



# ***Press Clips***

**(October 1, 2018)**

### CLIPS CONTENT

*FROM THE OC REGISTER (PAGE 3)*

- **Mike Scioscia steps down as Angels manager after 19 years**
- **Hoornstra: On his final day as Angels manager, Mike Scioscia finally handed over the script**
- **Taylor Ward's walk-off homer gives Angels victory as Mike Scioscia gives up the reins**
- **Tim Salmon, Garret Anderson among former Angels to react as Mike Scioscia steps down**
- **Shohei Ohtani reflects on decision to play for Angels and historic rookie season**
- **Mike Trout says winning is 'huge' in determining his future plans, but believes Angels are trying**

*FROM LOS ANGELES TIMES (PAGE 15)*

- **Mike Scioscia takes time in final win to enjoy game alongside players instead of his usual perch**
- **Mike Scioscia turned the Angels from pretenders to contenders**
- **Mike Scioscia won't return as Angels manager in 2019**

*FROM ANGELS.COM (PAGE 23)*

- **Scioscia's tenure with Angels comes to an end**
- **Angels walk off in Scioscia's final game at helm**
- **Five questions facing Angels this offseason**
- **Ohtani: 'I made the right decision' joining Halos**

*FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (PAGE 28)*

- **Mike Scioscia bids farewell as Angels manager after 19 years**

*FROM THE ATHLETIC (PAGE 31)*

- **The managerial education (and Angels audition?) of Eric Chavez**
- **'I am going to step down': Transcript of Mike Scioscia's press conference**
- **Mike Scioscia steps down and the Angels pay tribute to the best manager they've ever had**
- **After one season attempting his two-way experiment with the Angels, Shohei Ohtani has no regrets**

*FROM MLB.COM (PAGE 47)*

- **2019 Draft order set: O's, KC, White Sox go 1-2-3**

*FROM ESPN.COM (PAGE 49)*

- **Mike Trout's relentless quest to get even better**

*FROM NBC SPORTS (PAGE 51)*

- **Mike Scioscia confirms he is not returning to Angels next year**

*FROM CBS SPORTS (PAGE 52)*

- **Angels manager Mike Scioscia steps down after 19 seasons, ending longest tenure in MLB**

*FROM THE SPORTING NEWS (PAGE 52)*

- **Shohei Ohtani overcame almost every obstacle in jaw-dropping rookie year**

*FROM USA TODAY (PAGE 55)*

- **Mike Trout Monday: Mike Trout surpassed 39 Hall of Famers in career WAR in 2018**

*FROM BLEACHER REPORT (PAGE 57)*

- **Mike Scioscia Will Not Return as Angels Manager for 2019 Season**

*FROM KYODO NEWS (PAGE 58)*

- **Baseball: Shohei Ohtani reflects on historic rookie season**

*FROM MLB TRADE RUMORS (PAGE 60)*

- **West Notes: Trout, Beltre, Andrus, Bumgarner, Posey**

**FROM THE OC REGISTER****Mike Scioscia steps down as Angels manager after 19 years**

By Jeff Fletcher

ANAHEIM — Sitting in front of a packed press conference, choking back tears, Mike Scioscia delivered the words that, although rumored for months, nonetheless signaled the jarring end of an era.

After 19 years and a World Series title, Scioscia would not be managing the Angels any more.

“I am going to step down,” Scioscia said, his press conference being shown live in Angel Stadium just after the team’s dramatic 5-4 victory over the Oakland A’s in the season finale. “I will not be returning to manage the Angels next year. In speaking with (wife) Anne and our family, there’s no doubt it’s right for me, and I think it’s the right move for the organization. I’ve had an incredible 19 years. It’s been just awesome.”

In the final year of a 10-year contract, Scioscia had been strongly rumored to be on his way out for months, with the Angels on their way to what would be a third straight losing season.

Scioscia said he and his wife made the final decision in the last month of the season. Angels president John Carpino said definitively that it was Scioscia’s choice not to seek a contract extension. Scioscia made clear that he is not retiring, though.

Scioscia leaves the Angels with nothing but admiration from those above and below him in the organization.

“He transformed this whole organization,” Carpino said.

Owner Arte Moreno said in a statement: “We will always be grateful and proud that the Angels played a part in his Hall of Fame career.”

Within minutes after the end of the game, Scioscia entered a press conference and got directly to the point, announcing his decision. In front of a room filled with his family, Angels players and executives, Scioscia spoke for 10 minutes before taking a question, at times stopping when he was overcome by the emotion and his eyes moistened.

Scioscia, who turns 60 in November, said his immediate plans were to enjoy his time with his family, but he would be open to managing again.

“I have a deep passion for this game,” he said. “I love it. I love managing, but in this game, you never know if where or when an opportunity comes, and I’m fine with it. If something comes and I get another chance, great. If not, believe me, I’m going to take the great experience I had here and just move forward with it. It’s been terrific.”

Outfielders Mike Trout, Kole Calhoun and Justin Upton all sat in on the press conference, in full uniform. Afterward, they still seemed a little shocked that an era was officially over.

“He’s the only manager I played for,” said Trout, the Angels superstar who debuted in 2011. “It’s tough to see him go, but like he said, it’s time for a change. It was fun playing for him. The passion he had for the game, to win. Him and the coaches, they always put the players in a great position to succeed. I can’t thank him enough.”

Added Calhoun: “It hasn’t really sunk in yet. He’s definitely going to be missed. He’s been a presence in this organization for almost two decades. It’s going to be interesting to see what happens.”

The Angels are now expected to take the next several weeks, at least, interviewing candidates to replace Scioscia.

Among those most likely to be considered to replace Scioscia are Brad Ausmus, the former Detroit Tigers manager who is a special assistant to General Manager Billy Eppler; Eric Chavez, a longtime third baseman who is also a special assistant to Eppler; Josh Paul, the Angels bench coach; and Dino Ebel, the Angels third base coach.

Because Eppler came to the Angels from the New York Yankees, the list of potential candidates from outside the organization likely includes those with Yankees ties.

Former Yankees manager Joe Girardi could get an interview. Longtime Yankee coach Rob Thomson, now the bench coach of the Philadelphia Phillies, and Trey Hillman, a former Yankees special assistant who also managed the Kansas City Royals, might also be on the list.

Whoever gets the job will be replacing an icon.

Scioscia’s 1,650 victories rank 18th in major league history. In the four major pro sports, only Greg Popovich, coach of the NBA’s San Antonio Spurs, has led his current team for longer than Scioscia.

Scioscia won a World Series in 2002 and led the Angels to the playoffs six other times. The Angels had never won a postseason series in the franchise’s first 31 seasons.

“I think the organization owes a great deal of gratitude to the time he’s put in here,” said former outfielder Tim Salmon, a member of the Angels’ Hall of Fame. “He’s definitely put this organization on the right track for years to come. He had a great run. Everything he did to come in and bring in leadership and bring in that steady influence. It’s been the biggest run of success this organization has ever had.”

Scioscia came to the Angels in November 1999, after he’d spent almost all of his professional career up the freeway with the Dodgers. Scioscia was a catcher with the Dodgers from 1980 to 1992, playing on their last two teams to win the World Series. After that, he was a major and minor league coach with the Dodgers.

Frustrated that he wasn’t hired to manage the Dodgers, Scioscia left for the Angels. He took over as a manager after a tumultuous 1999 season that saw Manager Terry Collins resign amid months worth of clubhouse discord.

Scioscia was largely credited for bringing the clubhouse together in a player-friendly environment. He was known for his laugh-filled morning meetings during spring training, when players would be assigned various tasks that helped them get to know each other and created team unity.

On the field, the Angels were consistent winners for much of Scioscia's tenure. From 2000 to 2015, the Angels never had consecutive losing seasons. Their worst record was 75-87, in 2001, the year before they won the World Series.

"He got here in 2000 and put the organization on the map," said Ebel, a member of Scioscia's coaching staff since 2006. "The 2002 World Series and all the flags hanging in the stadium. You think of the Angels, from a staff point of view, and you think of Mike Scioscia."

After the 2008 season, Moreno rewarded Scioscia with a 10-year contract, virtually unprecedented in an era when most managers last less than five years on the job.

In recent seasons, though, the organization's fortunes had turned. The Angels had losing records in the past three seasons, despite having the game's best all-around player in Trout.

Since 2010, the Angels reached the postseason only once, and in 2014 they were swept by the Kansas City Royals.

There were personality conflicts between Scioscia and former general manager Jerry Dipoto, who resigned in the middle of the 2015 season.

Amid that, the team has struggled on the field, mostly because of a farm system was allowed by front office decisions to deteriorate to the point that it was among the worst in baseball.

Still, Scioscia has received his share of criticism. Scioscia was accused of being resistant to change when it came to adapting to the analytics that have now become a regular part of decision-making in the industry. Scioscia has insisted over the years that he has evolved.

Scioscia, in fact, was more open to changes – like the increased use of defensive shifts, and non-traditional use of relievers – after Eppler took over following the 2015 season. By all accounts, the two had a strong working relationship throughout most of their three seasons together.

There were, however, signs of cracks this year, as they had some philosophical differences, mostly relating to bullpen management.

Another criticism of Scioscia has been that he didn't communicate well with enough players, leaving them unsure of their roles.

Mostly, though, the players have said they respected and appreciated Scioscia.

"In my first few years, we had so many different managers coming in and out, it was nice to have a nice calming steady force that came in with him," Salmon said. "He changed the culture. He completely changed the culture. He went from that old-school culture to a newer light-hearted culture. He was all

about building continuity and building camaraderie in the clubhouse and the dugout and checking your ego at the door.”

In his press conference, Scioscia said he’s always wanted to keep the focus on the players.

“This game is about the players,” he said. “It’s not a manager, not about a GM or an owner. There are a lot of things that are important, but this game is about the players and it always will be. For 19 years, we had guys who put it all on the line, whether we were going good or bad. And that’s what I’m going to take away. That was so inspiring to me on a personal level, to see these guys go out and play the way you should play the game.”

## **Hoonstra: On his final day as Angels manager, Mike Scioscia finally handed over the script**

By J.P. Hoonstra

ANAHEIM — Mike Scioscia thanked the Angels’ clubhouse staff, video crew, training staff, medical staff, strength and conditioning staff, then paused. He nervously scratched a patch of skin below his left ear, amplifying the silence while trying to bridge the awkwardness of a speechless pause. After 29 seconds, Scioscia couldn’t pretend this postgame press conference was like the 3,125 that came before it.

Soon a 59-year-old man in a full baseball uniform was crying openly in front of his players, his wife, executives, reporters, and a live television audience. The video boards inside Angel Stadium streamed every tear. Scioscia wiped his right eye, then his left, with little effect. His face was more wet than dry by the time he took a question from a reporter.

So it was that Scioscia did what some considered impossible. At 3:04 p.m. Sunday, on the final day of his career as the Angels’ manager, Scioscia ceded control of the moment.

Scioscia never formally told his players that he would not be their manager in 2019. Mike Trout, Justin Upton and Kole Calhoun only found out in person because they were in the audience for the press conference. The team did not have time to sign a photo, or a baseball, or produce any semblance of a going-away gift besides their 5-4 walk-off win over the Oakland A’s.

Immediately after rookie third baseman Taylor Ward ended the game with a two-run home run, Scioscia shook hands with each of his coaches, then walked down the dugout steps toward his office. Every other soul in an Angels uniform hustled to home plate to celebrate. His final step off the field was as calculated as any other.

“This game’s about the players,” Scioscia said afterward, his voice quavering. “It’s not about a manager, it’s not about the GM and owner. ... It’s not about the coaches. This game’s about the players and it always will be.”

Scioscia’s last day in the Angels’ dugout involved more actual managing than most. Calhoun led off the bottom of the first inning with a single and was immediately replaced by a pinch runner, Jabari Blash.

Trout jogged to center field to begin the second inning, then jogged back three batters later so Michael Hermosillo could take his place. Starting pitcher Matt Shoemaker was removed after three innings, leaving four men to tag-team the finish.

Scioscia made none of these moves. Next to the top step of the Angels' dugout sits a broad platform covered with green foam padding. This is where the manager stands and rests his elbows, where the padding creased perfectly beneath Scioscia's familiar imprint. The manager was not there Sunday.

Alfredo Griffin, the Angels' longtime first-base coach, stood at Scioscia's perch for a couple innings. Bench coach Josh Paul took over in the third. Dino Ebel took over in the seventh. Steve Soliz grabbed the ninth. Meanwhile, Scioscia floated through the dugout like a social butterfly, at once embracing his final day on the job and preparing for all his tomorrows as a free agent.

"I had nothing to do with today," Scioscia said. "Nothing to do with the lineup. Nothing to do with the pitching changes. Hence, that's probably why we won."

Scioscia said he talked to his wife, Anne, about stepping down when his 10-year contract expired, and the decision "came to fruition over the last month." The decision was Scioscia's alone, Angels president John Carpino said. As Scioscia declined to address his future in public, his impending departure became the worst-kept secret in baseball.

Fans in attendance Saturday received a Scioscia bobblehead. Sunday, a list of highlights from Scioscia's managerial career rotated through the digital display above the main stadium entrance. (Among them: Scioscia's MLB-record second guest appearance on "The Simpsons.") Between innings, the video boards played a montage of clips over the years, from Scioscia's dark-haired debut in 2000 to the mostly gray-haired end.

There was Scioscia wearing periwinkle, then red. There he was hugging Bengie Molina after the 2002 World Series, then waving to the crowd after the first 100-win season in franchise history. Any mention of the Angels finishing with a losing record in three consecutive seasons? Poppycock.

This isn't how you salute a manager who is staying put for years to come – a possibility Scioscia repeatedly, deliberately left open. This was a send-off.

"You look at the wins that we've been able to put up in 19 years and it doesn't point to anything but the players," Scioscia said. "That's what I'll take away from this experience. It's been incredible."

In the hours before Sunday's game, Trout wore a gray sleeveless hoodie emblazoned with the words "PART UNICORN" across the front. Across the clubhouse sat another unique talent: Shohei Ohtani, the best blend of pitching and hitting the game has seen in 100 years. Even they could not compete with Scioscia, whose 19 years with one team defied the longevity of a modern manager in any profession. He fit the unicorn metaphor better than any player

The Marlins cycled through 13 managers during Scioscia's tenure. The Expos relocated from Canada to Puerto Rico to Washington D.C. Even the Angels changed uniforms, owners, and names before changing managers. It would be stunning if that degree of job security did not beget comfortability.

For a moment Sunday, Scioscia tried to take control of his own press conference.

“So what’s next? Well, Anne and I are going to go back to Thousand Oaks and go out to Mastro’s (restaurant) tonight,” he said, answering his own question. “I don’t know if the whole posse’s going or if it’s just us. Do you know yet?”

“It might be a surprise,” Anne Scioscia said.

A day that began like any other, with a long drive to the ballpark and a stop at Starbucks, ended with Scioscia showing more emotion than his current group of players had ever seen. The last day of his tenure was unlike the first 6,893. The facade that carefully guarded Scioscia’s candor finally crumbled. The decision to step aside might have been his, but his power to craft a response to each moment abandoned him. As his voice quavered, Scioscia said he was at peace with the possibility that he would never manage again.

Regardless of whether he gets that chance, Sunday marked the end of an era.

Infielder David Fletcher was an Angels fan from birth. His first memory was of the 2002 World Series, watching the games on his family’s television in Cypress. He attended the victory parade in person with his father, Tim, and his brother, Dominic. At 24 years old, Fletcher is part of an entire generation that is too young to remember the Angels without Scioscia.

“When you think Angels, you think Mike Scioscia,” Fletcher said. “Growing up around here, he’s kind of like ingrained in the organization as like a major piece of it.”

## **Taylor Ward’s walk-off homer gives Angels victory as Mike Scioscia gives up the reins**

By Jeff Fletcher

ANAHEIM — The Angels’ final victory was a thriller, but one for which Mike Scioscia was taking no credit.

On what he knew would be his final day of 19 years managing the Angels, Scioscia allowed three of his coaches to handle everything, while he sat back and watched the team pull out a 5-4 victory over the Oakland A’s on Sunday, with Taylor Ward’s walk-off homer capping a three-run ninth inning.

“I had nothing to do with today,” Scioscia said afterward during a press conference in which he made public what had been suspected, that he was stepping down. “Nothing to do with the lineup, nothing to do with the pitching changes. Hence, it’s probably why we won.”

Longtime coaches Alfredo Griffin and Dino Ebel managed the first and last thirds of the game, with bench Josh Paul handling the middle.

Scioscia, meanwhile, sat casually on a bench in the middle of the dugout, mingling with players, throughout the afternoon.



The Angels trailed 4-2 when the ninth inning began. Jefry Marte, who had been responsible for the Angels' other runs with a first-inning two-run homer, sliced the deficit in half with an RBI double, after a Shohei Ohtani single.

Ward then smashed a two-run homer against Chris Hatcher, allowing the Angels to end a disappointing season on a high note.

The Angels finished 80-82, the first time in Scioscia's 19 seasons that they had three straight losing seasons.

Matt Shoemaker got the start, his sixth after missing five months with a forearm issue. After allowing two runs – on a Stephen Piscotty homer in the second – Shoemaker finished the season with a 4.94 ERA.

He left with the score tied, thanks to Marte's two-run homer in the first inning.

The A's took the lead on Franklin Barreto's two-run homer against Odrisamer Despaigne in the sixth.

Both teams pulled several of their more experienced starters throughout the game.

Mike Trout hit a flyout in his first at-bat, and then he left the game during the top of the second inning, allowing fans to give him the AL MVP candidate a standing ovation as he jogged to the dugout.

Trout finished his season with 39 homers, just missing his second 40-homer season.

"I told them, 'Give me one at-bat and if I hit a homer, I hit a homer,'" Trout said. "I tell you guys, if I try to hit a homer, I get out. I tried to hit a homer and I got out."

## **Tim Salmon, Garret Anderson among former Angels to react as Mike Scioscia steps down**

By James H. Williams

Following Mike Scioscia's announcement to step down as manager of the Los Angeles Angels, members of the Angels' 2002 World Series Championship team shared their reaction to the news.

"Mike Scioscia impacted my career in ways I'm forever grateful for. He brought leadership, vision, and a winning style of play to the teams I was a part of. As the architect of our 2002 World Championship he taught us the importance of "checking your ego in at the door" and playing as a team. I will always remember Sosh's hilarious morning meetings each spring that were so instrumental in building team chemistry and bonded our teams in ways I had never seen before. His "one day at a time" mantra kept his players focus where it needed to be and was the hallmark of the blue collar teams he lead. Sosh's consistent demeanor and steadiness influenced those around him and brought the Angels organization stability at the helm and their greatest run of success the past 19 seasons. Words of gratitude just don't seem to be enough for what Mike has meant to us all." – **Tim Salmon**

“As I said in my Angels Hall of Fame speech, Mike changed the culture of the Angels. We went from thinking we could win to knowing we could win. Every spring he talked only once of winning the World Series. He then then turned to using the analogy of taking one step on a ladder to reach our goal. The first season he took over was the most mentally fatiguing season I’ve ever had because I bought into our two biggest thieves were yesterday and tomorrow. He taught me how to prepare for that day to win a major league game.” – **Garret Anderson**

“Mike Scioscia is a true Angel. Mike has dedicated his heart and soul for the last 20 years to making the Angels a first class organization. Over this time, he has become one of the best and most respected managers in the game today. I am forever grateful to Mike Scioscia for giving me the opportunity to start my major league career. He took a chance on me when most experts in the game deemed that I could not play in the big leagues. I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to play for him, learn from him and win with him. I am blessed to call Mike Scioscia a mentor and friend, and the game still has a lot to learn from him.” – **David Eckstein**

The reaction didn’t stop with players from the 2002 World Series team. Here are statements and reactions from those who worked with Scioscia during his 19-year tenure.

**More former players:**

“Sosh is someone that I would want to study under if I was to become a manager one day. I watched him think outside the box on so many different occasions in the clubhouse and on the field. He didn’t care about the scrutiny and the aftermath that came with his decisions. It was the one he felt he had to make at that crucial moment. That’s what true leaders do for everyone he/she is leading. I’m proud to have spent 5 years playing for him. I’ve learned so much in the years I played for him.” – **Torii Hunter**

“Mike was essential in my success and longevity as a MLB player. His ability to show he believed in me on a daily basis as well as teach me tough lessons along the way made it possible for me as a player to fit in and help his team and my future teams moving forward. No matter what point in the game, whether it was offense or defense, you knew you could look in the dugout and have his confidence and support that we would get the job done. His strong presence in the clubhouse as our leader gave us added confidence. Mike created a new buzz in and around Anaheim with his team’s style of play that the fan base will forever appreciate.” – **Adam Kennedy**

“In the year 2000, the Angels brought on board and welcomed a former “Dodger” ...Mike Scioscia as our new manager. Little did we know how the trajectory and the path of the organization would change for the better with his hiring. I have had the opportunity to ‘compete against’ as a player....’play for’...’coach with’... and ‘coach against’ Mike. He defines everything a ‘Champion’ represents. Mike changed the expectations of our organization....brought out the best in all of us...AND no longer did we hope to win BUT we were going to win.

As a player for him; he challenged me, pushed me to new limits and introduced me to a new approach....“Play Free.” He was a World Series champion as a player, so Mike brought instant credibility into our dugout. As a coach on his staff; he showed me how important preparation, conviction, passion, and boldness were in the dugout. Those days when we were not playing well...Mike was always at his best....calm, determined and adamant that we would turn things around. As a coach against him; he forced you to be more prepared than ever. Ready for anything. You never knew what he was going to do

next. If your team did not play sound, fundamental baseball then Mike would expose it and capitalize on it.

Mike came into the Angels organization at a time when we had a difficult time reaching the next level. His leadership, knowledge, work ethic, and confidence helped pushed the organization to new heights. Those flags you see out there ...flying beyond the centerfield wall say it all.....and.....speak volumes about what Mike Scioscia meant to the Angels organization. Much love and Thanks Mike!" – **Gary DiSarcina**

#### **Former general managers:**

"I had the pleasure to work alongside Mike since his arrival in 2000 until 2011. I simply believe that Mike is one of the brightest baseball minds in the history of the Angels Organization. His passion and commitment to the finest details of his craft are evident in his performance throughout his 19 years in the Angels dugout. From the memorable Spring Training morning meetings and our late night conversations following Angels ballgames to a 2002 World Championship, Mike was the consummate professional. His personal accomplishments never outweighed his desire to compete and win. I was his baseball conscience and he was mine. I wish nothing but the best to Anne, Matt and Taylor. Much success in the next chapter." – **Tony Reagins**

"Mike encouraged the players to have an aggressive, team-first style of play. His positive attitude enabled the players to focus on the job to be done today regardless of what may have happened yesterday." – **Bill Stoneman**

#### **Broadcasters:**

"In the nearly two decades that I have known Mike Scioscia, the trait that has most impressed me about him is his character. His integrity, honesty and kindness are things I admire in someone I will always consider a dear friend. Professionally, Mike has distinguished himself in baseball as both a player and manager. In his tenure as manager of the Angels, he guided the franchise to heights it had never previously attained. Mike is an integral part of the Golden Years of Angels baseball. He is a Hall-of-Famer in his profession, but most importantly as a person." – **Terry Smith**

"I've known Mike a long, long time. First as a person I competed against, and then as person I learned so much from. First and foremost, I have the utmost respect for him as a husband and father. His upbringing set the foundation for him treating all of us as his family. His leadership skills and intelligence were the best I've seen as a manager since the late Dick Howser in my opinion. I wouldn't play poker with him because I never knew if we were up by 10 or down by 10. I cherish our friendship. His sense of humor was highly underrated. I conclude by saying to me, he is a Hall of Famer in the baseball world and off the field also." – **Mark Gubicza**

"I first met Mike Scioscia when I was broadcasting for ESPN in the early 90's. It was a game at Dodger Stadium and Mike was catching Orel Hershiser that night. I asked Mike if he had a few minutes before BP to discuss his catching philosophy along with his game plan for Hershiser that night. We must have sat in the dugout for fifteen minutes as Mike went on about growing up in Philly, then who helped him along the way, from John Roseboro, to Roy Campanella, to Del Crandell. He gave me a scouting report on not only Orel but each Dodgers pitcher. It was awesome. I must have used everything he gave me that night on the air.

A decade later, I would truly get to know Mike when he took over the Angels and led them to their first World Championship. He was a natural leader, a man who not only challenged every player but inspired them to be their best. And that 2002 team became the best. From Eck, to Ersty, to GA to Percy, to Tim Salmon, they were a reflection of their manager. No one cared who got the credit.

They just wanted to win. And when the team struggled, Sosh gave them a pat on the back, when they got on a roll, he told them they could do better, and when a member of the media went after one of his players after they made a mistake, Sosh had this unique ability to twist the conversation in some self-deprecating way that had the media laughing and the players mistake somehow forgotten.

I'll always remember the look on his face when Ersty caught the final out to win the championship. It was a look of pride, and not for himself, as he searched for coaches and players and trainers and clubhouse guys to hug. Great managers are people who share their success and believe that incredible things can happen when no one cares who gets the credit. Sosh is one of those guys. He's the very definition of what we want in our leaders. Integrity, trust, toughness.

Mike Scioscia is a good man, good son, good father, good husband, good friend. It was my honor to broadcast games he managed. Blessings always." – **Steve Physioc**

"I don't know that I can fully explain what Mike Scioscia has meant to me personally over the last 9 seasons but I'll certainly try. From the moment I went out to dinner with Arte, Mike and his coaching staff in March of 2010, he has been nothing but the most accommodating person on a daily basis. Maybe it was the connection to Philadelphia through my dad but whatever the case, he made me feel like I mattered every time we talked. And it wasn't just with me, he made every member of my family feel as if they were the most important person in the room when he visited with them.

He was never in a hurry and always took the time to chat about the previous night's game, his Eagles/Flyers/Sixers and/or everyday happenings in and around the ballpark. I wish more fans had a chance to see this side of Mike. He's a man of integrity whose loyalty you never questioned.

They broke the mold with Mike Scioscia. Tough as nails competitor that wanted to beat you every single night and it carried over into the dugout as manager. What a run...Hall of Fame husband, father and manager. Our loss is the Scioscia family's gain. Be well, Skip!" – **Victor Rojas**

## **Shohei Ohtani reflects on decision to play for Angels and historic rookie season**

By J.P. Hoornstra

ANAHEIM – Shohei Ohtani said through his interpreter that "nothing crazy really surprised me on or off the field" in his first year as a major league player.

Maybe that means that Ohtani, the Angels' 24-year-old rookie phenom, was the crazy and surprising one.

As he prepared for his 104th and final game of the season Sunday, Ohtani had already accomplished a feat many thought impossible. His 3.31 earned-run average was the lowest of any Angels pitcher who made at least 10 starts in 2018. His .362 on-base percentage, .568 slugging percentage, 10 stolen bases and .392 weighted on-base average trailed only Mike Trout. Despite losing 22 games to an elbow injury, Ohtani established himself as baseball's best dual-threat pitcher/position player in a century.

"Overall I was able to have fun and enjoy everything when I was playing on the field," Ohtani said through his interpreter. "That's a really good thing to take out of this season. Unfortunately I'm very disappointed the team wasn't able to make the playoffs. I'll try to come back stronger next year and hopefully next year we'll be in the playoffs."

Ohtani will undergo Tommy John surgery in the coming week to replace a torn ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow. When he is able to return as a hitter is uncertain. He will almost certainly not pitch before the 2020 season.

In hindsight, 2018 might just be an appetizer to an already historic career.

Ohtani and Babe Ruth (1919) are the only two players in major league history with 10 pitching appearances and 20 home runs in the same season. Ohtani and Ruth are the only players to hit 10 homers and wins four games as a pitcher. No one had ever hit 20 homers and struck out 50 batters in the same season before Ohtani.

When he left Japan for MLB last winter, Ohtani was able to choose from 30 destinations. He was allowed to sign only the standard rookie contract under MLB's international signing rules, in addition to a limited signing bonus. Since the maximum signing bonus allowed varied by less than eight figures from team to team, the cost to sign Ohtani was not prohibitive.

The Angels have missed the postseason each of the last four years. At 79-82, they are guaranteed a losing record in each of the last three. Does Ohtani regret his choice?

"I feel that I made the right decision, and I feel that I made that more every day that I come to the field," he said. "Every game that I play, I feel more and more that I made the right decision."

Rather than immediately accepting a doctor's recommendation of Tommy John surgery on Sept. 6, Ohtani chose to play out the season as a hitter. He hit two home runs in that day's game against the Texas Rangers.

The Angels were already on the brink of postseason elimination at the time, so Ohtani's presence in the lineup merely offered incentive for fans to tune in – and for American League Rookie of the Year voters to keep an eye on Ohtani's gaudy stats.

Among AL rookies with at least 300 plate appearances, Ohtani ranks first in OBP (.362) and slugging (.568), third in batting average (.286) and stolen bases (10), and fourth in home runs (22) and RBIs (61) through Saturday.

Ohtani said that the most impressive pitcher he had to face was probably Justin Verlander. The best hitter he had to face was Mookie Betts. He might be honored alongside both of them when baseball's annual awards are announced in November.

## **Mike Trout says winning is 'huge' in determining his future plans, but believes Angels are trying**

By Jeff Fletcher

ANAHEIM — On the verge of finishing what he said was probably his best overall season, Mike Trout heads into a winter with two seasons left that he hopes will end with more than individual performance to discuss.

Asked before Sunday's season finale how important the chance to reach the postseason is for his future plans, he said it was "huge."

"You want to be in an atmosphere where (the organization) wants to win," he said. "I want to come to the ballpark playing for something. That's everybody's goal here as a player. You don't want to come playing for nothing."

The Angels have reached the playoffs just once in Trout's seven full seasons, and they were swept in the division series in 2014. This will be their third straight losing season.

Trout, however, was quick to say that he believes that general manager Billy Eppler and the staff have so far made an effort to win, but the team has been derailed by injuries.

"I was really excited coming into this season with all the guys we brought in," Trout said. "The name of the game is staying healthy. You lose all those guys, you're going to be in trouble."

This winter the Angels are expected to broach the prospect of an extension with Trout, who is signed through 2020, but Trout did not want to address his contractual situation specifically on Sunday.

Speaking in general, though, Trout said he's enjoyed playing in Anaheim.

"My years here we haven't been winning, but they've been taking care of me," he said. "I enjoy coming to the ballpark. It (stinks) when it's September and you're out of it. But when I was a kid they took a chance on me. We'll see how it goes. I've got a couple more years and we'll go from there."

The Angels could trade Trout before the end of those two years, but Trout — who has a no-trade clause — laughed at that notion. He said "for sure" he expected to be here for two more years.

"They committed to me and I've got to two more years," he said.

Despite the questions about Trout's future, there are no issues with his present. He once again proved himself to be the best overall player in the major leagues.

“I think this was probably my best overall season, offensively and defensively,” Trout said. “Coming into the spring, I wanted to get better at defense, and the stats show it. You put your mind to something and try to get better each and every day. The hard work I put in early this season and the offseason paid off.”

Trout said in spring training that he was committed to improving his defense, in part because the defensive metrics didn’t paint a favorable picture of his play. He worked specifically on getting quicker jumps and covering more range.

This year Trout is currently at 8 defensive runs saved, up from -6 last year. It will be his highest total in that stat since his rookie year, when the figures were inflated by several robbed home runs.

With reigning Gold Glove center fielder Byron Buxton and previous winner Kevin Kiermaier both missing much of this season with injuries, Trout has a realistic shot to win his first Gold Glove. Boston’s Jackie Bradley Jr. is probably his stiffest competition.

“That’s one of my goals in my career, for sure,” Trout said. “I think every outfielder tries to win a Gold Glove. I definitely felt it was one of my better years defensively.”

Trout has already won two MVPs, but winning a third could be difficult even though his season was so good, by his standards.

Trout hit a flyout in his only at-bat before coming out of Sunday’s game, to a standing ovation. He finished the season hitting .312 with 39 homers, a 1.088 OPS and a WAR — according to FanGraphs — of 9.7.

Boston’s Mookie Betts is nearly equal to Trout across the board, with a .346 average, 32 homers, a 1.078 OPS and a WAR of 10.2. Many MVP voters will favor Betts because his team is headed to the postseason.

Even Trout acknowledged that he could lose to either Betts or Boston’s J.D. Martinez, who has 42 homers and a 1.025 OPS.

“Mookie, you can’t take anything away from him,” Trout said. “He’s unbelievable. Both those guys in Boston, with Martinez, they are both great people. Their stats are great, but they are even better people.”

**FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES**

## **Mike Scioscia takes time in final win to enjoy game alongside players instead of his usual perch**

By Maria Torres

Mike Scioscia manned the south corner of the home dugout at Angel Stadium for nearly two decades.

Through the final stages of a 15-year playoff drought, through a World Series championship, through three consecutive losing seasons, Scioscia stood there, steadfast and unwavering through most of his 3,078 games guiding the Angels.

But on Sunday afternoon, Scioscia finally stepped back. He told friend Alfredo Griffin, the only coach remaining from the first staff Scioscia helped put together in 2000, that Griffin would take over managerial duties for part of the day. Then he turned around.

Hours before it became public knowledge that he will not return for a 20th season as Angels manager, Scioscia retreated to a bench and reveled in the final day of his tenure in Anaheim. He enjoyed the company of his players, the encouragement from his coaching staff and the end of the most historic managerial career in Angels history.

Griffin, Josh Paul and Dino Ebel took turns standing in Scioscia's spot, pulling the strings on the way to the Angels' ninth-inning rally for a walkoff victory. They beat the Oakland Athletics 5-4 on rookie Taylor Ward's home run.

Pyrotechnics exploded in center field. The Angels charged the plate. The stadium rocked with cheers.

About 20 minutes after his 1,650th victory and fighting an uncharacteristic public display of emotion, Scioscia laughed.

"I had nothing to do with today," he said. "Nothing to do with the lineup. Nothing to do with the pitching changes. Hence, that's probably why we won."

But he had so much more to do with everything else.

Scioscia helped turn a club viewed as a national laughingstock into a perennial contender. Over 19 seasons, he guided the likes of Vladimir Guerrero, David Eckstein, Chone Figgins, Jered Weaver and Torii Hunter. He witnessed the historic rookie campaigns of Mike Trout and Shohei Ohtani. He suffered the anguish of losing a player in Nick Adenhardt, and he celebrated the triumphs of Albert Pujols' milestones.

So Scioscia spent 10 minutes reminiscing about those players and his time in Anaheim as he sat on the dais in the ground-level interview room.

He shook off the persistent interruptions of a reporter's ringing cellphone — "Is that an iPhone that doesn't have an off switch? When's the battery out?" — to make sure he thanked everyone he could. He wiped tears off his cheeks as Trout, Justin Upton and Kole Calhoun sneaked into the room and watched from the second row. He reiterated his love for baseball and his desire to manage again, should an opportunity present itself.

And Scioscia came to grips with the end.

"In this game you never know if, where or when an opportunity comes and I'm fine with that," said Scioscia, who turns 60 in November. "If something comes and I get another chance, great. If not, believe me, I'm gonna take the great experience I had here."



The last four seasons haven't met expectation. Ohtani's arrival, Upton's decision to sign with the Angels through 2022 or Trout's best overall season didn't allow the Angels to end a playoff drought at four seasons. They finished 80-82 for the second year in a row. The combination of disappointing results and the expiration of Scioscia's 10-year contract likely helped to usher in a new era of Angels baseball.

Who will replace Scioscia is tough to predict. On the list of candidates for general manager Billy Eppler to consider are special assistants Eric Chavez and Brad Ausmus, and bench coach Paul. Eppler also will likely interview people outside of the organization. The process can drag on for months.

At any rate, Scioscia leaves behind a legacy that, in an age of managerial carousels, will be hard to outrank.

"The passion he had for the game, to win," Trout said. "Him and the coaches, he always put the players in a great position to succeed. I can't thank him enough."

**6:55 p.m.:** This article has been updated with more details and quotes.

## **Mike Scioscia turned the Angels from pretenders to contenders**

By Bill Shaikin

Mike Scioscia summoned me into his office and asked me to close the door. He was not happy.

He did not care for whatever I had written about his strategy. He was offended at the notion that I might have considered something that he and his coaches had not. Let me explain my strategy first, he said, so you can understand it before you criticize it.

The decibel level rose to an uncomfortable level, but the point was a fair one, and a valuable window into how he ran his clubhouse. He did not embarrass me in front of players or other reporters, and he did not hold a grudge. He had made his point, and he turned the proverbial page.

Any workplace is better off when the employees need not wonder what kind of mood the boss might be in on any given day. Scioscia was a rock. He turned the page every day, for 19 years, before he stepped down as Angels manager on Sunday after his team's 5-4 victory over Oakland in Anaheim.

That is what made his farewell speech Sunday so distinctive, and so human. On his last day on the job, after 3,078 games as manager of the Angels, he finally lost his composure.

He thanked the team owner, the executives, the coaches, the medical staff, and the video guys, and then he could not go on. He struggled to compose himself, wiping away tears. He needed 28 seconds to compose himself, spoke a little more, and started to cry again.

"I'm really happy, guys," he said through the tears.

He did what we all aspire to do. He left the place in better shape than he found it. In his case, the rock moved mountains.

The Angels have fallen upon hard times recently, but it is impossible to overstate how adrift the organization was when he arrived, at the end of the lost decade of the 1990s.

They spent money, but not freely, and they did not win. They let the kids play, but not wholeheartedly, and they did not win.

“Don’t say ‘contend,’ ” one team official told me during those dark days. “Say ‘compete.’ ”

The Walt Disney Co. bought the team, outfitted the players in pinstriped pajamas, planted cheerleaders on the dugout roof, and installed a team president who once bellowed, “Somebody said to me, ‘You can’t trade 25 guys.’ I said, ‘Why not?’ ”

Disney pushed that president out after hiring Bill Stoneman to run the Angels. Stoneman hired Scioscia, who banished the talk of competing. He was here to contend.

The Angels can’t win the World Series? Why not?

Three years was the average life span for an Angels manager in those days. I gave Scioscia three years, either to join the pile of failed Angels managers or to leverage whatever modest success he might have into a better job.

In his third year, the Angels won the World Series. He transformed the Angels job into a coveted one, and the Angels franchise into a relevant one.

The Angels won five of six American League West championships, new owner Arte Moreno funded the arrival of Hall of Famer Vladimir Guerrero, and fans packed Angel Stadium even when the Dodgers, Boston Red Sox or New York Yankees were not in town.

“Angels fans, don’t let anybody sell you short,” Scioscia said Sunday.

The team that once spit up and chewed out managers suddenly developed them. Joe Maddon, Bud Black and Ron Roenicke all parlayed coaching jobs under Scioscia into major league managing jobs, and all borrowed from Scioscia’s light touch in managing the long grind. So did Dodgers manager Dave Roberts, who learned from Black.

Even on Sunday, as Scioscia fought back tears, he did not yell at the reporter whose ringing cellphone interrupted the news conference three times. Instead, he quickly reverted to his usual managerial persona.

“Is that an iPhone 1 that doesn’t have an off switch?” he laughed.

And, for all of his accomplishments that flashed on the stadium video boards Sunday, he certainly appreciated this one: “Mike Scioscia has appeared in two episodes of ‘The Simpsons.’ ”

John Carpino, the Angels' president, said Scioscia had decided on his own to step away. What if Scioscia had wanted a new contract so he could return next season? It never got to that point, Carpino said.

That is for the best. Even the best messengers can lose their audience. Billy Eppler, the general manager, deserves the same chance to hire a manager that Stoneman got — and that the two Angels general managers in between never got. Scioscia said he would like to manage again.

I don't buy the claim that Scioscia cannot adapt to the modern game. For all the hype surrounding the "bullpenning" craze now — that is, using a flurry of relief pitchers to overcome the shortcomings of starters — that is exactly how Scioscia won the 2002 World Series. The Angels got 31 innings from their starters in that series, 30 from their relievers.

And the style that Scioscia imported from his playing days with the Dodgers and nurtured with the Angels fell out of fashion less because of anything he did and more because Moreno's costly acquisitions — Vernon Wells, Albert Pujols, Josh Hamilton and C.J. Wilson — did not pay off for the major league team and deprived the minor league system of the resources necessary to replenish talent.

Scioscia might never have the power in another job that he did in Anaheim. He once kicked Jose Guillen off the team for insubordination, even though the Angels were in a heated pennant race and Guillen ranked second on the team in home runs.

But Scioscia commands enough respect that three prominent players — Mike Trout, Justin Upton and Kole Calhoun — made sure to witness the news conference before heading to the airport, and to the off-season.

"Are your flights delayed?" Scioscia joked.

That is vintage Scioscia. As a catcher with the Dodgers, he played for Tommy Lasorda, a manager who dominated the spotlight. As a manager with the Angels, Scioscia insisted the spotlight belonged to his players.

"This game is about the players," he said, crying again, "and it always will be."

He dropped the names of 13 of his former players within 40 seconds, with a description for each. He took a few breaths to describe what he called the "phenomenon" that is Torii Hunter, then threw out six more names within 20 seconds.

The last three names: Trout, Guerrero and Pujols.

Guerrero was inducted into the Hall of Fame this summer. Trout and Pujols will get there too.

And, although this kind of suggestion would have been within the realm of the magical when he took the job as manager of the Angels, Scioscia will get there too. His halo shines tonight, and forever.

## Mike Scioscia won't return as Angels manager in 2019

By Mike Digiovanna

Mike Scioscia, a fixture in the Angels dugout for nearly two decades and the manager who led the franchise to its only World Series championship in 2002, announced on Sunday that he is stepping down, ending his 19-year run as the team's field boss.

"I am not returning to manage the Angels next year," Scioscia said in an emotional postgame address to the media. "In speaking with [Scioscia's wife] Anne and our family, there's no doubt it's the right move for me. And I think it's the right move for the organization. I've had an incredible 19 years. It's been just awesome.

"I want to thank Bill Stoneman. Bill, you took a chance with me in 1999. I guess the jury's out if that worked out or not, but thank you for that opportunity. You let us do our thing. We appreciated it. Thanks for giving me that opportunity. I want to thank obviously Arte and Carole Moreno. I can't tell you how much they supported us and our family. I think they made our family part of this Angel family. That is something that I'll never forget. Getting the opportunity to stay here for 19 seasons just doesn't happen."

Scioscia, who turns 60 in November, built a Hall-of-Fame-worthy resume in Anaheim. He led the Angels to six division titles—five in a six-year span from 2004 to 2009—and the American League championship series in 2005 and 2009.

The former Dodgers catcher, in the final year of the 10-year, \$50-million contract he signed before 2009, is baseball's longest-tenured manager. He entered Sunday's game with a 1,649-1,428 record and will finish his Angels career ranked 18th on the game's all-time managerial win list.

Only four men have managed more games with one franchise—Connie Mack (7,466 games with the Philadelphia Athletics), John McGraw (4,424 games with the New York Giants), Bobby Cox (3,860 games with the Atlanta Braves) and Walter Alston (3,658 games with the Brooklyn and Los Angeles Dodgers).

"He's been synonymous with Angels baseball," said Colorado Rockies manager Bud Black, who served as Scioscia's pitching coach from 2000 to 2006. "It's going to be weird to not see him in that dugout, and to see somebody else there."

The list of potential replacements for Scioscia is expected to include at least three in-house candidates hired by general manager Billy Eppler in the past three years—Eric Chavez and Brad Ausmus, who are special assistants to the GM, and current bench coach Josh Paul.

Chavez, 40, is a former third baseman who played 17 big-league seasons before becoming a special assignment scout for the New York Yankees in 2015. He was one of Eppler's first hires in October of 2015, joining the Angels in a hybrid on-field coaching and scouting role.

During the same early-August weekend in which reports first surfaced that Scioscia was expected to resign after this season, Chavez was sent to Salt Lake City to manage the Angels' triple-A team. The Bees went 10-14 under Chavez.

Ausmus, 49, joined the Angels this season after spending the past three years as the manager in Detroit, where he guided the Tigers to a 314-332 mark and an AL Central title in 2014.

A former catcher who played 18 big-league seasons from 1993 to 2010, Ausmus transitioned from the playing field to the front office with a three-year stint (2011-2013) as a San Diego Padres special assistant.

Paul, 43, spent three years (2015-2017) as the New York Yankees' minor league catching coordinator, four years (2011-2014) as a Yankees scout, and he managed their Class-A Staten Island team to a 34-40 record in 2010. The former catcher played nine big-league seasons, two with the Angels in 2004-2005. Among the other possible candidates to replace Scioscia are former Yankees manager Joe Girardi, Boston Red Sox bench coach Ron Roenicke and Angels third-base coach Dino Ebel.

Scioscia was 41 with only one year of triple-A managing experience when he was hired by first-year Angels GM Bill Stoneman to replace Terry Collins in November of 1999.

Scioscia quickly transformed the Angels into an AL power with a National League style of play that featured aggressive base-running, clutch hitting, situational hitting, sound defense, solid-to-superb starting pitching and stout relief.

Six of Scioscia's first 10 teams won 92 games or more, with the 2002 club notching 99 victories and the 2008 team winning a franchise-record 100 games.

The lineups in that first decade under Scioscia featured hard-nosed players such as David Eckstein, Darin Erstad, Erick Aybar, Bengie Molina, Orlando Cabrera and Torii Hunter, the speedy Chone Figgins, the power-hitting Tim Salmon, Troy Glaus, Garret Anderson and Mike Napoli, and future Hall of Famer Vladimir Guerrero.

"For 19 years, we've had guys that just put it all on the line," Scioscia said. "Whether we were going good or going bad. And that's what I'm gonna take away. That was so inspiring to me on a personal level to see these guys just go out there and just play the way you should play the game.

"I'll take away the grit of Darin Erstad, the athleticism of Garret Anderson, the presence of Tim Salmon, the heart and soul of Bengie Molina, Eckstein and [Adam] Kennedy. The competitiveness of Jarrod Washburn, Jered Weaver, who was the ultimate competitor, and John Lackey. These guys were tremendous, just tremendous on the mound. The fearlessness of Chone Figgins and Erick Aybar. The talent of Howie Kendrick. These guys were special. The phenomenon of Torii Hunter, that's the only way I can explain it is a phenomenon. You had to be around Torii. So much fun to watch him play. He was incredible.

"And you move forward now to so many guys now that we have that are so important to us. The talent of Justin Upton and Andrelton Simmons, the hard-nosed play of Kole Calhoun. And now you look at guys like Mike Trout, Albert Pujols and Vlad Guerrero, who will be Hall of Famers with an Angel cap on. Can't tell you how much of a privilege it was to be around them."

The 2002 World Series team had a deep and dominant bullpen headed by Troy Percival, Francisco Rodriguez and Brendan Donnelly, and division-winning teams over the next seven years featured Percival, Rodriguez and reliable relievers such as Scot Shields and Darren Oliver.

“When Sosh came in, he was one of the first to start limiting times through the lineup for starting pitchers,” Salmon said. “I don’t think it was verbalized that way, but he was a big proponent of shortening the game with the bullpen and defense.

“It was a National League style of baseball that he brought over. All of those things he was doing were precursors to what we’re seeing today, but for some reason, he doesn’t get credit for that. It’s almost like it’s old-school now.”

Tigers manager Ron Gardenhire was a rookie manager in Minnesota in 2002 when the Angels beat the Twins in a five-game AL Championship Series that left a lasting impression on Gardenhire, who spent 13 years with the Twins.

“We always tried to mirror what the Angels did,” Gardenhire said. “They played fundamental baseball and seemed to do all of the little things right.”

Unpredictable in the eyes of opposing managers, Scioscia was a constant in the Angels dugout and clubhouse, his even-keeled nature and one-day-at-a-time approach setting the tone in a game filled with so many emotional highs and lows.

“There were times when I didn’t agree with something during a game when I was pitching, and after the game we’d argue and yell and scream at each other,” said left-hander Washburn, the ace of the 2002 staff.

“The next day, you’d show up, and it would be, ‘Hey, Wash,’ and it was, ‘Hey Sosh, how’s it going?’ It was like nothing ever happened, and we’re good buddies again. You turned the page and you worried about today.”

The Angels were nowhere near as successful in the past nine years under Scioscia as they were in the first 10. The team reached the postseason only once, getting swept in the first round by Kansas City after winning the AL West in 2014.

There were four winning seasons and four losing seasons from 2010 to 2017, and the Angels have been out of playoff contention this season since mid-August.

Despite having Mike Trout, baseball’s best all-around player and a two-time AL most valuable player, since 2012, the Angels have not won a playoff game with the star center fielder.

The high-priced acquisitions of one-dimensional sluggers such as Vernon Wells, Josh Hamilton and Albert Pujols, who has three years left on a 10-year, \$240-million deal, put a drag on the team’s payroll and, too often, the offense.

Hamilton, who signed a five-year, \$125-million deal before 2013, was a total bust. Pitcher C.J. Wilson was hurt for half of the five-year, \$77.5-million deal he signed before 2012. Injuries have ravaged the pitching staff the last three years.

"I know they're trying to get the best players and to spend money in free agency, but it seems like the money they spent was not on the types of players that fit Scioscia's managing style," Washburn said. "I don't know if that kind of handcuffed him on being able to play the style of baseball he wanted to play."

His Angels career may be ending on a bit of sour note, but a few losing seasons with do little to tarnish Scioscia's legacy.

"From the other side, when you play the Angels, you knew they were going to be well-managed, well-coached, and they were going to play hard," said Black, in his 11th season as an NL manager. "I always thought there was a presence to any Angels team, and I think Mike set that tone.

"I know the results haven't been great for the past seven or eight years, but the sense in our game is that they're a good team ... even when they're not."

**FROM ANGELS.COM**

## Scioscia's tenure with Angels comes to an end

*Longtime manager steps down: 'I've had an incredible 19 years. It's been just awesome'*

By Maria Guardado

ANAHEIM -- Mike Scioscia's 19-year run with the Angels has officially come to an end.

Scioscia, the longest-tenured manager in baseball, announced that he will be stepping down from his post following the Angels' **5-4 walk-off win** over the A's in Sunday's regular-season finale. The move has been widely expected, as Scioscia is in the final days of the 10-year, \$50 million contract he signed with the Angels in January 2009.

"I want to make an announcement that I am going to step down," Scioscia said. "I am not returning to manage the Angels next year. In speaking with Anne and our family, there's no doubt it's the right move for me. And I think it's the right move for the organization. I've had an incredible 19 years. It's been just awesome."

Angels president John Carpino said the move was of Scioscia's own volition.

Before a packed news conference room, Scioscia fought back tears as he reflected on his tenure with the Angels, taking time to thank his family, his coaching staff and the hundreds of players who helped forge

his legacy. **Mike Trout**, **Justin Upton** and **Kole Calhoun** were among those present, along with several Angels executives and coaches.

"We kind of knew this was coming," Calhoun said. "If it was going to be the last one, we kind of wanted to be there for him. He's been there for us for years. To kind of stand by his side in probably one of the toughest press conferences he's ever done seemed like kind of the respectable thing to do."

Scioscia, who turns 60 on Nov. 27, will depart the organization as the most successful manager in franchise history, steering the Angels to their first and only World Series championship in 2002, capturing six division titles and winning two Manager of the Year Awards. Scioscia posted a .536 winning percentage (1,650-1,428) with his 19 seasons with the Angels, the best in club history.

"The dedication and commitment Mike Scioscia has given Angels baseball over the last 19 years greatly contributed to our evolution into an elite organization," owner Arte Moreno said in a statement. "Mike's tenure as manager of the Angels includes six division titles, a pennant, and a World Championship that transformed this franchise, and its perception on both local and national levels. We will always be grateful and proud that the Angels played a part in his Hall of Fame career."

But the latter half of Scioscia's tenure with the Angels featured less success than the first. The Halos have not won a postseason game since 2009 and have only one playoff appearance since then, which ended in a sweep at the hands of the Royals in the '14 American League Division Series.

The Angels made a flurry of moves this offseason in an attempt to end that drought, re-signing Justin Upton, landing **Shohei Ohtani** and adding infielders **Zack Cozart** and **Ian Kinsler**, but their playoff hopes crumbled under the weight of injuries. Their disappointing season ends with a fourth-place finish in the American League West and a losing record for the third consecutive year.

Reports that Scioscia was on his way out first surfaced in August, though he initially pushed back against them, calling the speculation "poppycock" and staying mum on his future with the organization.

Still it became increasingly apparent that the Angels were preparing for the end of an era as the final homestand of the season wound down. On Saturday, the Angels **distributed bobbleheads** in Scioscia's honor and played a series of video tributes in between innings highlighting his various accomplishments with the club.

"He's the only manager I played for, so it's tough seeing him go," Trout said. "But like he said, it's time for a change. It was fun playing for him. The passion he had for the game, to win. He always put the players in a great position to succeed. I can't thank him enough."

Added Ohtani: "I felt like he was excellent in communicating with me. He was always mixing in jokes, trying to make me feel comfortable. He made me feel comfortable, and he set up a situation so I could focus on baseball. I'm really appreciative of that."

The Angels have three internal candidates who will likely be in the mix to succeed Scioscia: bench coach Josh Paul, former Tigers manager Brad Ausmus and former Major League third baseman Eric Chavez. Ausmus and Chavez are currently special assistants to general manager Billy Eppler.



Scioscia's 19 years with the Angels constituted the longest such tenure in the big leagues since Bobby Cox managed 21 consecutive years with the Braves. It's also the sixth longest in MLB history.

While Scioscia said he is at his peace with his decision to leave the Angels, he left open the possibility of managing again elsewhere.

"I have a deep passion for this game," Scioscia said. "I love it. I love managing. But in this game you never know if, where or when an opportunity comes. And I'm fine with that. If something comes and I get another chance, great. If not, believe me, I'm going to take the great experience I had here."

## Angels walk off in Scioscia's final game at helm

*Rookie Ward caps 3-run 9th with 2-run homer to down A's*

By Maria Guardado

ANAHEIM -- The Angels sent off Mike Scioscia with a flourish.

**Taylor Ward's** two-run home run off **Chris Hatcher** capped a three-run ninth inning that allowed the Angels to rally for a dramatic 5-4 walk-off win over the A's in Sunday afternoon's regular-season finale at Angel Stadium.

With no playoff implications on the line, the game itself carried little import, but it was memorable for Scioscia, who **announced in an emotional postgame news conference** that he would not return to manage the Angels in 2019 after a 19-year run in Anaheim.

"That's awesome," right fielder **Kole Calhoun** said. "To go out in a fashion like that, walk-off win, hopefully, he can look back on that one day and smile."

Down 4-2 entering the ninth, **Shohei Ohtani** sparked the uprising with a leadoff single and then scored from first on **Jeffrey Marte's** RBI double to bring the Angels within one. Ward followed by hammering a 2-0 fastball from Hatcher out to left-center field for the game-winning hit.

"It was wonderful," Ward said. "I couldn't have asked for anything better, being in my shoes in that spot. I couldn't be any happier for him. It was wonderful to play under him for the short amount of time that I was able to."

The Angels will finish their 2018 season with an 80-82 mark, matching their record from last year. The victory was the 1,650th of Scioscia's managerial career, which ranks 18th all-time.

In his final game at the helm of the Angels, Scioscia largely abdicated his duties to others, allowing first-base coach Alfredo Griffin, bench coach Josh Paul and third-base coach Dino Ebel to stand in his usual spot by the third-base railing and take turns managing the club in three-inning increments.

"To be honest, I had very little to do with today's game," Scioscia said. "I'll point to Alfredo to JP -- and Dino brought it home the last three innings. They did all the work. But it's fun. You know what's fun? To

see Taylor Ward go through the growing pains and doing something. To see this team down by a couple and three hits later, we're in here with music blaring. It's just a great team win. It feels good."

For the second straight game, a series of video montages highlighting Scioscia's accomplishments with the club played in between innings, bringing a sense of finality to the afternoon's events.

The Angels took an early 2-0 lead after Marte launched a two-run home run in the first inning, but the A's tied it on **Stephen Piscotty's** two-run shot off **Matt Shoemaker** in the second.

Shoemaker allowed two runs on two hits over three innings, concluding a frustrating season for the 31-year-old right-hander, who missed more than five months with a vexing forearm injury that was misdiagnosed last year and led to two surgeries.

Limited to only seven starts in 2018, Shoemaker posted a 4.94 ERA over 31 innings for the Angels.

The game remained deadlocked until **Franklin Barreto** crushed a two-run home run off **Odrisamer Despaigne** that briefly gave the A's a 4-2 lead in the sixth.

## Five questions facing Angels this offseason

By Maria Guardado

ANAHEIM -- Change is afoot for the Angels.

**Following the club's 5-4 walk-off win** over the A's in Sunday's regular-season finale, Mike Scioscia **announced that he will not return** to manage the Angels in 2019, ending his 19-year run at the helm of the club.

It leaves yet another question mark for the Angels, who will watch the playoffs unfold without them for the fourth consecutive year after finishing in fourth place in the American League West with a disappointing 80-82 mark.

The onus is now on general manager Billy Eppler and his staff to find ways to retool the roster to keep pace in an increasingly competitive division. Here are five questions for the Angels as they head into the offseason.

### **Who will be the next Angels manager?**

Now that Scioscia's tenure has come to a close, the Angels' first order of business will be to find his successor. Three internal candidates have already been mentioned as potential options to replace Scioscia: bench coach Josh Paul and special assistants to the GM Brad Ausmus and Eric Chavez. Expect the Angels to spend the next several weeks interviewing contenders from inside and outside the organization to find the right fit for the job.

### **Will the Angels attempt to sign Mike Trout to an extension?**

Trout is coming off his best overall season to date, but he was once again forced to play meaningless

games in September after the Angels faded from contention. Despite their consistent efforts to build a competitive team around him, the Angels have yet to win a playoff game with Trout, and their window to capitalize on his prime is closing.

Trout is under control for only two more seasons, but the Angels are expected to broach the possibility of a contract extension this offseason. While Trout has said he enjoys playing in Anaheim, the Angels will likely have to convince him that they can contend in the near future to lock him up long term.

#### **When will Shohei Ohtani be available to hit in 2019?**

Ohtani is expected to undergo Tommy John surgery later this week, which will keep him off the mound until the 2020 season, but he will likely be back as a hitter at some point next season. It's unclear whether Ohtani will be ready by Opening Day, as the Angels have not yet offered a potential timetable for his return. Ohtani's rehab will be unique, as there are no notable cases of a two-way player coming back from this procedure.

While the prospect of having Ohtani's bat in their lineup on a regular basis next season helps ameliorate some of the sting of losing him as a pitcher, the Angels will not rush him back as a hitter if they feel it would compromise the health of his prized right elbow.

#### **Will the Angels look to bolster their oft-injured rotation?**

Durability has been an issue for many of the Angels' starters, and a slew of rotation injuries proved to be one of the primary culprits in the club's disappointing finish this year. They will be without two of their top starters in 2019, as **Garrett Richards** will be a free agent and Ohtani will be rehabbing from Tommy John surgery. Those developments could prompt the Angels to look externally to beef up their pitching staff. The Angels have not delved into the free-agent market for starting pitchers in recent years, but perhaps that will change this winter.

#### **Who will be the Angels' starting catcher next season?**

The Angels relied on rookies **Jose Briceno** and **Francisco Arcia** over the final month of the season after trading **Martin Maldonado** and letting **Rene Rivera** go to the Braves on a waiver claim, but they will likely be on the hunt for a more experienced starter this winter. With a shortage of internal depth at the position, the Angels will likely have to look outside the organization to fill that void.

## **Ohtani: 'I made the right decision' joining Halos**

*Two-way star looks back on historic rookie season with Angels*

By Maria Guardado

ANAHEIM -- **Shohei Ohtani** surprised many last offseason by choosing to sign with the Angels following a whirlwind courtship from nearly every Major League team. While Ohtani lived up to the hype in his historic rookie campaign, the Angels did not, falling short of the playoffs for the fourth consecutive season.

Still, Ohtani said he has no regrets about his decision to come to Anaheim.

"I feel like I made the right decision," Ohtani said through interpreter Ipppei Mizuhara prior to Sunday's regular-season finale against the A's. "Every day I come to the field, every game I play, I feel more and more like I made the right decision."

Ohtani, a **frontrunner** for the American League Rookie of the Year Award, entered the Angels' final game of the season batting .286 with a .930 OPS, 22 home runs, 61 RBIs and 10 stolen bases in 363 plate appearances as a left-handed hitter. Before a damaged ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow ended his season as a pitcher, Ohtani also logged a 3.31 ERA over 10 starts, racking up 63 strikeouts over 51 2/3 innings.

To put that in perspective, Ohtani and Babe Ruth (1919) are the only players in MLB history to make 10 pitching appearances and hit 20 home runs in a single season.

"What Shohei has done is not easy," manager Mike Scioscia said. "What he's done is exceptional. He's an exceptional talent."

Ohtani will have to put his two-way endeavor on hold for the near future, as he will **undergo Tommy John surgery later this week** that will keep him off the mound until the 2020 season. Still, the 24-year-old said he feels like he's only scratching the surface of his potential, which bodes well for the Angels.

"Ever since Spring Training, the one thing I really felt was that I still have a lot of room to grow," Ohtani said. "I felt that even more than my time in Japan, so that's one thing that I've learned about myself."

## **FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

### **Mike Scioscia bids farewell as Angels manager after 19 years**

By Beth Harris

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Mike Scioscia started out smiling in front of the crowded room. It wasn't long, though, before tears glistened in his hazel eyes.

He stepped down as manager of the Los Angeles Angels after 19 seasons on Sunday, ending the longest current tenure in the majors with a come-from-behind victory.

"It's been second to none. It's been incredible," he said of his time in Anaheim.

Scioscia guided the Angels to the franchise's only World Series title in 2002, starting a stretch of six playoff appearances and five AL West titles in eight years. He finished with a 1,650-1,428 record.

His wins are the 18th-most in major league history and the second-most with one team, trailing only Walter Alston's 2,040 with the Dodgers, Scioscia's club during a standout catching career.

Scioscia surpassed the 1,599 wins of Tom Lasorda, his playing manager and mentor, and his .536 winning percentage is the best in franchise history.

The Angels sent him out a winner, rallying to beat the playoff-bound Oakland Athletics 5-4 on Taylor Ward's two-run, ninth-inning homer. They crowded home plate and jumped up and down in celebration.

"For Wardy to hit that walk off is icing on the cake for Mike," Angels star Mike Trout said.

Scioscia was in the final year of his contract and his departure had been expected. He said he talked to his wife, Anne, and had made his decision recently. He turns 60 in November.

Scioscia deflected questions about the specifics of his departure, repeatedly saying he only wanted to talk about the just-finished game in which he had his coaches handle managerial duties while he watched.

"Don't take that off my record," he joked about the victory.

The Angels finished 80-82, the first time they've had three straight losing seasons under Scioscia. They haven't won a postseason game since 2009.

Scioscia reiterated recent comments he made indicating that retirement wasn't necessarily in his immediate future.

"I have a deep passion for this game. I love it, I love managing, but in this game you never know where or when your next opportunity comes," he said. "If I get another chance, great. If not, I'm going to take the great experience I had here and move forward."

Scioscia's 19 consecutive season matched Cap Anson of Chicago's NL team in the 19th century for sixth longest behind Connie Mack with the Philadelphia Athletics (50), John McGraw with the New York Giants (31), Alston (23), Lasorda (21) and Bobby Cox with Atlanta (21).

"I just feel he'll manage, if not here, somewhere else," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said before the game. "I think he'll manage until he goes to his grave. I'll tell you one thing, when you manage against Mike Scioscia, you better be ready. He takes every pitch, every inning seriously, even the spring training games."

Scioscia thanked his current and former players, coaches and Angels fans.

"I'm really happy, guys," he insisted as his voice broke. His wife stood along the wall in the crowded room. Trout, Kole Calhoun and Justin Upton sat and listened.

Before the game, Trout reflected on the only manager he's played for in his eight big-league seasons.

"He's so passionate about the game and he wants to win. As a player you want to play for a guy like that," Trout said. "He's made a career of putting guys in a position to succeed. I have complete respect for Mike as a manager and a former player and for the passion he has to win."

Scioscia grew up in the Philadelphia area and became a first-round pick by the Dodgers in 1976. He reached the majors in 1980 and spent his entire career in blue, getting 1,131 hits in 1,441 games through 1992 and earning two All-Star game selections as a dependable catcher.

He was a coach in the Dodgers' organization before Angels general manager Bill Stoneman tapped him to take over in late 1999. With Joe Maddon as his assistant from the start, the Angels ended a 16-year playoff drought in 2002 as the AL wild card.

Former Angel Torii Hunter, Scioscia singled out by Scioscia in post-game comments, said if he ever became a manager he would want to be tutored by Scioscia.

"I watched him think outside the box on so many different occasions in the clubhouse and on the field," Hunter said in a statement distributed by the Angels. "He didn't care about the scrutiny and the aftermath that came with his decisions. It was the one he felt he had to make at that crucial moment."

Moreno credited Scioscia for helping the franchise evolve into what the owner called "an elite organization."

"Mike's tenure," the owner said, "that transformed this franchise, and its perception on both local and national levels," Moreno said in his statement.

Moreno and general manager Billy Eppler have several options in replacing Scioscia.

Former Detroit manager Brad Ausmus is in the team's front office, while Eric Chavez was hired last month as the manager of their Triple-A affiliate in Salt Lake City. Eppler, a former New York Yankees executive, has worked closely with former Yankees manager Joe Girardi and current Angels bench coach Josh Paul.

Scioscia said the success the franchise enjoyed during his tenure wasn't due to him.

"This game is not about the manager, GM or owner," he said. "The game is about the players and it always will be. We had guys that just put it all on the line, whether we were going good or going bad. That's what I'm going to take away."

Scioscia asked, "What's next?" and then answered his own question, saying he and his wife would be going to dinner near their Ventura County home. She indicated there might be a surprise awaiting him and Scioscia joked that they would be joined by 30 of his closest friends.

When he wasn't getting emotional, Scioscia's humor came out.

"I had nothing to do with today, with the lineup or pitching changes," he said. "That's probably why we won."

**FROM THE ATHLETIC****The managerial education (and Angels audition?) of Eric Chavez**

By Fabian Ardaya

SALT LAKE CITY — Returning to where you came from isn't always the most glamorous thing, particularly in minor league life. Then again, glamour and the minors aren't often found in the same sentence.

Eric Chavez leans back in his folding chair, racking his brain trying to recollect all his travel in the last month. A night ago, the game in Fresno was canceled. When a water main breaks in the ballpark and floods the field, it's pretty hard to play a baseball game.

"Doesn't get much more minor league than that," a club official quips from the other corner of the room.

Chavez laughs, the chair slightly lifting. Behind him lies a silver suitcase, the handle still up. That suitcase has essentially been his home as of late. He runs his left hand through his black hair, neatly coiffed and styled and not yet ruined by hours spent under a baseball cap, flashing the tattoos on each of his forearms in the process. Every other sentence starts with the word "dude," and almost every person who walks through the door is given the designation of "man" or "bro." Chavez daps up catcher José Briceño and brings him in for a bear hug. His words roll off with ease, with a calmness washing over his complexion save for his piercingly intense eyes.

It's not until Chavez sighs and scratches at his beard, which is speckled with gray, that Chavez shows any sign of age. He is 40 years old, turning 41 in December, his time as a Gold Glove-winning third baseman ending four years ago when he retired mid-season in Arizona.

He is here getting used to a new role as interim manager of the Salt Lake Bees, the Angels' Triple-A affiliate. Chavez looks, feels and is younger than any manager in the major leagues right now; Angels skipper Mike Scioscia began his tenure with the club two years after Chavez made his big league debut. As he walks to deliver the lineup card before games, Chavez looks as much like a player as he does a manager.

"It's completely different. It really is," Chavez said of his temporary role. "I'm a lot calmer.

"You just know there's really no impact you can have on the game. You try to put the players in their respective positions, and they have to do the job."

It's been a learning process — one Chavez certainly wasn't expecting — but the words he says bring energy. He speaks of an excitement for the process, a rejuvenation that comes when he puts on a uniform. In a way, this is a role he has been preparing for since he was a player. He spent the final month of the Bees' season on the job and opened his doors to The Athletic for a three-game set in late August to provide a glimpse into what it's like to learn to be a manager on the fly.

Looking back now, much of the phone call was a blur. Chavez stood inside Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, unable to recall if he was leaving or returning to his Scottsdale-area home. He was mostly stunned by the question posed by Angels general manager Billy Eppler:

“What are you doing in August?”

What do you mean, what am I doing? Chavez thought to himself. You’re my boss.

Chavez was used to creating much of his own schedule. Serving as one of the Angels’ special assistants to Eppler allowed some freedom. Chavez, who is based out of Arizona, was able to go and visit the club’s affiliates as he pleases. He would spend some time in the analytics department, scouting and even coaching in small stints.

Eppler informed Chavez that Keith Johnson, a longtime organization man and the manager of the Bees, was moving to the Angels in a coaching role, primarily working with the big club’s young infielders. Chavez was the first choice to manage the Bees in Johnson’s absence. When Johnson joined the coaching staff for the Futures Game during the All-Star break, Chavez stepped in for a few days in his place. With his schedule clear and his children — Diego, Dolce and Cruz — each about to start up school again, he figured, “Why not?”

The night before Chavez was to write out his first lineup card in an official capacity, Ken Rosenthal of The Athletic reported that Scioscia and the Angels will likely part ways at the end of Scioscia’s contract following this season, a resolution reached on Sunday when he formally announced he was stepping down. The move was expected — the surprise came in Rosenthal’s list of candidates.

In addition to bench coach Josh Paul and former Tigers manager Brad Ausmus, both currently with the Angels organization, Chavez was named as a potential successor. The timing of the moves, combined with Rosenthal’s report, was a coincidence that raised eyebrows.

“There’s natural speculation,” said Chavez, remaining mum on his potential knowledge of any moves. “But for me it was nothing I really wanted to deal with or be a part of. It really hasn’t been an issue. Nobody’s called me or anything.”

Besides, Chavez had been quite busy trying to figure out the intricacies and work through the minutiae of being a minor league manager. The Bees set a franchise record for transactions this year as the Angels used the most players in their history. When ex-first rounder Taylor Ward earned his first big league call-up in mid-August, Chavez was surprised he was the man who got to break the news. Each move, each add/drop to the roster, each meeting, each lineup came from Chavez.

It was a struggle, however, as Chavez turns and curses and points his finger at the Lenovo ThinkPad sitting on his desk. Chavez, for the better part of a month, lost that battle, though he confidently states he feels he has a handle on the software now.

“I’ve made a mistake pretty much on a daily basis,” Chavez said.

Having conquered his laptop on this Tuesday afternoon, he talks about that night’s starting pitcher, Griffin Canning, and glows when discussing the right-hander’s attitude and fire on the mound.



Canning, who Chavez helped the Angels draft in the second round a year ago, allows three runs over five innings as the offense breaks loose to power a 10-6 win, but Chavez knows as well as anyone that the minors are more about development than wins or losses.

There's a lot of firsts for Chavez in this job, but mentoring young talent is something he's been doing since his playing days.

In 2010, when injuries robbed him of much of the superstar ability that had made him beloved in 13 seasons in Oakland, where he won each of his six Gold Gloves and had posted a career .821 OPS, baseball was, in his mind, running out of time for him. That changed when he and his brother, Casey, worked a baseball camp in San Diego that offseason.

The thirst to coach reinvigorated his love for the sport. He signed a minor league deal with the Yankees that wound up being beneficial in more ways than one. Chavez became an established veteran figure and learned how to be a leader from Andruw Jones and Raúl Ibañez before wrapping up his career with a couple of years in Arizona marred by injuries.

It was there, with a young Diamondbacks nucleus that included the likes of Paul Goldschmidt, Didi Gregorius and A.J. Pollock, that Chavez noticed something. More than the playing he enjoyed the coaching — the subtle tips with the glove he would give Gregorius, the conversations with Goldschmidt about approach, the instruction he would give Pollock to find the right swing plane.

Being a veteran means you're not as spry or physically able as you once were. On the other hand, veterans are typically revered in the clubhouse and the first voice to provide wisdom. Chavez, who struggled to stay healthy in his last season, effectively became another coach on staff before retiring.

"I think the guys had so much respect for him because of how good of a player he was," Goldschmidt said. "A guy like that you want to learn from. While he was here, he was a guy that any question. ... He'd won, had been on winning teams, he'd done so many things that I probably sought him out a lot to learn from him as a guy who I thought had a lot of knowledge. I was fortunate he was willing to share."

For many of the Bees, Chavez was a former hero. Well, almost everyone. Chavez said it took reliever Akeel Morris about a week until he realized his new manager was that Eric Chavez. Canning, a Southern California native, had grown up watching Chavez against his Angels. So too had Ward. Ray Olmedo, the Bees' defensive coach, broke into the big leagues briefly with the Reds as Chavez was making his ascension to stardom and spoke in awe of the weight that Chavez's words carry.

Bob Geren has been in Chavez's shoes and seen his weight as a vocal leader increase with age. Geren, a former big leaguer, worked in the A's minor league system as Chavez, a former high school shortstop, changed positions and shot through Oakland's system. Years later, Geren was Chavez's manager during his final years with Oakland. Now a bench coach with the Dodgers, Geren recognized how Chavez's success as a player can impact a club.

"The respect he gets would get him off on the right foot," Geren said. "I think he'll do well. Leadership is not always in being vocal and being loud. There's all different types of leaders, so it's finding the right combination of knowing when to say something when something needs to be said, or letting players have their space when they need to have their space. It's tying it all together."

A year ago, Indians manager Terry Francona and Brad Mills, his bench coach, sat at the bar at Pebble Beach Golf Links, where Francona and some baseball friends had gathered for a tournament. Francona noticed an old player of his, Chavez, who in 2003 put together one of the best years of his career. That year, Francona was Oakland's bench coach. A year later, Francona was managing the Red Sox to their first World Series in 86 years.

Chavez came over to Francona and Mills, ditching his friends to say hello. The conversation lasted hours, recounting memories of a lively clubhouse that included the likes of Mark Mulder, Tim Hudson, Barry Zito, Mark Ellis and others.

"I had a lot of room to coach," Francona said of those Ken Macha-led A's. "I had a ball. We were young and good. I really enjoyed the guys. ... Chavvy, it was Mulder, Hudson and Zito, Miggy was the shortstop, Mark Ellis, fuck, I loved them. It was a fun year.

"I felt like the relationships there kind of exceeded one year. That was kind of the way that place was. It was good. I learned a ton that year. I had fun that year."

That relationship, that year, meant more to Chavez than Francona realized. Despite never having Francona as a manager, Chavez considers the two-time World Series champ a managerial idol. The communication and openness Francona preached became a motto in Chavez's brief time at the helm of a clubhouse, a style he credits almost entirely to Francona.

"That's something that will definitely stick with me forever," Chavez said. "It's hard to put the pedal to the metal for 162 games a year, so there's got to be times where you've got to push the pedal, but also times where you've got to back off for a little bit. I think that's why Francona has been so good at his job. For whatever reason, his clubhouse atmospheres are working."

The door to Chavez's office, which is unavoidable through the narrow hallway that separates the makeshift player's lounge from the Bees clubhouse, is always open. As each player passes, he offers a greeting. He attempts to constantly make himself presentable to players, coaches and members of the front office. On any given day, he might hold multiple conversations with farm director Mike LaCassa, director of player development Mike Gallego, Eppler and assistant general managers Steve Martone and Jonathan Strangio. That communication is made easier because of Chavez's three-plus years in the Angels' front office, allowing him to help coordinate player development through to his own everyday work.

"He has experiences that I will never have in this game, and you to be able to learn from him both in the front office setting and working with him as closely as we are in player development over this last month, it's been a great opportunity for everyone who's been around," LaCassa said. "He brings a lot of experience and passion to the table."

Chavez wants to bridge the gap between front office and player. For years in Oakland, he understood he had value, but didn't understand why the Athletics wanted him as much as they did. As a young player, he was told one thing by the organization — to draw a walk once every 10 at-bats — but he never knew why.

In 2003, Michael Lewis released “Moneyball,” outlining how the A’s used numbers and metrics, such as on-base percentage (which at the time was perceived as advanced), to measure value for players and find a way to continue succeeding with one of the lowest big-league payrolls.

When the book was released, Chavez had no idea of any organization-wide push or strategy for roster construction. The information presented was foreign even to those directly involved, something that didn’t correlate in Chavez’s mind. To this day, he still hasn’t read the book, although he “loved” the movie that was released in 2011.

“It goes a little bit deeper here with things that they want, and I think players need to understand what we value, and why we value them as players,” Chavez said. “There’s certain things that I thought were valuable that are not valuable, like batting average. We’re trying to get some of that old thinking out of players’ heads, and we definitely want to be more process-oriented and really break down what players are doing and what we value. To me, that’s been the biggest jump. (When I was playing) they put together a team, but the philosophy of it at the time, we just were playing baseball. Nobody was telling us what the philosophy was. We just did what we did. ... Here, we don’t want to let that happen. We want the message to be loud and clear.

“Obviously, when you go sign a player to a three-year deal worth \$45 million, you must know that an organization must want you. But you don’t know the why, like which characteristics you have that they value. When we go out and get players organizationally, the message is really clear what we want from them, what we expect from them. ... Whoever they are, there is something in that player that we value and that we want that player to continue to have those characteristics when they put on an Angels uniform.”

In one meeting in 2015, Chavez and Eppler, then an assistant general manager with the Yankees, sought to analyze the batters they valued most, with Eppler asking Chavez to rank the players from best to worst. Chase Headley, then mired in a deep slump, topped Eppler’s list. Chavez was stunned. Eppler pointed out the quality of Headley’s at-bats, how he saw a high amount of pitches to bring counts to 3-2 and had a low chase rate to go with a high contact rate.

“Dude, you need to go tell him that,” Chavez told Eppler.

“As a player in that situation, you feel like you’re underperforming and you’re not feeling too good about yourself,” Chavez said. “So in that case, go tell him that. Tell him what you really value about him. You have all this information and it’s great. But don’t keep it back there. The players want to find out about that. It keeps them motivated.

“In this game, there’s a lot of failure already, so if there’s an underlying positive, like, ‘Oh, I’m doing this?’ You may not be performing on the front pages, but you’re running the bases well, taking pitches, giving good at-bats, all that stuff goes a long way for a player’s mentality.”

It’s an idea Chavez pushed with the Bees. And it was a unique challenge, finding a way to assemble information and disperse it in a way that each player, for all their oddities, would be receptive to it. For some, it was metrics such as wRC+, and for others it was as simple as an at-bat by at-bat approach. On this particular day, it’s Matt Thaiss — a player who, with the organization’s use of TrackMan data,

revamped his swing this season — who drove in the winning run with a walk-off single in a 4-3 victory in 10 innings.

“It’s knowing how to speak to players like me who need information and to get better,” Ward said. “I think there was a period of time where, there’s some things he was able to communicate that were very clean and I knew what he was talking about and was able to make an adjustment, and then other things where it took a few times for me to kind of get it.”

“Everything is balance,” Chavez said. “Analytics have weighed heavily, and I still think that there needs to be a delicate balance between, ‘Hey, I still know what I’m seeing out there,’ and whatever the data’s seeing. You have to be able to give that to the player, and some players don’t understand that. Some players are visual. They need to see video or whatever they need, and some people do like the data. That’s our job, to understand how we get to that player and make him understand that this is going to put you in the best position to succeed. It’s not the same message for everybody. That data is good, but you better learn how to understand the player you’re trying to impact.”

“You don’t just tell somebody you need to hit like this or throw this,” Chavez added. “It needs to be an open conversation and he needs to buy in.”

Some three months after he retired midseason in 2014, Chavez was offered a job as a special assistant to Yankees general manager Brian Cashman. When he was first brought in, Yankees director of quantitative analysis David Grabiner asked Chavez a simple question: “Where do you like the ball to hit?”

Chavez prided himself for his ability to drive the ball the other way and show power to all parts of the park, so he quickly answered middle-away.

“Huh, that’s interesting,” Grabiner replied, pulling up a heat chart for Chavez’s career. In bright red was a cluster of pitches middle-in, the middle-away zone colored a cold blue.

“I thought there was no way,” Chavez said. “I thought, I should know me as a player, but the data tells you something different. I’m not saying that analytics is the end-all, say-all, but it’s a piece of the puzzle. You have to be able to learn what you’re trying to do as a player, and then understand that this is what the numbers are telling you, and piece that together.”

“That just made me think, ‘Wow, I thought I knew myself as a player,’ when the data was really showing me I really didn’t know myself,” he added. “If you put that information together, it really helps.”

In many aspects, the duty of the modern manager has changed. Some of those regarded as the game’s best, including the Dodgers Dave Roberts and Astros manager A.J. Hinch (last year’s managers in the World Series), are figures whose main role is to communicate the front office’s messaging and research down to the players rather than push their philosophies up the chain.

Most managers fall into different categories. Some say launch angle, others say, “avoiding putting the ball on the ground.” Chavez’s own personal evolution in analytics and how he views the game began when he first stepped into a front office, first with the Yankees in 2015 and then with the Angels after Eppler left New York to become Angels general manager that offseason.

Eppler offered Chavez a role closer to home and the flexibility to create his own schedule and the chance to test out a variety of different roles. He would put a uniform on and coach. He would scout. He would pop in and out of different affiliates as a face for the franchise. It became, as Chavez called it, a baseball grad school “without having to sit in a classroom or read books. Just getting the real-life experience of it.”

What perhaps most intrigued Chavez was the time he spent learning about the numbers of a game that he had little to no knowledge of when he was playing. That allowed him to open his mind to new concepts. There’s more than one way to build a baseball player, Chavez said, even if perhaps there are ways to make it a more streamlined process.

“Analytics isn’t going anywhere, so the baseball people, if you want to be in this game, you better be ready to adapt to it, to accept it, learn it,” Chavez said. “It’s a part of this game. It’s going to be a balance, and the teams that are balancing it out right now are the teams that are really successful. Baseball people that don’t really like analytics or don’t agree with it too much. If you want to be in this big game, you’ve got to adapt to it.”

On Sept. 3, a little less than a week after he allowed The Athletic to look at his first full dive into managing, Chavez peeled off the Bees uniform, repacked that suitcase and returned to Arizona. A 7-6 loss to Fresno put Salt Lake at 10-16 in Chavez’s 26 games as manager, though minor league results are meaningless.

He felt the experiment was a success. He truly enjoyed the work, the chance to put on a uniform again, to be able to control everything leading into the moments before a game, then step back and watch from afar. There have been no promises, he said. Scioscia has officially stepped down as manager, leaving the Angels’ job open for the first time in 19 years.

No decision (at least publicly) has been made about who will manage the Angels in 2019. But those who’ve been around Chavez are bullish on what he could do.

“I’m glad he stayed in the game because he has so much to offer,” Francona said. “It might be a manager, it might be a general manager. He’s kind of one of those guys that has that skill set that he probably could do whatever he wants. I’m a big fan.”

If Chavez’s role increases with the Angels, be it as a manager or a high-ranking front office member, he will be a rarity. Entering this season, Chicago’s Rick Renteria, Washington’s Dave Martinez and Boston’s Alex Cora represented the few Hispanic managers in the game, with the Dodgers’ Roberts the lone other minority. Almost as rare is the amount of minorities making baseball decisions in the front office.

“I definitely take a lot of pride in that, for sure,” said Chavez, who was born and raised in the United States to Mexican parents. “It’s something that, when I’ve thought about managing before, that was definitely a pro for me to try to make a push for Hispanics to get those types of roles, for sure. I don’t like to dive too much in politics, but I know the Anaheim location, Arte Moreno, that type of connection. It’s crossed my mind, but not only just specifically for Anaheim but for any coach or manager at any level, I think it’s very important, especially right now.”

Perhaps Chavez's brief stint in Salt Lake was an audition for the same post in Anaheim. Maybe it's just a temporary move that bolstered his cache in the front office.

"For me, it was just a chance to get back on the field, put a uniform on and see what happens," Chavez said. "Whatever's going to happen in the future, I have no idea. If I continue to do the job that I'm currently in, I'll be a happy man. Having a free schedule, being able to be with my kids and still do a little bit of travel has been pretty awesome for me. I love what I do. I love my job. It's pretty rewarding.

"Adding this as an experience, as something that I've done now, I'm very grateful for it. Managing, I tend not to look in the future about that stuff. When Billy called me and asked me what I wanted to do, and I said I had no idea, I really had no idea. I think that whatever I'm currently doing, I try to do it to the best of my ability, trying to respect the position that I'm in and then doors will open. Honestly, that's how I feel. It's been like that for pretty much my whole career.

"In the future, I don't know what that's going to be, but I feel well-equipped to move forward in any position if that happens."

## **'I am going to step down': Transcript of Mike Scioscia's press conference**

By Fabian Ardaya

### **Opening statement**

I want to make an announcement. I am going to step down. I will not be returning to manage the Angels next year. Speaking with Anne and our family, there's no doubt it's the right move for me, and I think it's the right move for the organization. I've had an incredible 19 years. It's been just awesome.

First I want to thank Bill Stoneman. Bill, you took a chance on me in 1999, and I guess the jury's out on how it worked out. But thank you for that opportunity. You let us do our thing. We appreciated it. Thanks for giving me that opportunity. I want to thank obviously Arte and Carole Moreno. I can't tell you how much they supported us and our family, and I think they made our family part of this Angel family. That is something I will never forget. Thank John (Carpino) and Billy (Eppler). I think their passion for this organization is very strong. Their support is real for everybody in this organization, and it's been a great honor to work with them the last three seasons.

There's a lot that goes into a ballclub. I think every manager is always concerned with the environment. I can tell you that, for 19 seasons, the environment in the clubhouse, on the field, traveling on planes, in the training room, has been second to none.

(Mike Trout, Kole Calhoun, Justin Upton, Dino Ebel and Alfredo Griffin walk in.)

You guys go get ice. You guys are off tomorrow, but go get some ice, please.

(A phone rings three times and Scioscia offers to talk)

I can get that.

### **Opening Statement (continued)**

(Pauses). The coaches. These guys have become some of our best friends. I can't tell you what they mean to us as Angels. I think anybody that — I'm really happy guys, I'm sorry. Anyone who's came into our organization I think knows that they're going to have every tool available to them to get better. I'm really proud of the guys like Alfredo, Dino, these guys who have worked a long time. They were awesome. I want to thank the fans, because I don't think guys understand that the sea of red, what it meant to us. It's remained strong every year, even when sometimes we had great seasons, sometimes not so great. To see that sea of red every night, it was inspiring to us. Sometimes we never talk about it as much as we should, but Angel fans, don't let anybody sell you short. You guys are passionate, and you know the game, and that's important and incredible. I definitely want to thank the fans.

This game's about the players. Not about the manager. Not about the GM, the owner, not about the coaches. This game's about the players, and it always will be. (Through tears) In 19 years, I mean my guys, they just put it all on the line, whether we were going good or we were going bad. That's what I'm going to take away. That was so inspiring to me on a personal level, to see these guys just go out there and just play the way you should play the game. I'll take away the grit of Darin Erstad, the athleticism of Garrett Anderson, the presence of Tim Salmon, the heart and soul of Bengie Molina and (David) Eckstein, the competitiveness of Jarrod Washburn, Jered Weaver, who was the ultimate competitor, and John Lackey. These guys were tremendous, just tremendous on the mound. The fearlessness of Chone Figgins and Erick Aybar, the power of Howie Kendrick. These guys were special. The phenomenon of Torii Hunter — that's the only way you could explain it, it's a phenomenon. You've got to be around Torii. So much fun to watch him play. We got to see him everywhere else, he was incredible.

You look forward now to so many guys now that we have that are so important to us. You have the talent of Justin Upton and Andrelton Simmons, the hard-nosed play of Kole Calhoun and now you look at guys like Mike Trout, Albert Pujols and Vlad Guerrero, who will be Hall of Famers with an Angels cap on. I can't tell you how much of a privilege it was to be around them. The thing that I'm going to take away is, as good of players as everybody saw they are, and they're the elite players on this planet, these guys are even better people and that makes us all proud. You come and see guys grown from when they get here to be the type of people we would want, and instill the things that we would put in our own kids. That's something that's really special to me to see that. Now you'll get a young kid like Shohei Ohtani who comes in from a different country. I know the fans appreciate everything, but you have to see how hard these guys work, have to see what they do back there. That's why I say this game will always be about the players. It's not anything that I've done. It's not anything that Billy or John or Arte has done. There's no way that you look at the wins we've been able to put up there in 19 years and it doesn't come from anything but the players. That's what I'll take away from this experience. It's been incredible.

So what's next? Well, Anne and I are going to go back to Thousand Oaks and go out to Mastro's tonight. I don't know if the whole posse's going or it's just us. ... I guess it's going to be me and 30 of my closest friends.

I have a deep passion for this game. I love it. I love managing. But in this game, you never know, if where or when an opportunity comes, and I'm fine with that. If something comes where I get another chance, great, if not, believe me, I'm going to take the great experience I had here and nothing will be more

important. It's been terrific. So with that being said, we had an incredible ball game out there today. Let's talk about the ball game. AC [Fox Sports West's Alex Curry], whaddya got?

**Was it special to see an ending in walk-off fashion in your last game, with the fireworks going off?**

To be honest, I had very little to do with today's game. I'll point to Alfredo, to JP and Dino brought it home the last three innings. They did all the work. But it's fun. You know it's fun to see Taylor Ward go through the growing pains and doing something like he did. To see this team down by a couple, and three hits later we're in here with music playing. It's just a great team win. It feels good. I had nothing to do with today, nothing to do with the lineup, nothing to do with the pitching changes. That's probably why we won.

**What does it mean to see Mike Trout, Justin Upton and Kole Calhoun come in here and just be a part of this?**

Well, I know Trouty's got a plane to catch to go back east. He probably only came in to check the Eagles score and just hung out here. Up is going to head over to Phoenix at some point. Kole, I don't know if they're going to follow each other over or not, but to be honest with you, I'm sure Tim Mead roped them in and probably bribed them to come in here so they have to sit here and hear me talk again. The last thing in the world after a long season that these guys want to do is come here and hear me talk. What, are your guys' flights delayed, or what? You guys want to go to Mastro's, is that it?

But it's a great game. It's great to see some of our pitchers get out there and perform better. ... It's a great win. There's a lot of positive you can take out of any game, and a lot of these young players that came up here just did a great job. It was fun to watch.

**What was it like driving in to the ballpark today?**

I'm going to talk about the game. Driving to get ready for the game? Well, driving in, I was really figuring out how the coaching assignments were going to go. I think a lot of guys had some different roles today. They were terrific. I got my Starbucks, came in here and knew I wasn't managing. Don't take that off my record though.

I love the game. I have a great passion for the game. If we're talking about today's ballgame, I liked Ohtani's line drive in the ninth, liked his line drive that hit the pitcher on the behind. Trouty didn't do very much. I liked Kole Calhoun's line drive in the first inning, that was a rocket.

**How much did it mean to you to give those guys that opportunity to manage?**

I think it was great. I had fun with it just watching them. Alfredo tried to get thrown out on the first pitch, but he managed to stay in the game. It's not out of character for what they've done all season. It was fun. JP, the first day we talked to him, we said, 'Hey, JP, you come to the dugout every day like you're managing it. Prepare like you're managing it.' He took it to the nth degree, trust me. He was very prepared. Same with Dino, he's one of the best baseball minds I've ever been around.

**How long ago did you decide that this was going to be your last game?**



Really, Anne and I talked and I just think it came to fruition over the last month of the season.

## **Mike Scioscia steps down and the Angels pay tribute to the best manager they've ever had**

By Fabian Ardaya

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Much like the night before, Mike Scioscia sat through Sunday's game attempting to avoid looking toward the video screens in left and right field at Angel Stadium.

As all those eyes around him became fixated on tracking his every movement, Scioscia attempted to go unseen. He sat back on the bench of the dugout, going to the opposite side of his usual perch, dubbed "The Box." Over the course of two nights, the Angels put on some sort of Scioscia tribute video on the big screen 14 times. With each one, Scioscia hid.

On his last official day as Angels manager, he stayed true to himself, ensuring relentlessly that the attention was on his club, not him. But this was unavoidable.

Scioscia announced on Sunday that he would be stepping down as Angels manager, ending a tenure that was the second-longest in all of professional sports behind only the San Antonio Spurs' Gregg Popovich. It was a decision Scioscia came to willingly and on his own, according to Angels president John Carpino, with the final verdict coming sometime this past month. In August, Ken Rosenthal of *The Athletic* initially reported that Scioscia and the Angels had agreed to part ways.

The typically jolly Scioscia battled tears while discussing the end of a near-generation at the helm of Angels baseball, looking back at the players, coaches and fans who had surrounded him over the years.

"This game's about the players," Scioscia said. "Not about the manager. Not about the GM, the owner, not about the coaches. This game's about the players, and it always will be.

"In 19 years, I mean my guys, they just put it all on the line, whether we were going good or we were going bad. That's what I'm going to take away. That was so inspiring to me on a personal level, to see these guys just go out there and just play the way you should play the game."

Scioscia spoke of the grit of Darin Erstad, the athleticism of Garret Anderson, the presence of Tim Salmon, the heart and soul of Bengie Molina and David Eckstein and the competitiveness of Jarrod Washburn. He felt both Jered Weaver and John Lackey were the "ultimate competitor." There was the fearlessness of Chone Figgins and Erick Aybar, the power of Howie Kendrick and the phenomenon of Torii Hunter — "that's the only way you could explain it, it's a phenomenon," according to Scioscia.

And then he spoke of his current roster, noting the talent of Justin Upton and Andrelton Simmons, the "hard-nosed play" of Kole Calhoun and guys like Mike Trout, Albert Pujols and Vlad Guerrero, "who will be Hall of Famers with an Angels cap on." He brought optimism for the future, highlighting the pending stardom of Japanese two-way star Shohei Ohtani.

Speaking for nine and a half minutes, Scioscia opened up about life, his career and what was to come as he fought tears and emotions the entire way through it, albeit with jokes mixed in and a phone buzzing multiple times. Some 15 minutes after he took the postgame podium for his final press conference — which was broadcast live on the big screen at Angel Stadium — he stepped off for the final time as Angels manager.

The room was packed with the people who represented much of Scioscia's past and present. Scioscia's wife Anne, Trout, Upton, Calhoun, president of baseball operations Bill Stoneman, general manager Billy Eppler, first- and third-base coaches Alfredo Griffin and Dino Ebel all piled into the mass of media anticipating the announcement. They came, Scioscia quipped, because they were bribed by Angels vice president of communications Tim Mead.

Scioscia never wanted the fanfare. On one occasion earlier this season, he stated that his life story, which includes a turn as a World Series-winning catcher for the Dodgers before becoming the most successful and tenured manager in Angels history, will never be published in a memoir.

"When you're from Philly," he said, "you take that shit to the grave."

Scioscia has been a presence in the Angels franchise since being hired by Stoneman, then the GM, in 1999, leading the Angels to a World Series crown in his third season. In the time since, he has lasted through two owners and four different general managers.

"The dedication and commitment Mike Scioscia has given Angels Baseball over the last 19 years greatly contributed to our evolution into an elite organization," Angels owner Arte Moreno said in a statement. "Mike's tenure as manager of the Angels includes six division titles, a pennant, and a world championship that transformed this franchise, and its perception on both local and national levels. We will always be grateful and proud that the Angels played a part in his Hall of Fame career.

"On behalf of the entire Angels organization, we want to express our gratitude to Mike for his time and devotion as our Manager. We wish Mike, his wife Anne, and children Taylor and Matt the very best; you will always be a part of the Angels family. Thank you."

When asked about his job status and an update on his contract — a 10-year, \$50 million pact signed in 2009 that ends after this season — Scioscia spent this season quickly shooting down any discussion. Those matters would be addressed later, he would say. Sunday became "later."

As Sunday morning came, he followed his typical routine, stopping at Starbucks to grab coffee for his commute from his home in Thousand Oaks to get to Angel Stadium of Anaheim. But instead of mapping out his lineup of players, he instead tinkered around with his coaches.

He did very little managing. He took his turn addressing the media — the day before, a collection of former Dodgers scribes sat with him for some 20 minutes reminiscing about Scioscia's time as a player, and eventually as a manager. But when the game started, he sat back on the bench as the Angels coaching staff took their turns manning "The Box."

First it was first-base coach Alfredo Griffin, the lone member remaining from Scioscia's first staff in 2000, 3,078 regular season games ago. The two have shared a locker room dating back to their days winning

the 1988 World Series with the Dodgers, and they have been together during the Angels' seven postseason appearances, including the 2002 World Series title.

Keith Johnson, who spent more than two decades in the minor leagues and served as the manager of the Triple-A Salt Lake Bees for much of this season before earning his first big-league coaching call-up, manned the first-base coach's box, eventually sliding over to the third-base coach's side.

Next, in the fourth inning, first-year bench coach Josh Paul stepped up. Paul, who played under Scioscia for parts of two seasons in 2008-09, is a rumored candidate to replace Scioscia, given his ties working with Eppler in the Angels front office. In the seventh, it was third-base coach Ebel, another longtime Scioscia man, getting the chance to manage from "The Box."

"I had fun with it just watching them," Scioscia said. "Alfredo tried to get thrown out on the first pitch, but he managed to stay in the game. It's not out of character for what they've done all season. It was fun. JP, the first day we talked to him, we said, 'Hey, JP, you come to the dugout every day like you're managing it. Prepare like you're managing it.' He took it to the nth degree, trust me. He was very prepared. Same with Dino, he's one of the best baseball minds I've ever been around."

All the while, Scioscia sat quietly, off to one end of the bench. Not used to suddenly being a target for foul balls from his wider perch, he at one point hid behind a fellow coach as a human shield.

Even before the club could make it official on Sunday, it was clear Scioscia was getting his final goodbyes from the folks in Anaheim he's known for the better part of two decades. Should another chance to manage come, Scioscia indicated he would love to continue. If not, he feels content with what he's accomplished.

"I have a deep passion for this game," Scioscia said through tears. "I love it. I love managing. But in this game, you never know, if where or when an opportunity comes, and I'm fine with that. If something comes where I get another chance, great, if not, believe me, I'm going to take the great experience I had here and nothing will be more important."

Scioscia's managerial resume and time in Anaheim was immeasurable, the impact he had on a franchise without any period of true sustained success unimpeachable. "He transformed the franchise," Carpino said.

Among managers who spent their entire career with one team, Scioscia's 1,650 wins trail just Walter Alston's tenure with the Dodgers.

"A true Angel," 2002 World Series champion David Eckstein said of Scioscia. "He took a chance on me when most experts in the game deemed that I could not play in the big leagues. I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to play for him, learn from him and win with him. I am blessed to call Mike Scioscia a mentor and friend, and the game still has a lot to learn from him."

For several Angels — and several Angels fans — they've never known another manager.

Matt Shoemaker, who started Sunday's season finale against the A's, recalled hours-long conversations about pitching with the former catcher. "I've just been with him a long time. ... He turned me into this

guy, into this baseball player, who felt like he could go out and dominate,” said Shoemaker, who emerged from undrafted non-prospect to a vital cog of a club that won the AL West title in 2014.

There’s Kole Calhoun, who came up in 2012 as a wide-eyed rookie and an unheralded prospect and emerged as one of the franchise’s key cornerstones.

“Coming up, you definitely had to earn your stripes a little bit, earn your respect,” Calhoun said. “It wasn’t easy, but once he let you in, you were in. You were one of his guys, and he’d go to bat for you.”

Trout, the two-time MVP who just capped off the best season of his career, said he owed some gratitude to the only big league manager he’s ever had.

“He had that passion, that will to win,” Trout said. “He and the coaches always put us players in great position to succeed. I can’t thank them enough.”

Scioscia’s final game was a victory, a 5-4 win over Oakland capped off by rookie third baseman Taylor Ward’s two-run walk-off home run. Ward, a converted catcher, connected with Scioscia during their brief interactions in spring training. “He, above all else, always saw something in me,” Ward said.

As he sat at the podium, Scioscia couldn’t help but lose his train of thought.

“I’m really happy guys, I’m sorry,” he said through more tears.

It was a fitting ending, but one he couldn’t take much credit for. Ebel ran the show for the final three innings while Scioscia watched from the dugout bench. As Ward rounded the bases, the dugout emptied, with the exception of Scioscia. As the fireworks and pyrotechnics were set off at Angel Stadium, Scioscia stood watching, taking it all in.

“I had nothing to do with today, nothing to do with the lineup, nothing to do with the pitching changes,” Scioscia said. “That’s probably why we won.”

“Don’t take that off my record though,” he quipped.

In many ways, Scioscia was the last of a generation when it comes to managers. To be able to survive front office turnover, to become such a staple in a franchise, to be able to last long enough to pass his idol, Tommy Lasorda, in career wins. Be it to Josh Paul, to Joe Maddon, to Bud Black, to Ron Roenicke and the rest of the current and future members of his managerial tree, he was an idol.

“Sosh is someone that I would want to study under if I was to become a manager one day,” Hunter said in a statement.

Scioscia’s teams were emblematic of his personality — quick-witted, gritty and tough — with a certain style that harkened back to an earlier day of baseball. His world championship club thrived off speed, not pop.

Culture and communication were hallmarks of his time with the Angels. In 19 years at the helm, Scioscia was always quick to fire off a quick joke to ease tension, but he also brought a sternness and a weight

that carried beyond this iconic red fungo bat he brought with him each and every day during batting practice.

“Mike changed the culture of the Angels,” Angels Hall of Famer Garret Anderson said in a statement. “We went from thinking we could win to knowing we could win. Every spring he talked only once of winning the World Series. He then turned to using the analogy of taking one step on a ladder to reach our goal. The first season he took over was the most mentally fatiguing season I’ve ever had because I bought into our two biggest thieves were yesterday and tomorrow. He taught me how to prepare for that day to win a major league game.”

There is one thing Scioscia said he’s certain of now: he has more free time. On Sunday evening, he and his wife drove back to Thousand Oaks to have dinner at Mastro’s Steakhouse near his home. There the noted foodie — who earlier this season in a press scrum fired off his list of the best Italian restaurants on every road stop, then the next day gave out the recipe to his “Scioscia-Ritas” — will have a chance to dine and to reflect.

It would be a grand occasion, he promised. And should Upton, Trout, Calhoun or any of the other Angels miss their pending flights home for the offseason, they were invited to join them. The more, the merrier.

“I guess it’s going to be me and 30 of my closest friends,” he said.

## **After one season attempting his two-way experiment with the Angels, Shohei Ohtani has no regrets**

By Fabian Ardaya

ANAHEIM, Calif. — The final Sunday morning of Shohei Ohtani’s rookie season in the major leagues was a calm one.

He made his way throughout the clubhouse, interpreter Ippei Mizuhara by his side, offering his thanks to the various clubhouse attendants before making his way back to the locker. He looked comfortable, at ease in his new home. As the phone that resides right next to his locker rang, reliever Jim Johnson put that comfort to a comedic test.

“Shohei, phone!” he yelled. Ohtani turned his head back, motioning as if to say, “Who, me?” before shaking his head no. Japanese remains his first language, with maybe even Spanish ranking second, then English third. That comfort isn’t quite there yet.

A full season is under his belt as a major leaguer and the 24-year-old Ohtani is comfortable. A little less than a year ago, the two-way Japanese sensation chose to come to Anaheim, selecting the Angels over a reported group of finalists that included the Dodgers, Padres, Mariners, Giants, Rangers and Cubs.

In choosing the Angels, he opted to try to join a club that, first, was willing to adopt his two-way style of play and adapt its medical and pitching schedule to accommodate him and his needs. The Angels did just that, allowing him to essentially pitch once a week and serve as the club’s designated hitter in every

other game besides those immediately before and after his starts. But as June came, a reported Grade 1 sprain of the ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow worsened to a Grade 2. He rehabbed to make another start in September, in which the damage to his UCL got even worse. He will have Tommy John surgery next week, his two-way experiment delayed until 2020 (he'll be a hitter exclusively next year).

Ohtani also hoped to contend with the Angels, who, in addition to adding Ohtani, also re-signed Justin Upton and went out and acquired position-player talent in Zack Cozart and Ian Kinsler to complement a core that already included the best player in the game in Mike Trout as well as Andrelton Simmons and Kole Calhoun. The Angels, despite a 13-3 start, were decimated by injuries as they'll finish this year below .500 for the third consecutive season.

But Ohtani, even with a year to learn the majors, has no regrets.

"I feel like I made the right decision," Ohtani said through Mizuhara. "I feel that even more every time I come to the field, every game I play. I feel more and more like I made the right decision.

"Overall, I was able to have fun and enjoy every day I was playing on the field. That's a really good thing to take out of this season. Unfortunately, the team wasn't able to make the playoffs, but we'll try to come back stronger next year, and we'll be in the playoffs."

The Angels couldn't ask for much more, besides health. When he's been healthy on the mound, he's been effectively as good as the likes of Carlos Carrasco, Luis Severino and Zack Greinke. When he's been at the plate, he's been as good as AL MVP candidate José Ramírez. During one week in April, he slugged three home runs in as many days and carried a perfect game into the seventh inning — worth more than one Win Above Replacement, by Baseball Reference's measure, in less than an entire week. During the season's final week, he became the first player ever to slug 20 home runs, steal 10 bases and appear in 10 games as a pitcher in the same season — a testament to the all-around ability that has allowed him to be the first big leaguer in almost a century to attempt the two-way endeavor.

Ohtani is a strong contender, if not the favorite, for the AL Rookie of the Year award, with his attempts to replicate the efforts of Babe Ruth providing a strong contest to the likes of the Yankees' Miguel Andújar and Gleyber Torres.

Even as Ohtani is sidelined to essentially just be a DH next season, and even as the Angels deal with the natural roster construction issues that come with that (see: Albert Pujols), they have a genuine four-win player (3.8 combined fWAR) at a cheap price. If he returns to the mound as expected in 2020, the Angels are guaranteed team control of a two-way Ohtani for four more years, five total if you include a hitting-centric 2019 season.

The production, at least at the plate, could conceivably be even better. As his troublesome elbow has led to an increase in consistent at-bats, his production has only increased. Since the beginning of August, his wRC+ of 185 entering Sunday's season finale ranked as the sixth-best in baseball. The names ahead of him? Christian Yelich, Trout, Mookie Betts, Justin Turner and Luke Voit.

"The one thing I've felt is I still have room to grow," Ohtani said. "I felt that even more than in my time in Japan. That's one thing I've learned this year."

“That experience is going to let him go into next season not as much in a fishing expedition to see what guys are doing,” Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. “You have a semblance of what they’re trying to do, although his year has been terrific. There’s no doubt that I think he’s going to continue to be consistent, continue to improve. You can’t ask for much more than Shohei’s done. Not too many guys steal 10 bases, hit 20 home runs and pitch the way he did.”

**FROM MLB.COM**

## 2019 Draft order set: O's, KC, White Sox go 1-2-3

By Jim Callis

Unlike in 2017, when the race for the No. 1 overall pick in the next year's Draft came down to a walk-off homer on the final day of the season, there was no such drama this summer. The Orioles, whose 115 losses were the fourth-most in modern big league history, clinched the top choice in 2019 with nine games remaining.

Baltimore owned the first selection only once in the previous 54 Drafts, choosing Ben McDonald in 1989. The Orioles haven't had a top-five pick since having six straight from 2007-12, when they grabbed **Matt Wieters** (fifth in 2007), **Brian Matusz** (fourth in 2008), Matt Hobgood (fifth in 2009), **Manny Machado** (third in 2010), **Dylan Bundy** (fourth in 2011) and **Kevin Gausman** (fourth in 2012).

Assigned pick values rise each year based on MLB's revenue growth, so Baltimore will be allocated more than the \$8,096,300 assigned to the No. 1 pick in 2018. The Tigers, who gained that choice when **Pablo Sandoval**'s ninth-inning homer in the Giants' last game of 2017 dropped San Francisco to the No. 2 slot, signed Casey Mize for \$7.5 million, setting a record for the Draft's bonus-pool era. Mize's bonus tied those of **Bubba Starling** and **Stephen Strasburg** for the second-highest in Draft history, trailing only **Gerrit Cole**'s \$8 million.

Oregon State catcher Adley Rutschman, **the Most Outstanding Player at the 2018 College World Series**, and Colleyville (Texas) Heritage High shortstop Bobby Witt Jr., the son of the 16-year big leaguer and No. 3 overall selection in the 1985 Draft, are the leading candidates to go No. 1 overall at this point.

Like the Orioles, the Royals locked up the second choice well before season's end, securing it when they suffered their 102nd loss last Saturday. Kansas City has picked that high three times before, taking **Alex Gordon** at No. 2 in 2005, **Luke Hochevar** at No. 1 in 2006 and **Mike Moustakas** at No. 2 in 2007.

The White Sox (No. 3 overall), Marlins (No. 4) and Tigers (No. 5) round out the first five selections. Detroit, which took Mize at No. 1, and Chicago, which popped Nick Madrigal at No. 4, had top-five choices this year. Miami hasn't picked that early since 2014, when it used the No. 2 choice on Tyler Kolek.

The first-round order won't be finalized until the two divisional tiebreaker games are settled on Monday. The Brewers and Cubs will play for the National League Central title and the Nos. 27 and 28 picks, while the Dodgers and Rockies will battle for the NL West crown and the Nos. 23 and 25 choices.

Three teams have multiple first-round selections because they received compensation choices when they couldn't sign 2018 first-rounders. The Braves pick ninth and 21st, the D-backs 16th and 26th, and the Dodgers either 23rd or 25th along with 31st.

Because each team's highest first-round pick is exempt from forfeiture, the only way the first-round order could change would be if a team that doesn't receive revenue sharing and exceeded the luxury tax this season has two first-round picks and signs a free agent who rejects a qualifying offer, in which case it would lose its second-highest first-rounder.

### **2019 First-Round Draft Order**

Draft order is based on the reverse order of 2018 regular-season standings, with 2017 records used to break ties.

1. Orioles (47-115)
2. Royals (58-104)
3. White Sox (62-100)
4. Marlins (63-98)
5. Tigers (64-98)
6. Padres (66-96)
7. Reds (67-95)
8. Rangers (67-95)
9. Braves (compensation for unsigned 2018 first-rounder Carter Stewart)
10. Giants (73-89)
11. Blue Jays (73-89)
12. Mets (77-85)
13. Twins (78-84)
14. Phillies (80-82)
15. Angels (80-82)
16. D-backs (82-80)
17. Nationals (82-80)
18. Pirates (82-79)
19. Cardinals (88-74)
20. Mariners (89-73)
21. Braves (90-72)
22. Rays (90-72)
23. Dodgers/Rockies Monday loser (91-72)
24. Indians (91-71)
25. Dodgers/Rockies Monday winner (92-71)
26. D-backs (compensation for unsigned 2018 first-rounder Matt McLain)
27. Brewers/Cubs Monday loser (95-68)
28. Brewers/Cubs Monday winner (96-67)
29. Athletics (97-65)
30. Yankees (100-62)
31. Dodgers (compensation for unsigned 2018 first-rounder J.T. Ginn)
32. Astros (103-59)
33. Red Sox (108-54)



**FROM ESPN.COM**

## Mike Trout's relentless quest to get even better

By Alden Gonzalez

ANAHEIM, Calif. -- Mike Trout wanted to see the numbers.

The game's best all-around player began 2018 with his mind set on turning himself into an elite defensive center fielder, a distinction that continually eluded him. He wanted to know what the advanced stats had to say about his first step, and he wanted to compare it to that of Jackie Bradley Jr., Kevin Kiermaier and Byron Buxton -- the best of the best.

On one afternoon in late February, Trout sat in a conference room at the team's spring training facility in Arizona with a handful of Los Angeles Angels coaches and executives, and -- for perhaps the first time in his professional life -- was presented with data that was unfavorable to him.

Angels general manager Billy Eppler described Trout as "open-minded and accepting."

Dino Ebel, the team's long-time outfield coach, recalled more conviction.

"He said, 'I'm better than this.' And in his mind, he went all-in."

It paved the way for a season that Trout now considers his best yet, which is no small feat. He once again performed among the game's best offensive players, but he also turned in a defensive season on par with the most skilled at his position. Trout is a legitimate candidate to win his third MVP -- but may finish second for the fourth time because of Boston Red Sox outfielder Mookie Betts -- and he might just capture his first Gold Glove.

Once again, though, he will sit out the playoffs.

"It sucks," Trout said Saturday, moments before the penultimate game of his season. "Being out of playoff contention, early September, playing the games that mean something to other teams and not us -- it's not a good feeling. It's hard to stay focused and try to finish strong. It sucks saying this, but the games don't mean anything when you're eliminated."

Trout is nonetheless ending on a high note, putting the final touches on a season in which he batted .315/.463/.635 with 39 home runs and 24 stolen bases through the first 160 games.

Sunday's regular-season finale is expected to be Mike Scioscia's final game as the Angels' manager, ending a highly successful 19-year run that could someday send him to the Hall of Fame. It will be up to Eppler to replace Scioscia and construct the type of team Trout would want to stay with beyond his current contract, which expires in 2020.

"I got two more years, I guess, so we'll see," Trout, 27, said when asked about staying with the Angels into his 30s. "I haven't really thought about that yet. We'll see what happens in the offseason."

There has been speculation that the Angels might approach Trout about an extension this offseason, a commitment that would cost them at least \$35 million a year.

"I don't know anything about any contract," Trout said. "I think it's just a lot of talk right now. I'm going to finish out strong and see what happens."

Entering Saturday's action, Trout's OPS (1.099) was on pace to be the highest in the American League since 2002. Baseball-Reference gives him 10.2 wins above replacement, which would make Trout the only player outside of Ted Williams to register three or more double-digit-WAR seasons in their first eight years.

But what makes Trout beam these days is his defense, a skill he honed by tracking balls off the bat during batting practice every day of spring training.

Trout is the only everyday player at his position not to commit a single error this season. Heading into the weekend, he was among the leaders in AL center fielders with seven defensive runs saved and ranked second with a 3.4 ultimate zone rating. He had also contributed seven outs above average, a range-based Statcast metric that grades outfielders based on catch probability. The previous two seasons, Trout's combined outs above average score was minus-5.

"I put my mind into something," Trout said, "and the results are there."

There are no publicly available metrics to adequately judge a player's first step, but internal stats are said to support the belief that Trout is a significantly better defensive center fielder this season. Scioscia took it a step further, saying Trout is "playing at a Gold Glove level" -- a compliment that suddenly seems to hold some validity.

"Mike Trout believes in that T-shirt that's out there, 'Evolve Or Die,'" Eppler said. "He's going to evolve. He's going to continue to get better. He is completely focused on continuous improvement. That's something that is rare in superstars, but it's something that you want in your superstars."

The question -- the persistent question -- is whether the Angels can evolve with him.

The organization has consistently tried to surround Trout with adequate talent, but injuries have taken a major toll, the farm system has suffered, and at times the process has been flawed.

Trout, who has played in only three playoff games since his rookie year in 2012, said he was "very, very excited" heading into the 2018 season. The Angels re-signed Justin Upton, acquired Shohei Ohtani and entered with high hopes for their young, promising rotation. But injuries ruined their plans once more. They wound up sending a major league leading 25 players to the disabled list and used a franchise-record 60 players.

"It's frustrating, for sure, but we can't do nothing about it now," Trout said. "We just have to stay positive and take it into next year."

Trout doesn't go out of his way to watch postseason baseball, tuning in only in the rare times he finds himself bored on the couch. Most of his Octobers are spent fishing and hunting, mixing in the occasional Philadelphia Eagles game on the right Sunday. It's a way to escape, even though he prefers to engage.

Trout was recently talking to Albert Pujols about the increasing possibility of a tiebreaker game in the National League and found himself longing for that type of chaos.

"They gotta be having an unbelievable amount of fun," Trout said. "Just the big stage -- you want to be on there."

### **FROM NBC SPORTS**

## **Mike Scioscia confirms he is not returning to Angels next year**

By Bill Baer

The Angels' 2018 campaign was a disappointment. Even after winning the final game of the season in walk-off fashion, they finish with an 80-82 record, missing the postseason for a fourth consecutive year.

During his postgame press conference, manager Mike Scioscia confirmed he will not return to manage the Angels next season. **Per Jeff Fletcher of the Southern California News Group**, Scioscia said, "I am going to step down. I will not be returning to manage the Angels next year." Scioscia had been baseball's longest-tenured manager.

Scioscia, 59, has managed the Angels since 2000. The club went 1,650-1,428 (.536) under his leadership, reaching the postseason seven times, winning the AL pennant once, and winning the World Series once in 2002 over the Giants.

It is unclear if Scioscia plans to continue managing elsewhere. If he does, he would certainly draw interest from teams with managerial openings. The Blue Jays and Rangers both recently let go of their managers (John Gibbons and Jeff Banister, respectively). The Reds are interviewing candidates to potentially replace interim manager Jim Riggleman. The Orioles are expected to replace Buck Showalter.

**FROM CBS SPORTS****Angels manager Mike Scioscia steps down after 19 seasons, ending longest tenure in MLB**

*Scioscia leaves with 1,650 career wins and a World Series title*

By Matt Snyder

The longest-tenured manager of his generation has decided to walk away from the only team he's ever managed. After the Angels' 5-4 regular-season finale win on Sunday, Mike Scioscia announced that he has decided not to return to his post for the 2019 season. He wasn't fired:

@JeffFletcherOCR

Angels president John Carpino said the decision was entirely Scioscia's.

The Angels were a disappointing 80-82 this season, but it's not like that entirely falls on Scioscia's shoulders. There were injuries, a flawed rotation and some players not playing nearly as well as they should.

On the whole, Scioscia finishes his 19-year career with a 1650-1428 record. He made the playoffs seven times, winning one pennant and the 2002 World Series, the only World Series title in Angels history. He also won two Manager of the Year awards (2002 and 2009).

Scioscia ranks 18th in career manager wins and 19th in games managed. His 19 years on the job ties him for 26th all time.

At this point, it's unclear whether Scioscia wants to ride off into the sunset and just enjoy his life or if he'd be open to managing again in the near future. He's only 59 years old, so it's possible he returns to the bench at some point.

**FROM THE SPORTING NEWS****Shohei Ohtani overcame almost every obstacle in jaw-dropping rookie year**

By Joe D'Hippolito

ANAHEIM, Calif. — The American League's presumptive rookie of the year admittedly felt trepidation as he was about to embark upon history.

Shohei Ohtani, trying to become the major leagues' first two-way player in nearly a century, experienced a miserable spring training after ending a scramble for his services by choosing the Los Angeles Angels in December.

As a pitcher, he allowed nine runs on nine hits — including three home runs — in only 2 2/3 innings. Opponents compiled a .529 average against him. At the plate, Ohtani managed just four hits in 32 at-bats while striking out 10 times and driving in just one run.

"To be honest, I was pretty nervous going into the season, after my spring training," he said through his interpreter. "But I had a great first week."

That week changed everything.

As a pitcher, Ohtani not only won his first two starts but took a perfect game into the seventh inning of his second start April 8. At the plate, he accumulated seven hits — including three home runs — in his first 18 at-bats, drove in seven runs and struck out just four times.

As a result, the American League named Ohtani its first player of the week this year. But the young veteran of five seasons with the Nippon Ham Fighters of Japan's Pacific League earned something more valuable.

"That made the transition a lot easier," Ohtani said about his success in the first week, "and gave me confidence throughout the whole season."

A confident Ohtani became a history-making Ohtani. The rookie joined Babe Ruth as the only players in major-league history to hit at least 15 home runs and pitch at least 50 innings in a season. Ohtani also became the first player in 130 years to hit at least 15 home runs, steal at least eight bases and pitch in at least three games in one year.

Ohtani finished his first season by tying a career high with 22 home runs while hitting .285, stealing 10 bases, collecting 21 doubles and driving in 61 runs in 104 games as a designated hitter.

"Being able to accomplish my career high in my first year the big leagues is a huge thing for me," Ohtani said about his home run total. "I'm proud of it."

On the mound, the right-hander went 4-2 with a 3.31 earned-run average and compiled 63 strikeouts in 51 2/3 innings covering 10 appearances, all starts. An injured ulnar collateral ligament in his elbow ended his stint in the rotation and will require Tommy John surgery.

"What Shohei Ohtani is doing is not easy," said Mike Scioscia, who managed his last game for the Angels on Sunday. "What he's done is exceptional. From the pitching side, he's shown that he can shut down good lineups. When he's healthy, his stuff is dominant. On the offensive side, when you look at his swing and his bat speed, he's got power to everywhere, no doubt about that."

Ohtani's offensive success resulted from an adjustment he made with two games left in spring training. Hitting coach Eric Hinske suggested that Ohtani replace the high leg kick he used in Japan with a toe tap to improve his timing and weight distribution. After hitting home runs in batting practice with the toe tap, Ohtani incorporated it into his swing.

"He's not hanging in the air with the leg kick, anymore," Hinske said. "So he stays behind the ball, his head stays still, and he's able to make an aggressive pass at every pitch."

That adjustment enhanced Ohtani's natural ability, as a former Cy Young Award winner noticed.

"I think his hand-eye coordination is off the charts," the Houston Astros' Justin Verlander said. "He does a really good job of trying to make contact, especially with some tough pitches I threw him up and in that he was able to foul off.

"I gave him a lot of respect. I threw him a 3-2 slider the first time I faced him. I don't think I do that to a lot of guys that I've never faced before. But I've seen him take some pretty impressive swings on fastballs in predictable counts."

Ohtani's inability to pitch because of elbow problems allowed him to craft a late hitting surge. On the day he was held he needed surgery, Ohtani hit two home runs and drove in three runs while going 4 for 4 in a 9-3 rout of the Texas Rangers on Sept. 5. In the final 23 games, the rookie hit .292 with six homers, 17 RBI and 18 runs scored.

"He's a serious middle-of-the-order threat," Oakland Athletics manager Bob Melvin said, "and he runs way better than they ever do, too."

Ohtani even improved against left-handed hitters. Scioscia benched the rookie against them for most of the season but when Albert Pujols went on the disabled list Aug. 29, Ohtani began a stretch in which he compiled a .333 average against left-handers with 11 RBI through the season's next-to-last day.

"I think the way I finish the season is very important to me, whether it's good or bad," Ohtani said, "because I know what to work on during the off-season." That attitude reflects Ohtani's unusual discipline.

"He studies things a lot more than some of the players in our clubhouse do," Scioscia said. "He's a very meticulous preparer. He prepares for pitching and hitting to the nth degree."

While trying to master hitting and pitching, Ohtani had to learn to navigate a different culture.

"Everyone has been supporting me and welcoming me — all my teammates, staff members," he said. "The transition got a lot easier because of that. People like Mike Trout and Albert Pujols, future Hall of Famers, are really genuine, really down to earth. It's been really helpful for me."

Scioscia, despite knowing virtually no Japanese, contributed unique input.

"He would always be mixing in jokes to try to make me comfortable," Scioscia said. "He was excellent in communicating. He pretty much made me feel comfortable in situations so I could focus on baseball. I really appreciate that."

Rangers' right-hander Chris Martin, Ohtani's teammate for two seasons with the Fighters, believes the rookie's personality enhances his transition.

"He got along with everybody," Martin said. "He can take a joke. A lot of Japanese guys, if you mess with them and give them a hard time, they get a little sensitive. Not with Ohtani. You can mess with him and

he'll dish it right back to you. I think that's why he fits so well over here. That's what you've got to be able to do in these clubhouses here."

Now comes Ohtani's biggest obstacle: the curse of the modern pitcher. The 24-year-old right-hander this week will undergo the ligament replacement surgery named for the pitcher whose career it saved. Ohtani will not be able to pitch next year and the club will not contemplate a timetable for his return until after surgery.

"As far as when I'll be able to return, there's no really set date," Ohtani said. "It depends on how rehab goes, if there are no setbacks. I'll have an update every four weeks post-surgery.

"I am disappointed with the fact that I'm not going to be able to pitch next season. Fortunately, I have the luxury of playing as a hitter."

Whether Ohtani can continue his quest to be a two-way player in the major leagues, however, now becomes an open question.

"It's been a small sample size, just one season, so you can't say I've proved to the world that I can continue to be a two-way player," he said. "I need to keep improving each year and, hopefully, I will be able to prove that I can continue as a two-way player.

"But the next round will be rehabbing the injury. That's what I'm going to be focused on and try to get stronger."

## *FROM USA TODAY*

### **Mike Trout Monday: Mike Trout surpassed 39 Hall of Famers in career WAR in 2018**

By Ted Berg

No one's here to tell you Wins Above Replacement, or WAR, is a perfect stat, but it's about the best shorthand we have for assessing baseball players' all-around contributions to their clubs. If you're skeptical, check out the career WAR leaderboard and admire how well it seems to correlate with the general perceptions of the most valuable guys in MLB history.

Mike Trout set new career highs in walks, on-base percentage and OPS in 2018, and hit 39 homers and stole 24 bases despite missing most of August with injury. You don't really need WAR to tell you Mike Trout is a historically great player who had another great year. But Trout finished 2018 with 10.2 WAR, the third time in his career he has reached double-digits. He is only the eighth guy in MLB history to clear 10 WAR as many as three times. He upped his lifetime mark to 64.3, and in the process, surpassed 39 Hall of Famers in career WAR this season alone.

Some of these guys, naturally, endured extenuating circumstances that prevented them from longer careers. Wars got in the way of their WARs. But a bunch of them just had long, fruitful, uninterrupted tenures in which they simply failed to contribute as much as Trout has in his first seven big-league seasons.

Here's the full list:

- 1. Eppa Rixey**
- 2. Joe Medwick**
- 3. Bill Dickey**
- 4. Luis Aparicio**
- 5. George Sisler**
- 6. Whitey Ford**
- 7. Joe Gordon**
- 8. Willie Stargell**
- 9. Joe Torre**
- 10. Joe McGinnity**
- 11. Hank Greenberg**
- 12. Rube Waddell**
- 13. Mordecai Brown**
- 14. Vladimir Guerrero Sr.**
- 15. Yogi Berra**
- 16. Mike Piazza**
- 17. Jim Bunning**
- 18. Jesse Burkett**
- 19. Dazzy Vance**
- 20. Zack Wheat**
- 21. Al Spalding**
- 22. Stan Coveleski**
- 23. Harmon Killebrew**
- 24. Early Wynn**
- 25. Jake Beckley**
- 26. Clark Griffith**
- 27. John Ward**
- 28. Dennis Eckersley**
- 29. Mickey Welch**
- 30. Home Run Baker**
- 31. Juan Marichal**
- 32. Lou Boudreau**
- 33. Hal Newhouser**
- 34. Billy Hamilton**
- 35. Vic Willis**
- 36. Billy Williams**
- 37. Bob Feller**
- 38. Richie Ashburn**
- 39. Dave Winfield**



This does not include a handful of likely future Hall of Famers Trout surpassed in career WAR this season, including Mariano Rivera, Ichiro Suzuki, Justin Verlander and Joey Votto.

Mike Trout remains quite good.

## **FROM BLEACHER REPORT**

### **Mike Scioscia Will Not Return as Angels Manager for 2019 Season**

By Adam Wells

Mike Scioscia's 19-year tenure as manager of the Los Angeles Angels came to an end Sunday.

Scioscia announced he won't return to the team following a 5-4 win over the Oakland Athletics. Los Angeles finished 80-82 during the 2018 season.

Originally hired by the Angels in 2000, Scioscia was the longest-tenured manager in Major League Baseball. Bruce Bochy of the San Francisco Giants was the only other skipper to be with the same team for at least 10 years when last season began.

Rumors of Scioscia's departure picked up in August when The Athletic's Ken Rosenthal reported the 59-year-old would step down at the end of the season.

"Scioscia, nearing the completion of a 10-year, \$50 million contract, is expected to step down at the end of the season, according to major league sources," Rosenthal wrote. "His decision not to pursue a new deal would be his alone and not the result of pressure from the club, sources said."

Following the 2017 campaign, Scioscia told reporters he wasn't concerned about managing with just one year left on his contract.

"I am extremely excited about next year," Scioscia said. "I wouldn't be coming back unless [general manager] Billy [Eppler] and [owner] Arte [Moreno] had confidence in my ability in the dugout and with the team, so I'm excited about it. That's it."

At that same time, Eppler said the team was only looking toward the upcoming season.

"The focus is on 2018," Eppler said. "We'll discuss business beyond that at an appropriate time. We're not focused on '19. We're focused on '18. That's solely what our whole mindset is right now. He's comfortable with that. I'm comfortable with that. Arte is comfortable with that."

Since winning the American League West with 98 victories in 2014, the Angels have missed the playoffs each of the last four years.

Time is of the essence in Los Angeles right now. Mike Trout is under contract for two more years. Shohei Ohtani had a terrific rookie year with a .930 OPS in 103 games as a hitter and 3.31 ERA with 63 strikeouts in 51.2 innings as a pitcher.

It's unclear what Ohtani's status for 2019 will be after the Angels recommended he undergo Tommy John surgery on his right elbow. His presence in the lineup gives Los Angeles another superstar talent to pair with Trout to build around.

Scioscia led the Angels to seven postseason appearances, including a World Series title in 2002. Prior to his hiring as manager, the franchise made just three playoff appearances from 1961 to 1999.

He is the Angels' all-time leader in games managed (3,078), wins (1,650) and win percentage (.536).

Despite a rough ending to Scioscia's two-decade stint managing the Angels, his overall run with the club was a rousing success that took the team to heights it had never before experienced.

## **FROM KYODO NEWS**

### **Baseball: Shohei Ohtani reflects on historic rookie season**

Following his historic first season in Major League Baseball, two-way rookie Shohei Ohtani on Sunday said he had made the right decision in joining the Los Angeles Angels.

"Every game I play, every time I come to the stadium, I feel good to be there," said Ohtani, who chose the American League West side after being pursued by several clubs.

"The number one thing is that I am able to enjoy playing baseball every day."

Despite a pitching elbow injury prematurely ending his bid to become the first player in 100 years to post 10 wins on the mound and hit 10 home runs, Ohtani recorded several milestones in his groundbreaking first season in the majors.

The 24-year-old Japanese phenomenon entered Sunday's regular-season finale against the Oakland Athletics batting .285 with 93 hits, 22 home runs, 61 RBIs and 10 stolen bases.

As a pitcher, Ohtani went 4-2 over 10 starts with a 3.31 ERA and 63 strikeouts in 51-2/3 innings before a damaged ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow forced him off the mound.

In his last start on Sept. 2, Ohtani became the only player besides Babe Ruth to start 10 games and hit at least 10 home runs, as well as pitch at least 50 innings and hit 15 homers in a season.

He earned AL Rookie of the Month in his debut in April and AL Player of the Week honors for the second time last month, the same week he broke the record for most homers by a Japanese major league rookie.

Ohtani produced only one comparable season at the plate in his professional career, hitting 22 homers in 104 games for Japan's Nippon Ham Fighters in 2016, the same year he went 10-4 on the mound.

While scheduled to undergo Tommy John surgery this week, a procedure likely to sideline him from the mound until the 2020 season, Ohtani said he will focus on improving as a batter.

"Every day I feel like I still have a lot to learn," Ohtani said. "Since spring training, I've really felt like that, much more than when I was in Japan."

"(Next season) depends on how the surgery recovery goes. First I just want to focus on getting better, so I will do my best with that and work hard to get us to the postseason next year."

During Sunday's regular-season finale in front of a home crowd at Angel Stadium, Ohtani singled and scored to spark a ninth-inning comeback rally culminating in Taylor Ward's two-run walk-off homer.

In a postgame press conference, manager Mike Scioscia announced 2018 will be his last season with the Angels after 19 years with the franchise, the sixth-longest tenure in MLB history.

"I felt like he was excellent in communicating with me," Ohtani said of his first major league manager.

"He was always mixing in jokes, trying to make me feel comfortable. He made me feel comfortable, and he created a situation where I could focus on baseball. I'm really appreciative of that."

The Angels' most successful manager also had good things to say about the club's standout newcomer and frontrunner for the AL Rookie of the Year Award.

"What Shohei has done is not easy," Scioscia said. "What he's done is exceptional. He's an exceptional talent."

Scioscia, who turns 60 next month, posted a franchise-best .536 winning percentage over 3,078 games. He led the Angels to their first and only World Series championship in 2002, earned six division titles and two Manager of the Year Awards.

The Angels, however, slumped to a losing record this season and finished fourth in the AL West, missing the playoffs for the fourth straight year.

## FROM MLB TRADE RUMORS

### West Notes: Trout, Beltre, Andrus, Bumgarner, Posey

By Connor Byrne

**Mike Trout** just concluded yet another MVP-caliber season, yet team success has continued to elude the superstar. Trout has only been part of one playoff team (in 2014) and has yet to win even a single postseason game after eight seasons. With Trout only signed for another two years, the **Angels** may need to turn things around quick to have a better chance at extending or re-signing him, and Trout indeed told Jeff Fletcher of the Orange County Register that playing for a contender is a “*huge*” factor in deciding his future plans. *“I want to come to the ballpark playing for something. That’s everybody’s goal here as a player. You don’t want to come playing for nothing,”* Trout said. This being said, he still holds the Angels organization in high regard: *“My years here we haven’t been winning, but they’ve been taking care of me. I enjoy coming to the ballpark. It (stinks) when it’s September and you’re out of it. But when I was a kid they took a chance on me. We’ll see how it goes. I’ve got a couple more years and we’ll go from there.”* Trout also laughed off the idea of the Angels trading him over the next two years, per Fletcher, saying he “*for sure*” expects to remain with the franchise through at least 2020. In hopes of keeping Trout beyond then, the Halos are expected to discuss an extension with him during the offseason, Fletcher writes.

Elsewhere around the majors’ West divisions...

- There is a chance the left side of the **Rangers’** infield will consist of two new starters next season, as third baseman **Adrian Beltre** could retire and shortstop **Elvis Andrus** has an opt-out in his contract. In the latest update regarding the two close friends, Jeff Wilson of the Star-Telegram tweets that Beltre is “*genuinely torn*” on whether to come back in 2019. Evan Grant of the Dallas Morning News believes Beltre will walk away, and he explains why in a piece which pays respect to the future Hall of Famer. Andrus, meanwhile, is still planning to stay with his current contract, as was the case a few weeks ago, according to Wilson. Vacating the remainder of the deal would mean leaving a four-year, \$58MM guarantee on the table, which may be too risky in the wake of a down season for Andrus.
- The **Giants** are open minded with what to do with ace **Madison Bumgarner** as they seek a new baseball operations leader, CEO Larry Baer suggested Sunday. The team “*does not plan to dictate a timetable for contention or major decisions such as trading or keeping*” Bumgarner, Henry Schulman of the San Francisco Chronicle writes. Instead, the Giants will listen to the candidates’ opinions on the best course of action in regards to Bumgarner, who’s only under control for another year. As for longtime battery mate **Buster Posey**, the soon-to-be 32-year-old will remain behind the plate when he returns from hip surgery next season – perhaps as early as Opening Day, per Schulman. *“There’s been no discussion about him playing any other position,”* executive vice president Brian Sabean said. *“He’s our franchise player and he wants to catch.”*
- More on the **Giants**, who plan to go into next season with **Steven Duggar** as their Opening Day center fielder, Andrew Baggarly of The Athletic tweets. The 24-year-old got his first taste of major league action this season and hit a below-average .255/.303/.390 (87 wRC+) in 152 plate appearances, though he did account for four Defensive Runs Saved and a 1.4 Ultimate Zone

Rating in 345 innings as a center fielder. Baseball America (subscription required) ranks Duggar as the Giants' sixth-best prospect.