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### **Big inning dooms White Sox in loss to Cards**

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com / July 10, 2018

CHICAGO -- The sixth inning of the White Sox 14-2 loss to the Cardinals on Tuesday night at Guaranteed Rate Field essentially summed up Chicago's six-game losing streak and 2-10 and stretch. Actually, it spoke volumes to its disappointing 30-61 record in Year 2 of its rebuild.

Ten Cardinals batted against White Sox pitchers Dylan Covey, Jace Fry, Bruce Rondon and Hector Santiago. They scored seven runs, turning a 4-2 advantage into a comfortable nine-run lead.

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Dexter Fowler, who played a big part in the Cubs winning the 2016 World Series championship but has slumped this season, capped off the Cardinals' rally with a grand slam off Santiago in his return to

Chicago. Before Fowler connected on his sixth home run, the Cardinals scored runs on a Omar Narvaez passed ball, a Rondon wild pitch and a bases-loaded walk, the third consecutive free pass that Rondon issued.

Since June 29, the White Sox have given up six or more runs in an inning five times, all coming in separate games.

"I feel like we are hanging in there early for sure," White Sox outfielder Charlie Tilson said. "It's something we have to learn from. One of those things where you have to keep fighting. Those situations happen, but we have to work through it."

An undermanned White Sox squad played without Avisail Garcia, the team's hottest hitter, who was placed on the disabled list with a Grade 1 right hamstring strain prior to the game. All-Star first baseman Jose Abreu continued his prolonged slump dating back to May 27, going hitless in four at-bats as his average fell to .256, while the offense managed two runs in the third on Tilson's single and nothing more in six innings against Miles Mikolas.

Tilson was drafted by the Cardinals in the second round of the 2011 Draft, then traded to the White Sox for reliever Zach Duke in 2016.

"It's pretty cool. Playing for an organization that gave me an opportunity to play in the big leagues, and on the other side, it was the team that brought me into pro ball," Tilson said. "It's motivating to go out there and play hard and try to stick it to your old team."

Covey struck out four in the first two innings, but took a fourth straight loss, with one no-decision mixed in among those last five starts. He allowed five runs (four earned) in five-plus innings, striking out five and walking two, leaving him with an 11.70 ERA over his last 20 innings pitched.

"Felt good early on," Covey said. "I think my ball started creeping up in the zone a little bit as I went. Those ground balls turned into base hits, and they strung a few together. Struggled to get it back down. Did feel good, though. Ball had life on it. Changeup was really good."

"I think I figured some things out in the 'pen this week. I saw the results of that really quick in the first couple innings. And then, runner got on, thinking ground ball, string together some hits and just try to grind through it from there."

#### RondON STRUGGLES AGAIN

Rondon's rough recent results on the mound continued, and it could lead to a roster move by the White Sox. The right-hander allowed three runs on three walks in one-third of an inning, as he has allowed 19 earned runs over his last 7 2/3 innings. Rondon has walked 15 and given up 18 hits during that stretch.

"He has to continue to work at pounding the zone," White Sox manager Rick Renteria said. "He's got a great arm, great stuff, but again, you have to command. And everybody knows, at the Major League level, no matter how good your stuff is, you've got to hit your spots. It's imperative to give yourself a chance at success."

#### HE SAID IT

"I think he's kind of missing more middle, which is what they've been getting to." -- Renteria, with one explanation for Covey's recent struggles

#### UP NEXT

Carlos Rodon is scheduled to make his seventh start of the season -- his third at home and second career against St. Louis -- when the two-game series concludes on Wednesday at 7:10 p.m. CT. Luke Weaver will take the mound for the Cardinals. Rodon is making his 11th career Interleague start, but his first of the season. Last time out, Rodon delivered a quality start against the Astros, allowing two runs over six innings with six strikeouts and six walks.

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## **Adolfo to get Tommy John; Garcia heads to DL**

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com / July 10, 2018

CHICAGO -- White Sox general manager Rick Hahn had more to talk about than an Avisail Garcia hamstring update when addressing the organization's injury situation during a pregame media session prior to Tuesday's series opener against the Cardinals.

Micker Adolfo, the No. 10 White Sox prospect per MLB Pipeline, suffered a setback during his throwing program with Class A Advanced Winston-Salem. The designated hitter/outfielder was examined by doctors in Chicago on Monday and will undergo Tommy John surgery in the upcoming weeks.

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Adolfo, 21, sprained his ulnar collateral ligament and suffered a strained flexor tendon during Spring Training. But instead of undergoing immediate surgery, Adolfo served as the DH for the Dash and hit .283 with 11 home runs and 50 RBIs this season. It was determined at the time of the original injury that Adolfo could do no further damage by hitting, although Adolfo and the team knew surgery would be likely eventually.

"We're hopeful to have him back in the vicinity of 8-10 months, which would have him hopefully with an affiliate by May 1 of next year," Hahn said. "Obviously not great news for Micker, but going back to Spring Training, initially we were concerned he was going to end up missing the entire year, and at least this way Micker was able to get over 300 plate appearances at Winston-Salem."

"He had a very solid year from a development standpoint, and will be back in time -- assuming everything goes smoothly -- with a chance for essentially a full season in 2019. It should not set him behind too far developmentally, but obviously not great news for the kid personally."

Garcia was placed on the 10-day disabled list (retroactive to July 9) with a strained right hamstring after he left Sunday's game against the Astros. It's the same hamstring that put Garcia on the DL from April 24-June 22 earlier this season, but Hahn pointed out this injury is in a different area of the hamstring and more mild in nature.

"Our doctors and training staff are optimistic that we could have him back as soon as the start of the second half," Hahn said. "Obviously we'll see how it unfolds here over the next few days, but it appears to be more mild than the last time."

Outfielder Ryan LaMarre was added to the active roster in place of Garcia, after LaMarre, 29, was claimed off waivers Monday from the Twins. He batted .263 with five doubles, eight RBIs and seven runs scored in 43 games over four stints with Minnesota this season before being designated for assignment on July 2. LaMarre, who bats right-handed and throws lefty, will wear uniform No. 25.

Pitching coach Don Cooper was also out of action for the start of the series against the Cardinals after having off-day surgery on his right hand. Unfortunately for the White Sox, it has been an injury-filled season as they continue to rebuild.

"At the same time, we know a couple things. If you have a great number of prospects, a great number of young players that people are interested in, the odds of some of them, or multiple of them, getting hurt are higher," Hahn said. "Just the nature of the business. I think it reinforces some of the tenants or mantra you've heard us repeat from the start of this entire rebuild going back the last 18 months."

"We need to build depth, we need to build enough redundancy within our own system, so when things like this happen, we have alternatives. We don't want any player to get hurt, but we want to put ourselves in a position to have enough premium talent on hand that we can fill whatever voids are created by these setbacks."

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## Hahn discusses trade interest in Sox pitchers

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com / July 10, 2018

CHICAGO -- There were no specific names put forth when White Sox general manager Rick Hahn mentioned definite outside trade interest "in numerous guys on our roster" who could help other teams win.

However, the focus appears to be on pitching, based on further comments from Hahn, meaning names such as Joakim Soria, Luis Avilan and James Shields, to name a few, could be in play.

"I don't think there's any club anywhere throughout the league, regardless of the position they're in, that doesn't feel like they could improve themselves from a pitching standpoint," Hahn said. "So that's certainly an area of conversation.

"We're going to continue to be aggressive out there and have the same tenor of conversations we've had for the last 18 months, doing everything we can to put ourselves in a strong long-term position. Obviously this time around, this Trade Deadline is going to be considerably different from the last one, based upon the amount of moves we already made vs. what we currently have at the Major League level. So it's probably going to be a little bit quieter than what we had 12 months ago, for good reason. At the same time, our views and our intentions remain the same."

### Abreu's All-Star bid celebrated

White Sox manager Rick Renteria described an interesting reaction from Jose Abreu upon hearing Sunday he had been voted in by the fans as the American League starting first baseman for the MLB All-Star Game presented by Mastercard to be played next Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. CT on FOX.

"We presented [the news] with everybody in the clubhouse, let him know he made the club," Renteria said. "He was apologetic because he felt like he wasn't doing enough to make the All-Star club. I think once he gets there, again, the whole atmosphere, everything it's about, will allow him to understand he belongs there. We know he belongs there."

Abreu, who was an All-Star as a rookie in 2014, entered Tuesday in a 28-for-153 slump over his last 40 games, with three homers and 20 RBIs, dropping his average from .319 to .259. On this young team, Abreu has likely taken on extra weight in terms of leadership and trying to get a big hit in every situation.

But even if that situation has affected him, don't expect Abreu to become more "me-first" in nature. It's just not in his demeanor.

"That's not who I am. It's never going to happen," Abreu said through an interpreter. "I give 100 percent to this organization. It's for the organization, which is the most important thing. It's not my name. It's not who I am. I play this game and I wear this uniform and I represent this team because I love this organization."

### Pierzynski getting a bobblehead

Chicago White Sox Charities (CWSC) is honoring former White Sox catcher A.J. Pierzynski with a limited-edition bobblehead. The collectible bobblehead is available for purchase online exclusively at whitesox.com/ajbobble and at White Sox home games beginning Friday.

The bobblehead features Pierzynski's bleach-blond hair during a memorable postgame celebration pose acknowledging fans after the 2008 "Blackout Game," a 1-0 victory over the Twins in a tiebreaker game that sent the White Sox to the postseason. All proceeds from bobblehead sales benefit CWSC and Make-A-Wish Illinois, an organization selected by Pierzynski.

"When I played here, I did a lot of Make-A-Wish for the Chicago area. We had kids here all the time," Pierzynski said. "It was one of my favorite things to do, because this is the one thing they wanted to do, come to a White Sox game and meet some players.

"To be able to help them in any way, and especially through something like the White Sox Charities and do the bobblehead, it's something you can't say no to. Make-A-Wish was the first thing because of the way they treated me, and I know how hard those people work to get the kids something they always dream they could do."

Pierzynski has been working as part of FOX baseball broadcasts, but on Sept. 2, he will join Ken "Hawk" Harrelson in the White Sox booth during "Hawk Day" at Guaranteed Rate Field, which comes in the final month of Harrelson's illustrious broadcasting career.

"I'll set up the pins for 'Hawk,' and he can come in and knock them down," Pierzynski said. "Set up all his stories. Hopefully get a tear out of him at some point during the broadcast."

ACE gets special donation

The White Sox Amateur City Elite (ACE) program was presented with a donation from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on Tuesday night in between ACE games at The Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center in Chicago. The donation included 125 baseball bats, as well as dozens of baseballs confiscated from a recent fraud investigation.

FBI Chicago special agent in charge Jeffrey Sallet, along with the case agent and additional FBI agents and staff, were on hand to present the items to ACE athletes.

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## **Tuesday's top prospect performers**

By Mike Rosenbaum / MLB.com / July 10, 2018

Here's MLB Pipeline's roundup of the top prospect performances in the Minor Leagues on Tuesday.

In his first fully healthy season, Bobby Dalbec is showing that he's one of the top power-hitting prospects in the Minor Leagues.

Dalbec, Boston's No. 12 prospect, hit a pair of home runs as he extended his hitting streak to eight games in Class A Advanced Salem's 8-4 win over Winston-Salem. He finished the game 4-for-4 at the plate and matched his career high with five RBIs.

After hitting a single in his first trip to the plate, Dalbec proceeded to blast a three-run homer in the third inning followed by a two-run shot in the fifth. Two innings later, the 23-year-old baseman capped his perfect night at the plate with a single to right field.

Dalbec was named to MLB Pipeline's most recent Prospect Team of the Week (covering July 2 to July 8) after hitting .481/.484/1.185 with four home runs and leading all Minor Leaguers in slugging percentage, extra-base hits (10), total bases (32) and RBIs (14). With his performance on Tuesday, meanwhile, Dalbec sports a robust .581 average (18-for-31) with six home runs and 18 RBIs over his past eight games.

A fourth-round pick in the 2016 Draft out of Arizona, Dalbec posted a 1.101 OPS in his pro debut but was limited to just 85 games in '17 due to a hamate injury. He still managed to hit 13 home runs, albeit with a .248 average.

Dalbec's big-time power has been on full display this season in the Carolina League, a circuit that he currently leads in home runs (21), doubles (25) and RBIs (75). On top of that, Dalbec is proving to be more than just a slugger, with a .260/.371/.573 batting line through 83 games.

The rest of the best performances from top prospects Tuesday

- On a rehab assignment in the Rookie-level Gulf Coast League, No. 5 overall prospect Victor Robles (Nationals' No. 1) recorded his first hit in over three months in his third game back from the disabled list. He finished 1-for-3 and also scored a run in the contest. The 21-year-old outfielder suffered a

hyperextended left elbow while diving for a ball in center field just four games into his season back on April 9.

- No. 68 overall prospect Andres Gimenez (Mets' No. 1) hit a double and a triple as part of a 3-for-5, two-RBI game in Class A Advanced St. Lucie's 5-1 win over Charlotte. The three-hit performance was the 19-year-old shortstop's second in as many games and also extended his hitting streak to nine games. Behind a .457 average (16-for-35) in that span, Gimenez has improved season average from .257 to .281. Second baseman Luis Carpio (No. 18) also had a big night at the plate, tallying a season-high four hits including a double out of the leadoff spot.

- No. 99 overall prospect Cristian Pache (Braves' No. 8) put Class A Advanced Florida on the board with a leadoff home run before adding an RBI triple three innings later and finishing 2-for-5. Six of the the 19-year-old outfielder's seven home runs this season have come out of the leadoff spot, and he's now gone deep three times in his first at-bat. Overall, Pache has produced a .280/.305/.436 slash line with 29 extra-base hits and 39 runs scored in 78 games.

- D-backs No. 29 prospect Emilio Vargas needed just five innings to rack up a season-high 13 strikeouts in a dominant performance for Class A Advanced Visalia. Recording all but two of his outs via the strikeout in five innings, Vargas permitted two earned runs on three hits and a walk while throwing 59 of 91 pitches for strikes. The 21-year-old righty is having a breakout season in the California League, as he now leads the circuit both in ERA (1.85) and strikeouts (126) through 92 1/3 innings (12.3 K/9).

- Dodgers No. 22 prospect Tony Gonsolin's bat-missing ability was on display as he notched a career-best 11 strikeouts while tossing five innings of one-run for Class A Advanced Rancho Cucamonga. He allowed three hits, walked a pair and threw 66 of his 87 pitches for strikes. The 24-year-old right-hander has fanned at least nine batters in four straight starts and owns a 1.29 ERA with 38 strikeouts in 21 innings in that span.

- Mets No. 10 prospect Ronny Mauricio connected on a two-run homer and later added a sacrifice fly to finish with three RBIs for the Mets' Rookie-level Gulf Coast League affiliate. The 17-year-old shortstop, signed by the Mets for \$2.1 million a year ago, has now hit safely in 19 straight games to begin his career, compiling a .359/.345/.551 batting line with nine extra-base hits (2 HR), 19 RBIs and 15 runs scored.

- After giving up a season-worst seven earned runs in his last start, Rangers No. 7 prospect Yohander Mendez rebounded with a seven-inning outing for Class A Advanced Down East in which he allowed an unearned run on three hits and two walks with four strikeouts. After struggling earlier in the season between Double-A and the Major Leagues, the 23-year-old southpaw has pitched to a 3.24 ERA with 22 strikeouts and five in 25 innings (four starts) as he works to get back on track in the Carolina League.

- White Sox No. 30 prospect Bernardo Flores completed seven strong innings, allowing two earned runs on six hits, but ultimately took the loss as Double-A Birmingham fell to Mississippi, 3-1. The 22-year-old lefty recorded seven strikeouts as well as eight ground outs while throwing 63 of his 91 pitches for strikes in the outing. Promoted to Birmingham on June 21, Flores has completed seven innings in three of his four starts while registering a 1.67 ERA and 0.93 WHIP in 27 innings.

- Making his Appalachian League debut, Mets first-rounder Jarred Kelenic (No. 6 overall pick) delivered a go-ahead two-run homer in the bottom of the eighth inning that proved the difference in Rookie-level Kingsport's 13-12 win against Greeneville. Kelenic's homer, the second of his career, capped a 2-for-4 performance that included a career-best four RBIs. The 18-year-old outfielder has opened his career on a tear, slashing .420/.464/.600 with six extra-base hits, 13 RBIs and 11 runs scored across his first 13 games.

- Twins second-round pick Ryan Jeffers and Hunter Lee (27th round) both hit the first home runs of their respective careers, while Albee Weiss (23rd round) contributed a pair of solo shots in Rookie-level Elizabethton's 15-1 rout of Johnson City. The trio accounted for eight of Elizabethton's 18 hits in the

victory, as Jeffers and Weiss each tallied two knocks to match Lee's team-leading four hits. They also combined for six RBIs and scored seven runs.

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## **Rick Hahn hoping to make some deadline deals but expecting White Sox to be quieter than last summer**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / July 10, 2018

As the trade deadline approaches, White Sox fans shouldn't be expecting a repeat of last summer. At least that's what Rick Hahn says.

The White Sox general manager talked about the potential for deadline deals this month and was sure to point out that he expects his front office to perhaps be significantly less active than it was a season ago, when it made a bevy of trades that included the high-profile crosstown swap with the Cubs, the selling off of much of the bullpen and the shipment of big names Todd Frazier and Melky Cabrera away from the South Side.

This time around, the assets aren't quite as plentiful. And while Hahn would certainly like to add more talented youth to his rebuilding effort, he's not promising another busy July 31.

"We're going to continue to be aggressive out there and have the same conversations or have the same tenor of conversations we've had for the last 18 months, doing everything we can to put ourselves in a strong long-term position," Hahn said Tuesday. "I think obviously this time around, this trade deadline is going to be considerably different from last one based upon the amount of moves we already made versus what we currently have at the major league level. So it's probably going to be a little bit quieter than what we had 12 months ago, for good reason. At the same time our views or our intentions remain the same."

Just because the White Sox might not be super busy at this year's deadline doesn't mean they'll be completely inactive. There are pieces that could draw the interest of contending clubs. Starting pitcher James Shields is a veteran arm who's been to a pair of World Series and could help get a team to a division title or a playoff spot at the back end of its rotation. Three bullpen pitchers — Joakim Soria, Xavier Cedeno and Luis Avilan — have improved as the season has gone on and could end up being the sign-and-flip guys they appeared to be when they were acquired over the winter.

"Yes, teams are definitely interested in numerous guys on our roster that could potentially help them win," Hahn said. "I don't think there's any club anywhere throughout the league, regardless of the position they're in, that doesn't feel like they could improve themselves from a pitching standpoint, so that's certainly an area of conversation."

While young players can most definitely surprise — just look at what Ti'Quan Forbes, acquired in last August's trade that sent Miguel Gonzalez to the Texas Rangers, is doing this season — it doesn't seem that any of the above-listed guys are the type to land a highly touted prospect in return. Shields, Soria, Cedeno and Avilan wouldn't figure to demand the kind of return packages the White Sox got in the Quintana trade with the Cubs or even the trade with the New York Yankees that sent David Robertson, Frazier and Tommy Kahnle out of town in exchange for, among others, Blake Rutherford, a top-100 prospect in baseball. For that reason, it's possible that no trade made this summer could have earth-shattering effects for the rebuild.

Fans might speculate about the kind of trade that could, however. Would the White Sox deal away some of their prized prospects in a move like that?

"We've talked about that from the start, that there will come a time where we're doing prospect-for-prospect-like trades where we're dealing from a position of strength to fill positions of need in the system. We've had some conversations with other clubs along those lines. Do I think that's likely in the next three weeks? Probably not," Hahn said. "Simply because this tends to be the time when it's more veterans-for-prospect mindset for most clubs."

"But in the coming three to 12 months, you might see a little more of those as we again want to make sure we're diversified enough across our prospect base to have enough premium talent all around the diamond."

The White Sox won't be sleeping through the trade deadline. But a big deal? A lot of deals? Probably not.

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### **Dylan Covey's status in White Sox future keeps fluctuating as string of poor results continues**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / July 10, 2018

It wasn't long ago that it seemed quite reasonable to ask the question: Does Dylan Covey have a place in the White Sox rebuild?

But it didn't take long for Covey to make that question seem not so reasonable.

The notion that rebuilds are chock full of surprises and that guys can emerge as key pieces who you never thought would emerge remains a real one. And for a bit, it looked like Covey could be a candidate for that kind of player.

He seemed to have solved the woes that plagued him during his rough 2017 campaign. He had a 1.53 ERA over the course of five starts. He was generally pitching better than the rest of the White Sox starting rotation, including Lucas Giolito and Reynaldo Lopez, two guys expected to have big roles to play as the future creeps closer for this rebuilding franchise.

But what's happened since has made Covey disappear from that long-term picture a little bit, not unlike Marty McFly fading away in "Back to the Future."

In his past five starts — including Tuesday night's outing that, after he left, ballooned into a 14-2 beating — Covey's got an 11.70 ERA. He's allowed at least four runs in each one of those starts. In the two starts prior to Tuesday's, he combined to allowed 14 earned runs in only six innings of work.

Tuesday's wasn't that kind of disaster, and both Covey and manager Rick Renteria said they thought he looked better than he's been looking. But the results weren't dramatically different.

"Felt good early on," Covey said. "I think my ball started creeping up in the zone a little bit as I went. Those ground balls turned into base hits, and they strung a few together. Struggled to get it back down. Did feel good, though.

"Just need to be a little bit better with my off-speed for strikes early so they aren't just sitting on the fastball early, which is something that I think a lot of teams are trying to do on me, especially second time through the lineup. Just need to be able to get some pitches over for strikes that are not a fastball early and go from there.

"I think I figured some things out in the 'pen this week. I saw the results of that really quick in the first couple of innings. And then, runner got on, thinking ground ball, (they) string together some hits and just try to grind through it from there."

It's probably more than a little unfair to put so much weight on a small handful of starts, to suggest Covey was a piece worthy of future planning after five good starts or to suggest that Covey has no place in this rebuild after the same number of bad ones.

And it's worth noting that pitching on a team like this one, 31 games under .500 after Tuesday, has its pitfalls. He wasn't the one who mustered just five hits Tuesday night. He wasn't the one who gave up the bulk of the visiting St. Louis Cardinals' eye-popping offensive output.



But just as Covey's string of quality outings sparked speculation about where he could wind up in the White Sox long-term plans, this string of poor performances sparks the same speculation. That's what this rebuilding season is about for every player: figuring out where they fit in this team's long-term future.

Covey doesn't carry the same kinds of high hopes or high expectations as guys like Giolito, Lopez, Michael Kopech, Carlos Rodon, Alec Hansen, Dane Dunning, Dylan Cease or anyone else in the crowded rotation of the future. But even crowded rotations have room for surprises — if a spot is earned.

Right now, we don't know what Covey's future is with this team, but it's safe to assume that his performance this season will determine what it is. Half the performances have been good, half of them bad. Covey will need to figure things out and return to way things were if he wants to stay in the picture.

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### **Another significant injury to a White Sox prospect, as Micker Adolfo needs Tommy John surgery**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / July 10, 2018

The injuries keep piling up for the White Sox wealth of highly touted prospects.

Eloy Jimenez, Luis Robert and Dane Dunning are all on the disabled list. Alec Hansen missed months while recovering from a springtime injury. Jake Burger is out for the season and beyond thanks to two Achilles tears.

And now you can add Micker Adolfo to that list, with general manager Rick Hahn announcing Tuesday that the minor league outfielder needs Tommy John surgery on the elbow he injured back in spring training. Adolfo will be out for the next eight to 10 months.

"As a position player, the return to play protocol is quite different than for a pitcher," Hahn said. "We're hopeful to have him back in the vicinity of eight to 10 months, which would have him hopefully with an affiliate by May 1 of next year."

Adolfo injured the elbow back in the spring, and the White Sox hoped he could avoid surgery by strictly playing designated hitter and staying out of the outfield. That's what happened the last few months, but he had a setback during a recently commenced throwing program and now surgery is required on what was at one point considered one of the best outfield arms in the organization.

Adolfo's bat was not affected too badly by the injury. He slashed .283/.368/.466 in with 11 homers and 50 RBIs in 78 games with Class A Winston-Salem.

The injury doesn't prevent Adolfo from being an important piece of the White Sox rebuild. But like the injuries to all the other talented youngsters, it brings up the question: How will it affect his development and his timeline to reach the South Side?

"Obviously not great news for Micker," Hahn said, "but at the same time for those of you who have been following this story going back to spring training that initially we were concerned he was going to end up missing the entire year, and at least this way Micker was able to get over 300 plate appearances at Winston-Salem, had a very solid year from a development standpoint and will be back in time — assuming everything goes smoothly — with a chance for essentially a full season in 2019.

"Should not set him behind too far developmentally, but obviously not great news for the kid personally."

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### **Avi Garcia heads back to DL with hamstring strain**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / July 10, 2018

It's been a tough 2018 so far for Avisail Garcia.

The White Sox outfielder is heading back to the disabled list with a right hamstring strain, the same injury that put him out of action for two months earlier this season.

Garcia departed early from Sunday's loss to the Houston Astros with his hamstring once again bothering him. Back on April 23, he left a game against the Seattle Mariners with a hamstring injury and didn't return until late June.

This time, however, the DL stint interrupts what was a strong stretch for the 2017 All Star. Since his return, he slashed .333/.347/.783, raising his batting average nearly .050 points, homering eight times in 17 games and putting his season-opening slump in the rear-view mirror. A guy looking to prove that last season's breakout campaign was no fluke seemed capable of doing just that.

But this latest bout of hamstring tightness brings that to a screeching halt.

If Garcia can return after 10 days and pick up where he left off, he can most certainly keep his name in the conversation about the White Sox crowded outfield of the future. But should he once more miss weeks upon weeks or see his offense return to its April form, he could fall out of that conversation rather quickly and perhaps be overtaken by highly touted prospects like Eloy Jimenez, Luis Robert, Blake Rutherford, Micker Adolfo and Luis Alexander Basabe, to name a few.

To fill Garcia's vacated spot on the active roster, the White Sox added outfielder Ryan LaMarre, who was claimed off waivers from the Minnesota Twins on Monday. LaMarre slashed .263/.321/.313 in 43 games with the Twins before being designated for assignment earlier this month.

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### **Limited edition A.J Pierzynski bobblehead now available**

By Vince Lovergine / NBC Sports Chicago / July 10, 2018

White Sox fan favorite A.J Pierzynski will be honored by Chicago White Sox Charities with a limited-edition bobblehead.

Each commemorative bobblehead purchase will also include a limited-edition certificate. They are available for purchase online at [whitesox.com/ajbobble](http://whitesox.com/ajbobble) beginning today and at White Sox home games beginning Friday, July 13 in Section 135.

"A.J. has a special place in the hearts of all White Sox fans," said Christine O'Reilly, Chicago White Sox Charities executive director. "It's a wonderful opportunity to celebrate one of the most beloved players in White Sox history in a fun way, while also provide fans an opportunity to support the impactful work of White Sox Charities."

Over the course of his Sox career, Pierzynski hit .279 with 198 doubles, 118 home runs, 460 RBI and 452 runs scored in 1,068 games over eight seasons with Chicago. He ranks third all-time among Sox catchers in home runs.

Pierzynski is tied for the major-league record with 13 consecutive seasons (2001-13) with at least 100 games caught and ranks sixth in major-league history with 16,335.1 innings caught.

For Chicago White Sox Charities, this is the fifth straight year it's held a fundraiser bobblehead campaign.

Previous years have commemorated former team captain Paul Konerko in 2014, first baseman Jose Abreu in 2015, former two-sport athlete Bo Jackson in 2016 and Hall of Famer Tim Lincecum in 2017 – raising a combined total of more than \$350,000.

To top it off, as legendary Sox play-by-play TV announcer Hawk Harrelson nears retirement, Pierzynski will join him in the booth as a special guest, Sept. 2 against the Red Sox.

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### **When They Were Prospects: Robin Ventura**

By Chris Kamka / NBC Sports Chicago / July 10, 2018

With such a strong focus on current White Sox prospects, we thought it'd be fun to take a look back at statistics and scouting reports of other South Side stars on their journey to the MLB. Our Chris Kamka dug deep into the numbers.

In a baseball discussion, a simple mention of the number 56 is all it takes. You know exactly what is being discussed. Joe DiMaggio's MLB record hitting streak in 1941.

In 1987, Robin Ventura set an NCAA record (since broken) by hitting in 58 straight.

A year later, he was the Golden Spikes Award winner, given to the top collegiate player. And he was drafted 10th overall by the White Sox.

He concluded his NCAA career at Oklahoma State with a .428 batting average, 68 Home Runs, 301 RBI and a .792 slugging percentage in 210 games.

White Sox Director of Scouting and Player Development Al Goldis commented on the team's number one pick:

"Obviously, we were looking for a quality player. It just so happens we got a player to fill a need. He's the best pure hitter in the draft, and we need hitting."

Goldis added: "He's a Boggs-type guy. His hitting fundamentals are excellent."

He hit .278 with a stellar .403 OBP in a 129-game tour through Birmingham (AA) in 1989, striking out only 51 times compared to 93 walks. He finished the season with the White Sox. He hit only three home runs over his 145 combined games in the minors & majors.

Entering 1990, Ventura was Baseball America's #15 Prospect (Frank Thomas was ranked 29th). He hit .249/.324/.318 with 5 Home Runs in his first full Major League season.

Robin took it to the next level as the White Sox moved into New Comiskey Park in 1991. He hit .284/.367/.442 and his power arrived with 23 HR and 100 RBI. Ventura took home the first of his six career Gold Gloves at the Hot Corner. He made his first All-Star team the next year. For several years, Robin's sweet left-handed swing was the perfect compliment to the booming bat of Frank Thomas.

Ventura's 10-year run in Chicago concluded in 1998, finishing with 171 HR, 741 RBI, more Walks (668) than Strikeouts (659), and a slash line of .274/.365/.440 before moving on to the Mets for 1999.

Robin returned to Chicago to serve as White Sox manager from 2012-16.

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### **Column: No apology necessary: White Sox All-Star Jose Abreu worth keeping more than trading**

By David Haugh / Chicago Tribune / July 10, 2018

In the White Sox clubhouse Sunday, players gathered as manager Rick Renteria announced first baseman Jose Abreu had been named an American League All-Star starter.

Abreu responded with an apology.

Becoming an All-Star means never having to say you're sorry, but there Abreu was, the first Sox position player voted into the All-Star lineup in 22 years, humbly accepting an honor he thought he didn't deserve.

"He felt like he wasn't doing enough to make the All-Star club," Renteria said.

The gesture made a lasting impression on young Sox players, many of them Latinos, who look up to the 31-year-old Cuban. That cast a powerful image.

That's not an insignificant example for a team that one day expects to worry about how to handle success. Remember that the next time someone floats an Abreu trade rumor, likely to happen by the time you're done reading this column. Astros? Red Sox? Who's next?

Abreu's intangibles make him more valuable to the Sox than any other team in the league, metrics impossible to measure. Imagine how many prospects it would take to equal the sentimental value general manager Rick Hahn inevitably would factor into any potential Abreu deal. Abreu is like the cute, lived-in bungalow on the cul-de-sac whose market price will fall well short of an inflated number the seller truly seeks for reasons difficult to explain. Unless it's an offer Hahn can't refuse, any deal involving Abreu would come as a surprise.

Hahn always seems more amused than annoyed when asked about Abreu's trade speculation but clarified one thing Tuesday in the Sox dugout. Hahn sees no connection between any increased chatter involving Abreu and the prolonged slump that saw his batting average dip 60 points in 40 games, a bad stretch that included only three home runs and 20 RBIs. So the Sox would be selling low on Abreu anyway, making a trade even harder to understand.

One other truth Hahn repeated more than he confirmed when asked if he keeps an open dialogue with Abreu regarding his status.

"There's no misunderstanding about how we feel about him, and he knows that," Hahn said.

Really, the ongoing debate over whether to trade Abreu is no debate at all, a product of sports media's endless quest for Web clicks, ratings points and boredom cures. The Sox have stayed pretty consistent with their philosophy when it comes to their team leader.

Sure, they need minor-league assets and control Abreu contractually only through the 2019 season, facts that churn the rumor mill. But if the Sox believe Abreu has three or four productive seasons left in his bat, then they would be wiser considering another alternative seldom mentioned: the contract extension.

Sign the dangerous hitter with a career slash line of .296/.353/.514 through the 2022 season instead of trading one of the franchise's best players in the post-2005 World Series era.

"I love this organization," Abreu said Tuesday through an interpreter.

If it's as mutual as Hahn suggests, the right move would be to let everybody know it with a contractual maneuver that removes any doubt.

As the July 31 trade deadline nears, go ahead and shop Avisail Garcia, whose right hamstring injury doesn't sound bad enough to prevent him from returning in time to get hot again before the end of the month. Garcia is only 27, but the Sox might be smart to sell high, if they can. Get what you can for veteran pitchers James Shields and Joakim Soria, which won't be much. Even keep an open mind if a contender makes an enticing offer for power hitter Matt Davidson, a difficult player to project in the Sox rebuild.

But take Abreu off the market by extending him and send the slugger to Washington for the All-Star Game hoping the experience can help restore his confidence.

"It could be an affirming aspect to who he is," Renteria said.

Who Abreu is to the Sox, now and in the future, makes him worth keeping.

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**Jose Abreu stays upbeat despite deep slump that continues in 14-2 loss to Cardinals**

By Phil Rogers / Chicago Tribune / July 10, 2018

Jose Abreu will be the American League's starting first baseman in the All-Star Game. But unless he figures out something between now and then, he will face the likes of Max Scherzer and Jacob deGrom while in the worst stretch of his five seasons in Chicago.

Abreu took another 0-for-4 on Tuesday night, and even if he had been 4-for-4 it may not have mattered for the White Sox. The Cardinals pounded them 14-2 in the opener of a five-game homestand, with former Cub Dexter Fowler hitting a grand slam that delighted St. Louis fans in the crowd of 23,245.

Imagine trying to hit your way out of a slump against Scherzer or deGrom, with every baseball fan watching.

"I'm ready," Abreu said. "Not just for that but to represent this organization the best I can. Things are going to be good."

There are few signs at the moment, however. The Cardinals punished Dylan Covey (3-5) and the bullpen, giving the Sox their six consecutive loss and 19th in the last 25 games.

Abreu grounded out in all four at-bats (once into a double play), and each time ended an inning. He's batting .178 with only three home runs in 157 at-bats since May 27.

There are better ways to market yourself for a midseason trade, although Abreu is hardly hoping to get out of town. It's the opposite, really. He's trying his hardest to help an undermanned, inexperienced team that just keeps taking lumps.

"It's frustrating," said Charlie Tilson, whose third-inning single drove in both Sox runs. "I feel like we are hanging in there early for sure. ... It's one of those things you have to keep fighting. Those situations happen but we have to work through it."

Abreu has said consistently he wants to finish his career with the Sox, so he's hardly looking for an exit ramp. He hopes he can earn a contract extension, as he continues to believe there are big things ahead for him, just as there was for his old team in Cuba, Cienfuegos.

The Elefantos suffered through six consecutive losing seasons at the start of Abreu's career but then went 194-127 in his last 31/2 seasons before he defected to the United States.

"(Losing) hasn't affected me at all," Abreu said. "I always compare this process to my time in Cuba. My first years in Cuba, the team wasn't good and we passed through a process like this. By the end of my time there we were winning, and I think that's the process here. I embrace this process."

White Sox general manager Rick Hahn expects a big second half from Abreu, who generally has been much better after the All-Star break than in the early months.

"He has had a tough stretch, these things happen," Hahn said. "We've seen All-Star caliber players such as him go through 20- or 30-game stretches where they haven't performed up to an All-Star level, which happens over the course of a long season. ... It's certainly nothing to be concerned about from our standpoint from a long-term performance standpoint."

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### **Avisail Garcia back on disabled list with strained hamstring**

By Phil Rogers / Chicago Tribune / July 10, 2018

While Avisail Garcia hit the disabled list on Tuesday, the White Sox felt there was good news in him being diagnosed with only a Grade 1 strain in his right hamstring.

There's hope it is mild enough for him to return immediately after the All-Star break, putting him back into play for a possible trade before the July 31 deadline.

Garcia, who was sidelined from April 24 through June 21 with a Grade 2 strain in a different area of his right hamstring, was hitting .333 with eight homers and a 1.130 OPS in 72 plate appearances before leaving Sunday's game in Houston.

"He looked fantastic for the stretch of time we had him active," Hahn said. "Hopefully the layoff this time will be brief enough that he's able to pick up where he left off."

Hahn said he's receiving interest from contenders in some of the Sox's veteran pitchers but the players who figure to draw the most interest are Garcia and All-Star first baseman Jose Abreu. Both are signed only through 2019 so at some point the team will probably either trade them or extend their contracts.

"We're going to have to make a decision on (them) in due course," Hahn said. "Now is not the time to make that decision (on Garcia) while he's sitting here on the DL, but in the coming weeks and months those are the types of decisions we might have to make."

Sheepish All-Star: Abreu, who has had at least 25 homers and 100 RBIs in each of his four full seasons, was elected by fans for the first time despite diminished production.

"It was interesting," manager Rick Renteria said. "We presented (the news) with everybody in the clubhouse, let him know he made the club. He was apologetic because he felt like he wasn't doing enough to make the All-Star club. ... We know he belongs there."

Extra innings: Pitching coach Don Cooper had surgery on his hand but is expected back Wednesday or Friday. ... Outfielder Micker Adolfo, who had been limited to designated-hitter duty at high Class A Winston-Salem, will undergo Tommy John surgery and miss the rest of the season. He was hitting .283 with 11 homers and 50 RBIs in 78 games. ... Nick Madrigal, the fourth overall pick in the June draft, is nursing a strained hamstring he played through with Oregon State in the College World Series.

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### **More bad news on, off field for White Sox**

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Sun-Times / July 10, 2018

Not a day, it seems, and certainly not a week, goes by without fresh White Sox injury news.

On Tuesday, the team returned home after a 2-8 road trip to announce that one of the hottest hitters in baseball, Avisail Garcia, was returning to the disabled list. From the minor-league side, in the land where the Sox' future rests, general manager Rick Hahn said outfield prospect Micker Adolfo suffered a setback in his throwing program and will undergo Tommy John surgery and be out eight to 10 months.

This wasn't a stunner. Adolfo suffered a sprained ulnar collateral ligament during spring training. Rather than go under the knife, he got 334 plate appearances at Class A Winston-Salem (where he batted .283/.368/.466 with 11 homers and 50 RBI) as a designated hitter to keep the offensive side of his development moving, knowing the surgery was possible.

But still, how much more can a team take — especially one that fell to 30-61 on Tuesday night with a 14-2 loss to the visiting Cardinals? Even pitching coach Don Cooper was out Tuesday after having minor surgery on his hand.

It's been that kind of year.

Garcia going to the DL with a hamstring strain wasn't a surprise, either, not after seeing him slow up running down the first-base line in Houston on Sunday.

Under different circumstances, this might have been a nice time to call up Eloy Jimenez, the Sox' prized outfield prospect, but Jimenez needs seven to 10 days before returning from the adductor strain that sidelined him and silenced any buzz about a possible July call-up.

The injuries to prospects — almost too numerous to list, and coupled with the major-league team's performance — have been a reality check about the Sox becoming contenders in the next two seasons. "It's been a tough year from a health standpoint," Hahn said. "At the same time, we know if you have a great number of prospects, the odds of some or multiple of them getting hurt are higher.

"[It also] reinforces some of the tenets or mantra you've heard us repeat from the start of this entire rebuild, going back the last 18 months. We need to build depth, enough redundancy within our own system, so when things like this happen, we have alternatives."

On the field, the struggles continued on the first night of a five-game homestand. Shortstop Tim Anderson's error on a routine ground ball led to an unearned run in the fifth, and in a seven-run sixth, the Cardinals blew it open on .167 hitter Dexter Fowler's grand slam against Hector Santiago. The inning also included runs on Omar Narvaez's passed ball, reliever Bruce Rondon's wild pitch between Narvaez's feet, and a bases-loaded walk by Rondon — one of his three free passes.

There's a long ways to go, but Hahn says the injuries to the aforementioned players, as well as to Jake Burger, Dane Dunning, Luis Robert and Zack Burdi, to name a few more, don't alter the outlook for when the Sox will be competitive.

"It's not like a start date that [on] this specific time, on this specific date, we need to be ready to win," Hahn said. "It's more [that] during this timeframe, we expect to be in a position to contend annually. Obviously, on certain players who haven't been able to give us full seasons, the jury might still be out going into next offseason on exactly how and when they matriculate to being contributing big-leaguers on a championship club. But in general, the breadth and the depth of the prospects and the ceilings of the prospects still keep us on relatively the same timeframe that we put out there.

"Until these guys get to Chicago, though, and are performing in Chicago, and we've augmented them properly through free agency or trades, it's impossible to say they're going to start winning on this date. There's still work that needs to be done."

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### **Cubs' Willson Contreras ASG starter, but Cards catcher still feels like the man**

By Steve Greenberg / Sun-Times / July 10, 2018

Yadier Molina was a happy guy Tuesday as he discussed his late addition to the National League All-Star roster. Next week in Washington will be All-Star appearance No. 9 for the great Cardinals catcher.

"I'm glad to be part of this team," Molina said at Guaranteed Rate Field before the Cardinals opened a two-game series against the White Sox. "It's a great honor for me to be a part of this game."

He was a happy guy, that is, until a real nudnik of a reporter started in with questions about his controversial Instagram post — way back in January, it was — directed at Cubs catcher Willson Contreras.

"Respect the ranks, rookie!" was the gist of what Molina wrote next to a photo of himself with the Giants' Buster Posey and the Royals' Salvador Perez at the 2015 All-Star Game.

Actually, the controversy started when Contreras, 26, proclaimed at Cubs Convention that he was going to become a better player than Molina and eventually be the "best catcher in the game for a long time." And, technically, it only became a controversy when the very same nudnik reporter, to whom Contreras had made those remarks, wrote about it.

So sue me.

Considering Contreras is this year's All-Star starter behind the plate, I was going to ask Molina for an update on his relationship with the Cubs hotshot anyway. But after it was discovered Tuesday afternoon

by a Sun-Times sleuth that Molina had actually taken down the aforementioned Instagram post, well, inquiring minds first had to know what the heck that was all about.

"I don't remember," Molina said. "When did that happen, January?"

But why? Why did he remove the post?

"I don't know why you keep asking the same question."

Because I'm a nudnik?

"Why did I take it down? Because I wanted to."

So that settles it.

As for his relationship with Contreras, it certainly appears that all is well.

"Yeah, why not?" Molina said. "Yeah, yeah, I'm always going to pull for him. He's a great kid. He's got great talent. I've got nothing against him."

The Cardinals have had a healthy respect for Contreras' ability since the first start of his career, which came in June 2016 against the Cubs' division rivals at Wrigley Field.

"He's obviously a talent," Cardinals manager Mike Matheny said. "He's got a dangerous bat, a lot of power. Got a cannon of an arm. You can see that he has a lot of energy back there, a lot of things that he does well. The first time that we watched him, we realized that he was probably going to be around for a while."

Yet, will Contreras rise to the level of, as he put it, "the best catcher in the game for a long time"? And does the fact he's starting in his first All-Star Game signify he's the best in the NL right now?

Cubs manager Joe Maddon says Contreras is the top catcher in all of baseball. According to Maddon, if a scout graded every catcher in the game in all areas — hitting, arm strength, blocking pitches, running the bases, tenacity, aggressiveness, you name it — Contreras would come out No. 1.

"After a certain amount of time, somebody else has to ascend to the throne," he said.

But many would say 31-year-old Posey is the best. There's buzz as well about the Marlins' 27-year-old J.T. Realmuto, who, like Contreras, will be making his All-Star debut. Of course, many others would throw their support behind Molina, who turns 36 on Friday.

That's where Matheny — himself a four-time Gold Glove-winning catcher — is at.

"I'm extremely biased because we get to see every day all the little things he does that'll never find a category," Matheny said. "You can't have metrics on some of the things that he does that help this team. To me, it's just very rare what he has done. Just look at the impact a player has — I don't know if there's a more impactful player for a team."

You know who else still puts Molina right at the top of the heap? Molina does. He's feeling young and doing his usual workhorse thing. He's batting close to his career .284 average, leading the league at his position with 13 home runs and still excelling defensively. Cardinals shortstop Paul DeJong, 24, called it a "privilege" to share the field with the potential Hall of Famer.

Contreras is the All-Star starter, but Molina still sees himself as the man.



"In my mind, I feel that way," he said. "But right now, I'm worried about staying healthy and trying to help my team win. I'm not worried about anything else."

Least of all a six-month-old social media post.

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### **White Sox Charities honors A.J. Pierzynski with bobblehead**

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Sun-Times / July 10, 2018

A.J. Pierzynski remembers the last time the White Sox went to the postseason. It was 2008.

The catcher on that team and the 2005 World Series champs, now a team ambassador, stopped by Guaranteed Rate Field to promote his bobblehead featuring Pierzynski's bleach-blond hair in his memorable postgame celebration pose acknowledging fans after the 2008 "Blackout Game," the AL Central tiebreaker against the Twins, which the Sox won 1-0.

It was one of the most memorable games in recent Sox history and one of the most memorable for Pierzynski.

"One game, everything on the line," he said.

"The fans were really into it. It was one of the coolest experiences to walk out on the field and every person in the stands was in black. It was just something I had never seen before."

More than anything, it was about making the postseason.

"We hadn't been there for a few years and the White Sox haven't been back since," Pierzynski said.

Pierzynski is broadcasting for Fox Sports about once a week and will do a Sox game with Ken Harrelson on Sept. 2. He has kept an eye on his old team from a distance.

"I like the direction they are in," he said. "They need to keep going. It's tough. These guys are thrust into the fire. You look around MLB right now and there are a lot of teams in the same spot. It's all going to come down to who develops their players the quickest. The White Sox have a good staff and organization and are on the right track."

The bobbleheads are available for \$35 online at [whitesox.com/ajbobble](http://whitesox.com/ajbobble) and at Guaranteed Rate Field in Section 135 beginning Friday.

Shipping rates also apply. All proceeds from the bobblehead sales benefit White Sox Charities and Make-A-Wish Illinois, an organization selected by Pierzynski.

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### **White Sox put Avisail Garcia on 10-day disabled list with strained hamstring**

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Sun-Times / July 10, 2018

Just when White Sox right fielder Avisail Garcia was crushing everything in sight, he returned to the disabled list.

Garcia went on the 10-day DL Tuesday with a strained right hamstring, and the timing couldn't be worse. He was batting .333 with 13 extra-base hits and 13 RBI in 17 games since returning from the DL with a Grade 2 right hamstring strain. His eight homers since June 26 are the most in baseball.

The Sox put Ryan LaMarre, claimed off waivers from the Twins on Monday, on the 25-man roster.

Garcia, who has been playing with tight hamstrings in both legs, left the game Sunday in Houston. The Sox expect him back after the All-Star break.

Garcia's hitting surge rekindled debates about whether he should be included in the Sox' rebuild. He turned 27 last month, so he could conceivably fit.

"From an age standpoint, absolutely," general manager Rick Hahn said Tuesday. "He's under control right now through 2019, which currently doesn't overlap with what we project to be the bulk of our potential championship window. So we're going to have to make a decision on him and others in due course."

Abreu's heavy load

Manager Rick Renteria suggested first baseman Jose Abreu's recent slump is related to him trying to carry too much on his shoulders on a losing team.

Abreu, who was named Sunday as an American League starter for the All-Star Game, didn't disagree.

"Yes, I think so," he said through a translator. "I've always wanted to give 100 percent of myself to this organization. And sometimes you take on more responsibility than you should take. But it shows who I am. That's the way I take care of business."

But he won't change.

"I can't," he said. "That's not who I am. It's never going to happen."

Rondon down?

Right-hander Bruce Rondon, who was gathering belongings after the game and receiving pats on the back from teammates, likely will be replaced on the 25-man roster Wednesday. Rondon walked three and threw a wild pitch. His ERA climbed to 8.49.

"He's got a great arm, great stuff but you have to command and everybody knows at the major league level, no matter how good your stuff is, you've got to hit your spots," Renteria said.

In other news

Pitching coach Don Cooper missed Tuesday's game after surgery on his right hand Monday. He's expected back Wednesday.

- Sam Esposito, who played nine of his 10 seasons with the Sox and appeared in two games for them in the 1959 World Series, has died at 81.

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## **LaMarre sits out Chicago White Sox's lopsided loss to Cardinals**

By Scot Gregor / Daily Herald / July 10, 2018

As a member of the Twins this season, Ryan LaMarre played seven games against the Chicago White Sox.

"I think everyone knows what they're building up toward," he said.

Slogging through a difficult season, the Sox are hoping all of the prospects they've been stockpiling since after the 2016 season stay healthy and make impacts when they reach the major leagues.

It's going to be a patchwork process until that happens, and LaMarre will try to find a place with the White Sox after being claimed off waivers from Minnesota on Monday.

The 29-year-old outfielder joined the Sox's 25-man roster for Tuesday night's game against the Cardinals, replacing injured right fielder Avisail Garcia. In 43 games over four stints with the Twins this season, LaMarre batted .263 with 5 doubles and 8 RBI. He also has played for the Reds, Red Sox and Athletics.

LaMarre didn't play for the White Sox against St. Louis. Dexter Fowler's grand slam in the sixth inning broke the game open and the Cardinals buried the Sox 14-2.

White Sox starter Dylan Covey (3-5) had another rough outing, allowing 5 runs (4 earned) on 9 hits and 2 walks in 5 innings.

Relievers Jace Fry and Bruce Rondon combined to give up 5 runs in two-thirds of an inning. Rondon had 3 walks and a wild pitch in one-third of an inning, and the big right-hander likely pitched his last game for the Sox.

"Great arm, great stuff, but you have to command at the major-league level," manager Rick Renteria said of Rondon. "You have to hit your spots to have a chance at success."

Covey had 4 strikeouts through the first 2 scoreless innings before giving up 4 straight two-out singles in the third that put the Cardinals ahead 2-0.

"I felt good early," Covey said. "The ball started keeping up in the zone as I went on. They were sitting on fastballs the second time through (the lineup) and attacking them early. I need to recognize that and throw sliders, curveballs and changeups for strikes."

Jimenez update:

Top prospect Eloy Jimenez hasn't played since July 1 due to a strained left adductor, but the 21-year-old outfielder is close to returning.

"He's progressing nicely," general manager Rick Hahn said. "Probably another week to 10 days at this point. One thing that given the situation we're in right now is we're always going to err on the side of caution with these guys. There's no need to rush anyone back."

Jimenez was on track to join the White Sox later this season. Does the injury eliminate that chance?

"Not yet," Hahn said. "Right now he's on the DL, so that decision isn't really on the table. Given the progress he's made when he's been active, that issue could be back on the table at some point here in the not too distant future. For now, it's a moot point."

In a combined 65 games with Class AA Birmingham and AAA Charlotte this season, Jimenez is hitting .313/.371/.541 with 12 home runs and 46 RBI.

Pierzynski sighting:

A.J. Pierzynski was at Guaranteed Rate Field on Tuesday to promote his new bobblehead commemorating the 10-year anniversary of the White Sox's "Blackout Game" against the Twins. In Game 163 of the 2008 season, the Sox edged Minnesota at home to advance to the playoffs.

"The fans were really into it," Pierzynski said. "It was one of the coolest experiences to walk out on the field and every person in the stands was in black. It was just something I had never seen before."

Pierzynski bobbleheads currently are available at whitesox.com and at home games (Section 135) beginning Friday. Proceeds benefit Chicago White Sox Charities.

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## Updating Chicago White Sox's injury report

By Scot Gregor / Daily Herald / July 10, 2018

Before the first game of a homestand, Chicago White Sox general manager Rick Hahn typically meets with the media and takes questions.

The practice has continued this season, but most of Hahn's dugout sessions begin with injury updates.

As the White Sox prepared to play the St. Louis Cardinals on Tuesday night at Guaranteed Rate Field, Hahn shed light on the health status of four players -- right fielder Avisail Garcia, outfield prospect Micker Adolfo and infielder Nick Madrigal and outfielder Steele Walker, the club's top two draft picks last month.

Garcia is back on the disabled list with a Grade 1 strain of right hamstring. The Sox's lone all-star in 2017 was out from April 24-June 20 with a Grade 2 strain.

"It is the same hamstring, however it is in a different location and is considered more mild than last time around," Hahn said. "Our doctors and training staff are optimistic that we could have him back as soon as the start of the second half (July 20)."

In 17 games back in the Sox's lineup, Garcia batted .333 with 3 doubles, 2 triples, 8 home runs, 13 RBI and a 1.130 OPS.

"He looked fantastic for the stretch of time we had him active," Hahn said. "Hopefully, the layoff this time will be brief enough that he's able to pick up where he left off."

The news on Adolfo was much worse.

In spring training, the 21-year-old outfielder injured his throwing (right) elbow, and season-ending Tommy John surgery was an option.

Swinging didn't bother the elbow, so Adolfo was the full-time designated hitter at high Class A Winston-Salem this season.

Adolfo started a throwing program last month with the hopes of returning to the outfield this season, but he suffered a setback and is now scheduled to have the reconstructive elbow procedure.

"Obviously not great news for Micker, but going back to spring training we were concerned he was going to end up missing the entire year," Hahn said. "At least this way, Micker was able to get over 300 plate appearances at Winston-Salem, had a very solid year from a development standpoint."

Pitchers typically are Tommy John victims, and the usual down time is one year. Adolfo should be back in 8-10 months.

Madrigal, the No. 4 overall pick in the draft, made his professional debut with the Arizona Rookie League White Sox last Thursday. He also was scheduled to play Saturday and head to low A Kannapolis on Sunday.

Hahn said the shortstop/second baseman was dealing with a mild hamstring injury his last three weeks with Oregon State, this year's College World Series champions.

"If you know the kid or at least know of the kid, you understand why he was continuing to grind through that, because he was trying to win a national championship," Hahn said. "Then he showed up to us, wanted to keep playing through it, which we shut down."

"He's progressing nicely. He'll likely be back in the lineup with the Arizona affiliate hopefully by this weekend if not sooner and then go from there to Kannapolis once he gets his rhythm back."

Walker, the Sox's second-round pick out of Oklahoma, hasn't made his pro debut due to an oblique injury.

"He missed part of the college postseason because of that oblique and we're letting him fully recover from that before we get him out there," Hahn said. "It was something we knew when we drafted him and we're just giving him time to heal."

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## **Rozner: National League as wide open as ever**

By Barry Rozner / Daily Herald / July 10, 2018

Baseball has been ruined by the "superteams."

Yep, that was the narrative in spring training 2018. Too many teams tanking, too few teams with a chance to win the World Series, too many great teams dominating the sport.

Narratives come and go quickly in baseball these days, the national contingent landing on a conversation and passing it around the game as if it's gospel.

Groupthink at its finest.

The problem is it hasn't happened in the National League this year. All three division races were supposed to be over by June 1 and instead all three divisions are up for grabs.

The Cubs, Nationals and Dodgers were supposed to cruise into the playoffs, but going into Tuesday night the Cubs were in second place, 1½ back of the Brewers, the Dodgers were in second by a half-game, trailing Arizona and chased closely by the Giants and Rockies, and the Nationals were in third at .500, behind the Phillies and Braves.

So much for the NL superteams. So much for the ruined sport.

With the Red Sox, Yankees and Astros performing as expected, and the Mariners surprising just about everyone, the American League has four teams on pace for 95 wins, but the National League has just one in the Brewers as of Tuesday evening.

The Nationals, one of the guaranteed superteams, would have to finish 50-22 to win 95 games.

The average number of 95-win teams has been four the last decade, with some years five and some at three. The current pace is five -- including Seattle, which no one forecast -- so not what you would call an extraordinary occurrence.

Five of the six divisions have great races shaping up for the second half, and the only division already decided is the AL Central, where the Indians have not played like a superteam and are winning easily only because the rest of the teams are so bad.

But is that because of tanking? Only the White Sox and Tigers in the Central have announced their intentions, while the Twins are trying to win and the Royals held on to their World Series stars too long for a small-market operation needing to turn over the roster.

There are many bad teams trying to win and just aren't good at it, like the Orioles, Blue Jays, Rangers, Mets and Pirates, and fewer teams than expected actually pulling the plug as did the White Sox, admitting they are losing in hopes of future winning.

The Reds were supposed to be terrible but have played better than .500 over their last 73 games, since Jim Riggleman took over as manager, and are planning to boost the payroll in 2019.

At the same time, even the supposed superteams are flawed. The Cubs, Dodgers, Nationals, Yanks, Red Sox and Indians all have issues they are trying to address before the trade deadline, and these are not small problems.

The Astros are the only great team that seems to have little to worry about, and even they have intentions of picking up at least one late-inning arm before the postseason, and it remains to be seen how the Astros' hurlers who pitched into November will handle another long playoff run.

So if you think back to the spring-training storylines, it was supposed to be the most boring baseball season ever.

Five divisions were decided and the sixth was New York vs. Boston, with all of it sewn up before a pitch was thrown in anger.

Instead, only one division race is done and only one wild card is a certainty, coming from the AL East.

The second half looks as if it will be quite entertaining, and there is much to be determined before October.

Unless they have altered the process, only one team can come out of the American League, where four teams have a very good chance, and only one from the National League, where as many as nine teams think they can get it done with the right mix of improved performance and acquisition.

Only a few months ago, the screaming was that superteams and tanking were ruining the game, and that rules must be changed immediately to fix a broken system.

So much for narratives.

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### **Add these 5 Chicago White Sox prospects to the watch list**

By Scot Gregor / Daily Herald / July 10, 2018

Chicago White Sox fans of the future undoubtedly are up to speed on all of the organization's top prospects.

They know outfielders Eloy Jimenez (adductor strain) and Luis Robert (thumb) are down again with injuries, starting pitcher Michael Kopech is having an uneven campaign with Class AAA Charlotte, AA Birmingham starter Dane Dunning is hoping to avoid Tommy John surgery, and first-round draft pick Nick Madrigal is scheduled to join low A Kannapolis at some point this week.

With so much young talent to track, a few Sox prospects have slipped through the cracks.

"There have definitely been some surprises," said Chris Getz, the White Sox's director of player development.

Here are five:

Spencer Adams

The Sox typically go the college route when using high draft picks on pitchers.

In 2014, they used their second-round pick on White County (Georgia) High School right-hander Spencer Adams.

The 6-foot-3, 170-pounder took some expected lumps on his climb through the system, and he figured to spend the entire season at Birmingham after going 3-6 with a 4.59 ERA in 13 starts this year.

But Adams was dealing with a finger injury in spring training, and he was bumped up to Charlotte in mid-June after allowing just 1 earned run in 21 innings over his final 3 starts at Double-A.

Adams has allowed 1 earned run over 13 innings in his last 2 starts with Charlotte, and the 22-year-old is pushing to be a part of the White Sox's rotation in 2019.

Luis Gonzalez

He's a third-round pick out of the University of New Mexico in 2017, and Sox amateur scouting director Nick Hostetler was thrilled to land the outfielder.

"Luis is a five-tool type of center fielder," Hostetler said.

The tools have been on display this season.

After batting .300/.358/.491 in 55 games with Kannapolis, the 22-year-old Gonzalez is hitting .317/.353/.492 in 13 games with high A Winston-Salem. He has 24 doubles, 9 home runs, 34 RBI and 8 stolen bases in 69 combined games.

"He uses the whole field and he's got some naturalness in the bat," Getz said. "He gets on base and has sneaky pop. Defensively, he's continued to improve. He's better than he was last year. He's throwing better. He's just a baseball player."

Ian Hamilton

An 11th-round pick in 2016 out of Washington State, don't be surprised if Hamilton is pitching out of the White Sox's bullpen following the all-star break.

After racking up 12 saves in 21 appearances with Birmingham while posting a 1.78 ERA, the right-handed Hamilton has not allowed a run in 6⅔ innings with Charlotte.

"He's got the right mentality," Getz said. "He certainly has the stuff. Mid-to-upper 90s fastball, a plus slider, just a bulldog approach to the whole thing."

Ti'Quan Forbes

Acquired from the Texas Rangers in the Miguel Gonzalez trade last August, Forbes is attracting attention at Winston-Salem.

A natural third baseman who also has been playing second, Forbes is batting .421 (16-for-38) with 2 home runs and 8 RBI over his last nine games.

Laz Rivera

A 28th-round pick in 2017 out of the University of Tampa, Rivera is a natural shortstop also capable of playing second and third base.

Rivera also can hit, as evidenced by his .339/.383/.522 slash line with 9 home runs and 33 RBI in 78 games with Kannapolis and Winston-Salem.

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## **State of the (injury-ravaged) farm system: Checking in on the White Sox's top prospects**

By James Fegan / The Athletic / July 10, 2018

In the position I am in, it's a blessing to get all the helpful fan feedback that I do receive, and to reflect on the perspective it provides. These days, a lot of comments are of the nature of "put everyone in bubble wrap," or "all of our pets are dead," or "I will donate my limbs to Eloy Jiménez."

With the benefit of a previous irrational decision to list out 67 prospects before the season, we can refer back to that list and see just how rough it's been for the White Sox's top prospects, and whether Jiménez really will need your limbs. For fun, first- and second-round picks Nick Madrigal and Steele Walker are listed about where they would fall if we were doing this whole list again right now, but otherwise the rankings are unchanged from the offseason list.

Tier 1

Eloy Jiménez, OF — Having a relatively normal season considering he's been shut down from game action on three separate occasions and it certainly hasn't hampered his game much, unless you're deeply scrutinizing his defense. That said, between this year's brief bout with knee soreness, a pectoral strain, an adductor strain and last year's bone bruise, he's developed a history of getting nicked up with minor ailments while incurring nothing that seems like it should hamper him long term.

Michael Kopech, RHP — Going through a more high-profile sequel of last year's first-half control problems, but despite his hard-throwing ways, remains as healthy as an ox. He did get scratched once last year from a start on his 21st birthday for "flu-like symptoms." (Off the field, he's doing great, apparently. After breaking up with a reality show-starring girlfriend, he is now dating TV actress Vanessa Morgan and was recently on set for her CW show "Riverdale.")

#### Tier 2

Luis Robert, OF — To steal a line from Tom Fornelli, Robert has 201 plate appearances since he signed last May, and 114 of them took place in the Dominican Summer League. That's not good. Robert is still young and precocious, has a chance to get back and play this season, and some of the tools were put on display this season. But he hasn't really been in sync since he left Cuba and general manager Rick Hahn acknowledged that due to the thumb issues, his power might not really play in games until next year.

#### Tier 3

Nick Madrigal, IF — The revelation that he's been dealing with a sore hamstring for three weeks adds some context to his struggles in the College World Series, if you prefer optimism. If you prefer pessimism, even though Madrigal will be back in action this week, White Sox prospects are injuring their hamstrings before they arrive now.

Alec Hansen, RHP — Lost almost half the Double-A season due to forearm issues, and after four clunkers, just had his first quality outing. As someone who led all of the minors in strikeouts last year, he's still not back to the height of his powers, nor the increased velocity he was targeting when he set reaching the majors as his preseason goal.

Dylan Cease, RHP — The high-risk electric stuff guy with questionable command and a history of injury is having the most drama-free successful season of any of the top prospects. Baseball is a funny game. That or Cease has the top-level stuff that won't be tested until the higher levels.

Dane Dunning, RHP — For someone whose carrying trait is reliability, missing eight weeks with an elbow strain is a major drag. Not every elbow injury is an immediate precursor to Tommy John surgery and this shouldn't be treated as such, but it remains to be seen how smoothly he'll return.

#### Tier 4

Zack Collins, C — Walking a ton, striking out a lot, hitting for solid but not overwhelming pop, and showing slow but steady progress on defense. He's done what was expected of him, which can't be taken for granted given the carnage around him.

Spencer Adams, RHP — Missed big league camp due to a torn ligament in his finger, and didn't pitch like he was completely healthy for the first couple months, but has settled in right where he was expected to be — a strike-throwing innings-eater at Triple-A — at this point in the year.

Jake Burger, 3B — Ugh, what a bummer.

Blake Rutherford, OF — He's taken a pickoff throw to the gut and flipped over an outfield wall but has largely been healthy. He's had as strong of a bounce-back campaign as could have been hoped for.

#### Tier 5

Luis Basabe, OF — Did the whole thing where his season was hampered and shortened by an injury last year as he battled through a torn meniscus in his left knee. This year he torched the Carolina League as he was expected to do upon repeating it, and earned himself a bid to the Futures Game.

Luis González, OF — The biggest issue for González is that there are scouts who think he needs to be in Double-A, and due to the White Sox's glut of lower-minors outfielders, he spent the entire first half in Low-A Kannapolis. As far as problems go, this ranks as less severe than a ruptured Achilles.



Micker Adolfo, RF — As Hahn argued, Adolfo was able to squeeze in 334 plate appearances at Winston-Salem, which were encouraging even if they did not dismiss the larger concerns for him as he progresses to the higher levels (contact rate, making the power play consistently enough in games to counter the contact rate). But he will be getting Tommy John surgery, as Hahn talked about Tuesday, which is bad news for a raw hitting prospect.

Steele Walker, OF — The White Sox drafted him knowing he had a strained oblique, and he is currently out with a strained oblique. Coincidence? I think not. It does not seem like it will create a prolonged absence.

Carson Fulmer, RHP — Health has not been his issue.

#### Tier 6

Ryan Cordell, OF — Monday marked 12 weeks since he fractured his right clavicle diving for a ball in center field in Charlotte, and between waiver claims for Trayce Thompson and now Ryan LaMarre, it's safe to say he missed a major opportunity to grab some playing time in the majors after another hefty opportunity at the end of 2017. To play the Luis Robert game, Cordell was acquired on July 26 of last year and since then has just 41 plate appearances in Triple-A to show for it.

Jordan Stephens, RHP — Stephens would point out that he was perfectly healthy right up until he felt forearm soreness at the end of spring training last year, but he's been without issue so far this season and is spinning curveballs and running a 3.69 ERA in Triple-A Charlotte. He is meeting all expectations.

A.J. Puckett, RHP — He started a throwing program a month ago, but has yet to appear in a game, even in the AZL, due to elbow soreness that knocked him out of the Double-A Birmingham rotation. He recently turned 23 and could pitch in the Arizona Fall League potentially, but has lost most of the season.

#### Tier 7

Seby Zavala, C — Started last season by having an awful month of April at Low-A Kannapolis, so with that in mind, that he's currently having a rough transition to Triple-A offensively speaks to some nice work in-between. He missed a couple weeks with a sore wrist and has not quite returned to his power-hitting ways since, though an adjustment to a new level has to be weighed in.

Aaron Bummer, LHP — His stuff seems to be a couple steps out ahead of his command, both in the majors and since being optioned back to Charlotte, but health is not the question for the 24-year-old former Tommy John surgery recipient.

Zack Burdi, RHP — Burdi has not pitched in a game yet this year, which isn't a surprise given he tore his ulnar collateral ligament in July 2017. Jace Fry has quickly shown how much fun it would be to have an electrifying youngster to dream on, even delivering the limited impact that a short reliever has, and Burdi seems unlikely to get a chance to push for the major league squad at the end of this season, but nothing new has gone wrong in his recovery.

#### Lightning round of interesting players

Kade McClure, RHP — On the one hand, he was a yeoman college starter in Louisville who slipped to the sixth round and didn't throw much in 2017, so it wasn't known that he was going to be a prospect worth paying attention to until he dominated Low-A over his first eight starts. On the other hand, he twisted his knee fielding a ball and required season-ending surgery, so now he's a prospect worth paying attention to who got hurt. He remains childhood friends with Bears quarterback Mitch Trubisky.

Casey Gillaspie, 1B — Spent some time on the restricted list, spent the rest of his time struggling at Triple-A at the age of 25 and getting outrighted off the 40-man roster. He is healthy, though.

Gavin Sheets, 1B — A short disabled list stint due to a foot strain can't be blamed for his low power output, but his polished approach is still carrying him through a solid High-A season, even if the fundamental question about his profile remains unanswered.

Ian Clarkin, LHP — Has been out since the end of May with a groin strain, and has just started doing rehab starts in Arizona. Health aside, his results make his future as a starter less than automatic.

Bernardo Flores, LHP — After a strained oblique ended his 2017 season, he's been as reliable as it gets through getting a mid-season promotion to Double-A Birmingham while seeing his velocity tick back up.

Jordan Guerrero, LHP — Last year's top source of outrage for his 40-man roster omission, Guerrero was knocked around for 84 hits in 65 1/3 innings in Double-A Birmingham before getting a surprise call-up to Charlotte to fill a gap in their rotation for a bit. The shine from last year's first half worn off, though.

Alex Call, OF — An intercostal strain ruined his 2017 campaign, and while he's been healthy since the end of 2018, he would say he's still re-finding the rhythm he had in his draft year.

Jameson Fisher, OF — One of the Sox's middle-tier outfield prospects had to get the aggressive assignment and go straight to Double-A, and Fisher drew the short straw. He has struggled in response.

Yeyzon Yizarri, SS — He is an athletic shortstop, and everyone keeps talking about how cool it might be if he switched to pitching, which is a bit telling.

Ryan Burr, RHP — Between him and Ian Hamilton, I thought it would be Burr who would fly from the Birmingham bullpen and through the system at a rapid pace, but it turns out it was Hamilton. Burr has been dominant since June, though.

Thyago Vieira, RHP — He throws extremely hard with extreme effort and occasionally extreme control lapses.

Luis Curbelo, IF — Finally made it to full-season ball and is holding his own before Madrigal arrives and shifts the whole Kannapolis infield around in his wake.

Justin Yurchak, 1B — The approach and contact have come with him to full-season ball, but the power has not, which is an issue at first base.

Jace Fry, LHP — His year actually started with a disabled list stint for an oblique strain, but now he has an argument for "best reliever in the major league bullpen" status. He credits his rehab coach for the turnaround, so maybe prospect injuries are actually good.

Lincoln Hensman, RHP — In the name of managing his innings load progression, he's back to the bullpen for the second half of the season. It will be interesting to see how his hyper-economical strike-throwing translates to the higher levels, but when you're converting a college reliever to starting and that's the big question left, it's going pretty all right.

Charlie Tilson, OF — The most injury-ravaged man in the organization last year has been the one soaking up big league reps that others have spurned this year. His high-contact, low-power game seems to scream fourth outfielder, and that's exactly the job he's holding down right now.

Tito Polo, OF — He has hit the disabled list a couple times this year and finds himself mostly on the outside looking in at the Barons' outfield rotation. Great name though.

Craig Dedelow, OF — Needs to stand out at the plate as a 23-year-old corner outfielder playing in Low-A, and so far he has not stood out.

Joel Booker, OF — The former 22nd-round speedster has taken his underdog run up to Double-A after winning Carolina League All-Star Game MVP honors. He has already surprised scouts with his pop and hit tool in getting this far but will have to keep beating the odds to push through this glut of outfield prospects.

Tyler Danish, RHP — The transition to middle relief is looking permanent, but the 23-year-old still needs to be more of strike-thrower to make his “three pitches or less” sinker approach work.

Tyler Johnson, RHP — It’s rare that you see someone complete a perfectly straight trajectory from the back of the bullpen in Low-A to the back of the bullpen in the majors. But Johnson has been nothing but overpowering since getting selected in the fifth round last year and has curbed his control problems.

Alex Destino, OF — After a three-game cameo in Kannapolis last year, it was a little surprising he didn’t get a full-season assignment, but a slow start in Great Falls is showing it made sense.

Yermin Mercedes, C — He is fun to watch, but his nice offensive numbers in High-A would be more fun if he were not 25 years old and in his third season at the level.

Ian Hamilton, RHP — Last year he was another raw and hard-throwing reliever who seemed overwhelmed upon arriving at Double-A. Now he’s the relief prospect du jour in Triple-A who looks like he could get called up any moment and get major leaguers out.

José Rondón, SS — He’s tweaked his hamstring a couple times, so he’s not the perfect picture of prospect health, but he’s given himself a decent case to be a utility infield option going forward.

Laz Rivera, SS — At a level beyond Booker’s underdog status is Rivera, a 28th-rounder who mostly got my attention for making a play in instructional league last October that drew a standing ovation from manager Rick Renteria. He is 23 years old and not a tools monster, but riding an OPS over .900 across two levels of A-ball is a good way to transcend that.

Maiker Feliz, 3B — He’s 20 years old and has hit two home runs in nine games at Great Falls so far this year. He is very far away.

Mike Morrison, RHP — You don’t want to see any relief prospect struggle in High-A, but control problems seem like a common way for relief prospects to struggle.

Matt Foster, RHP — Also a reliever struggling with control, but only after he dominated High-A in the first half and got promoted

Jacob May, CF — He has not been the picture of perfect health, but is struggling to consistently get on base at Triple-A for the third-straight year and does not seem in the mix to get another big league look soon.

Brian Clark, LHP — After putting up solid but unspectacular numbers as a reliever in Triple-A, Clark is now putting up solid but unspectacular numbers as a reliever in Double-A this year.

Will Kincanon, RHP — The hard-throwing reliever is just getting his feet wet in Low-A.

Amado Nunez, SS — After struggling mightily as a 19-year-old in Great Falls last year, he is just struggling normally as a 20-year-old in Great Falls so far this year.

José Ruiz, RHP — The converted catcher was outrighted at the beginning of the year but is putting up dynamite numbers out of the bullpen in Double-A. He looks like a good depth addition.

Jimmy Lambert, RHP — Adding three mph to his fastball and switching over to a four-seamer/curveball/changeup combination has proven revelatory for the former fifth-round pick, who is putting up big swing-and-miss numbers in Birmingham and has put himself on the map as a prospect. His deception and athleticism will get tested at higher levels, but as you can see, he was more of an afterthought going into the year.

Matt Rose, 1B/3B — He's going to set a career-high in home runs this year after a stance change brought out his pop — and the Sox certainly aren't flush with third base options — but has struggled badly to make contact in Birmingham.

Victor Diaz, RHP — Still waiting to throw his first pitch for a White Sox affiliate this season due to shoulder troubles.

Danny Mendick, IF — Those still smarting from the loss of Jake Peter should know there is another well-traveled middle infielder with moderate pop waiting in the weeds in Birmingham, though Mendick has struggled since June.

Evan Skoug, C — He dropped to the seventh round due to contact problems and questions about whether he could stick behind the plate, and he's running a strikeout rate over 30 percent and has seven passed balls in 38 games in Kannapolis.

Andre Davis, LHP — Neither pitcher from the Melky Cabrera trade has pitched in a game this season, with Davis sitting out due to knee surgery for a patella issue.

Trey Michalczewski, 3B — Still only 23, but consistent pop has never shown up against Double-A pitching.

Mitch Roman, 2B — Still not much pop, but has played all over the infield for the Dash and got on base at a decent clip.

Zach Thompson, RHP — After three years of being extremely tall with good-looking stuff in High-A, he finally got a promotion to Birmingham and is looking nasty out of the bullpen.

Ben Wright, RHP — Spending the entire season on the restricted list seems suboptimal

Sam Abbott, 1B — Extremely raw power prospect should spend the summer playing complex league ball. Still searching for his first professional home run.

Corey Zangari, 1B — Finally healthy after Tommy John surgery, the raw power prospect is stroking homers in Great Falls again. This is his third year spending time there, but at 21 years of age, all hope is not lost.

Bryant Flete, 2B — He's listed at 5-foot-10, 146 pounds. This does not seem like it's particularly close to being right.

Glaring omissions who have proven to be at least as relevant as the guys listed here: Tate Blackman, 2B; Yosmer Solorzano, RHP; Blake Battenfield, RHP; John Parke, LHP; Luis Martinez, RHP; Blake Hickman, RHP; Ti'Quan Forbes, IF; Zach Remillard, IF/OF.

New draft additions who will obviously need to be considered on the next list: Konnor Pilkington, RHP; Lency Delgado, SS; Jonathan Stiever, RHP; Codi Heuer, RHP; Cabera Weaver, OF; Kelvin Maldonado, SS; Isaiah Carranza, RHP; and many others.

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