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**Twins thrilled to have Lynn on board**

**Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | March 12, 2018**

TAMPA, Fla. -- Lance Lynn officially became a Twin on Monday, signing his one-year, \$12 million contract after passing a physical, but he comes in already having prior relationships with several of his new teammates.

Lynn, who will make his debut on Tuesday (12:05 p.m. CT, listen live) in a planned three-inning start against the Orioles, trained this offseason in Jupiter, Fla., working out with several current Twins such as first baseman/DH Logan Morrison, Rule 5 right-hander Tyler Kinley, non-roster outfielder Ryan LaMarre and non-roster reliever Michael Kohn. Lynn was also teammates with lefty Zach Duke on the Cardinals last season, and he's known Brian Dozier since college, as Lynn faced Dozier several times in Ole Miss-Southern Miss matchups.

Lynn worked closely with Morrison this offseason, including throwing live batting practice to him while they were both free agents. Morrison kept in touch with him throughout the free-agent process and believes they both signed with the Twins on one-year deals because they wanted to play for a winner.

"Given my choices, it was a no-brainer to come here, and I think once I came here it kind of gave Lance a more clear choice to make," Morrison said. "He wants to win and that's what he's told me this whole time. He told me he was looking for a certain deal but if he didn't get it, he wanted to win, especially if it was just a one-year deal."

Lynn, 30, had other offers, but once he decided he was willing to take a one-year deal, his camp contacted the Twins because he felt it was his best fit to join a club that made the postseason last year and has several players he already knows.

"There was some real interest from the player to make this a marriage and that helped our cause," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "We have a couple guys in our clubhouse, player-wise, who know him particularly well. A lot of comments about how he's a great teammate and how he works and pitches the ball."

Minnesota becoming a popular destination for free agents looking to win has resonated in the clubhouse, as the front office has added veterans such as Fernando Rodney, Addison Reed, Duke, Morrison and Lynn via free agency, and all of them pointed to playing for a contender as a reason for signing with the Twins.

"The guys out there definitely wanted a team that's on the upswing with a chance to compete for the playoffs and a championship," Dozier said. "I think it's enticing for a lot of these guys, and it's cool to see. People want to win and be part of a good atmosphere. When you come to a place where you're willing to win and going to win, it brings out the better in yourself."

Lynn had spent his entire six-year career with the Cardinals, posting a career 3.38 ERA in 977 2/3 innings, but he missed the '16 season after undergoing Tommy John surgery. Lynn returned last year to post a 3.43 ERA in 33 starts with St. Louis, which impressed Duke, who also returned from the same surgery with the Cardinals last season.

"It was really impressive," Duke said. "He took the mound every day. No issues. He's a great teammate and a great competitor. He's as intense on the mound as they come. He's a bulldog. He eats up innings. He gives the team a chance to win every time. He's a great addition."

Lynn was continually referred to as a bulldog and a workhorse by Twins players, as he's averaged 32 starts and 192 innings over his past four seasons. And with Lynn another year removed from Tommy John surgery, he's a candidate to reach 200 innings for the third time in his career.

"It's definitely what we needed," Morrison said. "Our bullpen is good, but with him in the starting rotation, it's even better. Hopefully, when he starts, it's a day where the bullpen gets some rest."

As for Lynn off the mound, those who knew him best described him as having a much more low-key demeanor away from the field and isn't afraid to keep it loose with his teammates.

"He's great," Kinley said. "He's a gamer in between the lines and he's a real competitive guy on the mound, but from knowing him off the field, he's funny, real relaxed and fun to be around. He's a great guy and will be a great asset to this team."

### **Hughes sharp vs. Yankees in wake of Lynn deal** **Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | March 12, 2018**

TAMPA, Fla. -- Before his start against the Yankees on Monday night, Twins right-hander Phil Hughes met with manager Paul Molitor about his status after the club signed Lance Lynn to a one-year deal just weeks after trading for Jake Odorizzi to further bolster the rotation.

Hughes, who is coming off surgery to alleviate thoracic outlet syndrome, was competing with Anibal Sanchez for the final spot in the rotation until Lynn was signed and Sanchez was released over the weekend. Molitor told Hughes not to worry about the roster, as his focus needs to remain on proving he can be effective after several injury-plagued seasons. Hughes took the message to heart and pitched well in a 2-1 win over New York.

#### View Full Game Coverage

"He just reiterated my thoughts, that that kind of stuff doesn't matter," Hughes said of his meeting with Molitor. "Just go out and worry about what I can control, which is just throwing pitches on the mound. Obviously, it's a good thing for us. Our team is better with these moves we've made. It makes my status a little cloudier, but I can't let it affect me and be in my head when I pitch in games like this because I need to be productive and get results."

Hughes, coming off a live mound session Friday of two innings to fine-tune his off-speed pitches, allowed four hits, including a solo homer, over four innings with three strikeouts. He started nine of the 15 batters he faced with an off-speed pitch.

"A lot of those things I worked on during that sim game was sequence stuff, really, and I brought it into the game today and had some pretty good results," Hughes said. "Overall, I was pretty happy, and the command was pretty good. Fortunately, I was able to throw a lot of strikes."

Molitor softened his stance on opening with a four-man rotation on Monday, a day after he said he'd stick with that configuration because of off-days. But with Lynn on track to make just three Grapefruit League starts, the Twins could hold him back for one more outing on the Minor League side once the club departs for the regular season and go with Hughes as a starter early in the season.

"He knows what's going on," Molitor said. "It doesn't change what he's trying to do in terms of coming back from not pitching much last year and trying to earn innings at this level. He knows still has an opportunity with how we decide to proceed."

#### Camp battles

- Non-roster catcher Bobby Wilson hit a two-run homer to right off Masahiro Tanaka in the second inning Monday. Mitch Garver remains the

expected backup catcher, but Garver is 1-for-16 with a homer this spring.

- Robbie Grossman, who is competing with Zack Granite to be the fourth outfielder, has been heating up offensively after opening 0-for-17, and went 2-for-3 with a double in the second and a single in the fourth off Tanaka.
- Rule 5 right-hander Tyler Kinley, who is competing for a spot in the bullpen, threw a scoreless inning, working around two walks in the eighth. He has a 3.00 ERA this spring with his fastball reaching as high as 99 mph to go along with a 92-mph slider.
- Lefty Gabriel Moya, who is also competing for a bullpen role, continued his solid spring with a scoreless ninth to lower his ERA to 1.50.
- Left-hander Adalberto Mejia, who is likely headed to Triple-A after the signing of Lynn, threw two scoreless innings to lower his spring ERA to 4.50.

#### Injury updates

- Left fielder Eddie Rosario has yet to start a throwing program after dealing with right arm tendinitis. Molitor said the injury has healed slower than he expected. Rosario is expected to be ready to start the season and will return to action as a DH in spring before he sees the field.
- First baseman/designated hitter Logan Morrison said he's healthy after straining his right glute while running the bases on Wednesday and will return to the lineup against the Orioles on Thursday.
- Infielder Ehire Adrianza has been out since Tuesday with a left calf strain but will play as a backup on Wednesday, Molitor said.

#### Up next

- Lynn will be introduced with a news conference on Tuesday morning and then will make his Twins debut against the Orioles at 12:05 p.m. CT at Hammond Stadium (listen live). Odorizzi was scheduled to start but now will throw a bullpen session Thursday and start on Sunday. Other pitchers scheduled to see action include Addison Reed and Zach Duke.

### **Duggar's homer leads top prospect performers**

**William Boor | MLB.com | March 12, 2018**

Other top prospect performances from Monday's action:

No. 80 overall prospect Nick Gordon (Twins No. 4) stayed hot with a 2-for-3 performance against the Yankees. Gordon went 2-for-9 over his first five games of Spring Training, but he is 6-for-7 over his past four games. Gordon, the No. 10 overall shortstop prospect, also showed off his defensive versatility with a nice play at second base.

### **Lynn to Twins: Free agent finds new team**

**Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | March 12, 2018**

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- The Twins made their one-year contract with right-hander Lance Lynn official on Monday. The deal is worth \$12 million.

Lynn is the third major addition the Twins have made since arriving at camp, as they also traded for right-hander Jake Odorizzi on Feb. 17 and inked designated hitter/first baseman Logan Morrison on Feb. 28.

The addition of Lynn to the rotation moves the Twins' projected payroll to roughly \$130 million, which is a club record, and they'll lose the No. 95 overall selection in the third round of the Draft in 2018 because Lynn rejected the Cardinals' \$17.4 million qualifying offer. Lynn, however, cannot be extended a qualifying offer for a second time.

Lynn, 30, solidifies the rotation with his career 3.38 ERA in six seasons with the Cardinals, joining Jose Berrios, Kyle Gibson and Odorizzi as the four-man rotation expected to open the season. It leaves Phil Hughes in line for a long-relief spot, while Adalberto Mejia is likely headed for Triple-A Rochester. The rotation will get a further boost once Ervin Santana returns in late April or early May, after undergoing surgery on his right middle finger in early February.

The veteran had been linked to the Twins for much of the winter and reportedly turned down a two-year, \$20 million deal recently, according to a story this week from the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

Lynn missed the 2016 season after undergoing Tommy John surgery, but remained effective last season, posting a 3.43 ERA in 33 starts. He struck out 153, walked 78 and gave up 27 homers in 186 1/3 innings. He posted career-worst walk and strikeout rates, but the Twins are hopeful

that'll improve a year further removed from the surgery, as regaining command is often difficult in the first year back from the operation.

Outside of missing the 2016 season, Lynn was a workhorse for St. Louis, averaging 32 starts and 189 innings and a 3.39 ERA for five years from '12-'17. He's outpitched his peripheral stats throughout his career, as he has a career 3.64 FIP -- including a 4.82 FIP in '17 -- marks which are both higher than his 3.38 career ERA and 3.43 ERA last season.

Lynn is also the sixth notable free agent signed by the Twins this offseason, joining Zach Duke, Addison Reed, Fernando Rodney, Michael Pineda, and Morrison. They're aiming to make the postseason in back-to-back years for the first time since 2009-10, after their surprise run to the AL Wild Card Game last season.

Fantasy spin | Fred Zinkie (@FredZinkieMLB)

Although Lynn logged an unimpressive 4.82 FIP last season, he has produced a solid 3.38 ERA across nearly 1,000 career innings. The right-hander warrants late-round attention in shallow leagues after joining a contender in a division with three rebuilding teams, which should ease his transition to the American League by presenting many favorable matchups this year.

### **Twins post impressive depth at shortstop**

**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | March 13, 2018**

FORT MYERS, FLA. – Michael Cuddyer was one. So were Trevor Plouffe, Miguel Sano, Chuck Knoblauch and Brian Dozier.

They all were shortstops when signed or drafted by the Twins, and all ended up at another position.

And that underscores the Twins front office's belief that you can't have too many good options at one of baseball's premier positions.

The Twins began camp with four above-average shortstop prospects before dealing Jermaine Palacios to Tampa Bay for pitcher Jake Odorizzi. That still leaves them with Nick Gordon, Wander Javier and Royce Lewis. With Jorge Polanco, 24, just settling in as the shortstop of the present — he figures to be only the second Twins shortstop since 2004 to make consecutive Opening Day starts — the Twins appear to be secure at the position for the next several years.

“The reality is, when you think about the defensive spectrum and you work down that spectrum — no disrespect to first base or left field or otherwise, typically a lot of the guys who start there don't move into the middle infield positions, center, catcher,” Twins Chief Baseball Officer Derek Falvey said.

“So the up-the-middle positions — catcher, shortstop, center field, even second base to some degree — those guys have some flexibility afterward as they go up the ladder.”

Which means it's not a bad thing to draft or sign several shortstops a year, because they can be moved anywhere. It's not just the Twins, as a number of current and former players started out at short before moving elsewhere. Adam Jones, Melvin Upton, Dustin Pedroia, Alex Rodriguez and even former Twins All-Star closer Joe Nathan (54 games for Class A Bellingham in 1995) began as shortstops before switching positions.

The moves can be made for various reasons. Some outgrow shortstop (see Sano). Skill sets become better suited for another position (see Dozier). In Nathan's case, he just couldn't hit. But someone loved his arm enough to make him a pitcher.

Collecting top shortstop prospects can require using high draft picks and committing millions in bonus money. Lewis, the first overall pick in last year's draft, signed for \$6.7 million. Javier, 19, signed out of the Dominican Republic for a club record \$4 million in 2015. Gordon, the fifth overall pick in 2014, signed for \$3.8 million.

Lewis, 18, is ranked as the top overall prospect in the organization by MLB.com, with Gordon fourth and Javier fifth. The Twins took Lewis with Polanco, Gordon, Javier and Palacios already in the organization.

“While we have a lot of shortstops right now,” Falvey said. “Some of those guys could end up moving, and we think they have the opportunity to impact us at different positions.”

Second or short?

Gordon, 22, batted .270 with nine homers and 60 RBI at Class AA Chattanooga last season. He played 104 games at short and 14 at second. There has been a belief by many in the organization that his range and arm are a better fit at second base. But many also feel that with more consistent footwork, Gordon will be able to handle short in the majors.

“I’m an infielder,” Gordon said. “Wherever they give me a chance to play, I’m definitely going to feel good about it.”

There were concerns about Polanco, too, but he enters 2018 as the unquestioned starting shortstop.

“It’s kind of similar to Nick,” said Twins manager Paul Molitor, who played 57 major league games at shortstop but achieved stardom at second base, third base and designated hitter. “Nick’s still a little bit young and on that curve. He had a chance to play Double-A last year. I think he should play around just so he can keep his windows open in case something should happen, but I wouldn’t take him off short.”

Something that could happen next year: Dozier leaving as a free agent. That would open up second base for Gordon.

While Gordon is at major league camp, teenagers Javier and Lewis are on the back fields of the CenturyLink Sports Complex, preparing for the minor league season. Together.

“We’re actually in the same group, the Fort Myers group for now,” said Lewis, who last year made the rare jump from the Gulf Coast Rookie League to Class A Cedar Rapids. “We’re fielding, hitting, running. Anything baseball-wise, we’re doing it together. I learn a lot from him and hopefully I’m giving him stuff he can learn from me as well.”

Future stars?

Some scouts believe Lewis will end up in center field, but the Twins are more convinced than ever that he is a shortstop after watching him at rookie ball and, after the promotion, Cedar Rapids of the Midwest League. Lewis batted .296 with a home runs and 10 RBI in 18 games with the Kernels.

Javier started the year with the Twins’ Dominican League team but played 41 games at Rookie League Elizabethton, where he batted .299 with a .383 on-base percentage in 41 games. The Twins love his offensive potential and feel he could stick at short even if he begins to add to his 6-foot-1, 165-pound frame.

The best scenario is for Lewis to start 2018 at high-Class A Fort Myers with Javier at Cedar Rapids. But the Twins are prepared to share shortstop with both at Cedar Rapids.

With three of the top shortstop prospects in baseball, the Twins will make sure Gordon, Lewis and Javier will continue to develop at the vital position.

“It’s exciting for us to have three guys of that caliber and all playing the shortstop position,” said Jeremy Zoll, the Twins director of minor league operations. “They are all making their way through the system, also expect them to be pretty fast movers and make an impact sooner than later in Minnesota.”

### **Phil Hughes beats Yankees as he battles for spot in Twins' rotation**

**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | March 12, 2018**

TAMPA, FLA. -- Righthander Phil Hughes understands the situation he’s in after the Twins completed their latest transaction, signing free agent righthander Lance Lynn.

The Twins also have added righthander Jake Odorizzi and designated hitter-first baseman Logan Morrison since camp opened. But Lynn’s arrival makes it unlikely that Hughes could be part of the rotation if the Twins open the season with four starters.

“It’s a good thing for us, and our team is better, with these moves we have made,” Hughes said. “Kind of makes my status a little cloudy, but I can’t let that affect me. Can’t let it be in my head and when I go out and pitch in games like this because I still have to go out and be productive and get results.”

Hughes held the Yankees to one run over four innings on Monday as the Twins held off New York 2-1. Showing increased usage of his off speed stuff, Hughes did give up a couple of hard hit balls - including Tyler Austin’s home run in the fourth - but stayed out of big trouble.

Hughes threw his fastball 89-90 miles per hour on Monday, a few mph lower than he threw before having thoracic outlet surgery in each of the last two seasons. Consequently, he’s getting used to pitching without a 94 mph fastball.

“It’s not an overnight adjustment,” Hughes said. “It takes repetition.”

Bobby Wilson’s two run homer in the second off of Yankees starter Masahiro Tanaka accounted for the Twins offense on Monday. Robbie

Grossman and Nick Gordon each had two hits. Byron Buxton struck out four times.

### **Twins officially sign Lance Lynn, and he'll start on Tuesday**

**Phil Miller | Star Tribune | March 13, 2018**

FORT MYERS, Fla. — Lance Lynn is a Twin, and he's not exactly going to ease his way into action with his new team.

Lynn, the 30-year-old former Cardinal, will start for the Twins on Tuesday against the Orioles, making his spring debut less than 24 hours after signing his one-year, \$12 million contract.

Lynn, who agreed to the deal Saturday after his hopes for a much more lucrative long-term contract never materialized this winter, was at Twins' camp Monday for a physical exam and a magnetic resonance imaging test on his right arm. After being cleared by the team's medical staff, he signed his contract and joined his new teammates on the field for an early-afternoon workout. Lynn was not made available to reporters, but will be introduced at a news conference on Tuesday.

Lynn has been working out in Jupiter, Fla., at the Cressey Performance Center, along with fellow new Twin Logan Morrison, and has told the Twins his throwing program has him on schedule to be ready for the start of the regular season. They'll get their first look at the righthander, who has pitched 175 or more innings with an ERA lower than 4.00 five times in his six-year career, at Hammond Stadium on Tuesday.

Lynn will wear uniform No. 31, as he did with the Cardinals. Coach Jeff Pickler will switch to another number.

### **Twins shortstop battle looming?**

**Staff Writers | Star Tribune | March 12, 2018**

#### SHORTSTOP BATTLE LOOMING?

The Twins have four rising stars at shortstop, including one who was a regular last season:

Jorge Polanco, 24: Signed as a 16-year-old in 2009 as a Dominican free agent for \$775,000.

Last season: Twins starting shortstop. Overcame a midseason slump to hit .256 with 13 home runs, 30 doubles, 13 stolen bases and 74 RBI. Had 18 errors, fourth-most among MLB shortstops.

Nick Gordon, 22: Fifth overall pick in the 2014 MLB draft, signed for \$3.8 million.

Last season: At Class AA Chattanooga, hit .270 with 46 extra-base hits, including eight triples and nine home runs.

Royce Lewis, 18: First overall pick in the 2017 MLB draft out of JSerra Catholic High in San Juan Capistrano, Calif., signed for \$6.7 million.

Last season: Started in the rookie level Gulf Coast League before jumping to Class A Cedar Rapids, where he hit .296 in 18 games.

Wander Javier, 19: Signed as a 16-year-old in 2015 as a Dominican free agent for \$4 million.

Last season: Started in the Dominican League before moving to rookie level Elizabethton, where he hit .299 in 41 games.

### **Twins send Phil Hughes to face the Yankees on Monday, with Lance Lynn to debut on Tuesday**

**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | March 12, 2018**

I entered the pressbox at George M Steinbrenner Field just a little while ago and ran into a national baseball writer from the Mid-Atlantic region. I asked him what was he doing here.

"I'm here to write Yankees, although your team is more interesting," he said.

"It's been quite a few weeks at camp," I replied.

"Hey, YOU guys are the Yankees now," the national writer fired back.

That's the new perception of the Twins after an eye-opening run of acquisitions since camp started. They trumped their trade for Jake Odorizzi with the signing of Logan Morrison. Then they trumped that addition by signing Lance Lynn, which the Twins made official today.

Combined with what what did earlier in the winter, the additions of Zach Duke, Addison Reed and Fernando Rodney, and the Twins have added depth to lineup, the rotation and the bullpen. They have announced their intentions to close the gap between themselves and Cleveland in the AL Central.

Lynn will be officially introduced on Tuesday morning at a press conference at Hammond Stadium, then he will make his Twins debut a couple hours later against Baltimore.

The Twins had kept in touch with Lynn's camp, but were done adding players after they signed Morrison. Lynn apparently was sick of being unemployed and picked the Twins because of they look ready to compete. He signed for one year and \$12 million - that's called having something fall into your lap.

This has been an unique camp, with a parade of new players coming in since pitchers and catchers reported about a month ago.

Phil Hughes makes his first start since March 3 tonight when he faces the Yankees. Hughes skipped his last start and pitched an extended session at Fort Myers for work on his slider and change up. He'll have a few good hitters to test himself against, including Giancarlo Stanton and Greg Bird. Masahiro Tanaka is on the mound for the Yankees. First pitch is at 5:35 p.m.

The Yankees made some news on Monday, signing infielder Neil Walker.

#### Twins

Byron Buxton, CF  
Erick Aybar, 3B  
Max Kepler, RF  
Kennys Vargas, 1B  
Robbie Grossman, LF  
Bobby Wilson, C  
Nick Gordon, 2B  
Gregorio Petit, SS  
Jordan Pacheco, DH

Phil Hughes, RHP

#### Yankees

Brett Gardner, CF  
Giancarlo Stanton, LF  
Greg Bird, DH  
Brandon Drury, 3B  
Tyler Austin, 1B  
Bill McKinney, RF  
Austin Romine, C  
Ronald Torreyes, SS  
Tyler Wade, 2B

Masahiro Tanaka, RHP

### **Lance Lynn set to make Twins debut on Tuesday**

**Mike Berardino | Pioneer Press | March 12, 2018**

TAMPA, Fla. — So much for letting Lance Lynn ease into his new surroundings.

Shortly after the veteran right-hander passed his two-day physical exam on Monday, making official his one-year, \$12 million contract, the Twins announced he would make his debut on Tuesday at home against the Baltimore Orioles.

That will come 2 1/2 hours after the former all-star and two-time pennant winner with the St. Louis Cardinals meets the media in an introductory

news conference.

The pitching-starved Orioles reportedly were willing to guarantee Lynn more years and dollars than the Twins, but the chance to join an ascending young team coming off a postseason appearance carried greater appeal to the 30-year-old Lynn.

“Everyone knew the numbers that were out there early, and then we heard the years and dollars start to come back a little bit and we still really weren’t in the mix, especially with length,” Twins manager Paul Molitor said. “I think there was ... a real interest from the player to make this a marriage, and I think that helped our cause.”

According to a person with direct knowledge, Lynn’s contract includes up to \$2 million in performance bonuses. He would receive \$1 million apiece for reaching 170 and 180 innings this season.

In his five full seasons in the majors, Lynn has averaged 188 2/3 innings, so a normal Lynn season should net him \$14 million. His deal also includes Cy Young Award bonuses of \$100,000 for a first-place finish, \$75,000 for second and \$50,000 for third.

“I probably didn’t do as much due diligence on this one as I have some other ones because I really wasn’t expecting it,” Molitor said. “Obviously it built some momentum over the past seven to 10 days. We’ve got a couple guys in our clubhouse that know him particularly well.”

That includes former Cardinals reliever Zach Duke and designated hitter Logan Morrison, the latter of whom stayed sharp while awaiting a contract through workouts at the same Jupiter, Fla., facility as Lynn.

“Very glowing comments about ‘teammate, work, takes the ball,’ all those kind of things,” Molitor said. “Very heavy usage of his fastball. He can move the ball, and he has a really good idea how to pitch. It’s just an asset for us. Obviously we feel it makes us better.”

Outfielder Ryan LaMarre, in Twins camp on a non-roster invitation, was a regular workout partner of Lynn’s as well this offseason at Cressey Sports Performance Center.

“Great guy,” LaMarre said. “It seems like he’s very genuine, very humble and down to earth. I saw him in there every day. When you have guys who are that successful in the game, to see him still hungry and still working out, it was fun. He was very approachable. He joked with you. He’s going to do great things here.”

With Opening Day in Baltimore a little over two weeks away, Lynn has time to make three Grapefruit League starts as he ramps up in a hurry.

His turn also would fall on March 18 at home against the Philadelphia Phillies, who reportedly showed interest in signing the free agent before opting to sign former Chicago Cubs right-hander Jake Arrieta to a three-year, \$75 million deal on Monday.

Lynn’s final spring outing likely would come on March 23 at home against the Houston Astros, although he could also stay behind and slip in one last outing against Twins minor leaguers before slotting into the back of the rotation the first time through.

“I’d like to think there’s a chance he would be ready to be in the first round of the rotation,” Molitor said. “You could see where we could get that extra start by keeping him back here, if everything goes according to plan.”

The immediate plan is for Lynn to throw three innings and roughly 50 pitches against the Orioles on Tuesday.

“We’ll probably be a little conservative,” Molitor said. “Even as a veteran, I told him this is different circumstances. If you’re not ready to throw 100 pitches when the regular season starts, let’s go slowly and do it right rather than try to force the issue just because we’re in a little bit of a time box.”

Lynn has been throwing bullpens in Jupiter, one exit north of his former spring training home with the Cardinals.

“We’ll probably get a feel for where he’s at,” Molitor said. “He’s ready to pitch but we’ll have to see how it goes and how fast we can build him up. He’s been throwing, but it’s a lot different than being in camp.”

### **Eddie Rosario’s return taking longer than expected**

**Mike Berardino | Pioneer Press | March 12, 2018**

TAMPA, Fla. — Twins left fielder Eddie Rosario, dealing with right triceps tendinitis, said he still hasn’t been cleared to resume throwing but continues to improve and hoped to return in a DH role in a few days.



“I’m a little bit hurt but I want to try to be 100 percent for the season,” Rosario said Monday. “I feel better every day.

Twins manager Paul Molitor, however, said Rosario’s progress has only been “fair” as his absence has dragged on since his last game appearance on March 4.

“I think he’s probably a bit anxious to get some at-bats, but it’s tough to find room,” Molitor said. “We’ll see if his throwing picks up here in the next couple days, and we can start maybe putting together a schedule about when he might play.”

If that sounds like a slow-play of the situation, it’s because the Twins will be careful with one of their core players.

“We’re going to have to start some kind of throwing program which is going to allow him to play in a game,” Molitor said. “When he gets in the game, most likely we’re going to have to tell him to throw the ball to second base so he avoids that temptation of trying to make that one throw that’s maybe going to set him back. If a guy’s still symptomatic, you’re not going to force the issue.”

Rosario, who received a \$50,000 raise to \$602,500 after a 27-homer breakout season, said he wasn’t aware of any talks regarding a multiyear contract extension after missing out on Super 2 arbitration eligibility by three service days.

“The only thing I’m focusing on right now is my arm and getting ready for the season,” he said. “I was feeling good at the plate. I’m not swinging at a lot of balls (out of the zone).”

#### ODORIZZI PUSHED BACK

Right-hander Jake Odorizzi had been scheduled to start Tuesday against the Baltimore Orioles, which would have put him on track to start against them on Opening Day at Camden Yards. That still figures to be the case as teams often attempt to shield their starters from seeing early-season opponents during spring training.

With newly signed Lance Lynn making his Twins debut on Tuesday, Odorizzi will now skip Tuesday’s start and throw a second between-starts bullpen session on Thursday in advance of a start Sunday against Twins minor leaguers. Odorizzi last pitched in a game on March 7.

Asked if Odorizzi is healthy in light of the layoff, Molitor said, “I think relatively. I think he’s doing OK.”

#### COUNT TO FIVE

After stating repeatedly he was leaning toward opening the year with a four-man rotation while awaiting Ervin Santana’s return from Feb. 6 finger surgery, Twins manager Paul Molitor said a conventional five-man rotation was now back in play.

“I’ve got more options, just with the depth, just with other factors including how ready (Lynn is) going to be as far as length,” Molitor said. “You want to try to be as creative as you can to look at every option.”

Veteran right-hander Phil Hughes, fighting for one of those rotation spots, gave up a solo homer on a changeup to Tyler Austin but looked sharp in a four-inning stint against his former team.

“Our team is better with these moves that we made,” Hughes said. “It kind of makes my status a little cloudier, but I can’t let that affect me. I have to still try to be a productive guy on this team. I still have to crack that five. We have a lot of good arms in that room now. That’s a really good thing for the Twins.”

#### ADRIANZA CLOSE

Twins super utility man Ehire Adrianza (left calf) expects to return to game action on Tuesday after missing the past week. He suffered the setback while playing left field against the Philadelphia Phillies at Clearwater.

“I was trying to play through the pain but I couldn’t (ignore) it anymore,” he said. “I have to be smart because it was early in the spring. I just want to be ready on Opening Day. That’s all that counts. Right now I feel 100 percent. Hopefully I’ll keep out of the training room.”

#### BRIEFLY

Lefty Stephen Gonsalves was due to throw another bullpen on Monday and work three innings his next time out in a midweek game. The Twins’ top pitching prospect has a 2.45 earned-run average in just 3 2/3 innings this spring in the Grapefruit League, plus another two scoreless innings

against the University of Minnesota in the spring opener.

Catcher Willians Astudillo made a no-look pickoff throw to first that nabbed pinch-runner Shane Robinson, the ex-Twins reserve. Astudillo went out on a back field and practiced the play last week.

### **Slashed salaries: Walker to Yankees, Lynn starts with Twins**

Staff Writers | Associated Press | March 12, 2018

Starting pitcher Lance Lynn got right to work with Minnesota after finalizing his \$12 million, one-year deal. He turned down a \$17.4 million offer to stay with St. Louis, and looked for a richer contract in free agency.

Lynn limbered up with the Twins on a practice field, and was set to start Tuesday against Baltimore.

TWINS 2, YANKEES 1

New York starter Masahiro Tanaka allowed two runs and struck out six in four innings. Tyler Austin launched his third home run of the spring to center field off former Yankees right-hander Phil Hughes in the fourth. Hughes went four innings for Minnesota, giving up four hits.

### **Hughes earns win in Twins' 2-1 win over Yankees**

Staff Writers | Fox Sports North | March 12, 2018

Phil Hughes outdueled Masahiro Tanaka on the mound to boost the Twins to a 2-1 win over the Yankees.

Hughes held the Yankees to one run, a solo home run by Tyler Austin in the fourth, over four innings.

Bobby Wilson highlighted the Twins bats, hitting a two-run home run in the second.

Hughes earned the win for the Twins, striking out three and giving up one earned run.

Gabriel Moya recorded the save for Minnesota.

### **Twins sign Lance Lynn to 1-year, \$12 million contract**

Staff Writers | Associated Press | March 12, 2018

Patiently monitoring baseball's slow-moving market, the Minnesota Twins made several significant improvements to the team that made a surprise run last season to the AL wild card game.

Right-hander Lance Lynn became the latest addition when the Twins finalized a \$12 million, one-year contract on Monday, another low-risk move to strengthen a pitching staff that ranked 19th in the major leagues last year with a 4.59 ERA.

"I think there was at least, my take on it, a real interest of the player to make this a marriage and I think that helped our cause," Twins manager Paul Molitor said.

Lynn, who joined his new teammates on the field for an afternoon workout in Fort Myers, will be introduced at a news conference on Tuesday before taking the mound for an exhibition against Baltimore.

Molitor thinks there's a chance that Lynn could be ready to pitch the first time through the regular-season rotation.

"I told him this is different circumstances, if you're not ready to throw 100 pitches when the season starts, let's go slow and do it right rather than try to force the issue just because we're in a little of a time box," Molitor said. "We'll probably get a feel for where he's at."

After missing the 2016 season while recovering from Tommy John surgery, Lynn went 11-8 with a 3.43 ERA in 33 starts for St. Louis in 2017 last year. The 6-foot-5, 280-pound Lynn was an All-Star in 2012, his first full season in the majors. He was the 39th overall draft pick in 2008 by the Cardinals out of Mississippi.

"Has a really good idea how to pitch," Molitor said. "It's asset for us. We talked all winter about how we can deepen our choices in the rotation."

With the Twins, Lynn will join fellow newcomer Jake Odorizzi, acquired in a trade with Tampa Bay, in the rotation. Jose Berrios will likely take the mound on opening day on March 29 against the Orioles, and Ervin Santana will join the group in late April or early May once he's recovered from surgery on his middle finger. Kyle Gibson will likely round out the starting five, putting 25-man roster spots in question for Adalberto Mejia, Phil Hughes and Tyler Duffey.

Odorizzi had his scheduled start Tuesday pushed back to a minor league game Sunday.

To make room on the 40-man roster, the Twins released right-hander Anibal Sanchez on Sunday after a three-week stint with the club. Sanchez gets \$403,226 in termination pay rather than his \$2.5 million salary.

Minnesota signed veterans Fernando Rodney, Zach Duke and Addison Reed before reporting to spring training, bolstering their bullpen. Then after making the deal with the Rays for Odorizzi, they signed first baseman Logan Morrison to be the primary designated hitter.

"Probably made as many additions as any club in term of pitching," Molitor said. "It puts us in a much better position to compete."

Both Morrison and Lynn were among the dozens of accomplished free agents who found a cool market for their asking prices and were forced to work out privately and wait for shorter-term deals.

The Twins took full advantage, pushing their franchise-record payroll to around \$130 million for opening day. They have only a handful of players signed for 2019, though, and no commitments for 2020 to give themselves the ultimate flexibility as they continue to try to build a contender under chief baseball officer Derek Falvey. The Twins have not won a postseason game since 2004, a postseason series since 2002 or a World Series since 1991.

By signing Lynn, who turned down a \$17.4 million qualifying offer by the Cardinals, the Twins forfeited the 95th overall pick in the amateur draft in June. Lynn can make an additional \$1 million for pitching 170 innings and another \$1 million for reaching 180.

### **Olney: How the Twins built their best possible offseason**

**Buster Olney | ESPN | March 13, 2018**

Derek Falvey tore down walls when he took over the Minnesota Twins' front office in the fall of 2016. On the fourth floor of Target Field, offices were taken apart and more cubicles were constructed to eliminate barriers between departments and employees, to keep everybody working together.

Falvey and Thad Levine, his chief lieutenant, aimed for more collaboration, for more information. They have been very busy this winter, and their work has drawn much praise from rival executives. "They got a lot done and got better at low cost," said one American League executive, who added that a case could be made that the Twins are the most improved team in baseball.

Said an agent: "They are smart, disciplined, composed, and they stay after it."

Minnesota didn't make a lot of transactions in the winter of 2016-17, but along the way, Falvey and Levine constructed a research and information apparatus for the front office, which was greatly utilized this winter. It's as if the Twins have been selectively raiding estate sales in what has been a dead winter market, and Minnesota has augmented the team around the strong core of players who rallied in the last two months of the season to earn a wild-card spot.

When the Rays were unable to obtain the trade value for Jake Odorizzi that they hoped for, Tampa Bay pivoted and worked to dump his \$6.3 million salary -- and the Twins plucked the right-hander while giving up very little in prospect return.

A bunch of relievers got three-year deals at the winter meetings, and that was the hope for Addison Reed. But the Twins waited and landed the right-handed veteran for \$18 million over two years.

After offers failed to materialize for Logan Morrison, his asking price fell to \$6.5 million, and the Twins landed the first baseman/designated hitter, who had a .353 on-base percentage and 38 homers in 2017. Right-handed starter Lance Lynn rejected the Cardinals' qualifying offer of \$17.4 million last fall in hopes of a big-money multiyear deal, but that did not happen. On Saturday, Lynn took the Twins' offer of \$12 million for one year, a deal that will become final once he passes his physical examination.

In the Odorizzi trade and in free-agent signings -- which also included closer Fernando Rodney, lefty Zach Duke and pitchers Michael Pineda and Anibal Sanchez (who was released Sunday, at a cost of \$625,000) -- the Twins have landed two starting pitchers for this season, a middle-of-the-order hitter, two setup men and a possible closer for a grand total of \$60 million.

To put that number into perspective: \$60 million is what the Phillies paid for Carlos Santana alone, and it is \$84 million less than the Padres' eight-year investment in Eric Hosmer.

In keeping with Falvey's aim to maintain payroll flexibility, only two of the contracts (Reed and Pineda) are for multiple seasons, so the Twins' long-term risk for the roster upgrades is minimal.

Once Ervin Santana returns from a finger injury -- perhaps after a missing a month of the season -- he will join a rotation that includes Odorizzi, Lynn, Jose Berrios and Kyle Gibson. The bullpen has more competition and more options than a year ago, when the Twins sorted through 34 pitchers. An offense that led baseball in runs over the last two months of last season should be stout again, with Morrison hitting in the middle of an order fronted by Brian Dozier and Joe Mauer at the top and Byron Buxton, Eddie Rosario, Jorge Polanco and Max Kepler arranged below.

The Twins lost 103 games in 2016, the season before Falvey took over, and last year they went 85-77. When Falvey was with the Cleveland Indians, some of his peers there regarded him as a star front-office prospect, someone who would inevitably run a team with great success with his acumen and consistently cheerful and assuring demeanor.

Those projections are quickly proving to be accurate, and maybe at the expense of Cleveland sooner than anybody expected.

### **Minnesota Twins reach out to kids who were hurt in Alligator Alley crash**

**Todd Tongen | Local10.com | March 12, 2018**

BROWARD COUNTY, Fla. - The Minnesota Twins reached out to a group of children who were hurt last week in a crash along Alligator Alley.

The young people from Minnesota were part of group that was traveling to Fort Lauderdale on March 6 after attending a Twins spring training game in Fort Myers. Florida Highway Patrol troopers said Nisbany Garcias was driving drunk on Interstate 75 when his pickup truck rear-ended the group's van, causing it to flip over.

One of the 15 people inside the van -- Lauren Vanreese, 21, of Andover, Minnesota -- was pronounced dead at the scene.

Several of the children were wearing Twins jersey at the time of crash. The jerseys had to be cut off as paramedics and doctors treated them for their injuries.

Hearing about how the kids lost their beloved jerseys, a family member reached out to the Twins and got an immediate response.

The team, along with the kids' favorite players -- Byron Buxton, Brian Dozier, Joe Mauer and Miguel Sano -- sent the group signed jerseys, baseball bats and bats on Sunday. The team also held a moment of silence for Vanreese at a recent game.

The Twins wanted the kids to know that the entire team was behind them and praying for them.

Most of the group have been released from the hospital, but two women remain in serious condition.

"If you could have seen the glimmer in their eyes, that moment, it was just magic," the family member said. "I can't thank the Twins organization enough ... It really shows what baseball is all about -- families."

### **Grounds Crew Removes Tarp At Target Field**

**Staff Writers | WCCO | March 12, 2018**

There was a sure sign of spring on Monday in downtown Minneapolis.

Grounds crews with the Minnesota Twins pulled back the tarp at Target Field to get a good look at the field. They're looking for mold, and just making sure everything looks the way it should.

The field is heated to just above freezing all winter long. No doubt the field will be ready to go by the Twins home opener on April 5, where they host the Seattle Mariners.

The Twins open the 2018 regular season with a series at the Baltimore Orioles.

## **Pot-committed Twins have the assets and the will to make more big moves**

**Dan Hayes | The Athletic | March 12, 2018**

FORT MYERS, Fla. — By now, it should be pretty obvious the Twins aren't messing around.

They've already come this far. If it's necessary, it's not unreasonable to think the Twins would go a little bit further.

With Opening Day only 17 days away, the Twins have put themselves in a great spot to contend after a thorough and disciplined offseason that appears to have concluded with the signing of Lance Lynn.

Lynn's \$12 million salary pushes the club's projected payroll for 2018 to a franchise record nearing the \$130-million mark. As long as they think they're well-positioned, the Twins — whose Las Vegas odds of winning the World Series are 20-to-1 as of Sunday — have indicated their commitment won't stop here.

Not only are they committed, the Twins think they have enough assets in their surging farm system to make a blockbuster trade without hampering their future.

General manager Thad Levine said he and chief baseball officer Derek Falvey made that determination after an offseason worth of phone calls, texts and emails from rival teams inquiring about their young talent.

“Regardless of what we think of our system, let the league tell you how good your players are,” Levine said. “We’ve been given indication this offseason that our system is deep enough to be able to assist in our endeavors of bolstering our team without necessarily single-handedly hamstringing our ability to have a next line of defense internally, or potentially make a subsequent deal down the line that we feel is worthwhile of our pursuit. So that’s the gauge right now.”

The arrow for the Twins' chances of reaching the postseason for a second straight year is decidedly pointing upward after this latest move.

Since they arrived at spring training a month ago, the Twins have answered the biggest lingering questions they had with the signings of Lynn and Logan Morrison and the February trade for Jake Odorizzi. They've lengthened the lineup with Morrison as their designated hitter and filled out their rotation with Odorizzi and Lynn, even with Ervin Santana expected to miss at least half of April.

The trio of moves means the biggest inquiries left for the Twins involve the performance of their young position players, including Miguel Sano, Byron Buxton, Jorge Polanco and Jose Berrios.

Given 75 percent of the rest of the American League Central is rebuilding, the Twins could likely handle some underperformance and still expect to compete for a wild-card spot. If that's the case, they should be able to rely on a farm system Baseball America recently ranked as No. 12 of 30 to provide the assets needed to make a trade.

“I would not be shocked come July if Minnesota is looking at a pretty solid farm system and is saying we need to make some moves,” Baseball America editor J.J. Cooper said.

Not only does the system boast top prospect Royce Lewis — “You could probably get just about anybody in baseball that would be on the trade market (for him),” said MLB Pipeline.com's Jim Callis — and pitcher Fernando Romero, who has been buzzed about all spring, but the Twins feature depth. The minor-league backfields at CenturyLink Sports Complex are teeming with intriguing prospects headed into their first full seasons. Pitchers Brusdar Graterol and Blayne Enlow are high on that list of first-year pros and so is Brent Rooker, who blasted 18 home runs in half a season after he was drafted out of Mississippi State last June.

“They have high-end talent,” Callis said. “There are some lists where you're at prospect 18 and you don't know who to put on the list. With the Twins, you have no problem legitimately filling out the 30.”

“The Twins have the depth to where you could give up significant guys and not feel like you're not destroying the system. If they wanted to, they'd definitely be in position to do that.”

What Falvey likes about the Twins' farm is that one big trade shouldn't wipe them out for the long haul. The current 25-man roster features a solid core of players 25 and under who could have the Twins competing for the next few years. But Falvey is hopeful there are several waves of prospects behind this group that could provide sustainability and a chance to win for several more seasons. If that's the case, Falvey suggested the Twins would have no problem dipping into the system to find whatever trade piece could potentially put them over the top.

“Should it be necessary, and I'm hopeful that it is ... we could go get a piece if needed,” Falvey said in early February.

Though they've added two starters to the rotation this spring and have depth in Aaron Slegers, Phil Hughes, Tyler Duffey, Romero, Stephen Gonsalves, Zack Littell (and Trevor May and Michael Pineda down the road), the Twins could add a frontline starting pitcher if one becomes available. Or if a big bat is needed, they could probably find one of those, too.

It's not that the Twins believe their system is capable of helping them fill out the roster. The league has told them, Levine said, noting it's a lesson he learned from "wizened curmudgeonly" scout Don Welke.

"We can be as bullish as we want on our prospects, but if the league disagrees with us, it's a little bit of a moot (point)," Levine said. "They've given us some indication that there's combinations of players that are very intriguing. That's obviously tons of credit to our international scouts, our domestic scouts and our player development group to putting us in that position. Because as much as we hope those guys will come to the big leagues and help us, the reality is we're going to trade some of them along the way to help accelerate the process."