



# Padres Press Clips

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# Padres spring training primer: Infielders

Jeff Sanders

Pitchers and catchers report to the [Padres' spring training](#) complex in Peoria, Ariz., a week from today. In advance of the official start of the 2019 preseason, we're digging into each facet of the Padres' roster.

Today, the infield:

## 2018 recap

For the second year in a row, the Padres prepped for the season by signing a corner infielder to a franchise-record deal. The hope was that [Eric Hosmer's](#) eight-year, \$144 million pact would be a building block in a young clubhouse. It still might, too, if the former [Royals](#) world champion first baseman rebounds from a disappointing introduction to San Diego, one in which he struck out a career-worst 142 times as his OPS dropped from .882 in 2017 to .720 in 2018.

[Freddy Galvis](#), a one-year rental who arrived via trade, played [Gold Glove](#)-worthy defense at shortstop despite posting yet another sub-.300 on-base percentage. Collectively, only the Dodgers got less value out of their second basemen than the Padres, who were more than ready to move on from [Cory Spangenberg](#), [Carlos Asuaje](#) and [Jose Pirela](#) when top prospect [Luis Urias](#) arrived for a late summer audition. That, however, was cut short when Urias injured his hamstring 12 games into his big league debut. At third base, [Christian Villanueva](#) teased with an eight-homer April but his issues with consistency had the Padres experimenting with first baseman-turned-outfielder [Wil Myers](#), the owner of the richest contract in franchise history before Hosmer's arrival, at the position down the stretch.

## Current picture

A week away from spring training, the only certainty is Hosmer's return to first base, where he'll look for a bounce-back year. The Padres have emerged as late suitors in the [Manny Machado](#) derby, largely because the game's biggest spenders aren't tripping over each other to hand the 26-year-old a \$300 million deal. Absent such a splash, the Padres appear poised to play newcomer [Ian Kinsler](#) at second and third base after moving Myers back to the outfield, moving on from Spangenberg (released), Asuaje (waived) and Villanueva (released) and give the 21-year-old Urias a chance to hold down shortstop in the short term.

Pirela, despite slugging just .345, remains in the Padres' plans to mix in at second base if the Padres don't acquire an infield upgrade as is newcomer [Greg Garcia](#), who will also back up shortstop. San Diego State's [Ty France](#), recently added to the 40-man roster, will also get a chance to audition for at-bats at third base.

Long-term?

The Padres' fan base is eagerly awaiting the arrival of **Fernando Tatis Jr.** The 20-year-old shortstop was recently named the game's top prospect by [ESPN](#) and represented the Padres in last year's [All-Star Futures Game](#) before a season-ending thumb injury ended his Double-A campaign in July.

Tatis has made a full recovery, but his shortened 2018 season provides the Padres with plenty of cover should they elect to delay the start of his clock until a bit later in the year — perhaps as late as the summer if the front office is eyeing his Super 2 status.

### **On the farm**

Tatis is the cream of the Padres' minor league crop, which is the deepest and most talented farm system according to ESPN's latest rankings. Urias, too, is a consensus top-100 prospect, giving the Padres a homegrown double-play tandem to dream on. Beyond those two, the organization is stacked up and down the minors in middle infield talent, with **Xavier Edwards**, **Gabriel Arias**, **Owen Miller** and **Tucupita Marcano**.

**Hudson Potts** likely starts 2019 at Double-A Amarillo as the third-baseman-of-the-future-not-named-Machado and the left-handed hitting **Josh Naylor** is ready to attack the hitter-friendly Pacific Coast League after hitting a career-high 17 homers while splitting time at first base (29 games) and left field (89 games) in 2018.

## What would signing Harper mean for Padres?

By AJ Cassavell MLB.com @AJCassavell

Feb. 5th, 2019

SAN DIEGO -- Welcome to the **Bryce Harper** sweepstakes, San Diego.

The Padres met with the free-agent outfielder last week, and though it's unclear what came of that meeting, the team's interest in signing Harper is legitimate. He's a franchise-altering talent and could anchor the middle of the San Diego lineup for most of the next decade.

Of course, were the Padres to sign Harper, they'd need to clear up a few other things with their roster. In that regard, it's simpler to envision third baseman **Manny Machado** fitting in San Diego, given that he plays a glaring area of need. But if the Padres were to shock the baseball world and land Harper, what comes next? And how do they sort out the rest of their roster puzzle? Here are a few steps:

### Trade an outfielder, probably two

Even without Harper, the Padres are looking to deal from their glut of corner options. Already, **Franmil Reyes**, **Hunter Renfroe** and **Wil Myers** are competing for, at most, two places in the starting lineup. All three are righty hitters with similar offensive profiles, so there isn't much space for a platoon either.

Throw Harper into the mix, and things get even more confusing. That's not a reason to avoid signing Harper, who's an instant upgrade over any of the in-house options, just an acknowledgement that signing Harper would require a bit of extra maneuvering.

Harper will cost a pretty penny, so chances are the Padres would look to deal Myers, who still has four years and about \$64 million remaining on his contract. They might keep Renfroe and Reyes and allow them both to compete for time. But in reality, they have enough depth with **Franchy Cordero** and **Travis Jankowski** on the bench (and probably sharing time with **Manuel Margot** in center field). General manager A.J. Preller might decide it's best to package either Renfroe or Reyes -- both talented, controllable young outfielders -- in a deal for a pitcher or a third baseman.

### Find a third baseman

The Padres have several options here, but with Harper on board, Machado would no longer be one of them. That means the biggest hole on offense still needs to be filled. As things stand, **Ty France** is the projected Opening Day starter.

The surplus of outfielders could prove valuable in a trade for a third baseman. Already this offseason, San Diego has been linked to Nick Senzel and **Miguel Andujar**, though those talks have cooled recently.

Another option is free-agent **Mike Moustakas**, who, like Harper, is a client of agent Scott Boras. If the Padres could ink Moustakas to a two-year deal, he'd solve their short-term third-base issue. In the meantime they could keep a sharp eye on the development of infield prospects

Hudson Potts, Gabriel Arias and Xavier Edwards. If any of those three pan out, the Padres would have a left-side-of-the-infield partner for **Fernando Tatis Jr.**

And if neither Moustakas nor a trade comes to fruition, expect the Padres to sign a utility option who can play third base. **Yangervis Solarte** and **Adeiny Hechavarria**, among others, remain available.

### **Settle the rotation**

You don't sign Harper without intending to make a postseason push. As things stand, the Padres' rotation is nowhere close to playoff-caliber.

A number of free-agent starting pitchers remain available, including **Gio Gonzalez**, who was linked with the Padres last week. The Friars could also deal from their deep farm system for a rotation piece, and they've already been linked with Toronto's **Marcus Stroman** this offseason.

But the most important rotation addition might not come preseason (or even in-season). The Friars need a front-line starting pitcher to headline a prominent group of young arms, and Preller has been scouring the trade market to find one for nearly a year. He's got plenty of pieces to deal from.

### **Be patient**

The gulf between the Padres and Dodgers is a wide one (25 1/2 games last season, to be exact). Even if San Diego were to sign Harper, it's hard to envision that gap closing in one season.

The whole point of a Harper deal is the long-term effects. The Friars have a loaded farm system and tons of pitching talent on the way. On offense, it's fair to expect prospects Tatis, **Luis Urias** and **Francisco Mejia** to experience some growing pains in the big leagues this season. But their futures are bright as well.

No question, Harper's impact would be immediate. He's Bryce Harper, one of the best hitters in the world. But his presence in the middle of the San Diego lineup would clearly be felt in a much bigger way over the long haul.

# 50 Moments—The Padres Win the 1984 National League Title

FriarWire

Feb 5

*By Bill Center*

Sixteen years of frustration ended for Padres fans on Oct. 7, 1984, when the Padres rallied from a 3–0 deficit to score a 6–3 win over the Chicago Cubs at San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium in the decisive fifth game of the National League Championship Series.

The Padres were the National League champions.

“I’d been told what it’d feel like when that winning moment came,” **Tony Gwynn** said years later. “But until you experience it, you don’t know. There’s that moment . . . then you reflect on the game, the series, the season. It’s mind blowing. The emotions over flow.”

That moment came after Padres closer **Goose Gossage** gave up a single to **Keith Moreland** in the ninth. With two outs, Chicago’s **Jody Davis** hit a grounder to Padres’ third baseman **Graig Nettles**, who threw to second baseman **Alan Wiggins** for the game—and series—ending forceout of Moreland.

“The Padres win the pennant! The Padres win the pennant!” shouted **Jerry Coleman**.

For the Padres the decisive game was a comeback that capped a series of comebacks.

The Padres lost the first two games of the best-of-five series at Wrigley Field in Chicago by scores of 13–0 and 4–2. They won the third game 7–1 at San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium then tied the series at 2–2 on **Steve Garvey**’s two-run, walk-off homer in the bottom of the ninth of game four.

But the Padres fell behind 3–0 after two innings of the decisive fifth game.

San Diego cut the deficit to one in the bottom of the sixth on back-to-back sacrifice flies by Nettles and **Terry Kennedy**.

Then the Padres scored four times in the bottom of the seventh against Cubs’ ace **Rick Sutcliffe**.

**Carmelo Martinez** opened the inning by drawing a walk and advanced to second on a bunt by **Garry Templeton**. Martinez then scored to tie the score when pinch-hitter **Tim Flannery**'s grounder got by Cubs' first baseman **Leon Durham** for an error.

Wiggins singled ahead of Gwynn's two-run double. Garvey then singled home Gwynn to make it 6-3.

Reliever **Craig Lefferts** got his second win in as many days. Gossage got the save. Garvey went 8-for-20 with a home run and seven RBIs to be named the Most Valuable Player of the NLCS.

Sadly, the World Series didn't go well for the Padres. The Detroit Tigers, who are still ranked among the Top 10 teams in Major League history, won the World Series in five games.

But after posting only one winning season in their first 15 seasons, the Padres went 92-70 in 1984 and won their first National League West title by 12 games.

**Tony Gwynn** hit .351 to win his first National League batting title. He also led the league with 213 hits. Nettles and **Kevin McReynolds** shared the team lead with 20 homers. Garvey led the Padres with 86 RBIs while Wiggins scored 106 runs and led the National League with a still-standing Padres record of 70 stolen bases.

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*Top 50 Moments (in chronological order):*

1. National League votes to expand into Montreal and San Diego (May 27, 1968)
2. Padres stocked with players in National League expansion draft (Oct. 14, 1968)
3. Padres win their Major League debut (April 8, 1969)
4. Clay Kirby removed from a no-hitter (July 21, 1970)
5. Nate Colbert's five-homer, 13-RBI doubleheader in Atlanta (Aug. 1, 1972)
6. 1973, the year San Diego nearly lost the Padres
7. Ray Kroc buys the Padres (Jan. 25, 1974)
8. Ray Kroc grabs the microphone during his first home game as the Padres owner (April 9, 1974)
9. Randy Jones National League Cy Young Award (1976)

10. Shortstop Ozzie Smith's greatest defensive play in Padres' history (April 20, 1978)
11. Padres host 1978 All-Star Game (July 11, 1978)
12. Gaylord Perry wins 1978 National League Cy Young Award
13. The "re-hatching" of the San Diego Chicken (June 29, 1979)
14. 1984 Padres-Braves brawl in Atlanta (Aug. 12, 1984)
15. More than 12,000 fans greet Padres as they return home from two losses in Chicago in 1984 National League Championship Series (Oct. 3, 1984)
16. Steve Garvey's series-tying, walk-off homer in Game 4 of the 1984 National League Championship Series
17. Padres win their first National League title (Oct. 7, 1984)



# Top 50 Individual Seasons

## №37—CF Kevin McReynolds helped Padres win 1984 N.L. title in first full season

[FriarWire](#)

Feb 5

*By Bill Center*

Everyone remembers the Padres winning the 1984 National League title.

But few recall how unsettled the Padres were during spring training of 1984.

They didn't have a third baseman until **Graig Nettles** was acquired from the Yankees on March 30. **Alan Wiggins** was moving from the outfield to play second base for the first time. And **Carmelo Martinez**, who had played first during most of his minor league career with the Cubs, became the Padres left fielder as a Major League rookie.

However, the first move made by manager **Dick Williams** that spring was to assign center field to 24-year-old **Kevin McReynolds**, whose total Major League career consisted of 39 games at the end of the 1983 season.

McReynolds certainly had the credentials.

The 6-foot, 205-pound, University of Arkansas product had been the Padres' first-round pick (sixth overall) in the 1981 draft. He split his first professional summer between Advanced Single-A and Double-A, hitting a combined .368 with 33 homers and 137 RBIs in 33 games. At Triple-A Las Vegas in 1983, McReynolds hit .377 with 32 homers and 116 RBIs in 113 games before being promoted to the Padres.

But he had hit only .221 with four homers and 13 RBIs in 155 plate appearances in 155 plate appearances with the Padres late in 1983. His on-base percentage was .277.

As great a prospect as McReynolds was, he was still a huge question mark when Williams announced he'd be starting the season as the Padres center fielder with **Tony Gwynn** moving to right.

McReynolds delivered.

The center fielder hit .278 in 1984 with a .317 on-base percentage and a .465 slugging percentage. He hit 20 homers and drove in 75 runs while spending most of the season hitting seventh in the Padres' order. He finished 17th in the voting for the National League Most Valuable Player Award.

More importantly, he played 147 games in 1984. McReynolds anchored the Padres outfield, taking a lot of pressure off first-time left fielder Martinez.

McReynolds had a career-high 5.4 WAR in 1984.

The numbers and importance of his defensive role makes McReynolds' 1984 campaign my 37th-best single-season in Padres' history.

He played only two more seasons with the Padres. On Dec. 11, 1986, general manager **Jack McKeon** traded McReynolds, relief pitcher **Gene Walter** and a minor leaguer to the New York Mets in a blockbuster trade that returned third baseman **Kevin Mitchell** and outfielders **Shawn Abner** and **Stan Jefferson** to the Padres.

In four seasons with the Padres, McReynolds hit .263 with a .319 on-base percentage and a .438 slugging percentage for a .756 OPS. He hit 65 homers with 260 RBIs in 496 games as a Padre.

McReynolds' Major League career was shortened to 12 seasons due to injuries. He was a .265 career hitter with a career .775 OPS.

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*Top 50 Individual Seasons:*

37. CF Kevin McReynolds (1984)

38. LHP Dave Roberts (1971)

39. RHP Clay Kirby (1972)

40. 1B Adrian Gonzalez (2010)

41. 1B Phil Nevin (2004)

42. RF Tony Gwynn (1995)

43. RF Dave Winfield (1978)
44. 2B Alan Wiggins (1984)
45. RHP Andy Hawkins (1985)
46. INF-OF Bip Roberts (1990)
47. RHP Heath Bell (2010)
48. RHP Trevor Hoffman (1999)
49. RF Brian Giles (2005)
50. 2B Mark Loretta (2003)