



# Padres Press Clips

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# Rotation arms atop Padres' Hot Stove needs

Preller also facing decisions with left side of infield, catcher, bullpen

By AJ Cassavell MLB.com [@AJCassavell](#)

SAN DIEGO -- The Padres are set with [Eric Hosmer](#) at first base. They probably aren't going to add to their already deep outfield either.

Everywhere else on the diamond? Well, if the right piece is available, general manager A.J. Preller is going to be interested.

"There's a lot of ways to get better," Preller said last month. "The good thing overall, from our standpoint, is that we have talent throughout the organization. We're at that point where we need to supplement that from the outside. Whether it be [via] the free-agency route, we'll look through that."

Of course, some needs are more glaring than others. There are a few spots where the Padres will add for depth purposes only. There are others where San Diego will be at the forefront of the offseason conversation.

As the Hot Stove season officially begins, here's a look at the needs in San Diego and what the Padres might be looking for at each spot.

## STARTING PITCHING

**Need:** Top priority

**What they're looking for:** The Padres' farm system is the best in baseball, according to MLB Pipeline. But most of the organization's top arms are at the lower levels. There's no front-line starter in San Diego, and the rotation is jarringly inexperienced.

As things stand, all five rotation spots are up for grabs next spring. [Joey Lucchesi](#) and [Eric Lauer](#) have a clear upper hand. But otherwise, expect the Padres to be active as they look to add rotation options.

Given the strength of their farm system, the Padres will almost certainly be linked to the top available pitchers on the trade market (or at least the pitchers on the market with multiple years of team control remaining). If the Padres can't work out a trade, it's unlikely they pay exorbitantly in a mediocre class of free-agent pitchers. But they're almost certainly going to add somewhere. Their 5.09 rotation ERA was the worst in the National League last season.

## SHORTSTOP/THIRD BASE

**Need:** Important

**What they're looking for:** The Padres might not be entirely sure yet what they're seeking here. More than anything, it should come down to the future of top prospect [Fernando Tatis Jr.](#)

No doubt, Tatis is part of the club's long-term infield. Ideally he'll be at shortstop, where the Padres can reap the most value from him. But that might not stop Preller from a reunion with [Freddy Galvis](#).

Tatis is bound for a first-half callup next season, meaning if Galvis returns, he might be in a utility role rather than everyday shortstop. Tatis could also shift to third base on occasion.

In any case, if Galvis isn't re-signed, the Padres will be looking for a stopgap option at short -- probably one who can serve as a utility man across the infield once Tatis arrives. They could also add at third base, where there's plenty of long-term uncertainty surrounding [Wil Myers](#) and [Christian Villanueva](#).

## **CATCHER**

**Need:** Mild

**What they're looking for:** This one's purely a depth issue. The Padres have [Austin Hedges](#) and [Francisco Mejia](#) locked in as their top two catchers for 2019.

But it's a physically demanding position, and there aren't many options behind those two. [A.J. Ellis](#) is a free agent, and [Raffy Lopez](#) will likely be removed from the 40-man roster in the next month.

Prospect Austin Allen ([No. 25 in the Padres' system per MLB Pipeline](#)) is a nice piece, and he's probably slated for his big league debut at some point next year. But the Padres will almost certainly look to add a veteran this offseason -- one who will report to camp with the club but is likely to open the season at Triple-A.

## **BULLPEN**

**Need:** Luxury

**What they're looking for:** The Brewers' bullpen received plenty of accolades during the postseason -- and deservedly so. But there's an argument to be made that the Padres' relief corps was actually better in 2018. They combined to post the second highest [WAR](#) (according to FanGraphs) for a bullpen in NL history.

It's a deep and young group, and all of those arms are back for 2019. [Trey Wingenter](#), [Robert Stock](#) and [Jose Castillo](#) -- all rookies last season -- should only get better. [Kirby Yates](#) and [Craig Stammen](#) -- if they aren't traded this offseason -- will continue to be the anchors.

That being said, there's no spot more volatile year to year than the bullpen. Plus, [Matt Strahm](#) is expected to make a run at a rotation slot, removing arguably the most electric arm from the mix. It certainly wouldn't hurt if Preller were to bring a depth option or two on board -- especially if he can find another gem off the scrap heap in the same way he found Stammen, Yates and [Brad Hand](#).

# Diaz, Reed named to AFL Fall Stars Game

AFL's marquee event to be broadcast on MLB Network, MLB.com

By Jim Callis MLB.com [@JimCallisMLB](#)

The World Series may have just ended, but there's still meaningful baseball being played. [The Arizona Fall League](#) is showcasing several of the game's top prospects, and the best of those best will compete against each other in the Fall Stars Game on Saturday.

A dozen of [MLB Pipeline's Top 100 prospects](#) will take the field on Saturday at Surprise Stadium, the Spring Training home of the Rangers and Royals. MLB Network will broadcast the 13th annual Fall Stars Game live at 8 p.m. ET/5 p.m. MST, and MLB.com will stream the contest live.

This year's Fall Stars Game features baseball's best prospect, Blue Jays third baseman Vladimir Guerrero Jr., and its best pitching prospect, Astros right-hander Forrest Whitley, both of whom have been spectacular in the first half of the AFL season. Guerrero, who won the Minor League regular-season batting title with a .381 average as a 19-year-old, is second in the Fall League in hitting at .458/.491/.604 and has struck out just once in 55 plate appearances. Whitley (No. 8 on the Top 100) whiffed the first seven batters he faced in his first start and tops the developmental circuit with 23 strikeouts in 17 innings.

Each team includes six Top 100 Prospects:

## West

1. Vladimir Guerrero Jr., 3B, Blue Jays
30. Keston Hiura, 2B, Brewers
39. Keibert Ruiz, C, Dodgers
44. Luis Robert, OF, White Sox
45. Estevan Florial, OF, Yankees
68. Cristian Pache, OF, Braves

## East

8. Forrest Whitley, RHP, Astros
17. Taylor Trammell, OF, Reds
37. Carter Kieboom, SS, Nationals
55. Andres Gimenez, SS, Mets
58. Peter Alonso, 1B, Mets
80. Jon Duplantier, RHP, D-backs

The West could add a seventh Top 100 Prospect in Rangers outfielder Julio Pablo Martinez (No. 56). He's one of three West candidates whom fans can give the final spot on the roster via the Fall League Bowman Final Vote, along with Yankees shortstop [Thairo Estrada](#) and Orioles outfielder Ryan McKenna. For the East, fans can select from among three shortstops: Jazz Chisholm (Diamondbacks), Arquimedes Gamboa (Phillies) and Nico Hoerner (Cubs).

Seven Fall Stars also played in the SiriusXM All-Star Futures Game at Nationals Park: Alonso, Gimenez, Hiura, Kieboom, Ruiz, Trammell and Padres outfielder Buddy Reed. Alonso homered

in that showcase and is tied for the AFL lead with four homers with Hiura, who also has a Fall League-best 24 RBIs in 12 games.

The Fall Stars Game annually serves as a preview of coming attractions, with potential National League Rookie of the Year [Ronald Acuna Jr.](#) singling and showing off his strong outfield arm [in last year's Fall Stars Game.](#) [Cody Bellinger](#) homered in [the 2016 contest](#), a prelude to slamming a NL rookie-record 39 homers in 2017. [Gary Sanchez](#) went deep and threw out a basestealer [in 2015](#) before becoming the first big leaguer ever to homer 20 times in his first 51 games the next summer.

# Padres prospects deliver in walk-off AFL win

By Sam Ficarro MLB.com

In a back-and-forth game Monday, a pair of Padres prospects delivered at the plate in the Peoria Javelinas' 7-6 walk-off win over the Surprise Saguaros in the [Arizona Fall League](#).

Third baseman Hudson Potts, [San Diego's No. 23 prospect](#) according to MLB Pipeline, drove in the game-winning run on a walk-off single, his only hit of the day, scoring [Brewers top prospect \(No. 30 overall\)](#) Keston Hiura.

"It was a great inning. Hiura started off things great and (Cristian) Pache with a great bunt to move him over," Potts said. "He just threw a first pitch curveball and I put a pretty good swing on it."

The Javelinas trailed 3-0 after the second inning and 6-4 heading into the eighth inning, but they were able to come back both times in the victory.

"We've played great the whole Fall League. We know we're always in it," Potts said. "We went down a couple of runs in those late innings, but we always have the confidence to always come back."

Potts entered Monday's game batting only .222 after finishing his Minor League season with Double-A San Antonio batting .154.

Despite the numbers, Potts says the Fall League has given him the opportunity to work on his game.

"It's going pretty good," Potts said. "Just working on different things, getting help from my teammates and coaches trying to make the best of the opportunity."

Also adding to the cause Monday was right fielder Buddy Reed, the [Padres' No. 13 prospect](#). Reed finished the game 2-for-4 with a double and a triple, with the biggest knock coming in the fourth inning.

With the bases loaded, Reed smoked a two-run, ground-rule double to deep left center to tie the game at three runs apiece.

It was Reed's third double and his second and third RBIs of the Fall League.

"It was a pretty solid one [performance] I would say," Reed said. "Coming out here early in the morning, getting my reps and work in, coming out here hitting a double and triple, it was fun."

"The biggest thing for me is just getting reps, putting good swings on balls and adjusting to the pitching here."

Reed is hoping to improve multiple facets of his game as the Fall League continues.

"Just refining my approach, being a leader, building relationships with these guys out here and just having fun," Reed said. "That's the biggest part about it, it's a game and I like to have fun."

With San Diego ranked as the No. 1 farm system in MLB according to MLB Pipeline, Potts and Reed are both happy to see the Padres' prospects contributing in the Arizona Fall League.

"Buddy had an outstanding game today," Potts said. "It's good to be with a good couple of guys and all the Padres guys that are here. It's fun to be around."

"It's a lot of fun. We got (Dauris) Valdez and (Travis) Radke in the 'pen, we got Austin (Allen) and Huddy, I don't want to leave anybody out but it's a lot of fun," Reed said. "Like I said, there's other teams here so I'm just trying to build relationships with these guys off the field as well."

# Padres' Buddy Reed, Miguel Diaz named to AFL all-star game

[Jeff Sanders](#)

Buddy Reed is still collecting accolades in this breakthrough season.

The [Padres](#)' center field prospect on Monday was selected to participate in the Arizona Fall League's all-star game, joining right-hander [Miguel Diaz](#) on the West Division's Fall Stars roster.

The 23-year-old Reed is hitting .351/.400/.405 with four steals, two doubles and eight runs scored. Before his selection to the Fall Stars Game, the switch-hitting Reed rose from high Single-A Lake Elsinore to Double-A San Antonio while hitting .271/.319/.435 with 13 homers, 51 steals and 62 RBIs in 122 games across both levels.

Reed was an all-star in the California League and represented the Padres in the [All-Star Futures game](#) alongside Fernando Tatis Jr. and Luis Urias.

On the mound in the Arizona Fall League, the 22-year-old Diaz is 2-0 with a 2.45 ERA, eight strikeouts, three walks and a 1.00 WHIP in three starts (11 innings).

A Rule 5 pick in 2017, Diaz posted a 4.82 ERA and 30 strikeouts in 18 2/3 innings with the Padres. He had a 3.33 ERA, 81 strikeouts and a 1.34 WHIP in 78 1/3 innings in the high minors.

The Fall Stars Game will be played at 5:08 p.m. Saturday (MLBN) at Surprise Stadium.

Fans can vote one more player onto each roster via an online ballot at [mlbfallball.com](http://mlbfallball.com).



# #PadresOnDeck: Diaz, Reed to Appear in Fall Stars Game

## Hard-throwing righty, speedy outfielder shine in Arizona Fall League

*By Justin Lafferty*

A pair of Padre farmhands — pitcher **Miguel Diaz** and outfielder **Buddy Reed** have earned acclaim in the Arizona Fall League and will represent [San Diego in the Fall Stars Game](#). Diaz and Reed will compete for the AFL West Fall Stars squad.

Reed, the [Padres' No. 20 prospect](#) as ranked by MLB Pipeline, has been a consistent hitter for the Peoria Javelinas. His .351 average is second on the team, and he has stolen four bases in nine games.

Across two levels in the 2018 season (Class-A Lake Elsinore and AA San Antonio), Reed swiped 51 bags while hitting at a .271 clip. Reed also played for the U.S. team in the 2018 Futures Game.

Diaz, a Rule 5 selection in 2016 who fanned 30 in 18.2 innings in San Diego last season, is 2–0 with a 2.45 ERA over 11 innings for Peoria.

The 13th annual Fall Stars Game will take place at 5:08 p.m. PT, Saturday, Nov. 3 at Surprise Stadium in Arizona. It will be televised on MLB Network and MLB.com.

The Javelinas — comprised of minor leaguers from Atlanta, Milwaukee, San Diego, Seattle and Tampa Bay — have plenty of future Padres, including 3B **Hudson Potts** ([Padres' No. 23 prospect](#)) and catcher **Austin Allen** ([No. 25](#)).

Last year, organizational [Nº4 prospect Luis Urías](#) and [Nº15 prospect Josh Naylor](#) represented the Padres in the Fall Stars game. The [Padres' current Nº3 prospect, Francisco Mejía](#), was selected for the 2017 Fall Stars game as a member of the Cleveland Indians organization.