



# Padres Press Clips

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## AFL starts today with 14 Top 100 prospects

Vlad Jr., Whitley among up-and-coming stars on Fall League rosters

By Jim Callis MLB.com

Baseball's finishing school opens again on Tuesday, when the Arizona Fall League will begin its 27th season. Designed to enhance the development of advanced prospects while also serving as a testing ground for potential rule changes, the AFL has sent more than 2,700 players to the big leagues.

Roughly 60 percent of all AFL participants have reached the Majors, including Hall of Famer Mike Piazza and future Cooperstown inductees Derek Jeter and Albert Pujols. The league has produced 278 All-Stars, 17 Most Valuable Players, six Cy Young Award winners and 29 Rookies of the Year. That list of award winners could go grow this fall as MVP front-runners Mookie Betts and Christian Yelich, as well as leading Rookie of the Year candidates Ronald Acuna Jr. (the 2017 AFL MVP) and Gleyber Torres (the 2016 AFL MVP), all polished their skills in Arizona.

Each MLB organization sends six or more prospects to the Fall League, where they'll play a 30-game regular season from Oct. 9 through Nov. 15 at six Cactus League stadiums in Glendale, Mesa, Peoria, Salt River, Scottsdale and Surprise. The two division winners will stage a one-game playoff for the championship, which will be broadcast live on MLB Network on Nov. 17. MLB Network also will televise the Fall Stars Game on Nov. 3 and the Military Appreciation Game on Nov. 10.

Fourteen of MLB Pipeline.com's Top 100 Prospects will play in Arizona this fall, highlighted by the game's best prospect (Blue Jays third baseman Vladimir Guerrero Jr. of the Surprise Saguaros) and top pitching prospect (Astros right-hander Forrest Whitley of the Scottsdale Scorpions). Scottsdale has four Top 100 Prospects, with Reds outfielder Taylor Trammell, Mets shortstop Andres Gimenez and Mets first baseman Peter Alonso joining Whitley.

The complete list of Top 100 Prospects in the AFL:

Vladimir Guerrero Jr., 3B, Surprise/Blue Jays (No. 1 on Top 100)

Forrest Whitley, RHP, Scottsdale/Astros (No. 8)

Taylor Trammell, OF, Scottsdale/Reds (No. 17)

Keston Hiura, 2B, Peoria/Brewers (No. 30)

Carter Kieboom, SS, Salt River/Nationals (No. 37)

Keibert Ruiz, C, Glendale/Dodgers (No. 39)

Luis Robert, OF, Glendale/White Sox (No. 44)

Estevan Florial, OF, Glendale/Yankees (No. 45)

Andres Gimenez, SS, Scottsdale/Mets (No. 55)

Julio Pablo Martinez, OF, Surprise/Rangers (No. 56)

Peter Alonso, 1B, Scottsdale/Mets (No. 58)

Cristian Pache, OF, Peoria/Braves (No. 68)

Michael Chavis, 3B, Mesa/Red Sox (No. 69)

Jon Duplantier, RHP, Salt River/Diamondbacks (No. 80)

Once again, the Fall League will use a clock to regulate the time between pitches (15 seconds), between hitters (30 seconds), mound visits (30 seconds) and between innings (two minutes, 15 seconds). Additionally, all extra innings will begin with the player who made the final out the previous inning on second base, though games will continue to end if tied after 11 innings. Past AFL experiments have included instant replay, foul poles of different heights and colors, further pace-of-game initiatives and balls that don't require being rubbed down with mud.

#### Probables

##### Tuesday

Glendale (RHP Jordan Foley) at Peoria (RHP [Bubba Derby](#)), 3:35 p.m. ET

Salt River (RHP Ryan Castellani) at Surprise (RHP [Dario Agrazal](#)), 3:35 p.m. ET

Mesa (LHP [Gregory Soto](#)) at Scottsdale (RHP Forrest Whitley), 9:35 p.m. ET

##### Wednesday

Peoria (RHP [Miguel Diaz](#)) at Glendale (LHP Ben Holmes), 3:35 p.m. ET

Scottsdale (LHP Garrett Williams) at Mesa (RHP Teddy Stankiewicz), 9:35 p.m. ET

Surprise (LHP Evan Kruczynski) at Salt River (RHP Luis Reyes), 9:35 p.m. ET

##### Thursday

Peoria (RHP Jeremy Walker) at Mesa (LPH Justin Steele), 3:35 p.m. ET

Surprise (RHP Tai Tiedemann) at Glendale (LHP [Chris Lee](#)), 3:35 p.m. ET

Scottsdale (RHP J.B. Bukauskas) at Salt River (RHOP [Jordan Yamamoto](#)), 9:35 p.m. ET

#### Dates To Remember

Oct. 9: Opening Day

Oct. 13: Bowman Hitting Challenge, Sloan Park, Mesa, 9:35 pm ET

Nov. 3: Fall Stars Game, Surprise Stadium, Scottsdale, 8 pm ET

Nov. 10: Military Appreciation Game, Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, 8 pm ET

Nov. 17: Championship Game, Scottsdale Stadium, 3 pm ET