

Cincinnati Reds Press Clippings February 10, 2018

THIS DAY IN REDS HISTORY

2000-The Reds acquire Ken Griffey, Jr., in a trade with Seattle. Griffey, Jr. will play nine seasons for his home town team, collecting a .270 batting average, with 173 doubles, 210 home runs and 602 RBI

MLB.COM

**Will Reds get Scooter-style surprise this spring?
Projecting Cincinnati's Opening Day 25-man roster
By Mark Sheldon MLB.com @m_sheldon
Feb. 9th, 2018**

CINCINNATI -- They say there are few certainties in life other than death and taxes. A similar sentiment holds true for baseball: There are only a few things you can always bank on in Major League Baseball.

One of them is that one way or another, teams will set a 25-man roster just ahead of Opening Day on March 29. Of course, the journey the Reds take getting to that point is just beginning, and they can take multiple paths to complete the process.

Who will fill out the back of the rotation? Who will get the last three spots in the bullpen? Who will make up the bench? Injuries have rocked the Reds in recent camps -- can the club stay relatively healthy? If there are injuries, how will that affect the outcome of the roster? Could there be a surprise waiver claim, like Scooter Gennett at the end of camp last year?

Before pitchers and catchers report on Tuesday, here is the first educated guess as MLB.com projects the Reds' Opening Day roster.

Catcher (2): Tucker Barnhart, Devin Mesoraco

For the first time, the depth chart is reversed; Barnhart will be the primary catcher with Mesoraco backing him up. Barnhart earned a four-year contract and a National League Gold Glove Award for his strong work last season. A 2014 All-Star, Mesoraco has been sidetracked by big injuries each of the last three years and will be trying to reboot himself again.

First base (1): Joey Votto

No drama to be found here, as the runner-up for the NL MVP Award is back following up the best season of his 11-year career.

Second base (2): Gennett, Dilson Herrera

Cincinnati's best pickup of 2017 cost the club nothing more than a waiver claim before the final day of Spring Training. Gennett slugged 27 home runs with 97 RBIs in a breakout year. Mostly injured with a bad right shoulder since his July '16 trade from the Mets for Jay Bruce, Herrera is out of options and puts the club in a bind. Can he be healthy and productive enough to remain on the roster?

Shortstop (1): Jose Peraza

Peraza opened 2017 as Brandon Phillips' replacement but struggled and lost the job at second base to Gennett. Still 23, he now replaces departed free agent Zack Cozart and gets to play his natural position.

Third base (1): Eugenio Suarez

Suarez has become a superb defensive third baseman in a short amount of time. He also hit 26 homers last season.

Outfield (4): Adam Duvall, Billy Hamilton, Scott Schebler, Jesse Winker

Currently, the plan is to have the four outfielders rotate among three spots with the odd man out being a bench option. The club believes Winker is ready to get significant playing time after his second-half performance last season.

Utility (2): Phil Gosselin, Patrick Kivlehan

Both are non-roster players in camp, so that will be an extra hoop to clear for them to make the team. Gosselin can play five positions, including shortstop. Kivlehan was with the team all of last season and batted only .208, but manager Bryan Price liked his versatility -- he can also play five positions -- and he has power potential from the bench after cracking nine homers last year. He led the club in 2017 with 57 pinch-hit plate appearances.

Rotation (5): Anthony DeSclafani, Homer Bailey, Brandon Finnegan, Luis Castillo, Sal Romano

The first three spots are going to veterans trying to bounce back from injuries. Castillo made himself a lock with a sensational 15 starts as a rookie last season. The fifth spot is up for grabs, but the edge goes to Romano for now. But he wasn't the only rookie to come on strong down the stretch; Robert Stephenson also impressed with a 2.74 ERA in his final eight starts. And Tyler Mahle also looked good in a small sample size. Amir Garrett, Cody Reed, Michael Lorenzen and others will be part of this battle.

Bullpen (7): Raisel Iglesias, Jared Hughes, David Hernandez, Wandy Peralta, Lorenzen, Vance Worley, Ariel Hernandez

Iglesias will close after logging 28 saves last season, and the free-agent signings of Hughes and Hernandez are expected to bring stability. Lorenzen will get a spot if he doesn't make the rotation. It's possible another pitcher who doesn't make the rotation could land here. Hernandez is a wild-card choice because of the control issues he experienced as a rookie, but he has a lot of upside with velocity and a nasty curveball. Worley, signed to a Minor League deal, could be a potential swing man with experience as a starter and long reliever. Others in the battle for the final spots could be Kevin Shackelford, Kyle Crockett, Kevin Quackenbush, Austin Brice and Jeff Manship and prospects Jimmy Herget and Zack Weiss.

Eyeing starting job, Garrett already in camp

By Mark Sheldon MLB.com @m_sheldon

Feb. 9th, 2018

CINCINNATI -- With his goal to earn a job on the big league pitching staff for the Reds when Spring Training opens next week, Amir Garrett isn't wasting time. Like others on the club, Garrett is already in camp in Goodyear, Ariz., working out and getting ready.

"I got here on Sunday," Garrett said Friday on MLB Network's Hot Stove. "I just had to get out here, get situated and get going. I was itching to get back out here."

Garrett, 25, made the Reds out of Spring Training last year but went 3-8 with a 7.39 ERA and a 1.61 WHIP in 16 games (14 starts) during his rookie year. He missed time with a right hip injury and also spent a large bulk of the season at Triple-A Louisville.

It was the first real setback Garrett experienced in professional baseball after coming to the game a little later in life. A 22nd-round Draft pick by the Reds in 2011, he split his time playing college basketball as a guard and forward for St. John's University in New York. The left-hander didn't turn his attention to baseball full-time until 2014.

Once he did, Garrett moved quickly through the Reds' system and made his big league debut in 2017. He started out with 12 scoreless innings over his first two starts and struck out 12 batters in his third start. Struggles came after that.

Garrett told MLB.com last month that he underwent platelet-rich plasma and stem cell injections on his sore hip and that he's 100 percent again after rehabilitation. He said on MLB Network on Friday that he's still a work in progress as a pitcher.

"I'm still learning to this day. I still feel like I'm pretty raw," Garrett said. "I haven't even tapped the surface of my abilities and what I can do. I've gotten better from just being on the mound. I'm still an unfinished product, but I'm getting there. It's getting close."

Besides getting healthy in the offseason, Garrett's biggest moment came in his personal life. He got engaged while his girlfriend was throwing him a surprise party. Little did she know, the ring was already bought and he was ready.

"Me being the smart guy that I am, I knew my fiancée was throwing me a surprise party," Garrett said. "She had all of my family and friends and a going away video for me saying good luck. At the end of the video, I was on there telling her I appreciate her and all of that. [Afterwards] I popped the question. It was the biggest day of my life, and the happiest day of my life."

CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

Katie Uhlaender's connection to the Reds
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Why do the Cincinnati Reds root for Team USA skeleton racer and four-time Winter Olympian Katie Uhlaender (@KatieU11 on Twitter)?

Uhlaender is the daughter of former Major League Baseball outfielder (and former Cleveland Indians coach and San Francisco Giants scout) Ted Uhlaender, who spent eight seasons with the Minnesota Twins, the Indians and the Reds. In 2009, Ted - suffering from cancer - died of a heart attack at the age of 69.

In memory of her father, Katie wears Ted's National League Championship ring from the 1972 Cincinnati Reds on a necklace. It was Ted's only season with the Reds and his final season in the Majors.

Skeleton requires athletes to go head-first down an icy chute on a sled they steer by using their shoulders and knees. Skeleton sleds can reach speeds of about 80 miles per hour.

In Pyeongchang, women's skeleton runs 1-2 are slated for Fri., Feb. 16 at 6:20 a.m. Runs 3-4 are scheduled for Sat., Feb. 17 at 6:20 a.m.

The Games are being broadcast on NBC, NBCSN and across the networks of NBC Universal. Events are available to stream live and on-demand on NBCOlympics.com and the NBC Sports app.

Katie Uhlaender finished fourth in Sochi, one spot behind Elena Nikitina of Russia - one of the athletes who had her results from Sochi stripped, which would have meant Uhlaender would move up to bronze and claim her first Olympic medal.

Last week, Katie said she is "heartbroken" by the Court of Arbitration for Sport's decision to overturn the disqualifications of Russians who competed at the 2014 Sochi Olympics.

Transactions

02/09/18

Toronto Blue Jays signed free agent RHP John Axford to a minor league contract and invited him to spring training.

Pittsburgh Pirates signed free agent LF Daniel Nava to a minor league contract and invited him to spring training.

Philadelphia Phillies signed free agent LHP Josh Tols to a minor league contract.

New York Mets designated 3B Matt Reynolds for assignment.
