



## **SF Giants Press Clips Tuesday, September 4, 2018**

### **San Francisco Chronicle**

#### **Giants get mammoth homer from rookie Chris Shaw, but fall to Rockies**

**Henry Schulman**

DENVER — A casual fan who merely pores over minor-league boxscores and stat sheets would not have gotten a complete picture of why the Giants remained enamored of a prospect who has struck out 442 times in 1,543 at-bats.

The view comes into high-definition focus when you witness what happens to a baseball when 24-year-old Chris Shaw truly gets ahold of one, like he did at Coors Field on Monday.

Shaw's first big-league hit turned into the Giants' longest home run in three seasons, a 468-foot Saturn 5 launch into the second deck at Coors Field that gave the Giants a fleeting lead in the eighth inning before the Rockies scored twice off Tony Watson in the bottom half to win 9-8.

While the Rockies moved into a first-place tie with the Dodgers, with a chance to take an outright lead if Los Angeles lost on Monday night, the Giants fell for the 16th time in their past 18 games at Coors.

For a lame-duck team in September, losses are more annoying than meaningful. Looking at the future takes priority.

The Giants got a promising glimpse of Steven Duggar before his season-ending shoulder injury last week. Catcher Aramis Garcia has had a couple of big hits.

But if Shaw produces, he will provide the Giants something they desperately lack: pure power, which was evident throughout his Triple-A season. Shaw hit 24 homers. He also struck out 144 times in 394 at-bats.

That's baseball in 2018, isn't it?

"That's what he's got, power," manager Bruce Bochy said. "He will swing and miss a lot, but then he'll run into a ball. That's his game. That's what is needed here."

Shaw had seven big-league plate appearances before he pinch-hit in a game that Alen Hanson had just tied with his own pinch homer. Measured against Shaw's second-deck blast, Hanson's 413-footer to right was a chip shot.

Shaw struck out in five of those seven plate appearances. He also hit two flyballs, one a sacrifice fly.

Any start like that conjures memories of Willie Mays going hitless in his first 12 big-league at-bats and saying he wanted to go home.

Shaw did not despair like that. Bochy calmed him when he arrived Friday by saying, "Don't go out there thinking this is the last time you're going to play."

"I was facing Zack Wheeler and Noah Syndergaard right up from Triple-A," Shaw said. "I took it with a grain of salt."

The Giants have gotten countless phone calls from other teams asking for Shaw since they drafted him out of Boston College with their second pick in 2015, No. 31 overall.

The Giants have not been shy about dealing first-round draftees for immediate help, but they could not walk away from Shaw, because how many hitters like him do they ever develop? Not many have the strength that 43,256 fans saw when the left-handed hitter blasted a hanging slider from Seunghwan Oh farther than any Giants batter had hit a ball since Brandon Belt's 475-foot upper-deck blow at Coors in 2015.

"It was incredible," Shaw said. "That's the kind of thing you dream about, your first knock being a homer, and a late homer that gives you a lead. It's surreal."

For now, Shaw is starting against right-handers. The Rockies had lefty Tyler Anderson on the mound Monday, so Shaw sat. He did not hit lefties well in Triple-A. Bochy is trying to ease him into the majors and said Shaw will see some lefties later.

“I figured that was going to be the game plan going forward, getting my feet wet,” Shaw said. “I’m not in position to have any sort of expectations as far as playing time.”

On Monday, Shaw gave Bochy 468 reasons to give him as much playing time as possible.

**San Francisco Chronicle**  
**Giants bullpen wastes electric comeback at Coors**  
**Henry Schulman**

DENVER - The Giants played at Coors Field on Memorial Day and lost. They also fell here on Independence Day and completed the holiday trifecta with Monday's 9-8 Labor Day defeat.

Rosh Hashanah starts Sunday night. Happily for the Giants they will be flying home from Milwaukee.

For the 19th time this season, which matches the worst in the majors, the Giants lost in their last at-bat. They overcame deficits of 4-0 and 7-2, all the runs charged to Madison Bumgarner, and had a dream offensive day after totaling five hits in two weekend losses to the Mets.

Gorkys Hernandez homered. Evan Longoria had three RBIs, two on a triple. Chase d'Arnaud and Nick Hundley doubled and scored. In a three-run eighth inning, the Giants caught the Rockies then took an 8-7 lead on the club's first back-to-back pinch homers since Barry Bonds and Shawon Dunston in 2001.

The Alen Hanson and Chris Shaw homers made the Giants dugout euphoric, a temporary high, as the Rockies scored twice off Tony Watson in the bottom half on Noel Cuevas' two-run single past a drawn-in infield.

When Wade Davis finished the Giants in the ninth, they had lost for the 16th time in 24 seasons at Coors when despite scoring at least eight runs.

Bumgarner had the second-worst of his 15 starts here, allowing all the runs on two Trevor Story homers (good for five RBIs) and another by DJ LeMahieu. Each hit a two-run shot in the first before Bumgarner could get an out.

The crucial play was a Nolan Arenado groundball that could have ended the fifth inning with the Giants down 4-2. Instead, second baseman Kelby Tomlinson let it shoot off his glove into center for an error. Story then hit his second homer.

It seemed as though second-base umpire Larry Vanover screened Tomlinson as he tried to jump clear of the ball. Tomlinson said Bumgarner actually screened him more.

It bounced up a little bit, but it hit my glove, so it's got to be caught," Tomlinson said.

**Belt out:** Brandon Belt did not start because of soreness in his right knee, which he injured in Seattle on July 25, costing him 17 games.

Belt had the knee cleaned out in an arthroscopic procedure after 2015 and might need a similar operation this offseason. His recovery time after the first one was a month.

**Briefly:** Steven Okert and Pierce Johnson, who were recalled from Sacramento with pitcher Casey Kelly, each threw a shutout inning. ... D'Arnaud started at first base for the first time in his career.

## **San Jose Mercury News**

### **Chris Shaw crushes first home run, Giants collapse again at Coors**

**Kerry Crowley**

DENVER—The youngest members of the Giants roster are charged with igniting change, showcasing potential and providing hope that the future of the franchise won't look as bleak as the present.

Alen Hanson, 25, and Chris Shaw, 24, did that with back-to-back pinch hit home runs to cap off a furious six-run Giants' rally Monday, but their eighth-inning heroics weren't enough to obscure the reality of the current state of affairs.

The Giants battled back from a five-run deficit to take a late lead, but the Rockies stormed back with two runs off Tony Watson in the eighth to down San Francisco 9-8 on Labor Day.

"What a great comeback, it's a shame we couldn't hold on," manager Bruce Bochy said. "Because we fought hard. Really came on real strong there at the end. We just couldn't finish the job."

The air at Coors Field is thin, but the Giants' odds of defeating the Rockies at the mile-high destination have appeared much thinner of late.

After Hanson launched a pinch-hit two-run homer off Rockies reliever Seunghwan Oh, Shaw slammed his first big league homer to push the Giants ahead 8-7.

Shaw's 468-foot home run was the furthest by a Giants player this season and the first hit of his

major league career. After producing a go-ahead sacrifice fly in his major league debut Friday, Shaw joined Aramis Garcia as the second Giants rookie in four games to crush a home run for his first career hit.

“That’s the kind of thing you dream about,” Shaw said. “Your first knock being a home run and a go-ahead home run late in the ballgame. That was pretty surreal.”

Shaw became the fourth player in San Francisco history to record his first major league hit on a pinch-hit home run and the first since Damon Minor did so September 10, 2000.

“I’m looking forward to watching him the rest of the year,” starter Madison Bumgarner said.

Bumgarner’s command issues put the Giants in an early 4-0 hole, as D.J. LeMahieu and Trevor Story each hit two-run homers off the left-hander in the bottom of the first. Though he battled back to throw three scoreless innings, Bumgarner allowed a third home run in a start for the first time this season after an error extended the fifth.

With one-out, a hard-hit Nolan Arenado grounder skipped to the side of second base umpire Larry Vanover and right past the glove of second baseman Kelby Tomlinson, who could have stepped on the bag to start an inning-ending double play if he fielded the ball cleanly.

Instead, the Rockies had two on and one-out for Story, who became the fourth player to homer off of Bumgarner twice in the same game as he pushed the Rockies ahead 7-2 with a three-run shot to left field.

“I didn’t feel like my command was very good at all,” Bumgarner said. “Didn’t feel like the stuff was super good either. The curveball felt pretty good, but everything else besides that I would like for it to be better. Especially here.”

The Giants chipped away at the Rockies lead with a run in the sixth and two more in the seventh on a two-run triple from Evan Longoria, but they didn’t overtake Colorado until the eighth. After Oh hit center fielder Gorkys Hernández with a pitch, Hanson lined his first home run since July 5 into the right field seats.

“Hanny, look what he did,” Bochy said. “That’s huge to hit that home run and then Shaw got all of that one.”

Since the Giants selected Shaw in the first round of the 2015 draft, he’s showed off mammoth power and a skill set the franchise has lacked in recent years at the big league level.

After beginning his major league career with five strikeouts in his first six at-bats, Shaw finally connected on a hanging breaking ball and left no doubt.

“Guys come in here and tell you to get ready,” Shaw said of Coors Field. “It’s a show taking BP here and this is a place you get excited to come hit at.”

Hanson and Shaw left the Giants optimistic about their potential, but an eight-run outburst from a struggling offense still wasn’t enough to snap a dreadful stretch at Coors Field.

After the Rockies took a 9-8 lead against Watson, who has allowed eight earned runs in his last nine innings, the Giants struck out three times in the ninth to clinch their 16th loss in their last 18 games in Denver.

### **Belt day-to-day**

Brandon Belt appeared as a defensive replacement in Monday’s loss, but Bochy held his starting first baseman out of the lineup as Belt is dealing with right knee soreness.

Belt missed 17 games after hyperextending his knee running the bases July 25 and is still dealing with lingering effects from the injury. Bochy said Belt is “day-to-day.”

## **San Jose Mercury News**

### **Belt dealing with injury, Giants look to reverse trends at Coors Field**

**Kerry Crowley**

DENVER — First baseman Brandon Belt carried the Giants’ offense for much of the first half, but as the team has fallen into a late-season slump, so has Belt.

Belt isn’t in the lineup against the Colorado Rockies on Monday at Coors Field and he might not play in Tuesday’s game as he’s day-to-day because of right knee soreness.

Though Belt remains a Gold Glove candidate, he has hit only .154 with a .439 OPS in 21 games since the All-Star break. Belt missed 17 games from the end of July through the middle of August with a hyperextended right knee he suffered July 25 at Safeco Field, and it appears he’s still dealing with lingering pain from the injury.

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Bochy inserted utility infielder Chase d’Arnaud into Monday’s lineup in Belt’s place against Rockies left-hander Tyler Anderson.

Austin Slater started regularly at first base during Belt’s absence in August, but Slater has taken over as the Giants’ everyday right fielder after the trade of Andrew McCutchen to the New York Yankees on Friday.

Bochy said the Giants nearly pulled Belt in the seventh inning of Sunday's game against the New York Mets, but Belt played through pain. Belt is 2 for 19 in his last six games, with both hits coming in Friday's 7-0 win over the Mets.

Though the Giants are 7.5 games out in the National League West with 24 games remaining, Bochy believes the series at Coors Field is an important one because the Giants have lost 15 of their last 17 games there.

The Giants are 1-5 at Coors Field this season and scored only three runs in a three-game sweep when they last visited in July.

"For some reason, we've had a hard time scoring runs here," Bochy said. "Their pitching has done a number on us and that's been the biggest problem. You expect to give up a couple more runs here or there, but the bats have been quiet in this ballpark. It would be nice to change that up so guys can get some confidence in this ballpark."

### **September call-ups continue**

The Giants added three pitchers to their roster ahead of the three-game set in Denver as Casey Kelly, Pierce Johnson and Steven Okert were promoted from Triple-A Sacramento.

Kelly and Johnson have spent time in the big leagues this season, but Okert has yet to pitch for the Giants this year. After a dismal first half with the Sacramento River Cats, Okert posted a 2.35 ERA with 19 strikeouts in 15 1/3 innings after the All-Star break.

Bochy said the Giants have not determined whether the club will add any more players after the Triple-A season ends Monday, but with Belt hurting, corner infielder Ryder Jones is a candidate to join the club.

San Francisco might also look at infielder Abiatal Avelino, who was acquired in the McCutchen trade Friday.

Right-handed relief pitcher Tyler Rogers is also deserving of a major league opportunity after earning Triple-A All-Star nods in each of the last two seasons, but the Giants will need to create 40-man spots for both Avelino and Rogers if they elect to promote either player.

**MLB.com**

## **Giants rally in 8th but can't hold down Rockies**

**Jack Etkin**

DENVER -- Seemingly destined for more misfortune at Coors Field, the Giants finally showed some offensive might and the ability to come back there. But in the end, it was more of the same Monday as their stunning eighth-inning rally that enabled them to wipe out a five-run deficit went for naught in a 9-8 loss.

"What a great comeback," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "It's a shame we couldn't hold on, because they fought hard and really came on real strong there at the end. We just couldn't finish the job."

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Pinch-hitter **Noel Cuevas** bounced a two-run single up the middle and through a drawn-in infield to hand the Giants their sixth loss in seven games at Coors Field this season and 16th in the past 18 there. The Giants scored three runs while getting swept in three games at Coors Field and batting .152 (14-for-92) on their last visit in early July.

Cuevas' hit came against left-hander **Tony Watson**, who gave up a single to **Ian Desmond** to start the inning and a one-out double off the right-field wall to pinch-hitter **Chris Iannetta**.

The Giants came roaring back from a five-run deficit and made it 7-5 in the seventh on **Evan Longoria**'s two-run triple with two outs, a prelude, as it turned out, to the theatrics in eighth when Bochy went to his bench with win-the-lottery results.

Pinch-hitter **Alen Hanson** hit a two-run homer to tie the game at 7, and pinch-hitter **Chris Shaw** followed with his first Major League hit, a 468-foot home run to right-center, according to **Statcast™**. Both homers came off **Seunghwan Oh**, who ended up the winning pitcher when the Rockies rallied.

"It was incredible," said Shaw, who struck out five times in his first six at-bats. "That's kind of the thing you dream about, your first knock being a home run, a go-ahead home run late in a ballgame. So that was pretty surreal."

So was the 35-pitch first inning when Giants ace **Madison Bumgarner** was uncharacteristically victimized by the long ball. He gave up a career-high-tying three home runs, including two-run homers to two of the first four batters he faced. **Charlie Blackmon** led off the first with a soft single up the middle, and **DJ LeMahieu** followed with a homer. **Nolan Arenado** then pulled a double into the left-field corner, ahead of **Trevor Story**'s two-run homer.



It was the first time Bumgarner had allowed four runs in the first since July 28, 2014, against Pittsburgh, and the first time he had allowed four runs in the first inning on the road since July 30, 2011, at Cincinnati.

"I didn't feel like my command was very good at all," said Bumgarner, who yielded seven runs (six earned), both season highs in five innings. "Didn't feel like the stuff was super good, either. The curveball felt pretty good but everything else besides that -- I'd like for it to be better, especially here. You make it hard on yourself when you get out there like that."

Bumgarner might have fared better save for second baseman **Kelby Tomlinson's** error on a potential inning-ending double-play grounder by Arenado that Tomlinson muffed in the fifth with the score, 4-2. Story followed with a three-run homer that boosted the Rockies' lead to 7-2.

"Got a bad break there in the sixth," Bochy said of Bumgarner. "He's out of that, he goes back out there in the sixth. It's a pretty good game after giving up four early."

The Giants have played 77 games decided by two or fewer runs and are 38-39 in those contests.

### **SOUND SMART**

Bumgarner gave up three homers for the seventh time and first since Sept. 3, 2017, against the Cardinals. In his previous 16 starts this season, Bumgarner had allowed nine home runs in 100 2/3 innings and had yielded two homers in a game once. That was on June 16 at the Dodgers in Bumgarner's third start this season, when **Matt Kemp** hit a solo homer in the second and **Enrique Hernandez** hit a two-run shot in the fifth.

### **YOU GOTTA SEE THIS**

Shaw's 468-foot pinch-hit home run was the Giants' second longest homer ever recorded by Statcast™. The only one longer was **Brandon Belt's** 475-foot home run on May 22, 2015, also at Coors Field.

"That's what he's got -- power," Bochy said of Shaw. "He's going to swing and miss, but he's going to run into balls. That's kind of his game, and it's something that's needed here. He needs reps, and he'll get the discipline. But as you saw, when he runs into it, it doesn't matter what park he's at, it's going to go."

### **HE SAID IT**

"Strikeouts don't sit well with me. I don't like just giving an out away if I can avoid it. But it is part of my game, whether I like it or not. I'm trying to drive the ball in the air. So to do that, you got to essentially swing a little harder and be a little more aggressive. I don't like it, but it is

what it is. I think I'll get better at it, too, honestly." -- *Shaw, on the strikeouts that come with being a power hitter and belting home runs*

#### UP NEXT

**Dereck Rodriguez**, who made his Major League debut at Coors Field this season on May 29, will make his first start there Tuesday. First pitch is at 5:40 p.m. PT. The Giants are 9-5 in his starts and 4-1 on the road. Rodriguez is 2-1 with a 2.03 ERA in his past seven starts, allowing two homers in 44 1/3 innings in that span and limiting opposing hitters to a .158 batting average and .515 OPS. **German Marquez** will start for the Rockies.

#### MLB.com

##### **Belt out of lineup with right knee soreness**

**Jack Etkin**

DENVER -- First baseman **Brandon Belt**, who has struggled since coming off the disabled list, was not in the Giants' lineup Monday due to right knee soreness.

**Chase d'Arnaud** made his first career start at first base and third appearance at the position where his previous experience totaled three innings -- two this year on July 29 and one in 2017 for the Padres.

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"It's flared up on him occasionally, and yesterday it was bothering him to the point where we almost had to pull him out there in the seventh inning," manager Bruce Bochy said. "But he felt like he could keep going. He needs a day [off] today."

Belt missed 17 games with a hyperextended right knee and was reinstated from the 10-day disabled list Aug. 14. Since coming off the DL, Belt is 10-for-61 (.164) with two hits in his past 21 at-bats. He has gone 26 plate appearances without an extra-base hit at Coors Field this season.

#### **Worth noting**

- Outfielder **Steven Duggar** will undergo surgery Tuesday to repair a labrum tear in his left (non-throwing) shoulder. He suffered the injury last Tuesday. Dr. Gary Waslewski will perform the operation in the Phoenix area.
- The Giants recalled right-handed pitchers **Casey Kelly** and **Pierce Johnson** and left-handed pitcher **Steven Okert**. Kelly is 0-2 with a 2.16 ERA in four games (two starts) for the Giants this season. Recalled for the fifth time this season, Johnson is 3-2 with a 5.72 ERA in 31 games for

the Giants. Okert will be making his 2018 debut for the Giants. He was recalled on April 10 but did not appear in a game.

Bochy did not rule out the possibility of recalling a position player. He said he spoke Monday morning with general manager Bobby Evans, "but right now, this is what we have."

- Shortstop **Brandon Crawford** was back in the lineup. He missed the past three games due to left knee soreness.

## **MLB.com**

### **One wish for all 30 teams entering final month**

**Richard Justice**

While some teams are already planning for postseason baseball, others are scratching and clawing to get that far. Still, others are looking to the offseason and beyond.

Regardless, this final month of the regular season is important for all of them, whether it's about wins and losses, player development or an opportunity to make better evaluations. On this Labor Day weekend, let's give all 30 teams a September wish list.

### **National League East**

**Braves:** For **Nick Markakis** and **Freddie Freeman** to get hot again and put the finishing touches on what have been magical seasons for both themselves and the franchise.

**Marlins:** Solid final months from two rookies -- center fielder **Lewis Brinson** and right-hander **Sandy Alcantara**. Both were acquired during last offseason's remake and are projected to be big parts of the future.

**Mets:** One more ride for third baseman **David Wright**. Forget about him playing in 2019. One step at a time. After all the pain and work and all that he has meant to the franchise, he deserves to get back on the field and do what he loves.

**Nationals:** To put youngsters **Victor Robles** and **Juan Soto** in the outfield together and give Nationals fans a look at a 2019 season that still has lots of promise, despite the disappointment of '18.

**Phillies:** Time to fight through tough times, which the Phillies always knew were coming. That

begins with cleaner play and a pitching staff that has had a tough few days. **Jake Arrieta** was signed last offseason to lead in times like this.

## NL Central

**Brewers:** Right-handers **Chase Anderson** and **Junior Guerra** put a difficult August behind them and help a struggling pitching staff get back on track. Little room for error with eight NL teams fighting for five postseason berths.

**Cardinals:** Don't change a thing. Hit the way you've been hitting, wear what you've been wearing, sing the songs you've been singing. No team is playing better. One other thing: How about **Matt Carpenter** for the Most Valuable Player Award?

**Cubs:** Status quo. The Cubs are doing a great imitation of the NL's best team, and with a front three of **Jon Lester**, **Cole Hamels** and **Kyle Hendricks**, they could have a potentially dominant October rotation.

**Pirates:** How about a little bit of offense to back all that nice pitching? The Pirates have set themselves up nicely for 2019, regardless of how '18 plays out. But **Starling Marte**, **Josh Bell** and others could set the stage with fast finishes.

**Reds:** To show the makings of a solid 2019 rotation. Left-hander **Cody Reed** could solidify a spot for next season with a good final month and line up behind **Anthony DeSclafani** and perhaps **Luis Castillo**.

## NL West

**D-backs:** **Robbie Ray** finishes strong to give Arizona what could be a World Series championship-caliber pitching staff. They might have that anyway, but one more hot pitcher would help.

**Dodgers:** **Kenley Jansen** calming the Dodgers' jitters by having a healthy and productive September. Without him, the entire bullpen equation looks shaky in a tight division race.

**Giants:** Give right-hander **Dereck Rodriguez** more offensive and defensive support to boost his NL Rookie of the Year Award candidacy and put the finishing touches on a successful rookie season.

**Padres:** Twenty-two-year-old second baseman **Luis Urias** energizes the entire franchise with a nice showing. The Padres have a bounty of young talent on the way, and lots of them are going

to get chances this month. Urias would show fans how bright the future is.

**Rockies:** Rotation picks itself up, dusts itself off and gets back on track. The Rockies need someone to step up behind **Kyle Freeland** and **German Marquez** to keep a playoff berth in sight.

### **American League East**

**Blue Jays:** **Aaron Sanchez** gives the franchise a boost with a healthy final month. He has made only 25 starts over the past two seasons and interrupted a trajectory that seemed headed toward stardom. Having him for a full season in 2019 would be huge.

**Orioles:** Let the kids keep playing. Center fielder **Cedric Mullins** is off to an exciting start, and right-hander **David Hess** has gotten better and better.

**Rays:** Keep on keeping on. No non-playoff team is likely to finish the season with as much optimism about the future as this one. This final month is about keeping the momentum going.

**Red Sox:** **Chris Sale** healthy and pitching well. If that happens, there's no team better than this one. But until he gets back on the mound and shows he's sound, there'll be worries.

**Yankees:** **Aaron Judge** back on the field healthy and swatting balls over the fence. Closer **Aroldis Chapman** returning in time to be ready for the postseason. **Andrew McCutchen** is a nice addition, but there are still issues.

### **AL Central**

**Indians:** Right-hander **Trevor Bauer** and lefty **Andrew Miller** returning in time to be full go for the postseason. If that happens, the Indians are an easy World Series pick.

**Royals:** Full speed ahead with the reconstruction, which means playing time for **Brett Phillips**, **Brad Keller**, **Heath Fillmyer**, **Adalberto Mondesi**, **Hunter Dozier** and the others. Yes, Spring Training has already begun, and doesn't everyone love Spring Training?

**Tigers:** Outfield prospect **Christin Stewart** taking advantage of a September opportunity. He has struggled in the second half at Triple-A, but he's the organization's top position-player prospect.

**Twins:** **Joe Mauer** enjoying a healthy, productive and happy final month. If this is the end of his career with the Twins --- he's unsigned and won't discuss 2019 -- let it remind all of us how much he means to the the Twin Cities and to baseball.

**White Sox:** Top pitching prospect **Michael Kopech** continuing to show he's the real deal. Now, White Sox fans are hoping to get a look at outfielder **Eloy Jimenez** to remind them of the talent that's on the way.

## **AL West**

**Angels:** **Shohei Ohtani** back on the mound for the entire month with a sound elbow as he continues to swat home runs between starts. He has shown he's a difference-maker, and his availability in 2019 would be huge.

**Astros:** **Jose Altuve**, **George Springer** and **Carlos Correa** are all back on the field. If they stay there, the Astros will again be a very tough October opponent.

**A's:** Right-handers **Daniel Mengden** and **Frankie Montas** adequately filling the roster spots opened by injuries to **Sean Manaea** and **Brett Anderson** to put the finishing touches on what has been a great season for the A's.

**Mariners:** Fast finishes from third baseman **Kyle Seager** and designated hitter **Nelson Cruz** to make a run at the Astros and A's to snag that first postseason berth in 17 years.

**Rangers:** Strong performances by the young pitchers they will be auditioning for the 2019 rotation. Rookies **Yohander Mendez** and **Ariel Jurado** are at the top of that list.

## **NBCsportsbayarea.com**

### **Chris Shaw's first big-league hit is longest Giants homer since 2015**

**Alex Pavlovic**

DENVER — Chris Shaw came to the majors with a reputation for piling up strikeouts, so you would think whiffing in five of his first six at-bats would be the worst thing to happen to the young left fielder. Shaw, however, managed to keep it all in perspective.

The left fielder's first two starts came against Zack Wheeler, one of the National League's hottest pitchers, and Noah Syndergaard, who can be as tough as any pitcher in the game.

"It was a double-edged sword," Shaw said Monday afternoon **after the Giants' loss to the Rockies**. "You want to go up and have a terrific start. But it's also like, what are you expecting facing the best pitchers in baseball your first time up? It's hard to have five strikeouts in six at-bats but it's a great learning opportunity."

The rookie apparently is a quick learner.

Shaw's next opportunity came Monday in the eighth inning, and when Seunghwan Oh hung an 0-2 slider, Shaw was ready. He blasted it 468 feet, giving the Giants their second-longest homer of the Statcast era and, temporarily, a lead over the Rockies.

The Giants blew that lead. That's the way this season has gone. But September is now about development, and in that respect, the loss wasn't all bad. Shaw is the kind of player the Giants haven't developed in recent years. He will strike out a lot, but he also has the power to hit 30 homers one day. He has back-to-back 24-homer seasons in the minors. In essence, Shaw is the modern slugger.

"That's what he's got, power," manager Bruce Bochy said. "He's going to swing and miss but he's going to run into balls. That's kind of his game and something that's needed here."

Shaw hopes it's not always his game. He's well-aware of his flaws, and said he hopes that many of those strikeouts are replaced by walks. But for now, he can show flashes of what's been missing from this lineup. The Giants do not need him to hit third or fourth. They just need him to occasionally change games with his pop.

Shaw came up after Alen Hanson hit a two-run homer to tie it, wiping out the last of what had been a 7-2 deficit. He thought he had a pretty good plan against Oh. Then he fell behind in the count.

"As you can tell by the 0-2 start, I went up with the wrong idea there," Shaw said, smiling.

Oh made a mistake, though. He left a slider across the bottom third of the zone and Shaw blasted off. The ball shot out towards the bullpen at 108 mph as so many do here. But instead of landing in the trees, it cleared everything and clanked off some steps a dozen rows up in the second deck. The homer was the longest by a Giant since Brandon Belt pulled one an estimated 475 feet here three years ago.

The dugout exploded. Madison Bumgarner, who gave up seven runs but didn't get a decision, said he had heard of Shaw's power as he traveled up the minor-league chain.

"I'm looking forward to watching him the rest of the year," Bumgarner said.

Shaw should get two more shots at Coors this week. Bochy plans to start him just about every day against righties and the Rockies are throwing German Marquez and Antonio Senzatela the next two days. Shaw knows he will sit against lefties, and for now he's fine with it. This is part of the development process, and Bochy met with him the other day and told him not to get discouraged by any of it.

The days off may present other opportunities, too. Bochy likes a game-changer off the bench, and you can bet Shaw will get other pinch-hit opportunities. On Monday, he became the first Giant to record his first hit on a pinch-hit homer since Damon Minor, Shaw's Triple-A hitting coach, did it 18 years ago. He became the second Giants rookie in four days to homer for his first big league hit, **joining Aramis Garcia.**

"It's incredible," Shaw said. "It's the thing you dream about, your first knock being a homer. That was surreal."

**NBCsportsbayarea.com**  
**Giants Notes**  
**Alex Pavlovic**

DENVER — Madison Bumgarner summed up his day neatly.

"I didn't feel like my command was very good at all," he said. "I didn't feel like my stuff was super good, either."

That'll lead to a bad day in most ballparks. At Coors Field, it'll wreck your ERA. Bumgarner gave up seven runs — six earned — in five innings, although he didn't take the loss **as the Giants fell 9-8 to the Rockies.**

The last three runs weren't totally his fault. Bumgarner got a double-play ball to second but Kelby Tomlinson appeared to have trouble tracking it as it shot past an umpire and made an error. Bumgarner then gave up a three-run shot to Trevor Story. Manager Bruce Bochy said Bumgarner would have gone out for the sixth if he had gotten the double play. Instead, it was a rough five-inning line.

Bumgarner gave up four runs on two homers in the first inning. This was the first time in four years he gave up four runs in the fourth. He tied a career-high by giving up three homers, two to Story.

"That's the way the game is sometimes," Bumgarner said. "Sometimes you've got it and sometimes you don't."

— The Giants got Bumgarner off the hook when Alen Hanson hit a two-run pinch-hit shot in the eighth. Hanson has two pinch-hit homers this year. The rest of the Giants have three.

"When he doesn't play he's a weapon off the bench," Bochy said. "He's a threat with his speed.



We needed a homer and at that point and he gave it to us.”

It’s unclear what the Giants will do at second base next season, but regardless, Hanson looks like a lock to make the opening day roster. At the very least, he’s a perfect bench option.

— The Giants added some pitching depth in the morning, calling up Casey Kelly, Pierce Johnson and Steven Okert. After making 44 appearances last season, Okert spent the first five months of this one in the minors, posting a 4.55 ERA for the River Cats. His first big-league appearance of 2018 was a good one. Okert retired the side in the sixth.

Johnson’s return was nearly disastrous. He walked two ahead of the heart of the lineup, but struck out Nolan Arenado and Matt Holiday and got Story to bounce into an out.

The Giants are likely just about done adding September call-ups. The only exception could be infielder Abiatal Avelino, **acquired last week from the Yankees**. The front office has discussed bringing him up.

— The last time the Giants overcame a five-run deficit but didn’t win? Last June 15. That game was also at Coors Field, obviously.

**NBCsportsbayarea.com**

**Giants storm back from 7-2 deficit. Blow 8-7 lead in loss to Rockies**

**Alex Pavlovic**

DENVER — The Giants got another big homer from a rookie, but at Coors Field, it wasn’t enough. The first day of a six-game road trip was a Coors Classic, and for the Giants, a 9-8 loss to a Rockies team that remains right in the thick of it in the National League West.

The Giants trailed by five runs through five, but managed to claw back and take the lead by scoring in three consecutive innings. Alen Hanson tied the game with a two-run shot in the eighth and Chris Shaw put the Giants on top for the first time by finding the second deck for his first career hit and homer.

Tony Watson gave the lead right back. With two on in the bottom of the inning, the Giants pulled their infield in and paid for it when Noel Cuevas bounced a two-run single up the middle.

Here's what else you need to know ...

— Shaw’s homer had an exit velocity of 108 mph and went an estimated 468 feet. It was the longest homer by a Giant since Brandon Belt’s 475-foot blast to the third deck here three years ago.

—- Hanson set the stage for Shaw by tying the game one batter earlier. With two outs in the eighth, Gorkys Hernandez was hit by a pitch. Hanson followed by driving a Seunghwan Oh fastball into the seats in right. The homer was Hanson's seventh. He's the only Giant with two pinch-hit homers.

—- Madison Bumgarner tied a career-high by giving up three homers. He had done it six previous times. The Rockies got two in the first, with DJ LeMahieu hitting a two-run shot to left and Trevor Story smoking a two-run shot to dead center. Bumgarner threw 35 pitches in that inning and was nearly pulled, but made it through five.

—- The fifth should have been an easy inning for Bumgarner. Instead, it ruined his line. Kelby Tomlinson booted a double-play ball with one out, putting runners on the corners for Story. Bumgarner threw him a 3-2 cutter that didn't cut at all, and Story smacked a three-run shot to left to give the Rockies a 7-2 lead.

## **The Athletic**

### **Giants' Chris Shaw needed a tape measure for his first big league hit, now he must grow the rest of his game**

**Andrew Baggarly**

DENVER – Giants rookie Chris Shaw knew he might be called upon to pinch hit in the eighth inning Monday afternoon. So he took one more peek at the scouting report for Rockies reliever Seunghwan Oh.

Then Shaw watched from the on-deck circle as Alen Hanson quieted Coors Field with a game-tying, two-run pinch homer.

Shaw stepped into the moment and he thought he had a good idea how Oh would pitch him as a left-handed batter. He was confident. His dugout had all the momentum. He was facing a reliever already knocked to his heels.

Two swings later, he was staring at an 0-2 count.

“So much for that,” Shaw recalled after the game. “Now I’m in battle mode.”

More and more in this modern game, hitters enter battle mode and continue to grip their broadswords. There might still be some profit in spreading out and choking up, but this is a different time now. Teams are less and less likely to tell their big, strapping power hitters to play the nickel slots and merely try to put a ball in play.

The problem for the Giants, especially this season: they are playing the modern game but not receiving any of the payout. They entered Monday with a strikeout rate of 23.3 percent, the seventh highest in the major leagues. Yet their 2.2 percent home run rate ranked dead last.

Perhaps the Giants will make concessions to this brand of baseball, as inactive and unappealing as it can be to watch at times. Perhaps they will be more tolerant of higher strikeout totals. But

there comes a time when even the most superstitious gambler will quit pumping coins into a cold machine.

At some point, especially in these livelier road ballparks, the Giants must hit more home runs. They received them off the bench in a clutch spot Monday afternoon.

Shaw took an aggressive swing at an 0-2 slider, and the concussive contact resulted in much more than his first major league hit. It was a tiebreaking home run, and at 468 feet, the second-deck shot was the longest by a Giant in more than three years.

Heck, let's just get the fun facts out of the way:

- Shaw's blast was the second longest by a Giant in the four-season Statcast era, exceeded only by Brandon Belt's 475-foot shot into the third deck here in 2015.

- Shaw became just the fourth player in the Giants' San Francisco era to hit a pinch homer for his first big league hit, and the first since Damon Minor in 2000.

- Shaw and Hanson became the third set of Giants teammates in the San Francisco era to hit consecutive pinch homers, and the first since Barry Bonds and Shawon Duston did it in a game at Montreal in 2001.

- The other instance? Well, at the risk of going off on a tangent, this is too dramatic not to share. Hank Sauer and Bob Schmidt hit a pair of solo shots against the Milwaukee Braves with two outs in the 10th inning at Seals Stadium to force the 11th. For all that drama, though, the Braves eventually won on a pinch single from pitcher Warren Spahn. Talk about a rollercoaster of emotion there.

The Giants endured their own wild ride Monday, as the lead Shaw provided lasted all of 10 minutes. Tony Watson gave up hits to three of the first four batters he faced, and Noel Cuevas hit a pinch single that drove in two runs as the Giants lost, 9-8, to the Colorado Rockies in classic Coors Field fashion.

The Giants are 1-6 in this ballpark this season, after finishing 1-9 last year.

The bright side: at least they could go back to cursing the ballpark and not their own ineptitude. When the Giants came here last month, they scored a total of three runs in three games. It is never a good feeling to come out on the wrong side of a back-and-forth slugfest here. But at least those pangs of disappointment are familiar ones. It's better than not competing at all with an offense that is dead on arrival.

And with a power hitter like Shaw, at least there is the hope for some future payout.

"It was incredible," Shaw said of his pinch homer. "It's the kind of thing you dream about, to have your first hit be a home run, and a late home run to give you the lead in a ballgame."

“Oh, it’s got to do a lot for him,” Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. “That’s what he’s got, power, and he’s going to swing and miss. But that’s his game and that’s what is needed here. He needs reps and he’ll get discipline. As you see, it doesn’t matter what park he’s in. When he hits it, it’s going to go.”

Shaw is far from a finished product, and the flaws in his game are significant enough that the Giants weren’t sure whether to promote him in September. He hit 24 home runs in the Pacific Coast League but posted just a .308 on-base percentage and struck out 144 times. He averaged one strikeout per 2.7 at-bats.

“Strikeouts don’t sit well with me,” Shaw said. “It’s a part of my game, whether I like it or not. I’m trying to drive the ball in the air, and you’ve got to swing harder and more aggressive. But I think I’ll get better at it, honestly.”

Shaw did not need to look far to find evidence of a major league power hitter who turned himself into an MVP candidate by tempering his strikeout totals. Shaw only needed to glance at the Rockies player who did the most damage Monday afternoon.

Trevor Story hit a two-run home run in the first inning as the Rockies ambushed Madison Bumgarner for a 4-0 lead before the left-hander recorded an out. Then Story followed Kelby Tomlinson’s error on a potential double-play ball by smacking a three-run shot in the fifth. Story became just the fourth player ever to tally a multi-homer game against Bumgarner, joining Kiké Hernandez, Justin Turner and Aaron Hill.

Story is still striking out a lot – he ranks fourth in the NL with 146 – but he is making significant strides one season after he led the NL with 191 strikeouts. The Rockies challenged Story to improve his on-base percentage, which was intolerably low. This might sound familiar to you. It was .308.

Odd as it might seem, Story has cut down his strikeouts while actually swinging more often this season, offering at 49.8 percent of pitches after swinging at 48.3 percent last year. It’s helped that he reduced his chase rate slightly, from swinging at 32.2 percent of pitches out of the zone to 30.1 percent. The biggest factor, though? He is making more consistent contact on pitches in the zone. Story’s contact rate when swinging at strikes has jumped from 80.8 percent to 87.4 percent. He isn’t missing those early strikes and putting himself in as many disadvantageous counts. Especially at Coors Field, where hitters are so often rewarded for balls in play, the mix of a disciplined yet aggressive approach has paid off. (He also discovered the value in the bucket lid drill, as Nick Groke detailed in this piece over the weekend.)

Shaw, of course, won’t play half his games at Coors Field. If he becomes an everyday presence in the Giants lineup, he will contend with a home ballpark in China Basin that has penalized every left-handed hitter not named Barry Bonds.

Shaw should receive a full introduction over these final four weeks. But he did not start against a left-handed starter on Monday, likely because the Giants are aware that he struggled against lefties at Triple-A (.204 compared to .276 against right-handers) and are looking to protect him as much as possible.

The Rockies will throw two right-handers in the final two games of this series, though. And Bochy indicated that Shaw would be in the lineup both times.

“I figured that would be the game plan,” Shaw said. “I’m really not in a position to have any kind of expectancy.”

Bochy didn’t share that plan with Shaw. But he did give the rookie one message after those five strikeouts in six at-bats against the Mets’ Zack Wheeler and Noah Syndergaard.

“Boch was telling me, ‘If you have a bad game, don’t think this is the last time you’re going to play,’” Shaw said.

Bochy likes to gamble, after all. And he has no fondness for nickel slots.

## **The Athletic**

### **Building the Giants’ 2022 roster: Bart behind the plate, Posey at first and lots of new faces Melissa Lockard**

With a second straight disappointing season coming to a close, the Giants find themselves at a crossroads as an organization. The core of their roster has aged and their large contracts have left them little wiggle room to stay below the luxury tax threshold. The Giants’ front office has insisted it won’t do a complete rebuild, but it stands to reason that at some point the team will need to try to turn the roster over to younger players.

So what might a younger roster look like, say, four years down the road? Below I take a stab at forecasting how the Giants’ 25-man roster might appear on Opening Day 2022. Please note that no team is made up completely of homegrown players, and it is impossible to predict future trades or free-agent signings. This projected roster is less a crystal ball and more a way to see where the strengths within the Giants’ organization currently lie and what areas the team will need to bolster in the coming years.

Without further adieu, I present your Giants, 2022 edition...

## **Starting lineup**

### **1B: Buster Posey**

**Age on 2022 Opening Day: 35**

The Giants hold a team option for Posey in 2022 of \$22 million, which they can also buy out for \$3 million (and possibly re-sign him to a lesser deal depending on his production at that stage). Either way, it is currently hard to envision the Giants letting Posey finish his career anywhere else. Even before his hip injury, Posey was destined for a late-career switch to first base. That switch may come much sooner than 2022 and could provide Posey's body some relief, allowing his offensive game to get back to his career norms. In any case, the Giants don't have any obvious heirs to the first base position in the minor leagues, so placing Posey there doesn't block any rising stars. Brandon Belt is a free agent after the 2021 season. He doesn't seem as likely a candidate to remain with the Giants beyond that contract as Posey. In fact, he is a candidate to be traded before that time.

**2B: Jalen Miller****Age on 2022 Opening Day: 25**

Miller took a big step forward this season with the San Jose Giants, earning a spot on the California League's postseason All-Star team. The 2015 third-round pick has been on an aggressive development path since signing out of high school, and he is on pace to reach the big leagues by 2020. Miller is an outstanding athlete with above-average power for a second baseman and the speed to be disruptive on the basepaths. He has the tools to be a solid defender in the big leagues, as well. After Miller, the Giants' minor league depth chart at second base is pretty thin. The middle infield, in general, is likely to be a focus for the scouting department in the coming years.

**SS: Ryan Howard****Age on 2022 Opening Day: 27**

Like Belt, Brandon Crawford will hit free agency after the 2021 season. Crawford will be 35 in 2022 and the Giants are likely to move on from him that offseason, if not sooner. Howard isn't a flashy prospect, but he's the kind of player who has done well with the Giants over the past decade — fundamentally solid, makes a lot of contact, fields his position. The 2016 fifth-round pick should be ready for Triple-A next season and could find his way onto the Giants' roster as a bench player before taking over at shortstop full time. By 2022, the Giants hope that Marco Luciano — the Dominican teenage phenom they inked in July — will be a year or so from the big leagues. Luciano may ultimately be an outfielder, but if he can stick at shortstop, he'll give the Giants a boost at a position of need in their farm system.

**3B: Evan Longoria****Age on 2022 Opening Day: 36**

Ideally, the Giants will have moved Longoria and his contract by then, but, if not, it's hard to envision him not in the lineup with his hefty salary. He'll be in the final year of his contract in

2022, so the Giants will be looking for an heir. Jacob González (listed on my bench below) is the player they hope to be in position to take over for Longoria at that point. González had a rough first full professional season with Low-A Augusta, but he is only 20 and has the basic tools to be a solid run-producer and defender at third base.

**C: Joey Bart, Aramis García**

**Age on 2022 Opening Day:** Bart, 25; García, 29

García is getting his audition for a spot as a backup catcher now, and we'll likely know by the end of next season whether he's a serviceable big leaguer. If he sticks, he could get a year as the Giants' primary catcher, bridging the gap between Posey and Bart, but there is no question that Bart is the future for the Giants behind the plate. Bart profiles as a middle-of-the-order slugger and has a cerebral approach to catching that should serve him well in the big leagues. Chances are Bart will already be well established as the Giants' primary catcher by 2022.

**LF: Chris Shaw**

**Age on 2022 Opening Day:** 28

Shaw made his big league debut on Friday, and he will use the remainder of the season to make his case for a spot on the Giants' 2019 roster. I'm betting that he finds a long-term home on the Giants' 25-man roster. He has his flaws — mainly average (at best) defense and not enough plate discipline — but Shaw is a powerful run producer in an organization that is lacking players of that skill set. On this roster, Shaw will platoon with Heath Quinn (see my bench below), and the two should give the Giants solid production from left field.

**CF: Steven Duggar**

**Age on 2022 Opening Day:** 28

Duggar's shoulder injury comes at an unfortunate time, as he was just starting to establish himself as an everyday big leaguer. Assuming he makes a full recovery, Duggar should continue to be the Giants' center fielder for the next few years. He gives the Giants a legitimate asset defensively in center field, and offensively he has the potential to be a solid leadoff or No. 2 hitter. If Luciano moves off shortstop to center field, he could challenge for Duggar's spot in Duggar's final years of arbitration eligibility, but, for now, Duggar is the obvious pick for this spot in four years.

**RF: Heliot Ramos**

**Age on 2022 Opening Day:** 22

It hasn't been an easy first full professional season for Ramos, but the 18-year-old flashed plenty of talent in an uneven year with Augusta, Georgia. A Ramos-Bart middle of the order could possibly give the Giants their best Nos. 3-4 pair since Barry Bonds and Jeff Kent. Ramos should hit for plenty of power and he has the bat speed to hit for average, as well. Defensively,

Ramos has only played center field to date, but as he continues to add muscle to his frame, he'll likely lose a little foot speed and move to a corner. The bat should play at any spot.

## **Bench**

**Alexander Canario, OF, Heath Quinn, OF, Abiatal Avelino, IF, Jacob González, IF, C.J. Hinojosa, IF**

**Ages on 2022 Opening Day:** Canario, 21; Quinn, 26; Avelino, 27; Gonzalez, 23; Hinojosa, 27

Canario will barely be of legal drinking age in 2022, but his approach at the plate is already mature beyond his years and he should move through the minor leagues at a fairly quick clip. He has patience and a nice blend of gap power and speed. Depending on how he develops, he could emerge as the Giants' center fielder of the future.

Quinn bounced back from a disappointing 2017 to put up good numbers with San Jose this year. He is a solid athlete who can handle both right and left field, and he has good pop from the right side, which will be a nice balance for a Giants' outfield with two starting left-handed hitters.

Avelino, just acquired on Friday from the Yankees, fills a depth need in the Giants' system for athletic middle infielders. The native of the Dominican Republic has above-average speed, and he has shown growth at the plate this season, hitting for more power than in the past. His ability to work the count and make consistent contact paired with his versatility in the infield make him a solid bench player.

In a scenario in which Longoria is not on the roster, González would be the favorite for the starting third base job. However, in this iteration of the roster, he is serving a bench role as a backup at both corner infield spots, gaining experience for a future role as a starter for the Giants.

It's been a disappointing season for Hinojosa, who began the year on the restricted list serving a suspension while also rehabbing an Achilles injury. The former Texas standout put up mediocre numbers with Richmond, Virginia, showing good contact skills but not much else. That being said, Hinojosa can handle the middle infield defensively, and his bat control gives him a chance at a bench role. As I mentioned earlier, middle infield is an area of need in the Giants' system, and I suspect new candidates for the bench will emerge in the coming years.

## **Rotation**

**Shaun Anderson, RHP, Sean Hjelle, RHP, Logan Webb, RHP, Andrew Suárez, LHP, Dereck Rodríguez, RHP**

**Ages on 2022 Opening Day:** Anderson, 27; Hjelle, 25; Webb, 25; Suárez, 29; Rodríguez, 29

The strength of the Giants' farm system at the moment is starting pitching. Bolstered by a strong trade with the Boston Red Sox last July that netted them Anderson and Gregory Santos, and a 2018 draft weighted toward pitching in the early rounds, the Giants have built up a nice arsenal of intriguing young arms.



Two of those young arms — Suárez and Rodríguez — are already in the big leagues, and both look like they could be stalwarts in the middle of the Giants' rotation for the next several years. If either fall off, young arms listed in my bullpen below, such as Santos or Conner Menez or Seth Corry, could take their place. Other arms not listed on this staff such as John Gavin, Blake Rivera, Keaton Winn and Aaron Phillips could work their way into this mix, as well.

Anderson has the look of a rotation anchor. He mixes all of his pitches well, throws strikes and has a good amount of swing-and-miss to his game. He's also ultra-competitive and seems to step forward in big moments. His arrival to the big leagues seems on track for next season.

Hjelle, on the other hand, is just beginning his professional career. Like Anderson, he cut his teeth collegiately in the ultra-competitive Southeastern Conference. Hjelle has good stuff already, and many scouts believe there is a lot more projection left given his 6-foot-11 frame. He gives hitters fits with his unique release point.

Webb is a bulldog on the mound with an explosive fastball that can touch 96 mph as well as two solid to plus secondary offerings. Despite missing a year recovering from Tommy John surgery, Webb is already in Double-A at age 21 and has pitched well at that level. Webb was on an innings limit this year in his first full season back from Tommy John surgery, but he should pitch without restrictions next year and could be in the Giants' rotation by 2020.

## **Bullpen**

**Gregory Santos, RHP, Melvin Adon, RHP, Jake Wong, RHP, Conner Menez, LHP, Seth Corry, LHP, Juan De Paula, RHP**

**Ages on 2022 Opening Day:** Santos, 22; Adon, 27; Wong, 25; Menez, 26; Corry, 23; De Paula, 24

All six of these relievers are currently being developed as starters, but most big league relievers were starters at some point in their professional careers. All six have swing-and-miss stuff, which is key for building modern-day bullpens. All six also struggle with command on occasion, which could hold them back from reaching the big leagues as starters. If any of them improve that aspect of their games, they'd be good candidates for the rotation.

Santos has a big 6-4 frame that he uses to throw a solid fastball that touches 98 and sits 94-96 and a sharp slider that sits in the low-80s. He also has a changeup that is behind his other two pitches but could be effective as he develops.

Adon is the hardest thrower in the Giants' system not named Ray Black. Adon regularly hits triple digits with his fastball even as a starter. Command and consistency have been issues for Adon. Moving to a bullpen role where he has to focus only on short appearances may help with both of those concerns.

Wong has been a starter throughout his college and brief pro career, but the Giants 2018 third-round pick has a strong arm that would be well suited for a relief role if he doesn't stick as a starter.

Menez leads all Giants minor leaguers with 171 strikeouts this season, and the left-hander has reached Double-A in his age-22 season. He isn't a fireballer, but his low-90s fastball gets a lot of

movement and is difficult for hitters to square up. He also has a swing-and-miss slider and curveball. Menez is effective against both right-handers and left-handers, which could allow him to go multiple innings as a reliever or come in and face one lefty in a big spot.

Fellow lefty Corry is just starting to scratch the surface of his potential. An overslot signing out of the 2017 draft, the Utah native has plenty of arm strength and a promising breaking ball. His command is still spotty, but he has a high ceiling.

The Giants just acquired De Paula from the Yankees on Friday. Another big arm, the right-hander was clocked as high as 97 mph this year with short-season Staten Island. He will need to be added to the 40-man roster this offseason, which will force the Giants to speed up his development in order to get him into a regular big league role before his option years run out. That may force them to move him into a relief role to get him to the big leagues sooner.

#### **KNBR.com**

#### **Chris Shaw hits monster go-ahead home run against Rockies for first major-league hit Jacob Hutchinson**

Chris Shaw did not have a great first few outings to start his major league career. He went 0-for-6 in his first three games, striking out six times. But on Labor Day, Shaw pulled off the unimaginable. In a game in which the Giants trailed the Colorado Rockies 7-2 at one point, the team surged offensively.

The team added a run in the sixth and two in the seventh. Then, the eighth rolled around and the improbable became reality. After Gorkys Hernandez was hit by a pitch, Alen Hanson stepped in for Kelby Tomlinson and hit a two-run home run to tie the game at 7-7.

Then, Shaw stepped in for the pitcher's spot. After seeing two strikes go by, Shaw teed off, using the power that led him to 24 home runs in the minors this season, and smashing a ball for a home run to right field, giving the Giants an 8-7 lead over the Rockies. What's especially sweet for Shaw was having his mom and girlfriend in the crowd to witness his first career hit and home run.

**KNBR.com**

**Giants lose to Rockies by a run in power-heavy game**

**Jacob Hutchinson**

Coors Field is not a pitcher-friendly ballpark. On Labor Day, it was especially cruel to Madison Bumgarner. The Giants' ace was tagged for three home runs and seven runs in a 9-8 loss to the Colorado Rockies.

Bumgarner lasted five innings, somewhat of a feat considering how poor his first inning was. He failed to retire his first five batters. First, Bumgarner allowed a leadoff single before a two-run home run to DJ LeMahieu. After a double from Nolan Arenado, Trevor Story followed suit with his own two-run homer. A pair of strikeouts were split before and after a single by Carlos Gonzalez, and a popup ended the inning.

Story was far from done with his torment of Bumgarner. After retiring eight-straight batters, Bumgarner committed the cardinal sin of allowing the leadoff batter on by hitting Charlie Blackmon. After striking out LeMahieu, it seemed like he'd picked up a double-play ball from Nolan Arenado. But Kelby Tomlinson saw the ball roll right past his glove into center field. It appeared his vision was blocked by the second-base umpire, but the play prevented the inning from ending.

With two men on, Story came up again, belting a three-run homer to left field to give the Rockies a 7-2 lead.

But in the mile-high air, the Giants were far from the stagnant offense they had been over the past two days, during which they mustered a combined two runs. Gorkys Hernandez put the team on the board with his 14th home run of the season in the third inning. Then a double and uncontested steal of third base by Chase d'Arnaud set up a sacrifice fly from Evan Longoria in the third.

In the sixth, a double from Nick Hundley was followed by a wild pitch and one-run single from Brandon Crawford, closing the deficit to 7-3. The next inning, Longoria tagged the Rockies for two more.

A pinch-hit single from Aramis Garcia and infield single from Austin Slater were saved by Arenado bobbling a sure double-play ball hit by d'Arnaud toward third base. The next batter was Longoria, who hit a two-run triple to right field after Carlos Gonzalez made an ill-advised attempt at a diving catch. It left the Giants trailing by just a couple runs in the seventh.

Then, the eighth came around and both offenses exploded in spectacular fashion. Hernandez was hit by a pitch before Alen Hanson stepped up as a pinch-hitter and ripped a game-tying home run to right field. The next batter was the rookie, Chris Shaw, who was 0-for-6 with five strikeouts through his first three games. Shaw tore a monster shot to right field to give the Giants an 8-7 lead.

The back-to-back pinch-hit home runs were the first for the Giants since 2001 when Barry Bonds and Shawon Dunston pulled off the feat.

But in the bottom half of the inning, the Rockies responded. A two-run single evaporated the Giants lead, and the Rockies shut down the Giants in the ninth to secure the win. The Giants dropped to 68-71.

**SI.com**

## **The Shame of MLB's Anti-Labor, Anti-Competitive "Service Time" Rules**

**Jon Tayler**

The first of September has come and gone, and with it, a wave of minor leaguers up to the majors as teams expand their rosters to 40 players for the month. Top prospects and career backups alike either have made (or will make) the trek to cities across the country to write a new chapter in their careers or, in many happy cases, make their debuts.

But as notable as the names popping up by the dozens on MLB's transaction logs are those that remain absent—in particular, Eloy Jimenez, Vladimir Guerrero, Jr., and Byron Buxton, not one of whom will be called up by their respective teams this September. That's despite terrific performances all season by Jimenez and Guerrero, both of whom are the top prospects in their systems, or the need to evaluate for next year amid a lost 2018. Instead, they'll head home or to the Arizona Fall League, denied a chance to earn major league money or begin what promises to be a superstar career.

So why are all three of those players not getting the call? Simply put: money. By leaving Jimenez, Guerrero and Buxton in the minors, the White Sox, Blue Jays and Twins gain additional service time on their contracts and delay their free agency. By holding back Jimenez and Guerrero, Chicago and Toronto can keep them in their organizations for longer and cheaper. Minnesota, meanwhile, will get an extra year of control over Buxton by keeping him out of the majors, as his injury-interrupted campaign has left him two

weeks shy of a full season of MLB service time.

This kind of chicanery is nothing new. In 2015, the Cubs sent Kris Bryant to Triple A to start the season, ostensibly for him to work on his defense, but two weeks later, he was promoted. That delay probably didn't do much for his glove work, but it did gain Chicago an extra year of team control on Bryant's contract. Earlier this year, the Braves pulled the same stunt with Ronald Acuña Jr., who hit .344/.393/.548 in Triple A the season prior as a 19-year-old and did equally ridiculous things in spring training but didn't make the Opening Day roster. "We just want him to get into the flow, keep doing what he was doing and he'll find his way back here, hopefully very soon," said Atlanta general manager Alex Anthopoulos in an empty attempt to justify Acuña's demotion. By the end of that month—despite hitting a meager .211/.297/.267 in Triple A—Acuña was up, presumably enough in the flow for the Braves' liking, and with one more year between him and free agency.

So it's been for Jimenez and Guerrero, who have shown from day one of the season that they have nothing left to learn in the minors. Jimenez slashed a scorching .317/.368/.556 in Double A to begin the year, got the bump to Triple A in late June, and hit .355/.399/.597 there at 21 years old. Guerrero was even better: a preposterous .402/.449/.671 in Double A, then .340/.419/.566 the next level up after missing a month with a knee injury—and all that at the age of 19.

There's no performance reason for Jimenez and Guerrero to be where they are. But all year, the White Sox and Jays have delayed the inevitable despite trudging through losing seasons and using lesser players. Toronto has preached a need for Guerrero to work on his defense at third base, as he's presumably not up to the team's standards there. Yet at the major league level, the Jays have slotted declining veteran catcher Russell Martin at the hot corner repeatedly and given the majority of the starts there to the iron-gloved Yangervis Solarte. It's hard to imagine Guerrero being any worse than those two, and that's before you factor in offense.

Jimenez and Guerrero staying down is all about service time manipulation, but neither team will say that openly. Doing so would be an admission of bad faith on the team's part—of artificial suppression of a career solely for financial gain. Bryant filed a grievance against the Cubs over his delayed callup; Jimenez's agents say they're considering one. These grievances are almost impossible to prove without concrete evidence; as such, MLB GMs skirt around the issue with bland comments on defense and readiness instead of admitting the obvious.

But when the Twins chose to leave Buxton off their roster, Minnesota GM Thad Levine

surprisingly told reporters that service time did play a part in that decision. “I think part of our jobs is we’re supposed to be responsible for factoring service time into every decision we make,” he said. It’s a curious admission: Should Buxton and his agency want to file a grievance, they’ll have Levine’s comments front and center in their case. It also signals just how strong a position the teams hold: Yes, service time matters, but what are the players going to do about it? The rules on it are locked in through the current CBA, and that won’t be up for debate again until 2021.

It makes all the financial sense in the world for teams to do this. That extra year of control is valuable, and MLB teams are always looking to exploit every last advantage. This business has been cheered on, too, by a small yet vocal segment of media and fans. They’ll support keeping Jimenez and Guerrero down if it means they’ll be around one year longer or allow a team to save money. Process trumps everything, and service time manipulation is part of that.

But what fun is that, to lose what could’ve been special seasons from Jimenez or Guerrero solely to save billionaires some money? What message does it send if a team essentially announces that it’s too cheap to field a better product? It’s cruel to force players to spend chunks of their finite careers wasting away in the minors, denying them opportunities to earn more money or put up stats that will enrich them down the road. It’s anti-labor—and more than that, it’s anti-competitive. Fans should get to watch the best players, not have to count down the days until owners deem it financially appropriate to be good. For those defending their teams for keeping players down: What does it matter to you if, six years down the line, Jerry Reinsdorf or Rogers Communications has to spend more of their millions to keep them? Shouldn’t spending money on good players be the goal anyway?

Lost amid service time manipulation and teams openly tanking and front offices refusing to sign free agents is that baseball is supposed to be about the on-field product, not the ledger books. The people who own these franchises are richer than you and I will ever be; even the biggest player contracts are rounding errors amid their vast wealth. But owners will do whatever they can to save a dollar, and in the end, it’s the players and fans that end up footing that bill.

Jimenez, Guerrero and Buxton deserve to be up. So have several other minor leaguers in the past, and so will countless more in the future. And the fans deserve to see them play when they’re ready, not when it’s financially convenient. Service time is a trap, and one that, come 2021, the MLB Players Association should be ready to fight and fix. It’ll be too late for Jimenez, Guerrero and Buxton by then, but it’s patently unfair to let this continue.

