



### **WHITE SOX HEADLINES OF JANUARY 14, 2019**

"White Sox avoid arb with 4, including Abreu" ... Scott Merkin, MLB.com

"Sox prospects to visit DR on team-building trip" ... Scott Merkin, MLB.com

"Report: White Sox make offer to Machado" ... Manny Randhawa, MLB.com

"White Sox have reportedly made eight-year, \$250 million offer to Manny Machado" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"One analyst thinks Dylan Cease could make the Opening Day roster, but here's why that probably won't happen" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"White Sox avoid arbitration with quartet including Jose Abreu and Carlos Rodon" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"And then there were two? Yankees add another infielder, and Manny Machado derby might be down to White Sox and Phillies" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"White Sox Team of the Future: Closer" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"What the Phillies' meeting with Bryce Harper could mean for the White Sox and Manny Machado" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"Could a Phillies coaching hire trump the lure of Manny Machado uniting the 'Miami Baseball Brotherhood' on the South Side?" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"White Sox's long shot pursuit of Manny Machado could be paying off" ... Paul Sullivan, Chicago Tribune

"Manny Machado's high school coach thinks he'll choose the White Sox" ... Staff, Chicago Tribune

"Reports: White Sox offer Manny Machado 8 years, \$250 million" ... Daryl Van Schouwen, Chicago Sun-Times

"White Sox agree to terms with Abreu, Rodon, Sanchez, Colome" ... Daryl Van Schouwen, Chicago Sun-Times

"Report: Machado mulling eight-year offer from White Sox" ... Scot Gregor, Daily Herald

"Rozner: There's logic to White Sox's pursuit of Machado, Harper" ... Barry Rozner, Daily Herald

"White Sox agree to one-year deals with Abreu, three others" ... Scot Gregor, Daily Herald

"Manny Machado has offer from White Sox for 8-year contract" ... Jeff Passan, ESPN.com

"White Sox, Jose Abreu agree to \$16 million, 1-year deal" ... Staff, Associated Press

"MLB hot stove: White Sox reportedly make eight-year offer to free agent Manny Machado" ... Dayn Perry, CBSSports.com

"Report: Manny Machado has eight-year offer from White Sox" ... Charlotte Carroll, Sports Illustrated

"White Sox avoid arbitration with Jose Abreu, 3 other players" ... James Neveau, NBC Chicago

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### **White Sox avoid arb with 4, including Abreu**

*Club also reaches 1-year deals with Colome, Rodon, Sanchez*

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com | January 11, 2019

CHICAGO -- The White Sox avoided arbitration with their four remaining eligible players after agreeing to terms on one-year contracts with first baseman Jose Abreu (\$16 million), right-handed reliever Alex Colome (\$7.325 million), left-handed starter Carlos Rodon (\$4.2 million) and switch-hitting infielder Yolmer Sanchez (\$4.625 million). The club announced the signings on Friday night.

These new deals bring Chicago's 2019 payroll to \$80,166,668 per Spotrac. But the rebuilding South Siders remain in pursuit of premium free agents Manny Machado and Bryce Harper, with even one of them agreeing to terms almost certainly taking the White Sox over \$110 million for this season.

Abreu, 31, hit .265 with 36 doubles, 22 home runs, 78 RBIs and a .473 slugging percentage in 128 games last season, while making his second American League All-Star appearance and his first All-Star start in five seasons. Despite missing time due to two stints on the disabled list, Abreu became the first player in White Sox history to hit 20 or more home runs in each of his first five seasons, and he joined Albert Pujols (2001-10) and Ted Williams (1939-42, '46-49) as the only Major League players to record 30-plus doubles and 20-plus home runs in each of his first five seasons.

An original deal of six years, \$68 million between Abreu and the White Sox allowed Abreu to opt into arbitration and out of his remaining guaranteed salary when eligible. He did so after the '16 season, earning \$13 million in 2018. The 2019 campaign represents the last year of contractual control the White Sox have over Abreu, who figures to split first base and designated hitter responsibilities with Yonder Alonso.

Colome, 29, was acquired from the Mariners in exchange for catcher Omar Narvaez on Nov. 30, 2018. He finished 7-5 with a 3.04 ERA, 30 holds, 12 saves and 72 strikeouts over 70 appearances and 68 innings last season between Tampa Bay and Seattle. Colome, who became the first pitcher in Major League history to record at least 10 saves and 30 holds in one season, will close or serve as the primary setup man for the White Sox.

Rodon, 26, went 6-8 with a 4.18 ERA and 90 strikeouts over 20 starts and 120 2/3 innings last season, his fourth with the White Sox after being selected third overall in the 2014 MLB Draft. Sanchez, 26, batted .242, with 34 doubles, 10 triples, eight home runs, 55 RBIs, 14 stolen bases and 49 walks in 155 games in 2018. Sanchez also led the AL in triples.

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### **Sox prospects to visit DR on team-building trip**

*Players will spend a week soaking in island's culture between Spring Training prep*

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com | January 11, 2019

CHICAGO -- Thirteen White Sox Minor Leaguers will embark Monday on a weeklong trip to the Dominican Republic in lieu of the organization's hitters' mini-camp usually held this time of year at Camelback Ranch in Glendale, Ariz.

This is a work trip, a little bit of a final offseason vacationing with SoxFest and Spring Training fast approaching. This also should be a cultural bonding experience for some of the top players in the White Sox system.

"The opportunity to go to the Dominican Republic and expose some of our American players to a different culture -- a culture a lot of their teammates are from -- I thought it was going to be such an invaluable experience," said White Sox director of player development Chris Getz, who will be part of the trip.

"I point back to my own career. I wish I would have gone down to the Dominican Republic at kind of the younger stages of my life. And you know, being around some of the best teams in baseball -- the reasons why some teams are successful and some are not is really just the team coming together with a diverse cultural background."

Catchers Zack Collins and Seby Zavala, infielders Nick Madrigal, Laz Rivera and Gavin Sheets and outfielders Blake Rutherford and Steele Walker will be joined by pitchers Zack Burdi, Dylan Cease, Dane Dunning, Bernardo Flores, Tyler Johnson and Jimmy Lambert on this trip. All of those players are among the club's top 30 prospects, according to MLB Pipeline. Ten staff members also will make the journey.

With the White Sox Dominican Academy re-opening for the season, the players have on-field work scheduled in the morning. They also will have cultural community activities, including a visit to an orphanage and a kids' clinic in a local village, before heading to a Dominican Winter League playoff game on Thursday.

"We'll get our baseball work in because it's that time of year, in terms of ramping up preparation for Spring Training, but also really dive into what the Dominican offers," Getz said.

"It's going to be different scenery. It will offer something fresh. We'll be able to accomplish what needs to be accomplished from a baseball standpoint, with some other benefits. But this time of year, there's something to be said [about] going down to the Dominican -- it certainly offers a different perspective. It can almost be kind of centering for people."

Getz mentioned there was nothing but excitement and encouragement from the players when he brought up the idea of this trip. It could bring this burgeoning White Sox core closer together.

"We are there to get better, we are there to put in work," said Madrigal, who previously played in the Dominican as part of a 15-and-under team. "There also will be times where we can enjoy it, especially going to the Winter League games. I've heard those get pretty crazy.

"It's going to be a lot of fun, being out there on the field, especially with all the guys. I remember the first time I got outside the country and saw a different lifestyle out here, I was amazed. It's cool how you go there and see the kids playing baseball and how it's the same game. They are out there on the field running and throwing the ball. I'm looking forward to it big time."

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### **Report: White Sox make offer to Machado**

By Manny Randhawa / MLB.com | January 13, 2019

The White Sox have made an eight-year contract offer to free-agent superstar Manny Machado, according to ESPN's Jeff Passan. Passan also tweeted on Sunday that the club may "be compelled to go even longer" to land Machado, who is reportedly seeking a deal north of the record 13-year, \$325 million contract the Marlins gave slugger Giancarlo Stanton in 2014.

The White Sox have not commented on their pursuit of the infielder.

Machado is one of two premier free agents on this offseason's market, along with fellow 26-year-old superstar Bryce Harper. The other team that is seen as a front-runner for Machado is the Phillies, though Philadelphia is reportedly turning its attention to Harper after meeting with the outfielder in Las Vegas on Saturday.

The Yankees were also considered a serious suitor for Machado, but ESPN's Buster Olney reported that talks with Machado are "either dormant or completely dead" in the wake of New York signing shortstop Troy Tulowitzki and, according to a source, agreeing to a deal with second baseman DJ LeMahieu.

Given recent developments, the White Sox may now be the favorite to land Machado, who would join a rebuilding club that boasts one of the top farm systems in baseball. In 2018, Machado had the best offensive season of his career, slashing .297/.367/.538 with 37 home runs and 14 steals between the Orioles and Dodgers.

Chicago also recently traded for Machado's brother-in-law, Yonder Alonso, in a deal with the Indians, and signed free-agent outfielder Jon Jay, a close friend of Machado.

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### **White Sox have reportedly made eight-year, \$250 million offer to Manny Machado**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago | January 13, 2019

If the White Sox truly are the favorite to land Manny Machado, now we know what kind of contract they've offered him to put themselves in that position.

Hours after USA Today's Bob Nightengale predicted that Machado would end up playing on the South Side, ESPN's Jeff Passan reported that the White Sox have made Machado an eight-year contract offer.

That differs, though only slightly, from reports earlier this month of the White Sox making a six- or seven-year offer to Machado. And as for what the dollar amount on such a deal might be, there's no new information from Passan supplanting Nightengale's earlier report of around \$200 million. But Hector Gomez reported Sunday night that the offer is worth \$250 million.

SOURCE: The #WhiteSox have offered Manny Machado an eight-year, US\$250 million deal, #Phillies still involved.

First to reported @JeffPassan.#ZDigital #ZDeportes @z101digital @ZDeportes

Nightengale followed up those reports with his own, however, saying the White Sox haven't moved past that seven-year offer, and by including the phrase "original" in his tweet, it figures he's referring to the one he reported as being worth "closer to \$200 million than \$300 million."

The #WhiteSox have NOT increased their original 7-year offer to Manny Machado.

Of course, a lot could have changed in the wake of the Philadelphia Phillies' meeting with the game's other mega free agent, Bryce Harper, this weekend in Las Vegas. Nightengale wrote Sunday that the Phillies are prepared to make the biggest offers for both Harper and Machado, and perhaps the White Sox felt compelled to up their six- or seven-year offer to something lasting a year longer and worth a great deal more. Perhaps not.

Passan added that the Phillies are "still engaged" with Machado despite their meeting with Harper and Machado's eight-year offer from the White Sox. Meanwhile, Nightengale reported earlier that the Washington Nationals appear long shots to get back into the Harper derby, even though they were recently discussed as a strong possibility thanks to a pre-Christmas meeting. The White Sox, reportedly, have still not made an offer to Harper, who they've been in on much of the offseason.

All of that needs to be taken into account when discussing the White Sox competition for Machado, which appears to be solely the Phillies. The New York Yankees, Machado's supposed preferred team, seemingly took themselves out of that sweepstakes by acquiring free-agent infielder D.J. LeMahieu last week. If the Phillies are the "clear-cut favorite" for Harper, as Nightengale described them, then is there still a chance they can sign Machado, too? Well, yes. While acquiring both 26-year-old superstars would seem even out of the price range of the "spend stupid" Phillies, they appear to have the desire to get it done, especially if they get creative with shorter deals.

But that's where an eight-year, \$250 million contract offer could come in handy.

Passan suggests that this offer from the White Sox could merely be a step in the bidding process for Machado, with the deal eventually getting pushed to the decade-long status many believed it would take to land either of these free agents at the beginning of the offseason. The White Sox had been previously reported to not want to go past seven years in their offers to either Machado or Harper. But now here we stand.

As for when Machado's decision might happen, it was reported that it could come as quickly as the middle of this week. But with a potentially new status quo after Harper's face-to-face meeting with the Phillies, who knows? It's long been speculated that these sagas could stretch into February, and while the White Sox are still in on Harper — having met with him twice in Vegas, according to reports — if they haven't even made him an offer yet, that could signal that the process is far from over. Or it could signal they're not as much in on Harper as the Phillies are.

Passan reported Sunday night that there is a mysterious third team in on Machado, as well, but it seems a possibility that only a few outcomes remain. Nightengale forecasted Harper going to Philly and Machado going to the South Side. Perhaps the two join forces in Philly.

How will it end? When will it end? Questions we only wish we had answers to. Stay tuned.

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## **One analyst thinks Dylan Cease could make the Opening Day roster, but here's why that probably won't happen**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago | January 14, 2019

White Sox fans should definitely be excited when reading Jim Bowden's piece in *The Athletic*, one profiling 20 rookies who will have the biggest impact in baseball during the 2019 season.

Unsurprisingly, Eloy Jimenez is prominently featured, with Bowden touting Jimenez's light-tower power: "Jimenez has the ability to hit the ball from foul pole to foul pole and has the power to reach the upper decks." White Sox fans likely won't have to wait long to see that in action at Guaranteed Rate Field. Jimenez is expected to arrive in the major leagues at some point in the season's first few weeks.

But Jimenez isn't the only highly rated White Sox prospect on Bowden's list. The former general manager included Dylan Cease, as well, not really a surprise following Cease's terrific 2018 season that earned him the title of MLB Pipeline's minor league pitcher of the year. But here's something Bowden wrote that might raise a few eyebrows: "It won't be long before Cease is a part of the White Sox's starting rotation, and it could happen as early as Opening Day."

As things stand and given the White Sox recent handling of their prized prospects, Cease is very much not expected to be a part of the White Sox rotation on Opening Day, yet to pitch at the Triple-A level after making just 10 starts at Double-A Birmingham last year. There's no doubt he was remarkable there, finishing with a 1.72 ERA and 78 strikeouts in his 52.1 Double-A innings. He had a 2.40 ERA and 160 strikeouts in 124 innings when you add in his early season numbers from Class A Winston-Salem.

But the White Sox are expected to take a similar approach to Cease as they did with Michael Kopech in 2018. Kopech had logged just 15 innings at Triple-A Charlotte after getting promoted late in his dominant 2017 campaign and then ended up staying there much of last season as he struggled for a decent stretch in the middle of the year. He ended up making his big league debut in late August before requiring Tommy John surgery that will wipe out his 2019 season.

Cease could be on a similar track, starting the season at Triple-A and being given the opportunity to either dominate or struggle at that level — Kopech ended up doing both — before making his way to the majors. And there are two reasons that's the most likely way the White Sox will proceed. One, it would continue their approach during this rebuilding project of giving prospects ample time to develop in the minor leagues. Fans were begging for sooner promotions for Kopech and Jimenez both last year, but the White Sox were patient. Two, even if the White Sox do land Manny Machado or Bryce Harper, their playoff outlook might still not be great. So what would be the point of rushing Cease to the big leagues in a season where they might not even contend for a postseason berth?

Also, Rick Hahn talked about Cease following a similar path to Kopech earlier this offseason.

"That's very possible," Hahn said back in November during the GM Meetings. "I think the only possible concern or the only thing holding back Dylan Cease right now is the innings base he has under him. Right now his career high in innings was 2018, about 125-ish. So you can't necessarily project him, 'Oh he's going to go throw 180 in the big leagues next year.' So that's really the only sense of caution on him."

"I think it's fair to compare where he is now to where Kopech was a year ago in terms of coming to spring training with the stuff, with everything he's accomplished, with the stuff he has and the ability to compete at the big league level. It's just a matter of going to start that process and what we can expect once we do."

All this being said, of course, the possibility exists that Cease could be so good he changes the White Sox plans. And the possibility exists the White Sox plans can change, too. Cease could dominate in spring training (like he did last year) and show the team he can handle being thrown in the major league waters — something Kopech, because of performance, and Jimenez, because of injury, couldn't do last spring. And the White Sox could land Machado or Harper and look at a weak American League Central — and not many wild-card contenders across the Junior Circuit — and see an opportunity for a playoff run a year earlier than anticipated. A couple other moves might need to be made in addition to a Machado/Harper signing, but it's not out of the realm of possibility. And Cease would almost certainly make the White Sox rotation better.

Hahn has long insisted that the White Sox will not rush the development of their highly rated prospects for any kind of short-term benefit at the big league level, and it would be completely expected for them to take that approach with Cease, just like they did with Kopech and Jimenez. And so for that reason, it seems rather unlikely that Cease will be pitching on the South Side in April. But if he can continue the success he had at Double-A at Triple-A, it wouldn't be at all surprising to see him hit the bigs before the end of the 2019 season.

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### **White Sox avoid arbitration with quartet including Jose Abreu and Carlos Rodon**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago | January 11, 2019

The White Sox will not be taking part in the arbitration process this winter, handing out contracts to all four of their remaining arbitration-eligible players Friday.

Jose Abreu, Carlos Rodon, Yolmer Sanchez and the recently acquired Alex Colome all agreed to one-year deals.

Abreu will receive \$16 million after the worst statistical season of his big league career. But despite a slide in statistics caused by an uncharacteristic, extended slump in the middle of the season and a pair of freak injuries, Abreu was elected as the American League's starting first baseman in the All-Star Game and won the second Silver Slugger of his career. He remains the team's best hitter heading into the final year of his current contract.

Colome will receive \$7.325 million as he begins his tenure on the South Side. Acquired in the trade that sent Omar Narvaez to the Seattle Mariners, Colome will likely return to closing two seasons after he led the majors in saves. He probably would have kept racking up saves last season had he not been dealt from the Tampa Bay Rays in a midseason trade.

Rodon will receive \$4.2 million after a bounce-back season of sorts that saw him return from shoulder surgery. For the second straight year, he didn't debut until June, but he showed an ace-like ability at times, with a particularly nasty stretch during July and August, when he owned a 1.84 ERA over the course of nine starts. A rough September, though, ballooned his ERA to 4.18 by season's end. He'll be tasked with completing a healthy season in 2019 after making just 32 combined starts in 2017 and 2018.

Sanchez (\$4.625 million) ranked among the major league leaders in triples, one of the lone bright spots in an otherwise challenging year offensively. Only Arizona Diamondbacks infielder Ketel Marte had more triples than Sanchez's 10, a number that led the AL. But he slashed just .242/.306/.372. Still, Sanchez plays a big role in energizing the clubhouse and keeping things light. His versatility on the infield makes things easier for Rick Renteria, too, and should be valuable as the White Sox still aren't sure how their infield alignment will shake out for the 2019 season.

Leury Garcia, who was also eligible for arbitration this offseason, agreed to a one-year deal back at the end of November.

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## **And then there were two? Yankees add another infielder, and Manny Machado derby might be down to White Sox and Phillies**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago | January 11, 2019

Now this doesn't seem like something a team that's about to sign Manny Machado would do.

The New York Yankees added yet another infielder to their talented collection Friday, reportedly agreeing to a two-year deal with free-agent second baseman D.J. LeMahieu. That gives them second-year studs in Gleyber Torres and Miguel Andujar, a recovering shortstop in Didi Gregorius and a pair of offseason additions in LeMahieu and Troy Tulowitzki. The infield isn't big enough for all those guys nor for all those guys and Machado, the free-agent superstar who supposedly prefers the Yankees but might not get the opportunity to play for them.

And that's got to be good news for the White Sox.

One report from earlier this week indicated that all three of the teams that played host to Machado on his free-agent tour last month — the White Sox, Yankees and Philadelphia Phillies — have made offers to Machado. But several others followed up saying the Yankees haven't made an offer, and perhaps they still haven't.

The #Whitesox and #Phillies certainly a lot more confident now over chances of landing Machado, with #Yankees now unlikely to make offer after landing DJ LeMahieu

It's long appeared they had no interest in offering the kind of gigantic deal it was believed would be required to land Machado. And while maybe they can never be counted "out," it sure as heck seems like this is down to two teams.

It would be foolish to ever count out the New York Yankees on a player of Manny Machado's caliber. But if they are indeed planning on bringing Machado into the fold, they're going to need to move an infielder, because LeMahieu, Gregorius, Torres, Tulowitzki and Andujar is a glut.

LeMahieu \$24M, 2-year deal makes Manny even more unlikely for yanks. will be a major surprise if anyone but white sox or Phillies get Manny now.

And so the White Sox are now likely going head-to-head with the Phillies. Reportedly, the White Sox have made their offer of "about \$200 million" for six or seven years. Could the Phillies top that? By a lot? Most definitely. Machado entered the offseason expected to get much closer to \$300 million as a 26-year-old with multiple All-Star appearances and Gold Gloves on his resume. And the Phillies, whose owner said early in the offseason they might "be a little stupid" with their spending, have the money to blow any offer away.

The White Sox perhaps have the better pitch, though, one of long-term success fueled by a currently loaded farm system. The lure of playing alongside Eloy Jimenez, Michael Kopech, Dylan Cease and Luis Robert for the better part of the next decade would figure to be more attractive, from a pure talent standpoint, than almost anything the Phillies could pitch. Plus, the White Sox offer what the Phillies cannot: the opportunity for Machado to play alongside brother-in-law Yonder Alonso and good friend and winter workout buddy Jon Jay, the opportunity to unite the "Miami Baseball Brotherhood." Though the Phillies just hired a coach who's been described as Machado's mentor.

The Yankees seemed like a perfect fit all along. Machado grew up wanting to play for them, he filled an immediate need at shortstop, he could be a part of a new Bronx dynasty by joining a team that won 100 games last season and is built for long-term success.

But money talks, and if the Yankees weren't wanting to spend that much of it on Machado, they weren't going to be an option.

And then there were two.

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## **White Sox Team of the Future: Closer**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago | January 11, 2019

What will the next championship-contending White Sox team look like?

That's what we're setting out to determine (or at least make a guess at) over the next few weeks. Ten members of our White Sox content team here at NBC Sports Chicago put our heads together to try to project what each position on the diamond would look like in one, two, three years. Basically, we posed the question: What will the White Sox starting lineup be the next time they're capable of playing in the World Series?

That question can have a bunch of different answers, too. We didn't limit ourselves to players currently a part of the organization. Think the White Sox are gonna make a big free-agent addition? Vote for that player. Think the White Sox are gonna pull off a huge trade? Vote for that player. We wanted to see some creativity.

Relief pitching is volatile, as Rick Hahn will tell you. It's hard to project out who's going to be your closer by the end of the season, making it exponentially more difficult to project who's going to be your closer two years from now. But we did it anyway. And we landed on Zack Burdi.

It makes plenty of sense. He was a first-round pick of the White Sox in 2016, he's yet to reach his 24th birthday (that comes in March) and he's ranked as the organization's No. 17 prospect. There's no White Sox relief-pitching prospect with a higher ceiling than the Downers Grove native.

But Burdi is also serving as an illustration of the pitfalls of development. He was injured in early July of 2017 and had Tommy John surgery, which wiped out the rest of his 2017 season and most of 2018. He got back into action in the Arizona Fall League to close out 2018, but he was shut down there, too, though that was explained as nothing to worry about by Hahn at the GM Meetings in November.

While the White Sox remain high on Burdi and see him as potentially making his way to the majors in 2019, it's perfectly valid to wonder how more than a year on the shelf has affected his future.

Hahn thinks there's no reason for concern.

"He is doing well, and it is too early to be concerned about Zack Burdi," he said at the GM Meetings. "It's important to get back throwing regularly. He had a very long rehab process, as you can imagine, which ended with going out on a regular basis in the Arizona Fall League. He cleared every hurdle we had for him at the end.

"He expressed to us a level of fatigue as far as his overall body being worn out from the time of his throwing program to instructs, to the Fall League, we felt it made sense to just shut him down instead of just running him out there for the last two weeks of Fall League.

"We are pleased with where he's at right now. We had always said that the target for him would be to be essentially back without restriction in 2019. That continues to be the case."

Is Burdi going to be the White Sox closer of the future? He'd figure to have as good a shot as anyone, probably the best shot. But you never know with relievers, you generally never know with prospects and you never know with guys who haven't played in a year and a half. The good news he'll probably start the season at Triple-A Charlotte and could be in the majors before season's end, giving the White Sox and their fans a chance to answer that question for themselves.

Other vote-getters



Alex Colome. Losing out to Burdi by one vote was the guy who will most likely be the White Sox closer of the present beginning in 2019. Colome was acquired in a trade with the Seattle Mariners this offseason and is a tremendous get for a White Sox bullpen that really needed one of those. He's just two years removed from being the major league saves leader when with the Tampa Bay Rays, and the only reason he didn't rack up a bunch more saves in 2019 is because he was dealt to the Pacific Northwest and worked as the setup man for last season's major league saves leader, Edwin Diaz. Colome has a great track record and is under team control for two more seasons, perhaps meaning he's around when the future arrives. He could also be used as a midseason trade piece if the White Sox so choose. It might require a contract extension at some point, but he's a solid pick to be the closer of the future — and a more established one than most of the organization's other internal options.

Ian Hamilton. Called up at the end of last season and doing a decent amount of impressing after a remarkable season in the minors, Hamilton is actually ranked higher than Burdi on the White Sox prospects list. A couple months younger than Burdi, he was sensational in the minors in 2018: a 1.74 ERA and 62 strikeouts in 51.2 innings between Double-A Birmingham and Triple-A Charlotte. Things didn't go quite as smoothly upon his ascension to the big leagues, with Hamilton turning in a 4.50 ERA in his just eight innings of major league work. But he'll be under way less pressure in 2019 thanks to the additions of Colome and Kelvin Herrera to the White Sox bullpen. Hamilton and a host of other young relievers won't be thrown into the high-leverage situations they were already getting thrown into at the end of 2018, helping their development, one would assume. Hamilton showed he could dominate in the minors, making him not at all a bad pick for the closer of the future.

Tyler Johnson. Speaking of dominating in the minors, the White Sox prospect more people should be talking about is Johnson, who was absolutely amazing, statistically, last season. Though he's yet to pitch above the Class A level, Johnson finished 2018 with a pencil-thin 1.40 ERA and 89 strikeouts in just 58 innings between Kannapolis and Winston-Salem. His days in the majors might be a ways away, but this is the future we're talking about and maybe Johnson is that ninth-inning guy one day.

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### **What the Phillies' meeting with Bryce Harper could mean for the White Sox and Manny Machado** By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago | January 11, 2019

The baseball world already made its trip to Las Vegas. The Philadelphia Phillies are going back.

The White Sox are competing with the Phillies in not only the derby for Manny Machado but for the other 26-year-old superstar on this winter's free-agent market, Bryce Harper. And while the White Sox have reportedly twice met with Harper in Sin City — once early in the offseason, with Hall of Famer Jim Thome supposedly present, and again during the Winter Meetings, when the baseball world descended on Harper's hometown — the Phillies are just now sitting down for a face-to-face meeting with one of the best players in the game.

While it's been reported that the Machado saga could soon be reaching its end, there's seemingly no end in sight for the Harper sweepstakes, which more than one report has suggested could last into February.

And because there's no apparent rush for Harper to ink what's expected to be one of the biggest contracts in baseball history, perhaps there's time for a little chess.

Not long ago, it seemed the Harper derby was down to three teams: the White Sox, the Phillies and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Well, the Dodgers haven't been making any noise on the Harper front, even if they did clear outfielders from their roster and salary from their books in that blockbuster deal with the Cincinnati Reds. Then the Washington Nationals re-entered the picture, despite Harper having reportedly rejected their initial offer of 10 years and \$300 million. Harper, agent Scott Boras and Nationals owner Ted Lerner reportedly sat down for five hours just before Christmas, and now the possibility that Harper will return to the team with which he spent the first seven seasons of his big league career is looking like a mighty strong one.

So where does that leave the Phillies? You'll remember their owner saying they might "be a little stupid" with their spending this winter, and it wouldn't come as any surprise if they end up bringing a big bag with a dollar sign on it to their Saturday meeting in Vegas.

But remember, too, that the Phillies and Nationals are division rivals. And so whichever team doesn't get Harper is going to have to face him 19 times a season for the next decade. So what will the Phillies do if they're on the short end of that stick?

Enter The Athletic's Ken Rosenthal, who has a suggestion that ties all of this together. He wrote Thursday that the Phillies still prefer Machado to Harper. And with the New York Yankees continuing to add infielders to their already crowded infield, the Machado derby appears to be down to the White Sox and Phillies. If the Phillies want to spend that "stupid" money on Machado, why are they meeting with Harper? Rosenthal has a guess:

"A contingent from the Phillies' front office is scheduled to meet with Harper in his native Las Vegas on Saturday. If the Phillies' preference is Machado, as some in the industry believe, then the meeting from their perspective might simply be a ploy to drive up the price for the Nationals, a division rival. Harper and Boras, in fact, might be proceeding with the same motivation."

Oh really?

The White Sox have recently been considered "long shots" on Harper and have, like the Phillies, been reported to be more "in" on Machado, who by everyone's guess is expected to sign before Harper, with Boras likely waiting to ensure his client gets the biggest payday of the offseason. But if the Phillies throw their "stupid" money at Machado and reel him away from the rest of the "Miami Baseball Brotherhood" on the South Side, then does the Harper derby get whittled down to two teams, with the White Sox as one of them?

It's all a bunch of "what ifs" as this whole thing continues to be a head-spinning mess, with the rest of baseball along for the ride as much as fans of the involved teams.

Machado's decision could reportedly be made by next week, and perhaps the goings-on in Vegas will have something to do with that. In other words, stay tuned.

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### **Could a Phillies coaching hire trump the lure of Manny Machado uniting the 'Miami Baseball Brotherhood' on the South Side?**

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago | January 11, 2019

The White Sox can offer something no other team in the Manny Machado derby can: the opportunity to play alongside brother-in-law Yonder Alonso and good buddy/winter workout buddy Jon Jay, a chance to unite the "Miami Baseball Brotherhood" on the South Side.

But the Philadelphia Phillies, the White Sox chief and perhaps only remaining competitor in this sweepstakes, have made their own interesting move to try and add an aspect of comfort and familiarity to their pitch.

According to a couple reports, the Phillies added former Baltimore Orioles coach Bobby Dickerson to their coaching staff. Dickerson has been described as Machado's mentor and had a close relationship with him during the 26-year-old free-agent superstar's time in Baltimore.

The #Phillies have hired former #Orioles third base coach Bobby Dickerson as infield coach. Will be in the dugout for games. 1st member of O's 2018 staff to find job in majors.

The Phillies' front office is already stacked with former Orioles brass, but Dickerson provides a whole different level of familiarity.

This story from The Athletic's Dan Connolly, written amid the firestorm created by Machado's antics during the NLCS back in October, is packed with details of the relationship between Machado and Dickerson, including that Dickerson was the one sent to Machado's Double-A team to teach him how to play third base when he was 19. Machado won a pair of Gold Gloves at the hot corner as a big leaguer, even though he now claims a preference for shortstop, what he was playing when Dickerson coached him up in the minors.

Connolly wrote that the two cried together when Machado was traded to the Los Angeles Dodgers last summer and that they still text on a weekly basis. And Dickerson had a unique insight on all those negative headlines Machado has grabbed during his career, whether for throwing equipment in the middle of games, executing spikes-up slides or dragging his foot across Jesus Aguilar's leg during the NLCS.

"I've always tried to challenge him with what does he want his legacy to be. That's how I tried to talk to him," Dickerson told Connolly. "Sometimes it worked, and sometimes it didn't work. But, ultimately, I just tried to challenge him," Dickerson said. "I definitely didn't try to boss him. I tried to challenge him and say, 'Hey, how do you want this to look when your career is over? What do you want it to be like?'"

"I don't think he is intentionally doing things like that. I think sometimes, maybe, he screws up. I don't think anything he does is malicious. I know him personally. He's been really good to me and good to my family and my son. He's a good guy. He's got a good heart. He's all these things if you know him personally. A lot of people will never get to know who the guy is, who the man is. They just know who Swaggy Machado is."

Nothing, though, should do a better job convincing outside observers that the Phillies' hiring of Dickerson could be a big deal than Connolly's opening line to that story: "Besides select family members and a few close friends, there might be no one who knows Los Angeles Dodgers infielder Manny Machado better than Bobby Dickerson."

Of course, the White Sox have a family member and a close friend on their roster in Alonso and Jay.

The New York Yankees, perhaps "out" on Machado depending on which report you read at any given moment during this always-changing saga, made a move that did a similar job of raising eyebrows earlier this offseason, adding Carlos Beltran to their front office right before their meeting with Machado. During his playing days, Beltran was represented by Machado's current agent. But Beltran was a Yankee, too, and received rave reviews for the part he played in the Houston Astros' recent championship run.

And you can make a case that the familiarity those in the Phillies' front office have with Dickerson from their days in Baltimore makes him a valuable addition, regardless of the tie to Machado. If he helped a superstar like Machado so much, he'll be of great value to other young players, right?

So, too, did Rick Hahn argue that the White Sox adding Alonso and Jay were "baseball moves" that make the White Sox better and have nothing to do with "the relationships they have with other players throughout the game."

But at the very least, there is now another argument the Phillies can make for why they're the best destination for Machado. Just like the White Sox are the only team that can offer the opportunity to play alongside family and friends, the Phillies are the only team that can offer the opportunity to continue a significant working relationship with a coach.

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### **White Sox's long shot pursuit of Manny Machado could be paying off**

By Paul Sullivan / Chicago Tribune | January 13, 2019

As unlikely as it seemed entering the offseason, the White Sox could wind up one of the biggest winners of free agency.

A USA Today report suggesting the Phillies are favorites to land Bryce Harper could give the Sox a decided edge in the Manny Machado sweepstakes.

Anything can happen, of course, but things suddenly are looking up for the rebuilding team coming off a 100-loss season.

The Phillies and White Sox are among the small group of public suitors for Harper and Machado, the two biggest fish in the free-agent pond. But after a five-hour meeting in Las Vegas with Harper on Saturday, the Phillies appear to be closing in on the former Nationals outfielder.

USA Today's Bob Nightengale reported three officials told him the Phillies were "clear-cut favorites" over the Nats to sign Harper, who reportedly is seeking a record deal. However, the Phillies have not made an official offer to Harper, the report said.

Unless the Phillies give huge contracts to both players, which remains a possibility, that leaves the Sox and the Yankees as the two remaining teams interested in signing Machado.

Both teams brought Machado in for interviews, though the Yankees have since signed shortstop Troy Tulowitzki and second baseman DJ LeMahieu, creating a glut of infielders that seemingly makes a Machado signing superfluous.

A "mystery" team can emerge as they often do when agents try to ignite a bidding war, but the lack of public suitors for the 26-year-old Machado could mean he'll fall into the Sox's lap. According to an ESPN report, the White Sox have made an eight-year contract offer to Machado.

The Sox have been trying to downplay their chances of landing one of the two superstars so as not to create undue expectations. Still, anticipation over the possibility of signing Machado has increased since the news they made him an offer.

General manager Rick Hahn said last week it has been "tough" dealing with all the rumors surrounding their offseason pursuits, though he hasn't denied any specific report. Hahn said he tries to keep his "fan hat" on, recalling his days growing up on the North Shore, pre-internet, when he'd call into Sports Phone to get the latest updates on hot-stove rumors.

But Hahn worries about "fan perception" based on incorrect information.

"And the age we live in, the age of Twitter and the age of social media, rumors and sort of monitoring the horse race of free agency is part of it," he said. "From a club perspective, honestly, it's frustrating. There's a lot of misinformation out there. There's been numerous players that supposedly were in that we have not had conversations on.

"There were reports of offers, or being in or being out (on players), and under the rules we're not allowed to respond to (them). So you just got to let those play out.

"I realize it's part of the business, but especially when you're talking about negotiations, which are understandably and purposely confidential and not something we conduct through the media, the amount of rumors out there can get frustrating. We don't let it be a distraction."

Of course, one of the outlets, the multiplatform site Stadium, has been adding to the speculation by tweeting edited photos of Machado wearing a Sox uniform. White Sox Chairman Jerry Reinsdorf is an owner of Stadium.

.@JonHeyman reports that the #WhiteSox continue to "try hard" for Manny Machado.

Will it happen, Sox fans?

Whether the rumors are a distraction or not, they've helped keep the Sox in the news in a relatively slow offseason.

The Sox's offseason acquisitions, which include Ivan Nova, Yonder Alonso, Jon Jay, Kelvin Herrera and Alex Colome, may have improved the team's chances in 2019, but none of them is a must-see player driving ticket sales.

Machado may be the answer to their attendance woes, though Sox fans historically only support teams that are winning and have little patience for the alternative. Even popular stars such as Chris Sale couldn't make fans come out to watch a subpar product on the field.

Whether Machado has the personality to be a drawing card is debatable, but he'd obviously create a buzz entering spring training.

Hahn has denied that bringing in Machado's brother-in-law (Alonso) and close friend (Jay) have anything to do with their pursuit of the star infielder, though obviously it doesn't hurt to have someone close whispering in his ear.

And with four weeks remaining until the start of training camp in Glendale, Ariz., the Sox are still in the mix to land one of the biggest names in baseball, a scenario that seemed unlikely months ago.

Back on Oct. 29, the gambling site [bovada.lv](#) listed the odds for eight teams that could land Harper and seven that could land Machado.

The Sox weren't listed for either player, and for good reason. It seemed like a pipe dream that either would wind up on the South Side.

But as the horse race enters the homestretch, it looks like Hahn might have a winning ticket.

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## **Manny Machado's high school coach thinks he'll choose the White Sox**

By Staff / Chicago Tribune | January 11, 2019

Where will Manny Machado land?

His high school baseball coach says it'll be the White Sox.

In a story by Brendan Kutty for N.J.com, Miami Brito Private School's Lazaro Fundora said: "He's been a Yankees fan his whole life. Anybody would like to wear those pinstripes. ... But as far as where he could play shortstop, for instance, that's why I think the White Sox could be it."

The Yankees have two shortstops: newly acquired Troy Tulowitzki and Didi Gregorius. The White Sox, of course, also have a shortstop: Tim Anderson, who had a strong rookie year in 2016, but whose numbers have slumped since then.

"That's just me thinking as a baseball guy," Fundora, now the school's athletic director, continued. "Well, if you want to play short, (the White Sox) will probably be the best venue for him."

USA Today's Bob Nightengale has reported that the Sox officially have made an offer to Machado. But many have speculated Machado would prefer the Yankees if the interest and financials are mutual.

On the other hand, the Sox recently added two of Machado's best friends to their roster: first baseman Yonder Alonso and outfielder Jon Jay.

“Manny’s going to do what’s best for him and his family,” Jay said in a conference call Thursday after the team made his signing official. “Obviously, we have a great friendship, and Yonder is his brother-in-law and all that, but Manny’s going to do what’s best for his family.

“Obviously, we’d love to have a Manny on the team. Absolutely. But that’s something ultimately that’s going to be on them and their family. Who knows what’s going to happen?”

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**Reports: White Sox offer Manny Machado 8 years, \$250 million**

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Chicago Sun-Times | January 13, 2019

If the Phillies are the clear-cut favorite to sign free agent Bryce Harper, as USA Today reported Sunday, then the ripple effect should be beneficial for the White Sox and their chances of landing Manny Machado.

After all, the Phillies were the only other team known to be involved in the Machado sweepstakes. If the Phillies invest a fortune in Harper, the Sox would seem to be the favorite to land Machado, although it’s possible the Phils are willing to spend for both Harper and Machado.

The Sox have tried to make things comfortable for Machado by trading for his brother-in-law, Yonder Alonso, and signing a good friend, free agent Jon Jay. And according to ESPN, they have made an eight-year offer to Machado, who’s still being pursued by the Phillies. One report, from Dominican-based Hector Gomez of Z101 Digital, says the offer is for \$250 million. The Sox, who have never awarded a contract beyond six years, \$68 million for Jose Abreu, were previously believed to be holding the line on seven years.

That offer comes with a hefty annual average of \$31.25 million taking Machado through his age 33 season. And the bidding might not be over.

Baltimore Orioles' Manny Machado laughs in the dugout during the seventh inning of a game against the White Sox Tuesday, May 22, 2018, in Chicago. (AP)

“Everything is still on the table,” one industry source said, “especially in this new age of free agency where not everything makes sense. These guys are still so young [both 26], so if things aren’t what they want, they could gamble and take a much shorter deal and try again in the near future.”

It’s not clear how enamored Machado is with the Sox, who lost 100 games last season and haven’t been to the postseason since 2008. The Sox are selling a strong farm system, a comfortable clubhouse and a rebuilding plan that bodes well for a brighter future. Machado’s first choice was the Yankees, who were believed to be the favorites at the outset but are loaded with infielders after adding D.J. LeMahieu and Troy Tulowitzki to an already deep group.

The self-described free-spending Phillies became the favorites to land Machado as the Yankees’ interest waned, but if they invest in Harper, how much cash will they have left for Machado?

The Nationals, who offered Harper, their right fielder since his career began in 2012, a 10-year, \$300 million deal during the season and were thought to be out before re-emerging in the picture, have already spent \$189 million in payroll this offseason and might be out again. The Sox also have been in the hunt for Harper and met with him in November but haven’t made an offer.

The Phillies haven’t made an offer to Harper, either, according to USA Today, but their five-hour meeting with him Saturday apparently went well.

“I think it was really positive,” Phillies owner John Middleton told the ABC television affiliate in Philadelphia. “We got to understand the man. We got to understand what he’d be like in the dugout, the clubhouse and the community. He and his wife are really an impressive young couple.”

As is their practice, the Sox' front office has been mum on free agents, especially with two players of this magnitude, although they have made it clear they are in pursuit. Jim Thome, special assistant to general manager Rick Hahn, said on MLB Network last week that Hahn and vice president Ken Williams are "working hard" and that signing Machado "would be wonderful."

Hahn, on a conference call discussing the Jay signing Thursday, remained coy and collected when asked about the nonstop rumors.

"I realize it's part of the business," Hahn said, "but especially when you're talking about negotiations, which are understandably and purposely confidential and not something we conduct through the media, the amount of rumors out there can get frustrating. We don't let it be a distraction."

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### **White Sox agree to terms with Abreu, Rodon, Sanchez, Colome**

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Chicago Sun-Times | January 12, 2019

As Manny Machado's free-agent status still commanded most of the attention Friday — even with little in the way of news but for one significant signing by the Yankees — the White Sox took care of pressing contract matters by avoiding arbitration with their four eligible players, including first baseman Jose Abreu.

Abreu agreed to a \$16 million salary for 2019, a raise of \$3 million. Right-hander Alex Colome will get \$7.3 million, left-hander Carlos Rodon will make \$4.2 million and infielder Yolmer Sanchez will make \$4.625 million. Rodon made \$2.3 million last season and Sanchez \$2.35 million. Colome made \$5.3 million with the Rays and Mariners last season. The team payroll is at approximately \$80.1 million, leaving plenty of room for Machado.

Meanwhile, the Yankees' signing of infielder D.J. LeMahieu seemed to signal the Bronx Bombers' waning interest in Machado, leaving the Sox and Phillies as the only known remaining teams pursuing the star third baseman/shortstop, who is expected to sign a lengthy blockbuster deal well above \$200 million. Before Friday, the Yankees — thought to be Machado's top choice when he hit free agency — hadn't made a formal offer. And LeMahieu's addition on a two-year deal crowded their already crammed infield even more.

While the possibility of a mystery team continued to persist, the prospect of the Sox adding Machado to the middle of the order with Abreu did, as well, though it would be only for a year. Abreu's contract runs out after 2019. Abreu turns 32 this month, and it remains to be seen whether he fits in the Sox' plans beyond this season.

Abreu signed a six-year, \$68 million deal when he joined the Sox before the 2014 season, but he opted into arbitration and out of his guaranteed salaries before 2017. He would have made \$10.5 million in '17, \$11.5 million in 2018 and \$12 million in 2019 under the original terms. He made \$10.825 million in 2017, \$13 million in 2018 and will get \$16 million in 2019 in arbitration.

An All-Star and Silver Slugger winner in 2014 and 2018, Abreu was on pace for his fifth season with at least 25 homers and 100 RBI but was limited to 128 games, sidelined by testicular torsion surgery and an infection in his right thigh during the second half of the season. He finished with career lows in homers (22) and RBI (78) as well as a career worst .265/.325/.473 hitting line.

The Sox historically have avoided going to arbitration, but they lost to Avisail Garcia and Sanchez last winter, the first time since 2001 they went to arbitration (Keith Foulke).

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**Report: Machado mulling eight-year offer from White Sox**

By Scot Gregor / Daily Herald | January 13, 2019

Is this the week Manny Machado finally signs a free-agent contract? Bryce Harper?

The two 26-year-old stars are still on the market, but there were some interesting developments over the weekend.

On Sunday night, ESPN's Jeff Passan reported the White Sox have offered Machado an eight-year contract. If it matches his expected asking price of \$30 million per season, that is a potential \$240 million deal with expected opt-out clauses.

The Sox have plenty of money to spend as they enter the third year of a rebuild, and they've also traded for first baseman/designated hitter Yonder Alonso and signed outfielder Jon Jay. Alonso is Machado's brother-in-law and Jay is a close friend of the all-star infielder.

"These players (Alonso, Jay) are here because of what they bring specifically, both between the lines and in the clubhouse," Sox general manager Rick Hahn said last week. "We feel they make us better in 2019 and have the potential to have a lasting impact on what we are trying to build for the long term.

"I'm not going to get into the relationships they have with other players throughout the game. It's certainly a positive, but I would say it's by no means a reason to make a move to acquire other player."

The White Sox met with Harper in his hometown of Las Vegas in November, but don't appear to have made an offer.

On Saturday, the Phillies met with Harper in Vegas, reportedly for five hours. Like the Sox, they have the money to sign either Harper or Machado, who they are also pursuing.

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**Rozner: There's logic to White Sox's pursuit of Machado, Harper**

By Barry Rozner / Daily Herald | January 12, 2019

Interesting spot these White Sox are in today.

It's well into January and two of the best free agents in MLB history are still flirting with them, mostly because the market has dwindled for Bryce Harper and Manny Machado.

Nevertheless, both are still on the dance floor and talking with the South Siders.

If it feels it too soon for such a move, just two years into a rebuild, there is logic behind what they're doing.

Some would point to the Cubs' signing of Jon Lester only three years in as proof that it makes sense, but the Cubs were willing to pay for years in which they didn't think they would compete in order to secure that player.

There's also that whole veteran guy with rings thing, and how that can advance a program.

The Cubs had no idea they would compete in 2015. In the fourth year of a rebuild, they were at least a year early. By Year 5, they were winning a World Series and it would have never happened without Lester.

So much for calendars.



The Sox might believe they are on a slightly faster track because of the number of prospects they were able to acquire in deals to start the rebuild, not to mention playing in a division with only one good team that is itself behaving in an odd manner this winter.

But there's more to it than that.

In Bryce Harper, who turned 26 in October, and Manny Machado, who turned 26 in July, you're talking about two of the best and youngest free agents in the history of the game.

These are generational talents on Hall of Fame tracks. If you're looking for free-agent comparisons, the list is very short.

Think in terms of Greg Maddux, a 26-year-old starter coming off a Cy Young, 20 wins and 268 innings.

Apologies as always, Cub fans, for the reminder.

There's Alex Rodriguez, a 25-year-old, Gold-Glove caliber shortstop coming off three straight seasons of 40 homers and 100 RBI.

And that's about it.

Carlos Beltran was a 27-year-old Gold-Glove quality center fielder coming off 38 homers, 104 RBI and 42 steals, and Barry Bonds was 28 when he left Pittsburgh.

In today's game, that's considered nearing the end of a player's prime.

In any case, Machado and Harper belong in the most elite category of free agents ever and it's easy to believe the next five years of their careers will be as good as the last five, making them worth the five years after that to the teams desperate to get them.

Are the White Sox one of those teams? Do they have to make this happen now? Are they truly desperate?

Certainly not an appropriate word to use in this case.

The Sox, as did the Cubs, probably figure they're at least a year away from competing, but also know players like this -- particularly at such a young age -- are rare to find in free agency, and it just so happens that teams are developing less of an appetite for 10-year contracts and luxury tax expenditures.

Considering their payroll commitments moving forward, which are obviously few and small, the Sox are in a position to take a shot.

That's why it's logical now, assuming length of term and annual value don't mess up a good thing.

If they fail to land either one, they also know who might be available next winter.

Rockies third baseman Nolan Arenado -- 28 years old when the 2020 season begins -- is one of the best players in baseball and somehow still underrated. He's a monster, period, and in line for a huge deal next offseason.

Also unsigned are Nats third baseman Anthony Rendon (29 in 2020), Reds second baseman Scooter Gennett (29), Astros starter Gerrit Cole (29), Cards outfielder Marcell Ozuna (29), Giants starter Madison Bumgarner (30), Cards first baseman Paul Goldschmidt (32) and Oakland DH Khris Davis (32).

Justin Verlander will be 37, but shows no signs of slowing down and might be nice to have around for the postseason.

And, oh yeah, that Chris Sale guy will be a free agent next winter, 31 when the 2020 season opens.

"Given where we are, a lot of people had us as long shots entering this process. We'll see what happens over the coming days and weeks," GM Rick Hahn said Thursday. "But we understand that this isn't the last opportunity to add premium talent."

As of Saturday, it had the feeling of Harper waiting for Washington to sweeten the package and Machado trying to get a bit more from Philadelphia.

But the White Sox are still in the mix.

They could get lucky and land a big fish, thus speeding up the process again. Not a bad place to be considering no one thought this was possible a few months ago.

Well, maybe no one but the White Sox themselves.

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### **White Sox agree to one-year deals with Abreu, three others**

By Scot Gregor / Daily Herald | January 11, 2019

In what could be his final contract with the White Sox, first baseman Jose Abreu agreed to a \$16 million deal Friday, avoiding salary arbitration.

New relief pitcher Alex Colome (\$7.325 million), infielder Yolmer Sanchez (\$4.625 million) and starting pitcher Carlos Rodon (\$4.2 million) also agreed to terms.

Last year, Sanchez and Avisail Garcia took the Sox to arbitration -- the first time that's happened since 2001. Both players won their hearings.

Heading into the final season of a six-year contract, Abreu has continually expressed a desire to sign an extension with the White Sox. While the Sox have raved about Abreu's offensive skills and leadership qualities, a deal has yet to get done.

The 31-year-old Abreu was limited to 128 games due to injuries last season. He batted .265 with 36 doubles, 22 home runs and 78 RBI while making his second trip to the All-Star Game. He also won his second Silver Slugger award.

Abreu is the only player in franchise history to hit 20 or more homers in each of his first five seasons. He made \$13 million last year.

Acquired in a Nov. 30 trade from the Mariners for catcher Omar Narvaez, Colome became the first reliever in major-league history to record at least 10 saves and 30 holds last season, which he split between Tampa Bay and Seattle.

The right-hander made \$5.3 million last year.

Returning from shoulder surgery last June, Rodon was 6-8 with a 4.18 ERA. From July 5-Aug. 27, the left-hander made 9 straight quality starts, the longest streak by a White Sox pitcher since at least 1908.

Last year, Rodon made \$2.3 million.

Sanchez led the American League with 10 triples last season while batting .242 with 34 doubles, 8 home runs and 55 RBI. He made \$2.35 million in 2018.

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## **Manny Machado has offer from White Sox for 8-year contract**

By Jeff Passan / ESPN.com | January 14, 2019

As the sweepstakes for baseball's best free agents heats up, Manny Machado is sitting on an eight-year offer from the Chicago White Sox and is still engaged with the Philadelphia Phillies, while their pursuit of Bryce Harper grew stronger with an in-person meeting in Las Vegas over the weekend, league sources told ESPN.

The Phillies, as anticipated, could serve as the fulcrum for where two of the most talented free agents in a generation wind up, according to sources. Although a USA Today report deemed Philadelphia a "clear-cut favorite" to sign Harper, the Washington Nationals remain a possible landing spot for the 26-year-old outfielder, according to sources.

Philadelphia remains in the hunt for Machado, a 26-year-old shortstop/third baseman, and along with the White Sox, they've been told a third team is involved, according to sources. The White Sox have shown significant interest in Harper -- they met him in Las Vegas, his hometown, before the new year -- as well as Machado.

Chicago's willingness to offer a deal in the 10-year range has been questioned, as the largest contract in franchise history was Jose Abreu's six-year, \$68 million deal. Guaranteeing eight years on Machado illustrates the seriousness of the White Sox in their pursuit, according to sources, and could portend the ability to proffer a decade-long offer -- especially if Philadelphia or the supposed mystery team continues engaging with Machado.

The slow-developing markets for Harper and Machado aren't necessarily indicative of teams' willingness to reach the \$300 million threshold seen as a starting point for both players. The number of teams involved is smaller than anticipated, but Phillies owner John Middleton suggested to USA Today that his team might be "even a little stupid about" spending money this offseason, and the White Sox's transition from rebuilding to competitive in the American League Central is close.

Chicago already has traded for first baseman Yonder Alonso, Machado's brother-in-law, and signed outfielder Jon Jay, a close friend. The transactions by themselves haven't swayed Machado to deem the White Sox a favorite, but they were strong indications of Chicago's seriousness about signing Machado.

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## **White Sox, Jose Abreu agree to \$16 million, 1-year deal**

By Staff / Associated Press | January 11, 2019

CHICAGO -- Slugger Jose Abreu and the Chicago White Sox have agreed to a \$16 million, one-year contract, avoiding arbitration.

The White Sox also announced one-year deals with right-hander Alex Colome (\$7,325,000), lefty Carlos Rodon (\$4.2 million), and third baseman Yolmer Sanchez (\$4,625,000) on Friday.

Abreu gets a \$3 million raise after making his second All-Star team. He hit .265, finishing with career lows in homers (22) and RBI (78). Abreu also missed most of the final six weeks because of a testicular torsion and an infection in his right thigh.

Colome has 96 saves in six seasons with Tampa Bay and Seattle.

Rodon was 6-8 with a 4.18 ERA in 20 starts. Sanchez tied for the American League lead with 10 triples.

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## **MLB hot stove: White Sox reportedly make eight-year offer to free agent Manny Machado**

By Dayn Perry / CBSSports.com | January 13, 2019

The Chicago White Sox have made an eight-year contract offer to free agent infielder Manny Machado, sources tell ESPN's Jeff Passan.

Along with Bryce Harper, Machado, 26, is one of the most coveted free agents in recent memory. That's especially the case given the strength of his 2018 season with the Orioles and then Dodgers following a July blockbuster trade ...

For his career, Machado owns an OPS+ of 121 and a WAR of 33.8 across parts of seven big-league seasons. His youth in tandem with his broad-based excellence means that Machado could command a deal worth in excess of \$100 million or, at the very least, a contract with a high average annual value plus one or more early opt-outs.

As for the White Sox, installing Machado at his preferred position of shortstop would require them to shift Tim Anderson, who's made big strides with the glove, to another spot (likely third base, thus bumping Yolmer Sanchez to a bench role). The White Sox are working to emerge from a deep rebuilding process. Machado would in essence become the face of a franchise that also includes compelling young talents like Yoan Moncada, Eloy Jimenez, Michael Kopech (once he returns from Tommy John surgery), Carlos Rodon, and others. As well, the AL Central is perhaps the weakest division in baseball, and that's especially the case given that the Indians' contending window may be gradually closing. As such, Machado on the south side would figure to have a shot at playing relevant baseball for years to come.

While the Yankees don't seem willing to pay the going rates for Machado, the Phillies remain in the mix for his services, and there's no doubt a mystery team or three on the fringes. The situation is fluid until ink is put to paper, but the White Sox appear to be more than just talk when it comes to landing one of these two generational free agents.

It remains to be seen whether eight years and an unnamed dollar amount is enough to bring Machado to the South Side, but it certainly demonstrates the White Sox are beyond serious about bringing him into the fold.

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## **Report: Manny Machado has eight-year offer from White Sox**

By Charlotte Carroll / Sports Illustrated | January 13, 2019

Free agent star Manny Machado has an eight-year contract offer from the Chicago White Sox, reports ESPN's Jeff Passan.

The shortstop/third baseman Machado, along with Bryce Harper, are the two biggest free agents who have yet to sign this offseason.

The White Sox and Phillies are the reported frontrunners for Machado. The Phillies are the reported leaders for Harper after a meeting in Las Vegas over the weekend.

Pitchers and catchers report to spring training in little over a month.

According to Passan, there is a third team involved in the hunt for the 26-year-old Machado.

Last season, Machado hit .297 with 37 home runs and 107 RBIs for the Dodgers. The four-time All-Star and two-time Gold Glove winner was traded from the Orioles to the Dodgers last summer.

The White Sox have already traded for Yonder Alonso, Machado's brother-in-law, and signed Jon Jay, a friend of Machado's.

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**White Sox avoid arbitration with Jose Abreu, 3 other players**

*Abreu signed a one year deal worth \$16 million*

By James Neveau / NBC Chicago | January 11, 2019

The Chicago White Sox have agreed to terms with four arbitration-eligible players on contracts, including first baseman Jose Abreu.

The team announced the signings on Friday afternoon, and the squad will not have to go to arbitration with any of their players this offseason.

Abreu agreed to a one-year deal that will pay him \$16 million in the coming season. The first baseman hit 22 home runs and drove in 78 RBI last season, and was named to the MLB All-Star Game for the second time in his career.

The White Sox also agreed to a one-year, \$7.325 million deal with relief pitcher Alex Colome, a \$4.2 million pact with pitcher Carlos Rodon, and a \$4.625 million deal with infielder Yolmer Sanchez.

The team had previously agreed to a contract with outfielder Leury Garcia.