

**Baseball: A's say Forst isn't talking with Padres about GM job**

Wire services

The A's squashed speculation that assistant general manager David Forst is in the mix to become the next general manager of the San Diego Padres

The A's said in a statement e-mailed to The Associated Press on Wednesday that Forst, Billy Beane's longtime right-hand man, has not interviewed for the job, nor has anyone asked for permission to interview him.

"At this time, he has no interest in pursuing a position outside of Oakland and has no plans to leave the A's organization," the statement concluded.

Forst completed his sixth season as the A's assistant GM.

The Angels have lost 12 of their last 13 postseason games against the Red Sox, including 9 of 10 over the last three series heading into today's Division series opener, although don't call it a jinx.

"We don't believe in curses," Red Sox first baseman Kevin Youkilis said. "We never believed there was a curse in Boston. I don't believe there's a hex (on the Angels). It's just two teams going at it."

Los Angeles hasn't even led Boston for eight total innings of those last 10 games, and the Angels' only win was a 12-inning nail-biter last season.

The Twins' 12-inning victory over Detroit received a 4.2 rating on TBS, up 56 percent from the Chicago White Sox's win over Minnesota in last year's AL Central tiebreaker. Tuesday night's game was seen by 6,543,000 viewers, the most for a tiebreak game since 1998. It received a 27.1 rating in Minnesota and a 24.6 rating in Detroit.

The Mets acquired minor leaguers Chris Carter and Eddie Lora from Boston, completing an earlier trade that sent reliever Billy Wagner to the Red Sox. Carter, a Stanford product, batted .294 with 16 home runs and 61 RBIs in 116 games with Triple-A Pawtucket.

A 12-year-old Florida girl who grabbed Philadelphia Phillies slugger Ryan Howard's 200th career home run has her prize back after suing the team for its return.

A sheriff's official in Georgia says former major league pitcher Brian Powell has died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Powell, who pitched for the Giants in 2003, was 35.

**Oakland A's Instructs Q&A: Gil Patterson, P1**

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OaklandClubhouse.com

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The Oakland A's 2009 Instructional League camp is in its final two weeks. On Monday, we caught-up with A's minor league pitching coordinator Gil Patterson to discuss the pitchers who are participating in camp. Patterson gives us some rehab updates, as well as progress reports on the attempts at improvement by the pitchers participating in camp. This is Part One of a two-part interview...

For a list of the A's Instructional League roster, as of September 14, [click here](#)

OaklandClubhouse: How are Instructs going? You are about halfway through right?

Gil Patterson: Yep. We have Monday through Saturday this week and Monday through Saturday next week and that's it. It's been encouraging. When these guys start Instructional League, the first thing you want to say to them is 'this is really an honor and a privilege to be here, and, at the same time, if you guys are starting to get tired, the season is really only three-quarters old because the entire month of September, you should be playing and then, the first few weeks of October, you should be playing. You want to get to the point when you are playing through the whole month of October with the playoffs and the World Series.' So I said to them, 'just don't let your head say, 'oh, I'm tired. It's been a

long year' because you don't want it to be over yet.' This is a pretty good group.

Last year, we had something like eight guys in camp – we had one guy reach the big leagues, Trevor Cahill, although he really only came down because of a little mechanical stuff, and seven other guys reach 150 innings, and three or four guys go to Double-A or Triple-A. So Instructional League can make a difference. I've got a good group again this year. Our strength and conditioning guy told me that he has been so extremely happy with the way that the pitchers have worked hard in the gym. That's a nice compliment for them because it is October or the end of September and they have been getting after it, a lot of them, since the end of the January or February. And some of the guys who came from college, it is the same thing, so it is just nice to hear that these guys are still getting after it here the first week in October.

OC: Is there anything that you are focusing on with them as a group? Anything that you noticed system-wide this year that you wanted them to work on?

GP: [laughs] I'm surprised you ask that. Doesn't everyone who goes to Oakland now have a cutter? [Ed. Note: Patterson has added a cut fastball to the arsenal of a number of A's pitchers over the past year.] [Andrew] Bailey, [Jerry] Blevins, and I read that Dana Eveland said a couple of nice things about his cutter and how I helped him with that. I'm half-teasing. You know as well as I do that, for me, every pitching coach helps plant a seed with every one of our players and it is never just one person.

The biggest thing from this Instructional League is that I am hoping that we can help them gain possibly a pitch that is going to help them to get better, and, of course, the mental attitude of being a warrior and never giving in. Grinding it out. Being mentally and physically tough. Those are things that are important, as well. Each guy, when we start, has a goal sheet where he can say, 'what pitch do I need? Or what do I need to accomplish?' In general, it's mostly a pitch that guys want to get better with. This Instructional League is the same as the last in that way.

OC: There are a couple of guys who are coming off of injury- or otherwise-shortened seasons in camp – Fautino De Los Santos, Michael Ynoa, Brett Hunter and Daniel Thomas, in particular. Are they having normal throwing programs at this point?

GP: Unfortunately, Fautino had a set-back again. You're heart-broken for him because he has worked so hard and our training staff has worked so hard and you think you see a light at the end of the tunnel and then you have set-backs. We had a set-back with him where he had to be shut-down again.

OC: Was it his elbow again?

GP: Yep, it is, so he is in the recovery mode again. At least with Ynoa, he is throwing. He isn't pitching yet, but he is playing catch. He hasn't thrown a side [session] yet, but he is playing catch without any pain, so that is encouraging.

Brett Hunter, we revamped his whole delivery. The other day, he threw 93-97 [MPH]. It's frustrating because today [Monday], he said he felt a little sore in his elbow, so it's like 'oh my gosh, we are starting to get it, come on.' We lowered his arm angle. He is such a great kid. He works so hard and he just started to repeat his delivery. When you change someone's arm angle, that is extremely difficult. You are talking about changing something that someone might have done for the last 20 years or, in his case, maybe 10 years. But he has really worked hard at it. It has been a very good work-in-progress. Like I said, if you throw 94-97 with a good slider – and he did that in his last outing – you see a good, strong light at the end of the tunnel.

Dan, unfortunately, had to stay in Florida. He wasn't able to make it to Instructional Leagues. We are both frustrated by that, but you know as well as I do that the health is the main goal and I think he is in that stage of rehab where he is feeling much better. We are looking forward to getting him back here in the spring.

OC: Has it been his elbow or his shoulder this year?

GP: I think it has been his shoulder that was sore, yeah.

OC: You have a couple of young lefties in camp, Ian Krol and Julio Ramos. What have you seen from both of them?

GP: Ramos, did you see some of the stats he put up? Mickey Storey, too. He was going to come here and now he is going to the Fall League instead. But you look at those numbers, and it's amazing. What a great year for us [the pitchers in the A's system] in general. So many of the guys had over 150 innings and so many guys had over 100 innings.

Ramos had just an outstanding year, starting in extended [spring training] and going to Vancouver and then finishing up in Stockton. He's left-handed, throws 88-91 [MPH] with a good change-up. He used to have a curveball that he used to raise his arm too high on. We had him throw a slider instead. With the slider, he didn't raise up as much, and it has been much better. He has worked so hard at it. Sometimes, in the middle of the season, you might say, 'let's wait for Instructional League to change something,' but when I was in Vancouver mid-season, I said, 'this will definitely not work

[the curveball], so let's change it now and see what happens.' To his credit and to Lefty's [Vancouver pitching coach Craig Lefferts] credit, they both worked very hard and it got better, very much so.

OC: Is he working on anything in particular right now?

GP: Just making sure that he maintains that slider, to the point that he can throw it for a strike and then expand it [out of the strike-zone]. I think it was in July or so when we made the change and he has been very good at it since then. So that has been the biggest thing we have been working on with him, that he can throw that slider for a strike and then expand it out of the strike-zone if he wants to.

Ian Krol is a young man who has great potential. He's 18, and when I say that he is 18, we all remember what it was like to be 18 and know what that means. But this kid works to get better and he wants to raise the bar for himself. Besides that, he's pretty darn good. He has a fastball with some life. He has a curveball and a good change-up. He is going to have to learn the mental side, but who doesn't? For all of the guys, including big league guys, it's not so much that they have to learn the mechanics or a pitch. It's more about how you can control your mental discipline. At that age, you don't know what mental discipline is. We are working with him, as we are with all of the guys, on the mental aspects. He's getting better. He's just a great guy to be around.

OC: There is a young Venezuelan pitcher in camp, Argenis Paez, who is coming off of a nice season in the Rookie League. How has he looked?

GP: Ariel Prieto [the A's Rookie League pitching coach], who is here, we talked about how Paez was just so high over the top with his delivery, so we lowered him a little bit. He's got a good sinker, a pretty good breaking ball and a good change-up. He is someone that is going to be on the radar, very much so. He's been great.

OC: You have your strike-out kings in camp – Anthony Capra and Ben Hornbeck. Last year in Instructs, they refined their change-ups. Are they working on anything in particular this year, or are they mostly fine tuning at this point?

GP: They have a nice little rivalry. Last year during the Instructional League, Capra's change-up sucked, okay? [laughs] So I said, 'Cap, come over here. Look how Ben throws his.' So they keep going back and forth and finally the student's change-up is better than the teacher's change-up. They have fun with it. You never know what is going to work, but it did and that is one of the main reasons that they both punched out 11 or 12 guys per nine innings.

Probably along with that, the biggest thing that we are working on with both of them is developing a curveball and maybe a little bit of a cutter. The cutter is a great pitch. It might not be for everybody, but with these two guys, if they can get their curveballs spinning and throw fastballs at 90 and their cutter about 85 and their change-up about 73, you've got something with the change-up that they have. They are both progressing really well with the curveball, the cutter and, again, the running competition that they have with their change-up.

OC: I read that Connor Hoehn might be moved to the starting rotation next season. Is that something you see as likely for him?

GP: It's not always about arm strength, but sometimes you look at a young pitcher and, as an organization, you decide whether you are better suited getting him to pitch every fifth day and build up innings so that he has the experience of pitching, or is it better for him to go into the bullpen. I think, in general, the guys with the best arms, at least early on, you'd like to see them in the rotation to try and go ahead and build up some innings. Like I said, we had so many guys throw over 100 innings this year. The more innings you pitch, the better you should really get through experience.

OC: So someone with his kind of arm, you'd like to see him get a chance to start?

GP: Yes, without question. He's got a good breaking ball, good change-up and that good fastball.

## **Best Sports Cities**

The Sporting News, 10/8/09

Oakland takes its place among the elite at No. 33 out of 399 in Sporting News' annual Best Sports Cities rankings. Pittsburgh—which reclaimed its title of "City of Champions" with the Penguins and Steelers—is No. 1. Boston, last year's No. 1 city, slips to No. 3.

"You've got the Raiders, the A's and the Warriors, so on any given day, fans in Oakland have a lot to choose from; when you throw in Berkeley, which we include for our ranking purposes, you've got quite a lively sports landscape," said Sporting News chief of correspondents Bob Hille, who has coordinated the Best Sports City rankings since their expansion 13 years ago.

This year's Best Sports Cities list features almost 400 cities and towns in the U.S. and Canada, ranked by a system that assigns points to a variety of categories, including a city's number of teams, their regular-season won-lost records, playoff berths, bowl appearances and tournament bids, championships, applicable power ratings, fan fervor, attendance and more.

Sporting News began its Best Sports Cities rankings in 1993. Past winners:

2008—Boston  
2007—Detroit  
2006—Chicago  
2005—Boston  
2004—Boston  
2003—Anaheim/Los Angeles  
2002—Boston  
2001—New York  
2000—St. Louis  
1999—New York  
1998—Detroit  
1997—Denver  
1995—Denver  
1994—Cleveland  
1993—Chicago

Note: There was no Best Sports City in 1996 as the ratings were expanded and refined.