

## A's News Clips, Wednesday, November 4, 2009

### Desme, Weeks to play in televised Arizona Fall League showcase

By Joe Stiglich, Bay Area News Group blog, 11/4/09

I saw that the MLB Network will broadcast Saturday's Rising Stars Showcase live from Surprise, Ariz. It's basically the All-Star Game for the Arizona Fall League, and first pitch is 5:15 p.m. (West Coast). Outfielder Grant Desme and second baseman Jemile Weeks will represent the A's, and heralded prospect Stephen Strasburg is scheduled to start on the mound for the East Division squad.

Desme, as you may know, has been the AFL's offensive star, hitting 10 homers in just 16 games and leading the league in RBI. He's four homers shy of the AFL's season home run mark with three games remaining. Tune in Saturday to see him for yourself ...

—About a year ago, I drew your attention to a Web site run by baseball fanatic Paul Sullivan, where he ranked all-time teams for all 30 major league franchises. He's at it again ... now giving his thoughts on the most forgettable baseball uniforms of the past 30 years. You can check it out [here](#) ...

### Trumbull's Breslow always pitching for cancer research

Chris Elsberry, Greenwich Time 11/4/09

Three years ago, Craig Breslow had enjoyed a cup of coffee with the Boston Red Sox, but in the summer of 2007, he was back in the minors, pitching for the Class AAA Pawtucket Red Sox. Apparently, though, he had made quite an impression in Boston.

At least on pitcher Josh Beckett, that is.

It was Beckett who called: "Bres " I need you to answer a question," the voice message began. It seems that Beckett and catcher Doug Mirabelli were trying to figure out how many times a baseball would rotate from the pitcher's hand to the catcher's glove. No one in the Red Sox clubhouse could figure that out. Too cerebral. If there was anyone who would know the answer, Beckett figured, it was Breslow.

And he did.

Breslow is a Yale graduate. He majored in molecular biophysics and biochemistry. How many times a baseball spins from the mound to the plate? Piece of cake.

"I called a couple of my friends, we talked about it and came up with a number," Breslow said Tuesday via cell phone. "It's 12. We based it on a major-league fastball thrown at 95 miles per hour."

If he wasn't striking out major-league batters himself with a fastball clocked in the low 90s, Breslow would probably be in medical school, working on a cure for cancer. And, in a sense, he is, although he's not in a laboratory. Through the creation of his strike3foundation, Breslow is raising money for pediatric cancer research, something that's close to his heart.

"The fact that my sister (Lesley) is a pediatric cancer survivor has obviously weighed heavily on me for a long time," Breslow said. "I've always had an interest in medicine, given my major in college " I'd probably be in med school right now if I wasn't playing baseball. Doing something charitable has allowed me to kind of stay connected to the medical field and allowed me to do something productive and beneficial."

On Saturday at the Omni Hotel in New Haven, Breslow's strike3foundation will host its second charity benefit. Former Red Sox shortstop Nomar Garciaparra will be the featured speaker with several other regional celebrities on hand, like Oakland A's outfielder Jack Cust, former Mets manager Bobby Valentine and ex-UConn star and current assistant coach Shea Ralph.

"We've got a great event planned," Breslow said. "Anything we can raise will help."

Breslow was 12 when he heard Lesley, who was 14 at the time, had been diagnosed with thyroid cancer. She had surgery to remove the tumor and has been cancer-free for the last 16 years. Lesley's condition led Breslow down a path that took him from Trumbull High to Yale University, where he graduated in 2002, looking to head to medical school.

Only the Milwaukee Brewers changed his plans.

The Brewers drafted Breslow and he spent a couple of seasons in their minor-league organization before being released. In 2005, he signed with the San Diego Padres, and on July 23, he made his major league debut, finishing the 2005 season with a solid 2.20 ERA in 14 appearances.

The Red Sox picked him up, and in 2006, he made 13 appearances with the big club, posting a 3.75 ERA. He spent the '07 season with Pawtucket, except for a one-day call-up on Sept. 1 -- which earned him a Red Sox World Series ring. But in spring training, the Red Sox released him. Cleveland signed him " and then waived him a month later. The Minnesota Twins picked him up and he spent the rest of the 2008 season there, posting a 1.63 ERA in 42 games.

On May 29, the Twins placed Breslow on waivers and Oakland grabbed him. He finished with a 7-5 record and a 2.60 ERA in 60 games out of the bullpen.

"It was unfortunate that the Twins felt like they needed to make a change. You would have thought that the year I had last year might have earned me a little bit of a longer lease, but that's the business side of things," Breslow said. "Fortunately, the A's had been interested in acquiring my services for quite some time and this year finally had a chance to make good on that."

He's hoping that Oakland will tender him a contract for 2010, but for now, he's busy working with his foundation. Last year's event raised over \$100,000, and this year, Breslow's hoping for more.

"We're really happy with the way things have gone," he said. "I didn't really know what to expect (when the foundation was created). I had mentioned to my family that I wanted to do something and they were all supportive. Joe Lizza (CEO), who handles the day-to-day management of the foundation, said 'whatever you need, I'll do,' and since then, we've been running with it."

## **Tuesday's Arizona Fall League roundup**

### **Royals' Crow hit hard in second professional start for Rafters**

MLB.com

#### **Rafters 6, Desert Dogs 5 (11 innings)**

Aaron Crow, the No. 12 overall pick by the Kansas City Royals in this year's Draft, was hit up for four runs on six hits over 3 1/3 innings, taking a no-decision in Surprise's win over Phoenix. In two starts in the AFL, Crow is 0-1 with a 7.36 ERA over 7 1/3 innings. Marcus Lemon (Rangers) went 4-for-5 with two RBIs, a double and a run scored in the Rafters' win, raising his AFL average to .313. Jarrod Dyson (Royals) added three hits, including a triple.

#### **Saguaros 2, Solar Sox 1**

Steve Garrison threw three shutout innings, allowing one hit and one walk while fanning two in his second consecutive scoreless start as Peoria edged Mesa. The Brewers' 10th-round pick in the 2005 Draft, spent time at three levels during the 2009 season following shoulder surgery last October. Starlin Castro (Cubs) cranked a leadoff homer and tripled to raise his average to .429. Connor Graham (Indians) picked up the win with one scoreless frame.

#### **Javelinas 3, Scorpions 2**

Brewers prospect Josh Butler pitched three scoreless innings and grabbed a share of the league lead with his third win as first-place Peoria edged Scottsdale. The 24-year-old right-hander yielded two hits and two walks to go with four strikeouts as he lowered his ERA to 10.13 in four AFL starts. Lucas May (Dodgers) went 2-for-3 with an RBI for the Javelinas, who have won five in a row. Cole Gillespie (Diamondbacks) had two hits, including a solo homer, for Scottsdale.

## **Oakland A's MLN: Winter And Fall League Notes**

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OaklandClubhouse.com

Nov 3, 2009

We have news on Oakland A's prospects participating in winter and fall league ball and more inside...

### **Desme, Weeks Rising Stars**

A's prospects [Grant Desme](#) and [Jemile Weeks](#) have been named to the Arizona Fall League's Rising Stars game roster. The game will take place on Saturday and will be televised on the MLB Network, the first AFL game to be televised on a national network. The network will also air the AFL championship game for the first time. The Phoenix Desert Dogs, who are represented by the A's every season, are five-time defending champions.

Desme was the AFL's Player of the Week for week two and he leads the AFL in homeruns and RBIs, with 10 and 23, respectively. Weeks earned Player of the Week honors for week three. The second baseman is batting .308 with a .918 OPS and four stolen bases in 12 games.

### **Cunningham Lands With Anzoategui In VWL**

A's outfielder [Aaron Cunningham](#) has agreed to terms with the Caribes de Anzoátegui, the team announced last week. He is expected to join the team after November 15th. Cunningham hit .302 with 11 homeruns and an .851 OPS in 83 games with the Sacramento River Cats in 2009. He also hit .151 in 23 games with the A's. The 23-year-old missed more than a month of the regular season with a separated shoulder, so his time in the Venezuelan Winter League will give him an opportunity to make-up for some of those missed at-bats. He is expected to battle for a spot on the A's 25-man roster this spring.

In other Venezuelan League news, A's shortstop [Gregorio Petit](#) is expected to leave his Venezuelan team next week and travel back to Sacramento to join his wife, who is expected to give birth to a baby girl. Petit, a member of the Leones del Caracas, has been hailed in the Venezuelan press as a rising leader on the Caracas ballclub. He is batting .268 with 17 RBIs and six stolen bases in 21 games thus far this season for Caracas.

A's minor league free agent [Raul Padron](#) continues to shine for Caracas. In 16 games, the backstop is hitting .300 with four homers and 11 RBIs.

### **Valdez Leading Escogido In DWL**

A's infield prospect [Alexander Valdez](#) is off to a terrific start in the Dominican Winter League. Through seven games, he is batting .367 with a homer, seven RBIs and a .1091 OPS. He also has two doubles and two triples. Valdez, a switch-hitter, is coming off of a strong season with High-A Stockton and Double-A Midland. In 111 games, he hit .273 with 65 RBIs. Valdez was a minor league free agent at the end of the season, but he re-signed with Oakland, who initially inked him to a non-drafted free agent contract in February of 2003.

In other Dominican League news, A's minor leaguer [Anivoris Ramirez](#) has made his debut with the Tigres del Licey, tossing a scoreless inning. The 21-year-old left-hander had a 3.69 ERA in 75.2 innings for the Rookie League A's and short-season Kane County Cougars in 2009.

### **Carter To Return To Mexico This Week**

A's prospect [Chris Carter](#) is expected to rejoin his Mexican League team this week. He has been sidelined since October 17th with what turned out to be a stomach virus. Carter was sent home to the US to ensure that the illness wasn't anything more serious, and he has been cleared to continue his winter league play. In seven games with Guasave, Carter has four homers and six RBIs.

In other Mexican League news, A's relief prospect [Arnold Leon](#) is starting to turn around his season with Culiacan. After allowing six earned runs over three appearances (2.1 innings), Leon has given up only two earned runs over his last three appearances (7.1 innings). On the season, he has a 6.23 ERA and 12 strike-outs against four walks in 13 innings. Leon had a 3.51 ERA in 74.1 innings for the A's Double-A affiliate, the Midland Rockhounds, in 2009.

### **Carson, Reineke Outrighted; Carson Re-Signed To Minor Deal**

Last week, the A's moved two more players off of their 40-man roster, bringing their total to six players removed from the 40-man roster since the end of the regular season. Oakland outrighted outfielder [Matt Carson](#) and right-hander [Chad Reineke](#) to Sacramento. Carson had already re-signed with the A's before the move and will be back with the

organization next season. He has received a non-roster invitation to big league spring training. The outfielder made his major league debut with Oakland in September after leading the Triple-A Sacramento River Cats in homeruns with 25. He hit .286 with a homerun in 21 major league at-bats for the A's.

Reineke spent most of the season with Sacramento, going 9-4 with a 4.75 ERA in 125 innings. He made one start for Oakland, allowing four runs in five innings.