

## A's News Clips, Friday, November 6, 2009

### Crosby doesn't expect to return to A's

### Kennedy, Nomar, Duchscherer, Tomko eligible free agents

By Mychael Urban / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Now that baseball's postseason is over, it's time to fire up the Hot Stove.

Eligible players are free to file for free agency the day after the World Series ends, so Hideki Matsui's heroics to help the Yankees close out the Phillies on Wednesday opened the filing floodgates.

Six members of the 2009 A's are eligible to hit the open market this offseason, and one -- right-handed swingman Edgar Gonzalez -- has been out there for a few weeks. He was removed from the 40-man roster when he was sent outright to Triple-A Sacramento on Oct. 10, allowing him to become a free agent immediately.

Infielders Adam Kennedy, Bobby Crosby and Nomar Garciaparra, and right-handed starters Justin Duchscherer and Brett Tomko are Oakland's other free-agent eligibles, and all of them are expected to file during the 15-day window that opened Thursday.

Crosby, who lost his starting job at shortstop when the A's signed Orlando Cabrera during Spring Training and didn't get it back when Cabrera was traded to the Twins in July, told MLB.com early Thursday afternoon that he'd already filed.

"I just got off the phone with my agent," he said. "I don't know exactly what the process is, but I know he's filed, so [the process has] started."

The 2004 American League Rookie of the Year, Crosby, who turns 30 in January, played all over the infield and also appeared in the outfield during the final year of his five-year, \$12.75 million contract.

Asked if he was interested in returning to Oakland, Crosby said he hadn't heard from the A's since the season ended and had accepted that 2009 was his final year with the team when rookie Cliff Pennington was named the starting shortstop after the Cabrera trade.

"I honestly don't see it happening," said Crosby, who batted .223 with six homers, 29 RBIs and a .295 on-base percentage in 97 games at five positions this season. "I'd like the opportunity to play shortstop somewhere."

The A's are known to have had conversations with the agents for Kennedy and Duchscherer, but assistant general manager David Forst on Thursday suggested that those talks have been casual at best.

"There hasn't been anything of substance," Forst told MLB.com on Thursday afternoon.

Kennedy, who was acquired in a Minor League trade with the Rays in May to serve as a fill-in for injured second baseman Mark Ellis, took over at third base -- he'd never before played there in the Majors -- when Ellis returned to the lineup and proved to be one of the team's most consistent offensive contributors.

Oakland's primary leadoff man for much of the season, Kennedy batted .289 with 11 home runs, 63 RBIs and a .348 OBP. He made a career-high 20 errors, including 13 at the hot corner, and Ellis is under contract for 2010 with a club option for 2011, but the A's have expressed a desire to bring back Kennedy, who turns 34 in January.

Six-time Gold Glove third baseman Eric Chavez also is under contract for 2010 with a club option for 2011, but he's coming off his second back surgery and hasn't played in more than 90 games since 2006.

One of Oakland's top hitting prospects, third baseman Brett Wallace, batted .302 with nine homers, 28 RBIs and a .365 OBP in 44 games at Sacramento after being acquired in the July trade that sent Matt Holliday to the Cardinals. He's expected to be invited to big league Spring Training to compete for a job, but he's considered a defensive work in progress.

Thus, the A's might be more comfortable re-signing Kennedy as insurance against the unavailability of Chavez and in case Wallace is deemed not quite ready for prime time.

Kennedy, who also played first base and in the outfield in 2009, also might make sense in the type of utility role that Crosby and Garciaparra helped fill last season.

"I like it here," Kennedy said in early October. "Who knows if they want me back, but I'm open to [coming back]."

Garciaparra, 36, was contemplating retirement before he signed with Oakland during Spring Training. Limited by a chronic condition in both calves all year, he batted .281 with three homers, 16 RBIs and a .314 OBP in 65 games for the A's and isn't expected back.

"I don't know what I'm going to do," Garciaparra told MLB.com when asked if he was again considering calling it a career. "I still love the game and feel like I could help someone, but obviously I'm not an everyday player anymore, so who knows if someone's going to even want me."

Duchscherer, a two-time AL All-Star -- as a setup man in 2005 and as a starter in 2008 -- who turns 32 this month, missed all of the 2009 season, during which he made a reported \$3.9 million. He had shoulder surgery this spring, saw his rehab stalled multiple times by back problems, and on Aug. 22 he announced that he'd been diagnosed with clinical depression.

The A's, who had the youngest starting staff in the Majors this year, are interested in bringing back Duchscherer, who told MLB.com last week that he's "feeling much better." But Duchscherer, whose 2007 and 2008 season were shortened by hip injuries that led to surgery, likely would have to accept an incentives-based deal.

Tomko, 36, was picked up in August after being let go by the Yankees and went 4-1 with a 2.95 ERA in six starts with the A's but was shut down for the year with an irritated nerve in his right biceps after beating the Rangers for his 100th career victory in mid-September.

The A's, who are well-stocked with talented young starters, aren't expected to aggressively pursue Tomko, who should have plenty of other suitors.

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

### **Cubs' Cashner extends scoreless streak to eight innings**

MLB.com

#### **Solar Sox 8, Javelinas 1**

Cubs prospect Andrew Cashner pitched four shutout innings for the second start in a row as Mesa routed Peoria. Cashner scattered five hits and struck out four over four innings. The offense banged out 14 hits for Mesa. P.J. Phillips (Angels) homered and scored twice on a three-hit afternoon. Red Sox farmhand Luis Exposito scored twice, and Starlin Castro (Cubs) plated a run. Casper Wells (Tigers) extended his hitting streak to six games and Brewers prospect Lorenzo Cain had an RBI for Peoria.

#### **Saguaros 12, Desert Dogs 11**

Jon Gaston hit a three-run homer and Jose Vallejo homered and plated four runs, but the Peoria Saguaros fell to the Phoenix Desert Dogs in a slugfest. Gaston homered for the second time in Arizona. Vallejo, playing in front of new Houston manager Brad Mills, collected four hits and four RBIs. Cory Brown (Athletics) hit a game-tying home run in the eighth for the Desert Dogs. Chris Marrero (Nationals) plated three runs and fellow Washington prospect Danny Espinosa scored four times.

#### **Scorpions 8, Rafters 7**

Rockies catching prospect Wilin Rosario homered twice and drove in three runs as Scottsdale edged Surprise. Rosario hit a solo homer in the fifth inning to put the Scorpions on the board and slugged a two-run shot in the eighth as part of a four-run rally. Rosario finished up with three hits, three runs and a stolen base. Pirates prospect Jose Tabata smacked a two-RBI double in the eighth and he leads the Arizona Fall League in hits with 29.