

A's News Clips, Tuesday, October 19, 2010

A's Jackson prefers to play, not watch

Outfielder says he's concerned with getting healthy for 2011

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- At the end of the regular season, several players who are not afforded a playoff spot retreat home and transform into fans, fixated on any and all postseason action. Then there are the others, the ones who try to stay away from the game.

Conor Jackson fits the latter bill, and it's not hard to understand why when examining his last two seasons.

The 28-year-old outfielder, limited to 30 games with the D-backs in 2009 because of a long battle with Valley Fever, looked to put any remnant of the disease behind him this season only to play in just 60 games -- 42 with Arizona and 18 with Oakland -- due to injury.

So, it's no wonder Jackson isn't caught under the spell many have deemed October Magic.

"I want to play today," Jackson said. "I think, when you're a competitor, it's just tough to sit here and watch baseball and not play it."

Instead, Jackson, speaking by phone on Monday, said he has his own big offseason plans in Hermosa Beach, Calif.

"Getting healthy," he said.

So far, so good. On Wednesday, Jackson will be seven weeks post sports hernia surgery, the results of which he believes cured all other injuries suffered this season, including a right hamstring strain.

"Hopefully this was the root of all my other injury problems and hopefully it will put me in a better physical and mental place," he said. "There's really no doubt in our heads that this was the borderline issue. But it feels good. I'm right where I want to be. From talking to people, it seems like you need six to nine weeks to feel perfect and not experience any pain. Obviously, if you're in-season, you probably push it a little bit more, but right now I'm not in any hurry to rush it and maybe re-injure it."

Jackson is not putting a timeline on his rehab process, which has included everything from deep tissue massages to core strength training. Rather, he'll continue "until I feel no pain." The A's midseason acquisition knows he's close to that point, one at which he'll take some time off before resuming normal baseball activity in December.

It's around that time the A's are expected to make a decision on his contract, which could be non-tendered following a rather inconsistent year that included a .228 average with one home run and five RBIs in 57 at-bats for Oakland. The arbitration-eligible Jackson knows his injuries prevented the A's from seeing his full potential, but he's still eager to fight for a spot in a crowded green and gold outfield if healthy.

"I'd love to be back in Oakland," he said. "The time I had there was phenomenal. Obviously, they have a decision they have to make, and I respect that. So on one side, I'd love to be back with Oakland, and on the other side, I know it's kind of out of my hands."

"You have to think positive. As much as I could sit here and dwell on the last two years and what it's entailed for me, I can't. I've forced myself not to. You can spiral down with it, or you can rise above it and try to overcome it. That's the route I'm going to take. It's been a rough few years, but I know if I'm 100 percent healthy, I can definitely help a team out. I'd love for that to be with Oakland."

In three full seasons with Arizona from 2006-08, Jackson averaged 14 home runs and 71 RBIs with a .292 mark. Those are the numbers that proved attractive to an A's organization looking for outfield stability in June. Now, though, several members of the A's brass have said power phenom Chris Carter could be the answer in left field, which would likely leave Jackson -- who made \$3.1 million this year -- out of the mix.

However, nothing's ever certain in Oakland, which is expected to make a healthy lump of offseason moves. Whether Jackson is included in such transactions likely won't be known until the days leading up to the Dec. 2 non-tender deadline, but the outfielder is content on maintaining his routine the whole way.

"This has been a big year," Jackson said. "Obviously, I really don't know the situation I'm going to be in, and I just need to go out and have a healthy year. I'm convinced that if my health is there, I'll definitely be a player that I think I am and know I am."

Monday's Arizona Fall League roundup

Brewers prospect Gindl goes deep to lead Rafters to win

By / MLB.com

Rafters 6, Scorpions 4

Caleb Gindl, a fifth-round pick by the Brewers in 2007, slugged a two-run homer as Surprise held on to defeat Scottsdale. Fellow Milwaukee prospect Eric Farris raised his batting average to .500 with three hits. Orioles farmhand Ryan Adams drove in his eighth run of the Arizona Fall League for the Scorpions, tying Mesa's Brandon Wood. Rafters' starter Mike Montgomery (Royals) fanned three over 3 2/3 innings to earn the win.

Saguaros 6, Desert Dogs 3

White Sox prospect Eduardo Escobar was 3-for-4 with a homer and two runs scored to lead the Saguaros to their first win of the season. Escobar's three-run homer came with Peoria trailing in the seventh inning, 2-1. Ben Revere (Twins) increased his league-leading hit total to 12 with a pair of singles. According to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Phoenix's Freddie Freeman (Braves) left the game after spraining his left thumb sliding into third base.

Javelinas 4, Solar Sox 2 (10 innings)

Scott Barnes (Indians) fanned five and allowed a hit over four shutout innings and Red Sox prospect Jose Iglesias drove in the go-ahead run to lead the way for Peoria. Ben Tenbrink (Mariners) was 3-for-4 with a double, while Ryan Lavarney (Red Sox) scored on Iglesias' hit and drove in a run for the Javelinas. Mariners prospect Tom Wilhelmsen was credited with the win in relief, striking out four over two perfect innings.