

## A's News Clips, Thursday, November 4, 2010

### Oakland A's buy out contract of Eric Chavez, pick up options of Coco Crisp, Mark Ellis

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 11/4/2010

The A's cut ties with third baseman Eric Chavez on Wednesday, declining his \$12.5 million option for 2011 and paying him a \$3 million buyout.

Although most saw the move coming, it provides a historic conclusion to the six-time Gold Glove's career in an Oakland uniform.

The A's also announced that they exercised their \$6 million option on second baseman Mark Ellis and \$5.75 million option on center fielder Coco Crisp, ensuring both will return next season.

Chavez -- whose six-year, \$66 million contract expired at season's end -- now becomes a free agent. And though he's not sure what interest he'll generate, he said he's not ready to retire despite multiple injuries that have ravaged his career since 2006.

One possible scenario was for the A's to extend Chavez, 32, a non-roster invitation to spring training if he appeared healthy. But Chavez said he needs a fresh start and believes the A's are ready to move on as well.

"I'm going to see what's out there," Chavez said from his home in Arizona. "I've done everything, seen every doctor. The only thing I haven't done is change the scenery. And I don't even know what that (entails). But I'm going to hang my hat on that and see if that makes any difference."

A first-round pick in 1996, Chavez became a cornerstone as the A's made five postseason appearances over a seven-year span beginning in 2000.

His 230 homers rank sixth in franchise history. He ranks second in Oakland history in doubles (282) and fourth in RBIs (787) and runs (730). Chavez's six consecutive Gold Gloves at third base from 2001-06 are surpassed only by Baltimore's Brooks Robinson, who won 16 straight from 1960-75.

The six-year deal Chavez signed in March 2004 was the richest in franchise history, a fact magnified in following years as back, shoulder, forearm and neck injuries kept him sidelined.

Chavez played in just 154 of the A's 647 games from 2007-10, or 24 percent.

"It's hard because I went from someone playing 155 games a year to playing 25," he said. "The last few years, it was real pivotal for them to have someone in the middle of the lineup, and I was supposed to be that guy."

Chavez said he deeply appreciated the way the A's handled the situation in recent years, given his unavailability.

"We're grateful for everything that Eric gave the organization," assistant general manager David Forst said. "Literally, he gave as much as his body could handle. I'm hopeful he can have another opportunity to play if that's what he wants to do."

Forst said it was an easy decision to pick up the options on Ellis and Crisp.

Ellis, 33, is still considered one of the game's top defensive second basemen.

He hit a team-high .291 in 2010 but had just five homers after five straight seasons in double digits. Injuries also have limited him to 124 games or fewer in each of the past three seasons.

Crisp, 31, holds the bigger key to whether the A's improve on this season's 81-81 mark.

When healthy, he provides the A's a dynamic catalyst in the leadoff spot as well as an excellent center fielder. But injuries continued to dog him this season, as he spent two lengthy stints on the DL with a fractured pinkie and strained rib-cage muscle.

The A's saw enough to convince them Crisp is an essential piece. He hit .279 with eight homers, 38 RBIs and a career-high 32 stolen bases in just 75 games.

## **Chin Music: A's let Eric Chavez go, pick up options on Mark Ellis and Coco Crisp; Angels doubleheader on tap next season**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 11/3/2010 11:31AM

The A's announced they've exercised their club options on second baseman Mark Ellis (\$6 million) and center fielder Coco Crisp (\$5.75 million), ensuring both players are back in the fold for 2011. But the A's officially cut ties with third baseman Eric Chavez, declining his \$12.5 million option and instead paying him a \$3 million buyout.

None of these moves ranks as a big surprise, though this closes the book on Chavez's Oakland career. It's possible he could come to spring training as a non-roster invitee if he's healthy, but he hasn't played a full season since 2006. Club officials had strongly hinted that Ellis would be brought back, and his scorching September at the plate really boosted his cause. Is it a high price tag for him? I think so, considering he's had his own injury struggles and his power has declined considerably.

This move was based on defense, which the A's have made a priority since heading into the 2010 season. And Ellis is still an excellent defender. But this move also speaks to the fact that the young second basemen in the farm system haven't come along as quickly as hoped. Jemile Weeks continues to battle injury problems and Adrian Cardenas hasn't developed as quickly as expected. Adam Rosales? I think he's more valuable to the A's in the super-utility role he played this season. Eric Sogard looked pretty good in his September call-up, but the team still hasn't seen enough of him to hand him the job.

The decision to bring Crisp back could hardly be considered a slam-dunk given his considerable injury struggles, but I like the move. Not only does he provide excellent defense in center, he was an impact leadoff man. In just 75 games, he hit .279 with eight homers, 38 RBIs and a career-high 32 stolen bases. Now, the key is to make sure he plays MORE THAN 75 games in 2011. And Crisp had two lengthy DL stints this season with a fractured pinkie (twice) and a strained rib cage. But this team is a different lineup with Crisp in it, and it's worth the gamble to bring him back. Now we'll see if the A's search for a power-hitting outfielder to put on either side of him.

—One last note: The A's have scheduled a traditional doubleheader next season for July 16 against the Angels. They've shifted a July 14 (Thursday) game in order to do so. It's the first time the A's have staged a planned doubleheader since 1995. The first game will start at 1:07 p.m. with the second game to follow after a short break.

Let's hear some thoughts on today's news

## **Experts: Giants' World Series success could boost chances for A's move to San Jose**

By Tracy Seipel, San Jose Mercury News 11/3/2010

Oakland A's co-owner Lew Wolff has been engaged in an epic battle with the San Francisco Giants, who are fighting to block his team's move to the South Bay.

But this week, as the eyes of the Bay Area were upon Texas, Wolff had nothing but kind words for his local rivals.

"I don't want to take anything away from this World Series. It's too much fun for everybody," he said Monday a few hours before the Giants took the field against the Texas Rangers for the title-clinching game.

Yet it's hard to argue that the Giants' stock hasn't been this high for the better part of a decade. And the team's soaring popularity, especially over the past few weeks, has only cemented their image as the Bay Area's dominant Major League Baseball team.

Whether their invigorated stature hurts or helps Wolff -- who is hoping to persuade three-quarters of his fellow team owners to terminate the Giants territorial rights to the South Bay -- depends on who you ask.

Representatives from the Giants, Major League Baseball and a special committee appointed by baseball Commissioner Bud Selig in March to study the A's options all declined to comment on the issue.

If Selig recommends a territorial change, it would go to a vote by the league's 30 team owners.

Likely to be included in the committee's report is an analysis of what kind of fan base shift might occur should the A's move to San Jose.

The Giants have insisted South Bay fans and corporate sponsors are crucial to their bottom line. Many San Jose boosters say those fears would be offset by the number of East Bay fans who would likely drive a shorter distance across the Bay Bridge to attend Giants games instead of hiking south.

At Sunday's game, Selig told a Bay Area News Group columnist that a decision on the A's would be coming "hopefully in the near future."

At least one expert Monday said the claim that an A's move to San Jose would hurt the Giants' bottom line might be difficult to prove after the San Francisco team's handsome postseason profits -- as well as the prospect of an even larger boost from ticket sales and sponsorships next year.

"To the extent that the commissioner's office would be concerned about the Giants' financial well-being if the A's were allowed to move to San Jose," said Andrew Zimbalist, a Smith College economist and baseball expert, "that concern would be allayed given the success the Giants have had."

Zimbalist estimates the Giants will net from \$13 million to \$16 million from their share of ticket sales and concessions for the postseason and World Series.

"The owners want (a team) to be as economically successful as it can be," said Zimbalist of the A's proposed move.

"And I think fundamentally that is what Selig is looking at -- if he thinks it's a plus economically."

Roger Noll, a Stanford University economist who specializes in sports economics, agreed that the Giants' appearance in the Series "is more likely to help the other team (A's) than hurt them."

He said the San Francisco team's thrilling postseason run will elevate local interest in baseball overall.

Paul Staudohar, professor emeritus of business administration at Cal State East Bay, said the Giants' success will raise the stakes for the A's to provide a product that can compete for fans and sponsors.

"It will put a certain amount of pressure on the A's to try to rise to the occasion," Staudohar said. "It may provide some incentive for the A's to make a move and try to get into a new ballpark in San Jose."

Santa Clara County Assessor Larry Stone, who like many South Bay fans is delighted with the Giants' performance, sees only a positive effect from the Giants' success.

"Nothing but good can come from this," Stone said. "The enthusiasm of the South Bay fans should demonstrate to Selig, to San Jose and to Silicon Valley the value of having a professional baseball team" in San Jose.

## **A's bring back Ellis and Crisp, bid Chavez adieu**

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Thursday, November 4, 2010

What was expected Wednesday: The A's picked up the 2011 options on second baseman Mark Ellis and center fielder Coco Crisp, and they declined the \$12.5 million option on third baseman Eric Chavez.

Unexpected: Chavez, who has played for Oakland his entire 12-year career, said that if he is able to play next season, he plans to go elsewhere. Not because he wants to, but because he believes it's the last thing he can try after three years of injuries.

It's not a slam on the A's or their training or medical staffs, said Chavez. It's just a personal feeling that moving on might help after three difficult and frustrating years of injuries.

"If things had been different, I would have wanted to stay in Oakland my whole career," the six-time Gold Glove third baseman said. "I've had therapy, I've had treatment, I've had surgeries. The only thing left is to change scenery. ... To go back to Oakland, even with the direction they're going, I'm not even sure there would be a spot open."

Chavez said the neck spasms that ended his 2010 season subsided completely several weeks ago. His right shoulder remains a concern, however. He has had five surgeries in the past three years.

"Eric has been an important part of our organization for a long time, and he literally has given us everything his body could handle," A's assistant general manager David Forst said.

Ellis said he hopes people appreciate what a great player Chavez was and added, "He'll be missed."

Chavez said he'd love to be able to stay in California to play but he'll see what his options are as the season approaches. Broadcasting is also a possibility, and it should be noted that Carney Lansford recently left CSN California, where he was a pregame and postgame studio analyst.

According to Ellis and Forst, there was discussion about a possible future contract extension for Ellis, who will earn \$6 million in 2011.

Crisp, who will make \$5.75 million, said he's excited about the A's prospects for next season, especially considering that the team has great young starting pitching, which is what the Giants used to win the World Series.

"If we get guys back healthy and if we stay healthy, hopefully we'll do what the Giants did this year and surprise everyone," Crisp said.

**Briefly:** The A's moved their scheduled July 14 game against the Angels to July 16, as part of a doubleheader, the first at the Coliseum in 16 years.

## **Drumbeat: Chavez's playing days with A's over, Crisp and Ellis back**

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser 11/3/2010 2:35PM

As had been expected since the final month of the season, the A's exercised the team options on center fielder Coco Crisp and second baseman Mark Ellis, and they declined the \$12.5 million option on Eric Chavez, paying him a \$3 million buyout, instead.

Chavez tells me that even if all his physical issues are resolved before next season - and everything is feeling good right now, though his right shoulder is still an unknown quantity - he does not plan to return to Oakland to play.

Chavez said that he believes what will be best for him, if he continues to play, is a change of scenery. It's nothing against the A's or their training or medical staffs, he said, but it's a personal feeling that a new spot would be a good thing for him. The past three years of injuries have been so frustrating, he just can't see potentially facing that again in Oakland, his home the past 12 seasons. Were it not for the injuries, Chavez said, he would have wanted to stay with the A's his entire career.

"I've had therapy, I've had treatment, I've had surgeries, the only thing left to change is the scenery," he said. "And to go back to Oakland, even with the direction they're going....I'm not even sure that there would be a spot open."

Chavez said the neck spasms that ended his 2010 season subsided entirely several weeks ago, and in a perfect world, he'd stay within this state to continue his career, but of course he has no idea what will happen. He'll consider any and all his options as the offseason continues.

"Obviously, I'm a California guy, so I'd like to stay in California," said Chavez, who is from San Diego and who maintains a home there. "But I'll have to see if I even have any opportunities there or anywhere first. I'll feel things out, talk to some teams before the start of spring training."

If that doesn't work out, Chavez, who has had five surgeries in the past three years, said that A's general manager Billy Beane told him there is always a place for him in the organization. Chavez's recent work on the MLB Network made him even more enthusiastic about the possibility of post-baseball broadcasting. Chavez would prefer to do work for one team or area, though, and it's logical to assume that with Carney Lansford leaving the A's pre- and post-game shows on CSN California, that Chavez would be a potential target if he isn't with a big-league club.

Ellis, who has played with Chavez his entire career, said he hopes fans appreciate what a great player the six-time Gold Glove third baseman was before his injuries.

"I think everyone expected this a little bit," Ellis said of Chavez's option not being picked up. "I'm not saying he's done as a player, he can be a good player again, but he was so good for this team when he was healthy, I hope people realize that. I think he was under-appreciated a little. And he'll be missed."

Chavez said even at the start of last year, he assumed it would take a monster season for the A's even to consider picking up the option, so he wasn't surprised at all it wasn't picked up.

He's long been a favorite of Beane, and on Wednesday, assistant general manager David Forst said, "Eric's been an important part of this organization for a long time. He literally gave us everything his body could handle. Hopefully he has the opportunity to play again because it sounds like that's what he wants to do."

Forst said that the value Ellis and Crisp brought to the team "was easy to see," and Ellis "is such an ingrained part of the organization, it's hard to imagine him not being here."

Forst and Ellis both said that there was discussion about a possible contract extension at some point. The option is for \$6 million.

Crisp's option was for \$5.75 million, and he told me today, "Everything worked out as I wanted it to."

Crisp is fired up about the A's chances for next season, knowing that the club has exactly what just earned the Giants a title: Superb young starting pitching.

"If we get guys back healthy and if we stay healthy, hopefully we'll do what the Giants did this year and surprise everyone," Crisp said.

The A's could still use one thing, however.

"We have to try to find some power-hitting," Crisp said, mentioning Jack Cust, Chris Carter and Michael Taylor as some internal possibilities. "It's always nice to have a 30-homer run presence in there, and that's something we're lacking. To be a more well-rounded ballclub, we need to have some thump.

"Regardless if we do have a power hitter, I do believe we'll have a phenomenal team."

## **A's pick up options on Crisp, Ellis, not Chavez**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- The A's on Wednesday exercised the 2011 club options for a pair of prominent players, retaining veterans Mark Ellis and Coco Crisp for the coming season.

"Obviously, if you watched them play last year," assistant general manager David Forst said, "what their value was to this team was big."

Ellis' option was for \$6 million, while Crisp's was worth \$5.75 million. Both decisions were expected, as was the choice to decline Eric Chavez's \$12.5 million option. The A's will instead pay Chavez a \$3 million buyout.

Forst mentioned that the organization's continued focus on continuity, as evidenced by several moves this season, including the choice to keep manager Bob Geren in the fold for another year, played an integral part in keeping Ellis and Crisp around.

Ellis, 33, will embark on his ninth season with the A's and represents the club's longest-tenured player now that Chavez has departed. The organization has watched Ellis compile a career .990 fielding percentage, which ranks second-best in Major League history among second basemen with at least 750 games played.

He has appeared in an Oakland-record 962 games at the position, and it is there where Ellis has truly made his mark. He committed just three errors in 116 games this year and has always been deemed by many around the league as a Gold Glove-caliber player.

Furthermore, Ellis led the A's in batting for the second time in the past six seasons this year, compiling a .291 average through 124 games. This included a Major League-leading .413 mark with 14 multi-hit contests in September. His power has declined considerably, as noted by a decrease in home runs in each of the past three years.

However, the A's see plenty of value in his rather steep price tag and have even considered exploring a contract extension at a later time.

"On the field, he's proven he's one of the best second basemen in the game, and he showed during the last six weeks of the season what he's still capable of doing offensively," Forst said. "Those are always the first considerations in a decision like this, and Mark's certainly proved that he's worth it.

"You couldn't find a better guy to set an example for our younger players."

Ellis holds a strong presence on the club, as does Crisp. The 30-year-old outfielder, initially signed by the A's as a free agent last year, was a key facet of Oakland's lineup when healthy this season. His year was interrupted by injury three times, two of which were simply of the unlucky sort -- a fractured left pinkie finger in April and September sustained when sliding into a base.

When not sidelined, though, Crisp posted some of the best numbers on the team, hitting .279 with eight home runs, 38 RBIs and a career-high 32 stolen bases in 75 games. He gives the A's a strong leadoff threat, as well as an above-average defensive glove in the outfield.

"With Coco, the more we can keep him on the field, the benefits to the team are huge," Forst said. "When he's healthy, he adds an element that we otherwise don't have, so we're excited to have that back in 2011 and in more games than we had him for this year."

The news of Chavez, though expected, officially represents the end of a 13-year career with the A's -- marking his entire professional career, a total surpassed only by Rickey Henderson's 14 years. The 32-year-old third baseman had each of his past four seasons end early with injuries, the most recent limiting him to just 33 games due to neck spasms.

Chavez ranks among the top-10 in nearly every category on the Oakland career lists and compiled six consecutive American League Gold Glove Awards at third base from 2001-06.

"We're certainly grateful for everything Eric gave the organization," Forst said. "He literally gave as much as his body possibly could."

## **Major League: A's pick up options on Crisp, Ellis**

Jane Lee, mlb.com, 11/3/2010 8:53AM

I just confirmed what Coco Crisp already announced on Twitter in the early hours of the morning: the A's are picking up his \$5.75 million option for next season. They've also retained franchise player Mark Ellis, picking up his \$6 million option.

Both decisions were very much expected. Crisp's lineup presence -- when healthy -- was a strong facet of Oakland's game this season. His year was interrupted by injury three times, two of which were simply of the unlucky sort -- fractured left pinkie finger in April and September sustained when sliding into a base. But when healthy, Crisp undoubtedly posted some of the best numbers on the team, hitting .279 with eight home runs, 38 RBIs and a career-high 32 stolen bases in 75

games. By keeping Crisp in the fold for 2011, the A's are getting a huge leadoff threat and a strong defensive body in the outfield.

Ellis, meanwhile, is a staple of this team. Thanks in part to a ridiculously good September, he finished the 2010 season with a team-best .291 average. His average has increased in each of his last two seasons, though his home run totals have decreased three straight years. Still, what Ellis gives to the club defensively is unmatched. He committed just three errors in 116 games at second base this year, ranking second in the AL only to Robinson Cano. Furthermore, his leadership abilities on this club go beyond any stat.

More on these announcements to come.

## **A's to be aggressive, creative in free agency**

### **Club looking to fill primary needs for power bat, outfielder**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- The A's are primed for shopping this winter, but their wish list -- think power -- and corresponding budget -- flexible but still limited -- may ultimately result in a lot of window shopping.

Only time will tell how it all plays out and whether the A's bankroll can keep up with other buyers. But that time starts now, as the conclusion of the postseason signaled the beginning of the Hot Stove season.

Two members of the 2010 A's are eligible to hit the open market this offseason and both -- Ben Sheets and Justin Duchscherer -- are slated to do just that following injury-plagued seasons. The former isn't slated to return to a mound until 2012, while the latter is hoping to latch on with another team.

Thus, retaining their free agents won't be of concern for the A's, who instead will be seeking out others -- and sooner than in years past thanks to a shortened exclusive-rights window. All players not signed by their 2010 team within five days of the final game of the World Series now automatically become free agents. The previously governed 15-day period to "file" for free agency is no longer intact.

The A's need for a power bat or two is well documented by now, with the team once again ranking at or near the bottom of several offensive categories this season, including home runs. Pitching, meanwhile, is essentially of no worry for a club that boasts a rotation of Trevor Cahill, Brett Anderson, Gio Gonzalez and Dallas Braden. Even the fifth-starter spot, up for grabs, offers plenty of viable candidates.

Therefore, general manager Billy Beane's focus this winter will revolve around the lineup, one in dire need of a productive designated hitter and possibly another power threat -- likely in the form of an outfielder -- to boot. The general consensus within Oakland and beyond is that, with an upgraded offense to match the talented pitching staff, the A's will be a strong contender in 2011.

Beane has said that his staff will explore both the free-agent and trade markets in order to accomplish this, but the second option appears more realistic for an A's team that will once again play with a payroll that sits near the bottom of the Majors.

The club certainly has a large wad of green coming off the books, most notably Sheets' \$10 million and Eric Chavez's \$12 million option that will likely be declined. Still, chasing big-name free agents such as Jayson Werth, Adam Dunn and Hideki Matsui won't be easy. Beane has had problems in the past enticing these types of players to come play in Oakland. Even more, the Werths and Dunns of the baseball world are expected to engage in lengthy discussions with other -- and wealthier -- teams.

So, while the free-agent market certainly offers the A's much of what's keeping them from becoming a true threat in the American League, the team's brass is expected to stay the cautious route, mindful of both a long-term budget and long-term success. Bottom line: Expect Beane to be creatively aggressive.

#### **CONTRACT ISSUES**

**Free agents:** Justin Duchscherer, RHP; Ben Sheets, RHP.

**Eligible for arbitration:** Craig Breslow, LHP; Dallas Braden, LHP; Ryan Sweeney, OF; Kevin Kouzmanoff, 3B; Rajai Davis, OF; Boof Bonser, RHP; Joey Devine, RHP; Conor Jackson, OF; Jack Cust, OF; Gabe Gross, OF; Travis Buck, OF.

**Super Two possibility:** Brad Ziegler, RHP.

**Player options:** None.

**Club options:** Mark Ellis, 2B, \$6 million; Eric Chavez, DH, \$12.5 million; Coco Crisp, OF, \$5.75 million.

**Non-tender possibilities:** Boof Bonser, RHP; Conor Jackson, OF; Jack Cust, OF; Gabe Gross, OF; Travis Buck, OF.

## AREAS OF NEED

**Designated hitter:** The A's are looking for more production out of this spot, where Cust has primarily been housed the past two seasons -- the most recent bringing just 13 homers. His decline in power could very well dictate a second straight non-tender situation, thus leaving the A's on the hunt for someone that strikes out less and drives in more. If the likes of Dunn and Matsui prove too expensive, the A's could potentially try out Chris Carter's DH abilities.

**Power outfielder:** Beane and Co. are on a mission to prioritize power this offseason while at the same time holding on to solid defense. With that notion in mind, Oakland's infield is essentially set for next year. The outfield, though, is not. The club has several candidates to fill these slots but none -- specifically in right field -- that offers the power needed to sustain a healthy lineup.

## 2011 PAYROLL

An exact figure is far from set, but the A's figure to carry between \$55-59 million in payroll next season, representing a slight increase from the start of the 2010 season. More than \$20 million is expected off the books, leaving the club decent wiggle room when shopping for that power.

## A's trim roster, part ways with Bonser, James

### Carson outrighted to Triple-A, but is invited to Spring Training

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- The A's cropped their 40-man roster yet again Tuesday, this time eliminating relief pitchers Boof Bonser and Justin James, along with outfielder Matt Carson.

Bonser and Carson were outrighted to Triple-A Sacramento -- the former electing free agency and the latter agreeing to terms on a 2011 contract with a non-roster invitation to Spring Training. James, meanwhile, was claimed off waivers by the Milwaukee Brewers.

The A's now have 30 listed on their 40-man roster. That number does not include Ryan Sweeney, Conor Jackson, Adam Rosales, Josh Outman and Joey Devine -- all of whom are currently on the 60-day disabled list but could return next year.

Bonser split his 2010 season with the Red Sox and A's, who signed him to a Minor League contract on July 3 after being designated for assignment by Boston a couple of weeks prior. He was 1-0 with a 5.09 ERA in 13 relief appearances with Oakland but was not expected to return in 2011 with several other bullpen options already intact.

Carson is no stranger to Sacramento, where he was shuffled back and forth between four stints in Oakland this year. He proved his power worth with the River Cats, batting .303 with 13 home runs and 36 RBIs in 64 games, but struggled with consistency in the big leagues, finishing the year with a .177 mark and four home runs in 36 games.

The 29-year-old Carson received most of his playing time in right field and has provided the A's with a strong backup outfield option. However, the club is set on adding power this offseason, an asset which may very well come in the form of an outfielder. The A's also expect right fielder Sweeney, who underwent knee surgery in July, to be healthy by spring. Nevertheless, Carson will likely begin yet another season with Sacramento.

James, a hard-throwing September callup, offered the A's a feel-good story toward the end of the 2010 campaign. His year began with the Kansas City T-Bones in the Independent League and ended in Oakland, where he posted a 4.50 ERA in five relief appearances for the A's. He was immediately added to Milwaukee's 40-man roster.



## **A's exercise options for Ellis, Crisp; decline Chavez's**

The Sports Network 11/3/2010

The Oakland Athletics announced Wednesday they have exercised the club options on the contracts of second baseman Mark Ellis and outfielder Coco Crisp for the 2011 season.

Additionally, the team declined to exercise its option for third baseman Eric Chavez, making him a free agent.

Chavez has spent his entire professional career with Oakland after the A's selected him in the first round of the 1996 draft. He established himself as one of the game's best third basemen early in the decade, averaging 29 home runs and winning the Gold Glove every year from 2001-06.

However, the 32-year-old has played in only 64 games over the last three seasons because of various injuries -- primarily back problems.

In 1,320 games over 13 seasons with Oakland, Chavez hit 230 home runs and 282 doubles, and drove in 787 runs. He batted .267 with a .343 on-base percentage.

Ellis, 33, has spent his entire major league career with the Athletics, and last season led the team with a .291 batting average. He committed only three errors in 116 games at second base. The 2011 season will be his ninth with the club.

Crisp was limited to 75 games last season, his first with Oakland, because of injuries. The 31-year-old hit .279 with eight home runs and 38 RBI, and was successful on 32-of-35 stolen base attempts.

## **Wednesday's AFL roundup**

### **Rzepczynski continues strong fall showing for Javelinas**

By MLB.com

#### **Javelinas 11, Solar Sox 2**

Reigning AFL Pitcher of the Week Marc Rzepczynski (Blue Jays) gave up three hits and struck out three over six scoreless innings for Peoria. Rzepczynski, who pitched in 14 games for Toronto, now has a 0.90 ERA after four fall starts. Mariners prospect Nate Tenbrink drove in three runs and Astros Minor Leaguer Koby Clemens extended his hitting streak to six games with a three-hit performance for the first-place Javelinas.

#### **Saguaros 8, Desert Dogs 0**

Reds prospect Daryl Thompson fanned six over four innings to earn the win for Peoria. Batting leader Andy Parrino (Padres) was 4-for-4 with a pair of doubles to raise his average to .441, while Rays farmhand Leslie Anderson slugged a solo homer. White Sox Minor Leaguer Eduardo Escobar collected his sixth multi-hit game in his last 10 with a 3-for-5 performance for the Saguaros. Yankees prospect Austin Romine had two of last-place Phoenix's four hits.

#### **Scorpions 9, Rafters 3**

Caleb Joseph (Orioles) was 3-for-3 and hit a bases-loaded double in the sixth inning to break a tie game for Scottsdale. No. 1 overall pick Bryce Harper (Nationals) reached base three times and scored twice and Diamondbacks prospect Conor Gillaspie drove in a pair of runs. Rockies farmhand Bruce Billings picked up the win after tossing two shutout innings of relief. Tony Cruz (Cardinals) slugged a two-run homer in a losing effort for Surprise.

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

### **Negron's two-run triple paces Saguaros' 11-run seventh inning**

By MLB.com

#### **Saguaros 13, Solar Sox 8**

Reds prospect Kris Negron tripled in a pair of runs during an 11-run seventh inning as Peoria rallied past Mesa. Negron finished with three hits and two runs and was a homer shy of the cycle. Eduardo Escobar (White Sox) was 4-for-5 with a pair

of doubles and two RBIs, and Padres farmhand Luis Martinez collected four hits and scored two runs. Jordany Valdespin (Mets) extended his hit streak to seven games with a pair of singles for the Solar Sox.

**Rafters 2, Desert Dogs 2 (11 innings)**

Former first-rounder Eric Hurley (Rangers) tossed five shutout innings for the second straight start for Surprise. Hurley struck out three and allowed three hits to lower his ERA to 3.07 in four outings. Cardinals prospect Pete Kozma doubled and scored once for the Rafters, while Ben Guez (Tigers) reached base three times and stole his fourth base of the fall. Yankees prospect Jose Pirela tied the game for Phoenix with a seventh-inning sacrifice fly.

**Javelinas 7, Scorpions 4**

Former Mariners first-rounder Dustin Ackley continued his red-hot play, going 4-for-4 and slugging a two-run homer for the second straight day for Peoria. Jason Kipnis (Indians) went yard and drove in a pair of runs, while Astros prospect Brandon Barnes tripled and scored twice for the Javelinas. Brandon Belt (Giants) homered and scored three times for Scottsdale. David Greenwalt (Astros) got the win after allowing two runs on four hits over 3 1/3 innings.