

A's News Clips, Monday, November 15, 2010

STOCKTON ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

BRADEN LEADS 'PERFECT' BLEND OF INDUCTEES

By Scott Linesburgh, Stockton Record, 11/15/2010

There's something perfect about this year's induction class into the Stockton Athletic Hall of Fame.

Oakland Athletics pitcher Dallas Braden, the Stagg High graduate who threw a perfect game this season, will be one of six individuals who will be inducted Wednesday at the Stockton Memorial Civic Auditorium, along with the Macfarlane family.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m., and the program begins at 7 p.m.

Softball player Candace Harper, Pacific football coach and athletic director Jack "Moose" Myers, track coach Merv Smith, contributor-coach Dean Janssen, contributor Don Schrader and the 2000 San Joaquin Sharks men's fast-pitch softball team are also being honored.

Tom Stubbs, a member of the hall of fame's board of directors and the treasurer, said the organization is pleased with the quality of this year's class.

"I think it's just a fantastic group," Stubbs said. "There's a great mix of outstanding players, coaches and contributors. It's a fine class."

And the members of the class are very happy to be a part of it. Harper, 30, said she was stunned to find out she had been selected for induction.

"I'm so surprised and a little overwhelmed," Harper said. "I never really thought I'd be mentioned as a candidate and it's an honor to go in with so many distinguished people."

Braden threw a no-hitter against the Tampa Bay Rays on May 9, and Stubbs said it was not the only reason he is being honored.

"In Dallas' case, he could have gone in earlier, and his perfect game of course add to it," Stubbs said. "He was a wonderful player at Stagg, and the pros, as well as a credit to the community."

The St. Mary's varsity girls basketball squad, which won the Division III state title for the third year in a row, was named the team of the year.

Stockton Athletic Hall of Fame

Banquet: 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Stockton Civic Auditorium; dinner at 7 p.m.

Price: \$35 per ticket

Let's play two: Oakland Athletics schedule a traditional doubleheader

Scott Boeck, USA Today, 1/15/2010

Let's play two. The Oakland Athletics are turning back the clock with a scheduled traditional doubleheader in 2011.

As part of a promotion, the Athletics shifted a July 14 (Thursday) against the Los Angeles Angels to July 16 (Saturday) in order to do so. The first game will start at 4:07 p.m. ET and followed shortly after with game two.

The true doubleheader is a rarity. It's the first time the A's have staged a planned doubleheader since 1995.

The two-for-one promotion won't help the Athletics in the turn styles. They ranked 29th in the league in 2010 and were last in 2009.

Today, doubleheader's are primarily used to make up games. However, they are day/night doubleheaders, which allows clubs to get two separate admissions.

Hall of Famer Ernie Banks would be proud.

Oakland Athletics claim third baseman Edwin Encarnacion off waivers from Toronto Blue Jays

By Joe Stiglich_Oakland Tribune

The A's continued lighting up the transaction wire Friday, claiming third baseman Edwin Encarnacion off waivers from the Toronto Blue Jays.

Indications are he's a strong candidate to start at third next season, which signals the A's might cut ties with incumbent third baseman Kevin Kouzmanoff.

Encarnacion, 27, hit just .244 last season, but his 21 homers (in just 96 major league games) would have led the A's.

Power is the team's biggest need, and it's believed the A's also have strong interest in free agents Lance Berkman and Hideki Matsui. The team as a policy doesn't comment on specific free agents.

Assistant general manager David Forst was asked if he sees Encarnacion competing for the third base job.

"I think we're (three) months away from spring training," Forst said. "We obviously have him and Kooz on the roster right now. We have to make some decisions."

Those decisions must come soon, with Dec. 2 the deadline for teams to tender contracts to arbitration-eligible players. Encarnacion made \$4.75 million last season; Kouzmanoff \$3.1 million. Both are eligible for arbitration, and considering they each hit right-handed, it's unlikely both would be kept.

Kouzmanoff, 29, hit .247 with a team-high 16 homers and 71 RBIs in 2010.

Encarnacion had two DL stints last season because of shoulder and wrist injuries. He hit a career-high 26 homers in 2008 and is a .258 career hitter.

Kouzmanoff is better defensively, but the A's might sacrifice with the glove to add pop offensively.

Kouzmanoff would become a free agent if he isn't tendered a contract, though the A's could work a trade.

Oakland was linked to Matsui, 36, last winter before he signed with the Angels and hit .274 with 21 homers and 84 RBIs. Berkman, 34, had 14 homers and 58 RBIs with the Astros and Yankees.

In other news, the A's promoted Rick Rodriguez to be their new bullpen coach.

Chin Music: A's claim third baseman Edwin Encarnacion off waivers, what's next for Kouzmanoff?

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 11/12/2010 1:40PM

More news from the A's transaction wire today ... They claimed third baseman Edwin Encarnacion off waivers from Toronto, signaling that Kevin Kouzmanoff's status is in limbo after one year as the starter at third. Encarnacion hit just .244 last

season but popped 21 homers with 51 RBIs in just 96 games. That homer total would have led the A's last season (Kouzmanoff had a team-high 16 homers). Encarnacion spent a short spell in the minors and also had two DL stints for shoulder and wrist injuries, accounting for his lower number of games played.

I asked A's assistant GM David Forst if he considered Encarnacion a candidate to start at third. "I think we're probably (three) months away from spring training. We obviously have him and Kooz on the roster right now. We have to make some decisions," Forst said.

Those decisions figure to come quickly, as Dec. 2 is the deadline for teams to offer contracts to their arbitration-eligible players. Kouzmanoff and Encarnacion, 27, both are up for arbitration. Kouzmanoff made \$3.1 million last season and Encarnacion made \$4.75 million. Both play third base and both hit right-handed, so I don't see the A's keeping both players. Is a trade for Kouzmanoff in the future? We'll find out

A's get third baseman Edwin Encarnacion from Jays

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer, 11/13/2010

The busiest team of the offseason made another move Friday, acquiring **Edwin Encarnacion** on a waiver claim from Toronto. That's three headlines this week for the A's, who also won the bid for Japanese pitcher **Hisashi Iwakuma** and traded for outfielder **David DeJesus**.

Stay tuned for further developments, especially considering the A's now list two starting third basemen.

Incumbent **Kevin Kouzmanoff** made \$3.1 million last season and, like Encarnacion, is arbitration-eligible. Encarnacion made \$4.75 million while showing more pop but less glove than Kouzmanoff.

Dec. 2 is the deadline for teams to tender or non-tender players eligible for arbitration - you're non-tendered, you're a free agent - so the A's have three weeks to pick a guy, though it's possible both could stick if Encarnacion emerges as a legitimate designated hitter option.

Assistant general manager **David Forst** wasn't leaning either way, suggesting there's plenty of time for decisions.

It's a low-risk move by the A's, who don't need to keep Encarnacion. But for a team desiring more pop from the right side, his power is appealing. His 21 home runs last season were more than anyone on the A's hit - even though he played just 96 games.

While Kouzmanoff hit .247 with a .283 on-base percentage in 143 games, Encarnacion hit .244 with a .305 OBP. Kouzmanoff had 16 homers and 71 RBIs to Encarnacion's 21 and 51.

Encarnacion also committed 18 errors, but Forst said, "If you look at his objective numbers, he's getting better every year. He's close to an average defensive third baseman."

Coaching move: Oakland native **Rick Rodriguez**, who's been in the A's organization 26 years, was named bullpen coach.

No Taiwan trip for Giants

The Giants won't open their defense of the world championship in Taiwan, after all.

A proposed two-game series against the Diamondbacks was axed, so the Giants will open at Dodger Stadium on April 1. Though some Giants players were hesitant about the trip, team President Larry Baer said it was a front-office decision.

"It became more difficult to pull off, preparing players to start the regular season March 26 in Taiwan if our last game was Nov. 1," said Baer, adding the team is open to future international travel "to help baseball grow globally."

Drumbeat: Another A's move: Edwin Encarnacion

John Shea reporting on the fast-moving A's . . . 11/12/2010 1:44pm

Two days after acquiring outfielder David DeJesus and four days after it was announced they won the bid for pitcher Hisashi Iwakuma, the A's claimed third baseman Edwin Encarnacion off waivers from Toronto.

Encarnacion, who bats right-handed, is another piece of the puzzle, not necessarily the answer to any one position, including third base or designated hitter. He hit 21 homers last season, more than anyone on the A's -- despite two stints on the DL and a trip to the minors -- but he hit .244 with a .305 on-base percentage and made 18 errors in 95 games at third.

Only Adrian Beltre had more errors among AL third basemen (19), but Beltre played 500 innings more than Encarnacion.

The A's aren't yet giving an exact role to Encarnacion. He made \$4.75 million and is arbitration-eligible. Incumbent third baseman Kevin Kouzmanoff, who has had back issues and didn't exactly out-produce Encarnacion (.247, .283 OBP, 16 homers, 71 RBIs), also is arb-eligible after making \$3.1 million. Kouzmanoff made 12 errors after making just three with San Diego in 2009.

Could Encarnacion become the full-time third baseman? A DH? He could top \$5 million in arbitration, lots of money for a backup.

Encarnacion, 27, debuted with Cincinnati in 2005 and is a .258 lifetime hitter. He posted career highs with a .289 average and 76 RBIs in 2007 and hit a career-high 26 homers in 2008. He was dealt to Toronto in July 2009 in the Scott Rolen trade.

A's claim Encarnacion off waivers from Jays

Third baseman hit 21 homers in 96 games in 2010 season

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

The A's have yet to slow down in what's already been a rather busy week, one that saw transaction No. 3 unfold Friday when the club claimed third baseman Edwin Encarnacion off waivers from Toronto, leaving Kevin Kouzmanoff's job in jeopardy.

Encarnacion batted .244 with 21 home runs and 51 RBIs in 96 games with the Blue Jays last year. His home run total amounted to more than any A's player, despite two stints on the disabled list with a strained right shoulder and sprained left wrist.

A's assistant general manager David Forst said Friday that, according to Encarnacion's agent, the infielder is "in great shape" and completely healthy. The A's front office, Forst mentioned, had eyes on Encarnacion when he was sent down to Triple-A Las Vegas for a couple of weeks in June and figured he might be available at some point. That time came Wednesday, when he was placed on waivers.

"He's coming off his best offensive year in the big leagues," Forst said, "and this gives us a chance to increase our options as far as the 25-man roster is concerned."

Oakland's 2010 home run leader was Kouzmanoff, who tallied 16 but struggled to find overall consistency at the plate in a year that concluded with a career-low .247 average and .679 OPS. His status for the coming season is now in question with the arrival of Encarnacion, a Dominican Republic native who initially came to Toronto as part of the Scott Rolen trade in the middle of the 2009 season.

The 29-year-old Kouzmanoff, despite offensive question marks, is widely regarded as one of the best defensive third basemen, a notion supported by impressive numbers at the hot corner. He tallied 12 errors in 142 games at third base in a 2010 season that resulted in just 99 combined errors by the A's -- fifth fewest in the American League. Encarnacion, meanwhile, committed 18 errors in 95 games.

Both third basemen are arbitration-eligible -- Kouzmanoff made \$3.1 million in 2010, while Encarnacion brought home \$4.75 million -- but neither should demand a hefty raise. The A's could potentially offer arbitration to both players by the Dec. 2 deadline but would likely look to trade one if given the opportunity to acquire a power bat.

"We certainly don't have to decide who our third baseman is for a few months," Forst said. "This creates another option for us, and we'll make those decisions when we need to."

Encarnacion, 27, is a career .258 hitter with 100 homers and 337 RBIs in 652 games throughout six seasons. He garnered a career-high 26 home runs in 2008 and has hit 13 long balls or more in each of the last five seasons.

The move came just two days after the A's plucked outfielder David DeJesus from Kansas City in exchange for Vin Mazzaro and Justin Marks and four days after the club won bidding rights to negotiate with Japanese right-hander Hisashi Iwakuma.

Rodriguez named bullpen coach for A's

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

The A's on Friday named Rick Rodriguez their new bullpen coach, officially completing manager Bob Geren's coaching staff for the 2011 season.

Rodriguez has 26 years of experience in the A's organization, including seven as a player and 19 as a coach in the farm system. He spent 10 of the last 11 seasons -- excluding 2003, when he managed Class A Modesto to a postseason appearance -- as the pitching coach for Triple-A Sacramento, where he became familiar with the likes of hurlers Dallas Braden, Gio Gonzalez and Henry Rodriguez.

Rodriguez, 50, was born in Oakland and raised in the East Bay before eventually being selected by his hometown team in the second round of the 1981 Draft. He spent two of his seven years as a player with the A's -- 1986 and 1987 -- in the big leagues and also pitched for Cleveland and San Francisco.

He is now part of a coaching staff that saw a large overhaul this offseason, joining third-base coach Mike Gallego, hitting coach Gerald Perry, pitching coach (and most recent A's bullpen coach) Ron Romanick, bench coach Joel Skinner and first base coach Tye Waller.

The team still needs a head athletic trainer, and general manager Billy Beane said Thursday that his staff will be conducting interviews with potential candidates next week.