

## **A's News Clips, Wednesday, September 21, 2011**

### **Oakland A's beaten up by Texas Rangers yet again**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

A's starter Rich Harden lasted just three innings and was tagged for six runs (five earned) in a 7-2 loss to the Texas Rangers, who lowered their magic number to four to clinch the American League West.

The loss dropped the A's to 5-12 against Texas this season, and they've lost 11 of the past 12 to the Rangers.

Harden (4-4), who has failed to complete six innings in five of his past seven starts, found trouble immediately. After giving up back-to-back singles to Josh Hamilton and Michael Young with two outs in the first, Harden served up Adrian Beltre's three-run homer.

That put the A's in a hole they weren't going to escape against Rangers lefty Derek Holland (15-5), who held them to two hits over seven innings. The A's offensive highlight was the first career homer for right fielder Michael Taylor, who crushed a 3-2 changeup from Holland over the left field wall in the fifth.

"It was nice to get the first one out of the way," Taylor said.

Right-hander Graham Godfrey relieved Harden and delivered four shutout innings.

One of the most interesting aspects of the "Moneyball" movie is Philip Seymour Hoffman's portrayal of former A's manager Art Howe. Howe came across as very aggressive and confrontational with A's general manager Billy Beane, and while its known the two had tension, many believe the portrayal isn't entirely accurate.

"If Billy and Art weren't getting along, Art never talked to us about it," said Rangers manager Ron Washington, who was on Howe's staff. "We didn't know anything was going on. Of course, Billy never talked to us about it, too."

A's manager Bob Melvin, who attended the "Moneyball" premiere on Monday night along with many of his players, said his highlight was getting to talk to Hoffman, an actor he greatly admires.

"We had a little to talk about," Melvin said. "Actually, he doesn't live too far from me in New York."

The Oakland premiere generated \$370,000 in donations for Children's Hospital of Oakland and Stand Up To Cancer.

Left fielder Josh Willingham won the annual Jim "Catfish" Hunter Award, given to the A's player whose play and clubhouse conduct best exemplify the spirit of the A's late Hall of Fame pitcher.

### **Chin Music: Carter, Taylor both in lineup for A's vs. Rangers**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 9/20/2011 5:29pm

It's a youthful lineup for the A's, with Chris Carter playing first base and Michael Taylor in right field. With Texas throwing lefty Derek Holland, A's manager Bob Melvin took the opportunity to get a couple of right-handed bats in there.

—Melvin said if Ryan Sweeney returns in any capacity, it's likely to be in a pinch-hitting role.

Here's the full lineups for the A's and Rangers, whose magic number to clinch the AL West is five. The earliest that can happen is Thursday, the final game of this series. You can bet the A's don't want to see a second team celebrate on their field within a week, after Detroit clinched here Friday.

A's — Weeks 2B, Crisp CF, Matsui LF, Willingham DH, Sizemore 3B, Carter 1B, Suzuki C, Pennington SS, Taylor RF; Harden RHP.

Rangers — Kinsler 2B, Andrus SS, Hamilton LF, Young 1B, Beltre 3B, Napoli C, Murphy RF, Cruz DH, Chavez CF; Holland LHP.

### **People: Charlie Sheen getting \$25 million 'Two and a Half Men' settlement**

By Randy McMullen, Contra Costa Times

Charlie Sheen and Warner Bros. are close to finalizing a \$25 million settlement over his firing from the CBS sitcom "Two and a Half Men," the Los Angeles Times reported Tuesday.

The agreement would settle one of the most acrimonious producer-vs.-star spats in recent memory. Sheen was canned from the top-rated sitcom after displaying increasingly bizarre behavior -- including surrounding himself with porn stars and engaging in reported drug and alcohol abuse -- and lashing out at series co-creator Chuck Lorre.

Warner Brothers on Tuesday refused to comment on a reported settlement. Sheen's rep referred questions to the actor's lawyer, who was not available.

The near-deal comes at a time when Sheen has toned down the bizarre antics and maintained that he regrets the ordeal. It also comes at a time when "Two and a Half Men" has shown that, at least for the time being, it can succeed without him. Monday's season premiere, featuring Sheen replacement Ashton Kutcher, drew nearly 28 million viewers, a record for the show. It also gave Lorre a shot at payback. The episode was built around a funeral for Sheen's character, and observers said the jokes made about his death and lifestyle were clearly thinly veiled attacks on Sheen himself.

***THAT'S WHY THEY CALL IT 'MONEYBALL,' RIGHT?: Monday's star-studded premiere of the film "Moneyball" at Oakland's Paramount Theatre raised more than \$370,000 in donations for the Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland and Stand Up to Cancer. The donations, made through the Oakland A's Community Fund, will be split evenly between hospital and cancer-fighting charity.***

***"Moneyball" depicts how A's general manager Billy Beane, played by Brad Pitt, used nontraditional methods to keep his cash-poor team in contention. Monday's screening, to the delight of many, featured appearances by Pitt along with co-stars Philip Seymour Hoffman and Jonah Hill.***

SCHON, SALAHİ TELL THEIR SIDE OF THE STORY: Silly us. We had no idea a "fairy tale romance" involved running off with another guy's wife and e-mailing the aggrieved husband a picture of your privates.

But Journey guitarist Neal Schon used those very words to describe his fling with "Real Housewives of D.C." star and White House party crasher Michaela Salahi.

The affair came to light after Salahi's husband, Tareq, reported her missing last week. He has since filed papers to divorce Michaela.

Schon and Michaela recounted their romance in an interview with the Daily Beast website, during which they claim they dated seriously in the 1990s before Michaela chose to marry Tareq over Schon because she felt life would be "less stressful."

This from a woman who gleefully sneaked uninvited into a White House party and starred in a frequently combative reality TV show.

Schon and Michaela had been back in touch via texting just before she and her husband attended a Journey concert and cemented their renewed romance.

"I began to see he really loved me. I had to begin to feel it completely in my soul," Michaela Salahi said. Schon added that Tareq knew the night of the concert that his wife would leave him, well before he publicly raised fears that she'd been kidnapped.

"What happened was ... she takes off her wedding ring ... right in front of Tareq. Takes it off," Schon said. "And then she proceeds to come into my dressing room where I'm sitting down. ... And she looks down at me like she's standing on stilts and says, 'I love you, and that's never gonna change.' And when that happened I said, 'Get over here! This has taken 15 years!' "

It's true: Confirming long-standing rumors, Bill Clinton said Tuesday that producers at "Dancing With the Stars" invited him to be a contestant on the show.

"This is interesting, actually, they contacted me once about this," the former president said on "The Rachael Ray Show." "And I told them I didn't have the time to train for it ... so I had to pass."

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 21, the 264th day of 2011. There are 101 days left in the year.

1897: The New York Sun ran an editorial, written anonymously by Francis P. Church, that responded to a letter from 8-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon asking whether Santa Claus really existed. Church wrote, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus."  
1937: "The Hobbit," by J.R.R. Tolkien, was first published.  
1938: A hurricane struck parts of New York and New England, causing widespread damage and claiming some 700 lives.  
1948: Milton Berle made his debut as permanent host of "The Texaco Star Theater" on NBC-TV.  
1970,: "NFL Monday Night Football" made its debut on ABC-TV as the Cleveland Browns defeated the New York Jets, 31-21.  
1981: The Senate unanimously confirmed the nomination of Sandra Day O'Connor to become the first female justice on the Supreme Court.

## BIRTHDAYS

Actor Larry Hagman (80), poet-songwriter Leonard Cohen (77), author-comedian Fannie Flagg (70), producer Jerry Bruckheimer (68), author Stephen King (64), Basketball Hall of Famer Artis Gilmore (62), actor Bill Murray (61), Hall of Fame jockey Eddie Delahoussaye (60), rock musician Philthy Animal (57), former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (54), movie producer-writer Ethan Coen (54), retired MLB All-Star Cecil Fielder (48), actress Cheryl Hines (46), country singer Faith Hill (44), rock musician Tyler Stewart of Barenaked Ladies (44), talk show host Ricki Lake (43), actor Luke Wilson (40), TV personality Nicole Richie (30), actress Maggie Grace (28).

### Michael Taylor hits 1st major-league homer

John Shea, Chronicle Staff Writer

**Michael Taylor** hit his first career home run in Oakland's 7-2 loss Tuesday to the first-place Rangers, whose magic number dropped to four.

That means the Rangers could clinch the American League West title as early as Thursday night, if they win the next two games and the Angels lose their next two.

Don't expect another celebration (like Detroit's on Friday) in the visiting clubhouse at the Coliseum. The Rangers play a Thursday matinee in Oakland and would be out of town by the time the Angels finish their game that night.

The A's collected three hits off **Derek Holland** and two relievers, and Taylor's and **Coco Crisp's** homers provided their only runs.

"It's obviously a special thing," Taylor said, "but it's kind of disappointing it comes in a loss, though technically it brought us closer."

The A's have lost 11 of 12 to the Rangers, and manager **Bob Melvin** said, "We're all tired of getting beat by Texas."

**And another:** One more award for **Josh Willingham**. The left fielder won the Catfish Hunter Award as the A's most inspirational player.

"He's won basically every humanitarian award he could here this year," Melvin said. "It tells you a little bit about him off the field. Usually you get perspective of a guy on the field. But obviously, there's a lot more with this guy than meets the eye."

Willingham also won the Dave Stewart Community Service Award and is the A's candidate for the Roberto Clemente Award. The latest honor, voted on by players, coaches and staff, will be presented before tonight's game.

**The other superstar:** Though most A's players attended Monday's "Moneyball" premiere, the only one on the red carpet was **Hideki Matsui**.

"Of course. He was the second-most-famous person there," said pitcher **Brandon McCarthy**, implying No. 1 was **Brad Pitt**.

Matsui was asked by Sony Pictures to walk the carpet as a promotion for the movie's Japanese premiere Oct. 30.

## Leading off

**Limited:** It's possible outfielder Ryan Sweeney won't be in the lineup the rest of the season but could be available to pinch hit, manager Bob Melvin said. Sweeney is hobbled by quadriceps tightness.

## Where are A's real-life stars of 'Moneyball'?

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

In 2002, they were part of the memorable A's season chronicled in "Moneyball." Where are they now? Though the answer is obvious in a couple of cases, most of the principals scattered from Oakland years ago. With the movie opening Friday, we caught up with many of the "Moneyball" figures to see what they're doing and what they're saying about the movie:

### **Billy Beane**

**Then:** A's general manager. **Now:** In his 14th season as the A's GM, he is also a minority owner of the team. For the first time since deciding not to go to the Red Sox in 2003, Beane might consider opportunities elsewhere because of organization-wide frustrations over the lack of clarity on the A's stadium question.

Beane has been selective about doing interviews for the "Moneyball" movie.

"I've kind of had to walk a fine line," he said. "If you do every interview, talk about it all the time, it looks like you're digging yourself, and if you don't do any, it looks like you're distancing yourself. But Sony; the director, Bennett Miller; the producers, they couldn't have been nicer or more respectful. I told them from the beginning that I have a day job and I can't have anything distracting me from that, and they were always sensitive to that."

Brad Pitt is portraying Beane. "If someone has to play you for two hours in a movie, he's not a bad one to do it," said Beane, who has spent time with Pitt and said he is struck by his intelligence and kindness. Beane is impressed with how hard Pitt fought to get the movie made, and he's happy to hear that advance reviews are largely positive.

### **Paul DePodesta**

**Then:** A's assistant GM. **Now:** Vice president of scouting and player development for the Mets. Previously, he was the Dodgers' GM.

Jonah Hill plays the A's assistant GM in the movie, but his character is named "Peter Brand." There were reports that DePodesta had denied the rights to his own name, but DePodesta said with a laugh, "I don't have that kind of power - people have overestimated that."

"I did request that they change my name," he said. "I met with everyone, and had a number of conversations with Bennett and at the end of the day, it was clear the character as written didn't resemble me that closely. And they acknowledged that. To create dramatic tension, they had to create that person. It was all very amicable. I had contact with Jonah and everyone understands it's a movie - not a direct representation.

"He's great at what he does. In some respects, it's an honor to have someone of that caliber playing you."

DePodesta has fond memories of his time with Oakland, and, he said "I feel awfully fortunate that I got to be there and live through it as it happened. I have two primary hopes - I mentioned to Jonah one of them, which is that I hope they had as much fun making the moving as we had while it was going on. And I hope everyone is portrayed favorably and no one is too hurt by this."

### **Art Howe**

**Then:** A's manager. **Now:** Pre- and postgame analyst for Fox Sports Houston's broadcasts of Astros games. Previously, he managed the Mets and was the bench coach in Texas. The past two seasons, Howe has spent five weeks in Italy during the summer working with prospects at Major League Baseball's academy in Terrenia, near Pisa.

Howe is portrayed by Academy Award-winner Philip Seymour Hoffman.

"That's a pretty good actor portraying me, but he doesn't look much like me," Howe said. "I hear the guy playing DePodesta looks even less like him, totally different body type. At some point, I'll see it. I'm interested in the portrayal - it's definitely a compliment to have someone like that play you."

### **Scott Hatteberg**

**Then:** A's first baseman. **Now:** Working in Oakland's front office doing everything from on-field instruction to amateur scouting to national cross-checking.

Hatteberg is played by sitcom actor Chris Pratt and Hatteberg says his three daughters are now big fans of Pratt's TV show "Parks and Recreation."

"When I met Chris, he was just so nice," Hatteberg said. "My kids were weirded out about how well he got my mannerisms down - he's batting left-handed, and he's really right-handed. They thought he did such a good job playing me, and he's booting balls left and right. I said, 'Is he really playing me that well? Thanks a lot.' "

There are some in baseball that saw the book as anti-scout, favoring statistical analysis over more traditional evaluation methods, so it might appear odd that Hatteberg, showcased in "Moneyball," is now a scout.

"I love the scouting," he said. "This organization is not anti-scout. The opinions of the old school - tools, blah blah blah, that's all very important. It's a marriage between the two."

### **Grady Fuson**

**Then:** A's scouting director. **Now:** A's special adviser, after stints as a scout for the Rangers and the Padres.

In the film, which Fuson had not seen when The Chronicle spoke to him, Fuson is fired, rather than - as actually happened - leaving for a more prominent job with Texas.

"I walked into the clubhouse the other day and Steve Vucinich said, 'What are you doing here? You got fired!' " Fuson said of the A's equipment manager. "But talking to Billy, he said it's pretty much fictitious. So I'm not too worried.

"A year ago, a guy called me and said he was playing my part, and he told me some of the lines, so I called Billy and said, 'You'd better give me a 10-year contract, because I'm never going to get another job after this.' Then the actor called back and said they'd rearranged the part and it's not as bad."

Fuson is played by Ken Medlock, an actor who has been in several baseball-themed movies.

### **David Justice**

**Then:** A's outfielder. **Now:** He has worked in broadcasting for ESPN and the YES Network.

Justice, who attended the "Moneyball" premieres in Toronto and Oakland, is portrayed by Stephen Bishop, who played at Campolindo High in Moraga and at UC Riverside. The two actually met about 20 years ago: Bishop was a big fan of Justice's, and he approached the player at a game and told him that, so Justice gave him a pair of his batting gloves.

"The next time I ran into him, he'd been drafted by the Braves and during spring training, he reminded me," Justice said. "Then I did remember, and I took him under my wing."

And now Bishop, known as "Baby Justice" to teammates when he played, is the "Moneyball" Justice.

"I thought he did a great job," Justice said. "I knew he'd give it his all."

### **Jeremy Brown**

**Then:** 2002 A's draft pick who figured prominently in the book. **Now:** Brown, who is not a big part of the movie, retired from baseball in 2008 at the age of 28, after a career that included five major-league games. He did not respond to several interview requests from The Chronicle.

### **Chad Bradford**

**Then:** A's submarine-style reliever. **Now:** Retired in Mississippi. Bradford, played by Casey Bond in the movie, pitched for several other teams after 2002, including in the 2008 AL champion Tampa Bay Rays. He retired after elbow surgery and is an assistant coach for his son Keller's high school team.

Bradford is looking forward to seeing "Moneyball," but has some trepidation.

"I just wonder how it will play out on screen," he said. "Are the players going to look like they know what they're doing? Or is our 2002 team going to look like the Bad News Bears? I know that team we had in 2002, we felt if we played our game, we can win. We weren't the Bad News Bears. We maybe didn't have a lot of five-tool players or guys that threw 98 (mph), but we knew we could win."

Any tension between Beane and Howe was minimal, as far as the players were concerned, though it's played up in the movie trailer. "I think in the course of a six-month season, Art and Billy probably butted heads 10 or 15 times, no big deal," Bradford said. "It wasn't every day. And Art was such a nice man, and he and Billy and Paul all just wanted to win."

### **Ron Washington**

**Then:** A's infield coach. **Now:** Rangers' manager. "For the most part, the whole objective of the movie was that Billy was under monetary restraints, and he had to figure out a way to put a competitive team on the field because he was a competitive person. We brought guys up in here that other people thought were through, and we used what abilities they brought to us, and it worked. They all had good years for us, all of them."

"The guy who portrayed me (Brent Jennings) didn't mince his words. When they asked him something, he was honest and forthright, which is the way I am."

### **Nick Swisher**

**Then:** A's prospect. **Now:** Yankees' outfielder.

Swisher was among the A's record seven draft picks before the second round in 2002 - a major part of the book, but not the movie.

"The main focus of the book is our draft class - and we're not even in the movie!" Swisher said with mock outrage. "Brad Pitt playing Billy Beane, though - I'm interested in seeing that, whatever angle they take."

Swisher has some showbiz insights now. He's married to sitcom actress JoAnna Garcia and he appeared in an episode of "How I Met Your Mother."

### **Michael Lewis**

**Then:** "Moneyball" author. **Now:** He has a new book, "Boomerang: Travels in the New Third World," coming out Oct. 3; he is working on a pilot for an HBO show based on his 2008 Vanity Fair article about a Cuban arrested for smuggling players into the United States; and he will follow the 2002 draft class in, yes, a sequel to "Moneyball."

"It was originally sold as two books," Lewis said. "I did a whole lot of work already, I have a lot of old journals shelved. I didn't want to write it before, but now it's kind of clear what I'd like to do."

At one point, Lewis said he wasn't sure how much Swisher might be in the second book, but Swisher is a regular contributor for the Yankees' first-place team and his outsized personality is well suited to New York.

"I told him, 'You're a big part of the book now,' " and Nick said, 'Of course I am!' " Lewis said.

### **Harden, A's unable to slow Rangers' march**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Though out of the races themselves, the A's are intertwined with the American League playoff picture.

Their play over the next week could largely factor into the fate of the Rangers and Angels, a pair of AL West counterparts who essentially have one week to make their final postseason push.

So, it's their job to mainly keep things interesting, and while they failed to do as much on Tuesday, when the Rangers watched their magic number shrink to four after a dominating 7-2 victory, the A's found a way to make news off the field.

It appears Bob Melvin is close to ridding himself of his interim title in favor of a permanent one, as the A's manager is expected to reach a three-year deal -- an announcement likely set for Wednesday, with a news conference scheduled.

Melvin has long been favored to assume the role he's held since June, when Bob Geren was dismissed. And once he does, he'll likely include improvement over a Texas club that has claimed 11 of the past 12 games against Oakland on his to-do list.

"I think we're all tired of getting beat by Texas," he said after Tuesday's loss.

Perhaps no more frustrated by the ongoing woes is righty Rich Harden, who upped his season ERA against his former team to 10.50 on Tuesday.

The A's hurler got two quick outs to start the game but was ultimately allowed to notch just seven more, as he lasted three innings, giving up six runs -- five earned -- over that span before handing the ball over to rookie Graham Godfrey in the fourth.

After setting down Ian Kinsler and Elvis Andrus in the first, Harden surrendered back-to-back base hits to Josh Hamilton and Michael Young, both of whom found their way to home plate just a minute later when Adrian Beltre unloaded on a 1-1 fastball for a three-run homer to center field.

"I made some pitches, they got a couple of hits, and the pitch to Beltre was in, maybe not enough," Harden said. "He was looking for that."

Texas' 3-0 lead, which quickly built Harden's pitch count to 38 after one inning, was expanded to four in the second, when Nelson Cruz hit a leadoff double and, following an Endy Chavez groundout that moved him to third, scored courtesy of a wild pitch from Harden.

The right-hander gave up two more runs in the third and finished the frame with 71 pitches. That was enough for Melvin, who elected for another righty to have a go at Texas' potent lineup.

"Their approach up there, they don't swing at a lot of bad pitches and they work the count a lot, too," Harden said. "They foul pitches off and try to work the count in their favor and look for a pitch to hit. One through nine, they're pretty tough. A similar approach that the Yankees take, too. That's a tough lineup."

Not surprisingly, the maker of said lineup agreed.

"You have to pitch our lineup tough one through nine," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "We made him work and we made him throw pitches. He didn't last very long."

Godfrey, though, fared quite well, compiling four scoreless innings despite putting the Rangers' leadoff man on in three of those frames. He walked just one and struck out three, handing his teammates an opportunity to make a dent in a six-run deficit.

The A's managed to do so only slightly, though, with Michael Taylor's first career home -- a shot to left field off Texas lefty Derek Holland -- with two outs in the fifth representing the lone run off the southpaw.

The ball barely got comfortable in the stands before it was thrown back onto the field and ultimately made its way to Taylor's locker.



"It's obviously sort of a special thing, something you dream about," Taylor said. "I'm kind of disappointed it came in a loss. Technically, it brought us closer, but we were never really threatening and it's nice to do those things in situations like that, but hopefully it's the first of many. It's nice to get the first one out of the way and enjoy it a little bit."

Otherwise, Holland proved nearly flawless, surrendering just one other hit through seven innings to improve to 2-0 with a 1.64 ERA in three starts against the A's this season and 3-1 with a 1.91 ERA in his career.

Texas is 12-5 against the A's this year, a matchup that many assumed early in the season would bring about a fierce battle for first place in the West. Instead, Oakland -- whose final run came courtesy Coco Crisp's ninth-inning homer -- fell to 16 games under .500, while the Rangers moved within one victory of a 90-win season.

Still, the A's can find other ways to mess with their division foes.

"At this point, they're in a playoff race, and you can try and change things," Harden said.

### **Willingham selected for Catfish Hunter Award**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Josh Willingham was named the recipient of the 2011 Jim "Catfish" Hunter Award, which for the past seven years has recognized the A's most inspirational player -- a trait the late Hunter prominently showcased during 15 Major League seasons.

It marks a third honor this year for the A's outfielder, who also garnered the Dave Stewart Community Service Award as well as a nomination for the Roberto Clemente Award. This one, though, proved the most gratifying, as it was voted upon by A's players, coaches and staff members.

"Pretty unbelievable," Willingham said. "Any time you're voted for something or given an award from your peers, I think a lot of people, when their careers are over with, their numbers don't matter as opposed to what others think of you, how you represented yourself. That's why it's so special to me."

The 32-year-old Willingham is enjoying perhaps the most productive season of his eight-year career. He entered Tuesday with a team-leading 27 home runs and 92 RBIs -- both numbers represent career highs, and the latter is the most by an A's player since Frank Thomas' 114 in 2006.

Off the field, he has joined wife, Ginger, in continually working to expand the Josh Willingham Foundation, which this year provided much-needed help to tornado victims in their home state of Alabama.

"I think the fact that he's picked up basically every humanitarian award you can this year tells you a little bit about him off the field," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "Usually you just get a perspective on a guy on the field, and your interviews with him pertain a lot more to baseball, but obviously there's a lot more with this guy that meets the eye than just baseball-wise."

### **Melvin enjoys buzz created by 'Moneyball'**

OAKLAND -- A's manager Bob Melvin was stationed in Arizona as the D-backs' bench coach in 2002 when Oakland strung together 20 consecutive wins.

But on Monday, he essentially received a front-row seat to relive it, taking part in the "Moneyball" national premiere at the historic Paramount Theatre in Oakland, which was followed by a mingling scene with the film's actors at the Fox Theater.

"I thought, really, the whole night was very nice," Melvin said Tuesday afternoon. "It was great for the city of Oakland. There was a big buzz, from the Paramount to the Fox and everywhere in between. On top of it, it was entertaining and a great story. It really ended up being an enjoyable evening."

The A's skipper even engaged in conversation with Philip Seymour Hoffman, "told him that I was currently in the role he portrayed." Hoffman plays the part of then-manager Art Howe in the movie, one which depicts a rather tense relationship between him and general manager Billy Beane.

Melvin insisted he wasn't scared off, quickly answering, "I do, I do," when asked if he still wanted to work for Beane following the screening -- "Though I did notice him throwing that chair out of the manager's office," he said, smiling.

The film has generated a welcomed buzz around the A's, with whom star Brad Pitt said Monday he "feels a bit romantic about."

"I didn't know how big it would be," Melvin said. "I didn't expect anything like that. It really felt like an L.A. or Hollywood event, mixed in with a lot of baseball fans."

As for the movie itself, Melvin exited a fan, as did several of his players, including Jemile Weeks.

"If you're part of the A's organization, it had a little more effect than just a sports movie," Melvin said. "To an extent, it was surreal to see it go down in the fashion it did, and know that a lot of people that experienced that are still in the organization, and you're part of that."

### **Worth noting**

- Brandon Allen received the day off Tuesday, allowing Chris Carter to make his second straight start, this time at first base. Allen, manager Bob Melvin said, is expected back for Wednesday's contest against the Rangers.
- Ryan Sweeney, sidelined by a strained upper left quad, is more likely to return in a pinch-hit role than as a starter this season, Melvin said. Still, there's a possibility the A's could also choose to keep Sweeney off the field, as only eight games remain after Tuesday.

### **Rangers down A's 7-2**

JANEY McCAULEY, ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND — Adrian Beltre hit a three-run homer in the first that held up for 15-game winner Derek Holland, and the AL West-leading Texas Rangers beat the A's, 7-2, on Tuesday night.

Michael Young hit an RBI single in the third that gave him 200 hits for the sixth season and drove in another run in the eighth, Mike Napoli also singled in a run and Texas won for the seventh time in eight games and eighth in 10.

The first-place Rangers maintained their five-game division lead over Los Angeles after the Angels won 10-6 at Toronto. Reigning AL champion Texas is 12-5 in September. The Rangers magic number to win the AL West is down to four.

Rookie Michael Taylor hit his first major league home run in the fifth — his 18th career at-bat — for Oakland's lone run against Holland (15-5), who won his fourth straight decision.

Elvis Andrus singled in the eighth to extend his hitting streak to 13 games for Texas, which moved to 24 games over .500 for its best mark since sitting 31 over in 1999.

Texas is 90-65 for its second-best record in franchise history through 154 games. The '99 team was 91-63 at this stage.

And the Rangers won this one by beating a familiar face.

Rich Harden (4-4) lost consecutive starts for the first time this year, done after a season-low three innings in which he was tagged for six runs — five earned — on seven hits, struck out three and walked one.

Harden, who pitched for Texas last season, is winless in five straight outings since beating the Blue Jays on Aug. 19.

Beltre drove a 1-1 pitch over the center-field wall with two outs in the first as Texas immediately jumped ahead on an uncharacteristically warm night in the Bay Area.

First-pitch temperature was 74 degrees.

The slugger had batted just 2 for 16 against Harden before connecting for his 28th home run of 2011. It was Beltre's 20th career homer against Oakland and seventh in as many games. The last eight have come off seven different pitchers.

A wild pitch in the second allowed Nelson Cruz to score after he doubled leading off the inning.

Texas scored twice more in the third to make it 6-0 and chase Harden, whose start was his shortest since the Rangers knocked him out after only 2 1-3 innings on Aug. 7, 2010.

Holland allowed one run and two hits over seven innings. He struck out seven and walked three while earning his second win in three starts against Oakland this season.

Coco Crisp homered in the ninth for the A's against Michael Kirkman.

Texas came out swinging a night after Rangers manager Ron Washington attended the "Moneyball" premiere and reminisced about his special days as Oakland's third base coach.

Cruz remained in the designated hitter role while he nurses a strained left hamstring.

Washington said Cruz would likely DH again Wednesday night and then the manager would decide whether to use him in the outfield as soon as Thursday's series finale with the A's or wait until back home in Texas.

**Notes:** A's LF Josh Willingham was named the 2011 Jim "Catfish" Hunter Award winner. The award, voted on by players, coaches and staff, honors the Oakland player whose play on the field and conduct in the clubhouse best exemplifies the courageous, competitive and inspirational spirit demonstrated by the late Hall of Fame pitcher. ...

Harden is 5-4 lifetime against Texas. ...

... Texas is 12-5 vs. the A's this year, winning 11 of the last 12 matchups since May 10. The Rangers have only won more than 11 against Oakland in a season twice before — going 13-2 in 1977 and 12-7 in 2008. ... LHP C.J. Wilson, who pitches for Texas on Wednesday night, has won his previous three starts against the A's after dropping the first two this year. Wilson (16-7) leads the Rangers and is tied for fourth in the AL in victories. ... RHP Brandon McCarthy (9-8) goes for the A's and is winless in four starts against Texas this season. ... The "Moneyball" premiere at the Paramount Theatre in downtown Oakland generated more than \$370,000 in charitable donations to benefit the Children's Hospital and Research Center Oakland and Stand Up To Cancer.

### **Your Morning Phil: Moneyball, Bell, Epstein**

Phil Rogers, Chicago Tribune

Talking baseball while hoping the NBA isn't gone too long: 1. "Moneyball" opens in theaters Friday, and I'm guessing you have heard about it. The publicity for this Oakland Athletics' epic has been relentless, especially considering the film celebrates a team that was never more than a regional success.

I've always been in the school of people who didn't understand the popularity of the **Michael Lewis** book, in part because it underplayed the reason that the A's were successful a decade. They won because of their Big Three on the mound -- Tim Hudson, Barry Zito and Mark Mulder, all of whom were assembled by old-school scouting director **Grady Fuson** through traditional means -- much more so than the ancillary pieces like **Scott Hatteberg** and Chad Bradford, who were collected through the resourcefulness of general manager Billy Beane.

The focus on Beane and his progressive front office overlooked what a strong situation he inherited from Sandy Alderson, who had cornerstone guys Jason Giambi and Miguel Tejada in place. Once Beane's front office had run through guys like Giambi, Tejada, Hudson, Zito and Mulder, it proved pretty much impossible to out-think the competition on a low budget.

That's my take, anyway. But I am looking forward to seeing the movie.

Brad Pitt provides the best explanation I've seen for why the limited success of Beane's reliance on statistical analysis and unconventional means shouldn't be a reason not to see the movie. He says "Moneyball" is more like films that were made in the 1970s, including "The French Connection," "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" and "All the President's Men."

"In scripts today, someone has a big epiphany, learns a lesson, then comes out the other side different," Pitt told Sports Illustrated. "In these older films I'm talking about, the beast at the end of the movie was the same beast in the beginning of the movie. What changed was the world around them, by just a couple of degrees. Nothing monumental. I think that's true

about us. We fine-tune ourselves, but *big* change is not real."

Look at "Moneyball" not as a movie celebrating an accomplishment, like most sports movies, but one that's about the struggle. That's something we can all relate to.

It's got a great cast. Michael Lewis tells a great story. Go see it.

**2. Buddy Bell** has a real shot to replace [Ozzie Guillen](#) as the [White Sox's](#) manager. That's a point I should have made Tuesday when I explored some of the South Side options, assuming Guillen is lured away by the [Florida Marlins](#). Bell, a **Jerry Reinsdorf** favorite from a time when he was the Sox's director of minor-league instruction, has spent the last few years as their farm director. He has overseen the education that got [Dayan Vicedo](#) from an overweight third baseman to a big-league outfielder and helped [Brent Morel](#) and **Tyler Flowers** climb through the minors. He has spent three seasons each as a manager with the [Tigers](#), [Rockies](#) and [Royals](#), and only once had a team good enough to produce a winning season. He wants to manage a team that has a shot to win, and his understanding of the ups and downs of experienced by big-league players would make him an interesting candidate for a 2012 team whose fate will largely lie on turnarounds by [Adam Dunn](#), [Alex Rios](#) and [Jake Peavy](#), as well as the potential of Vicedo, Morel and Flowers.

Bell would be a comfortable choice for Reinsdorf, who seems very unlikely to give Guillen the contract extension he continues campaigning for. Reinsdorf's not going to fire Guillen, not knowing he'd be on the line to pay him part of his next year's salary. But he won't stop the Marlins from talking to Guillen, knowing they'll ultimately have to negotiate his release from the last year on the contract. Here's how I'd rank the top candidates to replace Guillen: 1. [Tony La Russa](#) (who most likely stays in St. Louis), 2. [Joe McEwing](#), 3. **Buddy Bell**, 4. **Joey Cora**, 5. **Ryne Sandberg**, 6. [Sandy Alomar Jr.](#), 7. [Dave Martinez](#), 8. **Bobby Valentine**, 9. [Carlton Fisk](#), 10. **Jeff Cox**.

3. [Cubs](#) GM candidate [Theo Epstein](#) is under heat in Boston, and it's understandable. He traded for the train wreck known as [Erik Bedard](#) only after a deal for [Rich Harden](#) fell through because Harden couldn't pass a physical. Bedard's been healthy enough to make only six starts since the July 31 trade deadline. He exacerbated Boston's ongoing pitching crisis by lasting only 2 2-3 innings against Baltimore on Tuesday night. Harden hasn't been much better. He's 2-2 with a 5.08 ERA in eight starts in August and September, averaging 5 2/3 innings.

The best arm available was [Edwin Jackson](#) and the [Cardinals](#) beat the other contenders to him, getting the White Sox discard after a deal sent him to Toronto. Jackson has been a key for the Cardinals' run toward a wild-card spot, although he didn't contribute much to their dramatic 11-6 victory over the [Mets](#) on Tuesday. The Cardinals have eight games left -- against the Mets, Cubs and Astros. They could win them all and knock the Braves out of the playoffs. Stay tuned.

### **Game changes fast for 'Moneyball' techniques**

By Paul White, USA TODAY

When *Moneyball* opens in theaters Friday, the film version of a book that changed baseball will look like ancient history to many insiders. It has been less than a decade since the season portrayed in the adaptation of Michael Lewis' 2003 book, but the analytical side of the game is growing as quickly as a computer can spit out the latest advanced stats.

"Analytics can't keep up with the technology," says John Dewan, owner of Baseball Info Solutions. "It takes awhile to make sense of all of it."

Making sense of numbers and tying them into traditional scouting methods was what spawned *Moneyball*. But now those numbers — and more that even Oakland Athletics general manager Billy Beane hadn't found back then — can be produced, dissected and even superimposed over accompanying video.

"We're not far from scouts sitting there with iPads, entering info on a player in real time," Houston Astros general manager Ed Wade says.

That information soon will include video, the speed, location and movement of a pitch, where and how hard it was hit, and how far and how quickly a fielder moved to catch the ball.

"*Moneyball* is the founding father," says Bill Squadron, who heads Bloomberg Sports' analytical tools that range from specialized products for major league teams and players to games and products for fantasy players.

"At the end of the day, the difference will remain the creativity, skill and acumen in using the data. There is a huge difference among teams in that area. We don't level the playing field."

It hasn't been so many years since scouts lamented the field being changed forever. Longtime executive Roland Hemond said 103 scouts lost jobs after the book came out.

But the game is turning back toward the visual as part of progress that further marries scouting and analysis.

"No question, technologically and sabermetrically, there's been a lot of progress," Wade says. "More data is easily accessible. It's akin to rain delays. It used to be we'd call the weatherman and ask, 'When is it going to rain, and when is it going to stop?' Now, everybody with a laptop and a smartphone is a weatherman."

But not all weathermen — or players, scouts and analysts — are created equal.

"When the book came out, there was a lack of understanding, even among teams themselves," Dewan says. "The real idea was that we need to mix analytics with scouting and use them both as tools. The best teams do have the best analytics — the Red Sox, Yankees, Rays, Indians, Phillies."

And Beane's A's have struggled recently. After making the playoffs in five of seven seasons from 2000 to 2006, Oakland is enduring a fourth sub-.500 season in five years.

"Since Michael's book, (analytics) have accelerated," Beane says. "It was heading that way anyway. Michael's book brought it to more of a public position.

"The fact there's so much information available to people too, technology has allowed it and refined it to some extent, and it will continue to be the case going forward."

What the teams are getting now, from myriad sources, is not only video but also visual representations of data.

"We've always wanted validation with video," Squadron says. "It's really about the numbers and the verification. There were all sorts of things we could do technologically, and a lot of it would be pretty cool. But the question was, if you did it, would it provide significant value?"

The value is expanding beyond analyzing and predicting statistical performance.

"Teams tell us, 'That's great, but what's next?'" Squadron says. "They're giving us the next mountain to climb, and we just got over this mountain. I think we'll see better biometric information, which — when combined with other things — will help assess injury risk and durability."

Rick Peterson, whose résumé as a longtime pitching coach includes the 2002 Oakland team in the movie, has formed 3P Sports, a company that allows anyone to submit a home video of a pitcher — even Little Leaguers — for analysis of potential physical problems with the pitching motion.

Peterson says he also used a combination of video and analytic techniques as Milwaukee Brewers pitching coach last season to move reliever John Axford's positioning on the mound to increase his effectiveness.

"Shame on us if we're not taking advantage of every opportunity to gather information," Wade says. "It always goes back to baseball is cyclical. There's a swing of the pendulum back toward the center. The mistake is sitting in one spot waiting for it to swing back."

### **Paul DePodesta is captured to a T in film 'Moneyball'**

Bill Plaschke, LA Times

Although identified by a different name, the sabermetrics guru who later became Dodgers general manager is the real hero of the movie that depicts Billy Beane's reliance on statistics to build the Oakland Athletics.

He first appears in the movie as he first appeared with the Dodgers, a wallflower pulled reluctantly into the spotlight, a nerd suddenly tapped on the shoulder by the cool kids.

The character that is supposed to be Paul DePodesta is a rumpled and bespectacled figure leaning against a wall whispering trade vetoes to a Cleveland Indians colleague.

character that is supposed to be Billy Beane openly wonders who he is, and why everyone thinks he's so smart, and so begins a journey that Dodgers fans will instantly and painfully recognize.

The movie, starring Brad Pitt and opening Friday, is called "Moneyball." But if you ask me, it could have been called "DePo Man."

While the flick is based on the book that chronicled Beane's use of new statistics to challenge the traditional baseball world in rebuilding the Oakland Athletics, the real hero is the reticent, reluctant guru of these numbers, a Harvard-educated geek who would later spend two years as a failed general manager of the Dodgers.

How reticent is DePodesta? He is the only main character who did not allow his name to be used in the movie, with actor Jonah Hill instead portraying someone named Peter Brand.

"I remember thinking how unforgiving it might be to have someone else portray you to the rest of the world," said DePodesta in a phone interview Tuesday from New York, where he is the vice president of player development and scouting for the New York Mets. "It could be great, but it also could be very unnerving, and once I read the script and realized it was a piece of fiction, then I saw no reason for my name to be attached to it."

How reluctant is DePodesta? I saw the movie before he did. In fact, on Tuesday he still had not seen it, but a screening is being arranged so he doesn't have to sneak in the back of a theater and watch it with everyone else.

"I really do want to see before it opens," he said, laughing. "And who knows, maybe fiction will be better for me than reality."

Parts of the movie indeed seem fictional, with the scouts being painted as evil caricatures while Beane, as played by Pitt, comes across as this overblown swashbuckling hero despite the fact that "Moneyball" never really worked, his teams having yet to even reach the World Series.

But Hill nails DePodesta. Hill nails his shy mannerisms, his uncomfortable silences, his awkwardness in sharing his newfangled theories with old men spitting tobacco into cups, his fear in dealing with players.

At the time of the filming Hill was a little stouter than the rail-thin DePodesta, but everything else fits, everything else I remember exactly, from the odd dress to the innovative mind to the unwavering determination in beliefs that could only be shared in darkened film rooms or back hallways.

"I saw a lot of myself in Paul in a completely different way," said Hill in a phone interview. "I see a quiet rebelliousness in Paul, and I see him finding great difficulty in being defined by strangers."

Contrary to the gossip, DePodesta confirmed he had decided to remove his name from the film long before Hill became attached. DePodesta actually hung out in a group of people, including Hill, for a day before the filming, which was apparently enough for the kid to catch his vibe.

"I talked with [director] Bennett [Miller] about portraying a guy who blends into the wall until suddenly a light shines upon him," Hill said.

That was DePodesta when he took over the Dodgers in February 2004, a 31-year-old prodigy occupying a seat once held by Branch Rickey and Al Campanis. That light made him blink, and he wasn't the only one.

He clearly wasn't ready for the job, which lasted only two years before he was fired for essentially tearing the place apart. But I clearly wasn't ready for him, and never really gave him time to implement the baseball sabermetrics that I have since come to accept and understand.

"The Dodgers have a new face, and it is dabbed in Clearasil," I wrote when he was hired. "The Dodgers have a new voice, and it speaks in megabytes."

Yeah, I never really gave him much of a chance, I saw him as some robot enemy brought here to destroy our blue heaven. Watching him in the movie reminded me that he was, instead, nothing more sinister than a numbers cruncher who just couldn't equate with people.

DePodesta was brilliant, but never condescending or patronizing or even impolite. He always did every interview, returned every phone call, faced every shot from every angle.

He was a stand-up guy. But he brought in a bunch of are-you-sitting-down ideas that didn't work for a team with a big payroll and immediate expectations. Maybe in Oakland he could have survived gutting the roster of a clubhouse leader and bullpen stalwart during a championship race, but it didn't work here, not when he traded Paul LoDuca and Guillermo Mota in the summer of 2004 from a team that was 60-42.

During the rest of DePodesta's tenure here, the Dodgers were swept in a playoff series and were 104-118, and his legacy can best be remembered in a three-word chant.

"Hee-Seop Choi ... Hee-Seop Choi."

When he was fired in October 2005, I wrote, "Some will say DePodesta was never given a fair chance. I say he never should have been hired in the first place."

Turns out, both statements were probably true.

DePodesta has learned enough since then that when I asked him whether he wanted to be a general manager again, there was no awkward silence.

"No, not particularly," he said quickly, strongly. "From my perspective, it's not necessarily a great job."

To completely understand that sentiment, we'll just have to wait for the movie about Ned Colletti.