

A's News Clips, Tuesday, October 18, 2011

Hechavarria's three triples pace Desert Dogs

Shortstop sets probable AFL record to halt Phoenix's losing streak

By John Parker / Special to MLB.com

Blue Jays prospect Adeiny Hechavarria entered Monday's AFL action with just two hits -- both singles -- in 24 at-bats over seven games.

With his Desert Dogs mired in an eight-game losing streak, the Cuban-born shortstop picked a fine time to break out, going 4-for-4 with a league-record three triples and four RBIs as Phoenix topped host Scottsdale, 7-4.

Batting ninth in the Desert Dogs order, the first at-bat for **Toronto's No. 7 prospect** came with the bases loaded and one out in the second. He sent a 1-1 pitch into the gap in right-center field that deflected off the glove of Scorpions center fielder Tyson Gillies (Phillies). By the time right fielder Bryce Harper (Nationals) retrieved the ball, Hechavarria was on third and Phoenix had a 3-0 lead.

Hechavarria singled in the fourth and followed a solo shot by Corban Joseph (Yankees) in the sixth with his second triple of the game.

He smacked his third three-bagger with two outs in the eighth, driving in catcher Roberto Perez (Indians) from first.

Not only had the 22-year-old never collected three triples in a game before, but it is thought to be a first in the 20-year history of the Arizona Fall League.

"I've never had a game like that before," Hechavarria said. "It feels really good to go 4-for-4, especially after getting off to a slow start. I was trying to relax and be more myself at the plate and it worked out well."

Phoenix center fielder Grant Green (A's) went 3-for-5 with a triple of his own and scored twice. The former first-round pick has hits in eight of nine games this fall.

Scottsdale shortstop Jean Segura (Angels), also batting ninth, led the Scorpions attack with a double, a single and three RBIs. He's batting .381 over seven contests.

Phoenix starter T.J. McFarland (Indians) improved to 2-0 after allowing one run on three hits and a pair of walks over three frames. Reds relief prospect Brad Boxberger tossed a perfect ninth for his second save.

Tyler Cloyd (Phillies) fell to 0-2 with the roughest of his three AFL starts. He surrendered five runs on six hits and a walk while fanning six over four innings. The loss was the sixth in a row for the defending-champion Scorpions, who dropped into last place with a 3-8 mark.

The two teams will go at it again Tuesday night, this time in Phoenix.

Drumbeat: Is the MLB postseason song driving you insane, too?

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser 10/17/2011 2:34pm

We all love the baseball playoffs, but there is a trend over the past few years that needs to stop: Fox and TBS/TNT adopting one song for the entire month and playing it incessantly.

This year's method of slow torture: "Written in the Stars," by, of all things, a British rapper named Tinie Tempah. It might be a great song, but I'm sick to death of it, and will actively seek not to listen to it ever again. That might not be the greatest marketing strategy ever for a singer/songwriter: Make your work so ubiquitous that no one wants any part of it.

The networks used to change up the music coming in and out of breaks, they'd play different songs with different promos, highlighting many more artists (better for the music business, too) and preventing their viewers from throwing their remotes through the TV.

A's close to buying San Jose stadium parcels

Silicon Valley / San Jose Business Journal 10/16/2011

San Jose city officials are scheduled on Tuesday to discuss the proposed sale of several parcels of land in preparation for a new **Oakland A's** stadium.

The team has yet to get Major League Baseball approval of its proposal to move from Oakland to downtown San Jose. But city and A's officials say they hope that the team can convince MLB to act soon by acquiring the parcels.

San Jose City Council members, acting as the San Jose Diridon Development Authority, are scheduled to discuss pricing and terms for the six parcels that the city owns near Diridon station. They make up about half of the 14 acres where the A's new home park would be built.

Two other parcels owned by AT&T and a Los Gatos family will have to be acquired by the A's if the stadium is to be built.

Major League Baseball has been studying the proposed A's move since March 2009 with no indication when a special panel will make its recommendation.

The San Francisco Giants hold territorial rights to all of the South Bay, including San Jose, and have been unwilling to yield that to the A's.

Philadelphia First: 100 Years After the A's Ruled

John Finger, Philadelphia Enquirer, 10/16/2011

Before there was Babe Ruth and the Yankees, the 1910 and 1911 Athletics set the standard for which all Philadelphia baseball teams are based. That was the season Connie Mack guided Philadelphia to four trips to the World Series over five years, capturing three championships. In '10, the A's rolled over the Cubs in five games; six games over the Giants in '11; a five-game victory over the Giants in '13 before it came to an end in four games to the Boston Braves in 1914.

One of the first dynasties of baseball history came to a crash landing in 1915 when Mack sold off his great players or they jumped to the upstart Federal League as the A's spent the next seven seasons in last place.

Could you imagine what we would have written and said about Mack in this day and age if he sold Home Run Baker, Eddie Collins and Chief Bender to make a little cash though it meant a decade in the second division? That would be like David Montgomery being told by the Phillies' partners to dump Ryan Howard, Chase Utley, Cliff Lee and Roy Halladay in order to line the team's coffers.

Strangely, Mack chose to sell out when his core group of stars were just coming into their primes and it's not far-fetched to think that the Philadelphia Athletics and the Philadelphia Phillies could have played in the 1915 World Series. The first two games would have been played at the Baker Bowl on Broad and Huntingdon in North Philly, packed up the gear after the games, and walked down Lehigh for five blocks to Shibe Park.

Forget a subway series; Philadelphia could have hosted the Lehigh Avenue Series.

Anyway, with the World Series set to be played in a different city for a second straight year, we'll bring a little slice of the "Deadball Era" for the Digital Age.

Connie Mack

For as synonymous as his name was with baseball during the first half of the last century and for as much as he was as part of Philadelphia like Ben Franklin, W.C. Fields and Grace Kelly, there is a lot we don't know about Connie Mack.

Like Franklin, Mack moved to Philadelphia from Massachusetts and remained for the rest of his life.

But unlike Franklin, it's difficult to find Mack's name on much in the city. Sure, there is no way to compare a Founding Father with the most prolific manager in Major League Baseball history, but in a city where sports is treated with so much importance, Philadelphians don't show much pride that Mack won the World Series five times for his adopted home town.

Of course Mack also lost more games than he won in his 50 years as manager of the Philadelphia A's. He spent the last two decades of his career achieving solid mediocrity in the standings and seemingly popularized the practice of the "fire sale." Oh yes, even a century ago Mack, also the owner of the A's, massaged his player payroll the way clubs do now. Ultimately, the Mack family sold the A's before the 1954 season and just like that, Philadelphia became a one-team town. Two years after the A's moved to Kansas City, Mack died at age 93 in his home on Anderson Street in Mt. Airy.

So to remember Mack in Philadelphia these days we have a ballpark that was torn down in 1976 and a statue set into its first location in 1957 that now rests in front of its third ballpark. However, a quick bit of research revealed no schools named after Mack, though there is a movement to get him depicted on a stamp.

Perhaps the lack of modern day recognition had something to do with Mack's reputation as a manager/owner more concerned with the bottom line on the balance sheet instead of the standings. Still, the 1910 and 1911 teams were known for its "\$100,000 Infield" with Hall of Famers, Frank "Home Run" Baker, Eddie Collins, Jack Barry, and Stuffie McInnis.

Home Run Baker hit two homers in 1910.

But 100 years ago today, Baker hit his second homer of the 1911 World Series as the A's took Game 3 at the Polo Grounds to take a 2-1 series lead. Strangely though, Game 4 wasn't played for another week because of six days of rain in Philadelphia washed out the games. It turned out to be the longest pause in a World Series until 1989 when the A's and Giants took nine days off after the earthquake before Game 3.

Anyway, Mack's 1910 and 1911 teams were known for its hitting. During the Deadball Era, Mack's teams routinely led the American League in slugging, on-base percentage and batting average. The 1911 club was led by college grad, Eddie Collins, who paced the team with a .365 batting average, good for fourth in the league. Baker led the league with 11 homers to go with 115 RBIs and a .334 batting average.

Notably, the 1911 A's did it with pitching. Amazingly, the team won 101 games, it's second straight 100-win season, though they carried just five pitchers to appear in at least 10 games with four of them amassing at least 216 innings. Jack Coombs was the ace with a 28-12 record, 3.53 ERA in 336 innings. That was an off year for Coombs after he went 31-9 with a 1.30 ERA and 13 shutouts in 1910.

Coombs and Eddie Plank were the Halladay and Lee of their day. Plank, a lefty from Gettysburg, went 23-8 with a 2.10 ERA. Though he started 30 games, Plank also appeared in 10 games as a reliever and even led the league in saves with four. That served him well during the World Series in '11 because the lefty turned out to be the only reliever Mack used during the series, pitching the 10th inning of the Game 5 loss in relief of Coombs.

Still, the key to the 1911 series was the 17-game winner named Charles Albert "Chief" Bender, the Chippewa Indian from Minnesota who studied at the Carlisle Indian School along with Jim Thorpe. Bender had three complete games during the series against the Giants, including the Game 6 clincher.

There was no other pitcher Mack wanted on the mound for a big game than Chief Bender.

"If I had all the men I've ever handled and they were in their prime and there was one game I wanted to win above all others," Mack was quoted as saying, "[Bender] would be my man."