

A's News Clips, Monday, December 12, 2011

Oakland A's trade right-hander Trevor Cahill to Arizona Diamondbacks

By Joe Stiglich, Bay Area News Group

The A's kicked off their latest roster makeover Friday by trading pitchers Trevor Cahill and Craig Breslow to the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Oakland received pitchers Jarrod Parker and Ryan Cook and outfielder Collin Cowgill, three prospects who could play significant roles for the A's in 2012.

Cahill's name surfaced Wednesday as a trade possibility. Until then, it was fellow starter Gio Gonzalez and closer Andrew Bailey who were most heavily rumored to be leaving Oakland. Both remain strong candidates to be dealt, with Texas interested in Gonzalez.

"It's never easy to trade a guy who was a focal point of your team for three years," A's assistant general manager David Forst said of Cahill. "But we understand every so often you need to shuffle the deck."

Cahill broke into the A's rotation in 2009, a 21-year-old who appeared part of the foundation upon which the team would build. He went 18-8 with a 2.97 ERA in 2010 and was an All-Star. Last April, he signed a five-year, \$30.5 million contract extension with club options for 2016 and 2017.

That affordable, long-term contract was attractive to the defending National League West-champion Diamondbacks, who will add Cahill to a rotation that includes Daniel Hudson, Josh Collmenter and Ian Kennedy.

"We think we've got four young starters who are as good as anybody in the N.L. West," Arizona G.M. Kevin Towers said.

The A's are looking to stockpile prospects -- cost-controllable and with little big league service time -- who can develop together as the team hopes to build a new ballpark in San Jose.

Cahill took news of the trade hard. He said he was happy with Oakland and looked forward to being reunited with pitching coach Curt Young, who returned to the A's after one season with Boston.

"Maybe another piece or two and we would have had that core thing and been good for a long time," Cahill said. "You kept thinking in the future, and then, all of a sudden, it passed you up, and now you're on a new team."

In Parker, 23, the A's get a right-hander rated as Arizona's No. 4 prospect by Baseball America. He was their top prospect before missing the entire 2010 season because of "Tommy John" elbow surgery.

He went 11-8 with a 3.79 ERA last season for Double-A Mobile. In his only big league start, Parker threw 52/3 shutout innings against the Dodgers in September.

He has a fastball that reaches 95-96 mph, a good changeup and an overhand curve that he has yet to completely regain the feel for after surgery.

"It's not out of the question he could pitch well in spring training and start the year in the rotation," Forst said.

Cowgill, 25, has played in just 36 major league games, but Forst said Cowgill will get every chance to win the center field job. That's no surprise given the lack of depth and experience in the A's outfield.

One scout interviewed for this story gave Cowgill high marks for his grittiness but said he doesn't possess one dominant "tool" that stands out.

Cook, 24, became a full-time reliever last season. A right-hander, Cook has hit 97 mph with his fastball, and the A's believe he might be suitable for late-inning work this season.

Breslow had been a workhorse for the A's bullpen since being claimed off waivers from Minnesota in 2009. By the time Forst called to tell him he'd been traded, the lefty had already heard from another source.

"I can no longer denounce the relevance of Twitter," Breslow tweeted. "It broke the story of my trade ... to me."

Oakland mayor hopes to woo Warriors, A's with 'Coliseum City' complex

By Marcus Thompson II

Oakland Mayor Jean Quan said today she is going to reveal the plans for "Coliseum City" -- a sports and entertainment complex -- and the Warriors are excited about the potential.

"I think they're just open and they're intrigued," Quan said. "They're intrigued by the overall idea of Coliseum City and that's something San Francisco can't offer them."

Quan has a press conference set for noon to unveil the city's plans for the new complex, which would include a new homes for Oakland's teams in the current Coliseum Complex.

She said the Warriors' lease at Oracle Arena is the last of the teams to expire, so there is still "plenty time" to woo Golden State ownership.

Quan said she has met with all the teams, including multiple talks with Warriors co-owner Joe Lacob on multiple occasions. In light of the San Francisco Chronicle report that the Warriors met with San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee to discuss a new arena in the China basin, Quan expressed Oakland's resolve to keep the Warriors in Oakland.

"They're just looking at all the options," Quan said Friday morning. "We know we have to fight for all our teams in this competitive market."

Carl Steward: Darting here and there ... in a baseball world ruled by Angels

By Carl Steward, Bay Area News Group

Darting here and there ...

Bay Area baseball winter meetings wrap-up: Giants get Angel, A's get Angel-ed.

-- Famous fantasy locales: Xanadu, Emerald City, Atlantis, and now Coliseum City. Or as Lew Wolff is undoubtedly already calling it, Neverland.

-- With Arte Moreno's big splurge for Albert Pujols and C.J. Wilson, fans may wonder whether Wolff and John Fisher can compete -- even in a real city like San Jose.

-- Whoa, Oakland is sending a letter to Bud Selig about its latest A's sites. But it's likely going to come back rubber-stamped "Return to Spender."

-- If the A's winter meetings vibe were to be turned into a campaign slogan, it'd go something this: Beware of Beane in '15.

-- This is where we are with the A's: Trevor Cahill for a guy named Cowgill. Adding Parker and Cook doesn't make it smell a whole lot better.

-- The Houston Astros must really be miffed. After being in Pujols' division the first 11 years of his career, they get a one-year reprieve before jumping to Pujols' new home in the A.L. West.

-- If Pujols averages 32 homers over the life of his new contract (he averaged 40 in his first 11 seasons), he'll finish with 765 bombs, three more than B. Lamar Bonds.

-- Major League Baseball will be instituting a dress code for media this year: no ripped jeans, tank tops or bare midriffs. Hey, if we sew up the jeans, we're good.

-- Considering what they charge for beer at AT&T, hard to believe the Giants are tapped out at \$130 million.

-- Of course, \$13.6 mil of that goes to Aaron Rowand, who's no longer a Giant. Just think of the aging shortstops that money could buy.

-- In Angel Pagan, the Giants essentially traded Andres Torres for a better version of Andres Torres. That's their hope, anyway.

-- Bruce Bochy's bold proclamation: Brandon Crawford is our shortstop. Um, we're writing that one down in pencil.

-- With Carlos Beltran now a monetary memory, wonder if Brian Sabean asked the Mets about their promising young Class A pitcher named Zack Wheeler when working on the Pagan deal.

-- How can Bill Mueller and Terry Mulholland be on the Hall of Fame ballot when they're not even on the Giants' Wall of Fame?

-- What the 49ers lavishly celebrated last Sunday wasn't celebrated at all in the Walsh-Montana era. The NFC West title was a one-bite appetizer for Eddie DeBartolo.

-- Is it our imagination, or with the Raiders coming off a dispiriting loss and now headed to Green Bay, has Hue Jackson's bluster lost its luster?

-- Nothing lower than mid-30s are expected at Lambeau Field on Sunday. But that's not the temperature forecast, it's the Packers' anticipated point total.

-- Texas vs. Cal in the Holiday Bowl. Good match. It took awhile, but the Golden Bears can finally avenge getting hosed out of the Rose Bowl by Mack Brown in 2005.

-- The teams listed 6-7-8-9 in the final BCS rankings (Arkansas, Boise State, Kansas State, South Carolina) are not going to BCS bowl games. Teams ranked 10, 13, 15 and 23 (Wisconsin, Michigan, Clemson, West Virginia) are. Makes complete sense to us.

-- It might surprise you to learn that Oklahoma State, Stanford's Fiesta Bowl opponent, has the fifth-most NCAA team sports championships behind UCLA (107), the Cardinal (102), USC (94) and Abilene Christian (55). The Cowboys have 50 NCAA titles, but 34 of those have come in wrestling and 10 others in golf.

-- Yes, I know what really surprises you -- Abilene Christian with 55 NCAA titles. Must have been all those way-back championships shooting whiskey bottles off fence posts.

-- Tight pants, wide collars, big Afros, crazy moves. No, we're not talking about Soul Train but rather Comcast's full-game airings of the 1975 Warriors in the playoffs this past week. Amazing footage, but it hasn't aged well.

-- Golden State apparently wasn't golden enough for Tyson Chandler. That could prove to be the only way the Warriors are going to attract free-agent stars -- grossly overpay.

-- Strange bedfellows dept.: Ex-Warriors Mike Dunleavy and Stephen Jackson, traded for each other once upon a time, will now be teammates with the Milwaukee Bucks. Maybe they should bring back Nellie.

-- David Stern might have done the Lakers a favor. L.A. becomes awfully small in that would-be trade for Chris Paul. A lot of weight suddenly would be put on Andrew Bynum's glassy knees. And Metta World Peace doesn't rebound.

-- Of course, Stern fully realizes the other shoe that likely would drop by next year: Dwight Howard's size 18.

-- Tiger Woods won a tournament last week, but did anybody notice? The World Golf Rankings did, as Tiger jumped from No. 52 to No. 21. Look out in 2012 (the folks at Pebble Beach certainly are, with fingers crossed).

-- Finally, the bad news is Vegas says Baylor's Robert Griffin III is a stone-cold lock to win the Heisman (1/20 on one line). The good news is you don't have to watch the show now.

A's trade Trevor Cahill, Craig Breslow

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

The focus during the winter meetings in Dallas this week was on A's pitcher Gio Gonzalez and Andrew Bailey, but instead a different starter and reliever were dealt away Friday.

Trevor Cahill, an All-Star in 2010, was sent to Arizona along with left-hander Craig Breslow and small cash considerations, a couple of hundred thousand dollars, for one of the Diamondbacks' top young pitching prospects, right-hander Jarrod Parker, plus outfielder Collin Cowgill and reliever Ryan Cook, a pair of rookies.

"I heard a lot of trade rumors," Cahill said by phone Friday, "but I never thought I'd be the guy to get traded."

The A's priority in any deals this winter is to acquire top-10 first-round picks and Parker, 23, was selected with the ninth pick in 2007 and was considered one of Arizona's three best prospects. Oakland is trying to rebuild with an eye toward a possible new stadium in three years, and Parker presumably would be a major part of that rotation.

"I'm glad to get an opportunity with Oakland, but I have to earn my opportunity," Parker said. "I've never been one to take handouts."

Parker missed the 2010 season after Tommy John surgery, but he threw 130-plus innings at Double-A last season and he said his velocity is back up as high as 98 mph. According to Oakland assistant general manager David Forst, Parker has an outstanding changeup, and his signature curveball is showing signs of coming back following the surgery.

Oakland drafted Cowgill, 25, when he was a junior at Kentucky, but he'd broken his hamate bone that year, so he decided to return to school. The A's then tried to acquire the Pacific Coast League Player of the Year in the Brad Ziegler deal in July and failed.

"Here I am now," Cowgill said with a laugh on Friday.

Forst said the A's see Cowgill as a center fielder, though the Diamondbacks had him on the corners in the big leagues. The A's expect to lose their starting outfield to free agency, so Cowgill, a fifth-rounder in 2008, might get an immediate chance to start.

Many scouts believe that Cowgill is an extra outfielder, and at 5-foot-9, 185 pounds, he's not imposing, but the numbers he put up at Triple-A Reno were: .354 with 24 doubles, eight triples, 13 homers, 70 RBIs and 95 runs in 98 games, and 30 steals in 33 attempts.

"I'm not flashy," he said. "I play hard and try to do everything I can do to win."

Cook, 24, might be the sleeper in the deal. He throws 97 mph, and he has a promising slider. This past season was Cook's first as a reliever, and batters hit .167 against him in Double-A and Triple-A combined.

Cook, a former USC player who is a good friend of A's 2009 top pick Grant Green, said the move came "as an absolute shocker," but he added, "I guarantee we three guys coming over ... will hopefully take the team to a new stadium and prosper at it."

Breslow, known as "the smartest man in baseball," was typically philosophical. He'd bounced around before finding a home with the A's in 2009, when he was claimed on waivers from the Twins.

"I've been on the other side of not being desired - being designated, being released - but I've never been traded to a team that wanted my services," he said.

Cahill was blindsided by the news: He was in his car in San Diego when general manager Billy Beane called him, he couldn't figure out how to use his Bluetooth device, and a police officer was right next to him. Then, after finding out he'd been dealt, he was stuck in traffic for an hour.

"But if you look at the positives, I guess I'm going somewhere where they want to win now," Cahill said of the NL West champions.

Cahill is signed for the next four seasons, with two option years after that.

"You never like to trade a guy like Trevor," Forst said. "He's been a big part of what we've done the last few years. But we have to move some pieces around, and we had a chance to get a top-of- the-rotation prospect back."

"This lines up with what Arizona is trying to do and what Oakland is trying to do," one major-league scout said. "Win now - or win three years down the road."

The A's are not done dealing, should they get the offers they'd like for Gonzalez, Bailey or anyone else except second baseman Jemile Weeks.

Cahill stats

Year by year stats for Trevor Cahill, who was traded to the D'backs on Friday:

Year	W-L	ERA	SO-BB
2009	10-13	4.63	9072
2010	18-8	2.97	118-63
2011	12-14	4.16	147-82
Totals	40-35	3.91	355-217

To teams, grass looks greener on other side of bay

Al Saracevic, San Francisco Chronicle Sports Editor

While the 99 percent fight to occupy Oakland and San Francisco, the sports teams can't wait to get the heck out of town.

A day doesn't go by, it seems, that one of the Bay Area's pro teams isn't flirting with somebody else, openly angling for a new stadium or fan base, or both.

In case you haven't been following the soap opera:

-- The A's are making serious googly eyes with San Jose, having signed an option to buy land near HP Pavilion. The Giants stand prepared to put up a fight, claiming they own the territorial rights to San Jose, but the longer the A's languish in Oakland, the less fans will fill up the seats and the less money Oakland contributes to baseball's revenue sharing arrangement. Eventually, the rest of the owners will get sick of Oakland's lousy revenues, turn on the Giants and force the San Jose deal through.

-- The 49ers are still planning to leave their hearts in San Francisco, but take their butts down to Silicon Valley. The team lined up \$850 million in financing this past week from the likes of BofA and Goldman Sachs. And Mayor **Ed Lee** folded his tent faster than the Occupy campers he evicts. After promising to fight for the team during the mayoral campaign, Lee characterized the chances of persuading the 49ers to stay as a "very steep uphill climb."

-- The Warriors are now playing footsie with San Francisco. New owners **Joe Lacob** and **Peter Guber** have met with Lee and Giants President **Larry Baer** and discussed the possibility of building a new arena near AT&T Park. While they also say they're exploring options in Oakland, the interest in San Francisco is very real.

-- And the Raiders ... well, the Raiders don't do flirting. They rarely perform any public displays of affection. Team leaders have been mum on the future since owner Al Davis died. To the regulars over at Ricky's bar in San Leandro, the silence has been deafening.

If all this comes to pass, the sports landscape of the Bay Area will tilt inexorably south, after leaning to the north for more than 50 years. The East Bay will be a barren wasteland of bitterness and regret. And the North Bay sports fan will have larger gas bills than the space shuttle.

Lonely Oakland: The odd man out in most any of these team and town pairings is Oakland. It's as if everyone's playing musical chairs, except Oakland doesn't get a chair.

The city's mayor, **Jean Quan**, made an effort to re-enter the dating game this past week, holding a hastily planned news conference and saying she will work to keep all three teams in town. So far, though, the only cards she has are two parcels of land someone could build on. With no financing, architectural plans or commitments in place, Quan's comments rang hollow.

Maybe Oakland should just let them all leave.

Talk to the Santa Clara folks in a few years, when the true horror of municipal stadium finance becomes reality. They'll be lucky if they can still pay the garbagemen.

Talk to San Francisco in a few years when they realize they traded the 49ers for the Warriors.

Oakland will be proudly hosting truck pulls and motocross events at the Coliseum as the ghosts of **Catfish Hunter** and **George Blanda** look on.

Go ahead and occupy Oakland. Looks like there's going to be plenty of room.

The quotable Jim Harbaugh: If anyone thinks winning is softening up the 49ers' tightly wound head coach, think again.

The best player on the team goes down with an injury last Sunday. One would kind of think that would be a topic of conversation on Monday, right? Not so much.

Did you get results from linebacker **Patrick Willis'** MRI exam?

"Yes."

Will you share with us?

"No, we wouldn't share those."

Would you call it a strain or is it more serious than that?

"Wouldn't share any information about it."

Do you expect him to play?

"Don't know, don't know yet."

A man of few words, but many wins.

Baseball dress code: Major League Baseball issued dress guidelines for journalists covering the sport this week.

Among the rules: No more short skirts. No more flip-flops.

Part of the inspiration for the guidelines came from the NFL, where Mexican TV reporter **Ines Sainz** sparked a national debate last season after Jets players treated her improperly in the locker room. The question was: Did Sainz bring on the attention because of the way she dressed?

The resounding answer, of course, should be no. Regardless of how one dresses, abuse isn't an option.

Maybe baseball and football should issue new guidelines on acceptable behavior from players, rather than trying to regulate what journalists are wearing.

Touching letter: I received a nice letter from a reader in Lafayette this week. **Tom DeMerritt** wrote in to congratulate the 49ers for winning the Western Division title.

"It would have meant more to me if my uncle **Granville DeMerritt** was still around to savor it. He passed away Jan. of this year. He loved the 49ers. So much so, he was an usher, first at Kezar and later at Candlestick for a total of 62 years. My father ushered for 58 years. ... They were both at the team's first game in 1946!

"My uncle thought nothing of commuting from Santa Rosa to see his team ... I wonder how he would have felt if the team were to eventually move to Santa Clara..."

I'm guessing he would have felt tired ... from driving so far.

Drumbeat: A's trade Trevor Cahill, Craig Breslow to Diamondbacks

From Chronicle Staff Writer Susan Slusser 12/9/2011, 5:52pm

The focus during the winter meetings was on Gio Gonzalez and Andrew Bailey, but instead a different starter and reliever were dealt away Friday.

Trevor Cahill, an All-Star in 2010, was sent to Arizona along with left-hander Craig Breslow and cash considerations for one of the Diamondbacks' top young pitchers, Jarrod Parker, plus outfielder Collin Cowgill and reliever Ryan Cook.

"I heard a lot of trade rumors," Cahill told me, "but I never thought I'd be the guy to get traded."

The A's are trying to acquire top-10, first-round picks when they make deals this winter and Parker, 23, was taken in with the ninth pick in 2007 and was considered to be one of Arizona's top three prospects. Oakland is trying to rebuild with an eye toward a possible new stadium in three years, and Parker presumably would be a major part of that rotation.

Oakland drafted Cowgill, 25, when he was a junior at Kentucky, but he chose not to sign. The A's then tried to acquire him at the trade deadline last year and failed, so they have liked him for a long time.

"Here I am now," Cowgill said with a chuckle.

Assistant general manager David Forst said the A's see Cowgill as a center fielder, though the Diamondbacks had him on the corners in the big leagues.

Cowgill told me he hopes to earning a starting spot – the A's are expected to lose all three of their outfielders to free agency this winter, and, he said, "I couldn't be more excited."

Cook, 24, might be a sleeper in this deal. He throws 97, and he's got a promising slider. He could develop into a back-end of the bullpen guy, I'm told by a scout who said Cook has "a big arm."

Cook said the move came "as an absolute shocker," but he added, "I'm excited to embark on this journey with Oakland. ... I guarantee we three guys coming over will help the team out and hopefully take the team to a new stadium and prosper at it."

The A's are losing "the smartest man in baseball" in Breslow, who was typically philosophical about everything. He'd bounced around before finding a home with the A's in 2009, when he was claimed on waivers from the Twins, and he said it's at least nice to be wanted.

"I've been on the other side of not being desired – being designated, being released – but I've never been traded to a team that wanted my services," he said. "And on top of that, it's a good organization that has had a lot of success and a team that is coming off winning its division."

Breslow, 31, said he was greatly appreciative of the prolonged opportunity the A's had given him.

The Arizona Republic first reported that the Diamondbacks were considering dealing Parker in a package for Cahill.

Cahill, 23, told me jokingly in a text that he'll start going to the batting cages every day, and when I spoke to him on the phone, he said he really will start hitting some once all of this calms down.

There's little doubt that losing Cahill stings; he's established himself as a front-line starter and he was signed for the next four seasons with two option years after that.

"You never like to trade a guy like Trevor," Forst said. "He's been a big part of what we've done the last few years. But we have to move some pieces around and we had a chance to get a top-of- the-rotation prospect back."

I asked Forst if this deal means the A's are done – if moving Cahill means that Gonzalez won't get traded – and he said that's not the case. So the A's are still open for business if anyone wants to meet the steep price for Gonzalez or for Bailey.

The Diamondbacks initially asked about both Gonzalez and Cahill, but the A's wanted another top pitching prospect, Tyler Skaggs, in any deal for Gonzalez, and Arizona balked at that. Trevor Bauer, Arizona's top pick last June, was never discussed, I'm told.

I've run this deal by several scouts to get outside perspectives, and one told me this trade tells you exactly where both teams are.

"This lines up with what Arizona is trying to do, and what Oakland is trying to do," he said. "Win now – or win three years down the road."

Knuckleheads of the week: Lew Wolff, Billy Beane

Scott Ostler, Chronicle Columnist

A's owner **Lew Wolff** and general manager **Billy Beane** have elected to build for the future, selling and trading what they can in order to be build for the 2014 or 2015 season, when they'll have a new ballpark in San Jose.

(That's assuming they clear small hurdles such as fierce opposition from the Giants, a community group's lawsuit, financing ...)

Nothing like energizing the Oakland A's fan base.

Meanwhile, I've got a fever and there's only one prescription: More tarp!

A's nab prized prospect Parker in deal for Cahill

Trade sends Breslow to Arizona; Cowgill, Cook head to Oakland

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- After the A's quiet departure from the Winter Meetings this week, there still existed a lingering unknown surrounding the team's direction. But just one day removed from the confines of Dallas, that path is now clear.

The A's made a bold statement on Friday, likely securing their stance as a team on the rebuild route, by dealing right-hander Trevor Cahill and lefty reliever Craig Breslow along with cash considerations to the D-backs.

In return, Oakland received prized pitching prospect Jarrod Parker, right-hander Ryan Cook and outfielder Collin Cowgill in a deal that had been in the works for nearly a week.

"Once we got together, it sounded like Trevor was going to be the guy that would be a good fit for them," A's assistant general manager David Forst said. "And it was important to us that if we were going to trade Trevor, we were going to get a guy that has the chance to be a front-line starter back, and we feel like Jarrod is that guy. From that point, we went about trying to figure out which other pieces could help our Major League club in 2012."

Each piece, the A's hope, will help add up to a contending team as early as 2014. By then, the A's could be moving into a new stadium in San Jose. At least that's the plan if Major League baseball approves it, which many believe could happen in January at the next owners' meetings.

The green light would equate to a handful of years defined by growing pains, while the A's look toward a future of several playoff runs in their new home. With that in mind, Friday's move may be one of many to come this offseason -- Gio Gonzalez and Andrew Bailey still serve as trade bait -- and could ultimately conjure up memories of the one that followed the 2007 campaign.

The D-backs, coincidentally, were also prominent figures of Oakland's roster makeover that winter, as well. Arizona acquired hurler Dan Haren and, in turn, shipped six players to the A's, including Brett Anderson, Carlos Gonzalez and Chris Carter.

"It's kind of come full circle," Anderson said Friday. "I was in Jarrod Parker's shoes, looking toward the future. Now we're looking toward the future again."

"It's tough, especially with it being Trevor. You understand the business side but are torn because of the friendship side. I guess you have to do what's best for your club, but you never want to see one of your friends go. The A's are in an interesting situation right now, not knowing whether there's going to be a new stadium, so it's tough to know whether to play like we're gonna be in Oakland or if we're going to be in San Jose. Tough goings in Oakland right now."

After Anderson joined the A's in 2007, the club proceeded to grab hold of Gonzalez, Ryan Sweeney and Fautino De Los Santos from the White Sox in a swap for Nick Swisher that winter. Trades that sent away pitchers Rich Harden and Joe Blanton also followed months later.

This time, it's Cahill on the move. Just 23 and owed \$29 million over the next four years in a deal that also includes two club options, the right-hander will surely fortify a strong D-backs rotation that helped Arizona to a National League West title this year.

After a career 2010 season, which included an 18-8 record and 2.97 ERA, Cahill took a downturn in 2011, collecting a 12-14 mark and 4.16 ERA. However, he made a career-high 34 starts and has made at least 30 starts in each of his three big league seasons.

"Kind of surprised," Cahill said of the news he'd been traded. "I heard a lot of other guys' names bounce around, and until the last couple of days, I never thought I'd be at least the first one to go."

"I think it's going to be good. I really liked Oakland and was comfortable over there, but it looks like the Diamondbacks want to win and I really want to compete and try to win a championship so I think it's good."

The 31-year-old Breslow is arbitration-eligible and has served as one of the game's best left-handed relievers over the past three seasons, most recently putting together a 3.79 ERA in 69 games this season. He's set to join a D-backs bullpen that includes submariner Brad Ziegler, traded by the A's to Arizona in July.

By reeling in Parker, a first-round Draft pick in 2007, the A's get a player who vaults to No. 1 on their **list of top prospects**. Following rehab from his 2010 Tommy John surgery, the 23-year-old right-hander posted an 11-8 record and 3.79 ERA for Arizona's Double-A club this year.

He was called up to the big leagues for the first time in September and impressed greatly in just one start, tossing 5 2/3 shutout innings and earning a spot on the club's postseason roster.

"We saw him quite a bit this year and we like him," Forst said. "Before he had his surgery, he was probably one of the top pitching prospects in the game. We felt like he bounced back really well this year."

"I remember him having a tremendous arm," said Anderson, who played alongside Parker in instructional league while still in Arizona's system. "He was drafted in the first round for a reason. I know he had Tommy John surgery, but I saw he got back to the big leagues, and it looks like he's recovering from that."

Parker finished the 2011 season ranked No. 17 on **MLB.com's Top 50 Prospects list**.

Cowgill, meanwhile, batted .354 with 13 home runs and 70 RBIs in 98 games at Triple-A. He appeared in 36 contests with Arizona, hitting .239 with one homer and nine RBIs and nearly found his way to Oakland five months ago as a talked-about option in the Ziegler trade.

Forst noted Cowgill can play center field, which represented a rather big void on the A's roster before Friday. He'll be in the mix for a starting job in that spot come spring, and he can also play the corners.

Ryan, 23, combined for a 2.21 ERA and 1.03 WHIP in 48 appearances between Double-A and Triple-A this season.

Not one of the players acquired by Oakland on Friday are named Albert Pujols or C.J. Wilson, who signed with the division-rival Angels just a day before. But Oakland, which figures to be at the bottom of the American League West for a few years while Los Angeles and fellow threat Texas duke it out for the crown, desires to be in that mix soon after.

To that end, they'll do whatever it takes to reel in young players with minimal service time who can help them get there. That means the likes of Gonzalez and Bailey, along with several other top players on the A's roster, are still for the taking.

"This doesn't change any of the other ongoing conversations we've been having," Forst said.

Major Lee-ague: Forst on Cahill trade

Jane Lee, mlb.com, 12/9/2011, 5:48pm

A's assistant general manager David Forst on today's trade:

"The D-backs had checked in with us a couple of times before we got to Dallas and made it clear they were interested in a starter. Once we got together, it sounded like Trevor was going to be the guy that would be a good fit for them. And it was important to us that if we were going to trade Trevor, we were going to get a guy that has the chance to be a frontline starter back, and we feel like Jarrod is that guy. From that point, we went about trying to figure out which other pieces could help our Major League club in 2012."

Major Lee-ague: A's Cahill involved in trade with D-backs

By Steve Gilbert and Jane Lee / MLB.com, 12/9/2011, 3:19pm

The A's and D-backs are closing in on a deal that will send right-hander Trevor Cahill and lefty reliever Craig Breslow to Arizona, MLB.com learned on Friday.

In return, Oakland is expected to receive prized pitching prospect Jarrod Parker and outfielder Collin Cowgill, baseball sources confirmed. Another player could also be heading Oakland's way in the multi-player package.

Cahill, who would fortify an already strong D-backs rotation, is owed \$29 million over the next four years in a deal that also includes two club options. Oakland's decision to move the 23-year-old only further represents their latest attempt at a rebuild while they wait word on a new stadium.

After a career 2010 season, which included an 18-8 record and 2.97 ERA, Cahill took a downturn in 2011, collecting a 12-14 mark and 4.16 ERA. However, he made a career-high 34 starts and has made at least 30 starts in each of his three big league seasons.

The 31-year-old Breslow is arbitration-eligible and has served as one of the game's best left-handed relievers over the past three seasons, most recently putting together a 3.79 ERA in 69 games this season.

By reeling in Parker, a first-round Draft pick in 2007, the A's get what's considered to be Arizona's top prospect. Following rehab from his 2010 Tommy John surgery, the 23-year-old right-hander posted an 11-8 record and 3.79 ERA for Arizona's Double-A club this year.

Cowgill, meanwhile, batted .354 with 13 home runs and 70 RBIs in 98 games at the Triple-A level. He appeared in 36 contests with Arizona, hitting .239 with one homer and nine RBIs.

Oakland leaders committed to keeping the A's, Warriors, Raiders in the East Bay

By Associated Press, Published: December 9

OAKLAND, Calif. — Oakland leaders are making a last-ditch effort to keep the Athletics from leaving the East Bay — apparently fearing the NBA's Golden State Warriors and NFL's Oakland Raiders could follow without suitable venues.

Oakland Mayor Jean Quan said Friday a letter is being sent to baseball Commissioner Bud Selig to let him know the city wants to keep the A's. Selig appointed a committee in March 2009 to evaluate the issue facing the Bay Area's two baseball teams, yet he has provided no timetable for when he might announce a decision. A's owner Lew Wolff, determined to move his club south to San Jose so it can survive, and general manager Billy Beane have said they expect to hear something from Major League Baseball by next month.

"We wanted to tell you that we're sending a letter to Commissioner Selig to make it clear that Oakland wants the A's, that we have to viable sites for the A's that can be delivered by 2014," Quan said Friday. "We want them to stay."

She insists her city still has a legitimate site near the rundown Oakland Coliseum, which is shared by the A's and Raiders, to build a new ballpark and basketball arena, as well as a waterfront spot in the trendy Jack London Square neighborhood that could work only for a ballpark. Environmental impact reports have yet to be completed.

New Warriors owners Joe Lacob and Peter Guber are considering moving their team across the bay to San Francisco, while the Raiders are dealing with a similar problem to that of the A's since they play at the same stadium.

In December 2009, the City of Oakland unveiled three potential spots to build a new ballpark for the A's. Wolff has his sights on San Jose and technology-rich Silicon Valley and has repeatedly said his franchise has exhausted its options in Oakland after years of trying.

The problem is the San Francisco Giants hold the territorial rights to San Jose.

Last week, a Giants-supported group called "Stand for San Jose" sued the city of San Jose claiming the city failed to perform a proper environmental review of land committed to the A's at a drastically discounted price. The 28-page suit also claims the city violated citizens' rights by not putting to a public vote the contractual agreement it made with the A's to sell the discounted downtown property.

"Oakland has two sites that have political support, are financially viable and have strong sponsorship," Quan said. "We think we're the only city that can open a new (baseball) stadium by 2016."

The A's had planned to build a state-of-the-art stadium in nearby Fremont that they thought would eventually transform the small-budget club into a big spender.

But that plan, which would have been in partnership with Cisco Systems Inc., fell through because of a variety of complications — including public transportation issues. Those same issues could arise with the Jack London Square spot.

Oakland A's Prospect Q&A: Murphy Smith

Donald Moore, OaklandClubhouse.com

Dec 11, 2011

In 2011, right-hander Murphy Smith was an integral part of a strong Stockton Ports' starting rotation that helped lead the team to the California League finals. Smith posted a 3.94 ERA and a 100:33 K:BB ratio in 137 innings for the Ports. This fall, he had the opportunity to go up against the top talents in minor league baseball in the Arizona Fall League. Donald Moore spoke with Smith.

Since being selected in the 13th round of the 2009 out of Binghamton University, he has been a workhorse out of the starting rotation. After tossing 144.1 innings in 2010, Smith threw 137 more innings during the 2011 regular season and then added another 26 innings during the Arizona Fall League.

Smith's 2011 campaign was the best of his young career. Despite pitching in a hitter-friendly league, Smith posted a career-best 3.94 ERA. He induced 1.72 groundouts for every flyout and struck-out more than three batters for every batter he walked.

After that success and his experience pitching in the AFL, Smith is working this off-season towards making the jump to Double-A and beyond in 2012. Donald Moore spoke with Smith recently about his 2011 campaign and his goals for next season.

Donald Moore: Murphy, how was your experience pitching in the AFL?

Murphy Smith: It was a great time. Obviously, it was a different experience for me. I never really had pitched above A-ball in a higher level, so there was a lot of really talented players up there. It was a lot fun and a really good learning experience for myself.

DM: What did you work on?

MS: Being consistent with my delivery. I kind of have a tendency to fall off a little bit off the first-base side. It's just a mechanical thing and I'm kind of really working on hammering out the consistency with that, so I can repeat it every time. Obviously keep repeating my pitches.

DM: What would you like to improve on?

MS: When I was consistent with [my delivery], I was throwing well. It's just a matter of repeating really.

DM: What are your goals for next season?

MS: You know, obviously, I hope to start in Double-A and then make the jump maybe to Triple-A at some point in the year.

If not, have a good solid year in Double-A and kind of feel good about how I'm throwing going into the off-season next year.

DM: What are your best pitches?

MS: Kind of hard to say. I would say probably my fastball and change-up. The curveball and cutter are good, but I feel like currently I just need to be a little bit more consistent with my fastball and change-up location, so I get more outs with those two pitches.

DM: Have you always been a starter throughout your career?

MS: Yeah, the only time I only relieved actually was when I was in my freshman year in college. Then the summer after that I began starting again. It's pretty much all I've known.

DM: When did you find out you were going to the instructional league?

MS: They usually tell us right about mid-August or so.

DM- What have you learned from pitching coach Jim Czajkowski?

MS: Basically, the same stuff I've been working on all year. He's another voice and another set of eyes to kind of tell me more or less the same stuff I've been hearing.

DM: What is it like to play guys that are the top notch prospects from other organizations in the Arizona Fall League?

MS: Yeah, like I said, it was a really great experience to hear what those guys have done and some of the guys on our team alone were actually in the big leagues. So to hear stories of what's it like and and basically telling us what's it like to have their dreams come true is great. Obviously, I'm kind of hoping to get those same feelings and tell those same stories.

DM: Murphy, thank you so much for your time and best of luck to you.