

## A's News Clips, Friday, December 16, 2011

### Chin Music: "Moneyball" might clean up at Golden Globes, plus A's trade updates and free agent news

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune, 12/15/2011 4:26pm

The Golden Globe nominations are out, and "Moneyball" scored big across the board. Among the movie's nominations: Best Picture, Drama; Brad Pitt (Best Actor, Drama); Jonah Hill (Best Supporting Actor); Aaron Sorkin, Steven Zaillian (Best Screenplay). Could it be a foreshadowing of things to come at the Academy Awards? The Oscars are handed out Feb. 26. Here's the full list of [Golden Globes nominations](#) ...

So big things could be in store for the A's from the Hollywood angle. As for baseball? That's shaping up as a much gloomier scene, based on the cornerstone players the A's are likely to continue dealing. Cbssports.com's Danny Knobler says the [Reds are interested in Gio Gonzalez](#), and that the A's want first baseman Yonder Alonso as part of any deal. That's not surprising, considering the A's needs at first base. Closer Andrew Bailey also remains a strong bet to be dealt.

And it's open season for signing free agent A's outfielders. Earlier today [the Twins inked Josh Willingham](#) to a three-year, \$21 million contract. In this mlb.com video clip, the [Cubs' interest in Coco Crisp](#) is discussed. Given the A's outfield needs, I think they should be taking a harder look at re-signing Crisp. But they're putting off any free agent pursuits as they await word on their stadium situation. The Dodgers also are reportedly interested in Crisp, a Los Angeles native.

- The A's released their spring training schedule, which includes just 21 Cactus League games because of the team's season-opening trip to Japan. The spring opener is March 2 against the Mariners at Phoenix Municipal Stadium. The A's and Giants play just once in Arizona — an A's split-squad game March 17 in Scottsdale. Oakland's Cactus League finale is March 21 against the Royals in Surprise, Ariz., and then the A's fly to Tokyo to open the regular season against the Mariners in a two-game set March 28-29. They'll return to exhibition play — a strange sequence, just as it was after their 2008 Japan trip — to play a March 31 exhibition against Triple-A Sacramento at Raley Field, and then follow up with the Bay Bridge series against the Giants on April 2-4. The A's resume the regular season at home April 6 against Seattle.

### Drumbeat: Twins land a steal in Josh Willingham, A's get draft picks

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle 12/15/2011 11:58AM

So Josh Willingham signs with Minnesota, as expected, for three years and \$21 million — he'll make just \$1 million more per year than he did in Oakland. After a terrific season playing half his games at the spacious Coliseum — he hit 29 homers and drove in 98 runs, and that was with a short DL stay — I thought he'd go for closer to what he was hoping to get on the open market, which was about \$10-11 million per year.

I remain surprised there wasn't more interest. He's not the greatest outfielder and he has some tendinitis in an Achilles tendon, but he is a very solid run producer. When I spoke to Minnesota people at the winter meetings last week, they were very high on Willingham but the team was still talking to longtime Twin Michael Cuddyer. Now, the Twins get Willingham instead, don't lose a first-round pick — and they'll get a first-rounder when Cuddyer signs elsewhere.

The A's will get a supplemental pick after the first round (the first 15 picks are protected — and the Twins pick second overall) and they'll pick in front of the Twins in the second round, a nice high second-rounder.

I spoke to Willingham, and he's excited to go to Minnesota, despite the Twins' surprisingly poor 2011 season.

"I know they had a rough year and some injuries, but it's still a good situation," he said. "When you think of the Twins, you think contenders. They've been to the postseason most every year."

Willingham had hoped at one point during the season to return to Oakland on a multi-year deal, and he told me he'd really enjoyed his time with the A's.

"I love the A's organization and the fans were awesome to me, the way they accepted me," he said, adding with a laugh, "They acted like they like me, anyway."

Willingham does feel for the teammates he leaves behind as the A's embark on another rebuild, but he knows good things can come from rebuilds. He's an example.

"It's not something any player wants to go through — unless you're one of the players they're rebuilding with," he said. "I was one of those guys in 2006 with the Marlins. That's how I got my opportunity."

So two-thirds of Oakland's starting 2011 outfield is gone. The next question is: Where will Coco Crisp land?

## Oakland has little chance to keep A's in town

Chip Johnson, Chronicle Columnist

Oakland Mayor Jean Quan's pitch to Major League Baseball last week sounded more like a wish list to Santa Claus than a last-ditch effort to keep the Oakland Athletics from moving.

Her proposals, which include a convention center and shopping mecca in East Oakland, come days late and dollars short. We could soon see a day when there are no professional sports teams in Oakland.

The Raiders have already talked about sharing a stadium with the 49ers, who are all but certain to build a new home in Santa Clara. The Golden State Warriors met with San Francisco officials last week to discuss plans for a new basketball arena next to AT&T Park.

A's owner Lew Wolff, a developer by profession, crafted an ambitious \$1.8 billion ballpark village deal with the city of Fremont, but opposition from environmentalists and some City Council members compelled the team to withdraw the proposal in 2009.

He's been angling for a similar opportunity ever since and believes he has found one in San Jose.

A decision is expected next month from MLB officials, who would have to OK the move to San Jose, which is considered part of the San Francisco Giants' territory.

Whatever they decide, it's clear that attracting and retaining pro sports franchises has become a beauty contest with perks - and Oakland is not going to win any of those.

Quan's idea that Oakland could build a convention and shopping center in an East Oakland neighborhood that is statistically one of the most violent places in the state isn't going to create a lot of positive buzz with league officials. Oakland can't persuade a major grocery store chain to build there, so it's anybody's guess how they would attract an anchor tenant.

Nordstrom Deep East? I'm not so sure developers or mainstream consumers are ready for that concept.

The other possible ballpark site, located near downtown, is a privately owned property that Oakland officials said could be acquired and developed quickly.

### **Stadium by 2016?**

Even without the environmental reviews or approvals, Quan pledged that either site could deliver a new stadium to the team by 2016.

If a city's stability and finances are considered in such deals, Oakland has yet another obstacle to overcome.

The city's high crime and homicide rate and a pending federal court decision about whether to place a court receiver in charge of the Oakland Police Department next month doesn't exactly inspire a lot of confidence.

What's saddest about the A's likely departure from Oakland is that it will be a loss for all East Bay residents.

Historically, San Francisco has been the center of commerce, a place where the business owners lived and headquartered their companies.

But Oakland and its East Bay neighbors have always been more working class, a beer-instead-of-wine crowd. As long as sports teams continue to follow the money, the working man loses out.

### **Economic muscle**

In the modern era, Oakland simply doesn't have the economic muscle to compete with San Jose, located in a region that includes some of the most successful companies in the computer and technology industry.

Quan's pitch to keep the A's makes her the city's third mayor to deal with the issue - and she is no closer to succeeding than her predecessors.

When Gov. Jerry Brown was mayor of Oakland a decade ago, he opted to build more housing instead of a new downtown ballpark. That decision prompted the departure of City Manager Robert Bobb.

When Ron Dellums was elected, one of the first and perhaps most honest assessments he ever made was a blunt announcement that Oakland's chances of retaining the A's were slim and none.

Despite efforts to the contrary from Oakland's current mayor, it remains the best and most accurate assessment of the situation.

## **Andrew Bailey to host bowling fundraiser**

Courier Post 12/16/2011

Andrew Bailey knows how important it is to give back.

The 2009 American League Rookie of the Year and a two-time All-Star with the Oakland A's, Bailey realizes how fortunate he is and wants to put his celebrity status to work for others.

Through his association with The Strike 3 Foundation, the Haddon Heights native will host the inaugural "Bailey Bowl" on Saturday, Jan. 7 at Pinsetter Bar & Bowl in Pennsauken. The night will feature bowling, food, drinks, a silent auction, prizes and celebrity mingling.

All proceeds will go to The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in its quest to treat and research pediatric cancer. Go to [www.strike3foundation.org](http://www.strike3foundation.org) for ticket information.

"For me, it's an opportunity to give back to a community where I grew up and to a hospital that means an awful lot to me and people who have supported me in my life from Day 1 and right up to now," said Bailey, a 2002 Paul VI High School graduate.

"It's a great reason to get together. It's a nice night out. You get to mingle with celebrities, other local baseball players, and it's all for a great cause."

As the director of development for the foundation, Bailey has focused on spreading the word on the impact of the charity and establishing a nationwide presence.

It was founded by former Oakland teammate Craig Breslow (now with the Arizona Diamondbacks) as a charitable agency to heighten awareness, mobilize support and raise funds for childhood cancer research.

Breslow's motivation is his sister, Lesley, who was diagnosed with pediatric thyroid cancer at 14 years old and is now 33.

Bailey joined the foundation in 2009.

"Every child that I have encountered has inspired me," Bailey said. "The thrill they receive by meeting a Major League Baseball player is trumped by the courage and resilience they show me. My hope is that one day these kids will be able to fulfill their hopes and dreams in the same way that I am currently fulfilling mine."

In its four years, the foundation has raised more than \$500,000 through a host of fundraising events. A recent event in Connecticut raised more than \$215,000.

“There is nothing that outshines the smiles on the children’s faces when I am able to visit with a group of players on behalf of Strike 3,” Bailey said. “Being able to have a positive impact on each child’s life is something that The Strike 3 Foundation will always strive to accomplish.”

Bailey, who lives in Connecticut in the offseason, has his hands in every aspect of the event — getting sponsors, selling tickets, collecting items for the auction.

“I just fell in love with the charity. Not that others are bad or that their work is insignificant, but I just fell in love with The Strike 3 Foundation. Everything is done through us. We make all the phone calls, everything. It’s not like we have everyone else do all the work and we just show up.

“Seeing the fruits of your labor does put baseball in perspective.”