

**Local sports digest: Oakland A's have interest in Ordonez, according to MLB Network's Peter Gammons**

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According to the MLB Network's Peter Gammons, the A's are evaluating Magglio Ordonez for a possible spring training tryout. Ordonez, 38, is recovering from surgery after refracturing his right ankle in the ALCS last season.

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No. 2 Stanford (2-0, 1-0 Pac-12) posted a 6-1 women's tennis win at Oregon. Stacey Tan and Veronica Li both posted 6-0, 6-0 singles victories.

The sixth-ranked Stanford men's team (4-2) suffered a 6-1 nonconference loss to No. 9 UCLA (6-0) at the Taube Family Tennis Stadium. The Cardinal played again without injured All-American Bradley Klahn.

The 13th-ranked Cal men's team fell to No. 1 USC 5-2 at the Hellman Tennis Complex. n Third-ranked Stanford (7-1) posted a 175-118 men's swimming and diving win over No. 5 USC (3-3) in Los Angeles. The Cardinal's Kristian Ipsen won the 1- and 3-meter springboard events, and teammate Aaron Wayne won the 50-yard freestyle.

Ashley Young had three goals as the second-ranked Cal women's water polo team beat Michigan 9-7 at the Stanford Invitational. Cal (10-1) then lost to No. 4 UCLA 4-3.

**Report: A's considering adding Magglio Ordonez**

By Joe Stiglich, Oakland Tribune

Manny Ramirez apparently isn't the only aging slugger the A's have their eye on.

According to MLB.com's Peter Gammons, the A's are evaluating Magglio Ordonez for a possible spring training tryout. Ordonez, 38, is recovering from surgery after re-fracturing his right ankle in the American League Championship Series last season.

He hit .255 with five homers and 32 RBIs in 92 games for Detroit in 2011.

**A's stockpile candidates, but DH still a concern**

**Despite depth, Oakland lacks sure-fire starter at the position**

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- It appears the A's have more than one aging slugger on their wish list, as Magglio Ordonez has reportedly joined Manny Ramirez as potential additions to what currently is a lineup lacking power.

Ramirez, who will turn 40 in May, is said to have narrowed his decision on a new baseball home to three teams: Oakland, Baltimore and Toronto. Meanwhile, the 38-year-old Ordonez is nearing the end of rehab on the right ankle he re-fractured in October's American League Championship Series, all the while garnering a good dose of interest from several clubs looking for last-minute help.

Either could potentially give the A's yet another option at the designated hitter spot, an area that is already plenty crowded but still of concern.

It wasn't too long ago, though, when the A's front office seemed intent on playing out the spring with their current crop of DH candidates. And if the team proceeds without adding one of the aforementioned big names by the time Spring Training begins, they'll have no choice but to do just that.

Manager Bob Melvin, for one, wouldn't mind. As the roster stands now, he's envisioning a rotation of sorts at the DH spot.

"At this point," he said recently, "it could potentially rotate a lot, unless someone decides they're going to make a stand and decide, 'This job's mine.' I'm all for that."

At least four players have the opportunity to do so. Here is a look at them:

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### CHRIS CARTER

**Credentials:** Carter's Minor League career includes impressive numbers, including a .283 average to go along with 170 home runs and 586 RBIs in 754 games. He's also compiled a .540 slugging percentage and a .379 on-base percentage -- all numbers the A's believe can be replicated at the big league level.

**Concerns:** In his 39 Major League contests, Carter has looked rather raw and uncomfortable at the plate and in the field. There are questions as to where he belongs on the field -- the A's tried his glove in left field before transferring him back to his natural first-base position -- and Oakland officials have been hesitant before about handing the DH job to a rookie.

**Outlook:** There was hope that Carter would be ready to grab hold of a big league job by now, but a sluggish start to his career hasn't helped that cause. He'll need to put together a monster spring to prove he's capable of everyday DH duties if he wants to land on the roster, especially considering the other candidates provide more versatility.

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### JONNY GOMES

**Credentials:** The 31-year-old veteran is owner of a lifetime .242 average and .780 OPS, with his most productive season coming in 2010, when he hit .267 and drove in 86 runs while appearing in a career-high 148 games for the Reds.

**Concerns:** Gomes is a flyball hitter, which may not mesh well in the spacious Coliseum.

**Outlook:** His skill set should nicely complement the left-handed-hitting duo of projected starting outfielders Seth Smith and Josh Reddick, and he'll likely see plenty time as DH when not filling in for them.

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### KILA KA'AIHUE

**Credentials:** Ka'aihue is a career .216 hitter in the Majors spanning three seasons. In 283 at-bats, he's compiled 11 home runs and 32 RBIs, along with 39 walks and 67 strikeouts.

**Concerns:** Numbers show his plate discipline isn't a strong suit, and so far his bat speed hasn't fared well against Major League pitching, bringing to light concerns surrounding consistency.

**Outlook:** The A's were willing to give anyone a chance at first base when acquiring Ka'aihue in September, and a player who put together a .322/.465/.601 line at Triple-A Omaha the year before seemed like a good option. But he'll have to post similar numbers for the A's to seriously consider him for any job -- whether at first base or DH -- especially with their depth at both positions.

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### BRANDON ALLEN

**Credentials:** Allen boasts the most power potential of any DH candidate, and has regularly dominated Minor League pitching. But that success hasn't translated well to the Majors, where he has a dismal .210/.297/.383 line, with 11 home runs spanning 367 plate appearances.

**Concerns:** He struck out 55 times in just 146 at-bats while up with Oakland last year, bringing his career strikeout total to 128 in 324 Major League at-bats.

**Outlook:** The A's were reportedly shopping Allen to other teams in recent weeks, with the club's depth being cited as reason. But Melvin is a big fan of Allen, who could ultimately end up back at first base should Daric Barton endure a disappointing spring campaign.

## **Oakland A's announcer Friendly Sons speaker**

### **98th annual St. Patrick's Day Banquet Saturday, March 17, at Woodlands**

Times Leader, Wilkes-Barre, PA, 2/4/2012

Avoca native, Richard (Dick) Callahan will return to the Greater Pittston Area for the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick 98th Annual Banquet to be held on Saturday night March 17, at the Woodlands Inn and Resort on Rt. 315 in Plains.

Banquet tickets are available any Wednesday night at the Pittston Knights of Columbus from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. or by contacting any active member of the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. This year's banquet is a Saturday night so it is recommended that those who wish to attend get their tickets and tables soon.

The Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick will honor Past President, Michael J. Cadden at the Annual Past Presidents Dinner on Saturday, Feb. 18, at the Knights of Columbus in Pittston. The night will begin at 6:00 p.m. and will feature a buffet dinner along with refreshments and live music. Make reservations by stopping by the Knights of Columbus any Wednesday night from 7-9 p.m. or by contacting Past Presidents Dinner Chairman Patrick M. Bilbow or any other active member of the Friendly Sons.

#### *Banquet speaker*

Callahan grew up in Avoca in the area of St. Mary's Church. He graduated in 1954 from St. Mary's School in Avoca and was a member of the 1958 graduating class from Scranton Prep. He has had a highly successful career in the insurance business during his lifetime, but he is known throughout the West Coast and the Country for his expertise in the field of public address.

The voice of basketball at St. Mary's College in San Francisco's East Bay for 34 years, Callahan was the winner of the college's Mike Gibbons Award for long-term athletic service. He was named Honorary Alumnus in 1998 and currently serves on St. Mary's College Board of Regents. He spent 19 years announcing for the Golden Warriors in Oakland; gaining a large following and wide-spread renown for his signature "shhhhhhhhhoo-ting two" free-throw call.

The Oakland Athletics' baseball team appointed Callahan in 2004, as their public address announcer. And football in the Bay Area gained access to his silky sound 10 years ago when he became the public address announcer for the University of California's Golden Bears. His boisterous "FIRST DOWN BEARS" is a signature sound at Cal's Memorial Stadium.

In May, 2010, on Mother's Day, Callahan announced Major League Baseball's 19th perfect game when Dallas Braden shut down the Tampa Bay Rays. Callahan's voice has come to represent the sound of sports in the Bay Area.

Two past public address experiences, the East-West Shrine Game at AT&T Park and the lead announcer for the 1994 World Basket Ball Championships in Toronto, are significant events in Callahan's history.

Recognized for his meticulous preparation and wide ranging expertise covering athletic competitions, Callahan has earned honors and awards for the same attributes from the insurance industry. He represents Kosich & Callahan Insurance Agency located in Lafayette, Ca. Mr. Callahan is a sought after speaker as an over 25 year life and qualifying member of the Million Dollar Round Table, a trade association for Financial Professionals.

Callahan has volunteered for Special Olympics, the American Heart Association, and Family Aid - Catholic Education, a fund-raising organization that provides tuition grants to low-income families. He is the father of three grown daughters and lives in Moraga, California.

## **In baseball, a premium on smart shopping**

### **There were plenty of big spenders in free agency, but which major league teams got the most for their money and which ones might wind up with buyer's remorse?**

By Mike DiGiovanna, Los Angeles, Times, 2/4/2012

This winter's free-agent class included a Prince (Fielder) who got a deal fit for a king and a reliever who came away looking like a pauper by major league salary standards.

Closer Ryan Madson nearly had a four-year, \$44-million agreement with Philadelphia in November, but talks broke down and the Phillies signed Boston's Jonathan Papelbon for four years and \$50 million.

The demand for closers drying up, Madson settled in January for a one-year, \$8.25-million contract with Cincinnati.

A tough break for Madson? Sure, but a stroke of genius for the Reds, who got a key piece for a potential division contender at a cut-rate price.

Free agency isn't just about who throws the most money around, though it often seems that way for teams such as the Angels, Phillies, Red Sox, New York Yankees and Detroit Tigers, who snagged Fielder with a nine-year, \$214-million deal.

It's about value, getting bang for the buck and, as Papelbon-Madson shows, the Phillies paid a premium in dollars and years for an asset that doesn't look like much of an upgrade over what the Reds got on the cheap.

With that in mind, here's a look by position at the best and worst free-agent values of the off-season:

### **First base**

**Best:** Carlos Pena, one year, \$7.25 million, Tampa Bay.

No team stretches a \$60-million budget like the Rays, who contend in the American League East despite puny payrolls. In Pena, 33, they have another low-cost, high-impact player.

Pena had a .357 on-base percentage and 28 home runs for the Chicago Cubs in 2011 after averaging 36 homers with a .368 OBP in four seasons at Tampa Bay. He's also a Gold Glove-caliber defender and a strong clubhouse presence.

**Worst:** Albert Pujols, 10 years, \$240 million, Angels.

This contract will look great if the slugger leads the Angels to a World Series or two in the next five years. If not, it could become a financial albatross.

Pujols, 32, will make \$12 million this season. But starting in 2017, when he'll be 37, he'll make salaries of \$26 million, \$27 million, \$28 million, \$29 million and \$30 million in the final five years of the deal. Only one player in 40 years has had multiple MVP-caliber seasons after he was 37.

His name: Bonds. Barry Bonds.

### **Second base**

**Best:** Aaron Hill, two years, \$11 million, Arizona.

Hill, 30, slumped in 2011, hitting .246 with eight homers and 61 runs batted in, but he flourished after an August trade from Toronto to Arizona, hitting .315 with a .386 OBP. Hill has freakish power — 62 homers, 176 runs batted in over the 2009 and 2010 seasons — for a second baseman.

**Worst:** Mark Ellis, two years, \$8.75 million, Dodgers.

Ellis, 34, is an excellent defender and clubhouse leader, but shouldn't a little offense be a standard feature with this sticker price?

Ellis hit .248 with a .288 OBP, seven homers and 41 RBIs for Oakland and Colorado last season, and his 1.3 wins above replacement (WAR) rating was third-lowest among major league second basemen.

### **Shortstop**

**Best:** Jimmy Rollins, three years, \$38 million, Philadelphia.

The length of this deal made it attractive to the Phillies to retain their sparkplug, who was looking for a five-year contract.

Rollins, 33, has tailed off since his MVP season of 2007, when he hit .296 with 30 homers, 20 triples, 139 runs and 94 RBIs, but he bounced back from an injury-plagued 2010 with a .338 OBP, 16 homers and 87 runs in 2011.

**Worst:** Jose Reyes, six years, \$106 million, Miami.

The dynamic 28-year-old switch hitter has game-changing speed and had a .383 OBP to go with his NL-leading .337 average in 2011. But who pays \$17.6 million a year for a leadoff guy?

The former Mets star was limited to 295 games by ankle, calf, hamstring and rib-cage injuries the last three seasons, and he's forcing the Marlins to move their best — and most temperamental — player, Hanley Ramirez, from shortstop to third.

### **Third base**

**Best:** Aramis Ramirez, three years, \$36 million, Milwaukee.

The knock on Ramirez, 33, is he has bad body language and occasionally takes defensive plays off, but he has consistently put up excellent power numbers and will ease the loss of Fielder.

Ramirez has a career .284 average, .342 OBP and .500 slugging percentage, has averaged 24 homers and 86 RBIs in 13 seasons and is a .299 hitter with runners in scoring position.

**Worst:** Wilson Betemit, two years, \$3.25 million, Baltimore.

It's the years, not the money, that make this deal a head-scratcher.

Why would a rebuilding team give a mediocre-hitting, poor-fielding, 30-year-old journeyman with little power a two-year deal — with a \$3.2-million, third-year vesting option, no less?

### **Catcher**

**Best:** Ramon Hernandez, two years, \$6.4 million, Colorado.

Hernandez is 35 with heavy mileage on his knees, and he's reached double figures in homers just twice in five seasons. But he is better suited to tutor 22-year-old Wilin Rosario, the Rockies' top position-playing prospect, than Chris Iannetta.

Iannetta, 28, may not have been as eager to take Rosario, who would be pushing for his job, under his wing. Iannetta was traded to the Angels for promising pitcher Tyler Chatwood.

**Worst:** Rod Barajas, one year, \$4 million, Pittsburgh.

Barajas, 36, hits for power despite a .238 career average, but the Pirates say he will catch only 80-90 games. And \$4 million is a hefty sum for a small-market club to pay a part-time catcher at the end of his career.

### **Left field**

**Best:** Josh Willingham, three years, \$21 million, Minnesota.

The Twins hit an American League-low 103 homers last season, and Willingham had 29 homers, 98 RBIs and a .332 OBP for Oakland.

Willingham, 33, has hit 20 homers or more in four of six years and has drawn so many walks that his career OBP (.361) is 99 points higher than his average (.262).

**Worst:** Jason Kubel, two years, \$15 million, Arizona.

Kubel, 29, has 25-homer potential, but he is a below-average defender and his signing will push Gerardo Parra, a promising 24-year-old who had a .357 OBP and won a Gold Glove last season, out of the starting lineup.

### **Center field**

**Best:** Grady Sizemore, one year, \$5 million, Cleveland.

Injuries limited Sizemore, 29, to 104 games the past two seasons, and two knee surgeries will prevent the two-time Gold Glove winner from playing his usual 160 games.

But if Sizemore is healthy — he recently resumed baseball activities — he brings the potential for 25 homers, 80 RBIs and superb defense.

**Worst:** Coco Crisp, two years, \$14 million, Oakland.

The A's can't afford to keep productive outfielders David DeJesus and Willingham, they trade star closer Andrew Bailey and superb starter Gio Gonzalez because of their rising price tags, and they give \$14 million to a 32-year-old leadoff hitter with no power?

That isn't Moneyball. It's Mad Money.

## Right field

**Best:** David DeJesus, two years, \$10 million, Chicago Cubs.

The 31-year-old struggled in 2011 after being traded from Kansas City to Oakland, hitting .240 with a .323 OBP and .376 slugging percentage.

But he's one season removed from hitting .318 with a .384 OBP and slugging .443. DeJesus has 15-homer, 70-RBI potential and is an excellent defender.

**Worst:** Michael Cuddyer, three years, \$31.5 million, Colorado.

The Rockies will give Cuddyer, 32, \$10.5 million more over three years than the Twins will give Willingham, and Cuddyer (.284, 20 homers, 70 RBIs) didn't have nearly as good a 2011 as Willingham.

## Starting pitcher

**Best:** Wei-Yin Chen, three years, \$9.3 million, Baltimore.

A sleeper pick, the Taiwanese left-hander has a 93-mph fastball, a hard, slurve-like breaking ball and the potential to be a No. 3 starter. Chen, 26, pitched in Japan last season, with a 2.68 earned run average in 1642/3 innings for the Chunichi Dragons.

**Worst:** Yu Darvish, six years, \$56 million in salary plus a \$51.7-million posting fee, Texas.

The lanky right-hander has ace-like potential, but the Rangers are sinking \$108 million — the most spent on a free-agent right-hander — into a player who has never thrown a big league pitch.

Some think Darvish, 25, who played most of his games in domed stadiums, will struggle to adjust to sweltering Texas summers.

## Relief pitcher

**Best:** Madson, one year, \$8.25 million, Cincinnati.

In his first season as a closer, the 31-year-old had a 4-2 record with a 2.37 ERA and 32 saves in 602/3 innings. He struck out 62, walked 16, gave up two homers and had a 1.154 WHIP (walks plus hits/innings pitched).

**Worst:** Papelbon, four years, \$50 million, Philadelphia.

He has six years of closing experience, but his 2011 season (4-1, 2.94 ERA, 31 saves, 0.933 WHIP, 87 strikeouts, 10 walks, three homers in 641/3 innings) was only slightly better than Madson's. And Papelbon, 31, is one year removed from a career-worst 5-7 record, 3.90 ERA and 1.269 WHIP.