

## A's News Clips, Wednesday, March 7, 2012

### A's lefty making a good impression

By Carl Steward, Oakland Tribune

One of the pitchers acquired from the Washington Nationals for Gio Gonzalez did a pretty good impression of Gonzalez in just his second spring start on Tuesday.

Tommy Milone, a 25-year-old left-hander vying for one of the three open spots in the A's rotation, might have taken an early leg up for one of the jobs with three shutout innings to kick off a 6-0 A's victory against Milwaukee.

Milone gave up a hit and a walk and struck out three, including reigning N.L. MVP Ryan Braun swinging to end the first inning. He opened the game by walking Rickie Weeks but promptly picked him off. He completed his day but striking out Weeks looking to end the third inning.

Happy?

"Extremely happy," said Milone. "(The Brewers) have such a tough lineup, and that was the first time I'd ever seen Braun in person, let alone face him. I'd only seen him on TV. It was exciting to strike him out, particularly doing it to end an inning and be able to walk off the mound afterward."

Milone certainly didn't look like a pitcher with only five games of major league experience. Calm and efficient, he retired eight of nine hitters after picking off Weeks, including the final four in a row.

"I have not changed my opinion of him since the first bullpen I saw him throw," said manager Bob Melvin. "Mixing his pitches, great command, reads swings, very smart pitcher."

"My game is to stay composed and continue to stay low in the zone," Milone said.

It was a fun day for Jemile Weeks, who not only got to play against his other brother Rickie but also got to tag him out. Picked off by Milone to open the bottom of the first, Rickie Weeks was caught from behind by his brother while diving toward first base at the end of the rundown.

"We just got into the normal rundown, and I felt I was close enough to make an attempt, so that's what I did," Jemile said.

Weeks said it wasn't the first time the two brothers have spent time clashing in a cloud of dust.

"That's one of the few times on the field," he said. "We've done it a few times off the field, actually, some years back. He usually gets the better of it. Not today, though."

Did Rickie say anything after being outraced to the bag by his sibling?

"Nah, we just looked at each other funny, and he gave me a little smirk," Jemile said.

Highly touted Cuban acquisition Yoenis Cespedes is still probably four to five days away from playing in a spring training game, but that could be accelerated depending how he fares against live pitching in the next couple of days.

Melvin said Cespedes is in great physical shape but added, "He's not in baseball shape, in my opinion." Cespedes hasn't played in a live game since December, when he logged eight games in the Dominican Republic.

Cespedes went through another day of routine batting practice and conditioning and might face live pitching in the next day or two. Depending on how he looks, he could be in a game by the weekend.

"Once we feel comfortable where he is physically that he can go out and run around for five innings or so, then we'll get him in," Melvin said. "There will certainly be a couple of days where he's facing pitchers, but whether it's two or three days of that, he'll be in a game closely after that."

Left-hander Brett Anderson took a significant step in his recovery from elbow ligament reconstruction surgery. He threw off a mound from the full 60-foot, 6-inch distance for the first time. Anderson said he threw 25 pitches, all fastballs, at roughly 60-70 percent velocity.

"The ball came out of my hand really well," he said. "It's weird not having any pain. I kind of see the light at the end of the tunnel. You don't want to get ahead of yourself, but I feel unbelievable."

Melvin is encouraged.

"Everyone was envisioning potentially August (for Anderson's return)," Melvin said. "I would caution to say it could be before that, but he's had no setbacks."

It was a strong afternoon for all the A's pitchers against the Brewers. Five pitchers limited Milwaukee to just two hits while Oakland hitters boasted a 14-hit attack. Ryan Cook, a rotation candidate, pitched two scoreless innings after Milone, allowing only a walk. Andrew Carignan and Jerry Blevins each threw a scoreless inning.

### **Yoenis Cespedes still could be days away from playing for Oakland A's**

By Carl Steward, Oakland Tribune

Highly touted Cuban acquisition Yoenis Cespedes is still probably 5 or 6 days away from playing in a spring training game with the A's, but that could be accelerated depending how he fares against live pitching in the next couple of days.

Manager Bob Melvin said Cespedes is in great physical shape, but added, "He's not in baseball shape, in my opinion."

Cespedes hasn't played in a live game since December, when he logged eight games in the Dominican Republic.

Cespedes was scheduled for another day of routine batting practice and conditioning, and may face some live pitching in the next day or two. Depending on how he looks, he could be in a game by the weekend.

"Once we feel comfortable where he is physically that he can go out and run around for five innings or so, then we'll get him in," he said. "There will certainly be a couple of days where he's facing pitchers, but whether it's two or three days of that, he'll be in a game closely after that."

Elsewhere, the A's will take a look at rotation candidates Tommy Milone and Graham Godfrey Tuesday when they play Milwaukee in Maryvale. Melvin said he is uncertain when lefthander Dallas Braden will get in a game, although he is progressing nicely, and doesn't want Braden to feel pressure that he needs to be ready once the season starts.

"I'm treading that one lightly because I don't want to push him," Melvin said. "(Dallas) is the kind of guy who if he reads something like that, he's going to try to push to it. He's going to have to start throwing breaking balls. It's basically been fastball-sinker. He hasn't even thrown his change off a mound yet."

Lefthanded pitcher Brett Anderson, recovering from Tommy John surgery, was scheduled to throw a full 60 feet, 6 inches off a mound for the first time Tuesday.

"Everyone was envisioning potentially August (for Anderson's return)," Melvin said. "I would caution to say it could be before that, but he's had no setbacks."

Melvin said he has impressed with the performance of the team's top draft pick, righthanded pitcher Sonny Gray, so far.

"I don't envision him starting with us," Melvin said, "But boy, he could be a quick mover."

### **Jeff Fiorentino, Brandon Moss hope to join A's**

Susan Slusser, San Francisco Chronicle

Four years ago when the A's opened the season in Japan, outfielder **Jeff Fiorentino** supplied a big hit for Oakland, and on the other side, **Brandon Moss** had an even more notable appearance with Boston.

Moss hit his first big-league homer in the ninth inning of the first game of the 2008 regular season, a shot off **Huston Street** that tied the game. After that series, Moss was sent down, and much of the rest of his season was interrupted by health issues, from an appendicitis to separated cartilage in his knee.

Florentino had an RBI single in the A's win over Boston in the second game in Tokyo, and he, too, was demoted after the team returned to the United States. The next week, at Triple-A Sacramento, while running the bases, he was struck in the face by a thrown ball, an injury that broke his cheek and orbital bone and kept him out two months; Fiorentino now has a plate in his cheek.

Both are in the A's camp, hoping to make a return trip at the end of this month to the country where they made an impression in 2008. Fiorentino also played there full-time, with Hiroshima, in 2010.

"That was a great experience," he said. "They do things really differently, but the bases are 90 feet apart, the mound is 60 feet, 6 inches from the plate. And I went to the museum in Hiroshima, I saw the plaque at ground zero (of the 1945 atomic bomb attack by U.S. forces during World War II). I saw the bombed-out buildings that look like they might fall over any time. It was amazing."

Both signed as minor-league free agents with Oakland because it appeared the A's would have major openings in the outfield last fall. Since then, the team's outfield corps has swelled to 15 men.

"I know the odds," Moss said. "It's an uphill battle with all of these outfielders in camp, but my ultimate goal is to go to Japan with the team, break camp with the team. I believe in my ability."

Florentino said, "I'm still hoping this is the right place at the right time."

The A's can take 28 men with them to Tokyo and set a 25-man roster for each game, meaning only one starting pitcher is likely to be active per game. The team will add probably a reliever or two and possibly one outfielder or utility player for each game.

Moss and Fiorentino each doubled in the A's 6-0 win over the Brewers on Tuesday.

**Céspedes update:** Manager **Bob Melvin** said **Yoenis Céspedes** is in tremendous physical condition, but not baseball condition, which could mean a bit more time before Céspedes appears in a game. Melvin said Céspedes will hit off pitchers later in the week and could play the next day or two after that.

**Briefly:** Third baseman **Scott Sizemore** was riding the exercise bike at Phoenix Muni on Tuesday morning, his fifth day of doing so, he said. He described it as torture, but said it helps get the swelling out of his left knee and will keep his leg from losing muscle tone as he waits to get his torn ACL repaired. ... **Brett Anderson** threw a bullpen session at the full distance Tuesday; he'd been throwing with the catcher set up just in front of the plate.

## A'S 6, BREWERS 0

**Notable:** The A's had two new pitchers, **Tommy Milone** (Gio Gonzalez deal) and **Ryan Cook** (Trevor Cahill deal), who both went to USC and who both shined at Maryvale. ... Milone, a front-runner for a rotation spot, threw three scoreless innings and struck out three, including **Ryan Braun** to end the first inning. ... Cook, a strong bullpen candidate, struck out two in two innings. ... Third-base hopeful **Josh Donaldson** went 1-for-5 with three strikeouts. ... Nonroster third-base candidate **Wes Timmons** was 2-for-2. ... **Chris Carter** and **Seth Smith** each had two hits, including a double apiece.

**Quotable:** "Usually he wins, but not today. I got him today. I kind of looked at him, and he gave me a little smirk."

- *Second baseman **Jemile Weeks** on diving to tag out his brother, **Rickie**, during a rundown in the first inning.*

**Today's game:** Dodgers (**Aaron Harang**) at A's (**Tyson Ross**), 12:05 p.m. Webcast only

### Oakland nears move to revitalize Coliseum area

Carolyn Jones, San Francisco Chronicle

Oakland took an ambitious step Tuesday night toward overhauling the Coliseum area, in hopes of enticing the A's, Raiders and Warriors to stay.

The City Council unanimously approved spending \$3.5 million on plans for a new stadium, hotels, conference center, shopping, entertainment and other amenities in the 750-acre area around the Coliseum and along Hegenberger Road toward the airport.

"Along with a few other things we have going, this Coliseum project could transform the city of Oakland forever," said City Council President Larry Reid, whose district includes the Coliseum complex. "When I see this actually getting built, that's when I'll get excited. But this is a great first step."

The money is among the last of the city's redevelopment funds and will not come from the general fund. The project itself would be privately financed.

About \$1.6 million will go to a development team that includes Forest City, the firm that developed much of the new housing in city's popular Uptown neighborhood, and HKS Architects, a Dallas firm that's done dozens of stadiums, including the Cowboys Stadium in Texas.

### **Money for review**

The rest of the money will go to an Oakland urban planning firm for environmental review.

But the plans - due for completion in 16 to 18 months - might be too late to keep the A's and Raiders, both of which see their Coliseum leases expire next year. Both teams have complained for years they don't like sharing the Coliseum and have said they want their own, brand-new stadiums, in Oakland or elsewhere.

The A's are awaiting a ruling from Major League Baseball on whether they can move to San Jose, which is in Giants territory.

"We will reserve comment until Major League Baseball reaches a decision about our stadium situation," said A's spokesman Bob Rose. "We choose not to speculate. Our position has remained the same."

Raiders spokesman Mike Taylor had no comment Tuesday on the team's plans or on Oakland's efforts to keep the team.

The Warriors appeared a little more swayed by Oakland's development plans.

"The Warriors and the city have expressed the desire to meet and discuss the impact of recent developments in Oakland," said team spokesman Raymond Ridder.

In December, the team announced it wanted a new arena and had been talking to San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee about building one near AT&T Park. An arena also could be in Oakland's plans.

### **Teams must help**

But no matter which teams stay in Oakland, they'll have to help pay for a new stadium if they still want one, said Ignacio De La Fuente, Oakland city councilman and chair of the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum board.

"The Raiders and A's should be begging to stay in Oakland," he said. "It should not be the opposite."

The Coliseum area has much to offer a sports franchise, including easy access to the airport, BART and freeway, plenty of available land for development and a location that's almost the geographical center of the Bay Area, officials said.

In addition, the BART connector between the airport and Coliseum will be complete next year.

Even if the stadium element of the plan falls through, the city would still like to develop the 3.5-mile stretch between the Coliseum and the airport, which is now home to a smattering of hotels and restaurants and a Walmart.

Ideally, development plans would include offices for high-tech and biotech firms, a hotel with at least 500 rooms and a midsize conference center, Reid said.

### **Major hotel possible**

Oakland is sorely under-equipped to handle major conventions, Reid said. The largest hotels are the Claremont, downtown Marriott and the airport Hilton, and the downtown convention center can't accommodate gatherings of more than 1,000 or so in its main ballroom.

The Coliseum area "is the perfect location for a major hotel and conference center," Reid said. "Right now, Oakland has the opportunity to be one of the most incredible cities in the U.S."

## Parker adapting after first trade of career

### Young right-hander was key piece in deal with D-backs

By Lyle Spencer / MLB.com

PHOENIX -- The first cut is always the deepest. You believe you've found a professional home, forming bonds for years to come, and one day -- Dec. 9, 2011, in this case -- someone from management calls and tells you not to take it personally, but you've just been traded.

Goodbye, Arizona. Hello, Oakland. You're two weeks past your 23rd birthday, and overnight your world is turned upside down.

When you're Jarrod Parker, and you thought you'd be part of a dazzling Diamondbacks rotation for years to come with good buddies such as Tyler Skaggs, it's a blow. How can you not feel abandoned, rejected?

"Early on, it's a jolt," Parker said. "You always know it can happen, but the first time, it's a little rough. But there's a little saying: When other teams make a trade for you, it's because they want you."

The sun, you find, keeps shining. You gradually find common ground with people in your new work environment and begin to shape new friendships and aspirations. You move on.

Parker, a right-hander from hoops-crazy Indiana, was the centerpiece from Oakland's viewpoint in the five-player swap sending starter Trevor Cahill and reliever Craig Breslow to Arizona. The A's also received hard-nosed outfielder Collin Cowgill and reliever Ryan Cook.

A's general manager Billy Beane identified Parker as a target and was thrilled to land him -- even at the cost of Cahill, an 18-game winner in 2010 who was neither as precise nor as productive in 2011.

Parker, quietly confident and advanced in his craft, has the repertoire, internal drive and mental stability to emerge as a No. 1 starter for as long as the A's can hold on to him.

He's a natural on the mound, with his clean mechanics and fluid delivery. A 93-96 mph four-seamer explodes out of his hand, and he has developed a full complement of secondary stuff with the arrival of a quality changeup.

In his fourth professional season -- he missed 2010 with Tommy John surgery -- Parker is determined to make it difficult for the A's to send him down for more seasoning.

"I never want anything handed to me," Parker said. "I've always worked for it and competed. It's definitely what you do in the offseason, to be ready when you get here so you can let what you do on the field take care of itself."

Coming right out of the chute in his first Cactus League test on Saturday, the 6-foot-1, 195-pound right-hander was dominant against Seattle: two innings, no hits, walks or runs, four strikeouts. The only baserunner reached on an error.

"Definitely this early, having that command is a good sign," Parker said. "The changeup felt good today, and I was able to throw a couple sliders. Being 100 percent fresh and healthy is huge coming into the year."

The ninth overall pick in the 2007 Draft, signing for \$2.1 million, Parker was on the fast track to Arizona when he hit a roadblock after pitching in the 2009 Futures Game at age 20. Elbow pain wouldn't go away, and surgery was performed in October. Rehab would fill the 2010 season.

Fully recovered in 2011, Parker excelled at Double-A Mobile and showed his mental toughness in his final three outings. He won two playoff starts, giving up a total of two runs, to drive Mobile to the Southern League title, and then held the Dodgers scoreless in 5 2/3 innings in his MLB debut on Sept. 27. He retired the first seven men he faced, and Matt Kemp was 1-for-2, with a double.

Like with any young player, it was never easy for Parker to leave behind all the people who nurtured him as he was finding his way.

"I made a lot of good friends in the Arizona organization," he said. "We had a great team in Mobile last year, some great times there. Skaggs lived with me and we had a good, friendly competition. He'd throw after me in the rotation and we gave each other a lot of good feedback."

Parker, under wraps early during the 2011 season in his recovery from elbow surgery, finished strong, going 11-8 with a 3.79 ERA. He refined a two-seam fastball and his changeup along with the slider and curve, enabling him to get deeper in games by inducing early-count outs.

Filling out one of the best Minor League rotations in memory were potential Major League starters Wade Miley, Patrick Corbin and Charles Brewer. In August, Trevor Bauer -- third overall pick in the 2011 First-Year Player Draft and a future star -- joined the club.

The bullpen featured two more MLB-bound arms in Cook and Bryan Shaw. First baseman Paul Goldschmidt was dominating the Southern League with 30 homers and 94 RBIs - high in the Minor Leagues - when he was summoned to Phoenix to help power the D-backs' stretch run.

Not much is expected of the A's this season with the revolving clubhouse door bringing in so many new faces.

A competitive environment is not such a bad thing when you're one of the young guys getting an opportunity that might not have been available elsewhere.

"It's nice to be around a lot of young guys," Parker said. "There's a lot of drive in the clubhouse. Everybody is excited to show what we can do."

Parker said he will look to veterans Brandon McCarthy and Bartolo Colon, "who have a good idea what it takes to be a professional." Another valued leader is durable and respected catcher Kurt Suzuki, who guides the staff with patience and wisdom.

"I've gotten good feedback after throwing to him," Parker said. "We talked about the changeup, fastball command. It's great to have someone like that to work with."

Jarrod Parker has moved on. Youthful resilience is a beautiful thing.

### **Young lefty makes strong start vs. Brewers**

#### **A's pitching holds Milwaukee to two hits, no runs**

By Adam McCalvy / MLB.com

PHOENIX -- Yovani Gallardo and Tom Milone are in very different positions this spring, Gallardo the likely Brewers Opening Day starter and Milone the A's left-hander fighting for a job.

Both made strong cases on a sunny Tuesday at Maryvale Baseball Park.

Gallardo struck out four in two scoreless innings for a successful spring debut and Milone logged three scoreless innings for the win, a 6-0 A's triumph that dealt the Brewers' first Cactus League loss.

Milone allowed only one hit -- a double by Brewers catcher Jonathan Lucroy in the second inning -- and struck out three batters including National League MVP Ryan Braun. The A's capitalized on a fielding error by Brewers shortstop Cesar Izturis in the third inning to score the run that made Milone the winner.

That run scored unearned against Brewers reliever Francisco Rodriguez on Jemile Weeks' RBI single. Weeks batted leadoff for the A's opposite his big brother, Rickie, who served as Milwaukee's designated hitter for a second straight day. The brothers engaged in a footrace in the top of the first inning, when Jemile made a diving tag near first base to catch Rickie in a rundown.

Oakland tacked on three more unearned runs in the sixth inning after another error charged to Izturis, this one on an errant throw that let two runs score. It was the third error in as many games charged to Izturis, a nonroster invitee to Brewers camp who is the leading candidate to win backup shortstop duties, partly based on his reputation as a sure defender.

Braun had another quiet day at the plate. He struck out swinging to end the first inning, his third whiff in as many Cactus League at-bats, then snapped his strikeout streak with a pop-out in foul ground in the fourth inning and called it a day.

"The overwhelming odds," Braun said with a smile, "are that I'm going to put one in fair territory one of these days."

**A's up next:** They have back-to-back games against the Dodgers on Wednesday at Phoenix Municipal Stadium and Thursday at Camelback Ranch. On Wednesday it's right-hander Tyson Ross against Dodgers' newcomer Aaron Harang. On Thursday, top starter Brandon McCarthy goes against Chris Capuano. A's manager Bob Melvin said Cuban slugger Yoenis Cespedes is still probably about a week away from seeing game action.

**Brewers up next:** Manager Ron Roenicke hopes to have Rickie Weeks back at second base on Wednesday, when the Brewers travel to Glendale, Ariz., to face the White Sox. Weeks has served as the DH in each of Milwaukee's first two games to rest a stiff throwing shoulder, but he needs some time in the field to develop a rapport with new shortstop Alex Gonzalez. Marco Estrada will start for the Brewers against Chicago's Jake Peavy, and the Brewers' John Axford, Kameron Loe, and 2011 first-round Draft pick Taylor Jungmann are all on the travel roster.

### **Milone making case to join A's rotation**

By Barry M. Bloom / MLB.com

PHOENIX -- The A's are still in search of three-fifths of their starting rotation and it couldn't be a better situation for Tommy Milone, the young left-hander from USC.

Milone was one of four players obtained by the A's on Dec. 23 in the trade that sent Gio Gonzalez to Washington. Right now, he has Brandon McCarthy and Bartolo Colon in front of him with Dallas Braden and Brett Anderson recovering from shoulder and elbow surgeries, respectively.

The A's rotation is wide open and that's just the way Milone likes it.

"There's definitely a better shot at making this rotation than any other in the Major Leagues right now," he said after the A's prevailed, 6-0, over the Brewers on Tuesday at Maryvale Baseball Park. "I'm glad I'm in that situation. I'm glad I'm here and able to be looking at a spot. I can't complain about the situation I'm in right now. Hopefully it will work out for the best."

Milone faced a formidable top of the Milwaukee lineup in Rickie Weeks, Carlos Gomez, Ryan Braun and Aramis Ramirez, allowing one hit and striking out three in his three innings of work. In the first, Milone walked Weeks to open the game and then picked him off, with Jemile Weeks, his younger brother, finishing the rundown as Rickie tried to slide head first back into first base.

Gomez flied out to center and Braun struck out for the third time in his first three at-bats this spring. Milone, the 25-year-old with five Major League starts last September for the Nationals, was pumped to have gone through the first inning so easily.

"It was pretty good, especially to be able to do that for the third out of the inning, to walk off the field," Milone said about whiffing last year's National League MVP. "It felt good, seeing him hit and stuff. That's the first time I ever saw him play in person. I've seen him before only on TV. It was a good feeling to be able get out one of the best hitters in baseball right now."

Braun fouled to first in the fourth inning and kind of laughed off how important the first-inning strikeout was to Milone. Braun is 0-for-4 in his first four at-bats of the spring, but it's nothing for him to worry about.

"The overwhelming odds are that I'm going to put one in fair territory one of these days," Braun said with a smile.

The overwhelming odds are that the A's are going to leave camp with a five-man rotation. But who the last three guys will be right now is anybody's guess. It won't be Braden or Anderson who are in different phases of recovery. Anderson officially threw off a mound the regulation distance to home plate for the first time prior to the game when the team worked out Tuesday morning at Phoenix Municipal Stadium.

Melvin, beginning his first full year as A's manager, seems content to wait it out. After all, the A's have played only six Cactus League games and Milone has made two appearances.



"I haven't changed my opinion of him since the first bullpen I saw him throw," Melvin said about Milone, Washington's 10th-round Draft choice in the 2008 First-Year Player draft. "He mixes his pitches and has great command. He reads swings. He's a very smart pitcher. He's one of those guys. You talk about position players who are great baseball players, he's a baseball player on the mound. He really has a good sense of what he needs to do."

### **A's Weeks bests his brother in spring game**

PHOENIX -- As A's second baseman Jemile Weeks chased down his older brother, Rickie, in a first-inning rundown on Tuesday at Maryvale Baseball Park, he had no intention of giving up the baseball.

"Not a chance," he said after practically tackling the Brewers second baseman as he tagged him out trying to slide head-first back into first base.

"That doesn't surprise me at all," Rickie said. "That's just brotherly competition right there."

The A's won, 6-0, but Jemile was still beaming after he came out of the game. The two had wrestled with each other many a time as they grew up in central Florida. Rickie is now 29, Jemile is 25. In the past, Rickie usually won.

"He usually gets the better of it," Jemile said. "But not today, though, I got him today."

The elder Weeks is more concerned about returning from a serious left ankle sprain on July 26 that knocked him out for the rest of the season. With Cactus League play just under way, he's trying to get his legs back under him.

"Yeah, he looks good," Jemile said about his brother. "He had a lot of rehab because of his ankle and everything. We worked out together. Obviously, all that work is starting to pay off. He's out there playing. I just hope he can keep it up."

Rickie was walked by left-hander Tommy Milone to open the Brewers' half of the first. Milone then picked him off, the ball having been transferred four times before it wound up in Jemile's grasp. Of the play, Weeks said, "a good move [by the pitcher], I guess." Then he was off to the races.

"They always say you want to get out of a pickle, but I just try to draw throws. As many throws as I can," Rickie said.

A's manager Bob Melvin wasn't enthralled with his club's execution. Too many throws, not enough early pressure.

"I didn't love the rundown, but we got the out," Melvin said. "That's the only thing that bothered me a little bit. We just didn't have the timing down. Once 'Weeksie' got it, you could tell he was going after his brother and wanted to tag him. He wanted to end that play right there."

### **Jemile Weeks helps Oakland blank Milwaukee 6-0**

By The Associated Press

PHOENIX - (AP) -- Once Jemile Weeks got the ball in this rundown, he wasn't about to give it up.

Weeks made a diving tag to nab his older brother Rickie in the first inning and finished with two hits in the Oakland Athletics' 6-0 exhibition victory over the Milwaukee Brewers on Tuesday.

Oakland left-hander Tommy Milone walked Rickie Weeks to lead off the game but picked him off first. Jemile Weeks was the last player with the ball in the ensuing rundown and chased his brother back toward first before going to the ground for the out, tackling his sibling at the bag in the process.

"He was acting like he was frustrated but he was all right," Jemile Weeks said. "He just looked at me kinda funny and gave me a little smirk."

Asked if he ever considered throwing the ball to a teammate, Weeks quickly said, "No. Not a chance."

Milone, one of four players acquired from Washington in the offseason deal that sent Gio Gonzalez to the Nationals, pitched three innings of one-hit ball. He struck out NL MVP Ryan Braun for one of his three Ks.

"It was a good feeling to get out one of the best hitters in the game right now," Milone said, "especially to do it for the third out and walk off the field. I didn't feel as good as I did the last time but I can't complain about the results."

Milone, one of several pitchers in the mix for a spot in the Athletics' largely open starting rotation, is proud of the development of the pickoff move he used to get Weeks.

"It used to be just a 'show me' move," he said. "Now it's turned into, I wouldn't say a game changer, but it saves innings."

Braun finished 0 for 2 and is hitless in four plate appearances this spring.

"I can only head in one direction," he said with a wry smile. "So the overwhelming odds are that I'll put one in fair territory one of these days."

Milwaukee starter Yovani Gallardo allowed a hit and struck out four over two innings in his spring debut.

Manager Ron Roenicke has yet to announce his opening-day starter, but the spring schedule points to Gallardo.

"I don't think it ever will (get old)," Gallardo said. "It's one of those things that's very exciting and everybody's looking forward to it, both the ballclub and the fans."

NOTES: Braun received a rousing ovation from the pro-Brewers crowd, a decided change from Saturday when he was heckled loudly by visiting San Francisco Giants fans. Braun was caught up in a drug case during the offseason and recently won his appeal, overturning a 50-game suspension for a positive drug test. ... Brewers OF Corey Hart underwent surgery to repair torn cartilage in his right knee. Hart will be out three to four weeks. . Brewers RHP Francisco Rodriguez pitched the third inning and allowed an unearned run.

### **The way to San Jose becoming bitter battle for A's**

By: Art Spander, San Francisco Examiner

The A's have their sights set on San Jose, but the Giants still hold territorial rights to the area.

PHOENIX -- The dynasty started 40 years ago in 1972. The A's won a World Series. Then another. Then another, an achievement since unmatched.

This is going to be a season of celebration, of memories, and two of the greats from the era, Rollie Fingers and Bert Campaneris, stopped by spring training before a recent exhibition game, living reminders of the way it was. Such a glorious past for the A's. Such a problematical future.

Spring is supposed to be a time of rebirth, the time in baseball when there is only optimism.

The A's do have their prospects and their hopes. They also have the stadium issue, which in actuality is an issue with the Giants.

An issue which seems unsolvable. An issue which has A's management frustrated and angry.

"That G on the Giants' spring training hats," said someone close to the A's organization, "the A's think it stands for greed."

The Giants think it could stand for grief, which would be the result if they are forced to cede their territorial rights to San Jose, the only place Lew Wolff, head of the A's, wants to build the new ballpark.

With seats in the upper deck of the O.co Coliseum covered by tarps, with few stars on the roster, with a policy of selling or trading their best players to get more money and players to stay on the treadmill from which there seems no escape, the A's are understandably troubled.

It was Wally Haas of the A's who in 1989 agreed to give then-Giants owner Bob Lurie the San Jose-area territorial rights so Lurie could try to get a ballpark there, which he couldn't, losing two elections on measures for public funding.

The park, AT&T of course, eventually was built in downtown San Francisco with private funds, necessitating a huge debt being paid off with money from sellout crowds boosted in part by fans from San Jose.

Thus, the Giants contend, they cannot afford to let the A's have one of their major sources of revenue.

Thus, the A's contend, unless they can have San Jose, meaning the wealth of Silicon Valley, there will be no new ballpark. Oakland be dreary and be damned.

Baseball commissioner Bud Selig could invoke the "best interests of baseball" powers and award San Jose to the A's, and his fraternity brother, Wolff.

Which Bill Madden, the New York Daily News baseball columnist, wrote Selig would be reluctant to do, because he couldn't get votes from owners of other teams who worry their own territorial rights could be endangered.

Madden claimed the A's and the Tampa Bay Rays, who like the A's have stadium troubles (Tropicana Field) and attendance failings, might be eliminated, or in the phrasing of baseball "contracted."

"The A's and the Rays are both in hopeless situations," Madden quotes an unnamed baseball official, "and there's no place to move these teams. Hard as this might be to swallow, it would be in the best interests of baseball to contract both of them."

That won't happen. The A's and the Rays are going to continue playing baseball, but for the A's, the question is where. They don't want to be in Oakland, and the Giants don't want them in San Jose. What a mess.

### **Don Mincher, player with both incarnations of Washington Senators, dies at 73**

By Matt Schudel, Washington Post

Don Mincher, who was one of the few players to appear with both incarnations of the old Washington Senators, and who later became a minor-league baseball executive, died March 4 at his home in Huntsville, Ala. He was 73.

The Huntsville Times reported his death, but the cause was not disclosed.

Mr. Mincher, who had a 13-year career as a first baseman, made his big-league debut in 1960, the final season the original Senators were in Washington before owner Calvin Griffith moved the franchise to Minnesota.

With the Minnesota Twins, the 6-foot-3 Mr. Mincher developed into a powerful left-handed-hitting slugger in an era dominated by pitching. In 1965, he hit 22 home runs for a Twins team that won the American League pennant.

Mr. Mincher was named to the all-star team in 1967, when he played with the Los Angeles Angels, and again in 1969, when he played for the Seattle Pilots during the team's only year of existence. He is the answer to a trivia question by being the only all-star in Pilots history. The franchise became the Milwaukee Brewers in 1970.

One of Mr. Mincher's teammates with the Pilots was pitcher Jim Bouton. In 1970, Bouton (with writer Leonard Schechter) published "Ball Four," an inside-the-clubhouse account of baseball that was considered scandalous at the time. Mr. Mincher reportedly disliked some of Bouton's revelations and his occasionally acidic portraits of players and coaches.

Before the 1970 season, Mr. Mincher was traded to the Oakland A's, for whom he hit a career-high 27 home runs. Early the next season, he returned to Washington to play for the second version of the Senators, who began as an expansion team in 1961.

On Aug. 31, 1971, Mr. Mincher became the final Senator to hit a grand-slam home run. At the end of the season, owner Bob Short moved the franchise to Texas, where the Senators became known as the Texas Rangers.

Mr. Mincher's final moment of glory came in the 1972 World Series, when he was playing for Oakland. In the fourth game of the series against the Cincinnati Reds, Mr. Mincher came to bat in the bottom of the ninth inning with the A's trailing, 2-1.

He stroked a single to tie the game, and the A's went on to win, 3-2. It was Mr. Mincher's final time at bat in the major leagues. Oakland later won the World Series in seven games.

Donald Ray Mincher was born June 24, 1938, in Huntsville. He was first signed by the Chicago White Sox before coming to Washington in a trade in 1960, when the Senators sent slugger Roy Sievers to the White Sox.

After his playing career, in which he hit exactly 200 home runs, Mr. Mincher returned to his native town, where he ran a sporting goods store and announced baseball games. In 1985, he became president and general manager of the Huntsville Stars minor-league baseball franchise. He was part of a group that bought the club in 1994 to keep it in Huntsville.

"Don was bigger than life in this town," Huntsville Stars general manager Buck Rogers told MiLB.com, the Web site of minor-league baseball. "If you wanted to make a movie about the prototypical local hero, then he'd be the guy."

Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Patsy Ann Payne Mincher; three children; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

From 2001 to October 2011, Mr. Mincher served as president of the Southern League, a Class AA minor league with 10 teams throughout the South. In 2010, he was honored with the minor league's King of Baseball award.