



Clips

(April 28, 2015)

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FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Josh Hamilton officially traded by Angels to Texas Rangers

By Mike DiGiovanna

Josh Hamilton's short, tumultuous and disappointing tenure with the Angels officially ended Monday when the team announced it had completed a trade of the troubled outfielder to the Texas Rangers, the club with which Hamilton thrived from 2008 to 2012.

"Over the course of the last few weeks, it became clear that Josh wanted to return to Texas," said Angels General Manager Jerry Dipoto. "After several discussions with the Rangers, we were able to complete a trade that in the end is the right decision for everyone involved."

No other players were involved in the deal. The Rangers will reportedly pay less than \$7 million of the remaining three years and about \$80 million on Hamilton's contract, and Hamilton will forfeit about \$6 million to the Angels to offset the benefit he will derive by playing in Texas, where there is no state income tax.

So, in effect, the Angels will pay Hamilton about \$68 million to play for an American League West rival, a reflection of just how much owner Arte Moreno wanted to rid himself of Hamilton after the player suffered a substance-abuse relapse over the winter.

"As his friend, it's unfortunate that it looks like I'm going to have to play against him," Angels pitcher C.J. Wilson, a teammate of Hamilton's in Texas, said after Sunday's game. "But that's the way it goes. You don't get to pick your teammates."

Hamilton, who has had a long and well-chronicled addiction to cocaine and alcohol, was a five-time All-Star and the 2010 AL most valuable player in Texas, but he was a bust in Anaheim after signing a five-year, \$125-million deal with the Angels.

In 2013, Hamilton hit a career-low .250 with 21 homers and 79 runs batted in. He hit .263 with 10 homers and 44 RBIs in 89 games in an injury-marred 2014 and was booed at home as he went hitless in 13 at-bats in a division series sweep at the hands of the Kansas City Royals.

"Josh knows that he didn't play to his potential here," Wilson said. "I think it comes down to that. He felt responsible to play up to the contract, because it's a big contract, obviously, and he scuffled a little bit."

Hamilton, who underwent right-shoulder surgery on Feb. 4 and did not report to spring training camp in Arizona, informed Major League Baseball of his relapse in early February.

But an arbitrator ruled on April 3 that Hamilton, who turns 34 in May, had not violated his drug treatment program, so Hamilton did not have to go into a rehabilitation program and could not be suspended.

Angels management was livid, with President John Carpino saying the ruling "defies logic," Dipoto saying he had "serious concerns about Josh's conduct, health and behavior," and Moreno refusing to say Hamilton would play for the Angels again.

The team had already pulled Hamilton-related merchandise from team stores and refused to issue him a locker in the Angel Stadium clubhouse. Moreno also said Hamilton's contract contained language that would protect the Angels from a relapse, an assertion vigorously denied by the players' union.

The sides seemed to inch closer to a reunion last week when the Angels announced a plan to send Hamilton to their Arizona training facility to prepare for a comeback.

Hamilton has been rehabilitating from shoulder surgery at a friend's ranch in the Houston area, and Manager Mike Scioscia, bench coach Dino Ebel and four players — Wilson, David Freese, Kole Calhoun and Collin Cowgill — met with Hamilton before an April 17-19 series in Houston, the players reporting that Hamilton was in great shape, in good spirits and eager to return to the field.

But Hamilton, who also recently filed for a divorce from his wife, Katie, balked at the plan and told the Angels he wanted to play in Texas, where he lives in the off-season.

On Monday, the Angels officially granted his wish, sending Hamilton to a struggling Rangers club that will get a potential impact slugger at a bargain price.

"It's not just about baseball," Angels star Mike Trout said. "He's a good teammate off the field, a good person to have in the clubhouse. It's tough."

The Angels are apparently so convinced that Hamilton will not be a productive player that they traded him without sending him to triple-A Salt Lake for a 20-game rehabilitation assignment, where the team could have done a more thorough evaluation of him.

Had Hamilton shown even a few glimpses of his All-Star form or a swing that showed some potential, the Angels, who are also struggling to score runs, might have benefited from his return or gotten a better return in a trade.

Instead, they are paying roughly \$68 million not only for Hamilton to go away, but to play for a division rival the Angels must play 19 times a year. Whatever Hamilton has left, he will surely be more motivated when he plays the Angels. The teams will next square off in Texas on July 3-5.

"As long as he's healthy and his shoulder is good, I think he can definitely help a team," Angels designated hitter C.J. Cron said. "Everything off the field, that's none of my business. When someone is on your team like that he becomes part of your family. All you can do is root for him and hope he sorts all that stuff out."

Hamilton is the third high-priced outfielder acquired under Moreno and then dumped with at least two years left on his contract, following Gary Matthews Jr. and Vernon Wells.

The Angels paid all but \$2 million of Matthews' five-year, \$50-million deal and all but \$14 million of the four years and \$68 million they inherited on Wells' contract after acquiring Wells from Toronto.

Josh Hamilton disagrees with Angels' assertion he lacked accountability

By Mike DiGiovanna

Josh Hamilton took strong exception to Angels owner Arte Moreno's comments suggesting that Hamilton lacked "accountability" by suffering a substance-abuse relapse that ultimately led to the troubled outfielder getting traded to the Texas Rangers on Monday.

"I have no clue what he's talking about," Hamilton said during a press conference at Globe Life Park in Texas, his first comments since he reported his relapse to Major League Baseball in early February. "I showed up every day and played hard when I was there. I hadn't been the player they wanted me to be, I know I haven't been, but I worked my butt off this winter to be that player.

"They just didn't want that to happen for some reason. It doesn't hurt my feelings or make me mad, but I prepared. [Moreno] knew what the deal was when he signed me. Hands down, he knew what he was getting. He knew what the risks were. He knew all those things. Under the [joint drug agreement], it is what it is."

Hamilton, who has had a long and well-chronicled addiction to cocaine and alcohol, was a five-time All-Star and the 2010 American League most valuable player in Texas from 2008-12, but he was a bust in Anaheim after signing a five-year, \$125-million deal with the Angels.

In 2013, Hamilton hit a career-low .250 with 21 homers and 79 runs batted in. He hit .263 with 10 homers and 44 RBIs in 89 games in an injury-marred 2014 and was booed at home as he went hitless in 13 at-bats in a division series sweep at the hands of the Kansas City Royals.

When an arbitrator ruled on April 3 that Hamilton had not violated his drug treatment program and could not be suspended, Angels President John Carpino said the ruling "defies logic," and General Manager Jerry Dipoto said he had "serious concerns about Josh's conduct, health and behavior."

Moreno said he was "disappointed" in Hamilton and refused to say Hamilton would play for the Angels again, claiming Hamilton's contract contained language that would protect the Angels from a relapse.

"More than anything, we look at accountability," Moreno said at the time. "With all of our players and all of our employees, we look for accountability."

Hamilton underwent right-shoulder surgery on Feb. 4 and never reported to spring training in Arizona, choosing to rehabilitate his injury at a friend's ranch in the Houston area. The Angels pulled Hamilton-related merchandise from team stores and refused to issue him a locker in the Angel Stadium clubhouse.

Had the Angels embraced him instead of shunned him after his relapse, "I would have been in spring training and playing a month ago," said Hamilton, 34. "I need baseball. I love baseball. I've been playing baseball since I was 3. But baseball is coming to an end soon.

"The reason I'm making certain changes in my life is I want to be OK after baseball is over. I've done a lot of growing, learning and soul-searching over the last few weeks. I'm excited about being a Ranger, about playing for fans again and ending my career by having fun."

The Angels had no interest in giving Hamilton a second chance, so much so that they are willing to absorb about roughly \$60 million of the remaining three years and \$80 million on Hamilton's contract to rid themselves of the player.

The trade of Hamilton to the Rangers was for a player to be named or cash, with the teams agreeing to complete the transaction by an unspecified date, but the Angels are not expected to get any considerable salary relief.

The Rangers will reportedly pay less than \$7 million of Hamilton's contract, and Hamilton will forfeit a fair amount -- believed to be at least \$12 million -- to the Angels to offset the benefit he will derive by playing in Texas, where there is no state income tax.

So the Angels, in effect, are paying Hamilton roughly \$60 million to play for a division rival without even sending him to triple-A Salt Lake for a 20-game rehabilitation assignment in which they could have done a more thorough evaluation to determine whether Hamilton can still be a productive player.

Had Hamilton shown glimpses of his All-Star form or a swing that showed some potential, the Angels, who are also struggling to score runs themselves, might have benefitted from his return or gotten a better return in a trade.

"We determined as an organization that this is the right move for us," Dipoto said on a conference call. "It was something we determined some time ago. ... This is not the way we envisioned any of this playing out when we signed Josh, but at the end of the day, we felt this was the best for the team, to be able to clear the air and move forward with 25 guys we have on the field today."

Was Dipoto ordered by Moreno to trade Hamilton?

"We run as an organization," Dipoto said. "The baseball operations group, the front office, the field staff ... everyone has communicated very clearly on this. We have made our decision, one that is in the best interest of the organization. This was not an order to do anything other than the right thing as an organization."

Dipoto said he had trade talks with other teams, but Hamilton has a full no-trade clause and expressed a strong desire to return to Texas, where he makes his off-season home, so the Rangers were the best and probably only fit.

"This is a transaction that puts Josh back where he wanted to be," Dipoto said. "That was made very clear through the course of this."

Does Dipoto believe Hamilton can still be a productive player?

"That's up to Josh," he said.

Hamilton, who will report to the Rangers' extended spring-training camp in Arizona on Tuesday and then go on a minor league rehab assignment, thinks he has something to offer.

"I'm not over the hill," said Hamilton, who will now be tested for drugs and alcohol five times a week, up from his three-times-a-week testing in recent years. "I got my shoulder cleaned up. I've been working in cage. I feel really good as far as my mental state of mind and physical well being."

"Wherever you want to put me, left field, center field, first base, catcher, designated hitter, it doesn't matter. I'm just happy to be here. I want to be part of a team that loves each other, that has good team chemistry and wants to leave everything on the field."

Albert Pujols' hitting is picking up for Angels

By Zach Helfand

By the time **Albert Pujols** stepped to the plate in the ninth inning Sunday and hit a sharp grounder through the infield, he had been due for a hit.

Pujols is batting just .200 this season, but he has shown signs of breaking out. Before his two hits in the Angels' series finale against the Texas Rangers — he also doubled in the 11th inning — he had gone one for 12. But many of those had been hard-hit balls right at a fielder.

Despite the lack of production early on, Manager **Mike Scioscia** has little concern. Scioscia noted that Pujols has been swinging the bat well.

"Albert, probably his last 10 at-bats, he's hit six rockets and not a lot to show for it," Scioscia said before Sunday's game. "He'll be fine."

The Angels need him to be. With the trades of **Howie Kendrick** and **Josh Hamilton**, the Angels lost two power hitters from last season's lineup. **Mike Trout**, who is hitting No. 2 in the order, remains perhaps the best hitter in baseball. Behind him, the Angels could use some pop, especially from Pujols, the No. 3 hitter.

In his three previous seasons with the Angels, Pujols has typically been a leader for the team. In 2012, Pujols had a shaky start. In April, he hit only .217 with no home runs and four runs batted in as the Angels languished at 8-15.

The next year was slightly better — he drove in 17 runs — but not enough to power the Angels through another ugly start, at 9-17. They never recovered. Despite only one more sub-.500 month, the Angels finished with their second losing season in a decade.

Pujols had his best start as an Angel last year, when he hit nine home runs and drove in 23 runs in March and April. As a result, the Angels were a more respectable 14-13.

As Pujols has taken longer to get going this season, the Angels have dipped below .500 again, at 9-10. But unlike in 2012 and 2013, no other division rival has capitalized.

Getting offensive

Sunday's blown save opportunity by **Joe Smith**, who was spelling **Huston Street**, overshadowed a resurgent performance from the lineup.

The Angels still haven't come close to last year's production, when they led the majors in runs. This season, they are ninth in the American League.

On Sunday, the Angels had 15 hits in 11 innings but stranded 14 runners as the bottom of the order continued its struggles. The top six batters accounted for all but three of the hits.

"We were swinging the bat well," Trout said. "Just in key situations a couple balls didn't go through."

Kole Calhoun has been the hottest. He is six for 10 in his last two games, including a string of five hits in a row. Last Thursday against Oakland, he had the team's only hit, a two-run, game-winning home run.

Up next

Right-hander **Jered Weaver** (0-2, 5.24 ERA) will face Oakland and right-hander **Sonny Gray** (2-0, 1.91) on Tuesday at 7 p.m. at O.co Coliseum. TV: FS West; Radio: 830, 1220.

FROM THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Angels' trade of Josh Hamilton to rival Rangers made official

BY JEFF FLETCHER

ANAHEIM – Josh Hamilton's turbulent relationship with the Angels officially came to an end on Monday, with Hamilton smiling in Texas and Jerry Dipoto satisfied that the club had saved about \$20 million and made the best out of bad situation.

"This is not what we envisioned," the Angels general manager said. "It didn't work out on the field. It didn't work out off the field. We are in a position now where it's best just to move on and focus on what happens next rather than what occurred."

Officially, the Angels traded Hamilton and cash considerations to the Texas Rangers in exchange for a player to be named or cash considerations. If they do get a player, it will be a low level minor leaguer. If they get cash, it could be \$1, a typical amount that changes hands in "cash considerations" deals.

This deal was about the Angels cutting their losses on Hamilton, who has a no-trade clause, by sending him to the place he wanted to go.

"Over the course of the last few weeks, it became clear that Josh wanted to return to Texas," said Dipoto. "After several discussions with the Rangers, we were able to complete a trade that in the end is the right decision for everyone involved."

Instead of paying Hamilton the \$83 million he is owed through the end of the 2017 season, they will send the Rangers about \$63 million. Their payroll, for purposes of the luxury tax, will be reduced by about \$20 million over three years, but the money is not divided evenly over the three years.

The Rangers will pay Hamilton about \$6 million, and the rest of the difference was made up by Hamilton reworking his contract.

Hamilton recoups some of that money simply by going to Texas, which has no state income tax, but much of that gap is simply lost. It was a concession Hamilton was willing to make in order to play at a place where he was comfortable during his five All-Star seasons before signing with the Angels.

The other benefit Hamilton received, in exchange for reducing the value of his contract, was an opt-out clause following the 2016 season. That would allow Hamilton to become a free agent a year early.

The agreement also likely contains further protection for the Angels, so they would get back money if Hamilton gets suspended without pay during the remaining term of the contract.

Hamilton, 33, avoided a suspension this year because an arbitrator ruled that his self-reported relapse of drug and alcohol use did not constitute a violation of his drug treatment program.

That decision sparked a series of comments from Angels management that highlighted the rift between the player and the organization that signed him to a \$125-million deal in December 2012.

Besides his latest off-field issue, Hamilton had never lived up to expectations on the field. He hit .255 with 31 homers and 133 RBI in two seasons with the Angels, including an injury-shortened season in 2014.

Hamilton ended his Angels career by going hitless in 13 at-bats in the postseason, looking lost at the plate.

"There was always turbulence," Dipoto said. "If I could put my finger on why where there was such a struggle, we could have corrected it."

Hamilton, who was having marital troubles that resulted in him filing for divorce in February, suffered his relapse around the time that he underwent shoulder surgery.

When spring training began, the Angels did not invite Hamilton to camp, instead allowing him to rehab in the Houston area until he was ready to get back to baseball activities.

By the time he finally clearance to do so, about a week ago, the Angels were already in the process of trying to trade Hamilton.

Dipoto said Hamilton never refused to report to Angels extended spring training in Tempe.

"This transaction was already in progress at the time we were released and allowed to send Josh for medical rehabilitation in Tempe," Dipoto said. "We were a good way toward realizing this outcome. We decided it was better to see this through than ask him to report to Tempe."

Word of the deal began to leak on Friday, and it took three more days for the complex agreement to be completed.

The deal was not only between the Angels and Rangers, but also involved Hamilton, because of his no-trade clause. The commissioner's office needed to approve it because of the amount of money the Angels were sending to the Rangers. The Players' Association needed to weigh in also, because Hamilton agreed to rework his contract.

"This is the culmination of a variety of different explorations, which included (Hamilton) playing for the Angels," Dipoto said. "There were a number of outcomes. This one made the most sense for everybody."

While the trade made it clear that Angels management simply wanted to be rid of Hamilton, in the clubhouse players have expressed support for Hamilton and some disappointment that he won't be returning to the Angels.

"It's not just about baseball," Mike Trout said Sunday. "He's a good teammate, a good person in the clubhouse. It's tough."

Lefty reliever Scott Snodgress eager for fresh start in Angels organization

BY BUBBA BROWN / CONTRIBUTING WRITER

SALT LAKE CITY — The skies were sunny, as they should be on the opening homestands of baseball seasons, and - sat alone in the first base dugout as workers on the field ushered away the last remnants of batting practice.

He looked beyond the outfield fence as he sat. He was optimistic that there, under the shadows of the snow-capped Wasatch Mountains towering in the distance, he would find a fresh start.

But if a new beginning is to be had with the Salt Lake Bees, Scott Snodgress will have to overcome an early-season speed bump to find it. The left-handed reliever was placed on the disabled list April 20 with inflammation in his throwing elbow. He was eligible to come off the DL Monday, though as of the writing of this story, no roster move had been announced.

Though Snodgress does not believe the injury is serious — he attributes it to trying to come back too soon from the stomach flu — it nonetheless was not how the free agent signee wanted to start his tenure in the Angels organization.

Snodgress did not sign with the Angels to watch games from the bench, an ice pack wrapped around his arm. He signed to reignite a promising career and, as he put it, to be part of something special.

“I was excited about the prospect of being an Angel,” said Snodgress, who have up six runs in 4 â ...” innings with the Bees before going on the DL. “With the things they’re doing, I think they’re capable of putting together a team that can compete to win the championship. That was a huge draw for me.”

But a change of scenery was never part of the original plan. A fifth-round pick out of Stanford by the White Sox in 2011, Snodgress had risen quickly through Chicago’s system. During his first three seasons in the minors, he worked primarily as a starter and posted ERAs in the mid- to low-3s. He garnered attention as a prospect with a good chance to stick on a major league roster.

But his ERA rose in the 2013 and 2014 seasons and his value dropped. Despite making his major league debut in August last year — he gave up four runs in 2 â ...” innings — he was not a part of Chicago's future.

Once considered one of the top prospects in the White Sox organization, Snodgress was non-tendered and for the first time as a professional, he found himself without a home. He signed a minor-league deal with the Angels eight days later.

There are things that are hard about leaving the only organization you’ve known, he admits. For one, it’s tough to leave behind the bonds forged with teammates through hundreds of games and thousands of hours traveling to and from minor league towns.

Nevertheless, he believes that with the Angels, he has found the place where he can rediscover what had once made him a good prospect. Though the name on his uniform has changed, it’s still just baseball, same as it ever was.

"It's just part of how this game works," he said of changing organizations. "It's something I figured I'd have to do at some point. It's still the same game. You're still doing the same routine you always did. I think the biggest thing is getting to know a new group of guys and getting to develop chemistry with them."

Snodgress is fortunate that what he needs to do to recapture his success is not a mystery, at least according to Bees manager Dave Anderson. As he puts it, the key for Snodgress is, simply, to find consistency.

If he can do that, Anderson said, Snodgress could be an asset for the Angels.

"He's got some really good stuff," Anderson said. "He just has to work on command and being consistent. That's basically what it is."

Snodgress knows it, too. He doesn't need to add velocity to return to a major league mound, nor is it necessary to develop another pitch. He just needs to find his rhythm. And once he does, he needs to repeat it.

"There's not really, at this level, a lot of drastic changes you're making," he said. "It's just day-in, day-out being a consistent player."

On deck: Angels at A's, Tuesday, 7 p.m.

BY JEFF FLETCHER

Where: O.co Coliseum

TV: Fox Sports West, 7 p.m.

Did you know: The Angels had lost the season series against Oakland three years in a row before winning in 2014.

THE PITCHERS

RHP JERED WEAVER (0-2, 5.24)

Weaver's past two outings have each shown progress after a couple rough games to start the season. On Wednesday night he gave up eight hits in six innings, but he didn't walk anyone and managed to escape with only one run on the board. Weaver was visibly upset at not getting a chance to pitch the seventh, but later said he needs to improve to again earn Mike Scioscia's trust to get deeper into games.

Vs. A's: 13-9, 2.46

At O.co Coliseum: 6-5, 3.47

Loves to face: Billy Butler, 6 for 32 (.188)

Hates to face: Eric Sogard, 9 for 27 (.333)

RHP SONNY GRAY (2-0, 1.91)

The Angels faced Gray in Anaheim in his last outing. They managed only two hits and one run against him in seven innings. Gray has allowed six runs in four starts, but four of the runs were in one game. He struck out a season-high seven against the Angels. In parts of three big league seasons, Gray has a 2.89

ERA and a WHIP of 1.147. Gray has faced Albert Pujols more than any other pitcher who has allowed one hit or fewer to the future Hall of Famer.

Vs. Angels: 3-1, 2.45

At O.co Coliseum: 12-8, 2.95

Loves to face: Albert Pujols, 1 for 16 (.063)

Hates to face: None

UPCOMING MATCHUPS

Wednesday: Angels TBA at A's TBA, 7 p.m., Fox Sports West

Thursday: Angels RHP Garrett Richards (1-1, 3.75) vs. A's LHP Scott Kazmir (2-0, 0.99), 12:30 p.m., Fox Sports West

Josh Hamilton discusses trade from Angels to Rangers, speaks for first time since relapse

BY PEDRO MOURA

ARLINGTON, Texas – The last time Josh Hamilton spoke publicly, he talked in grandiose terms of returning the Angels' investment in him by hitting 30 homers, driving in 100 runs and altogether being great at baseball again.

That was in January. In the three months since, the 33-year-old outfielder's world shifted dramatically. And so, in breaking his self-imposed silence after the Angels finalized a trade sending him home to Texas for some salary relief, he had a lot to say Monday at Globe Life Park.

Hamilton began the news conference re-introducing him as a Ranger by saying he would address only the future, not the past. That would not last; he would prove willing to discuss the end of his time with the Angels.

It was his chance to publicize his side of the story. While he has been quiet, the Angels repeatedly acted on their chances. Most notably, owner Arte Moreno said earlier this month he was "disappointed" in Hamilton and the lack of accountability he showed in admitting to a drug and alcohol relapse in February.

"We understand that he's had struggles, and obviously he's still having struggles, but the reality is there's accountability," Moreno said. "When you make an agreement, you need to stand up."

Hamilton said Monday he had "no clue what he's talking about."

"Going into this season, I hadn't been the player that they wanted me to be. I know I hadn't been," Hamilton said. "But I worked my butt off to be that guy, this year, going into the season for the Angels. They just didn't want that to happen, for some reason. It didn't hurt my feelings, it doesn't make me mad, or anything like that. But I prepared.

"(Moreno) knew what the deal was when he signed me, hands down. He knew what he was getting, he knew what the risks were, he knew all those things."

Hamilton said he still feels he's worth those risks.

At first, he sidestepped a question about whether he was willing to play for the Angels in 2015. Hamilton then winked at a reporter when asked it again, saying he would've been on the field for them already if they had forgiven his relapse.

"I would be," Hamilton said. "I would've been in spring training. I would've rehabbed in spring training. I would've been playing, probably, a month ago."

The Angels were not even ready to send him to extended spring training until last week, which speaks to the size of the divide between the two sides.

Hamilton and the Rangers have had their issues, too. He famously said the Dallas area was "not a baseball town," which earned the ire of fans all across the region. His wife of 11 years, Katie, criticized the team at his introductory news conference in Anaheim – and then felt threatened enough by fans to call security during the Angels' first series in Arlington.

Hamilton and his wife are now in the process of obtaining a divorce. He didn't mention her Monday, although he did mention their four daughters several times. Hamilton also made just one passing mention of his religious beliefs, in stark contrast to his Anaheim introduction, where he mentioned God or Jesus in nearly every answer.

Speaking in vague terms, Hamilton also seemed to criticize the Angels' handling of his so-called accountability partner, Shayne Kelley, who was not brought back for the 2014 season after being hired away from Texas prior to 2013.

"Between 2012 and 2015, a lot of my support system was kind of, I don't know, removed," Hamilton said. "Or pushed away, with other pieces added. And not all by my doing."

That was contradictory. Hamilton told MLB.com last year that he opted to "downsize" Kelley's role.

"It's time to cut the cord a little bit," Hamilton said then.

Regardless, the Rangers will employ Kelley this season. Texas has a concrete plan for Hamilton's future: He'll begin workouts at the team's spring-training facility in Arizona on Tuesday morning and a minor-league rehab assignment shortly afterward, with the goal of returning to the majors by May's end.

Hamilton said he realizes now he never should've signed with the Angels.

"Looking back on it now, if I could change the past, I would," he said. "I probably wouldn't have gone anywhere. I would've stayed here. But I can't change that. I'm happy to be back now."

Playful and primed, Hamilton spoke smoothly and a tad combatively Monday, as he often did in Anaheim. "I'm not over the hill, if that's what you're thinking," he said at one point, grinning widely.

He turns 34 next month and may never sign another professional baseball contract. The Rangers are absorbing the remaining three years of his current deal for roughly \$6 million, a miniscule investment compared to the \$125 million Moreno guaranteed 29 months ago. Texas general manager Jon Daniels called the acquisition an "easy decision."

"I don't feel like I have anything to prove, not to anybody else," Hamilton said. "But I always have something to prove to myself."

Said Rangers third baseman Adrian Beltre, who reached out to Hamilton before the trade was official: "He sounds like he wants to show people that he still can play."

Hamilton struggled to answer only one question, the final one he fielded, about how much baseball mattered at this stage in his life.

"I need baseball," Hamilton said after first asking what the politically correct response would be. "I love baseball. I've been playing baseball since I was 3. But baseball's coming to an end soon.

"The reason I'm making certain changes in my life is because I want to be OK after baseball's over."

FROM ANGELS.COM

Trade complete, Hamilton's Angels tenure ends

By Alden Gonzalez

ANAHEIM -- Whatever it is that ultimately happened between the Angels and Josh Hamilton -- from the drug relapse to the hurt feelings to the other parts of this saga that may still not be public knowledge -- it's over.

The Angels have turned the page, a very expensive one, on Hamilton's tumultuous tenure in Southern California.

On Monday, they completed a trade that sent the embattled outfielder back to the Rangers organization for which he once thrived. In exchange, the Angels were able to save roughly \$20 million on Hamilton's contract, which was originally set to pay him \$83 million through the 2017 season, and were able to move on.

"As an organization, this is not what we envisioned this experience to be," Angels general manager Jerry Dipoto said on a conference call. "It didn't work out on the field, it didn't work out off the field. We're in a position now where it's best for us to just move on and focus on what comes next, rather than what's occurred."

The Rangers are expected to pay the Angels \$2 million to \$3 million in each of the remaining three years of Hamilton's contract, and Hamilton himself relinquished roughly \$12 million while restructuring his deal, which is made up for by the fact Texas has no state income tax. Hamilton will also be able to opt out of his deal after 2016, though it's unlikely that he will.

The Angels talked through a variety of scenarios with Hamilton's representatives over the last three months, but a trade to the Rangers "is the one that always made the most sense for everybody," said Dipoto, who couldn't comment on specifics.

During his introductory news conference at Globe Life Park, Hamilton said if he had to do it over again, "I probably wouldn't have gone anywhere; I probably would've stayed here."

"When it was made aware to me that the Angels wanted to move me, my first choice was the Rangers," Hamilton added. "I've had a lot of good memories here."

Monday's trade put an end to what had evolved into an uncomfortable, contentious scenario that was sparked by a drug relapse late in the offseason.

Hamilton had spent the entire year in Houston, rehabbing from Feb. 4 surgery to his right shoulder while staying away from the team. The club did not issue the 33-year-old a locker at its Spring Training facility or at Angel Stadium, where all his merchandise and likeness was promptly removed, and never really welcomed him with open arms.

On April 3, when an arbitrator ruled that Hamilton's self-reported relapse did not violate the terms of his treatment program, president John Carpino said the ruling "defies logic" and Dipoto expressed the club's "disappointment" with a statement. Before the home opener on April 10, Angels owner Arte Moreno declined to say Hamilton would play for his team again and added that he hasn't spoken to Hamilton since the end of the 2014 season.

Asked why, Moreno said, "Probably disappointment."

"I think that's probably the biggest word here," Moreno added then. "We understand that he's had struggles, and obviously he's still having struggles, but the reality is there's accountability. When you make an agreement, you need to stand up."

Hamilton's response, when asked about those comments at his press conference on Monday: "Yeah, I have no clue what he's talking about."

"Going into this season, I hadn't been the player that they wanted me to be," Hamilton continued. "I know I hadn't been. But I worked my butt off to be that guy, this year, going into the season for the Angels. They just didn't want that to happen, for some reason."

"It doesn't hurt my feelings, it doesn't make me mad or anything like that. But I prepared. [Moreno] knew what the deal was when he signed me. Hands down. He knew what he was getting, he knew what the risks were, he knew all those things. Under the [Joint Drug Agreement], it is what it is."

Hamilton was later asked if he'd still be with the Angels if they had been more accepting of his relapse.

"I would be," Hamilton said. "I would've been in Spring Training, I would've rehabbed in Spring Training and I would've been playing probably a month ago."

Hamilton -- the No. 1 overall Draft pick out of high school in 1999, before drug and alcohol addiction kept him out of baseball for three years -- tapped into his potential with the Rangers from 2008-12.

Hamilton started five straight All-Star Games, played in back-to-back World Series, won the American League's Most Valuable Player Award and batted .305/.363/.549 in that five-year span, averaging 28 homers and 101 RBIs per season.

But his production slipped considerably after signing a five-year, \$125 million contract with the Angels in December 2012. He batted .255/.316/.426 with an average of 16 homers and 62 RBIs over the last two years, capping his run with an 0-for-13 performance in an AL Division Series sweep to the Royals.

"From the moment he got here," Dipoto said, "there has been turbulence."

Rangers general manager Jon Daniels expects Hamilton to be back on the field by the middle or end of May. He's restructured some things with his personal life, filing for divorce from his wife, Katie, and getting back to the support group he had before the 2012 season. Hamilton said he's now getting tested five times a week, up from three, and has done "a lot of learning and soul searching over the past few weeks."

"Baseball is coming to an end soon," Hamilton said, "and the reason I'm making certain changes in my life is because I want to be OK when baseball is over."

The Angels next play the Rangers in Arlington July 3-5, and Hamilton is slated to return to Angel Stadium July 24-26.

Dipoto was asked if this was a move that would come back to haunt the Angels.

"Why would it come back to haunt us?" Dipoto asked, to which the response was that he was trading Hamilton to a division rival and an organization that helped make him a star.

"Again," Dipoto said, "we're comfortable with the decision here."

FROM THE LA DAILY NEWS

Josh Hamilton trade from Angels to Texas Rangers official

By Clay Fowler

The Angels have officially traded Josh Hamilton to the Texas Rangers, Angels general manager Jerry Dipoto announced Monday afternoon.

"Over the course of the last few weeks, it became clear that Josh wanted to return to Texas," Dipoto said. "After several discussions with the Rangers, we were able to complete a trade that in the end is the right decision for everyone involved."

Hamilton, troubled by alcohol and drug addiction throughout his baseball career, self-reported his drug relapse in February. An arbitrator ruled Major League Baseball could not discipline him, leading to Angels owner Arte Moreno saying Hamilton would never play for the team again.

The Angels, who signed Hamilton to a five-year, \$125 million deal after the 2012 season, will pay \$68 million of the remaining \$83 million on Hamilton's contract, according to the Dallas Morning News, and the Rangers will pay \$6 million over the remaining three seasons of the deal.

In return for the 34-year-old, who was a five-time All-Star with the Rangers and the 2010 American League MVP, the Angels will receive a player to be named or cash considerations.

Hamilton has missed the first 19 games of the season recovering from February shoulder surgery.

FROM ESPN

Josh Hamilton on his return to Texas: 'This feels like home'

By Randy Jennings

ARLINGTON, Texas -- Expressing excitement to return to an organization where he experienced "so many good memories," Josh Hamilton was reintroduced as a member of the Texas Rangers at a media conference Monday afternoon at Globe Life Park.

Hamilton was acquired from the Los Angeles Angels in a deal rumored to be in the works for several days.

"Today is about moving forward," a casually dressed Hamilton told a packed conference room. "It feels good to be back in Arlington. A lot of ball games won here. It's still the loudest ballpark I've played in."

Hamilton, who turns 34 next month, is a five-tool outfielder who helped Texas to its only two World Series appearances, in 2010 (when Hamilton won American League MVP) and 2011.

"It was a little more complicated transaction than we're used to," said Rangers president of baseball operations and general manager Jon Daniels, crediting MLB, the Angels and Hamilton himself to make it happen.

Daniels said reacquiring Hamilton -- for a player to be named later and cash -- "was pretty much a no-brainer for us."

Prior to the 2013 season, Hamilton stunned Rangers fans when he signed a five-year, \$125 million free agent contract with the Angels, Texas' biggest rival. In two seasons in Anaheim, he failed to match the success enjoyed in five seasons as a Ranger.

"I probably shouldn't have gone anywhere," Hamilton said in reflection. "The Rangers always treated me great. But there's nothing I can do to change it."

When he left Texas, Hamilton angered the fans further by saying Dallas was not a true baseball town. Asked about the comment, Hamilton said he has tried to clarify and apologize. He is not sure what reaction he will get from the fans upon his return.

"This feels like home," Hamilton said. "I loved the guys in L.A. But L.A. is not Texas. The most important thing in my life right now are my girls and baseball."

The support team that Hamilton had in Texas, altered when he went to the Angels, is back in place. His repaired shoulder is "good to go." But without spring training, it will take a few days for Hamilton to get used to wearing the spikes again.

Angels owner Arte Moreno seemed to sour on his high-priced signee when it was revealed in February that Hamilton had a relapse into his drug addiction while rehabilitating from shoulder surgery. When the

rumor circulated that the Angels were going to move him, Hamilton said the Rangers were his first choice.

"I'm really happy to have him," said Elvis Andrus, one of the few Rangers remaining who can call Hamilton a former teammate. "He's a guy that has showed he can carry a team. "Nobody in this clubhouse is going to judge him," Andrus added. "Nobody is perfect. He knows we have his back with whatever happens. We know the kind of person he is."

Jeff Banister downplayed the idea of Hamilton requiring extra attention.

"All 25 players are different," the Rangers manager said. "Each one has his own things to deal with on a daily basis. He's one of 25 in the clubhouse.

"My experience is when players have something to motivate and drive them, they perform better and stay focused."

Roster move: The Rangers optioned struggling right-handed reliever Tanner Scheppers to Triple-A Round Rock and recalled left-handed reliever Alex Claudio.

Rain delay: The Seattle Mariners-Texas series opener Monday at Globe Life Park is in a rain delay.

FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Monday Sports In Brief

BASEBALL

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) - Josh Hamilton is back with the Texas Rangers.

After two troublesome years with the Los Angeles Angels and less than halfway through a \$125 million, five-year contract, Hamilton was traded to AL West rival Texas with cash on Monday for a player to be named or cash.

The Angels are expected to pay most of the remaining \$80.2 million Hamilton is owed.

Hamilton never reported to the Angels this season after offseason right shoulder surgery. He self-reported a relapse of alcohol and cocaine use, but an arbitrator ruled he could not be disciplined by Major League Baseball.

Hamilton was the 2010 AL MVP and an All-Star in each of his five seasons with Texas from 2008-12. He struggled with injuries and lack of performance with the Angels.

Angels-Athletics Preview

Jered Weaver is winless through the first four starts of a season for the first time in part because Sonny Gray bettered him less than a week ago.

For Gray, it was an extension of an impressive start to his second full season, while Weaver limited damage but continued getting hit at a clip he's not quite used to.

The right-handers square off again as the Oakland Athletics host the Los Angeles Angels on Tuesday night to open a three-game series, with some additional buzz surrounding the Angels after the departure of Josh Hamilton in a trade with Texas.

Gray (2-0, 1.91 ERA) held Los Angeles to a run and two hits while striking out seven in seven innings of Wednesday's 9-2 Athletics victory at Anaheim.

"For the most part, he's basically pitched the same game every time this year," manager Bob Melvin said. "He gets a strikeout when he needs one, gets the ball on the ground when he needs it, and his competitiveness shows up every time. He kicks it into another gear."

Gray moved to 3-1 with a 2.45 ERA in seven career games against the Angels (9-10). Of his six starts, two have come against Weaver and Gray has won both.

Albert Pujols' 1-for-16 mark highlights the Angels' offensive shortcomings against him, while Kole Calhoun (2 for 18 with seven strikeouts), Matt Joyce (2 for 11) and Chris Iannetta (0 for 7) have also struggled. Mike Trout is 4 for 16 with two home runs and seven strikeouts.

Weaver (0-2, 5.25) allowed a run and eight hits in six innings of the last matchup before the bullpen let things get out of hand. He didn't surrender a home run for the first time this season, but hasn't lasted more than six innings in any of his four starts.

"I've just got to prove to (manager Mike Scioscia) that I can get deeper in games," Weaver said. "I'm still trying to find my way, and it's getting better each and every time." Limited offense has also been a factor, as Los Angeles has supplied Weaver with 2.42 runs of support per game.

Weaver has gone 7-2 with a 1.79 ERA in his last 11 starts against the Athletics (8-12), though he hit a rough patch in Oakland last season, going 1-1 with a 5.68 ERA in two starts.

The clubs split four games last week. Oakland dropped the series finale and has lost four in a row after being swept by Houston at home over the weekend.

The A's longest skid last year was five games and they're four under .500 for the first time since July 1, 2012, but they aren't panicking.

Oakland's off day Monday - just its second - provided a tired bullpen with some rest. The relievers have posted a 7.91 ERA in six games and have pitched 25 1-3 innings in the past seven - among the most in baseball in that span.

"With the state of our bullpen right now, we need a day off," manager Bob Melvin said. "We're one of the few teams that's only had one, if not the only one. We did a lot of good things right today, but we're doing just enough to lose games right now."

Los Angeles has been more concerned with its lineup after entering Sunday's matchup with Texas with a .219 average. Despite a 15-hit day, the Angels fell 5-4 to snap their three-game win streak.

Pujols bumped his average to .200 with two hits while Calhoun had three and is 12 for 25 over six games. C.J. Cron entered the series batting .154 but went 8 for 12. Hamilton will no longer be a part of that lineup, though he hadn't made an appearance for Los Angeles this year anyway. The talented but troubled slugger was returned to the Rangers on Monday for a player to be named or cash.

Hamilton endured two troublesome seasons with the Angels on a \$125 million, five-year contract, suffering a relapse of alcohol and cocaine abuse this past offseason and spending all of this season on the disabled list after shoulder surgery. However, he was an All-Star each year for the Rangers from 2008-12 and was the 2010 AL MVP.

FROM YAHOO SPORTS

Angels simply, coldly stopped believing in Josh Hamilton

By Tim Brown

On a mid-December day, what seems like forever ago, Josh Hamilton was asked if the Los Angeles Angels were right to believe in him.

The sun shined. The cameras clicked. Optimism hovered like a halo. His wife and four daughters sat before him, as did Angels owner Arte Moreno, as did the rest of his baseball career. He was 31 years old, lucky in some ways to have made it there, but there nevertheless, rich many times over and about to be feathered into a lineup that already held Mike Trout and Albert Pujols.

The press conference was held in what amounted to a bar, which was how certain the Angels were of their belief in him, the recovering alcoholic and drug addict.

“It comes to a point of making choices,” Hamilton said that day. “What choices are you going to make?”

Not halfway through the \$125 million contract trumpeted that hopeful day, and all the way through the smiles from that sunny day, Hamilton is no longer an Angel. He is responsible for that. He made his choices, and Arte Moreno apparently is not the kind of man to let another man up from his choices. Those are Moreno’s choices.

On Monday, Moreno rid himself of Hamilton, all that chases Hamilton and, because there after all are choices, all that Hamilton chases. The Angels traded Hamilton to the Texas Rangers, though “traded” is the official term for a transaction that in reality was an eviction. The Angels will pay all but a few of the \$83 million still owed Hamilton and get nothing in return but the satisfaction of knowing they put Hamilton out, that he – Arte Moreno – is not a man to be crossed, and that he – Arte Moreno – will not stand for other people making him – Arte Moreno – look like a gullible fool.

In the end, Moreno bought 31 home runs, 123 RBI and zero postseason hits for about \$118 million. Twelve years before, he bought the entire team for \$184 million, the sort of accounting that would have irked him once. And yet, when Hamilton relapsed, there hardly seemed any hesitation in what Moreno would do. First, the organization publicly and shamefully scolded Hamilton. Then, Moreno announced he had a way out of the contract. They all but said they were wrong to believe in the day Hamilton arrived, wrong to believe in the player, wrong to believe in the man.

That’s a hard, hard heart. But theirs to be hard. The Angels would not – could not – believe. Not anymore. They are not the first to conclude they are better off without him, that the skills – such as they are – are not worth the time, money or occasional heartache and public relations hit. They are not sending him into the streets. Just, away, into somebody else’s clubhouse, somebody else’s lineup, and somebody else’s orbit.

Hamilton, as a high-ceiling, low-paid risk (which is how most organizations viewed Hamilton in free agency, by the way), will have time to continue his shoulder rehabilitation and then his career, certainly in the American League and with the Rangers, where the frailties of his past – a weakened body among them – would be less detrimental.

Moreno lives with that, and presumably quite comfortably.

The rest of us go back to rooting for Hamilton the husband and father, for another day like Dec. 15, 2012. He mugged for his little girls, who giggled at the sight of daddy up there slipping into a new jersey under the lights. If they were listening, they would have heard the talk about family and belief and accountability, then come to the conclusion they were among friends. The man with the thin mustache would be that kind of boss, as he'd invested in their future in spite of the alarmists who figured their daddy was one crummy day away from something terrible.

We only know what we know. Based on that and that alone, Moreno's reaction seems so overblown to be cruel. Maybe there was more. Maybe something ugly. Maybe not.

Maybe if Josh Hamilton were still the man who won MVP awards and hit 40 home runs and led the league in hitting and RBI...

Maybe if Hamilton still lit up a field with his athletic ability...

Maybe if he were still marketable as something other than an entirely human, utterly vulnerable, deeply flawed man...

Maybe then Arte Moreno would find it in his heart to give Josh Hamilton another chance. Instead, it appears Moreno has come to the conclusion he made a mistake 2½ years ago, and simply cannot bear the evidence of that in his clubhouse for another 2½.

So, the world moves on. Moreno has what seems to be a decent ballclub, relevant again. Hamilton has his money and his life and an opportunity to get healthy, stay healthy and find more work. Where it goes from here, only Hamilton knows for sure.

It's his choice.

FROM FOX SPORTS

Hamilton: Angels knew what the risks were with signing me

By Steve DelVecchio

Before the **Los Angeles Angels** decided to eat \$68 million to basically give **Josh Hamilton** back to his old team, owner Arte Moreno **explored ways to void the 33-year-old's contract**. To the surprise of no one, the MLB Players Association fought Moreno and won.

An arbitrator ruled that the Angels could not punish Hamilton for his latest drug relapse. While many fans and analysts have been quick to throw the phrase “buyer beware” in Moreno’s face, it was interesting to hear Hamilton use a variation of it when addressing the situation on Monday. “He knew what the deal was when he signed me. Hands down,” Hamilton said, per Gabe Lacques of USA Today Sports. “He knew what he was getting, what the risks were. Under the (joint drug agreement), it is what it is.”

Something just doesn’t seem right about that coming from Hamilton. We know addiction is a disease, but one would expect Hamilton to hold himself accountable on some level. Hamilton, who filed for a divorce from his wife Katie around the time of his latest relapse, was offended by Moreno’s assertion that he lacked accountability.

“I have no clue what he is talking about,” he said. “I showed up every day. Played hard every day I was there. Going into this season, I hadn’t been the player they wanted me to be.

“But I worked my butt off to be that player this year for the Angels. They just didn’t want it to happen to me for some reason. It doesn’t hurt my feelings, doesn’t make me mad. But I’m prepared.” Most people don’t understand drug and alcohol addiction, which is one of the reasons players typically apologize when they abuse drugs or alcohol. Hamilton apologized on Tuesday for the stuff he has said about Rangers fans in the past, but he did not apologize for allegedly doing cocaine at a strip club in February. Whether you think he owes anyone an apology for that is a matter of personal opinion.

Angels can now move forward sans Josh Hamilton

By Rahshaun Haylock

If **Josh Hamilton** had to do it all over again, the slugger says he likely would've stayed in Texas with the Rangers.

Ditto, for the **Angels**.

The Josh Hamilton era in Anaheim ended Monday with the former American League MVP being shipped back to Texas for a player to be named later or cash considerations.

"It's a decision that we are at peace with," Angels general manager Jerry Dipoto said.

The Angels signed Hamilton to a five-year, \$125 million deal following the 2012 season. Hamilton has \$83 million remaining on that deal and it is believed the Angels will pay the bulk of the salary going forward, although Dipoto wouldn't comment on the cash considerations.

It just didn't work, Dipoto said. The marriage, like many others, wasn't a good match. Emotions tipped over after Hamilton self reported a drug and alcohol relapse to Major League Baseball in February. An arbitrator ruled Hamilton would not be punished for his actions which didn't sit well with the organization.

Even before the ruling, the organization began looking for places to unload embattled star.

The division rival Rangers made the most since for all parties involved, Dipoto says.

Although Hamilton hit just .255 with 31 home runs in two seasons with the Angels, he leaves a gaping hole in the lineup.

Skipper Mike Sciocia has mentioned many times the difficulty of replacing **Howie Kendrick** and Hamilton in the lineup. Kendrick was traded to the Dodgers in the offseason. At the time of the trade, the Angels were under the impression Hamilton would be in the lineup. Both are now former Angels. The good news is the club can now turn the page on the Hamilton saga, no longer worried about receiving questions about if and when Hamilton is returning.

That door has been closed.

The Angels bats have been quiet to start the season but during the last home stand appeared to have come alive thanks to a pair of 15-hit games. The team is now hitting .227 on the year, which is 23rd in Major League Baseball and up six spots from where the team was last week --next to last.

In left field, Scioscia has been relying on a platoon of **Collin Cowgill** and former Tampa Bay Matt Joyce. Neither, however, are having their way at the plate.

Cowgill is hitting .184 while Joyce is hitting .140, which makes Hamilton's .255 in two seasons with the club look even more impressive.

Grant Green was recently called up and, perhaps, can give the club some offensive pop in left field.

Green was hitting .328 at Triple-A Salt Lake at the time he was called up.

C.J. Cron has gotten the bulk of the starts as the team's designated hitter. Like Joyce and Cowgill, Cron was beneath the Mendoza Line to start the season but raised his average 146 points during the last home stand and appears to have regained the swing that helped him hit over .400 in spring training. The Angels can now truly do what it's wanted to for the past couple of months and that's move on.

"If I could put my finger on why Josh had a tough time here, we may have been able to help him solve those issues and I'm sure if he could put his finger as to why it was such a struggle here, I'm sure he would have been able to contribute more than he did, but at the end of the day this decision is about our 25-man roster, our organization, (and) the health of this group as we move forward," Dipoto said. "We're going to part ways with Josh Hamilton, let him rejoin the Texas Rangers, and we're going to focus on Angels baseball as we move forward."

FROM NBC SPORTS

Did the Angels shoot themselves in the foot in the Josh Hamilton situation?

By Craig Calcaterra

The deal is done and **Josh Hamilton** is heading to Texas. The Rangers are paying less than \$7 million for the guy, which is a great deal even if Hamilton performs at the level he's shown in Anaheim the past two years. If, however, his health and sense of well-being are such that he's able to approach his old level, the Rangers have themselves an absolute steal. No matter what happens, the Angels are paying Hamilton tens of millions of dollars to simply go away.

And I can't help but think that's their own damn fault.

While Rob Manfred continues to maintain that the Angels did not leak the fact of Hamilton's drug relapse and the disciplinary hearing against him to the media, logic suggests that they're the prime candidates. And even if they didn't, the fact of the matter is that **Angels officials gave multiple public comments about Hamilton in the wake of all of this**, most of it negative, much of it suggesting that Hamilton has little or no value at the moment. He's broken and sick and he's the sort of person we don't even want near our club, let alone on it, the Angels' words and actions seem to have said.

There are always things that happen in negotiations we in the public don't know about, but is it that hard to believe that, given how badly the Angels sandbagged Josh Hamilton and how clear they made it that they wanted to be rid of him that Jon Daniels realized he had a good bit of leverage here? Is it not reasonable to suggest that, had Hamilton's issues remained confidential, they could've gotten a better deal for him? Not because the Rangers wouldn't know — they'd have access to his medical history and, I presume, would be told of his relapse — but because the public wouldn't. And if they didn't Jon Daniels would not be able to tell Jerry Dipoto "hey, you gotta help me sell this deal to my fan base." With said sale being a very low price tag to take on a guy perceived as damaged goods.

It's all speculation on my part, I realize. Like I said, there are always things in these deals we do not know. But from where I'm sitting, I can't see a lick of benefit the Angels got from publicly denigrating their player and I can't see how this deal is particularly good for the Angels.

Maybe those things go together, maybe they don't. But it's hard to see what good came of the Angels' peculiar approach to Josh Hamilton since February.

Deal done: Josh Hamilton traded to the Texas Rangers for cash considerations

By Craig Calcaterra

On Friday it was reported that the Angels and Rangers had agreed to a trade for **Josh Hamilton**. The deal is now done and the details announced: it's for a player to be named later or cash considerations. There will be a press conference at 4:30 Eastern time, and presumably the details will be confirmed then or shortly thereafter.

As for now, **T.R. Sullivan of MLB.com reports** that the Rangers will "pick up a small portion" of the remainder of Hamilton's salary with the Angels responsible for the rest of the \$83 million still owed. On Friday it was reported that the Rangers' amount could be as low as \$7 million for the remaining three years. There have also been reports that Hamilton can opt-out of his deal after the 2016 season. Which, boy-howdy, is not a lot for a guy who could still be a good player. It basically means the Angels just gave up on the guy and gave up on their belief, however erroneous it was, that they could go after Hamilton for the money they still owed him under some sort of "bad behavior" clause in his deal. Now the Angels will be on the hook for the vast majority of the money he is owed and get nothing, it seems, in return.

Of course, given the events of the past several weeks, one suspects that Hamilton and the Angels would do just about anything to be rid of one another.

Following **Hamilton's admission of a drug relapse in late February**, Major League Baseball held an arbitration in order to determine if he should be disciplined. **Hamilton prevailed and faced no punishment**, but the Angels were clearly dissatisfied with the results. In the wake of the ruling, **multiple team officials issued public statements criticizing the arbitrator's ruling** and Hamilton's behavior. Since then, Angels owner **Arte Moreno has refused to state publicly if Hamilton would ever play for the Angels again**. Hamilton's locker was given to another player and all Hamilton merchandise had been removed from the Angels' team store. Two weeks ago it was reported that **Hamilton had placed his Orange County home up for sale**.

Moreno has suggested to the press that the Angels possessed the legal right to claw back money from Hamilton pursuant to special substance abuse provisions in Hamilton's contract and language **which requires that Hamilton be in "first-class condition."** **Sources familiar with the contract told NBC Sports two weeks ago**, however, that no such provisions exist which would supersede the terms of the Joint Drug Agreement. The players union has likewise said that Joint Drug Agreement, which Hamilton has been found not to have violated, trumps any contract language to which Moreno may be referring. Last week Hamilton's teammates who met with him in his Houston-area home **told the Los Angeles Times** that Hamilton was in excellent physical condition and eager to begin playing again.

This deal puts an end to that acrimony. And puts Josh Hamilton back in Texas, where he rose to his greatest heights as a major leaguer. In five seasons with the Rangers Hamilton hit .305/.363/.549 with 142 home runs and 506 RBI. He led the Rangers to two American League pennants and won the 2010 MVP award and batting title while likewise leading the league in OPS.

While Hamilton's exit from Texas was a rocky one, a lot has happened since then. Hamilton, following two awful seasons and this latest drama, has been humbled. The Rangers are no longer a winning team. A reunion may not make the most baseball sense, but a commitment of only \$7 million for a potential impact bat is not that much, and the reunion may not be the worst thing for a club and a player each of which could use something of a fresh start.