

## A's News Clips, Wednesday, November 11, 2009

### Base question: Who's on 3rd?

Susan Slusser, Chronicle Staff Writer

Billy Beane of the A's spent the general managers' meetings in Chicago this week combing for third-base possibilities because the team does not have an automatic option there next season.

Infielder Adam Kennedy might not return, though he is interested in doing so; six-time Gold Glove winner Eric Chavez is trying to come back from his second back surgery; and top prospect Brett Wallace is likely to need more seasoning. It's also unclear if third will be his position in the majors. So while Oakland is looking in general terms for good young players on the left side of the infield and at the corner outfield spots, the emphasis is third.

"Certainly it is," Beane said, "with Adam being a free agent and, with Eric, we've made it clear that it would be great if he can come back but we'd be foolish not to look at other options."

The A's are unlikely to spend much money on free agents. Beane said the emphasis continues to be on young players, so if Oakland adds pieces, they're more likely to come through trades. Oakland has weighed the merits of probably every young third baseman around, but from a sheer speculation standpoint, Kansas City might be willing to deal Alex Gordon or Josh Fields, and if the Angels re-sign Chone Figgins, Brandon Wood might be available.

Oakland is talking to Kennedy and to another of the team's own free agents, however: right-hander Justin Duchscherer. Duchscherer's agent, Damon Lapa, said Tuesday that the two-time All-Star has made terrific progress in his return from clinical depression, calling Duchscherer "a happier and healthier person."

Lapa said that after not pitching in 2009, Duchscherer has dedicated himself to preparing for 2010, working with noted trainer Brett Fischer.

Lapa said that Duchscherer and the A's have mutual interest but that Duchscherer is receiving a great deal of interest from other teams. Duchscherer has made it clear to suitors that his strong preference is to be a starting pitcher.

Beane and assistant GM David Forst are heading to the Dominican Republic today, in part to scout players.