



OAKLAND ATHLETICS

Media Release

Oakland Athletics Baseball Company • 7000 Coliseum Way • Oakland, CA 94621
510-638-4900 • Public Relations Facsimile 510-562-1633 • www.oaklandathletics.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 18, 2011

A's Agree to Terms with Balfour on Two-Year Contract with Club Option **A's Also Reach Agreement with Four Arbitration Eligible Players on One-Year Contracts**

OAKLAND, Calif. – The Oakland A's agreed to terms with free agent right-handed pitcher Grant Balfour on a two-year contract through the 2012 season with a club option for 2013, the club announced today. To clear a spot on the 40-man roster, the A's designated right-handed pitcher Clayton Mortensen for assignment. The A's also agreed to terms with left-handed pitcher Dallas Braden, infielder Kevin Kouzmanoff, and outfielders Conor Jackson and Josh Willingham on one-year contracts, leaving Craig Breslow as the only arbitration eligible player. In addition, right-handed pitcher Philip Humber was claimed off waivers by the Chicago White Sox.

Balfour was 2-1 with a 2.28 ERA in 57 relief appearances with Tampa Bay last year and ranked eighth among American League relievers in ERA. He held the opposition to a .216 batting average, including .174 against right-handed hitters, and struck out 56 in 55.1 innings. The 33-year old right-hander also made three appearances in the ALDS against Texas, not allowing a run in 3.2 innings.

Balfour is 13-7 with a 2.98 ERA, .201 opponents batting average and 207 strikeouts in 181.0 innings over the last three seasons. He made his Major League debut with Minnesota in 2001 and pitched in parts of three seasons for the Twins (2001, 2003-04). The Australian has also pitched for Milwaukee (2007) and Tampa Bay (2007-10), posting a 19-10 mark with a 3.81 ERA and .222 opponents batting average in 261 career games over seven seasons. Balfour's 311 career strikeouts are the most in Major League history by an Australia-born pitcher and he also ranks third in wins (19) and games pitched (261) among his countrymen.

Braden was 11-14 despite a 3.50 ERA in 30 starts with Oakland last year and tossed the 19th Perfect Game in Major League history, May 9 against Tampa Bay. Kouzmanoff led the A's in home runs (16) and extra base hits (49), and tied for the team lead in RBI (71) despite batting .247. Jackson combined to hit .236 with two home runs and 16 RBI in 60 games with Arizona and Oakland last year in a season that was interrupted by three stints on the disabled list, including twice with Oakland. Willingham was acquired from Washington Dec. 16, hitting .268 with 16 home runs, 56 RBI and a career-high 67 walks in 114 games with the Nationals.

Mortensen made one start with Oakland in 2010 and had a no decision while posting a 4.50 ERA. He spent the balance of the season at Triple-A Sacramento, where he was 13-6 with a 4.25 ERA in 26 starts. Humber was claimed by the A's off waivers from Kansas City Dec. 17. He was 2-1 with a 4.15 ERA in eight games, one start, with the Royals and 5-6 with a 4.47 ERA in 21 games, 20 starts, with Triple-A Omaha.

The complete 2010 and career statistics for Balfour follow:

BALFOUR	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SHO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
TAMPA BAY	2	1	2.28	57	0	0	0	0	55.1	43	16	14	17	56
Charlotte	0	1	10.80	2	2	0	0	0	1.2	2	3	2	3	2
MLB CAREER	19	10	3.81	261	1	0	0	8	273.2	221	120	116	132	311

#

Contact: Mike Selleck (510) 563-2233
mselleck@oaklandathletics.com