THE TRADE DEADLINE

Oh my, where do I begin. Next to October, this is my favorite time of the baseball season. So many teams selling and buying into their near future, as well as teams providing hope for their long-term future when making trades. Last year I made some predictions here on Facebook and I am happy to report that I got one of those predictions correct, while I had 4 predictions off of Facebook that were correct. Let’s see if we can see that same success with my predictions this year. I can’t make predictions for a few names like Giolito, Graveman, or Kelly, so I’ll go based off of what I have in front of me.

Let’s break down a few buyers here.

The Rangers - the Rangers are buying IN! They traded for Jordan Montgomery, Max Scherzer, and a solid reliever. I originally thought they would add pitching, but I thought it would be Verlander. They need a hitter now to solidify that lineup.

The whole NL Central besides the Cardinals. The Cubs shocked me with the bounce back they’ve had this second half. 8 game winning streak including wins making the Cardinals sellers at the deadline. I see them keeping Stroman and Bellinger and hoping they can keep them at the end of the year. But goodness they need some help. A third baseman, starting pitching, and preferably another outfielder. Even a first baseman. The moral of the story is, they need a lot to make a deep run here. The Reds have pitching depth, young players, and a resurgent Joey Votto. I could see them adding a veteran outfielder though. The Brewers will get pitching back, but they need bats. Yelich is looking better this year, but they’ve needed more.

Orioles - the Orioles will be buyers at the deadline but for pitching. Their lineup is insanely young, and insanely good. There is a reason why announcers are calling them the Baby Birds. (That needs to be trademarked) O’Hearn, a team the Royals gave up on is now raking in Baltimore. Henderson, Rutschman, Cowser, and Mountcastle. Adding in the guys who aren’t in the bigs yet, headlined by Holliday. They’re getting Cedric Mullins and Aaron Hicks back. That’s a lineup that opposing pitchers are terrified of. I could see them going after a third baseman as well, but only if the price is right.

**Sellers:**

Red Sox - while the Red Sox aren’t bad, they’re in a loaded division. The Yankees could probably be listed above the Red Sox, but I’d be more impressed if the Red Sox don’t end up unloading a few players. I wouldn’t be surprised if teams call about Justin Turner, Kike Hernandez has already been traded, but I also believe that a team might call about some of their arms like Bernardino.

White Sox - last year I thought they could make the playoffs. I was wrong. I was even more wrong that they struggled this year as well. Not much else to say, disappointing season for the South Siders.

Mets - this team is so bad, it’s not funny. The thing is, they could be great! They underperform, and it’s arguably worse than what the White Sox have. They’re selling out pitching; Robertson, Scherzer, and potentially Verlander. Tommy Pham, Mark Canha are on the block, but I wouldn’t be surprised if Brooks Raley or Adam Ottavino also find their way out of New York.

**Stuck in Limbo:**

Padres- do you sell your big guys like Blake Snell, Juan Soto, and even explore trade options for Manny Machado in a 3rd base heavy market? The plain fact here is that the Padres are not performing up to the standard which they created by signing so many big names, that standard wasn’t making the playoffs, it was winning a World Series, maybe even a standard of winning multiple. AJ Preller now has to decide what he’s going to do, and reports indicate that Josh Hader and Blake Snell are available, which indicates that they’re going to be sellers.

**The Big Named Players who could be Dealt**

Paul Goldschmidt: Goldy is a great player. He’s a veteran, he’s had tremendous success year in and year out. He’s slashing .277/.365/.479 which are low for him, but he’s Paul Goldschmidt. If anyone can turn it around, it’s him. Teams that’ll be interested in him are the Giants, Phillies, and the Cubs. The Cubs are a long shot, but they need a first baseman so Bellinger can play the outfield everyday. The Phillies lost Rhys Hoskins and are now relying on Bryce Harper to play first. This would give them a veteran and an option to let Bryce Harper go back to DH. The Giants have Lamonte Wade at first and honestly, you’re barking up the wrong tree if you think he’s a viable option for a contender.

My prediction: the Cardinals keep Goldschmidt but trade away Arenado.

Nolan Arenado: He’s a platinum glove winner. He’s a great bat in the lineup. He wants to win. What isn’t to love about Nolan Arenado? There is so much to love about him. Arenado is slashing .272/.333/.486, very similar to Paul Goldschmidt. I could see a few teams going after Arenado, as so many teams need help at 3rd. The Dodgers, the Yankees, and if the Mariners go all in this year, they could be an option. I don’t put the Giants here because J.D. Davis is at third and he’s an okay option there. The Dodgers need a third baseman, but they’re not going to go after Arenado with the contract that he has. Max Muncy has been disastrous this season, but the Dodgers can’t afford Arenado. But the team that I think will make the biggest push, is the Brewers. This year their third basemen have slashed .235/.317/.374. Thats last in all of the MLB. Yikes.

My Prediction: Arenado winds up in the division with the Brew-Crew.

Justin Verlander: while he isn’t as young as he used to be when he won his first Cy Young, Verlander is still an ELITE starting pitcher. He was arguably the best pitcher on the Mets this year, even if Edwin Diaz hadn’t gotten hurt. And Diaz was the number one closer last year. Teams that need pitching help are an abundance this year. However, there are an only a couple that I think Verlander would waive his no-trade clause for. That’s the Dodgers, the Astros, and the Orioles. The Dodgers because he can win a World Series there again, and the Astros are the same case. He’s also talked about how much he enjoyed his time in Houston, and they’ve already traded for a familiar face in Kendall Graveman. Verlander is a native to the Virginia/Maryland area, and Baltimore would practically be a homecoming for him. Baltimore is also extremely young and could use a veteran presence like Verlander who has had proven success in the playoffs.

My prediction: Verlander goes to the Astros. I hate it, but I think it’s just fate.

Dylan Cease: Dylan Cease is either going to the Astros or he’s staying in Chicago. There is no world that he goes anywhere else. I’m completely bought into that. The Rangers were potentially a fit, but they already traded for Scherzer and for Montgomery.

My prediction: Cease stays with the White Sox

Blake Snell: Ah Blake Snell. He started off slow this season, but has been terrific since a few bad starts at the start of the year. He’s a version of his Cy Young self. He’s a tremendous lefty with playoff experience. I’d be pressed to say that he would go to a team that would need a lefty and would be a World Series contender. That would be the Dodgers, Astros, Phillies (even with Ranger Suarez), and the Orioles. I won’t touch on the Dodgers, Astros, or the Orioles since I spoke about them with Verlander. The Phillies could use another arm. Their starting pitching has been a little sketchy this year. Snell would add some consistency. I don’t think it’ll happen, especially since they have a lot of cap space taken up by Turner, Harper, Schwarber, and Castellanos. Not even to mention their deadly pitching duo of Wheeler and Nola.

My Prediction: Snell goes to the Orioles. BALTIMORE MAKE IT HAPPEN. Just kidding, Snell is going to the Astros.

**The Spark-Plugs who could be Dealt:**

Jaimer Candelario: The Cubs need a third baseman, and haven’t made very many big time moves in recent years at the deadline. I think with their past of signing lower level named players, Candelario would be more appealing to them. It helps that Candelario has been in the Cubs organization in the past.

My prediction: Candelario goes to the Cubs

Michael Lorenzen: Lorenzen is an appealing starting pitching arm. He went to Detroit after seeing a lot of relief experience in Cincinnati. He has a WHIP of 1.10 and an ERA of 3.58. He’s having a very quality season, on a really bad team. He’s 5-7 and hasn’t had much run support behind him.

My prediction: Lorenzen lands on the injury heavy pitching rotation of the Orioles

Lane Thomas: he’s young and can play the outfield. The Nationals have a lot of up and coming talent, so they’re debating on trading Thomas for more prospects, or keeping him and building with him. I’m pressed to say they keep him, and I hope my Nationals do.

My Prediction: Thomas stays with the Nationals.

Mark Canha: Other writers are putting a heavy name on Canha and talking him up. He’s a .245 hitter with 6 homers on the year. He’s back-up/pinch hit material on the majority of playoff teams. I could see him going to a team like the Rays, Brewers, or the Astros. The Astros relied on Jake Marisnick, which I’d say is a good comparison for Canha. The Brewers need help with bats, we’ve already seen them pick up Carlos Santana who has a lower average than Canha.

My prediction: Canha goes to the Brewers

Tommy Pham: I like Tommy Pham. I think he’s had a resurgent year and has helped the Mets quite a bit. He’s clearly the better option than Mark Canha, as Pham is hitting .268 with 10 homers. I’d be pressed to say that Pham goes to a team to be an everyday outfielder. I could see the Twins, the Guardians, or the Rays trading for him.

My prediction: the Guardians make the leap for Pham.

Adam Duvall: Duvall is having a good season. A .261 hitter with 9 home runs and can play left field or the first base position. In my prediction above I said that Goldschmidt was staying in St. Louis. The Giants, Phillies, and Cubs are still an option for Duvall. However, with the Phillies being desperate for help at first. It just makes sense that Duvall ends up there.

My prediction: Adam Duvall lands in Philadelphia