



Clips

(September 8, 2016)

Today's Clips Contents

FROM THE LA TIMES (Page 3)

- **Angels lose to Oakland, 4-1, but are encouraged by starter Alex Meyer's stint**

FROM THE OC REGISTER (Page 4)

- **In Angels debut, Alex Meyer shows talent, wildness in loss to A's**
- **Angels Notes: The wheel of starters lands on Daniel Wright**

FROM ANGELS.COM (Page 7)

- **Visiting Angels come up short against A's**
- **Heaney nominated for Clemente Award**
- **Angels' offense struggles to back Meyer, bullpen**
- **Wright to make first start for Angels on Saturday**

FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (Page 11)

- **Jharel Cotton makes memorable major league debut for A's**

*FROM THE LA TIMES***Angels lose to Oakland, 4-1, but are encouraged by starter Alex Meyer's stint**

Pedro Moura

Somewhere in the Eastern United States in April 2014, two Minnesota Twins pitching prospects held a conversation about changeups. Before a game in Pennsylvania or New York, Deolis Guerra, a tall reliever, approached Alex Meyer, an even taller starter, to tell him he would be better off nixing the circle-changeup grip he favored for a faster, three-finger change.

In the International League that spring, Meyer experimented to great success. He had always lacked a reliable third pitch to complement his fastball and breaking ball and ensure he could remain a starter rather than a reliever. Guerra's suggestion was the solution he sought, Meyer has since said.

ADVERTISING

Both men are Angels now. On Wednesday afternoon at the Oakland Coliseum, Guerra watched as Meyer hardly utilized it in his Angels debut. The 6-foot-9 right-hander threw only two over his 3 1/3 innings in the Angels' 4-1 loss to the Athletics. The first changeup was clocked at 92 mph, and Marcus Semien flailed at it. But Meyer could not command his vicious fastball well enough to feel comfortable deploying the change of pace.

"I need to throw more than that," Meyer said.

Still, the Angels were encouraged by Meyer's abbreviated debut. He carried a no-hitter into the fourth inning. When his pitches were around the strike zone, the Athletics generally could not come in contact with them.

Of Meyer's 68 pitches, 40 were fastballs, reaching as high as 98.9 mph. Thirty-one were balls. He issued four walks. He struck out five men. Six of the 15 Athletics he faced put the ball into play.

"It was good to see that stuff," Manager Mike Scioscia said. "That stuff is real."

Scioscia said it will be "impossible" for Meyer to reach 100 pitches in a start this season. He has four outings left, probably, and may only augment his workload a bit by the end. But the club is counting on him as a starter for next season, and this trial will announce how much expectation he can handle.

Often on Wednesday, he did not only miss the strike zone, but missed wildly — particularly to his pitching-arm side with his fastball, outside to left-handed hitters. He believed he was missing because he was too excited and thus allowing his left side to come open too early within his delivery.

"I'm trying to make each pitch nastier than it needs to be," he said.

Wednesday's starter for Oakland, rookie right-hander Jharel Cotton, better harnessed the changeup that made him a prospect, and the rest of his stuff, over 6 1/3 sharp innings. But he benefited from a weakened opposition.

The Angels' third baseman, Yunel Escobar, remains out with a bruised left wrist suffered Saturday. Additionally, Scioscia chose to combine Wednesday's early start with Thursday's scheduled day off to give Mike Trout and Albert Pujols back-to-back days of rest. So he furnished his lineup with only three men who had been on his opening-day roster: Andrelton Simmons, Kole Calhoun and C.J. Cron.

The rest of them began the season in triple A, as did Cotton. Acquired from the Dodgers on the Aug. 1 trade deadline, Cotton was making his major league debut. He came within one out of a no-hitter in his second start in the Athletics organization, and he toted a perfect game into the fourth inning Wednesday afternoon.

Simmons, a teammate of Cotton's brother at tiny Western Oklahoma State College six years ago, ended that attempt by singling. Seeing the pitcher not paying attention, he then helped himself to a huge lead and swiped second base.

That expedition did not net the Angels their only run. That came in the seventh inning, when Cron ambushed a 3-and-2 changeup and drove it 408 feet to center field, ending Cotton's day. It was the Angels' second hit of the game. They did not notch another.

Short hops

Matt Shoemaker returned home from Seattle on Wednesday. The Angels right-hander underwent emergency surgery late Sunday night after he was struck by a line drive in the head while on the mound. He sustained a hematoma and a small skull fracture, but should be able to pitch next season. ... Manager Mike Scioscia said he will start right-hander Daniel Wright on Saturday against Texas to fill Shoemaker's slot. Wright, 25, was claimed off waivers from Cincinnati over the weekend. He started twice for the Reds this season and yielded 16 runs in 13 innings. Asked why Wright was chosen over veterans Jhoulys Chacin and Brett Oberholtzer, Scioscia cited his fastball's high spin rate, which tends to lead to more swinging strikes and fly balls than the 90-mph average velocity would indicate. He'll become the 15th man to start for the Angels.

FROM OC REGISTER

In Angels debut, Alex Meyer shows talent, wildness in loss to A's

By JEFF FLETCHER / STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND – When Alex Meyer finally stepped on a major league mound in an Angels uniform, he performed pretty much as you'd expect.

The good and bad – why the Angels wanted him, and why the Minnesota Twins traded him – were both on display.

In his first major league game since the Angels got him in an Aug. 1 trade, Meyer struck out five and walked four in 3-1/3 innings of the Angels' 4-1 loss to the Oakland A's on Wednesday afternoon.

Meyer was charged with just one run, which scored after he was out of the ballgame.

Overall, it was just the type of game you see from prospects who have talent, but need some polish.

“It was good to see that stuff,” Manager Mike Scioscia said. “That stuff is real.”

Most tall pitchers have delivery issues, because it requires such precise timing to get such long limbs to work in unison. Meyer is 6-foot-9. Although his delivery looks relatively clean and straightforward, his control has been an issue throughout his career.

On Wednesday, he missed the strike zone with 46 percent of his pitches, which is why it took him 68 pitches to get 10 outs.

“Command obviously went in and out more than I’d like it to,” he said. “Two four-pitch walks. You can’t have stuff like that happen.”

Meyer said the control and command issues stem from overthrowing, which causes his mechanics to get out of whack.

“Not getting jacked up and trying to throw the ball too hard,” he said. “There are times I rush and let my front side open. That’s always been an issue.”

The good news is that he has the tools. His fastball was between 95 and 97 mph consistently, touching 98. His curve was sharp. He caught A’s hitters looking at it for three of his strikeouts.

He threw just two changeups, at around 90 mph. Meyer admitted he needs to slow that down, to create more of a differential from his fastball, and he needs to throw it more often. He said he didn’t throw many on Wednesday because he was having so much trouble commanding his other pitches.

“You saw a big arm,” Scioscia said. “I think you saw a guy that wasn’t missing by a lot. He had an idea of where the ball was going. He spun it well, but he lost his release point in a couple stretches.”

Meyer didn’t allow a hit until the fourth, when Yonder Alonso led off with a double. Meyer got one more out and then was done for the day, having approached his limit of about 70 pitches. Meyer has only been pitching for about a month, after missing most of the summer with shoulder trouble.

The Angels took a chance on a pitcher with control and shoulder issues, trading Hector Santiago to get Meyer, because they like the upside. With a dearth of pitching in the majors and a lack of high-end prospects in the minors, the Angels need to see if they can hit the jackpot on pitchers like the 26-year-old Meyer.

They had been slowly increasing his workload in the minors in the month since the trade, before finally unleashing him in the majors.

“It was fun getting out there,” Meyer said. “It was fun getting out and competing.”

While the Angels were taking a look at their future in Meyer, the A’s got their first look at Jharel Cotton, who they acquired from the Dodgers in the Josh Reddick-Rich Hill trade.

Cotton got a break in that he faced an Angels lineup without either Mike Trout or Albert Pujols, both of whom got the day off.

The Angels lineup included just three players from the opening day roster – Andrelton Simmons, Kole Calhoun and C.J. Cron – and they managed just one run against Cotton in 6-1/3 innings. Cron led off the seventh with a homer, his 16th of the season.

Angels Notes: The wheel of starters lands on Daniel Wright

By JEFF FLETCHER / STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND – On a day that the Angels started Alex Meyer – their league-leading 14th starter -- they announced their 15th.

Daniel Wright will get the ball on Saturday against the Texas Rangers, taking the rotation spot of Matt Shoemaker.

Wright was just claimed on waivers from the Cincinnati Reds over the weekend.

“It’s an arm we definitely want to take a look at,” Manager Mike Scioscia said. “He’s started. He should be stretched out enough to get us a chance to see what he’s got. Hopefully he gives us a good game.”

Wright, 25, started twice for the Reds this season and pitched twice in relief. He gave up six earned runs in 8 1/3 innings in his two starts.

At Triple-A, he had a 6.13 ERA in 17 games, including 12 starts. His last start was Aug. 30, when he gave up three runs in five innings.

A 10th-round pick in 2013, Wright has a career 4.44 ERA in the minors, with 2.0 walks and 8.0 strikeouts per nine innings.

Explaining what he likes about him, Scioscia said: “He’s got a really good spin rate. His velocity is sneaky. He’s not going to rear back and throw it by guys, but he can get it by guys in good zones. He’s going to throw strikes and spin the ball well.”

NO TROUT, NO PUJOLS

Mike Trout and Albert Pujols were both out of the Angels lineup on Wednesday, given what Scioscia called a routine day off.

As for why he didn’t split up their days off so the lineup wouldn’t be without them both, Scioscia said: “When a guy needs it, he needs it. When guys need days off might not really mesh exactly where you’d like it to. This is a good day to have them both out, then pick it up on Friday again.”

After the off day, the Angels have 17 straight games against contenders. For the integrity of the pennant race, it makes more sense to rest Trout and Pujols against the A's.

ALSO

Yunel Escobar, who has been out with a bruised left hand, took batting practice and ground balls before Wednesday's game. The Angels are hoping he can play on Friday...

Andrelton Simmons came out of the game in the eighth inning because he was "feeling a little stiff out there," Scioscia said. "It's a long day."...

Cory Rasmus, who is out after having abdominal surgery, is scheduled to pitch an inning for rookie-level Orem on Thursday. He is expected to pitch another game in the playoffs for Orem, and then he could be activated.

FROM ANGELS.COM

Visiting Angels come up short against A's

By Justin Wise and Rick Eymer / MLB.com |

OAKLAND -- Four different A's batters recorded run-scoring base knocks and Jharel Cotton worked 6 1/3 shutdown innings as Oakland earned a series win over the Angels with a 4-1 victory at the Coliseum on Wednesday afternoon.

Making his Major League debut, the moment never seemed too grand for Cotton while he seamlessly dispatched Los Angeles batters for the majority of his outing. The 24-year old didn't surrender a hit until the fourth inning and didn't allow an extra-base hit until C.J. Cron blasted a solo home run off him in the 7th. But one blemish aside, Cotton appeared like a viable option for the A's in the final weeks of the season.

"He made it look easy early on," A's manager Bob Melvin said of Cotton. "You expect maybe a walk, couple of baserunners, have to pitch out of a jam early on before you get settled. That never happened. The most impressive thing was that he went right after them, used all his pitches and really didn't have any trouble spots early in the game."

Trouble spots were almost nonexistent during Cotton's outing and he earned his first Major League win thanks to the result. He also earned a warm reception from both his teammates and the Oakland fans upon exiting the game. "That was pretty special," said Cotton. "I saw everyone come in to congratulate me and that was a fun feeling."

- Cotton makes strong impression in MLB debut

Cotton's performance was a welcome sign for an A's lineup that entered Wednesday's rubber game struggling with consistency. But the group found its rhythm at the plate and scored two runs as part of a three-hit fourth inning. Yonder Alonso added one more after singling with the bases loaded in the fifth before Ryon Healy highlighted the performance with a solo home run

in the seventh, helping Oakland win a series over an American League West foe for the first time since late July.

Angels starter Alex Meyer allowed just one run and one hit, but struggled with his command throughout his outing. He surrendered five walks in 3 1/3 innings before exiting the game.

"Two four-pitch walks, you can't have that," Meyer said.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Breaking out: The A's entered the series finale having been no-hit through the first five innings in three of their last four games. And it took the club until the bottom of the fourth to muster a base knock Wednesday, after Alonso doubled to open the inning. But a snowball effect followed, as Max Muncy and Brett Eibner recorded consecutive RBI hits to give the A's a 2-0 lead.

"We want to get guys on base and get opportunities," Melvin said. "We just haven't been getting guys on, so they had a good approach up and down the lineup today. We had some deep counts, we had some walks. I thought our at-bats as a whole today were much better

Mishandled throw: Alonso was going to be out by several feet at the plate trying to score on Muncy's single. That is, until catcher Jett Bandy was unable to cleanly handle the throw from left fielder Nick Buss. Alfonso's double leading off the fourth was the only hit allowed by Meyer, making his Angels debut. Reliever Jose Alvarez came in and gave up RBI hits to the first two batters he faced.

Setting the tone: Cotton was perfect over his first three innings to begin his Major League career. But that wouldn't have been the case if not for Jake Smolinski's diving grab in left field in the first. It initially appeared that Kole Calhoun had lined a single. But Smolinski got a bead on it and cradled the ball between his glove and his chest while falling to the turf. The Angels challenged Smolinski's catch of Calhoun's sinking liner and the call was upheld. The Angels would rarely threaten offensively Wednesday after that.

"I was kind of nervous, but I think I got all of my jitters out in the bullpen," said Cotton. "Great catch by Smolinski, got me hyped up. So after that catch, I was good from there."

Going deep: Cron got the Angels' second hit of the game and it was a blast. The first baseman crushed a 3-2 pitch to straightaway center to put the Angels on the scoreboard. Cron was batting third in the order for just the second time all year. Normally the kingdom of Albert Pujols or Mike Trout -- both out of the lineup -- Cron was trying to uphold the mighty offensive reputation of the Angels' duo. Pujols and Trout represent 56 home runs, 198 RBIs, 46 doubles and 169 runs scored. The next three best Angel run producers (Cron, Calhoun and Jeffrey Marte) have a combined 44 home runs, 164 RBIs and 129 runs scored.

QUOTABLE

"You can't always know. It depends when a guy needs it. They've both been grinding. It's a good time to give them a day off." -- *Angels manager Mike Scioscia before Wednesday's game, on Pujols and Trout both being out of the lineup.*

SOUND SMART WITH YOUR FRIENDS

Cotton became the first A's starting pitcher to last longer than six innings and hold an opponent

to two hits or fewer in his Major League debut since Porter Vaughan did it in 1940 for the Philadelphia A's.

WHAT'S NEXT

Angels: Left-hander Tyler Skaggs takes the mound on Friday night when the Angels open a three-game series at home against the Rangers at 7:05 p.m. PT. Skaggs is on a two-game winning streak. He's 2-1 with a 7.90 ERA in three starts against the Rangers.

A's: Following an off-day, Daniel Mengden will take the ball when the A's and Mariners begin a three-game series at 7:05 p.m. on Friday at the Coliseum. The A's are 5-7 against Seattle this year. Mengden has never faced the Mariners.

Heaney nominated for Clemente Award

Angels pitcher up for philanthropic honor with volunteer work

By Austin Laymance / MLB.com

Andrew Heaney is making a difference off the field, even though an injury has prevented him from helping the Angels on the baseball diamond since early April.

Heaney is the Angels' nominee for the **Roberto Clemente Award**, and Wednesday is Roberto Clemente Day in the Major Leagues. In addition to his annual offseason mission to help orphans in Honduras, the starting pitcher volunteers his time in countless ways and has donated Angels tickets this season to military and first responders.

Beginning on Roberto Clemente Day, fans are encouraged to participate in the new process of selecting the winner of the Roberto Clemente Award by posting any nominee's voting hashtags to MLB's official social media accounts, **@MLB** on Twitter and **Facebook.com/MLB**. Heaney's hashtag is #VoteHeaney.

Major League Baseball announced the 30 club nominees on Tuesday for the annual recognition of a player who best represents the game of baseball through extraordinary character, community involvement, philanthropy and positive contributions, both on and off the field. Each club nominates one player to be considered for the Roberto Clemente Award in tribute to Clemente's achievements and character by recognizing current players who truly understand the value of helping others.

Over the past two offseasons, Heaney has been part of a small group of big leaguers to travel to Honduras to help start a learning center in the outskirts of a city called El Progreso, located about 20 miles from San Pedro Sula, the second-largest city in the crime-riddled Central American nation.

Heaney made one start for the Angels in April and is out for the season after undergoing Tommy John surgery in July. The left-hander will likely miss the 2017 season as well.

Wednesday marks the 15th annual Roberto Clemente Day, which was established by MLB to honor Clemente's legacy and to officially acknowledge local club nominees of the Roberto Clemente Award. Clubs playing at home on Wednesday will recognize their local nominee as

part of Roberto Clemente Day ceremonies. Visiting clubs will honor their nominee before another September home game.

As part of the league-wide celebration, the Roberto Clemente Day logo will appear on the bases and official dugout lineup cards, and a special tribute video will be played in ballparks.

The original "Commissioner's Award" for philanthropic service was renamed in 1973 in honor of Clemente, the Hall of Famer and 15-time All-Star who died in a plane crash on New Year's Eve 1972 while attempting to deliver supplies to earthquake victims in Nicaragua.

Angels' offense struggles to back Meyer, bullpen

By Rick Eymer / Special to MLB.com |

OAKLAND -- No Albert Pujols. No Mike Trout. No offense for the Angels, who got a decent outing from right-hander Alex Meyer.

The Angels didn't have much of an answer for Athletics starter Jharel Cotton, making his Major League debut.

Cotton retired 14 of the first 15 batters he faced en route to earning the victory in the A's 4-1 victory. But he was facing a watered-down version of the powerful Angels lineup.

The Angels managed two hits off Cotton, one a booming home run from C.J. Crono lead off the seventh.

That left Meyer with very little margin for error. Ineffective at times, Meyer weaved his way through four walks and needed 68 pitches to get through 3 1/3 innings.

"It was fun just getting out there," said Meyer, who made his first Major League appearance since May 3, when he was with the Twins. "My command went in and out. There were times when I rushed and my front side opened early. That's been an issue."

Meyer said Angels pitching coaches helped him tweak a few mechanical issues that he's been working on throughout his career.

"Sometimes I get too excited and try to make a pitch before I'm ready, or try to throw it harder than I should," he said. "I obviously would like to win, but I can continue to build on this. I want to be able to pitch more of the game."

That's in line with what Angels manager Mike Scioscia is also thinking. Meyer was on a pitch count and Scioscia would like to build him up to where he could get through six innings.

"You saw a big arm, I think you saw a guy that wasn't missing by a lot, so he had an idea of where the ball was going," Scioscia said. "He lost his release point a couple of stretches. After getting two quick outs in the second, he got extended with a couple of walks, but for the most part it was good to see that stuff. His stuff is real."

Wright to make first start for Angels on Saturday

By Rick Eymer / Special to MLB.com |

OAKLAND -- Right-hander **Daniel Wright** will become the 15th pitcher to make a start for the Angels when he takes the mound Saturday night, getting the first shot at replacing **Matt Shoemaker** in the rotation.

"He's an arm we want to take a look at," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said before Wednesday's game against the Athletics. "He's started [in the Minors], so he should be stretched out enough. It's a chance to see what he's got."

Wright hasn't appeared in a Major League game since June 13 when he was with the Reds, who designated him for assignment on Sunday.

The rookie, who made two starts for the Reds, has allowed 25 hits in his 13 innings thus far. He's walked two and struck out six.

"He throws strikes," Scioscia said. "He spins the ball and his velocity is sneaky. He doesn't throw hard, but he can get it by you."

Wright, 25, was the Reds' 10th-round pick in the 2013 Draft out of Arkansas State. He's auditioning for a spot on the Angels' 40-man roster in 2017.

Worth noting

- **Yunel Escobar** (left wrist) was scheduled to hit Wednesday. "He feels better," Scioscia said. "We'll turn him loose in batting practice and see how he is Friday."
- **Geovany Soto** (right knee) continues to progress slowly. He'll be re-evaluated when the Angels return home this weekend.
- **Albert Pujols** and **Mike Trout** were given a routine day off.

FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jharel Cotton makes memorable major league debut for A's

OAKLAND, Calif. -- The Athletics didn't show much spark at the plate until slugger Khris Davis slammed down his bat and helmet after striking out to end the seventh inning.

After that, it was a completely different look for Oakland, an abrupt change that manager Bob Melvin's ballclub has grown accustomed to making lately.

Two days after breaking up no-hitter with four outs to go, the A's were completely shut down until Joey Wendle hit a go-ahead single during a three-run eighth inning and Oakland rallied to beat the Los Angeles Angels 3-2 on Tuesday night.

"It's just kind of the ebbs and flows of the game," said third baseman Ryon Healy, who had two hits, including an RBI single. "Whether we get 10 hits in the first five innings and lose or get whatever it was in the back half of the game and win, I don't really care how it happens. I just want to get a victory."

The A's didn't have a hit or a baserunner until one out in the sixth inning before their first five batters in the eighth reached.

Healy, whose single broke up starter Ricky Nolasco's bid for a perfect game, singled in Yonder Alonso before Wendle lined a hit to right to drive in pinch-runner Arismendy Alcantara and Marcus Semien.

It was just the third career hit for Wendle, who was making his fourth start at second base after being called up from the minors on Aug. 31.

"We save our at-bats for when they really count," Melvin said. "For a guy that just got called up, that really makes him settle in. We liked him in the spring. Now he's getting an opportunity."

John Axford (5-4) pitched two innings to get the win. Ryan Madson retired three hitters for his 28th save.

Albert Pujols and Andrelton Simmons had two hits apiece for the Angels, who had their three-game winning streak snapped.

Los Angeles wasted a mostly strong outing by Nolasco (5-13).

Coming off a four-hit shutout against Cincinnati, Nolasco retired the first 16 batters against Oakland to extend his streak to 28 until Healy's single to center on a 1-2 pitch. The Angels right-hander faced one over the minimum through seven before the A's batted around in the eighth.

Nolasco allowed three runs, two hits and two walks with five strikeouts.

"It looked like he lost his release point," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "He didn't get the ball where he wanted."

The Angels did all of their scoring in the second. Simmons doubled in Mike Trout, and Pujols scored on a sacrifice fly.

MAKING PROGRESS

A's starter Zach Neal allowed two runs over six innings in one of his best starts of the season. Neal, who struck out five and walked one in his longest stint of the year, bounced back following a rocky outing against the Red Sox.

"He's had some really good efforts for us after what was a difficult start for him with us," Melvin said. "He figured it out in the bullpen over a stretch and now he's got a lot more confidence."

TRAINER'S ROOM

Angels: Matt Shoemaker was released from a Seattle-area hospital following emergency surgery after he was hit in the head by a line drive by the Mariners' Kyle Seager on Sunday. Shoemaker remained in the Pacific Northwest and could return to Los Angeles on Wednesday.

Athletics: Infielder Alcantara was called up from Class A Stockton before the game. Alcantara, who began the year with the Chicago Cubs, had been in the minors since Aug. 29.

UP NEXT

Angels: RHP Alex Meyer (0-1) makes his Angels debut in the afternoon finale of this three-game series at the Coliseum. Meyer had been in the minors since arriving as part of the Nolasco trade.

Athletics: RHP Jharel Cotton (0-0) will be called up from Triple-A Nashville to make his major league debut Wednesday. Cotton was part of the trade that sent outfielder Josh Reddick to the Dodgers. He'll be the third pitcher from the Virgin Islands to appear in the majors.