

# Whitey's Rap Sheet for the 2015 TBL Draft

Whitey Bulger, the former General Manager of the Grand Cayman Havens, has not had much news from the outside world as he sits in his 10 x 10-foot maximum-security cell. But he studies what he can find. He is a changed man from his days as a gangster. Now he spends his time ruminating on baseball. This document, smuggled out of the prison in a way you do not want detailed, explains his take on the upcoming draft:

## #1 NORTHBORO?

Whitey believes that whoever picks first should pick the offensive beast who is *Jose Abreu*. He just isn't sure that the pick will remain in Northboro's hands. Northboro has firstbase options in Brandon Belt and Chris Carter. While neither is Abreu, why use the first pick of the draft on a DH? Whitey sees a trade coming.

## #2 MIDWEST

Darrell loves his Twins. When they're good, they're fun. Then they're bad, they're still fun, but they lose more often. The Twins are like the Midwest version of the Oakland A's: small market funds, but without the entertaining GM. All this is to point to: *Danny Santana*. Midwest needs to rebalance its Santanas after trading away Carlos.

## #3 MIDWEST

What a luxury to have two picks so high in the draft. And these are his only two picks in the first two rounds, so take those Twinkies while they're still there. *Josmil Pinto* fits the bill.

## #4 BLUE HILL

Mark has reinvigorated his team with his recent trades. He wants to contend. Who can blame him? What he needs now is starting pitching, and the better it is, the better it will be. There are many options to choose from, but it's hard to argue with 30 starts from: *Yordano Ventura*.

## #5 TAYLORVILLE

The Taylor Brothers have put together a team that seems to have everything. Everything except a starting shortstop they can call their own. They have lots of choices this year. They could opt for budding power or blazing speed or exceptional defense. Whitey thinks they'll stick to the local product: *Xander Bogaerts*. While he doesn't have a great card, he gets to play a lot, another advantage.

## #6 NEW WESTMINSTER

Gee, where to start? Jim could go in a number of directions, and all would help his team. Whitey thinks he'll rebuild slowly. A second baseman could be a good fit here, since there are several. And the point is to take a player who sucks... for this year at least. *Javier Baez* can help New West meet its goal of drafting with the first overall pick next year.

## #7 LAS VEGAS

Paul H. basically has everything covered, but some positions are so thinly veiled that you can see right through them. The point is, though, that for the first time in a while, Paul can choose a player he wants vs. a position he needs. And he's shown a propensity in the past for accomplished players. Whitey thinks *Josh Harrison*, a once and future Gambler, is the answer Paul seeks. He can cover multiple positions. Maybe all at the same time.

## #8 BROBDINGNAG

Joe already knows whom he's taking here. He's done his analysis, which told him to trade for this exact pick. He knows the player he wants will float down to him, seemingly by accident. So who

does he want? Who the hell knows? But Whitey thinks age will play a role: **Rougned Odor** is his type of player: little present value, all future value.

#### **#9 GRAND CAYMAN**

It's never easy going from an also-ran to a contender. There's so much pressure. But Whitey has sent a strong message to current GM Boomer Wells: **Collin McHugh** is a difference maker.

#### **#10 KANSAS**

Everyone thinks Bill will pick the best Yankee, but that's not the way Bill works. Instead, he'll pick the best player available, in his mind — one who will be able to contribute for years to come, one who delivers present value with the promise of future growth: **Masahiro Tanaka**. It just so happens that he's a Yankee.

#### **#11 COLUMBUS**

In a down year after a disappointing 2014, Vic just wants to add talent. He likes power. He's shown a weakness for players with speed. If only he could find a player with both... Wait! There's **George Springer**! Whitey thinks the combination will intrigue Vic.

#### **#12 HOBOKEN**

Sorry, Steve P. It just feels weird to write "Hoboken." It's like saying, "San Jose Athletics" or "Salt Lake City Devil Rays." Anyway, Whitey applauds Steve for populating his outfield in last year's draft. Now, how about the infield? **Nick Castellanos** is one answer.

#### **#13 NORTHBORO**

So let's assume Bob and Steve took Jose Abreu. If they have, it might mean they want to ramp up quickly, to take advantage of the pitching they developed. In that case, **Joe Panik**, welcome to the team.

#### **#14 MELROSE**

What do you give to the guy who has everything? How about a guy who can pinch-hit, pinch-run, and play second base as well as Dan Uggla (a long-time Avenger)? **Mookie Betts**. As a bonus, he's a Red Sox player for a diehard fan.

#### **#15 HUDSON**

Clay, it was a long ride to the World Series and short ride down the escalator of rebuilding. Hope you enjoyed it. To get back to the top, he knows he'll need many things, but Whitey thinks he'll start with pitching, maybe because he hasn't tried that path recently. **Drew Hutchinson** gives him many starts this year and many more in the future.

#### **#16 WARRENTON**

If only Trader Jack had traded up; he might have been able to snag Panik, but it's too late now. So Jackson goes to Plan B. He'll swallow a mouthful of West Coast ale, reach across the country, and select **Jake Odorizzi** to bolster his starting staff.

#### **#17 GOTHAM CITY**

Anyone who trades for a 40-year-old starting pitcher is someone who is not afraid to take performance over youth. However, having said that, anyone who wants to contend will go enter the season with Fernando Abad as his closer. **Dellin Betances**.

#### **#18 GREATER OHIO**

Devlin likes to win. He likes players with power. Whitey thinks these two factors point to **J.D. Martinez** as his pick. Martinez adds instant credibility to his lineup, and he'll enjoy rolling those virtual dice on that card all season long.

### **#19 BERKSHIRE**

Welcome to the League, Mike! It must be nice to inherit such a vast collection of talent. All you have to do is step in, roll the die, and win! No one knows Mike's preferences, but he doesn't need much to go deep into the playoffs. Whitey doesn't think he's mess with that. Who would? So adding a pinch-hitting toy who could work out in the future seems like a good option: **Jorge Soler**.

### **#20 MARACAIBO**

Walter is an easy read, and not just because he's a writer. In novels, there are plot twists. In TBL, there are holes to fill. Whitey thinks Walter will do the obvious and bolster his rotation. He needs a lot of starts to not be ridiculous, and remember, no Maracaibo team has ever lost 100 games in a season. To maintain that success, **Jacob deGrom** is a nice sparring partner for Cole Hamels.

### **#21 WHITMAN**

Brian is a shrewd guy. Sure he needs starts, and if deGrom or McHugh were available, he'd be tempted to take one of them, but Whitey knows he's been looking for many years at the black hole in the spot where his shortstop normally would bat. So he'll take **Jose Ramirez** over the other choices, first because he likes speed and second because he needs the better defense to contend.

### **#22 HOBOKEN**

You know, Whitey's not saying this team is bad, but he keeps writing "Hobroken." Good thing he has an editor. After "fixing" his third base problem with Castellanos, Dr. Steve could conceivably turn his attention to the mess his pitching staff has become. Prospect **Marcus Stroman** gives him a half season of upgraded starts, so to speak. It's a half step in the right direction.

### **#23 ZION**

Rich has another strong team, but with some needs. Take his starting pitching. I would. Whitey's just saying it's a little thin. There's no way that Scott Baker will make any starts for this team. So running down the list of starters still available, **Roenis Elias** jumps out as a hard-throwing pitcher with lots of starts. Both are good things.

### **#24 BROBDINGNAG**

Joe would look at the list above and shake his head in wonder. That's because Whitey knows as well as anyone that these draft predictions are based not on intuition or careful research, but on misdirection and convincing rhetoric. So, with this pick, the last pick of the first round of the 2015 TBL rookie draft, in keeping with his future-value philosophy for this year, Joe takes **Gregory Polanco**.

And there the message ends in some badly smeared ink — at least we think that's ink. Remember that nothing is certain until a name is called on Draft Day. This rap sheet is as valid as the paper it's printed on. All Whitey asks is that you keep those cards and letters coming. He misses the camaraderie and back-stabbing of his TBL brethren.