

This Week In Baseball Debuts: The Week Of June 10, 2018

Welcome to the fifth issue of the This Week In Baseball Debuts newsletter. Inspired by an [episode of Effectively Wild](#), the purpose of this newsletter is to highlight the MLB debuts that have occurred in the past week. Our goal is to not only inform you about the top prospects you already know but give you some insight into some of the lesser known players who may only be up for a single cup of coffee.

In addition to this newsletter, a version of these profiles will also appear at [Banished To The Pen](#).

Sam Howard, P

Born: March 5, 1993 (25)

Throws: Left Hits: Right

Team: Colorado Rockies Debut: June 10, 2018

Out of high school, the Chicago Cubs selected Howard in the 48th round of the 2011 MLB draft. He did not sign with Chicago, instead enrolling at Georgia Southern University. In 2014, he signed with the Colorado Rockies after being drafted in the third round. After signing, Howard spent the rest of 2014 in rookie ball, posting a 1-3 record with a 5.40 ERA in 14 games.

In 2015, he played for the Asheville Tourists of the Single-A South Atlantic League where he went 11-9 with a 3.43 ERA, along with a 1.22 WHIP. Howard started 2016 in High-A Modesto, where he made the all-star team before being promoted to Double-A Hartford, between the two leagues Howard pitched to a 9-9 record and 3.35 ERA in 27 appearances.

Howard was invited by the Rockies to 2017 spring training. He returned to Hartford to begin 2017, and after posting a 2.33 ERA and 0.88 WHIP in 46.1 innings, he was promoted to the Albuquerque Isotopes, where he finished the season, going 4-4 with a 3.89 ERA. The Rockies added him to their 40-man roster after the season.

In Triple-A this season Sam has compiled a 3 -4 record in 9 games with a 4.68 ERA, pitched 42.1 innings gave up 3 home runs, struck out 33 and gave 20 free passes for a 1.51 WHIP. [Eric Longenhagen writes](#), "[Howard] has a strange arm slot that helps his fringe stuff play a little better. He was 90-92 this spring with an average change and a fringe cutter. He projects as a fifth starter." Howard made his debut the same day as teammate Jerry Vasto.

On June 13, Howard was optioned back to Albuquerque.

Debut Game

1 IP | 1 H | 0 ER | 0 BB | 0 K

Player Pages

[Fangraphs](#)

[Baseball Reference](#)

Prospect Rankings (Team / Overall)

MLB Pipeline: 16 / NA

Fangraphs: 19 / NA

Baseball Prospectus: 9 / NA

Jerry Vasto, RP

Born: February 12, 1992 (26)

Throws: Left Hits: Left

Team: Colorado Rockies Debut: June 10, 2018

Jerry was drafted out of Felican University by the Rockies in the 24th round of the 2014 draft. Vasto worked his way through the Rockies farm system, in 2017 he pitched the entire season for the Triple-A Albuquerque Isotopes. Vasto owns a 1.71 ERA and 26:8 K:BB over 21 innings of relief at Albuquerque this season. Manager Bud Black said he liked what he saw from Vasto in spring training and that he had gotten good reports on him from Albuquerque.

“Jerry’s got a good arm,” Black said. “He’s got some velocity to the fastball, some life in the hitting zone on the four-seam fastball, the slider when thrown correctly is a legit big league slider.” "It was crazy," Vasto said before Sunday's game against the Diamondbacks. "I wasn't expecting it at all. Called my parents, put them on speakerphone so my coaches could hear them, and it was a moment I'll never forget." Jerry made his debut on the same day as teammate Sam Howard.

On June 14, 2018, Vasto was optioned back to Albuquerque.

Fun Facts:

Under "Notable Alumni" on the Felican Univesity Wikipedia page Vasto is the only person listed.

Vasto attended Henry Hudson Regional High School, which is the same high school that Kevin Smith and Jason Mewes attended. Snoochie Boochies.

Debut Game

0.2 IP | 3 H | 3 ER | 1 BB | 1 K

Player Pages

[Fangraphs](#)

[Baseball Reference](#)

Prospect Rankings (Team / Overall)

MLB Pipeline: NA / NA

Fangraphs: NA / NA

Baseball Prospectus: NA / NA

David Fletcher, IF

Born: May 31, 1994 (24)

Hits: Right Throws: Right

Team: Los Angeles Angels Debut: June 13, 2018

David Fletcher was drafted by the Angels out of Loyola Marymount in the sixth round of the 2015 draft, signed in June of the same year for \$406,900. Going into the 2018 season, Baseball America thought Fletcher might break camp with the Angels as the "utility infielder of the future". Fletcher's debut game featured flashes on both sides of the ball, going 3-for-4 with a triple, and turning a [nifty double play](#) at home plate. Fletcher's call up comes due to Jeffrey Marte's left wrist sprain suffered on Monday, June 11.

Debut Game

4 PA | 4 AB | 3 H | 1 3B

Player Pages

[Baseball Reference](#)

[Fangraphs](#)

Prospect Rankings (Team / Overall)

MLB Pipeline: 21 / NA

Fangraphs: NA / NA

Baseball Prospectus: NA / NA

Yefry Ramírez, SP

Born: November 28, 1993 (24)

Throws: Right Hits: Right

Team: Baltimore Orioles Debut: June 13, 2018

Ramírez signed with the Arizona Diamondbacks as an international free agent in 2011 as an infielder. He was moved to pitching by the Diamondbacks, and the Yankees must have been intrigued in Yefry the pitcher because they took in in the minor league phase of the 2015 Rule 5 draft. Ramirez began the 2017 season with the Trenton Thunder of the Double-A Eastern

League. On July 31, 2017, the Yankees traded Ramírez to the Orioles in exchange for international bonus pool money. The Orioles let him stay in the Eastern League, assigning him to the Bowie. In 2017, [Eric Longenhagen](#) wrote, "Ramirez throws a high-volume of strikes and profiles as a back-end or up-and-down starter."

Ramírez started the 2018 season with the Triple-A Norfolk Tides. The Orioles briefly promoted him to the major leagues in April, but he did not appear in a game. At Norfolk, Ramirez has a 4.33 ERA/ 3.45 FIP with 24.8 K% against 7.9 BB% in 60.1 innings. Ramirez got the start and took the loss against the Red Sox in his major league debut, but he probably deserved better. Following his start Ramirez was optioned back to Norfolk.

Pronunciation Fact: His first name is pronounced, "jeffrey."

Debut Game

4.1 IP | 4 H | 3 ER | 1 HR | 6 K | 2 BB

Player Pages

[Baseball Reference](#)

[Fangraphs](#)

Prospect Rankings (Team / Overall)

MLB Pipeline: 17 / NA

Fangraphs: NA / NA

Baseball Prospectus: NA / NA

Jonathan Loaisiga, SP

Born: November 2, 1994 (Age: 23)

Hits: Right Throws: Right

Team: New York Yankees Debut: June 15, 2018

On Friday Jonathan Loaisiga pitched five shutout innings against the Tampa Bay Rays to earn

a win for the New York Yankees in his major league debut. He had eight ground ball outs and 17 swings and misses among 91 total pitches. Following the game, Rays manager [Kevin Cash](#) was quoted comparing Loaisiga to another Central American-born Yankees pitcher, Mariano Rivera.

Loaisiga was signed by the Giants as an amateur free-agent in 2013 but was released in 2015 after battling shoulder injuries. In 2016 he had signed to play in Italy, until the Yankees saw him pitch in an international tournament. After just 2.1 innings at Single-A Charleston Loaisiga needed Tommy John surgery.

Last year he pitched 33 innings between rookie ball and low-A with a 33/3 K/BB ratio and a 1.38 ERA. Loaisiga was added to the Yankees' 40-man roster, this off-season after having only pitched 103.2 innings in five pro seasons, including only 2.1 innings in a full season league so the Yankees wouldn't lose him in the rule 5 draft. At the time of his call-up Loaisiga had pitched 45 innings this season between High-A and Double-A with a 3.00 ERA, and a 58/4 strikeout-to-walk ratio.

Despite being only 5'11", Loaisiga has a fastball that can hit 98 and a plus curveball that can look like a slider and a change-up that also rates as average. John Sickels of [Minor League Ball](#) wrote, "Grade-wise, the pre-season C+ made sense for a guy who was in the New York-Penn League last year but is certainly too low right now. I think he's at least a Grade B and you can make a case for more."

Fun Fact: Loaisiga is the fifteenth Nicaraguan-born player to play in the majors. The last to debut before Loaisiga was Chelsor Cuthbert (Royals) in 2015. The greatest Nicaraguan-born player of all-time is "El Presidente" Dennis Martinez.

Debut Game

5 IP | 3 H | 0 ER | 4 BB | 6 K

Player Pages

[Baseball Reference](#)

[Fangraphs](#)

Prospect Rankings (Team / Overall)

MLB Pipeline: 12 / NA

Fangraphs: 12 / NA

Baseball Prospectus: NA / NA

Jose Trevino, C

Born: November 28, 1992 (Age: 25)

Hits: Right Throws: Right

Team: Texas Rangers Debut: June 15, 2018

Let's quickly [recap the past week for Jose Trevino](#):

Sunday June 10: Birth of his first child.

Friday June 15: Major League Debut.

Saturday June 16: Gets first MLB hit, a game-tying RBI single.

Sunday June 17: Walk-off pinch hit to cap a 4-run ninth inning comeback.

Oh yeah, Sunday was Father's Day. Trevino's first Father's Day as a dad. And Jose's father Joe was his high school baseball coach and passed away a few months before Jose was drafted.

While at Oral Roberts, Jose was an infielder, but after being drafted in the sixth round by his home-state Texas Rangers he was moved to catcher. Trevino's minor league career got off to a fast start, as he was named 2014 Northwest League Top Star. He was chosen to play in the Arizona Fall League in both 2016 and 2016 and was selected as an AFL Rising Star in 2016. Trevino is known as glove-first catcher, having won a Rawlings Minor League Gold Glove Award in both 2016 at High-A High Dessert and 2017 at Double-A Frisco. Last season in his first exposure to Double-A, he led the league throwing out 41% of base-sealers and only allowing 3 passed balls, though his offensive numbers took a nosedive, Trevino only hit .241/.275/.323. At the time of his call-up he was hitting .233/.284/.333 back at Frisco. If his

glove is unable to carry his bat in the big leagues, Trevino probably will have a career as a manager, at every level he has received high-marks for the way he handles a pitching staff and his leadership.

On Monday June 18 Trevino was optioned back to Frisco. Isiah Kiner-Falefa ([TWIBD issue 1](#)) is now the Rangers' backup catcher.

Debut Game

4 PA | 4 AB | 0 H | 1 K

Player Pages

[Baseball Reference](#)

[Fangraphs](#)

Prospect Rankings (Team / Overall)

MLB Pipeline: 20 / NA

Fangraphs: 20 / NA

Baseball Prospectus: NA / NA

Thank you for reading. If you know anyone that would enjoy this newsletter please tell them [to subscribe](#). All past issues can be found [here](#). If you have any feedback please reply to this email.

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