NEW YORK YANKEES TOP 10 PROSPECTS

GLEYBER TORRES, ESTEVAN FLORIAL HEADLINE A SYSTEM SWIMMING WITH POWER ARMS

1. GLEYBER TORRES, SS/3B
   SIGNED BY: Luis Ejuela/Hector Ortega (Cubs).
   TRACK RECORD: Torres ranked as the No. 2 prospect available on the 2013 international market when the Cubs signed him for $1.7 million. Chicago traded Torres to the Yankees in July 2016 as part of the four-player package for closer Aroldis Chapman.
   Chapman returned to the Yankees as a free agent for 2017 on a five-year, $56 million deal, and Torres put together a torrid first three months of the season and looked like he could soon be in line to make his major league debut. Then, on one freak play, everything derailed. After a mid-June promotion from Double-A Trenton to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, Torres tore his left ulnar collateral ligament on a collision at home plate and required season-ending Tommy John surgery on his non-throwing elbow. He’s expected to be ready for spring training.
   SCOUTING REPORT: When he was on the field, Torres was every bit of the player the Yankees expected when they acquire him. At the plate, he showed the ability to hit for a high average and power, as well as a discerning knowledge of the strike zone. In particular, Torres’ ability to make quick adjustments set him apart from other high-pedigree prospects. Coaches noted how quickly he would identify the way pitchers were working to get him out, then adjust and close those holes. That showed up both over the course of a season and during individual games. Defensivey, there’s no reason Torres can’t stick at shortstop, but the emergence of Didi Gregorius in New York necessitated that Torres learn other positions quickly. He shuffled around during his brief season, playing 15 games at third base and 10 more at second base before the injury. He has the above-average range and arm to play those positions or shortstop. If he were to land at third base, he would hit for enough power to profile there. The Yankees were working with Torres on the small things throughout the year. In particular, they were helping him find a consistent pre-set position in the field and getting him to chase fewer pitches out of the zone. He’s an average runner, but needs to refine his basestealing technique.
   THE FUTURE: When Torres returns, he’ll likely head back to Triple-A for more seasoning so he can be ready to fill a potential hole at second base or third base. Evaluators both inside and outside the organization see a player with a chance to be a perennial all-star.

2. ESTEVAN FLORIAL, OF
   SIGNED BY: Esteban Castillo.
   TRACK RECORD: The Yankees signed Florial for $200,000 when he was 17. They would have signed him for $2.6 million.
   TRACK RECORD: The older brother of Dodgers prospect Jordan Sheffield, Justus was a first-round pick of the Indians in 2014. He showed well in his pro debut. Cleveland dealt Sheffield, Clint Frazier and righthanders Ben Heller and J.P. Feyereisen to the Yankees in July 2016 as the freight for closer Andrew Miller.
   SCOUTING REPORT: Despite standing just 5-foot-10, Sheffield packs lightning in his left arm. His fastball can sit in the mid-90s, and he has touched as high as 98 mph. Sheffield’s fastball generates plenty of swings and misses thanks to intense riding life and a deceptive delivery. He couples the pitch with a slider and change-up that both project as above-average to plus. His slider, which sits in the mid-80s, ranks slightly ahead of his changeup, which sits in the high 80s. Sheffield missed a significant chunk of time in 2017 with a severely strained oblique muscle, so the Yankees sent him to Arizona Fall League to make up innings.
   THE FUTURE: After a successful stint in the AFL, where he struck out 22 in 20 innings, Sheffield should move to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre in 2018. If everything clicks, he has the ceiling of a No. 3 starter.

3. JUSTUS SHEFFIELD, LHP
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4. CHANCE ADAMS, RHP
   TRACK RECORD: Adams moved back and forth between the rotation and bullpen during a collegiate career that saw him transfer from Yavapai (Ariz.) JC to Dallas Baptist after his sophomore season. The Yankees believed in Adams as a starter and eased him into that role after making him a 2015 fifth-round pick. He has no issues starting in pro ball and reached 150 innings in 2017.
   SCOUTING REPORT: Returned to Double-A Trenton in 2018, Adams continued increasing his workload and earned a quick promotion to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. He headlines a four-pitch arsenal with a 92-97 mph fastball and an plus slider. His fringe-average curveball and changeup rank third and fourth in his repertoire, and he spent time in 2017 working on refining his changeup. He already throws the pitch with the same conviction and arm speed as his fastball. A new two-seam fastball grip could lead to further improvement. Despite some of the best stuff in the system, Adams shows a tendency to nibble for the corners rather than attacking.
   THE FUTURE: With two plus pitches and above-average control, Adams profiles as a potential mid-rotation starter. He faces a probable return to Triple-A in 2018.
5. MIGUEL ANDUJAR, 3B
TRACK RECORD: New York signed Andujar for $570,000 in 2011 out of the Dominican program run by Basilio Vizcaino, who also helped develop Gary Sanchez. The Yankees liked Andujar’s overall mix of skills, particularly his power potential and athleticism. He has improved each year as a pro and made his big league debut with two separate callups in 2017.

SCOUTING REPORT: After correcting an issue with his stride early in the season with Double-A Trenton, Andujar made quick work of the Eastern League and continued to mash at Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. There, the coaching staff worked with the franchise slugger to refine his pitch selection, and Andujar responded with a career-high 16 home runs. Though his home run power plays exclusively to his pull side, he has shown the ability to pepper the whole field with doubles. Scouts are divided on Andujar’s fielding ability. His arm strength is well above-average, but questionable footwork and hands might force him off third base.

THE FUTURE: With Greg Bird at first base and Gleyber Torres potentially fitting best at third base, the Yankees don’t necessarily have a position open for Andujar, who will return to Triple-A for more seasoning in 2018.

6. ALBERT ABREU, RHP
TRACK RECORD: When the Astros signed Abreu in 2013, they knew he had the potential for big-time stuff. They were proved right when he started hitting the mid-90s with his fastball when he got to low Class A Houston. He joined both Abreu and righthander Jorge Guzman to the Yankees for Brian McCann in December 2016 in a deal that worked out for both sides. Abreu dealt with right elbow inflammation at times in 2017, which he spent mostly at high Class A Tampa, but never had surgery.

SCOUTING REPORT: With another year under his belt, Abreu’s fastball has really shown. Now he sits in the mid-90s with regularity and touches as high as 101 mph on occasion. He couples his fastball, which has average life, with a curveball and changeup that project to be at least average if not plus in the future. He still needs to refine his command, and some evaluators have seen more of a thrower than a pitcher at this point, but scouts inside and outside the organization see a pitcher with the upside of a No. 2 starter if everything develops.

THE FUTURE: Abreu could be ready for Double-A to begin 2018, though a return to high Class A to begin the season is a likely option as well.

7. LUIS MEDINA, RHP
TRACK RECORD: When the Yankees signed Medina out of the Dominican Republic in 2015 for $280,000 he was already hitting the triple digits with his fastball. He has made tweaks to improve his delivery and allow himself to throw more strikes, but he’s still a raw power arm first and foremost.

SCOUTING REPORT: Medina sits in the upper 90s and topped at 102 mph in 2017 in the Rookie-level Appalachian League. He couples his fastball with a high-spin curveball and a changeup. His curve is inconsistent but flashes the potential to be a true hammer that he can either land in the zone or bury for chases, and his changeup is above-average already with the potential to be plus as well. There are some in the organization who think Medina might be better served as a slider as his primary breaking ball. As would be expected with an 18-year-old, he needs to continue to refine his fastball command.

THE FUTURE: Medina is talented enough to make the jump to low Class A Charleston in 2018, but he might be better served by starting in extended spring training before moving to short-season Staten Island. He’s got the ceiling of a top-flight starter. In a pitching-rich system, Medina’s ceiling is among the highest.

THE FUTURE: Averaging 102.1 mph, he has the stuff to be a top-of-the-rotation starter or a power reliever.

8. THAIRO ESTRADA, SS/2B
TRACK RECORD: Overshadowed by Yankees prospects in his signing class like shortstop Jorge Mateo (now with the Athletics) and catcher Luis Torrens (Pirates), Estrada has quietly risen to the ranks of the system’s best prospects. He continued to show a knack for contact as he advanced to Double-A Trenton in 2017, when he took over at shortstop when Gleyber Torres was promoted to Triple-A. He was Trenton’s most consistent player during its run to the Eastern League finals.

SCOUTING REPORT: None of Estrada’s tools jump off the page, but he just keeps performing. As one of the Eastern League’s youngest players in 2017, he finished among the top 10 in average (.301) and ranked second in the league with 149 hits. His quick hands and flat bat path allow him to make plenty of contact and spray line drives from gap to gap. Estrada proved that he could play shortstop with above-average range and a plus arm. He’s got below-average power, and his smallish frame doesn’t make it seem likely to change. He’s an average runner on the bases.

THE FUTURE: After a turn in the Arizona Fall League, Estrada will head to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, where he could split time again with Torres.

9. DOMINGO ACEVEDO, RHP
TRACK RECORD: When they signed Acevedo for a scant $7,500 in 2012, the Yankees saw a big man with a big arm. He dealt with injury issues early in his career, including blister issues that limited him to just 93 innings in 2016. Acevedo was fully healthy in 2017 and proved a valuable piece of the Double-A Trenton rotation until he reached his innings cap before the Eastern League playoffs.

SCOUTING REPORT: Aside from his massive frame, the first thing that jumps out about Acevedo is just how many strikes he throws—he rang up 142 strikeouts in 2017 against just 34 walks—in spite of a delivery that is littered with funkiness and moving parts. He starts his pitch package with a four-seam fastball in the mid-to-high 90s and couples it with a high-80s slider that should develop into a plus pitch. He has enough confidence in his changeup to throw it to both sides of the plate and against both righthanders and lefties.

The Yankees worked with Acevedo to help him gain more confidence in his offspeed pitches, including a fringe-average slider, by throwing them more often.

THE FUTURE: Acevedo, who has the ceiling of a mid-rotation starter and a floor of a power reliever, will head to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre in 2018.

10. DILLON TATE, RHP
TRACK RECORD: Tate improved his draft stock immensely after he converted from a reliever to a starter as a UC Santa Barbara junior. The Rangers drafted him fourth overall and signed him for $4.2 million. Hamstring issues limited him 2016, when the Rangers dealt him to the Yankees as the headliner in the Carlos Beltran deal.

SCOUTING REPORT: Tate’s 2017 was delayed by linger- ing back and shoulder issues, but he was dynamite once he got on the field in late June. Between high Class A Tampa and Double-A Trenton, he showed off an impressive three-pitch combo led by a mid-90s fastball that topped at 97 mph. He coupled the pitch with a slider and a changeup, both of which flashed plus. Scouts are still divided on whether Tate profiles best as a back-of-the-rotation starter or a power reliever.

THE FUTURE: Tate has never topped 103 innings in a season, so 2018 will be pivotal for his future. He was originally slated to go to the Arizona Fall League, but the Yankees opted instead to let his work in the Eastern League playoffs serve as his make-up time for missing action in April and May. He appears likely to return to Double-A to begin 2018.