

Baseball Operations Questionnaire

1. Of the three rule changes taking affect in 2023 (Pitch Clock, Shift Restrictions, Larger Bases), which do you think will have the biggest effect on the game? Why?

- The shift restrictions will definitely have the biggest effect on the game in 2023. This is because the game for a while now, has been all about power, because guys that typically always pull the ball either hit a home run or hit into the shift for an out. By banning the shift, the league will see a lot more singles and a higher league batting average overall. This can change a lot including the pitcher's approach, since they know they don't have the shift to fall back on for a guy that always hits the ball to the same area of the field. We also may start to see more players change their philosophies and look for more base hits over swinging for the fences each time. Overall, because the league has seen an average decline in batting average in the past years, I believe the banning of the shift will affect the league average and have it increase for the next few years, while making the game more exciting from more hits and less easy outs. More hits will also lead to more runners on the bases and more runs overall to make the games have more action, which will draw the interest of more fans.

2. If your organization had \$1 Million in additional budgeted for Player Acquisitions in the upcoming season, where would you choose to spend the money to get the most value per dollar?

- If my organization had \$1 million in additional budget for player acquisitions, I would spend the money on a defensive catcher to get the most value per dollar. This is because the catcher can be seen as the general of the field and helps control the game by how he manages his pitchers, the hitters, and his defense. A great catcher will be able to know hitter's tendencies and habits, which in turn, can help him know what his pitchers need to throw and where to throw it. He also needs to know his pitcher's strengths and call pitchers that go with those strengths to get the best overall performance from his guys. He will then need to know where his teams defense is at, so when he calls a pitch, he can predict where that ball is going to go. Guys like Ivan Rodriguez, Johnny Bench, Yadier Molina, and others were the very lifelines of their teams at times. I've always been told that defense wins games and look non further than a great defensive catcher to win games at the highest level. Because of all these factors and having to know so much to control the game, a great defensive catcher is who I would spend an additional \$1 million on in player acquisitions.

3. Thinking back to your initial application and our question about which farm system you believe is underrated. Which prospect outside of that Farm System's top 10 prospects do you believe will be the most valuable to a major league organization? What will this player's role be on the roster?

- Back on my initial application I stated that the St. Louis Cardinals had the most underrated farm system. The prospect that I believe will be the most valuable at the major league level that isn't in their top 10 right now is Left Hander Pitcher Connor Thomas. Thomas is coming off the Arizona Fall League's Pitcher of the Year award. Although he had some struggles this past AAA season, he dominated some of the best prospects in the league this past Fall League says itself. He is a smaller pitcher at 5'11, but as a southpaw it won't matter too much. His pitch arsenal is a fastball from 80's to low 90s, mid 80s slider, and his refurbished cutter is his main secret. During his time in the Fall League, he compiled a 1.75 ERA with an insane 11.9K/9 rate. I think he would be a solid guy who can eat some innings out of the bullpen in the near future as he is a projected 2022 eta. Long term I can see him as solid top five rotation guy with great command and as a lefty has a nice advantage as well. I would definitely expect to see Connor Thomas move up in the prospect list in the coming year.

4. If given the option of having the 10th overall pick in the amateur draft or two 2nd round picks, which would you choose and why?

- I can see both sides for this question, but in the end, I would have to go with the number 10 overall pick because of research I found. Based off research from Baseball America when the draft started in 1981 to 2010's draft, first rounders have reached the majors 73% of the time. That number drastically lowers with second round draft picks making it only 51% of the time. Overall, I would rather take my chances with the 73% versus basically having a 50/50 chance of my two second rounders making it. I think that now a days analytics and scouting are so advanced that if you have the 10th overall pick, you are getting someone that is going to be good and going to be good at the major league level. Just last night, Adley Rutschman who was drafted number one overall a few years ago, finished second in rookie of the year voting. Another keynote to look at from Sabr.org is when they looked at durability of first and second round picks from the 1996 draft to 2011 draft. It's good if a player makes the majors, but for a team you don't want them to just be a one year wonder, you would like them to be there for a while, especially if you are spending a high draft pick on them. Based on this research, 66.7% of players signed from the first round play in the majors. Of those players, 46.8% play in the majors 3+ years. Then for second rounders, 49.4% of players signed play in the majors, with 31.5% playing for 3+ years. The numbers speak for themselves, and for a first rounders percentage to play in the majors for 3+ years to be very close to the percentage of a second rounder even making the majors, should show you that taking the 10th overall pick

is the better choice. These are the reasons why I believe that you have to go with the surer option of your 10th overall making that majors than guessing on two second rounders and having a 50/50 chance.

5. One of the more common concepts around the baseballatmosphere/clubhouse environment is the idea of “feel”, what does the phrase “have some feel” entail to you?

- I love the saying “have some feel,” because it just means being aware of your surroundings and knowing when it’s appropriate to talk and how to behave. It has to do with how individuals interact and behave during certain times in the clubhouse/baseball atmosphere. In general, it means knowing what is acceptable and what is not. For example, if a pitcher is throwing a no hitter don’t go up and joke around with him, let him focus and get the job done. If a batter is struggling and struck out three times don’t approach him right away trying to cool him down. “Having some feel” can go a long way and can ultimately help your team prepare and produce a lot better if everyone is aware of what is going on and handles the situations that arise throughout a season appropriately.