

Re: This Week In Baseball
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TWIB Show #1214 "Texas Rangers"

Act One "Alex Ogando": The Texas Rangers nearly won the World Championship last year in a large part due to pitcher Alexi Ogando, for whom just getting into a big league uniform was an epic challenge. While still in his native Dominican Republic, Alexi was convinced by a group to participate in a marriage for hire scheme to get a visa. The U.S. Government caught wind of the scam and began to deny visas to the 30 players involved. Alexi and fellow Ranger prospect Omar Beltre had to convince the government that the ruse was an innocent mistake. They showed remorse and earned another chance. To be sure this doesn't happen to others, a PR campaign was created by Alexi and others to show the government that they were pawns in a bigger picture. Perseverance paid off and in February 2010 Alexi and Omar were granted visas. The Rangers' long wait for Alexi paid off big time when he immediately became a key element in the Rangers bullpen by helping them reach the World Series. This year Alexi has moved from the bullpen to the starting rotation. After opening the season with seven straight wins Alexi has struggled lately. But the Rangers aren't worried and it's apparent to all just how elated Alexi is to finally have a chance to pitch in the Major Leagues.

Educational theme: Ignorance of the law is no excuse for breaking it. In this case fraud is an intentional perversion of truth or a false misrepresentation of a matter of fact. It is a felony.

Educational theme: A baseball player who is a citizen of a foreign country who seeks to enter the United States generally must first obtain a U.S. visa. It is an endorsement on a passport indicating that the holder is allowed to enter, leave, or stay for a specified period of time in a country.

Educational theme: Perseverance is the hard work you have already done. Winners never quit, quitters never win.

Educational theme: Elation is an emotion, when one recognizes the valuable use of one's time. It is a source of enjoyment or pleasure. When something is no longer fun, we stop doing it; therefore fun is the key to intrinsic motivation. Playing baseball is simply fun.

Act Two - "Draft Picks": The Texas Rangers have a knack for scouting good young talent, and that includes a pair of University of Georgia Bulldogs - Zach Cone and Johnathan Taylor. Zach may be the best athlete in college baseball because he is a true five tool player and Taylor is a man of many talents. But during their junior year the two outfielders had a horrific collision in left center field. After lying prone for a long time, Zach got up, but JT was paralyzed. The two best friends talked in the hospital, where even then JT was in good spirits. Later JT was transferred to a rehab facility while Zach and the Bulldogs reached the NCAA Regional Final. When it came time for the 2011 MLB First Year Player Draft, the Rangers selected Cone 37th overall. The Rangers liked Zach's makeup and aptitude, and although he didn't have the best season, they focused on his potential. It's possibly the Rangers would have drafted JT had he not

been paralyzed, so in an effort to lift his spirits, they also took JT in the 37th round. Both men are high character and high makeup players. After signing with the Rangers, the two teammates toured the Rangers clubhouse where they were welcomed as Texas Rangers.

Jon Daniels was asked the *TWIBIA* question. Who is the Texas Ranger right handed pitcher holding the mark for the lowest ERA in a full season? The answer is 2011 Hall of Fame inductee Bert Blyleven with a 2.72 ERA in 1977.

Winning Road Trips celebrates the teams and players that know how to win away from home. In Detroit the NY Mets hit grand slam home runs in back to back innings. The Mets had gone nearly two years without hitting a grand slam.

In *All-Star Moments*, broadcaster Bob Costas described NY Giants' southpaw Carl Hubbell striking out five future Hall of Famers in the 1934 All-Star Game at the Polo Grounds. They were Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Jimmie Foxx, Al Simmons and Joe Cronin. Fans are asked to vote as to what feat was the greatest in all-star game history.

Educational theme: Baseball is considered to be the most difficult sport to master. It takes great skill and ability to play the game successfully. That is why athletes possessing all five baseball tools are highly regarded.

Educational theme: The First-Year Player Draft, also known as the Rule 4 Draft, is MLB's primary mechanism for assigning amateur baseball players.

Educational theme: Character counts when selecting baseball players. Sports do not build character. They reveal it. It involves trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

Educational theme: Trivia is a seemingly superfluous and insignificant event; however, it is an important component of baseball legend, lore and tradition. For both fans and players, trivia is a source of fun and interest in the American institution called baseball.

Educational theme: Paying honor to the past is necessary for seeing the future. History is a vital aspect of sport, especially providing standards of achievement and evaluation, while providing year round fun and interest.

Act Three - "Pepsi Max": Once again from the high-tech, interactive, hardball haven called "The MLB Man Cave," *TWIB* and the two intrepid baseball fans continued to answer the question - what would it be like to watch every inning of every MLB game for the entire season of 2011? Mike O'Hara and Ryan Wagner have watched more than 1000 games. In addition, more than 70 celebrities and MLB players have visited the cave, including Miss USA and home run champion Jose Bautista. This week on MLB Fan Cave Chat, host Mikey Oh challenged sportscasters Ken Rosenthal and Tim McCarver regarding which two current players they would select to start a franchise. McCarver selected Jose Reyes and Roy Halladay. Rosenthal chose Troy Tulowitzki and Roy Halladay. Mikey O'Hara picked Robinson Cano and Derek Jeter. In a lighter moment, Mikey had Ken assist him in learning to tie a bow tie.

Gillette presented *The Rookie of the Month*, which honors the league's top rookies throughout the season. Washington Nationals' rookie Danny Espinosa is making his mark as a home run machine.

Educational theme: Baseball aficionados simply enjoy watching the game of baseball. There is a powerful emotion for the game of baseball. It is an ardent love and boundless enthusiasm of uniquely American way of life.

Educational theme: Fantasizing about baseball is a way to enjoy the game and establish relationships by offering opinions and quoting statistics of your favorite players and teams. This is an extension of the baseball related term "The Hot Stove League."

Educational theme: Clutch performances occur when a player delivers prime efforts time after time.

Educational theme: Landmark performances are those that mark a turning point in history. An athletic accomplishment with historical significance is one that is marked for preservation by aficionados, players and national governing bodies of sport.

Act Four - "Diamond Demos": To play baseball one must execute the fundamentals of the game. MLB Network expert Harold Reynolds offered one key on what to look for when a right handed pitcher is on the mound to avoid being picked off. Reynolds says that a pitcher is quickest with his feet when the hands are moving. Once the pitcher comes to a set his feet slow down.

Going All Out is a segment that honors special players who continually show maximum effort. Alexi Ogando was signed as an outfielder by the Oakland Athletics in 2002. Texas drafted Alexi in the Rule Five Draft, and after he came to the United States they quickly converted him to a pitcher. Immediately he demonstrated the ability to throw strikes, throw hard, spin the ball and economize his pitches. Credit for this change goes to the Rangers scouting department, especially scout Don Welke. Welke once before discovered a converted pitcher for the Toronto Blue Jays. Dave Steib was drafted out of Southern Illinois University in 1978. Steib applied everything he was taught and learned much through experience. Incredibly, over a two year span, Dave lost three no-hitters with just one out to go. Finally the frustration ended, when he no-hit the Cleveland Indians.

Big League Blast takes us to Cincinnati where the Tampa Bay Rays' Evan Longoria hits a walk off home run to defeat the Reds.

Educational theme: Sports pedagogy is an important aspect of the learning process. Demonstration and explanation are initial steps in the process. Children learn best by watching and mimicking athletic performance.

Educational theme: Baseball scouting involves observing professional and amateur prospects, then deciding what role that player would fill on a team.

Educational theme: It is what you learn after you know it all that counts. The only way to get better is to get smarter; therefore, don't be seduced by the allure of mediocrity.

Educational theme: The enemy of great is good. Hitting in the clutch separates the good from the great. Clutch performances occur when a player delivers prime efforts time after time.

Act Five - "How 'bout that!": Some of the best plays of the week were presented to the song "*Man of the People*" by *Middle Distance Runner*. This edition began with an interesting and impressive gymnastic move during the pre-game first pitch ceremony. There were lots of good plays by infielders making nifty diving catches and impressive throws, as they showed quick reflexes and creativity. The back-to-back inning grand slam home runs were noted. A few fielding errors and stumbling base runners were shown. Outfielders were shown making diving, leaping and over the shoulder catches.

Jason Verlander's 14 strikeout game and Cliff Lee's third consecutive shutout were cited. Finally, several game winning celebrations at home plate were featured.

Educational theme: Great players don't win games, it is players playing great that do.

Educational theme: Emotional celebrations are excellent ways to rejoice that often result in team bonding and improved performance. It is the optimal use of energy to relieve the anxiety and stress of competition.

Educational theme: The artistic value of sport can be found in the beauty, grace, and rhythmic movements of elite athletes. The aesthetic quality of a well-executed play enhances the appreciation of baseball.

Educational theme: Once the student-learner has carefully observed the required effort and the bio-mechanics of the premier athletes, then the movements can be more easily duplicated and performed by the learner. The student is then physically educated.