



## ***Quintana-for-quality kids could be biggest – and best-ever – Cubs-Sox trade***

*By George Castle, CBM Historian  
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Jose Quintana promises in the short run to be more impactful to the Cubs than Sammy Sosa was in 1992.

Eloy Jimenez could be as valuable to the White Sox as Jon Garland was for the long run.

What likely was the biggest trade in Cubs-White Sox history on July 13 – the 15<sup>th</sup> between the teams involving big-league players – will be one of the uncommon deals that works out for both franchises.

The Cubs have a lefty starter in Quintana who should rank No. 3 in the rotation, if not higher as the years progress that he is under control for the North Siders. Meanwhile, outfielder Jimenez is rated in the same ballpark as top position-player prospects Yoan Moncada and Luis Robert in a Sox farm system that was almost totally barren of impact youngsters a few years ago.

Sox general manager Rick Hahn played poker expertly in initiating the Quintana talks, completed late on July 12, to counterpart Theo Epstein on the final day before the All-Star break.

With the July 31 trade deadline still three weeks away, Hahn took advantage of two angles in moving Epstein off square one. A southpaw like Quintana would likely be the subject of a numerous serious trade inquiries, including one from a revived Milwaukee Brewers team the Cubs now must catch in the NL Central. And Hahn couldn't help but notice the 10 runs Cubs ace Jon Lester surrendered to the Pittsburgh Pirates in the first inning in the July 9 Wrigley Field game – the low point in a string of mediocre or worse Cubs rotation performances. Kyle Hendrick's disablement, John Lackey triggering Home Run Derby in most starts and the instability of the Eddie Butler/Mike Montgom-



**Jose Quintana (left) should stabilize the Cubs rotation for years to come, while Eloy Jimenez (right) enlarges an impressive White Sox cache of position-player prospects.**

ery fill-in rotation turns convinced Epstein he had no more time to ponder moves with a 5 1/2 –game deficit opening the second half.

Added benefits accrue to both sides.

Rightfully lauding Quintana’s character, Hahn presents the Cubs a young veteran who should seamlessly fit into the Wrigley Field clubhouse. A native of Colombia, Quintana was comfortable speaking English in explaining his friendly persona from his first day with the Sox. Quintana never complained about lack of run support that might have cost him 15 or more wins over 3 1/2 seasons. Given the expected revival of the youngish Cubs hitters, Quintana should have no beefs going forward in being rewarded in the W column.

In the Spanish language category, Jimenez – rated Baseball America’s No. 5 prospect in the game – should break in to the majors alongside Robert after Moncada has led the initial wave of Sox prospects to G-Rate Field later this season. There will be a cultural comfort zone of fellow Latin prospects, all likely mentored by first baseman Jose Abreu.

Hahn also liked Class-A right-hander Dylan Cease, the most highly-rated pitcher coming over from the Cubs. Cease was rated the No. 63 prospect in the game by MLB.com.

Ian Happ’s quick ascent to the Cubs this season alongside the requisite patience for Kyle Schwarber and Albert Almora, Jr.’s center-field defensive skills meant Epstein did not short himself in the outfield by dispatching Jimenez. Acquiring Quintana, who will cost the Cubs no more than \$10.5 million a season through 2020, will shorten Epstein’s future shopping list for starting pitching. He won’t have to overpay for a free agent with a lefty of Quintana’s caliber locked up.

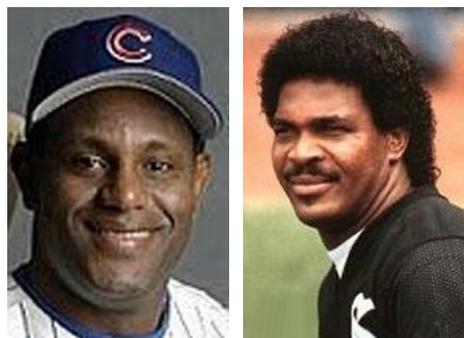
General managers through history insist the best deals are not ones that rip off one team or another, that benefit both parties. The flops take place due to miscalculation, ignorance, desperation and player failures or injuries.

Rarely have Cubs-Sox deals have the potential for such positive mutual outcomes.

### **Sosa-for-Bell most lopsided long-term**

The most spectacular one-sided outcome tilted the Cubs’ way when Larry Himes, a Sammy Sosa booster since he landed him for Harold Baines in 1989 on the South Side, got Sosa from the Sox for George Bell late in spring training in 1992. Irrespective of his future connections with PEDs, Sosa made the trade thoroughly lopsided after the moody Bell gave the Sox only two seasons – only one with decent run production – before retiring.

The Sox came out way ahead landing Garland from the Cubs for setup man Matt Karchner near the 1998 trade deadline. The Cubs’ No. 1 draft pick in



**Sammy Sosa’s Cubs career made his 1992 trade for George Bell (right) the most lopsided in the 14 previous Cubs-Sox deals before Jose Quintana’s arrival at Wrigley Field.**

1997, Garland went on to become a two-time 18-game winner for the Sox, one of the big seasons in the 2005 World Series run, while Karchner crumbled in Wrigley. One observer thought Karchner could not adapt to pitching in a pennant race. Cubs president Andy MacPhail later said GM Ed Lynch made one deal in which he should have pulled rank and stopped. He obviously meant Garland-for-Karchner. Better that Lynch should have aggressively chased Randy Johnson instead of Karchner, a non-deal he angrily protested later he did not have the resources to pursue.



**Jon Garland lived up to his early Cubs-prospect billing as a Sox while Matt Karchner (right) flamed out as a Cubs setup man.**

Multiple players crossed town in previous deals with differing results for the Cubs and Sox.

The previous big deal involving total number of players took place early in 1983, affecting the first divisional titles by each franchise in the post-1959 era.

South suburban South Holland native Steve Trout was traded with reliever Warren Brusstar to the Cubs for infielders Scott Fletcher and Pat Tabler, and pitchers Dick Tidrow and Randy Martz. The Cubs got a bit of an edge as Trout went a surprising 13-7, while Brusstar was a serviceable middle reliever, for the 1984 NL East titlists. Fletcher and Tidrow were middling contributors to the 1983 Sox “Winning Ugly” AL West champions, while Tabler was moved on to a productive career – particularly with the bases loaded – in Cleveland. One report had Sox GM Roland Hemond crafting this deal with Cubs counterpart Dallas Green as a favor for not taking future Hall of Famer Fergie Jenkins in a free-agent compensation deal.

### **Switched to ‘pen, Lamp helped Sox**

The Sox came out way ahead in a late-spring training deal in 1981. The team swapped pitchers, Dennis Lamp to the Sox for lefty Ken Kravec. As a starter, Lamp pitched to contact with mediocre results. Switched to the bullpen by Tony La Russa, he had much better success and contributed to the '83 team. Once a 15-game winner with the Sox, Kravec did little in a season-plus with the Cubs.

Almost a decade earlier, the Cubs got more benefit out of another multi-body deal. Late in 1973, Ron Santo, taking advantage of a CBA clause helping 10-year veterans, forced GM John Holland to scotch a trade to the Los Angeles Angels for Andy Hassler. Holland accommodated Santo’s desire to stay in Chicago by dealing him to Hemond and the Sox for pitchers Steve Stone and Ken Frailing, catcher Steve Swisher and a player to be named later (lefty Jim Kremmel).

Santo spent an unhappy final .221 season on the South Side, while Stone was a serviceable pitcher (20-14 his first two seasons) with the Cubs. Swisher got playing time at catcher, and begat son and future Sox outfielder Nick Swisher, now a TV baseball analyst for Fox. Frailing’s top Cubs accomplishment was



**Dennis Lamp was less easier-to-hit as a Sox reliever compared to his three seasons as a Cubs starter.**

pitching a complete-game 15-hitter in a 12-4 win over the San Francisco Giants on May 27, 1974 at Wrigley Field.

Trivia-meisters will love a 1970 winter meetings deal. Newly-appointed as Sox player personnel chief, Hemond traded outfielder Jose Ortiz and first baseman Ossie Blanco to the Cubs for lefty pitcher Dave Lemonds and right-hander Pat Jacquez, and first baseman Roe Skidmore. Ortiz opened the 1971 season as the Cubs' center fielder, then disappeared from the majors two months later despite hitting .295 for Leo Durocher. Lemonds was a decent lefty (4-7, 2.95 ERA in relief and spot starts) for the 1972 Sox, a surprise contender. Meanwhile, Decatur, Ill. native Skidmore continued to not get a break. He remains one of the few big leaguers ever with a 1.000 career average (one hit, a single, in one at-bat late in the 1970 season for the Cubs).

But Quintana-for-talented kids seems to ensure the outcome will burst out of the trivia category. The future awaits on both sides of town.