SAN DIEGO UNION POST

AUGUST 2, 2032 · THE SAN DIEGO SEALS BEAT

Charles fans 224; Seals still haven't made a trade

BY **TRINA BOSANKO** · SAN DIEGO UNION POST

Still one name.

In May I printed the complete list of everything this front office had done since November 1: Justin Curry, signed March 4, two years, $14 million. It is August 2. The list has not changed. No trades at any level, all season, with the deadline closing at the next sim.

And this time the standings are not an excuse for standing still. The Seals are 51-54, fourth in the Ruby, three games behind San Juan for the last playoff spot in the Fire Conference. They were 35-45 on June 29. They have gone 16-9 since, including nine straight wins from July 3 to July 16.

Three games out and nobody picking up the phone.

Start with the best thing in this organization, because it is the best thing in the league. Al Charles has struck out 224 batters. Nobody else in baseball has more than 164. He is 11-8 with a 3.79 earned run average and a 1.01 WHIP, he is 26, and he makes $3.9 million. He is the reason anybody outside this city has heard of this team this summer.

Chujiro Doi is hitting .277 with 13 home runs behind the plate, at 34, in the last year of his deal. Trey Wood has 20 home runs. Jack Withers has 18. Ezequiel Acevedo has 22 saves and a 1.62 earned run average, and the bullpen has blown eight saves, the second-fewest in baseball.

That is the good list. Here is the other one.

Jose Marulanda was owed $27.2 million this season and was hitting .219. He is not on the big-league roster anymore. The club sent him to Triple-A Medina, where he is hitting .171. Twenty-seven million dollars, in Medina.

Craig Turcios, owed $13 million this year and $12 million next, is hitting .189 with a .232 on-base percentage. Craig Noftall is at .218 with a .255 on-base percentage. Joaquin Manriquez is at .218 and hurt. The offense is 28th in the league in runs.

The road record was 8-16 in May. It is 18-33 now. At home the Seals are 33-21. This is a good team in its own ballpark and one of the worst in the league everywhere else, and 30 of the last 57 games are on the road.

So here is the deadline, and here is what I think.

San Diego should buy a bat. Not a savior. A bat. A corner outfielder or a second baseman who can hit .260 somewhere other than here. The club is paying $144.7 million, 17th in the league, for a roster that has two things working, Charles and the bullpen, and a playoff spot three games away. That is exactly the situation a deadline exists for.

And if the front office is not going to buy, it should say so and sell Doi while a contender will still pay for a 34-year-old catcher hitting .277 on an expiring deal. What it should not do is what it did all winter, which is nothing.

Alex has been in that chair since 2001. Thirty-two seasons, five MVP awards, all of them bought or traded for. When this organization traded a first-round pick to Philadelphia for a young arm and kept him, it got Al Charles. It worked. Do it again.

Because it is not coming from below. The affiliates are 28th in the league in combined record and have been 23rd or worse in all seven years before this one. The one exception is Jessie Hughes, and the league agrees. Its own list of its top 100 prospects has him third. He was 6-1 with a 1.27 in 10 starts at Jackson, got promoted to Medina, and has a 6.34 there in 10 more. He is 21 and currently hurt. He is also the only Seal on the list. DSA Reports, in its list dated July 19, has him 51st and Aaron Buggage, who has a 5.55 at Medina, 75th.

In May I told you Medina was the problem. It is 27-66. And now $27.2 million of Jose Marulanda is in its lineup.

Fifty-seven games left, 27 at home. Thirty-nine inside the Ruby, six apiece against Big Horn, Mexico City, Oahu, Phoenix, Myrtle Beach and Spokane.

Three games. One name since November. The deadline closes at the next sim. Somebody in that front office is going to have to decide whether this is a team worth adding to, and if the answer is nothing again, the answer is also the explanation.