

STARTING LINEUP



Diamond Awards

VIEWING KIT

THANK YOU

DEAR FRIEND,

On behalf of all of us affiliated with the Diamond Awards, we are grateful for our friends, partners, and sponsors who care so much about the health of the countless lives of individuals who are affected by neurological diseases.

Most of us have been affected by someone who suffers from one of these horrible diseases.

Our stories with neurological diseases are very personal. For me, Deb, it starts with the diagnosis of my father-in-law, Bob Allison. Bob was diagnosed with ataxia in 1989 and with his wife Betty founded the Bob Allison Ataxia Research Center at the University of Minnesota. Bob left us in 1995, from the complications of ataxia but, he lives on with us now as we talk about treatments and cures not just hope.

For me, Jennifer, my story centers on my father who died from the complications of Parkinson's disease in 2003. When he began showing signs of Parkinson's disease

he was in his 60s. I feel truly blessed to be a part of this cause and cannot say enough great things about the Medical Staff at the University of Minnesota and the research they are conducting on a daily basis to come up with a cure for these debilitating diseases.

We are very fortunate to have world renowned doctors and researchers working everyday on finding the keys to the treatment and cure for these neurological diseases. Join us in continuing the fight against these diseases by funding the research that is so desperately needed.

BE WELL and STAY SAFE!



Debra Allison
2021 Event Co-Chair



Jennifer Crowder
2021 Event Co-Chair



VIEWING TIPS

FRIDAY | NOVEMBER | 19 | 2021

Tune in to Bally Sports North at 6:00pm on November 19th to watch the Minnesota Twins 17th Annual Diamond Awards. Visit bid612.com to bid on the auction and donate to further the innovative research and patient care for brain, nerve, and muscle disorders at the University of Minnesota.

WATCH LIVE



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ON THE AUCTION

Tuesday, November 16th
at 9:00am – Tuesday,
November 23rd at 8:30 pm

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HISTORY

WHO WAS BOB ALLISON?

Baseball star Bob Allison played 17 seasons with the Washington Senators and the Minnesota Twins. He slugged 256 home runs, made three All-Star appearances, and was recently voted the greatest left fielder in the first 40 years of the Twins. He retired from baseball at the end of the 1970 season.

Thirteen years later, Allison began noticing problems with his coordination. Family and friends started to notice the stagger in his walk. Allison was suffering from a progressive sporadic ataxia known as Olivoponto cerebellar atrophy (OPCA).

Allison continued to battle this rare degenerative neurological disease for years, eventually losing his ability to walk, talk, write, and feed himself. He died of complications from ataxia in April of 1995 at the age of 60.

RESEARCH PROGRESS

Muscular Dystrophy: UMN researchers have engineered antibodies to target blood vessels in the muscles of mice with Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy, decreasing damage and improving muscle function.

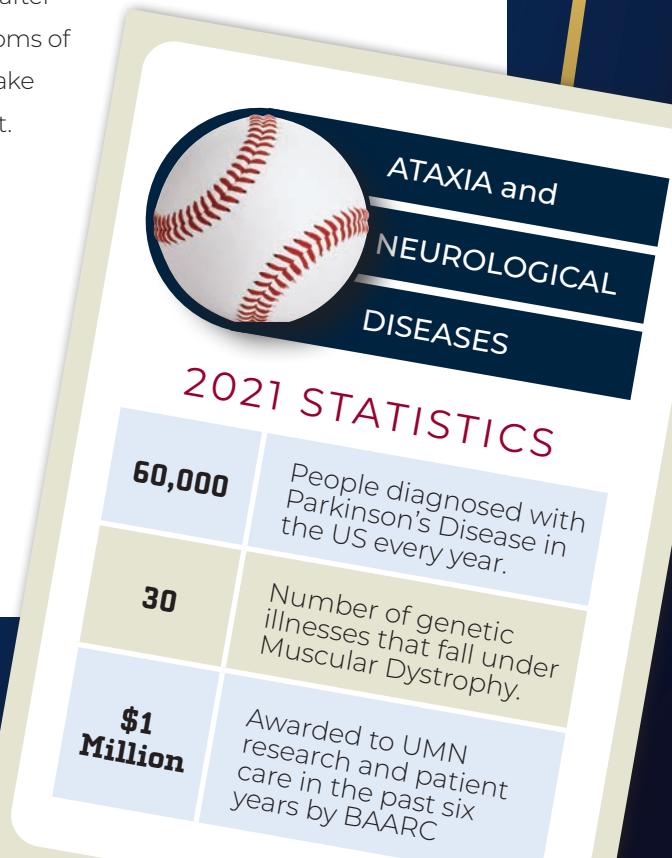
Multiple Sclerosis: University of Minnesota researchers (Patterson Group) are currently

working on a new class of drugs designed to prevent damage to the nervous system caused by multiple sclerosis.

Ataxia: Dr. Harry Orr with the University of Minnesota is making strides towards a gene therapy that could become the first-ever ataxia treatment.

Parkinson's: U of MN researchers have developed innovative improvements to Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) implants for patients with Parkinson's disease.

ALS: Using new voice database technology, the University of Minnesota offers "voice banking" as a way for patients with ALS to preserve their voices electronically. Patients are able to communicate using their natural voice through an iPad or speech generating device after symptoms of ALS make difficult.



TONIGHT'S
LINEUP

FRI., NOVEMBER 19 | 6PM CENTRAL TIME

DIAMOND AWARDS PROGRAM
WITH HOSTS AUDRA MARTIN AND DICK BREMER

Awards Overview Baseball Writers' Association of America
La Velle E. Neal, III, Minneapolis Star Tribune

AWARDS PRESENTATION

Sherry Robertson Award – Minor League Player of the Year: José Miranda
Jim Rantz Award – Minor League Pitcher of the Year: Louie Varland
Terry Ryan Play Ball! Minnesota Award: Todd Smrekar
Dick Siebert Award – Upper Midwest Player of the Year: Jared Walsh
2021 Kirby Puckett Award – Twins Alumni Community Service: Joe Mauer

MISSION MOMENT University of Minnesota Research

AWARDS PRESENTATION

Bob Allison Award – Twins Leadership: Nelson Cruz
Joseph W. Haynes Award – Twins Pitcher of the Year: José Berrios
Bill Boni Award – Twins Most Outstanding Rookie: Bailey Ober
Jim Kaat Award – Twins Defensive Player of the Year: Andrelton Simmons
Mike Augustin Media Good Guy Award - Josh Donaldson
Herb Carneal Award – Lifetime Achievement Award: Mike Radcliffe
Carl R. Pohlad Award – Outstanding Community Service: Taylor Rodgers

MISSION MOMENT Rich Melzer

AWARDS PRESENTATION

Calvin R. Griffith – Most Valuable Twin: Jorge Polanco

AWARD WINNERS

Sherry Robertson Award – Minor League Player of the Year

JOSE MIRANDA

After five seasons in the Twins' minor league system, third baseman Jose Miranda saw his game reach new heights in 2021. The 23-year-old split the season between Double-A Wichita and Triple-A St. Paul, combining to hit .344 (184-for-535) with 32 doubles, 30 home runs, 94 RBI and 97 runs scored with a .401 on-base percentage, a .572 slugging percentage and a .973 OPS in 127 games. He began the season in Wichita and earned himself a promotion to St. Paul in late June after hitting .345 (67-for-194) in 47 games for the Wind Surge. He also recorded two five-hit games in a single week in late June, including a three-homer game with six RBI on June 29 for the Saints, his second career Triple-A game.

Miranda led all of Minor League Baseball in hits and total bases (306), while ranking second in batting average, tied for fifth in RBI, sixth in OPS, eighth in slugging percentage (.572) and tied for 11th in homers. He also became the first Twins farmhand to hit 30 homers in a season since Daniel Palka hit 34 in 2016. The 6-foot-2, 210-pound infielder was named a Baseball America Minor League All-Star and earned a Twins minor league player of the week award on three separate occasions.

"Our scouts have said for years that his bat-to-ball skills are special," Twins President of Baseball Operations Derek Falvey said. "The problem was, he was showing it a little too often."

"He's making much better contact, much more consistently," Falvey added.

The former 73rd overall pick was selected by Minnesota in the supplemental round of the 2016 First-Year Player Draft out of Leadership Christian Academy in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico and has hit .282 (534-for-1891) with 100 doubles, 66 home runs and 294 RBI over 486 minor league games in the Twins system.

The Twins have had the Sherry Robertson Award winner reach the major leagues in each of the last 14 seasons. Miranda's remarkable rise means fans could see him in a Minnesota uniform sooner rather than later.

Jim Rantz Award – Minor League Pitcher of the Year

LOUIE VARLAND

Pitching prospect Louie Varland's ascent reached a new peak this year with his hometown team, as the North St. Paul High School alum and former Concordia University pitcher is the 2021 winner of the Jim Rantz Award as Twins Minor League Pitcher of the Year.

Varland, 23, split the 2021 season between Low-A Fort Myers and High-A Cedar Rapids. The 6-foot-1, 205-pound pitcher went 10-4 with a 2.10 ERA (103.0 IP, 24 ER), 30 walks, 142 strikeouts, a 1.09 WHIP and a .214 opponent batting average (82-for-383), leading Twins minor league pitchers in strikeouts, wins and ERA (min. 45.0 innings pitched). He was named Low-A Southeast Pitcher of the Week with Fort Myers on June 13 and later named Twins minor league Pitcher of the Week twice (July 25 and September 12) while pitching for the Kernels. Varland also recorded four 10-plus strikeout efforts, including fanning a career-high 11 batters on June 9 with Fort Myers and replicating the feat on September 15 with Cedar Rapids. His development from Division II hurler to lauded prospect is a tribute to the adjustments he's made along the way.

"He started throwing his breaking ball harder, and that's shown up in games, too," Twins Director, Player Development Alex Hassan said. "He's got three really interesting pitches. And he's throwing strikes and missing bats, so a lot of good ingredients."

The St. Paul native is the first Minnesota-born pitcher to win the Jim Rantz Award since it was first given in 2002. Varland hails from a family whose athleticism is legendary in certain St. Paul circles — his older brother, Gus, was his teammate on the baseball team at Concordia and is currently in the Los Angeles Dodgers' minor league system, while his aunts, Denise and Sue, were fastpitch softball pitchers in North St. Paul.

Varland was selected by the Twins in the 15th round of the 2019 First-Year Player Draft and has gone 10-5 with a 2.10 ERA (111.2 IP, 26 ER), 34 walks and 152 strikeouts in 23 games (19 starts) through parts of two seasons in the Twins minor league system. He is currently ranked as the club's 28th-best prospect by MLB.com.

AWARD WINNERS

Terry Ryan wwPlay Ball! Minnesota Award

TODD SMREKAR

Continuing to celebrate and support those who impact the game of baseball at all levels throughout our region, longtime Cambridge-area youth and high school coach Todd Smrekar is the winner of the 2021 Terry Ryan Play Ball! Minnesota Award. The award, which is voted upon by founding members of Play Ball! Minnesota, is named after the Twins' former Executive Vice President and General Manager.

"Terry Ryan was always accessible to coaches around this state," Smrekar said. "I don't know if it ever will sink in; it is humbling to receive an award with his name on it."

Like Ryan, Smrekar has a long history of impacting youth and coaches around the state of Minnesota. His youth coaching career has spanned 30 years, including two decades as head baseball coach at Cambridge-Isanti High School. A 1989 graduate of then-Cambridge High School, where he played baseball and football, Smrekar received his degree from St. Cloud State University in 1994 and returned home a year later to teach and coach at his alma mater. He took the reins of the Bluejackets varsity baseball program in 1997 and guided C-I to 210 wins over his 21 seasons, becoming one of 164 coaches in Minnesota history to surpass 200 career victories. Smrekar's 2008 team won the Mississippi 8 Conference title and was runner-up in Class 3A, Section 7. When he stepped down following the 2017 campaign, Smrekar was the longest-tenured baseball coach in Cambridge-Isanti High School history.

In addition to his high school duties, Smrekar also coached American Legion, VFW and other youth baseball teams, along with football and hockey. Equally impressive as his coaching resumé has been Smrekar's longstanding work with the Minnesota State High School Baseball Coaches Association, where he is a past president, secretary/treasurer and webmaster. For his work on and off the field, Smrekar was inducted into the Minnesota State High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame in 2020.

Dick Siebert Award – Upper Midwest Player of the Year

JARED WALSH

By Betsy Helfand, St. Paul Pioneer Press

By the time the Los Angeles Angels selected Jared Walsh in the 39th round of the 2015 draft, he had already been passed by every team more than three dozen times as 1,184 players heard their names called before him.

Players like Alex Bregman and Walker Buehler, first-round picks out of SEC schools, were near the top of the draft, on a clear path to major league stardom.

Walsh's path wasn't so clear. He was overlooked and underestimated. But he quickly got to work, and when given the chance at the major league level, Walsh has made the most out of his opportunity.

Walsh, 28, who originally hails from Brookfield, Wisconsin, was voted this year's Dick Siebert Award winner, given to the Upper Midwest Player of the Year after an all-star season for the Angels.

Walsh's emergence as an everyday player wasn't so much of a surprise. He did, after all, finish seventh in American League Rookie of the Year Voting last year after slushing .293/.324/.646 with nine home runs in 32 games during 2020's abbreviated season, seeing consistent playing time by the end of the year.

But this year, Walsh, who took over full-time first base duties when the Angels designated future Hall of Famer Albert Pujols for assignment in May, did everything he could to cement himself in the Angels' plans moving forward.

Walsh hit .277/.340/.509 with 29 home runs and 98 RBIs in 144 games this year. He posted a 2.9 Wins Above Replacement per Baseball Reference, which was second on the team behind just Shohei Ohtani.

In the midst of it, he was named an All-Star for the first time, becoming just the 11th position player to be drafted in the 39th round or later to make an All-Star team and the first since 2012.

Angels teammate Ohtani was credited with the win in that game, but it wouldn't have happened without Walsh's efforts. With the American League clinging to a three-run lead in the eighth inning and the bases loaded, Walsh broke in to catch a Kris Bryant sinking liner on the slide, pronouncing himself on the national stage for all to see.

Walsh edged out Twins reliever and Northfield native Caleb Thielbar, who finished the year 7-0 with a 3.23 ERA, for the award. In doing so, he became the first non-Minnesotan to win the award since Tony Watson in 2015 and the first Wisconsinite to win it since reliever Pat Neshek in 2014.

AWARD WINNERS

2021 Kirby Puckett Award – Twins Alumni Community Service

JOE MAUER

Former Twins catcher and first baseman Joe Mauer is the winner of the 2021 Kirby Puckett Award for Twins Alumni Community Service. The St. Paul native and Twins icon continues to live and give in his hometown. Mauer has remained active in the Twin Cities community since retiring after the 2018 season, working with many of the same organizations he was involved with during his 15-year major league career, all of which was spent in a Twins uniform.

Joe and his wife, Maddie, are longtime supporters of Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, donating funds to renovate a sports-themed playroom at the St. Paul hospital and hosting the Mauer and Friends Kids Classic every year since 2016. This year, the event transformed into a COVID-friendly home run derby at Target Field, as Joe brought back former teammates and other local sports personalities to compete in an event that raised over \$350,000 to benefit children who have complex medical conditions, rare diseases and traumatic injuries.

Joe has also continued as a spokesman for the Highland Friendship Club, an organization dedicated to providing teens and young adults with developmental disabilities opportunities to engage in their community and connect with others. A supporter of HFC since its founding in 2002—when Joe was a 19-year-old playing Single-A ball—Mauer hosts an annual bowling fundraiser benefitting the organization.

The 2008 winner of the Carl R. Pohlad Award for Outstanding Community Service, Mauer has also long been a frequent participant in appearances on behalf of the Twins Community Fund, raising over \$250,000 annually through these efforts.

A prep legend at St. Paul's Cretin-Derham Hall High School, the top overall pick in the 2001 First-Year Player Draft and one of eight individuals to have his number retired by the Minnesota Twins, Joe's legacy and impact on his home state is far greater than his athletic accomplishments. For more than two decades and counting, Mauer continues to lend his time and resources to help enrich the lives of others, from TwinsFest to school and hospital visits, to events and fundraisers in communities across Twins Territory.

Bob Allison Award – Twins Leadership

NELSON CRUZ

By La Velle E. Neal, III, Minneapolis Star Tribune

Nelson Cruz joins Michael Cuddyer and Justin Morneau as three-time winners of the Bob Allison Award. Unlike Cuddyer and Morneau, Cruz won the award having played just two-and-two-thirds seasons with the Twins.

Cruz was dealt to Tampa Bay on July 22, as the Twins fell far from contention for the playoffs. But his impact on the club had lasting effects on the players he mentored and the coaching staff he worked with.

Even as the gravity of him being traded hit him, he still willingly met with the media for an exit interview and said he would be open to returning.

"This is part of my family," he said. "I've got a lot of friends that I love like family. The city. Everything that I've been through the last three years, it really touched me."

That's just one example of why Cruz was respected and revered in the clubhouse. The Bob Allison Award goes to the Twins players who exemplifies determination, hustle, tenacity, competitive spirit and leadership both on and off the field. Cruz touched all those bases in each of his two-plus seasons with the club. He played with a damaged ligament in his wrist. He stole three bases in 2021, not too shabby for a 40-year old. Despite the Twins struggling to compete, Cruz did his part by hitting .294 with 18 homers and 50 RBI in 85 games. He continued to be a positive influence in the clubhouse, helping teammate Miguel Sano through a terrible slump.

And his dedication to staying fit at 40 impressed those around him. He ate well, worked out consistently, took afternoon naps before night games and was ready to play from the first pitch.

"This is meant with no disrespect to anybody else," said Derek Falvey, the Twins' president of baseball operations. "But he may be the best teammate I've ever seen in terms of the way he goes about his business, the way he puts his arm around people, the way he helps us become better in our front office jobs and coaching staff jobs. This guy is beyond special."

Cruz also was the Twins' nominee for the Roberto Clemente Award, which goes to the MLB player who best represents the game on and off the field. He understood his role, embraced it and mastered it. And the Twins couldn't forget that - even if he was dealt to another team by the end of the season.

AWARD WINNERS

Joseph W. Haynes Award – Twins Pitcher of the Year

JOSÉ BERRÍOS

By Dave Campbell, Associated Press

José Berrios saved the best for last.

Receiving an honor for one team after finishing a season with another is a rather uncommon occurrence, but Berrios was a natural pick for Minnesota Twins Pitcher of the Year -- the Joseph W. Haynes Award -- despite his late July departure for Toronto. He also earned the honor in 2018.

Fondly remembered in Minnesota for his upbeat demeanor off the field and relentless work ethic between starts, Berrios was uncharacteristically subdued the day he learned he'd been traded. He was appreciative of his new destination, where he helped the Blue Jays stay in the crowded American League playoff race until the final day of the regular season. They wound up just missing a wild card spot, by one game.

As Berrios conducted an exit interview via Zoom with reporters who cover the Twins, the right-hander from Puerto Rico repeatedly mentioned how much he and his family would miss the people on the team, in the organization and in the state. When you pitch that well for a club over that long of a period of time, you tend to develop a strong attachment.

"When you're a good player since day one, you keep doing what you're doing and you finish your career the way you're doing, a lot of people and a lot of teams are going to want you," Berrios said that day. "I've been learning that part of this business, this sport."

Berrios was the 32nd overall pick in the 2012 draft by the Twins. He efficiently worked his way up the minor league system and made his debut at Target Field in 2015. After a rough rookie year, Berrios quickly found a groove as the team's most reliable starting pitcher, flirting with ace status all along the way while being picked twice for the American League All-Star team.

In 2019, he went 14-8 with a 3.68 ERA and a career-high 200 1/3 innings. Despite the Twins being out of contention all summer in 2021, Berrios wound up pitching even better. He had 126 strikeouts in 121 2/3 innings over 20 starts before the Twins dealt him for two top prospects. He even managed the rarity of a complete game in today's age of managed workloads and supercharged bullpens. His 3.48 ERA for the Twins was his career best.

In what wound up as his final start for the Twins on July 24, the 27-year-old Berrios pitched seven strong innings against the Angels with three hits, no walks and no earned runs allowed.

Bill Boni Award – Twins Most Outstanding Rookie

BAILEY OBER

By Do-Hyoun Park, MLB.com

Take a look at all six feet, nine inches of Bailey Ober's towering frame next time you see him on the mound, and imagine the uncanny coordination and body control it takes for him to shoot two-under par on an 18-hole golf course. (He's done that.)

It barely sounds more plausible that this mammoth of a man could build a professional career as a command-first finesse pitcher — but he's well on his way to doing that.

Hardly a year ago, Ober was an injury-plagued 12th-round Draft selection who struggled to clock 90 mph with his fastball and had never thrown more than 80 innings in a season as a professional. Now, he's the 2021 winner of the Twins Most Outstanding Rookie Award.

"In a season that was dying for some silver linings, I think Bailey Ober presents as one of the more prominent silver linings for the season," general manager Thad Levine said.

It helps that Ober's fastball is now on the correct side of the 90 mph threshold — topping out at 94.7 mph this season — thanks to more efficient mechanics that have helped his stuff and his arm health. He's got that to thank in part for the 4.19 ERA in 20 starts as he held down a spot in the rotation from June to the end of the season.

That didn't cost him any of his command, either. More impressive still are the rookie's 96 strikeouts and 19 walks, giving him the ninth-best strikeout-to-walk ratio in MLB history among rookies to throw at least 90 innings.

Not bad for a guy who was so caught off-guard by his addition to the 40-man roster in January that the Twins had to scramble to reach him with the good news because he'd gone off the grid for a hunting trip in the Maine wilderness.

The idealized Twins' 2021 season they envisioned on paper almost certainly didn't involve 20 starts from this 26-year-old, who got his chance only because of a rash of injuries and underperformance all around him. But once he established himself, his newfound health and development for the future were exactly what the team needed.

"It's definitely been unreal to be able to stay up here as long as I have been and have some of the success that I had," Ober said.

AWARD WINNERS

Jim Kaat Award – Twins Defensive Player of the Year

ANDRELTON SIMMONS

By Aaron Gleeman, The Athletic

Upgrading the infield defense was a priority for the Twins heading into last offseason, so they made four-time Gold Glove-winning shortstop Andrelton Simmons their biggest addition of the winter and moved Jorge Polanco to second base. It worked, as the Twins were the fourth-best infield in the league at converting ground balls into outs, a massive improvement after ranking 10th the previous two seasons.

Polanco being better suited for second base than shortstop helped a lot, but nothing made a bigger impact on the Twins' defense than having Simmons in the middle of everything. He was second among AL shortstops in both Defensive Runs Saved (plus-14) and Outs Above Average (plus-15), consistently making routine plays that sometimes gave Polanco and other past Twins shortstops trouble and frequently producing highlight-worthy outs.

"When you watch Andrelton Simmons play, and you really just pay attention to what he's doing, he truly is working ahead of the game," Twins manager Rocco Baldelli said. "He's a maestro in that way, and he's thinking two and three steps ahead on everything. And it's actually helped a lot of our players think about the game differently, too. It shows you what's possible."

Baldelli and the Twins were so impressed by Simmons' defense and calming, veteran presence in the infield that they stuck with him as the starting shortstop down the stretch even after falling out of contention and despite his struggles offensively, believing that his elite fielding would help ease the burden on a young, patchwork pitching staff.

"He was a very good contributor to our team in solidifying our defense and helping our pitchers and getting us through innings," Baldelli said. "Simba truly did affect the people around him and changed the way that guys saw the field."

Simmons' season didn't go as planned at the plate, but his defense largely lived up to the hype, of which there was plenty. His overall 80 percent "success rate" on all balls hit in his vicinity led the AL's starting shortstops by a wide margin. He was the first Twins shortstop with double-digit Defensive Runs Saved since Jason Bartlett in 2007 and Simmons' plus-14 DRS are fourth-most by any Twins fielder, regardless of position, in the past 10 seasons.

Mike Augustin Media Good Guy Award

JOSH DONALDSON

By Phil Miller, Minneapolis Star Tribune

It's a lifeline that allows writers to do their job, and a scourge that suffocates the individuality out of the speakers. Zoom interviews have become a staple of COVID-era baseball writing, a makeshift adaptation that has produced myriad insights along the lines of "I put a good swing on it."

But on the Twins, there is a speaker who, ahead of MLB's crackdown on illegal substances, unabashedly volunteered this: "I didn't want to come out and say, 'Hey, guys are cheating.' Hopefully the game will police itself, because at the end of the day, if you're doing something illegal and getting outs, that needs to be stopped."

And this: "[Lucas Giolito] called me a pest, right? Which is fine. At the end of the day, I almost consider that a compliment."

And also: "I signed up for this. I signed up to be a Minnesota Twin. At the end of the day, I want to win here."

Josh Donaldson is both a student of the game and a professor, and he has candidly shared his insights and opinions during his two seasons in Minnesota, even when his words might invite backlash. When he felt umpires weren't calling the game as they saw it, for instance, he explained, "They don't care, most of them. They just want to get the game over with, and it's pretty sad because, at the end of the day, they're making six figures a year and have no accountability."

His breakdown of his swing mechanics, his analysis of the relationship between analytics and his production, and his prognosis about the future of his sport allow readers to learn about more than just final scores and division standings. As a refreshing change, "Zoom" seems an appropriate description for Donaldson's online interviews.

As a veteran and a former MVP, not to mention one of the most dangerous hitters on the Twins — his .827 OPS in 135 games was second on the Twins behind only Nelson Cruz — Donaldson also has the stature to speak about big-picture topics on his team despite the disappointing season. At a time when many players avoided interviews, it was a role that Donaldson willingly, even eagerly, accepted after Cruz was traded.

At the end of the day, it made the 35-year-old third baseman a worthy recipient of the Mike Augustin Media Good Guy Award.

AWARD WINNERS

Herb Carneal Award – Lifetime Achievement

MIKE RADCLIFF

By Pat Borzi, MinnPost.com

Anyone who attended the Diamond Awards before the pandemic probably remembers Mike Radcliff, the Twins' vice president for player personnel. He often presented the Minor League Player and Pitcher of the Year Awards, a rare turn in the public eye for someone whose best work takes him far from Target Field, scouting amateur and pro prospects across the U.S. and overseas.

Until slowed recently by a bout of pancreatic cancer, Radcliff—who joined the Twins as an area scout in 1987 and later spent 14 seasons as scouting director—was known for driving hundreds of miles across Florida and other states in search of future Twins. Respected across the industry for his humility and eye for talent, tonight Radcliff accepts his latest honor: The Herb Carneal Award for long and meritorious service to baseball in Minnesota.

"It's quite an honor, probably the biggest honor I've ever had in my scouting career," Radcliff said. "I feel like it's more on behalf of many. I'm just one spoke in the wheel of the giant process of scouting and player development. Fortunately, I've been around a long time."

Radcliff took part in evaluating virtually every standout player who came through the Twins system the last three decades. His legacy includes the club's 2009 plunge into the international talent pool, when it spent more than \$4 million in bonuses on Miguel Sano, Jorge Polanco and Max Kepler, now productive major leaguers. It also stretches to younger Twins scouts he mentored over the years.

"He's a legend in the scouting community, not just because of how good he is as a scout and a leader and a developer of other people, but because of the way he went about it," said Twins Chief Baseball Officer Derek Falvey. "His humility. His steadiness. And his incredible work ethic."

Radcliff had chances to go elsewhere as a general manager. He never did, because the Pohlad Family and Twins executives Andy MacPhail, Terry Ryan, Bill Smith, Dave St. Peter, Falvey and Thad Levine always made him feel valued.

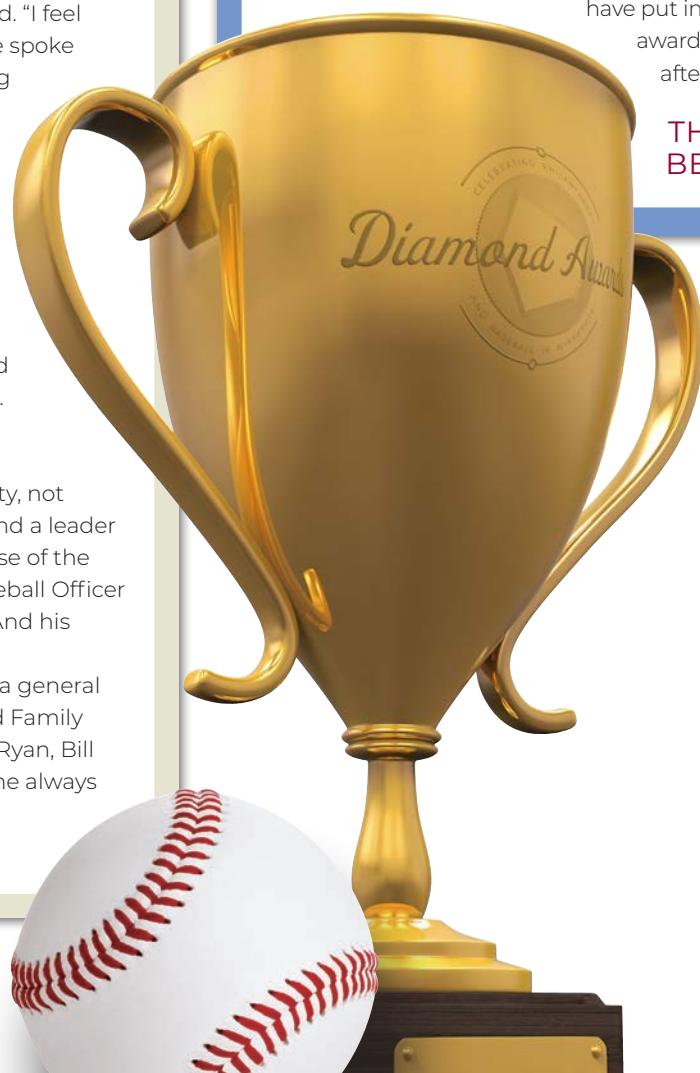
Continued next column.

"Great leadership creates a great environment to go do your work," Radcliff said. "Yeah, some of those things came along. But the grass isn't always greener on the other side. I felt very appreciated and always had a seat at the table in the decision-making processes, which is all you want. You always want to be part of a good process and a good organization, and I feel very blessed to be a long time with the one organization."

BASEBALL WRITERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Thank you to our partners with our local chapter of the Baseball Writers' Association of America, who put in the extra time of nominating, voting, and awarding many of our Diamond Awards. Tonight we want to thank them for all the time and effort they have put in to make these awards happen year after year.

THANK YOU,
BBWAA!



AWARD WINNERS

Carl R. Pohlad Award – Outstanding Community Service

TAYLOR ROGERS

Taylor Rogers, an All-Star reliever who has been a staple in both the Minnesota bullpen and in Twins Territory since his 2016 major league debut, is the winner of the 2021 Carl R. Pohlad Award for Outstanding Community Service. The award is given annually to recognize the community involvement and leadership of a current Twins player or coach, as voted upon by the Twins Community Fund Board of Directors.

Taylor, a left-handed pitcher who was selected by Minnesota in the 11th round of the 2012 First-Year Player Draft, and his identical twin brother Tyler, a right-hander who just wrapped up his third season in the San Francisco Giants bullpen, both grew up dreaming of becoming fifth-generation firefighters rather than major league pitchers. Taylor has maintained strong connections to the family's longtime profession; in 2018, he co-founded the nonprofit Rogers Family Foundation, which is committed to providing funds for, and raising awareness around, mental wellness for first responders in his home state of Colorado and his second home of Minnesota. In addition to the Foundation's financial support for counseling sessions and mental health education, Rogers hosted a dinner for firefighters at a Minneapolis fire station in 2019, providing a full meal from The Capital Grille as a thank you for all those men and women do.

Beyond his ongoing work with the Foundation, Rogers has long been active in community events and initiatives around Twins Territory. He has been a regular participant in Twins Winter Caravan and TwinsFest, while he has undertaken numerous school and hospital visits during his time in Minnesota. Throughout the 2021 season, Rogers donated the stipend he received for his weekly appearances on the Treasure Island Baseball Network to Every Meal, a Twin Cities-based organization that provides kids with meals on the weekends and during the summer when they don't have access to food at school.

From saving another Twins victory to providing for the wellbeing of firefighters or bringing a smile to a child's face—all while inspiring his teammates to do the same—Rogers embodies the spirit of the late Twins owner Carl R. Pohlad, who always strove to return something to his beloved community.

Calvin R. Griffith Award – Most Valuable Twin

JORGE POLANCO

By Dan Hayes, The Athletic

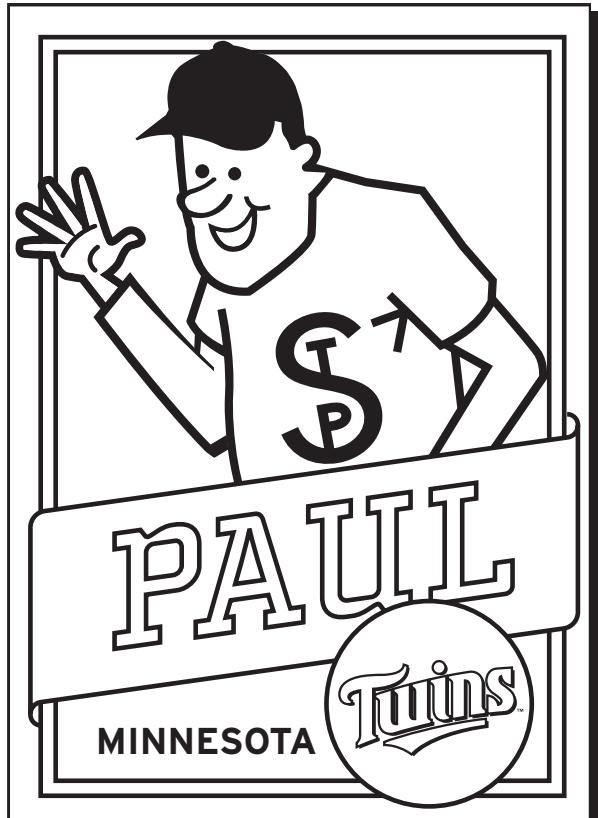
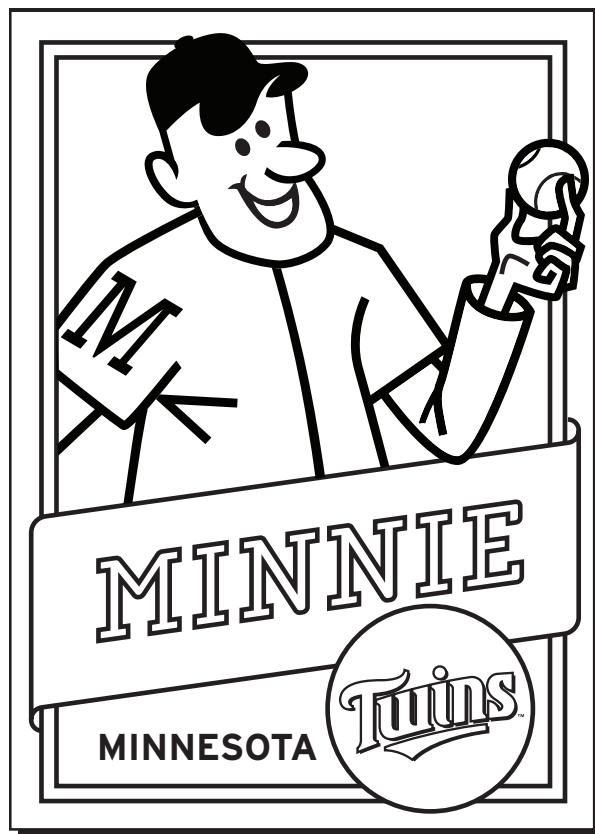
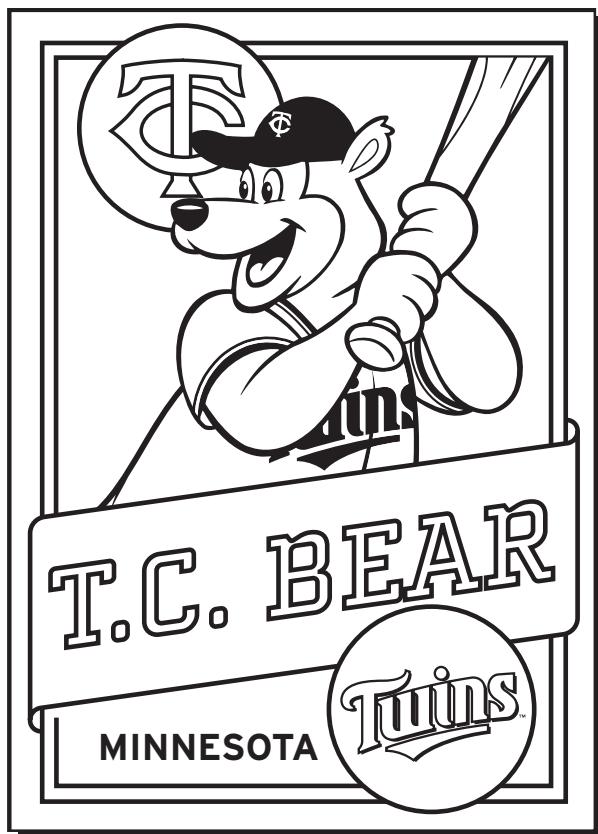
If you paid close enough attention during the 2020 season, it was readily apparent Jorge Polanco wasn't healthy. A right ankle that would twice require offseason surgery was hindering what the switch-hitter could do at the plate. Polanco couldn't pull the ball to right with any power. Every ball Polanco hit from the left side was pulled on the ground or popped up to shallow left.

Even with good health in the early part of this past season, Polanco struggled to rediscover a swing that led him to an All-Star appearance in 2019. He slumped throughout April and carried a .697 OPS through the end of May.

But sometime in early June, Polanco figured out this issue, corrected it and never looked back. With his fluid swing allowing him to drive the ball to the gaps and his ability to make contact making him a difficult out, Polanco soared throughout the summer. His success became particularly important in late July when the Twins traded the backbone of their offense, Nelson Cruz. Despite losing their veteran leader and pitcher José Berrios before the deadline, the Twins played their best ball over their final two months and Polanco's bat was a big reason.

Having located his powerful stroke from the left side of the plate, Polanco established career highs by blasting 33 home runs and driving in 98 runs. He also scored a team-high 97 runs and hit .269/.332/.503 overall, a performance that vaulted Polanco to be named the Calvin R. Griffith Most Valuable Player and its most improved player.

But Polanco's accomplishments weren't limited to hitting. Asked during the offseason to switch positions to accommodate free-agent signee Andrelton Simmons, Polanco flourished after moving from shortstop to second base. Not only did he never hint that he was upset about the team's request, Polanco tackled the shift with enthusiasm. Whether it was extra work with infield coach Tony Diaz during spring training or speaking confidently about his ability to handle changing positions, Polanco demonstrated leadership qualities in accepting his new assignment. Those qualities were much-needed when Cruz's leadership was traded away after 2 1/2 seasons with the Twins and allowed Polanco to flourish on the field and in the clubhouse.



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