2013 National Baseball Arbitration Competition

Tommy Hanson v. Atlanta Braves
Submission on Behalf of Atlanta Braves
Midpoint: $3.9 million
Submission by: Team 10
Table of Contents

I. Introduction...................................................................................................................... 2-3
II. Quality of Mr. Hanson’s Contributions During the Past Season.............................. 3-4
III. Length and Consistency of Career Contributions..................................................... 4-6
IV. Comparative Baseball Salaries.................................................................................. 6-10
V. Existence of Physical and Mental Defects................................................................. 10-11
VI. Conclusion.................................................................................................................. 11
I. Introduction and Request for Arbitration Hearing Decision

The following brief will discuss relevant statistics, player attributes, team attributes, awards, and other relevant factors regarding the playing career of 26-year-old right-handed starting pitcher Atlanta Hanson (“Mr. Hanson”) of the Atlanta Braves Baseball Club (the “Club,” or the “Braves”). The Major League Baseball (“MLB”) Collective Bargaining Agreement (“CBA”) between the 30 MLB teams and the MLB Players Association will govern the arbitration proceeding and sets forth the criteria which will be considered in this arbitration hearing. According to Article VI, Section E, Part 12(a)-(b) of the CBA, the criteria to be considered includes: (1) the quality of Mr. Hanson’s contribution to the Braves last season including, but not limited to, his overall performance, special qualities of leadership, and public appeal; (2) the length and consistency of Mr. Hanson’s career contributions; (3) Mr. Hanson’s past recorded compensation figures; (4) comparative baseball salaries; (5) the existence of any physical or mental defects on the part of Mr. Hanson; and (6) the recent performance of the Braves, including, but not limited to, its League standing and attendance as an indication of public acceptance. The following evidence will not be admissible during the proceedings: (1) the financial position of the Braves and Mr. Hanson; (2) press comments and other similar material on the performance of the Braves or Mr. Hanson; and (3) offers made by either party prior to arbitration.

The final team offer in this arbitration matter is for $3.5 million. The final player offer is $4.3 million, thus the midpoint and the essential figure in this arbitration is $3.9 million. The Braves believe that the combination of Mr. Hanson’s recent performance on the field, injury history, and comparable player salaries warrant a contract award of less than the $3.9 million midpoint and therefore Mr. Hanson should receive no more than the Club’s final offer of $3.4
II. Quality of Mr. Hanson’s Contribution During the Past Season

Mr. Hanson has played for the Braves in all four of his seasons in the major leagues.\(^1\) With 3.120 years of major league service time, he is currently entering his first year of arbitration eligibility.\(^2\) Mr. Hanson started 31 games for the Braves this past season.\(^3\) He missed two starts as a result of being placed on the disabled list on July 31, 2012, after being diagnosed with a strained lower back.\(^4\) This marked the third time in his short four-year career in which Mr. Hanson would be placed on the disabled list.\(^5\)

Table 1: Tommy Hanson’s 2012 Statistics\(^6\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>ERA</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>WHIP</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>K/BB</th>
<th>HR/ 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>174.2</td>
<td>1.454</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2012 Mr. Hanson pitched 174.2 innings, fewer than 73 other starting pitchers.\(^7\) Although he accumulated two more wins than the previous season (13), he also started nine more games than he did in 2011. Mr. Hanson posted career worsts in nearly every substantive category in 2012. His 87 earned runs allowed led to a career-high earned run average of 4.48, nearly a full run above his previous career high, ranking him 100\(^{th}\) among pitchers with 100 innings or more.\(^8\) Mr. Hanson gave up over 2 hits more per 9 innings than at any other point in his career.

Mr. Hanson’s walks per nine innings increased, while his strikeouts per nine innings decreased, causing his strikeout to walk ratio to plummet from 3.09 to 2.27. Although he struck

---

2 Id.  
3 Id.  
5 Id.  
6 Baseball-Reference, “Tommy Hanson”  
8 http://espn.go.com/mlb/stats/pitching/_/count/81/qualified/false/order/false/minip/100
out 19 more batters in 2012 than in 2011, it took him 44.2 more innings to do so. Finally, Mr. Hanson gave up 27 homeruns for an average of 1.4 home runs per nine innings, both career highs. This decrease in numbers could largely be attributed to the drop in average velocity of his fastball from 91.9 miles per hour (“mph”) in 2011 to 90.4 mph in 2012, marking the first time in his career Mr. Hanson’s fastball did not average over 91 mph for a season.\(^9\)

### III. Length and Consistency of Career Contributions

Table 2: Tommy Hanson’s Career Statistics\(^{10}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>ERA</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>WHIP</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>K/BB</th>
<th>HR/9</th>
<th>AFV (mph)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>127.2</td>
<td>1.183</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>202.2</td>
<td>1.174</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1.169</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>91.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>174.2</td>
<td>1.454</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>1.252</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92.175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mr. Hanson was selected in the 22\(^{nd}\) round of the 2005 MLB June Amateur Draft.\(^{11}\)

After spending four seasons in the minor leagues, he was called up to the Braves on June 3, 2009.\(^{12}\)

During his rookie campaign, Mr. Hanson recorded an ERA of 2.89, the only time in his career he has posted an ERA below 3.0. Since then, his ERA has progressively increased with each season.

Since his 2010 sophomore season, the average velocity of Mr. Hanson’s fastball has consistently declined. In 2010, the average velocity of Mr. Hanson’s fastball was 93.5 mph.\(^{13}\)

---


\(^10\) [Baseball-Reference](http://www.baseball-reference.com), “Tommy Hanson”

\(^11\) *Id.*

\(^12\) *Id.; [http://www.baseball-reference.com/minors/player.cgi?id=hanson001tho](http://www.baseball-reference.com/minors/player.cgi?id=hanson001tho)*

The average velocity of his fastball decreased to 91.9 mph in 2011, and then again in 2012 to 90.4 mph.\textsuperscript{14} Over the past two seasons, Mr. Hanson’s fastball has dropped a full 3 mph. This progressive decline in velocity can be attributed to Mr. Hanson’s need to change his pitching mechanics in order to reduce strain on his shoulder.\textsuperscript{15}

On June 17, 2011, Mr. Hanson was placed on the 15-day disabled list as a result of right shoulder tendinitis on his throwing arm; more specifically, inflammation in the posterior aspect of the rotator cuff.\textsuperscript{16} Mr. Hanson would be forced to miss his next two starts before being cleared to return from the disabled list on June 26, 2011.\textsuperscript{17}

On August 6, 2011, Mr. Hanson pitched his last game of the 2011 season before he was again placed on the disabled list for right shoulder tendinitis.\textsuperscript{18} In this start, he gave up 7 earned runs in only 3.1 innings.\textsuperscript{19} He would remain on the disabled list through the conclusion of the season.\textsuperscript{20} It was later found that Mr. Hanson had suffered a tear in his rotator cuff.\textsuperscript{21} Although surgery was not required at that point, the tear does worry the Braves moving forward, especially considering the steady decline in Mr. Hanson’s performance and velocity.\textsuperscript{22}

IV. Comparative Baseball Salaries

Table 3: Comparative Statistics between Tommy Hanson and Justin Masterson\textsuperscript{23}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>ERA</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>WHIP</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>K/BB</th>
<th>HR/ 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanson 2012</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>174.2</td>
<td>1.454</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{14} Id.
\textsuperscript{15} Id.\textsuperscript{14} http://www.hardballtimes.com/main/article/tommy-hansons-new-delivery-whereis-the-velocity/
\textsuperscript{16} Id.\textsuperscript{15} http://hardballtalk.nbc.com/2011/06/26/tommy-hanson-cleared-to-return-from-disabled-list-tuesday/; Id.
\textsuperscript{17} Id.
\textsuperscript{18} Id.
\textsuperscript{19} Id.
\textsuperscript{20} Id.
\textsuperscript{21} Id.
\textsuperscript{22} Id.
\textsuperscript{23} Baseball-Reference, “Tommy Hanson”; http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/m/masteju01.shtml
Justin Masterson (“Mr. Masterson”) is a starting pitcher for the Cleveland Indians. At the end of the 2011 season, Mr. Masterson entered his first year of arbitration eligibility, the same year of arbitration Mr. Hanson is currently in. In the season leading up to his arbitration (2011), Mr. Masterson’s statistics were significantly better than Mr. Hanson’s in almost every pitching category. Mr. Masterson pitched 216 innings in 34 games. In comparison, Mr. Hanson pitched only 174.2 innings in 31 games, 41.1 innings less than Mr. Masterson, despite only having three fewer starts than Mr. Masterson. This discrepancy in innings pitched is from Mr. Masterson averaging 6.5 innings per start, while Mr. Hanson was only able to pitch 5.6 innings per start. In other words, Mr. Masterson averaged almost a full inning more in each of his outings.

Additionally, Mr. Masterson maintained an ERA of 3.21, nearly a run and a half lower than Mr. Hanson’s ERA of 4.48. Mr. Masterson was also more efficient with his pitches, allowing 6 less walks than Mr. Hanson despite pitching over 40 more innings. Furthermore, Mr. Masterson’s WHIP (walks and hits per innings pitched) of 1.278 was 0.176 lower than Mr. Hanson’s WHIP. This, yet again, demonstrates Mr. Masterson’s superior pitch efficiency compared to Mr. Hanson’s. Finally, Mr. Masterson managed to give up an average of only 0.5 homeruns per nine innings in 2011 while Mr. Hanson allowed an average of 1.4 homeruns per nine innings. This means Mr. Hanson allowed almost 1 homerun more than Mr. Masterson for every nine innings pitched.

In January of 2012, the Indians and Mr. Masterson avoided arbitration when the parties agreed to a one-year deal worth $3.825 million, $75,000 below the midpoint of the Braves’ and
Mr. Hanson’s final offers. Mr. Masterson’s superior season combined with his salary below the midpoint show why the Braves’ offer should be accepted.

Table 4: Comparative Statistics between Tommy Hanson and Max Scherzer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>ERA</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>WHIP</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>K/BB</th>
<th>HR/ 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanson 2012</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>174.2</td>
<td>1.454</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scherzer 2011</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>1.274</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Scherzer received $3,750,000 following his 2011 season

Max Scherzer (“Mr. Scherzer”) is a starting pitcher for the Detroit Tigers. At the end of the 2011 season, Mr. Scherzer entered his first year of arbitration eligibility. In the season leading up to his arbitration (2011), Mr. Scherzer pitched 195 innings in 33 games. In comparison, Mr. Hanson pitched only 174.2 innings in 31 games, 20.1 innings less than Mr. Scherzer. While Mr. Hanson averaged only 5.6 innings per start, Mr. Scherzer averaged 5.9 innings in each of his outings.

Mr. Scherzer also maintained a lower ERA and WHIP than Mr. Hanson. In addition to striking out 13 more batters than Mr. Hanson, Mr. Scherzer also allowed 15 fewer walks. Mr. Scherzer maintained a strikeout to walk ratio of 3.11, compared to Mr. Hanson’s ratio of 2.27. He struck out almost 1 more batter than Mr. Hanson per walk allowed.

On January 17, 2012 the Tigers and Mr. Scherzer avoided arbitration and agreed to a one-year contact extension worth $3.75 million for the 2012 season, $50,000 below the midpoint of the Braves’ and Mr. Hanson’s final offers. Mr. Scherzer’s superior platform year, combined with a salary below the midpoint at issue show the arbitration panel should rule in favor of the Braves and grant Mr. Hanson a salary of $3.4 million.

---

Table 5: Comparative Statistics between Tommy Hanson and Mike Pelfrey \(^{26}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>ERA</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>WHIP</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>K/BB</th>
<th>HR/9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanson 2012</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>174.2</td>
<td>1.454</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelfrey 2010</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>1.377</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pelfrey received $3,925,000 following his 2010 season

Mike Pelfrey (“Mr. Pelfrey”) is a starting pitcher for the New York Mets. At the end of the 2010 season, Mr. Pelfrey entered his first year of arbitration eligibility. In the season leading up to his arbitration (2010), Mr. Pelfrey outperformed Mr. Hanson in nearly every statistical category. Mr. Pelfrey was consistently able to go deeper into starts than Mr. Hanson. He threw 204 innings in 34 games, an average of 6 innings per game pitched, while Mr. Hanson averaged only 5.6 innings per game. Additionally, he maintained a lower ERA and WHIP than Mr. Hanson. Mr. Pelfrey ended 2010 with an ERA of 3.66, nearly a full run lower than Mr. Hanson’s ERA of 3.66 and a WHIP of 1.377, lower than the 1.454 produced by Mr. Hanson in 2012.

In January of 2011, the Mets and Mr. Pelfrey avoided arbitration and agreed to a one-year contract extension worth $3.925 million.\(^{27}\) Mr. Pelfrey’s superior platform year warranted a higher salary in his first arbitration eligible season than Mr. Hanson. Because he received only $25,000 above the midpoint at issue, Mr. Hanson should be awarded the $3.4 million offered by the Braves.

Table 6: Comparative Statistics between Tommy Hanson and David Price \(^{28}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>ERA</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>WHIP</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>K/BB</th>
<th>HR/9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanson 2012</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>174.2</td>
<td>1.454</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{26}\) [Baseball-Reference](http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/p/pelfrmi01.shtml), “Tommy Hanson”;
David Price ("Mr. Price") is a starting pitcher for the Tampa Bay Rays ("Rays"). At the end of the 2011 season, Mr. Price entered his first year of arbitration eligibility. Mr. Price followed up an all-star season in 2010 in which he finished second in the Cy Young voting with an equally impressive second all-star season in 2011. His numbers surpass Mr. Hanson’s in almost every pitching category. In 2011, Mr. Price threw 211 innings in 34 games started, an average of 6.2 innings per outing, while Mr. Hanson only averaged 5.6 innings per start. Mr. Price ended his 2011 campaign with an ERA of 3.49, almost 1 full point lower than Mr. Hanson’s ERA in 2012.

What truly stands out about Mr. Price, however, is his ability to efficiently strike batters out. In 2011, he struck out 218 batters and allowed only 63 walks. This gave Mr. Price a strikeout to walk ratio of 3.46, compared to Mr. Hanson’s strikeout to walk ratio of 2.27. Mr. Price’s ratio is an astounding 1.2 strikeouts per walk higher than Mr. Hanson’s. Mr. Price also finished the 2011 season with a WHIP of only 1.137, 0.317 lower than Mr. Hanson in 2012.

Not only was Mr. Price substantially better than Mr. Hanson in every major statistical category, but in addition he was already a 2-time all-star and Cy Young runner-up by the time he reached his first year of arbitration. The Rays and Mr. Price avoided arbitration and reached a one-year contract worth $4.35 million.²⁹ When compared to Mr. Price, it is clear Mr. Hanson is much more deserving of the $3.4 million the Braves have offered.

V. Existence of Physical and Mental Defects

Over the past two seasons, Mr. Hanson has been placed on the disabled list four times

and has lingering shoulder problems, which continue to be a concern to the Braves. In August of 2011, a tear was found in the rotator cuff of Mr. Hanson’s throwing shoulder, requiring him to miss the remainder of the season. Although at the time the injury did not require surgery to repair the damaged rotator cuff, the Braves are unsure as to how said injury will further hinder Mr. Hanson’s development.

In 2012, Mr. Hanson opted to alter his pitching mechanics and delivery in order to avoid discomfort. These changes have had a significant impact on his effectiveness as a pitcher and seem to have caused a decline in the velocity of his fastball.

In July of 2012, Mr. Hanson was again placed on the disabled list and was forced to miss to two starts. This time, his absence was due to a strained lower back.

VI. Conclusion

It is difficult to gauge how Mr. Hanson will further develop as a starting pitcher. In four seasons in the major leagues, Mr. Hanson has completed only one season where he has reached the 200-innings pitched mark and only two seasons where he has started 30 games or more. In the past two seasons, Mr. Hanson has suffered significant injuries including a deteriorating shoulder caused by a torn rotator cuff on his throwing arm, requiring Mr. Hanson to be placed on the disabled list multiple times and hindering his ability to pitch.

With each passing season, his ERA only seems to be rising, while the velocity of his
fastball is declining at a rate of 1.5 mph per season. For each of these reasons, as well as the previous analysis of other starting pitchers entering their first year of arbitration, we ask the arbitration panel find for the Braves and award Tommy Hanson a salary of $3.4 million.