2013 National Baseball Arbitration Competition

Dexter Fowler vs. Colorado Rockies
Submission of $4.6 million on Behalf of Dexter Fowler
By: Team 3
Midpoint: $4.3 million
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I. Introduction and Request for Hearing Decision

This brief analyzes the contributions and athletic prowess of Colorado Rockies (herein “Club” or “Rockies”) outfielder Dexter Fowler (herein “Player” or “Fowler”). Major League Baseball’s Collective Bargaining Agreement governs this arbitration hearing. Per that agreement, Fowler, having acquired 3.168 years of major league service time, is second-year arbitration eligible and requests a hearing before this Panel. Part of the CBA sets forth the following criteria by which this salary arbitration case is presented: 1) the quality of Player’s contributions to his Club during the past season, including but not limited to, his overall performance, special qualities of leadership, and public appeal; 2) the length and consistency of Player’s career contributions; 3) comparative baseball salaries; 4) the existence of any mental or physical defects of the Player; 5) the recent performance of the Club, including but not limited to, the Club’s League standing and game attendance; and 6) past compensation.¹ As evidence in this brief suggests, Fowler is coming off of his best season yet as both a centerfielder and leadoff hitter and is an invaluable asset to the Rockies. Thus, Fowler respectively requests that this Panel conclude him deserving of his $4.6 million salary submission for 2013.

II. Quality of Player’s Contributions During Past Season

As one of the Rockies’ best young talents, Fowler is projected to begin his fifth season with the Rockies as a regular starter in 2013. This past season was Fowler’s best yet at the plate. Fowler showed a lot of promise, compiling a line of .300/.389/.474 and an impressive .863 OPS.

¹ MLB Collective Bargaining Agreement
Table 1: Dexter Fowler 2012 Batting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>2B</th>
<th>3B</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>SB</th>
<th>BB</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
<th>WAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fowler</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td>0.863</td>
<td>2.600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two things to note about Fowler are one, he hits with power, and two, he gets on base (.389 OBP). In 2012, Fowler hit 18 doubles, 11 triples and more than doubled his homerun production from 2011 with 13. In over 530 plate appearances he walked 68 times and successfully stole 12 bases. Fowler’s 2.6 WAR on the season was a career-high. Fowler scored 72 runs and drove in another 53 RBI.

Defensively, Fowler played 131 of his 143 games in centerfield. He had a .978 fielding percentage and committed 6 errors. At 6-4, Fowler’s athleticism and speed make him a brilliant outfielder for the Rockies. Among active NL centerfielders, Fowler ranks 6th for most games played (131), 8th in putouts (257), 7th in assists (4), and notably, 3rd in double plays (2).

Fowler just completed a season that the Rockies had always expected of the 27-year-old. A clubhouse favorite, Fowler provides the Rockies’ fan base with some much-needed energy. Given Fowler’s platform performance, one can guarantee that Fowler is one of the Rockies’ most anticipated players for 2013.

III. Length and Consistency of Career Contribution

In 2004, Fowler, having rejected offers from both the University of Miami and Harvard, went in the 14th round of the MLB draft to the Colorado Rockies. Fowler’s...
career in the Minors was impressive. Not only did he participate in the 2008 All-Star Futures Game, but he also was selected for the 2008 Summer Olympics.\footnote{Id.}

### Table 2: Dexter Fowler Career Batting\footnote{Dexter Fowler Player Page- Standard Batting Stats, \url{Baseball-Reference}, http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/f/fowlede01.shtml}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.266</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>0.760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.260</td>
<td>0.410</td>
<td>0.757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.266</td>
<td>0.432</td>
<td>0.795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td>0.863</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Fowler’s 2012 performance was no deviation, as indicated by his career immensity. Each season since 2009 has experienced a rise in Fowler’s RBI and SLG numbers. Playing in over 100 games per season, Fowler annually scores at least 70 runs. Additionally, in the past 3 seasons since 2010, Fowler has increased both his batting average and OPS. Fowler established himself as a great hitter in 2012, hitting .300. Fowler’s OPS speaks to the same as he has year-to-year maintained above .750.

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \footnote{Id.}
  \item \footnote{Dexter Fowler Player Page- Standard Batting Stats, \url{Baseball-Reference}, http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/f/fowlede01.shtml}
  \item \footnote{“Colorado Rockies win opening series against the Arizona Diamondbacks: 2-1,” \url{Examiner}, http://www.examiner.com/article/colorado-rockies-win-opening-series-against-the-arizona-diamondbacks-2-1}
\end{itemize}
Fowler’s best ability is his consistent approach to each at-bat. After his demotion at the start of 2011, Fowler came back hitting doubles and triples at a remarkable rate of 50 per 125 games. During the final 14-game stretch alone, Fowler contributed 1 double, 2 triples and 2 of his 6 homeruns for the season. Fowler’s second half success in 2011 transferred into 2012 as Fowler made the jump to become an elite offensive player, finishing the year with 18 doubles, 11 triples, 13 homers and 53 RBI.

| Table 3: Dexter Fowler Triples (Rank in NL) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | Career |
| 10 (5th) | 14 (1st) | 15 (3rd) | 11 (4th) | 50 (19th) |

Fowler’s contributions extend beyond the plate to the field. Despite some unfavorable defensive metrics, Fowler has also been a great centerfielder throughout his career. Likewise, it could easily be Coors Field affecting Fowler’s numbers. Nonetheless, over 5 seasons, Fowler has played in 509 games at centerfield and contributed 1064 putouts, 18 assists and committed just 19 errors. In 2010, Fowler’s fielding percentage was a career-high .996. The next year, his range factor per game as an outfielder ranked 2nd among NL fielders at 2.58. It is not so much his arm but rather Fowler’s abilities to cover ground and play smart that make him essential to the Rockies.

IV. Comparative Baseball Salaries

For the purposes of establishing Fowler’s value to the club, it is useful to compare his platform season and career statistics with those of Jeff Francouer (herein


“Francouer”), Michael Bourn (herein “Bourn”), and B.J. Upton (herein “Upton”). These comparisons clearly indicate Fowler’s value is above the $4.3 million midpoint and, as such, this panel should decide in his favor.

a. Jeff Francouer – RF ($5 million in 2010)

Comparing Fowler to Francouer establishes a value well above the $4.3 million midpoint. Following the 2009 season, Francouer received one-year deal worth $5 million -- $700k in excess of the $4.3 million midpoint before this panel today.¹⁶

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Platform Season¹⁷</th>
<th>MLS</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>SB</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>$4.3 mil</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td>0.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Francouer</td>
<td>4.088</td>
<td>$5 mil</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>0.423</td>
<td>0.732</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Despite Francouer appearing in 14 more games than Fowler during their platform seasons, Fowler still managed to produce the same number of Runs (72), almost an equal number of HRs (13 to 15), and double the amount of SBs (12 to 6). While the above chart demonstrates that Fowler and Francouer’s platform seasons are remarkably similar, it is important to note several statistics where Fowler performs at a higher level than Francouer. Fowler produced higher batting percentages in the following categories: AVG (.300 to .280), OBP (.389 to .309), SLG (.474 to .423), and OPS (.863 to .732).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Career¹⁸</th>
<th>MLS</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>SB</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>$4.3 mil</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.364</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>0.791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Francouer</td>
<td>4.088</td>
<td>$5 mil</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.432</td>
<td>0.743</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fowler and Francouer also have similar numbers throughout their respective careers. Even with Francouer having played 158 more games than Fowler when he signed his one-year $5 million deal in 2010, Fowler is not far behind in Runs (305 to

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¹⁶ Jeff Francouer Salary, http://www.amazinavenue.com/2010/1/19/1259014/mets-jeff-francoeur-agree-on-


¹⁸ Id.
350), and has more than quadrupled Francouer in SBs (64 to 15). Similarly, Fowler’s batting percentages are similar to Francouer’s over their respective careers. The two have an identical AVG (.271), and while Fowler is slightly behind Francouer in SLG (.427 to .432), Fowler exceeds Francouer’s career numbers in OBP (.364 to .311) and OPS (.791 to .743).

Due to Fowler and Francouer’s platform season and career numbers being highly comparable, and Fowler being a more productive batter, Fowler’s true value exceeds, or at a minimum matches, that of Francouer’s -- well in excess of the $4.3 million midpoint.

b. Michael Bourn – CF ($4.4 million in 2011)

Comparing Fowler to Bourn also shows that Fowler’s value exceeds the $4.3 million midpoint. After the 2010 season, Bourn signed a one-year $4.4 million deal, $100k in excess of the $4.3 million midpoint before the panel today.\(^{19}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Platform Season(^{20})</th>
<th>MLS</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>$4.3 mil</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td>0.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Bourn</td>
<td>4.028</td>
<td>$4.4 mil</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.265</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.346</td>
<td>0.687</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In their platform seasons, Fowler and Bourn played in almost the same number of games (143 to 141), and while Fowler did not produce as many Runs as Bourn (72 to 84), Fowler did have over six times as many HRs (13 to 2), leading to more RBIs (53 to 38). Just as the previous comparison, Fowler exceeds Bourn in all batting percentages: AVG (.300 to .265), OBP (.389 to .341), SLG (.474 to .346), and OPS (.863 to .687).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7: Career(^{21})</th>
<th>MLS</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>$4.3 mil</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.364</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>0.791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Bourn</td>
<td>4.028</td>
<td>$4.4 mil</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>0.331</td>
<td>0.348</td>
<td>0.679</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{19}\) Michael Bourn Salary, http://homesidenews.blogspot.com/2011_01_01_archive.html  
\(^{21}\) Id.
The chart above indicates that Fowler has better career numbers than Bourn in many important areas. Despite Bourn playing in 10 more games than Fowler when he received his one year $4.4 million deal following the 2010 season, Fowler still posted more Runs (305 to 269), over double the amount of HRs (28 to 11), and more RBIs (168 to 108). Fowler has also been a more consistent and productive batter than Bourn has over the course of their careers, posting better numbers in all batting percentages: AVG (.271 to .263), OBP (.364 to .331), SLG (.427 to .348), and OPS (.791 to .679).

With Fowler being a more productive and reliable batter than Bourn in both his platform season and career, it is clear that Fowler’s value at least matches, if not exceeds, that of Bourn’s. Therefore, Fowler’s value is above the $4.3 million midpoint.

c. B.J. Upton – CF ($4.825 million in 2011)

Lastly, comparing Fowler to Upton also shows that Fowler’s value exceeds the $4.3 million midpoint. In 2010 Upton reached a one-year deal worth $4.825 million -- exceeding the midpoint before this panel by $500k.²²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8: Platform Season²³</th>
<th>MLS</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>$4.3 mil</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td>0.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.J. Upton</td>
<td>4.126</td>
<td>$4.825 mil</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>0.237</td>
<td>0.322</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>0.746</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fowler did not appear in as many games as Upton did in his platform season (143 to 154), so it is not surprising that Fowler’s numbers would be less than Upton’s in the following: Runs (72 to 89), HRs (13 to 18), and RBIs (53 to 62). However, Fowler’s true value is shown in his batting percentages, all of which exceed Upton’s. Fowler posted a higher AVG (.300 to .237), OBP (.389 to .322), SLG (.474 to .424), and OPS (.863 to

.746). These batting percentages establish that Fowler is at least as reliable and productive as Upton, if not more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9: Career</th>
<th>MLS Value</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td>3.168 $4.3 mil</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.364</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>0.791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.J. Upton</td>
<td>4.126 $4.825 mil</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>0.260</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>0.413</td>
<td>0.758</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As with their platform seasons, Fowler has not appeared in as many games as Upton had when Upton signed his one-year deal worth $4.825 million in 2010 (548 to 667), so it is expected that Upton would post higher numbers in a few statistics. However, Fowler is still not far behind in Runs (305 to 378), considering having played in 119 games less than Upton at this point in his career. Further, Fowler has produced better batting percentages than Upton in all categories throughout his career: AVG (.271 to .260), OBP (.365 to .345), SLG (.427 to .413), and OPS (.791 to .758).

With all of Fowler’s platform season and career batting percentages exceeding Upton’s, it is not a stretch to say that one can expect more out of Fowler when he steps up to the plate. These figures demonstrate that Fowler’s value is worth at least that of Upton, if not more – clearly exceeding the $4.3 midpoint before this panel.

V. Existence of Mental and Physical Defects

Fowler has suffered various injuries over his 4-year career but nothing uncommon of those experienced by any major league ballplayer. Fowler missed 17 games in 2009 due to a contusion, just 1 game in 2010, and hit the DL list in 2011 for 14 days due to an abdominal injury.\(^{25}\) Additionally, in 2012, he was sidelined for 14 games as a result of both a wrist and ankle injury.\(^{26}\) Despite such setbacks, Fowler’s abilities as a both a

\(^{24}\) Id.
\(^{26}\) Id.
leadoff hitter and centerfielder have not been impacted. In fact, Fowler leapt into the 2011 season 7 pounds heavier and having dropped 4% of body fat.\textsuperscript{27} Rather than be complacent with 2011’s success, Fowler utilized the off-season to enhance his workout regimen and improve his diet, spending 2 weeks working out with LA Dodgers’ Matt Kemp prior to Spring Training.\textsuperscript{28} That self-discipline resulted in Fowler’s 2012 breakout season and demonstrates that even when considering his injuries, Fowler’s value as a major leaguer remains greater than the $4.3 million midpoint.

VI. Recent Performance of the Club

The Rockies may have won their last game of the 2012 season, but the year was otherwise disappointing with the team recording 98 losses, a franchise-worst.\textsuperscript{29} An injury-plagued season, 2012 was a rough year as the Rockies produced poor pitching (5.22 ERA), a sloppy defense (122 E), and a mediocre offense (.274 AVG).\textsuperscript{30} The Club is certain to make some changes this winter. However, the Rockies’ talented outfield will likely remain unscathed. Specifically, Fowler, a bright spot in an otherwise dismal season, emerged as one of the Rockies’ top talents in 2012. This next season, as the Rockies look to surpass 64 wins, Fowler’s confident swing will give the Club those extra wins that land the team in playoff contention.

VII. Past Compensation

In 2009, Fowler launched his rookie season with the Rockies and signed a $401,000 1-year deal.\textsuperscript{31} Then in 2010 and 2011, proven a solid outfielder, Fowler would

\textsuperscript{27} "Bulked-up Dexter Fowler is center of attention of Rockies," \textit{Denver Post}, http://www.denverpost.com/rockies/ci_19771859
\textsuperscript{28} Id.
\textsuperscript{30} Id.
\textsuperscript{31} Dexter Fowler Compensation-Details, Baseball Prospectus, http://www.baseballprospectus.com/card/card.php?id=47493
earn close to league minimum, making $406,000 and $424,000 respectfully.\textsuperscript{32} In 2012, Fowler had acquired enough major league service time to legitimize him for salary arbitration for the first time in his career. As a “Super Two,” Fowler fell in the top 22% of players who had between 2 and 3 years of service time and at least 86 days of service time during the previous season.\textsuperscript{33} Fowler avoided arbitration and quadrupled his salary, re-signing with the Rockies for $2,350,000 after a successful 2011 season.\textsuperscript{34} The $4.3 million submission for 2013 is reflective of a player of Fowler’s caliber.

\textbf{VIII. Conclusion}

Fowler provided the Rockies with exceptional power and speed in 2012, having a career-year, hitting .300 and managing an OBP of .389. He has consistently been a solid player for the Rockies, a young outfielder who just this past season put up numerous career offensive highs. Additionally, the Rockies can capitalize on the opportunity for Fowler to find success on both sides of the plate given his unique ability to switch-hit.

Fowler’s statistics demonstrate that his value is commensurate with Francouer, Bourn, and Upton; all of whose values exceed the $4.3 million midpoint before this panel today. Fowler’s batting percentages in his platform season, and for the overwhelming majority of his career, exceed those of Francouer, Bourn, and Upton’s in all categories.

The sky is the limit for this young ballplayer, and accordingly, Fowler has played his way to a salary exceeding $4.3 million. After reviewing the criteria submitted, Fowler respectfully asks that this Panel determine the $4.6 million salary submission to be fair compensation for the Rockies retention of his services in 2013.

\textsuperscript{32} Id.
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{MLB Collective Bargaining Agreement}
\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Dexter Fowler Compensation-Details}, Baseball Prospectus, http://www.baseballprospectus.com/card/card.php?id=47493