2013 National Baseball Arbitration Competition

Dexter Fowler v. Colorado Rockies

Submission on Behalf of Dexter Fowler

Midpoint: $4.3 million

Submission by Team 7
Table of Contents

I. Introduction and Request for Hearing Decision ................................................................. 3

II. Dexter Fowler’s Contribution to the Team in 2012 ............................................................ 4

III. Length and Consistency of Career Contribution ............................................................. 5

IV. Player’s Past Compensation ............................................................................................. 7

V. Comparative Baseball Salaries ......................................................................................... 7

VI. Existence of Physical or Mental Defects ...................................................................... 10

VII. Recent Performance of the Club ................................................................................... 11

VIII. Conclusion .................................................................................................................... 11

Table of Authorities


Biz of Baseball, Bizball, LLC, http://www.bizofbaseball.com

ESPN, ESPN Internet Ventures, “MLB”, http://www.espn.go.com/mlb/


I. Introduction and Request for Hearing Decision

This brief analyzes the contributions of outfielder Dexter Fowler (“Mr. Fowler”) to be considered and reflected in his 2013 contract with the Colorado Rockies (“Rockies” or the “Club”). The Major League Baseball (“MLB”) Collective Bargaining Agreement (“CBA”) regulates the factors that an arbitration panel is to consider in this hearing.\(^1\) This panel shall consider (1) Mr. Fowler’s contribution to the Rockies in 2012 (including but not limited to his overall performance, special qualities of leadership and public appeal); (2) the length and consistency of his career contribution; (3) the record of Mr. Fowler’s past compensation; (4) comparative baseball salaries; (5) the existence of any physical or mental defects on the part of Mr. Fowler; and (6) the recent performance of the Club.\(^2\) For our purposes, the CBA also dictates that an arbitration panel must give particular attention to comparative baseball salaries to the contracts of Players with Major League service not exceeding one annual service group above the Mr. Fowler’s annual service group.\(^3\)

After being first time arbitration eligible in 2012 as a “Super Two,” Mr. Fowler is second time arbitration eligible with Major League service of 3.168.\(^4\) Based on the criteria laid out in the MLB CBA, Mr. Fowler’s previous success and future potential entitles him to a salary exceeding the $4.3 million midpoint. Mr. Fowler respectfully requests this panel to find he is entitled to an award of $4.6 million.

\(^2\)Id.
\(^3\)Id.
II. Dexter Fowler’s Contribution to the Team in 2012

In his platform season, Mr. Fowler hit at an overall impressive clip and at only 26 years of age, he has established himself as one of the games young outstanding talents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Runs</th>
<th>Triples</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>Walks</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>OBP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11 (4th)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68 (11th)</td>
<td>.300 (13th)</td>
<td>.389 (7th)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the most important statistics for any good hitter, but particularly for those hitters that lead off or hit in the second spot is on base percentage (“OBP”). In his platform year, Mr. Fowler took 325 of his 454 at bats in the one and two holes of the lineup (256 as the leadoff hitter). A leadoff hitter getting on base provides an immediate spark to the offense, especially when that hitter has some speed as is the case with Mr. Fowler. In 2012 Mr. Fowler had an on base percentage of .389 ranking 7th overall among all National League hitters and 4th overall among all Major League outfielders. Mr. Fowler was also the Rockies’ team leader in OBP. Factored into this stat and also an important indicator of a hitter with a good eye for balls and strikes are walks. In his platform year, Mr. Fowler led the Rockies in walks, ranked 11th among all National League hitters, and ranked 10th among all Major League outfielders.

Not only did Mr. Fowler get on base often, he also hit for a .300 average, ranking him 13th in the National League, and 10th among all outfielders. Among those hits were eleven triples, ranking him 4th in the National League and 2nd among all outfielders. Therefore, if the key to

---

5Id.
7MLBSortable Player Stats, MLB.com, http://mlb.mlb.com/stats/sortable.jsp?c_id=mlb&tid=mm_mlbl_stats#statType=hitting&elem=%5Bobject+Object%5D&tab_level=child&click_text=Sortable+Player+hitting&sectionType=sp&page=1&ts=1357513569990.
8Colorado Rockies Team Stats, Rockies MLB page, http://colorado.rockies.mlb.com/stats/sortable.jsp?c_id=col#playerType=ALL&elem=%5Bobject+Object%5D&tab_level=child&click_text=Sortable+Player+hitting&sectionType=sp&statType=hitting&page=1&ts=1357514194934.
9MLBSortable Player Stats, MLB.com, http://mlb.mlb.com/stats/sortable
being a successful leadoff hitter is getting on base, Mr. Fowler must be invaluable, as seven
times during his 2012 campaign he reached third hitting from that spot in the lineup.\textsuperscript{10} Mr. Fowler
is also unique in that he switch hits. Hitting from both sides of the plate provides match-up
problems for opposing teams especially when that hitter hits with the success that Mr. Fowler did
in 2012. Mr. Fowler hit for an average of .293 as a left handed batter and .315 as a right handed
batter.\textsuperscript{11} In addition to these key offensive statistics, Mr. Fowler also stole twelve bases and hit
thirteen home runs.\textsuperscript{12} Eight of Mr. Fowler’s thirteen home runs came when he was hitting in the
one (six HR) and two (two HR) spots of the lineup, again showing the dominance and spark he
provides at the front of the lineup.\textsuperscript{13}

III. Length and Consistency of Career Contribution

Mr. Fowler’s 2012 statistics are no anomaly; he has been a consistent contributor to the
Rockies since being called up and playing his first full Major League season in 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Runs</th>
<th>Triples</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>Walks</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>OBP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>10 (5\textsuperscript{th})</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>14 (1\textsuperscript{st})</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>15 (3\textsuperscript{rd})</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11 (4\textsuperscript{th})</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68 (11\textsuperscript{th})</td>
<td>.300 (13\textsuperscript{th})</td>
<td>.389 (7\textsuperscript{th})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since starting his first full season in 2009, Mr. Fowler has not played less than 125
games. In those games his stats evidence his productivity. His excellence in getting on base was
not something that started in his platform year; he has been above the .347 mark in OBP his
entire professional career. Adding to this stat is his eye at the plate. His stats show that he has

\textsuperscript{11}Id.
\textsuperscript{12}Id.
\textsuperscript{13}Id.
\textsuperscript{14}Id.
consistently taken a healthy amount of walks each season and also provides a good source of runs. Mr. Fowler has also shown his offensive prowess through his ability to consistently rank in the top five in the National League in triples, as evidenced in Table 2. As Mr. Fowler has completed his first few seasons, he has become more and more consistent until breaking out this year posting his season best .300 average. Along with his consistency at the plate, Mr. Fowler is also beginning to hit for more power. He hit for 15 home runs in his first three seasons combined and in 2012 hit 13 alone. This shows he not only hits for average, but is developing nice power to add to his baseball resume.

Mr. Fowler’s speed is another tool in his arsenal that makes him a threat all around the game. In 2011, Mr. Fowler was ranked second among all NL outfielders and NL centerfielders in range factor, with a range factor of 2.58.\textsuperscript{15} Range factor is defined as the number of plays made per game at the fielding position and, importantly for Mr. Fowler, it takes into account a players ability to get to a batted ball.\textsuperscript{16} In 2012, Mr. Fowler dropped to 14\textsuperscript{th} among NL outfielders; however, his ability to consistently compete in this stat category stems from his athleticism and speed.\textsuperscript{17} In 2009, Mr. Fowler stole 27 bags ranking him sixth among all NL hitters.\textsuperscript{18} Again this evidences his athletic ability to make plays and provide an offensive spark.

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{17}MLB Sortable Player Stats, MLB.com, http://mlb.mlb.com/stats sortable
\end{flushright}
IV. Player’s Past Compensation

Mr. Fowler, despite his productivity and contributions to the Rockies, received close to the league minimum in each of his first three Major League seasons.\textsuperscript{19} After his 2011 season, Mr. Fowler qualified for his first year of arbitration eligibility as a “Super Two.” In this pay period the Rockies paid Mr. Fowler $2.35 million to avoid arbitration.\textsuperscript{20} Below is a table of Mr. Fowler’s total Major League compensation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>$401,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>$406,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>$424,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>$2,350,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Comparative Baseball Salaries

Based on the salary rewards of statistically comparable second-time arbitration eligible outfielders, Mr. Fowler’s value to the Rockies is definitely above the $4.3 million midpoint and his offer of $4.6 accurately reflects his true value for his contributions to the club. These comparable players and their arbitrated salaries include: Corey Hart, right fielder and leadoff hitter for the Milwaukee Brewers; and Cody Ross, at the time, centerfielder for the Florida Marlins.

\textsuperscript{20}Id.
\textsuperscript{21}Id.
Table 4: Comparative Hitting Stats between Dexter Fowler and Corey Hart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>MLS</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>3B</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>SB</th>
<th>BB</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>.300</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corey Hart</td>
<td>4.038</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>.335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Career   | 548 | 305 | 50 | 28 | 168 | 64 | 260 | .271 | .427 | .364 |
|          | 521 | 267 | 21 | 67 | 260 | 64 | 129 | .259 | .450 | .317 |

In 2009 and what was his second-time arbitration eligible year Corey Hart won his hearing and was awarded $4.8 million. Adjusted for inflation to the actual value in 2012, he was awarded $5,115,703. Corey Hart provides an excellent comparison for Mr. Fowler because both are outfielders and both hit at the front of their respective lineups. In his platform season and for most of his career Corey Hart also hit in the one and two spots of the lineup. As the table above demonstrates, Mr. Fowler impressively outperformed Corey Hart in their respective platform years in every category. It is particularly important for those players hitting at the front of Major League lineups to get on base in order for the club to have a productive offense. Although Corey Hart’s career statistics include almost an additional year of MLS, Mr. Fowler for his career with the Rockies has produced 38 more runs, 21 more triples, an equivalent amount of stolen bases, 131 more walks, and has hit for a better average and better on base percentage. Although Hart’s power numbers are better than Mr. Fowler’s, Mr. Fowler is a more productive offensive player and productivity is greatly important at the front of any lineup. In their second-time arbitration eligible seasons, Mr. Fowler tremendously out performed Corey Hart and

---

25 Id.
therefore, should logically be valued higher. A comparison of these statistics and the fact that a previous arbitration panel found Corey Hart was worth what is today $5.115 million, clearly shows that Mr. Fowler is certainly more valuable than the $4.3 million midpoint and should be awarded his offer of $4.6 million.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th></th>
<th>MLS</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>3B</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>SB</th>
<th>BB</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>SLG</th>
<th>OBP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dexter Fowler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>.300</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody Ross</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.058</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.270</td>
<td>.469</td>
<td>.321</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Comparative Hitting Stats between Dexter Fowler and Cody Ross

In 2009 and what was his second-time arbitration eligible year Cody Ross won his hearing and was awarded $4.45 million. Adjusted for inflation to the actual value in 2012, he was awarded $4,742,683. Cody Ross provides another great comparison to Mr. Fowler because they are both centerfielders, and are both important to the offensive and overall production of their respective organizations. Cody Ross provides different offensive value in his power hitting; this is demonstrated in the platform and career HR and RBI comparison. However, in overall offensive production Mr. Fowler outshines Cody Ross. In his platform year, Mr. Fowler played in fewer games and scored one less time, hit ten more triples, stole seven more bases, took 34 more walks, and hit for a significantly better average and on base percentage. He even out-slugged Cody Ross. For his career, again Mr. Fowler played in fewer games and has scored 68 more runs, hit 40 more triples, stolen 49 more bases, taken 127 more walks, and has hit for a better average.

---

and a significantly better on base percentage. Due to this overall offensive outperformance and the fact that a previous arbitration panel found Cody Ross was worth what is today $4.74 million, logically indicates that even if Ross’s power numbers dictate a slight discount on the $4.74 million he was paid, Mr. Fowler is more valuable than the $4.3 million midpoint and should be awarded his offer of $4.6 million.

VI. Existence of Physical or Mental Defects

Since being called up for his first full Major League season in 2009, Mr. Fowler has been relatively consistent and for the most part has remained injury free. In 2011 Mr. Fowler did have a minor abdominal injury for which he rehabbed for 24 games in the minors before being called back up to the big club.\footnote{Dexter Fowler Statistics, Baseball-Reference.com, http://www.baseball-reference.com/players/f/fowlede01.shtml#contracts.} The 2011 season marked his fewest amount of total games played in a full season at 125 games. Mr. Fowler came back from this injury to complete a strong second half in 2011 and continued to play in 143 games in the 2012 season.\footnote{Id.} Below is a table that evidences Mr. Fowler’s consistency in games played since being called up to the MLB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Total Games Played</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Colorado Rockies</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\footnotetext[30]{Id.}
\footnotetext[31]{Id.}
VII. Recent Performance of the Club

The Colorado Rockies had a dismal year in 2012 finishing in the cellar of the National League West division with a record of 64 wins and 98 losses. This record put them 30 games back of the division leader and World Series champion San Francisco Giants. A major catalyst of this losing trend came from their pitching. The Rockies will need to improve their league worst pitching which sported a 2012 earned run average of 5.22 and opposing team batting average of .290. However, the Rockies did maintain a league leading team batting average of .274, which Mr. Fowler’s individual average of .300 surely helped. The Rockies will look to maintain this offensive production carrying into the 2013 season and to do so will need Mr. Fowler’s offensive production and speed at the front of their lineup.

VIII. Conclusion

Mr. Fowler has been an outstanding young talent on the Rockies roster since playing his first full season in 2009. His offensive consistency, speed, and developing power at the front of the lineup, in addition to his speed and ability to get to batted balls as a centerfielder make him an invaluable asset to the Rockies. In order to maintain their offense production and compete at a higher level within the National League in 2013, the Rockies need Mr. Fowler’s contribution to the team. Based on the evidence outlined in this brief and presented to the panel during oral arguments, Mr. Fowler respectfully requests that this panel find and award him his arbitration request of $4.6 million for the upcoming 2013 season.

33 Id.
34 Id.
35 MLB Sortable Team Stats, MLB.com, http://mlb.mlb.com/stats sortable