

2010 Indians Top 50 Prospects: #30-26

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Saturday, February 27 2010 8:30 AM - Last Updated Saturday, March 27 2010 3:09 PM

Here is the next group of prospects in the 2010 Indians Top 50 Prospect Countdown here on TheClevelandFan.com and SportsTimeOhio.com. As a reminder, these scouting reports will be linked and listed for easy access on my [site](#) .

Also, my new 2010 Cleveland Indians Top 100 Prospects & More [book is now available](#) . To order the book (which profiles over 165 players in the system and runs 214 pages in length) ... [go here for all the details](#)

[#50-46](#)

[#45-41](#)

[#40-36](#)

[#35-31](#)

30. Bryan Price – Right-handed Pitcher

Born: 11/13/1986 – Height: 6'4" – Weight: 210 – Bats: Right – Throws: Right

Year

Age

Team

Lvl

2008

21

Lowell

A-

2009

22

Greenville

A

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2009	22	Salem	A+
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2009	22	Kinston	A+
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Totals	7	15	4.53
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History: Price was selected by the Boston Red Sox in the 1st round of the 2008 Draft out of Rice University. He was acquired by the Indians on July 31, 2009 as part of a three player package the Indians received from the Red Sox for Victor Martinez. When he was selected in the 2008 Draft, he only had pitched in 46 career college games and thrown 65.2 total innings. He signed with the Red Sox for \$850K.

Strengths & Opportunities: Price is a physical, strong, athletic right-handed pitcher who has some great stuff, highlighted by a very good fastball-slider combination. His fastball sits at 91-94 MPH as a starter and tops out at 95 MPH, though as a reliever the velocity is noticeably higher across the board as he will sit at 94-95 MPH and has touched as high as 97 MPH in the past. The Indians feel there is more fastball in there, and they feel that once he gets more settled into the strike zone and can really start to get more aggressive with his arm slot and with his arm speed that there is a potential for more power. His plus slider is a major league offering with good tilt and true swing and miss ability. His slider is his go to secondary pitch as he has a lot of confidence throwing it at anytime in any count. He has the ability to get strikeouts and has leverage to his pitches, and is also very intelligent.

Price is still kind of raw and just needs work as he did not pitch a lot in college and only has a year and a half of experience pitching in pro ball. As a result, while he has some great stuff, he is still in the early stages of learning how to command and control all of his pitches. He also

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throws a changeup, but it is still very much a work in progress, mostly because he never used it in college at Rice because he was the closer. To help improve his changeup he has worked on trying a few new grips to try and take a few MPH off it. There was some talk late last season of him maybe adding a curveball or splitter to his pitch mix or having it replace his changeup.

Price's delivery is very good and his mechanics are sound, but he needs to firm up his arm slot in order to keep his stuff more consistent. Command is the big area of focus with him as he controls his pitches well, but has a hard time consistently commanding them. His delivery is also at times affected by an inconsistent effort level, so he needs to get better at not overthrowing since when he does it exposes his slot too soon. His slider can lose its sharpness when he tries to muscle the pitch up. When his slider is on the plate hitters struggle with it, so it is just a matter of getting him more consistently on the plate with it. The Indians are also working on instilling in him a mindset to be more aggressive on the mound and have challenged him to attack hitters and to pitch inside a little more. They would also like to see an improved changeup, and more action with his two-seam fastball.

Outlook: The Indians continued to use Price as a starter after they acquired him last year, but at some point he likely will be transitioned to a full-time priority bullpen role, quite possibly this coming season. His true value as a big leaguer lies in the bullpen, so if the Indians feel his fastball-slider mix is ready to attack hitters in a relief role they will move him to the bullpen this year, otherwise they will leave him in a starting role to continue to get the regular reps in order to refine the command and control of those two pitches. With his up and down performance last year at the High-A level and just a little over a half year's work at a level the Indians deem as one of the most important stops for a minor leaguer, it is very possible that Price could return to High-A Kinston to open the 2010 season. That said, it appears the move to the bullpen will occur this spring and that he will open the 2010 season in the Double-A Akron bullpen.

Photo courtesy of Tony Lastoria

[Bryan Price MinorLeagueBaseball.com page](#)

[Bryan Price Baseball-Reference page](#)

[Bryan Price MinorLeagueSplits.com page](#)

Bryan Price Pitching:

29. Cord Phelps – Second Baseman

Born: 01/23/1987 – Height: 6'2" – Weight: 200 – Bats: Switch – Throws: Right

Year

Age

Team

Lvl

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2008	21	GCL Indians	R
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2008	21	Mahoning Vy	A-
------	----	-------------	----

2009	22	Kinston	A+
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Totals	166	623	96
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History: Phelps was selected by the Indians in the 3rd round of the 2008 Draft out of Stanford University. His professional debut in 2008 was slowed by a sprained ankle he suffered prior to the College World Series. Prior to his junior year in college, he did not hit a home run in 278 at bats, but he hit 13 home runs in 259 at bats his junior year in 2008. Last year at High-A Kinston he finished 7th in the Carolina League in games played (130), 8th in at bats (479), 9th in runs (72), 9th

in hits (125), 6th

in triples (5), 1st

in walks (93), and 2nd

in on-base percentage (.386).

Strengths & Opportunities: Phelps is the most complete player the Indians obtained in the 2008 Draft, and has an ability to impact the game in several different areas. He is an above-average offensive player with great instincts who maintains a consistent, patient approach at the plate that results in a good ability to put the bat on the ball and get on-base at an incredible rate. He handles himself really well at the plate with a good game plan, and is a very strong player. He has a very good idea of the strike zone, and is an extremely disciplined and intelligent hitter. He pounds the gaps and is still getting stronger, so has the potential to

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drive the ball more down the road.

Phelps is a very athletic table-setter who has good speed and shows excellent instincts on the bases, runs them hard, and makes good decisions. He is very disciplined with the way he goes about his preparations with his game. He is what they call a "baseball player" because he is a hardnosed, serious player that is very mature, driven, has a good attitude, and understands the game. His offensive game may not be that of Chase Utley, but the way he plays the game and carries himself is very much like him. His patient, polished approach at the plate along with his good speed profiles him as a #2 hitter and potentially a leadoff hitter.

Phelps is often under-rated as a defender at second base. He already plays very good, consistent defense at the position and it is believed that he will ultimately become an above average defender at the big league level. He moves around well and displays very good instincts and gets good reads on the ball. He turns a good double play and displays a solid, accurate arm, and shows a very good ability to cover the hole between second and first well. Though he is firmly planted at second base, he does have experience at third base and shortstop in college which could create some versatility for him down the road. He is just a very sound defender where in 561 total chances last year he only had four errors, which was good for a .993 fielding percentage which was 1st in the Carolina League.

Phelps is still transitioning to the professional game and is continuing to improve as a player, and is expected to show more power numbers. Right now his on-base percentage is very good and it is felt that he will continue to improve in this area because of his abilities. Going forward he needs to be a little bit more consistent, but this also comes with learning the game. His batting average should improve as he continues to play and his approach at the plate becomes even more sound. He needs to make some adjustments at the plate to improve his approach such as being more short to the ball and work through the ball better. While he has a simplified, patient approach, he needs to continue to work on being a little more aggressive at the plate and to know what to expect in certain situations.

Outlook: The Indians have had trouble in years past finding and developing quality second basemen, and things have changed now that Phelps is in the mix. He shows good strength, speed, and defense in the middle of the diamond, and is already producing early in his career which is a good sign that he is getting the most out of his abilities. He is an option in the near future at second base for the Indians because he is an advanced player both defensively and offensively, and should open the 2010 season as the starting second baseman at Double-A Akron.

Photo courtesy of Tony Lastoria

[Cord Phelps MinorLeagueBaseball.com page](#)

[Cord Phelps Baseball-Reference page](#)

[Cord Phelps MinorLeagueSplits.com page](#)

Cord Phelps Hitting:

28. Delvi Cid - Outfielder

Born: 07/19/1989 – Height: 6'2" – Weight: 170 – Bats: Switch – Throws: Right

Year

Age

Team

Lvl

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2007	17	DSL Indians	R
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2008	18	GCL Indians	R
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2009	19	Lake County	A
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Totals

193

751

107



History: The Indians signed Cid as an undrafted free agent in December 2006 out of the Dominican Republic. While he only played in 93 games at Low-A Lake County last year, he finished 8th in the South Atlantic League in stolen bases (33). One bad month in July when he hit .167 really took away from his numbers as he hit .306 in May, .333 in June, .273 in August, and .320 in September.

Strengths & Opportunities: The Indians signed Cid as a low profile international free agent who was extremely raw, but they saw the tools and felt he projected well. He has come a long way since the day they first laid their eyes on him over three years ago when he couldn't even get the ball out of the batting cage from the left side and his arm strength was so poor that he had trouble getting the ball from center field to second base.

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So far Cid is looking like one of their better more recent Latin signings. He is an extremely athletic outfielder with high aptitude who has a game focused on speed and defense. He is considered the fastest base-runner in the Indians system grading out as an 80 on the 20-80 scouting scale. He is an extremely gifted defensive center fielder where he displays good instincts, route-running and uses his plus-plus speed to track down just about everything in the gaps. He is a gold glove caliber defender and the best defender in the Indians system.

As a hitter Cid has little power at this stage of his development, but he has shown the ability to hit for average. He has a good approach at the plate for his age, and will need to use that as the foundation to build and develop his plate discipline to be a little more patient and draw more walks and cut down on the strikeouts. He is strictly a slap-hitter right now, but he has the frame to put on more weight and get stronger as he matures. Last year he showed signs he was starting to fill out and get stronger as he added about 15 pounds of weight. He should continue to fill out more in the coming years which could help him begin pounding the gaps much more consistently and hitting the ball with authority where his blazing speed will be put on display with many more extra base hits.

Near the end of the 2008 season with the rookie-level Gulf Coast League team, Cid severely injured his foot tracking down a ball in the outfield after he slammed into the wall and got his foot caught under the fence. He ended up with a Lisfranc fracture to his foot that sidelined him for over six months. The injury came at a bad time as the Indians were getting close to calling him up to Lake County for the final month of that season, and he also ended up missing Instructional League and almost all of spring training last year. He was actually scheduled to open the season as the Lake County starting centerfielder, but he remained in Goodyear, Arizona to continue rehabbing his foot and eventually made it to Lake County by mid-May.

Cid still is very raw and has a lot to learn on how to play the game, which is something the Indians understand is going to take awhile. He needs a lot of development because players from the Dominican Republic do not play in games until their free agent workouts with teams. A player with his skill set, what he has to develop are his instincts, his small ball approach, playing the game, getting on-base, creating havoc, and all the things that are a different skill set from his raw tools. The Indians believe he can do it and feel he has already made great strides in these areas.

Even though he is still learning, he often gets by because of his raw plus-plus speed which helps cover some mistakes on the base paths or outrunning mistakes in the outfield. He still needs work in the outfield on his reads, routes, and jumps. In time, as he better develops his skills he is expected to be an elite base-stealer and gold glove caliber defender. He needs to learn how to be a smarter base-runner by reading the ball off the bat better, getting better secondary leads, and reading a pitchers move to get better jumps on steals. He also needs a lot of work at the plate, but is to be expected with such a young, talented player with the raw abilities he has. He would be a player at the top of the lineup the Indians hope can create a lot of uneasiness for pitchers when he gets on base, and a player who can impact a game with his defense.

Outlook: Cid is a player who went largely unheralded when he was going through the workout and signing process as an international free agent, but now is a player who is starting to turn some heads. As raw as he is, he has come a long way. Even with the foot injury a year ago, the Indians are excited with where he is at currently from a development standpoint. His development and growth is tough to judge from a fan perspective as the stats don't always show progress, but the Indians are doing everything they can to ensure he reaches his potential and becomes the true leadoff centerfielder they believe he has to be. He likely will open the 2010 season in a return trip to Low-A Lake County as the starting center fielder, but should still see significant time at advanced High-A Kinston this season.

Photo courtesy of Ken Carr

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[Delvi Cid MinorLeagueBaseball.com page](#)

[Delvi Cid Baseball-Reference page](#)

[Delvi Cid MinorLeagueSplits.com page](#)

Delvi Cid Hitting:

27. Eric Berger – Left-handed Pitcher

Born: 04/22/1986 – Height: 6'2" – Weight: 205 – Bats: Left – Throws: Left

Year	Age	Team	Lvl
2008	22	Mahoning Vy	A-
2008	22	Lake County	A

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2009	23	Kinston	A+
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2009	23	Akron	AA
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Totals	12	9	2.42
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[Click here for a full breakdown](#)

Year	Age	Team	Lvl
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2007

22

Kinston

A+

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2008	23	Akron	AA
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2009	24	Lake County	A
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2009	24	Columbus	AAA
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Totals	328	1239	164
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History: Hodges was a 2nd round pick by the Indians in the 2006 Draft out of Georgia Tech. He was considered a sure fire first round pick going into 2006, but his ranking took a hit when he came down with a stress fracture in his left leg and basically played on one leg for almost all of his final season at Georgia Tech and finished up hitting .329 with 11 HR and 68 RBI in 219 at bats. The Indians gambled and selected him with their third of four second round picks, and signed him to a \$1 million bonus and a 2007 contract to hold him out of action the rest of the season and give him more time to mend from the injury. In 2008 he was named the Eastern League Rookie of the Year at Double-A Akron, and he also played for the U.S. team in the Futures Game at Yankee Stadium. His 97 RBI at Akron in 2008 broke the single-season record formerly held by Chan Perry who had 96 RBI in 1997.

Strengths & Opportunities: Hodges is a very disciplined hitter with great bat-to-ball ability, and has a nice, short line drive stroke that allows him to cover the whole plate with good power to all fields. He is selective at the plate and when he swings he makes good, hard contact and has no trouble catching up to good fastballs. Since joining the Indians he has shortened his swing and simplified his approach at the plate which has helped him improve as a hitter. His swing mechanics were also adjusted to get him to cock his hands back into a pre-loaded position by his right shoulder and use his legs as a timing mechanism to shift load in his bat. He has become better at recognizing pitches, understanding how pitchers are attacking him, and

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making good adjustments at bat to at bat. The Indians feel he is one of the most intelligent hardworking baseball players in the system and a true student of the game. His aptitude is off the charts and he has an unbelievable ability to make adjustments. He is very professional and is very committed. He has no fear and is not intimidated by expectations.

As a defender, Hodges is still rough around the edges at third base and his future is questionable there. His arm is good enough to handle the position, but it is his fielding and movement at the position which is most concerning. He has good hands and a strong arm, but has displayed below average range and ability to come in on groundballs. He has a hard time getting low on groundballs, and the Indians have worked with him on gaining more flexibility to help him in this area and also improve his lateral quickness.

When Hodges is healthy, he has proven that he can put up some big numbers as evidenced by his 2008 season. The problem with him is he can't stay healthy as in addition to his pre-draft injury issues, he had a strained hamstring and broken toe which plagued him in 2007, and then last year hand and shoulder issues affected his season. He came down with a shoulder injury in late April which affected his throwing and sat out a few games before returning, but a week later he dislocated a bone in his right wrist when sliding into second base. The injury forced him to miss almost two months of action, and even when he did come back he was relegated to designated hitting duty for about a month since he was still not completely recovered from his shoulder and wrist injuries. He returned to regular duty at third base at the end of July and played there full time the final six weeks of the season, though his wrist was never really 100% the rest of the season and it showed with his performance at the plate. With a lack of strength in his shoulder and not being completely healthy in his wrist, it prevented him from turning on anything and he was often late getting the bat head through the zone which led to a lot of weak pop outs the other way in right and right center. This is a big reason he had the absence of any real power last year.

The shoulder and wrist injuries not only affected Hodge at the plate, but they had an even greater affect on his development as a defender at third base. Going into last season the Indians were encouraged with the steps he took to improve defensively at third base in the offseason and had hoped he could carry that momentum into last season. Things never materialized as they hoped as the injuries prevented him from playing regularly at third base where he only managed to play 50 games at the position all last year. For a player needing to improve his defense, that short amount of time and inconsistent work at the position was not enough, so improving his play at the position will be a central focus this coming season.

A bad season after being promoted to the next level is certainly cause for concern, but sometimes players just have an off year or struggle with injuries. The Indians do not put too much stock into one singular off year for a proven performer, especially a player like Hodges who has always been a successful hitter from college through the pros. While the injuries he battled through last year should not be an excuse, they certainly did impact the way he performed last season. The Indians feel he will be fine and will hit and play better in 2010, and that while valuable time was lost because of the injuries in 2010, that his defense will still be a work in progress to get the most out of his physical tools.

Hodges needs to use the upcoming season not only to improve defensively, but also prove he can be durable and shake the injury bug which has plagued him for the better part of three of the last four years. His bat profiles well at third base, but the question is whether he fits there defensively. Down the road he could be moved to first base if his defensive issues continue, but doing so would considerably hurt his value as his bat is above average at third base but barely average at first base. He has worked on improving his agility and since last offseason has lost 15 pounds to help with his mobility. He needs a lot of work with improving his footwork and timing, primarily his first step quickness at third base and coming in on balls. If he is able to get in the lineup and work on his limitations the feeling is that he can become an average defender at third base. Offensively, he needs to continue applying his relaxed, patient approach at the plate and get better at learning to recognize and hit changeups and breaking balls and lay

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off them early in the count. He needs to continue thinking down and through the ball and use his legs more in his swing to help create more line drives.

Outlook: In a lot of ways, Hodges' 2009 season at Triple-A is very much similar to the season first baseman/outfielder Jordan Brown went through at Triple-A in 2008. Both were Top 10 prospects in the system who at the time struggled with their first exposure to Triple-A ball mostly because of several nagging injuries which affected their performance at the plate. A lot of people mistakenly jumped ship on Brown after his unspectacular 2008 season, and the same may ring true with Hodges. Even after a sub par season last year, the Indians rewarded him by putting him on the 40-man roster in the offseason. By rostering him, it shows that not only do they value him as a potential big league contributor down the road, but that they had strong vibes other teams do too as had they not rostered him he likely would have been picked up in the Rule 5 Draft. His bat is close to big league ready, it is just ironing out his defensive flaws. Now that he is on the 40-man roster, it is very likely he will be in Cleveland at some point during the 2010 season, especially with incumbent third baseman Jhonny Peralta possibly being on the trading block all season. He should open the 2010 season as the starting third baseman for Triple-A Columbus.

Photo courtesy of Tony Lastoria

[Wes Hodges MinorLeagueBaseball.com page](#)

[Wes Hodges Baseball-Reference page](#)

[Wes Hodges MinorLeagueSplits.com page](#)

Wes Hodges Hitting: