



ORIOLES

(2006 salaries not available)

Jorge Arangure Jr.'s analysis and projected batting order

1
2B
Brian Roberts

2
DH
Kevin Millar

3
3B
Melvin Mora

4
SS
Miguel Tejada

5
RF
Jay Gibbons

6
1B
Javy Lopez

7
C
Ramon Hernandez

8
LF
Jeff Conine

9
CF
Corey Patterson

2B BRIAN ROBERTS Backups: Chris Gomez, David Newhan

VITALS
Number: 1
Age: 28
Height: 5-9
Weight: 180
Bats: Switch
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 143
At-bats: 561
Runs: 92
Hits: 176
Homers: 18
RBI: 73
Walks: 67
Strikeouts: 83
Average: .314
OBP: .387
Slugging: .515

'05 SALARY
\$390,000

WHY HE IS IMPORTANT
When he's healthy, the Orioles have a potent offense with a spark-plug at the top of the order. When he's not, Baltimore's offense could be stagnant.



Perhaps no player in baseball was more of a surprise than Roberts, who in 2005 set career highs in batting average, on-base percentage, home runs and RBI and earned his first all-star appearance and the Orioles' most valuable player award. Roberts's .387 on-base percentage ranked second in the majors and he clearly is one of the better second basemen offensively and defensively. Roberts's success will depend on how quickly he recovers from the gruesome elbow injury that forced him to miss the final two weeks of the season. But coming off the elbow injury, it's unlikely he'll get off to a quick start, which was what propelled him to such an impressive season last year. Roberts did not play in an exhibition game until March 21, which gave him just two weeks to get ready for the season. It would be unrealistic to expect the same type of production from Roberts this season as he had last year.

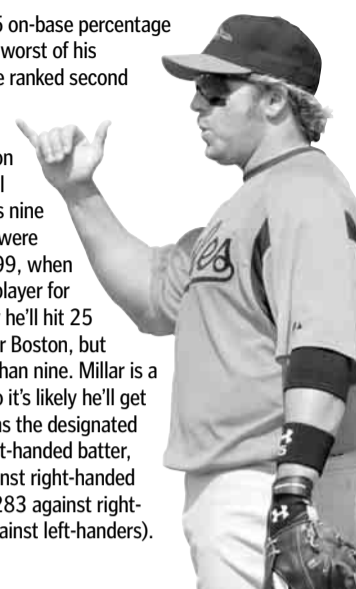
DH KEVIN MILLAR Backups: Javy Lopez, Jeff Conine

VITALS
Number: 15
Age: 34
Height: 6-0
Weight: 210
Bats: Right
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 134
At-bats: 449
Runs: 57
Hits: 122
Homers: 9
RBI: 50
Average: .272

'05 SALARY
\$3.5 million

Though Millar's .355 on-base percentage last season was the worst of his career, it would have ranked second on the Orioles behind Brian Roberts. The question is whether Millar will regain his power. His nine home runs in 2005 were his fewest since 1999, when he was a part-time player for Florida. It's not likely he'll hit 25 as he did in 2003 for Boston, but he should hit more than nine. Millar is a defensive liability, so it's likely he'll get most of his at-bats as the designated hitter. Though a right-handed batter, Millar hit better against right-handed pitching last year (.283 against right-handers vs. .246 against left-handers).



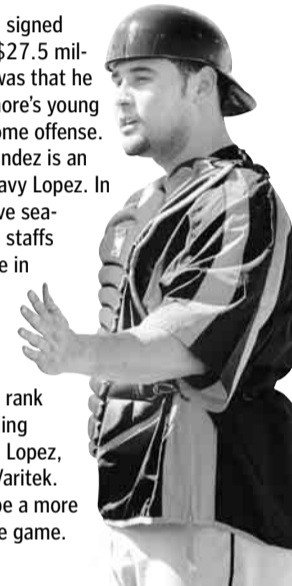
C RAMON HERNANDEZ Backup: Javy Lopez

VITALS
Number: 55
Age: 29
Height: 6-0
Weight: 210
Bats: Right
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 99
Runs: 36
At-bats: 369
Hits: 107
Homers: 12
RBI: 58
Average: .290

'05 SALARY
\$4,312,500

The hope when the Orioles signed Hernandez to a four-year, \$27.5 million deal in the offseason was that he would help stabilize Baltimore's young pitching while providing some offense. There is no question Hernandez is an upgrade defensively over Javy Lopez. In four of the past five seasons, Hernandez's pitching staffs have finished in the top five in the majors in ERA. Offensively, Hernandez stands out as well. In the past five seasons, Hernandez's 73 home runs rank sixth among catchers, trailing Jorge Posada, Mike Piazza, Lopez, Ivan Rodriguez and Jason Varitek. There does not appear to be a more well-rounded catcher in the game.



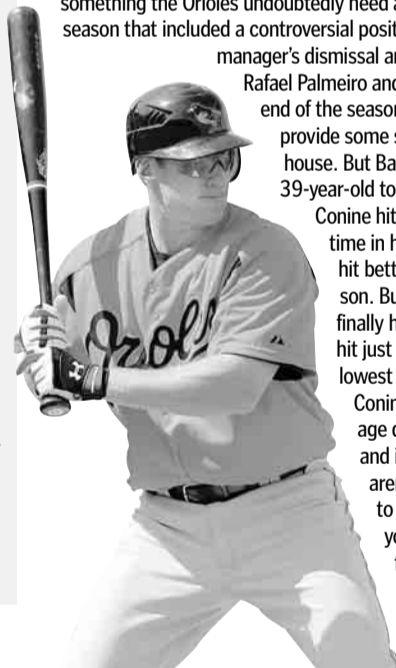
LF JEFF CONINE Backups: Luis Matos, David Newhan

VITALS
Number: 19
Age: 39
Height: 6-1
Weight: 220
Bats: Right
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 131
At-bats: 335
Runs: 42
Hits: 102
Homers: 3
RBI: 33
Walks: 38
Strikeouts: 58
Average: .304
OBP: .374
Slugging: .403

'05 SALARY
\$3 million

Conine was signed to provide a veteran presence in the clubhouse, something the Orioles undoubtedly need after a harrowing 2005 season that included a controversial positive steroid result, a manager's dismissal and the banishment of Rafael Palmeiro and Sammy Sosa at the end of the season. Conine certainly will provide some stability in the clubhouse. But Baltimore expects the 39-year-old to hit, too. Last year



Conine hit .304, only the fourth time in his 15-year career he's hit better than .300 for a season. But Conine's power may finally have been sapped. He hit just three home runs, the lowest total of his career.

Conine also is only an average defender at first base and in left field. The Orioles aren't looking for Conine to find the fountain of youth, just to show flashes of his once all-star form.

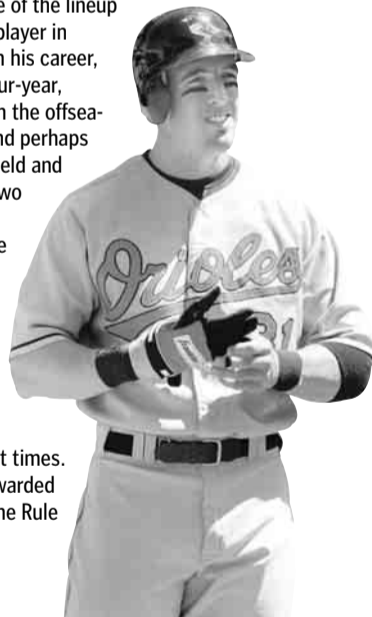
RF JAY GIBBONS Backups: Luis Matos, David Newhan

VITALS
Number: 31
Age: 29
Height: 6-0
Weight: 205
Bats: Left
Throws: Left

2005
Games: 139
At-bats: 488
Runs: 72
Hits: 135
Homers: 26
RBI: 79
Walks: 28
Strikeouts: 56
Average: .277
OBP: .317
Slugging: .516

'05 SALARY
\$2.6 million

At one point in his career Gibbons was the Orioles' most feared power hitter, though that was more telling of Baltimore's lack of depth. Regardless, Gibbons still is a feared power hitter and his presence in the middle of the lineup makes him an important player in 2006. For the first time in his career, Gibbons, who signed a four-year, \$21.1 million extension in the offseason, has some stability and perhaps that will help him in the field and at the plate. It was only two years ago when some thought Gibbons would be non-tendered by the team. Now he will be a pivotal part of Baltimore's rebuilding effort. Gibbons is the team's union representative and often the team's spokesman during difficult times. The Orioles have been rewarded for selecting Gibbons in the Rule 5 draft in 1998.



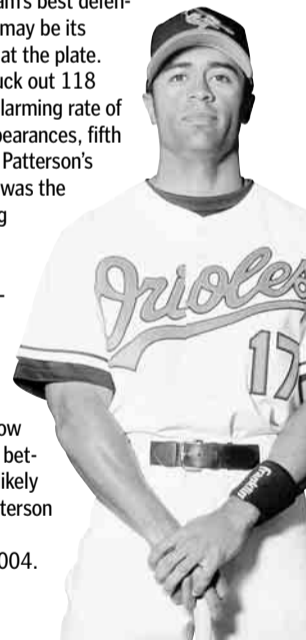
CF COREY PATTERSON Backups: Luis Matos, David Newhan

VITALS
Number: 17
Age: 26
Height: 5-9
Weight: 180
Bats: Left
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 126
At-bats: 451
Runs: 47
Hits: 97
Homers: 13
RBI: 34
Walks: 23
Strikeouts: 118
Average: .215
OBP: .254
Slugging: .348

'05 SALARY
\$2.8 million

There may be no player more athletic than Patterson, though there also may be none who is more frustrating to watch. Patterson clearly is the team's best defensive outfielder, though he may be its most undisciplined player at the plate. Last season Patterson struck out 118 times in 451 at-bats, an alarming rate of once every 3.80 plate appearances, fifth worst in the majors. Also, Patterson's .254 on-base percentage was the worst in the majors among players with 425 or more plate appearances. Patterson was once a first-round pick who appeared to be on verge of becoming one of the brightest stars in baseball after hitting 24 home runs in 2004. Now he simply must prove he's better than Luis Matos, who likely will be a bench player. Patterson has speed, stealing a career-high 32 bases in 2004.



SS MIGUEL TEJADA Backups: Chris Gomez, David Newhan

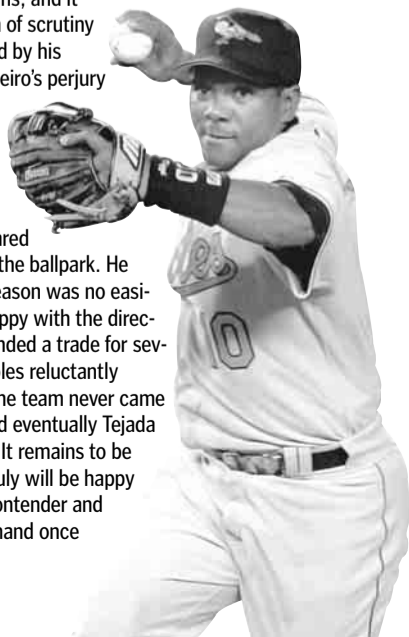
VITALS
Number: 10
Age: 29
Height: 5-9
Weight: 215
Bats: Right
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 162
At-bats: 654
Runs: 89
Hits: 199
Homers: 26
RBI: 98
Walks: 40
Strikeouts: 83
Average: .304
OBP: .349
Slugging: .515

'05 SALARY
\$11 million

Perhaps not since his rookie year in 1997 has Tejada had so much to prove. Last season, for the first time since 1999, Tejada failed to drive in 100 runs, and it was clear that a season of scrutiny and controversy, caused by his inclusion in Rafael Palmeiro's perjury investigation, wore on the shortstop.

Teammates and coaches noted that Tejada neither played with his previous zest nor appeared to have a good time at the ballpark. He rarely smiled. This offseason was no easier. The shortstop, unhappy with the direction of the team, demanded a trade for several weeks and the Orioles reluctantly shopped him around. The team never came close to dealing him and eventually Tejada rescinded the demand. It remains to be seen whether Tejada truly will be happy if the Orioles aren't a contender and whether that trade demand once again will resurface.



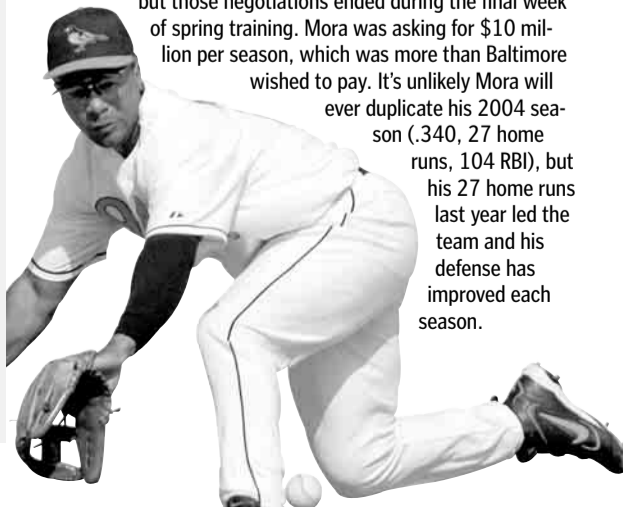
3B MELVIN MORA Backups: Chris Gomez, David Newhan

VITALS
Number: 6
Age: 34
Height: 5-11
Weight: 200
Bats: Right
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 149
At-bats: 593
Runs: 86
Hits: 168
Homers: 27
RBI: 88
Walks: 50
Strikeouts: 112
Average: .283
OBP: .348
Slugging: .474

'05 SALARY
\$3,833,333

Perhaps no player does more for his team and community than Mora. In addition to being one of the premier third basemen in baseball, he also makes numerous charity appearances, helped convince Miguel Tejada to rescind his trade demand in the offseason, was the only current player to attend Elrod Hendricks's funeral and is the stabilizing force in the locker room. It would seem to be a given that he would receive a contract extension, but those negotiations ended during the final week of spring training. Mora was asking for \$10 million per season, which was more than Baltimore wished to pay. It's unlikely Mora will ever duplicate his 2004 season (.340, 27 home runs, 104 RBI), but his 27 home runs last year led the team and his defense has improved each season.



1B JAVY LOPEZ Backups: Kevin Millar, Jeff Conine

VITALS
Number: 18
Age: 35
Height: 6-3
Weight: 230
Bats: Right
Throws: Right

2005
Games: 103
At-bats: 395
Runs: 47
Hits: 110
Homers: 15
RBI: 49
Walks: 19
Strikeouts: 68
Average: .278
OBP: .322
Slugging: .458

'05 SALARY
\$7.5 million

Entering this spring, Lopez had played all of two innings at first base in his 14 years in the majors. The Orioles gave Lopez a challenge in expecting him to pick up the position with only six weeks of spring training. The results have been mixed: At times he appears adequate; at other times, he appears hopelessly out of place. The Orioles hope Lopez can at least become an average first baseman. Baltimore is willing to accept such defensive deficiencies because of Lopez's bat. The Orioles hope Lopez can perform as he did the last time he was in a contract year. With the Atlanta Braves in 2003, Lopez hit 43 home runs and earned a three-year, \$22.5 million contract with the Orioles, which expires after this season. To earn an extension, Lopez must show he still is quick with the bat and adequate at first base.

