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Heat Head to Canberra With Four Australian Starters

Posted By [Dan Vaughan](#) on December 15, 2016



PHOTO : IAN KNIGHT SMP IMAGES

PERTH – Australia Day has come early for the Alcohol. Think Again Perth Heat. It is fitting that this weekend the Heat will travel to Canberra the nation's capital with an all Australian starting rotation. Import Mike Lee is taking a week off and should return in two weeks. With Lee resting it gives the Heat a chance to showcase what the Australian Baseball League is really all about. It is about growing the game in Australia.

The Heat will move rookie and Under 23 Team Australia member Conor Lourey into the starting role this weekend. Lourey will be joined by fellow Silver Medal team member Nick Veale then third year man Tom Bailey will follow on Saturday. The Heat will turn to veteran lefty Daniel Schmidt to round out the weekend at the "fort".

"It is very exciting to get my first start in my ABL and Heat career. I hope to get over there and compete as hard as I can and be a part of a promising all Australian rotation," said Conor Lourey.

"Conor has warranted a start and Mike Lee is going to rest this week as he is laboring a little bit. Conor will step in for us and do what he has been doing all year for us and that is doing his thing on the mound and putting up zeros," added Heat Manager Matt Kennelly.

In the new ABL it has been vogue put a "stud" import or two at the top of the rotation and the Heat have done that in the past as well. But the depth of the young talent out west has given the Heat this rare opportunity to showcase what the best of baseball has to offer in Australian talent.

"This program (High Performance) has produced a lot of Australian talent and it is a tip of the cap to have four Australian starters at once this series," said Matt Kennelly.

Lourey has been working in long relief for the Heat and has gone 1-1 with a 3.86 ERA in 9.1 innings out of the Perth pen. Lourey has not started a game since his senior season at High Point University in North Carolina in May of 2015. That game was a complete game shutout 1-0 in High Points Big South Tournament win over Longwood on the 21st of May of 15.

"We have a good talent pool in Australia and we have four worthy starts and the fact that we are Australian is a bonus. Hopefully we will see some quality starts out there this weekend," said Lourey.

For Team Australia Lourey threw eight innings giving up six hits and a pair of earned runs in the World Cup in Monterey, Mexico. He would add eight punch outs to his line as well in the monumental achievement for Australia.

Nick Veale was victim of the big inning last weekend after tossing five strong innings the week before. He will look to bounce back and show the form that he showed while making a big push for rookie of the year last season. He was 5-5 with a 4.40 last season for Perth and he tossed 17.1 innings at the World Cup to lead all Australian pitchers in innings pitched.



Credit Wendy D'Souza – Austin Images Perth

While Mark Hamburger and Keisuke Honda from Melbourne have gotten the bulk of the publicity from the imports perspective and young phenom Jack O'Laughlin of Adelaide has garnered the domestic attention, Tom Bailey has quietly put up impressive numbers with his star rising. He gave up four runs in his first start at Melbourne in five innings but has given up just four in his last 19 innings over his last three starts. He gave up a solo home run last Saturday in the first inning against Adelaide only to settle in and toss the next six innings scoreless.

Bailey is sixth in ERA with a 3.00 and he is second in the ABL in strike outs with 31 and is fresh off an 11 strike out career high performance last Saturday for the Heat. Bailey will be one of three Heat players to be on the Team Australia squad for the All-Star Game in Melbourne on 23 of December. He joins Tim Kennelly and Luke Hughes for the game just before Christmas.

The Heat are not where they want to be but there were no hung heads at training at Baseball Park Thornlie this week. The team worked on some fundamentals that Matt Kennelly wanted to address and most of all the message was that there is an opportunities still there for Perth.

"The way the guys see it is that there still some season left we are not even at the half way point. If we can get this thing turned around in the next couple of series we can make a run for this thing for the end of the year," said Matt Kennelly.

The opportunity to show the best of domestic talent against Canberra in the ACT starts Thursday night at 4:00pm AWST.



Credit – Wendy D'Souza – Austin Images Perth

Pitching Matchups

Thursday 15/12/16 4:00pm AWST – RHP Conor Lourey (1-1, 386) vs. RHP Louis Cohen (0-0, 1.50)

Friday 16/12/16 4:00pm AWST – RHP Nick Veale vs. LHP Scott Cone (0-1, 10.24)

Saturday 17/12/16 4:00pm AWST – RHP Tom Bailey vs. RHP Josh DeGraaf (2-1, 4.26)

Sunday 18/12/16 9:00am AWST – LHP Daniel Schmidt vs. RHP Sean Guinard (0-1, 4.70)

Broadcast information

The Sporting Star Network will carry all four games on **mixlr** with the Talking Baseball Australia crew of Dan Vaughan and Paul Morgan. It will mark the first time both have made the trip for the Heat. Morgan will join Vaughan Friday-Sunday. The game can also be heard right here on our player on Talking Baseball and for the first time on **Fielders.net**.



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