

Pittsburgh Pirates Player Valuation – TrackMan Data

By Josh Orenstein – March, 2021

Prospect Rankings

1. Kohl Franklin
2. Ethan Small
3. Aaron Ashby
4. Jacob Bukauskas
5. Drey Jameson

1. Kohl Franklin, SP

Drafted: 4th Round, 2018 from Broken Arrow HS (CHC) Data: 2018, 2019 – Rookie, Short Season, Low A							
Current Age	21.5	Height	6' 4"	Weight	190	Bat / Thr	R / R
Pitch Values are given by Run Value/100 which is Percentile Ranked compared to MLB averages							
Four Seamer		Curveball		Changeup		First Pitch Strike%	
44/100		98/100		99/100		51.3%	
						92 / 96	

Summary: Three-pitch mix, average fastball, elite curve spin, good changeup speed. Excellent performance especially considering age for level.

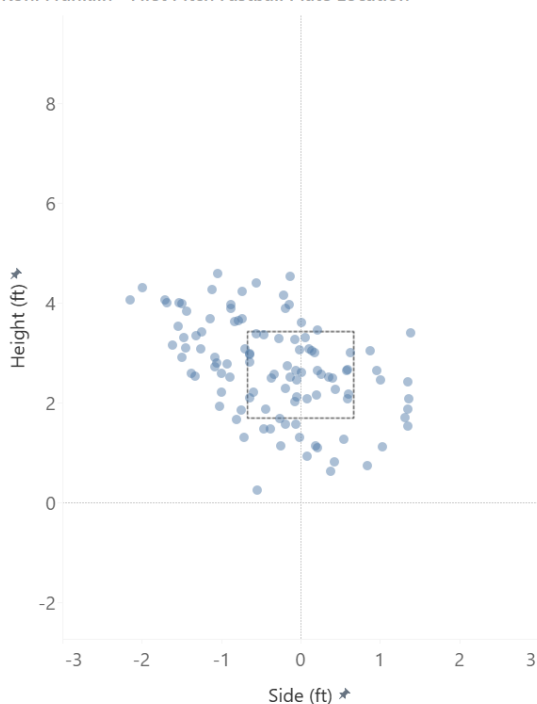
Breakdown: Franklin pitched primarily at Short Season Eugene where he was two years younger than the average competition. Fastball velocity was slightly below MLB average (92 mph) with spin rate rating slightly above average (2271 rpm). He struggled to command the zone ranking with low percentiles in First Strike and Zone Percentage. On first pitch fastballs, he tended to miss arm-side (see chart below). He throws his fastball from a high forearm angle (79th percentile).

Franklin throws his changeup at a low velocity (84 mph) and rates above average in keeping a small vertical break compared to his fastball.

His curve is slow (76 mph) with elite spin (2848 rpm). He gets out in front on it with extension ranking in the 62nd percentile at 5.8 feet.

Franklin tended to miss arm-side (top left quadrant) on 1st pitch FB

Kohl Franklin - First Pitch Fastball Plate Location



2. Ethan Small, SP

Drafted: 1st Round, 2017 from Mississippi State (Milwaukee) Data From 2019, 2020 seasons – Rookie, Low A, Spring Training							
Current Age	24.0	Height	6' 3"	Weight	214	Bat / Thr	L / L
Pitch Values are given by Run Value/100 which is Percentile Ranked compared to MLB averages							
Four Seamer	Change Up		Curveball		First Pitch Strike%		Avg/Top
98/100	98/100		95/100		55.0%		91 / 94

Overall: Fastball, curve, changeup. Long extension adds 1.5 mph to his perceived fastball velocity. High forearm angle; big vertical separation between fastball and changeup.

Background: Most of Small's data is from Low A Wisconsin where he dominated competition over 18 innings. Small relied heavily on his fastball (67%) which played up due to his long extension (7 feet) and forearm angle which rates in the 95th percentile. It's a low spin pitch which typically correlates with ground balls.

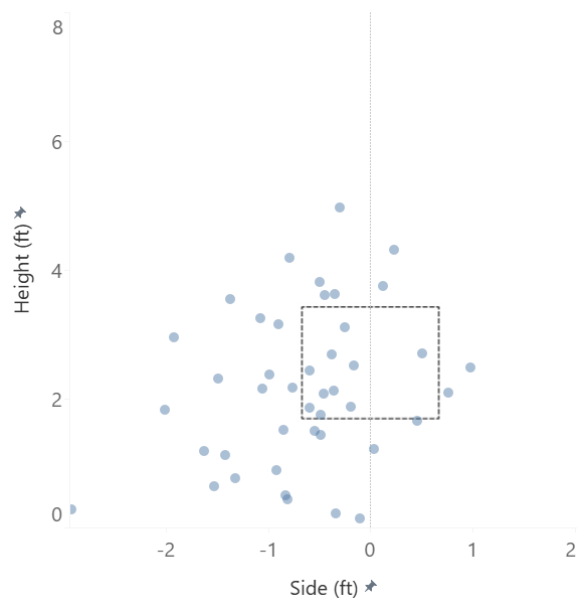
Small throws a slow changeup (14 mph slower than his FB) and combined with his forearm angle this gives the pitch heavy sink compared to his fastball (9 inches).

His curve is slow with average spin but gets good horizontal movement (85th percentile). He tended to locate it glove-side.

Small may tip his breaking pitches as well as there is clear separation in his release point.

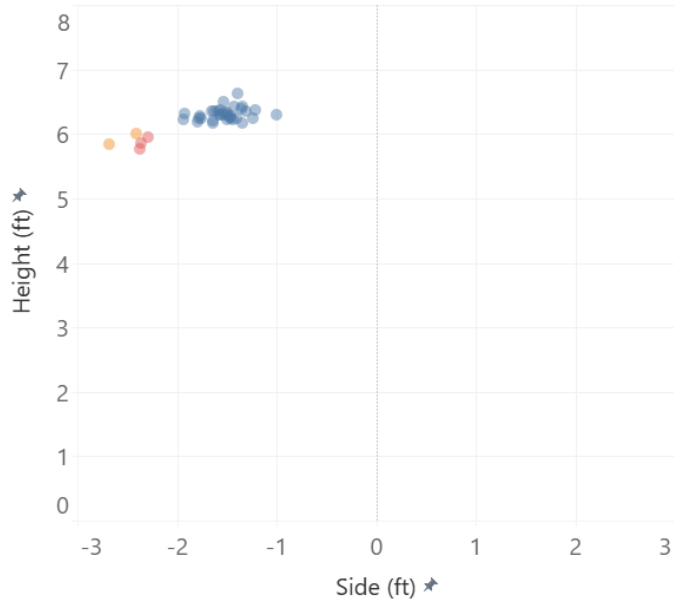
Small located his curveball glove-side

Small, Ethan - Curveball Location

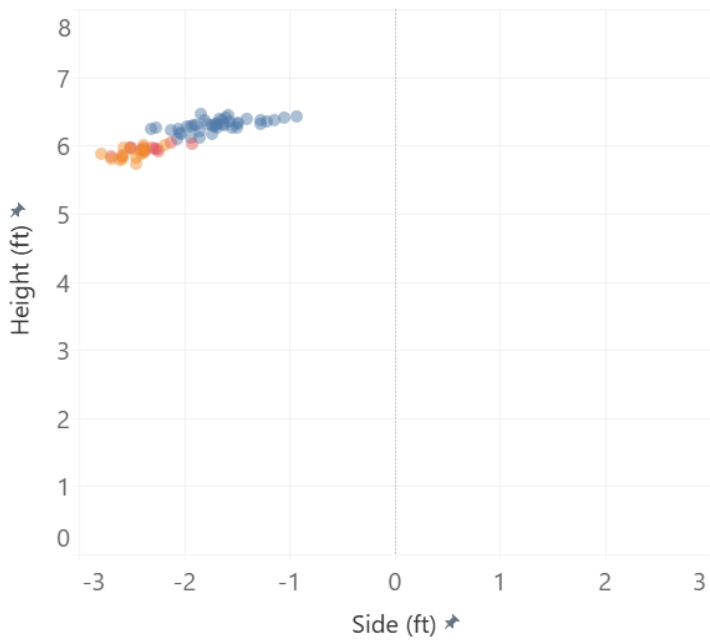


Small may be tipping his offspeed stuff.

Ethan Small Release Point - Aug 9 2019



Ethan Small Release Point - Aug 16 2019



3. Aaron Ashby, SP

Drafted: 4th Round, 2018 from Crowder College (MIL) Data: 2018, 2019 – Rookie, Short Season, Low A							
Current Age	22.8	Height	6' 2"	Weight	181	Bat / Thr	R / L
Pitch Values are given by Run Value/100 which is Percentile Ranked compared to MLB averages							
Four Seamer	Changeup	Slider	Curveball	First Pitch Strike%	Avg/Top		
52/100	90/100	94/100	50/100	56.4%	92 / 95		

Summary: Ashby has a four-pitch mix; four-seamer, changeup, slider, curveball. Fastball has excellent ground ball potential and he can throw his breaking pitches for strikes.

Breakdown: His fastball had average results largely due to poor command. Ashby's fastball first-pitch strike and zone percentage rated slightly below MLB average. He scored in the 98th percentile on fore-arm angle; but had short extension (5.5 ft) and a low spin rate (2100 rpm); He did have some pitches classified as two-seamers that rated highly and given the high forearm angle it may be worth featuring the two seamer more.

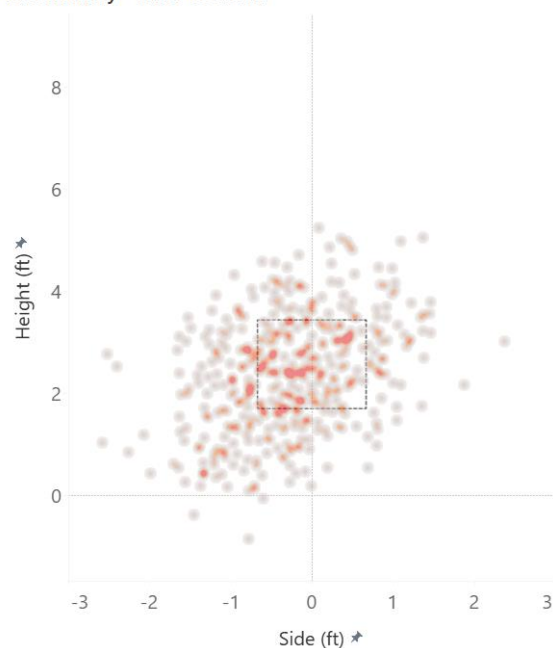
His slider was his most successful pitch. He rated highly in vertical movement gap compared to his fastball (82nd percentile) but low in velocity at 82 mph. He was able to throw it for strikes as his zone percentage is about average. The plate location chart below shows its chase potential to LHB

Ashby has success with a slow changeup (9 mph gap to fastball). He was able to command it well scoring in the 97th percentile in zone percentage. He did throw the pitch high in the zone and this could be a concern at higher levels.

His curveball is his 4th pitch. A 78 mph, 2300 spin pitch rating about average in vertical break and velocity. He located it in the zone slightly above MLB average.

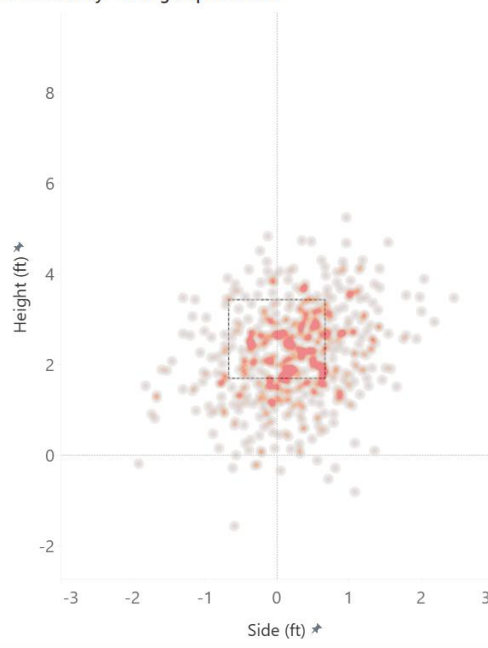
Ashby locates his slider down and away.

Aaron Ashby - Slider Location



Ashby is able to throw his changeup for strikes at a high rate

Aaron Ashby - Change Up Location



4. Jacob Bukauskas, RP

Drafted: 1st Round, 2017 from North Carolina (HOU)							
Data From 2018, 2019 seasons – Short Season, Low A, High A, AA, AFL, Spring Training							
Current Age	24.4	Height	6' 0"	Weight	196	Bat / Thr	R / R
Pitch Values are given by Run Value/100 which is Percentile Ranked compared to MLB averages							
Four Seamer	Slider	Two Seamer	Change Up	First Pitch Strike%	Avg/Top		
72/100	86/100	37/100	28/100	58.0%	95 / 99		

Overall: Elite two-pitch mix, struggles with command. Low forearm angle

Background: Bukauskas throws a hard fastball topping out at 99 mph with elite spin (2543 rpm, 97th percentile). Due to his short arm stroke, he registers a low forearm angle (30th percentile).

He struggled to command this pitch ranking low in zone percentage (16th percentile) and first pitch strike percentage (35th percentile).

His slider was his best pitch according to run value and he threw it 30 percent of the time. Bukauskas increases his slider usage in his last 5 outings in AA and it resulted in an increased strike out rate (12.3 K/9). It's a hard, high spin pitch (87 mph/2477 rpm) that has a lot of ride ranking 64th percentile in vertical break and average horizontal movement. He tries to get hitters to chase locating it down and away.

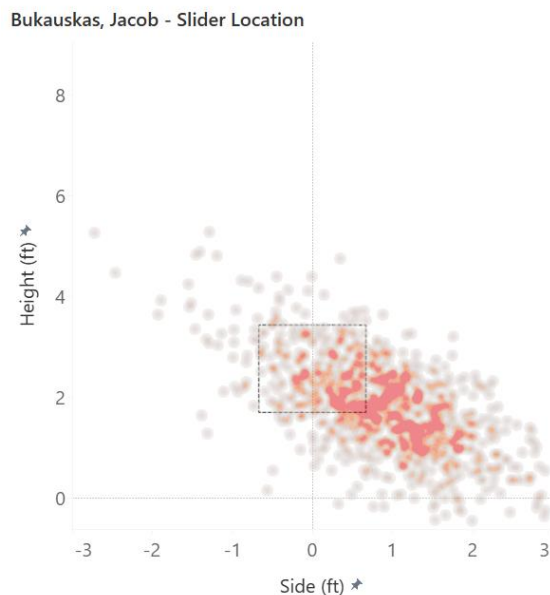
His changeup didn't fare well and he started to move away from it towards the end of the 2019 season. He throws it hard (88 mph) but it does have good sinking potential as it drops 9 inches relative to his fastball.

Bukauskas throws a two seamer on occasion. It didn't fare well likely due to command issues and it may not be the ideal pitch for him as he releases his pitches at such a low forearm angle (28th percentile).

We did capture 35 cutters from Bukauskas, which was not enough to qualify for run value ranking; however, it did rate high in velocity (90mph) and vertical break/ride (82nd percentile).

He really struggles with his release point as it often ranged about a foot side-to-side.

Bukauskas tries to get RHB to chase down and away



5. Drey Jameson, SP

Drafted: 1st Round, 2019 from Ball State (ARI)							
Current Age	23.5	Height	6' 0"	Weight	165	Bat / Thr	R / R
Run Value/100 is Percentile Ranked							
Data From 2019 season – Short Season A							
Four Seamer		Slider		First Pitch Strike%		Avg/Top	
70/100		61/100		47.0%		94 / 97	

Overall: Jameson showed a two-pitch mix at Hillsboro showing a fastball 70% and slider 22% of the time. Short extension ticks down his perceived fastball velocity by 1 mph. Slow, slurvy slider.

Background: Jameson's fastball showed above average velocity and spin but he really struggled to find the strike zone with it registering a first pitch strike just 47 percent of the time and locating it in the zone just 10 percent of the time.

His slider is slow compared to MLB pitchers at 82 MPH. It's got good spin but was a little flat as it rates low in vertical break/ride and horizontal break. It seems a little slurvy given its velocity relative to his fastball (12 mph diff).

We captured just 9 changeups and 6 curveballs and he throws both at a high velocity; 87 mph from the changeup and 80 mph from the curveball. His curve had average spin at about 2400 rpm and short extension (5.0 feet).

Appendix –

Indicators of Run Value Based on 2018 MLB TrackMan data provided

	Primary Indicators		Secondary Indicators	
	LHP	RHP	LHP	RHP
Four Seam	Strikes, Spin Rate, Extension	Strikes, Spin Rate, Velo	High forearm angle	
Two Seam	Strikes, Sink	Movement, Velo, high forearm angle	Velo, high forearm angle	Movement, Velo, high forearm Angle
Cutter	Extension	Velo, Strikes, Horz Break	Strikes, Ride	Ride, High forearm angle
Slider	Low arm slot, Rides like FB	Ride, Spin, Horz Break	Velo	
Curveball	Lower vert break separation from FB, Velo, Strikes		Horz Break	Extension
Changeup	Velo gap to FB, Horz movement	Velo, break relative to FB	Keep ball down	