

THE PINSTRIPE DISPATCH

Yankees Baseball • Every Angle, Every Day

BRONX EDITION • BASEBALL DESK • OFFSEASON SPECIAL

THE OFFSEASON OPENS

A new charity, a coaching staff that lost three names to retirement, a 39-year-old first baseman calling it a career and a \$382 million budget: the Yankees' first day of the winter had it all

By Nick Ferraro | Pinstripe Dispatch Staff Writer

Bronx, NY — November 2, 2026

THE YANKEES GIVE BACK

The most important news of the Yankees' fall had nothing to do with a bat or a ball. On Oct. 13 the club announced a new New York-based charity, and it started with a reliever. At the urging of Cade Winqest, the Yankees brass decided to "step up to the plate and do everything it could to help the local community." Owner Hal Steinbrenner said Winqest brought the idea to the front office. "Cade came to us and told us about the work he was doing and we were inspired," Steinbrenner said. "That is the kind of civic-minded thinking that I really admire. I personally asked him how much he needed to get a new program off the ground and wrote him a check."

"As long as they want me here, I will play for them."

Winqest, 26, went 2-1 with a 4.54 ERA and one save in 45 appearances this season, striking out 81 in 81.1 innings, and he is one of the pieces the club has no interest in moving. Local fans and Winqest were overjoyed. "For the team and owner to step up like that really shows me the type of people I work with. Let's put it this way, as long as they want me here, I will play for them. I'm so proud to be a part of this organization," Winqest said.

A COACHING WEEK THAT ENDED IN RETIREMENTS

The front office spent the middle of October rebuilding the minor-league staff. Veteran pitching coach Bob Apodaca agreed to terms on Oct. 14 ("Where do I sign? I'm anxious to get started with your organization"), and two days later Dave Winter, the highest-rated free-agent hitting coach on the list, accepted the Low-A hitting job and Clay Rapada accepted the Low-A pitching job. On Oct. 20 George Fennell agreed to manage Double-A Somerset. Rapada takes over the Tampa pitching staff from Gerardo Casadiego, and Fennell brings teaching ratings of 134 hitting and 128 pitching.

Then came Nov. 2, the first day of the offseason, and four staff retirements across the organization: two at the Yankees level, one at Somerset and one at Tampa. When the dust settled, major-league pitching coach Bryce Bence (69, a 181 pitching rating and the best on the staff) was gone, and so were Apodaca and Winter, the two hires who had signed less than three weeks earlier. That leaves three jobs open: pitching coach for the big club, pitching coach at Somerset and hitting coach at Tampa. The club is already working through candidates.

GOLDSCHMIDT HANGS IT UP

The same day, the league's retirement notices included a Yankees name that fans will recognize: Paul Goldschmidt. The 39-year-old first baseman finished his Yankees season at .231/.291/.359 with eight home runs, 41 RBI and seven stolen bases in 320 at-bats, mostly in a timeshare with Ben Rice at first base. Rice, who hit 29 home runs and drove in 80, now

has the position largely to himself.

THE BUDGET AND THE CALENDAR

Steinbrenner's new budget arrived Monday: \$382,000,000 for total team expenses, which at the current level of staff and other costs should allow a payroll of about \$260,000,000. The owner also set the first deadline of the winter. The club has until the end of the Winter Meetings on Dec. 15 to set next year's ticket price, at which point season tickets start selling, and until the end of the pre-season to set the scouting, player development, draft and international amateur budgets. The Winter Meetings themselves run Dec. 12 through Dec. 15, and the Rule 5 Draft follows on Dec. 17.

THE DEV LAB OPENS

Development facilities opened the same day, and the Yankees plan to fill all 30 Dev Lab slots: 15 for big-league and near-big-league players and 15 for prospects, with work ethic and baseball IQ leading the ranking. Cam Schlittler, the 71-rated right-hander who went 7-15 this year, and Clarke Schmidt, back from Tommy John surgery, are in line for endurance work. Anthony Volpe is a candidate to learn a second position, and a long list of the system's best prospects (Trent Caraway, Dylan Crews, Dax Kilby, Yanquiel Fernandez and catchers Jack Natili and Sean Dunlap among them) will get targeted work on the weakest tool in each of their games. The results come in the spring.

A LOOK AT THE INTERNATIONAL CLASS

The Yankees invited ten 16-year-old international amateurs to a private practice around the Oct. 17 showcase. The list includes Dominican center fielders Dave Vasquez and Miguel Cazaes (potential grades of 69 and 68, each asking \$4.2 million), Cuban catcher Fidel Gallardo, South Korean second baseman Sang-hyun Kim and a trio of right-handers led by Puerto Rican Gilberto Martinez and Dominican Manuel Garcia, who appear to carry the highest ceilings of the group. The signing period opens in January.

WHAT'S AHEAD

The checklist is long and the calendar is short: fill three coaching jobs, decide on Luis Gil and Yanquiel Fernandez, who are out of options, work through arbitration and non-tender calls, set the ticket price, and head into the Winter Meetings with a plan for the older, pricier pieces the club wants to turn into younger, cheaper talent. The Yankees finished 76-86, but they have spent the first weeks of the winter acting like a team that intends to be better.

BY THE NUMBERS — THE YANKEES' OFFSEASON SO FAR

DATE	MOVE	DETAIL
Oct. 13	Charity announced	New York-based program, launched at Cade Winquest's urging
Oct. 14	Apodaca agrees	Pitching coach, Double-A Somerset (retired Nov. 2)
Oct. 16	Rapada agrees	Pitching coach, Low-A Tampa (tP 144, signed)
Oct. 16	Winter agrees	Hitting coach, Low-A Tampa (retired Nov. 2)
Oct. 17	Int'l FA showcase	Ten 16-year-old invitees at the Yankees' private practice
Oct. 20	Fennell agrees	Manager, Double-A Somerset (signed)
Nov. 2	Owner budget	\$382,000,000 total expenses, payroll about \$260,000,000
Nov. 2	Retirements	Four staff (incl. Bence, MLB pitching coach) and 1B Paul Goldschmidt
Dec. 12-15	Winter Meetings	Ticket price due when they end Dec. 15
Dec. 17	Rule 5 Draft	Protection list built from the in-game eligible screen

New York Yankees Season Coverage / Franchise Archive — 2026 Offseason Special, filed 2026-11-02