



Angels, Rangers come together to raise money

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Outside Bowlmor Lanes in Tustin on Sunday, Torii Hunter spotted Rex Hudler and threw the Angels' former announcer into a headlock.

"Wow," Hudler said afterward. "Spring training's a month away, but he's ready. He's strong!"

Pitchers and catchers report to spring training in just three weeks, and on Sunday a number of Angels joined up for a celebrity bowling tournament to raise money for autism treatments. Former major league pitcher Eddie Guardado, whose 6-year-old daughter has autism, helped organize the players.

Hunter said he's already working out and getting ready for the season. The Angels' signings of Albert Pujols and C.J. Wilson have been motivating him. "This is the year I could have a chance to win it all," he said. "I'm not taking any chances."

Despite the additions to his team, he said his trash talk to the Rangers who were bowling — including Adrian Beltre and Michael Young — would be very limited. "They're the champs. We have to try to take it from them."

Vernon Wells agreed. He said the Rangers have a good team and the Angels had a lot of ground to make up. He has been working in a new backyard batting cage at his Dallas-area home to bounce back from a disappointing 2011 season. Rudy Jaramillo, the well-regarded batting coach for the Chicago Cubs, helped him break down his swing and rebuild it from scratch.

"He's awesome," Wells said. "I finally have a load in my swing, which will be fun." He says getting loaded early on pitches will help him catch up to more hittable pitches, lay off the garbage, and stay shorter in the rest of his swing.

New Angels reliever LaTroy Hawkins was also bowling. After shoulder surgery last year, he said he was considering bowling left-handed to support his pitching arm. But, once inside, he couldn't resist using his good arm and going for his best score. His pitching arm appeared unhurt by the effort.

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