



The **Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim** officially announced during Friday night's game that the club acquired pitcher **Scott Kazmir** from the **Tampa**

Bay Rays

in exchange for prospects

Alexander Torres

,
Matthew Sweeney

and a player to be named later, according to

MLB.com

The Angels are hoping the 25-year-old lefty can bolster a pitching staff ranked 12th in the American League in team ERA. Kazmir has struggled with a quad strain and mechanical issues this season, posting a 5.92 ERA in 20 starts. But the Angels were encouraged by Kazmir's last start in which he struck out 10 **Blue Jays** batters in six innings. "We had a scout in Toronto watch Scott pitch, and obviously he threw very well," Angels G.M.

Tony Reagins

said. "We've been following him for weeks, and we just felt it made sense for us to make a move right now."

Kazmir had to pass through waivers since the deal occurred after the July 31st trade deadline, but he is eligible to pitch in the post-season since the trade was completed prior to September 1st. Kazmir, a two-time All-Star, is under team control for the next two seasons and has a club option for 2012. He's set to earn \$8 million next year, \$12 million in 2011 and has a \$13.5 million option with a \$2.5 million buyout. Kazmir will receive an \$800,000 bonus for being

traded, and no money was exchanged between the teams in the deal.

Kazmir is the Rays' all-time leader in starts (144), quality starts (71), innings pitched (834), and strikeouts (874) with a career record of 55-44 and a 3.92 ERA after being selected with the No. 15 overall pick in the first round of the 2002 draft by the **New York Mets**. The Rays acquired him in 2004 in exchange for

Victor Zambrano

and

Bartolome Fotunato

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"I was surprised," said Kazmir, noting that he'd heard rumors in the past. "I just want to say thanks to the organization for all the years I've been here -- all the support they've given me [and the] fans. There's a disappointment leaving here, but at the same time you have to look at the business side of it," Kazmir said. "I know that I'm going to a quality organization with the Angels. And they're always in contention to make the playoffs every year."

While the Angels received a quality starting pitcher, the Rays received two solid prospects and some much-needed payroll relief. "We gave up two talented players and a third to come, so this deal was not a salary dump," Reagins said. "They got players they really liked and that we really liked, too." **Andrew Friedman**, the Rays executive vice president of baseball operations said the trade does not signal that the team has raised a surrender flag for the 2009 season. "I think it increases the risk a little bit, especially the way that Kaz has pitched the last couple of outings," Friedman said. "But I feel like we have a lot of very capable arms." The Rays are expected to fill Kazmir's rotation slot with either top prospects

Wa

de Davis

and

Jeremy Hellickson

, or former starter

Andy Sonnanstine

.

Torres is a 21 year-old right-hander from Venezuela who is a combined 13-4 with a 2.75 ERA in 26 appearances (24 starts) between Class A Rancho Cucamonga and Double-A Arkansas this season with 149 strikeouts in 147 1/3 innings. Sweeney, 21, is a left-handed third baseman who was hitting .299 with nine home runs and 44 RBIs in 58 games for Rancho Cucamonga this season. He missed the 2008 season while recovering from ankle surgery, and spent more than two months on the disabled list this year with a right hip injury.

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