

DOMINGO GERMÁN

in his sophomore season. With that in mind, he made subtle changes to clean up his delivery with the help of pitching coach Larry Rothschild over the winter. He also worked on his mental approach, focusing more on every pitch and not allowing any outcome, good or bad, to disrupt him. “You want to have the same kind of energy no matter what,” he says. Another big difference? That would be increased experience, which in turn has fed Germán’s conviction on the mound.

“It’s not a surprise,” Germán says when asked about the seemingly out of nowhere season he has had, “and the reason why is because I had confidence in myself.”

That belief goes both ways, with Yankees manager Aaron Boone having the utmost trust in his young starter. “We have a lot of confidence in him,” Boone says. “And certainly, he’s pitching with a lot of confidence. When you have his repertoire and the ability to fill up the zone like he can with all his pitches, there’s good reason to walk out there with confidence.”

For some on the outside looking in, Germán’s success has been unexpected; he’s one of several previously unheralded players who have, against all odds, simultaneously risen to the challenge after the injury bug infested the Yankees’ roster this season. Those who have watched Germán over the years saw this coming, though.

“I mean, I’m not *that* impressed,” Severino says, and he’s dead serious. “I always thought he was good like that.”

Germán and Severino grew up two hours apart in the Dominican Republic, so it was not until the 2014 All-Star Futures Game in Minnesota that the two crossed paths. Both played for the World Team that year. Germán was still with the Marlins’ Single-A affiliate, while Severino — two years younger — had made his way to High-A Tampa on the Yankees’ farm and was just days away from moving up to Double-A. Germán went up to Severino and introduced himself prior to the exhibition before they tossed one shutout inning apiece. Germán struck out two that afternoon, blowing a 95-mph fastball past future NL MVP Kris Bryant before fooling slugger Joey Gallo



A SINGLE-A PROSPECT FOR THE MARLINS AT THE TIME, GERMÁN TURNED HEADS DURING THE 2014 ALL-STAR FUTURES GAME WHEN HE STRUCK OUT EVENTUAL BIG-LEAGUE SLUGGERS KRIS BRYANT AND JOEY GALLO. THE PERFORMANCE WAS AN INDICATOR OF THE YOUNG RIGHT-HANDER’S POTENTIAL TO THRIVE UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT.