

DOMINGO GERMÁN

— an All-Star with the Rangers this season before getting hurt — with a change-up. At the time, both batters were already in Triple-A. It was then that Severino first realized just how nasty Germán could be.

A bit more than five months later, the two were members of the same organization. The Yankees sent David Phelps and Martín Prado to Miami that winter in exchange for Nathan Eovaldi, Garrett Jones and Germán. Eovaldi was deemed the prize pitcher of the package, with Jones providing pop off the bench while filling in at first base and in the outfield. Germán, meanwhile, was little more than a promising unknown.

“We had a number of scouting reports that, let’s say *if* he reaches his future potential, we’d be very pleased by that,” Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said after the trade was announced. “It’s great to add another lottery ticket, so to speak, into that prospect category for us, and I know our people are very excited to add a prospect with his physical tools into our system.”

Five years later, the Yankees could not have asked for a bigger payoff at a more crucial time.

Naturally, Severino was the first person Germán reached out to when the deal went down. He said that Germán, then 22, didn’t handle the trade all that well at first, which is understandable for a young player who had only known one organization.

“It was a bit sad at the beginning,” Germán admits. “That was the only team I had known at the time. But time cures everything and I started learning that this is a possibility in baseball, that you can get traded. I started to get to know new people, new coaches, so eventually it turned to [feeling] happy and excited.”

Severino adds that while he has never been traded, “It’s got to be a tough situation. You don’t know anybody there. It’s going to be a little bit awkward. But that was the best thing for him. He’s one of the best pitchers in the big leagues right now.”

Germán is still mindful of the lessons his father taught him when he was a kid. Also named Domingo, the elder Germán was a member of the Dominican army’s baseball team, an outfielder talented enough to gain some notoriety in San Pedro. He taught his son to concentrate, and steered his gaze toward players such as Derek Jeter, Nomar Garciaparra and Pedro Martínez. “He saw those guys as someone to maybe model your son after,” says Germán, who owned a No. 2 Yankees jersey growing up. “Those guys were the popular players at the time and provided an example for us.”

Now a big leaguer himself, Germán often appears subdued on the mound. Flickers of



THE YANKEES WERE HOPING SEVERINO [ABOVE, L] COULD BUILD UPON HIS 2018 ALL-STAR CAMPAIGN, BUT THEIR ACE SPENT THE MAJORITY OF 2019 ON THE INJURED LIST. GERMÁN HAS DONE A MORE THAN ADMIRABLE JOB OF STABILIZING THE ROTATION DURING HIS FRIEND’S ABSENCE. “HE’S ONE OF THE BEST PITCHERS IN THE BIG LEAGUES RIGHT NOW,” SEVERINO SAYS.

