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Handwriting analysts take a closer look at the autographs of seven Angels find some clues about the ballplayers personalities. Signatures from Angels slugger Josh Hamilton, center, are among those reviewed.

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An Angels autograph can hold sentimental value. It can fetch eBay dollars. It can also be worth a thousand words beneath the scrutinizing eyes of handwriting analysts.

The signature — big or small, simple or elaborate, expansive or congested, careful or hurried, slanted or vertical, legible or not — isn't much to go on as far a writing samples.

But it's something, a peephole into a personality, the experts contend.

While a paragraph or more of handwriting can reveal traits about the whole person, the signature is "like a cover of a book" and "what the writer wants to project to the world," said Sheila Lowe, a certified graphologist and president of the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation.

We presented several autographs of Angels manager Mike Scioscia and six current or former Angels All-Stars — Jered Weaver, Mike Trout, Albert Pujols, C.J. Wilson, Mark Trumbo and Josh Hamilton — for evaluation by four handwriting experts.

None of the analysts was a baseball fan. None was familiar with these players. None realized how right/write on they actually are.

MIKE SCIOSCIA

Looking at the polished, animated signature with furious loops and rounded letters, Lowe noticed a symbol – a mitt – right away, indicating the Angels manager and former Dodgers catcher's strong identification with his profession. (She later found a mitt in Weaver's autograph and stars in Wilson's signature.)

Lowe, who authored "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Handwriting Analysis," noted that Liberace drew a candelabra with his name, that former Pro Bowl quarterback Joe Theismann's signature resembled a football, and that Scioscia's first name appeared, likely unconsciously but revealingly, to end with what looks like a glove.

"The handwriting has strong rhythm, which suggests dynamic self-confidence, confirmed by the tall, well developed capital S," she said. "He's smart. He takes his time before making decisions."

Lowe saw high-flying dots above Scioscia's i's, indicative of humor, and a hook inside the c's, meaning that "he can sometimes surprise others when he comes out with zingers."

Our three other experts detected Scioscia's quick wit as well as charisma, openness, optimism and generosity in his rounded letters. They also pointed to the "protective" strokes encircling his name that suggest a guarded nature. They recognized the high-level writing's overall speed as a sign of high energy, perhaps even a capacity for explosiveness.

JERED WEAVER

The first observation Studio City graphologist Lena Rivkin made upon seeing the three-time All-Star's ballpoint-pen tumbleweed of an autograph is "another baseball symbol, a mitt, like the one in Mike's (Scioscia's) writing."

She can't ignore its illegibility, a huge stop sign considering how some media-craving celebrities often want their signature and name to be recognized.

"It's not easy to read his handwriting," said Rivkin, who has spent 25 years consulting with companies for pre-employment screening and forensic analysis. "He is reticent. He is composed, reserved, private, emotionally restrained and not open about himself."

Apparently Weaver's modesty and desire for privacy speak through his illegible public script, further noted by Lowe's observation of a "strong, firm, rightward moving final stroke" with "a lot of force, like a straight arm held out, as if to say, 'Stay back.'"

Lowe, of Ventura, also saw the "tremendous amount of energy that builds before moving forward," a visual "wind up" befitting a pitcher.

Another expert, "Wild" Bill Cooksey of Las Vegas, sorted through the tangled lines, hinting at Weaver's unpredictability, and noted the sizable, well-formed loops, signifying overall generosity. But Cooksey was most intrigued by the signature's tight spacing.

"This looks like determination, like that of a pit bull that doesn't want to be crossed," said Cooksey, unaware of the fiery competitor Weaver really is.

MIKE TROUT

Oceanside graphoanalyst Pat Rarus put on her magnifying glasses and held close a baseball bearing the signature of the 2012 AL Rookie of the Year.

Rarus, 66, a longtime member of the California Association of Handwriting Analysts, has evaluated writing for 30 years for corporate personnel selection and compatibility and individual analysis. As a graphoanalyst, she focuses on the writing's strokes, slant, depth or pressure, size, imagination and rhythm.

She studied the forceful, hurried, low-complexity scrawl that's barely legible scrawl beyond the prominent M and T that trail off into scribbles. He writes like he plays: in fitful bursts.

His letters lose shape through the name, reflecting warp-speed thinking but also diminishing attention or impatience, several experts noted.

Rarus looked closer at the M and its second, much lower hump and concluded that Trout "wants to do the right thing at the right time" and "seems like a man of few words."

Try interviewing him.

The inspection of the T, which travels beneath the signature's baseline, was made with the heavy pressure of a determined man. But the T also offered an "arcade," an upper-zone stroke that covers a portion of the signature like an umbrella, indicating a desire for security.

The arcade, the overall illegibility and what she identifies as a "caution stroke," or flat and feathery-line ending, were signs of someone she would consider reluctantly famous.

ALBERT PUJOLS

Cooksey studied the signature of the future Hall of Fame slugger and said, "This is the jewel of all seven. He's the winner. How do you pronounce his name?"

Cooksey, who has analyzed writing from hundreds of celebrities and corporate executives as an entertainer on the Vegas convention and trade-show circuit, can tell a lot of about Pujols (POO-holes) from the bold, refined, sophisticated and legible autograph that reflected "an accomplished ballplayer and solid person."

"He is satisfied with what he has done but will always try to improve," Cooksey said. "The large capital letters project power, pride, power and strength. He could be intimidating. The low bar in the A hinted that he had doubters in the past but he's Mr. Competent."

Cooksey didn't know that the Dominican-born slugger was a 13th-round draft pick who became a three-time NL MVP.

Several experts focused on the upper zones of the autograph, specifically the very tall, elaborate capital letters of someone pleased with his achievements.

Lowe noted the squarish appearance at the top of the A as a quality of someone who needs security. Rivkin also saw that desire for protection in the compression of the signature, its letters void of expansion in a narrow space. That was telling of how private Pujols really is his about his family and personal life.

Graphoanalyst Rarus said the vertical AB slant, neither forward or backward, reflects a man whose "head rules his heart. He's objective. He would be a good judge. He may act emotional but everything he does is calculated."

Not knowing that Pujols is in the second year of a 10-year, \$246-million deal with the Angels, Rarus suggested that the full looping j and exaggerated s resemble a money bag and a dollar sign, respectively.

"There is a lot of showmanship in this writing," Rarus said of the Angels star's autograph.

CJ WILSON

The most perplexing autograph was that of the two-time All-Star left-hander known for his many off-the-field pursuits in racing, photography, music and philanthropy.

"Oh boy. This signature is an amusement park after a hurricane," said Cooksey, staring into an illegible but deliberately executed, complex intersection of lines and acute angles. "It looks like he doesn't know what he wants to be.

"There are a lot of loops, lines and hooks that are like little jabs, punches and possibly a tendency to be cruel," said Cooksey, unfamiliar with Wilson's penchant for sarcasm. "The sharpness suggests that he thinks a lot, can be persuasive and intimidating."

Cooksey put the signature down and concluded it "conveys rebellion."

The most telling quality lies in the signature's absence of identifiable letters, making it more code – "like hieroglyphics," several remarked – than overt communication.

Rarus, stunned by its illegibility and complexity, considered Wilson the "most self-protective" of the ballplayers and perhaps the "hardest to trust because you don't know what you're going to get."

Several experts noted the triangular forms and X's that obscured the name, "crossing himself out" while "indicating an analytical, sharp mind and the ability or appearance of intelligence," Rarus said.

Lowe, an expert in symbols, identified two star shapes that suggest Wilson's view of himself as a star. She and Rivkin also referenced the hard edges and angularity in the forcefully rendered signature, signifying aggression.

"With the forceful energy in his signature, it looks like he doesn't like to waste time, Rivkin said. "There's a fast drive, like he's exceeding the speed limit."

Her observation was uncanny. Wilson's chief passion outside baseball is his C.J. Wilson Racing team.

MARK TRUMBO

This autograph belongs to a powerful slugger, given its disproportionately tall capital letters in the upper zone, everything very firmly and forcefully rendered.

The heavy pressure of the writing, the experts said, indicated the Angels home run leader's enormous strength, drive, determination and commitment to his decisions over popular opinion. The firm as opposed to a feathery, more tentative ending implies Trumbo's serious, deliberate nature.

Examining the high M, Rarus suggested Trumbo's philosophical leanings. Its two equally tall humps, a contrast to Trout's conceding, smaller second hump, indicated "less diplomacy and more self-consciousness, perhaps fear of meeting new people," she said.

Cooksey observed the hook that begins the M, saying Trumbo is "friendly and agreeable" and "can handle or even laugh at things when other people would whine and complain."

He didn't know that the versatile Trumbo has spent much of the past two seasons playing first and third base, designated hitter and both corner outfield positions depending on the Angels' needs.

Both Cooksey and Rarus said the sweeping T bar showed enthusiasm but its wide extension – another arcade – reflected a need for privacy.

All the experts commented on the lower zone of disproportionately small, closed letters that reveal not only Trumbo's intelligence and cunning but also a propensity toward perfectionism.

"He seems like someone who works hard to present himself in the best light and can't stand to be seen as less than perfect," said Lowe. "At the same time, he seems to want to get to the bottom line without a lot of explanation. His motto might be 'Just do it.'"

JOSH HAMILTON

For the final analysis of an Angel, the experts received an autograph as well as a small handwriting sample. Hamilton often writes a Biblical message with his autograph.

The legibility difference between his handwriting and his autograph is astounding, reflecting the contrast between Hamilton as a public figure and as a whole person.

His signature was pure chaos, illegible, full of protective "covering" strokes and symbolic slashes through his own name. This is not uncommon for someone with a sordid past, a key observation about the 1999 No. 1 overall draft pick who overcame drug addiction to be a five-time All-Star and 2010 AL MVP.

"Heavy pressure indicates drive, ambition and energy, and the slant forward is compulsive and emotional," Rarus said. "A lot of the letters are contaminated, not opened, and there's a straight line at the ending – a caution stroke – showing that he might put his brakes on his feelings and impulses."

Rivkin observed the rounded, quickly rendered loops in the signature as being from someone "friendly and personable because there's a playful, gestural quality to his writing."

Hamilton is one of the most fan-friendly Angels.

Unlike his autograph, the penmanship in Hamilton's message featured capital letters much taller than the small letters, "something often seen in strongly religious people who aspire to be better than they feel they are. Considering what he's written here, that makes perfect sense," Lowe said.

Cooksey can't ignore the stark disparity between the signature and the handwriting, contending that Hamilton has "a dual personality" and an inclination to be "moody, manic, a pleaser one day and off-the-charts dangerous the next."

Cooksey wasn't aware of Hamilton's streaky batting but wasn't surprised to learn of it.

"Hey, I don't know the guy. I don't know any of these guys," he said. "I've only seen their writing."

No doubt an autograph can be more even more valuable and more revealing than we once thought.

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