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Vernon Wells reflects on life away from baseball

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BY KEVIN CASAS

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FRISCO — -- Vernon Wells is certain he has some baseball left in the tank.

He's also certain that a reason to use it hasn't surfaced.

At least not yet.

Citing his time with family, a new job as youth sports coach and tranquil surroundings in Westlake, the former Toronto Blue Jay, Los Angeles Angel and New York Yankee said he's content with his station in life.

Wells, a three-time All-Star who hit .270 for his career with 958 RBIs, played most recently with the Yankees.

Last season in New York, Wells hit 10 home runs in his first 38 games, but closed with just one home run the rest of the way. He was released in January.

He's also in the final year of a \$126 million deal he signed with Toronto in 2006, with the Yankees and Angels carrying some of the price tag. He's due \$21 million this season (whether he plays or not) with the Angels responsible for \$18.6 million and the Yankees responsible for \$2.4 million.

As injuries mount, the All-Star break comes and teams start to look at rosters, Wells might get an opportunity to return to action.

"I don't know. For me, it's a conversation we'll have if that time arises, but it hasn't," Wells said. "As far as I know the phone hasn't rang, so there's nothing to think about."

Wells was among the many celebrities playing in the Dirk Nowitzki Heroes Baseball Classic recently.

How has the time off treated you? "It's been great. I'm enjoying family, that's pretty much it. Just enjoying being with them and hanging out with Michael Young more often. That's about it."

As an athlete at Arlington Bowie, how did you temper your dreams, and what was it like to see them come true? "Well, obviously what I did worked out. When you're a kid and have dreams of playing in the big leagues, at that point it's just a dream. But you put in the time and the work you put into it, you do a lot. We did a lot there. And not just at Bowie, but on my summer-league teams and as I got closer to my senior year, there was a point where I realized the dream might come true, and it did."

As far as your career, is there still something left in the tank? "I don't think the question is a matter of if I can still play. I can still

play. I think last year, I started off the year great and then things went sideways. But that's how this game is. I think even if you talk to Michael, it's not a question of can you still play, it's really about how much do you value spending time with your family. We both have boys in the ages where things are going to start changing in a number of different ways and they need their dad around."

How is fatherhood? "It's awesome to be a dad and obviously a great responsibility. I enjoy it. I enjoy the time you get to spend with them. I think people sometimes just look at the money we make, but not really see the sacrifice that you make for your family. It's huge."

How has the added time helped with your children? "I get to coach now. I get to live vicariously through them and I don't have to be sore after it, so that's good."

What were the top moments in your career? "Getting a chance to see other people and the moments they had. First one that comes to mind is Carlos Delgado and him hitting four home runs in a game. And then John McDonald. His dad passed away from cancer and he came back on Father's Day and hit a home run in that game. He was in tears rounding the bases. It's moments like that where you appreciate all the things about this game."

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