

Royals Lock up SS Escobar

SURPRISE, Ariz. (AP) _ The Kansas City Royals have signed shortstop Alcides Escobar to a \$10.5 million, four-year contract extension that includes two option years that could drive the value to \$21.75 million.

The team announced the deal Thursday.

Escobar will make \$1 million this season and \$3 million each of the next two seasons. The options are for \$5.25 million in 2016 and \$6.5 million in 2017 with \$500,000 buyouts each year.

The 25-year-old Escobar was acquired from the Brewers in December 2010 in the deal that sent pitcher Zack Greinke to Milwaukee. He was immediately slotted into the Royals' starting lineup last season, hitting .254 with four homers and 46 RBIs while stealing 26 bases.

He joined Freddie Patek, U.L. Washington and Angel Berroa as the only shortstops in franchise history to steal at least 20 bases in a season.

The Royals signed a similar deal with catcher Salvador Perez a couple weeks ago. Perez left spring training Tuesday and returned to Kansas City with a injured left knee. He is expected to have surgery and miss the next few weeks.