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How working with the Blackhawks strength coach helped White Sox catcher Yasmani Grandal prepare his body after an injury-plagued 2022

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[Yasmani Grandal](#) is looking forward, not dwelling on what did — and mostly didn't — go right in 2022 for the [Chicago White Sox](#).

"It's a new year," Grandal said after a workout Sunday at Camelback Ranch. "Let's talk about this year."

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After injuries limited Grandal to 99 games in 2022, the catcher says he's feeling good physically with camp underway.

"The body feels good," he said. "That's the way that it should be, right? I think everybody comes into spring training feeling better than they did the year before."

Sox manager Pedro Grifol said Grandal "looks great all the way around."

"He's strong, he's focused," Grifol said Sunday. "He's been here for probably a couple weeks. I'm really impressed with his work capacity. When your

I'm excited where he is right now.”

Grandal looks to rebound after slashing .202/.301/.269 with five homers and 27 RBIs in 2022. He was on the injured list from June 12 to July 22 with lower back spasms and Aug. 21-31 with a left knee strain.

His offseason included working with [Chicago Blackhawks](#) strength and conditioning coach Paul Goodman.

“We were able to get back to what I'm usually doing in the offseason instead of having to rehab, having to catch up during spring training,” Grandal said. “Getting your stamina, make sure that your legs are getting underneath you, getting stronger there.

“The catching position is completely different to anybody else. There are things you have to do in the offseason, and then we get ready for that. If you are not strong down there, then you aren't going to be strong period.

“It was definitely a great offseason when it came to that aspect. We got a little bit over 100 sessions in. I saw a progression that I wanted to see as we went on.”

Grandal added of the workouts: “Quite frankly, at the beginning I was like, ‘I don't know if I'm going to be able to make it through this.’ But as I got stronger, better, things just started to click. We were able to get to where we are right now.”

Sox hitting coach José Castro has been impressed with Grandal's approach.

“We all know Grandal had the (right) knee (surgery after the 2021 season), and catching, that's tough,” Castro said Wednesday. “Grandal looks really good right now. Has worked really hard physically, swing-wise, the whole deal.

“He's always had a good eye, as we all know. I really think he's going to have a really good year. God forbid, no injuries because you never know what can happen. But if he stays healthy, it's going to be fun to watch.”

Grifol also noted a difference defensively.

“He's able to get in positions this year that he wasn't able to get in last year, body-wise,” Grifol said. “He's working lower to the ground, he doesn't

(defensive) stances. He's always been a traditional guy, and now he's able to incorporate those in certain times where he needs angles. Sometimes you need angles, so you get on a knee. Sometimes you've got to be traditional because there's a guy at third base and you've got to block.

"But what he went through last year taught him many different ways of doing it back there, so he's really educated when it comes to positioning and how his body feels."

Grandal has noticed an impact across the board.

"You see the difference right away," he said. "You see the difference catching and moving and running and hitting. And then recovering, it's way faster than you are used to recovering. That's why that regimen of training seven days a week and understanding what it is that we needed to do on a daily basis, it helps out once you get to spring training.

"You don't have the body aches, the pains, nothing like that. It's a matter of coming in and staying, keeping your routine going and taking it all the way from here to t

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