



International League News & Notes



February 22, 2007

BUFFALO BISONS

HALL OF FAME LOVULLO RETURNS: Manager **Torey Lovullo** will return to the Herd for his second season on the bench. Lovullo led the Bisons to a 73-68 record and third place in the North Division in 2006. He guided the team to 43 victories at Dunn Tire Park, tied for the third most home wins in the IL, and a 2006 Thruway Series Cup Championship, a competition with the two other teams connected by the I-90 Thruway (Rochester, Syracuse). Lovullo played for the Bisons for three seasons, won league championships in the American Association in 1997 and the IL in 1998 and was elected to the Buffalo Baseball Hall of Fame in 2003.

NEW COACHING STAFF TO JOIN LOVULLO: Lovullo will be joined by two newcomers on the 2007 coaching staff. **Scott Radinsky** has been promoted from Double-A Akron to be the new pitching coach while **Dave Myers** comes over from the Seattle Mariners organization to be the new hitting coach. Radinsky pitched for the Bisons in 2001 as well as 11 seasons at the Major League level with the White Sox, Dodgers, Indians and Cardinals. Myers has 18 years of coaching experience, including 12 seasons as a Minor League manager and four as the third base coach for the Mariners (2001-2004).

FRANCISCO'S A TREAT YEAR ROUND: OF **Ben Francisco** was the Bisons Co-MVP in 2006 because he finished at the top in virtually every offensive category. He led the Herd in runs scored, hits, doubles, triples, extra-base hits and stolen bases and finished second in average, walks, home runs and slugging percentage. This off-season, Francisco's bat stayed red-hot for Tomateros de Culiacan of the Mexican Pacific League. In 66 games, Ben hit .280 with a team-high 16 doubles, 46 runs, 37 walks and eight stolen bases. He was also second on the team with 72 hits, 11 home runs and 37 RBI.

CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS

BOMBARD JOINS KNIGHTS: On January 18, 2007 the Charlotte Knights announced that **Marc Bombard** will serve as manager for the 2007 season. The team also announced that pitching coach **Juan Nieves** and hitting coach **Tack Wilson** will return to the Knights. Bombard enters his 23rd season as a Minor League manager and is the active leader in career wins as a manager with 1,556. He has spent 34 years in professional baseball—spending last season as first base coach for the Philadelphia Phillies. He is no stranger to the International League having managed Scranton/Wilkes-Barre from 1997-2004. He also managed Buffalo in 1992 and Indianapolis from 1993-95 when the teams were part of the American Association. Bombard was named Minor League Manager of the Year in 1994 by *Baseball America*, Triple-A Manager of the Year by *Baseball Weekly* in 1995 and Minor League Manager of the Year by *USA Today* in 2002. In 1996, Bombard joined Ray Knight's staff as third base coach of the Cincinnati Reds. Bombard replaces **Anthony "Razor" Shines** as manager. Shines was promoted to third base coach of the Chicago White Sox on October 30, 2006. Shines spent his winter managing La Guaria of the Venezuelan Winter League.

FORMER KNIGHTS HOPE TO JOIN SHINES IN CHICAGO: At La Guaria, **Razor Shines** tutored the White Sox top offensive prospect **Josh Fields**. Fields spent his winter learning to play the outfield after playing 117 games at third base for the Charlotte Knights in 2006. During spring training most eyes will be placed on the young pitching that the White Sox have assembled in the off-season. The list includes **Gavin Floyd**, **John Danks**, **Nick Masset**, and former Knights **Gio Gonzalez** and **Charlie Haeger**. The White Sox will be looking for one of those pitchers to fill the fifth spot in their starting rotation. Danks was the top pitching prospect in the Texas Rangers organization according to *Baseball America*. Haeger is an interesting prospect due to the fact that he is a knuckleball pitcher, and can be used in a variety of roles. Another position battle will take place in the outfield. Former Knight **Brian Anderson** spent the 2006 season as the White Sox everyday center fielder. Anderson struggled hitting just .225 in 134 games. This season Anderson will be pushed in spring training by his former Knights teammates **Jerry Owens**, **Ryan Sweeney** and **Josh Fields**. Owens is a speedy outfielder who last year stole 40 bases at Charlotte. Sweeney is the number one prospect in the White Sox organization according to *Baseball America*. Last year Sweeney hit .296 for the Knights and also had a .988 fielding percentage in 116 games in center field. Fields is considered the White Sox top offensive prospect. Fields hit .305 with 19 home runs and 70 runs batted in for the Knights last season.

COLUMBUS CLIPPERS

MAJOR LEAGUE ACTION AT THE COOP: Clippers President & General Manager **Ken Schnacke** announced that the Washington Nationals will travel to Columbus on Thursday, March 29 to play an exhibition game against the Baltimore Orioles, at 4:05pm in Cooper Stadium. "Washington promised Columbus that as a part of this new partnership between our state capital and the nation's capital, that they would entertain coming to Columbus for a pre-season exhibition game. We are very pleased that things have worked out in the very first year of our partnership." said Schnacke. This game will represent a homecoming for former Clippers **Nick Johnson** and **Brandon Claussen**. It will also showcase other names familiar to Central Ohio; **Austin Kearns**, previously with the Cincinnati Reds and now with the Nationals, former American League MVP **Miguel Tejada** and Zanesville native **Jay Payton** with the Orioles." This will mark the first time a Major League team has played in Columbus since May 12, 1997 (The New York Yankees vs. the Columbus Clippers); and the first time two Major League teams have met since the last Ohio Cup Game between Cleveland & Cincinnati on March 31, 1996.

CLIPPERS ANNOUNCE STEARNS AS SKIPPER: **John Stearns** comes to Columbus as the manager after managing Washington's Double-A team in Harrisburg last season. Stearns is entering his 33rd season in professional baseball. Stearns was drafted out of the University of Colorado by the NFL's Buffalo Bills, but signed with the Phillies as their first pick in 1973 (number two overall). Traded to the Mets by late 1976 he was their first-string catcher. Stearns played eleven Major League seasons hitting .260, with 152 doubles, 10 triples, 46 home runs and 312 RBI in 810 games with the Phillies and Mets. He was a NL All-Star in 1977, 1979, 1980 and 1982. He retired as a player in 1984 and started his coaching career the following season with the Milwaukee Brewers as a scout and Minor League instructor. Stearns has worked for the Blue Jays, Yankees, Reds, Orioles, Mets and Nationals as scout, Minor League manager, coach, and a roving catching and hitting instructor. A great communicator, Stearns was also a broadcaster for ESPN in 1993.

MCCATTY FOR THE MOUND AND BOOTS FOR THE BOX: **Steve McCatty** has been named the Clippers pitching coach for the 2007 season. He held the same position with the New Orleans Zephyrs last season. The Zephyrs finished third in the PCL with 3.84 ERA and had a League-high 1,114 strikeouts. McCatty pitched for the Oakland A's for nine seasons and went 63-63 with a 3.99 ERA in 221 games (161 starts). He tossed 45 career complete games, including 7 shutouts. The 6'3" power pitcher finished 2nd in Cy Young voting to Milwaukee's **Rollie Fingers** in 1981. **Charles "Boots" Day** will join the Nationals organization this season to coach the Clipper batters. Last season was his 3rd as hitting coach at the Class-A level for the Royals (High Desert Mavericks). Boots was also the hitting coach for the Memphis Redbirds, the Triple-A affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals from 2001-2003. Day has also coached in the Cleveland, New York Yankees and Detroit organizations.

DURHAM BULLS

NEW LOOK: The Bulls will have an entirely new coaching staff in 2007, the first time that's happened since the Bulls became a Triple-A club in 1998. **Charlie Montoyo**, who led Tampa Bay's Double-A Montgomery club to the Southern League Championship last year, will manage the Bulls. It's Montoya's first opportunity to manage in Triple-A. He'll be joined by ex-major leaguer **Xavier Hernandez**, his pitching coach in Montgomery, and **Mark Vinson**, the trainer with the Biscuits. **Gary Gaetti** will join the Bulls as hitting coach. Gaetti, who hit 360 homers in the majors, is in his first year with the Rays' organization. Gaetti is somewhat familiar with the Triangle, since his son Joe played for North Carolina State from 2001-2003.

NEW BALLPARK LOOK: Durham Bulls Athletic Park will have a slightly new look in 2007, the 10th year for the Bulls as a Triple-A club. The main scoreboard, which was in center field, is tripling in size and will be built into the Blue Monster in left-center field. The scoreboard will go from 12' x 16' to 16' x 36'. In addition, the Bulls also are building a new picnic area in right field.

NOTABLE NEWCOMERS: In addition to a new coaching staff, Tampa Bay has signed some notable six-year free agents who've had success in the International League. Shortstop **Jorge Velandia** has been to the playoffs the past three seasons with three different clubs (Charlotte, Indianapolis and Richmond). **Dustan Mohr** was part of last year's championship season for Toledo. Slugging first baseman **Carlos Pena** has played with Toledo, Columbus, and Pawtucket in the International League.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?: Last year's Minor League home run champ, **Kevin Witt**, has signed to play in Japan, as has **Damon Hollins**, who spent most of the last two seasons in Tampa Bay. **Darnell McDonald**, a post-season IL All-Star last year, signed with Washington and could end up playing for Columbus. **C Kevin Cash** will battle for a backup job with the Red Sox, while RHP **Scott Dunn** signed a Major League contract with Oakland.

INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS

THE SKIPPER RETURNS: Manager **Trent Jewett** returns for his third season with the Tribe in 2007. The 42-year-old has led Indianapolis to a 154-132 regular-season mark in two years at the helm. The 2006 Indians earned a share of the International League West Division crown after going 76-66, while the 2005 Tribe went 78-66 before advancing to the Governors' Cup Finals. Indianapolis had not enjoyed back-to-back winning seasons since 1999-2000. Jewett enters his 10th year as a Triple-A manager and 16th season overall in the Pittsburgh Pirates organization.

THE COACHES ARE BACK, TOO: Hitting Coach **Hensley "Bam Bam" Meulens** returns for his third year with the Indians, while Pitching Coach **Jeff Andrews** is back for his second campaign. The duo helped 11 Indians earn Major League promotions by the first week of September. The 39-year-old Meulens begins his third season working with Pittsburgh farmhands, while the 47-year-old Andrews enters his fifth year in the Pirates organization.

HOW ABOUT THOSE FIRST-ROUNDERS?: Outfielder **Andrew McCutchen**, who Tribe fans should see at some point during the 2007 campaign, is ranked by *Baseball America* as Pittsburgh's top prospect. Catcher **Neil Walker** (No. 2) and right-hander **Brad Lincoln** (No. 3) join McCutchen as first-round draft picks on the list. The 20-year-old McCutchen hit .308 with 3 HR and 12 RBI in 20 Double-A games after a late-season promotion in 2006.

THE SOUTHPAW STOPS BY FOR LUNCH: On Feb. 15, over 200 people gathered at The Westin hotel in downtown Indianapolis for the Tribe's annual Hot Stove Luncheon. Former Major League pitcher and Indiana native **Tommy John** served as this year's keynote speaker. John spent 26 years between six big league teams. His 288 career victories rank fifth all-time among left-handed hurlers.

LET'S TALK ABOUT PROMOTIONS: Seven Friday Night Fireworks shows, eight Spectacular Saturday entertainment acts and 10 Souvenir Sundays highlight the 2007 Indianapolis Indians promotional schedule. The slate also features seven Business Day affairs and 11 Monday Dollar Menu games. For a complete listing of upcoming promotions, visit www.IndyIndians.com.

INDIANS HELP RAISE OVER \$205,000: The Indianapolis Indians donated over \$95,000 to charitable organizations in 2006, while non-profit groups received over \$110,000 in efforts coordinated by the team's front office. The Tribe will continue to "give back" during the 2007 season. For more information, contact Community Relations Manager Ryan Bowman at 317-269-3542 ext. 300 or rbowman@IndyIndians.com.

LOUISVILLE BATS

2008 MEIJER ALL-STAR GAME: The All-Star Game is coming back to the Derby City in 2008 with Meijer being named as the title sponsor. Included in the festivities are the Home Run Derby, All-Star Gala, Fan Fest and the All-Star Game itself where the International League takes on the Pacific Coast League All-Stars. Louisville will become the first International League city to host the event twice. Before a crowd of over 20,000 at Cardinal Stadium, the National League affiliates defeated the American League affiliates, 3-1, in 1991.

NEW VIDEOBOARD AT LSF: The Louisville Bats have replaced the videoboard with a state-of-the-art ProStar® video display, designed and manufactured by Daktronics Inc. At 18' x 46', the new video display will enable the team to display live and recorded video, colorful animation and vivid graphics on the world's leading provider of large screen LED video displays. More than 100 Minor League ballparks and 27 Major League stadiums use Daktronics systems, including Cincinnati's Great American Ball Park.

COACHING STAFF BACK IN 2007: Manager **Rick Sweet** will be back in a Bats uniform for the third time and his coaching staff will remain intact when the 2007 season opens at Louisville Slugger Field on April 5. Sweet has a 141-146 record with the Bats and is in fifth place on the all-time wins list in franchise history. **Smokey Garrett** returns for his fifth season as the team's hitting coach; last season the Bats led the IL with a .270 batting average. Former Redbird **Ted Power**, who finished last season as Louisville's pitching coach, returns, as well as Louisville native **Jay Sorg**, the team's first base coach. Trainer **Chris Lapole** returns for his third season and newcomer **Gabriel Moreno** will be the strength and conditioning coach for the Bats.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CONTRACT EXTENDED: The Louisville Bats extended their Player Development Contract (PDC) with the Cincinnati Reds through 2010. This extends the previous agreement which was set to expire following the 2008 baseball season.

NORFOLK TIDES

BANK OF THE COMMONWEALTH CLASSIC TICKETS ON SALE SATURDAY: Tickets for the Bank of the Commonwealth Classic, which features the Baltimore Orioles and the Washington Nationals in a Major League exhibition game, will go on sale Saturday, February 24 at 10:00am. The Classic will be held on Friday, March 30 at 2:00pm, and tickets will be \$20.00 for box seats and \$17.50 for reserved seats. Tickets will be available at the Harbor Park box office, any Ticketmaster outlet, or online at norfolktides.com. "Because of their strong presence in the area, Bank of the Commonwealth was a perfect fit to serve as the title sponsor for this event" said Tides' President **Ken Young**. "We are very excited for Harbor Park to be showcasing this game, which will be the first time in over 30 years that two Major League teams will be playing in Hampton Roads." All fans attending the Bank of the Commonwealth Classic will receive a complimentary souvenir program, complete with full-color pictures of the Orioles and Nationals, courtesy of Bank of the Commonwealth. Those buying tickets at Harbor Park on the 24th will be able to purchase merchandise of the Orioles, Nationals and Tides in the main lobby of Harbor Park at the home plate entrance. Complimentary Krispy Kreme coffee and donuts will also be provided to the first 500 fans in attendance at the park.

TIDES UNVEIL NEW ROAD HAT DESIGN: The Norfolk Tides have announced a new design for their road hats. The new look incorporates an orange "N" surrounded by blue and silver water, with a baseball located in the upper portion of the "N". The Tides will begin wearing this logo on their road hats this year, and the hats are currently available for purchase online at norfolktides.com.

MERCHANDISE SALE SET FOR MARCH 3: The Tides will be holding a merchandise sale on Saturday, March 3 from 10:00am – 2:00pm in the Harbor Park lobby. Numerous discounted items will be available, including game-worn jerseys as low as \$25 and game-worn jackets at \$50. Many vintage items will also be on sale, including autographed team baseballs and team sets of baseball cards from 1969-2006.

OTTAWA LYNX

A-PHILLY-ATION: The Ottawa Lynx will begin the 2007 season as an affiliate of the Philadelphia Phillies after inking a two-year player development contract with the Major League franchise. The deal ends a four-year tenure with the Baltimore Orioles. The Lynx also welcome a brand new field staff headed by 2006 International League Manager of the Year **John Russell** who led the Phillies' affiliate in Scranton/Wilkes-Barre to a North Division title last season.

ANNIVERSARY ANNOTATION: 2007 marks the 15th anniversary of Ottawa Lynx baseball in Canada's Capital. The team has released a special anniversary edition logo commemorating the occasion. The first order of business was to ask the fans how to celebrate the event. The *Salute to 15 Survey* was a huge success and it has spawned the Lynx theme for the season: *I Remember When ... 15 Seasons of Making Memories*. With a decade and a half of great memories to build on, don't be surprised to see some old faces back at Lynx Stadium this season.

"HOME" RUN FOR THE LYNX: The Philadelphia Phillies have signed a number of former Lynx players to Minor League contracts. **Lou Collier**, who was part of the Lynx powerhouse 2002 team, leads the pack of four former Lynx players who could return to Ottawa's lineup this season. 2003 Lynx MVP and fan favorite **Pedro Swann**, **Ron Calloway** and **Anderson Garcia** round out the list of potential Lynx repeats in 2007.

PAWTUCKET RED SOX

WELCOME ABOARD: The Boston Red Sox have announced a number of off-season acquisitions, several of whom could impact Pawtucket this season. Here is a profile of some of the top newcomers.

- RHP Adam Bernero** Was with four teams last year. Went 5-3 with a 2.84 ERA in 16 games (12 starts) for Triple-A Omaha (Royals), 1-0 in 3 games with Kansas City, 1-1 in 5 GS for Scranton/WB, and 0-1 in 1 start for Philadelphia. He has appeared in 150 Major League games with Detroit (2000-03), Colorado (2003-04), Atlanta (2005), Philadelphia (2006), and KC (2006).
- C Alberto Castillo** Spent all of last season with Triple-A New Orleans (Washington) where he hit .268 in 88 games. Veteran 36-year-old has a .222 Major League average with Mets (1995-98), Cardinals (1999), Blue Jays (2000-01), Yankees (2002), Giants (2003), Royals (2004-05), and A's (2005).
- RHP Runelvys Hernandez** Has spent his entire nine year pro career in the Kansas City organization. Is 25-33 with a 5.38 ERA in 78 games (all starts) for Kansas City. The 28 year-old was 6-10, 6.48 in 21 GS for KC last year and 5-6, 4.59 in 12 games (11 GS) for Omaha.
- RHP Travis Hughes** Made 51 relief appearances for New Orleans last year going 2-6 with a 2.32 ERA and 4 saves. Also appeared in 8 games with Washington (0-0, 6.35). Has pitched in the big leagues with Texas in 2004 and Washington (2005-06).
- INF/OF Joe McEwing** The 34 year-old, who can play 2B, 3B, and the outfield, was with Triple-A Round Rock (Houston) for much of last year batting .315 with 10 HR & 46 RBI in 112 games. Also played in 7 games for Houston. He is a .251 career Major League hitter in 754 games with the Cardinals (1998-99), Mets (2000-04), Royals (2005), and Astros (2006).
- OF Alex Ochoa** Has played the last four seasons with the Chunichi Dragons of the Japanese Central League. Last season hit .273 with 15 HR & 77 RBI in 138 games. The 34 year-old played eight years in the majors with the Mets (1995-97), Twins (1998), Brewers (1999, 2002), Reds (2000-01), Rockies (2001), and Angels (2002) posting a .279 average in 807 games.
- OF Kerry Robinson** The 33 year-old speedster hit .311 in 100 games for Omaha and then .266 in 18 games for the Royals last season. He has a .267 career Major League average in 463 games with Tampa Bay (1998), Cincinnati (1999), St. Louis (2001-03), San Diego (2004), and KC (2006).
- INF Ed Rogers** Joins the Red Sox after nine years in the Baltimore system. Had a fine season with Ottawa last year batting .298 in 86 games playing shortstop (48 games), outfield (20), 2B (15), and 3B (8). The 28-year-old has played in Baltimore during parts of 2002, 2005, and 2006.
- OF Bobby Scales** The 29 year-old had a solid season for Scranton/Wilkes-Barre last year hitting .291 in 105 games while showing his versatility (54 games in OF, 17 at 3B, 9 at 2B, and 4 at 1B). Was with Triple-A Portland (Padres) for all of 2005 (.274/14/61).

SO LONG FOR NOW: Several members of the 2006 PawSox have joined other organizations this off-season while some are still free agents at this point.

RHP Brad Baker	Minnesota (New Britain)	INF Alejandro Machado	Minnesota (Rule 5 Draft)
OF Ron Calloway	Philadelphia (Ottawa)	C Corky Miller	Atlanta (Richmond)
1B Hee-Seop Choi	Tampa Bay (Durham)	OF Tyler Minges	Free Agent
RHP Marc Deschenes	Free Agent	1B Carlos Pena	Tampa Bay (Durham)
INF Trent Durrington	Free Agent	LHP Phil Seibel	LA Angels (Trade)
INF Willie Harris	Atlanta (Richmond)	RHP Jermaine Van Buren	Washington (40-man roster)
C Ken Huckaby	LA Dodgers (Las Vegas)		

RICHMOND BRAVES

CARIBBEAN: The 2006 Richmond Braves were well represented at the Caribbean Series. SS **Tony Pena** played for the champion Dominican Republic squad. **Cesar Crespo** played in his second straight Caribbean Series for host Puerto Rico. OF **Gregor Blanco** hit leadoff for the Venezuelan team. Crespo hit .300 in the Series. Blanco hit .241 with a home run. Pena had just one at-bat, backing up **Miguel Tejada**, after starting all season for the Dominican League champion Aguilas. INF **Martin Prado** was also a member of the Venezuelan League champion Tigres but was left off the Series roster. A total of 17 2006 R-Braves played winter baseball in '06/'07.

SPRING TRAINING: 21 members of the 2006 R-Braves are in spring training with Atlanta. 19 of the 21 are on the 40-man Major League roster. The 19 '06 R-Braves on the 40-man include pitchers **Manny Acosta, Lance Cormier, Kyle Davies, Joey Devine, Chuck James, Jonathan Johnson, Anthony Lerew, Macay McBride, Peter Moylan, Chad Paronto, Phil Stockman, and Tyler Yates**; catcher **Brayan Pena**; infielders **Willy Aybar, Tony Pena, Martin Prado, and Scott Thorman**; and outfielders **Gregor Blanco and Kelly Johnson**. The non-roster invitees are RHP **Kevin Barry** and INF **Carlos Mendez**.

NEW FIELD STAFF: The Braves will have an all-new field staff in 2007. Manager **Dave Brundage** joins the Braves from the Seattle organization. He has won two Double-A League titles and is a former *Baseball America* Manager of the Year. **Guy Hansen** returns to Richmond for his second stint on the R-Braves coaching staff. Hansen was the Braves' pitching coach when the Braves advanced to the Governors Cup Finals in 2004 and when they chased a South Division crown into the final week of the 2002 season. **Leon Roberts** will be the hitting coach. He is a former manager in the Atlanta system who has big league experience as a player and coach.

ROCHESTER RED WINGS

SIGN ME UP: The Red Wings will have some new and old faces in Rochester this season. During the off-season the Twins signed free agents INF/DH **Ken Harvey** (2004 American League All-Star with Kansas City), INF/C/DH **Matt LeCroy**, RHP **Jeremy Cummings**, and RHP **Brad Baker** while bringing back INF **Tommy Watkins**, INF **Gil Velazquez**, INF **Glenn Williams**, 1B **Garrett Jones**, OF **Josh Rabe**, LHP **Dave Gassner**, RHP **Bobby Korecky**, LHP **Jason Miller**, and LHP **Ricky Barrett** from the 2006 Governors' Cup Finals team.

SHOW ME WHAT YOU GOT: In addition to the free agents and returning players, the 2007 Rochester Red Wings will have their share of young prospects as well. RHP **Matt Garza**, LHP **Glen Perkins**, RHP **Kevin Slowey**, 2B **Alexi Casilla**, CF **Denard Span**, and 3B **Matt Moses** will most likely all be on the Red Wings' Opening Day roster.

GOING CAMPING: The Minnesota Twins opened spring training on February 18 and will play their first game on February 28 vs. the Boston Red Sox. The Red Wings will open their spring training camp on March 10 and will play a 15-game spring training schedule leading up to the start of the 2007 season. Rochester will play all 15 games vs. International League opponents (3-Norfolk, 9-Pawtucket, 2-Louisville, and 1-Indianapolis).

SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE YANKEES

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE YANKEES: Where do we begin? The biggest news over the winter involved the affiliation change. After an 18-year run with the Philadelphia Phillies, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre and the Phils severed ties. The Phillies will head to Ottawa this season. Replacing the Phillies will be the New York Yankees. When the announcement was made on September 21 more than 47,000 tickets were sold in one day. To date the season ticket base has tripled and the 2006 total attendance of 376,284 has already been surpassed in season ticket sales.

NEW NAME(S): Along with the arrival of the Yankees comes two new names – one for the team and one for the stadium. The Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Red Barons name was replaced by the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees while Lackawanna County Stadium will now be known as PNC Field. The Yankees name has proven to be incredibly popular. The day after the name change was announced, 2,500 people waited in line to purchase hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts and anything else with the new name. More than 3,000 hats sold in the two weeks before Christmas.

STADIUM IMPROVEMENTS: Keeping with the subject of change, PNC Field will see numerous changes in 2007. The most important is the playing surface. The ugly green artificial turf has been removed and will soon be replaced by a beautiful new grass field. The Motz group is scheduled to lay the new sod on March 5. New hospitality areas are being added in each corner of the field, areas that formerly housed the bullpens. The new Bullpen Field Boxes hold up to 75 people and will be rented on a nightly basis. New pitchers bullpens will be constructed behind the outfield wall. Finally, the stadium's original metal bleachers down each foul line have been replaced by hard back seats. The seats, removed from the last four rows of the upper level, have been sold to season ticket holders. The seats in the upper level will not be replaced lowering PNC Field's capacity to an approximately 10,310.

SYRACUSE CHIEFS

BACK TO THE FUTURE: The 2007 season will mark a return to the nickname "Chiefs" for Syracuse baseball and will include a brand new identity with new logos, uniforms and a new theme. The Chiefs' new logos honor the mighty railroads that shipped goods manufactured in Syracuse all over America. The new look includes a steam locomotive, a vintage engineer mark, and the word "Chiefs" stylized from the golden era of manufacturing. The Chiefs' new official colors, Blue, Black, Silver and Graphite pay tribute to Syracuse's long-standing affiliation with the Toronto Blue Jays.

“CHIEF” OF STAFF: **Doug Davis** was named the 36th manager in Syracuse franchise history in November. Overall in six seasons as a Minor League Manager Davis owns a record of 382-331 and comes to Syracuse with championship experience in both the majors and minors. He was the bench coach under **Jack McKeon** when the Marlins won the World Series in 2003, guided the Pittsfield Mets to the New York-Penn League Championship in 1997 and guided Columbia to the South Atlantic League Championship in 1998. Davis was named the Minor League Manager of the Year by the *Sporting News* in 1998.

FAMILIAR FACES HIGHLIGHT SIGNINGS: **Kevin Barker** and **Chad Mottola** highlighted the list of free agents signed for the 2007 season by the Toronto Blue Jays. Barker, 31, was the SkyChiefs 2006 recipient of the R. Howard Webster Award recognizing him as the top player of the Blue Jays’ Triple-A affiliate after hitting .275 with 18 HR and 76 RBI and breaking a Modern Franchise record with 39 doubles. Mottola, 35, has played four seasons in Syracuse and ranks second in franchise history with 114 career doubles and third with 83 home runs. Other free agent signings include pitchers **Geremi Gonzalez**, **Beau Kemp**, **Blaine Neal**, and **Brian Wolfe**; catcher **Sal Fasano**; and outfielders **Jeff Duncan** and **Mike Vento**. Major League veterans **Matt Stairs** and **Victor Zambrano** were also signed to Minor League deals but are expected to make the Blue Jays roster.

TOLEDO MUD HENS

TEAM PREVIEW FOR 2007: The 2007 Toledo Mud Hens are coming off their second straight Governors’ Cup Championship – the first team to win consecutive titles since Durham (2002-2003). Below is an early thumbnail sketch of potential Hens in 2007.

Infield: Toledo will have several familiar faces; 3B **Mike Hessman** blasted 24 HR in 2006 and added five more long balls in the post-season. Hessman also was the League’s top defensive glove at the hot corner. Hessman needs just 16 HR to become the all-time Toledo leader. 2B/SS **Kevin Hooper** was a sparkplug for the Hens at the top of the order, stealing 24 bases in his second season with the club. 2B/3B **Jack Hannahan** made his Major League debut in 2006 but appeared in 119 games with Toledo, leading the team with 61 walks and hitting .330 over the season’s final two months. 1B **Chris Shelton** may end up in Toledo after playing in 28 games with the Hens last year. Shelton joined elite company when he belted five HR in the first four games of the year with Detroit in 2006. The only others to accomplish this feat were Lou Brock (1967) and Barry Bonds (2002). SS **Ramon Santiago** may be back after splitting time between Detroit and Toledo last year. Santiago hit .253 in 25 games with the Hens last year.

Outfield: **Ryan Raburn** appeared in 118 Toledo games and hit a career-high 20 home runs and even hit one in the Triple-A All-Star Game in Toledo. **David Espinosa** hit a 10th inning pinch-hit home run to beat Charlotte in Game #4 of the semi-finals last season and most likely will return to Toledo. **Brent Cleven** skipped Toledo last season when he was promoted to Detroit from Erie on July 29. The 23-year-old doubled in his first Major League at-bat against Minnesota’s Johan Santana. New faces may include veteran **Timo Perez** who split time last season between St. Louis and Memphis. The 31-year-old last played in the International League with Norfolk (2000-2003). **Brandon Watson** should end up roaming the outfield in Toledo as well. The 25-year-old hit .270 in 42 games for the Louisville Bats in 2006 and has 35 Major League games under his belt with Cincinnati (2006) and Washington (2005-06).

Catchers: Behind the dish, Toledo will count on **Mike Rabelo** to do the bulk of the catching. The 27-year-old started last season with Double-A Erie but then spent the second half of the year with Toledo and eventually got a September call to Detroit. Rabelo collected a career-high 25 doubles and committed just four errors in 639 total chances. Former Louisville Bats **Steve Torrealba** & **Dane Sardinha** will battle for the back-up job in Toledo.

Pitching: The pitching staff is not as clear cut but some returning arms should make Pitching Coach **Britt Burns’** job a little easier. RHP **Zach Miner** may start the year in Toledo depending on his spring. Miner went 6-0 in nine starts with Toledo in 2006 before being summoned to Detroit for the rest of the year. The 25-year-old added another seven wins with the Tigers. RHP **Chad Durbin** is another possible candidate for the Toledo rotation. The 2006 All-Star was fantastic, going 11-8 with an ERA of 3.11 for Toledo and then getting a brief September call-up to Detroit following the IL post-season. Durbin finished second among all Minor Leaguers with 149 strikeouts last year. RHP **Jordan Tata** will most likely start in Toledo after going 10-6 in 21 starts for the Hens last year. Tata started the year with Detroit (his first action above Class-A) and pitched in eight games before being sent to Toledo on May 10. RHP **Virgil Vasquez** joined Toledo for the 2006 playoffs and pitched just 1.2 innings. The 24-year-old finished second in the Eastern League with 173.2 innings and led the League with three complete games. RHP **Eulogio De La Cruz** was another pitcher that joined Toledo very late in 2006 and struck out an amazing 11 batters in Game #3 of the semi-finals at Charlotte. RHP **Dennis Tankersley** will be one of the new faces on the mound for Toledo. The 28-year-old was second in the Pacific Coast League in 2006 with 167.2 innings pitched with Memphis. He also led the Redbirds with 123 strikeouts. Rounding out the staff, familiar faces include LHP **Vic Darensbourg** (with Toledo in 2005 and pitched with Buffalo in 2006), RHP **Jason Karnuth** (27 saves with Toledo over the past three seasons), LHP **Lance Davis** (28 appearances with Toledo in 2006), RHP **Craig Dingman** (did not pitch last year due to artery replacement surgery in right shoulder), LHP **Corey Hamman** (37 appearances with Toledo in 2006), and LHP **Bobby Seay** (24 games with Toledo last year). Some potential new faces on the mound: RHP **Yorman Bazardo** (acquired from Seattle in February), RHP **Kevin Beirne** (has been in Japan the last four seasons), LHP **Tim Byrdak** (veteran has pitched in 440 career games), LHP **Felix Heredia** (658 career appearances), RHP **Ron Chiavacci** (pitched with Indianapolis in 2006), and RHP **Aquilino Lopez** (41 games with Triple-A Portland last season).

FIFTH THIRD FIELD ENTERS SIXTH SEASON, TOLEDO COMING OFF RECORD YEAR: The Mud Hens will celebrate their sixth season in downtown Toledo in 2007 with Opening Day scheduled for 5:30pm on Friday, April 13. Toledo is coming off an historic year in 2006 with a Toledo baseball record 569,380 fans coming out to root for the eventual Governors’ Cup Champions. Toledo has now sold-out 140 games since 2002. The Hens have welcomed 2,735,688 fans (regular season) through the gates during the first five years of Fifth Third Field. As a comparison, the last five seasons at Ned Skeldon Stadium saw 1,531,000 fans come to see the team from 1997-2001. That is an increase of 78.69%.

FIREWORKS STILL POPULAR WITH THE FANS: The 2007 promotional game schedule is loaded with fireworks shows. Last season, the Hens began the year with 26 scheduled fireworks shows and added more throughout the season due to popularity. All fireworks nights were sold-out games in 2006. As of February 22, Toledo has 23 fireworks shows planned for the upcoming season and the Mud Hens anticipate selling-out all scheduled fireworks nights.

TELEVISION SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED FOR 2007: For the fourth straight season, the Toledo Mud Hens will televise over 50 games on Buckeye Cable Sports Network (BCSN) locally. Last season, the Hens televised 66 games on BCSN with 50 of those games being live. The Hens also televised all 10 post-season contests. All games are available (video streaming) online at www.mudhens.com as well.