



International League News & Notes

May 10, 2007



BUFFALOBISONS

HISTORIC COMEBACK: The Bisons made team history Saturday night with an amazing nine-run 9th inning rally against the Pawtucket Red Sox. In the completion of a suspended game from April 23, the Herd trailed 14-6 after the PawSox plated five runs in the top half of the inning, but the Bisons sent 13 men to the plate in their half with the first seven reaching base and scoring. **Ryan Mulhern** drove in a pair with a double and **Hector Luna** would've won the game but his RBI-double hopped over the fence and drove in just one. **Mike Rose**, who plated the first run of the inning when he was hit with the bases loaded, drew a bases-loaded walk to give the Bisons a 15-14 win. The winning pitcher for the game: infielder **Trent Durrington**, who walked in two runs in the top of the 9th before getting the final out. The Sporting News shows the only nine-run comeback in the 9th in the Major Leagues was Cleveland defeating Washington 14-13 in 1901.

COMEBACK KIDS: The amazing rally on Saturday night has started a trend for the Bisons. Buffalo is 5-1 on their current homestand, but has only scored first in one of the games. In four of the five wins, the Herd has trailed in the 6th inning or later. On the season, the Bisons are 8-4 in games when their opponents get on the scoreboard first.

HIGH-SCORING HERD: The Bisons are the highest scoring team in the International League. The Herd has plated 167 runs so far this season, 19 more than any other team. The main reason for their success has been the production from every spot in the lineup. In fact, first baseman **Ryan Mulhern** has batted primarily in the #9 spot, yet leads the team in home runs (6, T-5th in the International League), RBI (22, T-3rd in the IL) and slugging percentage (.583, 4th in IL).

IT'S MILLER TIME: RHP **Adam Miller** is proving the hype was well deserved. The Indians #1 prospect has been dominating in his last three starts. He threw seven shutout innings on April 27 in Pawtucket and backed that up with six scoreless on May 2 in Syracuse. On Monday, Miller allowed two runs in six innings and improved to 4-0 on the season. In those three starts, Miller has allowed just seven hits while striking out 22 in 19.0 innings of work (0.95 ERA).

CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS

GROUND BALL – FLY BALL: Knights Stadium is small by comparison to most ballparks as it is only 325 feet down the left and right field lines. The White Sox home ballpark, U.S. Cellular Field, is also known as a home run hitter's park. So it is important for Knights starting pitchers to make hitters hit the ball on the ground. The Knights as a team have had 293 fly ball outs compared to 282 ground ball outs. **Ehren Wassermann** has the best ratio of ground ball to fly ball outs as he has 24 ground ball outs to 14 fly ball outs.

RUN JERRY RUN: **Jerry Owens** got his 14th stolen base of the season Tuesday night against Richmond. The Knights have lagged behind in most offensive categories, but have done well in stolen bases. Owens has the third-most stolen bases in the IL.

WIKI GONE WILD: Knights catcher **Wiki Gonzalez** has been outstanding over the past week. Gonzalez has gone 4-12 with 2 home runs and 6 RBI in his last five games. In Wednesday night's game against Richmond, Gonzalez hit two home runs and drove in five. That was the first multi-home run game by a Knights player this season and also the most RBI in a single game for a Knights player this season. Gonzalez leads the team in hitting with a .310 average and home runs with 4.

COLUMBUS CLIPPERS

CLIPPER CLUBHOUSE A REVOLVING DOOR: The Clippers have made eight roster moves in the last three days. Today, Columbus has received RHP **Jerome Williams** from Washington on a Major League rehab assignment. RHP **Winston Abreu** and RHP **Jason Simontacchi**, as well as INF **Tony Batista** all had their contracts purchased by Washington. OF **Crisian Guerrero** was optioned to Harrisburg. Replacing those players were LHP **Chris Michalak** (activated from the DL), RHP **Danny Rueckel** (from Harrisburg) and OF **Michael Restovich** (outrighted from Washington). The Clipper roster now stands at 23, plus 1 player on rehab. To date, the Clippers have made 42 roster moves, putting them on pace for 189. That would eclipse the franchise record of 155 that was set last season (previous was 121, set in 2005).

DOMINICAN DANDY: Prior to his promotion, **Winston Abreu** had allowed just one hit and one walk in five appearances (9.1 IP). Even more impressive was that 21 of the 28 outs he recorded came via the strikeout. The 30-year-old right hander from Cotui, Dominican Republic is averaging 14.5 K/9; almost four strikeouts better than his career average. Abreu notched one strikeout in his Nationals' debut on Tuesday.

THREE'S GOOD FOR ME: Since being inserted into the number three spot in the lineup, **Darnell McDonald** has increased his offensive production. In 13 games he is hitting .404 (19-47) with three doubles, three triples and 12 RBI. He knocked in two runs in five straight games from May 2-6 and is currently on a Clippers season-high 10 game hit streak (.462, 18-39).

DURHAM BULLS

SONNY DAY: **Andy Sonnanstine** now has had four straight starts where he's allowed two runs or less and pitched at least seven innings. Sonnanstine, who won his third consecutive start yesterday, has allowed four runs in those starts, covering 29.2 innings for a 1.21 ERA. Sonnanstine is tops in the IL with 45.2 innings pitched, 8th in ERA at 2.17, and 2nd with 47 strikeouts.

THREE IS FOR ME: Outfielder **Justin Ruggiano** clearly has enjoyed hitting third for Durham. Since moving up to third in the order he's hit in seven straight games and is 14-27 with a homer and 7 RBI. It's raised his average to .314.

QUALITY IS KEY: Sonnanstine's quality start yesterday was his fifth this year (three ER or less, six innings or more). Durham now has 12 quality starts in 34 games.

STREAKS: Durham has won five straight home games, in addition to beating Norfolk five consecutive times. The two teams wrap up a stretch of eight games in 10 days against one another tonight.

WELCOME ABOARD: Reliever **Ruddy Lugo** arrived Tuesday. Lugo was optioned to Durham after Sunday's game when **Chad Orvella** was promoted to Tampa Bay. It's Lugo's first stop in Durham. He is the brother of Boston Red Sox and former Devil Rays' shortstop **Julio Lugo**. The Bulls also lost **Tim Corcoran** this week when **Juan Salas** received a 50-game suspension from Major League Baseball.

INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS

LEADING THE LEAGUE: Indianapolis leads the International League with a .284 team batting average and 297 hits. Buffalo (.273), Rochester (.272), Richmond (.268), Ottawa (.266) and Syracuse (.250) also have team BAs of at least .250. The Tribe also ranks 2nd in the League with 148 runs.

INDIANS IN THE TOP 10: The Indians have three of the International League's top eight hitters -- INF **Luis Ordaz** (5th, .344), INF **Brian Bixler** (8th, .330) and INF **Yurendell de Caster** (T-9th, .327). In on-base percentage, de Caster places 3rd (.441), while Bixler ranks 4th (.420). In runs, OF **Nyjer Morgan** places 2nd (22), while Bixler is tied for 3rd (20). In hits, Morgan is tied for 6th (35).

THE LOCAL KID IS ON A ROLL: Indians RHP **Bryan Bullington** is tied for 1st in the IL with five wins and leads the League with a 0.96 ERA. The former Ball State star and No. 1 overall pick is 4-0 with a microscopic 0.67 ERA (2 ER in 27 IP) over his last four starts. The 26-year-old fired seven scoreless frames and fanned five batters on Saturday evening vs. Louisville. He is scheduled to start today's contest against Syracuse.

JOHNNY "V" IS RED HOT, TOO: Tribe RHP **John Van Benschoten** has recorded a team-best 19.1 consecutive scoreless innings (April 27 to present). The 27-year-old is 2-2 with a 1.93 ERA in six outings this year. Van Benschoten hurled seven shutout innings and struck out six batters on Monday night vs. Syracuse. He is scheduled to start Saturday's tilt against Ottawa.

THE TOP TANDEM IN PRO BASEBALL: Indianapolis OF **Nyjer Morgan** and OF **Rajai Davis** are currently the top stolen base tandem in all of professional baseball. Morgan enters Thursday afternoon's contest with an IL-best 19 swipes, while Davis ranks 2nd in the League with 17 thefts. Indianapolis paces all of Triple-A Baseball with 57 SB as a team.

LOUISVILLE BATS

HE'S A HIT MACHINE: INF **Jeff Keppinger**, who was recalled by the Reds today, is on a 12-game hitting streak, the longest by a Bats player this season and tied for 4th for longest in the International League. Since April 25, Keppinger is hitting .438 (21/48) with four doubles and seven runs scored; he has hit safely in 13 of the 14 games played. He started the season on the Reds' disabled list after getting hit by an **Allan Simpson** pitch and breaking his right ring finger March 4. After playing three games for Class-A Sarasota on a rehab assignment, Keppinger was recalled from his assignment and optioned to Louisville April 22. In 2003 **Brandon Larson** set the franchise mark for longest hitting streak when he hit in 26 straight games.

COMINGS & GOINGS: After being transferred to the Bats from Double-A Chattanooga May 7 to continue his rehab assignment, RHP **Jared Burton** was recalled and reinstated by the Reds yesterday. Burton had been on the disabled list since April 8 with a strained left hamstring. The Reds selected Burton from Oakland in the Major League phase of the 2006 Rule 5 Draft. On May 7, OF **Tyrell Godwin** was transferred to Chattanooga and OF **Chris Dickerson** was promoted from the Lookouts. Dickerson hit .272 in 30 games with the Lookouts this season.

HITTING ON THE RISE: Through the first nine games in May, Louisville's team hitting is on the rise with the Bats hitting .274 with seven home runs this month. Louisville went 11-12 and hit just .229 during the month of April. Overall, the team is hitting .243 (9th in the IL) and has a team ERA of 3.14 (3rd in the IL) through 32 games.

NORFOLK TIDES

OLSON IMPRESSIVE: 23-year-old left-hander **Garrett Olson** tamed in his third straight strong outing Wednesday, striking out nine while allowing three runs on six hits in 7.0 innings. Over his last three outings, Olson has posted a 2.14 ERA (5 ER, 21.0 IP) while striking out 22, including a season-high 10 on May 4 vs. Durham. Olson ranks 5th in the IL with 39 strikeouts this season, and he ranks 2nd among all Orioles minor leaguers in the same category (Class-A Frederick's **David Hernandez** has 40 punchouts).

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: Of Norfolk's 31 games this year, 23 have been decided by 3 runs or less, including eight of the last nine. The Tides are 4-4 in one-run games, 3-2 in two-run games, and 2-7 in three-run games (the Tides also had a game suspended with the score tied 2-2 in the 12th inning on April 11 at ROC). Norfolk is 2-6 in games decided by more than three runs.

THREE IN THE THIRD: Of the 107 runs scored by the Tides this year, only three have been scored in the 3rd inning. Two of those runs were scored on April 7 at Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, meaning the Tides have scored one 3rd inning run in their last 28 games.

OTTAWA LYNX

THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE: The Lynx continue to find success with their rock solid defensive play this season. They have shut down opponents with an International League leading .986 fielding percentage and have committed the fewest errors out of any team in the IL (15). **Joe Thurston** continues to lead all IL second basemen with a 1.000 fielding percentage through 27 games without committing an error. Other Lynx players are contributing as well. **Gary Burnham**, **Lou Collier**, **Chris Coste**, and **Jim Rushford** are all error-free. Ten Lynx pitchers also have a perfect fielding percentage.

OVER THE FENCE: It is a good thing Lynx pitchers have limited their opponents to 19 home runs (T-5th fewest in IL) so far this year because the Lynx have mustered only three of their own – which is the fewest in the IL. **Lou Collier** and **Danny Sandoval** hit the team's second and third long balls of the 2007 season, going yard of Louisville pitchers in back-to-back games May 8-9.

THE UP'S AND DOWNS OF TRIPLE-A: Over the last week the Ottawa Lynx have welcomed several players onto the team and bid farewell to some others. 27-year-old reliever **Yoel Hernandez** was the first to go when the Phillies summoned him to Philadelphia. He was replaced by **J.D. Durbin**, who went 4-3 with a 2.33 ERA in 16 starts with the Rochester Red Wings last season. **Clay Condrey** also returned to Philadelphia, where he began the season with a 2.25 ERA. On May 9 Lynx reliever **John Ennis** was placed on the disabled list with a groin injury and starter **Brian Mazone** was granted his release to play the remainder of the 2007 season in Korea. To fill the open roster spots the Lynx recalled **Ryan Cameron** and **Heath Totten** from Double-A Reading. Cameron, 0-0, had a 4.35 ERA and one save in nine games. Totten, 2-4, had a 4.46 ERA in six starts.

LEADING THE WAY: The International League leaderboard continues to feature Lynx players. **Matt Childers** cracked the IL top ten with a 2.31 ERA. **Gary Burnham** is tied for 2nd with nine doubles and 5th with a .419 OBP. **Joe Thurston** is tied for 4th with 8 stolen bases. **Brennan King** has recorded both the longest on-base streak (19 games) and the longest on-base streak at home (14 games). Overall the team is 4th with 35 stolen bases, and 5th with a .266 batting average.

PAWTUCKET RED SOX

LAST CHANCE: The Pawtucket Red Sox – losers of 6 straight and 12 of their last 13 games – have one more chance to accomplish a couple of firsts tonight when they play Game 4 of their 4-game series against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre in Moosic, PA. The PawSox are shooting for their first-ever win against the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees (going 0-6 thus far) and for their first win on this road trip (0-6 thus far). They are also hoping to avoid a season-high 7-game losing streak, their first 4-game sweep on the road since June 7-10 of 2005 in Toledo, and their first 4-game sweep against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre since the infamous 4-game series to end the 2002 season when Scranton/Wilkes-Barre knocked the PawSox out of playoff contention with an improbable sweep in Scranton from September 1-4 to claim the Wild Card.

BRING BACK THE RED BARONS: The PawSox – who had dominated the former Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Red Barons over parts of the last three seasons (going 23-4 in their last 27 meetings while Scranton/Wilkes-Barre was a Phillies' affiliate) – have yet to beat the new-look Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees going 0-6 thus far vs. the new Yankees' affiliate. The teams faced each just over three weeks ago in Pawtucket with the Yankees sweeping that abbreviated 3-game series by scores of 6-2, 5-1, and 5-2 with one rain-out mixed in as well. The Sox dropped the opener of this current 4-game set on Monday night, 2-1 and then fell Tuesday night, 3-1 and Wednesday afternoon, 5-4 in 10-innings. Pawtucket has scored 2 runs or less in 5 of the 6 games vs. Scranton/Wilkes-Barre this season (11 runs total).

WINS ARE SCARCE: The PawSox snapped their season-high 6-game losing streak with a 5-4, 11-inning win last Friday night vs. Indianapolis at McCoy. That win is their only victory between April 28 – May 9 as they have subsequently lost 6 in a row and 12 of 13 overall. They have also lost 21 of their last 28 games since beginning the year 3-0. Pawtucket's current 10-21 record is their worst 31-game start in 18 years since they went 6-25 to begin the 1989 season.

BORDERING ON THE ABSURD: Pawtucket suffered arguably the most difficult loss in franchise history last Saturday in Buffalo. The Sox took a 14-6 lead heading into the bottom of the 9th inning. However, in a comeback of epic proportions, the Bisons rallied for 9 runs off Sox relievers **Craig Hansen** (7 batters faced – all 7 scored) and **Manny Delcarmen** (6 batters faced – only one out) en route to a stunning 15-14 victory over the PawSox. The fateful inning went – walk, error by Hansen, single, HBP, single, error by LF **David Murphy**, double, pitching change to Delcarmen, pop out, error by SS **Ed Rogers**, single, ground rule double, intentional walk, and walk to force in the winning run. Total – 9 runs on 5 hits, 3 walks, 1 HBP, 3 errors.

DONNY & MARIE: The Philadelphia Flyers had Kate Smith and the New York Yankees have Ronan Tynan. The Pawtucket Red Sox will turn to Donny Osmond to help get them back on the winning track as the popular recording and television star will sing The National Anthem prior to the PawSox game Friday night vs. Toledo at McCoy Stadium. Donny, who unfortunately will come without sister Marie, is in town courtesy of Providence radio station 92 PRO-FM as he promotes his new album – Donny Osmond Love Songs of the '70s (a personal favorite of Rochester PR guru and music aficionado Chuck Hinkel). Donny, who is a big baseball fan, will sing the anthem and be available to sign autographs during the game tomorrow night at McCoy.

RICHMOND BRAVES

AN EPIC START: The Braves' 21-8 start is easily the best in club history. The Braves hit 20 wins faster in both date and games played than any club in R-Braves history. The 2007 R-Braves are the first Braves club to reach 20 wins in under 32 games. The previous fastest to 20 wins was the 1986 club which won their 20th in game number 32. The 9.5 game lead in the South enjoyed by the Braves Monday was the largest in club history. Their current 7.5 game lead is the largest lead in all of organized baseball (out of 166 full-season clubs). The Braves have not lost back-to-back games since last August.

IKER FOR WINS: The Braves are 11-0 when **Iker Franco** starts at catcher. Richmond pitchers have an ERA of 1.40 when pitching to Franco. Franco has thrown out 11 of the 17 runners who've attempted to steal against him (.647). He would lead the League in caught stealing percentage but does not have enough games played to qualify.

TOP OF THE HEAP: The Atlanta Braves, Richmond Braves, and Mississippi Braves all lead or are tied for the lead in their divisions. Only one other big league organization has its top three clubs all in first place (Cleveland Indians, Buffalo, and Akron). The top three Atlanta clubs have a combined record of 64-31 (.674), the best in baseball.

MAKING THE JUMP: Five members of the 2007 Richmond Braves have earned promotions to Atlanta. RHP **Anthony Lerew** pitched six innings with seven strikeouts in his 2007 Atlanta debut Tuesday. LHP **Steve Colyer** has been designated for assignment. RHP **Kevin Barry** has not appeared in a game with Atlanta. **Willie Harris** is hitting .417 with three steals and two RBI in nine games. RHP **Peter Moylan** is 1-0 2.51 in nine games.

ROCHESTER RED WINGS

BAD STARTS: The Red Wings starting pitchers have struggled the last eight games, going 1-5 with a 6.91 ERA. The starters have pitched 41.2 innings, allowing 33 runs (32 earned) on 52 hits while walking 11 and striking out 32. This comes after the starters had a 7-1 record with a 1.87 ERA in their first 19 starts this season. The starters allowed more than two earned runs in just two starts over the first 19 games but have allowed three or more earned runs in six of their last eight games.

WELCOME BACK: Infielder **Ken Harvey** pinch-hit (lined out to left field) for outfielder **Doug Deeds** in the bottom of the 8th inning Tuesday. It was Harvey's first regular season game since June 9, 2005 when he went 1-6 with two RBI for the Omaha Royals. Harvey's last Major League game was May 18, 2005 when he went 1-4 with a double vs. Baltimore for the Kansas City Royals. Harvey was placed on the disabled list in June, 2005 and didn't play in 2006 due to surgery to repair a ruptured Achilles' Tendon.

MUD IN MUDDY'S EYE: With a win tonight the Red Wings will clinch their first season series win over Toledo since 1997. Going into the 2007 season Rochester had just a 28-44 record vs. Toledo (15-21 record at Frontier Field and 13-23 record in Toledo) during that timeframe.

SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE YANKEES

DAY/NIGHT DH SCHEDULED FOR JULY 7: The Yankees will play their first-ever home day/night doubleheader on Saturday, July 7 vs. Ottawa. Game 1 will start at 1:30 and Game 2 will begin at the regularly scheduled time of 7:00 p.m. Both games will be nine innings in length. The doubleheader was necessitated by a rainout on April 25 against the Lynx. The stadium will be cleared immediately upon the conclusion of the 1:30 game in order to prepare for the regularly scheduled 7:00 p.m. game.

GREAT PITCHING EQUALS WINS: The Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees have won three straight games and four of the last five games largely on great pitching performances. During the three-game winning streak the staff ERA is 0.64 (2 ER in 28.0 IP) and since May 5 the ERA is 1.48. Since April 16 they have gone 9-5 with a 2.68 ERA. Looking back the only bad stretch the staff had was from April 19-24 when they went 0-6 with a 7.29 ERA. In all other games they are 16-9 with a very nice 2.96 ERA.

ANDY'S LAST 15: In his last 15 games **Andy Phillips** has shown why he is one of the best hitters in the system and why he played in the big leagues all last season. Since April 21 he has recorded nine multi-hits games including four three-hit contests and has driven in 13 via four home runs. Over the 15 games he is hitting .417 (25-60).

SYRACUSE CHIEFS

DIVIDING EVERYTHING IN HALF: The Chiefs concluded a ten game homestand in which everything was very even. Syracuse was 5-5 in the period and split all three series (Louisville, Buffalo and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre). Not only did the Chiefs split, they followed the same formula of losing the first two games before responding with victories in the final two games (against the Yankees in a two game set the Chiefs dropped the first and won the second). Starting out an eight-game road trip, Syracuse is sticking true to form by falling in the first two games versus Indianapolis before grabbing game three yesterday.

LIKING MAY: Chiefs' outfielder **Jeff Duncan** struggled throughout April. Duncan batted .119 (5-42) in the season's first month but has rebounded in May, picking up a hit in every game this month in which he's played. Duncan is riding a six-game hitting streak during which he's batting .364 (8-22).

WHERE HAS THE POWER GONE?: Syracuse has had the plug pulled in the power department during the past week. The Chiefs still top the International League in home runs with 28 on the season, but only one has come in the past six games. **Ryan Roberts** jacked a two-run shot on May 8, his third of the year as the only blast since May 4.

TOLEDO MUD HENS

HARSH 2007 FOR HENS' COACHING STAFF: Pitching Coach **Britt Burns** did not travel with the team for their season-long 10-game road trip to Columbus, Rochester and Pawtucket. Burns instead went down to Alabama to have his hip examined. He had hip replacement surgery nearly 12 years ago. **Jon Matlack**, the pitching coordinator for the Detroit Tigers and former pitching coach for both the Chicago White Sox and San Diego Padres made the road trip with the Hens. Manager **Larry Parrish** is also still recovering from successful ankle surgery on April 4 and has not been with the team so far this season.

TIMO IS EN FUEGO: **Timo Perez** has been on fire since returning from a calf injury at the end of April. He is batting .333 (12-36) in May, and in the last week (since May 4) Perez crushed two home runs, two doubles and drove in four runs. He currently leads the International League in hits (40), runs scored (23), is 4th in batting average (.348), and tied for 1st in both doubles (10) and extra-base hits (16).

RYAN RABURN (ING) IN MAY: In the last week left fielder **Ryan Raburn** has been burning up opposing pitchers. The 26-year-old batted .350 (7-20) in six games with three home runs, nine RBI, two doubles and scored four runs to help lead the Toledo offense. Raburn is now batting a scorching .400 (12-30) in the month of May and is leads the IL in RBI (25), doubles (10) and extra-base hits (17).

1-2-3 STRIKES YOU'RE OUT: The Mud Hens pitching staff is currently 5th in the IL in total strikeouts (239) led by right-hander **Virgil Vasquez**. Vasquez leads the IL in strikeouts (50), averaging just over seven per start. The 23-year-old is 4-0 in his last five starts and has been dominant at home. Vasquez is 2-0 with a miniscule 0.93 earned run average and has struck out 22 batters in three starts at Fifth Third Field.