



# International League News & Notes



June 14, 2007

## CURRENT INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE LEADERS IN ONLINE FAN VOTING FOR TRIPLE-A ALL-STAR GAME

**Catcher** – Mike Rose, Buffalo

**First Base** – Chris Shelton, Toledo

**Second Base** – Joe Inglett, Buffalo

**Shortstop** – Luis Rivas, Buffalo

**Third Base** – Mike Hessman, Toledo

**Designated Hitter** – Shelley Duncan, Scranton/WB

**Outfield** – Ryan Raburn, Toledo

Timo Perez, Toledo

Jacoby Ellsbury, Pawtucket

**Starting Pitcher** – Homer Bailey, Louisville

Adam Miller, Buffalo

**Relief Pitcher** – Mike Koplove, Buffalo

Jeremy Johnson, Toledo

*\*\*\*Online voting concludes June 22\*\*\**

### BUFFALO BISONS

**MARTE HEATING UP:** If it's June, then **Andy Marte** is starting to heat up just like the weather. The Bisons third baseman is the reigning International League Batter-of-the-Week and has averaged .333 (14-42) with four doubles, four home runs and 13 RBI in 13 games this month. He homered in consecutive games June 6 and 8 (DNP June 7), and went 3-3 with two doubles and a home run on June 10 in Richmond (Game 1). Last year, Marte erased a bad start by hitting .304 with 10 home runs and 22 RBI in 24 June games (Topps IL Player of the Month).

**THE JOKE IS ON THE HITTERS:** Pitcher **Aaron Laffey** continues to cement his spot in the Bisons rotation. Taking advantage of injuries in the staff, the rookie southpaw has been lights out this month. He's won his last three, allowing just two earned runs in 19 innings of work (0.95 ERA). He also struck out 17 and walked just two over that span. Laffey was 4-1 with a 2.31 ERA in six starts with Double-A Akron before his promotion on May 17.

**THE NEW CLEAN-UP SPOT:** Infielder **Ryan Mulhern** is making the #7 spot in the batting order fashionable. The Triple-A rookie has flourished down the Bisons' card. He is tied for the League-lead with a .571 slugging percentage, thanks to leading the Herd in home runs (10, T-6<sup>th</sup> in the IL), doubles (20, T-2<sup>nd</sup> in IL) and extra-base hits (31, T-3<sup>rd</sup> in the IL). It doesn't hurt that Mulhern is also 5<sup>th</sup> in the League with a .324 batting average. Mulhern has made 32 of his 60 starts batting seventh (20 other starts in the ninth spot in the order).

### CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS

**GAVIN FLOYD NAMED IL PITCHER-OF-THE-WEEK:** Charlotte Knights pitcher **Gavin Floyd** was named International League Pitcher of the Week for June 4-10. Floyd is the second Knight to be recognized by the League this season. Teammate **Josh Fields**, currently with Chicago, was named Batter-of-the-Week for May 21-27. In his last two starts, Floyd is 1-0 with a 1.20 ERA in 15 innings pitched. He allowed 12 hits, allowed only two earned runs and struck out 14. The award follows Floyd's victory against Indianapolis on Sunday, when he pitched seven innings, striking out eight Indians batters. For the season, Floyd is 4-3 with a 3.58 ERA and 57 strikeouts. The 24-year-old Floyd was the 4<sup>th</sup> overall pick in the 2001 draft by Philadelphia. He was traded by the Phillies to the White Sox in December 2006 in a deal for pitcher Freddie Garcia. Floyd has appeared in 19 games at the Major League level, going 7-5 with the Phillies.

**BOURGEOIS CONTINUES HITTING STREAK:** Knights infielder **Jason Bourgeois** has been simply outstanding since joining the Knights on June 1. Bourgeois has gotten a hit in every single game he has played for the Knights (12). That is the longest hitting streak of the year for any Knights player this season. Bourgeois' hitting streak is actually at 16 games when you include his last four games that he played for Double-A Birmingham.

**KNIGHTS MAKE ROSTER MOVES:** The Knights placed relief pitcher **Paulino Reynoso** on the disabled list on June 11. In correspondence to that move, the Knights activated infielder **Kenny Perez** from the disabled list. Perez was placed on the disabled list on May 27 with a pulled quadriceps muscle. Reynoso has been one of the Knights' better relievers this season. Reynoso started the year by not allowing an earned run in 14 consecutive innings of work. The Knights have also activated catcher **Ryan Smith** from the disabled list.

**TIDBITS:** The Knights scored 8 runs in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning against Indianapolis on June 12. That was the most runs the Knights have scored this season ... Outfielder **Kenny Kelly** didn't play for the first three games of the series against Indianapolis, but did play in the finale of that series. In that game he hit 2 home runs and had 4 RBI.

### COLUMBUS CLIPPERS

**NEXT UP, JACK LELIVELT:** After shattering the Clippers franchise record for longest hitting streak (24 games, **Brian Raabe**) and then surpassing the longest streak in Columbus baseball history (36 games, **Johnny Rizzo** of the Columbus Red Birds), **Brandon Watson** singled three times on Tuesday to pass **Mitchell Hilligoss** of the South Atlantic League's Charleston River Dogs for the season's longest streak at 39 games. Watson now has his sights set on **Jack Lelivelt's** IL record of 42 straight games, set back in 1912 with Rochester. Watson's streak, which started on May 1, has increased his batting average by 61 points and has included 12 multi-hit games. He has waited until his last at-bat to extend the streak three times while taking care of business in his first at-bat 13 times.

**JIMENEZ PLAYING CATCH UP:** With his 2-3 performance on Tuesday, **D'Angelo Jimenez** raised his batting average to .396. After having played the first month of the season with Washington, Jimenez has not registered enough plate appearances in the IL to qualify for the batting title. He currently needs to make up 11 PA. At a rate of 4 PA a game it would take him 9 games to qualify; at 5 PA a game it would take him 5 games. The last Clipper to win the IL batting crown was INF **Fernando Seguinol** in 2003 when he hit at a clip of .341 (the Clippers franchise record). Seguinol, the 2003 IL MVP, became the sixth Clipper to lead the League in batting.

WANT SOME COMPANY?: Columbus is the only team in the IL that has had two players with on-base streaks of at least 30 games. **Brandon Watson** (39 games) leads the League while **D'Angelo Jimenez** (33 games) is in 3<sup>rd</sup>. Both streaks are still active. Louisville's **Joey Votto** is in 2<sup>nd</sup> with a 36-game streak that is still active.

### DURHAM BULLS

HOMER HAPPY: **Chris Richard's** homer on Tuesday at Scranton/Wilkes-Barre gave him two in three games in that series, and the team 26 in the last 16 games. Durham now has 73 homers, tops in the International League. Richard and Justin Ruggiano each have 10 to lead the club.

RISK AND REWARD: While the Bulls lead the IL in homers, Durham hitters also lead the League in strikeouts with 620, 76 more than anyone else. Durham struck out 49 times in the just completed four-game series with Scranton.

GO JONNY GO: **Jonny Gomes** went 2-4 on Tuesday, and has been recalled to replace the injured **B.J. Upton** (DL – quad). Gomes hit cleanup for Durham in 13 straight games, batting .302 (13-43) with two doubles, a homer and seven RBI. He also walked 11 times, and had a .464 on-base percentage in his two-week stint with Durham. **Jeremy Owens** has been added from the Hudson Valley roster to replace Gomes.

ROTATING ROTATION: The Bulls started the season with five prospects age 24 and under in their starting rotation. The quintet made the first 56 starts for Durham, but in the last 10 games, three of five have moved to the big leagues. **J.P. Howell** and **Andy Sonnanstine** left on June 2, and each has a win and a no-decision in two starts for Tampa Bay. Monday **Jason Hammel** was recalled to pitch in the bullpen for the Rays. Hammel has never been a reliever. **Jae Seo**, **Jae Kuk Ryu** and **Tony Peguero** have replaced that trio in the rotation. Despite the losses, Durham still has a 3.59 ERA, second best in the IL.

HOME SWEET HOME: The Bulls begin a stretch tonight of 16 of their next 20 games at home. The Bulls just finished 19 of 27 on the road, and went 14-13 during that period.

### INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS

NO. 1 IN TRIPLE-A BASEBALL: Indianapolis (39-25, .609) owns the best winning percentage in all of Triple-A Baseball. Iowa (38-26, .594) has the best mark in the Pacific Coast League, while Richmond (37-26, .587) places 2<sup>nd</sup> in the International League. The Indians enter tonight's game atop the IL's West Division, while Toledo (36-30, 4.0 GB), Louisville (33-32, 6.5 GB) and Columbus (29-36, 10.5 GB) trail the leader. Thursday is the Tribe's 59<sup>th</sup> consecutive day atop the division. In 2006, Indianapolis spent 119 days in either 1<sup>st</sup> place or tied for the top spot.

THE NAME IS "SUGAR SHANE": Indianapolis LHP **Shane Youman** recorded the longest scoreless outing of his six-year professional career on Monday night at Charlotte (8.0 IP, 4 H, 0 R, 2 BB, 6 SO). Youman faced just five over the minimum and improved to 2-5 with the win. The 27-year-old, who retired 16 straight batters from the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> innings, needed just 102 pitches to get through eight frames on the hill.

GOOD STARTING PITCHING: Indians RHP **Bryan Bullington**, **John Van Benschoten** and **Marty McLeary** have combined for a 19-8 record over their 33 starts this season. Bullington (9-3, 2.83) leads the IL in wins and places 5<sup>th</sup> in ERA, while Van Benschoten (6-4, 2.73) ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in ERA and is tied for 4<sup>th</sup> in wins. McLeary (4-1, 2.68) would place 4<sup>th</sup> in ERA, but doesn't have enough innings to qualify.

A TOUGH BULLPEN, TOO: The Indians bullpen has posted a 5-to-1 strikeout-to-walk ratio (30-to-6) during its first 12 games in June. The Indianapolis relievers did not allow a run during a six-game stretch (22.1 IP) from June 3-8.

HOLDING ON TO THE LEAD: The Tribe is 35-1 on the season when leading after 7 innings and 38-1 when holding an advantage after 8 frames.

TURNING INTO A POWER TEAM: Indianapolis whacked just 16 roundtrippers in its first 42 games of the season (0.38 per game), but has nailed 27 long balls over its past 22 contests (1.23 per game).

### LOUISVILLE BATS

TWO STRAIGHT BATTING CHAMPS?: INF/OF **Jeff Keppinger** is one plate appearance away from qualifying for the League batting title; his .367 mark would lead the International League. Keppinger's average would also place him in 5<sup>th</sup> place overall in Minor League Baseball and he has hit safely in 33 of 37 games with the Bats this year. Last season's IL batting champ, **Norris Hopper**, finished the 2006 season with a .347 average which is a Louisville franchise record. The Bats' **Chris Denorfia** was 29 plate appearances shy of edging Hopper for the IL Batting Title with a .349 average.

CAMOUFLAGE JERSEYS UP FOR AUCTION: The Louisville Bats players and coaches wore special camouflage jerseys Tuesday night to benefit the Special Operations Warrior Fund; the jerseys will be auctioned off on the Bats' website for one week. The Special Operations Warrior Foundation provides free college scholarship grants, along with financial aid and educational counseling, to the children of Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps Special Operations personnel who were killed in an operational mission or training accident.

VOTTO CHUGGING ALONG: 1B **Joey Votto's** on-base streak continues as he has reached base safely in 36 straight games. Just three games shy of Brandon Watson's current streak of 39 straight games, Votto's on-base percentage since May 4 is .476 and he's batting .384 (53-138). He is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Triple-A (and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the IL) with 43 walks and he is 2<sup>nd</sup> on the team with 19 multi-hit games.

### NORFOLK TIDES

THE CLOSER: With another save on Tuesday night, **Cory Doyne** picked up his League-leading 19<sup>th</sup> save, a total that ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in all of Minor League Baseball (trailing only **Steven Register's** 22 saves for Double-A Tulsa and **Robert Delaney's** 21 saves for Class-A Beloit). Since May 5, Doyne has gone 0-0 with a 0.00 ERA and 15 saves in 18 games, and the 25-year-old right-hander has not allowed a run over his last 20.1 innings pitched, holding opposing hitters to a .077 average against (5-65) over that stretch. The scoreless innings streak is just 5.1 innings shy of the Tides' franchise record of 26.2 consecutive scoreless frames (set by reliever **Royce Ring** in 2006) and Doyne ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> among all Minor League relievers with a .132 average against this season. Doyne has already tied his career-high in saves (previously set with Double-A Springfield in 2005), and he is already in a tie for 5<sup>th</sup> on the Tides' all-time list for saves in a season, joining **Jeff Innis**, **Mike Cook**, and **Oscar Henriquez** at 19. The franchise record is 26 saves, set by **Derek Wallace** during the 1996 season.

**THROWING STRIKES:** Tides pitchers have struck out 485 and walked 189 this season, a 2.5661 strikeout-to-walk ratio. That ratio is the second-best in all of Triple-A baseball, trailing only the 2.5666 ratio of the Rochester Red Wings (385 strikeouts, 150 walks). Norfolk pitchers are 4<sup>th</sup> in the IL in strikeouts and are tied for the third-fewest walks in the League.

**HIT MAN:** Tides infielder **Mike Cervenak** is 5<sup>th</sup> in the IL with 72 base hits, and he leads all Orioles' minor leaguers in the same category. Cervenak also ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the O's system with a .282 average this year.

### **OTTAWA LYNX**

**WRAPPING UP NATIONAL LEAGUE RULES IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL:** This weekend's series against Columbus will be the last time the Lynx will take on a National League affiliate at home this season. Pitchers had not stepped up to the plate in Lynx Stadium since 2002, when the Lynx were affiliated with Montreal. Four Lynx pitchers have hits this season: **Matt Childers** has two hits while **J.D. Durbin**, **Bubba Nelson** and **Brian Mazone** have one hit apiece.

**CALL TO ARMS:** The Lynx rotation gets a shot in the arm, as LHP **J.A. Happ** was activated from the disabled list today. He was placed on the DL June 1 with an elbow injury. Lynx reliever **Joe Bisenius** was placed on the disabled list June 7 with a shoulder injury. Fellow reliever **Matt Smith** was placed on the disabled list June 13 with left elbow inflammation.

**CHARITY STARTS AT HOME PLATE:** The Ottawa Lynx and The Salvation Army are teaming up for a toy drive at that will run from June 14-30, coinciding with Skratz's birthday celebration at Lynx Stadium. Skratz is asking for everyone coming to Lynx Stadium to bring new unwrapped toys and books to be donated to the Salvation Army. This is not the only charitable effort going on at Lynx Stadium this weekend. Sunday is the Lynx Food Drive, benefiting the Overbrook-Forbes Emergency Food Program. The Emergency Food Program needs snacks, peanut butter, tomato sauce, canned fruit, canned vegetables, cereal and juice, in addition to clean grocery bags and egg cartons.

### **PAWTUCKET RED SOX**

**STRAIGHT SETS:** Pawtucket has put together three consecutive series victories to start this month – all by the same margin of 3 games to 1. The Sox took 3 of 4 in both Norfolk and Richmond during their last roadtrip (June 1-8) and then came home and won 3 of 4 earlier this week vs. the Ottawa Lynx. They get set to host Richmond – who they are 18-3 against over the past 3+ seasons – in another 4-game series beginning tonight. Pawtucket is 7-8-3 in their first 18 series of the year.

**MOVIN' ON UP:** The PawSox moved out of last place in the IL North on Monday for the first time since May 26. They look to continue their climb in the standings tonight as they are just 1-game behind 4<sup>th</sup> place Syracuse. The Sox have been just 5.0 GB of 1<sup>st</sup> place Buffalo since Monday marking the closest they have been since April 29 when they were 4.5 GB. Not bad for a team with a 14-19 home record (worst in the League).

**MAY JUNE NEVER END:** The PawSox have already won 9 games in June with 17 games remaining this month. Those 9 victories equal their total from all of April (9-13) and are just two shy of their win total from all of May (11-17). Sox pitchers have been outstanding in June going 9-3 with a 2.62 ERA. LHP **Kason Gabbard** leads with two victories in June along with a 2.77 ERA while relievers **Bryan Corey** (0.00 in 5 RA), **Travis Hughes** (1.42 in 4 RA), and **Mike Burns** (1.80 in 3 RA) have been terrific out of the bullpen. Starters **Devern Hansack** (1-1, 1.74) and **Abe Alvarez** (1-0, 2.84) have also been impressive. Offensively, INF **Bobby Scales** leads with a .410 average in 11 games and is followed closely by 1B **Jeff Bailey** (.375 with 2 HR in 7 games), 3B **Chad Spann** (.375 in 8 games), OF **Brandon Moss** (.370 with team-highs of 3 HR & 11 RBI), and OF **Jacoby Ellsbury** (.308 in 10 games with a team-leading 6 SB).

### **RICHMOND BRAVES**

**IKER TO WIN:** The Braves are 17-2 when **Iker Franco** starts at catcher. Franco has thrown out 15 of the 30 runners attempting to steal on him. He has not played in enough games to qualify for the official IL lead (catchers must have played in half a club's games; Franco spent over two weeks in May on the DL). He is one of four catchers (none who qualify for the IL lead) to retire half or more of runners attempting to steal. Braves pitchers have an ERA of 1.97 of when pitching to Franco. Franco knocked in the go-ahead run Monday. He drove in the tying run in the Braves win over Buffalo Sunday.

**MOWING THEM DOWN:** Braves outfielders have 17 assists this season. Richmond had 21 outfield assists all of last season. Three Braves (**T.J. Bohn** with six, **Doug Clark**, and **Gregor Blanco** with four each) are among the 14 IL outfielders with four or more assists this season.

**PICK IT:** The Braves have committed just one error in their last seven games. Over that span they have turned six double plays, racked up three outfield assists, thrown out five runners stealing, and picked two runners off. **Martin Prado** has not committed an error at second base this season in 191 chances.

**SHUT THE DOOR:** Braves relief pitchers have a win-loss record of 22-7 and have 16 saves in 20 opportunities. All four "blown saves" came in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. Richmond is 30-0 when leading after seven innings. Eight different Braves pitchers have earned saves this season.

### **ROCHESTER RED WINGS**

**IN ORDER TO BE THE MAN YOU HAVE TO BEAT THE MAN:** The Red Wings have struggled against teams with winning records this season. Rochester has just a 15-16 record vs. teams with a .500 or better record (Buffalo, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, Richmond, Indianapolis, Toledo, and Louisville). Rochester has a 17-12 record vs. teams with a below .500 record.

**THE MORALES & TOLBERT FACTOR:** The Red Wings offense has had two players that have been consistent all season. Catcher **Jose Morales** (.350) and infielder **Matt Tolbert** (.379) are hitting a combined .365 (101-277). The Red Wings go into tonight's game with a .259 team batting average but if you take away Morales and Tolbert the Red Wings are batting just .243 as a team.

**TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT:** Red Wings catcher **Korey Feiner** is still looking for his first Triple-A hit (0-24 in nine games with Rochester). Feiner had a great start to the season batting .326 (15-46) in his first 16 games with Double-A New Britain but has gone (2-54) .037 over his last 20 games (11 games in Double-A and 9 games in Rochester).

## SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE YANKEES

NICE BULLPEN DEBUT: RHP **Steven Jackson** has had a little trouble this year so far as a starter, but he sure had a solid first effort out of the bullpen, picking up his first win since May 8. Jackson threw one and two-thirds scoreless frames of relief in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> innings to notch the win, and may have pitched longer had a 2:02 rain delay not interrupted his outing.

A REALLY LONG SHORT GAME: While Tuesday's win over Durham may have been one of the longest nights of the year for everyone involved, it was technically the fourth-quickest nine-inning game the Yanks have had this season. First pitch came just after 7:00 p.m., a 122-minute rain delay stopped play just before 9:00, play resumed around 11:00 and RHP **Edwar Ramirez** struck out the final batter around 11:15. All told, the game went down in the books as a two-hour, 13-minute affair, despite the more than four hours it took to actually complete.

FIRST TO 40 (AND 30, 20 AND 10, TOO): OF/1B **Shelley Duncan** continued his great season on Tuesday against Durham, driving in a run with a single in the first inning to pick up his 40<sup>th</sup> RBI of the season. He is the first Yankees player to 40 RBI this year, just as he was the first to the 30-, 20- and 10-RBI marks as well. He was also the only Yankee to record two hits in Tuesday's 2-1 win. He went 2-for-3 with a double.

## SYRACUSE CHIEFS

GRIFFIN FINDING HIS GROOVE: Over the past seven days Chiefs OF **John-Ford Griffin** seems to have gotten his swing together. Griffin has hit four home runs in the past seven games. The Florida State product bashed a jack in three straight games from June 7-9 and added his 12<sup>th</sup> of the season on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Griffin had just two home runs in his previous 34 games heading into this stretch.

LYDON IT UP: OF **Wayne Lydon** hasn't been doing it with the long ball but has been setting the table atop the lineup. Lydon hit safely in each of his last six games. The switch-hitter is 8-23 during the stretch for a .348 batting average. These six games are part of Lydon's on-base streak. Now, he's reached base in 23 of his last 24 games.

WELCOME BACK: The Chiefs welcomed OF **Jeff Duncan** back to the lineup June 11 at Columbus. Duncan crashed into the outfield wall at Alliance Bank Stadium May 19 versus Durham and sustained a concussion. He was placed on the disabled list the next day. Duncan has hit safely in the two games he's played since returning. He's 3-9 after his nearly month-long layoff.

## TOLEDO MUD HENS

KNOW WHEN TO HOLD 'EM, KNOW WHEN TO FOLD 'EM: Detroit Tigers LHP **Kenny Rogers**, affectionately known to baseball fans as "The Gambler," made a rehab start with the Mud Hens against the Norfolk Tides on Sunday, June 10. For Rogers, it was his first game action since undergoing surgery on March 29 to remove a blood clot and repair two arteries in his left shoulder. In front of a sold-out crowd of 10,300 at Fifth Third Field, Rogers was greeted warmly by Tiger and Mud Hen fans alike, and hardly disappointed the masses. On a pitch count of 50, Rogers threw 3.2 innings, allowing no runs and just three hits while striking out two and walking none. His fastball topped out at 88 mph. A gracious Rogers tipped his cap to teammates, fans and umpires as he left the field to a loud and appreciative ovation. When asked what it was like to be a Mud Hen for a day, Rogers replied "It was great, I had fun. This is a nice ballpark, and the fans were great." Prior to game, Rogers was seen in the "Swamp Shop" souvenir store loading up on memorabilia to commemorate his day as a Mud Hen, though he admitted his son was "probably going to raid the bag" before he got back to it. It is still unclear where and when his next rehab start will come in the minors, and when he will rejoin the Tigers starting rotation. The 42-year-old is a veteran of 18 Major League seasons with Texas, New York (AL), Oakland, New York (NL), Minnesota, and Detroit. Rogers is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among all active left-handed pitchers with a .598 winning percentage (207-139). In addition, he has won five Rawlings Gold Glove Awards, and earned his most recent in 2006. Last year for the Tigers, Rogers went 17-8 with a 3.84 ERA in 33 starts.

CAN'T TOUCH CHIAVACCI: Mud Hens RHP **Ron Chiavacci** has won his last four decisions after beginning the year 1-4, and on June 10 in relief of **Kenny Rogers** he surrendered an earned run in the 9<sup>th</sup>, snapping a 17.1 scoreless innings streak. Chiavacci, who was to originally come out of the bullpen this season for the Hens, has proved invaluable as a starter, replacing a then-injured **Jordan Tata** in the rotation at the beginning of the season. Due to other roster changes, Chiavacci has remained a starter and continues to impress. The 29-year-old native of Scranton, PA has allowed just ten hits in his last three outings (16.1 IP), striking out ten. Chiavacci struck out ten in a single game April 22 at Durham, and impressed a raucous supporting crowd in his hometown at Scranton/Wilkes-Barre on May 30, earning the win and allowing just four hits and two walks while striking out five. This is Chiavacci's first season with the Mud Hens. He was originally drafted and signed by Montreal in 1998, remaining in that organization through 2004. He spent 2005 and 2006 in the Pittsburgh organization, splitting time between Indianapolis and Double-A Altoona.

THE TOLEDO MUD HENS: WHAT A BUNCH OF HOMERS: On June 9 before the game versus Norfolk at Fifth Third Field, the team honored Mike Hessman's achievement as the alltime Toledo Mud Hens home run champion. Hessman clubbed his 68<sup>th</sup> career dinger at Dunn Tire Park in Buffalo on June 1, and was presented with a commemorative Louisville Slugger engraved with the details of the historic accomplishment. Not far behind Hessman on the alltime homer list is teammate **Ryan Raburn**, who celebrated Hessman's night with a blast of his own on June 9. The home run moved Raburn into 9<sup>th</sup> on the Toledo all-time list with 53, in front of **Billy Queen**, who socked 52 from 1953-1955.

IT MUST BE HEN SEASON: The Mud Hens, featuring one of the most explosive offenses in the IL, have several batters at the top of League batting categories. OF **Timo Perez** is 6<sup>th</sup> in batting average at .321, leads the IL in hits with 78, and with 29 extra-base hits is 5<sup>th</sup> in that category. Perez is also tied for 1<sup>st</sup> in runs scored with 44. 3B **Mike Hessman** leads the International League with 18 homers and 58 RBI (ten more than the closest competitor). All the round-trippers have made Hessman the 5<sup>th</sup> best slugger in the IL (.553); he is the leader in extra-base hits at 36. OF **Ryan Raburn** is right on his heels though, 3<sup>rd</sup> in home runs (14), RBI (48) and extra-base hits (31). Raburn also sits tied with Perez for the League lead in runs (44), and is 4<sup>th</sup> in slugging (.554). All of this, and we haven't even mentioned **Chris Shelton** yet, who is tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> in doubles with 20, and is 4<sup>th</sup> in on-base percentage (.411). Not to be outdone by the bats, RHP **Virgil Vasquez** has won his last seven decisions, putting him 3<sup>rd</sup> in the League in wins (7-2), while leading the circuit in strikeouts with 79. Vasquez has been named IL pitcher of the week twice already this season. These players certainly have an eye on Isotopes Park in Albuquerque, New Mexico, site of the Triple-A All-Star game on July 11. A season ago, Raburn homered in the All-Star game.