



# International League News & Notes



April 30, 2009

## **BUFFALO BISON** ([www.Bisons.com](http://www.Bisons.com))

**TRUTHS THE ONE YOU GLOVE:** After three years near or at the bottom of the International League fielding charts, the Bisons have become a very strong team in the field. The Herd's .984 fielding percentage is tied for the League's best (Gwinnett) with the fewest errors (11) among all 14 clubs. Last season, Buffalo's 153 errors and .971 fielding percentage both ranked last. Bisons catchers also top the IL in both times caught stealing (11) and percentage (46%). **C Robinson Cancel** has thrown out six of 10 baserunners against him to lead the team.

**BISON ADD PROVEN POP:** The Mets have signed a pair of free agents to add power to the Herd's lineup. OF **Wily Mo Pena** and INF **Mike Lamb** are now in Buffalo. Pena went 2-4 in his debut yesterday in Rochester. He has 77 big league home runs over parts of seven seasons in the majors. Lamb was activated on Monday and has hit .277 with 69 homers and 345 RBI over nine Major League seasons.

**MERELY THE MINIMUM:** In his three starts with the Bisons this year, RHP **Nelson Figueroa** has combined to face just five more than the minimum. In 16 total innings, Figueroa has allowed just eight hits and three walks. On top of that, he has induced six double plays to limit the few baserunners he does allow. Figueroa's 0.69 WHIP and 2.25 ERA both top the Bisons club. His strong work earned him a spot start in New York on April 19.

## **CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS** ([www.CharlotteKnights.com](http://www.CharlotteKnights.com))

**PHILLIPS HITS IT OUT:** INF **Andy Phillips** hit a pair of home runs for the Knights in yesterday's game. Phillips has now hit 3 home runs in the last two games. Another interesting note was that all three of his homers have been 3-run shots. Phillips has gotten a hit in every game he has played for the Knights except one. Phillips is hitting .361 (26-72) with 4 home runs and 15 RBI. His .361 average is good for 7<sup>th</sup>-best in the IL.

**THE AMAZING TORRES:** Knights RHP **Carlos Torres** picked up his second win of the season yesterday and allowed his first run in 18.2 innings of work. Torres has allowed just 3 earned runs in 23 innings of work. His 1.17 ERA leads the IL and he is tied for 5<sup>th</sup> in the League in strikeouts with 23. Torres was a late addition to the Knights roster. The White Sox released reliever **Franklyn German** two days before the season opener and recalled Torres from Double-A Birmingham. Torres made just one start for the Knights in 9 games in 2008.

**CASSEL TO ROTATION:** RHP **Justin Cassel** will start for the Knights on Thursday vs. Syracuse. It will be his first start of the season. Cassel takes the rotation spot of RHP **Lance Broadway**, who was recalled by Chicago. Cassel finished the 2008 season with a 10-4 record and a Southern League best 3.11 ERA in 28 starts for the Birmingham Barons. He has made two relief appearances for the Knights this season, going 0-0 with a 2.08 ERA in 4.1 innings of work. Cassel is the younger brother of Columbus pitcher **Jack Cassel** and Kansas City Chiefs quarterback **Matt Cassel**.

## **COLUMBUS CLIPPERS** ([www.ClippersBaseball.com](http://www.ClippersBaseball.com))

**ROSTER STABILITY:** Last season, in which the Clippers set franchise records for both players used (70) and roster moves (188), the Clippers had only two players play in over 100 games (**Larry Broadway**-130, **Ray Olmedo**-108). Through 20 games this season, Columbus has nine players on pace to play in at least 100 games (**Luis Valbuena**, **Matt LaPorta**, **Wes Hodges**, **Wilson Valdez**, **Jordan Brown**, **Michael Brantley**, **Chris Gimenez**, **Michael Aubrey** and **Stephen Head**). Valbuena is the only Clipper to play in every game this season. So far, the Clippers have made 19 moves through April (compared to 38 last season) and are on pace to make 137 moves. They have had 26 players appear in a game (14 position players, 12 pitchers).

**GOLDEN SHOWDOWN:** This Saturday, the Durham Bulls are expected to throw LHP **David Price**, the 2007 Golden Spikes Award winner, against the Clippers. Price will be facing off against a fellow 2007 GSA finalist, **Matt LaPorta** (the 2007 SEC Player of the Year). In two college games, Price (Vanderbilt) got the better of LaPorta (Florida), holding him hitless in 7 AB with 3 K. However, their teams split those two games, with LaPorta homering in the 13<sup>th</sup> inning to give the Gators a 2-1 win at Vanderbilt in 2005. In addition to LaPorta, the Clippers also have 2004 finalist **Stephen Head** and 2003 finalist **Michael Aubrey** on the roster.

**DELUCCI SHOWING MAJOR LEAGUE FORM:** **David Dellucci** has hit safely in each of his seven games of rehab so far, batting .414 (12-29) with a double, a triple and two steals. Dellucci was placed on the DL out of spring training with a strained left calf.

## **DURHAM BULLS** ([www.DurhamBulls.com](http://www.DurhamBulls.com))

**BIG NIGHTS:** Durham allowed nine runs yesterday in a 9-1 loss to Charlotte. The nine runs were the most by a Bulls opponent this season. Charlotte also scored six runs in the 4<sup>th</sup>, the biggest inning by a Bulls opponent in 2009. Durham had set season highs in runs (14) and runs in an inning (6) one day earlier in a 14-7 win over Charlotte on Tuesday.

**SEEKING QUALITY:** Durham has a 12-7 record, but just one quality start (six innings or more, three earned runs or less) so far this season. **Mitch Talbot** provided that start in his most recent outing.

**IZZY ON BOARD:** **Jason Isringhausen** joined the Bulls on Tuesday. The former Cardinals closer is with Durham on MLB rehab. He is coming back from August elbow surgery. Isringhausen has 293 career saves. He is scheduled to pitch in tonight's game against Columbus, and go two innings or 45 pitches, whichever comes first.

**NEW OPPONENT:** Tonight is the first game for the Bulls outside the division. Durham will end up playing 27 of its first 31 games against Charlotte, Norfolk or Gwinnett.

### **GWINNETT BRAVES** ([www.GwinnettBraves.com](http://www.GwinnettBraves.com))

**RUNNING DOWN THE ROAD:** The Gwinnett Braves are batting 20 points better on the road (.263) than at home (.243), but the bigger disparity is in run production. In 10 games at home, the G-Braves posted just 33 runs on 82 hits. In 10 games on the road, Gwinnett has produced 57 runs on 92 hits. The Braves have hit six home runs on the road compared to eight at home, but all six road homers have come with at least one runner on base. At home, four of Gwinnett's home runs have been solo shots.

**LOOK WHO'S STREAKING:** **Gregor Blanco, Brooks Conrad, Barbaro Canizares** and **Reid Gorecki** have all hit safely in each of the last four games, collecting a combined 12 RBI along the way. Blanco is 6-21, Canizares is 7-16, Conrad is 5-17 and Gorecki is 6-15 since April 25. **Van Pope** and **Brian Barton** have hit safely in three of the last four games, and the result of six hot hitters in the Braves lineup is a season-high three-game win streak. Pope is 5-13 and Barton is 4-13 over the course of the last four games.

**HARD LUCK HANSON:** Right-hander **Tommy Hanson** takes the mound in search of his first win of the season tonight. Hanson is 0-3 in spite of a 2.18 ERA (5 ER, 20.2 IP) and a League-leading 29 strikeouts. In two of his three losses, the G-Braves have failed to produce a run. In the other loss, Gwinnett posted just one run while their top pitching prospect was on the mound. Gwinnett won Hanson's first start, a 9-1 tilt on opening day, but he did not factor into the decision, having thrown just 4.1 scoreless innings. Hanson's 2.18 ERA places him 8<sup>th</sup> in the IL, just behind teammate **Kris Medlen**, who boasts a 2.04 ERA.

### **INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS** ([www.IndyIndians.com](http://www.IndyIndians.com))

**MILESTONE MAKER:** With his four-RBI performance on Tuesday against Louisville, Indians RF **Garrett Jones** has now collected 600 RBI in his Minor League career. The 10-year veteran is also approaching four other career Minor League milestones as he is just one home run away from 150, 17 games away from 1,000, 18 runs away from 500, and 77 hits away from 1,000.

**ROAD WARRIOR:** After the Tribe's recent 10-game road trip, 1B **Steve Pearce** may be hesitant to return home. Pearce started the season hitting only .094 with one run, one home run, five RBI, and a team-high nine strikeouts in the Indians first nine home games. However, since the team went on the road, the 6'0" righty has improved his numbers tremendously going 13-33 (.394) with six runs, two home runs, nine RBI and only two strikeouts over the last eight road contests. Last season Pearce's performance was quite the opposite as the slugger enjoyed more success at home (.286, 26 R, 9 HR, 32 RBI, 33 SO) than on the road (.221, 21 R, 3 HR, 28 RBI, 42 SO).

**THE MORE THE MERRIER:** Three Indians batters have risen to the occasion this season with runners in scoring position. INF **Larry Broadway** (2-5, .400, 1 BB), 1B **Steve Pearce** (7-18, .389, 1 3B, 9 RBI, 4 BB) and RF **Garrett Jones** (11-24, .458, 4 2B, 2 HR, 19 RBI, 5 BB) are all hitting over .350 with runners in scoring position. Jones has been the Tribe's best when it really counts as he is batting .545 (6-11) with one double, one home run and nine of his team leading 20 RBI all with two outs and runners in scoring position.

**THE COMEBACKS:** The Tribe has had to overcome early deficits to claim their past two victories. After being shutout in the first seven innings of Sunday's game, Indianapolis scored five runs with two outs in the 8<sup>th</sup> to comeback and defeat the Columbus Clippers 5-4. Three straight two-out singles, a throwing error and a clutch two-run single by 1B **Steve Pearce** helped the Indians comeback from that four run deficit. In Tuesday's contest Louisville RF **Jonny Gomes** blasted a three-run long ball to left-center field to give the Bats an early 3-1 lead, but the Indians answered with another comeback. RF **Garrett Jones** sparked the Tribe offense with his four-RBI performance including a two-run homer, while RHP **Virgil Vasquez** retired 13 straight hitters en route to an 8-6 victory.

### **LEHIGH VALLEY IRONPIGS** ([www.IronPigsBaseball.com](http://www.IronPigsBaseball.com))

**WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES:** Lehigh Valley may be just 8-11 through Wednesday, but the IronPigs were 2-17 at this point in 2008. It took the 'Pigs 18 games to get win No. 8 in 2009. Last year, it took 38 games to get win No. 8 – May 11 vs. Columbus, when they 'improved' to 8-30. In addition, the 'Pigs have scored 80 runs in their first 19 games of 2009. It took them until Game 33 (May 6) to get to 80 R in 2008.

**PLOP, PLOP... FIZZ, FIZZ... OH WHAT RELIEF IT IS!:** The 'Pigs bullpen has allowed just 1 ER in their last 36.0 IP (0.50) and just 3 R in their last 44.0 IP (at one point, the corps had a 16.1 scoreless innings streak). In the last 15 G, the 'Pigs pen is 2-2, 0.74 with 2 SV (60.2 IP, 5 ER) -- retiring 122 of the last 153 BF (80%). The corps started the season 0-3, 13.00 in the first 4 G of '09 (18 IP, 28 H, 26 ER, 19 BB, 2.61 WHIP) before the drastic turnaround.

**REHABS:** C **Carlos Ruiz**, who had his ML rehab assignment with the 'Pigs cut short on Monday, is expected to rejoin Lehigh Valley on Thursday. Ruiz has been on Philadelphia's DL since suffering a strained right oblique on April 10 at Colorado. He went 1-6 with 3 BB in his first two games with the IronPigs Saturday and Sunday. Prior to landing on the D.L., the 30-year-old was hitting .273 (3-11) with a double and a walk in four games. Other notable rehabs at Coca-Cola Park: OF **Shane Victorino** (4/26-4/27/08), RHP **Rudy Seanez** (8/11/08) & Boston RHP **Daisuke Matsuzaka** (6/16/08) and SS **Julio Lugo** (4/24-4/26/09). Detroit Tigers LHP **Dontrelle Willis** is expected to rehab with a start for Toledo at Coca-Cola Park on Friday.

**BACON BITS:** OF **John Mayberry** has hit in 7 of his last 8 G (11-31, .355-3-9, 5 2B, 4 BB), slugging at .806... OF **Jason Ellison** put LHV up 1-0 on Tuesday with a solo HR. It was Ellison's first HR in 489 AB (since 4/17/08)... RHP **Rodrigo Lopez** started a 6-0 shutout at SWB on Tuesday. It was his first since 7/7/07, when the Rockies defeated the Phillies, 6-3, at CBP.... SS **Jason Donald** has started all 19 games at shortstop and has yet to commit an error – leading IL shortstops in fielding (110 chances)... The IronPigs have turned an IL-best 24 double plays this season. The next closest teams have turned 21.

### **LOUISVILLE BATS** ([www.BatsBaseball.com](http://www.BatsBaseball.com))

**HOMER'S RECORD DAY:** RHP **Homer Bailey** struck out a career-high 15 Hens batters Sunday (nine consecutive between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> innings) to tie the franchise record set by **Ken Hill** (5/10/90 vs. Indianapolis). The 17 overall batters struck out by Bailey and reliever **Ben Jukich** were the most since Bats pitchers struck out 18 last season at Pawtucket (June 12) - **Justin Mallett** (8), **Todd Coffey** (2), **Jon Adkins** (3), **Josh Roenicke** (1) and **Tyler Pelland** (4).

**LOUISVILLE'S HOME RUN KING:** 1B **Kevin Barker** (1998-99, 2008-09) is the Louisville franchise's new home run king with 71, passing **Brandon Larson's** 70 homer mark set from 2000-04. Barker's two home run game Sunday also made him the all-time leader in multi-homer games, breaking a six-game tie with Larson. Barker's also moved up the all-time hits list Sunday, passing **Stan Royer's** 365 career total.

**ROSALES GETS THE CALL:** On Tuesday afternoon INF **Adam Rosales** was recalled by the Cincinnati Reds. He made his debut with the Reds last season on August 9 against the Houston Astros, going 0-1 in a pinch-hit performance. Rosales hit safely in 15 of his first 16 games with the Bats this season and is 2<sup>nd</sup> in the IL in batting at .431 (28-65), 3<sup>rd</sup> in hits (28), 1<sup>st</sup> in slugging percentage (.754), 1<sup>st</sup> in extra-base hits (12), and T-5<sup>th</sup> in runs scored (18) on the season. Rosales is also on an 11-game hitting streak (.467, 21-45), which is the longest by a Louisville player this season. He leads the Bats with nine multi-hit games. Rosales has also reached base safely in all 17 games, which is 2<sup>nd</sup> in the League behind Norfolk's **Oscar Salazar** (18); Salazar also has the IL's longest active streak at 15.

AN AWESOME APRIL: With the Bats' win on Monday night, the team was guaranteed a winning month of April for the fifth time since 2000. The winning April also marks their second time since becoming the Reds' affiliate in 2000 that the franchise has back-to-back winning Aprils. The Bats went 14-12 in 2002 and 15-9 in 2003. In 2008 they went 16-11 and their record currently stands at 11-8 with one game remaining in April.

#### NORFOLK TIDES ([www.NorfolkTides.com](http://www.NorfolkTides.com))

HE'S GOING STREAKING!: With three more hits yesterday, **Oscar Salazar** extended his hitting streak to 15 games, the longest in the IL this season. Over the 15-game stretch Salazar has hit .422 (27-64) with two home runs and 16 RBI, and the 30-year-old's streak is now just nine games shy of the Tides franchise record, a 24-game hitting streak put together by **Gregg Jefferies** during the 1988 season. Salazar has reached base safely via a hit or walk in all 18 games this season, and his on-base streak stretches to 24 straight when taking into account his final six games with the Tides in 2008.

HOMER HAPPY IN 2009: Norfolk enters play tonight with 15 home runs this season, eight of which have been hit in eight games at Harbor Park. Last year, the Tides did not hit their 8<sup>th</sup> home run at Harbor Park until the 28<sup>th</sup> home game of the season, and Norfolk hit a total of 24 home runs at Harbor Park during the entire '08 campaign. On the flip side, Norfolk's pitchers have yielded just three home runs at home this season.

HIT MAN: **Nolan Reimold** has had an outstanding start to his Triple-A career. The 25-year-old ranks among IL leaders in on-base % (1<sup>st</sup>, .481), home runs (T-2<sup>nd</sup>, 6), slugging % (2<sup>nd</sup>, .731), batting average (3<sup>rd</sup>, .403), hits (T-4<sup>th</sup>, 27) and RBI (T-4<sup>th</sup>, 19). Reimold's six home runs this month are the most for any Tides player in a month since **Chase Lambin** hit six homers in August of 2005. The last occurrence of Tides players hitting seven home runs in a month came in April of 2005, when **Brian Daubach** hit eight long balls and **Mike DiFelice** hit seven.

#### PAWTUCKET RED SOX ([www.PawSox.com](http://www.PawSox.com))

GO UP THERE AND DO YOUR THING: The Pawtucket Red Sox were especially pleased when two of their former players finished #1 (**Dustin Pedroia**) and #3 (**Kevin Youkilis**) in the American League in MVP voting last season. So far in this young season, although they may not necessarily be MVP candidates, the PawSox and their manager **Ron Johnson** have sent several players on their way from McCoy Stadium to Fenway Park – and all have made significant contributions to make the organization proud. Lefty reliever **Hunter Jones** was promoted from Pawtucket on April 15 when **Daisuke Matsuzaka** went on the DL and Jones has been nearly perfect out of the Red Sox bullpen in 3 games with 4 scoreless innings allowing just one single. Next up was 1B/OF **Jeff Bailey**, the 2008 IL MVP, who replaced injured OF **Rocco Baldelli** on April 22. That night Bailey crushed a 3-run HR in the 1<sup>st</sup>-inning at Fenway to help lead the Red Sox to a victory over Minnesota. This past weekend, RHP **Michael Bowden**, who was leading the IL in ERA at the time (1-0, 0.64 in 3 GS for the PawSox), was recalled to Boston to help an overworked Red Sox bullpen. Bowden came on in relief on Sunday night vs. the Yankees and was perfect in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>-innings (2 IP, 2 SO) to keep the Red Sox ahead en route to their 4-1 victory and 3-game sweep of New York. Ironically, Bowden was optioned back to Pawtucket after the game despite his tremendous performance before a national TV audience. And then last night, OF **Jonathan Van Every**, who was technically recalled from an injury rehab assignment from Pawtucket over the weekend, picked a great time to deliver his first Major League home run as his solo blast in the top of the 10<sup>th</sup>-inning gave the Red Sox a thrilling 6-5 comeback victory in Cleveland. Van Every also made a terrific diving catch and had a clutch RBI single as he became the latest former PawSox to make a huge mark for the red-hot Red Sox (winners of 12 of their last 13 games).

APRIL FINALE: Tonight marks just Pawtucket's sixth home game of the season as they conclude the month of April this evening with their first-ever meeting with the Gwinnett Braves at McCoy Stadium. Last year the PawSox played 14 April games at McCoy while going 15-12 overall in April of 2008 (that total of 27 games is their most ever played in the first month of a season). The PawSox will finish with a winning month this April as they are 10-8 with the April finale on tap for tonight. Last year the PawSox posted five consecutive winning (full) months for the first time in franchise-history as they had winning months in April, May, June, July, and August (not counting a 1-0 record last September). They have picked up right where they left off this April and now have not suffered a losing month since August of 2007 (15-16).

#### ROCHESTER RED WINGS ([www.RedWingsBaseball.com](http://www.RedWingsBaseball.com))

DRAWING FIRST BLOOD: The Red Wings have been very successful when they score first this season (7-1 record). In those eight games they've outscored their opponents 45-25. Rochester has a 0-9 record and has been outscored 66-28 when their opponent has scored first.

HOT WING: Outfielder **Jason Pridie** has a 10-game hitting streak batting .302 (13-43) with two doubles and five runs scored. Pridie is no stranger to hitting streaks; last season with Rochester Pridie had a 14-game (April 13-26) and 21-game (July 25-August 15) hitting streak.

HAPPY DAYS (IN THE DIVISION) ARE HERE AGAIN: Rochester has a 7-10 record against North Division opponents so far this season. Rochester has a 179-157 record vs. division rivals since 2005 (43-37 in 2005, 41-38 in 2006, 45-35 in 2007 and 43-37 in 2008). Prior to 2005 the Red Wings hadn't had a winning divisional record since the IL went to three divisions in 1998.

#### SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE YANKEES ([www.SWB Yankees.com](http://www.SWB Yankees.com))

ONE CONTINUES AND ONE COMES TO AN END: **Todd Linden** enters play on Thursday night with a SWB season-high 14 game hitting streak. After picking up a 1<sup>st</sup> inning single off Lehigh Valley's **Justin Lehr**, Linden moved to within one game of the SWB Yankees record. **Alberto Gonzalez** holds the SWB Yankees record with a 15-game streak in 2007. The Scranton/Wilkes-Barre franchise record is held by current IronPig **Pablo Ozuna**, who hit in 27 straight during the 2004 season.

THE WELL FINALLY RAN DRY: The IronPigs shut out the Minor League's top scoring team on Tuesday night, becoming the first team to shutout the Yankees in 70 games since Lehigh Valley turned the trick at Coca-Cola Park on July 3, 2008. The completion of the game actually took place on July 17, 2008 after the game was suspended by rain. Since last getting blanked the Yankees have played in nine games involving shutouts and were 9-0 (six in the '08 regular season, two in the '08 Governors' Cup playoffs, and one in 2009).

BEST APRIL EVER: Both the '06 Red Barons and the '08 Yankees played .667 ball for the season's opening month, while the '09 Yankees will fall short of the number of games played by each team (due to the late opening day), the '09 SWB team will better the winning percentage (.667) set by each club. The '06 Red Barons went 16-8, while the '08 Yankees team started 18-9. The '09 Yankees can get to 17 wins by downing Norfolk on Thursday and will play at least .800 for the month provided they don't drop the final game remaining before the calendar hits May.

IT'S NOT ALL SUNSHINE AND LOLLIPOPS: For the 2009 season, no International League team has more wins than the SWB Yankees. No team has scored more runs or picked up more hits, but it's not all good. No team in the IL has bounced into more double plays than the Yankees, who have been doubled up on the ground a League-high 23 times, including four on Tuesday night to set a season high and coming within one of the franchise record set @ Ottawa on May 28, 1997. **Eric Duncan** personally hit into three DP's on a 0-3 night, tying a franchise record set in Scranton/Wilkes-Barre's first season of existence (1989). **Keith Miller** hit into three on May 26, 1989 vs. the then Louisville Red Birds at then Lackawanna County Stadium.

**SYRACUSE CHIEFS** ([www.SyracuseChiefs.com](http://www.SyracuseChiefs.com))

**MAXWELL, BERGMANN RETURN TO CHIEFS:** After spending two weeks with the Nationals, outfielder **Justin Maxwell** and right-handed relief pitcher **Jason Bergmann** returned to the Chiefs this week. Maxwell returned after **Willie Harris** came back from the disabled list. Harris played in five games for the Chiefs on a rehab assignment. Bergmann returned after the Nats acquired right-handed pitcher **Logan Kensing** from the Marlins.

**NATS SEND SHORTSTOP TO CHIEFS:** The Washington Nationals optioned shortstop **Alberto Gonzalez** to Syracuse after activating **Christian Guzman** from the disabled list on Wednesday. Gonzalez appeared in 12 games for the Nats while Guzman was inactive.

**MIKE O'CONNOR JOINS ROTATION:** Despite losing the Nationals top prospect **Jordan Zimmermann** 11 days ago, the Chiefs did not need a fifth starter until last night when lefthander **Mike O'Connor** joined the team. The lefty, who began the season at Double-A Harrisburg, pitched six solid innings to defeat Pawtucket on Wednesday night. With the addition of O'Connor, the Chiefs rotation is **Craig Stammen, Marco Estrada, Collin Balester, and J.D. Martin.**

**SEVEN STRAIGHT:** The Syracuse Chiefs have defeated their thruway rival Buffalo Bisons seven straight games thus far in 2009 after sweeping the Bisons at Coca-Cola Field this week. The Chiefs have outscored the Bisons 34-10 this season in head-to-head matchups.

**TOLEDO MUD HENS** ([www.MudHens.com](http://www.MudHens.com))

**STRANGE OCCURRENCE:** The Mud Hens have started each of the last three seasons with a 10-8 record. In 2007, the Hens went on to win the IL West Division. Then, in 2008, Toledo finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the West to end a streak of three consecutive division championships.

**STARTING ROTATION NEEDS A BOOST:** The first two times through their rotation, Toledo starters pitched 56.2 innings and allowed 11 runs, good for a 1.75 ERA. The rotation has allowed 40 earned runs in the last nine games in 42.1 IP (8.50 ERA).

**D-TRAIN WILL ROLL INTO LEHIGH VALLEY:** LHP **Dontrelle Willis** will be making a rehab start (anxiety disorder) on Friday, May 1 at Lehigh Valley. The 27-year-old has made two rehab starts already in the past 2 weeks (with Class-A Lakeland and with Double-A Erie). Willis started six games with Toledo last year (3-1, 4.45 ERA). Willis was the 2003 NL Rookie of the Year with the Florida Marlins.

**BAFFLED BY HOMER:** On Sunday, April 26, Louisville starter **Homer Bailey** established a Fifth Third Field record when he fanned 15 Mud Hens. The previous record was 13 which was accomplished three times. The most recent was **Jason Hammel** (Durham) on August 16, 2006.