



International League News & Notes

June 11, 2009



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

Catcher

1. **Chris Stewart**, Scranton/WB
2. Gustavo Molina, Syracuse
3. Dusty Ryan, Toledo
4. Lou Marson, Lehigh Valley
5. Erik Kratz, Indianapolis

Shortstop

1. **Doug Bernier**, Scranton/WB
2. Jason Donald, Lehigh Valley
3. Jolbert Cabrera, Norfolk
4. Reid Brignac, Durham
5. Brian Bixler, Indianapolis

Outfield

1. **Shelley Duncan**, Scranton/WB
2. **Austin Jackson**, Scranton/WB
3. **Matt LaPorta**, Columbus
4. John Mayberry, Lehigh Valley
5. Todd Linden, Scranton/WB
6. Chip Ambres, Buffalo
7. Joey Gathright, Norfolk
8. Don Kelly, Toledo
9. Drew Stubbs, Louisville
10. Matt Joyce, Durham

First Base

1. **Juan Miranda**, Scranton/WB
2. Oscar Salazar, Norfolk
3. Paul McAnulty, Pawtucket
4. Michael Aubrey, Columbus
5. Andy Tracy, Lehigh Valley

Third Base

1. **Eric Duncan**, Scranton/WB
2. Andy Marte, Columbus
3. J.J. Furmaniak, Lehigh Valley
4. Neil Walker, Indianapolis
5. Mike Hessman, Toledo

Starting Pitcher

1. **Clay Buchholz**, Pawtucket
2. **Homer Bailey**, Louisville
3. Andrew Carpenter, Lehigh Valley
4. Nelson Figueroa, Buffalo
5. Tommy Hanson, Gwinnett
6. Chris Tillman, Norfolk
7. Kei Igawa, Scranton/WB
8. Casey Fossum, Scranton/WB
9. Michael Bowden, Pawtucket
10. Kyle Kendrick, Lehigh Valley

Second Base

1. **Josh Barfield**, Columbus
2. Pablo Ozuna, Lehigh Valley
3. Justin Turner, Norfolk
4. Seth Bynum, Syracuse
5. Travis Denker, Pawtucket

Designated Hitter

1. **John Rodriguez**, Scranton/WB
2. Wily Mo Pena, Buffalo
3. Mike Cervenak, Lehigh Valley
4. Wes Hodges, Columbus
5. Jon Weber, Durham

Relief Pitcher

1. **Mark Melancon**, Scranton/WB
2. **Chris Bootcheck**, Indianapolis
3. Anthony Claggett, Scranton/WB
4. Rich Rundles, Columbus
5. Winston Abreu, Durham
6. Fernando Cabrera, Pawtucket
7. Jim Miller, Norfolk
8. Vinnie Chulk, Columbus
9. Dale Thayer, Durham
10. Zach Kroenke, Scranton/WB

Online voting concludes June 26

BUFFALO BISON (www.Bisons.com)

BISON COACHING MOVES: The New York Mets have made a couple of organizational coaching moves that have affected the Bisons. First, Coach **Bobby Malek** left the Herd on Sunday to become the Hitting Coach of the Kingsport Mets, New York's rookie level team in the Appalachian League. Yesterday, the Mets announced that **Bill Masse** has been promoted to Hitting Coach for the Bisons. Masse held that position for Double-A Binghamton this year and led the B-Mets to the 4th-highest team average in the Eastern League (.269). Masse has been a minor league manager in each of the past nine seasons, compiling a 610-560 record and making the playoffs in four of his last five seasons. Bisons Hitting Coach **Luis Natera** has been transferred to Binghamton to take the Hitting Coach position there.

METS ADD AMBRES: The Mets acquired OF **Chip Ambres**, with the veteran joining the Bisons today. Ambres, 29, was hitting .259 (48-185) with nine doubles, three home runs and 18 RBI in 52 games with the Pawtucket. He is coming off a career season in 2008. With Portland of the Pacific Coast League, Ambres hit .279 with career highs in home runs (22) and RBI (77). Ambres, a 2005 International League All-Star with Pawtucket, signed as a free agent with the Mets in 2007. That year, he hit .274 (117-427) with 21 home runs and 71 RBI at New Orleans before playing three games with the Mets (.333, 1-3, 1 RBI).

BULLY FOR THE PEN: The Bisons have been getting great work from their bullpen recently. RHP **Adam Bostick** has not allowed a run in his first three outings (5.0 IP) since joining the Herd. RHP **Elmer Dessens** has converted his last eight save opportunities. His eight saves are T-6th in the International League. LHP **Jon Switzer** has made six consecutive scoreless appearances for Buffalo. He has allowed just one hit and struck out seven in his last 5.0 innings. RHP **Tim McNab** has allowed just one run in his last 12.2 innings.

CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS (www.CharlotteKnights.com)

PARTY LIKE IT'S 2005: Pitcher **Freddy Garcia** was placed on the Knights disabled list after signing a minor league contract with the White Sox on Monday. Garcia previously pitched for the White Sox from 2004-06. Garcia was the winning pitcher in the Game 4 of the 2005 World Series which clinched the title for Chicago. Other World Series winners from 2005 have played for the Knights this season including OF **Brian Anderson**, OF **Scott Podsednik** and RHP **Jose Contreras**. Anderson played in 6 games for the Knights as part of a major league rehab assignment. Anderson went 6-22 (.273) with a triple for the Knights. Podsednik played in 10 games for Charlotte after he signed a minor league contract with the White Sox. Podsednik was 11-42 (.262) with one stolen base and two RBI. Contreras asked to be sent to the minor leagues to work on his mechanics after struggling with the White Sox. Contreras made 5 starts for the Knights going 3-1 with a 2.70 ERA (10 ER/33.1 IP), including a complete game one-hit shutout on May 18 vs. Toledo. Contreras was recalled to Chicago this week.

K MAN: RHP **Carlos Torres** earned his fourth win Saturday night vs. Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Torres had 7 strikeouts in the game. Torres is now 2nd in the League in strikeouts amongst active players. Torres' 66 strikeouts trail only former Gwinnett Braves pitcher **Tommy Hanson** (now with Atlanta) and Lehigh Valley's **Carlos Carrasco**. In two starts vs. Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Torres has 17 strikeouts over 12.2 innings.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN: The Knights begin an 8-game roadtrip today that will take them to Lehigh Valley for four games with the IronPigs and then Pawtucket for four games against the Red Sox. The Knights are 10-16 on the road compared to 16-16 at home. Despite not getting as many wins on the road, the Knights are hitting better and pitching better away from Knights Stadium. The club is hitting .254 with 32 home runs in 32 games at home compared to hitting .277 with 20 home runs in 26 games on the road. The pitching staff has a combined 4.28 ERA at home compared to 4.06 on the road.

COLUMBUS CLIPPERS (www.ClippersBaseball.com)

BRANTLEY FINDING HIS STROKE: Over the last 19 games, **Michael Brantley** has hit .351 (27-77) to raise his batting average 42 points to .275. He has nine multi-hit efforts over that span and also has hit 2 HR, giving him 3 HR on the season (one shy of his career high, set last year). In addition, Brantley has been a terror on the base paths after swiping his 19th base. He has a 90.5% success rate, and is tied for 1st in the IL in steals (six straight steals since last time caught).

USING THE BIG INNING: In eight games during June, the Clippers have had 11 multiple run innings, scoring 78% of their runs for the month in those innings (38 of 49). On the season, Columbus has been held scoreless in 345 of 500 offensive innings (69%), scored one run in 83 innings (17%) and scored more than once 72 times (14%). The Clippers are 28-11 (.718) when having a multi-run inning and 2-18 (.100) when they don't.

THREE MUSKETTEERS: After playing in only six games during April, **Andy Marte** has taken over as the everyday third baseman for Columbus since **Wes Hodges** injured his shoulder on April 28. He has hit .331 (43-130) since then and accumulated enough plate appearances to break into the batting race. He currently sits in 5th in the IL at .322 (49-152), ahead of teammates **Michael Aubrey** (7th at .311; 52-167) and **Jordan Brown** (7th at .311; 59-190). The last Clipper to lead the IL in hitting was **Fernando Seguinol** during his IL MVP season of 2003 (franchise-best .341).

DURHAM BULLS (www.DurhamBulls.com)

ONE-RUN ONLY: Durham just split a four-game series with Pawtucket, and all four games were decided by one run. Durham lost the two games started by rehabbing major leaguer **John Smoltz** and PawSox ace **Clay Buchholz** by identical 2-1 scores. Durham's wins were by 3-2 and 5-4 margins. Each team won a game in its final at-bat. Durham now is 15-7 in one-run games, and 17-8 in those decided by one or two runs.

SOLID START: **Carlos Hernandez** went six innings in Tuesday's start, Durham's 15th quality start (six innings or more, three earned runs or less). In the past eight games, Bulls starters have pitched 49.1 innings and have allowed 12 runs (2.18 ERA). In each game the starter has at least pitched into the 6th.

HOMER HAPPY: Durham led the IL in homers six games ago. After a five-game string without homers, the Bulls have gone deep in back-to-back games. The Bulls are 24-8 in games in which they homer, 13-14 when they don't.

CHANGES: **Rhyn Hughes** made his Triple-A debut on Tuesday and went 2-4 with a double. The first baseman/DH was leading the Southern League in homers and RBI with 15 and 46 prior to his promotion from Montgomery. Durham has had 38 different players on the field this season, and the 39th will be RHP **Jorge Julio** when he appears in a game. Julio was signed as a free agent by the Rays after he was released by the Brewers. Julio has 99 major league saves.

GWINNETT BRAVES (www.GwinnettBraves.com)

GO WES: **Wes Timmons** was 1-2 in the series finale against Columbus on Tuesday to extend his hitting streak to 11 games. Timmons is 18-39 with 15 runs, nine walks and six doubles in that stretch. He has raised his average more than a 100 points from a season-low .161 batting average on May 11 to his current average of .279 heading into tonight's game against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Timmons already has more hits in June than he did in April or May. He was recognized as the International League Player of the Week for the week ending June 7, a week that included a 9-16 performance in a four-game series at Rochester. Wes currently leads the IL in on-base percentage with a .416 mark. The utility man has played all four infield positions and committed only two errors in 241 chances.

GO WEST: The Gwinnett Braves make their first trip to the International League West Division on Monday beginning an eight-game road trip with stops in Indianapolis and Louisville. The G-Braves, following the four-game set against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre this weekend, will have played every team except the West Division-leading Louisville Bats. Gwinnett won three of four games against Indianapolis from May 25-28. The G-Braves recently dropped three of four against Columbus, who is currently 2nd in the West. The G-Braves are currently 8-4 against the West but all 12 of those games were played at Gwinnett Stadium. The G-Braves are 10-14 against the South and 15-9 against the North Division.

BC BOYS AND GORECKI: **Barbaro Canizares** and **Brooks Conrad** are tearing up International League pitchers lately. Canizares is batting .385 (15-39) with seven runs and six RBI in the last 10 games. Conrad has generated 14 runs in the last 10, scoring seven runs himself and driving in seven more. Neither of the two players, who are still tied for the team lead with eight home runs apiece, have gone yard in that stretch, but G-Braves outfielder **Reid Gorecki** has belted three home runs in his last five outings after going deep just once in his first 44. Gorecki is batting .325 (13-40) with 6 runs and a team-high 9 RBI in his last five games. His three homers are more than the rest of the club combined in that span. Gorecki is now 3rd on the team, behind Canizares and Conrad, with four homers.

INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS (www.IndyIndians.com)

STARTING JUNE STRONG: RHP **Daniel McCutchen** tossed 6.1 no-hit innings on Tuesday before Bisons' LF **Jesus Feliciano** broke up his no-hit bid with a one-out single in the 7th. McCutchen (7.0 IP, 3 H, 2 R, 2 ER, 2 BB, 6 SO), who struck out six batters, went on to allow only two runs on four hits in what was his longest outing of the season. Overall, Tribe starting pitchers have dominated in the month of June as McCutchen (6/4-Game 1 & 6/9), RHP **Jeremy Powell** (6/2 & 6/8), RHP **Ty Taubenheim** (6/1 & 6/7), RHP **Charlie Morton** (6/4-Game 2), RHP **Virgil Vasquez** (6/5) and RHP **Eric Hacker** (6/6) have combined to allow only 12 earned runs and 11 walks, while striking out 39 in 55.0 innings pitched (1.96 ERA) thus far in the season's third month.

DOUBLE TROUBLE: The Tribe continues to get out of jams with the help of the double play as the Indians turned two more double plays in Tuesday's victory at Buffalo. The Tribe defense has now turned 17 double plays in their last 11 games and rank 2nd in the International League with 60 double plays turned so far this season. 1B **Steve Pearce** was involved as the concluding putout in both double plays in the June 9 contest and the right-handed slugger continues to convert more double plays than any other first baseman in the IL with 47. The Indianapolis defense also remained error free in the contest in Buffalo for the third straight game and the Indians have not committed a defensive miscue in eight of their last 10 games. The Indians are currently tied for the 4th-best fielding percentage (.980) in the IL and trail just two points behind Rochester's League leading percentage (.982).

PEARCE PERFORMING IN THE CLUTCH: Indians 1B **Steve Pearce** came through with four more clutch RBI in Tuesday's victory. The right-handed slugger slugged two home runs and a two-run double to put him at 36 RBI for the season, good enough to tie him for 7th in the IL. The first baseman continues to show up in the clutch this season, batting .440 (22-50) with 27 RBI when runners are in scoring position while also stepping up late in games where he is hitting a combined 19-62 (.306) with eight runs, nine walks and 13 RBI in the 7th, 8th, 9th, and extra innings compared to his .261 average (36-138) in the other six frames.

TWO FOR TUESDAY: The Tribe's contest at Buffalo on Tuesday was a scoreless struggle after three innings until RF **Garrett Jones** and 1B **Steve Pearce** broke the 0-0 deadlock with back-to-back solo home runs in the top of the 4th. In the very next inning with a runner on base Jones blasted his second long ball of the game and his team-leading ninth homer of the season, while Pearce, not to be out done, launched another solo round-tripper himself in the 8th. The 10-2 victory marked the third time this season that a pair of Indians hitters have smashed back-to-back home runs (4/25 OF **Jeff Salazar** & **Neil Walker**; 5/8 Pearce & Walker). The contest was, however, the first time a Tribe hitter has hit multiple dingers in a single game this season with Pearce hitting two long balls for the first time since June 25, 2008 and Jones collecting multiple home runs in a single game for the first time since August 12, 2007.

LEHIGH VALLEY IRONPIGS (www.IronPigsBaseball.com)

BOWERS POWERS: LHP **Cedric Bowers** had an 11.0 scoreless IP streak snapped Monday. During the impressive streak, he was not scored upon in 8 G -- during which opposing batters were 0-29! The run scored after a one-out triple by **Drew Sutton** which snapped a string of Bowers not allowing an extra-base hit in a span of 16+ G, 20.2 IP & 66 AB. It was just the third extra-base hit that Bowers had allowed and his first since 4/19 on an **Alex Ochoa** solo HR. Even so, he has allowed just 1 R in his last 9 G (0-0, 0.77 ERA, 6 holds, 11.2 IP, 3 H, 1 ER).

LEAD STORY?: Lehigh Valley scored in the 1st inning in three of the four games in Louisville, but still dropped all four games of the series. The 'Pigs have now blown leads in 51.4% of their losses (18 of 35). If they hung on in just 1/2 of those games, they'd be 31-27. They lead the IL with seven losses when leading after 5 innings and they've also blown an IL-high four games leading after eight (10 teams have either 0 or just 1; Toledo has 3). The 'Pigs also have the second-worst record when scoring first (16-13) behind Buffalo (9-10).

THAT'S HOW THEY DREW IT UP: Since winning his first ML start May 16 at Washington, RHP **Drew Carpenter** has gone 3-0 with a 0.66 in 4 G, 3 GS with Lehigh Valley (27.1 IP, 20 H, 2 R, 2 ER, 18 K). Amazingly, Carpenter has taken a shutout into the 8th inning of his last three games. His win in his lone ML appearance in 2009 was in Game 2 of a DH against the Nationals (4.1 IP, 8 H, 5 R, 5 ER, 3 BB, 4 K). He was credited with a win due to Rule 10.17 (b) (2).

WHO'S HOT: INF **Miguel Cairo** had his 11-G hitting streak snapped Monday, but he has hit safely in 17 of his first 19 G since joining Lehigh Valley (27-76, .355-3-10), and he has hit 3 HR after going 850 AB without one (going back to 2005)... OF **John Mayberry** had his 8-game hitting streak snapped Sunday but has still hit safely in 9 of his last 10 G (11-35, .314, 4 2B) and in 16 of his last 19 G (21-69, .304-2-8, 6 2B)... C **Lou Marson** has a 4-G hitting streak (7-15, .467-0-2, 2 2B) with 3 multi-hit games.

LOUISVILLE BATS (www.BatsBaseball.com)

BRING OUT THE BROOMS: The Bats swept the IronPigs for their first four-game sweep since they took all four versus Toledo last season at LSF (8/4-8/7). The team also tied their season-high winning streak with four in a row, now set four times this season (4/17-4/21, 5/9-5/12, 5/31-6/3, 6/6-pres). The last time Louisville won five in a row was last season (8/10-8/17) when they won seven straight. The longest winning streak from 2008 was eight in a row (8/1-8/8).

LAST 10: The Bats have won eight of their last 10 games (5/30-pres) and Louisville starting pitchers are 6-2 with two no-decisions and a 3.32 ERA (62.1IP, 23 ER) during that time. Twice the Bats have shutout their opponents (6/1-6/2) and three times have the starters left having allowed no runs (6/7, 6/2, 6/1). On offense, batters are hitting .278 with 13 homers and 49 runs scored (4.90 runs/game) while the pitching staff's ERA is 3.38.

ON FIRE: In their last 10 games, C **Craig Tatum**, OF **Danny Dorn** and INF **Danny Richar** have been on fire, with none of the four players batting below .342. Tatum is hitting .355 (11-31) and raised his average from .219 to .250; he hit safely in seven of 10 and has four multi-hit games since May 26. Dorn is hitting .351 (13-37) and raised his average from .191 to .230 and hit safely in eight of 10 games since May 27. Also since May 27, Richar is batting .342 (13-38) and has four multi-hit games. Richar raised his average from .255 to its current mark of .283.

NORFOLK TIDES (www.NorfolkTides.com)

THIS IS BIRDLAND: With the promotion of **Oscar Salazar** to Baltimore this past weekend, the Orioles current roster has 10 players (**Matt Albers**, **Brad Bergesen**, **Jason Berken**, **Alberto Castillo**, **Dave Hernandez**, **Rich Hill**, **Lou Montanez** (DL), **Nolan Reimold**, Salazar, and **Matt Wieters**) who have played in Norfolk this season. In addition, four other players (**Jim Johnson**, **Melvin Mora**, **Alfredo Simon** (DL) and **Ty Wigginton**) have spent time with Norfolk in previous years.

WHAT A RELIEF: Since being optioned from Baltimore earlier this season, both **Bob McCrory** and **Chris Ray** have pitched exceptionally with Norfolk. McCrory has posted a 0.64 ERA (1 ER, 14.0 IP) over his last 11 appearances (10 of which have been scoreless), registering 17 strikeouts while allowing 11 hits. Ray has yielded just one hit and two walks in his four outings, and he's struck out six in 5.2 innings.

ROAD WARRIORS: Norfolk's 19-11 road record is the 2nd-best in the IL, trailing only the 21-11 record of the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees. The Tides offense has performed much better away from Harbor Park, as Norfolk has hit .292 with 29 homers and 169 runs scored in 30 road contests (5.6 runs a game) compared to .259 with 19 homers and 104 runs scored in 27 games at home (3.9 runs a game). Six players on Norfolk's current roster have a road batting average over .300, led by the .429 average (12-28) posted by **Melvin Dorta**.

PAWTUCKET RED SOX (www.PawSox.com)

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS AT MCCOY: The PawSox are coming off a 4-game split at home against Durham during which all four games of the series were decided by 1-run, which was appropriate as Durham (15-7) and Pawtucket (14-7) are one-two in the International League in both 1-run games played and 1-run victories (next closest in wins is Louisville with nine 1-run wins). The teams split a pair of 1-run decisions to begin the series (Sox won last Saturday, 2-1 but Bulls prevailed Sunday, 5-4 by rallying for 4 runs in the top of the 9th-inning). Durham got the upper hand with a 3-2 victory on Monday, but the PawSox gained the split with a last at-bat win of their own on Tuesday, 2-1 (as **Dusty Brown's** RBI double in the 9th snapped the tie). Those four games marked the first time the Sox have played four straight 1-run games since May 9-13 of 2007 (one at Syracuse and three vs. Toledo) and the first time all games of a 4-game set were decided by 1-run since 1997 (July 10-13) when the Sox went 2-2 in four 1-run affairs at Norfolk. The Sox last were involved in five consecutive 1-run games in 2004 (April 14-17) when they lost all five on the road (2 in Rochester and 3 in Syracuse).

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES: This season the PawSox have scored 85 runs in their 28 home games for an average of 3 runs/game at McCoy thus far. Last year the Sox scored 398 runs in their 72 home games for an average of 5.5 runs/game at McCoy. Furthermore, the PawSox have 36 HR this season after 57 games. Last year after 57 games they had almost double the amount of homers (70 HR in their first 57 games in 2008). In 2008 the Sox finished with 176 HR on the year. This season they have 36 HR in 57 games which puts them on pace for 90 HR (49% fewer homers than last year).

PAW PRINTS: **John Smoltz** makes his second (and possibly final) rehab start for the PawSox tonight in G1 of a doubleheader in Syracuse. Smoltz, 42, is the only pitcher in major league history to have at least 200 career wins (210 to be exact) and at least 150 saves (154), is on the verge of making it back from right shoulder surgery (torn labrum) one year ago (last June 10). Smoltz tossed 6 strong innings (allowing just 1 hit and 1 run) to earn a 2-1 victory vs. Durham on Saturday night at McCoy... The Red Sox traded PawSox OF **Chip Ambres** (.259/3/18 in 52 games) to Buffalo for future considerations on Wednesday... Pawtucket promoted OF/1B **Aaron Bates** from Portland on Monday. Bates was the Eastern League Player of the Month for May (hitting .370) and on the season was batting .340 with 7 HR & 39 RBI for the Sea Dogs... PawSox closer **Fernando Cabrera** is 11-for-11 in SV opportunities since taking over for **Daniel Bard** who was promoted to Boston on May 10... Reliever **Rocky Cherry** has gone 19.1 innings without allowing an earned run dating back to the end of April... **Clay Buchholz** had his streak of 23.1 straight innings without allowing a walk end when he issued a free pass to Durham's **Jon Weber** leading-off the game in his last start on Tuesday.

ROCHESTER RED WINGS (www.RedWingsBaseball.com)

CARDIAC KIDS: Tuesday was the fourth time this season that Rochester has captured a win in their final at-bat (4-3 record in last at-bat games this season). Going into the 2009 season, Rochester has six consecutive seasons (2008, 15-10 record, 2007, 11-10 record, 2006, 20-12 record, 2005, 11-6 record, 2004, 11-6 record & 2003, 10-7 record) with a winning record in games decided in last at-bats. It's the first time Rochester has done this since 1979 when Red Wings records begin. Since 2003, the Red Wings have a 81-56 record in games decided in last at-bats.

EXTRA, EXTRA: With Tuesday's win the Red Wings moved to 3-4 in extra-inning games this season. Last season Rochester played 18 extra-inning games (11-7 record) which were the most of any team in the IL. Rochester has a .500 or better extra-inning record in each of the last five seasons and holds a 61-45 record (including a 17-3 record in 2006) in extra-inning games since changing affiliations to the Twins in 2003.

I'M COMING HOME TO YOU BABY: The Red Wings will return home on Friday, June 19 when they open up a 10-game homestand. Rochester will welcome Toledo for a four-game series, then Columbus for a four-game set before concluding the homestand with a two-game series vs. North division leader Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. The 10-game homestand will be the longest homestand Rochester has had since a 10-game homestand June 13-22, 2004.

SPECIAL GUESTS: The Red Wings next homestand will feature appearances from some special guests. On June 20 Buffalo Sabres center Derek Roy will be appearing at the ballpark. Roy will be signing autographs pre-game and throwing out a first pitch. June 26 will feature a post game concert by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. On June 27 **Steve Demeter**, **Bill Short** and **Ed Stevens** will be at Frontier Field to be inducted into the IL Hall of Fame. Finally, Yankees legend **Roy White** will be signing autographs pregame on June 28.

SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE YANKEES (www.SWBYankees.com)

NORTHERN EXPOSURE: At 21-10 vs. the IL North, the Yankees have more divisional wins than any other team in the IL and SWB's .677 winning percentage is the best in the League within their own division. Scranton/Wilkes-Barre has not had the same success against the other two divisions in the League this season posting a combined 14-14 record vs. the South and the West. The Yankees have a winning record vs. the South but are just two games over .500 at 7-5. For the second consecutive season the Yanks have struggled against the West with a sub .500 record at 7-9.

NOW TAKING THE HILL: **Sergio Mitre** made his first start for Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, taking the hill for the Yankees in the final game of the four-game series against Charlotte to become the 17th different pitcher to start a game for the Yankees this season. **Alfredo Aceves** (4), **Brian Bruney** (1), **Paul Bush** (2), **J. B. Cox** (1), **Casey Fossum** (8), **Eric Hacker** (3), **Phil Hughes** (3), **Kei Igawa** (11), **Steven Jackson** (1), **Ian Kennedy** (4), **George Kontos** (7), **Romulo Sanchez** (1), **Jason Stephens** (1), **Josh Towers** (5) and **Chien-Ming Wang** (2) have all made starts for SWB in 2009. The Yankees used 21 starters during the championship run of 2008.

FULL FIVE MAN ROTATION: With Mitre joining the rotation, the Yankees will now have a full five-man rotation for the first time since the five-game stretch in early May (4-8) covering a road series at Indianapolis and Louisville. Scranton/Wilkes-Barre lost its fifth member of the rotation when, on consecutive days, **Eric Hacker** and **Steven Jackson** were both designated for assignment due to roster shuffling at the Major League level. Over the last month the Yankees have gotten by with **Chien-Ming Wang** (two rehab starts), **Brian Bruney** (one rehab start), **Paul Bush** (two spot starts), **J.B. Cox** (spot start) and **Romulo Sanchez** (spot start) filling the gap in the rotation.

RUSSO MAKES IT GO: In his four games back at the top of the lineup since returning from nearly a month on the DL (5/8 - 6/5), **Kevin Russo** has showed his worth to the Yankees. Since returning to the top of the lineup the Yankees table setter has reached base in all four games, and he now has an on-base percentage of .466. In 15 games this season, he has scored 12 runs, driven in 12, and has drawn nine base on balls. With Russo in the lineup this season, the Yankees are 12-3.

SYRACUSE CHIEFS (www.SyracuseChiefs.com)

SMOLTZ COMES TO THE CUSE: Boston Red Sox pitcher **John Smoltz** will pitch against the Chiefs tonight at Alliance Bank Stadium in his sixth rehab start of the season. Smoltz will pitch in Game 1 of the scheduled doubleheader. Smoltz follows former Red Sox **Manny Ramirez**, **Bret Saberhagen**, **Curt Schilling**, and **Mark Bellhorn** as players who rehabbed in Syracuse.

SCOTT OLSEN REHABS AS WELL: The Washington Nationals have announced that left-handed pitcher **Scott Olsen** will make a rehab start for the Chiefs on Sunday against the Red Sox. Olsen has been out of action for a little over one month with an arm injury.

COOPERSTOWN CLASSIC RETURNS: The Chiefs and PawSox will travel to historic Doubleday Field on Sunday, June 14 to play at 2:00 p.m. The Chiefs played in the first Classic against the Red Wings last season to help celebrate the International League's 125th Anniversary. The game was suspended in the 2nd inning due to rain.

TOLEDO MUD HENS (www.MudHens.com)

FANS FLOCK TO FIFTH THIRD FIELD: Through about one-third of this season's home games, Fifth Third Field has welcomed more guests than ever before. The Hens have had only 26 games at home this season, but seven have been sold out and a whopping 183,505 fans have already come through the gates. This figure is ahead of the 2007 pace, where a record 590,159 fans came to the ballpark. Last year through 26 games, the stadium had sold out for four games and hosted a total of 172,330 Mud Hens' faithful.

GREAT SIGN: The Hens' latest eight-game road trip saw the team go 5-3, thanks in part to great starting pitching. **Ruddy Lugo**, **Luke French**, **Brooks Brown**, **Scot Drucker**, and **Chris Lambert** had a combined 1.96 ERA (11 ER/50.1 IP) in series vs. Durham and Norfolk. Also, even after a blown save on the first game of the road trip, the bullpen has been stellar with a 1.07 ERA (2 ER/16.2 IP) in the last seven games. The bullpen will be adding a hard throwing right-hander in **Ryan Perry**, a 1st-round draft choice out of Arizona in 2008. He had appeared in 23 games this season with the Detroit Tigers but was optioned to Toledo to make room for starter **Jeremy Bonderman**, who had finished his rehab assignment.

CLOSED DOOR POLICY: The Hens have not had a "bona fide" closer this season. In fact, five different Hens' pitchers have notched saves already this year. Toledo used LHP **Clay Rapada** for two consecutive save opportunities, and he shut the door on both games in impressive fashion. His last two save appearances (June 3 and June 6), Rapada has combined for 5.0 IP and six strikeouts with only one hit allowed. Rapada has only allowed one run in his last 13.2 innings, lowering his ERA from 5.68 to 2.29. Then, RHP **Freddy Dolsi** was called on for the next save chance (June 7) and also closed the door. He has not allowed a run in his last three games (5.1 IP) and lowered his ERA from 5.91 and 4.91. It will be interesting to monitor the closer situation with the new addition of Perry, who many feel has the potential to be the Detroit Tigers closer-of-the-future.