



International League News & Notes



July 17, 2009

BUFFALO BISON (www.Bisons.com)

ALL-STAR SEASON: RHP **Nelson Figueroa** was the Bisons lone player representative in the Triple-A All-Star Game this week, but he showed why he was more than worthy of the selection. The veteran pitched a scoreless 8th inning in the IL's 6-5 win and had two strikeouts. Figueroa may be the most consistent pitcher in the League this year, with a 2.50 ERA that is tied for the 3rd-lowest mark in the IL. Figueroa has allowed more than two runs in just two of his 14 starts and more than three runs only once. He has won five decisions in a row and has a 1.64 ERA in seven starts since the beginning of June.

NEW CLOSER IN TOWN: Since the departure of RHP **Elmer Dessens** and his 11 saves to New York in late June, the Herd has been looking for a new closer. It looks like they have found one by plucking RHP **Brandon Knight** out of the starting rotation. Knight was leading the Bisons with 78 strikeouts before accepting his new role over the final weekend of the first half. Knight responded with a pair of saves against Pawtucket and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. No stranger to the position, Knight saved 27 games with Double-A Altoona in 2006 and 12 more with Columbus in 2002.

BREAK, NO THANK YOU: There's one Bisons player that didn't want the All-Star Break to come. INF **Javier Castillo** took a 16-game hit streak into the off days and lost it last night in the first game back. Still, the veteran hit .361 (22-61) from June 26 - July 12, tied for the 5th-longest streak in the International League this year. In 28 total games with Buffalo, Castillo has hit .299 (32-107) with four home runs and 14 RBI.

CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS (www.CharlotteKnights.com)

ON ASSIGNMENT: White Sox outfielder **Carlos Quentin** continues his rehab assignment with the Knights. Quentin went 2-4 with a double, RBI and run scored. So far in his rehab assignment with Charlotte, he is 9-25 (.360) with six RBI, four walks and six runs scored in eight games with the Knights. Quentin was placed on the White Sox disabled list on 5/29 (retroactive to 5/26) with plantar fasciitis in his left foot. White Sox pitcher **Bartolo Colon** continues his rehab assignment. Colon started and earned a win for the Knights on 7/9 vs. Norfolk. Colon is scheduled to start for the Knights on 7/19 at Norfolk. Colon was placed on White Sox disabled list on 6/9 (retroactive to 6/8) with a sore left knee.

OUT OF THE BREAK: The Knights played well in their first game after the All-Star break. They got on the board early scoring on an RBI single from **Carlos Quentin**. They followed with three more runs in the inning. RHP **Lucas Harrell** had his best outing since being promoted to Charlotte on 6/25, pitching seven innings and allowing just one run off of two hits.

FLOWERS JOINS KNIGHTS: The Knights have received catcher **Tyler Flowers** from Double-A Birmingham. Flowers made his Triple-A debut last night at Norfolk and hit a solo home run in the 9th inning. Flowers was named to the 2009 Southern League All-Star Team and to the United States team at the Major League Baseball Futures Game. Flowers appeared in 77 games for the Barons hitting .302 (75-248) with 13 home runs and 43 RBI. Catcher **Donny Lucy** was transferred to Birmingham. Lucy appeared in 45 games for Charlotte this season, hitting .216 (33-153) with 2 home runs and 10 RBI.

COLUMBUS CLIPPERS (www.ClippersBaseball.com)

CROWE, CROWE, CROWE YOUR BOAT: The Clipper offense has surged to the top of the International League in both hitting and runs scored, as they now hold a seven point advantage over Norfolk in batting average (.281) and a four-run lead over Scranton/WB for most runs (434). Leading the Clipper attack is **Trevor Crowe**, who has hit safely in all 17 games since being optioned from Cleveland on 6/24. Thanks to a hit in the final game of his first stint with Columbus (5/5-5/25), Crowe now has an 18-game hitting streak that is good for 2nd longest in the IL this year (.346, 27-78).

MARTE NOT GOING AWAY: Crowe isn't the only Clipper with an impressive streak going, as **Andy Marte** tallied three hits last night to extend his on-base streak to 19 games. For Marte, it's his second 19-game on base streak of the season (4/12-5/15). During his current run, he is hitting .417 (30-72) with 5 HR, 20 RBI, and on-base percentage of .481. His remarkable stretch has also included a 10-game hit streak (6/23-7/2), eight consecutive at bats with a hit (6/30-7/2) and back to back IL Player of the Week Awards (6/22-6/28 and 6/29-7/5).

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR AN ENCORE?: **Hector Rondon** will make his second career start at Triple-A, after six innings of no-hit ball in his debut on 7/8 vs. Indianapolis. At 21 years and 131 days old, he became the youngest Clipper to play in a game since **Shairon Martis** (Rondon's opposition for tonight vs. Syracuse) started against Pawtucket on 6/22 last season at 21 years and 84 days. Rondon came into the season ranked as the 13th best prospect in the Cleveland organization after leading all Indian minor leaguers in strikeouts (145) last year. This year, he made his Double-A debut for the Akron Aeros, winning each of his first five starts while posting a 1.13 ERA (29.1 IP, 4 ER).

DURHAM BULLS (www.DurhamBulls.com)

GOING DEEP: **Chris Richard** homered in the 2nd inning yesterday in a 4-3 win over Louisville. The home run gave Richard a team-high 15. Durham, which leads the IL in homers with 93 (two ahead of Louisville), has far more road homers (52) than homers at home (41), even though Durham Bulls Athletic Park is considered a good home-run hitting park. Durham has four players with at least 10 homers (Richard, **Matt Joyce**, **Justin Ruggiano** and **Ray Sadler**).

ONLY WINNERS: Durham has played seven straight games against clubs with winning records (Gwinnett, Norfolk and now Louisville) and has three more this series against the Bats. After this series, Durham will face sub-500 Indianapolis, but then has five games against Norfolk and four more against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. That's 19 of 23 against clubs with winning marks. Durham has to play 16 games still against Syracuse and Scranton/WB, the top two teams in the North Division.

ROAD UNKIND: With three straight road games before the break, and eight after the break at Louisville and Indianapolis, Durham is playing 11 straight road games and 15 of 20 away from Durham Bulls Athletic Park. The Bulls are 27-20 away from home, and have two more home wins than road victories this year.

NO BREAK IN THESE STREAKS: **Jon Weber** went 3-4 last night with a pair of doubles (he has a League-leading 29), and is now 13-25 (.520) with an eight-game hit streak, while **Chris Richard** is 9-21 with a six-game hit streak after going 2-4 with two RBI last night.

GWINNETT BRAVES (www.GwinnettBraves.com)

STREAKER-1: Wes Timmons sat out Thursday's game after flying from Portland earlier in the day. Timmons will look to extend his 36-game on-base streak in the rest of the series at Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Timmons hasn't been kept off the bases since May 26 vs. Toledo. Timmons has batted .350 (42-120) with 27 runs, 11 doubles, 10 RBI and 30 walks since the streak began on May 27 vs. Indianapolis. Timmons recorded a hit in 12-straight games that started the on-base streak on May 27. He was 22-50 (.440) in the streak, the second-longest hitting streak of any G-Brave. **Barbaro Canizares** holds the longest Gwinnett Braves hitting streak at 13-straight games from April 25-May 8.

STREAKER-2: Reid Gorecki was 2-3 with a double, triple and a walk on Thursday at Scranton/WB to extend a pair of streaks. Gorecki has now hit safely in each of his last seven games, including three-straight multi-hit games. Gorecki is batting .480 (12-25) with eight runs, five doubles, a triple, three RBI and seven walks in the seven-game hitting streak that started on July 6. His 6th inning walk on Thursday made it the ninth-straight game that he has drawn a walk. Prior to his last nine games, Gorecki had only drawn 17 walks in his first 69 games.

NAIL BITERS: Seven of the Gwinnett Braves' 12 games in July have been decided by one run. The G-Braves are 4-3 in those games. Overall this season, Gwinnett has played in 31 one-run games, which is tied with Durham for the second-most nail-biters (Pawtucket has played 32 one-run games) in the League. Gwinnett is 5-3 this month and 23-21 this season in games decided by two or fewer runs. The G-Braves have played 44 games that were decided by two or fewer runs (tied for fourth-most in the League). Gwinnett has played a League-high 92 games (48% have been decided by two or fewer runs).

INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS (www.IndyIndians.com)

KRATZ TAKES HOME IL TOP STAR AWARD: Indianapolis Indians catcher **Erik Kratz** earned the Major League Baseball Advanced Media's IL Top Star Award after he went 2-2 with a walk, double and a two-run homer in the IL's 6-5 All-Star Victory over the PCL on Wednesday at PGE Park in Portland, Oregon. The first time Triple-A All-Star doubled in his first at-bat and scored the IL's first run of the contest. Kratz later blasted what turned out to be the game-winning hit when he launched a 3-0 fastball off of PCL knuckleballer **Charlie Haeger** (Albuquerque Isotopes) over the fence in left field and out of the stadium for a two-out, two-run long ball. With his outstanding performance the 29-year old now makes it two consecutive seasons in which a member of the Tribe has brought home the Major League Baseball Advanced Media's IL Top Star Award as former Indians' CF **Andrew McCutchen** also received the award last season after he went 2-2 with two RBI in a 6-5 PCL victory at Louisville Slugger Field. Kratz entered the All-Star break ranked 1st among IL catchers in hits (54) and runs (29), 2nd in home runs (5) and RBI (23) and also 3rd in average (.269).

PEARCE CONTINUES TO PRODUCE: **Steve Pearce** continues to swing a productive bat for the Indians as the first baseman extended his hitting streak to five games by going 3-5 with two doubles and two RBI on Thursday at Pawtucket. After he went 0-7 with two strikeouts in his first seven at-bats since returning to the Indians from the Pirates, the first baseman broke out with an RBI double in the 9th inning of the July 10 contest. After an 0-4 performance in his first game back Pearce has hit in every single game since and is hitting .470 (8-17) with four runs, six doubles, a home run and eight RBI in his last five contests. The 26-year-old is also currently ranked 4th in the International League with 51 RBI and tied for 8th in the IL with 12 home runs.

THE SNELL OF VICTORY: RHP **Ian Snell** has been nothing short of dominant since joining the Indians on June 28. In his four starts with the Tribe the 27-year-old has gone 2-1 with 34 strikeouts (8.5 K/game) and has allowed only one earned run in 26.1 innings pitched for an astonishing 0.34 ERA. In his first appearance on June 28, Snell struck out a Victory Field record and a Minor League season-high 17 batters, including 13 consecutive punch outs en route to a no-decision. In his second outing with Indianapolis on July 5 the right-hander tossed the Indians' first complete game shutout of the season, striking out six in a seven inning effort for his first Tribe victory since 2005. The 2005 IL All-Star's only loss came on July 10 against Toledo when he allowed just one earned run on six hits and struck out four in six innings. Yesterday Snell kept up the impressive performance as he picked up his second victory for the Indians giving up only one unearned run on one hit and striking out seven in 6.1 innings of work.

MIGHTY MYROW: 1B/OF **Brian Myrow** went 1-4 and scored a run in the Tribe's final game before the All-Star break on July 12. The left-handed slugger has now reached base safely in 15 of his 19 games since joining the Tribe on June 24. Myrow has also recorded a hit in seven of his last nine games and currently leads the Tribe with a .298 batting average. The Texas native is also tied for 4th in the International League with a .389 on-base percentage, after he finished last season ranked 1st in the Pacific League in that same category with a .451 OBP.

LEHIGH VALLEY IRONPIGS (www.IronPigsBaseball.com)

CARPENTER EMERGES VICTORIOUS IN TRIPLE-A ALL-STAR GAME: IronPigs RHP **Drew Carpenter** had literally a perfect inning of relief as the IL defeated the PCL 6-5 in the Triple-A All-Star Game at PGE Park in Portland on Wednesday. Carpenter entered in the 2nd inning and struck out the heart of the PCL lineup – **Randy Ruiz**, **Terry Evans**, and **Matt Miller** – on exactly nine pitches. Carpenter has gone 7-2 with a 1.89 ERA in 10 G (9 GS) with Lehigh Valley.

TAYLOR MADE: OF **Michael Taylor** was promoted from Reading to Lehigh Valley on Thursday. The 6'6", 260-pound slugger was having an amazing season in Double-A. The Eastern League All-Star was batting .333-15-65 in 86 G. All his statistics were very impressive, as the native of Apopka, FL was leading the EL in hits (106) and was 2nd in extra-base hits (40), tied for 2nd in runs (59), 3rd in average (.333), RBI (65) and slugging percentage (.569), 4th in HR (15), and 5th in stolen bases (18). The Phillies' 5th-round pick in 2007 out of Stanford combined to hit .346-19-88 in 132 G between Low-A Lakewood (.361) and Advanced-A Clearwater (.329) in 2008. Rated the No. 6 Prospect in the system by *Baseball America*, Taylor has been a Type-1 diabetic since he was 10 years old.

GREAT PITCHING: RHP **Steven Register** has not been scored upon in his last eight games -- and has a 10.2 scoreless IP streak with three saves. He also has held opponents scoreless in 12 of his last 13 games. He started his LHV career allowing at least one run in three of his first five games (0-2, 7.11). RHP **Kyle Kendrick** has turned in Quality Starts in nine of his last 11 starts -- and really nine of 10 since one was a 0.1 IP rain-shortened start June 22 at Norfolk. In these last 11 G, Kendrick is 4-2, 2.97 with a CG. He has taken a shutout into the 6th inning in six of the starts.

'PIGS ON SPORTSCENTER: The IronPigs hosted their second annual ballpark wedding on Thursday, as Matthew Stoudt and Kelly Johnson were wed at Coca-Cola Park. In conjunction with the event, the 'Pigs wore 'Tuxedo T-shirt' Jerseys during their game against Rochester which were later auctioned off for charity. However, the uniforms were so unique that they were featured on several editions of Thursday night/Friday morning ESPN SportsCenter – as the wedding came in at No. 9 on ESPN's daily Top 10 highlights.

LOUISVILLE BATS (www.BatsBaseball.com)

LEHR FACTOR: When RHP **Justin Lehr** was acquired from Philadelphia on May 23, Bats starters had an 11-18 record with a 4.42 ERA. Since his acquisition, starters are 27-12 with a 2.97 ERA. Overall, the team was 19-22 when Lehr was acquired and the pitching staff had a 4.26 ERA. Since they have gone 32-18 and have compiled a 3.06 ERA.

VALAIKA'S STREAK COMES TO CLOSE: INF **Chris Valaika's** season-high nine-game hitting streak came to a close with an 0-5 performance in last night's 4-3 loss to Durham. During the streak, he batted .353 (12-34) with three runs scored, two RBI, and one double. His 18-game hitting streak last season with Double-A Chattanooga was the second-longest in the Southern League and in 2006 while with Billings, Valaika hit in 32 straight games which set a Pioneer League record. It was the longest hitting streak in the minors that year. He also reached base safely in 45 consecutive games during in 2006.

HEISEY NAMED IL BATTER OF WEEK: OF **Chris Heisey** was named the IL Batter of the Week (7/6-7/12); he hit .450 during that time and led the IL with two home runs, nine RBI and an .850 slugging %. Heisey did his damage in only five games before traveling to St. Louis to play in the Futures Game. Over a three-game span (Wed. – Fri.), Heisey went 8-14 with two homers and six RBI, and also delivered a game winning, two-run double in the top of the 12th Thursday in Toledo. Heisey was leading the Southern League in average (.347) when he was promoted to the Bats on June 27 from Double-A Carolina and in 14 Bats games, he's hitting .365 with three homers and 13 RBI. He's homered in each of his last two games and has had three straight multi-hit games. It's the sixth time a Bats player has been named IL Player of the Week (Stubbs, Bankston, Bailey (2), Maloney).

ALL-STARS: **Drew Stubbs, Justin Lehr, and Rick Sweet** represented Louisville in the 22nd annual Triple-A All-Star Game in Portland on Wednesday night. The IL squad held on to win 6-5 after the PCL Team rallied with two runs in the bottom of the 9th. Lehr started for the IL Team and pitched a scoreless opening frame (1 K) while Stubbs went 2-5 with a two-run homer in the 3rd inning. It was the third-largest crowd in Triple-A All-Star history with 16,637 fans at PGE Park. The PCL and IL are now tied at 6-6 in the 12 years since the Game changed to the current IL vs. PCL format. Because of the win, the International League earned the right to have its champion play as the "home team" at the Bricktown Showdown Triple-A Championship Game in Oklahoma City this September.

NORFOLK TIDES (www.NorfolkTides.com)

MAKING HIS PITCH: Tides starter **Chris Tillman** enters play tonight tied for 3rd in the IL with a 2.50 ERA and 6th in the League with 88 strikeouts. The 21-year-old, who was ranked as the number two prospect in the Orioles system by *Baseball America* prior to the season, made the start for the U.S. Team in the Future's Game on July 12 in St. Louis, allowing two runs in an inning of work. Over his last two starts with Norfolk, Tillman hasn't allowed a run in 13.2 innings, striking out 13 while walking one and yielding 10 hits.

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY: The Tides enter play today with an 18-12 record against the South Division (.600 winning %), which is the 3rd-best winning percentage of any team in the IL against its own division. Since being swept in a season-opening three-game series at Durham, the Tides have won seven of their last eight series against South opponents, with their only loss a two-game sweep vs. Gwinnett on April 28 and 29. Norfolk is currently in a stretch where they play 25 straight games against the South division, and the Tides are 7-5 thus far.

CHICKS DIG THE LONG BALL: After finishing last in the IL with seven home runs in 28 June contests, Norfolk has already hit eight in 12 games thus far in July. Those eight homers have upped the Tides season total to 60, which is just six shy of matching last year's total of 66. Norfolk's pitching staff has surrendered the second-fewest homers in the IL (56).

PAWTUCKET RED SOX (www.PawSox.com)

SKID MARKS: Pawtucket has currently dropped 6 in a row overall to match their longest losing streak since May of 2007 when they lost 6 straight from May 5-9. Their last 7-game losing streak came more than four years ago from June 29 – July 5 of 2005. The PawSox have also dropped 6 straight home games (July 3, 9-12, and 16) which marks their longest since a 6-game skid at McCoy from April 28 – May 3 of 2007. Pawtucket's last 7-game home losing streak occurred all the way back in 1989 when they lost 7 in a row at McCoy (April 8 and April 22-27 of 1989). The PawSox have also lost 9 of their last 10 games since July 3 and have not won back-to-back games since a 3-game winning streak nearly a month ago – June 19-21. While losing 9 of their last 10 games, the PawSox are hitting .197 (62-315) with just 3 HR and 27 runs scored (2.7 runs per game). During that time their team batting average has fallen from .234 on July 2 to their current .230 (it was as low as .228 on July 10). PawSox pitchers are 1-9 with a 5.13 ERA (50 ER in 87.2 IP) as their team ERA has risen from 3.49 on July 2 to their current 3.67 (which is a season-high).

HEADED IN THE WRONG DIRECTION: It all adds up to the fact the PawSox are now in 4th-place in the IL North and staring at their largest deficit of the season at -8½ GB which was also their largest deficit since they ended the 2007 season -16½ GB. Two weeks ago (on July 2) the Sox were in 2nd-place and just -2½ GB. And at 43-45 on the season the Sox have been below the .500 plateau for the first time since the end of the 2007 season when they finished at 67-75. Pawtucket peaked at 7-games over .500 on May 8 and May 12 (19-12) and they were 6-games above .500 as late as July 2 (at 42-36).

ONE AND DONE THE WRONG WAY: The PawSox have dropped each of their last four 1-run decisions including the final three games before the All-Star break to Buffalo, 1-0 and then Syracuse, 8-7 and 5-4 and the other a 3-2, 11-inning loss at Scranton/WB on July 6. The Sox do still own a League-best record of 20-12 in 1-run games. The PawSox had won six straight 1-run decisions prior to these four losses in the past week.

THE BUCK STARTS HERE: Pawtucket Red Sox ace **Clay Buchholz** finally earned a well-deserved promotion to Boston as he will make his 2009 Boston Red Sox debut tonight in Toronto. Buchholz, who may return to Pawtucket after his start tonight (as he is slotted to help give the other Red Sox five starters an extra day of rest coming off the All-Star break), is 7-2 with a 2.36 ERA in 17 games for the PawSox this season. He led the IL in ERA for most of the past month but was just recently surpassed by **Carlos Torres** of Charlotte (2.20).

ROCHESTER RED WINGS (www.RedWingsBaseball.com)

LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL: The Red Wings are just 10 wins away from 500 regular season wins as a Minnesota Twins affiliate. Rochester has a 490-460 (.516) regular season record during the Twins era. Prior to the change in affiliation in 2003 the Red Wings had a 394-468 (.457) regular season record from 1997-2002 as an affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles. Rochester currently has five consecutive winning seasons which is the first time since 1966-1976 when Rochester had a franchise-best 11 consecutive winning seasons.

THESE HOTELS AREN'T SO BAD: This season the Red Wings have a 21-21 record away from Frontier Field. If Rochester finishes with a winning road record this season it would only be the second time since 1994 that Rochester has had a winning road record. The last two times Rochester has finished a season with a winning road record they've made the Governors' Cup Finals (1993: 37-34 record away from Silver Stadium and 2006: 37-35 record away from Frontier Field).

AT THE BREAK: The Red Wings 44-44 record at the All-Star break is the sixth time in the last seven years Rochester has had a .500 or better record at the break. The Red Wings hit the 2009 All-Star break with a better record than 2008 (45-54 record .454). Rochester looks to post their fifth consecutive winning second half. Since 2005, the Wings have a 114-92 record after the All-Star break.

ROAD WARRIORS: The Red Wings will play 12 of their first 16 games after the All-Star break away from Frontier Field. During this 16-game stretch Rochester will play a four-game series in Lehigh Valley, Charlotte, and Gwinnett. Rochester has only four home dates remaining in July (July 20-23 vs. Pawtucket). Rochester will have 19 home dates in the month of August.

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

SPECIAL KEI: **Kei Igawa** looked to have the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre franchise mark for most career wins locked up leaving the first game of the four-game series with the Gwinnett Braves on Thursday night with a 5-3 lead after six innings. It looked even better when the Yankees took the two run lead to the 8th. The historic win was not to be as the Yankees pen coughed up the lead, allowing two in the eighth as Gwinnett tied the game at 5-5. Igawa will get attempt number two at the record on Tuesday in Columbus. It took the lefty three attempts at number 26 before beating Pawtucket in the second game of a July 6th DH at PNC Field to tie **Evan Thomas'** SWB franchise mark for the most wins by a pitcher. Igawa picked up his 26th win with Scranton/Wilkes-Barre in just his 51st game, where as Thomas took 72 career games with SWB to reach the same number of wins. Since the start of the 2008 season, Igawa is the winningest pitcher in the International League with a record of 21-9. The left-hander's career record with Scranton/Wilkes-Barre sits at 26-13.

RIDING THE RECORD ROLLER COASTER: Following a win at Louisville on May 8, the Yankees had the best record in Minor League Baseball at 23-5 and had a five and a half game lead in the IL North. Since that 11-5 win, the Yanks have posted a 28-31 record which has included three five-game losing streaks, a three-game losing streak a five-game winning streak and a four-game winning streak. Despite the ups and downs in the last 59 games, the Yankees lead in the North has only been reduced by one and a half games and currently sits at four full games over Syracuse.

FANTASTIC FOUR: Four has been the magic number for the Yankees in 2009. In games decided by four runs or more, the Yankees have the IL's best record at 29-7. The almost unbeatable aspect of the number four comes when the Yankees score four or more runs in a game. When SWB hits four or more on the scoreboard, they own a 43-7 record, for a winning percentage of an unreal .860. When the Yankees have scored three runs or less in a game they are 8-29 (.276).

GET ON PLANE, LAND, GET LUGGAGE, HIT HOMER: Heading into the All-Star Break, **Shelley Duncan** had not homered in 16 games and 57 at-bats going back to June 22, yet he was still 1st in the IL in homers and tied for 3rd in all of Minor League Baseball with 21. Duncan finished 2nd in the Home Run Derby at the Triple-A All-Star game on Monday. Following the game on Wednesday was the all-day travel of Thursday, leaving Portland in the morning and arriving at PNC Field for Thursday's game while the Yankees were taking batting practice. After a grounder to third and a walk, Duncan crushed his 22nd homer of the season with a scoreboard-shot to left center for his League-leading 70th and 71st RBI. The blast snapped a 58-at-bat string with out a HR and puts the slugger three away from tying his own franchise record for homers in a season set in 2007.

SYRACUSE CHIEFS (www.SyracuseChiefs.com)

ROAD WARRIORS: The Chiefs entered this weekend's series with the Columbus Clippers having not lost a road series since May 16-19 at Victory Field in Indianapolis. Syracuse has won or tied seven consecutive road series entering the weekend set at Huntington Park.

DIVISIONAL DEMONS: After the All-Star Break, the Chiefs play 28 consecutive games against interdivision opponents. Syracuse's next game against the North comes on August 14 at Alliance Bank Stadium against Rochester. Overall, the Chiefs are 34-22 against their own division and have a winning record against each team except the Red Wings. The Chiefs' 34 divisional victories is the best in the IL.

TOLEDO MUD HENS (www.MudHens.com)

THE CLUTCH FACTOR: So far in July, the Mud Hens have hit .348 (24-69) with runners in scoring position in wins and .224 (11-49) in losses. In June, the Hens hit .280 (45-161) with RISP in wins and .118 (12-102) in losses.

LOSSES ARE COLD: The Mud Hens have scored three runs or fewer in 43 of their 90 games so far (48.31% of games). The team is 5-38 on these occasions. The Hens are 37-10 when scoring four or more runs.

WHO'S HOT ON THE LINEUP CARD: OF **Wilkin Ramirez** is blazing in July, batting .442 with 4 HR and 13 RBI. He already has more RBI this month than any other month this season. For the week of July 5-11, Ramirez was 2nd in the League with a .500 batting average (**Lou Marson:** .545). This month is the complete opposite of June for Ramirez, where he struggled to the tune of a .146 average (1 HR, 5 RBI).

WHO'S HOT IN THE BULLPEN: RHP **Casey Fien** has allowed only two runs in his last 17.2 IP (1.01 ERA) to go with 25 K and he has recorded four saves during that 12-game stretch. He is now 3rd on the team in strikeouts (behind starters **Chris Lambert** and **Scot Drucker**). RHP **Ryan Perry** is a perfect 3-for-3 in save situations since joining the Hens (2.25 ERA in 12 innings). Also, RHP **Matt Rusch** has not allowed a run in 11.1 innings since June 29.