



International League News & Notes



July 23, 2009

BUFFALO BISON (www.Bisons.com)

SHUTOUT DOUBLEHEADER: Two of the hottest pitchers in the International League treated Bisons fans to a rare treat on Saturday night at Coca-Cola Field. Buffalo's LHP **Jonathon Niese** and RHP **Nelson Figueroa** each threw a complete-game shutout as the Herd swept a doubleheader from Toledo, 1-0 and 2-0. Niese allowed just two singles in his masterpiece and now leads the IL with two shutouts. Niese is 5-0 with a 0.73 ERA in his last seven starts. Figueroa struck out five in the night cap and is now 2nd in the IL with a 2.32 ERA. The veteran is 6-0 with a 1.44 ERA in his last eight starts. Because of the great pitching, the total game time of both games together was just two hours and 50 minutes.

MORE NIESE: LHP **Jonathon Niese** has completely turned around his fortunes this season. The southpaw was the Herd's Opening Day starter, but struggled for the first two months of the year. In his first nine starts, Niese was 0-6 with a 7.36 ERA. He had allowed five or more earned runs in five of his nine starts, but Niese turned it around on June 12 when he threw seven shutout innings in a win over Durham. He then collected 24.1 consecutive scoreless innings. In his last seven starts, he has allowed just a total of four earned runs while striking out 42. He fanned 10 in a nine-inning complete game shutout of Rochester on July 5. Since his rough start, Niese has nearly cut his ERA in half, from 7.36 to 3.82.

CHART CLIMBER: Buffalo's most consistent hitter all year, OF **Jesus Feliciano**, has really swung the bat well since the All-Star Break. Feliciano has averaged .407 (11-27) since the break with a double and a pair of RBI. He is now 7th in the International League in average (.312) and 4th in total hits (99). He is now on pace for 153 hits on the year, which would be the highest for a Bisons player since IL MVP **Jhonny Peralta** (181) and INF **Brandon Phillips** (158) during the 2004 season.

CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS (www.CharlotteKnights.com)

TORRES' CONTRACT PURCHASED, POREDA OPTIONED TO CHARLOTTE: Following Tuesday's game the Chicago White Sox purchased the contract of Knights pitcher **Carlos Torres** and optioned left-handed pitcher **Aaron Poreda** to the Knights. Torres is scheduled to make his Major League debut tonight for the White Sox against the Tampa Bay Rays. Torres, 26, has gone 8-4 with one save on the season. He leads the International League in ERA at 2.20 (24 ER/98.0 IP), is second in strikeouts with 96 and is tied for third in wins with eight. Torres was named to the International League All-Star team and pitched a scoreless inning in last week's Triple-A All-Star Game. Poreda, 22, was 1-0 with a 2.45 ERA (3 ER/11.0 IP) and 12 strikeouts in 10 relief appearances this season with the White Sox after his contract was purchased from Double-A Birmingham on June 9. He went 5-4 with a 2.38 ERA (17 ER/64.1 IP) and 69 strikeouts in 11 starts with Birmingham. The left-hander led the Southern League in strikeouts and ranked third in ERA at the time of his promotion to the White Sox. Poreda, the White Sox first-round draft in 2007 (25th overall) out of the University of San Francisco, entered the season ranked by *Baseball America* as the No. 3 Prospect in the Sox organization.

GRAND SLAM: INF **Wilson Betemit** got his third home run of his season in yesterday's game. The homer was his first grand slam. Betemit hit the ball into right center field knocking in **Daryle Ward**, **Brent Lillibridge**, and **Michael Restovich** along with himself. The grand slam was the Knights second of the season; the other came off the bat on **Josh Kroeger** on June 18 at Pawtucket.

KNIGHTS ON HOT STREAK: The Knights are on a three-game winning streak, all coming against Lehigh Valley. The first two wins were shutouts. The Knights did not allow a run in the series until the 2nd inning of game three, giving the Knights a 23.0 consecutive scoreless-innings run. Charlotte has outscored Lehigh Valley 16-2 in the three games and enters tonight looking for their third series sweep of the season.

COLUMBUS CLIPPERS (www.ClippersBaseball.com)

SWEET 16: Coming into tonight's game, both **Jordan Brown** and **Matt LaPorta** have 16-game on base streaks. Their streaks are tied for the 5th-highest on the team this year. Brown has hit .391 (25-64) with 15 runs, 10 RBI and eight multi-hit games during his streak, while LaPorta has batted .379 (22-58) with 12 runs, 13 RBI and seven multi-hit games.

ONE MAN WRECKING CREW: With his 3-run homer in the 3rd inning Monday night, **Andy Marte** went deep for the fourth time in five games. Marte has hit each of the last four Clipper home runs and six of the team's 16 HR in July. Each of Marte's last 3 HR have been with men on base, following 11 consecutive solo homers. The Clippers are 12-2 when Marte homers, having won five in a row.

MARTE GUNNING FOR 20 (AGAIN): **Andy Marte** has 18 RBI in July, leading the team. Last month he drove in 22 runners, becoming the first Clipper with 20+ RBI in a month this year. If he reaches 20 again, he'll be the first Clipper to record two 20+ RBI months in a season since **Mitch Jones** in 2006 (July and August).

DUELING RELIEVERS: Sunday night **Rafael Perez** added to his scoreless innings streak as he kept Syracuse off the board for 1.2 IP. On the season, he has thrown 13.2 scoreless innings over 10 games with Columbus, resulting in the longest shutout stretch for a Clipper pitcher this year. Right on his heels is **Jensen Lewis**, who has not allowed a run in his first 13.0 IP. Lewis has also punched out 20 batters in his eight games.

DURHAM BULLS (www.DurhamBulls.com)

CLOSE CALL: Since the All-Star Break, Durham has played seven consecutive games decided by one or two runs. Durham is 3-4 during this stretch. The Bulls are 27-22 (.551) in games decided by one or two runs. Of Durham's last 14 losses, 13 have been decided by one or two runs, including the last seven. Since June 6, 28 of 42 Bulls games have been decided by one or two runs, and the Bulls are 12-16 in those close games.

CLOSING IN: The Bulls begin a stretch tomorrow of five games in four days against South Division leader Norfolk. Durham's 3-1 win yesterday over Indianapolis, coupled with Norfolk's 8-2 loss at Gwinnett, moved the Bulls within 0.5 games of Norfolk in the South Division. Durham is the Wild Card leader, but just by 1.5 games over Gwinnett, with Syracuse two off the pace.

ONLY WINNERS: Durham had played 10 straight games against clubs with winning records (Gwinnett, Norfolk and Louisville going 4-6) before the current series with Indianapolis. After this series, Durham has five games against Norfolk and four against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, the South and North Division leaders. That's 19-of-23 against clubs with winning marks. Of the remaining 47 games, only 12 are against the teams with sub-.500 records, seven against Charlotte and five against Indianapolis (including tonight).

ROAD UNKIND: With three straight road games before the break, and eight after it against Louisville and Indianapolis, Durham is completing 11 straight road games tonight (4-6 so far), a stretch of 15-of-20 away from Durham Bulls Athletic Park. The Bulls are 29-24 away from home, and have three more home wins than road victories this year. After this series, Durham will have 28 of its last 46 games at Durham Bulls Athletic Park.

GWINNETT BRAVES (www.GwinnettBraves.com)

SAMMONS: Catcher **Clint Sammons** has hit safely in six of his last seven games including three multi-hit games. He is batting .417 (10-24) with five runs and four doubles during that span. Sammons made just his third start as a designated hitter on Tuesday night vs. Norfolk. Prior to Tuesday, Sammons was 0-7 as a DH but was 2-4 with an RBI in the win. Sammons has started a team-high 49 games and has batted .239 (43-180) when catching this season. The G-Braves are 28-21 when he starts behind the dish. He has been behind the plate for 429 of the G-Braves' 859 2/3 innings. Sammons has thrown out 32.6 percent (14-43) of runners attempting to steal and has picked off two batters at first.

TIMMONS: **Wes Timmons** was placed on the 7-day disabled list on July 21 with a fractured left thumb. The timing couldn't have been worse for the IL All-Star. Timmons was in the midst of a 40-game on-base streak that started way back on May 27. During the streak, Timmons was batting .358 (48-134) with 31 runs, 11 doubles, 12 RBI and 35 walks. He had raised his average from a season-low .161 on May 12 to his current and season-best average of .291. In the first two months of the season, Timmons batted .212 (22-104) in 44 games but has since batted .361 (43-119) in 35 games in June and July. Timmons will also put a five-game hitting streak on hold, during which he was batting .412 (7-17) with six walks. He had drawn a walk in 10 of his last 11 games before being placed on the DL. Timmons leads the League with a .435 on-base percentage.

FIVE-STRAIGHT AND EVEN AGAIN: Gwinnett won its fifth-straight game last night. The five-game streak matches two previous season-long five-game winning streaks, the first from April 26-May 1 and the second from May 26-30. The win also marks the fourth time the club has been eight games above .500, also tying a season-high. Gwinnett goes for six straight wins tonight as the club tries to complete the four-game sweep against South Division-leading Norfolk. Gwinnett evened its record at home with a win on Wednesday and is now 24-24 in games at Gwinnett Stadium. Gwinnett is the only team with an overall record of .500 or better to not have a winning record at home, but has the chance to change that tonight with a win against Norfolk. The G-Braves (.580, 29-21) are tied with Durham for the most road wins in the League with 29. Only Scranton/Wilkes-Barre has a better winning percentage on the road (.609, 28-18).

INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS (www.IndyIndians.com)

1-2 PUNCH: Indianapolis starters **Ian Snell** and **Tom Gorzelanny** have quickly become a dominant 1-2 punch atop the Tribe rotation. Since Snell joined the Indians on June 28 the duo has combined to go 3-3 with 65 strikeouts over their nine combined starts, allowing only four earned runs in 58.0 innings for a 0.62 ERA. In Snell's five starts with the Tribe the 27-year old has gone 2-1 with 43 strikeouts (8.6 K/game) and has allowed only two earned runs in 32.1 innings pitched for an astonishing 0.56 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, while 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. Gorzelanny has been nothing short of brilliant over his last eight starts as he has posted a 3-2 record, 1.00 ERA (5 ER in 45.1 IP), and 47 strikeouts, while not having allowed more than a single earned run in any of those eight outings.

MILLEDGE WALKS OVER THE COMPETITION: Indians OF **Lastings Milledge**, who was recently named the International League's Batter of the Week for July 16 through July 19, continued to display his patience at the plate as he recorded three bases on balls on July 21. The contest tied a career-high in walks for Milledge as it was only the third time he has been handed three free passes in a game in his professional career and the first since he recorded three walks against the Florida Marlins as a member of the New York Mets on August 1, 2006. The 24-year old has now walked seven times in 10 games with the Indians which is the same amount he had in his 32 games within the Nationals Organization this season and only three off of his total 39 games outside of Indianapolis (3 games w/ High-A Lynchburg & 4 games w/ GCL Pirates) this year. The speedy outfielder has also recorded five multi-hit performances and two multi-walk contests in his ten games, including four consecutive contests (7/12 - 7/18) with multiple base knocks. Since joining the Tribe, Milledge has reached base in eight of his 10 games and is batting .400 (14-35) with five runs, five RBI, seven walks, two stolen bases, two HBP and a .511 on-base percentage.

MASTERFUL MCCUTCHEN: After allowing just one run and striking out six Durham batters on July 20, RHP **Daniel McCutchen** posted his fifth straight win to move to 9-5 on the season. After beginning the season 2-3 the right-hander has gone 7-2 in his last 10 outings with his streak of five straight victories the most in-a-row for a Tribe pitcher the season. McCutchen is only the seventh pitcher in the IL to win in five straight outings as former Indians' starter **Charlie Morton** won five for Gwinnett, RHP **Andrew Carpenter** won five straight for Lehigh Valley, RHP **Chris Tillman** won five for Norfolk, Syracuse's **Collin Balester** and **Garrett Mock** each won five straight for the Chiefs and RHP **Justin Lehr** won an IL season-high six in-a-row for Louisville. McCutchen's streak is the best in his professional career and represent his most consecutive outings with a win since he had four straight victories as a member of the High-A Tampa Yankees from June 14 through June 30, 2007.

NO LOVE FOR OPPONENTS: Indians reliever **Mike Koplove** continues to thrive in pressure situations as he has allowed only five hits and struck out eight in 31 at-bats to hold opponents to a .161 average when the opposing team has runners in scoring position. The .161 opponent's batting average with runners in scoring position is the lowest average for all Tribe relievers and is second behind RHP **Ian Snell**'s team-leading .150 opposing average. The veteran reliever Koplove has not allowed a single run in his last 7.2 innings over his last four appearances and has only allowed runs in two of his 16 outings for the Tribe this season and has given up runs only five times in his combined 37 appearances between Lehigh Valley and Indianapolis. The right-handed hurler has gone 2-1 with one save in those 16 contests with the Tribe and is currently tied for 4th in the International League with 37 appearances and tied for 5th with eight holds.

LEHIGH VALLEY IRONPIGS (www.IronPigsBaseball.com)

WELCOME BACK WALKER: The 'Pigs have added back RHP **Tyler Walker**, who cleared waivers and accepted his assignment back to Lehigh Valley. With Philadelphia, Walker was 0-1, 1.64 ERA in 9 G (11.0 IP, 10 H, 2 R, 2 ER, 1 BB, 5 K, 2 HR). With the IronPigs, Walker was 2-1 with a 1.40 ERA and 3 SV in 15 G (19.1 IP, 8 H, 4 R, 3 ER, 3 BB, 20 K, .125) -- and was not scored upon in 13 of 15 relief appearances.

NOT SO GOOD CHARLOTTE: The red hot 'Pigs were riding a four-game winning streak heading to Charlotte for a four-game series Monday-Thursday, and things cooled off quickly. It started with a 1-0 walk-off loss Monday, followed by an 11-0 loss Tuesday (tying the worst lost by margin of defeat in franchise history). In doing so, the 'Pigs were shutout in back-to-back games for the first time in LHV history. This was followed with a 5-3 loss on Wednesday. Lehigh Valley is batting just .224 (22-98) in the series, averaging 1.0 R/G. Prior to this three-game draught, the 'Pigs had scored 53 R in their previous 9 G, batting .295 (87-295), averaging 5.9 R/G.

FRANCHISE HISTORY: It took 220 games for Lehigh Valley to get to .500 for the first time in franchise history -- which the 'Pigs did on 6/28/09 at 38-38 after a 6-1 win vs. Norfolk, but then they lost two-straight games and seven of their next nine. The 'Pigs then reeled off seven wins in their next nine contests to get back to .500 for just the second time in team history -- and have now since lost three consecutive affairs. Until thr loss Wednesday, Lehigh Valley took residence in 3rd place in the North for the first time in team history -- and for four days in all. With its doubleheader sweep of Rochester last Saturday, LHV passed both Rochester and Pawtucket to move into 3rd place. Previously, the 'Pigs had held sole possession of 4th place for 10 days (4/16; 6/24-7/2).

LOUIE, LOUIE!: C **Lou Marson** has hit safely in 15 of his last 17 G (24-55, .436-0-5) and in 20 of 24 G (32-79, .405-0-13) since coming off the DL on June 19 with a right ankle contusion. Since June 4, he's raised his average from .202 to .304 by hitting safely in 24 of his last 29 G (39-97, .402-0-17, 5 2B).

LOUISVILLE BATS (www.BatsBaseball.com)

EXTRA, EXTRA: On Saturday and Sunday night, the Bats played in back-to-back extra inning games for the first time since Aug. 11 (vs. Columbus, 4-3 W (10)) and 13 (at Toledo, 6-4 W (12)) of last year. The last time they played extras on back-to-back days was Aug. 4-5, 2006 at Toledo. In the 3-2 loss on Saturday night, the Bats and Bulls went 16 innings. The 16-inning game lasted 4 hours and 30 minutes, both of which are season-highs. They then backed it up with a 13-inning game on Sunday night, which the Bats won 7-6. The 29 innings in two days is tied for a franchise record. Louisville also played 29 innings in consecutive days on Aug. 18-19 of 2002 in Columbus.

BOLIVAR GETS THE WIN: INF **Michael Griffin** and INF **Luis Bolivar** both pitched an inning on Sunday night for the first time in their professional careers. Griffin pitched the 12th and walked one, struck out two and hit a batter while Bolivar earned the win in the 13th. Bolivar gave up one hit and struck out one and is the only position player in franchise history to earn a win. The last time Louisville had a position player pitch in a game was last season when INF **Kevin Barker** took the loss in a 5-2 loss vs. Columbus. He pitched the 17th inning and allowed three runs on two hits while walking three in an inning. It was Barker's fifth career pitching appearance, with the previous occurring in 2005 with Double-A New Hampshire.

HOME SWEET HOME: Louisville plays their 52nd game at home tonight and far and away has the best home record in the IL with a mark of 32-19 (.627). Including tonight, the Bats have 21 more games at Louisville Slugger Field and are on pace to win 14 more games at LSF. If the Bats reach the 46-26 mark, it would tie the 2000 and 2003 seasons' home records of 46-26. The Bats are the only team in its division with a winning record at home.

BIG MAC: OF **Darnell McDonald** homered in back-to-back games (7/20-7/21) for the first time since he hit home runs in three straight games while with Rochester last year (May 29-31). Since Game 2 of July 5's DH vs. Indianapolis, McDonald has hit in 12 of his last 13 games with six multi-hit games. He's batting .386 (22-57) with 11 runs, four doubles, three triples, three home runs and 11 RBI during the stretch.

NORFOLK TIDES (www.NorfolkTides.com)

MAKING HIS PITCH: Tides starter **Chris Tillman** enters play tonight 4th in the IL with a 2.42 ERA and 4th in the League with 95 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 three starts with Norfolk, Tillman has allowed one run in 21.1 innings (0.44 ERA), striking out 20 while walking two and yielding 17 hits. Tillman has faced Gwinnett twice this season, going 1-0 with a 1.54 ERA (2 ER, 11.2 IP).

HIT MAN: Outfielder **Jeff Fiorentino** has reached base safely via a hit or a walk in 35 of his last 37 games played, and he ranks 9th in the International League with a .312 batting average. Fiorentino has hit .400 (22-55) with two home runs and 34 RBI with runners in scoring position this season, and he's hit an even better .429 (9-21) with runners in scoring position and two outs. The 26-year-old also ranks 4th in the IL with a .526 slugging percentage.

WHAT A RELIEF: **Alberto Castillo** has not allowed a run in 12 of his last 14 outings with the Tides, as he's posted an ERA of 1.72 (3 ER, 15.2 IP) and registered five saves while striking out 13. On the season, Castillo has not allowed an earned run in 28 of his 35 appearances, and he's held left-handed batters to a .193 average against (11-57). The 34-year-old has also performed very well with runners on base, as he's allowed just three of 15 inherited runners to score.

PAWTUCKET RED SOX (www.PawSox.com)

OCEAN'S FOURTEEN: While losing 14 of their last 16 games, the PawSox have scored just 46 runs (2.88 runs per game) and have seen their IL-low team batting average slip to .230. PawSox pitchers in their last 14 games are 2-14, during which time the team ERA has risen from 3.49 on July 2 to the current season-high of 3.86. The PawSox fell to 5th-place in the IL North on Saturday for the first time this season and the first time this late in the year since they ended the 2006 season in 5th-place in the division. The Sox now face their largest deficit of the season at 10 GB, their largest deficit since they ended the 2007 season 16½ GB. Three weeks ago (July 2) the Sox were in 2nd-place and just -2½ GB.

ONE AND DONE: Pawtucket's 3-2 victory on Sunday vs. Indianapolis got the Sox back on track in 1-run games. Prior to that win, the Sox had dropped each of their last five 1-run decisions from July 6-18. The Sox own a League-best record of 21-13 in 1-run games. The PawSox had won six straight 1-run decisions prior to those five defeats. The PawSox all-time franchise record for 1-run victories in a season is 28 set in both 1981 & 1992.

OH SO CLOSE: PawSox pitchers came within one out of the first combined no-hitter in team-history last Sunday vs. Indianapolis at McCoy Stadium. **Michael Bowden**, who had not pitched in 13 days, was the starter and went 5 hitless innings. **T.J. Large**, just up from Double-A Portland, worked a hitless 6th-inning. Lefty **Javier Lopez**, who has not allowed a run in his last 9.2 innings, was perfect for 2.1-innings getting the first out of the 9th-inning before giving way to closer **Fernando Cabrera**. Cabrera recorded the second out of the 9th setting the stage for **Larry Broadway** as Indy's last hope. Broadway stroked a clean ground ball single to the right of second base to ruin the Pawtucket quartet's bid for a no-hitter. **Tagg Bozied** followed with a 2-run HR but Cabrera got the last out to preserve the 3-2 PawSox victory.

BOBBLE MANIA: The PawSox are pleased to present the first-ever **Jon Lester** Bobblehead Doll Night at McCoy Stadium this Saturday. Lester joins an illustrious list of former PawSox and current Red Sox stars who have been feted with a PawSox bobblehead following such luminaries as **Jason Varitek**, **Tim Wakefield**, **Jonathan Papelbon**, **Kevin Youkilis**, and last year **Dustin Pedroia** (the 2008 AL MVP).

ROCHESTER RED WINGS (www.RedWingsBaseball.com)

CHICKS DIG THE LONG BALL: The Red Wings have hit at least one home run in six straight games (nine home runs during six-game stretch). Rochester has hit a home run in eight of their last nine games (13 total home runs in those nine games). Rochester has hit 71 home runs which is 9th in the International League (Durham leads IL with 99 home runs).

DOWN THE STRETCH THEY COME: The Red Wings have 49 games remaining in the regular season (27 road games and 22 at Frontier Field). Of the 49 games remaining 28 of them are against teams with a losing record (Red Wings have a 17-11 record vs. these teams this season). Rochester will look to make their move in August when they play 19 games at Frontier Field.

YOU GOTTA TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS IN THE NORTH: Rochester holds a 24-23 record against North Division opponents so far this season. Rochester has 196-170 (.536) 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.SWBYankees.com)

THREE STRAIGHT NOT GOING TO HAPPEN: After wrapping up what will be a three-game instead of a four-game series at Columbus against the Clippers, the Yankees and Mud Hens will make up a pair of games rained out at PNC Field June 16-17 due to heavy rain, which eventually led to the PNC Field issues later in July. Due to the Yankees back-to-back days of doubling up against Toledo on Friday and Saturday, the Yanks and Clippers won't play a double header on Thursday (which would have given SWB three straight twin bills) but will instead settle for a three-game series. The loss of a second game means that the Yankees will play 142 games in 2009 instead of 144. The shortened series also guarantees Columbus the season series with the Clippers leading 4-2 heading into the final head-to-head match up.

OH KEI!: **Kei Igawa's** win over Columbus at Huntington Park on Tuesday night was the eighth of the season for the southpaw and the 27th of his career with Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, making him the winningest pitcher in SWB history. Igawa was tied with **Evan Thomas** who posted 26 wins in his career with the SWB Red Barons. Since the start of the 2008 season, Igawa is the winningest pitcher in the International League with a record of 22-9. The left-hander's career record with Scranton/Wilkes-Barre now sits at 27-13.

HOT START TO THE SECOND HALF: **Colin Curtis** wrapped up the unofficial first half of the IL season with a 2-29 (.069) slide from July 6-12 dropping his average from .250 to .174. The three-day break for the Triple-A All-Star Game agreed with the outfielder who has been on a tear since the Yankees returned to action on July 16. In the seven games since the break, Curtis is 8-20 (.400) with a HR and an RBI and a pair of multi-hit games including his first three hit game of the season Monday night at Columbus.

THAT'S WHY THE GAME ISN'T PLAYED ON PAPER: Statistically the Clippers have the worst pitching staff in the IL with a 4.61 team ERA. The stats have yet to show up for Columbus pitchers in six games against the Yankees in 2009. The Clippers have limited Yankees to 12 runs over the six games played between the two teams in 2009 and have posted a 2.09 ERA against SWB while holding the Yanks to a .200 average.

SYRACUSE CHIEFS (www.SyracuseChiefs.com)

BALESTER IS NEXT: The Washington Nationals once again recalled a starting pitcher from the Chiefs. This time it was right-hander **Collin Balester**, who was 7-9 with a 4.34 ERA in 19 starts. Balester joins **Jordan Zimmermann**, **Garrett Mock**, **J.D. Martin**, and **Craig Stammen** as starters promoted to Washington, while **Tyler Clippard**, **Logan Kensing**, **Mike MacDougal**, **Jason Bergmann**, and **Ron Villone** have all been promoted out of the Syracuse bullpen.

DESMOND DOES IT: Infielder **Ian Desmond** was recalled from Double-A Harrisburg this week and was inserted in the Chiefs lineup as the everyday shortstop. The 3rd round selection in the 2004 draft was batting over .300 with Harrisburg before his promotion. He missed six weeks of the season with an injury before returning to play in June.

MORE LEFTIES ADDED: At one point in the season the Chiefs pitching staff included no left-handers. This week they added two more, starting pitcher **Ross Detwiler**, who was optioned from Washington, and relief pitcher **Yunior Novoa**, who was recalled from Harrisburgh. They join starter **Horacio Ramirez** and reliever **Dave Williams** as lefties on the current staff.

TOLEDO MUD HENS (www.MudHens.com)

THE CLUTCH FACTOR: Updating a previous statistic, so far in July the Hens are hitting .325 (28-86) with runners in scoring position in wins and .200 (16-80) in losses. For the season, they are batting .222 with RISP. No other team is lower in said situations; in fact, in all of Minor League Baseball (excluding Short Season Single-A) only the Montgomery Biscuits (Double-A) are worse (.221).

WHO'S HOT ON THE LINEUP CARD: SS **Brent Dlugach** has a current 11-game hit streak, during which he is hitting .429 (18-42) with six of the hits going for extra-bases. OF **Jeff Frazier** is blazing to the tune of a .571 average and 2 HR in the last four games. OF **Wilkin Ramirez** continues to have a hot month; he is batting .351 in July and is one HR shy from matching his HR total from the previous three months combined.

WHO'S HOT ON THE HILL: RHP **Chris Lambert** has been on a magnificent streak. Eight of his last nine starts were "quality" and he has posted a 1.24 ERA (7 ER/50.2 IP). Despite the great performances, his team has only won three of those games. The one outing excluded from the streak was won by Toledo, despite Lambert surrendering five earned runs. Out of the bullpen, RHP **Casey Fien** has only allowed two earned runs in his last 19.2 IP (0.91 ERA). RHP **Matt Rusch** is in a current 13-inning shutout streak and RHP **Josh Rainwater** has converted three saves in as many chances since July 16.

K'S A-PLENTY: Of all the teams in Minor League Baseball, only the Inland Empire 66ers (Single-A) have struck out more than the Hens this season. Toledo has 855 strikeouts to the 66ers 871. Only three other teams are over 800: the Greenville Drive (824), Charleston River Dogs (808) and Bakersfield Blaze (806). As a rather impressive statistic, the Buffalo Bisons have just 513 strikeouts, the fewest in all of Minor League Baseball.