

Winter Haven Live: Wrapup

Written by {ga=consigliere}
Monday, March 19 2007 7:00 PM -

Lastoria chimes in one last time with his Winter Haven Live report. Now back in Cleveland, he provides pictures and video from his last few days in camp on various players like Carlos Rivero, Jason Cooper, Nick Weglarz, Shawn Nottingham, Steven Head, and many more. Lots of pictures here of various prospects in the Indians system, as well as some shots from the Thursday (3/15) game.



It is amazing how fast time flies when you are having fun, and that is exactly what happened down in Winter Haven. I was there for a little over a week, and it felt like just a few days. Boy, was it tough to leave the low 80s and sunny weather in Winter Haven on Saturday and come home to high 20s and snow in Cleveland. Man, someone please remind me why I live here again.

Anyway, I've got to say the atmosphere down in Winter Haven is very relaxed, and the players have a quiet confidence to them going into the season. Also, all the articles we read about where the clubhouse is supposedly great in fact does appear to be true, as from everything I saw on and off the field, these guys really do get along. One of the best litmus tests for me to tell how well players get along is when they can openly rib each other, which I saw a lot of, with Jake Westbrook being the ringleader.

A lot of the major league players were more than happy to chat, the minor leaguers especially. Also, various executives, coaches and instructors like Travis Fryman, Cory Snyder, Ross Atkins, Neil Huntington, and others were more than willing to chat when approached at the right time. Overall, just an intimate experience with the team and players, and one more fans should try out for themselves at least once.

It will be sad to say good-bye to Winter Haven next year, but the promise of the move to

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Arizona in 2009 is exciting.

Just a great week, and the itch is definitely there for baseball season to start.

All that said, here are some random video shots and pictures from the last two days in camp on Thursday (3/15) and Friday (3/16) from last week:

I had a few people ask about young shortstop prospect Carlos Rivera. For those unfamiliar with Rivera, he is an 18-year old infielder who is 6'3" and 198 pounds, and he really does look that big. The Indians signed him out of Venezuela in March of 2005, and last year played for the Indians rookie level affiliates Burlington and the GCL Indians. No word on where he will start this season, but it looks like he will stay behind in extended spring training and then when short season leagues start up in late June he will probably go to Mahoning Valley. Here are two clips of him in action taking BP, and some pics of him:

[Carlos Rivera takes BP](#)

[More Carlos Rivera BP](#)



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[http://www.mlb.com/news/roster/2007/03/19/roster_mlb_winter_haven_live_wrapup/](#)

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6 On the left, P. D. Feltman's first full home run in the 11th inning of the game with the big boys. On the right, C. G. Smith's first home run in the 11th inning of the game with the big boys.



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Infielder Jake Gautreau in action at third base:

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clubhouse and winter park complex. A down player hang around outside the minor league

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First baseman Stephen Head gets some work in at first base:



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Pitcher Shawn Nottingham sticks around to sign an autograph and pose for pictures:

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the right hand of the... (The text is mostly illegible due to heavy overlap and low resolution.)

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Right-handed pitcher [Caitan Smith](#) (11) riding along with outfielder [Nick Weglarz](#) (8). Also,

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Lead baseman Nick Struzi (11) in action, as well as Jared Goedert (16):



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[Florida Tariffs: Few of the hundreds of ninth-grade kids at the Tuesday night game \(2/15\):](#)



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Rafael Betancourt in action:

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Ryan Garke in action:



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Grady Sizemore in action:

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Johns River and Lake Winstar in action, as well as the famous water tower in the



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the new home of the Florida Gators, and Andy Ward, Craig, Mike, and Francis stretching in the morning.

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Photo by [The Florida Sports Illustrated](#) and [The Florida Sports Illustrated](#) for [The Florida Sports Illustrated](#) Winter Haven