

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

Minor Happenings is back this week in its normal Thursday afternoon timeslot. This week, Lastoria brings us up to date with the recent news and developments in the Indians farm system such as the new TV deal for the Captains on SportsTime Ohio, John Van Every's breakout season, Adam Miller's health status, draft signings, the start of the short-season leagues, and more.



"Minor Happenings" covers the important developments and news in the Indians farm system. Information in this report is collected from the various news outlets that cover each team, some national news, and in some cases from private sources connected to the Indians organization.

TheClevelandFan.com Minor League Player of the Week *(for games from June 15 through June 20)*

John Van Every (Buffalo - Outfielder)

.500 AVG (9-18), 7 R, 1 3B, 4 HR, 4 RBI, 4 BB, 1 SB

Buffalo outfielder John Van Every is having a breakout season, and one of the best seasons of any Indians minor leaguer to date. Van Every was called up from Akron to Buffalo on June 10th, and since his arrival in Buffalo has been on a tear. In

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -



Director's Cuts

Indians Farm Director Ross Atkins is currently in Buffalo taking in games, and had the following to say on some Tribe prospects in Buffalo:



On the recent roster moves: When moves are made by the Indians to callup someone from Buffalo, almost every time the move is based on situational needs.

Ben Francisco's offensive production and his ability to get on base warranted the call up to Cleveland.

Mujica's callup was deserved as well.

He has been throwing strikes consistently, and has allowed few walks.

On Ryan Mulhern: Statistically, he is performing at an impressive clip. One of the areas the organization is working with Mulhern on improving is his plate discipline and getting him to work counts to draw more walks.

In the spring, they worked with his defense and wanted to see improvement in his

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

defensive play at first base, and he has shown that improvement.

On Adam Miller: While not etched in stone, Miller is ready to go on a rehab program to work himself back into the Buffalo starting rotation.

The hand specialist Miller visited a few weeks ago is working directly with the team and monitoring Miller's progress and is involved in the rehab planning.

Miller feels good, and the plan is to give Miller three to four appearances out of the bullpen to get him back into game shape, and if all goes well he should be back in the Buffalo rotation in two to three weeks.

Captains On STO

The Lake County Captains and SportsTime Ohio (STO) announced a deal this week that an agreement has been reached to televise five Captains games on STO the second half of this season. The five games will be broadcast from Classic Park in



Eastlake, Ohio, and be produced by Classic Teleproductions, which is an Emmy award winning production company based in Twinsburg, Ohio.

The first broadcast is tonight, which is the first game of the second half of the season for the Captains, and will air live at 7:00pm. Aside from tonight's game, each game will be aired on a tape delayed basis and will be re-aired at least one time.

The broadcast booth will see Lake County Captain's radio play-by-play voice Craig Deas handle TV play-by-play duties, and he will be partnered up with David Bacon who is vice president of Sports Programming for Classic Teleproductions.

When Deas is on TV, Matt Jaworski will take over the radio play-by-play duties on WELW-AM 1330.

Here is the broadcast schedule:

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

06/21/2007 7:00 PM Game #1 vs. Delmarva Shorebirds
06/23/2007 12:00 AM Game #2 vs. Delmarva Shorebirds
06/24/2007 3:00 PM Game #2 vs. Delmarva Shorebirds (replay)
06/25/2007 12:00 PM Game #1 vs. Delmarva Shorebirds (replay)
07/08/2007 9:00 PM Game #3 vs. Hagerstown Suns
07/12/2007 12:00 PM Game #4 vs. Lakewood BlueClaws
07/13/2007 12:00 PM Game #5 vs. Lakewood BlueClaws
07/15/2007 12:00 PM Game #4 vs. Lakewood BlueClaws (replay)
07/15/2007 3:00 PM Game #5 vs. Lakewood BlueClaws (replay)

Adelphia had been broadcasting about ten Lake County home games a year on their local-access channel from 2003-2006, but when Time Warner cable gained control of Adelphia last year they stopped producing Captains games and other programs for the local-access channel, which left the Captains without a TV deal. With the Captains now back on TV, it will give Indians fans a chance to see some of the young stars of tomorrow on TV.

According to Pat Kilkenney, SportsTime Ohio Vice President of Program Acquisition/ Executive Producer, "This is a great opportunity for STO to provide Minor League baseball to our fans and showcase the Indians of the future."

Almost Miller Time

Buffalo right-hander Adam Miller is on the verge of returning to game action. Miller threw 25 pitches in a bullpen session Tuesday, and came away feeling good and showed no signs of still being hampered by the strained tendon in his middle

finger. He threw all three of his pitches well, as the fastball showed normal life

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

and velocity, his devastating slider had good bite, and his changeup looked good.

Miller, who last pitched in a game on May 12th, was throwing at almost 100 percent during the bullpen session.

Miller was evaluated by hand specilaist Dr. Tom Graham and team doctors on Wednesday, and all indications are there were no setbacks and he is set to throw one more simulation game and then go on a rehab throwing program working out of the Buffalo bullpen. The plan is to have him make three to four appearances out of the bullpen to get back into game shape and then, barring any setbacks, be back in the rotation in two to three weeks. My guess, is Miller will return to the rotation after the All-Star break (July 9-11).

In seven starts, Miller is 4-1 with a 2.45 ERA.

Draft Signings

The Indians signed first round (13th overall) draft pick Beau Mills to a \$1.575 million signing bonus on Friday. Mills is in



Mahoning Valley, and is expected to be quickly moved up to Lake County after a week.

Scouting Director John Mirabelli says negotiations with Bo Greenwell (6th round) are going in the right direction. Greenwell is an outfielder out of high school in Fort Myers, Florida, and son of former Boston Red Sox outfielder Mike Greenwell.

New draft rules call for teams to sign players by August 15th, or they go back in the draft the next year.

Here is a listing of the players signed to date:

1st round: Beau Mills 1B Lewis-Clark State (Idaho)

8th round: Mark Thompson SS Lewis-Clark State (Idaho)

9th round: Adam White OF West Virginia

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

10th round: Heath Taylor LHP Oklahoma
12th round: Gary Campfield RHP Texas A&M
13th round: Matt Brown OF Wichita State
14th round: Daniel Morales rhp San Francisco
18th round: Kyle Landis RHP Pittsburgh
20th round: Jeff Hehr SS Eastern Michigan
29th round: Garrett Rieck LHP Chico State (CA)

Politte Shutdown

Rehabbing right-hander Cliff Politte pitched for Akron on Friday night, throwing one inning and recording three strikeouts.



Politte is recovering from off-season rotator cuff surgery, and woke up on Saturday with shoulder fatigue. As a precaution, the Indians decided to shut him down for a week to ten days, and he is expected to be back in action soon.

Indians General Manager Mark Shapiro hinted that the Indians envision him as a bullpen possibility for the major league club sometime in late July or early August.

In three games with Akron, Politte is 0-0 with a 3.38 ERA with five strikeouts in 2.2 innings pitched.

The Other Miller



Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

Buffalo right-hander Matt Miller continues to dominate International League hitters. Miller is now in the midst of a stretch of 11 consecutive outings without allowing a run, pitching 10 innings and striking out 17. Miller was called up briefly by the Indians over a week ago, but was optioned back to Buffalo to make room for Jason Stanford on the roster.

When Miller was added back to the Buffalo roster, right-hander Jake Dittler was moved down to Akron.

With Tom Mastny's recent struggles in the Indians bullpen the past few weeks, don't be surprised if Mastny is optioned out this weekend and Miller called up to Cleveland.

To date, in 15 appearances with Buffalo, Miller is 0-0 with a 3.21 ERA and has allowed 9 hits and 6 walks while striking out 18 in 14 innings pitched.

Scrapper Homecoming

It is a homecoming for Mahoning Valley shortstop Jeff Hehr this week. Hehr was the Indians 20th round pick in the 2007 draft out of Eastern Michigan University, and he signed quickly.

He went to high school at Youngstown Cardinal Mooney High School, and is the first local player to play for the Scrappers.

Hehr is excited at the opportunity to play for an

organization he followed growing up, and also for his family in nearby Boardman to get a regular opportunity to see him play. This is also only the second time the Indians have drafted and signed a player that went to a local school in 12 years.

Hehr is very athletic, and while he has average range and an average arm, he is

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

considered to be fundamentally sound at shortstop. Hehr hit .299 for Eastern Michigan last year, but the question will be if he hits as a professional, which many scouts are not convinced will happen.

Laffey Anchors Bisons Rotation



Buffalo left-hander Aaron Laffey is certainly going well out of his way to make himself noticed. Last night, Laffey put up another outstanding effort, pitching a complete game two-hit shutout. Laffey threw 88 pitches, of which 56 were for strikes, and issued one walk while striking out six.

Laffey has now made seven starts for Buffalo, and in all but one of them when he was bombed for 12 hits and 10 runs in 2.2 innings he has gone at least six innings.

In fact, in his last five starts he has not allowed a run three times and the other two times allowed two runs.

At Buffalo he is now 4-3 with a 3.80 ERA, and at Akron and Buffalo combined he is 8-4 with a 3.13 ERA in 13 starts.

Aubrey Still Hurt?

Reports coming out of Akron say first baseman Michael Aubrey is having trouble running. While he is playing, he noticeably



is either hurt again, or seriously favoring his recent groin and hamstring issues. Indians Farm Director Ross Atkins played down the issue saying "he may subconsciously be protecting himself";.

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

After hitting .400 with 5 HR and 11 RBI in 13 games at Kinston, Aubrey is currently hitting .179 with 1 HR and 4 RBI in 7 games at Akron.

On the year, he is hitting .321 with 6 HR, 15 RBI and a 1.028 OPS in 20 combined games at Kinston and Akron.

The Indians understand that they are running out of time with Aubrey, and with that in mind are no longer coddling him and want him to play every day and provide 100% effort. They need to make a decision on Aubrey this offseason, and if he can't stay healthy or give 100% effort because of past injuries, they may be forced to remove him from the 40-man roster and risk losing him to another team.

Panther Pitches

Kinston reliever Michael Finocchi reached his pitch limit on Saturday night, which left Kinston in a bit of a quandary. The Kinston bullpen was stretched thin, but thankfully Kinston already had the first half title wrapped up, so Kinston manager

Mike Sarbaugh called on outfielder Nathan Panther to finish out the game. Panther was greeted by a mess, as Kinston led the game 7-3 but the bases were loaded and there was only one out in the in the 9th inning.

Panther was once a pitcher back in his junior college days, but had not pitched since then. He walked the first two batters he faced to force in two runs and make the score 7-5, but then got the next batter on a pop out to first and then struckout the last batter to close out the Kinston win and leave the bases loaded.

It was Panther's first ever relief appearance, and he earned a save for his efforts.

Prior to Panther's appearance, the last time a position player appeared as a pitcher in a game at Kinston was infielder Luis Cotto who pitched a scoreless inning of relief on September 5, 2005.

Single-A All Star Wrapup

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

The Carolina/California League All Star Game was played on Tuesday night, with the California League beating down the



Carolina League 10-5. Kinston Indians catcher Max Ramirez went 0-for-2 with a strikeout, utility player Chris Gimenez went 0-for-2 with a strikeout, right-hander Frank Hermann pitched one inning and allowed one run on two hits, and right-hander Jim Deters pitches a third of an inning and did not give up a run and had a strikeout.



The South Atlantic League All Star Game was played on Tuesday night, with the North All-Stars beating the South All-Stars 3-1. Lake County Captains first baseman Matt Whitney went 1-for-3 with a double, RBI and strikeout.

Also, catcher Matt McBride was 0-for-1 with an RBI, shortstop Carlos Rivero went 0-for-3 with a strikeout, and right-hander Hector Rondon pitched one inning and did not give up a run on one hit.

Infirmiry Report

Buffalo outfielder Shin-Soo Choo has been diagnosed with sprained ligament in his left elbow and is out for at least the next six weeks. There is even unofficial word that the injury is more serious, and may require major surgery and effectively end his 2007 season.

His injury situation should become clearer in the coming weeks.

In 41 games at Buffalo, Choo is hitting .270 with 1 HR, 20 RBI, 8 stolen bases and

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

a .705 OPS.



Kinston infielder Jared Goedert has been on the disabled list since around June 9th with inflammation of his left shoulder.

According to Ross Atkins, he is scheduled to be activated sometime this weekend.

In 56 combined games at Lake County and Kinston, Goedert is hitting .333 with 16 HR, 56 RBI and a 1.071 OPS.

Akron catcher Wyatt Toregas is on the disabled list with a lower back strain, and catcher Dave Wallace was moved down from Buffalo to fill Toregas' spot on the roster. Akron's other catcher Armando Camacaro was placed on the inactive list, and catcher Argenis Tavaréz was called up from Lake County.

Toregas is expected to be reactivated any day.

Affiliate Notebook



Buffalo Notes: Outfielder Jason Cooper went 3-for-3 in the first game of Wednesday's doubleheader, driving in three runs with a single, double and solo home run. ... Left-hander Jeremy Sowers started the second game of Wednesday's doubleheader, and was knocked around for three runs in 4.2

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

innings, giving up nine hits and three walks. ... When outfielder Ben Francisco was called up to Cleveland on Wednesday, Buffalo activated infielder Trent Durrington who had been on the disabled list with a strained left calf. ... Utility infielder Hector Luna was hit in a face with a pitch on Wednesday night, and will be out of action today (Thursday). He is not expected to miss much time.



Akron Notes: Outfielder Brian Barton leads all the minors in being hit by a pitch. Amazingly, he has been hit by a pitch 21 times in 63 games. ... Left-handed starter Chuck Lofgren was touched up for six runs in six innings on Wednesday night. ... Catcher Armando Camacaro was briefly placed on the inactive list for four games for the birth of his child. ... Shortstop Asdrubal Cabrera is hitting .329 with 6 HR, 29 RBI, 16 SB, and has an .896 OPS. ... First baseman Jordan Brown is hitting .323 with 4 HR, 41 RBI, 10 SB and has an .872 OPS. ... Outfielder Brian Barton is hitting .312 with 6 HR, 33 RBI, 12 SB, and an .864 OPS.



Kinston Notes: Second half action in the Carolina League picks back up tonight. ... Some stats at the break: Wes Hodges (3B) .325, 6 HR, 33 RBI, and a .919 OPS; Max Ramirez (C) .297, 10 HR, 40 RBI, and a .937 OPS; Chris Gimenez (UT) .288, 15 HR, 37 RBI, and a 1.031 OPS; Stephen Head (1B) .258, 11 HR, 40 RBI, and a .789 OPS; John Drennen (OF) .255, 8 HR, 41 RBI, and a .728 OPS; Frank Hermann (RHP) 5-1, 3.13 ERA, and a 1.15 WHIP; Ryan Edell (LHP) 7-3, 3.29 ERA, and a 1.24 WHIP; David Huff (LHP) 4-2, 2.72 ERA, and a 1.21 WHIP; Erik Stiller 2-1, 0.64 ERA, and a 1.07 WHIP.



Lake County Notes: Second half action in the South Atlantic League picks back up tonight, and as noted above, the Captains will be on STO at 7:00pm. ... Some stats at the break: Matt Whitney (1B) .309, 16 HR, 58 RBI, and a .935 OPS; Matt

Minor Happenings: Captains Debut On STO Tonight

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 20 2007 7:00 PM -

McBride (C) .294, 5 HR, 39 RBI and a .832 OPS; Jason Denham (OF) .273, 3 HR, 22 RBI, and a .746 OPS; Roman Pena (OF) .269, 5 HR, 44 RBI, and a .786 OPS; Carlos Rivero (SS) .265, 4 HR, 32 RBI, and a .707 OPS; Nick Weglarz (OF) .249, 9 HR, 35 RBI, and an .805 OPS; Josh Tomlin (RHP) 6-0, 3.06 ERA, and a 1.17 WHIP.



Mahoning Valley Notes: Right-hander Michael Eisenberg is back in action, and has resurfaced in The Valley. Eisenberg had control issues with Lake County earlier this year and was sent to extended spring training to work on his command, and for at least one start it looks to have paid off.

Eisenberg won the season opener, going six innings and allowed one run on four hits but no walks, and struckout out five. ... Mahoning Valley is 1-1 to start the season, and as a team have only four hits in those two games. ... 2007 top draft pick Beau Mills (1B) is 0-5 with a walk and strikeout in his first two games.



GCL Indians Notes: In the Indians season opener on Tuesday, left-handed starter Kelvin De La Cruz came away with the win going five innings and allowed one run on two hits while striking out seven. ... Right-hander Gregorio Rosario, the player the Indians received from Seattle in the Jason Davis trade, is on the GCL Indians pitching staff. ... Outfielder Angel Rodriguez has four RBI in two games.