

## Minor Happenings: The Return of Adam Miller

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, June 27 2007 7:00 PM -

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A little different format this week, as Minor Happenings will actually be broken up into two pieces this week with a short first half posting today and a much longer second half posting Saturday afternoon. Lastoria touches on the return of Adam Miller to the Buffalo pitching staff, the plan to get him back into the rotation, and the Indians now considering him as a bullpen option for the major league team.



*“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.*

A little different format this week, as *Minor Happenings* will actually be broken up into two pieces this week with a short first half posting today and a much longer second half posting Saturday afternoon.

Why the split? Well

I, the reason is two-fold.

There is just so much info to share this week, that it is hard to get it into one report and not having it come out obsessively longer than this piece sometimes already is, and also I had and still have some personal things to attend to this week that have prevented me from being able complete the report as normal.

So, be on the lookout for the more thorough and longer report this Saturday.

## **TheClevelandFan.com Minor League Player of the Week** *(for games from June 21 through June 27)*

### **Reid Santos (Left-handed Pitcher - Akron)**

*2-0, 0.82 ERA, 2 starts, 11 IP, 6 H, 1 ER, 3 BB, 16 K*

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Santos put forth two excellent starts for Akron this past week, and continues to be impressive since his move to the starting rotation. Since the move at the end of May, in six starts Santos has been outstanding going 3-1 with a 2.43 ERA.



On the year in 22 combined appearances in the bullpen and starting rotation at Akron, he is 5-1 with a 1.99 ERA and has allowed 38 hits and 14 walks while striking out 44 in 54.1 innings pitched.

Last Friday, Santos toyed with a no-hitter through 5.2 innings before giving up a hit. Santos' versatility to pitch out of the bullpen or as a starter, especially since he is left-handed, makes him very valuable to the Indians as a possible swing man down the road.

Santos is not overpowering as he is yet another soft tossing finesse lefty in the system, but he has very good command and location of his pitches.

His fastball only clocks in the upper 80s, but he compliments it well with a solid changeup to play up the speed of the fastball.

### *Honorable Mentions:*

Jordan Brown (1B - Akron): .323 AVG (10-31), 3 R, 2 2B, 2 HR, 11 RBI, 2 BB

Jake Dittler (RHP - Akron): 2-0, 0.00 ERA, 2 starts, 11 IP, 10 H, 0 ER, 6 BB, 6 K

Eric DuBose (LHP - Buffalo): 1-0, 1.29 ERA, 1 start, 7 IP, 9 H, 1 ER, 0 BB, 3 K

Jeanmar Gomez (RHP - Lake County): 2-0, 1.64 ERA, 2 starts, 11 IP, 6 H, 2 ER, 4 BB, 7 K

Nick Weglarz (OF - Lake County): .450 AVG (9-20), 3 2B, 2 HR, 7 RBI, 6 BB

### *Previous Winners:*

6/15 to 6/20: John Van Every (Outfielder - Buffalo)

6/8 to 6/14: Chris Gimenez (Utility - Kinston)

6/1 to 6/7: Aaron Laffey (LHP - Buffalo)

5/24 to 5/31: Josh Rodriguez (SS - Kinston)

5/17 to 5/23: Shawn Nottingham (LHP - Akron)

5/10 to 5/16: Matt Whitney (1B - Lake County)

5/3 to 5/9: Chuck Lofgren (LHP - Akron)

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4/26 to 5/2: Adam Miller (RHP - Buffalo)

4/19 to 4/25: Shawn Nottingham (LHP - Akron)

4/12 to 4/18: Jason Stanford (LHP - Buffalo)

4/5 to 4/11: Matt McBride (C - Lake County)

## Director's Cuts

Indians Farm Director Ross Atkins is currently in Winter Haven assessing the rookie level GCL Indians affiliate, and provided some insight on the players selected to the Future's Game and the young players in Winter Haven.



*On Chuck Lofgren:* He continues to pitch at an above average level, especially for his age (21).

He displays a great mound presence, and his combination of athleticism and power on the mound is exciting.

He also has a very good walk (35) to strikeout ratio (86).

Overall, the organization is enthusiastic and very excited about his potential.

Lofgren is 7-6 with a 4.57 ERA in 15 starts.

*On Max Ramirez:* There is no question that he can hit. The question now is, can Ramirez catch as much as he wants to hit? So far it

looks like Ramirez is dedicated to making the mandated improvements defensively, and has made some incredible strides defensively behind the plate.

Ramirez is hitting .303 with 10 HR, 44 RBI and a .947 OPS.

*On Tim Bogar:* He has been a successful manager with Akron the past two seasons. Externally, he is recognized with the nice performance in the win/loss department, but internally he is recognized by how great a job he does with helping to develop players, communicating, and putting forth effective strategies on the field.

*On the GCL Indians:* This is an introductory level, but of all the affiliates it probably is the most

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fun for Atkins and his coordinators.

Everyone at this level is a prospect

and has varying degrees of unknowns that have yet to play out.

Everyone is viewed as on the way up with potential, and this is where Atkins and his staff can make their mark and develop players.

## Miller Returns



Right-hander Adam Miller returned to the mound for the Buffalo Bisons on Monday night, and had a great first outing in his return from a finger injury that sidelined him for almost seven weeks. Miller started the game Monday night and threw one inning as scheduled, throwing 11 pitches while setting the opposing team down in order and registering a strikeout. After finishing the inning, Miller worked on the side in the bullpen to get the rest of his scheduled 20-25 pitches in.

Miller showed excellent velocity hitting 98 MPH on the radar gun on his final pitch, very good command (eight strikes), and his secondary stuff was sharp. He reportedly came away from the outing in good health and reports the next day indicate there have been no setbacks.

Miller is now 4-1 with a 2.40 ERA in eight appearances (45.0 innings pitched) for Buffalo.

## Miller's Plan

Before making his long awaited return to the mound on Monday night, Miller threw a 34-pitch simulated game last Friday in Buffalo, and afterward was proclaimed ready to return to game action. Officials who took in the simulated game on Friday noted his stuff was "outstanding" and "electric". Miller displayed his quick arm action, which makes it tough to pick up the

baseball in his hand, and his secondary pitches were crisp and down in the zone.

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Miller had been out since May 12<sup>th</sup>, a total of 45 days, with a strained tendon in the middle finger of his right hand. According to officials he looks great and there are no concerns, but right now the plan is to pitch Miller out of the bullpen to build up his arm strength and regain confidence in all of his pitches, as well as get him back into pitching shape. In many ways, the next few weeks will be like spring training all over for him.

During his bullpen rehab assignment, the plan will be to get him at least two one-inning relief stints and then push him to a few two and three inning relief stints before inserting him back into the starting rotation. He should be back in the rotation after the All-Star break (July 9-11). Once he is back in the rotation, he'll be on a strict pitch count that is much lower than normal, and will take a few starts to ramp him up to his normal pitch count of 85 or so pitches.

Miller's next bullpen appearance should be today (Thursday).

### Miller Bullpen Bound?



The Indians acknowledged this past week that if Miller does not have any setbacks from his finger injury that he could become a viable bullpen option for the major league team. The Indians are searching for another late inning bullpen arm after the Roberto Hernandez experiment failed, and Indians GM Mark Shapiro commented that Miller could be an option and figure into a middle or late relief role with the Indians possibly sometime this year.

Even if Miller does pitch out of the Indians bullpen, it would be a temporary solution as they still envision him long-term as a starter.

### On The Road

I'll be hitting the road visiting all the minor league affiliates over the course of the next two months. Next weekend, I will start a stretch of visiting four affiliates in eight days and I plan to write a piece on each stop. The four stops planned are Buffalo (July 6<sup>th</sup>), Mahoning

Valley (July 8

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), Akron (July 9

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), and Lake County (July 13

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I plan on doing some behind the scenes reporting on the experience at each stop, taking in batting practice, interviewing a player or two, talking to scouts, taking some video and pictures which I will post, and more.

How much of all that I actually accomplish at each stop

remains to be seen, but so far Akron and Mahoning Valley have complied and will be giving me access to do most if not all of those things.

Later this month, I will be visiting Winter Haven the last two weekends of July. Also, in late August I will be visiting Kinston, or may hold off until the playoffs in early September.

I plan to do the same reporting from each of these sites as I am doing with the other four affiliates.

If anyone has any suggestions on some things I should focus on during these visits, other ideas, please feel free to e-mail me at [tlastoria@swerbsblurbs.com](mailto:tlastoria@swerbsblurbs.com) .

## Reminder

Part two of this report will post Saturday afternoon. Thanks for reading.