

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -

The Gulf Coast League (GCL) is minor league baseball in it's rawest form. The GCL Indians roster is littered with draft picks out of high school from the two most recent drafts, as well as several young Latin American players experiencing professional baseball stateside for the first time. Tony ventured down to Winter Haven, Florida back in late-July for his fourth stop on his minor league road trip to checkout the rookie-level GCL Indians, talk to a few players, and most importantly get a sense of what goes on down there and in extended spring training. What an interesting experience it was.



This is the fourth in a series of six articles where by the end of August I will have visited all six of the Indians minor league affiliates in seven weeks. I'll recap each stop in Winter Haven, Mahoning Valley, Lake County, Kinston, Akron and Buffalo with a short writeup consisting mostly of video and pictures, and also write several separate articles on players I talk to during my visit.

Welcome to the Gulf Coast League (GCL), where the Cleveland Indians lowest level affiliate the rookie-level GCL Indians reside. It is professional baseball in its rawest form, with a roster littered with draft picks out of high school from the two most recent drafts, as well as several young Latin American players experiencing professional baseball stateside for the first time.

I ventured down to Winter Haven, Florida back in late-July for my fourth stop on my minor league road trip to checkout the GCL Indians, talk to a few players, and most importantly get a sense of what goes on down there and in extended spring training. What an interesting experience it was.

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -

Whether you go to Buffalo to watch the Indians Triple-A affiliate in action, or you go to Mahoning Valley to catch the Indians short-season Single-A affiliate in action, you always catch the game in a stadium with fans in attendance. That's not the case for the GCL Indians. When the games are being played, you would think you were watching a high school baseball scrimmage.

They play on the Indians Triple-A practice field located adjacent to the minor league clubhouse at the Indians spring training complex at Chain of Lakes Park in Winter Haven, Florida.

If you take a look around, there is definitely a feeling of isolation. There is no one working in the administration buildings. No front office.

No open concession stands.

No restrooms.

No press box.

No fans.

The only applause you hear when the home team makes a nice play, makes a good pitch, or gets a hit comes from the coaches and players in the dugout.

Just to give you an idea of how different it is at this level, the "front office" is the trainer Teddy Blackwell. That's it. There just is not anything there, except a handful of coaches and roughly 50 players who make up the GCL team and others from various parts of the organization on rehab assignments, and the trainer. That is your GCL Indians organization.

The ticket office where patrons would normally buy tickets during spring training is all closed up, and in fact the entire facility is in a state of hibernation until next spring training. All except the minor league clubhouse and the practice fields.

Here are a few pictures of the field, dugout and practice field:

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



The setup of the Winter Haven facility where it basically is only fully operational for two months out of the year is a big reason the Indians are moving their spring training operations to Goodyear, Arizona at the start of the 2009 season. At Goodyear, the Indians will have a brand-new state of the art training complex that should be fully (or at least nearly) operational year round. It will become a true sister operation to the team headquarters in Cleveland located at Jacobs Field.

The GCL team is just a temporary home for the Indians rookie-level prospects. The GCL team was started up last year, and ended up replacing Burlington by year's end as the Indians affiliate where most of their recent high school draft picks and Latin American players get their first taste of professional baseball.

The GCL team is temporary because when spring training operations move to Goodyear, Arizona in 2009, the GCL team will be scrapped and the Indians will have a rookie-level team in the Arizona League in 2009.

The environment is one that a lot of these players get used to, as many have been in Winter Haven since spring training opened in February. After the big league club and full-season minor league clubs break camp at the end of March, the players left behind in extended spring training are those rehabbing injuries and others who will play on one of the Indians short-season league teams in the GCL or at Mahoning Valley.

Short-season leagues do not startup until mid-June, so for two and a half months from April to mid-June, the players left behind play in inter-squad scrimmages and get lots of practice work in on the diamond, and some in the classroom.

Also, sometimes pitchers are sent to extended spring training to work on new things with their

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -

game, whether it be developing another pitch, working on their fastball command, or a new delivery. During my stop in Winter Haven, right-handed reliever Cody Bunkelman had just been sent to extended spring to work on a new arm slot.

Bunkelman is hanging on by a thread in the organization, but because he throws a mid-90s fastball they do not want to give up on him yet.

So, to my surprise, when I was there I caught Bunkelman's first workout learning how to drop down and throw sidearm. Here are two videos of him in action:

Video 1: [Bunkelman bullpen session](#)

Video 2: [Bunkelman bullpen session \(homeplate view\)](#)

Also, here are some pictures of him throwing during his bullpen session:



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



With this system, a mirror is placed at the top of the ladder, reflecting the sparks, which may be seen in the walls.

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Written by {ga=consigliere}
Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Wednesday, 16 May 2018 12:00 PM

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Written by {ga=consigliere}
Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



And for [citing the paper in Google Scholar](#) on the same pressing physical specimen 847

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Michigan State University is a public research university in East Lansing, Michigan. It is the largest university in the state and is a member of the Big Ten Conference. The university was founded in 1855 and is one of the oldest universities in the United States. It has a long history of academic excellence and is known for its research and teaching. The university is a member of the Association of Public Universities and Colleges (APUC) and the Association of American Universities (AAU). It is also a member of the Association of Public Research Universities (APRU) and the Association of Public Research Universities in the United States (APRUS). The university is a member of the Association of Public Research Universities in the United States (APRUS) and the Association of Public Research Universities in the United States (APRUS).

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Watch [Edgar Martinez's](#) [pitching motion](#) - it lot like Ronnie Belliard at the plate, see for yourself:
Watch [Edgar Martinez's](#) [pitching motion](#) - it lot like Ronnie Belliard at the plate, see for yourself:

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



What is a signed Pet of Pedro Angel Rodriguez:
What is a signed Pet of Pedro Angel Rodriguez:

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



And finally, the player's some random field action shots and players in action (scroll over the

Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



Welcome To The GCL

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Monday, August 13 2007 7:00 PM -



© 2007 The GCL. All rights reserved. This page is for informational purposes only. It is not to be used for any other purpose. The GCL is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this page. The GCL is not responsible for any damages or losses incurred by any user of this page. The GCL is not responsible for any content or opinions expressed in this page. The GCL is not responsible for any links or references to other websites. The GCL is not responsible for any trademarks or registered trademarks used in this page. The GCL is not responsible for any copyright or other intellectual property issues. The GCL is not responsible for any other legal issues. The GCL is not responsible for any other issues.