

## Indians Top 50+ Prospects: #41-50

Written by {ga=consigliere}  
Tuesday, January 01 2008 7:00 PM -

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For all you diehard Tribe fans out there ... we have a belated Christmas present for you as we begin running a piece as detailed and informative as any we've ever run in our two year history. Tony Lastoria (with help) has spent the better part of November and December putting together his list of the Indians Top 50 Prospects, complete with career stats, detailed bios, pictures, and video. And we kick it off today with prospects #41-50. Enjoy.



*This is part three of a nine piece installment ranking the Indians top prospects. [Part one](#) provided a listing of prospects who just missed this list, and [part two](#) profiled the 2007 Draft picks and Dominican Summer League players.*

*All photos in this installment, except Perdomo, are courtesy of Carl Kline. To get in touch with Carl Kline for photo assistance, please e-mail me at [tlastoria@theclevelandfan.com](mailto:tlastoria@theclevelandfan.com) and I will forward his e-mail address to you. Luis Perdomo photo is courtesy of John M. Setzler, Jr. / MiLB.com.*

*All ages as of 04/01/2008*

### 50. Randy Newsom - Right-handed Pitcher

**Age: 25 Height: 6'2" Weight: 200 Bats: Right Throws: Right**

	W	L	IP	ERA	WHIP
2007 Kinston/Akron	4	2	2.80		58
Career	11	8	3.33		133

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[Newsom on the mound in spring training](#)

### 49. Brian Slocum - Right-handed Pitcher

Age: 27 Height: 6'3" Weight: 210 Bats: Right Throws: Right

#### 2007 WHIP

2007 Buffalo	2	2	4.15	5
Career	41	25	4.00	111



**History:** The Indians drafted Slocum in the 2nd round of the 2002 Draft out of Villanova

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University. He came into the draft as a highly touted player where Baseball America ranked him as the #1 prospect in Pennsylvania and 40th overall nationally.

**Strengths & Opportunities:** When he came out of college, Slocum threw the ball in the mid-90s, but his velocity dipped to the upper-80s when he mistakenly took part in an upper body lifting program not authorized by the Indians after the 2002 season. The Indians put him on a proper program and after a few years, Slocum once again is throwing a lively low-to-mid 90s fastball. He compliments his fastball with a changeup and slider, where the changeup is an above average pitch, but while his slider has shown improvement it still needs work to be more effective. He is an aggressive pitcher on the mound and attacks hitters.

In 2005, the Indians moved Slocum to the bullpen and he stayed there until the second half of the 2006 season when the Indians decided they felt he best suited the team as a depth starter. Slocum has shown the versatility to where he can be a swing guy in that he can fill a need in the bullpen or as a starter when needed by the Indians in the future. Slocum needs to continue refining his delivery, and he needs better command of his off-speed pitches. He struggled in his first call to the big leagues in 2006, but some of it was due to over-thinking and things speeding up on him.

The real problem with Slocum is he has had a hard time staying healthy. In 2001 he had a sore shoulder, in 2002 he had bicep tendonitis, in 2005 he had a ganglion cyst in his right wrist and a blister on his throwing hand, and in 2006 he injured his elbow while warming up to pitch. Last year he made his first five starts at Buffalo, and then was sidelined with irritation in his elbow in May and never returned. He was ready to come back in August, but the Indians did not activate him because they sided on being cautious. Reportedly, he is healthy and ready to resume his role for the Indians in 2008 as a depth starter. In the Venezuelan Winter League this offseason, in four starts Slocum went 1-0 with a 2.08 ERA and in 21.2 innings allowed 12 hits, 6 walks and struck out 16.

**Outlook:** At age 27, Slocum is what he is and is no longer much of a prospect. But, considering he still is rookie eligible and is a part of the organization's farm system, he still has to be considered one. The Indians showed a lot of confidence in Slocum's ability to be a contributor with the major league club when they kept him on the 40-man roster this offseason. While he will not be an impact player by any means, the Indians appear to have faith that if a rash of injuries befalls the Indians starting rotation or bullpen that Slocum could step in and adequately fill the void. Slocum will return to Buffalo in the starting rotation.

## 48. Shawn Nottingham - Left-handed Pitcher

Age: 23 Height: 6'1" Weight: 190 Bats: Left Throws: Left

Year	W	L	ERA	IP
2007 Kinston	9		4.77	27
Career	27		4.26	97

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[Nottingham on the mound](#)

### 47. Ryan Mulhern - First Base

Age: 27 Height: 6'2" Weight: 205 Bats: Right Throws: Right

**BBS**

2007 Buffalo	.290	130	476	67
Career	.282	525	1932	284



**History:** Mulhern was taken in the 11<sup>th</sup> round of the 2003 Draft out of the University of South Alabama. Mulhern had a sensational 2005 campaign where he won the Lou Boudreau Award

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as the organization's top hitter by hitting .315 with 32 HR, 94 RBI and a 1.030 OPS in 112 combined games at Kinston and Akron. Mulhern took a step back in 2006 and struggled at Akron hitting .268 with 15 HR, 69 RBI and a .773 OPS in 121 games.

**Strengths & Opportunities:** Mulhern has very good power, but lacks good plate discipline. For his career, he averages a strikeout every 3.7 at bats. On top of that, for a player who strikes out so much he does not draw very many walks as he has a 3:1 strikeout to walk ratio for his career. As with any power-hitter, a lot of his problems center around a lack of aggressiveness early in the count in not attacking fastballs, and then late in the count being over-aggressive when the pitchers are throwing more breaking balls.

Last spring and throughout the season, the Indians worked with Mulhern on his shaky defense and wanted to see improvement in his defensive play. They worked on his mental approach to playing the position, and he responded well to the additional instruction and showed improvement by season's end. Going forward, one of the Indians primary areas of focus for Mulhern in 2008 will be working with him on improving his plate discipline and getting him to work counts to draw more walks.

**Outlook:** The Indians were very pleased with his performance in Buffalo being that it was his first taste of Triple-A. At 27 years of age, Mulhern has pretty much maximized his potential and is a player at a position where there is no immediate need at the major league level for the Indians. He arguably is good enough to be a serviceable first baseman at the major league level, but as long as Garko et al are in Cleveland, Mulhern will never get a shot in Cleveland. He will open the season at Buffalo again, and could be someone the Indians move during the season to fill a need at the major league level and create roster room at one of the most crowded positions in the system (first base).

**Video:** [Mulhern hits a home run](#)

## 46. Michael Finocchi - Right-handed Pitcher

Age: 22 Height: 6'0"; Weight: 190 Bats: Right Throws: Right

	WHIP			
2007 Kinston/Akron	5	3	3.27	45
Career	10	8	3.17	102

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### 45. Ryan Goleski - Outfield

Age: 26 Height: 6'3" Weight: 215 Bats: Right Throws: Right

#### STATS

2007 Akron	.257	128	471	50
Career	.271	569	2122	307



**History:** The Indians selected Goleski in the 24<sup>th</sup> round of the 2003 Draft out of Eastern Michigan University. Last year, Goleski was picked up by the Oakland A's in the Rule 5 Draft,

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but he ended up being returned to the Indians when he did not make their opening day roster.

**Strengths & Opportunities:** Goleski's poor season in 2007 may have been a byproduct of the disappointment from not making the Oakland A's opening day roster and returning to the Indians where he was essentially being buried in a system deep with outfielders. He was pretty vocal about his displeasure of having to come back to the Indians, and according to sources who watched Goleski most of last season, he showed a lack of passion that seemed to carry over into his performance on the field and at the plate for most of the season.

To be fair to Goleski, it is only human nature to be disappointed in not seeing your major league dream realized and instead having to go back to the daily grind in the minors. On top of that, he also had injured his wrist during the offseason and it was not 100% healthy when the season started. The wrist injury would help explain the evaporation of his power in the early part of the season as he struggled to find his power stroke hitting only hit one home run with a .312 slugging percentage in April and May. But, from June through the end of the season, Goleski did manage to put up a slugging percentage almost 100 points higher (.405) and the last four months he had a .744 OPS.

By the end of the season Goleski was reportedly 100% healthy, but because he was trying to compensate for the injury he fell into some bad habits with his swing mechanics. As a result, for most of the last few months of the season the Indians worked with him to get rid of those bad habits. Still, even with the issues from last season, Goleski is a prototypical right-fielder in that he brings power to the plate and has a cannon for an arm.

**Outlook:** The question with Goleski is whether he can stay consistent, as he put up great numbers in 2004 (28 HR, .895 OPS) and 2006 (27 HR, .948 OPS), but fell off in 2005 (17 HR, .658 OPS) and 2007 (9 HR, .701 OPS). He needs to overcome the bad habits that plagued him in 2007, but if his power returns because of a healthy wrist and his two strike approach gets back to where it was in 2006, he should have a good year. If past history is any indication, this being an even numbered year and him likely to repeat at Akron to start 2008, look for him to have a great start in Akron where he eventually moves to Buffalo by mid-season.

**Video:** [Goleski at the plate](#)

### 44. Erik Stiller- Right-handed Pitcher

Age: 23 Height: 6'5" Weight: 200 Bats: Right Throws: Right

	WHIP			
2007 Kinston	3	6	2.89	25
Career	8	11	3.61	38

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### 43. Eddie Mujica - Right-handed Pitcher

Age: 23 Height: 6'2" Weight: 220 Bats: Right Throws: Right

#### 2007 WHIP

2007 Buffalo/Cle	2	1	5.86	44
Career	18	16	3.77	160



**History:** Mujica was signed by the Indians as an undrafted free agent out of Venezuela in October 2001. In 2005, he burst onto the scene going 3-1 with 24 saves and a 2.54 in 52 combined relief appearances in Kinston and Akron, and then went 0-0 with 4 saves and a 1.35

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ERA in six games for Akron in six appearances in the Eastern League (EL) playoffs for the EL Champion Akron Aeros.

**Strengths & Opportunities:** In the spring of 2005, the Indians made a role change for Mujica from starting pitcher to reliever that jumpstarted his career. Mujica went from an unknown and struggling pitcher, to one of the better bullpen prospects in the Indians system in just over a year's time. The decision to move him to a bullpen role worked out well as he put up a great year in 2005, and followed it up with an even better year in 2006 by going 4-1 with 13 saves and a 1.57 ERA in 34 combined appearances at Akron and Buffalo.

Mujica features a mid 90s fastball and locates it well, and also has a good mid-to-high 80s slider. With the development of a nasty split-finger fastball a year ago he can be more than just a situational reliever since he now has a pitch in his repertoire to consistently get out left-handed batters. Mujica has excellent physical and mental makeup, and outstanding durability to handle multiple appearances. The Indians love Mujica's fearless approach, and his attitude and competitiveness thrive late in games. He believes there is not a player that is going to beat him, and when he gives up a hit he bears down and goes right after the next hitter. His confidence and short-memory, to go along with his fearless mentality and pitching abilities, make him a natural fit for a backend bullpen role.

Last year, however, Mujica slid back some because he struggled mentally with returning to Buffalo to start the season. He also had trouble handling the callups back and forth from Cleveland to Buffalo which often resulted in long layoffs between appearances. During the season he was working on refining his fastball to get more sink on it and also worked on his split-finger, and at times it hurt him because he is such a strike thrower that he left some pitches out over the plate that were hammered. He will continue to work on developing his split finger to use as a much needed put away pitch in the big leagues.

**Outlook:** Mujica is a quality bullpen arm the Indians will likely stash in Buffalo again this year. He will battle for a spot in the Indians bullpen this spring, but looks destined to return to Buffalo and continue refining his game and to work on improving his split finger.

## 42. Luis Perdomo - Right-handed Pitcher

Age: 23 Height: 6'0" Weight: 170 Bats: Right Throws: Right

	WHIP			
2007 Lake County	4	6	3.27	56
Career	12	12	3.16	137

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### 41. Brad Snyder - Outfielder

Age: 25 Height: 6'3"; Weight: 200 Bats: Left Throws: Left

BBB

2007 Buffalo	.263	86	259	41
Career	.279	524	1934	343



**History:** Snyder is a former first round pick of the Indians in the 2003 Draft out of Ball State University. At Ball State, Snyder was named the Mid American Conference Player of the Year in 2003 leading the league in doubles (25), walks (49), total bases (154), and slugging

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percentage (.770), and ranked second in runs (68), RBI (61), and on-base percentage (.522). In three seasons at Ball State, Snyder hit a combined .378 (211-558).

**Strengths & Opportunities:** Snyder's compact stroke generates excellent bat speed, and he has very good power to all fields. His swing is geared for pitches in the zone, and when he stays within himself he hits almost everything hard. Snyder has good speed, which plays up due to his very good instincts on the basepaths. Snyder has mostly played center-field during his time with the Indians, but his power bat and plus arm project him as a major league right-fielder. Snyder's athleticism is a big strength. His power/speed combination is salivating, and except for last season he has played well at each stop in the minors and is already at Triple-A. He has the potential to be a Jeromy Burnitz type player with more speed, or even an outfield version of Howard Johnson.

Snyder had eye surgery last offseason, and with some of the adjustments at the plate the Indians implemented, many (including me) felt that he could improve on his high strikeout rate in the minors. In 2006, Snyder set an Akron record with 158 strikeouts and struck out once every 3.3 at bats. But, last year in Buffalo his strikeout rate increased to once every 2.8 at bats. On top of that, his power and batting average slipped considerably. With his lack of discipline, he is still very susceptible to high and outside pitches and pitches in the dirt.

While there are always concerns when a player does not play up to par, the Indians are not overly concerned with Snyder. The Indians made some adjustments with Snyder's stance at the plate during the season last year and in the offseason to get him to stand over the ball more and get his head out over the plate. He has adapted well with the new approach and looked real good in the Fall Development Program (FDP) and looked 100% recovered from a broken right thumb that sidelined him the last month or so of the season.

**Outlook:** I have been one of the biggest supporters of Snyder the past few years as I love his all around game with power, defense, speed, athleticism, and hustle. But, Snyder's once promising professional career took a turn in the wrong direction in 2007 when he had a forgettable season at Buffalo. Still, it is a little too early to completely cast him aside, but his poor showing in 2007, strikeout rate, and erratic hitting is what caused him to tumble on this list so much from last year. The Indians expect him to have a big year in 2008 when he returns to Buffalo for another season, and it could be a make or break year for Snyder.

**Up Next:** Indians Top 50+ Prospects #31-40