

Minor Happenings: A Lot Of Crowe-ing In Akron

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Wednesday, July 02 2008 7:00 PM -

It is Thursday, and that means it is Minor Happenings time again here on the site. As we get ready for the holiday weekend, Tony gives us another thorough rundown of the Indians farm system, touches on the sizzling hot Trevor Crowe in Akron, gives an update on the proposed move of the Indians Triple-A affiliate to Columbus, the emergence of Hector Rondon and Stephen Head, Asdrubal Cabrera playing shortstop in Buffalo, Akron and Buffalo All Star selections, and lots more!



"Minor Happenings" covers the important developments and news in the Indians farm system. While most of the information in this report is from my own research and through interviews I have conducted with organizational personnel, some information in this report is collected and summarized from the various news outlets that cover each team.

In case anyone missed it, earlier in the week I did a feature on Lake County first baseman [Dust in Realini](#)

Also, as a reminder, be sure to check out my blog the [Cleveland Indians Minor League Insider](#) for more regular updates.

I add something every night to recap any of the major transactions and news from the day as well as give some highlights from the games of all six affiliates.

I had a blast in Frederick, MD and Washington D.C. over the weekend. Kinston absolutely destroyed Frederick in the game on Friday night, with Beau Mills hitting two moon rockets for home runs. Speaking of Mills, I had a chance to speak to him, Nick Weglarz, Brian Juhl, Mike Pontius and Josh Tomlin at length, so be on the lookout for feature pieces on them throughout the month.

For anyone wondering, I plan to go to Buffalo on Sunday to see lefty David Huff pitch, and then sometime mid-week will visit Akron for the first time in about a month to hopefully see Scott

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Lewis in action for the first time.

Indians Minor League Player of The Month

(for June)

Trevor Crowe (Outfielder - Akron)

.400 AVG (42-for-105), 32 R, 10 2B, 1 3B, 4 HR, 24 RBI, 16 BB, 13 K, 5 SB, 1.100 OPS

Akron outfielder Trevor Crowe had an incredible month, capping a remarkable turnaround to his season and resurrecting his fading prospect status. Finally healthy from the herniated disc that plagued him in spring training and the first two months of the season,

Crowe put together one of the most impressive months seen by a hitter in the Indians minor league system in awhile. His play has more than earned consideration for a callup to Buffalo, which should be coming really any day. Crowe is now very much in the plans in the Indians outfield next year, possibly even later this year.

Crowe was also named Bank of America Eastern League Player of the Week on Monday for the week ending June 29th, the second week in a row he has won the award. Crowe is the first player to win back-to-back weekly awards in the Eastern League since Harrisburg's Dee Haynes in 2005, and is believed to be the first Akron player to ever do it.

Crowe hit .464 (13-for-28) for the week with two doubles, a triple, two home runs, 10 RBI, and 11 runs scored in seven games.

Crowe had four multi-hit games and led the Eastern League in batting average, RBI, runs and on-base percentage (.531) for the week.

He also slugged .821 on the week with a 1.352 OPS.

Over his last 23 games, Crowe is hitting .417 with 15 extra-base hits, and has raised his batting average 144 points from .181 on June 4th to .325 today.

On the year, Crowe is hitting .325 with 4 HR, 26 RBI, 9 stolen bases, and a .921 OPS.

Crowe was 4-for-6 with a game-tying RBI double in Akron's 11-10 comeback win last Monday, and went 4-for-5 with two RBI and two runs scored in Akron's 9-7 loss last Wednesday. On Friday night Crowe went 3-for-5 with four runs, four RBI, and a grand slam that highlighted a

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six-run seventh inning in a 16-6 win.

Crowe hit a leadoff home run in the eighth inning Sunday afternoon that proved to be the difference in Akron's 7-6 win, and he also banged an RBI triple off the wall in right-center in the third inning to score the first run of the game.

For those wondering why Crowe has been out of the lineup in two of the last three games, he is battling a bruise on his chest that bothers him when he swings. It is nothing serious, and he should be in there on a more regular basis again starting tonight or tomorrow.

Honorable Mentions:

Hector Rondon (RHP - Kinston): 4-0, 5 games, 1.29 ERA, 28 IP, 10 BB, 34 K

J.D. Martin (RHP - Akron): 3-0, 0.56 ERA, 7 games, 16 IP, 10 H, 4 BB, 19 K

Lucas Montero (OF - Lake County): .318, 4 HR, 12 RBI, .961 OPS

Luis Perdomo (RHP - Kinston): 3-0, 6 saves, 0.71 ERA, 11 games, 12.2 IP, 6 H, 8 BB, 18 K

Previous Winners:

May: Kelvin De La Cruz - Lake County

April: Ryan Miller - Lake County

Director's Cuts

Indians Farm Director Ross Atkins took some time this week to talk about Double-A Akron and the hot performances to date there:

On Trevor Crowe: "Trevor has been healthy. He had a herniated disc and he has worked extremely hard to get back quicker than we expected.

He got off to a relatively slow start this year and we think the injury had something to do with it.

Since then he has

picked up to where he was a year and half ago. He has been absolutely on fire and is driving the ball all over the place. He is really making a hard case for us to get him out of the Eastern League.

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He can play all three outfield positions very well, and I think he can definitely be an everyday player in a major league lineup."

On J.D. Martin: "J.D. is going to be one of those great stories in the game. He has already been a potentially sad story because he was highly touted and then injured and he is not in the major leagues yet.

I just believe in my heart that he is going to be one of those great stories like a Joe Borowski that just ends up being an integral part of a major league team somehow.

Because of his drive and his courage he has probably the best baseball makeup in the organization, but unfortunately he does not have the best physical makeup as he has been injured a lot.

His stuff is major league average some days.

It is not across the board above average and some of it is below average, but he just has those intangibles."

On Randy Newsom: "He has been unbelievable. I don't think he has given up many hits at all to right-handed hitters. He must have more 1-3s than anyone in minor league baseball as anytime I see him pitch they are hitting a groundball back to him.

The biggest test for him will be getting left-handed hitters out.

There are not many right-handed specialists in the game and it is hard to carry that type of guy on your team at times, but they are there and they exist.

For him to transition, he really needs to focus in getting the left-handed hitters out."

On Wes Hodges: "Wes is one of my favorite guys to talk about, be around and watch play. He is the kind of player you grew up watching on "This Week in Baseball" as he is that All-American, strong, athletic, powerful, very smart and great guy to be around. He is going to be a major league player for a very long time, and I think the Cleveland Indians' fans are going to get to know him well very soon."

On Josh Rodriguez: "He has power and speed. He is showing at least average ability at second base with the ability to play shortstop.

I think he probably is more suited for major league second base, but he can play shortstop.

Josh has settled in nicely.

The more we play him at second base, the more natural that becomes.

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Offensively he has always been a guy who gets on base, gets his walks, and drives a few balls out of the park.

He is very much on his way."

On All Star selections: "I think it is an affirmation for them as they were voted in by other managers at the minor league level. That is what's great about the minor league All Star game, as it is not just your statistics it is the other managers that watch you play and you stand out to them.

It is a great experience for them to be in and around those caliber of players and start to experience the game on that level."

Indians Minor League Player Of The Week

(for games from June 26th through July 2nd)

Stephen Head (Outfielder - Akron)

.400 AVG (12-for-30, 8 R, 4 2B, 4 HR, 9 RBI, 1 BB, 6 K

Akron outfielder Stephen Head has quietly been having one of the better seasons no one is talking about. After he began the season in extended spring training to continue rehabbing from offseason shoulder surgery, he was moved up to Akron about a week



into the season. After a few games, he went back on the disabled list on April 16th with a broken bone in his right wrist (non-throwing hand). Surgery was not required, so Head only missed about two weeks and returned to action on May 3rd.

Since his return, Head has been one of the most consistent performers in the Indians minor league system.

On the year, Head is hitting .320 with 7 HR, 29 RBI and an .860 OPS. His consistency is best demonstrated by his monthly numbers where he hit .357 in April, .303 in May, and .307 in June (in two July games he is hitting .556).

In his last 14 games, he is hitting .421 (24-for-57) with 13 extra base hits (5 HR) and 14 RBI.

He has split time at first base and outfield, playing 27 games at first base and 20 in the outfield.

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Head is considered the best defensive first baseman in the system, but was moved to the outfield late last year because of his athleticism and to give him more flexibility to play in Akron, Buffalo and even Cleveland.

For a more detailed scouting report on Head,
[go here](#)

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Honorable Mention:

Jordan Brown (1B - Buffalo): .458, 2 HR, 3 RBI

Ryan Edell (LHP - Akron): 1-0, 1.50 ERA, 12 IP, 10 H, 1 BB, 11 K

Lucas Montero (OF - Lake County): .360, 3 HR, 7 RBI

Lonnie Chisenhall (SS - Mahoning Valley): .480, 1 HR, 4 RBI

Josh Tomlin (RHP - Kinston): 1-0, 0.00 ERA, 6 IP, 1 H, 0 BB, 5 K

Josh Rodriguez (SS - Akron): .385, 0 HR, 7 RBI

Previous Winners:

6/19 to 6/25: Trevor Crowe (OF - Akron)

6/12 to 6/18: Chris Gimenez (C - Akron)

6/5 to 6/11: Jim Deters (RHP - Kinston)

5/29 to 6/4: Steven Wright (RHP - Kinston)

5/22 to 5/28: Chris Archer (RHP - Lake County)

5/15 to 5/21: David Huff (LHP - Akron)

5/8 to 5/14: Steven Wright (RHP - Kinston)

5/1 to 5/7: Jeremy Sowers (LHP - Buffalo)

4/24 to 4/30: Jose Constanza (OF - Akron)

4/17 to 4/23: Hector Rondon (RHP - Kinston)

4/10 to 4/16: Wes Hodges (3B - Akron)

4/3 to 4/9: Kelvin De La Cruz (LHP - Lake County)

Columbus Move Still Not Confirmed

There is nothing new to report on the potential move of the Indians Triple-A affiliate to Columbus next season. The National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues have sent memos to all minor and major league teams reminding them that any

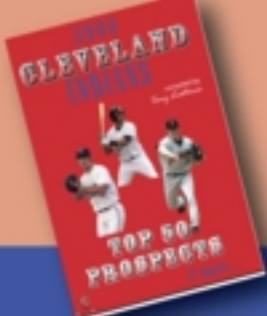
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