

Minor Happenings: Abreu Done For The Year

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Friday, June 26 2009 7:00 PM -

Busy week for Tony. Wednesday, he was in Mahoning Valley, watching and talking with members of the Scrappers. Thursday, 2009 first round pick Alex White joined Tony and Paulie on "Smoke Signals", right here on The Cleveland Fan Live. And today ... he is off to Columbus to see the Clippers in action at their gorgeous new ballpark. Where he finds time to put together this ruthlessly thorough column each week, I'll never know. But I ain't complainin'.



"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.

A shorter update today, mostly because things have been hectic of late. I'll chime in with a short piece tomorrow or early in the week on

[my blog](#)

sort of taking a look at the first half of the season and how the system overall is doing and run down how my pre-season Top 20-30 have done so far (by the way, my

[Indians 2009 Top 100 Prospect book](#)

is still available).

Be sure to check out and [follow my Twitter page](#) to get up-to-date info as it happens in the Indians minor league system.

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In case you missed it, [on our radio show Smoke Signals](#), Paul and I this week talked to 2009 first round pick right-handed pitcher Alex White.

We talked for about 15 minutes about where he is in the signing process, his experience in the College World Series, and lots more.

Also, I was in Mahoning Valley on Wednesday, so will have some pictures, video, and a few articles from that visit soon, though I have some stuff from recent visits to Lake County and Akron I have to get out as well. Anyway, I talked to right-handed pitcher Clayton Cook and infielder Jason Smit, so expect future feature pieces on them at some point this season.

I'm off to Columbus today, so hope to see many of you at the game tonight.

Onto the *Happenings*...

Indians Minor League Player Of The Week

(for game from June 18 through June 24)

Nick Weglarz (Outfielder - Akron)

.429 AVG (9-for-21), 7 R, 2 2B, 0 3B, 2 HR, 8 RBI, 4 BB, 3 K

After admittedly trying to do too much at the plate in the first month of the season, Double-A Akron outfielder Nick Weglarz has been on fire for the last two months and to date is hitting .265 with 11 HR, 52 RBI, and has a .902 OPS. The numbers really



become eye-popping when you look at his numbers since May 1st as he is hitting .327 with 10 homers and 46 RBI in just 49 games over the last two months. Weglarz has also collected 13

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doubles in that span, scored 24 runs, and has more walks than strikeouts while notching a .628 slugging percentage.

Weglarz was widely considered one of the Indians top five prospects going into the season (#2 by me), and so far he has lived up to that ranking. Weglarz was at his best in a three-game series against Trenton that concluded earlier this week as he hit .700 (7-for-10) in the series, homered in all three games, drove in eight runs, and collected his first four-hit game of the season Wednesday before becoming just the 12th player in franchise history to draw four walks in a game on Thursday.

Weglarz has collected hits in 12 of his last 14 games and raised his batting average to .265 which is the highest it has been at this season. On the season, he leads Akron and is tied for second in the Eastern League with 52 RBI.

Honorable Mentions:

Eric Berger (LHP - Kinston): 1-0, 0.00 ERA, 1 game, 7.0 IP, 2 H, 0 ER, 3 BB, 4 K
Nick Kirk (LHP - Mahoning Vy): 2-0, 1.42 ERA, 2 games, 6.1 IP, 4 H, 1 ER, 0 BB, 11 K
John Allman (OF - Mahoning Vy): .455 AVG (10-for-22), 3 R, 4 2B, 0 3B, 0 HR, 6 RBI, 3 BB, 3 K
Jared Goedert (3B - Akron): .429 AVG (9-for-21), 1 R, 4 2B, 0 3B, 0 HR, 4 RBI, 2 BB, 2 K
Jordan Brown (1B - Columbus): .346 AVG (9-for-26), 1 R, 0 2B, 0 3B, 1 HR, 5 RBI, 2 BB, 7 K
Juan Aponte (1B - AZL Indians): .462 AVG (6-for-13), 4 R, 1 2B, 0 3B, 1 HR, 5 RBI, 1 BB, 4 K

Previous Winners:

06/11 to 06/17: Trey Haley (RHP - (Lake County)
06/04 to 06/10: Michael Brantley (OF - Columbus)
05/28 to 06/03: Donnie Webb (OF - Lake County)
05/21 to 05/27: Jordan Brown (1B/OF - Columbus)
05/14 to 05/20: Paolo Espino (RHP - Kinston)
05/07 to 05/13: Lonnie Chisenhall (3B - Kinston)
04/30 to 05/06: Nick Weglarz (OF - Akron)
04/23 to 04/29: Matt McBride (1B - Kinston)
04/16 to 04/22: Eric Berger (LHP - Kinston)

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04/08 to 04/15: Kelvin De La Cruz (LHP - Kinston)

Scouting Abreu

First off, Low-A Lake County outfielder Abner Abreu was lost for the season last weekend when he dove for a ball in the outfield and ended up separating his shoulder. He has been put on the disabled list, and they are still evaluating him to determine whether or not he will have surgery on the shoulder. In any case, he is expected to be out the remainder of the season.

In 63

games with the Captains, he hit .305 with 7 HR, 30 RBI and had an .839 OPS. The injury is very unfortunate for him as he was really coming into his own, but now the focus is getting him healthy and using his successful first half of the season this year as a building block to next year.

That said, I was able to talk to a scout who has recently seen Lake County play - ironically the night before the injury occurred - and he came away glowing after seeing Abreu play. Those who have been reading

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the past year know that Abreu is a guy the Indians are very high on, so it is good to hear it coming from someone from outside the organization with no bias toward the players in the Indians system.

"Seriously, body and actions-wise, at least defensively, he reminds me of when I saw Vladimir Guerrero back when Vlad was in the Eastern League at Harrisburg like a gazillion years ago," said the scout. "Same kind of tall, gangly body, crazy range in right field - he tracked a ball to the right field line to make a huge catch at a crucial time in the game in foul ground, then later glided into the right-center gap to run down a ball that would have gone for extra bases with almost anybody else playing right field. I'm

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not saying he's Vladdy, but that's who he reminded me of defensively and the fact that he was easily the best player on the field from either side."

The Guerrero comp is interesting as this is the same comp Ross Atkins used about a month back. Now, obviously, they are not saying he is Vladimir Guerrero today, but his tools and physical build really resemble the kind of player Guerrero was back when he was in the minors.

And, this is what comps are for, to give people an idea of what a player could become or what he looks like to give a mental picture in their head what the scout is seeing.

The scout went on to talk about the rest of Abreu's game.

"That's what he does - he glides," said the scout. "Glider runner on the bags, but more so in the outfield. He's more raw at the plate, but shows ability to make contact with pitches all over the zone. The speed doesn't play as well on the bases, but he's aggressive as hell in all phases of the game.

He's going to get bigger and stronger, which will probably limit the ridiculous range he has now, but should also give him more power.

I think he recognizes pitches extremely well at the young age he is now, and that'll get better as he moves up.

Just a guy who's obviously dripping with tools."

Get well and see you next year Abner.

Checking In On Meloan, LaPorta

As I mentioned in the intro above, I'll be travelling to Triple-A Columbus tonight, and my hope is that I see right-handed reliever

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