

## Hagadone Set To Make Double-A Debut

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:27 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:35 AM

---



Cleveland Indians prized left-handed pitching prospect Nick Hagadone will make his Double-A debut tonight pitching for Akron in Canal Park.

The Indians received Hagadone as part of a three player package from the Boston Red Sox last year when they traded All Star catcher Victor Martinez to the Red Sox on July 31<sup>st</sup>. While the deal also included right-handed pitchers Justin Masterson and Bryan Price going to the Indians, Hagadone was the headliner of the trade as he was one of the top left-handed pitching prospects in the minors because of his powerful fastball that can touch 99 MPH, his promising secondary stuff, and his tenacity on the mound.

Since joining the Indians, Hagadone has pitched well and pretty much lived up to the hype. He joined Low-A Lake County after the trade last year and went 0-1 with a 2.45 ERA in five starts (14.2 IP, 8 H, 5 BB, 21 K) before finishing the season at High-A Kinston where he made two starts going 0-0 with a 5.06 ERA (5.1 IP, 5 H, 5 BB, 6 K).

Even though Hagadone is 24-years old and at a more advanced age, he opened the season in Kinston this year to get more time at an important development level. In addition, since he is coming off Tommy John surgery two years ago and is still on a somewhat restricted pitch count,

## Hagadone Set To Make Double-A Debut

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:27 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:35 AM

---

the Indians wanted him to open the season with a warmer weather team. In ten starts at Kinston this year he went 1-3 with a 2.39 ERA, and in 37.2 innings allowed 28 hits, 29 walks and had 45 strikeouts.

Hagadone has looked good so far this season and now that the reigns are being let go some he is able to pitch deeper into games which could help him build some momentum and carry it through the rest of the season.

“It’s been good this year,” said Hagadone in a recent interview. “My pitch count is up to 80 and I am pretty happy about that to get a chance to go more innings. I knew it was going to be pretty cautious at the beginning, though I didn’t know it was going to be that cautious. It has worked out fine.”

Most importantly, Hagadone’s surgically repaired elbow is feeling great, which is good news for the Indians as that was obviously the biggest risk they took when they acquired him from the Red Sox. At the time of the trade he was barely a year removed from Tommy John surgery and was on a restricted 50-pitch or three inning limit (whichever came first) for all of his starts last year.

“My arm has really never felt better than it does right now,” said Hagadone. “I am totally and completely free from the surgery and ready to go.”

There is no question the arm strength has returned this year for Hagadone as he has officially been up to 97-98 MPH several times. According to some stadium scoreboards he has even reached triple digits a few times, but those readings are often inflated. In addition to his powerful fastball his feel for his other pitches has also returned.

“I am starting to get a better feel for everything,” said Hagadone. “My slider has been pretty consistent every start and my changeup is pretty good. I am hoping it keeps building from there and I can just keep it going consistently.”

The only chink in his armor to date is his high walk total as 29 walks in 37.2 innings (6.9 BB/9) is

## Hagadone Set To Make Double-A Debut

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:27 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:35 AM

---

excessive. To be successful in the higher levels of the minors and the big leagues that 6.9 BB/9 rate will have to be dropped nearly in half to the high threes or low fours. Being a power pitcher he is going to walk more hitters because he gets a lot of swings and misses and foul balls, and also he won't give up very many hits, so a slightly higher walk rate would be acceptable. At the moment the Indians are not concerned about the walk issues, though it is something down the road they may focus a little more on limiting in order to finish off his development.

"His walks will always be high and he is always going to be a high strikeout guy because he has natural stuff and is not going to give up a lot of hits," said Indians minor league pitching coordinator Dave Miller. "He has some walks this year, but they are not bad walks. Just walks where he has ran up some counts. He could certainly get better with that, but by no means is it alarming to us as it is not really an issue as his stuff is so good."

Developing Hagadone's secondary pitches is the main focus right now. He has shown improved confidence in both his slider and changeup, and the Indians felt it was time to bump him up a level to challenge him more with those pitches.

"We are definitely trying to challenge him to throw his slider for strikes early in the count and also use his changeup," said Miller. "One thing we'd like to see is for him to use his changeup more to right-handed hitters. It's not just a matter of staying healthy, but developing his secondary pitches, fastball command and also reading swings too."

Now that Hagadone is in Akron, he more than likely can settle in and unpack his bags as he should be there for the remainder of the season. He should get close to 13-15 starts in Akron, which should be enough to evaluate him and decide whether to add him to the Major League 40-man roster considering he is up for roster protection from the Rule 5 Draft this offseason. Barring something unforeseen, he is a lock to be rostered.

But the roster situation is far from Hagadone's mind, and instead his focus for the rest of the season is to continue to improve his mechanics and pitches.

"I'm not really worrying about my health anymore," said Hagadone. "I am just trying to stay consistent with all my pitches, my command, staying in my good rhythm with my delivery and just being better overall."

## Hagadone Set To Make Double-A Debut

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:27 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, June 01 2010 9:35 AM

---

*Follow Tony and the Indians Prospect Insider on Twitter [@tlastoria](#) . His new book the [2010 Cleveland Indians Top 100 Prospects & More](#)*

*is also available for purchase on*

[Amazon.com](#)

*or*

[his site](#)

.