

## Minor Happenings: Kipnis Is First At Second

Written by {ga=consigliere}

Saturday, June 26 2010 6:27 AM - Last Updated Saturday, June 26 2010 6:57 AM

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*"Minor Happenings" is a weekly column which 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.*

Lots and lots of stuff to share this week, so we will dive right into it.

In case you missed them, two player articles posted this week on Low-A Lake County right-handed pitcher [Clayton Cook](#) and on High-A Kinston left-handed pitcher [Chris Jones](#) . Also, I provided another update on the 2010 Draft and [where we are in the signing process](#) with several players. Also, with the draft coverage all but over, I will finally be posting lots of player articles in the coming weeks.

A lengthy conversation I had with Low-A Lake County pitching coach Mickey Callaway was to be included in this report today, but due to the length of the conversation and the piece itself, I will be posting it tomorrow. We talk extensively about 7-8 pitchers on his staff, covering the entire bullpen.

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I will be in Columbus this week to get my second look at the Clippers, my first since the opening week of the season. The team has a much different look than they did to start the season, and I am excited to see some of the new and old faces there and see how the immediate future of the Indians are doing.

Onto the *Happenings*....

### Indians Minor League Player of the Week

*(for games from June 17 to June 23)*

#### Jason Kipnis (Second baseman - Akron)

*.360 AVG (9-for-25), 5 R, 3 2B, 0 3B, 2 HR, 6 RBI, 2 BB, 6 K, 1.127 OPS*

While things topside in the organization appear to be a mess this year with the win/loss record, poor performance, injuries, and



some questionable roster decisions, if you peer down below to see what is going on in the farm system things are much better these days.

The Indians have been very aggressive this year in pushing up their better prospects, a change in philosophy that is very welcomed and refreshing to see. Instead of the typical level to level moves for some of the higher level prospects in the system we have seen in past years, a lot of them have seen promotions to a new level at least once already this season, and it is not out of the realm of possibility that others could jump two full levels by the end of the season.

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One of those players who has moved quickly is Double-A Akron second baseman Jason Kipnis. After he hit .300 with 6 HR, 31 RBI and an .865 OPS in 54 games for High-A Kinston, he was quickly promoted to Double-A Akron about two weeks ago. In years past, a move out of Kinston after just two months worth of games and under 250 plate appearances would have been unheard of, but not this year.

Since arriving in Akron, Kipnis has continued to hit. His numbers since joining the professional ranks last year have been solid and consistent, and for a second baseman the output is actually very good. In 11 games so far at Akron he is hitting .333 with 3 HR, 7 RBI, and a 1.036 OPS.

Overall at Akron and Kinston Kipnis is hitting .306 with 9 HR, 38 RBI and has an .894 OPS, but the most important area he has excelled is the transition to a full time second baseman. He has adapted quickly to the position change, which is what ultimately led to the promotion to Akron as if he were struggling defensively or showing little progress there he surely would have remained in Kinston.

Kipnis' success to date at the plate is the result of him being in a good rhythm and using his very good, strong hands where he can let it air out when he swings but still keep the bat under good control. He hits the ball where it is pitched, stays on the ball well, and shows good power to all fields. Defensively, he just needs more repetition at second base to continue to become more comfortable there and increase his confidence, especially on the hard shots right at him. He shows all the makings of being at least a solid average defensive Major League second baseman.

Kipnis has always been kind of undervalued because of his small 5'10" 175 pound frame, but there is no doubt that within that small frame he packs a lot of punch. The concerns that scouts once had about him because of his size have all but evaporated, and many scouts are starting to jump on his bandwagon and feel he will be the Indians' everyday second baseman as soon as this time next year.

### *Honorable Mentions:*

Cord Phelps (2B – COL): .353 (6-17), 5 R, 1 2B, 0 3B, 0 HR, 1 RBI, 2 BB, 2 K, .833 OPS

Lonnie Chisenhall (3B – AKR): .375 (9-24), 5 R, 2 2B, 0 3B, 1 HR, 4 RBI, 2 BB, 6 K, 1.028 OPS

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Doug Pickens (C – KIN): .467 (7-15), 3 R, 2 2B, 0 3B, 0 HR, 3 RBI, 2 BB, 0 K, 1.129 OPS  
Jeremie Tice (3B – LC): .545 (6-11), 2 R, 3 2B, 0 3B, 1 HR, 3 RBI, 3 BB, 3 K, 1.758 OPS  
Jeanmar Gomez (RHP – COL): 0-0, 1.13 ERA, 1 G, 8.0 IP, 3 H, 1 ER, 1 BB, 4 K, .120 BAA  
Josh Tomlin (RHP – COL): 2-0, 1.46 ERA, 2 G, 12.1 IP, 8 H, 2 ER, 1 BB, 6 K, .182 BAA

### *Previous Winners:*

06/10 to 06/16: Jared Goedert (3B – Columbus)  
06/03 to 06/09: Josh Rodriguez (INF – Columbus)  
05/27 to 06/02: Paolo Espino (RHP – Akron)  
05/20 to 05/26: Kyle Bellows (3B – Kinston)  
05/13 to 05/19: Carlos Santana (C – Columbus)  
05/06 to 05/12: T.J. McFarland (LHP – Kinston)  
04/29 to 05/05: Trey Haley (RHP – Lake County)  
04/22 to 04/28: Jason Donald (INF – Columbus)  
04/15 to 04/21: Bo Greenwell (OF – Lake County)  
04/08 to 04/14: Carlos Santana (C – Columbus)

## Director's Cuts

Indians' Farm Director Ross Atkins this week shared some thoughts on the recently promoted Aaron Laffey as well as the Indians' two Futures Games participants Lonnie Chisenhall and Chun Chen:

*On Aaron Laffey:* "It's an interesting situation. He obviously has had some Major League success in a couple of different roles

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