

2010 Tony Awards: Offensive Player of the Year

Written by {ga=consigliere}

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Today we kick off the Cleveland Indians year end awards with the announcement of the Offensive Player of the Year. In the coming days the Pitcher of the Year, Reliever of the Year, Defensive Player of the Year, Rookie of the Year, Comeback Player of the Year, Biggest Breakthrough, Biggest Disappointment and All-Tony Team will be announced.

As a quick reminder, these awards are awarded 100% based on performance as prospect standing is not factored in. So just because a guy is or is not listed does not mean anything from a "prospect" status. These awards are simply for fun to hand out at the end of the year. Also, the Cleveland Indians in no way whatsoever had any input in these awards.

Offensive Player of the Year Nominees:

Chun Chen (C – Lake County/Kinston)

.315 AVG, 58 R, 38 2B, 3 3B, 12 HR, 69 RBI, 55 BB, 74 K, 5 SB, .924 OPS

Chen had a breakthrough performance this season, which also made him a candidate for the Biggest Breakthrough award later this week. Coming off a poor campaign at short-season Mahoning Valley in 2009 where he hit .215/.328/.308, he went to Low-A Lake County and hit .312/.368/.518 and more impressively was better after a promotion in June to High-A Kinston

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(.320/.442/.523). He finished 2nd in the organization in batting average (.315).

Lonnie Chisenhall (3B - Akron)

.278 AVG, 81 R, 22 2B, 3 3B, 17 HR, 84 RBI, 46 BB, 77 K, 3 SB, .801 OPS

Chisenhall battled a sore shoulder all season, an injury which really affected him the first two months of the season where through May 28th in 27 games to start the season he hit .261/.325/.315 with just six doubles and zero home runs in 111 at bats. In his 90 games since then he hit .284/.359/.493 and in 349 at bats had 16 doubles, 3 triples and 17 home runs. He finished tied for 3rd in the organization in home runs (17) and was 1st in RBI (84).

Jose Constanza (Outfielder – Columbus)

.319 AVG, 69 R, 11 2B, 8 3B, 1 HR, 32 RBI, 35 BB, 54 K, 34 SB, .766 OPS

Constanza had an exceptional year and was the most consistent offensive performer all year for the International League champion Columbus Clippers. While the lineup changed almost daily because of callups topside, he was a regular at the top of the lineup all year and did his job getting on base (.373 OBP). He ranked 1st in the organization in batting average (.319) and was 2nd in stolen bases (34).

Jared Goedert (3B – Akron/Columbus)

.283 AVG, 80 R, 37 2B, 1 3B, 27 HR, 83 RBI, 53 BB, 112 K, 4 SB, .890 OPS

Up until about the middle of July, Goedert looked to be a runaway winner of every award imaginable in the Indians organization this year. He got on another one of his hot streaks, sort of like he had at Low-A Lake County in 2007 where in 46 games he hit .364/.475/.715 with 16 HR and 51 RBI, and even though he struggled from mid-July to the end of the season he really had a great year. He finished 1st in the organization in home runs (27) and 2nd in RBI (83).

Jerad Head (OF – Akron/Columbus)

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.299 AVG, 59 R, 27 2B, 0 3B, 17 HR, 66 RBI, 23 BB, 66 K, 2 SB, .906 OPS

Even though he turns 28 years old in a month, Head has been one of the most versatile players in the system that has really grown as a hitter the last two years. He has proven to be a clutch performer and valuable fill in player in the upper levels, and his production and performance may have earned him some deeper consideration as a big league option down the road. He tied for 3rd in the organization in home runs (17) and he was 8th in batting average (.299).

Jason Kipnis (2B – Kinston/Akron)

.307 AVG, 96 R, 32 2B, 8 3B, 16 HR, 74 RBI, 55 BB, 107 K, 9 SB, .878 OPS

In his first full season Kipnis showed why the Indians are so high on him as an offensive performer. He responded by breezing right through High-A Kinston and the Carolina League which is traditionally tough on hitters where he hit .300/.387/.478 in 54 games and then did not skip a beat with Double-A Akron in 79 games (.311/.385/.502). He finished tied for 5th in the organization in batting average (.308) and home runs (16).

Matt McBride (OF – Akron/Columbus)

.275 AVG, 70 R, 31 2B, 1 3B, 21 HR, 75 RBI, 35 BB, 79 K, 0 SB, .814 OPS

Coming off a very good 2009 campaign where he hit .287/.340/.489 with 18 HR and 99 RBI in 129 combined games for High-A Kinston and Double-A Akron, McBride had another big season as a run producer. He made it to Triple-A for the first time in his career, and continued to show some versatility playing both first base and left field. He finished the season 2nd in the organization in home runs (21) and 4

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in RBI (75).

Cord Phelps (2B – Akron/Columbus)

.308 AVG, 66 R, 28 2B, 7 3B, 8 HR, 54 RBI, 39 BB, 68 K, 4 SB, .825 OPS

Phelps saw his stock skyrocket as he went from a player viewed as a high on-base singles

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hitter after his year in Kinston last season (.261/.386/.363). After a very sound year at the two highest levels of the organization this season (.308/.368/.457), he is now a guy who can not only get on base at a consistent clip but also drive the ball out of the ballpark. His .308 average was good for 4th in the organization.

Josh Rodriguez (SS – Akron/Columbus)

.297 AVG, 60 R, 30 2B, 1 3B, 13 HR, 57 RBI, 51 BB, 85 K, 6 SB, .862 OPS

After a rough year in 2008 at Double-A Akron (.241/.335/.359) and a frustrating year in 2009 where he missed 101 games due to injury, Rodriguez had been given up by many coming into the 2010 season. He responded with his best season as a pro and put himself back on the prospect map and is a legit big league option going forward. His .297 batting average was good for 9th in the organization this year.

Jeremie Tice (1B – Lake County/Kinston)

.282 AVG, 57 R, 34 2B, 3 3B, 14 HR, 79 RBI, 31 BB, 106 K, 1 SB, .810 OPS

One of the more overlooked performances of the season was the year that Tice had. After battling all sorts of injuries in 2009 which limited him to a .266/.350/.373 line in 69 games at Low-A Lake County, he returned to Lake County this year and in the first half of the season hit .282/.342/.478 and carried it to High-A Kinston in the second half where he hit .283/.337/.461. He finished 3rd in the organization in RBI (79).

And the 2010 Tony Award goes to...Jason Kipnis

This award ultimately came down to the trio of Jared Goedert, Chun Chen and Jason Kipnis, and the difference between the performances of the three was barely noticeable if you ask me. Chen showed excellent plate discipline and some good gap power and Goedert had the best year from a power and production standpoint, but neither could match Kipnis' ability to stuff a stat sheet and his consistency all year. Even though he was making a transition to a new defensive position at second base, but his offense never suffered as he hit for average, piled up extra base hits, and ran the bases well.

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Most impressively, Kipnis' performance improved with each promotion he had. After hitting .300/.387/.478 with High-A Kinston in 54 games, he was promoted to Double-A Akron and even though a majority of his games were in the cavernous Canal Park he still hit .311/.385/.502. He proved he can hit at any level and that pressure does not phaze him as he was a late season addition to the Triple-A Columbus roster during the playoffs, and in five postseason games for Columbus hit .455/.500/.1.045 and hit for the cycle in the International League championship clincher.

What a year for Kipnis, and hopefully just the start to a very successful pro career that continues at the big league level. The Indians can certainly use his potent bat at the big league level, and hopefully it translates and does not disappoint like so many others have recently. If things continue to go well and he avoids injury, he should get his first big league opportunity sometime next season.

Up Next: Pitcher of the Year

Photo courtesy of Lianna Holub

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