



Minor league opening day is Thursday, and all of the Indians minor league clubs will be in action. The season of dollar dogs, fireworks displays, discount tire coupons, magnet schedules, mascot bobbleheads, lunchboxes and other awesome giveaways is upon us. We'll be profiling all of the Indians full season affiliates here on The Cleveland Fan, starting with low-A Lake County and working our way up to AAA Columbus.

There's a lot to like throughout the Indians system this year, as every team from top to bottom features some exciting prospects who will hopefully find their way to Cleveland over the next few years.

Coming off of the 2010 Midwest League Championship, the Lake County Captains have another solid roster in 2011. Several 2010 draft picks will join the low-A affiliate for their full season debuts, and that should help make the Captains an exciting team to watch.

The Captains play in beautiful Classic Park, just East of Cleveland. Lake County games are a great, local way to check out the future of the team and see some pretty good baseball for pretty cheap. You literally can't buy a ticket for a Captains game for more than \$9. They open on the road, but you can

[check out their schedule here](#)

and plan a great day at the ballpark.

Also, if the player is in my overall Indians top 50, I've listed the ranking in parentheses after the name.

Catcher:



Local product and 2010 8th round draft pick **Alex Lavisky (16)** will get an opportunity to handle the catching duties for the Captains, and he has a chance to be a good one.

The St. Ed's product showcased his light-tower power in minor league games this spring, and has all the tools to be a plus defender behind the dish as well.

He's a great catch and throw guy who has advanced receiving skills to boot thanks in part to high school battery mate Stetson Allie.

Normally I'd be hesitant to want a high school catcher from last year's draft start at a full season league, but Lavisky is already 20 and very physically mature, so I think he can handle it.

I'm already thinking that 16 might have been too low for Lavisky, and he has a good chance to be in the top ten by next spring.

Also catching for the Captains will be **Alex Monsalve** and **Dwight Childs**. Monsalve is the better prospect of the two, and is actually the youngest catcher on the roster. He'll turn 19 on April 22 of this year, and spent last year in the complex leagues in Arizona.

Childs was an 18th

round pick in 2008 and spent some time with Lake County last season.

Infield:

Lake County's infield took a hit this spring when SS **Tony Wolters (14)** broke a bone in his hand. He'll miss the start of the season, but should be back playing games in late April or early May.

There's a chance that the Indians get conservative with him and hold him out until the short season leagues start up in June.

Fellow 2010 draftee

Nick Bartolone

should get the first shot to replace him out of the gate.

The speedy Bartolone stole 23 bases between the AZL Indians and Mahoning Valley last year after he was a surprise 6

th
round selection out of Chabot Junior College.

I saw Bartolone tag up and take 2
nd
base on a routine fly ball to CF in Goodyear this spring so...yeah, he's fast.

Joining Wolters/Bartolone up the middle will be yet another 2010 draftee, 2B **Tyler Cannon**. Pl
ucked out of the University of Virginia in the 12
th
round, Cannon played 40 games for the Scrappers last year, putting up a line of .201/.282/.295.

Hopefully the 6'1"/185 LB switch hitter can swing the stick with a little more authority now that he has some exposure to wood bats.

The corner IF spots should be exciting for the Captains in 2011. Third base will feature one of the most gifted defenders in the organization in **Gio Urshela (34)**. Urshela has an outstanding glove, and is no slouch with the bat either, having hit .290 last year for short-season Mahoning Valley. Across the diamond

from Urshela will be big, bad
Jesus Aguilar

Aguilar has massive raw power, and will be easy to spot during warmups as he will be the biggest guy on the field.

I saw him hit 2 HR in spring training that probably haven't landed yet.



Outfield:

The Captains outfield will feature 2010 2nd round pick **LeVon Washington (6)**, who should be a dynamic force at the top of the Lake County order.

Washington will play CF and likely hit leadoff, a role in which he has drawn comparisons to Red Sox OF Carl Crawford.

He's not an impact defender because of a below-average arm, but covers a lot of ground in the OF.

Washington will start the season in extended spring training recovering from some nagging injuries, but will be in Lake County as the weather warms up.

Joining Washington in the outfield will be **Brian Heere, Jason Smit, Anthony Gallas** and **Carlos Moncrief**

. Heere was drafted in the 41st

out of Kansas last year, signed quickle and put up a .713 OPS for Mahoning Valley.

He has above-average plate discipline and is a solid defender, but doesn't have a whole lot of pop.

Smit was an international signing out of Australia back in 2006 as a 16-year old, and put together a solid campaign for the Captains in 2010 with a .710 OPS.

Gallas is a local kid out of Strongsville HS who played collegiately at Kent State.

He was a UDFA that signed last year and played primarily for the AZL Indians last year, although he did play in a few games for Mahoning Valley, hitting a home run in his 17 at bats.

Moncrief was originally drafted out of Cipola College as a pitcher, but was converted to the OF prior to the 2010 season.

He's an athletic player with a cannon for an arm, but still has a ways to go with the bat.

Starting rotation:

