On the final leg of his visits to each of the Indians six minor league affiliates, Tony Lastoria took the road show to Kinston, NC this past weekend to get a close look at the class A Kinston Indians. While there, Tony ran into Indians Minor League Pitching Coordinator Dave Miller, who spent twenty minutes answering questions on pretty much every Indians minor league pitcher of note. Another superb piece from Tony, whose work has been off the charts for us this summer.

I was in Kinston, North Carolina this past weekend, and in addition to the several players I talked to, I had the chance to sit down with Indians Minor League Pitching Coordinator Dave Miller for about 20 minutes to talk about a slew of pitchers in the system from the major league team on down to the rookie-level Gulf Coast League (GCL) team.

As the pitching coordinator, Miller serves as another set of eyes to help the pitching coaches at each affiliate. Also, pitching coaches typically change leagues each season, so Miller provides stability while the coaches at each affiliate turnover just about every year. He has a pretty good feel for the 80 pitchers the Indians have in the system, and from year to year when the pitchers go to different pitching coaches he can give the pitching coaches information about when the players struggle or when they had success what they can do.

What Miller will do is visit each affiliate several times a year, and when he comes into town he will visit for five days to see all the pitchers in the rotation and bullpen. He will try to see each of the four full-season clubs three times by seeing them early in the season, the middle of the season, and the end of the season.

Early in the season to kind of see where the pitchers are at, the middle of the season to see if the pitchers are progressing or regressing, and at the end of the season to see where the pitchers finished off and get an idea of what the organization is going to do with them next year.

Also, Miller checks out the short-season squads in Mahoning Valley and the GCL just once to make recommendations for instructional league or make plans for next year.

I asked Miller about several players up and down the system, and a few of them I did not ask about but he made it a point to mention them as the organization is very excited about them (Kelvin De La Cruz, Jeff Stevens, Aaron Laffey, and Jim Deters). Here is what he said, word-for-word on each player:

On Fausto Carmona: "I'll go up to Cleveland once a year and just talk to our major league pitching coach and watch some games up there. I mostly watch all the big league games on TV through the big league baseball package.

The thing is,

Fausto has always been our number one guy in the minor leagues. He wet out and never missed a start in the minor leagues.

The biggest thing for him is his delivery.

When he stays under control and keeps his effort level good, he is good.

Last year he got into some of those close games and his effort level got a littler high and his delivery fell apart and he got flat, where this year he has done a really good job of maintaining his delivery and effort level.

You'll watch a lot of the games where in the game you'll see Fausto be a little bit out of control and then you'll see Victor kind of say ‘hey slow down a little bit and stay within your delivery'.

He can throw 95 nice and easy and stay within his delivery, where he was just trying to do too much last year.

To Fausto's credit he bounced back from that.

We always knew he was going to be a big time starter.

Out of necessity the big league club needed him to pitch out of the bullpen, and when he was setting up he was great."

On Adam Miller: "He is close to being 100% healthy. Every outing he is getting a little bit better in his relief appearances.

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