Sowers Continues To Impress

The Minor League Baseball season kicked off for all four of the Indians full season minor league clubs last Thursday April 6th. SwerbsBlurbs will give a weekly rundown every Friday or Saturday of the happenings down on the farm by providing stat updates for key prospects, news, transactions, prospect profiles, brief weekly recaps for each team, and a minor league player of the week. With some contacts to insiders within the minor league system, you may even receive some exclusive news and information from time to time.

If you have any suggestions regarding content not included that you may wish to see added, please feel free to e-mail me at tlastoria@swerbsblurbs.com

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Minor League Player of the Week:

Jeremy Sowers 1-0, 0.00 ERA, 12.1 IP, 11 hits, 5 BBs, 7 Ks, 1.30 WHIP

After going 14-4 with a 2.37 ERA last year in the minors, Sowers already looks to be in mid-season form as he was very impressive in his first two starts of the season for the Bisons. In each start, Sowers went at least six innings, and did not allow an earned run, although he walked 5 batters (only 30 all of last year). Sowers continues to prove his talent and make a case for a starting rotation spot with the Indians in 2007 (maybe even late-2006), and at some point this season should make his major league debut with the Indians.

Honorable mention: Kevin Dixon and Trevor Crowe

News and Notes:

Prior to the start of the season, many players in the organization were released. Some notables you may have heard of: Jason Young (P), Shea Douglass (P), Chris Clem (IF), Chad Longworth (OF), and JJ Sherrill (OF)…..Kinston outfielder Brian Barton got off on the wrong foot, literally. After singling in his first at bat of the season, he was taken out after tweaking his knee leaving the batter's box. No ETA on his return…..Ben Francisco is off to a slow start for the Bisons (.174 with 0 HRs and 1 RBI), and missed the first few games due to a minor injury suffered in Spring Training.

Fausto Carmona struggled in his last start for the Bisons on Monday giving up 5 earned runs in 6 innings of work. Fear not, though, as he was pitching on 3-days rest in a final tune-up for his April 15th start with the Indians....Ramon Vazquez replacement alert: Lou Merloni hitting .214 and Joe Inglett .261 at Buffalo….Speedy outfielder Todd Donovan has 6 stolen bases in 7 games for the Aeros, and could be a useful addition to the Indians late in the season as a pinch running specialist (i.e. like Dave Roberts for the Red Sox in 2004)…..Here is how bad the Lake County lineup is: 1B Fernando Pacheco is hitting .097 and is hitting CLEANUP.

Buffalo Roundup:

The Bisons just completed a rough 8-game roadtrip to start the season, going 4-4. Friday night the Bisons get set for their home opener, with Jeremy Guthrie likely getting the starting pitching assignment. Guthrie was impressive in his first start of the season last Sunday as he went 6 innings and only gave up 4 hits and 0 runs while striking out 4. The starting pitching for the Bisons has been phenomenal, as in 8 starts the starters have combined for a 2.57 ERA. The aforementioned Sowers was his typical crafty self, and Fausto Carmona and Andrew Brown have been stellar. Offensively, several players are off to good starts, but the strikeout totals as a team are alarming in that they have 69 strikeouts in 272 at bats for a 4:1 ratio….yuck! That's almost 9 punchouts a game for the opposing team.

Six Notables:

Franklin Gutierrez: .345 avg (10 for 29), 6 runs, 3 2Bs, 0 3Bs, 2 HRs, 4 RBIs, 3 BBs, 7 Ks
Ryan Garko: .357 avg (10 for 28), 4 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 0 HRs, 5 RBIs, 1 BB, 7 Ks
Andy Marte: .310 avg (9 for 29), 6 runs, 3 2Bs, 0 3Bs, 0

HRs, 1 RBI, 6 BBs, 7 Ks
Jason Dubois: .304 avg (7 for 23), 2 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 2 HRs, 6 RBIs, 4 BBs, 7 Ks
Fausto Carmona: 0-1, 4.50 ERA, 10 IP, 8 hits, 1 BB, 9 Ks, 0.90 WHIP
Andrew Brown: 2-0, 2.08 ERA, 4.1 IP, 1 hit, 3 BBs, 1 K, 0.92 WHIP

Akron Roundup:

The Aeros are off to a rough 3-5 start after losing 9-6 to Harrisburg in their home opener last night. While the pitching as a whole has been pretty good early in the season, a big reason for Akron's slow start is due to a struggling offense. The two big boppers in the middle of the lineup Brad Snyder and Ryan Mulhern have not done a lot of bopping, in fact, they haven't made a lot of contact either. In 68 at bats, Snyder and Mulhern have combined to strikeout an amazing 29 times. When they do make contact, they are producing as seen by their combined .265 average with 2 HRs and 10 RBIs…..but their strikeout rate is very alarming at this point, and

bears watching as the season progresses.

Six Notables:

Brad Snyder: .265 avg, (9 for 34), 4 runs, 2 2Bs, 1 3B, 1 HR, 3 RBIs, 3 BBs, 15 Ks
Ryan Mulhern: .265 avg (9 for 34), 3 runs, 3 2Bs, 0 3Bs, 1 HR, 7 RBIs, 3 BBs, 14 Ks
Kevin Kouzmanoff: .300 avg (9 for 30), 4 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 0 HRs, 0 RBIs, 2 BBs, 5 Ks
Adam Miller: 1-0, 3.00 ERA, 12 IP, 7 hits, 2 BBs, 11 Ks, 0.75 WHIP
Tony Sipp: 0-0, 3.60 ERA, 5 IP, 6 hits, 0 BBs, 9 Ks, 1.20 WHIP
Edward Mujica: 0-0, 2 saves, 0.00 ERA, 5 IP, 1 hit, 4 BBs, 4 Ks, 1.00 WHIP

Kinston Roundup:

After losing their season opener, Kinston has rattled off 6 wins in a row and stand at 6-1 after their 4-1 win last night. Kinston is being led by 2005 1st round pick Trevor Crowe and 2005 2nd round pick Stephen Head, as the 1-2 punch have combined to hit .341 with 2 HRs and 10 RBIs in the first 7 games. Matt Whitney has struggled, hitting only .100 while striking out in over half his at bats. With Whitney struggling, Brandon Pinckney has filled in for Whitney at 3B and performed well in hitting .444 (8 for 18) with 1 HR and 3 RBIs.

Six Notables:

Trevor Crowe: .368 avg (7 for 19), 3 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 1 HR, 7 RBIs, 5 BBs, 4 Ks, 2 stolen bases
Stephen Head: .320 avg (8 for 25), 2 runs, 2 2Bs, 0 3Bs, 1 HR, 3 RBIs, 4 BBs, 3 Ks
Argenis Reyes: .323 avg (10 for 31), 5 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 0 HRs, 6 RBIs, 0 BBs, 3 Ks
Matt Whitney: .100 avg (2 for 20), 0 runs, 1 2B, 0

3Bs, 0 HRs, 1 RBI, 2 BBs, 11 Ks
Chuck Lofgren: 1-0, 0.00 ERA, 5 IP, 3 hits, 0 BBs, 8 Ks, 0.60 WHIP
Jensen Lewis: 1-0, 0.00 ERA, 5 IP, 3 hits, 1 BB, 4 Ks, 0.80 WHIP

Lake County Roundup:

The Captains are off to a 5-3 start, and last night won their home opener 8-4. The Captains have very few noteworthy prospects, but nonetheless, they some players that have put in some good performances right out of the gates. Namely, Kevin Dixon. The 5th round 2005 draft pick is quickly making a name for himself after his first two starts where he pitched 11 innings yielding only ONE hit while striking out 11 batters. Young 19-year old outfield prospect John Drennen has also performed well.

Six Notables:

John Drennen: .259 avg (7 for 27), 3 runs, 0 2Bs, 0 3Bs, 0 HRs, 1 RBI, 3 BBs, 5 Ks, 2 stolen bases
Nick Petrucci: .185 avg (5 for 27), 3 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 0 HRs, 3 RBIs, 2 BBs, 11 Ks
Mike Conroy: .344 avg (11 for 32), 4 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 1 HR, 2 RBIs, 4 BBs, 6 Ks
Jose Constanza: .304 avg (7 for 23), 2 runs, 1 2B, 0 3Bs, 0 HRs, 3 RBIs, 5 BBs, 5 Ks, 2 stolen bases
Kevin Dixon: 0-0, 1.64 ERA, 11 IP, 1 hit, 4 BBs, 11 Ks, 0.45 WHIP
James Deters: 0-0, 3.00 ERA, 12 IP, 13 hits, 0 BBs, 12 Ks, 1.08 WHIP

Coming Soon:

An exclusive Q&A session with Baseball America's Chris Kline is in the pipeline, and should make its way to this site sometime in the next few weeks.