Right-handed pitcher Sean Smith has dominated AA Akron since his callup at the end of April, and now is back on the prospect radar. Also, a quick rundown of all the team stats, league leaders, and noteworthy stats for individuals at Buffalo, Akron, Kinston and Lake County.

(for games from Sunday May 21 through Friday May 26)

Minor League Player of the Week:

Sean Smith (SP- Akron): 1-0, 0.00 ERA, 15 IP, 7 hits, 0 runs, 5 walks, 7 strikeouts

Smith once was a highly regarded pitcher in the organization in 2004, as he was a 16th round draft pick who signed for $1.1M as a draft-and-follow player. While he had a solid 24-16 record and 3.60 ERA in his 4-year minor league career coming into this season, his injuries and command problems (71 walks in 140 IP last year) have held him back and dropped him off the prospect radar some. But, it appears as if he has finally put it all together, and Smith is one of several Indians prospects enjoying bounce back seasons.

Since being called up to Akron at the end of April, Smith has arguably been the best pitcher in the Eastern League. He recently won Pitcher of the Week (POTW) honors in the league, and may be on his way to another POTW award. Currently, Smith is in the midst of a 24 consecutive inning shutout streak, and since giving up 5 runs in his first

6 innings of work at Akron, he has only yielded one run in his last 33 innings. On the season at Akron, he is 4-0 with a 1.38 ERA in 6 starts, and has 28 Ks in 39 IP and a 0.92 WHIP. Before joining the Aeros, he was 1-2 with a 3.60 ERA in 4 starts at Kinston, and had 23 Ks in 25 IP and a 1.04 WHIP. His season totals: 5-2, 2.25 ERA, 10 starts, 64 IP, 51 Ks, and a 0.97 WHIP.

Honorable Mention: Jeremy Sowers (SP- Buffalo), Ryan Goleski (OF- Kinston), Kevin Kouzmanoff (3B- Akron)

Buffalo Update:

Team Stats: The Bisons continue to be inconsistent and underachieve going 2-3 for the week, and currently stand at 25-25 on the season in 3rd place (4.5 back) in the Northern Division of the International League (IL)…. Offensively, Buffalo's recent struggled offensively have dropped then from 2nd to 5th in the league in hitting with a .257 average, and they are 4th out of 14 teams in pitching with a 3.29 ERA.

League Top 10's: Ryan Garko is 5th in RBIs (30) and tied for 5th in walks

(23)….Jason Dubois is tied for 6th in RBIs (29)….Ben Francisco is 7th in stolen bases (12)….Franklin Gutierrez is tied for 5th in walks (23)….Jeremy Sowers is tied for 2nd in wins (6), is 2nd in ERA (0.94), 1st in IP (67.0), and 4th in WHIP (1.04)….Ben Howard is 1st in saves (10)….Jake Dittler is 1st in losses (8).

Player Notes: Combined at Buffalo and Akron, utility infielder Joe Inglett is hitting .406 (54-133) with 4 HRs, 15 RBIs, and 7 stolen bases….Kelly Shoppach is getting regular playing time at Buffalo, and has also found his power stroke. In 3 games

with the Herd, he is hitting .400 with 2 HRs and 3 RBIs….Ramon Vazquez continues to be, um, Ramon Vazquez at Buffalo. He is hitting .278 (5-18) and slugging .278….Jason Dubois continues to be a human windmill, as he has 51 Ks in 154 at bats…..The Jason Cooper era might soon be coming to a close, as he is hitting only .241/.322/.340 with 2 HRs and 17 RBIs. With the need to move up other outfielders in the system from Kinston and Akron, Cooper could be released or demoted soon…..Eddie Mujica still has not allowed an earned run in 16 games (24.2 IP)….Hyang-Nam Choi continues to pitch well out of the bullpen (2.59 ERA, 31.1 IP, 36 Ks, 1.15 WHIP), but Danny Graves struggles have followed him to Buffalo (6.23 ERA, 4.1 IP, 1 K, 1.38 WHIP).

Noteworthy Year-to-Date Stats:

Franklin Gutierrez (OF): .286 avg, 16 2Bs, 3 HRs, 16 RBIs, 9 stolen bases, .790 OPS

Ryan Garko (1B): .272 avg, 9 2Bs, 5 HRs, 30 RBIs, 3 stolen bases, .807 OPS
Jason Dubois (OF): .266 avg, 11 2Bs, 6 HRs, 29 RBIs, 2 stolen bases, .784 OPS
Ben Francisco (OF): .257 avg, 9 2Bs, 6 HRs, 22 RBIs, 12 stolen bases, .751 OPS
Andy Marte (3B): .235 avg, 11 2Bs, 2 HRs, 10 RBIs, .651 OPS
Jeremy Sowers (SP): 6-1, 0.94 ERA, 67 IP, 37 Ks, 1.04 WHIP
Jason Stanford (SP): 2-3, 3.89 ERA, 44 IP, 38 Ks, 1.20 WHIP
Jeremy Guthrie (SP): 3-0, 0.64 ERA, 28 IP, 21 Ks, 1.00 WHIP

Akron Update:

Team Stats: Akron is hot once again, going 5-1 this week, and currently are 28-19 on the

season good for 2nd place (2.5 back) in the Southern Division of the Eastern League (EL)….Offensively, the Aeros are ranked 2nd in the league with a .271 batting average, and on the pitching front have zoomed up from 9th to 5th in the league out of 12 teams with a 3.28 ERA.

League Top 10's: Kevin Kouzmanoff is 1st in hitting (.422), 1st in OPS (1.086), 8th in RBIs (27)….Jon Van Every is 3rd in OPS (.916), tied for 6th in HRs (7), 2nd in RBIs (31), and 8

th

in walks (21)….Brad Snyder is tied for 9
th

in HRs (6), and tied for 9
th

in RBIs (25)….Ryan Mulhern is tied for 9
th

in HRs (6), and tied for 9
th

in RBIs (25)….Eider Torres is 4
th

in stolen bases (16)….Sean Smith is 4
th

in ERA (1.38)and 5
th

in WHIP (0.92)….Adam Miller is 10
th

in Ks (47).

Player Notes: Kouzmanoff leads the league in hitting by 89 points and in OPS by 142 points. Gee, you think someone needs a new challenge in AAA?….In 6 games at Akron, the rehabbing Michael Aubrey is hitting .269 (7-26) with 1 HR, 2 RBIs and an .806 OPS....In an attempt to get highly touted prospect Brad Snyder going, he has been moved up to the leadoff spot in the lineup and has responded well. Since the move, Snyder is hitting .286 (12-42) with 2 2Bs, 1 3B, 1 HR and 2 RBIs….Aeros Bullpen Watch: Travis Foley has a 2.45 ERA with 26 Ks and a 1.13 WHIP in 29.1 IP, Eddie Buzachero has a 1.71 ERA with 19 Ks and a 1.41 WHIP in 26.1 IP, and Juan Lara has a 2.81 ERA with 29 Ks and a 1.21 WHIP in 25.2 IP.

Noteworthy Year-to-Date Stats:

Kevin Kouzmanoff (3B): .422 avg, 10 2Bs, 5 HRs, 27 RBIs, 1.086 OPS
Jon Van Every (OF): .287 avg, 13 2Bs, 3 3Bs, 7 HRs, 31 RBIs, .916 OPS
Eider Torres (2B): .284 avg, 3 2Bs, 1 3B, 0 HR, 12 RBIs, 16 stolen bases, .655 OPS
Ryan Mulhern (1B): .271 avg, 12 2Bs, 1 3B, 6 HRs, 25 RBIs, .785 OPS
Brad Snyder (OF): .250 avg, 6 2Bs, 3 3Bs, 6 HRs, 25 RBIs, 5 stolen bases, .737 OPS
Adam Miller (SP): 4-4, 4.75 ERA, 53

IP, 47 Ks, 1.23 WHIP
Rafael Perez (SP): 3-4, 3.65 ERA, 49.1 IP, 43 Ks, 1.14 WHIP

Kinston Update:

Team Stats: Kinston continues to play the best ball of the four minor league Indians affiliates as they went 3-2 on the week, and currently are 32-14 on the season which is good for 1st place (6.5 game lead) in the Southern Division of the Carolina League…..Offensively, Kinston ranks

1st in the league by 20 points with a .275 team batting average, and are 1st in pitching in the 8-team league with a 2.98 ERA.

League Top 10's: Ryan Goleski is 1st in hitting (.331), 1st in OPS (1.077), 1st in HRs (10), 1st in RBIs (43), and 7th

in walks (25)….Brian Barton is 6th

in hitting (.313), 4th

in OPS (.948), tied for 6th

in HRs (6), and tied for 9th

in stolen bases (10)….Trevor Crowe is 10th

in hitting (.297), 7th

in OPS (.859), 6th

in RBIs (25), 2

nd

in stolen bases (17), and 1
st

in walks (35)….Wyatt Toregas is 2
nd

in hitting (.330) and 2
nd

in OPS (.966)….Stephen Head is 4
th

in RBIs (31)….Brian Finegan is 5
th

in stolen bases (13)….Argenis Reyes is 9
th

in RBIs (24)….Chuck Lofgren is 1
st

in wins (7), 2

nd

in ERA (1.84), 10

th

in Ks (43), and 9

th

in WHIP (1.12)….Jensen Lewis is 2

nd

in wins (6)….Aaron Laffey is 5

th

in ERA (2.18) and 7

th

in WHIP (1.06)….Joe Ness is 6

th

in ERA (2.20) and 7

th

in Ks (48)….TJ Burton is 3

rd

in saves (7)….Scott Lewis is 4th in Ks (51).

Player Notes: Wyatt Toregas, a catcher, missed the early parts of the season or he might be ranked in a lot of other offensive categories. To date, in 33 games, he is hitting .330 with 3 HRs and 19 RBIs….Ryan Goleski needs to be moved up to Akron yesterday. He is back to his 2004 form and then some, but is

old for the Carolina League and could use a new challenge in AA….Trevor Crowe has a 35:36 walk to strikeout ratio, Stephen Head an 18:18 ratio, and Goleski a 25:30 ratio….Matt Whitney has 52 Ks in 117 at bats….Again, left-handed starting pitcher Scott Lewis would figure into more decisions and post in the top 10 under more pitching categories if he could go deeper in games. With a 60-70 pitch count, he is only going roughly 4-5 innings a start. Still, he is 1-1 with a 0.50 ERA, and has 51 Ks and a 0.75

WHIP in 36 IP…..Recent callup from Lake County Kevin Dixon has had a rough start at Kinston, going 1-1 with a 5.28 ERA in 3 starts…..Left-handed reliever and former highly touted prospect Mariano Gomez went 2 inning of near perfect relief (0 runs, 1 hit, 0 BBs, 1 K) the other night in his first appearance since being activated from extended Spring Training….TJ Burton may be 3rd in the league in saves with 7, but he has a 5.50 ERA and 1.44 WHIP.

Noteworthy Year-to-Date Stats:

Ryan Goleski (OF): .331 avg, 7 2Bs, 10 HRs, 43 RBIs, 1.077 OPS
Brian Barton (OF): .313 avg, 8 2Bs, 1 3B, 6 HRs, 22 RBIs, 10 stolen bases, .948 OPS
Trevor Crowe (OF): .297 avg, 10 2Bs, 1 3B, 4 HRs, 25 RBIs, 17 stolen bases, .859 OPS
Stephen Head (1B): .245 avg, 9 2Bs, 5 HRs, 31 RBIs, .710 OPS

Chuck Lofgren (SP): 7-2, 1.84 ERA, 49 IP, 43 Ks, 1.12 WHIP
Jensen Lewis (SP): 6-3, 4.86 ERA, 46.1 IP, 34 Ks, 1.34 WHIP
Joe Ness (SP): 4-0, 2.20 ERA, 45 IP, 48 Ks, 1.27 WHIP
Aaron Laffey (SP/RP): 4-1, 2.18 ERA, 41.1 IP, 24 Ks, 1.06 WHIP

Lake County Update:

Team Stats: The Captains continue to fade, as they went 1-5 for the week, putting them at 22-26 on the season and in 6th place (8 games back) in the Northern Division of the South Atlantic League (SAL) standings….Offensively, the Captains are ranked 12th in the league out of 16 teams in hitting with a .242 average, and are ranked 6th in pitching with a 3.66 ERA.

League Top 10's: Jose Constanza is 7th in stolen bases (17) and 8th in walks (27)….Niuman Romero is 10th in walks (25)….Jim Deters is 9th in IP (56.0)….Matt Davis is 2nd in saves (12).

Player Notes: The Captains don't exist. They don't. With no one even in the top 25 in HRs, top 35 in RBIs, top 40 in hitting, and top 50 in OPS why even bother? But hey, they have two guys in the top 10 in WALKS. Like I mentioned last week, this is a poor collection of talent. So bad, you might find more talent scouting the local Little League games in

Eastlake-Willoughby. Hopefully when the draft commences and the first half of the season concludes, a lot of these guys are sent to Mahoning Valley or Burlington, and a roster overhaul is completed.....It should be noted, outfielder John Drennen is back from the disabled the list and is the one legit position player

prospect to actually pay attention to in Lake County….On the pitching side, the two big pitching names to pay attention to are struggling. Carlton Smith is 1-2 with a 6.08 ERA in 5 starts, with 19 Ks and a 1.52 WHIP in 23.2 IP. Cody Bunkelman has faired a little better, going 1-1 with a 4.50 ERA in 9 appearances in the bullpen, with 23 Ks and a

1.57 WHIP in 14.2 IP.

Noteworthy Year-to-Date Stats:

John Drennen (OF): .321 (27-84), 3 2Bs, 2 3Bs, 1 HR, 9 RBIs, 4 stolen bases, .840 OPS

Jim Deters (SP): 2-3, 4.50 ERA, 56 IP, 51 Ks, 1.41 WHIP

Albert Vargas (SP): 4-5, 3.61 ERA, 52.1 IP, 35 Ks, 1.28 WHIP