

WEOL AM930 presents:

# FORECAST

Volume 14 Issue 3  
Spring 2013

## Keystone's Kenzie Conrad

2012 Lorain County  
Miss Softball



## Keystone's Brandyn Sittinger

2012 Lorain County  
Mr. Baseball



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### ABOUT THE COVER:

2012 Lorain County Mr. Baseball was Brandyn Sittinger of Keystone. Brandyn helped lead Keystone to its second straight Division 3 District championship. He compiled an 802 mark on the mound with a 1.04 ERA. Brandyn only allowed 32 hits and 9 earned runs in 65 innings during which he struck out 103 batters and walked 16. At the plate, Brandyn hit .400, had 38 hits and scored 38 runs, drove in 24 runs and stole seven bases. Brandyn is now pitching at Division I Marshall University.

2012 Lorain County Miss Softball was Kenzie Conrad of Keystone. Kenzie won just about every honor imaginable after leading 32-0 Keystone to the state championship. She was 1st team All-American and Gatorade State Player of the Year in softball. In 2012, Kenzie was 25-0 on the mound with a 0.74 ERA and 178 strikeouts in 142 innings. She also batted .485 with 44 RBI, 16 doubles, two triples and 11 home runs. Kenzie is now playing at Division I University of Akron.

### WEOL FORECAST MAGAZINE SPRING 2013 PREVIEW A Publication of AM 930 WEOL

Volume 14 Issue 3

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*"In our sundown perambulations of late, through the outer parts of Brooklyn, we have observed several parties of youngsters playing 'base', a form of 'ball'. Let us go forth for awhile and get better air in our lungs. Let us leave our closed rooms. The game of 'ball' is glorious."* -Walt Whitman

I can't recall how many years I've opened the spring edition of FORECAST from AM930 WEOL with the words of wisdom from Walt Whitman, but something tells me to use it again and again. Perhaps it reflects a time gone by; perhaps its signals a new time, a fresh start...time to get outdoors after a cold and snowy winter.

This year, there is plenty of excitement and anticipation to go around. The Cleveland Indians will take the field with a new manager and at least two new players who have been All-Stars and the Lake Erie Crushers hope to return to the playoffs under new leadership.

And of course, young men and women across Lorain County have been eager to return to the diamonds to show what they can do.

Special thanks go to the outstanding advertisers who are supporting this magazine and our incomparable broadcast schedule of high school baseball and high school softball.

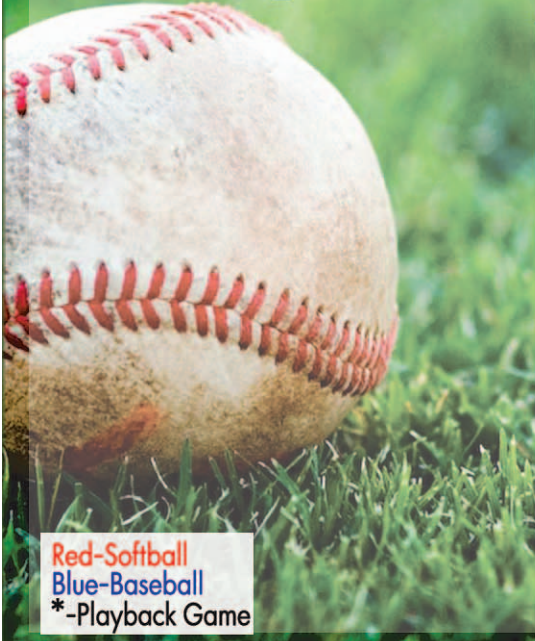
Thanks also go to the athletic directors, managers and coaches for their support. It is indeed time to, "Play Ball!"

**Craig R. Adams**  
Operations Manager  
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# Kolczun + Kolczun DIAMOND DUEL Broadcast Schedule



Red-Softball  
Blue-Baseball  
\*-Playback Game

Saturday, April 6	Elyria at Elyria Catholic
Saturday, April 13	ELYRIA CLASSIC (3 Games)
Monday, April 15	Olmsted Falls at Amherst*
Saturday, April 20	Avon Lake at Elyria
Wed., April 24	Midview at Avon* at All-Pro Freight Stadium
Thursday, April 25	Elyria Catholic at Vermilion*
Saturday, April 27	PREBIS TOURNAMENT Elyria vs. N.C. Hoover Keystone vs. Matthews
Sunday, April 28	Elyria at Lorain at the Pipe Yard & Rube Foster Night
Thursday, May 2	Firelands at Keystone*
Monday, May 13	Midview at Avon Lake*

# 2013 LORAIN COUNTY SOFTBALL PREVIEW

By: Todd Shapiro

You can't top perfection. It would be impossible for any team in 2013 to surpass what the Keystone Wildcats accomplished in 2012. Not only did they win a Division II State Championship with a 7-2 win over Greenville at Akron's Firestone Stadium, they also won a mythical national championship, finishing number one in the final MaxPreps Xcellent 25 National Softball Rankings, and ended the year with an unblemished 32-0 record.

In winning their third state championship in school history, the Wildcats set the standard by which every future team will be judged. Keystone shattered the state-record with 45 home runs, which according to records compiled by the National Federation of State High School Associations only four teams in the history of the sport have hit more round-trippers in a season.

Keystone pitcher Kenzie Conrad won National Player of the Year honors after a senior season in which she batted .485 with 11 home runs and 44 RBIs. In the pitchers circle Conrad went 25-0 with 14 shutouts and a 0.74 ERA. She struck out



Steve Manheim/The Chronicle-Telegram

## Elyria's Caitlyn Minney returns to the rubber!

178 batters in 142 innings pitched with just 15 earned runs and only 17 walks. She finished with a career record of 66-5.

Her teammate Erin Pond won the Lorain County Softball Coaches Association Player of the Year award after a 2012 season in which she hit for a team-high .510 batting average. Pond also had

11 doubles, five triples and nine home runs. She drove in 47 runs, stole 13 bases and finished the year with an on-base percentage of .598.

Pond and Conrad are now teammates at the University of Akron.

Wildcats manager Jim Piazza also added to his trophy case winning the ESPNHS National Coach of

the Year award. Piazza has a career record of 286-35 in his 10 years at Keystone. However, Keystone wasn't the only Lorain County team to do big things in 2012.

Elyria made its ninth trip to the state tournament and its third in four years before eventually falling to Lebanon 3-1 in the Division I state semifinals. After losing to Mentor on Opening Day the Pioneers won 26 of their next 27 games, including winning an eighth consecutive district championship.

Elyria coach Ken Fenik will be looking to replace two of his top hitters from last season — Darien Ward who hit .483 with 20 stolen bases, who is now playing at Cleveland State and Alanna Williams, who led the Pioneers with 41 hits and took her talents south to Wright State University, just outside of Dayton.

Fenik, who will be beginning his 19<sup>th</sup> season as the Elyria coach, will have his top pitcher returning the rubber this spring, Caitlyn Minney, who compiled a 21-2 record during her junior season and has already signed a National Letter of Intent to play at Youngstown State University

See **Softball** on page 4

*Nick Abraham*

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# SOFTBALL

from page 3

next year. Her teammate Melanie Woodard also accepted a softball scholarship from Cleveland State University.

Black River came one win away from making it a trio of area teams in the state tournament advancing to the regional finals before dropping a heartbreaking 1-0 decision to Warren Champion. Pirate pitcher Dagmar Smith had a 16-3 record last season despite missing the second half of the regular season after suffering a back injury, which was eventually diagnosed as a cracked vertebra. However, Smith returned to the team for the postseason and finished the year with 144 strikeouts in just 108 innings pitched.

But that was then and this now. What does 2013 have in store for Lorain County's sandlot heroes?

An early test for many local teams comes in the form of the Prebis Memorial Tournament. The event, which features 30 teams from across Ohio and Michigan, is hosted by Keystone and has grown to seven fields with games played both in LaGrange and Wellington. The Prebis annually attracts the top teams in Ohio and this year is no different, with two defending state champions, six of the 16 state defending regional champions and 10 teams that advanced to the regional finals in their home state.

There will be seven Lorain County teams taking the field in the Prebis. In addition

to the host Wildcats – Elyria, Columbia, Wellington, Avon, Vermilion and North Ridgeville will take place in the two-day event which will be played on April 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>.

Elyria will also host its own event – the Elyria Softball Classic on April 13. In addition, Lorain County will be represented in a series of showcase events that are hosted by the Akron Racers and played at the site of the state finals – Firestone Stadium. Firelands and North Ridgeville will take part in the 2013 Spring Showcase the weekend of April 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. One week later Avon Lake and Clearview will be down in Akron for the 5th Annual Racers Rock N Fire Showcase.

One tournament that is not on the schedule this spring is the JB Firestone Invitational which is usually hosted by Black River. Scheduling conflicts forced a one-year hiatus for the event. The Pirates will still play in the Butch Cook invitational at Smithville High School.

It should be another exciting season of conference play as well. The Patriot Athletic Conference returns a wealth of pitching talent.

**Clearview** won its first Stripes Division title in school history last year behind the pitching of Sara Kaya, who had a record of 18-7 and averaged two strikeouts per inning pitched.

**Firelands** senior Samantha Dostall, another of the PAC's top arms, made a name for herself in the district semifinal pitching a complete game shutout, in a 1-0 win over Clearview. Dostall was also



Linda Murphy/The Chronicle-Telegram

**Columbia's Kailey Minarchick** looks to come back even stronger in the 2013 season.

one of the area's top hitters with a .524 batting average.

**Columbia's** Kailey Minarchick had a strong freshman season and is expected to share the pitching duties with Christine Lyzen for the Raiders.

Alli Rangel will take over the bulk of the pitching duties for **Wellington**, replacing Olivia Wulfoop. The Dukes, as well as Black River, are looking to knock Keystone off of the top of the Stars Division standings for the first time since 2008.

**Elyria** has dominated the Northeast Ohio Conference in recent years, going 10-0 in league play last season, and it should again be a two team race between the Pioneers and Medina, who both

advanced to the Division I state semifinals in 2012.

**Amherst** won its fourth Southwestern Conference championship in five seasons in 2012 and has a talented team again this spring. In addition to the usual suspects in the SWC race, Westlake and Brecksville, look for the Shorelarks to make a run this season.

**Avon Lake** returns a trio of future college players in Alexis Thomas, a Division I recruit headed to Wright State, Abby Rogers and Anne Wennerberg, who have already committed to Division III Otterbein and Case Western Reserve University respectively, from a 2012 team that nearly knocked off Elyria in the Division I district tournament.

**Midview**, led by Cleveland State recruit Kate Thomas, has won at least a share of the West Shore Conference each of the last five seasons and will be near the top of the standing again this season. **Avon** and **Vermilion** both hope to challenge for the WSC title as well. The Sailors have one of the area's most exciting players in centerfielder AuBree LaForce, A second-team, all-Ohio selection, who led the county in stolen bases in 2012.

There are always many question marks going into a new season but one thing is certain – there will be plenty of outstanding softball played throughout Lorain County in 2013. Don't take my word for it, go out and check out a game yourself and support some of the best softball players in Ohio.

# WEOL congratulates Coach Piazza and the 2012 Lady Wildcats on winning the Division II State Championship!



# 2013 LORAIN COUNTY BASEBALL PREVIEW

By: Jim Allen

In my 43 years of covering Lorain County High School sports, I cannot recall any sport that has experienced head coaching changes at three of its winningest schools from the previous season. But, that's what has happened in baseball since last spring.

Keystone, Amherst and Midview all have new leaders in the dugout. The **Keystone** Wildcats were 21-9 last year, Lorain County's only regional qualifier in baseball for a second straight year, and Pac Stars champs for a third consecutive season. Mark Clement has retired after all that success. Assistant coach Bert Fitzgerald has taken over the reins. The 1987 Keystone grad will have to deal with the losses of Lorain County's Mr. Baseball, Brandyn Sittinger and Caleb Schillace, both playing Division I baseball now. But, Fitzgerald has good talent returning, including Marcus Gunter who hit a home run in the 8th inning of last May's regional game against Youngstown Ursuline, along



Linda Murphy/The Chronicle-Telegram

The Middies will be returning tremendous talent in 2013.

with Kendle Stiner, who had seven doubles last spring as well as Pierce Young.

**Amherst** was 19-9 and shared the SWC crown with Avon Lake, Westlake and Brecksville. Eight-year coach Al McConihe has been replaced by assistant Matt Rositano, one of the leading base stealers in Ohio history while starring at Admiral King. Matt is the nephew of Comet girls basketball coach John Rositano and brother of Lorain High volleyball coach Lynne Rositano, both with winning records. Matt welcomes back some tremendous talent like first-team All-Ohioan Connor

Morris who put together a 17 game hitting streak en route to a .468 batting average with a county best 44 hits, Griffin Weir, who has been accorded a Division I baseball scholarship to prestigious Stanford, Justin Mott, who hit .367 with 34 RBI, and a good pitching staff that includes Shawn Reid.

**Midview** enjoyed an 18-9 campaign and shared the West Shore title with Avon. John Justice is now an administrator in the Brunswick School system and long time assistant, 1987 Midview grad Scott Jalowiec has taken over. Jalowiec, a member of the Midview Athletic Hall of

Fame, has two sure fire future members of the elite group on his team in Eric Lauer and Cody Callaway. Lauer, who will continue his career at Kent State University, struck out a county high 103 batters last spring, with a 1.65 ERA and 5-2 record. Lauer also has power at the plate as shown by his 5 home runs. Callaway, a junior, was 5-1 on the mound and hit .396. In addition, Steven Frye batted .363 with 28 RBI.

**Avon**, besides sharing the Shore crown with Midview, was the county's winningest team at 24-4 and the highest ranked in the state, number 5 in Division I. Coach

See **Baseball** on page 7

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# BASEBALL

from page 6

Frank Desmit is back as are several key players from that outstanding team. Matt Wentz was 8-0 on the mound with 1.37 ERA. Wentz did not allow Amherst a hit in the district semifinals until the seventh inning. Brandon Linna hit a fabulous .481 while Donny Kelly and Austin Bevins also had lofty batting averages.

Like Avon, a district finalist, but in Division II, **Firelands** fashioned a 19-10 record under Ted Busch. The Falcons will have for a fourth year the Division II County Player of the Year, Joe San Felippo, who hit a fantastic .537 with 43 hits, 3 home runs, 33 RBI and 22 stolen bases. Another top returnee is Garrett Monhollen who drove in 26 runs.

**Elyria Catholic** was 18-10 in Bruce Lisicky's first year as Panther coach. EC has Chris Tomshack who tossed a gem in the district semis in a 1-0 loss to eventual champ Keystone, Dan Whitacre, who blasted 2 home runs and also pitched well, plus several offensive standouts, including Joey Begany and Angelo Cruz.

**Lorain** High enjoyed a 17-9 season under Brad Ternes, despite losing star hitter Nic Billingsley early in the season with a knee injury. Billingsley, who opened the campaign with four hits against Midview, will be back for a fourth varsity year as will be Ryan

Osko, who began his career at Elyria Catholic. Osko hit .381 last spring, earning 1st team All-County Division I. Lefty Adrian Calez was one of the county's top strikeout artists on the mound.

Billingsley, Osko and Calez as well as catcher Nate Drabiak and pitcher Kyle Stumphauzer showed their team togetherness by playing on St. Anthony's CYO basketball team this winter. Lorain will be playing its

omore as well as the multi-talented David Winkel who batted .356, with 26 hits, 24 runs scored and 15 stolen bases in addition to being one of the area's top hurdlers in track.

**Elyria** High finished near the .500 mark playing in a rugged division of the NOC. The Pioneers have plenty of talent returning including Mike Parron who hit .473 with 35 hits and 24 RBI, Mike Izzarelli with a



Linda Murphy/The Chronicle-Telegram

**Falcon Joe San Felippo** is ready to bring it in his fourth year.

home games at the beautiful Pipe Yard this spring.

**Columbia** captured the Pac Stripes championship and will have a couple of juniors who contributed mightily to the Raiders' success. Sean Nagle hit .371. On the mound, Michael Boey was 6-2 with a 2.05 ERA, 63 strikeouts and two saves.

One of the four teams that shared the Southwestern Conference crown, **Avon Lake**, brings back Brad Hamilton who hit .360 with 27 hits and 11 stolen bases and made 1st team All-County as a soph-

.376 average, 32 hits, 35 runs, and 19 stolen bases, Dan Ratliff who hit 2 homers and stole 12 bases, and Chris Emerson who scored 24 runs.

Always respectable **Vermilion** will have stand-out Vinny Ragnoni back for a fourth varsity year. Vinny made the front page of the Chronicle-Telegram this past December. While being a Good Samaritan trying to rescue a dog that was stuck in the Vermilion River, Vinny fell down a 40-foot cliff onto the river bank. It took 90 minutes in freezing weather conditions,

but, fortunately Vinny and the dog were rescued. Look for Vinny to make the sports headlines this spring as he has done so often in the past with his outstanding hitting. The Sailors also have good ones in Garrett Koutsopoulos and Mitch Peterson and are hoping that Nick Dlugosz can return to his fine pitching form after missing last season due to injury.

**Clearview** has one of the county's best in Ryan Vargo who hit .419 with four triples, 21 RBI and a 2.31 ERA on the mound with 40 strikeouts. Roger Engle was honorable mention all-county as a freshman.

**Brookside** has a couple of underclassmen who also won honorable mention honors, Matthew Seekins and Cameron Drew plus a pitcher who fanned 34, Greg Maust.

**Wellington's** top veteran is Erik Fehlan who hit .360 with 27 hits, two homers, 31 RBI and as a pitcher, fanned 54. Jacob Grimmett had eight doubles.

**North Ridgeville** junior Matt Feierabend was 1st team All-County with a .375 batting average.

**Oberlin** has 3 returnees with impressive stats. Matayo Wyman hit .493 with 33 hits, Tyler Buga .462 with 36 hits and Liam McMillan .384 with 28 hits.

**Open Door** has a heavy hitter in Jordan Wright with his .438 average last spring.

Leading **Lake Ridge** should be Jordan Johnson and Owen Mullaney.

# BATTER UP:

## A Look at the 2013 Lake Erie Crushers

**By: Andy "Bull" Barch**

Voice of the Crushers

The 2013 season promises to be a lot of things for the Lake Erie Crushers, but if there is one word that accurately describes what the season will be like, that word would be different.

The differences will be noticeable right away, and on the field it starts with a brand new manager. After four successful seasons with manager John Massarelli, the Crushers decided to go in another direction with their field general.

On December 19<sup>th</sup>, the Lake Erie Crushers announced Jeff Isom as their second manager in franchise history. Isom, no stranger to the Independent circuit, having spent seven years as a manager with four different teams, has a very impressive track record in the Frontier League.

Isom, who spent a year with the Canton Crocodiles (2000), two with the Washington Wild Things (2002-'03) and one with the Traverse City Beach Bums (2006), has an incredible 252-



Steve Manheim/The Chronicle-Telegram

Crushers new manager, **Jeff Isom.**

184 record in the Frontier League. Altogether in his seven year tenure as a manager

in the Independent circuit, he owns a career mark of 337-291.

In 2007, he joined the Milwaukee Brewers organization, managing the Helena Brewers and one year later he was promoted to the South Atlantic League, where he led the West Virginia Power to a division championship. Over the next three years with the Brewers, he managed the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers (2009-'10) of the Midwest League, the Brevard County Manatees (2011) of the Florida State League, and last year he went back to the Pioneer League to manage at Helena for a second time.

Prior to taking the reins as a manager, Isom enjoyed a nice playing career. He was selected by the Pittsburgh Pirates in the 18<sup>th</sup> round of the 1993 Major League Baseball draft out of Purdue University. Isom spent three seasons (1993-'95) pitching for the Pirates and San Diego Padres organizations, before signing with Fargo-Moorhead in the Northern League. Isom compiled a career record of 28-28, with an ERA of 4.44 over seven professional seasons.

See **CRUSHERS** on page 9

**LAKE ERIE CRUSHERS**  
on  
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- 5/19 vs Gateway Grizzlies
- 6/02 vs Joliet Slammers
- 6/13 vs Evansville Otters
- 6/20 vs Normal Cornbelters
- 7/07 vs Rockford RiverHawks
- 7/14 vs Frontier
- 7/22 vs Southern Illinois Miners
- 7/23 vs Southern Illinois Miners
- 7/24 vs Southern Illinois Miners
- 7/25 vs River City Rascals
- 8/04 vs Traverse City Beach Bums
- 8/15 vs Washington Wild Things
- 8/16 vs Frontier
- 8/17 vs Frontier
- 8/25 vs Schaumburg Boomers
- 9/01 vs Frontier
- 9/05 vs Traverse City Beach Bums

# CRUSHERS

from page 8

While many of the players on the field will be different, there will be a few names on the roster, very familiar to Crusher fans everywhere. No name is more recognizable than Andrew Davis. Davis, who is Lake Erie's veteran exception, will enter his fifth season with the Crushers in 2013. Last year, Davis led the Crushers with 14 home-runs and 67 RBI's. He hit .277 on the year, and belted out 25 doubles and is still considered one of the best defensive shortstops and third basemen in the league.

Also back from last year, will be 1B/DH Russ Moldenhauer, who was not only a 2012 Frontier League All Star, but he also won the Homerun Derby competition. Moldenhauer was a key cog in the middle of the lineup last season, hitting .285 with a

team best, 32 doubles, to go along with nine homeruns and 51 RBI's.

One of the most impactful rookies in the entire circuit last season, Daniel Bowman, is back for his sophomore campaign with the Crushers. Bowman burst onto the scene in 2012 after an incredible finish to his collegiate career at Coastal Carolina. The Lake Erie outfielder hit .312 on the year, and registered 15 extra base hits, and 37 RBI's in just 54 games.

While Davis, Bowman and Moldenhauer will be expected to lead the charge for the Crushers offensively, the Crushers have a few returnees from the 2012 squad on the pitching staff as well. Four veterans return from the 2012 pitching staff, and a few other pieces have been added as well.

Fans will certainly miss the likes of Paul Fagan in the rotation, and Travis Risser in

the bullpen, but the Crushers will return three out of their top five leaders in ERA last season – one of those being Matt Smith, who was also with the Crushers in 2010. Last year, he pitched in four games last season, with a robust, 0.64 ERA over 14 innings of work. Trevor Longfellow is back after an outstanding 2012 season. He spent time in the rotation, and in the bullpen, going 11-2, with a 3.35 ERA. From July 26<sup>th</sup>-August 18<sup>th</sup>, Longfellow tossed 21 consecutive innings without allowing a run.

Also back from last year's staff is Mickey Jannis, who proved to be one of the best relievers for the Crushers down the stretch. Jannis made 31 relief appearances throughout the year. Despite a rough start to the season, Jannis still ended the year with a 2.53 ERA and 46 strikeouts. The Crushers are also bringing back Eric Gonzalez-Diaz. Gonzo had a great 2011 season with the Crushers, and he tallied 118.1 innings of work last season.

One of the additions to the club, is Fostoria, Ohio, native, Alex Kaminski. Kaminski was acquired in January, for right-handed pitcher Jason Sullivan. Kaminski comes to the Crushers after an outstanding 2012 season with the Gateway Grizzlies, where he went 10-5, with an ERA of 3.74.

The Mid American Conference championships will return for a second year in a row at All Pro Freight Stadium. The four-day event will begin on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Off the field, fans are sure to be entertained by a bevy of in game promotions, promotional nights, and a series of weekly promotions that will make All Pro Freight Stadium

the place to be this summer.

Weekly promotions will lead off on May 17<sup>th</sup> with fireworks. There's always a spectacular show to be seen after every Friday home game. Super Saturday's will feature a giveaway to the first 1,000 fans. Just as last year, on Saturdays, families can purchase 4 home box tickets and 4 perfect game vouchers for \$44.

Two-fer-Tuesday is back as well. Discounts on special concession items will be available at Stomper's Grille and Eddy's Eatery and there will be dollar hot dogs on Wednesday nights. On Wednesdays, seniors will be able to buy a Home Box ticket for \$6.

Thursdays are still \$1 beer night. College students presenting proper ID will be able to purchase a general admission ticket for \$2 on Thursdays.

Superhero Night returns on Saturday, June 1st and we are encouraging all fans to dress as their favorite superhero.

Our annual Pack the Park Pink will reign again this season. Come out to the ballpark on Friday, August 16th to help raise money for breast cancer research and stick around for the Fireworks following.

The Kid's Club is back and bigger than ever this year! Accompanying the likes of Kids Run the Show and Stomper's Birthday will be Pirates and Princesses and a special Splash Day! Every Sunday game will be filled with many activities for kids and adults alike.

Opening night is Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, and features a post game fireworks extravaganza. For ticket information, call the Crushers at 440-934-3636, or visit the Crushers website, at [www.lakeeriecrushers.com](http://www.lakeeriecrushers.com).



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# 2013 Season Schedule

## May

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
12	13	14	15	16	17 GAT★	18 GAT
19 GAT	20	21 SIL	22 SIL MAC	23 SIL MAC	24 RC MAC	25 RC MAC
26 RC	27	28 FLO	29 FLO	30 FLO	31 JOL★	



## July

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 WC	3 WC	4 WC★	5 RCK★	6 RCK
7 RCK	8	9 WAS	10 WAS	11 WAS	12 FG★	13 FG
14 FG	15	16	17 AllStar Game	18	19 GAT	20 GAT
21 GAT	22 SIL	23 SIL	24 SIL	25 RC	26 RC★	27 RC
28 EVN DH	29 EVN	30	31 WAS			

## June

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 JOL
2 JOL	3	4 TC	5 TC	6 TC	7 WAS	8 WAS
9 WAS	10	11 EVN	12 EVN	13 EVN	14 RCK	15 RCK
16 RCK	17	18 NOR	19 NOR	20 NOR	21 SCH	22 SCH
23 SCH	24	25 FG	26 FG	27 FG	28 TC	29 TC
30 TC						

## August/September

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 WAS	2 WAS★	3 TC
4 TC	5 TC	6	7 FLO	8 FLO	9 FLO	10 JOL
11 JOL	12 JOL	13 WAS	14 WAS	15 WAS	16 FG★	17 FG
18 FG	19	20 NOR	21 NOR	22 NOR	23 SCH★	24 SCH
25 SCH FG <sub>1</sub>	26 <sub>2</sub>	27 WC TC <sub>3</sub>	28 WC TC <sub>4</sub>	29 WC TC <sub>5</sub>	30 FG★	31 FG

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★ = FIREWORKS

GAT Gateway Grizzlies  
 FLO Florence Freedom  
 WAS Washington Wild Things  
 NOR Normal Cornbelters

SIL Southern Illinois Miners  
 JOL Joliet Slammers  
 EVN Evansville Otters

RC River City Rascals  
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# For the Love of the Game

By: Tim Alcorn

A few weeks ago, the clocks moved ahead, the days became longer, and my thoughts moved forward as well, to calling softball and baseball throughout the spring and summer on WEOL. Whether it's on the high school diamonds, or sitting with Bull Barch calling Crusher games in Avon, my announcing duties for the next few months involve balls and strikes, home run calls, and late inning rallies. Over the past several years, I've grown to love calling these softball and baseball games (almost to the same degree as basketball), and I would like to share with you why the two games have developed such a hold on me.

Starting with softball, to paraphrase a slogan the NBA used to use, "I LOVE calling this game". Perhaps it's because of the sheer high level of play that I have been honored to witness over the years in Lorain County, or just the way the games seem to unfold, but I love calling softball. It has a pace that is so unique to the game, yet in a sense, it is similar to basketball. The action moves quickly, the games tend to be very cleanly played, and usually wind up close at the end. That's a play-by-play man's dream. While the moving of the pitching rubber back three feet has had the desired effect of adding more offense to the game, overall, most contests are still somewhat low scoring, which always adds drama to a broadcast. I also love the "fun" aspect of high school softball. Make no mistake, the girls who play are as fiercely competitive and locked in as any



other athletes in any other sports, but the dugout chants, the infield rituals, and the exuberance displayed throughout the game make for an entertaining atmosphere. I love being around the game, and with the incredible level of talent displayed in this area year after year, I would urge you to check out some games throughout the season. You won't be disappointed.

To be an outstanding baseball announcer, is probably every play-by-play man's goal. When you think of great sports play-by-play men over the years, more often than not, you think of baseball announcers... they just roll off the tongue; Harry Caray, Ernie Harwell, Jack Buck, Vin Scully (and of course, Tom Hamilton is in a select group of great broadcasters as well). They are institutions in the world of broadcasting. But to be a great baseball announcer, you have to have a unique set of talents that set you apart from the other sports. It's what makes baseball so challenging from a broadcasting perspective, but also so much fun to call.

First and foremost, baseball announcers have to like to talk, have a conversation, and be a friend to the listener. That may sound very simplistic and obvious, but it is so much easier said than done. Think of politics when pundits describe the "likability" factor of a candidate. Would you want to sit and have a burger with that person or a conversation on your porch? Are they genuine? Baseball announcers are the same. Baseball has so much down time in between pitches, batters etc. that broadcasters have to have that continual conversation with the listener. I love the opportunity to do that. Maybe I'm just a "talker" or story teller at heart, but I genuinely enjoy that aspect of calling a baseball game. It's certainly the inverse of softball. Baseball is more (not always) leisurely, and slower paced, which lends itself to a much different tone than a football, basketball or softball broadcast. Think of the great announcers I listed above (or maybe your favorite). They have all had monumental calls of great plays or moments, obviously,

that's what play-by-play guys are supposed to do. But I would guess you can also think of a great story they told or just how they held your interest on a warm summer night listening to a game in the back yard. A great baseball announcer can keep you engaged in the broadcast, whether it's 10-1 in the 3rd, or 2-2 in the 8th.

So for baseball, I love the slower pace of the game. I relish the opportunity to bring it down a notch and just have a conversation with a listener for a few hours. Sure, I'll still get cranked up for a big rally in the bottom of the ninth to win a game, or a bases clearing triple, but I also love the opportunity to share some stories with listeners either about the game or wherever the conversation may go. I know Bull Barch and I have had some great discussions the past couple of years about a myriad of topics on the air. Some baseball related, some not. But that's the beauty of the sport. It allows you as a broadcaster to do that. I recall a great comedy bit by the late George Carlin, where he talked about the leisurely aspect of baseball which was hilarious and yet so true. Baseball does not have a final gun or buzzer or timed quarters. It moves at its' own pace and just takes you along with it. As an announcer, I want you to go along with it with me. I would love for you to sit there with me, enjoy the game, share some stories, and take pleasure in the broadcast.

So let's get ready for some softball and baseball this summer. I love calling those games, more than I ever thought I would. I hope you enjoy listening to them as well.

# The Changing Tribe

By: Jim Rosenhaus  
Play-by-Play Announcer

Creating hope and excitement in professional sports can be a challenging and, at times, daunting task. When a franchise is caught in a down period, with a string of losing seasons, the obstacles become greater. The 2013 Cleveland Indians have broken down those barriers and created a team that has brought uncommon anticipation to a fan base that had grown weary. How did it happen? The following is a look at a 5 month period in time that has Northeast Ohio baseball fans as excited for a new season as they have been in quite some time.

The change truly began in late September of last season. The Indians were tumbling towards a fourth consecutive losing season. Early season promise had been shattered on the heels of an 11 game losing streak that dovetailed into an August in which the Indians went 5-24, the worst month in the 113 year history of the franchise. On September 27<sup>th</sup>, manager Manny Acta was fired. The Tribe had reached rock bot-



Terry Francona

tom.

Bench coach Sandy Alomar Jr. replaced Acta for the season's final 6 games

and seeds of change were planted. One of the most popular players from the Indians glory days of the

1990's, Alomar instilled a fresh outlook on the team. While he wasn't a lock to become the next manager of the Tribe for 2013, it would take something unexpected for it not to happen. The unexpected came in the form of Terry Francona. The 2-time World Series winning manager of the Boston Red Sox was just finishing a year of television work with ESPN after being let go by Boston following the 2011 season. The two questions regarding the "Francona to the Indians" speculation were, would he want to manage again and would he want to manage the Indians.

The answers came when Terry Francona was announced as the 42<sup>nd</sup> manager of the Cleveland Indians on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Why Cleveland?

"I am here for two reasons," said Francona that day. "Mark Shapiro and Chris Antonetti. I met Mark at the 1999 Winter Meetings. That meeting led to a relationship that is going on 12 years now. When I was let go by the Phillies in 2000, Mark

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# INDIANS

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reached out to me and I ended up as Special Assistant to Baseball Operations. It was there that I met Chris. We've kept in touch over the years and I value not only their friendship but their leadership as well. I'm genuinely excited to tackle the challenges ahead of us as a unit."

Francona was adamant that the Indians managerial job was the only one he would have left ESPN for. Add in the historical perspective, with Terry's dad Tito having spent his best years as a player with the Tribe from 1959 to 1964 and Terry's youth being spent in Cleveland and it truly is a great fit.

It didn't take long for the new Tribe skipper to go to work. His boundless energy and focus on communication saw him burn up the phone lines in reaching out to every current player on the Tribe roster. In many cases, personal player visits took him to all corners of the United States and beyond.

"It's so important to know your players personally," said

Francona. "You have to be truthful with them and eventually you are probably going to have to deliver news that they don't want to hear. It's a whole lot easier to do that if you've developed a level of trust and respect with them."

In addition to getting to know his players, the new Tribe manager was assisting General Manager Chris Antonetti and his staff in reshaping and improving the Tribe roster. In 2012, the Indians fielded a lineup that was filled primarily with left handed hitters, a lineup that had gaping holes in the outfield and at first base. The result was a team that scored the 2<sup>nd</sup> fewest runs in the American League. Combine that with a pitching staff that finished the season with the league's highest ERA and it's easy to see why the Tribe staggered to a 68-94 record.

The first major offseason move to address roster needs was a whopping 3 team trade in December that saw the Indians move popular outfielder Shin Soo Choo to the Cincinnati Reds. In return, the Tribe received speedy outfielder Drew Stubbs from the Reds and relief pitchers Matt Albers and Bryan Shaw,



**Michael Bourn**

along with young pitcher Trevor Bauer, regarded by many experts as one of the top pitching prospects in the game today.

Coupled with the acquisition of super utility man Mike Aviles and catcher Yan Gomes in a trade with Toronto, plus the signing of righthanded slugger Mark Reynolds, the addressing of specific needs was off to a good start. However, the best was yet to come.

Looking for a consistent, established run producer, the Tribe front office targeted free agent outfielder Nick

Swisher. One of only 4 players in baseball to hit at least 20 home runs the past eight seasons, Swisher also provides an energy and enthusiasm for the game that may be unequalled. The signing became official shortly before the New Year and the former Ohio State first baseman didn't hold back in his happiness for his new team and town.

"I never thought Cleveland would be in the mix when this free agent process started," said the player his teammates refer to

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# INDIANS

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as “Swish”. “The way the Indians rolled out the red carpet for myself and my family was amazing. We’ve already been out there house hunting and are looking to get involved in the community. Add in the way this organization is run and the things they are looking to do in the future, I couldn’t be happier.”

Team Antonetti and Francona and the staff did not rest with the signing of Swisher. Pitcher Brett Myers was signed as a free agent to bolster the starting rotation. Various veteran players were signed to minor league contracts, with invitations to major league spring training. The likes of longtime slugger Jason Giambi, along with pitchers Scott Kazmir and Daisuke Matsuzaka all have a chance to be contributors to the 2013 Indians.

But the best was yet to come. With spring training already underway, there was still an intriguing outfielder on the free agent board. Michael Bourn had played out his contract with Atlanta in 2012. The Indians were attracted to his speed, leadoff capabilities for the batting order and superlative defense in centerfield. On February 15<sup>th</sup> he was signed to a four year contract.

We feel we’ve added one of the best center fielders in baseball,” Antonetti said. “He’s a dynamic player, an exceptional defender in center field and can really impact the game on the bases. His accomplishments speak for themselves.”

The result of all the off-

season moves has been felt at the box office for the Indians. The day the Bourn signing was announced, season ticket sales for one day surpassed the normal amount for one month in past off seasons. When single game tickets were put on sale in late February, the Home Opener sold out in 6 minutes.

While so much emphasis was centered on acquisitions in the offseason, the youthful composition of the Tribe roster can often be overlooked. Catcher Carlos Santana, second baseman Jason Kipnis, third baseman Lonnie Chisenhall and outfielder Michael Brantley are all regarded as outstanding young players nearing the prime of their major league careers. Mix in a bullpen anchored by closer Chris Perez and set up man Vinnie Pestano and you have the makings of a solid ballclub.

One of the question marks from a year ago is the starting rotation. The hope is for Justin Masterson and Ubaldo Jimenez to return to past form. The addition of Brett Myers will help and Zach McAllister’s continued development will be fun to watch. The fifth spot is seemingly up for grabs between Scott Kazmir, Daisuke Matsuzaka, Corey Kluber, Trevor Bauer and Carlos Carrasco who is on his way back from Tommy John surgery.

On the whole, the Cleveland Indians have been one of the most interesting teams to follow throughout the offseason leading up to the new season and will certainly be a team watch in 2013.



Nick Swisher



Jason Kipnis

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## 2013 SEASON SCHEDULE

### APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 ● 7:07 TOR	3 ● 7:07 TOR	4 ● 7:07 TOR	5 ● 7:10 TB	6 ● 7:10 TB
7 ● 1:40 TB	8 ● 4:05 NYY	9 ● 7:05 NYY	10 ● 7:05 NYY	11 ● 7:05 NYY	12 ● 7:05 CWS	13 ● 4:05 CWS
14 ● 1:05 CWS	15	16 ● 7:05 BOS	17 ● 7:05 BOS	18 ● 7:05 BOS	19 ● 8:05 HOU	20 ● 7:05 HOU
21 ● 2:05 HOU	22 ● 8:10 CWS	23 ● 8:10 CWS	24 ● 2:10 CWS	25	26 ● 8:10 KC	27 ● 7:10 KC
28 ● 2:10 KC	29 ● 8:10 KC	30 ● 7:05 PHI				

### JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 ● 8:10 KC	3 ● 8:10 KC	4 ● 2:10 KC	5 ● 7:05 DET	6 ● 4:05 DET
7 ● 1:05 DET	8 ● 7:05 DET	9 ● 7:05 TOR	10 ● 7:05 TOR	11 ● 12:05 TOR	12 ● 7:05 KC	13 ● 7:05 KC
14 ● 1:05 KC	15	16	17	18	19 ● 8:10 MIN	20 ● 7:10 MIN
21 ● 2:10 MIN	22 ● 10:10 SEA	23 ● 10:10 SEA	24 ● 3:40 SEA	25	26 ● 7:05 TEX	27 ● 7:05 TEX
28 ● 1:05 TEX	29 ● 7:05 CWS	30 ● 7:05 CWS	31 ● 7:05 CWS			

### MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 ● 7:05 PHI	2	3 ● 7:05 MIN	4 ● 1:05 MIN
5 ● 1:05 MIN	6 ● 7:05 OAK	7 ● 7:05 OAK	8 ● 7:05 OAK	9 ● 12:05 OAK	10 ● 7:05 DET	11 ● 7:05 DET
12 ● 1:05 DET	13	14 ● 7:05 PHI	15 ● 1:05 PHI	16	17 ● 7:05 SEA	18 ● 1:05 SEA
19 ● 1:05 SEA	20 ● 12:05 SEA	21 ● 7:05 DET	22 ● 7:05 DET	23 ● 7:10 BOS	24 ● 7:10 BOS	25 ● 1:35 BOS
26 ● 1:35 BOS	27 ● 1:10 CIN	28 ● 7:10 CIN	29 ● 7:05 CIN	30 ● 7:05 CIN	31 ● 7:05 TB	

### AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 ● 12:05 CWS	2 ● 7:10 MIA	3 ● 7:10 MIA
4 ● 1:10 MIA	5 ● 7:05 DET	6 ● 7:05 DET	7 ● 7:05 DET	8 ● 7:05 DET	9 ● 7:05 LAA	10 ● 7:05 LAA
11 ● 1:05 LAA	12 ● 8:10 MIN	13 ● 8:10 MIN	14 ● 1:10 MIN	15	16 ● 10:07 OAK	17 ● 9:07 OAK
18 ● 4:07 OAK	19 ● 10:05 LAA	20 ● 10:05 LAA	21 ● 7:05 LAA	22	23 ● 7:05 MIN	24 ● 7:05 MIN
25 ● 1:05 MIN	26	27 ● 7:10 ATL	28 ● 7:10 ATL	29 ● 7:10 ATL	30 ● 7:05 DET	31 ● 7:05 DET

### JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 ● 4:05 TB
2 ● 1:05 TB	3 ● 7:05 NYY	4 ● 7:05 NYY	5 ● 1:05 NYY	6	7 ● 7:05 DET	8 ● 4:05 DET
9 ● 1:05 DET	10 ● 8:05 TEX	11 ● 8:05 TEX	12 ● 8:05 TEX	13	14 ● 7:05 WAS	15 ● 7:15 WAS
16 ● 1:05 WAS	17 ● 7:05 KC	18 ● 7:05 KC	19 ● 7:05 KC	20 ● 7:05 CIC GOLF OUTING	21 ● 7:05 MIN	22 ● 7:15 MIN
23 ● 1:05 CWS	24 ● 7:05 BAL	25 ● 7:05 BAL	26 ● 7:05 BAL	27 ● 7:05 BAL	28 ● 8:10 CWS	29 ● 4:05 CWS

### SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 ● 1:05 DET	2 ● 4:05 BAL	3 ● 7:05 BAL	4 ● 7:05 BAL	5	6 ● 7:05 NYM	7 ● 4:05 NYM
8 ● 1:05 NYM	9 ● 7:05 KC	10 ● 7:05 KC	11 ● 12:05 KC	12 ● 8:10 CWS	13 ● 2:10 CWS	14 ● 7:10 CWS
15 ● 2:10 CWS	16 ● 8:10 KC	17 ● 8:10 KC	18 ● 8:10 KC	19 ● 7:05 HOU	20 ● 7:05 HOU	21 ● 4:05 HOU
22 ● 1:05 HOU	23	24 ● 7:05 CWS	25 ● 7:05 CWS	26 ● 8:10 MIN	27 ● 8:10 MIN	28 ● 4:10 MIN
29 ● 2:10 MIN	30					

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