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SYRACUSE CHIEFS

TOLEDO MUD HENS

NEWS RELEASE

FOR 3:00PM EASTERN RELEASE

August 28, 2007

TOLEDO'S MIKE HESSMAN NAMED IL MVP; SLOWEY, VOTTO, & MILEY ROUND OUT 2007 AWARD WINNERS

The International League today announced its post-season All-Star Team and Award Winners as selected by the circuit's managers, coaches, media, and club representatives. Toledo Mud Hens third baseman **Mike Hessman** has been named the IL's Most Valuable Player on the strength of his League-leading 31 home runs and 97 RBI. Rochester Red Wings right-hander **Kevin Slowey** is the League's Most Valuable Pitcher, having posted a 10-4 record with an IL-best 1.74 ERA and five complete games. The Rookie-of-the-Year is Louisville first baseman/outfielder **Joey Votto**, who finds himself among the League leaders with 22 home runs (4th), 90 RBI (2nd), and 140 hits (5th). Rounding out the list of 2007 Special Award Winners is Manager-of-the-Year **Dave Miley** of the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees. Miley's club leads the IL North with a 77-58 mark.

Most Valuable Player – Mike Hessman, Toledo

Third baseman Mike Hessman was a major contributor on Toledo's Governors' Cup Champion teams of 2005 and 2006, but his effort this season may be the best of his 12-year professional career. Hessman has already achieved personal highs in home runs and RBI, and his batting average is nearly 90 points better than a year ago. His 16th homer this year, hit back on June 1 at Buffalo, made him the all time home run king in Toledo baseball history. 2007 is Hessman's third season with the Mud Hens, and his sixth in the International League. He played for the Richmond Braves from 2002 to 2004. Hessman was a member of the Atlanta organization for the first nine years of his career before signing with Detroit as a free agent following the 2004 season. Hessman has played 57 games in the Major Leagues, including nine with the Tigers earlier this year.

Most Valuable Pitcher – Kevin Slowey, Rochester

Kevin Slowey got his first taste of Triple-A Baseball last September when we was called upon to pitch Game 2 of the Governors' Cup Finals. Slowey was brilliant, allowing just one run on five hits in 7.2 innings while striking out six. The victory gave Rochester fans a glimpse at what the 2nd-round draft pick from 2005 was capable of achieving. This season, Slowey has proven that his debut was anything but a fluke. He has dominated the League, posting a microscopic 1.74 ERA, over a full run better than his closest competitor. Through 19 starts this season with the Red Wings, his ERA has never been higher than 1.87, giving Slowey a chance to make history. The last pitcher to record an ERA under 2.00 in the International League was Tidewater's Dave West in 1988 (1.80). Since 1923, only three pitchers have finished with an ERA lower than Slowey's current 1.74 mark: Jersey City's Ben Cantwell (1.65 in 1937), Richmond's Pablo Torrealba (1.45 in 1975), and Memphis' John Montague (1.73 in 1975). Slowey, at age 23, is the youngest member of the IL postseason All-Star Team.

Rookie-of-the-Year – Joey Votto, Louisville

Louisville's Joey Votto made his Triple-A debut this year after being named the 2006 Southern League Most Valuable Player. He didn't miss a beat in his transition to Triple-A. Votto's 90 RBI are 2nd in the IL only to MVP Mike Hessman (97), and are approaching his career high of 92 set in 2004 between Class-A Dayton and Potomac. He's already matched his career-best 22 homers of a year ago. Votto has proven himself to be a versatile threat this season, playing 39 games in the outfield in addition to 89 at his regular position of first base. He leads the Bats in both slugging percentage (.483) and on-base percentage (.384), and is 2nd on the club with 17 stolen bases. Votto has been particularly hot down the stretch, leading the IL with 8 home runs and 26 RBI in August.

Manager-of-the-Year – Dave Miley, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre

For the second straight year, the IL Manager-of-the-Year hails from Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Dave Miley becomes the fourth manager in franchise history to be so honored, joining Lee Elia (1992), Marc Bombard (2002), and John Russell (2006). Miley is in his eighth season managing in the International League. He was the skipper in Indianapolis from 1996-2000 (the Indians were in the American Association until 1998). He became Louisville's all-time winningest manager during his 2000-2003 tenure with the Bats, and last year Miley guided Columbus to a 69-73 record in his first year managing the Yankees' Triple-A affiliate. 18 of Miley's players have been promoted to New York this season, but the Scranton/WB club seems only to get better. Since July 1, Miley's Yankees have gone 35-20, and now have a magic number of four to clinch the IL North Division.



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In addition to Hessman, Slowey, and Votto, nine other players have been named to the International League postseason All-Star Team for 2007. Six clubs are represented with one player on the team (Buffalo, Durham, Indianapolis, Norfolk, Richmond, and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre), while three clubs lead the way with two players apiece (Louisville, Rochester, and Toledo).

- ☆ 23-year old second baseman **Martin Prado** of the Richmond Braves has blossomed in his first full year at the Triple-A level. Prado is hitting a career-best .318, good enough for 2nd-best in the International League. Prado, who hails from Maracay, Venezuela, has played in 41 Major League games with Atlanta, including 17 in a pair of stints this season. He owns a .280 average so far in the big leagues.
- ☆ Indianapolis shortstop **Brian Bixler** is among the most impressive rookies in the International League this season. The 24-year-old from Sandusky, Ohio reached Minor League Baseball's highest classification in just his fourth professional campaign. He leads the Indians in hits (124) and games played (123), and is tied for the club lead in stolen bases (27). Bixler is tied for 1st in the International League with 10 triples and tied for 2nd with 75 runs scored. As he did last year in the Carolina League, Bixler was named to both the IL mid-season and postseason All-Star teams in 2007.
- ☆ The 2007 All-Star catcher is Rochester's **Jose Morales**. The 24-year-old Morales is 3rd in the International League with a .315 batting average, the highest of his seven-year professional career. Morales has also been a masterful receiver, catching for a Rochester pitching staff that is 2nd in the IL in ERA (3.62), 1st in complete games (13), and last in walks (318). Morales, a native of Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, is in his first full season at the Triple-A level.
- ☆ The International League's leading hitter is Buffalo outfielder **Ben Francisco** (.322). The 25-year-old is dominating IL pitching one season after sharing the Bisons' Most Valuable Player Award with former teammate Jason Dubois. This year, Francisco leads the Herd with 22 stolen bases, a .500 slugging percentage (7th in the IL), and a .387 on-base percentage (4th in the IL). The native of Santa Ana, California also made his Major League debut earlier this season, hitting .273 with 3 HR and 7 RBI in 19 games with Cleveland. Francisco was the leading vote-getter among all outfielders.
- ☆ Toledo outfielder **Timo Perez** has been one of the IL's top offensive threats all season, and the 32-year-old has been rewarded with election to the postseason All-Star Team. Perez is among the League leaders with a .309 batting average (6th), 151 hits (T-1st), 39 doubles (2nd), and 76 runs scored (1st). He stole the show at the Triple-A All-Star Game in Albuquerque, going 3-4 with a double and 2 RBI and was named the IL's "Top Star". Perez, a native of Bani, Dominican Republic, has played in 577 Major League games, plus 333 in the Minor Leagues and 359 in Japan.
- ☆ In his first season at the Triple-A level, 24-year-old Durham outfielder **Justin Ruggiano** has been among the IL's most impressive offensive players. He is currently near the top of the League with a .313 batting average (4th), 143 hits (3rd), a .386 on-base percentage (5th), a .508 slugging percentage (4th), and 75 runs scored (T-2nd). The Austin, Texas native is surging in August, hitting .424 with 6 HR and 18 RBI to lead the Bulls to a 16-9 record this month and a 2.0 game lead in the IL South. Ruggiano was acquired from the Dodgers as the "Player to be Named Later" in the June, 2006 deal that sent Toby Hall and Mark Hendrickson to Los Angeles in exchange for Jae Seo and Dioner Navarro.
- ☆ Norfolk closer **Cory Doyne** has been elected as the relief pitcher on the IL postseason All-Star Team. Doyne has been nearly perfect for the Tides this year, saving 29 games in 30 chances. He has recorded 49 strikeouts in 44.1 innings, with a microscopic WHIP of 0.88. The 26-year-old native of Tampa, Florida now holds the Tides' franchise record for saves in a single season, besting the old mark of 26 set by Derek Wallace in 1996. Doyne also earned the save for the International League team at the Triple-A All-Star Game, striking out two in the 9th.
- ☆ Though he has been in the Major Leagues for over a month, Yankees slugger **Shelley Duncan** is still 3rd in the International League with 25 home runs and leads the circuit with a .667 slugging percentage. The 27-year-old burst onto the Triple-A scene this year by hitting .318 with 7 HR and 16 RBI in April before being elected the Topps IL Player-of-the-Month in May. The Tucson, Arizona native is hitting .292 with 6 HR and 13 RBI in 21 games with New York since his mid-July promotion from Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.
- ☆ The final All-Star spot goes to Louisville's **Aaron Herr**, who has been selected as the International League's top utility player for 2007. The 26-year-old Herr received votes at both second and third base, where he's split time this year for the Bats. Herr has driven in a career-best 82 runs, trailing only Mike Hessman and Joey Votto for the highest total in the League. The Lancaster, Pennsylvania native leads his team with 30 doubles and is tied for the lead with 71 runs scored this year. Herr is in his first full season at the Triple-A level, and just his second in the Cincinnati organization after signing as a free agent following the 2005 campaign.



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2007 IL AWARD WINNERS

- Most Valuable Player ➤ Mike Hessman, Toledo Mud Hens
- Most Valuable Pitcher ➤ Kevin Slowey, Rochester Red Wings
- Rookie-of-the-Year ➤ Joey Votto, Louisville Bats
- Manager-of-the-Year ➤ Dave Miley, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees

2007 IL ALL-STAR TEAM

- First Baseman ➤ Joey Votto, Louisville Bats
- Second Baseman ➤ Martin Prado, Richmond Braves
- Shortstop ➤ Brian Bixler, Indianapolis Indians
- Third Baseman ➤ Mike Hessman, Toledo Mud Hens
- Catcher ➤ Jose Morales, Rochester Red Wings
- Outfielders ➤ Ben Francisco, Buffalo Bisons
- Timo Perez, Toledo Mud Hens
- Justin Ruggiano, Durham Bulls
- Designated Hitter ➤ Shelley Duncan, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees
- Utility Player ➤ Aaron Herr, Louisville Bats
- Starting Pitcher ➤ Kevin Slowey, Rochester Red Wings
- Relief Pitcher ➤ Cory Doyne, Norfolk Tides

ALL-STAR STATISTICS (thru Aug. 27)

<u>Batters</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>BA</u>	<u>AB</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>2B</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>HR</u>	<u>RBI</u>	<u>SB</u>
Joey Votto	LOU	.297	472	71	140	18	2	22	90	17
Martin Prado	RICH	.318	365	58	116	21	3	4	38	5
Brian Bixler	IND	.273	455	75	124	21	10	5	50	27
Mike Hessman	TOL	.254	410	70	104	23	2	31	97	6
Jose Morales	ROCH	.315	356	41	112	24	1	2	35	1
Ben Francisco	BUF	.322	360	58	116	27	2	11	47	22
Timo Perez	TOL	.309	489	76	151	39	1	13	69	13
Justin Ruggiano	DUR	.313	457	75	143	28	2	19	72	26
Shelley Duncan	SWB	.295	336	58	99	18	1	25	79	2
Aaron Herr	LOU	.273	488	71	133	30	5	18	82	8
<u>Pitchers</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>W-L</u>	<u>ERA</u>	<u>SV</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>IP</u>	<u>SO</u>			
Kevin Slowey	ROCH	10-4	1.74	0	19	129.2	103			
Cory Doyne	NOR	0-1	2.23	29	42	44.1	49			