

SPORTS

Indians have eyes on World Series Title

By Andrew McLachlan
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The Cleveland Indians surprised everyone in Major League Baseball last season. In arguably the most competitive division in baseball, the Indians won the American League Central and eventually lost to the 2007 World Series champion Boston Red Sox in seven games in the ALCS, even though expectations were not that high for the tribe. With the core of last season's roster still intact, the Indians will look to get back to the World Series and win their first title in 60 years.

Indians fans are still having a tough time getting over how last season ended. After leading 3-1 in the best of seven series over the Red Sox, the Indians only needed one more game to take down the powerhouse from Beantown. The last win never came for the Indians as they dropped the last three games of the series, allowing the Red Sox advance to the World Series to face the Colorado Rockies. The Red Sox went on to sweep the Rockies in four games to win the World Series.

The tribe only made a few minor deals during the off-season, including the acquisition of utility infielder Jamey Carroll. The former Rockies prospect will be used as a backup infielder and a versatile bat off the bench. The Indians did not jump into the free agency market this off-season due to the fact that the team from

last year was relatively a young team.

The starting pitching staff will be the same five starters they had last year in C.C. Sabathia, Fausto Carmona, Cliff Lee, Jake Westbrook and Paul Byrd. Sabathia and Carmona were the anchors of the staff last season, which led to trips to the All-Star Game and Cy Young consideration for both. They will rely on Sabathia and Carmona to play at the all-star level they did last year, to keep them in the mix in the AL. The staff will count on the improvement of Lee, who has had two rough seasons since his breakout

year in 2005. If he starts out slow this season, look for management to pull the plug on Lee and give either Jeremy Sowers or Aaron Laffey a shot in the starting rotation.

The youthful batting and fielding of the Indians has the same big names in the lineup that include center-fielder Grady Sizemore, designated hitter Travis Hafner and right-fielder Franklin Gutierrez. Sizemore, who is one of the most coveted outfielders in the game, has been a leader on and off the field for the Indians. As the lead-off hitter for the Indians, Sizemore is an energy source for the team. An injury or early season struggles of Sizemore could create a huge problem for the Indians.

Hafner, who in 2005 was finalist for the AL MVP, has had troubles matching his number from three seasons ago. Still a major threat in the batting order, Hafner needs to find his stride in '08 or the Indians might try to find a cheaper alternative for the DH spot. Gutierrez had his breakout season in 2007, showing signs of a potential stud in the batting order and in RF. A major factor in last year's success, Gutierrez needs to avoid being a one-hit wonder that many Indians fans have seen over the years.

With the Indians season starting in three days, fans and experts have expectations for the club in '08. Will the tribe keep their focus on the top of the Central Division or will they have another letdown season like in 2006? We will find out in the next few months.



Cleveland Indians Mascot Chief Wahoo

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

This Week in Sports

NBA

~Golden State Warriors forward **Chris Webber** announces his retirement after 15 seasons in the NBA.

Webber, who was made famous for being apart of the University of Michigan Basketball's "Fab Five" during the early 90s, finished with an average of 20.7 points, 9.8 rebounds and 4.2 assists per game over his career.

~Portland Trail Blazers guard **Brandon Roy** will miss the next four games due to a groin injury.

Roy, who is emerging as a premiere guard in the NBA, is averaging a team-high 19.3 points and 5.8 assists this season.

NHL

~Former NHL goaltender **Patrick Roy** was suspended five games and his son, goaltender **Jonathon Roy**, was suspended seven games for their part in a brawl that took place between the Quebec Remparts/Chicoutimi Saguenens of the QMJHL.

The elder Roy, who was on the bench, denied playing any role in the melee, although he appeared to urge on his son with a wave before he attacked the rival goaltender, **Bobby Nadeau**.

Patrick Roy, who is the NHL's career leader in victories and a member of the Hockey Hall of Fame, apologized on Tuesday, Mar. 25 to Nadeau and his family, as well as to the Remparts organization.

NFL

~Seattle Seahawks cornerback **Marcus Trufant** signed a six-year, \$50.2 million contract.

The deal includes \$20 million in guaranteed money. Trufant is due \$28 million over the first three years of the contract, making him one of the highest-paid cornerbacks in the league.

Intramural Deadline Update

Kickball

Deadline is **Friday, March 28 at 4 p.m.**

Tennis

Deadline is **Friday, April 4 at 4 p.m.**

If interested contact Rob Wittman at rww3@psu.edu

Sports Fan of the Week Behrend Baseball look to live up to hype



Name: **Buster**
Favorite Team: **Pittsburgh Penguins**
Favorite Player: **Hal Gill**
Been a Penguins Fan Since: **April 2007**

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With the weather still frigid and the threat of snow still in the air, it is hard to think about the upcoming baseball season. For the Behrend baseball team, their season began on a road trip to Florida, but, now that they are back in Erie, they can begin focus on winning their first Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference (AMCC) title in five years.

"We are moving in the right direction," said Behrend Baseball Head Coach Paul Benim. Behrend began their road trip 1-2, including a 19-7 shellacking in Transylvania, Ken., but the Florida coast must have brought good luck to the team. They went 6-2 in the sunshine state to finish their road trip with a 7-4 record. Some of the notable wins in Florida were a 12-7 victory over Manhattanville and a 20-3 blowout over Ursinus.

As the divisional play begins in the AMCC, Coach Benim will look for the same ingredients of success that led them to a good outing in Florida. "Our depth was important over our first 11 games. It will continue to be with the weather and other factors that arise during the season."

Behrend finished 27-12 last year overall and 12-8 in the AMCC. Their record led them to a No.4 place finish in the division, but was quickly knocked out by Pitt-Bradford in the first round of the playoffs. With high expectations going into this year, Coach Benim is looking at his returning players to step it up in 2008. "The veterans are mentally and physically ready to play. They know what it takes to excel and have provided strong leadership early on for our program."

Behrend received high praises from their competitors when they were voted and ranked No.1 in the AMCC preseason poll. Behrend Junior starting pitcher David Koerbel was also voted as the Preseason Pitcher of the Year. Koerbel finished 5-1 in 11 appearances last season, with an ERA of 2.87 and 55 strikeouts in 53.1 innings pitched. While Coach Benim is thrilled with the preseason rankings and awards, he has his team focused on their goals for this season.

"The preseason honor is nice, but the end of the year stuff is what you hang on your refrigerator. Our league is ultra competitive and you have to be prepared to play everyday. Top to bottom you will be tested in each and every game."

Behrend will rely on the pitching staff of Koerbel, junior Andrew Chrobak, junior Ben Cain, sophomore Charles Zimonski and freshman Blake Pavlik to shutdown the competition and help carry Behrend to an AMCC title. "Our starting pitching must continue to be one of our strengths," said Benim. Behrend lost some of their top batters from last year, but Benim believes that some of the younger guys could step it up this season. "We have some youth that is pushing and making our staff take notice of what they might be capable of as the season unfolds."

Behrend's coaching staff consist of Benim and assistant

coaches Brian Hirschberg and Butch Kenling. Behrend begins their divisional play at Mt. Aloysius on Saturday, March 29, at 1 p.m. Their first scheduled divisional home game will be on Tuesday, April 1, at 1 p.m. "We need to play one pitch of one game at time," says Benim.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Behrend Baseball went 7-4 on their road trip

