



GAMEDAY

JULY 2024

LETTER FROM THE TEAM

Hey Fans!

Wow! What a first half of the season! We had a lot of fun chasing the playoffs all throughout the first half. We saw a season filled with suspense, drama, excitement, joy, agony, and all the things that make baseball great! Unfortunately, the Hillcats fell just short of guaranteeing themselves a trip to the postseason, but as the second half kicks off, the team is more determined than ever.

Despite the losses of several key players, the Hillcats still boast a ton of top prospects within the Guardians organization. Players such as Ralphie Velazquez, Jaison Chourio, and Wuilfredo Antunez still don the teal and green. Though they may have an impact on the field, it's been the fans in the stands who have been the most impactful.

Ask any player and they will tell you that they feed off of the Lynchburg Hillcats faithful. The energy that the crowd brings helps them overcome the challenges they face. When the game is close, it's the fans who help push the team over the hump. When obstacles arise, the players use the locals as their motivation. That's you! The organization wants to help make your job as the energizer as easy as possible by providing tons of promotions this July, so make sure to stop on by!

And who knows, maybe it'll be you that helps the team make it back to the playoffs.

Sincerely,
The Lynchburg Hillcats



CLARIK



FIRST HALF RECAP

By: Connor Young

We are now halfway through the 2024 Lynchburg Hillcats season celebrating 30 years of the Lynchburg Hillcats franchise and I think it is certainly fair to say that it has been a historical start to the year already. From one of the best crops of top prospects we have seen in the Hill City in decades, to an unforgettable unlikely ace, to a so close but so far away first half crown a lot has gone on in the Bank of the James Stadium since April 5th, 2024. So, let's recap it all!

Heading into the season there was a lot of Hillcats hype around Lynchburg and Guardians nation alike. The Lynchburg roster was made up of 7 top 30 Cleveland prospects on opening day. Angel Genao, Jaison Chourio, Ralph Velazquez, Wuilfredo Antunez, Rafael Ramirez Jr., Alex Clemmey, and Jackson Humphries are all highly touted Cleveland prospects. But, as many Minor League teams know, high level prospects does not always equal high-level baseball right away, or wins. This was something Lynchburg would learn all too soon.

The Hillcats lost their first 5 games in a row to open up the season. They lost a shortened 3 game series on the road against Down East to open the year and then got smacked in both of their first two games at home against the Fredericksburg Nationals who were sporting the hottest offense in professional baseball at the time. Lynchburg rallied late in that series against the FredNats winning 3 of the last 4 games of that series and giving us a taste of the heart of 2024's iteration of the Lynchburg Hillcats that we would all grow to love.

Lynchburg was fueled through the first half largely off the backs of two players who have since gotten the call up to High A Lake County. One a pitcher, the other a position player. The first being Matt Wilkinson who struck out 15 batters through 6 innings against the Myrtle Beach Pelicans smack dab in the heart of the Hill City in the Bank of the James Stadium in an outing that would garner national media attention. The "Tugboat" was an overnight Lynchburg sensation and his phenom-esque performances on the mound would not be isolated to that one fateful start against the Pelicans. Wilkinson would rack up a pitcher of the week award for his efforts as well as a pitcher of the month nod. Wilkinson dominated at the Carolina League level and his quick call up caught no one by surprise.

Wilkinson would not be the only Hillcat to bring in some individual hardware. Ralph Velazquez, Esteban Gonzalez, and Angel Genao would all take home Carolina League players of the week honors. The latter of the trio is the position player who in many respects carried Lynchburg over the last two months I mentioned in the last paragraph. Genao was pound for pound the best hitter in the Carolina League through the first half of the

season. Genao combined hitting for average with newfound power leading the league in hits for the majority of the season before his callup while finishing his time in Lynchburg this season with 6 home runs through just over 40 games. The growth in Genao's game from 2023 to 2024 was apparent and he was the leading force in the Lynchburg lineup day in and day out.

As a team, Lynchburg really found their stride in mid-May. Lynchburg would only lose one series throughout the whole month of May that lost series game at the hands of Delmarva. Looking back on the season to this point, both of Lynchburg's series against Delmarva once at home in May the other on the road in June, felt like their best chances to claim the North Division first half crown securing themselves a Carolina League playoff berth. All season long Lynchburg was chasing the Carolina Mudcats and Fredericksburg Nationals who both found themselves at the top of the North Division. For the majority of the season, it was the Mudcats on top and the FredNats second. Lynchburg kept clawing away through May and June, staying competitive all the way through the first half. The 'Cats zoomed past Fredericksburg and remained in the second spot through all June, never getting closer than 3 games back of first place.

Lynchburg was not able to topple the Mudcats to secure a playoff berth just yet through the first half, but this team certainly feels like they have something special brewing. That was the story of the first half, and like I said there sure have been some memorable moments in the Hill City so far to say the least. But if you ask me, the best from the Bank of the James Stadium in 2024 is yet to come!



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PURCHASE YOUR 2024 HILLCATS TRADING

The wait is finally over!

The Hillcats trading card team set is now available in the team store. This year's set is designed to look like the trading card sets from the 1990's, since, ya know, we're celebrating our 30th Anniversary this season.

This years pack features star players such as Ralphy Velazquez, Angel Genao, and Wuilfredo Antunez. Also featured are Rorik Maltrud and Matt Jachec.

The cards are the perfect gift for the Hillcat fan in your life. Stay after the game and stand down by the third base side and you may have a chance to get your favorite Hillcat to autograph them.

The trading cards will be located inside the team shop. The cards have a limited availability, so make sure to get yours today!



A close-up portrait of an elderly man with white hair, smiling slightly. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue collared shirt. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

REMEMBERING DAVE ELMORE

Remembering the Legacy of David Elmore: A Visionary and Inspirational Leader

Palm Desert, CA - It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of David Elmore, a visionary entrepreneur, and a cherished member of the professional sports community. Dave leaves behind an immense void in the world of business, philanthropy, the Olympics, and his profound impact on professional baseball and hockey. He will be remembered not only for his remarkable achievements, but also for his unwavering commitment to these sports and their global significance.

Dave Elmore created the Elmore Sports Group, a conglomerate of Minor League Baseball teams, professional hockey clubs, facility, concessions and special event management companies.

David Elmore's passion for professional baseball was exemplified through his ownership of numerous minor league teams across the country. His entrepreneurial spirit and dedication to sports transformed communities and brought the joy of baseball and hockey to fans of all ages.

As the founder and owner of several minor league baseball teams, including the Eugene Emeralds, Colorado Springs Sky Sox, Rocky Mountain Vibes, Inland Empire 66ers, Amarillo Sod Poodles, San Antonio Missions, Idaho Falls Chukars and Lynchburg Hillcats, David Elmore established a lasting legacy in the world of sports. Through these teams, he created opportunities for aspiring players, entertained countless fans, and contributed to the growth and development of the sport. He was inducted into the Pacific Coast League and Texas League Halls of Fame and was recognized as King of Baseball in 2016.

Beyond his involvement in professional baseball, David Elmore's visionary leadership extended to various sports ventures. Dave Elmore had a passion for hockey, owning the Utah Grizzlies and the Idaho Falls Spud Kings. Dave along with his wife, Donna Tuttle, moved the Grizzlies from Denver to Utah, and aided West Valley City in the development of the Maverik Center in Salt Lake City, a state-of-the-art sports and entertainment arena which hosted the 2002 Winter Olympics. This multi-purpose facility became a hub for sporting events, concerts, and community gatherings, providing an unforgettable experience for attendees and contributing to the local economy.

As we mourn the loss of David Elmore, let us also celebrate his profound contributions to professional baseball, the sports industry, and the Olympic movement. His visionary leadership, unwavering commitment, and entrepreneurial spirit have left an indelible mark, igniting the passion for sports in communities and fostering a legacy of excellence and inclusivity.

B

LIVE

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home



VOTE FOR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

The Lynchburg Hillcats are excited to bring back one of the traditions from our past this season.

Lynchburg and Arthur's Jewelry are teaming up to bring back the Hillcats Player of the Year! Fans in attendance at Bank of the James Stadium will have the opportunity to place their vote for which Hillcats's player they believe deserves the award.

As part of the award, both the player and one of the fans that voted for them will receive a free watch, courtesy of Arthur's Jewelry. The award and the watch will be handed out at Fan Appreciation Night on September 1st.

Arthur's Jewelry is a family owned and operated jewelry store located in Bedford, Virginia. Located at 111 N Bridge St., Arthur's Jewelry is the community's home for engagement rings, fine jewelry, and diamonds.

Fans can cast their vote for Player of the Year by visiting the promotions booth located on the concourse during any of the Hillcats home games in 2024.

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WHO ARE THE TOP 5 HILLCATS OF ALL-TIME?

Top 5 Hillcats of all-time. Well, this article took a lot of research as there was 30 years of Lynchburg Hillcats baseball to comb through, but it was one of the more interesting and fun articles I have had the opportunity to write. There has been so much star power in the Hill City over the years. From recent Guardians success stories like Steven Kwan and Shane Bieber to mid-2000's household names like Aramis Ramirez. That said, the success of a player after they left Lynchburg did not come into play for this article. All that this list was based off of was the players actual season as a Hillcat, not what they have accomplished in the Major Leagues. So, with that out of the way let's get right into the list!

Anthony Santander

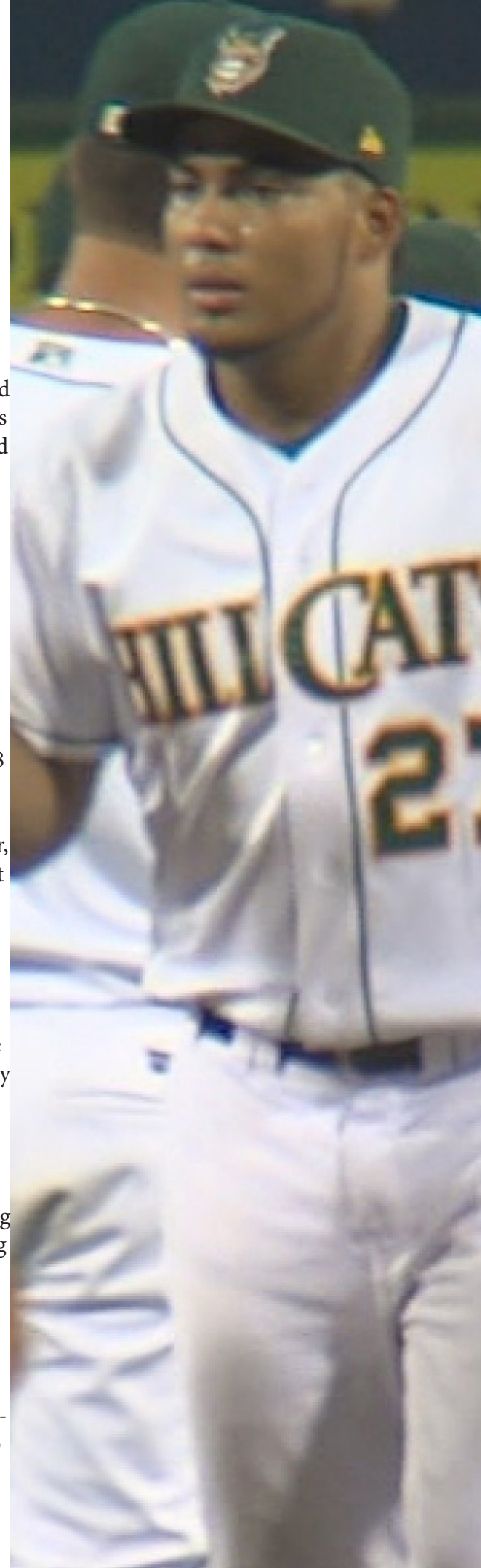
Anthony Santander is the best Hillcat of all-time. His year in Lynchburg was phenomenal. The most shocking thing about Santander's 2016 season in Lynchburg was not his impressive offensive numbers, which we are going to break down in just a moment, it was the fact that he stuck around in Lynchburg for the whole season without getting called up! On the year, Santander held a .290 batting average, .368 on base percentage, clubbed 20 home runs (which did not even lead the team that year), and had 95 runs batted in! Santander was paired up with another power bat in that 2016 Lynchburg lineup who, spoiler, is also on this list. Santander led a star-studded 2016 Hillcat order that propelled the team to an 84-46 record good for first in the Carolina League that season.

Bobby Bradley

Santander's Hillcat teammate and the single season home run all-time Lynchburg leader Bobby Bradley is the second entry on this list. Bobby Bradley may not have been the first baseman of the future that many Guardians fans were banking on at the time, but in Lynchburg he was a power threat unlike anything we have seen in the Hill City. Bradley was bringing the power in spades, he hit 29 home runs on the season while crossing the triple digit threshold in RBIs in 2016 as well, driving in 102 runs. It is hard not to see the Bobby Bradley hype when looking back at his 2016 numbers.

Andrelton Simmons

Andrelton Simmons may not have had the offensive numbers to his name while in Lynchburg like we saw from Bobby Bradley and Anthony Santander, but Simmons was no doubt the best defensive shortstop in the Carolina League in 2011. I would take it one step further and say Simmons is the best defensive shortstop in the history of the Hillcats franchise!



Simmons was still hitting the ball well in 2011 in a Lynchburg uniform, he would hold an impressive .311 average through 131 games played stealing 26 bases while playing world class defense at shortstop.

Will Dion

Will Dion is the most recent Hillcat on this list and is also the only listed Lynchburg alumni to not have made his major league debut. Now, give Will Dion some time and he should make that milestone, especially if his 2022 season in Lynchburg is any indication. Dion was dealing at the Carolina League level. He pitched to an 8-4 record, miniscule 2.26 earned run average, all while striking out 142 batters and walking just 31. It was clear Dion was levels above his competition and anyone who was there to see his dominant Hillcat run here at the Bank of the James Stadium would tell you he is going to be a staple in this Cleveland organization for years to come. Dion is currently one step away from the big leagues as a member of the Columbus Clippers, the Triple A affiliate of the Cleveland Guardians.

LYNCHBURG HILLCATS
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- 6** Limonadas Nights 
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- 12** Giveaways

27
Theme
Nights

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Triston McKenzie

Back-to-back pitchers to end the list, and when you look at Will Dion and Triston McKenzie's numbers it is kind of a case of pick your poison. Both have a case to be placed one spot above the other if not even higher up our list and the biggest thing McKenzie's case would have going for it is the strikeout numbers. McKenzie struck out 186 batters in just 143 innings pitched. He was the closest pitcher I could find to near the 200-strikeout threshold as a Hillcat in one season since the Lynchburg club switched over to the Hillcat moniker 30 years ago. McKenzie's ERA was certainly higher than Dion's sitting at 3.46 but he held opposing batters to just a .203 average against him. Much like Will Dion, Triston McKenzie was showing flashes of special stuff on the mound in the Hill City that would continue to shine through all the way up to the big leagues. That 2017 Hillcats rotation at various times throughout the year would consist of Major League all-star caliber arms the likes of Triston McKenzie, Shane Bieber, and Aaron Civale. No wonder that elite rotation would lead the 'Cats to one of their best records of all time winning 87 games that season and claiming the last Hillcats Carolina League crown. It is hard to say Lynchburg would have been able to do that without Triston McKenzie.

Well, that is my list! Like I said to open the article, there really have been so many stars to roll through the Hill City on their way to the show and I think my top 5 list shows that you probably have a rather good idea of who those future Major League stars are going to be when they are in town. Current Hillcats like Jaison Chourio and Ralphy Velazquez are having great starts to their 2024 season and certainly have the same presence the aforementioned players on this list did when they were members of the Hillcats. So make sure you take the opportunity to see them in action this season while they last in Lynchburg!

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FIREWORKS

30 SAND-COME SUNDAY
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Weekly Promos



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SIGN UP FOR THE YOUTH BASEBALL CLINIC

It's that time again! The Lynchburg Baseball Corp. will be conducting the 34th annual Youth Baseball Clinic at Bank of the James Stadium on Monday, July 15th and Tuesday, July 16th from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. Boys and girls ages 6-14 are invited to attend and will receive quality instruction while learning the fundamentals of baseball from local coaches.

Participation fee: \$125 per child. (\$100 for Southpaw Kids Club members & season ticket holders)

Each child is required to bring his/her own bat, glove, cap, bag lunch, water bottle, and workout clothing.

Each child will receive a clinic t-shirt and one complimentary GA ticket to the Hillcats baseball game on Sunday, July 14th.

Lunch from Jersey Mike's will be provided to campers on Tuesday, July 16th.

Parents are encouraged to stay and watch the clinic from the stands.

Registration is not guaranteed until payment has been received by the Hillcats. Please download, complete, and email the registration form to hallred@lynchburg-hillcats.com. For more information, please call (434) 528-1144 x 8122.



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\$5 MARGARITA NIGHT

JULY 13



MARGARITAVILLE NIGHT

JUNE 13



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APRIL 26



LITTLE HILLCATS NIGHT

JUNE 2



SOUTHPAWS BIRTHDAY PARTY

JULY 1



MARVEL MONDAY

*SHOW THIS CARD AT THE BOX OFFICE ON THE DAY OF THE GAME FOR A FREE GENERAL ADMISSION TICKET!

AUG 1



AVIATION & AEROSPACE NIGHT

AUG 28



HALLOWEEN AT THE BALLPARK



SOUTHPAW'S FUN ZONE

Hillcats 2024 Word Search

L	O	T	C	F	D	B	M	F	C	P	A	B	D
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DE HILL CITY

