# GUIDERAIL AUGUST 3-8

## HISTORY MADE GIL COMBINES WITH MCCLAIN AND RIDINGS TO NO-HIT RED WINGS

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# SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE RAILRIDERS 2021 SCHEDULE



# 2021 GUIDERAIL Volume Eight- Issue Seven

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In July 21, Luis Gil, Reggie McClain and Stephen Ridings combined to throw a no-hitter against the Rochester Red Wings. It was the franchise's first no-no since 2006... also against the Wings.

Read more about this historic feat on page 22.

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#### 2021 RAILRIDERS FIELD





BORN: SEPTEMBER 24, 1962 **RESIDES: BLOOMSBURG, PA** YEARS WITH NYY: 4

DID YOU KNOW ?: DAVIS' FIRST MANAGER IN THE MINOR LEAGUES WAS HAZLETON. PA NATIVE JOE MADDON, WHO EVENTUALLY LED THE CHICAGO CUBS TO THE 2016 WORLD SERIES.

It was announced January 27, 2020, that Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania native and Central Columbia High School graduate Doug Davis will manage the RailRiders for the 2021 season. He is the 13th manager in SWB franchise history, and just the fifth in Yankees-era history (2007-Present). He joins Dave Miley (2007-15), Al Pedrique (16-17), Bobby Mitchell (2018) and Jay Bell (2019) as SWB skippers to serve under the Yankees affiliation.

Davis enjoyed an 11-year professional career, which included spending parts of two years in Major League Baseball. He spent three seasons coaching with the RailRiders under three different managers, serving as the Defensive Coach in 2017 under Pedrique, the Bullpen Coach in 2018 under Mitchell and the Bench Coach in 2019 under Bell.

Davis, 58, has been in coaching since 1995, serving as a minor league manager for eight seasons. As a manager, he owns a career 515-484 record including championships with Pittsfield in the NY-Penn League in 1997 and Capital City (Columbia, SC) in the South Atlantic League in 1998. From 2007-2016 he was on staff in the Toronto Blue Jays system and before that he spent two seasons in the big leagues as the Florida Marlins bench coach from 2003-04, winning the World Series against the Yankees in 2003 with former SWB Pitching Coach Tommy Phelps on the roster.

In between coaching stints, Davis served as the Minor League Field Coordinator for the Montreal Expos (2001), Florida Marlins (2002, 2005), and Toronto Blue Jays (2009-2016).



Selected in the ninth round of the 1984 MLB Draft out of

NC State, the former catcher played professionally for 11 seasons between 1984 and 1994 in the minor league systems of California, Kansas City and Texas. He made it to the big leagues on two separate occasions, scoring one run in six games with the Angels in 1988 and he collected a hit in his only MLB at-bat with the Rangers in 1992.

#### DOUG DAVIS – MINOR LERGUE MANAGERIAL RECORD **RECORD FINISH**

YEAR TEAM 1996 Pittsfield Mets 1997 Pittsfield Mets 1998 Capital City Bombers 1999 Binghamton Mets 2000 Binghamton Mets 2006 New Hampshire Fisher Cats 2007 Syracuse Chiefs 2008 Syracuse Chiefs MiLB CAREER (8 Years)

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## 2021 RAILRIDERS FIELD STAF



## **CASEY DYKES- HITTING COACH**

#### Born: January 27, 1990

#### Resides: Wesley Chapel, FL

Dykes joined the Yankees organization last year after spending 2019 with Indiana University as their hitting coach. Prior to his time with Indiana, Dykes was the hitting coach and recruiting coordinator at Virginia Military Institute (2015-18) and spent two seasons as an assistant at his alma mater, Western Kentucky University (2013-14).

#### **RAUL DOMINIGUEZ- COACH**

#### Born: July 25, 1980

#### Resides: Panama City, Panama

Dominguez begins his first season with Scranton/Wilkes-Barre and his 14th in the Yankees organization in 2020. He spent the last two seasons as the defensive coach for Double-A Trenton, and served in the same role for A-Advanced Tampa in 2017. Dominguez was signed by the Yankees as a non-drafted free agent in 2001.





#### CAONABO COSME- COACH

Resides: La Vega, Dominican Republic

Born: March 18, 1979

Cosme enters his 10th season in the Yankees organization and his first with the RailRiders. He was scheduled to serve as a defensive coach for the Yankees' former Double-A Trenton affiliate before the 2020 season was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## DARREN LONDON- ATHLETIC TRAINER

#### Born: December 26, 1966

#### **Resides: Grove City, OH**

London returns for his 28<sup>th</sup> consecutive season as the athletic trainer of the Yankees' Triple-A affiliate. He was the International League's Trainer of the Year in both 2006 and 2012. London's baseball career began in 1989 with the Class-A Prince William Cannons in the Carolina League. He graduated from thniversity of Maine-Orono.





#### LARRY ADEGOKE-STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

Born: April 3, 1993

Resides: Atlanta, GA

Adegoke joined the Yankees organization on a full-time basis in 2018, spending two years in Pulaski and was tabbed for Charleston last year. He served as the Yankees performance science assistant in the spring of 2017. Adegoke graduated with a B.S. in exercise science from Kennesaw State University (Ga.). He earned his M.S. in exercise and nutrition science from the University of Tampa.



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## 2021 RAILRIDERS ROSTER

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# HISTORY MADE: THREE RAILRIDERS COMBINE TO NO-HIT ROCHESTER

Luis Gil, Reggie McClain and Stephen Ridings combined to throw a no-hitter on July 21; the franchise's first no-no since September of 2006.

#### **By Sadie Keller**

A no-hitter is a rare feat. It is special to be in attendance for one, feeling like you and everyone else in the stadium were a part of something historic, almost willing the pitcher to throw strikes and outfielders to make diving grabs. For a player actually competing for the team, a no-hitter is one of the most nerve-wracking and thrilling games to experience.

In a typical minor league season, there are a handful of no-hitters, but until Luis Gil teamed with relievers Reggie McClain and Stephen Ridings on a combined no-hitter for Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre against Rochester on Wednesday, July 21, there hadn't been a no-hitter for a SWB team since 2006.



Gil was untouchable from the get-go and overpowered hitters starting from the very first pitch, a heater that Red Wings lead-off hitter Rafael Bautista fouled off. With one out in the first inning, Gil walked a batter, but after that, he retired the next 14 in a row.

"I felt very good," Gil said through a translator. "I was very competitive and I had great communication with my catcher, Donny Sands. My fastball was very good and consistent, especially the velocity and location."

Acquired in a trade with the Minnesota Twins for outfielder Jake Cave in 2018, the 6-2, 185-pound native of the Dominican Republic has become one of the Yankees' most interesting pitching prospects. That season would bring Gil's promotion to professional ball in the United States after spending the prior three years playing for the Dominican Summer League Twins.



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Gil began the 2018 season with the Pulaski Yankees where he started 10 games and owned a 1.37 ERA. His performance earned him a promotion to the Staten Island Yankees for his final two starts of the season. In 2019, Gil was again promoted, this time to the Charleston RiverDogs where he continued to show positive development. The Yankees rewarded him with another late-season promotion to test his skills with the Tampa Tarpons.

In 2020, Gil spent the season at the Yankees' alternate site, though he did not make any appearances with the major-league club. He was assigned to Double-A Somerset at the start of 2021 and continued his climb through the system with a promotion to the RailRiders on June 15. Since then, the young prospect has produced a 5.64 ERA in eight starts, striking out 38 in 30.1 innings pitched. He was tabbed as the Triple-A East's Pitcher-of-the-Week following the no-hitter.

"I knew what was going on, but I didn't want to make any comments about it," Gil said. "I wanted to finish my outing and stay locked in."

The performance represents the most dominant showing for Gil in eight starts since he moved from Double-A Somerset to Triple-A. The 23-year-old right-hander struck out nine batters with two walks over six hitless innings, throwing 84 pitches, before handing the ball to the bullpen.

"Watching Luis from the start, you could tell that he had really good stuff," RailRiders manager Doug Davis said. "They could not get on his fastball and he located it very well. He definitely found the strike zone and also threw some really good changeups. His changeup had some nice action on it and it was probably better than we saw all year. His slider was effective but we really didn't need to see it all that much. He used it, but he was so dominant with the fastball and its location. They might have hit a few balls hard, but it was a really strong effort from Gil's standpoint."

RailRiders pitching coach Dustin Glant was impressed with the variety of pitches Gil used and the command he had throughout the game.

"Gil did a good job of sticking to the game plan," Glant said. "Two starts ago, Gil had an outing where he didn't throw any changeups. I think it was the second time through the lineup that he started letting the changeup rip tonight and I thought that was so good. Gil knows he needs to continue to develop that pitch and I think, because he was rolling, he was throwing it with purpose. It was electric tonight. Gil did a really nice job of not just relying on the fastball when he probably could have, but getting his arsenal out of his hand and growing as a pitcher."

Entering in relief of Gil's dominant outing, McClain embraced the challenge of continuing the no-hitter.

"Luis had a phenomenal start that day," McClain said. "We root for all of our starters to go deep into their starts to save the bullpen, but especially on that day he was on his 'A' game and he definitely found a groove. When I got the call to come into the game I wanted to continue what he had started already."

With two major-league stints already under his belt, McClain knows what pitching against top talent in high-pressure situations entails. McClain was a 13th-round draft pick in 2016 and spent time with the Mariners in 2019 and the Phillies in 2020. With Seattle, he had an ERA of 6.00 in 21 innings during 14 games including two starts. In Philadelphia, he owned an ERA of 5.06 in 5.1 innings in five games.

Since being claimed by the New York Yankees on Dec. 10, 2020, McClain has found tremendous success in Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. In 22 games, he has gone 5-2 with a 1.83 ERA and 41

strikeouts in 39.1 innings, relying primarily on a sinker.

"This is what we train for," McClain said. "Not to throw no-hitters, but just to be successful on the mound. When our game plan matches the execution, this is what will happen."

McClain contributed two perfect innings of relief in the seventh and eighth. He struck out a pair, but Red Wings infielder Ali Castillo made some of the best contact of the night with one out in the eighth inning. Brandon Wagner snagged the line drive at first base to preserve the no-no and put the RailRiders just five outs from history.

"We brought Reggie in just to show them something a little different and he was really good too," Davis said.

Glant continued, "Reggie has been a hot hand all year and has really put together a tremendous season. The time that he puts into his work and to better his craft is outstanding."

Ridings got the ball for the ninth with the RailRiders flirting with no-hitter history, but after spending the entire game beyond the outfield wall in the bullpen, was unaware of the situation he was entering.

"Obviously I didn't know going into the game that there was a no-hitter happening, so it was harder to have that excited initial reaction," Ridings said. "I was honestly happy I didn't know coming in because that would have been way more nerve-racking going into that game and knowing what was on the line."

Originally a Chicago Cubs eighth-round pick in 2016, Ridings is a Huntington, N.Y., native and Haverford (Pa.) College alum. Traded by the Cubs to the Royals during spring training 2019, he was still in rookie ball that year and pitched to a 5.91 ERA mostly as a starter for Idaho Falls. He was idle last year due to the pandemic wiping out the entire 2020 Minor League Baseball campaign, then without a team when the Royals cut him.

Ridings was signed by the Yankees in January 2021 as a minor-league free agent and has opened a lot of eyes since. After starting the season in Somerset, the reliever was promoted to the RailRiders where he boasts an impressive 0.47 ERA with 30 strikeouts in 19.0 innings over 14 appearances.

"I had a slower start to professional ball than I wanted, so it is good to now be with a new organization and make those strides forward," Ridings said. "Being back with New York and so close to home is definitely special. My family is certainly grateful that I am playing closer to home."

Those strides forward were apparent in the game as Ridings, a 6-foot-8 flame thrower, got a couple of weak ground balls to turn the Red Wings aside 1-2-3 in the ninth to close out the nohitter. He needed just nine pitches to finish it off.

"Ridings hadn't pitched in a while, so we needed to get him in there for an inning and he was as dominant as ever with his fastballs," Davis said. "It was just a great effort all the way around from the pitching standpoint."

Ridings delivered the final pitch. The soft grounder was fielded at short by Andrew Velazquez, who coolly tossed it over to Brandon Wagner at first base. Every player in the pinstriped RailRiders uniform who stood at the netting in the dugout in anticipation of potential history erupted in celebration at the play. Within a moment, there was a large group on the mound, jumping and tossing water on each other. History was made.

"I was very excited and I was full of emotions that I could not control at that moment," Gil said. "I just went out on the mound and was happy for the three of us to be able to complete that. This was my first no-hitter and I am very happy to be part of it. It doesn't happen often, so it is almost like a story."

The only previous experience McClain had with a no-hitter occurred when he donned a Mariners uniform. Seattle was no-hit on his second day in the big leagues, but the losing end was the closest McClain has ever been to one.

"It was incredible to be part of," McClain said. "You don't really realize how special it is until you do it. Once we finished the game, the three of us took a step back and realized that we actually just threw a no-hitter. We really didn't know what to do after that. I told all of the guys to remember this one because games like this don't happen often."

Ridings, also having never been part of a no-hitter, echoed similar sentiments.

"It is definitely special and I will admit that it didn't really sink in until after the game when we got into the clubhouse," Ridings said. "It was delayed, but the time we got off the field and I realized it, it was so awesome. We got into the clubhouse and Reggie came up to me to take a picture. That was something special and something that doesn't happen often. For me, that is when it set it. That was something to be proud of."

While it was a tremendous pitching feat, no pitcher can throw a no-hitter without an impressive performance from those around them as well. Catchers are often the unsung heroes of the game but play an incredibly important role in skillfully calling the pitches that silence the opponent's bats.

"Sands, our new catcher here, was tremendous and deserves a lot of credit for calling that game," Glant said. "He is really good not only with Gil but with everybody on our staff. In the two years I have been able to be around Donny, he has been an outstanding catcher and outstanding game caller with high energy. I just love him."

There are also amazing plays in the field to preserve it. There was no magical play needed to save the no-hitter for the RailRiders, but right fielder Frederick Cuevas made several catches to keep the feat going.

"Those balls hit out to Cuevas were not easy," Davis said. "They were hit by right-handers with a little cut side spin on them and they were moving away from him. There was one ball that was really running away from him but he got to it and made a nice play."

While most no-hitters throughout Major League Baseball's history have been performed by a single pitcher, combined efforts are much more common among farmhands, where the starter doesn't go the distance and the bullpen completes the accomplishment. There has been a change in how combined no-hitters come about that fits in with an era of fewer hits, more relievers and closer attention to pitch counts. For Gil, McClain, Ridings and the rest of the RailRiders, the no-hitter was even more thrilling as a team effort.

"Being a combined no-hitter does not diminish the feat at all for me," Davis said. "It is very difficult to have one guy throw a no-hitter anymore. You may have that in the major leagues because those guys can still throw 110 or 120 pitches, but these guys here are on a really strict pitch count. With Gil only throwing one inning his last time out, his pitch count number actually dropped a bit for this start. But no, being combined does not diminish it at all. That was a tremendous effort from all three guys and I am very proud of them along with the entire pitching staff. They were all very pumped when that final out was made."

Photo Credit to Todd Hiller

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# PURPOSE & PERSPECTIVE: WARREN'S RETURN BRINGS NEW FOCUS

Adam Warren first pitched for Scranton/Wilkes-Barre in 2011 and returns a decade later, but now has a family and different focus from first time through.

#### By Sadie Keller



Photo Credit: Todd Hiller

A highlight of each homestand at PNC Field is Sunday Family FunDay; a day to bring out the family to the ballpark where, along with the usual brand of family-friendly entertainment, children have the opportunity to run the bases. As the youngest fans make their fastest trip around the bags, a father dressed in the RailRiders pinstripe uniform chases after two kids of his own. Reliever Adam Warren, along with his wife Kristen, cherish the time the family can spend together.

"It is really special that my son might possibly be able to remember all of these experiences now," Warren said. "He traveled with me when he was really young, but he won't remember that. For my family to be here with me during the season, they have allowed me to realize that this is just a game and I need to have

fun. My kids have a blast and I think my son is really starting to get into the game."

While Warren has now established himself as a reliever and appreciates every moment of baseball life, he couldn't have predicted the peaks and valleys he would come to face in his professional career when he was drafted more than ten years ago in the fourth round of the 2009 Major League Baseball draft by the New York Yankees.

Warren signed with the Yankees and made his professional debut that same season with Staten Island of the Class A Short Season New York-Penn League. He started the 2010 season with the Tampa Yankees where he went 7-5 with a 2.22 ERA in 15 starts. Impressed with his performance, New York promoted Warren to the Trenton Thunder and he continued to flourish. While with the Thunder, Warren set a franchise record by striking out 15 batters in one game on August 17. He and Kristen, who were high school sweethearts, married that off-season.

"It has been incredible to have Kristen with me for the ride," Warren said. "She travels with me to most places during the season, and it is truly a blessing to have a person with you during the good and bad times that understands you. This game is not easy."

Quickly climbing the ranks, Warren made his first stop in Scranton/Wilkes-Barre as part of the 2011 Yankees roster and was named to the Triple-A All-Star Game. Warren made his Major League debut in 2012 and spent most of the next three seasons with New York before being traded to the Cubs in December 2015. Chicago traded him back to New York the following

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year. During the rest of the 2016 season with the Yankees, Warren posted a 3.26 ERA in 29 appearances.

"I just love being a part of the Yankees organization and in the pinstripes," Warren said. "They have taken such great care of me throughout my career and they really take care of all of their players."

Despite the success during his 2016 season in New York, Warren's MLB journey once again changed on July 30, 2018, when the Yankees traded him to the Seattle Mariners for international signing bonus pool space. After finishing the season with the Mariners, Warren signed a one-year contract with the San Diego Padres for

his 2019 campaign. However, his season was cut short when injury struck.

Warren suffered damage to his Ulnar Collateral Ligament, underwent Tommy John surgery and faced one of the most extensive rehabilitation programs a pitcher can endure. Despite the long, grueling road ahead, Warren inked a minor league contract with the Yankees to mark his third tenure with the team and continued to rehab at various sites during the winter and 2020 season.

"It has been a challenge coming back, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic as well," Warren said. "I rehabbed in about six or seven different places and had to adapt to different situations as I bounced around. It has been a tough process for me because I have always been consistent with my mechanics and how I throw the ball. I dealt with inconsistencies and walked too many guys



after the injury, which is something I am not used to doing. It is just funny how long it takes to come back when you take a year and a half off. It has been a challenge, but I have learned to enjoy the journey as well."

Halfway through the year-long rehab program, Warren was released from his Yankees contract on July 17, 2020, and faced the possibility of signing with another team during the difficult COVID-19 pandemic. He continued to rehab his injury and the opportunity arose to sign back with New York. In the middle of December, Warren signed another minor league contract with the Yankees, marking his fourth stint with the team.

"The Yankees do things the right way, so when I've had the opportunity to come back, I've always jumped on the chance," Warren said. "I have made so many great relationships throughout the years and this organization feels like home to me."

Warren was fully healthy heading into spring training as a non-roster invitee in 2021 but concerns still remained as it would be his first time pitching in a game since his Tommy John surgery. Warren, wearing No. 48 instead of the No. 43 he wore in his earlier stints with the Yankees, struck out two in a scoreless inning in his first action back.

"At that point my arm felt good, so it was more about overcoming the nerves because I hadn't pitched in a while," Warren said. "I know it was spring training, but I wanted to prove to myself and the organization that I could be the pitcher I thought I was. Getting back out there with the

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guys behind me and enjoying that experience was really the big thing."

As the Yankees made their first big batch of roster cuts, Warren was assigned to minor league camp after seeing three innings of work during spring camp. At the announcement of the break camp roster, he was sent to the RailRiders and started the 2021 season in Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

Set out to prove that he can be his former self, Warren is 3-1 and owns a 2.52 ERA with 33 strikeouts in 35.2 innings pitched for the RailRiders. He has been a large part of the team's success as Scranton/Wilkes-Barre holds onto a 1.5 game lead on Buffalo in the Triple-A East Northeast Division standings heading into the series vs. Worcester.

"The success has made this season so much fun," Warren said. "We all know that the minor leagues are about developing your talent to get to the big leagues, but winning makes things so much more fun. We are the Yankees and we expect to win no matter what level we are at. I think part of the reason we are playing so well is because we are having fun and are laid back. We are very focused on preparing for games, but know we can't be locked in for so long. We know we have to stay loose and that is what we have done."

In addition to re-establishing his value and working towards returning to the pinstripes in the Bronx, Warren has taken a leadership role within the clubhouse. As a veteran with eight seasons of experience in MLB, he has brought the young RailRiders pitching prospects under his wing and taught them valuable lessons about certain pitches and how to carry themselves on the mound.

"I try not to think of myself as too old, but being around all of these young guys I do feel old," Warren said with a laugh. "There have been days where I talk about being in Scranton ten years ago and they look at me funny. Some of these guys were in middle school at the time, so that definitely makes me feel old. It has been so much fun with this group and these guys keep me young. It has been neat to share my experiences with them because I have been around for a long time, but they are teaching me things constantly as well with all the new importance placed on analytics."

Even though Warren welcomes this new role, he isn't with the RailRiders just to be a mentor. He's on a mission to get back to the major leagues and stay until he retires. Now two years after Tommy John surgery, Warren feels fresher than ever and is gunning for another spot in the Yankees' bullpen. He feels like there's more jump to his fastball and that his slider is tighter. But most of all, he is having fun and appreciating each step of the journey.

"My mentality the whole year is that I missed baseball so much last season that I am just really trying to enjoy it," Warren said. "Sometimes when you get up and you face successes and failures, you forget to have fun. I get to play baseball for a living and I need to remember to have fun and enjoy the experience while I can. I would love to get back to the big leagues, that is obviously my number one goal, but I am having fun at this level. I am working on my consistency and proving I can stay healthy. I feel like when I am doing what I know I can do on the mound I will be able to help the big-league club."

Where does the journey lead from here? Even he doesn't know. But as for now, Warren is taking things day by day and is relishing in the fact he has learned to appreciate every step of the journey, the highlight of which comes when chasing his two young children around the bases and sharing his experiences with his family.

"My son and daughter run the bases on Sundays here at the stadium and it is really rewarding to be able to share that with them. You never know how long this baseball life is going to last, so it is very special."

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# FORMS OF ART: GARCIA USES HOBBY TO HELP HONE PROFESSIONAL CRAFT

Pitcher Deivi Garcia's talent on the field is advanced by his passion for a creative outlet off the field.

#### by Sadie Keller



Photo Credit: Todd Hiller

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One could say that the greatest form of art is found on a baseball field. If you are a poet, baseball has a sort of rhythm to it and if you are an artist, it has a visual appeal. Baseball is an art form because it is uniquely creative and imaginative, and pitching artistry is revealed when a pitcher has the ability to paint the corners of home plate pitch after pitch. For Deivi García, artistry comes on and off the diamond.

During his childhood in the Dominican Republic, García fell in love with drawing. He started with small sketches at home but quickly learned more at school and began to work on larger, more special drawings.

"I have been drawing since I was a little boy," García said through interpreter

Coanabo Cosme. "Sometimes I would draw on the walls of my house when I was little and I got in trouble for that. But, I've had an interest in drawing since I was little."

When he sits down with his pad of paper and pencil, García normally does not have an idea of what to draw in mind. Sometimes he will glance around his surroundings or scroll through his phone for inspiration. Once he finds an idea, most recently a photo of Fernando Tatis Jr., he will sit down with his pad and draw for an hour or two until his work is finished.

"I like to draw anime, as that is easiest for me," García said. "Overall I focus most of my drawing on people at this time."

García uses his art as a release during both the highs and the lows of the baseball season. When he is dominating on the mound, he uses art as a way to wind down and stay levelheaded. When he faces adversity, his drawings are there to help him block out the world and reset.



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"Being patient and being under control are important in both pitching and drawing," García said. "When pitching, you have to have control of the situation and when you are drawing, you have to be focused from the beginning to the end. Those two things are very important to have on the mound and while you are drawing."

Even with slight struggles on the mound, García continues to be one of the top young pitching prospects for the Yankees alongside teammate Luis Gil. García and Gil quickly created a strong bond and have become inseparable during their time in the organization.

They've had much to bond over - both being regarded as some of the best talent in baseball, both being born and raised in the Dominican Republic and both having a deep love for animals. García has five Siberian Huskies and Gil recently lost a dog of his own. After a day of training at the Yankees alternative site earlier this year, the two sat down in their hotel room when Gil started to talk about his tattoos. Intrigued, García pulled out his drawing pad and created a drawing of a Husky with piercing blue eyes and a bright red rose with the stem and thorns on the side of the dog's face. Gil fell in love with the drawing and soon had it inked on his right arm.



Garcia's artwork was the inspiration for Luis Gil's tatoo.

"When I was at the alternative site, we were looking at some of my drawings and playing around with designs," García said about his conversation with Gil. "At one point, Gil said he liked the drawing and that he might get a tattoo of it. A while later, he sent me a video of him getting the tattoo and I couldn't believe he was actually getting it."

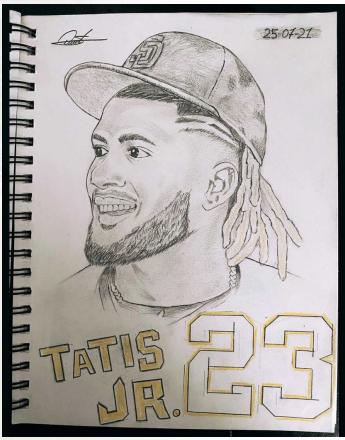
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Gil's tattoo was the first tattoo that García designed, but it might not be the last. While there hasn't been another request from a teammate yet, the common suggestion from the RailRiders clubhouse is that García should design a piece of art for a tattoo of his own.

"Right now everyone thinks I should draw a tattoo for myself," García said. "I don't have an idea of what that would be yet, but I am thinking of something with puzzle pieces."

While the status of a tattoo of his own is up in the air until the offseason, García is focused on closing out the 2021 season strong. He has registered a 6.88 ERA with 61 strikeouts over 53.2 innings pitched but has shined in multiple outings, including a nine-strikeout performance that helped him earn Triple-A East Pitcher of the Week honors in May. García's foreseeable future will continue with his development on the diamond, but he also has briefly considered becoming a professional artist as well once his time in baseball is finished.

"I haven't really thought about that yet, but when I am drawing, I am very serious about it," García said. "I will see where drawing takes me as time goes on."



A portrait that Garcia drew of San Diego Padres shortstop Fernando Tatis Jr.



#### **RAILRIDERS RADIO NETWORK**

The flagship of the RailRiders Radio Network is The Mothership; Bold Gold's oldies station that hit the airwaves in 2020 and added a frequency to expand the coverage. Scranton/Wilkes-Barre games can be heard locally on 1400 AM, 1440 AM, 93.5 FM, 106.7 FM and 107.9 FM. This array of frequencies for The Mothership gives the RailRiders coverage across both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, as well as into Wayne and Pike Counties in the Pocono Lake Region.

Bold Gold Media Group's family of stations has been the home of RailRiders radio broadcasts since 2007.

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders broadcasts

are also available online at swbrailriders.com and with the video feed on MiLB.tv when the team plays at PNC Field. In addition to the over-the-air broadcast, MiLB.tv and the webstream, broadcasts will be streamed through Bold Gold's state-of-the-art RadioBOLD Mobile App, available for free in the Apple and GooglePlay Marketplace and at RadioBOLD. com.

Adam Marco and Joe Vasile will serve as the broadcast voices of the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders during the 2021 season.





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# UNFORGETTABLE: PARK'S LIMITED TIME IN SWB MADE LASTING IMPACT

Yankees traded infielder Hoy Park to Pittsburgh on July 26, but his two-month stint in a SWB uniform made an impact on both the fans and the player.

By Joe Vasile



Photo Credit: Todd Hiller

If you looked down the left field line in the PNC Field grandstand at the right time during a late-May homestand against the Buffalo Bisons, you would see a family holding up a South Korean flag. They did this to show support for one of the newest members of the RailRiders, infielder Hoy Park, while he was at-bat.

Park began the 2021 season as a member of the Double-A Somerset Patriots, but played only 10 games there before he was promoted to the RailRiders while the team was on the road in Rochester. He was only supposed to be a short-term fill-in while several RailRiders were serving on the Yankees taxi squad. But Hoy went 3-for-5 with a double and two RBIs in his first game with the team

and never stopped hitting. He proved he belonged in Triple-A.

In virtually no time, fans fell in love with Park. Customized RailRiders jerseys bearing his name and number popped up in the stands, they chanted along to his walk-up song, and nobody got a louder applause from the NEPA faithful. He was a slick fielder at shortstop and second base, led Triple-A East in batting average, on-base percentage and slugging percentage for large chunks of his time with Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, and was beloved in the clubhouse for his personality and work ethic. He came out of nowhere to be one of the key members of the RailRiders this season.

"It all starts with his ability to control the strike zone, and that's something he always did," said RailRiders hitting coach Casey Dykes of what allowed Park to have such success. "Every night if guys came to him in the zone he was going get good swings off, and if they tried to pitch around him and not throw strikes he was going to take his walks. You just knew you were going to get a good at-bat."

One of the biggest differences for Park in Triple-A was his uptick in power hitting. Since beginning his professional career in 2015, Park had never hit more than seven home runs in a single season, and he had only three in 113 games with Double-A Trenton in 2019.

88

He hit 10 home runs in only 48 games with the RailRiders this season.

The power surge was not an accident. Hoy was never a power hitter on his way up the system, with his career-best slugging percentage coming in at .370. The Yankees wanted him to focus more on hitting the ball hard and in the air. The buzzwords "launch angle" and "exit velocity" being what the Yankees were striving for. With the RailRiders, he slugged .567 and still walked as much as he struck out.

"I'm not a home run hitter," Park admitted. "But I'm trying to hit the ball harder, make good contact and be on time. If I do that good things are going to happen. My approach, my routine and my mindset are completely different from past years."

Within a few weeks of his Triple-A debut, fans in New York took notice of Park's performance and began calls for him to be promoted to the Yankees. It especially saw an uptick after his signature moment with the RailRiders – a walk-off home run against Syracuse reliever Trey Cobb on June 20.

"I think that really helped me out to make my debut," Park said of the vocal fan support. "Yankees fans are awesome."

With the Yankees in dire straits due to their second COVID outbreak of the season in mid-July, fans got their wish as the team selected his contract from Scranton/Wilkes-Barre and brought Park up to the majors. It was a short stay that lasted only five days, but Park did get into one game – Pinch-hitting and staying in to play right field against the Boston Red Sox on July 16.

"I never expected to play outfield when I first debuted," said Park, who had never played the outfield in a game before this June with the RailRiders. "It was a shock, but like, I gotta play, you know? I learned a lot from watching [my teammates] and playing with them. It was great."

In his only at-bat as a New York Yankee, Park grounded out against Red Sox pitcher Tanner Houck. After sitting on the bench for the next few days, he was sent outright back to the RailRiders on July 21. With the trade deadline looming, the Yankees traded Park to the Pittsburgh Pirates on July 26 in a deal which got the Yankees Clay Holmes to solidify the bullpen.

Hoy played three games with Triple-A Indianapolis before being promoted to the Pirates. On Sunday, August 1, he got his first MLB start with Pittsburgh, going 1-for-4 in a 15-4 loss to the Philadelphia Phillies. Park's first career hit – a double down the right field line against All-Star Kyle Gibson – was vintage Hoy. He turned on an inside slider and smacked a line drive that one-hopped off the right-field fence.

It was the first of hopefully many hits in the majors for Park, and a moment that fully began to take shape this year with the RailRiders.

# **UPCOMING PROMOTIONS**

AUGUS

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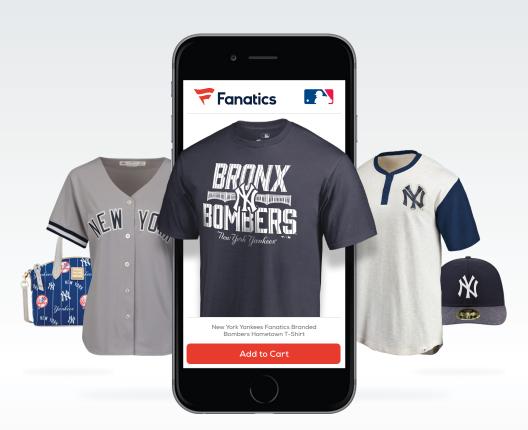
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- 3 \$2 Tuesday- Get \$2 Landshark tallboys for two hours after gates open! 🕬
- 4 Waggin' Wednesday \$1 Hot Dogs for two hours after gates open courtesy of Sabrett
- 5 Thirsty Thursday- Get \$1 Bud Light drafts & \$1 Pepsi products for two hours after gates open presented by Bacacor & NEWS
- 6 Faith & Family Night -PLUS- Post Game Fireworks! 🐲
- 7 Bud Light Seltzer Saturday- Get \$2 Black Cherry Bud Light Seltzers for two hours after gates open; 6:05 P.M. First Pitch TIMES LEADER MEDIA GROUP Jersey Lunch Bag Giveaway for the first 2,500 fans GIANT
- 8 1:05 P.M. First Pitch; Geisinger Sunday Family Fun Day C
- 10 \$2 Tuesday- Get \$2 Lawn Seats (online only) & \$2 Landshark Tallboys 🕬
- 11 🛛 Waggin' Wednesday & \$1 Dog Night 🍩
- 12 Thirsty Thursday Baumener & NEWS
- 13 Paradise in the Park with custom jerseys & Post Game Fireworks! and the second seco
- 14 Legends Race Dual Bobblehead Giveaway for the first 2,500 fans 📀 PNC
- 15 Geisinger Sunday Family Fun Day 🥬

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