

*Meet New Tribe
Skipper
Trent
Jewett*



An Interview with
IndyIndians.com

"I'd like to think that I'm a manager who has a style of adapting to the talent he has"

In November, Trent Jewett was named the 57th skipper in Indianapolis Indians history. He comes to Indy with 13 years of experience in the Pittsburgh Pirates organization. The second winningest manager in Nashville Sounds history with 320 victories, Jewett led the Triple-A Sounds to their first division title in 10 years in 2003. He also spent three seasons (2000-02) as Pittsburgh's third base coach, working under former manager Gene Lamont and current skipper Lloyd McClendon.

Before the season, Jewett sat down with IndyIndians.com to talk about his background and the upcoming campaign.

Q: When did it sink in that you wanted to manage?

A: The reality of coaching entered my life in 1990. At that point, I could either head to Triple-A as a backup catcher or begin a coaching career. I was 27 years old and thought it would be a good time to get involved in coaching. That first year, I split time between Single-A and Double-A, working with our Carolina affiliate and Salem affiliate. The next year, I had my first managing job after only one year of coaching. I went to short-season A-ball in Welland, Ontario and was able to move up each year after that. At that point, I realized that my playing wasn't going to take me to where I wanted to be, but, at the same time, I didn't want to quit. I was encouraged by the fact that the Pittsburgh Pirates organization thought enough of me -- as an instructor -- to offer me a job at such an early age. Early in my managing career, I was close in age to several of the players so there were hurdles to clear, but I was able to work through them.

Q: Characterize yourself as a manager. Are there any others coaches that you've molded yourself after?

A: I have learned from a lot of managers and coaches over the years. I grew up watching, loving and paying close attention to the game, so there's probably hundreds of people who I've molded my style after. I'd like to think that I'm a manager who has a style of adapting to the talent he has. I'd also like to think that I'm able to make the necessary adjustments to get the most out of the available talent. In my opinion, it's naïve to have a pre-determined coaching style in place. If you like to run and have a slow team, you are limited. If you live and die with the home run and you don't have any power in the lineup, you are limited. I appreciate good pitching and defense. Without those two factors, it's going to be a struggle.



Trent Jewett Q and A

Q: In your mind, what is the most important aspect of coaching at the Triple-A level?

A: I feel like it's very important to evaluate before you actually begin coaching. You can't base your coaching style on one event. You have to sit back, look, observe, make sure you know what you're seeing and not make rash decisions. Most players have a certain level of experience and I think they respect an educated decision rather than a quick, spur-of-the-moment decision.

Q: What types of things can you tell us about the Pittsburgh Pirates organization?

A: I will always appreciate the Pittsburgh Pirates organization because they were the ones who gave me an opportunity to get in professional baseball. I've met a lot of good people and developed a lot of friendships since 1987. The organization has a tremendous tradition. It's a ballclub with a great number of talented players and I know it will continue to have Major League stars in the future. Jack Wilson is a silver slugger and potentially a gold glove award winner at shortstop and Oliver Perez looks like he'll be a player who can dominate in the future.



Jewett managed the Nashville Sounds to 320 victories in a little under 5 seasons.

Q: Tell us about your relationship with (pitching coach) Darold Knowles.

A: Darold and I have a special relationship because we've been together for a while. I trust him completely with the pitching staff, and he's the type of coach who will ease my mind. He also has the ability to let me work with other aspects of the team because he's so thorough in his daily instruction. The pitchers love Darold because he has a tremendous amount of experience and he's so easy to deal with. I have a great deal of trust and respect for him as a person and as a coach.

Q: What did you know about Indianapolis before your arrival?

A: From a social standpoint, I had heard a lot of good things about the city. I had also heard a lot of tremendous things about Victory Field. Everyone in minor league baseball seems to think that it's one of the very best facilities in the country and, from what I've seen, it certainly is. Those two things are what the players and coaches talk about. I've heard nothing but positive things in both areas. The positive reputation of the city and ballpark are two things that really made me want to come here.

Q: What is the most exciting thing about being the new Indians manager?

A: My hope is that this team shows a great deal of passion, experience, understanding and belief in the game on a daily basis. Those are some of the factors that will allow the fans to get their money's worth each time they come to the park. Our goal is to put an exciting product on the field, night in and night out. We want to have a team that the people of Indianapolis can be proud of. This game is about the players and for the fans. Unfortunately, a lot of managers and coaches get caught up in what they're doing and, sometimes, lose site of that. It's always been about the players and for the fans.

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Trent Jewett keeping a watchful eye at 2005 spring training.

"these are my 25 players, how am I going to make them better for next year?"

Q: What types of things can your team do on a daily basis to give itself an advantage?

A: In the minor leagues, you don't always have control over the make up of your team, but your nine guys can come out every night and work hard. Our goal every night will be to out-compete the opposition. Ultimately, you'd like to know, "these are my 25 players, how am I going to make them better for next year?" I left last season on a losing note and that made for a very long off-season. I kept asking myself, "how am I going to get these guys to motivate themselves?" I also thought, "how am I

going to motivate myself?"

I really plan to out-work and out-compete the opponent on a nightly basis. There are years when you have the talent and experience to win on a regular basis and there are years when you don't. But, you can always out-compete the opposition, regardless of your team's talent level. Out-competing the opposition doesn't always guarantee a win, but it increases your chances significantly.



Jewett Fast Facts

Is the 57th manager of the Indians since 1902.

Guided the Carolina Mudcats to a Southern League championship and the league's best record (89-55) in 1995.

From June 6, 2000 until the end of the 2002 season, Jewett served as the Pirates third-base coach.

In 2003, he coached the Sounds to their first division title in 10 years.