

Thursday, January 22, 2026

Bowling Green Ballpark

### **Bowling Green Revamps Bootleggers for 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*Hot Rods pay homage to Kentucky heritage and past alternate jerseys*

**Bowling Green, Kentucky** – Since 2016, the Bowling Green Hot Rods have taken the field as the Bootleggers. With the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary fast approaching, Bowling Green will roll out a new look for the Bootleggers in 2026, paying homage to the rich heritage of bootlegging and bourbon in our great state of Kentucky.

The Hot Rods have been tied to the Bootleggers throughout the franchise's short and prosperous history. Although not publicly mentioned in the initial poll, the Bootleggers were in the running for the team's fulltime name. Hot Rods took home the crown, while Cavemen and Cave Shrimp finished close behind.

Bowling Green debuted the Bootleggers on July 16, 2016. The promotion garnered nationwide attention, leading to a MiLBY for Promo of the Year, edging out promotions like "Purple Game, Purple Game, Prince Tribute" from the Columbia Fireflies and "KISS Night" by the El Paso Chihuahuas.

The Bootleggers returned for select nights over the 2017 and 2018 seasons, with the organization making a major change in 2019, committing every Thursday to the Bootleggers. The tradition has continued since, with nearly every Thursday home game belonging to the Bootleggers, paired with Thirsty Thursday™ drink specials.



*The original Bootleggers jersey worn by Kevin Padlo on July 16, 2016, against the Beloit Snappers.*

# Hot Rods PRESS RELEASE

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The jerseys have also been a canvas for expression, representing history and change during the team's time in Bowling Green. The original uniform for the Bootleggers sported bourbon barrel themed jerseys, paired with an equally unique cap, featuring a bearded bootlegger riding a barrel.



*The second Bootleggers uniform worn by Josh Lowe on July 22, 2017, against the Peoria Chiefs.*

The second showing of the alter ego in 2017 introduced a brighter palette to the jersey. With an all-yellow base, the jerseys had brown and white piping on the shoulders, while keeping the same logo on the black hat.



*Emilio Gustave, Brendan McKay, and Vidal Brujan donned the 2018 Bootleggers jerseys.*

In 2018, the final showing before the Bootleggers took the field every Thursday, the bourbon barrel style uniform was redesigned. The jersey had a realistic, natural grained design, along with barrel heads displaying the numbers.



*The first full-time Bootleggers jersey worn by Payton Battenfield on June 3, 2021, against the Rome Braves*

The first full-time uniform for the Bootleggers debuted in 2019, worn until 2022, showing similarities to the 2017 jersey, with dark palette and a new cap displaying the "BG" logo over a bourbon barrel.



*Nick Schnell and Dru Baker wearing 2022-2025 Bootleggers uniforms.*

The longest tenured Bootleggers uniform came in 2022 and was worn through the 2025 season. Pinstripes were implemented, not just to the jersey, but also the pants. It also marked the return on the bearded bootlegger riding the barrel on a new, three-toned hat.

With a full 10 seasons of the Bootleggers in the book, there is a new look coming to Bowling Green Ballpark in 2026. The bearded bootlegger has returned to the logo, riding his flaming barrel under the wordmark. This is accompanied by a special edition 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo, displaying a custom barrel head for the occasion.



“We are extremely excited to usher in a new era here at Bowling Green Ballpark,” said Kyle Wolz, Hot Rods GM and COO. “The identity of the Bootleggers has allowed us to express the rich history of our state while also giving the fans something different to enjoy.”

Another alternate logo, a flaming alligator coming out of a bourbon barrel is placed on the left sleeve. This, paired with the black base and graphite pinstripes of the jersey, have been used to mimic the look of a “gator char” on the inside of a bourbon barrel, honoring the tradition of putting barrels through a 55-second charring process, creating a cracked and shiny look that shows comparisons to alligator skin.

“It was a pleasure to collaborate with Brandon Lamarche from ThreeTwo Designs again,” said Wolz. “We had a vision for what we wanted to do, and he was able to bring some really cool aspects of the bourbon culture of the state to life through our uniform.”

The first chance to see the Bootleggers and the new uniform in action is on Thursday, April 9, when Bowling Green takes on the Rome Emperors at Bowling Green Ballpark with 6:35 PM CT first pitch. Fans can secure their seats for future home Hot Rods games by calling (270) 901-2121, visiting the Bowling Green Ballpark box office during normal business hours, or going to [www.bghotrods.com](http://www.bghotrods.com).

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**Hot Rods Baseball**