

NORTHERN STATES LEAGUE
2024 HALL OF FAME ELIGIBLE PLAYERS
Class of 2023 Batters

Bobby Abreu- Bobby's 4th ballot- Abreu put out a solid career in the NSL with a fine .281 BA and 284 long balls with 1181 rbi. He was originally drafted by Jericho in the 2nd round of the 1998 Rookie Draft and was traded soon after to Wolf's Wizards. It really didn't look like he'd make it after his 1st two years, but in 2000 started to put things together with 27 HR and 102 BB. It was then that we sort of realized he'd be an on-base machine and in fact he did just that, walking 8 of the next 12 seasons in the top 10 of the league. Indeed, his walk total (1280) is the best on the ballot this year and he would be 4th (if elected) in the Hall of Fame. At the same time, he was putting up some nice batting average numbers (career high .328 in 2005). He was an All-Star 3 times and after "sort of" retiring in 2012, he returned with Creekside in 2015 (2nd round FA). He played in 218 post season games with 40 BB and 9 HR. He was traded 6 times in his career, posting his best seasons in the mid-00s and especially for Longtown. He had a ton of doubles in his career (521) and finished with 851 XBH in 16 years.

Erick Aybar- The 3rd round pick of the Muncie Black Wolf in 2008, Aybar spent considerable time as Bob's starting SS- amassing as many as 154 games (2015) and a much better than anticipated .272 batting average. With the position comes the errors, though, and Aybar led the league with 28 in 20015 and came close to topping that with 27 the following year. His best season was 2010 when he batted a robust .337 with 8 triples and 61 runs scored in 129 games. He played his 1st 9 seasons in the league with Muncie, then was traded 3 times over his final 2 seasons- finishing things in 2018 with Longtown. Honestly you could do much worse at SS- Erick had a solid career.

Carlos Beltran- Carlos was the number 1 overall pick in the 2000 rookie draft by the East Hardwick Giants. I still remember Tod making the pick at the condos and he was by far the best player to ever appear in a Giant uniform. He was everything expected for many years, including 5 All-Star appearances and 4 time All-League. He polled 28 long balls in his rookie season and batted .281, but after a tough 2001, he exploded with 115 HR over the next 4 seasons combined and he was on the way. You may recall that the Giants moved in 2007 to Muncie, and he notched his career best rbi with 120 for the Black Wolf. After being passed around the league like a bottle of Jameson's, he played 4 nice years for York (2014-17) and finished in Albany the following season. Carlos has lots of career numbers to look at and his .277 career BA is one of the nicest on the ballot. Despite a couple of injury partial seasons, he still appeared in 2482 career NSL games which is 2nd on the ballot. Carlos was a solid all-round player who wound up being very worthy of his #1 overall pick. If there is a downside, he never had 200 hits in a season and broke triple figures in rbi just 4 times. But- I'd certainly take the career numbers.

Lance Berkman- The last chance for Lance- 5th ballot here- I always thought he was a 1B with a decent eye, but perhaps a little light on the power side. Yet the numbers in this case don't lie- he amassed a solid 365 HR and 1244 rbi for his career, pretty much after the steroid era. Lance was a 3rd round pick by East York in 2000- a pick obtained via a trade with New England. Go figure. But this was Mick in his glory years and Lance fit right in to the powerful 66er lineup starting in 2002 with a .305 BA and 35 bombs. The rest of the way is simply solid numbers with an East York trademark great OBP. He was only in the top 10 in HR twice (2003 with 42 and 2007 with 39) and never in the top ten in doubles, though his total of 419 in 15 seasons is impressive. He also walked more than 80 times 8 times. He was in an incredible 94 post season games and

walked 51 times in those games. More fun facts- he was an All-Star just one (2002) yet an All-League 3 times. In 2014 he was traded to Marietta for his final season (.224 in 69 games).

Gregor Blanco- An 8-year NSL career got him on the ballot, but you'd be forgiven if you looked the other way. He was selected by Canaan (God Bless the Polar Bears) in 2009 in the 2nd round of the rookie draft, was cut, and selected by- yup- Canaan in the 1st round of the 2011 FA draft. Cut again, he was taken by New England in the 1st round of the 2013 FA draft, and then the fun began with 5 trades over the next 5 seasons. After 3 years with Longstown he moved to Codorus Creek and finally New Freedom.

Peter Bourjos- Gulf Breeze selected him in the 3rd round of the 2011 rookie draft and I still don't know why. Just another speedy lead-off type guy who could just never figure out his value. The bulk of his career was spent in Duneland where he was a supportive type OF with minimal value other than his speed. He did swipe 27 bags in 2012 for New England, but the high-water mark in BA was .253 in 2014.

Eric Chavez- His 5th and final ballot- Here was a solid player in the league who succumbed to injuries in 2009-10 before having a bit of a reawakening, though we'll never know how good he could have been. Chavez was Crosstown's 1st pick in the 2000 Rookie Draft (2nd overall pick) and he did for Cross what was expected- covered a skill position (3B) and stayed productive for 8 years. Remember, Crosstown was an expansion team in 1999 and the goal for most of those expansion clubs was simply to field a team. Chavez made the 'dales a little more competitive at least. He smacked 49 doubles in 2002 and drove in 116- but the high-water mark in rbi was 117 in 2004 with a .284 BA. Injured in 2008, he was traded to East York where he played for half a year and 2 no card years, was cut in 2010 then resurfaced on the Gulf Breeze roster after being selected in the 2nd round of the 2012 FA draft. He was an All-Star for the only time in his career in 2013 (.277, 18 HR), but faded badly thereafter and was done after the 2014 season. He was in 49 post season games but batted just .216 with 24 rbi in those games. His value may well have been his limits more than anything, yet he was a solid 3B for many years-but I thought his stats would be better than they are.

Lonnie Chisenhall- Lots of hype for Lonnie as he came up to the major leagues- grabbed by New England in the first round of the 2012 draft. After a couple of so-so years, he was peddled off to Kalamazoo, where he had his best year (*2017)- batting .308 in 98 games, earning his 1st and only All-Star appearance. He played in as many as 138 games (2015), but that was his only season in triple digits. Not much to look at here.

Adam Dunn- His 4th ballot this year- It was all or nothing. 466 HR leaves him a tad short of 500 and to me at least he was beaten by Abreu by 173 in 2 years less. But you knew what you were going to get with Adam and there is colored ink all over his stat page. Coach Kerr grabbed him with the 4th overall pick in the 2002 Rookie Draft and as we've seen elsewhere, the Greys were an expansion team in 1999 just trying to gain respectability. His power was apparent right away (18 in his rookie year, 237 atbats) and by 2005 he was a league leader in HR (led the league with 51 in 2005 and 48 in 2008). He wound up in the top 10 of HR in 7 of his 14 seasons but was only in the top 10 in rbi 3 times- never leading the league. The walks were nice (led the league with 107 in 2010 and in 2013 with 106). But there was a downside. An astounding 2237 Ks in 14 seasons including leading the league 4 times in seasons where it wasn't popular to whiff 200 times a season yet. But still, he was a 5 time All Star and All League his HR total is 2nd on the ballot this year to Manny. Almost 2/3 of his hits were for extra bases. He played in a whopping 83 post season games with 22 HR and 48 rbi with a BA of .209. He was traded 6 times and from his large amount of post season games obviously to contenders most seasons. Yet it is true, chicks dig the long ball, yet we have no chicks voting, do we?

Jacoby Ellsbury- I think the legend was bigger than the player. Anytime you play in Boston and New York you're destined to be blamed for everything, and this could easily be the Jacoby story. Interesting fact was that in the NSL he was selected in the 1st round of the 2008 Rookie Draft by Eric and Wolf's Wizards, and he was never traded, following the franchise to Mud Creek, then North York, then Codorus Creek, before it landed in New Freedom (now Cackalacky). Whew! Yet still, he cobbled together a decent career helped immensely by that rookie campaign where he batted .373 in 30 games. He stole 47 in 2019 and 61 in 2010- then missed an entire season before a fantastic 2012- scoring 117 runs, notching 171 base knocks, and swiping 29 bags. But the writing was on the wall. Despite the nice 2012, he never really fit in as a Yankee, and the next 6 years were more of a "what if I hadn't signed with the Yanks and stayed put in Boston". I guess it doesn't really matter- he grabbed the money and that was it. After a .251 mark with 4 HR in 2018 he was done. The high-water mark in HR was 30 in 2012 and despite 25 more SB in 2015 (after zero in 2014) he was just a shadow of expectations. Jacoby was elected an All-Star 3 times, and 2012 was his one All-League team. I just thought there would be more to look at.

Yunel Escobar- He was the #5 overall pick for the Pennsylvania Pounders in 2008. The numbers aren't bad- sort of a surprise, as his walk/K ratio was excellent and a .265 BA solid- especially for a 3B/ sometimes SS type guy. Yunel amassed 2020 hits (2nd in the league) in 2010- his first of 2 All-Star seasons and had more than 120 games appeared in for 8 of 9 years (2009-17). After 2 years in Pennsylvania, he moved to Indiana for 3 seasons, Crosstown for 1, then York for 3 and Southport for the final 2. Not much respect for a decent player I would say. He was an All-League player in 2010.

Jason Giambi- His 5th and final ballot now- He nailed his own coffin with that interview- remember? "I apologize". Hmmm. For what Jason? "I apologize". Yeah- I get that, what are you apologizing for? Turns to lawyer, turns back, "I apologize". Oh, what a great interview. Yet we do tend to forget his contributions- yes, completely burned into the steroid era- but close to amazing. The thing I like the most about him was that he was just not an "all or nothing" guy, rather he walked a lot usually hit for average, and of course, the power. He was an All-Star a whopping 7 times and All-League 3 times. He had a career best 45 long balls in 2002 and hit more than 30 6 times. He walked more than 90 times 6 times. His rbi totals were nice- 126 in both 2001 and 2003, and was in the playoffs 7 different times, though never in the Championship Series. Giambi was the 3rd round pick of the Pennsylvania Pounders (now Coastal). At the time, he was trying to play 3B and Goody peddled him off to New England in 1998. After 2 seasons with the Elite and his 1st All-Star appearance in 1998, he was traded in 1999 to Longstown, where he toiled for 9 seasons including 6 All-Star seasons. Traded on to East York for 2008 (through NE), then Canaan for a pair, followed by Keystone for the final 4. He had 23 HR and 47 rbi in 59 post season games. He had very solid numbers when compared to the rest of the eligible players this year.

Matt Holliday- A huge offensive performer, 8 time All-Star and 3 time All-League shows you the impact Holliday had on the NSL in his career. A true blend of power and batting average, he was only in the top 10 in HR once (39 in 2008) but also took the batting crown that same year (.340). He batted .316 in 2011, .317 in 2007, and the list goes on. Selected with the #9 pick in the 2005 Rookie Draft, he was our 2005 Rookie of the Year (.295, 12 HR, 60 rbi) for the Johnson Knights. After 5 solid seasons, he moved to New England for 2 seasons, then Gulf Breeze for the final 7 campaigns. He was 21 for 81 in post season games with just 1 HR and 7 rbi (24 career post season games). To be honest, I thought his numbers might be a little better and I for sure was surprised at the lower-than-expected power numbers. But adding it all up, I would have spent the 9th overall pick on him.

Ryan Howard- 2nd time around for Ryan- Okay- we all know what Si called him. Put that in the back of your minds. Howard was picked by Vermont in the 2nd round (!!!) of the 2005 Rookie Draft and took a couple of years to find himself. But in 2007 he led the league in rbi with 154 (51 HR) and in 2008 belted 42 with 100 BB and 109 rbi. Now in the mid-oughts Vermont was a very, very good team, and Dave just needed that extra umph. Thinking it best to move on from Howard he was given the opportunity for a trade and moved Ryan with Aaron Harang to Si for Josh Beckett and a #1 rookie (turned out to be Clayton Kershaw) in what turned out to be a huge NSL trade. Immediately, Howard paid dividends for York with 44 HR and 116 rbi in 2009 and 46 HR with 138 rbi in 2010. Those were his only two All-Star years (yes- 154 rbi for Vermont in 2007 did not get him an All-Star berth) even though he was an All-League in 2007, 8, and 10. Interesting. Anyway- after 2010, the Ks went way up (198 in 2012) and the games played went way down (22 in 2013, 77 in 2014) as his size and legs started to slow him down. No longer would he lead the league in anything, and after 2017 with Sparrow Lake he was through. He was only 22 for 113 in the post season with 6 JHR and 15 rbi. But it did appear in those early years of the 10s decade that he would be a super star. He got most of the way there- missed it by “this much”.

Torii Hunter- Here is his 3rd ballot- It’s easy to remember the nosedive in the playoffs into the Boston bullpen. But Hunter did much more than a face plant, putting up excellent numbers despite a sluggish start. He was originally drafted by the Farmland Chieftones (now Albany) in the 4th round of the 2000 Rookie Draft. He moved with the club to Albany and continued a decent career, but with no real eye-popping stats. He was a solid performer and could be counted on for 125-130 games or so with decent impact. After a trade to New England, Hunter responded in 2009 with his 1st of 2 All-Star performances, batting .299 with 24 HR but driving in just 77 on a team that was lacking offensive firepower. A couple of years later he wound up in Albany again and led the league with a .340 batting average in 2013, smacking 22 HR and scoring 99 times, but he batted just .148 in the playoffs that year and starting in 2014 the downhill spiral had begun. He did have 15 straight years of double-digit HR but only drove in more than 90 twice. The career batting average was nice, but he struck out a ton for a guy that was “pre- striking out is okay”. I wonder how different things would have been had he made that catch at Fenway? Guess we’ll never know. After a 2016 swan song in Muncie, he was done in the NSL.

John Jaso- We rarely see catchers as lead off hitters, but Jaso was just that- a high OBP guy for the Comanches over 8 seasons. Drafted in the first round of the 2011 rookie draft by Keystone, he was a part-time catcher (max of 96 games in 2011) with minimal power (52 HR over 8 seasons). His batting average climbed over his final years (.276 in 2017) but that was about it.

Paul Konerko- Here is his 4th ballot- Miscast as a 3B early in his career, Paul would come on and develop in to a fine hitter when moved to the OF and DH. He was the #8 overall pick in the 1999 Rookie Draft by Jericho and after a rookie year struggle, rebounded nicely in 2000 with a .285 BA, 20 HR, and 79 rbi. From there it even got better with .331 in 2001, an All-Star appearance in 2002, and a .316 74 rbi campaign in 2003. But just as quickly he blew a tire and was held to an ugly .204 with just 13 HR in 2004. Yet he figured it out again and hit .302 in 2006 and a league 4th best .343 in 2007. That year was his best for HR (47) and rbi (124). Yet things slipped again in 2008 (.223) despite 38 HR and as the club relocated to Kalamazoo the power remained, but the BA did not. Still, though, he clubbed 109 long balls for the ‘zoo in 09-12 before being traded twice prior to 2013, winding up on Sparrow Lake for the final 3 campaigns of his career. Paul was in double digits in HR for 14 straight years (00-13) and was a 4 time All-Star. It was interesting to note his BB totals and his relatively low K ratio meant he had quite a bit of value which may not have been appreciated during his playing career. IN 63 post season games, he amasse3d 28 HR and 42 rbi. The fact that the .276 career batting average was right up there may make you think a little bit harder on him.

Miguel Montero- Drafted in the 4th round of the 2008 draft by Jericho, Montero was just a limits guy with a catcher rating. After his rookie season in Jericho, he was traded to New England for 2 seasons, then on to Kalamazoo for his final 8 campaigns. The numbers aren't that pretty, but he was a serviceable player for the 'zoo, with double digit HR totals in 9 straight seasons. He batted .301 in 2013 with 41 XBH, 72 rbi, and 60 BB. But his overall batting average will drag him down a bit. In 96 post-season at bats, he had just 16 hits.

Brandon Moss- He was drafted in the 2nd round of the 2009 draft by Crosstown and had 2 so-so years before being released. In 2013, Gulf Breeze grabbed him with the #1 overall FA pick, and he proceeded to have his best career year- .249 with 19 HR and 42 rbi. He had better rbi totals (over 60 three times) but the average was borderline terrible by that point. Whiffing 3 times as much as walking, Moss was a free swinger with minimal contact. He did blast 28 long balls in 2017 but batted just .220 that year with 150 punch outs. In 2018 he was through- batting a less than robust .180.

Mike Napoli- Party at Napoli's! Interesting character in the real world- yet pretty pedestrian in the NSL. Chad drafted him in the third round of the 2007 draft, then he was peddled in 2008 to East York where he played the final 11 seasons with decent numbers if you turn away from the batting average. He hit over 20 HR in 7 different seasons for the 66ers yet whiffed 181 times in 2017, 170 in 2014, and 158 in 2010. You get the picture. He was an All-Star in 2012 and in 211 post-season at bats he had 9 HR and 23 rbi. After a .202 21 56 season in 2018 he was through. But it was a nice party.

Cliff Pennington- How did he get in here? The Gulf Breeze 4th round pick in 2009, he actually had a decent year in 2011 (.252, 10 triples in 156 games) as the everyday Gulf Breeze SS and he batted .282 in 2012 (147 games). Later he was traded a couple of times and resurfaced with Coastal in the 2018 FA draft, where in 52 at bats he batted .282. Interestingly- he was the Breeze SS for 3 years and I hardly remember him. Could be my own grey matter, or it could just be that Cliff wasn't very good. I'll take the latter.

Brandon Phillips- Scoop got a gem in the 1st round of the 2004 rookie draft. But it didn't look as if his career would ever get jump-started, as Brandon played in just 20 games over his first 3 seasons. But he worked his way into the lineup in 2007 (133 games), and he played in the mid-140s games on average the rest of his career. His numbers don't jump off the page at you, but he was a solid contributor on some very good Creekside teams. He was an All-Star in 2013 (.257, 18 65) and hit more than 20 HR twice. His .263 career batting average is solid in this league and he played in 48 post-season games. After those first 3 wash out years, he posted his best season immediately after with a .294 batting average, 27 bombs, and 89 rbi. He did a tally of 96 rbi in 2010.

A.J.Pierzynski- Ballot #2 for A.J.- How was I going to write this one? Hmmm. Might as well have Crossie do it. But- I'll give it a shot. In 2000, Crosstown selected A.J. (Anthony John if you care) in the 7th round of the Rookie Draft. Not a misprint- 7th round for what would turn out to be an 18-year catcher. As you would likely expect- there wasn't much help coming from A.J. early, but things started showing positive in 2002 (.287) and it crested in 2004 with a .320 BA, 16 HR, and 69 rbi in what would be the first of his five All-Star selections. Firmly entrenched as the Crosstown everyday Catcher for some good 'dale teams, he hit another high-water mark in 2007 with a .325, 16 HR, 80 rbi season in hand. But- Crossie wouldn't pay the price and Pierzynski was traded to Creekside in 2009 along with J.D.Drew in a deal which netted Crossie Jeremy Affeldt, Villaneuva, Zaun, and Franklin Gutierrez. My guess is that all trades are not that good. In 5 years with Creekside, he was an All-Star twice and All-League once, crunching a career best 29 long balls in 2013. Yet things went sour in Creekside to no one's surprise, he was traded back to Crosstown where he would finish off the career and later become the Clydesdale manager. His career numbers are solid and if you consider that he was a catcher you would say they're great. He played in 100 games or better in 12 straight seasons and

finished with a fine .275 BA. Just like the SS we've been talking about, life is great when you get some offense out of the catcher slot.

Alex Rodriguez- Ballot #3 for ARod- I've been thinking for some time how I'd write this one up. The length of the monograph does not really reflect my opinions on the man, so don't let it affect you. We'll start in 1995, when we had the meetings in York, and the rookie draft at JB's place. Manny Ramirez went first, then Cliff Floyd. Carlos Delgado to Vermont and Bob Hamelin to Lamoille County. Jose Oliva to Farmland and yours truly took Joey Hamilton. So, it was Al's turn, and I still remember the conversation as he phoned it in..." Listen Rich- I just want to verify, is ARod still available?" He was and the rest is history. How could he be the 7th pick overall? Did we all know that he was going to be the true jerk that he may well have been? Well, the numbers don't lie. Twenty-two NSL seasons and our career top dog in rbi (2036). He's 2nd in HR with 667 (to Bonds' 704), 3rd in runs scored, 4th in whiffs, 8th in BB, and 9th in hits. From 2002-2008 he misses a total of 25 games. He was in the top ten in HR 9 times, rbi 7 times and runs 7 times. He batted .309 in 2006 and .332 in 1997. He had 53 HR twice as his high-water mark and 165 rbi in 2002. He was a 12-time All-Star and on 9 All-League teams. What is there not to like? The numbers were great- there is no doubting that. Yet he appeared in just 31 post-season games and never a single game in the Championship Series. Oh sure, that's a reflection of the teams he was on, but I just sort of found it comical that the all-time leader in rbi couldn't get his team to the finals. After 7 years as a Hit Man, he was involved with one of the biggest NSL trades ever- with Gulf Breeze of all teams. I gave up Mark Mulder, my #1-3 rookie picks, Carlos Guillen, and Rick Helling for Jose Cabrera, ARod, and a #3 rookie. The Jemison's was on the table and Al got what he wanted. Things really took off at this point and Alex had the next 10 years labelled as the league's best player, yet sadly he never grabbed an MVP in the league. After 2013, he was peddled to Indiana for the final 3 seasons, including 26 HR in the finale of 2016. We've made statements already about "those" guys which included Bonds, Sosa, Giambi, et al and we just need to figure where ARod fits. That is no doubt up to membership to decide.

Jimmy Rollins- Here is Jimmy's 2nd ballot- Yes, we're talking offensive SS this year and Rollins fits the bill. But Jimmy was more than that. In the NSL- Jeter is the high-water mark for SS, right? Hardly. Jeter was traded around in the NSL and never really led any teams. Now Rollins- not only was he a star offensive player but he was the absolute leader of the Keystone Comanches for 16 years. Drafted with the #5 overall pick in the 2002 Rookie Draft, he immediately took control of the C's SS position with a 156 game, 656 at bat campaign. He rarely took a day off and played in more than 140 games in 14 of his 16 seasons. Not only that, but he was in the top 10 in errors just once. His 425 SB is tops on the ballot this year and he led the league in that rookie season with 41. Yet like fielding, he was only in the top 10 in CS once. Sprinkle in some pop (212 HR, 500 doubles) and runs (136 in 2007) and hits (212 in 2007) and All-Star appearances (3) and All-League appearances (2007) and what you have is a consummate leader who helped the Keystone franchise through 40 post season games. Incredibly he had more than 600 at bats his first 7 seasons and 9 for his career. I guess I'm leaning on Ortiz a bit here as far as leadership goes, but for 15 years at least, when you thought Keystone, you thought Jimmy Rollins.

Carlos Ruiz- For those of us who had the fortune, or mis-fortune- of playing Si face to face, we can all remember then, "Ruiz- please!" comments as Carlos took a bat against your team. A 4th round pick by York in the 2007 draft, he was a decent catcher with minimal results over a 12-year career. After his 1st of 2 All-Star appearances in 2011 (.280, 10 HR) he was sent packing to Vermont where in 2013 he had his 2nd All-Star appearance on the heels of a whopping .392 batting average in 94 games. But his BA would drop .133 points in 2014 and continued to fall until his final campaign- Waiver Draft pick up by York- where he batted .160. Sandwiched between his 2 All-Star years, he batted .303 in 2012 with 32 doubles.

Michael Saunders- In his 9-year career, he was kept as a no card by Duneland twice. He had 24 HR and 67 rbi for the Crusaders in 2013 and after the two dead years, moved to New England (20 HR, 67 rbi) and finally Glenville to finish things up. He was the 4th round pick of York in 2010 and was traded 4 times in his career.

Seth Smith- AKA Garry Seth. It seems as if this year is the year of the backup OF. Smith toiled for 10 seasons on 4 teams and did play in a season best 132 games in 2015 for the North York Warthogs. He had double digit HR totals (albeit low numbers) in 7 campaigns and drove in a career best 63 in 2011. Drafted in the 4th round of the 2009 rookie draft by York, he played 5 seasons there then moved to North York, Codorus Creek, and New Freedom. He was a bit more than a part-time player and I was surprised to see his at bat total (3359).

Ichiro Suzuki- In 2002, Al Rapp got his son on the phone to make the #1 rookie pick for the Cleveland Hit-Men. We were sure it would be Pujols, but Mark announced the pick as Ichiro, and the happiest guy at the draft was Crossie- grabbing Pujols with the #2 pick. But back to Ichiro- the only negative I can see is that he didn't reach 3000 hits for us. Now 2824 hits is more than robust, but just short of that magical number. Regardless, Ichiro batted .294 for his career and was in the top-ten in hits in 10 of his first 12 seasons. He missed just 56 games over his first 12 seasons and stole a whopping 472 sacks over his career. But the hits just kept on coming- more than 200 in six different seasons and 8 seasonal batting averages over .300. He was an 8-time All-Star and 6-time All-League. He played his entire career for the Hit-Men and was our 2002 Rookie of the Year. All that plus he grabbed 906 rbi and 117 HR. A remarkable career. He was 72 fore 312 in post-season at bats.

Mark Teixeira- His 2nd ballot- Some big numbers here. The thing that jumps off the page to me the most is his 8 All-Star appearances. He also was an All-League 5 times and Rookie of the Year in 2004 for Johnson after being taken with the 1st overall pick in the 2004 Rookie Draft. Later- in 2006- he was the league MVP on the strength of a 41 HR, 137 rbi, .332 BA season. Keep in mind that Johnson, unlike Jim's original Lamoille County franchise, was not a good team and Mark was certainly the one guy in the lineup to look out for. Despite a stellar career (especially the first 10) he only appeared in 16 post season games. But the numbers are solid- thirty or more HR 8 times in his career, 9 straight years of +100 rbi, and a competitive 408 BB. Teixeira also batted a nice .265 over his 14 seasons. Things crashed and burned after 2012 including not being carded in 2014 for Marietta (the "new" Johnson/Lexington team) and despite a few long balls down the final 3 seasons, his production trailed off. His career best in HR was 45 (2012) and rbi 147 (2005) were more than solid and he was an everyday player until the 2012 injury. Yet for at least 9 seasons there was no more feared hitter, it was just too bad he was on so many lousy teams.

Ruben Tejada- Albany's 4th round pick in 2011, his middle name is Dairo. He did bat .297 in 2012 and played in a career-high 114 games in 2013. 7 HR in 1577 at bats might be just a little short of consideration.

Chase Utley- A career East York 66er after being selected in the 2nd round of the 2004 Rookie Draft, Utley was blessed to be on some juggernaut 66er clubs in the early part of this century. I was surprised to see a career batting average of .250 and although he was an All-League 3 times, he was an All-Star just once. In that All-Star year (2008) he batted .320 with 56 doubles- this on the heels of a .297, 129 rbi, 47 doubles, 36 HR in 2008. Utley had 10 straight seasons of double-digit HR yet drove in more than 100 just the one time. He played in 68 post-season games with 24 long balls and a huge 23 rbi in 10 playoff games in 2006. He scored 80 or more runs in 6 different seasons.

Jason Werth- Another career Creekside player, Werth was the 2nd round pick of the Crushers. Similar to Phillips, he was nursed along for 5 years where he played in just 206 games, but then began the solid portion of

his career with 75 games in 2008, and back-to-back All-Star appearances in 2010-1. His overall numbers aren't huge, but he was an everyday OF for Creekside over roughly a 7-year stretch. He had a career best 49 doubles in 2011 and 115 rbi in 2010.

David Wright- Here is his 3rd ballot- David was a tough one to figure out. He was expected to be a true superstar for the Mets and pretty much took the hype to a decent career, if not superstar. He was the #2 overall pick for Creekside in the 2005 Rookie Draft and played 12 seasons for the same franchise- that's nice! His numbers are certainly solid with a terrific .278 career batting average. He was an All-Star 5 times and All-League once. He played in 39 post season games and was 38 for 145 in those games with 6 HR and 17 rbi. So, what's the rub? 247 long ball sin 12 seasons- nothing wrong with that. 891 rbi, 921 runs, a sparkling BB/K ratio and a whopping 405 two baggers. It's tough to live up to the hype in New York- especially the Mets, and Wright did so and became almost a Met icon. You can make the case that he was a Creekside Crusher icon as well. In 2014 he batted .325 with 30 long balls. 2009 was a .311 average with 133 rbi and 42 HR. Thirty-three bombs in 2011 and 128 rbi in 2008. All this with a team which was always competitive and frequently in the post-season. Superstar? You bet- too bad New York couldn't latch on to him the way Scoop did. Injuries played a role (69 games in 2005, 102 games in 2012, 38 in 2016) and he was done long before he could have been- and that dulled the numbers only so slightly. .278, 247 and 891? Would you take that? You betcha.

Chris B Young- Not to be confused with the pitcher of the same name, Chris B was selected with the #5 overall pick in the 2007 Rookie Draft by Pennsylvania. After an 18-game rookie season, he became an everyday player in 2008 and stayed there until 2012. In 2013 he moved to East York and batted .202, then finished with Coastal (2 years under .200) and Gulf Breeze (2 years over .200). He stole 45 bases in 2011 for Muncie and walked 81 times that same year. But the rest of his career was mediocre, and his career was over in 2018. He had 30 HR in 2008 and 26 in 2009, but things rapidly went downhill.