

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

Bronson Arroyo- I remember him as the first white guy I ever saw with corn rows. That and, of course, the fact that he was a solid contributor for Boston to break the curse. I never really thought of him as a HOF type of guy, but looking at the numbers he was a solid contributor in the NSL including a run of 226 starts in a 7-year span from 2005-11. Drafted in the 4<sup>th</sup> round of the 2001 draft by Glenville, he moved to Jericho after a couple of nondescript years where after a no card season in 2004, he was on the bump in a 5-man rotation for that long stretch. After his 12<sup>th</sup> year for Kalamazoo (was Jericho), he was dealt to New England for 2 years, East York for one, then finally Indiana for 2018. He was an All-Star in 2013 for the Elite (17-5, 2.46). He lost more than he won, which won't help much but you could do much worse with a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> starter.

Joaquin Benoit- I don't know- French? Maybe Spanish (Joaquin). His middle name is Antonio- Italian? Anyway, this multi-country reliever wasn't always that. Drafted as a starting pitcher in 2003 by York (3<sup>rd</sup> round), he was traded to Keystone and after 3 years of starting for the C's, he moved on to Jericho. There, Kevin Lanphear groomed him for his correct role- and he never started another game in the NSL. Towards the end of his career, he became the closer for Indiana (2015-7) and saved 102 games over a 3-year period for the Imps. But the rest of his career was basically a wash-out, despite some nice ERAs over the years (1.26 in 2011, 1.74 in 2014). He was an All-Star in 2015 for Indiana with a 1.99 ERA in 54.1 IP. But he was at least solid for 15 years in the league.

Joe Blanton- It seems as if we're into 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> starters for teams which is okay- they can be every bit as valuable as those #1 studs. Blanton didn't make your eyes pop out and was only 4 games over .500 in his 12 year-career. But he missed two complete years in the middle when he should have been posting numbers. After those missed years, he started just 44 more times in the NSL before finally hanging them up with the Nutjobs in 2018. Blanton was the 4<sup>th</sup> overall pick in the 2006 draft by Canaan (God Bless the Polar Bears), and started out his career with a bang, going 14-6, 2.59 as a rookie. 2007 was solid if not spectacular, and in 2008 he was traded to East York. He would later be peddled 4 more times and New Hudson grabbed him in the 2016 Free Agent draft where he finished it off. More hits than runs never helped a pitcher and 903 punch outs in 1369 IP is weak. He led the league in HR allowed in 2010 with 37.

Blaine Boyer- I don't know if he is related to Ken or Clete. The 4<sup>th</sup> round pick in the 2006 draft by Duneland, he wound up being cut twice in his career only to bounce back as a Free Agent a year later. He did pitch 65 innings for Guldf Breeze in 2016 with a 1.25 ERA and closed out 22 games that year. But the rest of his career is vanilla.

Matt Cain- Selected in the first round of the 2006 draft by TMI, Matt put up some nice seasons in the NSL including a solid 10-6, 3.01 in 2013 for New Hudson (still the same franchise) when he grabbed his one and only All-Star appearance. He did lose 16 games twice, though, and in his final 2 years (35 starts) his ERA was well over 5.00. But he started 30 or more games 8 seasons in a row, before a 6 game 2015, a no card, and the final 2 seasons- which were played in Frankfort. Matt walked too many and gave up a slew of HR, but still took the ball every 5<sup>th</sup> day for a long stretch.

Santiago Casilla- He was the 4<sup>th</sup> round pick of New England in the 2008 Rookie Draft and wound up being traded 5 times over his 11-year career. He was strictly a middle relief type guy with just 21 saves over his

career. He did most of his work for Kalamazoo from 2010-2016 before moving on to Frankfort and Marietta to finish it off.

R.A.Dickey- Here is a guy who recreated himself with the knuckleball- similar to Phil Niekro and Tim Lincecum. Drafted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the 2004 draft by the Johnson Knights, he moved to Green Mt for a season where it was apparent that he was not ready for the real world (4-9, 6.25) and was dumped. Fast forward 5 years, and R.A. reappeared in the NSL through the 2009 FA draft- selected then by Canaan in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, was traded to NE, and moved in 2012 to Vermont where he had his best years. In 2013, he won the Nolan Ryan award for the 'chucks thanks to a 27-4 mark with a 2.26 ERA. After going 2-0 in the 2013 playoffs, he was bashed around in the Championship Series of 2013 (0-2, 10.00). Despite getting the ball every 5<sup>th</sup> day from there on, there was no season that resembled 2013. He was 64-54 the rest of the way toiling for East York in the final 2 seasons. R.A. was an All-Star twice (2013 and 2018- his final season where he rebounded to 15-5, 3.21 for the 66ers) and All-League in that magical 2013 season. Just 49 years old at the time of this writing, you would think another comeback is possible, right?

Michael Dunn- Eight-year career. Traded 6 times. A Bill Waller wannabee. Kalamazoo selected Dunn in the third round of the 2011 draft and his results were mixed but included a 1.34 ERA in 40 innings in 2014 yet a 7.27 for Longstown in 2016- 52 innings. He played back-to-back years for one franchise in 8 years- can you guess? Yup- New England in 2013 and 2014.

Scott Feldman- Everyone needs a workhorse and Feldman fit the bill for a few years with Crosstown (15-33 in 2009-10 combined) and Indiana (16-4, 2.92 in 2014). Allowed to finish what he started for once in Indiana, he posted his best year (only All-Star year) with 10 CG, 4 shutouts, as well as a 2-1 record in the playoffs that year. His higher than usual CG numbers are courtesy of the Imperials and even with that one strong season, his W/L in his career was negative 15. Originally drafted by Green Mt, he was cut and bounced back to Crosstown in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the 2009 FA draft. Once again cut after a 20-44 Crosstown W/L, he was selected by Indiana in the FA draft and posted his best years. In 2009 for the 'dales he started 24 times, went 4-17 with an ERA of 7.90. Now that will pad some opponent's averages.

Neftali Feliz- He was a rare first round draft pick as a reliever by Albany and started his career on a high note (1.19- but just 30 IP) with the following year being a solid 3.38 in 69 frames. He was traded to New England (who wasn't?) and saved 21 games, but this would be his only closer year, the rest being in short set-up type roles. The career did not match the first-round hype.

Matt Garza- I always liked the guy- a "give me the ball" type guy who could log innings for you. That's what I thought until now. He started 30 or more games just twice in an 11-year career and was 22-23 in those 2 years. He logged a ton of CG- with 17 coming for 2012 Longstown and 8 more for 2015 New England. The career W/L is ugly- and perhaps it reflected the teams he played on as in 11 seasons he failed to reach the post-season. It's tough to find the best year in his stats, so I won't look any further. Drafted in the first round of the 2008 Rookie Draft by Cleveland, he wound up being traded 4 times. Oh- I guess I see a best season- 3.22 ERA for 2009 Cleveland and his best winning mark at 12-9.

Dillon Gee- I wonder if anyone ever called him Gee Whiz?

Luke Gregerson- Luke was a solid if not spectacular reliever with a 3.33 career ERA. He was miscast as a closer in 2015 for Kalamazoo (23 saves) and appeared in a career best 65 games in 2018 for Magic City.

Drafted in the third round by Kalamazoo in the 2010 rookie draft, Luke pitched in a robust 459 games in his 9-year career and was there early and often when needed. He had a sub-3 ERA in 13.2 post-season innings.

LaTroy Hawkins- His 3<sup>rd</sup> ballot now- He started out as a starter, but after 5 tough seasons in that role he became a reliever and had several positive seasons the rest of the way. He started his first 71 games in the NSL, then over the next 15 seasons he appeared in 739 games with no starts. 2010 and 2012 were good to him, as the Keystone closer those years he had 34 and 33 saves respectively, but he was injured all of 2011. Most of his other seasons were solid- 1.45 ERA for Johnson in 2003, 1.57 for York in 2008, and 32 saves in 2004 for White River. He saved 3 games in the 2012 playoffs when Keystone came close to advancing. He was an All-Star in 2008 with 28 saves in 53 appearances in 74.2 IP. Drafted in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round by New England on a pick received from Longstown, he was traded within days to White River for his 1<sup>st</sup> season. Hawkins did what so many relievers in this league do- traded to a contender with his good grades and traded to also rans for his lousy grades. In fact, Hawkins was traded 10 times in his 21-year NSL career. I was able to see one of his games with Mick and Si in Baltimore when he was pitching for Minnesota as a starter, and it was clear he wasn't going to make that. But the pen agreed with him, and he was able to fashion a nice career there.

Tim Hudson- His 3<sup>rd</sup> ballot also- War Eagle! As you all know, Hudson was an Auburn alum and fashioned an excellent NSL career. He won 194 times while losing just 152 and seemed to always be on a playoff caliber club. His best years were early on. Drafted by Vermont with the #9 overall pick he acquired from Farmland, Hudson had a tough rookie season, but then put things together and was 74-28 over the next 4 seasons. The worst ERA he had through those 4 years was 3.02, and he was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the league in ERA in 2002 with 2.88 on the board. These were some dynamite Vermont teams through the early 00's and Hudson just did not miss a start through that time. He was traded to the Wizards in 2004 but that did not stem the career at all as he continued every 5<sup>th</sup> day thing and continued with double digit wins. He stumbled a bit in 2009 and 10 for Albany starting just 29 times in those 2 seasons, but back to work in 2011 where he was 15-9, 4.01 in 228.2 IP. Things started to wind down after 2013 and finally he was traded to Crosstown for the swan song in 2016. Tim was a 3 time All-Star and a 2 year All-League. He started 13 playoff games with an ERA under 3. He was not a horse who would punch out 15 a night, rather a Greg Maddox type who would baffle 'em and get the outs when needed. The longevity numbers are great, his numbers fairly like Buehrle, and he went to Auburn. What can you not like about that?

Phil Hughes- Hughes went from SP to reliever not once, not twice, but 3 times in his career. Originally, he was the 6<sup>th</sup> overall selection in 2008- drafted by Johnson. Yeah- he was a Yankee at the time. After 5 seasons of strange pitching (20 starts in 2011, 33 saves in 2010)- he moved with the franchise to Lexington (33 starts, 4-22, 4.98 ERA) and later Marietta (19-21 over 2 years) before finishing up with Sparrow Lake when he went 10-16 over three seasons. But the career is right there in front of us- starter- reliever- starter- reliever- starter. Make up your mind already!

Ubaldo Jimenez- Funny name. True story- we had a pharmacist in town here who was turning bald. He played fantasy with me, and his team's name was, "Ubaldo like me". He wasn't very good at fantasy, but the real Ubaldo was very good in the majors. I know he grabbed at least one "B" grade and I'd have to guess that was 2010 for Muncie, when Bob rode him hard (33 starts) to a 20-7 record and a 3.30 ERA. In a 3-year stretch (2009-11) he started 100 games. He was 16-8 for the 2014 Black Wolf and overall checks in with a nice 105-89 W/L mark. The trouble is that inflated ERA (4.83). Still, though, he was at least a workhorse with 28 CG in his 11 seasons- 8 of those being for Indiana where he spent his final campaign. Bob drafted

him in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the 2008 draft and a solid pick it was. But- the fly in the ointment is the ERA and that large walk total.

Scott Kazmir- The #3 overall pick in the 2006 draft, Kazmir just never lived up to the hupe. He did win 100 games in his NSL career and any ERA under 3 in the league is great. He completed 48 games that he started (the Imperial factor) and was a robust 15-3 for the 2016 Comanches with a 2.90 ERA. But I think his career year was 2008 for Indiana when he went 13-9 for a not-so-great team with 9 CG, 3 shutouts, and 219 punch outs. He was an All-Star once in 2016. Like Jimenez, though, his walk totals were a bit too high. After 6 years in Indiana, he was cast adrift to come back to the league through the 2014 FA draft to Keystone, finally finishing his career with Frankfort.

John Lackey- This is a workhorse pitcher ballot this year, and Lackey fits the bill. He won 154 times yet lost 152. He started 30 or more games in 7 different seasons and more than 20 in 13. In a solid 2014 for East York, he went 18-5 with a 3.14 ERA. But he had his hiccups as well (9-21 for 2004 Keystone and two times that he lost 16). His numbers are close to Tim Hudson. But Lackey was never an All-Star. He was drafted as the #6 overall pick of the 2003 draft by Keystone, served there for 5 years, then moved on to Vermont for 5, East York for 5, and finally York for the finale. He did win double digits 8 times and whiffed 198 in 2007. He was solid even in his final season with 30 starts and 9 wins for York. In the dictionary under workhorse, Lackey is pictured.

Cliff Lee- Here is his 4th ballot now- I had to check and be sure he wasn't on an NSL roster. It seems that if he retired it happened just yesterday. But no- sure enough he has hung 'em up, and honestly it was a really nice career. Drafted by New England in the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the 2004 Rookie Draft he was traded to White River (a trade? By New England?) and on to Sparrow Lake with the franchise shift. He then rode the Atlanta connector between Sparrow Lake and Cleveland and in doing so wound up in the playoffs 4 out of 5 years. 2011 was his best season, going 18-4 with a league second best 2.33 ERA in 212 innings and topped that off with a 2-0 Championship Series. He won a league best 22 times the following season with a 2.90 ERA. In 2013 he went back to Sparrow Lake and went 15-10, 4.01 as well as 3-0 in the post season. He started at least 30 games in every season from 2005-14 except one and won 72 times from 2009-2013. There was a stinker in there (3-10, 8.57 for Cleveland in 2008), but overall had marvelous numbers- in the top 10 of ERA 4 times and strikeouts twice. He was both an All-Star and All-League in 2012. His career 142 wins is the best on the ballot for non-repeat pitchers and his H/IP and K/BB ratios are excellent.

Boone Logan- I can honestly say that I don't know anyone named Boone. Oh sure- Daniel, but that seems a little backwards. He was not selected in the 2007 Rookie Draft and appeared first in 2008 after Muncie grabbed him in the FA draft. He did have some nice seasons (1.67 in 37 IP for Vermont in 2011 and 2.18 in 33 innings in 2014) but despite 302 appearances he never saved a game. Wouldn't you think it might happen once just by chance?

Brandon McCarthy- Eleven-year career, traded 5 times and went through one FA draft. 4.55 career ERA- not much to see, right? Dan selected Brandon in the first round of the 2006 draft and he started 10 games, yet the following year he was a bullpen only guy (43 games). With nothing much to show, he was peddled on the Magic City train, then on to Albany. After a so-so year in East York, he went to Green Mt where Burnie got the most out of him- 33 wins and almost 700 IP. But nothing much jumps off the board.

Dustin McGowan- In his 12-year career, he was a no card five times. You do the math. Okay- I'll help. That's roughly 14 games on average per season. He was Sparrow Lake's 4<sup>th</sup> round pick in 2006 and stayed between SL and Cle for 10 years, before moving on to New Hudson for a pair of years. 51 of his 57 career starts came in his 1<sup>st</sup> 4 seasons. I wonder if Mark had insurance to cover all his time on the disabled list. I mean that's 4 straight years as a no card. Good grief.

Joe Nathan- Here is Joe's 4th ballot now- With 5 solid closer years he amassed 155 saves in a 6-year period from 2005-10 for the TMI Tigers. He was elected to two All-Star teams and in 5 post season innings had a 0.00 ERA which is pretty good and 11 Ks. Although he was "light's out" for several years, I'm afraid the election of Mariano Rivera last year may set the saves bar a bit higher than Nathan was able to achieve. He was originally selected by Creekside in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the 2000 Rookie Draft, and after 3.1 IP over two years he was cut and was the #6 overall pick in the 2004 FA Draft by TMI. That year was decent (career high 67 games, 3.28 ERA) but thing stook off in 2005, the first of his All-Star years with 33 saves and an 8-6 record with a 1.55 ERA. He saved 33 again in 2010 and had a 1.92 ERA in 2009. Three of his 15 seasons in the NSL he had no appearances, and his 593 IP is half of Mariano's (1183). His save, total however is just ¼ of Rivera's. You still can't argue with how effective Nathan was from 05-10 and despite the 3 lost years, he put up excellent closing numbers for a sub-.500 team.

Ricky Nolasco- Quick- what's his first name? Don't cheat and google him. To help you out, I'll tell you his real name is Carlos. Middle name Enrique- guess that's where the Ricky comes from. Moving on- Nolasco was a .500 pitcher with a mid-4 ERA. He had some shining moments- his one All-Star year in 2009 for Vermont (21-5, 3.25) but had a few duds as well (4-19, 5.74 for 2017 Cleveland). In this season of back-and-forth pitchers- starters, then relievers, etc., it was refreshing to see Nolasco never appeared in relief. He was the original 3<sup>rd</sup> round pick of the Woodchucks and was eventually traded to York and finally Cleveland. He whiffed 226 in 2010, but at the cost of a 4.86 ERA. The hits allowed is pretty poor, and 2 years were no card years in the league, but in this ballot, he's just another workhorse- maybe a workhorse wannabe.

Mike Pelfrey- 48-108 and we're considering him for our Hall of Fame? What happened here? He was originally drafted by Pennsylvania in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the 2008 draft, and it was soon apparent that he was not ready for the NSL (7.93, 1-8). The numbers are all over the place including that nifty 5.47 career ERA. In 2016 for New England, he was a less than solid 2-17, 6.08, and topped that the following year with 11 losses and a 6.41 ERA- this season for Frankfort. He was double digit in losses 6 of his 9 seasons. I have no problem if you move on.

Andy Pettitte- Here is Andy's 5th and final ballot- and the repeat- This is going to be a confusing one. No doubt the rumors and all the time he spent with Clemens may cloud your thinking. I have my own opinion on that, but you can't possible ignore his NSL longevity (19 years) and the W/L record at 230-170, 2<sup>nd</sup> best wins on the ballot this year in 4 less NSL seasons. It all started with the White River Sharks (now Sparrow Lake) with one Oh taking Andy with the 7<sup>th</sup> overall pick in the 1996 Rookie Draft. After a decent rookie campaign, Pettitte strung together win totals of 16, 19, and 18 over the next 3 seasons, 2 of which were 2/3 of his 3 All-Star appearances. A flat 11-11 in 2000 was followed by his best season, 21-7 with a 3.55 ERA yet somehow- almost incredibly- he whiffed just 99. Never a big strike out king, Pettitte finessed you and followed that nifty 2001 season with a 15-12, yet 4.85 in 2002. Bob then traded him to Indiana even up for Lohse. So with 113 wins in 7 seasons for White River, Andy moved on and was strong for Indiana, but the ERA kept inflating. Strikeouts picked up a bit but would soon dwindle, and after 49 CG over a 5-year period (2007-2011) he spent the 2012 season as a no card, returning for his final 2 years in Sparrow Lake and Pennsylvania with an overall

17-13. I've harped on his W/L most all the monographs, yet his ERA over 4 isn't pretty. 2307 punch outs are 3<sup>rd</sup> on the ballot as are his 1071 walks. Couple that with more hits allowed than IP and it seems he had base runners all over the place. Yet the career started out with so much promise. Who knows if the CGs slowed him down or it was simply too many IP on his arm from the White River years? There are lots of longevity numbers, though, and someone to at least consider. It just seemed a lock after his 2002 season. He was 4-7 in the post season with 34 ER allowed in 88 post season IP.

Francisco Rodriguez- His 2<sup>nd</sup> ballot- The original, not the middle initial M guy. Or for that matter Frankie Rodriguez of the mid-90s. I remember this Francisco got a card despite just a few innings pitched in 2003. That didn't stop Scoop from snapping him up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the 2003 Rookie Draft and he rewarded the Creekside franchise with 15 seasons of solid ball- acting as the team closer from 2006-9 (153 saves in the 4 years). He was a solid contributor in other years but nosed out by other Creekside closers in those time frames. Still, he posted a 3.52 ERA in his career which included an All-Star appearance in 2009 and 10 post season game with 6 saves. A pair of under 2.00 ERAs (1.82 in 2005, 1.74 in 2011) were great, yet a .500 career W/L isn't. His 731 appearances are 2<sup>nd</sup> on the ballot this year.

Mark Rzepczynski- Scrabble. Maybe when he gets married he can change his name to Smith or something. 8 seasons and a total of 309 innings, a true LH specialist. He did save 13 games for 2017 Glenville and spent his rookie year as a starter for Gulf Breeze. The 'varks selected him in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the 2010 draft because I liked the name.

Drew Storen- Riding the Duneland/Magic City express, Storen had some decent years in the league including a 29 save 2015 for Magic City which was his only All-Star appearance. In 8 years for some very good team Storen never appeared in a post season game. A 2<sup>nd</sup> round pick in 10` by Duneland, he amassed 303 games without a single start. A sub-4 ERA is always nice but show me the meat and potatoes. After a career high of 52 games in 2018 (6.14) he was cast adrift.

Chris Tillman- Another one of those "can't miss" guys who missed. Tillman was a well thought of starter drafted in 2010 by Vermont in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round and was soon traded to Crosstown After his inaugural campaign where he toiled for 8 seasons. 2014 was his best as he was an All-Star- starting 33 times with a solid 3.26 ERA and 14-8 W/L mark. He started 33 again in 2015 with reverse results (9-19, 4.32) and was able to post one more good season (13-8, 3.57) in 2017- a season where Crosstown went to the Championship Series. In 2018 he started 8 times and was done. 58-65, 4.39. Guess it was a miss.

Koji Uehara- This must be the funny name ballot. It seems that Creekside always has a great closer, and Uehara's career was part of that- 35 saves in 2012 and 42 in 2013. But there were other years where Uehara couldn't get the ball in a save situation since there were others ahead of him in the pecking order. He posted a relatively small number of IP over his career and his high-water mark in IP was 71 in 2014. He was bypassed in the 2010 Rookie Draft and showed up in 2011 as the first pick of the Crushers in the FA draft. But with Francisco Rodriguez ahead of him it was tough to get those high save seasons. His 2.92 career ERA should make you take notice, but the numbers are extremely short when compared to others on this ballot.

Travis Wood- A one year career as he went 15-8 with a 2.43 ERA in 2014 for Sparrow Lake (an All-Star year) but 28-61 otherwise. After his solid 2014 season, he was traded to Gulf Breeze where he nearly tripled his ERA (6.37) and went 9-16. After a couple years in Coastal and one in Glenville he was through. He was originally a Crosstown 2<sup>nd</sup> round pick in 2011 where he went 13-30 over 3 seasons.

