

**COACHES CORNER: RYAN FULLER (PAGE 25)** PLAYER FEATURE: CHANCE SISCO (PAGE 30)

DELMARVA SHOREBIRDS OFFICIAL GAME DAY MAGAZINE

CLASS~A AFFILIATE OF THE BALTIMORE ORIOLES













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#### **SUNDAY**

#### Strike Out Hunger Sunday & Kids Run the Bases

Perdue Strike Out Hunger Sunday - Bring two canned food items to the Shorebirds Box Office and receive an upper reserve ticket for \$5. Kid's Run the Bases - All Kids runs the bases after the game presented by Chili's Bar and Grill.



#### **MONDAY**

47 ABC \$3 Buck Mondays

47 ABC Three Buck Monday - Enjoy \$3 upper reserved tickets, \$3 hot dogs and \$3 fountain Pepsi products presented by Wicomico Heating and Air Conditioning.



#### **TUESDAY**

Wag Your Tail Tuesday & BOGO Book Exchange

Wag Your Tail Tuesday - Bring a pet donation item and the Shorebirds will allow your dog free entry into the stadium courtesy of Concord Pet Foods and Supplies. Valvoline BOGO Book Exchange - Bring two new books & purchase an upper reseved ticket to get one upper reserved ticket for free courtesy of Valvoline.





**WEDNESDAY** Silver Sluggers Wednesday

Silver Sluggers Wednesday - Play baseball bingo and win prizes courtesy of Peninsula Home Care every Wednesday at Arthur W. Perdue Stadium. Don't forget to join the club, as all Silver Sluggers get admission to 10 select games for just \$25.





#### **THURSDAY**

Thirsty Thursday & Maryland Pride Thursday

KISS 95.9 Thirsty Thursday & Maryland Pride Thursday - Come to Perdue Stadium and show your Maryland Pride as every Thursday the Shorebirds will wear special Maryalnd Pride Jerseys, while you sit back, relax, and enjoy special pricing on Coors Light and Miller Lite.



#### **FRIDAY**

Big Beer Friday & Orange Friday

Big Beer Friday & Orange Friday - Every Friday home game, the Shorebirds will be wearing specialty orange jerseys that are custom made just for the Shorebirds, while you sit back, relax, and enjoy special pricing on Coors Light and Miller Lite.



**SATURDAY** Q105 Fireworks Show

Q105 Fireworks - Every Saturday night is Q105 fireworks night at Arthur W. Perdue Stadium and you do not want to miss out. Come with friends and family as we host the best fireworks on Delmarva every Saturday night.





By: Will DeBoer

#### **Quarter Century Later, Perdue Stadium Still Glows**

Long before an era when brand-new minor league ballparks became in vogue, the Delmarva Shorebirds built something to last. Arthur W. Perdue Stadium, which first opened its gates in 1996, is currently the fourth-oldest park in the 14-team South Atlantic League. Despite nearly a quartercentury of use, the "Big Chicken Wing" is still a favorite destination for fans, Orioles prospects, and visiting Sally Leaguers alike.

"I remember that the stadium was amazing," said 1997 Shorebird star reliever Ryan Kohlmeier. "I was a guy that came right out of a small junior college, so I really had no exposure to stadiums that looked like that. That was a huge treat...and when we traveled around all the other stadiums in the South Atlantic League, you definitely understood how spoiled you were."





The quest to bring pro baseball back to the Eastern Shore began before the area even secured a team, as meticulously documented in Dr. Richard Passwater's widely-read 2005 guide Celebrating Champions. In 1994, Maryland Baseball LP presented plans to the Wicomico County Council for a mostly privately-funded stadium to be built on land donated by Perdue Farms baron Frank Perdue, who invested \$4 million into the project that was eventually named for his father. The ownership group turned to The Design Exchange Architects for the design, zoning in on "Godmother of Stadiums" Trish England. When Maryland Baseball secured a SAL team for 1996, eventually purchasing the Albany (Ga.) Polecats, construction began in earnest in the summer of 1995.

The inaugural Shorebirds spent the first two weeks of 1996 on the road before finally arriving at Perdue Stadium for the April 17 opener. Manager Doug Sisson remembers his players staying up to see the new park as the bus rolled in for the first time. Behind a stellar pitching performance from future big-league mainstay Javier Vazquez, the Shorebirds beat the Columbus RedStixx 4-2 in front of 5,787 new Delmarva faithful.

"At that point in [the Expos organization], that was the place to play," said Sisson in 2018. "This is the truth: when I told guys they were getting promoted...they didn't want to leave."

The feelings stayed the same when the Orioles took over the affiliation from Montreal in 1997. Baltimore sent top-rate talent to a facility that, for some, is still the best in all of Birdland. The Shorebirds won two Sally League pennants (1997, 2000) in their first four years under the Oriole umbrella.









"I remember pulling up here and thinking that I must be in the wrong place," said former Orioles All-Star and onetime Shorebird Brian Roberts. "I had seen A-ball stadiums before and they did not look like this. I loved this place, and we are all very spoiled to have this in our organization."

The league office took notice. Revered former SAL president John Henry Moss deemed the location of the stadium, just off U.S. Route 50 and the Highway 13 bypass, as perfect for residents, players, and visitors. Perdue Stadium hosted the Sally League All-Star Game in 1999 and again in 2011, and it could be due to host another in the early 2020s.

Over the years the Shorebirds and ownership group 7th Inning Stretch have made several improvements to the park, always with the blessing of the local community, including last year's new 360-degree outfield deck. It's all endeavored to keep one of the now-vintage yards of the Sally League feeling fresh and fan-friendly. Indeed, the fan support has not gone unnoticed from the young men who call Arthur W. Perdue home 70 nights out of the year.

"It was always great pitching in front of the home crowd," said 2019 ace Grayson Rodriguez. "The atmosphere is electric. The Eastern Shore has great baseball fans and it was always an honor getting to throw in front of them."



Delmarva's most recent game at Perdue Stadium - a September 6 postseason showdown against Hickory, and the first home playoff game in 14 years – exhibited an unrivaled postseason atmosphere. By the time its gates open again, no doubt it will once again take its place as a gem of the Sally League, the Orioles system, and all of Minor League Baseball.





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Lakewood BlueClaws Philadelphia Phillies First Energy Park



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# SOUTHERN DIVISION



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Columbia Fireflies New York Mets Segra Park



Greenville Drive Boston Red Sox Fluor Field



Lexington Legends Kansas City Royals Whitaker Bank Ballpark



Rome Braves Atlanta Braves State Mutual Stadium





#### 2020 SHOREBIRDS HOT STOVE: MIKE ELIAS

#### O'S GM MIKE ELIAS HEADLINES HOT STOVE



An appearance from the Orioles' general manager highlighted the 19th annual Shorebirds Hot Stove Banquet, held on Thursday, January 23, at the Wicomico Civic Center in preparation for the silver anniversary season of Delmarva Shorebirds baseball

The keynote speaker for the event was Mike Elias, general manager and executive vice president of the Baltimore Orioles. Elias,

who last visited Salisbury for the Shorebirds' playoff game on September 6, took questions from the audience and spoke at length about the importance of Delmarva and Baltimore's other minor league affiliates in reversing the Orioles' major league fortunes in the coming years.

"Some of the names we've been reading about are going to start to arrive in Camden Yards," said Elias. "It's still about player development and those individual performances and not necessarily the team's win-and-loss record. Those guys are taking steps forward, graduating to the big leagues and adjusting to big-league life."

Elias also paid one last homage to the 2019 Shorebirds, who won a franchise-record 90 games en route to a South Atlantic League postseason berth and earned MiLB.com Minor League Team of the Year honors. Delmarva was one of four Orioles affiliates who either made the playoffs (Bowie), contended until the season's final day (Aberdeen), or finished with their league's best record (Gulf Coast League Orioles).

"It's exactly what you want to see, especially when you're in a rebuild," said Elias. "We're focused on that type of success. The success of teams like the Shorebirds is really going to dictate what we do the next couple of years in Baltimore."

Before Elias' keynote address, the Civic Center crowd of almost 300 heard from several other speakers, including Shorebirds General Manager Chris Bitters and 7th Inning Stretch President Pat Filippone. The Shorebirds thank everyone who attended the annual Hot Stove event and you can view the full article at theshorebirds.com.







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## **CFES Grants Support Fight Against COVID-19**



PRMC Nurses receiving care packages from Operation We Care that was funded by a Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore grant from the Emergency Response Fund.

Community matters most during the tough times, and as always, the Eastern Shore has rallied together through recent events. The Emergency Response Fund at the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore has received invaluable support from local businesses and donors. These generous gifts have allowed CFES to rapidly respond to critical needs in our community. Likewise, fund holders such as the Shorebird's Fly Together Fund have used their charitable funds to direct grants to causes they champion and help in times of need.

Grants through the Emergency Response Fund have recently provided food, shelter, and necessities for the homeless and needy families, care packages for frontline healthcare workers and first responders, PPE mask production, and countless other resources that have aided in the pandemic recovery. In times of great need, generosity makes a difference

The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore connects people who care to causes that matter for the common good of the Lower Eastern Shore. We are a 501c3 nonprofit with an inspiring history of fostering charitable endeavors, and have provided over \$84 million in grants and scholarships to the local community since 1984. We collaborate with individuals, families, and businesses to match their charitable interests with community needs and strengthen local nonprofits through grants and resources. We are devoted to improving our regional community and believe in the power of philanthropy. Learn more at CFES.org











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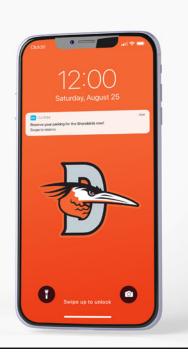




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## Vicki Parks

Vicki Parks, our 2019 Shorebirds Fan of the Year, is our Season Ticket Holder in the spotlight. Vicki & her daughter Jenna have been attending Shorebirds games for 23 seasons, and 2019 was their 3rd year as half season ticket holders. On January 23, 2020 at the Shorebirds annual Hot Stove Banquet, Vicki was honored by the Shorebirds as the 2019 Fan of the Year (pictured from that night). Each year the Shorebirds Fan of the Year award goes to a fan(s)

who not only is a great supporter of the team, but also helps volunteer their efforts to assist the Shorebirds in any way.

"Vicki has been a tremendous supporter of the Shorebirds throughout the last several years, and this award is certainly well deserved," said Chris Bitters. "She is always active in serving as an officer in the Shorebirds Fan Club, helping spread the program to our fans, and consistently contributes to the team through player jersey auctions, and has been an asset for hosting players."

Originally from Silver Spring, Vicki now lives in Salisbury only 3 miles away from the stadium. Vicki & Jenna love to take laps around the stadium throughout games, and take plenty of photos. "I'd say we take around 4,000 pictures throughout each year," said Vicki. "Not just for us, but to share with players and their families who may not be able to make it to see them in person."

The Parks family recently hosted a few familiar Shorebirds pitchers, Nick Vespi & Javi Echevarria. "Hosting players have been a fantastic experience, we especially love learning about their families, background, and what got them into baseball. For Javi, before coming to Delmarva he had never had crab, so we always had fun seeing how he would approach handling it!"









#### SILVER ANNIVERSARY TEAM HEADSHOTS



**WILLIE HARRIS ~ 2B** 



MANNY MACHADO - DH



CALVIN PICKERING ~ 1B



RYAN MINOR ~ 3B



NICK MARKAKIS ~ RF



JASON FRANSZ ~ LF



CHANCE SISCO ~ C



ZACH JARRETT ~ CF



ORLANDO CABRERA ~ SS



YERMIN MERCEDES ~ C



TREY MANCINI ~ 1B



ADAM HALL ~ INF



**BRANDON TRIPP ~ OF** 



GRAYSON RODRIGUEZ ~ P



**ALEX WELLS ~ P** 



JAVIER VAZQUEZ ~ P



DYLAN BUNDY ~ P



ZACK BRITTON ~ P



JOHN MAINE ~ P



RYAN KOHLMEIER ~ P





DEREK BROWN ~ P



**ROMMIE LEWIS ~ P** 



JIMMY YACABONIS ~ P



ZACH MATSON ~ P



#### SILVER ANNIVERSARY TEAM ROSTER

POS_	STARTING LINEUP	B/T	YEAR(S)	OPS	HOMETOWN	HIGHEST LEVEL		
2B	Willie Harris	L/R	'99-'00	.759	Cairo, GA	MLB (12 Years)		
DH	Manny Machado	R/R	2011	.859	Hialeah, FL	MLB (8 Years)		
1B	Calvin Pickering	L/L	1997	.949	St. Thomas, USVI	MLB (5 Years)		
3B	Ryan Minor	R/R	1997	.932	Canton, OH	MLB (4 Years)		
RF	Nick Markakis	L/L	2004	.842	Glen Cove, NY	MLB (14 Years)		
LF	Jason Fransz	R/R	2004-05	.935	Newport Beach, CA	A+		
С	Chance Sisco	L/R	2014	.854	Corona, CA	MLB (3 Years)		
CF	Zach Jarrett	R/R	2018	.779	Hickory, NC	AA		
SS	Orlando Cab <mark>rera</mark>	R/R	1996	.731	Cartagena, COL	MLB (15 Years)		
	DECEDVEC	D/T	VEADC	ODC	HOMETOWAL	LUCLIECT LEVEL		
POS	RESERVES	B/T	YEARS	OPS	HOMETOWN	HIGHEST LEVEL		
C	Yermin Mercedes	R/R	2015-16	.896	La Romana, D.R.	AAA		
1B	Trey Mancini	R/R	2014	.779	Winter Haven, FL	MLB (4 Years)		
INF	Ad <mark>am Hall                                 </mark>	R/R	2019	.780	Hamilton, Bermuda	A		
OF	Brandon Tripp	L/R	2007	.908	Artesia, CA	AA		
•	T P				,			
						HIGHEST LEVEL		
	RTING ROTATION	Hand	YEARS	ERA	HOMETOWN	HIGHEST LEVEL		
	RTING ROTATION  Grayson Rodriguez	Hand RHP	<b>YEARS</b> 2019	<b>ERA</b> 2.68	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX	A		
	Grayson Rodriguez Alex Wells	Hand RHP LHP	YEARS 2019 2017	ERA 2.68 2.38	Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS	A AA		
	RTING ROTATION  Grayson Rodriguez  Alex Wells  Javier Vazquez	Hand RHP LHP RHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996	ERA 2.68 2.38 2.68	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R.	A AA MLB (14 Years)		
	RTING ROTATION  Grayson Rodriguez  Alex Wells  Javier Vazquez  Dylan Bundy	Hand RHP LHP RHP RHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012	2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R. Tulsa, OK	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years)		
	RTING ROTATION  Grayson Rodriguez  Alex Wells  Javier Vazquez  Dylan Bundy  Zack Britton	Hand RHP LHP RHP RHP LHP	2019 2017 1996 2012 2008	2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00 3.12	HOMETOWN  Nacogdoches, TX  Newcastle, AUS  Ponce, P.R.  Tulsa, OK  Panorama City, CA	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years)		
	RTING ROTATION  Grayson Rodriguez  Alex Wells  Javier Vazquez  Dylan Bundy	Hand RHP LHP RHP RHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012	2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R. Tulsa, OK	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years)		
STAF	RTING ROTATION  Grayson Rodriguez  Alex Wells  Javier Vazquez  Dylan Bundy  Zack Britton	Hand RHP LHP RHP RHP LHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012 2008 2002-03	2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00 3.12	HOMETOWN  Nacogdoches, TX  Newcastle, AUS  Ponce, P.R.  Tulsa, OK  Panorama City, CA	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years)		
STAF	Grayson Rodriguez Alex Wells Javier Vazquez Dylan Bundy Zack Britton John Maine	Hand RHP LHP RHP RHP LHP RHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012 2008 2002-03	2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00 3.12 1.48	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R. Tulsa, OK Panorama City, CA Fredericksburg, VA	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years) MLB (8 Years)		
STAF	Grayson Rodriguez Alex Wells Javier Vazquez Dylan Bundy Zack Britton John Maine	Hand RHP LHP RHP LHP RHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012 2008 2002-03 YEARS	ERA 2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00 3.12 1.48 ERA 2.65	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R. Tulsa, OK Panorama City, CA Fredericksburg, VA HOMETOWN	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years) MLB (8 Years) HIGHEST LEVEL		
STAF	Grayson Rodriguez Alex Wells Javier Vazquez Dylan Bundy Zack Britton John Maine	Hand RHP LHP RHP LHP RHP Hand	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012 2008 2002-03 YEARS 1997	2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00 3.12 1.48 ERA 2.65 2.98	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R. Tulsa, OK Panorama City, CA Fredericksburg, VA HOMETOWN Salina, KS	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years) MLB (8 Years) HIGHEST LEVEL MLB (2 Years)		
STAF	Grayson Rodriguez Alex Wells Javier Vazquez Dylan Bundy Zack Britton John Maine  IEF PITCHERS Ryan Kohlmeier Scott Rice	Hand RHP LHP RHP LHP RHP Hand RHP LHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012 2008 2002-03 YEARS 1997 2002-03	2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00 3.12 1.48 ERA 2.65 2.98	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R. Tulsa, OK Panorama City, CA Fredericksburg, VA HOMETOWN Salina, KS Simi Valley, CA	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years) MLB (8 Years) HIGHEST LEVEL MLB (2 Years) MLB (2 Years)		
STAF	Grayson Rodriguez Alex Wells Javier Vazquez Dylan Bundy Zack Britton John Maine  IEF PITCHERS Ryan Kohlmeier Scott Rice Derek Brown	Hand RHP LHP RHP LHP RHP Hand RHP LHP RHP	YEARS 2019 2017 1996 2012 2008 2002-03 YEARS 1997 2002-03 1997-98	ERA 2.68 2.38 2.68 0.00 3.12 1.48 ERA 2.65 2.98 1.85	HOMETOWN Nacogdoches, TX Newcastle, AUS Ponce, P.R. Tulsa, OK Panorama City, CA Fredericksburg, VA HOMETOWN Salina, KS Simi Valley, CA Hagerstown, MD	A AA MLB (14 Years) MLB (5 Years) MLB (9 Years) MLB (8 Years)  HIGHEST LEVEL MLB (2 Years) AAA		











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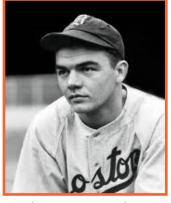
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By: Will DeBoer & Eric Day



## Wartime big leaguer played for Federalsburg, Salisbury during 11 year career

Robert "Ducky" Detweiler played second base and outfield for the Federalsburg Athletics of the Class-D Eastern Shore Baseball League from 1938-39 and 1947-49. During his time representing Caroline County he batted .292 with 10 home runs.

Born in Trumbauersville, a small community within Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Detweiler moved to Federalsburg following high school. Not content to just play baseball, he was very active around all Federalsburg

sporting events, sometimes even as a game official or umpire.

Much like modern minor leaguers, Detweiler bounced around between multiple teams, leagues, and systems. The Philadelphia A's signed him to his first pro contract in 1939, assigning him to his hometown Federalsburg team. He then earned a promotion to the Wilmington Blue Rocks of the Interstate League before transitioning to the Boston Braves system. After spells in the Pennsylvania-Ontario-New York League, Interstate League, and Triple-I League, Detweiler made it up to The Show in late 1942. He played in 12 games for the Braves that September, batting .318 with three extra-base hits and five RBIs

As it did for so many ballplayers of the World War II era, Uncle Sam put in a call for Detweiler after the 1942 season. When he wasn't active in the Army Medical Corps of the 1301st Service Unit, Detweiler and other baseball teammates created an army baseball team at the New Cumberland Reception Center in Pennsylvania and another team in Alabama called the Camp Siebert Gashouse Gang, one of the top military teams in the South.

In 1947, Detweiler moved back to the Eastern Shore to both play for and manage the team with which started his professional career. With the new Federalsburg A's in

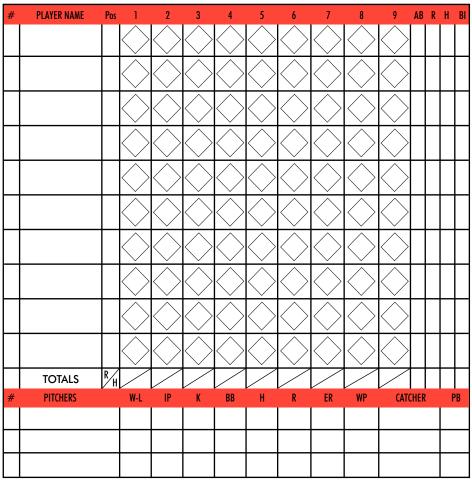






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	TOTALS	R/H													
#	PITCHERS		W-L	IP	K	BB	Н	R	ER	WP	CATO	CHER		P	В
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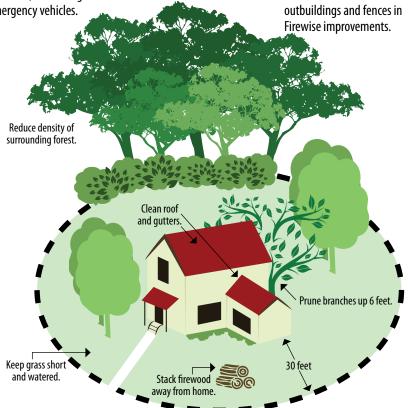
- 1. Appress Use at least 4-inch reflective numerals.
- 2. YARD Keep a green, mowed lawn at least 30 feet around all sides of the house.
- 3. Maintenance Keep roof. gutters and yard free of leaves, twigs and other debris.

4. Access Clear driveway 12 feet wide, 14 feet high for emergency vehicles.

- 5. Decks Remove debris. **Enclose underneath with** lattice, backed with wire screen.
- 6. House Use fire resistant materials when replacing roof or siding.
- 7. LANDSCAPING USE Firewise plants and mulch. Keep ornamental plants 30 feet

from house. Space plants so fire can't spread.

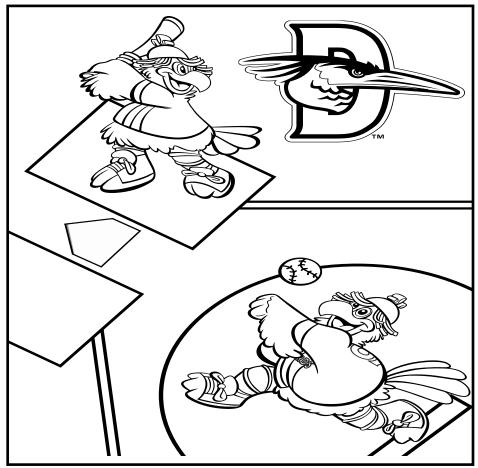
- 8. Foundation Clear flammables and keep landscaping 4 feet away from house.
- 9. FIREWOOD Move firewood pile at least 30 feet away from any buildings.
- 10. OUTBUILDINGS Include all Firewise improvements.













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Dear Delmarva Shorebirds Fans:

Welcome back to Arthur W. Perdue Stadium! The 2020 season promises more of the same great play and memorable moments that you have come to expect when joining your family and friends for an enjoyable night out at an affordable price. Every game delivers future memories for both young and old alike as you spend quality family time together watching the Major League stars of tomorrow in action today.

Delmarva Shorebirds Chief Executive Officer Tom Volpe, President Pat Filippone, General Manager Chris Bitters and the outstanding Shorebirds staff hope to make baseball at Arthur W. Perdue Stadium your choice for summertime entertainment in 2020. The Shorebirds staff will be showcasing special events and new promotions for your enjoyment this season as you watch the emerging stars in the Baltimore Orioles organization display their abilities and talents for you.

I would like to thank each of you for your support of the Delmarva Shorebirds and the South Atlantic League. Please enjoy the friendly environment of Arthur W. Perdue Stadium and bring your family and friends to cheer on the Shorebirds as they compete for the Northern Division and South Atlantic League Championship.

I look forward to seeing you at the Shorebirds' games in 2020.

Sincerely,

Eric Krupa, President
South Atlantic League



#### **ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT CONT...**





the last iteration of the Eastern Shore League, he hit .344 with 63 home runs in 331 games over three years. Detweiler put in three more seasons of pro ball, finishing off his career in 1952 with the Salisbury Indians of the Interstate League, the last team to play in Salisbury until the Delmarva Shorebirds' arrival in 1996. Detweiler eventually retired from baseball, became a

tavern owner for nine years, and then made a career as a mailman for 20 years.

Detweiler was consider a longtime resident of Easton, Maryland. A community-minded citizen, he became heavily involved with several organizations, including the Federalsburg Volunteer Fire Company, Immanuel Lutheran Church in Preston, and American Legion Post #243 in Hurlock. Detweiler always had an appetite for history: he founded the Federalsburg Historical Society, where artifacts from the Eastern Shore Baseball League can be seen, and also took up membership in the Boston Braves Historical Association; the Philadelphia Athletics Historical Society; the Association of Professional Ball Players of America (APBPA); and the MLB Players Alumni.

Ducky Detweiler was inducted into the Eastern Shore Baseball Hall of Fame in 1995 and attended several games at Arthur W. Perdue Stadium when baseball finally returned to Salisbury the next year. He died in Easton on March 13, 2013, at the age of 94. At the time of his death he and his wife Jean had been married for 68 years; Jean passed away in 2015





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#### **Q&A WITH RYAN FULLER**



During a recent episode of the podcast One Flew Over the Shorebirds Nest, Delmarva radio voice Will DeBoer chatted with incoming Shorebirds hitting coach Ryan Fuller. This season is Fuller's first in affiliated pro ball. He previously worked at Power in Training (The PIT), a facility in East Lyme, Connecticut, and also taught high school English. He was All-Big East at the University of Connecticut and played in the Diamondbacks system.

**WD:** Could you take us through what a typical day at The PIT looked like?

RF: Most days I went to school from 7:00 to 3:00, drove down, and then I was pretty much in the cage until 7:00 or 8:00 at night. I worked with players as young as six years old up to professionals. We did a lot of one-on-one training with the older kids, but we also had a lot of small group training as well. The fun part for me was getting kids from all over Connecticut to get into these groups and every night come together, work off of each other, and get to know each other to get better. That was the fun part where you can create some competition and get the velo machines going and make a really good atmosphere, get the music rocking.

**WD:** The training there is technologically advanced, but the focus is on something comparatively old-school: hitting line drives. How did the focus come on that over something like tweaking launch angle or focusing on exit velo?

RF: We all know that whether you're playing tee ball or hitting in the big leagues, if you hit the ball hard on a line, you're going to be successful. So rather than telling the young kids, "I want you to hit at a 23-degree launch angle every time," we just want them hitting line drives, and as they get older those line drives start to become extra-base hits, home runs. We keep it as simple as possible and let them know that if you hit the ball really hard on a line, you're going play the game for a long time.

WD: I definitely appreciate that on the cover of your line drive handbook is Miguel Cabrera, maybe top line drive hitter of his generation. Line drives allowed him to win a Triple Crown and not become just a onedimensional power hitter.

RF: Yeah, he is the picture of a complete hitter. It doesn't matter what you throw him: he has power to all field, he can handle the ball with two strikes, I mean just a complete hitter. And when you think of a guy who owns that line drive, that's the guy who comes to mind for me. He is definitely the guy I aspire to be, and when kids ask for video, he's always one of the guys I bring up right away.

Part II of this conversation with Ryan Fuller will be available in PlayBall! Issue 2





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#### PLAYER FEATURE: CHANCE SISCO

By: Will DeBoer

#### Silver Anniversary Team: Chance Sisco, Catcher

To serve as the foundation of the Shorebirds Silver Team, our esteemed panel voted for a man who turned in one of the finest hitting seasons in franchise history and brought first-of-its-kind hardware back to Arthur W. Perdue Stadium.

Catcher: Chance Sisco, 2014

114 games, .340/.406/.448, 56 R, 27 2B, 5 HR, 63 RBI, .854 OPS

Through the first month of the 2014 season, Chance Sisco looked like he bit off more than he could chew. The 19-year-old catcher, drafted in the second round the previous summer, was hitting just .245 in April before suffering a left elbow strain that sidelined him for two weeks. By the time he returned to action, though, Sisco was ready for primetime.

"[That season] was big for developmental reasons," said Sisco via text earlier this month. "It was my first full season as a professional, so it was about learning the ups and downs and how to keep my body healthy for so long. There were plenty of learning curves that year, on and off the field."

The biggest curve upward, of course, was his batting average. From Sisco's return on May 8 through the end of the year, Sisco hit .353, a mark astounding for any Class-A player but almost unheard of for a primary catcher. At season's end Sisco stood above all with a .340 average, beating out only one serious challenger to take home the first SAL batting title in Delmarva Shorebirds history.

"It was a pretty cool moment to end the year," said Sisco. "I had to learn how to get out of that slow start I had and not let it affect the whole year, so it was nice at the end to be able to see how big of a change my season took. There were plenty of teammates and coaches that played roles that whole season for me."

A natural hitter who could spray to the gaps all over the field, Sisco saved one of his best performances for one of the season's biggest stages. He set the tone for the Shorebirds' 17-5 Fourth of July shellacking of Lakewood with a two-run home run in the bottom of the first, finishing the game with three hits, three runs, and four RBIs to thrill the sellout home crowd of 7.685.



"The fans were always so supportive of us," said Sisco. "The players for sure appreciate that!"

While his pedestrian start kept him from joining seven of his teammates at the All-Star Game, Sisco got his due and then some by the end of the year. He made the Sally League Postseason All-Star Team and picked up minor league All-Star nods from MiLB.com and Baseball America.

# S. C.

#### PLAYER FEATURE: CHANCE SISCO CONT...

Sisco built on his Delmarva success and became one of Baltimore's most decorated prospects of the 2010s, earning slew of All-Star selections and playing in two Futures Games. In 2016 with Bowie, Sisco earned the Brooks Robinson Award as the Orioles' top minor league hitter after batting .320 with an .828 OPS. He made his major league debut the next September and bounced between Triple-A and the bigs before establishing himself as the O's primary backstop in June of 2019

StIll young for an established major leaguer – he turns 25 in February – Chance Sisco is still writing his post-Shorebirds story. But for the franchise's first batting champion, his legacy in Delmarva is assured.



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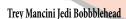
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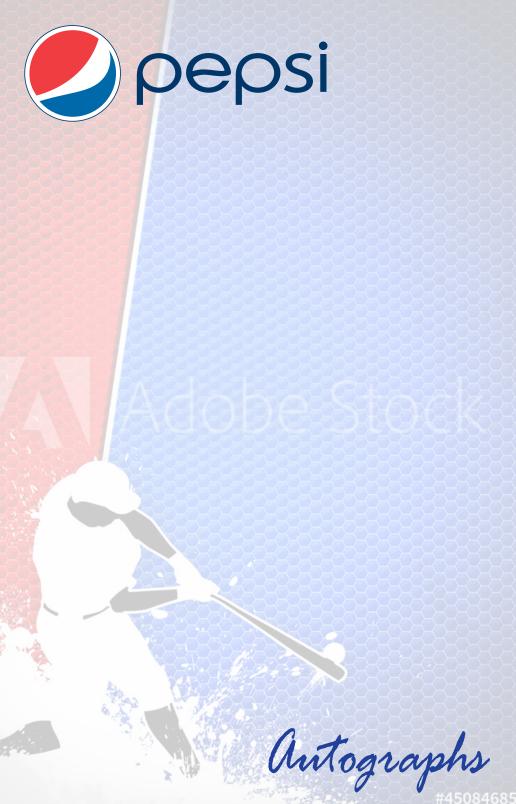




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