

Dayton Dragons 2020 Team Prospectus



by Tom Nichols
Dragons Director of Broadcasting/Media Relations

This preview includes players who are expected to be candidates for positions on the 25-man roster of the Dayton Dragons and is an unofficial projection. Minor League rosters are not established until April 5. Spring training variables including performance, injuries, trades, and additional player acquisitions will impact the roster accordingly.

The Reds list 163 minor league players in camp, but the number of players competing for jobs is actually larger. There are 60 players in big league camp with the Reds, and with only 26 roster spots available in Cincinnati, many of those 60 will eventually be assigned back to minor league camp. In effect, the Reds have 223 players in Arizona competing for 126 jobs. There are four Reds farm clubs that open their seasons on April 9, and each team has 25 roster spots, along with 26 players that make the big league roster. The competition will be fierce.

Minor League rosters will change almost daily throughout the spring. As the Reds trim their Major League spring roster, it will create a domino effect with the Minor League rosters. For example, when a player is sent down from big league camp and assigned to the Triple-A Louisville Bats spring roster, a player from the Louisville team will be sent to Double-A Chattanooga, and so on. The Dayton roster will not be set until the end of spring training.

The Dragons will open the Midwest League season on Thursday, April 9th against the Great Lakes Loons at 7:00 p.m. at Day Air Ballpark. Again this season, all 140 home and road games can be heard on radio on WONE 980 AM and on the internet at wone.com and the Dragons Mobile App. Additionally, the Dragons will again televise 25 games on the Dayton CW.

Key Spring Training Dates for Minor League Players

Report date for Instructional League	February 14
Pitchers and Catchers report to Goodyear	March 2nd
Position Players report to Goodyear	March 10th
First Spring Training Game	March 18 vs. Lake County at Goodyear
Last Spring Training Game	April 3 (intersquad)

DRAGONS 2020 COACHING STAFF

Gookie Dawkins	Manager
Brian Garman	Pitching Coach
Darryl Brinkley	Hitting Coach
Hernan Iribarren	Bench Coach
Andrew Cleves	Athletic Trainer
Dan Donahue	Strength & Conditioning Coach

REDS PLAYER DEVELOPMENT COORDINATORS AND ROVING INSTRUCTORS

Chris Tremie	Field Coordinator
C.J. Gillman	Hitting Coordinator
Kyle Boddy	Pitching Coordinator
Eric Jagers	Assistant Pitching Coordinator
Tony Fossas	Roving Pitching Instructor
Jose Nieves	Infield Coordinator
Willie Harris	Outfield/Baserunning Coordinator
Corky Miller	Roving Catching Instructor
Luis Bolivar	Academies Coordinator
Frank Pfister	Mental Skills Coach

Catchers

Candidates: Eric Yang, Luke Berryhill, James Free.

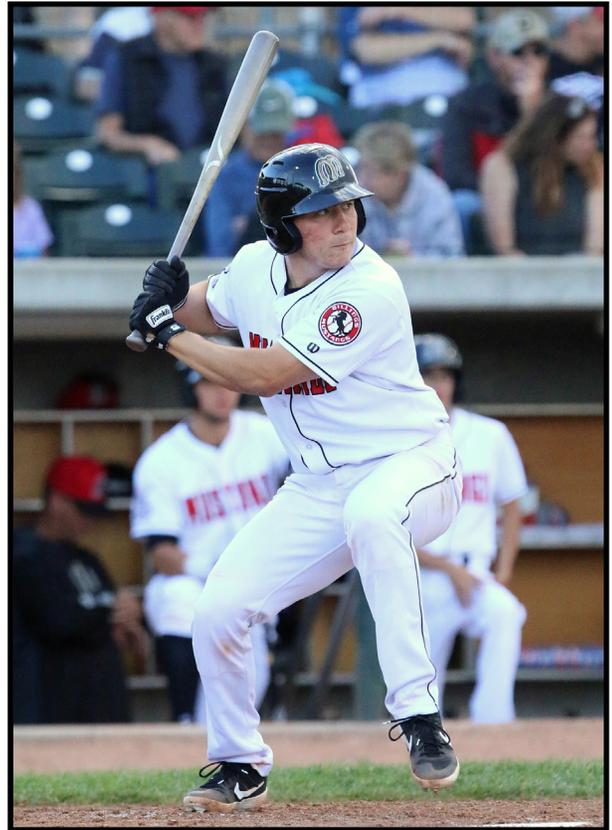
Player	Age	B/T	Ht.	Wt.
Eric Yang	22	R/R	5'11"	185
Luke Berryhill	21	R/R	6'1"	227
James Free	21	S/R	6'2"	205

The Reds drafted two catchers out of strong college programs last June and signed another college catcher as a higher profile non-drafted free agent. All three could be with the Dragons in 2020. They will replace the Dragons catchers from 2019, Pabel Manzanero, Jay Schuyler, and Morgan Lofstrom. Schuyler and Lofstrom should advance in the system and Manzanero became a free agent last fall (Manzanero actually moved up a level from the Dragons before the 2019 season ended).

Eric Yang was the highest-drafted catcher by the Reds in 2019, taken in the seventh round, the same round where the Reds selected Schuyler the previous year. Yang played at UC Santa Barbara, helping his team to the Big West Conference championship last spring and a trip to the NCAA Regional. The Big West is a good conference that has produced many Dragons players over the years. Former Dragons all-star Chris Valaika also played at UC Santa Barbara. Other Big West schools that have produced Dragons players include Cal State Fullerton (Michael Lorenzen, Justin Turner, Josh Fellhauer, Daniel Renken), Long Beach State (Devin Lohman), Cal State Northridge (Dominic D’Anna), and UC Irvine (Taylor Sparks).

Yang spent three years at UC Santa Barbara and was the starter in 2018 and '19, his sophomore and junior years. He had a huge season in 2019 when he was selected 2nd Team All-American (*Baseball America*), Big West Conference Player of the Year, and a finalist for the Buster Posey Award as college baseball’s best catcher. He played in all 56 of his team’s games and batted .368 with seven home runs and a .545 slugging percentage. After signing with the Reds, Yang went to Billings, made the all-star team, and hit a home run in the all-star game. He played in 51 games for the Mustangs, batting .290 with four home runs and a .420 slugging percentage. He was selected by *Baseball America* as the #19 prospect in the Pioneer League, the second highest ranking among catchers.

Yang is a Los Angeles area native and had a notable high school career at El Camino Real Charter School (Christopher Knight, who was Peter in the Brady Bunch, is one of many famous ECR alumni). His team won the Los Angeles City Section championship at Dodger Stadium in both his junior and senior years, and he was the LA City Section Player of the Year in 2015, selected from among athletes at about 100 high schools.



Eric Yang with Billings in 2019
Photo courtesy of Paul Ruhter/Billings Mustangs



Luke Berryhill spent the 2019 college season at the University of South Carolina before being drafted by the Reds in the 13th round. After years of contending for a national title (and winning two in a row in 2010-11), South Carolina struggled to a 28-28 record last spring, their first non-winning season of the century. Still, Berryhill faced the strongest level of competition that college baseball can offer, playing in the Southeastern Conference, which placed eight teams in the final top-20 national rankings including the national champion, Vanderbilt. Berryhill played in all 56 of his team's games, batting .271 with 12 home runs and a .538 slugging percentage. He served as South Carolina's cleanup hitter. Berryhill's teammate, outfielder T.J. Hopkins, was also drafted by the Reds and could play for the Dragons in 2020 as well.

After playing his final 2019 college game on May 21, Berryhill did not sign with the Reds until just before the deadline on July 12. He was assigned to Greeneville and played in his first professional game on July 16. He appeared in just eight games with the G-Reds, batting .240 with a home run. The long layoff between his last college game and first pro game, along with the extremely small sample size, should be taken into account when looking at his first-year numbers.

Berryhill is a native of Atlanta and played at River Ridge High School, where he was selected Cherokee County Player of the Year in a strong baseball area that has also produced former Dragons Tyler Stephenson and Taylor Trammell. Berryhill's high school success led to his selection for the prestigious Perfect Game All-American Classic at Petco Park in San Diego in 2015. An opposing pitcher in that game was a young Nick Lodolo, the Reds #1 draft pick four years later (see the Lodolo connection below to the third catcher in this preview, James Free). Berryhill played a season at Georgia Southern University and one year of junior college baseball before transferring to South Carolina. He is considered to be a good athlete and an above-average runner, unusual qualities for a catcher. He played some outfield at South Carolina.

James Free signed with the Reds as an undrafted free agent last June after a successful three-year career at the University of the Pacific. The fact that Free was not selected in the 40-round draft was a surprise to some; he was projected by Baseball America as a player who would be taken in the first 10 rounds. Like Yang and Berryhill, Free faced high-level competition in college, playing in the West Coast Conference. That conference includes several traditionally-strong programs that have produced Dragons players including Pepperdine (Zach Vincej), University of San Diego (Jay Schuyler), and Loyola Marymount (Cassidy Brown and Jeff Stevens).

Free had a huge freshman season at Pacific in 2017 when he posted an OPS of over 1.000 while leading the conference in both home runs (14) and RBI (54) and batting .343 in 52 games. Those numbers earned him NCAA Freshman All-American honors. He fell off as a sophomore in 2018 to .283 with seven home runs but bounced back in 2019. As a junior last spring, he hit .335 with eight home runs in 49 games with a .541 slugging percentage.

After signing with the Reds, Free was assigned to Billings, where he played in 43 games and got off to a tremendous start to his professional career before a late-season slump weakened his final numbers. As late as August 17, Free was batting .312 and had compiled a .624 slugging percentage. He had seven home runs in 93 at-bats. Those impressive numbers came in 27 of the 43 games he would eventually appear in. But over his final 16 games, he went 9 for 62 (.145) to finish at .245, a statistic that looked nothing like what Free had produced for most of his time with the Mustangs. His final slugging percentage of .452 was the best on the team among players with at least 100 plate appearances. Free did blast a home run in Billings' three-game playoff series. Free started all three playoff games and hit third in the Billings lineup, playing first base or designated hitter as Yang handled the catching duties in all three contests.

Free is a native of Walnut, California, about 25 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. He played at Damien High School and was a teammate for all four seasons with Nick Lodolo, the 2019 Dragons pitcher who was the Reds #1 draft pick last summer. Former Cardinals slugger Mark McGwire and the late former Reds pitcher Frank Pastore are also products of Damien High School. Free was a high school star and in 2015, he was selected to play in the WWBA World Championships in Jupiter, Florida, earning All-Tournament Team honors. Among his teammates was 2019 Dragons starting pitcher Lyon Richardson, who was also a high school star at the time from Florida. Baseball forms connections everywhere.

First Basemen

Candidates: Bren Spillane, Leonardo Seminati, Garrett Wolforth

Player	Age	B/T	Ht.	Wt.
Bren Spillane	23	R/R	6'4"	223
Leonardo Seminati	21	R/R	6'2"	210
Garrett Wolforth	22	S/R	6'4"	220

Bren Spillane spent part of the 2019 season with the Dragons and showed flashes of the skills that made him the 2018 Big Ten Player of the Year (and Triple Crown winner) at the University of Illinois. Unfortunately, Spillane also dealt with a rough start and a later injury that ended his season just when he was starting to play his best baseball of the year. It is possible that Spillane will return to the Dragons in 2020, at least to start the year.

In 2018 at Illinois, Spillane produced one of the best seasons in the history of the Big Ten Conference and was named national "Player of the Year" by Collegiate Baseball Newspaper, becoming the first Big Ten player to be selected to that honor in the 35-year history of the publication. Spillane led the nation in 2018 in slugging percentage (.903), OPS (1.401), and home runs per game (0.46). His slugging percentage was second best in Big Ten history and the best mark since 1987. The Reds drafted Spillane in the third round in 2018 and he spent that summer at Billings, batting .236 with five home runs in 48 games and a .439 slugging percentage.

Spillane opened the 2019 season with the Dragons but struggled to make contact. After 36 games, Spillane was batting just .150 and was transferred back to the Reds extended spring training complex in Goodyear, Arizona on May 16 for some individual work. He returned to the Dragons three weeks later. On June 26, Spillane's season turned completely around. Over the next 15 games, he batted .385, going 20 for 52. He also cut way back on his strikeout troubles that had hounded him up to that point. Spillane had struck out 88 times in 161 at-bats through his first 47 games, but over the 15-game stretch starting June 26, he cut the strikeouts to 16 in 52 at-bats. Most unfortunately, on July 17, he suffered a sprained left wrist that brought his season to an end. He finished the year with a batting average of .207 with five home runs in 62 games. If Spillane returns to the Dragons in 2020, there is obviously potential for dramatic improvement from 2019.

Leonardo Seminati is a native of Italy who has shown steady improvement since signing with the Reds as an international free agent in July of 2017. To date, the only Italian player who has ever played for the Dragons was Luca Panerati in 2011. Panerati was a relief pitcher who appeared in 17 games for the Dayton playoff team that season that also featured Billy Hamilton and Tucker Barnhart. Panerati gained attention in 2013 when he started a game for the Italian national team against Team USA in the World Baseball Classic and tossed three scoreless innings. Seminati would like to become the second Italian to play for the Dragons.

Seminati opened his professional career in 2018, splitting the season between Billings and the Arizona League Reds and batting a combined .252 with four home runs in 42 games. He spent the entire 2019 season with Billings, serving as their starting first baseman for most of the season. He batted .270 with a team-leading nine home runs in 58 games. He had a streaky year, batting .391 in June, .152 in July, .342 in August, and .105 in September. Seminati also had a home run in the third and deciding game of Billings' first round playoff series, a game the Mustangs lost to end their season. Seminati started 43 games at first base for Billings, another eight games at third base, and six games in left field.



Bren Spillane with Dayton in 2019

Garrett Wolforth was drafted by the Reds in 2019 out of NCAA Division II Nova Southeastern University, a Florida school that was a top-20 D2 program last spring. He played just one season there after spending the previous three years at Dallas Baptist University, a very strong D1 program that has been the top team in the Missouri Valley Conference in recent years. Wolforth was a catcher in college, but he did not see an inning behind the plate in the Reds system last summer. He primarily played first base with limited time in all three outfield spots and third base.

Wolforth enjoyed his best year at Dallas Baptist in 2017, his sophomore season, when he earned 1st Team All-Conference honors. He batted .289 with seven home runs in 57 games as his team won the MVC tournament and went to the NCAA Regional. His production dropped in 2018 when he batted .242 with five home runs in his third and final year at DBU. He transferred to Nova Southeastern for the 2019 season and hit .307, ranking second in the conference in home runs with 12. He posted a .585 slugging percentage in 51 games. He was named the top defensive catcher in all of D2 college baseball.

After signing with the Reds, Wolforth was assigned to Greeneville, where he played in 53 games and batted .242 with five home runs. At the end of August, the Reds moved Wolforth to the playoff-bound Billings club, where he appeared in another six games and hit .238 with one home run.

Wolforth is from the Houston, Texas suburb of Spring and played for a powerhouse high school program at Concordia Lutheran, earning 1st Team All-State honors in one of the top baseball states in the country. His pre-college background is filled with appearances in major showcase events and personal honors, including 2nd Team All-American honors from *Perfect Game* in 2015. Both of Wolforth's parents were college athletes (his mother was an All-American softball player at Nebraska), and he has been strongly credited by his coaches for his advanced understanding of the game and overall baseball intelligence. His high school coach, Rick Lynch, with over 500 career victories to his credit, called Wolforth "the most prepared player" he had ever coached in an article at *PerfectGame.org*.



Second Basemen

Tyler Callihan is one of the top infield prospects in the Reds organization and if he opens the 2020 season with the Dragons, he would probably be identified by scouting consensus as the top prospect on the Dayton roster. Callihan is a young player at age 19, less than a year removed from Providence High School in Jacksonville, Florida.

The Reds will determine whether Callihan is ready for the challenge of facing Midwest League pitching or if his development is best served by spending some time in extended spring training.

Candidates: Tyler Callihan, Jonathan Willems, Caleb Van Blake				
Player	Age	B/T	Ht.	Wt.
Tyler Callihan	19	L/R	6'1"	205
Jonathan Willems	21	R/R	5'11"	190
Caleb Van Blake	23	L/R	6'0"	195

Over the years, few hitting prospects in the Reds system with Callihan's experience level have been pushed to the Midwest League, but it certainly has happened, and there have been some positive outcomes. Specifically, this group includes players under the age of 20 who are less than one year out of high school. Those young hitters face many Midwest League hurlers who are products of strong college baseball conferences and have developed their secondary pitches to a level that is more advanced than the young hitters have seen. The group of teenage hitters who started a season with the Dragons less than a year after their final high school game includes Michael Siani in 2019, Jeter Downs in 2018, Taylor Trammell in 2017, Tyler Stephenson in 2016, Jesse Winker in 2013, and Jay Bruce in 2006. Notice that the list is limited to top-level prospects, mostly out of the first or second round of the draft. Winker handled the transition best, winning Dragons Batter of the Month in each of his first two months in the Midwest League. Some of the others struggled mightily in their first several weeks in Dayton as they made the necessary adjustments. Siani, a player who had played for Team USA in international competition as one of the top amateur players in the entire country, is a good example. After his first 38 games with the Dragons as a 19-year-old in 2019, he was batting .168. But by late May, the adjustments he made started to pay off. From May 23 through the end of the season, Siani hit .291 in 83 games.

Callihan was ranked by *Fangraphs* as the 25th best overall prospect in the 2019 draft, which would have landed him in the first round. *Perfect Game* ranked him as the 10th best high school prospect in America. Due to signability concerns (he was committed to the University of South Carolina), Callihan lasted until the third round, where the Reds were happy to take him.

The left-handed hitting Callihan opened some eyes in 2018 when he was one of eight high school players selected to compete in the Home Run Derby at the Major League All-Star Game at Nationals Park, and then blasted 21 homers in the contest to tie for fourth place (Rece Hinds, another possible 2020 Dragons infielder who will be previewed at third base, finished second). He played for Team USA in international competition in 2018, one year after Siani had played for the same team. He started all nine games at the Pan American Championships in Panama and was outstanding, batting .528 with a pair of home runs to make the All-Tournament team. Callihan was also selected to play in the 2018 Perfect Game All-American Classic at Petco Park in San Diego, an event limited to the top players in the nation. Callihan's senior season at Providence High School produced a batting average of .456 with 12 home runs and he was named the area player of the year by the *Florida Times-Union*. Callihan was also an outstanding high school student and earned numerous academic honors.

After signing with the Reds last summer, Callihan was first assigned to Greeneville. He got off to a slow start, hitting .184 in his first nine games, but he improved as the season progressed. He finished at .250 with five home runs at Greeneville and then was transferred to Billings for the final week of the regular season and playoffs. He had a big week with the Mustangs, going 8 for 20 (.400) with a home run and triple.

Entering the 2020 season, *Baseball America* ranks Callihan as the 13th best prospect in the Reds system and notes his outstanding home run power and overall hitting ability. Callihan's defensive position is still under review. He played shortstop in high school but is seen as a second baseman or third baseman as a professional. He had 31 starts at third base at Greeneville in 2019 and 19 more at second base. He was used mostly as a designated hitter in his short time with Billings and earned a playoff start at that position.

Jonathan Willems was the Dragons opening day second baseman in 2019 and remained with the club as the starter into mid-May before being sent back to extended spring training and eventually joining the Billings roster. He would be an option in Dayton in 2020 if Callihan opens the year in extended spring training (or settles in at third base instead of second).

Willems was the latest name on the growing list of Dragons players from the Caribbean island of Curacao. Previous Dragons from the same location have included Didi Gregorius, Calten Daal, and Hendrik Clementina.

Willems played in 33 of the Dragons first 39 games but could never quite get on track at the plate. His batting average peaked at .239 on April 27 and he was hitting .214 with two home runs on May 16 when the Reds promoted Brian Rey from extended spring training to replace Willems at second base. Willems went back to Goodyear for a month before the start of the Billings season.

Willems emerged as one of the best hitters in the Billings lineup and started 52 of their 76 games at second base, plus all three of their playoff games. He led the Mustangs in batting average at an even .300 but did not have a home run.



Jonathan Willems with Dayton in 2019

Caleb Van Blake was drafted by the Reds in 2019 in the 37th round out of the University of California-Davis. UC Davis is a Division I program that competes in the Big West Conference, where his team was a conference rival to Dragons catching prospect Eric Yang at UC Santa Barbara. Van Blake played four years at UC Davis, earning the majority of his team's starts by his sophomore year and then playing full-time as a junior and senior. He was a second baseman until his senior year, when he primarily played third base. He was a consistent player all three years as a starter, hitting between .256 and .264 each year with three to five home runs. As a senior, he was selected All-Big West Honorable Mention when he batted .256 with four home runs. He was a tough hitter to strike out throughout his college career, fanning 62 times in 558 at-bats.

After signing with the Reds, Van Blake was initially assigned to the team's Arizona League affiliate in Goodyear, where he dominated as one of the older players in the league. He hit .341 in 32 games, adding six home runs to tie for the team lead. When the AZL season ended, he briefly went to Greeneville for less than a week and then moved on to Billings. He struggled with those two clubs in a small sample size, going 3 for 22.

Van Blake is from the northern California city of Benicia, an adjacent town to the home of former Dragons pitcher Robert Stephenson in the San Francisco Bay area. Even as a high school player, Van Blake was praised for his versatility and ability to play anywhere on the field. Those skills could give him an opportunity to earn a utility role with the Dragons.

Shortstops

Candidates: Ivan Johnson, Quincy McAfee, Claudio Finol

Player	Age	B/T	Ht.	Wt.
Ivan Johnson	21	S/R	6'0"	190
Quincy McAfee	22	R/R	5'11"	185
Claudio Finol	19	L/R	5'11"	170

Ivan Johnson came out of Kennesaw Mountain High School in suburban Atlanta, where he was a sophomore teammate of former Dragon Tyler Stephenson during Stephenson's senior year in 2015. While Stephenson entered professional baseball right out of high school, Johnson enrolled at the University of Georgia and then transferred after one season. Johnson spent the 2019 baseball campaign at Chipola College, a powerhouse junior college program in Florida that went all the way to the national Junior College World Series with Johnson as their best hitter. Johnson played in 57 games at Chipola last spring and batted .381 with nine home runs, a .587 slugging percentage, 14 stolen bases, nearly as many walks as strikeouts, and an OPS of 1.078.



Ivan Johnson with Greeneville in 2019

Photo courtesy of Doug Gray/RedsMinorLeagues.com

The Reds drafted Johnson in the fourth round out of Chipola last June. He was assigned to Greeneville and played in 46 games. The switch-hitter batted .255 with six home runs, 11 stolen bases, and a .415 slugging percentage. He started 33 games at shortstop and another 11 at second base.

Baseball America ranks Johnson as the #23 prospect in the Reds organization. The publication says that Johnson has the ability to become a major league starting infielder. They credit his solid all-around skillset, his above average speed, and his ability to play both shortstop and second base.

Quincy McAfee was a starting middle infielder at Pepperdine for three seasons, beginning with his freshman year in 2017. The Dragons all-star shortstop in 2013, Zach Vincej, played the same position at Pepperdine five years before McAfee arrived on campus. During his time at Pepperdine, McAfee's conference rivals included 2019 Dragons catcher Jay Schuyler (University of San Diego) and possible Dragons 2020 catcher James Free (University of the Pacific). All three players were stars in the West Coast Conference. McAfee batted .310 in 2019 at Pepperdine, connecting on a pair of home runs with a .433 slugging percentage.

The Reds drafted McAfee in the 26th round last June and assigned him to Billings, where he was a key contributor to the Mustangs run to the Pioneer League playoffs. After a slow start, he caught fire in August and finished at .291 in 60 games, adding one home run. He was hitting just .214 after his first 37 games, but starting on August 9, he hit .405 over the rest of the season in 23 games. He started 29 games at shortstop, 20 at second base, and six more at third base.

McAfee had a huge prep career at Southlake High School in Houston, Texas. He hit .537 as a senior and was selected as the Texas 6A (largest schools) All-State shortstop and the Houston-area 6A Player of the Year.

Claudio Finol served as the Dragons utility infielder in 2019 for the month of April before heading back to extended spring training and then to Billings. He returned to the Dragons at the start of July and finished the year in Dayton. He played in 53 games for the Dragons, batting .218 with one home run. He started 30 games at second base, and 10 games each at shortstop and third base. In eight games at Billings, he batted .226. In 2018, Finol hit .294 without a home run in 49 games with Greeneville. Finol is a native of Venezuela who signed as a free agent with the Reds in 2016. His ability to play well at three different infield positions provides value as a utility man.

Third Basemen

Candidates: Rece Hinds, Victor Ruiz

Player	Age	B/T	Ht.	Wt.
Rece Hinds	19	R/R	6'4"	215
Victor Ruiz	20	R/R	6'1"	190



Rece Hinds, like potential Dragons infielder Tyler Callihan, was one of the top high school players in the nation in the 2019 draft class. If he begins the 2020 season with the Dragons, he would be one of the top prospects on the team. Just like Callihan, the questions regarding Hinds' assignment to the Dragons in 2020 relate not to his ability level, but to his youth and readiness to face Midwest League pitchers, many of whom have significant college experience. Even more than Callihan, who did play professionally for 10 weeks last summer in the Reds system just a few months after his high school graduation, Hinds would be on a steep learning curve. Injuries limited Hinds to just three games and eight at-bats last summer after he turned pro.

Hinds was the Reds second round draft pick in 2019, taken with the Reds next selection after they chose pitcher Nick Lodolo out of Texas Christian. Hinds was a power-hitting infielder at IMG Academy in Florida and was 18 years old when he was signed by the Reds.

Hinds is known for massive home run blasts and off-the-charts power. In 2018, both Hinds and Callihan were among eight high school players in the country to be invited to the Home Run Derby at the Major League All-Star Game at Nationals Park. It would be interesting for Dragons fans if two of the eight most highly-regarded home run hitters in the entire nation among high school talent in 2018 both wind up on the Dayton roster in 2020. As we described in our second base preview, Callihan performed very well in the contest, tying for fourth. Hinds actually finished second.

Baseball America ranks Hinds as the #11 prospect in the Reds organization, two spots ahead of Callihan. Other publications have Callihan slightly higher than Hinds. Callihan is considered the more polished hitter of the two, while Hinds is considered to have the better pure power. After the Reds drafted Hinds in the second round in 2019, they took Callihan in the third round. Both players were projected by MLB Network to go in the first round and were considered to rank among the top 10 high school hitting prospects in the country. *Baseball America* credits Hinds with "the ability to crush baseball to all fields due to sheer strength...his extreme power fits as a masher in a corner (infielder or outfielder) if he can make enough contact." Hinds certainly has the arm for third base. He was clocked at 98 mph in a throw across the infield by *Perfect Game*. They clocked the exit velocity of a ball off his bat at 101 mph, an amazing stat for a high school player.

One of the biggest days for Hinds in his amateur career came in June of 2018 at the Tournament of Stars Gold Medal Game. Another of the top showcase events of the summer featuring the top players in America, Hinds put on a show, blasting two home runs and driving in seven runs to lead his team to the gold. Hinds also started at third base for the East All-Stars in the 2018 Perfect Game All-Star Classic at Petco Park in San Diego. Callihan was his teammate in that game.

In our second base preview discussing Callihan, we detailed the challenges faced by hitters who are less than a year removed from high school in making the jump to the Midwest League. History has shown it to be a difficult transition. The Reds will determine if Hinds is best served by opening the year in extended spring training to gain experience, or by jumping right into the deep end with the Dragons.

Victor Ruiz was the starting third baseman for the Billings club that went to the playoffs in 2019. Ruiz signed with the Reds as a free agent out of Mexico three days before his 17th birthday in 2016, and he has played three seasons in the Reds system. Ruiz was a catcher in 2017-18 but converted to third base in 2019.

Ruiz played in 60 games with Billings in 2019, batting .270 with one home run. He has a career batting average of .266 with three home runs in 118 games.

There could also be a chance that the Dragons third baseman in 2019, **Juan Martinez**, could return to Dayton. Martinez played in 129 games with the Dragons, batting .238 with eight home runs.

Outfielders

Candidates: Mariel Bautista, Quin Cotton, TJ Hopkins, AJ Bumpass, Reniel Ozuna

Player	Age	B/T	Ht.	Wt.
Mariel Bautista	22	R/R	6'3"	194
Quin Cotton	22	R/R	5'11"	200
TJ Hopkins	23	R/R	6'0"	195
A.J. Bumpass	23	L/R	6'3"	195
Reniel Ozuna	21	R/R	6'2"	202

Mariel Bautista spent most of the 2019 season with the Dragons, missing four weeks at the end of the first half due to injury. He played in 103 games for the Dragons, batting .233 with eight home runs and 19 stolen bases. That season came on the heels of a monster year with Billings in 2018 when Bautista batted .330 with eight homers in just 56 games. Bautista entered the 2019 season ranked as the Reds #16 prospect by *Baseball America* and slipped to #25 entering 2020. Those are still strong rankings, considering there are more than 200 prospects in the Reds system.

The hope would be that if the super-talented Bautista returns to Dayton for a second year, he could make a big jump in performance. The gold standard for second-year improvement in Dayton from outfielders with great tools was established by Jose Siri in 2016-17. Siri hit just .145 in 27 games with the Dragons in 2016 and was shipped off to Billings before the end of May. He returned in 2017 and had arguably the greatest all-around season in Dragons history. It would not be realistic to expect any player to make the improvements that Siri made over those two seasons, but Bautista is certainly capable of playing like an all-star if he returns in 2020.

Bautista had hit at least .320 in three previous seasons in the Reds organization before 2019. His game features a combination of power and speed. *Baseball America* says that Bautista “still has plenty of high-impact tools. Evaluators are enamored with his athleticism and projectable, wiry frame. He has plus bat speed and plus raw power...he is a plus runner.” Much of that scouting report sounds like Siri.



Mariel Bautista with Dayton in 2019

Quin Cotton was drafted by the Reds in the eighth round in 2019 after his junior year at Grand Canyon University of the Western Athletic Conference (WAC). GCU has been an NCAA Division I program since 2014 and has produced some strong players, though Cotton is the first to be drafted by the Reds since the school moved up to D1. Cotton had back-to-back big seasons at Grand Canyon in 2018-19. In his sophomore year of 2018, he batted a conference-leading .390 and won the WAC Player of the Year award. In 2019, he hit .331 and was 2nd Team All-Conference. His 21 doubles ranked second in the WAC. He combined to hit nine home runs over the 2018-19 seasons in 116 games at GCU.



Quin Cotton with Billings in 2019

Photo courtesy of Paul Ruhter/Billings Mustangs

After being drafted by the Reds, Cotton was assigned to Billings and became one of the Mustangs best hitters as their starting center fielder. In 61 games, he hit .283 with four home runs and eight stolen bases as the Billings lead-off hitter. He was selected as a Pioneer League all-star. Cotton reportedly has good instincts, does the little things well, runs well, and has a strong all-around game. He might be the Dayton lead-off hitter on opening night.

TJ Hopkins was drafted by the Reds one round later than Cotton—in the same draft. He was taken in the ninth round in 2019, and then played beside Cotton in the Billings outfield. Hopkins played college baseball in the nation's top conference, the SEC, as a star at the University of South Carolina. He spent four years with the Gamecocks and was a teammate there in 2019 with potential Dragons catcher Luke Berryhill. In fact, Hopkins and Berryhill often hit back-to-back in the SC batting order. In 2019, Hopkins played in all 56 South Carolina games and led the team in numerous categories. He hit .285 with 11 home runs, 18 stolen bases, a .519 slugging percentage, and an OPS of .882.

At Billings, Hopkins played in 54 games and batted .267 with five home runs and 12 stolen bases. His 19 extra base hits were second on the team to Cotton's 20.

AJ Bumpass was the best hitter on the University of Cincinnati team that won the American Athletic Conference championship in 2019, Bumpass' senior year. He led UC to their first NCAA tournament berth since 1974. He was picked as the Most Outstanding Player of the AAC tournament and then had a game for the ages at the NCAA Regional when he went 5 for 5 against defending national champion Oregon State, including a home run and a ninth inning RBI triple that brought in the eventual winning run as UC completed a stunning upset on OSU's home field. Bumpass finished the year with a .290 batting average while leading the team in home runs (8), slugging percentage (.512), and OPS (.881). Bumpass broke the conference record for career triples over his four seasons at UC.

The Reds drafted Bumpass in the 39th round (the next-to-last round of the draft) and assigned him to Greeneville, where he played for 2020 Dragons manager Gookie Dawkins. He played in 41 games last summer for the G-Reds and batted .250 with five home runs. His .805 OPS was second best on the team. Bumpass played both left field and right field at Greeneville.

Reniel Ozuna was a member of the Dragons opening day roster in 2019 and remained with the club through the end of May, starting 35 games in right field. He was never able to get on track as a hitter and was batting just .157 with two home runs when he was reassigned to extended spring training. When Billings opened their season on June 14, Ozuna was in the #3 spot in the batting order playing right field. He played in 62 games for the Mustangs and batted .235 with five home runs. The Billings outfield for all three of their playoff games featured Hopkins in left, Cotton in center, and Ozuna in right.

Ozuna was signed as an international free agent from the Dominican Republic by the Reds in 2015. He has some talent but endured some struggles in 2019. Ozuna will be a candidate to return to Dayton in 2020.

Right-Handed Starting Pitchers

Candidates: Noah Davis, Miguel Medrano, Graham Ashcraft, Jhon De Jesus, Spencer Stockton, Jason Parker, Carlos Carreno.

Player	Age	Ht.	Wt.
Noah Davis	22	6'2"	195
Miguel Medrano	22	6'0"	165
Graham Ashcraft	22	6'2"	217
Jhon De Jesus	23	6'4"	203
Carlos Carreno	21	6'2"	174
Spencer Stockton	23	6'3"	210
Jason Parker	22	5'11"	197



Noah Davis would be considered by many observers to be the best prospect on the list of possible Dayton starting pitchers. *Baseball America* has Davis ranked as the Reds #15 prospect, higher than such notable arms as Reds 2019 Minor League Pitcher of the Year Packy Naughton and Triple-A pitcher Tejay Antone, who was added to the Reds 40-man roster over the winter.

The Reds drafted Davis in the 11th round in 2018, knowing that he would miss all of that season and part of 2019 after undergoing Tommy John elbow surgery. Davis was a college teammate at UC Santa Barbara of potential Dragons 2020 catcher Eric Yang, who caught Davis at Billings last summer after Davis returned to the mound following his rehab assignment. Davis made 30 starts at UCSB, serving as a full-time starting pitcher as a freshman and sophomore before being limited to eight innings as a junior due to the injury. He posted a career record of 15-9 with a 4.58 ERA.

Davis was on the mound for some big games in college and high school. As a freshman at UC Santa Barbara in 2016, he was the team's #2 starting pitcher behind ace Shane Bieber, who has won 26 Major League games with the Cleveland Indians over the last two seasons. Davis helped UCSB to its first-ever trip to the College World Series as the team finished the year as the #7 team in the nation. Davis was the starting pitcher for their second game of the 2016 College World Series as his team beat powerful Miami. Davis allowed just one run on two hits over six innings in that game. Davis returned to UCSB in 2017 and was his team's top starter, going 7-4 with a 4.63 ERA. At Huntington Beach High School, Davis was a California All-State selection and pitched his team to a state championship.

After being drafted by the Reds in 2018, Davis battled back from reconstructive elbow surgery to return to the mound by June of 2019. He made five short rehab starts with the AZL Reds and then joined the Billings roster on July 28. He was limited to a maximum of 75 pitches at Billings but made eight starts, posting a fine ERA of 2.10. Assuming there are no further setbacks, Davis should be on a normal pitching program in 2020 and would look like a solid choice as the Dragons opening day starter.

Miguel Medrano was the ace of the Billings staff last season and was selected as the 2019 Pioneer League Pitcher of the Year. His ERA of 3.13 would easily have led the league, but he finished literally two-thirds of an inning short of the minimum number of innings to qualify. Medrano walked just 14 batters in 60.1 innings while striking out 66. In four of his 14 starts, he did not allow a run. He did not allow more than three runs in any start. Medrano was originally signed as an international free agent by the Texas Rangers and spent two years in their system before being traded to the Reds in exchange for international spending cap space. (These types of trades relate to the salary cap that every team is limited by in relation to their ability to sign international players. In these trades, no money changes hands. One team receives “cap space” from another club and gives up a minor league player in return. The Reds have made several similar deals within the last four years).

Graham Ashcraft was the Reds sixth round draft pick in 2019 out of the University of Alabama-Birmingham, becoming the highest-drafted player in UAB history. After numerous reports that Ashcraft’s fastball had reached 99 mph in high school in Huntsville, Alabama, he started his college career at Mississippi State in 2017. But after undergoing two hip surgeries and missing the 2018 season, he transferred to UAB. He was used as both a starter and reliever in 2019, going 2-5 with a 5.63 ERA.

The Reds assigned Ashcraft to Greeneville where he made 13 starts, posting a 4.53 ERA with 60 strikeouts in 54 innings. The mediocre ERA was driven up by one bad start in which he was charged with 10 earned runs. Without the one rough performance, his ERA for the year with Greeneville would have been a sparkling 2.96. His best start came July 18 when he fired five no-hit innings and struck out six. Overall, he allowed one earned run or less in eight of his 13 starts. Now fully healthy, Ashcraft would be a strong element of the Dragons rotation.

Jhon De Jesus spent most of the 2019 season in the Dragons starting rotation. He made 23 starts in his return to action after missing the entire 2018 season due to an injury. De Jesus, a native of the Dominican Republic, has one of the best arms in the Reds system, but he is still looking to reach his potential.

De Jesus opened the 2019 season with the Dragons with back-to-back scoreless starts, tossing a combined 10 shutout innings while allowing a total of four hits. But he struggled over most of his remaining starts, finishing the year with a record of 2-13 with a 5.08 ERA. His velocity on his fastball reached only the high 80’s in some innings but topped out at 97 mph in others. It is possible that the Reds will move De Jesus on to Daytona to see if the increase in competition brings out an improved performance. On the other hand, a return to the Dragons and a familiar situation that would allow him to achieve success and build confidence could also be a consideration.

Carlos Carreno is regarded as the pitcher with the best pure stuff of anyone on this list. He pitched at Billings last season and struggled, but one element of Minor League Baseball that has been consistent for decades is that potential does create opportunity. Carreno made 15 starts for Billings and posted a record of 4-6 with a 5.37 ERA. The season did mark an improvement for Carreno over his 2018 season, one level lower in the Reds system with the AZL Reds, when he went 2-6 with a 6.75 ERA.



Jhon De Jesus with Dayton in 2019

Spencer Stockton was one of several outstanding additions from independent professional baseball by the Reds during the summer of 2019. The Reds acquired Stockton after he had made seven starts for the Utica Unicorns of the United Shore Professional Baseball League, an entry-level independent league in the Detroit area. Three days after Stockton had played in the league's all-star game as a starting pitcher, the Reds signed him to a Minor League contract. Stockton's 2019 season was an amazing one, as he climbed from the USPBL, making his last start on June 27 against a team called the Westside Woolly Mammoths, all the way to becoming the Cincinnati Reds Minor League Pitcher of the Month in August.

Stockton had played four years of college baseball at Jacksonville University in the Atlantic Sun Conference, posting strong numbers every year. In 2018, he helped his team earn a bid in the NCAA tournament and was Jacksonville's starting pitcher against the University of Florida, the Regional's #1 seed. He finished the 2018 season with an 8-6 record and a 3.59 ERA, but he was not drafted. His time in the United Shore Professional Baseball League led to the chance with the Reds.

Stockton initially was sent to the AZL Reds in Goodyear, Arizona and made six appearances there including four as a starter, going 3-1 with a 2.14 ERA. He was promoted to Greeneville in early August and made four appearances with the G-Reds, going 2-1 with a 1.96 ERA. Overall in August, Stockton made six appearances in the Reds system, posting an ERA of 1.50 as he allowed just six runs in 36 innings. Those numbers earned him the Reds Minor League Pitcher of the Month honor for August.

Jason Parker was drafted by the Reds in the 16th round in 2019 out of North Carolina State University. He did not pitch professionally after signing with the Reds. At NC State, where Parker spent just one season after two years at the junior college level, he led the team in starts in 2019 with 16. Parker posted a 4.38 ERA in 76 innings, helping his team to a berth in the NCAA tournament. He was the starting pitcher in the Wolfpack's loss to East Carolina in the Greenville Regional. Parker showcased his skills when he beat then #1 Florida State on March 15, firing seven scoreless innings and striking out 10.

Parker's ERA over his first eight starts in 2019 at North Carolina State was 1.98. Over his final eight starts, his ERA was 7.20. Those numbers, coupled with the fact that Parker did not pitch at all after he signed with the Reds in June, could indicate any number of conclusions. Hopefully, Parker is fully healthy in 2020 and can bounce back to his first-half form from 2019, when he was one of the top pitchers in one of the top college baseball conferences in the country.



Left-Handed Starting Pitchers

Candidates: Jacob Heatherly, Jose Salvador, Evan Kravetz, Jacques Pucheu.

Player	Age	Ht.	Wt.
Jacob Heatherly	21	6'1"	215
Jose Salvador	20	6'2"	170
Evan Kravetz	23	6'8"	240
Jacques Pucheu	23	6'2"	210

Jacob Heatherly is the highest-drafted player of anyone expected to be in competition for a job on the Reds pitching staff in 2020. He was the Reds third round pick in 2017 out of Cullman (Ala.) High School. Heatherly enters 2020 ranked as the #29 prospect in the Reds organization by *Baseball America*.

Heatherly opened the 2019 season in the Dragons starting rotation before going on the injured list on April 20, and he did not pitch again for the remainder of the year. Heatherly made four starts for the

Dragons, the last of which lasted just nine pitches due to injury. The first three starts featured some inconsistency, which was to be expected for a young pitcher in his first month of full-season professional baseball. His third start was by far his best when he fired five shutout innings against Fort Wayne to earn a win, allowing just two hits and no walks with five strikeouts. But the next start lasted just three batters and he was never able to get back on the mound.

Heatherly had a tremendous prep career and was regarded as one of the top high school pitchers in the nation in 2017. As a senior at Cullman High School, Heatherly went 10-1 with a 1.11 ERA and struck out 116 batters in 70 innings. *Baseball America* selected him as a Third Team High School All-American, meaning he was one of the top 15 high school pitchers in the country. *MLB.com* ranked him as the 25th best pitching prospect (high school and college) in the 2017 draft. He played in some of the same national showcase events as former Reds pitcher Hunter Greene in the same high school class.

Jose Salvador is a hard-throwing 20-year-old from the Dominican Republic with big potential. He was signed by the Reds in 2017 and opened his career the next summer, posting exceptional numbers with the Reds Dominican Summer League club. He made 12 starts and finished the 2018 season with a sparkling ERA of 1.18. He completely dominated the competition in his league as opposing batters combined to hit just .155 against him. He walked 20 and struck out 72 in 53 innings.

In 2019, Salvador skipped over the Arizona League and was assigned to Greeneville, a big jump in competition. His ERA after his first four starts was 7.47, but he was strong the rest of the way, producing a 3.58 ERA over his remaining seven starts. He finished with an ERA of 5.05. On August 20, the Reds promoted Salvador to the Billings club that was headed to the playoffs and he made three regular season starts with the Mustangs, posting a 3.86 ERA. At that point, the confidence in Salvador was high enough that he was sent to the mound to start the third and deciding game of Billings' first round playoff series on September 10. His start lasted just one inning because of rain, but it was a good inning as Salvador gave up a lead-off single and then struck out the next three batters to strand the runner. The game was suspended and picked up the next afternoon as Billings suffered a 6-4 loss to end their season. If Salvador can have a strong year in Dayton in 2020, he will jump onto the Reds top prospects list.



Jacob Heatherly with Dayton in 2019

Evan Kravetz was the Reds fifth round draft pick in 2019 out of Rice University, where he had been a teammate of 2019 Dragons starting pitcher Ricky Salinas (former Dragon Austin Orewiler's final year at Rice was the season prior to Kravetz's arrival). Kravetz spent four years at Rice, working as a reliever for the first three seasons before enjoying a strong senior year in 2019 as a starter. He earned 2nd Team Conference USA in 2019 when he made 14 starts and went 6-2 with a 3.24 ERA. His secondary numbers were outstanding. In 81 innings he gave up just 58 hits and struck out 108. His best game came against Middle Tennessee State when he earned national College Baseball Pitcher of the Week honors after striking out 13 batters in a one-hit shutout over seven innings.

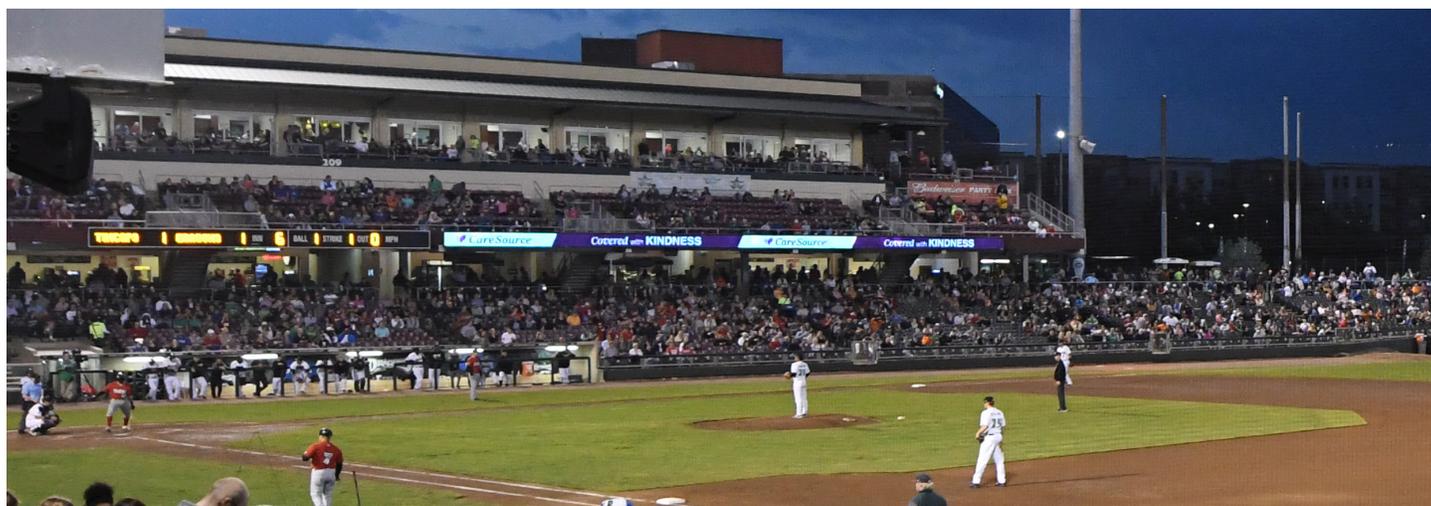
Kravetz is a native of the Miami, Florida area and was selected 1st Team All-Miami/Dade County as a high school senior in 2015. His college choices came down to Miami and Rice and he decided upon the Houston school. Kravetz already has some Ohio connections. He played for the Cincinnati-based Midland Redskins at the 2014 WWBA World Championships.

After the Reds drafted Kravetz last June, he threw just one inning with Greeneville (a perfect inning) before being shut down for the year. The decision might have been related to Kravetz's heavy workload at Rice last spring when he had seven starts in which he threw over 100 pitches and two more with at least 98. If Kravetz comes to Dayton, he will match Logan Ondrusek for the distinction of being the tallest player in Dragons history, at six-foot eight.

Jacques Pucheu is another member of the outstanding class of Reds signees out of professional independent baseball last summer. Pucheu, a native of Gulfport, Mississippi, was undrafted after a record-setting career at Austin Peay State University last June before briefly joining the Evansville Otters of the independent Frontier League. The Reds purchased Pucheu's contract from Evansville on June 22, 2019, and he impressed in Greeneville later in the summer.

After one year in junior college, Pucheu spent his remaining three years of college baseball at Austin Peay in the Ohio Valley Conference. His best year came as a senior in 2019 when he went 8-4 with a 3.07 ERA to earn 1st Team All-OVC. He was not drafted last June and signed with Evansville, where the Otters have been a strong source of talent for the Reds over the last two years. In 2018, the Reds acquired Patrick McGuff, the former Sinclair College star, from Evansville and assigned him to the Dragons. In 2019, Pucheu and starting pitcher Randy Wynne were both acquired by the Reds from Evansville, and Wynne actually posted the Dragons highest single-game strikeout total from all of last season after arriving in Dayton.

Pucheu was initially sent to the Arizona League Reds in Goodyear, where he made 11 appearances including three starts, producing an ERA of 4.08. He was promoted to Greeneville in mid-August and made four appearances with the G-Reds including two starts, allowing just three runs in 18 innings for an ERA of 1.50. His best outing came August 23 when he fired seven shutout innings, allowing just four hits and one walk with nine strikeouts.



Relief Pitchers

Candidates: Patrick Raby, Jerry D'Andrea, Jake Stevenson, Johnnie Schneider, Ryan Dunne, Ian Koch, Omar Conoropo, Tyler Garbee, Tanner Cooper, JC Keys, Francis Peguero, Frainger Aranguren, Jeffry Nino, Pedro Garcia.

(Candidates listed as starting pitchers could also be in the competition for reliever roles)

Player	L/R	Age	Ht.	Wt.
Patrick Raby	RHP	22	6'3"	230
Jerry D'Andrea	LHP	23	6'1"	192
Jake Stevenson	RHP	23	6'4"	225
Johnnie Schneider	RHP	22	6'5"	180
Ryan Dunne	RHP	25	6'3"	220
Ian Koch	RHP	22	6'4"	220
Omar Conoropo	LHP	21	5'10"	165
Tyler Garbee	RHP	23	6'3"	210
Tanner Cooper	RHP	20	6'3"	215
J.C. Keys	RHP	23	5'10"	173
Francis Peguero	RHP	22	6'1"	185
Frainger Aranguren	RHP	23	6'2"	190
Jeffry Nino	RHP	23	6'4"	170
Pedro Garcia	RHP	25	5'11"	220



When it comes to having an impressive personal history, it would be difficult for any Midwest League pitcher to match that of **Patrick Raby**. He joined the Reds as a 17th round draft pick in 2019 after a great career at Vanderbilt University, the 2019 NCAA national champions. Raby left Vanderbilt as the all-time career leader in victories for the Commodores, going 32-11 in four years. He had more wins than legendary former Vanderbilt pitchers David Price and Sonny Gray. His career ERA of 2.98 is ninth best in school history, and his strikeout total ranks eighth. In 2019, as Vanderbilt went all the way to the College World Series title, Raby went 10-1 with a 2.82 ERA. He made eight starts against ranked opponents. In nine of his 15 total starts, he allowed no runs or one run. Raby was a freshman All-American in 2016 when he went 7-1 with a 2.61 ERA, and he followed that up in 2017 by going 10-4, 2.73. He was 5-5, 3.57 as a junior in '18.

Raby also had tremendous success at Farragut High School in Knoxville, Tennessee, where his teammate for two seasons was former Dragon Nick Senzel. For three straight years, Raby was the starting pitcher in the Tennessee AAA state championship game. His team won the title in 2014, his junior year. He was a three-time all-state selection and won 35 games in his high school career.

For whatever reason, whether it was a tired arm or an injury, Raby struggled mightily after joining the Reds organization last summer. He pitched in 12 games between Greeneville and Billings and gave up 21 runs in 20.2 innings. His ERA was 8.47. Raby's struggles may have actually traced back to his last few games of the 2019 college season, where his performance showed a drop-off. Raby's first six starts in 2019 at Vanderbilt produced a 0.57 ERA and a 4-0 record. A return to form for Raby would make him a key member of the Dayton pitching staff in 2020.

Jake Stevenson was the Reds 10th round draft pick in 2019 out of the University of Minnesota. He spent four years with the Golden Gophers, making 48 appearances including 13 starts. As a senior in 2019, he pitched in 20 games (three starts), posting a 6.28 ERA. His downfall was a high number of walks (30 in 38.2 innings) but he countered that with 45 strikeouts. After signing with the Reds, he was assigned to Billings and was one of two pitchers used in a closer role by the Mustangs. In 18 games, he had a 3.10 ERA with five saves (his ERA entering his final game of the year was 1.96). In 20.1 innings he posted a great strikeout total with 31, but he walked 14. If Stevenson can demonstrate improved command and cut down on the walks, he has the arm to be a quality pitcher.



Jake Stevenson with Billings in 2019

Photo courtesy of Paul Ruhter/Billings Mustangs

Left-hander **Jerry D'Andrea** had some outstanding performances with the Dragons in 2019, appearing in 30 games out of the Dayton bullpen. While D'Andrea was victimized by a few bad outings late in the year that drove his final ERA up to 5.12, his strikeout totals told the tale of how dominant he could be. He struck out 72 batters in just 51 innings, averaging 12.71 strikeouts per nine innings. He was at his best during a week in mid-July when he made three appearances and fired nine shut-out innings, allowing only two hits. As late as July 24, his ERA for the year stood at 3.19, but a rough month of August gave his final stats a rather misleading impression of how effective he could be.

D'Andrea spent four seasons at NCAA Division III Ramapo College in New Jersey and had an excellent career ERA of 2.78 in 50 games (23 starts). He signed with the Reds in 2018 as an undrafted free agent.

Johnnie Schneider was the Reds 29th round draft pick in 2018 out of Palm Beach Atlantic University, an NCAA Division II program. He was the first PBA player to be drafted since Thomas Piazza (brother of Mike) in 2003. Schneider played at two different junior colleges before spending one year at Palm Beach Atlantic. After signing with the Reds, he pitched for Greeneville in 2018, going 2-4 with a 5.61 ERA in 15 games. He improved with Billings in 2019, going 3-2 with a 3.34 ERA in 22 games. All 37 of his career appearances in the Reds system have come out of the bullpen.

Ryan Dunne was also a member of the Billings bullpen in 2019. He pitched in 23 games, going 6-4 with a 3.98 ERA. He struck out 46 batters in 32.1 innings and allowed just 23 hits with an opponent's batting average of .207. He also pitched with Billings in 2018, posting a solid ERA of 2.66. In his two years with the Mustangs covering 55.1 innings, opponents hit just .194 against him. Dunne was signed by the Reds as an undrafted free agent in 2018 out of Western Illinois University.

Ian Koch was Dunne's teammate at Western Illinois and also signed with the Reds as an undrafted free agent in the summer of 2018. Koch pitched in 15 games for Billings last season, going 5-0 with a 3.37 ERA.

Omar Conoropo also pitched for Billings in 2019. He made 16 appearances (three starts) and posted an ERA of 3.36. He has shown excellent control over his last two seasons in the Reds organization, issuing only 22 walks in 99.1 innings with 95 strikeouts. He is a native of Venezuela.

Tyler Garbee was an effective pitcher with Greeneville in the Reds system in 2019 after being drafted earlier in the summer in the 19th round. Garbee opened his college career at the University of Pittsburgh for two seasons, where he was a teammate of 2019 Dragons reliever Matt Pidich. Garbee transferred to NCAA Division II Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania for the 2018-19 seasons, going a combined 14-4 with a 3.16 ERA in 33 games including 23 starts. After signing with the Reds, Garbee made his first appearance with Greeneville on June 19, but he did not allow his first run until exactly one month later, July 19. He opened his career with a 17-inning scoreless streak, and he gave up only two runs in his first 27 innings. He had some rough outings in August and finished the year with a 2-2 record and a 3.83 ERA. He walked only 11 batters in 47 innings.

Tanner Cooper entered the Reds organization after a starring role as a dominant two-way player in junior college. Cooper began his college career in 2018 as an infielder at Stony Brook University, an NCAA Division I program. Stony Brook is remembered for its shocking run to the 2012 College World Series, led by Travis Janowski, a first round draft pick by the Padres that summer who is now with the Reds. Cooper played only briefly at Stony Brook and transferred to Finger Lakes Community College in New York for the 2019 season. At Finger Lakes, he hit .411 with a club-leading eight home runs and also served as his team's best pitcher. He led the nation in strikeouts with 136 in 72.1 innings and posted an ERA of 1.62. He was picked as the conference and region player of the year. The Reds drafted Cooper in the 35th round and assigned him to Greeneville, where he worked exclusively as a pitcher. He was very effective with the G-Reds, posting a 2.21 ERA in 15 relief appearances. He actually surrendered three runs in his first inning as a professional and then produced a 1.51 ERA over the remainder of the season.

J.C. Keys was drafted by the Reds in the 23rd round in 2019 out of the University of Southern Mississippi. He spent four years at USM, pitching in 63 games (13 starts). In his freshman and sophomore years, he was also used as a pinch runner and late-inning defensive replacement as an outfielder. His best season on the mound came as a senior in 2019 when he made 22 relief appearances, posting an ERA of 4.65 with 49 strikeouts and only 21 hits allowed in 31 innings. Keys played for one of the top high school programs in Mississippi, Oak Grove in Hattiesburg, where his team won the state championship in his junior year and was the runner-up the next season. He was 1st Team All-State as a senior, going 10-2 with a 1.64 ERA. Keys was also a quarterback on the football team in high school. After signing with the Reds, he went to Greeneville and saw limited game action, working 14.1 innings with a 3.77 ERA. He struck out 21 hitters and walked only seven.

Francis Peguero spent the 2019 season with Billings and led the team in saves with six. He made 22 relief appearances, posting a 4.00 ERA. Peguero had the best strikeout-per-inning ratio of anyone on the team, notching 45 strikeouts in 27 innings while walking only four. Peguero is a native of the Dominican Republic.

Frainger Aranguren was also a part of the Billings bullpen group in 2019 and had a good season. In 20 games, he had a 3.16 ERA and gave up only six walks in 31.1 innings. He has a 3.08 career ERA in the Reds system in three years, all at the Short-Season level. He signed out of Venezuela.

Jeffry Nino also pitched out of the Billings bullpen in 2019, working in 19 games with a fine ERA of 2.45. He struck out 39 batters in 25.2 innings. Nino, a native of the nation of Colombia, has already spent five seasons in the Reds system including three years in the Dominican Summer League.

Pedro Garcia helped Georgia Gwinnett College to the 2019 NAIA World Series, going 7-2 with a 3.41 ERA last spring. Two of Garcia's teammates were drafted, but he signed with the Reds as an undrafted free agent. He initially went to the AZL Reds in Goodyear, throwing 14.1 innings without allowing an earned run in five games. He appeared in one game during the final series of the Dragons 2019 season, retiring all four batters he faced on August 31 against West Michigan.

DRAGONS 2020 MIDWEST LEAGUE SCHEDULE

(All Times are Eastern Daylight Time)

Day	Date	Opponent	Time	Day	Date	Opponent	Time
Thursday	April 9	Great Lakes	7:00	Thursday	June 25	@Bowling Green	7:35
Friday	April 10	Great Lakes	7:00	Friday	June 26	@Bowling Green	7:35
Saturday	April 11	Great Lakes	2:00	Saturday	June 27	@Bowling Green	7:35
Sunday	April 12	Off Day		Sunday	June 28	@Bowling Green	3:05
Monday	April 13	@Fort Wayne	6:05	Monday	June 29	Fort Wayne	7:00
Tuesday	April 14	@Fort Wayne	6:05	Tuesday	June 30	Fort Wayne	7:00
Wednesday	April 15	@Fort Wayne	11:05 am	Wednesday	July 1	Fort Wayne	7:00
Thursday	April 16	@Lansing	6:05	Thursday	July 2	Bowling Green	7:00
Friday	April 17	@Lansing	6:05	Friday	July 3	Bowling Green	7:00
Saturday	April 18	@Lansing	6:05	Saturday	July 4	@Bowling Green	7:35
Sunday	April 19	@Lansing	1:05	Sunday	July 5	@Bowling Green	6:05
Monday	April 20	Bowling Green	7:00	Monday	July 6	Off Day	
Tuesday	April 21	Bowling Green	7:00	Tuesday	July 7	@Fort Wayne	7:05
Wednesday	April 22	Bowling Green	7:00	Wednesday	July 8	@Fort Wayne	12:05
Thursday	April 23	Lake County	7:00	Thursday	July 9	@Fort Wayne	7:05
Friday	April 24	Lake County	7:00	Friday	July 10	Lake County	7:00
Saturday	April 25	Lake County	2:00	Saturday	July 11	Lake County	7:00
Sunday	April 26	Lake County	2:00	Sunday	July 12	Lake County	2:00
Monday	April 27	Off Day		Monday	July 13	Lake County	7:00
Tuesday	April 28	@Burlington	7:30	Tuesday	July 14	Off Day	
Wednesday	April 29	@Burlington	7:30	Wednesday	July 15	@Beloit	7:30
Thursday	April 30	@Burlington	7:30	Thursday	July 16	@Beloit	7:30
Friday	May 1	@Clinton	7:30	Friday	July 17	@Beloit	7:30
Saturday	May 2	@Clinton	6:00	Saturday	July 18	@Wisconsin	7:35
Sunday	May 3	@Clinton	3:00	Sunday	July 19	@Wisconsin	2:05
Monday	May 4	Cedar Rapids	7:00	Monday	July 20	@Wisconsin	1:05
Tuesday	May 5	Cedar Rapids	7:00	Tuesday	July 21	Quad Cities	7:00
Wednesday	May 6	Cedar Rapids	7:00	Wednesday	July 22	Quad Cities	7:00
Thursday	May 7	Peoria	7:00	Thursday	July 23	Quad Cities	7:00
Friday	May 8	Peoria	7:00	Friday	July 24	Kane County	7:00
Saturday	May 9	Peoria	7:00	Saturday	July 25	Kane County	7:00
Sunday	May 10	Off Day		Sunday	July 26	Kane County	2:00
Monday	May 11	@Lake County	6:30	Monday	July 27	Off Day	
Tuesday	May 12	@Lake County	6:30	Tuesday	July 28	@Fort Wayne	7:05
Wednesday	May 13	@Lake County	6:30	Wednesday	July 29	@Fort Wayne	7:05
Thursday	May 14	@Great Lakes	6:05	Thursday	July 30	@Fort Wayne	7:05
Friday	May 15	@Great Lakes	6:05	Friday	July 31	South Bend	7:00
Saturday	May 16	@Great Lakes	2:05	Saturday	August 1	South Bend	7:00
Sunday	May 17	Lake County	4:00	Sunday	August 2	South Bend	2:00
Monday	May 18	Lake County	7:00	Monday	August 3	Off Day	
Tuesday	May 19	Lake County	7:00	Tuesday	August 4	Great Lakes	7:00
Wednesday	May 20	@Lansing	7:05	Wednesday	August 5	Great Lakes	7:00
Thursday	May 21	@Lansing	7:05	Thursday	August 6	Great Lakes	7:00
Friday	May 22	@Lansing	7:05	Friday	August 7	@South Bend	7:05
Saturday	May 23	West Michigan	7:00	Saturday	August 8	@South Bend	7:05
Sunday	May 24	West Michigan	7:00	Sunday	August 9	@South Bend	2:05
Monday	May 25	West Michigan	2:00	Monday	August 10	@Great Lakes	7:05
Tuesday	May 26	South Bend	7:00	Tuesday	August 11	@Great Lakes	7:05
Wednesday	May 27	South Bend	7:00	Wednesday	August 12	@Great Lakes	7:05
Thursday	May 28	South Bend	7:00	Thursday	August 13	Bowling Green	7:00
Friday	May 29	@West Michigan	6:35	Friday	August 14	Bowling Green	7:00
Saturday	May 30	@West Michigan	6:35	Saturday	August 15	Bowling Green	7:00
Sunday	May 31	@West Michigan	2:00	Sunday	August 16	Bowling Green	2:00
Monday	June 1	Off Day		Monday	August 17	Off Day	
Tuesday	June 2	@Fort Wayne	7:05	Tuesday	August 18	West Michigan	7:00
Wednesday	June 3	@Fort Wayne	7:05	Wednesday	August 19	West Michigan	7:00
Thursday	June 4	@Fort Wayne	7:05	Thursday	August 20	West Michigan	7:00
Friday	June 5	West Michigan	7:00	Friday	August 21	@Lansing	7:05
Saturday	June 6	West Michigan	7:00	Saturday	August 22	@Lansing	7:05
Sunday	June 7	West Michigan	2:00	Sunday	August 23	@Lansing	1:05
Monday	June 8	@Bowling Green	7:35	Monday	August 24	@Lansing	7:05
Tuesday	June 9	@Bowling Green	7:35	Tuesday	August 25	@West Michigan	7:05
Wednesday	June 10	@Bowling Green	1:05	Wednesday	August 26	@West Michigan	7:05
Thursday	June 11	Lansing	7:00	Thursday	August 27	@West Michigan	7:05
Friday	June 12	Lansing	7:00	Friday	August 28	Great Lakes	7:00
Saturday	June 13	Lansing	7:00	Saturday	August 29	Great Lakes	7:00
Sunday	June 14	Lansing	2:00	Sunday	August 30	Great Lakes	2:00
Monday	June 15	Fort Wayne	7:00	Monday	August 31	Great Lakes	7:00
Tuesday	June 16	Fort Wayne	7:00	Tuesday	Sept. 1	Bowling Green	7:00
Wednesday	June 17	Fort Wayne	7:00	Wednesday	Sept. 2	Bowling Green	7:00
Thursday	June 18	@South Bend	7:05	Thursday	Sept. 3	Bowling Green	7:00
Friday	June 19	@South Bend	7:05	Friday	Sept. 4	@Lake County	7:00
Saturday	June 20	@South Bend	7:05	Saturday	Sept. 5	@Lake County	7:00
Sunday	June 21	@South Bend	2:05	Sunday	Sept. 6	@Lake County	6:00
June 22-24: All-Star Break				Monday	Sept. 7	@Lake County	1:00