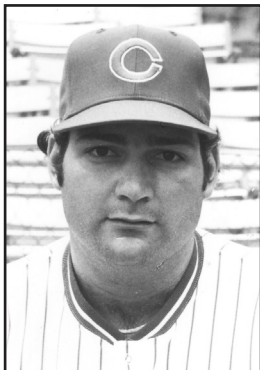


INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE HALL OF FAME

CLASS OF
2011

Steve Balboni



- FIRST BASEMAN -
Columbus 1981-83

- * IL Home Run Champion 1981, 1982
- * 1981 IL Postseason All-Star
- * Clippers All-time Home Run Leader

Steve Balboni entered the International League in 1981 with a ton of expectations. The former All-American from Eckerd College in Florida had been selected by the Yankees in the second round of the 1978 draft. He was named Most Valuable Player of the Florida State League in 1979 and of the Southern League in 1980, having led both circuits in home runs and RBI.

Upon joining the Clippers for his third professional season, Balboni continued to display the power that earned him the nickname "Bye Bye". In 125 games, Balboni slugged 33 long balls and drove in 98 runs, both International League bests. Columbus won the pennant by 5.0 games before going on to defeat Rochester and Richmond in the Governors' Cup playoffs.

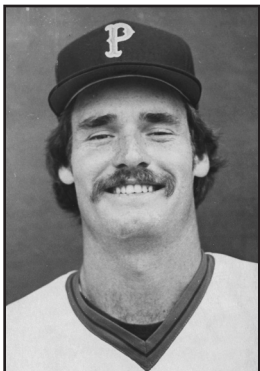
The next season Balboni nearly matched his incredible power numbers despite playing in 42 fewer games. His 32 home runs were again enough to pace the League while Balboni added 86 RBI and a .284 batting average before receiving a promotion to New York.

Back in Columbus for much of the 1983 campaign, Balboni cemented his legacy as one of the great power hitters in League history. He crushed 27 more home runs to bring his career total with the Clippers to 92, still the franchise record. The Columbus team won another pennant in 1983, Balboni's last season in the International League.

Balboni enjoyed a distinguished tenure as a Major League player, seeing action in eleven seasons with the Yankees, Royals, Mariners, and Rangers. He hit 181 big league home runs, highlighted by the franchise-record 36 homers he hit for Kansas City during the 1985 World Championship season.

His achievements in the International League have endured long past his retirement. Balboni was inducted into the Columbus Baseball Hall of Fame. He is also the only player in IL history to homer twice in an inning on two separate occasions. The first instance came on July 6, 1981 against Rochester, and then on June 28 of 1982 he did it again at Pawtucket. In the twenty years that followed, an IL player homered twice in an inning just two times.

Wade Boggs



- THIRD BASEMAN -
Pawtucket 1980-81

- * IL Batting Champion 1981
- * .322 Lifetime Average, 105 RBI, 118 R
- * Led IL with 167 hits in 1981

Wade Boggs reached the International League in 1980 at the age of 21, where he immediately established himself as one of the best hitters in Triple-A Baseball. A ground out in his final at-bat of the 1980 season cost him the League's batting title as his .306 average was just a fraction of a point behind IL leader Dave Engle of Toledo.

Boggs would get his batting crown the next season, improving his average to .335 and leading the League with 167 hits. In another close race, he narrowly beat out Richmond's Brett Butler for the title. In addition to batting average and hits, Boggs also established career-high totals that season in doubles (41), home runs (5), RBI (60), and walks (89). He also played a key role in one of the most famous games in IL history when his PawSox defeated Cal Ripken, Jr. and the Rochester Red Wings in 33 innings, baseball's "Longest Game". After Rochester had taken a 2-1 lead in the top of the 21st, Boggs tied it with a RBI hit in the bottom of the frame to send the game towards baseball lore.

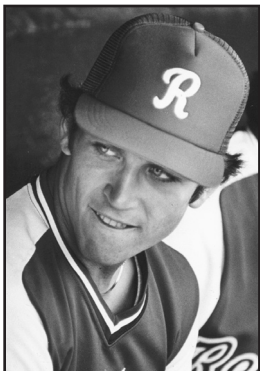
In 1982 Boggs began a 18-year Major League career that would eventually land him in Cooperstown. He won five American League batting titles with the Boston Red Sox, including four in a row from 1985-88. He made the first of twelve All-Star appearances in 1985. After eleven seasons with the Red Sox, Boggs signed with the New York Yankees, with whom he would win two Gold Gloves and a World Series title in 1996.

The last two years of his big league career were spent with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. On August 7, 1999 he became the only player in history to hit a home run for his 3,000th hit, and his uniform number 12 was later retired by Tampa Bay.

In 1999, the *Sporting News* ranked Boggs among the 100 greatest baseball players of all-time, and he was a nominee for the Major League Baseball All-Century Team. He is the only player in MLB history with 200 hits and 100 runs in seven straight seasons.

No Pawtucket player since Boggs has won the International League batting title.

Cal Ripken, Jr.



- THIRD BASEMAN -
Rochester 1981

- * 1981 IL Rookie of the Year
- * 1981 IL Postseason All-Star
- * Rochester All-Century Team (2000)

Cal Ripken, Jr. arrived in Rochester in 1981 for what would be his only season at the Triple-A level. He had been one of the Double-A Southern League's best hitters in 1980 (25 home runs and 78 RBI), but the 35 errors he committed at shortstop and second base prompted the organization to try him at third base with the Red Wings.

Considered to be one of baseball's brightest prospects, Ripken excelled in his role for the Red Wings. He launched 58 extra-base hits, including 23 home runs, and even earned a brief promotion to Baltimore during the strike-shortened 1981 season. Before his call to the Orioles, Ripken played in each of Rochester's 114 games, including the longest game in baseball history. In the infamous contest against Pawtucket, Ripken started at third base and played every one of the game's 33 innings. His fifteen plate appearances is tied with two of his teammates for the most ever in a single game.

Ripken finished the season with a .288 average. He was named the International League Rookie of the Year and the third baseman on the League's Postseason All-Star Team.

In 1982 he joined the Orioles full-time and achieved instant success as the American League Rookie of the Year, beating out Boston's Wade Boggs for the honor. The next year he led the Orioles to a World Series championship, winning the first of two American League Most Valuable Player Awards.

In May of his first season, he began the consecutive games played streak that didn't end until September of 1998. Baseball's "Iron Man" played in 2,632 consecutive games to shatter the record set by Lou Gehrig.

Ripken is a 19-time Major League All-Star and a member of the 3,000-hit club. He was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2007 with 98.53% of the vote, the third highest total in history. He is a best-selling author and the President of Ripken Baseball, Inc., an organization that helps grow baseball at the grass roots level. His uniform number 8 was retired by the Orioles, and he was named by Major League Baseball to the All-Century Team in 1999.