



WINNIPEG GOLDEYES DAILY CLIPPINGS

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2nd, 2019

- **Canaries Edge Goldeyes**—Winnipeg Goldeyes (Steve Schuster), 9/1/19
- **September 1st Game Highlights (Video Link)**—Winnipeg Goldeyes (Jason Young), 9/1/19
- **Birds Snap Skid With Tight Win at Winnipeg**—Sioux Falls Canaries (Carter Woodiel), 9/1/19
- **Goldeyes on Hot Streak**—Winnipeg Sun, 9/1/19
- **Fish Pitching Ace Traded**—Winnipeg Free Press (Jason Bell), 8/31/19
- **Goldeyes Trade McGovern**—Winnipeg Sun, 8/31/19
- **McGovern Receives Opportunity in Atlantic League**—Winnipeg Goldeyes (Steve Schuster), 8/30/19
- **Plenty of Positives in Goldeyes' Failed Bid for Playoffs**—Winnipeg Sun, 8/30/19
- **Garcia Simply Sensational for Goldeyes**—Winnipeg Sun, 8/29/19
- **Pitcher French Loving Life With Goldeyes**—Winnipeg Sun, 8/28/19

CANARIES EDGE GOLDEYES

STEVE SCHUSTER – WINNIPEG GOLDEYES – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st

WINNIPEG, MB – The Winnipeg Goldeyes (56-43) lost 4-3 to the Sioux Falls Canaries at Shaw Park on Sunday afternoon.

Tied at 3-3 in the top of the seventh inning, Clint Coulter singled home Graham Low with the go-ahead run.

Canaries' reliever Will Solomon (5-6) pitched three and one-third scoreless innings to close out the game and picked up the win.

Goldeyes' starting pitcher **Mitchell Lambson** (13-4) took the loss, allowing four earned runs on 11 hits in eight innings. Lambson walked one and struck out four. Lambson finishes the season with 150.2 innings pitched, which is a new Goldeyes' single-season record. Lambson's 133 strikeouts this year rank third on the Goldeyes' single-season list.

Winnipeg took a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the first. Consecutive singles from **Reggie Abercrombie**, **Kyle Martin**, and **Willy Garcia** loaded the bases with one out. **Dominic Ficociello** lifted a sacrifice fly to centre that drove in Abercrombie with the game's first run. **Jonathan Moroney** followed with a two-out, RBI single to left.

Coulter hit an RBI single in the top of the fourth and the Canaries (38-61) tied the game in the fifth on a two-out, RBI double from Alay Lago.

Abercrombie put the Goldeyes ahead 3-2 in the bottom of the fifth with a solo home run to centre with one out. On the play, Abercrombie scored his 370th run in a Goldeyes' uniform, which tied **Brian Duva** for the franchise record.

Michael Hart tied the game at 3-3 in the top of the sixth with a one-out, solo home run to right.

Moroney finished with four hits. **Cameron McVey** pitched a scoreless inning in relief of Lambson.

The Goldeyes close out the 2019 season on Monday afternoon at 1:05 p.m. **Parker French** (5-6, 5.45) takes on right-hander Alex Boshers (6-8, 5.92). Advance tickets are on sale now by visiting www.goldeyes.com/tickets or by visiting the box office at Shaw Park.

For information on 2019 season tickets, 10-game mini packs, and group tickets, call the Goldeyes' office at (204) 982-BASE, or visit the Goldeyes' official website at www.goldeyes.com

VIDEO: SEPTEMBER 1st GAME HIGHLIGHTS

JASON YOUNG – WINNIPEG GOLDEYES – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st

LINK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcicX6ednac>

BIRDS SNAP SKID WITH TIGHT WIN AT WINNIPEG

CARTER WOODIEL – SIOUX FALLS CANARIES – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st

WINNIPEG, MB -- Two RBIs from Clint Coulter and an outstanding effort in relief from Will Solomon added up to a big win for the Sioux Falls Canaries on Sunday. The Birds (38-61) knocked off the Winnipeg Goldeyes (56-43) 4-3 at Shaw Park.

Solomon threw 3.1 scoreless innings to close out the game and earn the win on his 27th birthday. The victory snapped a six-game losing streak for Sioux Falls.

Alay Lago went 3-for-4 in the victory, raising his batting average to .338 and staying atop the race for the American Association batting title with one game to go.

Winnipeg jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first, peppering four singles off Birds starter Keaton Steele. Jonathan Moroney capped off the rally with an RBI single.

The Birds closed the gap in the fourth on an RBI single from Coulter, and tied the score in the fifth on an RBI double from Lago.

The tie wouldn't last long; Reggie Abercrombie put Winnipeg up 3-2 with a solo homer in the bottom of the fifth. It was Abercrombie's second blast of the series and his 16th of the year.

Sioux Falls tied things up again in the sixth, also via a solo shot. Mike Hart hit a line drive over the right-field wall, his 11th of the season.

Canaries starter Keaton Steele got into trouble in the sixth inning, allowing two singles and a walk to load the bases with no one out. The right-hander struck out the next two batters he faced before giving way to Solomon.

Solomon got Winnipeg leadoff man Wes Darvill to ground out, ending the inning.

The Canaries took the lead for good in the seventh. After singles from Graham Low and Lago put a man on third, Clint Coulter knocked a two-out single to give the Birds a 4-3 edge.

Solomon threw the rest of the game, inducing a double-play ball to end it in the ninth.

UP NEXT

The Canaries and Goldeyes play their last game of the 2019 season Monday afternoon at 1 p.m. Alex Boshers will start for the Birds; Parker French will get the ball for Winnipeg. Birds fans can tune in on Sioux Falls Sports Radio 98.1 FM and AM 1230 KWSN.

GOLDEYES ON HOT STREAK

WINNIPEG SUN – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st

The Goldeyes went into Saturday night having won six consecutive games.

Manager Rick Forney has been pleased with the effort of his players after being eliminated from the race.

"Everybody's kind of disappointed with where we're at, and that's because our guys care," Forney said. "Ever since we've been officially eliminated, nobody has stopped playing. They're still trying hard every day and putting in a good effort. We're playing good baseball."

Winnipeg was mathematically eliminated last Saturday, but continues to play until the final out. Three of their six wins on the current streak have been decided in the seventh inning or later.

"Just playing the game the right way," Forney said on what he wants to see from his team in the waning days of the season. "It comes to a close. It's important that they continue to enjoy their time here. Before you know it, you're back in the real world working a 9 to 5 job, and you're antsy to get to the next baseball season. It's still important to these guys and it shows. They're still playing good baseball and trying to win every night."

RECORD CHASER

Goldeyes' left-hander Mitchell Lambson makes his final start of the year this afternoon, and has the chance to tie an 18-year-old franchise record.

At 13-3, Lambson can match former Goldeyes' great Rafael Gross for the club's single-season record for wins. Gross won 14 games for the 2001 squad.

In the years since, the 14 wins have been challenged only twice. Gross himself picked up 13 victories in 2003, while Kevin McGovern racked up a baker's dozen in 2017.

Lambson is the front-runner for American Association Pitcher of the Year. In addition to leading the league in wins, Lambson is fifth in ERA (3.03), first in strikeouts (129), and first in innings (142.2). The Montclair, Calif. native is just six and one-third innings back of the Goldeyes' single-season mark of 149.0 held by Roger Luque (2004) and Andrew "Ace" Walker (2009).

Left-hander Nick Hernandez was the last Goldeye to win American Association Pitcher of the Year after a 12-2 performance in 2014.

SAINTS IN PLAYOFFS

The St. Paul Saints not only clinched the remaining North Division playoff spot on Friday, but the club overtook the Fargo-Moorhead RedHawks for the division lead.

The Goldeyes' two chief rivals begin postseason play against one another next Wednesday.

St. Paul most certainly earned their playoff ticket. Including Friday's win, George Tsamis' crew won 15 of 17 games, 10 of which came against contenders Chicago, Fargo-Moorhead, and Winnipeg.

The Saints have had their challenges this season. Three of their five rotation slots are being filled by relievers. The club also lost its most productive player, all-star outfielder Max Murphy, to the Arizona Diamondbacks' organization in late-July.

Through all of the adversity, the Saints have set an American Association record for one-run victories in a season, and might be the most battle-ready team once the playoff field is complete.

FISH PITCHING ACE TRADED

JASON BELL – WINNIPEG FREE PRESS – SATURDAY, AUGUST 31st

Kevin McGovern is getting a chance to extend his baseball season — although it won't be with the Winnipeg Goldeyes.

The ace of the pitching staff was traded to the Atlantic League's Southern Maryland Blue Crabs on Friday in exchange for future considerations.

The Goldeyes (54-42) will miss the playoffs for the second consecutive American Association season. However, the Atlantic League plays a 140-game regular-season schedule that continues through late September. The Blue Crabs are members of the Freedom Division and have climbed to within just 4.0 games of first place in the second half of the season.

McGovern was sensational Thursday night in his swan song, surrendering just four hits in eight shutout innings to pace Winnipeg to a 2-0 victory over the Gary SouthShore RailCats at Shaw Park.

He was 12-7 with a 3.85 ERA for the Goldeyes in 20 starts and one relief appearance this season, his fourth in a Winnipeg uniform. The triumph was McGovern's 46th of his six-year stint in the American Association, moving him into third place on the league's career win list.

McGovern, 30, owns the franchise record for strikeouts (467) and was a member of the Goldeyes' back-to-back championship teams in 2016 and 2017.

GOLDEYES TRADE MCGOVERN

WINNIPEG SUN – SATURDAY, AUGUST 31st

The Winnipeg Goldeyes traded left-handed pitcher Kevin McGovern to the Atlantic League's Southern Maryland Blue Crabs on Friday.

The transaction does not preclude McGovern from returning to Winnipeg in the future.

The Atlantic League plays a 140-game schedule that carries through the end of September. American Association clubs will often send players to the Atlantic League once they are out of contention.

McGovern was 12-7 with a 3.85 ERA and 95 strikeouts for the Goldeyes in 20 starts. The Philadelphia, Penn. native logged 126.1 innings, which rank third in the American Association. On July 24th, McGovern set the Goldeyes' franchise record for strikeouts.

"Kevin's been really good for us," Goldeyes' manager Rick Forney said. "He had a nice bounce back year. It was a little bit of a struggle last year at times. 12 wins is a lot in our league. Kevin's thrown well over 500 innings in the four years we've had him. He's done everything we've asked and gave us everything that we needed from him."

McGovern will have the opportunity to continue playing baseball, while testing his skills against more experienced competition. Unlike the American Association, the Atlantic League does not have any roster minimums or maximums. The majority of Atlantic League players have either Major League or Triple-A experience on their resumes.

"It's an opportunity for him to extend his season, earn a couple of more weeks pay, and be back in a playoff chase," said Forney. "Hopefully he can help them earn a playoff spot. I think it's a great opportunity for him. Hopefully he can make some new friends and see what it's all about. He was appreciative of the opportunity. We're looking forward to it, and I hope he does well."

Southern Maryland is just 4.0 games out of first place in the Atlantic League Freedom Division's second half race, so McGovern will have a second chance at reaching the playoffs.

The 30-year-old left-hander will also get an eye-witness look at the structural changes the league has implemented over the course of the season.

The Atlantic League gained widespread attention last spring when it announced, among other changes, the circuit was eliminating extreme defensive shifts, increasing the size of each base, and moving the pitching rubber back two feet. The latter received backlash from players and fans and never came to fruition, but the remainder of the new rules came to pass.

Following its all-star break, the Atlantic League instituted electronic strike zones, while allowing batters to "steal" first base on balls that get away from the catcher.

MCGOVERN RECEIVES OPPORTUNITY IN ATLANTIC LEAGUE

STEVE SCHUSTER – WINNIPEG GOLDEYES – FRIDAY, AUGUST 30th

WINNIPEG, MB – The Winnipeg Goldeyes traded left-handed pitcher Kevin McGovern to the Atlantic League's Southern Maryland Blue Crabs in exchange for future considerations on Friday.

McGovern pitched eight shutout innings and picked up the win on Thursday in his final American Association start of 2019. The Philadelphia, Pennsylvania native was 12-7 with a 3.85 ERA for the Goldeyes in 20 starts and one relief appearance. Thursday's win was McGovern's 46th during his six years in the league, which moved him into third place on the American Association career list. On July 24th versus Texas, McGovern set the Goldeyes' franchise record for strikeouts.

The Atlantic League plays a 140-game regular season schedule that continues through late-September. The Blue Crabs are members of the Atlantic League Freedom Division, and just 4.0 games out of first place in the second half.

McGovern is in his eight season of professional baseball, and is 52-40 lifetime with a 4.01 ERA in 130 games, 122 of them as a starting pitcher. 2019 was McGovern's fourth season in a Goldeyes' uniform, and the 30-year-old was a member of the Goldeyes' back-to-back American Association championship teams in 2016 and 2017.

Additionally, the Goldeyes activated outfielder Jonathan Moroney from the Disabled List on Friday. Moroney is seventh in the league with a .322 batting average and last played on August 14th at St. Paul.

The Winnipeg Goldeyes open a four-game series against the Sioux Falls Canaries tonight at Shaw Park. First pitch is scheduled for 7:05 p.m. Advance tickets are on sale now by visiting www.goldeyes.com/tickets or by visiting the box office at Shaw Park.

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PLENTY OF POSITIVES IN GOLDEYES' FAILED BID FOR PLAYOFFS

WINNIPEG SUN – FRIDAY, AUGUST 30th

The Winnipeg Goldeyes still have a lot to be proud of this season.

The club was eliminated from playoff contention following last Saturday's loss at Fargo-Moorhead. The Goldeyes then bounced back against the RedHawks Sunday and Monday to take the season series from the North Division leaders 7-5.

Monday's win also clinched a winning record for a 22nd time in the franchise's 26-year history. Since the Goldeyes began play in 1994, only the New York Yankees and Los Angeles Dodgers have produced more winning seasons.

"It's hard to do this," said Goldeyes' manager Rick Forney. "It's hard to make the playoffs. The last week to 10 days has been pretty difficult for me, because at times I really felt like we had a chance."

Led by a complete game, two-hit shutout by Mitchell Lambson on August 12th at St. Paul, the Goldeyes moved into a tie with the Saints for the North Division wild card and had full control of their destiny.

The following morning, Winnipeg jumped out to a 2-0 lead over the Saints in the top of the first. St. Paul, however, answered back with six runs in the bottom half en route to a 10-2 final, and hung on to beat the Goldeyes 6-5 in the rubber game the following night.

After the series finale in St. Paul, the Goldeyes endured travel complications that led to the Fish not arriving at Shaw Park until 7:00 p.m. for a game against the Chicago Dogs. Understandably fatigued, Winnipeg lost 13-0.

The Goldeyes lost two of three in the Chicago series before getting swept in a two-game set at home by the Saints, which left Winnipeg 6.0 games out of a playoff spot with only 13 games remaining.

The position in the standings is a reflection of the competitiveness of the North as much as anything else. Following Wednesday's win over the RailCats, the Goldeyes are on pace to win 56 games. Of the 41 teams in American Association history that have finished with 56-plus victories, only five have missed the postseason.

"We've had a good team this year," Forney said. "We've dealt with a lot of injuries. We've had four guys get picked up by Major League clubs that were playing a key role on our team. We had two of our best players leave for the Pan-Am Games and had to find a way to try and make things work, so it's been difficult. I'm just disappointed that I wasn't able to get a couple of more pieces in here that could help put us over the top and make the last week a little more relevant."

The Goldeyes have a chance to win as many as 58 games, which would be the second-most for an American Association non-playoff team.

"For me, unless you're winning the very last game of the American Association season—no matter if you make the playoffs, you make it to the semi-finals, win 70 games, or win 53 games—it's still a little bit of a disappointment if you're not winning the last game of the season," Forney said.

GARCIA SIMPLY SENSATIONAL FOR GOLDEYES

WINNIPEG SUN – THURSDAY, AUGUST 29th

Goldeyes' right fielder Willy Garcia has been among the American Association's most productive players this season.

The former Major Leaguer went into Wednesday's game against Gary SouthShore eighth in the league with 68 RBI and sixth with a .924 on-base plus slugging.

"He's had a good year," said Goldeyes' manager Rick Forney. "He missed a little time because of injury, and obviously missed some time when he was at the Pan-Am Games. If he's here and healthy the whole year, we're probably looking at a guy with 80 RBI on the season."

Earlier this month, Garcia represented his native Dominican Republic in the Pan-Am Games in Lima, Peru. The 26-year-old had a strong showing at the tournament, including a grand slam home run.

Over his last 34 American Association games, Garcia is hitting .360 with 29 runs scored, 13 doubles, eight home runs and 39 RBI.

Garcia homered twice against the RailCats on Tuesday, the latter of which struck the middle of the Shaw Park scoreboard in right-centre field. In the top of the third, Garcia cut down RailCats' outfielder Colin Willis at second base after the Gary SouthShore all-star attempted to stretch a single into a double.

"He's come in and been a presence in the middle of the lineup," Forney said. "That's what we signed him for. He's also probably the best right fielder in the league with the best throwing arm in the league. He's done a good job for us."

TORRES FINISHING STRONG

Goldeyes' left-handed reliever Christian Torres has enjoyed a strong second half of the season.

The Canovas, Puerto Rico native has a 2.84 ERA over his last 19 appearances spanning 31.2 innings.

Torres' greatest strides have come in left-on-left situations. Opposing left-handed batters were hitting .393 against Torres going into July 4th. Since then, Torres has handcuffed lefties to a .059 average (2-for-34).

"He's done a really good job for us," said Forney. "Unfortunately, we haven't been able to consistently use him in the right situations. Often times we've been forced to make up some things as we go along, and make sure we throw enough innings to complete some games. In the second half, he's thrown really well for us. He's got some versatility in his game. He came in (Tuesday) and threw strikes, attacked the zone, and kept the ball on the ground."

Part of Torres' versatility has come in his ability to pitch multiple innings. The 25-year-old has recorded more than three outs in 19 of his 34 appearances this season.

PITCHER FRENCH LOVING LIFE WITH GOLDEYES
WINNIPEG SUN – WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28th

Goldeyes' right-hander Parker French has enjoyed his first season in Winnipeg.

The right-hander takes the mound on Wednesday when the Goldeyes host the Gary SouthShore RailCats in the second of a three-game series.

"They treat us extremely well," French said of the Goldeyes. "A lot of us are very far from home, and they treat us like family. The hospitality has been awesome. Then you go on the road to some of these places, and you're staying in first-class hotels and playing at first-class facilities."

French was drafted by the Colorado Rockies in the fifth round in 2015, and spent the previous two seasons in double A.

The 26-year-old has walked three batters or less in 13 of his 16 starts, and struck out a season-high eight batters in a previous outing against the RailCats on June 11.

A groundball pitcher throughout his career, French has enjoyed the support of a Goldeyes' defence that is likely to set the American Association record for fielding percentage. French entered the season with a 1.66 career ground-out-to-air-out ratio.

"It's such a good defence," said French. "The job that each of them has done individually and then collectively has been so impressive. It definitely puts you at ease as a pitcher. You just have to throw strikes and let them work, because they do their job at a high level."

French has been lauded by teammates and coaches alike for his commitment to getting better. The University of Texas alumnus credits his parents for instilling that work ethic at a young age.

"(My parents) laid it out to me that baseball was my choice if that was something I wanted to do, but they wanted me to pursue it with 100 percent focus and intent," French said. "That shaped me as a kid, and it's stuck with me through my young adult years. As long as I play baseball, I'm going to give it my all. I know I'm not the most talented pitcher, but hard work can make up that gap."

Goldeyes' manager Rick Forney believes French has all of the ingredients to enjoy greater success in the future.

"The velocity is good, the movement is good," Forney said. "It all boils down to really developing a little more feel for a secondary pitch, something that he can pull a hitter forward with. The overall arm talent is there. He's strong, he works his tail off. He's a great kid, and he's shown some flashes of having the ability to be really good in this league."

French's dedication transcends the baseball diamond. The Austin, Tex. native is a devout Christian who regularly attends Sunday chapel with Goldeyes' teammates. Earlier this season, French served as a guest speaker during the Goldeyes' annual Faith Night.

"Having that relationship has been huge for me," said French. "I've gone through some really great times in this sport and some very low times. My faith has helped pull me out of those really tough times to get me here today. I'm just thankful for this opportunity to continue to play professional baseball and play here in Winnipeg.

"The relationship I have with Jesus is the most important thing I have in my life, and it always will be," French concluded. "Baseball is a game, but that faith is something I'm going to be able to pass on to my kids, and my kids to their kids. That impacts generations."
