# Zephyrs Played Their Way Into Contention 

The New Orleans Zephyrs completed the month of May with a winning record (17-13) and played with more consistency as the season wore on. Having put an 11-game losing streak behind them in early May, manager Tim Foli's team hung tough to win a marathon 24-inning game on the road in Nashville (see page 4). That win seemed to refocus the team, as they won 10 of the next 13 games, to put themselves back into contention in the Southern Division.

The month of May did not begin well for the Zs. They lost the first three games of the month to extend their long losing streak to 11 . On May 4, at Memphis, the Zephyrs pushed across a 9th-inning run to win, 3-2 over the Redbirds. The next night in Nashville was the 24-inning saga that overlapped two evenings. New Orleans came out on top, 5-4 in the marathon game; then they dropped the regularly scheduled game, 7-5.

The Zephyrs won eight of their next nine games, including a 7-1 homestand against Fresno and Sacramento. The middle of the New Orleans lineup, anchored by Brendan Harris and Larry Broadway, was producing enough runs to win. Hot-hitting Mike Vento, before his call-up, was a consistent run producer also.Meanwhile a strong bullpen, led by Jason Bergmann, Bill Bray, Micah Bowie, Santiago Ramirez, Travis Hughes and Kevin Gryboski pitched well enough to keep the Zs close.

Harris, at the time of his promotion to Washington, was hitting .333 , with an on-base percentage of .422 . In early June, Broadway was hitting .338 , with 7 home runs and 41 RBIs for New Orleans.

Team speed was another key factor in the Zephyrs' success. In early June, New Orleans had stolen 48 bases, but had been thrown out 28 times, not a good

team percentage. Bernie Castro was the most effective base stealer for the Zs ; he was successful on all 8 stolen base attempts.

By a week into June, the Zephyrs had played their way back into contention; they were five games over .500 and only two games behind division-leading Albuquerque.

New Orleans baseball legends George Strickland (left) and Lenny Yochim were two of the inductees into the Nerw Orleans Professional Baseball Hall of Fame on April 29 at Zephyr Field. Also inducted were Rusty Staub and the late Abner Powell.


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# Nationals Hire Davey Johnson to Work with Jim Bowden 

## The Pair Won Division Titles Together With Cincinnati in the 1990's

WASHINGTON -- Davey Johnson, best known for managing the Mets to a World Series title in 1986, was hired by the Nationals as a consultant to general manager Jim Bowden on Wednesday.
Bowden and Johnson will work together for the first time since the 1995 season, when both were with the Reds. Bowden was the GM and Johnson managed the club at the time. Together, they won two division titles in 1994 and '95.

Johnson posted 1,148 wins as a big-league manager from 1984-2000, a total that ranks 38th all-time. He notched an overall .564 winning percentage ( 1,148 888) as a manager with the Mets, Reds, Orioles and Dodgers.

Johnson most recently served as the bench coach for Team USA at the inaugural World Baseball Classic in March. Last November, he managed Team USA to a perfect 5-0 record in the CONCEBE North American Regional Olympic Qualifying Tournament to advance to this August's COPABE Olympic America's Tournament in Havana, Cuba.
-Bill Ladson
Courtesy WashingtonNationals.MLB.com

## Catch the Zephyrs Games LIVE on Radio Home and Away with TIM GRUBBS and RON SWOBODA

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## 70 Years Since New Orleans' First Night Baseball Game

Night baseball is a way of life in minor leagues today, but it wasn't always. Southern Association night baseball was introduced to New Orleans on Friday night, May 15, 1936. Heinemann Park, illuminated by lights measuring 7,000,000 candle power, attracted 11,149 fans for the gala occasion. This was six years after the league's firsst night game was played at Little Rock on July 21, 1930.

The powerful Atlanta Crackers defeated the Pelicans in the local nocturnal inaugural, by a score of ll-5. Atlanta first baseman Alex Hooks was the batting star of the evening. He socked four hits in five times at bat, including two doubles and a home run. His home run in the sixth inning was the first ever in a night game in New Orleans. It was the first of three homers hit by Atlanta. Pelicans second baseman Leo Kintana earned the distinction of hitting the first ever home run by a New Orleans player in a night game.

Each lineup had some outstanding ballplayers. I feel that the Pels' Tommy Henrich and Atlanta's Paul Richards were the most notable among those who played in the majors. Henrich was the New Orleans hitting star of the game with a single and two doubles. Richards' three-run homer in the 9th put a close game out of the home team's reach. His ability behind the plate also made a lasting impression on me.

From a personal standpoint, this game remains among my most treasured baseball memories, as I attended the contest with my father one month before my graduation from Jesuit High School.

Pelicans outfielder Eddie Rose is a unique figure in Southern Association night baseball history. He played left field for Little Rock on July 21, 1930, in the first Southern Association night game. He played against the Pels for Little Rock on August 5, 1930 (New Orleans' first night game on the road. Six years later, May 15, 1936 he was the Pels left fielder in the first night game ever played in New Orleans.

Atlanta starting pitcher Bob Durham put his name in the record books as the first winning pitcher in a

night game in New Orleans. Durham went the distance despite allowing 5 runs on 10 hits.

## Quotes:

"Your system is plenty good. It is one of the very best that I've seen. I am sure New Orleans is going to like night baseball." - Earl Mann, Atlanta Crackers President
"This crowd speaks for itself. Night baseball is going to be a great success for New Orleans." -Gernon Brown, Jesuit High School Athletic Director

## Cincinnati Hosted Majors First Night Game

There were 20,432 fans in Crosley Field in Cincinnati to witness the first major league night game on May 24, 1935. The Reds defeated the Philadelphia Phillies, 2-1.
Pul Derringer tossed a six-hitter to win the first night game in major league history. Night baseball, like many innovations in the game, was first tried and found to be successful in the minor leagues. For example, the first Southern Association night game was five years earlier than Cincinnati's first.

## Zephyrs' 24-Inning Win in Nashville Was One for the Record Books

The game began at Greer Stadium in Nashville at two minutes past 7 p.m. on Friday night, May 5, 2006. After 18 innings, with nothing decided, the game was suspended due to a curfew rule a few minutes past 1 a.m. on May 6 . When the game resumed the following evening in the 19th inning, the two teams battled scoreless for five more innings before the Zephyrs broke through with a run in the top of the 24th.

It could have ended in the 9th inning. New Orleans came to bat in the top of the 9th trailing the Sounds, 4-3. Nashville closer Allan Simpson retired the first two Zephyrs batters, pinch hitter Kenny Kelly on strikes and Brandon Watson on a fly ball. With New Orleans down to its final out, Henry Mateo singled, stole second base, and scored on a 2 -strike RBI-single by Brendan Harris. From that point, the two teams' pitching staffs threw shutout ball for fourteen innings. During that stretch, however, there were several opportunities for Nashville to end the game, but they could never come up with a clutch hit. The Sounds, in fact, left the bases loaded in the 11th and again in the 13th inning.

Wiki Gonzalez finally put the Zs ahead in the top of the 24th, with an RBI single off the second baseman's glove that drove in pitcher/right fielder Chris Schroeder, who had walked, with the go-ahead run. Santiago Ramirez, the 8th New Orleans pitcher of the game, retired the Sounds in order in the 24th to become the winning pitcher.

Here are some fast facts about the record-shattering contest:

- 29 Nashville batters struck out in the game, breaking the PCL record by plenty. The old record was 20.
- A total of 48 batters (both teams) struck out in the game, wiping out the old PCL record of 29.
- Each team stranded 22 runners on the bases.
- The 24 inning game was the longest by innings ever by either franchise. The game tied the PCL record for longest game by innings. A 24-inning game was played in 1909 between San Francisco and Oakland. That record was tied in 1911, in a game between Portland and Sacramento.
- The Zephyrs had 85 official at-bats in the game, establishing a league record. The two teams combined for 166 at-bats easily topping the old PCL record of 109 .
- The two teams used a total of 17 pitchers in the game, breaking the old league mark of 14 .
- The two teams combined to use 40 players in the game to tie a PCL record.
- Sounds first baseman Brad Nelson struck out seven times in the game to establish a new PCL single game record.
- Zephyrs outfielder Mike Vento reached base seven times on six singles and a walk, but did not score a run.
- Of the Zephyrs' total of 22 hits, 21 were singles.
- After the Zephyrs pushed across the go-ahead run in the 24th inning, the Sounds brought in shortstop Chris Barnwell to pitch. Barnwell retired the only two batters he faced.
- Barnwell, along with Zs shortstop Josh Labandeira, each had 11 at-bats in the game.
- The Zephyrs bullpen pitched a total of 17-2/3 innings of shutout ball. The only four runs Nashville scored were off New Orleans starter Andrew Good.



## Zs Trainer Mike Quinn Headed to All Star Game

The Pacific Coast League announced that New Orleans Zephyrs trainer Mike Quinn has been named the trainer for the PCL All-Star team. The Triple-A All Star game will take place on July 12th at 6:00 PM CT at Fifth Third Field in Toledo, Ohio and features the International League vs. the Pacific Coast League.

Quinn's five previous seasons as trainer for the Nationals/ Expos Triple-A club have taken him to three different locations: New Orleans (2005), Edmonton (2003-04), and Ottawa (2002). Quinn has also worked in the Florida and Texas systems since beginning his career in baseball in 1995. He was honored in 1999 as the Professional Baseball Athletic Trainers Society's Athletic Trainer of the Year. Quinn becomes the second Zephyrs trainer to earn a trip to the Triple-A All-Star Game, following Mike Freer in 1999.

All-Star voting for players began on June 1st when for the first time fans are allowed to vote for Triple-A All-Stars online at www.zephyrsbaseball.com, the PCL website (www.pclbaseball.com) or the Minor League Baseball website (www.minorleaguebaseball.com).

Fan voting will account for $1 / 3$ of total vote, with $1 / 3$ contributed from the media and $1 / 3$ from each team's field manager, coaches and general manager.

## Baseball America Honors Zephyrs, Gives Check to Delgado Baseball Program

The New Orleans Zephyrs will be honored by Baseball America at their June 9th game against the Nashville Sounds. Baseball America will also present a check on behalf of the Zephyrs to Delgado Community College to repair their baseball field.

The Zephyrs were honored by Baseball America, at the Baseball Winter Meetings in Dallas last December, as a representative of the City of New Orleans for showing courage and contributing to the Hurricane Katrina relief effort .
"We are very thankful for the recognition by Baseball America and honored to present a check with them to Delgado Community College," said Zephyrs GM Mike Schline. "As the city's only professional baseball team, we try to support local youth and college baseball as much as we can."
"Baseball America is proud to work with the New Orleans Zephyrs in support of youth baseball," said Catherine Silver, President of Baseball America. "We have done fundraising all over the United States but are especially glad to participate in rebuilding youth baseball in New Orleans."

Silver will be in attendance at the game to present the check with the Zephyrs to Delgado Community College.
-From ZephyrsBaseball.com

## They Had League's Worst Record Despite Hitting Most HRs

Power hitting is usually one of the elements that make a winning club. Usually, but not always. A team with little or no home run power can find enough other ways to win to capture a pennant, and conversely, a team with enough power to lead everyone in home runs can lose enough games to finish last.

Among the teams that led their league in home runs for the season since 1900, only ten finished last in the league the same year. Before the leagues split into divisions in 1969, the "last place" team in the league, by definition, had the league's worst record. Since divisional play began, there were five clubs that led the league in home runs and finished last in their division. None of the five, however, had the league's worst record for that season.

Here are some observations on this curious accomplishment:

- The dead-ball season of 1918 is the only year that produced two last-place teams that led in home runs. A total of 22 homers the Philadelphia Athletics was good enough to lead the American League. Meanwhile in the National League, the St. Louis Cardinals were hardly busting down the fences, producing a league-leading total of 27 home runs, and finishing 27 games below . 500 .
- The Philadelphia Phillies dominated this strange category, leading the league in both homers and losses on five different occasions. Most infamous, perhaps, is the 1923 team which lost 104 games despite hitting an NL-leading 112 home runs. The reason they lost so often? They were outscored by the opposition, 1008-748.

| Yr. | Team | W | L | HR | R | OR |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :---: | ---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1918 | St. Louis (NL) | 51 | 78 | 27 | 454 | 527 |
| 1918 | Philadelphia (AL) | 52 | 76 | 22 | 412 | 538 |
| 1919 | Philadelphia (NL) | 47 | 90 | 42 | 510 | 699 |
| 1920 | Philadelphia (NL) | 62 | 91 | 64 | 565 | 714 |
| 1921 | Philadelphia (NL) | 51 | 103 | 88 | 617 | 919 |
| 1923 | Philadelphia (NL) | 50 | 104 | 112 | 748 | 1008 |
| 1935 | Philadelphia (AL) | 58 | 91 | 112 | 710 | 869 |
| 1936 | Philadelphia (NL) | 54 | 100 | 103 | 726 | 874 |
| 1943 | New York (NL) | 55 | 98 | 81 | 558 | 713 |
| 1946 | New York (NL) | 61 | 93 | 121 | 612 | 685 |

- The other Philadelphia club, the Athletics, hit an AL-leading 112 home runs in 1935, but it wasn't enough to prevent Connie Mack's team from being outscored over the course of the season by a margin of 159 runs.
- The 1936 Phillies' total of 103 home runs led the NL, but their pitchers allowed a league-leading total of 874 runs, resulting in a 54-100 record.
- The wartime New York Giants of 1943 needed only 81 homers to lead the league, which was without many of its stars who were serving in World War II. Player/manager Mel Ott's team finished 8th however, 49-1/2 games behind the pennant-winning St. Louis Cardinals.
- The 1946 Giants were the last major league team to hold the league's worst record while leading the league in home runs. They finished with a record of 61-93, while belting 121 homers.



## Another Fun Weekend in New Orleans

Dear Bleacher Creature,

Over the Memorial Day weekend we made our second visit to New Orleans this year. We stayed downtown, and on Sunday we visited the fabulous Aquarium of the Americas, which was having its grand reopening. Louis, Betsy and I also attended two games at Zephyr Field, on Friday and Saturday nights. It was our first post-Katrina visit to the ballpark, and we had a wonderful time both nights.

The Zephyrs were at the top of their game during our visit, which helped to make a pleasant, winning atmosphere inside the Shrine on Airline. Friday night's crowd was large and loud. It was a post-game fireworks night, and the 8,000+ in attendance was treated to some great baseball.

The game itself was a tough pitcher's battle in which the Zephyrs bullpen made Brandon Larson's three-run homer stand up for a hard-fought 3-2 victory over Oklahoma. Jason Bergman and Bill Bray were both very sharp in relief of starter David Gil for New Orleans.

It was our first chance to see the park's new scoreboard with its beautiful video. The sound system, we heard, is new and improved too. Betsy got a chance to hug Boudreaux, and she was thrilled. She was getting a little sleepy about the time the game ended, but when the lights went down for the fireworks show, she perked up and sat motionless and attentive until the last series of flashes and booms was finished. I love to watch any of the kids' faces during the fireworks, but for me, watching Betsy's is the most fun.

Saturday morning we took a drive through many of the same New Orleans neighborhoods we saw during our Mardi Gras trip in February. I admit I don't know the whys and the wherefores, but, from what I could see, not much has changed since then. Yes, we noticed that some houses had been torn down, and some were being worked on, but the majority of badly damaged homes looked pretty much the same as they did three months ago. What has happened to many New Orleans neighborhoods is enough to bring tears to my eyes. I can

only pray that progress will be made and that over time, the city I love will come back to some semblance of its former glory. I believe it will, because it has to.

Saturday evening we returned to Zephyr Field for the second game of the Oklahoma series. On this night the crowd in the ballpark was not quite as big or as frantic as it was Friday night, but the Zephyrs bats provided a lot of excitement in a 17-2 rout. Larry Broadway and Tyrell Godwin each drove in five runs for New Orleans. The Zephyrs jumped on top with five first-inning runs and never looked back. With Betsy getting a little cranky, and the Zs leading 16-2 after six innings, we headed back downtown to the hotel to get some rest, because we all had a date to do the aquarium the following day. My husband Louis said on the way out of Zephyr Field, "If they blow this lead, I don't think we want to see it." I was in total agreement. I must say that all the Zephyrs' stadiium employees were very warm and friendly; lots of smiling faces and enthusiasm. Although the concessions lines were too long on Friday night, the people serving the food and drinks kept their cool. Betsy and stood in line for Icees; Louis bought a beer from the vendor.

When we returned to Houston, folks asked us stuff like, "How's New Orleans? Is it getting back to normal?" What can you say to someone who hasn't seen it? Sure, you can have a wonderful time there, but normal? Normal, I'm afraid, may be several years away, but I believe in the people of New Orleans.
-Rose

## Let's Support New Orleans Zephyrs Baseball in 2006

## JUNE 2006

JULY 2006

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## See You at the Ballpark!

