





# Schedule & Info



## May/June

				28 WIS 6:35	29 WIS 6:35	30 LAC 6:35
31 LAC 5:05	1 TB 6:35	2 TB 6:35	3 BRD 6:35	4 BRD 6:35	5 GB 6:35	6 GB 6:35
7 ROC 6:05	8 DUL 7:05	9 DUL 7:05	10 BC 6:35	11 BC 6:35	12 DUL 6:35	13 DUL 6:35
14 LAC 5:05	15 LAC 6:35	16 ROC 7:05	17 OFF	18 BC 6:05	19 BC 6:05	20 MAD 6:35
21 MAD 6:05	22 WAT 7:05	23 WAT 7:05	24 OFF	25 MAD 6:35	26 MAD 6:35	27 GB 7:05
28 GB 5:05	29 MAN 6:35	30 MAN 6:35	All games are Central Daylight Time			

## July

			1 WIS 6:35	2 WIS 6:35	3 ROC 7:05	4 ROC 6:05
5 OFF	6 BRD 7:05	7 BRD 7:05	8 TB 6:05	9 TB 6:05	10 MAN 7:05	11 MAN 7:05
12 LAC 5:05	13 LAC 6:35	14 WAT 6:35	15 WAT 6:35	16 BC 6:35	17 BC 6:35	18 MAD 6:05
19 MAD 5:05	20 OFF	21 *ALL STAR	22 OFF	23 GB 7:05	24 GB 7:05	25 BC 6:05
26 BC 12:05	27 WAT 7:05	28 WAT 7:05	29 GB 6:35	30 GB 6:35	31 WIS 6:35	

## August

						1 WIS 6:35
2 WIS 5:05	3 WIS 6:35	4 OFF	5 LAC 7:05	6 LAC 6:35	7 MAD 7:05	8 MAD 6:05
9 WAT 6:05	10 WAT 6:35	11	12	13	14	15
16	Division Playoff Aug. 11-13 Championship Series Aug. 14-16					

Home games shaded

\*All-Star game in Thunder Bay, Canada

### Mailing Address:

108 East Grand Avenue  
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### Business phone:

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### Business fax:

(715) 839-7676

### Team Email:

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### Official website:

www.eauclaireexpress.com

### Broadcast Information:

WATQ 106.7FM Moose Country  
www.moose106.com

### Front office personnel:

Bill Rowlett	Owner
Dale Varsho	Director of Operations
Brett Schroedel	General Manager
Andy Neborak	Sales & Operations

### Field staff:

Dale Varsho	Field Manager
Vic Cable	Pitching Coach
Shawn Peck	Assistant Coach
Nate Schwartz	Assistant Coach

### Game day staff:

Scott Montesano	Radio Announcer
Paul Schommer	Public Address
Connie Olson	Concessions Mgr.
Chippewa Valley Sports Medicine	Athletic Trainers
Trax	Mascot

### Media:

Bob Bradovich	WQOW - TV18
Bob Gallaher	WEAU - TV13
John Casper	Leader Telegram

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**Bill Rowlett**  
*Owner*

The Eau Claire native was instrumental in bringing Northwoods League baseball and the Express to Eau Claire, serving in the capacity of General Manager during the team's inaugural season of 2005. Rowlett has been involved with baseball most of his life, having played on high school and amateur state championship teams and lettering four years in baseball for his alma mater, UW-Eau Claire. He managed American Legion and local amateur baseball teams and directed the city's youth baseball program while attending college. Over the years, Rowlett served in numerous management roles with local baseball and fast pitch softball programs. The father of two adult sons (Brett and Ron), he and his wife Sue presently reside in neighboring Elk Mound, WI.

Varsho has been the Field Manager for the Express since the inaugural 2005 season. In 2007, he led the team to the Northwoods League South Division title. This season will also mark his fourth as the team's Director of Operations. A native of Marshfield, WI, Varsho is no stranger to Eau Claire baseball, having played a number of years for the Eau Claire Cavaliers while also serving as an assistant baseball coach at his alma mater, UW-Eau Claire. After a short coaching stint at UW-River Falls, he served as the head coach and Director of Facilities at Viterbo University in La Crosse, WI from 1999-2001. Dale and his wife Jennifer reside in Eau Claire with their three children: Jake, Averie and Christian.



**Dale Varsho**  
*Director of Operations/Field Manager*



**Brett Schroedel**  
*General Manager*

Schroedel begins his fifth year with the Express and his second as the team's General Manager. He served as the media relations intern in 2005 and as Assistant General Manager during the 2006-2007 seasons. Schroedel's internship in 2005 completed his Masters Degree in Sports Administration from UW-La Crosse. The Eau Claire native graduated from UW-Madison in 2003 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Journalism. While attending UW-Madison, Schroedel served as a field manager for the Badgers football team including two years as head manager. He and his wife Emily live in Eau Claire.

Andy Neborak joined the Express staff full-time in October 2008 after spending the previous two summers as the stadium operations intern. As an intern, Andy was responsible for daily oversight of Carson Park for both the spring high school baseball season and summer amateur baseball season for all users of Carson Park. Andy's duties included staffing, concessions, inventory control, and fan relations. During the off-season, Andy oversees ticket renewals and assists with corporate sponsorships. The Waconia, MN native is a recent graduate of UW-Eau Claire and has his Bachelor of Business Administration in Business Management.



**Andy Neborak**  
*Sales & Operations*

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# All-Stars

## Mid-Season All-Stars



Left to Right - Chris Odegaard (Minnesota State-Mankato), Kole Calhoun (Yavapai), and Brooks Pinckard (Baylor).

## Postseason All-Stars



**Joe Bonfe**

*Creighton*

*Third Baseman*

.326, 5 HR, 42 RBI

.326 Average - 4th NWL



**Chris Odegaard**

*Minnesota State-Mankato*

*Pitcher*

7-1, 2.14 ERA

71.1 IP, 71 K, 31 BB

2.14 ERA - 9th NWL

7 Wins - T-3rd NWL

71 Strikeouts - 3rd NWL



# Who was on first?



## Roster turnover plagued Express in 2008

By Joe Ziemer, Leader-Telegram Staff

Manger Dale Varsho called it his most talented team. But the problem was keeping all that talent together. It wasn't necessarily pitching, hitting or defense that kept the Eau Claire Express out of the Northwoods League playoffs. Above all, the team's biggest downfall was a near constant roster turnover. If it wasn't the Major League Baseball draft, it was injuries. How severe was the turnover? Well, the Express had to take two separate team photos because by July most of the players in the original photo were no longer in Eau Claire.

"It was pretty funny, last night we were watching a slideshow," utility man Brooks Pinckard said prior to the season finale. "It had the first team photo and then the last team photo. I think there were probably six or seven guys still on the team from the first photo. It's good meeting new people and everything but it's also been kind of a challenge trying to bond with a team and everything like that. We did all right with it."

Thirty eight players suited up for the Express in 2008 - far and away the most in the franchise's four-year history. When the season came to a close Monday night, only 15 players were left from the original 30-man roster. That led to a hectic summer for Varsho, who was constantly searching for new faces to replenish his depleted squad.

"I've been on the phone a lot this year," Varsho said. "I've been text messaging. I'm 40 years old. I shouldn't be text messaging. I shouldn't even know how to text message."

But through it all, Eau Claire still managed to remain competitive. The Express' 33-35 overall record was the second-best mark in team history. An 18-17 second half record coupled with a rather evenly matched South Division had the team in the playoff hunt until the season's final three games. Eau Claire just might have been in the playoffs if not for the figurative revolving door in the locker room.

The draft claimed the likes of opening day starter Shane Dyer and reliever David Cales. And it meant pitchers Anthony Bass and Brad McAtee never arrived in town. Injuries took care of pitcher Adam Worthington and outfielders Erik Knutson and Pat Colwell. Another handful of players just decided to go home.

"If you look at our opening day roster and look at it now, it's night and day," Varsho said. "It's not even close to what we were expecting throughout the year. It's just one of those years where you just don't know what to expect."

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## Who was on first? (cont.)

There were plenty of positives, though. Pinckard, outfielder and reliever Kole Calhoun and right-hander Chris Odegaard were named midseason all-stars. Ryan Lee won the Northwoods League stolen base title. And Odegaard and infielder Joe Bonfe were named postseason all-stars. Bonfe put together one of the best seasons in franchise history, batting .326



Photo by Marisa Wojcik

**Chris Odegaard (MSU-Mankato) was third in the League in both strikeouts (71) and wins (7).**

with 15 doubles, five home runs and a single-season record 42 RBIs. And despite the considerable adversity, the Express did demonstrate a pretty stiff jaw. Every time they looked destined to plummet to the bottom of the standings, they put together a run and got back in contention.

"It's been a good, successful season," Bonfe said. "If we just would have had a win here and there, we probably would have made the playoffs. But it was a great season, everyone had fun and everyone did their best."

The constant flux of the 2008 roster may change the way Varsho assembles his team - a process that will begin later this

week. The success of late-season signings Nolan Fadness and Jeremy Rubens of UW-Oshkosh gave him reason to take a stronger look not only at Division III talent but local and Midwestern players. He also may steer away from Division I juniors and focus on freshmen and sophomores who aren't draft eligible.

"I'm going to try to change up some things," Varsho said. "I have to really look at what's available, knowing that there are some guys in the Midwest that can help us out right away and play hard and not have to worry about the juniors from San Diego, the juniors from Florida and the juniors from Texas. Because you don't know if they're going to be around all summer."



# Comfort Zone



**Bonfe finding his rhythm in second season**

**By Joe Ziemer, Leader-Telegram Staff**

**June 15, 2008**

Everything about Joe Bonfe this summer screams, "more comfortable." The way he carries himself on the field, the way he acts in the dugout. And, above all, the way he's hitting the ball. The second-year Eau Claire Express infielder/reliever has been one of the team's most pleasant surprises this season. Almost every ball off his bat has been hit hard - even the outs.

"I've been seeing the ball really well and squaring the ball up good," Bonfe said. "It took awhile to adjust to the wood bats but now I'm feeling pretty good with it." After struggling at times both at the plate and in the field last summer, the 6-foot-4, 220-pound Bonfe is batting .278 with eight RBIs this season. That's after hitting .248 and committing 12 errors a year ago. But this summer he's more relaxed, more confident and more comfortable. That might just be a product of his personality. Bonfe is good-natured, but quiet and a little shy. He may just need more time to adapt.

"It's his second year," Express manager Dale Varsho said. "He's a little more confident, a little more of a standout. He likes being around the guys. He's a little more open." Now

more comfortable, Bonfe is trying to help some of his teammates adjust to life in the Northwoods League. Bonfe is one of eight Express veterans on the roster. With that experience, come some extra leadership responsibilities.

"I've been trying to make everyone comfortable with everything and be friends with everyone," Bonfe said. "I'm trying to be a leader by example and by mouth." Bonfe's value to the Express is pretty clear. For one there's his versatility - something that's prized by Varsho, who loves to stock his roster with position players who also can pitch.

Last summer Bonfe played first base, designated hitter and pitched out of the bullpen. This summer he's primarily played third base, while also seeing time at first and making three appearances on the mound - one of them a start. Should David Cales end up signing with the Chicago Cubs, who drafted him in the 24th



Photo by Marisa Wojcik

**Joe Bonfe (Creighton)**

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## Comfort Zone (cont.)

round, Bonfe would likely move across the diamond and become the team's regular first baseman.

"Joe's doing really well," Varsho said. "Even his outs are hit hard. Hopefully, he can play a little smoother third base and he'll be in the lineup even more. If David Cales leaves, I'll need a first baseman, so he'll fit the role there too. He'll get a lot of playing time."

At the plate, Bonfe has pop in his bat that few players can match, given his size. Last season, in which his at-bats were limited by a thumb injury, he flashed his power potential by hitting three home runs. He's still looking for his first homer of this season, but has been productive. His eight RBIs are second on the team. What makes Bonfe's success at the plate more surprising is that he got all of nine at-bats at Creighton this spring.

"I've been practicing in the cages here and there but I haven't really seen a lot of live pitching," Bonfe said. "I had to quickly adjust to that, but it hasn't been a problem." After redshirting him in 2007, the Bluejays decided to make Bonfe into a starting pitcher this spring. The results weren't great, as Bonfe made seven appearances - three starts - and recorded a 1-2 record and an 8.03 ERA in 12.1 innings.

The role really didn't fit Bonfe, who considers himself a position player first and a reliever second - exactly how he's used in Eau Claire. Because of the limited action he saw at Creighton, Bonfe will be heading elsewhere to play college baseball. He said he'll likely end up at Sierra College, a community college in Sacramento, Calif. There he'll be able to play in the field regularly and get at-bats.

For now, though, he's just enjoying a more successful summer. "It's definitely a lot easier to play the second year," Bonfe said. "You can just relax and you know what to expect. There's no pressure or anything."



Photo by Marisa Wojcik

**Bonfe's .326 batting average in 2008 was fourth best in the Northwoods League.**

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# Head to Head Records



Year	Record	ALX	BRD	DUL	LAC	MAD	MNK	ROC	STC	TB	WAT	WIS	BC	GB
2005	28-40	2-2	2-2	2-2	5-7	1-7	2-2	2-6	3-1	1-3	5-3	3-5		
2006	29-38	1-3	4-0	2-2	3-9	5-3	1-2	1-7	1-3	3-1	6-2	2-6		
2007	42-26	4-0	X	2-2	6-2	5-3	X	3-1	0-4	3-1	4-4	5-3	6-2	4-4
<b>2008</b>	<b>33-35</b>	<b>3-1</b>	<b>3-1</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>5-3</b>	<b>6-2</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>0-4</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>4-4</b>	<b>2-6</b>	<b>4-4</b>	<b>2-6</b>
Totals	132-139	10-6	9-3	6-6	19-21	17-15	5-6	6-14	4-12	9-7	19-13	12-20	10-6	6-10

## Extra Inning Record

	Home Record			Road Record			One Run Record			Shutout Record					
	W	L	PCT	W	L	PCT	W	L	PCT	W	L	PCT			
2005	20	14	.588	8	26	.235	3	1	.750	10	7	.588	2	8	.200
2006	14	19	.424	15	19	.441	4	3	.571	13	14	.481	10	6	.625
2007	24	10	.706	18	16	.529	5	3	.625	18	10	.643	4	7	.364
<b>2008</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>.588</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>.382</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>.333</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>.375</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>.417</b>
Totals	78	57	.578	54	82	.397	13	9	.591	47	41	.534	21	28	.429

ALX-Alexandria Beetles, BC-Battle Creek Bombers, BRD-Brainard Blue Thunder, DUL-Duluth Huskies, GB-Green Bay Bullfrogs, LAC-La Crosse Loggers, MAD-Madison Mallards, MNK-Mankato MoonDogs, ROC-Rochester Honkers, STC-St. Cloud River Bats, TB-Thunder Bay Border Cats, WAT-Waterloo Bucks, WIS-Wisconsin Woodchucks.

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# 2008 Final Express Statistics

## W-L Record: 33-35

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PLAYER	AVG	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB	CS	SLG	OBP	E
Anderson, D.J.,3B	.077	10	26	0	2	0	0	0	3	4	6	0	0	.077	.200	4
Bonfe, Joe,3B	.326	57	193	36	63	15	1	5	42	20	28	9	1	.492	.392	11
Cales, David,1B	.254	20	71	13	18	2	0	1	16	10	13	2	0	.324	.341	6
*Calhoun, Kole,OF	.273	43	161	29	44	14	1	2	22	24	23	6	5	.410	.382	0
Colwell, Pat,OF	.210	21	62	6	13	0	0	0	5	6	10	1	1	.210	.279	2
Degamo, Braden,C	.277	35	119	14	33	10	1	1	19	10	23	1	2	.403	.344	3
*Fadness, Nolan,2B	.281	28	96	21	27	4	0	0	9	15	15	8	4	.323	.381	3
Holloway, Kyle,C	.253	51	182	27	46	6	0	3	24	19	35	1	2	.335	.335	2
Hopkins, Russ,1B	.199	51	146	16	29	5	0	4	21	17	39	3	1	.315	.285	7
Knight, Robbie,OF	.259	67	224	44	58	12	0	1	16	36	37	18	2	.326	.385	3
Knutson, Erik,OF	.357	16	42	8	15	1	1	0	5	9	6	7	1	.429	.481	0
Lee, Ryan,OF	.239	53	180	25	43	5	1	0	29	19	34	30	2	.278	.309	3
O'Sullivan, Ryan,SS	.192	45	146	19	28	8	1	5	24	20	51	8	1	.363	.287	11
Olson, Ronnie,2B	.282	10	39	6	11	1	0	0	6	5	2	1	1	.308	.348	2
*Piazza, Dominic,DH	.203	43	143	14	29	6	0	0	8	17	16	3	0	.245	.296	5
*Pinckard, Brooks,3B	.298	62	215	40	64	11	3	2	29	24	46	22	8	.405	.377	12
Ware, Landis,2B	.209	43	134	23	28	4	2	1	6	11	32	3	0	.291	.274	8
Wheelless, Cameron,3B	.118	15	34	4	4	0	0	0	4	5	6	1	0	.118	.231	5
All Others	.000		4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	.000	.000	11

Total-All Batters	.250	2217	555	11	288	426	31	.339	98
		346	104	25	271	124	.341		

PITCHER	W-L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SHO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	HR	HB	BB	SO	WP	AVG
Beard, Willie	2-2	4.35	21	0	0	0	3	41.1	36	23	20	4	5	22	41	3	.232
Bonfe, Joe	0-0	5.91	5	1	0	0	0	10.2	15	8	7	1	2	6	6	1	.349
*Calhoun, Kole	1-2	3.46	12	0	0	0	8	13.0	13	6	5	0	1	5	20	0	.277
Dyer, Shane	1-0	5.00	2	2	0	0	0	9.0	8	6	5	0	2	7	7	3	.242
*Ellison, Evan	0-2	8.49	5	3	0	0	0	11.2	16	13	11	0	1	9	5	0	.333
Goryl, J.D.	1-0	3.00	5	0	0	0	0	6.0	8	8	2	1	1	5	3	0	.308
Hellenbrand, Ross	0-0	2.57	3	0	0	0	1	7.0	7	2	2	0	0	3	5	3	.304
*Hines, Ryan	1-5	4.46	7	7	2	0	0	38.1	43	25	19	4	3	11	35	0	.279
Kendrick, Drew	2-3	3.93	14	2	0	0	1	34.1	27	24	15	0	1	18	34	0	.216
*Kennedy, Bobby	1-0	3.97	5	0	0	0	0	11.1	8	5	5	1	3	5	10	2	.200
Kessick, John	0-4	9.00	5	1	0	0	0	14.0	16	16	14	0	3	12	20	2	.286
*Kilcrease, Robert	4-3	3.84	10	10	1	0	0	61.0	56	29	26	3	5	38	58	2	.248
Leary, Drew	3-1	2.67	6	4	0	0	0	27.0	28	9	8	0	3	8	22	1	.275
Lenton, Patrick	2-2	4.70	7	3	0	0	1	23.0	17	12	12	0	0	15	30	2	.205
Mackey, Wade	2-1	5.34	7	6	0	0	0	32.0	38	23	19	2	1	14	24	0	.295
Mauldin, D.J.	3-1	2.64	8	7	2	0	0	47.2	43	20	14	2	3	14	41	4	.231
Odegaard, Chris	7-1	2.14	11	11	1	1	0	71.1	55	25	17	1	5	39	71	6	.212
Otto, Ryan	1-2	3.38	11	1	0	0	0	26.2	25	13	10	0	0	7	13	0	.260
Pinckard, Brooks	0-2	2.08	11	0	0	0	2	13.0	11	3	3	0	1	3	11	1	.234
*Reichenbach, J.D.	1-3	5.30	11	8	0	0	0	37.1	38	25	22	1	1	27	33	0	.275
Rubens, Jeremy	0-1	1.45	4	1	1	0	0	18.2	19	3	3	0	0	2	8	0	.275
Worthington, Adam	1-0	3.12	2	1	0	0	0	8.2	12	4	3	0	0	3	8	0	.375
All Others	0-0	1.47	10	0	0	0	3	18.1	12	5	3	1	3	6	22	1	.188

Total-All Pitchers	33-35	3.79	68	5	581.1	307	21	279	31	253
			7	19	551	245	44	527		

\* Bats Left for Batters, Throws Left for Pitchers # Switch-Hitter



# Team Records



## Single-Season Batting Records

Category		Name	School	Year
Average	<b>.326</b>	<b>Joe Bonfe</b>	<b>Creighton</b>	<b>2008</b>
RBI	<b>42</b>	<b>Joe Bonfe</b>	<b>Creighton</b>	<b>2008</b>
Runs Scored	54	Kole Calhoun	Yavapai	2007
Stolen Bases	38	Kraig Binick	New York Tech	2005
Hits	81	Kraig Binick	New York Tech	2005
Doubles	19	Kole Calhoun	Yavapai	2007
Triples	3	Erich Diedrich	Youngstown State	2005
	<b>3</b>	<b>Brooks Pinckard</b>	<b>Baylor</b>	<b>2008</b>
Home Runs	8	Jake Friday	Missouri	2005
Walks	<b>36</b>	<b>Robbie Knight</b>	<b>Creighton</b>	<b>2008</b>
At Bats	263	Kraig Binick	New York Tech	2005
Strikeouts	56	Kole Calhoun	Yavapai	2007
Games Played	<b>67</b>	<b>Robbie Knight</b>	<b>New York Tech</b>	<b>2008</b>

## Single-Season Pitching Records

Category		Name	School	Year
ERA	1.01	Jordan Zimmermann	UW-Stevens Point	2006
Wins	9	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha	2007
Games	29	Nick Fellman	MSU-Mankato	2005
Strikeouts	92	Jordan Zimmermann	UW-Stevens Point	2006
Walks	39	Jon Bjelland	MSU-Mankato	2005
	<b>39</b>	<b>Chris Odegaard</b>	<b>Minnesota St.-Mankato</b>	<b>2008</b>
Saves	14	Kole Calhoun	Yavapai	2007
Games Started	11	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha	2007
	<b>11</b>	<b>Chris Odegaard</b>	<b>Minnesota St.-Mankato</b>	<b>2008</b>
Losses	6	Nate Schwartz	Augustana	2005
	6	Thomas Eager	Cal-Poly	2005
Innings	80.1	Jordan Zimmermann	UW-Stevens Point	2006
Hits	72	Nate Schwartz	Augustana	2005
Runs Allowed	42	Kevin Libeg	Youngstown State	2005
Earned Runs	37	Nate Schwartz	Augustana	2005

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Express had 21 outfield assists in 2008, including gunning down 10 runners at home plate. Ryan Lee had 5 assists while Robbie Knight had 4 assists.

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# Team Records

## Career Batting Records

Category	Name	School	Year
Average	<b>.297</b>	<b>Joe Bonfe</b>	<b>Creighton</b>
RBI	<b>56</b>	<b>Kole Calhoun</b>	<b>Yavapai</b>
Runs Scored	89	Kraig Binick	New York Tech
Stolen Bases	64	Kraig Binick	New York Tech
Hits	145	Kraig Binick	New York Tech
Doubles	<b>34</b>	<b>Kole Calhoun</b>	<b>Yavapai</b>
Triples	3	Erich Diedrich	Youngstown State
Home Runs	<b>3</b>	<b>Brooks Pinckard</b>	<b>Baylor</b>
	8	Jake Friday	Missouri
	<b>8</b>	<b>Joe Bonfe</b>	<b>Creighton</b>
Walks	69	Bryan Frew	Nebraska-Omaha
At Bats	496	Kraig Binick	New York Tech
Strikeouts	111	Mike LaLuna	New York Tech
Games Played	128	Bryan Frew	Nebraska-Omaha
	128	Kraig Binick	New York Tech

## Career Pitching Records

Category	Name	School	Year
ERA	2.44	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha
Wins	14	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha
Games	52	Nick Fellman	MSU-Mankato
Strikeouts	129	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha
Walks	71	Jon Bjelland	MSU-Mankato
Saves	<b>22</b>	<b>Kole Calhoun</b>	<b>Yavapai</b>
Games Started	22	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha
Losses	9	Thomas Eager	Cal-Poly
Innings	158.2	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha
Hits	132	Tim Huber	Nebraska-Omaha
Runs Allowed	65	Jon Bjelland	MSU-Mankato
Earned Runs	53	Jon Bjelland	MSU-Mankato

## Top 5 Express Attendances

<b>July 4, 2007</b>	<b>La Crosse</b>	<b>5,659</b>
<b>July 4, 2008</b>	<b>St. Cloud</b>	<b>5,462</b>
<b>July 4, 2006</b>	<b>St. Cloud</b>	<b>5,257</b>
<b>July 4, 2005</b>	<b>Rochester</b>	<b>4,718</b>
<b>June 18, 2005</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>4,377</b>



# The Home of the Express

## Carson Park



### Stadium Facts:

**Stadium Name:** Carson Park

**Year Built:** 1937

**1st NWL Game Played at Stadium:** June 1, 2005

**Seating Capacity:** Grandstand: 1,000 people; Fan Deck: 650 people; Bleachers and Kids Area: 3,000 people; Total: 4,650.

**Ballpark Dimensions:** 326L, 388C, 302R

**Ticket Prices:** General Admission - \$5, Reserved Grandstand - \$6, Reserved Box - \$8, Fan Deck - \$30.

**Parking:** A large parking lot exists directly to the West of the stadium. Numerous auxiliary lots may be found throughout the park as well. Due to the high volume of events held in Carson Park, shuttle service from the Menomonie Street parking lot is occasionally available.



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## The Home of the Express

**Directions to Ballpark:** Carson Park Drive. Carson Park is a large city park on the near southwest side of town. From the North or the East, get onto Business Highway 53/Hastings Way. Take a right onto Main Street at the lights. Follow Main Street into downtown and turn left on S. Farwell Street at the lights. At the next set of lights, turn right onto Lake Street. Lake Street becomes Carson Park Drive once you cross over Half Moon Lake. From the South or the West, get onto Highway 12/Clairemont Avenue and head into town. Turn East onto Menomonie Street and take the next left (near the Dairy Queen) onto Carson Park Drive. The baseball stadium is at the center of the park with a large parking lot immediately to the West.

**Express demonstrate continued dedication to improving Carson Park Northwoods League presence has afforded opportunity for renovations**  
By Brett Schroedel, Eau Claire Express General Manager

Carson Park will be entering its 72nd season as the home of Eau Claire Baseball this summer. Through the years, the ballpark has seen many improvements to keep with the changing times. While the City has demonstrated continual dedication to keeping this facility the jewel of the park system, a majority of the changes over the last five years have been a direct result of the Northwoods League presence in Eau Claire.

The most noticeable change to Carson Park baseball stadium in the last five years has been the addition of the fan deck in right field. This five-tiered wooden structure added capacity to the stadium while also serving as an all-inclusive food and beverage location for fans enjoying Northwoods League baseball. The deck is designed to seat 650 people and is available to both groups and individuals. With catered barbecue and ballpark fare along with beer and soda, it is hard to find a better place to enjoy a summer evening watching Express baseball.

While the fan deck is tailored to entertaining the larger crowds that Express baseball draws, other renovations around the park and in the grandstand have benefited all users. In the first year of existence, the Express added a message display board above the scoreboard and upgraded the sound system to improve the overall baseball experience for fans of all teams. In the fall of 2006, the Express also added \$20,000 worth of bleacher-back seating to the grandstand, completing the project that was started in 1994. Each year the Express have improved upon the children's area in left field. This area includes playground equipment, inflatable rides,



**NORTHWOODS LEAGUE**  
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# The Home of the Express



city-installed batting cages and bleacher seating, all enclosed by protective netting to assure the safety of our young fans.

Most recently, the Express have improved the concession area by installing a commercial grill and fryers. These additions have allowed the Express to expand the menu choices, including fries, cheese curds, chicken strip baskets and Friday fish fries. The Express also created a beer garden in what was once the team apparel shop on the first base side of the concourse. The Rail Yard was created to serve a variety of beers and other concession items to alleviate the congestion near the main concession windows. It accomplished that and more, as it became a gathering place for baseball fans before and after the games to watch Major League Baseball games on the installed HD flat-screen television.

This year will see the expansion of the press box areas at Carson Park. Due to the increasing need to accommodate local media in a safe location away from the elements, as well as house radio and video broadcasting personnel and equipment, the Express will add a wing to each side of the existing press box on top of the grandstand. The expansions will match the existing press box in materials and design to keep a uniform look at the park.



Photo by Marisa Wojcik

Future projects planned in conjunction with the City include completion of the stadium lighting project, renovation of the dugout areas and the possibility of field turf.

It is clear to see the presence of Northwoods League baseball has contributed significantly to the improvements at Carson Park. Because these upgrades have been designed to be both user and fan friendly, everyone associated with Express baseball is confident the future of baseball in the Chippewa Valley is brighter than ever.

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## Express return 12 players in 2009

Team hopes to build on experience and familiarity

The Express will start the 2009 season with a solid foundation of 12 returning players, the most in the franchise's history. These players all made significant contributions in 2008 and give the Express the chance to start the season with valuable Northwoods League experience and familiarity with each other on the field - ingredients that may lead to a more successful summer.

Due to the large number of returning players, the starting infield for 2009 may be identical to that of 2008. Field Manager Dale Varsho is returning first baseman Joe Bonfe (Creighton), second basemen Nolan Fadness (UW-Oshkosh) and Landis Ware (Baylor), shortstop Ryan O'Sullivan (San Diego State), and third baseman Brooks Pinckard (Baylor).

Bonfe led all first basemen in the Northwoods League last season with a .326 batting average. Twenty one of his 63 hits were for extra bases, including five home runs. Bonfe also led the Express with 42 runs batted in. For his efforts, Bonfe received both the Rawlings Big Stick Award and a spot on the Northwoods League Post-Season All-Star Team.

A pair of sophomores returns to patrol the infield at second base. Fadness batted .281 (27-for-96) in 2008 and collected 21 runs and nine RBIs while only committing three errors in the field. Ware batted .207 (28-for-135) and scored 23 runs. He was second on the team with two triples and collected six RBIs.

Brett Tanos was one of the original roster members who never showed up in Eau Claire last season. O'Sullivan, his replacement and future teammate at San Diego State, filled in quite nicely. He started the season slowly, but gained momentum as August approached. While he only batted .192 (28-for-146) for the season, O'Sullivan demonstrated raw power at the end of July and early August, hitting a home run in four consecutive games. Eleven of his 24 RBIs came in that four-game stretch. With a year of college experience under his belt coming into the 2009 season, hopes are high that O'Sullivan will improve on his 2008 numbers.

Rounding out the returning infielders is Pinckard. Pinckard, a Mid-Season NWL All-Star selection, was in the top three for many



**Brooks Pinckard (Baylor)**

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## Express return 12 players in 2009 (cont.)



team batting categories in 2008 including: first in hits (64) and triples (3), second for batting average (.298) and runs (40), and tied for second in RBIs (29) and walks (24). Pinckard also saw some time on the mound in 2008, collecting two saves and a 2.08 earned run average. In 13 innings of work, Pinckard surrendered three runs on 11 hits and three walks while striking out 11 batters.

Another Express returning player who saw considerable time in both the field and on the mound is Kole Calhoun (Arizona State). Calhoun will be entering his third season with the Express. In 2007, he was named NWL Co-MVP with Green Bay's Daniel Robertson. That year, Calhoun collected 57 runs and 34 RBIs on 75 hits and 36 walks while patrolling right field. Twenty six of his hits went for extra bases, including an Express single-season record 20 doubles. On the mound, Calhoun was even more dominating, finishing the season with a 3-0 record and 14 saves. Due in large part to his 45 strikeouts in 24 innings pitched, opponents batted only .079 against Calhoun and earned only one earned run. His ERA was a low 0.38. Last season, Calhoun batted .273 and collected 22 RBIs while also going 1-2 on the mound with eight saves and a 3.46 ERA.

Calhoun will be joined in the outfield by Robbie Knight (Creighton). Knight batted .259 while playing centerfield in 2008. He led the team in runs (44), walks (36) and hit by pitches (11). Knight also collected 12 doubles, 16 RBIs and 18 stolen bases.

Rounding out the returning players are five pitchers: Robbie Kilcrease (Texas Tech), Chris Odegaard (UM-Mankato), Patrick Lenton (UM-Mankato), Jeremy Rubens (UW-Oshkosh) and Drew Kendrick (New Mexico).

Kilcrease was a starter for the Express in 2008. He finished second behind Odegaard in wins (4), strikeouts (58), and innings pitched (61.0). Kilcrease allowed 26 earned runs on 56 hits and 38 walks.

Odegaard, a Mid-Season and Post-Season NWL All-Star Selection in 2008, will be entering his third season with the Express as a starting pitcher. He has a career record of 8-1 and a career ERA of 1.90. In just under 86 innings of work, Odegaard has surrendered only 66 hits while striking out 91 batters.

Odegaard will be rejoined by Maverick teammate Pat Lenton. Lenton was a mid-season acquisition due to the heavy roster turnover. Lenton appeared in eight games including three starts. He finished the season with a 2-2 record and one save. Lenton posted a 4.05 ERA while striking out 34 batters in 26.2 innings of work.

Rubens, another mid-season acquisition, appeared in four games including one complete game appearance. In 18.2 innings pitched, Rubens allowed only three earned runs on 19 hits and two walks while striking out eight batters. He finished the season with a 0-1 record and an ERA of 1.45.

Kendrick will be playing his third season with the Express, having missed the 2007 season due to summer school after his rookie campaign in 2006. For his career, Kendrick is 3-3 with one save and a 3.59 ERA. He has struck out 50 batters and surrendered only 36 hits in 49 innings of work.

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# City Officials

## Dave Adler, *President* Eau Claire City Council



*"On behalf of the City of Eau Claire, welcome to our wonderful community and beautiful Carson Park. We are privileged to have the Express in Eau Claire for another thrilling season of Northwoods League Baseball. The Northwoods League is a wonderful asset to our community and provides a great opportunity for family and friends to come out and see outstanding baseball at an affordable price.*

*The Express draws spectators from miles around and allows visitors to experience the beauty of Eau Claire and all it has to offer. The players are great residents while they are here, and are great role models for our youth. The future of Major League Baseball is here now and we are extremely proud to have such talent in Eau Claire. We are excited for the fifth season of Eau Claire Express baseball as we continue to build on the success of the past. We look forward to yet another memorable season with the Express and hope our relationship with the Express and the Northwoods League continues for many more years to come."*

## Phil Fieber, *Director* Eau Claire Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department

*"The City of Eau Claire is proud to welcome you to the historic Carson Park Baseball Stadium. Our staff is excited to begin the 72nd season of baseball in this old stadium. Our crews pride themselves on the stadium and field and strive to make Carson the best place to play ball in the Northwoods League. This fifth season for the Eau Claire Express promises to be even more exciting for Eau Claire families.*

*We invite you to tour the stadium and the new Eau Claire Baseball Hall of Fame and Hank Aaron Plaza. Hammerin' Hank finally has some company in the plaza, with the recent addition of Hall of Fame members Herman White and "Ran" Bezanson - two key organizers of the first professional minor league here in Eau Claire.*

*Don't forget to visit other Carson Park attractions like the football stadium and the two summer semi-professional football teams, the Chippewa Valley Museum, the Paul Bunyan Logging Camp and the Chippewa Valley miniature Railroad Association. Carson Park is surrounded by an ancient ox-bow lake formed by the mighty Chippewa River and offers many opportunities for recreation enjoyment including canoeing and fishing.*

*Good luck to all Northwoods League players and we hope the fans enjoy your time at Carson Park!"*



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