

# The 2013 Spectator

You always get a special kick on opening day, no matter how many you go through. You look forward to it like a birthday party when you're a kid. You think something wonderful is going to happen.

2013 Preview Issue April 22, 2013



St Paul Saints to play the North Star League All-Stars

– 26 of the best players in the League from 10 different teams – will compete against the St. Paul Saints Sat., May 11 in an exhibition game hosted by the Delano Athletic Club.

The game will begin at 2:00 p.m. at Municipal Baseball Park in Delano, host of the 2013 State Tournament. The event is sponsored in partnership with Killebrew Root Beer.

Pre-sale tickets can be purchased for \$7 and the gates will open at noon.

Saints players will be participating in pre-game warm-ups and also a home run derby.

Tickets are available in Delano at All-Seasons Sports and The Delano City Hall.



### NSL All-Star Roster

Joey Althoff, Delano

Jeff Althoff, Delano

Matt Bergstrom, Maple Lake

Tyler Maher, Loretto

Adam Gregg, Maple Plain

Tyler Zwibohmer, D-C

Bobby Kneefe, Saint Michael

Isaac Nelson, Cokato

Justin Juergenson, Hutchinson

Kevin Jaunich, Delano

Graham Brown, Maple Lake

Jeremy Schmidt, Maple Lake

Adam McGrane, Loretto

KC Johnson, Maple Plain

Eric Schriefels, Howard Lake

Jason Lesser, Rockford

Kyle Messner, Hutchinson

Jeff Jarvis, Albertville

Andy Brown, Delano

Luke Fobbe, Maple Lake

Kent Koch, Loretto

Ben Smith, Maple Plain

Jordan Danielson, Dassel-Cokato

Mike Freske, Saint Michael

Eric Pokornowski, Cokato

Tim Thode, Hutchinson



### Changes for 2013

**B teams in the North Star League remain the same - Albertville, Elk River, Rogers and St Michael.**

**The Division standings will be decided by the home and home series between the four teams.**

**They will also play the other four Section 8 teams twice each,**

**Anoka, Big Lake, Champlin & Hamel to determine the standings and seedings for Section 8.**

### C teams to play a 22 game schedule

At the "C" level, Montrose/Waverly has been added as a 12th team.

All of the C teams will belong to one division, the Central Division.

Each of the twelve teams will play the other eleven teams twice this year



## The NORTH



# A

## ALBERTVILLE

2012 league record 3-3

The Villains enter the season with many question marks at this point. It appears they have quite a bit of turnover on the roster. NSL MVP Jeff Jarvis returns and is expected to be among the offensive leaders for Albertville. Shane McLaughlin returned after a 5 year hiatus and batted nearly .400 in 2012. Matt McNeil and Ben Shaven continue to improve. Albertville expects to compete and be right in the mix come playoff time. A bit of improvement is needed defensively, especially up the middle. Pitching should be improved, since their young arms are a year older.



## ELK RIVER

2012 league record 3-3

The Pioneers saw a ton of improvement last year as all the new players took a while to gel. Now they return most of those players including Aaron Pipenhagen, Cory Kaminski, Tucker Morrell, Harley Thompson, Jim Brown, Lance Johnson, Kam Crandall & Ben Hendrickson. The Pioneers have also added five new players – Brandon Meyer, Kyle Connelly, Aaron Daugherty, Brien Geerdes and Josh Sutonen. In order to improve their seeding and go farther in the playoffs, the Pioneers will need to improve their pitching and defense and hope for more consistent hitting.

He looks like a greyhound,  
but he runs like a bus.



## ST. MICHAEL

2012 league record 6-0

Expected to dominate the division and compete at the State level, the Saints return with Alex Naasz, Bobby Kneefe, Dane Carlson, Mike Frelske and Blake Schirmers still in their line-up. Blaine Barthel is back to anchor the staff. Nick Volkmann and Ben Schmitz will not return and Sam Boisner will be out due to shoulder surgery. The Saints will be strong again, scoring plenty. They could use depth both in the field and on the mound.

**The way to make coaches think you're in shape in the spring is to get a tan.**



## ROGERS

2012 league record 0-6

Being moved to Class B last year seemed to hurt the Red Devils more than most and 2013 appears to be a rebuilding year as they lost many of their veterans and will be trying to blend a number of new players into a team. Bryan McCallum, Jack Keisner, Justin Stewart, Dustin Carlson and Blake Shermer return. New are Ben Poidenser, Rob Fodness, Garrett Watters, Dustin Watters, Shawn Morris and John Weber

*The 16 coaches were asked to predict the order of finish for the upcoming season. Here are their predictions.*

### ***THE NORTH (Class B teams)***

- 1) St. Michael - Unanimous top choice
- 2) Albertville - Next best on most lists
- 3) Elk River - May be coming together
- 4) Rogers - re-building again with more youth



### ***THE CENTRAL (Class C teams)***

- 1) Maple Lake – state title makes them top choice.
- 2) Howard Lake - pitching makes them contender
- 3) Loretto - core group of a contending team all return
- 4) D-C - deep pitching staff
- 5) Maple Plain - relying on same veterans to carry load
- 6) Delano - hoping to do better than .500
- 7) Hutchinson - very close to MP and Delano
- 8) Cokato - Improving every year
- 9) Rockford - many veterans, could be better than predicted
- 10) Buffalo - young team with some potential
- 11) Mound - need help to improve on a disappointing 2012
- 12) Waverly - need time to build a winner



## MAPLE LAKE

2012 league record 15-5

The Lakers will return everyone from their State Championship team including Jeremy Schmidt, Mitch Wurm, Graham Brown, Luke Fobbe, Chad Raiche, Nate Johnson & Dusty and Riley Decker. In addition, the Lakers are adding Matt Bergstrom, Sam Marsnik and Matt Brown and expect contributions from Brian Redem-ske and Bert Marsnik. Maple Lake will be one of the fa-vorites for the league championship and will set their sights repeating as State Champs.

**The funny thing about these uniforms is that you hang them in the closet and they get smaller and smaller.**



## LORETTO

2012 league record 14-6

The Larks will look much the same as they have the last couple of years and again should be in contention for one of the top seeds in the league. Back again for 2013 are Brandon Scanlon, Eric Schutte, Tyler Maher, Kent Koch, Nick Koch, Adam McGrane, Ryan Schaut, Reed Pawelk, Herb Koch Jr. and Josh Hanson. Also returning to health after missing last year is Nathan Maher who should provide an additional arm on the mound and add to the Larks offense.



## HOWARD LAKE

2012 league record 15-5

The Orphans return Adam Koch and an experi-enced pitching staff that will likely keep them near the top of the league. They are expecting college players Cam Lehner and Cody Kielsa to make large contributions this year and have added Jason Mix, Ed Cox and Dan Wackler to their roster. Key players gone from their line up this year are Andrew Ghostly, Matt Donovan, Ben Borrell and Shane Heber. Again in 2013, Howard Lake remains one of a handful of teams that could win the league title.



## DASSEL-COKATO

2012 league record 14-6

The Saints should compete for the title with the depth of pitching on their staff. Tyler Zweibohner, Eric Hanson, Jordan Flick, Jordan Danielson all are back to pitch. Veteran returnees include Brent Opsahl, John Hohnstein, Brice Berggren, Andrew Carlson and Brandon Opsahl. Dan Birkholz returns and Lucas Larson will pitch and catch. D-C needs to replace Matt Bergstrom and Luke Peterson. They hope to use their team speed, hit better in the clutch and cut down on their strikeouts to help their offense.



## HUTCHINSON

2012 league record 12-8

The Huskies bring back a number of play-ers with a ton of experience. They should be strong in the infield, centerfield and catcher, but young and inexperienced in left and right. The staff consists of a number of good arms and their success may depend on someone stepping up as a closer. Hutchinson will need to show some improve-ment to compete for the title, they are more likely just a step behind the favorites.



## MAPLE PLAIN

2012 league record 11-9

The Diamond Devils return all of their veterans, Adam & Lee Gregg, KC Johnson, Ben Smith, Pat McPherson, Ryan Dwyer, Luke Hagen, Ryan Jakubov and Jeff Pitzenberger. Their line-up usually produces a lot of runs. On the mound, they will rely on more innings from pitch-ers Adam Jacobson and Darron Culbert to help them hold opponents down. Utility players, Sean Geelan and Matt Kolander will be added to the mix in 2013.



Minnesota Baseball Association

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## DELANO

2012 league record 10-10

The A's look to continue moving up the standings with a large core returning—Kevin & Adam Jaunich, Andy Brown, Jeff & Joey Althoff, Ryan Hayes, Aaron Swenson, Jay Stevens, Josh, Jay & Zach Muckenhirn, Justin Polak, Matt Arens, and Jud McKown. Joining them will be a couple of Delano High Seniors, Dean Halonen and Toby Hansen. The line up provides some consistent offense and Aaron Swenson and Joey Althoff are reliable on the mound. To go farther in 2013, the A's need the young pitchers to throw more quality innings and the defense to support the pitching staff.



## BUFFALO

2012 league record 4-16

Derek Bauer, Brett Renshaw, John Euerle, Jake Schmitz, John Eckstein and Jake Kounkel. Other players expected to contribute are Nick Mattson, JD O'Donnell and Keenan Brown. Many of their veterans have moved on, but they have a lot of young, raw talent returning. New catcher Colton Haight, coming off his freshman season at the University of Minnesota-Crookston, is expected to be a valuable addition. Infielders Kounkel and Schmitz are poised for breakout years, and we expect big things from both. We look for quality, reliable starting pitching from Euerle and Eckstein, as well as a bounce-back year at the plate from the veteran Bauer. Renshaw, Haight and O'Donnell could provide some much needed power in the lineup, while second-year players Nick Mattson and Keenan Brown will hopefully take the next step and become consistent contributors.



## MOUND

2012 league record 3-17

The Mallards key returning players are Pete Harrell, Nick Rettke and Pat Regan. Joining them on a full time basis are Cole Easley and David Engle. Mound is counting on Dan Hoy making improved contributions on the mound. The Mallards lost a lot of close games last year and count on winning some of those in 2013 to climb in the standings.



## COKATO

2012 league record 7-13

The Kings expect to continue their improvement of the last few years. They have raised their batting average and if they can collect more clutch hits, they expect to win more games. The Kings will rely on returning players Billy Aho, Eric Pokornowski, Cody Benson and Isaac Nelson. A mix of young players and veterans make the Kings a dangerous team to play. The goal for 2013 is to compete for a higher seed in the playoffs.



## ROCKFORD

2012 league record 5-15

The River Bandits return a lot of veteran ball players including Jason Lesser, Jake Gleason, Cole Hanson, Dusty Littlefield, Ben Fontana, Ian Keen and Andy Jorges. In addition Andy Brenner comes over from Cologne. Rockford's line up should be formidable and hit for a high average. Many of their games last year were lost by one bad play or one bad inning. If they can be more consistent defensively and on the mound, the Bandits could make a big jump in the win column.

Us ballplayers do things backward.  
First we play,  
then we retire and go to work

## WAVERLY/MONTROSE

2012 league record—None

2013 is the initial season for the Waverly/Montrose Stingers. They will rely heavily on the 6 players with Town Team experience, Kirby & Robb Moynagh, Travis Bickman, John Peterson, Jason Frey and Jeff Holt. The Stingers are hoping to use their speed to create offense and make plays defensively. Their lack of experience on the mound is expected to be a major weakness and like most first year teams hope to remain competitive, but will probably struggle to win a lot of games.