**Jack Banks**

**All-WAR Team**

While Major League Baseball’s greatest stars travelled west for the 2022 All-Star Game in Los Angeles, the Northwoods League’s best and brightest competed in the league’s annual All-Star Game Tuesday in Wisconsin Rapids, WI. The squads were selected through league-wide vote, and although each all-star has shined on the field, some of the league’s best players were left out of the festivities.

All-Star snubs are a common occurrence. St. Louis Cardinals’ second baseman Tommy Edman has enjoyed a breakout season, putting up 4.5 rWAR, the third highest total of all major league position players. Dylan Cease has twirled an MLB leading 150 strikeouts to go along with a 2.15 ERA. Due to the nature of Northwoods League voting, many players have flown under the radar, lacking flashy numbers but putting up strong advanced metrics.

In observance of this, I have created brand new All-WAR teams, using the same roster size and structure as the Northwoods League, just with my created Win Above Replacement as the only factor in selection.

**Great Lakes Division**

**All-WAR All Stars –** These players have made both the Northwoods League All-Star team and my honorary All-WAR team.

**C Matthew DePrey – Lakeshore Chinooks via Xavier University**

*.357/.419/.531, 5 HR 29 RBI,* ***1.5 WAR***

**C Josh Caron – Madison Mallards via University of Nebraska**

*.288/.389/.466, 6 HR 28 RBI,* ***1.5 WAR***

**1B Brendan Bobo – Wisconsin Rapids Rafters via CSU Fullerton**

*.282/.422/.530, 11 HR 37 RBI,* ***2.0 WAR***

**SS Ben Ross – Wisconsin Rapids Rafters via Notre Dame College**

*.421/.502/.649, 10 HR 39 RBI,* ***3.7 WAR***

**SS Griffin O’Ferrall – Kalamazoo Growlers via University of Virginia**

*.343/.452/.448, 1 HR 23 RBI,* ***1.5 WAR***

**OF Nick Mitchell – Fond du Lac Dock Spiders via Western Illinois University**

*.379/.417/.516, 1 HR 36 RBI,* ***2.4 WAR***

**OF Patrick Mills – Battle Creek Battle Jacks via Indiana University Kokomo**

*.291/.402/.445, 2 HR 35 RBI,* ***1.7 WAR***

**OF Garrett Martin – Lakeshore Chinooks via Oklahoma State University**

*.295/.461/.562, 8 HR 29 RBI,* ***1.7 WAR***

**RHP Clark Candiotti – Kenosha Kingfish via Wichita State University**

*50 IP, 2.70 ERA 1.32 WHIP 3.43 FIP,* ***1.5 WAR***

**LHP Eric Chalus – Lakeshore Chinooks via Kent State University**

*38 IP, 1.89 ERA 0.82 WHIP 2.77 FIP,* ***1.4 WAR***

**LHP Aren Gustafson – Traverse City Pit Spitters via Olivet Nazarene University**

*45 IP, 3.00 ERA 1.24 WHIP 3.30 FIP,* ***1.4 WAR***

**RHP Ty Rybarczyk – Rockford Rivets via University of Illinois**

*44.2 IP, 1.61 ERA 0.90 WHIP 3.56 FIP,* ***1.3 WAR***

**LHP Kyle Seebach – Rockford Rivets via Northern Illinois University**

*44.2 IP, 2.42 ERA 1.34 WHIP 3.52 FIP,* ***1.3 WAR***

**LHP Derek Clark – Traverse City Pit Spitters via Northwood University**

*41.2 IP, 2.38 ERA 0.79 WHIP 3.19 FIP,* ***1.2 WAR***

**RHP Dylan Carter – Green Bay Rocker via University of Arkansas**

*53.2 IP, 2.85 ERA 1.01 WHIP 4.44 FIP,* ***1.1 WAR***

**All-WAR Snubs**

**C Hunter Dorraugh – Wausau Woodchucks via San Jose State University**

*.320/.463/.523, 6 HR 22 RBI,* ***1.9 WAR***

--to replace--

**1B Jacob Igawa – Wisconsin Rapids Rafters via University of Hawaii**

*.279/.355/.394, 4 HR 36 RBI,* ***0.6 WAR***

**2B Fisher Pyatt – Battle Creek Battle Jacks via San Diego State University**

*.241/.418/.353, 2 HR 23 RBI,* ***1.1 WAR***

--to replace--

**2B Sam Kirkpatrick – Kalamazoo Growlers via Belmont University**

*.291/.415/.355, 1 HR 23 RBI,* ***0.9 WAR***

**3B Liam Moreno – Madison Mallards via Missouri State University**

*.321/.467/.381, 1 HR 9 RBI,* ***1.1 WAR***

--to replace--

**3B Grant Broussard – Wisconsin Rapids Rafters via Utah Valley University**

*.235/.321/.347, 3 HR 30 RBI,* ***0.1 WAR***

**OF Trey Lipsey – Kalamazoo Growlers via Ohio State University**

*.340/.489/.490, 1 HR 18 RBI,* ***2.0 WAR***

--to replace--

**OF Ty Crittenberger – Rockford Rivets via Western Kentucky University**

*.278/.424/.424, 3 HR 27 RBI,* ***1.2 WAR***

**OF Parker Stinson – Kenosha Kingfish via Indiana State University**

*.302/.442/.487, 4 HR 24 RBI,* ***2.0 WAR***

--to replace--

**3B Matthew Mebane – Rockford Rivets via South Georgia State College**

*.251/.303/.425, 7 HR 40 RBI,* ***-0.3 WAR***

**OF Ryan Dykstra – Kalamazoo Growlers via Oakland University**

*.268/.455/.362, 0 HR 28 RBI,* ***1.7 WAR***

--to replace--

**3B Brent Widder – Wausau Woodchucks via University of Evansville**

*.291/.392/.404, 2 HR 20 RBI,* ***0.9 WAR***

**1B Owen Jackson – Green Bay Rockers via University of Toledo**

*.346/.470/.593, 4 HR 20 RBI,* ***1.4 WAR***

--to replace--

**1B Grant Hussey – Fond du Lac Dock Spiders via West Virginia University**

*.263/.327/.444, 4 HR 24 RBI,* ***0.3 WAR***

**RHP Dan Wright – Madison Mallards via Iowa Western Community College**

*37 IP, 1.46 ERA 0.89 WHIP 2.36 FIP,* ***1.5 WHIP***

--to replace--

**RHP Mitch Mueller – Lakeshore Chinooks via Parkland College**

*21 IP, 0.86 ERA 0.86 WHIP 2.56 FIP,* ***0.6 WAR***

**RHP Ross Thompson – Rockford Rivets via Heidelberg University**

*48.1 IP, 5.03 ERA 1.39 WHIP 3.35 FIP,* ***1.5 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Grant Manning – Wisconsin Rapids Rafters via Chapman University**

*29 IP, 1.86 ERA 0.86 WHIP 3.59 FIP,* ***0.7 WAR***

**RHP Caleb Lanoux – Battle Creek Battle Jacks via Middle Georgia State University**

*38 IP, 2.61 ERA 1.18 WHIP 2.51 FIP,* ***1.1 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Grayson Thurman – Kenosha Kingfish via Lynchburg University**

*26 IP, 0.69 ERA 1.19 WHIP 3.00 FIP,* ***0.6 WAR***

**RHP Mason Patel – Traverse City Pit Spitters via Georgia State University**

*32.1 IP, 3.62 ERA 1.27 WHIP 3.38 FIP,* ***1.0 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Bryce Woody – Madison Mallards via Lincoln Memorial University**

*24.2 IP, 2.19 ERA 1.14 WHIP 2.66 FIP,* ***0.7 WAR***

**RHP Scott Rouse – Lakeshore Chinooks via Ohio Dominican University**

*35 IP, 2.57 ERA 1.29 WHIP 3.66 FIP,* ***1.0 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Steven Lacey – Madison Mallards via Delta State University**

*23.1 IP, 1.93 ERA 0.73 WHIP 3.61 FIP,* ***0.4 WAR***

Finally, the Great Lakes Division has one additional pitcher, Richard Kiel, in order to represent the Kokomo Jackrabbits. Instead of just removing this player, I will replace him with Kokomo’s leader in WAR, Hector Garcia, who was on pace to make the All-WAR team before his summer ended early.

**RHP Hector Garcia – Kokomo Jackrabbits via Hope International University**

*25.2 IP, 2.81 ERA 1.87 WHIP 2.40 FIP,* ***0.8 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Richard Kiel – Kokomo Jackrabbits via Menlo College**

*36.1 IP, 5.70 ERA 1.46 WHIP 4.70 FIP,* ***0.3 WAR***

**Great Plains Division**

**All-WAR All Stars –** These players have made both the Northwoods League All-Star team and my honorary All-WAR team.

**C Drey Dirksen – Willmar Stingers via Augustana University**

*.295/.396/.508, 7 HR 31 RBI,* ***1.0 WAR***

**3B Trevor Austin – St. Cloud Rox via Mercer University**

*.326/.453/.404, 1 HR 29 RBI,* ***1.4 WAR***

**SS Kristian Campbell – Duluth Huskies via Georgia Institute of Technology**

*.351/.461/.481, 2 HR 36 RBI,* ***2.1 WAR***

**OF Sean Ross – Mankato MoonDogs via Indiana State University**

*.406/.500/.631, 7 HR 43 RBI,* ***3.2 WAR***

**OF John Nett – St. Cloud Rox via St. Cloud State University**

*.383/.505/.521, 3 HR 23 RBI,* ***2.8 WAR***

**OF Ryan Guardino – Waterloo Bucks via Tennessee Tech University**

*.343/.459/.540, 8 HR 35 RBI,* ***2.3 WAR***

**OF Nico Regino – Rochester Honkers via Charleston Southern University**

*.339/.461/.435, 1 HR 22 RBI,* ***1.4 WAR***

**OF Landon Wallace – La Crosse Loggers via West Virginia University**

*.315/.420/.508, 4 HR 24 RBI,* ***1.2 WAR***

**RHP Jack Habeck – Willmar Stingers via St. Cloud State University**

*54.1 IP, 1.33 ERA 0.98 WHIP 4.14 FIP,* ***1.3 WAR***

**RHP Sam Malec – Willmar Stingers via University of Minnesota**

*43.2 IP, 4.95 ERA 1.51 WHIP 4.54 FIP,* ***0.8 WAR***

**All-WAR Snubs**

**C Michael Carico – Rochester Honkers via Davidson College**

*.263/.482/.447, 3 HR 18 RBI,* ***1.4 WAR***

--to replace--

**C Eduardo Rosario – Duluth Huskies via University of Nebraska Omaha**

*.333/.409/.404, 0 HR 30 RBI,* ***0.7 WAR***

**1B Will Hodo – Willmar Stingers via University of Alabama**

*.294/.423/.505, 4 HR 26 RBI,* ***1.2 WAR***

--to replace--

**1B Charlie Condon – St. Cloud Rox via University of Georgia**

*.274/.356/.486, 7 HR 49 RBI,* ***0.8 WAR***

**2B Brice Matthews – St. Cloud Rox via University of Nebraska**

*.286/.470/.504, 5 HR 22 RBI,* ***2.0 WAR***

--to replace--

**2B Boston Merila – Mankato MoonDogs via University of Minnesota**

*.308/.415/.375, 1 HR 15 RBI,* ***0.8 WAR***

**SS A.J. Barraza – Bismarck Larks via CSU San Bernadino**

*.255/.474/.292, 0 HR 13 RBI,* ***1.4 WAR***

--to replace--

**SS Cameron Cromer – Waterloo Bucks via University of Northern Colorado**

*.305/.396/.336, 0 HR 11 RBI,* ***0.5 WAR***

**2B Jonathan Vastine – Duluth Huskies via Vanderbilt University**

*.305/.491/.451, 1 HR 10 RBI,* ***1.3 RBI***

--to replace--

**2B Ben Vujovich – Minnesota Mud Puppies via University of St. Thomas**

*.325/.418/.429, 1 HR 16 RBI,* ***0.7 WAR***

**OF Carson Hornung – La Crosse Loggers via University of South Carolina**

*.311/.435/.481, 2 HR 25 RBI,* ***1.4 WAR***

-to replace--

**OF Tai Walton – Waterloo Bucks via University of Hawaii**

*.281/.360/.461, 2 HR 10 RBI,* ***0.4 WAR***

**OF Ethan Mann – St. Cloud Rox via Dallas Baptist University**

*.261/.430/.500, 5 HR 31 RBI,* ***1.13 WAR***

--to replace--

**OF Joey Walls – Willmar Stingers via University of Nevada Las Vegas**

*.267/.340/.474, 5 HR 26 RBI,* ***0.6 WAR***

**RHP Donovan Schultz – Mankato MoonDogs via University of Evansville**

*38.1 IP, 2.11 ERA 1.04 WHIP 2.94 FIP,* ***1.4 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Hunter Day – St. Cloud Rox via Tarleton State University**

*36 IP, 2.75 ERA 1.28 WHIP 5.87 FIP,* ***0.3 WAR***

**RHP Drew Buhr – Mankato MoonDogs via Bellarmine University**

*36.1 IP, 4.21 ERA 1.21 WHIP 3.37 FIP,* ***1.2 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Thaniel Trumper – Rochester Honkers via Doane College**

*19.2 IP, 3.20 ERA 1.17 WHIP 2.92 FIP,* ***0.5 WAR***

**RHP Jake Hamilton – Duluth Huskies via Oklahoma Baptist University**

*30 IP, 2.70 ERA 1.23 WHIP 2.97 FIP,* ***1.1 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Jake Christianson – Duluth Huskies via Feather River College**

*21.2 IP, 0.83 ERA 0.69 WHIP 1.87 FIP,* ***0.76 WAR***

**RHP Joseph Battaglia – St. Cloud Rox via Southern University and A&M College**

*33.1 IP, 1.89 ERA 1.14 WHIP 3.37 FIP,* ***1.1 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Tyson Neighbors – Mankato MoonDogs via Kansas State University**

*17 IP, 1.06 ERA 1.00 WHIP 2.98 FIP,* ***0.4 WAR***

**RHP David Rodriguez – Rochester Honkers via San Joaquin Delta College**

*32 IP, 3.66 ERA 1.34 WHIP 2.53 FIP,* ***1.1 WAR***

--to replace--

**LHP Edwin Colon – Bismarck Larks via Northwestern Oklahoma State University**

*18.2 IP, 2.41 ERA 1.82 WHIP 4.95 FIP,* ***0.1 WAR***

**RHP Devin Dodson – Duluth Huskies via Friends University**

*43 IP, 3.77 ERA 1.26 WHIP 4.24 FIP,* ***1.0 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Matt Helwig – Eau Claire Express via Lewis University**

*22 IP, 0.00 ERA 0.68 WHIP 2.99 FIP,* ***0.5 WAR***

**LHP Connor Harrison – La Crosse Loggers via University of Hawaii**

*40 IP, 4.73 ERA 1.35 WHIP 3.93 FIP,* ***1.0 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP Chase Grillo – St. Cloud Rox via Washington State University**

*13.2 IP, 1.32 ERA 0.73 WHIP 3.01 FIP,* ***0.3 WAR***

**RHP Pat Miner – Duluth Huskies via Arkansas Tech University**

*44 IP, 4.70 ERA 1.41 WHIP 4.06 FIP,* ***0.9 WAR***

--to replace--

**LHP Chase Chatman – La Crosse Loggers via Florida Southwestern State College**

*35.2 IP, 4.29 ERA 1.40 WHIP 4.96 FIP,* ***0.5 WAR***

**RHP Ryan Jares – Willmar Stingers via Augustana University**

*23 IP, 2.74 ERA 1.17 WHIP 2.82 FIP,* ***0.9 WAR***

--to replace--

**RHP John Klein – Willmar Stingers via Iowa Central Community College**

*29 IP, 3.72 ERA 1.48 WHIP 5.24 FIP,* ***0.3 WAR***

**LHP Owen Boerema – Mankato MoonDogs via Kansas State University**

*23 IP, 0.78 ERA 0.74 WHIP 2.73 FIP,* ***0.834 WAR***

--to replace--

**LHP Nathan Culley – St. Cloud Rox via Minnesota State University Mankato**

*28.2 IP, 2.51 ERA 1.36 WHIP 3.65 FIP,* ***0.829 WAR***

Similar to Kokomo in the Great Lakes division, my All-WAR team has left out a couple Great Plains teams: Minnesota Mud Puppies (6-17) and Eau Claire Express (28-18). Minnesota only plays a 36 game road schedule to account for the dormant Thunder Bay Border Cats (Canadian COVID restrictions), making it difficult for players to accumulate enough WAR to keep up with the rest of the league. Surprisingly, Eau Claire did not have a representative despite their record, although their 24-22 expected Pythagorean record (+4 xLuck) gives reason to be bearish.

In fairness, I will mention each team’s current WAR leader.

**OF Cadyn Schwabe – Eau Claire Express via North Dakota State University**

*.294/.436/.353, 2 HR 12 RBI****, 1.05 WAR***

**1B Jackson Hauge – Minnesota Mud Puppies via Minnesota State University Mankato**

*.329/.438/.487, 2 HR 13 RBI,* ***0.8 WAR***

So, what creates the divide between All-WAR and All-Star? The league’s best players have no issue making it on to both teams, but that was not the case for 31 of the 54 All-WAR players.

The first cause is player availability. In summer ball, by nature, players will come and go all season, often seeing their season cut short for personal reasons or at their collegiate coach’s desire. This is seen most often in pitchers, as Madison’s Dan Wright and Mankato’s Donovan Schultz are two of the many inactive players on the All-WAR team.

Park factors are certainly overlooked in the voting process, and the most extreme example of this can be found in Ty Crittenberger of the Rockford Rivets. Rockford is by far the most hitter friendly ballpark, with an offensive factor of 118.8 and defensive of 120.3. (100 is league average, with higher values indicating increased offense, likely due to park dimensions, elevation, weather, etc.). Let’s take a look at how Crittenberger’s WAR would change if he put up the exact same numbers in a neutral ballpark.

**OF Ty Crittenberger – Rockford Rivets via Western Kentucky University**

*.278/.424/.424, 3 HR 27 RBI,* ***1.2 WAR -> 1.7 WAR (All-WAR level!)***

For position players, voters may also be looking at the wrong metrics. Batting average is very prominent in the eyes of most fans, leading them to overlook players with a high on-base percentage. A strong example of this can be seen in the Great Lakes division with Fisher Pyatt and Grant Broussard.

**2B Fisher Pyatt – Battle Creek Battle Jacks via San Diego State University**

*.241/.418/.353, 2 HR 23 RBI,* ***1.1 WAR*** *(155 PA)*

**3B Grant Broussard – Wisconsin Rapids Rafters via Utah Valley University**

*.235/.321/.347, 3 HR 30 RBI,* ***0.1 WAR*** *(194 PA)*

The two players have near identical batting average, slugging percentage, home run rates (Pyatt 1.3%, Broussard 1.5%), weighted stolen bases (Pyatt -0.79, Broussard -1.25), home park factors (Pyatt 92.6, Broussard 94.9). Broussard has played a longer season, with 39 more plate appearances, allowing him more opportunities to accumulate WAR. Despite all of this, Pyatt looks like an all-star while Broussard is near replacement level. This has everything to do with each player’s ability to draw walks. Pyatt’s elite 20% walk rate is 8th in the entire Northwoods League among qualified hitters, while Broussard’s 7.7% is 99th (out of 108). To further prove my point, 7 of the top 10 players in BB% are on the All-WAR team.

Finally, my metric may be negatively affecting relief pitchers. Following the methodology of Fangraphs, the replacement adjustment for starting pitchers is more generous than it is for relievers. This is because an injury to a starting pitcher may result in a new starter being called up from Triple A, which can be a drastic difference in quality. An injury to a closing pitcher does not result in a new closer from Triple A, instead the 8th inning man will likely assume the role. While the Northwoods League does not have a minor league, there are new players being called in as replacements daily. Fangraphs aids relivers slightly with Leverage Index, but the collection of that data would be tiresome and potentially inaccurate. Instead, workhorse starting pitchers have taken their spot on the All-WAR team after throwing 40+ quality innings.

After all, WAR doesn’t always measure a player’s skill, it measures how many wins their contributions on the field add to a team’s total. Naturally, batters with more plate appearances and pitchers with more innings will produce higher WAR totals.

Check back later for in-depth articles on how I calculated WAR for the Northwoods League, as well as other metrics such as Expected Pythagorean Standings and Win Probability Added.