

Top-10 Pitchers of the Decade (2000-09)

The first decade of the 21st Century was a great one for the Boise Hawks Baseball Club - two Northwest League championships, four East Division titles, a bevy of future Major League talent that played on the Memorial Stadium grounds. However, after polling Hawks staff, members of the media, and the fans, it is time to reveal the second Top-10 of the Decade...the Top-10 Boise Hawks Pitchers from 2000-09

10. Rocky Cherry (2003)

The big Texan, who actually pitched collegiately at the University of Oklahoma, was the Hawks Opening Night starter in 2003, picking up a victory over the Tri-City Dust Devils. Cherry would make ten starts for the Hawks before a call up to Lansing, going 5-2 and was among the Northwest League's leaders in ERA at the midway point of the season. He would make his Major League debut with the Cubs in 2007 and spend 2008 with the Baltimore Orioles. Last year, Cherry split time between Pawtucket (Red Sox) and Portland (Padres), a pair of AAA affiliates. He is currently a free agent.

'03 HAWKS	5-2	2.17 ERA	10 APP	54 IP	18 BB	55 K
MINORS CAREER	22-16	3.71 ERA	200 APP	431 IP	162 BB	385 K
MLB CAREER	1-4	5.77 ERA	40 APP	48 IP	35 BB	38 K



9. Jeremy Papelbon (2006)

The younger brother of All Star closer, Jonathan Papelbon, the 19th Round pick out of North Florida had a banner 2006 season for the Hawks. Got off to a banner start as a professional, picking up two wins and two saves in his first six appearances, without allowing a run during the 18 inning stretch. He was named to the Northwest League Postseason All-Star Team as the Left-handed Reliever, helping the Hawks to an East Division pennant. Last year, he spent most of the season at AA Tennessee, while making a pair off appearances at AAA Iowa.

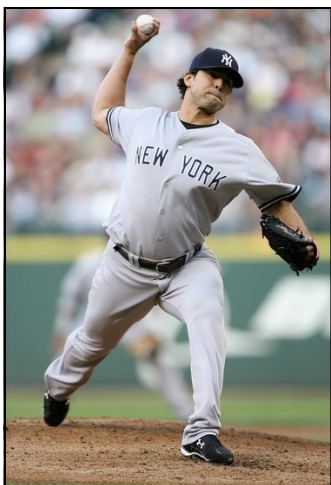
'06 HAWKS	4-0	1.83 ERA	18 APP	44 IP	15 BB	50 K
MINORS CAREER	21-13	2.99 ERA	128 APP	333 IP	98 BB	279 K
MLB CAREER	*** Has not made his MLB Debut ***					

8. Darin Downs (2004-06)

A three year member of the Hawks, Downs made his debut with Boise during the 2004 season as a 19-year-old and helped the squad to the Northwest League title, winning Game 1 of the League Championship Series over Vancouver. The following season, Downs went 5-4 with a 3.50 ERA, earning NWL All-Star honors. In 2006, Downs split the season between Boise and Peoria. He was picked up last year by the Tampa Bay Rays and had his best season as a professional, going 12-4 at Advanced-A, however, in his second start at AA Montgomery, was struck in the head with a line drive and continues to recover from the injury. It is uncertain whether Downs will pitch this season.

'04-06 HAWKS	14-9	4.34 ERA	37 APP	145 IP	59 BB	148 K
MINORS CAREER	32-32	4.22 ERA	159 APP	460 IP	168 BB	436 K
MLB CAREER	*** Has not made his MLB Debut ***					





7. Sergio Mitre (2001)

One of three pitchers on this list from that talent-laden 2001 Hawks staff that sent five arms to the big leagues, Mitre had an outstanding season, logging eight wins and recording just 18 walks in 91 innings, helping Boise to the East Division pennant. Just two years later, he would make his Major League debut with the Cubs, and over seven seasons (including missing the 2008 due to injury), has spent time with the Cubs, Florida Marlins, and now, the New York Yankees.

'01 HAWKS	8-4	3.07 ERA	15 APP	91 IP	18 BB	71 K
MINORS CAREER	40-34	3.09 ERA	110 APP	643 IP	155 BB	492 K
MLB CAREER	13-26	5.56 ERA	90 APP	362 IP	121 BB	220 K

6. Jerry Blevins (2004, 2006)

Had one of the more amazing second half of a season for the Hawks in 2004, not allowing a run over his final 15 appearances, spanning 22 innings - while opponents' hit just .145 against the lefty. Blevins picked up a save in all three Northwest League Championship Series games, striking out the final batter in the clincher vs. Vancouver. Spent a portion of 2006 with Boise to try a new delivery, but after being traded in 2007, has spent part of the last three seasons up with the Oakland Athletics.

'04-'06 HAWKS	7-4	3.26 ERA	39 APP	53 IP	29 BB	61 K
MINORS CAREER	22-21	3.66 ERA	229 APP	322 IP	114 BB	374 K
MLB CAREER	1-4	4.18 ERA	62 APP	64 IP	21 BB	61 K



5. Jeff Samardzija (2006)

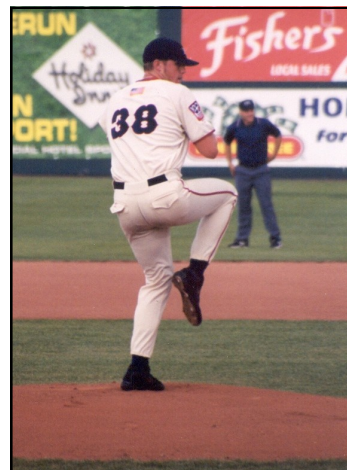
"The Shark" landed in Boise after being drafted by the Cubs in the 5th Round—that after a stellar junior season in football at Notre Dame. Outside of all of the media blitz, Samardzija was solid for the Hawks, going 1-1 with a 2.37 ERA in five appearances, before being called up to Peoria. He advanced quickly through the farm system, making an impressive debut with the Cubs in 2008, posting a 2.28 ERA in 26 appearances. After bouncing between the big club and AAA Iowa last year, he is one of the No. 5 starter candidates in 2010.

'06 HAWKS	1-4	2.37 ERA	5 APP	19 IP	6 BB	13 K
MINORS CAREER	20-25	4.28 ERA	77 APP	374 IP	141 BB	237 K
MLB CAREER	2-3	5.20 ERA	46 APP	62 IP	30 BB	46 K

4. Andy Sisco (2002)

Sisco was one of 12 players from the 2002 Northwest League champions to make it to the Major Leagues, and his season with the Boise Hawks helped propel him. The tall-lefty went 7-2 with 101 strikeouts on the season, and picking up a win in Game 1 of the NWL Championship Series against Everett. Following the 2004 season, he was selected in the Major League portion of the Rule 5 draft and spent the entire 2005 season with the Kansas City Royals, making 67 appearances in relief, with a 3.11 ERA. Sisco spent 2006 with the Royals and 2007 with the White Sox, before injuries sidelined his career. He last pitched at AAA Charlotte in 2007.

'02 HAWKS	7-2	2.48 ERA	14 APP	77 IP	39 BB	101 K
MINORS CAREER	21-26	3.81 ERA	95 APP	415 IP	190 BB	447 K
MLB CAREER	3-9	5.18 ERA	151 APP	147 IP	93 BB	141 K





3. Angel Guzman (2001)

It was quite possibly one of the more dominant starting rotations in the history of the Northwest League, and Guzman was definitely in the middle of it. The right-handed Venezuelan

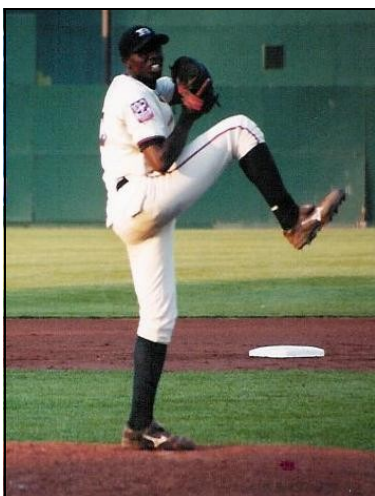
made his professional debut in Boise and quickly showed why he was one of the top prospects in the organization, going 9-1 on the season with a 2.23 ERA, earning Northwest League right-handed starter of the year, helping the squad to an East Division pennant. Guzman would quickly ascend the Cubs ladder, but injuries have plagued his career until 2009, when he had a breakthrough season with the Cubs, going 3-3 with a 2.95 ERA. Will begin 2010 as the Cubs right-handed set-up man.

'01 HAWKS	9-1	2.23 ERA	14 APP	76 IP	19 BB	63 K
MINORS CAREER	31-20	3.00 ERA	102 APP	498 IP	135 BB	460 K
MLB CAREER	3-10	4.82 ERA	88 APP	157 IP	73 BB	143 K

2. Ricky Nolasco (2002)

Spent the entire 2002 season with the Hawks, part of a starting staff that led the NWL in ERA (3.10). Logged 92 strikeouts in 90 innings of work, going 7-2 on the season, helping Boise a three-game sweep of Everett in the NWL League Championship Series. After three quality seasons in the Cubs system, was traded to the Florida Marlins. Made his MLB debut with the Marlins in 2006, going 11-11, but had his best season in 2008, going 15-8 with a 3.52 ERA. Will begin the 2010 season as the No. 2 starter in the Marlins rotation.

'02 HAWKS	7-2	2.48 ERA	15 APP	90 IP	25 BB	92 K
MINORS CAREER	43-22	3.61 ERA	115 APP	615 IP	186 BB	613 K
MLB CAREER	40-30	4.43 ERA	105 APP	558 IP	136 BB	491 K



1. Dontrelle Willis (2001)

No other player over the last decade has had the success that the D-Train has had—with his roots engrained in Boise. Willis was the No. 1 starter for the East Division champion Hawks team in 2001, going 8-2 in 15 starts, earning NWL All-Star honors as the left-handed starting pitcher. However, he did not make a name for himself until being traded to the Florida Marlins at the start of 2003 - getting an early season call-up and earned NL Rookie of the Year honors, helping Florida to a World Series title over the Yankees. A two-time NL All-Star, he was traded to the Detroit Tigers in 2008 and is in his final year of a three-year contract.

'01 HAWKS	8-2	2.98 ERA	15 APP	93 IP	19 BB	77 K
MINORS CAREER	30-9	2.64 ERA	66 APP	372 IP	85 BB	297 K
MLB CAREER	69-60	4.02 ERA	177 APP	1080 IP	407 BB	792 K

Other pitchers that just missed the Top-10 included major leaguers Sean Marshall, Jae-Kuk Ryu, and Rich Hill, along with Luke Hagerty, Matt Hines, J.R. Mathes, Andrew Cashner, Andy Mejia, and Bubba O'Donnell. Special thanks to Julie Takeuchi for the archived photos of Hawks players. Here's to another outstanding decade of Boise Hawks Baseball in HawksTown U.S.A.

