

Indiana Draft Prospects

Every June, Major League Baseball holds their annual First Year Player Draft in Secaucus, New Jersey. The draft is forty rounds full of hope and expectations. During the draft, General Managers and Scouting Directors from around the league make decisions that will shape their respected organizations for years to come. Area scouts spend countless hours at high school and college baseball diamonds evaluating talent from around the country. Many of the ultimate and most talented draft prospects come from the southern states; such as Texas, Florida, California, and Georgia. Many of the other states may be overlooked at times, however Indiana has developed some supreme talent over the past decade and looks like we could be seeing another great class from the Hoosier State. The likes of Gold Glover Kevin Kiermaier, AJ Pollock, and No-Hit pitcher Sean Manaea may have to make room for this class. The 2019 class from Indiana shows great promise. Multiple college arms, a college bat, and a prep pitcher are ahead of their class and will have a chance to be drafted very high in this upcoming years' draft.



Indianapolis native Avery Short leads the bunch with a great arsenal of pitches that could lead to becoming the top drafted Indiana native this season. Short is a 6'2 left handed pitcher that has two potential plus pitches with an easy arm swing that could last a long time in the league. His fastball sits at 87-89 MPH, reaching 92 on occasions. He commands it well and can hit both sides of the plate consistently. He also presents a good mid 70's curveball that produces strikeouts. He throws more changeups against righties than any other secondary pitch. Short also has a slider in his repertoire that yields ground balls. The South Port High School senior also has

no problem in the spotlight. Pitching two shutout innings with four strikeouts in the 2018 Under Armour All-American Game at Wrigley Field.

The college bat of Matt Gorski keeps climbing up the draft boards. To start this season, Gorski is hitting above .300 with 7 HRs. After a stellar Sophomore season last year at Indiana University the 6'4 outfielder decided to go on and compete in the Cape



Cod League the following summer, competing day in and day out against the best amateurs in the Nation. To start his junior year, Gorski was named the pre-season Big-Ten Player of the Year. Many saw the award as an accomplishment, however Matt Gorski saw it as a challenge. In a recent interview Gorski stated that he viewed the accolade as motivation. That attitude isn't the only thing that has MLB organizations jumping all over this kid. At the plate he has recorded a 106 MPH exit velocity and has hit 89 MPH from his position in the outfield. If he continues to play the way he has, many believe Gorski has a chance to be one of the first college bats coming off the board in June.

Butler University's Ryan Pepiot has separated himself from the other top college arms in Indiana. While the other top pitching prospects have struggled in college, Pepiot has excelled in his time at Butler. The right handed pitcher has been top three in the Big East in strikeouts per nine. He ranked third his freshman year striking out 10.83 batters per nine innings. He ranked third again his sophomore year, striking out 6.54 per nine innings. After his sophomore year he pitched for the Hyannis Harbor Hawks in the Cape Cod League. He struggled at first, but by the end of the summer he had sparked interest from the Yankees, Reds, and Mariners. Pepiot's

fastball sits at 86-89 and can top out at 91 MPH. He also fields a curveball that sits at 74-76 and a changeup in the high 70s.

Drey Jameson of Ball State University has also turned some heads. Following his Freshman year last season, he was named MAC Freshman Pitcher of the Year and Freshman All American from *Collegiate Baseball*. The right handed pitcher has shown extreme athleticism in his career. In high School, Jameson was a three sport athlete playing football, basketball, and baseball. He also made 8 starts in the lineup last season as an outfielder or designated hitter. His pitching is light years ahead of his hitting but it is nice to see a pitcher getting into the lineup on



his off days. Jameson's fastball can hit 94 MPH on occasions and sits at 88-92. He also has a changeup in the low 80's. Both his curveball and slider can get up into the low 80's as well. As a draft eligible sophomore he may not be an early pick this year, but should rise up the draft board in 2020.

Adam Lukas from Evansville University has struggled as of late but is still considered a top prospect in the state of Indiana. His ERA has lowered the past two seasons to 4.71 this year and 4.32 his Sophomore year, but is still very high for a potential draft prospect. His ERA was 17.36 as a Freshman. His pitches are great at getting swings and misses, however his command has been shaky. Lukas' delivery is clean and simple with a $\frac{3}{4}$ arm slot. His fastball sits at 88-90 topping out in the low 90's. He also presents a changeup that can hit up to 80 MPH. His curveball sits at 69-72 and his slider has late sharp break. With a great pitching repertoire, but shaky command his draft stock is undetermined at this time. If Lukas can start finding the plate his stock could rise exponentially.

The state of Indiana has not always been known for producing the best talent in the game. However, prepare to hear multiple names from the Hoosier State during the first 2 days of the upcoming draft. Out of these five mentioned, all five should be drafted before the 10th round ends. If not, then something went wrong in one of their development patterns. Any baseball fan in Indiana should be excited for these qualified individuals to be selected in June this year.