

Chillicothe Mudcats open 2012 baseball season this Thursday night

Sports

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The Chillicothe Mudcats summer baseball team opens its 11th season tomorrow (Thursday) night, playing the Clarinda A's at 7:05 in a MINK League game at Shaffer Park.

The potential roster of the 'Cats is still a bit in flux, with three players having arrived in Chillicothe earlier this week, in addition to head coach Eric Peterson, who is beginning his first summer as the Head Man in Chillicothe. Players in Chillicothe as of the first of the week were pitcher/infielder Ryan Brinley of Georgetown, Texas; third baseman Tyler Duplantis of Thibodaux, Louisiana; and center fielder Isaac Smith of Richmond, Kentucky.

Brashear native Matt Thomas will be on the Mudcats squad this summer, as he is listed as a left-handed pitcher and outfielder. Other players from the "Midwest" region will be outfielder Jordan Brown of Blue Springs, catcher Nate Arnold of Lawrence, Kansas, pitcher James Kohler of Ames, Iowa, pitcher Chase Anderson of Des Moines, Iowa, and pitcher Steve Adkins of Elmhurst, Illinois.

Two pitchers from the 2011 edition of the Mudcats, Jon Rand and Dylan Owen, are expected to play for the Mudcats again this summer, but not until after an arrival date in late June.

In addition, Peterson and assistant coaches Bill Jackson and Jake Nelson are waiting to see if catcher Levi Grassley of Cameron "a 2011 Mudcat who was in a community college program this spring" will become eligible to play on a Peterson-coached team by signing a letter-of-intent with a NCAA school.

Peterson confirmed earlier this year that he was focusing on building the team around pitching and defense to play to the contours of the Mudcats' spacious home park. Offensively, "small-ball" execution and speed figures to be critical to generating runs.