

MSR adds Kernels to lineup

Written by Metro Sports Report
Sunday, 10 March 2013 22:30 -

The Metro Sports Report will provide extensive coverage of the Cedar Rapids Kernels minor league baseball team this season, the company announced Sunday.

The Metro Sports Report plans to cover all 70 of the Kernels' home games with a staff reporter. In addition, the MSR plans to cover the 26 road games in Davenport, Burlington and Clinton with a staff reporter as part of our daily package.

The MSR will provide in-depth coverage of the remaining 44 road games in the other Midwest League cities based on reports from the Kernels and other sources.

In addition to the 140 game stories, the Metro Sports Report will have feature articles, breaking news, analysis, columns, player transactions, in-depth interviews and pictures, along with detailed information about the promotions and daily specials at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

Many of the Kernels stories will appear on the MSR home page at MetroSportsReport.com. The Kernels also will have their own dedicated page on the website that can be found by clicking on "Kernels" at the top of the home page.

"We are delighted to be adding the Kernels to the lineup of schools and teams that we're covering in Cedar Rapids and Marion," said Metro Sports Report president Jim Ecker. "We're confident Kernels fans and the community will enjoy our product."

"We're excited about this new venture and we hope you are, too."

The Metro Sports Report was launched on Jan. 3, 2011 with coverage of the seven major high schools in Cedar Rapids and Marion. Cedar Valley Christian was added to the package in August of 2011 after it joined the IHSA and IGHSAA, the governing bodies for prep sports in Iowa.

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The Metro Sports Report added Kirkwood Community College to its lineup this past November and now is adding the Kernels as the company continues to grow.

As of March 1, the Metro Sports Report had received more than 2.1 million pageviews since the website was launched 26 months ago. There also had been more than 750,000 visits and more than 230,000 unique visitors during that time frame.

The Metro Sports Report has readers all over the United States and around the world, according to website analytics.

"We thought the website had a chance to be successful when we began planning the project three years ago, but we never dreamed we would reach so many people this quickly," said Ecker. "It confirms our belief that there's a strong appetite for enhanced coverage of local sports in Cedar Rapids and Marion."

The Metro Sports Report plans to have four experienced baseball writers on the Kernels beat this season as we explore the team from all angles. The beat will be shared by Ecker, MSR vice president Mike Koolbeck, MSR baseball writer S.D. Buhr and MSR reporter Mike Condon. Other reporters may join the mix as well.

Buhr, the co-owner of a Minnesota Twins blog site that's called Knuckleballsblog.com, has been added to the staff specifically to help cover the Kernels.

The Kernels signed a four-year player development contract with the Twins last fall that runs through the 2016 campaign. The Kernels previously had been affiliated with the Los Angeles Angels.

"We think our timing is perfect as the Kernels begin their new partnership with the Twins," said Ecker. "We'll explore this new venture together and report on all aspects of the operation."

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"There are only 160 minor league teams in the country that have Major League affiliations," Ecker noted. "Cedar Rapids is very fortunate to have one of those clubs and it puts our community in a special situation."

"The Metro Sports Report is excited about this new project and looking forward to spending many interesting days at the ballpark. We hope you'll come along for the ride."

The Kernels page on the MSR website is up and running. Readers may click on "Kernels" at the top of the home page to find the MSR package of stories about the team.

The Kernels are scheduled to open the 2013 Class A Midwest League campaign on Thursday, April 4 at 6:35 p.m. at Perfect Game Field against Beloit.