

Jake Mauer will manage Kernels again

Written by Jim Ecker

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Maybe Jake Mauer should buy a house in Cedar Rapids and move his family to Iowa on a full-time basis instead of commuting between here and the Twin Cities.

He's coming back to town again.

The Minnesota Twins announced Tuesday morning that Mauer will manage the Cedar Rapids Kernels again in 2016 for his fourth straight season at the helm of the local Class A team.

Mauer, 37, has compiled a 238-180 record in three years with the Kernels and has taken them to the Midwest League playoffs all three years.

This will be Mauer's ninth season as a manager in the Twins organization.

Mauer was the 23rd-round pick of the Twins in 2001 and played five seasons in the Twins system, including 84 games in the Midwest League for Quad Cities. He is the brother of Twins catcher Joe Mauer and attended the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn.

Mauer and his wife, Rachel, reside in Shoreview, Minn., and have three children.

J.P. Martinez has been named the pitching coach for the Kernels for 2016. He served as the pitching coach for the GCL Twins in 2015.

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Before joining the Twins organization, Martinez was the head coach at Pope John Paul II High School in Slidell, La., in 2013 and 2014, and the pitching coach for the St. Cloud Rox of the Northwoods League in 2014.

Martinez was selected by the Twins in the ninth round of the 2004 draft from the University of New Orleans. He pitched five seasons in the Twins and Orioles organizations, posting a career 17-14 record and 3.36 ERA with 40 saves. Martinez currently resides in Metairie, La.

Brian Dinkelman will join the Kernels staff as the hitting coach in 2016. He previously served as the hitting coach for the GCL Twins in 2015. Dinkelman was selected by the Twins in the eighth round of the 2006 draft from McKendree University.

Dinkelman played eight seasons in the Twins organization from 2006-2013, including 23 Major League games in 2011 when he hit .301 with a double and four RBIs. Dinkelman played in the Midwest League for Beloit in 2007, batting .283 with seven home runs and 21 RBIs in 67 games. He currently resides in Centralia, Ill.

Tommy Watkins, who served as the Kernels hitting coach the last three years, will serve as the hitting coach for Minnesota's Double-A team in Chattanooga this season. Henry Bonilla, who served as the Kernels pitching coach last year, will be the pitching coach at the High Class A team in Fort Myers, Fla.

Steve Taylor will be the Kernels trainer for 2016. He was previously the trainer for the Elizabethton Twins in 2015.

2016 Kernels season ticket packages are on sale now at the stadium by calling the Kernels at (319) 363-3887. Individual game tickets go on sale Monday, March 14 at 10 a.m.

The Kernels open the 2016 Midwest League season on Thursday, April 7 at 6:35 p.m. against the Quad Cities River Bandits.