

New Britain Bees 2021

Season Retrospective:



The 2021 New Britain Bees finished with an overall record of 25-39, good for eighth place in the FCBL, 6.5 games back of the fourth and final available playoff spot. Yet, the Bees' season was a tremendous success. After all, the Futures League is a developmental league, where any team's positive record is merely an added bonus instead of a true measure of success. Instead, the Bees can hang their hat on a season full of development, camaraderie and a healthy dose of memorable moments and games.

Following a crushing 2-1 loss to the Nashua Silver Knights in the team's final home game of the season, general manager Bret Derosa and head coach Donnie McKillop were given plenty of opportunities to vent any potential frustrations. They refused. Instead, both pieces of the Bees' braintrust focused entirely on the positives. "[I'm happy about] just having a close group of guys come together and love playing baseball in a positive environment," Derosa said. "I thought our coaching staff did a really great job of creating that environment in the clubhouse."

Likewise, McKillop, who said he plans to return to the team after an eventful first season at the helm, noted there's undoubtedly room for improvement, but that doesn't take away from the pleasure of being a part of a strong and positive group. "Some things definitely to learn from and execute better," McKillop said. "[But it was] definitely a worthwhile experience full of memories for a lifetime."

Derosa was also quick to point out the team was rarely ever out of a game, as 15 of their 39 losses (38.5%) came by one run or fewer. A number that high is usually the mark of a talented but unpolished team, on the verge of putting it all together. “I obviously would’ve loved to have won more games but if you look back and check we lost a decent amount of close games and those could have gone a different way,” Derosa said. “It is what it is. We’re a summer league. We’re focused on development.”

And certainly for fans, the team itself was worth the price of admission on any given day. In 2021 the Bees produced eight FCBL All Stars. Starting pitcher Colin Blake (2-2, 2.70 ERA) and relievers Jagger Duquette (4-1, 1.75 ERA) and Bryson Cafaro (4-0, 1.04 ERA) all represented New Britain in the game. Meanwhile, infielders Luke Broadhurst (.337 avg, 5 HR), Jake Hyde (.296 avg, 32 RBI’s), Todd Petersen (.231 avg, 25 RBI’s, 13 SB) and outfielders Ryan Bagdasarian (.297 avg, 18 RBI’s, 17 SB) and Alec Ritch (.245 avg, 33 SB) were also selected to the FCBL All Star team.

Were the 2021 New Britain Bees perfect? No. But were the 2021 New Britain Bees successful in their own right? Absolutely. The team played hard, they improved from beginning to end and above all, they played for each other all year long. In a developmental league like the FCBL, that’s all you can ask for.