



*Before the 2008 season, the Rochester Red Wings took over operational control of the St. Louis Cardinals New York-Penn League affiliate, the Batavia Muckdogs.*

*The following story was a feature that appeared on the Muckdogs' website, [www.muckdogs.com](http://www.muckdogs.com).*

## Syracuse native stays local

By: Mike Spier

When the St. Louis Cardinals took Syracuse native George Brown in the 27th round of the 2008 draft, he probably didn't envision himself becoming the Batavia Muckdogs unofficial weatherman.

"[When the team got to Batavia] they were a little frustrated with the weather because there were a few days of really nasty rain," Brown said. "I explained to the other guys that it gets really hot here in July and August. No one believed me and now here we are and it's pretty warm. They believe me now."

Besides being the next Nostradamus, Brown was an excellent pitcher at his alma mater, St. John's University. For going 9-1 (9-0 during the regular season) with a 2.91 ERA and 59 strikeouts in 14 starts, Brown was named the Big East Pitcher of the Year in his final season there.

"I had a pretty solid career [at St. John's]," Brown said. As a pitcher your job is just to go out there and get outs and I think I did a pretty good job of that this year. I guess that's why I'm here."

Muckdogs manager Mark DeJohn seems to like his stuff for Batavia as well.

"He was a guy that started in the bullpen and was just taken out of there and put into our starting rotation in the piggyback system," he said. "Right now we're just trying to extend his pitch count and so far he's doing a pretty good job utilizing the movement on his pitches. He's got to be a guy that pitches to contact and stays aggressive by keeping the ball down."

Living closer to Batavia than any other player has paid some other dividends as well. Brown's first professional appearance was against the Auburn Doubledays on June 19, which is just a short drive from Syracuse. That made it very

easy for his family to come and see him pitch.

"[A lot of my friends and family were there and it was just nice being there and having someone to see me instead of being in Iowa

or something," Brown said. "Overall, it's a good experience [being in Batavia] because my family has gotten to see me and during off-days it's nice because I'm able to shoot over there and spend time with them."

Having support during that first Auburn game may have had some kind of impact. Brown pitched two innings in relief without allowing a run. He hasn't done badly since that appearance either. Overall, as of Aug. 4, he has pitched 29 1/3 innings and has a 3.68 ERA with 29 strikeouts.

Brown still has his whole professional career to look forward to and he's just happy that he gets to play a game he loves.

"I'm just going to go out there and play," he said. "Being able to play baseball and get paid for it is something everyone dreams about. Of course I'll take it serious but I just want to have fun while I'm here."



*George Brown*