

BASEBALL FANTASIES COME TO LIFE IN IOWA



You may not recognize all the players' names, but you'll never forget the experience of taking the family to a minor league ballpark in Iowa. The five teams that call Iowa home have launched careers of dozens of all stars, World Series champions and hall of famers. For little more than a couple tanks of gas, baseball fans can visit all five venues and see the stars of tomorrow.



Cedar Rapids Kernels

Veterans Stadium in Cedar Rapids plays home to the Cedar Rapids Kernels. This summer marks the tenth anniversary of the rebuilt stadium and the inaugural year of the Kernels' affiliation with the Minnesota Twins. The Kernels go out of the way to interact with their fans. At least two players sign autographs before every weekday game and the entire team does the same before Sunday games. The team holds a variety of themed promotions to mark the halfway points on the calendar to fall and winter holidays. Halfway to Halloween, for example, fills Veterans Stadium with costumed kids who scramble onto the field to collect candy that is dropped into the ballpark from a helicopter.



Burlington Bees

Picturesque Burlington is home to the Burlington Bees, a farm club of the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. The Bees, play home games in the smallest city to host a full-season minor league team, have helped to launch many major league careers over the years, including those of hall of famers Billy Williams and Paul Molitor and members of the Oakland A's who dominated the American League in the mid-1980s. Refurbished Community Field buzzes with entertainment for fans of all ages: from contests, fireworks shows and kids running the bases to Bark in the Park days when fans can bring their dogs to the game. Assistant General Manager Jared Schjei says Community Field also offers the most affordable night out in all of baseball. A family of four can attend a Bees game, get hot dogs, soft drinks and a program for an average cost of \$41.



Clinton Lumberjacks

The Mississippi River community of Clinton is home of the Clinton Lumberkings. During the past 50 years, the Clinton franchise has helped launch the major league careers of more than 200 players. Today, the franchise is the Midwest League affiliate of the Seattle Mariners. The Lumberkings offer big-time promotions including flat screen TV giveaway contests, fireworks displays and nightly food specials. And Ashford University Field offers a great view of the Great River.

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Modern Woodman Park

Modern Woodmen Park in Davenport plays home to the Quad City River Bandits. The Houston Astros' Class A affiliate has earned a reputation for offering some of the most unusual promotions in the minor leagues, including ugly sweater contests and post-game movies. This year, the park introduces new attractions, including a carousel, a Ferris wheel and a 300-foot zip line that will run from behind first base to just outside the left field corner of the park. The new attractions give fans a bird's eye view of the ballpark and the adjacent Mississippi River. Visit the River Bandits online to learn more



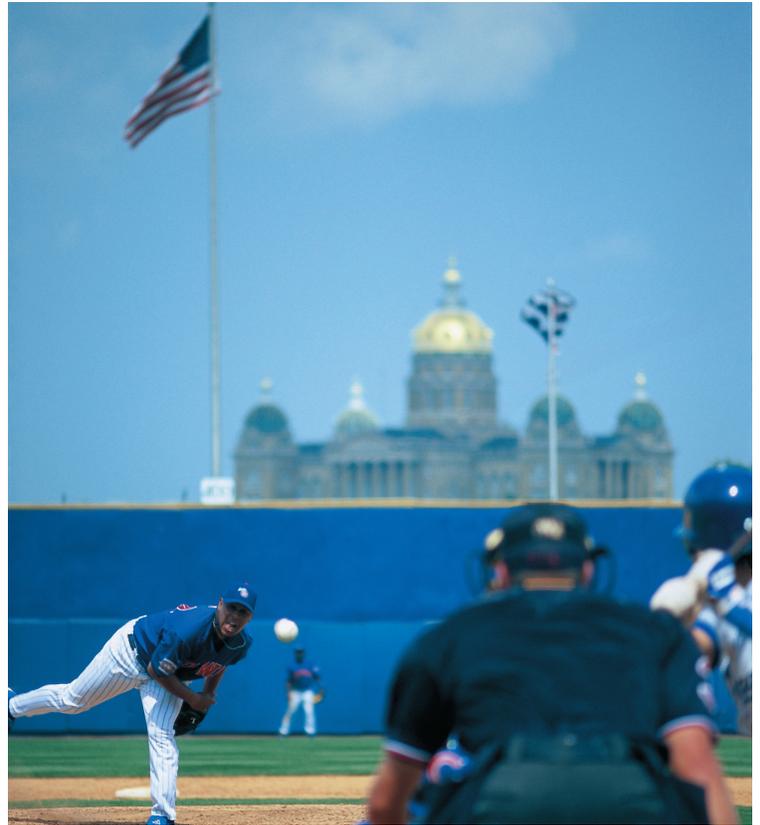
Iowa Cubs

Principal Park in Des Moines is the home of the triple A Iowa Cubs. The I-Cubs are the last Minor League stop before players advance to the Chicago Cubs. It's also where injured Cubs come to get themselves back into shape to return to Chicago. Starlin Castro and Darwin Barney, Kerry Wood and Mark Prior are one-time I-Cubs. The park sits at the confluence of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. Look over the center field fence to the sun-glistened gold dome of the State Capitol. "It's absolutely the best view in all of Minor League Baseball," adds I-Cubs spokesman Scott Sailor.



Sioux City Explorers

Baseball adventures also await those traveling in western Iowa. The Sioux City Explorers play a 100-game schedule, including 50 home games at Lewis and Clark Park. The Explorers play in the independent American Association, where teams have no major league affiliations and players compete hard to advance through the Minor Leagues. The Explorers describe their games as nine-innings of vacation. Every inning includes on-field and in-the-stands entertainment. You might even become one of the fans plucked from the stands to earn a chance to perform for the crowd and Dance for your Dinner is a big hit in which fans are selected at random to go onto the field, dance and earn free food.



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