

# Cincinnati Reds Press Clippings February 2, 2018

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## THIS DAY IN REDS HISTORY

1876-The National League is formed in New York City, with Cincinnati as a charter member

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### MLB.COM

**Injuries in past, future beckons T. Stephenson**  
**After lost 2 seasons in Minors, Reds C prospect ready to resume track toward Majors**  
**By Mark Sheldon MLB.com @m\_sheldon**  
**Feb. 1st, 2018**

CINCINNATI -- Just by virtue of his being the 11th overall pick in the 2015 Draft, prospect Tyler Stephenson and the Reds had easily envisioned the catcher's path toward reaching the Major Leagues.

They still do, despite some obstacles. Injuries have limited the 21-year-old in each of the past two years at Class A Dayton, where he played only 39 games in 2016 and 80 games last season.

"I know stuff happens. I know it's just part of it," said Stephenson, who is ranked as the Reds' No. 8 prospect, according to MLB Pipeline. "I'd rather get hurt now than later on down the road. Hopefully it's all out of the way and I'm good to go."

During his first full season, in 2016, Stephenson was first felled by a concussion and then dealt with a sore left wrist that limited his Class A production to .216 with three home runs. He eventually required surgery.

The 2017 season was looking good until mid-July, when Stephenson suffered a season-ending right thumb injury. He hurt ligaments in the thumb while sliding into third base. He batted .278/.374/.414 with six home runs and 50 RBIs, including a .340 average in the 15 games just before his season ended.

Originally expected to need surgery, Stephenson went for a second opinion that indicated he could heal with rehabilitation and not have an operation. Making that choice, he successfully recovered during the rest of the summer and was able to play in instructional league games after the season in Arizona.

"So I go to finish up the season for a month. No issues, no setbacks and I picked up to where I was at Dayton," Stephenson said. "I played really well. It was a fun offseason of hitting, throwing and working out with no issues at all.

That enabled the 6-foot-4, 225-pound Stephenson to go home to Georgia and have a normal offseason of workouts. He is expected to begin the 2018 season at Class A Advanced Daytona.

"He's earned the promotion," Reds senior director of player development Jeff Graupe said. "You can compare what he was doing to [No. 3 prospect and outfielder Taylor] Trammell and [outfielder Jose] Siri [No. 22] at the same time. That's the level of season -- if not better -- he was having, especially considering the position he was playing."

The Reds have been pleased with Stephenson's development on both the offensive and defensive side.

"When he missed time with the wrist and concussion, he really took a step back with Corky [Miller, Minor League catching instructor] to learn the mental aspect of the position, which I think was a blessing in disguise," Graupe said. "I thought the way he handled the pitching staff, his game calling, I thought he was in total command behind the plate last season. It was a nice step forward for a 20-year-old."

Stephenson, who is not related to Reds pitcher Robert Stephenson, is looking ahead to Spring Training, where he will be in the Minor League camp with hopes of getting some chances in big league games.

"I believe in myself," Stephenson said. "I have what it takes to be whatever I want to be and what everybody thinks I'm going to be. I am going to take advantage of every opportunity."

Still young, time is on Stephenson's side to get his career back on track.

"I'm really high on where he is and where he's going," Graupe said. "I think he was having a tremendous season when he had kind of a fluke injury strike. This is a really talented young man who took a major step forward last year."

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## CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

**MLB announces expanded netting for all ballparks by 2018 Opening Day**

**Dave Clark, [dclark@cincinnati.com](mailto:dclark@cincinnati.com)**

**Published 11:47 a.m. ET Feb. 1, 2018 | Updated 3:40 p.m. ET Feb. 1, 2018**

Major League Baseball announced Thursday that all MLB ballparks will have protective netting extending to at least the far ends of both dugouts by Opening Day of the upcoming season.

Each Major League team has decided to expand its ballpark netting beyond the minimum recommendations issued by the Commissioner's Office in December 2015, according to MLB's press release.

Many teams have already added expanded netting. The Cincinnati Reds announced in September of last year that the netting at Great American Ball Park would be expanded to the end of the each dugout for the 2018 season.

A quote from MLB commissioner Robert D. Manfred, Jr., from the release: "Providing baseball fans with a variety of seating options when they come to the ballpark, including seats behind protective netting, is important. Major League Clubs are constantly evaluating the coverage and design of their ballpark netting and I am pleased that they are providing fans an increased inventory of protected seats."

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## DAYTON DAILY NEWS

**Major League Baseball announces extended netting will be in every ball park this season**

**Marcus Hartman**

**11:17 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 1, 2018**

Major League Baseball fans will find extended netting at every ballpark in the league this season.

That announcement came from the league Thursday morning, roughly two weeks before the start of spring training.

"Providing baseball fans with a variety of seating options when they come to the ballpark, including seats behind protective netting, is important," MLB commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement. "Major League clubs are constantly evaluating the coverage and design of their ballpark netting and I am pleased that they are providing fans an increased inventory of protected seats."

The Cincinnati Reds announced late last summer they would extend netting at Great American Ball Park in 2018.

The Dayton Dragons installed extended netting at Fifth Third Field prior to last season.

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## **Transactions**

02/01/18

Baltimore Orioles invited non-roster OF Cedric Mullins to spring training.

Baltimore Orioles invited non-roster OF D.J. Stewart to spring training.

Baltimore Orioles invited non-roster SS Ryan Mountcastle to spring training.

Baltimore Orioles invited non-roster SS Erick Salcedo to spring training.

Baltimore Orioles invited non-roster SS Luis Sardinas to spring training.

Philadelphia Phillies signed free agent SS Adam Rosales to a minor league contract and invited him to spring training.

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