

February 4, 2010

Johnson and Viola Return

Former All-Star and Major League Manager of the Year Davey Johnson, in his second year with the Florida League, will be managing the Sanford River Rats for the summer of 2010. Johnson managed the DeLand Suns in 2009 and had a highly successful first season with the Florida League. The Suns got off to a hot start, beginning the season 14-0. Although the amazing run didn't continue throughout the entire season, the Suns easily finished the regular season in first place, finishing with a 24-11 record, before losing in the second round of the playoffs. Johnson, who has remarked that he loves the opportunity to teach younger players about the game, will surely bring excitement to the city of Sanford this summer.

Another top-tier coach, former Cy Young Award Winner and World Series MVP Frank Viola, will be returning to the Florida League this year. Viola will be returning to the Leesburg Lightning for the third straight season and the city of Leesburg should be excited with the news. Viola led the Lightning to an 18-18 regular season record last season alongside his son, Frankie, who was one of his assistant coaches. More importantly, however, Viola helped lead the team through a sweep of the playoffs to the franchise's second Florida League Championship. Leesburg beat a surging Clermont team in dominant fashion in the championship game at Tropicana Field, with the final score 5-1 in favor of the Lightning. With the victory, the Lightning became the first franchise in Florida League history to win two championships. The excitement will be high for the beginning of this year as well, so make sure to check in on all of the action at www.floridaleague.com.

The Florida League is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and one of nine leagues in the country supported and partially funded by Major League Baseball and is one of eight leagues affiliated with the **National Alliance of College Summer Baseball** (NACSB) - an alliance of college summer wood bat leagues which operate under NCAA legislation.



www.FloridaLeague.com