

Sabo awaits his shot

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Move aside Buddy Bell because Chris Sabo is coming.

It's only a matter of time before the former Redford Catholic Central and University of Michigan product is playing third base for the Cincinnati Reds.

The 24-year-old Sabo, a second round draft pick of the Reds in 1983, has made a steady climb through the professional ranks.

In his first season of Triple A baseball for the Denver Zephyrs, Sabo is batting .272 (through Monday) and leads the team in runs scored (72). He has played in over 100 games.

"He's having a pretty decent year," said Brian Granger, assistant director of player development and scouting for the Reds. "We feel he's made the adjustment to Triple A pitching and he has the ability to play in the majors. He's a good defensive third baseman and has a good arm. He can also hit in the clutch."

"But one of his problems, like a lot of Triple A players, is that we have Buddy Bell at third base. It's like the Tigers and Lance Parrish. Not too many catchers in their organization are going to get a chance as long as he's around."

The highly-regarded Bell, however, is getting up in age and is in the twilight of his career. That could open the door for Sabo.

"ONCE YOU GET this far you have to wait for the opportunity," said Sabo, from his hotel room in Nashville. "You'd like to be there and hopefully they'll give me the opportunity."

"Realistically, I hope to be there (in Cincinnati) sometime during next year."

Sabo's jump to the big leagues may coincide with his longtime sidekick, shortstop Barry Larkin.

The two played together at U-M and have been reunited in Denver.

"We work well on the left side," said Sabo. "We know each other's capabilities. Barry is tearing them up. He's up near .320 right now."

"There's no question Barry has the ability," said Granger. "It's just a question of time."

Patience is also a key for Sabo, even though he wouldn't mind being part of the Reds' call-up for the stretch drive in September.

"Overall, my hitting could use some improvement," he said. "I'm happy with my run production. I'm sixth or seventh in the league. Everything is going good, but I'd like to get my average up and become a .300 hitter."

SABO REALIZES he has some shortcomings. Consistency and added strength are keys to his improvement.

"I'm only 8-foot, 170 (pounds) and sometimes I get worn down," Sabo said. "We're playing over 140 games and it's more difficult than people think."

"And the pitching here (in AAA) is a lot better. A lot of guys have pitched in the big leagues. I've faced guys like Dave Rozema (a former Tiger and Texas Ranger). They spot the ball better, have better control and throw good breaking balls."

Sabo, who grew up in Buchanan, Mich., during the off-season with his wife, Cathy, of 2½ years.

"It's not too easy because I'm away a lot. Even though we fly most everywhere," he said. "It's not as glamorous a life as people think. During the off-season my wife and I try to do as many things together as possible. But she still enjoys (baseball)."

SABO GREW UP playing a variety of sports and at one time contemplated a career in hockey. He spent four months during his junior year of high school playing goalie for a Junior A club in Niagara Falls of the Ontario Hockey League.

"It was a good experience because I got a taste of living away from home, but I didn't like it at all," Sabo recalls. "I think I was a little too young at the time. I made up my mind to go back to CC and work hard on baseball."

During Sabo's junior year, CC captured the state Class A championship, his fondest memory.

"Winning the 'state' was something I'll never forget," he said.

Playing his first game in the big leagues is obviously something Sabo will cherish if the opportunity occurs, but for now, he's willing to wait.

"I think I'll have an opportunity to play this winter in Venezuela and that's good baseball and money," Sabo said. "When I make the majors I want to stay there. I don't want to be going back and forth all the time. I want to be mature enough and ready to handle anything."

OLSM coach switches to Andover

By Marty Budnor
staff writer

Rick Krinski has stepped into the hot seat at Andover High School as the new head varsity boys basketball coach.

Krinski is the fifth person over the past year to assume the head basketball duties at the Class A school in Bloomfield Hills, which is more noted for its swimming and tennis programs than its basketball prowess.

In addition, Krinski will be supervisor of the district's new high school in-house suspension program.

"Everything came about fairly recently," said Krinski. "I heard about it the second week of July. The third week in July I talked to (Bloomfield Hills administrators)

and the third week of July I accepted."

Krinski fills the void left by Monty Clary, who quit at the end of last season. Bob Shoemaker, John Vedura and John Wrobel were others who held the head varsity job at one time or another during the 1985-86 school year.

Andover's basketball team went winless through its first 11 games last season. The Barons snapped the skid with a 70-54 victory over Royal Oak Kimball in late January. Andover finished the season with a 4-17 record — all four victories under Clary's guidance.

CLARY SAID a number of factors were involved with his decision not to return to Andover.

"I just moved to Troy Athens (from Troy Zion Christian) for a

basketball

teaching position last year and I didn't want to move again," said Clary. "Plus I'm working on my masters program now and really didn't have time for summer basketball. And we're expecting our first child in December."

"It just wasn't good timing for me to continue at Andover," he said. "I think it will be a great place for someone to work. I got a lot of support while I was there."

A former head coach and assistant coach at Class C Orchard Lake St. Mary's, Krinski is looking forward to piloting the Barons program.

"A lot of coaches dream of coaching at this level," said Krinski. "It's a great opportunity for me to coach in a Class A school district."

"It was at St. Mary's for nine years as a coach and I felt it was time for me to move on," he said.

Andover competes in the Southeastern Michigan Association (SMA) with such perennial basketball powerhouses as Southfield and Ferndale. Troy and Berkley have fielded strong teams the past few years, while Andover has basically been relegated to the lower half of the eight-team league.

ANDOVER hasn't had a winning season this decade.

"I'm more familiar with the Andover program than some of the people who would have been basically coming in cold," said

Krinski, an assistant to Shoemaker for six years at St. Mary's.

"It's nice to step into a winning program, but it's also a challenge to start your own," he said. "It's nice to build your own situation."

"I know it will be a challenge for me at Andover," he said. "I'm excited about working in the district."

Krinski compiled a 29-38 overall record in three years as St. Mary's head coach. The Eagles advanced to the state Class C District championship game in each of those seasons, only to lose to arch rival Detroit Country Day.

St. Mary's also qualified for the Catholic League playoffs in two of Krinski's three years. While an assistant at St. Mary's, the Eagles won the state Class D title in 1978 and the state Class C crown in 1982.



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