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IronPigs to host 2010 Triple-A All-Star Game

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Lehigh Valley IronPigs

ALLENTOWN, PA. -- The Lehigh Valley IronPigs announced today that the organization has been selected to host the 2010 Triple-A All-Star Game at Coca-Cola Park, as well as the adjoining All-Star Game festivities. The 2010 Triple-A All-Star Game, which will take place July 14 and televised to a national audience, is the focal point of a multi-day baseball extravaganza that will showcase the Lehigh Valley community. The announcement was made at a press conference at Coca-Cola Park.

The Triple-A All-Star Game -- played annually since 1988 -- features the premier players of all 30 Major League team's top affiliates as the International League and the Pacific Coast League All-Stars square off in a head-to-head contest. Among the other public events scheduled are an All-Star Fan Fest -- which will feature fan autograph sessions and baseball-themed attractions, a Home Run Derby, an All-Star luncheon and several other ballpark and community events.

"It is an honor for our young franchise to be chosen to host a Triple-A All-Star Game - and we are excited about the positive impact this event will have on the Lehigh Valley and the surrounding region," said IronPigs President Chuck Domino. "We are anxious for the opportunity to introduce the Lehigh Valley, our loyal fans and Coca-Cola Park to the rest of the nation."

Added Lehigh County Executive Commissioner Don Cunningham, "The Lehigh Valley has embraced what has happened here - and there is no question about that. This is a great culmination of baseball in the Lehigh Valley. [Lehigh County] is certainly happy to host and to help and is looking forward to this event."

The team also unveiled the official 2010 Triple-A All-Star Logo, which incorporates the regionally popular Moravian Star while honoring Lehigh Valley's role in producing much of the steel that built America. The mark also features the IronPigs' primary logo and the team's official colors of Brick Red, Furnace Blue and IronPigs Steel.

The annual classic, which rotates annually between IL and PCL host cities, will be played in Portland, Ore., on July 15, 2009. The 2008 game was a wild affair, with the PCL scoring six runs in the ninth inning before holding on for a 6-5 victory over the IL in front of a capacity crowd of 13,131 at Louisville Slugger Field in Louisville. Recent Triple-A All-Star Games have also been played in Albuquerque (2007), Toledo (2006) and Sacramento (2005). All 30 organizations that comprise Major League Baseball are annually represented with at least one player in the Triple-A All-Star Game.

"This [announcement] is truly a result of what has happened this year and the way this community has supported this franchise like none of us could have expected," said International League President Randy Mobley. "Everything has come together like it was one massive script...and Triple-A Baseball has now recognized what has happened here."

The Triple-A All-Star Game originally pitted players from National League organizations against those from American League teams until the game took its current format in 1998. Under current rules, the winning league is awarded with its eventual champion earning 'home-team' status in the annual Bricktown Showdown - a one-game, winner-take-all Triple-A Championship between the IL and PCL held in Oklahoma City at the end of each season.

Dozens of eventual Major League stars have played in the Triple-A All-Star Game including Chase Utley, Derek Jeter, Mike Lowell, Justin Morneau, Alfonso Soriano, Jim Thome, Chipper Jones and Kenny Lofton.

The return of professional baseball to the Lehigh Valley for the first time since 1960 was met with remarkable community support, unprecedented excitement and unrivaled fanfare in 2008. By becoming one of just six Minor League franchises to surpass the 600,000 mark for total attendance, the IronPigs emerged as one of the top draws and premier franchises in Minor League Baseball. Coca-Cola Park, the foremost baseball and entertainment venue in the Minors, drew rave reviews for its intimacy, fan-friendly atmosphere and architectural design. Bolstered by the success of Coca-Cola Park and the Lehigh Valley IronPigs, the International League also established a single-season attendance record this year, breaking the seven-million fan threshold (7,097,411) for the first time in the league's 125-year history.

The first-ever game at Coca-Cola Park -- an exhibition between the eventual World Champion Philadelphia Phillies and the IronPigs on March 30 - was the most anticipated contest in Lehigh Valley sports history as fans camped out overnight despite snowfall and temperatures in the teens hoping to secure a limited number of single-game tickets. By the time the ticket office opened its windows for single-game ticket sales on March 1, there was an inch of snow on the ground and an estimated crowd of 1,000 people waiting in line. Not surprisingly, the game sold out in just one hour and 58 minutes.

Tickets for the 2010 Triple-A All-Star Game and corresponding events will initially be made available to Lehigh Valley IronPigs season ticket holders in the summer of 2009. Further details, including event pricing, will be made available leading up to the 2010 Triple-A All-Star Game.

Season tickets and mini-plans for the 2009 season presented by Capital BlueCross are on sale now and can be purchased by calling (610) 841-PIGS or by visiting the Coca-Cola Park ticket office. Group tickets and hospitality areas for the 2009 season will go on sale to the general public on Monday, November 10.

This story was not subject to the approval of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues or its clubs.