



Press Release - November 30, 2020

## Trenton Thunder Continue Affiliation with Major League Baseball in New MLB Draft League



Major League Baseball in conjunction with MLB's partner, Prep Baseball Report (PBR), has announced the formation of the new MLB Draft League to complete MLB's 21st Century vision for minor league player development. Set to launch in 2021, the MLB-affiliated league will be anchored in NJ by the top-rated Trenton Thunder organization, and will be recognized as the Premier League in the country focused on baseball's top prospects eligible to be drafted by MLB Clubs each summer.

"We are thrilled to share with our fans and sponsor partners the exciting news that your Trenton Thunder will be a founding member of the new MLB Draft League for the 2021 season and continue to bring family fun to ARM & HAMMER Park," said Thunder GM/COO Jeff Hurley. "We are dedicated to delivering our Power of Fun brand to our fans as the Thunder Entertainment Experience they have enjoyed for the last 27 years, featuring the antics of our beloved mascot Boomer having a blast in the crowd. Fans will continue to enjoy our World Famous Bat Dogs retrieving bats, with Dash making his debut this summer. The new MLB Draft League will showcase the best prospects in baseball eligible for the MLB draft. Thunder fans will get to know these players as they begin their path as future stars of Major League Baseball."

"For legions of Trenton Thunder fans, the development of a new league showcasing up and coming talent will be a real thrill. Major League Baseball's success is built on a thriving minor league system,

and for 27 years Thunder supporters have visited our Capital City, warmly welcoming new players and proudly cheering others on to the big leagues. Mercer County has made wise investments into the ballpark - benefitting both the fans and players - and the new Trenton Thunder team will be developed in a first-class facility. This news is a win for everyone - The Thunder, Mercer County, the City of Trenton, and especially baseball fans, and we look forward to a great season."

-- Mercer County Executive Brian M. Hughes

"This is great news for the Thunder and proves the resiliency of the city of Trenton and Mercer County. The Thunder has a rich history as a winning franchise which provides family entertainment at an affordable price in a great location for baseball fans throughout the region. Trenton's rich industrial heritage proved Trenton Makes, the World Takes. This tradition continues with the creation of the MLB Draft League as The Thunder Makes, MLB Takes."

-- Greater Trenton Chief Executive Officer George Sowa

The Trenton Thunder, presented by NJM Insurance Group, continues its award-winning Entertainment Experience as the action packed summer place to be and will be joined by the Williamsport Crosscutters, Mahoning Valley Scrappers, State College Spikes and West Virginia Black Bears, also all MLB-affiliated teams, as hand-selected founding members of the MLB Draft League. MLB is in advanced negotiations with more teams to be announced in the coming weeks.

The MLB Draft will be simulcasted in a closed-circuit telecast live from ARM & HAMMER Park as part of MLB All-Star Week in mid-July. The MLB Draft League's rosters are filled with draft-eligible players who will have a unique opportunity to showcase their abilities and gain exposure to other MLB clubs and crowds of Thunder fans each year.

The MLB Draft League will feature an exciting jammed packed 68-game regular season, scheduled to run from late May to mid-August with an annual All-Star Break centered around the MLB Draft and featuring our Thunder players. Players will receive unprecedented visibility to MLB scouts through in-person observation and state-of-the-art scouting technology, as well as instruction from former MLB players on the Thunder staff. Our professional baseball coaching staff will develop the skills of Thunder players, with the dream of one day adding their names to the nearly 400 Thunder players who have made it to the Big Leagues.

### **About The Thunder**

The Trenton Thunder have drawn over ten million fans to ARM & HAMMER Park over 27 years and have won the three major awards that Minor League Baseball teams can win; the Johnson Trophy for the "Nation's Best Franchise" (2005), the Larry MacPhail Trophy for Outstanding Club Promotion (2003) and the Bob Frietas Award for Long-Term Success (1998, given by Baseball America). The team has given back over \$7.5 million worth of goods, services and monetary donations through Trenton Thunder Charities, under the Grand Slam We Care Foundation umbrella. The Thunder can be found online at [trentonthunder.com](http://trentonthunder.com), [facebook.com/trentonthunder](https://facebook.com/trentonthunder), [instagram.com/trentonthunder](https://instagram.com/trentonthunder), and [twitter.com/trentonthunder](https://twitter.com/trentonthunder).