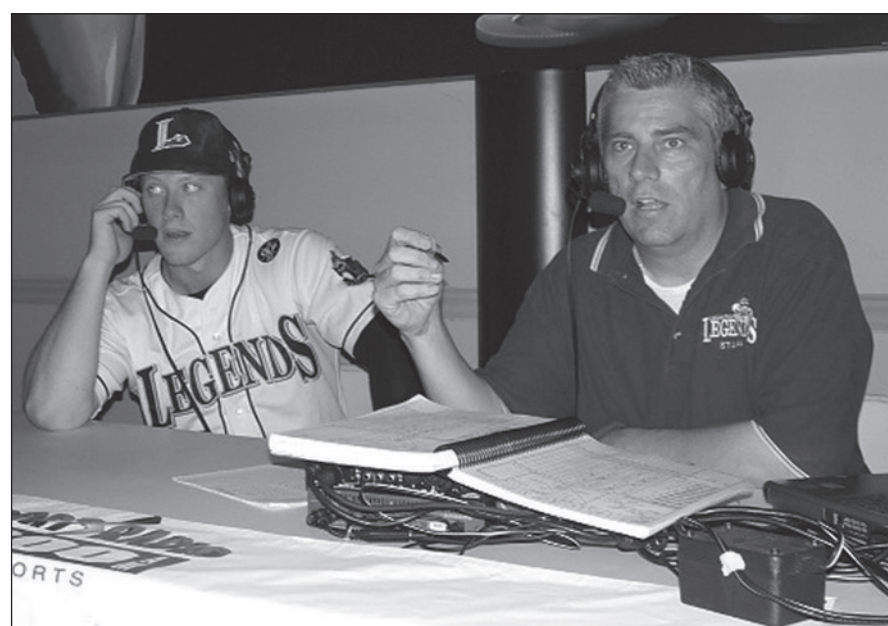
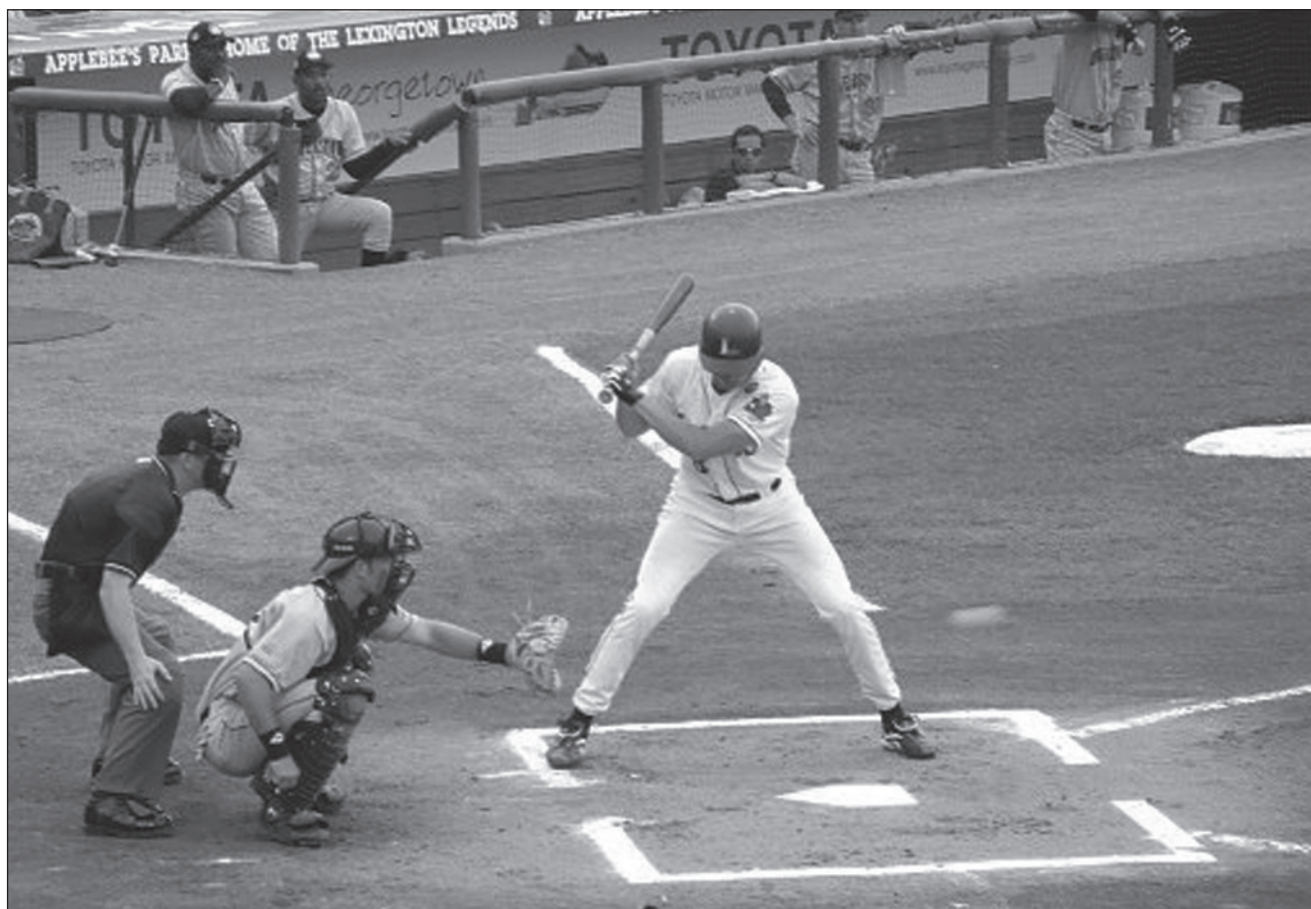




# SPORTS

The Winners Circle

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Lou Santangelo, the 6'1", 200 lb. catcher for the Lexington Legends, is from Colt Neck, N.J. The Houston Astros selected him in the fourth round as a 2004 draft pick. His batting average is .205, he is right-handed. He is seen above with Larry Glover, the play-by-play announcer for WLXG sports radio, as he conducts an interview after the game against the Suns.

## Lexington Legends on the rise

By Lauren Clouse

The Lexington Legends are now one game away from the No. 1 position with only 12 games left in this half of the season. The Lexington Legends pulled ahead with a 7-4 victory Monday night, June 5, against the Hagerstown Suns.

Lou Santangelo and Hunter

Pence made their presence known to both the crowd and the Suns. Santangelo made his comeback Monday night after being out for two games. He doubled and singled putting the Legends up 6-4. He also ripped a home run over right field fence in the eighth inning to seal the victory for the Legends.

Pence (.340) is now fifth

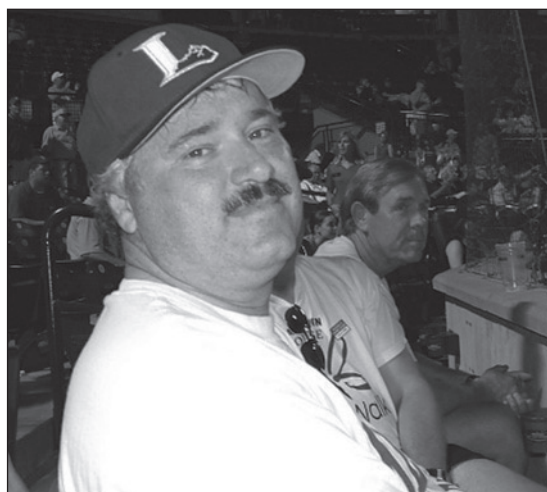
among batting leaders in the South Atlantic League. He came to bat with the bases loaded and grounded a ball that could have ended the inning but got on base and scored the run for the Legends. In the fifth inning a wild pick-off attempt by Jeff Landing (5-4) allowed Pence to advance to second. Ben Zobrist and Pence were able

to bring in two runs after Mitch Einertson doubled to left.

Other players contributing to the victory were the relief pitcher Chad Reineke, first baseman Ole Sheldon, who made his Legends debut, and Paul Estrada who replaced Ryan Thompson in the sixth inning with two outs and two men on base.

The Legends now prepare to play the West Virginia Power in their next four games. The Power are eighth in the northern division of the SAL. Infielder Alcides Escobar (.312) may be the batter to watch, and pitcher Gregory Kloosterman may be throwing some heat to the Legends.

## Hats off to a home run: Reviving tradition



Bradley passed the batting helmet to collect cash for Santangelo.

By Rachel Fair

Filing down the rows of bleachers with a batter's helmet in one hand, a smiling Pat Bradley carried on a tradition with pride. Who knew that hitting a home run could be so lucrative?

Fans watched in amazement as they saw Lou Santangelo's ball soar high over the fence, giving him the first and only

Legends' home run of the game. Before returning to his space on the bench after rounding home, Lou ran over to the bleachers and tossed his batter's helmet into the crowd. Immediately Pat Bradley knew what to do.

Pat ran up and down nearly all rows of bleachers holding out the batter's helmet as people tossed money into Lou's own personal piggy bank. After

he finished his rounds, Pat returned Lou's hat, filled

**"It's just a good old tradition we brought back."**

-Pat Bradley

with green, to the batboy who delivered it to Lou.

Pat confirmed that in the past eight games the

fans have been committed to tossing money into the batting helmet of any Legends player to hit a home run.

"It's just a good old tradition we brought back," said Bradley.

Salaries average only \$800 to \$900 a month during baseball season for Class A minor league players, so this money is very sought after and very appreciated.

## NTRA hopes ESPN will take it to the next level

By Colin Sinnard

When you hear the NFL, you think of football. When you hear NBA, you think of basketball. When you hear NTRA, you think of... This is exactly what the Thoroughbred industry is trying to change by forging a new partnership with ESPN.

The NTRA, for those who don't know, is the National Thoroughbred Racing Association. Many don't consider Thoroughbred racing a household sport, but the NTRA is taking a new direction to make the sport of Thoroughbred racing as popular as the National Football League. NTRA officials know that they won't be granted instant success, so they have formulated two steps that will help them reach their ultimate goal.

The first step to make Thoroughbred racing a top television ratings competitor is to increase its public awareness. The NTRA has decided to leave its former television partners, the network stations, NBC and ABC. They will now broadcast their races exclusively on cable television with ESPN.

"With the offer that ESPN made us, we would be fools not to take it," said Fritz Widaman, senior director of marketing of the NTRA. "We have gotten complaints from the people who don't have cable, but the size of the people without cable doesn't compare to the people with it," Widaman said.

The NTRA is now thinking of different ways to catch viewers' attention. Instead of making the

Breeders' Cup a five-hour telecast on NBC, they are now thinking of catching viewers' attention throughout the whole show and increasing ratings by dividing half of the show between ESPN and ESPN 2. The move will require a greater investment.

That brings up the second step for success: to improve the economic conditions. Right now the NTRA is spending millions of dollars to make the initials NTRA into a household name. Their big money day is the Breeders' Cup. The NTRA represents the Breeders' Cup as the NFL represents the Super Bowl. In other words, the Breeders' Cup is the NTRA's "cash crop."

It also has affected the way owners and trainers race, said Dora Hughes, vice president nominations for the Breeders' Cup. She said now horses train to run through the late fall when the Breeders' Cup races are scheduled. Before, many horses stopped racing after summer meets. She hopes more racing will mean more fans.

The NTRA is "going to increase interest of Thoroughbred racing globally," Hughes said.

Since 1999, the NTRA fan base has increased by 19 percent, said Widaman. With this new future plan in store for the association, officials are hoping that the only place that the NTRA can go is up, hopefully to the top of the ratings chart.



Senior Director of Marketing Fritz Widaman predicted that ESPN would take the NTRA in the new direction they want to go. NTRA's goals are to increase the popularity of the Thoroughbred horse industry and to improve economic conditions in the industry.

The NTRA partnership with ESPN represents a "huge opportunity to take this to the next level," said Widaman.

