



# 2022 Cotuit Kettleers Game Notes

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## 2022 Schedule/Results

Overall: 14-8-5, Home: 7-6-2, Away: 7-2-3

### June (13-2-2)

12	at Chatham	5-0, W
13	at Falmouth	4-0, W
14	Bourne	6-4, W
16	at Bourne	7-0, W
17	Chatham	PPD
18	at Hyannis	W, 8-2
19	Brewster (DH)	W, 1-0/W, 5-0
21	at Wareham	5-3, W
22	Falmouth	3-3, T
23	Chatham	9-2, W
24	Harwich	4-2, L
25	Y-D	5-3, L
26	at Orleans (DH)	7-3, W/ 0-0, T
28	Orleans	3-2, W
29	at Y-D	4-1, W
30	Wareham	6-5, W

### July (1-6-3)

1	at Harwich	4-4, T
2	Hyannis	3-1, W
3	at Falmouth	5-0, L
4	Falmouth	10-7, L
6	at Brewster	1-1, T
7	Bourne	12-7, L
8	Wareham	7-2, L
9	Harwich	11-6, L
10	at Bourne	7-3, L
12	Hyannis	6-6, T
13	at Wareham	6:00
14	Orleans	5:00
15	at Brewster	5:00
16	at Harwich	5:30
17	Falmouth	5:00
19	at Hyannis	6:00
20	at Bourne	6:00
21	at Y-D	5:00
22	Chatham	5:00
23	All-Star Game (Wareham)	6:00
25	Y-D	4:30
26	at Chatham	7:00
27	Hyannis	4:30
29	at Hyannis	6:00
30	at Wareham	6:00
31	Wareham	4:30

### August (0-0)

1	Bourne	4:30
2	at Falmouth	6:00
4	Playoffs Begin	

## Tonight's Matchup

### Cotuit Kettleers @ Wareham Gatemen

July 13, 2022 - 5:00 - Spillane Field



#### Cotuit

Record: 14-8-5  
Home/Away: 7-6-2, 7-2-3  
Up Next: 7/14 vs. ORL  
MGR: Mike Roberts



#### Wareham

Record: 11-12-4  
Home/Away: 4-6-3, 7-6-1  
Up Next: 7/14 @ HAR  
HC: Harvey Shapiro

## Keep up with the Ketts'

STREAM: Home games by searching "Cotuit Kettleers" on YouTube. Road games by searching "Cotuit Kettleers" on MixLR! (Jake Starr, Tim Crowley, Rylee Pay and Jenna Meyer)

FOLLOW: Keep up on social media by following @CotuitKettleers on Twitter and Instagram. You can also like us on Facebook and follow us on TikTok!

READ: Game Recaps, Features and more on our website Kettleers.Org!

### Leading Off

Tonight, the Kettleers travel to Spillane Field for the second time this season to face the Wareham Gatemen. Cotuit won the first meeting at Spillane 5-3 on June 21.

### Looking Back

Cotuit picked up its fifth tie of the season in a 6-6 draw against Hyannis. Tommy Troy homered twice and Carter Trice added a solo shot among six total home runs between the two teams.

### Brooks' Legacy

Brooks Baldwin finished up his career in Cotuit on a ten-game hit streak, which was both a personal and team high on the season so far. He led the Ketts in a variety of offensive categories.

### Tommy's World

Tommy Troy kept his red-hot start season going with two homeruns on Tuesday night vs Hyannis. It was his second multi-homer game of the season and second game with five or more RBI as well. The other came against Bourne on July 7, also at Lowell Park.

### Success in June

Cotuit's 13 wins in June are tied with four other teams for the most wins in the season's first month in league history. The 2002 Kettleers also won 13 games. Also included are 1996 Wareham and 1994 Orleans. All of this info comes via Bruce Hack of Sportstats.

### Record-Setting Pace

With a 9-0-1 start to the season before a loss, the 2022 Kettleers tied for third all time in the most games played without a loss to begin a season. The 2002 Kettleers hold the record with 15 games played at a 13-0-2 clip to begin the season. All of this info comes courtesy of Bruce Hack of Sportstats.

### 400 Club

Mike Roberts captured his 400th career win on June 13th at Falmouth. With Saturday's win, Roberts is up to 412 career wins. He is one of five CCBL managers all-time with 400 or more wins and Roberts sits fifth in wins all-time.

### No Runs for You

Cotuit posted six shutouts during the first month of the season as well. That number eclipsed last year's shutout total of two. The Kettleers pitching staff has been one of their strengths and they'll look to keep that up in July.

### 75 Years

This season will make the 75th anniversary of Cotuit Kettleers baseball. During the year we'll commemorate the franchise, which was founded in 1947 and it's strong history. More 75-year content can be found on our website.

### Going for 18

Cotuit leads all teams in the Cape Cod Baseball League with 17 championships, with its last coming in 2019. This season they'll be aiming for their 18th championship. Head coach Mike Roberts has picked up three championships in his time leading the Kettleers.

### Experience at the Helm

A familiar face is leading the charge for the Kettleers this season. Mike Roberts returns as head coach for Cotuit for his 18th season and is in search of his fourth title with the Kettleers.

### Rounding out the Coaching Staff

Roberts is joined by a plethora of experienced coaches in the dugout. Andrew Shreiner leads the pitchers, Trey Holland is the bullpen coach, while Andrew Turner and Daniel Wilkerson round out the Cotuit coaching staff.

## 2022 Team Stats

### Offense (Per Game)

Average:	.251
OBP:	.343
SLG:	.385
OPS:	.728
Runs:	117 (4.3)
Hits:	210 (7.8)
BB:	100 (3.7)
SO:	221 (8.2)
2B:	30 (1.1)
3B:	5
HR:	24
HBP:	21
SB:	49-73 (67%)
LOB:	179 (6.6)

### Pitching (Per Game)

IP:	229.0
Hits:	172 (6.4)
Runs:	98 (3.6)
ER:	85 (3.1)
BB:	104 (3.9)
K:	222 (8.2)
ERA:	3.34
WHIP:	1.21
BAA:	.204

### Fielding (Per Game)

DP:	16
E:	17
Field%:	.907%
CS/SBA:	9-42 (21%)

### Cotuit Record When...

Home:	7-6-2
Away:	7-2-3
West Division:	8-6-2
East Division:	6-2-3
Scoring First:	12-1-2
Opponent Scores First:	2-7-2
Score less than 3 runs:	1-2-2
Score 3-6 runs:	9-3-2
Score 6-9 runs:	4-2-1
Score 10+ runs:	0-0
One-run games:	2-0
Give up less than 3 runs:	11-0-2
Give up 3-6 runs:	3-3-2
Give up 6-9 runs:	0-1-1
Give up 10+ runs:	0-3
Lights:	6-2-2
No Lights:	8-6-3
Weekdays:	8-4-4
Weekends:	6-4-1
Hit a home run:	11-4-2
Did not hit home run:	3-4-3

## Numerical Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	School	Year
2	Trotter Harlan	IF	C. of Charleston	Junior
3	Caleb Ketchup	IF	Lipscomb	R-Freshman
8	CJ Kayfus	IF/OF	Miami	Sophomore
10	Calvin Harris	C	Ole Miss	Sophomore
12	Tommy Troy	IF/OF	Stanford	Sophomore
14	Carter Trice	IF	NC State	Sophomore
15	Caleb Lomavita	C	Cal	Freshman
19	Jimmy Obertop	C/IF	Michigan	Junior
22	Eddie Park	OF	Stanford	Sophomore
23	Joey Dixon*	RHP	Stanford	Sophomore
24	Tyler Johnson	OF/IF	Coastal Carolina	Senior
25	Josh Pearson	OF	LSU	Freshman
27	Colby Wilkerson	IF	North Carolina	Sophomore
28	Ben Johnson	RHP	Ga. Southern	Sophomore
29	Christian Little	RHP	LSU	Sophomore
30	Cameron Wagoner	RHP	Eastern Michigan	Junior
34	Jaylen Paden	RHP	Ga. Southern	Sophomore
36	Harrison Cohen	RHP	Virginia	R-Senior
38	Carson Swilling	RHP	Auburn	Sophomore
39	Daniel Brooks	RHP	C. of Charleston	Freshman
40	Ryan Bruno*	LHP	Stanford	Sophomore
41	Cam Schuelke	RHP	FGCU	R-Freshman
42	Max Meier	RHP	Stanford	Junior
45	Will Jacobson	RHP/IF	Harvard	Junior
46	Ty Johnson	RHP	Ball State	Sophomore
47	Zach Chappell	LHP	North Florida	Senior
48	Adam Boucher	RHP	Duke	Sophomore
50	Max Gieg	RHP	Boston College	Junior
51	Paul Skenes*	C/RHP	Air Force	Sophomore

\* indicates signed but not activated

### Coaching Staff

Head Coach:	Mike Roberts
Pitching Coach:	Andrew Shreiner
Bullpen Coach:	Trey Holland
Bench Coach:	Andrew Turner
Assistant Coach:	Daniel Wilkerson

### Front Office/Support Staff

President:	Terry Moran
General Manager:	Bruce Murphy
Dir. of Baseball Operations:	Peter Flaherty
GM/Scout Liason:	Will Thompson
Athletic Trainer:	Rachel Jordan

### Pronouciations

#30 - Wagoner (Wag-ner)
#34 - Paden (PAY-den)
#41 - Schuelke (SHUL-kee)
#42 - Meier (MY-er)
#48 - Boucher (Boo-shay)
#47 - Chapell (like "chapel")
#50 - Gieg (gig... like gigabyte)
#51 - Skenes (Ski-nz)

## 2022 CCBL Standings

### West

Cotuit Kettleers..... 14-8-5 (33 Pts)  
 Hyannis Harbor Hawks.....13-8-6 (32 Pts)  
 Bourne Braves.....12-9-6 (30 Pts)  
 Wareham Gatemen.....11-12-4 (26 Pts)  
 Falmouth Commodores.....10-15-2 (22 Pts)

### East

Y-D Red Sox.....13-8-6 (32 Pts)  
 Brewster Whitecaps.....11-10-6 (28 Pts)  
 Harwich Mariners.....10-12-5 (25 Pts)  
 Orleans Firebirds.....10-14-3 (23 Pts)  
 Chatham Anglers.....6-14-7 (19 Pts)

## Scouting the Opposition

### At a Glance

Opponent: Wareham Gatemen  
 Record: 11-12-4 (5-2-3 L10, Streak: 1T)  
 Last Game: T 5-5 vs. Chatham (5 innings)  
 Next Game: July 14 @ Harwich  
 Last Matchup: 7/8/22; 7-2 Wareham Win

### Team Leaders

AVG: Hogan Windish (.289)  
 H: Max Anderson (29)  
 R: Hogan Windish (17)  
 HR: Hogan Windish (3)  
 RBI: Hogan Windish (19)  
 2B: Hogan Windsih (9)  
 BB: Blake Wright (14)  
 SO: Two Tied (23)

IP: Michael Sansone (24.2)  
 SO: Michael Sansone (30)  
 ERA: Four Tied (0.00)  
 W: Cameron Weston (4)  
 SV: Two Tied (2)

## Opponent Team Stats

### Offense (Per Game)

Average:..... .233  
 Runs:..... 113 (4.2)  
 Hits:.....199 (7.4)  
 BB:..... 103 (3.9)  
 SO:.....235 (8.7)  
 2B:..... 37 (1.4)  
 3B:..... 0  
 HR:..... 11  
 HBP:.....30

### Pitching (Per Game)

IP:..... 225.2  
 Hits:.....209 (7.7)  
 Runs:.....109 (3.7)  
 BB:..... 77 (2.8)  
 K:..... 221 (8.2)  
 ERA:.....3.88  
 WHIP:.....1.27

## Ketts' Leaders

AVG: Tommy Troy (.364)  
 OBP: Tommy Troy (.417)  
 SLG: Tommy Troy (.841)  
 OPS: Tommy Troy (1.258)  
 AB: Tyler Johnson (59)  
 R: Tommy Troy (10)  
 H: Tyler Johnson (19)  
 2B: Tommy Troy (4)  
 3B: Tommy Troy (1)  
 HR: Tyler Johnson (6)  
 RBI: Tommy Troy (15)  
 Tyler Johnson (15)  
 BB: Carter Trice (6)  
 HBP: Josh Pearson (3)  
 Tyler Johnson (3)  
 SO: Tyler Johnson (21)  
 SB: Eddie Park (3)

\*Minimum ABs to qualify is ten

APP: Will Jacobsen (7)  
 IP: Harrison Cohen (22.2)  
 W: Harrison Cohen (2)  
 BB: Adam Boucher (16)  
 SO: Harrison Cohen (18)  
 SV: Max Gieg (1)  
 ERA: Ben Johnson (2.00)  
 WHIP: Zach Chapell (0.82)  
 BAA: Max Gieg (.152)  
 SO/9: Cameron Wagoner (16.6)

## Today's Probable Pitcher

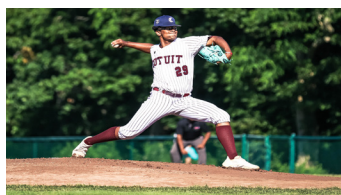
### Christian Little

### RHP, Vanderbilt (LSU Transfer), Rising Junior

2022 CCBL Stats: 4 APP (2 GS) 0-1, 10.13 ERA, 8.0 IP, 12 H, 7 K, 3 BB, 9 ER, 9 R, 3 HR, 0 BK, 7.9 K/9  
 2022 @ Vanderbilt: 1-2, 3.72 ERA, 18G/3S, 38.2 IP, 29 H, 46 K, 17 BB, 16 ER, 16 R, 5 HR, 10.7 K/9

### 2022 Game Log

Date	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	HR
6/24	1.0	4	2	2	0	0	0
6/29	3.0	2	1	1	2	3	1
7/4	2.0	3	4	4	1	0	0
7/7	3.0	5	5	5	1	4	2



-VERSATILITY: After serving as both a reliever and a starter this season, Little serves as a bulk arm behind an opener tonight.

-LAST TIME OUT: Little tossed three innings in his last start against Bourne on July 7.

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-SEC SOON: Little recently announced that he will be transferring from Vanderbilt to Louisiana State University (LSU) for the 2023 season.

-PROMISING POTENTIAL: Coming out of high school, Perfect Game ranked Little as the top prospect in Missouri and the fifth-best starting pitcher for his class in the nation.

# Transactions

<b>Date</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Transaction</b>
Jun. 13	Cam Hill	Released
Jun. 15	Mitch Jebb	Released
Jun. 15	CJ Kayfus	Activated
Jun. 15	Zach Cole	Signed/Activated
Jun. 17	Peyton Williams	Released
Jun. 17	Kyle Karros	Activated
Jun. 18	Jake Berger	Released
Jun. 18	Joe Williams	Released
Jun. 18	Tyler Johnson	Signed/Activated
Jun. 20	Josh Pearson	Activated
Jun. 22	Ethan Chenault	Released
Jun. 23	Christian Little	Signed/Activated
Jun. 24	Chris Stuart	Released
Jun. 24	Ben Johnson	Activated
Jun. 24	Mark McLaughlin	Activated
Jun. 24	Kade Morris	Inactivated (Team USA)
Jun. 26	Graham Pauley	Released
Jun. 27	Tommy Troy	Activated
Jun. 28	Isaiah Coupet	Released
Jun. 29	Dalton Rogers	Activated
Jun. 29	Kenya Huggins	Released
Jun. 29	Cam Collier	Released
Jun. 30	Eddie Park	Activated
Jun. 30	Chandler Simpson	Released
Jun. 30	Cody Schrier	Signed/Activated
Jul. 1	Tyler Bosma	Released
Jul. 1	Jackson Kelley	Released
Jul. 1	William Privette	Released
Jul. 1	Max Meier	Signed/Activated
Jul. 2	Cameron Wagoner	Signed/Activated
Jul. 2	Carson Swilling	Activated
Jul. 4	Zach Cole	Released
Jul. 4	Zach Chappell	Signed/Activated
Jul. 5	Ryan Ritter	Released
Jul. 5	Jimmy Obertop	Signed/Activated
Jul. 5	Jaylen Paden	Activated
Jul. 6	Dalton Rogers	Released
Jul. 6	Mark McLaughlin	Released
Jul. 6	Trotter Harlan	Signed/Activated
Jul. 6	Calvin Harris	Signed/Activated
Jul. 6	TJ Brock	Released
Jul. 6	Cody Schrier	Released
Jul. 8	Kade Kern	Released
Jul. 8	Kyle Karros	Released
Jul. 8	Victor Scott	Released

# Transactions

<b>Date</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Transaction</b>
Jul. 10	Caleb Ketchup	Signed/Activated
Jul. 10	Brooks Baldwin	Released
Jul. 10	Justin Miknis	Released
Jul. 11	Cam Schuelke	Signed/Activated
Jul. 11	Colby Wilkerson	Signed/Activated

# MULTI-HIT/RBI GAMES/STREAKS

Mutli-Hit Games	2	3	4	Total
6 Miknis, Justin	1	-	-	1
8 Kayfus, CJ	-	1	-	1
10 Collier, Cam	-	1	-	1
11 Baldwin, Brooks	8	2	-	10
12 Troy, Tommy	2	3	-	5
14 Trice, Carter	1	-	-	1
15 Lomavita, Caleb	1	-	-	1
24 Johnson, Tyler	3	-	1	4

Mutli-RBI Games	2	3	4+	Total
6 Miknis, Justin	2	-	-	2
11 Baldwin, Brooks	2	1	-	3
12 Troy, Tommy	-	1	2 (6/5)	3
14 Trice, Carter	-	2	-	2
24 Johnson, Tyler	1	2	-	3

Hitting Streaks	Longest	Current
2 Harlan, Trotter	3	-
8 Kayfus, CJ	3	-
10 Harris, Calvin	3	-
11 Baldwin, Brooks	10	10
12 Troy, Tommy	5	2
14 Trice, Carter	4	2
15 Lomavita, Caleb	3	-
22 Park, Eddie	3	3
24 Johnson, Tyler	5	-

Reached Base Streaks	Longest	Current
2 Harlan, Trotter	3	-
8 Kayfus, CJ	6	-
10 Harris, Calvin	3	-
11 Baldwin, Brooks	10	10
12 Troy, Tommy	5	2
14 Trice, Carter	5	3
15 Lomavita, Caleb	3	-
19 Obertop, Jimmy	3	3
22 Park, Eddie	6	6
24 Johnson, Tyler	7	-
25 Pearson, Josh		

## The Last Time (Cotuit in 2022)...

Cotuit won five or more straight games .....	June 12-22 (8)
Cotuit scored 10 or more runs in a game .....	None
Cotuit shut out an opponent .....	..@Orleans; June 26
Cotuit shut out consecutive opponents .....	vs Brewster; June 19
Cotuit was shut out .....	@ Falmouth July 3
Cotuit swept a doubleheader .....	vs Brewster; June 19
A Kett had a multi-home-run game .....	Tommy Troy, July 12 vs. Hyannis
A Kett hit a grand slam .....	None
Cotuit hit back-to-back homers .....	Tommy Troy & Carter Trice, July 12 vs. Hyannis
A Kett had four or more RBI in a game .....	Tommy Troy; July 12 vs Hyannis (5)
A Kett had four or more hits in a game .....	Tyler Johnson; July 4 vs Falmouth (4)
A Kett stole three or more bases in a game .....	Victor Scott: June 23 vs. Chatham
A Kett had a five game hitting streak .....	Brooks Baldwin (10); June 29 - July 9
A Kett had a ten game hit streak .....	Brooks Baldwin (10); June 29 - July 9
A Kett had ten or more strikeouts .....	None
A Kett pitched a complete game .....	None
Pitched a combined nine-inning shutout .....	June 16; at Bourne
Pitched a no-hitter .....	None



# Head Coach Mike Roberts



Coach Roberts, has led the Kettleers to the 2010, 2013 and 2019 Cape Cod Baseball League Championship, claiming the Arnold Mycock Trophy. In 2012, the team won the President's Trophy for the best regular season record in the league at 30-14. This was the first time the Kettleers had reached 30 wins under Coach Roberts' leadership.

From 1978 through 1998, Roberts was the head coach at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Then he went on to UNC-Asheville, where he coached in the spring of 2000. All totaled, Roberts' UNC teams made nine NCAA post-season and two College World Series appearances. Five times his teams captured the ACC Regular Season Championship and four times the ACC Tournament Championship. Ten of Roberts' former players have been first round draft picks. Sixteen of his former players at UNC have played in Major League Baseball. His greatest individual coaching success is his own son, Brian Roberts, the two time all-star 2nd baseman who played for the Baltimore Orioles and New York Yankees.

Walt Weiss, who played for Coach Roberts at UNC-CH went on to become the American League Rookie of the year in 1988, manage the Colorado Rockies and is currently the bench coach for the 2021 World Series champion Atlanta Braves. Several former players are collegiate head coaches (Mark Kingston, South Carolina; Chad Holbrook, College of Charleston; Todd Interdonato, Wofford). Some, like Willie Stewart, are assistants, and several others work in professional baseball or are professional baseball athlete's advisors. "I am pleased so many of the excellent student/athletes I have recruited through the years continue to enjoy a career helping young men try to reach their academic, athletic, and career goals."

Every summer in Cotuit the goal is to win a Cape League Championship. We strive to accomplish this goal with mature college student-athletes from around the nation who embrace fundamental practices and love playing at picturesque Elizabeth Lowell Park. Many of the Kettleers players become involved in our wonderful community with activities such as the Cotuit library reading program and the ever-growing Kettleers baseball clinics. The athletes provide excellent leadership to young people during the summer as they are also building close relationships, many which last a lifetime, with their host families.

Prior to managing Wareham to the Western Division regular season title in 2000, Roberts had led Wareham to the same title in 1984. Each of those two seasons, Roberts' Cape League teams led the entire League in stolen bases and continued this tradition with the 2012 Kettleers. In 2000, Roberts' Wareham team tied the Cape League all-time single season stolen base record with 134 stolen bases.

In the off-season, Coach Roberts has studied part-time for his Doctorate in Sports Administration at the University of New Mexico, does base stealing clinics, writes, and produces baseball videos. He has written 2 books on base stealing. The first titled "You Can't Steal Second Base and Keep Your Foot on First!" published in Dec. 2008 and the 2nd book titled "Baserunning" was published in Dec. 2013. He is now working for the Pittsburgh Pirates as well as consulting with many colleges and high schools on base stealing and base running.

Several base stealing videos were filmed at beautiful Elizabeth Lowell Park in Cotuit in 2011 and a hitting video was filmed at Lowell Park in 2012. His son Brian, who led the American League in stolen bases in 2007, contributed to the first book and the DVD which shows clips of Brian stealing bases for the Orioles.

Mike currently works for the Pittsburgh Pirates. He is an adjunct Sports Management professor for Spring Arbor University in Michigan after completing three years as Director of Sports Management at Asbury University in Wilmore, KY. He has consulted for two sports industry training and technologies companies as the Director of Baseball Development for SmartKage in Tyngsborough, MA. He holds a similar role with Athletes' Performance (name is currently TeamExos), driving the Business Development for Baseball with minor league and major league baseball athletes. AP is featured often in publications and on ESPN as the premier athletic training center for Elite Athletes in the USA and around the world.

In Jan. 2014, Coach Roberts was voted into the American Baseball Coaches Association Coaches Hall of Fame and was inducted in Orlando, Florida on Jan. 3, 2015. In January 2009, 2011, 2017 and recently again in January 2022 Coach Roberts was a platform speaker at the annual ABCA convention which hosts around 6,000 coaches.

Coach Roberts daughter, Angie lives in the Dallas area with husband David and boys Tyler and Brock. They have enjoyed visiting Cotuit almost every summer since 2004. His son, Brian lives in Sarasota, FL with wife Diana and boys Jax, Nash, and Cru.

## Kett's Honors

June 28, 2022:

Chandler Simpson  
CCBL Player of the Week

Jackson Kelley  
CCBL Pitcher of the Week

## 2021 Kett's Drafted

John Rhodes  
Jake Smith  
Justin Meis  
Ben Rice  
Andre Granillo  
River Town  
Brooks Baldwin  
Alaska Abney  
Ryan Long  
Mikey Perez

## 2021 CCBL All-Stars

Luke Gold  
Eric Brown  
Jake Brooks

# Off Day Profile: The Duo Behind the Dish

by Clara Richards | Washington University in St. Louis

In his eleventh start, catcher Caleb Lomavita walked to the mound to greet his new pitcher and ask an essential question.

“Hey, what’s your name again?”

There’s a period of adjustment for every player coming to the Cape Cod League, but the catchers have a particularly tough task. They have to call pitches and catch for teammates who, sometimes, they’ve never seen throw before. They don’t know how fast their velocity will be or what type of command they have on the mound; a 97 mile pitch might fly towards them, and they just have to follow their instincts.

“You don’t have any trust with them,” Lomavita said. “Right there, you need to just be athletic. You can’t think about anything. Once you start thinking too much, that’s when it starts to become hard.”

Not all of the Cape Cod League’s teams leave the pitch calling to the battery. Some teams use earpieces to communicate pitch sequencing. But for head coach Mike Roberts, the decision to put the responsibility on the pitcher and catcher is a no-brainer.

“What I’m trying to do is encourage catchers to become more fundamentally sound,” Roberts said. “The earpieces are just to speed up the game and, and if a pitcher and a catcher are in sync, you don’t need an earpiece. Today, we’re trying to electronify the game, and I don’t think we can ever electronify it; it’s just a backyard wiffle ball game.”

Roberts thinks that catching is the most difficult position in the sport of baseball today. He used to think that it was the pitcher, but he’s changed his mind because of the wildness of pitchers today. “To be an excellent catcher today, you have to be old school and just more fundamentally sound than any position on the field,” he said. “Otherwise, it shows up, because you’re involved in every pitch.”

Instead of focusing on stealing strikes, Roberts stresses the essentials for his catchers. He’s given Miknis tips about keeping his thumb in the air instead of down to keep him from dropping balls, and he’s helped Lomavita with pitch calling. But in terms of framing, Roberts stresses that the goal is to be overlooked instead of having any dramatic movements.

“Catchers and coaches teach them that, ‘Okay, you have to get on one knee to pull the ball up out of the ground to make the umpire see that it’s a better pitch,’” Roberts said. “Well, catchers have not improved by going to one knee — they’ve actually gone the other way.”

The task of catching for the Kettleers’ pitching staff has posed an interesting challenge for the duo of Lomavita and Justin Miknis from Kent State, who have rotated behind the dish for the first half of the season. At college, they both have the fall preseason to get to know their pitcher’s tendencies. Without those months of introduction, it makes those early mound visits extra valuable for the catchers. Miknis likes to throw questions at them: what’s their strikeout pitch? What’s their best pitch thrown on a 3-2 count? What are they the most comfortable with in certain situations?

And then in the stressful mound visits—the 3-2 counts, the bases loaded and the just-need-to-throw-a-strike moments—some of those talks are just a regular conversation. Lomavita will crack a joke to ease the tension, maybe talk about someone in the stands. Miknis might tell them to breathe and focus on throwing over the plate.

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The catchers’ education on the Cape hasn’t just been from Roberts. It’s also been from each other, and some of it has nothing to do with baseball itself. The biggest competition between two may be about fishing. Lomavita, who grew up in Hawaii, argues that he’s had more success on the Cape so far.

“This poor guy hasn’t caught something since the first day. I feel bad for him,” Lomavita joked about Miknis’s fishing abilities.

Granted, it might be true for as long as the two have them have been on the East Coast together — “I haven’t caught anything, and it’s upsetting,” Miknis concurred. But Miknis said that Lomavita also might be overhyping himself: “He’s only caught one or two.” They’ve trekked all the way out to ponds in the middle of the Cape, surrounded by brush and mosquitos, and tried their luck.

The fish just didn’t want to bite. Maybe it was the lures, and maybe the water in Miknis’s host family’s pond was too cold. Regardless, Miknis and Lomavita tried anyway. That time together, both in the dugout and outside of it, has solidified their relationship as they continued to learn from each other.

Lomavita admires the simplicity of his fellow catcher’s mentality. “He’s bought into the simplified game of just catching the ball,” he said. “I’m enjoying just catching the ball; I’ve got the pitcher’s back. We’re just mentoring each other. And if we see something, we tweak it a bit.”

And Miknis, who played his last game before departing before the draft, has picked up some keys from his coworker. “He’s going to be really good, Loma is,” Miknis said. “I’ve learned that just being relaxed is gonna take me a lot farther than trying to be tight. It’s hurt me when I’m tight and the balls tip my glove, so I just need like relax; he does that really well.”

There is undeniable pressure on the battery to control the sequence of pitches and the trajectory of the game, but it’s one that these two catchers have relished.

“I’ve seen pro catchers who didn’t like to catch. Caleb and Justin really like to catch,” said Roberts. “They work at it, and they don’t mind getting beat up. It’s a long day, so you gotta love it. And these guys love to catch.”