



Chris Colabello '05

Major League Baseball player, Minnesota Twins

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MINNESOTA TWINS

BY TROY WATKINS

AT ABOUT 1 A.M. ON MAY 22, 2013, CHRIS COLABELLO '05 GOT THE NEWS HAD BEEN WAITING FOR ... ROCHESTER RED WINGS MANAGER GENE GLYNN INFORMED HIS FIRST BASEMAN THAT HE HAD BEEN CALLED UP TO PLAY FOR THE MINNESOTA TWINS. ACCORDING TO A *USA TODAY* STORY, THE BUS ERUPTED IN CHEERS. "LITTLE BIT OF SHOCK, LITTLE BIT OF TEARS, LITTLE BIT OF LAUGHTER," COLABELLO TOLD REPORTERS IN ATLANTA, WHERE HE PLAYED IN HIS FIRST GAME, ABOUT FINALLY REACHING THE MAJORS. "IT'S SOMETHING I'VE WISHED FOR FOR SEVEN YEARS. AS MUCH AS I ENJOYED PLAYING THE GAME IN INDY BALL I ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE IF I COULD DO IT HERE."

It took longer than he had hoped, but Colabello became a Major League Baseball player. He collected his first hit, a single, against the Tigers' Doug Fister in Detroit. An honorable mention all-America performer at Assumption, Colabello signed a contract with the independent Worcester Tornadoes and received a non-roster invitation to the Detroit Tigers Minor League camp in 2006, but was released before the season started.

He spent seven seasons playing for Worcester in the Canadian-American League, where he hit .317 with 86 home runs, before the Minnesota Twins called. Colabello batted .348 for the Tornadoes in 2011 with 20 home runs, earning League MVP honors and Baseball

America's Independent League Player of the Year accolades. He hit .284 with 19 HR and a team record 98 RBI for the New Britain Rock Cats last season, to finish second in the Eastern League's MVP balloting.

This year, he was a non-roster invite to the Minnesota Twins spring training, with his locker stationed between former American League MVPs Justin Morneau and Joe Mauer. Despite a solid performance, Colabello started the season with the Twins' AAA International League affiliate, the Rochester Red Wings, where he took the league's lead in several statistical categories and collected the most votes to play in the AAA All-Star game.

Born in Framingham, Colabello grew up in Milford and played for Team Italy in the World Baseball Classic last spring, following in the footsteps of his father, Lou, who pitched for Italy in the 1984 Olympics. Chris helped Italy reach the second round of the tournament by hitting .333 with seven RBI in 18 at-bats. His strong performance helped to strengthen his baseball résumé and convince himself he could make it to the major leagues.

"I promised myself three things," he said in a MLB.com interview. "If I was having fun, if it was feasible financially and physically, and if I was getting better I'd keep playing. I always thought I belonged and if I didn't believe that, I think I would've stopping playing." ❖