



NEWS RELEASE

EASTERN LEAGUE AFFILIATE OF THE NEW YORK METS SINCE 1992

2014: A Run to Remember

When the temperature dips in September and Friday night rolls round in the Southern Tier, the Binghamton Mets, and professional baseball for that matter, aren't exactly high on the local's list of things to see.

As the summer weather is put in the rearview mirror, so too are the boys of summer. Their time has passed. The days of humid August nights watching the future New York Mets were sweet, but those days are gone.

Shorts and T-shirts have been replaced with jeans and hoodies.

First pitch has given way to the opening kickoff of the local high school football game.

The seventh-inning stretch has ceded to the cheerleading squad's halftime performance.

The B-Mets log another season, they fail to claim the Eastern League title and everyone moves onto the next attraction in September. It's an annual cycle that everyone became accustomed to.

That all changed in September 2014.

The Stage is Set

It is Friday, September 12th.

Under overcast skies and with the thermometer just barely touching 49 degrees, Joe Pascarella opens the windows to the NYSEG Stadium box office a few minutes before 9:00 AM.

As manager of ticketing for the team, he is prepared to oversee the biggest moment in the stadium's history since 1994.

Before he can even settle into his chair, a fan has already made his way to the box office window.

Why is he here so early?

He wants to purchase tickets to tonight's game; Game 3 of the Eastern League Championship Series. The B-Mets own a 2-0 series advantage and they are just one victory shy of clinching the league title, something no team in the Southern Tier has done in two decades.



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Just as soon as Mr. Pascarella completes the transaction, another fan approaches the window.

And then another. And another. The steady stream of ticket seekers continues throughout the day.

Forget high school football. Forget cheerleading performances. Forget about the weather.

Southern Tier residents had one thing on their mind that fateful Friday: The Binghamton Mets winning an Eastern League title.

"Six More Wins"

The goal for the 2014 Binghamton Mets was set by their manager Pedro Lopez on the first day they reported to the ballpark in early April.

As he greeted the media and prepared for his third season steering the ship in the Southern Tier, Lopez declared he wanted six more wins out of his ballclub. Six more postseason wins.

His team the previous season rewrote the B-Mets' record books. Using a stellar starting rotation, a shutdown bullpen and a high-octane offensive attack, the 2013 Binghamton Mets scorched the Eastern League with a record-setting 86-55 record.

Despite their stellar regular season, the B-Mets postseason proved to be a disaster.

In Game 1 of the Eastern Division Championship Series, the Trenton Thunder scored three runs with two outs in the bottom of the tenth inning to stun the B-Mets. Two games later, the Thunder completed the sweep, blanking Binghamton at NYSEG Stadium.

It was a shocking and rapid fall from grace for a B-Mets squad that most deemed unbeatable in the postseason.

Lopez was not prepared to see his team fall like that again.

Getting Back In

Before the B-Mets could fulfill Lopez's postseason request, they had to make it back to the postseason, something no B-Mets team had ever done in back-to-back seasons.

Despite heavy production from veterans Matt Clark and Brian Burgamy in April and an other-worldly performance from Kevin Plawecki in May, the B-Mets sat just two games over .500 by the second week of June.



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It took a trip to Akron, Ohio, home of the newly-minted RubberDucks, to jumpstart their season. In a doubleheader sweep on June 10, the B-Mets outscored their opponents 18-6, while collecting 22 hits and blasting five home runs. The victories started a six-game winning streak and a 17-3 stretch.

Just a week later, the B-Mets clubhouse would install a revolving door. On June 19, Binghamton welcomed five former Florida State League All-Stars from the St. Lucie Mets. Each would play a large role in the second half and some would etch their names into Binghamton baseball lore in the postseason.

With contributions from the reinvented Jayce Boyd, young-and-eager Dilson Herrera and tried-and-tested Brian Burgamy, the B-Mets clinched the second spot in the Eastern Division by mid-August.

Despite punching their ticket to the postseason, trying times awaited the B-Mets at the conclusion of the regular season.

The B-Mets normally steady bullpen blew back-to-back ninth-inning leads in their final two home games. On August 29, the B-Mets lost Dilson Herrera to the Major Leagues.

Without their offensive sparkplug, the punchless B-Mets were swept by the Richmond Flying Squirrels, closing the regular season on a six-game losing streak.

The outlook appeared bleak for the suddenly-struggling B-Mets as they prepared for the Eastern Division Championship Series matchup against the Portland Sea Dogs, the top team in the Eastern League.

Revived by Rivera

Tyler Pill got the ball for the B-Mets in Game 1 and cruised in his first trip through the Sea Dogs batting order, facing the minimum through three.

Sean Coyle busted the stretch by belting a solo home run in the fourth. Pill dodged further damage in the fifth, but was burned by a two-out three-run homer by David Chester in the sixth.

Trailing 5-1, Binghamton looked for an offensive pulse from the heart of their order. They got it.

TJ Rivera, who had already collected an RBI in the third inning, doubled with one out in the sixth. Jayce Boyd brought him home two batters later with a single to left.

The B-Mets turned to Hansel Robles to keep them within striking distance. The right-hander had been bumped to the bullpen at the All-Star break when



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Binghamton welcomed three starters back from the Las Vegas 51's and needed to make room in the rotation.

Robles was the odd man out.

Robles went from being the odd man out to The Man for the B-Mets. In his first outing as a reliever in the postseason, he blanked Portland over 2-1/3 innings.

In the eighth, the Sea Dogs started to unravel With Wilfredo Tovar on second following a leadoff double, Rivera stroked an RBI two-bagger down the right-field line.

After a walk to Brian Burgamy, Boyd shot a potential inning-ending double play ball to second. Sean Coyle fielded cleanly, but his shovel to Ryan Dent was off-line and allowed Rivera to score. Darrell Ceciliani capped the rally and tied the game with a sac fly to center.

Cody Satterwhite ran into trouble in the ninth, but preserved the 5-5 game by fanning Mike Miller to strand two aboard.

The table was set for the B-Mets to set the tone against the first-place Sea Dogs.

Yet again, Portland opened the door.

With one out Xorge Carrillo reached on a fielding error by Miller at third base. Tovar laced a single to left, pushing the winning run into scoring position.

Brandon Nimmo, hitting in the leadoff position in the batting order, fulfilled the goal of every leadoff hitter; see as many pitches as possible. The left-handed hitting outfielder engaged in a nine-pitch battle with reliever Noe Ramirez before striking out.

Despite going down, Nimmo had done his job. Rivera, who had been waiting on-deck, saw everything he needed to see out of Ramirez. The unheralded infielder who had gone undrafted out of college calmly dug into the box.

The Bronx native blasted the first pitch he saw from Ramirez over the left-field wall, sending the 1,625 diehard fans in attendance into a frenzy.

The B-Mets had completed the comeback and Rivera had led the way. His walk-off, three-run homer capped a personal four-hit, five-RBI game. Binghamton had overcome a four-run deficit with seven unanswered runs while earning their first postseason win in ten years.

Unfortunately, the B-Mets failed to build on the momentum, falling in Game 2 by a 7-0 final.



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The series shifted to Portland, Maine, where the B-Mets lost Game 3 by a 6-3 score.

Binghamton would need to win in enemy territory in Game 4 to keep their season alive.

Hemlock Field

Hadlock Field, home to the Portland Sea Dogs since 1994, had not been hospitable to the B-Mets in the 2014 regular season.

An April visit that included a loss and two postponements due to a snow storm was just a sign the difficulties ahead for the B-Mets.

The club returned in mid-May for six-game series for first place and lost five straight games, capping the slump with a walk-off loss.

The Sea Dogs defended home turf again by taking two of three at home in late July.

On top of this, history was on the Sea Dogs side. Back in 1996, in their only previous postseason meeting, the Sea Dogs defeated the B-Mets at Hadlock Field in Game 5 of the North Division Championship Series.

The B-Mets would have plenty of adversity to overcome.

Earning Every Inch

Lopez's message in 2014 was, "Six more wins." However, the message he has preached throughout his managerial career has been, "Quality at-bats."

Make the opposing pitcher work. Don't swing at bad pitches. Find a pitch you can drive. Make him come to you.

It is the foundation of a strong offensive attack. It was something sorely lacking from the B-Mets' efforts in Games 2 and 3.

The Binghamton Mets would need to go back to the basics for Game 4.

With a powerful thunderstorm forecasted for Saturday night, the two clubs agreed to push the start of Game 4 up to noon on Saturday, September 6.

The teams traded a run through the first three innings before Portland grabbed the lead by plating a run in the fourth against B-Mets starter Rainy Lara.

Trailing 2-1, the B-Mets prepared for the top of the fifth. It would prove to be the most pivotal two-inning stretch of the season for Binghamton.



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After two straight hits to open the inning, Rivera shot a sinking line drive single to left, plating Tovar with the tying run. Reliever Mike McCarthy took over from Augliera after a walk loaded the bases and issued a free pass to Ceciliani to force in another run. McCarthy capped the inning by uncorking a wild pitch, prompting Rivera to dash home.

After grabbing the lead with three runs in the fifth, Binghamton broke the contest open with a seven-run sixth. The B-Mets sent 11 men to the plate, collected four hits, cashed in on three walks and walked away from the 38-minute frame with an 11-2 lead. The first seven batters of the inning all reached and scored against relievers McCarthy and Pete Ruiz.

The B-Mets had followed Pedro Lopez's plan. They had made every plate appearance count. They did not give an inch to any Portland pitcher. They grinded it out and shifted the tide of the series.

Lara capped his start, the first quality one from a B-Met in the postseason, with a blank sixth. Jon Velasquez surrendered a two-run homer to David Chester in the eighth before Randy Fontanez posted a perfect ninth.

It was an 11-4 win. It bought another day of life to a B-Mets team that wanted no part of watching their season come to an end.

There was still work to be done, though.

Winner-take-all Game 5 was played at Hadlock Field on a gorgeous Sunday afternoon, 18 years to the day that the Sea Dogs bounced Binghamton from the postseason in 1996. In a link to the past, that contest had also been a Game 5 at Hadlock Field.

This time the B-Mets would not repeat history.

Leading 2-1, Binghamton broke the game open with a six-run fourth inning. After a single and a sac bunt, Tovar extended Binghamton's lead by lining an RBI single into center. Nimmo followed by punching a single into right, Tovar took third on the hit and scored when Jonathan Roof's throw skipped into the seats.

Burgamy walked and Boyd was hit by a pitch with two outs, loading the bases for Ceciliani. The hobbling outfielder greeted reliever Dayan Diaz by belting a bases-clearing, three-run double off the Maine Monster in left field. Taijeron followed with an RBI single to right, giving Binghamton an 8-1 advantage.

B-Mets starter Gabriel Ynoa lasted until the sixth before Robles took over and carried the game into the ninth.



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Closer Satterwhite worked a shutout ninth inning, inducing Keury De La Cruz to bounce out to short to punch Binghamton's ticket to the Eastern League Championship Series.

With their backs against the wall, the B-Mets had fought back and survived. Instead of heading home, the B-Mets would be heading to Richmond, Virginia to take on the Flying Squirrels.

But first, it was time to celebrate.

After the final out, Satterwhite leaped into his catcher Xorge Carrillo's arms. The rest of the B-Mets joined them near the pitcher's mound. In a mixed state of euphoria and relief, the B-Mets made their way to the clubhouse to spray champagne and spill light beer.

Although the bubbly made some eyes burn and the beer may have been a little warm, it had all never tasted so good to a B-Mets team heading to the championship series.

Before the champagne could be washed out of their jerseys, the B-Mets focus shifted to their next opponent, the Western Division champion Richmond Flying Squirrels. The team had a twelve-hour bus ride from Maine to Virginia to collect their thoughts

650 miles later, the Binghamton Mets arrived in Richmond. The Eastern Division champions were welcomed to the South by the sun rise and a much-needed day off.

Keeping It Up Down South

Just a week removed from an embarrassing regular season-closing four-game sweep at the hands of the Squirrels, the B-Mets were back at The Diamond seeking revenge.

The Squirrels claimed the Western Division by beating the Akron RubberDucks in four games in a pitching-dominated series. The two squads combined to hit a measly .196 and scratch out a combined 18 runs.

Binghamton's starter in Game 1, Tyler Pill, had fired 15 scoreless innings against the Squirrels in the regular season and picked up where he left off in the postseason, posting two blank frames.

The B-Mets supported Pill with an RBI single by Nimmo in the second and two runs in the fifth, highlighted by a run-producing single by Ceciliani.

The Squirrels scratched out single tallies in the third and fifth, and the one-run game sailed into the seventh where the B-Mets bullpen took over. Right-hander



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Paul Sewald, who made just three Double-A appearances in the regular season, sandwiched a pop out with two walks before ceding to Chase Huchingson. The left-hander added more fuel the fire by issuing a free pass to load the bases for pinch-hitter Mitch Delfino.

With just one out and the tying run just 90-feet away, Huchingson induced Delfino to dribble a grounder to second. Rivera scooped up the roller, stepped on the base and fired to first to complete a game-saving, inning-ending double play

Robles and Satterwhite solidified the win, combining for two scoreless innings of relief.

As opposed to their stumble in Game 2 against the Sea Dogs, the B-Mets did not let up in their second game against the Squirrels.

For a team that had homered just twice in the previous 17 games, the B-Mets picked the right time to find their power stroke in the Eastern League Championship Series.

With one aboard in the second, Xorge Carrillo, the owner of just two home runs in the regular season, belted a two-run shot over the left-field wall, putting Binghamton on top.

After a gritty, hard-nosed performance in the Division Series, Darrell Ceciliani and his body finally reached the breaking point. The B-Mets outfielder ceded to his injury after striking out in the first inning of Game 2.

His replacement, Kyle Johnson, stepped in and stepped up immediately producing two sparkling catches and throwing out one runner from left field.

The Squirrels scratched out a run in the second against Greg Peavey, but fell short of a big inning by leaving two men on base.

It would prove to be the last time the Squirrels would send more than three to the plate in an inning against Peavey. The righty settled down and got some help from his defense in facing the minimum over his final five innings.

Despite their sparkling defense and dominant pitching, the B-Mets still clung to just a one-run lead entering the eighth.

Squirrels reliever Edwin Quirarte issued a free pass to Brandon Nimmo and intentionally walked Brian Burgamy to face Travis Tajeron with two outs. The move backfired as the B-Mets outfielder threaded a game-sealing three-run homer inside the left-field foul pole.

With a four-run cushion, the B-Mets bullpen put a bow on Game 2.



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The most memorable, and arguably most successful, road trip in franchise history was complete. After six days, five games and 1,500 miles, the B-Mets headed back to the Southern Tier with a 2-0 series advantage. Just five days removed from having their backs against the wall, the B-Mets need one win to secure their first Eastern League title since 1994.

One Night in September

It is Friday, September 12th.

It is a day that already has significance to the B-Mets franchise. On September 12, 1994, left-hander Bill Pulsipher tossed a no-hitter against the Harrisburg Senators in Game 2 of the Eastern League Championship Series, the first of three straight wins the B-Mets collected to earn their second league title.

Fast forward twenty years and the Binghamton Mets have sold 5,904 tickets and NYSEG Stadium is jam-packed as left-hander Steven Matz strolls to the mound for what will become the game of his life.

This is not a new situation for the Long Island native. Last September he toed the rubber for the Low-A Savannah Sand Gnats in the championship-clinching game.

Nearly a year ago to the day of this start for the B-Mets, Matz was striking out nine Hagerstown Suns over 5-2/3 scoreless innings, guiding Savannah to the South Atlantic League championship.

Tonight his opponent is Richmond, a team he baffled in his last start a week earlier to the tune of a season-high ten strikeouts.

As the largest crowd of the season at NYSEG Stadium settles into their seats, Matz sets the tone with a scoreless first, issuing one walk and garnering one strikeout.

In the second, he strikes out the first two batters he faces and ends the perfect frame with a ground out.

Just seven batters into the game, it is already clear that Richmond cannot touch Matz's fastball. His curveball is sharper than it's been all season.

Matz's third inning is also perfect. He adds two more strikeouts to his collection, capping the frame by fanning Daniel Carbonell to raucous applause.

The B-Mets faithful are beginning to realize that something special is unfolding before their eyes.

In the fourth, Matz gets another weak groundout before walking Blake Miller. He strands him at first by retiring Mario Lisson and fanning Davin Harris, already his sixth strikeout of the night.



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Meanwhile, Flying Squirrels starter Ty Blach matches Matz zero-for-zero.

That stretch ends in the fourth when the B-Mets finally push a run across against the lefty. Travis Taijeron starts the frame with an infield single to third. After Dustin Lawley strikes out, Brandon Nimmo shoots a bouncer to the left of second base.

Shortstop Kelby Tomlinson slides to his left to field what could be an inning-ending double play. Instead, the roller, on its last bounce before reaching Tomlinson, skips off the infield lip, bounces over his glove and bounds into centerfield.

Taijeron races to third on the single and scores on a sac fly by Xorge Carrillo to get Binghamton on the board.

Matz cruises through a 1-2-3 fifth inning. Every out elicits a louder response from the crowd that has filled NYSEG Stadium anticipating history.

Strikeout number eight starts the sixth for Matz. Number nine closes the inning. The K's sandwich a fly out to right by Daniel Carbonell, the first Squirrel to hit a ball out of the infield against Matz.

The southpaw has not allowed a hit through six innings. The B-Mets fans are fully aware.

The run continues in the seventh. A fly out by Miller. Another fly out by Lisson. Matz works to a 2-2 count on Devin Harris. The lefty rears back and blows a fastball by the Richmond left fielder. It's his tenth strikeout. Matz's no-hit bid has now survived seven innings. NYSEG Stadium has been put into a frenzy.

With Binghamton still clinging to a one-run lead, Matz returns for the eighth and strikes out Angel Villalona looking. His eleventh strikeout marks a new career-high. It also pushes Binghamton to within five outs of the league title.

However, Richmond's offense finally awakens.

Elliott Blair, punches a 1-0 pitch into right field that falls safely in front of Taijeron for a single. The no-hit bid has come to an end after 7-1/3 innings. All in attendance rise to their feet and salute Matz for his sparkling effort.

With a no-hitter off the table, Matz's focus shifts solely to keeping Richmond off the board, but his very next pitch is poked through the hole into right by Tyler LaTorre.

It's the end of the road for Matz. Pedro Lopez heads to the mound and takes the ball from the lefty. As he strides to the dugout, the fans that have taken nearly every seat in the ballpark leave those seats once more to shower praise on their star pitcher.



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The fate of this game will now lie with the B-Mets bullpen.

Robles gets the call from the pen with two aboard and one out. The hard-throwing righty who has fully embraced his new role as a reliever fans pinch-hitter Tyler Horan.

One out shy of getting out of the jam, Robles gets ahead of Carbonell. The newly-signed outfielder fights off an 0-2 pitch from Robles and sends it into right field, plating Blair with the tying run. Pinch-runner Skyler Stroscoe, representing the go-ahead run, dashes for third, but is nabbed by Burgamy who had cut the throw off from right.

With the game now tied, the B-Mets put two aboard in the eighth against the Squirrels bullpen. Richmond chooses to intentionally walk Burgamy to face Tajeron, a plan that backfired in Game 1.

This time it pays off, but not without a little help from Elliott Blair, who makes a sparkling sliding catch in right to rob Tajeron of a go-ahead hit. With the bases still loaded, Lawley strikes out and this thrilling game heads to the ninth tied at one.

Satterwhite takes the reins and strands a runner while posting a scoreless frame.

It's off to the bottom of the ninth inning.

Similar to Game 1 against the Sea Dogs, the B-Mets ninth-inning rally starts with Carrillo. The catcher laces a one-out single to left. Tovar follows by shooting another single into right.

Lopez calls upon Gavin Cecchini to pinch-run for Carrillo at second base. Cecchini, who was barely eight months old when the B-Mets won their most recent Eastern League title, represents the Championship-clinching run.

Lopez also selects Jayce Boyd to pinch-hit.

It has been a comeback season for Boyd. He suffered through a case of thoracic outlet syndrome so severe it forced him to DH for the final two months of the 2013 season. After a slow start, Boyd asserts himself as one of the top hitters of the league by compiling the best batting average over the final two months of the season.

The first pitch from Richmond left-handed reliever Steven Okert is a fastball that clips the outside corner. Okert misses with a slider on his next offering.

A "Let's go Mets" chant rings out from the crowd. They are almost imploring the B-Mets to win, not just to earn the title, but to alleviate all this built-up anxiety.



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With the potential winning run on second, the outfield plays shallow to prevent a bloop by Boyd from beating them.

The eyes of 5,904 focus back to the matchup of Boyd versus Okert.

The lefty comes with a fastball on 1-1. It misses inside. The crowd approves.

On 2-1, Okert gets Boyd to chase an offspeed pitch low and away. Boyd's off-balance swing sends groans through the crowd.

The count now sits at two balls and two strikes.

Cecchini leads from second. Tovar strolls off first. Boyd stares at Okert. Okert peers to his catcher Eliezer Zambrano. 5,904 B-Mets fans hold their breath, almost too nervous to cheer, as the lefty kicks and delivers.

Okert's 2-2 pitch is a fastball. He's aiming for the inside corner. Instead, it tails to the plate, into Boyd's wheelhouse. Boyd squares up the offering and drives in the air to right-center field.

The fly ball hangs in the air for four seconds. It is the longest four seconds the B-Mets and their fans have ever experienced. Center fielder Daniel Carbonell is the only thing that separates the B-Mets from a championship. Having set up in shallow center, he's forced to race back to his left in attempt to track down Boyd's drive.

Carbonell stretches out his glove, but the fly ball lands out of his reach and bounces to the wall.

NYSEG Stadium erupts.

Cecchini races around third base. Richmond has no chance as Carbonell is just getting to the ball on the warning track.

The final 90 feet of Cecchini's journey are the sweetest any B-Mets fan has witnessed.

The youngest B-Met on the postseason roster steps on home plate and into the embrace of Kyle Johnson.

The Binghamton Mets are Eastern League champions.

The rest of the B-Mets spill out of the dugout. Half the team races to home plate to celebrate with Cecchini. The other half sprints out to second base where Boyd is waiting for them.



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Pedro Lopez trots to home plate from the third base coach's box clapping his hands having just won his first championship as a Minor League manager. He jumps into the pile.

The exuberant Wilfredo Tovar, sprinting down the third base line, flings his helmet as high as he can and leaps into the celebration at home plate.

The B-Mets bullpen hops the fence down the right-field line and makes a bee-line for second base.

The group celebrating around home plate now joins the other group near second base. The team is together as one.

And they are champions.

The reality that they have overcome the odds to become the first team to call the Southern Tier home to win an Eastern League title in two decades begins to sink in.

Fireworks explode beyond the right-field wall.

On this Friday night in the Southern Tier, the only thing that matters is the Binghamton Mets.

The celebration eventually makes its way to the first base line, where the B-Mets receive the Eastern League trophy from league president Joe McEacharn.

Sporting a GoPro camera to capture the moment, Lopez raises the trophy triumphantly over his head before quickly handing it off to his players.

Back in April he wanted six more wins. His team did exactly that in the most thrilling fashion imaginable.

Xorge Carrillo is named the Postseason MVP and proudly holds his trophy for all to see.

The last item to be given out is the Eastern League championship banner. Carrillo, Peavey and Tovar parade the cherished pennant from one end of the stands to the other. A roar rises up from the crowd. Their boys of summer of summer have produced a championship.

Not a soul has left the ballpark. After a 20-year wait, no one is about to miss this.

The team poses for pictures with the trophy and banner; pictures that will be forever displayed on the walls of NYSEG Stadium.



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Then it's onto the champagne that has appeared in front of the B-Mets dugout. The players douse each other. Then Steven Matz is lifted onto to his teammates' shoulders and given a champagne shower of his own.

The party shifts into their plastic-protected clubhouse where there is more to spray and spill and dump and pour and drink.

As with any good time, it flies by too quickly. Within 24 hours of Boyd's walk-off double every member of the Eastern League Champion B-Mets is on his way back home.

For some, that one night in September will be the highlight of their professional career. Something they will look back on again and again as their favorite moment.

For others it will be a small memory on their way to the Majors.

But for everyone, it is a time that they will never forget.

On September 13, NYSEG Stadium is quiet. Just a handful front office staffers are there to tie up a few loose ends. A far cry of the euphoria that had been experience just the night before.

The front page of the Press & Sun Bulletin that day reads, "CHAMPIONS" with a picture of Xorge Carrillo and Chase Huchingson embracing with a backdrop of fireworks.

It was no dream.

Before that fateful September night, the last time the Binghamton Mets celebrated an Eastern League title was September 14, 1994 with a 7-2 win over the Harrisburg Senators at NYSEG Stadium.

In between, 2,856 B-Mets games were played. 537 different players wore the B-Mets jersey. 7,303 days passed.

It was worth the wait.



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