

Cardinals' Flaherty builds off rookie season

By **CHUCK KING**
The Associated Press

JUPITER, Fla. — Jack Flaherty has done the math, and it all adds up. The young St. Louis pitcher is in line to start the Cardinals' home opener.

“Freakin’ cool,” the 23-year-old Flaherty said, sporting a huge grin. “To put it as forward as I can, it would be freakin’ sweet.”

Other than announcing Miles Mikolas as the opening day starter March 28 at Milwaukee, manager Mike Shildt has yet to make public his starting rotation, nor has he discussed it with Flaherty.

But with one Grapefruit League start remaining, Flaherty

is in position to make the Cardinals' second start of the season. And if that schedule plays out as expected, his second turn figures to be the home opener on April 4 against San Diego.

“We know Jack’s commitment, that’s really evident,” Shildt said. “We know Jack is athletic, that’s on display. We know Jack’s got all the pitches. We know Jack competes really well.”

The right-handed Flaherty throws a mid-90s mph fastball, a curve and a changeup, but it’s a hard-biting slider that led Flaherty to win four of his five August starts last season.

He lasted at least six innings in every one of those starts, never allowing more than two runs.

“He’s got a wipeout pitch in that slider and he’s got a sinker he’s been using that’s been effective, too,” Shildt said.

Pitching in a minor league game on Monday to allow the Cardinals better control of his workload, Flaherty struck out nine during six scoreless innings against the Double-A Marlins.

It’s the second time in three spring starts Flaherty’s struck out nine, replicating his four-inning performance two outings prior against Philadelphia. Flaherty struck out seven consecutive Philies that day.

“He can throw any pitch for a strike,” catcher Yadier Molina said. “Obviously he can strike out guys. That’s fun. But he can be a

different pitcher if he wants. He can be a contact pitcher, he can be a strikeout pitcher.”

Being called “fun” by Molina elicited another Flaherty smile.

“To hear him say something like that and truly believe it — that’s one of the best of all time to be back there behind the plate, if not the best. All it does is instill confidence in you,” Flaherty said.

Prior to Monday’s outing, Flaherty had allowed four runs on 10 hits in 13 Grapefruit League innings. He’s aiming to improve on last season’s 3.34 ERA over 151 innings, an average that took a hit as Flaherty appeared to wear down in September.

He finished 8-9 in 28 starts during his first full season in

the majors.

“Coming away from there, getting up and down six times, pitch count up and still feeling like there’s something left in the tank — I feel like it’s a really good spot to be in,” Flaherty said.

NOTES: Shildt announced that reliever Brett Cecil will begin the season on the injured list because of an on-going arm issue. ...Utility player Jedd Gyorko’s lingering calf injury puts his opening day availability in jeopardy, Shildt said. ...Originally expected to return on Wednesday, Matt Carpenter’s back tightness now might keep him out of action until the weekend. Shildt isn’t concerned about Carpenter’s opening day availability.

SCOREBOARD

Local schedule

■ **TODAY, MARCH 19**
Prep Softball
North Daviess at Northeast Dubois (V/JV) 5:00

■ **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20**
Prep Softball
Floyd Central at Jasper (JV/V) 5:30

■ **THURSDAY, MARCH 21**
Prep Softball
Forest Park at Springs Valley (V) 5:00
Bedford North Lawrence at Southridge (V/JV) 6:00
Owensboro Apollo (Ky.) at Jasper (JV/V) 6:30

Prep Track and Field
Springs Valley/South Spencer at Jasper 6:00
North Posey at Forest Park 6:00

Prep softball

AT LINTON VARSITY
■ **Jasper 18, Linton 6, six innings**

Jasper	3	1	2	3	5	4	—	18
Linton	0	0	2	4	0	0	—	6

Pitchers: (J) M. Werner
WP: M. Werner (1-0).
Doubles: (J) M. Matheis, Colvin, Werner, Mitchell, Leinenbach
Stolen bases: (J) Jerger

AT HUNTINGBURG VARSITY
■ **Southridge 13, Springs Valley 3, five innings**

Springs Valley	1	0	0	0	2	—	3
Southridge	2	8	3	0	x	—	13

Pitchers and catchers: (SV) Goldman and Allen; (SR) Genet, King (4) and Trent, Goepfer (4).
WP: Genet (1-0). LP: Goldman (0-1).
Doubles: (SR) Songer 2, Buechler
Triples: (SR) Songer, K. Nalley, Genet
Home runs: (SR) K. Nalley (1st, 1 on, 1 out)

College basketball

■ **NCAA TOURNAMENT GLANCE**

FIRST FOUR
At UD Arena
Dayton, Ohio
Tuesday, March 19
Fairleigh Dickinson (20-13) vs. Prairie View A&M (22-12)
Belmont (26-5) vs. Temple (23-9)

Wednesday, March 20
N.C. Central (18-15) vs. North Dakota State (18-15)
Arizona State (22-10) vs. St. John’s (21-12)

EAST REGIONAL First Round
Thursday, March 21
At Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena
Jacksonville, Fla.
LSU (26-6) vs. Yale (22-7)
Maryland (22-10) vs. Belmont-Temple winner

At Wells Fargo Arena
Des Moines, Iowa
Michigan State (28-6) vs. Bradley (20-14)
Louisville (20-13) vs. Minnesota (21-13)

Friday, March 22
At Colonial Life Arena
Columbia, S.C.
Duke (29-5) vs. N.C. Central-North Dakota State winner
VCU (25-7) vs. UCF (23-8)

At SAP Center
San Jose, Calif.
Virginia Tech (24-8) vs. Saint Louis (23-12)
Mississippi State (23-10) vs. Liberty (28-6)

Second Round
Saturday, March 23
At Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena
Jacksonville, Fla.
LSU-Yale winner vs. Maryland—Belmont-Temple winner

At Wells Fargo Arena
Des Moines, Iowa
Michigan State-Bradley winner vs. Louisville-Minnesota winner

Sunday, March 24
At Colonial Life Arena
Columbia, S.C.
Duke-N.C. Central-North Dakota State winner vs. VCU-UCF winner

At SAP Center
San Jose, Calif.

Virginia Tech-Saint Louis winner vs. Mississippi State-Liberty winner

At Capital One Arena
Washington
Regional Semifinals
Friday, March 29
Duke-N.C. Central-North Dakota State—VCU-UCF winner vs. Virginia Tech-Saint Louis—Mississippi State-Liberty winner
Michigan State-Bradley—Louisville-Minnesota winner vs. LSU-Yale—Maryland-Belmont-Temple winner

Regional Championship
Sunday, March 31
Semifinal winners

SOUTH REGIONAL First Round
Thursday, March 21
At The XL Center
Hartford, Conn.
Purdue (23-9) vs. Old Dominion (26-8)
Villanova (25-9) vs. Saint Mary’s (22-11)

Friday, March 22
At Colonial Life Arena
Columbia, S.C.
Virginia (29-3) vs. Gardner-Webb (23-11)
Mississippi (20-12) vs. Oklahoma (19-13)

At Nationwide Arena
Columbus, Ohio
Tennessee (29-5) vs. Colgate (24-10)
Cincinnati (28-6) vs. Iowa (22-11)

At SAP Center
San Jose, Calif.
Kansas State (25-8) vs. UC Irvine (30-5)
Wisconsin (23-10) vs. Oregon (23-12)

Second Round
Saturday, March 23
At The XL Center
Hartford, Conn.
Purdue-Old Dominion winner vs. Villanova-Saint Mary’s winner
Mary’s winner

Sunday, March 24
At Colonial Life Arena
Columbia, S.C.
Virginia-Gardner-Webb winner vs. Mississippi-Oklahoma winner

At Nationwide Arena
Columbus, Ohio
Tennessee-Colgate winner vs. Cincinnati-Iowa winner

At SAP Center
San Jose, Calif.
Kansas State-UC Irvine winner vs. Wisconsin-Oregon winner

At KFC Yum! Center
Louisville, Ky.
Regional Semifinals
Thursday, March 28
Virginia-Gardner-Webb—Mississippi-Oklahoma winner vs. Kansas State-UC Irvine—Wisconsin-Oregon winner
Tennessee-Colgate—Cincinnati-Iowa winner vs. Purdue-Old Dominion—Villanova-Saint Mary’s winner

Regional Championship
Saturday, March 30
Semifinal winners

MIDWEST REGIONAL First Round
Thursday, March 21
At Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena
Jacksonville, Fla.
Kentucky (27-6) vs. Abilene Christian (27-6)
Wofford (29-4) vs. Seton Hall (20-13)

At Vivint Smart Home Arena
Salt Lake City
Kansas (25-9) vs. Northeastern (23-10)
Auburn (26-9) vs. New Mexico State (30-4)

Friday, March 22
At Nationwide Arena
Columbus, Ohio
North Carolina (27-6) vs. Iona (17-15)
Utah State (28-6) vs. Washington (26-8)

At BOK Center
Tulsa, Okla.
Houston (31-3) vs. Georgia State (24-9)
Iowa State (23-11) vs. Ohio State (19-14)

Second Round
Saturday, March 23
At Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena
Jacksonville, Fla.
Kentucky-Abilene Christian winner vs. Wofford-Seton Hall winner

At Vivint Smart Home Arena
Salt Lake City
Kansas-Northeastern winner vs. Auburn-New Mexico State winner

Sunday, March 24
At Nationwide Arena
Columbus, Ohio
North Carolina-Iona winner vs. Utah State-Washington winner

At BOK Center
Tulsa, Okla.
Houston-Georgia State winner vs. Iowa State-Ohio State winner

At The Sprint Center
Kansas City, Mo.
Regional Semifinals
Friday, March 29
North Carolina-Iona—Utah State-Washington winner vs. Kansas-Northeastern—Auburn-New Mexico State winner
Kentucky-Abilene Christian winner—Wofford-Seton Hall winner vs. Houston-Georgia State—Iowa State-Ohio State winner

Regional Championship
Sunday, March 31
Semifinal winners

WEST REGIONAL First Round
Thursday, March 21
At The XL Center
Hartford, Conn.
Florida State (27-7) vs. Vermont (27-6)
Marquette (24-9) vs. Murray State (27-4)

At Wells Fargo Arena
Des Moines, Iowa
Michigan (28-6) vs. Montana (26-8)
Nevada (29-4) vs. Florida (19-15)

At Vivint Smart Home Arena
Salt Lake City
Gonzaga (30-3) vs. Fairleigh Dickinson-Prairie View A&M winner
Syracuse (20-13) vs. Baylor (19-13)

Friday, March 22
At BOK Center
Tulsa, Okla.
Texas Tech (26-6) vs. Northern Kentucky (26-8)
Buffalo (31-3) vs. Arizona State-St. John’s winner

Second Round
Saturday, March 23
At The XL Center
Hartford, Conn.
Florida State-Vermont winner vs. Marquette-Murray State winner

At Wells Fargo Arena
Des Moines, Iowa
Michigan-Montana winner vs. Nevada-Florida winner

At Vivint Smart Home Arena
Salt Lake City
Gonzaga—Fairleigh Dickinson-Prairie View A&M winner vs. Syracuse-Baylor winner

Sunday, March 24
At BOK Center
Tulsa, Okla.
Texas Tech-Northern Kentucky winner vs. Buffalo—Arizona State-St. John’s winner

At Honda Center
Anaheim, Calif.
Regional Semifinals
Thursday, March 28
Gonzaga-Fairleigh Dickinson-Prairie View A&M—Syracuse-Baylor winner vs. Florida State-Vermont—Marquette-Murray State winner
Michigan-Montana—Nevada-Florida winner vs. Texas Tech-Northern Kentucky—Buffalo-Arizona State-St. John’s winner

Regional Championship
Saturday, March 30
Semifinal winners

FINAL FOUR
At U.S. Bank Stadium
Minneapolis
National Semifinals
Saturday, April 6
East champion vs. West champion
South champion vs. Midwest champion

National Championship
Monday, April 8
Semifinal winners

New York	14	57	.197	36
Southeast Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Miami	34	36	.486	—
Orlando	33	38	.465	1½
Charlotte	31	38	.449	2½
Washington	30	41	.423	4½
Atlanta	24	47	.338	10½
Central Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
x-Milwaukee	52	18	.743	—
Indiana	44	27	.620	8½
Detroit	36	34	.514	16
Chicago	20	52	.278	33
Cleveland	18	53	.254	34½
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Houston	44	26	.629	—
San Antonio	42	29	.592	2½
New Orleans	31	42	.425	14½
Memphis	28	42	.400	16
Dallas	28	42	.400	16
Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
x-Denver	47	22	.681	—
Portland	43	27	.614	4½
Oklahoma City	42	29	.592	6
Utah	41	29	.586	6½
Minnesota	32	38	.457	15½
Pacific Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
x-Golden State	47	22	.681	—
L.A. Clippers	41	30	.577	7
Sacramento	34	35	.493	13
L.A. Lakers	31	39	.443	16½
Phoenix	17	55	.236	31½
Monday's Games				
Cleveland 126, Detroit 119				
Utah 116, Washington 95				
Denver 114, Boston 105				
Toronto 128, New York 92				
Miami 116, Oklahoma City 107				
San Antonio 111, Golden State 105				
New Orleans 129, Dallas 125, OT				
Chicago 116, Phoenix 101				
Portland 106, Indiana 98				
Tuesday's Games				
Philadelphia at Charlotte, 7 p.m.				
Houston at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.				
Golden State at Minnesota, 8 p.m.				
L.A. Lakers at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.				
Brooklyn at Sacramento, 10 p.m.				
Indiana at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.				
Wednesday's Games				
Boston at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.				
Milwaukee at Cleveland, 7 p.m.				
New Orleans at Orlando, 7 p.m.				
Utah at New York, 7:30 p.m.				
Houston at Memphis, 8 p.m.				
Washington at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.				
Miami at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.				
Toronto at Oklahoma City, 9:30 p.m.				
Dallas at Portland, 10 p.m.				

Thursday's Games
Denver at Washington, 7 p.m.
Minnesota at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Utah at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Dallas at Sacramento, 10 p.m.
Detroit at Phoenix, 10 p.m.
Indiana at Golden State, 10:30 p.m.

On the air

All Times EST
■ **TODAY, MARCH 19**
TELEVISION
6:30 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NCAA Tournament First Four, Prairie View vs. Fairleigh Dickinson (truTV)
7 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, St. Francis (PA) at Indiana (ESPN)
7 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, Hofstra at NC State (ESPN2)
7:30 p.m. — NHL hockey: Washington Capitals at New Jersey Devils (NBCSN)
8 p.m. — NHL hockey: Edmonton Oilers at St. Louis Blues (FOXSMW)
9 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NCAA Tournament First Four, Belmont vs. Temple (truTV)
9 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, South Dakota State at Texas (ESPN)
9 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, Arkansas at Providence (ESPN2)
10:30 p.m. — NBA basketball: Indiana Pacers at Los Angeles Clippers (FOXSMW)
11 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, Dayton at Colorado (ESPN2)

RADIO
6 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, St. Francis (PA) at Indiana (WITZ 104.7 FM)

■ **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20**
TELEVISION
5:30 a.m. — MLB baseball: Spring Training, Seattle Mariners vs. Oakland Athletics (ESPN)
6:30 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NCAA Tournament First Four, North Carolina Central vs. North Dakota State (truTV)
7 p.m. — NBA basketball: Boston Celtics at Philadelphia 76ers (ESPN)
7 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, Harvard at Georgetown (ESPN2)
7:30 p.m. — NHL hockey: Tampa Bay Lightning at Washington Capitals (NBCSN)
9 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NCAA Tournament First Four, Arizona State vs. St. John’s (truTV)
9 p.m. — Men’s college basketball: NIT Tournament First Round, Butler at Nebraska (ESPN2)
9:30 p.m. — NBA basketball: Toronto Raptors at Oklahoma City Thunder (ESPN)

BRIEFLY

JCards place second

O’FALLON, ILL. — The 14U JCards baseball team participated in the GMB Opening Day turf baseball tournament March 9-10 and came home with a second-place finish.

The weather pushed all games to Sunday, and the JCards were defeated in the championship game.

Members of the team are Charlie Kabrick, Ty Kalb, Ryan Leuck, Maverick Merkel, Garrett Scamahorn, Kaleb Senninger, Andrew Sternberg, Lucas Timm, Xavier Wehr and Matthew Wright. Coaches are Martin Timm, Eric Wright and Jason Scamahorn.

Senior league to begin play

JASPER — The senior golfing league at Buffalo Trace Golf Course in Jasper is scheduled to start on April 8.

Play will start at 9 a.m. each Monday, weather permitting.

Raiders

(Concluded from Page 24)

10-1 going into the third inning.

Southridge did have some more offense in the third inning,

as Songer’s RBI double, Kennedy Nalley’s RBI triple and Rachel Trent’s RBI flyout made it 13-1.

The Blackhawks did score two runs in the fifth inning, but King shut the door by forcing a flyout with a runner on second to end the game in five innings.

Kennedy Nalley finished with

four RBIs on a home run and a triple, while Songer had three RBIs on a triple and two doubles.

Buening was ecstatic to be able to get back on the diamond to coach one of the games he loves the most.

“I’ve always loved this sport. My first year in student teaching

at East Central is when I coached for the first time, and I learned so much,” Buening said. “It was great to be back out there.”

While the Raiders are grateful to start the season on a high note, they know they have to stay grounded as the season progresses.

“It gives us confidence, but we’re also not going to have big heads about it,” Genet said. “Every game is a big game, and we have to play just as hard as this and not overlook anyone. Just because we win one doesn’t mean we’re going to win them all.”

All Times EDT
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
x-Toronto	50	21	.704	—
x-Philadelphia	45	25	.643	4½
Boston	43	28	.606	7
Brooklyn	36	36	.500	14½