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## Big-league power Brownlee's pattern

INTERCOUNTY BASEBALL LEAGUE

By STEVE GREEN, THE LONDON FREE PRESS

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Get to Labatt Park a couple of hours before a London Majors game and you can see the city's own version of the Cleveland Show.

That's when Majors slugger Cleveland Brownlee often puts on a display in batting practice. He's also doing it in Intercounty Baseball League games, too, as he led the league with 15 RBIs heading into Friday night's game against the Kitchener Panthers. He was also tied for second with three homers and fourth in average at .406.

The power wasn't there against the Panthers -- he had an infield single and a bloop single to right in five at-bats in the Majors' 15-2 laughter -- but he did flash some leather, making a nice diving catch in left field for the first out in the top of the third inning.

His batting average shows how he's making a concerted effort for more consistency at the plate this season after hitting a league-leading nine homers but only driving in 24 runs and hitting .277 last season, his first with London.

"I can't complain," the likeable Atlanta native said with a big smile. "I'm doing a lot of things better this year and I'm more focused on driving in runs. The long balls will come and they're coming at a pretty good rate right now. But if they don't, I've got great guys around me in the lineup; we have, to me, one of the strongest lineups in the league, one through nine (in the order). Pitchers can't miss a pitch.

"For me, though, it's about being a little more patient at the plate, not chasing pitches, going the other way and taking my walks. It's more about team baseball this year."

Walks, of course, are anathema to a power hitter and when you're in a groove like Brownlee is, coming to the park is a joy. "I'm dying to get to the plate every time. The pitcher's got to pay."

Brownlee, 26, set home run and RBI records at Clark Atlanta University, but was never drafted. He did attend a Philadelphia Phillies camp and played some independent ball and a season with the Alexandria (Va.) Aces of the Cal Ripken summer collegiate league in 2009.

"Roop (Chanderdat ) finally gave me a chance," Brownlee said of the Majors manager. "And hopefully something comes out of it. I just want that chance to show what I can do. I always set my standards high, never low. You always want to aim for the stars, because as they say, if you don't reach the stars, you'll still hit the moon."

The moon seems to be where some of Brownlee's BP shots are headed, although the Thames River is the real final destination for a few. Chanderdat said he ordered 100 dozen baseballs before the season "and that won't last the season. Not even close."

Brownlee admitted he likes to put on a show in BP. "Especially the third round. That's for the fans. You give it all you've got in BP, because usually if you have a good BP, you'll have a good game."

"If you know anyone who can hit the ball better than him, let me know, will you?" Chanderdat said. "He could be totally on his front foot and still hit it 400 feet. He's got big-league power."

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### Majors 15, Panthers 2

**At the plate:** Paul LaMantia a three-run homer, a two-run double and an RBI single for the Majors (8-1) while Chris Chambers homered right after LaMantia went deep in the sixth and also had an RBI single. The Majors pounded out 21 hits.

**On the mound:** Jordi Amorgos (2-0) scattered eight hits and held the Panthers (6-4) to two runs over seven innings, striking out seven.

**Next:** The Ottawa Fat Cats are in town for two games, Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 1 p.m. on Pack The Park Day, when all proceeds will go to the Sunshine Foundation.

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