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**For immediate release**

## **West End Field named BASEBALLPARKS.COM's Ballpark of the Year**

West End Field, the anchor of a fascinating, revived portion of downtown Greenville, South Carolina, has been named **Ballpark of the Year** by BASEBALLPARKS.COM.

Each year, the award goes to the new baseball stadium with the best combination of superior design, desirable site selection and fan amenities. Therefore, the honor recognizes not only the governmental entities and team responsible for the new park, it also honors the architectural firm. In this case, DLR Group is behind the wonderfully intimate design of the ballpark.

"Intimacy. That's the key to me," said Joe Mock, webmaster of BASEBALLPARKS.COM, in announcing the award. "The Greenville Drive franchise is affiliated with the Red Sox, and they wanted their new park to be reminiscent of Fenway Park. In many respects, they were quite successful in this. In the area of intimacy, they really nailed it. In an age when we are seeing larger and larger ballparks, particularly in the Minors, West End Field provides the most welcome sense of intimacy I've seen in a new park in a long time."

Considering that the St. Louis Cardinals also opened an ambitious, feature-laden new park this season, some might view the selection of West End Field for the award as an upset.

"Not to me," said Mock. "In some respects, the new Busch Stadium is a little overwhelming, and lacks the sense of connection between the fan and the game that you like to see in new sports facilities, particularly ones with somewhat of a 'retro' style. West End Field, though, brings the fans incredibly close to the action on the field, while still providing great food, wonderfully affordable prices and other features today's fans crave."

"We're honored to have been selected by BASEBALLPARKS.COM as Ballpark of the Year," noted Mike DeMaine, Greenville Drive general manager. "The Drive is passionate about West End Field, and has always been committed to providing a quality facility that seems at home in the space. We're very grateful to the fans who have shown their support for these efforts, and for those of our outstanding players, by coming out this season and supporting the club."

Indeed, the fans have turned out in droves in Greenville this year. Following an offseason when the fan base appeared to be quite skeptical that a ballpark in the city's West End would provide a safe environment and sufficient parking, fans have attended Drive games in record-breaking numbers. In fact, the team broke the city's all-time season-attendance record on August 8, with three weeks yet to be played in the regular season.

“The success of West End Field is due to the synergy and the shared vision of the project’s key players, including contractor EMJ Corp., architect DLR Group and the City of Greenville,” added Drive team president and co-owner, Craig Brown. “Each entity was committed to providing a facility to Greenville that is top notch, from the well-crafted turf and carefully designed concourses, to the reclaimed brick façade and low profile, chosen to integrate the park into the existing downtown landscape. Our mini Green Monster and other Fenway touches pay homage to our affiliate team, while other design elements make the park uniquely our own. We wanted a park worthy of the vibrant downtown area of historic Greenville, and we’re proud that these efforts have been recognized with the Ballpark of the Year award.”

It wasn’t just the architecture that drew Mock to West End Field. “The ballpark’s setting is also wonderful,” he noted. “Nestled in Greenville’s ‘historic West End,’ the stadium is within a couple of blocks of quaint shops, trendy restaurants, galleries and a beautiful city park. Fans will also want to visit the statue of Greenville-area-native Shoeless Joe Jackson, and the house in which he lived when he returned to the city after his playing career was cut short. That house is now directly across the street from the gates of the ballpark.”

In addition to the new Busch Stadium in St. Louis, Medlar Field at Lubrano Park in State College, Pennsylvania was also a contender for this year’s ballpark award. This facility is used jointly by the State College Spikes of the New York-Penn League and Penn State University’s baseball squad.

By winning BASEBALLPARKS.COM’s annual award, Greenville’s park has joined some impressive company. Past winners include PNC Park (2001), home of the Pirates, Dr Pepper/7 Up Ballpark (2003) in Frisco, Texas and PETCO Park (2004) in San Diego. Last year, the plaque went to Hammons Field in Springfield, Missouri.

Mock’s complete review of West End Field can be found at [www.baseballparks.com/Greenv.asp](http://www.baseballparks.com/Greenv.asp) .

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*For more information, please call Joe Mock at 512-826-0853. BASEBALLPARKS.COM is a division of Grand Slam Enterprises, Inc. of Round Rock, Texas.*