

## Clearwater Threshers to Cancel Bobblehead Nights Over MLB Promo Rules

Written by Devon Teeple  
Sunday, 14 June 2009 13:52

---



The Tampa Bay Rays are forcing the Clearwater Threshers, the minor-league affiliate of the Philadelphia Phillies, to cancel their most recent promotion of bobbleheads, as the Rays are saying that the promotion is violating MLB's marketing rules.

The Threshers were planning to give away nine different bobbleheads, which paid tribute to the starting nine of the 2008 World Series champion Phillies. [According to the St. Petersburg Times](#), when the Rays heard about the promotion they contacted high-level MLB officials. The promotion was then cancelled costing the Threshers a loss of approximately \$50,000, placing the club under financial duress and removing a fan favorite from the schedule.

"It's disappointing to us, and it's disappointing to our fans," Threshers general manager John Timberlake said. "We were in violation of the agreement, and we didn't realize it."

MLB rules state that the Rays have exclusive rights to their home territory and the Threshers are in violation of the Major League Baseball Agency Agreement that, in this instance, prohibits the promotion of the Phillies brand within the home television territory of the Tampa Bay Rays. These same rules would prohibit the Dunedin Blue Jays and the Tampa Yankees. Rays Vice-President of Communications Rick Vaughan had this to say, "The Phillies organization recognized they were in violation of Major League Baseball's territorial rights guidelines and canceled the promotion, we appreciate their attention to this matter."

Clearwater has had two promotions and had planned their third giveaway, that of former Phillie and current Ray, Pat Burrell, which has since been cancelled. Fans are likely to be reimbursed for their purchases, but now have approximately 8,000 in stock, each priced at round \$3.50. They also have the \$25,000 of sponsorship money that has now exchanged hands. Timberlake is taking the situation in stride and plans to have some fun with it. At present time, there has been talk of an "Adherence to the Rules Night", "We'll give out gray molds of bobbleheads and we'll all wear white shirts with our Phillies logos covered up."

## Clearwater Threshers to Cancel Bobblehead Nights Over MLB Promo Rules

Written by Devon Teeple  
Sunday, 14 June 2009 13:52

---

**Devon Teeple** is a staff member of the Business of Sports Network, which includes The Biz of Baseball, The Biz of Football, The Biz of Basketball and The Biz of Hockey. He is a former professional baseball player with the River City Rascals & Gateway Grizzlies. Devon is a former student within Sports Management Worldwide's Baseball General Manager Class.

Devon is the founder of The GM's Perspective, is a intern with *The Football Outsiders* and contributor with the Plymouth River Eels. Currently, Devon is a Branch Manager at a financial institution in Southern Ontario Canada. He can be reached at [thegmerspective@gmail.com](mailto:thegmerspective@gmail.com)

[Follow the Business of Sports Network on Twitter](#) 