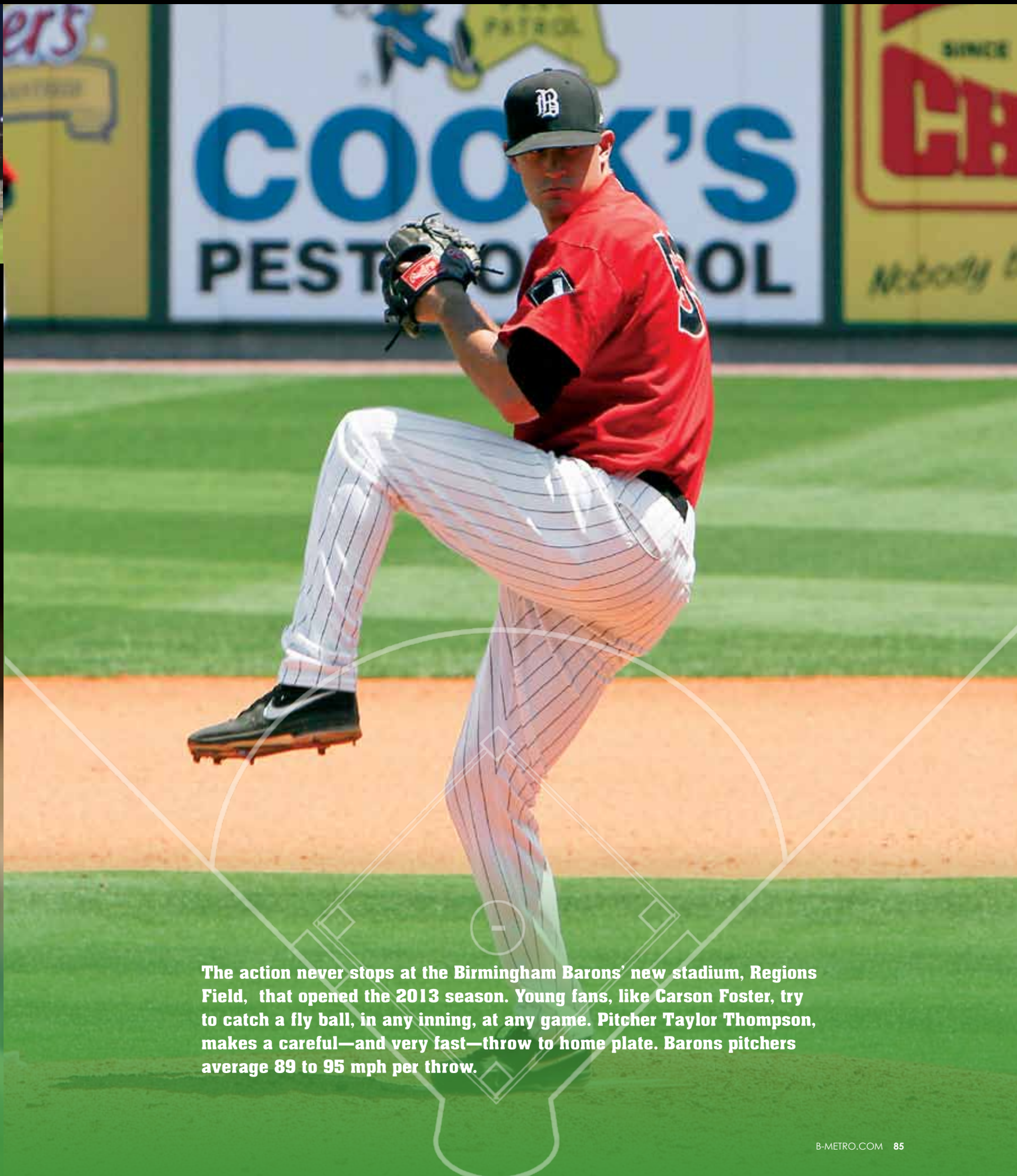




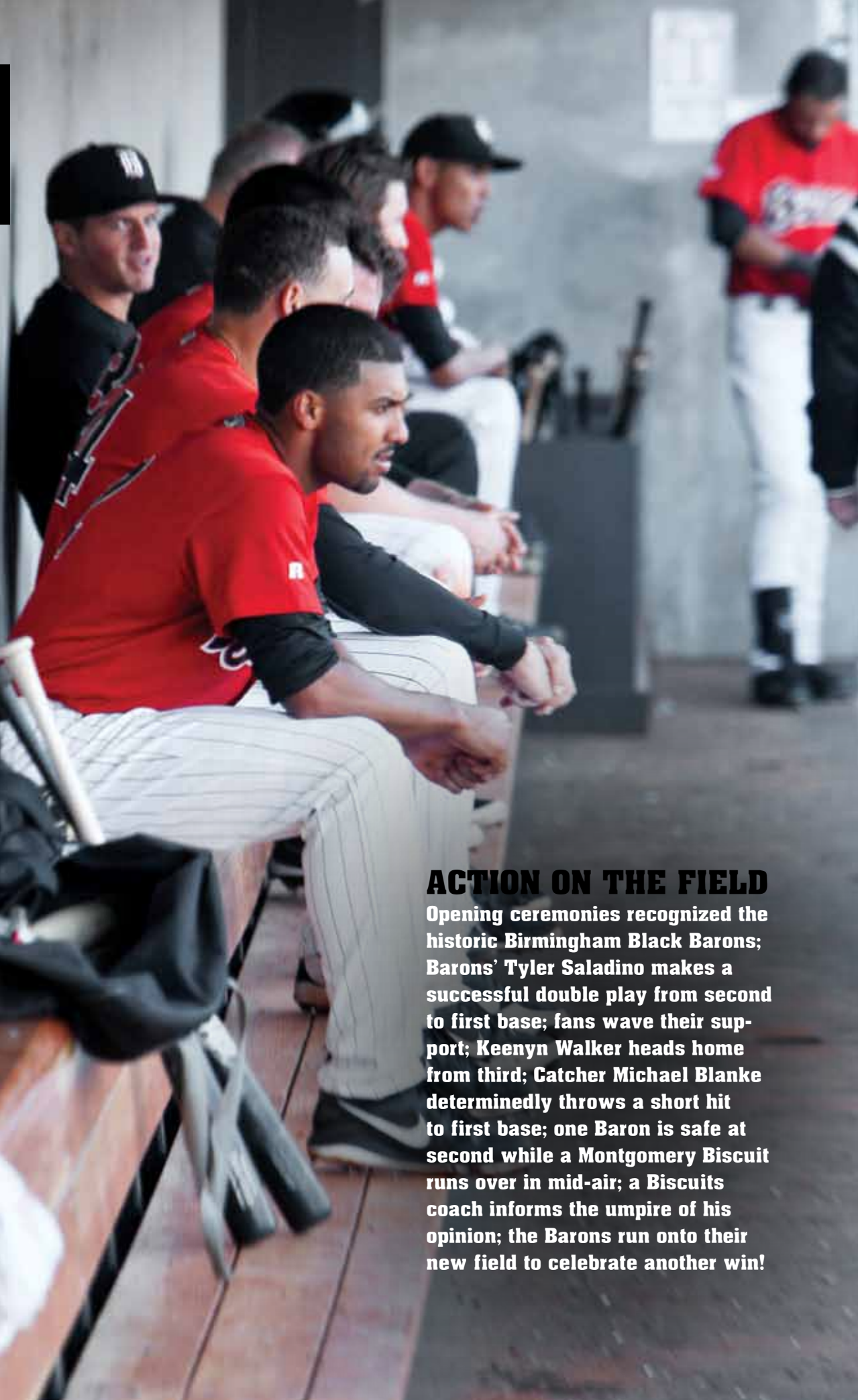
PLAY BALL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MEG MCKINNEY



The action never stops at the Birmingham Barons' new stadium, Regions Field, that opened the 2013 season. Young fans, like Carson Foster, try to catch a fly ball, in any inning, at any game. Pitcher Taylor Thompson, makes a careful—and very fast—throw to home plate. Barons pitchers average 89 to 95 mph per throw.

In their dugout, the Barons anxiously wait their turn at bat, hoping for runs and a win.



ACTION ON THE FIELD

Opening ceremonies recognized the historic Birmingham Black Barons; Barons' Tyler Saladino makes a successful double play from second to first base; fans wave their support; Keenyn Walker heads home from third; Catcher Michael Blanke determinedly throws a short hit to first base; one Baron is safe at second while a Montgomery Biscuit runs over in mid-air; a Biscuits coach informs the umpire of his opinion; the Barons run onto their new field to celebrate another win!





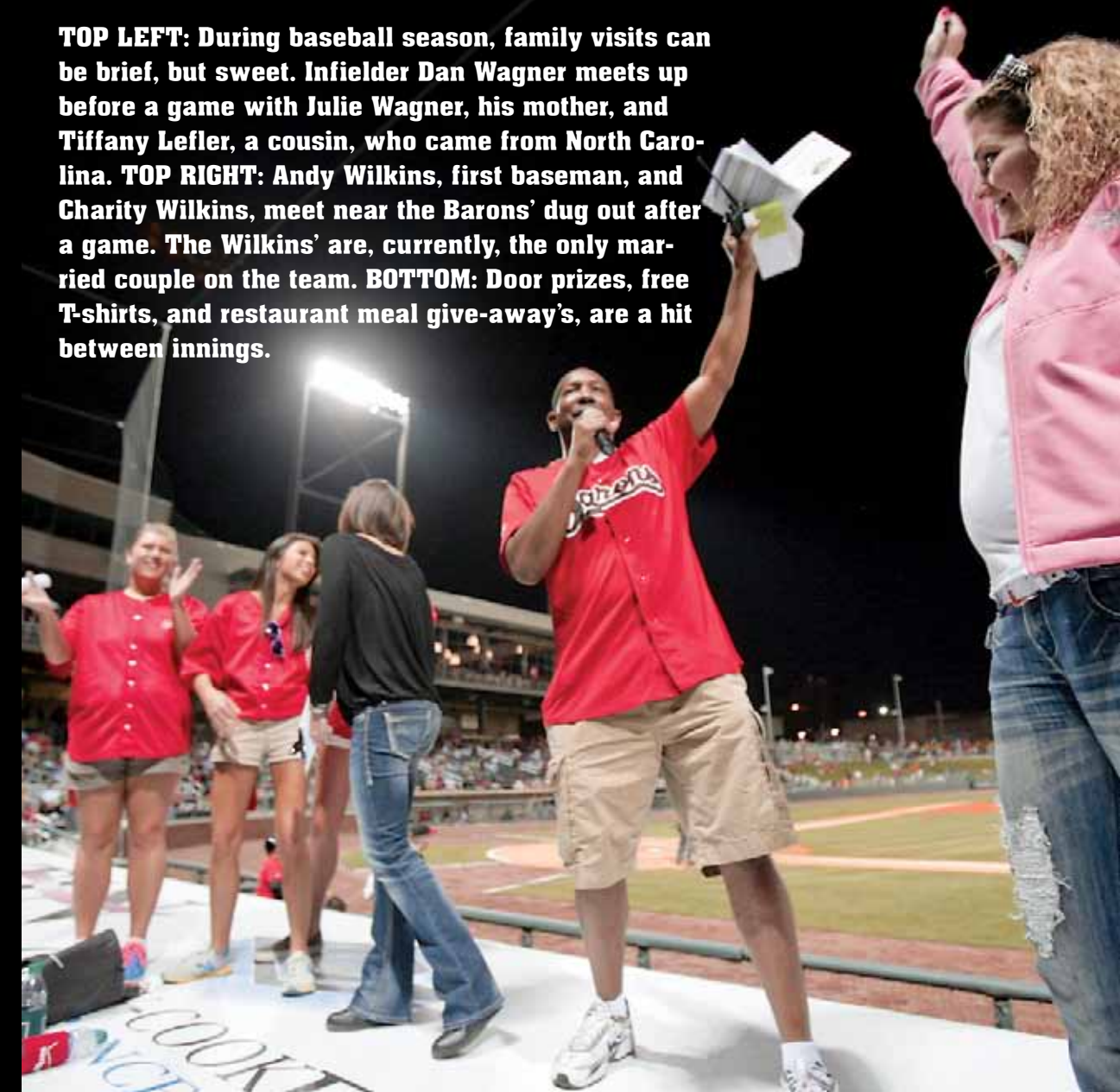
TOP LEFT: With dreams of playing in the big leagues, (from left) Caleb Lumpkin, Hughes Orr, Walker Gailey, Chapman Wallock, closely follow and voice their reactions to the pitches, hits, fly balls, base steals, walks, strike-outs, and runs. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Barons team members, with Field of Dreams Team members, stand at attention during the National Anthem. **THIS PAGE:** Making a dive at first base, Dan Wagner stays safe, after an attempted steal against the Mississippi Braves.



BARONS' FANS ARE NEVER TOO YOUNG. Two-year-old Peyton Lee, was given a fly ball, and appears to take aim, with the approval of her father, Michael Lee.



TOP LEFT: During baseball season, family visits can be brief, but sweet. Infielder Dan Wagner meets up before a game with Julie Wagner, his mother, and Tiffany Lefler, a cousin, who came from North Carolina. **TOP RIGHT:** Andy Wilkins, first baseman, and Charity Wilkins, meet near the Barons' dug out after a game. The Wilkins' are, currently, the only married couple on the team. **BOTTOM:** Door prizes, free T-shirts, and restaurant meal give-away's, are a hit between innings.



Win or lose, Friday fireworks light up over the Birmingham Barons' new downtown stadium, Regions Field. The stadium's architecture mixes Birmingham's history of steel manufacturing and legendary baseball and seats 8,500, with picnic tables and rocking chair sections, a Youth Sports Zone, a batting cage, 23 luxury suites, Club Seating section, and ballpark concession stands, offering bar-b-cue to ice cream.

