

# DESERET Morning News

## Angels bask in championship season

By **Steve Schaack**  
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PROVO — Dave Jacobsen had no clue how his first year as general manager of the Provo Angels was going to turn out. With the team preparing to move to UVSC's Parkway Crossing Stadium next year, Jacobsen thought the 2004 season had the potential to be a lame-duck year.

Early in the year, he might have been correct. In the home opener, a sponsor who threw out the honorary first pitch blew out his knee. The team then had to deal with several early home losses, bad weather and power outages at Miller Park.

But what looked to be a lame-duck year turned into a magical season for the Angels on Monday when they were crowned Pioneer League champions for the first time in four attempts, following a 4-2 win over Billings.

"We turned this into the best year the Angels have had since they have been in Utah County," Jacobsen said. "We look forward to bigger and better things. We're moving the bar up."

Bigger and better things are coming for the Angels. In spring training they will receive their rings for winning the Pioneer League crown. Next summer, Provo will move into its permanent home at Parkway Crossing Stadium.

Jacobsen wants Utah County residents to know, "We are here to stay. We are going to build our fan base. It's just going to get bigger and better as we go forward. This just caps our year. I can't wait for the ring ceremony to happen."

A championship has been along time coming for Provo owners Rob Owens and Linda Gach-Ray. The two owned the Helena Brewers for four years before coming to Provo. During their time in Helena they made the playoffs only one year and had a league-worst 15-game losing streak in 1998.

"Too many people have held it for too long," Owens said on winning the Wilson trophy. "We've waited a long time for this. What a way to end it at BYU and get ready to start at Parkway Crossing Stadium."

What impressed Owens about the way the Angels ended their four-year tenure at BYU were the 2,062 fans in attendance.

"From my standpoint, one of the greatest things about the way we won it was having such a great crowd here. It makes all the difference in the world. To have a soldout stadium for the final game and a crowd that is into it and cheering, that to me is the best thing that could happen in the community. That really made it special for us."

Added Jacobsen, "It's great for us to win this championship in front of a big crowd. The big crowd gives us momentum going into a new year. We have the championship under our belts. We have the new stadium, and we are going to have a new look and new name."

And now add a new 2004 Pioneer League championship ring to go along with next year's new look.

"Someone said to me 'It doesn't get better than this,' " Gach-Ray said. "I looked at them and said, 'Yes it does. In a new stadium it will be. It will be even better.' "

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