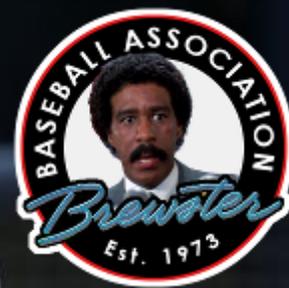

SURFERS FINALLY WIN LANDIS!



2030



**MORE RELOCATION!
WHICH FRANCHISE
IS ON THE MOVE
THIS YEAR?**

**TED TALKS
PREVIEWS**

**REALIGNMENT SPARKS
REGIONAL RIVALRIES**

**KYLE PENS
A POEM**

MEDIA GUIDE

BREWSTER

BASEBALL ASSOCIATION



Established 1973

LEADERSHIP

Matt Rectenwald	Commissioner
Aaron Weiner	Vice Commissioner
Ted Schmidt	League Director
Stephen Lane	PR Director/Historian

CONTACT INFORMATION

Home Page	montybrewster.net/
Forums	montybrewster.net/MBBA/phpBB3/index.php
HTML	montybrewster.net/MBBA/OOTPFiles/lgreports/news/html/leagues/league_100_home.html
Application	montybrewster.net/application-2/
Constitution	montybrewster.net/constitution/

The Brewster Baseball Association is powered by Out of the Park Baseball 17, our superb commissioner and our outstanding members. Please join us on our forums; we may be a weird bunch, but we're very welcoming. We even have the occasional podcast!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2030 Media Guide	Wherein Stephen Lane...	1
2029 Final Standings	...pretends to be Ron Collins.	4
Long Beach Surfers Win Landis	Stephen Lane	5
Birmingham on the Move	Mike Calvaruso	8
Catcher Defense	Tyler Simmons	9
Regional Rivalries	Mike Calvaruso and Stephen Lane	12
Poetry by Kyle	Kyle Stever	21
2030 Predicted Standings	by Ted Schmidt...	24
JL Previews	...who pretends to be Ron Collins...	25
FL Previews	...who pretended to be Aaron Weiner.	41
Hall of Fame 2030	compiled by Matt Rectenwald	56

The 2030 BBA Media Guide has been produced and published by Stephen Lane with the help of contributors Matt Rectenwald, Mike Calvaruso, Tyler Simmons, Kyle Stever and Ted Schmidt. Especially Ted. He wrote the previews.

Special thanks to our commissioner Matt Rectenwald.

2029 FINAL STANDINGS

Johnson League Atlantic			
	W	L	GB
Jacksonville	92	70	-
Montreal	91	71	1
Atlantic City	85	77	7
Brooklyn	80	82	12
Halifax	73	89	19
Carolina	72	90	20
Charm City	71	91	21

Johnson League Southern			
	W	L	GB
Huntsville	100	62	-
Las Vegas	94	68	6
New Orleans	84	78	16
Birmingham	79	83	21
Phoenix	75	87	25
Hawaii	71	91	29
Havana	67	95	33



Frick League Playoffs

Geohegan Round

California 3 – Seattle 1

Long Beach 3 – Calgary 2

Doubleday Series

Louisville 4 – California 2

Long Beach 4 – Yellow Springs 1

Cartwright Cup

Long Beach 4 – Louisville 2

Landis Memorial Series

Long Beach – 4

Las Vegas – 2



Johnson League Playoffs

Geohegan Round

Montreal 3 – Atlantic City 1

Jacksonville 3 – New Orleans 0

Doubleday Series

Montreal 4 – Huntsville 1

Las Vegas 4 – Jacksonville 3

Cartwright Cup

Las Vegas 4 – Montreal 1

Frick League Heartland			
	W	L	GB
Louisville	102	60	-
Yellow Springs	99	63	3
Omaha	87	75	15
Des Moines	81	81	21
Madison	66	96	36
Twin Cities	50	112	52
Indy	49	113	53

Frick League Pacific			
	W	L	GB
Long Beach	95	68	-
Seattle	94	69	1
California	94	70	1.5
Calgary	90	72	4.5
Vancouver	84	78	10.5
Valencia	80	82	14.5
Edmonton	65	97	29.5

LONG BEACH WINS FIRST LANDIS

On their eighteenth trip to the playoffs, the Long Beach Surfers capture their first BBA title



General Manager Stephen Lane stood in the visitor clubhouse at The Casino by Moe Fugger, soaked in champagne and looking equal parts exhausted, thrilled and shocked. His Surfers had just captured the Landis Memorial Series in a victory over their former division rival Las Vegas Hustlers.

An original member of the Brewster, the franchise started out in Salt Lake City as the Missions. They won the first five Frick League Pacific division titles, and averaged 101 wins while doing so. Despite this success, they never reached the Landis Memorial Series.

The team moved to Long Beach, becoming the Surfers in 1985. It was here that they found the most success, making the playoffs twelve times, including an excellent run of eight consecutive trips from 2005-2012. Again, despite the many trips to the playoffs, the team failed to even reach the Landis Memorial Series.

An ill-advised (in hindsight) move to Tucson in 2017 was nothing short of disastrous. The Cactus never had a winning season from 2017 through their final season in 2028. The once proud franchise was struggling both on the field and off. With the team due for a change, Commissioner Matt Rectenwald took a chance on a young up-and-coming GM who had found immediate success in the now defunct European Baseball Association. Stephen Lane had led the Amsterdam Neptunes to the EBA Championship in 2025 and was ready for a new challenge.

Upon arrival in Tucson, Lane made it no secret what his plan was for the franchise. Rumors of a move back to Long Beach were swirling almost immediately, but the on-field product came first. Nearly every player of value was shipped out, big veteran names like Leon Sandcastle, and young pitching stars like Tully Crow were sent all over the United States and Canada in return for prospects. Shrewd trades and smart draft picks resulted in the farm system rising to become the top ranked in the league.

The team won just 66 games in Lane's first season, and that total fell to 51 in 2027. Flush with cash leading up to the 2028 season, the team signed superstar pitcher Gary Estes and a number of hitters including Pedro Burgos and Mike Love. The acquisitions led to a hot start, and even though the team faded down the stretch, they won a respectable 71 games, a 20 game swing from the year prior.



Nearly lost in the commotion that was expansion and realignment in 2029, Stephen Lane moved the franchise back to Long Beach, CA. The southern California native was ecstatic that the franchise was moving back to the LBC, though he surely couldn't know the success that would come almost immediately.

Preseason prognosticators saw the Surfers as a borderline playoff team, facing stiff competition in the new Frick League Pacific. Facing an apparent excess of pitching in the offseason, GM Lane made the rookie mistake of assuming he could trade away SP depth, and sent Gary Estes back to the only other team he'd ever known, the Las Vegas Hustlers. Shortly thereafter, the staff suffered multiple injuries to SPs, but the team was able to rotate a number of starters through the 4-5 spots in the rotation and tread water for the first half of the season.

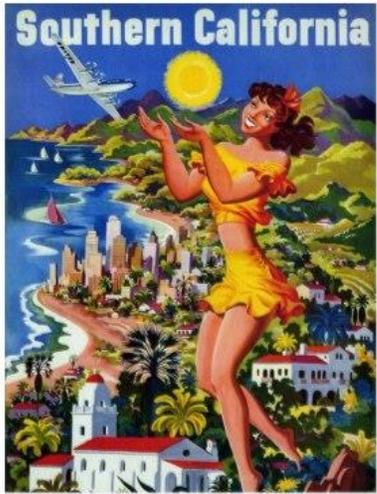


An injury to Mike Love brought up number one prospect Kade Cummins far earlier than management expected, where he joined fellow lefty Carlos Gonzáles. The pair decimated Frick League pitching throughout the summer, and then they were joined by righty and consensus best BBA outfielder, Alfredo Salazar. Lane had used some of his now dwindling prospect capital to acquire the most feared right handed batter in the league. Salazar brought balance to the lineup and helped lead the team to the FLP title.

Contributions from Esteban Gil, Jose Lozano and rookie Jimmy Greenwood on the pitching staff kept the team close and enabled the offense to win games for the Surfers. A breakout season from Italian catcher Ippolito Basaglia and a career year from middle infielder Fred Hernández were icing on the cake.

After a 1-game playoff with California to determine the division winner, their playoff road took them through Calgary, Yellow Springs and 102-game-winner Louisville. A 4-2 series win versus the Sluggers took them to their first ever appearance in the Landis Memorial Series. As fate would have it, they matched up against the Las Vegas Hustlers, former division rivals, and recent mega-trade partners. A back and forth series was hard fought, and was closer than the eventual 4-2 decision in favor of the Surfers.

The victory capped an unprecedented and almost unbelievable ascension for the franchise. From 51 wins in 2027 to 95 wins and a Landis Memorial Championship in 2029, it is understandable that GM Stephen Lane would be looking a little shocked as he stood soaked in champagne and surrounded by the championship team that he built in just four seasons.



LONE STAR STATE OF MIND

GM Mike Calvaruso of The Birmingham Bandits Announces Relocation to San Antonio, TX



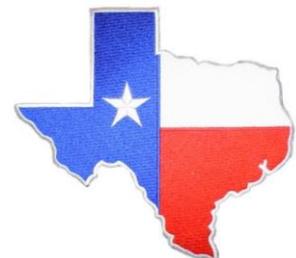
In a dramatic and surprising move, the Birmingham Bandits and Owner Walter Sobchak have decided to move the team to San Antonio, Texas and become only the second team to ever hail from the Lone Star State taking the new name of San Antonio Outlaws. The last team that played in Texas was the Austin Riverbats which was sold in 1998, moved to Marquette, Michigan and became the Marquette Suns. All that remains is for the signature of the league offices, but that should be nothing more than a formality since Commissioner Matthew Rectenwald has openly stated that he wanted to see the BBA return to Texas and take advantage of the huge media market there.

There had been rumblings around the league since last year when the league expanded and absorbed some of the former EBA franchises that further moves could be in the works, and San Antonio made it very clear that they wanted to join the BBA as they wined and dined every owner they could find. The die may have been cast this last October when the citizens failed to pass a new lease agreement and sales tax aimed at helping the Bandits stay in Birmingham.

In a move reminiscent of the departure from Oakland by the NFL Raiders, moving trucks arrived at the team facilities last night at around 11:00pm and rolled out before dawn could awaken the fans or the media to what was taking place. Owner Sobchak sounded tired but resolute when interviewed by Mike and Mike in the Morning. "I did everything I could to keep this team in Birmingham but I was meet with closed door after closed door. I wish all the citizens of Birmingham that supported us through good and bad all my blessings, but I did not buy this franchise nor do I run this franchise to be a non-profit organization. I am in the business to make money and money I will make".

The move caught everyone on the team by surprise as they were met this morning at the team facilities with coaches and members of Sobchak's legal team going over the do's and don'ts from here on out and imposing a media ban on all players. The team has already secured temporary accommodations for players and their families until new homes can be purchased.

With the move the Bandits/Outlaws jumped from the 45th largest media market to the 32nd, but can also take advantage of the 39th market in Austin, the 10th market in Houston and the 5th largest in Dallas. New logos and uniforms have been submitted for approval by the commissioner's office. Buckle up folks, it's about to get serious around here.



CATCHER DEFENSE – A FINAL VERDICT?

AN INVESTIGATION BY TYLER SIMMONS , JACKSONVILLE HURRICANES GENERAL MANAGER

I had been planning on doing a special prospect piece for this year’s media guide but after a little discussion in the forums, where Jeff basically told me to put up or shut up, I’d started thinking about how a study on catchers might be done. When I sat down to finish the prospect piece, I just kept having a nagging feeling that I was missing out on doing something really worthwhile for the BBA community. I could either write a piece that would be mostly forgotten in a couple of months, or I could follow through with a deeper look at catcher defense and what affect it has on individual catcher defensive stats and pitching staff stats as a whole. So, I scrapped the prospect talk, and got to creating a study on catcher defense, specifically the Catcher Ability rating.

Method

I created a generic fictional league with a 32 team setup. I tried to do my best to remove anything that could cause any unnecessary noise, turning off injuries, development, trades, coaching/scouting, owner goals, storylines, league evolution, the DH was turned off and I created a catcher who was a good enough hitter that he would be used as a starting catcher by the AI, no matter how poor his defense was. I then created three separate quick starts, one with the catcher having a 250 Catcher Ability, one with 120 CA, and one with 5 CA (the lowest I could get and still have a visible catcher position rating). All other ratings were identical. After creating the quickstarts, I simmed the same season 30 times (10 for each rating).

Results

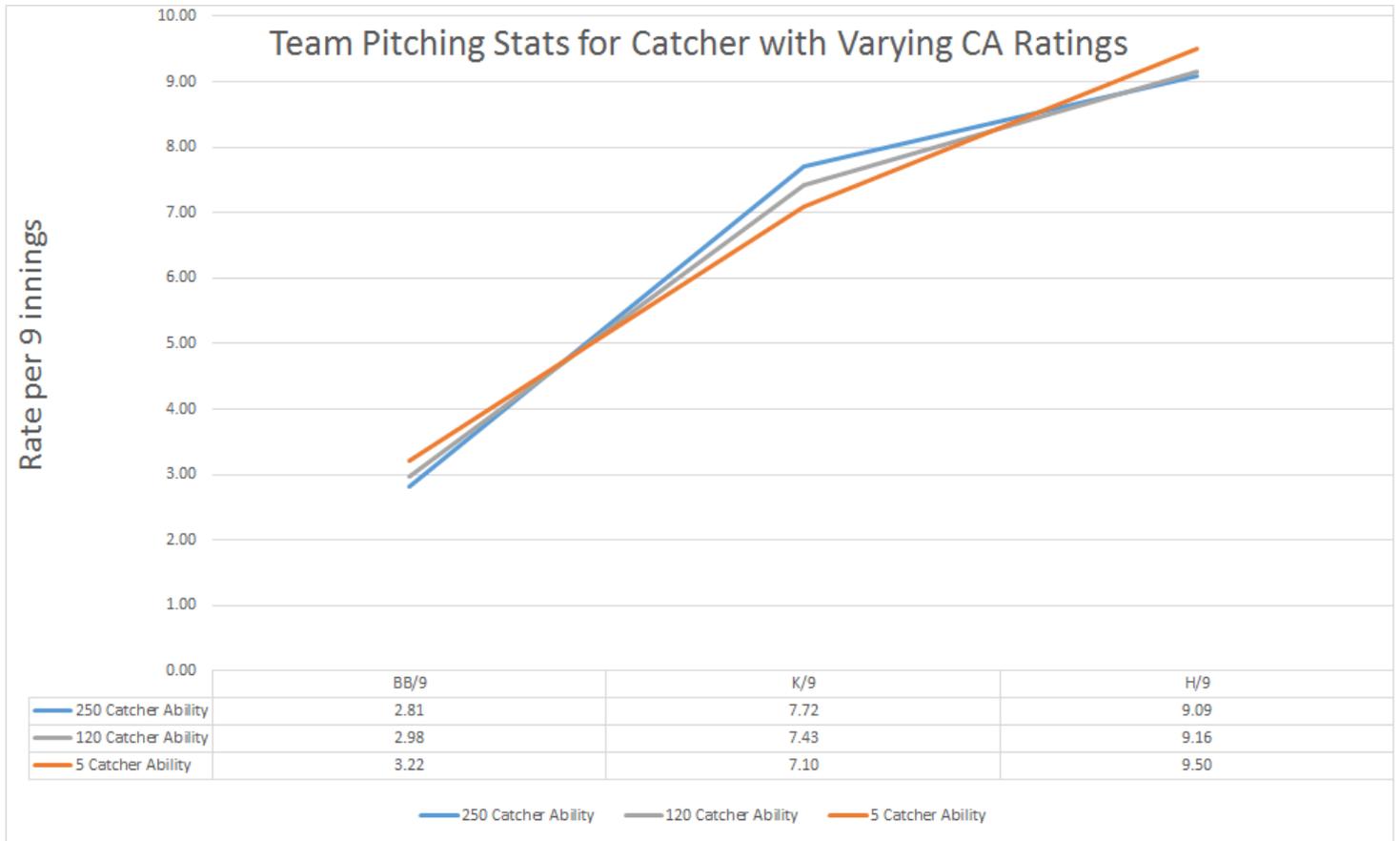
While 30 seasons certainly isn’t a definitive amount of data, the 10 seasons for each rating do produce solid data with the results roughly fitting a normal bell curve distribution and I do feel fairly confident in the results produced. So, what happened? Well, it is clear that the Catcher Ability rating is a big catch-all for catcher defensive ratings and after doing this small study, it appears the rating has an effect on a catcher’s individual ZR, Passed Balls, Fielding %, and (surprisingly) RTO%.

CA Rating	E	PCT	ZR	PB	RTO%
250	2.1	0.998	4.31	2.7	64.9
120	4	0.996	1.59	10.2	57.2
5	7.1	0.993	-1.54	15.4	41.1

The catcher with a 250 rating averaged 2 Errors, a +4.3 ZR, 2.7 PB, and 65% RTO. 120 rating saw his numbers dip to 4 Errors, +1.6 ZR, 10.2 PB, and 57% RTO. 5 rating was a train wreck with 7 Errors, -1.54 ZR, 15.4 PB, and 41% RTO. I was shocked to see such a clear drop in RTO% with no change in Catcher Arm. Apparently, the CA stat is a pretty large factor in a catcher’s ability to control the running game in OOTP. Everything else is pretty in line with what I thought would happen. As CA drops, Errors & Passed Balls rise, ZR falls. But the ZR and Errors aren’t all that much of a drop (5 runs worth of ZR and .005 fielding%).



Okay, so there is a hit to a catcher’s personal defensive statistics, but what does that mean to a pitching staff, and does his CA have any effect on a pitching staff’s overall numbers? Well, in short, yes he does. When looking at the 30 years, it is clear the Catcher Ability rating does have an effect on two things when it comes to a whole pitching staff: walks and hits.



As you can see by the rate stats above, a higher CA will produce fewer walks, more strikeouts, and fewer hits allowed. As a result of facing fewer batters and having fewer baserunners, staffs also see fewer hits per 9 and runs allowed. Over the course of a season, you can expect a 250 CA catcher to allow 70 fewer walks and produce 100 more strikeouts than a 5 CA catcher. The staff will also allow roughly 80 fewer hits and 70 fewer runs. You might be thinking, ‘sure, a historically terrible catcher will negatively affect a staff; but what about an average catcher, is there a difference between average and great CA?’ And there is. Over a season, a catcher with 120 CA allowed 25 more walks, 30 more hits, 20 more runs and got 46 fewer strikeouts on average.



Conclusion

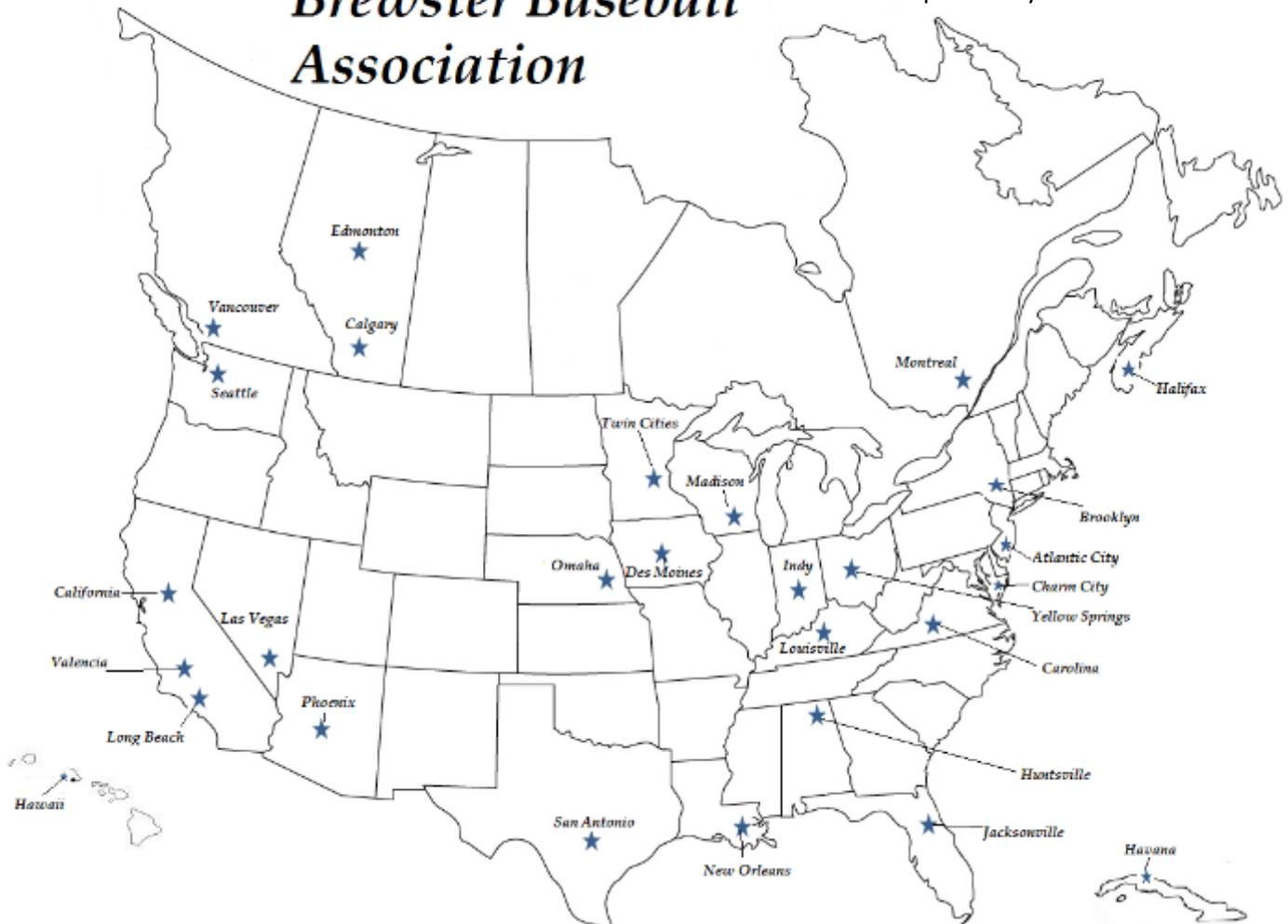
After looking at all of the data in these simulations, it does appear that CA affects more than you can first see in the defensive statistics. Catcher Ability seems to effect Fielding%, ZR, PB, RTO%, BB/9, and K/9. Having a catcher with a high CA can result in your staff seeing fewer hitters with fewer baserunners overall, resulting in the possibility of fewer runs. So, great, we should all shun guys without 9/10 CAs, right? Well, your mileage may vary here. The difference between an average CA catcher and a historically great one is still well within a standard deviation of BB/K/R/H/Err. We're talking about a 4 win difference (in the fictional league's run environment) between a high 6/low 7 CA player and a 12 rating. Even with the best rating possible, the pitching staff finished with more runs allowed (730) than the average for 120 catchers in 4 of the 10 simulations. Overall, it appears that getting a great CA catcher who is close to competent with the bat can create enough positive value to be worth paying for, and catcher WAR may actually be a better representation of the position value than I first thought, but I don't know if a catcher's defensive ability is any more valuable than having a good defensive at any other position.



REGIONAL RIVALRIES

United World of Brewster Baseball Association

Map courtesy of Mike Calvaruso



The expansion and realignment for the 2029 BBA season sparked a number of regional competitions between the league's General Managers. The first, and inspiration for the others was the Maxwell Weiss, Jr. Rocky Mountain Classic. This was followed in short order by the Ohio River Tri-State Boundary War, and finally the Bourbon & Blues Shootout.

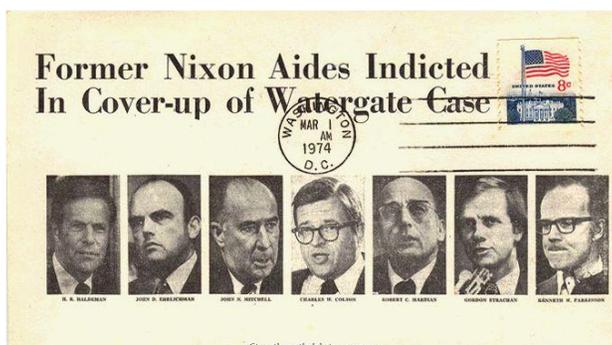
The following pages detail the results of the first annual competitions, as well as provide some inspiration for additional regional rivalries.

THE MAXWELL WEISS, JR. ROCKY MOUNTAIN CLASSIC

Not only was this the original, but it also set a precedent for unwieldy long names! We've got three Canadian clubs vying for this title, two longstanding BBA members in Calgary and Vancouver, as well as the expansion team in Edmonton.



We were going to award a trophy here to the winner, but when it came time to tally the results, they could not be located. The computer records of the BBA had been altered, and the records of the three teams involved had been purged. A request was made to the commissioner's office to locate the official paper records, but a staffer reported that those were missing as well. As such, no trophy can be awarded this year, but we hope that the member GMs choose to keep the competition going next year.



THE OHIO RIVER TRI-STATE BOUNDARY WAR

The brainchild of Louisville General Manager, Genius Hopkins, the Ohio River* Tri-State Boundary War pits the Sluggers against the Yellow Springs Nine and the Indy Grasshoppers. Genius Hopkins proclaimed the following upon the announcement: *“There are two things I hate, copycats and meaningless competitions. That’s why I’m announcing, before the announcement of the Maxwell Weiss, Jr. Rocky Mountain Classic, the First Annual ‘Ohio River Tri-State Boundary War.’”*



Yellow Springs



The only regional rivalry series to put some cash on the line was also the most closely contested. It came down to the final series of the year between Yellow Springs and Louisville, where they split a four-game series. Run differentials were tallied, and the Nine came out ahead. For this they will receive \$2,000,000 cold hard cash from the Genius, and bragging rights until next year.



*The author of this publication applauds Mr. Hopkins’ restraint in not giving the competition a more Louisville-centric name.

THE BOURBON & BLUES SHOOTOUT

Not to be outdone by the Genius, Huntsville established a competition fit for the southern states. Originally known by another name, Outlaws GM Mike Calvaruso supplied the new and improved moniker for the competition. The B&B Shootout features the Huntsville Phantoms, Jacksonville Hurricanes and the San Antonio Outlaws (néé Birmingham Bandits).



The Bourbon & Blues Shootout was slightly lopsided, but featured a close race for first. Huntsville and Jacksonville each won their respective Johnson League division races, and this little competition went down to the wire. Huntsville won by a slim one game margin in this inaugural series. Can the new-look Outlaws crash the party in 2030? Will the trio invite fellow southerners New Orleans to the party? Stay tuned!



THE CALIFORNIA CLASSIC OR THE WEST COAST BEST COAST SHOWDOWN

If the California teams (Crusaders, Stars, Surfers) decide to get a little competition going, maybe they'll choose "The California Classic." Or they could invite the Storm and have a competition that goes up and down the west coast.

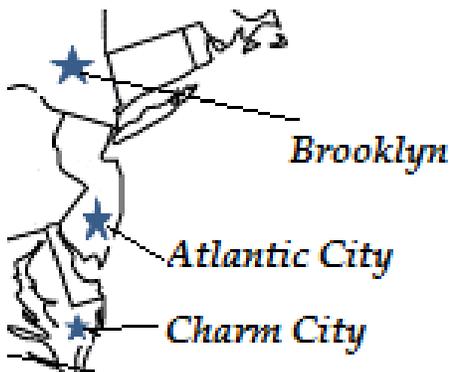


Then again, they're all in the same division already, so maybe it's unnecessary...

THE EAST COAST ELITE ENGAGEMENT

The Northeasterners can have a little tournament in between eating crabs, seeing Broadway shows and gambling. Not that they need a competition to demonstrate their superiority.

The Brooklyn Robins, Atlantic City Gamblers, and Charm City Jimmies would fight for this title. Maybe they could invite the Montreal Blazers too, if they are feeling generous.



THE TRIPLE TRIPLE TRI-MEET

Three Islands. Three Countries. Three H's. Halifax, Havana, Hawaii. It was meant to be.



THE QUAD-STATE MIDWEST MASHUP OR THE WACKY WALLEYE WAR

Four states, one fish. The Twin City River Monsters, Madison Wolves, Des Moines Kernels, and Omaha Barnstormers fight it out for superiority in the United States Midwest.



THE DUEL IN THE DESERT

Just two teams left to place into a regional rivalry competition. With Tucson departed to Long Beach, it's down to the Las Vegas Hustlers and Phoenix Talons in the desert. For now, this would be an extremely lopsided fight, but who knows, maybe in a few years the expansion Talons will be competitive with the Husters.



A POEM BY KYLE

The season was over
The bats and gloves all put away
And congratulations were in order
For the Surfers of Long Beach had won the day

But the calendar then rolled over
As it always seems to do
Letting another team now be closer
To capturing the prize, too

But before the season
Can officially be under way
First comes the offseason
And the start of Free Agency Day

It's marked on every calendar
Circled in green ink
And the GMs all get ready to pander
And push their finances to the brink

"December third!"
The cries from the fans ring out
Before the best news they have ever heard
"We're only one reliever away – have no doubt!"

And so the checkbooks are opened wide
It's not the fans concern, after all
Who will be their new team's pride?
And who will be their franchise's fall?

On this year, festivities began early
With the Sluggers being first
And though their GM is ever surly
That Hernandez contract is the worst.



Fred Hernandez, \$74 million dollar man.

Tuna got fished out by the Talons
Setting off for the Phoenix sun
Though Baca's tears may drop in gallons
Once that opt out clause is done

Salazar got 160 mil
From an expansion team
I'm sure that won't be a tough to swallow pill
Or a cold sweat waking dream

"Now Kyle", you might be saying
"Why are you such a prick?
Was there any contract a team is now paying
That you don't think is a total brick?"

"Well sure!" I would respond
With a tone only slightly droll
"But for that opinion to fully be spawned
We might need ANOTHER poll!"

In all seriousness, though, I'll shift
Because there truly were
Some contracts I'd call thrift
Even to a muckraker

Budding, for example
Seemed rather adept
For a Kraken team last season ample
With relievers most inept

Much better than that Vargas guy
Whom hasn't been good since '26
Madison might soon wonder why
They thought they needed this 10M/year fix



End of the Tuna



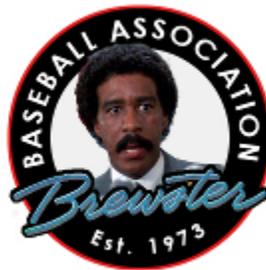
2030 PREVIEWS

General Manager Theodor Schmidt stepped up to the plate this year to preview the entire BBA. We know it's your favorite part, and we've made you wait long enough, so here it is.

We'll start with the projected standings here, followed by division and team previews.

Johnson League Atlantic			
	W	L	GB
Montreal	101	61	-
Atlantic City	88	74	13
Jacksonville	86	76	15
Brooklyn	80	82	21
Charm City	77	85	24
Carolina	72	90	29
Halifax	67	95	34

Johnson League Southern			
	W	L	GB
Huntsville	100	62	-
Las Vegas	99	63	1
New Orleans	87	75	13
San Antonio	67	95	33
Phoenix	66	96	34
Hawaii	73	89	27
Havana	71	91	29



Frick League Heartland			
	W	L	GB
Louisville	95	67	-
Yellow Springs	94	68	1
Des Moines	85	77	10
Omaha	83	79	12
Madison	72	90	23
Twin Cities	63	99	32
Indy	49	113	46

Frick League Pacific			
	W	L	GB
Long Beach	96	66	-
Calgary	94	68	2
California	93	69	3
Vancouver	87	75	9
Seattle	86	76	10
Valencia	74	88	22
Edmonton	63	99	33

JOHNSON LEAGUE ATLANTIC

With one big exception, 2029's Johnson League Atlantic division shook out as most pundits expected. Montreal was strong, Atlantic City staved off father time and injury for one more run, and Brooklyn rebounded (albeit not as much as some expected) from a dismal 2028. However, no one foresaw Jacksonville leading the pack pretty much wire to wire.

Last year, most appreciated the talent in the Hurricanes' young hitting core, but the pitching staff was still an odd collection of short contract veterans. GM Tyler Simmons looked poised to make a series of mid season deals to add to a growing farm system. Simmons started out thinking the same thing, it seems. He sold from first during the early part of the year. Eventually, the Hurricanes' front office reversed course a bit and bought into their contender status. The club made the playoffs for the first time as the Jacksonville Hurricanes (and the first as a franchise since 2022).

The Hurricanes' primary competition was initially not the mighty Montreal Blazers, who were expected to run away with the division. Rather, Atlantic City's minor offseason retooling around its Hall of Fame core worked once again, at least until injuries decimated the pitching staff. The Brooklyn Robins DID rebound, just not as much as expected. An aging Carolina finally threw in the towel, and now looks to the future. Halifax continues to be rudderless, and changed GM's for the umpteenth time in the last few seasons. The mighty Montreal Blazers scuffled a bit, but their run differential was that of an elite team. Eventually, they got things sorted out and made a strong playoff run before losing to Las Vegas in the Cartwright cup. As for the newcomer, the expansion Charm City Jimmies made a good showing. Their 71-91 record isn't bad for an expansion franchise, and belies an effort that had them flirting with .500 for most of the season.

What will 2030 hold? Likely more of the same. Montreal is still very, very talented and is the early favorite. Jacksonville looks to have improved enough that even if 2029 was a bit of an overachiever, they can make up the difference. Atlantic City is Atlantic City. The core is old (and maybe a bit rickety), but they have the talent to contend. Brooklyn has "underachieved" enough times to make me wonder if they really have the goods. As they bring back pretty much the same team, I again expect to see them on the outside looking in. Charm City made some big noise in free agency, but a seventy win team needs more than a couple big players to move into playoff contention. Still, given the young talent they have, this is the team with the biggest ability to surprise in this division. Carolina could win a few more games, but GM Aaron Weiner seems committed to rebuilding and this team will likely be sellers in the second half. Then there's Halifax. Poor Halifax. Let's hope Moonie can provide some stability for a team that seems completely directionless (unless you count down). They weren't last in 2029, but only by the grace of an implosion in Carolina and an expansion team in Charm City. They won't be so lucky in 2030.



ATLANTIC CITY GAMBLERS

General Manager: Ryan Scott

2029 Result:
85-77, 3rd JL Atlantic

2030 Prediction:
88-74

While some of our key players from our early 20s success have already moved on or retired, we do have a quartet of veterans that are kind of the bedrock of our franchise right now ... All four of these guys have contracts that expire after 2030. So I feel like this will probably be the last season of them together as a group, unless something crazy happens.

Post Subject: Boardwalk Empire #2029: This Core's Last Hurrah?

You don't have to look much further than GM's Ryan Scott's late season analysis of his own team to understand what 2030 means for this franchise. The days of Bido, Boone, and Sanchez are likely drawing to a close. Veteran additions like Kharlamov and Boone Carlyle, have extended this team's run. With Sanchez and Bido, that's still enough offensive potency for the Gamblers to score runs. Pitching will determine the fate of this team in 2030.

Unfortunately, Scott has had the matter taken out of his hands. Mingo Boone should be healthy by opening day, but how will the 36 year old vet come back from his modified Tommy John surgery? He's almost certainly going to take a hit, and the Gamblers need front end starter stuff out of the future Hall of Famer. The pen is alright, and there are some good back end pieces in the rotation like Dan Cannon and Nick Sutton. Even if Boone is alright, the availability of future staff ace Hiroyuki Rin (recovering from his own cloned UCL replacement) could make or break the team.

There is at least a bit of a youth movement going on in Atlantic City. Rin is joined on the staff by the above mentioned Dan Cannon. Right fielder Adam Parish looks like a decent enough OF and may be a bit better with another year under his belt. Left fielder Chang-Hyeok "Beserker" Chang should see some time this year, as may catcher Joaquin Camacho.

The team added starter Jose Garcia and left fielder Juan Cruz in free agency. Both should add a little to the team. In reality though, it comes down to the health of the starting pitching. Let's say they get 80% of the old Boone. If Rin can get things going by June, this team has a strong shot at the playoffs.



BROOKLYN ROBINS

General Manager: Alan Ehlers

2029 Result:
80-82, 4th JL Atlantic

2030 Prediction:
80-82

Reporter: So if all these allegations are false, why were you crying before?

Ehlers: Because Louisville really is moving to the Frick next season. We now have far less easy wins on our schedule. The JLA will no longer be the Johnson League Badlantic.

Post Subject: Robins Roundup 2029/1

...like throwing a ballpark frank down a concourse

I'm not sure even Alan knows what to expect from his team in 2030, but he's probably glad he doesn't have to count on Louisville for those "easy wins". According to the ancient Greek Sabermatrixian Pythagorus, they "should" have won 89 games last season. That would have been good enough for a wild card berth.

Something weird is going on in Brooklyn though. This is two straight years of underachievement in a division that frankly has a lot of punching bags. The division change might have increased the competition level a bit, but not enough that it explains the Robins'

frustrations. This has been a team that is less than the sum of its parts.

To the casual observer, Brooklyn looks like a team that can't pitch. Rick Ward would argue otherwise, especially after he missed a perfect game due to a batter reaching on a strikeout last year. Domingo Castillo, Jose Morales, and Miguel Delgado disagree too. Still this team lacks a number two to follow Ward's excellent opening act. Ward himself is recovering from Tommy John and may miss the first month or two of the season.

Part of the problem seems to be that the infield defense is mediocre at best. Michael Starr and Oliver Medrano, while fine bats, form a weak left side of the infield. The 'pen isn't that great either. If I want to explain away a negative pyth, poor defense and bad relief are the usual culprits.

Still, Brooklyn has at the very least starting depth and some great bats in Holden Blackwell, Emilio Rodriguez, and Enrique Salazar. They did lose a big thumper in catcher Sam Adams, and don't have impact talent on the way from the minors. They also have made very little noise in free agency, but still have some cash to spend.

Sadly for Alan, I don't see 2030 working out for Brooklyn. There's enough talent on this team to fight for a playoff spot if the right moves are made, but as is I see a repeat performance of 2029. The theme of the year is inconsistency.



CAROLINA KRAKEN

General Manager: Aaron Weiner

2029 Result:
72-90, 6th JL Atlantic

2030 Prediction:
72-90

As a righty hitter, Thomas may indeed be unmatched in all of history. He's never played the field in the bigs, but if he continues hitting well, it's going to be fairly safe to put him among the ten greatest hitters in league history.

Post Subject: Wise Kraken 2029 #2: Examining Thomas's Career

It's a good thing fans in Carolina get to look forward to seeing "Little Hurt" every day, and for that matter Billy Chapel Jr. every fifth. The Kraken aren't likely to offer much to get excited about in the near future. The real question is not about 2030, but whether Carolina can regain competitiveness before these two generational talents retire.

There are some role player bats like the Rodriguez's Manuel and Jose, Ron Whitney, and Chris Klein surrounding Thomas, but not much else. This team is limited in defensive range as well, especially in the infield.

Billy Chapel is facing a similar feeling of isolation in the starting rotation. Gustavo De La Torre, Juan Lopez and co. are okay, but not anyone you would want in an important game. Keeping with the "One Superstar Surrounded by Forgettables" theme, Rafael Mata is the only big piece in the bullpen.

Carolina did sign Joey Budding to a reasonable deal. It may not be too bad of an idea to see if he can return to starting. If not, at least between him and Mata they should keep from wasting too many of Chapel's starts.

Chet Gabriel and Jin-song Xuan may get called up before too much longer, and both look like big league starters, but neither is a huge upgrade over the Kraken's existing talent. It also wouldn't been impossible to see Arthur Dempster (arguably the best arm in the minors) get a late season call-up.

2030 looks like a forgettable transitional year for the Kraken. They have some talent in the minors, but it's a season or two away, and the roster has been decimated by trades and free agent losses.



CHARM CITY JIMMIES

General Manager: Brandon Slouck

**2029 Result:
71-91, 7th JL Atlantic**

**2030 Prediction:
77-85**

The GM also acknowledged that the team "still has work to do." The team still needs to address the left side of the infield and add some pitching all around.

Post Subject: 2030.03 - Savage chooses CCJ

That quotation from CCJ GM Brandon Slouck, along with looking at last years runs scored and runs allowed tells you everything you need to know about the 2030 Jimmies. You can't add a player like Savage Salazar and not improve, but offense wasn't their problem. This team couldn't pitch in 2029. Now, Egbert Behner should be better, and they did sign veteran journeyman Chester Kipling. They also have some bullpen arms in Soto, Concepcion and Schlondorff. However, as Jesus once said to Ghandi, "A number 2 and number 3/4 starter and three relievers do not a pitching staff make." (At least, I'm pretty sure that's what he said. I was all mystified by the water turning to wine thing and wasn't really paying attention.)

This team will have to score a TON of runs to win games. The good news is that a Salazar, Danny van Halen, and Desiderius Kirshbaum outfield could go a long way toward making that happen. Don Logan, Dale Jones, Jeaic Dalyell, and Brian Whitten are some nice supporting bats.

This is a pretty darn good offense. Good gloves all over the place too. Will it be enough? The short answer is no, but it's a step in the right direction. Charm City, if it can earn the revenue to support it, is still 25 million under the cap. This core, with 25 mil worth of starters added, could easily be a playoff team in a year or two. They could get there faster if they decided to trade offense for pitching (which may honestly be a questionable long term move given their relative values right now).

Charm Cities fans can dream big about the future, but for now that's all they can do. This edition of their Jimmies just doesn't have the arms.



HALIFAX HAWKS

General Manager: Jason Russell

2029 Result:
73-89, 5th JL Atlantic

2030 Prediction:
67-95

So, that's where I'm at. I'm back. I'm motivated. I want to see where I can take this team. Halifax may not be a big league town right now, but maybe we can help turn it into one. I can tell the Montreals, Jacksonvilles, and Atlantic Cities out there that they better put their big boy pants on, because Halifax is on the way...eventually.

Post Subject:

Halifax? I'm in Halifax?

Poor fans in Halifax. They've been jerked around with a whirlwind of GM changes for years. Rebuilding was replaced with selling the future for the present, which then gave way to giving up and going full rebuild, yielding to negligence, followed by another teardown. I've probably forgotten some steps in there. The road they've followed is littered with bad trades and missed opportunities. By all rights, this team should have Cisco Guererro, Elroy Hinson, Mark Sturdivant, Pierre

Cordova, Domingo Castillo and Roberto Ramos on the roster. Ask Jason Russell if he'd trade the entire organization for those six guys. What if you get to keep Sancho Delgado, the only talented player developed in Halifax in the last decade who wasn't traded for cents on the dollar?

Hopefully Russell can provide stability and direction to franchise the has been allowed to list aimlessly against the rocks in Nova Scotia for far too long. Let's hope so. A miracle can't save the 2030 season. There's no immediate help in the minors for 2030, and the big league roster is Stelio Kontos, Dominic Wyatt, Sancho Delgado, Martin Lewis, and Louis Hall. Hall and Wyatt represent some hope for the future. In the meantime, the best plan might be to get the highest possible return for Kontos, Delgado and Lewis.

This will be ugly in 2030, but Russell will get the best he can out of his guys.



JACKSONVILLE HURRICANES

General Manager: Tyler Simmons

2029 Result:
92-70, 1st JL Atlantic

2030 Prediction:
86-76

It looks like the Hurricanes are finally making a push for the playoffs and with an 11 game lead on the final wild card spot, this fan is beginning to get excited about the thought of October baseball in Florida for the first time since....well, ever!! (the old Jacksonville Monarchs never had a winning season before shipping off to Baltimore)"

Post Subject:

Tropical Tidbits 29.03 - So You're Saying There's a Chance!

The story in Jacksonville is resurgence. Baseball fans in Florida are riding a high they haven't felt in decades. They have reason to. These Hurricanes don't appear to be a flash in the pan, one and done type team. GM Tyler Simmons has carefully crafted a minor league system in Jacksonville that has consistently borne fruit, and the team has clawed its way out of the basement over the last few years.

While the plan looked solid, no one expected the Hurricanes to put it all together so soon. Most considered them a year or two away. As is often the case however, Jacksonville's kids grew up before anyone noticed. Given a chance, they took the ball and ran with it.

The question now is, can they sustain their success? Jacksonville has an offense. Rutledge and Hahn can anchor any lineup. They have other talented contributors in guys like Vicente Chavez, Lloyd Braun, and Jake Blues. Sergio Ramos and BFP provide some veteran presence.

They question is can they pitch? Last year's team rode a bunch of career or better than average performances out of aging vets. This time, Jacksonville boasts a couple bona-fide front of the rotation starters in Tully Crow and Jesus Tonche. That is, unless Tonche continues to do his #3 starter impersonation and Crow has his usual injury problems. Ye Kung and Vicheslav Vasilyev probably can be back end rotation types, but this group is short of depth and top end talent. The bullpen is a bunch of middle relief types as well, with Ricardo Valera, Andy Cantrell, and whatever is left of Skip Glendenning leading the way.

There is some help on the way. Uber third base prospect David Noburu is tantalizingly close. Jose Garcia and Luis Manuel Torres could really help out the rotation if they could finish off their development. Still, none of those players may make an impact this year.

Look for Jacksonville to make a late free agency signing to shore up the pitching. Also expect about 10-15 in season deals. If we've learned anything, it's that Simmons doesn't stand pat well.

Sadly, I do think last year's team was a bit of an overachiever. I still think this is a playoff club, but they'll likely be fighting for a wild card spot, rather than winning the division outright.



MONTREAL BLAZERS

General Manager: John Callahan

2029 Result:
91-71, 2nd JL Atlantic

2030 Prediction:
101-61

The crack of the bat was different than any other player during the River Rats batting practice. As soon as he stepped into the cage, and connected with that first BP pitch, everyone just stopped and started watching. Etienne LaFitte was cracking line drive, after line drive.

Post Subject:

Gung Ho is 'LaFitte' for the Blazers - 2029

For the love of jeebus, another young superstud for the Blazers? Really? Who keeps letting this happen? At least Etienne LaFitte was drafted by the team, unlike monsters Cisco Guerrero and Jared Gilstrom who they somehow acquired via trade. With speedsters like Juan Fernandez, Anastacio Sanchez, Jorge Rodriguez, and Ken Jenkins getting on base, Montreal's terrifying trio should have no problem driving in runs. Don't expect much dropoff from last year's league second best offense.

At least no one traded them pitching... Crap. Leon Flores hasn't been quite the pitcher he was when he tried to win a Gillstrom and a Nebraska in the same year, but he's definitely front of the rotation material. Veterans Luis Soto and Jorge Stanza will provide tons of reliable innings as well. And the bullpen's good. And they can pick it at every position. So there's no reason they won't repeat that league second runs allowed total as well.

At least they can't add anything more in free agency. To give you an idea how good this team is, and how badly John C is winning all his trades, some pretentious owner in California has six playoff appearances and a Landis since taking over eight and a half seasons ago. LaFitte, Guerrero, or Gilstrom are each easily better than ANY bat that jerk has had in that time. This is a team largely build through timely trades of veterans for huge hauls and excellent contract management, and should be the model for anyone who wants to know how it's done.

JOHNSON LEAGUE SOUTHERN

If you were a fan of a team the new Johnson League Southern that wasn't Las Vegas, Huntsville, or New Orleans, you probably expected to have a long season last year. Well, about the only good news you got is that Crawdads fans got to suffer with you after injuries derailed the 2029 campaign. The bad news is, 2030 probably won't be much different.

Huntsville brings back the same team that had a ridiculous +261 run differential and Vegas, if anything, looks slightly improved. After injuries and age torpedoed the Crawdads' season, it will be interesting to see if they can claw their way back into elite contender status.

The other teams are, well, the other teams. Birmingham has two of the best pitchers to put on a uniform in the Brewster, and not much else. Havana has almost dug itself out of its financial disaster. I don't know about you, but to me that's not a statement that smacks of winning potential. Hawaii's retooling continues, and while the progress looks decent, they aren't ready yet. Phoenix is still playing the expansion team game of creating revenue while trying to acquire and develop young assets.

Ho-hum, nothing to see here. Another year of the Haves duking it out while the Have-Nots have to have patience.



SAN ANTONIO OUTLAWS

General Manager: Mike Calvaruso

2029 Result:
79-83, 4th JL Southern

2030 Prediction:
67-95

"I am honored and blessed to stand here today and accept the Steve Nebraska Award. Even though it is given to a single player, it truly represents a team effort. Without my brothers in arms I would not be up here right now. I really want to thank my beautiful Wife Cindy who has been my rock, I love you babe".

*Post Subject: The Outlaw Chronicles 2030-2
Ramirez Wins #3*

The newly minted San Antonio Outlaws do have Nelson Ramirez, and that's something. Ramirez is the best control pitcher of his era, and when he keeps the HR totals respectable he's arguably the best pitcher in the game today. Following him in the rotation is Juan Jose Ornelas, who if not for his teammate, would have at least a couple Nebraska's of his own. Both of these guys are at the top of their games, just over 30, and likely free agents to be (Ramirez has a 16 mil player option for 2031). What to do with the pair is the biggest question facing the franchise.

Looking at the team as it is currently constructed, Juan Rodriguez gives them a nice number 3 option. After that however, the team looks to be counting on a collection of has beens and never wases to fill out the rotation. The bullpen is essentially Jonathan Bowen and Joost Breakwell, plus some middle relief types and worse. Still, the top end talent here is so good that this will likely be at least a good pitching team. They're thin though, and one big pitching injury could cripple them. In the minors, John Wick and Elliot Buckland are close, but could be overexposed if used too soon.

We can stop now if you like. Poor Mark Stuart looks like he will be miscast as a middle of the order bat, as outside of him the offense doesn't have a single player worth mentioning. Zip. Zilch. Nada. Just a bunch of old fogeys and defense first AAAA types. This group will be last in the Johnson in runs scored. Again. Last year they were in last by 75 runs, and this group is worse.

Still, fans in San Antonio are excited for their new team. "I hear we have some great pitching. And you know, pitching and defense is what wins ballgames," quipped a guy in a cowboy hat. "Well, you have to score SOME runs I guess, but as long as you do better than that team in Birmingham I heard about..." We didn't have the heart to crush his dreams.

2030 will be an interesting year for the Outlaws. There is some good hitting talent in the pipeline for the first time in a long time, and some young pitching. Do they break the bank to extend their exemplary starting duo in hopes they stay elite for a few more years until the rooks are ready? Do they sell their pride and joy to bolster that good up and coming crop? Do they (San Antonio Fans better hope not) trade the near ready youngsters for immediate help?

Barring a "win now" move, which I'll just come out and say would be disastrous for the franchise, the San Antonio Outlaws will be your same old Bandits in 2030, but won't get an absurdly lucky +11 pyth this time around.



HAVANA SUGAR KINGS

General Manager: Daniel Bigeau

2029 Result:

67-95, 7th JL Southern

2030 Prediction:

71-91

A high priority will be to stop the bleeding, and bring this organization back to profitability. How remains to be seen.

Sugar cane diaries - 2029-08-01 : Day One

It seems like all the Sugar Kings have done since their establishment in Cuba is bleed. Hemorrhaging money, hemorrhaging talent, hemorrhaging GM's. You name it, they've lost it. They say all bleeding stops eventually, but when you have the financial resources of a big league franchise, you're looking more at an ocean than a puddle of blood.

The new GM however seems to have things in hand. This team won't be good right away. That's okay. What it needed was to stop the bleeding, and it seems to have done so. With tourniquets in almost all the right places (Iran Brito will mercifully fall off the books after this season), Havana can swim out of its ocean of red and start creating a stream of green. Hopefully down the road that stream becomes a river.

Key to that process will be some guys who might get some cup of coffee time this year, but more likely will make an impact in 2031. Names like Reece Wareham, Manuel Gil, Jose Gamboa, Albert Gaona, and Jeffrey Cunningham could join Dave Wifler in the foreseeable future. Ignacio Rodriguez might finally get some help on the staff from Noonie Soong, Rien van der Heyden, Lawrence Hernandez and Wu-han Lu.

For now though, the treatment will have to be patience. I-Rod, Wifler, Fernando Alaniz, and Miguel Macias will have to keep those arteries tied off for another year. The pitching staff might have under-performed last year, but it's still bottom half. Any amount they improve will probably be balanced out by a regression in an offense that seemed to use a lot of smoke and mirrors last season. They'll duke it out with San Antonio and Phoenix to avoid last place. I'll go out on a limb and say the Sugar Kings get one or two of those young bats developed enough to help and come out ahead.



HAWAII TROPICS

General Manager: Mike Bieschke

2029 Result:
71-91, 6th JL Southern

2030 Prediction:
73-89

With the Hawaii Tropics stumbling through a dismal season, THE WHOLE TEAM is available via trade.

*Post Subject: 2029/5
Sanchez moved to Des Moines*

Thrust into a division that had the previous two Landis contenders and the perpetually strong Las Vegas Hustlers, Tropics GM Mike Bieschke did what any sensible head of a scuffling franchise would do. He sold everything that wasn't nailed down, and he pulled out the nails and sold some more. While some of the returns on his deals won't make an impact this year, Hawaii surprisingly looks a bit more competitive than the team that lost 91 games in 2029.

The lineup still has Joe Wilcox (whose looks to get a much needed move to first), Roberto Miranda and Paul Backstrom. No superstars in this group but above average players. Groucho Carter and Boys Altena are decent enough players in their own right, and this looks to be the year we see Hawaii's top prospect Claudio Moreno. Scouts rave about the 22 year old center fielder's glove.

The pitching staff will have to hope for a rebound year from Jody Nunez, as every other start on the roster looks like a back of the rotation type. The bullpen similarly is high on depth, low on high end talent.

What sets Bieschke's team apart from the other teams expected to be in the bottom of the standings is that Hawaii, while lacking top end talent, can field a team of players who actually belong in the Brewster. They won't compete or even post a winning record in a division with Vegas, Huntsville and New Orleans, but they won't be abysmal. My win projection is a bit lower than I think this team can get as currently constructed, because I think Bieschke sells a bit more.



HUNTSVILLE PHANTOMS

General Manager: Kyle Stever

2029 Result:
100-62, 1st JL Southern

2030 Prediction:
100-62

With 2029 in the books, it's officially time to start looking forward to 2030. And when we do that, we feel a whole lot better! First off, the entirety of the Phantoms roster is coming back except its bench. So, if you were hoping to get a reprieve from our JL best offense AND pitching staff next year I am pleased to say that you are SOL.

Post Subject: 29.4. Oh Well!

I'll be honest. I'm having trouble figuring out what to write about this team. We all know Stever has a team full of lefty OBP machines with 30 HR power at every position. We all know about his deep, talented pitching staff. We've heard his opinions on team construction so many times I really don't feel like repeating him (especially since he seems to be right). So I took a peak at Ron's bit from the last guide, looking for inspiration.

It didn't help. Ron spent the whole segment talking about space camp and conspiracy theories. Thanks, buddy.

Okay. Here goes. Huntsville is good. Very good. They have lots of talented hitters and pitchers. More than just about anyone else. They're going to win a lot of games.



LAS VEGAS HUSTLERS

General Manager: Matt Rectenwald

2029 Result:

94-68, 2nd JL Southern

2030 Prediction:

99-63

At the end of the day, it's about the bottom line and all it offers. "They cut over \$10 million from their salaries next year," said Slizz in amazement. "They did it without killing their chances this year, and they did so while improving their future. You're not supposed to be able to accomplish all three of those things at once.

Post Subject: WHIV 2029.24- 2029 Trade Deadline- Hustlers

Rectenwald's Hustlers won 94 games without reigning Silk holder Fredo Martinez last year. The outfield was a series of moving pieces all year. The bullpen imploded. Did the Hustlers panic?

Of course not. Rectenwald just made trades. Lots of trades. Now the outfield looks to be Salazar, Sweetworld, and eventually Joyride (at least if he figures out that he's supposed to play defense too). That's enough for most of us, but Recte still has Hank Brewer, Gervasio Ridder, and Jack Gulliver on the roster. (The "Doctor" is rumored to be on the block as he's pushing 30 and Recte surely looks to continue his amazing circus of revolving parts).

The pen? Somehow it's now one of the best in the league. Ramos, Staples, Cruz, Hartinger, Henry, Cruz and on and on. They won't even have to work very hard, as the starting rotation features five starters that go deep into games.

If this team has any weakness, it's that the rotation is getting a bit long in the tooth. Out of nowhere phenom Sam Romero is the only player who can't be described as veteran. Is this the year age finally catches up with Gary Estes?

Somehow, you have to pick between this team and Huntsville's. The age of the Hustlers' pitching scares me a bit, so I'll use that as an excuse to give Vegas slightly fewer wins.



NEW ORLEANS CRAWDADS

General Manager: Jim Roberts

2029 Result:
84-78, 3rd JL Southern

2030 Prediction:
87-75

Pitching, Hitting, Bullpen, Starters, Relievers, Infielder, Outfielders...they all struggled in unison this year. Perhaps it was the switch from the Frick League to the Johnson League, but clearly something went wrong in the Big Easy this season. Look for New Orleans to re-tool a bit this off-season.

*Post Subject: Crawdad Chronicles
29.02 - Disappointing Season in Big Easy*

There are a lot of GM that would commit murder (or at least give someone a very severe wedgie) for an 84-78 record right now. Not Jim Roberts. Eighty-four wins may as well be a last place finish for his mighty Crawdads.

Of course, it doesn't help when Pedro Canales gets injured and comes back a shadow of himself, or when you lose Miguel Datiz for most of the season. Eyechart Ramirez remembering how to pitch would go a long way towards righting the ship as well.

Even if those players rebound, the middle of the infield is pretty much a hole at this point for the 'Dads, and the bullpen looks shaky. Fortunately, there may be some help on the way as shortstop Reynaldo Ruiz looks about ready to join the big league club. Other youngsters who could make an impact include first baseman Juan Parra and starter (although he may be used in a relief role until he figures out his command issues) Freddy Delgado.

This is still an above average, powerful offense, with a good starting rotation, so fans in New Orleans can look forward to another winning season and a likely playoff berth.



PHOENIX TALONS

General Manager: Sean Marko

**2029 Result:
75-87, 5th JL Southern**

**2030 Prediction:
66-96**

Finally new GM S. Marko walks out of the Men's restroom, rubbing the remnants of sanitizer into his hands as he steps up the the microphone stand, hastily assembled atop the Denny's waitress' hostess station. "Our job right now is to create buzz in Phoenix and the BBA. To show the league that we are serious about putting a legitimate team on the field and immediately fill the roster with recognizable names, as well as fill the stands with excited fans."

Post Subject: 2029-01 How do you build an Expansion team? Old superstars!

This team would be a good deal better if it was playing in 2025. One year removed from expansion, GM Sean Marko is still relying heavily on some players who I hesitate to call geriatric, but only out of kindness. Many are holdovers from last year's expansion draft, guys like designated hitter Fulton Reed and shortstop Johnny Archer, but Marko doubled down on the decrepitness when he purchased the ghost of Manny Bautista's arm from Louisville for \$1 and brought back Floyd Carter's corpse in free agency.

Poking fun aside, Phoenix seems to be making the best of a tough situation while waiting for the young guys to develop. The veteran stars should help keep fans coming to the stadium. There is talent in this minor league pipeline, even if none of it sees action this year.

Outside of Ssempe and Batkitski, the pitching staff is a bunch of old guys best suited to 3rd or 4th starter and middle relief roles. The offense is relying on Rupert Grant and Luis Baca to be dependable. Yikes. Hard to see Phoenix winning many games this year.

FRICK LEAGUE HEARTLAND

To the dismay of general managers in the Brewster (and perhaps right minded people everywhere) that aren't psychotic despots with delusions of grandeur, 2029 saw the return of the Louisville Sluggers to prominence. A year and a realignment removed from winning one of the worst divisions in Brewster history with a 78-84 record, the Sluggers collection of drug addicts, mercenaries, and boot-lickers won 102 games en route to a loss in the league finals. Louisville rode a core of young exciting players peppered with elite veterans for a dominant run that should continue in 2030.

The Sluggers ball-club wasn't the only franchise to establish itself as a legitimate title contender for the next few seasons. Ron Collins' Yellow Springs Nine have their own core of young superstar batters and a 1-2-3 punch in their rotation that few can match. The first half of the coming decade may well be the story of these two team's contention for division supremacy.

Two resurgent franchises is enough for one division, but the Des Moines Kernels look to crash the party in 2030. Edward Murphy's club may have had the most futile stretch in Brewster history, but after more than a decade finally looks ready to contend.

The Omaha Barnstormers continue to do more with less, and 2030 should be no different. A few years removed from their tear-down, some of the prospects they acquired are starting to make their mark in the Brewster. The Madison Wolves, after years of futility, have some talented young bats and hope to join the Barnstormers as an organization on the way back up.

At the bottom of the division you have two 110 loss teams. However, the Indianapolis Grasshoppers and Twin Cities River Monsters couldn't be much different. Twin Cities has a core of young players, mostly batters that is about ready to make an impact. Poor Indy frankly has no hope in sight.

We just missed having two 100 win teams and two 110 loss teams in the Heartland by one Yellow Springs loss last year, if that tells you the gap in talent between the good and bad teams in the Frick. Expect things to tighten up a bit in 2030, but don't expect a huge change in the order of finish.



DES MOINES KERNELS

General Manager: Edward Murphy

2029 Result:

81-81 4th FL Heartland

2030 Prediction:

85-77

"I have enjoyed my playing time in Des Moines, the fans are great, my team mates are awesome and everyone in the front office staff have be amazing. I feel the Kernels are on the door step of turning the team around, and I would not be surprised if they are in the wild card hunt this season." - Connor Tyldsly, after being taken in the expansion draft by Charm City

Post Subject: TN 2029-01

Hold the phone!? Des Moines was 81-81?!?! .500??????? Is this a new dawn for the Kernels? Last time Des Moines was at or above .500 was waaaaaaaaaaaaay back in 2014. They have endured five 100 loss seasons and seven 90 less seasons in that time. Even more astonishingly, by pyth, Des Moines "should" have won 87 games last year, which would have just missed the playoffs. Someone get Connor Tyldsly's lotto numbers!

There's a lot to like about these new Kernels. The offense is lead by two legitimate superstars in catcher Cisco Arreola and first baseman William Moreland. Both are in the discussion for best in the league at their positions. Lew Driscoll has a bat at second, although he's a mediocre defender. That's probably okay because 2030 will see the debut of shortstop William S. Hardy, who has a terrific glove at short (along with a decent enough bat for the position). Rafael Alicea is a nice complementary hitter. The outfield is solid defensively and while not spectacular offensively shouldn't embarrass themselves. I can't believe this. I know the names of FIVE players in the Kernels offense off the top of my head!!!

The pitching staff is also the best this team has seen in decades. Tavio Ciccolella has shown he's a nice veteran junkballer type. Mike Davis, after lumping frighteningly has developed into a nice starter. Veteran Chris Lee is still alive and kicking. Ramon Hernandez (whose nickname "Pizza" is beyond superlative) might get some starting time this season after demonstrating he can hack it in the 'pen last year. Lefty Antonio Gonzales is a nice back of the rotation option. This team even has relievers!!!!

Color me crazy, but I think these are not your parent's Des Moines Kernels. This is a talented team with a mix of young stars and vets. I'm excited to see what they can do in 2030. I mean this in the most congratulatory way possible, but it's about damn time Ed! Go Kernels!!



INDY GRASSHOPPERS

General Manager: Nigel Laverick

2029 Result:
49-113, 7th JL Heartland

2030 Prediction:
49-113

Nineteen games into the reign of the new GM nothing much appears to have changed, at least at MBBA level. Of those 19 games just five have produced wins for the Grasshoppers, three of which were against expansion sides. It appears to be a real battle between the Indy Grasshoppers and the expansion Twin City River Monsters for the title of worst of the worst in the MBA.

Post Subject: Grasshopper, You have much to learn (2029-2)

Paul Scholes, Jesus Alvarado, Jesus Martinez, Patrick Lue, Jose Perez, Joe Clements, Luis Velasquez, and Jeffery Waller. If you said, "Hey, that's the exhaustive list of players on Indy's roster that belong in a starting role in the Brewster," give yourself a congratulatory pat on the back. Then go give Nigel Laverick a pat on the back. Maybe a hug, too. And maybe point him towards a good therapist.

It's going to be a bad year in Indianapolis. Maybe even worse than last year. Last year. You know, when they lost 113 games. It won't get better any time soon. Clements is the best and only high level prospect in the organization even close to being developed. It didn't help that two (or is it three?) GM's ago they lost most of their top end minor league talent in the rule 5 draft due to GM neglect.

Ugh. This team had a -300!!!! run differential last year. It could be worse this year. Poor Nigel. Poor Indy. Poor Grasshoppers fans.



LOUISVILLE SLUGGERS

General Manager: Stu Hopkins

2029 Result:
102-60, 1st JL Heartland

2030 Prediction:
95-67

"I apologize for neglecting you guys last season," grimaced the Genius as he gestured at the drunken press horde, "We were just so awesome, that I figured I'd let the team do my talking for me by their excellence on the field. We performed almost as expected. The best team in the world, over 162 games. That's all me. That's roster management. That's immaculate planning. That's Genius."

Post Subject: 2030.1 Slugging our Weight...well, that sucked

Genius Hopkins storms into his office. The door crashes into the wall. "Bring me the corpse of Charles Puckett!" he roars at "assistant GM" Devin "Fungo" Clark.

"Whaaa??" stammers Clark, spitting cheap whiskey all over his shirt. "Umm, boss?? I think Cricket is still alive."

"Huh? Well, fine then. Kill him. Then bring me his corpse. Maybe roll him around in the mud or let him float in the river for a day or two so he seems more . . . mushy."

Clark sits there looking more dumbstruck than usual.

"Do I have to explain everything?!?" demands the Genius, dragging Clark out his chair by the front of his stained shirt. "I'm going to mail him to that jackass Collins piece by piece. Upstart thinks he compete with my mighty Sluggers! I'll teach him to win games in MY division. I exiled the last idiot who tried to the other league! What was his name? Alers? Ellen something?"

Clark flounders, "..b-but, killing Puckett, boss? For Yellow Springs? I ... I don't understand..."

Genius drops Clark to the floor, "I don't pay you to understand, jackass. I'm the genius here. Imagine the horror as they receive a new body part every day for a month. It'll ruin their clubhouse ... and maybe it'll cause disease or something."

Leaning in close to Clark, he grins evilly, "Besides, it'll piss off Wilson."

Oh, right. A preview. Well, Louisville brings back pretty much the same team that won 102 games last year. Out is Manny Bautista, but there is young pitching in this organization to take his place. First up will be Ace Colbert, Jr. Another youngster who could see time this year is first baseman Fernando Cruz.

The offense has star caliber talent at every position, and the pitching staff is deep and talented. In a division with two teams looking like they could lose 100 games again, Louisville looks like the clear front runner.



MADISON WOLVES

General Manager: Chris Wilson

2029 Result:
66-96, 5th JL Heartland

2030 Prediction:
72-90

The end of the Salazar era in Madison has arrived. 89 million dollars for a 1 year extension. Puh-leeze.

Post Subject: That's What Cheesehead - 29.24 - Failed Experiment Over

Is this the year Madison finally turns things around? The offense looks solid. A whole year of John Mick and the arrival of uber-prospect Luis Barrera could jump start a lineup that frankly seemed to underachieve last year. A lineup with Dusty Rhodes, Don Draper, Manuel Garcia, Manuel Freyta, and Steve Dempsy should have been better last year. Perhaps they are a bit right-handed batter heavy, but these righties have real talent.

The starting rotation is still Marcos Villegas and a bunch of 4th and 5th starters. The pen on the other hand is quite good, anchored by Cesar Martinez, Emilio Sanchez, and the Vargases Ruben and Manny. The difficulty for the Wolves will be getting to these guys with a lead. The defense is only average, so they aren't going to rob many batters.

If Madison's offense can take a step forward and get into the 700 runs scored range, the Wolves could finally get things headed in the right direction. They'll have to do that without the great Alfredo Salazar, but I'm betting Mick, Barerra, and rebound years from some of their mainstays more than picks up the slack.



OMAHA BARNSTORMERS

General Manager: Fred Holmes

**2029 Result:
87-75, 3rd JL Heartland**

**2030 Prediction:
83-79**

GM Holmes: "All we're worried about is being in the Landis discussion next season. If we play well, the accolades will follow."

Post Subject: 2029.3: Omaha Shut Out of Postseason Awards

Fred Holmes knows something I don't. Actually, a lot of people know things I don't. Like married people, or people that are happy with their jobs, or own a house, or know how to get their act together. Some people know things about dogs, or how to get pretty girls to like you. I do know that in some strange way those last two things are related. I just can't figure out how. Some people know things about pop music. I don't. I'm actually kind of proud of that one.

What Fred Holmes seems to know is how to get the most out of the least talent. I have no clue how his Barnstormers teams have been winning recently. Interesting tidbit, Holmes has eschewed all prominent thought from recent years about taking and not giving up the free pass. Omaha walked 723 batters last year. TWO HUNDRED more than the next worst team and more than twice as many as the next. They also were dead last in taking the free pass. Somehow, despite this, they won 87 games, and beat their pyth by 8 games.

I don't know what Fred Holmes knows. I do know not to discount him and his Barnstormers. This year the offense looks very Barnstormery again. Slap it and run guys Velentin Colon, Armando Castaneda, and Roomba Castellanos will again play a big role. Juan Pablo might finally start to show his age, but still looks like a potent bat in this lineup. Speaking of age, Bruce Wayne is still playing. Neat, huh? The difference this year may be the development of Jose Estrada, the first middle of the order thumper type Omaha has had in a few years.

The staff once again is lead by Mr. Consistency Enrique Gomez. Then there are a bunch of guys who can't hit the broad side of a barn. Almost all of those guys have ridiculous strikeout capability, so....? Maxence Mace looks ready for the big time, and may represent a return to more traditional pitching values. The bullpen looks solid, and in typical Holmsian fashion, this team posts plus defenders at nearly every position.

I don't know what to make of this team. I'm sure Fred Holmes does.



TWIN CITIES RIVER MONSTERS

General Manager: Jeff Palin

2029 Result:
50-112, 6th JL Heartland

2030 Prediction:
63-99

When asked for a response, Mr. Palin chuckled and replied, "My job is to build a team here in the Twin Cities that can at some point challenge for championships. I can't make uneducated fans understand what needs to be done or understand how this deal was really good for us..." With that Dug Riddler came up and escorted Palin away. Palin was cackling like a hen as Riddler pushed him away from the microphone.

Post Subject: Expansion; 2029, V4

The good news for fans of the new River Monsters franchise is that year one is in the books. The bad news is that this year's edition may not be much better. On the free agent front, the team swapped Kirk Burkett for Chad Lawrence. Both are a year older, and probably a bit worse this season. The change is likely a wash.

What this means is that any improvement will have to come from within the organization. The batting prospects are there, but will they get to play? A pretty much ready to go Chris Limon sat at AAA all season last

year, posting an OPS+ of 156. Is GM Jeff Palin one of those GM's who doesn't play prospects until they have eked out every last bit of development, or one who will stash big league ready guys away as long as possible to save on future salary? OR was last year a one time phenomenon as the other guys weren't ready.

We'll likely get an answer this year, as this club has EIGHT hitting prospects who are either ready for big league play or close. Most exciting on the list may be shortstop Mark Wareham, whose glove is already one of the best in recent memory. His bat needs a little work, but he could play now as a defense first option. Chris Limon got a cup of coffee and looks to stay this year. Ray Cooper is ready to mash in left field. Jayden Harsnet has some power projection left, but at 23 has little to prove in the minors. Speedy contact hitter Xue-qin Man has a Zimmer caliber glove at second, and plays a solid center. We haven't even mentioned Dennis Giguere, Jack Bates, or Jose Romero.

Unfortunately, the pitching side of the equation doesn't hold as much promise for the River Monsters. That's not to say there is no talent, but a serious lack of blue chips exists. Carlino Omoboni could be better in his second year. Jesse Stewart MIGHT figure out how to overcome his stuck changeup. Jesse Howard is still a year away. Aaron Campbell may eventually be an elite reliever, but the rest of the staff looks like warty prospects and retreads.

The success of this team depends almost entirely on the attitude the front office takes. Plain old developmental luck will play a role as well, but with ready or near-ready players at nearly every offensive position, the decision management makes about playing time will be key.

For predictive purposes, let's say most of the youngsters start the league in the minors, and get a little over half a seasons' worth of PT in the end. That gives the Twin Cities probably about a 100 run improvement on offense, and maybe a small improvement in runs allowed. If they don't play the kids, they'll lose 100 games again easily.



YELLOW SPRINGS NINE

General Manager: Ron Collins

2029 Result:
87-75, 2nd JL Heartland

2030 Prediction:
94-68

"Jose Chavez is the real deal," one scout said. "He's just getting started, too. That change came in last year like it was something out of San Francisco. I mean, the guy is just going to be amazing."

Post Subject: 9-Notes: 29.019 - Chavez Signs

Jose Chavez sure liked his contract extension last year. Nice little award he won. I once won an award. When I was in the first grade, my father decided I lacked discipline, and enrolled me in Tae Kwon Do. Several years later, after many, many hours of practice and testing, I had my best tournament finish, third place in one on one sparring. I might have finished second, but the guy who won that award kicked me in the head so hard my glasses flew off and broke. Pretty much the end of that match. All that stuff about trusting your inner senses you

see in martial arts movies when the hero gets loses his sight either via a blindfold or dirt in the eyes or whatever? Bupkis. Hooey. Malarkey. Just plain old not true.

What is true is that Ron Collins has build a nice little team in sleepy Yellow Springs, Ohio. Did you know that Yellow Springs is "Everyone's Favorite Place?" according to their city webpage? You can explore the town's more than 75 shops, galleries, restaurants, and pubs. SEVENTY-FIVE businesses in the whole town. Boy-golly that's a lot. I don't even know what a busker is. According to the calendar of events, you can find out "Will it Waffle?" on February 23nd. Wow! That's tomorrow!!! Wait, I mean that's like thirteen years ago. I'm a bit sad then that I missed "Origami Yoda Club: The Surprise Attack of Jabba the Puppet".

But I digress, back to the Nine. Yellow Springs is a village in Greene County, Ohio, United States. The population was 3,487 at the 2010 census. It is part of the Dayton Metropolitan Statistical Area. It is home of Antioch College and Antioch University Midwest. In 1825, the village was founded by William Mills and approximately 100 families, followers of Robert Owen, who wanted to emulate the utopian community at New Harmony, Indiana. The communitarian efforts dissolved due to internal conflicts. The Little Miami Railroad was completed in 1846 and brought increased commerce, inhabitants, and tourism. The village was incorporated in 1856. Yellow Springs is located at 39°48'6 N 83°53'34 W (39.801723, -83.892662). According to the United States Census Bureau, the village has a total area of 2.02 square miles (5.23 km²), all of it land. The village takes its name from a natural spring located in the nearby Glen Helen Nature Preserve which is rich in iron ore, leaving a yellowish-orange coloring on the rocks.

FRICK LEAGUE PACIFIC

The Frick Pacific may not host the best teams in the league, but it IS the most competitive. Five teams at various points late in last season looked to have good shots to make the playoffs. The Surfers survived the chaos to win a Landis in their first year back in the LBC. Calgary and Seattle proved they could make their brands of baseball work in a division that suddenly was awash with pitching parks. California and Vancouver had to adjust to playing in parks where home runs actually occurred, and did so admirably. Valencia rejoined the ranks of the living, and Edmonton was ... well ... an expansion team.

There's no reason to think the division won't be as confusing at the top as last year. Long Beach gets the nod as defending champs, but Calgary looks just as good on paper. Seattle brings back essentially its entire team. Heck, let's just say everyone looks similar, plus a free agent signing or rookie or two.

This division could legitimately have six out of seven teams over .500. Last year, the race was so close that none of the contenders dropped out. Will 2030 be the same, or will one of these franchises fall into a first half hole and become sellers? The projections in this league are the ones I'm least sure about, and I actually had to spend half an hour subtracting projected wins from the Frick to get the math to work. It was either that or write Edmonton, Indy and the Twin Cities combine for 340 losses. That seems unrealistic, right?



CALGARY PIONEERS

General Manager: Kevin Dickson

2029 Result:
90-72, 4th FL Pacific

2030 Prediction:
94-68

One of the toughest things to do in the BBA is to keep a steady flow of young arms in your system without doing a complete tear down.

*Post Subject: Trail Droppings
2029-4 Calgary's Young Arms*

A new division meant Calgary Pioneers' GM Kevin Dickson had to embrace a new philosophy. Gone were the days of hitter's paradises every day. Enter a division with two of the greatest homer stealing ballparks in league history. It appears the Pioneers were prepared to play where quality starting pitching mattered, as they had young Christobal Hernadez ready for a breakout season. This year nepotastic former first round Jack Dickson looks to crash the party. The two youngsters are backed up by multiple savvy veterans. The pen is strong and deep as well, and should be able to weather the loss of closer Jason Morris for half the year.

The lineup looks even better than the group that scored 793 runs last year. Sparky Anderson is ready to go. He saw 4.44 pitches per plate appearance last year in AAA. For comparison, notable starter-wearer-downer Mike Love saw around 4.25 pitchers per appearance at his peak. Rumor has it Anderson decided over the winter that he hadn't been selective enough. Returning are table setters Mario Soriano and Dan Leonard, both still appearing to be at the top of their games. The other Mario, Mario Balderas proved his breakout 2028 wasn't a fluke and will anchor the lineup. Hector Cano still has something left in the tank, and should make a run at 600 home runs this year.

This is a talented team. The batters can get on base, hit for power, run, and field. The pitching staff is deep and can weather the inevitable injuries. It's easy to pick the defending Landis winning Long Beach Surfers as the division champs for 2030, but don't sleep on Calgary.



CALIFORNIA CRUSADERS

General Manager: Theodor August Schmidt, Esquire, M.D., Jackass

**2029 Result:
94-70, 3rd FL Pacific**

**2030 Prediction:
94-68**

I'm never criticizing the analysis of anyone who does multiple division or a league preview ever again. It's impossible to get every little thing. Sorry, Aaron.

Post Subject: This one. Right here.

We'll be sad here in California when Ricardo Diaz is gone. For now though, he still heads one of the handful of starting rotations in the debate for "best in the league". Lefty Luis Gracia came into his own last year and was joined mid-season by Cisco Morales. Gerardo Castillo remains a very good number four option. The fifth spot is up for grabs, and will need some addressing.

The best pen in the Brewster from a year ago is back, largely intact, with one monumental exception. Skip Glendenning, the best closer in the game over the last decade, was shipped to Jacksonville for peanuts, as the team cut salary. Emerson Mills isn't nearly as good, but should get promoted at some point and help pick up the slack.

The Crusaders offense that scored 725 runs last year is the best we've put together here in our right season tenure, and the 2030 addition looks better. Esteban Contreras was signed to plug an absolute hole at first base. John Galt slides to third, while exciting rookie Claudio Defazio takes over at short. The shift should improve both the offense and the defense. Left fielder Dave Brunskill struggled in spring, but will be promoted at some point and may be the best bat on the team. The real question is whether the changes will be net neutral as Chris Workman and Galt seem to have declined a bit. The team also needs to find some right handed bench bats, or this group will struggle mightily against left handed pitching.



EDMONTON JACKRABBITS

General Manager: Rhys Allen

**2029 Result:
65-97, 7th FL Pacific**

**2030 Prediction:
63-99**

Effective October 5th, 2029, Rhys Allen is now the manager of the Edmonton Jackrabbits. With new blood, will come new results. The only question is whether they will be positive or not.

Post Subject: 29.01 New blood = new results?

Edmonton isn't likely to win enough games to even get withing spitting distance of .500 in 2030. But you know what? That's alright. The top of their division is very congested right now. Being in a building mode while the five or six other teams in your division beat each-other senseless isn't the worst place to be. They made some nice moves in free agency and should be improved over last years near 100 loss club.

Rein Vis, Mario Murillo, and Pedro Burgos aren't the greatest hitters, but they are veteran bats who are upgrades over last years players. On the youngster side, designated hitter Jimmy Strambi should be a little better, and rookie first baseman Les Dedman seems decent enough. This team should break the 600 runs scored barrier this year. The infield lacks range up the middle, and the outfield corners could be a bit ugly on D, but we'll see.

On the pitching side of things, there's much less cause for optimism. Last year's standout, Stuart Pearce, is a year older, and otherwise this is much the same group that allowed 769 runs last year. Prospect Taisuke Suzuki could help, but he doesn't look ready, and neither does anyone else in the minors.



LONG BEACH SURFERS

General Manager: Stephen Lane

2029 Result:
95-68, 1st FL Pacific

2030 Prediction:
96-66

The Management of the Tucson Cactus, along with the Office of the Commissioner announce that the franchise has been relocated to Long Beach, California and renamed the Surfers with immediate effect.

Post Subject: 2029.02 - Announcing the Long Beach Surfers

Pretty nice way to return to you old stomping grounds, eh Long Beach? The defending Landis champs are a team brimming with young talent, and look to be good for a long, long time. It seems like they have young all star caliber players at every position. The corner outfield spots are any GM's dream. Carlos Gonzales and Kade Cummins will anchor the lineup for years to come. Franciso Flores in center isn't sliced bread either. (Does anyone have any idea where this saying comes from?) A scary wrinkle is that Tom Kazansky will join this group in a few years. If that wasn't enough young hitting talent, GM Stephen Lane acquired first

prospect Mark Simpson in the offseason, effectively ending the revolving door at first base. We haven't even gotten to complementary players like third sacker Raymond Aguilera, who is one of the best at his position in the league, or catcher Ippolito Basaglia.

The pitching staff of this champion returns pretty much intact. Esteban Gil and Jose Lozano are a nice 1-2. It would sure be nice if Jimmy Greenwood could develop his change, but he's been able to spot it effectively thus far in his career. The last two spots get a little shaky, but it's tough to be perfect. The pen is solid as well, and should be bolstered further by the free agent acquisition of closer Flint Colbert.

Long Beach Surfers fans have every reason to be optimistic about another shot at the Landis. The one weakness this team has is a thin-ish starting rotation (only when compared to other elite teams). An injury or ineffectiveness to one of the top three could demote the Surfers from division favorite to just another team in the deep pack vying for the playoffs in the Frick.



SEATTLE STORM

General Manager: Stephen Lane

**2029 Result:
94-69, 2nd FL Pacific**

**2030 Prediction:
86-76**

Seattle Storm General Manager Nathan Eagan is not traditionally known for his in-season trades. This season, however, with his Storm sitting in first place, and with a few clear areas of weakness, he decided to do something a little different.

Post Subject: Chasing The Storm 2029-7 Time to Make Some Trades

That post from Nathan Egan sums up the Storm's success in 2029. Well, that and Moustache Escobar's continued one man offense act. In 2029, Escobar set career marks for runs scored, hits, HR, and RBI. This for a guy who had already won two Sawyer Silk awards as the league's best hitter. As that rarest of lefty mashers who doesn't struggle against his fellow southpaws, Escobar is in a league of his own. More or less the rest of Seattle's potent offense is back. They're a year older, but seem to be hanging on well.

Some of the pitching Seattle acquire down the stretch last year is still around, and this bodes well for the team. In reality though, the season will hinge on Alfredo Contreras and Roberto Ramos reproducing their outstanding 2029 campaigns. There's not much help in the minors that looks ready to contribute quite yet, but a couple guys are close.

Eagan's teams always seem a little better than I expect. This is likely because I value pitching so much more than hitting, but I do think Seattle got a few lucky wins last year. Still, this is a competitive team that could easily get the bounces needed to take the division.



VALENCIA STARS

General Manager: Lee Honigsfeld

2029 Result:

80-82, 6th FL Pacific

2030 Prediction:

74-88

The Stars came so close to hitting their goal last season with 80 wins and the goal was 81 wins. In 2028 the Stars only had 60 wins so this season the Stars improved 20 wins this season.

Post Subject: Valencia Stars: 80-82 (.494) #8

A 20 win improvement over the previous season is pretty darn impressive. Even more impressive is that ol' Pythagorus thought the Stars should have a 25 win improvement. The thing is, I don't know how Valencia did it.

The offense has some nice pieces in shortstop Harlan Moore and Tubby Soto. Cody Smith is a solid bat against right handed pitching. Francisco Liriano has a bit left in the tank it seems. After that this team is a smorgasbord of defense first platoon guys and retreads. How on earth did they get 730 runs out of this group?

Looney Flores seems like the real deal at the top of the rotation. At one point it looked like he would struggle giving up the long ball, but he seems to have worked that out. Carlos Cortez had a bounce back year. It's simply remarkable how this staff has so many players that be homer prone. Their 194 home runs allowed was the third highest total in the Frick last year. They seem to have compensated by posting a respectable strikeout total and giving up the second lowest number of free passes (368).

Does Valencia continue their climb back to contention? I don't see how. This is usually the point where another big prospect or two makes an impact, and Valencia doesn't have them. At least, not ready ones. I'm looking at you Frank Mahaffey. Get your shit together. Lee needs you!



VANCOUVER MOUNTIES

General Manager: Lee Honigsfeld

2029 Result:
84-78, 5th FL Pacific

2030 Prediction:
87-75

Valencia, Yellow Springs and Madison. Well the way this season has gone so far it wouldn't surprise me one bit to go apeshit and put up a 8-2/9-1 type sim only to fall flat as the year closes out. OOTP you are a cruel mistress.

Post Subject: 2029 #15 Sim 15

A cruel mistress indeed. After winning their division the past two seasons, Vancouver made some big moves and loaded up for what should have been a competitive race. Instead, they seemed to be stuck in neutral. It's hard to find a particular injury or individual to blame. The whole just seemed to be less than the sum of the parts.

The staff is still pretty darned good. Most of the arms that allowed for a league leading 583 runs allowed are back. GM Brett Schoeder has played to the strength of his park, loading up on guys who have somewhat straight, but otherwise good stuff. The pen is full of similar types. Alfredo Granados and Harry Considine do seem to have regressed a bit, and their performances could make or break the Mounties.

Elroy Hinson, Pierre Cordona, Mark Sturdivant and co are back on offense, and are joined this year by rookie center fielder Aloysius Gonzaga and free agent signing third baseman Diego Moreno. Dani Lopez looks to reprise his role as an underappreciated power bat. A few other minor moves will allow the Mounties to shift the few bad defenders they had last year into friendlier roles.

If Vancouver can post similar or slightly worse pitching numbers and get a little bit of an offensive boost, things might go much better. The team also has some positional redundancy which may allow Brett to trade from improvement. This team could really use a front like starter. Does Luis Miguel Carrillo plus one of their top three starters plus maybe another prospect or two buy them that? I'm sure Schroeder is already evaluating his options.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2030

One inductee this year, congratulations to Jeff Kiplinger!

Kiplinger pitched 3,638 innings in his career, amassing 217 wins, 3,298 strikeouts (against just 681 walks!) a 3.45 ERA with a 1.16 WHIP. All told, it comes out to a career ERA+ of 128.

The final voting results appear below.

2030 HOF Voting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Jeff Kiplinger	7	3	5	4	1	2	1		2							648
Amen Mitrani	3	8	2	1	4	2		2	1	1	1					573
Voo Fowler	5	3	4	4		1				2	1	3	1		1	540
Milt Linares, Jr.	2		2	2	3	1	5	5	1		2	1		1		391
Terry Cochran	2	2	4	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	4		3	3	388
Paul Hogan	4	1		2	1	1	1		2		1	2	4	5	1	386
Kevin Haubert	1	1	1		6	6	5	1	1	1			1		1	380
Lorenzo Diaz		2	4	4	2	2	1	3	1	1		2	1	2		379
Jimmy McCabe	1	2			1	2	1		1	6	5	2	1	2	1	315
Matt Ryan				4	5	3	4	2	1	1	1	2	2			317
Carlos Altavista		2	2	1	1		1		3		2	1	5	2	5	281
Kevin Minuso				1	1	2	1	6	4	1	2	3	1	2	1	264
Joey Rosko				1		2	1	2	5	3	5	2	2	2		253
Pedro Espin		1	1				1	2	2	3	1	2	4	2	6	237
Eric Thorne							2	1		5	3	1	3	4	6	198
	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	575