

# BREWSTER BASEBALL

# ASSOCIATION

**MEDIA GUIDE**

**2023**

**ROCKVILLE TAKES CARE OF BUSINESS**

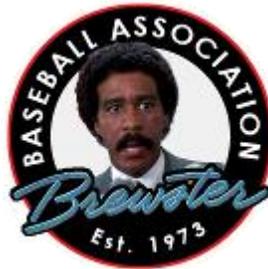
**2036 IN REVIEW - 2037 PREVIEWS**

**DRAFT RECAP (5 YEARS BACK) - TRUE HISTORY**

**THE BBA HALL OF FAME**

# BREWSTER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

*WE VOTE NONE OF THE ABOVE*



## LEADERSHIP

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**Application:**

<http://montybrewster.net/application-2/>

**Constitution:**

<http://montybrewster.net/forums/viewtopic.php?f=19&t=25938>

*So Paul (or was it John?) wondered if she'd still need me, if she'd still feed me, when he was sixty four. I guess now we know. That's right baby, the BBA is going on sixty-four seasons and looks to be good for sixty-four more. I mean, we got the annual Free Agent Podcasts. We got the Dorks Being Dorks, and even the GM's corner. We got the sweet, sweet participation points that Mikki Manning can sing her sould out over, as well as all 64 years of that history Unified in one hella spot. There's Offie and Maddie and the cyclone of death. The Muckraker and the Genius only look like they're sleeping. We got the Outlaws throwing trash along like another Brinks' coach is coming along any minute now and the Kernels looking like they're about ready to be harvesting something soon. Phoenix is drunk posting, and Randy, well, you can't really tell the difference now, can you? Here's to the crew, though. It's been such a wild-assed ride the Rockville's crown seems almost just normal now, doesn't it?*

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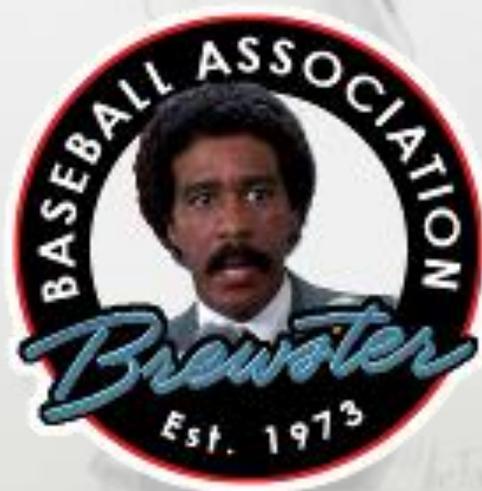
## Features\*

The 20/20 Hindsight 5-Year Draft Review – Scott Piccoli

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And, Finally, More People Who Have Not Advertised With Us



# FINAL 2036 STANDINGS

JOHNSON LEAGUE						FRICK LEAGUE					
<b>Johnson League Atlantic Division</b>						<b>Frick League Heartland Division</b>					
Team	W	L	W%	GB	RD	Team	W	L	W%	GB	RD
 Rockville	95	67	0.586	-	175	 Yellow Springs	101	61	0.624	-	186
 Montreal	94	68	0.580	1	78	 Omaha	98	64	0.605	3	153
 Atlantic City	90	72	0.556	5	54	 Twin Cities	85	78	0.522	16.5	74
 Brooklyn	80	82	0.494	15	-15	 Des Moines	79	83	0.488	22	-47
 Charm City	56	106	0.346	39	-233	 Madison	69	93	0.426	32	-128
<b>Johnson League Southeast Division</b>						<b>Frick League Pacific Division</b>					
Team	W	L	W%	GB	RD	Team	W	L	W%	GB	RD
 Jacksonville	99	63	0.611	-	286	 California	106	56	0.654	-	304
 Huntsville	88	74	0.543	11	44	 San Fernando	96	66	0.593	10	89
 Nashville	80	82	0.494	19	-33	 Long Beach	86	77	0.528	20.5	19
 New Orleans	77	85	0.475	22	-50	 Valencia	69	93	0.426	37	-184
 Louisville	63	99	0.389	36	-151	 Hawaii	60	102	0.370	46	-210
<b>Johnson League Sun Belt Division</b>						<b>Frick League Frontier Division</b>					
Team	W	L	W%	GB	RD	Team	W	L	W%	GB	RD
 Mexico City	95	67	0.586	-	104	 Seattle	96	66	0.593	-	207
 Las Vegas	89	73	0.549	6	136	 Boise	71	91	0.438	25	-179
 Phoenix	75	87	0.463	20	-42	 Calgary	68	94	0.420	28	-83
 Wichita	75	87	0.463	20	-106	 Edmonton	64	98	0.395	32	-134
 San Antonio	64	98	0.395	31	-149	 Vancouver	63	99	0.389	33	-165
<b>Geoghegan Round</b>											
Atlantic City 3 – Montreal 1 Las Vegas 3 – Mexico City 0						San Fernando 3 – Omaha 1 Long Beach 3 – Seattle 2					
<b>Doubleday Round</b>											
Atlantic City 4 – Jacksonville 2 Rockville 4 – Las Vegas 3						San Fernando 4 – California 3 Long Beach 4 – Yellow Springs 2					
<b>Cartwright Cup</b>											
Rockville 4 – Atlantic City 2						San Fernando 4 – Long Beach 3					
<b>Landis Memorial Series</b>											
Rockville 4 – San Fernando 1											



# ROCKVILLE TAKES CARE OF BUSINESS

The last time the Rockville Pikemen won the Landis Memorial Series ... well ... they weren't in Rockville. It was 2020, and Frank Thomas III was just a 25-year-old pup on his way to dropping a 7.7 WAR season and corralling his third Silk award. Billy Chappel, Jr. was dealing and wheeling on the mound to the tune of 19 wins and a Nebraska.

But that was then, and this is now. And now the Rockville Pikemen were on year three of a three-year mission. They'd made the palyoffs in 34, got to the Landis series in 35. 2036 was the season. You could feel it building.

Except, there was this problem in Montreal. You know? Against most odds the Blazers led the Atlantic until the bitter end, when Rockville's might managed to edge them. So instead of entering the playoffs on a tower of dominance, there were questions. Were the Pikemen for real? Were the young bats going to crumble in the pressure? Were the three aces enough?

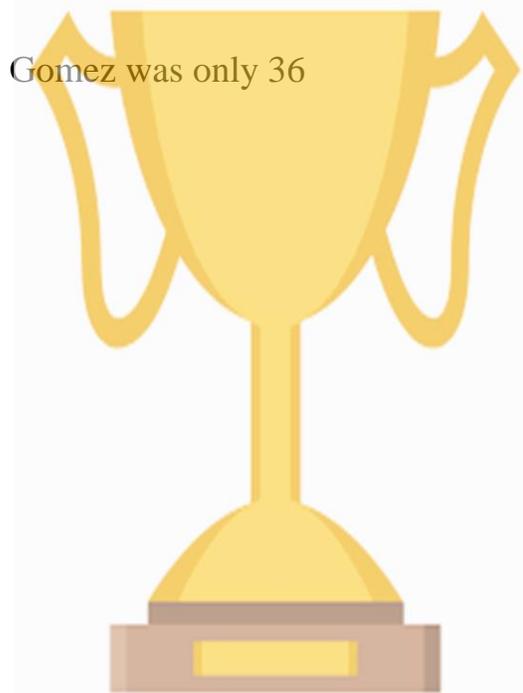
Like a true champ, though, GM Aaron Weiner's team cut through the BBA like a tractor at harvest time, getting stronger every series. They took Las Vegas in a tense 7-gamer, then Atlatnic City in six before obliterating San Fernando in just five.

When it was over, the team was standing on the top of the pile, celbrating with each other, fans cheering. The club had its stars in the form of a guy named Puckett (why does that name sound familiar, eh?), a catcher named Flores, and a clubbing slugger named Guerrer. And it's arms were solid as they come.

The fans, of course, were already looking forward. Enrique Gomez was only 36 and still going strong, and the rest were all still kids.

2037, they thought...

Great year for a repeat.



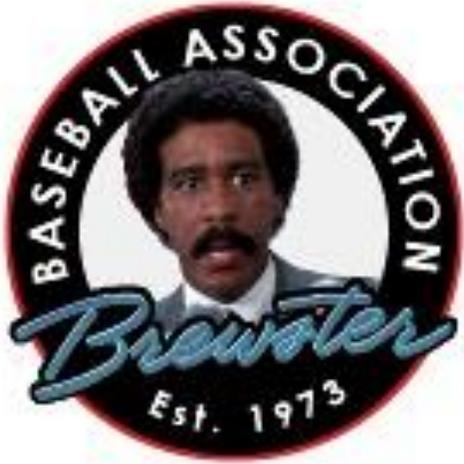
**WELCOME TO THE**

# Projection Room



*It's okay to admit it. The Projection Room is the first thing you page to when the Media Guide falls onto your doorstep. We all do it. So, you know what's coming next. Third time's a freaking charm, and this is the third year in a row that we get the joy of seeing what California GM **Ted Schmidt** and Rockville GM **Aaron Weiner** Tell us what's happening in the BBA stars.*

*Sometimes they're right, sometimes they're wrong, but they're always a helluva lot of fun to read, or, as it was noted by Brooklyn GM Alan Ehlers last year: "The media guide is fun to read when it comes out and even more fun to read after the season."*



# BBA 2037

## The Big Picture

### NOTES FROM TED (About the Johnson League)

The Johnson League is strong this year. Probably nine of the fifteen teams made notable strides to improve themselves. Only a couple are definitively worse. Last year, the Johnson league was plus ten wins over the Frick. I expect it to be higher this year.

When looking at the win totals, take into account that I only have 1215 (81\*15) to divvy up. If the Johnson is as good as I expect, you all might add a couple wins to your totals. Furthermore, many of you have made moves that you feel will make you either contenders when you weren't or stronger than last year. You did.

Again, I think the overwhelming majority of the teams in the Johnson improved. (I do not have that feeling for the Frick.) I feel like I'm slighting a handful of your efforts, and I apologize. The Sun Belt in particular is just nuts at the top.

Good luck guys, and happy Brewstering.

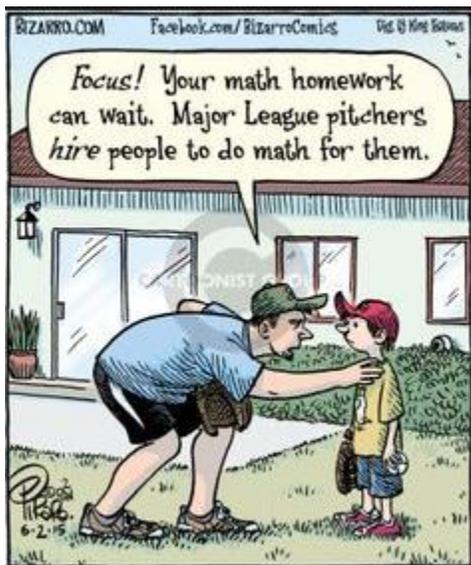
### NOTES FROM AARON (Preamble To It All)

It's difficult being anointed before you actually do anything. Anyone with eyes could see that the Rockville Pikemen were on their way to becoming contenders in 2034, when they won 99 games, beat Vegas in the playoffs, and made it all the way to the Cartwright Cup before losing to the Havana Sugar Kings in seven games. Already they had some of the most exciting young players in the game, and people were saying all sorts of things about Rockville before it ever happened. "Potential dynasty." "Great team." "Powerhouse." Except, you know, Rockville hadn't won anything yet. The next year they won the JL pennant but were bounced severely by the California Crusaders; still, a Johnson League title was something to build upon. Last year, Rockville won the Landis for the first time as a Maryland team; their last title had come all the

way back in 2020, when Little Hurt was in his prime and not a coach for Rockville's AA affiliate.

The thing to do with teams as talented as Rockville is not to suggest that they're going to win a title. Instead, the idea is to sort of project out the possibility that they could win one title over the next, say, five years. There was a fairly high chance of that happening all along, but if it didn't, all of the premature talk would have been for nothing. Now that Rockville has not only won a championship but also won two straight pennants, the Pikemen will attempt to accomplish something that no team has done in the modern era: win three straight pennants. And no team has won back-to-back titles in 30 years, since Vegas did it back in 2006.

They'll have plenty of company on their quest to defy history. Rockville just barely even won their own division last year, eking out a final week win over the Montreal Blazers, and were only the #2 seed behind the always-dangerous Jacksonville Hurricanes. Atlantic City was Rockville's opponent in the Cartwright last year and have every reason to believe they can contend for another wild card. Mexico City is an outstanding team, Huntsville and Vegas are always lurking, and Phoenix just signed Lawrence Columbus Laloosh on the open market. That's six teams who are legitimate, obvious contenders, and we haven't even mentioned Brooklyn and New Orleans yet: Rockville might not even make the playoffs if they stumble.



In the FL, the contenders appear a little more clear cut. I'm calling it early on all three division winners: Omaha appears to be following the Rockville model, and San Fernando and California have a ton of talent, and Seattle looked fantastic last year. I don't know who's going to win the battle of SoCal, but I'm pretty sure it won't be Valencia. Twin Cities looks like a solid team, and a number of teams have a shot at the sixth and final playoff spot: Long Beach, Calgary, maybe even teams like Boise, Edmonton, Valencia, Madison and, well, the depleted Yellow Springs Nine.

The last thing to remember about Rockville's title is that it didn't come easy. It took a lot of decisions, some good, some bad. It took some luck. Manuel Marino was a second rounder. Lorenzo Palacios developed almost overnight into a BBA star. It took some skill: Rockville traded for Dan Cannon and Dave Martin in consecutive years to augment the duo of Arthur Dempster and Enrique Gomez. Even now, as we speak, Rockville has spent \$50 million this offseason on three prospects including the man who might be the next FTIII. Makes perfect sense, as they've finally banished the last one to history.

**JOHNSON  
LEAGUE**

# Atlantic

<b>2037 Projected Standings</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
Rockville Pikemen	93	69
Brooklyn Robins	86	76
Montreal Blazers	84	78
Atlantic City Gamblers	83	79
Charm City Jimmies	62	100

2036 was supposed to be Rockville's year. The Pikemen were supposed to run away with the Atlantic division, and the Johnson league crown in general. Instead, the Montreal Blazers overcame a slow start to nearly win the division. Atlantic City continued to defy pundits and had a very good year. Brooklyn did Brooklyn things and at times looked relevant and at other times rather pedestrian. Charm City was bad, but we all knew that would happen. So rather than trouncing their competition in a tour de force, the Rockville Pikemen barely edged out Montreal for the Atlantic Crown. Then they won the Landis. I'm sure Aaron is fine with the end result, in-season hiccups aside.

Weiner should also be optimistic looking at 2037. Not much is different in the JLA. Rockville is a little less juggernaut-y perhaps, but still appears to be the easy favorite. Montreal is under its fourth GM in a year, but still has most of a roster that pushed the Pikemen all of last season. Atlantic City and Brooklyn still have GM's in Joshua Biddle and Alan Ehlers who make things hard for armchair prognosticators and could easily throw their hats in the race. And Charm City is still bad.

It's hard to see a scenario where Rockville doesn't get into the playoffs. As far as the other team to finish in the top two? That's a lot tougher. Montreal is probably a little worse than last year's finish. Atlantic City may be the same. Brooklyn might be a bit better. Could this division put three teams in the playoffs? Perhaps. They did so last year, but some other of the other divisions have shored things up a bit. However it works out, expect another dogfight in the JLA in 2037.

# ROCKVILLE PIKEMEN

GENERAL MANAGER: Aaron Weiner



*“If the Rockville Pikemen were still the Carolina Kraken, we'd probably have led in with some idea of some kind of long, dark night being over. If they were still the Hackensack Bulls we'd probably have a whole different writing staff. But, the fans of Rockville have to be spoiled by now. The Rockville Pikemen have never had a losing season”*

2037 Prediction: 93-67

Aaron Weiner's Rockville Pikemen are the defending BBA Landis Champions. They should make a run at defending their title in 2037. Most of the club is back. The only real losses are in the corner OF spots, where Terror and Norris have departed for FA.

While this is a complete team with talent all over the diamond, the real strength of the Pikemen is pitching. Arthur Dempster is a perennial Nebraska candidate and one of the handful of names in contention for best pitcher in the game. Dan Cannon isn't far behind. There's been some rumbling that Enrique Gomez might be finally starting to show signs of mortality, but you'd have to convince the 37 year-old righty of that fact. He just took home his third Nebraska in 2036. Life isn't so bad when Dave Martin, Robbie van Mierlo, and Bob Coleman are fighting for the last two rotation spots.

The Pikemen also have one of the best bullpens in the game. The fifth best reliever on this team is probably Derrick Falter, who would be a high leverage guy on a lot of teams. He's currently slotted as a long man for the Pikemen, since Fernando Marquez, Celio Marin and Nick Snyder will carve through the important innings. Aaron Weiner has made a huge investment in starting pitching and knows that backing that up by cleaning up the men those starters inevitably leave on base is key to cashing in on that investment.

Offensively the Pikemen are a bit thinner than last season. They remain quite good, but the losses of Terror and Norris leave holes in the corner outfield.

The good news for the Pikemen is threefold. First, they have an internal candidate who could bounce back from a down year in Gabriel Delgado. Furthermore, corner OF spots are usually fairly easy to address via trade. Perhaps most importantly, this team's infield and DH positions are rock solid, with Manuel Marino, Mario Guerrer, Chip Puckett, and Francisco Flores leading the way. The offense gets a bit weak for the bottom third of the order, but there isn't a bad glove in the bunch, and that should make up for the lack of potent sticks.

The just mentioned lack of offensive depth is the only thing that demotes Rockville from odds on favorite to repeat, to merely a near lock to take their division and a solid championship contender.

# BROOKLYN ROBINS

GENERAL MANAGER: Alan Ehlers



*“When the Brooklyn Robins announced that they were going to disassociate themselves from a traditional pitching staff and use what they like to call “The Cyclone”, pundits around the league silently chuckled to themselves wondering how this was going to turn out. It could be groundbreaking. It could equally be a train wreck. Early results show both.”*

2037 Prediction: 84-78

Oh boy! I get to try to preview the cyclone! I have no idea how this will work out. Previous editions didn't have enough arms or had too many injuries. Now, GM Alan Ehlers seems to have indicated he may use Mauro Flores and Francisco Ruiz as traditional starters and bullpen the rest of the way. I'd add one more in Manuel Andres, who should thrive as a regular starter.

The Robins bullpen is an absolute horde of arms that hit 100 and generate swings and misses. However, quite a few of them are a bit homer prone. At times last year, this bullpen was the best group in the game, all while getting something like more than 70% of the total innings. Other times well ... they were leading the league in DL time.

There is enough talent here for Brooklyn having no problem repeating the 4.3 runs per game mark they posted last year and ending up near the top of the league in pitching stats. (Dispensing with pretend baseball writing for a second. Were I our commish. I turn off injuries and sim the entire season ten times, half with Brooklyn in cyclone mode and half with a traditional setup, out of sheer curiosity. It would be neat to know if OOTP could get an advantage out of mass bullpening).

Alan Ehlers has made no bones about 2037 being the all or nothing year.

The Robins are way over budget and have loaded up on talented vets in an attempt for one final push. Alfredo Martinez, Cisco Guerrero, Fernando Cruz, and Mario Balderas are all legitimate premier bats. Chris Workman actually is a nice hitter as the strong half of a platoon. If he works out at third, he may have a nice rebound year. It seems though that Brooklyn will need to find production from somewhere else. Whether that's adding an infield bat through trade, or outfielders Eljah Curry or Jose Campos stepping up, this team needs an offensive addition. The top of their division is too good to get past with three or four spots in the lineup providing replacement level offense.

On paper, there's not so much different from last year's addition of the Robins that it seems like a finish better than last year's 80-82 is likely. However, that team had some injury problems and this one just looks better on paper. How much so? Who knows? I don't.

I am happy I'm done writing about Atlantic City and Brooklyn, who manage to make me look stupid every year.

# MONTREAL BLAZERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Zach Grant



*"We feel that he's the right man for both the short term and long term." Percolo responded when asked about Grant's hiring, "He had some issues in California, but that is well in the past. We were wanting someone with a little familiarity at what it takes to succeed at this level as well as a good personality fit with Kayne."*

2037 Prediction: 86-76

The 2037 Montreal Blazers will likely be very similar, at least on paper, to the 2036 Montreal Blazers. That team went 94-68, en route to a second-place finish, so the lack of change is ostensibly a good thing. Furthermore, the team lost very little to free agency. Defensively challenged third baseman Gary Schneider and contact challenged right fielder Robert Gowron are the only departed Blazers. On the other hand, the team has had anything but consistency at general manager since BBA great John Callahan stepped down. The fact that this team hasn't gone through the typical collapse after losing a long time GM is a testament to what he built. It also speaks to the lack of involvement of the previous two individuals to hold the spot. Zach Grant takes over a team that essentially skipped free agency and has some work to do to keep the Blazers competitive going forward.

The biggest challenge Grant will face is reducing the Blazers offensive positional redundancy, while upgrading the defense those players provide. Simply put, Montreal has too many poor defenders that play the same position. Gung Ho Lafitte is a tremendous hitter, but should be a DH, not first baseman. Benjamin Dale's potent bat needs to be at first base, but then where does Charles Martin fit? He'd be only a marginally acceptable second baseman, and Kel Bacon has to play somewhere. It goes on and on like this. Bacon has played left field in the past, and would be better than Dale there, but this is still a sub-par defensive group. Mark Dempsey, aging but still a potent hitter, doesn't help much at third with his limited range. Juan Santana and Pedro Navarro are the only solid to plus defenders in the group. Alonso Olvere and Kevin MacKeith should be playing somewhere as well, but Grant has his work cut out for him fitting them in. Roster problems aside, this bunch can hit and that's always a good thing.

On the pitching side the Blazers look at little more settled. Jubal Troop and Aki Kondo are a solid one-two, and Manuel Pena, Matt Hansen, Eric Franklin and Jermaine Clayton have enough to fill out the 3-5 spots. The Blazers could probably use an upgrade at one of those spots, but will survive. Those less reliable back end starters should get a lot of help from a solid bullpen, anchored by Vicente Lopez and Alberto Ramirez. Adkins, Pillbeam and Flores aren't too shabby either.

Don't expect too much change out of Montreal in 2037. Going forward who knows? This team has some problems. Some key players, like LaFitte, are pushing 30 and a new GM might want to put his own stamp on the team. Still, this is a good team and should expect to end up in the playoffs. There are some divisions they'd challenge for first, just not necessarily their own.

# ATLANTIC CITY GAMBLERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Joshua Biddle



*“The Atlantic City Gamblers entered the 2035 campaign with mixed optimism internally, but general pessimism from most of the BBA media contingent. Somehow, despite the general lack of expectations and a pitching staff that underwhelmed, the Gamblers’ offense propelled the team to a 90-72 (.556) record, a third place finish of five teams in the Johnson League Atlantic, and clinched the second of three available Johnson League wildcard positions.”*

2037 Prediction: 83-79

Joshua Biddle’s Atlantic City Gamblers have a recent tradition of being more than the sum of their parts.

At least, that’s the only explanation I can come up with other than gross player evaluation deficiencies on my own part. I find his teams hard to predict, largely because he uses a number of players who are easy to overlook. Later you see these guys and say, “Oh yeah, I guess he’s fine.”

This would explain how the Gamblers managed to win 90 games last year despite a pitching staff that lacks a number one starter, or perhaps even a number two. Javier Venegas, Byung-doo Yi, Rogerio Vazquez, Luis Soto, Dusty Welch, Carlos Rodriguez, et al. don’t wow anyone. But they belong on big league rosters and Biddle has lots of arms like this. Similarly, Ignacio Martinez is the only exciting bullpen part, but you only have to squint a little to see other reasonable options. On the other hand, this group gave up 5.0 runs a game last year, and that’s a tough way to win.

Fortunately for Atlantic City, their offense scored 5.4 runs per game in 2036. Again, there’s not a ton of star power, but this is a deep group with a number of underrated players.

We all know about Alfredo Salazar, who has stemmed off age related decline nicely, but Adrian Salazar, Bucky Dornster, Ricardo Hernandez, Stanley Perimutter, and Keith Dean are very good players. The Gamblers are above average at most positions. One way to overcome lack of stars is a lack of holes. Biddle will miss the production of the departed Jose Gamboa at catcher, but that’s about it.

So what will we see in 2037?

Well, last year’s 90 wins were nice, but the Gamblers were only “expected” to win 86 games. They might also be a tad weaker this year, as the offseason didn’t add much. Depending on when their hot streaks are, they could be in and out of wild card contention, but I expect them to be a bystander this year when the dust settles.

# CHARM CITY JIMMIES

GENERAL MANAGER: Branden Slouck



*“Word from the warehouse does indicate they aren't happy with the international prospects being found. While the scouts are finding guys that could be useful major leaguers, other organizations keep stumbling across potential superstars. Though these players are long shots, any way to get top end talent in the system is a must. Sources in the warehouse say if GM Rob Benson doesn't formulate a better plan for scouting finds in Central and South America, his job could be in jeopardy.”*

2037 Prediction: 62-100

As per the cliché, the Charm City Jimmies can only go up from their dismal 2036 performance. At 56-106, Branden Slouck's team clocked in at last place in the Atlantic, last in the Johnson, and last in the entire Brewster. Ouch.

How much can they improve for 2037? It depends on how you look at things.

Charm City's competitive window closed with a resounding crash a few years back. Usually the process is a bit more gradual, but a cap crunch and lack of incoming young talent slammed the door on the Jimmies in fairly dramatic fashion. The team's two highest paid players, Carlton Winson and Felipe Murillo are shadows of their former selves. Still though, they are decent players, and Slouck was able to add some parts in free agency.

Carlos Garcia is an underrated centerfielder, and could have been starting for quite a few teams despite getting only part time duty in Yellow Springs. Julio Terror is also a solid player, signed at a nice price. Ditto Matt Mills.

Still, do those names excite you? Do they sound like enough to plug all the holes a 100-loss team has?

If you answered in any sort of sane fashion, don't worry about Slouck. He probably feels the same. Still, someone has to play the games, and it's very difficult to make a bad team good with one free agency. Charm City found some guys to play this year and should be a little better than last. Still, this team needs a lot.

34 year-old Winson is the only exiting bat in the lineup. The aforementioned Mills and Tony Canales (nice back end of the rotation guys) are probably the best two starters on the roster. The bullpen has some parts, but that really doesn't matter too much when you'll be losing most every time it starts to warm up.

Something, something ... winter in the cycle of death and rebirth for a baseball franchise ... something, something ... 100 more loses for the 2037 Charm City Jimmies.

**JOHNSON  
LEAGUE**

# Southeastern

<b>2037 Projected Standings</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
Jacksonville Hurricanes	94	68
Huntsville Phantoms	87	75
Nashville Goats	81	81
New Orleans Crawdads	70	92
Louisville Sluggers	68	94

Ah the JL Southeastern, where New Orleans just has to stand out. Can't the city just change its name to Orleansville already so we can rename the division the Johnson League Southeasternville already? Rolls right off the tongue.

Last year, Jacksonville ended up running away with things, which was largely expected. The OOTP gods toyed with Kyle Stever's heart, as his Phantoms came up just short. New Orleans imploded for whatever reason, Nashville took another step forward, and Louisville continued a slow, soul crushing decline.

How about 2037? Oh man! I get to predict the exact same thing! Like literally. Well, sort of. So maybe not literally. This division is again Jacksonville's to lose. Huntsville will either beat out some JLA teams in a dead heat to make the playoffs, or Stever will get to find out how resilient his heart is when it gets stomped on for the second straight year. Nashville will most likely continue to improve, as Brett Golden's plan may bear its first .500+ fruit. Jim Roberts seems to be turning an uncontrolled implosion into a controlled one, and Louisville? Well. Sorry Nigel. It's not in the cards.

Unlike the JLA, where 2-4 could literally be in any order, it's hard to see much variation here. Roberts could really tear it down and end up in last, but as is he still has way more talent than Louisville. Nashville will try to win, and that should keep them ahead of the Crawdads. Huntsville is better than either of those teams, but they aren't as good as Jacksonville.

So everyone go home. Nothing to see here.

# JACKSONVILLE HURRICANES

GENERAL MANAGER: Tyler Simmons



*“When I first saw the results, I was like “yep, figured that probably the worst team would beat the best team I’ve put together so far.” Then was mad that a pitching staff allowing 5+ runs per game faced a (healthy) lineup that was scoring 6+ runs per game and the lineup was held below 4 runs a game (and that’s with us scoring 16 of our 23 runs in 2 games, we were held below 2 R/G in the other 4 games). And the more I look into it, I bounce between*



2037 Prediction: 94-68

The 2036 Jacksonville Hurricanes were very, very good. They won 99 games. Did you know their expected record was 106-56? Holy jeebus.

How might you ask were they so good? Hmm. Actually, you probably didn’t. Because this is a Tyler Simmons team, and we know how those look. Bats, bats and more bats. Did we mention bats? And more of them? Like all star bats at every position, and half of those HOFs? The Hurricanes only scored 6 runs a game last year, 0.5 higher than the second-place team. The spread between Jacksonville and second place was the same as the spread between second and seventh. Just to give some perspective.

How do they look this year?

Well, the did lose Norris Rutledge ... and probably won’t miss a beat, because Manuel Martinez is a thing. A thing in fact, that would be the biggest thing on about half the teams in the league, but not Jacksonville. David Noburo says hi. So does Reece Wareham. Tyler’s second and third tier bats are Bertram Hahn (who bounced back in Jacksonville because of course) and Luzvimindo Arbizo.

I do think the Hurricanes will miss Aloysious Gonzaga a bit in the short term, but they have some up and coming young outfielders who could help out in the near future.

Similarly, to the offense, the Hurricane’s pitching staff looks much the same. Solid vets speckled with solid youngsters.

Egbert Behner is legitimately good. Raul Gerala, Jose Carlos Soliz, Juan Jose Fuentes, and co have shown their worth. The bullpen has guys like Peter Grady, Netuno Markert, and Lorenzo Montalvo.

Another year, another Jacksonville monster. I don’t think this team is quite a dominant as last years, and while trading Alfredo Martinez likely improves the team in the long term, I believe it hurt them in the second half of last season and will continue to do so this year. Still, the JL Southern Crown is Jacksonville’s until someone else takes it.

# HUNTSVILLE PHANTOMS

GENERAL MANAGER: Kyle Stever



*“Perhaps signing a LEGENDARY trainer in the offseason got to my head. Perhaps I simply had WAY too much confidence in Imai (injured himself early on in AAA and didn't develop any this season anyway), Mangin (developed a bit this year, but not enough), Krappenshitz (sucked in AAA) and McPetrie (8.08 ERA in 42.1 IP in the majors this year... 'nuff said). Either way, it was clearly the wrong call.”*

2037 Prediction: 87-75

Kyle Stever's 88 win Phantoms just barely missed the postseason last year as the seventh best team in the Johnson. From the outside, it looked as if Stever's team lacked the platoon bats to complement its left-handed heavy lineup and had some underwhelming performances from key players. Some of those issues may have been addressed this offseason, others may have shown they weren't aberrations.

Any discussion of the Phantoms outlook for 2037 should start with Norris Rutledge. Perhaps not the player he once was, Rutledge is still a 3.5-4 win bat who should get a benefit from Huntsville's park. His contract is an absolute steal at ten million per year. His upgrade over the turd of a season Chris Klein dropped last year puts the Phantoms in the playoffs by itself.

The question is if there is enough regression elsewhere to negate Rutledge's impact.

The rest of the offense still looks quite good. Luis Barerra is on the list of best catchers in the league. Gerardo Guzman remains an excellent second baseman, and it's hard to see Yelanian being so bad again. Brian Sullivan looks done at short but won't be any worse than last year. Kouba is serviceable as a backup and platoon. In the outfield the Phantoms lost Sandcastle, but he was hurt and didn't do much last year. Huntsville will do just fine with Young, Torres, and Parrish in the outfield. David Hall is a solid DH option. Perhaps more important is the boost the Phantoms will get against left handed pitching from bats like Mike Manning, Juan Rivera, and Carlos Alonso, who weren't around last year.

The pitching staff is a typical Stever special. Disdaining the cost of a “true ace” for a bevy of left handers and #2 types has served Kyle well and the past and should this year. There is nothing wrong with Peithner, Tong and Nicto.

I think the Phantoms could handle a slight upgrade over one of Sanchez, Charles and Soto, and that lack might be what sabotages their season, especially with any significant injury to one of the top guys. The bullpen has undergone some recent drastic changes, but Frits Brinson, Juan Alfonzo, Santiago Diaz, and Rafael Suarez are a nice core. This pitching staff just seems a bit thin, otherwise I'd have no problem projecting the Phantoms for a five win improvement and a playoff berth.

With health, this could be a 90+ win team. Without it mid to low eighties is more realistic.

# NASHVILLE GOATS

GENERAL MANAGER: Brett Golden



*The Nashville Goats finished the month of July with a record of 14-11 and surprisingly, not quite mathematically eliminated from the playoffs just yet.*

2037 Prediction: 81-81

Nashville scored 4.4 runs per game last year and gave up 4.6, good for 78 expected wins. They finished a tad better at 80-82. Will 2037 be Brett Golden's first year over .500? Well, from transactions alone he added about four wins, and he some young players who could be expected to improve.

Still, I retain some caution about the Goats chances in the coming season.

The biggest reason why is the pitching staff. Franciso Luna, Eru Likiliki, Don Bird, Ramon Hernandez, Leon Ramirez and Arturo Cruz look like your starters. Jose Luna (Hey Look! Two Luna's. Neat!), Alan Dominguez, Francisco Reyna, and Steve Russell are your best relief options.

If Likiliki and Reyna were two years older and more developed, I'd feel a lot better about this group, but Don Bird is not putting up a 4.24 ERA again. Is Francisco Luna really a 3.1 ERA guy? Is Arturo Cruz going to beat his career ERA by half a run again?

Nashville allowed an opponents BABIP of .279 last year, good for second in the Johnson. League average was .295. If the Goats allowed that this year this is a 5+ run per game staff. Now, Nashville's park suppressed average somewhat, and Golden's players have good gloves, but I wouldn't be surprised to see the runs allowed closer to 5 than 4.5 per game.

Now that I'm done with the doom and gloom, let's talk about the strength of this club.

One through six, Nashville's offense has to have fans who suffered through the early part of this decade delirious with joy. Kamada, Yong, Suarez, Jackson, Norris, Lopez is pretty exciting one through six. Heck, Martinez and Basaglia in the 8 and 9 spots are nothing to sneeze at. Justin Jackson in particular is one of the more exciting young outfielders in the league. Kamade blew my projection for him out of the water last year, making me look more like a crochety old idiot than I usually do.

The more I look at the Arthur Norris addition, the more I like it. These guys could gel into an offense machine. At worst they'll be competent. Again, I expect them to be closer to 5 runs per game than 4.5.

So okay. The offense is probably more improved than the pitching staff will regress. Maybe? Right? Umm.. Maybe not? I don't know. So I'll be a chicken and take the push.

# NEW ORLEANS CRAWDADS

GENERAL MANAGER: Jim Roberts



*“Missing the playoffs for just the 6th time in the last 25 years is one thing. Having just the second losing season over that time frame is another. GM Jim Roberts is not happy. Of course, one could blame him for trading away two top pitchers in Freddy Delgado and Arthur Norris (among others).”*

2037 Prediction: 72-90

Why did the 2036 New Orleans Crawdads give up so many runs? Answering that question will go a long way towards predicting the fate of the 2037 ‘Dads. At least it would if GM Jim Roberts didn’t seem so intent on some degree of a rebuild. After winning 91 games in 2035 and 86 the year before, New Orleans opened 2036 with essentially the same team, and just kind of stunk. So much so that Roberts had enough and started selling off the more expensive parts of his team during last season. He continued the trend this offseason, as superstar catcher Hsin Mei appears on the way out to Mexico City, and all world closer Luis Ortega looks to be going to Montreal. Between those two players, you can knock ten wins off the Crawdads expected 2037 record, which would propel them into “really really bad” territory.

So are they that bad? Can they expect to give up 5.1 or worse runs per game this year without Freddy Delgado and Ortega? Well, Hector Amaral pitched better than his ERA last year. Yamaguchi, Georges, and Tenno are all solid middle rotation arms. Sam Romero is a big question mark. He’s not the pitcher he once was, but it doesn’t seem like he should be this bad. At some point though, you just may have to accept that he can’t cut it.

Even without Ortega, the New Orleans bullpen still has options, but a couple are just as confusing as Romero. Joe Whitaker should be good. Period. At worst, he should be serviceable. Instead, the 28 year-old right has 70 innings of 5 era ball to his name. Odd. Enrico Rivera should not have an era approaching 7 in over 100 innings. He just shouldn’t. Michel Girard is nothing special, but FIVE? Can youngsters Jim Armstrong and Ricardo Viera settle things down? I just don’t know. But this is largely the same group as last year, and they have a multi-year trend of being bad.

The New Orleans Crawdads offense on the other hand is not all perplexing. While Mei will be missed, Yancy Cravat, Luke Pratt, and Ricardo Vargo should provide plenty of pop. Chris Gonzales looks like a bad fit at second base defensively, but will have a well above average bat there. Virgil Shafer, Gilberto Dominguez, and eventually Mario Barrera (who likely needs more seasoning) are good second tier options. However, as you peruse this group, defensive deficiencies start to stand out. Gonzales and Barrera are not great in the infield. Shafer could probably handle a move to a corner. Vargo is probably a DH. This could go a ways towards explaining the lack of success of the pitching staff. (The starters anyway. The relievers are still shockingly bad for their supposed talent).

Had New Orleans kept the band together for 2037, it would have been easy to predict a bounce bad year. They haven’t. And it’s easy to see some further deconstruction as the season goes on. Still, this isn’t a team devoid of talent, and should have a tough time slipping into the 95-100 loss range.

# LOUISVILLE SLUGGERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Nigel Laverick



*"I suppose you shouldn't expect any better if you open your new home on April Fools Day but the debut of the Kentucky Truck Plant Stadium was an unmitigated disaster. It marked the start of a three-game set against Jacksonville and 44,837 turned up to witness the horror show that began in the third innings."*

2037 Prediction: 68-94

I wrote earlier about Atlantic City being more than the sum of its parts. Louisville somehow seems to be the opposite of that. It's not obvious why, because there are truly good players on this roster.

Last year the Sluggers missed losing 100 by a single game. Their expected losses weren't much better at 96. There are some bad contracts on these books, but to lose 100 games, a team should be devoid of talent. The Sluggers simply aren't.

Part of the reason the Sluggers struggle is that three out of five days they run out starting pitchers who have to be overcome. Mike Singleton, Carlos Guzman, Julio Barajas, Ramon Garza and Brendon Carr are the 3-5 options. Garza is the only one in that group who isn't the definition of a 5<sup>th</sup> starter. Kevin Morales and Pepe Jaramillo are absolutely fine but can't get the job done by themselves.

Gabriel Espinoza, Lando Klomp (great name), and Axel Goulding are decent relief options, but there needs to be a LOT more bullpen if the starting rotation is going to be so weak.

To obnoxiously repeat myself, when Jaramillo and Morales aren't starting, this is a pitching staff to be overcome, and the Sluggers don't have the bats to do it.

Gabriel Talamate is a good second baseman. Sean McGuire is good at third. Shag Hopkins forgot how to hit baseballs last year, but should he bounce back he's a fine catcher. Contract aside, you can say the same about Kirschbaum as a left fielder. The rest of these players are underwhelming. There is not an impact bat in the bunch.

Can Louisville string a bunch of hits together on some days and win? Sure. Will they come up just short more often? Yes.

This is the construction of a roster that scores four and gives up six, or two and gives up four. They need real bats at first base and DH badly. They need another starter. Trade from some position redundancy or move some prospects to get those and this can easily be a wild card team.

On the other hand, the financial situation is so bad it may be best to simply sell and wait out the deals to Kirschbaum, McGuire and Hopkins before starting over.

**JOHNSON  
LEAGUE**

# Sun Belt

<b>2037 Projected Standings</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
Las Vegas Hustlers	93	69
Mexico City Aztecs	92	70
Phoenix Talons	91	71
San Antonio Outlaws	70	92
Wichita Aviators	59	103

Listen Sun Belters, let's get one thing straight. If you look at those standings and are unsatisfied, I freely admit I have no idea how this will work out.

Any of Las Vegas, Mexico City, and Phoenix could easily win. Last year, this was basically a battle between the Hustlers and the Aztecs after OOTP killed all of the Talons' pitchers.

This year, all three teams are better. The problem is, the entire Johnson is largely better.

Phoenix is probably the best team on paper, but they are also the thinnest, and avoiding key injuries for an entire season is tough. Mexico City is the deepest, but Las Vegas isn't far behind. The Aztecs have marginally better starters, and the Hustlers take the edge in the pen. The offenses are different, but both are good. Vegas is probably a shade better.

San Antonio is better than last year, but again, so is the entire league. Someone has to lose game. Wichita looks worse.

At least one of these is easy.

This is the division I feel the least confident about. Go out there and prove me wrong.

# LAS VEGAS HUSTLERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Matt Rectenwald



*Two weeks ago the Hustlers made the unique decision to promote Rodriguez from Class A to the big leagues, and insert him as the everyday shortstop. It's looking like a stroke of genius.*

*"I don't care what stat you claim, Rectenberg is our MVP and there's not even a debate," said an emphatic Allen.*

2037 Prediction: 93-69

Matt Rectenwald's Las Vegas Hustlers have finished with 91, 89, and 89 wins the last three seasons, good for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> place finished with two playoff appearances. Many a GM would be content with such success. I'm going to go out on a limb and guess our beloved commish isn't. This is the longest the Hustlers have gone without a division title in two decades. Did you know a 66% playoff appearance rate is actually sub-par for the Hustlers? Spoiled bastards.

Can the team propel itself back to first this year? Well, Rectenwald is sure trying.

This is not your father's Hustlers offense, which is to say, it's only very good and scored 5.5 runs per game last year, instead of downright frightening from top to bottom. Gervasio Ridder has lost a bit, but still remains one of the few elite left handed bats without a bad platoon split in the league. Hank Brewer just put up his 8<sup>th</sup> 4+ win season and looks great this spring. Henry Rectenberg came through in a big way, posting his own four win season. And then there's Sweetworld in center, and youngsters Quant Kouros and Miguel Rodriguez holding down key infield positions. I'd love to have either one of those kids. It's a bit unclear where the recently traded for Richard Wishart will get his at bats, but he's yet another good-looking piece for the Hustlers moving forward. Jayden Harsnett staying healthy will be a big deal for Las Vegas. Fingers crossed, he's already out with a sore shoulder for five weeks.

On the pitching side of things, I'm sure Rectenwald is looking for an improvement. Having Gerardo Fajardo not go down at the beginning of the year will be a big deal, but he's already got a sore shoulder. Does this sound familiar? Still, Hyun-sik Chang has developed into a nice starter, as has Hao Kun. Chin Kim should be older and a year better. Does Recte have any non-Asian pitchers? Oh hey look! There's Manuel Orozco and Jesus Lopez both of whom will likely improve with another year under their belts. Or maybe Alvin Chartrand will get a shot. The Hustlers have depth here and should see a bit of an improvement over last year.

I feel like I remember Recte being desperate for relief help last year. Really? Shawn Huber is probably the best in the game right now. Of course, Wayne Muirhed could take that crown if he would just live up to his damn potential. Then there's Tony Medine and Augate Balun, who would be most people's closers (not mine because closers are dumb and no one should use them anymore). Hey look Javier Garcia! Another end of the bullpen candidate. Really Recte? Seriously?

So here's the deal. Las Vegas had the most expected wins in this division last year, and they look a tad better on paper. I should pick them to win the division, right? Right? Well, there's always Mexico City, who DID win the division last year and just added a seven-win catcher so ...

# MEXICO CITY AZTECS

GENERAL MANAGER: Fred Holmes



*"As an organization and as a fan base, we feel as though the rain has become a part of our franchise's identity. It's a part of baseball in Mexico City. We will fight with every means available to us to prevent any motion that will require us to change or remove a piece of our franchise. The league let Vancouver build a 50 foot wall in right, California moved their fences to the edge of the infield and won the Landis, but we have to build a roof because it rains too much? Please..."*

2037 Prediction: 92-70

Can Mexico City win their third straight division title in 2037? They have won 95 games two years in a row, and, having recently cemented a deal for one of the best catchers in the game, they have to feel good about their chances. Still, they did perhaps overachieve a smidge in 2036, and lost a few good players in OF Roy Lynn, C Elroy Hinson, and LF Chang-hyeok Chang. So let's take a look.

The position players are a solid place to start as this is where the turnover largely occurred. Any way you slice it, Hsin Mei is an upgrade over Hinson. The real question is whether he is a four win upgrade, or a more modest 1 to 1.5 one. Lynn was a solid player but won't be missed in the slightest. Another member of the Brewster's first family will take over in center this year. Gipper looks to have the tools to be yet another outstanding Kengos. With Willard Gagne and Jose Estrada in the corners, I don't see how Mexico City misses Chang or Lynn at all. In the infield Jerome Delage had a nice debut season in 2036 and appears a bit stronger this spring. Brett Compton thrived in a move to second, and Faireborn is a fine option at short.

The strong infield defense these guys provide will be a big deal for Fred Holmes' typical ground ball heavy pitching staffs. Similarly, the high contact Augie Plascencia fits in perfectly as the DH for this very good on base crowd.

There's no doubt that the Aztecs pitching staff is very good. Lefty Armando Rodriguez is currently slotted as their fifth starter. He'd be three or even two on some teams, but Scotty Pendleton, Pedro Rocha, Felipe Baez and Denis Pham have those roles. The bullpen isn't too shabby either, anchored by Pedro Castillo, and buttressed by starters who Fred simply doesn't have room for like Julio Silva, Dan Forsyth, and Gerard Wagner.

This is easily the deepest staff in the league, and will shrug off the inevitable pitching injuries better than most. I do question if this staff can truly repeat its league leading .268 BABIP allowed from last year. They do have the park and gloves for it, but that seems a bit much. Player for player, I'd have to say Mexico City's starters are slightly better than those in Las Vegas, and have more depth, but Vegas has a better 'pen. I don't think there is a half-run difference between these two staffs like there was last year.

Look, the Mexico City Aztecs are a solid candidate for a division title, but they have Las Vegas and a possibly resurgent Phoenix in their division. I honestly can say I have no idea how this will work out.

# PHOENIX TALONS

GENERAL MANAGER: Sean Marko



*Ripley was quoted as saying "We'll pop the top on a cold one and get back to work tomorrow". The question appears to be what he meant by "cold one", but law enforcement officials seem to believe that the phrase refers to a beer or other chilled alcoholic beverage, such as a wine cooler, premixed margarita, or even a Zima*

*Will it get better? In a word, no. Three of the injured starters are out for the season.*

2037 Prediction: 91-71

The Phoenix Talons are the hardest team to project for 2037. How do you predict a team who actually played for a time last year with their entire starting rotation on the DL?

Phoenix had the second-best offense in the Johnson last year, scoring five and a half runs per game. If they get any kind of health this year, they almost assuredly won't allow 5.7.

Oh and they added Lawrence Columbus LaLoosh.

Good grief. LaLoosh, Trujillo, Corrigan? No thanks Marko.

Cesar Aguilar is a solid fourth option and either Horswill or Tonche as number 5 is fine. With those top three, Phoenix is made for the playoffs. This rotation is a tad top heavy, and well, it seems like Phoenix loses a couple big starters every year, regardless of who they are.

Similarly, the bullpen is top heavy with Bakitski and Reynard as excellent end of game options, and Adrian Garcia looks solid. It thins out rapidly after that. I feel like it's impossible to grade a contender's pitching staff in this division without comparing it to the others. Marko's crew has more star power than either Las Vegas or Mexico City, but lacks the depth of either. If they stay healthy, this is a 4.5 or better run per game group.

The Talons' offense is as powerful as ever. It's easier to list the positions where there's not a likely 30 home run hitter. Jean-Luc Lacaze might not. Viotto Stromberg probably won't, and Arturo Barron probably won't make enough contact to get to thirty. Oh darn. Only 20 homers out of these excellent defenders. I guess it's also possible Brendan Kerndl won't but he's been at 28 and 27 the last couple years so it's largely academic. Those are Phoenix's "bad offensive players."

Let's just say the "other guy's" names for fun. Mario Deortiz, Bartolo Ortiz, Andres Martinez, and Weaver Ripley. The big difference between this club and past versions is they absolute defensive anchors up the middle in Ripley, Barron and Stromberg.

So, I don't know what to expect. This team is just too different from previous versions and is rather susceptible to injury on the pitching side. If everything goes right, you could be looking at a 100-win club. Two big pitching injuries, and they could miss the playoffs again. I'll split the middle in the prediction but expect to be wildly incorrect.

# SAN ANTONIO OUTLAWS

GENERAL MANAGER: Mike Calvaruso



*It happens in baseball, it's a long season, players go into slumps, sometimes early and sometimes late, and a lot of times they come out of them and are able to salvage the season, and then again sometimes they don't.*

*There are three certainties in life; death, taxes, and John Wick going on the DL.*

2037 Prediction: 70-92

Let's get this started off with the obvious. No team tried to improve themselves more in 2037 through free agency than the San Antonio Outlaws. With the (admittedly pricey) additions of Chang-Hyeok Chang, Angel DeCastillo, and Jesus Gonzales, the Outlaws might have tacked on ten wins.

The real question is what kind of club did they tack those wins onto?

Mike Calvaruso teams usually start with pitching, and so shall I. 2037 appears to be the debut year for Yriggs Carpenter, and he's a good pick as a Gillstrom candidate. Elliot Buckland appears to have caught John Wick-it is (or maybe Wick caught Buckland-it is from Elliot in the first place) and will begin the season on the DL. Again. Well that sucks. Now we're getting thin in the rotation. Mei-shan Ngui is a good number three, but that's it now. Three starting rotation spots will have to go back of the rotation options like Jesus Lopez, Fernand Ricard, Blake Schmidt, Bengdt De Meza, or Roberto Cruz.

A couple of those guys will end up in the bullpen and help out Roberto Lizardo and Xavier Perez. This is a very middling bunch. With Calvaruso's penchant for good gloves, this group will end up with acceptable numbers, but is probably below average.

So they'll need a lot of offense if the Outlaws are going to win. How much of an upgrade is Jesus Gonzales over Dan Norman? 1.5 wins maybe? Pedro Saurez has a great glove at short but looks like a black hole offensively. De Castillo is good at second. Albert Carrasco is a below average first baseman. Antoni Tobias has been a good catcher in the past, but is a jackass and took a step back last year. So far, things don't look very exciting.

The outfield is a bit better. Mark White is a nice player, and Chang is an upgrade in left. Paul Warren has yet to post a league average batting line in four full seasons and was a disaster in center last year. At DH you have Andy Seekins, whose above average contact and power will likely be held back by his free-swinging tendencies and lack of footspeed.

Well, I truly am sorry to say I don't see things working out in San Antonio. They are just too thin on the pitching side and have too many weaknesses offensively.

Last year they pushed 100 losses.

They are better this year, but I think still a 90-loss team.

# WICHITA AVIATORS

GENERAL MANAGER: Stu Hopkins



*The Genius suddenly stoops and looks closely at something on the ground; he reaches down and with an almighty pull, rips a tall athletic looking Dominican out of the very earth.*

*"Look at this! He can defend centerfield! He can run! He can hit lefties! Best of all, he still has two minor league options! I can't believe Charm City just left him lying around.*

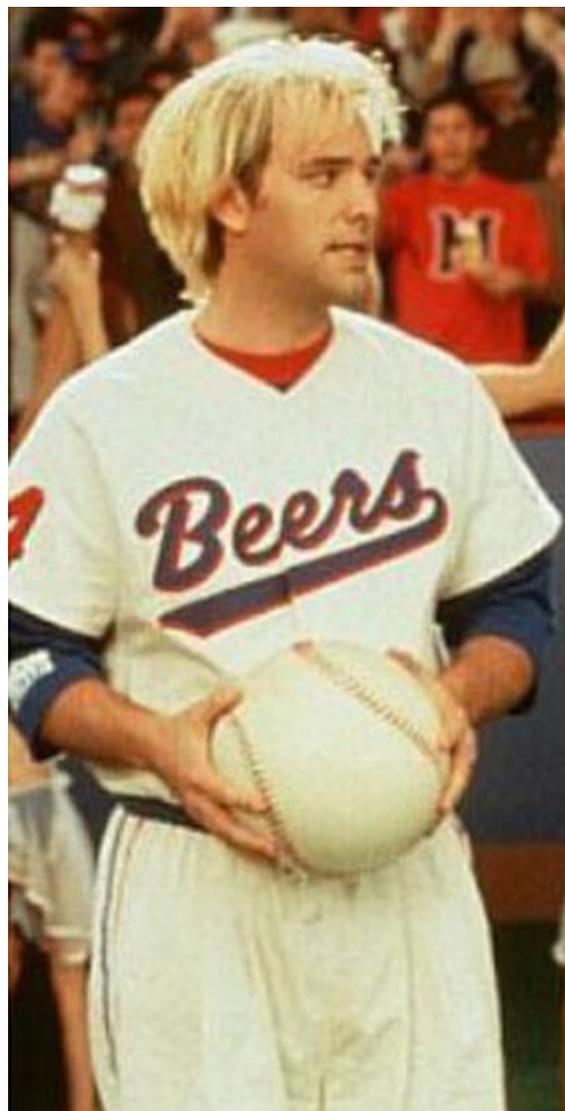
2037 Prediction: 59-103

Wichita is bad. Their expected record was for 91 losses last year and they are worse this year.

Also, I have written 14 team previews in the last ten hours and am exhausted.

I do this because I am a stupid procrastinator. I am tired, crabby, my hands hurt from typing, and I don't want to do this anymore.

Wichita will lose 100+ games. If "the genius" disagrees or thinks he deserves a better preview than this, tell him he can fight me.



**FRICK  
LEAGUE**

# Frontier

<b>2037 Projected Standings</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
Seattle Storm	95	67
Calgary Pioneers	87	75
Edmonton Jackrabbits	78	84
Boise Spuds	72	90
Vancouver Mounties	64	98

This was the Seattle invitational to such an extent last year that I thought I was looking at some early New Orleans history. Seattle won it by an absurd 25 games over Boise last year. The Storm are legitimately good, and there's no reason why they shouldn't have won that division going away, but the real story is the Calgary Pioneers, who stumbled pathetically.

Calgary had a lot of issues last year, but structurally they're still sound and they should be able to bounce back. Admittedly, I am basing this on past results that may not yield future performance, but they also have a fantastic farm with some guys who are ready now and could boost the team's performance – and I suspect, based on past behavior, that they will do exactly that.

Also, I think Edmonton is starting to show some signs of life here. Bobby Lynch might not ever be what we thought he'd be, but the Jackrabbits are starting to inch closer to respectability. I probably have their number too high but I'm not too worried about it; they're clearly better. Vancouver is clearly not; Boise is fine, but they're definitely noncontenders.

The interesting thing in this race will be whether there's a second team that participates in it. We're guessing Calgary, but, yes, it could easily be nobody again, and I have Calgary on the outside looking in on the playoffs.

# SEATTLE STORM

GENERAL MANAGER: Nathan Eagan



*“Heartbreak. That was the recurring theme as the last players filed out of Seattle’s clubhouse, as the Storm saw their fantastic 2036 season, and the 96-66 record, come to an abrupt end as the Storm lost in 5 games to the Long Beach Surfers in the Geoghegan Round.”*

2037 Prediction: 95-67

The Seattle Storm, for a long time, hung their hat on their lineup. Players like Jorge Rodriguez and Juan Escobar worked to lift up an often aceless pitching staff and propel the Seattle Storm into the playoffs. No longer: Seattle is a pitching town now. The Seattle Storm easily set a franchise mark for ERA last season, allowing just a 3.66 ERA and trailing only Cali for runs allowed. Are the Puget Sound Pitchers every bit as good as they looked last year, or are we due for a fallback from Seattle?

Let’s start with Ken Walter, who in four major league seasons has had FIP marks of 3.63 as a rookie, then 3.0, 2.97, and last year’s amazing 2.54 FIP. FIP is how well you’d expect a pitcher to perform independent of fielding, and Walter had an astonishing 9.6 WAR last year for the Storm in winning his first FL Steve Nebraska Award. He might really be this good, too, and if so quite a few franchise records might fall. Alfredo Contreras is starting to lose a little bit of the slide on his junkball repertoire, but he has still been spectacular the last two seasons, getting by on guile and pure stuff. Lefty Julio Alicea (16-4, 3.94 last year) doesn’t seem to have an ounce of falloff in him, and uses all of his stuff beautifully. Gordon Graves (17-10, 4.19) might not have had his best season yet. Then, the team has a number of options at fifth starter: Pablo Morales, Hector Marquez, Ta-heng Hor, Luther Summers, Shotaro Karamura. All of those other guys will probably be in a very deep and talented bullpen led by top reliever Axel Angwin and new addition Jose Souza. On paper they might have a better staff than California.

With all of that said, I really have no idea how the Storm finished with 5.2 runs per game, good for fifth in the Frick League. It’s not the hitting: their .281 team batting average is high, but some of that is due to their ballpark, maybe the easiest place in the BBA to get a hit. What was surprising is that Seattle busted right through expectations and hit 210 homers last year, and it would surprise me if that happened again. Gone is 39-homer man Jesus Gonzales. After him, only Lionel Crepin can accurately be called a powerhitter, though Crepin is one of the league’s better hitters. In fact, Seattle might have the most pedestrian, non-star powered lineup in the league, with most of their players best known for their defense. John Hickman is one of the better two-way outfielders in the league, and future Hall of Famer Juan Escobar still had enough left in the tank last year to hit 27 homers, but mostly this is just not a good lineup offensively. I’d be surprised to see them finish anywhere near fifth place this year.

There isn’t much help coming for the lineup yet, but while I already mentioned all of the pitching depth, all of which are young players, Seattle also now has the #1 prospect in the minors, CF Alexander Julyan, and has one of the better farm systems around, with some depth. Julyan is a long way away but he’s a potential monster. We might seem a little down on a team that just won 96 games, and actually finished below expectations, but rest assured: I’m pretty sure that Seattle’s pitching staff will carry them to the playoffs.

# CALGARY PIONEERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Kevin Dickson



*"This has been the worst season since I have been here, said GM Kevin Dickson who took over the position in the middle of the 2004 season. "We lost 98 that year and the next, but we were building from scratch. This team was built to compete and then the wheels fell off in April and we never got it turned around. I'm surprised I still have a job."*

2037 Prediction: 87-75

Chalk up Calgary as just another team that didn't make it a race in the Frontier Division last season, but see if you can see the number that doesn't match on this list: 90, 85, 90, 81, 89, 88, 86, 98, 91, 68. Was it the last one? Yeah, us too: Calgary lost 94 games last year, which is the most they had lost since – get this – 2005. With an astonishing farm system and a team on the field that was certainly a candidate for most disimproved, the Pioneers surely seem set for a bounce back this year. Or do they?

Let's start with the offense. A 17.3 WAR, even in Calgary's hitter's park, is a pretty fair number; for example, Long Beach had 18 WAR last year and finished with 4.6 runs per game. But it's Calgary's LOWEST offensive team WAR in fourteen years. Some people would say that's Providence, and I call it a fluke. Nearly nobody held their value in 2035 year over year. Rupert Grant went from 62 homers to 28 homers (and below replacement) and nobody knows why. He's the biggest drop, but let's examine the rest, using their 2035 WAR first, and their 2036 WAR second: Juan Karyabwite: 6.4 (2035) => 4.9 (2036); Tony Franco: 2.5 => 0.1; Mario Soriano 6.5 => 2.4; aforementioned Rupert Grant: 3.9 to a ghastly -0.9 WAR last year. What happened here? Franco got old, but a LOT of that is pure, simple fluke; the league didn't hit any more than before, the team didn't really fall off that much, most of the players are the same – they just didn't do what they did the year before. ALL of them. While the Seattle Storm were perfect, Calgary experienced the perfect storm. So we can expect between 3-5 wins more from Calgary just from random chance, and more depending on whether they let kids like Henry Jones III and Francisco Medina stick in the majors.

The pitching fall last year was a little more predictable, but it should rebound this season if they use everyone. Cristobal Hernandez is still amazing, for so many reasons, and he didn't fall off at all. Jimmy Greenwood is still a very productive pitcher even after the arm injuries that robbed him a little bit of his top speed. Jefferson Pierce and Carlos Rodriguez look to be ready for some major league time and should be upgrades over the disasters they had in there last year. The team has a number of poor fifth starter choices (a good choice to upgrade through trade if they want), but their bullpen looks deep, talented, and solid.

Looking at the Pioneers, one suspects they could bounce back very hard here. Edmonton looks to have improved but the other teams in their division haven't upgraded as much. The Pioneers will need their pitching to work this season to go anywhere but they have as good a chance as anyone to bounce back and take a wild card. I don't think they're in the same class as Seattle, but they could be, soon. This is a real arms race out here between these teams; Calgary has the #1 farm system in the game. Surely, they'll figure it out. Writing last year off as a fluke.

# EDMONTON JACKRABBITS

GENERAL MANAGER: Chris Robillard



*"I've been here before, but I inherited a much better team in the Halifax Hawks my last time around. The Halifax Hawks was ready to be a contend the moment I came to the team, but they didn't win much before me either. I brought them to the Landis twice and won once. I'll be asked to do it again with a worse team, worse fan interest, worse budget, etc. I could go on and on."*

2037 Prediction: 78-84

The Edmonton Jackrabbits may have the worst collective record of any BBA team in history at any given point past, say, five or six BBA seasons. Now in their ninth BBA season, Edmonton has never lost less than 92 games in a season and has averaged, over the past eight seasons, 98 losses per season. The Jackrabbits apparently made no effort at all to improve from outside the organization this year, re-signing mediocre second sacker Luis Soto and adding three Rule 5 picks, none of whom are likely to move the dial very much. (At least they're not still paying for the ghost of Holden Blackwell.) The key, then, is whether this team improved enough internally that we can call them a proper contender.

I have seen worse offenses than the one that Edmonton is likely to roll out in April. Mitch Dalrymple is probably their best all-around player and, indeed, one of the best in the BBA, playing stellar defense in right field and coming off back-to-back strong seasons for an outfielder. William Wood is an excellent two-way outfielder as well, and should be one of the strongest centerfielders in the game for a while. The Jackrabbits will feature perennial batting title contender Dusty Rhodes at the #2 spot, and he's hit over .350 two of the last three seasons. Luis Costello is a consistent power threat at DH. Also joining the team late last year was top prospect Steve Collins III, who has the ability to hit even more than Rhodes in his prime but is still developing and might not make a huge impact in 2037, but could be a superstar down the line. The rest of the lineup is a bit poor and platoon, but their top five are very promising.

Surprisingly, the Edmonton rotation also isn't without some pop. Promising #1 starter Bobby Lynch has suffered one too many arm injuries to do what we all thought he would do, but the team has built some good depth in the rotation. Jesus Ramos is a consistent, veteran starter, underrated Chet Parrish (11-10, 4.04, 4 WAR) broke out in a big way last year, and Maxime Manceau has a real chance to improve back to his 2035 levels (10-9, 3.95 ERA, 4 WAR). The team might consider giving Derek Terry another chance in the rotation as well. It's not an amazing group but it's a surprisingly solid rotation for a 98-loss team. Edmonton's bullpen is, predictably, terrible, but it's terrible without any ugly holes anywhere.

The Jackrabbits' time appears to be now, as their once-formidable farm is basically Collins, no longer really a prospect, and potential top starter Chuck Barnes, who is a long, long way away from anything. That's a strange thing to write about a team that's never had any sort of success, but if I knew nothing about their history, I might tell you that this team has a real shot at a wild card this year with a few lucky bounces. At any rate, I think they might have a chance at their first ever season with less than 90 losses. Baby steps or giant leaps? It'll be worth watching.

# BOISE SPUDS

GENERAL MANAGER: Al Sganga



*“Every aspect of the design has serves a specific purpose, from the calming color palette that is scientifically proven to improve pitcher control to the curvature of the letters that will help attract top notch free agent hurlers at a below market prices. We feel this change helps get the club on track to compete for a championship before the decade draws to an end, certainly before the turn of the century.”*

2037 Prediction: 72-90

Boise made one of the biggest free agent splashes this offseason by signing outfielder Carlos Gonzales, the 2031 Sawyer Silk Award winner and four-time All-Star, away from Long Beach to try to improve on their 71-91 showing last year. The team also opened their pocketbooks for aging second baseman Dave Wilfer and starter Jorge Ortiz. Are the signings going to be enough to push them up, or, in their third year in the BBA, are they doomed to another 90-loss season?

We're not sure what they're thinking trying to make Gonzales into a center fielder, but we digress. The fact is that he's still a definite impact bat in the BBA. I like Yunosuke Terada's combination of power and walks, and I think he's a star. George Helton could be a rookie plus at second base, and Carlos Munoz is in the right park for his skills. It's an erratic lineup all throughout, but the powerhitters are there and they should hit a lot of homers again, if not anything else: the team hit .221 last year while hitting 250 homers. A little upgrade there could make a difference, but keep in mind their run differential was that of a 99-loss team and they got a little lucky. Their 14<sup>th</sup> place finish offensively was fifty runs behind 12<sup>th</sup>-place Edmonton.

The home runs are a big plus for this team, because the pitching is a big minus. Boise didn't actually give up anywhere close to the most amount of runs in the FL last year, but from all accounts they were pretty lucky to keep balls in the ballpark last season (just 186 HR allowed, fourth-least in the FL). Their de facto ace, Cris Rios, has been a consistent if unspectacular starter for four BBA seasons. Maxence Mace was one of the nicest surprises in the league last year, and the FL leader in innings should be fine so long as his arm doesn't fall off, though his numbers were a bit flukish. Jorge Baez was really lucky last year, with a .221 BABIP; he's due for a correction. Jorge Ortiz will eat innings. The team might try to get something this year out of Marcos Sanchez, who has great stuff but not a lot of a clue what to do with it. Their bullpen is mediocre at best, and probably not quite that good.

Is there a light at the end of the very, very short tunnel for the Boise Spuds? Well, with a couple of good drafts under their belt, maybe. They have a couple of guys in Dennis French and Pancho German who might be a year away, and they do have the #7 ranked farm in the league largely on the strength of last year's #1 overall, French, who might be really, really good. At this point they're still at least that year away, and maybe further than that depending on what else happens.

# VANCOUVER MOUNTIES

GENERAL MANAGER: Taylor Bettencourt



*"When asked about what the future holds for this organization, he (Bettencourt) stated "Well, it's been far too long since this fan base has seen postseason success. We are committed to this city and have the hopes to bring that trophy back to Vancouver in the near future."*

2037 Prediction: 64-98

Up until now, I hadn't completely panned a team, suggesting they had no chance to do anything at all, that they were doomed to 90+ losses, that they have some obvious, leering deficiency that will bring them to their knees and force them to make sweeping changes to all the things. The wait is over. Vancouver is toast. Yes, they have a couple players worth watching, and we just genuinely hope the fans are all in on that. There's a light at the end of this tunnel, and it's always darkest before the dawn, and I promise to keep my language as pure as the driven snow.

The biggest problem with this team is definitely the offense, which last year scored a ghastly 3.8 runs per game. Even if you allow for the idea that Rashardo Menne III will probably play better this year and looks great at 21 years old, and that Scott Harper is not entirely useless and Hotha Popo would make a great addition to some contender, the rest of the offense is so foul we're not even going to bother bringing it up, with really only Mwaka and Ki-Seop Park likely to be above replacement level, and that not much. Pablo Soto, at least, is almost gone, but they'll be paying the ghost of Bertram Hahn to play for Jacksonville in the eight figures until 2039. They can play defense, at least.

The pitching is uninspiring at best, but at least there's a little talent there. Juan Guerrero, Dermott Halford, Jose Zamora, and Bert Hugill should be working for someone as a starting pitcher, but all four of those guys are roughly good #2B/3 starters. None are likely to carry a team for any amount of time, which is precisely what the sad-sack offense requires for this team to go anywhere. Some of them might look better because of the ballpark, but they're just all okay. The team does have a few good relievers, and if they have any sense all of them will be traded for prospects.

In case you were wondering whether you were about to start hearing about the deep Vancouver farm, well, sorry, it's the good teams in this division, Calgary and Seattle, that have the good farms. They do have a few prospects and I think they might be underrated, but there isn't a lot of really good there. The good news is that three straight losing seasons is finally moving Vancouver into a decent draft position. They'll have all the time in the world to rebuild.

**FRICK  
LEAGUE**

# Heartland

<b>2037 Projected Standings</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
Omaha Hawks	98	64
Twin Cities River Monsters	90	72
Yellow Springs Nine	81	81
Madison Wolves	75	87
Des Moines Kernels	73	89

Yellow Springs and Omaha duked it out all the way to the end of the season for the division title, and then Yellow Springs, ahem, sprung a leak this offseason. The Nine, long owners of this division or at least a playoff spot in off years, bled talent this offseason and fell as far as any team we can remember. They also had to pay a fortune just to hold onto Lucas McNeill. So they're kinda in a jam right now.

Filling that void will be the Omaha Hawks, who might be the best team in the Frick League this year. That's how we're calling it anyway. I love Omaha's mix of youth and pitching, and I think they'll probably make a contender move somewhere in the middle of the year to shore this thing up. At the very least I don't see how they miss the playoffs. Twin Cities lost a one-game playoff last year to miss out on the show, but I think they'll take it outright this year for their third playoff appearance in five seasons.

While I don't think any of the other teams in this division are contenders, I also could hypothetically see any of them contending for a back-end wild card if Twin Cities or Calgary aren't as good as I think. Yellow Springs probably still has the best chance, since they probably have the best pitcher and the best hitter in the division, but it's going to be a tough slog for any of the other three teams to rise to the level of a resurgent Calgary or Twin Cities. I just don't see them having the horses.

I'm predicting a runaway, but Omaha's full of young players, and those are unpredictable. We'll see what happens.

# OMAHA HAWKS

GENERAL MANAGER: Justin Niles



*We could not be happier over the performance that our team has shown this year which has propelled us to the top of the Heartland Division and rivaled the very best teams in the BBA. It has been a long winding road since we have come into power following the 2031 season and we can't thank our loyal fan base enough during that time period for standing with us and believing in the blueprint to a successful franchise as we waited for our time to rise to the top.*

*Well, the wait is over.*

2037 Prediction: 98-64

Omaha had one of the more interesting seasons in perhaps all of BBA history. No, they didn't win anything; they became a quick footnote in San Fernando's drive towards the FL Pennant. But it had been a solid decade since Omaha had won as many as 90 games, and last year, they won 98. We'd all pegged them as a team on the rise for some time, but last year, they showed they were for real. Their biggest loss this offseason was Hiroyuki Rin, who is very good but after all only a reliever. Can Omaha make it back to the show again this year?

The offense surely looks like a playoff offense. Third baseman Emilio Morales is the headliner here, off a 59-homer season in 2036. It's no fluke: Morales hit 64 in 2035. The two year total of 123 homers is one of the most in league history (though doesn't approach Long Chamberlain's 140). James Monger has been otherworldly since he debuted last season and should be amazing for quite some time. Martin Marin will surely be much better this season. Jimmy Starks, Jr., is now healthy and racking up the numbers. When we've managed to turn Aubrey Anderson into a footnote, you know this is a heckuva lineup, and Omaha, who almost managed to lead the league in offense last year, might have no challengers for that title in 2036.

The Omaha pitching staff isn't quite as good as the offense, but it's still a solid unit in its own right. Starter Adam Barnard has been excellent for the Hawks since 2033; he's in the top 10% of all starters in the league. The rest of the rotation is less impressive, though obviously Carson Stoller brings a lot of pedigree. It's a really solid unit, though, and the bullpen is also fairly solid. They could probably use one more arm, but the late inning handoff between David Rivas and Jose Canales should be very good.

Omaha spent a ton of money to get Orlando Ordonez this offseason, because otherwise they've burned all of their prospect chips. That said, the major league team is very young and has tons of talent. This is basically the FL version of Rockville, and while they don't have the veteran arms of the Pikemen they surely have a ton of talent all around. Omaha is going to have to figure out what to do next offseason when their projected payroll balloons to \$121 million (cutting ties with Harlan Moore makes sense) but for this season, they're one of the best teams in the league and my heavy favorite for the division title.

# TWIN CITIES RIVER MONSTERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Scott Piccoli



*"A lot of things have to go right... Most importantly, a very good team deciding to fall apart in the last three weeks," replied manager Juan Williams referring to Long Beach's 5 game lead over Twin Cities and an extremely slim shot at a Post Season Appearance.*

2037 Prediction: 90-72

Twin Cities gained a particular distinction last year: they are the only team in the modern era that has played 163 games in two out of three seasons. In 2034, Twin Cities missed out on the playoffs at 81-82, and last year, it took 163 to lose to the Long Beach Surfers to miss out on the playoffs. Two wins in the right spot and we're talking about four straight playoff appearances for a team with just eight years of history. I'm not giving Twin Cities a reasonable chance to catch Omaha, but Yellow Springs just left a power void which Twin Cities could at least share with the Hawks. There are a number of improved teams in the league: let's see if Twin Cities can hang with them.

The River Monsters' offense is jumpstarted by the superb Mark Wareham, who might be the best shortstop in baseball at the time of this article. What's notable about the rest of the Twin Cities lineup, however, is its consistency. The River Monsters had six players with a 2.5 WAR or better and even most of the ones who didn't were either on pace for that, or 25 home runs. Players like Xue-qin Man, Wes Savage, and Ray Cooper look to be consistent players for a long time. Joey Newhouse just needs to stay healthy, former #1 overall pick Duane Whitley, Jr, may finally be figuring this game out at age 25, and I expect some bounceback from Chris Limon. The team is good defensively and has no serious holes anywhere, so the one thing they're maybe missing is a gigantic slugger.

The big story for the River Monsters, though, is the return of Chris Kelly to the top of their rotation. Twin Cities got Kelly for half a year last year after reconstructive surgery to his elbow, and, thankfully, he hasn't missed a thing. If you put together Kelly's last 259 innings, he's one of the top five pitchers in the BBA. Kelly's good health will be vital to this team's success, as they're not especially deep in the rotation. Josh Brown, Travis Arnold, and Jerry Coyle are all good pitchers, but they also all come with some warts. Reese Rayner will be fine if he's keeping the ball in the ballpark. I've seen a lot worse bullpens than Twin Cities, but with an above-average home run park they're going to have to be nervous about their ability to keep the ball in the ballpark.

The River Monsters even have a significantly underrated farm, as many of their top 200 youngsters could easily be cast as top 100 prospects. Twin Cities doesn't appear to have any big holes, does have a productive offense, and has a #1 starter. A trade for a rotation stopper would go a long way for this team, but we can see them making the playoffs.

# YELLOW SPRINGS NINE

GENERAL MANAGER: Ron Collins



*The fans were despondent, of course, except for Jimmie McDougal who had put \$20 on "Lose by Giving Up 5 Runs In The Ninth" and was now offering to buy drinks all night. The rest, well, truth be told, they've seen this story before. They handled it like the champs they aren't, filing quietly out of Utopia field like they were passing through the wake of a 110 year old friend. "Well, it was bound to happen sooner or later," you could hear them say. "They're in a better place now."*

2037 Prediction: 81-81

The offseason review for the Yellow Springs Nine sounds a little bit like the trailer for an action movie (which in turn is sort of the trailer for every Shakespearean tragedy). Explosions! Treachery! Carnage! No team fell off further, more dramatically, or in more ways than the Yellow Springs Nine this offseason, who lost – Jesus – Lawrence Columbus Laloosh, Angel De Castillo, Carlos Garcia, Jose Souza, Tully Crow, and, um, we need to brake (Dave Brake, that is). We hear they're still fielding a professional baseball team over there in Ohio, though, so it's probably worth looking at them. Probably. Last man out of the dugout, please turn off the lights.

No lineup could be totally broke with future Hall of Famer Lucas McNeill manning the 3 hole. McNeill, who won the Golden Bat at first base last year, might play more second base this year, but, as a warning, his bat speed appears to have fallen off slightly at age 30 – and, oh yeah, he's making \$40 million this season and no less than \$25 through 2040. McNeill has some help: Aaron Stone has been one of the league's better catchers for the majority of his career, and we might not have seen the best out of DH George Robertson yet. The Nine are also tapping into veteran Jorge Rodriguez, who probably won't be back in 2038 but is still a very strong bat. Mauro Saucedo is a promising young center fielder who might not be better than his solid numbers last year. The rest of the lineup might need a little bit of a shave and a haircut to look really good, though Jose Machado might be better than he looks. The team is poor defensively and becomes poorer with McNeill moving to second base.

The rotation is also new, but not improved. Sure, Carlos Valle is a legitimate superstar. He's one of the better pitchers in the BBA and still making the rookie minimum. And Dogface Chavez just keeps trucking right on at age 35 to his possible meeting with the Hall of Fame, posting consistently solid numbers every single year. And then it gets a little bit wonky. Tristan Alfama is really a reliever and has been just okay as a starter. Hiro Osaragi wasn't bad at all in his debut, but I'm having trouble trusting him with their defense. Tim Oliver is a good reliever who might make a brutal starter. They do have some rocket arms in their pen, led by superb closer Curt Phillips, but the pitching staff will sorely be missing Laloosh.

After reading this, if you're still buying Yellow Springs as a contender, you must believe one of two things: the Nine will make more than one deal this year (very likely) to move forward, or you like their lineup a lot better than I do. The good news is that even if they don't contend at all, Yellow Springs has a superb, deep, and talented farm with tons of outstanding players on it, and somewhere in the next three or four years we will definitely begin talking about them the same way we used to: perennial contenders. The Nine will have to figure out what to do with Aaron Stone, who will no doubt ask for a ton of money, but they have no serious long-term payroll issues as long as McNeill stays whole. This year, 85 wins seems like their absolute max.

# MADISON WOLVES

GENERAL MANAGER: Chris Wilson



*“Things have gone from bad to worse in Madison. The team is pretty much done for after a dreadful end to August and now the club is even more trouble. The Madison Wolves don't have a shortstop.”*

2037 Prediction: 75-87

Since their run of three straight playoff appearances from 2031-2033 (and their dominance of the early BBA), the Madison Wolves have fallen on tougher times, culminating in their first 90-loss season last year since 2030. Ever competitive, Chris Wilson, who is one of the very few original BBA owners who has owned one team, is once again trying to field a competitive team. Madison won 98 games as recently as 2032, so it's not as if they can't do it, and they added probable Hall of Fame catcher Elroy Hinson this offseason to try to bounce back up. Do they have what it takes to return to relevance?

Hinson's not the All-World everything he was in his prime, but he'll certainly help a team who played superb fielder David Katzenbogen for 400 plate appearances almost all last year, as Katzenbogen was replacement level despite his superior gun and skills. Hinson joins stolen base king Mons Raider, sneaky-productive Jharod Thealer, and powerhitter Jon Mick to form a solid early lineup crew. I'm expecting bigger things from outfielder John Garcia, who didn't show a lot last season in a September callup but should be good for 25-30 homers. Natanael Barral also might have grown up some. Steve Dempsey had the emptiest .302 batting average you've ever seen, and he probably shouldn't be in a lineup above top prospect Andrew Torres if they're looking to compete. I'm a fan of Jose Carlos Moreno, who should be a really good two-way outfielder, but he and Barral are their only real plus defensive players as Madison's defense is just terrible. Offensively, they can compete with a lot of teams, though, despite having no legitimate superstar other than Raider, who also fell off a bit last year.

Since the offense is pretty good, you can expect a lot of shootouts this year in northern Wisconsin, because the pitching staff is awful. Terrible awful, almost nothing to write home about anywhere. Advanced stats still consistently like veteran Mario Gonzalez, as he always walks very few batters, but he surely won't benefit from Madison's defense. Ditto young starter James Robinson, who had something like a breakout season last year despite a 5.29 ERA. He doesn't look like a superstar but might be effective. Noonien Soong might be better than his Calgary numbers look, but he also might not. Axel DeGiusti might be back down by May, and they just don't have a lot of rotation options past Soong, surely not the ghost of Chunk Cavazos (sure to be inducted into the Hall of Very Good soon). As poor as the rotation looks, the bullpen might be worse. Closer Sean Spits has been fine but there's really nobody behind him.

Madison hasn't really developed a full farm yet, but they should. When you're running players like Hinson, Gonzalez, and Cavazos for a 93-loss team, it's a big issue long-term. It's not helping that they have some huge contracts in Jon Mick, who isn't worth the money, and Steve Dempsey, who really isn't, as their payroll is still in the \$90 million and up range. Madison probably tops out at .500 this year and I don't see them getting there.

# DES MOINES KERNELS

GENERAL MANAGER: Edward Murphy



*“In a quickly called press conference, owner Stephen Collins Jr, announced the Kernels have traded first baseman / designated hitter, William Moreland, to the San Fernando Bears pending medical review. Stephen said, “This was the toughest thing I have done. William is a team leader, loved by the fans, and is an outstanding person.”*

2037 Prediction: 73-89

They finally cut the cord. Des Moines had been hobbling along in the BBA middle class, sometimes sinking below that, with the two greatest career Des Moines players in modern history tagging along. Those two players, Cisco Arreola and William Moreland, had won a total of zero championships, made zero playoff appearances, and I’m sure experienced infinite frustrations with a franchise who couldn’t make it better around them. Des Moines finally traded Moreland this offseason, and that’s not enough: Arreola has to go, too, in my opinion. Yet, we don’t think it will happen, because Des Moines pushed hard to improve this offseason, and their offense got some big upgrades. Is it enough to finally end the long, dark nightmare stretching back three decades?

Des Moines, last year, finished eighth offensively (and ninth in runs allowed), but it’s worth noting that Moreland, who usually contributed more heavily to the offense, had a bit of a down year for him. So even keeping Moreland and everything else the same probably would have helped. That said, the Kernels added third baseman Don Draper, a very solid infielder, and center fielder Aloysius Gonzaga, who has been a very solid outfielder. Those kinds of regulars should surely help. They also got back Victor Guerra in the Moreland trade, who should provide some righty power. They could get more from their middle infield this year, as William S. Hardy and Manny Montanez could provide significant offense this year, and Long Chamberlain III might be along to help later in the season. The team is very good defensively, which should help.

Their pitching staff is also very decent, with a little upside. Elwood Blues has 29 wins over the past two seasons, and Ragnar Lothbrok has 24. Patrick Patchett, Mario Villareal, and one of the multiple fifth starter possibilities might help out as well. There isn’t a #1 starter here or even a real #2, but all of them can pitch. Their bullpen is equally unexciting, with a lot of pitchers who are reasonably marginal.

If you are sensing a bit of the ho and a bit of the hum on this one, that is me yawning in the background. The offense probably did get some upgrades this offseason, but I think some teams that were trailing Des Moines have passed them there. This is the sort of team that, when they make the playoffs, win a whole bunch of one-run games. They don’t have much of a farm either. Which leads me back to the beginning. It’s about time that Arreola gets his shot at a title, elsewhere.

**FRICK  
LEAGUE**

# Pacific

<b>2037 Projected Standings</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
California Crusaders	96	66
San Fernando Bears	94	68
Long Beach Surfers	75	87
Valencia Stars	74	88
Hawaii Tropics	63	99

California and San Fernando didn't fall off in any meaningful way this offseason, and so they ought to rule this division again. I might have San Fernando's win total up too high, but I'm not sure how else to distribute the wins; they're clearly better than most of the Frick League at any rate.

That said, the biggest two stories here for me are the Long Beach Surfers and the Valencia Stars: Long Beach because I think they'll fall back, Valencia because I think they might fall forward.

Long Beach just doesn't make sense to me anymore, and they lost Carlos Gonzales this offseason so I don't know how they catch up. They have some pretty good position players but their pitching just doesn't pass the eye test.

Valencia is one of those teams with a puncher's chance at a wild card this year, but I'm putting a lot on the shoulders of some of their players to get better in a hurry. Most likely, Valencia is on the outside looking in this year, but a payroll south of \$60 million next year (and nearly league minimum this year) means they can make some serious moves to start regrouping.

And Hawaii, poor Hawaii, has a top draft pick and a top farm and might have a top pitcher in Charlie Iron-Knife. We shall see. They could be better than this, San Fernando worse.

# CALIFORNIA CRUSADERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Ted Schmidt



*"Now we anxiously await the winner of the Omaha San Fernando series, to see who we will play in the Doubleday round. I want to think, "Offie! Don't be greedy. You won a championship last year. You can't be disappointed in your beloved Crusaders don't go all the way this year." But ... but .. well ... winning is so .. addicting. you want more."*

2037 Prediction: 96-66

For California to lead the league in pitching the way they did last year is basically their birthright. They've done it at least a dozen times and they've had one of the best pitcher's parks in the game for decades. For California to lead the league in offense last year and not win the Landis, or even the JL Pennant, is horrifying. California had never even scored five runs a game before, much less led the league in offense. The 2035 BBA Champion Crusaders finished eighth in offense that year, pretty much boilerplate. It's possible that they just squandered the best team in franchise history. Good news is that they should be awfully darn good again.

I don't think they lost a whole lot this offseason in real terms as Fernando Moreno has lost a lot of bat speed, but they're also short a player who was perfect for Cali's home park, so that's not helpful. What they lost was a few really outstanding years. Esteban Cuervo probably not quite as good as his league-leading .623 SLG. Flynn Johnson might not hit .274 again. In other words, the problem with the offense now – other than the loss of the 3-WAR Moreno – is that they might not be quite as good as they played last year. The Crusaders still have a bunch of lefty power hitters who should hit homers in bunches, but it's difficult to trust them game to game, inning to inning. Adding Raul Hernandez might be pretty good for their lefty power structure. They do play excellent defense and should be at least fine offensively, but expect them to drop back five spots offensively, and probably not score five per game.

Fortunately, whatever their offense does, California's pitching staff is still probably the best in the BBA. It's hard to find a better 1-2 than Luis Gracia and Miguel Ramos, and Jaime Mercado might be the best #3 starter in the game. Knud Zeitler and Cisco Morales means that the Crusaders never give the opponents a day off. California also has a strong bullpen and a few options for replacement starters, though none of them are as good as the frontliners.

The Crusaders are virtual locks for a 90-win season and the playoffs, and they're starting to build a farm system. They only have three players in the top 100 prospects, but they have eleven in the top 200 and should be able to continue the pipeline from the minors. They have zero payroll issues and should be able to move for another bat if necessary. In other words: contenderville for the Crusaders, who will look to escape from their missed chance last year and try again.

# SAN FERNANDO BEARS

GENERAL MANAGER: Randy Weigand



*“While the Bears have a great run through the Frick League last October, to say it ended with a bit of a disappointment is a bit of an understatement. GM Randy Weigand was heard to utter the words “fucking disgrace” when asked about his squad’s performance against the Rockville Pikemen.”*

2037 Prediction: 94-68

It was hardly obvious to any observer that the San Fernando Bears were going to the Landis last season. That’s not to diminish what was a very impressive season by the first-time FL pennant winners, but despite winning 96 games, their expected record was 89 wins, they had to play a wild card round, and it did eventually turn out for them to advance, they had to play one game short of the maximum. All of that said, San Fernando was quite the solid team without upgrading to one of the biggest powerhitters in league history, William Moreland.

Moreland has five seasons of over 40 homers, one of 50, and other than his rookie season (when he hit 29) he’s never had less than 38 knocks in any season. His best days were about five years ago, but he’s still a huge power threat and should fit in nicely with their home run capable park. Bunk’s just the new toy though: San Fernando could really rake without him. Future first-ballot Hall of Famer Jared Gillstrom is still a superb player at 32 years old, and superstar Tai Hoi Wie should bounce back from an injury-plagued 2036. Angel Garcia and Luis Maldonado showed why they’re two of the BBA’s rising young stars. Third baseman Juan Mendoza has been solid for the Bears, posting good numbers each of the last two years. Grant Lee looks like he’ll never live up to his full promise, but he’s a solid center fielder. Catcher Ares Papadias has back-to-back 30 homer seasons. In all, a very good lineup which should score plenty of runs this year.

The pitching staff isn’t quite as deep or impressive as the lineup, but it does feature 24 year old starter Feliciano Rafael, coming off a massive 2036 season where he led the league in strikeouts and was borderline unstoppable. Ernie Kinney has been one of the more solid starters in the BBA over the past three years, and while he should fall back from the best year of his career we’d still expect him to be good. Freddy Delgado is starting to fade a little as he turns 30, but he should still be a solid innings eater. Jon Reed is one of the more reliable back-end rotation guys around, and Alfredo Perales could be very productive in the rotation for the Bears. Still not sure why Carlos Delgado isn’t in the rotation, though with him in there the Bears’ bullpen is fairly okay, with Delgado the star. Miroslav Tomanek might also improve, but we keep writing that.

San Fernando’s team as currently situated had better work, because they don’t have much on the farm that’s going to help them soon. The team is still holding out that one of Jorge Vega or Sergei Hopkins (or both) will pan out, but Vega is a long way away, and there’s nothing really after those two. The Bears don’t have a lot of arbitration players or salary issues over the next few years so long as they remain financially productive. I could see them finishing around the same spots they were last year, 4<sup>th</sup> in offense and 6<sup>th</sup> in pitching, and that’s a playoff team in the BBA. Let’s see if they can repeat as FL champs.

# LONG BEACH SURFERS

GENERAL MANAGER: Stephen Lane



*“The up and down season has reached its final month, and luckily for the fans, it looks like an “up” month for the Surfers. Riding high after a sweep of the California Crusaders, they won the first game of their series against the Valencia Stars to take their win streak to five games.”*

2037 Prediction: 75-87

I am old enough to remember when the Long Beach Surfers had one of the most fearsome offenses in the BBA. With the loss of Carlos Gonzales this offseason to Boise and the impending departure of Tom Kazansky, it appears we’re looking at a transition year for the Long Beach Surfers. It’s possible I’m underrating this team, but I’m concerned that they overachieved last year and are due for a small fall this year, possibly just enough to keep them out of the playoffs. Let’s see if I can prove myself wrong.

A couple of Long Beach infielders, Sloan Daniel and Victor Bedolla, could make me look awfully silly. Daniel, not Mark Simpson, was the team’s leader in WAR as a rookie, and maybe he’s that good, while Bedolla is due for a big step forward if he gets playing time. The aforementioned Simpson is about as outstanding a first baseman as they make in the league and appears to be a potential Hall of Famer waiting for his plaque. The problem is that after the heavily skilled but aging Fernando Moreno, the Surfers’ offense leaves a lot on the table. Kazansky might be on the downside of his career at age 29. Pedro Holguin has nice on-base numbers, but he can’t play defense. We’ve seen the best of JJ McQuade. Really, there isn’t anyone on this team with a ton of upside or who might hold the lineup together. That makes this a very pedestrian lineup overall.

The pitching staff also appears somewhat mediocre, but Julio Velasco, a mid-season acquisition last year, might just make the pitching staff work. Velsaco was outstanding after coming over from Calgary and might be very good this year, but, really, the best pitcher on the staff was Lee McHone, who was amazing in relief last year. Pierre Legrand should be pretty good again this year, and lunchpail guys like Diogo Lindt and Pepe Castillo are fine, but this is mostly a rotation without a rudder. Their bullpen, led by McHone, might be slightly above average to balance out the mediocre rotation somewhat, but it’s hard to buy into this pitching staff, either.

We’re seeing Long Beach similarly to last year: the team finished 10<sup>th</sup> in overall offense and somehow finished 4<sup>th</sup> in pitching, likely on the basis of the 4<sup>th</sup> least home runs allowed. I’m not buying this as a top five pitching staff, so I’m seeing more like a .500 record this year for the Surfers. The team has a passable farm with top prospect Danya Tchekanov highlighting it, but the young righty is a long way away and it’ll take a long time for anyone of great significance to emerge from there. Long Beach has no serious long-term salary issues and to their credit, might understand exactly what I’ve written above, as they frontloaded the Moreno contract. Next year their payroll drops below \$70 million, and they’ll have a chance to reset.

# VALENCIA STARS

GENERAL MANAGER: Lee Honigsfeld



*“The Stars traded their ace SP Mauro Flores. With all the young offensive hitters coming up the last two years the Stars needed some young pitching now that can move forward with the team for the next 5 plus years.”*

2037 Prediction: 74-88

It takes talent to have a \$46.9 million payroll and still have a payroll eyesore: catcher Jose Moleno is such a player. It takes nothing, however, to have that same \$46.9 payroll and be completely terrible. The surprise is that Valencia might not achieve that particularly simple accomplishment this year, and they might finally be turning a corner for the first time in a long, long time. For a team that's won more than 74 games just once in the last baker's dozen seasons, simple things like competency might go a long way in So-Cal.

We'll start with the Stars' young hitting first, and few teams outside of Rockville have a better rated 1-2-3 punch 25 and younger than Frank Mahaffey, Angel Zalapa, and Wilton Rivera. None of them have completely figured it out yet at the major league level, but they're extremely talented and could get it soon. Some of that's their home park, too, which is still one of the toughest places to hit in the BBA. The Stars have a seemingly good problem with Curt Love and Kiichi Suzuki having total overlap, but they're playing Love at second base. Seems like a situation crying out for a trade, especially with top prospect Rory Wakely likely on the way in a year or two. Ramon Pagan looks like a productive outfielder. It's hard to know exactly what kind of team this is offensively, but it looks like a solid lineup with some very strong pieces.

Their pitching is even more surprising than their offense. I can't figure out why Zhi-Xin Chien hasn't put it all together in Valencia's ballpark, but this could be that year. Gerald Keynes could take a step forward this year. Grellan Profit is a huge prospect who just needs to develop his slider to be a top flight starter; maybe it happens this year. Niall Hanlon should be a lot better in that park than he is, primarily because he can't keep it inside the park. Their bullpen is also surprisingly talented for a 90-loss team, though it's not great.

This is a sentence we have written before and been burned by bigly, but the Stars have a real shot at finishing at or above .500 this year if everything bounces right. They need to keep the ball in the ballpark for the other team and their stars have to start playing like it, but this is a team with some really talented players. Their farm is also a little underrated, as players like Julio Guerra and Luis Gonzales are outside the top 200 – not in my opinion though. Valencia will probably finish with no more than 81 wins and should finish with a lot less, but stranger things have happened than that.

# HAWAII TROPICS

GENERAL MANAGER: Mike Bieschke



*"We're doing our end of season evaluations, as we always do", owner John Hough said. "The GM is certainly being evaluated to determine if we need to take this in a different direction". Mike Bieschke was not available for comment, but one does wonder, is he the right man for the job? Many fans feel he isn't.*

2037 Prediction: 63-99

The Hawaii Tropics have a Landis title in the last dozen years, but it's safe to say that they're pretty far from that at this point: they've lost 316 games over the last three years, most in the BBA. The scoreboard tells us that Hawaii had one of the best offseasons, largely on the basis of multiple, potentially shrewd free agent signings, but we're not sold on most of those guys, either. It's going to be difficult to see a big rise from Hawaii this season.

Honestly, the only one of the pitching signings we're buying is Dillon Young, who might be 35 years old but can really still pitch despite his spotty injury history. The others not so much: advanced stats tell us that Jody Nunez was the team's biggest signing this offseason, but our eyes don't lie – Nunez appears to be over the hill at age 35. Mike Bailey still has something left in the tank, provided he can stay healthy. Hawaii also signed the ghost of John Wick. If I'm trying to understand their motivation, I think they're trying to augment the potential rise of Charlie Iron-Knife and some pretty okay rotation guys in Luis Torres and Stephen Taub, but I'm not sure what they've accomplished here. On the plus side, their bullpen is legitimately competent and should do well in the pitcher's environment in Hawaii. We're thinking they may rise from their 14<sup>th</sup>-best position to somewhere closer to the middle.

Unfortunately, a fairly okay pitching staff isn't going to lift their lousy lineup. The team's de facto star is Gerbrand de Best, who really can play but also isn't Alfredo Martinez. Young players Benton Allen and Ernesto Alfiche both showed some promise last year, but they'd have to take a quantum leap forward to really get it going in Hawaii. Jorge Vargas did fine last year. Really, there's lots of fine in the lineup but nobody to really tie it all together and no oomph, even with the shrewd addition of Ricardo Guzman. It's not impossible to imagine that this lineup moves up a little bit too, but it's hard to see them hitting better than the .257 they hit last season, and that's going to probably hold them back.

Hawaii might actually make out around .500 if a lot of breaks go their way. Their rotation is fine, their bullpen should be solid, and they do have some lineup pieces who might perform. They also have some very interesting hitting prospects: Manny Aguilar, Jr., who I'm pretty sure Matt created just to troll me (even though I never owned him), Mike Campbell, who's probably a year away, Lee Morgan, who might be a reliever if his changeup never pans out but also might be really good, and Robert Hobbs, who is probably significantly underrated and could make a difference as early as this year. They didn't tie themselves down to any long-term deals this offseason, and will probably have a payroll in the \$40 million range to start next offseason. I'm fairly sure this isn't Hawaii's year, but next year might be, and it'll be exciting to watch.



## The 20/20 Hindsight Redux

# 5-Year Draft Review

*If there's anything that gets the blood of any GM racing, it's the idea of drafting a bunch of kids who are going to turn into the faces of their organization. It's the way contenders remain as contender, and the way GMs of also-rans help keep the fans off their back. "We've got the kids coming up," is a surefire way to avoid flames, right, guys?*

*Back by popular demand, Twin Cities GM **Scott Piccoli** moves the clock up one year and takes a fresh scan of a new draft class – this time 2032.*

# THE 20/20 HINDSIGHT 5 YEAR DRAFT REVIEW 2032

## 1<sup>st</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> Pick)



**Indy Grasshoppers (Now Omaha Hawks)**



**SP Carson Stoller**  
AGE 23

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POT (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>STUFF</b>	10	9/9	-1
<b>MOVEMENT</b>	8	7/7	-1
<b>CONTROL</b>	7	7/7	0

CURRENT TEAM – Omaha Hawks (BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 63 Games, 32 Wins – 15 Losses, 3.83 ERA, 1.27 WHIP, 4.67 WAR

Despite the slight dip in Stuff and Movement, Carson seems to be everything Omaha needs him to be as an over-all #1 draft pick. He also has excellent stamina and nice velocity.

Analysis – Extremely solid #1 selection who didn't lump like other top past draft picks.

**WELL DONE**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Pick)



## Twin Cities River Monsters



**CF Wes Savage**  
AGE 22

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POT (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	8	7/7	-1
<b>POWER</b>	8	6/6	-2
<b>EYE</b>	4	3/3	-1

CURRENT TEAM – Twin Cities (TWC – BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 185 Games, .282 BA, .754 OPS, 18 HR's, 2.8 WAR

One of the elite defensive Centerfielders, Wes Savage's offensive abilities were exposed quickly in his minor league career as being Not As Advertised. While still capable (average) against Right handed pitching, he's completely lost against lefties.

Analysis – Can fill the Centerfielding position with his excellent defense and average bat, nonetheless, a disappointment as an over-all #2 draft pick.

**Let Down**

### 3<sup>rd</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Pick)



**Rockville Pikemen (Formerly Carolina Kraken)**



**3B Larry Blake**

**AGE 21**

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POT (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	8	7/7	-1
<b>POWER</b>	7	5/5	-2
<b>EYE</b>	4	3/3	-1

**CURRENT TEAM** – Rockville Pikemen (BBA)

**CAREER BBA Totals** – 243 Games, .288 BA, .780 OPS, 26 HR's, 4.4 WAR

Another excellent defensive player, this time at Third Base, whose offensive ability isn't what was as expected. Had a much better rookie campaign in 2035, before dropping off a bit in 2036 (.801 OPS vs .750 OPS).

Analysis – Looks to be a well-rounded player who is a great with the glove and can provide some offense at the plate. However, like Savage, probably a bit of a disappointment with the #3 overall pick.

**JUST SHORT OF EXPECTATIONS**

## 4<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 4<sup>th</sup> Pick)



### Edmonton Jackrabbits



### RF Mitch Dalrymple

AGE 23

RATING	POTENTIALS (2032)	ACT/POT (CURRENT)	POT +/-
CONTACT	8	9/9	+1
POWER	7	8/8	+1
EYE	4	4/4	0

CURRENT TEAM – Edmonton Jackrabbits (ATC – A)

CAREER BBA Totals – 443 Games, .317BA, .881 OPS, 84 HR's, 14.0 WAR

College Centerfielder who was moved to Right Field by the Edmonton organization. Projected to be a excellent defensively either way and have a sold bat.

Analysis – The Cream of the Crop for the 2032 Draft so far. Mitch could play Centerfield, but is an Elite Frick League Right Fielder, winning the Diamond Glove in 2036 & 2034. He exceeded expectations early on, projecting as the #3 Over-all BBA Prospect in 2034. Should pass 100 career Homeruns mid-way through his fourth season.

### EVERYTHING YOU COULD HOPE FOR

## 5<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 5<sup>th</sup> Pick)



**Havana Sugar Kings (Current - San Fernando Bears)**



**RJ Juan Santana**

**AGE 21**

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POT (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	8	9/9	+1
<b>POWER</b>	6	6/6	0
<b>EYE</b>	4	4/4	0

**CURRENT TEAM – Montreal Blazers (BBA)**

**CAREER BBA Totals – 339 Games, .315 BA, .887 OPS, 44 HR's, 7.8 WAR**

Another nice defensive outfielder, this time with speed on the base paths and excellent gap power.

Analysis – Juan Santana is an extra base hitting machine, tallying 90 doubles, 25 Triples and 43 HR's in his last two seasons. He's an effective base stealer and holds his own defensively. He developed early and already has accumulated 7.8 WAR by the age of 21.

**LONGTERM IMPACT PLAYER**

## 6<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 6<sup>th</sup> Pick)



**Halifax Hawks (Current - Nashville Goats)**



**LF JUSTIN JACKSON**  
AGE 22

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POTS (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	8	8/8	0
<b>POWER</b>	9	9/9	0
<b>EYE</b>	5	5/5	0

CURRENT TEAM – Nashville Goats (BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 276 Games, .270 BA, .858 OPS, 54 HR's, 4.8 WAR

Another excellent outfielder in a 2032 loaded class loaded with them.

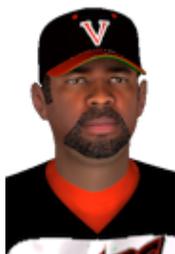
Analysis – Justin Jackson is a step behind Mitch Dalrymple in developing, but made an impact in his first full season in 2036. Locked and loaded for 2037, Justin will be looking prove that he could be one of the best hitting outfielder from the 2032 Draft. Time will tell if he is or not, but at this point, there's at least an argument he may have a shot it.

**WELL WORTH THE PICK**

## 7<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 7<sup>th</sup> Pick)



### Valencia Stars



**3B CURT LOVE**  
AGE 21

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POT (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	7	7/7	0
<b>POWER</b>	8	8/8	0
<b>EYE</b>	4	5/5	+1

CURRENT TEAM – Valencia Stars (BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 97 Games, .230 BA, .748 OPS, 19 HR's, 0.31 WAR

An average defensive Third Base men, Love looked to be a solid Left handed Power bat.

Analysis – It's been a slow steady slog for Curt Love through the Minors, but he finally made his BBA debut in 2036. After playing just over the half the season, Love struggled to make his impact in the lineup. He's held up to his expectations so far through his development, but 2037 will be the year to prove if Love is worth a top 1<sup>st</sup> Round Pick.

**PROMISING, BUT STILL UP IN THE AIR**

**8<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 8<sup>th</sup> Pick)****Brooklyn Robins****CF Michael MacCrain****AGE 21**

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POT (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	7	6/6	-1
<b>POWER</b>	6	6/6	0
<b>EYE</b>	5	4/4	-1

CURRENT TEAM – Brooklyn Robins (BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 107 Games, .217 BA, .651 OPS, 7 HR's, -0.10 WAR

Drafted highly because of his elite defensive skills, but projected to be average at best with the bat.

Analysis – MacCrain could have benefited greatly from just a slight bump in his Talents, however they went slightly the other way. MacCrain is now projecting to be a nice backup Outfielder and late inning Defensive Replacement. However it's unlikely MacCrain will be able to secure a starting role in the BBA.

**JUST MISSED?.... TBD**

## 9<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 9<sup>th</sup> Pick)



### Hawaii Tropics



**3B Dave Tallent**

**AGE 24**

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	7	7/7	0
<b>POWER</b>	8	7/8	0
<b>EYE</b>	5	4/4	-1

CURRENT TEAM – Hawaii Tropics (BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 295 Games, .244 BA, .730 OPS, 42 HR's, 2.0 WAR

Solid Offensive Third Basemen

Analysis – Maybe brought up to the BBA a little early, Dave Tallent has struggled to make in impact early in his career. However, he's still projected to be a solid hitter and is average defensively. Hawaii needs Tallent to step up in 2037 and prove he's ready for the Big Show.

**NEEDS TO PROVE HE'S BBA READY**

**10<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 10<sup>th</sup> Pick)****Phoenix Talons****P NATE HORSWILL****AGE 22**

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>STUFF</b>	8	8/8	0
<b>MOVEMENT</b>	7	6/6	-1
<b>CONTROL</b>	7	7/7	0

CURRENT TEAM – Phoenix Talons (BBA)

9 Games, 3 Wins – 6 Losses, 6.79 ERA, 1.61 WHIP, -0.2 WAR

Nice Three Pitch Starter with over-all good Potential

Analysis – Only the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pitcher taken in a weak Pitching Draft Pool, Horswill has been slow to develop to date, especially his changeup. However, 2037 may be the year for Nate to emerge and make an impact as a #2 or #3 starter.

**TBD....**

## WORTH REVIEWING

### 11<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 11<sup>th</sup> Pick)



**Mexico City Aztecs (Formerly Omaha Barnstormers)**



**CF Willard Gagne**  
AGE 25

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POTS (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	7	7/7	0
<b>POWER</b>	6	7/7	+1
<b>EYE</b>	6	6/6	0

CURRENT TEAM – Mexico City (BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 497 Games, .286 BA, .839 OPS, 74 HR's, 9.9 WAR

Projected solid Defensive Outfielder with a solid Left Hand Hitting Bat

Analysis – While not as good defensively as Mitch, he's still playing Centerfield for Mexico City at the BBA level. He struggle a bit there in 2035 with 14 errors, but over-all is holding his own at the position (1.003 EFF in 2036). He's a plus Hitter and is able to face Left Hand Pitching competently (unlike Wes Savage). Blew out his knee mid-way through the 2036, but is looking to return early in the 2037 season.

**RUNNER UP BEST 2032 PICK (FOR NOW?)**

## WORTH REVIEWING

### 16<sup>th</sup> OVER-ALL PICK (Round 1 – 16<sup>th</sup> Pick)



Atlantic City



**CF Virgil Shafer**  
AGE 21

<b>RATING</b>	<b>POTENTIALS (2032)</b>	<b>ACT/POTS (CURRENT)</b>	<b>POT +/-</b>
<b>CONTACT</b>	6	7/7	+1
<b>POWER</b>	7	8/8	+1
<b>EYE</b>	5	6/6	+1

CURRENT TEAM – New Orleans Crawdads (BBA)

CAREER BBA Totals – 175 Games, .271 BA, .845 OPS, 41 HR's, 3.3 WAR

Projected average Defensive Centerfielder with a solid Right Hand Hitting Bat

Analysis – At draft time, Virgil looked to have a nice shot at BBA career. Unlike #8 Pick MacCrain, Shafer benefitted from a nice across the board bump to his talents and it pushed him into contention for 2036 Rookie of the Year. Virgil banged 40 homeruns and had an .862 OPS in his first full season. Time will tell if he's destined for Centerfield or will make the transition like Mitch to Right Field.

**NICE SURPRISE**



## A Moment of Baseball History

*Is there anything more American than the good ol' hidden ball trick? It's the Darwinian answer to the adage that if you're not cheatin' you're not trying hard enough. Or is it? I mean, the idea of taking a base while the ball is in flight to the plate is called a "stolen base," but it's in the rules that you can steal. And while some folks think it's too tricksie, the hiddenball trick is sanctioned, too. So it's not really cheating so much as it is institutionalized trickery. Regardless, I got interested in this, and found lots of baseball goodness.*

Per Bill Deane, who was a Senior Research Associate at the Baseball Hall of Fame for some time—and who was so into the hidden ball trick that he wrote a book about it—there have been 264 occasions when this play has been successfully pulled off. This makes it about as rare as a no-hitter—though, like the No-no, the hidden ball trick is slowly turning into a thing of the past.

I saw somewhere that Bill James once attributed the first hidden ball trick to a guy in something like 1878, but I can't find reference to it now. But Deane disagrees, noting the trick is said to have been around since the 1869, but crediting the first documented hidden ball trick to have been pulled off in 1872 during a game pitting Philadelphia against the ruffians from Baltimore. It was May 20<sup>th</sup>, to be precise. By the late 1870s, it was no longer a novelty.

Here are a few cool tidbits to take home with you:

☺ In June of 1884, Chicago's Bill Sunday was caught off first base, prompting *The Sporting Life* reporter to note that "Any player stupid enough to be caught in that manner deserves a fine."

☺ In 1907, Detroit's Billy Coughlin pulled the trick when he hid the ball under his arm at third base and caught Cubbie "Rabbit" Slagle to step off the bag. This was particularly notable as having happened in the middle of Game 2 of the world series.

☺ Coughlin was a wizard with the play, having been the instigator of seven such plays during his career. Gene Michael pulled four of them. Marty Barrett of the Red Sox pulled it off two times in two weeks, both times against the California Angels.

☺ Speaking of Coughlin, sports writer Tim Murnane ripped Coughlin in the press after one of his tricks, suggesting the play was unsportsmanlike, and should be banned. The Detroit Times responded by noting how odd it was that Murnane was offended, seeing as Murnane himself executed a hidden ball trick 23 years earlier when he played in the National Association. See, totally American.

☺ In May of 1915, Cardinal second baseman Millard Huggins caught Redstocking runner Tommy Leach napping at second. It turns out that the second base ump missed it, but home plate umpire Cy Rigler rang Leach up when asked for help. Reds manager Buck Herzog burst out of the dugout, and a few moments later the two were in a full-fledged fistfight. After the game, both were arrested and fined \$5 for disturbing the peace.

☺ In September of 1918, Detroit's George Harper was caught off third base while he was watching airplanes circle the stadium. The season was cut short due to World War I, and Harper explained his inattention by announcing he'd been thinking of joining the Navy.



# Brewster Baseball Association Hall of Fame

## Five of 2037 Class Inducted

With 29 of 30 GMs voting this season, the BBA has inducted five players into its Hall of Fame. Induction required 75% of the vote, or 22 votes. No player made 100% of ballots, but three—Mingo Boone, Gary “Coop” Estes, and Antonio Sanchez—appeared on 25 ballots (86%). Hunter “Boogie” Eisenhower (23 votes) and Nelson “Slider” Ramirez (22 votes) rounded out the class.

### VETERAN COMMITTEE PICKS SHUT-OUT

Veteran Committee addition Carl MacNeill led the ballot for the rest, garnering 57% of the vote, a nice showing, but not enough to turn the needle his way. Nigel Halime registered only 24%. Both Boone Carlyle and Juan Castillo once again avoided the reaper’s cut by a single vote.

### MOVERS AND LOSERS

Several players showed improved impression this season. Interest in Mike Love bumped from 35% to 45%. Eduardo Lopez felt his love jump from 32% to 45%, and Diego Moreno jumped from 23% to 45%. Kal El moved from 21% to 37%.

The big loser appeared to be Martin Felix, who saw his support drop from 36% to 28%.

Two players, Estebahn Contreras and Antonio Correa, received less than 10% of the vote, and will be removed from the ballot next season.

# 2037 HOF INDUCTEES

## Antonio Sanchez

First Base



Active Career: 2018-2035 (20 seasons)  
2561 hits, 583 HR, 1768 RBI, .265/.374/.497 56 WAR  
Landis Champion: 2022  
Sawyer Silk Award: 2024  
3-Time Charles Pucket Golden Bat  
2-time Doubleday Series MVP

5-Time All-Star

### Hall of Fame Metrics: (average HoF)

JAWS: 46.5 (55)  
Black Ink: 17 (22)  
Gray Ink: 145 (105)  
HOF Standards: 51 (53)  
HOF Monitor: 103 (123)

## Hunter "Boogie" Eisenhower

Third Base



Active Career: 2019-2036 (18 seasons)  
2450 hits, 402 HR, 1340 RBI, .275/.365/.470 75.2 WAR  
Landis Winner (2028 - Huntsville)  
7-Time Charles Pucket Golden Bat  
6-Time All-Star

### Hall of Fame Metrics: (average HoF)

JAWS: 60.8 (60)  
Black Ink: 3 (23)  
Gray Ink: 81 (109)  
HOF Standards: 52 (53)  
HOF Monitor: 63 (126)

## Gary "Coop" Estes

Starting Pitcher



Active Career: 2017-2035 (19 seasons)  
240-127, 3.58 ERA, 2935 K, 70.6 WAR  
Landis Champion: 2027  
2018 Nebraska Award  
6-Time All-Star

### Hall of Fame Metrics: (average HoF)

JAWS: 56 (72)  
Black Ink: 11 (34)  
Gray Ink: 148 (162)  
HOF Standards: 54 (49)  
HOF Monitor: 143 (125)

## Mingo Boone

Starting Pitcher



Active Career: 2016-2034 (19 seasons)  
239-156, 3.58 ERA, 2865 K, 73.2 WAR  
Landis Champion: 2022  
Nebraska Award: 2021, 2026  
6-Time All-Star  
Comeback Player of the Year: 2030

### Hall of Fame Metrics: (average HoF)

JAWS: 61 (72)  
Black Ink: 17 (34)  
Gray Ink: 166 (162)  
HOF Standards: 48 (49)  
HOF Monitor: 112 (125)

## Nelson "Slider" Ramirez

Starting Pitcher



Active Career: 2020-2034 (15 seasons)  
175-139, 3.40 ERA, 2902 K, 68.8 WAR  
Nebraska Award: 20215, 2026, 2029  
4-Time All-Star

### Hall of Fame Metrics: (average HoF)

JAWS: 58.4 (72)  
Black Ink: 66 (34)  
Gray Ink: 191 (162)  
HOF Standards: 40 (49)  
HOF Monitor: 111 (125)

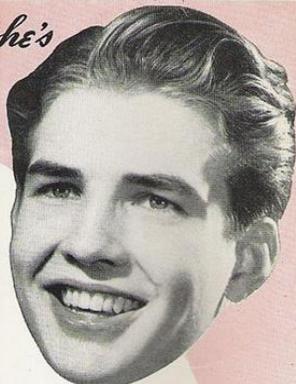
2037 HOF Voting	Votes	Pct
<a href="#">Mingo Boone</a>	25	86.21%
<a href="#">Gary "Coop" Estes</a>	25	86.21%
<a href="#">Antonio Sanchez</a>	25	86.21%
<a href="#">Hunter Eisenhower</a>	23	79.31%
<a href="#">Nelson "Slider" Ramirez</a>	22	75.86%
<a href="#">Carl MacNeill</a>	17	58.62%
<a href="#">Lionel Sanguinacco</a>	14	48.28%
<a href="#">Eduardo Lopez</a>	13	44.83%
<a href="#">Mike Love</a>	13	44.83%
<a href="#">Diego Moreno</a>	13	44.83%
<a href="#">Kal "Man of Steel" El</a>	11	37.93%
<a href="#">Maxwell Weiss, Jr.</a>	10	34.48%
<a href="#">Martin Felix</a>	8	27.59%
<a href="#">Juan Jose Ornelas</a>	7	24.14%
<a href="#">Rafael Bido</a>	7	24.14%
<a href="#">Juan Pablo</a>	7	24.14%
<a href="#">Niguel Halime</a>	7	24.14%
<a href="#">Boone Carlyle</a>	3	10.34%
<a href="#">Juan Castillo</a>	3	10.34%
<a href="#">Esteban Contreras</a>		0.00%
<a href="#">Antonio Correa</a>		0.00%

# Thanks for reading!

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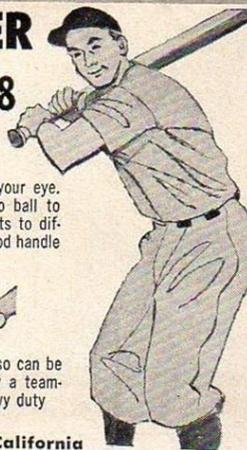
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