

BREWSTER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION 2061 MEDIA GUIDE



GM NASON'S BAD BIRDS CAPTURE 2ND TITLE IN 4 YEARS



BREWSTER



BASEBALL ASSOCIATION



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2061



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THE YEAR THAT WAS (2060)

Caleca Award

Year in Review, with Haiku (*Nathan Garrison*),

Hall of the Famous (*Matt Rectenwald, +*)

Other Stuff - Ron Collins,)

FEATURES

Meseck Accuses JR of... (*Jessie Ramirez*)

Of Minor Importance (*John Momberg*)

GERTIE'S BINGO (*Mike Simon*)

The 2059 Rule 5 Draft (*Matt Rectenwald*)

Nuggets (*John Momberg*)

The Morales Awards – 2040/2041 (*Rob McMonigal*)

Big League Chew (*Tim Meseck/Nathan Garrison*)

Sujoy the Collector (*Renato Umali*)

One Man's All-Time GBC Team (*Matt Rectenwald*)

Money for Nothing, Where's Your PPT? (*Ron Collins*)

Good Cop/Bad Cop (*James Walker/Chad Nason*)

THE PROJECTION ROOM

2061 Preamble (*Ron Collins*)

JL Atlantic (*James Walker*)

JL Frontier (*Chuck Valenches*)

FL Heartland (*Brian Pinnell*)

FL Pacific (*Ron Collins*)

GBC ASFAMOC (*Woody Donahue*)

GBC EurAsia (*Jim Slade*)

Cover Design (Mike Simon) – Publishing (Ron Collins)



SPECIAL FEATURE

Sean Marko's Day of Reckoning

(*Matt Rectenwald, Chad Nason, Sean Marko, David Burcicki*)



The Year That Was

**THE YEAR WAS
THAT WAS**

*A
Look
Back to
2060!*

2060 Caleca Award



Our writing and other contributions are what make the Brewster the community it is. Each season the BBA Community Awards the finest (meaning most fun!?) writing on the Brewster Forums with the Caleca Award. Vic Caleca was a fine writer, a great competitor, and one of the bright becomes of joy we were lucky enough to have in our league. When in doubt, be a Vic.

Your 2060 nominees for the Caleca Award:

<p><u>ChuckV</u> Edmonton Fulfills Kids Make a Wish and Trashes Phoenix</p> <p><u>Shoeless.db</u> Waco 2060.03 The Movie</p> <p><u>ae37jr</u> The Answer is Blowing in the Wind</p> <p><u>Trebro</u> 2060.34 18 Innings by the Numbers 2060.46 Meeting off the Mound</p>	<p><u>CTBrewCrew</u> 2060.05- DOWN GOES FRAISER!!!</p> <p><u>R.Umali</u> The Beef on 88.8 WSOS (excerpt from 9/4/2060 broadcast)</p> <p><u>lordtoffee</u> Brooklyn State of Mind: Late Night At Denny's (2060.8)</p> <p><u>chicoruiz</u> 60.2- Is Okay Okay??? 60.3- Bessi, as in "Messy"</p>	<p><u>JRamirez</u> Kernel of Truth 60.45 - The Muslin Affair, Part 1 60.46 - The Muslin Affair, Part 2 60.55 - The Muslin Affair, part 3 60.59 - Walter Wilhelm fuming about MPR broadcast coverage of "The Muslin Affair" 60.60 - Lawsuit against Mistaken Public Radio</p>
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Find Our Forum At: <http://montybrewster.net/forums/index.php>

YOUR 2060 CALECA AWARD WINNER

Rob McMonigal

18 Innings by the Numbers

by Nate Copper, Special for the Yellow Springs Journal



A series of numerical notes on an eighteen-inning game between the Yellow Springs Nine and the Long Beach Surfers played on May 28th/29th, 2020. Ironically, not a single thing in the game was a team or league record. But that doesn't mean we can't enjoy digging into the numbers:

36,202: Paid attendance for the game.

390: Number of minutes in the game.

100: Pitches thrown by Yellow Springs Nine Starter Hans Schwarzacher, who lasted 4.1 innings.

98: Combined ages of the Yellow Springs Nine left fielders in the game (Majd bin Nawaf, Arvin Duggan, and Bill Bowers).

81: Combined ages of the Long Beach Surfers center fielders in the game (Lao Kum, Ekela Kirila, and Emilio Reyes).

56: Number of players left on base by both teams (Long Beach 33, Yellow Springs 23).

33.75: Highest ERA for a pitcher who played in the game (Joe Jackson of the Nine, who reduced his gaudy number to 13.50 with 2 scoreless innings).

39: Age of the oldest player in the game (Mal Fountain, of the Nine).

31: Total strikeouts by both teams (Long Beach 13, Yellow Springs 18).

11: Consecutive innings in which the Surfers went scoreless.

9: Number of pinch-hitters (Long Beach 4, Yellow Springs 5).

9: Highest number of at-bats for any player (Emílio Reyes for Long Beach).

3: Total double-plays turned by the Nine.

2: Total injuries to Nine players (Majd bin Nawaf and Mal Fountain).

1: Number of people who find this stuff interesting.

0

Either team's playoff chances.

[Nate Copper appears courtesy of 42069, a statistics website putting the fun back in numbers]



REVIEW IN

HAIKU

HOW THEY FINISHED

LEAGUE STANDINGS ATLANTIC DIVISION

Team	W	L	WPct	GB	R	RA
Charm City Jimmies	94	68	.580	-	868	678
Jacksonville Zombies	88	74	.543	6	806	761
Charlotte Flyers	87	75	.537	7	771	700
New Orleans Crawdads	84	78	.519	10	741	728
Montreal Blazers	78	84	.481	16	658	698
Rockville Pikemen	76	86	.469	18	672	761
Brooklyn Robins	74	88	.457	20	811	876
Atlantic City Gamblers	68	94	.420	26	713	823

Review in Haiku – Nathan Garrison

CHARM CITY JIMMIES

*Atlantic winner
Back to back for nine straight years
Doubleday exit*

JACKSONVILLE ZOMBIES

*Zombies steady pace
Winning record in each month
Except October*

CHARLOTTE FLYERS

*Bandit brought good luck
The team went on a big run
Bluebirds were too much*

NEW ORLEANS CRAWDADS

*Crawdads four great months
Rough August and September
No playoffs this year*

MONTREAL BLAZERS

*Tom Allen was great
Pitching was a strength for sure
Now Bob gets the arms*

ROCKVILLE PIKEMEN

*Good young players here
Alex Payne is fantastic
Down one win this year*

BROOKLYN ROBINS

*Cano to Brooklyn
Oh my God how could he though
twenty-one more wins*

ATLANTIC CITY GAMBLERS

*Bill Kuhn in Rule Five
Niscanci signed a contract
More wins but last place*

LEAGUE STANDINGS FRONTIER DIVISION

Team	W	L	WPct	GB	R	RA
Calgary Pioneers	100	62	.617	-	877	727
Boise Spuds	89	73	.549	11	802	700
Las Vegas Hustlers	87	76	.534	13½	777	757
Rocky Mountain Oysters	86	77	.528	14½	879	793
Mexico City Aztecs	77	85	.475	23	735	750
Phoenix Talons	71	91	.438	29	764	863
Austin Shredders	70	92	.432	30	707	858
San Antonio Outlaws	68	94	.420	32	678	788

Review in Haiku – Nathan Garrison

CALGARY PIONEERS

*One hundred win year
Zero wins in postseason
Disappointing end*

BOISE SPUDS

*Solid all year long
Finally back in playoffs
Vegas shut them down*

LAS VEGAS HUSTLERS

*Four percent to dance
Seventeen and four finish
One win from Brewster*

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OYSTERS

*Game one sixty three
Built an eight one lead early
Couldn't hold it though*

MEXICO CITY AZTECS

*A losing record
The first one since forty eight
Amazing run ends*

PHOENIX TALONS

*Top ten draft pick earned
The Liberty were still great
Will Denny's still pay*

AUSTIN SHREDDERS

*The new team name rocks
Austin came to watch them play
Pitching let them down*

SAN ANTONIO

*Ninety four losses
Outscored by one hundred ten
Better days ahead*

LEAGUE STANDINGS HEARTLAND DIVISION

Team	W	L	WPct	GB	R	RA
Nashville Bluebirds	115	47	.710	-	959	611
Twin Cities River Monsters	107	55	.660	8	850	639
Des Moines Kernels	87	75	.537	28	814	734
Chicago Black Sox	74	88	.457	41	694	749
Omaha Cyclones	73	89	.451	42	749	915
Madison Wolves	64	98	.395	51	663	762
Yellow Springs Nine	64	98	.395	51	654	835
Louisville Sluggers	52	110	.321	63	623	925

Review in Haiku – Nathan Garrison

NASHVILLE BLUEBIRDS

*Here comes Twin Cities
Nevermind Bluebirds still reign
Nashville crowned the champs*

TWIN CITIES RIVER MONSTERS

*Twenty five and two
Can they unseat the Bluebirds
The answer is no*

DES MOINES KERNELS

*Sixty four team news
Add that to playoff money
Good year in Des Moines*

CHICAGO BLACK SOX

*Winning September
The Beef captures the fan voice
Sweet card collection*

OMAHA CYCLONES

*Not one winning month
Pitching struggled all season
No more Negrete*

MADISON WOLVES

*Same record as last
Gertie's girls are back at home
Marching Ants spotlight*

YELLOW SPRINGS NINE 2060

*Big offseason spend
Led to big disappointment
Thank God for Dave Lee*

LOUISVILLE SLUGGERS 2060

*Most losses in league
Last in pitching close with bats
Despair Squared for fans*

LEAGUE STANDINGS PACIFIC DIVISION

Team	W	L	WPct	GB	R	RA
Sacramento Mad Popes	108	54	.667	-	795	515
Portland Lumberjacks	88	74	.543	20	816	748
San Fernando Bears	82	80	.506	26	722	661
Vancouver Mounties	80	82	.494	28	594	638
Valencia Stars	79	83	.488	29	723	747
Hawaii Tropics	77	85	.475	31	664	690
Bikini Krill	76	86	.469	32	731	802
Long Beach Surfers	70	92	.432	38	701	781

Review in Haiku – Nathan Garrison

[SACRAMENTO MAD POPES](#)

*Won the Pacific
Green eyed woman does not cheer
No ring for the M'opes*

[PORTLAND LUMBERJACKS](#)

*Repeating is hard
Kernel of truth in defeat
Repeating is hard*

[SAN FERNANDO BEARS](#)

*Bounce back from rough year
Wildcard foe has way more wins
Playoff revenue*

[VANCOUVER MOUNTIES](#)

*Love the new logo
September swoon no playoffs
Aaron's bored at work*

[VALENCIA STARS](#)

*Stars were shining bright
Then August and September
Extinguished the light*

[HAWAII TROPICS](#)

*Early months were rough
Yodo Fungo Sato claimed
Then a strong finish*

[BIKINI KRILL](#)









*Earth's team started slow
Ron hates Sam Nebraska now
No twenty win streak*

[LONG BEACH SURFERS](#)





*Playoff streak is done
Nothing is in the water
Are we so certain*

2060 BBA Playoffs

Geoghegan Round

  CHA def. JAX 3-0	  LV def. BOI 3-1	  DM def. POR 3-2	  TWC def. SFB 3-1
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Doubleday Round

  CHA def. CLG 4-0	  LV def. CCJ 4-1	  NSH def. DM 4-1	  TWC def. SAC 4-2
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Cartwright Round

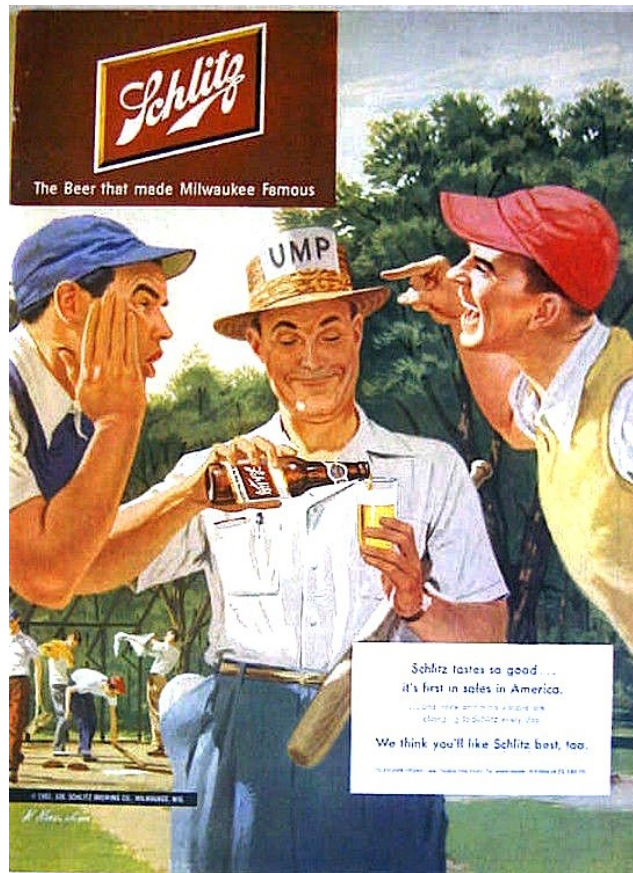
  CHA def. LV 4-3	  NSH def. TWC 4-1
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Monty Brewster Memorial Series

  NSH def. CHA 4-1
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2060 BREWSTER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION CHAMPION





REVIEW IN

HAIKU

HOW THEY FINISHED

LEAGUE STANDINGS EURASIA DIVISION

Team	W	L	WPct	GB	R	RA
<u>Moscow Thunder Bears</u>	96	66	.593	-	787	643
<u>Jerusalem Hebrew Hammers</u>	85	77	.525	11	782	762
<u>Tokyo Pearls</u>	83	79	.512	13	763	768
<u>London Monarchs</u>	74	88	.457	22	676	738
<u>Athens Fighting Centaurs</u>	64	98	.395	32	650	823

Review in Haiku – Nathan Garrison

MOSCOW THUNDER BEARS

*From worst to first place
Dashevsy made the right calls
Could not beat Cairo*

TOKYO PEARLS

*Beautiful logo
Came so close to the playoffs
Reclusivie GM*

ATHENS FIGHTING CENTAURS

*Not much to smile for
Worst record in the whole league
Time to turn the page*

JERUSALEM HEBREW HAMMERS

*Back to the playoffs
Lost to the Pharaohs again
Try again next year*

LONDON MONARCHS

*Beteev pitched so well
Disastrous second half fall
Woody will learn slang*

LEAGUE STANDINGS AFSAMOC DIVISION

Team	W	L	WPct	GB	R	RA
Cairo Pharaohs	98	64	.605	-	784	598
Buenos Aires Brisas	87	75	.537	11	783	693
Johannesburg Gold	78	84	.481	20	704	779
Sao Paulo Pilots	75	87	.463	23	703	778
Sydney Sharks	70	92	.432	28	694	744

Review in Haiku – Nathan Garrison

CAIRO PHARAOHS

*Back to back titles
Will Breezy ever leave home
Nice PowerPoint slides*

JOHANNESBURG GOLD

*Not a banner year
Rotation top was solid
Yanez was a stud*

SYDNEY SHARKS

*Dead in the water
The Sharks just could not score runs
Joe Unknown no more*

BUENOS AIRES BRISAS

*Quinn Greene at the plate
Omeragic on the mound
Still lost to Moscow*

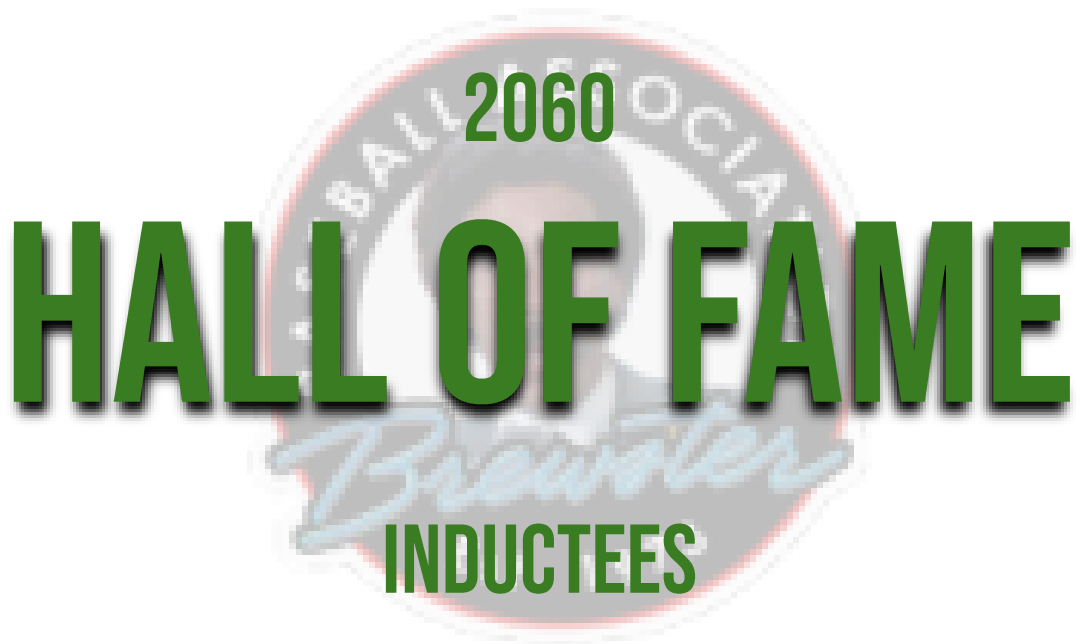
SÃO PAULO PILOTS

*Avoided cellar
Hashimoto is a beast
Geddes dog returns*

GBC Playoffs



2060 GLOBAL BASEBALL CONSORTIUM CHAMPION



2060
HALL OF FAME
INDUCTEES

2060 is a Brewster Baseball Association Hall of Fame Class for the ages! A whopping six new members were elected, with arguably even more deserving players on the outside looking in. In the last decade, the electorate has never tabbed more than two players in a single vote, so this is a truly amazing group. In fact, 2049 is the last time more than two players were elected (three were named: Luis Gracia, Arthur Dempster, Tai hoi Wie).

It's hitting heavy, just as the last couple of decades have been in general (in fact, the above-mentioned 2049 class may have represented the shift from strong pitching to strong hitting). Steven Collins III lived up to the genetic expectations (his grandfather Steve Collins was arguably the best pure hitter in the history of the league) by finishing just shy of the All-Time BBA Hits record (he finished fourth all-time with 3851, just 49 hits behind Bopper Kengos). Daniel Pepper was a premier hitter at both second base and shortstop who also fielded the positions well. Julio Barajas was an incredible hitter, and a postseason hero several times in his career. David "Horrible" Simpson was a consistent power threat and always seemed to find himself on great teams. Théo Bourges joins his former Louisville outfield mate Semei Kwakou in the Hall of Fame. And finally, after a long wait for entry, the league named Danya "Satan's Whelp" Tchekanov to the Hall, validating a career in which the highs were incredibly high.

RF David 'Horrible' Simpson
 Sacramento Mad Popes
 2039-2058, Inducted 2060



G:	2893	WAR:	85.9
Hits:	2866	Avg:	0.291
2B:	561	OBP:	0.398
3B:	22	SLG:	0.548
HR:	642	OPS:	0.945
RBI:	1904		
SB:	52		

All Star: 2039-2040, 2042-2043, 2045-2047, 2049, 2052, 2054, 2057 (11x)
RoY: 2039

Add'l Teams: Twin Cities River Monsters, Jacksonville Hurricanes, Yellow Springs Nine

David "Horrible" Simpson gained his tongue-in-cheek nickname due to his consistently menacing offensive prowess over 20 BBA seasons. An 11-time All-Star and the recipient of five Pucketts, Simpson was horrifying for opposing pitchers to face, slashing .291/.398/.548 over his career and compiling 642 homeruns.

(Sadly, Nashville converted him to a coach despite never having played for their major league club, forever tarnishing the great man Simpson was).

Shoeless

3B Steven 'Scooter' Collins III
 Edmonton Jackrabbits
 2036-2059, Inducted 2060



G:	3120	WAR:	79.8
Hits:	3851	Avg:	0.305
2B:	639	OBP:	0.359
3B:	110	SLG:	0.455
HR:	343	OPS:	0.814
RBI:	1490		
SB:	717		


All Star: 2038, 2040-2042, 2044, 2053-2054 (7x)
GG (3B): 2037, 2043, 2052

Add'l Teams: Phoenix Talons, Boise Spuds, Las Vegas Hustlers, Mexico City Aztecs

"I did not really get to know Steve until his final season in Edmonton. He was glad to be back where it started and back in his hometown. Even though he did not rack up a ton of at bats, he served as a mentor and teacher to many of your young hitters which is why we offered him a coaching contract when he retired. Stephen Collins is the first ever player to enter the Legends Gallery in a Jackrabbits uniform and we are extremely proud of him. He was a championship caliber ballplayer who played hard everyday and his talents helped every club he ever played for. A managers dream and a young temmates best friend."

Chuck Valenches

2B Daniel Pepper
 Rockville Pikemen
 2041-2059, Inducted 2060



G:	2764	WAR:	92.9
Hits:	3091	Avg:	0.290
2B:	635	OBP:	0.353
3B:	72	SLG:	0.504
HR:	502	OPS:	0.857
RBI:	1698		
SB:	152		


All Star: 2043-2048, 2050, 2052, 2055-2056 (10x)
GG (2B): 2048, 2049, 2051, 2056

Add'l Teams: Vancouver Mounties, Valencia Stars,
 Jacksonville Hurricanes, Mexico City Aztecs

“The man was just a superstar from the first minute he walked out into Owen’s Ordinary. Maybe the MVP of the second half of Rockville’s dynasty. He made a huge difference getting Jacksonville back on track too. An all-time great.”

Aaron Weiner

RF Júlio Barajas
 Rockville Pikemen
 2039-2057, Inducted 2060



G:	2745	WAR:	69.1
Hits:	3416	Avg:	0.326
2B:	744	OBP:	0.377
3B:	27	SLG:	0.546
HR:	504	OPS:	0.923
RBI:	1923		
SB:	17		

All Star: 2044, 2047-2048, 2054-2055 (5x)

“Julio was the most professional hitter we had in Rockville, and the best pure batsman in the franchise since Frank Thomas III. He was always in top shape, never took an at-bat off, could hit anyone or anything. It was a real joy to see him retire with Rockville and get into the top 20 all time in hits, because the league will remember him the way I do.”

Aaron Weiner

CF Théo Bourges
 Louisville Sluggers
 2041-2057, Inducted 2060



G:	2409	WAR:	83.5
Hits:	2651	Avg:	0.284
2B:	446	OBP:	0.343
3B:	142	SLG:	0.533
HR:	530	OPS:	0.876
RBI:	1579		
SB:	445		

All Star: 2041-2044, 2046-2047, 2049-2050 (8x)
RoY: 2041
MVP: 2042, 2044
GG (LF): 2042, 2055


Add'l Teams: Nashville Bluebirds, Seattle Storm

"I can't say enough good things about Semai (sic?) Kwakou... he was the heartbeat of... what? You asked me about Theo Bourges? Never heard of him. Are you sure I can't just talk about KWAK? No? OK. <clears throat>

I can't say enough good things about Theo Bourges... he was the heartbeat of the Louisville Sluggers. I loved Theo like the fake son I never fake had. I couldn't be prouder of his accomplishments, because when I watched him play fake baseball, I never felt more like a fake owner/GM. All the credit belongs to him, except for the large portion of it that is mine."

Shaw

P Danya 'Satan's Whelp' Tchekanov
 Long Beach Surfers
 2038-2053, Inducted 2060



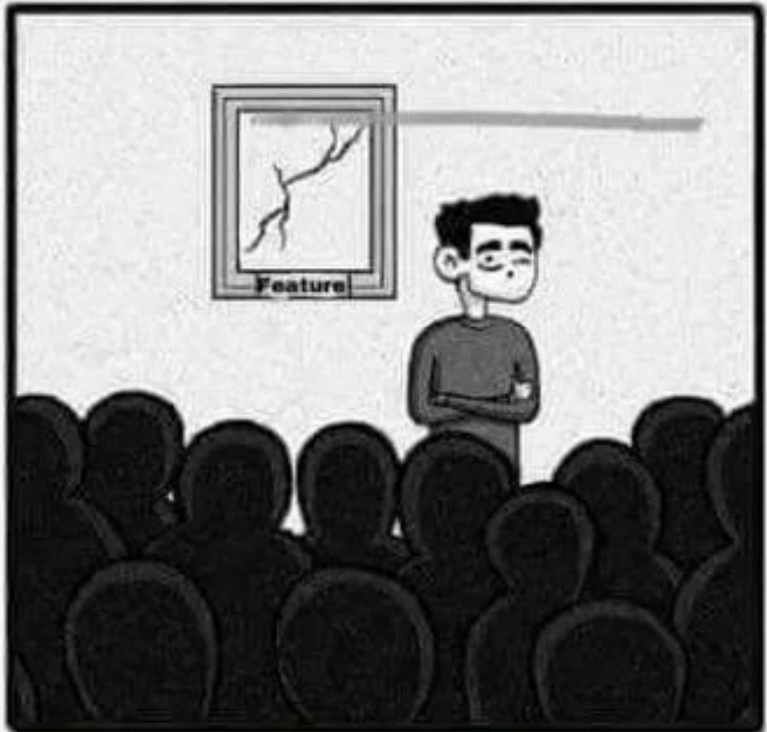
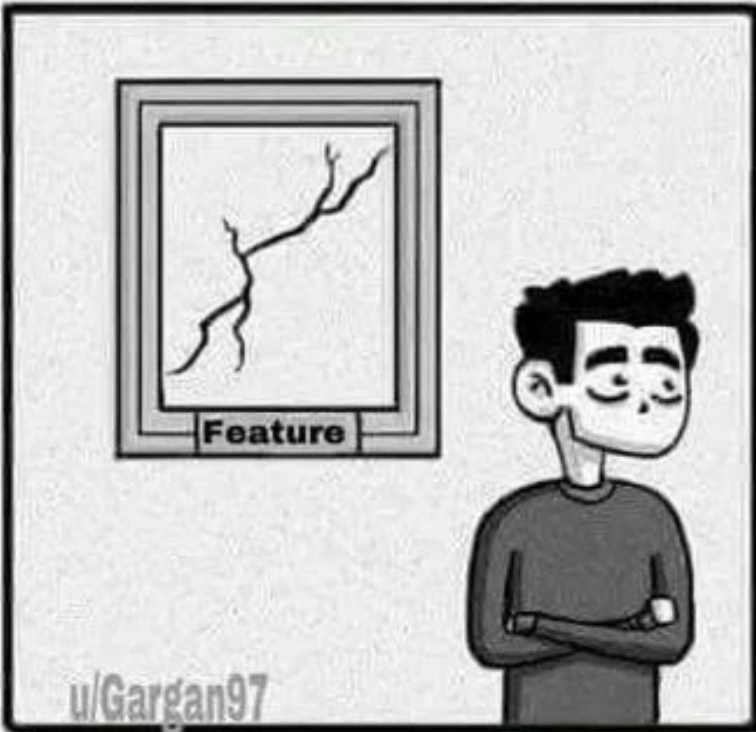
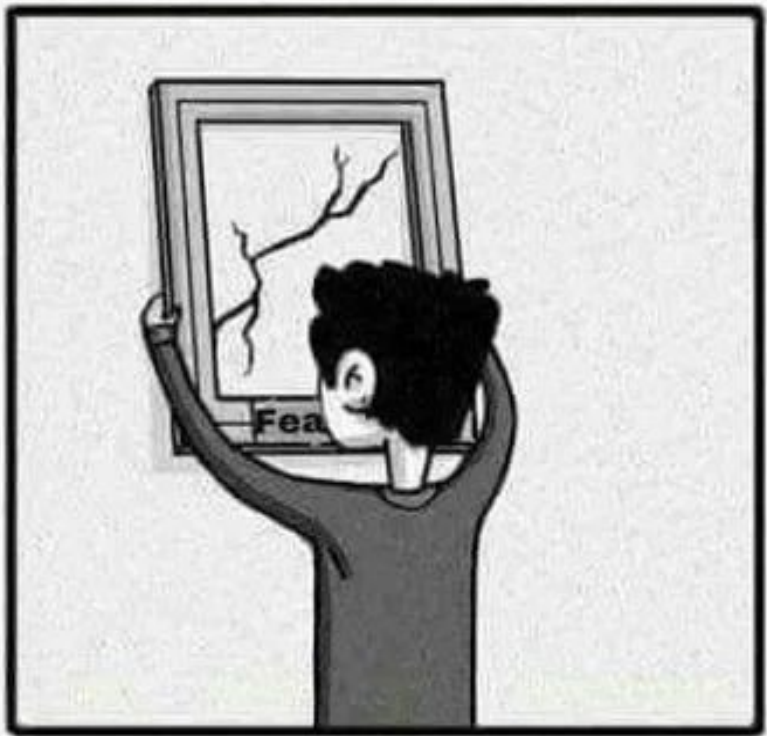
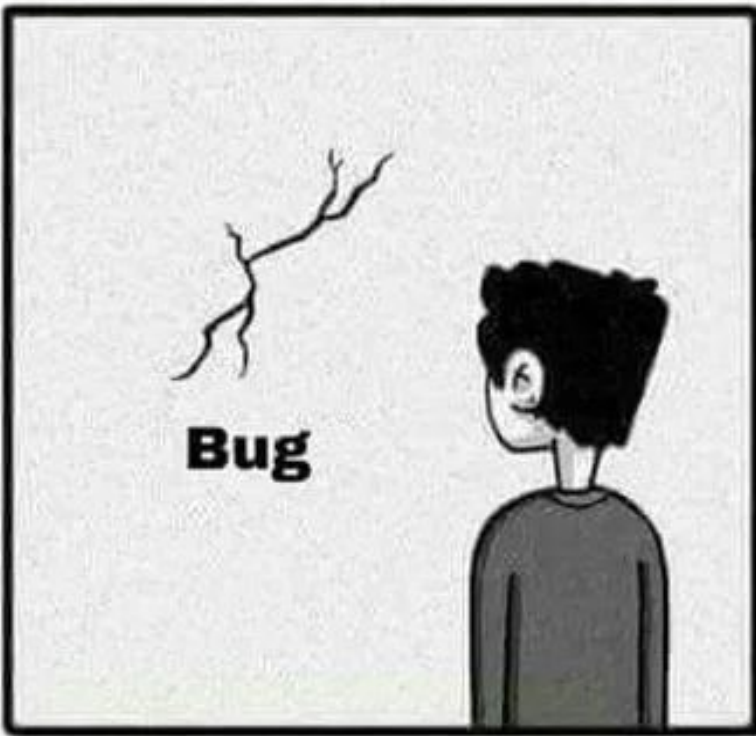
G:	500	WAR:	68.7
GS:	469	ERA:	3.51
IP:	2833.0		
W-L:	179-134		
SV:	0		
K:	2422		
BB:	575		

All Star: 2040-2042, 2044-2048, 2050 (9x)
Cy: 2041, 2050

Add'l Teams: Rockville Pikemen, Portland Lumberjacks

"Danya Tchekanov was a true ace, an intense competitor, and a face of the franchise. His inclusion into the Hall of Fame is a final highlight to a remarkable career. Long Beach fans know just how lucky they are to have gotten to watch him make his mark on the BBA."

Lane



© sandserif

MEDIA GUIDE FEATURES



Meseck Accuses JR of Using OOTP 62 to Run the Kernels

Des Moines GM Jessie Ramirez Travels Time to Spill Some San Antonio Tea...or is that OO-Tea-P?

It's the year 2062. (in some form or fashion)

"When I was younger," Tim Meseck avowed, "it wasn't the Hall of Fame that had OOTP features, it was OOTP, I think OOTP25—that bastard version—that had Hall of Fame features." Meseck is wearing a gray sweatshirt that says "Keep Austin out of S.A."

"Did you ever use them?" asks Ms. Jane Smuggins, reporter for the CBC, *Canadian Baseball Connection*. She sports a perfume called *Elle Éclat*, which pitches hints of bergamot, cardamom, and vanilla into the air.

"The HOF features? Hell no," I couldn't ever get, that is my Commodore couldn't ever load that feature. I was looking at a revolving cursor for like forever."

"Pardon me," Mr. Meseck—

"Call me 'Tim'."

"I think I prefer Mr. Meseck."

“As you like,” said Tim.

“Mr. Meseck, am I to understand you used a, you were using a Commodore Computer in— in 2024?” asks Ms. Smuggins.

“Yeah, sure, why not.,” TM replies. “I always loved the sound of my machine's floppy drive: *flit flit fleet, flit flit, fleet*. In addition, as you may be aware, I've always been a believer in Recycled Consumerism.”

“Ah, that explains, or some might say that explains the Outlaws' use of the local Y as your team's development lab.”

“Sure.” Meseck says. “We tell all our young men to go to the Y-M-C-A.” He stops, seems to focus, and appears to hear the tune of a Village People song in his head. As you do.

“Or that it—, that this recycled consumerism, as you call it, might explain the Outlaws' use of Hector Cano, Jr. as a center fielder.”

Meseck squirms. “I admit that didn't work out as I had hoped. He got wrecked. Then he got wrecked in the Riverwalk.” Meseck takes a whiff near his left armpit and yells to his s.o. “Buy some more Old Spice while you're at H.E.B., would you, Tammy?”

“Tammy and Tim,” Smuggins says. “That's such a cute couple's name.”

“Well, we're a cute couple.”

Smuggins smiles and says “The wreck on the Riverwalk?”

“Ah, that infamous Efoil incident,” Meseck continues. “I think old, or is it, young Mr. Cano thought he was Marty McFly out there on the Riverwalk, gliding above the San Antonio River. The thunder of the jets from Randolph in his ears. Those things can be downright murderous when they're directly overhead. Meseck pauses, as if recalling a rumble he hasn't heard in a half decade.

“Mr. Meseck?” suggests Smuggins.

Meseck continues: “You know, when Cano first came to San Antón he heard about the Riverwalk, and he tried to walk on the river, I mean literally—”

“He tried to walk on the river, *on the water?!*” says Smuggins.

“I said, ‘Jesus, Hector, you're not Jesus. You can't walk on the Riverwalk, it means you have a nice stroll, un paseo if you will, *along the river*’.” Anyway, he “graduated” to the Efoil, got it up to 45, hit the corner of Alamo and Crockett—you know, where that merciless San Antonio sunset slaves you into squinting—and smashed into Ripley's--”

“Ripley's Believe It or Not.”

“Yeah, right out in front of Ripley's. New-Model Mannequins flying everywhere. What a ruckus that made! Titanium against asphalt and chain-link. Let's see, I guess that would be the back side of Ripley's. In fact, we were fortunate Hector hit Ripley's. Any other firm would have sued the hell out of the Outlaws. But, Ripley's just made the whole ugly wreck a part of their display. *Asphalt Jungle à la Efoil*. Too bad, I was hoping Hector would've started more than 11 games for us that season. Well, at least we only had to eat \$40 million when we cut 'em.”

EDITOR'S COMMENT

PLEASE NOTE THAT INFORMATION TRAVEL THROUGH TIME CAN SOMETIMES BE WARPED. WE CANNOT CONFIRM THAT THE CHARACTER OF “TAMMY” IS REAL, SHE MAY OR MAY NOT EXIST IN SOME FORM OR ANOTHER, BUT WHO CAN SAY?

“Meanwhile,” Smuggins adds. “With that settlement he worked out with the Outlaws and the city he had become the new salesperson for Ripley's.”

“For Ripley's, for the Efoil, for his new hotel chain in his native Canada. Well, you, of the CBC should know about that,” Meseck says. “Hector became a phenomenal success while he was in the Alamo City. Phenomenal at everything but baseball. Still, we got that bin Tayyib that season too. And, well, you know, his career speaks for itself. 494 home runs, 13 doubles, six Chancey gloves.”

“A wonderful acquisition,” Smuggins says.

“And a wonderful man.”

“Now, Mr. Meseck, I'd like to focus, if we might, on your Team News that stated that one of your fellow GMs—”

“Jessie Ramirez.”

“Jessie Ramirez, that he, according to your claim, which you have to admit is astounding, that Mr. Ramirez was using a baseball simulator to operate his team, the Kernels.”

“Oh, it's not astounding at all, Misses Smuggins. I mean, this is *not* a case for Ripley's Believe It or Not. This is a case of it's so obvious why isn't everyone talking about it? I think some people shy from commenting on their fellow GMs. Well, me too, usually, I mean, almost always. I mean, I am a heads down kind of GM and you often won't think I'm here. But I'm here, all the time, evaluating players, scouting rookies—”

“You scout rookies?”

“Scout for possible rookies, I mean. And, you know, with baseball spread all over the globe that's a time-consuming task,” Meseck says.

“And you choose not to use the *Trainspotter* Instant Transporter, like most who can afford it?”

“Recycled Consumerism, Misses Smuggins, recycled consumerism. No, the steel hull of a Boeing Airbus beats that Trainspotter thing any day,” says Meseck. “But back to my point, you know this OOTP61 it has all these new metrics--”

“OOTP61 or 62?” Smuggins interrupts.

“Yeah, I think it was 62. That 61* version always throws me off. Anyway, these rubrics, these alleged tools, no one understands them. No one even uses them. Ron Collins, he pretends to. But everybody knows he's just kidding. And there's Ed, now he's got a head on him. His insights are the best. But then there's Jessie, there's JR, he tried to hide it, but he can't help yolpin' about his players, you know Bane McCoy IV, the Greatest GOAT ever. You know, walks per gram of Dutch-made cottage cheese, and Reiter Norman--”

“Ricardo's grandson.”

“Right, Reiter's real Roast Beef Rating. Supposed to measure a player's “beast boost” to team morale by his tailgate party contribs, there's SPF sun protection factor, TWEET, a player's so-called social media savvy and its influence on hitting, and there's SWAG factor, you know, all these OOTP61 things that nobody but nobody talks about because nobody knows what's going on under the hood, and, well, there's Jessie, JR, I honest to God think he's gone beyond his

fantasy team and is using the thing to run his Kernels. I mean, he ran out of popcorn ideas, and that Muslin Affair thing got old fast. I'm convinced he hasn't stepped into Edward Murphy Stadium in years, just dealing out those metrics from Io or wherever he is. That's another thing. Does this guy even exist? His team news could be written by AI, and no one's ever seen the dude."

"Wow. So you're going past your published allegations. Now you're saying you question if JR even exists?!"

Meseck pauses.

"You know," he says. "Lemme think on that. Let me cipher a bit. Better not rush into things. 'Fraid my adrenaline got to me. So many words, so much time, so much exposure, people'll start thinking *I* exist... Tammy!" he yells "Old Spice?! Okay?!"

Tammy sticks her head into the living room from the hallway. Her silver hair highlighted by a black Outlaws ribbon, inscribed with Red Outlaw O's throughout its length, "Dear, I have coupons for Zest. How about Zest?"

"All right, Zest, then." Meseck says. "And some more pork rinds!"

"Yes, dear, pork rinds, I'll be back within the hour. You have fun with Ms. Smuggins."

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OF “MINOR” IMPORTANCE

John Momborg takes us on a quick spin around the minor leagues of 2060

RUPERT HORN LEAGUE (AAA)



The Milwaukee Choppers stormed through the regular season with a 94-60 record, but found the upstart Brooks Fighting Pheasants to be a tough bunch of birds in the playoffs. The series ran the full five games, but eventually it was chopped Pheasant, as Milwaukee prevailed, with third baseman Jon Bevan earning MVP honors by going 10 for 19 with a homer.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMERS:

Orlando second baseman **Jesus Romero** notched a 3.7 WAR year in 2059, then topped it with a 5.3 mark in 2060 to lead the league. He would be a sure thing to make the majors in 2061 with any organization other than the player-rich Bluebirds.

Henry Arthur of Annapolis led the Horn in OBP with a .438 percentage. He added 24 homers, giving him a .958 OPS. This was his third year in AAA, so like Romero he's expecting to make the big time in 2061.

Left fielder **Sui-Chung Liang** was supposed to be a speed-over-power guy, but he confounded the scouting community by hitting 28 round-trippers against 12 steals for Saint Paul (the team, not the person). 226 hits, a .6200 slugging percentage... that'll do.

Of course, you have to mention the league's only .400 hitter, **Mike LeBlanc** of New Jersey. He has his faults- he seldom homers, he doesn't draw walks, and his infield range is the size of a welcome mat- but .401 is .401.

5.1 WAR sounds pretty good, right? What if I told you that Rockford's **Angel de la Cruz** compiled that number in only 76 games? You'd be impressed, right? Angel hit .372, slugged .603 and played a mean second base. If he had enough arm for shortstop, he'd be at the tippy-top of prospect lists.

The MUSIC of BASEBALL

A History and Catalog of Selected Works



George
Boziwick

Turning to the mound, **Jose Torres** of the San Francisco Doves led the league in ERA while going 16-5. And he's only 20 years old. He's showing why he was the first overall pick in the 2059 draft by Brooklyn.

Lefty **Jimmy Fisher** has been bouncing up and down from Rockville to Dodge City and back for a while now, and he's passed his 30th birthday, but you have to tip your hat to the year he had in AAA: 11-4 with a 2.78 ERA and 4.4 points of WAR.

Lincoln's **Mike Muller** was the only other full-time starter in the RHML to post an ERA under 3.00. His stat line: 17-7, 2.80 ERA, 1.28 WHIP, would indicate he'll get another shot in Omaha, but he just turned 26, so he's straddling the line between prospect and suspect.

Mars's **Steve Wauchope** led the league in saves, but his other numbers weren't all that exciting. The aged **Edgar Sosa** led in WAR at 5.3, but I'll be damned if I know how he managed that. He was 8-12 with a 4.88 ERA and a 1.47 WHIP. I'll never understand modern stats...

WARREN COX LEAGUE (AA)



When you play .700 baseball during the regular season, as the St. Joseph Butchers did, nothing less than a postseason triumph will suffice, and that's exactly what the Butchers did, sweeping the High Point Hammers in three games. Shortstop John Blood, third baseman Cesar Montes and pitcher Andy Blake were the stars of the championship series for St. Joseph.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMERS:

Otis Kolokotronis of Edmonton led the league in two key categories: WAR (6.1) and RBIs (116). Just for fun, he tossed in 16 homers and 31 steals. He's a right fielder by trade now, but he has the range and arm to be a viable CF candidate for the big club in a year or so, should the club decide to use him that way.

Badrak Owor of league champion St. Joseph batted .338 with a slugging percentage of .585, which led the league. He will strike out more than occasionally (102 times in 2060), but he has hit absolutely everywhere he's been, both before and after moving from the Twin Cities organization to the Louisville one.

First baseman **Leonardo Arevalo** of St Josephs (they were obviously totally loaded in 2060) slashed .348/.414/.568 in single-A Billings in 2059, then moved up to AA last year and didn't miss a beat, going .353/.421/.552.

Pablo Vasquez of New Bern won the AA stolen base crown with 58 steals in 69 attempts. He also registered a .405 on base percentage and played a fine second base. He was an 18th-round draft pick, and scouts aren't that high on him, but you can't argue with that kind of success. Number, as they say, don't lie.

Outfielder **Luis Parra** is having a weird career in the Jacksonville organization. He hit a very respectable .287 as a 23-year-old in AAA in 2058, but what did he get for his troubles? Demoted to AA. He hit .324 in '59 and .361 with a .420 OBP in 2060, as if to say, "Yoo-hoo... I'm still here" to management, but he's almost 26 now and it will be interesting to see how the Zombie brass regards him at this point in his career.

Pitching-wise, **Harry Spurlock** of High Point is now 21-6, with 1 1.64 ERA over two AA seasons. Not much left to prove.... **Glen Parker** of Louisville (the AA one) went 14-6, 2.30 with 233 strikeouts, which led the league by a bunch... **Alfred Childress** of Edmonton posted a 2.21 ERA, which is the highest of his caerre so far. He's 26, though, and his shoulder is currently barking at him, so the future doesn't look so bright. He'll always have 2020 though... And **Chris Parker** of the Mississauga Spartans paced the league's relievers with 48 at the tender age of 19.

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CHARLEY PEGLER LEAGUE (A)



All hail the Toledo Liberty and their amazing 108-32 regular season record. That's a .771 winning percentage folks. The magic wore off in the playoffs however, as they failed to advance past the semifinals. In the championship, Silver Springs topped Huntsville, 3 games to 1, with two of their wins being of the one-run variety. Tarpons outfielder William Peck was named series MVP after bashing three homers and knocking in 11 in the four games.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMERS:

Mas'ud bin Salah al Din of Toledo accomplished a seldom-seen double: he led the league in both OBP (.470) and slugging (581). That performance earned him a trip to big-league affiliate Phoenix where he slashed a very respectable .282/.333/.667 in 42 plate appearances.

Center fielder **Justin Vaive** returned to Quebec in 2060 for his third go-round, and this time he meant business. He jumped his batting average .247 to .318, his OBP from .317 to .404, and his SLG from .350 to .467. But wait... there's more! Like, 144 runs scored, and to top it off, 141 steals in 151 tries. He's a plus center fielder too. Definitely a guy to keep an eye on going forward.

The appropriately-named **Adrian Tallent** is another stud off the Toledo team. His 97 steals lag behind Vaive, obviously, but 97 is nothing to sneeze at. He batted .357, hit a league-leading 55 doubles, and amassed 6.5 points of WAR, all of which earned him a quick look-see in Phoenix.

Billings first baseman **Felix Alvarez** is nothing if not consistent; he's spent two years with the Cowboys and hit .370 both times. This time, he elevated his OPS from .871 to .935, so there probably won't be a third season in Billings. Plus he's 24, so if he's ever going to build a career he needs to be tested in the higher minors.

And yet another Toledo guy: DH **Taisuke Kamimura**. Like the two guys mentioned above, he hit the hell out of the ball; a 1.020 OPS in his case. And like the other two, he got a late-season call-up to Phoenix; they must have been running a shuttle service. He's never going to be anything but a DH, which hurts his future a bit, but that bat will play.

The pitchers are led by another Toledo guy. Big shock... **Lawrence Forest** went 17-3 with a 2.01 ERA. Okay, I promise, no more Toledo guys... **Von Alejo** of Prince George threw an ungodly 241 innings en route to a league-leading 18 wins. 25 of his 34 starts were rated "quality starts"... **Orlando Rubio** of Huntsville led class A with 208 strikeouts and 6.4 pitching WAR... Southpaw **Ignacio Lewis** of the Hollywood Silver Stars went 14-4 with a sparkling 2-04 ERA, and can also play the outfield in a pinch, which is kind of fun... Who had best season of any reliever in the Brewster universe? You could make a convincing argument that it was **Esteban Blanco** of Huntsville. 39 saves along with 5 wins and only one loss; an ERA under one, and 1.7 WAR in only 60 innings pitched. Nobody thinks he has star potential, but he's certainly putting his name out there...



ANGELA DRAKE LEAGUE (SA)



St. Johns and San Pedro de Macoris had the best regular season records, but when it came time to decide a champion, it was Daytona Beach versus Havana. Daytona ended up prevailing by a 3-1 count, with first baseman Israel Perez going 7 for 16 with two homers and six RBIs, enough to win the series MVP award. The Cruisers have now won the Drake league championship seven times in their history.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMERS:

Urian Giannopoulos, a second baseman for the Coxen Hole Schooners, moved down from full-season ball to the Drake, and he played like he had something to prove: a 1.018 OPS, to be precise. His arm may be a little short for second base duties going forward, but there's some stuff there to dream on for Vancouver fans looking for future help.

Another second baseman, **Reynaldo Marroquin** of Daytona Beach, finished second to Giannopoulos in the OPS race, but did league the league in batting with a .384 average. Rumor has it that his attitude is not the best, but that may be a product of spending three full seasons in the Drake, hitting the heck out of the ball but being ignored by the higher-ups.

Like Marroquin, RF **Ramon Rodriguez** is probably wondering what he has to do to get out of short-season ball. 2060 was his fourth year with the Havana Cigars, and he's hit a career .320 in the Drake, including a league-leading 4.3 WAR this past season. He's probably climbing the Drake career totals in a number of categories, but I'm sure he'd rather be testing himself against better competition.

Seldom does a player take a jump as big as the one taken by **Jalal bin Fakhiri** of Hermosillo. After slashing .181/.189/.220 in 2059, he returned to the Naranjeros for the 2060 season and

hit .300 with a league-leading 46 steals in 52 attempts. He's a center fielder, so if he can keep the momentum going he'll begin to turn some heads.

The Ladies' Home Journal for August, 1919 99



This Boy Knows

My signature is placed on each package of Kellogg's so that you may know at once that you are getting the original toasted corn flakes whose quality and flavor earned their leadership.
W.K. Kellogg

HE keeps his "eye on the ball." He's the kind of boy that eats Kellogg's. He likes the taste, the *realness* of these flakes.

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It's easy to get the *choicest* for your boy and girl, too.

Ask your grocer for Kellogg's; know it by the signature of W. K. Kellogg on each package.

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"Won its favor through its flavor"

Johnny Lazer of Bogota led SA in sacrifice hits. I only mention it because the idea of Lazer leading in any offensive category seems unreal; he's known as a premier shortstop but a total cipher at the plate. His glove work is such that he finished second in the league in WAR despite hitting .258. A really unique player who will be monitored closely as he makes his full-season debut in 2061.

Not to be outdone, Drake League pitchers posted some gaudy stats of their own:

Mike Davis of Cat Island had a 1.78 ERA in rookie ball in 2059. He couldn't quite match that in SA in the 2060 season, but he did post a 10-3 record with an ERA at an even 2.00 and a nifty 5.0 WAR, stellar in a short-season league.

Teenager **Francisco Moreno** of Daytona Beach went 10-1, 1.51 with a 1.06 WHIP. He's now 17-2 with an ERA below 1.4 in his brief

professional career since being a first-round pick by Phoenix, and is climbing prospect lists quickly.

Amelio Torres of the Phillipsburg Saints went 11-2, 1.91 with a WHIP under 1.00.

And Boulder's **Nelson Mojica** won all ten of his decision while posting a 2.12 ERA.

SPIKE NOLAN LEAGUE (Rookie)



For once, the Nolan League playoffs set up just the way they were supposed to, with Charlottesville, the winningest team in the Frontier, against Cheyenne, whose 51 regular season wins led the Horizon League. In the championship series, Cheyenne prevailed 4 games to 2, with outfielder Mark Busse winning series MVP honors. Second baseman Jorge Hernandez was stellar for Charlottesville in a losing cause.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCES:

Don't know how 6'8" catcher **Jorge Candelo** lasted till the 14th round of the 2026 draft, but I'm sure Twin Cities execs are glad he did. Playing for the San Angelo Missions, he slashed .434/.511/.547. He rated high for his framing skills too, and for a guy this tall, framing pitches is probably harder than it is for mere mortals.

Al Schuman of the Monclova Aqua Sox led the league in slugging with a .760 mark and tallied 4.5 WAR, pretty darn good for a short-season league. The former second-round pick by Chicago will probably never be a Gold Glove caliber outfielder, but should be perfectly serviceable in a corner spot.

Madison's top pick in 2059, 3B **Curt Holter**, batted .394 in 2059 and didn't get promoted. As if to prove a point, he returned to Saint Johns in 2060 and topped himself, batting .429 with a 1,151 OPS. Madison management finally rewarded him with a promotion to short-season A, where he hit .458 in a brief appearance.

Stephen Archdeacon was traded from Charm City to Portland in May for a nondescript catcher. It's way too early to judge a trade of players this young, but Portland had to be happy with the 5.4 WAR season that Archdeacon posted with the Bend Wild Things. He's a speedy 2B; the power he showed was the big surprise to all concerned.

What motivates parents to give their child the name “Brain”? Was it a clerical error involving the name “Brian” that just stuck? At any rate, **Brain Dearing** of Port Arthur led rookie ball with 44 steals in 49 tries, ten more than his closest competitor.

Some notable performances by Nolan League pitchers:

Juan Romero, Aurora Bullfrogs- 7-2, 1.16 ERA, 0.97 WHIP.

Jose Espinoza, Monclova Aqua Sox- 10-1, 2.85 ERA, 1.29 WHIP.

Tareef bin Usama, Berkeley Golden Bears- 5-0, 1.24 ERA, 0.91 WHIP.

Eduardo Brawner, Traverse City Talons- 2 wins and 24 saves in 29 appearances, 0.99 WHIP.

If there’s a hard luck award in the league, it should probably go to **Sergio Duran** of the Waco Thunder, who led the league with 11 quality starts, had a 1.00 WHIP and a 2.95 ERA, and ended up with only a 2-11 record to show for his efforts.



Mike Simon runs a season-long game within the game!



Gertie's Baseball BINGO Challenge: A Friendly Competition!

Baseball and BINGO—two of Gertie's favorite pastimes are coming together for a fun-filled challenge in 2061! Gertie, the ever loving 90-year-old (a lady never reveals her age), and diehard Madison Wolves season ticket holder as well as a long-time superfan supporter of Manobu Shimizu, has created a friendly competition between the Brewster Baseball Association (BBA) and her beloved BINGO. And now, she is inviting the BBA's finest GMs to join in on the action.

How It Works:

- The first 30 GMs who request a BINGO card will be eligible to play. That is all ol' Gertie could have made.
- Each card will be different and filled with categories that can be found in your team's weekly SIM results (e.g., player performance, injuries, TN stuff, etc.).
- After each SIM results, each GM will review their game logs to look for matching categories on their card. If found the GMs will mark off the corresponding squares on their card.
- The first GM to complete Gertie's chosen BINGO pattern wins!
- If we have no winner at the end of the regular season, ol' Gertie will figure it out.

The Prize:

- The winner gets *40 PPT* and ultimate bragging rights as Gertie's BINGO champ.

Deadline to enter:

- To enter, contact the Brewster's "sexiest GM," Mike Simon, before **SIM #2** to get your BINGO card.

How to play:

- Keep an eye on your SIM / Game Logs results and be the first to shout "BINGO" once you have completed the pattern.

Once you yell "BINGO," in the forums – or Discord, (*Gertie's hip yo*) Gertie and the gals will verify your win. So, get your card and let the games begin!

Let's see who comes out on top—BBA or BINGO!



The 2059 BBA Rule 5 Draft

Chock Full Of....30 Year Old Starting Pitchers???

In-Depth Analysis from The Commish

Every year at the Winter Meetings, minor leaguers who are not on the 40 man roster, and who meet all of the required criteria, have a renewed chance of making their Brewster big league dreams come true at the Rule 5 Draft. BBA General Managers assemble and are given the chance to draft an unprotected player with one caveat: that player must be kept on the BBA roster all season long, or they must be returned to their original team.

The 2059 BBA Rule 5 Draft was not unlike most other Rule 5 Drafts. There usually aren't big time prospects drafted, it's more of a chance for overlooked talents to get a shot at the show. In the table below, I put together some numbers.

Note: The "POT" that's listed was as of January 1, 2061. So, it may not have been that POT when they were drafted.

Rd	Pk	Player	Pos	Age	NewTm	OldTM	Kept?	WAR	POT	Notes
1	1	Omar bin Ayyub	P	31	BRK	RMO	Yes	-0.3		
1	2	Bill Kuhn	3B	22	ATC	BRK	Yes	2.8	50	
1	5	Jose Guerrero	3B	25	VAN	SFV	No			
1	6	Victor Ramos	2B	24	SFV	RMO	Yes	0.7	40	
1	7	Jesus Rios	P	22	MEX	YS9	Yes	-0.1	50	
1	8	Sonny Wadden	C	22	SA	CLG	Yes	1	40	
1	9	Kutaiba Abdul-Nasser	P	29	OMA	SAC	Yes	0.3		
1	10	Theodosio Palazim	2B	22	PHX	SAC	Yes	-0.4	50	Very underdeveloped
1	11	Jorge Marin	P	30	AUS	YS9	Yes	2		32 starts, first action in BBA
1	12	Carlos Diaz	C		CHI	MEX	No			
1	19	Jedidiah Marzuq	RF	22	MTL	JAX	Yes	-0.7	60	Very underdeveloped
1	20	Ekela Kirila	CF	22	LBC	RCK	Yes	-0.7	45	Very underdeveloped
1	21	Tareef Abdul-Malik	SS	21	NO	NSH	Yes	-3.2	50	Ridiculously underdeveloped
1	23	Fernando Gomez	P	22	RMO	LBC	Yes	0	40	
1	26	Randolph Clarke	RF	25	JAX	OMA	Yes	0.9	45	
1	27	Juan Chavez	C	23	MEX	MTL	Yes	-0.3	30	Can't hit at all, but could play all def. positions
1	29	Jorge Aguilera	3B	21	SAC	BOI	No			
1	30	Enver Kuspu	2B	26	TWC	CCJ	No			
1	32	Noori bin Mu'awiyah	P	29	NSH	LV	Yes*	0.1		*Returned after two sims
2	1	Feliz Feliz	P	28	BRK	TWC	Yes	-0.2	50	
2	8	Vance Coppock	CF	23	SA	NSH	Yes	1	40	
2	19	Luis Chavez	RF	24	MTL	SAC	Yes	0.7	50	
2	20	Larry Challen	LF	24	LBC	MEX	Yes*	-0.7	35	*Returned 6/28, MEX released him 7/13
2	21	Rich Moore	2B	29	NO	TWC	Yes	-1.1		
2	30	Pat Currie	SS	22	TWC	LV	Yes*	0	35	*Returned 4/26
3	1	Mokichi Nakamura	P	30	BRK	TWC	Yes	1.3	45	First action in BBA
3	19	Peter Ramsey	P	30	MTL	SFV	Yes	2.8	45	32 starts, first action in BBA
3	21	Dan Rivard	SS	25	NO	MAD	No			
3	30	Juan Martinez	SS	25	TWC	YS9	Yes	-0.9	35	
4	1	Aurelio Gonzales	C	22	BRK	POR	Yes	-0.4	35	
4	19	Javier Cruz	P	25	MTL	TWC	Yes*	-0.4	35	*Returned 4/26
4	21	Jesse Peterson	2B	33	NO	DM	No			
4	30	Jeffrey Tate	CF	35	TWC	SFV	Yes	0.9		
5	1	Steven Anderton	P	30	BRK	CLG	Yes	1.6		
5	21	Ed Wolochow	CF	25	NO	ATC	Yes*	-0.2	35	*Returned 7/26, traded back to NO 8/16
5	30	Eduardo Medine	C	22	TWC	NSH	Yes	0.1	35	
6	1	Tony Bernard	P	33	BRK	LV	Yes	2.7	50	30 starts, first action in BBA, 3rd in Gillstrom
6	30	Girolamo L'Archibudelli	LF	39	TWC	CLG	No			
7	30	Darren Wearne	CF	25	TWC	NO	Yes	0.3	45	

Let's start with the basics.

- There were 39 players chosen. 32 of them were kept by the drafting team at the beginning of the season (82.05%). That's a much higher number than I would have guessed. Five of the 32 were returned after the beginning of the season, meaning that 27 of 39 (69.23%) made it through the entire season with their new team. That's still a much higher percentage than I would have guessed.
- Total WAR earned by all Rule 5 Draftees in 2060: 9.6; an average of 0.3 WAR/player kept.

Now, for the interesting stuff!

WINNERS & LOSERS?

Which franchise was the big “Winner” and which was the big “Loser”. The answer for both is the same: The Brooklyn Robins.



How in the world could that be?

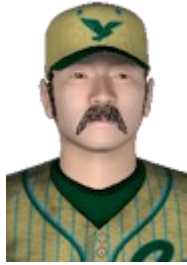
They lost the day because ...

They somehow left Bill Kuhn, a promising 22 year old third baseman, unprotected and he was quickly snapped up with the second pick of the draft by Atlantic City. Kuhn then went on to earn 2.8 WAR, tied for the second most of any player in this draft. The player Brooklyn picked #1 overall, a 31 year old journeyman pitcher named Omar bin Ayyub, earned -0.3 WAR which only makes the decision to leave Kuhn unprotected worse.

They won the day because ...

despite whiffing on their first two picks (bin Ayyub and one of the league’s best all-time names, Feliz Feliz) they did something spectacular with their third, fifth and sixth round picks. They drafted three pitchers who earned a combined 5.6 WAR (58.33% of the entire draft’s WAR). Ben Heuring uncovered three pitchers who slipped under the radar and made a big difference in helping to move the struggling Robins franchise forward. Ironically, the WAR numbers get higher as the picks get lower for these three.

Let's look at the three.



First, third rounder **Mokichi Nakamura** (1.3 WAR). This is a 30 year old guy who has been bouncing around the minor leagues since 2046, when Twin Cities gave him a \$5M bonus as an International Free Agent. He'd languish in the International Complex for three whole seasons before starting his professional minor league career in 2049 at Short-A San Angelo. He'd actually rise through the minors fairly quickly, and then was part of a trade sending him to the El Paso Chilis (now Rocky Mountain) in the 2051-52 offseason. Rocky Mountain released him in October 2055. He signed a minor league deal with Yellow Springs, until being waived in April 2058 and claimed by his original organization, Twin Cities. He had a solid 2059 season for the River Monsters' AAA team in Duluth, his first as a full time starter since 2052. Then, the Robins snagged him. In 43 relief appearances, he was 2-1 with 3 saves, 77.2 IP, 84 H, 5 HR, 25 BB, 57 K, 1.40 WHIP, 3.39 FIP.



Next, **Steven Anderton**. Anderton, 30 years old, had been a full time BBA starting pitcher for a decade. He was only eligible because after the worst season of his career with Atlantic City, he was released in September and then signed by the Calgary Pioneers to a minor league deal, but not added to the 40-man roster. Brooklyn snapped him up, put him in their rotation and he pitched alright (32 G, 32 GS, 14-9, 5.05 ERA, 176.1 IP, 208 H, 34 HRA, 35 BB, 139 K, 1.38 WHIP, 4.83 FIP).



Finally, the pièce de résistance: one **Tony Bernard**. I have a little history with Mr. Bernard. We signed him to a minor league deal last year to pitch for Milwaukee (AAA) and he did alright. I thought it was odd when I found him that he'd never reached the BBA level. He's been everywhere, man. He was, like Nakamura, originally a River Monster, signed after being undrafted in 2044. The organizations stacked up after that: Long Beach, San Fernando, Yellow Springs, Portland, Phoenix, Vancouver, Las Vegas. He spent the most time with the Phoenix organization, including an award-winning 2054 with Toledo that may have helped influence the minor league age limits rule (he was 16-3 in 27 starts with a 1.99 ERA and 1.00 WHIP; this after 161 appearances over six seasons at the AA and AAA levels). He then spent the next four and

a half seasons in the starting rotation for Surprise (AAA/PHX), pitching well but not well enough to earn a callup or even a 40-man spot. Same goes when Vegas picked him up. We thought about it, considered it for a minute. But who drafts a 33 year old dude with no BBA experience in the Rule 5 Draft? Ben, apparently. And I'll be damned if he wasn't their best starting pitcher (despite his 6-10 record, he started 30/30 games in 170 innings, with 109 K's, 4.08 ERA, 1.48 WHIP and 4.24 FIP, 109 ERA+) and finished third in the JL Gillstrom Award voting. At age 33! I love these stories. Gotta give a big shout out to Ben in Brooklyn for some great scouting. Guys like Bernard are what the Rule 5 draft should be all about.

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, ENOUGH ABOUT BROOKLYN!

What about the other guys?

Like Bernard, there were two other pitchers with similar backstories.

 <p>The Austin Shredders selected Jorge Marin with the 11th overall pick. He'd never made the BBA and was 30 years old, despite three years of consistent success at the Triple-A level with Yellow Springs (his third organization). All he did was start 32 games, with a 12-12 record, pitch 184.1 innings, allow 200 hits, 20 HRA, 66 walks and 118 strikeouts with a 4.69 ERA, 1.44 WHIP, 4.52 FIP.</p>	 <p>I have to give a special shoutout to some truly remarkable scouting by the Montreal Blazers. They tabbed LHP Peter Ramsey in the third round (27th overall pick) and gave him a starting rotation slot. This was a huge leap of faith. See, Ramsey (another 30 year old rookie) hadn't even been a full time starting pitcher since 2053 (with St. Joseph/AA/TWC). He'd bounced from Twin Cities (3rd round pick, 105th overall, 2048) to Des Moines, to San Fernando. Now he was in a starting rotation, and somehow holding his own at the BBA level (32 GS, 11-12, 3.92 ERA, 177 IP, 185 H, 18 HRA, 55 BB, 133 K, 1.36 WHIP, 4.01 FIP, 107 ERA+).</p>
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THEN THERE'S THE GUYS THAT STRATEGIZE

There's another way to approach the Rule 5 Draft as a General Manager, and that's to find young talent that may not be actually ready for the BBA but who might pay off in the future. A few picks went this way and predictably yielded negative immediate results with possible future gains yet to be determined.



The Sacramento Mad Popes had to believe that no one would pluck 22-year-old **Theodosio Palazim** from their minor leagues. He was nowhere near ready to contribute despite a profile of a future contributor at any number of positions, infield or outfield. Phoenix is anything but conventional, so they of course drafted him with their first rounder and carried him all season. He predictably served as a bench/utility player and ended with a -0.4 WAR but has promise for the future. We fully expect him to star for the Toledo Liberty in 2061.



Even more underdeveloped was shortstop **Tareef Abdul-Malik**. The 21-year-old was a one-time bonus baby signed by Nashville out of Egypt in 2055 for a whopping \$9,500,500. He then spent 2056-2059 with the Bluebirds' rookie league team in Lynchburg. Here are his batting averages by season there: .176, .143, .196, .154. New Orleans decided somehow that it was worth picking him, jumping four levels of minor leagues after he hadn't shown he could handle the lowest level after four seasons of being there, and playing him in 84 games at the BBA level on a team with playoff aspirations. The results were, well....predictable. 181 AB, 18 H, 2 HR, 13 RBI, 5 R, 2 BB, 67 K, .099/.113/.133/.245, -33 OPS+, -44 wRC+, -3.2 WAR. Back to the minors you go, Tareef. Quite possibly the worst stat line I can remember seeing in a long, long time.



Others include Montreal's RF **Jedidiah Marzuq**, who got far too much playing time for the Blazers last year but could be a really good player in the future (now a 65 POT); another Blazer selection in **Luis "Papa Smurf" Chavez**, a corner outfielder who started most of the year with a 0.7 WAR and looks like a legit BBA player); and Long Beach's Ekela "Harpo" Kirila, who can't hit a lick currently but could be a fair utility player if he ever develops.

FINAL NOTES

It's not entirely fair to label Brooklyn as the sole "loser" of the draft just because of losing Kuhn, a 2.8 WAR net loss for them. We have to give some shade to Jim Roberts in New Orleans, who between rostering the abysmal **Abdul-Malik** and giving **Rich Moore** the bulk of their playing time at second base (138 G, 385 AB, 83 H, 1 HR, 20 RBI, 11 BB, 67 K, .216/.238/.275/.513, -1.1 WAR despite a +8.5 ZR at 2B) enjoyed the services of the two most negative WAR earners from the entire draft (-4.3 WAR combined). So to you, Jim Roberts, I grant the "[Harry Doyle I Don't Know What The Hell He's Thinking](#)" award. It's a major award.

Likewise, it's not entirely fair to credit Brooklyn as the sole "winner" without acknowledging the job that Montreal did in getting Ramsey and Chavez, along with Marzuq. So, Bob Breum, I hereby award you the first annual "Atta Boy, You Did Alright Fella" light punch on the shoulder for your work in the 2059 Rule 5 Draft.

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NUGGETS

A Brief Look Into 2060's Statistical Oddities



Atlantic City GM John Momberg Plays BBA Blackjack, and hits us with 21 Cool Factoids!

- 1** In addition to all the other stuff they were good at, Nashville was the best base-stealing team in the Brewster, stealing 227 in 251 attempts, a league-leading percentage of 90.4. The league as a whole was pretty successful, with the worst percentage being 68.8 (Mexico City).
- 2** The Rocky Mountain Oysters uncorked the most wild pitches of any staff (82) by a fairly significant margin. Sacramento had the fewest. Kudos also to the Louisville staff, who only committed two balks all season.
- 3** For the second straight year, Patrick Stolz of San Antonio led the league in intentional walks with nine. Five players drew eight, including Montreal's Clancy Lee, who only hit .265. Seems like an overabundance of caution... Alfredo Trujillo of Brooklyn, on the other hand, was never intentionally walked despite being on the way to a .986 OPS.
- 4** Rockville's Cesar Rodriguez had only a .298 OBP in 2060; it would have been even worse if he hadn't been hit by pitch a league-leading 14 times. He also led the league in another unfortunate category: strikeouts. A painful season in a number of ways. He

did, however, avoid leading the league in strikeout percentage, being edged out by Boise's Sergei Bobrovsky, who whiffed in 33.6 of his plate appearances.

5 Mynorli Gaajlimitz of Portland led in plate appearances and hits, and struck out in an amazingly low 6.3 percent of his trips to the plate. Not bad for a player making the minimum.

6 Brooks Eliot of Nashville was up there to take his hacks; he drew only four walks in 647 plate appearances.

7 Every qualified hitter in the 2060 BBA hit into at least one double play. Tony Munyiga of Bikini and Juan Donestevéz of New Orleans were the only players to hit into only one. The league-leading mark was 25. by Tristan Lloyd of Des Moines.

8 Keith Jahnke of the Charm City Jimmies was probably the worst percentage base stealer in the Brewster last season, being successful only once in eight attempts. As the old saying goes, "He had larceny in his heart, but his feet were honest".

9 Gary Keller of Madison, on the other hand, stole 36 bases without ever being thrown out. No one else stole more than five without being caught at least once.

10 Elvin Masuki of Charlotte may not have had much of a year at the plate, but at least he led the league in sacrifice hits with 11, five more than the second-place hitter. The aforementioned Mynorli Gaajlimitz never laid one down in 733 plate appearances, which is only right if you're hitting like he was.

11 Yodo Sato of Hawaii was the only player to average fewer than three pitches seen per plate attempt. Cesar Rodriguez saw the most; looking at his stats, it didn't help.

12 Nobody was digging in against Morgan Tomsett of San Fernando; he plunked a league-leading 11 batters. Five qualifying starters made it through the year without hitting anyone; Arturo Meza of Bikini threw by far the most innings without a HBP.

13 Stevie Bodine of Chicago pitched 193.2 innings in 2060 without uncorking a wild pitch. Ruben bin Majid al Dir of Jacksonville and Jonathan Bryant of Valencia led with 13 apiece. Another Valencia hurler, Thomas Turner, was the only pitcher to commit four balks in 2060.

14 Three Brewster starters averaged 100 or more pitches per start: Charm City's Hector Silva, Portland's Alaric Wullenweber, and Calgary's Shinsui Hasegawa. Brody Picot of Yellow Springs, on the other hand, averaged only 66 pitches per start.

- 15** Luis Gonzalez was a true iron man again last season; he made 88 appearances covering 188 innings without starting a game.
- 16** Steven Anderton had a nice year for Brooklyn, but he gave up the most stolen bases; 31 in 35 attempts. Louisville's Darrel Burns (29 for 31), New Orleans's John Lucas (28 for 29) and Montreal's Kinzo Iwamoto (27 for 28) also deserve to be mentioned here.
- 17** Austin's Max Birstall pitched 13.2 innings without walking a batter. The previous year, no one pitched more than six innings without issuing a free pass.
- 18** Among pitchers with at least 50 innings pitched, Gunnar Patterson (Brooklyn) had the highest ERA (8.02). Among pitchers with at least 100 innings, John Jensen of Jacksonville's 7.29 brought up the rear.
- 19** Shortstop Elvan Masuki of Charlotte led the BBA in errors with 26. The worst fielding percentage award goes to third baseman Daniel Frampton of Portland with a .947 mark, not really all that bad. Resurrection Santos III of Calgary handled the most total chances (442) without making an error.
- 20** Who were the biggest bargains in the Brewster? Any list has to start with Jacquot Natta of Charlotte, a minimum wage guy who amassed 5.4 WAR as a hitter, and threw in 1.8 WAR as a pitcher. A unique and fun player. Randall Gray of Twin Cities logged 5.8 WAR as a hitter, but Natta's added pitching value put him over the top. Stevie Bodine's 4.8 WAR led among minimum-wage pitchers.
- 21** Among the worst values for money in 2060 were Glenn Fox of Austin (-1.2 WAR for 10.4 million), and Marcello Custello of Brooklyn (-1.1 WAR for 11.3 million). Among the pitchers, Omaha's Billy Kelly (13 million) was the only arm to lodge a negative WAR while collecting more than 10 million dollars for his trouble.



INTRODUCING THE KEVIN MORALES AWARD

Rob McMonigal looks deep into the draft

Sure it's easy to talk about the players who were drafted in round one, or maybe even round five, but how much do you know about those late-round picks? Probably next to nothing, right? Same here. So when I was looking at something I could do yearly for the media guide that was both fun for me to research and would add to the league lore, I stumbled on the concept of examining the BBA versions of Mr. Irrelevant.

Now I know that technically, that's the last person drafted. But I wanted to expand my field a bit, so for our purposes here, anyone drafted in the 20th round is eligible. Baseball is a game of depth after all.

Let's start with some parameters:

Eligibility:

All players listed by Stats+ as being drafted in the 20th round.

Starting Time Frame:

We'll begin in the BBA "modern era" of 32 teams, 2040, because...

Lookback:

20 Years.

And some details:

For eligibility, I'm using whatever Stats+ has in their historical record. It appears some picks may be missing, and I'm not sure why that is, but I'm not going to try to find the missing players. We'll just have to pretend those players just decided they hated their drafting team so much they refused to show up or something. If they were drafted by Loserville, I totally understand this.

For the starting time frame, I didn't want to go back too far. I mean, I love that the BBA is going into its 87th season, if my math is right, but looking THAT far back was a bridge too far, even for me. So I opted for the first year of a 32-team league. That also had the advantage of putting me around the 20 year mark.

For the lookback, I was considering how far back to go. I'd considered 15 years, which is longer than most superstars are around, let alone a 20th round pick. But since 2040 is 21 seasons ago, looking back 20 some years seemed right. And 20 seasons matches well with the 20th round picks. It all fit neatly into place.

Almost too neatly...

Now that we know the parameters, **who the #\$%# is Kevin Morales?**



For that name, I have Ron Collins to thank. When I proposed the idea to him, and mentioned I'd like a BBA-related name, his amazing sense of recall mentioned Morales, a 25th(!) round pick in 2029 who won the Steve Nebraska award in 2034, his third in the league. Morales might be the all-time BBA "Mr. Irrelevant" as he went on to win 204 games along with 3 BBA Championships, two of which were with the Las Vegas Hustlers.

He also won one in his rookie season with his drafting team, which is, I hate to report, Loserville. Even considered re-naming the award, but why hold his drafting team against him? So the Kevin Morales Award it is.

And now, without further ado, let's look at our 2040 Kevin Morales Award!

The 2040 Kevin Morales Award Fun Facts

- 22 of 32 are listed in Stats + or... 69 percent (nice)
 - 21 Position Players and only 1 Pitcher
 - 9 Years was longest pro career
 - 0 Players Made the BBA
 - 0 Players Made the GBC

Mean Median and Mode Fun Part 1: Leveling Up (or not!) BBA Level Data

- Mean: 2.5 (aka somewhere between Short A and A)
 - Median: 2 (Short A)
- Mode: Short A and Rookie Ball (tied with 6 each)

Mean Median and Mode Fun Part 2: Hiding from the GM (for a bit, anyway) – Career Length Data

- Mean: 3.64 Pro Years
- Median: 3 Pro Years
- Mode: 2 Pro Years (6 total)

Notable Stats

- 8 players had negative WAR in their minor league careers.
- 1 player had negative HS/College WAR in their career and still managed to get drafted.
- No one except our 2040 winner had more than 7.5 career minor league WAR.

Other Cool or Interesting Facts

- Javier Hernandez, a second baseman drafted by Las Vegas, went quickly to AA in his first pro year, playing 2 games there, then never played again.
 - Unlucky 7? No one played seven pro seasons in this group.
- The pitcher (Albert Fullerton, 649th overall in 2040), made it to A Ball for three seasons but stalled out, primarily due to a WHIP of 2.39.
 - The Devil's Draft? 3 Players with 6 pro years – 666, anyone?

Well, that kinda started off with a whimper, didn't it? Well, I knew I wouldn't get another Morales right out of the gate, but I was a bit shocked that no one made it higher than AAA and that no one had even 10 seasons in the pros. That made this one a really easy choice.

Your first-ever and 2040 Kevin Morales Award-Winner is...

Catcher Rodrigo Valles!



Mr. Valles was the 673rd pick in 2040, making him the 4th to last player chosen. Drafted by the California Crusaders by none other than Shoeless, Valles, from Costa Rica, had a respectable career average of .251 across 659 professional games. He slugged 68 home runs (wish it had been one more because I'm basically Old Butthead), 584 hits, and career WRC+ of 96 and WAR of 12.61. He went to one Minor League All-Star Game, in 2045. He appears to have been a lifelong proto-Pope wanna-be.

You can learn more about him here: <https://statsplus.net/brewster/player/44640?page=profile>

Congratulations, Rodrigo! The League Office will be touch with your plaque!

Bottom line on 2040's Bottom of the Draft Line: No diamonds in the rough here or deep sleepers.

Given all I heard about the "deep drafts" of the old days, it appears even talent bloat has limits – or perhaps that bloat meant players of marginal talent had no prayer of sticking around. Will be interesting to watch this as we move though, and almost – ALMOST – makes me want to do this for the 2030s.

And so we can keep on my 20 year schedule, **here's 2041!** Will it be better than 2040? Well, it couldn't get much worse – could it?

The 2041 Kevin Morales Award Fun Facts:

- 24 of 32 are listed in Stats + or 75%
- 23 Position Players and only 1 Pitcher
- 8 Years was longest pro career (2 players)
 - 1 Players Made the BBA
 - 1 Players Made the GBC

Mean Median and Mode Fun Part 1: Leveling Up (or not!) BBA Level Data

- Mean: 3.71 (aka somewhere between A and AA)
 - Median: 3 (A)
- Mode: A – with a whopping 13 players!

Mean Median and Mode Fun Part 2: Hiding from the GM (for a bit, anyway) – Career Length Data

- Mean: 5.375 Pro Years
 - Median: 5 Pro Years
 - Mode: 7 Pro Years (6 total)
- First Outlier: 14 Pro Years (next closest was 8)

Notable Stats:

- 6 players had negative WAR for their minor league careers.
- The only player to make it to the majors had a negative HS WAR!

Other Cool or Interesting Facts:

- As with 2040, only 1 pitcher out of the 24 players listed in Stats drafted in round 20.
- One player, Ricardo Alvarez (665th overall, by Twin Cities), was used as a two-way player for 2 seasons, 2042 and 2044. He was horrible.
- The very last player drafted was by the Yellow Springs Nine, who made it four seasons before Ron gave up on him and his -1.56 WAR, making him even worse than my typical first round draft picks, if you can believe it.
- The Devil's Draft, Part 2? Weirdly, once again, 3 players had 6 pro years. 666! Beware the 20th round for it brings death! Or just really odd coincidences.

As Ron might say, that's an interesting set of data. We have 2 players who (barely) made it to the majors, but both their career minor league WARs (1.63 and 10.85) are lower than 2040's winner, Valles. No one was a pro as long as Valles, either, but no one got stuck in Rookie ball like the 6 in 2040 and all of the mean/median/mode data points are far higher, both in terms of highest level achieved and length of careers. Does that mean 2041 was a better end of the draft than 2040? I think so, but not significantly. It seems to point to these players just getting a chance to climb the ladder a bit more than their 2040 predecessors. Why that was the case is lost to the mists of time.

Your 2041 Kevin Morales Award-Winner is...

Outfielder Theron Fairchild!



Mr. Fairchild was the 685th pick in 2041 out of 692. Drafted by the New Orleans Crawdads by GM Jim Roberts, who has been running his team since 1995(!) is a native of Portland, Oregon, where he holds season tickets to Lumberjacks games and often tries to tell the team how best to play. At some point, he ended up in San Antonio, where he played parts of the 2047 and 2048 seasons, but he was not our first Major League Ballplayer™ we've encountered so far.

That honor goes to Jeff Clark, drafted 682nd by the Long Beach Surfers, who played in the GBC for Libya (now Buenos Aires) in 2043. While some might argue the GBC doesn't count since it's now an "Independent" league, it's still not minor league baseball in my opinion so I am counting it when considering players for the award. However, Clark only got into 4 games and washed out.

Fairchild, however, played in 40 BBA games with the Outlaws, batting .202 with 19 hits and a WAR of -.54. However, he also lead all 2041 20th rounders with a minor league career WAR of 10.85, the only one in double digits, partly because of his ability to stick around. 14 Pro Years was 5 more than our 2040 winner, Mr. Valles, and 6 more than his closest 2041 alumni. Fairchild was a 2043 Minor League All Star. He also got 6.66 of that 10.85 WAR (told you this round is cursed!) in AAA, which means he kept staying at a high level even after losing his

BBA position. GMs in the BBA clearly saw he had potential as a backup but never felt the need to call him up. Eventually he retired as a result, especially when 2055 netted him only 2 games and one official at-bat.

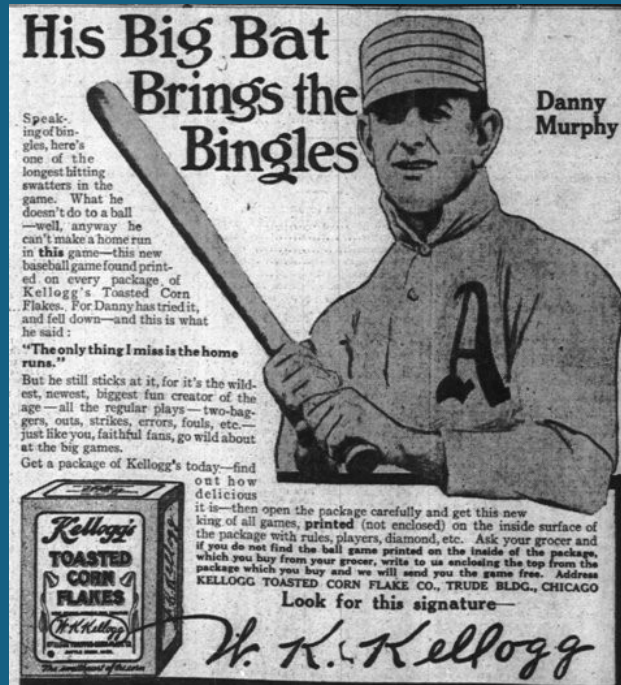
That's not quite what I was hoping to find, but it does make Fairchild the easy pick for the 2041 award.

You can learn more about him here: <https://statsplus.net/brewster/player/45934?page=profile>

Congratulations, Theron! The League Office will be touch with your plaque!

Bottom line on 2041's Bottom of the Draft Line: Don't give up on your dreams – you might be able to get pension benefits for life out of it.

I hope you enjoyed this walk down a deep, dark, unlit corner of the BBA's history as much as I did putting this together. I can't wait to find my first real "star" – even if the magnitude is too small for the naked eye. It's stuff like this that really makes you appreciate the size of our shared history, and I'm really happy to be unearthing a part of it, no matter how niche it might be, and even happier that there's 30-some other people who appreciate it.





Tim Meseck's conversation with Nathan Garrison

Welcome to the 2061 installment of Big League Chew. This year we were able to sit down with GM Nathan Garrison, GM of the Charlotte Flyers. He is fresh off the amazing Monty Brewster Memorial Series run where he lost in the final playoff series to the behemoth 4 games to 1. However, he blazed through the gauntlet of Jacksonville, Calgary and Las Vegas to get the championship series. It was an amazing year from an even more amazing GM. Here is the excerpt of our discussion.



Tim: Hey there Nathan, glad you were able to spend some time chatting about all things Monty. You had an amazing run in the playoffs that should have garnered more than just the single GM of the Year vote you received. Let's start with the beginning though. How long have you been a GM with the Monty?

Nathan: I first joined the league as the GM of the Cairo Pharaohs in the offseason leading into the 2055 campaign. It looks like my first post on the forums was May 19, 2023.

Tim: That was right around the time I joined up with the Outlaws. I think I rejoined the league at the tail end of the 2054 season so we are somewhat linked in timing there. Were you in any other leagues prior to joining here?

Nathan: I've been in a few other leagues. The first league I was ever with was called Dog Days Baseball. It was a really cool fictional league that I was in for a few seasons starting way back in 2010. I was part of a couple of other leagues over the next few years. When I joined the BBA, I was still part of the CBA, or Championship Baseball Association, a pro/rel league that I

was in for about 4 real life years. I left that league after being in the BBA for a while because I loved the world building in this league and wanted to really be able to commit to being part of that.

Tim: Roughly 15 years of fake sim league baseball, that's a certified hobby if I say so myself! Many GMs have mentioned that the immersion of the BBA makes it tough to carry multiple leagues, I can see myself how other leagues just fall short. Having been in previous fictional leagues how did that prepare you for this journey?

Nathan: Dog Days Baseball was interesting because you had the opportunity to influence some of your players through a system set up by the Commish. He didn't run a team, he just did the commish thing so he could do some things that might not have normally worked. He gave each team a trait or identity, like my team was known for having great center fielders. When I drafted a CF, they got a little boost because of it. Then, during Spring Training, you could choose a team focus, and through a series of dice rolls, etc., the commish would determine what kind of impact that had on the players, or position groups, you focused on. It was sort of like a combination of our PPT system and the in-game Dev Lab. I learned a lot from that league. GM's would post their team focus every year so I got to see how people approach things and which teams were successful and unsuccessful based on those approaches.

The CBA was a real challenge because you really had to have a good plan and learn how to build a good team/organization in order to go from the lowest league up to the highest league in the three tiered pro/rel setup. It was very interesting to see the different approaches that GM's took and how there were multiple ways to build your team that worked. I got to take over a really bad third tier team and build them to a team that could compete at the top tier. It took multiple seasons to get there and I learned a lot through the process.

Tim: The random dice rolls seem to mirror the randomness and fog of war of what the BBA, and also v25, seems to be shooting for I think. If I had to guess that commish may have been a dungeon master in a previous life. The pro regulation league also sounds unique with the challenge of having to rise up through the ranks and/or being demoted for having a less than stellar season. Very cool aspects. Having had exposure to some unique league setups you certainly bring experience to the Monty. What changes, if any, would you recommend for league rules?

Nathan: I'm overall pretty happy with where the league rules are now. I think there were some good changes made this offseason and I want to see how they play out for a bit to see if they have the desired effects. I think the area where I'd be interested in trying some new things might be with the GBC. I enjoyed my time with Cairo but I can see how some of the people who join the GBC can get frustrated with it. It's an interesting league, where you can kind of build a new roster every season or two and see what works. When I first came in, I think the Pharaohs had maybe 7 or 8 players on the active roster and most of my salary cap to play with.

I got to go out and build almost an entire team around Blair Peyton by finding interesting players to sign to minor league deals or 1-2 year deals and seeing if I could find the right combination of guys to turn them into a winner. It was actually a little tougher with Charlotte because I inherited a really bad team filled with big contracts. I had to find ways to get rid of players and contracts I didn't want before I could add players I did like. That being said, if you are looking to build an organization and put a system into place, the GBC doesn't really offer that in the way the BBA or other online leagues do. I can see how it's difficult for some guys to come in and look at an almost empty roster and think "This looks fun." And the fact that most people who join the GBC are looking to get out of it and go to the BBA makes it a tough league for guys who are there for a while. They see good competition disappear because those GM's transfer over to the BBA. I know a lot of it boils down to the writing and league engagement but I wonder if there is something that can be done to make the GBC feel a little more enticing to guys who stay there a while. I'm really not sure what that is, but I'd like to see us come up with something.

Tim: I had a stint with London but that was many, many years ago so I don't remember the exact team building process there. The transient nature of the GBC certainly makes things a bit unique to that league. In the main show, you have built a perennial playoff team. Is that the main goal, to get to the playoffs?

Nathan: Yeah. I'd love to win the division and have an easier path in the postseason but the main thing is getting there. The playoffs are so different from the regular season, and as my team showed this year, you just have to have a few guys get hot at the right time and you can make a lot of noise. That can only happen if you are actually in it though. So, while I might not have a dominant team, I want to have a team that can play tough against pretty much anyone and have a chance to get into the tournament.

Tim: The Flyers certainly got hot at the right time and continued that into the second season. I think almost every single GM would take such an exciting season. What was it like watching things play out?

Nathan: That was such a wild ride. Especially because the first $\frac{2}{3}$ of the season my team was basically a .500 ball club. I've talked about it before, but after a particularly rough sim where I went like 1-5 and fell below .500 and a few games out of the wildcard, I was ready to sell pretty much any veteran on the squad. I put up a trade block with lots of great players on it while waiting to see if my guys could pull it together in the next sim or so. I had a couple of people reach out about my players, then the team went on a tear and I told them I was going to see how far we could go with it. Turns out that was pretty far. Ha.

I really didn't expect to sweep through the first 2 rounds of the playoffs. Jacksonville and Calgary were both teams that had played me tough during the regular season and I expected those series to go pretty deep. I just ended up with a bunch of guys who got hot at the right

time and it was fun to watch. That Vegas series was a nail biter. That live sim was pretty intense and fun as the series went back and forth and my guys pulled it off in game 7. Then Nashville's pitching just shut me down and even though I had a couple of good pitching performances, we just couldn't score enough to win games. Ironically, the game I won was probably the second worst performance by one of my starters in the series.

Watching some of my young guys like Natta, Trujillo, and Bedreddin thrive in the postseason was awesome and I loved that Menzies came back after his injury to get a couple of big hits during the run.

Tim: Much like Montreal in '57 you happened to be a few Bluebirds away from a championship. How long can Nashville keep their behemoth together?

Nathan: That's a good question. I think this year will be an interesting one for the Bluebirds. Finances have finally forced Chad to make some tough decisions and he's lost some great players. He's got other guys who will need to get paid soon as well. His team is still stacked and he still has the top farm system in the league but you don't really know what prospects are going to do in the big leagues until they actually get there. If the young guys perform at a high level then Nashville is going to keep rolling for a long time. If not, then Chad's going to have to get creative to stay on top. A big part of being a behemoth is having the money to deal with mistakes or guys falling off/leaving. Chad's been able to set himself up well in that regard. Even if the team has a down year, he's got a lot of ways to deal with that right now. I'd say it's likely the Bluebirds stay near the top for quite a while.

Tim: There are definitely teams that have some really good strategy and staying power. Chad has been very receptive to strategy discussions and showing how his team has been built, really providing an additional road map on how great teams can be managed. Who is the next behemoth to maybe either follow his model or create a new take on building a dynasty?

Nathan: There are so many great GM's in this league that it's hard to say for sure. If I had to put money on one person/team, I would probably say Ron with Bikini. I sometimes marvel at some of the things he posts and it's clear he has a really good understanding of the game and this league. He has also created a behemoth before and has a plan in place to get there again. This year was a little bit of a hiccup so it will be interesting to see how he deals with that.

Tim: I marvel at Ron's understanding of the game engine, how to manipulate the output information at hand and the impact of the financials. He seems to be the go to guy when it comes to the dollars and cents of team building. How do you feel about the current financials?

Nathan: I'm really curious to see how the new financial rules play out. I think they could really change the game for lower revenue teams and make things very interesting and even

more competitive for all of us. I think the changes are a good thing. I know a lot of GM's on the lower end of the revenue spectrum have been frustrated and felt like they were swimming upstream trying to catch the big spenders. I feel like these changes should help give those teams a better chance to find a path forward.

Tim: It is tough for the low revenue teams to craft a long-term game plan to get out of the lower half, no doubt about that. It is almost impossible when the strategy put into place for many, many years ends up with less than stellar results and the 5-10 year process needs to start over again. It can be crushing. Having said that, you have gradually increased attendance each of the last 4 years. Is that by design?

Nathan: Yes. When I first took over Charlotte, I actually thought that my best course of action was to try to trade some of my better BBA players to build up a farm system that looked really lacking. Then I realized that Robert Menzies, easily my most valuable trade chip at the time, had a no-trade clause and was completely committed to staying in Charlotte. I was able to trade a couple of big contracts and let a couple of others go through free agency after my first full year with the club and decided to build around Menzies instead. I had a lot of cap room and had written so many TN that I was able to create some money to go out and find players who could help me turn my team around pretty quickly. I figured that I needed to start winning some games in order to get fans to show up and bring more money in to keep things moving towards having a team that could put together multiple winning seasons in a row. It turned out to be a great year to be able to do that through free agency. Not everyone I signed worked out but several of them did. Some of them were pretty popular as well, which drove fan interest and sold more tickets.

2057 was much better than 2056 and would have been even better if Menzies and Yoshikawa hadn't missed a combined 240 games due to injury. I was able to bring in a couple more guys for 2058 that put the team into position to compete for the playoffs and continuous winning brings fans to the ballpark.

I'm actually a little concerned about my attendance for this year though. My fan interest has gone down, despite playing in the championship series, and my season ticket sales are projected to be lower than last year. Having multiple popular players opt out of their contracts has definitely impacted that. I'm hoping I can figure out a way to counteract that during the regular season. That all starts with winning. If we get off to a slow start it could really be a rough time financially.

Tim: I love that you were able to assess the status of the team when you took over control but even more importantly you adjusted your process in real time based on the information you were seeing. There is an overall strategy but you adjust as needed. I think that aspect is underrated. You traded Montero this offseason after his breakout year last year. What was the thought process of that deal?

Nathan: There were a few things at play there.

The first thing is that my big free agent acquisition ended up being a corner outfielder. I would have preferred to make a splash with a middle infielder but those guys just weren't there this year. So, with Bedreddin, Trujillo, and Vargas all needing to be in my lineup, Montero was either going to play in the outfield and push one of those guys to DH or I was going to move Montero.

Another factor was that Montero was actually much better in the first half offensively than he was in the second half. He got off to an extremely hot start and then kind of became the hitter he had always been, just with slightly more power. His defense was incredible, and will be missed, but he was probably going to have to move to CF anyway. He was a brilliant RF but in CF he would likely be more of an average fielder. Then Bedreddin improved his outfield defense and I feel like I might be able to get away with playing him in CF a little more.

Then there's Harry Taylor. Taylor has torn it up in the minors ever since I drafted him and it doesn't really make sense to have him at AAA for another year. He's either ready to play in the BBA or he's going to get stagnant in the minors. If his minor league production is any indication of what he can do in Charlotte, then I need him on my team. He can play LF and RF and DH, potentially giving me a better bat than Montero, which I need because of the loss of Yoshikawa. He can still provide some injury insurance and defensive versatility so I'm looking forward to seeing how he can impact my team.

I also got two guys back who I find compelling so overall, I feel pretty good about the move even though it felt weird to trade a guy coming off of such a strong season.

Tim: That long term strategy played out and again, you adjusted as needed based on current findings. Good stuff. Proceeding forward, who are the key players for your team?

Nathan: Jacquot Natta is number one. He improved so much from year one to year two and I'm hoping he can be even better this year. Jorge Trujillo had a breakout year last year and Jose Bedreddin was fantastic in half a season as a rookie. I'd like to see Dallas Dixon return to his form from the previous couple of years after a bit of a down year in 2060. His second half was better than his first half so I'm hoping that's a good sign. I'm hoping that Vargas can be an impact player for me after signing him this offseason as well. My pitching staff has been really solid the last few years despite a couple of ratings lumps. I need them to keep pitching well if I want to get back to the postseason. Probably the biggest question mark for my team is the bullpen. I lost a couple of key guys there and I wasn't able to replace them with similar caliber players during the offseason.

Tim: You have a combination of aging veteran players like Dixon, young up and comer's like Natta and Trujillo and some activity on the free agent market. There's a lot going on in Charlotte year to year. What is your overall strategy for team building?

Nathan: I often try to build my starting rotation with guys who can give me a high percentage of “quality starts.” I want to give my team a chance to win every time out, and if my starters are getting through 6 innings and keeping the game close more often than not then I feel like I have a good chance to win a lot of games. Those guys can look a lot different from each other. I’ve focused on groundballers, strikeout guys, etc. but I just want guys who are going to keep the game close most of the time. It would be great to have a Hector Silva at the top of the rotation, but having a bunch of guys who are consistently showing up on Ron’s SP list means I’m going to be in a lot of games.

For position players, I kind of have a similar philosophy. I want a bunch of guys who are going to be able to contribute to winning games in a variety of ways. I don’t always go looking for big home run hitters in my lineups. It’s nice to have a couple of guys who can hit the long ball, but I want to have a lot of traffic on the bases and try to find ways to get them home. I like having guys who steal a lot of bases and guys who make a lot of contact. I want a variety of ways to score runs.

Most of my guys need to be good at a couple of things. Maybe they are fast and have good contact skills. Maybe they can hit home runs and steal bases. Maybe they play good defense and have a good eye. They often have some weakness built in too, but I’ll take a guy who is rated 45 or 50 who does a couple of things really well but has some warts if I think I can find a good spot in the lineup for him.

My bullpen is where I usually have the toughest time. I spend a lot of my resources on getting the things I already mentioned so I don’t usually have much money for the bullpen. The last couple of years I’ve bolstered my pen through trades but I don’t really know that I have a shut down guy right now. That’s something I’m going to have to work on. I hate having a rough bullpen because it can make my solid starters and tough out offense go to waste with a late blow up. Last year I felt like my bullpen was kind of bad but they ended up with one of the better bullpen ERA’s in the league. This year I’m currently going with guys who I like some things about who have warts like I talked about with starting pitchers and position players. But those warts can feel really bad when you end up on the Walkoff Watch too often. Maybe one of these days I’ll start with a great bullpen.

Tim: Sounds like there is a hierarchy in how the resources are being expended and an emphasis on certain groups. Bullpens seem to be built through a variety of ways, sometimes via trades and free agency like you mention but also through low level starters or maybe AAAA type fringe players. Which Charlotte minor leaguers are you most excited about?

Nathan: I already talked about Harry Taylor and as I’m writing this, he just completed his first sim taking part in Spring Training. He went 8 for 20 with 3 home runs. That has me pretty excited, even though it’s ST and an extremely small sample size.

Domingo Chavez just successfully completed a dev lab program to improve his 2B defense and he really showed growth through his first pro season in short A. I think he has a chance to be really good and he has the skills to be able to play a variety of positions on the field.

Paul Long, Ben Graybill, Victor Sandoval, and Kurtis Abas are guys I like a lot in my system as well. Long just improved his defense in the dev lab which he really needed. I'm also curious to see how a number of other guys develop. There are some guys who have 35-45 potential who I think could actually turn out to be better than that down the line. Time will tell.

Tim: That brings up a hot button issue that has been talked about the last few seasons since v25 came out. I'll just ask the question. Development lab or no development lab for you?

Nathan: I like the development lab. I don't think it's perfect but I like being able to have a little say in how my players develop. Overall, I've had some pretty positive results with it. For example, Jorge Trujillo has become a more valuable player through the dev lab. He has had two successful stints improving his outfield defense. That was probably his biggest weakness when I drafted him. Last season, he ended up with a ZR of 2.9 in LF and this offseason, he improved his defense again. I also sent Natta into the dev lab last season to improve his 3B defense and improve one of his weaker pitches. He was successful in both and I think it really helped him this year. I'm hoping the dev lab becomes even better in future versions but I find it a fun way to make the offseason have more ways to interact with your team while working on free agency or whatever.

Tim: I think GMs are starting to get a good feel for what works in the Lab and what may be more of a risk or has more of a downside. It allows some of the fringe players become the next stars of the league. Who are your favorite players in the league?

Nathan: My favorite GBC player is absolutely Blair Peyton from my run with Cairo. He was a big part of why I was able to win that title and he's just consistently very good. And since he seems to be content to sign an extension in Cairo every two seasons it feels like we'll never get to see him play in the BBA.

Robert Menzies and Jacquot Natta are my two favorite players from my time in Charlotte.

If it wasn't for Menzies being absolutely unwilling to waive his no trade clause when I first took over Charlotte I might be in the middle of a rebuild instead of coming off of three straight playoff appearances and a run to the Monty.

Natta was my first ever draft pick with Charlotte and I felt like he was a steal at the 8th pick. He was listed as a SP in the draft pool but had really good batter ratings. I didn't actually think he would make it as a pitcher based on his ratings at the time. But he just kept pitching well in the minors. His pitching stats were actually farther along than his hitting for a while. He's obviously a better hitter than pitcher in the BBA but the fact that he can be a decent 5th starter with some great stretches while also being a 5 WAR 3B is just awesome!

As for guys who aren't, or haven't been on my team, I think David Molina is incredibly impressive. I also admire Hector Silva. I think Mynorli Gaajlimitz is a fun player to watch and I'm also really curious to see how Jose Torres does with Brooklyn.

Then there's Rich Dares. I like that guy. *[Editor's Note: We Hate Rich Dares]*

Tim: Lot's of things to pay attention to year in and year out. The players coming to life and the relationships we have within the league, both with the players and the other GMs, make it come alive. Who are the Flyers' main rivals and why?

Nathan: That's an interesting question. I did a TN back in 2057 analyzing my team's history to determine who my biggest rival was. Based on a variety of factors, historical head to head record, historical matchup run differential, and playoff history, I determined that my biggest rival was Atlantic City. At that time, Charlotte had only won 5 more games than AC in their all-time regular season matchups and had only scored 36 more runs than AC over 269 games. They also met in the postseason twice with each team winning one series. I still feel like the fans have a long history of being invested in games against the Gamblers which would lead to them being our biggest rivals.

I think that Las Vegas has an interesting case as our biggest rival outside the division. The Hustlers have knocked Charlotte out of the playoffs on several occasions. The two teams played a game 163 for the right to make the playoffs in 2058, and they matched up again this postseason for an epic 7 game series in the Cartwright Cup.

Tim: Two classic franchises who have been around a long time and have history to lend. I can certainly see the connections there. They also have some of the most iconic logos in the BBA. I have to ask, did Charlotte get robbed in the logo tournament?

Nathan: I do love my logo but the winners had great logos too. I thought I might have a chance to win but it didn't quite work out that way.

Tim: Speaking of iconic franchises and classic logos, we currently have a MLB World Series that may rank up there as one of the biggest in memory. Which team are you rooting for, the Yankees or Dodgers?

Nathan: Neither. I dislike both of those teams so much. I grew up a Royals fan in a time when the Royals and Yankees had played each other in the playoffs on multiple occasions and there was a really strong feeling of hatred for the Yankees in the fan base. And as a Diamondbacks fan since the start of that franchise, there's not a team that our fanbase hates more than the Dodgers. This year's World Series is just a battle between my two least favorite teams in the MLB.

Tim: Like a real-life battle of the behemoths! I agree, it can be awful to watch these heavyweights battling it out. After growing up in Wisconsin and being a fan of a small market team it is tough to watch this series. Where do you currently live and were you always from that area?

Nathan: I live in Peoria, Arizona. It's a suburb in the Phoenix metro area. I live about 4 miles from State Farm Stadium, where the Arizona Cardinals play and the Fiesta Bowl is played. I've lived in the Phoenix area for most of my life. I moved here when I was 11 years old.

Before that I lived in a couple of small towns outside of Kansas City Missouri. The main one was Garden City, Missouri. I actually went back to Garden City this summer, saw my old elementary school, and the house I lived in. That was pretty cool. My family and I also took a stadium tour of Kauffman Stadium and went to a Royals game. I hadn't been to Kauffman since I took a trip with my dad there in 2017 and my wife and kids had never been there before.

Tim: I can see your love of baseball flows from your experiences growing up and the history of the game. What is your favorite sports memory?

Nathan: Having been a season ticket holder with the Diamondbacks since the first game in franchise history I've been able to witness a lot of really cool things in person but my favorite has to be game 7 of the 2001 World Series. I was at all 4 home Arizona games In that series but game 7 was such an incredible thing to be part of.

The energy in the stadium was unbelievable from the start. Clemens vs Schilling was a phenomenal pitching matchup. The roof was open and we started to get some wind and a little rain just as Alfonso Soriano hit the home run that put the Yankees ahead in the 8th inning. The life was just sucked out of the stadium in that moment. You could feel it happen. It felt like it was over. Mariano Rivera was going to come in and shut the door.

But when Brenly called to the bullpen and Randy Johnson came into the game after starting the night before, the building came back to life. There was incredible energy again. He got the last out of the 8th and shut the Yankees down in the 9th.

The bottom of the 9th came and the cows erupted when Mark Grace got a leadoff single. Rivera's throwing error made a comeback seem possible. I already had no voice but I was squealing out the words "Please Womack, do something magical once more time." He hit the game tying double and it was maybe the loudest thing I have ever heard. Two batter later, when Gonzo blooped a single over the drawn in infield, I jumped so high that when I came down I just landed partially on the back of the seat in front of me and just about went tumbling into the fans in front of me before somehow catching myself and shifting back onto solid ground.

My friend was also at the game, but was sitting near a bunch of Yankee fans. She told me after the game that they had all left to go celebrate after the top of the 9th because they knew there was no way Rivera could lose. That friend and I walked around downtown for the next couple of hours just celebrating with all of the other fans and high-fiving people who were sitting still in traffic trying to drive home from the game.

Last year I got to have a conversation with David Dellucci, who was part of that team. He told me that going into the bottom of the 9th inning the team had been feeling kind of defeated but then they looked out behind home plate and saw the wind had started swirling and had created a little dust devil tornado in that area. After all of the magical things that had happened

for the Yankees in New York, the DBacks players felt like that was a sign that there was some magic in Chase Field for them. It gave them new energy and confidence right before going out to pull off the comeback win.

Tim: I cannot even imagine what it would have felt like to be there for that series. The opportunity to see that series play out in person and then to be there for Game 7, wow. Those experiences and memories are what makes the game of baseball, and sports in general, a key element for many of us. Do you follow other sports?

Nathan: I used to follow the NBA quite a bit. I was a big Suns fan for quite a while. I kind of fell out of love with the sport after the Suns big run with Steve Nash and Amare Stoudamire. I still try to watch once in a while but I have a hard time caring about anything that happens in the NBA regular season. I've tried to get into the WNBA but basketball just isn't my game anymore.

I do like football quite a bit. I'm a Cardinals fan in the NFL and fan of The Ohio State Buckeyes at the college level. I went to a university that didn't have a football team, so I didn't have a favorite college team for a long time. I followed the local teams but just liked watching great games between great teams. My wife is from Ohio and is a huge fan of the Buckeyes. I married into the fandom and have fallen in love with them. They have provided plenty of joy and heartbreak since I joined.

I became a soccer fan in 2020. I never enjoyed soccer until that time but I decided to give it a try, learned a lot about the game and worked through finding teams to support. I'm a Tottenham Hotspur fan in the Premier League and a Columbus Crew fan in the MLS. I love watching soccer now.

I've never been able to get into hockey for some reason and the local team relocated this year so I don't even have any motivation to try again now.

Tim: My sports life mirrors yours in many ways. Obviously I am a Brewers fan but I also followed the Bucks as they were a huge thing when I was little. I haven't spent much time lately watching basketball though as the big 3 aspect doesn't seem to have as much fan involvement for building a consistent team. I also went to a collage without major football so the Badgers become my rooting team. Obviously there is the Packers for someone from Wisconsin and the Fire has been interesting to watch for local MLS for me. What other hobbies do you have?

Nathan: I like to play board games and video games.

I pretty much only buy board games that can be played both multiplayer and solo. My wife is not into board games and my kids are just getting to the age where they might be able to play some of the less complex games I play. I have a couple of people who I can play multiplayer with but it's nice to be able to just set up a game and play by myself once in a

while too. A couple of my favorites are Spirit Island and Too Many Bones. My oldest daughter likes to occasionally play Marvel Champions, the card game with me.

As for video games, I enjoy a wide variety of games. I've played a lot of Balatro this year. I also love Elden Ring and other From Soft games. Recently I've been playing Tactical Breach Wizards and Metaphor Re Fantazio. My family enjoys playing Mario Kart 8 together as well.

Tim: The multiplayer aspect of our little corner of the gaming world certainly scratches an itch for many of us. Which Monty GMs have you met in real life?

Nathan: Unfortunately, I haven't met any in real life yet. However, Ron and I have talked about getting together at some point because he drives through the area I live in from time to time. I think we'll make it work one of these times. I hope so.

Tim: Are you down for an "in person" winter meetings convention at some point?

Nathan: I think that would be really cool to do if we could figure it out. It seems like there are a lot of great guys in this league.

Tim: Nathan, this has been such a great conversation, thanks for taking the time to chat about all things Monty and otherwise. Congrats on a great season last year and I am very excited to see what you have in store for us this year. We'll all see you on the forums and discord. Thanks again!

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THE DEAL ABOUT PROJECTION CARDS

(OR, DID I JUST DO LEGALIZED GAMBLING?)

Sujoy Banerjee (Renato Umali!) lets us in on the latest craze to hit BBA baseball card collectors!

I am still still STILL cracking packs trying to pull one of those sweet sweet SWEET OsChar awards cards. I would kill to pull a Héctor Silva. Hottest pitching card in the game right now. A 4-time Steve Nebraska Golden Arm! Can we make it a 5? I'm betting we can. At the least, I am hoping he gets to 19 wins. Not that I'm a Charm Cities fan – I'm trying to be team agnostic this year – it's because I pulled a K-Toy Scratch-Off Predicto Card with Silva winning 19 games!

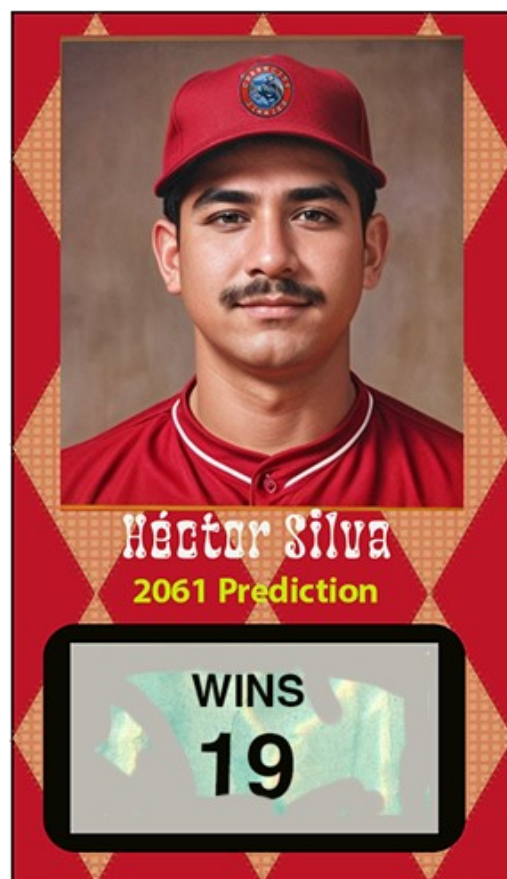


Yes, your boy Sujoy finally dipped into the latest craze in card collecting: prediction cards!

Prediction sets are not new to the industry. Stephen's on the Avenue's been shilling them for years, but usually in the part of the shop with all the injects, droplets, and traditional lotto scratch offs. But the luck I had with the vending machine last year has not materialized and I've been desperate for some action. I've pulled dreck from all my packs and I promised myself I wouldn't splurge on a JoGi Throwback pack until I pulled at least one post-season awards card. Still, that does not mean that I can't splurge on something else. Hence: \$20 on a K-Toy Predicto Pack.

You get 4 cards in each pack and you scratch off the silver to see the prediction. My guy at Stephen's says that some of the collectors don't do the scratch off because they resell for much more near the end of the season, even the K-Toy ones. Scenario 1: Say Dave Ackerman - sustains another concussion (knock on wood) - and you are also sitting on a Predicto card that has him driving in 100 RBIs. Well, that card's worthless if he gets injured, especially early in the season. Scenario 2: Say Umar Dogar - yes, the GBC's got some cards (K-Toy prints everything) - makes the All-Star team and you know that one of the Predicto Cards has Dogar making the team. If you've scratched it off then you can redeem, but if you don't scratch it off, you can probably sell for upwards of 4 or 5 times the cost.

I'm not a gambler but I know the mentality. In the Venn Diagram of gamblers and collectors there's a significant overlap.



The most ridiculous card I got from the pack is this Emilio Morales Jr. 61 home run card.



I love the player but the prediction is just bonkers. He went from 21 home runs in 59 to a career high 44 last year. And the computers at K-Toy think he's going to hit 61? I love it.

The reward structure is somehow commensurate to the probability of the outcome so if this hits, I'm getting something pretty amazing. And you'll see some of these prediction cards with crazy predictions on the secondary market going for loads. There was a Kelsey Perry one that predicted he would hit 17 sacrifice flies that went for \$10. There's an ongoing auction for a Keith Williams 14 Ground Into Double Plays that's up to \$12. I actually have my eye on that one.

With this Morales card, I'm going to be tuning into some Robins games this year, esp. if the guy goes on a tear.

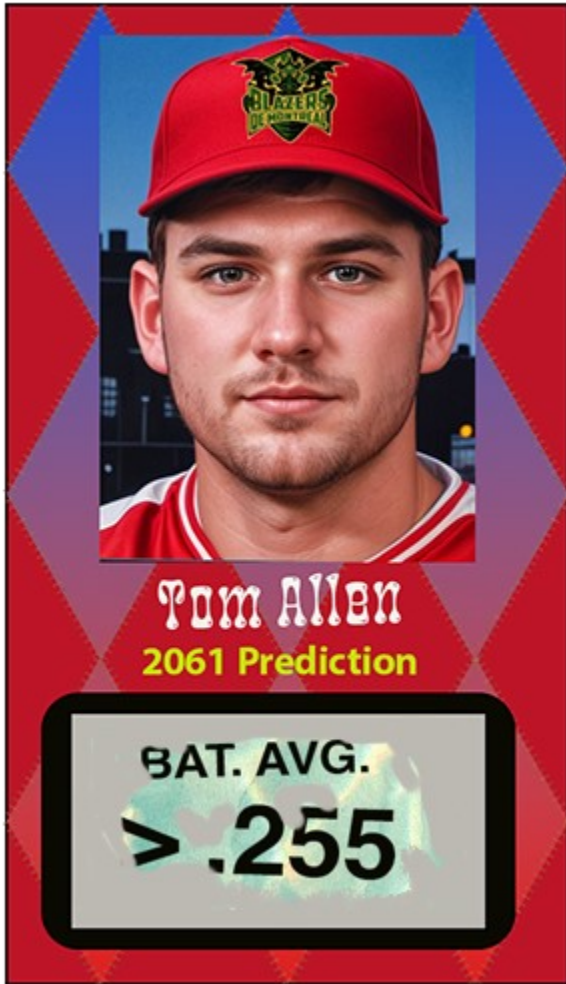
The other two Predictos I got are much more reasonable. I'm glad I scratched out the predictions.



I was plenty pleased to have pulled a Delgado. I started collecting him ever since I pulled his OsChar Joe Gillstrom last year (see last year's Media Guide). His batting average dipped a bit during his sophomore year but his usage went up and so did his runs and RBI. That more than made up for it in my eyes. He's been great and the community has recognized that. A 2058 near mint Delgado Mankato Moondogs card went for \$40 at last week's in-house weeklong silent auction at Stephen's. I had put in \$28. Way off the mark there.

For this Predicto card, Delgado has to hit exactly 15 home runs. I had him pegged for 19 but then he injured his shoulder in Spring Training so there's a chance.

The last card in the pack was a Tom Allen.



The prediction is that Tom "Gauntlet" Allen is going to hit over .255. Allen won the Johnson League Gillstrom last season when he hit .278 over 611 PAs. Hitting over .255 is a gimme if there ever was one.

A card like Allen's is basically an over / under bet. From what I've been reading, these over / under cards are really common. The redemption card, though, is typically not that valuable.

What sucks, though, is that if any of your Predicto cards hit, you gotta send in the card itself. There's no scan code or anything like that which some of the other sets (OsChar, JoGi) have implemented. One would think this would be a no-brainer given the shoddy cardboard and it's impossible to keep these cards in any kind of good condition – scratching off the silver stresses out the card.

For me, though, I actually like the bare aesthetic and thin cardboard of these Predictos. They are collectible ephemera in the best possible way. These are cards meant to be used, to be scratched up.

Once the 2061 season starts, the packs that are out on the shelves are the only ones available, so if you haven't treated yourself, I say go for it. By the time June comes around, the only way you'll be able to get unopened packs is to go on the secondary market and pay the premium.

What do you know? I've just written myself into buying another pack. Off to Stephen's on the Avenue. Happy Collecting and see you on the forums!

The logo is circular with a light blue outer ring containing the text "GLOBAL BASEBALL" at the top and "CONSORTIUM" at the bottom. The center features a stylized baseball bat, a baseball, and a globe with green and blue elements.

One Man's All-Time GBC Team

The Commish takes us back through time...GBC style

The Global Baseball Consortium (GBC), originally the United Middle East Baseball Association (UMEBA), enters its twenty-fifth season in 2061. It's hard to believe it has actually been that long!

As we do here in the Brewster universe, we like to take big views of history and with this milestone approaching it seems as good of a time as any to name an All-Time GBC Team.

Well, one man's All-Time GBC Team, at least.



Catcher: [Baden Dutton](#)

Baden Dutton was drafted by the Jerusalem Hebrew Hammers in 2038 in the first round as the fourth overall pick. He signed a minor league contract with the Hebrew Hammers organization and received a signing bonus of \$850,000.

- Dutton spent ten seasons with the Jerusalem Hebrew Hammers in the GBC (2041-2050).
- His best seasons in the GBC, based on WAR (Wins Above Replacement), were 2043, 2047, and 2049 (In those three seasons, he had a WAR of 4.2, 4.4, and 4.2, respectively)
- He was a consistent offensive performer, hitting over .270 in eight of his ten seasons with the Hebrew Hammers.
- He was selected to the Unified Middle East Baseball Association All-Star Game six times (2043, 2044, 2046, 2047, 2049, 2050).
- He won several awards, including the UMEBA BANC Platinum Stick Award at C in 2043 and 2049 and the UMEBA BURT Platinum Stick Award at C in 2047 and 2049.
- After the 2050 season, he became a free agent and signed with the Boise Spuds. He played four seasons with the Spuds before being released in 2054.
- He was known for his leadership abilities and intelligence.



First Baseman: [Adam Backhouse](#)

Adam Backhouse is an Australian baseball player born on January 20th, 2022. He was drafted in 2039 by the Istanbul Bosphorus, the second overall pick in the first round. He signed a minor league contract with them, receiving a signing bonus of \$400,000.

- Backhouse debuted with Istanbul in 2042 and received a one-year contract renewal worth \$400,000. The next year, after winning the UMEBA BURT Platinum Stick Award at 1B, he was drafted first overall by the Jerusalem Hebrew Hammers in the UMEBA Contraction Draft.
- Backhouse enjoyed the most successful period of his career with Jerusalem, winning the UMEBA BURT Platinum Stick at 1B again in 2047 and the UMEBA BURT Position Player of the Year Award the same year. In 2046 and 2049, he won the UMEBA Triple Crown.
- After opting out of his contract and becoming a free agent in 2049, he signed a six-year contract worth \$77,500,000 with the Calgary Pioneers.

- Backhouse returned to the GBC in 2059, signing a one-year contract with the Buenos Aires Brisas after being released by the Charm City Jimmies. He collected his 1000th career GBC RBI that year.
- After becoming a free agent, he signed a one-year contract with Buenos Aires again in 2060 for \$2,000,000. In 2060, he had a .259 batting average with 13 home runs and 56 RBIs. Following the 2060 season, Backhouse announced his retirement from baseball.
- Over his GBC career, he has a .323 batting average and a .935 OPS with 385 career home runs and 1085 runs batted in. Add that to his BBA career numbers of 358 homers and 1033 runs batted in and he has combined totals of 743 home runs and 2091 RBI.



Second Baseman: [Takechi Eida](#)

Takechi Eida was drafted by the Istanbul Bosphorus in 2039 (2nd round, 11th overall pick) and began his professional career in the lower levels of the minor leagues.

- In 2044, he was drafted second overall (right after Backhouse) in the GBC Contraction Draft by the Libyan Generals and made his GBC debut that year, playing in 91 games for Generals.
- His breakout season came in 2045 when, at 25 years old, he played 154 games for Tripoli and hit .332/.469/.382 with 38 RBI and 45 stolen bases. He won the UMEBA BANC Position Player of the Year Award, the UMEBA BANC Platinum Stick Award at 2nd base, and led the GBC in a number of statistical categories.
- Eida remained with Tripoli until the end of the 2050 season. During this seven-year stretch, he was an All-Star twice (2045 and 2047), and led the league in stolen bases three times.
- After the 2050 season, he became a free agent and signed a minor league contract with the London Monarchs. He played one season in London, appearing in 100 games, before again becoming a free agent. He then signed a minor league contract with the Mexico City Aztecs but was traded to the Rockville Pikemen midway through the 2052 season. He was released by Rockville after the season and played one final season in the major leagues with the Portland Lumberjacks in 2053.
- Eida announced his retirement following the 2056 season, in which he was not an active player.. His eight-year GBC career ended with a .297/.415/.339 batting line, 200 RBI, and 250 stolen bases.
- He also won two championship rings, one with the Ndali Barons (African Baseball Alliance) in 2044 and a Monty Brewster Memorial Series with the Mexico City Aztecs in 2052.
- Eida was primarily a second baseman throughout his professional career but also played some shortstop, first base, and even spent some time in the outfield. He was known as a "decent teammate who loves chili dogs."



Third Baseman: [Michael Best](#)

Michael "Neighbor" Best played 10 seasons in the GBC/UMEBA. He was originally drafted by the Charm City Jimmies in the first round of the 2034 draft. He made his MLB debut with the Long Beach Surfers in 2036 and enjoyed a successful seven seasons in the BBA.

- He joined the GBC in 2043, when he signed with the C.S.K.A. Army. He was later drafted by the Manama Pearls in the 2043 Contraction Draft; and then later traded to the Libyan Generals. He went on to play for the Tripoli Piranhas and the Beirut Cedars before returning to MLB.
- 2043: Won UMEBA Rookie of the Year, Platinum Stick at third base, and was selected to the All-Star game.
- 2045: Led the UMEBA in hits with 207 and won the Platinum Stick award at third base.
- 2047: Led the UMEBA in hits (205) and runs (104), won the BURT Round of Four MVP Award, and the Platinum Stick award at third base.
- Best was a consistent and productive hitter throughout his time in the GBC, as evidenced by his five All-Star appearances. He was also a solid fielder at third base. He retired from professional baseball in 2055 with career GBC totals of a .315 batting average, 1129 games, 1379 hits, 302 doubles, 150 homers, 670 RBI and a .857 OPS.



Shortstop: [Socrates Kazantziakis](#)

Socrates "The Philosopher" Kazantziakis was originally drafted by the Mumbai Metro Stars in the fifth round (37th overall pick) of the 2044 draft.

- Socrates played seven seasons in the GBC. Over his GBC career, he accumulated 942 hits, 130 doubles, 14 triples, 15 home runs, 256 RBIs, and 473 runs scored in 3,240 at bats over 847 games.
- He was primarily a shortstop in the GBC and was known for his speed and defense. In 2049, he won the GBC Platinum Stick and Great Glove awards at shortstop.
- During his time with the Manama Pearls, he was named to three consecutive GBC All-Star Games from 2048 to 2050.
- His best season was 2050 when he was in the top 10 in the league in plate appearances (656), at-bats (561), hits (172), stolen bases (26), runs scored (96), walks (76), and WAR (6.5).

- He was traded to the Tokyo Pearls before the 2051 season, where he helped the team win the GBC Championship and won his second Great Glove Award. He left the GBC after the 2052 season to sign with the Rockville Pikemen of the Brewster Baseball Association (BBA). He is currently a member of the Austin Shredders (BBA).



Left Field: [Quinn Greene](#)

Quinn Greene is a 35-year-old native of Manchester, England. He was born on May 25, 2025, and was drafted in 2045 in the fourth round (27th overall) by the Athens Fighting Centaurs. He quickly climbed the minor league ranks and was consistently ranked among the top prospects in the UMEBA (Unified Middle East Baseball Association).

- Greene transitioned seamlessly into the GBC, showcasing remarkable consistency and power throughout his career. Notably, he achieved the prestigious Global Baseball Consortium triple-crown in both 2052 and 2053.
- During his time with the Athens Fighting Centaurs, Greene contributed significantly to their success, including winning the 2048 United Cup.
- Greene's impact extended beyond individual accolades. He frequently led the league in various offensive categories, demonstrating his consistent elite performance.
- In 2059, he joined the Buenos Aires Brisas as a free agent, which was extremely hard for the fans of Athens to take. His first year in Buenos Aires was resurgent, hitting 53 homers and driving in 128 runs; however, in 2060 his age (now 35) began to show.
- Greene is known for his strong work ethic and dedication to the game. He is a fan favorite, admired for his relentless effort on the field. His consistent performance and impact on the GBC have established him as a prominent figure in baseball history.
- Career numbers: 2015 games, 2383 hits, 495 doubles, 632 home runs, 1627 RBI, 1528 runs, .319 average, 1.051 OPS.



Center Field: [Blair Peyton](#)

Blair "Breezy" Peyton is an extremely popular center fielder for the Cairo Pharaohs. He was drafted in 2049 with the 5th overall pick by the Pharaohs. Peyton has played 11 professional seasons, including 8 in the GBC. Peyton is known for his speed and defense.

- Peyton is a contact hitter with an above-average batting average. He has a career .328 batting average and .380 on-base percentage in the GBC. He has also stolen 328 bases in the GBC. Peyton primarily bats leadoff for the Pharaohs.

- Peyton is an elite defensive center fielder. He has won the GBC Great Glove Award at CF four times in his career. Through 1571 career games in center field, he has a Zone Rating of +123.9.
- 7x GBC All-Star, 4x GBC Great Glove Award winner, GBC Platinum Stick Award winner, GBC Position Player of the Year Award winner (2059), 2x GBC Champion, 2x Grand Slam Cup Champion, GBC Championship MVP (2055), Grand Slam Cup MVP (2060)
- Peyton is known for his strong work ethic. He "puts in long hours." Peyton is extremely popular with the local fans and very popular nationally.



Right Field: [Taylor Barfoot](#)

Cheating a little here. Barfoot has technically played more in left field than in right field, but he should be on this list. He was drafted by the Manama Pearls in 2045 (2nd round, 16th overall pick) and has played 13 years in the GBC.

- Manama Pearls (2046-2050): Barfoot played for the Manama Pearls for his first five seasons in the GBC. He consistently put up good offensive numbers during his time with the team. For example, he was selected to the UMEBA All-Star Game three years in a row (2047-2049). His best year with Manama was 2050 when he hit .314 with 40 home runs and 126 RBI. He also won the GBC Championship with the Tokyo Pearls in 2051.
- Tokyo Pearls (2051-2052 and 2058-2060): Barfoot was traded to the Tokyo Pearls before the 2051 season and played two seasons there before signing with the Buenos Aires Brisas. He then returned to Tokyo on a one-year contract in 2058. He is currently in his fourth consecutive season with the Tokyo Pearls. Barfoot has been a valuable contributor to the Tokyo Pearls, especially since returning to the team in 2058. He won a Gold Glove in 2059 and two Platinum Stick Awards (2059 and 2060) while with Tokyo.
- Buenos Aires Brisas (2053-2054): Barfoot played for the Buenos Aires Brisas for two seasons after leaving Tokyo. His offensive production dipped while he was with the Brisas and he became a free agent after the 2054 season. He spent the 2055 season in the minor leagues before signing with the London Monarchs.
- London Monarchs (2056-2057): Barfoot had a resurgent two seasons with London, winning a Platinum Stick Award in 2056 and a GBC Championship in 2057. Barfoot collected his 1,000th RBI and hit his 300th home run in 2057 while playing for London.
- He collected his 2,000th hit and scored his 1,000th run in 2059 and 2060, respectively.
- He has a career batting average of .294 and an on-base percentage of .327, with 384 home runs and 1,272 runs batted in.
- He has also been a solid fielder, winning Gold Glove and Platinum Stick awards, primarily for his play in left and right field.



Designated Hitter: [Joshua Koka](#)

More cheating- the DH spot in lists like this always allows me the opportunity to include a player who was left out solely because he was the “second best” at a position, but his career was much more than that. Koka is just that. He is simply one of the greatest players in the history of the league.

- Koka was drafted by the Manama Pearls in 2038 as the 8th overall pick. He made his GBC debut with the Pearls in 2042 and played with them for nine seasons. He was a very consistent and productive hitter during his time with the Pearls, hitting for both average and power. During his time with Manama, Koka received numerous awards, including the UMEBA BURT Player of the Week (8 times), the UMEBA BURT Batter of the Month (3 times) and the UMEBA BURT Platinum Stick Award at CF (twice). He was also selected to the Unified Middle East Baseball Association All-Star Game seven times. His best season with the Pearls was in 2044 when he hit .325 with 51 home runs and 146 RBIs. That year, he also won the UMEBA BURT Round 1 MVP Award.
- After leaving Manama, Koka played three seasons in the GBC with the Sydney Sharks and London Monarchs. He continued to be a solid contributor, hitting over .268 in each season. Koka's last GBC season was in 2057 with the London Monarchs. That season, he won the Global Baseball Consortium GBC Championship by Denny's & Marko Worldwide with the team.
- Koka then realized a lifelong dream of playing in the BBA by joining the Twin Cities River Monsters for the last two seasons of his career, where he played a part-time role in 2058 at age 38, and 2059 at age 39. He was unable to secure a contract during the 2060 season, and in November of 2060 he finally announced his retirement.



Starting Pitcher: [Owen Geddes](#)

Simply put, Owen Geddes is the best pitcher in the history of the UMEBA/GBC and it's not remotely close. Someday, the Pitcher of the Year Award will bear his name. Over his 17-year professional career, Geddes has established himself as a durable and reliable starter, with a career ERA of 3.84 across 561 games, all of which he started. He has accumulated 229 wins and 3007 strikeouts in the Global Baseball Consortium (GBC). Geddes began his career in the International Finishing Consortium (IFC) with the Manchester United club. After two seasons, he was drafted by the Bucharest Impalers in 2044 (Round 1, 6th overall). He went on to play ten seasons for Bucharest before joining the Sao Paulo Pilots in 2051.

- Numerous Awards and Accolades: Geddes has consistently ranked highly in pitching leaderboards throughout his career, winning several awards. Some of his notable achievements include:
 - Two GBC Pitching Triple Crowns (2050, 2057)
 - GBC Unsung Hero Award (2056)

- Two GBC Great Glove Awards at P (2049, 2051)
- One UMEBA BANC Pitcher of the Year Award (2045)
- Multiple GBC and UMEBA BANC Pitcher of the Month Awards
- **Consistent Performance:** Geddes has been a workhorse throughout his career, consistently starting over 30 games per season. His durability and dependability are reflected in his numerous leaderboard appearances for innings pitched, games started, and batters faced.
- **Strikeout Prowess:** Geddes is a strikeout pitcher, having surpassed 3000 career strikeouts in the GBC. He has consistently ranked highly in strikeouts per nine innings (K/9).
- **Fan Favorite:** Geddes is in huge demand locally to speak at civic functions. He is a popular and well-respected figure across the league. His "Fan Fav" reputation further emphasizes his likability and connection with the fans.
- **Following the 2060 season,** Geddes became a free agent and signed with the Las Vegas Hustlers of the BBA, leaving the GBC for the first time in his career. Geddes remains a reliable starter despite his age (35). His fastball velocity is still impressive, ranging from 96-98 mph, and he maintains a good repertoire of pitches, including a slider, changeup, and forkball. However, his recent injury history, including a strained back and elbow strain, might indicate some decline in his durability.

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2ND PRIZE — For the second most original scrapbook with a complete set of 26 Hunter trading cards: \$15.00 in cash; Official National League baseball autographed by Cardinal players; personally autographed photo of the Cardinal player of your choice; ticket for the Cardinal-Dodger game, Sept. 16, 1953; 2 reserved seats for one 1953 World Series game if played in St. Louis by the Cardinals.

3RD PRIZE — For the third most original scrapbook with a complete set of 26 Hunter trading cards: \$10.00 in cash; Official National League baseball autographed by Cardinal players; personally autographed photo of the Cardinal player of your choice; ticket for the Cardinal-Dodger game, Sept. 16, 1953; 2 reserved seats for one 1953 World Series game if played in St. Louis by the Cardinals.

4TH-10TH PRIZES — For the next seven most original scrapbooks with a complete set of 26 Hunter trading cards: \$5.00 in cash; personally autographed photo of the Cardinal player of your choice; ticket for the Cardinal-Dodger game, Sept. 16, 1953.

AND 100 OTHER PRIZES — The first 100 contestants submitting complete sets of 26 Hunter trading cards (not necessarily in scrapbooks) will see the Cardinal-Dodger game, Sept. 16, 1953, FREE as the guests of Hunter Packing Company. Earliest postmarks win!

And 109 other prizes!

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1. Contest is open to all boys and girls 16 years of age and under, except employees of Hunter Packing Company, their families or Hunter's advertising agency.
2. During the 1953 baseball season, HUNTER WIENERS will be packaged in special cardboard trays, each carrying two trading card cutouts of famous St. Louis Cardinals players. Thirteen sets of cards will be issued, for a total of 26 cards. Then prizes will be awarded for the most original scrapbooks containing a complete set of 26 cards, and 100 additional prizes for the first 100 contestants to submit complete sets of 26 cards, not necessarily in scrapbooks.
3. Entries must be postmarked before midnight, September 9, 1953, to be eligible for prizes.
4. All scrapbooks become the property of Hunter Packing Company and none can be returned. Decision of the judges will be final. In case of ties, duplicate prizes will be awarded. The judges are: J. Roy Stockton, Sports Editor, St. Louis Post-Dispatch; Robert L. Burnes, Sports Editor, St. Louis Globe-Democrat; and Ellis Veach, Sports Editor, East St. Louis Journal and Official Scorer of National League games played in St. Louis.
5. Send in as many scrapbook entries as you wish, provided each includes a complete set of 26 Hunter trading cards.
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GET YOU MONIES FOR NOTHING?

WHERE'S YOUR PPT?

Rumination by Ron Collins

A little bit earlier one of the league members—okay, you got me, it was Dave Burcicki over there in Charm City, sheesh...you didn't have to twist my arm that tightly!—and I discussed the influence of PPT-driven cash in the league. I thought that was an interesting question.

What exactly do we do with cash we receive as PPT?

How much do we create, and who creates it?

How much stays “in the game,” and how much spending of it happens outside OOTP's purview?

Cash is helpful, after all. Especially to teams lower on the revenue chain. Necessity is the mother of invention, as they say. So I've always figured that it was teams on the edge of existence that used PPT for cash more than anyone else. Is that true?

If you know me, you know that when I ask myself that question “Is that true?” that means I'm off on an adventure. In our case, that meant So let's take a quick look at PPT to cash conversion that has happened this off-season.

PPT Converted to Bonus Funds: (\$19.85M)

Five teams converted PPT to Bonus Cash, two expressly noting it would go to help pay stadium upkeep. One assumes that's the primary purpose for all these, but there are a few other logical expenses one could envision, too. Regardless, these PPT have been spent outside the game, hence the OOTP game engine is blissfully unaware of its existence. By definition, the funds can't be messing with anything in the OOTP inner workings.

TEAM	PPT	Cash
MTL	30	\$3M stadium
VAN	21	\$2.1 Stadium
HAW	80	\$8M Bonus
SFB	32.5	\$3.25M Bonus
POR	35	\$3.5 bonus

The teams that spent PPT on Bonus Cash were:

PPT Converted to In-Game Cash: (\$52.75M)

As best I can tell, a total of six teams converted PPT into in-game cash. It's not too surprising to see that these are teams who either are struggling financially, are stretching to compete, or both. Boise, who drew out the max \$20M from the PPT bank, is an interesting example in that they are a playoff team that has won often, but now are using every resource available to keep their claws in the playoff pie. Same for CCJ and their \$17M. Combined, those to made up over half the pot.

TEAM	PPT	Cash
PHX	50	\$5M
BOI	200	\$20M
BRK	60	\$6M
MAD	80	\$8M
SFB	27.5	\$2.75M
CCJ	170	\$17M

So, like, what's the deal, right? I think it's fair to say that PPT-generated cash doesn't affect OOTP at all, but I suppose it could be that injecting \$50M or so into the world as a whole could nudge something someplace. That said, the whole BBA economy runs up toward \$4B in revenue. At least that's what it was in the late 40s when I stopped tracking it closely. That's a lot of billion, right? Add in the cash that's already in existence in the game—call it \$300M-\$500M? And that makes the base economy even bigger. Doing the math says that this year's PPT cash injection amounts to something around 1.25% of the whole BBA economy at its biggest projection, and probably 1% at its most reasonable.

I'll be honest, that number doesn't impress me much.

A admit that I'm one who doesn't put much stock into the idea that free cash affects much in the OOTP economy. In other words—to be clear-I don't think FA asks are keyed very much to the "free revenue" in the game. I think they are keyed much more heavily to the settings we use as a league for what players of each tier should expect to be paid, then the market does the rest. But even if I'm wrong here, and even if free revenue/cash does make a larger difference, I'm not feeling it over that kind of adjustment.

What's your call, though?

How do you see it?

I'll hang up and listen to the responders.

Mickey Cochrane
MANAGER 'WORLD'S CHAMPION'
DETROIT TIGERS

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GOOD COP/BAD COP

Chad Nason and James Walker interrogate the BBA

ATLANTIC Division



Brooklyn:

GC – Robins sign ex-GBC SP Umar Dogar and call up Jose Torres to improve the Brooklyn staff which has fans and media talking about a playoff run.

BC – I smell a team name change incoming. The Brokeland Robbers since this franchise keeps spending money and hasn't seen playoff revenue since 2045. Keep Robbin fans of their hope – whatever's left.

Jacksonville:

GC – *The Zombies are running with the same group that made the playoffs last season and have some money to burn if needed.*

BC – The Zombies. Fitting name since only one player had double digit stolen bases on the team last year. Talk about spooky.

Montreal:

GC – *Montreal adds a Nebraska and a Barron to improve a below .500 team.*

BC – Ok you got me here. Adding a Nebraska winner is a good move. Oh wait, his name is Nebraska and had a 7.75 ERA with Bikini last season in the big ballparks in the Pacific? Not sure about the currency exchange rate in Canada, but unless \$71M CAN is \$10M USD...womp womp

Atlantic City:

GC – *The Gamblers have a good mix of youth and vets that could lead this team to the playoffs for the first time in 8 years.*

BC – “could lead this team to the playoffs” hahahaha. Speaking of Gamblers, what are the odds on that take? I’ll bet my house that doesn’t happen.

Rockville:

GC – *The Pikemen only lost C John McMuttray from a 76-86 team last season but add young LF Joshua Ackland to their young, talented lineup. The sky’s the limit for Rockville.*

BC – Let’s all agree to rename this team the Rockville Pikewomen, because they play ball like a girl!

New Orleans:

GC – *The Crawdads add Juan Rivera, Kinzo Iwamoto and John McMuttray while also bringing back Juan Donestevez to the band. Jim Roberts is gunning for the playoffs.*

BC – Rivera and Donestevez in the middle of the lineup should guarantee several championships...in the 2040s.

Charm City:

GC – *There is a youth movement in Charm City, but this team is still dangerous with a solid pitching staff. Never count the Jimmies out.*

BC – No offense outside of Ackerman and Chikafuji. These Jimmies need protection.

Charlotte:

GC – *The Flyers lost the Monty but have worked all winter to improve the team for another Johnson League Championship.*

BC – “Lest have the best sseason in our history and then fire our manager for shits and giggles bahaha” – drunk text from anonymous GM, probably

FRONTIER Division



Mexico City:

GC – *New Aztecs GM Brandon Tucker has added 1B Wafid Bishr, SP Juan Cruz and Sergio Torres to put his stamp on this team. He also built a new ballpark to end the rainouts that gave teams a pitcher rest advantage.*

BC – Rain, rain, go away, we hope to win again some day. Not anytime soon, but someday...

San Antonio:

GC – *The Outlaws signed half of a bullpen in free agency to keep the team ahead at the end of games. This team can go places!*

BC – Oh they’re going places alright...back to the dump in which they belong.

Calgary:

GC – *The Pioneers lose some fringe players from a playoff team and still have young stars Michale Little, Ollie Long, and Resurrection Santos II in the fold. They will easily return to the playoffs.*

BC – Carloamaria DONEadoni and Larry Stinson are no longer factors and this lineup loses a lot of potency without them. They certainly don’t have the pitching to make up for their loss of runs.

Las Vegas:

GC – *The Hustlers added some pop, some saves and a backup catcher in the offseason. Tadataka Yoshikawa gives Las Vegas a 25+ HR outfielder that can get on base too. Alejandro Chavez completes the ‘Rule of 3’ with Todd Stone and Augusto Dominguez to shut down late game rallies.*

BC – If Yoshikawa Hustles too much, he’ll wind up in the IL.

Phoenix:

GC – *Jodie Hanna and Joseph Mother are the leaders of this team. Tallons GM Sean Marko has many hobbies including collecting frequent flier miles and driving tanks.*

BC – Did you hear Your Mom was hooking up with one of the players in the bullpen?

Austin:

GC – The Shredders have settled into their new home away from the frozen wasteland Of Canada. They have a good balance of youth and experience on the pitching staff. There are some nice prospects working their way up the minors making the future bright in Austin.

BC – You can remove the team from Canada, but you can't remove the stank from the team. Any hopes of a playoff run are hereby Shredded.

Boise:

GC – There are no weaknesses in the Spuds pitching staff as they run ground ball pitchers out game after game beginning with Mahad Einan. The offense runs through CF Lou Bayou who will dominate Association pitchers for years to come.

BC – Bands often name themselves Lead Man and the Band Name. But this is more like Lou Bayou featuring the Spuds.

Rocky Mountain:

GC – The Oysters add veteran starter Steven Flannery to give Rocky Mountain a 1-2 punch with Jamie Barber. The biggest signing though was 3B Mohammed bin Mus'ad out of the GBC which drove the fans nuts. This is the final nudge the Oysters needed to make the playoffs.

BC – Takes some mighty big Rocky Mountain Oysters to predict a team to make the playoffs when their only two good pitchers are closer to the retirement home than the playoffs.

Heartland Division



Des Moines

GC – The Kernels improved their win record by 10 games last season and made the playoffs for the first time in four years. Julio Perez is due for a big breakout and has 40 HR potential. If he can put it together with Parreno, Thistle, and Norman, Des Moines will have a lethal offense.

BC – Parreno and Bane have tables reserved for them in the training room while Thistle and Norman had some luck last season. I smell burnt popcorn.

Nashville

GC – Sure, Juan Rivera, Todd Tatlock, Wafid Bishr, and Barney Lindsay were lost to free agency, but no other team in the league could have withstood such a loss and still be considered

the favorite to win. Eric Stevens and Mark Lolololo are the most dangerous 1-2 punch at the top of the rotation and reigning Silk winner, Alfonso Gonzales, got even better this offseason.

BC – The Bluebirds have an embarrassment of riches. They make me wanna puke.

Omaha

GC – New manager, Sylvester Reed, is no stranger to the Heartland, having coached the Black Sox and Bluebirds previously. Along with a new coaching staff, Sloth Fratelli returns to Omaha, where he played most of his career, on a one-year deal along with SP Elvin Hilliard. Look for these two to be trade candidates in August.

BC – Sloth Fratelli! His nickname is ‘Superman’ because he changes in the restrooms in the club house. The only thing you could get for Hilliard in a trade is batting practice balls. Pearls are reserved for Sloth.

Twin Cities

GC – Averaging 105 wins over the past two seasons is something most GMs would gladly accept. This River Monsters team is managed by one of the league’s greatest tacticians and if anyone can manage to stay competitive despite losing three of the best pitchers to hit free agency, it’s Alan.

BC – Alan should worry about a vacation because that’s the only thing to stop this team. Well, maybe some Long Beach water too.

Madison

GC – Jaime Canales and Takahiro Fujii should add an injection to an already solid rotation. GM Mike Simon usually sports good defense behind his pitchers, so I expect Madison to win a lot of close games with their pitching and defense.

BC – The only thing Canales and Fujii will be injecting is steroids.

Chicago

GC – The Black Sox have a great top half of their rotation and young hitters such as Angel de la Cruz, Tony Cochran, Timofei Gadomsky, and Al Schumann look to propel the Sox back into the playoffs for the first time since 2048.

BC – There is only one person with a great top half and that’s Sandy Mounds.

Louisville

GC – Amphibian Johnson is no longer the face of the franchise, but his departure leads the way for the next crop of young stars. Can the likes of Seiichi Suzuki and Ricardo Capeles help the Sluggers finally get out of the cellar?

BC – Suzuki and Capeles would need a spotlight to help Louisville out of the cellar.

Yellow Springs

GC – 2060 was a season to forget for Yellow Springs fans. Give GM Rob McMonigal credit for going for it, but it backfired and now they sit wondering what to do next. Emilio Navarro and Leslie Hartman hope to be the answer and Navarro had a nice cup of coffee last season.

BC – Fans forgot about the 2060 season in 2059.

Pacific Division



Sacramento

GC – The Popes have missed the playoffs just once since 2047 and will be a contender once again in 2061. There aren't any glaring weaknesses and if any player goes down with injury, Sacramento's depth will easily be able to replace them. Another 100-win season is on the horizon.

BC – The Fireshoeless crowd sees a weakness.

Hawaii

GC – Semih Gurani remains one of the most underrated pitchers in the BBA and the Tropics added two-time Nebraska winner, Barney Lindsay, in the offseason. Pitching and defense will keep Hawaii competitive in the Pacific.

BC – Hawaii is closer to Bikini than the continental US and the Tropics are closer to the Krill in the standings than the Mad Popes.

Vancouver

GC – The Mounties are the best Canadian team in the Pacific. They are solid across the board and Dirk Bessi is one of their best pitchers in the league. GM Aaron Wharram is always looking to make the next move to push his team forward, so expect the Mounties to be competitive in 2061.

BC – The rumor around the league is the only thing Wharram pushes forward is his barstool at the pub.

Long Beach

GC – Unem Ploid lost nearly 60 points off his batting average last year, so the Surfers are looking forward to more .350+ seasons. Rhys Atticus is one of the best catchers in the league and only 25 years old. The weather is nice and warm in Long Beach – just don't drink the water and the Surfers will be fine.

BC – No one knows the any other players on this team.

San Fernando

GC – The Bears made the playoffs last season, but didn't quite have enough to steam to power through to the championship. What were they missing? Yuu. As in Yuu Suzuki, who they acquired from Sacramento in an offseason trade. Is he the bat they need to take it to the next level?

BC – Yuu Suzuki strikes out over 100 times a season and is described as a prankster that Yuu 'Always has a joke to tell in the clubhouse.' The joke is on the Bears.

Valencia

GC – GM Gregg Greathouse has been busy this offseason. Thomas Turner, Luis Gonzales, and Luis Perez join the revamped pitching staff via free agency. Miller Shed has proved he is one of the league's best second basemen and the Stars have plenty of prospects behind them. They are locked and loaded for a run.

BC – Any team that has Peter Dean on it has no chance. The only thing loaded in Valencia is the baby diapers at the Stars Hospital Newborn Nursery.

Bikini

GC – This team is young and gonna be good very soon. Napoleon Mellot has improved his all-around game and looks to be all-star caliber. A pitching staff consisting of Jon Brown, Takashi Nakamura, Arturo Meza, Paul Worboys, and Brody Picot is almost as deadly as their bullpen anchored by Felix Vidaca and phenom, Winston Morris. Is that playoffs I feel or just radiation?

BC – Picot and Mellot sounds like two shitty wines.

Portland

GC – The 2059 champs couldn't quite put together the same performance last year, but this is still a very strong playoff team with a mix of veterans and young guns. The addition of Bernie Stuart is always nice, but how will the offense fair? Will Gaajlimitz crack .400 this year?

BC – Allan Uecker belongs in the broadcast booth not behind the plate.





THE PROJECTION ROOM

A Little Preamble About the League and Its Divisions by Ron Collins

Welcome my friend to the world that never ends. And, specifically, to 206, when-in a good time is promised to all. Or at least to one team. Because that's that deal, right? Only one team can win it all. Unless, of course, you're like me and cherish division pennants as heavily as you do anything else (because, well, yeah, you know). The question then becomes which pennant is with most worthy, am I right? I mean, beyond the fact that back in the day it was obviously the Heartland, and now it's equally true that the Pacific is the Bean of All Beans. Whatever that means.

We are getting ready to embark on the traditional previews of every team in every division, but this is a place to talk about the league overall, and so I'd like to take a moment to pull back and see things from a higher point of view (so, let me take a slug of this bourbon here and I'll see how that does for my perspective). *Slurp*. All righty, then. Let's talk about the Brewster, and in particular what sets the leagues and divisions apart.

Perhaps the first place to look at are financials.

Theoretically every team has the same possible resources: \$20M in cash and their projected revenue. But in practice that's a moving target. When a team is down the revenue is down. Up is, well, up. So here's an interesting take on the divisions as they entered Spring Training:

PAYROLLS and BUDGETS

Let's start by looking at the total base financial resources available to teams in each division. **Payroll**, of course, is the money set aside to pay for player salaries. For this year, this is capped to \$115M per team, and so would max out at \$920M if every team were to allocate every dollar allowed. **Budget** is the combined projected revenue stream for this year at the beginning of the off-season for every team in each division. There is no true cap on this figure, though the game seems to modulate it in ways that limit its growth.

Here are the totals for payroll spent and revenue projected for each division, sorted by Budget.

Division	Payroll	Budget
ATLANTIC	\$752,476,550	\$1,074,000,000
PACIFIC	\$821,635,205	\$1,052,000,000
FRONTIER	\$735,917,399	\$1,050,000,000
HEARTLAND	\$672,738,073	\$1,036,000,000

See what I mean? Fascinating, right?

If you go by the general rule of thumb and say you get what you pay for, the Atlantic projects to be the richest division in baseball, followed \$12M down by the Pacific and Frontier (who are very close), and then comes the Heartland, who is \$14M behind the Frontier.

If you're a fan of the Atlantic division, there's your fodder.

On the other hand, let's take a look at payroll and see how much the teams are putting onto the field. It turns out that payroll tells a very different story, and that story is that the Pacific is \$69M up on the Atlantic, who is \$17M up on the Frontier, who is a whopping \$63M up on the Heartland.

Let’s do another weird little exercise, and compare the differences between payrolls and budgets between divisions in the same leagues (Frick and Atlantic):

Division	Payroll	Budget	Delta PR	Delta Bud
ATLANTIC	\$752,476,550	\$1,074,000,000	\$16.5M	\$24M
FRONTIER	\$735,917,399	\$1,050,000,000		
PACIFIC	\$821,635,205	\$1,052,000,000	\$149M	\$14M
HEARTLAND	\$672,738,073	\$1,036,000,000		

Holy cows, right? Despite only a \$14M delta on Budget, the Pacific is spending \$149M more than the Heartland when it comes to players. So, like, what’s going on?

First and foremost, at the time of the listing (beginning of Spring Training), Louisville, Yellow Springs, and Omaha all had payrolls of under \$60M. So that \$149 delta is probably a little inflated. But, really, not much. At the end of the process, I don’t see the Heartland making up that kind of payroll difference with guys signed in March.

Bottom line—as we’ll find in the division reviews, the Pacific is the division in which every team is, to some degree or another, working to win now—and is spending the cash to do it. Perhaps other divisions are strapped, or just choosing to balance the future in a more workable basis, but the Pacific seems to be going for it.

Is this the year that division breaks through?

Look for a true Bloodbath.

FARM SYSTEMS

If Payrolls and budgets suggest a “Win Now” metric, perhaps farm systems can give us a glance at the future. To take a quick and dirty snapshot of systems by division, I scanned through Bob’s fantastic ranking tool. I like this approach much better than the OOTP Top 100 because it gives you a better sense of overall depth and opportunity rather than just a quick skim of an organization’s top layer.

To look at the divisions, let’s tabulate their scores and ranks by team

Atlantic	Frontier	Heartland	Pacific
MTL – 257	PHX – 343	NSH – 478	BIK – 238
CCJ – 238	AUS – 224	CHI – 245	HAW – 141
ATS -189	SA – 194	LOU -223	POR – 129
NO – 165	MEX – 150	YS9 – 105	LBS – 122
RCK – 159	LV – 148	OMA – 69	VAL – 119
BRK - 158	CLG – 109	DM – 53	SFB – 88
JAX – 90	BOI – 76	TWC – 43	SAC – 79
CHA - 56	RMO - 51	MAD - 30	VAN – 43
1,312 Total	1,295 Total	1,246 Total	959 Total

Here the Atlantic holds a hair’s breadth edge over the Frontier, but it seems to close that I’d call it tied within the margin of error. The Heartland lags behind just a little, and the Pacific is far behind. This makes some sense on the face of it. If the Pacific is going all-in, you’d expect the farms to be a little depleted.

That said, focus an instant on the top guys. One of them is not like the others. I’m talking, of course, about Nashville. Because of course I am. The Bluebirds are 240 points better than the top of the Pacific, for example. If we cut off both Nashville and Bikini, the Heartland’s bottom seven teams are only 41 points stronger than the Pacific’s. While the FL’s numbers appear to be imbalanced relative to the Frick’s this is mostly a Nashville thing. Take them out, and it would appear that the nearish-future will see the Frick league just as balanced, despite the Pacific’s “spend it all now” philosophy.

Who really knows what the future brings, of course.

This is 2061 after all, not 2065 or 2067 or whatever.

And 2061 looks to be a bit of a repeat from last year, with the Frontier and Atlantic in a conventional battle, but with the bulk of the Frick League ammo being spent in the Pacific.

Not that it will matter, of course.

In order to be the champ, you’ve got to knock out the champ.

Nashville is still Nashville.



FRANTIC

ATLANTIC



James Walker takes a look at the Atlantic division.

The Atlantic Division

2061

The Charm City Jimmies have now won 8 consecutive Atlantic Division titles after posting 94 wins leaving Jacksonville 6 games back. The Zombies and Charlotte Flyers each took a wildcard spot while the New Orleans Crawdads were left on the outside looking in. Montreal followed 6 games back of the Crawdads with Rockville hot their trail 2 back and Brooklyn just 2 back of the Pikemen. Atlantic City fell to last in the division for the 1st time since 2055.

Charlotte swept the Zombies in the Geoghegan Round then swept the Frontier Division winner Calgary in the Doubleday series. The Jimmies faced off against the red-hot Las Vegas Hustlers in their Doubleday Series with the Hustlers coming out on top 4-1. The Flyers and Hustlers met in the Cartwright Cup for the right to play in the Monty with Charlotte winning in seven.

The Flyers were met in the Monty by the Heartland Powerhouse Nashville Bluebirds. The Bluebirds toyed with Charlotte and took the Monty in five games for their 3rd Monty in 11 seasons and 2nd in the last four.

Final order of finish in 2060:

	W	L
Charm City	94	68
Jacksonville	88	74
Charlotte	87	75
New Orleans	84	78
Montreal	78	84
Rockville	76	86
Brooklyn	74	88
Atlantic City	68	94

Brooklyn Robins



GM Ben Heuring (lordtoffee)
Lifetime Record 1331-1994

2060 Season 74-88 (Predicted 55-107. So, sue me.)

Key Losses- LF Don Moore FA, 2B Kilipaki Iugini FA, SP
Manuel Camacho FA, 7 players totaling 3.4 WAR

Gains- C Felipe Delgado FA, RP You-cheng Hang trade
(DM), RP Walt Stadler trade (DM), 12 players totaling 1.1
WAR

2061 Season

The 2060 season was a slog for the Brooklyn Robins as they were 15 games under .500 at the end of June. In July, the Robins found something as they were 14-13 in July then 18-11 in August to propel them out of the basement in the Atlantic. But in September they fell back down to earth going 8-15 to finish 74-88.

The Robins made a leap with their defense but were still woefully bad with the glove. They were Top 5 in the Johnson League in batting average, OBP, slugging % and OPS but were one of the worst pitching teams in the Johnson. They were 15th in ERA, 16th in Runs Allowed and 13th in HRs given up.

There are weapons that have been added to the roster with the call up of the 2059 1.1 overall draft pick Jose Torres and the signing of former Tokyo Pearls Ace Umar Dogar to plug into the rotation. Torres is a 7/8/8 with 5 pitches over 7+. He was 16-5 in AAA last season in 28 starts with a 2.29 ERA and should join the top of the Robins rotation even with his low stamina. He will be joined by Umar Dogar who put up 134 wins in 11 seasons in the GBC. Dogar's real drawback is that he is an injury waiting to happen and will have to be managed. Tony Bernard, Bill Mills, Todd Jones, Mokichi Nakamura and Steven Anderton will have to fight over the rest of the rotation spots, but all could contribute good numbers in the bullpen. They landed a couple of relievers in a trade with Des Moines with You-cheng Hang the best of the two. They won't get Ommar bin Ayyb until mid-July but once he returns, they will have 8 solid relievers.

The Robins offense is built to put runs on the board not prevent them. They crushed the ball last season and that shouldn't stop in 2061. Brooklyn added Felipe Delgado at backstop to handle the staff, but he can't hit and doesn't control the running game. Emilio Morales, Jr. leads

the group with 44 homers last season and will be joined by Wilson Prieto, Alfredo Trujillo, Jorge Cano and Lawrence Miranda. Morales and Prieto each drove in 100+ and scored 100+ which only Charlotte, Charm City, Nashville and Rocky Mountain accomplished in The Association.

2061 Prediction 88-74

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Jacksonville Zombies



GM Aaron Weiner (aaronweiner)
Lifetime Record 4912-4476

2060 Season 88-74 Johnson League Wildcard (Predicted 88-74. Hit the 5 ring!)

Key Losses- RP Brian Groves FA, C Juan Cabrera FA, 5 players totaling 1.3 WAR

Gains- None

2061 Season

This is the season the Zombies shuffle into the Division Title. Yes, I said it. The Jacksonville Zombies were Top 10 in hitting last season and had arguably the best bullpen in the Johnson. They lost a reliever and an aging catcher which leaves GM Aaron Weiner with \$20 million in cap space to upgrade this team. Atlantic teams BEWARE!

The starters are 7 deep with the only flaw being that they're all righties. Bob Anderson is the Ace, joined by Takehide Gertrudes, Dan Voelzke, Gavrilovich Mastinsky, Cheslav Evgrafov, Ruben bin Majid al Din and John Jensen. There is depth here and the ability to shuffle pitchers to the 'pen. Mastinsky has strained his hamstring in Spring Training that will have him on the IL until May leaving Majid al Din to take up the slack. The bullpen is solid and will lean on relievers Hayden Bennion, Jesus Rios, and Luke Seddon. Closer Clarence Moore who converted 45 of 52 save opportunities and was 7-7 with a 3.83 ERA last season will have the final say in games.

The offense put up 5 runs a game while slashing .270/.333/.432 and blasting 181 homers. 86 of those were hit by the Brain Trust of Pepe Aragon (26), Steve Holcombe (40) and Terry Cole (23). Holcombe also drove in 111, Aragon 116 and Cole ended with 90. 2B Dan Colbert had a breakout season in 2060 getting on base and playing good defense. SS Billy McKay went down with a knee injury in July last year and at 36 is slowing down.

The Zombie's front office will make some moves during the season and make this prediction moot.

2061 Prediction 92-70

Montreal Blazers



GM Bob and Erik Breum (breum, Bob Breum)
Lifetime Record 525-447

2060 Season 78-84 (Predicted 80-82. Close!)

Key Losses- SP Kinzo Iwamoto FA, C Felipe Delgado FA, LF Tom Jacobs FA, RP Josh Miller FA, 3B Mike LeBlanc, SP Travis Wearne Released, 9 players totaling 6 WAR

Gains- SP Samuel Nebraska FA, SP Jose Barron FA, RP Augusto Ayala FA, RF Roosevelt Davis Waivers (RMO), CF Victor Frazier FA, 10 players totaling 7 WAR

2061 Season

The work to get the Blazers back into the playoffs continue but Montreal will have to do it with only half of their leadership. Erik has been blessed with a child and will be taking a hiatus being swamped with dirty diapers, baby bottles and no sleep. Bob Breum has made a big move making use of his \$70 million available. Probably with the input of Erik the Pitcher Whisperer. Out is Kinzo Iwamoto and in is Samuel Nebraska. Nebraska struggled in Bikini but pitched well in his short time in Las Vegas. Next to sign up was SP Jose Barron inking his 3-year, \$19.5 million deal. Augusto Ayala comes to Montreal from Atlantic City to work out of the bullpen. The Blazers pitching staff may not give up many homers this season breaking the team record of 137 in 2058. The Blazers also gave up just 139 in 2060.

Calvin Johnson will call the games behind the plate while Team Captain Dan Wilkinson will probably hit 3rd or clean up and play 1B as he shoots for a 40-homer season. Bill Atkinson and Takeichi Suzuki are vying for the everyday 2B job with Suzuki having the upper hand. Tom Allen at 3B while Eduardo Galvan are Juan Feliz battling it out for SS.

Bob Breum brought in Victor Frazier to play center as a defensive replacement. He then claimed RF Roosevelt Davis off waivers from Rocky Mountain.

The Blazers have outfielders Manny Burgos and Jedidiah Marzuq are about a year from making their debut in the BBA. There is also some pitching depth on the way up in AA in Harry Stewart, Jose Martinez, MacKenzie Rooney and Chris Parker.

2061 Prediction 84-78

Atlantic City Gamblers



GM- John Momberg (chicoruiz)
Lifetime Record 1127-1629

2060 Season 68-94 (Predicted 66-96. Close enough for horseshoes, hand grenades and nuclear war)

Key Losses- SP David Torres FA, RP Johnny Lovell FA, RP Augusto Ayala FA, RP Yoriyuki Ine FA, RP Jimmy Bumble Trade (NO), 3B Bill Kuhn Trade (BOI), 12 players totaling 7.1 WAR

Gains- SP John Avery FA, RP Motuha Kalinda FA, RP Bill Young FA, SP You-de Szema FA, RP Harry King Trade (BOI), 10 players totaling 3.1 WAR

2061 Season

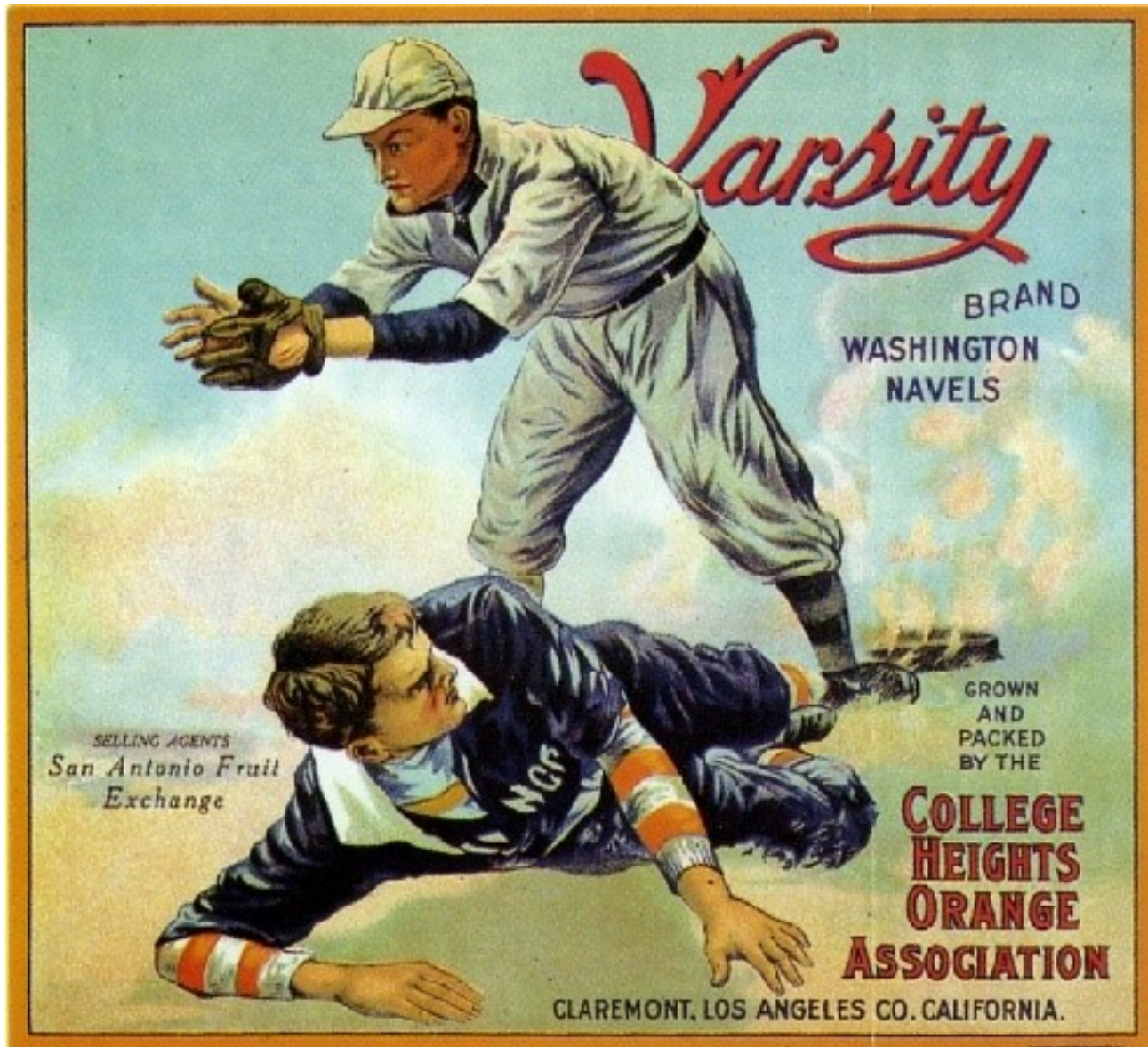
Atlantic City was 36-43 last season only six games back of the Charlotte Flyers and seven back of the three-way tie in the Atlantic when tragedy struck. SS Jafar Seif al Din went down with a torn Achilles tendon ending his season and sending the Gamblers into free fall. It was the last of many injuries that sidelined him in 2060 with a sore thumb, bruised shoulder and forearm stiffness. Atlantic City was forced to shuffle players around, but the damage was done as they quickly fell to end the season at 68-94.

The Gamblers added pitcher John Avery to their staff to get some starts but he hasn't started regularly since 2053 and was lights out for Nashville at the end of the last season after going to the Bluebirds via trade with Mexico City. He has shined in Spring Training so far and may stick in the rotation. You-de Szema was signed after he split time last season between Valencia and Charm City. He made 36 appearances between the two stops for 68.2 innings. He struggled in Charm City but fared better for the Stars. GM John Momberg stated that he will start Szema initially at the back of the rotation. Late in the spring, the Gamblers traded young 3B Bill Kuhn to the Boise Spuds getting P Harry King in return. King can start but leaves some questions on who will now move to the bullpen and who will play third. Kuhn was a budding star, and the Gamblers will need to make up for his offensive production. Also signed were relievers Motuha Kalinda, Bill Young and Arapeta Ebena to the 'pen that should help late in games. The Gamblers were 23-21 in one run games last season but were 6-16 in extra innings

and these acquisitions should give some improvement especially if Young can stay healthy. Ebena was an innings eater in the GBC and is the sleeper signing for Atlantic City.

Jafar al Din is back and healthy for now and gives the Gamblers some hope and will play alongside his double play partner Javier Aguilar while Tyer Ober is the old vet at 1B. With Kuhn now out of the organization, Mesrak Youssef will now get the first shot at replacing Kuhn's production. Larry Steele is in AAA and may be a better option than Youssef, but he hasn't been in the team's spring training. Okyay Nisanci is the best player in the outfield, but the defensive glue is going to Khayyat Isa in center. Carlos Allen rounds out the Gamblers out field in right.

2061 Prediction 68-94



Rockville Pikemen



GM Jim Slade (JimSlade)

Lifetime Record 888-1026

2060 Season 76-86 (Predicted 86-76, They stuck it to me!)

Key Losses- C John McMuttray FA, 6 players totaling 1.1 WAR

Gains- None

2061 Season

The Rockville Pikemen have positioned themselves for this season with plenty of cap space and some young talent. Position players are below 30 save for Cam Whitten and Cesar Rodriguez. Their pitching is the opposite with grizzled veterans in the rotation and bullpen. Does GM Jim Slade sign some of the talent remaining in free agency and cause chaos in the Atlantic Division?

Nathaniel Davis leads the rotation followed by Alex Payne and Jorge Ramirez. Nasir al Din bin Sahir, Logan Hill, Kasib Majd and Dabir Nawfal will fight for the other rotation slots with the losers going to the bullpen. The 'pen is decent and should be better if Rodrigo Rivera and Jon Keys bounce back from bad seasons. David Wade was the anchor making 71 appearances going 3-4 while converting 42 out of 43 save opportunities with a 2.69 ERA. Just get him a lead and the game is over.

Young 1B/DH Masahiko Harada has driven in 100 runs in consecutive seasons while hitting 36 homers in 2059 and 29 in '60. Cesar Rodriguez is his protection in the lineup and took advantage with 24 bombs and 76 RBIs himself. Young LF Joshua Ackland looks ready for Prime Time so far in Spring Training and can also provide some power in this lineup. The Pikemen are just good enough on defense but will need some late inning defensive replacements and get more power in the lineup.

2061 Prediction 75-87

New Orleans Crawdads



GM Jim Roberts (JimBob2232)
Lifetime Record 5845-5147

2060 Season 84-78 (Predicted 81-81, Another close one)

Key Losses- SP Steven Flannery FA, SP Juan Cruz FA, 1B Zenobius Kazantziakis FA, RP Chung Chan FA, RP Knox Sked FA, 10 players totaling 9.5 WAR

Gain- LF Juan Rivera FA, SP Kinzo Iwamoto FA, C John McMuttray, 3B Jon Bevan Claimed on waivers (LV), 6 players totaling 9.1 WAR

2061 Season

The New Orleans Crawdads narrowly missed the playoffs last season and are now having some turnover as GM Jim Roberts reloads. Cruz and Flannery are gone but Micah Harrington, John Lucas and Jaylin Ranjani are still in the fold. If the 'Dads make no more moves, they have options to start in Jason Nelson and Arturo Trevino on the big-league roster. There is some depth in AAA but not at a level that can handle the rigors of a BBA season. The bullpen is good but there are some parts to add yet.

The post-Donestevez Crawdads offensive era while be delayed one more season as he was re-signed in late January. The young RF Adib bin Nasser is still filling out but had a nice season in AAA last season and had some success in 23 games in New Orleans. Tom Guenette and Jamie Angwin power the offense as the combined for 60 homers and 210 RBI last season. New Orleans has three catchers, but it remains to be seen if they will carry them into the season.

2061 Prediction 82-80

Charm City Jimmies



GM Dave Burcicki (DaveB)
Lifetime Record 1425-973

2060 Season 94-68 Atlantic Division Champ (Record prediction was 99-63.)

Key Losses- 1B Helmut Grun FA, C Justin Bonfield FA, SP Katsuyuki Heida FA, 1B Jules Le Gal FA, 8 players totaling 3.7 WAR

Gains- SP Jose Castro FA, 1 player totaling 0.5 WAR

2061 Season

The Charm City Jimmies are a talented team with depth that makes them a problem against any team in the league not just the Atlantic. They lost Katsuyuki Heida in their rotation but replaced him with Jose Castro that I feel is an upgrade. Castro has struggled early in Spring Training, but it may just be the new environment. You know like when you travel and can't take a dump for a few days. Hector Silva is the workhorse in the rotation pitching four straight 200+ inning seasons going 65-31 in those four seasons with a 29.7 rWAR. Allen Davidson, Rannal Seldon, and Jose Flores will join Castro and Silva in the rotation. Troy Andrew may get some starts against lefty heavy teams and work out of the bullpen.

The superstars on offense have been dwindling but there is a new crop of talent on the way. For now, they still have a veteran presence with 2B Dave Ackerman and RF Kazunari Chikafuji still in the lineup. They will be joined by youngsters LF Ramon Rodriguez, 3B Izz al Din bin Riyad, SS Ramon Garcia and SS Antonio Martinez. Charm City is in transition from powerhouse to contender but that shouldn't be a disaster.

There are pieces in AAA like 1B Jose Cardoza and RP Miguel Reyes that are on the cusp of being called up. RF Matt Bamber is in AA and should be ready by 2063 at the latest. The Jimmies are going to come back to the pack but here is plenty here to keep them in contention and trade pieces if they need to make a move. They have some cap room to operate but have a projected \$13+ million in cash with draft signings to pay.

2061 Prediction 91-71

Charlotte Flyers



GM Nathan Garrison (Krathan)
Lifetime Record 500-475

2060 Season 87-75 (Predicted 93-69. I was right, the Flyers underperformed again!)

Key Losses- LF Tadataka Yoshikawa FA, RP Alejandro Chavez FA, RP Motuha Kalinda FA, RP Tulon Koruturk FA, RF Miguel Montero Trade (VAN), 9 players totaling 11 WAR

Gains- RF Jose Vargas FA, CF Craig Ablett trade (BIK), RP Cliff Crudge (FA), 3B Carlos Gutierrez FA, C Jesus Rodriguez, 11 players totaling 7.5 WAR

2061 Season

The Charlotte Flyers return the bulk of the team that won the Cartwright Cup. They lose two relievers but pick up Cliff Crudge in free agency to ease the pain of those losses. the rotation returns Buwono Mainaky, John Rasmussen III, Jim Fleming, Nario Mendoza, and two-way star Jacquot Natta. Natta and Mendoza were a drop off from the top 3 in the rotation, but they also had BABIP over .310. That should come back down to earth in 2061.

The Flyers were looking to be without 2B Robert Menzies for the 1st time since 2045 as Charlotte management decided to let the star walk but they blinked and signed him up for one last ride. Menzies is wrecked and management and fans alike are keeping their fingers crossed. LF Jorge Trujillo is just 24 and is already the owner of two playoff series MVPs. Last season he blasted 36 homers and drove in 129 runs. The Flyers signed RF Jose Vargas in free agency out of Valencia to play opposite of Trujillo. Vargas had played 7 seasons in Valencia but moves out the best division in the best league to the better division in the worst league. Also acquired was CF Craig Ablett from Bikini to play some defense in center late in games. He will back up sophomore CF Jose Bedreddin who had a hot start to his career hitting 15 homers in 274 at bats and 77 games. RF Harry Taylor is down at AAA Richmond and may be up later in the season.

2061 Prediction 90-72

PROJECTED RECORDS: ATLANTIC DIVISION

Team	Wins	Losses	GB
Jacksonville	92	70	-
Charm City	91	71	1
Charlotte	90	72	2
Brooklyn	88	74	4
Montreal	84	78	8
New Orleans	82	80	10
Rockville	75	87	17
Atlantic City	68	94	24

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WILD FRONTIER



Join Chuck Valenches as he tours the Wild Frontier

The Frontier Division

2061

Time, once again, for me to take a look at the current landscape of those perennial also-rans and never was, the Frontier Division. The Frontier fared better this season in post season play with Las Vegas battling it out with Charlotte to determine the Johnson League Champion (It was Charlotte) meaning that the league championship was decided by two third place teams. As I did last year, I will put forth my [LOOKS AT LAST YEARS PREDICTIONS, TOSSES THEM OUT] 100% perfect predictions if you don't count wins and losses, stats, evaluation and anything having to do with prognostication.

Pitching once again was an indicator of the eventual league champion as the top two hitting teams in the league were Frontier Division League teams, Calgary and Rocky Mountain with 5.4 runs per game, the pitching was dominated by the Atlantic Division where the top three teams in runs allowed per game were Charm City, Montreal and Charlotte.

The only ownership change in the division appears to be Mexico City where Brandon Tucker takes over after his stint in the GBC as the GM of the Moscow Thunder Bears. Not sure if Brandon named the team, but if he did, he should be fined. We wish Brandon all the luck in the world and a lot of Pepto Bismol.

Last season had its highlights, especially on offense, as Rocky Mountain's Max Shepperson hulked out and almost doubled his home run output, leading the league with 57 home runs. As prodigious a feat as that was, it was actually tied for just 31st on the most home runs in a season record. Calgary, expected to be an offensive powerhouse but showing itself to be a good all-around team with 100-win capability, posted two 19 game winners in Shinsui Hasegawa

(19-8) and Leon Ludeman (19-7) to lead the league. Malik bin Mazin of Rocky Mountain led the league in hitting with a .343 average.

This year's post season featured the top three from each division with Calgary getting the bye for the division and Las Vegas and Boise battling it out in the Geoghan Round. Las Vegas, shockingly NOT finishing with a 90-72 record, dispatched the Boise Spuds 3 games to 1. Calgary said bye-bye after their bye when Charlotte blanked them 4-0 and then Las Vegas would defeat last years defending champions, the Charm City Jimmies 4-1 before going on to fall to Charlotte 4-3 in the Cartwright Cup,

What is in store for 2061? Plenty, I am sure. As Ebbie Calvin 'Nuke' LaLoosh once said, "Some days you win, some days you lose. Some days it rains." Except in Las Vegas. That place will be dry as a bone.

Let's get this travesty started.



Mexico City Aztecs



2060 Record: 77-85, 5th Place, 23 GB.

2060 Projected Record: 80-82, -3 Diff.

Attendance: 2,707,133

Payroll: \$96,470,583

Farm System Rank: 12th

Key Additions:

1B Wafid Bishr via Free Agency

SP Juan Cruz via Free Agency

SP Sergio Tormes via Free Agency

Key Losses:

1B Brody Bond via Free Agency

RP Jack Abrams via Free Agency

C Ernesto Gray via Rule 5 Draft (TWC)

SP Campbell Honshorst via Retirement

C Juan Suarez via Trade (OMA)

LF Fernando Moreno via Free Agen

Much like a comet that crosses the ancient sky of Mexico and portends doom, or prosperity, or two headed kittens, getting a read on the Mexico City Aztecs was pretty tough last year. They won the division in 2059, then proceeded to soil the bed, fornicate the pooch, step on their own genitalia, whatever and dropped 5 places in the division and win 17 fewer games. To my credit, I predicted an epic collapse was possible, one of the few things I got right last year. Now the team has a new GM, Brandon Tucker, and he has started his reign by making some foundational improvements. A brand new 55,000 seat domed stadium replaces their 25 year old facility and should save them a bit in stadium fees for the next few years. However, the Aztecs have some egregious contracts on their books. After failing to sign as a 1st round pick in 2060, SP Jonathan Sobel signed a one year deal worth 8.5 million. As he is still developing, Sobers will be paid 8.5 a year as a minor leaguer and then can expect arbitration estimates above 10.5 mil for the next few years after that. Sobers is an unfortunate money trap that he will likely have to cut loose and declare a wasted pick.

Mexico City is not quite in rebuild mode, as the signing of 1B Wafid Bishr demonstrates, but maybe they should be.

Catcher: Abid Kakakhel will fill this slot for the next few years. He is an excellent hitter, batting over .300 the last two seasons with just a little pop in his bat, enough to keep pitchers

wary, and he does have a good glove behind the plate, framing pitches well and throwing out runners at a respectable 25% clip despite a below average arm. He will not receive any MENSAs in the near future, but he did receive an All-Star invite last year and it won't be his last one.

September, 1946 SOUTHERN COACH AND ATHLETE 37

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SPALDING SETS THE PACE IN SPORTS

Infield: Remember how the 2059 lineup featured five players hitting over .300? Yeaaaaahhhh. That didn't happen in 2060. Only catcher Abid KakaKhel and OF Charles Barling hit .300 or above. Marco Achesoin was let go at age 37, Jeremy Cherry numbers went down, RF Felix Roman disappointed and Fernando Moreno lost his starting job while batting 80 points lower than 2059. Are things any better this year? Well, yes. Wafid Bashir can be expected to contribute while also playing a decent 1B, and after that? Meh. Cherry at third is an average hitter with an above average arm. At SS Asil Colasan can hit a little but is not a true shortstop. Javier Cardona can field like a wizard but he would need a serious eating disorder for him to hit his weight while Edmond Spits can field and may hit in the future, but not yet. Best bet is for Cardona to start, Colasan to be a super sub and Spits to stay in AAA and continue to develop.

Outfield: Mexico City's outfield also disappointed last season. Charles Barling did show up and may have cemented his place as the future face of the franchise. He belted .303 with 38 HR and 116 RBI,

picked up an All-Star nod (well deserved) as well as a golden bat. He may not have the greatest range or glove, but he can fill both corners of the outfield admirably. Felix Roman is 41 and beginning to show it. It is about time for him to retire to the golf course and start doing diabetes commercials. Julio Martinez can play a good center field but is a hole in the lineup. If Brandon can find another solid corner outfielder, he can live with Martinez' bat. A potential replacement could be Tian-Yun Yeh. An adequate outfielder with some pop who still has room

to develop. He might be better off starting the year in AAA and getting 100 AB there, but I expect he will be in an Aztec's uniform sooner rather than later.

Rotation: I really want to see what Guo-Dong Cong becomes. He has the stuff, throws 97 and is only 25 and even put up decent numbers last year. But he is lazy and the one pitch he needs to develop to make him truly dangerous, a changeup, is always slow to develop. I also worry about a 5'11 pitcher throwing 97. They tend to go down with injury more often. Dave Corfield does what Dave Corfield does. Wins games, dominates hitters and goes out every five days. Corfield is a first ballot Hall of Famer. He is a five-time Steve Nebraska winner, a ten time all star and another couple of solid seasons will put him in the Top Ten in career wins. With a lot of luck he could be the first pitcher to notch 300 victories since Steve Nebraska, whose career began 88 years ago. The rest are fillers who belong in the back half of the rotation. Which is where they are.

Bullpen: I hope Richard Lawrence was on an incentive laden contract last year. The Aztecs closer racked up 81 appearances and 116 IP. His left arm is now three inches longer than his right but if they pitch him any more often, his left elbow ligament will be three shorter so it evens out. There is not much to say about this bullpen. They never really settled on roles for anybody. Their closer only managed 18 saves and the only other real closer potentate, Tyson Morris, put up subpar numbers, but those may be a little deceiving. His ERA was 4.82, but his WHIP was only 1.27. So what happened to Morris. Ah! There is the culprit! He gave up 24 HR in just 97 innings! A few guys will give relieving a try on their inexorable march towards the clubhouse exit and some may even turn it around, but that is about all you can hope for.

The new management, aside from the Wafid Bashr move, seems to be taking a wait and see approach. I think they will mostly be sellers at the deadline and if they want to rebuild they have some great trade pieces.

Possible Call-Ups: Brian Cuninghame has put up good numbers wherever he has gone and even looked impressive in three starts in Mexico City last year. Tian-Yun Yeh also looked solid and is on track for a call up. Both could be in an Aztecs uni by June.

Projection: This team has the pieces to reliably win one out five games when Dave Corfield starts. Other than that they will struggle. I think they will look at beginning to rebuild their farm system and letting expiring free agents walk. 71-91.

San Antonio Outlaws



2060 Record: 68-94, 8th Place, 32 GB -2 Diff..

2061 Projected Record: 89-73

Attendance: 2,496,747

Payroll: \$73,606,737

Farm System Rank: 5th

Key Additions:

RP Chung Chan via Free Agency

RP Felix Camarco via Free Agency

RP Jimmy Bumble via Free Agency

RP Jack Abrams via Free Agency

Key Losses:

3B Roberto Rivers via Free Agency

1B Jorge Pena via Free Agency

SP Kent Pickford via Free Agency

SP Eiichi Takahashi via Free Agency

1B Joe Edwards via Free Agency

Much is expected of the San Antonio Outlaws. They, for example, are expected by OOTP to go from 8th to 2nd place in one season and pick up 18 wins while they are at it? Will they? Of course not! Boise, Vegas and Calgary are still the same or better and that alone will prevent them from accomplishing that goal. But, dear reader, they WILL be better!

The Outlaws identity rested on the shoulders of ace Sakutaro Kawano who put up good numbers year after year for the Outlaws. Last year, the shoulders could not bear the weight and Kawano collapsed, leading the league with 18 losses and inflating his ERA by a full two runs a game. Ouch.

The rest of the team fared little better. They got some fine limited performances from Cesar Franco and Quinton Manning had a better than average year and CL Steve McFarland expanded his innings by often appearing in the eighth and still put up solid numbers. They were 14th in runs scored, 11th in runs allowed and while they did make a number of moves to help their pen this offseason, it's not 18 games worth of bullpen wins.

As I said, the Outlaws will be better. Tim Meseck has built a pretty good farm system, coaches notwithstanding, and he has some good pieces on the way. He also does not have many onerous contracts aside from Patrick Stolz who suddenly stopped cycling PEDs and saw his power cut in half which, by the way, is what they were paying him 15 mil a year for.

Catcher: Bradford “Blast” McBearett needs a new nickname. He doesn’t hit many homers and the only blasts he lets out are in the bathroom stall. What he needs is a nickname like “Brains” or “Smarty” or something because, while he is not a prodigious hitter, he is an excellent catcher. Good arm, calls a good game, good glove. This is what you need from your field general. Signing him to a three year extension was an excellent move.

Infield: Patience finally ran out for Jorge Pena. The 31 year old first baseman batted just .225 with 24 home runs, tied for the team lead, but that is damning with faint praise. Jim Fennell will move from second base, where he was lousy, to first base, where he is still kind of lousy but not as lousy as he is at second base. He is just 25, has an excellent eye and can wait for his pitch. Paul Moody will handle second base until somebody who can hit on a regular basis shows up. Julius Lewis will bring his defensive sorcery to shortstop and at 3B Jack Acheson will hit a little without any power and hopefully draw more than three walks in 338 plate appearances. Three walks?! That’s three more than me and I don’t even play! I almost tied the guy!

Outfield: The current state of the Outlaws outfield could best be described as apocalyptic. Maybe desolate or barren or even dystopian. Nobody hits above .255, nobody gets on base. Shoin Yoshida did hit 24 homers but everybody else was in single digits. Corner outfielders who can’t for power or hit period have a niche market best described as the “GBC”. But as we said earlier. This team will get better. At some point this season George Stickler will make his debut and he could be a monster. He can hit, hit for power, is patient enough at the plate and can play more than adequately at the corner outfield positions and he is almost ready at just 20 years old. He will be a lone bright light for a few years, but other prospects are on the way to deliver the Outlaws. Chester Lawrence should also hit well enough to hold a spot for the year.

Rotation: It would be hard to imagine Kawano’s suckitude exceeding last years so I think he will rebound a bit back to a perfectly serviceable starter if not the stud he once was. After all he is only 33. The Outlaws have a couple of interesting arms in Quinton Manning who seems to have figured it out at the age of 30 and put up a solid season last year and Cesar Franco, the young 23 year old who arrived on the scene and made 23 pretty steady starts. They will form the front end of the rotation. The back end will be whoever has the hot hand. George White needs to develop his pitches a little further, but could join the rotation by June but he does need the work in AAA as he got beat up pretty good in Spring Training.

Bullpen: While I am a big believer in trading away relievers for future prospects while in a rebuild. I like the idea of keeping Steve McFarland around. He had another solid year last year, is only 26 and will likely be in his prime when the rest of San Antonio’s prospects make their way to the big leagues. He is still making the minimum so there is no reason to get rid of him unless you are blown away by an offer. I also like the Felix Camarco signing. Her put up solid

numbers in Charlotte, Phoenix and Charm City and will make the most of his admittedly few opportunities here

Possible Call-Ups Two names come immediately to mind, but one probably before the other. George Stickler is a future star. If he can continue to develop after a month or two in AAA he will get the call and when he does, the BBA will need to watch out. George White is another possibility, he may take longer as he just has not developed his sinker and splitter enough for the big leagues. An early injury call up may be RP Angel Lopez. He doesn't throw hard and relies on a cutter and a curve ball, neither pitch is mind blowing, but he may get an early call up to be a lefty specialist.

Projection: San Antonio's record is pretty dependent on the development of some top prospects like Strickler and White. One thing that may hold them back is that none of the minor league managers excel at development and this may hold some players back. I think they will have a horrible first half, but the fertile farm system will start to produce in the second half and they will go 71-91.



Calgary Pioneers



2060 Record: 100-62, 1st Place, ---, +5 diff.

2061 Projected Record: 90-72

Attendance: 4,643,918

Payroll: \$101,030,764

Farm System Rank: 19th

Additions:

Nada

Losses

Lots of guys. None of them worth much

So, I was off just a bit on Calgary. I only missed by 17 wins! Who knew the rotation would pitch so well that they wouldn't even need their crappy bullpen. Which, by the way, was crappy just like I predicted. But, when your starters are going deep into games and your closer doesn't soil the bed, good things happen. It also helps that every player who played in over 100 games hit double digit homers and five of those players hit over 20 home runs. That was pretty much the recipe for the 100-62 division champs

Calgary was loved by fans who dig the long ball and hated by fans of teams who give up the long ball. They started off hot, never really cooled down and posted the best record in the Johnson League and even though they were swept by Charlotte in the Doubleday series (*snicker*) they should field just as potent a team this year and feature the same dependable rotation.

The Pioneers did make adjustments throughout the season and seemed to have most of their defensive holes patched. Larry Stinson was moved to DH where he could sit on the bench when the team was on the field and even then I think he had 12 errors. But the defense was solid, if not spectacular. They did make sacrifices where necessary and had good defense where it counted.

This offseason, Calgary dumped about 4.0 WAR of players but that was divided between seven or eight guys so no real big loss. Losing Liam Johnston may hurt as he was a dependable reliever, his numbers last year may have been due more to being forced to make ten starts. He moved to Long Beach as a free agent in the offseason

Let's take a look at Calgary's roster.

Catcher: Let's face it. Sam Butler is becoming a stud. Last season he smacked .303/.377/.512 and compiled a 6.3 ERA. Defensively he handled the staff with care and even notched a 15.0

FRM rate. While he has a weak arm behind the plate, he more than made up for it by getting his pitchers extra calls and calling a solid enough game to keep a lot of baserunners off the basepaths in the first place. Pedro Flores will get some starts behind the plate again this season.

Infield: With Stinson now cemented as DH and all his gloves burned in effigy, this infield will actually improve this year. Rule 5 pickup in 2058, Jose German spent the entire season in Calgary as a Rule 5 pick and was overmatched. But he stuck it out and the next year was sent to play everyday at AAA St. Paul. He developed there under a bevy of coaching, roving infield instructors, roving hitting instructors, nutritionists and a lot of Culver's Butter Burgers. He hit .314, played excellent defense and was ready when Janne Rintala was given his walking papers. The rest of the infield is a mixture of guys who may not be able to catch much but can hit. Carlomaria Donadini is not much of an upgrade at first defensively over Stinson which means he may be the second worst fielder on the team. But Stinson can mash and Donadoni is just solid. Bill Irvine plays excellent defense and hits well for a second sacker and Ollie Long is good for a .320 average as well as solid defense at 3B. No worries there except defensively at 1B.

Outfield: Resurrection Santos is now squarely in his prime and while his numbers did fall off last year, he ONLY hit .301 with 21 homers, he will be in the lineup almost every day. Scary thing is that he still hasn't fully developed at 28. Zhi Li could get more time in left this year as he split starts with Jeff Sawyers, but since both are left handers, a platoon may not work here. Don't be surprised if Sawyers is dealt to make room for Jose Farias if he gets off to a hot start in AAA this year.



Rotation: Pretty much the same rotation and almost all are in their prime so they will make opposing hitters miserable for a few more years. Starters 1-4, Hasegawa, Ludeman, Thornton and Harrison all notched at least 12 wins and sub 4.00 ERAs with Hasegawa and Ludeman both tied atop the league with 19 wins each. Tough to beat that 1-2 combo. Lefty Mitch Bond could get the majority of starts in the 5 hole, but his performance last year (4-3, 5.95 ERA) did not inspire confidence. The best hope opponents have is if somebody reminds Leon Ludeman that he is 35. Otherwise, this will be a tough rotation to beat.

Bullpen: Last year we asked what the hell happened to Edward Harrison, the former Calgary Closer. His ERA exploded in 2059 and I figured that would be a big flaw in Calgary's plans. Well, here is what happened: GM Kevin Dickson moved Harrison to the rotation where he excelled, going 12-9 with a 3.93 ERA. That's not supposed to happen. If you fail as a closer you are supposed to have a meltdown, be relegated to the back of the pen and spend your time warming up other pitchers because nobody trusts you in the game. Kevin also moved a guy who pretty much sucked eggs in 2059 into the closers role where he turned into a dominant 9th inning pitcher with 40 saves and a 2.21 ERA. It's just not fair. My only consolation of this spitting in God's eye is that rest of the bullpen is pretty lousy outside of Nalany Ahotaein. If Calgary gets another year of starters eliminating the need for long and middle relievers they could repeat.

Calgary will crush the ball. Michael Little's 2060 season will become the norm for him, Resurrection Santos will get his numbers back up from an already pretty good level. The only falloff I really see would be Stinson who is now 39 and will be 40 before June. They may not win 100 games again, but I think they will repeat. But I thought they would only be five games over .500 last year so what do I know.

Possible Call-Up?: It should be Jose Farias. He hit .365 over almost 400 Abs at AAA last year and even had a short call up in 2060. He is ready and could probably play better defense than Michael Little, who could slide over to the DH role when Stinson dies of old age.

Projection: 96-66. The offense is too talented and the rotation is top notch and still in their prime.

Las Vegas Hustlers



2060 Record: 87-76, 3rd Place, 13 ½ GB, +4 Diff.
 2061 Projected Record: 97-65
 Attendance: 3,603,309
 Payroll: \$98,608,440
 Farm System Rank: 22nd

Key Additions:

LF Tadataka Yoshikawa via Free Agency

Key Losses:

SP Samuel Nebraska via Free Agency

C Taylor Michaels via Free Agency

SP Jose Castro via Free Agency

RP Bill Young via Free Agency

SS Pat Curry via Rule 5 Draft

RP Sergio Rosales via Trade (SAC)

CL Alejandro Chavez via Free Agency

C Justin Bonfield via Free Agency

The Hustlers got hot at the right time last year. Breaking their double dip record of 90-72 by losing three more games, not much was expected in the playoffs. Las Vegas finished in 3rd place, 13 ½ games out. They finished right in the middle in runs scored and runs allowed. They were so average last season they could split a three-game series. But then, Las Vegas got hot. They picked up Samuel Nebraska who pitched surprisingly well and wound up beating the team above them, Boise, in the Geoghegan Round. Then they took it to last year's league champs, the Charm City Jimmies, dispatching them in five games to move on to the Cartwright Cup where they dropped a heartbreaker to the Charlotte Flyers in seven games.

All this late season winning inspired Matt Rectenwald, the GM of the team. With a lot of filler players and old contracts expiring, Matt went out and secured the services of superstar outfielder Tadataka Yoshikawa for three years and 39 million dollars. Despite having closer extraordinaire Todd Stone, he spent another 23.5 million for three years' service from Alejandro Chavez and finally signed journeyman catcher Justin Bonfield for some depth behind the plate. He gave up very little. Nebraska left for free agency, signing a six year 71.4 million dollar deal I am pretty certain he will fail to live up to. Jose Castro was a pretty good bullpen piece, but the bullpen got even stronger. This is a good team.

Just like last year, the team could use a big bat. Czar Mamatulin and Luigi Canavan led the team with 25 homers in the thin air of Las Vegas. Only 2B Randy Wright hit over .300. This

team made some investments this year in their apathetic offense and there should be fewer 2-1 losses and resultant pitcher's crying jags this year.

Do the Hustlers have what it takes? Let's take a look.

Catcher: Claudio Morgan's numbers fell off a bit in 2060. Not horrible, mind you, but nowhere near the .324/13/79 season that prompted the front office to sign him to a big six year extension. His numbers will rebound a bit this season. He still has a hose behind the plate, he will still hit near .280 with probably 10 or more homers and he will still be capable of coming in third in a race around the bases with a pregnant woman. Either Justin Bonfield or John Adams will get the nod as the #2, probably Bonfield as he is better defensively and will be used mostly as a late inning replacement.

Infield: Czar Mamatulin put up pretty good numbers in his sophomore season. He boinked 25 homers to tie for the team lead, improving on his 22 homers in 2059. He also had just about 450 PA because he can't stay healthy, missing five weeks because his groin kept aching. He needs to stay healthy to really make a difference here. 2B Randy Wright will be back at 2B and he is one of the best. An excellent glove, the only Hustler to hit .300 and he improved on his ability to hit the ball in the gap last season. At 23 he has a long promising future. SS Jorge Madrid could be called a min/max player. He strikes out a lot, and has no power to speak of, What he does have is an excellent eye and an ability to get hits that will only improve as the 22 year old gains experience. He may only hit .250 tops, but combined with his defense, that should be enough. With Tristan Lloyd gone via trade, Eduard Faktorovich will handle the hot corner. I'm not sure he is a long-term solution for Las Vegas, but he will do until something better comes along. He



is still just 25 and still on a minimum contract. Don't be surprised if Yoshikawa makes a move to 1B.

Outfield: This where things could get interesting. Despite 35 years old, OF Tadataka Yoshikawa can still mash with the best of them and still play a solid corner in the outfield. He may not crush the ball like he did in the early 20250s, but he is still good for a solid average, 25+ homers and a .370 OBP. Tankut Saltik will patrol right field and mostly underwhelm for a corner outfield but won't get anybody fired and finally CF Roberto Hampton will be out there to catch anything that lands in Vegas, Henderson, Carson City or Reno.

Rotation: Las Vegas traded away some halfway decent arms last year and while they did shore up the bullpen nicely, the rotation may be a chink in the armor. Arnold Cantrell is gone to Des Moines, Jose Barron departed for Montreal and nobody else has really stepped up to claim their spots. The year after leading the Johnson League with a 3.14 ERA, Brett Harrell went 10-13 with a miserable 5.26 ERA. If he is this bad again, it could tank the Hustlers hopes. Carlos Berrera may be ready to join the rotation, but probably needs to develop another pitch or at least improve his sinker to stick in the rotation all year.

Bullpen: The bullpen was already pretty good with Todd Stone closing games, racking up 42 saves, some of them multi-inning. a few other serviceable parts and the pen got the job done. Adding Alejandro Chavez to the pen, likely as a setup man could shorten the game to six or seven innings and you better have the lead by then or you are done. These two will be an excellent combo to finish games.

While the rotation is a bit of a worry, Las Vegas will have a better team this year than last and could go deeper into the playoffs in 2061. You can likely fill one of the playoff spots already with their name.

Possible Call-Up? This team is still pretty young. There are some older teams and Czar Mamatulin could put his cup on upside down and wind up back on the DL. I think the first call will go to Kamatari Kino. Mostly as an OF substitute when "Jimmie Jack" gets injured and Yoshikawa slides over to his future home at 1B.

Projection: 95-67. Maybe a few more wins if they can solidify the rotation.

Phoenix Talons



2060 Record: 71-91, 6th Place, 29 GB. -1 Diff..

2061 Projected Record: 68-94.

Attendance: 2,954,684

Payroll: \$98,156,281

Farm System Rank: 3rd

Key Additions:

SS Yazeed bin Zaleem via Trade (VAN)

Key Losses:

1B Keith Kerfoot via Free Agency

2B Angel Zalapa via Retirement

2B Aggur Lugono via Trade (OMA)

2B Tuna Tatises via Trade (VAN)

CL Jose Diaz via Trade (SFB)

RP Angelo Rodriguez via Rule 5 Draft (TWC)

In 2059, the Phoenix Talons stumbled to a 72-90 record. Dropping almost twenty games off the 2058 pace. In 20260, they pretty much did the same thing, losing one more game and going 71-91. The only silver lining? They did it \$20 million dollars cheaper. They again hit the ball a long way, that is, when they hit it. The Talons were third in home runs and third in home runs allowed. They struck out more than all but one team. They struck out more batters than any team in the league, but walked more than all but three teams.

It doesn't help that even dying kids make insulting your GM (in this case, Sean Marko) they're dying wish. (The Austin Shredders/Edmonton Jackrabbits were glad to help that innocent little boy. If he's still breathing, we may do it again. Big If though)

Phoenix does have a plan. They have the 3rd best system in the league and those players are making their way through the system. They don't have any huge albatross contracts to deal with and some of the biggest are expiring. They also have a number of team options they can exercise and before you know it they have the money to go get some players!

Catcher: The best option here will be Tony Lopez. A former first round pick in 2057, Lopez spent three years in Toledo with the Liberty before making his way to the BBA where he did not embarrass himself and showed good defensive instincts behind the plate. Runners will run on Lopez and with so many lefties in the rotation, expect other teams to run on the Talons a lot.

Infield: With Keith Kerfoot now a Free Agent (an unsigned one at that) the Talons have pinned their first base hopes on Jim Hopewell. Well, hope in one hand. Shit in the other and see which one fills up first. Hopewell is the BBA equivalent of Storming Gorman Thomas. Low average. High power. Can draw a walk. Hopewell may not be a good defensive player, but he will drive in runs and that is all Phoenix will ask of him. The rest of the infield are just keeping seats warm except for Mas'ud bin Salah al Di. He is a legit player who will hit and hit for power as well as showing a good eye at the plate. He is a future star just waiting for the rest of the prospects to join him.

Outfield: This outfield can bat the ball around a little bit. They can also pull their back muscle quite a bit, they can also throw their back out quite a bit and miss quite a bit of time. Maybe if they had a beer and a steak every once in a while, they wouldn't throw out their back tying their shoes? If the outfield can stay healthy, and last year only one player had 500 at bats, this team can win a few more games. But, when you start having to wonder where your seventh outfielder is and wonder whether or not he is also in traction, you have a problem. FYI, Jorge Colon, the Phoenix trainer? LEGENDARY at rehabbing back injuries. Poor at preventing them. The guy knows where his paycheck comes from.

Starters: This is not a bad rotation and the staff may be hampered by playing in a ballpark whose naming rights are held by the company that invented the Grand Slam Breakfast, but they do have some talent. Waseem bin Suhayb left with the lead most games, not that he got the win because the Talon's bullpen proved to be made up of a combination of nitroglycerin and Real Housewives. Losing Nick Rivers really hurts as he is a star in the making but will not return until June at the earliest. The rest will just try and keep the ball in the ballpark (They will mostly fail at that) This could be an ongoing problem as Phoenix has few legit pitching prospects in the minors. They have prospects, but they all swing the bat.

Relievers: If you are going to pay a legit closer 7.5 mil a year. Let him close. Josh Dougherty is a legit closer, but the bulk of the save opportunities went to Huang Cheng who hung too many splitters and barely saved 50% of opportunities that he was given. What the Talons really should do is trade Dougherty. Trade him now. He is an elite closer on a team that won't hand him a ton of leads. Get some starters back and buck that minor league system ranking up to #1 and wait for them to ripen.

The Talons time is definitely not now but it is coming. They have some good pieces they should deal to continue to build up that young core. Don't pay attention to the wins and losses at this level. Now. Get guys ready to win in two to four years.

Projection: 65-97. The fun for the Talon's fans will not be in watching Phoenix, but in watching to see the youngsters develop.

Austin Shredders



2059 Record: 70-92, 7th Place, 30 GB.

2061 OOTP Projected Record: 75-87 3rd Place

Attendance: 2,998,653

Payroll: \$76,452,824

Farm System Rank: 10th

Additions:

CF Pedro Rosales via Free Agency

Losses:

LF Antonio Roman via Free Agency

RF Ted Benson via Free Agency

A new city, a new stadium. Pretty much the same result. Not much was expected of the Shredders this year and they didn't deliver. The team is pretty much focused on developing their picks and hoping some pitching appears out of nowhere. So far, the former is working out better than the latter.

Like 2059, the Shredders hit a bit, hit a bit for power, pitched horribly and did not distinguish themselves in any fashion. Nobody appeared on the leaderboards unless you count Brent Gilbert, who finished 4th in triples and Glenn Fox who finished 3rd in strikeouts by a batter. As a staff the Shredders finished 14th in the league in runs allowed per game.

There is hope however. Luis Rubio, the Shredders Round 1 Pick in 2059 made short of the minor leagues and joined the club in June and definitely impressed, finishing the season hitting .272 with 15 HR and 46 RBI in 96 games. Rubio even managed a couple of votes for the Joe Gillstrom Newcomer of the Year. At just 22, you can probably pencil Rubio's name into the lineup card in LF for a few years at least. Ray Hoskins seems to have made the switch across the diamond seamlessly as well as he had career highs in average, home runs and RBI while playing a very solid 1B.

Not much is expected this year either, but let's take a look at the 2061 Austin Shredders anyways.

Catcher: The Shredders posted two catchers behind the plate in 2060, Enrique Mendoza and Ubaid bin Saleh. Both acquitted themselves adequately and you can't really lay the blame for the pitching staff's craptastic results on these two. Mendoza did have a 7.7 FRM rate and will likely get the bulk of the starts provided he can stay healthy, something he failed to do last year.

Infield: In 2059, the infield was a strength of the team. Barry Wallace at SS, Hoskins at 1B, Ortega at 2B and The Professor at 3B. This year that fell off. Kazantziakis lost a step on the infield dirt, prompting a move to 3B where he doesn't really hit enough for a corner infielder. Ortega fell off with the bat after a solid .322 in his rookie season and glove-for-hire Francisco Garcia played a solid SS but flailed away at the plate like he was swatting at angry bees. The lone highlight was Ray Hoskins in his first full season at 1B. He played excellent defense, hit .314 with 23 HR and 79 RBI. Not much has changed. Ortega will try and rebound, Ricardo Munoz will take over at SS, Kazantziakis will start on the DL and Hoskins will hope to repeat his solid 2059.

Outfield: While better than the previous year, this offense still lacks some serious punch. Glen Fox will discontinue his attempts to impersonate a CF and move to right, where he is more comfortable, Luis Rubio will play every day in LF and new free agent signing, Pedro Rosales will bring a better glove and more range to CF while hopefully providing a little spark on the basepaths and a little protection for the pitching staff's ERA. While the team will miss Ted Benson's prodigious home runs, they will not miss his 5:1 K/BB ratio. It should perform a little better this year overall.

Rotation: The Shredders have two legitimate talents in their rotation in Glenn Hargrove and Mus'ad Amr. But for the last few years, not one coach has been able to figure out how to unlock their talent. They should be double digit winners and sub 4.00 ERAs starters on a consistent basis. Instead, they post season after frustrating season of disappointment. Hargrove has posted a 4.99 ERA in five seasons while Amr has been slightly better at 4.31 over three seasons. The rest of the rotation is made up of living, breathing professional

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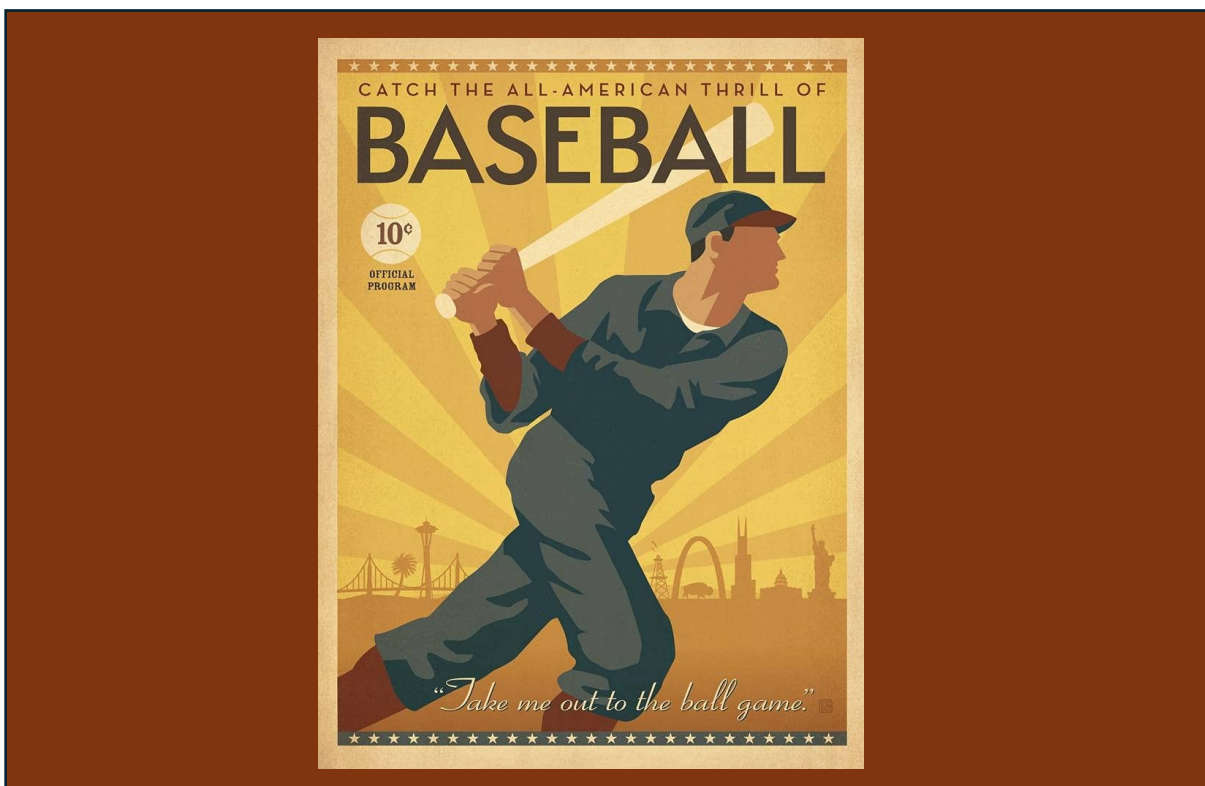
1959
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baseball pitchers. Just not very good ones. Rule 5 pick, Jorge Marin, was the teams lone All Star if that gives you any idea. Wilson Lopez will try and stay healthy (he won't) and throw a few innings to keep it interesting. I don't expect Marin to as well as he did last year even if his final numbers were not all that good anyways. If Hargrove and Amr do not step up this team is not going anywhere.

Bullpen: Have you ever looked at your tool box to find a tool that will fix the problem, then you pick any tool out of the box and start banging away at the problem with the side of the tool, even if it's a pair of pliers or a level or a screwdriver because you don't have the tool you really need so you just something not suited for the task? Ta-da! I present the Austin Shredders bullpen! A bunch of pieces that seem to have little use outside of Edward Joseph Pfeffer and Fernando Villareal. You could probably count Pepe Rivera in there too if the rotation would quit self-immolating necessitating his move to starter every year.

Possible Call-Up?: Takanobu "Heartbreaker" Komatsu will likely start the season in AA Winnipeg with the Black Drums, but could get a late season call up. He is a good OF who can play all three spots and does swing a heavy bat. Everybody else that gets called up will be because of injury and doesn't really deserve it.

Projected record: 70-92 The same record as last year. I think the offense will be a bit more consistent, but the pitching continues to be a black hole for the Shredders.



Boise Spuds



2060 Record: 89-73, 2nd Place, 11 GB. - Diff.

2060 Projected Record: 85-87,

Attendance: 2,919,662

Payroll: \$117,717,881

Farm System Rank: 30th

Additions:

RP Quirke Roddis via Free Agency

RP Brian Groves via Free Agency

Losses:

None

In 2060, Boise managed to put together the best pitching staff in the division, one good enough to prop up a very average offense and make enough noise that they managed to get into the playoffs for a short time before Las Vegas dispatched them in four games.

In 2061 it looks like the Spuds will continue to emphasize their strengths on the mound and hope that some of their bats will catch up. The team added a pair of solid relievers this year in Quirke Roddis, the former Nashville closer and journeyman Brian Groves. Both are coming off of solid seasons and both should be able to contribute.

Let's take a look at this boiled and mashed heap o' players.

Catcher: Sergei Brobovsky continues to fill the role here. He started 128 games last season, making him a durable catcher, threw out 25% of base stealers which is okay, but notched a 9.9 Frame Rate which means he was of great benefit to his pitching staff and that is what you want your catcher to do. He also added 26 HR for the second year in a row. At 1.3 mil per year, Brobovsky may be getting up there in years, but he has been well worth the price.

Infield: Defensively this team regressed last year. Dan Raymond continued his role as a defensive whiz, but hit just .202, meanwhile the rest of the infield underwhelmed defensively. Lou Tinter and Fernando Segura are good, not great defensively. Tinter came over in a May trade and did hit well. He should be the everyday second baseman. Abu Wamakota played adequately at 3B while Pedro Hozven smacked the cover off the ball at a .309-35-117 pace, which were all career highs, but he is a liability on the level of Ford Pinto gas tanks defensively. It is time to take Hozven off the field, make him the everyday DH and find a glove for first base.

Outfield: Lou Bayou continues his reign as one of the best CF in the game and the definitive leadoff man in the BBA. It's not even close. When you hit over .300 all five years of your big league career and lead the league in stolen bases for three straight, you win the title. Per Johan Mikkelson did very little in LF except give out a girlie shriek every time he threw the ball. Maybe he will improve this year as he is only 23. Then again, maybe he will grow a horn out of the top of his head and rent himself out as a party unicorn. Hard to say. Martin Hemming was solid in RF playing better than average defense and hitting a respectable .296 with 17 homers. Boise might want to give 28-year-old Hector Holloway a look in left field. He plays much better defense, and while he doesn't hit for average he does get on base. In 154 PA last year he notched a .396 OBP. Worth a look.

Rotation: Ben Teague, the Boise GM, made two of the best offseason moves last year, spending \$116 million dollars to bring in starting pitchers Robert Hanson and Mahad Einan. Einan limited hitters to a .232 average, best in the league and he also led the league with a 1.01 WHIP while going 16-6. Hanson went 12-9 with a league leading 2.65 ERA over 31 GS. It's hard to beat the ROI on that investment. The rotation should stay pretty much the same. Much of the rotation is getting up their in years with Winston and Hanson turning 36, Einan turning 34 and Eckhoff turning 32. All are still in their prime but a few may be sneaking some Geritol and EZ Ice into the sunflower seed bucket. This rotation could easily top the league again, but I think they could also be prone to falling a few rungs on the ladder with age and injury issues.

Bullpen: The bullpen last year was not lights out but was good enough to hold most leads. Mario Santos saved 38 games in 45 opportunities, an 83% clip. Not bad, not good. But, he's only 24 and put in some work on his movement in the off season. He should improve on that 5.44 ERA. As noted above, the Spuds did go out and make a couple of moves bringing aboard Groves and Roddis which should shore up any holes in the pen and give them some depth. This bullpen is a veteran pen with the serviceable parts all above 30 and not getting any younger. The younger pitchers will need to step up as it seems every reliever under 30 got their junk knocked off by opposing batters.

Possible Call-Up?: If OF Hector Holloway doesn't start the season in Boise, look for him to be the first call up. Once Ben realizes that Per-Johan Misstheball is a subpar defender with a lousy eye and little power for a corner outfielder, Holloway should be in there every day.

Projection: 90-72 While the defense needs some adjustment and the rotation is rapidly aging. They are well within their window to win and the two bullpen additions will help.

Rocky Mountain Oysters



2060 Record: 86-77, 4th Place, 14 ½ GB.

2061 Projected Record: 81-81,

Attendance: 3,643,528

Payroll: \$94,817,929

Farm System Rank: 23rd

Key Additions:

SP Steve Flannery via Free Agency

Key Losses:

C Sloth Fratelli via Free Agency

RF Roosevelt Davis via Waivers (MTL)

1B Dylan Mulloch via Free Agency

2B Ignacio Venegas via Free Agency

RP Norm Collyer via Free Agency

I'll admit it. I picked this one wrong. I thought the Rocky Mountain Oysters had a legitimate shot at the division. And they did win 86 games. But, Calgary, Boise and Vegas all put it together and the Rocky Mountain Oysters GM completely screwed it up. Hey. I said I would admit that I was wrong. NOT that it was my fault that *I* was wrong!

The lineup stayed mostly healthy and so did the staff. Maybe too healthy. Outside of Denny Tabb and Jamie Barber the other three starters had rather hefty ERAs. Other than that they were a mystery. They led the league in runs scored, were just two off the pace for the league lead in homers and batted .279. Nothing to wave your thing that those oysters used to be attached to at! So what went wrong? They didn't steal many bases, but why would you if you can just wait for the guy behind you to hit a homer? They did walk a ton of guys, so maybe allowing too many baserunners did them in. Hard to say. But they let their parents down and should be ashamed of themselves.

Will the Oysters disappoint again? Will they figure it out finally? Will the Joker and Mr. Freeze get the best of Batman?* Don't touch that BBA channel boys and girls! We'll be right back to let you know!

*Authors Note: The first two are complete unknowns and there is no way Cesar Romero and Clancy Brown beat Batman.

Catcher: If you wanted somebody to play everyday behind the plate, hit for a good average, play decent defense and add a few homers you looked up Sloth Fratelli. If you wanted

to overpay a Wrecked catcher 12+ million dollars you look to Omaha because that is what they did. Fratelli was out the door anyways but while he was there he was more than serviceable hitting .298 with 22 Homers. But even if Fratelli time had passed, you still have to come up with a replacement. Enter Tynan Potter. The 30 year old can't catch or hit as well and wont handle pitchers as well, but he is 1/5th the cost of Fratelli and will be an adequate replacement. Jack Cashman is better defensively and will be the occasional defensive replacement and Sunday catcher for the Oysters.

Infield: The only question here may be second base. Last years second sacker Paul Mallett is better defensively, but hit a paltry .229 and struck out over 100 times. Slap hitters like Mallett need to make better contact. Sergio Castro is slightly older, plays defense, not as ably as Mallett, but not embarrassingly so and he has hit .300 for two straight seasons in AAA. He may get the job over Mallett. The rest of the infield is pretty well set with bin Mazin still a stud at 1B, Lucio Guevara surprisingly productive at SS and GBC superstar Muhammed bin Mus'ad bringing his talents to wherever the hell Rocky Mountain plays and manning 3B. He still has room to grow, but has a hefty six year contract to live up to.

Outfield: Rocky Mountain really has four outfielders. Federico Linares and Luis Morales van both roam CF with consummate skill and Juan Miranda and Steve Cahill can both man the corners, though one will sit in favor of either Morales or Linares, whichever one doesn't win the starting CF job. Max Shepperson is a pretty good DH for an outfielder and that is where he will park his keister and punish opposing pitchers while doing it. Likely for another six or seven years. Shepperson clubbed 57 home runs last year while hitting .319 and won the Silver Slugger award for his efforts. This outfield will be just fine.

Rotation: The only real change here is the demotion of Robert Wilson and the FA signing of Steve Flannery. Flannery could be a trap. He has good movement, but most of his movement is taken up by his ability to keep the BABIP low, not the home runs allowed. Pitching in the thin, windy, cold, stupid air of Rocky Mountain, he may get exposed to more than the cold weather and he already gives up an average of 23 homers a year over the last three seasons. Tack on a few more due to the altitude and you may see that ERA climb above 4.00. One pitcher who knows how to handle the rare air there is Jamie Barber and he will put forth another season of solid numbers and at least 12-13 wins. Denny Tabb actually has a little room for improvement in the HRA department and every bit will help him. He also needs to locate better. He led the league in walks and finding yourself down 3-1 in the count is never a recipe for success.

Bullpen: Last year we mentioned that the Oysters let Michael Dixon and Bryce Sparks, both quality relievers, go in free agency. Apparently Oysters GM Brandon Slouck knew better than the rest of us did. Sparks signed with the Shredders (GUILTY!) for 1 year and 7.5 million. Dixon signed with the Yellow Springs Nine for 6.75 million over one year. They both sucked. In

fact, they both infuriated their new teams so much that they were traded for each other by the Shredders and the Nine and STILL sucked! Rocky Mountain dodged a bullet. Instead they rode Serjan Gijsberts, who sounds like somebody you use your leftover Scrabble tiles on, and Joe Shaw. Both pitched extremely well. The rest were cast off and Brandon will try and find some innings eaters to work around Shaw and whatever the other guy's name is.

Possible Call-Up: Let's go with Fareeq bin Su'ud. He did well at both AAA Albuquerque and in a short call up to the BBA. He may not start in the big leagues and needs to cut down on the whiffs (131 last year) but he can put the bat solidly on the ball when he makes contact.

Projection: This is still a talented team and I really don't know why they didn't do better. However, I think the piece they added, Steve Flannery, might be a dud so I will go with 83-79.



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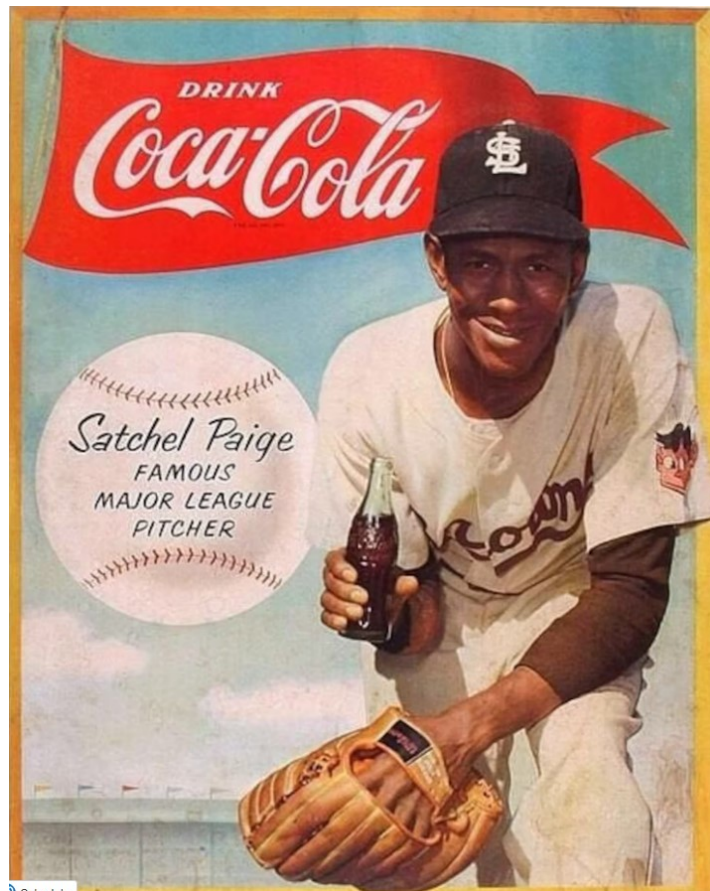
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PROJECTED RECORDS: FRONTIER DIVISION

Team	Wins	Losses	GB
CALGARY	96	66	-
LAS VEGAS	95	67	1
BOISE	90	72	6
ROCKY MOUNTAIN	83	79	13
MEXICO CITY	71	91	25
SAN ANTONIO	71	91	25
AUSTIN	70	92	26
PHOENIX	65	97	31





Brian Pinnell walks us through the Heartland

The Heartland Division

2061

Well, well, well. After 2059 left the Heartland shocked and awed by Nashville's defeat in five games in the Cartwright Cup series to eventual world champion Portland, the world seemed normal again in 2060. In 2059, the Bluebirds won 126 wins and scored over 1,000 runs. Many would probably have understood if they just cancelled the post-season after such regular season dominance because surely that team would just win it all and rub it in. But, alas. The 2060 Bluebirds only managed a relatively measly 115 wins and only scored 959 runs, but this time they took no prisoners in the playoffs cruising to their second championship in four years. The championship cemented the fact that Nashville is a dynasty and will continue to be a dynasty in the 2060s. They will be a team that will continue to dominate the Frick, and likely have a seat at the table deep into the playoffs each season.

Heartland GMs didn't need a championship to know they are in the best division in the BBA, but actually having the hardware does help quiet the haters. The division continued to be dominated by Nashville and Twin Cities. In 2060 it was Sacramento's turn to displace Twin Cities as the second-best team in the Frick, but only by a hair. With 115 and 107 wins respectively, Nashville and Twin Cities (along with 87-game winner Des Moines) provided the division with a top-weighted 1-2-3 punch. The rest of the Heartland comparatively struggled in various stages of rebuilding. With the exception of Long Beach, the entire Pacific division was stronger than the bottom five teams in the Heartland.

LEAGUE STANDINGS HEARTLAND DIVISION						
Team	W	L	WPct	GB	R	RA
Nashville Bluebirds	115	47	.710	-	959	611
Twin Cities River Monsters	107	55	.660	8	850	639
Des Moines Kernels	87	75	.537	28	814	734
Chicago Black Sox	74	88	.457	41	694	749
Omaha Cyclones	73	89	.451	42	749	915
Madison Wolves	64	98	.395	51	663	762
Yellow Springs Nine	64	98	.395	51	654	835
Louisville Sluggers	52	110	.321	63	623	925

But what will 2061 be like for the Heartland? Surely Nashville will continue to dominate, but will it have Twin Cities by its side again? Will there be any improvement overall by the rest of the division? And what of the rising sun in the Pacific? Pundits are predicting a massive rebalancing of power with five teams in the Pacific predicted to be above .500 with four of those teams predicted to win over 90 games.

In 2061, I don't see the top dogs changing yet again. Nashville and Twin Cities will surely carry the division again, though I think both will have fewer wins. Chicago will carry away some of those to inch higher than their 2060 performance to join Des Moines in what should be an interesting playoff race at the end. The remainder of the division will continue into the next phases of their respective rebuilds, at least free from the crushing weight of expectations.

Nashville Bluebirds



When Nashville won the Monty Brewster Memorial Series in five games against Charlotte, completely sober Vandy students stormed Les Paul Field to steal whatever they could and throw it all in the Cumberland. The party lasted all winter. Can the city withstand another year of such jubilation? Nashville's finest better get ready.

Pitching

This is where the team identity is slightly changing. The pundits think the 2061 Bluebirds will finish with a team ERA of 3.10, a ridiculously low number. It is not hard to see why given the team is again stocked with quality pitching. Mark Lolololo followed his superb 16-1 sophomore campaign with a league-leading 5.0 WAR. Eric Stevens led the league in strikeouts and WHIP. That 1-2 punch at the top of the rotation is the best in the league. And why not add Phil Cole to the mix, which Nashville did last season in a trade with YS9? Cole is in the tail-end of his stellar career, but I think he will have a big year for the Bluebirds. Fans don't even remember Steven Clayton was on the team. Gone are Barney Lindsay and Billy Kelly (via FA and trade respectively), but so what when you can just promote #8 prospect Bin-Ying Yen who appears ready to start what could be a fantastic career. In the bullpen, repeat Egan Reliever of Year winner David Molina will continue to be a stud. Quirke Roddis' departure via free agency would be a dagger for many teams, but Nashville has the depth to weather it.

Batting

As the team's pitching wizardry is ascendant, it will be balanced by a more measured offense. This won't be the 2059 team that scored over 1000 runs. Gone via free agency is Todd Tatlock's moustache which showed up via mid-season trade to help propel the team to the promised land. Oh, and a couple of guys named Wafid Bishr and Juan Rivera left as free agents as well. That is Nashville legend Wafid Bishr and part-cyborg Juan Rivera. Those three had 13.5 WAR last season, which doesn't grow on trees. What is left is still very impressive. One of the best outfielders in the game with Joffer, Tingle, and Gonzales, plus an infield that has Brooks Eliot and newcomer of the year Francisco Calderon. The weakest link right now is at

catcher, but perhaps GM Chad Nason will pull another rabbit like Tatlock out of the hat mid-season.

Outlook

It is getting difficult for me to predict how dominating Nashville will be. I am routinely underpredicting the amount of wins they will have. Last season I predicted 112 wins thinking that the 126 wins from the season before was just too good. They ended up with 115. This season I am again predicting 112 wins, which of course will still likely be the best record in the entire BBA. Though the underlying reasons for those 112 wins is going to be slightly different than what propelled the team's recent success, Nashville will again dominate. The team is an absolute juggernaut.



Louisville Sluggers



Congratulations to GM Brian Pinnell are again in order. The Sluggers managed a three-peat at the bottom of the Heartland. Stoic fans are enjoying the quarter wings and three-for-one beer specials at the Truck Plant while the team feels its way to the ultimate depth of its rebuild. Has it already hit rock bottom? Hard to say, but fans are happy to stay the course with dreams of

future success sustaining them through dark times.

Pitching

A pair of trades provided quite a bit of drama for the Slugger's rotation. Gone one game into the season was ace Greg Shaw, traded to Des Moines for a prospect and cash. His salary could no longer be justified and cash was necessary to help fix GM BP's prior financial mismanagement. Another trade was even bigger. Mid-season the Sluggers sent the pride of Louisville, Amphibian Johnson, to Sacramento in exchange for a large haul of prospects and enough cash to give the team a shot at a successful rebuild. Two of those prospects, Ethan Bricknell and Seiichi Suzuki, will likely be at the top of the rotation in 2061. The rest of the pitching staff will mostly be the same, with starter Ford Prefect getting a fresh application of duct tape to keep his arm on. Former first rounder Cade Miller and his 25 saves will return in the bullpen, with Tim Redmon again ready to unleash his wicked stuff against lefty hitters in a specialist role. But even with the added heft of Bricknell and Suzuki, this pitching staff will be one of the worst in the league.

Batting

The team not only got rid of Amphibian Johnson, but also team captain Joel Woodroffe in a separate trade. The Sluggers still have defensive wizards at the corners, with 2059 Diamond Glove winner and all-star Gustavo Canales likely to get even better as he starts to hit his prime. In the infield, Scott Torres lost four months to injury and even though Kaim Khay'ri won another Diamond Glove award, he simply doesn't hit the ball like he used to. Both make over 10M/year, but thankfully for Louisville, those contracts soon expire. It was hoped that top prospect Jose Barrera would have a better rookie season, but fans are still excited for his future along with 2060 all-star Gary Grant.

Outlook

Overall the team will largely be the same as last season. The deck chairs have been rearranged, but the ship is still sinking. The prospects that will eventually move the needle are still some time away from getting to the show. That includes last year's third overall pick Tankut Kostadinov, big IFA signing Gualtiero Columbo, and whoever the team picks with their first overall pick this season. Fans can at least focus on that future. The addition of Bricknell and Suzuki will help the team get a little better and finish with 60 wins.



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Madison Wolves



Say what you want about Madison, but at least they are consistent. Another 64-win season for GM Mike Simon. Normally I would toot my own horn for predicting that number correctly in last year's preview, but that was the third 64-win season in the last five years so I wasn't really going out on a limb. Last year was another year missing the playoffs and losing money (every year since 2049). A couple of free agent pieces were added, but Madison will be fielding largely the same team as last year. Should anyone expect the team to perform materially better or worse?

Pitching

2053 Newcomer-of-the-Year Josh Clark will return to anchor the rotation. You have to feel for him finishing last year with a 1-9 record despite pitching well overall. If he was on a better team, his career won-loss record of 41-71 would be flipped. Also returning are solid starters Lucas Wood and Tyler Murray. Some free agent acquisitions for the bullpen, including 3-year/26M man Clint Thomas, will help shore up that part of the pitching staff, and might allow Wesley Turner to go back to the starting rotation after many years in the bullpen. Overall, it is a decent pitching staff and will help keep Madison in place.

Batting

Certainly the loss of Manobu Shimizu to injury for most of the season was a hard pill to swallow for Madison fans. The ageless wonder is showing his age, but he still has the potential to be the Shimizu of old in his last contract year at age 40. He will be a big factor in whether the team improves on its 2060 performance. The team decided to bring back catcher Ziad Abdul-Samad on a smaller (5M) one-year deal with the hope that he could perhaps learn a new position to be more useful. Unfortunately, you can't teach an old dog new tricks. At least he is making less money than before. Former first-round pick Dave McClain had another all-star season with expectations for a three-peat all-star performance. Outfielder Gary Keller is turning out to be a shrewd Rule 5 acquisition. He had a great sophomore season, combining a solid bat with elite defense and speed. Overall, though, the rest of the team is just okay offensively. Similar to the pitching staff, it should help keep Madison in place.

Outlook

By now you will have deduced that I don't think Madison will be any different than last season and the season before that. That is correct, but I do think a healthier Shimizu will boost the team just slightly. BBA pundits are generously predicting the Wolves to have 76 wins. I instead predict a more reasonable 68 (not 64) wins.

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Yellow Springs Nine



What a difference one season makes. GM Rob McMonigal wanted that wild card spot. He made moves to get his team into playoff contention where anything can happen. He accelerated the teams rebuild with aggressiveness. But despite his fervor from the front office, the team wasn't on the same page, and it hurt. When faced with the new reality, the team hit the reset button and will be undergoing a multiple season overhaul to try again.

Pitching

One big part of the reset is the trade of Phil Cole. He was brought in via trade before the 2059 season in order to give the team a playoff-worthy rotation. His first season was pure class with a third-place finish in Nebraska voting and 5.2 WAR. The next season Cole took his foot off the gas and started to look his age. That and sub-par performances from other players caused YS9 to look in the mirror and make a bold move necessary to save the team from too much time in no-man's land. He was traded to Nashville mid-season for some prospects and cash. What was the point of Cole's 12.5M salary if the team wasn't reaping the rewards? It was a move that had to be done. Even without Cole and even with the loss of Brody Picot to free agency, YS9 still has a good rotation. Ace Hannes Schwarzacher is proving to be the real deal with an all-star nod to his credit. Solid starters Corey McGuire and Ollie Lowry will return and could have better seasons. One of the prospects from the Cole trade, Alfredo Anaya, could be in the running for Newcomer of the Year. The bullpen will be serviceable with some interesting additions, but no one that will make a huge difference.

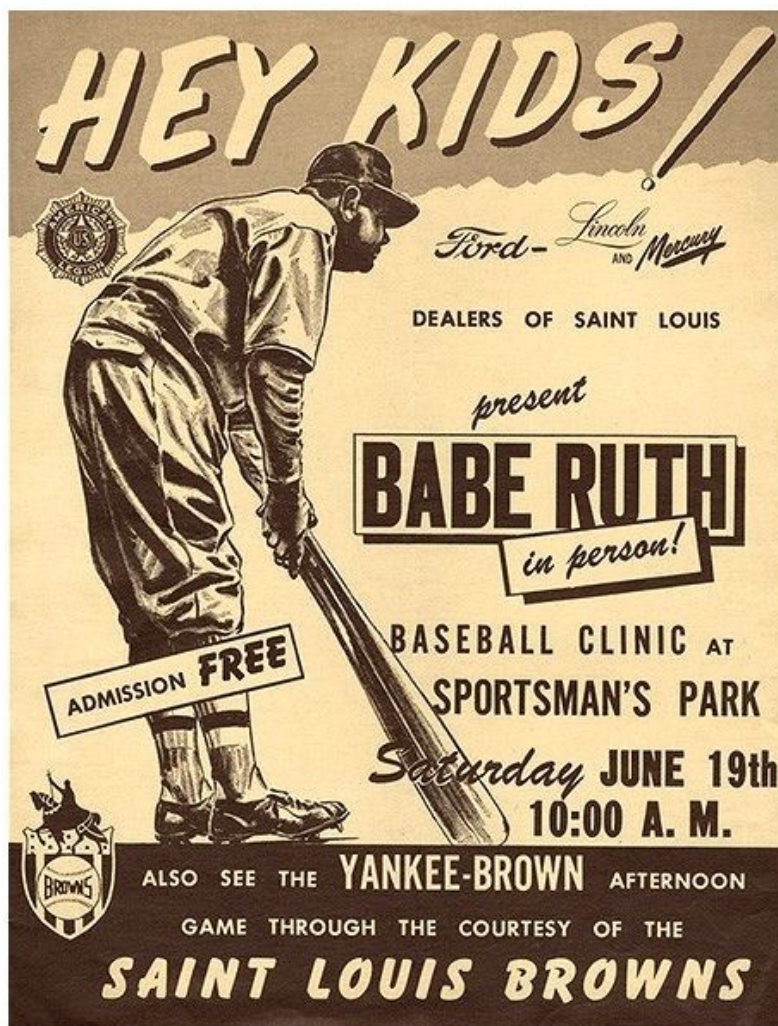
Batting

One of the players that didn't get the memo from the front office was Majd bin Nawaf. After trading for the star in his prime and giving up solid prospects for the privilege of his services, YS9 needed bin Nawaf to just be himself. But he wasn't. Not even close. A huge letdown offensively. It will be interesting to see what the team ultimately does with him, but for now his bat is a big factor in the vibe of the team. Another bat that will be needed will be that of rookie 1B Emilio Navarro. The former highly rated prospect will have his first full

season in the show, and it could be Newcomer-of-the-Year worthy. Gone are veteran players like Burhan Tahir and Mal Fountain but it won't make a difference.

Outlook

Now that the prior aggressive rebuilding strategy is in the rearview mirror, it will be interesting to see how the team recovers. As long as bin Nawaf is with the team, I expect him to play to his potential. That offensive boost coupled with the emergence of Navarro will add some runs. And the pitching staff has enough talent to keep the team in games. This will not be a playoff team, but I do expect an improvement to 71 wins.



Chicago Black Sox



Its déjà vu all over again in Chicago. Three seasons in a row with over 70 wins and another respectable 4th place finish in the Heartland last year. Did it do anything in the off-season to leapfrog third place Des Moines? What about the ascendant Pacific teams? GM Renato Umali didn't choose to make a huge free agent signing in the offseason, most likely due to the team losing over \$11M last year. But he did make some small improvements to the team's weakest link – the bullpen. Will it be enough?

Pitching

Big free agent signing from the season before, Adam Hines, started his career in Chicago with a very respectable 13 wins. He will return along with ace Stevie Bodine, and former Newcomer of the Year Carlos Moya, to form one of the best rotation foundations in the league. All three are young, dominant, innings eaters that are likely to improve even more. Their performance will determine where this team goes this season. The bullpen is still a weak link, but the team did bring in some under-the-radar quality pieces like free agent Yoriyuki Ine and a handful of possible Rule 5'ers. No material improvement, but with the top three starters being so good and pitching well into games, the pressure on the bullpen will certainly be less than other teams.

Batting

Most franchises would immediately fold if they lost a player like Todd "TNT" Tatlock. But Chicago and its fans dug deep and gutted out the tragedy of his trade to Nashville. Even after he helped the division rival win a championship. But Tatlock's time in Chicago was done. Fortunately for Chicago, there is more to the team than just Tatlock. Let's not forget Hasheem Makin and his 20M salary acquired off waivers from DM last season. Actually, let's forget him, because his performance at the plate was not worth even a fraction of that 20M. His best days are behind him and I'm sure that Chicago can't wait for that 20M to come off the books. Right-fielder Ragheb Burhan apparently loves deep-dish pizza, because since he came to Chicago he has become the fantastic player he always was predicted to be. He swiped 51 bases last season at age 32. I think the team might miss Candranibha Saswata who unsurprisingly didn't

replicate his breakout all-star season in 2059, but perhaps his price tag was too much. His departure solidifies the start of the Angel de la Cruz era at second base. His defensive skills are worth the price of admission. Overall the team isn't that different offensively from last season.

Outlook

Not sure why BBA pundits are so bullish about this team. Last season the consensus was 86 wins while the team ended up with 74. This season the consensus is 90 wins! I simply don't see how that is possible with no material changes to last year's team. Maybe they will finish better than Des Moines, but I predict the team slightly improves to finish with 79 wins.

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YOU'LL FIND THIS A FAVORITE *Breakfast of Champions*

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Wheaties are crispy, crunchy, golden brown flakes—light as snowflakes. They have the soft flavor of a porridge dish, and are so irresistible that even people who say they "hate" cereals go for big bowls of Wheaties—and come back for more.

And Wheaties have solved, in millions of homes, the problem of getting growing children to eat good, big breakfasts. Youngsters who once balked at breakfast... had to be coaxed and coaxed before they would eat... love Wheaties, and eat them without fuss. That is because whole wheat, in this tempting new form, has been made so good that it has all the appeal, to the child imagination, of a French confect.

Order Wheaties from your grocer today. Try a "Breakfast of Champions"—Wheaties, with plenty of milk or cream, sugar, and fruit. Wheaties have the acceptance of the Committee on Foods of the American Medical Association.

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*All available figures show that during the past year the sales of Wheaties have increased more than those of any other cereal.

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Holder of Every Major Title for Women's Speed Ice Skating in the World

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Champion of the World in Tennis

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All-American Quarterback

WHEATIES "Breakfast of Champions" WITH PLENTY OF MILK OR CREAM, SUGAR, AND SOME KIND OF FRUIT

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Des Moines Kernels



Sometimes you make some bold moves and they don't pan out, which happened recently in Yellow Springs. Sometimes they work, and that is what happened in Des Moines last season. A series of shrewd mid-season trades made the Kernels a better team and got them over the line for their first playoff appearance since 2056, where they put up an impressive performance losing to eventual champion Nashville in the Doubleday Series. The foundation for this playoff berth was laid by GM Jesse Ramirez in the off-season before the trades were made, where the team was one of the league leaders in WAR gained. This off-season has seen the team sit tight, but can it afford to do so if it wants to make the playoffs again?

Pitching

Des Moines fans can thank Louisville for the playoff tickets because the trade of Louisville ace Greg Shaw to the Kernels at the start of the season was a big reason for the Kernel's success. Shaw went 14-6 and earned his 11M salary. Another mid-season trade saw the team add depth piece Arnold Cantrell. He should be a fantastic #4 or #5 starter. The team will also continue to have its solid 1-2 punch of veterans Steven Clayton and Tommy Akers. Garth Dobbs will round out the rotation, and he could be poised to have a breakout year. Another mid-season trade saw the two-time reliever-of-the-year Scott Everard join the team. He was a lights-out closer after arriving in Des Moines, and should be counted on for a similar performance this season. Otherwise, the bullpen is fine, and overall this team will keep runs against relatively low.

Batting

Was it bold to trade Hector Cano Jr.? Bold or not, he had to go. He was definitely trending down with an enormous contract. That does leave a hole in center field, but at least the team has some rising stars on the corners. First-round pick in 2056 Kevin Thistle got an all-star nod and a Golden Bat award in LF, while RF Julio Perez was MVP of the Kernel's first-round playoff victory over Portland. Both are poised to breakout even further. Former Newcomer of the Year Ricardo Norman had his best season yet, earning his first all-star appearance and Golden Bat award at 1B. And speaking of Golden Bats, let's not forget to mention 3B Felix Parreno who

was a big free agent acquisition before last season. These guys can hit the ball, and overall the offense should keep the team in contention.

Outlook

With the balance of power shifting in the Frick, it is a risky move to sit still if you are a Heartland team living on the bubble. For Des Moines, however, you can feel confident that the bold moves already made have set the team up for success without further fiddling. The team is well balanced and should compete for a playoff spot yet again. Will it win 87 wins again or even more? I think it will be close, but ultimately the team will finish with 85 wins.

CARL HUBBELL
STRIKES OUT "MURDERERS' ROW"
Gets Biggest Kick in Career!

BIGGEST Thrills OF BASEBALL!
The biggest baseball thrills of big league stars like Bob Feller, Lefty Grove, Cicely Dean, etc., (one from each team in the majors) are available every year in greater quantity than ever. Get all the WHEATIES packages. Get all the fun. No. 5 IN A SERIES OF 10

"In the 1934 All Star game I got my biggest kick out of baseball! I got off to a bad start as pitcher for the National League team giving Gehring, the lead-off man, a base hit and Manush, a walk. Things looked pretty black because coming up in order were Ruth, Gehrig and Foxx, as tough a line-up as you could name! Believe me, I put everything I had on the ball and the three went down swinging! I've had lots of thrills in baseball, but striking out Ruth, Gehrig and Foxx in order tops them all!"

Carl Hubbell
PITCHER—NEW YORK GIANTS

WHEATIES
WITH MILK OR CREAM AND FRUIT
"Breakfast of Champions"

Omaha Cyclones



Last season can be considered a success for the Cyclones. GM Kevin Spencer landed the rebuild plane like a seasoned pilot, with a one-game improvement over the previous season, despite BBA pundits (and me) predicting a much worse outcome. Despite the smooth touch-and-go, the ride was too much for one player.

Future hall-of-famer Luis Mendoza called it quits midway through his 4 year/56M contract. Hard to lose such a popular player for sure, but the silver lining is not having to pay that big salary. This was a team that had done much to shed payroll in recent years with an aim toward profitability. Not there yet, but moving in the right direction. Can they turn the loss of Mendoza into a gain?

Pitching

Omaha fans were shocked when the team dealt ace Takashi Nakamura to Twin Cities mid-season, but ultimately understood it had to be done while the team could get maximum value for him. His contract with an ever-pesky option was simply not compatible with the new team direction. Where does that leave the rotation? Not in the greatest of places, but serviceable. The team will need to rely heavily on the likes of Sam Landry and Mathis Gerard. An interesting Rule 5 pickup, veteran Felipe Mendez, could be a surprise success. In the bullpen, shut-down closer Dave Ferrell will return for his final contract year after a sub-par season, but otherwise the bullpen will be, again, serviceable.

Batting

The hole left by Mendoza is huge given his larger-than-life status, but he was slowing down and was expensive. The sudden retirement likely wrecked plans that Omaha had to get some value in the trade market similar to Nakamura. But it did open the possibility to spend some money on the free agent market, and Omaha did not disappoint. The fans went from sorrow to jubilation when the signing of fan favorite Sloth Fratelli was announced. A safe though expensive one-year deal for the popular catcher will help the team on and off the field. And there are also other sources of excitement for today and the future. Left Fielder Jorge Delgado didn't exactly match his Newcomer of the Year-winning rookie season of 2059, but if he stays healthy, he should have a solid year. And Stephen Futon might be primed for a career year at

29 after a number of consistently solid seasons. Fans will be eager to see how Stan Lodge gets on at 1B since he was one of the returns in the Nakamura trade. He could have a bright future with the organization.

Outlook

With no Mendoza and Nakamura, it will be hard for the team to better their 73 wins from last season. Sloth is the man, but he is not going to magically double his normal amount of WAR this season. When you consider the overall weak state of the pitching staff, the decent overall offensive potential will not be enough to save this team from a slight drop. I predict 67 wins, but at least it won't be last place.

A vintage advertisement for Wilson baseball gloves. The central focus is a large, detailed illustration of a Wilson baseball glove, shown from the back with the fingers spread. The glove is dark brown with white stitching. The word "Wilson" is printed in white on the back of the hand. Below the glove, the text "KURY-FORM FINGERS" is visible. Above the glove, a baseball is shown with the Wilson logo and "Wilson Trial League" written on it. The background is a light green color. In the bottom left corner, there is a small illustration of three baseball players in action on a field. The text "This is our mark" is written in a small font above the large "Wilson" logo. Below the logo, the text "Look to the Leader For Progress" is written in a bold, serif font. Underneath that, there is a paragraph of smaller text describing Wilson's sports equipment and its use in military and medical contexts. At the bottom right, the text "IT'S WILSON TODAY IN SPORTS EQUIPMENT" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. A small number "91" is visible in the bottom right corner of the advertisement.

Twin Cities River Monsters



Sorry, but I feel like GM Alan Ehlers might be Bill Murray in Groundhog Day. I can literally repurpose the opening that I wrote in last year's preview. Which is basically to say congratulations again to Twin Cities for making the playoffs again, its eighth time in the last nine seasons. Another 100+ win campaign. But again, no division title, pennant, or BBA title. To rub salt in the wound, it was Nashville who slapped them around in the Cartwright Cup four games to one. But who wouldn't want this? It is successful team management with a chance to win it all every season. If not for Nashville, the recent history of Twin Cities would surely be a different tale. It is very difficult to keep this engine going this well this long. Will it overheat in 2061?

Pitching

Ouch. Three really good pitchers opt out for greener financial pastures. Specifically, Bernie Stuart, Takahashi Nakamura, and Luis Gonzalez. That is 10 WAR out the door. Most teams would curl up in a fetal position and cry if they lost two key starters and one of the best relievers in the league, but luckily for TWC, they still have an extremely good 1-2 punch with 2060 All-Star Erik Brooks and the unheralded but fantastic Jerry Stone. Those two will bring it, but a lot of the rotation's success this season will depend on the health of Yoshii Takuda. If he can remain physically intact, he could be a huge difference maker. The bullpen is also solid across the board with veterans David Prigent and Patrick Rosales returning.

Batting

Well, the hype surrounding 2057 first-round pick 2B/OF Randall Gray was justified. In his second season, he made the all-star team and was MVP of the opening playoff series against San Fernando. His fragility is concerning though. He is already missing a decent chunk of Spring Training with an injury. The team should not have a problem scoring runs if Gray stays healthy. They still have studs like Majid bin Husam, Felix Ramos, and Angel Gonzalez. All these key pieces will return with a solid supporting cast.

Outlook

Twin Cities is still a solid team across the board. The loss of Stuart, Nakamura, and Gonzalez will no doubt hurt, and ultimately will impact the team's won-loss record. But they will be exactly where they want to be. They will not win the division, but they should make the playoffs and that is just fine. Look for a solid 93 wins and a return to the playoffs for the River Monsters.

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Y. Peres

GET A GLOSSY PHOTO 8x10 INCHES ←

soflybeautifulandglam.com

The graphic features a large caricature of a smiling baseball player wearing a dark cap with a white 'M' logo. To the right, a photo booth frame shows a child in a white shirt holding a baseball bat, with a smaller photo of the same child on the wall. A signature 'Y. Peres' is written in cursive above the photo booth. A text box on the right says 'GET A GLOSSY PHOTO 8x10 INCHES' with an arrow pointing left. A small URL 'soflybeautifulandglam.com' is at the bottom left.

PROJECTED RECORDS: HEARTLAND DIVISION

Team	Wins	Losses	GB
Nashville	112	50	
Twin Cities	93	69	19
Des Moines	85	77	27
Chicago	79	83	33
Yellow Springs	71	91	41
Madison	68	94	44
Omaha	67	95	45
Louisville	60	102	52

“Don’t Strike Out”

The man who fans the air without hitting anything will soon be out of the game. Get strength for the Game of Life by eating

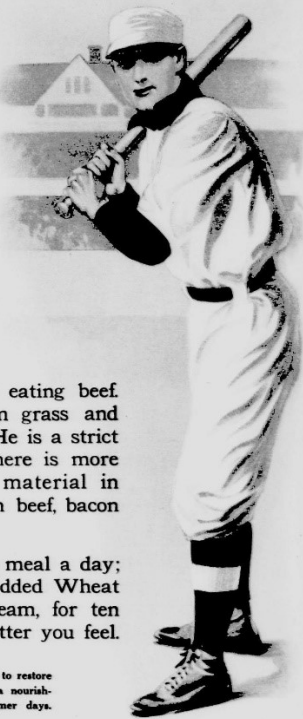
SHREDDED WHEAT

at least once a day all the year 'round. It contains all the muscle-making material in the whole wheat made digestible by steam-cooking, shredding and baking.

Many persons imagine they can get “strong as an ox” by eating beef. The ox gets his strength from grass and cereals. He doesn’t eat meat. He is a strict vegetarian. Pound for pound there is more muscle-making, brain-building material in Shredded Wheat Biscuit than in beef, bacon or eggs.

Confine your meat-eating to one meal a day; Cut out soggy pastries; try Shredded Wheat for breakfast, with milk or cream, for ten mornings and see how much better you feel.

Shredded Wheat Biscuit, (heated in the oven to restore crispness) with sliced peaches and cream, is a nourishing and wholesome dish for the hot Summer days.



All the Meat of the Golden Wheat
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TERRIFIC PACIFIC



Ron Collins takes a look at the Pacific Division

The Pacific Division

2061

Much has been written recently about the superiority of the Pacific Division. Much of it from pens of journalists and fans of Pacific Division teams.

It's fair to be skeptical.

The Pacific division did suffer difficult losses in the Brewster playoffs, both all three of San Fernando, Portland, and even Sacramento going one-and-done in what might be the biggest flameout since back when they tried to make the Flash into a major movie hit. And to be fair, while Nashville is an anomaly that everyone wants to discount in these things, you just can't ignore the fact that the Bluebirds are a Heartland team, and that five of the last six Frick League representatives to battle for the Monty trophy have come from that division—only three times being Nashville.

What can't be denied, however, is that across the divisions the Pacific has show dominance down through the ranks. What also cannot be denied is that there's a lot happening here. While every division can claim a certain swagger among their management structures, it is clear and true that the Pacific is deep with highly capable, highly engaged GMs—and that each entered this off-season paying attention to detail and highly motivated to improve their squads. It shows.

Every week of this off-season has been filled with a division rival making a big splash in the media, generally picking up whatever top starter happened to be willing to sign that week. Arms coming into or returning to the division include Thomas Turner and Luis Gonzalez (Valencia), Bernie Stuart (Portland), Takashi Nakamura and Brody Picot (Bikini), Barney Lindsey (Hawaii), Liam Johnston (Long Beach). And that's just the starters. Bullpens, too, got talent injections—perhaps Long Beach and Valencia taking the biggest leaps there. Vancouver added catcher Todd Tatlock. Valencia grabbed first baseman Zenobius Kazantziakis.

And if it wasn't signings, then trades were all over the front pages, perhaps the most intriguing being the inter-divisional move that sent Yuu Suzuki from Sacramento to San Fernando.

You'll note that we haven't talked about kids coming up, one of which—Bikini's 20-year-old reliever Winston Morris being so impressive as to be tagged by local pundits as a pre-season favorite for at least the Gilstrom and the Egan. There was even whispers of a Nebraska.

It was enough to get fans pumped up and bickering.

Which is what you want, right? As my grandfather would have said, eyeballs on the system creates cash on the barrelhead, whatever a barrelhead is.

As I type this, Valencia leads the division with a \$114.5M payroll, just under league cap. Vancouver is down at \$108M. Hawaii \$106M, and Bikini is at \$103M. Everyone else—specifically perennial contenders in Sacramento and Portland, are under \$100M. That means, barrelhead or not, despite all the activity, Pacific division teams still have more room to maneuver.

There are questions, of course. We'll get into those soon enough.

But it's clear from the pulse of the league that the Pacific is where all the cool cats (or at least the cool pitchers) are hanging out right now, and it's also clear from the standings the past few seasons that the battles in the Pacific theatre should be epic in 2061. The OOTP pre-season projections show this: Four Pacific teams with 90+ wins, Portland and San Fernando sitting at 97 each, Sacramento and Vancouver at 92 and 90. I suppose that's as good of a guess as any, though as you'll soon see, I don't see it quite that way.

That said, projection in the Pacific is tough.

As you might guess, the teams are mostly solid and mostly deep.

Random luck could go a long way to determining things. An injury here or a sudden aging out of a pitcher there could make a difference. That, too, is a thing. Pacific pitching is killer on paper, but you've got guys like Alaric Wullenweber and Barney Lindsey and Thomas Turner toward the top of rotations, and with age like that...well...time waits for no one.

All of that said, the Pacific division promises to be ultra-competitive this year, and that is going to make them interesting, exciting, and sometimes probably painful to watch.

Baseball is a game that tears your heart out, after all.

It's a game where you are supposedly doomed to fail 70% of the time.

It's also a game, like most, where there can be only one championship.

And, of course, nothing matters but the Pacific pennant.

Sacramento Mad Popes



The Mad Popes won 108 games last year. A simple scan of the Gains and Losses sheet says they are down 9 WAR after trading away 1B Yuu Suzuki, and losing SP Thomas Turner, RP Clint Thomas, and a few others to free agency.

It would then seem easy to say 108 wins -9 wins = 99 wins, and have at it. But where would the fun be of that?

There are, of course, still a lot of bullets in the Mad Popes' metaphorical gun. Despite Michihiro Tanaka looking a little banged up in the spring, the rotation could be either #1 or #2 in the division. Mark Moore, Steve Warren, Tanaka, Joe King, Fernando Rodriguez—or add in one of a couple kids coming up (because GM shoeless and the Green-Eyed Woman are nothing if not stockers of the minors), and you've got waves of arms in Sacramento.

Maybe Warren can even throw from the pen now?

I don't know.

On the whole the staff may not be quite as eye-popping as the days of "Nebraska All The Way Down," but don't sell it short.

The bats give me a similar vibe. Very good, but now that Ploid, Nisanci, and Suzuki are all gone, not quite to the Mad Pope reputation. Still, shortstop Badr Isam hasn't missed a beat at age 34. One assumes his next stop is the Hall of Fame, but given he dropped a 6.4 WAR season last year, that stop is a few kicks down the road. That said, springtime games suggest that 24-year-old super-glove Daniel Kenner might well play shortstop, and Isam move to third. I can see that, though Kenner would be as automatic of an out as there would be in the league. His double play mate (whoever "he" is), Ryan Geauxinue, is also 34, but also still kicking it despite his glove showing some wear. Add in 34-year-old catcher John Kinsalla (also likely to stop at the Hall), and you've got an infield mostly again.

The outfield, though, is spry, and is anchored by (again elite) centerfielder Amphibian Johnson, acquired from Louisville last year. At 25, he and Tsutomu Yamauchi are the "old" guys of the pasture at 25. Don't be surprised to see 20-year-old Craig Williams (once a first round pick), playing the other corner...if not now, sometime soon.

I've called this a team in transition before, and as a big-name club in the Brewster it is all that. There's enough churn here to be "worried." I mean, I don't see 108 wins in the revamped Pacific. The drop off means there will be a few more wins for the rest of the clubs.

But OOTP predictions has the team at 92 wins, and I think that's a little low.

Vancouver Mounties



You can feel it, can't you? The change? On a team in which the only constant is change, I suppose you can be forgiven if you miss it—but in this case the press is even commenting. There's a transition going on in Vancouver. The old guard is almost gone, the new guard is making its name and staking its claim.

In this case, the old guard is represented by Davenport Hinkle, who is now officially old enough that you worry more about him breaking his hip while falling out of bed than you think of him leading the team. The problem is bad enough that Mountie GM Aaron Wharram spent big money to bring Todd Tatlock in. That will help pad the fall, at least. The new guard, though, is clearly focused on Reynaldo Serrano, who at 25 has been with the big club for four years now, but who had to deal with questions about his health after an injury cut short his 2059. The results are in, though. His 3.7 WAR at second base was solid enough, but insiders say he's retooled himself in the off-season, and with the club's pushing him to play shortstop every day, looks like he might, maybe, turn into a generational kind of player.

We'll see.

They will need him to have a big year because Vancouver's offense was the worst in the Frick last year, and I'm not seeing extensive improvement if Serrano isn't leading it. The good news for Serrano is that he's got a collection of kiddie korps to lead, not the least of which might be 3B Javier Valles (23) and LF Greg Clover (25). Add in a sneaky-interesting Leonardo Rodriguez (25) at first, and you've got a core of very young players who could make an impact.

To expect this core to lift the team into the upper tiers of run production is probably fool's gold, though.

Of course, the good news is that the team nearly made the playoffs despite that tepid offense, and the pitching should be good again. That much is a constant for Vancouver. Pitching, Good. The rotation should probably be some order of Dirk Bessi, Antonio Baldez, Sam Fisher, Tom Miller, and Stephen Clulow, Jr. The addition of Tulon Koruturk to team with Jesus Garcia should improve an already better-than respectable bullpen.

I figure it all adds up to say Vancouver won't win the division, but another shot at the playoffs is clearly on the table. And to be honest, if the bats can pick up a few runs, and if Serrano grows into a true beast, it's a team I'd be happy to avoid come the postseason.

That's a few "ifs" I know. But the odds of it happening are not particularly low, and Aaron Wharram is the kind of guy who will just keep pressing the accelerator.

Don't count them out.

Hawaii Tropics



The past half-decade has been a bit of a tough patch for GM James Walker and his Tropics. At one point they were one of those perennial 85-90 win playoff teams (2054 & 2055), but recently they've been some combination of overpowered and snakebit. Their 77 wins last season was not inspiring, but on the other hand, equaled their best output in the five seasons since. What's going to

happen this year may be anyone's guess.

The team's strength has been pitching, and with a clearly healthy Semih Gurani on the hill again at age 33, and 28-year-old Niegloslaw Woywitka's solid transition from the GBC last season, you'd have to expect that to be the case again. The Tropics added Nashville veteran Barney Lindsay to the mix, and assuming he has anything left in the tank, that should help. I'm not certain you can count on that, but it sounds good going into Spring Training.

The problem comes on the offensive side of the game.

Or the defensive, if you want to start there.

I admit to being fixated on Hawaii's long, long quest for a shortstop. It appears that 23-year-old Na'il bin Hakin is going to get a full shot this year. Maybe it will all work out, but color me not convinced. He hits lefty, though, so maybe the platoon advantage will help. Given that the team seems to be a bit strapped for financial wiggle-room, every little bit counts. Because my crystal ball says runs are going to be a little hard for this offense to come by again.

If Curtis Sanchez can repeat his 4.2 WAR season, that would help, but he's been up and down in the past. Mitch Wareham turned his second straight 5ish WAR season at third, so he seems dependable. After that, I think there's a lot of wishful hope. Sometimes that works out, of course. I mean, 23-year-old switch-hitting first baseman John Harris had a rugged rookie tilt, but he's capable. A little growth and you like his look. It could happen. Julian Rivera is Zimmer-capable at second base (but will probably find his way to SS before the season is over). Either way, his bat is a bit problematic. In center, Angelo Lucchesi is top-flight with the glove, workable with that bat. Write him in for a not-bad 2.5 WAR. Eric Owen in a corner can be productive, but not in that flashy way that draws eyes.

Bottom line, I see the Tropics scratching for runs some time.

I suggest the cup will runneth over at times, and be dry as the Sahara others. But there's a lot of young bats here. They should grow over the year.

Will it be enough to have the win total climb up into the 80s?

I think so.

But I'm willing to go with the counter argument, too.

Valencia Stars



I'm not sure it matters, but the stars will enter the season with the largest payroll in the Pacific division. They lost ~4WAR outfielder José Vargas from a team that won 79 games and missed the playoffs in the last week or two of the season, but then went out and sold off dead weight pitching and brought in starters Thomas Turne and Luis Gonzalez along with bullpen arm Luis Perez (who will now likely anchor the bullpen). Add in New Orleans refugee 1B Zenobius Kazantziakis, and you've got a heck of an off-season. A pricey one, yes, but the fans aren't complaining.

Turner's deal may turn sour in the long run, but we're here to talk about 2061, and in 2061 he converts the rotation from solid to very good. He teams with Juan Garcia at the top of the order, and that's a 1-2 punch that should at least stop losing streaks. To be more comfortable with competing, I think they need another year from one of the rest, though. This make some assume that Gonzalez goes into the rotation rather than fills the stopper role he filled in TWC, which kind of makes sense. If they can find a fourth effective guy to find the magic again, that would make a difference. It make me wonder if or when they try out 2058 #1 pick Shiro Takahashi, who would be skipping from AA up to the bigs if that were to happen. The guy they call "Crazylegs" doesn't appear to be quite ready yet, but anxiety is the mother of desperation. We'll see what happens.

Offensively, Miller Shedd and Tyler Conklin will return to make up one of the more esteemed DP combos in the division, though it would help if Conklin could somehow get on base a little more. That he's turning positive WAR at all with that bat tells you all you need to know about the glove. Shed is elite at second, and an overall lovely player to watch. He's going to get expensive soon, though, and Valencia is going to need to figure out how to pay him all the monies.

Regardless, I'm not sure where the replacement for Vargas's WAR is coming from.

Young power hitter Altair Tableriou might well get the chance to play with the big boys. He's a "Hit if Far if you Hit it at All" kind of bats. Fun to watch, but still underdeveloped. A couple others should grow a little. That could do the job on the quiet.

So, how you see the Stars' chances for 2061 probably depends on how you see the pitching additions, and make no bones, those guys are some serious additions. There's no real question in mind that Valencia should be better.

Welcome to the Pacific division, right?

San Fernando Bears



General Manager Kurt Imber recently told the Terrific Pacific podcast listeners that he tries to keep an even keel and steadily field a team capable of 85 wins each year, with a ticket to the post season.

Where, you never know, anything can happen.

With the addition of speedy slugger Yuu Suzuki via trade from Sacramento, I'd say the 2061 Bears fit that bill, and maybe a little more. The OOTP predictor agrees right now, putting San Fernando in a dead heat with Portland. It could happen, too. Or not. I think a lot of it could depend on how healthy the team can keep its starting pitching, as it's top-heavy good but to my eyes lacks depth.

Morgan Tomsett (11-12, 3.05) looks fine at that top of the rotation now, but if he does ever find the Stuff that scouts say he has ... well ... Nebraska contender here we come. Young Rick Marriott is probably the #2, though Imber seems to be babying him a little—which makes sense. Marriott has spend a couple weeks shut down with a sore shoulder this spring. No reason to take chances. John Dawson and Morris Chappa seem like they can do the #3/#4 roles. Alexander Swanson and Richard Bullock are in the mix, too, but they aren't going to step into that upper tier and compete.

So, healthy top-end, Very Good News Bears.

Not so-healthy, Very Bad News Bears.

On the side of the bats, the club lost 1B Marco Acheson to free agency, but replaced him with Suzuki. Acheson is a solid player, but Suzuki is a bit of a force of nature. So, plus-plus to San Fernando. The team was tepid offensively last year, despite that park. Suzuki should kill it there. Otherwise, the team is comprised of guys who pretty much fit the bill Imber was talking about before: steady hitters who mostly play very good defense (shortstop Qutuz Mahdi gets penciled in as the presumptive Zimmer winner every year until the clock does eventually overtake him, but I don't *think* it will be this year).

All of these guys can hit al little bit, or at least do something on the offensive end, but other than Suzuki maybe, you wouldn't pay cash money to make sure one particular guy was at the plate with the game on the line.

It's an approach that can work, though, and if the pitching does stay healthy, that lofty OOTP projection could stick.

I admit that I don't like to bet on that kind of thing, though. Random nature is too predictable to see the entire rotation going on for 162 games.

Bikini Krill



After backing into the playoffs in 2059, the Krill took a major tumble last year. A bad enough tumbler that the Krill front office brought in a new manager this year. And it's a doozie. Can Kate-Two Fiscus, clone of the longtime Madison and Portland enigma make a stir up an ocean storm on the Atoll?

We're going to find out.

She'll be working with an offense filled with youngish players who the front office hopes will be better through natural progression, and with a pitching staff buoyed with free agent acquisitions (Takashi Nakamura and Brody Picot) and the arrival of the most scintillating new arm to hit the league in some time (Winston Morris).

Nakamura and Picot will join an already solid rotation that includes Jon Brown, and Francisco Ortiz. Morris joins a pen that already includes Felix Vidaca, Shae Valence, and a revitalized Enrique Aguilar.

There's a little more where that came from.

Bikini's pitching and defense were horrid last year. With the arms looking bolstered, and the results of the dev lab sounding positive, Krill fans are crossing their fingers and hoping not to die before they see the club in the postseason again.

The big addition to the offensive side is wayward veteran Mike Cox, who, after failing in Charlotte has been told he's the everyday guy in Bikini's center field. This is what's known as a risk. Scouts say Cox is capable of great things, and his numbers show that much is true. But they also show he's capable of lollygagging and luxuriating when maybe he should be concentrating on catching or hitting the baseball. If the gamble works out, and if Keith Williams can stay healthy all year, a lot of the concerns over the team's defense should dull down a little.

That's because Williams turned into a plus defender last year, and second baseman Napoleon Mellot had positive results at the team's Pain Island development lab for the second time in a row. As icing on the pie, corner infielders Mike McClure (who had an offensive revitalization last year), and Kata Ishibashi both grade higher with the glove in 2060.

Corner outfield is still going to be a mess, but with a majority of the offense (including a fully developed Pedro Jimenez getting most of the catching reps) moving into their 27-29 year-old phase, assuming Cox can just hold his own, we're going to see a steady offense that should exhibit no holes. Bikini's bats were league average last year. They should be better this time around.

OOTP predicts 76 wins. Fans of Earth's Team are hoping for a little more.

Portland Lumberjacks



If I were to pick a television show that best portrays the Portland Lumberjacks, it would be *Twin Peaks*. For the younger whippersnappers and other uninitiated among us, this was a truly wacked-out thing David Lynch did. Its first season (let's call it 2059) was amazing. It was a missing person/murder mystery led by an eccentric detective who always hit the right tone (let's call in Agent Gaajlimitz). It had a great cast of memorable teammates and brought many accolades along with frenzied interest. Let's call that the Monty. The second season (2060) seemed to wear thing, though. The weirdness wore off, and the story kind of dragged. The show was still a hit, but it seemed to be riding on last season's coat tails. In the end, it left fans and networks calling for more focus. Greater attention to plot.

Make something happen, the fans were saying. We want our Monty.

The good news is that GM Chris Wilson and assistant GM Sandy Mounds have listened. They lost starter Juan Marroquin, but brought in aging leading man Bernie Stuart to anchor the investig—er, mound. Or maybe he'll play second fiddle to Murali Patachli. Fans will see as, episode by episode, the season progresses. Regardless, that means that the nearly mystical Alaric Wullenweber can settle into a role deeper in the rotation, which is probably good. Wullenweber may never really grow old, but he has lost s shave off the breaking ball.

Pitching to elite receiver Alan Uecker should keep him going quite well.

Offensively, there's a lot going on here. The Jacks fielded the third best offense in the Frick last year, and I see no reason it shouldn't churn runs again.

Gaajlimitz is back, of course, working to fulfill his quest for a true .400 season, which just eluded his grasp last year. Sullen-faced Sammy McNeill, too, now a decorated veteran, but still haunted by his horrible past in Nashville. Will this be the year he pulls out of it? At 22, outfielder Greg Squires is now all the rage. And then there's Rich Dares. Jesus but we hate Rich Dares. Can he do another 3-4 WAR season?

I suspect so.

Which leaves the bullpen as the last place to investigate.

It is, admittedly a little threadbare when it comes to the idea of dominant arms. Instead, it's kind of a deep collection of good. I suspect that will go away, anyway. After an 88 win 2060, though, while I suspect a little natural bounceback, I'm not sure it will be enough to really compete for the division title.

On the other hand, give them a cup of coffee and a piece of that huckleberry pie and they might just do the trick.

Long Beach Surfers



What so we make of Long Beach in 2061?

It's an interesting question. With something rumored to still be in the Long Beach water system, the Surfers faded to finish at 70 wins, which would have been 6th in the Heartland but put them firmly in the Pacific division cellar.

Alas, I'm not sure I'm seeing a climb out in the waterlines this year. Unless ...

Well. Unless I'm wrong, which both I and OOTP certainly could be. First and foremost, the team's expected wins last year were 73 rather than 70, which suggests that they should naturally rebound a little anyway. Second, while they lost a little bullpen to free agency, GM Stephen Lane got busy and added in a starter (Liam Johnston) and a pair of reliever (Gilberto Cordero and lefty Slawomir Trzcinski). The pitching, which was bottom third last year, should be at least a little better. Not "Good," mind you. But better.

With 25-year-old Rhys Atticus as the primary backstop, you know the pitchers will get every chance to be great.

Offensively, this is Steveland Morris's team.

At 33, the shortstop is clearly the face of the franchise. He stole 42 bases last year, while his wOBA faded to under .300 for the second time in three years. He's had a nice little career, but no one is thinking of him as the guy who can carry the offensive load like that. He was supposed to have some help in first baseman Unem Ploid, but the high-priced free agent crashed and burned just a little last year, posting only 1.1 WAT after averaging about 6.5 the two years prior. If he bounces back, that's a thing. He's 34, though. You have to wonder.

Young first-sacker/DH Gustavo Espinso can hit the ball far. He's 24. Maybe he'll grow into the rest of his game this year.

Center fielder Emilio Reyes is a solid guy, too.

If there's a silver lining, too, it's that Lane appears to have some literal silver to throw around—though he's playing that close to the vest, spending it on the minor league system in the form of IFA right now, and I'd guess putting money into draft picks in June.

The fact is that Long Beach is a tough nut to crack. I suppose we're supposed to make predictions here, but Long Beach is a tough nut to crack. I think they did underperform just a little, but not enough to make a difference. I think they will bounce back, but it's hard to say how big of a bounce to expect from guys like Ploid.

So, like I assume most Surfer fans are thinking, I don't know.

I just don't know what to think about 2061 in the Surfer dugout.

PROJECTED RECORDS: PACIFIC DIVISION

Team	Wins	Losses	GB
Sacramento	95	67	-
San Fernando	92	70	3
Portland	90	72	5
Valencia	85	77	10
Vancouver	82	80	13
Bikini	81	81	14
Hawaii	78	84	17
Long Beach	75	87	20



GBC AFSAMOC Division

Woody Donahue takes a cut at the GBC:

Ah, the AFSAMOC division. A name that rolls off the tongue, much like the name of the title we're all playing for: the heralded Grand Slam Cup by Denny's, Marko and Subaru.

The Pharaohs have brought it home to Cairo each of the last two years, and with a recent extension to lock up perennial MVP candidate Blair Peyton until 2063, they're making a push for "dynasty" status. But how's their depth? They're looking a bit thinner, as a casualty of having to cut a couple expensive players. Can the team regroup, and make another push?

In São Paulo, there's another star player looking at Peyton and the Pharaohs, and saying, "Hey, that could be us." Katsunan Hashimoto is hoping to taste the playoffs for the first time, and lead his team there. There's a lot on the line, as one more losing season might mean Hashimoto packs his bags. There could be some extra motivation there to fuel a run.

Down the Atlantic coast, Buenos Aires made some noise last year, but ultimately fell short. They've got the bats, and an infusion of new pitchers. And you know Ricardo Yáñez wants a shot at a ring before he retires.

Johannesburg stumbled a bit last season, so in the interest of safety, they went out and bought a new Helmut. Helmut Grün, that is, who should stabilize an offense that really needed some help. Could he be the missing piece? And do the Gold have enough pitching to carry them?

Fans in Sydney have endured a few years of futility. They've got some promising pieces, like the always-exciting José Márquez, and the young prospect Wattas Hondo. But can they put enough of a team around them to finally win some games?

The great thing about GBC baseball is that you really never know what's going to happen, unlike the BBA, where you can just take for granted that Nashville will win. (It's ok if Chad catches some strays here; there's no way he'll read this far into the Media Guide.) Some unexpected stars will emerge before the season is over, and teams will rise and fall very quickly. The only thing certain is that these teams will earn a lot of Frequent Flyer miles from traveling.

So what are we waiting for? Let's play ball!

	W	L
Cairo Pharaohs	99	63
Buenos Aires Brisas	88	74
Sao Paulo Pilots	86	87
Johannesburg Gold	75	87
Sydney Sharks	64	98



2060 record: 98-64, 1st place in AFSAMOC

Notable additions: C Terry Noble*, 1B/OF Joe Bailey*, SP Júlio García, RP Evgeny Daibov

Losses (and 2060 WAR): C Heui-seong Park (0.4), IF Brian Browning (0.2), SP Luis González (0.0), RP Brian Ioneki (0.6), SP Afzul Chishti (3.6), OF Wan-ling Koo (2.9)

Outlook: The Pharaohs are the defending champions of the Grand Slam Cup by Denny's, Marko and Subaru, so they did what they had to do, and retained almost everyone from the championship squad. If you've got a good thing working, don't rattle the boat.

The rotation is led by Bani Marita, who was a workhorse for the Pharaohs last year, logging 200+ innings. He'll need to be that and more for this year's club, since his rotation-mate Afzul Chishti, the other 200-inning guy Cairo could count on, is now gone. In Chishti's stead, Willard Labonte has been a good find for Cairo, where his flyball-pitching style suits the cavernous ballpark, so he should be a good #2 to Marita. Beyond that, it'll be a bit touch-and-go, although free agent pickup Júlio García has looked quite promising in Spring Training games.

The bullpen is where this team really shines, to the point that the league knows by now if the Pharaohs have a lead in the late innings, it's pretty much a done deal. Closer Gary Powers is the best sinkerballer in the game, and speaking of games, he appears in most of them — 96 last season, to be exact. An elite closer who throws 150+ innings a year is a huge asset for Cairo.

But it's not just about Powers late in games. Setup guys Lucas Black and Jaime Mendoza both pitched to a sub-1 WHIP last year. With such a deep bullpen, Cairo will win a lot of games, as long as their offense can give them a lead.

That offense is led by reigning MVP* Blair Peyton, who will once again lead the league in most offensive categories. He doesn't hit home runs, but there are a couple guys batting behind him who certainly do. The Pharaohs can pretty much pencil in 30 dingers each from outfielders Bannon McThomas and Boulus bin Altair, many of which will come with Peyton on base. If that's not a formula for scoring lots of runs, I don't know what is.

The defense is also pretty airtight, with Peyton in center, two-time Great Glove winner Dima Rozinov at shortstop, and Shane Smith able to hold his own at second as well.

Bottom line is the Pharaohs are deep, and even the guys coming off the bench are players who should be starting. That kind of depth and an MVP* will pretty much guarantee them another title.

*Wait, Peyton *didn't* win MVP? That seems wrong. Whatever, I'm leaving it in.

2061 prediction: 99-63. Despite losing a few guys to the salary cap, Cairo has more than adequate backups to withstand it. Look for another deep playoff run.



Buenos Aires Brisas

2060 record: 87-75, 2nd place in AFSAMOC

Notable additions: 1B Mun-wah Hsu, SP Todd Schroeder, SP Manuel García, 1B Hayden Tanner, SP Maurice Jeffes, RP Ed Curry, C Steve Burton, SP José Núñez, SP Hsuang-tsung Xú, SP Jayden Nicholls, RP Carlton Hurt, SP Jacob Cruz, SP Derek Dyce, SP Hai-liang Jianbua, 1B/OF Ghazi Amid, OF Hsin Cui, 1B Ricardo Yáñez, SP Kaden Umair, OF Jesús Pérez, RP Bruno Bugbie, RP Miguel Arce, CL Siu-chung Zhan, IF Jin-hwan Kim, C Will Bennett, IF Anthony Moretti, OF Enrique Rodríguez, C Muhittin Tagmaç, SP Shusui Fujii

Losses (and 2060 WAR): 1B Adam Backhouse (-0.8), SP Fred Taylor (-0.2), OF Quinn Greene (3.5), RP Baz Badr (0.7), SP António Hernández (1.9), RP Carlos Rodda (1.6), RP Eric Buckson (0.8), RP Pablo Alcantara (1.1), RP Mike Allain (0.6), RP Edward Morrow (1.2), SP Abdul-Muhaimin Saleem (3.5), RP Ferede Keohi (0.5), RP José Díaz (0.0), SP Ostoja Omeragic (3.8), IF Kwan-uk Chong (2.3)

Outlook: Let's start with the pitching. To fill out their rotation, Buenos Aires went shopping for ex-BBA players who could make an impact in the GBC, and they came back with a good one in groundball specialist Todd Schroeder. He spent the last season at the Triple-A level, but he's still proficient at limiting home runs. They also got Manuel García and Jacob Cruz, both of whom have good pitch arsenals that should play well in the GBC. They'll probably need one more starter after Gonzalo Ruíz went down in Spring Training with a torn UCL, but they've got some extra budget to play with, so they could still add some depth.

In the bullpen, they spent some money to bring in Siu-chung Zhan, who has previously closed games in the BBA, and should make a good impact late in games for the Brisas. Setting

him up, I'm personally excited to see Jayden Nicholls back in the GBC, also coming over as a free agent. He's pitched out of the bullpen a few times previously in his career, most recently with Omaha, and you know what they say: if you can pitch in Omaha, you can pitch anywhere.

Turning to the offense, the Quinn Greene era in Buenos Aires is over, but if last year was any indication, the Brisas can survive without him. They saw guys like Félix Ladaga and Davey McDonald step up as the new cornerstones of the offense. Still, they'll miss Greene's 42 homers, but who wouldn't?

It will once again be Ladaga and McDonald leading the offense for the Brisas, with an assist from young left fielder Erik Robertsen, who hit 30 home runs as a rookie last year. Promising rookie first baseman Ralph Simpson also appears ready for the big leagues, and #4 GBC prospect Nick Bywaters is likewise knocking on the door, so the youth movement should give the Brisas' lineup a little extra spark.

But let's not forget about the old guys! Buenos Aires also spent a few millions to bring in 40-year-old Ricardo Yáñez, and he's no slouch, having put up a 4.4 WAR season just last year with Johannesburg. The yin-and-yang of old and young will give the Brisas a pretty deep lineup, and also make for a fun clubhouse vibe: Shuffleboard on one side, Nintendo Switch on the other (or whatever the kids are playing now).

This all seems good, with one major problem, which is that their lineup is incredibly left-handed, and the Brisas' park, Estadio Rico, is where lefty hitters go to die. Obviously these guys proved they could beat the dimensions in 2060, but will they be so lucky this year? For me to be sold on the Brisas, I'd want to see a potent righty bat in the lineup to break things up. Maybe Jesús Pérez is that guy? Or maybe Thomas Hohenwart?

In any case, I wouldn't read too much into ballpark factors, because half the games are played in other places anyway. The Brisas are good, and you shouldn't underestimate them.

2061 prediction: 88-74. The bullpen is great, the lineup is deep and potent, and the rotation looks all right if you squint. The X factor will be the young hitters. If one of them can have a breakout year, the Brisas could go far.



Sao Paulo Pilots

2060 record: 75-87, 4th place in AFSAMOC

Notable additions: OF Jin-soo Chong, IF/OF Stan Moten, SP Boulos Naim, OF Ted Benson, RP Spencer Sharrock, CL Derry Vacher, IF Mario Hernández, RP Carlos Campos*, OF Jiong Liu, OF Saulo Bayi, IF/OF Huo-tu Shaw, C Artie Blaikie, OF Fernando López, 1B Jesús Caballero

Losses (and 2060 WAR): RP Sotaro Abe (-0.3), IF/OF Santiago Durán (1.8), RP Tye Whitford (1.7), RP Jason Lee (-1.4), SP Owen Geddes (2.7), SP Ramón Mendoza (1.6), RP Tokugawa Takahashi (-0.5), OF Andrew Wright (2.0), IF/OF Creegan Corney (-0.5), SP Maurice Jeffes (1.6), RP Shigekazu Kikuchi (-0.1), OF Wayne Morris (0.6), IF Munir bin Rayhan (2.1), RP Juan Morales (-0.2), IF Abbad bin Rashad (-0.6), SP Jim Watson (-0.3), 1B Fakir Tarik (-0.1), CL Iván Ruíz (1.5), SP José Núñez (1.0), OF Tomás Guillén (-1.5), OF Masamichi Kubo (0.6), Kaden Umair (1.0)

Outlook: Sao Paulo kept most of the core together, while improving its roster in a few key areas.

But you would be forgiven if you don't recognize the guys who make up the starting rotation. First, there's a new signee, Boulos Naim, fresh from the BBA. He's a groundballer with an impressive splitter, and not a bad guy to have as an ace with how adept he is at limiting hard contact. Following him is George Ward, who finished third in Rookie of the Year voting last year, despite the fact that he's turning 35 later this month. And 38-year-old Steven Callahan, who Sao Paulo has kept stashed in the minors for three years, is just casually pitching to a 0.60 ERA in four Spring starts. Cool cool cool.

Sao Paulo also picked up some good options for the late innings. They signed ex-Moscow closer, Derry "Ice Cold" Vacher, on an affordable one-year deal. They also claimed Carlos Campos, who might set up for him, from Tokyo in the Rule 5 draft. Along with ex-starter Manaalii Cardinia, who seems to also have found a home in the bullpen, Sao Paulo has a pretty formidable squadron at the end of games.

Offensively, it all revolves around Katsunan Hashimoto, who has been one of the top hitters in the league for so long, it's easy to forget he's still just 23. But with a price tag of \$15 million, it seems likely that this is the last year Sao Paulo will be able to afford him. So from Sao Paulo's perspective, it would be really great if they could contend this season.

That, however, depends on Hashimoto's supporting cast. Sao Paulo spent some big money to sign Ted Benson, a big power bat who also strikes out a ton, hoping he can help infuse the lineup with some extra punch.

But for as much as Sao Paulo may get from Benson on good days, they're at or below replacement level from most of the rest of the lineup. They claimed London discard Jesús Caballero on waivers to play first base, who is the most perfectly unexceptional player I've ever seen. And newly-signed free agent Fernando López, who might be the Pilots' center fielder, is so mid that he's literally rated a 5 in every offensive metric. It's like they're trying to win the championship of "most average team".

Ok, sorry if that's a little harsh. Let's talk about someone exciting. Mario Hernández is Sao Paulo's top prospect, and there's an outside chance he'll break camp with the big league team. He possesses an eye at the plate that is refined well beyond his years, and has posted an OBP north of .400 each of the last two seasons. He is without a doubt the Pilots' best option at third base, so now it's just a question of when Juan Benítez will get injured. I'm betting on Easter weekend. (We've got a pool going.)

2061 prediction: 86-76. Hashimoto wants to get BBA money next year, so there's extra incentive for him to make this a career season. Let's say he inspires his teammates and squeezes a bit of extra effort from them, which leads to a seven-game improvement.



Johannesburg Gold

2060 record: 78-84, 3rd place in AFSAMOC

Notable additions: IF Helmut Grün, OF Yoshitoki Goto, SP Grigore Balas, SP Ferede Keohi, C Ethan Gahan, RP Khawaja Patel, RP Manny López*, SP Malcolm Gray*, SP António Rivera, SP Alexander Higgins, IF/OF Shirai Matsumoto, IF/OF Cisco Vázquez, OF Ernesto García, SP Tony Tighe, SP David bin Adnan, RP Ralph Dye

Losses (and 2060 WAR): OF Al Garrett (0.5), 1B Ricardo Yáñez (4.4), C Dave Butler (0.9), OF Jen-kan Zhai (0.2), IF Chance Wilson (0.4), RP Rob Scott (-1.5), SP Jorge Santos (1.2), 1B Marcos Castillo (0.3)

Outlook: While Johannesburg was floundering down the stretch last season, their front office said, "I've seen enough," went bargain-bin shopping, and scooped up any free agents who

would sign with them. The result is that the Gold now have a contingent of old dudes, ready to spring into action and fill the holes of the major league roster.

The pitching staff is mostly intact. Matt McCartney and Rowan Tucker, the two most dependable starters from last year, are back to reprise their roles. The young Kiminobu Seki was promising in 14 starts at the big league level last season, and the 2059 second-round draft pick will be looking to improve. And finally, the Gold will enjoy the return of Grigore Balas. Balas was claimed away from the Gold on waivers by Athens last year, and went on to have a career year with the Fighting Centaurs which included his first GBC All-Star selection. Good on the Gold to get him back, since I'm sure there were some feelings of Balas being "the one that got away".

The closer, Juan Oliver, is also still here, after a promising 2060 campaign in which he posted a 2.75 ERA. His 100+ mph fastball still rates as one of the best in the Consortium.

Turning to the offense, did you know that the national colors of South Africa are **green and gold**? So the Gold needed to find their green, and they went out and found the perfect one, signing 2-time MVP Helmut Grün. (Grün means green. Get it?) Grün won't be the 7-WAR player he once was, but he'll anchor the lineup and bring good leadership.

Helping Grün steer the ship will be veteran outfielders Zephyr Orphanides and Jamal bin Majd. Orphanides is 35, but he can still swing it, and he's coming off one of the best baserunning years of his career, having stolen 40 bags and only getting caught four times. Bin Majd should hit close to .300, and he's a plus on defense. Neither player will hit many home runs, but a contact-first approach works fine in the Golden Palace, Johannesburg's famous home run-suppressing ballpark.

Still, they'll miss the impact bat of last year's first baseman Ricardo Yáñez, who spurned the Gold to play a bit closer to home this season. The Gold are hoping to make up the 4.4 WAR with the likes of new DH Yoshitoki Goto, who has excellent gap power but struggles to make contact. 1B/OF Ernesto García should also be part of the picture, another good contact hitter who fits the Gold's ethos.

As for the rest of the lineup, at least you can say the Gold are strong up the middle defensively, but don't expect new catcher Ethan Gahan, or middle infielders Nick Ashwell and Jesús Álvarez, to hit very much.

The old dudes they're keeping around on the bench won't contribute much, but maybe their plan is to maximize efficiency by sneaking both Miguel Hernández (the catcher) and Miguel Hernández (the outfielder) onto the team, and having them share a roster spot. It's not like anyone would notice.

2061 prediction: 75-87. The Gold have a pitching staff that can go deep into games, but the lineup is thin, and if the Gold catch an injury or two, the cracks will show.



Sydney Sharks

2060 record: 70-92, 5th place in AFSAMOC

Notable additions: 1B Naoaki Kurioka, OF Wilson Alomar, OF Stewart Illingworth, RP Cristóbal Águila, RP Xian Ling, RP George Goodman, RP Ali Kivilahti, SP Rafael Gómez, RP Eleuterio Manteri, SP Antonio Cruz, RP Chris Mobley, RP Juan Blanco, RP Edward Morrow, RP Mike Allain, RP Carlos Rodda, RP Vic Ayliffe, SP José Díaz, SP Antonio Cuartas, C Taylor Michaels, RP Amritaksara Chawd, SP Jean-Sébastien Mangin*, 1B Jared Dixon, 1B Julong Ma, SP Daljit Mayappan, IF/OF Bob Pope, RP Juan Santana

Losses (and 2060 WAR): RP Daniel González (-0.3), SP Callum Duckering (-0.8), 1B Min-tae Kim (-0.9), SP Richard Balgera (3.0), SP Makin bin Isma'il (-0.3), C Germán Velázquez (-0.6), C Ethan Gahan (2.7), SP Javier de Jesús (2.6), SP Alexander King (3.4), SP Carlton Hurt (2.9), 3B Mohammed bin Mus'ad (5.0), IF Edgardo Álvarez (-0.4)

Outlook: Give the Sharks some credit, for they've cobbled together one of the best teams a lack of money can buy. Their highest-paid player is (*checks notes*) new closer Juan Santana, who is making \$4 million. And while I appreciate the frugality, I can't help but wonder why they didn't actually spend on some real impact players this off-season, especially in the wake of over 20 WAR walking out the door, including four-fifths of last season's rotation, and their best hitter.

Let's look at the rotation. Hassan bin Zuhair (the one-fifth that stayed) is their best starter by default. He boasts a good five-pitch arsenal, goes deep into games, and limits walks very nicely. After him, it's kind of a question mark. Bryan Hall is also a holdover from last year, but he seems to have more success in the bullpen. Then there's Alvin Anstey, who has never started a game in the big leagues, but looks like he might have the stuff. Javier Morales is similarly untested at the big league level.

Juan Santana, the longtime BBA reliever, leads the relief corps. And he'll be reunited with an old teammate from his Edmonton days, Carlos Rodda. They'll actually make a pretty decent one-two punch at the back end of games. The middle innings could be a bit of an adventure, but the beauty of GBC baseball is that some random dude will inevitably step up.

On the offensive side, Sydney was priced out of retaining its best hitter, Mohammed bin Mus'ad, as he made the move to the BBA. But on the bright side, outfielder José Márquez has blossomed as the new face of the team, and he'll be looking to continue his ascent into stardom (Especially since he's due to hit his own BBA payday next year). Sydney also made a sneaky signing of first baseman Naoaki Kurioka, a power hitter who never made it in the BBA, but could settle in nicely in a place like Sydney.

Looking around the diamond, there are some other solid guys such as third baseman, Watas Hondo, the GBC's #10 overall prospect, who should be breaking into the majors.

The Sharks aren't bad defensively, either, with Ari Ernalia at second and Takehide Nakayama at short. (We're going to ignore the pair of 40-year-old water buffalo, Wilson Alomar and Stewart Illingworth, when we talk about the defense. Let's hope the plan isn't to have those guys start.)

2061 prediction: 64-98. You can't lose as many pieces as Sydney did, waltz into the season without a real pitching rotation, and expect things to work out. Let's just say that the rebuilding process is underway, and there is some promise for the future.



GBC EurAsia Division

Jim Slade takes a cut at the GBC:

Just 2 seasons ago, the Moscow Thunder Bears were an expansion team. Last season they stormed through a division title. The Thunder Bears are a heavily veteran team, but they should be able to “la, la, la, la, la live for today,” as the ancient pop song went, through 2061. The Jerusalem Hebrew Hammers and the Tokyo Pearls had strong seasons in 2060, but they were far short of pushing for the division lead. I see Tokyo as the team best poised to make a push in 2061 and beyond. The Hebrew Hammers could be taking a step back, but I see them springing back into contention in 2062. The London Monarchs and the Athens Fighting Centaurs may be looking further into the future.

	W	L
Moscow	92	70
Tokyo	87	75
Jerusalem	81	81
London	76	86
Athens	62	100





Moscow Thunder Bears

2060 record: 96-66, 1st place

Key acquisitions: SP Deron Alexander (from Jerusalem), RP Edwin Crutcher (from Tokyo), RP Pablo Alcantara (from Buenos Aires), LF Godofredo Chucha (rookie), CF Lao Kim (from Long Beach), C So Huynh (from Cairo), 2B Miguel De La Cruz (from Montreal)

Key losses: CF Yoshitoki Goto (to Johannesburg), C Blake McCoy (retired), 2B Ricardo Munoz (to Austin), CL Derry Vacher (to Sao Paulo)

In just their second season, the Moscow Thunder Bears stormed to the top of the Eurasia Division on the strength of an aged starting rotation and veteran lineup. The team is running back its Gray Beards rotation (average age, 35.8 years old), with the addition of former Jerusalem ace Deron Alexander (35 years old) and led by “Kid” Ewungagoiba Ghera, a newly ripened 33 years old. Offseason rumors that Moscow pushed for nothing but day games in 2061 are unfounded.

LF Biao Li (40 HR; 114 RBI; .905 OPS) and 1Bs Maximillian Nielszen and Carlos Arroyo provide most of the team’s thunder, but this veteran team is driven by pitching. I see another division championship for the Thunder Bears, but pressure should be gaining on them.



Tokyo Pearls

2060 record: 83-79, 3rd place, 13 GB

Key acquisitions: SP Richard Balgera (from Sydney), SP Azful Chisti (from Cairo), 3B Tristan Lloyd (from Des Moines), SP Feheen MacKendrick (rookie)

Key losses: SP Umar Dogar (to Brooklyn); 3B Murray Healey (FA)

The Tokyo Pearls can pound the ball. 2B Ra'id bin Tamir and DH Matthew Woods each put more than 50 balls over fence in 2060. Add in 2 to 3 dozen each from 1B Najib bin Haroun, LF Taylor Barfoot, and RF Callum Mckay and there's no need for the Pearls organization to organize a ball giveaway day. This team is launching souvenirs on a regular basis. 3B Murray Healey, who hit an additional 25 HR, is still dangling in free agency, but his replacement for the coming season, Tristan Lloyd showed some pop in a couple of seasons with Las Vegas and Des Moines.

In 2060, at least, Tokyo Pearls pitching could be pounded. The loss of staff ace Umar Dogar to the Brooklyn Robins could be offset by the addition of Richard Balgera, who has been a workhorse for GBC clubs (most recently the Sydney Sharks) for most of his career. Balgera missed half of last season, however, with rotator cuff inflammation. That will need to be watched. Another promising workhorse added to the mix is Azful Chisti, who led the GBC in strikeouts and batted balls in play. And if those veteran additions haven't raised Pearls fans' hopes, there's rookie Faheen MacKendrick, who's been slowly simmering in the Pearls' system and is suddenly attempting to make the jump from A ball, where he was dominant the last 2 years.

If Pearls' pitching can take a step forward and the team's bats deliver as expected, competition for first place in the Eurasia Division may get too close for comfort.



Jerusalem Hebrew Hammers

2060 record: 85-77, 2nd place, 11 GB

Key acquisitions: SP Ed Noble (from Omaha), 3B Geaney Fay (from Long Beach), RP Ostoja Omeragic (Rule 5)

Key losses: 3B Tsuyoshi Kobayashi (to Moscow), SP Deron Alexander (to Moscow), SP Siu-chun Zhan (to Buenos Aires), RF Rajko Lovre (to Phoenix org), LF Enrique Rodriguez (to Buenos Aires), C Muhittin Tagmac (to Buenos Aires), SP Juan Garcia (FA)

The Hammers put together a balanced attack of pitching and hitting in 2060 that enabled them to capture a distant second-place finish. The roster has turned over greatly in 2061, losing about 15 WAR in talent. Pitching will likely require a patchwork approach. CF Jaicus Bigornia, 1B Ira Patterson, and SS Prabhu Vogelsang are back. A full season as a Hammer from C Francisco De La Torre will help. However, the added veterans, a Rule 5 selection, and some AAA depth pieces may not be enough to bridge the gap. Jerusalem does have a promising farm system. This season feels like a step back and a chance for young talent to begin emerging.



London Monarchs

2060 record: 74-88, 4th place, 22 GB

Key acquisitions: CL Alex Leon (from Atlantic City), RF Anurodha Nayar (from Phoenix), SS Naruhiko Okada (from Phoenix), RP Javier Parra (from Calgary), RP Brodie Diprose (Rule 5), 2B Thomas Terzin (Rule 5)

Key losses: 3B Anthony Moretti (to Bueno Aires), 2B Gary Robertson (to London), SS Artus Kilstedt (to Omaha), 1B Don Adams (FA), RP Garry Bryan (to Tokyo), RP Edwin Haney (FA), LF Bill Cole (to Jerusalem system)

The Monarchs were a fairly old team in 2060, and not necessarily in a good way. With the exception of 3B Anthony Moretti, Monarchs fans shouldn't shed many tears over the departed. They're running back their main strength in 2061: a pitching staff that is 4-deep in established starters, led by Motka Beteev (W-L 14-13; 2.99 ERA), and chock full of young relievers.

The loss of Moretti, who led the team with 33 HR, will leave a gap in power. Corner OF Anurodha Nayar, brought over from Phoenix, may help there. RF Ulvi Basgil and 1B Carlos Dorman can knock 2 dozen balls out of the park, but their strength is more in the gaps, allowing leadoff man and CF Amin Asim the chance to fly home. Maybe someone else can break through on the offense and lighten the burden on the Monarchs' pitching staff, but it may take until midseason for that player to emerge.



Athens Fighting Centaurs

2060 record: 64-98, 5th place, 32 GB

Key acquisitions: 1B/SP Adel bin Husam al Din (from Buenos Aires)

Key losses: 1B Nikolai Reshetkov (FA), SP Grigore Balas (to Johannesburg)

The Fighting Centaurs were short on hitting and pitching last year. Let's start with pitching the team's relative strength. Veteran Max Dawe is back. He got roughed up more often in 2060 than he did in his breakout 2059, but he still ate innings and kept his team in games. Jordan Knowles, another veteran, shows up every fifth day and sticks around long enough to get a decision, even if it's a loss. Beyond those 2, strap in. The loss of starting pitcher Grigore Balas won't help things. His replacement in the starting rotation, 2-way oddity Adel bin Husam al Din, should be interesting, if nothing else.

Offensively, beside CF Joo-il Paek and 3B Pat Phillips, it will be difficult for the Fighting Centaurs to generate runs. Adel bin Husam al Din's offense may outweigh his pitching, so there's that.

Sean Marko's Day of Reckoning

Meeting Date: November 11, 2060

Location: Brewster Baseball Association Offices, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

Participants:

- **Sean Marko aka League Control One aka Talons Workaday GM**, General Manager, Phoenix Talons, Tokyo Pearls, and Toledo Liberty
- **Commissioner Matt Rectenwald**, Brewster Baseball Association
- **BBA Governing Board Members** in their current role of "Ethics Committee"
- **Legal Representation** (as requested by the involved parties)

Purpose: To address allegations of unethical conduct by Sean Marko and to determine any disciplinary actions based on his responses and supporting evidence.



Inquiry Outline and Questions

Opening Statement by Commissioner Rectenwald:

"Mr. Marko, we have gathered today to discuss several serious allegations of misconduct that have arisen during your tenure as General Manager of the Phoenix Talons. As the representative of this organization, you have a responsibility to uphold the ethical standards

of the Brewster Baseball Association. Today, we'll review each allegation and give you the opportunity to respond directly."

Opening Response by Talon GM Sean Marko

Woah woah woah, guys. Slow your roll. I'm gonna stop you right there. According to the Maricopa County Municipal Court, as well as the Ninth District Circuit Court, and not to mention the Arizona Bureau of Motor Vehicles, my official name is now League Control 1, and my official nickname is Talons Workaday GM. Stop laughing, Chad! There has been massive amounts of media coverage regarding this fact. Do you even read Talons Team News?? Wait. Don't answer that. No one reads that crap. Except Mike, he reads them. Sometimes. Thanks Mike!

Regardless, before we begin, I have an opening statement of my own to make. First of all, let me say, that on behalf of Central Arizona Concessions LLC™ dba Phoenix Talons Base Ball Club Inc™, as well as our proud sponsors Denny's Restaurant Holding Corp™, Subaru of America Inc™, VODAK Fine Spirits LP™, and our media partner The Phoenix Sun Times Post Dispatch™ (One of Phoenix's Greatest Newspapers™), I am pleased to say that I am decidedly NOT happy to be here. Don't you guys realize that I have like three teams to run? I have to get Phoenix, Tokyo, *and* Toledo ready for next season and you guys are wasting my time with this clown show.

Anyway, it's quite clear that I am about to 'get Rectefied'™, and by that I certainly do *not* mean buying a used Nissan Sentra SV™ at 19.99% interest. Given that this is surely about to be a major league 'come to Jesus' meeting, I request a measure of personal privilege in this matter, based on my seniority and tenure as a multi-decade BBA™ GM with one of the best "has thanked/been thanked" ratios in league forum history.

I have taken the initiative, Mr. Commish, of providing the panel with samples of our very best VODAK™ Bakitski's Reserve™ Black Diamond Label™ Platinum Edition™ Premium Alcohol Beverage, made from the pristine waters of the Volga river as well as the finest grain from Pripyat's vast wheat fields. Tasting notes from this vintage include Toluene, Methyl Mercaptan, and lemongrass. It's easy on the nose, if you ignore the occasional whiff of paint thinner.

As my assistant Jadzia makes her way around the room to provide you with a sample, I also invite the panel to peruse these brochures, generously provided by lead customer champion

Marty Connors down at Talons Subaru™, about the brand new all-wheel-drive™ Subaru SVX Baja GT Midnight Edition™ 3.0 Turbo Hybrid PHEV, available at participating dealers this spring. Just ask Marty for a test drive and he'll throw in free Scotchguard™ and a set of floor mats.

Later, The Panel will be treated to free Super Grand Slam With French Toast And Bacon™ breakfast entrees, courtesy of the Greater Phoenix Area Denny's Franchisees Association™, as well as a complimentary meet-and-greet autograph session with Your Mom™, Toledo Liberty legend Chris Wright, and even new rookie league manager Ian Patrick Anderson. Also, I have graciously deposited 99,000 SkyMiles™ into each of your Delta™ accounts, which should be enough for a free round trip flight in Comfort+™ class to Akron-Canton Regional International Airport™, The Rubber Capital of the World™ and Home of the Pro Football Hall of Fame™.

That should pretty much cover it. Now that the formalities are taken care of, what's this shit all about???



1. Allegation: Secretly Funneling Players from Tokyo to Phoenix

- **Question:** *Mr. Control 1, can you explain any role you may have had in transferring players from the Tokyo Pearls to the Phoenix Talons? Were you aware of any league guidelines you may have violated in doing so?*

Can you explain why I've been running Tokyo for what, almost 10 years now? No? That's what I thought. Anyway, what do you mean by "transfer"? Is this the English Premier League or something? Allow me to introduce to you guys a novel concept from noted labor lawyer and former United Steelworker Richard Moss: Free Agency. You know, kind of like when a Finance Manager jumps ship from one Wisconsin-area car dealer to another for more money. Ever heard of it? That's how players move from the GBC to the BBA and vice-versa. And "League Guidelines"? In case you haven't heard, there's no more Rule 6 or Rule 7 crap that you guys tried in the EBA. It's a free market, baby!

Every player the Talons have signed from Tokyo has gone through this process, and Phoenix has won and lost bidding wars fair and square for each of them, even if we had to wait for up to three incredibly boring Free Agency Sims before Umar Doger felt like signing. It works both ways, too. How do you think Tokyo got guys like Murray Healey and Odemar Lock? I don't see you dragging the Tokyo GM in here and questioning him about this shit.

Oh, wait, strike that last comment. Oops.

- **Follow-Up:** *How do you respond to accusations that you have leveraged your position as interim overseer to gain an unfair advantage for Phoenix?*

Unfair advantage? You think Damian Theophanous' 5.21 ERA, or Huang Cheng's 8 bullpen losses last season is an *advantage*?? I rest my case.

2. Allegation: Suppressing Player Development

- **Question:** *You have been accused of keeping high-potential players in the minor leagues for longer than necessary. What factors do you consider when deciding a player's assignment level?*

Wow, what a concept. High-Potential Players. Huh. Well, when drafts have been shitty since 2038, and the Talons have not had a top-ten pick in literally decades, it's kind of hard to find any of these so-called "high-potential players" in my farm system. I'm gonna put aside for the moment the fact that these questions were clearly written by ChatGPT, and play along.

The one you and the AI bots are thinking about is probably Mas'ud bin Salah al Din, and you may have noticed that I bought him fair and square using that free agency thing I told you about earlier. He played exactly two seasons in my minors, even getting called up three separate times last year at age 22. He's likely the 2061 JL Rookie of the Year. That's right, in Phoenix.

Or, or, wait, maybe it's Adrian Tallent, my favorite prospect. He's been clearly held back for sure, guys. Nah, on second thought, it couldn't be him, because he's the one who hit .111 in his September callup. SO I guess it's "necessary" for that particular 20 year old to spend some more time in the minor leagues. Go figure.

And if you all think that the Talons are suppressing any development, may I invite you to look at the OOTP dev report for literally any team in the BBA. It's a sea of red numbers every sim. The only one doing any suppression around here is our Lord and Savior Markus Heinsohn!

- **Follow-Up:** *Are you aware that your actions may have hindered players' career progressions, possibly infringing upon their earning potential and professional growth?*

The only thing that I am "aware" of is that my minor league teams have been so good, for so long, that the esteemed and noble Governing Board decided to attempt to nerf all of my minor league teams with so-called "age limits", an ad hoc concept that was just invented one day in the Discord GB chat. Except something went wrong with your grand plan, because all, that's right, **all** of my lower minors have made the playoffs each of the last 4 years. It's kind of an honor to know that an entire rule was made just for me, you know? Even greater honor to know that it didn't work!

Oh, and please tell me more about Tarald Langli's infringed "earning potential". Damn, I'm sorry, you haven't heard of him? Let me enlighten you all. He's the one making \$4.9 million to be the backup left fielder in Toledo. Poor guy.

3. Allegation: Possible Allowance of Performance-Enhancing Drugs (PEDs)

- **Question:** *There are concerns that you may have allowed, or even encouraged, the use of PEDs within the clubhouse. What is your stance on this matter, and how do you enforce league rules on PEDs?*

It seems like you're referencing a hypothetical situation involving performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) in a sports context. If this were a real situation, my stance would be to emphasize the importance of maintaining a fair and healthy competitive environment in sports. Enforcing league rules on PEDs typically involves:

1. **Education**: Informing players about the risks associated with PEDs and the importance of fair play.
2. **Testing**: Implementing regular and random drug testing to uphold the integrity of the sport.
3. **Policies**: Establishing and clearly communicating consequences for violations of PED policies, including suspensions or bans.
4. **Support**: Providing resources for players to seek help and guidance regarding their health and performance without resorting to banned substances.

Overall, it's crucial to foster a culture of integrity and respect for the rules within any sports organization. While there have been efforts to curb the use of steroids and restore the integrity of the game, discussions about PEDs continue, especially as new substances and methods of enhancement emerge. The conversation also includes ethical considerations regarding the treatment of athletes and how best to support their health and performance without resorting to banned substances.

- **Follow-Up:** *Can you account for specific instances where players or staff have reported the use of PEDs under your watch?*

How was that last answer, guys? Seems a little sterile, eh? [Bet ya can't guess how I came up with that shit off the top of my head](#), huh.

Well, if you haven't already figured it out, that response was instantly created by Chatgtp version 69.0 on my 45 year old BlackBerry. Kinda cool, huh? You likely didn't even notice what I was furiously clicking on my half-century old physical phone keyboard in order to come up with that answer. What a marvelous invention!

Wait, **what?** It's *not* cool to use AI? But I thought this was the BBA, where AI can be used to generate unlimited Participation Points! Maybe instead of asking stupid questions about PED abuse (Oh and by the way guys, in case you haven't noticed, it's 2061 and all drugs are legal), you maybe should ask about PPT abuse. PPT which can then be converted to cash. Cash that can be used to sign IFA's that are better than any first round draft pick. Nothing wrong with that around here, I see.

And speaking of AI, seems like that's where all these dumb questions are coming from, like I said before. Are any of you real? Am I real? Is Ron (Hi Ron!) over there correct when he says that this is all a simulation? ARGHH it hurts my brain. Time for some more VODAK. Pardon me. **takes a swig** Is this VODAK real???

4. Allegation: Mishandling Company Funds

- **Question:** *How do you oversee and manage the team's financial resources? Can you explain discrepancies found in the Phoenix Talons' budget reports?*

Hold up guys. Do you even know how baseball works??? Who am I talking to here??

Any sane person who has half a brain cell knows that running a baseball team is categorically NOT about playing baseball. **DUH.** A baseball team is merely a tool to get unsuspecting rubes to pay their good money to watch said team fumble aimlessly around the field. Meanwhile, these same "marks" (to use a car salesman term, amirite Matt? **wink**), since they are already *literally* trapped inside your stadium, have absolutely no choice but to be completely dependent on you, the team management, for any and all sustenance they require.

Food. Beverages. Merch. Autographs with Your Mom. Hell, we even sell "fast passes" to the ladies for expedited restroom access. You gotta monetize, people! This isn't about baseball. It's about making money. Why do you think it's called "Central Arizona Concessions LLC" and not something like "Watch The Talons Play Baseball LLC"?

We could be having horse racing, jai-alai, bullfighting, it doesn't matter. As long as these people are willing to voluntarily trap themselves in a stadium where they are totally dependent on your facility, and then *pay for the privilege*, that's all that matters.

So it's not the team's financial resources that I oversee. It's the extraction of any and all monies possessed by people who happen to walk through that turnstile is what I oversee. Your question is invalid. Next!

- **Follow-Up:** *Do you have any response to the accusation that funds were used for personal expenses, unrelated to team operations?*

I AM THE PHOENIX TALONS. *Ipsa Facto*, all funds are mine and all expenses are personal. Why in [insert preferred deity here]'s name do you think I complain so much? All team money is my money.

Oh, and wait, I can already see the next question on the way. You think the Talons have an "owner"?? How naive. I **invented** the owner. In fact, your precious PPT award allowed me to. You think "Denny D. Dennison" is a real name? "Heir to the Denny's fortune"?? Are you fucking serious? That was so fake, I am shocked no one even caught it. And I even made it so the "owner" lets me spend waaaaay above budget and doesn't care about the team's record.

Man, I'm so glad that the last guy died at a table in an IHOP after eating 1200 calories worth of shitty pancakes. What was his name? Who cares. As soon as he croaked, I made up some new guy to be an owner, and you guys fell for it. Now I can do whatever I want! Suckers!

5. Allegation: Accepting Bribes from Denny's and Subaru Executives

- **Question:** *It has come to our attention that you may have accepted bribes from corporate representatives. Could you describe your relationships with executives from Denny's and Subaru, and whether these connections influenced team or league decisions?*

Don't hate the player, hate the game. This league's perfect and flawless PPT system actually *allowed* me to accept bribes from Denny's and Subaru to the tune of \$5 million bucks! They wanted me to rename the stadium, can you believe it? Didn't even cost anything. Just involved someone typing a new stadium name into OOTP, and now it's there for all to see in resplendent glory! It's so funny seeing the sim AI try to write fake game recap articles while struggling with fitting "Denny's Paul D. Lunn Memorial Stadium Presented By Subaru" into a sentence!

And you can do this shit every 10 years! It's in the constitution, have you guys ever read it?? SO that's half a million in bribes every single year forever! Great system you got there, guys.

- **Follow-Up:** *Are you aware that accepting such bribes could constitute a conflict of interest, violating league ethics policies?*

Did...Did you just put the words "league" and "ethics" into the same sentence?? That's cute. Next?

6. Allegation: Nepotism in Hiring Practices

- **Question:** *Mr. Workaday GM, you've been accused of hiring friends and family members into key roles. Could you explain your hiring criteria and how you ensure fair hiring practices?*

I once signed Henry Rectenberg to a minor league contract in 2041. Recognize the name?? Does that count, Mr. Big Boss Man???

- **Follow-Up:** *Were any positions filled without following league-standard interview protocols?*

I force out of work retired BBA players to work as coaches in my minor league system for starvation wages. No interviews, bro. It's **your** PPT system, remember?

7. Allegation: Failure to Address Workplace Harassment

- **Question:** *Can you explain the steps you take to maintain a safe and harassment-free environment in the clubhouse and front office?*
- **Follow-Up:** *Have there been any reports of harassment under your leadership that you have chosen not to act upon? If so, why?*

Welllllll, there was this one time. And, really, guys, it was just an innocent comment. Meant nothing. If you'd been one of the four people who read Talons Team News, you'd already know about it. But you don't read them, so I'll remind you.

It was a story about Your Mom. No Lane, not *your* mom, I'm talking about Your Mom™. There was a Talons TN about Joseph Mother and the fact that we trademarked his nickname to sell merchandise. Totally normal, right? Capitalism at its finest. And the story quoted one of our media partners, the eminent journalist Rob Powers of the Phoenix Sun Times Post Dispatch™ (One of Phoenix's Finest Newspapers™).

And, it's pretty embarrassing, Rob kinda got carried away with the story and exclaimed, and I quote, "I bet you Jodie Hanna's bra strap that Phoenix signs Joseph Mother to a 6 year contract before the year is done!" Now guys, I don't have to tell you that stuff like this isn't cool. First of all, Rob was totally wrong in the article, we can't even offer Joe a long term deal until he has 5 years of service time, which he does not. Point two, Rob Powers doesn't even have a prayer of getting within 10 feet of Jodie Hanna, much less seeing her undergarments, or even betting on them as he insinuated in the piece.

Let me definitively tell you that Central Arizona Concessions LLC takes harassment very, very seriously. We value all of our team members and any hint of a hostile work environment is frankly unacceptable. Rest assured that Mr. Powers was very, very sternly reprimanded for his hurtful speech, and his Denny's All You Can Eat Lifetime Pass was revoked immediately.

But legal action was not pursued by us or his employer. Mainly because Jodie threatened to kick his skinny little ass if he ever said that shit again, causing Mr. Powers to piss himself and run out of the clubhouse like a little whiny crybaby. Haha Rob, it sucks to be you, you little girly-man! I hope Jodie knocks your teeth out, you pansy-ass dumbfuck! She's a gawddamn

millionaire and you are a “sportswriter” with an Associate’s degree in Communications from the University of Phoenix, you idiot! What a fucking embarrassment, you white bread piece of shit!

But I digress. Next question?

8. Allegation: Leaking Confidential League Information

- **Question:** *Are you aware of any internal league information that may have been leaked to media or rival leagues? How do you safeguard against such leaks?*

Leaked information? Do you see any other “leagues” lined up outside to steal our “intellectual property”?? Do you think Major League Baseball is over here stealing our “incredible shrinking salary cap” idea? Maybe the AAA International League wants to demote their Toledo team to Single-A, like we have. Might help the ol’ Mud Hens by the way, they suck something awful.

But seriously, why would any rival leagues want to steal OUR ideas? I mean think about it, those other “major” leagues have teams in shithole cities like Milwaukee and Detroit. One of them is even called “The Brewers”. I mean, what the fuck is *that* name all about? What do they need our help for? They are perfectly shitty on their own. I mean come on. Why would any league want to *decrease* Media Revenue?

They have teams in New York, Houston, Toronto, and LA. We have teams on an uninhabited Pacific island and a small college town in Ohio that has like 3,000 people. Think about it. Which of the 19 Rockvilles in this country actually has the BBA team in it? Does anyone know? Is it the one in California with 47 people? Or maybe the one in southwest Wisconsin with 1900 people. Yeah, I’m sure Major League baseball really wants our secrets on how we maintain a team in that tiny podunk town.

- **Follow-Up:** *Would you agree to cooperate with an investigation into communications from your office, including email and phone records, to determine if such leaks occurred?*

Guess what folks, I’ve written 541 of the most amazing Team Newses in the history of the printed word. Take a look-see through **all** of them! I have nothing to hide. Do your worst! You got NOTHING on me!

Closing Statement by Commissioner Rectenwald:

"Thank you, Mr. Marko, for addressing each of these allegations. We will surely review those old Team Newses like you suggest. The Ethics Committee will deliberate based on your responses and all evidence presented. We will reach a conclusion regarding any disciplinary action pending a thorough review. Do you have any final remarks?"

Closing Response by Talon GM Marko:

It's League Control 1, dammit. Get it right.

(...)

Ok, Ok, wait. Don't get up just yet. Come on guys, just take a seat. Sit back down. You too, Ron. Those Grand Slams will be here any minute, and you don't want them to get cold, do you, Lane? So just chill out, take another shot of VODAK, and let me speak.

Although I find the idea of a BBA "Ethics Committee" to be a rich source of comedy, I do understand that the concept of final remarks means that I can pretty much say whatever I want without reprisal or interruption.



AHEM.

Marko/League Control 1/Talons Workaday GM jumps up on the table and begins to speak passionately.

The Brewster Baseball Association is a total joke. It's a ripoff of all the hard work that was done by Eric Ramon to flesh out and bring the original [Global Baseball Consortium](#)[™] (The league I named, by the way) to life after its former commish (forget his name) abandoned it. OOTP is a joke too. That's just a German ripoff of Terry Stapleton's Player Tracking System[™], the invention that made all internet baseball as we know it possible.

Yep, the former NACBA commissioner just decided to up and leave one day. Basically took his [Theo Reckleys](#), [Johnny Fevers](#), and [Luke Zaluskys](#) and took his ball and went home. Thank the universal deity that Mr. Ramon and Mr. Stapleton decided to soldier on and keep a great thing going. So great, in fact, that the Talons won the 2023 GBC Championship. What an achievement! I didn't have to pay money to some

European developer that is now wholly owned by a South Korean investment company ([look it up!](#)) to win. I won it through hard work, dedication, and a shit-ton of home runs, like any good Phoenix team should be.

So you guys can take your BBA and stick it where the sun don't shine, because I've already achieved everything I could possibly want. Instant brand recognition. Memorable promotions. Some of the best teams ever to play the game. Superstar players so popular that they are known solely by their nickname, which is a registered trademark™. Companies BEGGING me to sell them stadium rights because they need the exposure so bad. I mean I have single handedly saved one of the country's most revered "24 Hour Roadside Diners"! Hell, even Team News articles written by **other GM's** are up for Caleca awards, just because they are tangentially about me and the Talons!

I don't need the BBA, the BBA needs me, you idiots! Where would this fake league even be without the Talons, the Liberty, the Pearls, Denny's, Subaru, Vodak, IPA, Your Mom, and hell, even Jodie Hanna's Bra Strap™?? NOWHERE, that's where!

So do your worst! What are you gonna do, kick me out and save me \$49.95 a year? What a deal! I should thank you in advance! So pay attention guys, watch this. I'm gonna get up and walk out now, you bastards. I got three teams to get ready for your precious 2061 season. And my teams are a hell of a lot more important than whatever bullshit charges you can gin up in your secret Governing Board Discord Chat.

Here come the Grand Slam breakfasts now, you vultures. Don't mind the drywall dust in the pancakes, it's totally safe and cleared by the Maricopa County Health Department. And lab-grown bacon is totally ok to eat, those rumors of genetic mutations are purely circumstantial. Catch ya later, suckers!!!!

Additional Statement by Commissioner Rectenwald:

"Thank you, Mr. Marko, for your rather impassioned statement. It's clear to see where you stand. But, before you walk out in some sort of grand exit, please bear with me here and allow me to introduce some evidence that contradicts basically everything you just said. Fellow Board Members, please allow me to introduce into the record a certain "Team News" from way back in 2037. Take a gander at THIS:

2037-06: Talons Drinkposting Vol 1

Post by jiminyhopkins » Mon Dec 03, 2018 12:15 am

Phoenix, AZ--

Disclaimer: This post was penned by Talons Gm Sean V. Marko after a number of inebriating beverages. The Talons BaseBall Club LLC does not take any reponsibiloty for its contents

I like the Talons. I have run a baseball franchise by the name of Phoenix Talons since the year 1996 in real life, when I was at College inWisconsin. Iwas on an ESPN chatroom when someone said "Anyone want to join an internet baesball league?". His name was "Commish,". I said sure, why not. Then, I wass given control of a baseball team called Phoenix Talons. The year was 1996 and I was 18 years ols. The sim was FPS BBPro98 and the league was called the NACBA.

That was 22 real life actual years ago. Later the league was called the GBC. Then, as the gBC was still going on, Matt made a league with somethin called OOTP. I didn't know what it wasa but I was skeptical. I loved BBPro98 and I actually rejected ghis request to join his OOTP league. I thought that the GBC (the NACBA's eventual title) was the best league and I didn't want to change.

Eventually I won the GBC cchampionship in League year 2023 and to this day it remains the only champoonship I have won. Later, I eventually joined Recte's OOTP league with the Washington Bobwhites. But I grew tired of buying the OOTP program every couple seasons and I quit. I quit!

I regretted the decision. TYhen, Matt messaged me and said there was a part of his league called the EBA or European Baseball ASsociation. I jumped at the chance and was head of the Munchen Brauers, who developed some of the stars we see today such as Chris Limon, Mark Wareham, and Tu-fu Yong. We had a great team. But then Matt decided to expand the MBBA and I got my beloved Talons back. I am very thankful to be a part of the Phoenix Talons again and it is an honor to be in a Recte league once more.

I think that getting Laloosh this year may be the thing that pushes us over the top. We have a very good team that is full of players like Bartolo Ortiz, Mario Deortezm, and Voitto and LaLoosh, Maybe we can do better this year, Mayne not.

But I want to take this time to thaks Matt rectenwald and all the work he puts in to making this fake baseball league one of the few things that gives me joy in this life. I truly appreciate all the work you do, and have always done, to make this experience worthwhile to all of the people who take part in your creation. Thank you Mattm I wish you all the best and I hope every one of you reading this that you take as muchg joy in this league as I do.

I am sorry for my tone, I really have had a bit to drink. My day job is hard and stressfull and I appreciate that this community is there to give me some reprieve from the stresses of daily life. This league means so mucxh to me.

I love this league and I lpve the Talons. Thjank you all for everything. Now maybe LaLoosh and everyoje else can win me another championship.

Have a nice day...

Posting without editing, at 2 am on a Momday Morning,

Sean V. Marko

Commissioner Rectenwald:

“That you, bro? Had a few, eh?”

Talons GM starts making nonsensical scoffing and coughing sounds and begins to tremble

Talon GM Marko:

WHATTHEFUCK do YOU have ANY idea what happened to LUMPY LALOOSH after that????? He tore his GAWDDAMM Labrum and fucked over the Talons for **decades!!!!** I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!

security begins to drag the Talons GM from the hearing room

DAMN You, DAMNNNN
YOUUUUUUUUUUUUU...
.....AhhhhHAHhhHAHh!!...!!

YOU weren't supposed to read **THAT** team newsssssss!!! NO!
AAAAAAAAAAAAA...
...AAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHH...
HHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Board member Ron:

“Does this mean we won't get to meet Your Mom??

“The Turn”

Charm City Jimmies GM Dave Burcicki kicks the doors open. The song “[Stone Cold](#)” begins to play. The hearing room devolves into pandemonium as Bancroft approaches the table.



Burcicki: "This is an outrage! They are only leveling all of these charges against Marko to take the attention off of their own violations! I have proof!"

Rectenwald: "What on earth are you talking about?"

Burcicki: "You know damn well what I'm talking about. You and Nason cheated the system and signed International Free Agents that you shouldn't have. You thought you laundered the money into the system, but it's money that you shouldn't have had access to!"

Nason: "That's absurd. I followed the letter of the law as it was written. It's not my fault that the Constitution wording hasn't been changed. Nashville did nothing wrong."

Rectenwald: "All we did in Vegas was eat the salaries of two players, and that money replaced the money shelled out to those guys."

Burcicki: "Technically, that's a violation, or at least it should be. You know it should be."

Rectenwald: "Let's take a short recess so the board can discuss this."

The Governing Board members leave the room. They are gone for over an hour before returning.

Rectenwald: "Okay. Here's the situation. A couple of seasons ago we changed our internal accounting slightly and no longer have a dynamic line item for "Cash". We now have a static "Starting Balance" and a dynamic "Cash". While both Nashville and Las Vegas did have \$0 in cash and by the existing rules did transfer \$20M each into their cash, we have determined that moving forward the ability to move any cash into current cash balance from the Bonus Funds account must be based on Starting Cash-Cash on Hand. Therefore, while neither team did anything wrong by the letter of the law, they have both agreed to relinquish the rights to the four

IFA prospects in question. They will now be put into a special lottery amongst all BBA teams who have had losing records in each of the last three seasons.

Burcicki: “Well, umm, I suppose that’s ok, but who decides on how this lottery works, and who wins?”

Rectenwald: “I do.” *He rips off his face to expose himself as a robot.* “I am known as A.I. Recte, and I am a Sentient Chronicom existing solely to run the Brewster Baseball Association.”

Marko: “So that’s why it sounded like AI- it IS AI!”

A.I. Recte: “Yes. Matt Rectenwald and I both exist. While he is off running the Hustlers I have one directive- to ensure the best interests of the Brewster Baseball Association are protected at all costs. I will now develop the parameters of the lottery.”

“The Lottery”

A.I. Recte computes for about one second, then points to the screen in the room which has already populated with the lottery parameters.

*Let’s assign weights to the teams based on their **weighted number of wins over the past three seasons**. Teams with fewer wins get more weight, and teams with more wins get less weight.*

Here’s how we’ll approach it:

Step 1: Total Wins

*The sum of all teams’ wins is **836.5**.*

Step 2: Calculate Each Team's Weight

Now, for each team, we'll determine the percentage of the total wins they have and assign a weight inversely proportional to that. The fewer wins, the higher the weight.

Formula:

Weight = $1 \div \frac{\text{Team Wins}}{100} \times 100$, then normalize the weights to add up to 100%.

Step 3: Calculation for Each Team

Team Weights Calculation:

- Louisville Sluggers (57.1 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 57.1 = 1.751$
- Brooklyn Robins (62.5 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 62.5 = 1.6$
- Atlantic City Gamblers (63.8 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 63.8 = 1.567$
- Madison Wolves (65.8 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 65.8 = 1.519$
- Yellow Springs Nine (66 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 66 = 1.515$
- Austin Shredders (69.9 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 69.9 = 1.431$
- San Antonio Outlaws (70.1 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 70.1 = 1.426$
- Chicago Black Sox (73.9 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 73.9 = 1.353$
- Rockville Pikemen (75.7 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 75.7 = 1.32$
- Hawaii Tropics (76.1 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 76.1 = 1.314$
- Bikini Krill (77.6 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 77.6 = 1.289$
- Valencia Stars (78 wins):**
 - Weight: $100 \div 78 = 1.282$

Step 4: Normalize the Weights

Sum of all the calculated weights = **17.367**.

To normalize these weights so that they add up to 100%, we'll divide each team's weight by the sum of all weights, then multiply by 100 to get the percentage.

Normalized Weights:

1. **Louisville Sluggers:** $\frac{1.751}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 10.08\%$
2. **Brooklyn Robins:** $\frac{1.6}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 9.21\%$
3. **Atlantic City Gamblers:** $\frac{1.567}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 9.02\%$
4. **Madison Wolves:** $\frac{1.519}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 8.75\%$
5. **Yellow Springs Nine:** $\frac{1.515}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 8.73\%$
6. **Austin Shredders:** $\frac{1.431}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 8.24\%$
7. **San Antonio Outlaws:** $\frac{1.426}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 8.21\%$
8. **Chicago Black Sox:** $\frac{1.353}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 7.79\%$
9. **Rockville Pikemen:** $\frac{1.32}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 7.6\%$
10. **Hawaii Tropics:** $\frac{1.314}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 7.57\%$
11. **Bikini Krill:** $\frac{1.289}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 7.42\%$
12. **Valencia Stars:** $\frac{1.282}{17.367} \times 100 \approx 7.38\%$

Final Team Weighting:

1. **Louisville Sluggers:** 10.08%
2. **Brooklyn Robins:** 9.21%
3. **Atlantic City Gamblers:** 9.02%
4. **Madison Wolves:** 8.75%
5. **Yellow Springs Nine:** 8.73%
6. **Austin Shredders:** 8.24%
7. **San Antonio Outlaws:** 8.21%
8. **Chicago Black Sox:** 7.79%
9. **Rockville Pikemen:** 7.6%
10. **Hawaii Tropics:** 7.57%
11. **Bikini Krill:** 7.42%
12. **Valencia Stars:** 7.38%

This distribution can be used to assign weighted chances for the teams in the lottery. If you'd like to tweak any values or explore further, just let me know!

For the lottery, we will establish the rules and define the five available players. Since no team can win multiple players, the lottery should proceed in five rounds: one for each player. If a team wins the rights to the first player, they will be excluded from the second round and so on.

Player #1: Kenny "Stinger" Peterson

- **Age:** 17
- **Position:** Right Fielder
- **Bats/Throws:** Left/Left
- **Height/Weight:** 6'6", 190 lbs
- **Nationality:** Israeli
- **Strengths:** Elite potential with great speed and strong defensive arm. His batting ratings show high future potential in contact, gap power, and home run power.
- **Weaknesses:** Currently very raw, with low current hitting ability across all categories.
- **Personality:** High leadership, adaptability, and work ethic.

For more details: [Kenny Peterson Profile](#)

Player #2: Tony Álvarez

- **Age:** 16
- **Position:** Pitcher
- **Bats/Throws:** Right/Right
- **Height/Weight:** 6'0", 165 lbs
- **Nationality:** Chilean
- **Strengths:** Potential in control with a strong fastball and curveball. Velocity reaches 91-93 mph.
- **Weaknesses:** Raw stuff and movement, currently suited for bullpen work.
- **Personality:** High loyalty and work ethic, but low leadership qualities.

For full details: [Tony Álvarez Profile](#)

Player #3: Gilberto Sáenz

- **Age: 16**
- **Position: Right Fielder**
- **Bats/Throws: Left/Left**
- **Nationality: Chilean**
- **Strengths: High potential in contact, home run power, and avoiding strikeouts. Strong arm with potential for reliable outfield defense.**
- **Weaknesses: Personality concerns, perceived as financially ambitious and sometimes arrogant.**
- **Current Status: Signed with the Las Vegas Hustlers, minor league contract.**

For additional details: [Gilberto Sáenz Profile](#)

Player #4: Tamam Abdul-Basit

- **Age: 17**
- **Position: Pitcher**
- **Bats/Throws: Right/Right**
- **Nationality: Egyptian**
- **Strengths: Notable fastball (92-94 mph), potential to develop a strong changeup and splitter. Shows solid stamina for longer outings.**
- **Weaknesses: Low current ratings, suited to bullpen for now.**
- **Personality: High adaptability but lacks leadership traits.**

For more details: [Tamam Abdul-Basit Profile](#)

Player #5: Gary "Staple Nose" Baxter

- **Age: 17**
- **Position: Center Fielder**
- **Bats/Throws: Right/Right**
- **Nationality: Israeli**
- **Strengths: Potentially strong in power hitting with solid running speed. Good defensive range in the outfield.**
- **Weaknesses: Currently lacks consistent hitting ability; low ratings in patience at the plate.**
- **Personality: High leadership and loyalty.**

For more details: [Gary Baxter Profile](#)

Teams Entering the Lottery:

- 1. Louisville Sluggers – 10.08%**
- 2. Brooklyn Robins – 9.21%**
- 3. Atlantic City Gamblers – 9.02%**
- 4. Madison Wolves – 8.75%**
- 5. Yellow Springs Nine – 8.73%**
- 6. Austin Shredders – 8.24%**
- 7. San Antonio Outlaws – 8.21%**
- 8. Chicago Black Sox – 7.79%**
- 9. Rockville Pikemen – 7.6%**
- 10. Hawaii Tropics – 7.57%**
- 11. Bikini Krill – 7.42%**
- 12. Valencia Stars – 7.38%**

Lottery Results:

- Kenny Peterson (Right Fielder) goes to the Atlantic City Gamblers.**
- Tony Álvarez (Pitcher) goes to the Hawaii Tropics.**
- Gilberto Sáenz (Right Fielder) goes to the Chicago Black Sox.**
- Tamam Abdul-Basit (Pitcher) goes to the Valencia Stars.**
- Gary Baxter (Center Fielder) goes to the San Antonio Outlaws.**

A.I. Recte: “This hereby concludes the lottery. The Governing Board has also ruled that Sean Marko is guilty of nothing and can continue to run both the Phoenix Talons and the Tokyo Pearls as well as continuing to toil at the Local Neighborhood Iron Smelter. A.I. Recte has spoken.”

Marko (bursting back into the room): So this is what I get for *not* tanking. Figures!

All enjoy some good laughs and glad-handing, though everyone in the room is now somehow treating “The Commissioner” in a somewhat different manner.

Let's Have Some Fun This Year!

