

SPBI 1971 Newsletter

1971 Rookie Draft

In a word, stupendous! The 1971 rookie draft was held in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown on Sat. May 3rd. A total of 11 managers were in attendance; Gary Plunkitt, John Ungashick, Mike See, Rich Applegate, Terry Baxter, Joe DeZarlo, Rick Ryan, John Turnbull, Steve Brunner, Marc Hollingsworth and Al "Doc" Schweitzer. Also attending were Marc's brother and Don Rahn, who now owns a team in SPBI. For more about this very special draft weekend, you can read John Turnbull's cutting-edge article in the Bullpen section of the *Baseball Daily Digest* web site.

Just a few notes about the HOF draft that didn't make the cut in John's article:

- Rick is OK after the terrifying lobster attack... he says it was just a little prick (hey, whoa, careful now)...
- Doc swears he now has Seaver's motion perfected, and is working on a cutter... the velocity is just not there for the heater...
- Gabe was seen mumbling something about Lee Smith and a beat down... what a cut-up that Gabe is...

1971 Trades

There were a total of 57 trades made in preparation for the 1971 season. With 19 trades, Rick Ryan once again is crowned "Trader Rick". Rick nearly doubled the totals of the two runners-up, Dave Lauer and Mike See. Is anyone surprised about the top three?

The Saxons, Tourists and Volcanoes each participated in just 1 trade. Sometimes you can't mess with perfection!

Team	# Trades
Cubs	19
Eagles	10
Thunder	10
Tigers	9
Mountaineers	8
Triangles	7
Chiefs	7
Millers	5
Eels	5
Stallions	5
Rats	5

Team	# Trades
Black Sox	4
Stars	3
Spiders	3
Red Storm	3
Peppers	2
Dukes	2
Forest Citys	2
Red Streaks	2
Saxons	1
Tourists	1
Volcanoes	1

1971 Predictions

I will make another stab at predicting the outcome of SPBI (1970 team name in parenthesis if different). I was once again pretty accurate in 1970. I base my replays on a 40-man roster and generate manager profiles based on real-life usage, so there may be key players who get under-used, and some undesirable players who get over-used. Plus, I don't take into account the human factor. Most of us manage a better game than the Computer Manager. Therefore every year there are a few teams who out-perform my predictions by about 10 games. Conversely, there's usually an equal number of teams who under-perform my predictions by about 10 games.

AL East

The Rats, Red Storm and Saxon will battle all season. The Rats have the slight edge with pitching, but not much as all three teams have solid rotations. The Red Storm has that 3-run home run potential that could change any game in an instant.

AL West

The Triangles and Tigers will be neck and neck all season, with the Stallions just a nose behind. The Triangles have the superior rotation, but the Tigers have a slight edge in speed and speed can make a difference.

NL East

In another close race, the Chiefs and Tourists will be in a dog fight all season. Both teams are pretty evenly matched. The Chiefs have a slight edge with their rotation, while the Tourists have the edge in team speed. If either or both teams falter, the Spiders have a chance to grab the division title.

NL West

Unfortunately for everyone except the Thunder, this division will be no contest. The pitching staff is by far the best of 1971 and maybe the best ever in SPBI history, at least the starting 5, and have enough power, speed and obpct to win it all.

AL Championship

The Rats vs. the Triangles. Both squads have superb pitching, This is a tough one to pick, but the Triangles get the nod because their starting 5 is more dominant, and pitching wins in the post season.

NL Championship

The Thunder vs. the Chiefs. The Thunder have a huge advantage with their starting rotation. That will be too much to overcome in a short series.

World Series

The Thunder vs. the Triangles. This has the makings of a classic, with the two best pitching rotations in SPBI going head to head. The Thunder will prevail since they have a great advantage even against the Triangles superb rotation.

<<<<<<<<< American League East >>>>>>>>>

Flushing Rats, Joe DeZarlo. The Rats have a good blend of speed (Brock, Otis, Campaneris, May) and power (Bench and Perez should hit 30 home runs and five others who could hit 20 home runs each). However, the battery of Bench and the pitching staff should carry them to the pennant. Seaver and Perry are a solid 1 and 2, and Seaver should top the league in strikeouts and shutouts. Culp, Stone and Broberg are a solid 3,4,5 to round out the rotation. The bullpen is steady if not spectacular, and will get the job done. However, there's not a lot of depth in the bullpen, so the starters will need to go deep in games, which should not be a problem.

1970 Record: 104-58, American League Champions

1971 Prediction: 94-68

Niskayuna Red Storm, Don Rahn (Lincoln Tunnel). The Red Storm have plenty of power. Aaron should hit 50 home runs, while Killebrew, Montanez and Robinson will hit 30 apiece. Cardenas will add 20 home runs, with Fosse and Andrews in double-digit dingers. They also have the highest team obpct., so that should lead to a fair share of 3-run home runs. The rotation of Messersmith, Peterson, Nolan and Arlin are top notch at 1-4, and McAnally and Odom will split the #5 role solidly and add some long relief. Carroll is an excellent closer, and although the bullpen is a little lefty-heavy, it should perform well.

1970 Record: 101-61, 2nd Place American League East

1971 Prediction: 90-72

Schaumburg Saxons, Tim Johnson. The Saxons have some power, although only two players (Briggs and Oliva) will reach 20 home runs, good speed and an excellent team on-base percentage, so the potential is there for some big innings. Here's another team with a superb starting rotation of Wise, Niekro, Downing, Blass, with Kelly and Johnson splitting the #5 role. The bullpen is high quality, but there's not much depth, with Johnson splitting time in the bullpen when he's not starting.

1970 Record: 65-97, 4th Place American League East

1971 Prediction: 85-77

Blue Ridge Mountaineers, Steve Brunner. Williams and Johnson will each hit about 35 home runs, but that's about it for power. Hernandez and Nelson will get about 20 steals apiece, but that's about it for speed. With a relatively low team obpct, the Mountaineers will have to be creative when trying to manufacture runs. The 5-man rotation of Stoneman, Blyleven, Roberts, Drago and Lockwood is very solid. Fisher will handle the closer role, with Drabowsky and Pina steady. The rest of the bullpen is a little shaky, and there's no lefty except for Hassler's 7 appearances, so that might hurt the Mountaineers in close games.

1970 Record: 57-105, 5th Place American League East

1971 Prediction: 79-83

Spirit Mountain Volcanoes, Marc Hollingsworth (Cascade Glaciers). Some speed (Pinson, Cardenal, Clarke and Rettenmund getting between 15 and 30 steals each), but with very low team power and obpct, runs will be hard to come by. Wright is a solid ace, and Perry is adequate as the #2 guy, but then it's a team effort to cover the rest of the rotation. The bullpen is lacking in both quality and quantity, so the bonus guys will be used to their limits.

1970 Record: 76-86, 3rd Place American League East

1971 Prediction: 63-99

<<<<<<<<< American League West >>>>>>>>>

Dayton Triangles, John Turnbull. Plenty of power, with Pops Stargell hitting 50 home runs, Melton 35, Williams and Howard 30. The Triangles have arguably the best rotation in the AL, with Bradley, Carlton, Stottlemire, Siebert and McNally. Cumberland, the swing man, could be an ace on some teams! Lyle or Hoerner could each be the closer, with Tompkins, Timmerman and York solid in any role. The Triangles are the team to beat in the AL and should represent the AL in the 1971 World Series.

1970 Record: 63-99, 6th Place American League West

1971 Prediction: 96-66

Frankfort Tigers, Gary Plunkitt. As usual, the Tigers have good overall team power. Cash should hit 35 home runs, with Freehan, McAuliffe, McMullen, Buford and Hickman all adding about 20 each. Harrelson could get 30 steals, with Buford and Blair getting about 15 steals each. Parsons, Hands, Gentry and Forsch form a fine rotation, with Moose, Bryant and/or Strohmayer handling the #5 spot effectively. The bullpen is deep, but not spectacular. Gladding will be the closer, but his tendency to put runners on base may cause problems. Nelson has a high ERA, but his WHIP is relatively low and he may surprise some teams as the part-time closer, since he could get 24 bonus appearances.

1970 Record: 91-71, 2nd Place American League West

1971 Prediction: 92-70

Baltimore Stallions, Greg Henning (Wabash Ravines). The Stallions have some power, with Reichardt, Monday, Pepitone, Yastrzemski and Lum hitting between 15 and 20 home runs. There's not much speed, with Unser the only player in double-digits at about 15. The top 4 in the rotation (Bosman, Kline, Hedlund and Dierker) are very effective. Lamb and Merrit will handle most of the #5 starts. There's plenty of quality arms in the bullpen, with two bona-fide closers in Watt and Grzenda. The few bonus pitchers will not be needed much except to reach their minimum appearances.

1970 Record: 70-92, 4th Place American League West

1971 Prediction: 84-78

Rossville Cubs, Rick Ryan. The Cubs have some power. Powell will hit about 25 home runs, with Duncan, Harper, Rose, Clendenon and Davis adding 10-15 each. Harper and Davis will also get between 20-30 steals, with Rose getting about 15. Palmer and Katt are an excellent 1 and 2, and Reuss is a decent #3. Lonborg, Segui, Gogolewski and Krausse will split the #4 and #5, with Krausse spending more time in the bullpen. There's not a lot of arms in the bullpen, but they all provide plenty of appearances and quality. Lindblad should be a lock-down closer, with Miller as a solid setup.

1970 Record: 106-56, 1st Place American League West

1971 Prediction: 83-79

Elkhart Electric Eels, Lynn Miller. The Eels don't have much power or speed. Dietz will lead the team with 20 home runs, with nobody else hitting double-digits. May and Griffin will get about 15 steals each. Splittorff and Del Canton have the stuff to be aces, but not the starts. The rest of the rotation is good but not spectacular. There's not a lot of depth in the bullpen, but the top 5 have enough appearances to cover the season. Ray should be an excellent closer, with Lee and Romo pitching effectively.

1970 Record: 71-91, 3rd Place American League West

1971 Prediction: 60-102

Mill City Millers, Marc Robinson (Habana Robustos). Once again, the Millers will platoon at almost every position. There's not much team power, some team speed, and the team obpct is relatively low. Fairley and Josephson will hit double-digits in home runs. Wills, Kelly and Maddox will get 15-20 steals each. There's no stand-out ace, and the Millers will end the season with 13 or 14 pitchers starting a game. There's a lot of depth in the bullpen, but the quality drops quickly after Culver and Kelley.

1970 Record: 67-95, 5th Place American League West

1971 Prediction: 58-104

<<<<<<<<< National League East >>>>>>>>>

Lafayette Chiefs, Steve Ehresman. May should hit 40 home runs, with 6 others getting 15-20. Kessinger, Rivers and Harrah will get 10-15 stolen bases. The Chiefs have a decent team obpct, so they should be able to score runs. Cuellar, Sutton and May form a solid 1,2,3. Horlen fit's the mold of a swing man, but will split time at #4. 5 or 6 pitchers will start the remaining games. Conversley, the bullpen is very deep, with Granger the likely closer. Grant and Cloninger are solid in any role, with Regan, Severinsen and Tatum respectable in lesser roles.

1970 Record: 64-98, 4th Place National League East

1971 Prediction: 89-73

Asheville Tourists, Rich Applegate. The Tourists have a good combination of power and speed. Bonds will hit 35 home runs and steal 30 bases. Bando will add 25 home runs with Kranepool and Foster hitting 15 each. Alomar will steal about 40 bases, and Cash will add 15. Jenkins, Reed and McDowell are a top-notch 1,2,3. Peters is respectable at #4 and Walker is one of the better 5th starters around. Giusti will fill the closer role well, but Mingori might win that job with his superb WHIP. McMahon will be a dependable workhorse, with Strickland and House throwing well in limited roles.

1970 Record: 96-66, 1st Place National League East

1971 Prediction: 88-74

Cleveland Spiders, Chris Williams. The Spiders have good power throughout the lineup and bench. Torre and Allen will hit about 25 home runs each, with Henderson, Lahoud, Mitterwald and Brown adding about 15 each. Lolic, Bahnsen, Dobson and Short form a solid 1-4. The 5th starter will be a collection of swing men. Sanders will be a phenomenal closer. Cox, Jackson, Roland and Richert will be solid in the bullpen.

1970 Record: 79-83, 3rd Place National League East

1971 Prediction: 77-85

Kansas City Red Streaks, Mike Boling. Not much power besides Colbert (30 home runs) and Johnstone (20 home runs). There's not much team speed either. Johnstone should also steal about 10 bases, as will Davalillo. Combine those numbers with a low team obpct, and the Red Streaks will find it hard to score runs. The pitching staff for the most part will keep the Red Streaks competitive. Kirby and Pattin are top-notch 1-2. Foster is solid at #3 and Sadecki is very strong at #4. The 5th starter will be a trio of Shellenback, Pizarro and Chance, with Pizarro standing out. Linzy should be the closer, but his penchant for the base-on-balls may hurt him. Riddleberger is a solid hurler. The rest of the bullpen is a combination of quantity or quality, but not both, so getting to the closer may be an issue.

1970 Record: 61-101, 5th Place National League East

1971 Prediction: 75-87

Evanston Black Sox, John Ungashick. There's little power outside of Mays, Mincher and Rader, who should get 15-20 home runs each. There's also little speed besides Mays, who will get about 25 steals. Marichal is a true ace, with Lerch, Johnson and McGlothlin very solid at 2,3,4. Bunning, Moret and Luebber will split the 5th starter role. The bullpen is not very deep and besides Pena, Hambright and Denehy, not very good.

1970 Record: 83-79, 2nd Place National League East

1971 Prediction: 70-92

<<<<<<<<< **National League West** >>>>>>>>>

Las Vegas Thunder, Mike See. The Thunder have decent power. Jackson should hit 35 home runs, Nettles 30, Scott 25, with Rudi, Ceden, Munson and Egan hitting 10 each. There is good team speed as well. Ceden should steal 20 bases, with Jackson, Clines and Belanger at 15 each. Wood, Blue, Hunter and Wilson are phenomenal and could all be the ace on every other team in 1971. Koosman will be a solid 5th starter, but will only be needed for about 9 starts! McGraw should be the closer. The rest of the bullpen is not deep, but each pitcher has plenty of quality appearances. With the starting rotation as is, the bullpen won't be needed.

1970 Record: 95-67, 3rd Place National League West

1971 Prediction: 107-55

Hollywood Stars, Don Zminda. This may be a re-loading year for the Stars, but they would be competitive in any other division. There's not much power, but Smith will hit 30 home runs, with White adding 20 and Rodriguez 15. There's also not much speed, with Metzger and White stealing 15 bases each and Smith at about 10. The starting rotation is very good. Gibson and Ellis are an excellent 1&2. Cleveland, Singer and Slaton are solid at 3,4,5. The bullpen is not very deep, but Brewer is at the top of the class as the closer. Knowles, Taylor and McDaniel will be solid as setup and middle relief specialists. Zepp and Vance are strictly mop-up but in a very limited role.

1970 Record: 105-57, 1970 World Series Champions

1971 Prediction: 87-75

Rockford Forest Citys, Terry Baxter. There's plenty of power and speed on this team. Petrocelli, Robertson and Murcer could all hit 25-30 home runs. Foster should add 20, with Repoz, Morgan and Hermann adding 15 apiece. Morgan should steal 40 bases, and Garr will add 30. Murcer and Wynn will get 10-15 steals each. Coleman and Grimsley are an excellent 1&2. Holtzman and Blasingame are solid 3&4. The 5th starter will be any of 5 or 6 pitchers. Wilson will be very good as the closer. The rest of the bullpen will struggle at times, and the Forest Citys will need most of the bonus appearances to make it through the season.

1970 Record: 81-81, 4th Place National League West

1971 Prediction: 86-76

Fairfax Peppers, Ron Peterson. Good power, but almost no speed. Horton will hit 25 home runs. McCovey, Johnson, Hebner and Gaston could all hit 20 home runs each, with Clemente adding 15. Dobson is the ace, with Osteen, John and Jarvis solid at 2,3,4. Hargan will be shaky at #5. The bullpen is adequate but no one stands out as a true closer.

1970 Record: 99-63, 2nd Place National League West

1971 Prediction: 83-79

Amboy Dukes, Al "Doc" Schweitzer. The Dukes don't have much power or speed. Robinson and Spencer should get about 20 home runs each. Fuentes will get about 15 steals and day will add 10. Pappas, Murphy, Billingham and Gullet are a very solid 1-4. Dunning and Kekich will be serviceable splitting the 5th starter role, with Dunning spending more time in the bullpen. Fingers will be solid as the closer. Besides Abernathy, the bullpen is lacking in quality and quantity, so the bonus pitchers will be used heavily.

1970 Record: 70-92, 6th Place National League West

1971 Prediction: 72-90

Kenosha Eagles, Dave Lauer. The Eagles have decent power and some speed. Staub and Epstein should both hit 20 home runs, with Oliver, Bailey and Bateman adding 15 each. Bowa should steal about 30 bases, and Bailey will add 15. Pitching will be the Achilles heel of the Eagles in 1971. Renko is the ace on this squad. Morton is the only other starter with more than 19 starts, so he's the #2. The rest of the rotation will be split between 6 or 7 pitchers. Frisella and Burgmeir will be excellent as a closer / setup combo. Kealy will also be solid in any role. The rest of the bullpen is deep, but will struggle all season.

1970 Record: 78-84, 5th Place National League West

1971 Prediction: 62-100