

Baseball's Premier Magazine *Street & Schmody's* brings you the SPB1 1985 season May review.

The month of May brought series byes to the schedule, meaning some teams have 60 games under their belts and some have 54 games. This month of interleague play had the AL taking a 12-10 series wins along with a 72-60 record. Combined with April's interleague play the AL has a 32-30 series lead and a 245-217 .530 record in interleague games.

In the AL East, the Cuyahoga River Flames lead over second place Cleveland Spiders shrank to two games. The Dayton Triangles, the Preble Zorros, and the Collierstown Highlanders were last seen sinking below the horizon. The Flames offense was again paced by 3B Pedro Guerrero (.341 7 20), RF Dave Winfield (.333 10 27), and C Gary Carter (.303 10 19). SP Mike Scott won all five of his decisions (5-0 1.98 30k) and the team had a low 3.22 ERA for the month. The Cleveland Spiders had three pitchers with four wins in May led by John Tudor's (4-2 1.31 30k) four complete games in seven starts. The Spiders offense was led by LF Jose Cruz (.339 2 19) and 2B Bill Doran (.308 4 17). 1B Andre Thornton added six home runs. The Spiders also have two starters with ERAs below two for the season, John Tudor (1.11 1st in AL) and Atlee Hammaker (1.97 2nd in AL). What can be said about the Dayton Triangles?...winning four of twenty-four probably identifies a trend. But Triangles can retriangulate. How about those Preble Zeros? (oops, i meant Zorros.) Giving up five runs a game and scoring three will lead to only more negative outcomes. Their bats are a swish and a miss leading the league in Ks this month. The Collierstown Highlanders' anemic offense is penalizing the starting pitching who are pitching more commendably than the Triangles and Zorros. The time to turn it around is now.

In the AL West, five of the six teams are playing over .550 ball, led by the Bloomington Hoosiers league best 45-15 record, followed by the Rockford Forest Citys, whose 24-6 May record vaulted them into second place, just two games back. This will be one heck of a race. The Indy Alley Cats also took a leap of their own into third and ended May with a five game winning streak, best in SPB1, however eight games back probably means an alley fight for a wild card, to include the Frankfort Tigers and the surprising Kenosha Eagles. The Frankfort Tigers slipped a bit with a losing May. The Evanston Black Sox somehow ended up in the laundry chute to the basement as their fortunes look to be turning downward. The Hoosiers garnered their consecutive player of the month in RF Tony Gwynn (.386/.417/.553/.970 26rbis, 19r, 51h, 9d, 5t, five k's in 139 plate appearances). Hoosier starters Brett Saberhagen (8-1 2.28 65k), Charlie Leibrandt (6-0 2.31 37k), and Dennis Martinez (5-0 2.64 30k) anchor a solid rotation, while Goose Gossage pitched excellent in relief winning the Pitcher of the Month. The Forest Citys offense was led by LF Phil Bradley (.344 6 18) and 1B Darrell Evans (.343 8 25) and the team hit .291 in May, scoring 184 runs (6/g). The Forest Citys had a team 3.05 ERA with their starters going 17-5. SP Britt Burns leads SPB1 with a 9-0 record. Indy's top three starters going 13-2 in May gives the Alley Cats the momentum to gain a claw hold on a wildcard. The Kenosha Eagles went to unprecedented heights with a pitching staff that soared in May. An SPB1 best 2.69 team ERA and three times as many wins as losses have the Eagles flapping towards a wildcard. The Frankfort Tigers took a tumble in May as both pitching and hitting seemed to collapse at the same time. A 3-14 record on the road doomed the Tigers this month. The Black Sox may have fallen into the basement, but they are within striking range if they put together a string of series wins, which is possible with their schedule in June.

In the NL East, the New York Mets increased their lead to two games over the second place Blue Ridge Mountaineers and eight games over the Flushing Rats. All the other teams seem to be separating themselves from the top tier as the Asheville Tourists fall eleven back and the Beast Coast Brushbacks and Fairfax Peppers are twenty plus games out. The Mets rode the arms of their starters, Roger Clemens (4-0 1.32), Oil Can Boyd (3-3 2.16), Sid Fernandez (2-2 2.87) and Ricky Mahler's four wins to an NL May best 21-9 record. RF Dave Parker (.331 8 26) and 1B Don Mattingly's 23 rbis paced the Mets. The Mountaineers won ten more than they lost in May. Led by SPs Scott Sanderson (3-0 2.27) and Bert Blyleven (2-1 2.03) and a balanced offense, the Mountaineers have an easy June to catch the Mets. The Rats had a ping pong month with no starter dominating, but if their offense heats up, they may be on the road to recovery. The Tourists are in the middle of the pack in team pitching and team batting. Probably explains why they hover near .500. If one or the other jump starts and begins to play above their heads, the Tourists may get back into the race. The Brushbacks and Peppers both had a horrible month winning only eight games, each. Both these teams can't seem to swing themselves out of paper bags.

In the tight NL West, where no team is more than six games back of first, the surprising Milwaukee Road continue to hold the top spot, three games ahead of the Bolton Hill Scotties, matching April's 17 wins. The Ottawa Lynx, Spirit Mountain Volcanoes, and Las Vegas Thunder separate themselves by one game. The Road had four starters pitch more than 45 innings in May, while the rest of SPB1 counted ten. NL Pitcher of the Month Tom Browning led the starters to a 14-9 record. OFs Al Cowens (.287 8 29) and Jim Rice (.263 9 37) provide the pop, now the rest of the lineup needs to provide the snap and crackle. The Scotties ended May with a league worst 5.37 ERA yet still managed to play only one game under .500. Only one Scotties starting pitcher has an ERA under four. Playoff contending teams expect better, but the Scotties offense has the core to improve their record. The Lynx were the only other NL West team to finish the month over .500, however, this team lacks serious power and will need to do the little things, like getting on base and advancing runners to create scoring opportunities. The Volcanoes were the only SPB1 team to hit .300 for the month of May, but an almost 5.00 ERA really ruined any chances for a winning May record. CF Dale Murphy earned Player of the Month for the NL and the Volcanoes June schedule might give them the traction to start their winning ways. The Thunder five game drop from April, points to ominous signs. This team lacks in power and timely hitting. Their leading rbi hitter had 10 for the month and only the Triangles scored fewer runs. Looks like a long season for the Thunder.

For the Season to May 31, 1985

Best Home Record: 20-7 Rockford Forest Citys, Cleveland Spiders, New York Mets.

Best Away Record: 26-7 Bloomington Hoosiers

Best Division Record: 6-0 Cleveland Spiders and 11-1 Rockford Forest Citys

Best Interleague Record: 31-11 Bloomington Hoosiers

Most extra inning games: 8 Bloomington Hoosiers

Best extra inning record: 2-0 Las Vegas Thunder, 4-1 Milwaukee Road, Frankfort Tigers

Most one run games: 24 Milwaukee Road and Asheville Tourists

Best one run games record: 8-3 Las Vegas Thunder.