

PRE-SEASON PROGNOSIS 1971

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST

South River Gladiators

The Glads won 100 games in 1970 but finished nine games behind the Hot Rods. However, with realignment, the Rods' are now in the West and it looks like smooth sailing for South River in the AL East. The team bristles with power, led by RF Frank Robinson and third sacker Joe Torre. In a DH league (which won't exist for two more years) Torre would be sensational as he could easily challenge for the batting title to go along with excellent power, but his glove is very weak. Rusty Staub will man another outfield slot with the ageless Willie Mays in center. But a substantial amount of playing time in the garden will have to be found for Ralph Garr whose only flaw is an aversion to the base on balls. One solution would be to move Mays to first base but his glove there is questionable, and he is the only natural CF on the roster, but other managers would love to have this dilemma. The other first base candidates are Ed Kranepool and Donn Clendenon both of whom are serviceable. Felix Milan will get most of the starts at second where he is an adequate fielder with a Punch and Judy bat. Bud Harrelson wrote the book on being a great field low hit shortstop. Jerry Jestad will fill in as Torre's defensive caddie at third. Johnny Bench returns his cannon arm and good power behind the plate, but his batting average may suffer this year. The mound star is peerless Tom Terrific Seaver, but he is ably supported in the rotation by Bert Blyleven, Rudy May and Chris Short. The bullpen trio of Tom Brewer, Danny Frisella and Dave LaRoche is probably the best in all of SPBII. South River will be tough to beat.

Fairfax Colts

The Colts won 98 games in the AL West in 1970 (still ten games off the lead) but were moved to the East this year and look to be bridesmaids again. The offense is top notch in all ways except in comparison to the Gladiators and the pitching staff is well above average. The offensive leaders are corner outfielders Tony Oliva and Lou Brock. Oliva may only be able to play in 125-130 games but when he's in the lineup you can't ask for much more, despite a less than stellar OBA. Brock gets on base consistently and will likely lead the league in stolen bases. Rick Monday will get the most starts in center with Ron Swoboda and Jim Hickman filling in as needed. First base could be a problem with Hickman filling in until hot shot Greg Luzinski is ready to play full time which won't come until next year. The middle infield is weak as Steve Braun, a banjo hitter with a weak glove will split time at second with Ted Kubiak, who will also get some time at short backing up Marty Perez, another weak hitter. Al Gallagher is the best hitting third baseman, but he has defensive issues and will be spelled by Wayne Garrett, a terrible hitter with a decent glove and Terry Kennedy who hits a little bit but is not that good in the field. Ray Fosse is a solid catcher, both offensively and defensively but there isn't much behind him. The team has four good starters in Don Wilson, Sonny Seibert, Clyde Wright and Larry Dierker. Fred Scherman is a good closer and he'll get help from Tom Hall and Don McMahon. There isn't much after this crew and the fifth slot in the rotation could be a problem.

Evanston Elephants

The Pachyderms seem solid in third place and with a few breaks might challenge for second, but the pennant is realistically out of reach. Boog Powell and newly acquired Brooks Robinson are cannons at the corners with Brooks bringing his usual superlative glove. Horace Clarke will do his usual workmanlike job at second, but he is not a standout. Off season acquisition shortstop Maury Wills is in the twilight of a great career but he should have one more good year left in the tank. Dave May in right, Jose Cardenal in center and Jay (don't call me Jesus) Alou in left are a decent, if unspectacular outfield

with Hal McRae and Stan Swanson filling in as needed. Bill Freehan is a solid catcher with good power and his backup is highly prized youngster Carlton Fisk. Don Gullett, Al Downing, Tom Bradley and Luke Walker are the guts of the starting staff, but highly prized rookie Doyle Alexander will also contribute. Fred Gladding is a good reliever, but he has some control issues and he'll be ably backed up by Don Shaw, Horacio Pena and Pete Richert. The Elephants' pitching staff will have to overachieve if they hope to rise in the standings.

Los Angeles Angels

Very little to choose from in the last three teams in the division and it would be no surprise if they switched slots but for any of them to rise to third place would be a real accomplishment. The Angels get a slight edge due to a better offense, but their pitching is the worst in the division. John Briggs has some power and can get on base and he'll get most of the starts at first. Dave Cash doesn't hit for much power, but he won't kill you at second and his backup is aging Bill Mazerowski whose glove isn't what it used to be anymore. Dennis Menke is another banjo hitter who will hold down shortstop while third is a grab bag with Rich McKinney the best of a bad lot. Bob Barton is a nice defensive catcher and he'll be backed up by John Bocabella, who also plays first. The pitching staff is a problem with Barry Lersch and swingman Woodie Fryman the only starters you can count on day in and day out. Veterans Jim Perry and Denny McClain have seen better days. Bob Miller is an excellent reliever with Denny LeMaster and Tom Timmerman in support. Not much quality behind the pitchers already mentioned.

West Warwick Monarchs

The Monarchs offense is not up to the standards of the Angels, but the pitching staff is better. Carlos May (my old neighbor!) is the incumbent at first and even though he doesn't have the power you'd like at this position he will hit for a decent BA and knows how to get on base. Doug Griffin and Bobby Knopp will share time at second but neither can hit much. Roger Metzger at short has very little pop in his bat and might not even have a .300 OBA but his glove is acceptable. Doug Rader has some power and a decent glove at third while jack of all trades, Larry Brown, is available to fill in at second, short and third. Willie Montanez has the most power of anyone on the team and he'll hold down centerfield. Steve Henderson is a decent defensive OF and has a good batting eye. Cesar Cedeno will man the third slot and he does have some power but doesn't walk much. Jerry May, Jake Gibbs and Jack Hiatt are the three-headed monster that will share time behind the plate. The team has four good starters in Don Sutton, Dock Ellis, Bob Johnson and Ron Bryant with Pat Jarvis rounding out the rotation. Steve Mingori is a very good reliever with help from Steve Kealey, but the cupboard is bare after those two.

NanOOSE Bay Sox

As mentioned above, the Sox could rise to fourth but that's about all. Don Mincher, who has some power and a good batting eye, will get the majority of starts at first base. Ron Theobald, an extreme banjo hitter will hold down second with help from Gary Sutherland. Bobby Valentine and Rich Morales will share time at short but once again they won't light up the scoreboard very often. Paul Schaal at third is one of the best hitters on the team and knows to take a walk. Jay Johnstone and young George Foster are the two best outfielders and won't kill you, but the third slot is up in the air and will be filled by the likes of Roger Freed, Ty Cline and Roger Repoz who has a bit of power but not much else. The catcher, John Bateman, doesn't walk much but he can occasionally hit the ball out of the park and won't kill you on defense. He's backed up by Ellie Rodriguez, who also doesn't hit very well. The team has some decent starters in Dave Roberts, Bob Forsch, Dick Drago, Jim McGlothlin and Pete Broberg. Spaceman Bill Lee is a good reliever with his main help coming from Bucky Brandon, who has some control issues. Not much else in the pen.

American League West

Route 66 Hot Rods

The Route 66 crew easily won the 1970 AL West title, the AL pennant and went all the way to seven games before losing to the Seattle Totems in the World Series. This year they are loaded again and should breeze to the divisional title. The team bristles with power and should easily surpass 200 homers with as many as five players having 25 or more dingers. Harmon Killebrew brings his big HR bat to first base and also knows how to take a walk but his defense is suspect. Rod Carew at second doesn't have the power of the Killer but he can hit for a high average though his defense is also shaky. Bert Campaneris has a good glove and decent bat at short and will share time with Mickey Stanley. Off season acquisition Belting Bill Melton will patrol the hot corner and could lead the team in homers. Thurman Munson brings a great glove with a cannon arm plus a decent bat to the backstop position. In the 35-40 games Munson won't play, he'll be backed up by Jerry Stephenson, who is a major comedown. Vida Blue and Jim Palmer are a sensational L/R duo at the top of the rotation but further down you have stars such as Ron Kline, Catfish Hunter and Steve Carlton. Tug McGraw, Bob Locker and Sparky Lyle are a great bullpen, almost the equal of the Gladiators trio. The rest of the staff is more than adequate for the job.

Thud Ridge Wild Weasels

Not much hope for a pennant run, but Thud Ridge will be locked in a season long battle with the Pilots for second place. Their offense is inferior to Milwaukee but the pitching staff is better. They do have some team power, but the team BA could be the worst in the division. Deron Johnson brings a 30 plus homer bat to first and also has a decent OBA. Mike Andrews has a decent bat but poor glove at second and he'll be spelled by Tim Cullen who can't hit much but is better defensively. Cullen will also be pressed into service at short as the only alternatives are light hitting Rick Auerbach and Dick Scofield. Craig Nettles is a vacuum cleaner at third with a powerful bat. Dick Billings and Tom Egan will share time behind the plate. Joe Pepitone, Roy Foster and flyhawk Paul Blair will get most of the outfield starts but Ron Blomberg and Jim Nettles (no relation to Craig) are also available. Mike Hedlund, Fergie Jenkins, Mel Stottlemyre and Jack Billingham are a fine starting rotation while Eddie Watt and Steve Hamilton are the big guys in the 'pen. The rest of the staff is also decent.

Milwaukee Pilots

As stated above, it would be no surprise if the Pilots rose to second but falling to fourth would be a disappointment. Bob Robertson, probably the team's top power hitter will start the majority of games at first and he'll be spelled by hot shot part timer Tommy Davis. Tom Boswell has a decent, if punchless bat at second but he has defensive issues and will share time with Bob Heise, a better fielder with an even more punchless bat. Shortstop Mark Belanger will continue his stellar fielding but this year his offense is not that bad. Third base is a major problem with several players shuttling in and out. The spear carriers include potential future stars Steve Garvey and Eric Soderholm but the emphasis is on future. Three players will share time at catcher with the best being Duke Sims. Marty Pattin is the leader of the staff with Steve Arlin as a solid number two. Chuck Dobson and swingman Dean Chance will fill out most of the rest of the rotation but after that quartet it gets grim. Eddie Fisher is a good reliever and Stan Williams isn't bad, but the rest of the staff is weak.

East Kenosha Lions

The Lions could rise in the standings but just as easily fall to the cellar. The pitching staff is not bad, but the offense suffers from a very poor team OBA. Lee May is a solid power hitter at first, but his defense is weak. Time will have to be found for hot shot rookie Chris Chambliss who also plays first. Cookie Rojas, a decent hitter, will share time at second with Eddie Leon who can also play short. The incumbent SS is pint-size Freddie Patek who is an OK fielder but also one of the best base stealers in the league. Aurelio Rodriguez will play third and he has some power and is a good fielder but doesn't know how to take a walk. Johnny Edwards, a very good defensive catcher with a punchless bat will share time with Mil May, a better hitter with limited availability. Vada Pinson is a decent outfielder, but he also suffers from the curse of a poor OBA. Ken Berry is one of the better defensive outfielders in the league, but his bat is very weak. A parade of part-timers, none of whom scares anyone, will fill in the balance of the outfield starts. Pat Dobson and Joe Coleman have 20-game win potential but not with this offense. Stan Bahnsen and Dick Bosman are also available in the rotation and they are more than adequate. George Culver, Paul Lindblad and Dave Guisti are all good relievers and they have several adequate hurlers for support. If the Lions have any success in 1971, it will be due to the pitching staff.

New York Mets

The Mets breezed to the AL East in 1970 but what a difference a year makes as they may fall to the cellar in the AL West in 1971. The pitching staff is clearly the worst in the West and the offense isn't good enough to overcome the mound problems. Mike Epstein has decent power at first and knows how to take a walk, but he'll need some help from Matty Alou who can hit pretty well and also plays the outfield. Ted Sizemore is a decent hitter with a good glove and will share time at second with Don Money who can also play third. Veteran Shortstop Luis Aparicio has regressed as a hitter, fielder and base stealer and will need to share time with Lee Richard, who doesn't give you much at bat and is only an average fielder. Don Money and Bob Aspromonte will share time at third but neither does much on offense. Ed Hermann and Hal King will share time at catcher, but both might have trouble hitting their weight. Outfielder Ted Uehlander can field but his bat is punchless. Alou will get a lot of time in the garden when he isn't playing first base and Manny Mota is a solid hitter but with limited playing time. The balance of the outfield starts will be shared by several other no-name and no-talent part-timers. Jerry Koosman and Gaylord Perry lead the starting staff. George Stone is also a decent starter but there isn't much else other than rookie Bruce Kison who won't be able to start that many games. Mudcat Grant is a good reliever but veterans Lindy McDaniel and Ron Perranoski are starting to show their age.

National League East

Seattle Totems

The defending champs have a very good offense, but the pitching staff is so much better than the rest of the division that the contrast is almost laughable and as a result they should cruise to the divisional crown. Wes Parker doesn't have the gaudy hitting stats you'd like from a first baseman, but he is nonetheless a productive hotter with a great glove. Second-baseman Joe Morgan has much better power than the usual middle infielder, he can take a walk, fields well and is a very dangerous threat as a base stealer, who could ask for more? Shortstop Eddie Brinkman's weak bat can be covered by the rest of the lineup, but he makes up for it with a flashy glove. Sal Bando at third has good power and a sharp batting eye. Bando will push Dick (don't call me Ritchie) Allen to the outfield where his mediocre glove is more than covered by a good bat. Ted Simmons at catcher has good extra base, if not home run power, and can do the job with the glove. Ted will be backed up by Dave Duncan who would be the

starting catcher for most other teams. Roy White and Reggie Smith are the two other outfielders beside Allen, but time has to be found for Willie Crawford. Then we get to the pitching staff which is anchored by iron man Wilbur Wood who along with Mickey Lolich could easily start half of the team's games and have close to 50 victories between them. And that is just the start of the mound talent as they also have Phil Niekro and Mike Cueller, either of whom would be the number one starter on most other teams. That will push Diego Segui and Ray Sadecki, both fine starters, to the bullpen. Ken Sanders is a knockout closer and his main helpers, Joe Hoerner and Ted Abernathy are both sensational. This trio compares very favorably and may even exceed the three from South River as the best in the league. The staff even has a few other hurlers who could be serious contributors on other teams.

Data City Schema Busters

Data City moved from the West to the East in the off season and might be able to exceed last year's 83 wins, but it will be a tall order for them to compete for the NL East crown as Seattle is just too tough. Hammering Hank Aaron just keeps rolling along and 1971 looks to be one of his best seasons. Age will restrict him to 140 or so games but when he is in there the scoreboard will light up quite a bit plus he should have a .320 plus BA. A lack of range will push him to first base from the outfield with Dave Kingman filling in for the balance of schedule. Tito Fuentes is a solid second baseman who can hit and field but like many Hispanic players, he likes to swing the bat and is loath to wait for a walk. Enzo Hernandez has a punchless bat and so-so glove at short, but he is better than Bobby Wine who can't hit at all. Third base is a major problem with half a dozen part-timers moving in and out of the lineup. Roberto Clemente and his cannon arm will patrol right field for 130 or so games and he might vie for the batting title. Al Kaline's outfield defense has deteriorated over the years but he can still hit the ball. The rest of the outfield is sketchy with Tony Conigliaro continuing his comeback from a catastrophic beaming in 1967 but it looks like he is just about at the end of the line. Many Sanguillen is a solid catcher with Paul Casanova as his backup. Steve Blass, Claude Osteen and Ray Culp lead the pitching staff with help from Bill Singer and several swingmen. Joe Grezenda is a good reliever with Vincente Romo and Phil the Vulture Regan as helpers. Ancient Hoyt Wilhelm is still hanging on, but his best days are far in the past.

Salzburg Bishops

The holy ones will battle with Hudson Valley for third place all season and with a few breaks might even compete for second but no divisional crown in 1971. Danny Cater has probably the most punchless bat of any starting first baseman in the league and he'll be backed up by Tim McGraw who is even worse. Tommy Helms at second can't take a walk and doesn't hit the ball out of the park, but he can do the job on defense. Don Kessinger will give you his usual decent performance at short, but he is no longer a star. Jim Lefebvre will get the most starts at third and will be spelled by Tommy Harper, who can also play the outfield; both have modest power but not much else. Catcher Dick Dietz has some power and a good batting eye but is a disaster on defense. Outfielder Cito Gaston has some modest power but also the Hispanic curse of the base on balls. Bill Buckner has little power but on this team he is one of the better outfielders. Tommy Harper is probably the best of a bad lot with the balance of the outfield starts shared with several players, including PH deluxe Vic Davalillo who can also play first. Rick Wise is a solid number one starter with swingman Lew Krausse and Ross Grimsley also contributing. The balance of the rotation is very shaky. They have four good relievers in Jim Ray, Lloyd Allen, Joe Gibbon and Bill Wilson. The pen' needs to carry a heavy load if the Bishops are to succeed.

Hudson Valley Renegades

As mentioned above, the team should battle the Bishops all year for third place. They have cannons at the corners in Storming Norman Cash and Rico Petrocelli, both of which have 30 homer potential. Davey Johnson is one of the better power-hitting middle infielders in the league and can field his

position well. Dal Maxvil is an extreme example of a good field no-hit shortstop. Tim McCarver is a decent hitting catcher, but he has a very poor arm and opponents will run wild on the bases when he is in the game. Rick Reichart is a decent outfielder with some power, but the rest of the outfielders are all part-timers with the best being Mickey Rivers who will only be able to play about half the season. Ron Reed and Reggie Cleveland lead the rotation but that isn't saying much. The balance of the starts will go to Jim Lonborg and Alan Foster with a few going to Bart Johnson, unless the manager feels he is better served as a full-time reliever. Not much else in the pen with the "best" being Ed Farmer. The staff will need to overachieve if the Renegades are to have a successful season.

Winter Harbor Seals

With a few breaks, the Seals could compete with Salzburg and Hudson Valley, but the pitching staff will have to rise to the occasion. Their team power is the worst in the division, save the woeful Royals. Bob Watson, a budding star, will get most of the starts at first with Bobby Pena as his backup. Second baseman Ron (Clay Pigeon) Hunt could have as many hit by pitches as walks and as a result his OBA is very good but he has little power and a weak glove. Larry Bowa is another good field no-hit shortstop but a little better than most who share that designation. Ritchie Hebner, who has some power, but a weak glove will share third with Pena when he isn't playing first. Tom Haller is a serviceable catcher for half a season, but his backups are very weak. Carl Yastremski returns in left and even though his stats are way down from the glory years, he is still more than decent. Del Unser is a good defensive CF but he can't hit much and the only other OF capable of playing even 100 games is Billy Conigliaro who has some minor hitting ability but a below average glove. The rest are also rans. Sudden Sam McDowell, who has major control problems, plus Milt Pappas and Tommy John lead the rotation with the balance filled in by several swingmen. The bullpen is weak with Ray Corbin and Howie Reed the best of a bad lot.

Montreal Royals

It can be said without much doubt that the Royals are the worst team in all of SPBII and for them to escape the cellar would represent an earthquake of systemic proportions. Their offense is slated to be the worst in almost all categories, and they might not have a team BA much over .200 with OBA and SLG less than .300. Veteran Ron Fairly at first might be the best hitter on the team but he would be hard pressed to start for most of the teams in the league. Second base is anyone's guess with five no-names, no-hits and no-fields competing for playing time. Davey Concepcion can at least play almost every day at short but don't expect him to hit much and an extra base hit will be the cause of fan rejoicing. Paul Popovich and Coco Laboy will get most of the starts at third but don't look for much offense or defense from either. Gene Tenace, a good young catcher, will be limited in playing time and his primary backup, Chris Cannizaro, is another offensive cipher. Elliot Maddox has a great OF glove and knows how to take a walk but don't expect him to hit the ball out of the park or have a BA much over .200. Terry Holt can play 125 or so games but he won't light up the scoreboard very often. Joe Lahood walks a little and might very well lead the team in homers, but he also has the curse of a low BA. The OF spares are even worse. Although probably the worst in the division, the pitching staff is not as hopeless as the offense. Skip Lockwood is a solid number one plus Steve Renko and Ernie McAnally are not bad. The rotation below them is weak. Jack Acker is decent reliever and Al Severinsen isn't bad, but the cupboard is pretty bare after them. They do have some diamonds in the rough in Joe Niekro, Jon Matlack and Jerry Morales but none will help much this year.

National League West

Portland Beavers

Portland won the NL West in 1970 and look to repeat but they might have a rougher time than the other three predicted winners. They have very good team power, probably the best in the division. The Baby Bull Orlando Cepeda suffered an off-season injury and will be limited to less than half a season at first, but he'll be productive when he is in there. Earl Williams, who can also catch, will spell him and he has very good power. Glen Beckert is poised for a breakout season at second. Gene Michael at short can get the job done in the field but is not a strong hitter. Tony Perez will patrol the hot corner with a powerful bat and weak glove. Les Josephson and Ken Suarez will catch when Williams is playing first; Les is the better hitter and Ken the better defender. Billy Williams has a powerful bat, a good batting eye and will do respectable defensive job in LF. Barry Bonds strikes out a lot, but his power laden bat and good defense will more than make up for the K's. Felipe Alou is the third OF and although he doesn't have near the power of his two mates, he is a decent hitter, though his glove is weak. Juan Marichal, Bob Gibson and Gary Gentry are a great 1-2-3 in the rotation and they will be helped by Jim Slaton and swingman Tom Kelly. Bill Gogolowski can start but he might be better as a reliever. Denny Riddleberger is the best pure reliever and he has several able mates.

Frankfort Fortress

Frankfort has a strong pitching staff, arguably as good as the Beavers while the attack is not bad. With a few breaks they might even contend for the pennant but will also have to fight hard with the Voyageurs for second place. Stretch McCovey returns at first base with his usual big bat but will be limited in playing time and be spelled by Joe Hague who has some power but a weak BA. Sandy Alomar at second can play everyday and give you a good glove to go with an OK bat. Leo Cardenas at short has good power for a middle infielder and won't embarrass you in the field. Ken McMullen at third is a steady fielder with a decent bat, including some power. Ellie Hendricks and Jerry Moses will share time behind the plate, but both have their problems; defense on the part of Hendricks and hitting for Moses. Jim Northrup and Don Buford will man two OF slots and both are good hitters with Buford having an excellent eye for the base on balls. Angel Mangual and PH deluxe Gates Brown will get most of the balance of OF starts while the team waits for hot shot rookie Ritchie Zisk to develop. Dave McNally and Andy Messersmith are both potential 20-game winners with Bill Parson as a solid number three. Tom Murphy and Bruce Dal Canton will round out the rotation. The 'pen is four deep with Wayne Carroll, Mel Queen, Jerry Johnson and Wayne Granger.

Tippecanoe Voyageurs

The team could challenge for second but first would be a tough. They lack good team power but do have Nat Colbert at first with his 25 plus HR potential. Dick Green at second will turn a lot of double plays and is an acceptable hitter. Woody Woodward and Tim Foli will share time at short with Woody the much better hitter and both about the same on defense. Jerry Kenney has a great glove at third and a decent, if punchless bat and he'll be spelled by Davey Nelson who can hit but is not that good in the field. George Mitterwald is the number one catcher and he has some power and he'll be spelled by Andy Etchebarren who has a much better glove and is not a bad hitter. Merv Rettenmund is a solid outfielder with modest power and one of his mates will be Sonny Jackson who has very little power and is only a so-so hitter overall. Willie Davis will patrol CF and flag down almost everything plus contribute a very good bat. Fritz Peterson and Gary Nolan are the top two starters and are very good, but the balance of the rotation will be an inconsistent Gary Peters and several swingmen. Cecil Upshaw, Bobby Bolin and the non-starting swingmen will man the bullpen, but this is not a team strength.

Speedway Sparkplugs

The former Mulberry Marauders underwent an off-season name change and a switch from the AL East to the NL West. They will battle the Voyageurs and maybe even the Fortress all year in trying to move up in the standings. Frank Howard has to play somewhere as the team needs his powerful bat. His defensive weakness can be hidden a lot better at first base than the outfield but playing him there all year will force Jim Spencer to the bench. Spencer has some power and is slightly better defensive 1B but the rest of his offense is limited. Dick McAuliffe, a decent fielder with power but not much of a BA will share time at second with Tony Taylor a better hitter with no power and not as good a glove. Toby Harrah will play most of the games at short with some help from McAuliffe. Toby doesn't contribute much offensively and is only an average fielder. Ron Santo returns at third and he has his usual decent power bat and acceptable glove. Mike Lum and Mickey Stanley will man two OF positions; Lum has some power and is an excellent fielder while Stanley will have a better BA but little power and is also a good fielder. Walt No Neck Williams is available for spot play and even though he can get on base, he doesn't hit many homers. Howard will fill in when he's not at first. Jerry Grote is the number one catcher backed up by J C Martin. Jim Kaat and Kenny Holtzman are the top two starters with their best help coming from swingman Ray Lamb. Quality falls off pretty quickly as the balance of the starts will go to Jerry Reuss and Carl Moron, both of whom have serious issues. Rollie Fingers is a good reliever, but he will be pretty lonely in the bullpen as there isn't much else.

Kansas City Barons

If the Barons escape the cellar, it will be a major accomplishment, but they are no where near as hopeless as the Royals. The pitching staff is not that bad, but someone has to score runs and that will be a challenge. Bob Oliver will get most of the starts at first where he is a decent fielder with limited offensive potential. He'll be spelled by several players who will rotate in and out. Denny Doyle and Jack of all trades utilityman Hal Lanier will share time at second while prized rookie Rennie Stennet is waiting in the wings. Chris Spier can field but not hit, a familiar role for shortstops in this league. Bob Bailey will play third where he has limited power and a weak glove but a good OBA. Ed Kirkpatrick and Duffy Dyer will share time behind the plate and the best you can say about them is that they are adequate. Downtown Ollie Brown and Joe Rudi will man the two corner OF slots and both have limited power but are good defenders. Marty Keough, Jim Fairey and Ivan Murrell will share the third slot and fill in for Brown and Rudi. Rudi will probably get some starts at first. Clay Kirby, Paul Splittorff, Bill Stoneman, Bill Hands and Nolan Ryan will be the starting rotation although Ryan has major control problems. Tom Burgmeier, Frank Linzy and Jim York represent a very good bullpen, but how many leads will they have to protect?