

PRE-SEASON PROGNOSIS 1957

AMERICAN LEAGUE

American League

South River Muck Dogs

The defending World Series champs are favored again in 1957, but they should get stiff opposition from the Walleye and possibly the Aces. The team has a nice blend of offense and pitching. First sacker Big Klu Ted Kluzewski had a banner year in 1956, but off-season injuries will seriously impair him this year. His place will be filled by Frank Torre who has a nice glove but powerless bat and he'll be assisted by Harry Suitcase Simpson who also plays the outfield. Gil McDougal at second is a nice all-around player with a good glove and a bat with some modest power. Dick Groat at short has a nice .300 plus bat with doubles if not homer run power. For lack of any realistic alternative, Daryl Spencer will play third where he has a below average glove and weak bat. Cal Neeman is the main man behind the plate; his glove is OK, but his bat is weak and he seems to be allergic to the base on balls. He'll get help from Walker Cooper and Ed Fitzgerald. The outfield star is center fielder Sey Hey Willie Mays who combines a great bat with excellent power, good speed and a spectacular glove. Left field is the domain of Charlie Maxwell who doesn't hit LHP very well, but he batters righties and has very good glove. Carl Furillo will get the most playing time in right where his bat is solid, and he has a great throwing arm, but his range is limited on defense. Suitcase Simpson will also get a decent amount of outfield playing time. Teenager Curt Flood has a lot of potential, but he is still at least a year away. Tom Sturdivant has some control issues but is probably the best overall starter. He'll get a lot of help from Don Newcombe, Skinny Brown, Robin Roberts and Jack Harshman. The bullpen features Bob Miller, Bud Byerly and Clem Labine.

St. Clair Walleye

This team won 98 games last year which would have produced a runaway win in the NL, but they fell two short in the AL. This year should be another dog fight. First base will be a tag team with four players moving in and out of the lineup with none of them particularly effective. Gene Baker is a decent journeyman at second and will start 125 or so games. Jim Brideswer will fill in but he'll also be needed at short. That position is a real problem as Willie Miranda, and his hopeless bat will be needed for 100 games or so. Don Zimmer and Ted Kazinski have better bats but both have poor gloves and can't play that much anyway. They do have a solid star at third in Eddie Mathews who has a near .300 bat with 30-homer power. Don Zimmer doesn't hit much but he is a useful infield reserve. Yogi Berra is an excellent catcher who can hit homers and has a great glove and throwing arm. Veteran Ted Williams might flirt with a .400 average and excellent power, but he has a weak glove in left. Hammering Hank Aaron in right isn't far behind and will probably hit a lot more homers and even have a shot at the league lead plus he has a very good glove. Hank Bauer has some nice power and will get the most starts in left field. Johnny Groth, Bob Bowman and Elmer Valo don't have much power but can fill in reasonably well in the outfield. Warren Spahn and Bob Buhl are a solid L/R combo at the top of the pitching staff. Lew Burdette, swingman Bob Purkey and Early Wynn will round out the rotation. Marv Grissom and Jack Urban led a solid bullpen. The pitching staff will be the key to the St. Clair pennant hopes.

Goshen Aces

With a few breaks the Aces could be right up there in the 1957 pennant race. Stan the Man Musial will be a full time first baseman in 1957, and he is poised for another standout season as he could hit .350 with 30 homers and a very good glove. Dee Fondy, a good spray hitter with a little power is a nice backup. Jim Gilliam's numbers at second will be down from 1956 but he is still a good player to have around. Chico Carresquel and Billy Klaus will share time at shortstop; neither have much power but Billy is a better defender. Brooks Robinson hasn't yet arrived at third, but his future is unlimited. Ray Jabloski and Ossie Virgil will keep the position warm this year. Ed Bailey, who has good power and a nice throwing arm will share time at catcher with Jim Katt. Minnie Minoso has a .300 bat with a good sense of the strike zone and decent power in left. Larry Doby is a good centerfielder but will be limited to about 120 games. In right Jim Lemon is solid with decent power but a below average glove. Del Ennis will also get a lot of outfield playing time. Jack Sanford is the clear leader of the pitching staff with 20-win potential. Sam Jones, Ray Moore and several solid swingmen will round out the rotation. Cal McLish, Ray Narleski and Jim Brosnan are the leaders of the 'pen. The staff has a lot of depth.

Brooklyn Royal Giants

Big falloff after the top three. A leaky pitching staff will hold back the Giants all year long. Second year man Ed Bouchee looks to have a fine season at first base, and he'll share time with Dale Long who is just as good with decent power and an acceptable glove. Granny Hamner is the best they have at second base, but he isn't much on offense or defense. Ernie Banks returns as a solid power hitting shortstop and his glove won't kill you. Larry Raines is a decent fielder at third but doesn't hit much and will be limited to about 100 games. His backups are pitiful as Harmon Killebrew is still a few a few years away. Pete Daley, Red Wilson and Joe Lonnett are a sorry trio who will man the catcher position. The club has four solid outfielders in Gene Woodling, Bob Skinner, Ritchie Ashburn and Al Kaline. Harry Anderson is also available, and he could start for a lot of other teams. On the mound, Dick Donovan and Paul Foytack are the leaders of the staff with Duke Maas, Ron Kline, Ralph Terry and with swing man Bob Turley who has control issues rounding out the rotation. They don't have a number one reliever, and the starters will need to pull double duty. This lack of the ability to shut down the opposition in late innings could be a year-long problem.

Hoosier Thunderbolts

The last three teams in the AL are closely bunched and could easily switch positions and maybe even rise to fourth with a lot of luck but contending for the pennant seems out of reach. Greg Harris and Ray Boone will share time at first base although Boone will also get some time at third. Harris is a nice defender but has a punchless bat. Boone has modest power and on base, plus he crushes LHP, but his glove is weak. Fiery Billy Marin is the main man at second base where he has some power and a decent glove but abhors the base on balls. He'll need help from Ron Sanford, a good defender, and Felix Mantilla who will also fill in at short. Pee Wee Reese is on the downside of a great career, but he will be needed to fill in at short along with Mantilla and Andre Rodgers. Third base is a grab bag with several players moving in and out of the lineup. This is not a good infield. At catcher Gus Triandos has nice power and a good glove; his backups are nothing to write home about. Jimmy (I'm not crazy and have a paper to prove it) Piersall holds down center field. He has a decent bat with good power and a very solid glove. Bib Nieman has some power and will get the majority of starts in right field. Hank Sauer has good power but a terrible glove and will start most of the games in left. Hurricane Bob Hazle will be sensational in limited outfield duty. Enos Country Slaughter and Bob Thurman are also available for garden play. Brooks Lawrence, Sal Maglie and Frank Lary along with swingmen Herm Weinheimer, Dave Hillman and Sandy Koufax will round out the rotation. Right now Koufax is a little wild, but when he gets control of his fastball, watch out. Don McMahon and Virgil Trucks are both solid relievers.

East Kenosha Larks

As stated above the Larks could easily contend for fifth or even fourth place, but the team has some major flaws. Those flaws do not include first baseman and sometime outfielder Roy Sievers who has 40-homer power to go with a .300 bat and good on base. Vic Power who has a great glove and some power but a complete aversion to taking a walk will get a lot of time at first. Pepper Pot Nellie Fox is a stalwart at second base where he sprays the ball all over the field though any won't leave the park and he rarely strikes out but has a great glove. Luis Aparicio who also has a good glove will play shortstop and also steal some bases, but time will have to be found for 2B-SS Billy Gardner who has a good glove at both positions. Harvey Kuenn doesn't have much power, but he can spray the ball around pretty well and will hold down third base. Frank House is the primary catcher, and he has a decent bat to go with a good glove. His backups are average at best. As stated above, Sievers will get some time in the outfield. Wes Covington will get the most starts in left field especially against RHP as he is weak against lefties. He has decent power but a weak glove. Rising star Roberto Clements has a cannon arm in right but his bat is still evolving. The Bills (Viridon and Tuttle) will share time in centerfield. Neither has much power but are decent on defense. The pitching staff isn't bad with Vern Law, Billy Pierce, Curt Simmons and Lindy McDaniel the primary starters along with swing man Gene Conley. Dick Farrell and Turk Lown are the leaders of a decent bullpen. The club will need maximum production from this staff if they hope to rise in the standings.

Maumee River Carp

The Carp could rise in the standings but may be held back by a weak offense. They will almost certainly finish dead last in team homers. At first Bob Speake has some power and a decent glove but will struggle to hit .240. His backups are even worse. Bobby Morgan and Herb Plews will share time at second base. Both are OK fielders, but Plews is a far better hitter. Hot shot rookie shortstop Tony Kubek has a fancy glove and good, if powerless bat. George Kell has a decent bat and glove and will get about 100 starts at third base. Billy Consolo and Billy Goodman are nice infield reserves. Hank Foiles and Sammy White will share time behind the plate; Foiles is much better hitter but White has a better glove. Jackie Jensen can play everyday and has good power in left field. Jim Busby is a nice ball hawk in center but doesn't hit much. The rest of the outfield is catch and catch can and several nonentities will shift in and out. Jim Bunning is a solid number one starter and could win 20 games on a better team. After him you have Tom Brewer, Bob Rush and an aging Bob Lemon plus several swingmen, none very impressive. Roy Face and Harry Byrd lead the bullpen brigade.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Newfoundland Grays

The defending NL champs could repeat but they will get a lot of flak from the Arsenal, and the pennant race could go right down to the wire. Gil Hodges is solid at first base; he can play every day, hit .300 with power and has a great glove. Can't ask for much more but it will be hard to keep George Crowe and his 30-potential homer bat on the bench. Bill Mazerowski is a wizard with the glove at second base, and his bat is not bad. Joe DeMastrie and George Strickland will share time at shortstop; neither can hit much but George has a better glove. The walking man, Eddie Yost will get the most starts at third, but Danny O'Connell will get some playing time as he has a better glove. Hal Smith and Lou Berberet will share time behind the plate; Smith is a much better hitter and fielder. Highly touted Earl Battey is still a couple of years away. In center field Gus Bell has a near .300 bat and modest power to go with an average glove. Al Smith doesn't have a great glove, but he has some power and can get on base. Art

Schult, and Sandy Amoros, both bango hitters and several spear carriers will fill out the outfield starts. Connie Johnson is the ace of the staff, and his main helpers will be Mike Garcia and Joe Nuxhall plus several swingmen. George Zuvernik and Paul Lapalme plus the swingmen form a solid bullpen.

Rock Island Arsenal

The Arsenal have a top-notch attack but the pitching staff is leaky. They probably can't bludgeon their way to the pennant, so the staff need to step up to the plate. Joe Cunningham with some help from defensive whiz Whitey Lockman will hold down first base. Joe doesn't have much power, but he can slap the ball around pretty well and knows how to take a walk. Frank Bolling at second can play every day and he has a nice bat to go with a great glove. At short Roy McMillan won't hit many homers but he can spread the ball around pretty well and knows the strike zone. Gene Freese is a solid performer at third base without much power, and he'll get help from Jerry Coleman. Jim Finigan is a nice infield reserve. Stan Lopata who has a weak bat, but strong glove will share catching duties with Smokey Burgess who is pitiful on defense but has a good bat with some power. Center fielder Mickey Mantle is a walking machine who can also hit .350 with power and handle his glove. Al Pilarcik and Dave Philley will share time in right; they are both decent slap hitters who can field adequately. Bob Cerv and Lockman, when he isn't playing first will split time in left. Cerv is a better hitter but will be limited in his playing time. Promising rookie Jim Landis is waiting in the wings. The manager will have to scramble to cover the rotation as the closest thing they have to a full-time starter is Billy Hoeft. Swing men such as Whitey Ford, Art Ditmar, Don Larsen and Don Kaiser will need to pull double duty. The bullpen is thin especially since the swingmen will often be in the rotation. Pitching will be the Rock Island Achilles Heel all season long.

Chicago Stammers

With a lot of luck, the Stammers could compete for the pennant, but the odds are better that they will fall a notch or two. If the manager chooses to play Frank Robinson at first base, that position is solid as he has a great bat with good power and a nice glove. However, Frank may be more needed in the outfield in which case Joe Collins and Tito Francona will share time at first and both are well below par. Second base could be a problem as Milt Graf and Mike Bolling are both lousy hitters although Bolling can field. The only other player capable of playing second is Charley Neal but he will be needed at shortstop. Neal is a solid hitter but will need some help as he cannot play every day. Don Hoak is a good everyday third baseman with a nice glove, power and knows how to get on base. Wally Moon is a solid hitter in left who has OK power and a decent glove. Woodie Held has a decent glove and some power in center but might not hit .250. Rookie Roger Maris is a solid fielder with some power, but his BA will be weak. Decisions will have to be made as to whether Robinson plays first or the outfield based on who is available for the other position. Sherm Lollar and Jim Rice will share time behind the plate; Lollar is much better but will be limited to about 100 games. The team has more pitchers on the roster than everyday players and several such as Bobby Shantz, Johnny Podres and Larry Jackson are solid with Don Mossi and Alex Kellner not far behind. They don't have a full-time bullpen ace so the starters will need to pull double duty. Highly regarded teenager Mit Pappas is still a few years away.

Schaumburg Hawks

It's possible the Hawks could rise to third or even fall to sixth as the club has a few good players but a lot of holes. In past seasons, first sacker Mickey Vernon was one of the stalwarts of the team, but he looks to have a poor season in 1957 with only a good glove and ability to draw walks in his favor. His backups are part timers Norm Zauchin and Nippy Jones. Catcher Elston Howard may need to put in some time at first. Old reliable Red Schoendienst is back at second where can play every day, hit over .300 with decent power and has a solid glove. Rookie Eddie Kasko is the shortstop, and he is a decent singles hitter with

an average glove. Puddin Head Jones looks to have an off season as his BA and power have declined badly. Alex Grammas has a nice bat but can't play much and will mostly be used as a pinch hitter. Billy Goodman's main value is as a fill in at short and third as his bat is horrible. Joe Ginsberg and Howard will handle most of the catching duties. Neither will contribute much with the bat. Highly rated rookie John Roseboro will need to start some games behind the plate, but he is still a year or so away. Duke Snider in center has 40-homer power and can get on base; his glove is decent. Gino Cimoli is a solid hitter in right with some power and a good glove. Gus Zernial will play left where he can hit a few homers but not do much else with the bat. Gene Stephens is the primary outfield reserve and his bat is OK, but his glove is not. Rookie Lenny Green has some potential but that is a few years down the road. The Schaumburg pitching staff is not bad with the leaders being Don Drysdale, Moe Drapowsky and Ruben Gomez. Swingmen Billy Loes and Tom Gorman will also contribute. Ed Roebuck, Dixie Howell and Seth Morehead are the guts of a decent bullpen.

DeVilbiss Tigers

The last three teams in the NL are tightly bunched and could easily switch places or even rise to fourth. Moose Skowron is the main man at first base. He can hit for average with power and has a good glove. His backup is Irv Norem who doesn't do much of anything well. Rookie Jim Getile is still a few years away. The two Bobbies (Richardson and Avila) will share time at second base; neither has any power but Richardson is a better fielder although he is pathologically averse to taking any walks. Al Dark is a nice slap hitting shortstop with a great glove. Frank Malzone can pay every day at third where he has a near .300 BA, decent power and a great glove. Hal Smith will catch about 100 games but has no power and an average glove. Jim Hegan is the best of several lousy backups. Hector (No Hands) Lopez is a much better third baseman than outfielder, but he won't displace Malzone and takes his good bat and lousy glove to the outfield. Several low power mediocrities such as Bubba Phillips, Jim Rivera, Chuck Tanner and Irv Noren will also move in and out of the outfield lineup. Frank Sullivan, Jim Wilson and Johnny Antonelli are the leaders of the rotation, and they'll get help from Harvey Haddix and Camilio Pascual. Ken Lehman and swingman Bill Wright are about the only real contributors in the bullpen.

Indianapolis Clowns

The Clowns won 86 games last year and finished only one game behind the pennant winning Blues but don't look for those kinds of results in 1957. Bob Boyd at first has a nice bat but with little power and his defense is decent. At second Johnny Temple also doesn't hit many homers but he can spray the ball around and knows how to take a walk. However, his defense is below par, and he'll need Casey Wise to fill in as a defensive replacement. Johnny Logan at short has a decent bat with some power and a good glove; he'll be backed up by Eddie Bressoud. Lou Skizas will get the most starts at third where he has decent power and an adequate glove; Andy Carey is a nice backup. Sammy Esposito doesn't hit much but he is a useful infield spare. Del Crandall and Hobie Landrith will share time at catcher. Both are decent receivers, but Crandall has some power while Landrith does not. Frank Thomaas has the best power on the team and will play every day in left field. Walt Moryn has some power and a decent BA; he'll play right field. Bobby Usher and Billy Bruton will alternate in center; neither has much power and are just average in the field. Bob Friend is by far the leader of the rotation. However, it gets a little shaky after him with Ray Crone and Jeff Hethcoat plus swing men Ed Keegan and Hal Jeffcoat plus part timer Von McDaniel. Top man in the 'pen is Bob Grim and he has some decent support. Teenager Claude Osteen is still a few years away.

Kansas City Blues

How the mighty have fallen! The defending NL champs could slide all the way to the cellar in 1957. Vic Wertz and Joe Adcock will platoon at first base. Both have nice power and can pummel their opposite side pitchers; lefties for Adcock and righties for Wertz. Don Blasingame is a fixture at second base; he can spray the ball around pretty well and has a great glove. At shortstop, Chico Fernandez has a much better bat than Rocky Bridges but Rocky is a far better fielder. Ken Boyer at third has nice power and a good glove but doesn't walk much. Pete Runnels has been a solid performer in past seasons, but he will be relegated to an infield reserve in 1957. Roy Campanella has a good glove and arm behind the plate, but his bat has suffered recently. His backup is Clint Courtney who is OK but nothing special. The team has some power in the outfield with Rocky Colavito, Wally Post and Rip Repulski, but none of them can play much in centerfield which means Dick Williams and his punchless bat will get a lot of playing time there. Don Mueller is available for spot play in the garden. The pitching staff doesn't have any standouts, but the rotation of Curt Barclay, Johnny Kucks, Dick Drott and Willard Nixon aren't bad. The bullpen has Gerry Staley and Jim Merrit plus part timer Billy Muffet. If the Blues are to rise from the cellar, the pitching staff will be the major reason.