

1963 PRESEASON PROGNOSIS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Beard Black Cats

The 'Cats and the Saints are very close; both have a good offense and superior pitching so you pretty much have to flip a coin to pick the top dog and the coin will fall in favor of the Black Cats. Norm Siebern is a solid first baseman with a good sense of the strike zone and nice power. Ron Hunt is a workman-like second sacker who is a decent fielder with modest power. Dick Groat has a .320 bat and solid glove at short. Third baseman Max Alvis has nice power but a leaky glove. Catcher Johnny Edwards has an excellent glove and a modest bat. The best all around outfielder on the team is Floyd Robinson who has a near .300 bat with a decent OBA, modest power and an average glove. Center fielder Bill Virdon has a very good glove but just an average bat. Don Lock has the best power on the team and will play left. Wes Covington has a putrid glove, but his bat is good enough so that he will get some decent playing time in the garden. The starting staff is solid with a big five of Bob Friend, Al Simmons, Larry Jackson, Ray Culp and Jack Kralick. Johnny Klippstein, Roy Face and Harvey Haddix are the guts of a good bullpen, and the team has several other hurlers who will contribute.

Mound City Saints

Look for the Holy Ones to battle the Black Cats all season as both team's stats are very close. At first Orlando Cepeda has a powerful bat but he is a little wary of the base on balls and his fielding is shaky. At second, Julian Javier can play every day; he slaps the ball around pretty well and is acceptable in the field but is averse to taking a walk. Maury Wills at short is a .300 hitter and solid leadoff man who can steal a base and field his position very well. At third Junior Gilliam is another solid performer. Don Zimmer is a useful infield spare. John Bateman is a below average catcher and his main replacement Ken Retzer isn't much better. The Saints' outfield is top of the line. Center fielder Jimmy Hall has 30-homer potential and is a fine flycatcher. Right field is the domain of Rocky Colavito who has nice power, knows how to take a walk and has a good glove. Carl Yastrzemski has a .320 bat, great on base and can hit homers and doubles with a good glove. Their starting corps is right up there with the Black Cats and features Jim Bouton, Steve Barber, Jim O'Toole, Ernie Broglio and Milt Pappas. Bill Daily is a top notch closer and Jack Lamabe isn't far behind. Swing man Bobby Bolin is another solid performer.

Newark Bears

The Bears upset the heavily favored Mets and made it to the World Series last year but were beaten by the Lightning. This year the Bears seem solidly in third place. Their attack is top of the line, but a leaky pitching staff may hold them back. Boog Powell has nice power at first and he will be spelled by veteran Joe Adcock and defensive whiz Tim Lincecum. Bernie Allen is a below average second baseman with both the bat and glove; he'll share time with Woodie Held who has some power and will also get time at shortstop and the outfield. Eddie Brinkman can field a little, but his bat is not too good and as stated will share time at short with Held. Pete Ward has a nice bat with good

power at third but is a disaster in the field. Defensive whiz Daryl Spencer will fill in as needed. Several players will shuttle in and out at catcher with Buck Rodgers getting the most time; he has a decent glove but punchless bat. Merritt Ranew has a very good bat but a weak glove and will be limited to only 80 games or so. The two mainstays of the Bear's attack are still outfielders Hank Aaron and Willie Mays. Both are sensational hitters in all aspects of the game and Willie is a great defender. Any success the Bears have in 1963 will be on the shoulders of these two. The third outfield slot is a little shaky as several players will shuttle in and out and Held will get some playing time. Robin Roberts and Hank Aguirre are the leaders of the pitching staff with Bill Monbuquette, Ray Sadecki and Skinny Brown filling out the rotation. Bobby Shantz is a nice closer in the bullpen but there isn't much behind him.

Frankfort Frigates

Frankfort will need to overachieve to move up in the standings but seem a safe bet for fourth. Joe Pepitone at first has good power and a nice glove but a poor OBA. Frank Bolling is a middle of the road second baseman who won't kill you but won't win many games with his bat. Andre Rodgers has a very poor glove at short and his only offensive plus is a good batting eye. Bob Savarine will fill in as needed. Frank Malzone is a fixture at third; he has a decent glove and nice power. Johnny Goryl and Jake Wood are decent infield spares. Elston Howard has a cannon arm with a very good bat and will be a fixture behind the plate. The outfield doesn't have the kind of offensive firepower you would like from the garden with Billy Bruton, Gary Gieger and Wally Moon the best of the lot. Several no names and no talents will fill in as needed and Pepitone may even get some outfield work. Sensational veteran lefty Warren Spahn is far and away the leader of the staff. Ken McBride, Jim Bunning, Bob Purkey and swingman Pedro Ramos will round out the rotation. Ron Perronoski is one of the best relievers in the league and he'll get great help from Don Elston. If the Frigates advance in the standings the pitching staff will be a big part of that success.

New York Mets

The Mets won 109 games last year and the AL crown but were upset by the Bears in the second round of the playoffs. However, they look to be middle of the road in 1963. Ron Fairly, who also plays the outfield, will share time at first with Fred Whitfield who has nice power from the left side of the plate. Ken Hubbs at second has a decent glove but punchless bat. Zorro Versalles at short has a nice bat and good glove. Ken Boyer at third has a powerful bat and decent glove. Tom McCarver is a nice hitting catcher and will share time with J C Martin and Bob Tillman. Leon Daddy Wags Wagner has the best power on the team and will play left field where his glove is adequate. Frank Robinson in right still has decent power and a great batting eye but his stats should be far below his great 1962 season. Willie Davis is a great fielder in center but doesn't have much of a bat. Bob Skinner and Danny Tartabull are also available for spot play. The Mets pitching staff is not bad and led by Whitey Ford, Ken Johnson and Don Cardwell with Johnny Podres, Lew Burdette and Orlando Pena filling in as needed. Ron Kline and Barney Shultz are the top relievers.

Massillon Tigers

Massillon made it to the wild card round in 1962 but were swept by the Bears. Slick fielding Vic Power will share time at first with rookie Tom McCraw. Vic has modest power but doesn't know the strike zone. Don Blasingame will share time at second with Nate Oliver and Chuck Cottier, who also plays short. None of them can hit much but Oliver is the best fielder. Slick fielding Bobby Wine who has a punchless bat will get the most starts at short with Cottier filling in as needed. Clete Boyer is one of the best fielding third baseman in the league and he has a decent bat. Tom Haller and Doc Edward will share time behind the plate; Haller has some modest power. Al Kaline is the top hitter on the team, and he has all the tools. Good power, a .300 bat and nice on base; he will anchor right field. Pint size Albie Pearson will play center where he is an ideal lead off man. Lee Maye who has a good glove and modest power will get the most starts in left but time has to be found for Tommy Harper who is a promising second year player. Iron man Jack Sanford is the leader of the staff with Bob Buhl not far behind, but the rest of the starters are shaky. Stu Miller and Jack Baldschun are top notch relievers, and they have some support from the rest of the staff.

Joliet Jakes

The Jakes rolled the dice in 1961 and assembled a powerful team but it wasn't enough to get them in the playoffs. Since that time the team has deteriorated. and they look stuck in seventh place. Moving up will be a real accomplishment but the Grays are pretty bad so it's unlikely they will sink to the cellar. Last year's starter at first, Moose Skowron has seriously declined and will be sharing time with Bo Bo Osborne. Neither will hit much more than .200; Osborne does have modest power. Bobby Richardson returns at second; he is a decent defender, but his bat is punchless and he doesn't know how to take a walk. Dick Tracewski and Eddie Kasko will share time at short. Dick can handle the glove but neither can hit much. Third baseman Ed Charles has modest power and an acceptable glove. Phil Linz and Mike De La Hoz are decent infield reserves. Yogi Berra is starting to feel the effects of age and his skills have deteriorated. He'll share time behind the plate with Johnny Romano and Earl Averill. None of that trio will light up many scoreboards. The M & M boys (Maris and Mantle) are back but neither will play even 100 games but they both can still hit when they are in the lineup. A cast of no name, no talents will fill in the blanks in the garden, the "best" of which is probably Jim Landis. Carl Willey and part timer John Buzhardt are probably the best starting pitchers with Joel Horlen and Don Schwall, who has control issues along with Dick Donovan filling in. Wes Stock is the closest thing to a decent reliever, but the rest of the staff is grim.

Fairfax Grays

The Grays are right up there with the NL Rockets as the worst offense in the league and the pitching staff isn't much better. They won only 69 game in 1962 and might not even reach that level in 1963. Gordy Coleman and veteran Roy Sievers will platoon at first base. Coleman is virtually an automatic out against LHP's. Both men have decent power. Hot shot rookie Pete Rose will play second base every day and spray the ball around the infield, but his defense is weak. Ron Hansen has a great glove at short and modest power. He knows the strike zone but will struggle to hit .220. Bob Aspromonte will get the most starts at third base but that is only because he can play more games than any of his

teammates. He is a mediocre fielder with almost no hitting ability. The best alternative is Johnny Temple who has almost no power whatsoever. Gus Triandos and Jose Azcue will share time behind the plate; both have modest power, but Joe is a better overall hitter and fielder. Harvey Kuenn, Frank Thomas and Jackie Brandt are the best three outfielders; Harvey is a decent banjo hitter while the other two have modest power. Willie Kirkland can hit the ball out of the park on occasion and knows how to draw a walk, but his batting average will not be strong. Don Nottebart is the closest thing the team has to an ace, and he is surrounded by a gaggle of swingmen, the best of whom is John Tsitouris. Second year man Gaylord Perry and Galen Cisco will man the bullpen along with the non-starting swingmen.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Raleigh Tarheels

The 'Heels have the best pitching in SPB60 and a very good offense. It might be enough to dethrone the Lightning, but the pennant race should be close. Bill White is a solid first baseman with a .300 bat and good power. Dennis Menke can field and hit just enough to not be an embarrassment at second base. Jim Fregosi at short can play everyday and has nice power with the bat. Ron Santo is a solid third baseman who can hit for average and power plus he fields his position very well. Clay Dalrymple has a great glove and nice bat behind the plate and his backup Jim Pagliaroni is decent. Curt Flood is the centerfielder; he can hit .300 with nice double and triple power plus his glove is superb. Johnny Callison in left has a good glove and excellent power plus a near .300 bat. Bob Allison will play right field where he has a good batting eye, 35-homer power plus a cannon arm. And we haven't talked about Jim King who could hit 25 homers if given enough playing time, but his defense is weak. This is a pitching staff for the ages with Sandy Koufax, Gary Peters, Juan Marichal and Jim Maloney all capable of winning 20 or more games. The bullpen is equally sensational with Al McBean, Jim Duffalo, Ted Abernathy and John Wyatt. The Lightning have a better attack than Raleigh, but it will be tough to get past this pitching staff.

Louisiana Lightning

The defending World Series champs are loaded again this year but won't have the cakewalk they had in 1962 and will battle the Tarheels all season long. Stormin Norman Cash returns at first base. He promises that he has retired his "corked bat" from 1961 but is still a formidable hitter with good power, great on base and a fine glove. Bill Mazerowski mans second base with a superlative glove and a bat that's just a hair above average. Leo Cardenas at short is the other half of a great double play combination but his bat is weak. Off season acquisition Rick Rollins is solid at third with a .300 bat and good power; his glove is adequate. Earl Battey is one of the best catchers in the league with a nice glove and 25 homer power. Roberto Clemente in right and Vada Pinson in center are both five tool players who can do it all. Billy Williams in left is another solid hitter with good power and a great glove. Teenage phenom Rusty Staub is waiting in the wings. Big Don Drysdale is the clear leader of the pitching staff, but he'll get a lot of support from Bob Gibson, Earl Wilson and swingmen Lee Stange and Dennis Bennett.

The bullpen features Hal Woodeshick, Hoyt Wilhelm, Hal Reniff and Lindy McDaniel. Future stars Bob Veale and Wilbur Wood are also on the roster. The staff isn't quite as good as the Tarheels, but it is probably better than any other in SPB60.

Gem City Bombers

The Bombers might be able to contend in the American League, but they are stuck behind the two powerhouses above in the NL. Falling to fourth place would be an upset and the attack could easily generate 250 team homers. Stretch McCovey could flirt with 50 homers and is a natural first baseman, but the presence of Dick (Doctor Strange) Stuart and his 40-homer bat will move McCovey to the outfield. Billy Moran can play everyday at second and will give you a decent bat and glove. Tony Kubek and Johnny Logan will share time at short. Tony is a better hitter and fielder but neither has much power. Bob Bailey at third can play everyday with modest power and on base but won't have much of a batting average; his defense is adequate. Marv Breeding is a solid infield spare. The catcher is Joe Torre who has a near .300 BA and decent power. The outfield is loaded with power given Harmon Killebrew, Frank Howard and McCovey but the team lacks a natural centerfielder and the defensive ability of all the outfielders is below par. Aging veterans Stan the Man Musial and Duke Snider are also available for spot play. Dean Chance, Ralph Terry, Dick Stigman and Claude Osteen form a solid starting corps with swingman Bob Shaw filling in as needed. Art Fowler, Julio Navarro and Tommie Sisk lead a fine bullpen.

New Bedford Ahab's

Last year's edition won 95 games and made the playoffs as a wild card, but this year's team looks locked into fourth place but could surprise with a few breaks. Don Demeter is the first baseman; he has nice power and also plays third and the outfield but doesn't walk much. Pete Runnels will share time at second with Chuck Hiller. Pete is the better hitter and Chuck the better defender but neither have much power. The shortstop Eddie Bressoud has nice power for a middle infielder but his glove is weak. Brooks Robinson is still a stellar fielder at third, but his batting performance appears to be much weaker this year. John Roseboro is a good receiver behind the plate, but his bat is weak. Outfielders Tommy Davis, Felipe Alou and Chuck Hinton are all solid both offensively and defensively with Davis by far the best of the three. Camilio Pascual has 20-win potential and Ray Herbert isn't far behind. Swingmen Bob Miller and Diego Segui will get most of the remaining starts with some mediocre hurlers filling out the rotation. Dick the Monster Radatz leads a great bullpen which also includes Gary Roggenburk, Gary Bell and Dick Hall.

Asbury Argonauts

Asbury will have a tough time moving up in the standings and might have problems holding off the Colt 45's to hang onto fifth place. Ernie Banks is slowing down from his great seasons in the past but still has decent power at first. He'll share time with Bill Freehan, who also catches. Dick McAuliffe at second can play everyday and is a fine hitter with modest power, but his glove is weak. Wayne Causey at short has a good glove and decent bat. It looks like the Argonauts will need a trade to shore up their infield depth. Don Hoak has an adequate glove at third but doesn't hit much; his backup is Gene

Freese who has a weak glove and little power. Smokey Burgess who has a good bat and poor glove will share time at catcher with Dick Bertell who is the exact opposite, a great glove and weak bat. Tony Gonzales can play everyday in right field and but will be pressed into playing center (very poorly); he has a very good bat with nice doubles, if not home run power. George Altman in left can smack the ball around pretty well, but it will rarely leave the ballpark. Al Smith is about the same as Altman but his defense is weaker. Jim Hickman who also plays third is the closest thing the team has to a center fielder and even he isn't that good but does have some home run power. Lefty Dick Ellsworth is a sensational pitcher with 20-win potential, assuming he gets enough run support, but the rest of the rotation is shaky. Swingmen Jim Perry, Phil Regan and Tony Cloninger aren't bad but will be limited in how many starts they can make. Highly touted rookie Mickey Lolich will also contribute. Tom Sturdivant and Ed Bauta form the guts of a very inadequate bullpen.

Houston Colt 45's

The '45's could rise to fifth, but they would have to suffer a total collapse to sink to seventh. At first Donn Clendenon has a decent bat with some power but he doesn't know the strike zone and is a below average fielder. Nellie Fox returns at second but his bat and glove seem to have regressed, and he is allergic to the base on balls. Al Weis will back him up; he also plays shortstop. Larry Brown, who has a strictly punch and judy bat is probably the best of a bad lot at shortstop, but he will be limited to less than half a season. His backups, Bob Lillis and Ruben Amaro are almost automatic outs when they step to the plate. Eddie Mathews returns at third and is one of the mainstays of the team. He has a great batting eye, 25-homer power and a sensational glove. Dick Phillips is a nice infield spare. Gene Oliver has some batting ability with modest power but a terrible glove at catcher. Choo Choo Coleman has some defensive ability but can't hit his way out of a paper bag. The outfield will be a group of players with minimal offensive ability and little power; they include Lou Brock, Al Spangler, Vic Davalillo and Russ Snyder. The stars of the future, Tony Oliva and Jimmy Wynn aren't there yet. The best pitchers from a statistical point of view; Juan Pizarro, Al Downing, Dick Farrell and Moe Drapowsky will be limited in the number of starts they can make. Roger Craig and Mudcat Grant will also be in the rotation, but they aren't as good as the four mentioned above. Jack Spring, Larry Bearnarth. and goggle-eyed Ryne Durn form a decent bullpen.

Boulder Run Bullies

The only drama for the Bullies in 1963 will be a year long battle to stay out of last place and attempt to improve on last year's abysmal 56 wins. Second year man Willie Stargell has a lot of potential but most of that is in the future; in 1963 he will share first base with Don Mincher who has a terrible glove but nice home run power. The second baseman of the future is rookie teenager Joe Morgan, but he isn't ready yet and in 1963 the job will go to Dick Schofield who has an average bat and below average glove; he'll be assisted by Chuck Schilling who has a lousy bat and glove. Jose Pagan has a punchless bat and below average glove but he'll get the majority of starts at short with Schofield filling in occasionally. Felix Torres can hit doubles if not home runs and will patrol third where his glove is decent. Bob Johnson is a very nice infield spare and will get some starts at second, short and third but his glove is bad in all three positions. Ed Bailey has nice

power for a catcher and his defense is not bad; his backup is Charlie Lau who has a nice if punchless bat but a lousy glove. Mike Hershberger (a Massillon Ohio native!) can slap the ball around pretty well and is a decent centerfielder. Hector Lopez has some power and will get time in the corner outfield. Dave Nicholson and Lou Clinton both of whom have 20-homer power are also available along with Tito Francona whose stats will slip from 1962. Highly touted rookie Jose Cardenal is still a work in progress. Former teenage phenom Joe Nuxhall is the clear leader of the staff. Cal McLish, Stan Williams, Dave Morehead and Bob Turley round out the starting staff; Morehead and Turley have serious control issues. Steve Hamilton and Don (Perfect Game) Larsen are a nice L/R duo in the bullpen. Fred Gladding will help out in limited appearances. There isn't much depth behind the players mentioned.

Toledo Rockets

The Rockets have arguably the worst offense in the league and could finish last in team home runs. The pitching staff is a little better than the Bullies and if they move out of the cellar it will be the pitching staff which is responsible. In any event, bettering last year's 69 wins will be a major accomplishment. Diamond Jim Gentile at first base has nice power and on base and his fielding is more than adequate. Tony Taylor at second can play every day; his bat and glove are both decent. Luis Aparicio at sort can still steal a base and his defense is very good but he doesn't walk much. At third Jim Davenport has very little power and lousy on base (a characteristic of many Rocket players) with a decent glove. Camilo Carreon has a decent if punchless bat and a nice glove but can only play about 100 games at catcher; his helpmates are terrible. Tom Tresh has the best bat on the team and a good glove; he will anchor left field. Carl Warwick is the second-best outfielder but his stats are such that he wouldn't start for many other SPB60 teams. Lee Thomas, Bobby Del Greco and Ed Kranepool will fill out the garden slots; they are all well below par. Chris Short, Denny LeMaster and Billy O'Dell (all lefties) are the top three starters and aren't bad. Dave Wickersham and Benny Daniels will fill in the rotation. Ron Taylor and Terry Fox lead the bullpen. Highly touted rookie Tommy John isn't quite ready.