

1965 PRESEASON PROGNOSIS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

New York Mets

The Mets won 94 games last year and made the playoffs but lost in the second round to the eventual WS champs the Newark Bears. They look to battle the Grizzlies again this year with no one else having a realistic chance to grab the regular season AL flag. The Mets have what is clearly the best attack in the AL and maybe all of SPB60 but their pitching is a notch below the Bears. Wingy Fred Whitfield will share time at first base with Ron Fairly, who also plays the outfield. Whitfield has nice power but doesn't walk much while Fairly can take a walk and spray the ball around pretty well. At second Jerry Lumpe has a decent bat and lousy glove while his backup Joey Amalfitano has a great glove and a nice but powerless bat. Zoilo Versalles at short has great power for a middle infielder to go with a spectacular glove. Jim Ray Hart has a nice bat but leaky glove and will get the lion's share of starts at third base. His backup Ken Boyer is getting up there and his stats should fall off from previous years. Both men will probably get some time at DH. Tim McCarver, JC Martin and Don Pavletich will share time behind the plate. Pavletich has a terrible glove but a nice bat while Martin has a great glove but a punch and judy bat. McCarver has the best power of the trio, but his glove is weak. Leon Daddy Wags Wagner has a really leaky glove but good power and is made to order for the DH position. Frank Robinson is a fixture in right field where he has great power and a nice glove. Willie Davis in center has a spectacular glove with some power but doesn't walk much and can't hit LHP's. Davis will platoon with Danny Tartabull who hits lefties very well but without much power. The best left fielder will be Alex Johnson who will hit close to .300 but without much power or on base. Fairly and several spear carriers will also get some time in left. Don Cardwell, Whitey Ford and Ken Johnson will lead the starting staff with help from Johnny Podres and Ron Herbel. But the strength of the staff is the bullpen with Eddie Fisher, Ron Kline, Billy Hoeft, Ron Reed and Bob Humpherys just waiting to shut the door when the squad has a late lead.

Newark Bears

The reigning World Series champs are back with a solid club in 1965 and a spectacular pitching staff could easily carry them to another AL pennant plus the attack while not up to the standards of the Mets is still very good. Hulking Boog Powell is the incumbent first baseman and he has solid power to go with a nice knowledge of the strike zone. His backup is Joe Adcock who is starting to show the effects of age. Bill Mazerowski returns at second with his usual top-notch glove and nice spray hitter bat but doesn't draw too many walks. Wayne Causey who also plays short and third is his primary backup. Dick Groat has a good glove and nice but powerless bat and will play short. Pete Ward at third has a nice glove and some power. Wayne Causey and Woodie Held, who also plays the outfield are nice infield reserves. Catcher is not a team strength with Bob Rodgers the best of a bad lot. The dynamic duo of Willie Mays and Hank Aaron return in center and right respectively and you can't ask for more. Both have a .300 plus bat great power and super gloves. A big comedown to the left fielder Johnny Lewis but he does have some power. Several men will switch off at DH but none of them will get many All-Star votes.

As stated above the pitching staff is outstanding with Sudden Sam McDowell, Denny McClain, ancient Robin Roberts, Dave McNally and Aurelio Lopez forming a solid starting corps. The bullpen is no slouch with Stu Miller and Johnny Klippstein leading the way.

Frankfort Frigates

A big drop off after the big two but Frankfort and Asheville will battle all year long for the third spot and a slot in the playoffs. Joe Pepitone at first has a great glove and decent power but might not hit .250. Second baseman Frank Bolling doesn't walk much and has little home run power and a lousy glove; not a lot of superlatives. Dick Howser at short does know how to take a walk and has a decent glove but no real power. Dick Tracewski a fine fielder at short, second and third will fill in for Howser but don't look for much from his bat. Dick don't call me Ritchie Allen has nice power, a .300 bat and good on base plus an acceptable glove; he'll play third base. Elston Howard and John Orsino will share time at catcher; neither is much of a hitter. Tony Conigliaro is a solid right fielder with 30-homer power. Bob Allison in right has an eye for the strike zone and can hit the ball out of the park plus has a nice glove but his BA will be weak. The team doesn't have a natural centerfielder and will need to shuffle several no-names in that position plus DH. Fred Newman and Ray Culp are the top two starters, and they aren't bad. After them it will be Bill Monbouquette, swingmen Ray Washburn and Ken Boswell. They may also need a few starts from veteran Bob Purkey but he has lost a lot over the years and it will be bombs away when he is on the mound. The bullpen isn't bad with Lindy McDaniel, Pedro Ramos and Jim Dickinson.

Asheville Tourists

They won 87 games in 1964 and made the playoffs and could do so again but with fewer wins. Dick (Doctor Strange glove) has a horrible glove and would be a natural DH but after Orlando Cepeda suffered an off-season injury there is no real alternative but to play Dick at first where he does have nice power. Jim Lefebere has a good glove and some power and can play just about every day at second base. Maury Wills is solid at shortstop where he has a dazzling glove and is a record setting base stealer. Jim Gilliam, a nice slap hitter and Julio Gotay will share time at third base. Chris Cannizaro who has a nice glove and terrible bat will get the most starts at catcher and his backups aren't much better. The team does have three good outfielders in Rocky Colavito, Carl Yastrzemski and Jimmy Hall. All have nice power and can field their positions. Jimmy Piersal is a useful outfield spare. The DH position will be handled by Ron Swoboda and Frank Thomas but neither will excite you. The three top starters are Pete Richert, Milt Pappas and Steve Barber although Richert and Barber have some control issues. Joe Sparma (a Massillon Ohio native!) and John O'Donohue will round out the rotation. Bobby Bolin and Jay Ritchie are the top men in the 'pen.

Massillon Tigers

This club won 66 games in 1964 and might do a little better this year but moving up from fifth place will be a real challenge and they could even fall a place or two. Vic Power, Tommy McCraw and Len Gabrielson who also plays the outfield will share time at first base. Gabrielson is the best hitter and Power the best defender, but this is not a strong position. Don Blasingame, a nice defender with a lousy bat will share time at second with Gene Alley who will also need to play a lot at shortstop. Bobby Wine has a great glove but weak bat will be the primary shortstop with Alley filling in as needed. Defensive whiz Clete Boyer who has some power will be an anchor at the hot corner. Tom Haller who has good power will share time behind the plate with Pat Corrales; both are nice receivers. Rookie Curt Blefry will be the full time DH and he has 20-homer power, a rare thing on this club. Tommy Harper, Al Kaline and Albie Pearson are the main men in the outfield; all can hit for average and Harper and Kaline have good power. Gabrielson and Lee May are also available for play in the garden. The pitching staff is not strong. Wade Blasingame, Al Jackson and Bob Buhl are the three main starters although Wade has some control issues. The balance of the rotation will be a group of swingmen, with hot shot rookie Jim Palmer waiting in the wings. The club has several decent relievers in Dan Osinski, Bill Pleis, Bill Henry and Larry Sherry.

Fairfax Grays

Fairfield's attack is not strong, and the pitching staff is below average, but they could overtake Massillon for fifth place but just as easily sink to seventh. Gordy Coleman and Tony Perez will share time at first base. Both have some power and Coleman could hit over .300. Charlie Hustle Pete Rose is a fixture at second base. He can play every day, has nice power can get on base and won't kill you with his glove. Ron Hansen is a defensive whiz at short and has some power but probably won't hit .250. Bob Aspromonte is a decent slap hitter with a nice glove and will occupy third base. Ken Hamlin is a useful infield reserve although his glove is weak. Joe Azcue with help from John Sullivan will handle the catching duties. Neither has any power though Sullivan will hit for a higher average while Azcue is a better defender. Willie Smith will get the most starts in left where he has a nice glove with some power. Willie Kirkland has modest power but not much else on offense has just an average glove and will play a lot of right field. Jackie Brandt and Joe Nossek will share time in center field; neither can hit much though Brandt has a good glove. The main man at DH will be Danny Cater who possesses a decent bat with some power. Fred Talbot and a posse of swingmen (Tracey Stallard, Cal Koonce, Gaylord Perry and Joey Jay) represent the guts of the starting staff. Abrey Gatewood and veteran Frank Lary are the two big men in the bullpen, but they will get help from the swingmen.

Joliet Jakes

With a few breaks Joliet could compete for sixth and maybe even fifth place. The offense is terrible; only the Black Cats are worse in the AL. The pitching staff isn't as bad but won't win too many plaudits either. Moose Skowron at first has some power and a decent glove. Bobby Richardson can play every day at second, has some doubles if not home run power and his glove won't kill you. Rico Petrocelli and Mike De La Hoz will share time at short. Petrocelli has a nice glove and modest power while De La Hoz is

strictly a spray hitter. Ed Charles will play the hot corner where he has a nice glove and modest bat. Johnny Romano who has some power and Johnny Blanchard will split time behind the plate. Romano's throwing arm is OK but Blanchard's is terrible. Jim Landis in center can get on base but not do much else with the bat; his defense is average. Russ Snyder, who has a nice glove and decent bat will spell Landis in center and also get a lot of time in left and right. Mickey Mantle can still draw walks and hit a few home runs, but he is way down from his glory days and will be banished to left field when he isn't playing DH. Roger Maris has fallen even farther down the rabbit hole as he won't be able to play much more than 50 games in right field and his only real offensive contribution will be an ability to draw walks. George Altman and Mantle will share time at DH. Altman has almost no power. Mel Stottlemyre (another Yankee, can you sense a pattern) is the top man in the rotation and could win 20 games with the proper support which he won't get from this club. Johnny Buzhardt and 44-year old Warren Spahn will also be in the rotation with several swingmen such as Bill Stafford and Bo Belinsky plus Bill Faul who will be limited to less than 20 starts. Marshall Bridges and Don Schwall are the top two men in the bullpen.

Beard Black Cats

The Cats seemed doomed to the cellar as their attack is clearly the worst in all of SPB60 and the pitching staff though not that bad isn't very good. Norm Siebern and Dick Nen will share time at first base. Neither has much power but Siebern can get on base and Nen is a good defender. At second base Woodie Woodard and Ron Hunt will split time. Neither have any power or much else to offer on offense. You could say that Eddie Brinkman is your classic good field no hit shortstop but his glove is really not that good and his bat is horrendous. Charley Smith has some power and a decent glove at third base. Phil Gagliano is a nice infield spare and can also play the outfield if necessary. Johnny Edwards who has a nice glove and decent power will share time at catcher with Doug Camilli who has a lousy bat. By default Lee Thomas will be the full-time DH; he has the best power on the team. Mike Hershberger (another Massillon Ohio native!) will take his toothless bat and average glove to right field. Ty Cline has a nice glove and weak bat; he'll get the majority of starts in center field. Walt Bond will play 120 or so games in left field where his bat is decent and his glove weak. Doug Clemens is available to fill in at all three outfield spots. Bob Friend, Tony Cloninger and Larry Jackson are the leaders of the staff though Cloninger has some control issues. Several swingmen will fill in as needed. Lefty Ron Perranoski and righty Jim Owens are the stalwarts of the bullpen.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Raleigh Tarheels

The 'Heels won 104 games last year but were beaten by the Lightning in the divisional playoffs. This year they may have an easier time as both their attack and pitching are top notch. First baseman Bill White has solid offensive statistics in all areas plus he is great with his glove; can't ask for much more. Don Buford at second can play every day, hits both RHP and LHP and has good power for a middle infielder plus a decent glove. At

shortstop Jim Fregosi has some mild issues with LHP and may platoon with Denis Menke. This duo can both handle the glove and will contribute to the attack. The Hot corner will be handled by Ron Santo who has 30-homer power knows how to take a walk and has a vacuum cleaner glove. This is a sensational infield, probably the best in all of SPB60. Jim Pagliaroni has good offensive stats at catcher and will be spelled by Clay Dalrymple who though he can't hit much is a standout on defense. Gene Oliver will get the majority of starts at DH where he has good power. Rookie Bob Chance will also get some time at DH. Curt Flood in center will hit .300 with nice power and a decent glove. Mack Jones and Johnny Callison in left and right respectively both have 30-homer power plus Callison has a dynamite glove. Hector Lopez is available for spot play and pinch hitting. The pitching staff is out of this world. The top four starter (Sandy Koufax, Juan Marichal, Jim Maloney and Jim Bunning) all have the potential to be 20-game winners, and the fifth starter Gary Peters is no slouch. Al McBean, Ted Abernathy and John Wyatt lead a great bullpen. This club is top notch in all areas!

Louisiana Lightning

Under new ownership in 1965, the club won 114 games in 1964 and was heavily favored in the World Series but came up short to the upstart Bears. This year's edition is also solid and should easily qualify for the playoffs but probably won't unseat the Tarheels for the regular season pennant. Ex shortstop Ernie Banks is now comfortable at first base and will bring his 30-homer bat and the ability to play every day to the Lightning attack. Second baseman Pedro Gonzales is a little shy in drawing walks and his bat is mediocre but he does have a great glove. He'll switch off with hot shot rookie Glenn Beckert. At shortstop, Leo Cardenas can play every day has nice power and a good glove. At third both Don Wert and Ken McMullen have great gloves and nice bats. One may get some time at DH and McMullen can also play the outfield. The catching position will be shared by Earl Battey and Ron Brand; Battey is a much better hitter and fielder, but Brand is no slouch. The outfield is set with a marvelous trio of Vada Pinson in center, Billy Williams in left and Roberto Clements in right. All three can hit over .300 with nice power and good gloves. Rusty Staub and Rico Carty will share time at DH. Both have nice power, but Carty is a better overall hitter. While not as spectacular as the Tarheels, the Lightning starting staff is also very impressive featuring Jim Kaat, Bob Veale, Bob Gibson, Dean Chance and Wally Bunker. Knuckleballer Hoyt Wilhelm, Al Worthington and Hal Woodeshick are the guts of a great bullpen.

Gem City Bombers

The Bombers will be battling with the Colt 45's all year for the third playoff slot but they are a few notches below the Lightning in all areas and will be hard pressed to move up to second place. Harmon Killebrew returns at first base; he has good power knows how to take a walk, and his defense is adequate. Jerry Adair will get the lion's share of starts at second base. He has a great glove and decent bat. He'll share time with Dick Green who has more power than Adair and likewise a good glove. Roy McMillan is the shortstop; his offense is probably a little below par and his glove just adequate. Deron Johnson has 30-homer power and a near .300 bat. His defense is horrible but in order to make room for Willie McCovey whose only position is first base, Deron will need to play third base and not DH. Joe Torre is one of the better catchers in the league, certainly from the

offensive side. Wilie Horton in left field has a 30-homer bat and acceptable glove. Hulking Frank Howard will patrol right field, and he also has nice power, but his glove is below par. Center field is not a team strong point as both Nelson Mathews and Ken Henderson have serious offensive shortcomings. As stated above Willie McCovey and his 40-homer bat will be the DH. Overall the Bombers could lead SPB60 in team home runs. The team has four really good starting pitchers in Vern Law, Bob Shaw, Don Drysdale and Claude Osteen with able swingmen picking up the slack. Frank Linzy could be one of the best closers in the league and he has several able helpmates.

Houston Colt 45's

The perennial doormats of the league (they only won 63 games in 1964) could certainly compete for the playoffs in 1965. Wes Parker has a flashy glove at first base and knows how to take a walk but his overall bat is not that good. Bobby Knopp has a nice glove and some offensive punch and will get the vast majority of starts at second base. Several infield spares will fill in for him. Bob Lillis and Larry Brown will share time at shortstop. Brown is a better hitter and both have decent gloves. A team favorite, Eddie Mathews returns at third base with his 30-homer bat and good glove. Mike Brumly and Bob Uecker will share time behind the plate, but this is not a team strong point. Tony Oliva will play a lot of DH but is also a decent outfielder. Don Clendenton will also get time at DH. Both men are solid hitters. The best hitter on the team is right fielder Tony Oliva although he does have problems with LHP. Speedster Lou Brock will play left field and in addition to his base stealing abilities he has nice power. The toy cannon, Jimmy Wynn will play several outfield positions, but his bat is top notch, and he knows how to take a walk. When Wynn is not in center field Vic Davalillo will play where he has a .300 but powerless bat and a great glove. Paul Blair and John Briggs are also available for outfield play and versatile Cookie Rojas can play almost everywhere. The starting staff is very good and includes Sonny Seibert, Joel Horlen, Mudcat Grant, Al Downing, Turk Farrell and Bob Bruce. All of them except Downing have excellent control and some will get work in the bullpen. Budding star Fergeson Jenkins is waiting in the wings and has great future potential but not this year. Claude Raymond, Jack Aker and Tug McGraw plus the non-starting starters will form a decent bullpen.

New Bedford Ahabs

Big falloff after the top four but the Ahabs seem pretty secure in fifth place. The team won 93 games last year and made the playoffs but that will be a distant dream in 1965. They have both offensive and pitching problems and moving up will be a major accomplishment. Chuck Hinton plays a lot of positions, but he will be the primary first baseman this year; he has decent power and an adequate glove. Several others will move in and out of this slot. Felix Mantilla is the best hitting second baseman they have by far but his defense is terrible which will mean a lot of defensive replacements as the season wears on. Jimmy Stewart will get some help from defensive whiz Ray Oyler at short. Neither can hit very much. Brooks Robinson returns at the hot corner and his bat is a match for his peerless glove. John Kennedy is a nice infield reserve, but he can't hit a lick. John Roseboro a defensive whiz will platoon at catcher with Dick Brown; neither man has much power. Jesus Alou is a fine hitter who swings the bat all the time and draws few walks will be the primary DH. Jesus' brother Felipe will anchor center field

and has a nice bat and adequate glove. Don Demeter and Lenny Green will get the most starts in right and left respectively. Don has some power which is lacking in Lenny. The third Alou brother Matty is also on the squad and will fill in as needed. Tommy Davis who was a star in prior years suffered a serious injury and will only be available for limited play this year. The starting pitching is not strong as only Camilio Pascual would make the staff of the better teams in the league. Sammy Ellis and Earl Wilson aren't bad but after them it's bombs away. They do have four good relievers in Bob Lee, Bob Miller, Gary Lee and Gary Bell. Former ace Dick the monster Radatz suffered an arm injury and will be far less effective in 1965.

Boulder Run Bullies

Flip a coin for the last three spots. Boulder Run won a woeful 53 games in 1964 and may be better this year but should still finish between sixth and eighth; moving up to fifth will be tough. Don Mimcher will alternate at first base with Tito Francona; Don has nice power but neither man can hit LHP, which will be a season long problem. Joe Morgan is one of the stars of the team; he has nice power and a very good knowledge of the strike zone; his defense is more than adequate, and he can play every day. Dick Schofield will get the most starts at shortstop with Don Kessinger filling in as needed. Dick has a better glove but neither of them will contribute much with the bat. Paul Schall has the best glove of the potential third baseman, but his bat is weak. Jim Davenport has a better bat and will fill in at third but he is also useful as an overall infield spare. At catcher Ed Bailey, Rene Lachemann and Chaley Lau will switch off. Lau has by far the best bat, but his glove is weak and in any event he will only be able to play about 70 games. Willie Stargell has the most power on the team and will be a fixture in left field. Jose Cardenal in center doesn't walk much and his overall offense is below par, but he does have a good glove. A host of spear carriers will move in and out of right field and DH. Ken Berry doesn't hit much but has a better glove than Cardenal and may get a lot of time in center with Jose moving to DH. On the mound, Swingman George Brunet is the best starter they have and the rest of the rotation will be filled by the likes of Louie Tiant, Rollie Sheldon and Seth Morehead plus several other swingmen. Highly touted rookie Steve Carlton needs more time to develop. Steve Hamilton, Don Dennis and Fred Gladding are all nice relievers.

Asbury Argonauts

Jason and his mates won 83 games last year but that is a distant dream this year. They will battle the Bullies and Rockets for the last three spots but don't look for them to move any higher. Stormin Norman Cash will man first base where he has 30-homer power plus a good feel for the strike zone and a very good glove. Dalton Jones will share time at second base with Jerry Kindall; Dalton is a much better hitter but has a leaky glove whereas Kindall can't hit at all but can field his position well. The shortstop will be Bert Campaneris who is a decent hitter and can steal bases, but his glove is weak. Dick McAuliffe can also help out at short. Rich Rollins is a vacuum cleaner at third, but his bat is fairly unproductive. Dalton Jones is a nice utilityman at all infield positions and hot shot rookie Cesar Tovar is waiting in the wings. Bill Freehan and veteran Del Crandall will switch off at catcher. Freehan has modest power and a good glove while Crandall can't hit much but does have a good throwing arm. Floyd Robinson will play right field

where he has some power and the ability to draw walks but doesn't hit LHP very well. Tony Gonzales will play about 110 games in center and his bat is solid but his glove is weak. Jim Hickman in left has some power and a decent glove but doesn't walk much; he will also play some center field. Joe Christopher is available to fill in at right or left but has minimal power. Ray Barker and several others will share time at DH; none will contribute much offensively. Mickey Loich, Bruce Howard and swingman Jim Perry are the top starters, and they'll get help from Dick Ellsworth, Jack Fisher and veteran Curt Simmons. Old timers Harvey Haddix and Roy Face don't have a lot left but they and Hal Reniff plus the non-starting starters will man the bullpen.

Toledo Rockets

Toledo might match last year's 68 wins, but I wouldn't bet the farm on it. Both the attack and pitching staff are in the bottom third, if not worse of all SPB60 teams. At first Ed Kranepool has modest power and a good glove but can't hit LHP's. The other first baseman on the roster, Jim Gentile has better power but a lousy glove and also can't hit lefties. Gentile may also play some DH. By the process of elimination Tony Taylor will get the most starts at second base but nothing on his resume, offensively or defensively distinguishes him. Frank Quilici and Jerry Buchek are also available to play second but neither is any better than Taylor. Shortstop Luis Aparicio can play every day and still steal a base plus excels on defense but his bat is pretty weak. Max Alvis at third has decent power and his glove is adequate. Bob Tillman by default is the top catcher but his defense is terrible and his bat not much better. Mike Shannon who is a much better outfielder, will be forced to spend some time behind the plate. Ancient Smokey Burgess could conceivably catch a few games but his glove is so bad he will probably be used pretty much as a dynamite pinch hitter. In center field Bill Virdon has a great glove and his bat isn't bad, but he has little power. Tom Tresh who is probably the best hitter on the team will anchor right field where he has 25-homer power and a nice glove. Lou Johnson has modest power and an average glove; he'll get the most starts in left. Pint size Manny Mota is also available for outfield play. Wes Covington has a terrible glove but decent bat and will get the most starts at DH with Gentile filling in as needed. Teenager Bobby Murcer is waiting in the wings. Lefties Chris Short and Tommy John lead the starting staff. Dave Wickersham and Ray Herbert are next in line with the remainder of starts given to the likes of Buster Narum and Denny Lemaster. Billy O'Dell, Terry Fox and Joe Niekro are the best relievers but how many late leads will they be given to protect?