

PRE-SEASON PROGNOSIS 1930

American League

Schenectady Blue Sox

The Blue Sox are the defending AL champs and are favored to repeat although the Mutuals and maybe even the Riptide could push them. This will be a big hitters year but the Sox will be better than most. Outfielder Lefty O'Doul could flirt with a .400 BA and should exceed 20 homers, 100 runs and 100 RBI's. However first sacker Jimmy Foxx may be even more productive in power terms. He probably won't hit for a high enough average to win the triple crown (although he could have a .340 BA) but could challenge for the homer and RBI titles. Kiki Cuyler and Sammy West are great outfield defenders and both can hit but room must be found for hard hitting but feeble fielding Ed Morgan since he can't play first with Foxx on the roster. The manager will shuttle through several other players to cover the balance of the infield positions but all are more than adequate. Bill Dickey is one of the league's better catchers and should have a good BA but is a little light in the power categories. Dazzy Vance is one of the league's best starting pitchers and he has a good supporting cast, particularly George Uhle. The starters will double dip in the bullpen when not starting as the team has no standout pure reliever although they are hardly alone in that category.

New York Mutuals

Babe Herman is the leader of the attack and will put up some very impressive numbers. Dick Porter and Sam Rice are excellent mates for Herman while fourth OF Freddy Leach could start for a lot of other teams. Catcher Gabby Hartnett could hit .340 with 40 homers and well over 100 RBI's. The left side of the infield is very good with third sacker Freddie (bad hop) Lindstrom and SS Glenn Wright. First base is the domain of Dale Alexander who will have very good stats but nothing spectacular in the context of 1930. Second base will see several players shuttle through but none are much to talk about. Carl (screwball) Hubbell and General Crowder lead the staff but the rest of the staff doesn't match up to the Blue Sox. Sloppy Thurston and Hi Bell are decent relievers, even more so when you consider this is 1930.

Lincoln City Riptide

Lincoln City's offense is well below the two teams above but they have the best pitching staff in the AL and arguably the best in all of SPB-X. Outfielders Carl Reynolds and Heine Manush will lead the attack while the third OH slot will be shared by George Watkins and Bibb Falk with Don Hurst getting a few starts when he isn't playing first base. Joe Judge will get most of the starts at first but in the context of 1930 his stats will be no more than average. Buddy Myer at second, Red Kress at short and Jimmy Dykes at third fill out the infield but only Kress will seriously scare you with his bat. Four players all distinguished only by their mediocrity will share time at catcher. Then we get to the pitching staff led by the incomparable Lefty Grove whose numbers would be great in any era but sensational in 1930. Pat Malone and George Earnshaw could both win 20 games with proper support and fourth starter Wally Pipgras is also very good. Hod Lisenbee and Rip Collins will fill out the starting rotation. There isn't much depth beyond these five and they will need to pitch a lot of complete games. If the Riptide are to rise in the standings it will be a direct result of the pitching staff.

New Haven Whiffenpoofs

A big falloff from the three teams above but the 'Poofs should battle the Frogs for fourth place. New Haven lacks power and has one of the weakest outfielders in the league. That being said, the double play combo of second sacker Freddie Fritch and SS Joe Cronin is probably the best in the league. They have several Punch and Judy hitters in the OF but none may hit .300 which will put them well below anyone else in the garden. George Sisler is a workmanlike first baseman but well below the other first sackers in the league. Ossie Bluege is the incumbent at the hot corner but once again he won't scare you with the bat. Three guys will split time behind the plate and they won't embarrass you but won't win too many games either. Wes Ferrell and Ted Lyons are both potential 20-game winners, assuming a decent level of support. Swingman Firpo Marberry is a decent third man in the rotation but there isn't much beyond these three. Jim Lindsey is a decent reliever but he won't get much help from the balance of the staff.

Frankfort Frogs

The Frogs' offense is a little better than the 'Poofs but the pitching staff is worse and has a lot of problems with control. Lou (Iron Horse) Gehrig is sensational and has a real shot at the triple crown. Lou's only "weakness" is that he has little protection in the lineup and will be pitched around and intentionally walked by many teams throughout the season. Lou could easily have half of the homers hit by the entire team. Centerfielder Taylor Douhit is a great fielder and can hit some doubles and triples but very few homers. The other OF slots will be filled by several banjo hitters. Third baseman Tony Cuccinello is a decent if unspectacular hitter but a defensive liability. The double play combo is a serious weak spot of the team both offensively and defensively. Bob O'Farrell and Rollie Hemsley will hold down the catcher's slot. The team lacks a top flight number one starter and will need to run six or seven starting pitchers to the mound to get through the season. The non-starting starters will pull most of the bullpen duties as there is no one else.

San Diego Glaziers

Another big falloff for the bottom two spots but either the Glaziers or Colonels could end up in the cellar. The Glaziers have arguably the worst offense in the AL although the Colonels will give them a run for their money. Their power is close to non-existent. If the Whiffenpoofs have a weak outfield the Glaziers have absolutely the worst. Charlie Jamieson is a feeble fielder who "might" hit a bit over .300 (no great accomplishment in 1930) with little power but his mates are pathetic and they will need a lot of bonus plate appearances just to get through the season. Marty McManus is a decent third baseman who has a bit of doubles (if not home run power) but he has little help. First baseman Gus Suhr might crack 15-20 homers but he'll be all alone in that category. The rest of the infield is very weak and Gus Mancuso is a good part-time catcher but there is little behind him. Earl Whitehill is a decent starter but it's Katy Bar the Door after him. Whitlow Wyatt and Pete Appleton are decent relievers but how many leads will they have to protect?

Louisville Colonels

As mentioned above the Colonels could rise to sixth but much more would be a tremendous accomplishment. They do have a little power and a budding star in 21-year old RF Mel Ott. Dave Jolley will play LF and do a decent job but the third OF spot is up for grabs. Jim Bottomley is a decent hitting 1B but he has an iron glove. Ben Chapman at third is OK but the double play combo is well below par. Spud Davis is a fine catcher but he'll only be able to play about 100 games and his only backup is Muddy Ruel who walks a little but has absolutely no power. On the mound they have three OK starters in Burleigh Grimes, Freddy Fitzsimmons and Bill Hallahan but behind them is very little, either starters or relievers.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Brooklyn Knights

The Knights are loaded and it would take a herculean effort by the Seals to keep them out of the World Series. A big star is Bill Terry who should flirt with .400, get 75-80 extra base hits and drive in a ton of runs plus he has a dazzling glove at first base. However the really big man is the walking fireplug, Hack Wilson who could get 100 extra base hits and hit over .350 plus driving in more runs than Terry. In fact along with Terry and Wilson, the Knights have three other players (third baseman Pie Traynor, OF Goose Goslin and 2B Tony Lazzeri) who could also drive in 100 runs plus hit well over .300 and if he gets enough at bats, OF Harry Heilmann could join them. Travis Jackson is a standout SS and Shanty Hogan will get the lion's shares of starts at catcher. Hogan's backup is another .300 hitter, Bennie Tate. Brooklyn doesn't have any one pitcher of the caliber of Lefty Grove and might not have a 20-game winner on the staff but they are far deeper than any other team. Even the "worst" pitcher on the team (Irv Brame) would be a third or fourth starter on any other team.

San Francisco Seals

This year's Seals team is much better than the 76-win edition of 1929 and they could easily contend in the AL but are stuck behind the Knights steamroller in 1930. On the plus side they have an excellent (if all LHH) outfield with Paul Waner, Earl Combs and off season acquisition Earl Averill. The infield is solid with first sacker Del Bissonette who has some power, second baseman Sparky Adams, shortstop Charlie Gilbert and third sacker Pinky Whitney. In fact in those games when Harry McCurdy catches, they will have eight .300 hitters in the lineup. McCurdy's backups are adequate but nothing special. The team also has a decent bench but the one glaring flaw in the lineup is a serious lack of home run power. This might not matter quite so much in cavernous Forbes Field but will be a big problem when they are on the road. On the mound Lefty Stewart and Socks Siebold are a good one and two and the rest of the starters won't embarrass you. The bullpen has some talent but overall the staff is a big notch below the Knights.

Albany Empires

In some type of alternate universe where the Knights and Seals both collapse, the defending WS champs could contend but I wouldn't put a lot of money on it. Chuck Klein and Al Simmons are two of the best hitters in the league and could easily combine for 80 homers and 200 extra base hits. The third OF, Bing Miller would be a star in other years but in 1930 he is no more than average. Johnny Hodnap is sensational both offensively and defensively at 2B. The rest of the infield is no more than adequate but catcher Mickey Cochrane is one of the best, including his defense. Bill Walker is the leader of the pitching staff but the quality behind him is not that good. Bill Shore is a decent swingman and clearly the best pitcher in the bullpen when he isn't starting. The team will have to slug their way to contention as the pitching staff is leaky.

East Kenosha Leopards

The Leopards could supplant the Empires for third but anything more is very unlikely. Outfielder Wally Berger is the big power guy with his only real help coming from second sacker Charley Gerhinger. No one else in the lineup looks to crack double figure homers. Dick Bartell is a good SS and the team has a host of decent (if unspectacular) outfielders to match with Berger. The rest of the infield is very unimpressive and their first base position is one of the weakest in the league. Al Lopez is a decent catcher but has little pop in his bat. They have some decent starting pitchers, especially Vic Sorrell, Danny MacFayden & Red Ruffing but the manager will have to use a lot of no-names to fill out the

rotation. They do have two decent relievers in Bud Teachout and Bud Johnson but both will have to be used as starters. The lower part of the staff is not strong.

Borger Gassers

The Bambino is a good start to any lineup but his stats in 1930 are not as awesome as they have been in prior years. Johnny Frederick is a very good defender in center and has a good bat but it would be nice if he walked a little more. Charley Grimm and Art Shires will share time at 1B but neither would be confused with an All-Star. Second baseman George Grantham has a .320 bat with good power and does the job on defense. The rest of the lineup is weak and opposing pitchers will have an easy time with the latter part of the Gasser lineup. Roy Spencer and Clyde Sukeforth will share time at catcher but neither will scare you. The pitching staff is not strong and opposing teams will have a lot of high scoring games. There is no bullpen to speak of and the manager will have to leave the starters in far longer than he would like.

Detroit Titans

The Titans won only 57 games last year and should exceed that number in 1930 but not by much. Chick Hafey is by far the team's best hitter and pretty much the only power source but injuries will hold him to only about 120 games. A parade of mediocrities will fill out the rest of the OF at bats. Shortstop Tommy Thevenow is a decent glove man and will get a few hits here and there but he has a serious aversion to the base on balls. The rest of the infield is very weak and they will have a cast of thousands at first base, none of whom can hit or field very well. Jimmy Wilson is a decent catcher but he'll only be able to play in about 100 games and his replacements are putrid. They have three decent starters in Lloyd Brown, Charley Root and Larry French but the balance of the staff, starters and relievers, are very poor.

Boise Trees

The team formerly known as the Cummins Diesels has new ownership and a new moniker but could very easily end the season with less than the 51 wins of last years. They are arguably the worst team in all of SPB-X and in the case of the pitching staff there is no argument. The attack is a popgun and no batter looks to exceed a half dozen home runs. At year's end they might easily end up with a team home run total that is half what Hack Wilson will hit all by himself. The manager will shuttle a lot of players in and out of the lineup with only CF Tom Oliver and 2B Hughie Critz as anything approaching every day regulars. And even those two won't really scare you with the bat. The rest of the lineup is very poor but it doesn't really matter that much as even the Knight's offense wouldn't be able to overcome all the runs given up by the pitching staff. Twenty-Year old Dizzy Dean is a diamond in the rough but will contribute nothing in 1930. Swingman Mel Harder is good enough to make the staffs of most of the other teams in the league but there is very little else and most of the pitchers will end the season with 6.00 or 7.00 ERA's.