PRE-SEASON PROGNOSIS 1940

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Schenectady Blue Sox

The Blue Sox and Glaziers should battle it out all year long. They are very close in terms of offense although the Glaziers lack home run power, but San Diego has an edge in pitching. My complicated formula gives Schenectady a slight edge but not by much. Jimmy Foxx is a tower of strength at first base. He has 35-plus homer power and should draw over 100 walks plus hit close to .300; his glove is adequate. Foxx may need to play some games at catcher but Dick Siebert is a good replacement though lacks the power of Foxx. Second baseman Bobby Doerr has an excellent glove and much more power than you would expect from a middle infielder and will also hit close to .300. The team has some issues at shortstop with no full time regular. Alan Strange has a very good glove but a horrible bat while his two mates, Charlie Gelbert and Skeeter Webb can each hit a little with minimal power, but both have below average gloves. Third sacker Harlan Cliff can play every day and has a great glove to go with a solid bat, and he knows how to take a walk. Most of the catching duties will fall to Bill Dickey who is a very good receiver, but his bat is mediocre at best. As stated above, Foxx will need to fill in for 40 or so games behind the plate. The team has a trio of .300 hitting outfielders (Lou Finney, Moose Solters & Roy Weatherly) all of whom have decent power, but none draw a lot of walks. Deb Garms and Chet Labbs will fill in the outfield as needed. On the mound the leader of the staff is Bullet Bob Feller who can overwhelm batters with his fast ball but will also walk quite a few. He could approach 30 wins if he keeps the ball in the strike zone. Rip Sewell is an able number two with Bill Lorman and Harry Gumbert getting most of the remaining starts. Behind that quartet the staff is weak with nothing approaching a bullpen closer.

San Diego Glaziers

The San Diego pitching staff is far and away the best in all of SPBX and the offense isn't bad. If the Blue Sox hurlers falter, the Glaziers could win going away. Art Mahan has a nice glove at first base, but his bat is weak with minimal power. Second baseman Billy Herman can slap the ball around pretty well, but few will leave the park; he has a nice glove. Luke Appling can play every day at short and might even vie for the batting championship plus he can take a walk and has a decent glove. At third Stan Hack should hit well over .300 with a lot of doubles if not home runs plus his on base average and glove are top notch. It's catch as catch can behind the plate with no one player able to start more than 60-70 games. None of the four receivers can hit much but this lineup will be able to handle it pretty well. Center fielder Mike Kreevich is the closest thing the team has to a full-time outfielder. He has a very good glove with some power although he doesn't walk much. Johnny Rucker, Paul (Big Poison) Waner and Joe Gallagher can each start about 80-85 games, but none have any home run power. In fact, the Glaziers might not have a 10-homer player and will probably finish last in team home runs . However, it is on the mound where this team shines. Bucky Walters and Bob Newsom are the leaders of the staff and could each top 20 games. Thornton Lee, Tommy Bridges and swingmen Vito Tamulis and Bob Bowman will round out the rotation. Al Benton and the non-starting swing men form a decent bullpen, at least in terms of 1940 baseball.

Louisville Colonels

The Colonels could contend; their pitching staff is far below the two teams above, but the offense is not bad. At first Elbie Fletcher can play every day, has nice power, a great glove and is quite familiar with the base on balls. At second base, Alex Glossop has a mediocre bat with little power but a good glove; he will only be able to start about 85 games. The manager will be hard pressed to fill out the rest of the

2B starts as they don't have much depth at this position. A similar situation at short where hot shot rookie Pee Wee Reese is a solid performer on both offense and defense but will be limited in his playing time. Billy Jurges can fill in most of the remaining SS starts; his bat is punchless, but his glove isn't bad. Mel Ott will move to third base in 1940 and he has a nice bat and knows how to get on base plus he can play every day. Harry Danning is top-flight catcher with nice power and a .300 bat. His backup is Spud Davis who would rank as All-Star potential if he could play more often. Enos Country Slaughter and Ducky Medwick will occupy right and left field; both have nice power and can field their positions. Ben Chapman will play center field by default, and he knows how to take a walk plus hit doubles if not home runs. Pepper (the Wild Horse of the Osage) Martin is a very capable reserve outfielder. The team lacks a solid number one starter, and the manager will need to be creative to get through the season with this rotation. Schoolboy Rowe and Jack Knott will get the most starts but neither is a threat to make the All-Star Team. Swing man Ken Raffensberger is decent, and Freddie Fitzsimmons will be very good in a limited role, but he can't pitch enough of be a major factor. At the rear end of the rotation is Bob Klinger, who is horrible. Jumbo Brown and Red Lynn are two decent relievers. The Colonels will live or die based on whether the pitching staff can exceed expectations and I don't have a lot of faith in them.

West Baden Strudels

The team won only 53 games in 1939 and should easily do better in 1940 but looks to be locked into fourth place, maybe third if the Colonels falter. Hal Trotsky is solid at first base; he has very good power and knows how to take a walk plus his defense is decent and he can pay just about every day. The club has very versatile infielders who can play multiple positions and the manager will need to pick and choose who plays where and when. Johnny Bernardino is solid defensively at second, short and third but will probably get his most starts at short; his bat is decent with some power. Johnny Oregeno looks like the second baseman, and his bat is solid and he knows how to get on base via the base on balls. His backup is Stu Martin who will also get some time at third. Cookie Lavagetto will get the majority of starts at third where his main asset is a good OBA. The outfield star is left fielder Ted Williams who returns with his usual stellar stats; he'll challenge for the batting title and draw 100 walks plus he has very good power. Rip Ratcliff isn't far behind Williams in terms of batting average, but he has less power and on base; his glove is decent. Rookie Dom DiMaggio will get the most starts in center where he has a good glove and .300 batting average plus modest power. Chet Ross is a solid backup outfielder and could start for many teams. This outfield is one of the best in SPBX, Catcher Mike Tresh doesn't have much power, but he can slap the ball around pretty well and is a very good receiver. Several spear carriers will fill in when he needs an occasional rest. Claude Passau is the clear leader of the pitching staff and could easily win 20 games with proper support. Elden Auker is a solid number two, and the rest of the rotation will be filled by a variety of swing men. Mace Brown and Charley Root, when not starting will form a decent bullpen. Former standout Dizzy Dean is on the roster, but injuries have dulled his skills considerably.

Frankford Frogs

The Frogs could finish fourth, fifth or sixth with little chance of advancing further as the team is in the bottom half of all my key statistics. Frank McCormick is a solid everyday first baseman who has a .300 BA, nice power and a good glove. Pete Coscarat who is a mediocre hitter and fielder will share time at second with Tony Cuccinello who isn't much better and will also get some time at third base. First round pick Marty Marion will immediately get installed as the primary shortstop where he has good glove and slap hitting bat but little power or on base. Bill Lillard is a mediocre backup. Jim Tabor will start 120 games or so at third and he has nice power and an acceptable glove; he could be the only Frog to exceed double digit home runs. As stated above, Cuccinello will be his primary backup. Rollie Helmsley is an adequate man behind the plate and he has a cannon arm but little power. His backup is Ken O'Dea who

has zero power to go with a mediocre bat. Barney McCoskey will play center field, and he has a lofty BA with double and triple if not home run power plus an acceptable glove. Bruce Campbell, Beau Bell and Pete Fox will share most of the other outfield starts; all have modest power but can slap the ball around the outfield. On the mound, Frankford has three solid starters in Hal Schumacher, Marius Russo and Hugh Mulcahey; several mediocre swingmen will fill out the rotation. In the context of 1940 baseball Clint Brown will serve as the bullpen closer.

New York Mutuals

How the mighty have fallen! The defending World Series champs could descend all the way to the cellar; they have a better chance to advance to fifth but any higher would be a major accomplishment. First baseman George McQuinn can play every day, has nice power and a great glove. At second Lonny Frey is also an everyday performer with decent power, knows how to take a walk and is a wizard with the glove. Jimmy Pofhal and Billy Myers will share time at shortstop. Pofhal is a better hitter while Myers has a better glove but neither will create a lot of offensive fireworks. Kenny Keltner is a solid performer at third base who can play every day, has nice power and a good glove. Billy Sullivan, Joe Grace and Ray Berres will share time behind the plate with Sullivan having by far the best bat. Grace will also get some time in the outfield. Old age is finally catching up to long time hero Gabby Hartnett. Johnny Rizzo is a solid performer in left field where he has nice power and can hit both lefties and righties. Johnny Cooney is a nice punch and judy hitter and will start 100 or so games in center field. Augie Galan has fallen way off his stats from 1939 but will still be needed for time in the garden. Part-time spear carriers will make up the rest of the outfield. The pitching staff isn't bad with Luke Hamlin the clear leader of the staff. Carl Hubbell, Johnny Babich and Joe Sullivan will get most of the remaining starts with highly regarded Hal Newhouser bringing up the rear. Hal is still a year or so away. The team has several decent pitchers who can pitch in relief but none will have enough appearances to be significant.

Hew Haven Whiffenpoofs

The 'Poofs won 79 games last year, but a punchless attack and mediocre pitching staff will make it just about impossible to match that mark in 1940, and they could easily finish in the cellar. Dolph Camilli at first has a leaky glove but a potent bat with nice power and on base. Highly touted youngster Mickey Vernon is still at least a year away. Don Heffner is your typical good field no hit second baseman and he'll be backed up by Ham Schultze who is no better than average in all aspects of his game. Joe Cronin at short can play just about every day and is a solid offensive performer with a decent glove. Third baseman Bob Kennedy's only real standout stat is that he can play every day but his bat and glove are distinctly middle of the road. Rick Ferrell and Birdie Tebbetts will share time behind the plate. Neither have any power but both are decent slap hitters and won't kill you on defense. Frank Demaree has a .300 BA but minimal power in the outfield; he'll probably spend most of his time in left field. Mike McCormick in center won't clear the fence very often and has an aversion to the base on balls but he could hit .300 and his glove is not bad. Maurice Van Robas can play just about every day in right and has some power but doesn't walk much; his glove is adequate. The top four starting pitchers (Lon Warneke, Kirby Higbee, Manny Salva and Ted Lyons) aren't bad but there is little behind them and no discernable bullpen.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Detroit Titans

The Titans and Dodgers should battle for the pennant all year long with little to distinguish between the two. Detroit only won 70 games last year so 1940 will be a big improvement. At first base, Joe Kuhel has very good power and on base and his glove is adequate. Joe Gordon at second can do it all; he has a flashy glove with 30-homer power and can play every day. At short Pat Mullin is another solid everyday performer; he has nice power, very good on base and a great glove. Pinky Higgins at third isn't up to the status of his infield mates but he can hit an occasional long ball; he knows how to take a walk and his glove is fine. Red Kress will fill in adequately for the 20 or so games Higgins needs to sit. This is a very good infield. The Snooz Ernie Lombardi will be a solid performer at catcher for 110 or so games and he has a cannon arm. His backup Phil Masi is a major come down. The team has four .300 hitting outfielders (Jimmy Gleason, Dixie Walker, Terry Moore and Tommy Hendrich). Gleason and Walker won't hit a lot of homers, but they can get doubles and triples, and all four men have good gloves with Moore being excellent in center field. Joe Vosmik and Dom Dallassandro are also available for garden play. The Titans have an overabundance of good outfielders. On the mound lefties Al Milnar and Larry French will pair with righty Duch Leonard and several decent swing men to form a very good rotation. Joe Beggs is one of the best pure relivers in the league, and he'll get a lot of help from the swingmen.

Brooklyn Dodgers

Brooklyn only missed the playoffs by two games last year and will be in the thick of things again this year. They possess the best team power in the league. Johhny Mize at first is a tower of strength. He could hit over 40 homers and end up with close to 100 extra base hits plus he will hit over .300 and knows how to take a walk. Ray Mack at second can play everyday and has decent power for a middle infielder and a good glove. Cecil Travis will play shortstop, and he possesses a .320 bat with nice double and triple if not home run power and a good glove. Third base is the domain of Billy Weber who knows how to get on base, has OK power and a flashy glove. Bama Rowell is a fine second baseman and may get a few starts against RP's where is a little better than Mack and he may play some outfield where he has a weak glove. Pete Reiser and Eddie Joost are nice infield reserves. Frankie Hayes is a solid catcher with decent power and he'll be ably backed up by Don Pagett. Walt Judnich is a solid centerfielder who can start 135 games with good power, Doc Cramer and Gee Walker will get most of the corner outfield starts and both have .300 bats with Walker having more power. As stated above, Rowell will get some outfield starts. George Selkirk, who has a great batting eye and nice power will also feature in the outfield. Paul Derringer and Johnny Rigney are the top two starting pitchers with several top-flight swingmen including Vern Olsen figuring in the rotation. Hugh Casey and the non-starting swingmen will man the bullpen.

Borger Gassers

Big falloff after the top two but the Gassers and Atlantics will battle it out all season for third place. Babe Young can play every day at first base where he has decent power and a nice glove. Frankie Gustine doesn't walk much and has little power, but he can slap the ball around pretty well and has a good glove at second base. He'll be spelled by Buddy Myer who is similar to Gustine except that he has a better batting eye. Frankie Crosetti and Bobby Mattick are equally inept with the bat and just average on defense, but they will share the shortstop position. Sibby Sisti has an OK bat and good glove and will share third base with Lee Handley; neither player has much power. Babe Phelps and Bennie Warren will share time behind the plate; both have modest power, but Phelps is a better overall hitter. Left fielder Hank Greenberg is a major star; he has 40-homer power with good on base and has a nice glove. Right fielder Taffy Wright can hit .330 with modest power and has a decent glove. Bob Johnson has good power and also can take a walk with a good glove; he'll play center field. Larry Rosenthal is a nice part-time outfielder with modest power but a very good on base percentage. Johnny Hopp is also available for play in the garden. Age is catching up to former star Chuck Klein, but he will get a few starts against

LHP's who he crushes. The pitching staff is a little thin and the manager does not have the advantage of a strict five-man rotation. The Smiths (Ed and Al) are the top two starters but will be limited in how much they can pitch. The lower part of the rotation is pretty grim except for part-timer Lee Grissom who will be good for a dozen or so starts. Johnny Murphy is the closest thing the team has to a bullpen ace.

Fairfax Atlantics

The team won 94 games in 1939 and the NL pennant before losing in the World Series to the Mutuals. This year is a different story as they will battle for third place with the Gassers but moving up further will be a major challenge. Rudy York at first will have a ton of extra base hits including 30 plus homers plus he can hit .300, take a walk and has a very good glove. Charlie Gehringer will return at second where he has modest power to go with a .300 BA and .400 OBA plus a decent glove. When he sits out a few games, Tommy Carrey will play but he is best used as a solid pinch hitter. I'd call Eddie Miller a good field no-hit shortstop except that he is a fine hitter with modest power. Buddy Lewis is an everyday third baseman with double and triple, if not home run power and he can hit over .300 with a decent glove. Defensive whiz Al Lopez will start 100 or so games at catcher and his bat isn't bad but when he sits the team will need to play Bill Atwood who has a terrible bat. Vince DiMaggio and Al Leiber will each play 120 or so games in center and right respectively and both have decent power with a near .300 BA. Max West and Ival Goodman will get most of the remaining outfield starts and both are decent players. Lloyd (Little Poison) Waner is also on the roster and will get some playing time, but he is now past his prime. Red Ruffing is a solid number one starter, and he'll be ably assisted by Bill McGhee and swingmen Johnny Allen, Whitey Moore and Bill Deitrich. After them the talent is a little thin except for Danny McFayden who will lead a leaky bullpen.

Brunnerville Bean Brewers

The Brewers are a solid pick for fifth place and for them to move either up or down would be a major accomplishment or disappointment. First base is problem for this team as they have no one who can start and more than 65-70 games. Phil Cavaretta, a decent hitter with no power will share time with Rip Russell, a lousy hitter with a rotten glove and several no-talent spear carriers. Benny McCoy a decent hitter with an average glove will get most of the starts at second base. Mickey Wittek is the best man at shortstop, but he doesn't walk much and has no power. Burgess Whitehead doesn't have a very good glove at third base but he will be forced to play the majority of games there; his bat is so-so. The team has a host of low-quality extra infielders who can fill in at all three slots. Al Todd is allergic to the base on balls and has little power but he'll be the primary catcher backed up Buddy Rosar who is a decent hitter and fielder but will be limited in his playing time. Jolting Joe Dimaggio is the undisputed star of the team as he can hit .350 with great power and on base plus a flashy glove. Right fielder Wally Moses doesn't have Jolting Joe's power but he can hit .300 with a nice on base and good glove. Ernie Koy will get 115 or so starts in left and he can also hit .300 with modest power. Sam Chapman is a natural centerfielder, but he will play all three outfield positions at various times to take advantage of his 20-plus homer bat. Ken Chase, Dick Errickson and Jim Turner are a good 1-2-3 in the starting rotation and will get a lot of help from Mel Harder and ancient Lefty Grove who may still have some magic in his left arm. Bill Trotter and Roy Joiner are the big men in the bullpen. Second year man Dizzy Trout has great potential but isn't there yet.

San Francisco Seals

The Seals won 80 games last year but will be challenged to avoid 80-90 losses in 1940. They could easily fall to the cellar but have little hope of rising in the standings. First base is a mess; last year's starter Buddy Hassett has nothing going for him in 1940 other than a good glove. His backup Joe Gantenbein is

an even worse hitter plus he is a terrible defender. At second Jimmy Brown doesn't walk much and has no power but he can slap the ball around and has a decent glove; Al Rubeling is a decent backup. Shortstop is even worse as Johnny Hudson and a cast of no-names and no-talents will contribute very little to the attack or the team defense. Third base is a bright spot as Rudy May can play close to every day with a close to .300 bat and an acceptable glove but little power. Bob Swift is the primary catcher, but he also won't be able to hit the ball out of the park plus he is allergic to the base on balls. Backup catcher Willard Hershberger is a nice slap hitter but will be limited in how much he can play. Charlie Keller in right and Bill Nicholson in left are the two best hitters on the team and both possess good power which is missing from just about everyone else. Harry Craft has a good glove in center field but little power and poor on base. Jo Jo Moore is available to fill in as needed in the outfield and he does have some modest power. The pitching staff is not that good, and the manager will struggle to cover 154 starts. Gene Thompson, Mort Cooper and part timer Monte Pearson aren't bad starters but don't have much behind them and other than swingman Dick Lanahan, the bullpen is weak.

Montreal Golden Buddhas

This club won only 56 games in 1939 and could improve on that in 1940 and even rise to sixth place but anything better is a pipe dream. Babe Dahlgren will play first base where he has a serviceable bat with modest power and a decent glove. At second base Jimmy Bloodworth will get most of the starts and his bat is not impressive and he takes very few walks; Pep Young will fill in as needed. Loud Bodreau at short of one of the stars of the team as he has a .300 bat, good on base and nice power plus a great glove. Red Rolfe will play third but there isn't much impressive about him other than a good glove. Bill Knickerbocker is a nice fill in at third and short. Mickey Owen who has a nice throwing arm will be the primary catcher but don't look for much power from his bat. Jake Early who has a decent if unimpressive bat is the backup. Center fielder George Chase and right fielder Bob Elliot are both solid performers with both the bat and glove but lack power. Gene Moore can't play every day,but when he is in there he can smack the ball around but has little power and below average on base. The manager will need to find some outfield time for Jeff Heath as he has the best power (which isn't saying much for this club) on the team. On the mound Whitt Wtyatt and Bill Podgajny are a nice one-two at the top of the rotation and Buck Ross isn't far behind but after that trio the picking are slim. Part timer Newt Kimball and Bill Beckmann are the closest thing they have to a decent bullpen.