

BRASSWORLD JOURNAL

Volume 3, Issue 1

April 2008



Inside this issue...

2008 BRASSWORLD PREVIEW

Teams to Beat

Players to Watch

Predictions

2008 BRASSWORLD PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

COBB	RUTH	AARON	MAYS
Greenville	Gotham City	Georgia	Montreal
Silver	Hoboken	Virginia	Northwoods
Hogan's	Plum Island	Port Richey	Palo Alto
South Range	Dublin	Taggart	West Oakland
Alaska	Williamsburg	LaFontaine Park	Maryland
Waikiki	New York	Annadale	Aspen

The 2008 season has arrived and all 24 BW clubs start fresh in their pursuit of the championship trophy. Jonah's Macs are two-time defending champions. Gotham City, the 2007 runner-up, is strong once again and may take their turn in 2008 as BW champs. Plum Island, long a BW force, is still looking for a title. In the NL, the former champs in Northwoods are lurking while traditional NL contenders- Maryland and LaFontain Park- are viewed as being in rebuilding mode. Add it all up and maybe we'll see a freshness come the post-season in October. Talking about October baseball already in April? Yep. That's what a new baseball season is all about to BW fans everywhere.

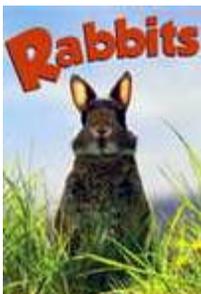


Good luck to all managers as we start our sixth season as a leader in the SOM baseball community.

A hearty and helpful thanks goes out to the co-contributors to this issue: Jonah Keri, Doug Beebe, Lenny Luchtefeld, Chris and Pete Blake. Thank you very much, guys. Great work! Special mention to Jim Bodnar for the logos he created. Enjoy!

COBB COMMENTS

Waikiki Rabbits 2007: 72-90			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Buck	SP	Glavine
1B	Garko	SP	R. Hill
2B	Kinsler	SP	Bannister
3B	Reynolds	SP	O. Perez
SS	Cabrera	SP	Danks
OF	Burrell	CL	Wheeler
OF	Murton		
OF	Payton/Mackowiak		



Last Year Re-Hash

In their final season as the Waukesha Keglers the club improved 30 games in the W column. Since traded Garrett Atkins (305-23-85) was the team star. Vincente Padilla (12-10, 3.85) led the moundsmen and has also departed. The Keglers tried to play Earl Weaver ball- sans the homer power. The club stole a paltry 45 bags in 07 while hitting a modest 173 taters. To their credit, an improving club needs to play well within their division and the Keglers were on the right path, going 42-48 versus their Cobb compatriots.

The Transaction Report

The big news for the Rabbits was the offseason trade that saw the club move the left side of its infield (Atkins and J.J. Hardy) for a different left side of the infield (Mark Reynolds and Orlando Cabrera). Reynolds is raw, but cheap, and few can pick it in BW like O.C. In free agency the Rabbits brought aboard the powerful stick of Pat Burrell's (281-21-79 in WOW), Tom Glavine to front

a young starting rotation and a closer (Dan Wheeler).

2008: The Hitters

The first thing that sticks out when you look at the Waikiki projected starters is that it is completely right-handed. That alone is a red flag when it comes to offensive success. Journeyman Rob Mackowiak is the only left-handed bat expected to see even semi-regular duty. Still, there is some pop. John Buck (416 SLG) and Ian Kinsler (443 SLG) provide power at spots in the lineup where it is not so easy to find in BW. Pat Burrell is a natural cleanup hitter and should thrive in the AL.

2008: The Pitchers

The Rabbits are a young bunch on the mound. Glavine was brought in to be the ace but Rich Hill is not far behind after his impressive freshman campaign (6-5, 2.82). Brian Bannister and John Danks appear to be ready to challenge Freddy Garcia and Esteban Loaiza for starts. The key member of the rotation will be Oliver Perez as he just can't be as bad as he was in 2007 (8-9, 5.33). Dan Wheeler is the only standout in a weak bullpen.

On the Farm

Young catcher J.R. Towles is the jewel of the minors for the club. Fernando Martinez and Jordan Schaefer are being counted on to be starters in the Rabbit outfield within three years. Casey Weathers may be ready to help the big club as soon as next season.

Prognostication

This is a club that is getting better in a measured manner. The next goal should be .500 and that is a reasonable goal to set. Look for the Rabbits to skirt the edges of the playoffs and possibly getting in if the bullpen outperforms.

Hogan's Heroes 2007: 72-90			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Pudge	SP	Lohse
1B	Casey/Sexson	SP	Weaver
2B	Uggla	SP	Bush
3B	Braun	SP	Looper
SS	Betancourt	SP	Tomko
OF	M. Ramirez	CL	Committee
OF	Hunter		
OF	Kearns		



Last Year Re-Hash

The Heroe's moved across country from Santa Barbara, but their fortunes remained the same as the club has lost 90 or more games for three consecutive seasons. It's been along time since the halcyon days of the upstart Syracuse franchise that won the inaugural BW World Series.

The Transaction Report

In stunning moves that rocked the BW countryside, up and coming stars David Wright (324-19-69) and Grady Sizemore (307-25-98) were sent packing to defending champ Montreal in separate deals. In return the Heroe's added precocious youngsters, headed by the heralded likes of Ryan Braun and Joba Chamberlain. It was in free agency that Bob Loose really made his move as he signed an entirely new outfield (Torii Hunter, Austin Kearns and Manny Ramirez).

2008: The Hitters

Like Waikiki the Heroe's are a remarkably right-leaning offensive outfit. Last year Hogan's only smacked 148 homers as a club. Last year, the new outfield trio deposited 74 souvenir balls. It looks like the offense will be buoyed by the signings. Word out of spring camp so far has circled around Ryan Braun, who's prodigious blasts are already becoming legendary. However, he's a work in progress with the club, and combined with Dan Uggla on the other side of him, poor Yuniesky Betancourt may be too tired to wing a bat after chasing down all the groundballs in the infield.

2008: The Pitchers

Success, ultimately, in BW comes down to a club's pitching staff. Kyle Lohse (6-9, 3.86) is the Heroe's putative ace. Braden Loper, who had a nice 2007 season in relief (3.23, 6 saves) will now be asked to join the starting rotation. Dave Bush (16-5, 3.82) was acquired from Taggart to strengthen the starter corp. In the pen there is much too choose from, but little that will intimidate opponent lineups.

On the Farm

Daric Barton (1B) and Chase Headley (3B) are professional hitters who appear ready to add impact to the Heroe's lineup in 2009.

Joba Chamberlain leads some strong pitching prospects that also includes the likes of Johnny Cueto and Dellin Betances.

Prognostication

Hogan's are the sleeper team for success in the AL in 2008. This club succeeded against its divisional foes in '07 (46-44) and posted the fourth-best ERA in the AL as well. By all reasonable measurement the offense is vastly improved. Even if the pitchers slipped to the middle of the pack in performance this is going to be a much tougher club for the AL to deal with in 2008.

Silver Sluggers 2007: 52-110			
Lineup	Pitchers		
C	R. Hernandez	SP	Maine
1B	Howard	SP	W. Rodriguez
2B	Phillips	SP	Westbrook
3B	Bautista	SP	Fogg
SS	J. Wilson	SP	Eaton/Lincecum
OF	De. Young	CL	Shields
OF	Abreu		
OF	Beltran		



Last Year Re-Hash

Things are going to get better this season for the Silver Sluggers. They have to.

Silver's savvy manager Lenny Luchtefeld took his lumps last season, as the team stumbled to a 52-110 finish. These were the struggles of a rebuilding team, biding its time until it can reload for a pennant run.

Among everyday players, only first baseman and cleanup hitter Ryan Howard rated as a star. The rest of the lineup included plenty of past-their-prime former stars (Garret Anderson, Craig Biggio) and stopgaps (Adam

Everett, Cory Sullivan). Of course at least the lineup had Howard, along with plus producers like third baseman Joe Crede and catcher Ramon Hernandez. The ace of the starting rotation was...ummm...Josh Fogg? Jeff Weaver? Adam Eaton?

2008: How is it Looking?

Ah, but good news is on the way. The Sluggers should live up to their nickname this season, with the likely top of the lineup—some combination of right fielder Bobby Abreu, second baseman Brandon Phillips, center fielder Carlos Beltran, Howard and left fielder Josh Hamilton—comprising one of the best quintets in all of BRASSWORLD. A few pitchers like Eaton still remain. But they're there to soak up innings, as young, strikeout-hurling righties John Maine and Tim Lincecum now head the rotation.

In fact, as good as this team looks now, Silver has the young talent to be a contender for years to come. Maine and Lincecum should be mainstays in the rotation. Twenty-something hitting keepers include Howard, Phillips, Tony Pena Jr., Delmon Young, Ronny Paulino, Chris Burke and Hamilton. Pena and Hamilton highlighted a fruitful draft, one in which the Sluggers took advantage of their down season, snagging Hamilton with the no. 2 overall pick. The off-season included several significant trades as well. Silver stole new starting shortstop Jack Wilson from Plum Island for Biggio and cash. Seeking to balance future needs with present wants, the Sluggers then dealt Fogg to Maryland for a 2009 first-round draft choice. Silver also dealt newly drafted infielder Brendan Harris along with starter Kip Wells for Wandy Rodriguez and picked up Chad Paronto in a dump trade, continuing the team's efforts to improve its pitching.

Finally, sitting on one of the league's biggest war chests, Silver added some impressive free-agent talent, with Pedro Martinez and Jake Westbrook coming on board to bolster the rotation, Hideki Okajima, Scot Shields and Derrick Turnbow turning the bullpen from a weakness into a strength, and Abreu and Beltran inking long-term deals to join Hamilton in forming a brand new and potent outfield.

Prognostication

Look for Silver to rise from last place to a solid 3rd this season in the Cobb division, enough to earn a lightning-fast return to the playoffs.

Greenville Black Sox 2007: 84-78			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Martin	SP	Harang
1B	Lee/LaRoche	SP	Buehrle
2B	Pedroia	SP	Garland
3B	Wigginton	SP	Snell
SS	Tejada	SP	Bonser
OF	Ichiro	CL	Corpas
OF	J. Guillen		
OF	Dye		

The Black Sox were a good team in 2007. They could be great in '08.

The Transaction Report



Coming off an 84-win season and a playoff berth, Manager Bob Askin figured it was time for his team to take the next step.

Knowing he had money to burn, Greenville pulled off one of the most ambitious trades in league history.

The breakdown:

Greenville trades Kevin Millwood, Chris Ianetta, Bill Rowell, Dexter Fowler and

Chad Paronto to New York for Derrek Lee, Jon Garland, Vinnie Chulk, New York's 2008 2nd round draft choice and \$23,000,000.

Yup, that's a doozy. The Sox gave up three promising young players in Ianetta, Rowell and Fowler. And while the \$23 million in cash New York sent back will help, Greenville is nonetheless on the hook for three more years of Derrek Lee at \$11.6 million per annum. Still, in acquiring Lee, the Sox picked up one of the top offensive first basemen in the league. Garland solidifies an already good starting rotation and Chulk bolsters the bullpen.

That wasn't the only move pulled off by Greenville this off-season. The Sox made back-to-back trades with Montreal at season's end, both involving second basemen. To add more depth and upside to the rotation, the Sox picked up Boof Bonser in exchange for Aaron Hill. Still facing a surplus of second sackers, Askin then flipped Jeff Kent and cash to Montreal for hard-throwing reliever Rafael Soriano and utility infielder Chris Gomez.

The moves fit into a smart plan for Greenville. Realizing the team needed to upgrade its offense, the Sox had earlier acquired Jermaine Dye (along with reliever Jason Frasor) for star closer Joe Nathan. Soriano helped make up for Nathan's loss. Newcomer Peter Moylan, who threw 90 innings of 1.80 ERA ball for the Braves in '07, should also provide a big bullpen lift. Free agent acquisitions LaTroy Hawkins and Javier Lopez should also help.

Lee and Moylan will have plenty of pressure on them to produce. Last season, Greenville's bullpen was one of its strengths. In tabbing Moylan with a first-round pick (no. 13 overall) and bypassing several intriguing prospects, the Sox made a make their pen better than ever, part of a go-for-it-

now approach. Similarly, Lee's contract will weigh on the team's salary cap until the end of the decade, meaning he'll need to succeed right away to earn his keep.

Prognostication

Expect the moves to pay immediate dividends. Greenville looks like the favorite to win the Cobb division in 2008.

South Range Mariners 2007: 56-106			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Ross	SP	Moyer
1B	Helton	SP	Byrd
2B	Lopez/Belliard	SP	M. Batista
3B	Lowell	SP	Loe
SS	Rollins	SP	Marshall/Carlyle
OF	Holliday	CL	Street
OF	Tyner		
OF	Hawpe		



The two most improved teams for 2008 could both hail from the Cobb Division. The Silver Sluggers you already know. Meet their well-armed rivals, the

South Range Mariners.

Manager Michael Swanson spent every penny he could this off-season to make a run at the division title and a deep playoff run. At press time, the Mariners were pressed right up against their bank account limit, thanks to an impressive shopping spree.

Last Year Re-Hash

And why not? South Range won just 56 games last season, disappointing the

hometown fans. At least half the lineup was impressive, featuring Colorado bookend outfielders Matt Holliday and Brad Hawpe, shortstop Jimmy Rollins and first baseman Carlos Delgado. The rest of the team's hitting talent, from the lower half of its batting order all the way to its bench, was subpar, to say the least. Pitchers like Paul Byrd, Carlos Silva and Claudio Vargas manned the rotation—and they were the good ones! This was a team badly in need of a makeover.

The Transaction Report

That's just what Swanson did. The South Range manager gave Helton a five-year, \$32.2 million contract, handing another three years and \$16.8 million to Lowell. Those signings add a pair of impressive bookends to the team's incumbent stars. Rollins and Holliday staged an MVP duel for the ages last season, and should be gigantic contributors for the coming season. Lower-profile trade acquisitions Ron Belliard and David Ross figure to take over at second base and catcher, respectively. Scott Schoeneweis and Oscar Villarreal, picked up from Taggart will aid the bullpen, as will veteran Troy Percival and several other free-agent snags. A closer was found late in the offseason when the youthful potential of Travis Buck was exchanged for the strong right arm of Huston Street.

2008: The Pitchers

Still, the biggest question mark remains the starting rotation. Jamie Moyer and Miguel Batista arrived via free agency. But the duo's better suited to make up the middle of a rotation, rather than the top. Byrd and rising Cubs starter Sean Marshall comprise a respectable front four. The question will be if respectable is enough. The lineup will need to score a ton of runs to support the team's pitching staff. There's little hope for in-

season pick-ups, with the payroll completely tapped out. The deal for Helton should prove interesting, as the Rockies' first baseman will be pushing 40 when the contract runs out.

Prognostication

Pencil in the Mariners for a 25- to 30-game improvement in 2008, likely enough to squeeze into the playoff. Whether South Range can do better than that should be one of the most compelling stories of this BRASSWORLD season.

Alaska Hot Stoves 2007: 109-53			
Lineup	Pitchers		
C	McCann	SP	Morris
1B	Fielder	SP	Young
2B	DeRosa	SP	Cook
3B	Glaus	SP	Gaudin
SS	Furcal	SP	Marcum
OF	Ibanez	CL	Papelbon
OF	Thames/Giles		
OF	Cuddyer		

Not to go on a limb or anything, but it's probably going to be tough for the Alaska Hot stoves to duplicate their 2007 season. After all, it's not every year that a team wins 109 games.

Last Year Re-Hash

Last year's Alaska roster really had no weaknesses. A



A balanced lineup included young sluggers such as Prince Fielder and Brian McCann, veteran mashers like Carlos Lee and Raul Ibanez, and an able

supporting cast. The Hot Stoves hit righties and lefties well. The bullpen was loaded, with young stud Jonathan Papelbon and veteran Scot Shields as the anchors. The

starting rotation included Padre standout Chris Young, 200+ innings of Aaron Cook effectiveness, and what may turn out to be the last good season of Jason Schmidt's career. The only real surprise was that Alaska failed to advance to the World Series, though the eventual American League champs from Gotham City were also stacked.

2008: How is it Looking?

With several key players gone from last year's squad and the rest of the division on the upswing, this could be a challenging year for Manager Chris Blake and his charges. With Schmidt a non-factor, the starting pitching load falls primarily to Young, promising Blue Jays righty Shaun Marcum and two free-agent signees, lefty Mark Hendrickson and returning starter Aaron Cook. The Cook deal could have implications for years to come: The Rockies righty will test the limits of one of baseball's lowest strikeout rates against his otherwise good command, with five years and \$22.5 million in free-agent funds on the line for the Hot Stoves.

It's a similar story in the lineup, as Alaska picked up powerful but injury-prone third baseman Troy Glaus on a five-year deal to patch the offense. At just over \$3 million a season, it's a risk that was probably worth taking. But will the additions of Glaus, Michael Cuddyer (five years, \$15 million) and Brian Giles (four years, \$7.8 million) via free agency be enough to rebuild the Alaska attack? With Ibanez, McCann and other pulling back a bit from prior levels, only Fielder figures to provide a truly elite bat.

Prognostication

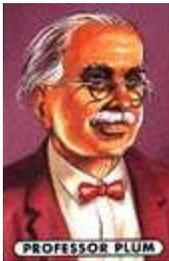
Expect Alaska to struggle to get above .500, possibly missing the post-season. With Schmidt and Matt Morris on the hook for a combined \$11.3 million a year over the next

three years, it could take some major patience, accounting magic and clever deals to return to prominence after that.

RUTH REPORT

Plum Island Greenheads 2007: 92-70

Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Barrett	SP	Zambrano
1B	Guillen	SP	Suppan
2B	Castillo	SP	Williams
3B	Inge	SP	McGowan
SS	Tulowitzki	SP	Trachsel
OF	Soriano	CL	Borowski
OF	Church		
OF	Guerrero		



Last Year Re-Hash

Henry's Greenheads have never won less than 91 games in BW. Despite that impressive feat neither has the organization experienced true post-season glory. Last year the club was solid on offense (3rd in AL in Runs Scored) and on the basepaths (205 steals; tops in the AL). Alfonso Soriano was his usual best (276-43-112). Juan Pierre swiped 94 bases.

The Transaction Report

One minor trade brought in veteran rotation filler (Woody Williams). In free agency Plum Island secured the services of a formidable offensive duo to help out Soriano: former MVP Vlad Guerrero (315-36-128) and Carlos Guillen (382-25-95) was signed away from the rival Gargoyles.

2008: The Hitters

This could be a dominant lineup in the AL once again, thanks in large part to Vlady and Guillen. Soriano returns and is aging well. And with PIG-pet Juan Pierre lost in free agency it appears Henry may field a more conventionally offensive club in 2008. ROY candidate Troy Tulowitzki will only need to supply the defense with the veteran bats around him. Expecting Michael Barrett to replicate '07 (322-17-72) might be asking too much, but he still one of the better catcher bats in BW.

2008: The Pitchers

Two time Walter Johnson winner Carlos Zambrano had a rather ordinary '07 campaign (14-13, 4.21). The rest of the staff is a middling bunch and veteran Jeff Suppan, while reliable, can't possibly yield only 7.8 hits per nine innings again, can he? The bullpen is deep and flexible. If Big Z returns to form and a second arm emerges to accompany him then the 'Head staff might be above average given that the deep pen will only necessitate six innings from the starters on most nights.

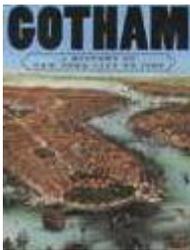
On the Farm

Plum Island's youngsters are intriguing with a solid SS prospect in Reid Brignac, a potential #1 starter in Carlos Carrasco and a strong backstop in Taylor Teagarden.

Prognostication

Plum Island will once again surpass 90 wins and will challenge for the AL pennant. The only thing that alludes this flagship BW franchise is the hardware to backup the regular season success.

Gotham City Gargoyles 2007: 114-48			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Napoli	SP	Lackey
1B	Ortiz	SP	Webb
2B	Roberts	SP	Haren
3B	Chipper	SP	Chico
SS	Lugo/McDonald	SP	???
OF	Swisher	CL	Rivera
OF	Cameron		
OF	Mathews		



Last Year Re-Hash

The most wins in BW, a run to the Series that was stamped out by the McGaffigans, a historic season from Big Papi (297-80-179), 1013 runs scored, a BW-best 3.40 ERA and a Walter Johnson-winner in John Lackey (20-3, 3.30). Frankly, the '07 Gargoyles may go down in BW lore as the best club to not bring home the hardware.

The Transaction Report

Once the most important second-fiddle in BW was retained (Chipper Jones), Wayne set about to bettering his club through some astute trades. Super fourth OF Matt Diaz was brought in to spell the main OF trio while Brian Roberts (253-10-54) came over from LPD and improve the Gargoyle defense immensely. Before the addition of Roberts, Gotham pitchers were going to see the right side of the infield manned by Jose Vidro and David Ortiz- an unacceptable defensive combo if ever there was one.

2008: The Hitters

David Ortiz will be the slugging definition of "regression to mean" in 2008. There is no possible way Gotham can count on a repeat of his '07 season. Chipper will continue to

provide protection for the big fellow. Brian Roberts should be much improved over his stats last year with the Diamonds. The outfield defense in Gotham should be well-above average. Watch out for young stick Jarrod Saltalamacchia who will be looked upon to shoulder some of the catching duties with slugging Mike Napoli (256-19-47).

2008: The Pitchers

Is there a better Front Three in BW than what the Gargoyles will throw out there in 2008? Lackey won the Johnson, but Danny Haren (16-8, 3.94) and Brandon Webb (18-4, 3.48) are aces in their own right. But after them the rotation will look to very young arms like Matt Garza and Matt Chico to hold the line and hopefully allow the club to win many an 8-6 contest. The bullpen is solid with studly closer Mo Rivera (40 saves, 1.81) just waiting for the call to close out games. Aaron Heilman (2.35, 77 IP) will be the main setup man for Rivera.

On the Farm

Young 3b bat Pedro Alvarez is the heir to Chipper for the Gargoyles. Brett Anderson and Brett Cecil are the only real young pitchers of note in the system.

Prognostication

Keeping Chipper around was huge. The weak links in the rotation may make it tough for the Gargoyles to surpass 100 wins again, but come playoff time they're presence won't be noticed as Wayne will be able to run out his Big Three consistently. There is no reason to doubt that the 2008 AL campaign will once again run through Gotham.

Hoboken Bums 2007: 86-76			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Varitek/Olivo	SP	Cain
1B	Dunn/Garciaparra	SP	D. Davis
2B	Sanchez	SP	Wakefield
3B	Gordon/Rolen	SP	Guthrie
SS	Jeter	SP	Belisle
OF	Alou	CL	Jenks/Soria
OF	DeJesus		
OF	Matsui		



Last Year Re-Hash

At the end of last season Pete Blake's Bums had major holes at shortstop and 2nd base. In October Pete made a major deal with Williamsburg to acquire Freddy Sanchez, a former batting champion, to fill that 2nd base position. In free agency the Bums were the high bidder on Derek Jeter. Now that his team has taken care of its shortages, the Bums can work on improving the team's 86-76 record from last year.

Free Agency

As I mentioned above, the Bums signed Derek Jeter in free agency. Jeter signed a 5 year deal for just over 6 million per season. The other player to sign with Hoboken was Jeff Keppinger. Keppinger has a very nice card but with limited plate appearances. He should be able to fill in nicely at 2nd, SS and 3rd with no real drop off.

2008 Draft

With his team in place, Pete was able to draft amateurs in the early rounds. Hoboken's first pick was number 14 overall. In that spot, the Bums selected minor leaguer Jed Lowrie. He as able to get the carded fleet footed Jerry Owens in round 2. He also added Jordan

Walden and Blake Beavan to bolster his amateurs. Hoboken later added some backups in Shelly Duncan and Bryan Pena.

On the Farm

Hoboken minor leagues are in very good hands. They are lead by Kosuke Fukodome, Jed Lowrie Blake Beavan and Jordan Walden. Anytime you have very good players like these with upside in your minor league system you are doing very well.

Prognostication

Hoboken has excellent defense up the middle, power bats, high average hitters and flexibility in the lineup with players like Dunn and Garciaparra. The Bums have some excellent young pitchers in Matt Cain and Jeremy Guthrie. They also have Wakefield, Doug Davis and Belisle to anchor the rotation. Hoboken has 2 excellent closers in Soria and Jenks. Most of the pieces are in place for them to improve and make a run at a playoff spot. My prediction is 86-76.

New York Metz 2007: 71-91			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Suzuki/Mathis	SP	Willis
1B	Morneau	SP	Millwood
2B	Weeks	SP	Jeff Weaver
3B	Iwamura/Rolen	SP	Maholm
SS	A. Cabrera	SP	E. Jackson
OF	Nady	CL	???
OF	L. Gonzalez		
OF	Patterson		

Last Year Re-Hash



The beginning of the 2007 season started the rebuilding process for Chris Metz's New York team when he took over the old San Bernardino

franchise. The Metz lost several key players to trades and free agency. This past off season continued the rebuilding. One major trade was made to bring in some much needed flexibility to the lineup and they did acquire some free agents to fill holes for the upcoming season.

Free Agency

The Metz acquired the services of Randy Wolf, Luis Gonzalez and Jeff Weaver in last year's free agency. Wolf and Weaver will provide about 250 much needed innings to the rotation. Gonzalez will anchor left field for the upcoming year. Chris was able to hold the line on spending and keep over 22 million in the bank for future rebuilding.

2008 Draft

New York didn't have a draft pick until the 24th spot. With that selection they took Nick Blackburn. The Metz had no 2nd round pick but took Billy Buckner in the 3rd. The rest of the draft was filled with guys who have some upside. Ben Francisco, Yorman Bazardo and Virgil Vasquez all offer good potential value down the road.

On the Farm

Help is on the way! The Metz have some excellent top notch prospects. Evan Longoria figures to hit for high average, power, with good plate discipline and outstanding defense. Another high profile prospect in the Metz minor league system is lefty Clayton Kershaw. Kershaw projects as a power pitcher and top of the rotation guy.

Prognostication

The rebuilding process in New York may take a few years but there is light at the end of the tunnel. The Metz have a nice core of young players that will be able to help in the

future. The most notable players are Ellsbury, Hu, Weeks and Cabrera. They also have over 22 million in the bank to acquire players in trades or free agency. The problem is going to be adding help in the area of pitching. Kershaw will be able to team with Willis soon to form a nice lefty tandem in the future but for now there is not much in the cupboard. There is also no real closer on this year's team. The offense could hold there own this year but they lack real power other than Morneau. My prediction is 65-97.

Dublin GaelForce 2007: 77-85			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Zaun	SP	Carmona
1B	Loney/Thome	SP	Francis
2B	Polanco/Kendrick	SP	Schilling
3B	Encarnacion	SP	Arroyo
SS	Eckstein	SP	Johnson/McCarthy
OF	Anderson/Ross	CL	Valverde
OF	Pence		
OF	Berkman		



Last Year Re-Hash

Doug Beebe took over the Exeter franchise in August of last year. After the season he renamed his team to the Dublin GaelForce. Exeter/Dublin finished at 77-85. Doug didn't have any Strat experience when he came to us but he seems to take to our passion very well. He has made a few key trades and free agent acquisitions over the off-season and has helped his team to potentially take it to the next level.

Free Agency

Dublin picked up some big names in Berkman and Palanco in last years free agency sweepstakes. They also added Randy Johnson, Scott Downs, Geoff Blum, Ambiorix Burgos and Neal Cotts. Dublin

spent around 17 million but still has over 15 million in the bank for the future.

2008 Draft

The GaelForce only made 5 selections in this year's draft. Dublin picked up 3 very good minor leaguers, two carded players in lefty in Justin Hampson and switch hitting catcher Mike Rabelo. These players taken add to an already solid team.

On the Farm

Dublin has a very good overall set of minor leaguers from top to bottom. Jason Heyward, Trevor Cahill and Joe Savery were selected in this year's draft. Add those guys to Hurley and Guerra along with Andrus, who was picked up in a trade, and you have yourself a nice crop of amateurs.

Prognostication

Dublin has the look of a playoff team this year. They have a solid offense with Berkman, Pence, Loney and Thome. They also have some nice bench depth in Blake, Morales and Ross. The pitching is anchored by staff ace Fausto Carmona. Add Francis, Arroyo, Schilling and Randy Johnson and you have the makings of a solid rotation. Brandon McCarthy will be spotted in the rotation when needed. Hirsch and Volquez will be able to add to the future rotation when Schilling and Johnson retire. Valverde will be the closer. Dublin might be able to add to this roster during the season and take another step. The future looks bright. My prediction is 89-73.

Williamsburg Burgesses 2007: 87-75			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Y. Molina	SP	Santana
1B	Delgado	SP	Correia
2B	Utley	SP	Silva
3B	Zimmerman	SP	Contreras
SS	Uribe	SP	A. Reyes
OF	Lofton/Ankiel	CL	Betancourt
OF	Byrd		
OF	Hermida/Encarnacion		

Last Year Re-Hash

Jim Bodnar's Williamsburg team finished 3rd in the standing and made it to the playoffs last year with 87 wins but bowed out in the first round to Hoboken. The Burgesses picked up Carlos Delgado, Carlos Silva and Yadier Molina in a deal with South Range during the off season. They also extended the contract of Marlon Byrd. Williamsburg seems set for another run at the playoffs this year.

Free Agency

The Burgesses added some key players in Lofton and Ankiel in free agency. Lofton was signed to a one year deal at 2.6 million. Lofton will play the outfield and lead off for this season. Ankiel was inked for 3 years in the hopes that miraculous comeback continues. They also added some role players to fill spot starts during the year.



2008 Draft

Williamsburg first pick came at number 15 in round one and they selected highly coveted amateur Brian Matusz. They also drafted Bryan Anderson, Juan Silverio and Luke Burnett to put in their minor league system. The other notable added was carded player Dallas Braden.

On the Farm

Williamsburg features one of the best minor league players in any system in Colby Rasmus. Rasmus could possibly take over for St. Louis in centerfield this year. He has a chance to be a bright star in this league for a long time. They have some other very good amateurs in Anderson, Niemann, Conger and Matusz.

Prognostication

Williamsburg has added several pieces in the off-season to remain a contender again this year. They have a nice mix of veterans and young players. They may be a little susceptible to tough left hand pitching with Delgado, Utley, Hermida and Lofton all swinging from the left side. The top of the rotation seems solid with Santana and Correia. Silva is solid at the #3 spot. Contreras and Reyes fill in at the 4th and 5th spots. Betancourt will be slated as the closer this year. Williamsburg looks to be a very solid team this year and looking for a post season bid again. My prediction is 87-75.

AARON ANALYSIS

LaFontaine Park Diamonds 2007: 98-64			
	Lineup		Pitchers
C	Snyder/Bard	SP	F. Hernandez
1B	Giambi	SP	Mussina
2B	K. Johnson	SP	Matsuzaka
3B	Branyan/Helms	SP	???
SS	Crosby	SP	???
OF	Ethier	CL	Fuentes
OF	A. Jones		
OF	Damon		

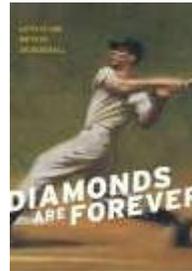
Last Year Re-Hash

The Diamonds finished in second place for the second year in a row, powered by a solid starting rotation featuring 19-4 Mike

Miussina, 19-5 Roy Halladay, and super closer Fuentes and his 1.70 ERA. Andruw Jones provided Gold Glove defense in center field and slugged 49 Homers. Jason Giambi pitched in with 36 Long-Flys, and Bobby Abreu took an amazing 126 walks to set the table.

Transaction Report

Much rebuilding has gone on in LaFontaine Park. 2b Brian Roberts (253-10-54) moved on in a shrewd move by Daniel that brought in young bats Ian Stewart and Carlos Quentin. Unheralded Ted Lilly (14-7, 3.50) was jettisoned before his contract ran out for a future 1st round pick and a prospect. Also shipped out was Junior Griffey in return for a pair of OFs: Johnny Damon (252-19-73, 41 SB for NOR) and Andre Ethier (277-10-50).



On the Farm

Perpetual slugging prospect Stewart is the only significant prospect at the upper reaches of the system. Recent draftee Justin Smoak, a slugging 1b, may move quickly for the Diamonds.

Prognostication

Lafontaine Park's ride near the top of the National League will end in 2008. Andruw Jones had a bad year, Bobby Crosby had an OBP of under .280, Mussina's career is nearly done, and rookie Dice-K didn't quite live up to expectations in his rookie season. LP won't tumble to the bottom – they still have quality players like Billy Butler, Kelly Johnson, and “King” Felix – but a finish in the lower half of the division is expected.

Port Richey Sandcranes 2007: 66-96			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Ausmus	SP	Halladay
1B	Millar	SP	Vazquez
2B	Grudzielanek	SP	Wang
3B	Beltre	SP	Cabrera
SS	F. Lopez	SP	Germano
OF	Crawford	CL	Capps
OF	Ordonez		
OF	Wells		

Last Year Re-Hash

Port Richey finished in fifth place in the division, the second poor year in a row.



Vernon Wells and Carl Crawford didn't have the supporting cast to do a lot. Shea Hillenbrand was a surprise, hitting an unexpected 30 home runs, but the pitching staff was a mess, with a team ERA of 4.82 and only Clay Hensley, at 10-16, reached double digits in wins.

Transaction Report

Owner Fred Lambrecht opened up his wallet during the off-season, spending and additional \$20M over 2006 and landed some blockbuster Free Agents in Javier Vazquez (14-6, 4.21, LZS), Roy Halladay (19-5, 2.98), and setup man Pedro Feliciano.

2008: Hitting

Perpetual highlight-maker Carl Crawford (344-19-56, 51 SB) returns to lead the 'Crane attack. Port Richey has amazing OF depth. Joining holdovers Mags Ordonez and Vernon Wells is new recruit Juan Pierre

(long of PIG). Aaron Rowand is expected to see more action after hitting .330 in limited action.

On the Farm

Blake DeWitt is getting close to being a factor for the Sandcranes. Much buzz surrounds precocious pitcher Henry Rodriguez. Only 20, he may burst on the BRASSWORLD scene quite soon.

Prognostication

Port Richey should enjoy a turnaround this season as Fred's team has the potential to finish with 90+ wins. The only blemish could be the inability to pick up pieces for the stretch run, since the team is almost at the Salary Cap.

Annadale Anteaters 2007: 55-107			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Molina	SP	Robertson
1B	Overbay	SP	Owings
2B	Loretta	SP	de la Rosa
3B	A. Ramirez	SP	Burress
SS	A. Gonzalez	SP	???
OF	Teahen	CL	Cordero
OF	Green		
OF	Spillborghs/Lind		

Last Year Re-Hash



the trough.

The Anteaters struggled mightily in 2007, posting the 2nd-worst record in the NL, a 55-107 mark. Coach Robert Smith is in a rebuilding phase, and last year was hopefully

Annadale really struggled with the bats, finished 3rd-worst in NL in OPS and HR, and

batting in the fewest runs in the league, with 591. Despite the team's performance, Mark Loretta, Edgar Renteria, and Mark Teahen had solid years in starting roles, and up-and-comer Luke Scott (now a Georgia Satellite) had a strong year in a part-time position. Lyle Overbay, Sean Green, and Mike Lamb however, didn't put enough production together for the middle of a lineup, contributing strongly to the low run total.

The pitching staff struggled as well, posting a bottom-half ERA, with the NL's fewest strikeouts. Only Chad Cordero, with 21 saves and a 2.59 ERA pitched really well. No full-time starter posted an ERA under 4, and Runelvys Hernandez put up a dismal 1-10, 9.00 ERA in 12 starts.

Transaction Report

Gone: Edgar Renteria, Luke Scott, Runelvys Hernandez, Mike Lamb, Gil Meche
 Added: Aramis Ramirez, Brett Myers, Claudio Vargas, Mark Loretta (re-signed), Alex Gonzalez, Adam Loewn

On the Farm

Befitting a rebuilding club, Annadale has some extremely exciting young talent in the minors: David Price, Ian Kennedy, Neil Walker and Gerrado Parra, to name a few. Watchout for lefty Glenn Gibson: his father Paul was a reliable LHP and his progeny could quickly become the same for the Anteaters.

Prognostication

Until Myers, Price, Loewen and Kennedy hit the starting rotation, the pitching staff will continue to struggle. The addition of Aramis Ramirez gives the offense an anchor that it badly needs, but there's still a power void that will be very hard to overcome. The Anteaters will struggle to avoid another 100-

loss season with the starting pitching it has assembled.

Georgia Satellites 2007: 89-73			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Posada	SP	Smoltz
1B	Pujols	SP	K. Escobar
2B	Iguchi	SP	Burnett
3B	Huff	SP	Billingsley
SS	M. Young	SP	Baker
OF	Scott	SP	Lowry
OF	Rios	CL	Hoffman
OF	Figgins		

Last Year Re-Hash

New BRASSWORLD owner Sean Britt took over the former Lake Zurich Stingrays from Bruce Herrin (who took it from Kevin Kolb), and promptly packed the team down to peach country. Lake Zurich residents took exception to their playoff team being pulled away, but I guess it's all about the money.



2007 saw a solid year out of the then-Stingrays, as the team posted an 89-73 record, earning a first-ever playoff berth for Lake Zurich.

Unfortunately, the celebration was short-lived, as Northwoods eliminated the Stingrays in five games.

Lake Zurich was led by NL MVP Albert Pujols, who led the NL in HR, runs, RBIs, Slg, and Total Bases, but didn't make the list for intentional walks. NL managers must not read the scouting reports too carefully. Manny Ramirez, Alex Rios, and Tad Iguchi also chipped in with strong overall performances, and Jorge Posada, Troy Glaus, and Jim Edmonds supplied more power, as Lake Zurich led the NL in total HRs, Runs, and RBIs.

All this offense was necessary to Lake Zurich's success, as their pitching finished near the bottom of the league in ERA, with a not-so-pretty team mark of 4.87. Not the fault of their top three pitchers though, as starters Kelvim Escobar, Javier Vazquez, and Barry Zito all had solid seasons, along with a strong 3.02/21save season from Trevor Hoffman. Too many innings by guys like Taylor Tankersley, Fernando Cabrera, and 25-game starter Noah Lowry dragged the team down though.

Transaction Report

Gone: Manny Ramirez, Jim Edmonds, Javier Vazquez, Barry Zito, Brad Radke,
 Added: AJ Burnett, John Smoltz, Luke Scott, Coco Crisp, Angel Villalona (min)
 Benched: Chad Tracy
 Promoted: Scott Baker

On the Farm

2b/OF Matt Antonelli looks to be on the big club soon. The Satellites feature arguably the two best baseball players under the age of 18: Angel Villalona and Carlos Triunfel.

Prognostication

The new Satellites will look to big money free agents AJ Burnett and John Smoltz to replace the wins lost from the departure of Barry Zito and Javier Vazquez. Team ERA should improve with a much better Noah Lowry, and a stronger relief corps as well. Prince Albert will struggle to repeat his colossal 2007 numbers, and Luke Scott and Coco Crisp won't replace Jim Edmonds' HRs either. But the defense should be stronger with Manny Ramirez wandering around in a different LF, and a strong looking Jorge Posada looks to improve on an average 2007.

Taggart Titans 2007: 111-51			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Estrada	SP	Shields
1B	Kotchman	SP	Gorzelanny
2B	Ellis	SP	Capuano
3B	Atkins	SP	Greinke
SS	Hardy	SP	Durbin/Gallardo
OF	Cust	CL	Ray
OF	C. Young		
OF	Hart		

Last Year Re-Hash

League commissioner Mark Lentz led the Taggart Titans to an NL-best 111 wins in 2007, only to fall unexpectedly in the NLDS to Lafontaine Park (now Georgia), 4-2.

Taggart was lead by an incredible pitching staff, headed by Jason Jennings (18-8, 3.00 ERA), Dave Bush (16-5, 3.82 ERA) and Chris Capuano (16-8, 3.65 ERA). All three were up for the Christy Mathewson award, with Jennings finishing best-of-the-group in 4th. The back end of the bullpen was held up by a surprising Chris Ray, who, despite giving up 11 HRs in 65 innings, still posted a solid 3.05 ERA, and tallied 38 saves. The team overall lead the NL in ERA, Wins, Saves.



On the offensive side, Lentz had more mixed results, with outstanding years from Bobby Kielty, Ben Broussard, and Johnny Estrada offset by a disappointing season from \$7 million dollar man Alex Rodriguez. The team still finished fifth in the NL in OPS, though they also were 2nd in strikeouts.

Transaction Report

Gone: Some schlub named Alex Rodriguez, Jack Cust, Milton "Are you talkin' to me?!" Bradley, Jason Jennings, Dave Bush, Pedro Martinez

Added: JJ Hardy, Garrett Atkins, Jack Cust, Chad Durbin

Benched: Ben Broussard, Bill Hall

Promoted: Cory Hart, Casey Kotchman, Tom Gorzellany, Yovanni Gallardo

On the Farm

Adam Miller remains the prize of the system. Dennis Sarfate may roar into the Titan pen next year with a fastball that nears 100 MPH. German Duran is a bat without a position- but hey- there are eight to choose from.

Prognostication

Taggart looks like a team that's going to take a small step back this year. Losing two of your top three pitchers, and the best player in MLB, can do that to you. Lentz shrewd moves, including picking up a rising JJ Hardy by trade, and Jack Cust in the draft, will help the offensive side of the ledger, but the pitching staff isn't likely to perform at 2007 levels. He's not rebuilding though, just taking a quick duck behind some cover to reload.

Virginia Patriots 2007: 72-90			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Schneider	SP	Sabathia
1B	Konerko	SP	Lowe
2B	Cano	SP	O. Hernandez
3B	Youkilis	SP	Sonnastine
SS	Vizquel	SP	S. Hill
OF	Griffey	CL	Wagner/Nathan
OF	Markakis		
OF	Victorino		

Last Year Re-Hash



The Virginia Patriots finished a tough 2007 campaign with a 72-90 record. Their solid pitching staff, anchored by Derek Lowe, Miguel

Batista, and CrookedCap Sabathia, posted a strong total ERA of 3.70. Billy Wagner provided a strong presence on the back end of the bullpen, posting a 1.90 ERA and garnering 23 saves. Only Eric Milton really struggled, yielding almost 6.5 runs per nine, but Roger Clemens' partial year performance was enough to make up for it, with a 1.78, 7-1, 7K/9IP line.

The solid pitching performance wasn't backed up with hitting however. The Patriots were bottom-three in the NL in runs scored (though they did score enough for a Pythagorean record of 80-82, providing hope for a stronger future). Bright spots for the struggling offense were: Robinson Cano's .322 average, Jermaine Dye's 37 HRs and Paul Konerko's 36. Too many at-bats for Omar Vizquel, Willie Bloomquist and Nick Markakis held back the team.

Transaction Report

Gone: Jason Frasor, Jermaine Dye, Felipe Lopez, Miguel Batista, Roger Clemens
Added: Brian Schneider, Orlando "get off my lawn, dang kids" Hernandez, Johnny Damon, Russ Springer, Felipe Lopez, Omar Vizquel, Joe Nathan

Benched: Mike Piazza, Shane Victorino

Promoted: Ryan Theriot, Shawn Hill

On the Farm

C Geovany Soto and 3b/SS Brandon Wood are as close as close can be to becoming fixtures in the Patriot lineup.

Prognostication

The pitching staff has a chance to have a Mathewson Award winner, with CC Sabathia as the #1 starter. The two through four spots have talent too, with Derek Lowe, Orlando Hernandez, and Shawn Hill providing good, but partial season, numbers.

The bullpen should benefit from a huge addition, as Joe Nathan brings his skills to Virginia to complement Wager. Behind the pitchers, the defense should be stronger as well. The offense will deliver better results too, if Mike Bardos can work the platoons and at-bats to his advantage. Some of the wins Taggart will drop could well go to Virginia

MAYS MENTIONS

Aspen Rainmakers 2007: 56-106			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Kendall	SP	Blanton
1B	Jackson/Johnson	SP	Kazmir
2B	Barfield	SP	Wainwright
3B	Kouzmanoff	SP	Kendrick
SS	Peralta	SP	Colon
OF	Winn	CL	Accardo
OF	Gload		
OF	Willits		

Last Year Re-Hash



Aspen finished the season with over 100 losses, but surprisingly not in last place. These numbers tell the story of a season gone wrong: Team batting average of .243, Team era of 4.85, and 113 HR hit versus 190 given up. Though Scott Kazmir had a strong season numbers-wise, he was only 3-11 despite only giving up 129 hits in 142 innings and getting 167 Ks. On the offensive side, no batter hit .290 or had over 20 HRs.

On the Farm

The Rainmakers hold intriguing power arms-one that throws lefty (Ross Detwiler) and the

other from the right (Felipe Paulino). Brian Barton is close to entering the outfield mix at the big league level.

Prognostication

Despite \$33M in the bank (an increase of \$8M over last season), Aspen signed no Free Agents, instead focusing on rebuilding (perhaps due to the incredibly high bidding). With a starting pitching staff anchored by Joe Blanton and Scott Kazmir, followed by youngsters Wainwright and Kendrick, and one-time Cy Young, but now filler, Bartolo Colon, the staff is at least better than last season. Unfortunately, the offense may be league-worst. So don't expect a turn-around this season. Expect over 100 losses and a last place finish as Aspen fans get a look at the kids who may lead their team out of the bottom some day.

Palo Alto Robber Barons 2007: 50-112			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Mauer	SP	Verlander
1B	Teixeira	SP	Peavy
2B	Matsui	SP	Pettitte
3B	Rodriguez	SP	Tejeda
SS	Drew	SP	Perez/K. Wells
OF	Kotsay	CL	Marmol
OF	Bay		
OF	E. Brown/Floyd		

Last Year Re-Hash



As the Mounties of Mansfield, the club experienced a shocking first-to-worst turnaround that left the team with over 110 losses in 2007 after winning 109 in 2006.

While there were some solid players remaining (Polanco, Mauer, Byrnes, and Teixeira), the rest were just

aweful. Barmes hit just .168, Kotsay .234, Castilla .221, and the fans saw a lot of Mark Bellhorn and his .139 average (just for comparison, his pitchers hit just a bit less at .102). The team average was .245. On the pitching side, after Verlander and Peavy there was a big drop. A team ERA of 5.78 and 230 home runs allowed lead to no pitcher with a winning record, and half with ERAs over 6.

Transaction Report

Alex Rodriguez was inked to a deal that will pay him nearly ten million per year for the five seasons. He will remove any worries Doctor Dick had at third base.

On the Farm

Matt LaPorta is one of the best RH sluggers not currently plying his trade at the BW level. Rick Porcello may rush quickly to Palo Alto, even though he is still a teenager.

Prognostication

ARod replaces Mark Bellhorn and Vinny Castilla at 3rd base, and I don't think you will ever see a bigger difference in output. Marmol had a good year, as did newcomers Villone and Mahay. Verlander is a true #1 and Peavy is too. But there is not much good news toward the back of the rotation, and a lot of mediocre relief innings to be used. The outfield is all below-average, and in some cases well-below. But with a new owner in tow and a willingness to change, things are looking up long-term. But the turn-around may not arrive until 2010 – especially with no money in the bank.

Maryland Mounders 2007: 78-84			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Martinez	SP	Beckett
1B	Hatteberg	SP	Meche
2B	Escobar/Fontenot	SP	Padilla
3B	Lamb	SP	Lee
SS	Greene	SP	Fogg
OF	Sheffield	CL	Lidge
OF	Bradley		
OF	Kemp		

Last Year Re-Hash

Much of the success that Maryland experienced in 2007 was due to the young arms of AJ Burnett, Josh Beckett and Francisco Liriano.

2008: The Pitching

After a tough year of free agency, and the potentially devastating elbow injury to one of the best young arms in the game, Francisco Liriano, all that remains from the top 4 is



Josh Beckett. Manager Bill Galanis had a lot of work to do to try and re-build his pitching staff. Very active in both the free agent market and

the trade market, he was able to land Gil Meche and Josh Fogg to help anchor the rotation. The price was high, but the moves were needed. Galanis is now hoping that young arms like Volstad, Delcarmen, and Stults can come through for him.

Transaction Report

Two fifths of the rotation came over via trade: Cliff Lee and Josh Fogg. Bill picked up other useful contributors in Vicente Padilla, Mike Lamb and Scott Hatteberg in free agency.

On the Farm

With some young talented hitters like Jay Bruce, Steven Pearce and Cameron Maybin all developing and maturing, the future outfield looks very bright for the Mounders.

Prognostication

Playing in a division that has two of the strongest teams in BRASSWORLD will make victories hard to come by at times. 2008 looks to be a rebuilding year as the Mounders must wait for a pitching staff to develop. Better things lie ahead.

West Oakland Wolverines 2007: 90-72			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Johjima	SP	Washburn
1B	Gonzalez	SP	Marquis
2B	Hill	SP	L. Hernandez
3B	Mora	SP	Sampson
SS	Reyes	SP	Wellemeier
OF	C. Lee	CL	Sherrill
OF	J. Jones		
OF	Kubel/Gutierrez		

Last Year Re-Hash



A late surge (35-19 from August onward) put the Wolverines in the playoffs once again. But unlike the previous year's run, WOW fell quickly to LaFontaine

Park. Freddy Sanchez missed the NL batting title by a mere point to Miguel Cabrera.

Transaction Report

While coping with the losses of Smoltz and Beltran, they have been very active in Free Agency, and made a major trade with Hoboken that brought in starry youthful players like Joel Zumaya and Travis Snider while also gaining some useful staff pieces in

Livan Hernandez and Todd Wellemeier. All that acquired for Freddy Sanchez- albeit a Freddy Sanchez that hit 360 with 63 doubles in 2007. And in a late move, Bill was able to replace Freddy when he swapped Huston Street for Aaron Hill.

On the Farm

Travis Snider and Jeff Clement may be the future 3 and 4 hitters in the WOW lineup. Jake McGee is a tantalizing lefty power arm.

Prognostication

The Wolverines are a solid team, but play on a tough division. While they have the talent, and players to equal their third place finish of last year, they are still considerably far behind the two front runners. Look for the younger players to continue to develop and this team to keep getting stronger every year.

Northwoods Moose 2007: 100-62			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	LoDuca	SP	Oswalt
1B	Hafner	SP	Hudson
2B	Hudson	SP	Hamels
3B	M. Cabrera	SP	Sheets
SS	H. Ramirez	SP	Olsen
OF	Drew	CL	F. Rodriguez
OF	Francouer		
OF	BJ Upton		

Last Year Re-Hash



The past champion Moose had another stellar regular season but stumbled in the NLCS to eventual champion Montreal. Hanley Ramirez won the ROY award in the NL.

Miguel Cabrera was runner-up in MVP voting.

2008: The Pitching

The Moose feature one of the best starting rotations in BRASSWORLD now that Tim Hudson is on board. The bullpen has been re-armed with Jason Istringhausen, Justin Speier and Scott Linebrink. Lurking at the end of games will continue to be Francisco Rodriguez. As always, though, health is a factor- especially when a club is counting on Ben Sheets to take the ball regularly.

2008: The Hitting

The line-up features three of the best young hitters in the game with BJ Upton, Hanley Ramirez, and Miguel Cabrera. In 2007 Cabrera posted an impressive 1.077 OPS. The club will need to replace Johnny Damon's lefty sparkplug bat at the top of the lineup. The additions of Paul LoDuca and Mike Redmond give the Moose a new backstop combo.

Transaction Report

Newly signed Eric Chavez has no place to play. The team that won 100 games last year, has only gotten better. Istringhausen came over from Palo Alto in a swap for out-of-a-job Jason Bay.

On the Farm

2008 draftee Mike Moustakas is the best hitter down on the farm. Scott Elbert is the best pitcher, but has missed time with arm problems. Most of the young talent in the Moose system has been graduated and is in the mix for yearly award recognition.

Prognostication

The Moose are one of the preseason favorites to win it all, and have the young players in place to continue their BRASSWORLD dominance. In 2008, they should pass the 2-time defending champs, and capture the Mays Division.

Montreal McGaffigans 2007: 107-55			
Lineup		Pitchers	
C	Pierzynski	SP	Bedard
1B	Pena	SP	Penny
2B	Kent	SP	Zito
3B	Wright	SP	Maddux
SS	Renteria	SP	Bonderman
OF	Bonds	CL	Putz
OF	Sizemore		
OF	Ludwick		

Last Year Re-Hash

The Macs are two-time defending BRASSWORLD champions. That pretty sums up the success the club has been experiencing recently. Chris Carpenter snagged the Christy Mathewson Award with a 21-3 record and 2.86 ERA.

Transaction Report



No team has ever been as active in the trade market as Montreal. GM Jonah Kerri has shown time and time again, he is never afraid to make a deal to make his team stronger.

The annual list of players that have passed through his clubhouse feature more stars and bigger names than most teams have on their roster. Grady Sizemore, David Wright, Edgar Renteria and Barry Zito were among the incoming talent expected to continue the winning Montreal tradition. Barry Bonds was signed to a large contract to stand in left-field- and fuel the offense.

2008: The Pitching

Their starting 5 pitchers may be the best in BRASSWORLD. That doesn't even mention their spot starter, Roger Clemens. Their

bullpen is anchored by good closers, and excellent set-up men.

2008: The Hitting

Their line-up is as solid as ever with only RF being a little unstable. One would assume Jonah will solve that riddle in due time. With a great bench, it is no problem to put a line-up out there that could put up record numbers. 1B Carlos Pena, signed for a song the year previous, has been the talk of spring camp. The new acquisitions (Wright, Sizemore, Bonds) also figure to anchor the line-up.

Prognostication

The only team that stands in the way of the Mays Title and further glories is their greatest rival – the Moose.