

ST. JOHN'S FALLS! N.E. WILL HAVE NEW CHAMPION!

STJ WON FIRST EIGHT NEW ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS; DOOMED BY RECENT 11-GAME LOSING STREAK

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (July 28, 1865) – St. John's hosted New England leaders Sons of the Ocean for the second of their five-game series on Friday afternoon, and they were expecting to do what they have always done late in the season: beat the New England competition and do so convincingly. However, despite an early lead it was not to be on this day:

NATIONAL BASE BALL ORGANIZATION												
SONS OF THE OCEAN AT ST. JOHN'S BASEBALL CLUB												
GAME ID: 1494 - FRIDAY, JULY 28TH, 1865 - <u>GAME LOG</u>												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	R	H	E
Sons of the Ocean (39-24)	1	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	1	7	8	5
St. John's Baseball Club (31-32)	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	8	5

The result did the unthinkable: it moved St. John's under the .500 mark and guaranteed that **FOR THE FIRST TIME** they would not be the winners of the New England Championship, with the result placing them eight games behind 1st-place Sons of the Ocean with seven games left in the season. S.o.t.O. is currently four games in the clear over Granite & Portland.

Players and fans of every other club in New England celebrated the news that hated St. John's would finally be dethroned, although some were a bit disappointed that it took what will easily be St. Johns' worst-ever season to see them fall from 1st place instead of an extraordinary team rising up and being their betters.

St. John's was even with S.o.t.O. for top spot at the halfway point with a 22-13 record – not the first time they've been in a fierce battle for the New England title after half the season – so how did it all go so wrong here in 1865?

Over the first eight years of the N.B.B.O, St. John's has become known for its almost mythical ability to string together long streaks of wins and dominant performances late in the season and during playoff base ball. Over the second half of one season ahead of a cup triumph, they had a record of 28-7. They have had multiple winning streaks of longer than ten games. During their first two cup triumphs, St. John's had an easy time sweeping Victory in Tucker-Wheaton Cup I and then beat Knickerbocker 10-2 in a Game Five at the Elysian Fields the next year. In three years of Round Robin cup play St. John's is 24-7, with their worst showing being a 7-3 2nd-place finish in the first Round Robin edition of the Tucker-Wheaton Cup.

With St. John's level with Sons of the Ocean for 1st place and one game ahead of Quinnipiac after seven weeks, many assumed that they would do what they always do: win about two-thirds of their games over the second half of the season and finish on top of the New England Championship by five games, give or take a couple. That was not what happened.

St. John's was 4-4 in the final eight June games that marked the start of their second half, looking brilliant in a 16-0 win vs Granite but otherwise struggling. St. John's continued to play just okay base ball to start July, going 4-3 against Granite & Cantabrigians ahead of three incredibly important series against Portland, Green Mountain, and Sons of the Ocean. *Then, it happened...*

Starting with a 7-4 home loss to open their series against Portland, St. John's [LOST ELEVEN GAMES IN A ROW](#), by far the worst stretch of baseball in club history. They lost all five home games to Portland by multiple runs, then lost four of five games at Green Mountain by multiple runs before a 7-6 loss, and a limp 6-3 home loss to Sons of the Ocean ran the losing streak to an unimaginable eleven straight. This was completely uncharted territory for base ball in Providence.

After showing signs of life in an 8-6 win over S.o.t.O. on Thursday, St. John's took an early 3-1 lead in a must-win game before falling apart and losing 7-3, giving St. John's an under .500 record, seeing them fall to 6th place, and relegating them to New England pretenders for the first time – three mortal blows all at once.

The dethronement of St. John's has been some time in coming. They lost John McGowan ahead of last season but were still able to outscore everybody else. However, letting Anderson MacGyver leave without bringing in anybody to replace him was the proverbial bridge too far. While MacGyver has been hitting over .330 with 60+ R.B.I. for Mutual, his 2B replacement, Walter Warren, has hit .247 (.576 O.P.S.) and has a -0.6 W.A.R. They also brought in a new C & SS, with C Bruce Botchko batting .247 (.570 O.P.S.) and SS Thomas DiMola batting .280 (.613 O.P.S.). Combined, all three positions with new players

have produced at below replacement level over the entire season, and because of that it is possible that St. Johns' offense will score 150 fewer runs (-2.1 R/G) this season than it did last season – the largest season-to-season drop ever.

The irony in all of this is that St. Johns' mighty fall has occurred in the year that the N.B.B.O. is honoring them by having Olneyville Field host the All-Star Game, and the team likely to finally take the New England pennant from them, the Sons of the Ocean, will do so in their first season after seeing superstar 3B Samuel Kessler leave for Alleghany in the Inland Championship.

One can expect major changes to the St. John's roster over the winter, so the rest of New England would be well-served to savor and enjoy the results of this season as while they can.