

THE 1874 PHILADELPHIA CITY BASEBALL LEAGUE PREVIEW

PHILADELPHIA (May 13, 1874) – This afternoon the curtain will be raised on the second season of the Philadelphia City Baseball League, with its twelve teams ready to go after their first winter of roster building.

The inaugural season ended with a surprise: Mercantile beating the three B.C.C. teams to a place in the Liberty Bell Classic and then besting favored Frankford Arsenal over five games to become the first champions of Philadelphia.

There wasn't much in the way of notable player movement during the winter, so perhaps the most important piece of news was one regarding one of the league's stars: that the precocious Joseph Evans had apparently taken up a [training regimen](#) upon a doctor's recommendation that somehow made the league's best player even more talented going into 1874, yet with [unfulfilled potential](#) still waiting to be reached.

That's not to say the PCBL lacks talented Greenhorns for 1874. The new player most are looking forward to seeing take part in an organized contest also happens to be a Frankford Arsenal player: five-star talent [Jonathan Toppin](#), who will be the team's new 2B. Aside from Toppin there are three other four or five-star Greenhorns: OF Artur Hall (Sons of Ben), P William Haney (Keystone), & OF Sig Siemens (Germantown).

The scuttlebutt from the Writers Pool is that Frankford Arsenal should top East Philadelphia again, but this will be the year that the three B.C.C. teams assert their dominance and top West Philadelphia.

And with that, it's time to play ball!

PHILADELPHIA CITY BASEBALL LEAGUE PROJECTED FINISH

East Philadelphia

- Favorites: Frankford Arsenal at 47-23 (+120 RD)
- Spartan 4 GB, Sons of Ben 6 GB, Port Richmond 7 GB

West Philadelphia

- Favorites: Merion B.C.C. at 47-23 (+115 RD)
- Philadelphia B.C.C. 4 GB, Germantown B.C.C. 5 GB, Mercantile 10 GB

Liberty Bell Classic favorites: Frankford Arsenal

EAST PHILADELPHIA – Of course Frankford are the favorites in East Philadelphia. Their best player reportedly is even better, they have the most talented Greenhorn in the PCBL, and they have top-five players at four different positions – C, 2B, LF, & CF – with Charlie Greiner ranked #6 at P. Spartan doesn't have a ton of talent, but they have Joseph Sizemore and that could be enough for a top-two finish. Sons of Ben has the league's most talented P, Paul Krueger, and thus they're a natural contender. Port Richmond has quality at a few positions and thus should finish a bit over .500.

WEST PHILADELPHIA – Merion enters 1874 with a truly stacked roster. Their regulars rank 1st, 2nd, or 3rd out of sixteen at six positions: 1B, 3B, LF, CF, RF, & P. Their only weak spot is at 2B, where Everton Woods ranks 16th/16. P.B.C.C. has tremendous top-end talent – C Harrison Hearts, 2B Frederick Pike, & 3B Charles Hunt all rank 1st at their positions – but they simply don't have Merion's all-around quality. Germantown has a similar problem: 1B John Bagwell, LF Harrison Comstock, & CF Edward Smith are all top-three at their positions but they can't recreate Merion's quality across the regular nine. The previous should leave defending champions Mercantile looking up, as their pitching is excellent but star 1B Ben Warnock won't be able to single-handedly carry their offense.

PCBL AWARD FAVORITES

Batsman of the Year: Joseph Evans (LF, Frankford) – projected .388/.432/.576, 2 HR, 78 RBI, 22 SB

Pitcher of the Year: Jonathan Atkins (Merion B.C.C.) – projected 24-15, 2.08 ERA, 27 K's over 328.2 IP

Most Valuable Player: Joseph Evans (LF, Frankford)

Greenhorn of the Year: Jonathan Toppin (2B, Frankford) – projected .304/.328/.432, 2 HR, 64 RBI, 28 SB

PCBL TEAM OF THE YEAR FAVORITES

P: Jonathan Atkins (Merion), C: Harrison Hearst (P.B.C.C.), 1B: William Norman (Merion), 2B: Frederick Pike (P.B.C.C.), 3B: Andrew Bennett (S.o.B.), SS: Jonathan Turriff (Independence), OF: Joseph Evans (Frankford), OF: Francis Brown (Frankford), OF: Isaac James (Keystone)