

THE 1880 PHILADELPHIA CITY BASEBALL LEAGUE PREVIEW

PHILADELPHIA, PENN. (May 12, 1880) – The eighth season of play in the Philadelphia City Baseball League begins today. The honor of hosting the first game goes to Yorktown B.C., who pulled off the most surprising signing of the winter, as they host Frankford Arsenal, with the opening pitch scheduled for 1:20 P.M.

Last year, Penn B.C. took a fairytale championship, only holding the least in West Philadelphia at the end of the final day of the season and then beating overall #1 Spartan 3-1 in the Liberty Bell Classic. They are favored to repeat in what is expected to again be a chaotic West Philadelphia pennant race, while Frankford Arsenal is projected to go back to #1 in the East.

P.C.B.L. PROJECTED FINISH & ANALYSIS

EAST PHILADELPHIA

- **FAVORITES:** Frankford Arsenal at 45-25 (+125 RD)
- Minerva 2 GB; Spartan 7 GB; Sons of Ben 9 GB
- Queen Village 12 GB; Keystone & Port Richmond 14 GB; Yorktown 20 GB

It appears that the Philadelphia Writers Pool has learned their lesson, because for the first time in three years they have NOT picked Minerva to take the East pennant. Instead, they've favored Frankford based on their 25-10 second half in 1879. Frankford did lose 3x Team of the Year member Francis Brown to the N.B.B.O. over the winter and replaced him from within, so their Outfield has taken a hit.

Minerva brought the whole lineup back, although star 2B Jonathan Auriemma will miss the opening two weeks due to injury. Defending champs Spartan lost two regulars over the winter, including veteran leader Joseph Sizemore, so they'll come back to the pack. Sons of Ben will be dangerous thanks to the combination of G.o.t.Y. Peter Stinson & B.o.t.Y. Henry Yoder, but, like Auriemma, Stinson will miss the first two weeks of play.

Among the teams expected to duke it out for last place, the biggest surprise *by far* was Yorktown recruiting Benjamin Warnock to play 1B for them after Mercantile decided to promote top prospect Samuel Harris.

WEST PHILADELPHIA

- FAVORITES: Penn B.C. at 41-29 (+50 RD)
- Merion 1 GB; Overbrook 3 GB; Schuylkill 5 GB; Germantown & Mercantile 6 GB; Bartram Village 8 GB
- Independence 17 GB

Defending champions Penn lost their LF over the winter but found a decent-looking indy ball Batsman named Francis Byrd (2.5/2.5*) to replace him, so they're favored to take the West pennant again as everyone else is back. However, just as last year there are a number of teams that could easily finish atop the standings.

Merion is expected back near first place after two off-years. They lost 1874 M.V.P. Clifford Martin to the N.B.B.O., but replaced him with A.P.B.L. backup Sidney Crowder at RF. Overbrook only lost one regular over the winter, and they have a promising Greenhorn at 1B in Almon Zolezzi. Schuylkill got \$1,400 for George Oman, and they used some of that windfall to upgrade their pitching. Germantown is a potential danger after promoting top prospect William Penn (3.0/4.5*) to the lineup at LF. That Mercantile prospect, Samuel Harris, grades as a 4.0/4.5* Batsman so they're fine at 1B, but they lost their #2 P & SS. Bartram Village is in good shape heading into their third season in the league.

Once again, Independence, who's finished last five times in seven seasons, is expected to prop up the standings. That said, they do have the league's most talented Greenhorn: CF John Smith (4.0/4.5*).

AWARD FAVORITES

Batsman of the Year: Henry Yoder (CF, age 25, Sons of Ben)

Pitcher of the Year: Thomas Bath (age 32, Penn B.C.)

Fielder of the Year: Jonathan Auriemma (2B, age 30, Minerva)

Greenhorn of the Year: John Smith (CF, age 24, Independence)

TEAM OF THE YEAR FAVORITES

P: Thomas Bath (PENN, age 32), **C:** Damian McLaughlin (PENN, age 24, 4.0/4.5*), **1B:** Benjamin Warnock (YORK, age 34, 4.5/4.5*), **2B:** Jonathan Toppin (FRA, age 32, 4.0/4.0*), **3B:** Jacky Kooren (MERC, age 31, 3.0/3.0*), **SS:** Louis McKenzie (MER, age 24, 3.0/3.5*), **OF:** Henry Yoder (SoB, age 25, 4.0/4.0*), **OF:** James Harris (FRA, age 33, 4.5/4.5*), **OF:** John Smith (IND, age 24, 4.0/4.5*)

TOP GREENHORNS & PROSPECTS (by position)

P1: Claude Haskins (FRA, age 24, 4.0/4.0*), **P2:** George Buchanan (PENN, age 25, 3.0/3.5*), **C:** Jacob House (SPA, age 22, 2.5/3.0*), **1B:** Samuel Harris (MERC, age 24, 4.0/4.5*), **2B:** James Blank (MERC, age 24, 2.5/2.5*), **3B:** Karl Stinson (MER, age 24, 2.5/2.5*), **SS:** Charles Dantzler (SoB, age 23, 1.5/2.0*), **OF:** John Smith (IND, age 24, 4.0/4.5*), **OF:** William Penn (GER, age 23, 3.0/4.5*), **OF:** Francis Byrd (PENN, age 25, 2.5/2.5*)