

THE FIRST TUCKER-WHEATON CUP

TROY, NY & PROVIDENCE, RI, August (1857) – After exciting base ball in the playoffs for both leagues, Victory B.B.C. and St. John's B.C. walked out champions of the New York League and the Northeastern League, becoming the first two teams to vie for the Tucker-Wheaton Cup.

For Victory, it looked like they would be up against it in the N.Y.L. Championship Series as Nassau County beat Metropolitan 3-1 in the Semi-Final via three easy wins. However, the Troy-based club dispatched Nassau Co. in four games themselves to take the N.Y.L. title, winning the finale 5-4 thanks to four runs over the middle innings. Victory did have some fortune on their side as they won the last two games by one run each, so results easily could have gone differently

St. John's B.C. was the #3 seed in the Northeastern League playoffs, but they certainly didn't play like it. They swept aside Shamrock in the Semi-Final by scores of 11-4, 11-4, & 7-6, and that set up a tantalizing N.E.L. Championship Series with Alleghany. The N.E.L.C.S. went the distance, and it was all offense. Alleghany won the opener 10-5 and St. John's won the next two games by scores of 12-10 and 14-4. Alleghany was able to stay alive with a 12-7 win at St. John's in Game Four, but in Game Five at Alleghany St. John's took the lead with two runs in the top of the eighth and held off an Alleghany rally in the ninth to win 7-6.

Troy was definitely not fancied to be the first New York team to try to take the T.W.C. New Yorkers figured that the base ball in New York City & Brooklyn was superior to the game played upstate, and if a team from upstate was going to be the N.Y.L. champion it would be Niagara or Flour City. However, Troy muscled their way through the competition thanks to the highest-scoring offense in the entire 48-team N.B.B.O. – 8.0 runs per game – and their defense held opponents to the third-fewest runs in the N.Y.L.

On the other hand, writers definitely thought St. John's capable of making it to the season finale. If anything, they found it surprising that St. John's record was only 41-29 and not closer to Alleghany's 52-18. However, their superstar outfielder shone in the playoffs and here they were with the opportunity to lift the cup.

Would the inaugural Tucker-Wheaton Cup be a memorable one?

St. John's Baseball Club win series, 3 to 0.

Game 1: St. John's Baseball Club defeat Victory Base Ball Club, 9 to 8:
St. John's Baseball Club Edge Victory Base Ball Club 9-8 to Open R3
W: P. Goehring (1-0) L: D. Roberts (0-1) S: J. McGowan (1)
HR - None
[Boxscore](#) [Game Log](#)

Game 2: St. John's Baseball Club defeat Victory Base Ball Club, 11 to 6:
St. John's Baseball Club Tops Victory Base Ball Club Again, 11-6
W: M. Helgestad (1-0) L: A. Higgins (0-1)
HR - None
[Boxscore](#) [Game Log](#)

Game 3: St. John's Baseball Club defeat Victory Base Ball Club, 3 to 2:
St. John's Baseball Club Sweep Victory Base Ball Club
W: P. Goehring (2-0) L: D. Roberts (0-2)
HR - None
[Boxscore](#) [Game Log](#)

Series MVP: SS Ernie Arnold (St. John's Baseball Club)

Unfortunately, no. Victory ran out of steam, the St. John's outfield continued its dominance, and the cup was given its first set of party arrangements in the city of Providence, Rhode Island.

Game One in Troy was a wild affair, but not until late. St. John's scored twice in the top of the first, and it looked like that might be enough as they were ahead 4-1 after the end of six innings. It *really* looked like that would be enough after St. John's scored three times in the top of the seventh to make it 7-1, but Troy came back with three runs of their own in the bottom half. Victory then scored in the eighth to make it 7-5. The visitors scored two runs in the top of the ninth to make it

9-5, and as it turned out they absolutely needed those runs as Victory scored three more times in the bottom half of the inning before leaving the tying run on first.

Player of the Game: St. John's shortstop Ernie Arnold (4/5, 1 R, 2 RBI)

Game Two was another case of St. John's jumping out to an early lead, but this time it was large enough that Victory couldn't come close. The visitors scored five times in the top of the first, twice more in the top of the second, and that was all they needed in an 11-6 win at Victory. Three different St. John's players recorded three hits – J. Buss, W. Johnson, & M. Reagan – while third baseman Herman Rust drove in three runs.

Player of the Game: St. John's outfielder William Johnson (3/5, 3 R, 2 SB)

Game Three was in Providence, and that was where St. John's ended the N.B.B.O. season. This game was a much tighter affair, as the teams combined for only five runs and fifteen hits – St. John's winning with only six hits of their own. Victory & St. John's traded runs over the first two innings before the hosts scored twice in the fourth to bring the score to 3-1. That proved to be enough since all Victory could muster St. John's pitcher Paul Goehring the rest of the way was a single score in the top of the fifth. The game ended with a pop fly to shortstop Ernie Arnold, and St. John's became the first team to lift the Tucker-Wheaton Cup.

Player of the Game: St. John's pitcher Paul Goehring (9 IP, 9 H, 2 R/1 ER, 1 BB, 139 pitches)

The Tucker-Wheaton-Cup MVP ended up not going to a member of the vaunted St. John's outfield trio. Instead, the honor went to shortstop Ernie Arnold, who finished the series 6/12 with three runs scored and four RBI.

Two-thirds of the St. John's outfield was outstanding during the postseason. Right fielder Clive Wise took home N.E.L. Championship Series Most Valuable Player and finished the playoffs 26/56 (.464) over eleven games, with eighteen runs, fourteen RBI, eight extra-base hits (5 2B, 3 3B), and five steals without being caught. Over the same span the other corner outfielder, William Johnson, was 23/52 (.442), with thirteen runs, eighteen RBI, five extra-base hits (4 2B, 1 3B), and five steals (4 CS). In addition, third baseman Herman Rust was voted MVP of the N.E.L. Semi-Final sweep over Shamrock after going 9/14 (.643) with four runs and three RBI.