

## PRE-SEASON PROGNOSIS 1974

### AMERICAN LEAGUE

#### American League East

##### Missouri Barons

The Barons won only 65 games last year and finished last in the AL East but after several savvy off season moves, they are in a position to battle the Gladiators all year long for the AL East. The offense is top notch, and the pitching is not bad. George (Great) Scott holds down first base, and he has a decent bat with adequate power plus knows how to field his position. Second baseman Rod Carew is the quintessential lead off man with a near .350 BA, good OB, some extra base power and can steal a base plus his defense won't embarrass you; what more could you ask? Bucky Dent is a workmanlike shortstop with modest power and a decent glove. Aurelio Rodriguez at third has a great glove but his bat is well below par. The other Rodriguez, Ellie has a cannon arm behind the plate and a great knowledge of the strike zone with some very modest power. Jay Johnstone against righties and Juan Beniquez against lefties will share time at DH. Both are very good in their own roles but pretty pitiful on the other side. Left fielder Pete (Charley Hustle) Rose knows the strike zone and has good doubles if not home run power; his defense is top notch. Larry Hisle in center has 20 homer power and can hit both righties and lefties. His defense is adequate. Don Baylor in right doesn't have as good a power bat as you'd like from an outfielder but he won't embarrass you. George Foster will fill in at all three outfield positions; he has great potential but hasn't yet arrived. Joe Fergeson, who has nice power and an ability to get on base will fill in at catcher and the outfield. Joe Decker is a workhorse and the leader of the pitching staff, but he'll get great support from the likes of Dave Roberts, Jackie Brown, Tom Griffin plus swingmen Dick Drago and Billy Champion. However, the standout of the staff is rubber armed Mike Marshall whose unorthodox pitching style enables him to pitch almost every day in relief, often two or more innings. Rick Richert and Ken Forsch are also standouts in the 'pen. If the Barons have a late lead, it will be lights out.

##### South River Gladiators

The defending Al Champs swept the Angles in the wild card round but lost in seven games to the Hot Rods in the league championship round. They should be in the fight again this year as they have a sensational pitching staff and an attack which is a notch below the Barons but still very good. Joe Torre who has a weak glove but decent bat with great on base will get the most starts at first base, but Rico Carty will get in some games and when he does watch out as his bat is sensational; unfortunately, injuries will limit him to about 100 plate appearances. Felix Millan at second has some defensive issues and his bat is fairly punchless. Shortstop Bud Harrelson can't hit the ball out of the park, but he does have a good batting eye and a great glove; he'll split time with Bobby Valentine. Dan Driessen, who is a terrible fielder will be forced to play the majority of games at third base; his bat is OK but nothing special. Johnny Bench is one of the best catchers in the league with both the bat and glove. He could easily approach 35 homers and 40 doubles. Aging slugger Frank Robinson is on the downside of a great career, but he still has some pop in his bat and will be the designated hitter. Center fielder Cesar Geronimo has a good glove and decent bat. In left you have Willey (Pops) Stargell who can hit .300 with good OB and nice power but his glove is below average. Rusty Staub in right, despite being a LHH can hit lefties very well but has some issues with righties. He has some nice power but a weak glove. The Gladiator bench is very poor which could be a problem as the season progresses. Then we come to the pitching staff. Bert Blyleven, Luis Tiant, Larry Dierker, Tom Seaver and swing man Rudy May are all top-

of-the-line hurlers. Tom House and John Hiller are great relievers, and the team has some good depth behind them.

### **Evanston Elephants**

The Pachyderms missed the playoffs by losing a one-game playoff to the Dragons last year but look to battle the Angels for third place in 1974. They are middle of the pack on both offense and pitching. Boog Powell at first can still hit right-handed pitching but will platoon with Bill Freehan who also catches but hits lefties very well. Powell is a terrible fielder and Freehan not much better. Davey Johnson, who has a leaky glove will share time at second with defensive whiz Frank White who has a weak bat with very little power. Bert Campaneris, who has a nice bat with minimal power and a decent glove will hold down short; Bert also knows how to steal a base. Long time standout Brooks Robinson was traded in the off season which leaves Ken Reitz as the incumbent third baseman. Ken can hit lefties pretty well but has problems with righties; his glove is OK, and he has very modest power. Canton Ohio native Thurman Munson was acquired in the off season in a trade involving Carlton Fisk and he'll share time at catcher with Freehan. Tommy Davis can't play the field, but he will be in the lineup almost every day at DH, where he has some power but doesn't walk much. Jose Cardenal is a fixture in right field where he will approach .300 with decent power and an adequate glove. Hal McRae in left is starting to come into his own; he possesses a good glove, a .300 bat and decent power. Davey May, a lousy hitter and fielder, will share time in center with Mike Stanton. The leader of the pitching staff is lefty Don Gullett but the manager will have to move several other hurlers in and out of the rotation as only Fred Norman and Dick Tidrow can be counted on to fill a regular slot. Oscar Zamora and Horacio Pina will man a below average bullpen.

### **Los Angeles Angels**

The Holy Ones made the wild card round last year but as mentioned above will battle the Elephants for third place in 1974. Al Oliver has a .320 bat at first with good power, but he doesn't walk much and has a below average glove. Dave Cash at second won't hit the ball out of the park very often but he can slap it around pretty well plus he plays every day, and his glove is decent. Mark Belanger at short is an offensive cypher but he can field. Darrell Evans has a vacuum cleaner glove at third, knows how to take a walk and can hit 25 plus homers. Darrell Porter and Dave Duncan will platoon at catcher; Porter has a cannon arm with modest power, but Duncan will struggle to hit .200 though he does have some power. Bobby Darwin will be the full time DH; he has 25-homer power but a modest BA and OBA. Ken Singleton in right can get on base and is a decent fielder but you'd like a little more power from this position. Amos Otis in center has a nice bat and glove and will be a good lead-off man. Cleon Jones and Johnny Briggs will share time in left; both have OK power and can field but neither will get many All-Star votes. Tony Taylor is a top pinch hitter and infield reserve. Jim Perry, Lynn McGlothlin and Buzz Capra are all fine starters with Bill Bonham and Rick Reuschel filling out the rotation. Doug Bird, Al (the Mad Hungarian) Hrabowsky and Pedro Borbon are a nice bullpen trio.

### **Fairfield Colts**

The Colts approached .500 last year and could do the same this year; with a few breaks they could compete for third place, but a weak pitching staff will probably hold them back. Nate Colbert, whose only positive is a nice appreciation of the strike zone with share time at first with aging veteran Norman Cash. This position is not a strength for the Colts. Jorge Orta who pulverizes righthanded pitching but can't hit a lick against lefties will platoon with Marty Perez at second who hits lefties very well. Wayne Garrett at short can get on base and has some power but he will struggle to hit much more than .225. Eric Soderholm has a good glove with some power and will play third base. Dave Rader has a nice if punchless bat at catcher and he'll share time with Ray Fosse who can't hit a lick. Pat Kelly and Greg

Luzinski will platoon at DH; neither has the kind of power you would like from this position, but they are both decent hitters otherwise. Rick Monday in center knows how to get on base and has 20-homer potential but he's a below average fielder. Greg Gross in right can pound right-handed pitching but he has minimal power and is not much of a fielder. Steve Braun in left can get on base and is a decent fielder but lacks the kind of power you'd like from a garden slot. Don Wilson and Steve Carlton are a nice R/L duo at the top of the rotation, but Andy Hassler is their only reliable partner. The bottom of the rotation is weak. Eduardo Rodriguez and Tom Hall lead the bullpen, but this is not a team strength.

## **American League West**

### **Route 66 Hot Rods**

The Rods won an amazing 113 games in 1973 and made it to the World Series but lost in six games to the eventual champion Seattle Totems. They retooled in the offseason but are still solid favorites to repeat in the AL West in 1974. Mike Jorgenson will platoon at first with Craig Kusick. Mike has a spectacular batting eye with nice power and a great glove while Craig is very tough on LHP. Except for power this platoon is one of the strongest positions in the league. Bobby Grich at second has a good batting eye and very nice power for a middle infielder plus he can field his position and play every day. The shortstop position with Mario Mendoza and Frank Taveras is clearly a weak spot in the batting order but the team has enough other sluggers to cover them very well. The Penguin, Ron Cey is a solid third baseman with a great glove and nice power. Fred Kendall will share time behind the plate with off season acquisition Carlton Fisk who will be limited to 50 or so games. Dave Parker has unlimited potential, but he won't show it this year and will platoon with Mike Anderson at DH. Neither player will show much power in 1974. Billy North in center is a sensational fielder and decent if punchless hitter who knows how to steal a base. Reggie Jackson in left has a very good batting eye, 30-homer potential and a good glove. Dwight Evans in right has a cannon arm and a great glove; his bat is decent but not great. Fan favorite Catfish Hunter will team with lefty Frank Tanana at the top of the staff. Bill Spaceman Lee, Dick Ruthven and Dennis Blair will round out the rotation. Rollie Fingers, Mike Garman, Dennis Montague and lefty Terry Forster are a formidable bullpen.

### **East Kenosha Lions**

The Lions won 75 games last year and should improve on that number this year but challenging for the pennant seems a distant dream. Chris Chambliss is one of the weaker first basemen in the league as he has minimal power and just an average glove. Cookie Rojas is a below average hitter and fielder at second. Pint size Freddy Patek's main advantage is he can play just about every day but not very well. Buddy Bell will platoon with Dave Chalk at third. Bell has a much better glove but neither has much power. Milt May and Jim Sundberg will platoon at catcher; both can hit pretty well from their side of the plate and field well but lack good power. Mike Hegan and Enzo Hernandez will share time at DH, but this is not a team strength. Lenny Randle and Cesar Tovar will platoon in center; Randle is decent hitter against RHP's but lacks power and is a lousy fielder while Tovar is good against LHP's and has a good glove but minimal power. Left fielder Ralph Garr has an aversion to the base on balls but might challenge for the batting championship; he has decent extra base power and can field his position well. Left fielder Charley Spikes has the best home power on the team and is a decent fielder but doesn't walk much. Phil Niekro and Pat Dobson are workhorses at the top of the rotation and could start almost half the team's games. Joe Coleman and Stan Bahnsen and swing man Dick Bosman will get the rest of the starts. Lefty Paul Lindblad and righty Gene Garber lead a fine bullpen,

### **Dayton Dragons**

Dayton sneaked into the playoffs as a wild card last year and will challenge the Lions for second place this year. Lee Maye at first has good power but has an almost complete lack of a batting eye and his defense is suspect. Rennie Stennett at second could hit close to .300 with decent power and he is a good fielder but is also a bit lax in taking a walk. Shortstop Chris Speier won't kill you with his bat or glove but won't win too many games for you either. Off season acquisition Brooks Robinson is now in the twilight of a great career but it looks like he has at least one season left. His glove is still solid, and his bat is decent. Ed Kirkpatrick and Duffy Dyer will share time at catcher. Ed is a decent hitter, but he has a terrible arm and opposing base runners will steal at will. Duffy has an almost completely punchless bat and his defense isn't much better than Kirkpatrick. Jimmy (the Toy Cannon) Wynn has the best power on the team and knows how to take a walk; he'll play designated hitter. Joe Rudi in right is a solid hitter against both righties and lefties and has good power plus an adequate glove. Gary Maddox patrols center field where he has a decent glove and modest power. Lou Brock is a solid lead off man who could easily lead the league in stolen bases; he plays left field. Nolan Ryan and Clay Kirby are the top two starters, but both have control issues. Doug Rau, Paul Splittorff and Jim Colburn round out the rotation. Tom Murphy is a sensational reliever, but he won't get much help from his bullpen mates.

### **West Warwick Monarchs**

The Monarchs look to be pretty safe in fourth place; rising higher would be a major accomplishment and falling to the cellar would necessitate a complete collapse or a major overachievement from the lowly Mets. Willie Montanez and Mike Hargrove will share time at first base. Both are good hitters for average but lack the kind of power you'd like from this position. Hargrove is a much better fielder than Montanez. Doug Griffin, a horrible fielder, will share time at second with Bruce Miller. It's possible than the entire season will go by without a home run from the keystone position. Highly touted rookie Robin Yount hasn't yet reached full potential and will share time at shortstop with Roger Metzger who is a wizard with the glove. Doug Rader, who has nice power and a decent glove will play third base. Aging veteran Al Kaline can still swing the bat but can't play the field and will be relegated to DH. Ken Henderson is a solid everyday centerfielder with good power and a great glove. Dusty Baker in right also has good power and a decent glove but might struggle to hit .250. Carlos May (my old neighbor!) plays left but won't contribute much to the attack. Jim Lonborg and Don Sutton are both solid starters and swingman Dock Ellis isn't bad, but the bottom of the rotation is suspect. Steve Mingori and Dave Guisti are the leaders of the bullpen.

### **New York Mets**

The Mets finished last in the AL West last year and look to repeat that in 1974. Their team BA could be the worst in the league and the pitching staff is not much better. Iron Man Steve Garvey anchors first base. He has a .300 plus bat and good power but a suspect glove. Ted Sizemore at second has a great glove but a punchless bat. Tim Johnson will share time at shortstop with Dick McAuliffe; neither can field much and Johnson will swing at everything and refuses to wait for a walk. At third we have the star of the team, Mike Schmidt who has great power, will draw over 100 walks and is a solid fielder. Steve Swisher and Ed Hermann will share time at catcher. Hermann has a little bit of power but Swisher very little. Jim Holt and some spear carriers will alternate at DH. This might be the worst DH position in the entire league. The entire outfield is a grab bag with several no names and no talents switching in and out of all three OF positions. Highly touted rookie Fred Lynn is waiting in the wings. Lefties Jerry Koosman and Mike Caldwell are the top two starters and both are decent but behind them it is pretty grim. Steve Rogers has a lot of potential but right now that is all in the future. Swingman Bruce Kison will be pressed into service as the top reliever but that isn't saying much and the rest of the pen will be bombs away.

## **NATIONAL LEAGUE**

### **National League East**

#### **Seattle Totems**

The defending champs return a solid club; they could be the most balanced in all of SPBII and should easily lead the league in homers. They could be pushed by the Royals but are still favorites. Ritchie (don't call me Dick) Allen holds down first base; he should hit over .300 with over 30 homers but his defense is weak. Joe Morgan at second is sensational; he should hit close to .300, knows the strike zone very well, has excellent power for a middle infielder, can steal a base and his defense is superb. Bill Russell is a solid everyday shortstop; not a lot of power but a good glove. Sal Bando at third has 20-homer potential and a good batting eye; his defense is decent. Joh Ellis and Ted Simmons will alternate at catcher; both have nice power and can also play first if needed. John Mayberry will get the majority of starts at DH, he also has 20-homer power. Switch hitter Reggie Smith is solid in right field; he has good power and knows the strike zone. Roy White holds down left field with modest power and a decent glove. Willie Crawford will play center even though his defense is weak. He has decent power but knows how to take a walk. Gaylord Perry, Mike Cuellar, Jim Busby and knuckle baller Wilbur Wood represent an iron man rotation. Bart Johnson is also available as a spot starter. Chuck Taylor and Rich Folkers are top notch relievers, and they have good support from several other bullpeners.

#### **Montreal Royals**

As stated above, the Royals could compete for the pennant but should at least finish second barring a total collapse. Ron Fairly, despite being a LHP, murders LHP's and will platoon with Tony Solaita at first. Davey Lopes and Jack Brohamer will share time at second; Lopes has a little more power and also knows how to steal a base. Dave Concepcion has nice power at short and is a great fielder. Budding star George Brett will get the lion's share of starts at third with Rich Morales picking up the balance; neither player has much home run power but Brett is the better fielder. Gene Tenace at catcher won't hit for much of an average but knows the strike zone and has 25-homer potential. Aging veteran Hank Aaron can't play the field anymore but still has some pop in his bat and will get the majority of starts at designated hitter. Bake McBride is a solid defensive center fielder and even though he has issues with LHP's, he is still a solid offensive performer. Johnny Grubb will platoon with Jerry Morales in left; both will occasionally spell Aaron at DH. Elliott Maddox and Joe LaHood will alternate in right; LaHood has better power and both are good defenders. John Matlack, Steve Rooker, Jim Palmer and Steve Renko are a solid rotation with Burt Hooton filling in as needed. Bill Campbell is a good closer and he'll get help from Joe Niekro but the rest of the bullpen is weak.

#### **Winter Harbor Seals**

It will be very hard for the Seals to advance in the standings, but they will be in a three-way battle with the Schema Busters and Bishops for third place. Bob Watson holds down first base; he has modest power but a good sense of the strike zone though his defense is weak. Ron Hunt plays second where his power is almost non-existent although he can take a walk. but he is below average with the glove. Larry Bowa can play every day at shortstop, and he has modest power, but his defense is weak and he might not have a .300 OBA. Ritchie Hebner plays third base and has what for this team will be considered good power; he might approach a .300 BA and his defense is decent, unlike his other infield mates. Johnny Oates and Ellie Hendricks will share time at catcher; both are well below average with the bat but they won't kill you in the field. Jim Fregosi and Pete LaCock (love that name!) will share time at DH. Fregosi has a little power while Pete has none and this is one of the worst DH combos in the league.

Veteran Carl Yastremski returns in left field where his defense has suffered over the years, but he is still has a potent bat with decent power and on base. Del Unser and Don Hahn will platoon in center; both have minimal power but Unser is a much better fielder. Oscar Gamble in right has the best power on the team and could flirt with .300 but his defense is weak. Defense is a major problem for this team all throughout the lineup and could cause problems as the season progresses. The three top pitchers, Tommy John, Dave Goltz and Ken Brett aren't bad, but all will be limited in how much they can pitch. Brett is such a good hitter that the manager may ditch the DH when he starts a game. The balance of the starting rotation is very thin and the bullpen is weak.

### **Data City Schema Busters**

Slugger Dave Kingman will get the most starts at first but will struggle to hit .230; his defense is adequate. He will be spelled by an aging Harmon Killebrew who still has a little pop in his bat but not much else. Tito Fuente and Ted Martinez will share time at second; neither can hit much and have very limited power but Martinez is a jack of all trades and can play almost anywhere. Frank Duffy at short can play everyday and won't kill you in the field but doesn't hit much or know the strike zone very well. Beltin' Bill Melton will play third; his power has declined from his past glory, but he is still the best home run hitter on this team; his defense is below average. Manny Sanguillen has a decent bat for a catcher and his defense is OK but he doesn't walk much. Merv Rettenmund and Gary Sutherland will platoon at DH but neither will set the world on fire. Mickey Rivers in center is a great ball hawk and has a decent bat but he'll share time with Rick Coggins who has a weak bat. Second year man Dave Winfield has unlimited potential and will start showing some of that in 1974 with good power and a decent glove; he will play right field. Gary Mathews is a fine left fielder who can play everyday with decent power and his defense is adequate. On the mound, workhorse Carl Morton is the leader of the staff, but the manager will have to resort to several swingmen and part timers such as Bill Singer and Glenn Abbott to get through the season. Dale Murray and Charlie Williams are good relievers but will be limited in how much they can pitch. The swing men will pick up the slack, but Bill Jean King's brother Randy Mofftt is also available.

### **Salzburg Bishops**

The Bishops have an aversion to working the count and may end up with the worst team OBA in the league but could contend for third with a few breaks. Bill Buckner will be the main man at first base where he has a .300 bat and some power; he may also get some time in the outfield to make room for Tim McCraw who hits lefties very well and has a flashy glove. Tommy Helms at second has a good glove and won't kill you with his bat. Don Kessinger is a nice slap hitter at short who can walk a little, but his defense is weak. Rico Petrocelli at third has the best power on this "powerless" team (they should easily finish last in team homers). Rico's defense is weak. Ray Boone and Bob Montgomery will platoon at catcher; neither can hit much but Boone is a better defender. Cito Gaston (who will also get some time in the outfield) will alternate with Bill Sudakis at DH. This position is not a team strength, to say the least. Gary Thomasson, who is worthless against LHP's will platoon with Tommy Harper in center. Neither is much of a fielder or hitter for that matter. Tom Grieve and Harper will switch off in left; Grieve is another victim of the "no walk syndrome". Von Joshua and Gaston will alternate in right; Joshua isn't much to write home about. Lefty Ross Grimsley is a nice number one starter. The balance of the rotation will be filled out from the likes of Mike Torrez, Dave Friesleben and swingman Ron Schueler. Highly touted rookie Bob Forsch will also see limited action along with swingman Ed Sprague. The bullpen isn't much with Charlie Hough and swingman Ken Frailing the main men.

## **National League West**

### **Frankfort Fortress**

The Forts won 88 games last year and made the playoffs but lost out in the wild card round to the eventual champions, the Totems. This year they are solid favorites in the NL West. Ed Goodson and Stretch McCovey will alternate at first base. Goodson has modest power and can hit RHP fairly well, but his defense is lousy. McCovey has the best power on the team and will also fill in at DH, as is glove is weak. Davey Nelson and Billy Grabarkewitz will share time at second; neither has much power but Billy does know how to take a walk, and both are decent with the glove. Rick Burleson who is a nice bango hitter will alternate at short with Danny Thompson who also plays third; Burleson is the better fielder. Bob Bailey who has nice power and on base will get the most starts at third but Thompson will fill in as needed. Barry Foote who has nice power will switch off with Glenn Borgman at catcher; both are decent defensively. When not playing other positions McCovey and Bailey will alternate at DH along with Rob Blomberg. Center fielder Vada Pinson's offensive and defensive stats have deteriorated over the years, but he is still a solid player. Ritchie Zisk has nice power and can take a walk; he will play right field where is glove is decent. Jim Northrup against RHP's and Tom Paciorek against LHP's will share time in left field. Northrup has modest power which Paciorek does not, but Tom is the better fielder. Andy Messersmith and Dave McNally lead a fine pitching staff which also includes swingmen Bruce Dal Canton and Jim Barr. Jim Bibby will also fill in as needed. The team has four fine relievers in Clay Carroll, Steve Foucault, Bob Reynolds and Tom Buskey.

### **Speedway Sparkplugs**

The 'Plugs finished just under .500 last year and could improve on that mark but contending for the pennant will be a stretch. Andy Thornton and Jim Spencer will platoon at first. Thornton has better power but Spencer is the better defender. Darrell Thomas holds down second base; he is a nice spray hitter and won't kill you in the field. Toby Harrah at short can play every day and has nice power for a middle infielder with a decent glove. Sandy Alomar and Paul Schaal will switch off at third; neither has any power but Schaal can get on base; the defense of both is not good. Jerry Grote and Andy Etchebarren will share time behind the plate; power is nonexistent for both, but Andy is a good defender. Jeff Burroughs has the best power on the team, knows how to get on base and will be the full time DH. Paul Blair is a great defender in center and has decent power. Willie Davis, normally a centerfielder will play out of position in right where he has good power but has an aversion to the base on balls. Hot shot rookie Ron Leflore and John Lowenstein will share time in left. Leflore has minimal power but knows how to steal a base. Fergie Jenkins along with lefties Jim Kaat and Ken Holtzman will start almost 120 games between them and all are very talented with good control. The number four starter Jerry Reuss is also good but has some control issues. Ramon Hernandez leads a solid bullpen which also includes Mike Cosgrove, budding star Goose Gossage and part timers Jim Brewer and Don Lamola.

### **Portland Beavers**

Portland could contend for second place but might also fall to fourth. Tony Perez at first has the best power on the team, can play every day and is a solid defender. Jim Cox, who is an offensive lightweight will share time at second with Gene Michael who is a slightly better hitter but has no power; both men are decent fielders. Jim Mason is a decent shortstop who can slap the ball around and is a decent fielder; he'll share time with Dave Roberts who has a terrible bat and a glove not much better. Bill Madlock who is a fine hitter with modest power will get the most starts at third, but he'll be spelled by Enos Cabell; a much better fielder than Madlock who is terrible. Cabell will also get some time in the

outfield. Earl Williams and Charlie Moore will platoon at catcher; Williams has a bit of power and is a better fielder than Moore, who has a popgun arm. Dave Hilton, a very modest hitter will play DH along with several other players who will move in and out. Bobby Bonds is a fixture in right field; he has good power and on base plus is a great base stealer and fine defender. Billy Williams is on the downside of a great career, but he still has nice power and can take a walk; he'll get the lion's share of starts in left. His main backup will be Willie Horton who has some pop in his bat but a weak glove. Billy Sharp, a weak hitter will share time in right with Cabell. Lefty Vida Blue is a workhorse at the top of the pitching staff. An aging Bob Gibson and Jim Slaton will occupy the next two slots. Several swingmen and part timer Tom Carroll will fill out the rotation. Grant Jackson is a nice reliever, but he won't get much help from the balance of the bullpen.

### **Perrysburg Stingers**

A new owner and moniker for the former Oceanlake Seagulls. It will be a major accomplishment if they rise in the standings but could fall to the cellar due to a leaky pitching staff. Improving last year's 54 wins is definitely possible. John Milner has good power and knows how to get on base but his defense at first is subpar. Denny Doyle at second has a pop gun bat and an aversion to walks but his defense is acceptable. Tim Foli is your quintessential good field no hit shortstop and he'll be spelled by Eddie Brinkman who is about the same on offense but not as good on defense. Don Money is an everyday third baseman who has decent power and an acceptable glove. Larry Linz is a useful infield spare. George Mitterwald and Vic Correll will share time behind the plate; neither has any power but both are acceptable on defense. Tony Oliva is slowing down but he still can hit the ball and will be DH for most games; others will fill in as needed. Rick Miller has no power at all but he is a great fielder and will log 120 games or so in centerfield. The balance will go to George Hendrick who also plays right; George has good power and is a decent defender. Tommy Hutton who has a little power will also play right but can spell Milner at first where he has a very good glove. Alex Johnson is a nice slap hitter and will get most of the starts in left. Cesar Cedeño could lead the team in homers if he gets enough outfield or DH starts. Larry Parrish, a promising third baseman is waiting in the wings. John D'Acquisto is at the top of the starting rotation but he has some serious control issues. Alan Foster, Kevin Kobel and several nonentities will fill out the rotation. Orlando Pena and Cecil Upshaw are good relievers but there isn't much behind them.

### **Hampton Road Cruisers**

What a difference a year makes; the Cruisers won 89 games last year and squeaked into the playoffs by one game but in 1974 they could very well finish last as the offense is one of the worst in the league with a lousy team OBA and minimal home runs. Their only hope of advancement is a decent pitching staff. Cecil Cooper has a load of potential and will share time at first with Deron Johnson who has a miserable bat. Erstwhile third base man Ron Santo will be pressed into service at second. Ron's offensive numbers have declined sharply; he'll be spelled by Dick Green who has no power but a decent glove. Mike Tyson at short has very little to offer at the plate but his defense is acceptable. Craig Nettles should lead the team in homers, can play every day and has a nice glove. Brian Downing, who has minimal power will share time at catcher with Ken Rudolph who has almost no chance of getting any kind of extra base hit. Rudolph can walk a little and both catchers are decent with the glove. Bobby Murcer, whose glove is weak will be the more or less full time DH. He has some modest power. Mike Lum and Mickey Stanley will platoon in center; Lum has modest power and can get on base but Stanley is the better defender. Jim Wohlford will play right and left; he has only modest power but a good glove. Lous Piniella will also log time in the outfield with a few starts by Murcer. Doc Medich, Ron Reed and Jack Billingham are the top three starting pitchers with swingmen Dave Hamilton, Ed Figueroa and



part timer Mel Stottlemyre filling in the gaps. Bob Miller, Mike Wallace and Blue Moon Odom are the top relievers. Rookie Jim Kern has a bright future but not this year.