

PRE-SEASON PROGNOSIS 1937

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Frankfort Frogs

The Frogs offense is right up there with the NL Dodgers as one of the best in SPBX. The pitching staff is decent though not outstanding, but they should be able to bludgeon their way to an AL pennant. However, the Blue Sox and maybe the Glaziers could give them a run for their money. The Iron Horse, Lou Gehrig is back for another season at first base, and he promises to light up the scoreboard just as much as he has in the past. A triple crown is not outside the realm of possibility. Tony Cuccillino is a fixture at second where he sports a great glove and nice bat. Billy Rogel has a great batting eye and nice glove as he holds down the shortstop position. At third Pinky Whitney has a .340 bat, nice power for an infielder and a decent glove. Eric McNear is a nice infield spare and could start for many other clubs. Overall, the Frog infield is sensational. The team will have a rotating cast of characters behind the plate, but all are more than adequate. Beau Bell in right field is another spectacular performer with the possibility of a .340 average and 50 doubles. His defense is below par but that's not a major issue considering his hot bat. Pete Fox will play center and his bat is also top of the line. Bruce Campbell and Buster Mills will platoon in left and both can hit but Campbell's glove is weak. Opposing pitchers will be shaking in their boots when facing this lineup which has no weak spots. On the mound the team lacks a knockout everyday starter, but Hal Schumacher, Monty Stratton and swingman Billy Swift are more than decent. The lower part of the rotation is a little weak. Clint Brown is a nice reliever and he'll get help from Syd Cohen and rookie Jim Tobin.

Schenectady Blue Sox

The Sox were horrible in 1936, winning only 64 games but they could contend in 1937 with a few breaks. Unlike the Frogs, their attack is not strong, but they do have some good pitching. Slugger Jimmy Foxx returns at first and while no Lou Gehrig, he will be a solid hitter with good power, great on base and a nice glove. Tom Carey who has a punchless bat and decent glove will keep second base warm until sensational rookie Bobby Doerr is ready. Woody English is the shortstop, and his best attribute is a nice batting eye but not much else. Harlon Clift at third has 30-homer power and could draw 100 walks. He is one of the better hitters on the team. Bill Dickey is an All-Star quality catcher with good power, a .330 BA, nice batting eye and a cannon arm; what more could you want? Sam West will get the majority of starts in center and his bat and glove are well above average. Moose Solters can play every day in left and he has a good bat with nice power. Myril Hoag is the best of several outfielders who will fill out the garden slots. The team doesn't have a knockout number one starter but swingmen Cliff Melton, Ed Brandt and sensational teenager Bob Feller can all do the job. Slick Castleman, Waite Hoyt and Harry Gumbert will round out the rotation. The team doesn't have a standout reliever, but the non-starting swingmen can handle the bullpen duties more than adequately.

San Diego Glaziers

The defending World Series champs breezed to the 1936 AL pennant with 104 wins but will have a tough time competing this year. The attack is OK but not great and the pitching staff is middle of the road. Gus Suhr at first base has a good batting eye and nice glove but you'd like a little more home run power from this position. Billy Herman is solid both offensively and defensively at second base. Shortstop Luke Appling has a great glove and very nice bat with a solid batting eye. Stan Hack at third doesn't have much power but he can take a walk. He will hit close to .300 and won't embarrass you in the field. Injuries and old age will keep catcher Mickey Cochrane out of all but a handful of games and he will be replaced by Gus Mancuso and Gen Desautels, neither of whom will set the world on fire. The

incomparable Paul (Big Poison) Waner returns in right field. He will slap the ball around very well, although few will leave the park. He could challenge for the batting title, but his glove is weak. John Stone in center won't hit quite for as high an average as Waner but he has better power and is a good fielder. Woody Jensen and Wally Berger will share time in left. Lou Fette is the clear leader of the pitching staff and has 20-win potential. Thornton Lee and Tomy Bridges are also solid starters with several middle of the roaders rounding out the rotation. The bullpen is weak and the team will have a tough time protecting late inning leads.

New York Mutuals

New York will battle New Haven for fourth place, but it will be tough for either to move up in the standings. The Mutuals have a lousy offense, but the pitching staff is top notch. Ripper Collins, who has nice power will share time at first with Buddy Hassett, a slap hitter who also plays the outfield. Lee Handley, a mediocre hitter will get the most starts at second as Odell Hale, a much better fielder will be forced to play a lot of games at third. Billy Meyers and Lonnie Frey will split time at short; Meyers is a better fielder and Grey a better hitter. Lou Chiozza will play third when Hale is at second as the manager waits for hot shot rookie prospect Kenny Keltner to develop. Gabby Hartnett is a solid hitter and fielder at catcher but will only be able to play about 110 games. He'll be spelled by Billy Sullivan who is a decent if punchless hitter. Johnny Cooney will get the most starts in right field where he is a decent fielder who can hit close to .300 but with little power. Jesse Hill is a nice ball hawk with little power and will patrol center. Hassett will play left when he's not at first base. Augie Galan, who has nice power will fill in at left and center. Ruben Gomez and Carl Hubbell are the leaders of the staff and are both workhorses capable of 20 wins with the proper amount of support. Part timer Monty Pearson and swingman Luke Hamlin are also solid members of the rotation. The balance of starts will go to a gaggle of part-timers. Jim Weaver is a nice reliever, but his only real support will come from Ira Hutchinson. Gomez and Hubbell will have to excel if the Mutuals hope to make any noise in 1937.

New Haven Whiffenpoofs

The Poofs are the opposite of the Mutuals. A decent offense and well below par pitching staff. Dolph Camilli at first can do it all; a great BA, good on base, 30-homer power and a well above average glove. Tony Piet and Leo Norris will share time at second. Neither can hit much but Piet is very good with the glove. Joe Cronin at short has a good batting eye, nice power and a more than adequate glove. Bill Brubaker who doesn't hit much but has an adequate glove will share time at third with Norris when he isn't playing second. Catcher Rick Ferrell knows how to take a walk but doesn't do much else and his backup is Bill Atwood who has a punchless bat and OK glove. Heine Manush can slap the ball around pretty well though few will leave the park but his defense in left field is not good. Right fielder Frank Demaree has decent power to go with a .320 bat and a good glove. Gibby Brack and Jo Jo White will share time in center. Neither has much power but White is a very good defender. Cy Blanton is the leader of the pitching staff and a real work horse. Veteran Ted Lyons isn't bad as a part-time number two but after these two the quality falls off fast. Leon Warneke and Wes Farell will be forced into the rotation. but neither is very good and the quality below them is terrible. Mace Brown is an OK reliever, but his main helper Joe Heving is not.

Louisville Colonels

The Colonels could contend for fourth and they are a clone of the Whiffenpoofs. The attack isn't bad, but the pitching staff is poor. Elbie Fletcher at first has a punchless bat and decent glove. Rusty Peters would be a very good utilityman on a better team but he'll be forced to be the primary second baseman on this club. His backup Del Young can field but definitely cannot hit. Billy Jorges at short has a .300 bat with decent on base and an adequate glove. Don Gutteridge is a third baseman with some power and a

decent glove, and he'll be backed up by Peters when he is not playing second. Left fielder Ducky Medwick is by far the best hitter on the team who has a great BA, the potential for 100 extra base hits, including more than 30 homers and can field his position very well. Mel Ott in right can hit .300, draw 100 walks and hit 30 plus homers. Mike Kreevich has a good bat with nice power and is a real ball hawk in center. Pepper Martin (the Wild Horse of the Osage) will get some outfield starts and also fill in at third base; his bat is not bad but doesn't have a lot of power. Harry Danning, Spud Davis and Mo Berg will share time behind the plate; none are exceptional, but they won't kill you. Then we come to the pitching staff. Swingmen Peaches Davis and Paul Hollingsworth aren't bad and part timer Freddie Fitzsimmons won't kill you but after them the pickings are very slim and there is no one who can take on the job of a bullpen leader.

West Baden Strudels

The Strudels won only 54 games last year and could improve but will still have to overachieve to escape the cellar. The offense is probably better than the NL Golden Buddhas but that is probably the best you can say. The pitching staff isn't as bad as the Whiffenpoofs and Colonels but it is still well below par. First baseman Hal Trotsky is a solid performer with good power but a weak glove. Roy Hughes has a decent if punchless bat and an average glove and will share time at second with Stu Martin. Shortstop Rabbitt Warstler has a vacuum cleaner glove, but he can't hit his way out of a paper bag. Cookie Lavagetto knows how to take a walk but has little power and will play third base. Luke Sewell has a good glove and decent bat and will share time at catcher with Ray Mueller who has a cannon arm. Jolting Joe DiMaggio can do it all, a great BA, 45 homer power and a superb glove in center field. Nel Almanda, Morrie Arnovich and Earl Browne are all pretty much clones of each other (near .300 BA, decent on base and modest power) and will share the rest of the outfield starts. Elden Auken is the workhorse of the pitching staff and should do a credible job. Mel Harder is number two but he has control issues. Swingmen Charley Root, Jack Wilson and Claude Passaeu will round out the rotation. Johnny Lanning will get a few starts but along with the swingmen, he will man the bullpen, such as it is.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Brooklyn Dodgers

The defending NL champs look poised to repeat in 1937 and may even surpass the 101 wins of 1936. As stated above, their offense is right up there with Frankford as the best in SPBX and the pitching staff is clearly the best in the NL. Slugger Johnny Mize is a fixture at first base. He combines a great BA with good power which more than negates his defensive issues. Second baseman Alex Kampouris has good power for a middle infielder and a nice batting eye; his defense is adequate. Cecil Travis at short can slap the ball around very well without a lot of power but he doesn't take too many pitches. He can do the job on defense. Billy Werber at third has a very good bat and a great glove. The team is lacking infield depth, a shortcoming that the manager may want to address as the season progresses. Frankie Pytlak is a very good hitting catcher and he'll be backed up by Frankie Hayes who has nice power. Gee Walker in left has a very good bat, although he is a little shy of taking a walk. His power is decent, and he knows how to field his position. Earl Averill in center can hit the ball to all fields, can take a walk and is acceptable on defense. Doc Cramer and Don Padgett, both fine hitters, will round out the garden. George Selkirk is a good outfield spare and pinch hitter. Dizzy Dean has some arm issues which will limit his starts but when he is in there, it's lights out for the opposing hitters. Tex Carleton, Paul Derringer and Van Lingo Mungo plus swingman Russ Bauers will round out a very good rotation. The team doesn't have a full time top notch reliever but Mike Ryba and Paul Gill plus the non-starting starters should be able to get the job done.

Fairfax Atlantics

The Atlantics and Gassers will both have a hard time displacing the Dodgers, but they will battle each other all season long for second place. Fairfax has a slightly better pitching staff while Borger has a better offense; flip a coin between them. Johnny McCarthy will get the lion's share of starts at first base where he has a good glove and so-so bat. Ossie Bleuge and Gene Hanson will back him up. Charley Gehringer is one of the stars of the league; a fantastic BA, good on base, nice power for a middle infielder and a spectacular glove; can't ask for more. Dick Bartell has a nice bat and great glove at short; between them Fairfax has one of the best double play combos in the league. Buddy Lewis at third can play every day, hit well over .300 with decent power and is an acceptable defender. Al Lopez doesn't hit much behind the plate, but he has a cannon arm while his backup Rudy York has a real good bat but a lousy glove. Lloyd (Little Poison) Waner possesses a great glove in center and can hit well over .300 but with few walks and little power. Rookie Vince DiMaggio will play right where he has modest power but poor on base. The third outfielder will be Ival Goodman who is a better version of DiMaggio. Roy Johnson and Jack Rothrock are also available for spot play in the garden. Danny McFayden and Red Ruffing are the clear leaders of the pitching staff. Part timer Johnny Allen will be a solid contributor. Monte Weaver and swingmen Joe Bowman and Archie McKain round out the rotation. The bullpen is weak with the swingmen getting most of the action.

Borger Gassers

As stated above, the Gassers and Atlantics are very close. Hank Greenberg at first can do it all. A great BA and OBA, the potential for 100 plus extra base hits including 40 homers and a good glove. Buddy Myer is a solid second baseman who knows how to get on base but doesn't have a lot of power; his defense is decent. His backup is John Kroner. Frankie Crosetti at short doesn't hit for much of a BA but he knows how to take a walk and can do the job in the field. Jim Bucher is a steady influence at third where he doesn't do anything particularly well but won't kill you either. Johnny Outlaw will back him up. Babe Phelps is a nice hitting catcher with Earle Brucker as a good backup. Joe Vosmik in left field can hit doubles if not homers with a plus .300 BA and a good glove. Bob Johnson has good power and can take a walk; he'll play right. Hersh Martin in center doesn't have a lot of home run power but can spray the ball around pretty well and has a good glove. Larry Rosenthal and Harry Gaffke are decent outfield reserves. Lee Grissom will be the number one starter but also log some time in the bullpen. Eddie Smith, who has some control issues and John Whitehead are two and three in the rotation. Things are pretty slim after that trio. Spud Chandler has some good numbers but will be limited in how much he can pitch. Clay Bryant, Johnny Murphy and Al Smith are the guts of a nondescript bullpen.

Brunnerville Bean Brewers

This club has one of the more interesting nicknames but will be hard pressed to move up in the standings and will in fact be battling the Seals and Titans all year long just to hang onto fourth place. Zeke Bonura can put up some very good numbers with his bat, but he'll be limited to about 120 games and Phil Cavaretta will have to fill in which is a major comedown. Jackie Hayes at second has a great glove but a very poor bat. Shortstop Skeeter Newsome has a decent if punchless bat to go with a good glove. Leo the Lip Durocher will back him up; he has very little offensive potential and just an average glove. Marv Owen at third has a decent if punchless bat to go with an average glove. He'll need help from Billy Mayo whose bat and glove are both below par. Except for first base this is not a good infield. Al Todd is a nice hitting catcher but his defense is not good. Left fielder Rip Ratcliff can spray the ball around pretty well, but few will leave the ballpark. His defense is adequate. Wally Moses in right has a very good bat with nice power and a good glove. Etan Allen will give you about 100 games in center where his bat is decent if punchless but he can field his position very well. Cavaretta will fill in when

he's not playing first base. Lefty Grove and Jim Turner are a nice 1-2 in the rotation and swingman Guy Bush is a decent number three but there isn't much behind them and when the manager has to call on the likes of Wayne LeMaster and Earl Whitehill it will be bombs away. A gaggle of no-namers and no-talents will try to man the bullpen.

San Francisco Seals

The Seals surprisingly went 13-3 in the last month of the 1936 season and in the process knocked themselves out of the lottery. Repeating the 74 wins in 1936 will be a challenge. It will be a season long battle with the Golden Buddhas to see who finishes last in team home runs. Sam Leslie, who has a decent if punchless bat and a good glove will share time at first with Les Scarsella whose bat is well below par and his defense just average. First round pick Jimmy Brown will hold down second base; his bat is decent and his glove average. He'll need help from Gil English, who also plays third. Lyn Lary at short can play everyday and has very nice bat for a middle infielder and also a good glove. Joe Stripp, a poor hitter and lousy fielder will share time at third with English. A parade of bums will share time behind the plate. Chuck Klein in right may be the only man on the team with double figure homers; he should hit well over .300 and has a nice glove. J J Moore in left can play almost everyday and his double and triple if not home run power but has a below average glove. Jimmy Ripple and Doug Bordagary will share time in center. Both can knock the ball around pretty well but have little power and well below average defense. Highly regarded outfield prospect Bill Nicholson is waiting in the wings. When you have a pitching staff who has someone like wildman Jimmy DeShong getting the most starts, you know you have a real problem. Swingmen Si Johnson, Gene Schott; Curt Davis and Willis Hudlin aren't bad, but they can't start enough games to make a significant impact. The balance of the starts will go to some real bums. Slick Coffman is the leader of the bullpen if you can call him that as the swingmen will have to all perform double duty.

Detroit Titans

The team has a decent on base average but minimal power and a poor pitching staff. Joe Kuhel is a decent hitter with minimal power, and he will hold down first base. Second baseman Tony Lazzeri has good on base and nice power for a middle infielder and an acceptable glove. His backup Wayne Ambler is well below par. At short Arky Vaughn has a real nice bat and glove but he will need help from Tommy Thevenow who is horrible. Pinky Higgins at third has a good bat with acceptable power and a decent glove. The Snooz Ernie Lombardi is one of the slowest runners in the league but has a .330 bat and modest power to go with a good throwing arm. The number two receiver is Bruce Ogradowski who is a big come down. First round pick Tommy Hendrich is a diamond in the rough who will be limited in his 1937 playing time but watch out for him to blossom into a first-rate outfielder in the future. Dixie Walker can play everyday and has good all-around talent except for his defense which is subpar. Terry Moore has a good glove in center, but his bat is average at best. He'll need help from Hank Leiber who can hit but not field. Tom Winsett has a decent glove and mediocre bat in left but he can't hit lefties and will need to be platooned with Dom Dellesandro and Bobby Reis who both know how to take a walk but not how to hit a home run. At the top of the rotation righty Bill Lee and lefty Bill Weiland aren't bad and Larry French is a decent number three. but the quality falls off real fast after that. Johnny Vandermeer is OK but can't pitch enough to be a major factor. A bullpen, what is that?

Montreal Golden Buddhas

Sad to say the Buddhas have to be counted as the worst team in SPBX and it will be a miracle if they can escape the NL cellar. Even matching last year's 62 wins will be a real achievement. Buck Jordan at first has a decent bat but no power and just an average glove. His backup Harry Davis can get on base but has very little power. Bill Knickerbocker at second can't field very well and doesn't make up for it with a

productive bat; his backups are even worse. Number one shortstop Pep Young has a decent glove but poor batting eye and only average power. Even though he can only play about 120 games there is very little on the bench behind him. Red Rolph at third is one of the stars of the team as he can play every day, has a vacuum cleaner glove, can get on base and has nice double and triple, if not home run power. The team doesn't have a regular catcher but will run a quartet of non-entities in and out of the lineup. Gene Moore is a solid right fielder with a great glove and arm and clearly the best power on the team. Aging Al Simmons will return in center where his skills have begun to deteriorate but he can still give you 100 decent games and a good glove. There is very little quality to handle the other 50 games. Jake Powell will get the most starts in left but he is no trip to Hollywood. Phil Wientrab is the only additional outfielder with any real ability. George Caster is the default leader of the pitching staff, but he has some serious control issues. Red Lucas isn't bad but can't pitch much more than 20 games. After that the manager will have to scrape the bottom of the barrel to come up with a rotation. Paul Coffman is a nice reliever but how many leads will he have to protect?