

2020 Preseason Power Rankings

Overall Rank. Team (Division Rank)

1. Yankees (Glendale CDJR 1)

The pattern continues. Seasons continue to trade off between successes and failures. History tells us, that the Yankees could suffer another 5-5 season, but from what we all have seen last year and in the offseason, this is the year the Yankees should break the mold they have been stuck in. The curse of the number one preseason ranking will fall on the shoulders of captain, Scott Pohle who is quite possibly in the prime of his wiffleball career. His fellow bash brother, Sam Bakula will make it to Season 18, but teammate John Calloway will not be in attendance due to a prior engagement. Kevin Pohle and Jackson Crosley will be looked upon to fill the void of their lefty hitter, but Kevin is having an incredible offseason and Jackson proved he can hit towards a championship, batting in all playoff games for the Yankees in 2019. Jackson and Scott will take the mound for this team as they continue to climb the ranks as one of the best one-two combos on the mound in the SWBL. Obviously, they won't win the Championship come Monday afternoon since the curse befalls them, but they will make a push come playoff time and it'll be an exciting storyline to watch out for.

2. Twins (Glendale CDJR 2)

After multiple scheduling changes and requests, the Twins will be at as full strength as they can for the 2020 season. Their roster of five may be one of the strongest in franchise history with the addition of 2019 SWBL and National Rookie of the Year, Cory McCarthy. Cory had a great year for the Royals in 2019 and looks to not have a sophomore slump with the Twins in 2020. Chris Meador looks forward to returning to play some wiffle for the first time in over a year, leading the charge as the preseason favorite to go back to back in the platinum hands race, and with Edloe's reception cancelled, he can focus on getting the Twins back to the championship after an above average showing at Summer League this year. The pitching situation is something to look out for with this squad as Spencer Bogad and Will Rath will be the assumed 1-2 on the mound, but with reigning MVP, Spencer missing four games, Chris will have to be intentional with who pitches which games. Per the usual for a Chris Meador team, all that matters is making the playoffs, in which they will roll out a squad at full strength, looking to add to their trophy shelves.

3. Brewers (Glendale CDJR 3)

Always the bridesmaid, and never the bride. The Brew Crew looks to finally break that mold and have their big day on Monday. Consistently, captain Peter Leicht has been looked upon to lead the team in hitting, but this year he could be the worst hitter in the lineup! That tells you how great the players are around him. A short rookie season for Derek Cornell showed a sample size of being a strong player the Brewers can rely on, and he will be their fourth hitter for presumably the entire season. The loss of ace David Olderman could be seen as a detriment to this franchise, but it seems to be the best decision for both parties. David can blossom in a new regime and get the playing time he deserves, while PG and Kyle can now step up and showcase themselves in innings on the mound that were once taken up by their former ace.

What seems to be this team's downfall every year is trying to get the lineup to hit at the same time. Although that may be their past, it certainly doesn't seem to be their future, as the Brewers could be poised for their best season yet.

4. Rockies (Koetting Eye Center 1)

Let's start with the elephant in the room. The Rockies had the least amount of runs allowed in 2019 behind the arm of their ace pitcher, Brett Spencer, who has made his way to the divisional rival, Expos. Without Brett, this team will have to bring the bats and have lock down fielding, while developing their arms back to full season workloads on the mound. Kyle Breda seemingly takes over as the team's ace, with captain Blake Spencer as their number two. Many forget, that the Rockies have won a championship without Brett in the franchise era, but that was with Grant Boyd, who will not be in attendance until maybe Sunday evening, if at all. Rookie, Mike Patterson will make his SWBL debut as the Rockies fourth hitter, and hopes to make a bigger splash than his older brother did with the SWBL Cardinals. With a lineup of four, Blake Spencer will get more at bats and looks to make a run at another MVP, starting the year as the preseason #2 favorite for the award. The Rockies are the only team in SWBL history to make the playoffs every single season, and I am sure they don't want that famous streak to end now. To do it though, they will have to battle it out in a tough division including a veteran Braves team, and two up and coming franchises with nothing to lose.

5. Braves (Koetting Eye Center 2)

In this interesting year of the global pandemic, many changes had to be made to the SWBL season. Two teams were affected more than the rest with the Athletics and the Royals. Out of the 10 players on those franchises, only 4 will be available to play in 2020, hence the new combination team, the SWBL Braves. The Braves will be a one-year only team led by captain, Gus Skibbe. Joining him will be his brother Sam, former Royal, Paul Castellano, and one of America's wiffle sweethearts, Steve Hays. Steve looks to be the extra hitter for the team as Gus, Sam, and Paul will handle pitching and fielding duties, and that may be good after a very slow showing at the plate for Steve during Summer League. Injuries and fatherhood surround this team as we head into Season 18, but these veterans can still be a threat to break open a game at any time and play with the best. It has been three years in a row that the Skibbes were in the finals. Maybe a team name change is what Gus needs to break the Royals curse, or did it now follow him to the Braves?

6. Expos (Koetting Eye Center 3)

Four wins in 2018, then falling to 1-9 is not how the Expos wanted things to trend, but in the offseason captain Kevin Wiethuchter went and got the most prized free agent of the decade in reigning CY Wiffle, Brett Spencer. Combine Brett with Summer League MVP and Champion, Jimmy Nelson and this becomes quite possibly the most formidable one two pitching punch in SWBL history. Jimmy's knuckleball has gotten even better, and with his speed being monitored he will continue to show success on the mound getting big outs for the Expos. John Leicht, Matt Germer, and Evan Close would fully round out the lineup with Eggs out for the season, but another offseason acquisition could prove to be quite useful in many ways with the addition of

SWBL veteran, Andy Oldenburg. The return of Andy has been quite anticipated as he looks to prove his worth in his trial at bats. Andy is a former Rookie of the Year and Home Run Champion, with a very high wiffle IQ. If Kevin ends up not using him as a hitter late in the season, they can surely use him as an asset on the bench. The Expos are very high on this season and look not just to make the playoffs but contend for the title. If their hitting and fielding can match their inevitable pitching dominance, this team could be right there at the end with not only their first playoff appearance, but ride the arms they have to a championship.

7. Astros (Koetting Eye Center 4)

Bryan Benware enters his fifth year as Astros' franchise captain, and has his best roster yet. The core has returned and the Astros have found their hold to gain some ground on the perennial playoff teams. In the offseason, Benware got prized pitcher, David Olderman in free agency, but unfortunately he can't make it this labor day. Cam Smith will continue as the team's ace, and without David, they need someone to step up. Low and behold, Summer League provided just that opportunity and Jeremy Worrell has shown the league what he is made of on the mound and seemingly becomes the franchise's number two, with possible number one stuff! Keaton Adams returns for his sophomore campaign, finishing second in the ROTY voting in 2019. Chris Oberlohr will make some appearances and Benware looks to continue in left field for his squad. The final piece of the puzzle came with the news of the Royals and Athletics combining as the Braves, leaving free agent (and Cam's Brother), Cole Layton ready to join a team. Cole had an incredible Summer League season, and will join the Astros on a one-year rookie deal and becomes the instant favorite for 2020 Rookie of the Year. Bryan has a tough task ahead of him, with a roster laden with talent and a thirst to prove themselves. This will be a team to watch out for late into the season.

8. Marlins (Glendale CDJR 4)

With very little known about these Marlin rookies and their wiffle skillset, it will be hard to know exactly what the returning players and teams will be dealing with in 2020. Ranked last in every preseason category, and seemingly the one on everyone else's schedule they have circled as an auto win is probably where captain, Eli Erickson and his rookie teammates want to be. Some baseball experience in the group, and we all know Parkway South pumps out amazing wiffers. Josh Anthony and Eli look to be the one two punch on the mound with others getting some innings in relief. Med student, Sam Rudnick will be looked upon as this team's utility man, but for the league could be looked to help out Will Rath in 2020 and fill the shoes of missing med players Alex Heck and John Doerries. While Eli looks to turn some heads in 2020, 6'8 funny guy, Trent Davis looks to bring the fun and energy along with his sneaky deceptiveness on the mound. The floor is quite low for this team, which means the sky is the limit in their first season to come out and prove they can instantly play with the SWBL veterans.