

2018 Day 3 Power Rankings:

Overall Rank. Team, Record, Playoff Record (Division Rank)(Previous Ranking)

1. Twins, 7-3, 2-0 (Cardinal Blinds 1)(3) – Chris Meador assembles yet another Championship squad in the franchise era (his fifth total). A great finish for the 7-3 Twins as they defeat the #2 seed Rockies and #1 seed Royals, as the away team in both games, on their way to this franchise's second title in three years. Will Rath, Spencer Bogad, and Jimmy Cole were a three-headed monster on the mound all season, but Spencer Bogad shut down their opponents in the playoffs. With the new out-of-towner rule, Jimmy Cole might be in a new uniform in 2019, but this league has seen what he can do after a fantastic regular season and finals performance, finishing fourth in the MVP race. Spencer also finished second in the MVP race and Chris Meador finishes third in the Platinum Hands category. This upcoming offseason the Twins will have a lot of questions surrounding them as they figure out what to do with their fourth spot in the lineup, and if Will Rath shall return to just the mound for them in Season 17.

2. Royals, 9-1, 1-1 (Glendale 1)(1) – 10-0 and the #1 seed, with one playoff win, then getting crushed in the championship in 2017; then going 9-1 as the #1 seed, with one playoff win, then getting crushed in the championship in 2018 is a nightmare that the Royals don't want to keep repeating. Gus Skibbe was named MVP leading the league in HR and RBI, and Sam won his 10th CY Wiffle Award of his career going 5-0 on the season against tough competition. Ty Butler had his best year in three years and looks to be back in form winning the SWBL batting title and finishing second in the Platinum Hands race, while Mike Boyles didn't capitalize on his chance for the SWBL Rookie of the Year Award as much as everyone thought he would. With the new out-of-towner rules, the Royals will be looking for a new fourth player for their lineup, but the pitching rotation should stay relatively the same as the three Skibbes pitched in all twelve games for the Royals in 2018.

3. Rockies, 8-2, 0-1 (Sandbar 1)(2) – A tough end to their 2018 season losing to the radar gun in their playoff matchup against the Twins. The Rockies looked poised to be back in the hunt all season, with Blake having a great bounce back year in 2018, Brian Kenney winning his second straight Platinum Hands award, and Brett Spencer going 4-0 on the mound finishing second in the CY Wiffle race. Kyle Breda was their pitching workhorse, and

Grant Boyd was a good role player again. They didn't change anything from their Championship run in 2017, but after an early exit in the playoffs it will be interesting to see what this franchise does heading into next season.

4. Brewers, 6-4, 1-1 (Glendale 2)(4) – Their second fourth place finish in two years, as the only team to win the new SWBL Wild Card game in the playoffs. Year after year, the Brewers are seen as having it all on paper, but they can never put it all together Friday-Monday. They won Franchise of the Year again in 2018, with the addition of the first keg in SWBL history, and will be a contender for NWLA Fun Team of the Year. They have more depth than they know what to do with, but it hasn't been enough to put together a season that isn't right around .500 in a few years. Peter will head back to the drawing board in the offseason, to see what they can do about improving in 2019, or at least to come up with a few more Hard Knocks episodes.

5. Yankees, 5-5, 0-1 (Cardinal Blinds 2)(5) – After going 9-1 in 2017, the Yankees went backwards in 2018 and nobody is really clear why despite many close games. If anything, their team seemed to improve offensively. Kevin Pohle is getting better each year, Scott is staying consistent as the backbone of this team, and Sam Bakula had an all-star season as well. John was decent enough this season and Jackson, despite going 7-8 at the plate, seemed to take a step back after his CY Wiffle season in 2017, not being able to put away the top teams from the mound in 2018. We will see what they will do this offseason with questions surrounding John Calloway and his future with the Yankees as they try and get back to the Championship game in 2019.

6. Athletics, 4-6 (Cardinal Blinds 3)(6) – With a last place finish in 2017 and Luke Bakula out for 2018, you would've thought the A's would be back in the basement, but they fought their way to a 4-6 final record in a tough division, stealing a game from the Yankees and beating the three teams below them. They had a great year from rookie Matt Galakatos, who should be a strong addition to this roster in the future, especially on the mound, pitching more innings than anyone else in the league. Paul had an all-star season in 2018, and Mike was a good number two, but Steve had one of his worst years of his career, and due to location and timing, this could have been one of Alex Heck's last years for now in the league. This offseason, we will be watching closely to see the status of Alex and Luke, while seeing

who they will add to supplement if they think it's needed, but to get back to the playoffs they need to do a bit more shocking the world in 2019.

7. Expos 4-6 (Sandbar 2)(7) – What a year! The Expos should be very proud of the year they put together, doubling their win total again, going 4-6, and to be honest, could have easily gone 6-4 if some small things had gone their way. Jimmy Nelson was a monster on the mound finishing in the top 5 for CY Wiffle, proving he might have one of the best pitches in the league. Egerstrom was a welcome addition back to the roster and they feasted on having the Diamondbax in the same division sweeping the series with them. Also, John Leicht and Evan Close both finished in the top 15 of batting average as the Expos have a lot to build on as they head into Season 17. These Expos of Shanty Town are here to stay.

8. Astros, 2-8 (Glendale 3)(8) – Matching their win total from 2017, and finishing with the top 2 in the rookie of the year race again, has the Astros sitting in the same spot for the final power rankings at the end of the season. Benware and Jeremy Worrell took a step back in 2018, while Cam Branson improved on both sides of the ball. The real excitement from this team came from their new rookies as Stephen Farkas and Chris Oberlohr were a great addition to improve this roster and if they stick around could give Benware the tools to build upon towards the future. Their two wins came against the lowly Diamondbax, and they were the only team to beat the Royals in the regular season for the past two seasons, defeating them 14-10 with Royals rookie Kevin Skibbe on the mound. There is a lot this team could do this offseason, but with Cam on the rise, Jeremy and Bryan hoping to improve, Chris and Stephen coming back, and players like Nick Lape and others who are wanting to attend in 2019, this team could find that right mix to improve from their two win total from the past two years.

9. Diamondbax 0-10 (Sandbar 3)(9) – Sure they lost Jimmy Cole in 2018, but he didn't add anything to their roster in 2017 anyway, so the only thing it could be is that they didn't have Andrew Lindor to match their same success they saw in their first season of the SWBL! Mat Peisert had a fantastic season finishing in the top 20 in the three major categories, and could be one of the top players in the league with more experience. Auston Steffes was hurt this season and will be a welcome addition on both sides of the ball in 2019. Devin Nelson did pretty good at the plate, and Trent added to his power hitting totals, but it wasn't near enough to stop the onslaught as this team finished as the first 0-10 team in three years. A positive is that

they are the best 0-10 team we have ever had as they head into a very intriguing offseason with Trent in charge of all of the out-of-towner players, getting his first pick of the entire litter. I would put money on them not going 0-10 in 2019, and wouldn't sleep on this team when they come up on your Season 17 schedule.