

2019 Preseason Power Rankings

Overall Rank. Team (Division Rank)

1. Twins (Glendale Chrysler 1)

A pattern is emerging between the Twins and the Rockies the past four years as they keep trading off Championships. This year, with the Twins under the curse of the preseason number one ranking, it looks like the pattern could continue. The loss of Jimmy Cole for this squad will hurt after he made a tremendous showing in a bounce back year to help this team to a title. Will Rath fills in as the new, full-time fourth member and will get another chance at proving he deserves a prime spot on a prime team, who, along with Bogad will be on the mound for this squad. Looking to break the home run record in 2019 is the now crossfit buff, Chris Meador, who looks to pull some more playoff voodoo magic to break the curse of the number one team. The real question remains though, is this an off year or an on year for Edloe? That could make or break the Twins hopes of breaking the curse, once and for all.

2. Royals (Cardinals Blinds 1)

Two years of championship appearances, and two years of heartbreak for a team with a 19-1 regular season record in that span. Gus and Sam continue to prove they are one of the best wiffle duos on any team in the country from both sides of the ball, and Ty Butler had a great bounce back year for the squad. Mike Boyles held his own in his first year of play, while Kevin Skibbe garnered his first pitching win of his young career, but this year, the expanded roster of the Royals takes on new faces with one of the largest rosters in SWBL history. Cory McCarthy looks to get most of the playing time in that fourth spot, but Leon Cherry, Tyler Cardwell, and Jamesell Kee could see some action as well if needed. Obviously though, the wiffle world waits in anticipation to see if the beloved Andy Oldenburg makes it back onto The Blur in 2019. There are many rumors circulating about the Royals and how much longer they may be around, but one thing is for sure, when firing on all cylinders, this team is hard to stop.

3. Rockies (Koetting Associates 1)

As the only team to make it to the playoffs in every year of the Franchise Era, the Rockies are always a threat to win it all. Last year they were hit with the number one curse, but now the Rockies look to stay consistent with the same roster and again make a push for a Championship. A bit of drama in the offseason with Brett randomly selecting between four teams that ultimately just brought him back to his brother's squad, but Blake is glad to have Brett back as arguably the best ace in the game today. Blake had a great year in 2018 and looks to build on it again for Season 17. BK won his second platinum hands award, while Kyle and Grant continue to be the ultimate pick me ups for a roster when a boost is needed. If there was any Vegas lock in wiffleball, it would be that the Rockies will make the playoffs in 2019, but how far will they go is the question?

4. Brewers (Koetting Associates 2)

The Brewers are still the only team that has ever won the SWBL Wild Card game since playoff expansion, and they are pre-ranked to be in that same position again in 2019. Both years, they have fallen just short to the Royals and cannot seem to make that jump to get back to the Championship (last title game was 2013). The Brew Crew is one of wiffle nation's favorite teams and they have the skill and depth to make a run, but cannot seem to put it all together. They have 4 quality pitchers, who could be aces on many other teams, 3 players that can compete for an MVP award at any time, and a social game that rivals any in the sport, but what is stopping them? We have said before that they never all play at their best all at the same time, especially in the playoffs, but that storyline is wearing thin. If the Brewers don't figure out something soon, the roster may get restless and start seeking other employment.

5. Yankees (Cardinal Blinds 2)

After such a promising 2017 in which the Yankees went 9-1 in the regular season, they finished 5-5 in 2018 and were just one game away from not making playoffs. Jackson was on a hangover from his CY Wiffle season, and the Yankees could not get by the Brewers in the Wild Card game in 2018. Scott Pohle is a monster at the dish and is quietly becoming one of the better number two pitching options on any team, while Sam Bakula continues to mash. Kevin Pohle gets better every single year like a fine wine, and with the hopefully inevitable improvements from John Calloway at the plate and Jackson on the mound, the Yankees can break out for another winning campaign as quickly as any team.

6. Diamondbax (Glendale Chrysler 2)

The surprise of the preseason power rankings has to be the D Bax at #6 after joining the Pirates, Expos, and Giants as the fourth team to go 0-10 in the SWBL just last season. They were in consideration for the 2018 NWLA Dangerfield award, but were still considerably better than some of the rest of the worst. Trent and the Minnesota boys are back for their third try at this season in a weekend experiment and are determined to improve. With the new out-of-towner rule set in place, the D Bax had a plethora of talent to choose from. This year, they added maybe one of the biggest wiffle names in the game right now in Caleb Jonkman, who is the instant favorite for Rookie of the Year, and could even contend for MVP if given a quality number of at bats. Mat Peisert is one of the most underrated players in the league and Chris Neumann was a solid addition to the league that nobody ever wants to live without anymore. Lindor is back, Auston Steffes makes his return from injury and Jay Zimmerman will be a welcome addition to the squad as well. They lose Devin Nelson, which will be a big blow, but Caleb should be on a mission early to help the D Bax make a possible playoff push.

7. Athletics (Glendale Chrysler 3)

The heart and soul of the Athletics, Alex Heck is out, and Luke Bakula returns as the Athletics try and get back to their glory season of 2016. The Athletics were one game away from a playoff spot in 2018 and that was without arguably their best hitter in Luke Bakula. Luke is a solid overall player and could make an MVP run if it all came together for him, or at least if he didn't have to face Bogad. Steve Hays takes the reigns of the franchise and looks for a bounce back year. Mike Karl had a great year for the A's and will look to build on that in 2019, while Paul Castellano was back to his home run form and looks to continue as well. The surprise of their 2018 roster was Matt Galakatos who pitched 30 innings for them last season, but he will not return in 2019, leaving the pitching duties to Luke and Paul for the whole season. This team is one that, on paper, seemingly could do so much better than their pre-ranking represents, and are a scary team offensively on your schedule if they are heating up to shock the world again.

8. Astros (Koetting Associates 3)

What else could go wrong for Bryan as he enters his fourth year as a franchise captain. Every time he has some success with some players, the next year they don't play. 2018 Rookie of the Year Stephen Farkas announced his retirement from the game of wiffleball due to lack of interest and elbow problems. Then, the Astro's number two pitcher from last year Cam Branson revealed he had vacation plans and had to sit this season out, which put Benware fearing for his life when it came to holding teams to runs. So, he went out and signed one of the best fast pitch pitchers in the St. Louis area, Cameron Smith, hoping he can translate to medium speed to be the team's ace, then has to hope for the best with the rest of the squad to find a number two. Chris Oberlohr was a beast in the games he could play in 2018, and will only be there for half the season again. Jeremy Worrell had an abysmal year at the plate, but was at least heard all weekend, much to the dismay of many others. Rookies Keaton Adams, Ryan Oberlohr, and Matt Pay could find some playing time this season, but unless one of them can pitch, their impact might be minimum at best. With Keaton getting the bulk of the work until Chris arrives, the Astros may not be playoff ready quite yet, but when he does return on Sunday, this team could play spoiler to an unsuspecting team vying for a spot.

9. Expos (Cardinals Blinds 3)

After a magical year, winning more than two games for the first time in this franchise's storied history, the Expos find themselves on the bottom yet again in the preseason power rankings, a place I am sure they did not think they would be. To be honest, this will probably just put a bigger chip on their shoulder and they will probably make a legitimate run at a playoff spot in 2019...but they also could very well be at the bottom come season's end as well. Co-captains, Kevin "Barefoot" Wiethuchter and John Leicht are keeping the same roster intact and will ride Jimmy Nelson's knuckleball until the day they die. Jimmy was the first Expo to be named to an NWLA All-National Pitching Team and many people are saying his knuckleball might be one of the best pitches in the game. Evan, Germer, and Eggs will round out the roster as the Expos look to make shanty town into playoff town and Expos(e) their opponents with chatter, alcohol, and heart. We all can't wait to see what the Expos have in store for Season 17.