TBL NEWS NETWORK

78-84

Baltimore's record, tied for the worst ever to reach the postseason

TIME WILL TELL

The Last Two Months of 2033 in The Big League

Three Ice clubs in with losing records, Toronto from 48-57, 103 wins in San Juan, and every club's stretch run.

By Dana Whitcomb · October 6, 2033

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On August 1 the Toronto Griffins were 48-57 and last in baseball in runs, batting average, on-base percentage and slugging percentage. Brandon in Toronto added four players that day: Danny Badillo from Cincinnati, Angel Diaz from Southland, Billy Moorse from Phoenix and Adam Dirks from Fort Collins.

In September, with the Griffins still under .500, Hollis Weir of *Toronto Sporting Life* asked him whether he had bought enough. "I certainly hope so. Time will tell," Brandon said.

On the night of September 25 Toronto was 72-81 with nine games left. It lost the next two in Chicago. Then it won seven straight: once more in Chicago, three at home against New York and three in Somerville, against the best club in the conference. It outscored those seven opponents 59-17. The win on October 4 put the Griffins in the postseason at 79-83.

Before this year, thirty-six clubs had been 48-57 after 105 games. Two reached October, Boston in 2008 and San Antonio in 2009. Toronto is the third.

1.

Three of the eight Ice Conference clubs in the field have losing records: Galveston and Toronto at 79-83 and Baltimore at 78-84.

Before this season, eight clubs had played in October with a losing record, and never more than two in one year. All eight came from the Fire. Baltimore's 78-84 ties Phoenix in 2031 for the worst record ever to reach the postseason.

Toronto has been outscored by thirty-four runs this year and Galveston by thirteen. They are the only two clubs in the field that allowed more runs than they scored. Both were 30-51 on the road, the worst road record of any playoff club.

2.

Every Fire club in the field finished .500 or better. The last one in was Huron, at 81-81.

Kansas City and Mexico City both finished 80-82, two games better than Baltimore, and both are home. So is San Diego, at 79-83, the same record as Galveston and Toronto.

The conferences played 736 games against each other this year, and the Fire won 383 of them. In August it led by four games. The Ice had won that season series in twenty of the previous twenty-two years, and the last time the Fire won it was 2026. Milwaukee went 33-13 against the Ice, the best record either way. Las Vegas went 14-32 against the Fire, the worst. New Orleans was 15-31.

3.

The last spot in the Fire came down to one game in Kansas City on October 5.

Huron, Kansas City and Mexico City all started the day at 80-81. On September 25 four clubs had been tied at 77-76 for the last two places, those three and Vancouver. Vancouver went 6-3 from there and clinched on October 4 in Spokane.

Steve Benton and Nate Peterson each struck out eight, and the game was scoreless through nine. In the top of the tenth Danny Perez singled off Mario Deras, stole second, took third on a passed ball and scored on Dan Boyd's single to right. In the bottom of the inning Jose Erbetto struck out J.J. Saxton on three pitches. Saxton finished with forty-six home runs, one behind the league lead. Big Horn beat Mexico City 6-1 the same afternoon.

Kansas City was 58-47 on August 1 and went 22-35 after it. It hit 245 home runs, the most in baseball, and batted .223, the lowest. Mexico City lost Arturo Rivera, Jonathan Coon, Adam Brady and Ted Sowell in September. Its run of three straight postseasons is over. Larry's Luchadores were 2-10 against Myrtle Beach.

Huron beat San Juan in eight of their twelve games and opens in San Juan. It stole 265 bases, the most in baseball, and struck out 1,155 batters, the fewest. "I have never found that they tell me much in October," Lorraine Petrosky wrote in the *Huron Daily Beacon*, about the records.

4.

San Juan won 103 games, the best record in baseball and the most in franchise history. The old mark was 102, in 2011, when the club was in Louisville. Last year it won the championship at 82-80.

Since August 1 the Stogies went 42-15. They were 15-4 in extra innings and 36-20 in one-run games, and they won more games on the road, fifty-two, than at home. Frank Mildner, 25 and on the minimum, drove in 121 runs, the most in the league. D.J. Zaccardelli saved forty and converted all ten of his chances in September. "I have stopped waiting for it to even out. I have started enjoying it," Nélida Cruz Betancourt wrote in *El Nuevo Día Deportes*.

Milwaukee finished 98-64, five games behind San Juan, and stole twenty-nine bases all year, the fewest in baseball. It led the league in on-base percentage, OPS and walks. In September Danny Kolar of the *Milwaukee Sentinel-Press* asked Ryan in Milwaukee whether the Mobsters could still win the Topaz. "We plan to," Ryan said. They went 7-2 in the last sim and won the first two in San Juan after the division was decided.

Oklahoma City won 93 and opens in Big Horn, because Big Horn finished second in its division and Oklahoma City finished third in its own. Oklahoma City has been to the postseason twenty-three times and never to a final. It has met Big Horn in October three times. Big Horn won all three, each in seven games.

5.

Myrtle Beach and Big Horn both finished 91-71.

On the morning of October 5 the Mermen were a game ahead. Robby Morales of Phoenix, with nothing left to play for, held them to two hits over six and two-thirds innings, and Phoenix won 1-0. Big Horn won in Mexico City behind Dan Gonzalez. Myrtle Beach won the season series between the two clubs, 7-5, and with it the Ruby. It is the first division title since the club moved from San Antonio, and its first October since 2028.

Myrtle Beach scored 759 runs, the most in baseball, and allowed 136 home runs, the fewest. Steven Alexander saved forty-two. Daryl in Myrtle Beach told Cricket Hallorhan of *Grand Strand Sports* that he has "full control of 75/80% of the roster for the next 3/4 years. And have money next year to fix any holes." The Mermen lost seven of their last nine, including three at home to Vancouver, and play Vancouver now.

Big Horn went 36-21 after the deadline and was 55-26 at home, tied with Montreal for the best home record in the league. Gonzalez, who won the last game, is expected to miss about three months.

6.

Phoenix lost seven straight from September 23 to 30 and still finished 87-75, seven games clear of the first club left out. Brendan in Phoenix added Tyler Holman, Jason Mills, Josh Baker and Travis Nelson this summer. Baker made two starts and tore a flexor tendon. Holman went 6-4 with a 2.71 in fifteen starts. Bryce Mosely hit forty-three home runs. It is the club's first October since 2031, and it opens in Milwaukee.

Vancouver went 83-79 with a 40-41 record at home. Adam Bickler won seventeen games, tied with Sam Kelly of Montreal for the league lead, and David Furlong saved forty-two, tied with Alexander. Justin Dora, with twenty-six home runs, hurt his back on September 26 and may not play again this year.

7.

Somerville won the Sapphire at 98-64. Its run differential, plus-177, was the best in baseball by thirty-eight runs. It is the club's twenty-eighth postseason in thirty-three seasons. Chase Martin struck out 246 in under 147 innings. Antonio Reyna strained a knee ligament on September 16 and has played once since.

Denver won the Jade by eighteen games at 97-65, its sixteenth straight trip to October. It allowed 565 runs, the fewest in baseball. Matt Ware, who led qualified starters with a 2.32 earned run average and threw a perfect game in July, tore a flexor tendon in September and is out until spring. Victor Baez has not played since September 11. In September Camille Ossorio of the *Denver Herald* asked Jay in Denver who starts Game 1. "Oh Marco Ruiz, of course," Jay said. "He's on ice for the last two sims quietly preparing to dominate." Ruiz has thrown one inning since September 7.

Montreal finished 94-68 after winning nine straight in September. Kelly made $4.5 million and struck out 246. Arturo Luna had a 0.94 earned run average in seventy-seven innings of relief.

Boston won 92 and the first wild card, and it plays Games 1 and 2 in Galveston, a club that won thirteen fewer. Juan Hernandez, 15-7 with a 3.25, left his October 2 start in Montreal with elbow inflammation and could miss as much as two months. Luis Martinez drove in 119 and becomes a free agent in November.

8.

Philadelphia is in for the first time since 2017. Connor's Eagles finished 83-79, 51-30 at home and 32-49 on the road, and went 29-16 in one-run games, the best in baseball. They clinched on September 28 with a 3-0 win over New York. They open in Montreal, a club they have never met in October.

Galveston won 102 games last year. This year it was 27-41 on June 14 and finished second in the Jade anyway, eighteen games behind Denver. Ashton Turner won the Ice batting title at .340, with thirty-three home runs and fifty steals, and was worth more wins than anyone in the league. The Gremlins lost their closer, Antonio Perez, on September 12, and two more arms, Matthew Tenner and Ricardo Sainz, in New Orleans on October 4.

9.

Baltimore was 54-51 on August 1, three games inside the line. It went 24-33 after that.

On August 1 the Blue Crabs were 19-10 in one-run games. They went 3-19 in them the rest of the way. Steve in Baltimore made no trade at the deadline. The club was 66-77 on September 13, went 12-7 from there, and clinched with a 5-3 win in Boston on October 4. "This is the one it backed into," Rosalind Feeney

wrote in the *Baltimore Ledger-Star*. Matt Locher, 25, on the minimum, pitched twenty-one and a third innings in September without allowing an earned run.

Baltimore outscored its opponents by forty-six runs this year. It won seven of twelve against Somerville, and it opens there for the fourth October in a row.

10.

On September 25 Baltimore and Rochester shared the last wild card in the Ice at 73-80. Toronto and Tampa Bay were a game back and Cincinnati two.

Rochester went 2-7 from there. It had been to the postseason every year since 2023, its first season under that name, and the streak is over at ten. On July 4 Keven in Rochester sent Vince Hernandes, Lyle Egner and Jorge Garcia to Denver for picks and prospects. Rochester went 23-34 after the deadline. "I had not seen it lose like this in Rochester," Ada Brightbill wrote in the *Rochester Post-Express*. Jeff Williams, 25, on the minimum, led the league with forty-seven home runs. On September 28 he hit three in one game in Denver, and Rochester lost it 6-4.

Tampa Bay held the last spot on August 1 at 51-54 and finished 76-86, two games out. It won seventeen more games than last year and ended a run of six straight seasons with 100 losses or more. Leo's Cannons did not sell at the deadline.

Cincinnati was 27-52 on June 27 and went 48-35 after that. It finished three games short. "We've played inspired baseball since the trade deadline and have almost pulled ourselves up from the grave," Chris in Cincinnati told Wendell Barr of the *Cincinnati Register*. Five of his players reach free agency this winter.

Fort Collins won ten straight starting September 19 and was one game out on the night of September 30. It lost four of its last five and finished 74-88. New Orleans won its last seven, three of them in Rochester, and also finished 74-88.

11.

Chicago sold. Mike in Chicago sent Jason Mills and Travis Nelson to Phoenix and holds two Phoenix first-round picks as a result. On September 9 the Black Sox were part of a four-way tie for the last wild card. Then they lost fourteen straight. "I always want to be in the playoffs even if I am in a rebuild year with a shot," Mike told Vera Nowak of the *Chicago City Wire*, "but I'm not expecting to make the playoffs." In the last week Chicago beat Toronto twice and won two of three in Baltimore. Toronto and Baltimore still made the field.

New York finished 68-94 and was outscored by 201 runs. Travis Eaton, paid $40.8 million, stayed through the deadline, and his contract ends this month. "Even a blind squirrel finds a nut," Joe in New York told Gil Amsterdam of the *New York Standard*, after an 8-4 sim. "A good couple weeks doesn't equate to a good season." The club went 3-9 the next sim. On October 3 Joe Pruitt struck out thirteen Black Sox and allowed one hit in seven and two-thirds innings.

Las Vegas finished last in the Jade at 70-92. Arturo Molina hit his 250th career home run on the last day of the season. Earlier in September the High Rollers shut out Galveston three nights in a row.

12.

Six more Fire clubs missed the field.

San Diego was 44-61 on August 1. Since 2001, no club that far down after 105 games had reached the postseason. The Seals went 35-22 after the deadline and finished two games short. Al Charles struck out 321, the most in baseball, and went 11-14.

Virginia won 100 games last year and 68 this year, the biggest drop in the league. "We got some liquidity and value for expiring contracts," Kaden in Virginia told Bo Threadgill of the *Richmond Dispatch-Ledger*. Memphis finished 67-95, thirteen games better than last year, with five names in the first sixty-three of the game's Top 100. "Current AAA phenom 2B Chris Faulk will start next season with the big league club playing second base," Eric in Memphis told Otis Frayne of the *Memphis Delta Times*.

Spokane had the worst record in baseball, 64-98, thirteen wins better than last year. Southland finished 73-89 and has ten players on the Top 100. One of them, Steve Boettcher, 22, came up in September and hit eleven home runs in twenty-one games. "It is very good at deciding who else does not get to play in one," Gerald Mabry wrote in the *Southland Tribune*, after the Bandits swept three in Kansas City in the last week. Oahu finished 73-89, 48-33 at home and 25-56 on the road. Christian Loredo, 38, finishes the year with 534 home runs. Paul in Oahu has said the target is 2034.

13.

In the three seasons of the sixteen-club field, the higher seed has won sixteen of twenty-four first-round series.

Toronto is the seventh seed and opens in Denver. The franchises have met in October four times, and Denver won the last three. Denver went 54-27 at home this year. Toronto went 30-51 on the road.

Game 1 is tomorrow.