

Beer League Baseball



2012 Draft Report Card

By Mike Jackson
March 27, 2012

INTRODUCTION	3
JACKSON PARK BADGERS.....	5
NEWCASTLE BROWN ALE	6
FRISCO SILVER BULLETS	8
TITLETOWN TWO FISTED SLOBBERS	9
KUKAGAMI LAKE CHIPPERS	11
SHINER BOCK.....	13
INLAND EVIL EMPIRES.....	14
SAN ANTONIO TEJANOS	16
TEXAS SNOW MONKEYS	17
CINCINNATI STEEL RESERVES	18
GRANITE CITY GANGSTERS	20
GUADALAJARA CROWS.....	21
HOLLYWOOD LIBERAL ELITE	22
ST LOUIS ARCH RIVALS	23
PHILADELPHIA STOOGES.....	24
GARSON EHS.....	26
TORONTO BEAVERS	27
EDMONTON TRAPPERS	28
NICKEL CENTRE WOLF PACK	29
SUDBURY NORTHERN ALES	30
PREDICTIONS – 2011 REDUX:.....	31
TEAM GRADES:.....	33
PREDICTIONS – 2012:	35

Introduction

The fifth annual Beer League Baseball draft took place on March 17, 2012 (St Patty's Day! How fitting for our *BEER* League!). After nearly 3.5 of drafting, and many, many beers (hopefully nobody ended the draft looking like this guy), the 19 attending owners finally had teams to call their own. After the last four drafts I did a report card, grading everyone's picks, and I've decided to make it an annual thing, since I enjoy doing it and everyone seems to enjoy reading it.



What I've done is copied each team's draft results (for this year only) into the report card. Then I evaluate each team's draft based on a number of factors: Did this team overpay for anyone? Did they get good value picks? Did they make the right decision with the direction of their draft (ie attempt to contend vs rebuild)? Did they spend all their money (or did they seem to have good reason not to spend)? Did they apportion their money smartly (ie if a team with 3 third basemen spent 50 bucks on A-Roid, that wouldn't make much sense). After I've discussed the draft, I came up with the best and worst values on the team. Finally, after all that, I assign a grade and summarize my overall thoughts on the team.

I should say that all these grades and team breakdowns are only my opinions. I didn't set out to do this to ruffle any feathers, or insult any owners, and if I do end up offending anybody with my grades, I apologize. I merely intend this to be a fun read, and something to get everyone psyched up for Opening Day.

After all the teams are complete, I've tried to make a prediction of every team's record this season. Again, this is just my opinion, though I will say that some of my predictions in past years were pretty close to accurate.

With that said, I hope everyone enjoys this document and has a fun time reading it, and I welcome any complaints and arguments about my grades! Bring it on, and Play Ball!

ALE LEAGUE

IPA DIVISION

Jackson Park Badgers

Hitters		
<u>Name</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Year</u>
Robert Andino	3	1/3
Rafael Furcal	2	1/3
Endy Chavez	1	1/3
Alex Presley	1	1/3

Pitchers		
<u>Name</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Year</u>
Cole Hamels	46	1/3
Brett Myers	3	1/3
Kameron Loe	2	1/3

Owner: Nate Feuerer

Total Payroll: \$283, \$10 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: A

2009 Draft Grade: A-

2010 Draft Grade: A-

2011 Draft Grade: A-

The Good:

Nate spent nearly all of his available dollars grabbing an Ace in Cole Hamels. I can't fault the strategy, just the price (more below) as Hamels has a sweet card for this year and is in his prime. Myers has an ok card, but the implications of his cheap deal could be felt next year as he's moved to the 'pen for 2012 to become a closer. If Myers can become a JAM closer, Nate will be happy he spent the 3 bucks.

On the hitting side, Andino brings speed and a solid utility guy to the roster. Endy and Presley are cheap but effective OF (both limited) to round out Nate's roster, and Furcal is a low risk potential high upside play at 2 bucks.

The Bad:

All I really didn't like about Nate's draft is the price he paid for Hamels, which is arguably 5-10 bucks of an overpay. Hamels does have a nice card this year, but the C durability scared me off of him a bit, and his value does take a bit of a hit as a lefty in the BLB.

Best Value: Myers at \$3

Worst Value: Hamels at \$46

The Verdict:

Nate has always done well on these report cards, and this year is no different as I'm giving him an overall grade of **B+** for this draft. Nate got a true Ace in Hamels, and though he overpaid some he'll be happy to add Hamels' arm to his rotation. He got a solid rotation arm (and possible future closer) in Myers, and filled out his bench with some speed and defense with his remaining dollars. All in all, a solid draft.

Newcastle Brown Ale

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Robinson Cano	57	1/3
Corey Hart	26	1/3
Eduardo Nunez	2	1/3
Mike Carp	14	1/3
Paul Janish	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Mark Melancon	11	1/3
Ubaldo Jimenez	19	1/3
Joba Chamberlain	4	1/3
Grant Balfour	7	1/3
Charlie Morton	1	1/3
Al Alburquerque	2	1/3
Glen Perkins	2	1/3
Jeff Samardzija	1	1/3

Owner: Ron Erdmann

Total Payroll: \$298, \$0 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: B

2009 Draft Grade: B+

2010 Draft Grade: C+

2011 Draft Grade: B

The Good:

I like what Ron did on the pitching side of this one. JAM closers are often difficult to project in these auctions; we've seen them go as high as the low 20's so for Ron to snag Melancon for 11 bucks was a great bit of value in my mind. It doesn't stop there, as he got Alburquerque's sick card for only 2 bucks (though Al's injured for half the year, \$2 won't kill Ron next year if he needs to buy him out), Samardzija and Perkins for a buck each and Balfour for 7 bucks. Ubaldo is a nice bounceback candidate, not a steal for Ron by any means but he's reasonably priced. Joba has a nice card but an F durability, so for 4 bucks this could turn out to be a steal or a sunk cost. Who can forget possibly the first \$1 JAM in BLB history, Charlie Morton!? Obviously he's unplayable vs LHP, but it's a ROOGY JAM for a buck!

The Bad:

Figured I'd save the entire offense discussion for here. Yes, Cano has a sweet card (MVP caliber, possibly best in the deck) but \$57 is a lot for any one player. That's nearly 20% of Newcastle's salary tied up in one guy! If he regresses or gets hurt, that will hamper Ron's flexibility in years to come. Carp was a guy I had my eye on, so nice pick there, but \$14 feels like a bit of an overpay for a guy who came out of nowhere like Carp did. Hart is a nice bat for \$26, but he looks like he's hurt to start the year.

Best Value: Melancon for \$11.

Worst Value: Cano for \$57.

The Verdict:

I loved the way Ron built his bullpen up from scratch, as he got an awesome bullpen at bargain prices. On the offensive side of things, he did snag Cano and probably doesn't give a shit that I think he overpaid, but the fact remains that Cano for \$57 is quite risky if Cano gets hurt or regresses from elite to merely very good. The pitching balances out the hitting as far as I'm concerned, so I'll give Ron an overall grade of **B+** for this year's draft. (NOTE: I adjusted Ron's grade up from a B to a B+ after having done my team grades, because I have to give Ron credit for going for broke in a wide open AL wild card situation. In that light, the Cano deal doesn't look **quite** as crazy as it vastly improves Ron's chances to make the playoffs this season).

Frisco Silver Bullets

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Kevin Youkilis	27	1/3
John Buck	8	1/3
Wilin Rosario	1	1/3
Adam Lind	2	1/3
Vernon Wells	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
CC Sabathia	38	1/3
Mariano Rivera	17	1/3
Greg Holland	9	1/3

Owner: Dan Trueden

Total Payroll: \$291, \$4 left on the table

2010 Draft Grade: C+

2011 Draft Grade: B

The Good:

Solid draft by Dab. Sabathia at 38 may seem like an overpay, and it is but only by a few bucks. I'd feel comfortable at that price with CC since he's got virtually no injury history and no sign of slowing down. Dan paid market price (based on what we've seen for similar cards) for Holland. An 'A' durability at catcher is sweet, even if John Buck isn't the sexiest catcher pick out there (though the draft was thin on catchers). Rosario is a nice pick at a buck. Lind/Wells are a couple of low OBP guys with connections to the Jays, and I like both picks at those prices as I think both of them could bounce back to provide real value (and Wells has value this year as a lefty masher with A defense in the corners).

The Bad:

About the only two picks I don't like are Mo Rivera for \$17 and Kevin Youkilis for \$27. Mo's got a nice card and all, but he's not a JAM reliever so he went for about double where I'd have pegged him. At least he'll likely either a) Retire, or b) get a JAM next year so this pick isn't really that bad for the future. On Youk, I like the bat and he's got solid D at first, but he's getting older and breaking down a bit, so \$27 seems quite a reach for a guy like that.

Best Value: Buck for \$8.

Worst Value: Youkilis for \$27.

The Verdict:

I give Dan an overall grade of **B+** for this draft. Even his "bad" picks weren't that bad, and he had some nice value plays in there as well.

Titletown Two Fisted Slobbers

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Ryan Zimmerman	35	1/3
Cameron Maybin	16	1/3
Devin Mesoraco	5	1/3
Gordon Beckham	7	1/3
Stephen Drew	2	1/3
Brandon Belt	1	1/3
Delmon Young	5	1/3
Jason Kipnis	1	1/3
Lonnie Chisenhall	4	1/3
Daric Barton	1	1/3
Anthony Rizzo	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Andrew Bailey	6	1/3
Max Scherzer	10	1/3
Huston Street	1	1/3
John Danks	7	1/3
Chad Billingsley	10	1/3
Lance Lynn	2	1/3
Jason Vargas	1	1/3
Brad Peacock	1	1/3

Owner: Craig Paprocki

Total Payroll: \$213, \$53 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: B+

2009 Draft Grade: C+

2010 Draft Grade: B

2011 Draft Grade: B-

The Good:

Craig needed to draft more or less his entire team, which can be tough. It looks like Titletown is starting a bit of a youth movement, as Craig picked up youngsters Maybin, Mesoraco, Beckham, Belt, Kipnis, Chisenhall, Rizzo, Scherzer and Lynn for reasonable prices. I think if even half of those picks work out this year, Craig will be happy! Aside from the youngsters, Drew is a good bounceback candidate, Zimmerman is elite at third, and Vargas, Billingsley and Danks round out a solid rotation.

The Bad:

I like Zimmerman but wouldn't have quite gone to \$35 for him, coming off of the season he just had. I don't have any hope that Beckham will figure things out, so I'm not a huge fan of that pick. Craig left a ton of money on the table (\$53); it's hard to say he should have spent more considering the prices guys were going for (and considering he's playing for 2013), but I wonder if Craig is regretting not getting into the bidding on a few younger guys.

Best Value: Rizzo for \$1.

Worst Value: Zimmerman at \$35

The Verdict:

I give Craig an overall grade of **A-** for this draft. He had a lot of spots to fill and a lot of money to do it, which is a tough thing when no other team has nearly as many open spots or dollars. Craig avoided overpaying for mediocre talent, though I'm not a fan of the Zimmerman contract. He picked up some solid young talent that should lead Titletown into their next championship era.

Kukagami Lake Chippers

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Brett Lawrie	19	1/3
Joe Mauer	16	1/3
Alejandro De Aza	6	1/3
Aaron Hill	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Adam Wainwright	12	1/3
Shaun Marcum	16	1/3

Owner: Chris Minton

Total Payroll: \$210, \$58 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: B+

2009 Draft Grade: C+

The Good:

Chris Minton, one of the BLB's original owners, returns to the BLB and has a largely successful draft. Chris is clearly playing for next season as he's loaded up on high upside, bounceback/up and coming types. Lawrie will almost certainly regress from his fantastic two month debut from last year, but I'm thinking an ~800 OPS and B-B+ defense at third is more than attainable which makes his \$19 salary a sweet deal. Mauer was hurt last year, but from the sounds of it he's healthy and looking good this spring. If Chris plays him at first this BLB season he should stay healthy long enough to put up solid numbers, and a bounceback in MLB is all but assured (again, if he stays healthy). Hill has sucked for several years now but hit well down the stretch in Arizona last year; at a buck, it's sure worth finding out if he can recapture his 2009 form (36 HR, 829 OPS). Marcum is a solid arm for this year and Wainwright is another bounceback candidate. De Aza has a nice OF card, though he is limited.

The Bad:

Chris better be reaching for that Maalox during the year, because he's gonna need it with all the risk he's drafted. Lawrie is a rookie, so usual "sophomore slump" caveats apply. Mauer as mentioned has struggled with health. Wainwright is coming off of Tommy John (and I believe an overpay for \$12). Marcum looked hurt in the playoffs last year and is complaining of shoulder pain this spring. Chris did leave a lot of dough on the table, which could have been used for some high upside/elite talent.

Best Value: Lawrie for \$19.

Worst Value: Wainwright for \$12.

The Verdict:

I give Chris an overall grade of A- for this draft. I like nearly all of his picks, and while I can quibble about the risks he took on some, he's drafted some serious upside which will help him build a contender in the years to come.

ALL LEAGUE

SECOND DIVISION

Shiner Bock

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Jesus Montero	7	1/3
Mark Trumbo	12	1/3
Nick Swisher	18	1/3
Nick Punto	14	1/3
Brent Lillibridge	8	1/3
Brayan Pena	2	1/3
Alfonso Soriano	6	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Antonio Bastardo	13	1/3

Owner: Brad Pike

Total Payroll: \$298, \$2 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: C+

2009 Draft Grade: C-

2010 Draft Grade: B+

2011 Draft Grade: B

The Good:

Let's start out with the *really* good: Jesus Montero for \$7!? That may end up being the steal of the draft in a few years. The guy's bat has been compared to Miguel Cabrera by some, and even if he doesn't fire on all cylinders right away, Brad looks to have locked up an elite bat for the next 3+ seasons for a great price. Other than that, I am a fan of Swisher and tried to get him before bowing out due to his platoon splits. Trumbo has a nice power card and defense but no walks. Lillibridge crushes lefties and can play all over which is crucial in the online game. Soriano's card isn't special but a \$6 clutch with A power against both sides can't be passed up on. Bastardo has a wicked relief card (in addition to one of the best names in baseball) so even though \$13 is a slight overpay, I don't mind the pick.

The Bad:

Punto for \$14? Granted he had a solid year and plays multiple positions, but \$14 is an overpay. Trumbo looks like he might be the odd man out due to the Pujols signing (though there was talk of trying him at third).

Best Value: Montero for \$7.

Worst Value: Punto for \$14

The Verdict:

Brad had a pretty good draft overall. Montero was a great pick, and he got some nice power bats in Swisher, Trumbo and Soriano for reasonable prices, as well as a utility guy in Lillibridge. The Punto pick drags him down but I'll give him a grade of **A-**.

Inland Evil Empires

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Derek Jeter	16	1/3
Allen Craig	18	1/3
Daniel Murphy	12	1/3
John Mayberry	17	1/3
Edwin Encarnacion	5	1/3
David Murphy	5	1/3
Jamey Carroll	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Josh Johnson	24	1/3
Jim Johnson	10	1/3
Vance Worley	19	1/3
Philip Humber	11	1/3

Owner: Dan Herman

Total Payroll: \$276, \$5 left on the table

2009 Draft Grade: B-

2010 Draft Grade: C

2010 Draft Grade: C+

The Good:

I like Edwin Encarnacion as a guy who might play multiple positions for the Jays this year, and he could hit 20+ HR in that park given the second half he had last year. Nice value pick for 5 bucks, and his card isn't bad for this year too. John Mayberry has a nice card and with Howard injured, he should get playing time, so I don't mind the 17 dollar investment. Josh Johnson looks healthy this spring, and though I don't like the price given the risk he could rebound to be a top of the rotation starter for next year. Humber had a breakout year, and \$11 seems about right to see if he can do it again. Dan Murphy has a nice card though the F durability will hurt. Jamey Carroll doesn't provide much defense, but a 350+ OBP against both sides for a buck is good value.

The Bad:

I feel like Dan took on a lot of risk by overpaying for guys who have injury and other concerns. Jeter looked cooked up until his chase for 3000 hits last year; I certainly wouldn't want any part of him at more than 5 bucks. Craig, Johnson, Dan Murphy all have nice cards but Dan's paying them a lot of money given their F durability ratings. Worley feels like a one year guy. Jim Johnson's card is good, but really not that much better than other relievers who were going for a fraction of the cost (if we were counting innings this year, his 91 innings would make this investment defensible)

Best Value: Encarnacion for \$5

Worst Value: Jeter for \$16.

The Verdict:

I give Dan an overall grade of **C+** for this draft. He drafted some nice cards, and did get some value plays like Carroll and Encarnacion. However he took on a lot of risk and overpaid several guys with F durability that could come back to bite him this year and next.

San Antonio Tejanos

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Hanley Ramirez	14	1/3
Mike Trout	14	1/3
Chase Utley	16	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Jordan Walden	17	1/3

Owner: Christian Sumner

Total Payroll: \$285, \$14 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: C+

2009 Draft Grade: A

2010 Draft Grade: N/A

2011 Draft Grade: B+

The Good:

Sumner had himself a pretty good draft day. He spread out his dollars well (though he did leave \$14 on the table), as his four picks were between 14-17 bucks. Hanley has some risk but he looks primed for a bounceback; if he can get to even 80% of his peak year value, at third base, that's a top 3 player at the position. So I love that pick at only \$14, especially compared to what some of the other "risky" type hitters were going for at that point in the draft. I thought Trout would go for a lot more than \$14 given what similar prospects have gone for in the past, so I think Christian got a steal here as well. I'm generally not a fan of giving big bucks to relievers, but Walden has a nice card and is young and talented enough to repeat so \$17 is reasonable.

The Bad:

I understand taking a gamble on Utley, but I'm not a fan of the \$16 investment. He seems to be breaking down (and I thought so even before the recent news that he won't be ready to start the season). It could still work out for Sumner if Utley doesn't miss too much time and returns to reasonable production, but it isn't looking good.

Best Value: Trout for \$14

Worst Value: Utley for \$16.

The Verdict:

I think Sumner had a wonderful draft, and were it not for the Utley pick and the money left on the table he'd get an A, but as it is I feel good about giving him an A-.

Texas Snow Monkeys

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
David Wright	22	1/3
Lucas Duda	16	1/3
Mike Moustakas	10	1/3
Ichiro Suzuki	14	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
		1/3

Owner: Jon Barnes

Total Payroll: \$262, \$25 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: B-

2009 Draft Grade: B

2010 Draft Grade: A-

2011 Draft Grade: A-

The computer drafted for Jon, so I won't go into the detailed analysis. I will say that if I were Jon, I'd be *very* happy with the outcome of the autodraft. Wright is the only overpay I see here, as Duda is good value as a 1B with a good bat against RHP (886 OPS), Moustakas has some upside for a reasonable price, and Ichiro has good speed/defense and will most certainly be better in 2012 than he was in 2011. If I was grading Jon I'd probably give this a B+ or A-, but since it is the computer Jon gets a grade of N/A

Cincinnati Steel Reserves

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Rajai Davis	1	1/3
Kyle Seager	1	1/3
Bobby Wilson	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Matt Cain	42	1/3
Fautino de los Santos	1	1/3
Josh Spence	2	1/3
Rubby de la Rosa	1	1/3
Brian Fuentes	1	1/3

Owner: Jon Buneta (auction performed by Adrian Paredes)

Total Payroll: \$282, \$0 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade (for Buneta): A- (was computer drafted)

The Good:

Adrian had all of one day to prepare for the auction, and no official draft list given, so I think he did a great job for Jon. He had clear instructions to get Matt Cain, and while that's a few bucks more than I would have spent, he didn't grossly overpay for the JAM starter in his prime so I can't complain. After that he had \$8 left to spend on 7 spots so he had to be patient, and he came out of the auction with some good value. Spence has one of the top lefty cards in the auction, Fuentes also has a good card and was in the running for Oakland's closer spot at the time of the auction (since then he's seemingly lost out to Balfour), de la Rosa has a nice card but D durability, and de los Santos has a nice card (lots of K's, good opposite splits) with some future upside. Rajai is a nice \$1 pick as a platoon guy/bench player/pinch runner who should fill a similar role in Toronto this MLB season. Seager has an ok card at third this year, and given the mess that is the Mariners should get playing time in 2012.

The Bad:

Not much to say here. I've discussed every pick except for Bobby Wilson, which Adrian had to scramble for as he tried and failed to draft his favourite, Pudge Rodriguez. Wilson isn't a bad pick, more of an "eh" pick as a backup catcher. Still I guess he hits LHP well and has a 0 arm.

Best Value: Davis for \$1.

Worst Value: Cain for \$42, I guess (not really anything to pick from here)

The Verdict:

I give Adrian an overall grade of A for this draft. Even without factoring in the lack of available prep time he still had a fantastic draft for Buneta. Jon doesn't really need much offense so he likely told Adrian to land an Ace and fill some bench/bullpen holes, and Adrian delivered on that so Jon has to be very pleased with the way the auction went in his absence.

LAGER LEAGUE

BOCK DIVISION

Granite City Gangsters

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Josh Hamilton	37	1/3
Paul Konerko	27	1/3
Torii Hunter	23	1/3
Tony Cruz	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Carlos Marmol	13	1/3
Fernando Salas	12	1/3
Joe Smith	5	1/3
Cristhian Martinez	7	1/3
Michael Stutes	3	1/3

Owner: Ron Wright

Total Payroll: \$283, \$0 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: B+

2009 Draft Grade: A-

2010 Draft Grade: A

2011 Draft Grade: B+

The Good:

Ron has always done well on these report cards, and this year should be no different. He's drafted three great bats (Hamilton, Konerko, and Hunter), with two of them at reasonable salaries. Given how much money I left on the table I wish I didn't drop out of the bidding on Konerko when it got into the mid-20's, as I do think he'll age gracefully. Hunter's bat is slipping a bit but he's got great defense and the A intangible/durability combo is a nice bonus. On the pitching side, Salas and Marmol give Ron a good back of the bullpen as a pair of JAMs at market prices. Smith, Stutes and Martinez are also solid investments for middle relief.

The Bad:

Ron spent 87 bucks on three hitters on the wrong side of 30. If he wins this year I don't think he'll care, but there is a good chance that each of those contracts look bad a year or two down the road. Hamilton in particular is a risk I would not have taken at \$37, as I can see him having a very quick decline phase due to the hard living he's done earlier in his life and how injury prone he's been the past few seasons.

Best Value: Salas for \$12.

Worst Value: Hamilton for \$37.

The Verdict:

I give Ron an overall grade of **A-** for this draft. I like just about every pick he made, and though he's taking on some long term risk with his big three drafted hitters, there is no question that those guys make his offense better for a run this season. He's also drafted an awesome bullpen pretty much from scratch without spending a ton of money.

Guadalajara Crows

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Eric Hosmer	28	1/3
Ryan Roberts	19	1/3
Salvador Perez	7	1/3
Garrett Jones	4	1/3
Layne Nix	1	1/3
Brendan Ryan	8	1/3
Lorenzo Cain	1	1/3
Jack Wilson	2	1/3
Brent Morel	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Guillermo Moscoso	13	1/3
Erik Bedard	11	1/3
Vinnie Pestano	4	1/3

Owner: Domingo Cruz

Total Payroll: \$271, \$0 left on the table

The Good:

Domingo's first auction with the BLB was a bit of a mixed bag (and he's even said as much to me in email discussions since the auction). On the plus side, I like Hosmer a lot, even if I think he overpaid by a bit for him. Ryan Roberts may end up a buyout in the future, but his versatility and bat for this year make me actually kind of like the pick. Bedard has always had the talent, and he had decent health last year, so \$11 for his card is good value. Pestano is a hardcore ROOGY, but I love his card if you can pick your matchups. Cain, Wilson, and especially Morel (who seemed like a different, i.e. better, player at the end of 2011) are all good value at the end of the draft.

The Bad:

The Salvador Perez pick was a bit of a headscratcher, given that we had found out a few days before the auction that he needed knee surgery. For a buck I would have stashed him away and hoped he played well in the second half of 2012 and in 2013 and beyond, but \$7 seems excessive. I'm not a fan of the Moscoso pick, as he's a flyball pitcher who benefited from Oakland's park last year and won't get that same benefit in Coors this year. Brendan Ryan has the A range at SS but at \$8 is an overpay.

Best Value: Morel for \$1.

Worst Value: Perez for \$7.

The Verdict:

I give Domingo an overall grade of **B** for this draft. He had some solid sleeper type picks (Morel, Cain, Pestano), but did overpay for a few guys. Still a pretty good first showing in the BLB auction!

Hollywood Liberal Elite

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Mark Reynolds	8	1/3
Mat Gamel	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Jeff Karstens	13	1/3
Aaron Harang	10	1/3
Edgmer Escalona	2	1/3
Dillon Gee	1	1/3

Owner: Doug Becker

Total Payroll: \$284, \$16 left on the table

2009 Draft Grade: B+

2010 Draft Grade: B

2011 Draft Grade: A-

The Good:

Doug's entire draft.

What, you want me to write more? Ok, fine. Reynolds and his 37 HR and lots of walks for \$8 (he's fairly young too and batting average tends to be volatile meaning he is a good bet to increase his average in 2012)? *Check*. Gamel as everyone's favourite sleeper for only a buck (when similar "sleeper" types were going for crazy high amounts)? *Check*. Second tier JAMs Karstens and Harang for only \$23 **combined**? *Check*. Great bullpen card in Escalona for only \$2? *Check*. Solid back of the rotation arm in Dillon Gee for only a buck? *Check*.

The Bad:

Nothing! Ok fine, I could quibble and say that Doug left \$16 on the table, but that could have been by design and even if it wasn't, \$16 isn't a huge amount.

Best Value: Reynolds for \$8.

Worst Value: Honestly, nothing. If I have to pick, I guess I'd say **Karstens** for \$13 just because of his splits and how fluky the season seems to be.

The Verdict:

I give Doug an overall grade of **A+** for this draft (the first A+ I've given out, I think). Doug's team should contend this year but he's recognized that the Bock is a tough division so he's made some picks with some upside as well as servicing his 2012 team. Well done!

St Louis Arch Rivals

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Michael Young	36	1/3
Jemile Weeks	17	1/3
Dee Gordon	9	1/3
Jason Bourgeois	5	1/3
Jason Kubel	1	1/3
Jed Lowrie	3	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Javy Guerra	10	1/3
Clay Buchholz	14	1/3

Owner: Brian Feig

Total Payroll: \$281, \$19 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: B+

2009 Draft Grade: A-

2010 Draft Grade: B

2011 Draft Grade: A

The Good:

Gordon and Weeks should form an electric double play combo for Brian for years to come (unless he deals them for help this year). Both need to improve their defense but they have bright futures, with Weeks' card being strong for this year as well. Bourgeois hits lefties well (surprised he wasn't limited) and has blazing speed so that's a good pick for 5 bucks. Kubel is a pretty limited player but you could do worse for a buck to be a platoon DH. Lowrie is a nice sleeper pick; if he's healthy, he'll produce. As for the pitchers, Guerra has a nice JAM card at a pretty cheap price, and Buchholz is a roll of the dice for this year (F durability) who I like to bounce back in this MLB season.

The Bad:

Young is a talented hitter, but Brian reached for him at \$36. Third base is indeed thin, but Young doesn't hit for much power and is dependent on batting average for most of his value which means when he finally slips he won't even have walks, homers, or defense to provide value.

Best Value: Guerra for \$10.

Worst Value: Young for \$36.

The Verdict:

I give Brian an overall grade of **A-** for this draft. Only the Young pick keeps him from an A grade, but I liked every other pick he made.

Philadelphia Stooges

Hitters		
<u>Name</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Year</u>
Nolan Reimold	2	1/3

Pitchers		
<u>Name</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Year</u>
Doug Fister	31	1/3
Kyle Lohse	25	1/3

Owner: Aaron Peck

Total Payroll: \$278, \$20 left on the table.

2011 Draft Grade: B

The Good:

Aaron did a lot with his three picks. The two notable ones are picking up JAM starters in Doug Fister and Kyle Lohse for reasonable prices (based on their cards this year anyway). Fister has good splits, the JAM/ON rating, holds runners well and has 30 endurance (crucial in the online game to save your bullpen), while Lohse also has even splits, JAM/OFF, and an A+/-3 at holding runners. Great cards at reasonable prices. Reimold is solid against RHP and young enough to show growth too.

The Bad:

I'm sure Aaron is playing to contend this year but it is worth pointing out that Fister and Lohse are both very unlikely to repeat their 2011 seasons, which makes both of those deals questionable in the long term.

Best Value: Lohse for \$25.

Worst Value: Fister for \$31.

The Verdict:

I give Aaron an overall grade of **B+** for the draft. He got two excellent starting pitching cards at reasonable prices, and a solid bench/platoon option in Reimold. The only thing holding him back from a higher grade is the long term potentials of Fister and Lohse, but then again that's something that I'm sure Aaron could care less about if those guys front his rotation in the post season!

LAGER LEAGUE

PILSNER DIVISION

Garson Ehs

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Placido Polanco	20	1/3
Geovanny Soto	14	1/3
Yunel Escobar	29	1/3
Denard Span	2	1/3
Ryan Sweeney	6	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Justin Verlander	47	1/3
Josh Collmenter	17	1/3
Jeremy Affeldt	2	1/3
Rafael Perez	1	1/3
Marc Rzepczynski	1	1/3

Owner: Doug Anness

Total Payroll: \$294, \$0 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: A-

2009 Draft Grade: B-

2010 Draft Grade: B+

2011 Draft Grade: B+

The Good:

Well the big guy to talk about here is Verlander. If Doug has designs on contending this year, I love this pick, even at \$47. Verlander is a stud, possibly the best pitching card I've seen since I've been playing in these leagues (ie since 2006). My budget for Verlander was capped at \$43, moreso because I had other holes to fill than anything else, so \$47 isn't far beyond where I would have taken the bidding. Span is a good bet to rebound and has good defense for this year, while Sweeney will get lots of playing time in Boston. I thought Soto would go for more given how scarce catching is. Affeldt and Perez have solid cards for bullpen filler.

The Bad:

I like Yunel a lot, but definitely not for \$29. Polanco is a minor overpay too, but nothing to get excited about (I wanted him for about \$15 or so). Collmenter has a nice card but I think Doug could have waited until later in the draft to get better value for his \$17. I can see Collmenter being a buyout, as junkballers don't do so hot the second time through the league. I also can't figure out why Doug drafted three LHP to fill out his bullpen.

Best Value: Sweeney for \$6.

Worst Value: Escobar for \$29.

The Verdict:

I give Doug an overall grade of **B** for the draft. He got the best pitcher (by a mile) in the draft, and used the rest of his money to pick up some solid pieces. Overpaying for a few guys holds him back, as well as the questionable strategy to add three lefties in the bullpen.

Toronto Beavers

Hitters		
<u>Name</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Year</u>
Alex Rodriguez	30	1/3
Casey Blake	1	1/3
Paul Goldschmidt	1	1/3

Pitchers		
<u>Name</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Year</u>
		1/3

Owner: Norm Larrett

Total Payroll: \$296, \$4 left on the table

2009 Draft Grade: C+

2010 Draft Grade: A-

2011 Draft Grade: B+

The Good:

Norm tried to sneak in Casey Blake for 0 bucks (Note: I don't know if he did that on purpose or the CBS default was set to \$0), so CBS decided to punish Norm by only letting him draft 24 guys even after I backed out the pick. Anyway, Norm's "bonus" pick at the end of the draft was his best one, as Goldschmidt for a buck is a steal.

The Bad:

Arod's best years are behind him; it's possible he stays healthy and returns to his upper 800 OPS days, but considering his OPS has declined in back to back years and he's failed to play a full season since 2008, I think 30 bucks is an overpay here. Hard to get excited about Casey Blake one way or another.

Best Value: Goldschmidt for \$1.

Worst Value: Rodriguez for \$30.

The Verdict:

I'll give Norm an overall grade of C+. Goldschmidt was a nice pick, and though I don't like the Arod pick there is a chance of upside there. I also recognize that had CBS not glitched out Norm would have been in on a few other guys too.

Edmonton Trappers

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Billy Butler	20	1/3
Jack Hannahan	5	1/3
Carlos Gomez	3	1/3
John McDonald	3	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Hiroki Kuroda	26	1/3
Jordan Lyles	1	1/3
Ryan Vogelsong	20	1/3

Owner: Mike Jackson

Total Payroll: \$258, \$29 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: A-

2009 Draft Grade: B+

2010 Draft Grade: C

2011 Draft Grade: B

The Good:

I went into this draft with a goal of competing in 2012, so I strictly looking for good cards for this year. With that in mind, I was very happy to get Kuroda and Vogelsong (a couple of JAMs) for a combined 46 bucks after my thoughts to land Sabathia, Verlander, or Cain fell through due to their price tags. I'm a big Billy Butler fan and am happy with him at \$20, as he's got a nice card for this year and is entering his prime years. After dropping out of the running for Youk and Michael Young, I specifically targeted Hannahan due to his defense and solid hitting vs LHP, so I was thrilled to get him for \$5. He is looking like he'll start the year as Cleveland's thirdbaseman too, at least until Chisenhall is ready. McDonald is a solid utility guy, B+ on the left side and B at second, though not much of a bat. Gomez smashes lefties and gives me an all "A" ranged OF (including a -2 arm and some speed).

The Bad:

Lyles has a bright future, but was an "oopsie" as I figured someone would bid on him if I nominated him. I'll be trying to trade him. As mentioned I didn't pay attention to future value, so I don't really care that Kuroda and Vogelsong figure to be worse next year (assuming Kuroda doesn't retire). I left a ton of money on the table which I wish I had used to go after someone like Konerko at first or maybe a guy like Cain. My lineup blows vs RHP so I should have done a better job in the draft of shoring that up.

Best Value: Hannahan for \$5.

Worst Value: Vogelsong for \$20

The Verdict:

I am generally happy with my draft for the most part, though the Lyles pick was a waste and I left some money on the table. I'll grade myself out at a **B+**.

Nickel Centre Wolf Pack

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Justin Morneau	2	1/3
Reed Johnson	3	1/3
Jason Bay	4	1/3
Bryan Petersen	2	1/3
Ruben Tejada	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Brandon McCarthy	18	1/3
Alfredo Aceves	16	1/3
Tony Sipp	1	1/3
Sam LeCure	3	1/3
Cory Wade	1	1/3

Owner: Nicholas Stock

Total Payroll: \$205, \$67 left on the table

2009 Draft Grade: B+

2010 Draft Grade: B

2011 Draft Grade: B-

The Good:

McCarthy has a pretty nice card, 30 endurance, ON/OFF (though D durability). In that park, in his prime years, he could repeat his 2011 performance so I don't mind the \$18 investment. Nick has selected a couple of bounceback types in Morneau and Bay that could provide him value next year. Tejada is getting first crack at the SS job in New York after Reyes' departure and is a nice value pick at a buck. Johnson has a nice part time card.

The Bad:

I don't know what kind of strategy Nick had in the auction, as there is a mix of picks for this year and the future. The Aceves pick puzzles me, as \$16 seems like an overpay considering the year he just had (maybe Nick likes his potential this year?). Sipp, LeCure and Wade don't excite me all that much. I think Bay is cooked personally, and Morneau's concussion woes scare me. Johnson is an odd choice if Nick is building for 2013. Nick left a ton of money on the table, meaning he could have spent big on some elite talent instead of the guys he decided to roster.

Best Value: Tejada for \$1

Worst Value: Aceves at \$16

The Verdict:

I'm not really a fan of Nick's draft this year. If he was going for it this year, there were better cards out there than the ones he got; if he was building towards 2013, he should have spent his dough on more picks like Ruben Tejada than the likes of Bay, Sipp, LeCure, etc etc. I'll give him a grade of **D**.

Sudbury Northern Ales

Hitters		
Name	\$	Year
Evan Longoria	40	1/3
Mark Teixeira	29	1/3
Josh Reddick	3	1/3
AJ Ellis	1	1/3
Casper Wells	1	1/3
Daniel Descalso	1	1/3
Andruw Jones	1	1/3

Pitchers		
Name	\$	Year
Ervin Santana	27	1/3
Colby Lewis	15	1/3
Tim Stauffer	24	1/3
Tyson Ross	1	1/3
Henderson Alvarez	20	1/3
Johan Santana	1	1/3

Owner: Mike Stockhaus

Total Payroll: \$264, \$15 left on the table

2008 Draft Grade: B+

2009 Draft Grade: B

2010 Draft Grade: A-

2011 Draft Grade: B-

The Good:

Mike spent big to bring back two Sudbury free agents in Longoria and Teixeira. I don't mind spending money on elite talent, within reason, and I think Mike got both players at reasonable market value. True they are coming off of down seasons, but I expect both to bounce back in 2012 (and their cards are solid for this BLB season too). I like all of the rest of Mike's picks on offense; Reddick has a good arm and hit tool, though he'll always be deficient in power and patience. Casper was a guy I had on my list until I opted for Carlos Gomez. Descalso has a solid utility card, and Andruw is a nice lefty masher. I like Henderson Alvarez' card and upside, and Johan is a nice sleeper pick.

The Bad:

I think Mike overpaid for each of his starting pitchers to some degree. 27 bucks is a lot for a non-JAM in this draft, despite how solid Ervin's card is aside from that. I do like Alvarez but for \$20 Mike is banking against a sophomore slump. Stauffer screams "Petco Park creation" to me, though \$24 isn't a gross overpay for a JAM. Lewis had a rough year and it is debatable as to whether or not he'll bounce back.

Best Value: Wells for \$1.

Worst Value: Santana at \$27.

The Verdict:

I give Mike an overall grade of **B+** for this draft. He made some nice pickups on offense, and he built a solid rotation (even if he overpaid a bit) for both this year and the future.

Predictions – 2011 redux:

Below are my predictions of records and playoff seeds from last year's report card, as well as a write up I did:

Ale League			Lager League		
IPA	W	L	Bock	W	L
Jackson Park*	92	70	Hollywood*	92	70
Manhattan*	88	74	St Louis*	88	74
Frisco	85	77	Philadelphia	83	79
Titletown	77	85	Guadalajara	79	83
Kukagami	65	97	Granite City	63	99
Stout	W	L	Pilsner	W	L
Boston*	94	68	Sudbury*	89	73
Arlington*	86	76	Garson*	87	75
Inland	77	85	Toronto	83	79
Texas	74	88	Nickel Centre	78	84
San Antonio	66	96	Edmonton	74	88

Man, this shit was HARD this year. I think there is more parity in the BLB this year than any year I've done this. There are no truly terrible teams, and there are no teams that really stand out as totally stacked either. Well, I'll try my best, but I fully admit that these predictions may be out to lunch:

I think the IPA division is Jackson Park's to lose, with a much improved Manhattan battling Frisco for 2nd place. I see Craig continuing to re-tool for next year, but still fielding an impressive offense, so he'll hover around the .500 mark. Kukagami had a tough task trying to draft an entire team, and I just don't think he stacks up to the rest of his division mates.

To me, Boston is the class of the Stout division, with Arlington likely to cruise to 2nd place and a wildcard berth. Inland and Texas are in the next tier, as both are teams with strengths and weaknesses. San Antonio, much like Kukagami, was in a tough spot trying to draft an entire team, and I pick them to finish last.

I see Hollywood and St Louis battling it out all year; I pick Hollywood to finish a few games above St Louis to take the division on the strength of their pitching rotation depth. Philly could surprise as Aaron has put together a solid team, but I just don't think the depth is there to challenge the top 2. Guadalajara should hover around .500 all year, while I think Ron continues to build for 2012 and therefore GC should finish in last.

The Pilsner division is still strong, but not nearly as stacked as a year ago. I will pick Sudbury to win the division, but I think Garson will nip at his heels all year. Toronto is much improved and Norm could pull off a few trades to surprise his Ontario compadres. Nickel Centre always seems to do better than I give him credit for, but this year I don't

see the pitching matching the strong offense. As for myself? Well I like my offense, but my pitching depth and my likelihood of making some moves this year has led me to predict a last place finish (albeit with a not horrible 74 wins) while I re-tool for 2012.

So right now I have Jackson Park, Manhattan, Boston, and Arlington making the playoffs in the Ale League. In the Lager, I have Hollywood, St Louis, Sudbury, and Garson making the playoffs. We'll see how I do in a year's time!

Now here are the final standings from last season.:

Ale League			Lager League		
IPA	W	L	Bock	W	L
Titletown*	102	60	Hollywood*	97	67
Jackson Park	78	84	Philadelphia	80	82
Frisco	74	88	Guadalajara	71	91
Manhattan	70	92	St Louis	67	95
Kukagami	56	106	Granite City	63	99
Stout	W	L	Pilsner	W	L
Boston*	104	58	Sudbury*	105	57
Arlington*	101	61	Toronto*	101	61
Texas*	92	70	Garson*	100	62
Inland	70	92	Edmonton	73	89
San Antonio	62	100	Nickel Center	55	107

I've highlighted teams that I pegged exactly right in terms of place in the divisional standings. I predicted 2 of the 4 playoff teams in the Ale League and 3 out of 4 playoff teams in the Lager League. So, 5/8 isn't bad (and it's the same as I did the last two seasons). Of note is that I predicted Granite City's record, and missed on my own record by one game, and I was also pretty close on a few other teams (then again, I whiffed badly on the likes of Titlewon, Texas, St Louis, etc).

Team Grades:

Before I do my predictions, I want to add a new section to the report card which will ultimately help me in my predictions. Below is a series of tables grading each team's current (ie as of TODAY, not as of the end of the auction) roster on offense, defense, starting pitching, relief pitching, and "risk" (which is basically a measure of the team's susceptibility to injuries, their depth, etc). The grades are for THIS season only (ie I'm not grading on long term potential) and of course, they are subjective (ie don't get too caught up over a B vs a B+; I tried to remain consistent but I prepared these over about a week so there could be slight inconsistencies).

IPA Division						
	Grades					
Team	Offense	Defense	Starters	'Pen	Risk	Comments
Kukagami	D	C-	C	B-	C+	Offense will be ugly, with no true star 60% of the time (Lawrie is 40%); defense will be rough on infield, good in OF (Revere/Upton); Marcum heads a group of mediocre LHP in the rotation, while the 'pen is ok; Fair amount of C-F duras
Frisco	C+	C+	B-	A-	B	Kemp, Asdrubal, Youk great on offense but not much behind them; OF defense is good but infield is not (aside from Asdrubal); best SPs are LHP as Pavano/Guthrie are mediocre RHP; excellent bullpen; a few C DUR and not much bench
Jackson Park	A-	B+	B+	B	C+	Very good offense led by Braun/A-GON; Defense is good with a few trouble spots (2B, 3B if chipper starts); Rotation is good with 4 JAMs; bullpen is deep but no JAM closer will hurt; 3 C dura SP hurts with only Litsch/Estrada to spot start
Newcastle	B+	B	B	B+	B+	Good offense and defense, but with a few trouble spots (SS, LF defense if JW plays, 3B offense, etc); Top 3 starters are good but drops off after that; bullpen is good but health issues; not many health issues and good UTIL/Bench
Titletown	C+	B+	D	C+	C	Cargo, Holliday lead an offense with holes; defense will be above average especially in the OF; rotation will be bad with a couple of LHP and no starter with an ERA below 4; bullpen is average-ish but major health issues there

Stout Division						
	Grades					
Team	Offense	Defense	Starters	'Pen	Risk	Comments
Shiner	C	B	B	C	B	Offense below average; speedy but lacks punch; defense is good up the middle and on INF corners; Rotation led by Bum/Hudson/Sanchez but drops off after that; bullpen below average with no JAM; ok health but Posey's F will hurt
Cincinnati	A-	C	B	B	B+	Solid lineup top to bottom; defense is poor except at 1B/3B/RF; Cain/Carpenter/Masterson are good but rotation falls off beyond them; bullpen is good not great; some health issues but good bench depth
Inland	B	C	B+	C	C+	Averagish lineup w/ some speed and pop; defense below average; rotation led by two LH JAMs (Romero/Saunders) and Worley/Humber complete a solid top 4; 'pen is LH heavy and below average; A few health concerns
Texas	C	C+	C+	C-	B	Below average (but not horrible) on offense and defense; Rotation will be slightly below average but not terrible; Sale/Bass lead a mediocre 'pen; thin bench (4 % limited guys) but good health overall
San Antonio	C+	B+	C	A-	C+	Offense led by Ellsbury but is average at best; defense is above average; Rotation led by Zimmermann is below average; good bullpen with 2 jams; some healthy issues on offense and only 2 catchers on roster, but pitching is ok

Bock Division						
	Grades					
Team	Offense	Defense	Starters	'Pen	Risk	Comments
Granite City	B+	B+	B+	A	B+	Good, balanced offense; defense is exceptional except at the INF corners; Great top 3 JAM starters but next 3 have injury issues (all are C durability) and ERAs above 3.65; deep bullpen with 2 JAMs; not many health concerns
Guadalajara	C+	C+	B	A-	B	Kinsler, McCutch and Napoli lead an average-ish offense; defense will be subpar except up the middle; Kershaw is top notch but the rotation has some health question marks behind him; Excellent bullpen; health ok except rotation
Hollywood	A-	B	B+	B+	B	Excellent, balanced offense; defense is a mixed bag w/ good OF and so-so infield; Deep rotation and good 'pen but both have injury concerns (7 guys with C or lower durability); offense has 6 A durabilities however
Philadelphia	A-	B+	A	B+	A-	Excellent offense led by Tulo/Votto; above average defense; Rotation features 4 jams and is solid top to bottom; bullpen is above average; minor injury concerns on offense but good depth on bench
St Louis	B+	C	B+	A-	B+	Offense is solidly above average; defense is below average; rotation is above average with good depth; bullpen is excellent with 2 jams; injury concerns in the rotation but offense is solid with good bench

Pilsner Division						
	Grades					
Team	Offense	Defense	Starters	'Pen	Risk	Comments
Edmonton	C+	B+	A-	B+	B+	Weak vs RHP, mashes LHP; 3 JAM starters plus CJ Wilson; solid 'pen; A ranges in LF/CF with Ichiro's B/-3 in RF; 4 regulars on offense have A durability, but 2 Fs and 2 Cs on the pitching staff a minor issue; ok depth on bench/bullpen
Garson	A	A-	B	C+	C	Stacked lineup, great defense in OF and solid in INF; staff drops off behind Verlander/Hellickson; bullpen is average (and lefty heavy) with no JAM closer; lots of C or worse durability guys
Nickel Center	B-	C+	B	B+	C	Average offense, not much pop but nice AVG/OBP; defense is below average; rotation slightly above average but w/ injury concerns; bullpen is good with jam closer; injury issues for SP and in lineup
Sudbury	B	B+	B+	B	B+	Pedroia leads a slightly above average offense (better vs LHP); defense is above average; Halladay leads an above average rotation with issues in the #5 spot; bullpen is good but not deep; some injury concerns but good bench
Toronto	B+	B	B	A	C	Good offense with lots of speed and some pop; defense should be average on the whole; Rotation is a bit above average with depth but lots of injury concerns; excellent 'pen; injury issues in SP/RP but offense has good health

Predictions – 2012:

Now, I present for debate, my 2012 predictions:

Ale League			Lager League		
IPA	W	L	Bock	W	L
Jackson Park*	100	62	Philadelphia*	102	60
Newcastle*	84	78	Hollywood*	100	62
Frisco	69	93	Granite City*	97	65
Titletown	61	101	St Louis	93	69
Kukagami	52	110	Guadalajara	57	105
Stout	W	L	Pilsner	W	L
Cincinnati*	105	57	Garson*	93	69
Inland*	82	80	Edmonton	86	76
Shiner	75	87	Sudbury	86	76
San Antonio	70	92	Toronto	84	78
Texas	68	94	Nickel Center	56	106

* = Playoff team

Holy fuck, I wish I was still in the Ale League!!! Jackson Park and Cincy should cruise to easy division titles in the Ale League (I don't think Cincy has the best team in the BLB, but I think Jon will finish with the most wins because he's in the worst division in the BLB). After that, Newcastle has a solid team and should win the top wildcard spot. The 4th wildcard was tough for me to decide, and could well be decided by one team getting hot and making some trades, but for now I think Inland could sneak into the playoffs. Really Shiner, San Antonio, and Frisco should be keeping an eye on the Lager standings to snap up some upgrades from the tough luck losers in the playoff races there.

The Lager League will be brutal this year, and I have zero confidence in any of the predictions for the Bock/Pilsner. The Bock... holy shit! What a division! I feel sorry for Domingo, because man you will lose a ton of games and your team isn't *that* bad. Anyway, any of Philly, Hollywood, St Louis, and Granite City could argue that their team will win the division, and I wouldn't disagree strongly. As I have it, I like Peck's pitching staff and he's got a strong offense to boot. I have Becker right behind him but I docked him a bit due to the health issues on his staff. St Louis and Granite City is a toss up as they are both evenly matched. The Pilsner is just as deep as the Bock, but a notch below in quality. I have Garson winning the division on the strength of his offense, with Edmonton, Sudbury and Toronto bunched up in the middle and looking up at the Bock runner ups in the wildcard (As an aside: I fucking wish I had done this analysis *before* the draft, because if I had I'd have been in *sell sell sell* and rebuild mode! There's no way, despite my personal bias, that I can justify having my team in the playoffs after having looked at the Lager League as a whole. Not to say that I'm selling now but unless I get lucky to start the year, it won't be long before I start tearing it down...)

I suspect these predictions will generate a fair amount of debate/discussion, so let me have it!!