

# THE 1864 CUP FIELD IS SET!

## THREE NEW N.Y.L. ENTRANTS; ALL THREE N.E.L. CHAMPS REPEAT AFTER MERRIMACK SURGE

NORTHEAST U.S.A (Aug. 8, 1864) – The National Base Ball Organization has come to an end, and it is time for the ten-day-long sprint to the Tucker-Wheaton Cup. There were some notable changes from midseason, and in the end the two largest pennant-winning margins came in the Brooklyn & New York City championships – the first time that has happened.

After seven weeks of play the best record in the N.B.B.O, somehow, belonged to 25-10 Lake Erie, with the other five regional championship leaders sitting at 23-11 or 23-12. Records at the top were similarly close at the end of the season, with the six champions winning between 43 and 48 games – nobody topped 50 wins for the third time in four years.

BROOKLYN – Kings County took the lead at the end of the first week of June (16-9) and Brooklyn was theirs the rest of the way – their retooled offense setting a new N.B.B.O. record for runs in a season. Favorites Excelsior, led by another outstanding season from Jim Creighton, finished in 2nd (6 G.B.) after their offense disappointed. Empire, one game back at the halfway mark, finished 3rd (8 G.B.). K.C. has now sat atop Brooklyn for the sixth time in seven years.

NEW YORK CITY – Gotham was five games up on four teams after Week Seven, and they finished the season seven games ahead of preseason favorites Knickerbocker and surprising Union, winning the N.Y.C. pennant for the second time in three years. It was an odd team – no superstar performers in 1864, but many high-quality players.

UPSTATE N.Y. – Halfway through the season surprising Binghamton was the Upstate leader, but a 23-12 first half turned into a 33-37 record and 5th place (10 G.B.) at the end of the season. Flour City was 24-11 in the second half, allowing them to leapfrog Syracuse and secure the pennant, their first since 1860, with a 15-6 win over Victory on the final day of the season. Once again, Upstate was the tightest regional championship, with just fourteen games separating Flour City from last-place Minuteman (29-41), who started the season as the Writers Pool's favorites to take the Inland championship.

**COASTAL** – The Coastal Championship belonged to Port Jersey for the last half of the season. They took over 1st place from Newark just before the end of Week Seven and never gave it up, finishing in 1st by four games over Mass. Bay and eight over Newark. Preseason favorites Shamrock were fourteen games back (34-36). In the end, Port Jersey did precisely the opposite of what the Writers Pool predicted, playing just as well as they did last year instead of wilting away.

**INLAND** – Sadly, the Lake Erie miracle was not to be. The perennial doormats were 15-20 over the second half of the season, making for a 40-30 record and a 3rd-place finish (6 G.B.). Still, it was their best W-L record by ten games and an eighteen-win improvement from last season. The two teams even with Lake Erie for first with a few weeks to play, Merrimack Mills & Reading, remained close until the end. Merrimack repeated as Inland champs thanks to a fifteen-game winning streak from July 10th to the 30th, finishing two games ahead of preseason favorites Reading.

**NEW ENGLAND** – This was supposed to be the year St. John's finally fell from the top of their New England perch, but even though their pitching struggled for the entire season – 17th in the N.E.L. in Runs Allowed – they were able to turn their one-game advantage at the midway point into a five-game gap at the end of the season, with Green Mountain in 2nd place for the sixth time. St. Johns' brilliant outfield carried them through, and they are playing for the cup once again.

So, the Tucker-Wheaton Cup is here, with all three New York League entrants different than last year's while all three Northeastern League entrants are in for the second year in a row. That surely makes St. John's the favorites, given what they did to the competition in the 1863 edition, but Kings County and their fearsome offense have won the cup twice.

### THE 1864 TUCKER-WHEATON CUP

**FORMAT:** Each team plays every other team twice, once home and once away, for a total of ten games. The team with the best record wins the cup. Extra games will be played if there is a tie for 1st. Head-to-Head record and Run Differential will be used as tiebreakers to determine other positions in the case of identical record.

**TEAMS:** The six entrants to the Tucker-Wheaton Cup, sorted by record & run differential.

- Port Jersey (Coastal) – 48-22, +116 R.D.
- Kings County (Brooklyn) – 46-24, +159 R.D.
- St. John's (New England) – 46-24, +97 R.D.

- Merrimack Mills (Inland) – 46-24, +84 R.D.
- Gotham (New York City) – 44-26, +81 R.D.
- Flour City (Upstate N.Y.) – 43-27, +113 R.D.

**SCHEDULE:** The tournament is ten days in length

- Aug. 9: Merrimack at Gotham, Kings Co. at Port Jersey, Flour City at St. John's
- Aug. 10: Port Jersey at Gotham, Merrimack at Flour City, Kings Co. at St. John's
- Aug. 11: Kings Co. at Flour City, Gotham at St. John's, Merrimack at Port Jersey
- Aug. 12: Flour City at Gotham, Port Jersey at St. John's, Kings Co. at Merrimack
- Aug. 13: St. John's at Kings Co, Flour City at Merrimack, Gotham at Port Jersey
- Aug. 14: Kings Co. at Gotham, Flour City at Port Jersey, St. John's at Merrimack
- Aug. 15: Gotham at Flour City, Merrimack at Kings Co, St. John's at Port Jersey
- Aug. 16: Port Jersey at Flour City, Gotham at Kings Co, Merrimack at St. John's
- Aug. 17: Port Jersey at Kings Co, St. John's at Flour City, Gotham at Merrimack
- Aug. 18: Flour City at Kings Co, St. John's at Gotham, Port Jersey at Merrimack

The Writers Pool has been asked their collective opinion of what they expect of this year's cup competition, and they have the teams in the following order:

- #1: St. John's (46-24, 24-11 2nd half, 5-5 Last 10, defending champion)
- #2: Port Jersey (48-22, 25-10 2nd half, 8-2 Last 10, won final six games)
- #3: Kings County (46-24, 24-11 2nd half, 8-2 Last 10)
- #4: Merrimack Mills (46-24, 25-10 2nd half, 6-4 Last 10)
- #5: Flour City (43-27, 24-11 2nd half, 7-3 Last 10)
- #6: Gotham (44-26, 21-14 2nd half, 5-5 Last 10)