

FOUR TEAMS A GAME APART IN INLAND WITH 5 TO PLAY

ALLEGHANY, LAKE ERIE, PIONEER, & SUSQUEHANNA FIND THEMSELVES IN A BRAWL TO THE END

ERIE, PA., PITTSBURGH, SPRINGFIELD, MASS., & WILKES-BARRE, PENN. (July 29, 1867) – Recent seasons in the NBBO have been dominated by top-heavy regional championships that have been clinched with a week or more to go, but this year's Inland Championship is providing some of the old drama that many of the regions used to see on an annual basis.

With one week left to play, the Inland Championship standings look like this:

	NEL INLAND CHAMPIONSHIP	W	L	PCT	GB	G	Pvt	Diff	RDiff
 A	Alleghany Baseball Club	37	28	.569	-	65	38-27	-1	+89
 P	Pioneer Baseball Club	36	29	.554	1	65	40-25	-4	+117
 L E	Lake Erie B.C.	36	29	.554	1	65	35-30	+1	+49
 S	Susquehanna Baseball Club	36	29	.554	1	65	35-30	+1	+39
 S	Sportsman's Baseball Club	32	33	.492	5	65	30-35	+2	-47
 S	e-Scranton Baseball Club	31	34	.477	6	65	28-37	+3	-70
 M	e-Merrimack Mills B.C.	28	37	.431	9	65	28-37	0	-74
 R	e-Reading Athletic Club	24	41	.369	13	65	26-39	-2	-103

Never has a regional championship been this close going into Week Fourteen. At the start of the month Alleghany was clear atop Inland by three games, but thanks to questionable pitching the four teams were just three games apart on the 15th. Since then, the gaps between the four have tightened even further to the minuscule point they are at today.

Alleghany has been led by Royal Altman, who at .446 looks likely to break Cormack Alexander's record for highest Batting Average in a season. Of course, Samuel Kessler (.385, 49 RBI, 28 SB, 3.3 WAR) & Arthur Waltrip (.383, 35 RBI, 2.6 WAR) are also having brilliant seasons.

Pioneer finished in last in 1866 and does not have Alleghany's star power, but they have been led by Kings County import & 5x All-Star CF Declan Brice (.359, 39 RBI, 29 SB, 2.4 WAR) and P Thomas Paddock (22-17, 2.97, 24 K, 4.9 WAR).

Lake Erie has three All-Stars this year: 2B James Caldwell (.361, 40 RBI, 2.1 WAR), CF Franklin Petty (.330, 67 RBI, 2.9 WAR), and P Bubba Mack (23-12, 3.92, 3.7 WAR), who will unfortunately miss the final week due to a wrist injury.

Susquehanna has been led by repeat All-Star SS Thomas Kolberg (.318, 44 RBI, 41 SB, 2.1 WAR), but OF Thomas German (.343, 57 RBI, 30 SB, 1.6 WAR) and P Elmer Seabold (20-17, 3.48, 99 K, 5.8 WAR) have also excelled.

The Week Fourteen schedule for the four teams looks like this: leaders Alleghany will be playing five games at Sportsman's, Pioneer and Lake Erie will play five games against each other at the Tenth Street Grounds in Erie, and Susquehanna will be at home for five games against Merrimack Mills.

Based on the schedule, Susquehanna has the advantage because Merrimack is 28-37 and 11-19 away from home. Alleghany will be playing a 32-33 Sportsman's team that is always tough at home. Pioneer did take 4/5 games in their earlier series against Lake Erie, but that was at home so there is always the chance the reverse could happen this week.

Regardless of what happens, it will be a memorable end to the 1867 Inland Championship. Either Alleghany will win it for the third year in a row, Pioneer will complete a historic "Worst to First" run, Lake Erie will finally finish on top after being on bottom in six of the competition's first seven seasons, or Susquehanna will make the TWC for the first time after being Inland Championship bridesmaids three times.

Here's to late-season base ball!