

THE TUCKER-WHEATON CUP PLAYOFFS ARE SET

FIVE OF SIX FROM '73 ARE BACK; SUSQUEHANNA TAKES BEST RECORD VIA RUN DIFFERENTIAL

NORTHEAST U.S.A. (Aug 17, 1874) – It will take another two days for the PCBL to decide which teams are playing in the Liberty Bell Classic, but the six-team field has been set for the Tucker-Wheaton Cup XVIII playoffs, which begin tomorrow.

Unfortunately, or fortunately depending on who you cheer for, even though there were three extremely close regional pennant races five of the six teams from last year's playoffs are back at it this year. That hints at a lack of parity, but there was still plenty of pennant chase excitement this year.

NEW YORK LEAGUE

BROOKLYN: Atlantic & Eckford, who had combined to take the last four Brooklyn pennants, were tied for 1st to start August. Over the final dozen games Eckford went 9-3 to Atlantic's 6-6, which gave Eckford their third consecutive Brooklyn title by three games, yet another stretch of late-season brilliance from the 1872 champions.

KEY PLAYER: Huibrecht v.d. Laan (2B) – .339, .839 OPS, 68 R, 95 R, 25 XBH, 2 HR, 57 RBI, 18 SB, +19.1 ZR, 3.8 WPA, **4.0 WAR**

NEW YORK CITY: It was a four-way race after 60 games, with Harlem, Mercury, Metropolitan, & Union two games apart. However, Metropolitan won their final ten games to go from two games behind Union to N.Y.C. champs by a single game, this time without a playoff – an incredible to the season.

KEY PLAYER: Francis Smith (CF) – .328, .774 OPS, 75 R, 116 H, 21 2B, 8 3B, 71 RBI, 8 BB, 11 SB, 3.0 WPA, 3.0 WAR

UPSTATE NY: Utica gradually pulled away from the competition over the last six weeks of the season, going from 3.5 games in front of Syracuse at the end of June to seven games ahead when all was said and done. The defending cup champions do have one notable problem: possible NYL Batsman of the Year James Heilman is dealing with back spasms.

KEY PLAYER: James Heilman (RF) – .357, **.884 OPS**, 71 R, 105 H, 22 XBH, 1 HR, 79 RBI, **39 BB**, 18 SB, 4.1 WPA, 3.2 WAR

NORTHEASTERN LEAGUE

COASTAL – Heartbreak for Trenton Utd. Ahead of Quaker St. by one game with ten left they finished the season 4-6 while Quaker St. was 8-2, and in the end the Trentonians essentially gifted Quaker St. their fourth consecutive Coastal pennant. To their credit Quaker St. was excellent when it mattered most, scoring 103 Runs over those final ten games.

KEY PLAYER: Ned Morganti (CF) – .389, **.917 OPS**, 75 R, 129 H, 28 XBH, 1 HR, **79 RBI**, 22 SB, +10.0 ZR, 3.1 WPA, **3.9 WAR**

INLAND – Susquehanna is back in the postseason for the third time in four years after clobbering the Inland competition. To wit, 2nd-place Reading finished seventeen games behind the Inland champs, who were alone in 1st by two games at the end of May, nine games at the end of June, and never looked back, taking best overall record by Run Differential.

KEY PLAYER: William Hawk (P) – **32-6**, **2.00 ERA**, **355.0 IP**, **31 CG**, 0 SHO, 39 K, **2.8 K/BB**, **1.11 WHIP**, 5.4 WAR, **11.3 rWAR**

NEW ENGLAND – At the end of May it looked like Portland would have a fight for the New England pennant on their hands, but by the end of June they were seven games clear atop the standings and from then on it was just a matter of how much they would win New England by. The answer: fifteen games, with Oceanic & Sons of the Ocean tying for 2nd.

KEY PLAYER: James Dressman (P) – 30-9, 2.38 ERA, 351.0 IP, **31 CG**, 2 SV, 29 K, 1.1 K/BB, 1.19 WHIP, 4.7 WAR, 9.4 rWAR

THE 1874 TUCKER-WHEATON CUP

SEEDS

- **NYL #1:** Utica – 50-20; +165 RD
- **NYL #2:** Eckford – 46-24; +120 RD
- **NYL #3:** Metropolitan – 43-27; +121 RD

- NEL #1: Susquehanna – 53-17; +245 RD
- NEL #2: Portland – 53-17; +182 RD
- NEL #3: Quaker State – 48-22; +200 RD

SERIES FORMAT & SCHEDULE

- LSF, LSCF, & TWC all Best of five games
- All series follow 2-2-1 schedule
- Higher seed has Home Field Advantage
- NYL SEMIFINALS: Metropolitan v Eckford
- NEL SEMIFINALS: Quaker State v Portland
- NYL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES: MET/ECK v Utica
- NEL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES: QS/PORT v Susquehanna
- TUCKER-WHEATON CUP: NYL Champion v NEL Champion (NEL has HFA)

WRITERS POOL PREDICTIONS

- NYL SEMIFINALS: Metropolitan (won final ten games) over Eckford
- NEL SEMIFINALS: Portland (16-4 in 1-run games) over Quaker State
- NYL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES: Utica (27-8 at home) over Metropolitan
- NEL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES: Portland (28-7 away) over Susquehanna
- TUCKER-WHEATON CUP: Portland over Utica