

FOUNDERS' CUP IV: WHO WANTS TO WIN IT?

MANHATTAN & PITTSBURGH. (Aug. 25 to Sep. 1, 1874) – Founders' Cup #4 would not be a repeat of the previous two editions. 2x defending champions American simply weren't as good as they were last year, and finished tied for 3rd in the Metropolitan with a 48-42 record. St. John's mounted the cavalry for a might late-season charge, but because they were stuck around .500 for much of the season the Providence men came up two games short in the Colonial.

This was a Founders' Cup that casual fans weren't sure what to make of. Alleghany was in it even though they were an APBL-worst 4-11 in August, and Orange was only 8-7 after the All-Star Game. If the Founders' Cup field was based on late-season record and star power there would have been multiple teams in each conference that would have been more worthy contestants than these two.

Still, Orange was entering the series with the APBL's #1 record and an impressive mix of legends and younger stars. They had 15x All-Stars Samuel Kessler & Anthony Mascherino, 9x All-Star Taliesin Buckley, 7x All-Star Everett Schreiber, 4x All-Star Will Chaffin, the productive Charles Whitehead, repeat All-Star P Paul Caldwell, and the recently returned William Valentine, who had All-Star-level production but missed six weeks of the season due to a broken hand.

Alleghany, for all their late struggles, still had to be respected. Their pitching duo of Raynard Cordell & Elmer Seabold both finished with 23-25 Wins and ERA's of around 3.00. Gerald Strong hit .341 while having a Zone Rating of +21 at SS and an APBL-best Batsman War of 4.8. Jerald Peterson, a 9x All-Star in the NBBO, hit .341 in with 78 RBI in his first APBL season at the age of 39. Harry Thompson was the best C in the Colonial Conference all season. Most importantly, their fielders led the APBL in all four factors – Errors, Fielding %, Efficiency, & Zone Rating – and it wasn't close.

For Orange, this was a chance to reverse their disappointing five-game loss in the inaugural Founders Cup' and take their first title since 1868, when all the APBL teams were still in the NBBO. For Alleghany, this was their first chance at a title since winning the 1869 Tucker-Wheaton Cup.

In a battle of teams who were mediocre or worse during the stretch run, who would win? Would it simply be a matter of who made the fewest mistakes? Or would one team wake up from its slumber?

GAME ONE (Upper Manhattan Grounds)

ALL 25-3 ORA – Ashley Hearn (RF, ALL) 4/6, 2 2B, 4 R, 4 RBI, SB

It was Alleghany that woke up from their 4-11 slumber, and how!

The visitors started the game off right with three runs in T1, and they ended up ahead 10-0 before Orange could put any runs on the board. The visitors raised the lead to 15-1 by the end of the 8th, but apparently they felt that wasn't enough as Alleghany added *ten* runs in the 9th to turn what was an amazing performance into an otherworldly one.

1B Jerald Peterson led Alleghany with five base hits (5/7, 2B, 3 R, 1 RBI), while Hearn, CF Solomon Springs, & C Harry Thompson had four each. In addition, 2B Burton Ellerby finished with five RBI.

GAME TWO (Upper Manhattan Grounds)

ALL 7-6 ORA – Gerald Strong (SS, ALL) 3/5 (all 1B), 1 R, 1 RBI, SB, GW HIT

Game Two was much closer than the opener, although it wasn't a back-and-forth contest.

Alleghany again started off strong, with five runs over the first three innings and a 5-0 lead that stood until the bottom of the 6th. That was when Orange pulled off a six-run rally that was punctuated by the first Grand Slam in Founders' Cup history, a blast over the Right Field fence by Taliesin Buckley.

That appeared to send Alleghany reeling, but after a scoreless 7th the visitors plated two runs in the 8th on Singles by Strong & PH Charles Davis to take an 8-7 lead that stood the rest of the way. Alleghany had wiped out the Orange HFA and taken a 2-0 series lead.

GAME THREE (Recreation Park in Pittsburgh)

ORA 9-8 ALL – Charles Whitehead (2B, ORA) 4/4, 3B, 3 R, 2 RBI, 1 BB, 1 DEF DP

All of the excitement came early in Game Three.

All seventeen runs in the contest were scored during the first six innings. After a 2-1 opening inning Alleghany scored five times in the 2nd and once in both the 3rd & 4th to take an 8-2 lead. The Orange response began in earnest during the 5th, when they scored four runs on a series of singles & sacrifices to cut the deficit to two. In the top of the 6th, a Whitehead Single and a two-run Double by Everett Schreiber put Orange in the lead 9-8, and from there stellar pitching & defense put Orange in the win column.

GAME FOUR (Recreation Park in Pittsburgh)

ORA 6-3 ALL – Everett Schreiber (C, ORA) 3/4, 3B, 1 R, 1 RBI, 1/3 RTO

It was four away wins in four games at the end of nine innings in Pittsburgh.

Orange scored first with a pair of runs in the 2nd, and they extended the lead to 4-0 with two more runs in the 5th. Alleghany responded with two runs of their own in the bottom of the 5th and one more in the 6th to make it a 4-3 game, but run-scoring Singles by Charles Whitehead & Samuel Kessler in the top of the 7th gave Orange a 6-3 lead and sealed the win.

GAME FIVE (Recreation Park in Pittsburgh)

ORA 4-1 ALL – George Sturgis (P, ORA) CG, 8 HA, 1 ER, 1 K, 1/4

And it was *five away wins in five games...*

This game was all pitching & defense. The two teams combined for just five fielding errors (APBL avg: 13.6 total E/G) and neither pitcher allowed a Base on Balls.

The result was decided in the top of the 9th. With the game tied 1-1, Orange came to bat and scored runs on a Single by RF William Valentine, a Sacrifice Fly by Taliesin Buckley, and a Single by Isaac Holm to go ahead 4-1. Sturgis was fine in the bottom of the 9th, and Orange had an unlikely 3-2 series lead.

GAME SIX (Upper Manhattan Grounds)

ALL 1-8 ORA – Taliesin Buckley (CF, ORA) 2/4, HR, 2 R, 3 RBI

Orange completed the delayed sweep at home.

The key inning in Game Six was the 5th. Orange came to bat ahead 1-0 and scored six runs, with the first three scoring on Singles by Charles Whitehead, Samuel Kessler, & Will Chaffin before Buckley put an exclamation point at the end of the rally with a three-run, inside-the-park Home Run that put Orange ahead 7-0. George Sturgis' pitching was excellent once again, and that meant Orange had nothing to worry about over the final four innings.

Orange B.B.C. had taken their first Founders' Cup title, and their third overall.

FOUNDERS' CUP MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

Charles Whitehead (2B, ORA) – .444 (12/28), 1.020 OPS, 7 R, 1 2B, 1 3B, 3 RBI, 1 BB, 1 SB

Taliesin Buckley's two Home Runs and eight Runs Batted In had a pretty good argument for Founders' Cup MVP, but Whitehead hit 150 points higher than him, and Whitehead was at his best in the Game Three that marked the start of Orange's reversal of their two home losses to open the series.

It was the end of a fine season for Whitehead. Signed by Orange ahead of 1872 to notable fanfare, during 1874 "Rowdy Chuck" made his first All-Star Game appearance and now had taken MVP honors in the season's biggest series.

FOUNDERS' CUP SUMMARY

Orange Base Ball Club win series, 4 to 2.

Game 1: Alleghany Baseball Club defeat Orange Base Ball Club, 25 to 3:

Road Win Lifts Alleghany Baseball Club to 1-0 Lead in FC

W: R. Cordell (1-0) L: G. Sturgis (0-1)

HR - ALL: B. Ellerby (1)

Boxscore Game Log

Game 2: Alleghany Baseball Club defeat Orange Base Ball Club, 7 to 6:

Alleghany Baseball Club Pins 7-6 Loss on Orange Base Ball Club

W: E. Seabold (1-0) L: G. Sturgis (0-2) S: E. Bradley (1)

HR - ORA: T. Buckley (1)

Boxscore Game Log

Game 3: Orange Base Ball Club defeat Alleghany Baseball Club, 9 to 8:

Orange Base Ball Club Breaks Through for First Win in Founders' Cup; Now Trails 2-1

W: G. Sturgis (1-2) L: R. Cordell (1-1) S: T. Paddock (1)

HR - None

Boxscore Game Log

Game 4: Orange Base Ball Club defeat Alleghany Baseball Club, 6 to 3:

Orange Base Ball Club Win Evens Series at 2

W: P. Caldwell (1-0) L: E. Seabold (1-1)

HR - None

Boxscore Game Log

Game 5: Orange Base Ball Club defeat Alleghany Baseball Club, 4 to 1:

Orange Base Ball Club Tops Alleghany Baseball Club, 4-1, Claims 3-2 Series Lead

W: G. Sturgis (2-2) L: R. Cordell (1-2)

HR - None

Boxscore Game Log

Game 6: Orange Base Ball Club defeat Alleghany Baseball Club, 8 to 1:

Orange Base Ball Club Tops Alleghany Baseball Club

W: G. Sturgis (3-2) L: R. Cordell (1-3)

HR - ORA: T. Buckley (2)

Boxscore Game Log

Series MVP: 2B Charles Whitehead (Orange Base Ball Club)