

METRO CONFERENCE RACE TOO CLOSE TO CALL

EXCELSIOR & ORANGE TWO GAMES APART WITH ONE WEEK LEFT; TIGER HAS FAINT HOPES

NORTHEAST U.S.A. (Aug. 15, 1881) – The 1881 A.P.B.L. season is about to enter its final week and both conferences have yet to be decided, although one is much closer than the other.

In the Colonial Conference, St. John's has won their last five games to push their lead atop the conference to five games over Niagara and six over Massachusetts Bay with six remaining. Their next series is at last-place Newark, so it's likely that St. John's will have yet another pennant in their hands by the end of the day on Thursday.

That means the Metropolitan Conference is where all of the excitement is at. With six games remaining, this is the top three:

- #1: Excelsior at 51-33 (+60 RD)
- #2: Orange at 49-35 (2 GB; +45 RD)
- #3: Tiger S.C. at 46-38 (5 GB; +81 RD)

The major matter of note here is that Excelsior & Orange open the final week of play with a series against each other, and Excelsior is hosting. Excelsior is a league-best 31-8 at home while Orange is 23-19 away, so Excelsior should win two of three games. That would leave them needing just one win or an Orange loss over the final three days to secure their first pennant in four years.

However, Excelsior has lost their last three games while Orange won their pair of outings over the weekend, so a series win by Orange is entirely possible. If that were to happen, then the Metro pennant would be completely up for grabs when Excelsior hosts Pt. Jersey (39-45) and Orange hosts Alleghany (39-45) for the final weekend.

An Orange series win at Excelsior also has the potential to bring Tiger into the mix. They host one-time Metro leaders but now struggling Kings County to start the week, and a sweep combined with a 2-1 or 3-0 Orange series win at Excelsior would leave all three teams just three games apart going into the final weekend. Tiger's problem: they end the season at St. John's,

and there's a small chance St. John's will still need a result to clinch the Colonial Conference title. In any event, this has been by far the most successful of Tiger S.C.'s four seasons in the A.P.B.L.

No matter which way the Metropolitan Conference finishes, what is known is that it will be won by a team that has undergone significant improvement after struggles in recent seasons.