

# 1858 NEW YORK LEAGUE REVIEW

## NEW YORK LEAGUE SEASON SUMMARY

Season number two of the New York League was another one full of surprises. None of the three favorites to win the city & regional championships did so, two of the three championships went to the final day before the winner was decided, and almost none of the favorites for the major awards were in the running for them at the end of the season.

The Brooklyn Championship pennant race was the most exciting of the three in the N.Y.L. At the end of May Kings Co. was 13-7, up a game on Atlantic and two over Continental, Eckford, & Nassau Co. By the end of June Kings Co. had widened the lead to four games atop the standings and it looked like they would slowly pull away. However, after losing their first two games of July Nassau Co. reeled off a record seventeen-game winning streak that would only draw them level with Kings Co., because K.C. themselves were 13-4 over the same span. It set up a frantic final two weeks, and going into the final day the two were 45-24. Kings Co. did the needed, winning 7-3 at Continental, while Nassau Co. took a stunning 3-1 home loss to last-place Continental to gift Kings Co. the Brooklyn title.

Things were much simpler in the New York City Championship. Knickerbocker B.B.C., predicted to go 40-30 and finish in third place, went 16-4 in May and sat five games clear at the top when the calendar rolled over to June. A 13-9 June kept the lead at five games over Mutual, but a 19-4 July removed all doubt as to who the best team in New York City was in 1858. Eleven games ahead with a week left, Knickerbocker coasted from there and finished 51-19.

The Upstate Championship was the closest of the three N.Y.L. subdivisions. The Preseason Writers' Poll had all eight teams finishing within ten games of each other, and indeed that was what happened – Victory B.B.C. in first at 40-30 with Eagle B.B.C. in last at 30-40. Not surprisingly, like in Brooklyn it took until the last day to determine the champion, when Victory's 10-8 win allowed them to keep Niagara one game behind them. Minuteman was two games back in third, and Syracuse finished fourth at just four games back.

Kings County looked like solid favorites over Victory in the N.Y.L. Semi-Final, but the series went the full five games.

- **GAME ONE** was a low-scoring affair – 3-2 to K.C. with Grover Wright earning Player of the Game honors after allowing just a lone Earned Run during the contest.
- **GAME TWO** looked like more of the same, as K.C. was up 5-1 going into the ninth inning. However, Victory scored seven Unearned Runs off Cliff Holmes to take an 8-5 win to even the series.
- **GAME THREE** was a wild one – the score 9-8 to Victory after just three innings of play. The scoring didn't stop there, as five runs in the top of the fourth from K.C. propelled to a 14-11 victory in which the hosts doomed themselves with a Bakers' Dozen of fielding errors. The #2-3-4 batsmen in the K.C. lineup – G. Lawrence, J. Peterson, & J. Francis – combined to hit 7/15 with five runs and five RBI in the win.
- **GAME FOUR** was even crazier, with Troy setting an N.B.B.O. regular & postseason record with SIXTEEN runs in the third inning of a contest that ended 23-8, and featured fifteen fielding errors by K.C. Every Troy batter – pitcher included – except leadoff hitter Joe DeVore ended the game with multiple hits & multiple RBI. Joseph Paige earned P.o.t.G. honors by going 3/6 with three runs & RBI each.
- The deciding **GAME FIVE** was back in Brooklyn, and in it Grover Wright atoned for his disastrous Game Three (2 IP, 8 ER) by again allowing just one Earned Run in a Complete Game 5-2 win. K.C. scored thrice in the second, and that was all they needed.

Kings County's win set up a New York League Championship Series against Knickerbocker B.B.C. featuring the two biggest clubs in the sport, at least in terms of money and venue size.

- **GAME ONE** at the Elysian Fields was relatively quiet, as Walter Simon and the Knickerbocker defense held K.C. to four hits in a 4-2 win. Henry Andrews' RBI single in the fourth was the hit that put the hosts over the top.
- **GAME TWO** was much livelier. K.C. chased N.Y.L. Win leader and eventual Newcomer of the Year James Kyle off the mound before the end of the fifth after thirteen hits and nine runs, and they exited 16-7 winners. Star third baseman Jerald Peterson & second baseman Roy Gregg were both 4/6 with three RBI, and Peterson's pair of two-baggers

meant he had six Total Bases on the day.

- **GAME THREE** in Brooklyn was another exciting tilt. Knickerbocker scored early and enjoyed a 10-3 lead after six innings, but a pair of rallies from K.C. made it 10-7 after eight. Unfortunately for the hosts, after a scoreless top of the ninth K.C. went out 1-2-3 in the bottom half. Knick outfielder Zarek Polakowski was the key man, hitting 4/5 with two runs and three RBI.
- For a while it looked like **GAME FOUR** was as even as a coin flip, but that all changed in the top of the sixth when Knickerbocker scored seven times to turn a 2-2 tie into a 9-2 rout. From there they scored two more runs and ended the series with an 11-4 win. Three Knick players had three hits in the game: 2B Ray Masters, C Olaf Myhre, and the aforementioned Polakowski.

Knickerbocker looked the part of the favorite going into the Tucker-Wheaton Cup against the St. John's offensive juggernaut. The series went the full five games with Knickerbocker enjoying the home advantage for Game Five, but to the shock of all in attendance they wilted in the series decider at the Elysian Fields as they lost 10-2.

When it came time to give out the second set of New York League awards, almost none of the Preseason Writers' Poll favorites were there. Out of the six favorites for Batsman of the Year and Most Valuable Player, only two even earned Spots in the Team of the Year: Niagara 2B Joe Bentley & Knickerbocker CF Albert Jones. The former wasn't in the running for any awards, but the latter...Jones took home both B.o.t.Y. AND M.V.P. after a spectacular season that saw him lead the league in Slugging, OPS, Hits, Triples, Total Bases, Win Probability Added, & Wins Above Replacement, and he did that perhaps the most pitching/defense-friendly venue in the entire National Base Ball Organization.

When it came time to give out the maiden version of the Newcomer of the Year Award it was a toss-up between Utica's William LaValliere, who finished third in the B.o.t.Y. vote with the league's #3 Batting Average, and Knick pitcher James Kyle, who led the league in wins with a 24-8 record. Kyle's second-place finish for the ERA title, when added to his win lead, caused him to get the trophy over LaValliere.

With two seasons in the books, the simplest thing that can be said about the New York League is, "Expect the unexpected."

## NEW YORK LEAGUE STANDINGS

BROOKLYN	W	L	PCT	GB	R	RA	RD	N.Y.C.	W	L	PCT	GB	R	RA	RD
Kings Co.	46	24	.657	--	531	413	+118	Knickerbocker	51	19	.729	--	513	388	+125
Nassau Co.	45	25	.643	1	455	376	+79	Mutual	41	29	.586	10	538	499	+39
Atlantic	36	34	.514	10	450	445	+5	Metropolitan	35	35	.500	16	456	442	+14
Continental	35	35	.500	11	412	437	-25	Orange	34	36	.486	17	468	426	+42
Eckford	34	36	.486	12	482	496	-14	Gotham	33	37	.471	18	529	563	-34
Bedford	30	40	.429	16	431	477	-46	Harlem	32	38	.457	19	414	487	-73
Empire	29	41	.414	17	367	374	-7	Hilltop <sup>1</sup>	27	43	.386	24	404	452	-48
Excelsior	25	45	.357	21	395	505	-115	Union	27	43	.386	24	429	494	-65

UPSTATE	W	L	PCT	GB	R	RA	RD
Victory	40	30	.571	--	508	446	+62
Niagara	39	31	.557	1	533	524	+9
Minuteman	38	32	.543	2	520	483	+37
Syracuse	36	34	.514	4	447	410	+37
Utica	34	36	.486	6	482	472	+10
Binghamton	32	38	.457	8	465	555	-90
Flour City	31	39	.443	9	545	562	-17
Eagle	30	40	.429	10	481	529	-48

1 = Won head-to-head tiebreaker

2 = Even on head-to-head, won Run Differential tiebreaker

## NEW YORK LEAGUE PLAYOFFS

**SEMI-FINALS: #2 Kings County beats #3 Victory B.B.C. 3-2**

- Game One: Victory 2-3 Kings Co. – PotG: Grover Wright (P, KC)
- Game Two: Victory 8-5 Kings Co. – PotG: Alex Higgins (P, VIC)
- Game Three: Kings Co. 14-11 Victory – PotG: Jerald Petersen (3B, KC)
- Game Four: Kings Co. 8-23 Victory – PotG: Joseph Paige (2B, VIC)
- Game Five: Victory 2-5 Kings Co. – PotG: Grover Wright (P, KC)
- M.V.P.: John Francis (CF, KC) – 9/20 (.450), 2 2B, 4 R, 4 RBI

**LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP: #1 Knickerbocker B.B.C. beats #2 Kings County 3-1**

- Game One: Kings Co. 2-4 Knickerbocker – PotG: Walter Simon (P, KNI)
- Game Two: Kings Co. 16-7 Knickerbocker – PotG: 3B Jerald Peterson (3B, KC)
- Game Three: Knickerbocker 10-7 Kings Co. – PotG: Zarek Polakowski (OF, KNI)
- Game Four: Knickerbocker 11-4 Kings Co. – PotG: James Kyle (P, KNI)
- M.V.P.: Raymond Masters (2B, KNI) – 9/17 (.529), 4 2B, 4 R, 5 RBI

## NEW YORK LEAGUE AWARD WINNERS

**BATSMAN OF THE YEAR: ALBERT JONES – 26 y/o Center Fielder, Knickerbocker B.B.C.**

- .393/.401/.570, .971 OPS, 70 R, 127 H, 31 2B, 10 3B, 2 HR, 65 RBI, 28 SB, 184 TB, 3.6 oWAR, 3.9 WAR
- Hit .427 (47/110) with 15 Doubles, 34 Runs, 18 RBI, & 11 Stolen Bases during July (23 games)
- George Israel (VIC: .401, 30 XBH, 62 RBI) 2nd, William LaValliere (UTI: .387, 1 HR, 59 RBI) 3rd

**MOST VALUABLE PLAYER: ALBERT JONES – 26 y/o Center Fielder, Knickerbocker B.B.C.**

- .393/.401/.570, .971 OPS, 70 R, 127 H, 31 2B, 10 3B, 2 HR, 65 RBI, 28 SB, 184 TB, 4.4 WPA, 3.9 WAR
- Led New York League in both WPA & WAR while playing for the team w/ the league's best record
- Callum Barr (ATL: .335, 42 SB, 3.5 WPA) 2nd, Leroy Weld (MET: .346, 56 RBI, 4.2 WPA) 3rd

**NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR: JAMES KYLE – 28 y/o Pitcher, Knickerbocker B.B.C.**

- 24-8, 2.55 ERA, 306.2 IP, 24 CG, 0 SHO, 44 BB, 27 K, 1.21 WHIP, 4.6 WAR, 8.6 R9-WAR

- Led New York League Wins, Second in ERA
- William LaValliere (UTI: .387, 1 HR, 59 RBI) 2nd, Callum Barr (ATL: .335, 42 RBI, 42 SB) 3rd

## GOLDEN GLOVES

P: Art Maxwell (BED), C: Irving Heywood (ORA), 1B: Albert Canepa (HILL), 2B: Henry Ciccone (MET), 3B: Johnny Deschenes (EXC), SS: Chester Sauls (VIC), OF: John Murphy (VIC), CF: Callum Barr (ATL), OF: Chatham Richter (GOT)

## TEAM OF THE YEAR

P: James Kyle (KNI) – **24-8**, 2.55 ERA, 24 CG, 0 SHO, 306.2 IP, 44 BB, 27 K, 1.21 WHIP, 4.6 WAR/8.6 R9WAR

C: Ruby Watson (NC) – .339/.394/.426, 46 R, 98 H, 22 2B, 0 3B, 1 HR, 61 RBI, 3 SB, 2.4 WPA, 2.4 WAR

1B: Ted Short (EAG) – .340/.357/.403, 50 R, 91 H, 17 2B, 0 3B, 0 HR, 54 RBI, 2 SB, 2.2 WPA, 1.4 WAR

2B: Joseph Bentley (NIA) – .342/.387/.417, 62 R, 105 H, 13 2B, 2 3B, 2 HR, 44 RBI, 5 SB, 2.3 WPA, 1.3 WAR

3B: Leroy Weld (MET) – .346/.**439**/.471, 66 R, 97 H, 19 2B, 8 3B, 56 RBI, **37 BB**, 6 SB, 4.2 WPA, 2.3 WAR

SS: Carl Keener (MIN) – .356/.383/.417, 70 R, 111 H, 13 2B, 3 3B, 0 HR, 39 RBI, 19 SB, 2.9 WPA, 2.6 WAR

OF: George Israel (VIC) – **.401**/.421/.529, 65 R, 116 H, 23 2B, 7 3B, 0 HR, 62 RBI, 17 SB, 3.8 WPA, 3.3 WAR

CF: Albert Jones (KNI) – .393/.401/.**570**, 70 R, **127 H**, 31 2B, **10 3B**, 2 HR, 65 RBI, 28 SB, **184 TB**, **4.4 WPA**, **3.9 WAR**

OF: Will LaValliere (UTI) – .387/.422/.457, 75 R, 117 H, 12 2B, 3 3B, 1 HR, 59 RBI, 10 SB, 4.0 WPA, 2.8 WAR

MGR: Jonathan Brown (KNI) – 51-19; Knickerbocker won N.Y.L. title & finished 1st in N.Y.C. by ten games