

THE 1862 TUCKER-WHEATON CUP

ROUND ROBIN FORMAT MAKES ITS DEBUT

NORTHEAST U.S.A. (Aug. 1862) – The 1862 version of the Tucker-Wheaton Cup was something new: a Round Robin competition put in place after issues came to a head during the previous offseason. There would still be six teams, but this year all six would play each other twice, with every team playing a total of ten games to decide the National Base Ball Organization champion.

While the cup's format was new, the teams taking part were most definitely not. St. John's was playing extra baseball as they had been every other year of the N.B.B.O.'s existence, Kings County was in the postseason for the fifth year in a row, Alleghany & Shamrock were in a playoff environment for the fourth time, and Orange was making its second trip to the postseason, with two second place finishes in New York City to their name. Only Upstate New York champions Utica, who had finished second in each of the previous three seasons, were playoff debutants.

There was speculation that the entire T.W.C. would take place at various venues in Brooklyn & New York City, but ultimately it was decided that the game would take place at the teams' venues after logistics with the [newly booming passenger train industry](#) were worked out. This would give the teams five true home games and five away games, and with all the teams playing in familiar environments it would ensure the baseball played would be of the highest standard.

The Writers Pool's favorite for the cup in the preseason poll was also the team with the best record in the N.B.B.O. during the season: Shamrock Baseball Club. Thus, they were seen as the favorites to win the cup. However, the six teams involved were four wins apart during the season, so if Shamrock were favorites they were not the overwhelming ones.

Would the new format of the Tucker-Wheaton Cup lead to a more interesting finale to the base ball season? Would a further playoff be needed to whittle apart teams tied for the lead after ten games? Here is how the first Round Robin version of the Tucker-Wheaton Cup went:

1862 TUCKER WHEATON CUP STANDINGS

TEAM	W	L	GB	R	RA	RD
SHAMROCK	8	2	--	71	64	+7
ST. JOHN'S	7	3	1	86	70	+16
UTICA	5	5	3	61	66	-5
KINGS CO.	4	6	4	68	71	-3
ORANGE	3	7	5	69	65	+4
ALLEGHANY	3	7	5	52	71	-19

M.V.P: William Johnson (CF, STJ) – .432 AVG (19/44), 1.149 OPS, 4 2B, 3 3B, 21 R, 6 RBI, 5 BB, 10 SB, 5x P.o.t.G.

The preseason favorite and regular season #1 went on to finish first in the Tucker-Wheaton Cup as well, no extra games needed. Shamrock did not have the best offense or largest Run Differential in the T.W.C. – that went to St. John's thanks to some huge wins – but they won their last five games to come out on top. Conversely, Alleghany lost their final five to finish in last place on Run Differential

Even though Shamrock lifted the cup, the award for individual M.V.P, surprisingly, went elsewhere. Shamrock was led by Thomas Maloney, who hit 19/45 (.422) with seven doubles, sixteen runs, nine R.B.I, and the double that clinched the cup for the Bostonians. However, St. John's stalwart William Johnson was absolutely outstanding, scoring more than two runs per game (21), stealing ten bases without being caught, hitting well over .400 (.432; 19/44), and earning Player of the Game honors in five of the last six St. John's games in the T.W.C. He was, without question, the star player of the competition.

If there were to be an award for Best Pitcher, it would also have gone to a St. John's player. Shamrock's Hannigan Miller was 3-0, but he walked thirteen batters while striking out three and had an E.R.A. near 4.00. Pitching mate Joe Cunningham had an E.R.A. near 2.50 in 49 innings, but he was only 2-2. Meanwhile, St. John's' John McGowan won five of his six starts – the only pitcher to go 5-0 – while striking out a cup-high nine batters and enjoying a 2.89 E.R.A. over 53 innings of work.

Even though the assumption is that defense and pitching are better when the best teams play, teams scored 6.8 runs per game in the cup competition, which was just 0.1 runs per game below the regular season average. St. John's had far and

away the best offense in the T.W.C. They were the only team to have more than one player with 10+ R.B.I, and they had three: Nelson Townsend (14), Konrad Jensen (11), and Collin Henderson (10).

GAMEDAY ONE

UTI 2-4 ALL – P.o.t.G: Eddie Morse (P, ALL) – CG, 7 H, 2 R, 0 ER 2 K
SHA 4-1 K.C. – P.o.t.G: Joe Cunningham (P, SHA) – CG, 3 H, 1 R, 0 ER 2 K
ORA 6-10 STJ – P.o.t.G: Konrad Jensen (RF, STJ) – 3/5, 2B, 2 R, 1 RBI

The first game of the revamped Tucker-Wheaton Cup was Utica at Alleghany in Pittsburgh Recreation Park. There was not much excitement, but Alleghany got the job done by scoring twice in the first and never trailing in their 4-2 win. Shamrock at Kings County was a similar affair, with Shamrock scoring twice in the top of the first and leading the whole way in their 4-1 win. Orange at St. John's was where the excitement was. St. John's scored six times over the first two innings, but an Orange rally made it 6-4 halfway through the contest. The hosts responded with four runs over the sixth & seventh, and that put the win to bed.

GAMEDAY TWO

ORA 4-5 ALL – P.o.t.G: Milton Eckhart (LF, ALL) – 3/4, 2 RBI, 2 SB, 1 OF AST
K.C. 13-3 STJ – P.o.t.G: Soren Thomsen (RF, K.C.) – 5/6, 2 2B, 3 R, 4 RBI, 1 SB
SHA 8-7 UTI – P.o.t.G: Warren Boltz (3B, UTI) – 4/4, 2B, HR, 3 R, 2 RBI

The shocker of Gameday Two was easily Kings County over St. John's. The game was 1-1 after four innings, but K.C. responded with three runs in the fifth, four in the sixth, and four in the eighth to knock the hosts asunder. Each of the first five K.C. batsmen in their lineup had multiple hits, and they were led by Soren Thomsen with five. Alleghany beat Orange thanks to five runs in the first three innings, and they needed just six hits to do it. Henry Fowler's two-run single in the third put the hosts over the top. In Utica, the hosts tried their best to take down Shamrock but they kept having to play from behind, and that meant a brilliant performance from Warren Boltz was wasted in a one-run loss.

GAMEDAY THREE

ALL 5-14 ORA – P.o.t.G: Fabio Lovato (2B, ORA) – 3/4, 2 R, 2 RBI

STJ 9-6 K.C. – P.o.t.G: Konrad Jensen (RF, STJ) – 3/5, 3B, 2 R, 4 RBI, 1 SB

UTI 6-3 SHA (10 Inn.) – P.o.t.G: Carl Bancroft (P, UTI) – 10 IP, 2 H, 3 R, 1 ER, 2 K

The big surprise of the afternoon came in Boston. It was not simply that Utica scored three in the tenth to win at Shamrock, but that the best team in the N.B.B.O. was held to a pair of hits by Carl Bancroft and the Utica defense. Utica themselves only needed four hits to win thanks to the hosts' nine fielding errors. St. John's reversed the home embarrassment of the previous day with a big win at K.C., with a five-run rally putting them up 9-3 going into the bottom of the eighth. Alleghany scored first at Orange, but it was all Orange from there as Alleghany pitchers walked half a dozen hitters and their fielders committed eight errors in a very forgettable day.

GAMEDAY FOUR

STJ 6-11 ORA – P.o.t.G: Barnes Koot (CF, ORA) – 4/5, 2B, 3 R, 1 RBI, 2 SB

ALL 4-6 UTA – P.o.t.G: Fred Fowler (LF, UTI) – 3/4, 2 R, 1 RBI, 1 SB

K.C. 10-11 SHA (10 Inn.) – P.o.t.G: Enda Reed (1B, SHA) – 3/6, 2B, 3B, 3 R, 3 RBI

Orange opened Gameday Four with a five-run win over St. John's. They were led by Barnes Koot's 4/5 with a double and three runs, but William Lantz was also 4/5 and superstar Ed Huntley was 3/5 with four R.B.I. Utica led from the bottom of the first onward in their win over Alleghany, in which they were led by Fred Fowler while both Peter Sweet & Charles Haynes were 2/4 with a run & R.B.I each. K.C. at Shamrock was a thrilling end to the day. The two teams combined to score fifteen runs from the 7th-9th, leaving the score 10-10 ahead of Extra Innings. In the bottom of the tenth, Shamrock Pinch Hitter MacArtan Kennedy singled in Player of the Game Enda Reed to win it.

GAMEDAY FIVE

ORA 4-6 UTI – P.o.t.G: Alonzo Reese (1B, UTI) – 3/4, 2 R, 2 RBI

K.C. 4-6 ALL – P.o.t.G: Joe Blake (ALL) – 3/4, 2 R, 2 RBI, 2 SB

SHA 4-10 STJ – P.o.t.G: William Johnson (CF, STJ) – 3/5, 2 R, 1 RBI, 2 SB

Utica was a little fortunate to win 6-4 over Orange to open Gameday Five. Alonzo Reese had a big day, but their defense committed six errors that the visitors were unable to capitalize on. Carl Bancroft did not make any major mistakes, and that kept Utica just in front. Joe Blake had a fine day for Alleghany, but it was their four-run rally in the bottom of the eighth that put them over the top against Kings County. An error, a walk, and five singles in the inning propelled the hosts to victory. St. John's win over Shamrock looked lopsided, but it was a four-run bottom of the eighth that sealed the win.

The records after Gameday Five were as follows:

TEAM	W	L	GB	R	RA	RD
UTICA	3	2	--	27	23	+4
SHAMROCK	3	2	--	30	34	-4
ST. JOHN'S	3	2	--	38	40	-2
ALLEGHANY	3	2	--	24	30	-6
ORANGE	2	3	1	39	32	+7
KINGS CO.	1	4	2	34	33	+1

With five of the six teams within a game of each other, the cup was truly up for grabs.

GAMEDAY SIX

UTI 8-5 ORA – P.o.t.G: Alonzo Reese (1B, UTI) – 3/4, 2 R, 3 RBI, 1 BB

ALL 8-9 K.C. – P.o.t.G: John Francis (LF, K.C.) – 2/5, 3 R, 2 RBI, 1 SB, 1 BB

STJ 9-10 SHA – P.o.t.G: William Johnson (CF, STJ) – 4/5, 3B, 3 R, 2 RBI, 2 SB

Ninth-inning rallies were the Special of the Day in Gameday Six. In the Upper Manhattan Base Ball Grounds, Utica scored twice in the top of the ninth to ensure their victory: an 8-5 result in which Alonzo Reese was P.o.t.G. for the second game in a row. Over in Brooklyn, Kings County scored three times in the bottom of the ninth to beat Alleghany 9-8, with Declan Brice's two-run single winning the contest. In Boston, Shamrock found themselves down 9-8 to St. John's with one out in the bottom of the ninth when Pinch Hitter Henry Rosendahl hit a two-run single to put the win in Shamrock's hands.

GAMEDAY SEVEN

SHA 9-5 ALL – P.o.t.G: Thomas Maloney (LF, SHA) – 3/5, 2 2B, 2 R, 1 RBI, 1 SB
ORA 10-4 K.C. – P.o.t.G: Edward Huntley (SS, ORA) – 2/3, 2 R, 1 RBI, 1 BB, 3 SB
STJ 10-7 UTI – P.o.t.G: Godfrey White (SS, STJ) – 3/5, 2B, 2 R, 2 RBI, 2 DEF DP

Shamrock opened Gameday Seven with a 9-5 win in Pittsburgh – seven runs over the 3rd-5th were more than enough as five Shamrock players, including pitcher Hannigan Miller, had multiple hits. The Orange Club made easy work of Kings County, with every member of the lineup getting hits and Ed Huntley stealing three bases against the misfiring arm of K.C. catcher Brannigan Williams. St. John's at Utica was also over early, with the visitors ahead 10-3 after five innings and strolling over the finish line.

The win for Shamrock was a huge one. It left them the first sole leaders of the competition with a record of 5-2.

GAMEDAY EIGHT

STJ 12-6 ALL – P.o.t.G: William Johnson (CF, STJ) – 2/4, 2B, 4 R, 1 RBI, 1 BB, 1 SB
SHA 10-8 ORA (10 Inn.) – P.o.t.G: Thomas Maloney (LF, SHA) – 3/5, 2 B, 2 R, 1 RBI
K.C. 6-7 UTI – P.o.t.G: Peter Sweet (RF, UTI) – 4/5, 2 2B, 2 R, 2 RBI

St. John's victory at Alleghany was all about the seventh inning, in which the visitors scored eight runs on five hits, four walks, and one fielding error. It was pure torture for the hosts, and St. John's was glad to inflict it. Orange had the upper hand going into the ninth against Shamrock, up 8-7. However, Shamrock scored once in the ninth on a Damion Brown single and twice in the tenth via Thomas Silke double to remain the leaders of the T.W.C. at 6-2. There were dueling ninth-inning rallies in the game in Utica. Kings County came up in the top of the ninth down 5-4 and scored runs on two singles to take a 6-5 lead, but Utica turned that straight around with two runs of their own on a Wyatt Flanders single to win the game.

The result in Utica means that Kings County was the first team eliminated from cup contention.

GAMEDAY NINE

ALL 4-5 STJ – P.o.t.G: William Johnson (CF, STJ) – 2/4, 2 2B, 2 R, 1 BB, 2 SB

UTI 9-10 K.C. (11 Inn.) – P.o.t.G: Declan Brice (CF, K.C.) – 3/6, 2 2B, 1 R, 3 RBI

ORA 3-6 SHA – P.o.t.G: Walter Williams (CF, SHA) – 2/5, 1 R, 1 RBI, 4 SB

A two-run single by Konrad Jensen in the bottom of the seventh put St. John's ahead and ultimately gave them the win over Alleghany at home, with William Johnson & Nelson Townsend also having fine afternoons for the second-place team in the competition. In Brooklyn, Kings County did not look like a team with nothing to play for as they responded to a six-run rally from Utica in the eighth inning by holding steady until the eleventh, when they scored on a single by Will Kelly that won the game for them and eliminated Utica. Shamrock made it all look easy at home against Orange, scoring six times by the end of the third and walking the win home. They were hoping for a St. John's loss that would have made them T.W.C. champions with one game left, but they were still sole leaders of the competition.

The standings after Gameday Nine were as follows:

TEAM	W	L	GB	R	RA	RD
SHAMROCK	7	2	--	65	59	+6
ST. JOHN'S	6	3	1	74	67	+7
UTICA	5	4	2	58	54	+4
ORANGE	3	6	4	65	60	+5
KINGS CO.	3	6	4	63	67	-4
ALLEGHANY	3	6	4	47	65	-18

There were two teams left in contention: Shamrock & St. John's. If Shamrock won on Gameday Ten they were champions, but if they lost and St. John's won there would be a one-game playoff.

GAMEDAY TEN

UTI 3-12 STJ – P.o.t.G: William Johnson (CF, STJ) – 2/4, 3B, 3 R, 2 RBI, 1 BB, 1 SB

ALL 5-6 SHA – P.o.t.G: Thomas Maloney (LF, SHA) – 3/5, 2B, 1 R, 2 RBI, GW HIT

K.C. 5-4 ORA (10 Inn.) – P.o.t.G: John Francis (LF, K.C.) – 2/5, 2B, 1 R, 1 RBI

St. John's started the final day of the T.W.C. by doing exactly what they needed to do, beating Utica 12-3 and seeing the amazing William Johnson take P.o.t.G. honors for the fifth time in six games. Kings County beat Orange 5-4 in the game that mattered not, and from there all eyes were on the game in Boston as Shamrock took on Alleghany. The hosts had one hand on the cup thanks to a 4-3 lead heading into the ninth inning, but Joe Cunningham allowed a two-run triple to Charlie Rumbaugh to put Shamrock behind and make a playoff very possible. However, in the bottom half of the inning Shamrock's batters went triple, double, double, with Thomas Maloney's two-baser winning the Tucker-Wheaton Cup for Shamrock.

The cup was going back to the Northeastern League, and celebrations in the city of Boston began immediately after the game.