



2025 OFFICIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Table of Contents

Page 3 - From the Commissioners Desk

Page 4 - Familiar Faces in New Places - Buster Spork

Page 7 - Best Case, Worst Case: A Team by Team Look at the 2025 Season - Richard Salas

Page 15 - 2025 Official Season Predictions

Page 19 - Terminal Velocity: The Rise and Fall of Pocatello's Only Night Club - Squirt Davis

Page 22 - Strange Faces in New Places - Buster Spork



This document is copyrighted by the WPBL for the private use of our audience. Any other use of this document or any pictures, descriptions, or accounts of the contents without the WPBL's direct written consent is prohibited.

From the Commissioners Desk

To All WPBL GMs and Fans,

The hopeful start of a new season is finally upon us. After an exciting offseason of thrilling acquisitions, gripping negotiations, and anxious waiting, each team now gets to watch and see the fruits of their labor. Can an aging star still continue to perform past his prime? Which unknown player is just waiting for his opportunity to blossom? And as the spring turns to summer, which young prospect can have the biggest effect on his team? All questions that I cannot wait to see answered as we move into the 5th season of WPBL Baseball.

It's hard to believe that the WPBL is reaching the half-decade mark already. What started as a dream to give baseball fans in the Western Frontier an alternate league to cheer for has turned into a strong association of 10 different organizations, all putting out strong products on the field. WPBL fans now stretch from coast to coast, and the future of the league has never been brighter. The league added two new GMs this offseason in Warrenton and Bandon, and both immediately brought new energy to not only their teams but also the league as a whole. A renewed sense of direction combined with a flurry of moves has both teams' fan bases finally feeling like there is hope in the future.

The WPBL prides itself on the fact that each new season could be your team's year. With 3 different champions in the first four seasons and each team with at least one playoff appearance, the parity in the WPBL is unparalleled. And this year is no different. When the first pitch is thrown on May 3rd, anything could happen, and truly any team in this league has the potential to go the distance.

I wish the best of luck to each organization as we move into our 5th season together. My hopes are that each time finds success in their own way. Cherish the ups and downs of the season, celebrate individual accomplishments, stand strong with your fans during the disappointing losses, and continue to enjoy the great success that the WPBL has become.

Play Ball!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bo Bunyan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bo Bunyan, Commissioner

Familiar Faces, New Places

Contributed by Buster Spork - The Pocatello Observer

There's been an unprecedented amount of movement this offseason as we've seen some major trades and free agency signings. This amount of change can be hard to keep up with, good thing you got ol' Buster Spork to break down the top ten familiar faces in new places.



10. Javier Torres

RP Javier Torres has left Tahoe and is headed to Kennewick. The Atoms are slowly creating an elite bullpen and Torres is one more piece to further strengthen this crew.



9. Bob Umphrey

Another big Kennewick signing, Umphrey is returning to where it all started for him. The Atoms are happy to bring in a veteran who still has a lot left in the tank. They've prioritized strengthening their pitching this offseason and we'll see if it works out for them.



8. Mario Gutierrez

Bandon traded for 'Joker' this offseason and believes he can help make them become a contender in the Pacific Conference. At 32 he's no youngster but will still provide a lot of value to the starting rotation of the Bung Hammers.



7. Tim Sistrunk

Not particularly known for his charming personality, Tim Sistrunk is still a great ballplayer. Walla Walla signed him this offseason as they feel they can manage his ego and turn him into the star they believe he can be. We'll see how things play out for Sistrunk as a Wallaby



6. Moises Batista

The Old-Timers traded with Astoria for the controversial SP this offseason. He's a former pitcher of the year, but he hasn't looked the same since his lawnmower accident. Let's find out if a fresh start in Pocatello leads to a resurgence.



5. Mac Johannson

Mac Johannson hasn't always been the most talked about player, mainly because he's taken a backseat to the acclaimed duo of Hamby and Watts. Make no mistake though, the guy is a star. We'll see how much gas he has left in the tank at 34, but this was a big pick-up for Elko.



4. Brian Sicard

Since the league started, Brian Sicard has been arguably the best hitter in the game. He's a great leadoff man who maintains a consistently high batting average while still showing off a lot of speed and natural baserunning instincts. He's another Elko pick-up who is getting up there in years, but only makes this team that much stronger for the upcoming season.



3. Geoff Healy

Bandon acquired their 3B for the foreseeable future from Astoria this offseason. 26-year-old Healy is a former number 1 pick and has a bright future ahead. Reports are that he is quite pleased to end up in Bandon and loves the idea of being a Bung Hammer.



2. Ashton Hamby

Mega-star Ashton Hamby was the prized free agent of the offseason. Elko has put themselves in “win-now” mode and is going all-in. Hamby comes to Elko with a great bat and an ability to play well anywhere in the outfield.

1. Joe Watts



Another Elko signing makes the list? Wow, they’re really going for it this year. This makes for their fourth move of a guy in his mid-30s who is elite but could fall off any year now. Watts is truly a top-tier talent though, the only question is what position he’ll play this year. Looks like he’ll move from 1B to 3B given Randy Barbecue’s role at 1B. We’ll see how things progress, but this much is clear: Elko has made themselves the team to beat. Given the age of all of their acquisitions the championship window may be small, but this team is going to win a lot of games.

Honorary Mention: Dustin Duley remains the one big star who has not signed with a team yet. Many GMs have been hesitant to sign based on his personality issues, but he’ll certainly end up somewhere soon and be a factor once again.

Best Case, Worst Case

A Team by Team Look at the 2025 Season

Contributed by Richard Salas - Elko Times

This WPBL offseason has been one of the most exciting in the history of this young league. It had a little bit of everything and has provided viewers with a bevy of storylines to follow going into the next year. WPBL mainstays were involved in blockbuster trades, high performing international free agents have entered the league, and great young players continue to get drafted and develop in the WPBL farm systems. In preparation, I have compiled a best case/worst case scenario for every team based on their off season moves.

Elko Truckers



Best Case: Fanbase gets rewarded with a return to WPBL championship series

Elko has made very clear their goal this season, to compete and ultimately win a championship. Their starting lineup will only feature 3 regular players from last year's team, SS Hall, ROY 1B BBQ and LF Miguel Montoya. They got CF Hamby in Free agency, then completed the Osprey trifecta by trading for 1B Watts and 2B Johannson. They acquired an old friend of the program, DH Brian Sicard. They return what ended up being a decent starting rotation last year, and the organization is excited to see a full season out of SP Bill Sykes. Brass is hoping to return to the playoffs, a place they haven't been since the inaugural WPBL season. With this payroll and collection of stars, it could be championship or bust in Elko

Worst Case: Injuries and lack of top line starting pitching doesn't get the job done, Elko just misses playoff and remains strapped for cash

If you take Hall and BBQ out of it, the remaining 7 starters average age is **almost 34**. To acquire this core, Elko had to give up a bevy of prospects and draft picks. Fan interest is through the roof, but it will remain to be seen if Elko can survive an injury to one of their new acquisitions. SP Jay Green led the league in ERA last year, but there are skeptics around the league on whether he can be an ace on a competing team. The possibility of guys starting to decline at this age is more likely than players like to let on. A few injuries + some underperforming from the big names, and Elko may find themselves some place very familiar come playoff time, at home watching on TV. It would be even sadder this year, as the organization now lacks the top end prospect talent and long-term financial flexibility that keeps fans hopeful for next year.

Lake Tahoe Mustangs



Best Case: Tahoe uses their second championship as a foundation for a dynasty

The Mustangs have cemented themselves as one of the premiere organizations in the WPBL by becoming the first with multiple championships. Looking at their line-up and prospect pipeline, it's not hard to imagine a scenario where they win 3 or even 4 championships before some other teams sniff their first. They still are led by T.J. Ketchum, the perennial MVP candidate who is still only 29 years old. Rookie Ruben Galaviz is set to premiere at 2B and has all the tools to be impactful right away. Lake Tahoe, with so much young talent, has the makings of a perennial playoff contender.

Worst Case: Tahoe never recovers from loss of Sistrunk, young studs underperform, leaving them scrambling at trade deadline, only to miss the playoffs. Ketchum grows tired of being the only "real" vet on the team

Although Sistrunk didn't play up to his own standards during the Mustang championship run, he has been a fiery vet for Tahoe since his trade from Kennewick in 2021, and Lake Tahoe will be looking to backfill his production by committee. The clubhouse will be interesting without his presence this year, although some sources say he wasn't beloved by everyone. We reached out to the Lake Tahoe GM for a statement on Sistrunk, after he opted out of his contract and signed a massive deal with Walla Walla:

"Tim Sistrunk was an invaluable member of this organization. He brought a true championship mentality to the clubhouse daily and is one of the most competitive people I've ever met. I wouldn't call him a great role model, but when you screwed up he made sure you knew it and was great at holding teammates accountable like that. I have no doubt that without him we wouldn't have won two WPBL championships. Now it's my job to replace him, and while I can't say any one man can replace such a great player, I feel like we've got a lot of young homegrown talent coming up through the ranks who are ready to make their own mark on the league. I can't wait to see what they are able to do"

-2 Time WPBL Champion GM Hank aka The Big Dog aka Hog Daddy aka The Champ

Astoria Fighting Chinooks



Best Case: Astoria loses a lot of games in competitive fashion, sell off any decently performing vets at the deadline for more draft capital and prospects

It's no secret what Astoria wants to do this year. They want to lose and lose often. The hope is to do it competitively. This may be difficult with the bevy of trades they made (gone are the likes of DH Sicard, 3B Healy, and SP Moises Bautista to name a few). It appears Melendez might be next, as league execs have stated he is very available. Astoria hopes to stay away from too many blowouts, as their ~30ish run loss to Pocatello last year is still being talked about throughout the league. Odds are we won't be seeing top prospects LF Joram van der Wal and SP Gabe Castaneda make their debuts this year but die hard fans will be following their progress closely as they look like the future of the organization. Ideally, they excel this year and put themselves in position for a 2026 debut. By 2027, a lot of their acquired draft capital should start conveying and joining this quickly improving farm system. By 2028, the vision of this rebuild should come into focus and this team can be something every Astoria fan can get into.

Worst Case: Astoria loses games in embarrassing fashion, resulting in a broken culture

Although losing is usually part of a rebuild, there is something to be said about how you lose. If Astoria can't at least appear competitive, this could affect their ability long term to lure free agents and develop their young talent. Although the battle of the bay will be the battle of the tank this year, that may be each team's best chance for wins. Look for a major confidence hit to the youngsters if they lose the season series to Warrenton. This team owns 2026 first rounders from Elko and Pocatello, and Astoria will probably be hoping at least one of them falters this year. These 2 teams ending up with the top 3 record, Astoria management will find themselves a little disappointed.

Walla Walla Wallabies



Best Case: The Wallabies ride their outfielders to postseason success

Walla Walla has made 1 postseason appearance in 4 years, but the team they have assembled is built to make some noise. The addition of Sistrunk catapulted this outfield into "best of the league" territory. Don't be surprised to see John Wolverton turn in another MVP caliber season, especially with the sort of protection the new look Wallabies can provide him in

their line up. Although there are questions on the big personalities of Sistrunk and Wolverton and how they will coexist in the clubhouse, it's not hard to imagine them being able to coexist to the tune of 50 wins. In order for this team to meet its full potential, they need LF Gumball Washington to make the leap from nice young player to an all star, which isn't far fetched at all after a promising rookie campaign. Fans would love to see an increase in power from him, but his front office would rather him lead the league in OBP. If he can improve upon his .342 obp from last year, Sistrunk and Wolverton will provide more than enough pop behind him to score some runs.

Worst Case: Sistrunk is good, but not great, Bats aren't good enough to make up for a very average starting rotation

Tim is coming off a championship and his best season since 2021. It wouldn't be surprising to see some fall off in production after signing such a lucrative contract. The best starting pitcher on this staff is newly signed Armando Serrano. He's coming off a career year, but he is still 37 years old. Mike Finazzo looked terrible to start last year with Elko, but was a very serviceable innings eater after his trade to Walla Walla. He will need to keep that up, as this team doesn't have much flexibility in the rotation. Don't be surprised if Walla Walla makes a move for another rotation piece.

Kennewick Tri-City Atoms



Best Case: Familiar Faces lead the Atoms to Familiar Places

The Atoms have built a culture of success, as they are coming off 2 consecutive playoff appearances and 3 consecutive winning seasons. They have a strong starting rotation that has had some trouble staying healthy. If they somehow get full seasons from Jorge Ordonez and Matt Daley, Kennewick could set some records, that's how good those two can be.

Worst case: Injuries woes continue

The starting rotation gets hit with the bug again, leaving the GM scrambling to find serviceable arms at the deadline. They still have some interesting farm pieces that could be moved in this situation, but the GM will likely find themselves at a crossroads: sustained playoff success or a concerted effort to rebuild the farm. Atoms die hards would hate to see the tear down of what has been a great team who has already delivered 1 championship to the city, but all good things have to end at some point.

Pocatello Old Timers



Best case: Pocatello proves themselves as premiere organization

When Pocatello signed Fernando Jimenez, there was a collective sigh from other GMs around the league. One anonymous GM, when asked about the acquisition, said, “The rich get richer, then you die.” Pocatello dominated the regular season last year, and as they bring back the core of that strong team, along with what could be the biggest signing of the off season, it’s hard to imagine them missing the playoffs. In their Best case, Pocatello lives up to their expectations, King Kong takes the league captive, and they join the Mustangs as two time champions

Worst case: King Kong is only average, are only contenders, not title favorites

In this scenario, the king kong signing looks similar to the Lake Tahoe/Victor Patterson signing of the previous season. Big money to a newcomer who doesn’t quite live up to expectations. They gave up a first rounder for Moises Batista. Everyone knows his best days are behind him, but can he be a solid rotation piece come playoff time? Many are skeptical, and there are stories coming from the Pocatello team that his quickness to display his mangled hand has rubbed people the wrong way. It’s not crazy to think MVP/Face of the league Chris Ponder regresses a tad after a historically monster year. This team has a decent farm that it could leverage around the trade deadline to shore up any holes, but we will have to see if that’s the way management wants to go.

Warrenton Osprey



Best Case: Win the battle of the bay with a surprisingly competent team

Warrenton has a collection of guys who could surprise on any given night. They no longer have the top end talent they used to, but they won’t be throwing out just a random assortment of guys either. IF Matt Moore, DH Kyle Kawa, and C Jesse Hammond have shown the ability to contribute at the major league level. They have young guys set to play at many pivotal positions. If guys like CF Frog Claxton, LF Tony Buanoroti are going to be the answer long term isn’t guaranteed, but they have the tools to emerge as serviceable stop gaps at the least. In their best case, this collection of talent becomes greater than the sum of their parts, capturing the heart of the city and building a culture that will serve them well entering the post

Watts/Hamby/Mac era. This could be huge as they have some top level talent who could prove ready to debut full time as soon as this year, such as young stud arm Manny Jamboree.

Worst case: Spare parts play like spare parts, clubhouse culture and fan interest suffer

Fans have no interest in a team who's stars have all relocated. Vets show up to collect a paycheck, paying no mind to the young guys and the mentoring they need. The whole organization becomes 'lackadaisical', just punting the season as young guys mature. Debuts of some minor leaguers are delayed because brass doesn't want to sully them with the losing atmosphere up top.

Crescent City Kodiaks



Best Case: Chris Mistretta wins batting title while Farelo and Roux become one of the top SP duos in the league

While the first part might be more realistic than the first, both of these things happening would vault CCK into a status they haven't been in in a while, a contender. They added 1B Victor Verver via trade, who provides a big upgrade at the position. If he replicates or even improves upon his production from last year, he makes a ton of sense at the top of their order. Mark Poole, with his devastating fastball/curveball combo, should be making another run at WPBL reliever of the year while he ends up top 3 in saves. Emilio Gonzalez is a young bullpen eye to keep an eye on as well. He throws GAS (clocked an unofficial 103mph in a Dominican league game a few years ago) and has the stuff to become one of the best flamethrowers in the league.

Worst Case: Crescent City joins the hamster wheel of mediocrity

Crescent City has a season that is best classified as, "meh." Hovers around .500, has some moments throughout the season, but ends up as sort of the best of the bad teams (think Elko last year). Hopefully some of their prospects start to emerge into budding stars (keep a close eye on Choo Baloo, already a fan favorite for the kids in Eureka due to his awesome name). If not, they will be going back to the draft looking for their next big, face of the franchise type player.

Victoria Geese



Best Case: Joey Hoffman gets the elusive MVP

3 platinum sticks, 2 great gloves, but still no MVP. Hoffman, as part of the expansion, only has 3 years of WPBL service, but his impact can not be overstated. When asked about MVP, Hoffman loves to talk about how that isn't what drives him, and how he just wants to win. He says all the right things, but there is an energy coming from him that he is pushing himself to the limit and wants to be recognized as the best player in the game. Is it possible for a CF who hit for an OPS of 1.064 and 20 homers last year to get better? Most pundits will say no, but that is what Hoffman might need to do to beat out the likes of Ponder and Wolverton. One thing we know, as Hoffman goes, so does Victoria. Keep an eye on young catcher Juan Lopez. A free agent signing seemingly out of nowhere, he dominated behind the dish in the Hawaiian league and could be more major league ready than anyone could have guessed.

Worst Case: Solid pitching still eludes the Geese

The facts are this, Victoria has always been able to barrel the ball. Their issue is their pitching often leaves much to be desired. As many teams added talent this year, Victoria found themselves tied up financially, and couldn't make too many moves to address one of their biggest weaknesses. They proved they can still make the playoffs off their otherworldly offense, but is this the year the lack of pitching catches up to them? They still have the talent to win the Pacific conference, but it looks like it won't be a cake walk with the improvements of CCK and Bandon.

Bandon Bung Hammers



Best Case: Bung Hammers Return to Relevancy

Bandon management is tired of missing the playoffs, and they came into the off season ready to address that. With Victoria being the lone representative in the WPBL playoffs from the pacific division, they must feel the door could be open for not only a playoff appearance, but a division Championship. They have the guns to make a run for it now. New comers 3B Geoff Healy, RP Kazumasa Watanabe, and SS JJ Smith are all plus players at their position that already put Bandon in the conversation of being a playoff team. Ultimately though, they solidified those plans by resigning the big swinging Alejandro Castillo. Although his age is up

there(along with his very expensive price point), he provides a steadying and familiar presence to members of the organization and fans alike. Many people are excited to see the type of numbers he could put up with some more serviceable bats around him. We haven't even touched on the starting rotation, which added Luis Diaz to an already solid core of Jim Thorp, Mario Gutierrez, 2-way sensation Colby Stillman, and Danny Jimenez. If Stillman gets some ABs this season will be an interesting follow.

Worst Case: Castillo production doesn't match contract, hamstringing Bandon future moving forward

To put it simply, Castillo makes a TON of money. If he is able to maintain his production (~20 homers, .800+ OPS, etc.) to go along with his ability to sell jerseys, Bandon will have no problem paying his price tag. If he regresses at all, he lacks the leadership and flexibility to make up for the production with leadership skills. It will be hard for any contending team to build a winner with an overpaid, 34-year-old, 900k a year LF. He has MVP potential, but Bandon will be very dependent on his slugging in the coming years.

2025 Official Preseason Predictions

Mainland Division

Team	Projected Record	2024 Record
Pocatello Old Timers	51-30	58-23
Elko Truckers	48-33	38-43
Lake Tahoe Mustangs	42-40	46-35
Kennewick Tri-City Atoms	41-41	44-37
Walla Walla Wallabies	39-43	30-51

Coastal Division

Team	Projected Record	2024 Record
Victoria Geese	45-36	54-27
Bandon Bung Hammers	43-39	35-46
Crescent City Kodiaks	39-43	37-44
Warrenton Osprey	30-52	28-53
Astoria Fighting Chinooks	25-57	35-46

Award Projections

Most Valuable Player - CF Joey Hoffmann - Victoria Geese

Many will say Chris Ponder should belong here as the undisputed best player in the league. But each year Joey Hoffman performs some incredible feats of his own in the Coastal Division, and this could finally be the year that he takes home some metal after finishing in the Top 5 of MVP voting each of his first 3 seasons. A 5-tool superstar, Hoffmann has more WAR than any other play in the past 5 seasons. With 20 home runs as well in 2024, it seems that his true power is finally peaking as well. Now is Hoffman's chance to show that there are other players in this league just as good as Ponder.

Pitcher of the Year - SP Bryan Daniels - Pocatello Old Timers

The WPBL is full of many highly talented pitchers who are all capable of winning this award, but none are more consistent than Daniels, making it very hard to pick against him. Daniels has finished in the top 3 in Pitcher of the Year voting the past 3 seasons, winning the award twice. He currently sits as the WPBL all-time leader in ERA, FIP, WAR, Wins, WHIP, and K%. The 29-year-old continues to put up the type of numbers you expect from the ace of the most winning WPBL organization. Over a typical season of 15 to 16 starts that most starting pitchers see, anyone could put together an incredible run to steal the award from Daniels. But more than likely Bryan Daniels will continue to do what he has always done and continue to fill up his trophy case at the end of the season.

Rookie of the Year - 2B Reuben Galaviz - Lake Tahoe Mustangs

Originally a scouting discovery in the Pocatello system, Galaviz was included in a trade for Lake Tahoe reliever Juan Rodriguez at the 2022 trade deadline. At the time he was only 18 years old, and more of a wild card prospect than anything else. He has flourished in his time since joining the Mustang organization, hitting above .350 in stops at AA Breckenridge and AAA Folsom. With long time Mustang second baseman Jake Dickinson leaving during free agency, Galaviz now steps into the starting role only 3 days after his 21st birthday. With elite speed and contact ability, “Long Haul” as his teammates call him, should make an immediate impact to the team.

Reliever of the Year - CL Alejandro Ferrer - Elko Truckers

The Reliever of the Year award is one of the most team dependent awards there is. Voters have shown over the past 4 years that they value saves as the most valuable statistic, and if your team can't get a lead late into games, then most closers won't have the chance to put up the elite save numbers that voters expect. In the inaugural 2021 season where Elko ran the league, Ferrer was a force to be reckoned with, leading the lead in saves while Elko put up a season to remember. Since then, while his rate statistics have remained elite, his save numbers have dwindled. This year, with Elko once again retooled and looking to make a run, expect Ferrer to once again lead the league in saves and compete for this award once again.

Playoffs Predictions



PROJECTED 2025 WPBL CHAMPION



2025 Preseason All-WPBL Team



Terminal Velocity

The Rise and Fall of Pocatello's Only Night Club

Contributed by Squirt Davis - Tri-City Tribune

Club Velocity has been closed for over a year, but the effects of a seemingly harmless business venture between friends is still felt around Idaho, the league and many homes across America. Founded by WPBL Old Timers Joaquin Lopez and Rick Saxton, Pocatello's only night entertainment option (besides the town's many strip clubs) experienced meteoric success. In just a few months of its opening, Single Farmers Weekly named Velocity "Southern Idaho's hottest club owned by current baseball players", an award that is still proudly displayed on the glass pane of the abandoned facade in downtown Pocatello.



Now closed, Club Velocity has become a stain on Downtown Pocatello's reputation.

Such accolades didn't go unnoticed, with names such Billy McFarland (Fyre fest founder) and Martin Shkreli (certified scumbag) being tied at some point to investment and expansion negotiations. Unfortunately, and as the saying goes in Pocatello, success is like the Old-Timers season. And while Velocity was breaking regular season records, it didn't take long for them to get dusted in the playoffs. From underage drinking to bar fights, the club racked up a sizable pile of records in the town's modest Police department. But despite having its liquor license revoked 6 times in one year, the real downfall began when police were called at 12:30am to resolve an all-out brawl between several players from both the Old-Timers and the Atoms organizations.

Atoms GM Konrad Hess touched on the incident in an episode of "Inside the WPBL Podcast" stating:

"Yes, I was disgusted. We had just won an exciting game against them, and I decided to take the boys to celebrate somewhere that wasn't a strip club, so options were slim ... We didn't even

notice some of the Old-Timer players were there until Kyle [Pocatello Catcher Kyle Kulzer] started yelling at Mitch [Kennewick second baseman Mitch Jones] and within seconds several other players joined in and bottles started flying...So funny story, and I don't think some of the leaked videos showed that, but Three Fingers and Stocky were in the middle of the brawl (Referring to ex-atoms players Sandy Gonzales and Micah Mints) and they were actually punching Kyle in the back, so you can tell what kind of clubhouse they run there".



Micah Mints rears back to punch a Kennewick player while teammate Dave Rhines attempts to intervene

Pocatello's GM Brandon Carroll had this to share when asked for comments on the incident:

"We hold our players to a high standard and are not happy with the events that took place that night...Our internal review of the incident found that the Tri-City players were the primary instigators...When Garrett Stevens joined the team mid-season, he told our team that Tri-City players went to Club Velocity that night to fuck shit up."

A real snitch-move if you ask me. Surprisingly it took another lesser-known incident involving a WPBL team, for the league and commissioner Bo Bunyan to finally take notice of the Velocity's controversial business. In an exclusive interview with the Tri-City Tribune Two-Time WPBL Champion GM Hank aka The Big Dog aka Hog Daddy aka The Champ, shared some disturbing details of a potential drink spiking situation that occurred at the club:

"Yes, some of our players stopped by Club Velocity during a road trip to Pocatello after being invited by some of the Old Timers Players. While most players had a good casual time, Team Captain Marshall DeCamp suddenly showed signs of extreme intoxication. For some players this would not be abnormal, but for DeCamp this is very odd and definitely seems to be evidence

of foul play. I only say this because Marshall has been sober for 6 years and had only been ordering Diet Coke all night. That's all I have to say”.

It is worth mentioning DeCamp was 23 at the time of the incident, which would have put him on a sober streak since being 17 years old. The tribune has decided to respect DeCamp’s privacy and not to pursue the story of the stark reality of those growing up in his hometown of Decatur, Illinois.

Anonymous sources within the Old-Timers organization have confirmed the incident was the last straw for the league, describing very heated phone calls between Commissioner Bunyan and Pocatello’s GM Brandon, in which he could be heard saying “You can’t take Velocity away from us. I own this damn town”. The Tri-City Tribune reached out to the league and commissioner Bunyan for comments on its knowledge of the incident, the use of the club by the Old-Timers to weaken opponents, and its role in the club’s demise:

“Due to ongoing legal matters with the WPBL Players Association, his office is not able to provide a comment on this subject”.

While the extent of the league’s involvement in the club’s closing is unclear, what is clear is that club Velocity became a liability to the town of Pocatello and the team.

... “As for Club Velocity itself, initially we were proud of Joaquin and Rick investing in the community and opening up a business in Pocatello. We also thought it could be a great place for players to unwind during a long and exhausting season. It became a distraction and a liability and was in the best interest of Lopez, Saxton, and the team as a whole to shut it down for good.” - Brandon Carroll, Pocatello’s GM

In a fitting ending, Velocity’s “Going away party with Ludachrist”, a Ludacris look alike, featured a total of 15 people, no WPBL Players, and 5 police appearances. It is unclear as to what the future holds for the town of Pocatello, but for now parents across Idaho and GMs across the league can breathe a sigh of relief knowing Velocity has finally come to a halt.

Editorial Notes: The Tribune reached out to Pocatello native and WPBL insider Buster Spork to contribute on this article. When asked about Lopez, Saxton, and Club Velocity, he had this to say: “Who?”

Strange Faces, New Places

Contributed by Buster Spork - The Pocatello Observer

Alright so you saw the list of familiar faces in new places, but what about the unknown? The WPBL has had some fresh faces showing up from other independent leagues, newcomers arriving from out of the country, and a couple big trades involving prospects that you don't know yet but will soon enough. Let's take a look at the top 5.

5. Manny Jamboree

Manny Jamboree is the #8 prospect in the league and is poised to become a WPBL star pitcher. The Osprey acquired him when trading away Watts and Johansson, a big pick-up in the prospect arms race between Warrenton and Astoria.

4. Yen-Nien An

2B Yen-Nien An is heading to the WPBL at the age of 33 from Taiwan. He is extremely versatile and can play many positions, looking to make an immediate impact for the Elko Truckers who chose to invest in him during their championship push.

3. Luis Diaz

Luis Diaz, 26-year-old SP, went through the formal process of leaving his East Coast independent league to transfer to the WPBL. Bandon immediately pursued Diaz and they came to an agreement relatively quickly. They're very optimistic about what he can add to their starting rotation.

2. Fernando Jimenez

King Kong is coming to the WPBL, the Cuban SS immediately became a highly sought-after free agent who is ready to make a name for himself right away. At 30 years old, he has had much success in the Caribbean leagues, but he is ready to test himself as the new starting SS for the Pocatello Old-Timers.

1. Joram Van Der Wal

He's currently the #6 overall prospect but he remains the most well-known and scrutinized prospect in the league. "Crazy Legs" came into the minor leagues at the age of 16 as the #1 overall prospect and has moved through multiple franchises over the past 4 years. After starting in the Pocatello system, he was traded to Bandon and joined their minor leagues. He was traded to Astoria as part of the Healy/Gutierrez deal, and you have to imagine this is where he stays. Between the prospects and picks that Astoria has accrued, one can't help but think he'll find success with the young core that is coming up for the Chinooks.