



2031
MEDIA GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 - WPBL BY THE NUMBERS**
- 4 - A DECADE TO REMEMBER**
- 9 - CLIQUES**
- 17 - LIGHTS, CAMERA, PLAY BALL**
- 24 - BEST OF THE BEST**
- 25 - PEAKS AND VALLEYS**
- 31 - UNBREAKABLE**
- 36 - TURN BACK THE CLOCK**
- 41 - TOP 10 THINGS YOU'LL NEVER HEAR IN THE WPBL**
- 42 - 2031 SEASON PREDICTIONS**

WPBL - BY THE NUMBERS

10 Year League Stats

4379 Games Played
78708.1 Innings Played
6247 Home Runs
70457 Strikeouts
35417 Runs
3921 Stolen Bases
76169 Hits
2606 Saves
800 Blown Saves
5 Unique Champions
3 Multi-Time Champions

A DECADE TO REMEMBER

The Top 10 Moments That Defined The WPBL's First Decade

1. Danny Schumacher Makes History

It's August 26, 2028, and the Mustangs and Old Timers are in a WPBL Championship battle. Pocatello has taken a 3-1 series lead and is looking to win their 4th championship, and their 3rd in four seasons. One more win would cement them firmly as the WPBL's premier franchise, with two more championships than any other team. As the Mustangs sat in the locker room after the game 4 loss, the team didn't feel out of it yet, but knew they needed a big statement in game 5 to set the tone for the rest of the series. With Danny Schumacher on the mound in game 5, they didn't just make a statement, they made history.

Danny Schumacher became the first WPBL pitcher to ever throw a no-hitter, and he did so with an incredible perfect game on the league's biggest stage. Schumacher shut down the league's greatest offense over 9 innings while striking out 8 and not allowing a single man to touch first base. The incredible individual effort completely turned the series around, and even though they still trailed 3-2, the momentum was completely in Lake Tahoe's favor. They went on to easily win the next two games and secure their 3rd WPBL Championship. It was a night that had everything you want in a baseball league. High stakes and elite players making big time plays on the biggest stage. It became a pivotal moment in WPBL history as it signaled the beginning of the end for Pocatello's dynasty while providing the league a historic moment to always remember.

2. Elko Combined No Hitter

For some reason, the greatest WPBL pitching performances always come in the playoffs. During the first ever WPBL playoffs in 2021,

Moisest Batista capped off an incredible season with an even better postseason. His signature moment came in game 6 of the division series against Pocatello. Elko had the chance to win the series with a strong performance and put Batista on the mound. Batista was untouchable, throwing 8.1 hitless innings. As his pitch count grew, the manager made the right choice to pull his ace and save his arm for the championship. Closer Alejandro Ferrer came in, striking out the final two batters to seal the win, the no hitter, and the series.

The combined no-hitter was the defining moment of the first season and set the tone for the WPBL. This is a league that could produce great baseball and historic moments for all its fans to enjoy.

3. Ponder and Patterson Triple Crowns

Each MVP and Pitcher of the Year has had a memorable season that is worthy of the record books. But two in particular went above and beyond and have found themselves a place in WPBL lore. Outfielder Chris Ponder and pitcher Victor "Push Pop" Patterson dominated the middle years of the 2020's. Ponder won the league's first Triple Crown in 2024 with the best offense season the league has seen. He led the WPBL with a .360 batting average, 24 home runs, and 98 RBI. He set the WPBL record for total bases and RBIs that still stand today, and compiled over 6 WAR. The following season, highly touted independent free agent Victor Patterson bounced back from a disappointing rookie season to post a 1.66 ERA, 10 wins, and 122 strikeouts to win the WPBL's first triple crown. While many of his numbers have been surpassed since, at the time he set many WPBL single season records. Two players put up historic runs in back to back seasons and no pitcher or hitter has been able to repeat it since.

4. David Love Back to Back to Back Walk Off Home Runs

When most fans think of rare baseball moments they will think of perfect games, 4 home run games, and immaculate innings. But in late May 2022, Walla Walla slugger provided a series of historic moments that has never before been recorded in any professional baseball league. Walla Walla was facing off against Lake Tahoe in an early season series. Both teams were middle of the road and looking to get their seasons off to

strong starts, and it led to some highly competitive games. On May 29 the two teams were locked in a 3-3 tie until the 13th inning when David Love hit a walk-off solo home run to take game 1. Turn ahead the clock 24 hours and once again the two teams were tied 3-3 and David Love steps to the plate. One swing later and he had done it again, a solo walk off homer to win the game for Walla Walla. Finally, Tuesday night rolled around and the game once again went to extra innings. It's tied 4-4 when none other than David Love comes up to bat. At that time most Mustang fans signed with relief, what are the chances that one man can beat them three nights in a row? Instead, the Lake Tahoe fans should have started walking to their cars as Love cranked out his 3rd walk off solo home run in 3 games. 3 straight walk off home runs had never been recorded in any MLB, MILB, or WPBL series ever, and is an unforgettable series in the WPBL.

5. Kennewick 59 Win Season

The Atom's have always been one of the more respectable teams in the league. They're a team known for winning the right way and always putting a competitive product out on the field. After a disappointing 2025 saw Kennewick miss the playoffs for the first time in 3 seasons, many began to expect that the team was on a downswing. But the Atoms showed up the next season rejuvenated and motivated. They put together the most impressive regular season run in the league, finishing with a .728 winning percentage and only one win of the 60 mark. The team was mostly unchanged from the season prior, but they just came together to play good, solid baseball. The team was definitely led by their pitching, where the team ERA of 2.43 is a record that still stands today. While the team fell short in the playoffs and didn't reach their ultimate goal, watching them create history in the 2026 regular season was special and will be hard to beat in the future.

6. 2023 Home Run Race

Chicks dig the long ball, and that's no different in the WPBL. No leaderboard is as closely watched as the home run charts. The league has seen its fair share of sluggers, with 12 players currently sitting in the triple digits for their careers. By far the most exciting home run race was

the 2023 season, and records still stand from it. As the season came into the home stretch it was clear there were 3 main contenders, John Wolverton (Walla Walla), Alejandro Castillo (Bandon), and Andy Wilkerson (Victoria). Each were tied in the low 20's in July and all were playing at a great pace. Slowly Wolverton pulled away while Wilkerson and Castillo slowed down until the final day of the season. Wilkerson sat at 24 home runs, Castillo at 26, and Wolverton at 29. John Wolverton had set a new WPBL record for home runs in a season and it was a healthy bit greater than anyone else had come close to. But Castillo still had one more game to play and he made it count. The Bandon slugger hit 3 home runs on the final day of the season to tie Wolverton's record. Both have shared the record since, as no other player has even been able to hit 25 home runs in a season, much less break the 30 home run mark..

7. Astoria 2023 Miracle Season

Books could be written about the first decade of Chinooks baseball. For a team that has never been known for success, their history is one of the most interesting in the league. The greatest time for Astoria was no doubt the summer of 2023. Jimmy Johnson took over as the new Astoria GM early in the season, and he was dismayed with what he saw. He immediately began a tear down effort to salvage what he could and hoped to begin with a fresh page the next year. But instead the players surprised him. With a few changes that helped clean up the clubhouse attitude, the Astoria players began playing as a team instead of playing as 9 individuals. The team pushed ahead and found themselves winning 49 games and the Coastal Division Title. It was an incredible feat for a team that had never before even sniffed a winning record. The future was bright under GM Johnson and although things haven't worked out the way he would have hoped yet, the magic of '23 still remains as both the players and staff work to get back to that.

8. Gillette Upsets the Old Timers

When the league expanded to 12 teams in 2026, no one expected much of the newcomers to the league. Most figured they would struggle for a few seasons to build a competitive team, and that any small accomplishment should be celebrated. Gillette disagreed with that

mindset though, and went out looking to compete immediately. Although their regular season record was very modest at 38-44, they were helped by the new expanded playoff format and defeated Walla Walla in a play-in game to capture the final wild card position in the Mainland Division. Their reward? Facing off against perennial powerhouse Pocatello in the Wildcard Series. The Pocatello players were confident headed into the series, and knew this would be a short four games that were just a roadblock before facing a real playoff team. Instead Gillette pulled off the greatest upset in WPBL history. The Bison took the Old Timers to 7 games before finishing them off. Gillette would get swept in the next series against eventual champion Elko, but it was a strong initial showing by the expansion team that catapulted them to early success, as they became the first expansion team to win a championship in 2029.

9. Batista's Lawn Care Mishap

What else can be written that hasn't already been said? The #1 overall pick in the inaugural draft, pitcher of the year winner, and quite possibly the best pure talent in the WPBL had his career completely altered when a John Deere lawn mower sliced off two fingers on his throwing hand. Batista was still able to put together a respectable career thankfully, but he was never the same as that first magical season. Quite possibly the entire trajectory of the WPBL was changed on that one afternoon, thanks to a general lack of respect for lawn mower safety.

10. Bryan Daniel 15K Game

Everyone loves to see the offensive players have the big games, like when a slugger hits 3 home runs. But perhaps even rarer and more difficult is for a pitcher to completely shut down an opposing lineup and bring them to their knees. Bryan Daniels did so in 2024, when he struck out 15 batters on the opposing Bandon team in 8 innings. Daniels' effort is a WPBL record and apart from the no hitters, is perhaps the greatest single game performance in the WPBL.

CLIQUE

Where Each WPBL Stands Heading Into 2031

Main Contenders

Elko Truckers

The reigning champions missed out on the big prize of the offseason, OF Koyanagi, but were busy in the wake with the available money. They addressed one of their main weaknesses last year(10th in bullpen ERA) by signing the aging but notable high leverage reliever, Mason Donaldson. They have yet to re-sign lead off man Mike Stefonovich, but he is the only starter in the lineup they are at risk of losing. They may look internally to replace him, and sources say CF Lucas Bone Jr could be pegged as their new leadoff man.

Player to Watch: 3B Jeff Pistone

The young star missed some major time last year, causing him to lose out on some accolades he could have been in line for. When he was healthy, he continued his torrid pace to start his career, and the Trucker playoff run solidified him as one of the premiere young players in the league. Elko knows this, and extended him in the offseason. Elko has never had an MVP, and people in the organization and within Jeff's camp are optimistic he can bring one home in the next couple years.

Victoria Geese

The champion runner-ups were busy in the offseason. Koyanagi was obviously the big signing, and has people in Canada and Japan excited for the Geese this upcoming season. Their line up top to bottom could be the best in the league. Their starting pitching doesn't have an ace by most standards, but newcomer Matt Dutton will join Gustavo Pacheco as the head of a decent starting rotation. The bullpen remains elite, and will make them very tough to beat in close games.

Player to Watch: 1B Logan Kellenberger

New outfielder Masakatsu Koyanagi seems like the easy answer here, but Kellenberger is a former first round pick coming off an amazing rookie season, even though he wasn't even the best rookie on his own team last season. With that said, he is a home grown talent, and hit 13 home runs last year in 66 games. He's a local fan favorite already, and if he can build on last year's success, could find himself known to every WPBL fan.

Walla Walla Farmers

It was a busy offseason for Walla Walla, who went through one of the highest roster turnovers in the off season. They did do a good job filling in for lost players:

Lost RF Tim Sistrunk to FA; signed RF Marcos Ortiz

Lost SP Esteban Monsiváis to retirement; signed Gustavo Cortes

Lost RP John Bumiller; Signed Adam Tolminson and Tony Merced.

All were savvy moves for a team that tied for the best record in the league last year and only missed out on a first round bye on a technicality of a tie breaker. Even with the solid moves, Walla Walla has a great core that starts with 2 time MVP Gumball Washington and newly minted Pitcher of the year, Juan Hinojosa. These two young guns are itching for a chance to accomplish the only thing they haven't in their young careers, a championship.

Player to Watch: RF Marcos Ortiz

The newcomer and former rookie of the year finds himself with a new long term home, signing an 8 year deal. His debut season remains his best in the WPBL, but he is a very good player and looks to bring some championship experience to a young team without much of it. I'm sure many Walla Walla fans will compare him to Sistrunk, which seems incredibly unfair. Ortiz is a bit younger and more compatible with the timeline of the great young core, and if he can build on his career high 14 home runs from last season, it will make it much easier for Farmer fans to accept Sistrunk's departure.

A Move Away

Yakima Hops

It's hard to not label a team as a contender when they're starting rotation is comprised of Victor Patterson, Danny Schumacher, Gregg Herfurth, and Javier de Santiago. This is mainly due to the loss of T.J. Ketchum, who many would say was the heart and soul of the Hops since the start of the WPBL. Their lineup isn't terrible by any metric, but they lost one of the top bats in the league, and no real answer to replace him. If they do find themselves able to produce without him, they will be hard pressed without his leadership. A midseason trade for a big bat could be the answer and push them into a familiar place for the franchise, a championship contender. Yakima has shown time and time again .they can compete in the playoffs

Player to Watch - RF Bonifazio Lopez

After a down year in 2029, the move from Tahoe to Yakima served Bonifazio well, when he was healthy. In only 37 games, he turned in 1.7 WAR and the .816 OPS would have been a career high. Throughout his career, Lopez has been on the good side of injuries, and folks in the front office are hopeful he can match the production from last season. For Yakima to compete for another division title, they will need Lopez at this best.

Pocatello Old-Timers

The Old-Timers missed the playoffs for the first time in their history last year, and with no money available, are going to be forced to run back essentially the same roster this year. This actually might not be a bad thing. Chris Ponder wasn't eligible for the MVP due to some rules on games played, but there's a good chance he would have won the award if those rules didn't exist. There is still talent up and down this roster, but is a full season of Chris Ponder enough to vault this team back to the top of the WPBL mountain? I tend to think so, but the Pocatello organization seems a little antsy after last season's misfortune. I wouldn't be surprised to see some moves from them at the deadline to cement them as one of the top teams going into the playoffs. They have a track record of success, and last year seemed much more of a fluke than an indication of the future.

Player to Watch - LF Chris Ponder

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the WPBL, it's hard not to take a second and just fully appreciate Chris Ponder and his ascension to super stardom. When the league started, there were plenty of great ball players who came in mid career and made instant impacts. There have also been quite a few draft picks we've seen grow into great players, but Ponder, who was the ripe age of 24, represents someone who was just about to enter his prime as the league started. What we have seen is a decade of Ponder just dominating year in and year out. Pocatello fans love him, all other fans love to hate him, but you'll be hard pressed to meet anyone who doesn't respect him. As he enters his age 34 year, I doubt there will be any downtick in production and that he will be a top flight player even late in his career, but time goes by faster than we think. In another decade when we look back on Ponder and reminisce, we'll see him for what he is: a true pioneer and surefire, first ballot hall of famer.

Astoria Fighting Chinooks

At this point, you have to feel for Astoria a little. As an organization, it feels like they have done everything right, yet they have seen their playoff drought reach 7 years despite back to back winning seasons. I think this is the year they break through, as they were in the playoff hunt last year until the bitter end, even with their generational talent Joram van der Wal only playing 38 games. Their starting rotation remains formidable, even if not great, and John Bumiller is a nice addition to their pen. It's starting to feel like this HAS to be the year they break through, and I think they'll be major buyers at the deadline in an effort to capture some postseason success.

Player to Watch - SP Gabe Casteneda

Gabe can be a polarizing player. He's not the most beloved teammate, but he's settled in a bit since his return to Astoria , with back to back seasons of over 100 strikeouts. He's been good, but not necessarily the front of rotation Ace he was projected to be early in his career. In a contract year, will he prove himself to be the top flight talent he has flashed at times? Will Astoria see that in him and extend him, or will he test the open market(one that tends to pay good starting pitchers very well)?

Might Surprise Ya

Crescent City Kodiaks

Crescent City brought back MVP Chris Mistretta after a bit of contract posturing, but both parties have put that behind them and hope to make the playoffs again this year. The Kodiaks took the league by storm for a stretch last year, where they quickly turned their season around after a slow start. They are hoping they don't dig themselves a hole that big this time around, and hope to make the postseason in back to back years for the first time.

Player to watch: RF Jaden Richardson

One day, when Jaden Richardson decides to retire, we will all look in awe of what he did at the tail end of his career. As he enters his age 40 season, can he keep producing like he has? At this rate, he may not retire until 50. Entering the last year of his contract, will he decide to retire after? It's hard to see that happening if he replicates last season's success, where he won the platinum stick award at RF. You might think he's only a bat, but he played 75 games at RF last season, where he was still an average outfielder. CCK are hoping their high producing, aging outfielders, Richardson and Mistretta can lead them back to the playoffs.

Gillette Bison

It feels wrong to put Gillette in this group, as all they seem to do is surprise all the pundits year in and year out. I almost put them in a higher tier, but it seems Gillette does best anyways when they are discounted. Although they snuck in with a losing record, they have made the playoffs in 3 out of 5 seasons, and making it this year would make it 3 in a row. They have a lot of continuity in their roster, and adding a solid bullpen arm like former reliever of the year Mark Poole is never a bad thing, even if his best days are behind him. They don't have that top level, MVP-like talent, but that hasn't stopped them before. There is something happening in Gillette that allows them to pull the best out of all their players.

Player To Watch: LF Magnus Barnhouse

The young outfielder is set to start in his debut season, and some of the more die hard fans couldn't be more excited. The 2028 third round pick absolutely tore AAA up last year, hitting for a .969 OPS. Magnus is the type of player that fits the Gillette DNA to a tee, a little under the radar, but just continues to contribute. Him and Brian McNary are going to make a good, young, fun to watch duo out in Wyoming.

Kennewick Tri-City Atoms

After a great 4 year run from 2026-2029(190-135) where they made the playoffs every year, Kennewick had a down year last year and missed the playoffs. Kennewick is looking forward to pairing new CF Tim Sistrunk with a healthy John Wolverton(only played 35 games last season), to revitalize the offense. I think if those two stay healthy, the offense will be good, but the question marks start to come up when you look at the rotation. It remains to be seen if they can win consistently when SP Taylor Simkins isn't on the mound. You have to think that if that remains an issue, they will try to address it mid-season and do their best to return the organization to championship glory.

Player to Watch: RF John Wolverton

Having both Wolverton and Ponder out for extended time last season just wasn't good for the entire league. Wolverton, a 3 time MVP, is a wonder to watch every time he is on the field. If he can capture his MVP form, he has a good chance to jolt the organization to make the necessary win now moves for a title run, which remains pretty much the only thing he hasn't accomplished yet, a WPBL championship.

Future is Bright

Great Falls Black Eagles

Great Falls has sort of just been around since the start of the league, and have a sustained lack of success to show for it(1 playoff appearance in 10 seasons). To be fair, under new management, the Black Eagles seem to at least have some vision and guidance and some semblance of a plan. They locked down the LF Aaron Jury to a very reasonable long term deal, and brought in 36 year old LF T.J. Ketchum on a low risk, 1 year deal to serve as a great mentor to their young star. People within the

organization are really happy with their last draft, and 24 year old SP J.J Brown looks like he could be the front of the rotation starter every team needs. It doesn't seem like they have enough to compete right now, but the on field product should at least be respectable until reinforcements show up in the form of #2 prospect Jesse Vander Maas(ETA 2034) and #3 prospect Jayden Anderson(ETA 2033).

Player to Watch: SP Matt Hall

I highlighted their two young stars above, but label Matt Hall because he is someone who carries a lot of value as an acceptable SP on a very reasonable contract. If he gets off to a strong start to the season, I wouldn't be surprised to see Hall traded to bolster what is already a scary strong farm system.

Coeur D'Alene Striking Miners

The Miners have some interesting pieces in their farm system, but it's common knowledge at this point they are using their major league team as a way to build their farm system a bit more. As an expansion team, they're behind the ball a little bit, but I think if they can start shipping out the right veterans for the right returns, they can strengthen their system to be in the top half of the league. They have a lot of players that other teams will covet, especially in their bullpen. With that said, this year nobody expects the Miners to compete for a playoff spot, but young players like 1B Ricardo Bulge and RP Jim Janak should at least keep the more dedicated fans interested.

Player to Watch: CF Jon Seely (PROSPECT)

Just drafted with the 4th overall pick, Seely instantly becomes the crown jewel of the CDA farm system. Although it will be quite some time until we see him at the majors level, his level of talent will be having fans going crazy on youtube highlight videos posted by the minor league affiliates. The big, lanky 6'5" is also a menace on the base paths, and looks like he has the makeup of a future superstar.

Tear it Down

Bandon Barons

The Barons title contention window slammed shut last season, with the fanbase enduring heartbreak after heartbreak. Their 4 year playoff run (2025-2029) had a little bit of everything except championship success. Now, after a very down year, it seems like they are looking a rebuild in the face, starting with a tear down. Surprisingly, their farm system is in a good place, and they have some reasonable contracts they can move at the major level to accelerate the rebuild. They have a long list of guys on expiring contracts that can contribute to winning on the right team, and hopefully they can parlay that into long term success

Player to watch: SP/1B Colby Stillman

Stillman is interesting in that he is the best(only?) two way player in the league, but he has had issues getting both sides of his game working at the same time.

2028: .807 OPS, 5.28 ERA

2029: .888 OPS, 2.87 ERA

2030: .698 OPS, 4.13 ERA

Besides 2029, his career has been inconsistent, although he remains a valuable contributor. At age 29, will Bandon make him a part of their long term plan, or flip him for what would be a very considerable haul(he remains a 1 of 1 in the WPBL). This will be very interesting to see play out.

Lights, Camera, Play Ball

A Squirt Davis Special

As a devoted cinephile and avid baseball enthusiast, I often imagine the perfect blend of America's favorite sport and the captivating world of cinema. You know how sports announcers say, "You couldn't write this any better"? Well, it got me thinking – what if each baseball team were a movie? Join me as we explore the cinematic identities of these baseball teams, and reveal the movies and movie franchises that encapsulate each team's spirit and story on the Hollywood stage.

Pocatello Old-Timers: Star Wars

Despite the city of Pocatello looking like Tatooine, we can all agree that the parallel between the Pocatello Old-Timers and the iconic Star Wars franchise is inevitable considering their shared success and enduring legacy.



Both entities boast a massive following and the well-deserved recognition of being among the greatest in their respective realms. Pocatello has the remarkable record of making the playoffs nine out of ten times, with three championships, and Star Wars is Star Wars.

The parallels also persist as both franchises battle with recent performance and financial challenges. The reception of recent movies has been notably mixed, if not outright negative, which compounded by multiple spin-offs led Disney to reassess its investment. Similarly, the Old-Timers faced an unprecedented setback by missing the playoffs for the first time in their history, which summed with

its financial struggles has some questioning if this is finally it for the Evil Empire.

Kennewick Tri-City Atoms: Fast & Furious

The parallels between the Kennewick Tri-City Atoms and the Fast & Furious Franchise are marked by initial triumphs and recognition followed by mediocre existence.

In similar fashion on how Fast & Furious emerged as one of the most popular and celebrated film franchises of the early 2000s. The Atoms showcased early success by securing a WPBL championship in their third year.

What followed both franchises is the challenge of relevancy and both have seemingly overstayed their welcome. The Atoms, despite making it to the playoffs 6 out of 10 times, no longer exude the aura of true contenders, raising questions about their sustained competitiveness. Fast & Furious is on movie 10 (I think, who knows) but it's following pales in comparison to the hay days of the first three movies.

But perhaps the biggest resemblance between both franchises is the fact that despite tremendous investments in superstars like John Wolverton, The Rock, Tim Sistrunk, Vin Diesel, baseball and movie fans are left to perplexedly wonder, "People still think they are good? That makes no sense."

Gillette Bison: Pan's Labyrinth

In the realm of niche excellence, the Gillette Bison remind me a lot of the movie Pan's Labyrinth, for their ability to flourish despite their understated presence.



Operating with relatively small budgets both have navigated their respective fields with resourcefulness and passion. And while not widely recognized, those who are

acquainted with baseball and movies can unanimously acknowledge both for their exceptional quality.

The haunting and suspense driven narrative of Pan's Labyrinth is the perfect match to the unsettling feeling of those facing Gillette in the playoffs.

Yakima Hops: The Marvel Cinematic Universe

Is hard not to look at Yakima and not think of one of the biggest franchises in the world. Both started off on a colossal scale, with the baseball team achieving early success and claiming multiple championships, mimicking the Marvel movies meteoric rise.

However, it seems that both franchises have since turned a chapter, undergoing rebranding, and new faces that leave both with a very different feeling from their initial glory.

The foundation is still there, but as a fan of both, it's hard to really tell which direction both franchises are heading.

Great Falls Black Eagles: The DC Cinematic Universe

Great Falls and the DC Cinematic Universe share a common thread: Rough, just rough.

The baseball team, historically out of the running and often settling for a 5th place division finish, mirrors the cinematic struggles of the DC movies, which are often criticized for their uneven quality in comparison to Marvel.

Amid disappointment, both share at least a moment to celebrate. For the baseball team, the silver lining is a lone playoff appearance ending one win away from the Championship in 2023. For the DC Universe, Christopher



Nolan era of Batman films stands out as the one high in a sea lows that include Suicide Squad and Justice League movies.

Ultimately fans of both prove themselves to be gluttons for punishment, demonstrating a loyalty that survives the rough patches and embraces the hope of brighter days ahead.

Elko Truckers: John Wick

The captivating nature of both the Elko Truckers and John Wick is undeniable and once the game starts or the movie begins, it's nearly impossible to take your eyes off the action.



This shared emphasis on offense creates an intense and thrilling experience, whether it's on the baseball field or the cinematic screen. Elko relentlessly pursues runs, showcasing a dynamic offensive focus that keeps fans on the edge of their seats for the entire game.

The parallel between team and movie franchise also extends beyond the field, with blade accidents, blood and lost fingers being a common denominator between both.

Astoria Fighting Chinooks: Jurassic Park/Jurassic World

The Astoria Chinooks, akin to the Jurassic Park/World franchise, embarked on their journey as a true prehistoric team at the very inception of the league. Much like the first Jurassic Park movie, fans were left wondering of the franchise's potential and future ahead. However, as

time progressed, both failed to live up to any expectations, sharing years of forgettable performances.

The similarities also extended to both franchises looking to reshape themselves in the modern day, making significant investments in players and casts, but much like Jurassic World, we were all left with the lingering sense that while changes were made, the overall performance or experience is still yet to change.

Victoria Geese – Mon Oncle Antoine

Never heard of them, both are Canadian, and have a bit of a following.



Bandon Barons – Home Alone



Bandon Barons and Home Alone share an unexpected bond, comedic brilliance. Despite a commendable track record of 5 playoff appearances in 10 seasons, they unfortunately seem to always get caught in traps as soon as the playoffs begin, and end their season in tragic and equally humorous fashion.

As both entities sought to rebrand themselves recently, it seems both franchises have also reached the same critical juncture to hit the reset button and

blow the whole thing wide open. Season tickets haven't been good and let's face it, nobody watched Home Sweet Home Alone.

Coeur D'Alene Striking Miners – Bill & Ted

Let's be real, who even knew there was a third Bill & Ted movie that came out in 2020 or that CDA played another season besides 2027? And if they did, were they any good?

Who knows? Who cares? We're all just clinging to that nostalgia of the early days for as long as we can. And with the shoestring budget they got, you have to admire what they were able to do with so little.

Just two cases of making a big splash early then kind of fading into the background, but still leaving us with that warm fuzzy feeling of the good ol' days.



Walla Walla Farmers – X-Men

Long-running yet disjointed franchises that somehow left an undeniable mark on the baseball and movie landscape. Are they comparable to some other heavy hitting franchises? No, but they've been around long enough that you can't mention baseball or superhero movies without mentioning the X-men or Walla Walla baseball

Both also seem to have an opportunity to gain some traction in their areas, with Marvel/DC and Pocatello/Yakima declines and recent success in their past appearances. The window of opportunity is open, and Flop-Hopkins could be the new superhero in town.

Crescent City Kodiaks – Terminator

CCK 2025 to the 2022 season are like James Cameron's T2: Judgement Day to The Terminator - a follow-up to something great that manages to

be even greater. But by the time those were done all we were left was an ugly metal endoskeleton and mediocre sequels with varying degrees of awful that lasted a long time.

"I'll be back" never sounded like a less appealing prospect, yet CCK proved everyone wrong with a remarkable comeback, making the playoffs last year and almost making a run for the championship game. Perhaps it's time I give both franchises another chance.



BEST OF THE BEST

THE WPBL 2020'S ALL-DECADE TEAM

SP - Bryan Daniels

SP - Jim Thorp

SP - Jesus Farelo

SP - Moises Batista

SP - Ken Williams

RP - Sean Rahm

RP - Jeremy Wolfe

RP - Tim Candelora

RP - Alejandro Ferrer

RP - Juan Rodriguez

RP - Mason Donaldson

RP - Scott Carolson

C - Keith Rehmert

1B - T.J. Ketchum

2B - Sandy Gonzalez

3B - Joe Watts

SS - Tetsuya Honda

LF - Chris Ponder

CF - Joey Hoffmann

RF - John Wolverton

DH - Brian Sicard

Bench - Alejandro Sanchez

Bench - Mac Johannson

Bench - Jaden Richardson

Bench - Ashton Hamby

Bench - Mitch Jones

PROJECTING THE 2030'S ALL-DECADE TEAM

P - Taylor Simkins - Kennewick

P - Juan Hinojosa - Walla Walla

P - Sam Regnier - Gillette

P - J.J. Brown - Great Falls

P - Jason Hritz - Victoria

P - Pete Funk - Astoria

P - Victor Figueras - Kennewick

P - Jeff Martyn - Bandon

C - Joel Wilcox - Crescent City

1B - Ricardo Bulge - Coeur d'Alene

2B - Dane Wheeler - Astoria

3B - Jeff Pistone - Elko

SS - Jeff June - Crescent City

LF - Gumball Washington - Walla Walla

CF - Aaron Jury - Great Falls

RF - Jim Whammer - Victoria

DH - Joram van der Wal - Astoria

Bench - Leroy Walters - Victoria

Bench - Billy Peanut - Walla Walla

Bench - Brett Flop-Hopkins - Walla Walla

Bench - Jayden Anderson - Great Falls

Bench - Lucas Bone Jr - Elko

PEAKS AND VALLEYS

The Highs and Lows of Each WPBL Franchise During The Past Decade

Mitch Isosceles

What a decade it's been! The WPBL started in 2021 with 8 teams and has grown into its current form that includes 12 franchises each with their own unique history. The ten year anniversary feels like the perfect time to explore the franchise highs and lows of each team. Here we go:

Astoria Fighting Chinooks

Low Point: During the 2022 season the team finished with a record of 25-56 which still currently stands as the worst WPBL regular season record of all time. To make matters worse, in the offseason the players received the damaging news that their owner was quitting the league after only two seasons and giving up on the Astoria franchise. No owner had set such a painful precedent and it's hard to imagine one can again.

High Point: The Fighting Chinooks rose from the ashes in 2023. An energetic, engaged, and enthusiastic owner took over when Jimmy Johnson showed up on the scene. His charisma and passion for the game helped the players rise up and the Chinooks landed their first and only postseason appearance that year. Winning 24 more games than Astoria had the year before, Jimmy won over fans right away. With fan and ownership support, he shifted into a re-build as the decade progressed, but this team is poised to find their true high point during the 2030s and a championship feels like a very realistic possibility.

Bandon Barons

Low Point: The end of the 2025 season represented a low-point for the Bandon franchise. Coming off consecutive losing seasons, the team seemed lost. They made the playoffs in 2021 but after that they missed out for four straight years and the 24/25 seasons were particularly dismal.

High Point: Bandon found their way and ended up in the championship series in 2027. It was a relatively uneventful bout as Pocatello won 4-1, but the series represented so much more for the Bandon faithful. Making it to the biggest stage and having a chance at a title sparked a killer instinct that led to multiple more postseason appearances. For the most part Bandon has underperformed in the playoffs during the 2020s, there are many experts who think they put together some teams that had the potential to win it all. They are looking to find even more success and consistency as they head into the next decade of WPBL baseball.

Coeur D'Alene Striking Miners

High point: The 2027 season featured the first and only playoff appearance for the Striking Miners. A winning record in their second season was cause for enthusiasm for both the fans and players alike.

Low point: The 2029 season was particularly tough for CDA. A 30-51 record led to many fans expressing their frustration with the team's direction. CDA remains committed to a re-build and believes greater things lie ahead for the team in the next decade, but only time will tell.

Crescent City Kodiaks

High Point: The year was 2022. The Crescent City Kodiaks were an expansion franchise that burst onto the scene in their debut season. After finishing with a 46-35 record, they found success in the postseason and ended up in the WPBL championship series. The Kodiaks were up 3-2 in that series against the Pocatello Old-Timers, poised to win it all. POC ended up winning the next 2 games and took the title, but this remains the peak moment for CCK. One can't help but wonder how the direction of the franchise would have gone if they had won one of those final two games in that series.

Low Point: Finishing a season with under 30 wins has been a benchmark for disappointment in the WPBL. For this reason, the end of the 2027 season has to be the low point for CCK. This marked the end of two consecutive sub-30 win seasons as they finished with 28 wins in 2026 and 29 wins in 2027. The team is trying to break out of their losing ways and

has been trending up recently, let's see what the 2030s have in store for them.

Elko Truckers

Low Point: In 2023 the Elko Truckers were coming off of two of the most absolutely pathetic seasons of all-time, 27-54 in 2022 and 26-53 in 2023. This team seemed destined for a championship in 2021 but suffered a devastating meltdown in the playoffs. Their star pitcher then stuck his hand in a lawnmower during the offseason that led to severed fingers and he was understandably never the same again. After that everything seemed to go wrong for the Truckers. The powerhouse team of the inaugural season quickly became the laughing stock of the league.

High Point: Elko became the master of the "re-tool". Never quite allowing themselves to go into a full rebuild, the team found a way to strengthen themselves and found much success in the 2020s. Their highpoint was certainly this past year when they celebrated their 2nd championship. Elko remains the prime example of what an engaged and creative owner can do to promote success for their franchise. He never gives up and this has paid off for him through the WPBL's first ten years.

Gillette Bison

Low Point: In 2028 things weren't looking very promising for the Bison. They shocked the world in 2026 with a playoff-series win over Pocatello in their debut expansion season. However, not much has gone well since then. Unfortunately they followed things up with two losing seasons and seemed to be in complete disarray.

High Point: Gillette found their way in 2029 and established a team cohesion that led to much success. A 48-23 record led to their second playoff appearance in their first four years. This time they did the unthinkable. The Bison' playoff run to win the WPBL Championship is one of the greatest moments in WPBL history. This is a high point that will be hard to top and owner Ty Fish will certainly appreciate this moment for years to come.

Great Falls Black Eagles

High Point: In 2023 the Warrenton Osprey almost did it. They made the WPBL championship and took their opponent(TRI) to 7 games.

Unfortunately, they did not win it all that year. Warrenton fans headed into the offseason with high hopes that the team would remain a contender in future years.

Low Point: This was not the case. The Warrenton Osprey became the Great Falls Black Eagles under new management, but the team has yet to match the success they experienced in 2023. The true low-point was probably the 2029 season when they finished with a dismal 27-54 record. New owner Chris Schubert is committed to the re-build and believes they will experience a new level of prestige through the 2030s, but this remains to be seen.

Pocatello Old-Timers

High Point: Up 3-1 in the 2028 WPBL championship, the Old-Timers were set to win their fourth championship. The Mustangs had been their Achilles heel, but this was the series when they were finally going to brush them off and become the one true WPBL dynasty. Just win one game in the next three and solidify greatness.....

Low Point: It wasn't quite that easy. Danny Schumacher pitched a legendary perfect game in Game 5. The Mustangs took games 6 and 7 and the Old-Timers experienced the most heart-breaking series loss of the 2020s. The team hasn't looked the same since and their core is aging quickly. Pocatello fans will always wonder how their legacy was impacted by that 2028 implosion.

Kennewick Atoms

High Point: 2023. There's no way a WPBL championship can't be considered your high point. The Atoms even defeated their rivals(POC) in the first round en route to the league title. Kennewick has been a force throughout the entire decade and the Atoms are constantly relevant as a team contending for the title, but the 2023 season stands out as their high point of the league's first decade.

Low Point: 2030. The Atoms are coming off their worst record in their team's history. Some owners might call for a re-build, but owner Konrad

Moverlock is doubling down. He spent time and money this offseason to re-tool the Atoms and many experts believe them to be one of the favorites to win it all this year. Let's see how it plays out!

Victoria Geese

Low Point: The 2028 season was one of complete disgrace for the Geese. A record of 31-50, questions about ownership's commitment to the team, crippling debt, and minimal interest from their fanbase led to one of the hardest rock bottoms for any WPBL franchise.

High Point: New ownership made all the difference. In a respectable move, Dave Victoria did not move the franchise to a new city, but made a commitment to creating a contender that would pull back in a disinterested franchise. He is doing just that. This past season is the clear high point for the Geese. A championship appearance, albeit a losing one, is the next step in revitalizing a fanbase. The trajectory is pointed up for Victoria's future and one can't help but expect a championship will be coming soon.

Walla Walla Farmers

Low Point: In 2024 the Walla Walla Wallabies went 30-51 (their worst record in franchise history), were in debt, and had minimal things to look forward to. Classic low point.

High Point: We're living in it. After a decade of mediocrity in which the Wallabies/Farmers never looked too terrible or too good, the team has finally found a path to success. The Farmers are coming off their best season of all-time with a 48-33 record. They have a solid core of young players who make WW look like a team who will be a strong contender throughout the next decade. Let's see how the Farmers build off this success.

Yakima Hops

Low Point: 2023. The Lake Tahoe Mustangs had followed up their 2021 championship with two absolutely dismal seasons. Going 33-48 and 35-46 was terribly disappointing when they had been champions in year 1. This would lead to a pair of draft picks that would strengthen the future of the team in years to come, but fans didn't know this just yet.

High Point: 2028. While down 1-3 in the WPBL championship, the Mustangs made the greatest comeback in playoff history that started with the greatest pitching performance in WPBL history. Danny Schumacher's perfect game initiated a sequence of events that led to a 2028 championship title for Tahoe/Yakima and matched them with Pocatello at 3-3 in overall titles. Pocatello and Tahoe emerged as the premier teams of the 2020s, let's see who does the same for the 2030s.

UNBREAKABLE

Examining The Top 10 Most Unbreakable Records in the WPBL

10: Andy Wilkerson 83 Games Played in 2023

A truly unbreakable record, Andy Wilkerson playing 83 games during one season is one of those statistical oddities that the WPBL is sometimes known for. Wilkerson had an anomaly of a season in 2023, less than a year after being waived by Kennewick and then claimed by Victoria. He put together an all star level year with 24 home runs and 80 RBI, both over double his next highest season totals. Victoria played a tough season and wound up needing a play-in game at the end of the season to make the playoffs. Wilkerson was an iron man, suiting up for every single game the Geese played that season. Somehow when the stats were recorded, the record keepers at WPBL Headquarters wrote down that Wilkerson played 83 games that season, 1 extra game that the Geese never played. The question of how this happened has never been able to be answered, but the record will go down in WPBL history as a truly unbreakable record.

9: Pocatello 9 straight playoff appearances

There is nothing unusual about a team getting a good core of players and riding that to many years of success. But in a league as dynamic and volatile as the WPBL, where shorter seasons amplify the effect of hot and cold streaks, being able to pull off a run like Pocatello did from 2021-2029 is incredible. And the Old Timers didn't make this streak barely sneaking in each year, they were a dominant force in the league that usually wrapped up their playoff spot in early July. Apart from the inaugural 2021 season where the Old Timers grabbed a wild card spot by only 2 games over the next closest team, the Old Timers were never within 6 games of missing the playoffs. The consistency of their performance is the reason Pocatello will go down as the WPBL's first dynasty. While they unfortunately fell short in 2030 and didn't extend

their streak to 10 straight seasons, most can be attributed to injuries and a poor record in close games. They showed a return to their previous form near the end of the season and should still be competing again next season.

8: 2026 Kennewick 59 Wins

The 2026 version of the Atoms will go down in the history books as having the best regular season record to date, and a win record that is difficult to see anyone topping. Kennewick's record season came rather unexpectedly. The 2025 team had a mediocre 42-39 record and the team didn't make any drastic changes in the offseason. They lost all-time great closer Jeremy Wolfe, captain Tom Saylor, and perennial all star Mitch Jones over the offseason, and most predicted a finish about the same place the next season, if not a step back. But the team came together early and decided to make a statement. It started with the pitching, where Kennewick finished with a great 2.43 team ERA (a WPBL record and 0.59 runs per game less than the season prior). Mike Puopolo had a breakout season, but overall the team had no true ace, it was just 5 guys pitching solid every night. The explosion of rookie Pete Freedom helped the team's offense, but this was far from an offensive juggernaut. No player even hit into the double digits for home runs. The team fell short in the playoffs, unable to cap off their great regular season with a championship, losing to Elko in 6 games in the WPBL Championship, but they will still go down in the record books for the most wins. Can another team ever hit 60 wins? Possibly, but it will take a season of great performances from regular players like Kennewick saw in 2026 to do it.

7: Moises Batista 34.82 K% & 30.95 K%-B%

10 years later everyone is still talking about how dominant Moises Batista's 2021 season was and for good reason, he set the benchmark for what it means to be an Ace in the WPBL. While many of the numbers he set that season have since fallen, two in particular have the potential to stick around for a while. In 2024 Batista struck out nearly 35% of the batters he faced, and while other strikeout focused pitchers have come close to that, none have been able to pair it with an elite BB% as well. Batista only walked 3.87% in 2021. Some other elite pitchers such as

Simkins and Patterson have come within a few points of Batista's record when they are at their best, but it will take another truly special pitcher to match Batista's numbers.

6: John Hofer, 105 home runs allowed and growing

Some athletes go down in history as some of the best to ever do it, but on the other hand, some players are remembered for things they would rather have forgotten. John Hofer falls on the latter side of things. The 2023 Rookie of the Year has put together a very respectable career. He's an elite strikeout pitcher and should break the 1000K mark in the next few seasons. But he has always had one weakness, home runs.

Through 8 seasons Hofer has allowed 115 home runs hit off of him, never giving up less than 10 in a season. The next three highest players on the leaderboard are at 78, 76, and 73 home runs allowed and are all recognizable names who have pitched a lot more innings than Hofer has. For a pitcher who is clearly very good, for some reason he has never been able to reel in the long ball and it cost him in his career as he has gone from hopeful ace in Astoria to only an end of the rotation starter in Bandon. It takes a very specific type of pitcher to set a record like this, one who is good enough to stay in the rotation but still bad enough to give up a lot of long balls. Only 29 years old and with a lot of innings left to throw, how high could this record end up by the time Hofer is done?

5: Brian Sicard career batting average

Sicard received some help with this record, as he came into the league already as a fully developed 30 year old who knew how to hit the ball. So he missed any type of lower average early seasons that most players will have to play through. But regardless, his incredible bat to ball ability led to the best career batting average of all time and one that will be hard for any player to beat. He currently sits at .330 all time, and while not retired yet he could see that number slip some, but the next closest player is Chris Ponder at .315 and Sicard's average likely will never suffer that much. If we look at only the past 5 seasons to see how some newer players are doing, only two have an average over .300. Joram van der Wal has hit exactly .300, while Gumball Washington has hit .325. Gumball has shown he can hit at a high average, but over a whole career

there is no chance he would be able to eclipse Sicard's numbers. Brian Sicard will truly go down as the best contact hitter that the WPBL has ever seen.

4: Joey Hoffmann 6.55 WAR in 2024

Joey Hoffmann entered the league with Victoria in 2022 and instantly became a WAR machine. His 32.79 all-time trails only Chris Ponder, and in 2024 he put together his best year ever. Helped mostly by a .437 on-base percentage (also a WPBL record), Hoffmann put up over 6.5 WAR. If he had put up that kind of pace in the MLB with a 162 game season, we would be talking about over 13 WAR and a number that trails only Babe Ruth. In a wild twist, Hoffmann didn't win MVP this season thanks to Chris Ponder also putting up record setting numbers and winning the Triple Crown. The chances of another player putting up the same on-base numbers with the same efficiency and the same fielding at a premier position as Hoffmann did in 2024 are incredibly slim, and his WAR record most likely will never be touched.

3: Wolverton/Castillo Home Run Record in 2023

When you think of events that could really shake the league over the next 10 seasons, a player finally breaking the 30 home run mark is a moment that will definitely make waves. Two players currently share the home run record with 29 (A race that is talked about elsewhere in this guide), but neither were able to crack 30 and none have come close since. There are times a player seems on pace to challenge the record, such as Joram van der Wal in 2029, but all usually fizzle out by the time July comes around. When someone does finally break the record it will be a monumental moment, but how long might it take for that day to finally come?

2: Brian Sicard 51 Stolen Bases in 2025

Another single season record that no one has ever come close to touching and probably never will, Sicard's 51 stolen bases is a testament to not only his speed but his intelligence and acumen as a total baseball player. Taking out triples and home runs (no stolen base opportunity),

Sicard reached base 118 times in 2025. He attempted to steal the next bag 61 times (52%), and was successful 51 times (43%). Truly remarkable numbers on the basepaths from one of the game's greats. Only one other player has even passed the 30 steals mark in 10 seasons (Kyle Kawa, 33 in 2021). And while the league has seen an uptick in stolen bases over the past few seasons, a single player touching a number as high as Sicards ever again seems highly improbable.

1: Chris Ponder 98 RBIs in 2024

The 2024 Old-Timers have the second most runs scored in WPBL single season history (only trailing the first place 2021 Truckers by one run), and a lot of that is due to the season Chris Ponder had. The only offensive triple crown in league history, Ponder put together a season with a .360 average, 24 home runs, and 98 RBI. The average and home run numbers are already among some of the league's best, but the 98 RBI is a record that could stand the test of time. Only one other player has even hit 80 RBI before (Andy Wilkerson, 2023), and Ponder went 18 beyond that, almost touching triple digits. Usually driving in 60 runs in a season puts you in contention for the league lead. Look at it one final way, in 2024 Pocatello scored 351 total runs, meaning Chris Ponder drove in 28% of all of Pocatello's runs that season. A truly remarkable number and one that will most likely never be touched.

TURN BACK THE CLOCK

Redrafting the 2021 Inaugural Player Draft

When the league was formed in 2021, the pressure was immediately put on the GMs to pick the perfect team from a wide pool of players. It was a shot in the dark for most, as teams were given very little scouting time to learn about the men who they were putting their trust in. Now with the gift of time, we're able to look back and see exactly who should have been picked where, and how each draft pick looks. Although the league has expanded twice since then, we stuck with only the original 8 first round picks for this redraft.

1st Overall

Original Pick - SP Moises Batista

Redraft Pick - Chris Ponder (Drafted Round 6, 47th Overall)

If this question had been asked after the inaugural season, it would appear that the Truckers had made the correct choice with their #1 overall pick. Moises Batista had been dominant from start to finish, winning Pitcher of the Year and leading Elko to the number one overall seed. In the playoffs, he was almost unhittable and there was no question that he was the best player in the WPBL. But in an unforgettable league defining moment that changed in October of 2021, when Batista lost multiple fingers cutting grass on his John Deere. While Batista rebounded to put together a respectable career, he never returned to his peak and isn't worthy of a first round draft pick.

On the opposite side, Chris Ponder was unknown entering the draft but has become the face of the league and has the potential to go down as one of the greatest ever. The league leader in WAR after 10 seasons and easily the most full trophy case, Ponder has been a 5-Tool star. Hindsight is 20/20, but picking him #1 overall would be the easiest selection in the draft.

2nd & 3rd Overall

Original Pick - #2 Overall Bryan Daniels & #3 Overall John Wolverton

Redraft Pick - Bryan Daniels & John Wolverton

Not much of a change here as the next 2 picks both turned out to be great choices, and really comes down to a matter of preference.

Originally Daniels went #2 to Pocatello while Wolverton went #3 to Walla Walla. In the redraft I would put Wolverton slightly over Daniels, but there is no wrong answer.

Over a full career, Daniels has been the best starting pitcher in the WPBL. He is the owner of multiple career records, while winning 2 pitcher of the year awards in the process. In a league so dependent on pitching, taking a sure thing like Daniels at #2 was a great move and set up Pocatello for their huge success in the 2020's.

For John Wolverton, there is an argument that you could take him #1 overall. The WPBL league leader in home runs and probably the best pure hitter the league has seen, Wolverton is the only 3-time MVP winner in league history. In the end Ponder goes with the first overall selection due to his all around talent, but getting Wolverton at #3 is not a bad consolation prize.

4th Overall

Original Pick - Jim 'Psycho' Thorp

Redraft Pick - Alejandro Sanchez (R3, 20th Overall)

Thorp was the heart of the Barons franchise in the early years and his career was respectable, highlighted by his Pitcher of the Year win in 2023, but overall he didn't have the longevity you look for when picking a player to build your franchise around. Already 30 years old when he was drafted, Bandon only got around 6 productive seasons, and only one really stellar season from Thorp. Psycho was mostly an above average pitcher most of his career before retiring after the 2028 season.

In the redraft, Bandon would end up with someone they originally drafted much later. Alejandro Sanchez was a 3rd round pick in the inaugural draft, but has played far above that level during his career so far. 4th all time in home runs and 6th in WAR, Sanchez has been a top 5 player in the WPBL, although doing so mostly under the radar. He hasn't won

many awards during his career due to never quite reaching the level of Ponder or Wolverton, but his numbers are not far behind either of those guys, and he's more than deserving of a top 5 selection.

5th Overall

Original Pick - Jorge Ordonez

Redraft Pick - T.J. Ketchum (R1, 8th Overall)

The 5th overall selection is really the only pick we can look at in hindsight and say that it just didn't work out. Ordonez was an extremely highly touted prospect in spring of 2021, and the Atoms took him in the first round hoping to secure an ace for years to come. Ordonez's stuff looked promising early, but unfortunately he was never able to stay on the field due to injuries. The former number one overall prospect has only averaged 51 innings a season through his WPBL career, which sounds more like a relief pitcher than a top tier starting pitcher.

T.J. Ketchum was originally selected by Lake Tahoe with the final pick in the first round, and has built himself a great career as the face of the franchise. Ketchum is very similar to Alejandro Castillo, where they have great numbers and some fantastic seasons, but are constantly overshadowed by the likes of Ponder and Wolverton. Ketchum has put up over 24 WAR the past 10 seasons and also only trails Wolverton for most home runs. He's slowly transitioned to playing mostly first base over the last few seasons due to age, but he's still got plenty in the tank and it shows.

6th Overall

Original Pick - Mario Gutierrez

Redraft Pick - Sandy Gonzalez (R10, 76th Overall)

Mario "Joker" Gutierrez had a respectable career with both Astoria and Bandon before retiring after the 2027 season, but with only 7 years of production and one all star season, he was hardly worthy of the 6th overall pick in the draft. Gutierrez put up almost 6 WAR over his 7 seasons and held a career ERA under 4, but even at his best he was only a #2 starter. Perhaps what he will best be remembered for is being one

of the centerpieces of the 2024 blockbuster trade that sent perennial all-star Joram van der Wal to Astoria.

Instead, the 6th selection should have been used on one of the best middle infielders that the WPBL has seen. Sandy Gonzalez was a steal of a pick when he went in the 10th round, and there's no way he would go past the first round in a redraft. Gonzalez has a slew of awards on his mantle as the second baseman has made his way around playing for four different teams. Gonzalez is a 7-time all star, 3-time Silver Slugger, 2-time Gold Glove Winner, and 2-time WPBL Champion. He nearly added an MVP to that list when he finished second in voting in 2022. Due to how incredibly tough it is to find consistent middle infielders, I could see Gonzalez going as high as 4th overall in a redraft.

7th Overall

Original Pick - Joe Watts

Redraft Pick - Adam Hembree (R5, 39th Overall)

Joe Watts will go down as one of the greats in the WPBL and will be remembered for being a classic ball player, a guy who came to work everyday and gave it his all. He won the WPBL's first MVP award with a fantastic season in 2021 (.315/.595/1.002, 15 HR, 4.2 WAR), and went on to be one of the team leaders for an Elko team that brought home their first championship in 2026. He could quite possibly become the first player inducted into the WPBL Hall of Fame when he becomes eligible. Picking Watts with the 7th pick would still be a very respectable choice, but in our hypothetical redraft he goes one spot lower due to two reasons. One is that while Watts was great, his time was still extremely limited. He put up six great seasons from 2021-2026, but after winning the championship he was a very average player for 3 more years before retiring. Secondly, it's hard to draft a third baseman when there is still premier pitching talent on the board.

That's why in this redraft, the 7th pick would have to be Adam Hembree. Hembree's career has definitely been overshadowed being the #2 pitcher to Bryan Daniels, but on any other team Hembree would be the ace. Hembree is 2nd all time in pitching WAR, 3rd in wins, and 2nd in strikeouts. He originally was drafted in the 5th round and was not highly

touted at only 23 years old. But a trade from Warrenton to Pocatello really turned his career around, and as he hit his peak he clearly established himself as a Top 5 pitcher in the WPBL.

8th Overall

Original Pick - TJ Ketchum

Redraft Pick - Joe Watts (R1, 7th Overall)

Both guys at this 8th pick have already been written about. Ketchum has put together a great career but wouldn't be available here in the redraft. Watts would only drop one spot, even with a shorter career his 6 year peak would be too good to pass up.

TOP 10 THINGS YOU'LL NEVER HEAR IN THE WPBL



1. I feel so bad for Pocatello missing the postseason
2. I wish I could find a good outfielder available.
3. There's so many good starting pitchers available, I don't even know how to choose a starting rotation.
4. Do you think Jimmy knows it's ok to only have one first round draft pick?
5. Why do all WPBL Players have such boring, bland names?
6. It's been over a full year since our last lawn mower related incident.
7. Why would you ask where the Hawaiian League is played at?
8. I wish Victoria Dave took this more seriously, he shows no emotion for his team.
9. I want to go on a Hot Air Balloon ride with Commissioner Bunyan.
10. I'm up by 3 runs in the 9th innings, I'm not worried at all about blowing this lead.

2031 SEASON PREDICTIONS

COASTAL DIVISION PREDICTIONS

TEAM	PROJECTED RECORD	2030 RECORD	DIFFERENCE
Victoria	50-31		
Kennewick	48-33		
Astoria	43-38		
Yakima	41-40		
Crescent City	35-46		
Bandon	29-52		

MAINLAND DIVISION PREDICTIONS

TEAM	PROJECTED RECORD	2030 RECORD	DIFFERENCE
Elko	48-33		
Gillette	44-37		
Walla Walla	42-39		
Pocatello	42-39		
Great Falls	33-48		
Coeur d'Alene	32-49		

CHAMPION PREDICTION



AWARDS PREDICTIONS

PRESEASON ALL-WPBL TEAM

P: Schumacher
C: Hamburger
1st: Kellenberger
2nd: Whiteford
SS: Honda
3B: Pistone
LF: Ponder
CF: Wolverton
RF: Hoffman

AWARD PREDICTIONS

MVP - Chris Ponder - Pocatello

Ponder finished last year with a WAR of 4.6. The next highest player was Chris Mistretta, who won the MVP award, at 3.3 WAR. Ponder did it in 49 games due to injury, Mistretta needed all 81. Ponder was a force when healthy last year and if he can stay healthy during the 2031 season he is the favorite to take home the MVP.

Pitcher of the Year - Danny Schumacher - Yakima

Schumacher became a legend in 2028 with his WPBL Championship perfect game. He remains one of the elite pitchers in this league. 2031 very well could be the year where he takes the next step and wins a POY title.

Rookie of the Year - Masakatsu Koyanagi - Victoria

The Geese have signed the likely ROY candidate in Koyanagi. At 31 years of age, he has been exceptional in the Japan League and he looks to be dominant in the WPBL. Look for Koyanagi to be one of the top players in the league this year and run away with the ROY title.

*Honorable Mention: Dane Wheeler: Any other year Wheeler would be the projected ROY. He is young, homegrown, and poised for a full career of success in the WPBL. After being the first overall pick in 2028, "Daddy O" is ready to take the league by storm. While not as polished as Koyanagi, Wheeler should emerge this year as the player with the brightest future.

Reliever of the Year - Sean Rahm - Victoria

The debate for best reliever will always be Rahm or Wolfe. After a surprise win for Scott Carlson last year, both pitchers are as motivated as ever to take back over. Sean Rahm, who is still looking to lock things down, has emerged as the favorite. A full season in Victoria should give him many save opportunities and a fourth reliever of the year seems on the horizon.

