

MLB - 2010 Fantasy Baseball Arizona Diamondbacks Team Preview

Written by Patrick Mayo

Saturday, 16 January 2010 13:10 - Last Updated Wednesday, 03 February 2010 17:15

We have many great articles planned leading up to the 2010 Fantasy Baseball season including sleepers, busts, rookies, strategy, full player rankings and projections all wrapped up into a nifty draft kit to help you win your league next year. Stay tuned for more, but for now, here's a team preview for you.

Ask a question about your fantasy team in our [FORUM](#) . Leave a comment about this article down below.

2009 RECORD: 70-92, 5th in NL West

Stat table note: The better the ranking number, the better the stat, in all categories. For example, for the SO cat for hitting, a #2 ranking means that the team tallied the second fewest strikeouts. For the BB and SB cats for pitching, the #1 teams allowed the fewest bases on balls and steals.

Hitting	BA	R	HR	BB
Stats	253	720	173	571
NL	13	8	4	9
MLB	27	20	12	14
Pitching	BAA	ERA	HR	BB
Stats	263	4.42	168	525
NL	10	11	11	3
MLB	16	19	14	8

LINE-UP

1. Young, Chris CF
2. Drew, Stephen SS
3. Upton, Justin RF
4. Montero, Miguel C
5. Reynolds, Mark 3B
6. LaRoche, Adam 1B
7. Jackson, Conor LF
8. Johnson, Kelly 2B

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Most expected the D-Backs to improve on their 82-80 record in 2008. They had a line-up full of young talent and the pitching to match it. So what went wrong? Apparently losing your ace in the first month doesn't set the kind of pace that leaves you playoff-bound. Expect Arizona to get back into the thick of things in the NL this season, which means loads of fantasy goodness to go around. Among a team of capable players, outfielder **Justin Upton** is truly an elite talent. He's one of baseball's few players that fills up all five categories on a consistent basis. The former number one pick turned in an excellent season that saw him collect 26 HR, 86 RBI, and 84 R, all while hitting .300 and swiping an impressive 20 bags. We can only assume that the 22 year-old will only improve on those stats this season. He's a top-five outfielder and will come off draft boards in the first two rounds. If you want him on your roster, you'll have to pay the price, but he should be worth it. There's not much refined talent after Upton, but definitely a few names to keep in mind come draft day. If

Mark Reynolds

wasn't the fantasy MVP last year, he was certainly a finalist for the award. Always known for his untapped power, Reynolds finally put it all together in 2009 with a monstrous season. I have trouble believing he'll post the same kind of gaudy numbers (.260-44-102-98-24) again in 2010, but he should be useful nonetheless. He trended down towards the end of the season, posting only 8 HR and 3 SB after August 17th, which leads me to believe the speed numbers may have been an aberration. He'll still be an excellent source of power from your corner position, but remember, a lot of his value is wrapped up in his speed numbers, which he may have trouble replicating. He's going to be slightly overrated coming into the year, so avoid the temptation of spending one of your first five picks on him. Don't pay for one huge season when there are other, more proven players that you can get for better value. Perennial bust

Stephan Drew

has rightly slipped in the pre-season ranks. He's coming off a pretty brutal season, which saw him hit a frightful .261. Drew may make a nice post-hype sleeper, but avoid having him as your every-day shortstop. See if you can nab him late in drafts, stash him on your bench and wait to see if he turns it around. If you're like me, you hate spending money on catchers. This season, you may be able to wait at the position and get top-five value later on in the form of

Miguel Montero

. The power-hitting backstop got increased reps as the season went along and turned the extra at bats into 16 HR and 59 RBI. Montero is now the D-Backs starting catcher, and with a full season under his belt comes the possibility of a breakout campaign in 2010. If you don't feel like spending a high pick on some of the elite catchers, wait, and grab Montero later on. You won't be sorry.

Chris Young

,

Adam LaRoche

, and

Conor Jackson

could all be late-round influxes of power, but be weary, as all three come with question marks. Young slugged 15 HR last season, but he hit .212 and struck out 133 times in 433 AB. This performance led to a brief AAA demotion. But, 2010 is a new season, and anyone willing to take a chance on Young may get a return to form from the young outfielder. At his best, he's capable of 20+ HR, 20+ SB season, which would be incredibly valuable from a late round pick. You know what you're getting with LaRoche. He'll mash 20+ HR, 80+ RBI and hit for a decent

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average. So what's not to like? I'm not really sure to tell you the truth, but it seems like he's fallen into the 'Marvin Harrison Zone'. There's nothing fun or exciting about telling people that Adam LaRoche is on your team, so his fantasy value takes a hit because of it. I would stay away from LaRoche come draft time and trade for him around the All-Star break, as he's been a second half player for four years in a row now. Who am I to argue with that kind of trend? Jackson is coming off a missed season in which he contracted Valley Fever, which is like swing flu... on HGH. He doesn't do anything special, but he'll chip in a handful of home runs and won't kill your average (a career .281 hitter). Don't bother putting him on your draft boards in 10-12 team leagues, but he can have value in deeper leagues as he'll contribute in all 5 categories.

Kelly Johnson

will provide a decent average from the bottom of the line-up, but you'll be able to do better at second base. There's nothing sexy about utility man

Ryan Roberts

(although he resides in the

[sensual 'Utility Room'](#)

), but he's is a nice source of speed if you need it. Fourth outfielder

Gerardo Parra,

not to be confused with early 90s latin rapper

[Gerardo Mejia of 'Rico Saue'](#)

fame, will get his reps, and his versatility on defense could have him usurp one of the starting gigs. As a rookie, he showed some potential, but he will need to improve his power numbers if he's to supplant Jackson or Young in the starting line-up. Keep an eye on him as the season progress, as he'll help your average and should pile up some runs if he hits at the top of the order.

STARTING ROTATION

1. Haren, Dan RHP
2. Webb, Brandon RHP (shoulder, should be ready for spring training)
3. Jackson, Edwin RHP
4. Kennedy, Ian RHP
5. Buckner, Billy RHP
6. Augenstein, Bryan RHP
7. Mulvey, Kevin RHP

If **Brandon Webb** can return to his Cy Young form, Arizona will be a force. The uncertainty surrounding Webb's health will drop his value to the point where you can take a calculated risk on him. He reminds me of Chris Carpenter in last year's draft. He's primarily a sinkerballer who looks to makes batters pound the ball into the ground. Since Webb isn't a power pitcher, a return to form is more likely coming off an arm injury. Even if Webb isn't able to contribute, the D-Backs have a formidable duo to lead this staff. **Dan Haren** is a roto king.

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He really does it all -- at least pre-All-Star break. His high inning total allows his tremendous ratios (ERA & WHIP) to be more valuable, and his 8.75 K/9 is among the league leaders. The best strategy with Haren would be to expend a high draft pick on him, and then trade him when he's named to the All-star team. His post-break numbers have plunged for three consecutive years. While he still turns in some good performances, what you can get for him midway will be worth more than keeping him. Newly acquired

Edwin Jackson

is coming off a career year with the Tigers, and a new residence in the NL West will do him nothing but favors. Jackson finished poorly but still posted a quality 3.62 ERA and 1.26 WHIP, and both ratios should improve with a move to the Senior Circuit. You'll be able to pick up Jackson in the later rounds, and he'll make a fine 4/5 starter on any fantasy team. Former Yankee super prospect

Ian Kennedy

may benefit from being out of the pressure cooker that is the Big Apple. He's an interesting sleeper that should be a late round/wavier wire contributor in deeper leagues.

BULLPEN

1. Qualls, Chad RHP (returning from a knee injury)
2. Howry, Bob RHP
3. Heilman, Arron RHP
4. Gutierrez, Juan RHP
5. Vazquez, Esmerling RHP
6. Boyer, Blaine RHP
7. Zavada, Clay LHP
8. Rosales, Leo RHP

Coming off knee surgery, **Chad Qualls** looks to return to the closer role in the desert. Qualls was having a very nice 2009 (24 saves, 3.63 ERA) before an untimely dislocated kneecap ended his season. The Diamondbacks should be better this season, which should lead to more save opportunities. He'll make a nice end of the draft/\$1 closer if you've missed out on the more elite talent. Former San Francisco set-up man

Bob

Howry

has made the switch to Arizona. He's familiar with the division and should be in line for 8th-inning duties. He'll be a great source of holds but probably won't get the call if something happens to Qualls. I would expect that duty to go to former Met/Cub

Aaron Heilman

. He's had closer experience, which should give him the edge over Howry.

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