

MLB - 2010 Fantasy Baseball Atlanta Braves Team Preview

Written by Buck Davidson

Tuesday, 19 January 2010 13:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 19 January 2010 13:58

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: 86-76, 3rd in NL East

The Brave bounced back to respectability in 2009, finishing with their best record since 2005. On the downside, they finished seven games behind the Phillies and were a shocking one game below .500 at Turner Field. This was once arguably the NL's most dominant franchise, but much of the Braves' star power is gone. One thing hasn't changed, though -- the Braves still boast one of the game's best starting rotations, and they'll try to muster enough offense to find their way back to the playoffs in 2010.

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	263	735	149	
602				
1064				
58				
NL	4			
6				
10	5			
4				
15				
MLB	13			

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17 29	22	8	11		
Pitching Stats 119 530 1232 NL 3 1 5 10	BAA 254 97 4 5	ERA 3.57	HR	BB	
MLB 3 1 11 6 15	6				

LINE-UP

1. McLouth, Nate CF
2. Prado, Martin 2B
3. Jones, Chipper 3B
4. Glaus, Troy 1B (shoulder, should be ready for spring training)
5. McCann, Brian C
6. Escobar, Yunel SS
7. Cabrera, Melky LF
8. Diaz, Matt RF (thumb, should be ready for spring training)

The Braves are a team built on pitching and defense -- which is a good thing, because they couldn't hit a lick last year. While that's a tad harsh, the fact remains that the Atlanta lineup is neither overly powerful nor terribly fast. One side of that equation could change with the arrival of first baseman **Troy Glaus**, who clouted 27 homers for the Cardinals back in 2008. He missed all but 14 games last season due to a right shoulder injury, though, so he's a major question mark.

Prado will be the full-time second basemen, and the .307-11-49 line he put up in just 450 at-bats last season may be a harbinger of things to come.

Escobar

is underrated with the stick, while new left fielder

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Melky Cabrera

is a bit overblown (it's a Yankee thing). For a team so lacking in pop, the Braves didn't -- and likely won't -- steal many bases.

Eric Hinske

was a nice offseason pick-up, as he can play both infield and outfield corner positions.

Jason Heyward

is an uber-prospect (think Justin Upton) that should arrive in RF at some point this season and perhaps be a top fantasy outfielder in 2012, if not 2011. He's a must-own in keeper leagues.

Jordan Schafer

CF is another decent talent in the minors.

STARTING ROTATION

1. Hanson, Tommy RHP
2. Jurrjens, Jair RHP
3. Lowe, Derek RHP
4. Hudson, Tim RHP (returned in 09 from Tommy John surgery)
5. Kawakami, Kenshin RHP
6. Reyes, Jo-Jo LHP
7. Medlen, Kris RHP

The names don't knock you over, but the Braves' starting rotation was one of baseball's best in 2009. **Hanson** has one of the game's most talented young arms, and the kid's upside is enormous.

Jurrjens quietly goes about his business, but his 2.60 ERA last season was fifth-best among qualifying starters. Lowe is a ground ball specialist whose 4.67 ERA last year was by far his worst in five seasons.

Hudson made only seven starts after returning from Tommy John surgery, but was solid, making him a legitimate fantasy sleeper this season.

Kawakami

was dropped from the rotation when Hudson returned, but posted decent numbers for a SP5. The Braves will need someone to step up and fill the big void left by the departure of Javier Vazquez, who was traded to the Yankees for Cabrera and prospects in what was widely viewed as a cost-saving measure.

BULLPEN

1. Wagner, Billy LHP (elbow problems last two years)
2. Saito, Takashi RHP

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3. Moylan, Peter RHP
4. Chavez, Jesse RHP
5. O'Flaherty, Eric LHP
6. Acosta, Manny RHP
7. Dunn, Mike LHP

The Atlanta bullpen was solid last season, but the two guys at the back (Rafael Soriano and Mike Gonzalez) have both left town. **Billy Wagner** is awesome when healthy, but he has appeared in only 62 total games over the last two seasons due to elbow surgery -- and he's 38 years old. If Wags goes down, the 40-year-old

Saito

would get the call -- 'til then, he'll serve as the set-up man.

Moylan

is steady and should be the seventh-inning man, while

O'Flaherty

will probably be first up as the lefty specialist.

Chavez

has a nice arm and could play a big role if Wagner or Saito hit a bump. An awful lot rests on Wagner's left arm staying healthy -- things could get ugly if he doesn't last the full season.

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