

MLB - 2010 Fantasy Baseball Oakland A's Team Preview

Written by Patrick Mayo

Thursday, 21 January 2010 17:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 26 January 2010 15:22

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: 75-87, 4th in AL 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	262	759	135	527
AL	9	9	14	10
MLB	15	14	27	22
Pitching	BAA	ERA	HR	BB
Stats	265	4.26	156	523
AL	7	3	1	5
MLB	19	11	7	7

LINE-UP

1. Davis, Rajai LF
2. Crisp, Coco CF (shoulder, should be ready for spring training)
3. Suzuki, Kurt C
4. Kouzmanoff, Kevin 3B
5. Cust, Jack DH
6. Fox, Jake 1B
7. Ellis, Mark 2B
8. Sweeney, Ryan RF (knees, should be ready for spring training)
9. Pennington, Cliff SS

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The A's will once again bring their small-ball, National League style of play to ball parks across the American League. Finding gold in the Bay Area area will be more difficult than it was in 1849, but some savvy sourdoughs should be able to strike it rich in 2010. The off-season acquisition of **Coco Crisp** gives the Athletics' a formidable one-two speed punch at the top of the order along with **Rajai Davis**. Both should provide reasonable averages and be excellent sources of steals and runs. New addition

Kevin Kouzmanof

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will be a cheap source of power and run production. He'll hit in the .270 range will piling up 20+ HR and 80+ RBI. Getting out of San Diego's pitcher's haven may have a very positive increase on this offensive numbers. Unless you're in a home run only league, stay away from

Jack Cust

. Okay, that's not completely fair. Cust will provide you with a good amount of RBI and runs along with the long ball, but he will destroy your batting average -- so be cautious. If you're the type who likes to wait for a catcher,

Kurt Suzuki

may be the perfect fit for your team. Many forget that Suzuki finished last season as baseball's fourth-ranked catcher. He'll contribute across all five categories and will go after much worse players at his position. When he wasn't catching, Suzuki spent time at DH. This allowed him to collect 570 AB, which was second among all catchers. Suzuki's volume of plate appearances make him more value than any catcher stuck in a platoon. Former Cub

Jake Fox

showed some promise last season and should get a chance to play every day in Oakland. Keep him off your draft boards, but keep an eye on him to see how he adjusts to his new home. He may make a nice pickup a month or so into the season. There's no need to bother yourself with the bottom of the order, as it's a proverbial 'fantasy wasteland'.

Ellis

,

Sweeney

, and

Pennington

only have value in super deep leagues (20+ teams) where just getting consistent at bats makes you own-able. And there isn't much to get excited about on the bench or in the minors.

Aaron Miles

can potentially be usable in AL-only leagues at MI. That's about it.

STARTING ROTATION

1. Anderson, Brett LHP
2. Sheets, Ben RHP
3. Cahill, Trevor RHP
4. Braden, Dallas LHP (foot, should be ready for spring training)
5. Mazzaro, Vin RHP (shoulder, should be ready for spring training)

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6. Duchscherer, Justin RHP (elbow, shoulder, should be ready for spring training)
7. Gonzalez, Gio LHP
8. Eveland, Dana LHP

Regardless of who's on the mound, Oakland always finds a way to field a top-notch pitching staff. After compiling the American League's third best ERA, Oakland returns their staff from 2009, now with an extra year's experience under their belt. The staff is headlined by sophomore **Brett Anderson**. If you aren't familiar with Anderson now, you will be -- he's a bonafide ace. Anderson was the main piece of the trade that sent Dan Haren to the Diamondbacks. They threw the 21-year-old to the lions last season -- starting him from day one -- and he responded in kind. He went through the usual growing pains in the first half of the season. He struggled in his first 14 starts in the big leagues to the tune of 74.1 IP, 4-7, 5.45 ERA, 6.3 K/9. Sometimes a rookie needs to take his lumps before putting it all together. In the second half, Anderson was a beast. Over his next 16 starts he was the American League's best rookie. Over those 101 IP he put up a sterling 7-4 record with a 3.03 ERA and 8.7 K/9. If Anderson can keep the momentum of his outstanding second half going into this year, he'll be welcome on any fantasy roster. Look to target Anderson in your draft's second half. If you can get him there, he'll be one of 2010's best values.

Trevor Cahill is still young, but his fantasy prospects aren't as encouraging as Anderson's. He'll turn in some quality starts, but he has a bad tendency of giving up the long ball. Couple that with dreadful 4.53 K/9, and you have a reason to stay away. Although he's been lit up in his two seasons in the majors,

Gio Gonzalez

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sure knows how to blow batters away. Keep away from him in the draft, as he's not guaranteed to make the rotation, but put him on your watch list. If Gonzalez can get his ratios under control, he'll be an elite source of strikeouts.

Justin Duchscherer

is definitely someone to keep an eye on. He missed all of 2009 with after undergoing right elbow surgery, followed by a battle with depression afterwards. But don't use those as reasons to discount Duchscherer. The two-time All-Star was lights out in 2008, turning in a 2.54 ERA and a WHIP of 1.00 in 22 starts. He's a precision pitcher who allows the batter to put the ball in play. If he can return to his 2008 form, he'll be a first-class contributor to your ratios. Take a late round flier on him, and then stash him away on your bench until he proves he can be useful again.

Ben Sheets

is back after his year sabbatical. The former Brewers' ace has spent more time on the DL than actually in the line-up over his career. So why do we still talk about him? His nasty stuff. Sheets is a true power pitcher and can help you out in most pitching categories. I would recommend drafting Sheets if you can get him 16th round on, which you should be able to. Minimize your risk with Sheets because it's likely that he'll just end up hurting his arm, but, if he can take the mound 25+ times this year, he'll be a top tier starter.

BULLPEN

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1. Bailey, Andrew RHP
2. Wuertz, Michael RHP
3. Ziegler, Brad RHP
4. Devine, Joey RHP (elbow, outuntil at least late March)
5. Kilby, Brad LHP
6. Blevins, Jerry LHP
7. Breslow, Craig RHP
8. Meloan, Jon RHP

Oakland's bullpen is their biggest strength. 2009 AL ROY **Andrew Bailey** headlines the group that boasts an array deadly options. Bailey turned in one of the best rookie campaigns in recent memory. In 68 appearances, Bailey's finishing line was an outrageous 6-3, 1.84 ERA, 91 K, 0.88 WHIP. The Wagner College product took over the closer's role in May and converted 26 of 29 save opportunities. It's not just Bailey who can come out of this bullpen and dominate though.

Michael can straight up blow people away. His 11.67 K/9 was among the league leaders, and he will be first in line for saves if something happens to Bailey. He'll be a top end option for holds, if your league counts them.

Joey Devine

is coming off of arm surgery, but should still be effective, despite missing all of 2009.

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