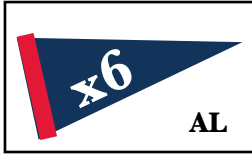




CLEVELAND GUARDIANS

American League Central



9760
FRANCHISE WINS

76-86
2023 SEASON

3rd
DIVISION

#15
FARM SYSTEM RANK

Cleveland, OH - Progressive Field (34,830)
Manager: Stephen Vogt (0-0, 1st Season)

Guardians' Hitting Still Hiding

The Guardians missed the postseason in 2023 for just the third time in the last eight seasons in what was, by record, their worst performance in over a decade. The offense struggled throughout the entire season and a lack of power was certainly a contributing factor. Cleveland ranked dead last in the majors for the long ball. The pitching was strong despite key injuries but, without enough run support, the pitching didn't often translate into wins. With no significant offseason moves, the Guardians are hoping for better performances from hitters and for young prospects to reach the big leagues and make an immediate impact. Otherwise, Cleveland will be staring at another sub-.500 season.

Batting

The offense is led by superstar **José Ramírez**. The 12-year veteran is building a Hall-of-Fame caliber résumé and, somehow, he seems to still be getting better with each passing year. At the very least, he's not slowing down anytime soon, both figuratively and literally, after posting 28 stolen bases along with a remarkable .282/.356/.475 slash line. Nobody has been intentionally walked more in baseball than Ramírez over the past two years and that likely won't change this season. He plays every day and is a nightmare for most pitchers with his remarkable eye for the strike zone and superb plate discipline. The Naylor brothers, **Josh Naylor** and **Bo Naylor** are featured in the heart of the lineup. The older Josh had a career year in 2023 with a batting average of .308 and an OPS of .842. He produced 97 runs, and, like Ramírez, is capable of producing long at-bats and his strikeout rate was almost 10 points below MLB average. Bo appears to be the starting catcher moving forward after 72 games in the majors over the past two seasons. **Austin Hedges** will serve as the likely backup.

The infield positions are up for grabs other than **Andrés Giménez**, who has shortstop locked down. Now a two-time Gold Glover, Giménez is criminally underrated. The other spots are open, however.

Gabriel Arias is an ultra-utility player who can and has played nearly every position in the field. **Brayan Rocchio** debuted in the majors last season and hit .247 in 23 games with most of his time being spent at shortstop. **Deyvison De Los Santos** is a Rule 5 player who could wind up playing first base even though he's never even reached triple-A. The Cleveland outfield is one of the best defensive groups thanks to the speedy **Steven Kwan** who has two Gold Gloves in his first two major league seasons and his bat is nothing to sneeze at, either. **Myles Straw** is also a terrific defender and **Ramón Laureano** can play both centerfield and right field. Power will still be an issue in 2024 outside of Ramírez and Josh Naylor but the Guardians have speed all over the lineup and will steal a ton of bases again.

Pitching

Shane Bieber's name was brought up quite a bit in potential trade offers at both the deadline and at the offseason, but, at present, he's still the ace of the staff and one of baseball's best. The former Cy Young winner had a down year by his standards. His 3.80 ERA was the worst of his career outside of his rookie season and he also posted a career-low 107 strikeouts but that was largely due to elbow inflammation that knocked him out for over two months of the season. If healthy, he should be the pitcher that opposing hitters have come to dread facing. **Triston McKenzie** is also eager to put 2023 in the rearview mirror. After a remarkable season in 2022 (2.96 ERA, 191.1 IP, 190 K), he suffered multiple injuries in 2023 and made just four starts for a total of 16 innings of work. His slider is particularly nasty and, when he's at his best, he pairs a mid 90s fastball and a curveball with that pitch. **Tanner Bibee** had a fantastic rookie season, finishing behind only Baltimore's Gunnar Henderson in the AL Rookie of the Year race. He made 25 starts and posted an ERA of 2.98 and a record of 10-4. He went less than five innings only twice and, if he avoids a sophomore slump, he'll give the Guardians one of the best rotations in the division. **Logan Allen** and **Gavin Williams** are two solid options at the back of the rotation. If injuries prevent themselves, things could get dicey as the bullpen was relatively average last season. **Emmanuel Clase** has made the most appearances and has registered the most saves in all of baseball in the last two seasons.

The Bottom Line

For the most part, it doesn't seem like the Cleveland Guardians addressed the issues that plagued the team last season. Scoring runs appears to be a laborious process again in 2024, especially without a consistent threat of the home run. The Guardians will need to be extremely fortunate in the injury department to have a chance to compete for a division title. Luckily, the race appears to be wide open and Cleveland is accustomed to being at or near the top of the standings. It's also worth noting that the Guardians were the youngest team in the majors last season. The season will likely come down to how quickly the Guardians' young prospects can make an impact at the Major League level. For now, the Royals and Tigers seem better positioned in to contend right away.

2024 Projection: 74-88, 4th in AL Central

José Ramírez

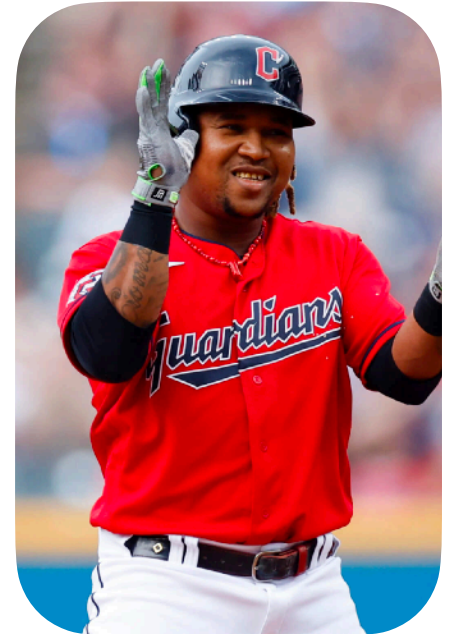


Photo via The Athletic



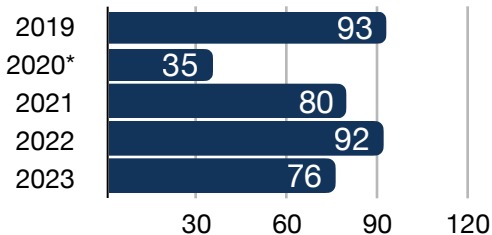
2023 MLB Ranks
RPG - 4.09 (27th)
HITS - 1379 (13th)
HR - 124 (30th)
ERA - 3.96 (9th)
SO - 1311 (25th)
FD% - .986% (12th)

Josh Naylor



Photo via Covering the Corner

GUARDIANS 5-YEAR WIN TREND



376 < Number to Know

The number of wins by the Guardians in the last five seasons, the most in the division. Yet, in that same time span, Cleveland has claimed the division title just once.

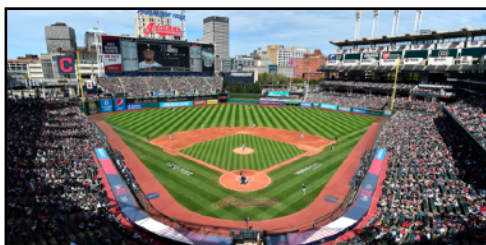


Photo via Axios

PROSPECT TO WATCH Kyle Manzardo - 1B

First base is a big question for the Guardians heading into 2024, and Kyle Manzardo could be the answer. He was traded to the Guardians from Tampa Bay and he benefited from the change of scenery in triple-A Columbus where his OPS soared to .938 in 21 games. He hit 6 home runs in just 92 plate appearances and mixed in 8 doubles. He picked up where he left off in the Arizona Fall League and again proved he has a very capable power bat. Will that ability translate to the majors? We might find out soon, as Manzardo could very well find himself on the Opening Day roster, especially if he can put together a decent spring.

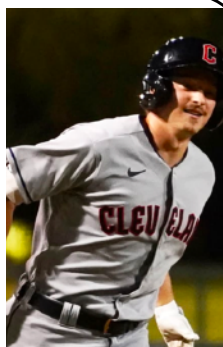


Photo via MLB

Projected Lineup			'23 AVG
38	Steven Kwan	LF	.268
0	Andrés Giménez	2B	.251
11	José Ramírez	3B	.282
22	Josh Naylor	DH	.308
23	Bo Naylor	C	.237
10	Ramón Laureano	RF	.224
4	Brayan Rocchio	SS	.247
13	Gabriel Arias	1B	.210
7	Myles Straw	CF	.238

Projected Rotation			'23 ERA
57	Shane Bieber	SP	3.80
24	Triston McKenzie	SP	5.06
28	Tanner Bibee	SP	2.98
41	Logan Allen	SP	3.81
32	Gavin Williams	SP	3.29
48	Emmanuel Clase	CL	3.22

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT Andrés Giménez - 2B



2023 Statistics

GP AVG OPS HR RBI
153 .251 .712 15 62

Giménez, not Shane Bieber, has led his team in WAR in each of the last past two seasons. He was especially impressive in 2022 when he slashed .297/.371/.466. While his productivity at the plate dipped in comparison to that season in which he was an All Star and 6th in AL MVP voting, he still put together a quality season. Statistically, he was the best defensive shortstop in the game with a staggering dWAR of 2.9 and he was clearly deserving of his second straight Gold Glove. He also swiped a career-best 30 bags last season and he's arguably only now hitting his prime years.

2024 Schedule

March/April 2024											
					OAK 10:07	OAK 9:40	OAK 4:07				
OAK 4:07	SEA 9:40	SEA 9:40	SEA 4:10	MIN 4:10			MIN 2:10				
MIN 2:10	CWS TBD	CWS 6:10	CWS 6:10	CWS 6:10			NYN 7:10	NYN 6:10			
NYN 1:40	BOS 11:10a	BOS 7:10	BOS 7:10	BOS 1:35	BOS 1:35	OAK 7:10	OAK 6:10				
OAK 1:40		BOS 6:10	BOS 6:10	BOS 1:10	BOS 1:10	ATL 7:20	ATL 7:20				
ATL 1:35		HOU 8:10									

May 2024											
					HOU 8:10	HOU 8:10	LAA 7:10	LAA 6:10			
LAA 1:40	DET 6:10	DET 6:10	DET 1:10	CWS 7:40	CWS 7:40	CWS 7:10	CWS 7:10				
CWS 2:10	TEX 8:05	TEX 8:05	TEX 8:05			MIN 7:10	MIN 6:10				
MIN 1:40	NYM 6:10	NYM 6:10	NYM 1:10			LAA 9:38	LAA 9:38				
LAA 4:07	COL 4:10	COL 8:40	COL 8:40			WSH 7:10					

June 2024											
										WSH 4:10	
WSH 1:40		KC 6:40	KC 6:40	KC 1:10	MIA 7:10	MIA 7:35					
MIA 1:40		CIN 7:10	CIN 7:10		TOR 7:07	TOR 3:07					
TOR 1:07		SEA 6:40	SEA 6:40	SEA 1:10	TOR 7:10	TOR 4:10					
TOR 1:40	BAL 6:35	BAL 6:35	BAL 6:35	KC 8:10	KC 8:10	KC 4:10					
KC 2:10											

July 2024											
SF 1:40	DET 6:40	DET 6:40	DET 6:40	DET 1:10	DET 1:10	TB 6:50	TB 4:10				
TB 1:40											
SD 1:40	DET 6:40	DET 6:40	DET 6:40	DET 1:10	PHI 6:40	PHI 6:05					
PHI 1:35	DET 6:40	DET 1:10									

August 2024											
BAL 1:40	ARI 6:40	ARI 6:40	ARI 1:10			MIN 8:10	MIN 7:15				
MIN 2:10	CHC 6:40	CHC 6:40	CHC 6:40			MIL 8:10	MIL 7:15				
MIL 2:10		NYN 7:05	NYN 7:05	NYN 1:05	TEX 7:10	TEX 7:10					
TEX 1:40	KC 6:40	KC 6:40	KC 1:10			PIT 7:10	PIT 6:10				

September 2024											
PIT TBD	KC 4:10	KC 7:40	KC 7:40			LAD 10:10	LAD 9:10				
LAD 4:10	CWS 7:40	CWS 7:40	CWS 2:10	TB 6:40	TB 7:10	TB 6:10					
TB 1:40	MIN 6:40	MIN 6:40	MIN 6:40	MIN 1:10	STL 8:15	STL 7:15					
STL 2:15		CIN 6:40	CIN 6:40		HOU 7:10	HOU 6:10					
HOU 3:10											

HOME AWAY