




DETROIT TIGERS

American League Central



x4



x11
AL

9590
FRANCHISE WINS

78-84
2023 SEASON

2nd
DIVISION

#13
FARM SYSTEM RANK

Detroit, MI - Comerica Park (41,083)
 Manager: A.J. Hinch (202-252, 4th Season)

Young Tigers Ready to Pounce

Tigers fans don't need to be reminded that, if their team doesn't reach the postseason in 2024, the playoff-less streak runs to double digit years. After three straight appearances in the ALCS from 2011-2013, it's been quite the fall from grace for Detroit. However, the baseball in the Motor City took a significant step forward from where it had been in previous seasons in 2023. The team's 78 wins was the most since 2016 and the organization has seemingly been successful in building a young nucleus of talent with more help on the way. Despite being six games under .500, the Tigers were just 9.0 games back of the division when the dust settled in 2023, so the window of opportunity clearly exists at the top of the AL Central.

Batting

After a shaky rookie season, **Spencer Torkelson** finally showed off what fans were begging to see: his power. He smashed 31 home runs and drove in 94 runs and there were only eight occasions in which he did not occupy first base on defense. He still has room for growth in terms of limiting strikeouts and getting on base more frequently, but he's showing glimpses that he could be a premier power hitter and at just 24 years old, he's just getting started. Fellow 2022 rookie **Riley Greene** also took a major step forward in his sophomore year but his challenge has been staying on the field. He had Tommy John surgery in the offseason, but luckily for the Tigers, it was on his non-throwing shoulder so he's expected to be a full participant from the start of the season. The final member of the "Class of 2022" featured in the projected starting lineup is **Kerry Carpenter**, who displayed a nice balance of hitting for contact and for power. **Parker Meadows** debuted last season and had ups and downs in a 37-game sample size. What he did show was a remarkable ability to draw a walk, which led to an on-base percentage of .331 despite a batting average of .232. He's a capable defender in centerfield, too. **Colt Keith** hasn't even taken a major league swing yet, but he's expected to be another piece of the young core and will likely cover second with newly-acquired veteran **Gio Urshela** claiming third base. When healthy, Urshela is a high-average hitter with above-average defensive skills. **Jace Jung** could also debut in the majors early this season.

The other side of the coin is **Javier Baéz**, whose lack of plate discipline turned him into a meme on several occasions in 2024. With his power seemingly having dried up, the Tigers are likely regretting the 6-year, \$140 million contract they offered the former Silver Slugger at the beginning of the 2022 season. (His OPS+ of 62 indicates that his adjusted OPS was 38% worse than the average player.) The Tigers also bring in **Mark Canha** who is now on his fourth team in as many seasons. Some of the best offense of his now-10-year-career came in the final 50 games of the season with the Brewers, so Detroit is hopeful that's the version of Canha they get in 2024. **Jake Rogers** returns as catcher and **Carson Kelly** will catch, too.

Pitching

With Eduardo Rodriguez signing with the Arizona Diamondbacks, the Opening Day starter will be **Tarik Skubal**. He has great stuff, maybe even "ace" stuff as long as he can stay healthy. He was tremendous last year but didn't get his season started until July and he's only topped 120 innings once in his first four seasons. His fastball is noticeable with both high velocity and late life. **Jack Flaherty** is a pitcher with high upside but a lot to prove in 2024. He received MVP votes in 2019 when he was with the St. Louis Cardinals after a season that featured 196.1 innings pitched, a 2.75 ERA, 231 strikeouts, and an NL-best WHIP of 0.968. Since then, he's battled numerous injuries but he did record 144.1 innings of work in 2023, although he wasn't especially effective. Speaking of WHIP leaders, **Kenta Maeda** led the majors with his 0.750 WHIP and finished second in Cy Young voting in the shortened 2020 season with the Twins. Tommy John surgery essentially halted any hopes of replicating that performance, but the Tigers' pickup of Maeda is a good one. **Matt Manning** and **Reese Olson** round out the probable rotation. **Jackson Jobe** could debut this season, especially if the Tigers are in the mix late in the season. The bullpen was relatively average last season but the additions of **Andrew Chafin** and **Shelby Miller** should help. **Alex Lange** enters the season as the team's closer again but that role is by no means locked down.

The Bottom Line

The Tigers could legitimately win the division and they could also legitimately finish last in the division. It all depends on if young hitters like Torkelson, Greene, Carpenter, Meadows, (and even incoming rookies Keith and Jung) can take the next step. Most did from their "freshman" season to their "sophomore" season, but this step will need to be even bigger, especially given the Tigers' struggles to score runs last season. If healthy, the pitching staff could be one of the most undervalued groups in baseball and will move from below average to above average. Now, that perspective is certainly an optimist's point of view, but with the recent success of the Lions and the Red Wings (sorry, Pistons), why can't the Tigers be next?

2024 Projection: 81-81, 2nd in AL Central

Spencer Torkelson



Photo via FanGraphs



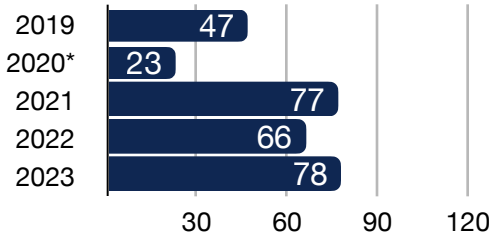
2023 MLB Ranks
 RPG - 4.08 (28th)
 HITS - 1292 (25th)
 HR - 165 (24th)
 ERA - 4.24 (17th)
 SO - 1374 (20th)
 FD% - .983% (24th)

Tarik Skubal



Photo via Bless You Boys

TIGERS 5-YEAR WIN TREND



.530 < Number to Know

The Tigers' winning percentage from July 1st until the end of the year. Extrapolate that over 162 games, and you get a 86-76 record. Could that record win the Central in 2024?



Photo via Detroit Sports Commission

PROSPECT TO WATCH Colt Keith - 2B

Keith has hammered minor league pitching at every stop in his journey through the minor league system. In his very first swing with triple-A Toledo, he bashed a ball over 400 feet for a home run. His bat is tremendous and he has a very good sense of the strike zone and he actually reduced the number of strikeouts when he made the jump to triple-A in the middle of last season. The Tigers are certain enough that they have a potential star that they signed the 22-year-old to a 6-year, \$28.6 million contract before he even steps foot on a big league field. That contract could extend to a 9-year, \$82 million deal if Detroit picks up all three club options. A remaining question is whether Keith will play second or third base, but there are no questions about his potential as a hitter.



Photo via USA Today

Projected Lineup			'23 AVG
22	Parker Meadows	CF	.232
31	Riley Greene	RF	.288
20	Spencer Torkelson	1B	.233
30	Kerry Carpenter	DH	.278
21	Mark Canha	LF	.262
33	Colt Keith	2B	-
28	Javier Báez	SS	.222
13	Gio Urshela	3B	.299
34	Jake Rogers	CF	.221

Projected Rotation			'23 ERA
29	Tarik Skubal	SP	2.80
45	Jack Flaherty	SP	4.99
18	Kenta Maeda	SP	4.23
25	Matt Manning	SP	3.58
40	Reese Olson	SP	3.99
55	Alex Lange	CL	3.68

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT Riley Greene - OF



2023 Statistics

GP 99 **AVG** .288 **OPS** .796 **HR** 11 **RBI** 37

Of the two players who debuted in 2022, Spencer Torkelson gets a lot of attention for his incredible power, but Riley Greene is just as vital (if not more) to the Tigers' success. Injuries have slowed what has otherwise been a great start to Greene's major league career. His debut was delayed by a broken foot in 2022 and in 2023 he played just 99 games due to elbow and leg injuries. Depending on which advanced metrics you want to dive into (expected batting average and exit velocity, to name a couple), you'll find him ranked in the upper echelon of hitters. Now, he just has to prove he can stay on the field.

2024 Schedule

March/April 2024											
									CWS 28		CWS 30
CWS 31	NYM 1	NYM 2	NYM 3					OAK 5	OAK 6		
2:10	7:10	7:10	7:10					1:10	1:10		
OAK 7	PIT 8	PIT 9					MIN 11	MIN 12	MIN 13		
1:40	6:40	12:35					1:10	6:40	1:10		
MIN 14	TEX 15	TEX 16	TEX 17	TEX 18	MIN 19	MIN 20					
1:40	6:40	1:10	1:10	1:10	8:10	2:10					
MIN 21	TB 22	TB 23	TB 24								
2:10	6:50	6:50	6:50								
KC 28	STL 29	STL 30									
1:40	6:40	6:40									

May 2024											
									STL 1		NYN 3
									1:10		7:05
											1:05
NYN 5	CLE 6	CLE 7	CLE 8					HOU 10	HOU 11		
1:35	6:10	6:10	1:10					6:40	6:10		
HOU 12	MIA 13	MIA 14	MIA 15					ARI 17	ARI 18		
1:40	6:40	6:40	1:10					9:40	8:10		
ARI 19	KC 20	KC 21	KC 22	TOR 23	TOR 24	TOR 25					
4:10	7:40	7:40	2:10	6:40	6:40	1:10					
TOR 26		PIT 28	PIT 29	BOS 30	BOS 31						
1:40		6:40	1:10	7:10	7:10						

June 2024											
											BOS 1
											4:10
BOS 2	TEX 3	TEX 4	TEX 5					MIL 7	MIL 8		
1:35	8:05	8:05	8:05					6:40	4:10		
MIL 9		WSH 11	WSH 12	WSH 13				HOU 14	HOU 15		
1:40		6:40	6:40	1:10				7:10	7:10		
HOU 16	ATL 17	ATL 18	ATL 19					CWS 21	CWS 22		
2:10	7:20	7:20	12:20					6:40	1:10		
CWS 23	PHI 24	PHI 25	PHI 26	LAA 27	LAA 28	LAA 29					
1:40	6:40	6:40	1:10	9:38	9:38	10:07					
LAA 30											
4:07											

July 2024												
CIN 7	CLE 8	CLE 9	CLE 10	CLE 11	LAD 12	LAD 13						
1:40	6:40	6:40	6:40	1:10	6:40	1:10						
LAD 14	All-Star Break - Arlington, TX						TOR 19	TOR 20				
1:40							7:07	3:07				
TOR 21	CLE 22	CLE 23	CLE 24	CLE 25	MIN 26	MIN 27						
1:37	6:40	6:40	6:40	1:10	6:40	6:10						
MIN 28	CLE 29	CLE 30										
1:40	6:40	1:10										

August 2024											
KC 4		SEA 6	SEA 7	SEA 8	SF 9	SF 10					
1:40		9:40	9:40	9:40	10:15	4:05					
SF 11		SEA 13	SEA 14	SEA 15	NYN 16	NYN 17					
4:05		6:40	6:40	1:10	6:40	1:10					
NYN 18		CHC 20	CHC 21	CHC 22	CWS 23	CWS 24					
7:00		8:05	8:05	2:20	8:10	7:10					
CWS 25	CWS 26	LAA 27	LAA 28	LAA 29	BOS 30	BOS 31					
2:10	8:10	6:40	6:40	1:10	6:40	6:10					

September 2024											
BOS 1	SD 2		SD 4	SD 5	OAK 6	OAK 7					
1:40	6:40		9:40	8:40	9:40	4:07					
OAK 8		COL 10	COL 11	COL 12	BAL 13	BAL 14					
4:07		6:40	6:40	1:10	6:40	6:10					
BAL 15	KC 16	KC 17	KC 18		BAL 20	BAL 21					
1:40	7:40	7:40	7:40		7:05	4:05					
BAL 22		TB 24	TB 25	TB 26	CWS 27	CWS 28					
1:35		6:40	6:40	1:10	6:40	1:10					
CWS 29											
3:10											

HOME **AWAY**