

Typically, the first three weeks of the baseball season don't tell you much of anything of what to expect.

Sure, you can see certain team's strengths and weaknesses and that certain players have gotten off to hot or slow starts, but injuries, warm weather and a variety of other factors can change things in a hurry.

With that said, here's an attempt to break down the CVC, division-by-division (records through Sunday), on what we've seen/heard so far and what you might come to expect.

Colonial Division

Steinert (5-0), with a talented and deep pitching staff, experience and a ton of young talent, entered the season as the favorite and has done nothing to dispel that notion.

As always, Notre Dame (2-1) should be in contention for the division crown and will know a lot about itself after it navigates a brutal schedule over the next two weeks. West Windsor-Plainsboro South (5-0) just recently returned from a trip to Florida, winning all four of its games, and should be considered a legitimate dark horse.

Both Hightstown (1-3) and Trenton (0-3) are young and inexperienced and have a lot of work to do in order to join the mix.

Valley Division

Prior to the season, it figured to be a two-horse race between West Windsor-Plainsboro North and Nottingham, but then Lawrence and Hamilton decided to make things a little interesting through the early going.

WW-P North (3-1) probably has the division's best rotation in Dave Bachner, Eric Wisotzky and Kyle Reed, but Nottingham (5-1) has almost as potent a rotation and at this point in the season, has a little more consistent lineup.

Hamilton (2-2) pasted Nottingham, 10-0, on opening day but has since lost to Allentown and Notre Dame. Lawrence (2-2) has a victory over Hopewell under its belt, but, like Hamilton, will need to win its share of big games to be considered a legitimate contender.

Patriot Division

Entering the season, it looked as if this could be anyone's division. Allentown won the NJSIAA Group II state title last season, Robbinsville reached the NJSIAA Group I state title game last year, Ewing and Hopewell Valley each returned a young nucleus almost intact, and



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Princeton was bound to improve after a tough year.

But as Allentown (1-3) and Robbinsville (1-3) are attempting to bounce back after losing integral players to graduation and Hope-well Valley (0-3) tries to figure out how to put some runs on the board, Ewing (4-0) has quickly jumped out to a three-game lead in the division behind very good starting pitching, solid defense and timely hitting.

Princeton (1-3) is still young but can win any game in which Matt Alvarez takes the hill.

Listen Live Tune in to hear intra-township rivals Hamilton at Steinert do battle tomorrow afternoon on 1350 WHWH with the pregame show starting at 3:45 p.m. The Spartans will also be on the air Friday afternoon at 3:45 when they travel to take on West Windsor-Plainsboro South.

A cross-river battle rounds out this week's coverage when Pennsbury makes the short trek over the Delaware to take on Hopewell Valley and head coach Ken Harrison, a Pennsbury alum, with the pregame show kicking off at 10:45 a.m.

Hits for Hope Update Kudos to local sponsors, booster clubs and parents for quickly getting on board with the "Hits for Hope" initiative which benefits Ryan's Quest. The four remaining teams without a sponsor are Allentown, Hightstown, Trenton and West Windsor-Plainsboro North.

If you or someone you know wants to sponsor one of these four teams (based on last year's numbers, the average cost per team would be approximately \$237), you can contact one of the local head coaches or Hamilton head coach John Costantino at JCostantino@optonline.net.

For more information on "Hits for Hope" or Ryan's Quest, go to www.RyansQuest.com.

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An early look around the CVC