

Disclaimer: I'm ranking teams solely based on their captains and auction picks. DEPs bring a level of variability to team lineups that is difficult to account for.

Also, my personal opinion is that this season is very O-heavy: a lot of great, solidified offenders while the pool of likewise defenders is more limited. This means a lot of defenders, particularly those drafted second, have a lot to prove. I'm hopeful we'll see some of those defenders shine this season and make names for themselves.

### Tier 1: The Contenders

**Teams who are Contenders have the pieces for a championship, and it's clear for anyone to see. They have the highest expectations going into the season, and making the playoffs isn't enough for them. Win it all, or the time spent was in vain.**

1. Young Hotties			
O	<a href="#">raymond53</a> (62)	<a href="#">Omar</a> (C)	D
O	<a href="#">team</a> (15)	<a href="#">Alphachurro</a> (16)	D

This is a great squad, and Omar had one of the best draft nights of any captain. raymond53 is a highly experienced, talented player whose confident attitude should pair well with Omar on the other side of the map. While he'll be the leader on offense, team is just as capable of making big plays and knows how to get past defenders with precision. If they can set up plays for each other in base, I see the offense being extremely productive, if not a bit wild at times. Fortunately, they should also be covered on the other side. Omar is as lockdown a defender as you'll find in minors, and after just missing out on a Muperball win last season I expect him to be hungry for redemption. Alphachurro played B-team last season but has impressed a lot of players, so much so that Omar figured to nominate him for his roster's final slot. While the jump to minors will take some adjusting, he is surrounded by great teammates, and won't be pressured to immediately perform. This is a team with both a high floor and high ceiling, which is all you can ask for.

2. Chennai Muper Pings			
O	<a href="#">ref</a> (56)	<a href="#">waterwheel</a> (C)	D
O	<a href="#">Will1119</a> (39)	<a href="#">popsic</a> (2)	D

This is my third NALTP season playing with waterwheel, all of which have been in the past calendar year. However, now we're competing for the Muperball instead of the Superball, and I'll

be on the opposite side of the map. I was very relieved to be drafted to his team. He might be the best overall player in this league, and I trust him to perform at a high level on defense. His partner, popsic, is someone I've rarely seen but have heard good things about. His strong performance in NLTP last season makes me confident that he can adapt to minors, especially with someone like water who can be an excellent and reassuring partner. While I wasn't expecting to play minors this season, I am hoping to give it my best on offense and build on what I've learned over the past few seasons at that position. I'm excited to play with Will1119, who I think will continue to improve after his return last season. We played on the same team several seasons ago at different positions, but the landscape of the league has definitely changed since then. While I don't have us ranked the highest, I think we can achieve a lot this season, especially because having two of the league's best defenders on the same team is a big benefit even with position restrictions.

3. Bubble Balls			
O	<a href="#">AK47</a> (50)	<a href="#">Raspberry</a> (C)	D
O	<a href="#">CarrotCake</a> (11)	<a href="#">Raven</a> (44)	D

AK47 actually re-added his signup late, which may have been an incredible manip if it can be proved. People question his decision-making from time to time, but his juking and capping abilities are top-class. He is the kind of player who tends to play better a league up because of the teammates that support him. CarrotCake may not be a majors-level offender, but I think he is perfectly comfortable and capable to provide support for AK and the team as a whole, such as through pups. Speaking of pups, Raspberry is going to make sure this team never misses a single pup round. Beyond her fascination for puppies, she has proven herself as an above-average minors player at both positions and won't hesitate to bring the flag into base herself if needed. Raven has been putting in serious work ever since his return to TagPro, and he can provide a level-headed attitude to this team, which could honestly get downright chaotic (good and bad) otherwise. This defense is one of the best bets to succeed among the others, and that combined with a high-ceiling offense makes them dangerous.

4. Itsy Bitsy Spikers			
O	<a href="#">ShinjukuGirl</a> (65)	<a href="#">JukeofYore</a> (C)	D
O	<a href="#">koro sensei</a> (0)	<a href="#">agency</a> (19)	D

Everyone should know that I think ShinjukuGirl (Elsa) and koro sensei (Kibo) on offense together have great potential. Elsa has a very high ceiling and what it takes to be a top 3 offender, even in a O-heavy season like this. He plays very selflessly and has the rare ability to

succeed as both a primary and supporting offender. Kibo hasn't been around in a hot minute, but that was the case when he won the Muperball with Elsa too. They will be a very fun and cohesive offensive pairing, but they also need to stay grounded and not expect immediate success from their past time together. Luckily, this defense also has a very high ceiling. Juke of Yore is both a solid defender and solid minors player overall, and I don't expect him to miss a beat. Agency is a unique pickup: his only competitive experience was this past NFTL season, which he won on B team. Boasting an axe and considerable hype, his entrance is remarkably similar to that of Elsa's rookie season. He could be a high-level defender when this season is all said and done, so long as he adjusts to NALTP well. Thankfully, Juke of Yore is the perfect kind of partner for that to happen.

### Tier 2: The Dark Horses

**Teams who are Dark Horses aren't immediate favorites, but to see them do well wouldn't be a surprise. They have sizable expectations going into the season, and playoffs are a likely achievement. There are murmurs that they could sneak by with upsets.**

5. Snow Angles			
O	<a href="#">Frozen</a> (C)	<a href="#">Squeeb</a> (80)	D
O	<a href="#">Spacetiger</a> (1)	<a href="#">Crowman</a> (1)	D

This team is pretty solid, and was arguably the best draft considering how few TCs Frozen was given. He is a solid all-around player who didn't want to go back to majors, presumably so he can vie for another Muperball. His off-nights are very few and far between, and it would be very tough not to see him light up opposing defenses. Many would argue Spacetiger is criminally underrated, especially since he possesses a recent Muperball. I'm not confident in him leading as a primary offender, but as Frozen's partner I think he is in a good spot to have a productive season. Squeeb is always hovering at the top of the list of great minors defenders. He should feel comfortable here playing opposite one of the more potent offenses in the league. I find the Crowman pick to be interesting, considering he wasn't very flashy in NLTP last season but has displayed a level of competency that makes him a safer pick among the available defenders this season. While I don't think the ceiling for the defense is very high, they honestly don't need to be stellar so long as they are strong enough to give the offense opportunities to come into base. I don't see a team with Frozen missing playoffs, but they will need to develop considerable chemistry in order to make the championship. Fortunately, half the battle is having the ability to form that league-winning chemistry.

6. Ball Guys			
O	<a href="#">Ball-E</a> (C)	<a href="#">Buff Baby</a> (105)	D
O	<a href="#">yiss</a> (0)	<a href="#">evanw4</a> (0)	D

Ball-E went all-out with his TCs and drafted Buff Baby (Snowball) for an insane price. Both of these players are formidable threats at their positions, and while I don't think either are near majors-level they should be able to step up as leaders and positive team forces. Ball-E has won his last two full-minute NALTP seasons, and I expect him to quietly feast on opposing defenses. His partner is yiss, a notoriously one-dimensional player whose transition to offense will likely be, in all honesty, a bit rough. I've rarely seen yiss play O, even outside of league matches, so he will need to get himself acquainted with his new environment. While Snowball went for high, I think this season he will be one of the few defenders able to hold his own against a majority of the league's best O pairings. Next to him is evanw4, who is coming off of a long hiatus. I think pairing an old ball with one of the league's best defenders is a smart decision, allowing him to shake off the rust and come into his own without needing him to do immediate heavy lifting. While the two anchors on this team are evident and will be paid the most attention to by their opponents, I think these players can complement each other and live up to high expectations.

7. Roamin' Swipes			
O	<a href="#">Beast Mode</a> (C)	<a href="#">Xile</a> (77)	D
O	<a href="#">Messi</a> (45)	<a href="#">Kamikaze</a> (16)	D

I'm assuming this offense is Messi and Kamikaze, which is a fantastic duo talent-wise. Kami can be a pretty tense player at times, so Messi will need to be the calm and reassuring backbone that keeps them upright. But both of these players can carry when needed to, and opposing defenses will be at a loss as to which player they want to devote more time and energy toward stopping. beast mode is back on defense, where he's spent a good portion of his recent seasons. He'll need to step things up in order to make a playoff run. The fall to NLTP was disappointing, and the teams he's been a part of haven't had much success overall. Getting Xile as his defensive partner was a solid decision. He's been upping his game recently, and while last season wasn't kind to him, after a lengthy hiatus he could have himself an All-Star season. This team could have really high upside, but it's going to take work for them to achieve it. Also, none of these players have particularly great Dallas ping, which they will also need to be cognizant of.

### Tier 3: The Cinderellas

Teams who are Cinderellas would be excited to make the Big Dance (playoffs), but getting beyond that seems like a fairy tale. They have decent expectations going into the season, but for them to win it all would be legendary. Could the glass slipper fit?

8. Mumble Cappers			
O	<a href="#">d0pe</a> (C)	<a href="#">black orchid</a> (65)	D
O	<a href="#">Galvatron</a> (39)	<a href="#">eldenn</a> (1)	D

I can see this being a very boom-or-bust team, which I'm not sure d0pe was looking for. d0pe, for his part, is a consistently-strong minors offender who very well could've broken into majors this season. So long as he continues to work on improving his in-game mental fortitude, he'll be another top threat this season. He decided to make a risky move and pick Galvatron as his O partner. Everyone knows that Galvatron is mechanically strong, but can he mature into the kind of well-rounded player that minors will demand of him? I think it's very possible, and if d0pe doesn't lose patience in him they will go far together. black orchid consistently puts up flashy stats, but his teams also don't perform very well. With his fantastic in-base play, he's capable of being a primary defender this season, but it comes with the duty of helping eldenn stabilize after a few seasons off. She is a competent minors defender who, similar to orchid, has yet to be part of a truly great team. Could this be the season? A playoff push is certainly possible, but past that seems like wishful thinking.

9. Bottle Otters (mex)			
O	<a href="#">titanblue</a> (P)	<a href="#">FLY</a> (90)	D
O	<a href="#">might dino</a> (75)	<a href="#">anduin</a> (0)	D

I'm really unsure of how I feel about this team. mex/titan spent all of the team's TCs on two players, and they had a lot of them. I have very limited experience playing with or against might dino, but he's spoken highly of and will surely provide a lot of experience adjacent the more unversed titan. titan definitely possesses skills beyond that granted him through ping advantage, and hopefully his partner also puts him in the right headspace to succeed. FLY was a no-brainer for this team. She's a high-level defender who can take control of the game from both sides of the map. While she can shine, however, she is also prone to getting frustrated and having it harshly impact her game. anduin as her partner should be a unique experience: he succeeds when paired with a more aggressive, primary defender, and I think FLY can be just that. But he also can be critical of himself a bit too much, and this team as a whole desperately needs to keep a positive attitude in order to play to their talent.

10. OutPast			
O	<a href="#">inthesomeday</a> (C)	<a href="#">Zig!</a> (34)	D
O	<a href="#">BallsToYou.</a> (59)	<a href="#">Darth</a> (1)	D

inthesomeday had a lot of TCs but ended up getting an average defense at best. Zig! did not live up to the hype of last season, and while he may certainly be talented he was overvalued here. Darth has had some decent past minors seasons, but they don't give the impression that he can be a team's primary defender. The only way I see this pairing working out is if they can have insane chemistry and be significantly better than the sum of their parts. The offense is another story. someday has been holding his own in TPM, and though he is certainly not a known commodity, choosing the experienced and hyper-talented BallsToYou. was a fantastic decision. BTY should've gone for more in the draft, honestly. I think he can carry an offense. Meanwhile, someday can both provide the support needed to help BTY get out of base and materialize his own capping opportunities. I'm not sure how much time will be spent holding versus capping, however, and this is because of the defense. Zig and Darth's prevent will need to be solid, because I think their return game is weaker. If the two can outperform expectations on defense, however, then this is going to be a solid team. But that's a big if.

#### Tier 4: The Golden Retrievers

**Teams who are Golden Retrievers are happy to be here, excited to play, and have little chance to make playoffs. They have low expectations going into the season, and ideally prioritize having fun. Winning it all would be as improbable as the concept of Air Bud.**

11. Pi-Curious			
O	<a href="#">BallAnka</a> (C)	<a href="#">boogie</a> (90)	D
O	<a href="#">FaZe BubbleZ</a> (16)	<a href="#">Homie</a> (1)	D

The first thing that pops into my mind is, why did boogie go for 90 TCs to BallAnka? boogie has been solid on offense recently, but drafting him and FaZe BubbleZ makes me believe he's playing defense. I don't know if he can hold down the fort on defense. He's pretty good at tagging, but the decision-making isn't quite there. Homie could go huge for this team if he can get back into prime form, but I think that's pretty unlikely, whether it's his commitment to scrimming or just how long it would take him to regain his skills. No one is going to question BallAnka being the primary offender here, but I've never been sold on him being one of the top offenders in the league. I admit that this could be based on limited experience playing with him. bubblez is alright. He isn't super consistent but has enough experience to make things work from time to time. I think BallAnka and bubblez can be perfectly fine #1 and #2 offenders,

respectively, but perfectly fine won't cut it if they want to make an impact this season, especially when the defense is questionable.

12. WCYDinos			
O	<a href="#">asap</a> (C)	<a href="#">CB13</a> (41)	D
O	<a href="#">Owen</a> (42)	<a href="#">Jubjubs</a> (11)	D

While watching the minors draft, it was clear asap knew exactly who he wanted to play with, and for the most part I think he got who he wanted. The major issue here is that I'm not sure if that will be conducive to winning. Neither the offense nor the defense looks particularly threatening. CB13 is a highly-capable player whose commitment to this team is as great a question as his ping issues. I'm glad Jubjubs is back, but I don't think CB is the kind of partner who can easily help him return to form, as I expect scrimming and team development (hampered by CB not using a mic) to be limited. People tend to be a bit low on asap, which is a result of his wild playstyle. Though his grab-heavy tendencies probably won't change this season, he is also talented in his own right. He shouldn't, however, have been the strongest player on his team, which I think he is. I have no reads on Owen, other than the fact that he had a decent season 20 on a strong minors team. Here he will be called on to not only help asap make his playstyle sustainable, but to also be skilled enough to make his own chances. Unfortunately, I think this team isn't strong enough to contend for a playoff spot, and asap may need to swallow his pride and make roster changes in order for things to work out.

**Edit:** Owen is D restricted, which leads me to believe CB might be playing offense. If that's the case, Jub's return to form is going to be even more hampered, and I expect the offense to have a difficult time creating cohesion, though they are both individually talented. This doesn't impact their ranking.