

UTAH PIONEERS



2022 Instructions

Introduction

Welcome to playing against the 2022 **Utah Pioneers**. Last year, we snuck up on people, tied for 1st in the Central, beat Cabo Del Sol in the 'play in game', over-achieved vs. Bay Area to find its way in the PCL Championship Series. We were then creamed by St. Louis. This year, Utah is projected to win the Central Division, and will do so with its offense, and solid fielding. Utah starting pitching is 'ok', and has a few quality relief pitchers capable of closing out games.

Path to the Playoffs

Utah will go as far as its offense and health will take them. I have a handful of injury prone 'key players' this year. Utah pitchers pride themselves on keeping the ball in the yard. My opponents will have baserunners, and with my infield defense and groundball pitchers, we look to turn the double play to keep the scoring down. The Pioneers seek to win by outscoring opponents. I believe Utah will be in the top three in PCL hitting, home runs, slugging and runs scored. I think we will be amongst the leaders in DPs made. Pitching will be in the lower worst third of the league, but we will have a lower number of HRs surrendered when compared to most PCL teams. Utah ball produces victories in the form of a 7-5 win, and likely will have higher runs scored when playing home games at the hitter friendly bandbox called the **Sandy Sandlot**. I think we have enough talent to win 48 to 50 games (~ .544).

2022 Active Roster

Hitters N=14			Pitchers (N=11)		
2023	Stallings, Jacob	Catcher (starter vs. RH)		ROTATION	
2023	Varsho, Daulton*	Catcher (starter vs. LH) & LF	2023	Alcantara, Sandy	Starter
2024	Belt, Brandon*	1B (starter)	2024	Marquez, German	Starter (8N hitter; Runs 1-13)
2025	Wisdom, Pat	1B/3B	2024	Wood, Alex*	Starter (Runs 1-13)
2022	Frazier, Adam*	2B (starter vs RH)	2024	Lauer, Eric*	Starter/Swing vs. RH (6N)
2024	Rodgers, Brendan	2B (starter vs. LH)	2023	Senzatela, Tony	Starting Pitcher (Runs 1-12)
2023	Edman, Tommy+	2B/SS/OF; PR		BULLPEN	
2022	Correa, Carlos	SS (starter)	2025	Bender, Anthony	Closer; Set-up vs. mostly RH
2022	Bregman, Alex	3B (starter)	2024	Loup, Aaron*	Closer; Set-up vs. mostly LH
2024	Hoerner, Nico	SS/2B; PR; Q PH	2024	Strickland, Hunter	Set-up
2022	Tucker, Kyle*	LF (starter)	2022	Barnes, Matt	Set up vs. mostly LH
2022	Bader, Harrison	CF (starter vs. RH; Defense)	2023	Minter, AJ*	Middle & Set-up Relief
2024	Carlson, Dylan+	RF (starter vs. LH)	2023	Mayers, Mike	Mop up; Early Relief
2023	Reynolds, Bryan+	RF/CF (starter)			

Minors

David Peterson	2023	Kieboom, Carter	2024
Stevenson, Andrew	2024		
Moreland, Mitch	2023		

Overview

Brandon Belt may break the PCL HR record set by Palmeiro decades ago. Alcantara is the best pitcher I've had since starting the Utah club (yeah, that's not saying a whole lot). Good defense with "1"s at 1B; SS; C; CF and "2"s fill the roster at every other position. E ratings are also low. Your team will get base runners on, and I'm hopeful the defense turns 2-3 DPs per game. I have a handful of injury prone players (Belt; Bregman; Bader; Hoerner; Rodgers). If Utah is up +5 by the 7th, look to PH for any of these guys (except in the last game) to protect their health.



Starting Line-ups

Lineup 1 vs. LH (want to bat LH)		Lineup 2 vs. LH (Standard Lineup)		Lineup 3 vs. RH (want to bat LH)		Lineup 4 vs. RH (Standard Lineup)		Lineup 5, vs. R N/A	
CF	Reynolds+	CF	Reynolds+	RF	Reynolds+	RF	Reynolds+		
SS	Correa	SS	Correa	2B	Frazier*	SS	Correa		
LF	Tucker*	LF	Tucker*	1B	Belt*	1B	Belt*		
1B	Belt*	2B	Rodgers	LF	Tucker*	LF	Tucker*		
2B	Rodgers	1B	Belt*	SS	Correa	C	Stallings		
RF	Carlson+	RF	Carlson+	CF	Carlson+	2B	Frazier*		
3B	Bregman	3B	Bregman	3B	Bregman	CF	Bader		
C	Varsho*	C	Varsho*	C	Varsho*/Stallings	3B	Bregman		
Fried; C. Smith; T. Rogers				Alzolay; Dunn; Musgrove; Houser; Ohtani; Patino; J. Ross; Z. Thompson		vs. all pitchers not listed in the column to the left			

Key: + Switch * LH

Varsho starts when Wood or Lauer starts, otherwise, it's Stallings

Additional Notes on Lineups: & Guidelines on Positions

- **Catcher:** Stallings starts vs. RH; Varsho starts vs. LH, he's is replaced by Stallings vs. RH or for defense late in the 8th or 9th.
- **First Base:** Belt¹ starts and stays in vs. all pitching. Can be PH (do compare) and replaced by Wisdom on defense when Utah leads by 4+ runs in 7th, 8th or 9th. Ignore this strategy in the last game of the series.
- **Second Base:** Simple platoon. Frazier starts vs. RH pitching. Rodgers starts vs. LH pitching, and both can pinch hit for the other should you bring in a LH, or RH. I like Edman or Hoerner playing defense in this position in the 8th or 9th when I have the lead.
- **Shortstop:** Correa starts, and stays in vs. all pitching; Hoerner replaces him if injured.
- **Third Base:** Bregman¹ starts, and stays in vs. all pitching; he can be PH (do compare) for in a critical situation late, replaced by Wisdom on defense. To avoid injury, he can be pinch hit for late when Utah leads by 5+ runs in the 7th, 8th or 9th. Ignore this strategy in the last game of the series.
- **Right Field:** Reynolds starts vs. RH and stays in vs. all pitching; Carlson starts vs. LH pitching, as Reynolds plays CF.
- **Center Field:** Simple platoon. Bader vs. RH pitching. Reynolds vs. LH pitching.
- **Left Field:** Tucker starts, and stays in vs. all pitching.

1- Whoever (Belt or Bregman) comes to bat first in the lineup when I am up +5 from the 7th on, PH for him (do compare), and Wisdom replaces on defense. This leaves the other needing to bat for themselves. In the last game of the series, disregard this strategy.

WHEN YOUR LEFTY STARTER EXITS THE GAME REPLACED BY A RIGHTY

Use compare feature with all platoon players (i.e., Varsho/Stallings; Frazier/Rodgers; Bader/Carlson), and replace if justified by the comparison. I am pretty aggressive with this at the beginning of the inning....go with the best match-ups early starting in the 4th inning, and continue with this approach for the remainder of the game (but only for my platoon players) and I realize that if you flip LH & RH pitching back and forth, that may put UTP at a disadvantage later in the game. Start and Stay Aggressive.

WHEN YOUR RIGHTY STARTER EXITS THE GAME REPLACED BY A LEFTY

Use **compare feature** with all platoon players (i.e., Varsho/Stallings; Frazier/Rodgers; Bader/Carlson), and replace if justified by the comparison. I am pretty aggressive with this at the beginning of the inning...go with the best match-ups early starting in the 4th inning, and continue with this approach for the remainder of the game (but only for my platoon players) and I realize that if you flip LH & RH pitching back and forth, that may put UTP at a disadvantage later in the game. Start and Stay Aggressive.

IF UTP IS TRAILING GOING INTO THE 6TH-9TH: Use **compare feature** for any and all platoon players when you make pitching changes.

IF UTP IS WINNING GOING INTO THE 8TH or 9TH: Look to pinch run either **Hoerner** or **Edman** for **Fraizer** or **Rodgers** or the PH in the 7th or 8th bringing in one of those for defense in the 8th or 9th if we have the lead. While **Edman** is an AA stealer, it's actually **Hoerner** who is more likely to get the lead at 53% vs. 25%. When your hold summation (Pitcher & Catcher is < -2 or better), PR **Edman**...otherwise, it's **Hoerner** as PR. Bring in the best defense available for those position players not likely to bat in the 8th or 9th inning and then assess again in the 9th. As mentioned above, if Utah is up by 4+ runs in the 7th, 8th, or 9th...and **Belt** comes up to bat...PH for him (use compare), and replace defensively with **Wisdom**. Ignore this strategy in the final game, as I'm fine with **Belt** blowing his knee out in the last AB of the series. See defense matrix below. Insert a double switch (i.e., pitcher/position player) if appropriate. Again, I like using **Hoerner**, or Edman in a PR role, and to steal a base, followed by one of them playing 2B late in the game for defense.

When switching out players, find the best pinch hitter for the situation first – do not just use the guy you are going to replace the position player with.

Double-Switching

I like the double-switch. Situations include when bringing in the closer, and new players for defense...perform a double switch which results in the UTP pitcher batting later on in the new batting order.

Defense Matrix – Best Defense in Bold – Look to use in the 8th inning onward with a lead

C	1B	2B	SS	3B	LF	CF	RF
Stallings	Belt	Hoerner/Edman	Correa	Bregman	Tucker	Bader	Reynolds
Varsho	Wisdom	Rodgers	Hoerner	Wisdom	Reynolds	Reynolds	Carlson
	Stallings	Frazier	Edman	Hoerner	Varsho/Wisdom		

1B	Belt starts, and stays in; Wisdom can PH for him in the 7 th -9 th when UTP is 4+ runs up to protect him from injury.
2B	Frazier or Rodgers start, and the non-starter can PH if you switch pitchers. When UTP is winning, PR for either in the 7 th using Hoerner or Edman (to attempt steal) and either can stay in for defense.
SS	Correa stays in always. If Correa gets injured, Hoerner plays SS, with Edman as third option.
3B	Bregman stays in, but can be pinch hit for late in close games (+/- 2) (use compare) and then replaced by equally effective Wisdom . If Bregman is hurt, Wisdom takes his place.
RF	Reynolds starts in RF vs. RH, and Carlson starts vs. LH
CF	Bader starts vs. RH, and Reynolds starts vs. LH; Bader should be playing defense in close games in the 8 th or 9 th
LF	Tucker starts and stays in LF.
C	Stallings starts vs. RH, and Varsho starts vs. LH. I like Stallings catching in the 8 th or 9 th in close games.

MISCELLANEOUS

Pitcher hitting / Pinch hitting / Pinch running

- **Pitchers Hitting: Marquez** (.271 avg) has the **green light** to swing away; Other pitchers sacrifice runners to second - even with two strikes.
- **Pinch Hit Guidelines:** Use **compare feature**. Remember Marquez is an 8N (.271 avg); PHs better in the clutch include: **Hoerner**; **Edman** (Ω)
- **Pinch Run:** The 2022 Utah team can run. **Edman** (1-16), **Hoerner** (1-15), and consider a double switch when inserted as a PR. The pitchers (**Wood** (1-13) and **Sanzatela** (1-12)) can also be inserted as PR, when they are not starting a game. **Marquez** (1-13) can run too, but I like him more in a PH role.

Game Strategies

- **Typical stealing decisions:** Steal 2nd at 70%; 65% at the bottom of the order, and 60% if there are 2 outs and a clutch hitter (Ω) is batting. **Bader, Edman, Hoerner, Tucker, Varsho, Frazier, Reynolds, and Wisdom** all have the **green light** to steal. Steal 3rd at 70%. If a SB is situationally needed (to tie or take the lead), consider **Hoerner** (53% chance to get the lead) or **Edman** (25% chance) or **Bader** (31% chance) as PR and try to get the lead to get someone in scoring position.
- **Who to H&R and when:** Never.
- **Sacrifice:** Sacrifice is only with pitchers (≥ 56% chance) and they are a mixed bag of talent.... but all pitchers (except **Marquez**) will try to sacrifice, even with two strikes. **Senzatela, Lauer** are pitchers with **A bunt ratings**, followed by **Wood** who has a **B bunt rating**...and can be used in a close game, or extra inning game to get a runner in scoring position, when the bench is depleted.
- **Squeeze Plays:** Same as sacrifice. Use small ball if it is late in a close game or earlier if a pitcher is up. The only roster players who can be used in a squeeze play are **Lauer, Senzatela, and Wood**. Consider using **Belt** (A bunter) in an extra inning tied game when your ace closer is on the mound and a runner is on 3rd. If you counter by bringing the infield in, Belt swings away....look at percentages here.
- **Scoring:** Run home at 65% with one out or less; 45% with two outs; 30% with two outs and the pitcher is batting next. If UTP is trailing by more than three runs after the 5th, take a more conservative approach (add +5%) in running to home with less than two outs.
- **Runners / Trailers:** To second at 50%+, but to third at 70%+. Otherwise, send a lower percentage trailer only when we are down by a run or tied, from the 7th inning on.
- **Throwing Guidelines:** Cut the throw off from the outfield early in the game unless runner is heading home with a safe chance at less than 55%. Let the throw through even if the runner is as high as 65% with two outs and the 8th or 9th hitter is due up.
- **Defense:** Always get the sure out on Defense Option plays, unless runner represents the go-ahead run and his safe chance is less than 35%. Same with the trailing runners.
- **Intentional Walks:** Use your best judgment. I do not like being too aggressive with this – but there are guys/situations...(i.e., **Trout**) ...or similar stud-types (OPS > 1.0) up to bat, and the winning run is presently on 2nd, I'd walk him. I do like to walk the 8th batter in the order, with runners on base and two out, to pitch to the pitcher if I am convinced the pitcher will be batting.



Starts: Alcantara (20); Marquez (20); Wood* (20); Senzatela (18); Lauer* (12)

On the Road Pitching Rotation Road Games in the WEST LOOK HERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3
Bay Area	Alcantara (1)	Wood (1)	Marquez (1)
Pebble Beach	Wood (2)	Alcantara (2)	Lauer (1)
Santa Barbara	Alcantara (3)	Senzatela (1)	Marquez (2)
Southern Cal	Alcantara (4)	Wood (3)	Lauer (2)

On the Road Pitching Rotation Road Games in the CENTRAL LOOK HERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3
Cabo Del Sol	Lauer (3)	Alcantara (5)	Senzatela (2)
PH Beach Bums	Marquez (3)	Alcantara (6)	Senzatela (3)
San Diego	Marquez (4)	Wood (4)	Lauer (4)

On the Road Pitching Rotation Road Games in the EAST LOOK HERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3
Augusta	Marquez (5)	Alcantara (7)	Senzatela (4)
Chicago	Wood (5)	Alcantara (8)	Lauer (5)
St. Louis	Marquez (6)	Lauer (6)	Wood (6)
Virginia Beach	Lauer (7)	Wood (7)	Senzatela (5)

On the Road Pitching Rotation Road Games in the CENTRAL LOOK HERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4
Cabo Del Sol	Marquez (7)	Alcantara (9)	Senzatela (6)	Wood (8)
PH Beach Bums	Marquez (8)	Alcantara (10)	Senzatela (7)	Wood (9)
San Diego	Marquez (9)	Lauer (8)	Senzatela (8)	Wood (10)



HOME GAMES Pitching Rotation HOME Games vs. the WEST

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3
Bay Area	Alcantara (11)	Wood (11)	Marquez (10)
Pebble Beach	Marquez (11)	Alcantara (12)	Lauer (9)
Santa Barbara	Alcantara (13)	Senzatela (9)	Marquez (12)
Southern Cal	Wood (12)	Alcantara (14)	Marquez (13)

HOME GAMES Pitching Rotation HOME Games vs. the CENTRAL

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3
Cabo Del Sol	Marquez (14)	Alcantara (15)	Senzatela (10)
PH Beach Bums	Marquez (15)	Alcantara (16)	Senzatela (11)
San Diego	Wood (13)	Marquez (16)	Lauer (10)

HOME GAMES Pitching Rotation HOME Games vs. the EAST

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3
Augusta	Wood (14)	Alcantara (17)	Senzatela (12)
Chicago	Wood (15)	Alcantara (18)	Senzatela (13)
St. Louis	Wood (16)	Senzatela (14)	Lauer (11)
Virginia Beach	Wood (17)	Marquez (17)	Senzatela (15)

HOME GAMES Pitching Rotation HOME Games vs. the CENTRAL

Team	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4
Cabo Del Sol	Marquez (18)	Alcantara (19)	Senzatela (16)	Wood (18)
PH Beach Bums	Marquez (19)	Alcantara (20)	Senzatela (17)	Wood (19)
San Diego	Wood (20)	Marquez (20)	Lauer (12)	Senzatela (18)

Managing the Starters

The goal with most of Utah's starters is to tolerate up to about 4 to 5 runs early (< 5 innings) and be able to **turn it over to the bullpen for the last 3-4 innings**. However, most starters (except **Alcantara**) are removed immediately if they go into dots. An exception to this is when Utah is up 5+ runs....at which point, go batter by batter in such situations, pulling the starter should the game getting closer than 3 runs. **In close games, (+/- 3 runs) past the 6th inning, go batter to batter with my starters, and resort to my bullpen when your team has a player in scoring position, or just scored.** Except for **Alcantara**, my set-up pitchers and closers are the better option to pitch in close games as compared to my starters.

Starting Pitcher Overview

<p>Sandy Alcantara (SP) 206 IP (be patient) 20 Starts (No Innings Max)</p>	<p>He's more effective vs. RH hitting. Batter by batter once he's in dots, and should not be allowed to give up more than 5 runs in his starts. If you load your batting order with LH hitting, a good early counter (5th-7th inning) would be Barnes in a set-up role (to get out of an inning in a close game) and/or Minter early (6th to 7th inning) or Loup late (8th or 9th inning).</p>
<p>Alex Wood* (SP) 139 IP (some patience) 20 Starts (7th-8th inning MAX)</p>	<p>He's more effective vs. RH hitting. He should be removed once in dots, and should not be allowed to give up more than 5 runs in his starts. Remove in the 7th or 8th inning based on what's ahead in your line-up. Remove in the 7th if he's facing the first half of your batting order. If you load your batting order with LH hitting, a good early counter (5th-7th inning) would be Barnes in a set-up role (to get out of an inning in a close game) and/or Minter early (6th to 7th inning) or Loup late (8th or 9th inning). Effective Utah relief vs. RH includes Mayers early (< 5th inning), Strickland early (5th to 7th), and Bender late (8th and 9th). Lauer (if not starting in the series) would be a good option early (< 5th) should your line-up be loaded with RHs.</p>
<p>German Marquez (SP) 180 IP (some patience) 20 Starts No Innings MAX</p>	<p>He's more effective vs. RH hitting. He should be removed once in dots, and should not be allowed to give up more than 5 runs in his starts. If you load your batting order with LH hitting, a good early counter (5th-7th inning) would be Barnes in a set-up role (to get out of an inning in a close game) and/or Minter early (6th to 7th inning) or Loup late (8th or 9th inning). Effective Utah relief vs. RH includes Mayers early (< 5th inning) Strickland early (5th to 7th), and Bender late (8th and 9th). Lauer (if not starting in the series) would be a good option early (< 5th) should your line-up be loaded with RHs.</p>
<p>Eric Lauer (SW) 119 IP (some patience) 12 Starts (7th-8th inning Max)</p>	<p>He's more effective vs. RH hitters. This swing pitcher will have a dual role with 12 starts, many of which are in bigger ball parks. He should be removed once in dots, and should not be allowed to give up more than 4 runs in his starts. Remove in the 7th or 8th inning. Remove in the 7th if he's facing the first half of your batting order. If you load your batting order with LH hitting, a good early counter (5th-7th inning) would be Barnes in a set-up role (to get out of an inning in a close game) and/or Minter early (6th to 7th inning) or Loup late (8th or 9th inning). Effective Utah relief vs. RH includes Mayers early (< 5th inning) Strickland early (5th to 7th), and Bender late (8th and 9th).</p>
<p>Antonio Senzatela (SP) 157 IP (little to no patience) 18 Starts (No Innings Max)</p>	<p>Pretty balanced, but also pretty below average. He's a ground ball pitcher who has a high DP loading on his card. While runners will get on base, I'm hopeful there will be inning ending DPs. He's removed once in dots, and should not be allowed to give up more than 4 runs in his starts. Don't trust him, and if the game is close (± 2) past the 6th inning, go to the bullpen. If you load your batting order with LH hitting, a good early counter (5th-7th inning) would be Barnes in a set-up role (to get out of an inning in a close game) and/or Minter early (6th to 7th inning) or Loup late (8th or 9th inning). Effective Utah relief vs. RH includes Mayers early (< 5th inning) Strickland early (5th to 7th), and Bender late (8th and 9th).</p>

Managing the Bullpen (Close Game = +/- 3 runs)

Three Batter Minimum Rule: This year, UTP's bullpen is decent, and follow the guidance below. If you beat the match-up, so be it. When reviewing who the next three batters are... Early in the game, **Mayers** vs. $\geq 50\%$ RH; **Strickland** vs. $\geq 50\%$ RH; or **Minter** vs. $\geq 67\%$ LH. **In a close game, Barnes** vs. $\geq 67\%$ LH, **Loup** vs. either, and **Bender** vs. $\geq 50\%$ RH are good choices stop a late inning threat, or to close out a game.

Again, UTP has a decent bullpen, and better ratios than most of our starters. Your challenge is getting the most out of what Utah has to offer by working the pen to improve the match-ups. **Long relief** (< 5th) is **Lauer** (when he is not in the series rotation) and **Mayers** (vs. more RH lineups). Both of these pitchers can be used later in the game if scores are more than ± 5 runs difference. The 6th through 7th, maybe into 8th inning, **Barnes** (when Utah is ahead by ≥ 2 runs vs. more LHs in lineup) or **Minter** (vs. more LHs in lineup) or **Strickland** (vs. more RHs in lineup). My closers work the 8th and 9th and are **Loup** (use vs. balanced lineup without lefty killers) and/or **Bender** (vs. $\geq 50\%$ RH hitters).

Relief Pitchers' Roles

<p>Closers</p> <p>Secondary Closer</p>	<p>By committee, use compare feature to select Loup* (57 IP) or Bender (61 IP). Loup is more balanced, but lefthanded. Bender shuts down RH, so go with him when next 3-4 batters are $\geq 50\%$ RH. A <u>secondary closer</u> is Barnes (55 IP; +9 hold rating) who shuts down LH, but use him if the two above are needing a rest, AND/OR Utah is up by 2 runs or more. Any of the three can enter the game from the 8th inning on. Consider a double switch with 2B or CF should one of these pitchers be likely to bat in the 9th.</p>
<p>High Leverage Situations in Close Games (to get one to three outs with you having runners in scoring positions in a tight game).</p>	<p>Barnes (55 IP; +9 hold rating) and Minter* (52 IP) vs. LH lineups, and Strickland (59 IP) vs. $\geq 50\%$ RH lineups. To a lesser degree, Mayers (75 IP) can be used vs. $\geq 50\%$ RH.</p>
<p>Primary Set-up Pitcher</p>	<p>Use compare feature to select Strickland (59 IP), Barnes (55 IP) and Minter* (52 IP). To a lesser degree, Mayers (75 IP) can be used vs. $\geq 50\%$ RH.</p>
<p>Specialist vs. LH Hitters</p>	<p>Use compare feature for RH Barnes (55 IP), or Minter* (52 IP)</p>
<p>Specialist vs. RH Hitters</p>	<p>Use compare feature for RH Strickland (59 IP) or Lauer* (119 IP) (when he is not starting in the series).</p>
<p>Long or Early Relief (mop-up)</p>	<p>If UTP is down or up by > 4 runs early ($< 5^{\text{th}}$) and my starter (except Alcantara) goes into dots go with SW pitcher Lauer* (119 IP; if not in series rotation) or Mayers (72 IP). Otherwise, insert RH Barnes (55 IP) who can pitch a couple innings.</p>

Usage Concerns: None. Follow my directions above, and if needed, I can limit IP during my home games. Should these instructions lead to bullpen IPs overage, I'll go long and hard with my starters with my home games to bring the usage trajectory back in line.

