

NJIT math professor announces picks for Cy Young and Most Valuable Player: Says Rangers will win

October 19 2011

With Major League Baseball's World Series set to begin today, NJIT math professor Bruce Bukiet has once again analyzed the players most deserving of winning baseball's most important awards for the 2011 season. He also provides the probability of Texas Rangers and St. Louis Cardinals winning the World Series.

"Now that the Texas Rangers and St. Louis Cardinals have won their League Championships, the Texas Rangers have a 63 percent chance of winning the World Series although the National League Champion St. Louis Cardinals have the home field advantage."

At the season's start, Bukiet used his [mathematical model](#) to project the number of team wins (see: http://m.njit.edu/~bukiet/baseball/2011_season_predictions.htm). Last April, Bukiet's model selected five of the eight post-season winners. His analysis gave him the top slot at [BaseballPhD](#). In addition, three of the four teams that advanced to the League Championship series numbered among Bukiet's five named winners. Both World Series contenders were also among the teams that, Bukiet said, should make it to the post-season. Follow Bukiet at <http://m.njit.edu/~bukiet/baseball/playoffs11.htm> Kevin Fritz, a college student based in New Jersey, provided research assistance for this work.

What is the likelihood of each team taking the series in a given number

of games? Going into the series, the most likely outcome (23.2 percent) is for the Texas Rangers to win in five games. The Cardinals' best chance is 16 percent to win in seven games.

As to the winners of the Cy Young and Most Valuable Player awards, Bukiet's model analyzes the number of extra wins based on each player's [performance](#) in 2011 that would have been added to a team of otherwise average players (taking into account position played). "This year the results were unusual because the most deserving hitter and the most deserving pitcher in each league played for the same team," said Bukiet.

In the American League, the Cy Young Award should go to Detroit Tiger Justin Verlander, whose performance would have added 5.7 wins to an average team and the Most Valuable Player Award should go to his teammate (and runner-up for the MVP award in 2010) Miguel Cabrera, whose performance was worth a whopping 7.2 extra wins. Runners-up: Los Angeles Angel Jered Weaver, 4.2 extra wins; Toronto Blue Jay Jose Bautista, 7.0 extra wins).

In the National League, the Cy Young Award should go to Los Angeles Dodger Clayton Kershaw, whose performance would have added 4.6 wins to an average team and the Most Valuable Player Award should go to his teammate Matt Kemp, whose performance was worth 5.9 extra wins. (The runners up should be Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Roy Halladay with 4.0 extra wins and Milwaukee Brewer Ryan Braun with 5.6 extra wins, respectively). The methodology and results for post-season awards over the past 20 years using the model were published in the International Journal of Performance Analysis in Sports.

This is Bukiet's 11th year predicting the probability of each team winning each game played during the baseball season (posted on www.egrandslam.com) and predicting how teams should perform during the season. The results have compared favorably with experts.

More information: Bukiet's model originally appeared in Operations Research; improvements have followed in the *International Journal of Performance Analysis in Sports*.

Provided by New Jersey Institute of Technology

Citation: NJIT math professor announces picks for Cy Young and Most Valuable Player: Says Rangers will win (2011, October 19) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-10-njit-math-professor-cy-young.html>

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