

Top 10 Most Difficult or Improbable Playoff Runs in PHL History

This ranking focuses on championship runs that were unusually difficult, unlikely, or transformed dramatically once the playoffs began. Factors considered include regular-season record, playoff record, length of the postseason path, strength of competition, individual scoring burden, A/B role performance, and how sharply a team improved when the postseason began. It is not simply a ranking of the best champions.

Rank	Year	Team	Reg. Season	Result	Why It Stands Out
1	2014	Ronnie Raymond / Casey Santos	24-30	Champion	12 playoff games
2	2025	Casey Santos / Jake Dupree	26-28	Champion	7-2 playoffs
3	2013	Bobby Almeida / Troy Lewis	24-24	Champion	9-0 playoffs
4	2021	Gerry Santos / Ramon Santiago	42-12	Champion	Gerry: 178 pts
5	2018	Chris Kelly / Arthur Poirier	31-23	Champion	7-0 playoffs
6	2024	Tom Wolfe / Marc Rousseau	36-18	Champion	7-0 playoffs
7	2011	Gerry Santos / Joe Morin	31-23	Champion	12 playoff games
8	2016	Dave Desnoyers / Wayne Gomes	46-8	Champion	Five-game Finals
9	2019	Casey Santos / Tom Wolfe	33-21	Champion	7-2 playoffs
10	2023	Casey Santos / Devin Santos	33-21	Champion	9-1 playoffs

1. Ronnie Raymond / Casey Santos - 2014

Why it was improbable: The champions entered the postseason after a 24-30 regular season, making them one of the rare PHL title teams to finish the regular season below .500. Their playoff path lasted 12 games, and both players elevated dramatically: Casey scored 137 playoff points while Ronnie added 126. They also ended the defending champions' attempt to repeat. Few PHL titles combine a modest regular-season record, a long playoff path and such a large postseason jump.

2. Casey Santos / Jake Dupree - 2025

Why it was improbable: The team finished the regular season 26-28, then went 7-2 in the playoffs. Casey raised his scoring to 110 playoff points at 12.22 PPG, while Jake added 67. Winning a championship after a sub-.500 regular season puts this run in a very small historical group and makes the postseason turnaround especially notable.

3. Bobby Almeida / Troy Lewis - 2013

Why it was improbable: Bobby and Troy were only 24-24 in the regular season, but once the playoffs began they did not lose a game. Their 9-0 postseason remains one of the cleanest examples of a team becoming dramatically better at exactly the right time. Bobby scored 122 points in those nine games at 13.56 PPG.

4. Gerry Santos / Ramon Santiago - 2021

Why it was difficult: The regular-season record was excellent at 42-12, so the surprise was not that the team was competitive. The difficulty came from the postseason scoring burden. Gerry scored 178 points in 10 games at 17.80 PPG and posted a league-record 28.8 playoff PER, while Ramon contributed 50 points. Gerry also scored a record 91 points in the Finals series. The title required one of the most extreme individual postseason performances in league history.

5. Chris Kelly / Arthur Poirier - 2018

Why it was notable: A 31-23 regular season placed the team in solid but not overwhelming territory. They then went 7-0 in the playoffs. Perfect postseason runs are rare in the PHL, and this one stands out because the team improved from a good regular-season club into an unbeatable playoff champion.

6. Tom Wolfe / Marc Rousseau - 2024

Why it was notable: Shoe-Ter McGavin went 36-18 in the regular season and entered the year behind other teams in the preseason outlook. They then completed a 7-0 postseason with two shutouts and swept the Finals. The combination of being outside the preseason favorite position and finishing with playoff perfection makes this one of the league's most impressive championship surges.

7. Gerry Santos / Joe Morin - 2011

Why it was difficult: The team went 31-23 in the regular season and then needed a 12-game playoff run to win the title. Gerry scored 166 points at 13.83 PPG, still the third-highest single-postseason point total on record. The length of the run and the sustained scoring requirement give this championship a strong endurance and carry component.

8. Dave Desnoyers / Wayne Gomes - 2016

Why it was difficult: This was not an underdog team - the 46-8 regular-season record made them a powerhouse. The difficulty came from the level of postseason competition and a five-game Finals. Dave scored 126 playoff points at 14.00 PPG, while Gerry Santos produced 134 at 14.89 during the same postseason on the eventual runner-up side. Winning through elite opposition and a full-length Finals earns this run a place on the list.

9. Casey Santos / Tom Wolfe - 2019

Why it was difficult: The champions went 33-21 in the regular season and 7-2 in the playoffs. Their postseason was unusually balanced, with Tom scoring 109 points and Casey 100. The field also included Armand Duquette's 127-point playoff run, so the title required surviving high-level individual competition without relying on one player to carry the entire load.

10. Casey Santos / Devin Santos - 2023

Why it was notable: The team finished 33-21 in the regular season and then went 9-1 in the playoffs. Devin, playing from the B position, scored 126 points at 12.60 PPG, while Casey added 94. The run stands out because the B-side production rose to elite levels during a nearly perfect postseason, giving the team a very different playoff ceiling than a typical A/B pairing.

What the list shows

The most improbable PHL championships are not always the teams with the weakest regular-season records. Some runs are remarkable because a middle-of-the-pack team suddenly became unbeatable, while others were difficult because a championship required an extraordinary individual performance or surviving unusually strong opposition. The 2014 and 2025 titles stand out for winning after sub-.500 regular seasons; 2013, 2018 and 2024 for playoff perfection; and 2021 for the historic individual workload required to finish the job.

Early-era note

Detailed playoff records are incomplete for portions of the league's earliest seasons, particularly 2006-2010. Those championships are therefore harder to rank confidently in a list built around playoff path difficulty, game-by-game results and individual postseason production. Their absence from this top 10 should not be interpreted as evidence that they were easier championships.

PHL historical analysis based on the available Master Database, season records and documented league context. The ranking is analytical rather than an official league award.