

## **2025 MLB Draft Comparison: Boston Kellner and Billy Carlson**

After spending the past 2025 season scouting and observing hundreds of high school baseball players through my internship at Prep Baseball Report, I am a little biased in saying there is some incredible amateur baseball talent in this state, and I could not have been prouder of all the players who put forth such a great effort and season...but then my baseball mindset took over and made me wonder, how good are these players as stacked up against other states throughout the country? So, I then took it upon myself to do a mini-statistical analysis and manifesto to see if these players' performances hold up against some of the best talent across the country.

My first stab was to look at the players from the states in my *"#DONTSLLEEPONAZ: An In-Depth Look at Arizona's 2025 HS Baseball Statistics v. the rest of the USA"*, which can be found on my Sports Management Worldwide scouting profile at [smwwscout.com/scout/alex-marks](https://smwwscout.com/scout/alex-marks). In this report, I will statistically compare using some advanced stats and metrics one of the top baseball draft prospects from Arizona, SS/RHP Boston Kellner from Hamilton HS in Chandler, AZ, versus one of the top baseball draft prospects from California, SS/RHP Billy Carlson from Corona HS in Corona, CA.

### **I. Selection Process**

I decided to select two top baseball prospects for the upcoming 2025 MLB draft from Arizona and California that excelled as a designated "two-way player," meaning they had high/extreme prospect potential for their skills as a position player and a pitcher. The selection of Boston Kellner as Arizona's was relatively easy to make, as he is not only the top-rated two-way player in the state but is also considered by many in the industry to be one of the top overall state prospects for the 2025 class. The selection of Billy Carlson was determined by his being one of the top overall draft prospects in the state of California, and he was also of equal talent level as a "two-way" baseball player based on prospect skill ratings provided by respected baseball scouting and player evaluation organizations in the industry.

One disclaimer I will make is that I have had the opportunity and privilege to see Boston Kellner in person for several games and outings during the 2025 season, as I reside in Arizona, but was unable to see Billy Carlson in person. However, I have reviewed all videos that are available through the World Wide Web and have been able to generate a solid overall scouting consensus of his prospect skills and abilities. It is also worth noting that Billy Carlson has been ranked by several player evaluation organizations and websites as a top 10 prospect for the upcoming 2025 MLB draft held in July. Boston Kellner, however, has only been ranked recently by one organization (Baseball America) within its draft prospects

rankings, and he was not considered a Day One draft prospect by way of the specific rankings (I will further disclaim that there may have been other rankings that included Boston Kellner, but I could not locate them). My overall scouting reports of both players can also be found at the end of this report under Exhibit A.

## **II. Introduction to Pitcher DIGS**

I wanted to make my statistical comparison between the two players using some advanced statistics and metrics I have access to through a website called “Pitcher DIGS.” ([Pitcher DIGS](#)). “Pitcher DIGS” is run by Kyle Goings out of Northern California. In his spare time from his full-time job and as a loving husband and parent, he created and runs this website that produces an advanced statistical leaderboard of baseball players' performance for the current specific season. He had focused mainly on professional and collegiate statistics since its maiden launch back in 2023 since those were readily available through other statistical platforms, but just recently back in 2024, he started creating one for high school players. (which he was able to provide statistics and advanced metrics for over 15,000 prep players). Using the rankings and statistics provided by certain baseball media platforms, he has then been able to utilize formulas he developed to upload all the stats from those websites to create statistical leaderboards. He has also done his best to provide a consistent, similar analysis and leaderboards for other states, prioritizing state powerhouses in the Southeast and Midwest. Upon discovery of the website and the great work Kyle does, I volunteered to help him update his spreadsheets for the state of Arizona and as many high school programs as he would like, and he graciously accepted. So, during the season leading up to the recent conclusion with the respective class state championships, I updated his Arizona High School spreadsheets with all the statistics that he needed and were available from public social media websites. It was a lot of work, but it was very rewarding once he made all the statistical generations available on his website. It is also worth noting that he has created two new baseball metrics called “DIGS” (which is a pitching metric that stands for Defensive Independent Game Score) and “BaGS” (which is an offensive metric that stands for Batter Game Score), as these were his flagship metrics when he originally launched Pitcher DIGS back in 2023. I will get more into this later in the program. All in all, we have been able to produce final statistics and metrics for over 2,700 Arizona high school players from the 2025 season. There are not too many sites out there in the World Wide Web that have such publicly available in-depth analysis of baseball amateur statistics and metric evaluations at the high school level, so I am honored to have met Kyle and been able to contribute to his endeavor.

I sincerely thank Pitcher DIGS for allowing me to contribute to this great platform and for having all these incredible stats and metrics available. None of this would be possible without it.

### III. My Analysis and Results

#### A. The First Group of Stats/Metrics (WAR, oWAR, pWAR, wOBA, ERA, and DEF)

I decided to separate my analysis into two subgroups. The first group consisted of values and metrics that generally had “smaller figures” to have the ability to show in a similar graphical presentation and not be distorted by one being larger than the other(s). Those stats/metrics would be WAR, oWAR, pWAR, wOBA, ERA, and DEF. To give you some context on what each stat/metric represents, here are the definitions provided by MLB.com<sup>1</sup> and Pitcher DIGS<sup>2</sup>:

- ***Wins Above Replacement, including offensive and pitching WAR***

**(WAR/oWAR/pWAR):** WAR measures a player's value in all facets of the game by deciphering how many more wins he's worth than a replacement-level player at his same position (e.g., a Minor League replacement or a readily available fill-in free agent).

**WAR = Wins Above Replacement**

- ☐ Combines points from ALL games played... it's a total.
- ☐ oWAR includes offensive & fielding production.
- ☐ pWAR includes only pitching production.
- ☐ WAR combines the two scores.
- ☐ Last year, 0.5 WAR was the average for all players in Superior CA (nearly 2,000 players).
- ☐ Roughly 100 players earned 3+ WAR | Top 30 earned 4+ | Top 15 earned 5+.

- ***Defensive Value (DEF):***

**Fielding (labeled DEF on the BaGS leaderboard)**

- ☐ Awards points for any outs or assists recorded in the field.
- ☐ Does NOT penalize for errors (1 point if the play is made, 0 if it's not).

- ***Weighted On-Base Average (wOBA):*** wOBA is a version of on-base percentage that accounts for how a player reached base -- instead of simply considering whether a player reached base. The value for each method of reaching base is determined by how much that event is worth in relation to projected runs scored (example: a

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<sup>1</sup> [Glossary | MLB.com](#)

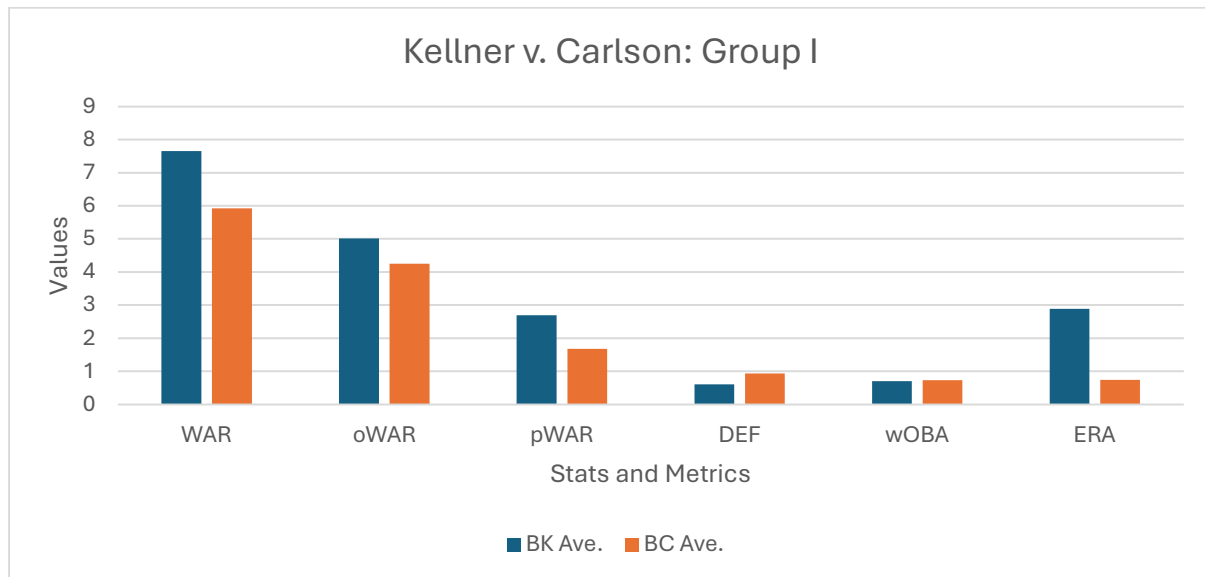
<sup>2</sup> [Pitcher DIGS on X: https://t.co/3Bcrx1J7is](https://t.co/3Bcrx1J7is) / X

double is worth more than a single). Unlike on-base percentage and OPS (OBP + SLG), wOBA assigns value to each method of reaching base, in terms of its impact on scoring runs.

- **Earned Run Average (ERA):** Earned run average represents the number of earned runs a pitcher allows per nine innings -- with earned runs being any runs that scored without the aid of an error or a passed ball. ERA is the most accepted universal statistical tool for evaluating pitchers.

Here are the statistical averages and graphical representations of these statistics/metrics for each player for the past two seasons:

	WAR	oWAR	pWAR	DEF	wOBA	ERA
<b>BK Ave.</b>	7.652146552	5.0118966	2.6902500	0.606061	0.701431	2.885
<b>BC Ave.</b>	5.923868100	4.2479310	1.6759370	0.935484	0.733221	0.740



As you can see from the applicable measures, Boston Kellner has been slightly more productive offensively with the higher average WAR and oWAR, and basically an equivalent wOBA. Billy Carlson has though been more productive as a fielder with the higher DF value, and that is consistent with his stronger fielding skillset, including several plus-plus potential scouting grades. They both seem to wash in the value of their pitching, as Boston Kellner had the higher pWAR, but Billy Carlson had the lower ERA (most likely due to Kellner's usage as a starting pitcher and Carlson being used as a reliever).

## B. The Second Group of Statistics/Metrics (BaGS+, DIGS+ and TWP+)

The next group of statistics and metrics I wanted to use to evaluate these states were the new stats and metrics generated by Pitcher DIGS: Batter Game Score (BaGS), Defense Independent Game Score (DIGS) and Two Way Player (TWP). Each metric also contained a “plus” component, making them “BaGS+”, “DIGS+” and “TWP+”. Here are the explanations of each as provided by Pitcher DIGS through their website and X account<sup>3</sup>:

- **Batter Game Score (BaGS and BaGS+)<sup>4</sup>:**

BaGS is an offensive rating system designed around the inputs of ottoneu fantasy baseball scoring (AB, 1B, 2B, 3B, HR, BB, HBP, SB, & CS). Statcast Barrels are also incorporated when available, as are GDP & SF. BaGS can be calculated on a single-game basis, but is primarily intended for comparing season or career performance. BaGS is adjusted for park, league, & year at the MLB level; age, level, park, & league for MiLB; and age, conference, & park (where applicable) for collegiate. BaGS scoring (where 50 is average) is used to estimate a player's wOBA, then converted to BaGS+ (where 100 is average).

### **BaGS+ Scale**

175 | Elite (+++)

150 | Excellent (++)

125 | Very Good (+)

100 | League Average

75 | Replacement

### **BaGS = Batter Game Score (measures offensive success)**

- ☐ BaGS awards points for things like hits (different weights for each type), BB, SB, HBP, & Sac Flies.
- ☐ BaGS penalizes (takes away points) for making outs, and doubles the penalty for strikeouts.
- ☐ BaGS is calculated as the average of all games played.
- ☐ BaGS+ means the scores are converted to a scale where 100 is average. Anything over 150 is excellent.

- **Defense Independent Game Score (DIGS and DIGS+)<sup>5</sup>:**

DIGS is a game score metric measuring IP, SO, BB, HBP, HR, & H. It is designed for multi-inning pitchers, is adjusted for park, league, & year for MLB; age, level, park, & league for MiLB; and age, conference, & park (when applicable) for NCAA & JuCo. While DIGS marries a results-based model (including raw H & HR) with a batted ball regression model (where batted ball types & quality of contact are used at the MLB level & league average results are used for MiLB & college). The formula is designed so a player's reported DIGS score will lean heavily to the regression model early on, then gradually slide more to the results model as his BF total rises during the season. DIGS

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<sup>3</sup> <https://t.co/3Bcrx1J7is> / X

<sup>4</sup> [Pitcher DIGS - BaGS](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Pitcher DIGS - DIGS](#)

scoring (where 50 is average) is used to estimate a player's ERA, then converted to DIGS+ (where 100 is average).

### **DIGS+ Scale**

160 | Elite (+++)  
140 | Excellent (++)  
120 | Very Good (+)  
100 | League Average  
80 | Below Average  
60 | Replacement

#### **DIGS = Defense Independent Game Score (measures pitching success)**

- ☐ Awards points for each out recorded (extra for K's).
- ☐ Penalizes for hits, HR, BB, & HBP.
- ☐ Does NOT penalize for defensive errors.
- ☐ Adds in a "batted ball luck factor" for each pitcher to account for defensive gaps.
- ☐ Calculated as an average of all games pitched.
- ☐ DIGS+ means scores are converted to a scale where 100 is average. Scores over 140 are excellent.

#### • **Two-Way Player score (TWP and TWP+):**

##### **TWP+ = Two-Way Players**

- ☐ Combines BaGS & DIGS (plus strength of schedule) to rate two-way player production..
- ☐ 100 is average. Scores over 150 are excellent.

One aspect of each of these new metrics is that each contains a "strength of schedule" (SOS) component, factoring in each respective player's class/division level of competition. Here is how that SOS component is factored in per Pitcher DIGS, including points for graduation year<sup>6</sup>:

#### **Strength of Schedule (labeled SOS+ on leaderboards)**

- ☐ Calculated using Maxpreps team ratings & strength ratings from the past 3 years.
- ☐ Schools receive SOS points from their own opponents & their league rating.
- ☐ A 100 SOS+ score means exactly average competition.
- ☐ All players receive an SOS adjustment (either raises or lowers their score).

#### **Graduation Year**

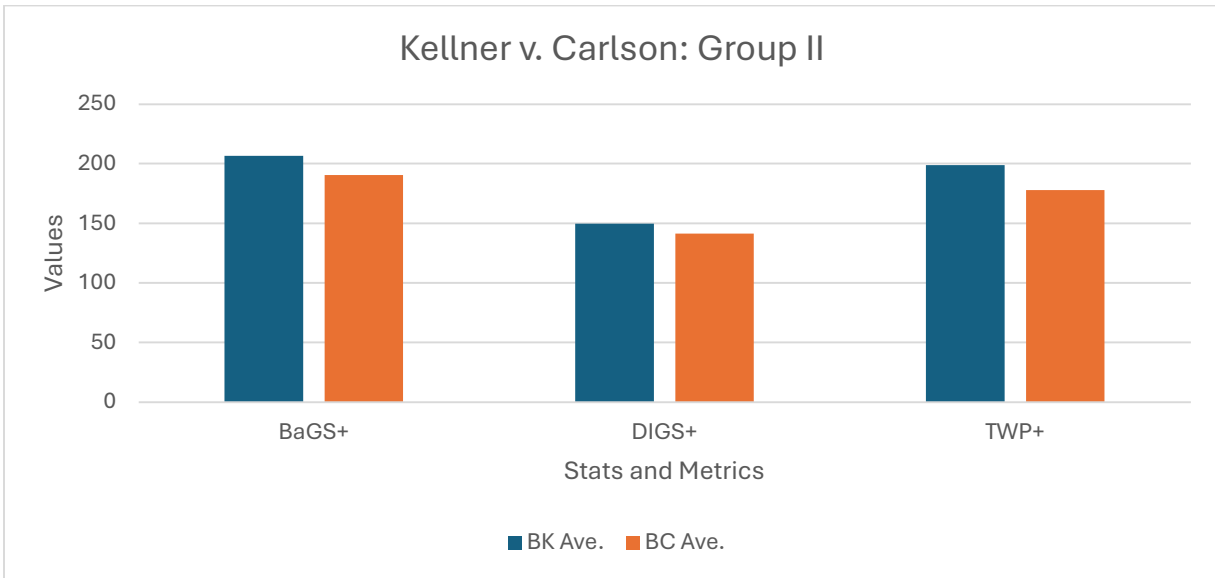
- ☐ Minor points awarded for underclassmen (freshmen >> soph >> juniors)

Here are the statistical averages and graphical representations of these statistics/metrics for each state:

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<sup>6</sup> <https://x.com/DigsPitcher/status/1775968668704506036>

	BaGS+	DIGS+	TWP+
<b>BK Ave.</b>	206.589	149.63675	198.7525947
<b>BC Ave.</b>	190.423	141.21750	177.8079313



As you can see from this group, both players profile as 1) elite hitters due to their BaGS+ scores, 2) excellent to elite DIGS+ pitching value, and 3) excellent baseball athletes through their TWP+ scores. However, Boston Kellner has clearly shown to perform at a higher level in all three metrics than Billy Carlson, with the higher scores showing his statistically is the better baseball athlete.

### C. Disclaimer

A clarification I would like to make regarding my analysis is that in reviewing the statistics for both players the past two seasons, there are a lot of variables that come into play when comparing high school baseball players from different states (ie, level of competition, amount of playing time and game action, geographic locations and environments, etc.) Also, from a statistical point of view, it would appear that Boston Kellner has had more “game action” the last two years due to the higher PA and IP as shown in the table below:

Player	Year	PA	IP
Boston Kellner	2025	139	72.1
Boston Kellner	2024	131	53.2
Billy Carlson	2025	116	8.0
Billy Carlson	2024	120	11.2

This may cause some bias towards the data due to Kellner's higher amount of game action (ie, more plate appearances and innings pitched); however, the advanced metrics of BaGS+, DIGS+ and TWP+ takes into account not how much they have played, but what they have done when they played, to minimize the impact of the amount of game action.

#### **IV. Conclusions**

The analysis shows that both prospects have produced at an excellent-to-elite level during their high school careers, and both should continue to perform at high levels wherever that may be. In my opinion however, the statistical analysis shows that Boston Kellner's statistical value and impact in most instances was equal to or slightly better than Billy Carlson, therefore making him just as attractive as a baseball prospect and therefore, supporting the argument that the talent level of the Arizona high school baseball players are very competitive with other states and programs across the country (especially in the hitting/offensive and defensive statistical categories), including the top baseball talent in traditional state powerhouses of California. Again, as previously stated, this was along the lines of an introductory analysis and could be taken in a lot of different directions and deeper analysis. The point of this was to bring to light the great baseball talent here in the great state of Arizona.



## EXHIBIT A

### Billy Carlson Scouting Report

**Player, POS:** Billy Carlson, SS/RHP

**Team:** Corona HS (Corona, CA)

**Role:** Starting Pitcher and Starting Infielder

**Throws:** R

**Arm action:** good

**Current:** HS Sr.

MLB or

D1(commit:

Tennessee)

**Height:** 6-1

**Delivery:** good

**Next Yr:** Tennessee

**Weight:** 176

**Wind-up:** SWU

**Tops:** MLB

**Arm Angle:** 3/4

**Interest:** Yes

Pitch	Velo (Ave.)	Fut	Cat	Pres	Fut
FB	89-82 (T92)	60	Control	50	55
CB	76-78	55	Command	50	55
Slider/Sweep	N/A	N/A	Poise	50	55
CU	81-83	50	Agg	50	55
Other	N/A	N/A	OFV	N/A	55

**Summation:** Carlson's athleticism and arm strength make him a promising pitching prospect as well. He's been up to 96-97 mph at peak velocity, throws strikes at a high clip and shows feel for two secondary pitches that flash above-average, including a mid-to-upper 70s curveball with tight rotation and a low-80s changeup with impressive fade. Profiles more as a potential high leverage reliever due to his limited pitch arsenal and need for innings build up to advance his career as a pitcher.

Category	Pres	Fut	Cat	Pres	Fut
Hitting	55	60	Fielding	60	70
Power	50	55	Range	55	60
Speed/Base	50	55	Agg	55	60
Speed/Running	55	60	Baseball Interests	55	60
Arm/Strength	60	70	OFP	N/A	60/70(fielding)
Arm/Accuracy	60	70			

**Summation:** A lean, athletic two-way player, Carlson grabs attention immediately during infield play. His actions are quick, smooth and clean with soft hands and nimble footwork as one of the best defensive shortstops in the country, moving around the position with bounce and grace. An average runner, Carlson is adept on both ends of the double play turn, has a quick release and a plus-plus arm. At the plate, Carlson typically has a selective approach and one of the lower swing-and-miss rates among top 2025 prep players. There are times where he hits too many balls on the ground, but his offensive game took a step forward in the 2024 spring season, with a line-drive approach and more power showing up in games and a chance for bigger extra-base damage to come given his bat speed and strength projection. If his offensive skills can catch up to his potential plus-plus range, glove and arm, he will be an annual all-star candidate at the major league level.

### **Boston Kellner Scouting Report**

**Player, POS:** Boston Kellner, RHP/SS

**Team:** Hamilton HS (Chandler, AZ)

**Role:** Starting Shortstop and Starting Pitcher

**Bats:** R

**Arm action:** good

**Current:** HS Sr.

MLB or

D1(commit:

**Throws:** R

**Delivery:** good

**Next Yr:** Texas A&M)

**Height:** 6-1

**Wind-up:** SWU

**Tops:** MLB

**Weight:** 206

**Arm Angle:** 3/4

**Interest:** Yes

Pitch	Velo (Ave.)	Fut	Category	Pres	Fut
FB	88-90(T)	60	Control	55	55
CB	73-76	60	Command	55	55
Slider/Sweep	77-79	55	Poise	55	60
CU	83-84	55	Agg	55	60
Other	N/A	N/A	OFV	N/A	60

**Summation:** Boston shows a great deal of upside as a pitcher, with a fastball that demonstrates good life and carry, in the 88-90 range touching 90 consistently. He has a fairly compact delivery that is repeatable and does not have a lot of moving parts. His arm appears to work well without a great deal of effort. His breaking ball was 72-74 with the ability to freeze hitters and showed some good depth. Boston is a strike thrower (had a 5.4% BB and 25.07% K rates his Senior year) with a good arm and could develop into one of the premier arms at the next level(s).

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Category	Pres	Fut	Cat	Pres	Fut
Hitting	60	70	Fielding	50	60
Power	55	60	Range	55	60
Speed/Base	55	60	Aggress	60	60
Speed/Running	55	60	Baseball Interests	60	60
Arm/Strength	55	60	OFV	N/A	60
Arm/Accuracy	55	60			

**Summation:** Kellner has posted monster numbers each spring of his high school career, first in his sophomore season in Colorado and then during his junior and senior years at Hamilton High in Arizona. He's a physical hitter with plenty of strength behind his swing that's evident with deep blasts towards and over the fence to his pull side, though he can get more contact-oriented in games. He has improved his bat path in his last two years and has consistently had a low swing-and-miss rate with a short, balanced stroke. Kellner moves well for his size as a tick above-average runner on the basepaths and in the field. He is a solid defender on the left side of the infield with a strong arm. His overall baseball athleticism is off the charts, projects to be a plus middle infielder with potential to have a career as a high-leverage reliever, depending on which direction an organization wants him to develop at the next levels.