

Player A is the recommended choice.

Player A allows less Walks and Hits per Innings Pitched (WHIP) compared to Player B. Player A leads Player B in both traditional earned run average (ERA) and in ERA+, which accounts for external factors like ballparks and opponents. Player A is 42 percent better than league average and 18 percent better than Player B according to ERA+.

In addition to ERA+, Player A also leads in another advanced pitching statistic called Fielding Independent Pitching (FIP). FIP takes fielding out of the equation and only uses factors within a pitcher's control. These factors include home runs, walks, hit by pitches and strikeouts.

Skill-Interactive Earned Run Average (SIERA) is similar to FIP but adds ball in play metrics (ground ball, popup, line drive) with assigned weights for each. Player B leads in SIERA overall but Player A leads in SIERA in each of the last two seasons. Expected Fielding Independent Pitching (xFIP) is another metric where Player B leads overall but Player A has led in the most recent season.

Wins Above Replacement (WAR) is used to measure a player's overall value compared to a replacement-level player such as a minor league free agent or a Quad-A player. Player A has a higher score for WAR according to Baseball Reference, FanGraphs and Baseball Prospectus. Player A was worth more than 14 wins above replacement in the four-year analysis according to each of these platforms. He also played at an All-Star level in the most recent season, according to FanGraphs.

The gap between Players A and B is most prominent in the last two years. Player A has lead Player B in nearly all pitching statistics for the last two seasons including WHIP, ERA+, FIP, SIERA and WAR. Age-related decline could be a factor for Player B, who is 34 years old.

Player A is recommended because of his better performance overall, his far better performance in recent years, and the fact that he is still under 30 years old.