

# 2026 PHL FINALS PREVIEW

Ring a Ling vs. Whole Lotta Pitches | Tuesday, September 29, 2026 - 6:30 PM | PHL Pits



## A Matchup Years in the Making

The 2026 PHL Finals brings together four players with very different paths to the championship round, but the center of the story is a friendship that began with two strangers entering the league in the same week. **Casey Santos and Sean Gomes both joined as replacement players in Week 2 of the 2013 season**, on separate teams. They quickly became friends and have spent the next 14 seasons competing for awards, playoff advancement and bragging rights while maintaining a close friendship away from the pits.

Now they meet in a championship series for the first time. Casey enters with four league championships and the defending champion Whole Lotta Pitches. Sean enters with one of the league's strongest individual resumes, but with the championship still representing the major accomplishment left to add. Their 2026 seasons made the collision especially fitting: **Casey finished first and Sean second in regular-season scoring, and entering the Finals Sean ranks first and Casey second in 2026 playoff scoring.**

| CASEY SANTOS                                    | SEAN GOMES                                      | JAKE DUPERRE                                  | CHAD WILSON                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 722 RS pts   13.37 PPG<br>62 PO pts   12.40 PPG | 715 RS pts   13.24 PPG<br>77 PO pts   15.40 PPG | 389 RS pts   7.63 PPG<br>47 PO pts   9.40 PPG | 241 RS pts   4.73 PPG<br>32 PO pts   6.40 PPG |

## The Stakes

For Casey, the opportunity is one he has wanted since joining the league: repeat as champion. Dave Desnoyers and Wayne Gomes accomplished the feat with Salt & Pepper in 2016 and 2017, and no team has repeated since. A Whole Lotta Pitches victory would give Casey a fifth championship and give Jake the remarkable distinction of winning championships in each of his first two PHL seasons. Casey describes Jake as a partner he can rely on, and their chemistry has carried directly into a second straight Finals.

For Sean, the opportunity is equally meaningful in a different way. He has accumulated scoring championships, elite career production, All-League recognition and a Rookie of the Year award, but has never won the league championship. His only previous Finals appearance came with veteran Eddie Correia in 2018. A title would fill the most visible open space on an already distinguished resume and strengthen his place in conversations about the greatest players in league history.

**After winning their Round 2 series, Casey and Sean congratulated each other and shared a moment as friends before turning their attention to the championship matchup.**

*Pegasus Horseshoe League - 2026 PHL Finals Preview*

# CASEY vs. SEAN

A rivalry built on friendship, individual excellence and contrasting paths to team success

## 2026: Almost Nothing Between Them

| 2026 Regular Season | Casey Santos                     | Sean Gomes          |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Team / Record       | WLP - 33-21                      | Ring a Ling - 28-26 |
| Points              | 722                              | 715                 |
| PPG                 | 13.37                            | 13.24               |
| Singles / SPG       | 155 / 2.87                       | 202 / 3.74          |
| Ringers / RPG       | 189 / 3.50                       | 171 / 3.17          |
| Doubles / DbPG      | 9 / .167                         | 11 / .204           |
| PER                 | 21.23                            | 21.02               |
| PP30                | 16.47                            | 16.21               |
| R/S Ratio           | 1.22                             | .85                 |
| 2026 honor          | Scoring Champion; All-League 1st | All-League 1st      |

Casey's seven-point scoring-title margin - 722 to 715 - was one of the tightest races of the season, and the advanced numbers were just as close. Casey finished at 21.23 PER and 16.47 points per 30 minutes; Sean finished at 21.02 PER and 16.21 PP30. Their styles were different: Casey produced the higher ringer rate and a 1.22 ringer-to-single ratio, while Sean produced more singles and doubles. The result was two elite seasons arriving at nearly the same overall level by different routes.

## Regular-Season Head-to-Head: Sean's Side of the Rivalry

| Scope               | Casey                       | Sean                          |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| All RS H2H, 2013-26 | 32-40   808 pts   11.22 PPG | 40-32   1,043 pts   14.49 PPG |
| A vs A RS, 2016-26  | 26-37   714 pts   11.33 PPG | 37-26   925 pts   14.68 PPG   |
| 2026 A vs A         | 3-3   81 pts   13.50 PPG    | 3-3   87 pts   14.50 PPG      |
| 2026 Week 2         | 3-0   45 pts                | 0-3   17 pts                  |
| 2026 Week 9         | 0-3   36 pts                | 3-0   70 pts                  |

Sean owns the stronger regular-season head-to-head history, but 2026 itself split perfectly at 3-3. The two meetings could hardly have been more different: Casey and WLP swept the first set, while Sean answered later with a **70-point three-game performance** as Ring a Ling swept the return meeting. Across all recorded regular-season meetings since 2013, Sean leads 40-32 in games and 1,043-808 in individual scoring.

## Postseason Head-to-Head: Casey's Side of the Rivalry

| Playoff H2H through 2025 | Casey       | Sean        |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Series record            | 5           | 1           |
| Game record              | 11-5        | 5-11        |
| Points / PPG             | 201 / 12.56 | 203 / 12.69 |
| Ringers / RPG            | 51 / 3.19   | 51 / 3.19   |
| A-vs-A series since 2020 | 5-0         | 0-5         |
| A-vs-A games             | 10-3        | 3-10        |
| A-vs-A points            | 169         | 165         |

The postseason tells the mirror-image story. Sean won their first playoff meeting in 2015, but Casey has won the five series since. What makes the contrast more interesting is how close the individual production has remained: across all 16 direct playoff games through 2025, Sean actually holds a 203-201 scoring edge and the two are tied at 51 ringers. The difference has been series outcomes rather than one player overwhelming the other statistically.

**Across regular season and playoffs, their recorded series history is exactly 15-15. The 2026 Finals breaks that tie on the biggest stage they have ever shared.**

# TWO GREAT RESUMES, TWO DIFFERENT STORIES

A Russell-Wilt-style contrast - team success on one side, extraordinary individual production on the other

## A Tale of Two Resumes

There is a useful basketball analogy for the shape of this rivalry - not a literal comparison of players, but a contrast in how greatness can be expressed. Casey's resume has increasingly been defined by **team success and postseason advancement**; Sean's has been defined by **elite individual production and regular-season dominance**. In that limited sense, it resembles the familiar Bill Russell-Wilt Chamberlain contrast: championships and team outcomes on one side, extraordinary individual statistical achievement on the other. The 2026 Finals gives each player an opportunity to add to the part of his resume that already defines him - while also reaching into the other's territory.

| Career / Historical Marker        | Casey Santos           | Sean Gomes                 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| PHL championships entering Finals | 4                      | 0                          |
| Finals appearances entering 2026  | 6                      | 1                          |
| 2026 Finals appearance            | 7th; 5th straight      | 2nd                        |
| 2025 result                       | Champion + Playoff MVP | Best Record + Triple Crown |
| 2026 regular season               | Scoring Champion       | 2nd in scoring             |
| 700+ seasons through 2026         | 2                      | 8                          |
| 800+ seasons                      | 0                      | 2                          |
| Century Club seasons through 2025 | 4                      | 0                          |
| 2026 career points after RS       | 8,028                  | 9,704                      |

## Casey's Postseason Experience

Casey enters his **seventh PHL Finals and fifth consecutive Finals appearance**, extending his own league-leading Finals total. His four championships are already the most in league history. He also owns four officially recorded Century Club playoff seasons - 137 points in 2014, 100 in 2019, a record 163 in 2022 and 110 in 2025 - tying the highest recorded total of Century Club seasons in the historical ledger. During the 2026 postseason he became only the second player, joining his father Gerry Santos, to reach 1,000 officially recorded career playoff points, and became the first player in the recorded database to surpass 300 playoff singles.

The regular-season/postseason split is also notable. Casey's completed 2026 regular season produced a 21.23 PER, 13.37 PPG and 3.50 RPG. Through two playoff rounds he is at 20.87 PER, 12.40 PPG and 3.20 RPG. The scoring rate is slightly lower, but the overall advanced production remains strong, and Round 2 was his biggest moment of this postseason so far: **30 points and nine ringers in a two-game sweep** that sent WLP back to the Finals.

## Sean's Opportunity - and His 2026 Playoff Surge

Sean's path into this Finals has been powered by the strongest individual postseason of the four finalists. Through Round 2 he leads the 2026 playoffs with **77 points, 15.40 PPG, 20 ringers, 4.00 RPG and three doubles**. His playoff PER has climbed to **25.92**, up from an already elite 21.02 in the regular season. He scored 47 points in the opening round and followed with 30 points, eight ringers and a double in the semifinal sweep that ended Orbital Bombardment's Cinderella run.

Sean's postseason surge has been one of the defining performances of this playoff run. After finishing second in league scoring, he has increased his PPG by more than two points while advancing to the Finals. He also moved into third place on the officially recorded career playoff scoring list during this run. A championship would pair that individual history with the team accomplishment that has remained just out of reach.

## A Rivalry Timeline in Six Stops

| Year    | Rivalry Milestone                                                                                                   |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013    | Both debut in Week 2 as replacement B players; Sean wins inaugural Rookie of the Year.                              |
| 2014-15 | Casey wins 2014 title; Sean becomes 2015 Scoring Champion; Sean wins their first playoff series in 2015.            |
| 2019-20 | Casey wins second title with #BEASTMODE; Casey begins a five-series playoff winning streak vs Sean in 2020.         |
| 2022-23 | Sean wins Scoring + Ringer titles in 2022; Casey reaches 2022 Finals and wins his third title in 2023.              |
| 2024-25 | Sean adds 2024 scoring title and 2025 Triple Crown; Casey reaches both Finals and wins record fourth title in 2025. |
| 2026    | Casey wins scoring title by seven points; both make All-League 1st Team; first Casey-Sean championship meeting.     |

# TWO PATHS TO THE SAME STAGE

Team achievement and individual excellence converge in the 2026 PHL Finals



**CASEY SANTOS**

Championship success + postseason experience



**SEAN GOMES**

Elite production + individual honors

## Different strengths. Shared championship stage.

The photographs capture the contrast that has followed Casey and Sean into this Finals. Casey's recent resume is anchored by championships, repeated Finals appearances and a Playoff MVP. Sean's is anchored by elite scoring, major individual awards and the 2025 Triple Crown. Together they explain why this first championship meeting between the two longtime friends carries so much history.

### CASEY - TEAM / POSTSEASON

- 4 championships entering 2026 Finals
- 7th Finals appearance in 2026
- 5th consecutive Finals appearance
- 2025 Playoff MVP
- 2026 Scoring Champion

### SEAN - INDIVIDUAL / REGULAR SEASON

- 2025 Triple Crown
- 4 career Scoring Championships
- 8 career 700+ seasons through 2026
- 2 career 800+ seasons
- 2026 All-League 1st Team

**The Finals gives both players a chance to add a new chapter to an already distinctive resume.**

# THE B-PLAYER BATTLE

Jake Duperre vs. Chad Wilson - a matchup that can change the shape of the Finals

## 2026 Comparison

| Metric                | Jake Duperre | Chad Wilson |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Regular-season games  | 51           | 51          |
| Regular-season record | 33-18        | 27-24       |
| Points / PPG          | 389 / 7.63   | 241 / 4.73  |
| Singles / SPG         | 128 / 2.51   | 112 / 2.20  |
| Ringers / RPG         | 87 / 1.71    | 43 / .84    |
| Doubles               | 2            | 1           |
| 2026 H2H record       | 3-3          | 3-3         |
| 2026 H2H points / PPG | 31 / 5.17    | 16 / 2.67   |
| Playoff record        | 4-1          | 4-1         |
| Playoff points / PPG  | 47 / 9.40    | 32 / 6.40   |
| Playoff PER           | 15.82        | 10.77       |

Jake has held the statistical edge in the 2026 regular season and in the direct matchup, but both B players have raised their scoring in the postseason. Jake has climbed from 7.63 to 9.40 PPG; Chad has climbed from 4.73 to 6.40. Both enter the Finals with identical 4-1 playoff records. That improvement matters because the A-player matchup has historically been close enough in postseason scoring that a strong B-player game can swing an entire series.

## Jake Duperre - The Trusted Partner

Jake is only in his second PHL season, yet he already enters his second Finals with a championship on his resume. He and Casey won together in 2025, and the partnership has developed into one Casey describes as dependable and easy to trust. Jake's 2026 postseason has reinforced that confidence: he leads the remaining field in playoff singles with **20** and has increased his scoring to 9.40 PPG. A WLP victory would give Jake championships in each of his first two league seasons.

## Chad Wilson - Veteran Experience, Preparation and Finals Opportunity

Chad is a multi-year PHL veteran whose experience included being slotted as an A player during his first season. He takes pride in his game and in the work he puts into practicing, and that preparation has shown in his late-season and postseason production. He and Casey are childhood friends who remain close and still spend time together regularly, adding another layer of friendly bragging rights to the Finals.

## How the Four Finalists Have Played in the 2026 Playoffs

| Player       | G | W-L | Pts | PPG   | R  | RPG  | PER   |
|--------------|---|-----|-----|-------|----|------|-------|
| Sean Gomes   | 5 | 4-1 | 77  | 15.40 | 20 | 4.00 | 25.92 |
| Casey Santos | 5 | 4-1 | 62  | 12.40 | 16 | 3.20 | 20.87 |
| Jake Duperre | 5 | 4-1 | 47  | 9.40  | 9  | 1.80 | 15.82 |
| Chad Wilson  | 5 | 4-1 | 32  | 6.40  | 6  | 1.20 | 10.77 |

The postseason numbers create a clear tactical picture. Ring a Ling enters with the hottest individual scorer in Sean; WLP enters with the more productive B player in Jake and the league's 2026 regular-season scoring champion in Casey. Chad's postseason improvement narrows that B-player gap, while Casey's extensive Finals experience gives WLP a level of championship familiarity few teams can match.

**The Finals may be headlined by Casey and Sean, but Jake and Chad have enough influence on the scoring balance to determine which team gets the final bragging rights.**

# WHAT MAKES THIS FINALS HISTORIC

One championship series, multiple legacy paths

## Historical Significance

| If Whole Lotta Pitches wins...                                                    | If Ring a Ling wins...                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Back-to-back champions - the first repeat since Salt & Pepper in 2016-17.         | Sean's first championship - adding the major team accomplishment missing from his resume.                                            |
| Casey's fifth title - extending his league record for championships.              | Ring a Ling turns a 28-26 regular season into a championship run after entering the playoffs as the No. 4 seed.                      |
| Jake starts his career 2-for-2 in championships across his first two PHL seasons. | Chad adds a championship to a veteran resume, doing it alongside Sean after the two previously shared multiple seasons as teammates. |

## Player Capsules

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CASEY SANTOS - Whole Lotta Pitches, A</b><br>Four-time champion and 2025 Playoff MVP. The 2026 Scoring Champion enters a record seventh Finals appearance and fifth consecutive trip to the championship round. His postseason resume is built on advancement, longevity and some of the largest officially recorded playoff point totals in league history. | <b>SEAN GOMES - Ring a Ling, A</b><br>One of the PHL's premier statistical players and the inaugural Rookie of the Year. Sean owns four Scoring Championships, a 2025 Triple Crown and the highest 2026 playoff scoring rate entering the Finals. He is seeking the first championship of his career in his second Finals appearance.                         |
| <b>JAKE DUPERRE - Whole Lotta Pitches, B</b><br>The defending champion B player has reached the Finals in each of his first two PHL seasons. Jake has increased his scoring from 7.63 PPG in the regular season to 9.40 in the playoffs and leads the four finalists with 20 postseason singles.                                                                | <b>CHAD WILSON - Ring a Ling, B</b><br>A multi-year PHL veteran, Chad was selected as a default A player during his first season and has continued to take pride in preparation and performance. That work has shown late in 2026, as his scoring rose from 4.73 PPG in the regular season to 6.40 in the playoffs. He enters the Finals 4-1 this postseason. |

## The Story Before the First Shoe

The personal connections give this Finals much of its character. Casey and Sean are longtime friends who genuinely want the best for one another and are competitive enough to want the championship for themselves. Casey and Chad carry a friendship that reaches back to childhood. Casey and Jake have built championship trust in a short period of time. Sean and Chad also bring multi-year history together as former teammates, giving Ring a Ling a partnership with roots that extend well beyond this season.

Statistically, the matchup has layers everywhere. The top two regular-season scorers are also the top two playoff scorers entering the Finals, and the teams split their six 2026 regular-season games 3-3. Sean has historically controlled more of the regular-season rivalry with Casey, while Casey has advanced in five of their six playoff series. Yet their direct postseason scoring is separated by only two points over 16 games. The history does not point to a simple story - it points to a fitting championship matchup.

THE 2026 PHL FINALS

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Four players. Two teams. Years of friendship and competition. One championship.

Sources: completed 2026 Stats & Standings database through Round 2; Casey Santos vs. Sean Gomes head-to-head reference; Casey Santos vs. Sean Gomes career rivalry timeline; Jake Duperre vs. Chad Wilson Finals comparison; PHL all-time historical records.