**It Figures: Lincecum Captures Cy Young**

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When the Cy Young Award was introduced in 1956, the voting was simple. Baseball writers voted for one pitcher, and that was that.

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Eric Risberg/Associated Press

Tim Lincecum won the Cy Young despite not having the most first-place votes.

***Linecum Wins Cy Young Award***



Jeff Roberson/Associated Press

Tim Lincecum, the Giants’ ace who went 15-7 this season with 2.48 e.r.a., won his second consecutive Cy Young Award.

The ballot was expanded four years later to include second- and third-place finishers, but the new format has almost never mattered. In every case but two, the pitcher with the most first-place votes has won the award.

The latest exception came on Thursday, when Tim Lincecum of the [San Francisco Giants](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/sports/baseball/majorleague/sanfranciscogiants/index.html?inline=nyt-org) parlayed 11 first-place votes out of 32 cast to capture his second consecutive National League award. Adam Wainwright of the [St. Louis Cardinals](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/sports/baseball/majorleague/stlouiscardinals/index.html?inline=nyt-org) had 12 first-place votes, but he was not even runner-up.

Another Cardinals right-hander, Chris Carpenter, finished second. Carpenter had nine first-place votes but was left off two ballots. Lincecum and Wainwright were named on all 32 ballots by members of the Baseball Writers’ Association of America.

[Tom Glavine](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/g/tom_glavine/index.html?inline=nyt-per) is the only other Cy Young winner who did not receive the most first-place votes. In 1998, Glavine had 11 first-place votes; Trevor Hoffman had 13 and Kevin Brown had 8. But Glavine compiled the most points based on a system that awards 5 points for a first-place vote, 3 for a second and 1 for a third.

Lincecum had 100 points, Carpenter 94 and Wainwright 90. The quirk for Wainwright was that he received only five second-place votes and 15 votes for third.

“Both guys I was up against, in Wainwright and Carpenter, just had tremendous seasons,” Lincecum said. “Given that, especially what Carpenter came off of and what Wainwright did as a workhorse, I didn’t know how the cards were going to fall. It was a lucky one for me. I’ll take them as they come, I guess.”

Carpenter, the 2005 N.L. winner, had reconstructive elbow surgery in 2007 and missed time this year with a pulled muscle in his side. He went 17-4 with a 2.24 earned run average in 28 starts; Wainwright was 19-8 with a 2.63 E.R.A.

Lincecum, 25, was 15-7 with a 2.48 E.R.A. He joins seven other pitchers as back-to-back winners: [Sandy Koufax](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/k/sandy_koufax/index.html?inline=nyt-per), Denny McLain, Jim Palmer, [Roger Clemens](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/c/roger_clemens/index.html?inline=nyt-per), [Greg Maddux](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/m/greg_maddux/index.html?inline=nyt-per), [Pedro Martinez](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/m/pedro_martinez/index.html?inline=nyt-per) and [Randy Johnson](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/j/randy_johnson/index.html?inline=nyt-per), a teammate of his in San Francisco last season.

Like Kansas City’s Zack Greinke, who won the American League award on Tuesday with only 16 victories, Lincecum won despite a low win total. His 15 victories are the fewest ever for Cy Young-winning starter in a nonstrike season.

Lincecum said he was vaguely familiar with Fielding Independent Pitching, or FIP, the statistic Greinke named as his favorite on Tuesday. Another nontraditional metric was important to Lincecum.

“To say which one I look to the most, I would just say WHIP,” Lincecum said, referring to walks-plus-hits per inning, “just because you limit the amount of base runners that can hurt you.”

The [Arizona Diamondbacks](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/sports/baseball/majorleague/arizonadiamondbacks/index.html?inline=nyt-org)’ Dan Haren led the National League in WHIP, at 1.003, followed by Carpenter (1.007), [Javier Vazquez](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/v/javier_vazquez/index.html?inline=nyt-per) of the [Atlanta Braves](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/sports/baseball/majorleague/atlantabraves/index.html?inline=nyt-org) (1.026) and Lincecum (1.047). Ken Davidoff of [Newsday](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/n/newsday/index.html?inline=nyt-org), who voted for Lincecum, wrote on the newspaper’s Web site that he did not consider won-lost record because it clouded a voter’s judgment. Davidoff listed Wainwright second and Carpenter third, giving Wainwright the edge because he pitched more innings.

Lincecum led the league in strikeouts, with 261, ranked second to Carpenter in earned-run average (2.48) and third in innings, with 225 1/3, behind Wainwright and Haren.

Haren was 14-10 with a 3.10 E.R.A., and got a third-place vote from Will Carroll of Baseball Prospectus.

Carroll voted Wainwright first and Lincecum second. He wrote that he left off Carpenter because “consistency and availability are two traits that I don’t think get measured well, but they have clear value for a pitcher.”

The other voter to omit Carpenter was Keith Law of [ESPN.com](http://ESPN.com), who had Lincecum first, Vazquez second and Wainwright third. Vazquez was 15-10 with a 2.87 E.R.A. and ranked second to Lincecum in strikeouts, with 238.

“I also gave him extra credit for pitching in the most difficult division in the N.L.,” Law wrote, “one in which he had to face two great offenses and only one patsy.”

The voting for both Cy Young Awards showed writers paying more attention than ever to a wider array of statistics. Greinke benefited on Tuesday, and now Lincecum has, too.

“You can see where the game is today — it’s turned into a game of complete numbers and statistics and what people do with that,” Lincecum said, adding later, “When there are so many numbers to be looked at, it makes the votes just completely different.”