

# FROM THE BULLPEN

Official Publication of the  
Hot Stove League  
Eastern Nebraska Division  
1988 Season

Final Edition  
November 17, 1988

Gentlemen:

This year's final edition of From the Bullpen properly begins with a hearty congratulations to the Big Guy, who successfully defended his 1987 league jewel. Now that the post-season awards are out, the final standings look like this (rounded to the nearest point):

Tigers	14,438
Red Sox	14,271
Chiefs	13,816
Pirates	13,733
Reds	13,428
Mudhens	13,225
Royals	13,069
Blues	13,006
Cubs	12,765
Braves	12,755

The final distribution of award money was \$300 to Big Guy, \$100 to Possum, and \$50 to the Baby Trumpetfish. Additionally, a stipend of \$50 was paid to Underbelly, to help defray the cost of postage and copying for his weekly results.

It should be noted that the final standings sent out by Underbelly dated October 5, 1988 not only did not include post-season award points, but also did not properly reflect each team's selected starters and reserves. Pursuant to league rule, if a manager has not designated his starters and reserves at each position by the cut-off date of September 1, 1988, the leading point-getter at each position at that time is automatically designated as the starting player. Underbelly's computer program calculates points based upon the top point-getter at each position, and does not take into consideration that the starters determined on September 1, 1988 may end up with less points than reserves designated on such date. For instance, Snickler did not designate any of his starters on September 1, and at that time his leading first baseman was Mike Marshall. Although designated as a starter, Marshall eventually ended up with 93 fewer points than the timeless Eddie Murray, requiring a substantial downward adjustment in the

final Cub point totals. The victims to fall prey to this situation were Brother, Jigger, Snickler, Magpie and the Fox. As you can see, the Snickler's cavalier attitude towards the September 1 selection process nearly landed him in the league's bowels, but he was fortunate enough to avoid sliding beneath the Underbelly.

It is certainly painful to watch Big Guy's Tigers win back-to-back crowns, particularly after having watched the Possum garner consecutive titles. Life isn't always fair. But hope springs eternal, and let's hope that the 1989 season finds the Skipper's heir apparent Royals on top of the heap where they rightfully belong.

It is also rather disconcerting to have my boisterous balding neighbor finish ahead of me in the league standings, especially in his first year in the league, drafting ninth. What this final placement does not show is that Jigger is a keen or even average baseball mind. What it does show is the gross inequity of the present supplemental draft system. If Jigger had been forced to keep his original 25 drafted players, he would have finished with 12,118 points, an eyelash ahead of the hapless Cubs. By virtue of being placed in the catbird seat at supplemental draft, Jigger was unfairly allowed to cherry-pick buzz saws like Dennis Eckersley, David Cone and Roberto Alomar (nice call, Scott). Only through this unjust supplemental draft process was the Jigger able to lunge past the Royals and finish in a respectable sixth place position.

Because of the supplemental draft's effect of overcompensating a nimrod manager for selecting a dreadful opening roster, as so poignantly pointed out by Jigger's situation this year, at the winter league meeting the rules committee will recommend a change concerning the supplemental draft process. It will be suggested that while the last-place team on the date of the supplemental draft shall continue to enjoy the first pick of the first round of the supplemental draft, the second and fourth rounds will go in inverse order, so that the first place team at the supplemental draft will have the first picks of the second and fourth rounds, and so on. This should prevent another distasteful Jigger incident.

Just for the fun of it, I have calculated what the final points would have been with everyone's opening day rosters, exclusive of supplemental draft selections and trades. Here are the results:

Red Sox	13,796
Chiefs	13,764
Tigers	13,602
Pirates	13,394
Reds	12,846
Blues	12,689
Royals	12,521
Mudhens	12,118
Braves	12,056
Cubs	11,934

As you can see, the Mudhens, Braves and Cubs each selected impotent squads, while the Royals, Blues, Reds and Pirates picked good, solid teams that, with a little luck, could have vied for contention. The Red Sox and Tigers proved once again that it's better to be lucky than good, and the Chiefs' manager has shown us his uncanny knack of trading himself out of contention for a championship.

### League Trip

This year's league trip was another unqualified success. The six league managers who do not wear pink lace underwear had a bang-up time in Chicago. The hotel accommodations were posh, the beer cold and free-flowing, and the women on Rush Street smitten by the six sophisticated baseball impressarios from Nebraska. Magpie set a personal standard by getting drunk three times in the same 24-hour period during the first day of our trip. Brother did a nice job of negotiating with the brothers for our Sunday tickets, although we were all a little bit nervous when we saw one such ticket agent holding both our tickets and our money. Jigger didn't drink much during the trip. Snickler had a helluva weekend for the \$23 that he spent. Underbelly lost a few more hairs. All in all, it was a splendid trip, and the six participants have agreed to vote that no league championship money shall be awarded in the future to a spineless manager who does not attend the league trip.

### Spring Training

Several league managers have expressed an interest in attending the second annual Hot Stove League spring training trip. This year we will venture to sunny Florida. At last count, the Skipper, Jigger, Magpie and Underbelly have pledged to go, with Snickler agreeing to attend if his air fare, lodging, food and drink costs are absorbed by others. I am proposing that the spring trip be scheduled for the weekend of March 24-25, 1989. Plan your schedules accordingly.

### Next Year's Summer Trip

The stout-hearted group that despoiled Chicago during the 1988 trip have proposed that next year the trip encompass Chicago and Milwaukee. Tentative plans are to fly into Chicago on a Saturday morning, drive a van to Milwaukee for an afternoon Brewers game, and then return to Chicago to watch the Cubs play on Sunday. I propose that next year's trip take place a bit earlier, perhaps during one of the latter weekends in June, such as June 24-25.

### Winter Managers' Meeting

This year's winter managers' meeting is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, January 21, 1989, and will be held in Jigger's newly-finished rumpus room. Jigger will furnish refreshments. Some very important topics will be discussed during this meeting, including the spring training trip, the summer

trip, the league rule changes, and most importantly, baseball. The changes that will be proposed at this meeting are as follows:

1. Modification of supplemental draft selection order, drafting from last to first place in the first round, first place to last place in the second round, last place to first place in the third round, and first place to last place in the fourth round.

2. A new requirement that all team rosters must include at least one, and perhaps two, left-handed pitchers.

3. A new league rule that requires attendance at league trips to qualify for championship money.

4. Imposition of new trading restrictions, as follows:

(a)Open trading through August 1;

(b)A limit of two trades involving a total of three players per team from August 1 through September 1;  
and

(c)No trading after September 1.

5. Allowing a manager to select a replacement player to replace an injured player, with a limit of one player per team, between the supplemental draft and September 1. The player chosen shall be from the pool of unselected players or players discarded at the supplemental draft. Points for the replacement player shall only be counted prospectively from the date of the transaction.

6. Fifty points for having a Rookie of the Year on your team.

7. Relocation of the struggling Red Sox franchise to Manilla, and renaming them the "Folders."

#### Closing Remarks

The fourth campaign of the Hot Stove League was another satisfying and enjoyable experience, notwithstanding the one-two finish of Big Guy and Possum. 1989 promises to be another exciting year for most of us, and for Underbelly, another year. Thanks again to Underbelly for all of his hard work in putting out the statistics each and every week. Thanks also to Possum for taking over for Underbelly and putting out statistics during Underbelly's trip to Europe. It was most unfortunate that your computer caught the virus and was unable to serve you during the period, but we all nevertheless appreciate your magnanimous gesture.

See you in January.

Skipper