



## *FROM THE BULLPEN*

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Eastern Nebraska Division  
1992 Season

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We have been to the mountaintop, and we have seen the other side. And on the other side was -- Cooperstown. That's right, we thought we had died and gone to heaven. On our recent visit to this sleepy little hamlet in upstate New York, B.T., U-belly and I found a little slice of heaven at the Baseball Hall of Fame. It was everything we expected, and more. I have touched the plaque of the one they called the Iron Horse, and I have been made whole.

The hallowed halls of Cooperstown provided spine-tingling memories of baseball's days of yore. The halls fairly echoed with voices and sounds from yesteryear:

"Say it ain't so, Joe."

"Can't anybody here play this game?"

"Play ball!"

"I love Brian Piccolo." (Oops, wrong museum.)

"I am the greatest of all time." (U-belly's favorite.)

"I should make more money than the president, I had a better year."

"Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio?"

And of course: "I feel like the luckiest man alive."

Hang on while I regain my composure. Sniff. Snort. Thanks. I'm much better

now. If you ever get the chance to go to Cooperstown, take it. But give your wife your credit card and leave her at Macy's in New York City. She won't get it.

One of my favorite exhibits at Cooperstown was a replica of the entrance to old Ebbets Field. I was lucky enough to be able to obtain an enlargement of this picture from the Cooperstown Baseball Library. B.T. was able to obtain a blow-up of his great uncle, Harry Krause. The library has literally thousands of photographs and other memorabilia which are available upon request, for payment of their cost of reproduction and postage. I have the information available if any of you should want to use this nifty service.

Now on to something much less important, the standings.

### JIGGER BOASTS HEALTHY MARGIN

With only two weeks to go in the Hot Stove League season, Sandjigger is able to boast a sizeable 437-point lead. Unfortunately, the Senators no longer are creeping up on him like snug underwear, and the pithy Shamu and his pesky Cubs have clawed their way into second. With only a fortnight to go, the once happy-go-lucky backslapper is a mortal lock for the Title. Here are how things look with only two weeks to go:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Last 2 Weeks</u>
1.Skipjacks	13,005.7	1080.5
2.Cubs	12,568.9	1173.5
3.Senators	12,548.6	957.0
4.Reds	12,515.4	958.0
5.Tigers	12,261.8	1187.0
6.Red Sox	11,639.9	1015.0
7.Tribe	11,268.8	1126.0
8.Blues	11,249.6	962.0
9.Pirates	10,958.1	919.5
10.Chiefs	10,827.9	1080.9

Things don't look promising for the Senators. With Brady and Devereaux taking an early hibernation, and with my patchwork pitching staff finally getting their just desserts, it looks like the Skipper's gutsy Senator squad could even finish out of the money for a second straight year. I have already come to grips with this likelihood, and can only say that 1992 is obviously an aberration, what with Sandjigger rocketing from 10th place to 1st, and the now-accepted pearl of wisdom that "Pitching is everything in this League." My suggestion is that we put an asterisk by Sandjigger's name on the Cup this year, since 1992 was the first year under our new scoring system, and the first year with inflated

points for pitchers. Unless anyone else disagrees, plan on an asterisk for the 1992 Skipjacks. Personally, I have already put the flukish season out of my memory, and am preparing my strategy for next year's draft. I suggest you do likewise.

### **WIFE OF SANDJIGGER: BUN IN THE OVEN**

For those of you who have not heard the news from the happy newlyweds (maybe it really was a shotgun wedding), Sandjigger and Wife of Sandjigger are expecting. Anne is expecting a baby boy or girl, and Sandjigger isn't quite sure what to expect. Anne's obstetrician has traced the probable moment of conception back to a date falling squarely in the middle of our four-day baseball trip to Detroit/Toronto/Cleveland, and this of course has raised a few concerns in Sandjigger's mind. Anne refused to be interviewed for this issue of *From the Bullpen*.

Anyway, assuming that it is his work, hearty congratulations to Sandjigger and Wife of Sandjigger are in order, and we wish him the best of luck on dealing with those intensified hormones.

The happy couple have already been thinking about names for their pending offspring. If it's a boy, the list of potential names looks like this:

Coleman Vincent Thielen (Anne's idea)  
Napoleon Baskerville Thielen  
Jerry Don Thielen  
Mac Piper Thielen (Anne's second choice)  
B.J. (for Bombastic Juniorjigger) Thielen  
Sammie Khalifa Thielen  
Mookie  
Balderdash Largebelly Thielen  
Rock Liberace Thielen  
Bubba  
Mordecai "Piano Legs" Thielen  
Mel  
Reginald Moe Thielen  
Opie

### **UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL: DAVE WINFIELD**

My personal vote for player of the year is my savvy pick in the 15th round of this year's draft, David Mark Winfield. In order to attempt to educate HSL members on greats

of the game, beginning with this issue, *From the Bullpen* will provide you with profiles of famous present or past major league baseball players, sprinkled with statistics, biographical information, and incisive analysis and commentary.

David Mark Winfield was born October 3, 1951 in St. Paul, Minnesota. He will turn 41 during this year's league playoffs. After a sparkling basketball and baseball career at the University of Minnesota, including a visit to Omaha for the College World Series, Winfield signed a pro contract with the San Diego Padres and made his major league debut on June 17, 1973, without ever having swung a bat in the minor leagues. He was also drafted by the NBA.

Winfield played for the expansion Padres from 1973 to 1980, at which time he filed for free agency in the re-entry draft, signing with the New York Yankees for an estimated \$2.5 million on December 15, 1980. He played for the Yankees from 1980 to May of 1990, at which time he was traded to the California Angels for pitcher Mike Witt. He played the 1991 campaign with the Angels, opting for free agency at the end of the season. He was signed by the Toronto Bluejays on December 19, 1991, and is about to finish his first full campaign with that team.

Winfield is about to become the first major league baseball player over the age of 40 to drive in 100 RBIs in a single season. At the time that this issue of *FTB* goes to press, he has accumulated 99 RBIs during the 1992 season. His other accomplishments are myriad.

Although Winfield has only led his league in a major offensive category one time in his 19 years (his 118 RBIs in 1979 led the National League), Winfield has put up some incredible career numbers that virtually guarantee his first-ballot induction into the Hall of Fame. You heard it here first. Allow me to demonstrate.

Perhaps most impressively, Winfield recently knocked in his 1700th career RBI, something done by only 15 other players. His next RBI will tie him with Reggie Jackson for 15th on the all-time list, with 1702. After that, he will set his sights on No. 14, Honus Wagner, with 1732 RBIs. With his excellent health and conditioning, Winfield has an outside crack at topping the 2000 RBI career barrier, something that has been done by only two other players in major league history. You know them well, Hank Aaron (2297) and Babe Ruth (2209). Some pretty decent company. And that ain't all.

In about a week, Winfield will play in his 2700th major league game, tying Graig Nettles for 17th on the all-time list. This past Sunday, Winfield has his 10,006th and 10,007th career at-bats, catching and then passing Frank Robinson for No. 14 on the all-time list. Winfield just recorded his 2856th hit, putting him in the 28th position of all-time career hit leaders. Next on the list above him at 2873 is Babe Ruth. Winfield recently scored his 1546th run, pushing him into 27th place past Max Carey. In the hitting of doubles, Winfield recently rapped out his 491st, putting him at No. 33 on the all-time list,

tied with Heinie Manusch. Winfield, the active leader in round-trippers, recently hit his 431st home run, which puts him in 20th place all-time, ahead of Billy Williams' 426. Right above him on the list at No. 19 is Dave Kingman (442), at No. 18, Yaz (452), and at No. 16, Stan Musial and Willie Stargell (475).

Some amazing numbers are one measure of this fine Senator player. When you watch big Dave during the rest of the season and in post-season play, appreciate the kind of player you are seeing.

### **MORE BASEBALL LORE**

- We ooh and ahh when someone like Cecil even gets near 140 RBIs in a season. But in historical perspective, is it really that much of a feat? Yes and no. There are relatively few players who have accrued as many as 140 RBIs in a season (70), but there are a few legends who are so far above the pack that it is almost unbelievable. And, the most amazing of them all was the Iron Horse.

The No. 1 season RBI total of all-time, as you all know, is Lewis (Hack) Wilson's 190 in 1930. This was a bit of an aberration for the Hack-man, whose second highest season total was 159 in 1929. Second on the list of greatest season RBI totals is Sweet Lou, with 184 in 1931. But what's more amazing is the number of RBI single-season totals that Lou had in the top 75. Take a look:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of RBIs</u>	<u>Rank Among All-Time RBI Season Totals</u>
1931	184	2nd
1927	175	4th
1930	174	6th
1934	165	13th
1937	159	20th
1936	152	32nd
1932	151	34th
1928	142	58th
1933	139	71st

Bear in mind that Gehrig managed all these RBIs with a pretty fair hitter batting ahead of him, cleaning the pond of ducks on occasion. Had Lou not been struck down by the disease that came to bear his name, is there any doubt that he would be our all-time RBI leader? I think not.

- On Sunday, Mickey Morandini pulled off a rare feat, an unassisted triple play against the Pirates. The last time it happened in the National League was 1987. The last time it happened in the American League was in 1968, when Oxford, Nebraska native Ron Hansen, a Washington Senators shortstop, pulled it off against the Cleveland Indians.

- As you are all well aware, Robin Yount recently eclipsed the 3000 hit mark, and has now passed up Roberto Clemente (3000 hits) and Al Kaline (3007 hits). Yount is currently No. 14 on the list. Next in his sights are Lou Brock at 3023 hits, Rod Carew at 3053, Paul Waner at 3152, and Nap Lajoie at 3242 (No. 10).

- George Brett is about to prove many of you nay-sayers wrong by getting his 3000th career hit. After Sunday's contest, he stands at 2989 hits, 11 short of the magic mark. But did you also realize that Gorgeous George recently hit his 625th 2-bagger to pass Hank Aaron and take over the No. 8 spot on the all-time doubles list? Next in his sights at 640 is the Flying Dutchman, Honus Wagner.

- Although Nolan Ryan has had a less than spectacular 1992 season, he continues to add to his legend. Nolan's win total now stands at 319, good for the 13th spot on the all-time win list. Within reach, should Nolan come back for 1993, are Don Sutton (324), Eddie Plank (326), John Clarkson (328), and Steve Carlton (329). Through last weekend, Nolan had pushed his career strikeout total to 5,659. This puts Nolan 1523 strikeouts ahead of the No. 2 all-time strikeout artist, Steve Carlton (4,136). And consider this. When Walter Johnson ended his storied pitching career in 1927, he established a career strikeout record of 3,509 (in 5923 innings). This mark stood the test of time for more than fifty years, until it was surpassed by the trio of Ryan, Steve Carlton and Gaylord Perry in the 1983 season. Nolan also ranks among the all-time leaders in innings pitched (5306), losses (No. 3 at 287), bases on balls (No. 1 at 2751), and shutouts (No. 9 at 60). Of course, he is the No. 1 of all-time in no-hit games, with 7 (the only other person with at least 4 is the great Sandy Koufax).

- Another Senatorial standout, Dennis Eckersley, has an outside chance at catching Bobbie Thigpen's 1990 record of 57 saves in one season. On Monday night, Eckersley recorded his 50th save, establishing the second highest season total, ahead of his own previous mark of 48 in 1990. As we witnessed in the Cooperstown records room, Eckersley is now in the top 10 among active players in both saves (238) and wins (181), an achievement that likely will never be duplicated.

- In the Cooperstown records room, we saw that Bert Blyleven ranks as No. 3 in career strikeouts with 3,694. He is also No. 22 in career wins, with 287. But wily old Bert has a couple of other records of which he is less proud. In 1986, Bert tossed up 50 gopher balls to easily establish a season record for home runs allowed. The very next season, Bert tried his darnedest to best his new record, but came up 4 short with 46 gopher balls, tying Robin Roberts for 2nd place on most home runs given up in one season.

I could go on and on, but I think that my point is well made. We are seeing some of the best baseball players ever in our generation, and this should not be lost on you as you observe Winfield, Brett, Yount, Rik Aalbert, the Eck, and Nolan in the twilights of their Hall-of-Fame careers. Appreciate these Boys of Summer for what they are doing and what they have done.

### **WINTER MEETING**

In the coming months, we will need to schedule the HSL winter meeting to crown our 1992 champion -- Sandjigger (woe is us), to discuss the 1992 season and our new scoring system and rule changes, and to decide on whether we need to fine tune our system for the 1993 campaign. Give this your consideration. The expansion draft for the Rockies and the Marlins will take place on Tuesday, November 17, 1992, beginning at 2:00 p.m. EDT. The draft is expected to last for several hours. I propose that we have our winter League meeting at the Scorecard or some other location where the draft will be televised on the big screen (perhaps Sandjigger's basement refinishing project will be completed by that time, and he will magnanimously offer to hold the event there). I can think of nothing more fitting than to sip beer and exchange baseball ideas while watching America's pastime take on a new shape with two expansion teams. Please give this your utmost consideration and let me know what you think.

### **CONCLUSION**

What a great season it has been. Enjoy the foregoing food for thought, and enjoy the last two weeks of the 1992 season.

Enclosed also for your edification is a copy of an article I found of interest titled "Baseball and the Law," the Top Ten Hitters and Pitchers for our last two-week session and a few other goodies. Enjoy.

Warm regards,

Skipper