



FROM THE BULLPEN

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The Hot Stove League
Eastern Nebraska Division
1993 Season

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August 10, 1993

Tough Guys:

THE TRIP

Which *trip*, you might ask? The monumental HSL excursion to the Golden State, or Curby's¹ Sensational Re-creation of the David Palmer Incident? Well, both.

By all accounts, The Trip of 1993 was momentous, and merits a recounting of the highlights in this issue of *From the Bullpen*. However, by unanimous vote of the nine loyal League members in attendance, that portion of this issue of *FTB* which pertains to The Trip will be shared only with The Trip attendees, and will be blacked out on the versions of this issue of the league rag sent to the three slagballs that punted this year's feature event. So here goes:

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

The 1993 HSL trip to Southern California was, to understate the obvious, a good time. Three great ball parks, four great games, four days of fun. For those of you who were too inebriated to recount the details of the ball games for your loved ones, we witnessed the following contests:

| Day | Stadium | Scores | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------|---|
| * Thursday, 8/5/93 | Anaheim, The Big A | Angels | 6 |
| | | Royals | 5 |

¹By popular demand, Magpie's nickname for the balance of the 1993 Campaign will hereafter be Curby. I trust that no further explanation is necessary.

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| | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------|---|
| Friday, 8/6/93 | San Diego, Jack Murphy Stadium | Padres | 6 |
| | | Rockies | 3 |
| | | Padres | 6 |
| | | Rockies | 2 |
| Saturday, 8/7/93 | Los Angeles, Chez Ravine | Reds | 8 |
| | | Dodgers | 5 |

Some great baseball!

It was unfortunate that we were unable to see the beloved San Diego Chicken perform at Jack Murphy Stadium², but seeing Tony Gwynn crack out his 2,000th career hit was better than any show that the feathered mascot could have put on.

The Trip began on a promising note with Itchie's aggressive demand for an eye-opener from the flying cocktail waitress before the pilot had even fired up the engines (What Time! Tell Me What Time I Can Get A Drink!). And with that, the tone of The Trip was set. The Trip highlights were too numerous to mention all of them here, but some of the more memorable moments are worthy of being recorded for the ages:

²Unbeknownst to League members, the panic-stricken Chicken abruptly left town after getting wind of how Shamu stripped his teeth and made short work of an entire barbecued chicken at The Spot earlier in the day.

- The initiation of the two League rookies on their first HSL trip, beginning with a true test of Mouse's³ mettle by positioning him next to the filibustering Curby for the entire trip to the coast. To his credit, Mouse feigned interest during the entire conversation, and did not become physically ill until almost dinner time, several hours longer than men of lesser stuff would have lasted.
- The stellar dipping performances during a virtual four-day Chew-A-Thon, by Shamu and others who shall remain nameless for their own protection.
- Riding in the 36-passenger Scratch-and-Dentmobile as B.T. bobbed and weaved through the treacherous L.A. traffic, popping wheelies and screaming, "I am the best."
- Watching a fear-frozen Eddie the Eagle make his first-ever hang gliding leap from the hills of LaJolla, as Rookie⁴ rubbernecked Black Beach below for naked (and he claims female) sunbathers on the beach.
- Shielding our endangered appendages as Shamu shattered the California state record for making large barbecued fowl disappear (this is considered magic in his country).
- Witnessing Itchie's eerily real imitation of Tarbash, the Egyptian Magician, before shaving and showering each day.
- Seeing the smile brought to the face of a homeless wino as he watched the Curby soar through the Santa Barbara skies à la David Palmer (while no doubt thinking to himself, "There, but for the grace of God, go I.").
- McBlunder's unyielding mimicking of lines from the Jerky Boys tape, including his favorite, "Frank Rizzo. Open your ears, jackass!"

³Clank doesn't work. Let's go with Mouse till something better comes to mind.

⁴Formerly known as Boxcar.

- Curby's relentless pleas for a side trip to the San Diego ballet, and his often-articulated disappointment with the state of affairs at Pacers.
- WhiteSot and Curby's adroit maneuvering of the Scratch-and-Dentmobile.
- The look of horror on WhiteSot's face as he learned of his \$420 telephone call to Santa Monica.
- The look of horror on WhiteSot's face as he learned of the cost of repairs to the Scratch-and-Dentmobile.
- Curby's cocksure declaration that the Reds are a "sure thing" to capture the Crown in 1993.
- The look of concern on everyone's face when told that Saturday night's lodging (The Discomfort Inn) was located in the heart of Los Angeles gang territory.
- The *extra special bonus* of having our Saturday night hotel room comped (although B.T. tried his best to talk the hotel clerk out of it).
- Watching the muscleheads at Muscle Beach hoist the unthinkable equivalent of Shamu's post-trip poundage for a world bench press record.
- The brain trust who waited on us at Yankee Doodle's.
- The near-unanimous vote for Possum's expulsion from the League, for sins too numerous to mention.

Many memories to treasure from the 1993 trip. But enough sentimentality. What about 1994? There seemed to be unanimity of enthusiasm for a tri-city tour of Baltimore/Philadelphia/New York to see Camden Yards, The Vet and Yankee Stadium for next year's trip. Remember, it's never too early to start lobbying those all-important spouses for their permission and/or blessing to attend, as each case may be.

STADIUM COUNT

With the 1993 trip in the jar, let's have a little recap of HSL trips from 1985 to 1993:

| Year | Dates | City | Stadium | Games |
|------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1985 | Aug. 3-4 | Kansas City | Royals Stadium | 2 - Royals/Red Sox |
| 1986 | Aug. 16-17 | Kansas City | Royals Stadium | 2 - Royals/Yankees |
| 1987 | Oct. 4 | Kansas City | Royals Stadium | 1 - Royals/Twins |
| 1988 | Aug. 13-14 | Chicago | Wrigley Field | 2 - Cubs/Cardinals |
| 1989 | July 20 July 21-22 July 24 | Kansas City Milwaukee Chicago | Royals Stadium County Stadium Wrigley Field | 1 - Royals/Indians 2 - Brewers/Twins 1 - Cubs/Giants |
| 1990 | July 4 July 5 July 6-7 | Kansas City Arlington Arlington | Royals Stadium Arlington Stadium Arlington Stadium | 1 - Royals/Brewers 1 - Rangers/Orioles 1 - Rangers/Red Sox |
| 1991 | Aug. 31- Sept. 1 | Chicago | New Comiskey Park | 2 - White Sox/Indians |
| 1992 | June 11 June 12 June 13 | Toronto Cleveland Detroit | Sky Dome Cleveland Stadium Tiger Stadium | 1 - Blue Jays/Red Sox 1 - Indians/Yankees 2 - Tigers/Orioles |
| 1993 | August 5 August 6 August 7 | Anaheim San Diego Los Angeles | The Big A Jack Murphy Stadium Chez Ravine | 1 - Angels/Royals 2 - Padres/Rockies 1 - Reds/Dodgers |

9 years, **11** ball parks, **25** baseball games, 627 beers, 270 bags of goobers, and 523 brats and polish dogs (222, if Shamu is excluded from the count). Wow! What a commitment to baseball. Let's keep this tradition alive, boys.

Congratulations to Shamu, McBlunder and Skipper, for making it to every trip while a League member. And special congrats to Rookie and Mouse, for starting things off on the right foot in their virgin years of HSL participation.

TIME TO PAY THE PIPER

And now for the bad news. I enclose herewith a recap of expenditures for this year's Trip, and my calculations of each man's share of the expenses. While unaudited, I believe that my figures are roughly accurate. The back-up documentation is available if there are any suspicions of financial mismanagement or outright fraud on my part. Please provide me with payment of your share at your earliest convenience. Feel free to pay in cash, or with some other medium of exchange if it will assist you in pulling the wool over your financial partner's eyes. And remember, although there is no particular hurry for me to receive your payment, if any of you attempt to use the Slo-Pay deferred payment plan, you are subject to scorn and ridicule in future issues of *FTB*.

ON WITH THE SHOW

Now that The Trip has been memorialized for posterity, let's move on to other items on the agenda.

As you know, following our double-secret vote on The Trip, we will have two holes to fill for the 1994 campaign. While Itchie has proffered One-Way Tony as a possible candidate for League membership in 1994, we should all keep our ears open for other candidates. Remember the membership traits that we discussed: Enthusiasm; integrity; loyalty; honor; ability and willingness to pay; ability and willingness to sit next to Curby; truthfulness in promising attendance on The Trip; knowledge of baseball minutiae; lack of cardplaying acumen; strong family values; family pants; and a fax machine. Remember, we must be selective in our quest to better the League.

REDS SCARE

While B.T. was busy meddling in the Senators-Redbirds rivalry — attempting to snatch a loser \$100 bet out of the fire, and interfering with the natural order of the universe — he fell asleep at the switch and allowed Curby and his pesky Reds to take over full possession of first place. Sadly, here are the standings through games of Sunday, August 8, 1993:

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|------|
| 1. | Sin City Reds | 6216 |
| 2. | Lincoln Chiefs | 6211 |
| 3. | Omaha Skipjacks | 6010 |
| 4. | Omaha Senators | 5821 |
| 5. | Omaha Red Sox | 5812 |
| 6. | Lincoln Colemans | 5683 |
| 7. | Lincoln Cubs | 5658 |
| 8. | Kansas City Blues | 5530 |
| 9. | Omaha Redbirds | 5459 |
| 10. | Omaha Bronx Bombers | 5374 |
| 11. | Detroit Tigers | 5309 |
| 12. | Lincoln Pirates | 4614 |

Is the Chiefs' *dream* season really a *pipe dream*? Looks like it. If the Reds continue at their recent pace, it looks like the runaway that Curby predicted could be a reality. But don't give up on the Skipjacks and their feisty manager. He really is an Egyptian Magician.

More distressing to me, of course, is the breakneck pace at which the Senators have been plummeting down the HSL totem pole. Although just a few short weeks ago the Senators were in the thick of the pennant race, poised for a fight to the finish, they have dropped well below the Skipjacks, and are threatened by -- gasp -- Possum's Red Sox. If this troublesome trend continues, and the Red Sox finish ahead of the Senators, the old Skipper may secede from the Hot Stove League and join a professional bowlers' rotisserie league. Don't let it happen.

The Tribe continues to fade, as the Cubs inch their way up the standings ladder. The Redbirds, thanks in large part to the meddlesome B.T., threaten to finish in the upper division, an unheard-of feat for a League rookie. The Tigers continue their free-fall, having nestled into 11th place, below both of this year's League rookies. My deepest condolences.

The Bronx Bombers, finally, are making their move. Last week, they led the League with 405 points. More incredibly, Slo-Pay's Pirates cracked the 300 barrier with 306 points, and had a better week than five other teams in the League. Rally, Pirates! Here's how each team did for the week:

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|-----|
| 1. | Omaha Bronx Bombers | 405 |
| 2. | Omaha Red Sox | 390 |
| 3. | Omaha Redbirds | 383 |
| 4. | Lincoln Cubs | 365 |
| 5. | Sin City Reds | 360 |
| 6. | Omaha Skipjacks | 349 |
| 7. | Lincoln Pirates | 306 |
| 8. | Kansas City Blues | 269 |
| 9. | Lincoln Chiefs | 264 |
| 10. | Detroit Tigers | 263 |

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| 11. | Omaha Senators | 231 |
| 12. | Lincoln Colemans | 227 |

TATER WATCH

Date: **Team Taters: 195** **Tater Limit: 210** **Taters To Go: 15**
8/12/93

AROUND THE HORN

Barry Bonds of the Senators continues to lead the League with 581 points. Jeff Montgomery of the Tribe is the top point-getter among pitchers, with 431. The top available free agents are Kirk Gibson (253 points) and Vince Coleman (249 points). Vinnie pledges to be back in a Lincoln Coleman uniform as soon as his little misunderstanding with the authorities is cleared up.

FOR YOUR READING PLEASURE

I have enclosed a new Top Ten List for your perusal, together with a fine article about George Brett that is mandatory reading, and a couple of other items of interest. Coming next issue: Photographs from The Trip. See ya.

Skipper