



FROM THE BULLPEN

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Eastern Nebraska Division
1994 Season

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*"Let there be long, slow
summer games on real
grass and Georgia clay
with wooden bleachers
and no damned DH."*

Rick Wilber.

Nice quote. If I can't be good at baseball management, let me be sentimental.

LET'S PLAY JEOPARDY

Long Shots for \$200, Alec.

A billion
to one.

Bzzt! "What are the chances that Skipper had Lance Johnson in the starting lineup for his 20-point Memorial Day

outburst? (4 hits, 2 triples, a double, 3 runs scored, 2 stolen bases.)"

That's right, my friends, after nearly two months of watching Lance do exactly nothing for the Senators, ranging between negative 2 and positive 2 points per night, I reached my tolerance limit and demoted him to the Senators' top farm squad, where he followed suit with other demotees and lit it up on Memorial Day. Very nice.

As if it would make any difference. Adding Lance Johnson's 20-point Memorial Day to the Senators' total would be like tossing a fire extinguisher to David Koresh. But the point is, it gives me grist for my whine list, and for that I thank Lance very much. And there is much to whine about this week, but we'll get to that later.

EIGHT-WEEK STANDINGS

After eight weeks of the 1994 campaign, it's the same old¹ story. The Redbirds are again atop the roost:

1.	Redbirds	2956
2.	Cubs	2625
3.	Chiefs	2620
4.	Reds	2557
5.	Bronx Bombers	2532
6.	Red Sox	2487
7.	Skipjacks	2396
8.	Blues	2341
9.	Tribe	2260
10.	Tigers	2166
11.	Pirates	2164
12.	Senators	1953

Yes, the gap between the Redbirds and 2nd place is growing chasmic (331), and the Redbirds may soon be considered beyond reach. While the next four teams (Cubs, Chiefs, Reds, Bronx Bombers) are fighting a pitched battle for 2nd (only 93 points separates 2nd from 5th), it may be *just that*, a battle for 2nd place. But of much more importance to Skipper is the alarming span between the 11th-place Tigers and the cellar-dwelling Senators. To be exact, 153 points. At this point, I could give a rat's posterior about who finishes in 1st place this year.

But I'll be damned if the Senators are going to sniff the collective HSL tailpipe the entire season.

¹ And it is getting old.

WEEKLY TOTALS

A touch of malaise has apparently affected the entire League, as only two teams finished with more than 300 points for the week ending May 29. Once again, those nauseating, over-achieving Redbirds set the pace, followed by the never-say-die Cubs:

1. Redbirds	360
2. Cubs	316
3. Tribe	295
4. Bronx Bombers	288
5. Blues	260
6. Skipjacks	257
7. Reds	256
8. Tigers	251
9. Chiefs	236
10. Red Sox	231
11. Senators	222
12. Pirates	208

The Redbirds had both the best batting (247) and pitching (112) for the week. The lowest-scoring hitting team for the week was the Reds (153), and the Pirates had the worst pitching week (-2).

The player of the week for week 8 was Frank Thomas, who chalked up 63 points. He is also the League MVP of the year at this stage, with 313 points, surpassing Ken Griffey, Jr. The top pitcher for the week was Kenny Rogers, with 44 points (but no new country hits). The Cy Young of the year again is (yawn) Greg Maddux, with 250 points.

For the year, the Redbirds have the best hitting squad (2111) and the best pitching squad (845). I would be remiss in my duties not to point out that the Redbird hitters have more points, all by themselves, than the entire teams of the Tigers and Senators. In other words, cut loose all of the Redbirds' pitchers, and their 845 points, and they still finish ahead of the lowly Tigers and Senators. Humiliating? Not at all.

SEASON FROM HELL, REVISITED, AGAIN

To the delight of many, the woes of the '94 Senators continue. No holiday for this sorry group. Let's see what is sticking in the Skipper's craw this week:

Lance Johnson: See page one.

James Mouton: I'm really starting to dislike this guy. On May 21, he played half an inning, scored 0 points. On May 22, he rode pine. With a total of 12 points in his previous 10 games, it was time for James to get some polish in the Senators' farm system. Then on May 24, his first day down in the bushes, Mouton has a career-best 4/5 day at the plate, chalking up 11 points. Thanks very much, James. In my minor leagues you will remain.

Bill Risley: Never even heard of this guy until I took him in the Free Agent Draft, but he had scored a bunch of points, so on the Senators roster he did go. And as you might expect, in his first outing for the Senators, he took it on the chin, losing 7 points for my team.

Chris Hammond: The saga continues. With two consecutive short outings because of a sore back, I sent Chris down to the minors for a brief rehabilitation stint. He immediately pitches 5-2/3 innings of 5-hit ball, earning a positive 9 points for the farm club. Thanks again, Chris.

Ken Caminiti: No, he's no longer a Senator, but I just realized how well he is doing for Rookie and his Redbirds. Through May 29, Ken was the 5th-rated third baseman with 167 points, not far behind the leader, Matt Williams (198) or my own Robin Ventura, who has 175. So why, oh why, did the Skipper cut him loose back on April 25, you might ask?

TO REJUVENATE HIS BASEBALL CAREER, of course! As I look back to my statistics, I see that Ken was batting .128 when I made the decision to cut him loose, having scored a total of 16 points in 11 games for the Senators. Maybe it was the fact that old Ken went a whole week without a hit there in April, and scored negative points more often than he scored positive points, that helped me to make up my mind on his future. In any event, since being picked up by the Redbirds in the Free Agent Draft, Ken has been a man on a mission, raising his points-per-game average to a very respectable 3.6, and forging a 10 or 11 or 12 (I lost count due to severe nausea) game hitting streak. And for that I say to Ken, thank you very much.

Juan Guzman: My little quibble with Juan Guzman should be self-evident. After igniting himself with rocket fuel and chalking up a negative 24 points for the Senators on May 5, Juan settled down and lost only 9 points for the Senators on May 10, and 11 points for the Senators on May 22. After having negative-point outings in 5 out of his 10 starts, is there any manager alive who would *not* have demoted Juan to the minor leagues? Well, apparently I was a bit hasty, because on May 28 Juan Guzman went up against another one of my starters, Mark Langston, and one of these two pitchers ended up with positive 11 points for the outing, the other with negative 11. Try to guess which. Thank you, Juan. And thank you, Mark.

Robin Ventura: I read my fax on the morning of May 28, and see that Robin Ventura had only 1 at-bat the night before. What gives? The next day, I see on my daily fax that Robin left the May 27 game with back spasms? So Robin doesn't play on May 28, May 29 or May 30. But does anybody know whether his injury is serious, whether he will go on the DL, or whether he will be back in action in a few days? Apparently not. The informational Iron Curtain has apparently enveloped the City of Omaha,

because nobody can tell me nothin' about Robin Ventura. But if he's hurt for long, that's okay. I still have back-up third baseman Ken Caminiti . . . never mind.

My Entire Pitching Staff: I hate it. They stink. They have had more negative-point outings than Shamu has mesh garments. You question this? Take a look:

Bobby Witt	-12	4/5
Chuck Finley	-9	4/7
Jim Gott	-8	4/10
Bobby Witt	-14	4/11
Juan Guzman	-6	4/14
David Nied	-7	4/19
Randy Myers	-6	4/25
Bobby Witt	-9	4/26
Kent Mercker	-8	4/27
Chuck Finley	-6	4/27
Pat Hentgen	-21	4/27
Chris Hammond	-9	4/29
Chuck Finley	-8	5/3
Juan Guzman	-24	5/5
Juan Guzman	-9	5/10
Tim Pugh	-11	5/11
Pat Hentgen	-9	5/13
Trevor Hoffman	-10	5/14
Mark Langston	-16	5/17
Chris Hammond	-8	5/18
Juan Guzman	-11	5/22
Tim Pugh	-7	5/22
Pat Hentgen	-5	5/25
Bill Risley	-7	5/27
Mark Langston	-11	5/28
Randy Myers	-6	5/31
Total	-257	

And these include only those outings where the pitcher (I use the term loosely) lost at least 5 points for the Senators. Those piddling little -1 and -2 point outings are not even included. I LOVE MY STAFF. And Curby has a good-looking haircut. And pigs are now . . . well, you get the idea.

THE TRIP

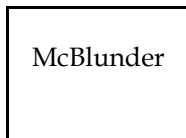
But enough negativity. I'm calmly confident the Senators will turn it around any day now.

Let's talk about something fun. The Trip. The Toast to the East Coast looms ever nearer. Despite Itchie's dogged attempts to change the '94 trip to a junket to St. Louis to see the Cardinals, and then on to Branson to catch concerts by Moe Bandy, Mel Tillis, Ray Stevens and Jim Stafford, it is still on to Bahs-tun, The Big Apple and Baltimore. Itchie has been overruled by the powers-that-be. Maybe next year, Itchie. Or maybe a nice little trip to Branson with Anne and Zack to revisit your country roots.

JULY 7. Be ready to go on The Trip of a Lifetime.

DOUBLE JEOPARDY

Okay, Alec, let me have Foolish Baseball Transactions for \$200.



Bzzt! "Who would ever be stupid enough to sign free agent Heathcliff Slocumb?" Circle gets the square.

Enjoy Week Nine, those of you who can.

Skipper