



# FROM THE BULLPEN

Official Publication of  
The Hot Stove League  
Eastern Nebraska Division  
1994 Season

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**Ringgggg!**

"Hello, this is Jim Buser."

"Hey, Boozer! Guess which team's second round draft choice just announced his retirement? Give up? It's yours! Har-har-har-har-har! You need help in a big way. Ready to deal on my terms?"

What a way to start your Monday morning. How would you like to be poor Rookie, precariously clinging to a dwindling lead, watching your team struggle through a dreadful slump, and your main competition scoring like Wilt Chamberlain? Then you

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get an early, Monday morning telephone call from (yes, we know) the Evil One. And then you learn that Ryne Sandberg has just announced that he will announce his retirement that afternoon. And then you receive a fax from the Evil One confirming this Godawful news.

Such is life in the Hot Stove League, Rookie. Time to suck it up, me boy. And if you can't stand the heat, stay out of Heil's Kitchen.<sup>1</sup>

## A PENNANT RACE AFTER ALL?

After it looked for all the world as if Rookie and his Redbirds would run away with the HSL title in '94, suddenly things are starting to get interesting. With the Redbirds mired in a bit of a slump (275 points last week, 236 points in Week X), and the Cubs scoring points at a breakneck pace (465 for Week X), that one-time 300+ point lead has dwindled to a 61-point bulge. This is what it looks like after ten weeks:

### WEEK X

1. Redbirds	3467
2. Cubs	3406
3. Chiefs	3350
4. Red Sox	3278
5. Skipjacks	3206
6. Reds	3107
7. Bronx Bombers	3089
8. Blues	2987

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9. Tribe	2835
10. Pirates	2782
11. Tigers	2596
12. Senators	2535

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There were several hot teams during the tenth week. Here are the one-week totals:

1. Cubs	465
2. Pirates	454
3. Red Sox	429
4. Skipjacks	361
5. Chiefs	355
6. Senators	351
7. Tribe	318
8. Bronx Bombers	271
9. Blues	257
10. Reds	243
11. Tigers	242
12. Redbirds	236

The first shall be last, and the last shall be first.

<sup>1</sup> Not a typo, but the name of U-belly's team in the Bill James Winter League.

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FROM WEEK X

— Frank Thomas continues to lead the league with 357 points. Junior is No. 2 with 326. Closing in fast is Jose Canseco with 294 (which does not include his 3 HR, 18 RBI outburst on June 13).

— Greg Maddux (yawn) is still the top pitcher with 323 points. David Cone is No. 2 at 257, and Lee Smith is 3rd with 245.

— Top scorer for the week was Moises Alou of the Lincoln Cubs, with 70 points. Top pitcher for the week was David Cone of the Red Sox with 51, followed by Kevin Tapani (I knew he would amount to nothing) with 50 points for the Tribe.

— The Cubs had the top pitching staff for the week, with 201 points. The abysmal Tigers' staff (yes, they are even worse than the Senators' staff), had the lowest pitching total for the week with 18 points.

— The top hitting team for the week was the Pirates (led by Travis Fryman's 60-point output) with 325 (a new HSL record?). At the other end of the spectrum were the Bronx Bombers, who could muster up only 158 hitting points for the week.

## SKIPPER TAKES A BOW

Your humble *FTB* scribe is pleased and proud to announce that he has received his first official BILL JAMES WARNING. Yes, it's official. The Senators are on track to drive in 951 runs. I have been warned that only 950 of these will count. Ahhh, it's good to be pushing the envelope.

As an aside, it should be noted that the only previous notice I have received in the warning section of the Stats pack has been that the Senators

project to lose 108 games for the season. I am relieved to find out that only 100 of these losses will count against the Senators. So at least I have that going for me. (And who else among you can boast of receiving one of Bill James' coveted "anti-warnings"?)

## CUBS CHATTER

With the hard-charging Cubs breathing and sweating down the neck of Rookie and his Redbirds, what else would you expect at this time of year but one of Shamu's customary "I might just win this thing" proclamations? Word has it that Shamu is biting his tongue to avoid making one of his patented predictions, still stinging from the aftermath of a similar outburst just a few short seasons ago.<sup>2</sup> Be careful, Shamu, even the walls have ears.

## TRIP UPDATE

Despite further intense lobbying by Itchie for a Branson excursion to see his idol, John Davidson, our "Toast to the East Coast" will proceed as scheduled. Those of us who paddle our own canoe will head south to Kansas City on Thursday, July 7, 1994, to begin the four-day ordeal of revelry, debauchery, and good old-fashioned fun. Somebody has to do it!

## CORRECTION

The Couples Shower for the Sinclairs of South Lincoln will take place not on Saturday, July 23, as previously indicated, but on Satur

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<sup>2</sup> For those of you who do not recall, in 1990 Shamu declared his team capable of finishing "No worse than third" and predicted that they "just might win this thing." At that exact moment, Shamu donned a concrete parachute, and plummeted swiftly and surely to the bowels of the League.

day, July 30, 1994. Please re-mark your calendars. And send that mesh off to the cleaners.

## TRADE WINDS

Nothing much new to report here. Possum is still pitching Deion Sanders and Paul O'Neill on the Home Shopping Network, but is not even getting a nibble. Must be another conspiracy. In an attempt to avoid a repeat of last year's Tater Watch, B.T. is beginning to shop around his most prolific home run hitter, Ken Griffey, Jr. Asking price? Your top six players. Good luck, Possum, Jr.

## McKUDOS TO McBLUNDER

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. McBlunder, who are now the proud owners of a baby girl, Daniella Tartabella Blongewicz, a/k/a Dani Lee Blongewicz, born May 2, 1994. Get her a catcher's mitt.

## FROM THE DUGOUT

Many of the Senators' hitters, and perhaps a few of your own, have been flirting with the "Mendoze line." But do you know where the term "Mendoze line" came from? (Pardon my dangling participle.) As those of you who read a recent article in the *USA Today* may know, Mario Mendoze was a weak-hitting journeyman playing for the Seattle Mariners in 1979, when teammates Tom Paciorek and Bruce Bochte began referring to a .200 average as the "Mendoze line." This was quite unfair to Mario (now a manager at Midland, Texas for the AA farm club of the Angels) who actually sported a .215 career average.

So now you know the "rest of the story."

See you next issue.

Skipper