

FROM THE BULLPEN



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

Edition No. 15
June 29, 1994

IT'S GREAT TO BE ALIVE!

I thought this to myself on the beautiful Saturday morning of June 25, 1994, in Victoria, British Columbia, where Cheryl and I spent a few leisurely days on our vacation to the Great Northwest.

Not as I lazily stretched upon the king-size bed of our beautiful hotel room in the grand old Empress Hotel.

Not as I showered leisurely before leaving for a late-morning breakfast.

Not as I devoured a sumptuous breakfast while basking in the warmth of the Canadian sun.

Not as I stared across the table at my lovely wife.

No, these things were all pretty darned good. But as I finished my breakfast and licked the last of the Canadian maple syrup off my lips; as I discovered that the Victoria newspaper contained all the previous evenings box scores; as I eyed the first box score to find Jeff Bagwell's 3 HR, 6 RBI night; as I realized the Possum would have been the benefactor of this 58.5-point Bagwell

night (including the 30-point bonus for hitting three home runs in one game) if

only he had made me a bona fide offer of Deion Sanders and Paul O'Neill for Jeff Bagwell (instead of the Bait-and-Switcheroo to two quarts of chaff and one pint of dross); as I realized that Bagwell had enjoyed his success off of Ramon Martinez of the Los Angeles Dodgers; and as I realized that Ramon was in Possum's starting lineup and had been bruised up to the tune of -9.5 points: *It was then* that I looked up to the heavens, wiped away a tear or two, and proclaimed: "Thank you, God! It's great to be alive!"

"What was that, Dave?" asked my wife.

"I'm just thanking my lucky stars to be here at this beautiful place with you, honeybunch," I quickly responded.

CHIEFS REGAIN TOP SPOT (WEEK XII)

Backed by the stellar pitching of staff ace Bobby Witt (&*#@!&), the hard-charging Chiefs blasted their way into the lead with another big week. After twelve weeks of play, the HSL standings look like this:
(Points-Points Behind-Points Week XII)

1. Chiefs	4087-	-345	(2)
2. Cubs	4005-	82 -256	(7)
3. Redbirds	3987-	100-240	(10)
4. Skipjacks	3949-	138-383	(1)
5. Red Sox	3863-	224-249	(9)
6. Reds	3823-	264-329	(4)
7. B. Bombers	3550-	537-221	(12)
8. Blues	3545-	542-310	(5)
9. Tribe	3427-	660-230	(11)
10. Pirates	3369-	718-267	(7)
11. Tigers	3247-	840-298	(6)
12. Senators	3203-	884-336	(3)

What was once a run-away by the Redbirds has turned into a six-horse race, with the top six teams within 264 points of each other. After that, it drops off another 273 points to the second division of the League.

The Dog Days of Summer are catching up to the Hot Stove League. For the second consecutive week, no team has scored over 400 points. Moreover, 7 of the 12 teams in the League scored less than 300 points for the week. The once-invincible Redbirds failed to top the 400-point barrier for the fourth consecutive week. Here are the weekly totals:

1. Skipjacks	383
2. Chiefs	345
3. Senators	336
4. Reds	329
5. Blues	310
6. Tigers	298

7. Pirates	267
8. Cubs	256
9. Red Sox	249
10. Redbirds	240
11. Tribe	230
12. Bronx Bombers	221

TOP INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES

Top 10 Hitters - Season

1. Frank Thomas (Redbirds)	438
2. Ken Griffey, Jr. (Chiefs)	414
3. Jeff Bagwell (Senators)	394
4. Albert Belle (Cubs)	378
5. Jose Canseco (Chiefs)	349
6. Kenny Lofton (Red Sox)	348
7. Mike Piazza (Reds)	329
8. Chuck Knoblauch (Tribe)	328
9. Darren Daulton (Skipjacks)	322
(T) Andres Galarraga (Tigers)	322

Top Hitters - Week XII

1. Jeff Bagwell (Senators)	81
2. John Valentin (Pirates)	46
3. Dante Bichette (Cubs)	44
4. Kenny Lofton (Red Sox)	44
5. Barry Bonds (Reds)	43
6. Frank Thomas (Redbirds)	42

Top Hitting Team/Season:
 Redbirds 2926

Top Hitting Team/Week:
 Chiefs 241

Worst Hitting Team/Season:
 Bronx Bombers 2431

Worst Hitting Team - Week:
 Bronx Bombers 124

Top Pitching Team - Season:
 Chiefs 1188

Top Pitching Team - Week:
 Skipjacks 156

Worst Pitching Team - Season:
 Tigers 32

Worst Pitching Team - Week:
 Tribe 19

Several teams took beatings by their staff this week. The Tribe netted out 19 points for the week, although Eric Plunk scored 22 points on his own. The rest of the Tribe's staff apparently came up with -3 points for the week. Similarly, the Redbirds netted 27 points for the week from the pitching staff, although Mel Rojas had 40+ points on his own. Likewise, the Red Sox netted 20 points from pitching, and Kevin Gross had 27+ points all on his own.

BALLPARK REVIEW

I am happy to report that our visit to the Kingdome for a Mariners-White Sox game (June 23) was pleasurable, indeed, although the outside of the Kingdome is as ugly as it looks on television, and the inside is nothing to brag about either. However, the crowd was enthusiastic, the Polish dogs hot and spicy, and the beer cold and plentiful. All in all, not a bad place for a visit. Ken Griffey, Jr., managed to hit home run number 31 the night before, and number 32 the night after, although we did get to see him blast a long, long foul ball in his first at-bat. Big deal, right?

For the record, the Kingdome is Ballpark No. 31 on my list. And I am duty-bound to report that Cheryl has now visited 9 different major league parks (she refuses to keep going with me unless I give her full credit), which probably gives her standing to replace Possum as a League owner. Some food for thought.

GRIEVANCES

— My Season in Hell continues as I watch Bobby Witt nearly pitch a perfect game for the Lincoln Chiefs, logging in 42 points for the week; followed by a

stellar 2-hitter last night (where, oh, where were you when I needed you?).

— Former Senator Ken Caminiti has now worked his way up to the third spot among 3rd basemen, with a total of 255 points, only 1 point behind Travis Fryman, the number two 3rd baseman. Rookie, you are quite welcome.

— Derek Bell (&#!&#!) had a 5-2-3-1/5-0-4-1 doubleheader performance for the Chiefs yesterday. I should get some recognition as Director of Player Personnel for the Chiefs if they win it all this year.

— Kirk Gibson, now firmly ensconced in the Senators' starting lineup, managed a whopping total of 8 points last week.

— Junior Felix, now also a Senator starter, chalked up a total of 7 points in six games for the Senators last week, an average of 1.1 points per game. As a non-Senator, Junior averaged 4.2 points per game.

— And the beat goes on.

ET CETERA

Can anyone explain why the Lincoln Pirates are still ahead of *any* other team in this League? This is not a good team, with its top scorer one week being Greg Vaughn, and John Valentin the next. This team has five 3rd basemen on the roster. This team has David Segui and John Jaha in the starting lineup. This team has Brent Gates, Leo Gomez and Tim Wallach in the starting lineup. This team has Greg Vaughn, Al Martin, Alex Cole and Devon White in the starting lineup. The heart and soul of this team is Tim Wallach. Enough said? What gives?

— You may have noted that Possum recently demoted Deion Sanders, the end-all and be-all of every trade pro-

posal he has made this year. The obvious question for Possum is: If Deion is so frigging good, why the hell is he in your minor leagues? Hmmm.

THE TRIP

One week from tomorrow, on July 7, 1994, the Trip to end all Trips will begin.

Kansas City, Boston, New York, Baltimore. Four great American League cities, eight different American League teams. Wow! Get ready for a big, big time.

AND FINALLY

Just a reminder (see enclosure) about my pro-am golf tournament in Seattle on August 1 and 2. Quite a few studs from the pro tour will be there, should be a good time. And for those of you who missed it, Scott Krause was featured on page 30 of last week's USA Today Baseball Weekly. A first for the HSL.

See you next week.

Skipper