

FROM THE BULLPEN



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EVERYBODY WINS AT MOUND BALL!

Just ask U-belly. This quickly became the theme for The Trip of '94, more formally known as the "Toast to the East Coast." As League members were introduced to a new version of this time-honored spectator sport at Kauffman Stadium, it became immediately apparent that everybody wins at mound ball. More to come on that.

KUDOS TO JIM ED

There is unanimity of opinion among the eight Trip attendees that Jim Ed Buser (a/k/a Rookie) put together a whale of a trip. Kansas City, Boston, New York, Baltimore. Four games, eight teams, great food, lots of barley, nary a hitch. Congratulations and many thanks from all for your superior planning and the superlative trip. The '94 Toast to the East Coast will go down in the HSL annals as one of the great ones. Special thanks to Big Guy for making the drive down to K.C. and back Thursday to be part of The Trip. It's good to see that kind of commitment to the HSL.

PLAINS, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

According to Itchie's calculations,¹ the Toast to the East Coast took us to or through ten different states, via just about every means of human transport:

-Automobiles from Nebraska to Kansas City, Missouri, via Iowa.

-Airplane from Kansas City to Boston, via Chicago.

-Taxi cab to the posh Howard Johnson Paul Revere in Boston.

-Luxury van (courtesy of Ho-Jo Paul Revere) to Boston bus station.

-Bus to Boston subway station.

-Subway to downtown Boston and Fenway Park.

-Subway from Fenway to downtown.

-Taxi to Ho-Jo Revere.

-Courtesy shuttle to Logan Field.

-Commuter flight from Boston to the Big Apple.

-Van from LaGuardia to Manhattan.

-Subway from midtown Manhattan to Yankee Stadium (The Bronx).

-Subway from The Bronx to the Plaza Hotel.

-Limo from Plaza Hotel to Penn Station.

-Amtrak train from Penn Station to Baltimore (via New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware).

-Taxi to airport.

-Airplane from Baltimore to Kansas City (via Nashville, Tennessee).

-Automobiles home from Kansas City.

All told, we stepped foot in ten different states, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Tennessee. Other than hot air balloons, rickshaws and beaming through space, we covered just about every available mode of public transportation. A whirlwind tour.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE TRIP

Each year, the highlights from The Trip seem to be more and better, and it is

¹ Sitting by himself on the plane ride home, Itchie had some time to kill.

of course difficult to mention them all. This year, I have solicited the assistance of League members in describing the best of the best from our Toast to the East Coast:

Day 1, Kansas City (July 7)

Underbelly: "Everybody wins at mound ball!"

McBlunder: "Seeing Possum's pitcher (Cal Eldred) get lit up was tops in my book!"

Big Guy: "Ditto."

Shamu: "Ditto."

Skipper: "Ditto."

Jim Ed: "Ditto."

Itchie: "I would have to say the 11 (hic) frosties that I put down were a highlight."

B.T.: "Fleecing Dave by trading off that slug, Manny Ramirez. He never even plays!"

Day 2, Boston (July 8)

Underbelly: "Everybody wins at mound ball!"

Shamu: "The ride on the subway was really neat; but the seven-course seafood meal at the Union Bay Oyster Club, and the three bräts at the park were even neater."

Mouse: "Fenway Pahk was outstanding."

Skipper: "Watching John Valentin's triple play unfold before my very eyes was remarkable. It was an honor to personally witness it!"

McBlunder: "What triple play?"

B.T.: "I didn't see no stinking triple play. Must be my medication."

Jim Ed: "I wouldn't have missed the triple play if I hadn't been down chasing more beers for Itchie, damn it!"

Itchie: "There is (hic) no question. It was wetting my whistle with 10 Samuel Adams brews before the game, and then really getting after it at Fenway."

Day 3, New York (July 9)

Underbelly: "Everybody wins at mound ball!"

Shamu: "The subway ride was pretty neat; but the bräts, the polish dog, the pizza, the macho nachos, the peanuts, and the super rope at the game were even neater."

B.T.: "The highlight for me was thinking about how bad I fleeced Skipper by trading off Manny Ramirez. He never plays!"

Mouse: "Hey, you guys, Mickey Mantle used to play here. I have his autograph! Mickey knows me!"

McBlunder: "The highlight for me was not sitting between Possum and Curby."

Skipper: "I can't remember anything. Heat stroke."

Itchie: "The 20-ounce frosties (all nine of them) and the (hic) permanent beer vendor in our aisle was tops for me."

Jim Ed: "Ditto. That and the carriage ride through Manhattan."

Day 4, Baltimore (July 10)

Underbelly: "I haven't won this stinking mound ball game once. I quit!"

Skipper: "Everybody wins at mound ball! \$\$\$\$\$"

Shamu: "The train ride from New York to Baltimore was really neat. But sampling Boog's 'Barn O' Beef' was even neater."

McBlunder: "Hey, you guys, what happened to Slo-Pay?"

B.T.: "What a ballpark!"

Mouse: "Ditto."

Jim Ed: "Ditto."

Itchie: "Ditto. And the beer (hic) was cold, too."

There were many other highlights from the trip. A few of the more memorable ones:

- Seeing Itchie be denied a mound ball win in the 5th inning of the Royals game, when Cal Eldred came sprinting in from the dugout with a jai alai scoop, making a shoestring save of the ball as it closed within millimeters of the mound.

- Watching in awe as B.T. bested the efforts of Jim Ed (58 mph), U-belly (58 mph), Skipper (57 mph), Itchie (53 mph), and Stretch² (2) at the pitching machine at Kauffman stadium, when B.T.'s errant throw went awry, hit the Jugs gun, flipped it over, and turned his 09 mph into the winning speed of 60 mph.

- Drinking Dawk beer at the quaint outdoor tavern in Bawston, and listening to Tip O'Neill belt out a tearful rendition of "Danny Boy."

- Seeing the major league debut of 18-year-old *Wunderkind* Alex Rodriguez (an inauspicious 0 for 3).

- Witnessing (We Were There) only the 11th triple play in major league history, by John Valentin, in the 6th inning of the Red Sox-Mariners game.

- Seeing three home runs over the Green Monster (one by John Valentin).

² Actual speed not disclosed at request of McBlunder.

- The stellar relief performance by Boston reliever, Ken Ryan (he was really fooling them).

- The beautifully-appointed Howard Johnson Paul Revere.

- Surviving heat stroke at Yankee Stadium.

- Visiting the holy monuments in Yankee Stadium.

- Watching an inebriated Itchie piss off 40 hostile New Yorkers in the subway car on the way back from Yankee Stadium.

- Listening to the unadulterated B.S. of our limo driver in New York City ("Git outta heah!" "Ya know what I mean?")

- Seeing a visably nervous Shamu make his way through the mean streets of Manhattan with his Barney knapsack (with his name on the back in glitter).

- Strolling the beautiful Inner Harbor in Baltimore.

- Touring the memorable Babe Ruth museum.

- Just walking into Camden Yards. (Oh, what a place!)

- Snarfing down barbecue made by The Boog. (Shamu was so impressed that he has promised to name his first-born Booger -- or Boogette, if it's a girl.)

TRADE WARS

The trade winds were blowing on the trip. B.T. had on his best checkered salesman's coat, and was playing Let's Make a Deal. These are the trades that were consummated during the Toast to the East Coast:

1. Chiefs trade Manny Ramirez to Senators for Joe Grahe and Trevor Hoffman.

2. Chiefs trade Derek Bell to Big Guy for reliever Ken Ryan (the mad scramble for former Senators continues).

3. Jim Ed trades Greg Swindell to Underbelly for Dave Nillson.

4. Jim Ed trades Julio Franco to Mouse for Dennis Martinez and Mark Lemke.

MOUND BALL

An attempt was made to record all of the mound ball winnings during The Trip, but since everyone wins at mound ball, what's the point? The biggest winners appeared to be Jim Ed (who won \$56 at the Red Sox game), and Skipper (who brought home the \$96 pot at the Orioles game). And the best thing of all was seeing how happy all my friends were for me when I won the big pot.

TRIP REIMBURSEMENT

As soon as I have received the audited figures from Arthur Anderson & Co., I will be submitting the figures for reimbursement. Don't spend all those mound ball winnings just yet, U-belly.

REMINDER: SHAMU BABY SHOWER

Don't forget. The Thielens and Ernsts will be co-hosting a baby shower for Shamu and Jan on the evening of Saturday, July 30. Please send in your money, and please R.S.V.P. A.S.A.P.

THE STANDINGS

I almost forgot. At the halfway point of the season (14 weeks), we are in the middle of a dog fight to end all dog fights. The four top teams are within 20 points of each other and the top five teams within 60. That's close. Here's how things stand:

Through 14 Weeks

1. Lincoln Cubs	4762
2. Omaha Skipjacks	4751
3. Omaha Redbirds	4745
4. Lincoln Chiefs	4742
5. Sin City Reds	4702
6. Boston Red Sox	4610
7. Kansas City Blues	4156
8. Bronx Bombers	4139
9. Lincoln Tribe	4047
10. Detroit Tigers	4002
11. Lincoln Pirates	4001
12. Omaha Senators	3930

FOR THE WEEK (XIV)

1. Redbirds	438
2. Skipjacks	401
3. Red Sox	399
4. Senators	376
5. Tigers	363
6. Reds	353
7. Pirates	352
8. Cubs	321
9. Bronx Bombers	280
10. Blues	274
11. Tribe	268
12. Chiefs	220

NEXT ISSUE

No more room this week, but next week's issue will contain additional incisive analysis of the standings, more trip highlights, and more trip pictures. Until then, I remain, very truly yours,

Skipper