

FROM THE BULLPEN



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

Edition No. 17
July 22, 1994

SENATORS ESCAPE OUTHOUSE!

Hallelujah!

It may not last for long. It may not last until next week. And it may not seem like a big deal to the rest of you. But for a team mired in last place for 14 consecutive weeks, a move into the 11th spot was as welcome to me as the liberation of the prisoners at Bastille. The 500-pound monkey is finally off the Senators' back (at least temporarily) and back where it belongs, on Slo-Pay.

Here's how it looks after 15 weeks:

First Division

1. Cubs	5048
2. Redbirds	5034
3. Chiefs	5008
4. Reds	4973
5. Skipjacks	4922
6. Red Sox	4882

Second Division

7. Bronx Bombers	4395
8. Blues	4358
9. Tigers	4271
10. Tribe	4248

11. Senators	4238
12. Pirates	4202

The Cubs' manager, Shamu, has a cervical strain from looking over his shoulder at the surging Redbirds and the ever-present Chiefs, as only 40 points separate the top three teams. Meanwhile, the Reds are lurking in the bushes, as the Skipjacks moonwalk backwards a few paces.

There has also been a substantial cinching up of the second division teams, as only 193 points separate the 7th place Bronx Bombers from the last-place Pirates (ahh, I like the sound of that). By way of contrast, after the 8th week of the season, a full 437 points separated the last-place team from the 7th place squad.

For historical perspective, after 15 weeks last season, the then-1st place Chiefs had 5072, or 24 more points than the 1st place team has at present. The bottom dweller at this point last year was, by staggering coincidence, also the Pirates, but at 15 weeks last year, the Pirates had only 3823 points, as compared with 4202 at present.

WEEK XV

For the first time this year, the **Senators were atop the leader board** for the week, totaling 308 points for the shortened week (Thursday through Sunday). Here are the totals for the week:

1. Senators	308
2. Redbirds	289
3. Cubs	286
4. Red Sox	272
5. Reds	271
6. Tigers	269
7. Chiefs	266
8. Bronx Bombers	256
9. Blues	202
10. Tribe	201
(T) Pirates	201
12. Skipjacks	171

The HSL average for the week was 249 points, compared with 237 points for the average of all teams. The average season points for the 12 teams of the HSL is 4631, compared with 4646 at this point last year. This is presumably attributable to the disfavored holds penalty.

BESTS AND WORSTS

MVP: Frank Thomas (Redbirds) - 558 (compared with Barry Bonds' 480 points at this time last year).

Cy Young: Greg Maddux (Blues) - 431
(compared with Jimmy Key's 380 points
at this stage last year).

Top Hitting Team/Season: Redbirds -
3591

Top Hitting Team/Week: Red Sox - 242

Worst Hitting Team/Season: Bronx
Bombers - 3017

Worst Hitting Team/Week: Tigers - 129

Top Pitching Team/Season: Chiefs -
1516

Top Pitching Team/Week: Tigers - 141

Worst Pitching Team/Season: Tribe -
932

Worst Pitching Team/Week: Skipjacks
- 38

Top Ten Point Scorers

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Frank Thomas (Redbirds) | 548 |
| 2. Ken Griffey, Jr. (Chiefs) | 480 |
| 3. Jeff Bagwell (Senators) | 471 |
| 4. Albert Belle (Cubs) | 459 |
| 5. Kenny Lofton (Red Sox) | 442 |
| 6. Greg Maddux (Blues) | 421 |
| 7. Jose Canseco (Chiefs) | 418 |
| 8. Dante Bichette (Cubs) | 412 |
| 9. Andres Galarraga (Tigers) | 403 |
| 10. Craig Biggio (Reds) | 398 |



TRIP POSTSCRIPT

What a trip. As I fondly look back at the photographs from our sojourn, I wonder how we can ever top the Toast to the East Coast, just as I wondered last year how we could hope to top our California Dreamin' Tour, just as I wondered the year before how we could ever best the Midwestern Swing to Detroit/Toronto/Cleveland. Fortunately,

it is out of my hands. Underbelly has graciously volunteered his services in planning next year's trip.¹ While next year's locale is a classified secret at this stage, to tease us a bit, Underbelly has suggested that he is looking at some of the following possibilities:

1. A three-city Mideastern swing to include Cleveland (to add Jacobs Field to the list), Pittsburgh and Motor City.
2. A train trip to Denver to see Coors Field and live like mountain men at Eagle's Nest; or
3. A four-city bus trip to cover Joe Robbie (Miami), the Astrodome (Houston), the Kingdome (Seattle) and Exposition Stadium (Montreal). All the beauties.

Uhh, before you lock us in on that last one, U-belly, break out a map, please.

After hearing about his dad's latest hi-jinx on the Toast to the East Coast, Zach Thielen has reportedly arrived at an appropriate adaptation of baseball's theme song:

Take me out to the ballgame.

Take me out to the crowd.

Buy me some knickknacks and souvenirs.

Don't spend all our money on 20-ounce beers.

Nice work, Zach. You know your dad well.



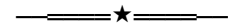
IN-LAWS ARE IN-LAWS

Who would have thought that my own brother-in-law, B.T., would take advantage of our familial relationship to foist a trade upon me through patently false representations. The most recent addition to the Senators' squad, Manny Ramirez, was represented to be an

"up-and-comer" who was playing at least eight games out of every ten, according to B.T.'s morning fax. He "gets a couple of hits every night" and "is knocking in a ton of runs," I was told. Okay, I screwed up. I trusted him. And then after this ill-fated trade during the first day of the Trip, I find that Manny has been relegated to a late-inning replacement role for the always-dangerous Wayne Kirby, who is suddenly starting eight out of ten games for the Indians in right field.

The first two days after the All Star break, Manny never even finds his way into the box score.

What has happened to the honesty and integrity upon which this League was girded? What happened to being able to trust your fellow owner/manager (other than Possum, of course)? When did winning a Hot Stove League title become more important than one's word to another manager? Of course, this is the same guy that drafted Darryl Strawberry and Eric Davis. Nothing more need be said.



TIME TO PAY THE PIPER

Prodded by Itchie's incessant whining to be reimbursed for his generous footing of the tab at the elegant Ho-Jo Revere, I provide the enclosed reimbursement summary for your review and consideration. If I have shorted anyone through my calculations, please let me know.

Until next week, I remain, the

Skipper

