

# FROM THE BULLPEN



Official Publication of  
The Hot Stove League  
Eastern Nebraska Division  
1995 Season

Edition No. 10  
June 16, 1995

Fellow Pilots:

No, the gap between *Bullpens* is not indicative of a lack of interest on my part because of the dismal performance of the '95 Senators. Not one bit. Well, maybe a little. Okay, a lot, but that's not the only damn reason. I'm a busy man, remember?

But the good news is that the Senators are on the upswing, chalking up 413 points during the week ending Sunday, June 11, 1995. This was second only to the less-than-lovable Reds, who cranked out 454 points for the week, buoyed by a truly remarkable yet nauseating performance by Magpie-Curby's new third baseman, Jeff Manto.<sup>1</sup>

For the 7th week, the totals look like this:

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| 1. Reds     | 454 |
| 2. Senators | 413 |
| 3. Tribe    | 385 |
| 4. Blues    | 362 |
| 5. Redbirds | 360 |

<sup>1</sup> A tip of the Old Skipper's hat to the sagacious Magpie-Curby, who filled a gaping hole at third base (Dean Palmer -- out for the year) with free agent Manto. Talk about your Blind Pig picks -- this pig was blind, deaf, dumb, and has a red mustache.

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| 6. Skipjacks     | 358 |
| 7. Chiefs        | 338 |
| 8. Bronx Bombers | 304 |
| 9. Red Sox       | 302 |
| 10. Tigers       | 288 |
| 11. Pirates      | 249 |
| 12. Cubs*        | 174 |

No, that is not a misprint. The Cubs\*, last year's HSL champion, are dropping faster than Curby did on his way across one of the mean streets of Los Angeles. What gives, Shamu\*? Why are the Cubs\* so down in '95? And don't blame it on some flimsy excuse, like the No. 1 pick in the entire draft suffering a career-ending shattered wrist, because we ain't buying it.

## MOUSE DISCOVERS THE MEANING OF LIFE

It's been quite a week for Mouse. Not only did his idol -- The Mick -- get a new lease on life with a new liver of the non-pickled variety, but Mouse's own Bronx Bombers remained atop the leader board of the Hot Stove League with 2496 points. The second place Skipjacks are 96 points away at 2400, with the crimson trio, the Redbirds, Reds and Red Sox, close behind with 2388, 2378 and 2358, respectively. Here's the whole list:

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| 1. Bronx Bombers | 2496 |
| 2. Skipjacks     | 2400 |
| 3. Redbirds      | 2388 |
| 4. Reds          | 2378 |
| 5. Red Sox       | 2358 |
| 6. Tigers        | 2303 |
| 7. Blues         | 2233 |
| 8. Pirates       | 2178 |
| 9. Senators      | 2079 |
| 10. Cubs*        | 2038 |
| 11. Tribe        | 1976 |
| 12. Chiefs       | 1949 |

Between Mick's new organ and Mouse's perch at the top of the heap, it's been one damned fine week.

And by the way, congratulations to Mouse and Brenda on the birth of their new baby daughter, Greta. I apologize that I do not know her vital statistics or middle name, but I can tell you that she is reportedly healthy, happy, and bears no resemblance to Vince Coleman. Nicely done.

## CHIEF CHATTER

It is hard to believe that the once-proud Chiefs are occupying the League basement this late in the year. Of course, there has been the usual whining by B.T. about his team being

desseminated by injuries, but the fact is that B.T. would have to admit himself that there has been a fair amount of tribal mismanagement this year. Inexplicably, B.T. had Gary Gaetti riding pine during his late-May 6-game-7-HR outburst, giving away a sizable 72 points. To top off that miscue, B.T. also had Jose Mesa in mothballs during the entirety of a 10-day stretch in which Mesa put together a whopping 60 point total. So, injuries aside, the Chiefs have problems.

B.T. assures me, however, that the Chiefs are "on the mend," with Albert Belle heating up and with B.T.'s addition of some savvy (his word) free agent selections. I'm not sure who he's talking about, but he did add Vince Coleman and Jeffrey Hammonds to his team last Sunday (wow), and he previously picked up Darren Holmes and Tyler Green to bolster a shaky pitching staff. Mark his words, B.T. will be out of the cellar by All Star break.

## AROUND THE HORN

### East Division

**Redbirds:** I continue to have a bout of morning sickness at 6 a.m. each day as I pick Jim Ed's fax sheet off the Gaines Mullen fax machine and scan over it on the way back to his office. It is truly painful to watch as each day Jim Ed gets 15-to-25-point pitching outings from slugs like Heathcliff Slocumb, Paul Quantrill, Rheal Cormier, and John Smiley, and big days at the plate from such superstars as Bernie Williams, John Jaha, Alex Gonzalez and the ageless Chili Davis. But hear this: When these slugs realize they're not good enough to be doing what they're doing, the Redbirds will go into a tailspin that they may never pull out of.

**Red Sox:** What can I say. Long, long ago Possum and I were talking about a Moises Alou (his player) for John Wetteland (my player) trade, back when both

of them were felt to be in temporary slumps. The trade was, of course, agreed to in principal, and then Possum did his bait-and-switch number on me and offered to trade me Ron Gant or Reggie Sanders and Chris Bosio or Melido Perez for John Wetteland. Naturally, I balked. You know the rest. Ron Gant and Reggie Sanders have been hotter than Itchie's last streak at Winn-A-Vegas, and I am now regularly kicking myself in the shins for this failed transaction. The only solace I can take is that Possum reportedly had Gant down in the minors during his recent multi-HR binge (like 5 in three days?) because he thought he had information that Gant might be injured. A little too much fine tuning on the old team, Possum.

**Tigers:** A rash of injuries to Tiger stars Barry Larkin and Lenny Dykstra, and most recently, the season-ending injury to Gary Sheffield, have knocked the Tigers out of the top spot, and caused a few wrinkles in Big Guy's brow. However, look for the Tigers to stay in contention if his over-achieving pitching staff (i.e., Steve Ontiveros, Tim Wakefield, Charles Nagy) can continue to overcome their collective lack of talent.

**Blues:** The feisty Blues continue to claw and scratch as they attempt to maintain upper division status. The recent outburst by Mark McGwire (85 points last week) was instrumental, but McBlunder had better hope he does not go back down with another injury, since backup Bob "Hamster" Hamelin is now hanging out in Triple A.

**Pirates:** Hard to believe, yes, but there is a pitching staff which is worse than the Senators. The Pirate hurlers totaled 13 points last week, with top pitcher Pedro Astacio gaining 14 on his own. In other words, the rest of the staff was collectively in the red. With Ricky Bones, Pedro Astacio, Darryl Kile and Wilson Alvarez as the backbone of the pitching staff, it's no small wonder this

team is having its woes. Time to hit that free agent pool, Slo-Pay.

**Senators:** Although the Senators continue to occupy the basement of the East Division, their recent ascent to 9th place overall was encouraging. If Bagwell continues to heat up, and if the pitching staff continues to come around, there is even a slim hope that the SENators might creep into the upper division by year end.

Not that injuries have had anything to do with the SENators' woes so far, but at present, six former Senators starters are on the DL, Pat Kelly, Jeff Frye, Phil "Plantoon," Deion Sanders, Aaron Sele and Danny Jackson, the latter being a blessing in disguise. And what about Deion? The guy sprains an ankle stealing third base in the 6th inning with his team leading 8 to 1, and he's going to be out until the playoffs? Wussy.

### West Division

**Bronx Bombers:** What more to say? Behind the strong arms of Kenny Rogers, Dennis Martinez and Orel Hershiser, the Bronx Bomber pitchers have complemented a good hitting team. Even with the recent loss of slugger Matt Williams, the Bronx Bombers have been able to keep their hold on the top spot. Look for this team to drop, however, until Mattie makes it back in the lineup.

**Skipjacks:** I look again at this team on paper, and I still think it stinks. It may be conceded that the Skipjacks have a fine pitching staff, and they are in fact leading the League in pitching points at 1053, with Greg Maddux having another outstanding year, and Jeff Fassero, Bobby Jones and Mike Mussina pitching well also. And let's not forget Chuck Finley, who is returned to his career form after a brief lapse last season while in the Senators' lineup. Big-talking Itchie thinks that this team can win it all. We shall see.

**Reds:** The Reds are hot, leading the League last week with 454 points. With shrewd free agent selections Jeff Manto, Ismael Valdes, Julian Tavarez, and Joey Hamilton, it no longer seems important that the Reds picked a mediocre team at the initial draft. Before we pat Magpie-Curby on the back too much, however, consider that his recent blunder in having Rondell White in the minor leagues for his cycle ride cost the Reds something like 68 points in one night. Ouch. And I thought that only I made mistakes like that.

**Cubs\*:** Call for the rescue squad, someone, this team is barely breathing. With Fred McGriff, Paul Molitor, Greg Vaughn, Jack McDowell and Doug Drabek on the schnide, things don't look good for the '95 Cubs.\* Was his pitching staff really that bad at the start of the season? Regardless, it is now. With Ken Griffey on the shelf for who knows how long, the Cubs\* do not seem likely to erase the memory of that asterisk anytime soon.

**Tribe:** Despite yeoman efforts from Rafael Palmeiro, Vinny Castilla and Dante Bichette, and despite some nifty free agent selections (Scott Sanders, Mike Hampton, Carlos Perez, Jim Corsi), the '95 Tribe squad considers to be hideous, no pun intended, Mr. No-Mo. Barring a miracle, this team is poised to finish about where it sits right now. Another bitterly disappointing season for Underbelly.

**Chiefs:** Not much more to add. When Rico Brogna and Gary Gaetti are your hitting stars, and your top pitchers are Jaime Navarro and Vaughn Eshelman, you've got problems. And so does B.T. And I'm thinking to myself, why did I limit this year's wager to a single C-note.

## TOP PLAYERS THROUGH JUNE 11

|                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| 1. Kevin Appier     | 237 |
| 2. Randy Johnson    | 217 |
| 3. Barry Bonds      | 210 |
| 4. Barry Larkin     | 209 |
| 5.(t)Edgar Martinez | 207 |
| Mark McGwire        | 207 |
| 7.(t)Matt Williams  | 201 |
| John Valentin       | 201 |
| 9.(t)Carlos Baerga  | 196 |
| Mo Vaughn           | 196 |

## GOOFY GOLF

For those of you who did not receive recent standings in our golf league, here's a recent look at the leader board, through the Memorial tournament which concluded on June 4:

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. Magpie-Curby | \$2,399,587 |
| 2. B.T.         | 2,283,139   |
| 3. Shamu*       | 2,258,531   |
| 4. Ziggy        | 2,205,787   |
| 5. Slo-Pay      | 2,167,208   |
| 6. Underbelly   | 2,105,094   |
| 7. McBlunder    | 2,033,144   |
| 8. Skipper      | 1,951,524   |
| 9. Possum       | 1,927,440   |
| 10. Jim Ed      | 1,834,898   |
| 11. Itchie      | 1,241,033   |
| 12. Mouse       | 1,149,777   |
| 13. Big Guy     | 1,099,566   |

Big deal, so what, who cares.

## THE TRIP

One of the highlights of the Hot Stove League season, The Trip, is fast approaching. In just three weeks, we will depart for the Mile High City for baseball, golf, cards, gambling and liquor. Doesn't sound like much fun to me, either. B.T. refuses to divulge too much information at this time, but plan to leave from the airport in your city early Friday morning, July 7, and to return on the evening of Sunday, July 9. A more detailed itinerary will reportedly follow, but plan on seeing at least two Rockies games, and bring your sticks as we will

plan to get in a round or two of golf at one of Colorado's beautiful mountain courses.

## PARTY AT THE BULLPEN

Mark Saturday, July 29, on your calendar, and try to keep it clear for an official Hot Stove League party (spouses included) at The Bullpen, the new official summer headquarters of the Hot Stove League. For those of you not in-the-know, the wife and I recently purchased a cabin at Ginger Cove in Valley (No. 63, Shaker Place, telephone number 359-9970). We plan to break it in in true Hot Stove League fashion on July 29, so load up the flippers, gather your swim gear (no thongs or speedos, Magpie), don't forget the sun screen, and come on out to The Bullpen on July 29. And this means you, too, Possum. Otherwise, you're out of my will.

See you all in Denver.

Skipper