

FROM THE BULLPEN



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The Hot Stove League
Eastern Nebraska Division
1995 Season

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Brethren:

HOT STOVE LEAGUE FOREVER!!!

Congratulations. Kudos. Bravisimo. All right. Nicely done.

You know what I'm talking about. According to the June 19, 1995, Stats, Inc. newsletter, *The Hot Stove League is leading the country in total points with 28,624!* And not just leading, but kicking ass. We are a full 242 points ahead of the second place league, some pack of wombats known as the Juan Marichal League. From top to bottom, from the mighty Bronx Bombers to the bottom-dwelling Chiefs, it is a total league effort. Keep up the good work, gentlemen. Let's win this thing!

For those of you/us not exactly in the hunt in our own league (the Chiefs, Cubs and Tribe come to mind), don't hose the rest of us out of our rightful place atop the Bill James scorecard. Keep watching those rosters, keep taking those hot free agents, and keep humping for the good of the League. And remember, Shamu*, money is no object.

BEST OF THE BEST

Brother Mouse has the distinction of having the top team (for the time being) in the top league in the Bill James hierarchy, with 2891 points. And the Bronx Bombers just keep on cooking, despite the devastating blow of losing superstar Matt Williams for his lengthy stay on the disabled list. Here are the point totals and standings for the season and for Week 8:

TO DATE

1. Bronx Bombers	2891
2. Skipjacks	2747
3. Redbirds	2724
4. Red Sox	2689
5. Reds	2687
6. Tigers	2686
7. Blues	2610
8. Pirates	2473
9. Senators	2427
10. Tribe	2359
11. Cubs*	2305
12. Chiefs	2273

WEEK 8

1. Bronx Bombers	395
2. Tigers	383
(T) Tribe	383

4. Blues	377
5. Senators	348
6. Skipjacks	347
7. Redbirds	336
8. Red Sox	331
9. Chiefs	324
10. Reds	309
11. Pirates	295
12. Cubs*	267

It's tight, boys, real tight, with only 205 points separating the top six teams, and only 3 points separating the Red Sox, Reds and Tigers, who are 4th, 5th and 6th, respectively. Likewise, the five bottom teams are only separated by 200 points.

Week 8 may go down in history as the closest full week of point totals from top to bottom, with only 128 points separating the top team (Bronx Bombers) from the bottom (Cubs*). With not one team scoring over 400 points for the week, and nobody scoring less than 250, we are talking about some serious parity.

TOP SCORERS

The top ten scorers for the season are as follows:

1. Kevin Appier - Redbirds	261
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2. John Valentin - Pirates	242
3. Edgar Martinez - Red Sox	236
4. Reggie Sanders (ugh)-Red Sox	232
(T) Chili Davis (ugh) - Redbirds	232
6. Barry Bonds - Reds	231
7. Mark McGwire - Blues	226
(T) Greg Maddux - Skipjacks	226
9. Albert Belle - Chiefs	223
(T) Roberto Alomar - Tigers	223

Woefully, not a single Senator in the Top Ten, although Raul Mondesi is close at 216.

THE TRIP

The high point of the season, The Trip, is but two weeks away. Start sneaking some cash together from the cookie jar, polish up the golf clubs, get your liver primed, and buckle up your chin strap. The 1995 Rocky Mountain High promises to be three days of sun, fun, baseball, golfballs, gambling, rambling, and quality time away from your spouse and offspring. In other words, *we will soon be free!* For a couple of days, anyway.

SKIPPER'S ALL-ALUMNI SENATOR TEAM

Mind you, I'm not bitching. I wouldn't do that, and you guys know that all too well. But it seems to me, and I'm sure it's only just me, that my players always seem to reach the peak of their talents and points the year before and/or year after they grace my roster. Caterpillars become beautiful butterflies and frogs, princes once they have escaped the ignominy of being part of the Senators fold. I exaggerate, whine and snivel, you say? Then allow me to share a few examples with you. The following are all recent alumni of the Senators:

Chuck Finley
Carlos Baerga
Cecil Fielder
Bobby Bonilla

Dennis Martinez

These individuals are all having banner years, but let me assure you, when they pulled on their stirrups and cleats for the Senators, they were remarkable underachievers. A few examples from my current roster will further serve to make my point. This year, I had the misfortune of taking John Wetteland, Mel Rojas, Mickey Tettleton, Danny Jackson (I may be sick), Ken Caminiti, Jeff Bagwell, and, well, you get the point. Last year these fellows all shone brightly in the sun, and their stars will rise again, once they are on the rosters of Jim Ed, Magpie-Curby, Possum or Big Guy. Let's face it, boys, I can't get a break in this league.

MISCELLANEOUS BEEFS

- Why hasn't my star left fielder, Bernie Gilkey, played for the last four games; and more to the point, why won't somebody give me some information about what's going on with him?

- Why is Stats, Inc. wrong about half the time in projecting when my pitchers will be pitching? I have had trouble enough getting Chris Haney into my starting lineup due to my own mismanagement, but it sure doesn't help when Stats, Inc. tells me last Saturday morning that Haney is starting that day (leading me to not pull the trigger on him) only to find out that Dennis Rasmussen started on Saturday and Chris Haney started on Sunday. Another nifty 25-point outing for the Senators farm club.

- Why does Stats, Inc. tell me two days too late that former Senator second baseman Jeff Frye is off the disabled list and back on the playing field, one day after I released him from my squad?

- How is it that in a single day 7 of my 10 everyday players can accumulate negative points for my team, negating entirely the 8 points by Jeff Bagwell and 5

points by Jim Edmonds that day, and causing the Senators to chalk up a negative 3 points for the entire day between hitting and pitching (Tuesday, June 20, was not a good day for me, you see).

- Why, why, why, why, why? I want answers.

The good news is, even with all of my misfortune and mismanagement, the Senators still are not occupying the cellar, and it is my solemn pledge to myself to keep them ahead of the Cubs*, Chiefs and Tribe for the balance of the 1995 HSL season.

MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- Nice move by Underbelly, promoting Jim Corsi just in time for 2 blown saves and/or blistering losses.

- I see that B.T. demoted Danny Tarabull and promoted Vince Coleman on the same day. Nice personnel, B.T. Darryl Strawberry is yours for the taking, B.T.

- Tough break for McBlunder, demoting Steve Trachsel just a few days before his stellar performance in a 1-0 loss to Andy Benes.

- Why didn't I take Reggie Sanders or Ron Gant when Possum offered them as a bait-and-switch for Moises Alou?

- Too bad B.T. had Jeffrey Hammonds in his minors for his recent outburst.

- If the Reds win this thing behind the arms of Joey Hamilton, Julian Tavarez and "They Call Me" Ismael Valdes, I'm packing it in.

- Somebody needs to tell Mouse that Paul Sorrento, Ed Sprague, Mike Stanley and Mark Portugal really aren't that good. Better yet, somebody needs to tell them.

- How is it that Jim Ed can pick relievers Heathcliff Slocum (200 points) in the 21st round and Tom Henke (162) in the 17th round, and they are both in the Top Ten for relief pitchers; and the Skipper picks John Wetteland in the 2nd round and Mel Rojas in the 4th round, and neither one can manage to get their ugly mugs up on the leader board?

CLOSING THOUGHT

As put so poignantly by Matt Greenberger, *we are 12 baseball maniacs who were destined to find each other. And find each other, we did. Amen.*

Skipper