

FROM THE BULLPEN



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Eastern Nebraska Division
1995 Season

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Brethren:

REDBIRDS ON RAMPAGE!

With the Big Hurt heating up and Kevin Appier continuing his torrid pitching, the Redbirds are tearing it up in the Hot Stove League of late. Buoyed by a 475-point week (tops in the League this season), the torrid Redbirds are now in the lead after nine weeks of play, overtaking the Bronx Bombers by 4 slim points.

STANDINGS THROUGH 9 WEEKS

1. Redbirds	3202
2. Bronx Bombers	3198
3. Skipjacks	3134
4. Reds	3113
5. Tigers	3028
6. Red Sox	3017
7. Blues	2908
8. Senators	2755
9. Tribe	2698
10. Pirates	2647
11. Chiefs	2580
(T) Cubs*	2580

The Cubs* and Chiefs are scratching and clawing to climb their way

out of the cellar. Backed by the 3-tater night of Big Cat, the Chiefs mustered up just enough bonus points to pull even with last year's defending champions.

The pitching-poor Pirates continue to flounder, losing a whole lot of ground with a 49-point pitching week and a total of 174 points for the week. It appears that Slo-Pay is trying to single-handedly keep our League out of contention for national Bill James honors. Again. Here are the weekly point totals for the League:

1. Redbirds	478
2. Reds	426
3. Skipjacks	387
4. Tigers	342
5. Tribe	339
6. Senators	328
(T) Red Sox	328
8. Bronx Bombers	307
(T) Chiefs	307
10. Blues	298
11. Cubs*	275
12. Pirates	174

Our League average for the week was 332, only 10 points above the All Leagues Point Totals, and probably not good enough to keep us in 1st place. Keep working those free agent drafts, keep making those calls. We have a mission.

TOP PLAYERS

1. Kevin Appier	309
2. Edgar Martinez	284
3. Greg Maddux	268
4. Randy Johnson	261
5. John Valentin	252
6. Frank Thomas	251
(T) Reggie Sanders	251
(T) Raul Mondesi	251
9. Mark McGwire	244
10. Mo Vaughn	243

Interesting, isn't it, that only two of the top ten point-getters (Greg Maddux, Frank Thomas) were selected in the first round of our draft. However, three of our first round draftees (Roberto Alomar, Carlos Baerga, and Barry Bonds) are close to cracking the top ten at the 11 and 12 (tie) positions.

Speaking of our first round draft picks, let's take a look at how each of these folks have done through the first nine weeks of the year:

<u>Player - Team</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Ranking</u>
1. K. Griffey, Jr. - Cubs*		Injured*
2. B. Bonds - Reds	239	12th
3. A. Belle - Chiefs	222	21st
4. K. Lofton - Red Sox	189	48th
5. F. Thomas - Redbirds	251	6th
6. G. Maddux - Skipjacks	263	3rd
7. C. Baerga - Blues	239	12th (4-way tie)
8. M. Piazza - Tribe	198	36th
9. M. Williams - B. Bombers	201	33rd
10.R. Alomar - Tigers	242	11th
11. J. Bagwell - Senators	173	Not in top 50
12.J. Canseco - Pirates		Injured*

* Because of the injuries to Griffey and Canseco, their point totals were so low that they are not listed in the player rankings by Bill James, so I do not know how many points each currently has.

Slo-Pay managed to pull off what could be one of the most foolhardy trades of all time, bartering first round draft pick Jose Canseco for another Jose, reliever Mesa. Of course, if current trends continue, it will be a good trade for Slo-Pay. But if Canseco stays healthy and starts hitting them out of Fenway, and Mesa returns to his old form, this could go down as the fleecing of the century by B.T. Was this one aboveboard? Or did B.T. slip a few Ben Franklins down Slo-Pay's way? Questionable.

See you in the Rockies next week!

Skipper

I also found it interesting to note that out of the top ten starting pitchers listed by Bill James, only three (Kevin Appier, Greg Maddux, and Randy Johnson) were taken early on in the draft. Ismael Valdes (FA), Hideo Nomo (28), Denny Neagle (24), Steve Ontiveros (17), and Carlos Perez (FA) -- five of the top ten pitchers -- were all late-round afterthoughts or free agent picks.

A NEW HIGH IN LOWS

I think that the Senators have chalked one up for the record books. Check this out. Last Tuesday, I recoiled in horror as I looked at my morning fax and saw that my vaunted staff had chalked up a grand total of 31 points for the night - all negative! Michael Mimbs led the way with a -14, followed by Chris Haney with a -13, and Steve Sparks with a -12. Only the bountiful offerings of Jim Abbott (+7) and Dave Veres (+1) kept me from having an even more negative night. This

should cheer a few of you up that think that your pitching staffs are miserable.

MISMANAGEMENT, INC.

Thankfully, I am not alone in the mismanagement department this or any other year. Big Guy proudly (?) announced last week that he had demoted starter Denny Neagle to the minor leagues on June 18th. In the next ten days, Denny managed to chalk up three wins and 85 points, including a 2-hit shutout, for Big Guy's minor league team. Ouch.

In addition, with the recent trade of Rick Wilkins from Chicago to the Astros, Big Guy now has both of Houston's catchers (Wilkins and Tony Eusebia) in his starting lineup. Hmmmm.

TRADE TALK

For those of you who haven't heard or read your last weekly report very closely,