

FROM THE BULLPEN



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REDBIRDS RACE PAST SLUGGISH SKIPJACKS

After leading the League race for 12 consecutive weeks since taking over the pole position on July 2, Itchie and his Skipjacks have now yielded the frontrunner position to that brash upstart from the Rapids of Cedar, Jim Ed Buser. Through games of Sunday, September 24, 1995, the rampaging Redbirds have a 71-point lead on the sinking Skipjacks, **7804 to 7737**. With only a week to go in the season, the portly Skipjacks manager is sucking gas right along with his entire team, and looks unlikely to be able to mount a last-ditch

rally to take the 1995 HSL championship. Stranger things have happened, but Jim Ed's feisty Redbirds are peaking at the right time and look poised to capture the League jewel.

With one week to go in the season, the HSL standings are as follows:

1. Redbirds	7804
2. Skipjacks	7737
3. Red Sox	7532
4. Tigers	7377
5. Blues	7331
6. Reds	7252

7. Tribe	7221
8. Bronx Bombers	7073
9. Pirates	7050
10. Chiefs	6787
11. Senators	6611
12. Cubs*	6401

Although the first three places in the League seem pretty well set, along with the last three spots in the order, there is a lot of skirmishing still going on between the 4th and 9th place teams. The Reds are battling mightily with the Tribe for an upper-division finish, with only 31 points separating the two. The Pirates are going toe-to-toe with the Bronx Bombers for the 8th-place finish spot in the League. And the Blues (yes, you heard me correctly) are neck-and-neck with the Tigers for a 4th-place finish in the 1995 campaign. *A 4th-place finish for the Blues. Sounds strange. Kind of like, "Shamu's" not hungry right now.*

Week 22

There were some decent point totals for the penultimate week of the season, with the leading Redbirds besting the pack at 405. At the other end of the spectrum, the sputtering Tribe team was able to muster up only 262 points for the week. Here are the team totals for Week 22:

1. Redbirds	405
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2. Reds	388
3. Blues	379
4. Pirates	354
5. Red Sox	341
6. Chiefs	320
7. Senators	308
8. Bronx Bombers	304
9. Skipjacks	266
10. Cubs*	263
(T) Tigers	263
12. Tribe	262

FULTON COUNTY REPORT

This past weekend Big Guy, Hillbelly and I journeyed to Atlanta for a visit to Fulton County Stadium, before it is soon nothing but a memory. In unseasonably cool and damp weather, we shivered together and watched the tenacious visiting Expos best the hometown Braves on Saturday night, and then threaten to do the same on Sunday afternoon until a bottom-of-the-10th, 2-out rally by the Braves sealed yet another come-from-behind victory. Hearing the partisan Braves fans join in the infamous war whoop and tomahawk chop was entertaining, and adding a new ballpark to the list of visits was, of course, meaningful. But Fulton County Stadium itself will not be sorely missed. Let's hope that the replacement for this

cookie-cutter stadium has just a little bit of personality and style.

The subject of Cooperstown came up during our Atlanta swing, and the three of us agreed that in 1997 (we will need at least a year to plan this thing), we should all travel to Cooperstown for the Hot Stove League draft. Think about it: we will rent out a bed-and-breakfast for the whole crew, spend a day and a half touring the spectacle of Cooperstown, and then enjoy the best day of the year together in the place of all places for baseball fans. Underbelly, admittedly while under the influence of a few cool ones at the ballpark, has offered -- no, actually, he insisted -- to spearhead and organize this draft of all drafts. So get started on gathering the marital capital, boys, because this one will be expensive.



Next issue: We announce the 1995 HSL Champion.

Skipper

P.S. My sources tell me Itchie has closed the gap to 29 points through games of Tuesday, Sept. 26. Wow!