



From the Bullpen

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1998 Season

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SENATORS LEAD RACE; HSL'ers RETURN FROM ALL-STAR TRIP

Brethren:

On the strength of a third consecutive league-leading weekly total of 428 points, the Senators stepped past the lukewarm Bronx Bombers and into the HSL lead, pacing the field with a 14-week total of 5172 points. Nomar Garciaparra (37 points) headed a Senators hitting team that posted a league-best 292 points for the week, while Greg Maddux (35 points) headed the Senators' pitching attack.

The Bombers dropped from the top of the leaderboard for the first time in several weeks, while the Blues held on to 3rd place despite a subpar pitching week (90 points) in which McBlunder's top hurlers each took the hill twice.

The standings through 14 weeks, from top to bottom, are as so:

STANDINGS THRU WEEK 14

1. Senators 5172

2. Bombers	5099
3. Blues	4979
4. Tigers	4893
5. Chiefs	4880
6. Redbirds	4663
7. Skipjacks	4653
8. Cubs*	4651
9. Tribe	4395
10. Red Sox	4385
11. Reds	4361
12. Pirates	4304

The surging Redbirds, riding the coat-tails of a red-hot Junior (57 points for the week, leading all players) and David Cone (63), have crept into the Upper Division, albeit a likely short-lived occupancy. Further down the list, the perpetually-underachieving Tribe has elbowed its way into the coveted 9-hole, supplanting the Red Sox and Reds along the way.

For the week, (did I mention that) the Senators led the field with 428 points, followed by the Redbirds with 387 in a short (six-game) week. The rest of you were scattered between 271 and 376 points, save the punchless Pirates who flirted with the Mendoza line at 205 points. Weekly totals for the 14th week:

WEEK 14 TOTALS

1. Senators	428
2. Redbirds	387
3. Tribe	376
4. Blues	350
5. Chiefs	348
6. Bombers	311
7. Tigers	297
8. Red Sox	294
9. Skipjacks	284
10. Reds	274
11. Cubs*	271
12. Pirates	205

The Senators were the top hitting team for the week with 292, while the Reds, with 151, had the fewest hitting points for the week.

The top pitching team for Week 14 was the Tribe with 204 points, paced by Shawn Bergman with 31. At the other end, the Pirates pitchers could muster up only 27 points for the week, even with Darrin Dreifort's 33-point week all by his lonesome.

The top hitting team for the year is the Tigers with 3280 points, followed by the Blues with 3248, followed by the Senators

with 3227. Bringing up the rear in this department is the Tribe with 2477.

On the pitching side, the Bombers continue to lead through 14 weeks with a total of 2010, followed by the Chiefs with 1958, the Senators with 1945, and the Tribe with 1918. The Pirates staff has the fewest pitching points for the year with 1065, just behind the 11th-best effort of the Red Sox with 1207.

League MVP continues to be Mark McGwire with 519 points, while Greg Maddux continues to lead the Cy Young race with 443 points. The top hitter for the week was Ken Griffey with 57 points, and the top pitcher was David Cone with 63.

INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

Hitters

1. Mark McGwire	519
2. Ken Griffey, Jr.	452
3. Alex Rodriguez	442
4. Sammy Sosa	427
5. Jim Thome	405
6. Greg Vaughn	404
7. Chipper Jones	398
8. Juan Gonzalez	394
9. Craig Biggio	389
10. Ivan Rodriguez	375
11. Vinny Castilla	369
12. Rafael Palmeiro	366
13. Andres Galarraga	364
14. Barry Bonds	359
15. Darrin Erstad	357

Pitching

1. Greg Maddux	443
2. Robb Nen	400
3. Curt Schilling	344
4. Pedro Martinez	343
5. Kevin Brown	341
6. Andy Ashby	325
7. Tom Gordon	307
8. Todd Stottlemyre	303
(T) Trevor Hoffman	303
10. Rick Reed	297
(T) Bartolo Colon	297
12. Tom Glavine	296
13. Jeff Shaw	285
(T) Ugueth Urbina	285
15. Rolando Arrojo	278

THE TRIP

The 1998 HSL Trip, while short on quantity, was high on quality. McBlunder and I – keeping our streaks intact – joined with B.T. in the Mile High City for the All-Star extravaganza. On Monday night we attended the Home Run Derby, won by Junior after his dramatic last-minute entry into the contest. On Tuesday, we attended the Biggest Show of All, watching the American Leaguers best the Senior Circuit by a score of 13 to 8.

More on the All-Star contest later as time permits, but for now I will merely mention that it was positively thrilling to watch seven sure First Ballot Hall-of-Fame players (Maddux, Griffey, McGwire, Gwynn, Bonds, Ripken and Clemens) and several likely HOFers (A-Rod, I-Rod, Piazza, Biggio, Glavine and Galarraga) on the field at the same time. Seeing Bonds go Yard with a dramatic upper deck 3-run homer and watching Maddux work out of a bases-loaded jam were also moments that I will not soon forget.

Sincere regrets that more of you could not make it to the big game. I hope that perhaps a second league junket – possibly to St. Louis in September to watch Big Mac chase the record – is in the cards (no pun intended).

BALLS AND STRIKES

No cracks, quips, observations or comments this week, amigos. The second half of the season is underway, the Senators are in first, and all is right with the world. May the force be with you all.

Skipper