



FROM THE BULLPEN

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Eastern Nebraska Division

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Brethren,

Oh, what a pleasure it is to be sending out the first *From the Bullpen* of the new year. For this means that we are through the month of November, past December, have January all but licked, and can look forward to February and its siren call to spring training. Before long, the new season will be just around the corner, and as always, it can't get here soon enough.

Unless you're McBlunder, of course, and have a rigormortic grasp on the Cup.

NEW LOOK

As the more astute among you have no doubt already noticed, *From the Bullpen* will have a bit of a new look for 1999. In an effort to be more environmentally friendly, this year most issues of the *Bullpen* will be sent out with the back page of the newsletter serving as the address and postage portion, avoiding the need for using envelopes. Furthermore, we are exploring the possibility of an HSL web site and of distributing future *FTB* issues over the Internet, and anticipate circulation to explode and grow exponentially once a few browsers pick up on the action and spread the gospel. On this chord, for those of you who have not yet provided me with your e-mail addresses, if you have them, please get them to me as soon as possible.

This week's insert is your new and updated 1999 Owner/Manager Directory, replete with useful information and compatible with today's computer technology. In addition to the e-mail address listings, there are a number of changes from last year's directory, including Shamu's new work address at Continental Western in Des Moines (perhaps Charles should start a web page simply to keep us advised of his employer *du jour*); the listing of B.T.'s newest addition, Anna Kathryn; Itchie's

current benefactor/employer; and a new nickname or two. If there are any inaccuracies in this directory or any additional changes, please let me know. Contact me at dernst@gmphlaw.com.

IT'S BASEBALL, RAY

One of the wonderful things about having an e-mail site is that they are wonderful repositories for the latest jokes, anti-Clinton rhetoric, and sound bytes that are making the circuit. B.T. recently forwarded on to me a sound clip from *Field of Dreams* in which James Earl Jones has the following to say to Ray (Kevin Costner):

The one constant through all the years, Ray, has been baseball. America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It's been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt, and erased again. But baseball has marked the time. This field, this game, is a part of our past, Ray. It reminds us of all that once was good, and that could be again. Ohhh, people will come, Ray. People will most definitely come.

Wonderful to read, but positively goosebump-producing to hear in the superfluous voice of James Earl. If you have a sound card on your machine and would like to hear it again, let B.T. or me know.

DRAFT DAY

At last week's HSL luncheon at Trovato's, the six of us in attendance agreed that Draft Day should be on the afternoon of Saturday, April 3, 1999, at 1:00 p.m. Opening Day is the following Monday, April 5, 1999, and so this scheduling is in line with our customary practice.

I have communicated with the other six of you about this date in one fashion or another, and thus far I have not heard of any conflicts. However, the following day is Easter Sunday, and so some of you (U-Bob and Slo-Pay come to mind), may have plans to spend the entire weekend observing the religious holiday and/or entertaining in-laws, such that Saturday, the 3rd, may not be the best day for you. Please check your calendars, check with your spouses, and let me know no later than January 31, 1999, if anyone has a conflict with having Draft Day on April 3rd.

MOCK, YE-AH

As is customary, the six attendees at our Trovato's luncheon conducted a four-round mock draft. Here's how it went.

Round 1: Kevin Brown, Alex Rodriguez, Randy Johnson, Greg Maddux, Ken Griffey, Jr., Mike Piazza, Roger Clemens, Pedro Martinez, Albert Belle, Kerry Wood, Nomar Garciaparra, Craig Biggio.

Round 2: Trevor Hoffman, Tom Glavine, Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa, John Smoltz, Barry Bonds, Vinny Castilla, Derek Jeter, Mike Mussina, Jim Thome, Ivan Rodriguez, Mo Vaughn.

Round 3: Bernie Williams, Jeff Bagwell, Chipper Jones, Juan Gonzalez, Curt Schilling, Chuck Knoblauch, Frank Thomas, Chan Ho Park, Mariano Rivera, Larry Walker, David Cone, David Wells

Round 4: Roberto Alomar, Rob Nen, Troy Percival, Rafael Palmeiro, Barry Larkin, Andres Galarraga, Tino Martinez, Edgar Martinez, Dante Bichette, Vladimir Guerrero, John Wetteland, Tim Salmon

My guess is that Shamu, with his team of Maddux, Sosa, Gonzalez, and Palmeiro drafted for him in abstentia would probably take this team in a New York minute. On the other hand, although we tried to draft his team for him as realistically as possible, SloPay can't be altogether pleased about having Biggio, Mo Vaughn, Wells, and Tim Salmon for his core group. Other than Tim Salmon, that is.

The take-home point, of course, is that pitchers will be going damned early once again, so you'd better make those early round draft picks count.

UNTIL NEXT TIME

Be careful out there.

Skipper

