



FROM THE BULLPEN

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Eastern Nebraska Division

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CUBS* SHATTER HSL SCORING MARK, THRUST SELVES INTO CONTENTION; CHIEFS AND SKIPJACKS CONTINUE BATTLE FOR 1st; REDS PREPARING FOR MAYAN CLIFF DIVE

Bros:

While the last thing I feel like doing this week is preparing a *Bullpen* to chronicle the exploits of the **Cubs*** and the discouraging malfeasance of the **Senators**, I'll suck it up, take my medicine like a man, and at least go through the motions and give you the points and a few nuggets to gnaw on this week. Don't expect *War and Peace*, however – issues of girth and substance are reserved for weeks when I actually have enjoyed being a participant in the Hot Stove League, unlike last week.

So let's cut to the chase and get right to it, shall we?

WEEK 22 STANDINGS

Upper Division

| | |
|--------------|------|
| 1. Chiefs | 8121 |
| 2. Skipjacks | 8071 |
| 3. Reds | 7987 |
| 4. Cubs* | 7943 |
| 5. Tigers | 7844 |
| 6. Senators | 7466 |

Those Other Guys

| | |
|--------------|------|
| 7. Tribe | 7325 |
| 8. Pirates | 7303 |
| 9. Blues | 7040 |
| 10. Redbirds | 7030 |
| 11. Red Sox | 7006 |
| 12. Bombers | 6516 |

WEEK 22 POINT TOTALS

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| 1. Cubs* | 539 |
| 2. Pirates | 453 |
| 3. Redbirds | 358 |
| 4. Chiefs | 355 |
| 5. Red Sox | 351 |
| 6. Blues | 332 |
| 7. Skipjacks | 318 |
| 8. Tribe | 311 |
| 9. Reds | 310 |
| 10. Senators | 256 |
| 11. Tigers | 243 |
| 12. Bombers | 200 |

CHIN MUSIC

◆ It pains me in no small measure to report that the amphibious member of our hallowed league – one Shamu* -- now has the distinction of having the 2nd-best total of all time in the HSL for points scored in a single week, just behind McGloom's high-water mark set last year in *That Championship Season* of 551 points. Not that I personally begrudge the mark to Sir Charles – we all love the guy – but come on here, fellows, shouldn't this distinction be held by a team that not only *is*¹ capable of scoring 539 points, but also has the look, smell and sound of a winner? Maybe it's just me, but the names Dave Burba, Sterling Hitchcock, Brad Ausmus, and Matt Stairs – and I could go on and on – simply don't strike fear in my heart nor inspire thoughts of a team destined for greatness, like the 1997 **Senators**, for example.

Too, maybe Shamu* being in my face about having a 500-point lead over my team back around the 4th of July or so, and then having my beloved Senators scratch and claw and inch their way back to within 200 points of the

¹ To the astonishment of all, this team has proved that they can win, not unlike the 1969 Mets proving that they *could* win the World Series in spite of looking to all the world like an extraordinarily ordinary team.

Cubs*, only to have the **Cubs*** regain almost all of that ground in a single week (539 minus 256 equals 283) didn't necessarily sit well with the Skipper, but that doesn't mean that I'm going to be sending Shamu* a mail bomb or anything. At least not yet.

If Shamu's* view on this thing is correct, then my minor act of dissing him by sending him an e-mail to alert him as to the rapidly-approaching object in his rear view mirror was primarily if not solely responsible for igniting the **Cubs*** fuse. Poppycock. However, it is true that this alleged act of insolence came approximately 24 hours before Edgardo went on his 6-6-6-5 rampage, but most would chalk that up to coincidence.

On the other hand, if my view on the world is correct, Shamu* is about to lose his job, again; soon to be served with notice of an IRS lien, again; soon to learn that he was really adopted, and is really the bastard love child of Lucille Ball and Ernst Borgnine; and soon to find out that both Vince Coleman and Icky Woods have been ordered to give DNA samples to clear up the paternity issues concerning Hannah and Rachel once and for all. The only conceivable explanation for the **Cubs*** Week 22 explosion is that it is intended to serve as compensation for a series of disastrous events affecting Shamu's* shallow life outside of the Hot Stove League. In advance of these certain calamitous occurrences, my condolences, brother Shamu*.

◆ Greg Vaughn's three-bagger the other night is yet one more example of hitting gone amuck. Other than on the **Senators'** roster, that is. I would love like crazy to

have one of my hitters hit three home runs in the same game, but the problem is, before they can hit three, they have to hit two, and before they can hit two, they have to hit *one*. There is apparently a serious allergic reaction to home runs in the **Senators'** camp at this time.

◆ I've spent so much time assuming that my only competition from down below was from the **Tribe**, and that the point caps would eliminate any such competition, that I failed to notice that those sneaky **Pirates** are fast gaining ground on the **Senators**, and threatening to dislodge them from the Upper Division. I can only hope that as is customary, U-belly will take over the making of all decisions and management moves for the **Pirates** from here on out, as happens most years at this time after the **Pirates** have fallen hopelessly out of contention for even an 11th-place finish. Go to work, U-belly!!

OCTOBER 1 GOLF OUTING

Those of you who have e-mail (I think that this would include everyone in the league, save Denny-asaurus-Rex) know that B.T. is in charge of our October 1 golf outing at Woodland Hills in Eagle, Nebraska. Keep the date blocked off on your calendar, secure those kitchen passes, and prepare to play golf with your pals while getting your last licks in at those who will be competing for the HSL title that last week of play.

Skipper