



FROM THE BULLPEN

Official Publication of The Hot Stove League

Eastern Nebraska Division

2000 Season Edition No. 1

January 6, 2000

Brethren:

The Millennium is upon us, and by all reports all twelve members of the Hot Stove League are alive, well, and gearing up for another year of fierce competition. Some of the questions that may be answered this season are as follows:

- If the 1990s were the Decade of the Skipjacks (Itchie says it was, and he has cleverly put it in writing, and all of us are wearing it and proving it), will this be the Century of the Tribe?
- Or will it be the Pirates' Millennium in the Sun?
- Will Possum rebound from his decade-long funk, and pilot his once-proud Red Sox back into contention? Or is it time to put a fork in him?
- Can the Redbirds, rancid though they are, shuck off their Hayden-like slump and pick a team that actually has a prayer of finishing in the money, or at least in the Elite Eight?
- Will Mouse quit being such a show-off and stop siring new offspring? And did he?
- Will U-Belly continue to use personal illnesses, family tragedies, and various and sundry other bold-face lies to avoid confrontations with his HSL peers about his foolhardy hitting draft strategy, overtaking Magpie as the crown prince of the shopworn excuse?
- How much financial fire power will B.T. unleash this season in an effort to get back on top, and will his beleaguered spouse be forced to seek legal redress to shield the family fortune from utter dissipation?
- Are the Tigers poised to improve upon last year's 4th place finish or to drop back into obscurity?
- Can SloPay improve upon last year's sixth place finish, or is the Bottom of the Upper Division the very top rung of the Pirates' Ladder of Achievement?

- Will Possum make it on this year's Trip, or any other league function save The Draft? And if not, why not?
- Will anybody show up on Draft Day bearing the Skipjacks' championship polo shirt?
- What round will Jon "Dead Man Walking" screw himself by taking the wrong Blue Jay, and will the poor guy suffer permanent damage to his cervical spine from sitting slump-shouldered for 20-plus rounds of the Draft again?
- Will this be the season that Shamu* finally unhitches the asterisk from his wagon, and proves he can win this thing even without benefit of a perfectly-timed players' strike?
- Will Magpie show up with another way-bad flat-top?

Tune in and find out.

THE STORK CLUB

I've heard of breeding like rabbits, but soon they may be talking about breeding like mice. Congrats to Brother Mouse for begetting yet another beautiful offspring¹, sweet little Tatum Layne Christensen Morris, born in the wee morning hours of Monday, December 20, 1999. Get used to those wee morning hours, Mouse.

Mother and child are reportedly doing well, while father is reportedly frantically trying to figure out how he will be able to bone up for Draft Day while handling 4 a.m. feedings and diaper changes and other associated child care obligations. A little tip from one busy dad to another, Mouse: Economy-sized cough syrup. (*Put out? Put baby out. Safe, recommended by doctors, and virtually undetectable by mom. Works on older siblings, too.*)

¹ Okay, Brenda gets a little bit of the credit—no, make that virtually all of the credit.

Congrats, Mike and Brenda.

MOCK DRAFT

Now, what you've all really been waiting for, the results of the first official Mock Draft, held last Wednesday at our luncheon meeting at Charleston's:

<u>Mag 7²</u>	<u>Round 1</u>	<u>Round 2</u>	<u>Round 3</u>	<u>Round 4</u>
1. Skipjacks	P.Martinez	Mussina	Rivera	Castilla
2. Chiefs	R.Johnson	L.Walker	Alfonzo	Palmeiro
3. Cubs*	K.Brown	McGwire	Wagner	Guerrero
4. Tigers	Jeter	R.Alomar	O.Hernandez	M.Williams
5. Reds	A-Rod	M.Ramirez	Hampton	Benitez
6. Pirates	GarciaParra	Sosa	Smoltz	Delgado
7. Senators	I-Rod	C.Jones	Colon	Helton
<u>Rest of Youse</u>				
8. Tribe	Griffey	A.Belle	K.Wood	Thome
9. Redbirds	Maddux	JuGonzalez	Hoffman	Galarraga
10. Blues	Millwood	B.Williams	Stewart	Lieberthal
11. Red Sox	Piazza	Bonds	Glavine	MoVaughn
12. Bombers	Bagwell	Biggio	Lima	Clemens

Random remarks:

- 1999 was Pedro's breakout year—will 2000 be his breakdown year?
- I have a hard time believing that B.T. will actually draft the Big Unit second because, although it's the right player at the right time, B.T. would much rather have the rest of us drafting behind him guessing as to his modus operandi than to know it with certainty at the front end.

- Pizza Boy may not be available for Possum in the 11-hole.
- U-Bob may snatch up a pitcher in the 1st round, just to prove his willingness to embrace change.
- Mouse probably won't really take Bagwell No. 12, unless the Yankees trade for him between now and then.

I could go on and on, but I won't. If you have thoughts of your own to share (right), please let me know and I will be happy to publish them.

THE DRAFT

It's time to get out our calendars and block off that holiest of holy days. With the season slated to begin on Monday, April 3, it looks like **Saturday, April 1** (April Fool's Day—how appropriate for some of you), is the logical draft day. I have already learned through an informal poll that at least one manager will be out of the state on vacation on the previous Saturday, March 25, so April 1 looks like our best bet. Please reserve this date on your calendar, and more importantly tell—don't ask—your spouse that this is the one day of the year that you must be allowed to leave your home and children and devote the entire day to yourself and the greater good of the league.

IF ANYONE HAS A CONFLICT OR EVEN A POTENTIAL CONFLICT ON APRIL 1, PLEASE CALL OR E-MAIL ME IMMEDIATELY!! If there are no conflicts communicated by next week at this time, it will be a done deal, etched in stone, and unchangeable. Don't miss out on this year's event.

Ahhh, it's good to be back. Happy New Year, my Hot Stove League amigos, and let the good times roll. Mooey Bwano.

Señor Skipper

² Short for **Magnificent 7**.

