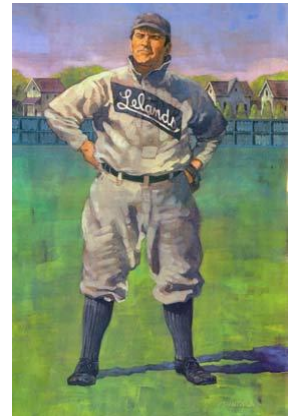


FROM THE BULLPEN

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2001 Season

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SENATORS STILL RULE ROOST

Surprising Blues Climb to 5th; Reeling Redbirds Plummet to 8th

Brethren:

Notwithstanding another dose of Pedro this week, and in spite of Barry Bonds' home run barrage, including a three-bagger Saturday which did not get left on the bench à la Jeromy Burnitz, the **Wahoos** could not catch the Gibraltarish **Senators**, whose bedrock foundation built on morals (no Strawberrys or Howes on this team), work ethic (no Juan Gonzaleses or Frank Thomases in the group), unity and balance have served this team well through the first seven weeks of the campaign. With 479 points for the week, the **Senators** enhanced their toehold on the league lead over the defending champion **Wahoos**, who forged a dynamite 446-point week of their own during this last week, thanks largely to Pedro and Barry.

Joining the top two in the 400 club were the **Blues**, with an impressive total of 416 points to leapfrog from 8th place last week to 5th place this week; and the always dangerous **Lincoln Tribe**, who put together a 407-point week to claw their way from 6th place to 4th, racing past the **Cubs*** and the free-falling **Redbirds** along the way.

Here are the standings through seven weeks:

Week 7 Standings

1.	Senators	2717
2.	Wahoos	2680
3.	Pirates	2400

4.	Tribe	2377
5.	Blues	2314
6.	Reds	2299
7.	Cubs*	2283
8.	Redbirds	2242
9.	Tigers	2196
10.	Skipjacks	2176
11.	Bombers	2138
12.	Chiefs	1708

SAME TIME, LAST YEAR

Last year at this time the **Wahoos** were leading our circuit with 2828 points, 111 points ahead of the **Senators'** total (this year) through seven. The **Skipjacks** were in 2nd at this time last year with 2806 points, a mere 600 or so points more than our back-slapping, baby-kissing, glad-hander has been able to muster up with his sorry **Jax** this season.

At bottom, the **Cubs*** had 1898 points at this time last year, not all that far ahead of the **Chiefs'** dismal pace this year, which is somewhat remarkable since Shamu* was actually managing his team last year, at least through the first seven or eight weeks.

Four different teams had 400-plus points in Week 7, the **Senators, Wahoos, Blues** and **Tribe**. Four different teams had less than 300 points, the **Skipjacks, Chiefs** (of course), **Cubs*** and **Redbirds**. And four teams (**Reds, Bombers, Pirates** and **Tigers**) had points in the 300s. So what's my point? I'm not sure that I have one. However, it does seem as if there have been a lot more performances in the 200s and 400s and fewer in the 300s than I remember in the past. Whether this is due to parity or just damned lies and statistics is anyone's guess.

It is interesting to note that while a bit of a chasm has developed between the 2nd and 3rd places (280 points), only 158 points separates the 3rd place **Pirates** from the 8th place **Redbirds**, and there is a smaller gulf between 3rd place and 11th place (262 points) than between 3rd and 2nd. My point? If you're not in 1st or 2nd place, you suck.

Week 7 Point Totals

1. Senators	479
2. Wahoos	446
3. Blues	416
4. Tribe	407
5. Reds	389
6. Bombers	362
7. Pirates	323
8. Tigers	305
9. Skipjacks	292
10. Chiefs	267
11. Cubs*	227
12. Redbirds	202

I could be wrong, but I believe that the **Redboids'** weekly total of 202 was probably the lowest non-**Chiefs** scoring total for any one week this year. My point? The **Redbirds** sucked last week.

The top pitching team in the league through seven weeks is still the **Wahoos**, with 1049, though it must be said that the **Senators** are hot on their tailpipe with 1043. The third best pitching team is the **Redbirds** with 825 points, while the 12th place pitching team is the **Pirates** with 612.

The top pitching team for Week 7 was the **Senators**, with a whopping total of 279 pitching points for the week. At the other end of the universe, the once-pitching proud **Redbirds** could muster up only 29 pitching points for the week, sending this staff's stock lower than Level 3.

The bestest hitting team after seven weeks is – still – the **Pirates**, now with 1787 hitting points. The second best hitting team is the **Senators** with 1674, followed closely by the **Reds** with 1631.5, the **Wahoos** with 1631, the **Blues** with 1627 and the **Tribe** with 1601. Five teams with only 73 hitting points separating them. So, uh, does *hitting* win HSL championships, Professor Bob? Don't be ridiculous, you silly, silly man.

The top hitting team for Week 7 was the **Wahoos** with an impressive hitting total of 274 points, followed by the **Pirates** with 232, the **Blues** with 229, the **Tribe** with 228, and the **Tigers** with 224. The **Chiefs**, who have been resting McGwire, Griffey and I-Rod for a furious second-half push, had the lowest hitting total with 141 batting points for the week.

Manny Ramirez of the **Senators** continues to be the league MVP with 271 points through seven weeks, entirely uninflated by bonus points. Pedro Martinez, the Walter Johnson of our generation, leads all pitchers with 251 points, none of which are bonus. To put this in perspective, the **Senators'** own Curt Schilling, who is currently 6 and 1 and has a boatload of strikeouts, had 180 points through seven weeks, a fur piece off the pace set by Pedro.

The only problem with Pedro, so far as I can determine, is that the guy doesn't have a nickname, at least not one that I'm aware of. Walter was the "Big Train." Carl was "The Meal Ticket" Hubbell. Christy Mathewson was "Big Six," and Grover Cleveland Alexander was "Old Pete." Clemens is "The Rocket." So why can't they come up with a good nickname for Pedro? Any ideas?

BETWEEN THE LINES

The **Senators** continue to lead the team batting average race with a .312 mark through seven weeks, well ahead of the 2nd place **Tigers** with .291. The **Chiefs** trail in this statistic with a dismal .257 team average, just behind the **Redbirds** and the **Wahoos** and their collective averages of .265. Which brings up this question, which is, how can the **Wahoos** be in 2nd place in this thing with a .265 team batting average? And the answer is, with Pedro leading the pitching staff, the **Wahoos** have been able to go with the minimal number of pitchers, and are one of the league leaders in hitter at-bats with 1720. Moreover, even with their puny team batting average, the **Wahoos** have knocked in 282 runs, second only to the **Senators'** 292.

The **Blues** lead the league in runs scored with 298, as well as in hits with 502, and at-bats with 789. The **Redbirds** lead with 111 doubles, and the **Tigers** with 14 triples. The **Senators** lead in home runs with 92, followed closely by the **Wahoos** with 89.

In the pitching department, the **Senators** lead in number of wins with 33, while the **Chiefs** continue to lead in winning percentage with .684. The **Wahoos** have the best team ERA with 3.41, ahead of the **Senators'** 3.58, while the **Pirates** have the worst ERA with 4.75, which explains why

they have the fewest pitching points even though his staff has a winning record of 22 and 19.

The **Bombers** lead in saves with 25, followed by the **Cubs*** with 24 and the **Redbirds** with 22. The **Senators**, betrayed by Derek Lowe, have been able to scare up only 11 saves, and are clearly in need of a new stopper.

JUNIOR LOVES BASEBALL, TOO

At the risk of being accused by U-Bob of having metamorphosed into a hard line, Jerry Falwell right-wing Republican, I am enclosing herewith a copy of a neat article from *Baseball Weekly* on George Junior. Hard not to like a guy who likes baseball as much as George. Now go out and do something about my Level 3 stock, will you, Junior?

THE TRIP

The beautiful city of Milwaukee awaits our incursion in a little more than one week. Mouse and McBlunder have a bang-up, crackerjack trip in the works, so all of you who are going, make sure and keep your ducks in a row so that you won't miss out on this terrific event. See you at the airport next week.



(Overheard in First Class, Midwest Express, Omaha to Milwaukee)

It would be my pleasure to bring you a frothy libation, Mr. (Foster) Brooks, I mean, Mr. Thielen. What will you have?

Skipper