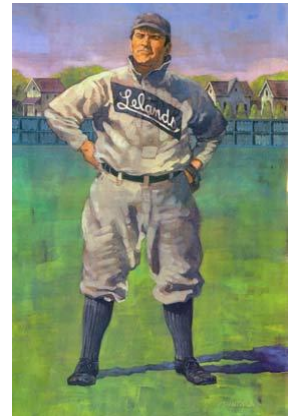


# FROM THE BULLPEN

## Official Publication of the Hot Stove League Eastern Nebraska Division



2001 Season

Edition No. 25

September 6, 2001

### REDS RUIN WAHOOS

Did anybody get the license number of the 22-ton steamroller that creamed the **Wahoos** last week? Doesn't matter, we all know that the operator of the bone-crushing machinery was none-other than our flat-topped friend McTricko Magpie-Curby, not to be confused with the movie star of the same name.

Wow. A more complete disintegration of a championship-caliber ballclub would be hard to imagine. The **Wahoos** went down harder last week than Curby on the mean streets of Los Angeles. The reverberations between the point cap ceiling and the floor which Possum must now pick himself off of were painfully noisy.

With fewer than four weeks to play, it looks like Tricko will be our new HSL champion, although the **Wahoos** and **Senators** aren't conceding this thing just yet. I can only hope that the **Reds** and the **Wahoos** have both had their last 400-point weeks for the season, and that the **Senators** might finally get their act together and finally experience just such a 400+-point week, following months of mediocre 325-375 point weeks. I'm not saying that it will happen, but wouldn't it be nice.

### WEEK 22 STANDINGS

It pains me to present you here the standings for Week 22, with Tricko's **Reds** on top and the Flaming Dirigible **Wahoos** in 2<sup>nd</sup>:

1.	Reds	8023
2.	Wahoos	7972
3.	Senators	7946
4.	Tigers	7442
5.	Tribe	7400
6.	Cubs*	7370

7.	Skipjacks	7273
8.	Blues	7259
9.	Pirates	7134
10.	Redbirds	7027
11.	Bombers	6674
12.	Chiefs	6156

The long-silent **Cubs\*** led the way during Week 22 with a not-to-be-sneezed-at total of 442 points, enabling the **Cubs\*** to vault past their arch-rival **Skipjacks** and the free-falling (233 points for the week) **Blues** and into 6<sup>th</sup> place. The *en fuego* **Reds** had the second-highest total during Week 22 with 409 points, undoubtedly establishing the highest two-week total in Hot Stove League history with 998 points during the past fortnight. Simply incredible. We will have to see how the home run caps, which are now in effect for the **Reds**, and the eventual RBI cap, will play out as the end of the season drama unfolds.

The **Senators** had the third-best Week 22 with 380 points, and thank goodness for that, or the **Reds** would be beyond any hope of being reached. The back-from-the-dead **Pirates** had the fourth-highest total for the week with 372, putting a little bit of distance between the **Bucos** and the pesky **Crimson Chirpers**.

In spite of all of his caterwauling and carrying on, the **Wahoos** still managed to carve out a 281-point week during Week 22, even with some of his brutal hitting performances, lack of production and point cap limitations. So don't get to feeling too sorry for the guy.

Here are the Week 22 point totals from top to bottom:

### WEEK 22 POINT TOTALS

1.	Cubs*	442
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2.	Reds	409
3.	Senators	380
4.	Pirates	372
5.	Tigers	342
6.	Redbirds	308
7.	Skipjacks	297
8.	Wahoos	281
9.	Bombers	271
10.	Chiefs	254
11.	Tribe	251
12.	Blues	233

### WEEK 21 NUMBERS

Since Big Guy did not include the Week 21 numbers in his *Tiger Beat* Special Edition last week, allow me to pick him up and furnish you the numbers here:

1.	Wahoos	7691
2.	Reds	7614
3.	Senators	7566
4.	Tribe	7149
5.	Tigers	7100
6.	Skipjacks	6976
7.	Blues	6936
8.	Cubs*	6928
9.	Pirates	6762
10.	Redbirds	6719
11.	Bombers	6403
12.	Chiefs	5902

### WEEK 21 TOTALS

1.	Reds	589 <sup>1</sup>
2.	Tribe	426
3.	Tigers	350
4.	Blues	348
5.	Chiefs	347
6.	Skipjacks	341
7.	Cubs*	348
8.	Redbirds	335
9.	Senators	317
10.	Pirates	258
(T)	Bombers	258
12.	Wahoos	256

### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

#### HITTING

1.	A-Rod	748
2.	Luis Gonzalez	742 <sup>2</sup>
3.	Sosa	741
4.	Bonds	725
5.	Helton	688
6.	Boone	643
7.	Alomar	640
8.	Giambi	619
9.	Burkman	607
(T)	Aurilia	607
11	Walker	600
12.	Green	594
13.	Bagwell	593
14.	Ramirez	586
15.	Thome	571
16.	Pujols	566
17.	Chipper Jones	564
18.	Gonzalez	562
(T)	Klesko	562
20.	Guerrero	557

I thought it was interesting to note that there are 31 players (Biggio has 501) with more than 500 points, but none of them are catchers or center fielders. Piazza leads all catchers with 479 points, while Bernie Williams leads all center fielders with 488.

#### PITCHERS

1.	Johnson	656
2.	Schilling	580
3.	Rivera	499
4.	Maddux	491
5.	Clemens	456
(T)	Park	456
7.	Nen	451
8.	Vazquez	445
9.	Lieber	441
10.	Burkett	434
11	Foulke	430
12.	Hudson	422
(T)	Mulder	422
(T)	Mussina	422
15.	Percival	420

<sup>1</sup> I still can't believe this. What tricks did Tricky pull to reach this number?

<sup>2</sup> With bonus points included, Luis is the points leader with 781.5 points.

## DIARY OF A MAD<sup>3</sup> STOCKBROKER

I hope that most of you have had the pleasure of reading Possum's recent e-mails that have circulated during the past week, during and after the demise of his team. Tirebiter suggested a suicide watch. I suggest a metal detector outside the BIF office, outside Possum's home, and in every building he enters. The thin line between sanity and insanity may have been breached, as evidenced by Possum's e-mails.

All I can think about when I read Possum's diatribes is the scene from the movie where Captain Queeg (Humphrey Bogart) is sitting in a chair with a handful of small metal balls or bearings, shuffling them back and forth with the fingers of his hand.

For those of you who haven't had the benefit of Possum's e-mails, I share them with you here now. And remember, you have been warned.

From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Friday, August 31, 2001 8:48 AM  
Subject: Down the Stretch

Now I know how Gene Mauch, Don Zimmer, and any other manager in the history of baseball that has presided over a long, slow melt has felt. Problem is, in the immortal words of Yogi Berra, it is de ja vu all over again for me, given my 1987 collapse (headlines read: "Franco AWOL from Tribe, Launches Jazz Career" . . . "Boggs Sits out last 2 weeks to Ice Batting Crown--Teammates Allege Personal Stats More Important than Team Success", and "Randolph Stars for AL in All Star Game, then Bags Rest of Season (96 runs, 80 walks, .305 avg, 67 RBI at the break--then---nothing), and the 1988 Total Jamjob that saw Orel Hershiser set a major league record for consecutive scoreless innings (around 58? it felt like 158) and media voters somehow vote Robin (.285, 15 HR, 70 RBI)\* Yount in as MVP over Ruben (.315, 30 HR, 115 RBI)\* Sierra, thereby vaulting Bone Daddy's crew past mine AFTER THE SEASON HAD ENDED (due to the stupid MVP and Cy point system then in place) by 18 points, after the Sox had led by about 400 around Labor Day.

I remember Danny Jackson shutting out the Cubs on Labor Day Sunday that year, and thinking "That should just about ice Jackson for the Cy Young, and the Sox for the coveted HSL crown." Not.

This year, as Labor Day weekend approaches, I take a different tack.

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<sup>3</sup> Mad as in: (1) crazy as a loon; and (2) pissed off.

There is NO WAY the Wahoos can win. Pedro Martinez out for 2 months--12 or 13 starts, 20 points per start--250 points lost (ok, well, less the 40 points Kip Wells posted in his place on the Wahoo roster over the same time frame). Nomar back for 3 weeks, only to still be hurt---thereby leaving Alex Gonzalez (the GOOD Alex Gonzalez) to go bat to bat with ARod (Reds) and Jeter (Sens) down the stretch.

And Javier Vazquez---(known to his close friends as "The Spanish Orel Hershiser")---posting shutout after shutout for the Skipjacks, making Randy Johnson look like, well, Danny Jackson, for gosh sakes: a good left handed pitcher but not the guy with destiny on his side.

Johnson has outpointed Vazquez since "the trade", 106 to 94, and has averaged 26 points per start. So that side of the deal is doing what it was designed to do. But Vazquez now thinks he is Pedro Martinez (the PRE INJURY Pedro) . . . much to my chagrin and poor fortune.

Speaking of fortune, how bout that AL Saves leader going down with an injury a day after joining the Wahoos? Nice. Bret Boone, however, continues his torrid, MVP pace. He is no Robin Yount, that is for sure. Boone will win the AL MVP.

As we ponder the outlook for September, we worry that semi-injured players on suddenly non-contending teams (Martinez and Grrrciaparra on the Red Sox, just to name one example) may follow the path of least resistance and pack it in early--why risk further injury now? Which will allow the Yankees to pad their lead---allowing Torre to rest O'Neill, Tino, and Posada for the playoffs (all Wahoos). Sasaki probably gets more downtime, too. Cruz Jr, Strained Abdomen and all, sits as well. The outlook for Team Wahoo is dismal at best.

Congratulations to the Reds and Sens. You guys managed to avoid significant injuries to your FIRST AND SECOND round draft picks, made some sagacious deals along the way (E, what the heck did you do to the Wood and Ramirez voo-doo dolls, explode them in your microwave?), and manage the heck out of your full 28 man rosters like Johnny runs his daytrading portfolio---full bore, 24/7.

The Wahoos are lowering the lifeboats. We have locked all our closers, middle infielders, and Tim Salmon in the steerage section. The violin section is playing. Captains of industry are drinking 100 year old scotch on the deck. And Pedro pitches tomorrow against the Yanks. Problem is--it just isn't going to matter. You can stick a fork in the Wahoos, because they are more done than a half slab of ribs at McKenna's. So let's find a day for a pennant race lunch there in the next week or so, and I am buying.

I think they still take Level 3 shares there . . . W-H-W. TB

PS--just to cover my backside, I will write the "other" letter later, explaining how despite all odds, all the injuries, all obstacles, the Wahoos will still prevail, lest the baseball gods turf the Wahoos for "lack of belief in trying times."

All statistics are rough estimates. or lies. your call.

*From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 12:03 AM  
Subject: A team of non-destiny*

*Just when you thought it couldn't get any worse . . .*

*Scrambled to get another reliever, U squared, because he is now THE MAN in the Red Sox bullpen, on a team that has to win literally every game to stay in the hunt.*

*And on his first day as a Wahoo, he promptly blows a save, and takes a loss for the Sox, and the Wahoos. And he blows Pedro Martinez's save. So, not only are his negative points absorbed (maybe a 20 point swing in and of itself), but he costs Pedro another 6 or 7 points for the win not gotten.*

*And RJ goes 7+ with no runs . . .and does not get the win.*

*So, the Wahoos have 13+ innings in 2 starts, and no wins to show for it.*

*As it has been all year---quality starts ad nasuem, wins impossible to come by.*

*So, Tony Muser throws R Hernandez for KC against Texas in DOWN 8-5, and he promptly gives up 3 ER's in a gratuitous appearance. He must have taken Muser's "let's get you some work since we never have a real save situation for you" literally.*

*I thought about throwing Jason Jennings in to pitch today, but since last night I am stranded in North Platte with no ISP . . .of course he goes 7 strong and DOES get a win . . .*

*Did you catch the Wahoos hitters go a collective 4 for 37 on Saturday?*

*Or how about Sunday, when Toronto wins 11-0, and the two guys at the top of the order, Wahoo guys, go 0 for 8.*

*It goes on and on . . but that tip of the iceberg should be enough for everyone to have a good laugh at the Wahoo's expense to start the shortened week . . . WHW. TB*

*PS---Bone Daddy will back me up on this one: told him the WORST thing that could happen to the Wahoos this weekend was a Yankee sweep with all low scoring games . . .(Sox lose, Pedro gets shut down as they fall out of the race, but O'Neill and Posada don't score points) . . . bingo.*

*So, this week I am telling Bone Daddy the NASDAQ is headed to 5,000 by year end, Level 3 will be \$50, and all the Wahoos will rock the rest of the way.*

*I am need of a serious Karma transplant . . .*

From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001, 12:05 AM

Oh, and after dissing Julio Franco in last Thursday's e-mail for his Red Sox Implosion in 1987 . . .low and behold, who surfaces Sunday playing first base for the Braves, but Mr Scat Singer himself. He has to be 45 years old!!!

Talk about a sign that it is not your year!!!! WHW TB

*From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 8:30 AM  
Subject: it IS worse . . .*

*The irony here is that Pedro is right---why jeopardize the best arm in baseball when you are 9 games out with 26 to play?*

*Dan Duquette is THE WORST GM in baseball.*

*Oh, I see, pitch him because the fans want to see him play. What an idiot.*

*Who the heck is Ralph Treuel.*

*And, if someone had told you that the Sox would allow 6 runs total in 3 games against the Yankees, how many games do you think they'd win? At least one, probably 2, and a decent shot at all 3. After this weekend, wouldn't you think they'd fire the hitting coach?*

*The Wahoos NEVER throw in the towel, but it is hard to imagine real life events playing out any worse . . .WHW TB*

From: "Ted Bridges" <[tbridges@BridgesInv.com](mailto:tbridges@BridgesInv.com)>  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 2:06 PM  
Subject: I give up . . .

Why not lose my catcher for a few games. Hopefully, the White Sox and Yankees can play each other soon so that there could be some type of bench clearing brawl and 4 or 5 of my players could get multi-game suspensions . . .

In the real world (the real world always seems to mimic baseball, and vice versa) one of our top 5 holdings cratered today because one of their competitors announced bad news. When it rains . . .build an ark. WHW TB

*From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 10:33 PM  
Subject: People's Exhibit #1*

*The People offer into evidence to support their theory that Wahoo starting pitchers will be continuously and frequently victimized by 1) poor run support, 2) poor defense (unearned runs due to errors not made by Wahoo fielders) and 3) poor relief pitching (blown saves by non-Wahoo relievers, not that the*

*Wahoos don't have many blown saves of their own making) at every turn:*

<http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/boxscore?date=20010904&gameId=210904120>

*The People call Tony Armas Jr. . . .*

WHW TB

From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 10:35 PM  
Subject: People's Exhibit #2

Offered into evidence to support the theory that certain Wahoo hitters refuse to participate in blowouts, to the detriment of the Wahoos, noting Cruz and Gonzalez at top of said Toronto batting order:

<http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/boxscore?date=20010902&gameId=210902114>

WHW TB

*From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 10:38 PM  
Subject: Peoples Exhibit #3--Insanity Defense*

*Ignorance of the Law or the Identity of Law Enforcement Officials does not justify or excuse wanton abuse of and/or willful ignorance of posted rules and regulations:*

<http://espn.go.com/mlb/news/2001/0904/1247961.html>

*Motion to Hear Change in Plea to Insanity Defense to be heard tomorrow.*

*Would someone please stop the madness.*

WHW TB

From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 10:40 PM  
Subject: Amended Plea

I wonder if Frank Robinson will go for the "All those White Guys look alike" Defense. WHW TB

("Toto los hombres blancos apperran muy similaridad")

*From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 10:42 PM  
Subject: Amended Plea*

*Add any player remotely connected with Dan Duquette to the Wahoo's never ever list.*

*Gosh, I mean it is only his arm. And he is only the best pitcher on the planet. I think he should suck it up and go 9 innings a pop the rest of the way to insure the Sox finish above .500. Not. WHW TB*

From: jhurlbut [<mailto:jhurlbut@neb.rr.com>]  
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2001 11:25 PM  
Subject: Re: I give up . . .

I'm officially giving notice that next year I will be drafting Sammy Sosa in the first round, he is the last player that is not on my "never ever list". After next year you are free to bring in Two Ton Terry, or any other relatives, cronies, misfits, scalawags, dregs, scumbags, neighbors or in-laws that you deem fit. I refuse to sink to the depths of picking pitchers as a viable option to try to stay afloat.

Mr. Underbelly

*From: Dave Ernst  
Sent: Wednesday, September 05, 2001 4:33 PM  
Subject: Murphy was an Optimist*

*I have Sele going tonight, at home, Pitcher's park that it is, the best team in baseball by far in his corner, against the crummiest team in the land, the Devil Rays. In other words, I've got no shot at all. I say Sele gets knocked out in the first or second inning.*

*You heard it here first.*

*Your Skipper and Oracle*

From: Ted Bridges  
Sent: Wednesday, September 05, 2001 4:54 PM

E--sorry, but I got that turf staked out already---the clever "predict the worst in writing to insure that the karma gods will make the other outcome happen"---and believe me, you do not want to be my neighbor in that 'hood. As Dennis Hopper used to say in those wild and crazy Nike ads a few years ago: "Bad karma, man, very bad . . ." I told Bone Daddy last Friday afternoon the WORST thing that could happen to me was (Yanks/Sox/few runs, all losses, etc etc ad nauseum), thinking that would cinch the Yanks scoring tons, but losing all 3 games, (except Pedro would pitch a shut-out, which he did), and that blew up my face like a cheap suit (help me out here, BT).

Besides. Seattle blew up last night, so the odds are they'll score 4 or 5 runs, Sele will give up 3 or 4 in 7 innings, and get a nice win, or at worst an ok no-decision. If Seattle does lose, it will be because 1) Lou has lost all faith in Sasaki as a closer, and goes with someone else who blows it, or 2) Lou tries to get Sasaki back on the saddle right away, and Sasaki, now that he is a Wahoo, turfs the game to get his payoff from the baseball gods---eternal karma and good fortune.

Meanwhile, this is a guy who blew 3 saves in 41 chances on Bone Daddy's squad, and suddenly has blown 1 of 3 for the Wahoos, and seen his PPG fall to 4.2 in 6 games for the Wahoos from 6.8 PPG season long. The karma fix is in.

E, you remind me of the old "bet the Sooners versus the Huskers, and gladly pay the bet to bank the Husker win" approach of the 1980's. Problem is, the Sooners usually covered AND won, leaving that strategy sorely wanting. \$3 bucks, straight up, says Seattle wins tonight. WHW TB

PS--E, if that game is on any media, whatsoever, radio, TV, internet webcast, etc. please tune in. Thanks. WHW TB

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Poor, crazy Possum. He has plainly gone over the edge. Fantasy baseball can do that to a guy.

Only 3½ weeks to go. Good luck and god speed, and may the entire **Reds** team go down in a third-world paddle boat accident.

Skipper