
From the Bullpen

Official Publication of the

Hot Stove League

Eastern Nebraska Division



2002 Season

Edition No. 30

November 5, 2002

NO FLEAS, PLEASE

As you can see from the photograph which follows,



Itchie is riding tall in the saddle again, having just opened up his own business. Tired of having other people dictate his life's course, Itchie decided to take the bull by the horns and become his own boss, an entrepreneur, a "bidnessman." Borrowing from Zach's Milford Trade School tuition fund, Itchie picked up a bargain of a lot at 24th and Lake, had the Thielen storage shed relocated there, and opened *Itchy's Flea Market*. Although Itchie reportedly has not yet been able to interest anyone in the big ticket items (notably the baby

HAIL TO THE HALOS

Although at the outset I did not care a whit about who won the 2002 World Series – still being ticked off that neither the Twins nor the Cardinals could win their respective pennants and give us a driveable Series venue -- this year's Fall Classic was one of the best ever. With four of the first six games being decided by a single run, the phenomenal comeback of the Halos in Game Six from a 5-0 deficit, and the tremendous Series performance of Barry Bonds, it was a most memorable Series. I marveled at all of the strategy decisions that had to be made by Scioscia whenever Bonds was due to come up in an inning. It is incredible how much of an influence he had on the Angels' pitching strategy.

The 2002 Series will be known as K-Rod's coming out party. It will be interesting to see how long he labors as Troy Percival's setup man in the coming months or years before becoming somebody's closer, à la Mariano Rivera when he broke into the majors in the mid-1990s. The guy's slider is just absolutely

grand and Itchie's combination tractor/snowblower/weedwhacker/knife sharpen-er), the stuffed pheasants and personal shrine items are selling well, and Itchie is already thinking about a second location in Carter Lake. Congrats to Itchie, and thanks to B.T. for capturing this fine establishment on film.

filthy, and even a zeroed-in Bonds was lucky just to get wood on horsehide when facing K-Rod. I'll bet U-Bob snaps him up in the fourth round next year, as his third or fourth middle reliever.

I won't soon forget Tim Salmon's disgusting immodesty after hitting the three-run homer in Game Four or Five. Did any of you see that interview on television? His comment was something like, "We knew that there'd be a hero in today's game, and tonight that hero is *me*." Humble, Tim, very humble.

I also won't soon forget Darin Erstad's solo home run in the bottom of the eighth inning in Game Six, which brought the Angels within one run. The guy is a big time clutch hitter, and not too bad with the leather in center field, either.

But what might stick out most in my mind is the unchained heat that Troy Percival was bringing in the top of the ninth inning of Game Six, earning the save. Percival was throwing absolute gas at the Giants, and they couldn't even come close to catching up to it.

If anyone else has any lasting memories from this year's Fall Classic, do us a favor and share it on the Message Board on the website. (This means you, too, SloPay. Get those gerbils moving inside that cage so that you can get power to your *Lost in Space* vintage computer, use the internet (U-Bob will explain) to get to our website, and go absolutely nutty.)

UPDATING OF ALL-TIMER LISTS

With our landmark tenth season of twelve-

10.	ARod	834/5.7	1996	Chiefs (16)
11.	Helton	829/5.2	2001	Senators (1/4)
12.	Bonds	817/5.7	2002	Blues (1/8)
13.	Sosa	814/5.1	1998	Bombers (7)
14.	Bonds	802/5.0	1993	Senators (1/2)
15.	Burks	797/5.1	1996	Cubs* (16)
16.	Alomar	797/5.0	1999	Senators (4)
17.	Kent	795/5.0	2000	Wahoos (7)
18.	Jeter	790.5.0	1999	Tribe (1/10)
19.	Piazza	785/5.2	1997	Reds (1/6)
20.	Belle	768/5.4.9	1996	Blues (1/5)

DUGOUT CHATTER

- ♦ Only two of this year's players scored

team play in the Bill James system now in the jar, it's high time that we update the All-Time Lists, both as to individual player performances and as to HSL team scoring. Let's start with the players.

HITTING

	<u>Player</u>	<u>Points/ PPG</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Team/Rnd Drafted</u>
1.	Bonds	923/6.0	2001	Wahoos (3)
2.	Sosa	897/5.6	2001	Tribe (2)
3.	ARod	875/5.4	2002	Reds (1/2)
4.	ARod	871/5.4	2001	Reds (1/2)
5.	Walker	862/5.6	1997	Redbirds (3)
6.	Helton	859/5.4	2000	Wahoos (4)
7.	Gonzo	846/5.2	2001	Cubs* (10)
8.	ARod	844/5.7	2000	Tigers (1/4)
9.	McGwire	843/5.4	1998	Tigers (3)

enough points to make our All-Time Top Twenty List for Hitters, A-Rod and Bonds. A-Rod's 875 points moves into the third highest total of all time, edging his 2001 total of 871 points. Talk about consistency. Both in 2001 and 2002, A-Rod was picked by Tricker as the second pick in the first round, and each year A-Rod averaged 5.4 PPG for the **Reds**, with only a 4-point difference from 2001 to 2002.

Bonds' 817 points for the **Blues** this year ranks as the twelfth best total of all time. His 5.7 PPG average is tied for the second best of all time, behind only his own matchless 6.0 PPG average in 2001. Bonds' 5.7 PPG this year is tied with A-Rod's 5.7 PPG averages in 1996 and 2000 for second highest on the list. (In the strike-shortened season of 1994, Bagwell averaged 5.8 PPG over 110 games, not enough to qualify for my list.)

♦ Beginning in 1996 when he debuted on the list with the **Chiefs** as a 16th round draft pick, A-Rod has scored more than 800 points four times and has four of the top ten performances of all time, 1996 (834), 2000 (844), 2001 (871), and 2002 (875). In 1997, 1998 and 1999 he scored 573, 786, and 666 points, respectively. The only year that I ever drafted him, 1999, A-Rod chose to get injured in spring training and only played 128 games, but still averaged 5.2 PPG.

♦ The lofty 800-point barrier has been cracked a total of fourteen times during the eight full seasons between 1993 and 2002. A-Rod has done it four times, Bonds thrice, Sosa and Helton twice, and Walker, Gonzo and McGwire have each reached this plateau once.

11.	Brown	681/18.9	1998	Tribe (1/10)
12.	Maddux	677/24.1	1995	Skipjacks (1/6)
13.	Johnson	669/19.1	1998	Senators (1/1)

♦ Five players reached the 800-point mark in 2001, but only two in 2002. In 2000, only Helton and A-Rod scored as many as 800, in 1999 nobody made the 800 club; two made it in 1998; and in 1997 and 1996, one player made it each year. Bonds was the sole 800-point man in 1993, our first year in the Bill James system.

♦ Of these top twenty all-time hitters, the **Wahoos, Tigers, Reds** and **Senators** have each been the proud owners of three such players. Surprisingly, the powerhouse **Skipjacks** franchise has not drafted a single one of these top twenty all-time hitters. But not surprisingly, neither have the **Pirates**.

So there you go.

PITCHING

	<u>Player</u>	<u>Points/PPG</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Team/Rnd Drafted</u>
1.	Johnson	780/22.3	2002	Senators (1/1)
2.	Johnson	747/21.3	2001	Skipjacks (1/1)
3.	Clemens	746/21.9	1997	Red Sox (5)
4.	Johnson	738.21.1	1999	Tigers (1/6)
5.	Pedro	731/25.2	2000	Skipjacks (1/1)
6.	Pedro	724/23.3	1999	Bombers (1/7)
7.	Schilling	720/20.0	2002	Cubs* (1/6)
8.	Pedro	706/22.8	1997	Reds (5)
9.	Smoltz	687/19.6	1996	Red Sox (4)
10.	Schilling	681/19.4	2001	Senators

14.	Gagne	651/8.5	2002	Chiefs (FAD)
15.	Maddux	647/19.0	1998	Senators (1/1)
16.	Johnson	635/21.2	1995	Reds (2)
17.	Clemens	628/19.0	1998	Blues (2)
18.	Pedro	619/20.6	2002	Tribe (1/5)
19.	Hoffman	616/9.3	1998	Blues (4)
20.	Brown	610/19.0	1996	Tribe (9)

♦ The Big Unit's 2002 total of 780 points (not including bonus points!) puts him at the very top of the All-Time list, by a fair margin. The second best is now Johnson's total from last year of 747 points, which topped Clemens' 746 points from 1997. Johnson now also owns the fourth best total of all time, his 738 points in 1999. With three of the top four highest-ever pitching totals in three of the last four years, this 39-year-old man just keeps stretching the limits of human performance. I believe it was also the fourth straight year that the Big Unit notched at least 300 strikeouts, another incredible achievement.

Dating back to 1995 when he scored 635 points in a short season, Johnson now has five of the top sixteen all-time pitching point totals.

How many more years can Johnson perform at this same level? He was at his very best in September of this year, when mere mortals like Schilling (a horse of a pitcher) were sucking gas in the sixth month of a long season. I'm guessing that the Big Unit is good for at least a couple more outstanding years.

♦ Although Pedro had his problems this

(3)

year, he still scored enough points (619) to register another year's performance in the top twenty, this one at No. 18. Pedro also continues to hold the fifth, sixth and eighth best pitching seasons.

♦ Schilling has now made the Top Twenty for the second time. This year's total of 720 points -- averaging exactly 20 points per game over 36 starts -- is now the seventh best pitching total of all time. But for his September swoon, Schilling might have given RJ a run for his money for the top spot.

♦ Despite RJ's eye-popping per-game average of 22.3 PPG this year, he still ranks behind Pedro's remarkable PPGs of 25.2 in 2000, 23.3 in 1999, and 22.8 in 1997. Maddux's 24.1 PPG average in the shortened 1995 season is still the second best ever, behind Pedro.

WEEKLY TEAM POINT TOTALS

In the 2002 season, we added a few weekly point scoring marks to the list of top intraleague weekly performances, including Tricky's Week 24 orgy of 572 points, which is now the second-highest weekly total of all time. Here is the updated list:

TOP TWENTY HSL WEEKS			
	Points	Team	Week Ending
1.	598	Reds	08/25/01
2.	572	Reds	09/15/02
3.	551	Blues	05/31/98
4.	540	Chiefs	07/21/02
5.	537	Blues	08/16/98
6.	529	Blues	04/29/01
7.	527	Senators	08/24/97
8.	526	Reds	07/03/94

16.	504	Reds	07/25/99
17.	504	Skipjacks	07/25/99
18.	504	Wahoos	07/02/00
19.	503	Reds	07/04/99
20.	502	Tigers	07/22/01

WEBSITES

You need to know about two fantastic baseball websites that you can access, both of which are (at least for now) entirely free. The first one is www.baseballreference.com, and this website allows you to access an incredible database of individual player records. Frankly, I've never seen anything quite like it. Punch up the name of superstar, like Randy Johnson or Bonds or Maddux or Sosa or Bagwell, and then feast your eyes on the smorgasbord of records and statistics that you can access. I haven't even scratched the surface yet.

The second website you need to know about is www.retrosheet.org. Linda found this one for me, too. This allows you to obtain box scores from major league baseball games, for any date, any stadium, for the years listed. I know it goes back to at least 1984, because I used it to find a box score from a baseball game that I went to with my dad at Tiger Stadium that year. I used it to remind myself that Jack Morris pitched a gem of a game to pick up the win against the visiting Indians.

9.	520	Reds	06/30/96
10.	517	Bombers	04/30/00
11.	517	Chiefs	07/09/00
12.	516	Wahoos	08/25/02
13.	514	Senators	04/29/01
14.	507	Skipjacks	09/09/01
15.	505	Redbirds	07/26/98

Just for fun, I also used this website to find the box score from our trip to Fenway in 1994 when we witnessed (define *witnessed*) John Valentin's incredible unassisted triple play. You may also remember, depending upon your level of imbibement that night, that A-Rod made his major league starting debut that game. Here's the box score from that fateful night of July 8, 1994:

Boston Red Sox 4, Seattle Mariners 3

Game Played on July 8, 1994 (N) at Fenway Park

SEA A	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	-	3	8	1
BOS A	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	x	-	4	9	1

BATTING

Seattle Mariners	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	K	PO	A
Turang lf	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Fermin 2b	3	1	2	1	1	0	2	4
Griffey cf	4	0	3	1	0	0	2	0
E. Martinez 3b	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Blowers 1b	4	1	2	1	0	0	7	0
Mitchell rf	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Newfield dh	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Haselman c	3	1	0	0	0	0	9	1
Jefferson ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rodriguez ss	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Fleming p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Risley p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gossage p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	32	3	8	3	3	1	24	10

FIELDING -

DP: 1.

E: E. Martinez (7).

BATTING -

3B: Griffey (4, off Nabholz).

HR: Blowers (7, 9th inning off Nabholz 0 on, 0 out).

BASERUNNING -

CS: Fermin (3, 3rd base by Nabholz/Rowland).

Boston Red Sox	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	K	PO	A
Fletcher 2b	4	0	2	0	0	0	4	2
Naehring 1b	4	0	0	0	0	1	11	0
Valentin ss	3	1	2	1	1	0	3	5
Dawson dh	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0

Brunansky lf	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	0
Chamberlain rf	4	0	1	0	0	3	3	0
Cooper 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	6
Rowland c	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
Tinsley cf	3	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
Nabholz p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ryan p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	32	4	9	4	2	7	27	14

FIELDING -

DP: 1. **TP:** 1.

E: Valentin (7).

BATTING -

2B: Dawson (17, off Fleming).

HR: Valentin (6, 6th inning off Fleming 0 on, 0 out); Brunansky (6, 6th inning off Risley 1 on, 0 out); Rowland (5, 6th inning off Risley 0 on, 2 out).

BASERUNNING -

CS: Fletcher (1, 2nd base by Fleming/Haselman).

PITCHING

Seattle Mariners	IP	H	HR	R	ER	BB	K
Fleming	5	6	1	2	2	2	4
Risley L(6-5)	2	3	2	2	2	0	1
Gossage	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Totals	8	9	3	4	4	2	7

Boston Red Sox	IP	H	HR	R	ER	BB	K
Nabholz W(1-1)	8	8	1	3	2	3	1
Ryan SV(7)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	9	8	1	3	2	3	1

Umpires: Jim Joyce, Ed Hickox, Matthew Winans, Jim McKean

Time of Game: 2:51 **Attendance:** 33355

I can't believe that it has been more than eight years since we made that trip, which was our infamous Kansas City to Boston to New York to Baltimore to Kansas City to Omaha baseball banquet. Time flies.

ITCHIE'S SOIRÉE

We are still set for Saturday, December 7, to have a Winter Meeting and pay honor, tribute and homage to the great one. Location and starting time to be announced.

See you next issue.

Skipper

[Back to Top](#)

[Back to Archives](#)

[Home](#)