
REDBIRD CHIRPS



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Greetings to fellow Hot Stove League Members. Only two weeks from the much anticipated sojourn to Petco Park and various side trips in the great State of California. Looking forward to the good company, weather and adventures that lie ahead. Best wishes too Magpie on his impending surgery and wishing him a speedy recovery, I assume he will be off the DL in time for the trip.

I just returned from a week-long family vacation in Colorado that was capped off by a Rockies-Diamondback game featuring an unusual pitching duel at Coors Field between the Big Unit and Jason Jennings. The game was played in a remarkable 2:20, with Jennings and the Rockies Bullpen out dueling Johnson 4-1. The Big Unit was far from being on top of his game even though he allowed only an infield single through the first six innings (he was more lucky than good). By my recollection he only reached 95 mph on two pitches (most fastballs were 92) and appeared somewhat disinterested, and the Rockies then rocked him for 4 runs in the seventh. Jennings was even less impressive, and was bailed out almost every inning by the Diamondbacks lack of clutch hitting and a little timely defense by the Rockies. My conclusion is that both teams stink and rightfully belong at the bottom of the Western Division.

While I was absent I noted a number of HSL trades, most of which were in my opinion really less than noteworthy. I have noticed a sense of urgency (perhaps desperation) of the Senators in their dealings and regular promotions and demotions. It is certainly going to be a dogfight to the end, with what appears to be a five team race for the cup in the works. I have said from the beginning that I like the Tigers team and will stick with them. It appears that the only team with serious cap problems is the Wahoo's. I am waiting to

see and hear the annual griping on the lack of justice in the Bill James cap system, which I am quite certain will be coming sooner rather than later.

How about the trade that sent Nomar to the Cubs. I believe that the Red Sox got the best of the whole deal, as I am a fan of Cabrera and Mientkiewicz (I can say his name, but you try and spell it without it in black and white in front of you) will shore up the shoddy Sox defense. What were the Dodgers thinking of by sending LoDuca and Mota to the Marlins. In his attempt to reshape his red-hot, albeit overachieving, team, DePodesta set himself up to be public enemy number 1 in Dodger land and rightfully so. The Mets, who cares.

Kudos to my Cardinals and to Walt Jockety on not making any deals. There were no stud pitchers for the taking and why upset the apple cart. Pujols, Rolen and Edmonds are awesome, as may be attested too by the HSL members on whose rosters they appear. They are scary good offensively and defensively and the great thing is that the Cardinals have them, as well as Renteria, locked up for the next few years.

I recently read the book Moneyball, as have other HSL members. This should be required reading for all, and cutting through the insufferable compliments bestowed on Billy Beane, illustrates much about the means for developing successful and unsuccessful major league baseball franchises in the early 21st century. I had not ever focused on the General Manager as being so instrumental in winning at the major league level. But one need not look further than the successes of the Rangers, A's, Braves, Skipjacks and Giants too see the accuracy of major theme of Moneyball. Unfortunately, I do not have an Ivy league degree or the time or inclination (or in the case of the Skipjacks, the incredible good fortune) to manage the Redbirds according to its principles.

How about the large point totals posted during the last week. It's tough too stomach garnering 440+ points and not gaining any ground. This has been a fascinating year, with **many** career years and obvious disappointments from draft day to date. I personally am on both sides with Carlos Guillen, Bret Boone and Garrett Anderson being examples of each. Almost every team with the notable exception of the Tribe have players on both sides of the fence. Perhaps Bobby's new league monicker could be "the anti-itchie." Bob, I feel your pain, but on the plus side, you have my vote for the MVP for the Bullpen of the year. Your last effort was one for the ages. I would like to get your spin on your man John Kerry. It has to be difficult to slap the "Kerry/Edwards 2004" bumper sticker on your car. I suggest taping it on.

A drunk man walks into his bedroom at 2:30 in the morning holding a chicken under his arm, he looks at his wife, his wife looks at him and he utters, this is the pig I've been screwing. His wife replies, you drunk SOB, that is a chicken you are holding. He in turn replies, I was talking to the chicken.

All right, on that note, I bid you adieu and wish all the best of luck the next 8 weeks. Go Red-birds!!!