



The Whale's Tale

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Editor: Shamu

2005 Season

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Greetings once again, my esteemed baseball brethren! God, I love baseball, perhaps too much. Although I cannot honestly say that baseball has been very, very good to me, our beloved game has been very good to some good friends of mine; Johnny, Dave, Mitch and Ted, to name a few, so life is still great! My bullpen will be short and sweet. If you want some good laughs please re-read Bob's latest bullpen, another incredibly funny and outstanding effort.

It's time for my traditional annual plug for Jesus. Promise Keepers is coming to Omaha on June 3 & 4 at the Qwest Arena. You can expect great speakers, a great concert (Newsboys) and an extremely funny comedian (Brad Stine). It runs from 6:30pm to 10:00pm on Friday and 8:00am to 5:00pm on Saturday. If interested, go to promisekeepers.org for more information, call me or email me. These Promise Keeper weekends are life changing experiences! Enough about that, now on to baseball.

Here are a few overly obvious random thoughts about each team:

Skipjacks – John, how do you do it? I thought this was your worst team ever and yet you find yourself in first place again. This will probably ensure the Cy Young award but I predict Jon Garland will wake up in mid May and realize that he is still Jon Garland with a lifetime .500 record and an ERA of 4.53.

Blues – Blongo, I love your everyday lineup, very solid infield and outfield. Good luck managing your pitching staff. I foresee an occasional bad box scores for some of your starters. However, your offensive fire power makes this a probable upper division team.

Irates – Denny, congratulations on finishing the first month of the season in 3rd place. With your starting staff, pray for a strike. It worked for me. It is easy for me to cheer for your team and I will cheer for an upper division berth but it may be a long shot.

Red Birds – Jim, this may be your year. You have an extremely solid and well balanced team. Don't over manage your team. Hope for good health for Morris and Carpenter and you will be in a pennant race all year.

Chiefs – Scott & Screech, are you aware there are category caps, for example saves? If unaware, please call Ted, as he has a lot to say about that. You have 26 saves through April, which puts you on pace for about 170. I am glad Pedro is off to a great start, the first year he is not my first round draft choice since about 1989.

Cubs – Already showing signs of the strain of being held together with glue and bubble gum. Oh well, there's always next year. Travis Hafner epitomizes this team, 6-3, 240 and has -0- homeruns through April 29th and his first 72 AB's. My 11 year plan is to pick up one spot in the standing each year.

Tigers – Big Guy, similar to the Blues, you have an extremely good everyday lineup and a little thin at starting pitcher; Santana and pray for rain. With Kolb and Mesa you are in for some very exciting saves. Your offense could make this an upper division team.

Wahoos – Ted, I like your team, which generally means it is old. You do have some significant underachieving occurring but I believe your statistical data starts to diminish when your players reach age 35. My only relief with Hafner's bad April is that at least he is kicking Jim Thome's ass. If your pitchers stay healthy, if RJ becomes RJ and if you make your typical savvy free agent acquisitions, you will probably make an upper division run.

Reds – Mitch, your upper division run may come to an end this year, although I suspect your free agent acquisitions, like Ted's, will keep you competitive. Who are Jeff Francis and Joe Blanton and why are they in your starting lineup? You need Tejada and Edmonds to stay healthy or it may get ugly.

Senators – Dave, at least you have a top ten team, for now. I hate to beat a dead horse as I know much has been written about your outfield already but you do ap-

pear to have some performance issues out there. Your pitching staff is good but I feel your chance of repeating is virtually nil. However, you will probably kick the Cubs' ass for the 13th consecutive year.

Bombers – Mouse, your team is better than an 11th place team. Your solid pitching and outfield should make reading the box scores enjoyable most of the time. However, unlike some one dimensional guys, your greatest gift may be your coaching ability. My nephew, Graham Carr loves playing for your Yankees team.

Tribe – Bob, you are just plain unlucky. You own all the top players who have sustained serious injuries, Nomar, Magglio, Wells and Wood. Oh well, the pressure is off and you only have one direction to go.

QUOTES

My feeble attempt at some humor is best served by sharing the following mildly amusing quotes:

"It's better than my wedding ring. You can always get wedding rings."

-- Johnny Damon on receiving his 2004 World Series ring

"Like I told the guys earlier, once he turns 21 and is able to drink, it's over."

-- Jalen Rose after LeBron James scored 56 on the Raptors

"Any time I've taken the mound, it's always been the old Samson-and-Goliath story written about me."

-- Randy Johnson

"He don't have no problem with you blinging. God's heavenly abode proves that he is the real king of bling. His gates are pearly, his house is about 10 stadiums big, the streets are gold. You do the budget on that kind of place."

-- Rapper Mase

"I know they're going to want me to be on the field a lot, so I'm just trying to take these few extra pounds I don't need off."

-- Jason Giambi explaining his mysterious weight loss before the 2004 season.

"Relax. We've been playing these guys for 80 years. They're never gonna beat us."

-- Yogi Berra to Bernie Williams before the 1999 ALCS

"It's bad for me because I've never been in jail that long."

-- Rafael Furcal on his 21-day jail sentence

"I wanted to get the kid an RBI in Boston."

-- Embattled Red Sox 3B coach Dale Sveum, after getting Bill Mueller thrown out by 40 feet on a single from rookie Earl Snyder.

"I may have smoked too much weed, but I wasn't taking drugs or anything."

-- Mike Tyson on his loss to Lennox Lewis (Do these last two remind you of anyone?)

"I drink to excess, I gamble to excess, but everyone knows it, so it's not a big deal."

-- Las Vegas mayor Oscar Goodman to MLB officials

I saw what the governor makes. That's like four hands of blackjack."

-- Charles Barkley on why he wasn't seriously considering becoming the Governor of Alabama

PREDICTIONS

My only prediction for the 2005 HSL title is this: we are looking at one heck of a pennant race.

WEEK 4 POINT TOTALS

1.	Skipjacks	454.5
2.	Irates	368.5
3.	Tigers	350.0
4.	Blues	341.0
5.	Redbirds	322.5
6.	Chiefs	300.5
7.	Senators	299.0
8.	Reds	288.5
9.	Tribe	272.5
10.	Cubs	250.5
11.	Wahoos	201.0
12.	Bombers	201.0

STANDINGS THROUGH MAY 1, 2005

Upper Division

1.	Skipjacks	1498.5
2.	Blues	1486.5
3.	Irates	1458.0
4.	Redbirds	1435.0
5.	Chiefs	1412.5
6.	Cubs*	1315.5

Lower Division

7.	Tigers	1288.0
8.	Wahoos	1283.5
9.	Reds	1252.5
10.	Senators	1235.0
11.	Bombers	1209.0
12.	Tribe	1132.0

TOP HITTERS BY POSITION

CATCHER

1.	J. Lopez	95
2.	G. Zaun	91
3.	Varitek	90
4.	I-Rod	88
5.	Maurer	79

SHORTSTOP

1.	Tejada	159
2.	C. Barmes	123
3.	Jeter	115
4.	Vizquel	96
5.	M. Young	96

FIRST BASE

1.	D. Lee	159
2.	Overbay	104
3.	Pujols	104
4.	D. Young	96
5.	Hinske	93

LEFT FIELD

1.	Ramirez	117
2.	C. Floyd	107
3.	M. Cabrera	95
4.	D. Dellucci	93
5.	Dunn	93

SECOND BASE

1.	B. Roberts	173
2.	Kent	137
3.	Vidro	101
4.	C. Figgins	96
5.	R. Belliard	85

CENTER FIELD

1.	M. Bradley	98
2.	Damon	94
3.	Wilkerson	90
4.	B. Clark	89
5.	Hunter	87

THIRD BASE

RIGHT

1.	A-Rod	131
2.	Mora	111
3.	Hillenbrand	108
4.	Glaus	107
5.	C. Jones	102

FIELD

1.	V Guerrero	119
2.	I. Suzuki	103
3.	Sheffield	101
4.	J. Guillen	99
5.	Burnitz	95

TOP PITCHERS

STARTERS

1.	Garland	130
2.	Willis	124
3.	Santana	122
4.	Peavy	114
5.	Halladay	113
6.	Pedro M.	107
7.	Clemens	106
8.	Hampton	103
9.	AJ Burnett	102
10.	Lowe	96

RELIEVERS (including MR*)

1.	Nathan	111
2.	B. Wagner	88
3.	*S. Shields	87
4.	K-Rod	86
5.	*Brazoban	85
6.	B. Lyon	80
7.	Mesa	80
8.	*Reitsma	79
9.	C. Cordero	78
10.	F. Cordero	77

I wish the best of luck to each and every team owner for the remainder of the season and I hope to see you all in Philadelphia!

Chuck

SKIP'S BLIPS

** For those of you who have not heard, congratulations are due to Brother B. T. on his recent nuptials. The beloved owner of the Lincoln Chiefs was married on Tuesday, April 26, to his fiancée, Beth, in a small family ceremony at the Cathedral in Lincoln.

Best wishes to Scott and Beth for many, many years of wedded bliss, if not Hot Stove League championships.

** Thanks to Shamu for his timely and thoughtful comments in this week's edition of *The Whale's Tale*.