

Curbside Chronicles

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The Highlanders
Editor: Curby



2008 Season

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Standings

The standings as of August 3, 2008:

1.	Blues	9043
2.	Cubs	8390
3.	Monarchs	8183
4.	Highlanders	8183
5.	Wahoos	8159
6.	Bears	8004
7.	Chiefs	7944
8.	Bombers	7825
9.	Skipjacks	7656
10.	Redbirds	7340
11.	Senators	7313
12.	Tigers	7184
13.	Tribe	6905

The spread between each team and the leader, and each team and the team ahead of it:

		<u>1st</u>	<u>Next</u>
1.	Blues	0	0
2.	Cubs	653	653
3.	Monarchs	860	207
4.	Highlanders	860	207
5.	Wahoos	884	24
6.	Bears	1039	155
7.	Chiefs	1099	60

8.	Bombers	1218	119
9.	Skipjacks	1387	169
10.	Redbirds	1703	316
11.	Senators	1730	27
12.	Tigers	1859	129
13.	Tribe	2138	229

There is no title race. That is as dead as Generalissimo Francisco Franco. The race for all the other spots appears to be alive and well. OK, maybe not all spots. The Senators vacated the cellar with such force and speed, I fear the Tribe has become vacuum locked to the cellar floor.

What If

Let's play a game of "what if"¹.

- What if someone told Jon at the draft that he would be 650 points ahead of second place by August 1st? Jon's response may have been something like "Freakin' A right I'll be in first by 650 points by August 1st. I don't just pick boogers at the draft like a clown or a Renaissance jester. I'm a smart sumbitch, like a judge. Probably be more like 700 points ahead."
- What if someone told Denny at the draft that he would be over 100 points behind Judge McJester on August 1st? Denny's response may have been something like "As long as it's not Ted or some other rich, Republican lovin' snob....or Bob".
- What if someone told Buser that he would be losing or close to losing to both Dave and Scott on August 1st? Jim's response may have been something like "(hic) How think do you (hic) dumb I am? It'll happen (hic) before August!"
- What if someone told Bob at draft day that he would be more than 2000 points behind Judge McJester on August 1st? Bob's response may have been something like "What's your point.....is Denny behind me?"

Money Maker

It would be truly fascinating and probably very scary to peer into Scott's brain to watch the creative process at work that generates so many brilliant ideas to make money. Sincerely, Scott has the best pure business brain in the HSL, as well as the cojones to take risks.²

¹ This is a game I taught to my United Airlines customer service representative when he told me that I would have to wait two hours before he could look at travel alternatives for my "delayed" flight out of New York on Sunday because it had not been cancelled yet. I told him we would play a game of "what if". He said that he doesn't play games with customers. I told him to humor me and we started to play....What if the flight is cancelled – can I get to Omaha yet today? What if the flight is cancelled – can I get to Minneapolis yet today? What if the flight is cancelled – can I get to Kansas City yet today? What if the flight is cancelled – can I get to Milwaukee yet today? On this one he actually said to me "Oh sir, you don't want to go to Milwaukee, Omaha is much better". I asked if he had ever heard of Midwest Express, and he said "Oh yes, that's a good idea. Oh no, it's sold out to Omaha..."

² Itchie has a brain for business, but it is far from pure, and his cojones are on loan from Anne.

So, I propose that Scott start a new company...the "Nebraska HSL Ballpark Consulting and Rating Service". Using the HSL owners as employees, Scott would offer to thoroughly examine all aspects of any MLB ballpark and prepare a report for the team. Ultimately, the reports would be sold as a book to all baseball enthusiasts. Each owner will have his own chapter.

A best seller for sure!

Here is the lineup:

Big Guy Drews: Examines all history of the facility and team. Corrects the media guide errors, adds several pages of extraneous information and inserts references to the Detroit Tigers as much as possible. Big Guy will also supervise Ted.

Judge McJester: Mascots. Jon would evaluate mascots and reject all of them other than the Chicken or a person wearing a chef's hat. McJester would also critique the video board entertainment and hurl the operator through the video board at the first glimpse of a dressed up animal.

Snickler Sinclair: Stadium food service would be examined thoroughly and often. Samples would be placed in a thermal backpack for further examination offsite. Quantity as well as quality would factor into the analysis.

Big Johnny Thielen: Local entertainment options for pre- and post-game activities would be Itchie's forte. Scott would have to get an advance from the stadium owner to finance Johnny's research. No pictures in this part of the report.

Onion Skin Ernst: Comparative analysis of the ballpark against other existing and past MLB facilities. This analysis would range from general ambiance to the quality of statuary. Opposing opinions will not be tolerated and any stadium owner expressing such an opinion will be nicknamed and mocked until he develops a personality disorder and retreats into the hole from whence he came.

Big Puma Krause: Merchandise and promotion. Substantial improvement will likely be recommended, probably involving a new vendor contract with Art FX and a promotion that gives free tickets to any game when the temperature is lower than the ERA of the worst pitcher on the club (i.e. 72 degrees and a pitcher has a 7.55 ERA – like Homer Bailey).

U.B. Hurlbut: Examines all negotiations with players and stadium staff to ensure maximum union involvement. Also instructs staff on strict enforcement of seating rules. Bob could also cover strength and conditioning facilities, nutrition plans, newsletters and uniform design (which will also ensure a new big contract for Art FX).

Mouse Morris: Fan base analysis. Mouse will interact with the fans to judge their friendliness. He will audit their assets too. Mouse will also assess the scalper situation at the ballpark.

Possam Bridges: Forecasting future performance of the ballclub. Ted will advise management on the trends of each player's performance, heavily hedged so as to be completely noncommittal. May attempt to assist in trade negotiations involving minor leaguers for MLB All-Stars.

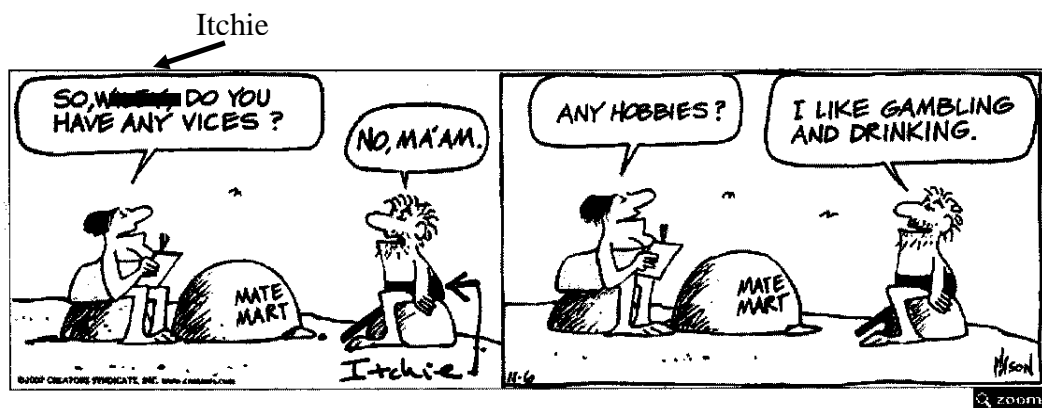
Screech: So famous he only needs one name, like his friend Skeesix. Screech will take a poll on anything and everything. For example, Barry Bonds is misunderstood or temporarily walking free? Manny is misunderstood or only hustles on days without an "s".

Tirebiter Buser: Beer quality. All kinds of beer, bottles and drafts, in all types and sizes of containers, at all kinds of temperature, with and without food, at different hours of the day and night, being held by one hand or two hands....you get the picture. It's an in-depth study.

The Assassin Bontrager: Security. Denny will test security personnel with a series of exercises involving Bob. For example, Denny will have Bob draw a weapon and watch the security guards use a Taser on Bob. Denny will have Bob sit in the wrong seat and watch the security guards Taser Bob, again and again.

I'm sure Scott has already thought of this idea and he is busy putting together the business plan. Unfortunately, I think stock ownership (like trades) will be restricted to family.

Random Thoughts



- Have you ever tried to call Ernie at the office? First it's the receptionist, then voicemail, then back to the receptionist, Linda's voicemail, back to the receptionist, then to Jagadeep at Ernst customer service desk in India.
- Do you think Blongo's thoughts this year are "sex, sex, sex, shit, shit, shit, hey I'm in first, shit, shit, sex, sex, don't make a move or do anything to jinx it, sex, sex, sex, shit, shit, shit,

who cares, no one can catch me now, shit, shit, shit, shit, sex, sex, I just jinxed myself, shit, sex, shit...." Does he have these thoughts in church too?

- At his current pace, Blongo is going to blow by Chuck's last year total by 500 points (12,823).
- Greatly enjoyed a July 3 game at U.S. Cellular with my whole family. Duchsherer versus Vazquez was a great match up with Jinstin beating Javier, 3-2. Cust and Murphy homered for the A's. Houston Street does not throw really hard but he misses bats. Carlos Quentin throws 90 mph in his warm up tosses between innings with a guy out of the bullpen – why throw so hard?
- Fabulous time at the Yankee Old Timer's Day last Saturday with my boys. Saw Dave Winfield, Reggie, Yogi, Goose, Boggs, Robby Richardson, Whitey Ford, Strawberry, Ricky Henderson, Tony Fernandez, Jim Abbott, etc. What a thrill! Loudest cheers were for Willie Randolph. Jeff Nelson sent him some chin music during the Old Timer's game and would not even let him foul off a pitch. The new stadium is looking good from the outside. I don't know if the subway will still be running next year – what a dirty, run-down crumbling mess!
- Wear a "Nebraska" shirt a thousand miles from home and you will inevitably run into another Nebraskan. Happened twice at Yankee Stadium. Also, people always talk to you about the football team, or some distant relative that lived in Nebraska. Happened with the people on either side of us at the game.
- I saw this article in the Omaha World Herald on July 17 and thought that it could be a story about some future HSL meeting in 2030. Item (as modified for HSL purposes): A 71-year old man is in intensive care at Creighton University Medical Center following an accident Wednesday night in a private pool near 61st Street and Lamplighter Drive. [Mitch Pirnie] and three friends were cooling down after a senior softball league game when he suddenly sank to the bottom of the pool, according to the pool owner, [Scott Krause]. "[Mitch] and I were in the pool just standing there talking to the two other guys who were sitting in chairs", [Krause] said. "Suddenly, one of the other fellows said "Where's [Mitch]? We looked and he was at the bottom of the pool".
- I hope we are all playing in the HSL and softball together when we are in our 70s. I enjoy the HSL more and more each year. I think we have mellowed a bit, but I seem to laugh harder than ever at all the antics, good-natured ribbing and funny stuff guys write. The HSL is very special, and I am proud to be part of it.

Going on vacation to the lake today. Hanging the "Gone Fishing" sign up for now.

Curby