



From the Bullpen

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PLAY BALL!

Baseball brethren:

Last Saturday's Draft, for the 24th year in a row, was the funnest day of the year. Thanks to all of you for showing up once again and investing your hearts and souls in the Hot Stove League.

STANDINGS AFTER ONE DAY

SloPay's **Bears** are out in front after our first day of baseball with a league-leading 99.4 points. Screech's **Monarchs** start off the year in the league bowels with a 29.2-point first day point total, thanks in large part to Mark Buehrle's Opening Day conflagration (minus 14 points, 7 ER in 1-2/3 innings). The **Senators**, after one lap out of 162 in their quest to go from worst to first, find themselves in 4th place with 76 points, and happy as a lark to be out of the league bowels for the first time in eleven months. Life is good!

Top Day 1 Pitcher: Johan Santana, **Highlanders**, 33 points

Top Day 1 Hitter: Xavier Nady, **Bombers**, 23.5 points

Biggest Day 1 Gaffe: **Possum's** benching of Jim Thome, at a cost of 16.5 points.

Is there anything better than having box scores to gaze at after five months without the beloved agate type?

OPENING DAY AT NATIONALS PARK

Joe, Will and I had a most excellent adventure in Washington, D.C., over the weekend, attending the first-ever game at Nationals Park, seeing President Bush throw the first pitch, and watching Ryan Zimmerman create a storybook ending on the night by hitting a 2-hour, walk-off homerun in the bottom of the 9th to send the Nationals to a 3-2 victory over the Braves in the inaugural game at Nationals Park. A ballgame and an evening for the ages, one that my boys and I will not soon forget. More later on my evaluation of Nationals Park, after the excitement of the game has lifted a bit and I am able to provide you with thoughtful, rational commentary on this new baseball cathedral. For now, suffice it to say that Nationals Park is an excellent venue for watching a game, one that will be much enjoyed by those of us who venture to our nation's capital for our annual Trip which is slated for June 6-8.

I will have to end this now as I am in a frenzied mode of trying to get ready for our family trip to Mexico which begins this Friday. I had hoped to get my annual Draft evaluation done while on the junket to D.C., but was having way too much fun with the boys to devote the time necessary to provide my annual picks and pans. My annual rankings will have to wait until after we have returned from Mexico in a couple of weeks.

For now, enjoy the return of our glorious summer game.

Skipper