

# From the Bullpen

Official Publication of The Nebraska Hot Stove League



**The  
Nebraska  
Hot Stove  
League**

1985 - 2014

Celebrating  
**30**  
Years

Of  
Competition,  
Brotherhood,  
And  
Bragging  
Rights



HARRY "HAL" KRAUSE

2014 Season

Edition No. 3

April 10, 2014

Brethren:

In light of Itchie's irresponsible failure to provide a guest newsletter this week, to help pick up the pieces for this flawed, pitiable locust shell of a man, I offer the following.

### STANDINGS THROUGH 10 DAYS OF PLAY

Through games of last night, April 9, the Hot Stove League standings look like this:

1	Wahoos	783.80
2	Chiefs	727.00
3	Cubs	692.90
4	Monarchs	660.20
5	Bombers	658.70
6	Tribe	656.00
7	Skipjacks	655.50

8 Senators	644.60
9 Bums	644.30
10 Tigers	575.00
11 Blues	524.80
12 Redbirds	488.70
13 Bears	453.70

Although it is early, early, early, this season already has the feel of a hotly-contested race for the title. Perhaps this is because my team, the **Senators**, are only 139.2 points back and in 8th place, whereas I usually start the season in the cellar and then work my way down from there.

This is how close it is through ten days: There are only 139.5 points separating the top team, the **Wahoos**, from the 9th place team, the **Bums**. Last night, the top-scoring team for the night, the **Chiefs**, scored 132.4 points. The lowest-scoring team for April 9, the **Bums**, scored 1.2 points. The margin between the top-scoring **Chiefs** and the bottom-scoring **Bums** was 131.2 points, or roughly the same amount of points separating the 1st place team from the 9th place team. Now *that's* close.

The **Bears** at 453.7 points total and 330.1 points behind 1st, now that's *not* so close. Rough start for the Grizzlies.

### TOP TEN HITTERS

The top ten hitters through ten days of competition are as follows:

1.	Carlos Gonzalez	Senators	63.0
2.	Michael Cuddyer	Tigers	62.8
3.	Paul Goldschmidt	Tribe	57.1
4.	Angel Pagan (yes, Angel Pagan)	Chiefs	53.5
5.	Mark Trumbo	Bombers	50.7
	Brandon Belt	Cubs	50.7
7.	Charlie Blackmon (who?)	Wahoos	50.5
8.	Emilio "In Your Facio"	Tribe	50.2
9.	Giancarlo Stanton	Skipjacks	49.6
10.	Jose Batista	Monarchs	49.5

I'm not sure any of us would have guessed that the Angel (Pagan) of Death, or Brandon Belt, or Charlie "He's So Black, Mon" or Emilio Bonifacio would be in the Top Ten at anything at any point of their careers.

### TOP TEN PITCHERS

1.	Jose Fernandez	Skipjacks	69.0
	Chris Sale	Tribe	69.0

	Tim Hudson	Senators	69.0
	Felix Hernandez	Tigers	69.0
5.	Jason Hammel	Tigers	63.0
6.	Gio Gonzalez	Chiefs	62.0
7.	Mark Buehrle	Senators	61.0
8.	John Lackey	Skipjacks	60.0
	Scott Feldman	Senators	60.0
10.	Jason Vargas	Blues	58.0

Can you even believe that there is a four-way tie for 1st? What are the odds of that? And while we are at it, what are the odds that my three pitchers in the Top Ten, Tim Hudson, Mark Buehrle and Scott Feldman, will be in the Top 200 pitchers by the end of this season? Exactly. Infinitesimal.

Whether you are in 1st place or last place, I think that we can all agree, it's great to have baseball once again. Keep up the good work, my brothers.

### OPENING DAY



Joe and Will and I had a great experience at Petco Park for Opening Day on Sunday, March 30, 2014. There were thousands of vocal, visiting Dodgers fans at the ballpark, and it is quite clear that Padres fans do not like Dodgers fans. For a minute, I felt that I was at a Yankees-Red Sox game, so virulent was the colloquy between the competing

fans.

Anyway, it looked like the Dodgers were going to sneak out of town with a 1-0 victory until Mattingly marched out *The Beard* in the bottom of the 8th, hoping to close it out for starter Hyun Jin Ryu after seven scoreless innings. The first batter faced by The Beard, Seth Smith, immediately whistled a towering drive into the right-field seats for a game-tying home run. The ball sailed an estimated 360 feet.

Next, Wilson walked pinch-hitter Yasmani Grandal, who advanced to 2nd when The Beard could not handle Everth Cabrera's sacrifice bunt and made an errant throw. Grandal then stole 3rd and Cabrera took 2nd on catcher indifference before the heavy-hitting Chris Denorfia (he of *Denorfiagate*) hit a bouncer up the middle to plate both baserunners.

Not sure what happened first, The Beard's slump-shouldered departure from the Padres-Dodgers game, or his removal from Itchie's team roster.

In any event, after the Padres took the 3-1 lead, the Friars brought in closer Houston Street in the top of the 9th to close out the Dodgers and seal the 3-1 win.

Another great Opening Day trip with my boys, our 12th in a row.

And finally:

**BEAUTY AND BEAST TO WED ON NEW YEAR'S EVE**



As you know from the Message Board, while in New York City the weekend before last, Michele and I became engaged to be married, but only after several potent libations at the notable Silverleaf Tavern, and following a stirring a capella rendition of “Michelle, Ma Belle.” No, not by Sir Paul McCartney—he was busy that night. And no, not by me, I can’t carry a tune. But that’s a story for another day.

In any event, although my people are talking with her people to sort out all of the details, assuming we have a deal in place, we are tentatively planning a private wedding ceremony on December 31 (or perhaps on January 1, depending on my accountant’s tax opinion), to be followed by a New Year’s Eve party/reception that evening. While the venue for this celebration is yet to be decided, we have secured the services of one of our favorite Omaha-area bands, “Finest Hour,” to help us celebrate. I hope that you will all block this on your calendar and plan to attend. It should be a ripping good time.

Thanks to all of you who have passed along your congratulations and other comments. I do feel truly blessed to be marrying this beautiful lady and person.

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Okay, enough of the mushy stuff already. Back to baseball. Looking forward to all of your guest articles as the season moves along.

And, oh, you owe me this one, Itchie.

Skipper