# From the Bullpen Official Publication of The Nebraska Hot Stove League



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### Brethren:

As we wait for this False Spring to bloom into the real thing, I offer a short *From the Bullpen* for your reading pleasure.

### STANDINGS THROUGH 2-3/7 WEEKS

Through games of Wednesday, April 16, the standings in the Hot Stove League look like this:

| 1. Wahoos    | 1292.00 |
|--------------|---------|
| 2. Monarchs  | 1223.40 |
| 3. Skipjacks | 1170.90 |
| 4. Chiefs    | 1138.90 |
| 5. Tribe     | 1090.30 |
| 6. Cubs      | 1086.10 |

| 7. Bombers   | 1081.20 |
|--------------|---------|
| 8. Bums      | 1072.70 |
| 9. Senators  | 1033.00 |
| 10. Tigers   | 1008.00 |
| 11. Blues    | 893.60  |
| 12. Redbirds | 860.10  |
| 13. Bears    | 817.70  |

While the owner at the top of the leaderboard—whose name need not be mentioned here—has been bellyaching more than Babe Ruth after consuming a dozen hot dogs, there has been very little mention made that his **Wahoos** are in 1st place primarily on the backs of Charlie Blackmon and Anthony Rendón, both of whom are in the top thirteen in points scored to date, and both of whom can only be described as acorns that have been scooped up by a blind squirrel. I didn't realize that squirrels were a member of the possum family, but I guess you learn something new every day on this earth.

And now for the Top Fifteen Hitters and Pitchers in the league through 16 days of play:

### **TOP HITTERS**

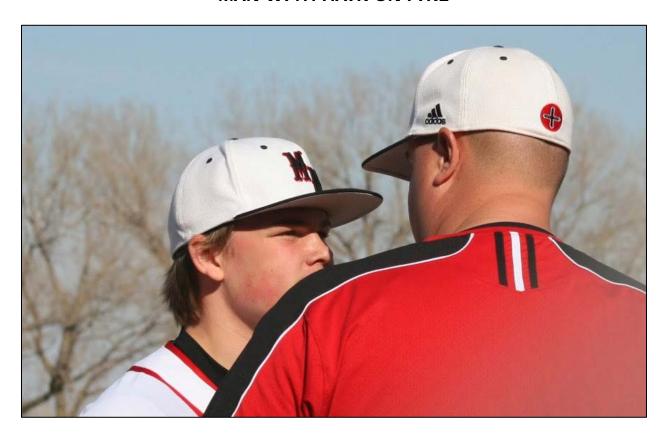
| 1.  | Alexei Ramirez    | Cubs      | 89.4 |
|-----|-------------------|-----------|------|
| 2.  | Giancarlo Stanton | Skipjacks | 82.7 |
| 3.  | Chase Utley       | Bombers   | 81.1 |
| 4.  | Freddie Freeman   | Wahoos    | 80.4 |
| 5.  | Mike Trout        | Chiefs    | 80.1 |
| 6.  | Paul Goldschmidt  | Tribe     | 78.6 |
| 7.  | José Batista      | Monarchs  | 77.0 |
| 8.  | Carlos Gómez      | Bombers   | 74.7 |
| 9.  | Joey Votto        | Wahoos    | 74.5 |
| 10. | Adrián González   | Blues     | 70.0 |
| 11. | Carlos González   | Senators  | 69.5 |
|     | Anthony Rendón    | Wahoos    | 69.5 |
| 13. | Charlie Blackmon  | Wahoos    | 69.0 |
| 14. | Michael Cuddyer   | Tigers    | 66.4 |
| 15. | Justin Upton      | Bums      | 65.7 |

## **TOP PITCHERS**

| 1. | Félix Hernández  | Tigers    | 136.0 |
|----|------------------|-----------|-------|
| 2. | Johnny Cueto     | Monarchs  | 117.0 |
| 3. | Andrew Cashner   | Tribe     | 112.0 |
| 4. | Masahiro Tenaska | Senators  | 99.0  |
| 5. | Yu Darvish       | Tigers    | 93.0  |
| 6. | José Fernández   | Skipjacks | 92.0  |

| 7.  | Mark Buehrle  | Senators  | 90.0 |
|-----|---------------|-----------|------|
| 8.  | Julio Teherán | Wahoos    | 89.0 |
|     | Scott Kazmir  | Wahoos    | 89.0 |
| 10. | Tim Hudson    | Senators  | 85.0 |
|     | Scott Feldman | Senators  | 85.0 |
| 12. | Chris Sale    | Tribe     | 83.0 |
|     | Aaron Harang  | Skipjacks | 83.0 |
| 14. | Michael Wacha | Redbirds  | 82.0 |
| 15. | Sonny Gray    | Tribe     | 80.0 |
|     | David Price   | Bombers   | 80.0 |

# MAN WITH HAIR ON FIRE







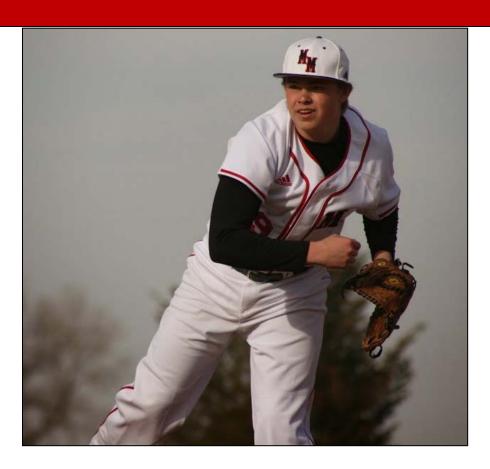












Will Ernst has recently been called upon frequently in relief of the wafer-thin Mount Michael pitching staff, and when he takes the bump, he pitches like a man with his hair on fire. And this season, Will actually has a head full of hair that could catch fire, different from his previous buzzed-globe looks. Most recently, Will came in to relieve in the bottom of the 7th against Fremont Bergan on a blustery Tuesday night, with the Knights holding a 2-0 lead with 2 Bergan baserunners to contend with and one out. Will promptly fanned the next hitter for the second out, but then gave up a single on about a 15-pitch at-bat to make the score 2-1, with runners at the corners. He then walked the next batter on a 3-2 count, on a pitch that seemed to be perfectly placed on the outside corner at the knees. With the bases juiced, Will ran the count to 1-2, and then threw a perfect pitch on the outside corner to end the game, to the lusty cheers of the Mount Michael throng. Except that the umpire called it a ball.

Kill the bum! String him up! Life in prison is too good for this scallywag!

With all of the pressure of the world seemingly mounted on his not-inconsiderable shoulders, but with ice water in his veins, Will then reared back and tossed an absolutely unhittable pea right past the Bergan hitter, notching the third strike and the final out of the game to rack up the save for his brother Knights. After the rescue squad jump-started his father's heart, dad and son had an excellent conversation on the drive home, including a brief detour to the Valley Dairy Queen.

I'm not sure what I'll do once Will's baseball career is over. I guess it's a damned good thing I'm getting married.

Have a great week.

Skipper

P.S. I am looking forward with great anticipation to seeing what Underbelly has in store for us next week in *The Bellyflop*!