

FROM THE BULLPEN

The Nebraska Hot Stove League



of the Summer of '68, "The Year of the Pitcher"



Bob Gibson



Denny McLain

2018 Campaign

Edition No. 5

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WEEK 7: REDBIRDS SURGE; WAHOOS CLING TO NARROW LEAD

The story of the week for Week 7 of the 2018 Campaign was the surge of the **Redbirds**, who notched 583.4 points for the week to climb within 18.5 points of the league-leading **Wahoos**. Not to be outdone, the **Bombers** put together an even more prolific week (593.4 points) and used this monumental performance to springboard all the way into--wait for it--11th place, just ahead of the moribund **Bears**.

Here are the standings from top to bottom through Week 7, together with the other information and statistics that we all love, courtesy of our diligent league secretary and webmaster, Linda:

STANDINGS THROUGH WEEK 7 ENDING MAY 13, 2018

1	Wahoos	3203.5	-
2	Redbirds	3185.0	18.5
3	Bums	3142.8	60.7
4	Blues	3106.6	96.9
5	Monarchs	3102.4	101.1
6	Cubs	3065.3	138.2
7	Senators	3064.7	138.8

8	Chiefs	2993.8	209.7
9	Tigers	2974.3	229.2
10	Skipjacks	2936.0	267.5
11	Bombers	2864.6	338.9
12	Bears	2836.1	367.4
13	Tribe	2472.0	731.5

POINT TOTALS FOR WEEK 7

1	Bombers	593.4
2	Redbirds	583.4
3	Bums	545.6
4	Blues	509.5
5	Monarchs	489.4
6	Cubs	485.6
7	Wahoos	484.9
8	Bears	475.3
9	Senators	450.0
10	Skipjacks	375.5
11	Chiefs	374.2
12	Tribe	367.1
13	Tigers	325.8

TOP 25 PITCHERS THROUGH WEEK 7

1.	Max Scherzer	Tigers	290.0
2.	Gerrit Cole	Wahoos	271.0
3.	Justin Verlander	Blues	269.0
4.	Corey Kluber	Redbirds	257.0
5.	Luis Severino	Bombers	251.0
6.	Chris Sale	Bums	238.0
7.	Aaron Nola	Monarchs	228.0
8.	Patrick Corbin	Tigers	219.0
9.	Charlie Morton	Redbirds	214.0
10.	Stephen Strasburg	Wahoos	206.0
11.	Rick Porcello	Chiefs	199.0
12.	Sean Manaea	Senators	193.0
13.	James Paxton	Bombers	186.0
14.	Carlos Carrasco	Senators	180.0
15.	Blake Snell	Bears	179.0
T16.	Jacob deGrom	Skipjacks	178.0
T16.	Carlos Martínez	Monarchs	178.0
18.	Mike Clevinger	Senators	174.0
T19.	Miles Mikolas	Skipjacks	172.0
T19.	Sean Newcomb	Bums	172.0

21.	Dallas Keuchel	Redbirds	160.0
22.	Jakob Junis	Blues	158.0
23.	Trevor Bauer	Redbirds	157.0
24.	Lance McCullers Jr.	Bears	155.0
25.	Tanner Roark	Tigers	154.0

WHO'S HOT -- PITCHERS

1.	Dallas Keuchel	Redbirds	70.0
2.	Sean Newcomb	Bums	64.0
T3.	Aaron Nola	Monarchs	61.0
T3.	James Paxton	Bombers	61.0
5.	Stephen Strasburg	Wahoos	60.0
6.	Clayton Richard	Bombers	59.0
T7.	Luis Severino	Bombers	55.0
T7.	Jeremy Hellickson	Cubs	55.0
9.	Luis Castillo	Blues	54.0
10.	Fernando Romero	Chiefs	48.0
T11.	Carlos Carrasco	Senators	44.0
T11.	Kyle Hendricks	Tigers	44.0
13.	Charlie Morton	Redbirds	42.0
14.	Corey Kluber	Redbirds	41.0
15.	Max Scherzer	Tigers	39.0
16.	Jon Gray	Chiefs	38.0
17.	Chris Sale	Bums	37.0
18.	Zach Eflin	Monarchs	36.0
19.	Julio Teheran	Bears	34.0
T20.	Derek Holland	Skipjacks	32.0
T20.	Cole Hamels	Bombers	32.0
T22.	Gerrit Cole	Wahoos	31.0
T22.	Vince Velasquez	Tribe	31.0
T24.	Shohei Ohtani (Pitcher)	Blues	30.0
T24.	Kyle Freeland	Bears	30.0

WHO'S NOT -- PITCHERS

1.	J.A. Happ	Tribe	-15.0
2.	Ian Kennedy	Senators	-14.0
3.	Jason Hammel	Blues	-13.0
4.	Carson Fulmer	Bears	-11.0
5.	German Márquez	Chiefs	-10.0
6.	Brandon McCarthy	Chiefs	-9.0
T7.	Chad Bettis	Blues	-7.0
T7.	Ivan Nova	Cubs	-7.0
T7.	Sonny Gray	Bums	-7.0

10.	Marcus Stroman	Chiefs	-6.0
11.	Adam Wainwright	Skipjacks	-5.0
T12.	Andrew Suárez	Bombers	-4.0
T12.	Jake Faria	Blues	-4.0
T12.	Ty Blach	Senators	-4.0
T12.	Kenta Maeda	Tigers	-4.0
T16.	Jarlin García	Tigers	-3.0
T16.	Trevor Bauer	Redbirds	-3.0
T18.	José Berríos	Tribe	-2.0
T18.	Danny Duffy	Cubs	-2.0
20.	Andrew Triggs	Monarchs	-1.0

TOP 25 HITTERS THROUGH WEEK 7

1.	Mookie Betts	Monarchs	230.7
2.	Manny Machado	Blues	224.1
3.	Mike Trout	Wahoos	221.3
4.	Aaron Judge	Bombers	214.2
5.	Francisco Lindor	Blues	204.2
6.	Freddie Freeman	Bears	195.3
7.	Bryce Harper	Chiefs	189.5
8.	Jed Lowrie	Wahoos	187.9
9.	José Ramírez	Redbirds	187.6
10.	Ozzie Albies	Chiefs	185.4
11.	A.J. Pollock	Tribe	184.6
12.	J.D. Martinez	Skipjacks	184.1
13.	Nick Markakis	Senators	180.9
14.	Didi Gregorius	Tigers	175.7
15.	Carlos Correa	Skipjacks	174.0
16.	Trevor Story	Bears	168.7
17.	Javier Báez	Monarchs	167.6
18.	Mitch Haniger	Blues	166.1
19.	George Springer	Cubs	165.2
20.	Odúbel Herrera	Blues	164.6
21.	Charlie Blackmon	Tigers	164.2
22.	Mike Moustakas	Wahoos	163.3
23.	Nolan Arenado	Bears	162.2
24.	Trea Turner	Tribe	160.1
25.	Kris Bryant	Senators	158.9

WHO'S HOT -- HITTERS

1.	Francisco Lindor	Blues	58.3
2.	Scooter Gennett	Senators	57.1
3.	Willson Contreras	Cubs	56.7

4.	Manny Machado	Blues	54.6
T5.	Odúbel Herrera	Blues	54.5
T5.	Trevor Story	Bears	54.5
7.	Aaron Judge	Bombers	52.6
8.	Kris Bryant	Senators	50.2
9.	Carlos Santana	Wahoos	47.2
10.	Justin Upton	Bums	45.0
T11.	Freddie Freeman	Bears	43.4
T11.	Anthony Rizzo	Tribe	43.4
13.	Giancarlo Stanton	Bums	43.0
14.	Trey Mancini	Redbirds	42.0
15.	Kyle Seager	Tribe	40.8
16.	José Ramírez	Redbirds	37.3
17.	Ender Inciarte	Monarchs	37.0
18.	Trea Turner	Tribe	36.9
19.	Michael Brantley	Bums	36.5
20.	Brett Gardner	Bombers	36.1
T21.	Eugenio Suárez	Bums	35.6
T21.	George Springer	Cubs	35.6
T21.	Ryon Healy	Bums	35.6
24.	Salvador Perez	Blues	34.6
25.	Mookie Betts	Monarchs	34.5

WHO'S NOT -- HITTERS

1.	Christian Villanueva	Tribe	-6.0
2.	Dexter Fowler	Wahoos	-5.0
3.	Matt Carpenter	Wahoos	-4.0
4.	Didi Gregorius	Tigers	-2.6
5.	Todd Frazier	Bombers	-2.4
6.	Bradley Zimmer	Skipjacks	-2.0
7.	Joey Gallo	Chiefs	-1.9
8.	Matt Olson	Tribe	-1.8
9.	Kurt Suzuki	Cubs	-1.0
T10.	Eric Hosmer	Blues	-0.5
T10.	Dustin Fowler	Chiefs	-0.5
12.	Rougned Odor	Tribe	-0.4

SOUR GRAPES DIVISION



I note that the **Senators'** Disaster Pick of 2017, Rick Porcello, is now sitting in 11th place among pitchers with 199.0 points--just ahead of the **Senators'** top pitcher, Sean Manaea. Life ain't Fair, except in early September at Fonner Park in Grand Island.



I have to confess that, until now, I've never even heard of the two pitchers who are tied for 19th best, Miles Mikolas of the **Skipjacks** and Sean "Puff Daddy" Newcomb of the **Bums**. I guess it's time to start paying more attention. And who is this Fernando Romero character who is now lighting it up on the **Chiefs** staff (48.0 last week)? Sounds like a flamenco dancer from someplace down in Central America.



I thought Zach Eflin (pitcher, **Monarchs**) was a teen heartthrob actor who has been in a bunch of bad movies. Am I warm?



Of course, the **Senators** own *Ian Kennedy* who was one of the worst pitchers of the past week with -14.0 points. Where is Lee Harvey or Sirhan Sirhan when you need them?



I see that Carson Fulmer of the **Bears** had a similarly dismal pitching week of -11 points. Serves him right for trying to play two different professional sports. Quarterbacking in the NFL will have to be enough.



What would the Las Vegas odds be on Mookie Betts being the top hitter through seven weeks at 230.7? Well, much better than the odds of Jed Lowrie having the kind of season that he is having this year. Gimme a break.

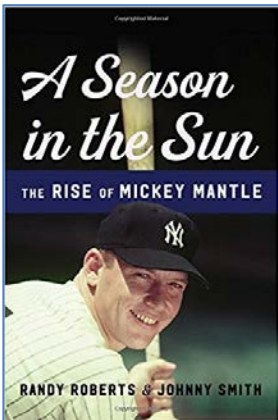


I see that Trevor Story is making his way up the list of Top Hitters. Should have figured that one out.



Not a bad week for Francisco Lindor with 58.3 points for the week. Well done, Stretch. But my man Scooter Gennett did okay at 57.1 points for the week as well.

BOOK REPORT:
A SEASON IN THE SUN
The Rise of Mickey Mantle



I just recently finished a wonderful baseball book that Linda bought for me (at least I think she did) titled *A Season in the Sun, The Rise of Mickey Mantle*. Unusual as it is, this book was co-authored by Randy Roberts, a distinguished Professor of History at Purdue University, and Johnny Smith, the Julius C. "Bud" Shaw Professor in Sports, Society and Technology at Georgia Tech. Their collaboration produced a delightful read.

The book focuses on a truly great year, 1956 [FN 1], in which the Commerce Comet finally started living up to all of the expectations that had surfaced since he made his Major League debut in 1951. During this magical season, in which he hit for the Triple Crown, Mantle started out on a pace to blow away the Bambino's season homerun record of 60, and looked like he might be the first batter to hit more than .400 since the Splendid Splinter in 1941. However, as the season wore on, the grind of a six-month long campaign began to take its toll on him, and the pressure that was put on him by the smothering press didn't help. Nor did Billy Martin coaxing him out to the bars and assorted other distractions of the night help the cause.

In the end, Mantle fell far off the Bambino's pace, and was nearly caught by Teddy Ballgame for the batting title at the end of the season, and by Al Kaline for the RBI crown, which went down to the last day of the season.

I didn't realize until reading this book how hobbled Mantle was by his infamous knee injury from Game Two of the 1951 World Series, when he broke hard to avoid running into Joe DiMaggio and caught his right shoe in the rubber cover of a drain in the outfield, a serious injury which plagued him his entire career.

I commend to you all this excellent book about one of the greatest players of our generation.

TRIP UPDATE

Our beloved and elongated correspondent from Kansas City--and lover of all things Renaissance and Medieval--the inestimable McBlunder, reports that we are a "go" for our HSL Trip to Kansas City for the weekend of August 25-26. On Saturday night, the Royals host the Cleveland Indians, and if promise of a baseball game at Kauffman Stadium with all your best chums isn't enough, the fact that it is Jeff Montgomery Bobble Head Night should sweeten the pot.

So far, it looks like we have affirmative responses from ten of the thirteen league members, all but the three cowering Lincolmites who quite clearly do not paddle their own canoes. How about it, you Star City Upslackers, are you in?

WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS

Hopefully all of you noticed that Linda has updated and upgraded our website to bring it current, and has notably added a new addition to our Photo Gallery, the infamous "Sea-worthy," which could in fact lead to our website being closed down. It is a risk.

Enjoy your week!

Skipper

FN1 Not coincidentally, the year of Skipper's birth.