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Spring Training 1961, Tampa Bay

NEBRASKA HOT STOVE LEAGUE

SEASON XXXVI



Angry no more.

FROM THE BULLPEN

2020 Campaign

Edition No. 4

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Brethren:

In light of the absence of Hot Stove League standings, team and player totals to share at this time, and inspired by all of the baseball, football and basketball replays which we now find as part of our regular television programming, FTB has decided to republish a few highlights (or lowlights, as the case may be) from prior Hot Stove League Seasons, starting with a repeat of the summary of our unforgettable California Dreamin' HSL trip in August of 1993, as originally published on August 12, 1993 in Edition No. 18 of the league organ, as follows:

THE TRIP

Which *trip*, you might ask? The monumental HSL excursion to the Golden State, or Curby's¹ Sensational Re-creation of the David Palmer Incident? Well, both.

By all accounts, The Trip of 1993 was momentous, and merits a recounting of the highlights in this issue of *From the Bullpen*. However, by unanimous vote of the nine loyal League members in attendance, that portion of this issue of *FTB* which pertains to The Trip will be shared only with The Trip attendees, and will be blacked out on the versions of this issue of the league rag sent to the three slagballs that punted this year's feature event. So here goes:

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

The 1993 HSL trip to Southern California was, to understate the obvious, a good time. Three great ball parks, four great games, four days of fun. For those of you who were too inebriated to recount the details of the ball games for your loved ones, we witnessed the following contests:

¹By popular demand, Magpie's nickname for the balance of the 1993 Campaign will hereafter be Curby. I trust that no further explanation is necessary.

Day	Stadium	Scores	
* Thursday, 8/5/93	Anaheim, The Big A	Angels	6
		Royals	5
Friday, 8/6/93	San Diego, Jack Murphy Stadium	Padres	6
		Rockies	3
		Padres	6
		Rockies	2
Saturday, 8/7/93	Los Angeles, Chez Ravine	Reds	8
		Dodgers	5

Some great baseball!

It was unfortunate that we were unable to see the beloved San Diego Chicken perform at Jack Murphy Stadium², but seeing Tony Gwynn crack out his 2,000th career hit was better than any show that the feathered mascot could have put on.

The Trip began on a promising note with Itchie's aggressive demand for an eye-opener from the flying cocktail waitress before the pilot had even fired up the engines (What Time! Tell Me What Time I Can Get A Drink!). And with that, the tone of The Trip was set. The Trip highlights were too numerous to mention all of them here, but some of the more memorable moments are worthy of being recorded for the ages:

- The initiation of the two League rookies on their first HSL trip, beginning with a true test of Mouse's³ mettle by positioning him next to the filibustering Curby for the entire trip to the coast. To his credit, Mouse feigned interest during the entire conversation, and did not become physically ill until almost dinner time, several hours longer than men of lesser stuff would have lasted.
- The stellar dipping performances during a virtual four-day Chew-A-Thon, by Shamu and others who shall remain nameless for their own protection.

²Unbeknownst to League members, the panic-stricken Chicken abruptly left town after getting wind of how Shamu stripped his teeth and made short work of an entire barbecued chicken at The Spot earlier in the day.

³Clank doesn't work. Let's go with Mouse till something better comes to mind.

- Riding in the 36-passenger Scratch-and-Dentmobile as B.T. bobbed and weaved through the treacherous L.A. traffic, popping wheelies and screaming, "I am the best."
- Watching a fear-frozen Eddie the Eagle make his first-ever hang gliding leap from the hills of LaJolla, as Rookie⁴ rubbernecked Black Beach below for naked (and he claims female) sunbathers on the beach.
- Shielding our endangered appendages as Shamu shattered the California state record for making large barbecued fowl disappear (this is considered magic in his country).
- Witnessing Itchie's eerily real imitation of Tarbash, the Egyptian Magician, before shaving and showering each day.
- Seeing the smile brought to the face of a homeless wino as he watched the Curby soar through the Santa Barbara skies à la David Palmer (while no doubt thinking to himself, "There, but for the grace of God, go I.").
- McBlunder's unyielding mimicking of lines from the Jerky Boys tape, including his favorite, "Frank Rizzo. Open your ears, jackass!"
- Curby's relentless pleas for a side trip to the San Diego ballet, and his often-articulated disappointment with the state of affairs at Pacers.
- WhiteSot and Curby's adroit maneuvering of the Scratch-and-Dentmobile.
- The look of horror on WhiteSot's face as he learned of his \$420 telephone call to Santa Monica.
- The look of horror on WhiteSot's face as he learned of the cost of repairs to the Scratch-and-Dentmobile.

⁴Formerly known as Boxcar.

- Curby's cocksure declaration that the Reds are a "sure thing" to capture the Crown in 1993.
- The look of concern on everyone's face when told that Saturday night's lodging (The Discomfort Inn) was located in the heart of Los Angeles gang territory.
- The *extra special bonus* of having our Saturday night hotel room comped (although B.T. tried his best to talk the hotel clerk out of it).
- Watching the muscleheads at Muscle Beach hoist the unthinkable equivalent of Shamu's post-trip poundage for a world bench press record.
- The brain trust who waited on us at Yankee Doodle's.
- The near-unanimous vote for Possum's expulsion from the League, for sins too numerous to mention.

Many memories to treasure from the 1993 trip. But enough sentimentality. What about 1994? There seemed to be unanimity of enthusiasm for a tri-city tour of Baltimore/Philadelphia/New York to see Camden Yards, The Vet and Yankee Stadium for next year's trip. Remember, it's never too early to start lobbying those all-important spouses for their permission and/or blessing to attend, as each case may be.

STADIUM COUNT

With the 1993 trip in the jar, let's have a little recap of HSL trips from 1985 to 1993:

Year	Dates	City	Stadium	Games
1985	Aug. 3-4	Kansas City	Royals Stadium	2 - Royals/Red Sox
1986	Aug. 16-17	Kansas City	Royals Stadium	2 - Royals/Yankees
1987	Oct. 4	Kansas City	Royals Stadium	1 - Royals/Twins
1988	Aug. 13-14	Chicago	Wrigley Field	2 - Cubs/Cardinals
1989	July 20 July 21-22 July 24	Kansas City Milwaukee Chicago	Royals Stadium County Stadium Wrigley Field	1 - Royals/Indians 2 - Brewers/Twins 1 - Cubs/Giants
1990	July 4 July 5 July 6-7	Kansas City Arlington Arlington	Royals Stadium Arlington Stadium Arlington Stadium	1 - Royals/Brewers 1 - Rangers/Orioles 1 - Rangers/Red Sox
1991	Aug. 31- Sept. 1	Chicago	New Comiskey Park	2 - White Sox/Indians
1992	June 11 June 12 June 13	Toronto Cleveland Detroit	Sky Dome Cleveland Stadium Tiger Stadium	1 - Blue Jays/Red Sox 1 - Indians/Yankees 2 - Tigers/Orioles
1993	August 5 August 6 August 7	Anaheim San Diego Los Angeles	The Big A Jack Murphy Stadium Chez Ravine	1 - Angels/Royals 2 - Padres/Rockies 1 - Reds/Dodgers

9 years, 11 ball parks, 25 baseball games, 627 beers, 270 bags of goobers, and 523 brats and polish dogs (222, if Shamu is excluded from the count). Wow! What a commitment to baseball. Let's keep this tradition alive, boys.

Congratulations to Shamu, McBlunder and Skipper, for making it to every trip while a League member. And special congrats to Rookie and Mouse, for starting things off on the right foot in their virgin years of HSL participation.

* * * * *

AND THAT'S NOT ALL, fellas. Because of the curious absence from the 1993 HSL Trip by one of our founding members, shortly thereafter we provided you with the following Top Ten List:

**TOP TEN LIST OF REASONS POSSUM¹
FAILED TO SHOW FOR THE 1993 TRIP**

10. Gets great personal satisfaction out of lying to other League owners.
9. Couldn't pass tip two days of churning and burning clients through stock market flim-flam.
8. Secretly despises baseball.
7. Terrified of running into former gay playmates in Southern California area.
6. Afraid of being assigned to room with Curby (also known as Magpie and Gums Flapping Plenty, if you will recall).
5. Fearful that spouse and children will pack everything and leave while he was gone.
4. Awaiting SEC summons for securities fraud.
3. Secretly despises McBlunder.
2. Already close to financial ruin - cost of trip would push him over edge.

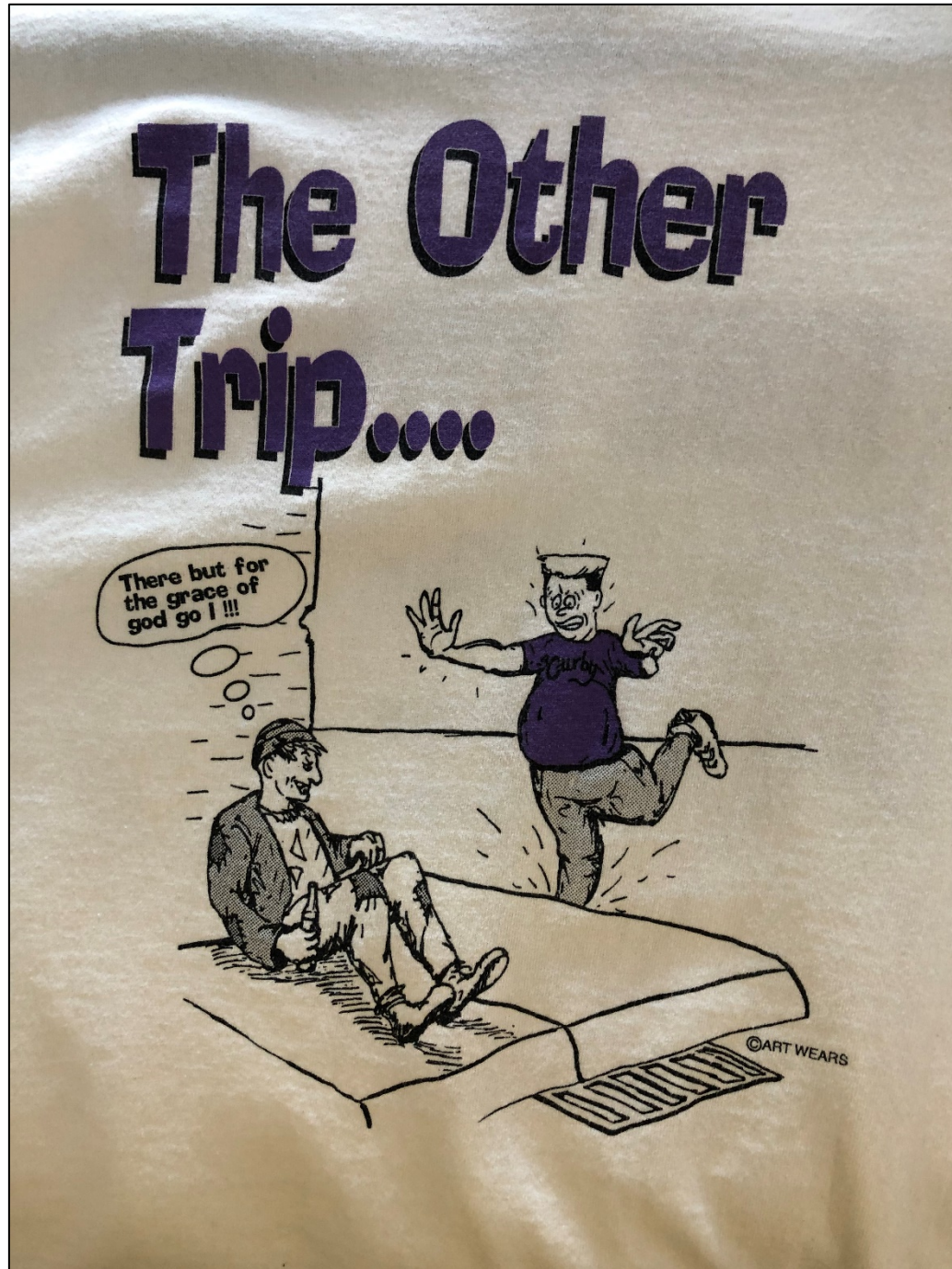
¹ PAwesome had not yet reached the achievement mark whereupon his name was upgraded to reflect same, so he will be referred to here by the old, but apt and well-deserved name of "Possum."

1. Afraid of being ditched in Tijuana by fed-up fellow managers.

And of course this was such a memorable trip that it spawned the creation of a commemorative T-shirt, which will always be one of the favorites in my closet. In case any of you have discarded yours, and have forgotten what it looks like, here you go:



And on the back side:



2020 TRIP

Although I don't think we should scrap it just yet, our planned HSL junket to Baltimore and DC in early June is clearly in jeopardy due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope that we can all be flexible and find a way to watch a major league game or two together this season, if indeed

we have live baseball to watch this summer. Somewhere, sometime, please. We can't let a damn virus end our 35-year skein of HSL trips.

SHORT STOPS

- This past Monday, the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 13 near-disaster, we watched the movie Apollo 13. What a great cinematic depiction of an almost unbelievable rescue from near-certain death. Tom Hanks was terrific, of course, but Clint Howard's role is so underrated.
- We also watched the jarringly racist movie from 1950 entitled "No Way Out," in which a black doctor (Sidney Poitier's film debut) is forced to provide medical care for two racist prisoners, including Richard Widmark. Not a comfortable film to watch, but eye-opening.
- Did anyone else read the report on Roy Halladay's death² which revealed that he had multiple drugs on board at the time and that he was engaged in performing multiple stunts with his aircraft, at one point flying at high speed only 5 feet above the surface of the water? That wasn't the way I wanted to remember this gutsy mound warrior.
- R.I.P. Glenn Beckert, a top-notch second baseman for the Cubs in the 1960s and '70s, and by all reports a good guy.

SUMMARY	WAR	AB	H	HR	BA	R	RBI	SB	OBP	SLG	OPS	OPS+
Career	15.6	5208	1473	22	.283	685	360	49	.318	.345	.663	82

6B • THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020

BRIEFLY

BASEBALL

Halladay did stunts before crash

Roy Halladay was performing a series of stunts in his airplane and had high levels of amphetamines in his system along with other drugs when he crashed his small plane into the Gulf of Mexico and died in 2017, according to a report released Wednesday by the National Transportation Safety Board.

The hall of famer performed three maneuvers in his ICON A5 plane before crashing, the report said. The maneuvers put loads of nearly two times gravity on the plane, and witnesses described them as "spins" and "rolls."

Several witnesses told the NTSB that they saw Halladay's airplane, which he purchased a month earlier, flying as low as 5 feet over the water as it maneuvered close to the shoreline in Pasco County, Florida.

A toxicology report said Halladay, 40, had the sedative zolpidem, amphetamine, morphine, fluoxetine, baclofen and hydromorphone in his system. The level of amphetamines in Halladay's blood was roughly 10 times greater than the therapeutic level, according to the report.

BOREDOM BEATERS

I have heard of lots of creative ways that people have been dealing with the boredom and monotony of being sheltered in place, and I think that we should share a few of these ideas just between us kids to help each other out. Here is one of ours: last Saturday night (and probably tomorrow night) Michele and I had a “pub crawl” at our house, each of us picking two locations and two different adult beverages, and then enjoying said refreshments in said spots. While not original—we heard the idea from someone else—it was fun.

What other ways have each of you found to stave off the boredom, that you can share with the rest of us, eh? Would love to hear from you.

IN CLOSING

Okay, enough blither-blather for this week. Hope you all are staying safe and well and reasonably sane. If you need a little pick-me-up after yet another week of social distancing, remember what has become our couples credo as we deal with the pandemic:

Alcohol IS the answer!

Yours in brotherly bonds,

Skipper