

NEBRASKA HOT STOVE LEAGUE

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SEASON XXXVII



2020 HSL Champion
West Des Moines Cubs
Manager: Shamu

400

FROM THE BULLPEN

2021 Campaign

Edition No. 16

July 23, 2021

BUMS BRANDISH BICEPS

The story of Week 15 is that Tricko and his **Bums** flex their muscles and increase their lead over the now 2nd-place **Cubs** to 312.5 points, making a strong statement during the first week of the second half of the campaign. Can the **Cubs** and **Bombers** hang in there and make it a race at the end of the season? Stay tuned.

Here are the point totals and the standings and the individual player totals for the week:

HSL STANDINGS THRU WEEK 15 ENDING JULY 16, 2021

Rank	Team	Points	Pts Back
1	Bums	7363.4	-
2	Cubs	7050.9	312.5
3	Bombers	7013.6	349.8
4	Skipjacks	6979.2	384.2
5	Saints	6834.4	529.0
6	Redbirds	6831.1	532.3
7	Wahoos	6748.3	615.1
8	Tribe	6718.7	644.7
9	Monarchs	6632.0	731.4
10	Senators	6483.3	880.1
11	Bears	6428.6	934.8
12	Tigers	6428.5	934.9
13	Blues	5907.8	1455.6

POINT TOTALS FOR WEEK 15

Rank	Team	
1	Skipjacks	293.8
2	Monarchs	269.5
3	Cubs	266.5
4	Wahoos	258.7
5	Bums	213.0
6	Redbirds	208.7
7	Bears	201.3
8	Senators	194.4
9	Bombers	193.7
10	Tigers	169.7
11	Blues	166.8
12	Saints	163.2
13	Tribe	151.8

TOP 25 PITCHERS

1.	Gerrit Cole	Bums	485.0
	Kevin Gausman	Saints	485.0
3.	Walker Buehler	Skipjacks	482.0
4.	Brandon Woodruff	Redbirds	472.0
5.	Jacob deGrom	Wahoos	465.0
6.	Zack Wheeler	Wahoos	458.0
7.	Chris Bassitt	Tribe	432.0
8.	Trevor Bauer	Tribe	417.0
9.	Robbie Ray	Tribe	410.0
10.	Carlos Rodón	Bums	409.0
11.	Max Scherzer	Tigers	408.0
12.	Freddy Peralta	Senators	404.0
13.	Anthony DeSclafani	Bombers	397.0
14.	Corbin Burnes	Redbirds	390.0
15.	Julio Urías	Tigers	380.0
16.	Yu Darvish	Blues	377.0
	Clayton Kershaw	Senators	377.0
18.	Germán Márquez	Tigers	364.0
19.	Trevor Rogers	Bums	361.0
20.	Lance Lynn	Bums	358.0
	Kyle Gibson	Monarchs	358.0
22.	Lucas Giolito	Bears	353.0
23.	Kyle Hendricks	Wahoos	347.0
24.	Charlie Morton	Cubs	344.0
25.	Zack Greinke	Senators	334.0

WHO'S HOT - PITCHING

1.	Corbin Burnes	Redbirds	44.0
2.	Lucas Giolito	Bears	43.0
	Carlos Rodón	Bums	43.0
4.	Lance McCullers Jr.	Redbirds	38.0
5.	Max Fried	Cubs	36.0
6.	Hyun Jin Ryu	Skipjacks	35.0
	Robbie Ray	Tribe	35.0
8.	Gerrit Cole	Bums	33.0
9.	Walker Buehler	Skipjacks	32.0
10.	Wily Peralta	Tigers	30.0
	Eduardo Rodriguez	Cubs	30.0
12.	Alex Cobb	Senators	28.0
13.	Chris Flexen	Tribe	27.0
	Kwang Hyun Kim	Skipjacks	27.0
15.	Luis Castillo	Monarchs	25.0

WHO'S NOT - PITCHING

1.	Brady Singer	Blues	-18.0
2.	Taijuan Walker	Tribe	-16.0
	Erick Fedde	Blues	-16.0
4.	Josh Fleming	Redbirds	-11.0
5.	Jordan Lyles	Cubs	-9.0
	Patrick Corbin	Tribe	-9.0
	Jake Odorizzi	Bears	-9.0
8.	Zach Eflin	Monarchs	-5.0
	Sandy Alcantara	Wahoos	-5.0
10.	Yusei Kikuchi	Redbirds	-4.0
11.	J.A. Happ	Monarchs	-3.0
12.	Sonny Gray	Cubs	-2.0
	Kolby Allard	Tribe	-2.0
14.	Blake Snell	Blues	-1.0

	Zach Plesac	Skipjacks	25.0
17.	Merrill Kelly	Tigers	24.0
	Kyle Hendricks	Wahoos	24.0
19.	Jon Gray	Monarchs	23.0
	Logan Gilbert	Saints	23.0
21.	Steven Matz	Saints	22.0
22.	Madison Bumgarner	Senators	21.0
	Tylor Megill	Bears	21.0
	Jameson Taillon	Monarchs	21.0
25.	Cal Quantrill	Wahoos	20.0

TOP 25 HITTERS

1.	Vladimir Guerrero Jr.	Blues	484.3
2.	Shohei Ohtani (Batter)	Skipjacks	438.9
3.	Fernando Tatis Jr.	Bears	406.7
4.	Marcus Semien	Monarchs	399.1
5.	Rafael Devers	Saints	377.8
6.	Matt Olson	Monarchs	377.0
7.	Freddie Freeman	Monarchs	375.8
8.	Nick Castellanos	Cubs	374.5
9.	J.D. Martinez	Blues	372.8
10.	Xander Bogaerts	Senators	371.2
11.	Trea Turner	Bums	370.1
12.	Max Muncy	Wahoos	364.8
13.	Bo Bichette	Skipjacks	361.6
14.	Jose Altuve	Bums	355.4
15.	Cedric Mullins	Bums	353.4
16.	Ozzie Albies	Senators	351.2
17.	Manny Machado	Bums	350.5
18.	Bryan Reynolds	Bears	350.3
19.	Carlos Correa	Bombers	348.9
20.	Joey Gallo	Skipjacks	348.0
21.	Justin Turner	Wahoos	345.1
22.	Jesse Winker	Bums	344.9
23.	Jake Cronenworth	Skipjacks	337.9
24.	Jared Walsh	Senators	335.0
25.	Mookie Betts	Monarchs	333.6

WHO'S HOT - HITTING

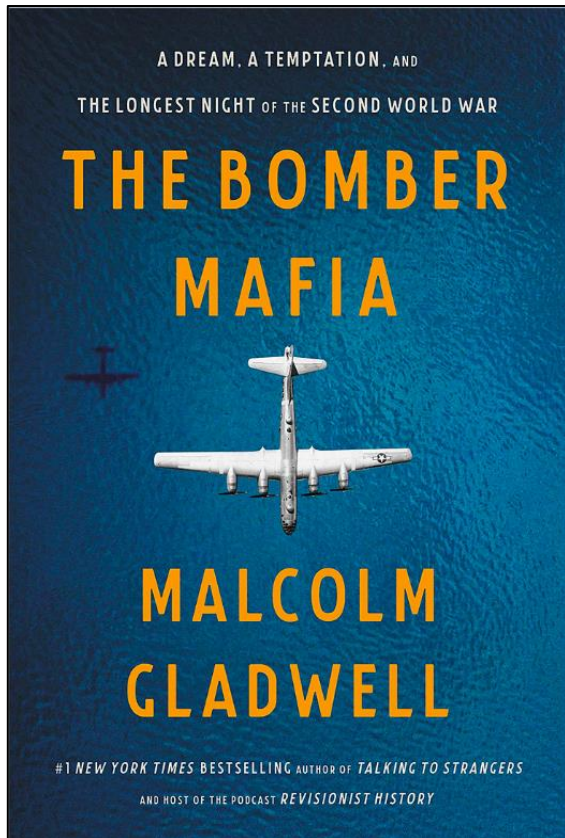
1.	Willy Adames	Monarchs	41.1
2.	Juan Soto	Redbirds	36.0
3.	Tommy Pham	Blues	35.0
4.	Mitch Haniger	Tigers	33.5
5.	Freddie Freeman	Monarchs	29.7
6.	Mookie Betts	Monarchs	28.0
7.	Tim Anderson	Senators	27.7
8.	Starling Marte	Bombers	27.0
	Eric Hosmer	Bums	27.0
	Wil Myers	Monarchs	27.0
11.	Will Smith	Blues	26.6
12.	Ty France	Blues	25.7
13.	Vladimir Guerrero Jr.	Blues	25.5
14.	Jake Cronenworth	Skipjacks	25.2
15.	Manny Machado	Bums	24.8
16.	Jesús Aguilar	Cubs	24.7
17.	Wilmer Difo	Bombers	24.6
18.	Fernando Tatis Jr.	Bears	24.4
19.	Josh Harrison	Blues	23.7
20.	Luis Urías	Wahoos	23.4
21.	Paul Goldschmidt	Monarchs	23.2
22.	Max Muncy	Wahoos	22.9
23.	Mike Yastrzemski	Senators	21.0
24.	J.D. Davis	Tribe	20.7
25.	David Fletcher	Senators	20.5

WHO'S NOT - HITTING

1.	Yordan Alvarez	Tribe	-5.5
2.	Giancarlo Stanton	Saints	-5.0
3.	Adolis García	Bombers	-4.5
4.	Carlos Correa	Bombers	-4.2
5.	Andrew Vaughn	Monarchs	-3.5
6.	Alex Kirilloff	Monarchs	-3.0
7.	Yadier Molina	Senators	-2.8
8.	Randy Arozarena	Bears	-2.5
	Ramón Laureano	Cubs	-2.5
	Max Kepler	Tribe	-2.5
11.	Nolan Arenado	Tigers	-2.4
12.	Bobby Dalbec	Wahoos	-2.2
13.	Dylan Carlson	Monarchs	-2.0
	Brandon Marsh	Senators	-2.0
	Alex Verdugo	Bums	-2.0
	James McCann	Redbirds	-2.0
17.	Trevor Story	Cubs	-1.7
18.	Oscar Mercado	Senators	-1.5
	Jesse Winker	Bums	-1.5
20.	Eric Haase	Tribe	-1.0
21.	Gavin Lux	Blues	-0.9
22.	Raimel Tapia	Saints	-0.5
23.	Kiké Hernández	Tigers	-0.1

SKIP SEZ:
Life without Acuña sucks. (*sigh*)

**BOOK REPORT:
THE BOMBER MAFIA:
A DREAM, A TEMPTATION, AND THE
LONGEST NIGHT OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR
By Malcolm Gladwell**



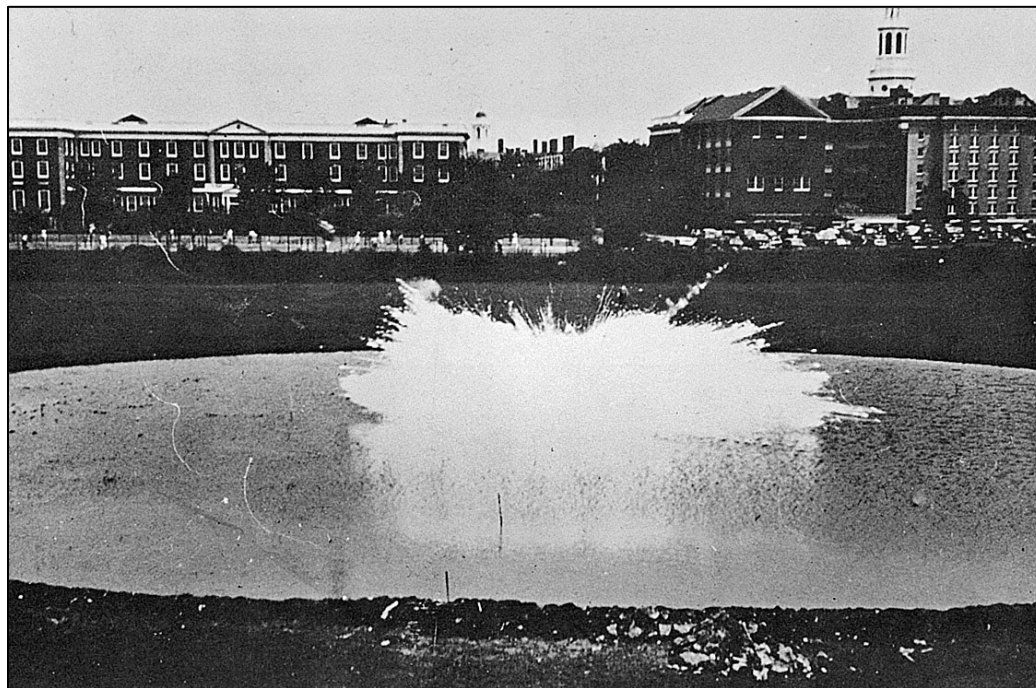
When I was up in Vermont a couple of weeks ago and had a couple of hours to kill prior to a deposition, I ducked into a wonderful little bookstore, of the non-chain variety, which had just an awesome offering of books for sale. In spite of the fact that I had three or four unread books still on my nightstand, I could not help myself and I ended up buying three new books, including *The Bomber Mafia*. Up until that time, I had only heard the name of *Malcolm Gladwell*, and didn't even really know who he was or what kinds of things he likes to write about.

The premise of *The Bomber Mafia* is the notion that it is more Christian and humane to have a wartime bombing policy that attempts to maximize bombing strikes on strategic targets such as ammo factories, petroleum production facilities and ball bearing plants, instead of just carpet-bombing residential areas to try to force a warring country to capitulate. The book features a small cadre of Air Force big shots who lived, worked and planned and plotted together at a place in Montgomery, Alabama known as Maxwell Field, home of the Air Corps Tactical College.

One of the fascinating things I learned from this book is that a native Hollander by the name of Carl Norden developed the Norden bombsight, a sophisticated piece of equipment that weighed about 55 pounds and which was used by American bomber squadrons to assist them in hitting their targets, although even with the bombsight the accuracy rate was astonishingly low. Although the legend was that the Norden bombsight (called "the football" by airmen) enabled a bombardier to drop a bomb into a pickle barrel from six miles up, in reality it wasn't nearly that accurate.

One of the fascinating subjects of the book had to do with the development of napalm as a weapon to be used against the Japanese, something which I either did not know or did not remember from other books about the Pacific Theater. While some of the best and brightest minds in the scientific community were recruited to develop new weapons for the use of our military in World War II, a report came out from the DuPont paint factory in Delaware that chemists there had created a new paint product which held great promise in terms of aesthetics and durability, but the problem was it kept spontaneously bursting into flames after it

was applied. Arrangements were made for some of the leading war-effort scientists¹ to travel to Delaware to see this new product and discuss it with the DuPont chemists, and after much additional work by these brainy scientists, they came up with a tantalizing new weapon which became known as napalm.² The beauty of napalm as a war weapon was that when it was delivered to an area through an explosive device, the napalm would stick to the surfaces that it hit--including human flesh--and continue to burn after impact. As described by Gladwell, the first real test of napalm as a weapon was in a new manmade lagoon on the Harvard campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, not far from the tennis courts. See below. Almost unbelievable.



Once the napalm weapon was developed, the military decided that they needed to understand how it could be used most effectively as a wartime weapon, and so they constructed mock neighborhoods resembling both Japanese and German dwellings in the Utah desert, and this

¹ Principally Harvard chemistry professor Louis Fieser and his associate E.B. Hershberg.



Louis Fieser



E.B. Hershberg

² "Napalm" is a combination of the names of two of the constituents of the gelling agent: naphthenic acid and palmitic acid.

became the testing grounds for the napalm. What they learned was that it was a devastating new weapon, and that these mock residential neighborhoods would ignite and burn hotter and faster than anything that had ever been seen before.



Gen. Curtis LeMay

Enter General Curtis LeMay, later of Offutt Strategic Air Command fame. As the new head of the United States Air Force operation in the Pacific, he was stationed in the Marianas Islands and tasked with using the newly-developed B29 Superfortress bombers to do as much damage as possible to the Japanese mainland.³ Apparently without concerning himself with obtaining approval from the military brass back in Washington, LeMay ruthlessly orchestrated and oversaw a massive napalm bombing campaign which decimated a number of Japanese cities and killed untold masses of Japanese civilians.



B29 Superfortress bomber



The Enola Gay, the B29 Superfortress bomber that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima

³ Later, during the Vietnam war, LeMay was famously quoted (or misquoted) as saying that America needed to bomb the Vietcong *back to the Stone Age*. Later, in the late 1960s, he was George Wallace's vice-presidential running mate. A real prince of a human being.

One of the other things that I learned from *The Bomber Mafia* that I thought was just fascinating--and could hardly believe I had never heard about before--was how the Air Force set up an air base from which to bomb Japan in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), India. But this first necessitated flying these enormous bombers over the Himalayan Mountains to Chengdu, China, where they would refuel and then fly on to Japan to drop their bombs. This mountain range became known as "The Hump," and it was no mean feat to fly a Superfortress over The Hump⁴ even unloaded, but when loaded up to capacity with bombs and fuel, a pass over The Hump even without enemy fire could be terrifying.⁵



Meili Snow Mountain, prominent landmark on the high Hump

⁴ This is how LeMay described flying The Hump:

It was a grueling hell The mountains were a veritable smorgasbord of meteorological treachery--violent downdrafts, high winds and sudden snowstorms--all served up in temperatures 20 degrees below zero. As if they needed any reminding, the crews could frequently glimpse the 29,028-foot peak of Mount Everest thrusting up through the clouds just 150 miles from their flight path.

⁵ 700 American planes crashed while trying to navigate over The Hump. The flying route was dubbed "the aluminum trail" because of all the debris scattered over the mountains.

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Okay, that's it for today, lads. Next issue: Madman in the courtroom.

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