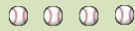


NEBRASKA HOT STOVE LEAGUE



SEASON XXXVII



2020 HSL Champion
West Des Moines Cubs
Manager: Shamu

400

FROM THE BULLPEN

2021 Campaign

Edition No. 2

February 16, 2021

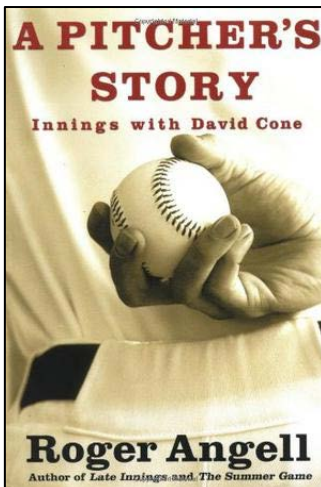
Gentlemen:

On a frigid, minus 22 degree (not a typo) day, what better to turn to for succor and good cheer than the hot stove for a bit of baseball chatter?

BOOK REPORT:

A PITCHER'S STORY: Innings with David Cone

By Roger Angell



I recently finished reading what will likely be my last Roger Angell book--he is 100 years old, for Pete's sake--titled *A Pitcher's Story: Innings with David Cone*, given to me by Brother Sunny. It is a *good*, but I would not necessarily say *great* book about an excellent pitcher but far from perfect person.

A couple of the parts of the book that I found interesting included:

- While Cone grew up in Kansas City and attended Rockhurst High School, he did not play high school baseball because they did not have a baseball field or a baseball program at that time. Instead, he played for a little league organization and was coached by his dad, and caught the attention of major league scouts at the age of 16 at Royals and Cardinals tryout camps.
- As a youth, Cone was better known as a football and basketball player. In 7th grade, he averaged 38 points a game for the Holy Cross Crusaders, coached by his father. When he signed his baseball contract with the Kansas City Royals in 1981 for \$17,500, he was practicing for a high school all-star football game played at Arrowhead Stadium, involving the best statewide players from Missouri and Kansas. Cone was a quarterback

and star punter for Rockhurst High, and had accepted a football and baseball scholarship at University of Missouri before deciding to turn pro.

- Cone pitched his perfect game in 1999 in what I would have expected to be the prime of his career. However, he was actually well past his prime, and the following year proved it when he had a won-loss record of 4 and 14 and an ERA of 6.91.
- Cone may have been abused a bit by his managers over the years. In 1992 he pitched a 166-pitch 1-0 shutout against the Giants, and in the course of six games, he averaged 140 pitches per game.
- Especially as a young, single pitcher with the New York Mets of Gooden, Strawberry and Hernandez in the late 1980s and 1990s, Cone earned a reputation as a bit of a wild man. He was an unapologetic cigarette smoker, a heavy drinker, a late-night/early-morning playboy who reportedly was no stranger to the white powder, and he had a possible rape arrest hanging over his head in October of 1991 when he threw his 19-strikeout game.
- After signing with the Red Sox in 2001 and going 9 and 7, Cone retired and did not play in 2002, before making a brief comeback afterward in 2003 with the Mets, going 1 and 3 with a 6.50 ERA.
- The book was intended to be about Cone's mound successes, but his defeats and "stubborn energy and courage" became the story, per Angell.

And as Forrest Gump might say: *That's all I got to say about that.*

Next book report: *The Guns of August.*

**PRE-DRAFT ZOOM MEETING SET FOR
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 5:00 P.M.**

Because I only heard from three or four of you as to your availability for a Zoom meeting this Friday, and because one of those respondents had a conflict, we are going to try it again. How many of you would be available for a Zoom meeting a week from this Friday, on February 26, at 5:00 p.m., so that we can discuss our Draft (tentative for Saturday, March 27) and other things of importance to our Hot Stove League baseball season? Please provide me your response no later than this Friday, February 19, as to whether you are or are not available for a February 26 Zoom meeting.

And that is all.¹

Skipper

¹ A *Bullpen* less than two pages in length. Astounding, isn't it?