

FROM THE BULLPEN

Official Newsletter of the

NEBRASKA HOT STOVE LEAGUE

2023: Our 39th Season

Edition No. 10¹



April 18, 2023

OWNERS:

Ted Bridges
("PAwesome")
Wahoos
Returning Champion

Jeff Bechtolt
("Screech")
Monarchs

Jon Blongewicz
("Sunny")
Blues

Denny Bontrager
("SloPay")
Bears

Jim Buser
("Tirebiter")
Redbirds

Rick Drews
("Big Guy")
Tigers

Dave Ernst
("Skipper")
Senators

Bob Hurlbut
("Underbelly")
Tribe

Scott Krause
("BT")
Saints

Mike Morris
("Mouse")
Bombers

Mitch Pirnie
("Magpie/Tricko")
Bums

Chuck Sinclair
("Shamu")
Cubs

John Thielen
("Itchie")
Skipjacks

STAFF:

Publisher and Editor
Dave Ernst

Webmaster and
Assistant Editor
Linda "Chief" Koftan

SAINTS CONTINUE ON VIRTUOUS PATH; BEARS MAUL PAST CUBS AND TRIBE INTO 10TH; SKIPJACKS' SWOON BEGINS

The **Saints** used a 525.5-point week to maintain their hold on 1st place, staving off the **Wahoos** even though PAwesome's charges led the circuit in points for the week with 612.1. The **Bears** had the second best total for the week with 546.8 points, boosting them into 10th, while the sorry **Skipjacks** had the leanest point total for the week with 329.6 points, dropping them into 7th on the way to the bottom.

Here are the Week 3 standings and Week 3 point totals from top to bottom:

WEEK 3 STANDINGS

Rank	Team	Points	Pts Back
1	Saints	1383.2	-
2	Wahoos	1345.3	37.9
3	Blues	1199.9	183.3
4	Monarchs	1197.1	186.1
5	Bombers	1184.4	198.8
6	Bums	1167.6	215.6
7	Skipjacks	1075.4	307.8
8	Redbirds	1072.0	311.2
9	Tigers	1068.9	314.3
10	Bears	1039.6	343.6
11	Tribe	1009.4	373.8
12	Cubs	989.7	393.5
13	Senators	902.7	480.5

¹ No. 744 overall, if you're keeping score at home.

WEEK 3 POINT TOTALS

Rank	Team	Pts
1	Wahoos	612.1
2	Bears	546.8
3	Saints	525.5
4	Bombers	525.2
5	Bums	499.2
6	Cubs	450.3
7	Monarchs	446.9
8	Senators	443.8
9	Redbirds	443.5
10	Blues	433.9
11	Tigers	431.9
12	Tribe	396.3
13	Skipjacks	329.6

INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

Bombers ace Gerrit Cole used a 73.0-point week to climb into 1st place among HSL pitchers with 142.0 points, a sizeable cushion over 2nd place Luis Castillo and 3rd place Shane McClanahan, both on the **Blues'** roster. However, the league-leading **Saints** can brag about having four different pitchers in the top 25, including #4 Pablo López with 105.0 points, 5th place pitcher Julio Urías with 99.0 points, Jesús Luzardo, who apparently rose from the dead this Easter season and is now at #19 with 75.0 points, and #21 hurler Mitch Keller with 72.0 points. Any wagers on where these four will end up at season's end? I didn't think so.

In the "Who's Not" pitching department, Jhony "The Flying Brother" Brito, did a Mexican hat dance backwards to the tune of minus 21 points, adding to Itchie's week of misery. Dueling Czechs Hayden Wesneski of the **Monarchs** and Michael Wacha of the **Wahoos** also did a little bit of blood-letting for their owners at minus 12 points apiece for the week.

On the hitting side of the ledger, Matt Olson of the **Wahoos** leads the entire circuit with 93.6 points, while Ronald Acuña, Jr. and Matt Chapman of the **Cubs** are 2nd and 3rd at 93.3 and 89.2 points, respectively. However, the hottest hitter for the week was Sean "The Irishman" Murphy of the **Tigers**, with 52.6 points, followed by Austin "Purple II" Hays of the **Wahoos** with 51.0 points, followed by Brent "My Queen Takes Your Rook"er of the **Tigers** with 49.5 points.

Here are the individual leaders, "Who's Hots" and "Who's Nots," for Week 3, thanks to our chief statistician and Girl Friday, Linda:

TOP 25 PITCHERS

	Pitchers	Roster	Pts
1.	Gerrit Cole	Bombers	142.0

2.	Luis Castillo	Blues	116.0
3.	Shane McClanahan	Blues	109.0
4.	Pablo López	Saints	105.0
5.	Julio Urías	Saints	99.0
6.	Shohei Ohtani	Redbirds	94.0
7.	Joe Ryan	Tribe	93.0
8.	Jeffrey Springs	Monarchs	90.0
9.	Dylan Cease	Monarchs	88.0
10.	Justin Steele	Monarchs	87.0
11.	Zac Gallen	Bears	85.0
12.	Shane Bieber	Skipjacks	83.0
13.	Anthony DeSclafani	Skipjacks	81.0
	Marcus Stroman	Tigers	81.0
15.	Kevin Gausman	Bombers	79.0
	Graham Ashcraft	Bums	79.0
17.	Kyle Freeland	Bombers	78.0
18.	Framber Valdez	Wahoos	77.0
19.	Jesús Luzardo	Saints	75.0
20.	Sonny Gray	Bombers	74.0
21.	Mitch Keller	Saints	72.0
22.	Hunter Brown	Wahoos	71.0
23.	Bryce Elder	Redbirds	70.0
	Drew Rasmussen	Bums	70.0
25.	Wade Miley	Skipjacks	69.0

WHO'S HOT – PITCHING

	Pitchers	Roster	Pts
1.	Zac Gallen	Bears	79.0
2.	Gerrit Cole	Bombers	73.0
3.	Luis Castillo	Blues	59.0
4.	Shane McClanahan	Blues	53.0
5.	Pablo López	Saints	48.0
6.	Graham Ashcraft	Bums	46.0
7.	Andrew Heaney	Bears	44.0
8.	Framber Valdez	Wahoos	43.0
9.	Corbin Burnes	Senators	42.0
10.	Wade Miley	Skipjacks	40.0
11.	Drew Smyly	Bombers	39.0
	Domingo Germán	Bears	39.0
	Shane Bieber	Skipjacks	39.0
	Joe Ryan	Tribe	39.0
15.	Bryce Elder	Redbirds	38.0
	Julio Urías	Saints	38.0

17.	Brad Keller	Blues	34.0
	Justin Steele	Monarchs	34.0
	Shohei Ohtani	Redbirds	34.0
20.	Yu Darvish	Wahoos	33.0
	Mitch Keller	Saints	33.0
	Dylan Cease	Monarchs	33.0
	Yusei Kikuchi	Redbirds	33.0
	Logan Gilbert	Bums	33.0
25.	Garrett Whitlock	Blues	32.0

WHO'S NOT – PITCHING

	Pitchers	Roster	Pts
1.	Jhony Brito	Skipjacks	-21.0
2.	Hayden Wesneski	Monarchs	-12.0
	Michael Wacha	Wahoos	-12.0
4.	Tyler Anderson	Monarchs	-8.0
5.	Drew Rasmussen	Bums	-7.0
	Alek Manoah	Skipjacks	-7.0
7.	Madison Bumgarner	Senators	-6.0
	Sandy Alcantara	Bums	-6.0
9.	Brady Singer	Saints	-5.0
	Kris Bubic	Tribe	-5.0
	Kyle Muller	Bears	-5.0
12.	Chris Sale	Blues	-4.0
13.	Bailey Falter	Senators	-3.0
14.	Nathan Eovaldi	Wahoos	-2.0
	Freddy Peralta	Cubs	-2.0

TOP 25 HITTERS

	Batters	Roster	Pts
1.	Matt Olson	Wahoos	93.6
2.	Ronald Acuña Jr.	Cubs	93.3
3.	Matt Chapman	Cubs	89.2
4.	Pete Alonso	Bums	87.2
5.	Adley Rutschman	Skipjacks	86.0
6.	Xander Bogaerts	Senators	84.1
7.	Francisco Lindor	Monarchs	80.9
8.	Wander Franco	Blues	80.9
9.	Rafael Devers	Monarchs	77.7
10.	Bo Bichette	Bears	77.4
11.	Vladimir Guerrero Jr.	Blues	76.4

12.	Ty France	Saints	76.2
13.	Adam Duvall	Skipjacks	76.1
14.	Jorge Mateo	Redbirds	75.6
15.	Yordan Alvarez	Redbirds	75.1
16.	Bryan Reynolds	Monarchs	74.5
17.	Brandon Lowe	Wahoos	74.2
18.	Kyle Tucker	Monarchs	74.1
19.	Aaron Judge	Wahoos	72.0
20.	Austin Hays	Wahoos	71.6
21.	Luis Arraez	Bums	71.2
	Alec Bohm	Senators	71.2
23.	Mike Trout	Senators	71.1
24.	Brandon Marsh	Redbirds	70.5
25.	Austin Riley	Saints	69.8

WHO'S HOT – HITTING

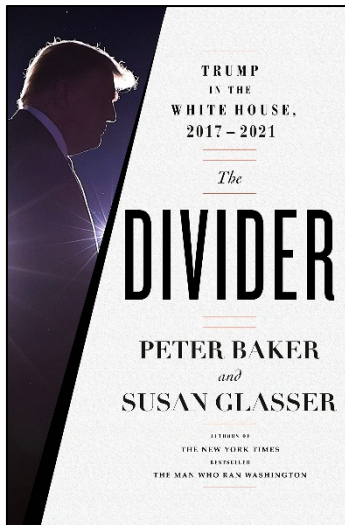
	Batters	Roster	Pts
1.	Sean Murphy	Tigers	52.6
2.	Austin Hays	Wahoos	51.0
3.	Brent Rooker	Tigers	49.5
4.	Jarred Kelenic	Tribe	48.5
5.	Max Muncy	Wahoos	48.4
6.	Francisco Lindor	Monarchs	47.3
7.	Kyle Schwarber	Wahoos	45.0
8.	Ronald Acuña Jr.	Cubs	43.0
9.	Rowdy Tellez	Wahoos	41.3
10.	Adley Rutschman	Skipjacks	41.0
11.	Jorge Mateo	Redbirds	39.7
12.	Brandon Marsh	Redbirds	39.5
13.	Cedric Mullins	Saints	38.5
14.	Jonathan India	Bears	37.8
15.	Anthony Rizzo	Bombers	37.3
16.	Alec Bohm	Senators	36.6
17.	Alex Bregman	Bums	35.8
18.	Brandon Lowe	Wahoos	35.3
19.	Pete Alonso	Bums	35.2
	Bobby Witt Jr.	Bums	35.2
21.	Trea Turner	Blues	34.8
22.	Cody Bellinger	Tribe	34.5
23.	Brandon Nimmo	Bums	34.0
24.	Wil Myers	Monarchs	33.7
25.	Ryan Mountcastle	Skipjacks	33.2

WHO'S NOT – HITTING

	Batters	Roster	Pts
1.	Triston Casas	Bears	-4.50
2.	Dylan Carlson	Tribe	-4.00
3.	Zach Neto	Bears	-3.40
4.	Jason Vosler	Tigers	-1.80
5.	José Abreu	Tigers	-1.40
	Tim Anderson	Redbirds	-1.40
7.	Josh Naylor	Monarchs	-0.20

BOOK REPORT 1: THE DIVIDER: TRUMP IN THE WHITE HOUSE, 2017—2021

By Peter Baker and Susan Glasser
Doubleday 2022



I recently finished this terrifying book authored by the husband and wife team of Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, summarizing the chaotic² reign of POTUS 46 from start to finish. I mean, *he is finished*, isn't he?

As I read through this retrospective account of Trump's White House, I can only be thankful that it did not culminate in nuclear holocaust or World War III, and that our democracy, writ large, is still intact, at least for now. There isn't much to laugh about in this review of the Stormiest³ four years endured by this country since the conclusion of the Second World War. However, I did find myself chuckling a bit at the nickname that was given to the followers and underlings of former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, who with fellow Nutjob Sidney Powell tried unsuccessfully to convince their boss to invoke martial law to confiscate the voting machines: *The Flynnstones*.

If you are one of the holdouts who still remain steadfast that the 2020 election was stolen, then you probably won't enjoy this book. But if you are of sound mind and reasoning intellect, you will want to read it before you head back to the ballot box in November 2024. In fact, it should be required for every American who wishes to exercise his or her right to vote.

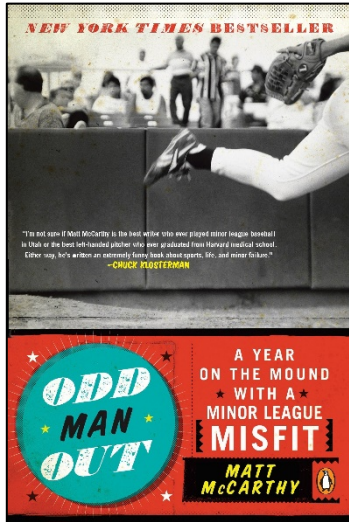
But that's just me.

Okay, maybe that was a little too political for a few of you. I realize that this is a baseball league, so let's go on to a book about baseball.

² To put it kindly and mildly.

³ No pun intended.

BOOK REPORT 2:
ODD MAN OUT:
A YEAR ON THE MOUND WITH
A MINOR LEAGUE MISFIT
By Matt McCarthy
Penguin Books 2010



Another good book worth mentioning which was gifted to me this past Christmas and finished by me is *Odd Man Out: A Year on the Mound with a Minor League Misfit*, which was written by a former minor league player to chronicle his one year in professional baseball after finishing a successful college career at Yale. McCarthy was an excellent student at Yale—majoring in molecular biophysics and biochemistry—and knew that he was probably going to go to medical school at some point in time, but after he was drafted in his senior year—although quite low—he decided he wanted to give professional baseball the old college grad try, so to speak.

After reporting to the Angels' training facility in Tempe, McCarthy was sent to play for the Angels' Rookie League team in Utah, the Provo Angels, where he was coached by a crusty old minor league lifer manager by the name of Tom Kotchman, father of future Angels regular Casey Kotchman. McCarthy wrote about how the players had the choice to live in a hotel, in a crummy shared apartment building, or be placed with a Mormon host family. Because of how little money professional players were paid at that level, he chose to live with the Mormons where he had a vehicle for his own use, terrific meals, and adoring, clean-cut beautiful Mormon children who idolized him. However, this hardly made up for the lifestyle required of a minor leaguer at this level, including such grueling bus trips as the 17-hour trek to Medicine Hat, Alberta, and shorter but still grueling bus rides to many other venues in Montana and elsewhere in the Northwest.

McCarthy was a left-handed pitcher whose fastball topped out in the low 90s and had to get by on wit and guile. He was raised in South Florida by a couple of cerebral college professors. He played on a Little League team that had six players picked in the MLB Draft. His college coach at Yale was John Stuper, a former Cardinals pitcher who won a game in the 1982 World Series. At Stuper's retirement celebration, a then little known Florida politician by the name of Ron DeSantis showed up to fete Stuper. As it turns out, DeSantis was a pretty fair baseball player for the Elis, starting in the outfield and hitting for average with decent power. As the old professor would say, "You can look it up."



In the end, McCarthy survived his season at Provo and was invited back to minor league camp the following spring where he got to pitch in a Triple A contest before being handed his walking papers. He returned to school—at Harvard, no less—and earned his medical degree, then underwent his residency training, and is now an associate professor of medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine and a staff physician at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, where he specializes in Infectious Diseases and serves on the Ethics Committee. His book is a nice read.

FROM MAGPIE, WITH LOVE

As we inch closer to a milestone Edition of *From the Bullpen*, allow me to share with you now an epic writing authored by Magpie several years ago, entitled "Secrets of Great Bullpen Writing." I recently unearthed this treasure from my tranche of paperwork at the office and laughed hysterically at the highly underrated wit and wisdom of Brother Tricko. I share it with you here:

"Secrets of Great Bullpen Writing"

By

David ("Skipper") Ernst



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Chapter 1: The first and foremost rule - "Write about yourself as much as possible".
- Chapter 2: Insult other members of the HSL, whenever possible, emphasizing personal traits such as weight, baldness, and resemblance to Arab terrorists.
- Chapter 3: Greatly exaggerate all your accomplishments (real and imagined), because they are few and otherwise void of bragging rights.
- Chapter 4: Never admit to a mistake, especially if Itchie will find out about it.
- Chapter 5: Pay no attention to the accuracy of dates, statistics, names or places - that is Big Guy's job.
- Chapter 6: Topics **"not"** to be discussed:
(a) Pettite - Gate
(b) Mickey Tettleton
(c) Mike Devereau
(d) Milwaukee Brewers - Game Time
(e) Chicago Cubs - Game Day
(f) Houston Trip Details
- Chapter 7: Always heap unfounded accolades on other HSL teams to ensure a jinx is conveyed that will guarantee a precipitous drop in the standings.
- Chapter 8: As practice for next year's Bullpen, write tedious and excruciatingly detailed Christmas newsletters.
- Chapter 9: Maintain "Onionskin" sensitivity to criticism.
- Chapter 10: Pick your own nickname and assign all other HSL members with nicknames that would embarrass Spanky and his gang.
- Chapter 11: When deadlines loom and material is sparse, cut and paste Possum's jibber jabber into Bullpen format and change "Wahoo's" to "Senators" where appropriate.
- Chapter 12: Take full credit for 17 years of Linda's brilliant ghost writing efforts by holding threat of employment termination over her head.

Hope you enjoy. This edition now put to bed, I am headed off to Dublin for ten days in the Emerald Isle. Have a great week of baseball, family and life, amigos.

Skipper