

FROM THE BULLPEN

Official Newsletter of the

NEBRASKA HOT STOVE LEAGUE

2023: Our 39th Season

Edition No. 14



June 1, 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

AMERICAN TOBACCO CO. AND STANDARD OIL STILL 1-2

Gentlemen:

I previously circulated the Week 9 standings and the season and weekly individual point totals on Tuesday, but I nonetheless include same again hereinbelow, without further commentary:

HSL STANDINGS THRU WEEK 9 ENDING MAY 28, 2023

	Team	Points	Pts Back
1	Wahoos	4388.5	-
2	Saints	4267.7	120.8
3	Skipjacks	3926.5	462.0
4	Bums	3866.0	522.5
5	Bombers	3853.1	535.4
6	Cubs	3849.8	538.7
7	Redbirds	3763.3	625.2
8	Tigers	3759.1	629.4
9	Bears	3712.6	675.9
10	Monarchs	3655.4	733.1
11	Blues	3620.4	768.1
12	Senators	3559.1	829.4
13	Tribe	3230.6	1157.9

POINT TOTALS FOR WEEK 9

	Team	Pts
1	Bears	609.8
2	Wahoos	561.6
3	Senators	521.3
4	Tigers	514.4
5	Bums	499.4



6	Blues	461.7
7	Redbirds	455.0
8	Saints	443.6
9	Skipjacks	443.3
10	Cubs	428.4
11	Bombers	427.5
12	Tribe	426.5
13	Monarchs	409.4

TOP 25 PITCHERS

	Pitchers	Roster	Pts
1.	Shane McClanahan	Blues	277.0
2.	Mitch Keller	Saints	265.0
3.	Shohei Ohtani	Redbirds	263.0
	Spencer Strider	Tigers	263.0
5.	Joe Ryan	Tribe	261.0
	Gerrit Cole	Bombers	261.0
7.	Framber Valdez	Wahoos	256.0
8.	Nathan Eovaldi	Wahoos	249.0
9.	Zac Gallen	Bears	239.0
10.	Cristian Javier	Tribe	236.0
11.	Logan Webb	Tribe	234.0
	Kevin Gausman	Bombers	234.0
13.	Eduardo Rodriguez	Senators	230.0
14.	Justin Steele	Monarchs	227.0
	Luis Castillo	Blues	227.0
16.	Merrill Kelly	Tigers	224.0
17.	Clayton Kershaw	Cubs	214.0
18.	Marcus Stroman	Tigers	209.0
19.	Logan Gilbert	Bums	206.0
20.	Shane Bieber	Skipjacks	205.0
21.	Zack Wheeler	Cubs	202.0
	Pablo López	Saints	202.0
23.	Sonny Gray	Bombers	201.0
24.	Bryce Elder	Redbirds	199.0
25.	Zach Eflin	Redbirds	197.0

WHO'S HOT – PITCHING

	Pitchers	Roster	Pts
1.	Luis Castillo	Blues	71.0
2.	Zack Wheeler	Cubs	53.0

3.	Spencer Strider	Tigers	51.0
	José Berríos	Senators	51.0
5.	Cristian Javier	Tribe	46.0
6.	Michael Kopech	Tigers	40.0
	Hunter Greene	Bears	40.0
	Marco Gonzales	Redbirds	40.0
9.	Logan Webb	Tribe	38.0
10.	MacKenzie Gore	Skipjacks	37.0
	Luis Ortiz	Bears	37.0
12.	Logan Gilbert	Bums	36.0
	Nathan Eovaldi	Wahoos	36.0
14.	Jon Gray	Wahoos	35.0
	Shane McClanahan	Blues	35.0
	Hunter Brown	Wahoos	35.0
17.	Bryce Miller	Saints	34.0
	Griffin Canning	Bears	34.0
	Max Scherzer	Senators	34.0
	Merrill Kelly	Tigers	34.0
	Miles Mikolas	Redbirds	34.0
22.	Michael Lorenzen	Bums	33.0
23.	Kyle Gibson	Monarchs	31.0
24.	Sean Manaea	Senators	30.5
25.	Andrew Heaney	Bears	30.0

WHO'S NOT – PITCHING

	Pitchers	Roster	Pts
1.	Gavin Stone	Saints	-18.00
2.	Freddy Peralta	Cubs	-14.00
3.	Tylor Megill	Monarchs	-9.00
4.	Lucas Giolito	Senators	-8.00
	Justin Steele	Monarchs	-8.00
	George Kirby	Blues	-8.00
7.	Cal Quantrill	Redbirds	-7.00
8.	James Paxton	Wahoos	-5.00
9.	Alek Manoah	Skipjacks	-4.00
10.	Justin Verlander	Tigers	-3.00
11.	Noah Syndergaard	Skipjacks	-2.00
	Yusei Kikuchi	Redbirds	-2.00
	Nick Martinez	Bombers	-2.00

TOP 25 HITTERS

	Batters	Roster	Pts
1.	Ronald Acuña Jr.	Cubs	272.1
2.	Freddie Freeman	Skipjacks	261.9
3.	Marcus Semien	Cubs	246.1
4.	Pete Alonso	Bums	242.3
5.	Bo Bichette	Bears	235.6
6.	Matt Olson	Wahoos	235.5
7.	Randy Arozarena	Saints	233.2
8.	Yordan Alvarez	Redbirds	232.6
9.	Paul Goldschmidt	Cubs	230.3
10.	Wander Franco	Blues	224.6
11.	Yandy Díaz	Bums	224.2
12.	Aaron Judge	Wahoos	221.0
13.	Juan Soto	Saints	213.3
14.	Adolis García	Skipjacks	211.8
15.	Mookie Betts	Bombers	206.9
16.	Jonathan India	Bears	206.1
17.	Anthony Rizzo	Bombers	204.6
18.	Nolan Gorman	Saints	203.1
19.	Jorge Soler	Bombers	202.5
20.	Cedric Mullins	Saints	200.1
21.	Mike Trout	Senators	199.2
22.	Max Muncy	Wahoos	198.8
23.	Sean Murphy	Tigers	197.8
24.	Shohei Ohtani	Skipjacks	195.9
25.	Josh Jung	Bears	195.4

WHO'S HOT – HITTING

	Batters	Roster	Pts
1.	Matt McLain	Tribe	56.8
2.	Michael Conforto	Skipjacks	50.6
3.	J.D. Martinez	Skipjacks	50.0
4.	Ryan McMahon	Wahoos	49.5
5.	Wander Franco	Blues	48.2
6.	Bo Bichette	Bears	47.6
7.	Julio Rodriguez	Bears	47.5
	Jorge Soler	Bombers	47.5
9.	Spencer Steer	Bears	47.4
10.	Pete Alonso	Bums	45.1
11.	Yordan Alvarez	Redbirds	45.0
12.	Josh Jung	Bears	44.5

13.	Zach McKinstry	Monarchs	44.1
14.	Austin Riley	Saints	43.1
15.	Riley Greene	Bears	41.5
16.	Juan Soto	Saints	41.1
17.	Freddie Freeman	Skipjacks	40.5
18.	Ty France	Saints	39.6
19.	Elias Díaz	Saints	38.9
20.	Brandon Nimmo	Bums	38.5
21.	Jonathan India	Bears	37.8
22.	Francisco Álvarez	Bums	37.6
	George Springer	Tigers	37.6
24.	Bryan Reynolds	Monarchs	37.5
	Marcell Ozuna	Tribe	37.5

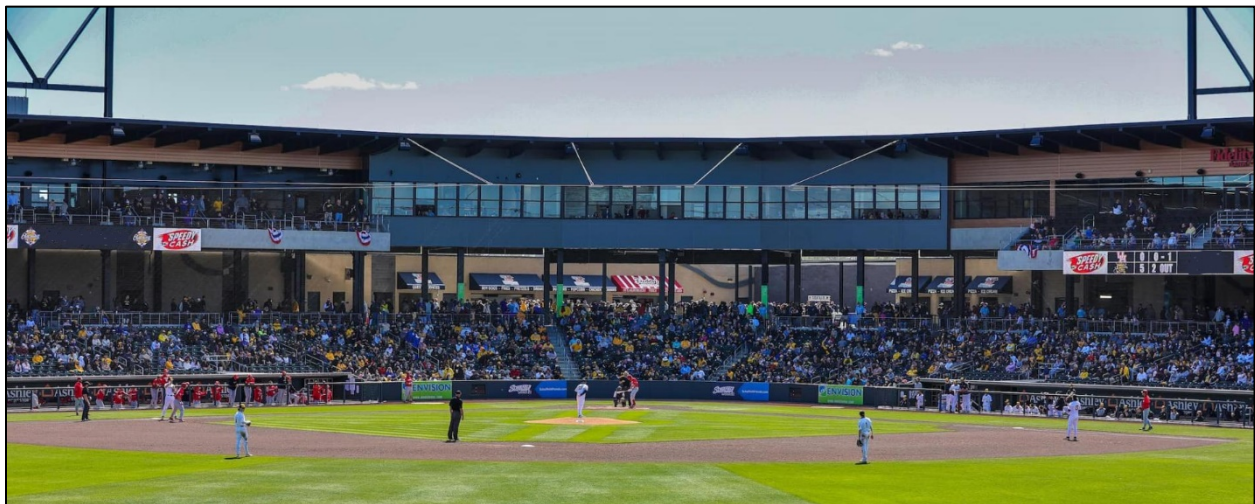
WHO'S NOT – HITTING

	Batters	Roster	Pts
1.	Jarren Duran	Bears	-4.5
2.	James Outman	Skipjacks	-4.0
3.	Willson Contreras	Bombers	-3.8
4.	Jesús Aguilar	Bombers	-3.0
5.	Rafael Devers	Monarchs	-2.8
6.	Kyle Farmer	Monarchs	-2.3
7.	Dominic Fletcher	Tribe	-2.0
8.	Ezequiel Duran	Skipjacks	-1.5
	Jake Fraley	Bears	-1.5
10.	Christian Vázquez	Tigers	-0.8

A VISIT TO WICHITA
AND RIVERFRONT STADIUM

Yesterday I took a self-guided road trip to Wichita to catch up with my Kansan cousin Steve Ernst—whom I had not seen for some 33 years—and to take in a Wichita Wind Surge (AA Texas League) baseball game against the Tulsa Drillers in their sparkling new \$75 million dollar Riverfront Stadium. On a beautiful late spring night, with the temperature cooling down from about 90 at game time to the high 70s with a breeze after the sun went down, we saw the hometown Wind Surge put a cap on any hopes of a gusher on the part of the Drillers with a six-run third inning outburst, featuring a mammoth grand slam blast by Yunior Severino, to blow the Wind Surge past the Tulsa Nine by a score of 7-2.

My take on Riverfront Stadium? It's about what you should expect from a \$75 million dollar investment, with lots of commercial development around the ballpark site under way or promised for the future. Here are a couple of pictures from the ballpark:



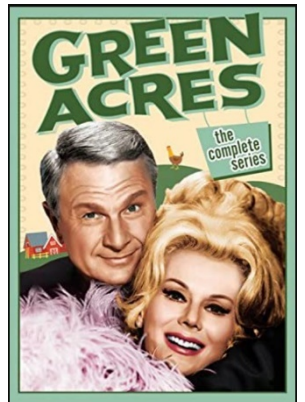
It was also good to see and catch up with my cousin Steve after half of my lifetime since our last encounter, and we made a pact to get together in '56 to celebrate my Centennial.

NOT HERE, NOR THERE:
IN PRAISE OF *GREEN ACRES*



This past Sabbath I started my day in just about the best way imaginable. No, not with Itchie at the Foot of the Cross, but downstairs on my elliptical watching early episodes of *Hazel* and *Green Acres*. That Shirley Booth, she was a real *doozie*, but then she had to be to keep the irascible Mr. B. (Baxter) on his toes.

And as for *Green Acres*, I'm not sure if I saw the first two episodes way back then (September 15 and September 22, 1965) when it first aired and they laid out the full story of how Oliver Wendell Douglas went from Manhattan bigshot lawyer to Hooterville farmer, but there's a great line when the Douglasses are in Sam Drucker's drugstore and meeting Mr. Drucker and Floyd Smoot and Fred and Arnold Ziffel for the first time. After learning that Oliver had purchased the unproductive Haney farm—replete with the dilapidated farmhouse for which nobody in his right mind would have paid good money—Sam Drucker asks Oliver if he had any previous experience in farming. After Oliver discounts his actual farming experience, wife Lisa reproves him for being too modest and says, "Oliver had the biggest *squash* in all of Manhattan," which line was clearly not written for the youngsters such as myself at that time. Beautiful.



There is another great scene in which Eddie Albert introduces himself to Uncle Joe Carson and others at Sam Drucker's store by extending his right hand and saying, "Douglas. Oliver Wendell Douglas." In response, Uncle Joe comments about how odd it was for him to have four different names (Douglas Oliver Wendell Douglas) as well as having the same first and last name. It is nearly impossible to quantify in words the amount of exasperation expressed by Mr. Douglas.

Now that I've figured out which network and which stations they are on, you can all count on more highlights from these two classic sitcoms from our youth.

NIXONLAND REVISITED

It wasn't until I was almost done with *Nixonland* that I realized that the television series called *White House Plumbers* was scripted from this very book. It was completely coincidental that I read this book and practically simultaneously watched the three episodes of the *WHP*

series. The multiple occurrences of dirty trickery by Nixon's henchmen are now underscored and reinforced in my mind from the combination of the two.



To provide some historical perspective, Nixon was serving his first term in office and getting crucified for the United States' continued involvement in the Vietnam War. He became obsessed with the onerous task of getting reelected in the 1972 presidential election. The aptly-named Committee for the Reelection of the President (acronym CREEP) was created to explore and implement "the dark arts" a/k/a "dirty tricks" for the benefit of Nixon's reelection campaign, primarily to spy on opponents and foment damage and chaos in the opposing camps. In addition to former CIA agent E. Howard Hunt (who allegedly had been in charge of the *Bay of Pigs* debacle in Cuba) and attorney G. Gordon Liddy, other members of the "Ratf***ers" (as they called themselves) included POTUS 46 loyalist, friend and pardonee Roger Stone¹ and now so-called respected Republican strategist Karl Rove. *Nixonland* details how POTUS 37 himself pushed on his chief oval office lieutenants, H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, to suggest specific opponent attacks and dirty tricks. I found it fascinating that during the Democratic nomination pre-season, Nixon wanted his henchmen to focus their efforts on Hubert Humphrey and George Wallace (now running as a Democrat and no longer an Independent) and others, but to keep their mitts off of George McGovern of South Dakota, because Nixon viewed him as the least formidable opponent to face in a general election.

If you have any interest in that kind of thing, I encourage you to watch the *White House Plumbers* three-part series. Woody Harrelson is terrific in the role of E. Howard Hunt, and the dude that plays G. Gordon Liddy is also excellent. The series focuses primarily on the efforts of Hunt and Liddy to obtain dirt on Daniel Ellsberg, the primary leaker of *The Pentagon Papers* to



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Who many of you may know has a disturbing permanent tattoo of Tricky Dick on his back.

the press, which were an embarrassment to anyone who had a hand in the Vietnam debacle, dating back to Truman, Eisenhower and JFK but potentially spilling over to Nixon. As chronicled in the book and the series, the *White House Plumbers* were comedically inept, and it was their final failed attempt and the Nixon administration's attempted coverup of same which led to our nation's only presidential resignation.



That's it for this issue. Have a great weekend, *mi amigos*.

Skipper