

# FROM THE BULLPEN

Official Newsletter of the

## NEBRASKA HOT STOVE LEAGUE

2023: Our 39th Season

Edition No. 21



Augusts 3, 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

Gentlemen:

This edition of *From the Bullpen* comes to you exactly 71 years to the day that Jack and Phyllis Ernst got hitched back in 1952 on a sweltering day in Topeka, Kansas. And the rest, as they say, is history.



So with that nod to Mom and Dad, we provide you now with the Hot Stove League standings through 18 weeks of competition, including games of Sunday, July 30, 2023, which boringly still found the **Saints** in 1st and the **Wahoos** in 2nd, with only 8.5 points separating them. Much more exciting, and I'm sure you'll agree, are the point totals for Week 18 itself, which found the **Tribe** leading the pack with 567.6 points, the **Senators** closely behind with 545.7 points, and the **Bums** with the third highest total for the week with 528.8 points. Below are the point totals for Week 18 from top to bottom.

### STANDINGS FOR WEEK 18

|   | Team      | Points | Pts Back |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|
| 1 | Saints    | 8470.1 | -        |
| 2 | Wahoos    | 8461.6 | 8.5      |
| 3 | Bums      | 8195.7 | 274.4    |
| 4 | Skipjacks | 7748.7 | 721.4    |



|    |          |        |        |
|----|----------|--------|--------|
| 5  | Cubs     | 7701.4 | 768.7  |
| 6  | Monarchs | 7662.4 | 807.7  |
| 7  | Bears    | 7485.9 | 984.2  |
| 8  | Bombers  | 7429.0 | 1041.1 |
| 9  | Tribe    | 7269.6 | 1200.5 |
| 10 | Blues    | 7244.5 | 1225.6 |
| 11 | Senators | 7180.8 | 1289.3 |
| 12 | Tigers   | 7123.4 | 1346.7 |
| 13 | Redbirds | 6750.7 | 1719.4 |

### POINT TOTALS FOR WEEK 18

|    | Team      | Pts   |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 1  | Tribe     | 567.6 |
| 2  | Senators  | 545.7 |
| 3  | Bums      | 528.8 |
| 4  | Cubs      | 441.4 |
| 5  | Wahoos    | 438.9 |
| 6  | Saints    | 434.5 |
| 7  | Blues     | 429.4 |
| 8  | Bears     | 426.4 |
| 9  | Redbirds  | 417.7 |
| 10 | Monarchs  | 385.5 |
| 11 | Tigers    | 336.2 |
| 12 | Bombers   | 332.7 |
| 13 | Skipjacks | 319.3 |

Provided below are the individual leaderboards for hitting and pitching for the week and for the year, and the usual "Who's Hot" lists.

### TOP 25 PITCHERS

|     | Pitchers        | Roster    | Pts   |
|-----|-----------------|-----------|-------|
| 1.  | Gerrit Cole     | Bombers   | 503.0 |
| 2.  | Spencer Strider | Tigers    | 483.0 |
| 3.  | Kevin Gausman   | Bombers   | 462.0 |
| 4.  | Zac Gallen      | Bears     | 449.0 |
| 5.  | Luis Castillo   | Blues     | 436.0 |
| 6.  | Logan Webb      | Tribe     | 431.0 |
| 7.  | Nathan Eovaldi  | Wahoos    | 429.0 |
| 8.  | Shohei Ohtani   | Redbirds  | 423.0 |
| 9.  | Corbin Burnes   | Senators  | 420.0 |
| 10. | Zack Wheeler    | Cubs      | 409.0 |
|     | Jesús Luzardo   | Saints    | 409.0 |
| 12. | Shane Bieber    | Blues     | 408.0 |
| 13. | Blake Snell     | Skipjacks | 407.0 |
| 14. | Joe Ryan        | Tribe     | 397.0 |
| 15. | Framber Valdez  | Wahoos    | 396.0 |

|     |                |          |       |
|-----|----------------|----------|-------|
| 16. | Mitch Keller   | Saints   | 391.0 |
| 17. | Justin Steele  | Monarchs | 390.0 |
| 18. | Zach Eflin     | Redbirds | 389.0 |
|     | George Kirby   | Blues    | 389.0 |
| 20. | Pablo López    | Saints   | 388.0 |
| 21. | Logan Gilbert  | Bums     | 385.0 |
| 22. | Marcus Stroman | Tigers   | 383.0 |
|     | José Berríos   | Senators | 383.0 |
| 24. | Chris Bassitt  | Senators | 380.0 |
|     | Aaron Nola     | Tigers   | 380.0 |

### WHO'S HOT – PITCHING

|     | Pitchers           | Roster    | Pts  |
|-----|--------------------|-----------|------|
| 1.  | Aaron Civale       | Tribe     | 63.0 |
| 2.  | Luis Castillo      | Blues     | 62.0 |
| 3.  | Ryan Yarbrough     | Blues     | 54.0 |
|     | Steven Matz        | Tribe     | 54.0 |
| 5.  | Justin Verlander   | Tigers    | 52.0 |
| 6.  | Blake Snell        | Skipjacks | 49.0 |
| 7.  | Cristopher Sánchez | Senators  | 46.0 |
| 8.  | Shohei Ohtani      | Redbirds  | 44.0 |
| 9.  | Graham Ashcraft    | Tribe     | 41.0 |
| 10. | Sandy Alcantara    | Bums      | 39.0 |
| 11. | Zack Wheeler       | Cubs      | 38.0 |
| 12. | Kyle Hendricks     | Monarchs  | 36.0 |
|     | Tarik Skubal       | Saints    | 36.0 |
|     | Tyler Glasnow      | Bears     | 36.0 |
| 15. | Freddy Peralta     | Cubs      | 34.0 |
|     | Kenta Maeda        | Senators  | 34.0 |
| 17. | Andrew Abbott      | Tribe     | 32.0 |
| 18. | Max Scherzer       | Senators  | 31.0 |
|     | Bryce Elder        | Redbirds  | 31.0 |
| 20. | Alex Cobb          | Cubs      | 30.0 |
|     | Dean Kremer        | Cubs      | 30.0 |
|     | Joe Musgrove       | Saints    | 30.0 |
|     | Kevin Gausman      | Bombers   | 30.0 |
|     | Gerrit Cole        | Bombers   | 30.0 |
| 25. | J.P. France        | Bums      | 29.0 |

### WHO'S NOT – PITCHING

|    | Pitchers       | Roster    | Pts   |
|----|----------------|-----------|-------|
| 1. | Framber Valdez | Wahoos    | -12.0 |
|    | Julio Teheran  | Tribe     | -12.0 |
| 3. | Adrian Houser  | Skipjacks | -9.0  |
|    | Charlie Morton | Wahoos    | -9.0  |
|    | Marcus Stroman | Tigers    | -9.0  |

|     |                |           |      |
|-----|----------------|-----------|------|
| 6.  | Alec Marsh     | Blues     | -8.0 |
|     | Bailey Ober    | Skipjacks | -8.0 |
|     | Edward Cabrera | Skipjacks | -8.0 |
| 9.  | Aaron Nola     | Tigers    | -6.0 |
| 10. | Taj Bradley    | Bears     | -5.0 |
|     | Tyler Wells    | Skipjacks | -5.0 |
|     | Zach Eflin     | Redbirds  | -5.0 |
| 13. | Kyle Freeland  | Bombers   | -4.0 |
|     | Matt Manning   | Bears     | -4.0 |
|     | Martín Pérez   | Tigers    | -4.0 |
| 16. | Lance Lynn     | Bombers   | -2.0 |
|     | Tony Gonsolin  | Blues     | -2.0 |
| 18. | Miles Mikolas  | Redbirds  | -1.0 |
|     | Michael Kopech | Tigers    | -1.0 |
|     | Joe Ryan       | Tribe     | -1.0 |

### TOP 25 HITTERS

|     | <b>Batters</b>   | <b>Roster</b> | <b>Pts</b> |
|-----|------------------|---------------|------------|
| 1.  | Shohei Ohtani    | Skipjacks     | 561.3      |
| 2.  | Ronald Acuña Jr. | Cubs          | 548.2      |
| 3.  | Freddie Freeman  | Skipjacks     | 526.3      |
| 4.  | Matt Olson       | Wahoos        | 485.0      |
| 5.  | Mookie Betts     | Bombers       | 474.5      |
| 6.  | Juan Soto        | Saints        | 435.7      |
| 7.  | Corbin Carroll   | Bears         | 425.3      |
| 8.  | Marcus Semien    | Cubs          | 422.4      |
| 9.  | Ketel Marte      | Saints        | 419.8      |
| 10. | José Ramírez     | Tribe         | 415.9      |
| 11. | Kyle Tucker      | Monarchs      | 413.6      |
| 12. | Adolis García    | Skipjacks     | 410.1      |
| 13. | Christian Yelich | Tigers        | 406.5      |
| 14. | Austin Riley     | Saints        | 403.1      |
| 15. | Ozzie Albies     | Senators      | 402.0      |
| 16. | Luis Robert Jr.  | Blues         | 399.9      |
| 17. | Nathaniel Lowe   | Bums          | 397.3      |
| 18. | Francisco Lindor | Monarchs      | 395.2      |
| 19. | Paul Goldschmidt | Cubs          | 392.9      |
| 20. | Christian Walker | Redbirds      | 385.5      |
| 21. | Bo Bichette      | Bears         | 383.6      |
| 22. | Justin Turner    | Tigers        | 382.8      |
| 23. | Alex Bregman     | Bums          | 377.1      |
| 24. | Nolan Arenado    | Bombers       | 377.0      |
| 25. | Rafael Devers    | Monarchs      | 376.3      |

## WHO'S HOT – HITTING

|     | <b>Batters</b>    | <b>Roster</b> | <b>Pts</b> |
|-----|-------------------|---------------|------------|
| 1.  | Lars Nootbaar     | Bums          | 46.5       |
| 2.  | Bobby Witt Jr.    | Bums          | 45.4       |
| 3.  | Pete Alonso       | Bums          | 44.1       |
| 4.  | Whit Merrifield   | Senators      | 43.0       |
| 5.  | Ha-Seong Kim      | Wahoos        | 42.2       |
| 6.  | Marcell Ozuna     | Tribe         | 42.0       |
| 7.  | Brandon Lowe      | Wahoos        | 41.9       |
| 8.  | José Ramírez      | Tribe         | 40.7       |
|     | Francisco Lindor  | Monarchs      | 40.7       |
| 10. | Hunter Renfroe    | Wahoos        | 39.5       |
| 11. | Julio Rodríguez   | Bears         | 39.0       |
| 12. | Carlos Santana    | Senators      | 37.9       |
| 13. | Shohei Ohtani     | Skipjacks     | 37.5       |
| 14. | Bo Bichette       | Bears         | 37.3       |
| 15. | Gary Sánchez      | Saints        | 37.1       |
| 16. | Chas McCormick    | Bums          | 36.5       |
| 17. | Ronald Acuña Jr.  | Cubs          | 36.0       |
| 18. | Jake Burger       | Senators      | 35.6       |
| 19. | Jeimer Candelario | Tigers        | 35.3       |
| 20. | Matt Olson        | Wahoos        | 34.1       |
| 21. | J.P. Crawford     | Bears         | 33.7       |
| 22. | Christopher Morel | Tribe         | 33.6       |
| 23. | Alex Bregman      | Bums          | 33.0       |
| 24. | Nathaniel Lowe    | Bums          | 32.8       |
| 25. | Ian Happ          | Redbirds      | 32.5       |

## WHO'S NOT – HITTING

|    | <b>Batters</b>               | <b>Roster</b> | <b>Pts</b> |
|----|------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| 1. | George Springer              | Tigers        | -8.0       |
| 2. | Henry Davis                  | Monarchs      | -3.8       |
| 3. | Trea Turner                  | Blues         | -3.7       |
| 4. | Lourdes Gurriel Jr.          | Saints        | -2.5       |
| 5. | Owen Miller                  | Tigers        | -1.8       |
| 6. | Christian Encarnacion-Strand | Monarchs      | -1.4       |
|    | Nick Pratto                  | Cubs          | -1.4       |
| 8. | Anthony Rizzo                | Bombers       | -1.0       |
| 9. | Willy Adames                 | Cubs          | -0.8       |

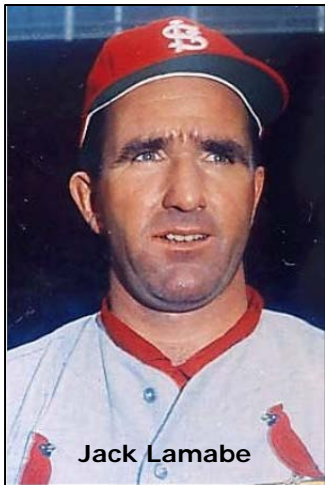
### III. IN PRAISE OF SHERMAN FIELD AND THE LINCOLN CHIEFS

In our last edition, we referenced the only baseball park in Lincoln of which I am aware of that ever hosted a professional baseball game prior to Haymarket Park, that being Sherman Field, erstwhile home of the Lincoln Chiefs. According to my meticulous internet research, Sherman Field was built in 1946-47 and was named after Cy Sherman, a longtime Lincoln sports-writer and official in the old Western League. The Lincoln Chiefs, a farm club of the Pittsburgh Pirates, called Sherman Field home from 1953 to 1961. Perhaps the most well-known major league

baseball player to spend time at Sherman Field was Dick "Dr. Strangelove" Stuart, who went on to hit 228 homeruns in the majors, but was not exactly the most adept at fielding his position (1st base), to be kind.



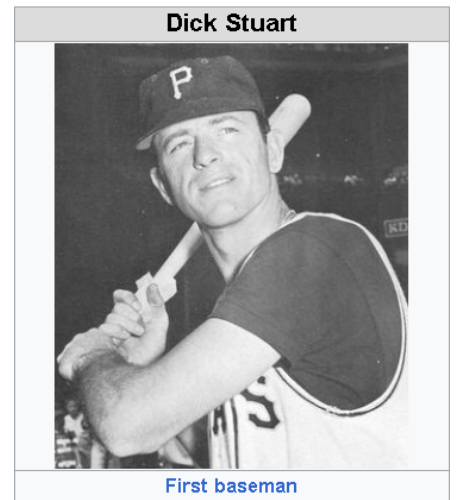
Charles Sumner "Cy" Sherman with Glenn Presnell, c.1943



Jack Lamabe

Another future major leaguer who spent some time at Sherman Field was Jack "Tomatoes" Lamabe who was mentioned a number of times in the book I reported on last week (*Welcome to the Circus of Baseball: A Story of the Perfect Summer, at the Perfect Ballpark, at the Perfect Time*) because he was the pitching

coach for the Asheville Tourists in 1994 when the author interned for that minor league club. It was said that Lamabe helped Bob Gibson win the World Series MVP in 1967 by getting shellacked in a relief role in Game 6 against the Red Sox and giving Gibson the opportunity to start again and win Game 7.



Dick Stuart

First baseman

## St. Louis Cardinals [Share & Export](#) [Glossary](#)

| Pitching                              | IP       | H         | R        | ER       | BB       | SO       | HR       | ERA         | BF        | GSc       | IR       | IS       | WPA           | aLI         | cWPA           | acLI         | RE24        |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| <a href="#">Dick Hughes</a>           | 3.2      | 5         | 4        | 4        | 0        | 2        | 4        | 5.00        | 16        | 37        |          |          | -0.337        | 0.71        | -17.02%        | 63.02        | -2.3        |
| <a href="#">Ron Willis</a>            | 0.1      | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 27.00       | 1         |           | 0        | 0        | 0.007         | 0.27        | 0.33%          | 24.12        | 0.1         |
| <a href="#">Nelson Briles</a>         | 2        | 0         | 0        | 0        | 1        | 0        | 0        | 1.64        | 8         |           | 0        | 0        | 0.053         | 0.61        | 2.65%          | 54.48        | 0.9         |
| <a href="#">Jack Lamabe</a> , L (0-1) | 0.1      | 2         | 2        | 2        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 6.75        | 3         |           | 0        | 0        | -0.266        | 1.54        | -13.25%        | 137.85       | -1.5        |
| <a href="#">Joe Hoerner</a>           | 0        | 2         | 2        | 2        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 40.50       | 2         |           | 1        | 1        | -0.079        | 0.89        | -3.94%         | 79.50        | -1.2        |
| <a href="#">Larry Jaster</a>          | 0.1      | 2         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0.00        | 3         |           | 2        | 2        | -0.048        | 0.42        | -2.39%         | 37.81        | -1.4        |
| <a href="#">Ray Washburn</a>          | 0.1      | 0         | 0        | 0        | 1        | 0        | 0        | 0.00        | 2         |           | 2        | 0        | 0.006         | 0.24        | 0.28%          | 21.89        | 0.6         |
| <a href="#">Hal Woodeshick</a>        | 1        | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0.00        | 4         |           | 0        | 0        | 0.002         | 0.03        | 0.11%          | 2.68         | 0.4         |
| <b>Team Totals</b>                    | <b>8</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>9.00</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>37</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>-0.662</b> | <b>0.63</b> | <b>-33.23%</b> | <b>56.64</b> | <b>-4.4</b> |

Joe Hoerner faced 2 batters in the 7th inning.



I don't honestly remember how many games I played at Sherman Field as a Lincoln Northeast Rocket, but it was at least a few, either in right field or behind the plate, or both, as Coach Stubby Seng tried desperately to find a spot where I would do the least damage defensively. But that is the only thing that I had in common with Dr. Strangelove, as I never even threatened to deposit a Yard Ball over the fence in the to-my-memory unfriendly confines of Sherman Field. I was able to unearth the following box scores from a few years ago while looking through old sports pages at the Bennett Morton Library in downtown Lincoln, while looking to preserve a little bit of posterity for my baseball-playing offspring. I think at least one if not both of these games happened at Sherman Field.

he notched his second win of the season. East is now 2-0 while Northeast fell to 0-2.

| LNE (2)    |    |   |    | EAST (6) |             |    |    |   |
|------------|----|---|----|----------|-------------|----|----|---|
| ab         | r  | h | bi | ab       | r           | h  | bi |   |
| Neill, 3b  | 4  | 1 | 2  | 0        | Voss, 2b    | 4  | 0  | 0 |
| Viva, c    | 3  | 0 | 0  | 0        | Smith, cf   | 4  | 1  | 1 |
| Vrcino, lf | 2  | 0 | 0  | 0        | Schmidt, cf | 0  | 0  | 0 |
| Brka, lf   | 1  | 1 | 1  | 1        | Csni, ss    | 3  | 1  | 3 |
| Reed, lb   | 3  | 0 | 0  | 0        | Ywill, c    | 3  | 0  | 2 |
| Ernst, rf  | 2  | 0 | 2  | 0        | Yitr, lb    | 3  | 0  | 0 |
| Hckmn, rf  | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0        | Hnsi, 3b    | 2  | 1  | 0 |
| Lrsn, rf   | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0        | Scott, rf   | 3  | 2  | 2 |
| McKny, cf  | 3  | 0 | 1  | 0        | Mign, lf    | 3  | 0  | 1 |
| Lwrnc, ss  | 2  | 0 | 0  | 0        | Bshp, p     | 2  | 1  | 2 |
| Srlc, ss   | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0        | Mrind, ph   | 1  | 0  | 0 |
| Klfkkn, 2b | 3  | 0 | 1  | 0        | Totals      | 28 | 6  | 9 |
| Mhlmn, p   | 1  | 0 | 0  | 0        |             |    |    |   |
| Rnhrt, ph  | 1  | 0 | 0  | 0        |             |    |    |   |
| Shltn, p   | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0        |             |    |    |   |
| Gades, ph  | 1  | 0 | 0  | 0        |             |    |    |   |
| Totals     | 26 | 2 | 7  | 1        |             |    |    |   |

IP H R ER BB SO  
 LNE ..... 000 002 0-2.7 2  
 East ..... 041 100 x-6 9 1  
 E -- Neill, Berka, Bishop: DP -- East  
 1; LOB -- LNE 5, East 3; 2B -- Yowell,  
 Bishop; 3B -- Scott; SB -- Neill; S --  
 Volava.

IP H R ER BB SO  
 Mahlman L (0-1) . 4 8 6 6 1 3  
 Shelton ..... 2 1 0 0 0 1  
 Bishop W (2-0) . 7 7 2 1 2 4  
 WP -- Mahlman.

**RESERVES**

by **Northeast 4, LHS 2**

| Lincoln High (2) |    |   |    | Northeast (4) |            |    |    |   |
|------------------|----|---|----|---------------|------------|----|----|---|
| ab               | r  | h | bi | ab            | r          | h  | bi |   |
| Sigs, rf         | 4  | 0 | 1  | 2             | Stnr, 3b   | 4  | 1  | 0 |
| Fen, ss          | 3  | 0 | 0  | 0             | Vtva, c    | 3  | 0  | 1 |
| Hart, cf         | 3  | 0 | 0  | 0             | Reed, lb   | 3  | 1  | 2 |
| Ewrth, lb        | 2  | 0 | 1  | 0             | McKny, cf  | 2  | 0  | 0 |
| Glenn, 2b        | 1  | 0 | 0  | 0             | Klfkkn, 2b | 1  | 0  | 0 |
| Gdwn, ss         | 2  | 0 | 0  | 0             | Brka, lf   | 3  | 1  | 0 |
| Mtzgr, p         | 2  | 1 | 1  | 0             | Lwrnc, ss  | 3  | 1  | 0 |
| Hghs, pr         | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0             | Ernst, rf  | 3  | 0  | 1 |
| Wrstr, c         | 2  | 1 | 0  | 0             | Dietz, p   | 2  | 0  | 1 |
| Kwmta, lf        | 2  | 0 | 1  | 0             | Hckmn, pr  | 0  | 0  | 0 |
| Krgr, lf         | 1  | 0 | 0  | 0             | Totals     | 24 | 4  | 5 |
| Hckmn, 3b        | 3  | 0 | 0  | 0             |            |    |    |   |
| Totals           | 25 | 2 | 4  | 2             |            |    |    |   |

Lincoln High .020 000 0-2  
 Northeast .021 100 x-4  
 E -- Fen, Glenn, Kuwamoto; Stoner,  
 Knofkorn: DP -- LHS, Metzger-Wurster-  
 Ewrth: 1 OB -- LHS, 6. LNE 6: 2B --  
 Ernst: 3B -- Reed: SB -- Kuwamoto,  
 Stoner

IP H R ER BB SO  
 Metzger (1) . 6 5 4 4 4 2  
 Dietz (W 2-1) . 7 4 2 1 5 4  
 WP -- Metzger (2): T - 1:30; Att - 50.

I do also remember going with my dad to Sherman Field to see an exhibition game involving Eddie Feighner of *The King and His Court* fame. As I recall it, Feighner would face local teams with only three players on his team, him at pitcher, a catcher, and a roving infielder/outfielder. I don't remember the score of that game, but I'm pretty sure that they won, because they always won.

#### IV. A TALE FROM THE WELL (AND THEN AN ANVIL FELL ON HIS HEAD)

A number of years ago I defended an Omaha anesthesiologist in a medical malpractice lawsuit accusing him of being professionally negligent in providing anesthesia during a surgery, allegedly resulting in serious and permanent brain damage. The attorney for the Plaintiff (let's call him Dirty Dan) was notorious for his unethical behavior and dirty tricks, which he used to offset his remarkable lack of skill in the art of courtroom advocacy. In other words, he sucked as a trial lawyer so he tried to compensate for this by cheating whenever the opportunity

presented itself. Stories of his dishonesty and deceits are legend, and I certainly knew him by reputation prior to our case, but the aforementioned case is the only case that I ever actually tried against him in court.

To set the stage a bit, throughout the discovery process in this case opposing counsel engaged in repeated shenanigans to try to scare the defense into settling, such as the time during a deposition when one of my witnesses gave a less-than-desired answer, and Dirty Dan he grabbed his necktie and lifted it up over his head as if to signal that my witness had just “hung herself” and killed any chance that we had at a successful defense. In another example that I can remember, Dirty Dan suggested that he had a couple of “secret” witnesses who he would be bringing in to testify “in rebuttal” of our evidence, but he would never disclose their identities. In any event, it was a case with some high stakes, and my doctor client was so nervous about being in trial that on the fifth day when I walked into the courtroom to get ready for closing arguments, he was hunched over at our defense table with a Bible in his hands and was fervently paging through it for comfort.<sup>1</sup> A real confidence booster for me.

At any rate, those five days of trial were exhausting because with Dirty Dan as my opposing counsel, I had to be constantly vigilant in monitoring his behavior in the courtroom during the day while worrying each night about what stunt he might pull the following day. It’s like sitting in a den of vipers and waiting to see which one is going to strike.

As it turned out, the evidentiary portion of the trial went well for the defense, including the cross-examination of the Plaintiff, the Plaintiff’s wife and the Plaintiff’s expert witness, while Dirty Dan got almost nowhere with his cross-examination of my client and witnesses. When it came time for closing arguments, I was feeling pretty good about our prospects for a victory, but I was not at all prepared for the approach that Dirty Dan took during his closing arguments. Apparently sensitive to something that I must have said about him during our Jury Selection or in Opening Statements, Dirty Dan began talking with the jury in closing about his humble upbringing in the Sandhills of Western Nebraska, and how he never imagined that he would be a trial attorney one day and end up in front of lots of people speaking on behalf of clients.

As he continued with his pitiable closing argument, apparently Dirty Dan did not feel that he was getting the reaction from our jury that he wanted, so he confided in them that when he was a little tyke he was forced to recite some lines at a school or church Christmas gathering, which made him very nervous. He talked about how he looked out into the audience and he saw his mother out there, with her beautiful blue eyes, urging him on with his recital. And then he told our jury that he had become frozen with fear and forgot his lines.

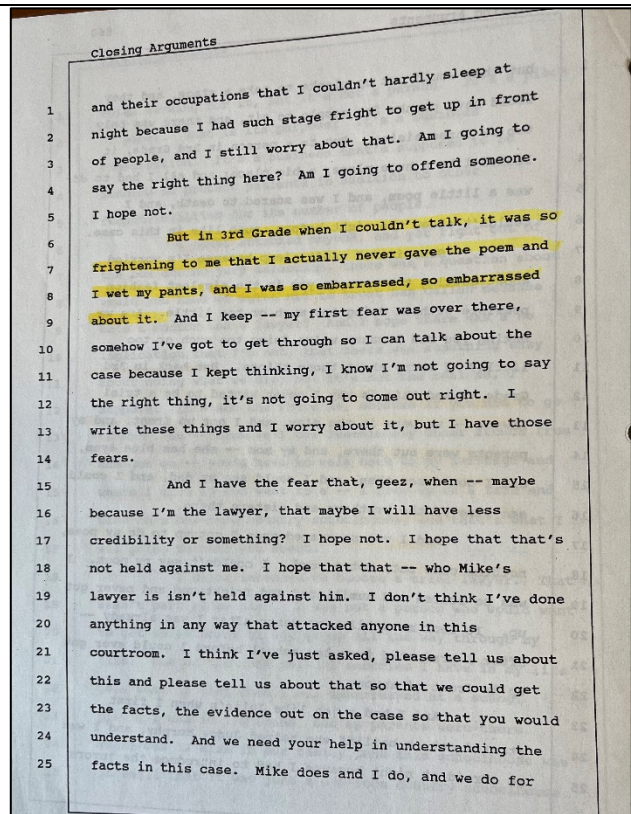
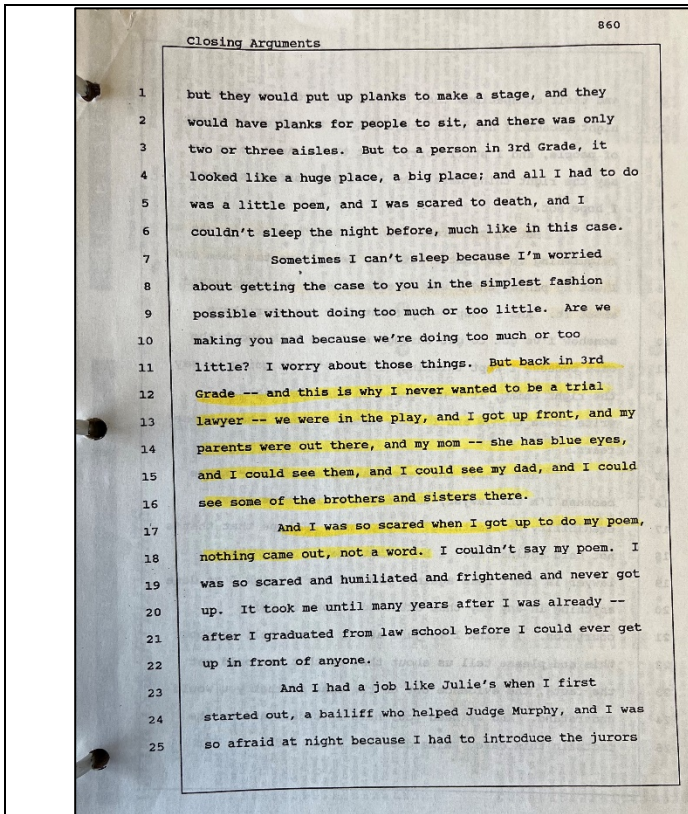
And then he told the jury, in a hushed courtroom, ***“And then I wet my pants.”***

My gaze immediately turned to the court reporter to see if I had heard what I thought I had just heard, and her look back at me confirmed that I had. Dirty Dan was so desperate to pull out a victory from the jaws of defeat that he actually told our jury that he had wet his pants at a Christmas pageant as a traumatized youth. I’ve got the transcript, and every time I re-read it, I can hardly believe my eyes.

---

<sup>1</sup> I don’t remember now what book or books he was looking at, but it was certainly possible that he was leafing through *Revelations*, so concerned was he with his fate.



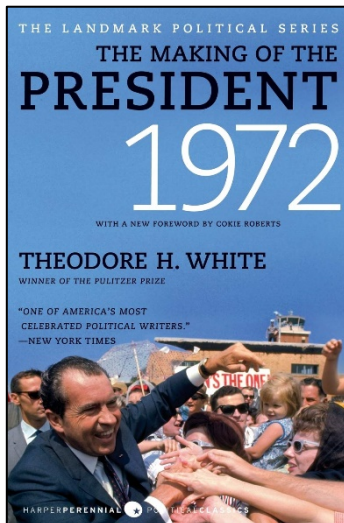


When I first recounted this little charade to Underbelly many years ago, after I dropped the Dirty Dan punchline, Robert immediately added, ***"And then an anvil fell on his head."*** The most perfect line imaginable.

In fact, every time I get together with my former partner Joe Grant to shoot the breeze, he brings up that line from Bob, and I tell him every time that the two of them need to meet at some juncture because they are both comic geniuses.

Perhaps if an anvil had fallen on Dirty Dan's head right there in the courtroom before our twelve jurors, his client would have fared better. Instead, it was a defense verdict in about 30 minutes of deliberations.<sup>2</sup> End of story.

<sup>2</sup> And then the next day, Dirty Dan was arrested for an incident of sodomy with a farm animal. Okay, not really, but there would be no other way to beat the *anvil drops on head sidesplitter*.



**BOOK REPORT:**  
***THE MAKING OF THE PRESIDENT 1972***  
by Theodore H. White  
Published by Atheneum Publishers 1973

I finally finished this book last week after picking it up almost two months ago. A great read, but so, so much detail about the political process itself, and all of this minutiae made it a bit of a slog to get through. But a fascinating read, nevertheless.

I have read a lot of books about Nixon and Watergate over the years, but this book probably describes better than most the twin psyches of Nixon the person and Nixon the politician. Born in Yorba Linda, California, to Quaker parents with very little money and with six children to feed, Nixon apparently could never win the affection or approval of his father, and instead became somewhat of a mama's boy. Somewhere along the way, he developed a facile mind and a strong sense of persecution and paranoia.

There are lots of good anecdotes to share from this book, but one of the best has to do with Nixon's opponent in the 1972 election, George McGovern of South Dakota, and his selection of Missouri Senator Thomas Eagleton to be his running mate the day after McGovern was nominated for the presidential campaign at the Democratic National Committee Meeting in Miami. So exhausted were McGovern and his top aides by the process of getting McGovern nominated over Hubert Humphrey and others, there was virtually no vetting of Eagleton whatsoever. Because of this, when McGovern named Eagleton as his running mate, he had no idea that Eagleton had been hospitalized for "mental exhaustion" on at least three occasions and had received electroshock therapy during two of these three hospitalizations.

As soon as Eagleton was named by McGovern, the long knives started coming out and all of his skeletons started tumbling out of the closet. When McGovern was initially asked about Eagleton's issues and whether he would remain on the ballot, McGovern foolishly provided the knee-jerk response that he was "one thousand percent" behind Eagleton. Ouch. Words that were impossible to take back. The author of the book, Ted White, called it perhaps the biggest "gaffe" ever made by a presidential candidate.

After Eagleton "voluntarily" removed himself as a vice-presidential candidate, McGovern was humiliated by being turned down by Ted Kennedy, Abe Ribicoff, Hubert Humphrey, Governor Reubin Askew and Ed Muskie before finally getting a "yes" from Sargent Shriver.

As you all may know, even though the Watergate burglars had already been arrested and the investigation was underway, Nixon nevertheless went on to a landslide victory over McGovern in November of '72, winning every state except Massachusetts, even McGovern's home state of South Dakota. What is fascinating to me, though, is that when Theodore White finished his book in March 1973, the Watergate scandal was still unraveling and Haldeman and Ehrlichman had both been arrested and charged, along with others, but nobody knew, or at least nobody outside Nixon's inner circle, that not only had he been aware of all this skullduggery, but he had initiated or at least suggested many of the criminal activities that occurred under the umbrella of CREEP (the acronym for the Committee to Reelect the President) of which John Mitchell, G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt were the driving forces.

Anyway, that's all I got to say on that.

Have a great weekend. Back at you next issue.

Skipper