

# FROM THE BULLPEN

Official Newsletter of the

# NEBRASKA HOT STOVE LEAGUE

2023: Our 39th Season

Edition No. 8



April 03, 2023

## OWNERS:

**Ted Bridges**  
("PAwesome")  
Wahoos  
Returning Champion

**Jeff Bechtolt**  
("Screech")  
King Billies

**Jon Blongewicz**  
("Sunny")  
Blues

**Denny Bontrager**  
("SloPay")  
Bears

**Jim Buser**  
("Tirebiter")  
Redbirds

**Rick Drews**  
("Big Guy")  
Red Ball Jets

**Dave Ernst**  
("Skipper")  
Senators

**Bob Hurlbut**  
("Underbelly")  
Tribe

**Scott Krause**  
("BT")  
Saints

**Mike Morris**  
("Mouse")  
The Huskers

**Mitch Pirnie**  
("Magpie/Tricko")  
Bums

**Chuck Sinclair**  
("Shamu")  
Cubs

**John Thielen**  
("Itchie")  
DFL

## STAFF:

Publisher and Editor  
Dave Ernst

Webmaster and  
Assistant Editor  
Linda "Chief" Koftan

## BUTTERFLIES BUMP BENGALS FROM 1ST

### COMMISH BRAVELY ENDURES 65TH BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

The **Omaha Monarchs** and their Maniacal Manager Screech ended the first (and short) week of the Hot Stove League season atop the standings. Dressed in his Palm Sunday best, Screech wielded a palm frond like a magician's wand to coax his Blessed Butterflies to 86.8 points on Sunday, rocketing past the **Tigers** like a supercharged Popemobile at the Talladega 500 and spoiling the Commish's 65th birthday by elbowing past the **Tamed Tigers**.

The overall standings after four days of play look like this:

Rank	Team	Points	Pts Back
1	Monarchs	308.3	-
2	Tigers	295.3	13.0
3	Skipjacks	275.5	32.8
4	Blues	274.2	34.1
5	Saints	269.1	39.2
6	Bums	262.0	46.3
7	Tribe	234.3	74.0
8	Bombers	233.9	74.4
9	Wahoos	232.7	75.6
10	Cubs	201.7	106.6
11	Redbirds	201.1	107.2
12	Bears	132.6	175.7
13	Senators	131.9	176.4

## LEADERBOARDS

It should quickly be evident to all why the **Monarchs** are currently in first place, as Screech has 4 of the top 15 pitchers on his roster and 2 of the top 10 and 3 out of the top 25 hitters as well. I'm not sure that anyone would have predicted that **Monarch** moundman Jeffrey Springs would be leading all pitchers after the first week with 42.0 points, but there he is, complimented by Dylan Cease with 32.0 points, Justin Steele with 29.0 points and Tyler Anderson with 29.0 points for the **Monarchs**. Similarly, I doubt that anyone thought that C.J. Cron would be the second-most prolific hitter after the first week with 36.3 points, behind the **Skipjacks'** Adam Duvall with 42.6 points. It is also notable that the second place **Tigers** have three different pitchers in the top 25 with Spencer Strider (34.0), Marcus Stroman (33.0) and Germán Márquez (27.0).

In the *Who's Not* hitting department, we can see that the **Senators** are totally dominating this list with Eduardo Escobar (-4.0), Brandon Drury (-3.8), Luke Voit (-2.0), Luis García (-1.0), and Jake Cronenworth (-1.0) all in negative territory, and joined in this dubious distinction by Chris Bassitt, who immolated himself to the tune of -20.0 for the week, and Madison Bumgarner, who hustled the **Senators** backward to the tune of -6.0. And so you can see why it is that the **Senators** are bringing up the rearguard through one week of play.

### TOP 25 PITCHERS

	<b>Pitchers</b>	<b>Roster</b>	<b>Fan Pts</b>
1.	Jeffrey Springs	Monarchs	42.0
2.	Gerrit Cole	Bombers	37.0
3.	Aaron Civale	Tribe	34.0
4.	Spencer Strider	Tigers	34.0
5.	Clayton Kershaw	Cubs	34.0
6.	Graham Ashcraft	Bums	33.0
7.	Marcus Stroman	Tigers	33.0
8.	Dylan Cease	Monarchs	32.0
9.	Shane McClellan	Blues	32.0
10.	Shohei Ohtani	Redbirds	30.0
11.	Luis Castillo	Blues	30.0
12.	Joe Ryan	Tribe	30.0
13.	Julio Urías	Saints	29.0
14.	Justin Steele	Monarchs	29.0
15.	Tyler Anderson	Monarchs	29.0
16.	Dustin May	Blues	28.0
17.	Kyle Freeland	Bombers	28.0
18.	Pablo López	Saints	27.0
19.	Germán Márquez	Tigers	27.0
20.	Brandon Woodruff	Tribe	27.0
21.	Jhony Brito	Skipjacks	26.0
22.	Max Scherzer	Senators	25.0
23.	Mike Clevinger	Tribe	25.0
24.	Noah Syndergaard	Skipjacks	25.0
25.	Jesús Luzardo	Saints	24.0

**WHO'S NOT – PITCHING**

	<b>Pitchers</b>	<b>Roster</b>	<b>Fan Pts</b>
1.	Chris Bassitt	Senators	-20.0
2.	Spencer Turnbull	Tribe	-17.0
3.	Corey Kluber	Monarchs	-8.0
4.	Cole Irvin	Monarchs	-8.0
5.	Madison Bumgarner	Senators	-6.0
6.	Chris Sale	Blues	-6.0
7.	Robbie Ray	Monarchs	-6.0
8.	Jared Shuster	Skipjacks	-6.0
9.	Alek Manoah	Skipjacks	-6.0
10.	Miles Mikolas	Redbirds	-2.0
11.	Jameson Taillon	Monarchs	-2.0
12.	Josiah Gray	Bums	-2.0

**TOP 25 HITTERS**

	<b>Batters</b>	<b>Roster Status</b>	<b>Pts</b>
1.	Adam Duvall	Skipjacks	42.6
2.	C.J. Cron	Monarchs	36.3
3.	Wander Franco	Blues	30.6
4.	Yoán Moncada	Skipjacks	30.3
5.	Xander Bogaerts	Senators	30.1
6.	Cedric Mullins	Saints	30.0
7.	Nolan Gorman	Saints	27.0
8.	Trayce Thompson	Tribe	26.5
9.	Charlie Blackmon	Blues	25.5
10.	Adam Frazier	Monarchs	25.5
11.	Yordan Alvarez	Redbirds	24.0
12.	Mitch Garver	Wahoos	23.5
13.	Aaron Judge	Wahoos	23.5
14.	Brendan Donovan	Tribe	23.2
15.	Matt Olson	Wahoos	22.8
16.	Taylor Ward	Tribe	22.5
17.	Jonathan India	Bears	21.6
18.	Luis Arraez	Bums	21.5
19.	Austin Hays	Wahoos	21.1
20.	Will Smith	Wahoos	21.1
21.	Alex Verdugo	Blues	21.0
22.	Tim Anderson	Redbirds	20.1
23.	Kyle Tucker	Monarchs	20.1
24.	Mike Trout	Senators	20.0
25.	Ty France	Saints	19.7

### WHO'S NOT – HITTING

	<b>Batters</b>	<b>Roster</b>	<b>Pts</b>
1.	Max Kepler	Redbirds	-5.0
2.	Eduardo Escobar	Senators	-4.0
3.	Brandon Drury	Senators	-3.8
4.	Josh Rojas	Blues	-3.4
5.	Teoscar Hernández	Bombers	-3.4
6.	Hunter Dozier	Tigers	-3.3
7.	Cody Bellinger	Tribe	-3.0
8.	Spencer Torkelson	Tribe	-3.0
9.	Kyle Schwarber	Wahoos	-3.0
10.	Alex Bregman	Bums	-2.6
11.	Chris Taylor	Redbirds	-2.5
12.	Luke Voit	Senators	-2.0
13.	Michael Conforto	Skipjacks	-2.0
14.	Sean Murphy	Tigers	-1.8
15.	Max Muncy	Wahoos	-1.8
16.	Luis Urías	Saints	-1.8
17.	Bobby Witt Jr.	Bums	-1.6
18.	AJ Pollock	Bombers	-1.5
19.	Anthony Rendon	Redbirds	-1.2
20.	Luis García	Senators	-1.0
21.	Jake	Senators	-1.0
22.	MJ Melendez	Monarchs	-1.0
23.	Jean Segura	Tigers	-0.8
24.	Hunter Renfroe	Wahoos	-0.5
25.	Oscar Gonzalez	Cubs	-0.5

### AIN'T NO DAY LIKE OPENING DAY

I was #BLESSED to make it to Opening Day with Joe and Will for the 20th consecutive season,<sup>1</sup> accompanied by the Always Sunny Stretch McBlunder for his 5th straight Opening Day junket, and my brother Dan and nephew Leo. While brisk, the sun shone the entire day and we were witness to a delightful contest between the hometown Red Sox and the visiting Orioles.

While the Orioles seemed in command of the game from the start at 5-1 through four innings and eventually built its lead to 10-5, the Beaneaters mounted a furious comeback in the last two innings and ended the game with the go-ahead run at the plate, ultimately succumbing by the score of 10-9. We were lucky enough to watch Itchie's star catcher, Adley Rutschman, put together a 5-for-5, 4 RBI day at the plate, including a home run. We also saw what reportedly was the first-ever strikeout of a player because of a violation of the new hitting clock rule, when the home plate umpire rang up Red Sock Rafael Devers for pussy-footing around too much before attempting to re-enter the batter's box. Historic!

<sup>1</sup> COVID 2020 doesn't count.

A couple of pictures will help tell the story.



*No. 20 for the Ernst boys*



*No Better Place to Be!*



Heaven on Earth



Skip 'N' Stretch

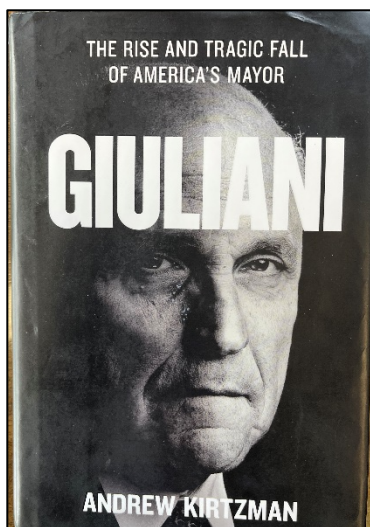


#BLESSED

In addition to being able to spend the afternoon in the heaven they call Fenway Park, we also enjoyed bending our elbows at the renowned Cask 'N Flagon tavern just across the street, and supping on some fantastic meals in Boston's North End. Such a great weekend, I am surprised it is even legal.

Thanks to Sunny, Dan and Leo for joining us on the trip.

BOOK REPORT:  
GIULIANI: The Rise and Tragic  
Fall of America's Mayor  
By Andrew Kirtzman



I recently finished a spellbinding book about Rudy Giuliani, entitled *Giuliani: The Rise and Tragic Fall of America's Mayor*. If you want to read an absolute page-turner of a book about the meteoric crash of this one-time stellar prosecutor and mayor, then this is the book for you. As one quickly concludes from reading this *tour de force*, Rudy's biggest mistake was hitching his wagon to POTUS 46 and throwing in with his band of nutjobs and nitwits.

Perhaps the most telling excerpt from the book which demonstrates just how far Giuliani has fallen is the notation that Giuliani appeared on *The Masked Singer* in a chicken suit in order to make a few bucks and stay relevant. Take a look at the YouTube video about this shameless exhibition. Embarrassing.

\* \* \* \* \*

That will do it for this issue of *From the Bullpen*, lads. Good luck in Week 2 of the season to all of you!

Skipper