

THE PRESSBOX

By Lenny Luchtefeld
April 2000

BRASSball Loses a Partner

I read Vaughn's e-mail about Tom's death on the morning of the 19th as I was getting ready to go to work and was devastated. I just sat at the computer and stared into the screen. I knew he had an uphill battle with cancer but I still couldn't believe it. I read the wonderful tribute that Vaughn had written about Tom and the tears began to flow. It was a very sad day for me and I'm sure for all of us. When I got home that evening, I told my wife about Tom's death. I read to her out loud that same tribute that Vaughn had written and couldn't make it through it again.

I only met Tom once. It was at the original BRASSball draft in Chicago when the league was just getting started. I remember sitting next to Tom for both draft days. Tom was a big guy with a hard New York accent and to a country boy like me, he seemed intimidating. As the day wore on I talked to him more and more. The weakest part of my draft was going to the amateurs and I told him that. We had to draft 5 amateurs during this initial draft. I would ask him just about every time it was my turn about different amateurs and he would always give me advice or a tip about a player. He could have very easily led me astray but he didn't and that was the kind of person he was.

Since that time Tom and I had many discussions over the years because we were in 2 leagues together. We made many trades with each other. We battled against each other in the first Brassball Championship and were division rivals in Brass. One of the other things I was most impressed with was Tom accuracy in all of the league's mailings and files he created. As I now know, after taking on LD responsibilities, it is very difficult to be 100% accurate. He did an outstanding job with everything he touched.

I said in this title that we lost a partner. And we did truly lose a valued partner. I selected the word partner very carefully because I believe Tom was surely one of the best partners a fellow member could have. He was unselfish and always worked towards the goal to make this league the best that it could be.

He was someone that you could trust. He was a true leader and a friend to look up to. He was admired and respected. They say that when you leave this world you go to a better place. I'm sure Tom is now playing in one of God's Strat-O-Matic leagues in heaven. I will miss him. Rest in peace my friend.

New Season Gets Underway Late

Due to the game company's getting the computer game out late, we ran a little behind this month. The league really didn't get started until the 12th of this month. Jack Howard took ill and 2 members are no longer with us. Even with all of that we managed to finish only about a week behind schedule. I would like to thank all of you for your extra efforts with the short window we had to work with.

The games that were not played will be made up very shortly and we will be back on track by the 15th of this month. With that said, we need to make sure that we get off to a good start this month. The new files needed were sent out today by Dave. We should all have our rotations and instructions sent to our opponents and LD's. That only leaves us 15 days to get the games played instead of the normal 20. Please make sure that we have all our games played and results sent by the 15th on May. Thanks again for your help.

National League Standings

East

<u>Team</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>GB</u>
Glen Allen	16	9	.640	
Racine	15	10	.600	1
Wauwatosa	12	11	.522	3
Long Island	12	12	.500	3.5

Central

<u>Team</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>GB</u>
Bloomington	16	12	.571	
Stanley	15	13	.536	1
Fleetwood	15	13	.536	1
Columbus	12	16	.429	4

West

<u>Team</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>GB</u>
Ocala	20	8	0.714	
Gem City	19	9	.679	1
North Georgia	13	15	.464	7
Metropolis	6	22	.241	14

Wildcard

<u>Team</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>GB</u>
Gem City	19	9	.679	
Stanley	15	13	.536	4
Fleetwood	15	13	.536	4
Racine	15	10	.600	4

NL EAST

GLEN ALLEN METS 16-9

The Mets jumped out of the gate riding the bats of Karros, Tatis, and Klesco. Tatis has knocked in 28 runs so far and Visquel has stolen 13 bases. They have a team batting average of .288 after one month of play. The pitching staff led by Nagy and Ritchie has gotten the team off to a great start. The overall pitching staff is ranked 4th in the league with an ERA of 4.37. Both Nagy and Ritchie are 4-0. Ritchie has been almost unhittable and has posted a 1.73 ERA to lead the league.

RACINE HEAT 15-10

Racine comes out of the gate like wild horses. Off to their best start ever in BRASSball. The Heat led the league in batting at .314 as a team. Joe Randa is the leagues 3rd leading hitter at .402. The Heat is also near the top in team pitching. They rank 6th overall with a team ERA of 4.55. Racine just one game back will give the Mets all they can handle this year.

WAUWATOSA WIZARDS 12-11

Wauwatosa ends April just above the .500 mark but has some impressive pitching to talk about. The Wizards led the league in ERA at 3.89. They have only allowed 22 homers and have held opponents to a .248 batting average. Chuck Finley is leading the staff with a 2.85 ERA. Burnitz has carried the load on offense so far. Burnitz has a .375 batting average, a slugging percentage of .847 and an on base average of .494. Opposing pitchers must not be happy with Burnitz, as he has already been hit 4 times in the first month. Koskie has also chipped in with a .373 batting average.

LONG ISLAND TIGERS 12-12

Tom Taormina has been a dominant figure in the NL since the inception of Brassball. His Tigers have been playoff participants almost every year. This year's team is in uncharted waters. After the loss of their beloved manager, the team seems to be feeling their way along. The only bright spot is Tony Fernandez. He is 5th in batting and is at the .400 mark. Fernandez is also leading the league in OBP at .519. On the pitching side, the Tigers check in at a team ERA of 5.22 and only Hoffman is among any leaders with 8 saves. This team has the capabilities to bounce back and get back in the race.

NL CENTRAL

BLOOMINGTON BEES 16-12

Once again, the Bees land in familiar territory, which is atop the NL Central. They have managed to get there without any of the big guns on the offensive or on the pitching side doing much. A team batting average of .269 and a team ERA of 4.91 rank in the bottom half. Roger Cedeno leads the league in steals with 18 and Pedro Martinez has an ERA of 2.73. Look for the Bees to start lighting it up soon.

STANLEY SIOUX 15-13

The Sioux find themselves only 1 game behind the Bees after the first month's play. The batters are off to a fast start with the team hitting .302. Stanley is still waiting for newly acquired Juan Gonzalez and Bernie Williams to really heat it up. Randy Johnson so far has been a disappointment. He has a 2-4 record and a 4.71 ERA. The team ERA is 5.03 and has given up 47 homers. When this team gets it in gear, the Bees had better look out.

Fleetwood Walkers 15-13

The Walkers have a potent offense this year although Chipper Jones has fallen on rough times. His April slump has landed him at .220 and he has committed 7 errors. Clayton has been the catalyst of the offense with a .429 average and 16 RBI's. The team is hitting .272 and the pitching checks in at 4.68. Livan Hernandez leads in wins with 3 but is posting a 5.82 ERA. Bullpen has been by committee, as 5 pitchers have collected saves.

COLUMBUS BUCKEYES 12-16

Brian Jordan is off to a blazing start. Jordan is hitting .359 with 8 homers and 28 RBI's. Carlos Beltran has chipped in with a .287 average, 7 homers and 24 RBI's. The Buckeyes are hitting .264 as a team. Jose Lima has 4 wins and a 3.93 ERA but has given up 7 homers in 37 innings. Columbus is near the bottom in pitching. A team ERA of 5.68 will not help the Buckeyes pull themselves up from the bottom of the division.

NL WEST

OCALA OCELOTS 20-8

Ocala dashes out to the best record in the NL at 20-8 and clinging to a 1 game advantage over Gem City. The Ocelots are batting .302 as a team and Edgar Martinez is zipping along at a .402 clip. Stewart has stolen 13 bases and Renteria has 10. Ocala has 4 pitchers with 3 wins in the first month. Percival, out of the bullpen, is off to a fast start at 2-0 and 9 saves. This should be a close race all year with Gem City.

GEM CITY WOLFPACK 19-9

The Wolfpack has mirrored the Ocelots the first month. Gem City is hitting .304 as a team and has actually stolen more bases than the Ocelots. Larkin is hitting .404 and is the new leader of this team. Bagwell has hit 12 homers and Thome has driven 10 balls out. Ivan Rodriguez is batting .312 with 32 RBI's and added 14 stolen bases without being caught. The team could use a little pitching help with a team ERA of 5.54. Radke is 4-0 with an ERA of 3.79 but has given up 13 homers in 40 innings. This should be a dogfight all year with Ocala.

NORTH GEORGIA YELLOW JACKETS 13-15

The Yellow Jackets may have the best pitching staff in the division and maybe the whole NL. Reynolds, Valdes, Hershiser, Villone and Meadows have combined with the rest of the staff to post a very impressive 3.90 ERA. The pitching has held the team together this first month. On the offensive side, the Jackets could use more 2 out base hits. The team is hitting a respectable .290 but the timely hitting has not been there. Brad Fullmer lead the league in hitting at .411 after April's play. Look for more offense as the temperature heats up but do they have enough to catch the Ocelots and the Wolfpack.

METROPOLIS AVENGERS 6-22

Not much left here in the gas tank. Last in pitching and last in hitting. Not much to say except, that is the strategy employed here is to be bad now and better in 2 years. Even Superman can't save this team from last place this year. The Avengers after one month are assured on of the top picks in the 2001 draft. The only excitement here is who will be their first pick next year. It will be a long season in Metropolis.

Stats

I think we still have some bugs to work out with new centralized stats. There has been an issue raised about renaming files and possibly overwriting subset. It has been suggested to establish a format for what # subset to use in each series. One idea would be look at the schedule we have and just go top to bottom .ss1 to .ss8 (there are never more than 8 total series in a month so this should work).

We have 8 series each month per team. If you save each subset into the appropriately numbered slot, then it will be quite simple for all of us to keep track of all the files Dave receives. I hope the suggestion below makes life simpler for Dave.

In addition - Dave has one other request:

He would really prefer to get just ONE file from each team per month, instead of four. He doesn't need box scores and play by plays. Here's his suggestion:

1. After each series, ZIP both teams subsets, and the boxes, and send this file to your opponent ONLY.
2. At the end of the month, ZIP all eight subset files (Four of yours, and one from each opponent, numbered as we described above), and send this file to Dave and to the appropriate LD.

Trades



No trades were sent to the National League office so there are none to report this month.

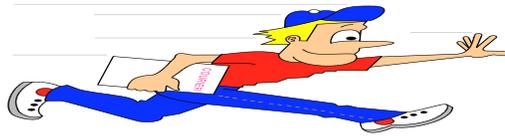
Contract Signings

North Georgia signs Banks and Lowery to M0-1 contracts.

Around the Horn

- Σ Jack Howard was hospitalized for a few days with chest pains and had been out of touch for a few days. We hope he has a speedy return and he and is back in action soon.
- Σ We have 2 openings in the league right now. If anyone knows of a prospect please let Kevin or myself know. Long Island and Milwaukee are vacant.

Upcoming Deadlines



May 15th...Series results are due out to your April opponents. You must send box scores, play by play and subset stats by e-mail to your opponents. Send only the subsets files in one zip file to Dave Little and Lenny Luchtefeld.

May 15th....If you make a trade during the month of April, you must e-mail the trade to your LD for it to take effect for the next months play.

May 20th...If you wish to submit a trade wire listing, you must submit the listing to your LD by e-mail by the 20th of the month for it to be included in the following newsletter.

May 20th...If you wish to submit an article for the newsletter, you must submit the article by e-mail in a Word format to your LD by the 20th of the month for it to be posted on the web site.

May 25th...Instructions due to June opponents. Pitching rotation for June due to your LD.