



League News *October 2003*

www.brassball.org

Playoffs

American League

Cook County versus Santa Barbara

The Maulers seemed to take control of this series right away in game 1 behind Pedro Martinez. Pedro was dominating, throwing a complete game 4-hit shutout in the opener. The Maulers only collected 4 hits off Roy Halladay and rest of the Outlaw staff, but they lumped enough hits (and a Outlaw error) together in the 7th to plate 3 runs.

Tom Glavine took the mound for the Maulers in game 2 versus the impressive Bartolo Colon. Unlike game 1, the Maulers slugged to 6-0 lead after 3 innings. Mike Piazza and Jason Giambi each hit a big fly. That was all Glavine needed as he allowed a run on 6 hits through 7 to notch his first win of the 2003 playoffs.

Santa Barbara returned home hoping to gain some momentum from the home crowd. Things looked like they might be turning around for the Outlaws in game 3, but the Mauler bats ignited in the 5th inning and didn't flame out until the end of the 6th. Before the two innings were done, the Maulers had put 7 more runs on the board and led 8-1. In all, the Maulers had collected 8 extra-base hits on their way to the victory.

The wind was completely void from the Outlaw sails. It was evident in game 4, as they couldn't muster anything against Tim Wakefield's knuckle balls. Roy Halladay didn't pitch as well as he had in the opener. It didn't matter, as the Outlaw bats didn't contribute a run for his second straight start. I have a feeling Halladay will be pushing management to add some bats this off-season.

Cook County had several hitters have good series, but the MVP award has to be given to the entire starting staff. In 29 innings, these guys only allowed 3 runs. They could have allowed 3 runs a game and had similar results, but they wanted to show that this team isn't just sluggers.

Bakersfield versus Minnesota

The Rattlers took out the Mudcats in five games. After two games in Bakersfield, the series was tied at one game apiece. Each team's ace delivered a strong performance in the opening two games. Tim Hudson held the Mudcats to 2 runs in 8+ innings in the series opener. Matt Morris delivered an

important win for the underdogs in game 2. His outing was also impressive, even though his daily line wasn't due to running out of gas in the 9th.

The series moved to Minnesota where the series took a turn for the worst for the Mudcats. The Rattlers lit up Terry Adams in game 3. David Bell especially enjoyed this game as the Mudcats had dispensed of him in the off-season. Bell connected for a granny in the top of the 5th sending Adams to the shower. That was plenty for Russ Ortiz who held the Mudcat bats in check.

Minnesota had a huge opportunity in Game 4 to even the series when Tim Hudson left game 4 in the third with a blister. However, the Mudcats were already down 3-0 and couldn't muster enough offense against Bakersfield's bullpen to catch up.

Bakersfield held a 3-1 series lead with Freddie Garcia on the mound for the Rattlers. The crowd was buzzing thinking another gem was on the way. Nope. Minnesota pounded Freddie Garcia. They held a 9-5 after the 5th inning thanks to homeruns by Gary Sheffield, Kevin Millar and A-Rod. That's when Minnesota's season came crashing down. The Rattlers offense came alive scoring 5 runs in the 6th to take a 10-9 lead. Two hits, an error by steady Mark Ellis, a walk and then grand slam by AJ Pierzynski and the lead was gone for the Mudcats. The team was stunned. They managed to hold Bakersfield in check in the 7th, but the Rattlers exploded for 4 in the 8th to put the game and series away.

A-Rod showcased his talent in the series hitting 3 dingers while hitting .333. The league definitely was watching as A-Rod is a free agent at the completion of the playoffs. Was this his last season as a Mudcat? David Bell took home the MVP award for the series hitting .350 with a HR and 8 RBI.

Cook County versus Bakersfield

The two best teams in the American League faced off for the right to represent the AL in the 2003 Brassball Series. Each team features a very strong pitching staff. Cook County features professional hitters that can put up runs fast whereas Bakersfield has a balanced attack that can be streaky, but they also contribute significantly on defense.

Pedro Martinez started this series off in style as he did in the Division Series. Rattler hitters had problems making contact against Pedro whiffing 14 times in the game. Hudson, still bothered by the blister that removed him from his final start against Minnesota, had trouble finding the strike zone walking five. When he did find the zone, the Maulers smacked him around to the tune of six runs in 5+ innings. That was all Pedro needed as he held the Rattlers to 2 runs and 5 hits.

The Rattlers bounced back in game 2 behind Freddie Garcia. Garcia didn't keep the Maulers off the bases, but he did keep them from scoring as the Maulers only plated two guys. Mike Cameron, who left with a hand injury due to a HBP in the top of the 1st of game 1, returned in full force in game 2. Cameron connected for two moon shots to ignite the Rattler offense. The Rattlers were heading home even with the favored Maulers.

Game 3 featured a pitching duel between Tim Wakefield and Sidney Ponson. The Rattlers took advantage of Wakefield's wildness in the 1st to take a 3-0 lead. Jose Hernandez provided the big punch connecting for a 3-run homerun. Ponson cruised with this lead until the 7th when he began to lose his stuff. The Maulers put up two runs, but the Rattler bullpen was there to close the door.

The Maulers faced a must-win in game 4. Bakersfield had the Maulers on the ropes leading the game 4-3 heading into the 9th. However, Keith Foulke didn't get the called strikes he needed and walked two consecutive batters after allowing a leadoff single. He was able to blow away Desi Relaford, but Kenny Lofton followed with a single scoring two to give the Maulers a 5-4 lead. Mariano Rivera, who had entered in the 8th, retired the side in the 9th to even the series at two games apiece.

Game 5 didn't have the suspense of the first two games in Bakersfield. However, it was worth the price of admission. Pedro Martinez allowed two two-run homeruns in the game, but it was his 19 punchouts

that grabbed the spotlight. The Mauler offense had spotted Pedro with 5-0 lead after three innings and he went to work striking out the side four times in the game. Freddie Garcia was not as effective allowing 16 hits in 8 innings. Cook County, who looked desperate in game 4, returned home with a 3-2 series lead.

The Rattlers hoped to jump out to quick start on the road, but the Maulers, behind a Jason Giambi 2-run dinger struck first. The Rattlers didn't fold, fighting back to tied in the 4th and holding a 4-2 lead entering the bottom of the 8th. That's when the Rattlers dream season came to an end. The Maulers took out the big wood. After a Kenny Lofton walk, Alfonso Soriano, the AL Rookie of the Year, tied the ballgame with a rocket over the centerfield wall. Nomar Garciaparra and Jason Giambi followed with homeruns of their own. The back-to-back-to-back homeruns propelled the Maulers onto the Brassball Series.

Bakersfield season may have ended, but it was a great start for the franchise in their new hometown. The fans will be expecting great things again next season. Cook County, behind ALCS MVP Jason Giambi (.478 with 4 HR and 10 RBI), returns to the Brassball Series for the first time in three years.

National League

Ocala versus Glen Allen

For the fourth straight season, Ocala and Glen Allen faced each other in the playoffs. Glen Allen won their first meeting on their way to being the 2000 Brassball League Champion. The past two seasons, Ocala managed to survive seven game series to move to the next round. Would this be another thriller?

In game 1, Glen Allen jumped to quick lead off of Roy Oswalt. Behind Barry Zito, the Mets cruised into the bottom of the 4th. Ocala's bats ignited over the next 3 innings scoring 9 in the 4th, 2 in the 5th and 3 in the 6th. Todd Helton delivered the first blow with a 2-run dinger to even the score at 2-2. Brian Giles and Shawn Green (twice) delivered 2-run homers of their own in the onslaught.

Glen Allen looked to even the series in game 2. The game didn't start well for the Mets as the Ocelots scored 3 runs in the first two innings. Glen Allen closed the gap to 3-1 in the 7th, but Ocala tacked on another run to make it 4-1. It stayed this score until the 9th. The Ocelot relief staff could not hold the Mets any longer. The Mets rallied to tie the score in the 9th. The tying run scoring on a Arthur Rhodes walk. Glen Allen appeared to have the momentum until Todd Helton stepped to the plate with one out in the bottom of the 9th. Helton smashed a walk-off homerun off Luis Vizcaino to send Ocala to Glen Allen with a 2-0 series lead.

Glen Allen once again held the lead heading into the middle innings of game 3. This time, Ocala trailed 3-1 until JD Drew and Todd Helton connected for homeruns in the 6th and 7th innings to give Ocala a 6⁻³ lead. Latroy Hawkins earned the win holding Glen Allen scoreless for 4 innings in relief of Kenny Rogers.

With their backs against the wall, Glen Allen opened up game 4 with a fury scoring 3 times in the first two innings taking a 3-1 lead. Following the pattern of the series, the Mets held the lead until the 5th. Ocala behind a run-scoring single by Helton and a Sosa sacrifice fly, took a 4-3 lead. Oswalt took over from there, allowing only one more hit until he left with one out in the 9th. Steve Reed and Mike Williams closed the door on the Mets' season.

This was another successful year for the Mets as they reached the playoffs for the fourth consecutive season. With a multitude of talent heading into 2004, this streak could very well continue. The Ocelots moved onto the NLCS for the 4th straight year.

Stanley versus Springfield

This series featured two of the three best pitching staffs in the National League. Offense would be the determining factor. During the regular season, this was Stanley, but would it follow suit in the playoffs.

A match up of two of the best left-handed starters opened the series, the veteran Randy Johnson versus the more junior Mark Mulder. The experience of the Big Unit was evident as he mowed down Isotope hitters through eight innings. The same couldn't be said for Mulder. He was roughed up for nine hits and six runs in five-plus innings. Jeff Kent continued his onslaught leading the Sioux offense to 13 hits and the victory.

The Isotopes needed to find a way to even series before heading home. They sent Ramon Ortiz to the mound against the NL Cy Young winner, Curt Schilling. Again, the veteran starter prevailed. Schilling didn't allow the big inning despite allowing nine hits in 7 innings to hold the visitors to two runs. Ramon Ortiz was not as fortunate. He allowed seven runs in 6 innings putting the Isotopes in a 0-2 hole heading home. Like game 1, Jeff Kent starred on offense.

Trailing 0-2, Springfield needed someone to step up. Jarrod Washburn, from Webster Wisconsin, was the man for the job. He held the Sioux bats in check. Something his teammates could not. However, he gave way to Billy Wagner who surrendered a one-run lead in the 9th. Mike Bordick took Wagner deep with one on to give the Sioux a 3-2 lead. The Isotopes did not fold. In the bottom of the frame, they evened the score on a Marquis Grissom double. With runners on 2nd and 3rd, Jose Mesa unleashed a wild pitch giving the home fans a reason to celebrate.

The Isotopes could now even the series at 2-2 with a win in game 4. The pitching match up was the same as game 1. The outcome was the same, but not due to Mark Mulder being rocked. The Big Unit and Mulder each pitched effectively, but Mulder yielded a two-run homerun to Todd Pratt in the 7th. That was the difference as the Isotope bats could never get anything started.

Springfield was now on the ropes and facing the NL Cy Young again. This time, Ramon Ortiz out-pitched the right-hander. However, he endured the same fate as Washburn. Leading 2-1 in the 9th, the Isotopes sent Billy Wagner to the mound to close it out. This time, Eduardo Perez, hammered his offering out of the park to even the score. Wagner regained his composure to end the inning. Luis Gonzalez quickly finished the game in the bottom of the 9th with a moon shot of his own.

Springfield had closed the series to 3-2 Sioux, but had to win two games in Stanley. Jarrod Washburn was not able to hold Stanley down in this game. Lucky for Springfield, neither could Joel Pineiro. Heading into the bottom of the 8th, the score was knotted at 4-4. That remained until Ryan Klesko hammered an Alan Embree offering into the stands for a 7-4 lead. The Isotopes rallied for two in the top of the 9th, but it wasn't to be as the Sioux eliminated Springfield with a 7-6 victory. Roberto Alomar was gunned at the plate for the first out of the 9th inning. With a different call, this game and series could have continued.

Springfield season ended, but not before an impressive first playoff run under the new management. This team has a collection of nice young left-handed starters and should compete for the playoffs for the foreseeable future. Stanley, behind series MVP Randy Johnson, will now head to Ocala to take on the Ocelots. This will be the third consecutive year that the two teams will meet in the NLCS.

La Crosse under New Management

The La Crosse Lagers are now under new management. Effective immediately, the team has been moved to Boston and will be called the Rust. Brian Neumann has taken over leadership of this talented team. His e-mail is bneu123@yahoo.com. Thanks go out to Andy Wiesner for introducing Brian to the league. Here is Brian's personal bio:

Brian Neumann is a Massachusetts resident and lifelong, diehard Red Sox fan. His favorite all-time players include Dewey Evans, Oil Can Boyd and Jerry Remy. Fortunately, "The RemDawg" continues to amaze in his role as color commentator for Red Sox broadcasts, providing eternal hope that the next Boston championship is just around the corner.

Brian is currently in his third and final year of law school, where he spends most of his time daydreaming about what it would be like to be Theo Epstein. When not paralyzed by jealousy of Boston's general manager, Brian spends his free time playing guitar, listening to classic rock, and revising the screenplay he started in 1997.

Brian is learning the league quickly and should be another great addition to the league. Welcome aboard Brian.

League Administration Changes

As we all know already, Mark has stepped aside as League Director. Robert Smith volunteered to step aside to allow Mark to step into his old position, Free Agency Conductor. Robert Smith will resume this position once Mark's time ends. Robert, many thanks for your effort last season. It was much appreciated.

The Website Coordinator has also switched. Andy Wiesner has stepped aside due to time constraints. Lucky for us, Jon Kjaarsgard was more than willing to take on this opportunity. As Jon has helped with much of our team logos, hats, etc., this should be great addition for the league. Many thanks go out to Andy for establishing our own website and putting Brassball on the internet map.

Lastly, Ray Martin has agreed to take on the reestablished NL Reporter position. Ray will be writing a summary for each NL team during the Brassball season, post-free agency and the post-draft/pre-season along the NL playoff summaries.

The league still needs an AL Reporter. Let me know if you are interested.

Proposal Results

The following proposals passed and will now be included as part of the constitution.

Proposal #1 (Vote 12-11) Eliminate Callups and MTM Contracts

This proposal changed how players early on in their career are used. The MO and MTM call-up system have been removed and replaced by contracts for players with 130 PA or 40 IP. Here are the highlights of the rule.

A player remains on a MO contract until he reaches 130 PA or 40 IP in a MLB season. Once the 130/40 threshold is reached, the player needs to be signed to a Y1 contract (\$200K). At the completion of the player's Y1 Brassball season, the owning team will need to resign the player to a Y2 contract (\$200K) (regardless of the amount of PA or IP) to retain him. If the player is not retained at this point, the player re-enters the draft. At the completion of the player's Y2 Brassball season, the owning team will need to resign the player to an "A" or "U" contract (regardless of the amount of PA or IP) to retain him. If the player is not retained at this point, the player enters free agency. Players on Y1 or Y2 contracts are eligible for the playoffs. Players on MO contracts can still be used in September without any additional cost. To offset the lower cost of the first two years of player's careers, the salary chart has been adjusted to:

New contract amounts		
	A	U
1 year	NA	\$400,000
2 year	NA	\$1,000,000

3 year	\$6,000,000	\$2,000,000
4 year	\$10,000,000	NA
5 year	\$15,000,000	NA
6 year	\$24,000,000	NA
7 year	\$35,000,000	NA

The intent of this rule was three-fold. A) Eliminate a manager's confusion of determining who's called up in a particular month. Plus, reduce the LD effort of tracking MO/MTM player usage, signings, etc. B) Eliminate the need to sign/use "bad" players to meet usage requirements. This should help the competitiveness of the league. C) Give managers the ability to use their young players in full-time role without immediately committing long-term contracts to them. This gives owners two cheap seasons to use their players before making a decision.

Granted, this proposal is not perfect. The benefit is very evident for team's that have players that make a "splash". However, there isn't a benefit for the players that garner enough PA/IP to reach Y1 status even though they really aren't established, full-time players yet.

As such, I have decided on a proposal amendment (to this system) for next season. The statement that the player would advance to the next contract regardless of the amount of PA/IP would be modified. Instead, it would read, the player will move from the Y1 to Y2 contract or Y2 to A/U contract if they reach the 130 PA or 40 IP limit. A player will remain on their existing (Y1 or Y2) contract until the threshold is achieved. This would still serve the overall purpose of the proposal without negatively impacting teams.

A good example of this would be Jesse Foppert. He has been signed to a Y1 contract. Under the current system, he will need to be signed to Y2 contract next year. Since he has had arm surgery, he will not be useable. This leaves his owning team in a precarious position. Under the amended system, Foppert would remain on a Y1 contract until he returns to the majors and pitches 40 innings.

Implementing this amendment next year will not have any negative effect on this year's signings. This is due to the fact that all players are still on Y1 contracts. There would need to be adjustments to switch players "back" if they didn't achieve their thresholds.

Proposal #5 (Vote 17-6) Signing Draftees is automatic

This was just a formality. Now, I can just ink players after the draft for all teams. With the addition of Y1, this is even more automatic as all players with 130 PA or 40 IP would simply be signed to a Y1 contract and anyone else to a MO contract.

Proposal #6 (Vote 17-6) HAL Road Manager

This is straightforward. HAL is now required as road instructions.

Proposal #7 (Vote 12-11) Removal of Injuries from game

This is another straightforward proposal. Injuries are now a thing of the past in Brassball

Proposal #8 (Vote 15-8) Removal of SOM Closer Rule

Again, this is another straightforward proposal. The Closer Rule is out.

Proposal #10 (Vote 12-11) Contract Extension Limitation

Extended players cannot be traded until May of the following season. This should eliminate the extend-and-trades that occur every September. The extended players can be traded effective for May play.

Proposal #2 also passed (Vote 13-10), but is moot since *Proposal #1* passed.

Post-Season Awards

American League

MVP – Vladimir Guerrero, Cook County

Runner up – 2) Barry Bonds, Moline

3) Alex Rodriguez, Minnesota

Cy Young – Pedro Martinez, Cook County

Runner up – 2) Tom Glavine, Cook County

3) Roy Halladay, Santa Barbara

Rookie of the Year – Alfonso Soriano, Cook County

Runner up – 2) Roy Halladay, Santa Barbara

3) Odalis Perez, Iowa

National League

MVP – Shawn Green, Ocala

Runner up – 2) Larry Walker, Springfield

3) Brian Giles, Ocala

Cy Young – Curt Schilling, Stanley

Runner up – 2) Randy Johnson, Stanley

3) Mark Mulder, Springfield

Rookie of the Year – Russell Branyan, Charlevoix

Runner up – 2) Damian Moss, Port Richey

3) Luis Vizcaino, Glen Allen

Raw Draft Order

1. Plaza	7. Brooklyn	13. LaCrosse	19. Minnesota
2. Hessville	8. Bloomington	14. GemCity	20. Springfield
3. Charlevoix	9. NorthGeorgia	15. Iowa	21. Bakersfield
4. Metropolis	10. Moline-*	16. Fleetwood	22. NLCS runner up
5. BoxCity	11. Columbus-*	17. SantaBarbara	23. BRASS runner up
6. PortRichey	12. Toledo	18. GlenAllen	24. BRASSball champ

* indicates these two teams tied and will alternate their positions in each round

Trades

1. Ocala trades Xavier Nady to Minnesota for Gary Sheffield.
2. Toledo trades Garrett Atkins, Jason Young, John Halama, Jason Tyner, Brian Meadows and Scott Strickland to Charlevoix for Travis Harper, Kevin Gryboski and Gabe Kapler.
3. Cook County trades Vladimir Guerrero, Josh Hancock and Jeremy Hill to Cook County for Charlevoix's 2004 1st round draft choice, Michael Cuddyer and Juan Rivera.
4. Plaza trades Mike Lieberthal to Toledo for Jose Valverde, Armando Almanza, Toledo's 2004 2nd round draft choice and Toledo's 2004 3rd round draft choice.
5. Hessville trades Jose Guillen to Metropolis for Metropolis' 2004 4th round draft choice and \$2,000,000.
6. Metropolis trades Hideki Matsui and Sean Burnett to Toledo for Richie Sexson.
7. Glen Allen trades Orlando Hudson and Glen Allen's 2005 4th round draft choice to Toledo for Sean Casey and Glen Allen's 2004 5th round draft choice.
8. Brooklyn trades Javy Lopez to Stanley for Zach Day, Paul LoDuca and \$500,000.
9. Fleetwood trades Jorge Posada to Metropolis for Luis Matos, Corky Miller, Ramon Castro and Metropolis' 2004 2nd round draft choice.

10. Ocala sends Luis Rivas, Javier Valentin, Blaine Neal and Brandon Villafuerte to Moline for Bret Boone.
11. Fleetwood trades Raul Ibanez to Toledo for Hessville's 2004 3rd round draft choice.
12. Cook County trades Jamie Moyer to Toledo for Charlevoix's 2nd round draft choice.
13. Iowa trades Hideo Nomo to Metropolis for Jason Arnold.
14. Charlevoix trades Garrett Atkins to Cook County for Kyle Farnsworth.
15. Minnesota trades Ron Villone to Toledo for Columbus' 2004 3rd round draft choice.
16. Metropolis trades Nick Johnson to Plaza for Plaza's 2004 1st round draft choice.
17. Iowa trades Jason Schmidt to Metropolis for Metropolis' 2004 1st round draft choice.
18. Ocala trades Kurt Ainsworth to Minnesota for Matt Morris.

Upcoming League Deadlines

November 26th Free Agency Bids due to the Free Agency Conductor.
December 15th Free Agent Signing Report sent out by Free Agency Conductor.

Articles

We have one article this month (Al Telgenhof).

Season Summary from Charlevoix

The Charlevoix Tigers closed out another disappointing campaign with a 55-107 record. The day after the Tigers' final game, manager Greg Estelle and his entire staff were fired. Former major leaguer Rick Leach was tabbed to manage the team in 2004.

"I would have only taken this job if the front office had promised to go out and get some help," Leach said. "We owe to the fans to put a competitive team on the field in 2004."

Owner/general manager Al Telgenhof reiterated that the team would not move the fences back for next season. Pitchers have found McCormick Park a difficult home as the balls have flown out of the park at a record pace since it opened in 2002.

The Tigers scored 5.36 runs per game but opponents scored 7.41. The Tigers' foes scored over ten runs in game a phenomenal 51 times. Charlevoix was shutout ten times and scored only one run nine times.

"The park is not the problem," Telgenhof said. "Our play is. We will put a competitive team on the field next season. I will see to that."

Frank Thomas was tabbed as the Tigers' team MVP for 2003 with his 34-109-.284 performance. Jeff Suppan was the team's most valuable pitcher with an 11-14 record and 5.60 ERA.

"We can't judge Jeff by that ERA," Telgenhof commented. "5.60 in our park is like 4.00 in any other."

In the off-season, Telgenhof indicated that the team will focus on improving the bullpen and bringing in starting pitchers who are not susceptible to the longball. Also, he said the team would be active in the free agent market this year, looking to bring in a marquee player to bring the fans back.