



BRASSball League News

March 2004

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Draft Recap

(AL Reporter – Robert Smith)

Being the new league reporter, I get the pleasure of recapping this years draft for my first story. Before I begin I wanted to congratulate Brian for once again running an extremely smooth draft. With only a few days to look things over here are a few things I took from the draft:

1st Round Steal: Jason Phillips at #15 for Cook County. One of the few offensive standouts with a solid card, lots of PA's, a player who can play two positions and a good future ahead of him I thought he would of gone in the top 10.

Best Minor Leaguer in Round 1: Delmon Young at #2 for Hessville. Yes he went early, but he is the number 1 prospect in most publications and looks like the real deal.

Biggest Surprise in Round 1: Jason Bay at #5 to Box City. Bay has talent, but is coming off an injury and has been traded numerous times in his young career. I thought Jody Gerut would of gone higher, but hey he went one spot lower.

2nd Round Steal: Robby Hammock at #30 to Plaza. Hammock looks to be an effective player. He can play many positions and one of them happens to be catcher, a position lacking quality players.

Best Minor Leaguer in Round 2: Blake Hawksworth at #36 to Brooklyn. Yes it's my pick but since my team stinks this might be my only chance to get publicity, but seriously he has tremendous potential for a team starving for pitching.

Best Minor Leaguer in Round 3: Stephen Drew at #76 to Ocala. The brother of JD and Tim looks like a solid player at the SS position, another position lacking quality players.

Steal of the Draft: Dustin Nippert at #97 to Minnesota. He has all the tools to be a perfect compliment to Brandon Webb for a long time in Arizona.

Biggest Risk of the Draft: Eric Milton at #117 to New Hampshire. Coming off surgery and with that contract it was a risky but bold move. If he reverts back to form it was a good move if not...

Do Not Drop Your Soap In The Shower Pick: Who else but Kaz Tadano at #139 to Toledo. I wonder how he is going to be received in Toledo's locker room.

Team That Did The Best: Cook County of course. With 9 picks in the first 2 rounds Kevin did a masterful job. He landed 4 great amateurs in Rios, Reed, Barfield and Quiroz, added a very nice carded player in Phillips, added some innings with Jeremi Gonzalez and finished it off with solid prospects in Edgar Gonzalez, Jhonny Peralta and Ryan Madson. Cook County won't be out of the playoffs for long.

Other teams that did well in no particular order were...Hessville, Bloomington, Fleetwood, Glen Allen, Minnesota, Metropolis, Springfield and Gem City.

AL Preview

(AL Reporter – Robert Smith)

EAST

Bakersfield Rattlers: Fresh off their division title last season, the Rattlers appear headed for another title. The pitching staff is the reason. From top to bottom this is the best staff in the AL. Tim Hudson anchors a very good young starting staff and figures to win 20 games. The bullpen from setup to closer is also solid with Matt Mantei and Ron Mahay setting up one of the better closers in the game in Keith Foulke. Offensively the Rattlers have some holes particularly in the top of the order. With no clear cut leadoff man or number two hitter the heart of the order led by Andruw Jones, Derek Lee and AJ Pierzynski will have to do it themselves. The future is bright with, of course, young starters...JD Durbin, Brett Evert and Angel Guzman.

Prediction: 1st place: 100-62

Moline Cutters: The Cutters now two seasons removed from a championship are primed for a comeback season after a disappointing 77-85 record last year. The starting staff is solid led by ace Mark Prior. Carlos Zambrano, Miguel Batista and Kelvim Escobar back Prior up nicely. Offensively Rocco Baldelli will be asked to get on base for the likes of Torii Hunter and Brad Wilkerson. The Cutters weaknesses are easy, the bullpen and a lack of depth offensively. Dan Kolb will be asked to close with limited innings and there is really no one else behind him. The Cutters have some talent down on the farm with Jeff Francoeur, Royce Ring and Adriano Rosario.

Prediction: 2nd place: 88-74

Minnesota Mudcats: Can you say A-Rod? The Mudcats can and will only go as far as A-Rod hits them. The supporting cast is okay with Jay Gibbons providing protection for A-Rod, and Mark Kotsay, Mark Ellis and Eric Young providing the speed. Where the Mudcats will be hurt this year is in their pitching. Jeremy Bonderman, Jerome Williams and Jason Davis are all up and coming pitching prospects but just aren't there yet. Throw in a shaky bullpen and the Mudcats will be fighting for the .500 mark. Besides the young pitching mentioned above Minnesota has the best farm system in the division with promising prospects Casey Kotcham, Dustin Nippert, Jayson Nix, Sergio Santos and David Wright waiting for their chance.

Prediction: 3rd place: 80-82

Hessville Everreadys: The Everreadys are coming off an abysmal 48-114 season, but there is some hope for the future. No, it won't come this year, but the building blocks are there. For starters, it is the starters...two to be exact Dontrelle Willis and Rafael Soriano. They won't help much this year due to their limited innings but they are young and talented. The offense will be improved with Milton Bradley, Rondell White and Alex Gonzalez coming off nice seasons. The pitching staff minus Willis and Soriano is bad and the offense lacks a big presence in the middle and an on base guy at the top. Down on the farm things are much better. Clint Everts, Jeremy Guthrie, Ian Stewart, Jon VanBenschoten and Delmon Young provide a glimpse into a promising future.

Prediction: 4th place: 50-112

CENTRAL

New Hampshire Derry Heifers: Under new ownership and a move from Iowa to New Hampshire there is hope in Derry Heifer land. Coming off of a 2nd place finish, the Heifers will make a strong run at 1st place. They are led by the pitching staff whose strength is in the bullpen. Damaso Marte will probably get most of the save opportunities with the help of solid setup men in Mike Timlin, Chad Bradford and Francisco Cordero. Led by Odalis Perez, the starting staff is okay. Kenny Rogers, John Thompson, Jeff Damico and Kris Benson finish off a deep rotation. Offensively the Heifers have pop. Jim Thome, Magglio Ordonez Jason Varitek and Cliff Floyd are a nasty middle of the lineup and should give opposing pitchers fits all year. The only questions on this team are at the top of the order where there will be a need for someone to get on base for the boppers. A shaky defense could also cause some concerns. New Hampshire is in a win now mentality as there isn't much on the farm right now to get anyone excited.

Prediction: 1st place: 102-60

Box City Parcelmen: The Parcelmen are coming off a dreadful 100-loss season, but things are looking up. Offensively Box City is strong. The additions of Miguel Tejada, Tike Redman and Raul Ibanez will go nicely with returning starters Michael Young and Tim Salmon. The pitching staff has 3 solid starters in Brian Lawrence, Kirk Reuter and Brett Tomko. Box City will only go as far as those 3 take them, as there is not much else in the pitching staff. Youngster Francisco Rodriguez will be asked to carry the load in the bullpen. Down on the farm Box City has Erick Aybar, Nick Markakis, Ian Snell and Jason Stokes fine tuning their skills.

Prediction: 2nd place: 81-81

Plaza Lions: You would hope that the team with the worse record last year could only improve, and yes, they will. Offensively Plaza has put together a good young lineup some of which will help them this year and definitely be ready to shine in 2005. Nick Johnson, Rickie Weeks, Jose Reyes and Eric Hinske are as good a young infield as you will see in Brassball and with Preston Wilson anchoring the outfield the Lions will score some runs. The pitching staff is also up and coming with Brett Myers, Ben Sheets and Oliver Perez providing the young arms. Jose Valverde will get a chance to close some wins this year for the young Lions. To go with the young team at the major league level, Plaza has some talent on the farm in James Loney, Felix Pie, Ervin Santana and Kelly Shoppach.

Prediction: 3rd place: 65-97

Cook County Maulers: Looking at the top of the AL Central won't be the same this year. The Maulers who have been the division leaders for quite some time have undergone a dramatic overhaul. Gone are the high priced veterans and in their place are some talented young players. Jeremi Gonzalez and John Lackey will lead the pitching staff, while offensively, the Maulers will look to score runs with Carl Everett (the only veteran to make it back this year), Carl Crawford, Jason Phillips and Josh Phelps. Yes it will be a long year, but down on the farm, thanks to all the picks the Maulers were able to acquire this year, they have the likes of Josh Barfield, Travis Blackley, Scott Hairston, Aaron Hill, Guillermo Quiroz, Jeremy Reed and Alexis Rios. Cook County has the number 1 farm system in the American League.

Prediction: 4th place: 55-107

WEST

Toledo Mudhens: In a tough division, the Mudhens get the ever so slight nod over the Outlaws. The pitching staff is solid. Esteban Loaiza, Mike Mussina, Jamie Moyer and Tim Wakefield are 4 solid starters. Add Kyle Farnsworth, Felix Heredia and closer Eddie Guardardo to the pen and the staff is set. Offensively is where this team will squeak out the division. The blend of speed and power is perfect. From top to bottom this is a very dangerous lineup with Shannon Stewart, Luis Castillo and Orlando Cabrera setting the table for the likes of Jason Giambi, David Ortiz, Rafael Palmeiro and Hideki Matsui in the middle. Add in Mike Lieberthal, Bill Mueller and Kevin Millar and this lineup is downright scary. The bench is strong and deep with Alex Sanchez, Craig Monroe and Toby Hall to name a few. If there are weaknesses, it's the Mudhens defense and a lack of depth in the bullpen. Toledo has built this team for now and thus only has two big prospects in Reggie Abercrombie and Sean Burnett.

Prediction: 1st place: 106-56

Santa Barbara Outlaws: The Outlaws only problem this year will be going up against division rival Toledo. The loser of the battle should still get the wild card and in this case I think it's the Outlaws. The pitching staff that will go up against Toledo is formidable. Roy Halladay, Bartolo Colon, Matt Clement Greg Maddux and Byung-Hyun Kim are fabulous. Add to that Scott Sullivan, Ugie Urbina and Scott Williamson and the staff is set. On offensive the Outlaws are no slouch. Nomar Garciaparra leads a potent attack. Garret Anderson, Jacque Jones, Carlos Lee and Mike Lowell will back up Nomar nicely. On the farm the Outlaws have 3 fine prospects in Adrian Gonzalez, Jeff Niemann and Chad Tracy. Prediction: 2nd place: 103-59

Boston Rust: The other new team in the American League moves from Lacrosse to Boston and has the unenviable task of having to face off against Toledo and Santa Barbara. The starting pitching is pretty good with Kevin Millwood, Carl Pavano, Kip Wells and Matt Kinney. The bullpen doesn't have solid set up guys to get to Troy Percival. Offensively Boston will score some runs. How would you like to face Aubrey Huff, Manny Ramirez and Mike Sweeney in the middle of that lineup? If Mark Grudzielanek and Johnny Damon can get on base enough the Rust will score some runs. On the farm Boston has two monster prospects in Cole Hamels and Prince Fielder, the latter being the consensus number 1 prospect this season. Prediction: 3rd place: 78-84

Brooklyn Bulldogs: The Bulldogs will pull up the rear once again in 2004. The top three starters are as good as any in the league but after that Brooklyn is in trouble. With no closer and a weak bullpen, Wood, Vazquez and Trachsel will watch hopelessly as leads they give the bullpen, vanish. Offensively there is hope but it won't come this year. Alex Cintron, Juan Pierre, Austin Kearns and Ken Griffey Jr have the potential to score some runs for years to come if they stay healthy. For now it's last place in a strong division. On the farm the Bulldogs have some good pitching prospects in Blake Hawksworth, Matt Peterson and Bob Keppel. Prediction: 4th place: 62-100

NL Preview

(NL Reporter – Ray Martin)

Power Rankings

Play Ball!!!! The beauty of spring training is undeniably that the beginning of the season is upon us and the fact that everyone has a chance to be champion, at least until we hear those magic words. I have provided a rating for all teams within their divisions (DR) and in the National League (LR). An overview is also provided into the current BA Top 100 ratings for prospects. Please note, that since our amateurs do not play each year, I did not factor the ranking into the final order. The team's breakdown follows the rankings (groups of three). I believe that an exciting season will result, as after the cream ascends, there will be dogfight amongst some similarly talented teams.

#1	<i>Metropolis</i>	LR	DR	#2	<i>Ocala</i>	LR	DR	#3	<i>Stanley</i>	LR	DR
	Rotation-Ranking	#1	#1		Rotation-Ranking	#6	#3		Rotation-Ranking	#2	#1
#1	Martinez			#1	Hernandez			#1	Brown		
#2	Schmidt			#2	Morris			#2	Williams		
#3	Webb			#3	Peavy			#3	Schilling		
#4	Nomo			#4	Shields			#4	Pinero		
#5	Contreras			#5	Eaton			#5	Meche		
	Bullpen-Ranking	#1	#1		Bullpen-Ranking	#3	#2		Bullpen-Ranking	#5	#2
CL	Gagne			CL	Hawkins			CL	Hasegawa		
SU	Dotel			SU	Rhodes			SU	Carter		
SU	Wagner			SU	Mota			SU	Ayala		
	INF- Ranking	#2	#2		INF- Ranking	#1	#1		INF- Ranking	#3	#1

C	Posada			C	Kendall			C	Lopez		
1B	Sexson			1B	Helton			1B	Klesko		
2B	Vidro			2B	Boone			2B	Kent		
3B	Chavez			3B	Burroughs			3B	Wiggington		
SS	Furcal			SS	Jeter			SS	Valentin		
	OF/DH Ranking	#1	#1		OF/DH Ranking	#2	#2		OF/DH Ranking	#3	#1
OF	Berkman			OF	Sheffield			OF	Winn		
OF	Wells			OF	Finley			OF	Edmonds		
OF	Bonds			OF	Giles			OF	Jones		
DH	Guillen			DH	Sosa			DH	Alou		
	Farm Rating-	#9			Farm Rating-	#1			Farm Rating-	#11	
BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way		
#36	Kyle Sleeth			#1	Joe Mauer			#60	Mike Hinckley		
#59	Denny Bautista			#9	Grady Sizemore			#91	Matt Cain		
#82	Dan Meyer			#18	Dustin McGowan						
#98	Brent Clevlen			#55	Kris Honel						
				#70	Jose Lopez						

#1-Metropolis (Projected Record 110-52)

This team is simply loaded and the odds on favorite not only to win the league, but to be the Brassball Champion. No weaknesses here, the bullpen is simply divine, the rotation is loaded and the line-up is powerful. Andy should finally realize the fruits from patience and make a huge step at getting his managerial record closer to .500, after years of being relegated to drafting first.

Greatest Need: Mantle Space for League Awards.

#2-Ocala (Projected Record 102-60)

A shame when you're the clearly the second best team in the league, but stuck with a juggernaut in your division. The Ocala faithful have grown accustomed to retooling and this year will be no different. The best infield in the NL leads this franchise. The scary part is that they also have the finest bunch of prospects in the league as well, which could lead to a trade for starting pitching, clearly their Achilles heel. About two trades short of threatening Metropolis for the title and likely League Championship.

Greatest Need: Dominant arm at the top of the rotation.

#3-Stanley (Projected Record 95-67)

In a short season anything can happen. The top three in the rotation make an upset possible and the rest of the team makes the playoffs likelihood. The team is well balanced and should be able to stave off division competition from a pre-season perspective. Certainly moves are going to have to happen to combat the teams knocking on their door, but at this point all signs point to a division title.

Greatest Need: Dominant Closer to upgrade pen.

#4	Glen Allen	LR	DR	#5	Springfield	LR	DR	#5	Bloomington	LR	DR
	Rotation-Ranking	#7	#2		Rotation-Ranking	#3	#1		Rotation-Ranking	#4	#2
#1	Zito			#1	Mulder			#1	Sabathia		
#2	Hampton			#2	Redman			#2	Padilla		
#3	Clemens			#3	Ortiz			#3	Beckett		
#4	Robertson			#4	Washburn			#4	Buerhle		
#5	Vargas			#5	Lohse			#5	Wilson		
	Bullpen-Ranking	#6	#1		Bullpen-Ranking	#11	#3		Bullpen-Ranking	#2	#1
CI	Donnelly			CI	Rvan			CI	Rivera		

SU	Martin			SU	Shuey			SU	Borokowski		
SU	Villareal			SU	Remlinger			SU	Biddle		
	INF- Ranking	#6	#2		INF- Ranking	#4	#1		INF- Ranking	#8	#3
C	Molina			C	Myers			C	Rodriguez		
1B	Casey			1B	Bagwell			1B	Conine		
2B	Roberts			2B	Blalock			2B	Soriano		
3B	Ensberg			3B	Koskie			3B	Crede		
SS	Vazquez			SS	Berroa			SS	Cruz		
	OF/DH Ranking	#4	#1		OF/DH Ranking	#6	#2		OF/DH Ranking	#10	#4
OF	Mora			OF	Grissom			OF	Suzuki		
OF	Nixon			OF	Gonzalez			OF	Williams		
OF	Pujols			OF	Walker			OF	Guiel		
DH	Young			DH	Martinez			DH	LeCroy		
	Farm Rating-	#10			Farm Rating-	#4			Farm Rating-	#3	
BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way		
	54 John Maine				13 Adam Loewen				2 BJ Upton		
	89 Jesse Crain				22 Jeff Mathis				28 Jeremy Hermida		
					44 Jeff Allison				31 Franklin Gutierrez		
					68 Chris Lubanski				33 Dallas McPherson		
									62 Bobby Jenks		
									65 Ryan Harvey		

#4-Glen Allen (Projected Record 90-72)

Glen Allen is a tenuous #4 pick, as the pack is solidly similar at the next five spots. An MVP season from Pujols and the unheralded, but gifted cards in the pen will decide if a division championship is in the cards. Expect some changes to NL landscape, as there are too many teams that are close that sitting pat is not an option and no action will result in this team falling in the rankings.

Greatest Need: #2 type pitcher to solidify rotation.

#5 Bloomington (Projected Record 83-79)

Solid rotation for the long season, could use a stronger #5. Bullpen is a true strength and should they fall out of contention this area of strength could likely determine the race through deft trading. Not enough here to compete with Ocala and the new Evil Empire, but the playoffs are possible.

Greatest Need: A Powerful Bat/Upgrade at SS.

#5 Springfield (Projected Record 89-73)

Solid Rotation, built for a short series. Best Infield in the division. Bullpen is a big question. OF is middle of the pack, but talented. At this point ten games in the standings could be made up through trades and this team possesses the tangible youth to secure the missing pieces.

Greatest Need: A dominant closer/Upgrade Pen.

#7	N. Georgia	LR	DR	#8	Maine	LR	DR	#9	Gem City	LR	DR
	Rotation-Ranking	#5	#2		Rotation-Ranking	#11	#4		Rotation-Ranking	#8	#4
#1	Pettite			#1	Wolf			#1	Ponson		
#2	Wells			#2	May			#2	Radke		
#3	Lilly			#3	Santana			#3	Johnson		
#4	Redding			#4	Hentgen			#4	Jennings		
#5	Ramirez			#5	Fogg			#5	Stephenson		
	Bullpen-Ranking	#4	#3		Bullpen-Ranking	#8	#3		Bullpen-Ranking	#9	#4

CL	Smoltz			CL	Nelson			CL	Benitez		
SU	Nathan			SU	Reed			SU	Kershner		
SU	Spooneybarger			SU	Hernandez			SU	Looper		
	INF- Ranking	#7	#3		INF- Ranking	#5	#2		INF- Ranking	#10	#4
C	Santiago			C	Olivo			C	Osik		
1B	Hillenbrand			1B	Olerud			1B	Spiezio		
2B	Polanco			2B	Anderson			2B	Walker		
3B	Helms			3B	Rolen			3B	Castilla		
SS	Renteria			SS	Gonzalez			SS	Lugo		
	OF/DH Ranking	#12	#4		OF/DH Ranking	#5	#2		OF/DH Ranking	#9	#3
OF	Byrnes			OF	Cordero			OF	Sanders		
OF	Byrd			OF	Beltran			OF	Lofton		
OF	Patterson			OF	Hidalgo			OF	Catalanatto		
DH	Teixeria			DH	Rollins			DH	Delgado		
	Farm Rating-	#6			Farm Rating-	#7			Farm Rating-	#5	
BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way		
#12	Scott Kazmir			#8	Greg Miller			#11	Andy Marte		
#48	Brad Nelson			#43	Joe Blanton			#19	J.J. Hardy		
#49	Adam Wainwright			#67	Scott Olsen			#41	Dioner Navarro		
#73	Adam LaRoche							#50	Taylor Buchholz		
#95	Joey Gathright							#86	Lastings Milledge		

#7 N. Georgia (Projected Record 82-80)

North Georgia is the hardest team to call. Their club is above average across the board, yet nothing is dominant. Some moves and this team is clearly in the playoff race, no moves and teams above fold for the future, than playoffs are still possible. Overall, a solid ball club that should come up just short.
Greatest Need: Power is in short supply; traditional positions of power are devoid of big bats.

#8 Maine (Projected Record 72-90)

Solid middle of the order and has some valuable youthful pieces. Starters are just not there for any realistic chance. Farm system is missing primary pieces to make big trades. The bullpen is lacking arms to dominant on a regular basis.
Greatest Need: Improved pitching with strikeout starter and end of the game dominator.

#9 Gem City (Projected Record 69-93)

Simply does not have the everyday line-up to contend. Pitching is middle of the pack, but the future should be bright as they have one of the better groups of amateurs. Likely to be a player in trade market with some valuable pieces to teams that are willing to mortgage their futures to take a dream shot at Metropolis.
Greatest Need: Improve tangible parts for future.

#10	<i>Fleetwood</i>	LR	DR	#11	<i>Charlevoix</i>	LR	DR	#12	<i>Port Richey</i>	LR	DR
	Rotation-Ranking	#9	#3		Rotation-Ranking	#10	#3		Rotation-Ranking	#12	#4
#1	Penny			#1	Lowe			#1	Zambrano, V.		
#2	Seo			#2	Leiter			#2	Oliver		
#3	Rusch			#3	Suppan			#3	Moss		
#4	Haynes			#4	Glavine			#4	Mays		
#5	Cook			#5	Halama			#5	Linnebrink		
	Bullpen-Ranking	#10	#4		Bullpen-Ranking	#7	#2		Bullpen-Ranking	#12	#4

CL	Julio			CL	Lopez			CL	Lopez		
SU	Stewart			SU	Lidge			SU	Tavarez		
SU	Grimsley			SU	Adams			SU	Speier		
	INF- Ranking	#11	#4		INF- Ranking	#12	#4		INF- Ranking	#9	#3
C	Stinnett			C	Matheny			C	Schneider		
1B	Konerko			1B	Pena			1B	Mientkiewicz		
2B	Giles			2B	Belliard			2B	Hart		
3B	Jimenez			3B	Beltre			3B	Randa		
SS	Woodward			SS	Loretta			SS	Eckstein		
	OF/DH Ranking	#7	#3		OF/DH Ranking	#8	#3		OF/DH Ranking	#11	#4
OF	Abreu			OF	Davanon			OF	Encarnacion		
OF	Matos			OF	Green			OF	Payton		
OF	Cabrera			OF	Guerrero			OF	Gerut		
DH	Clark			DH	Thomas			DH	Palmeiro		
	Farm Rating-	#2			Farm Rating-	#8			Farm Rating-	#12	
BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way			BA	Help On the Way		
#7	Kaz Matsui			39	Hanley Ramirez						
#14	Zach Greinke			92	Bobby Brownlie						
#23	Gavin Floyd			93	Jeff Francis						
#40	Merkin Valdez			97	Bryan Bullington						
#79	Michael Aubrey										
#87	Francisco Rosario										

#10 Fleetwood (Projected Record 67-95)

Above average OF, but pitching limits ceiling. Both the lower portion of the rotation and the pen do not match up well with the top-notch teams. The infield is also devoid of the necessary parts to contend. The future is one of the brightest in the league, as the have enough stars to be a full constellation.
Greatest Need: Continue to assemble pieces for rebuilding.

#11 Charlevoix (Projected Record 62-100)

Decent bullpen and rotation, but the line-up has too many holes. Projects to be on the losing end of many 4-1 games. Help should be on the way if some lower ranked prospects pan out. The GM is always an active trader, so anything is possible, but the holes here would be difficult to plug.
Greatest Need: Improve Infield and wait for a full season from Guerrero.

#12 Port Richey (Projected Record 48-114)

Long season projected here. Softball scores are likely and the offense will have a hard time keeping up. You have but to look at the top of this rating to see the beauty in this position, as everyone with a chance will overpay for talent from teams like this in their quest. Likely candidate for high picks and this active GM can truly follow in Andy's footsteps and flip the ratings in a short time.
Greatest Need: Use position to secure future returns from contenders, as the talent gap cannot be bridged this season.

2004 Player Usage

To avoid any problems with player over-usage, here is how the league will handle usage this year. The initial BRASSball league files, sent by Dave Little, contain the actual amount of PA/IP that players accumulated in the Majors last season. As such, the usage will be 1.05 times the amount of PA/IP listed. Note the amount for each of your players to ensure that you are tracking to the correct limits.

The BRASSball league game structure may or may not have the players' 2003 ML statistics adjusted during the season. It is each BRASSball owner's responsibility to know their players' limits, regardless of whether or not an adjustment to stats occurred.

However, we will attempt to "not" adjust the league files during the season. If this does occur, we will attempt to notify the membership that they were adjusted. Just be forewarned that it is still the BRASSball owner's responsibility to know their players' limits.

If a BRASSball owner exceeds the usage buffer (5 PA or hitters and 3 IP for pitchers) for a player, the following fines will result:

- Each plate appearance over the buffer will cost \$250,000.
- Each inning pitched over the buffer results in a \$500,000 fine.

In-Season Standings Incentive Program

This is a reminder about the In-Season Standings Incentive Program. The purpose of this program is to provide results "as they happen" to the LD so he can have the up-to-date standings published on the website.

Here is the text from the constitution pertaining to this incentive program:

In order for the league to have up-to-the-moment standings on the league website, the following incentive program is in place.

When a manager completes a HOME series he sends a message to the LD that states in the Subject line the results of the series. Example: OCALA (2) @ MINNESOTA (2). This is all that is needed. Please follow that format.

A manager will receive \$10,000 for each series reported in such manner. If a manager reports all 23 of the series that he is responsible for, he receives a \$70,000 bonus, which results in the equivalent of one newsletter article.

As this is meant to reflect the contribution equivalent of a newsletter article, the same rules apply as outlined in the "Article Incentive Program," i.e., the maximum allowed articles is twelve, the LD doesn't receive credit for articles and so forth.

MO – Y1 Contract Upgrades

Brent Butler (Box City)
Kelly Wunsch (Maine)
Joe Vitiello (Ocala)

Trades

59. Bakersfield trades Conor Jackson to Fleetwood for \$400,000.
60. Maine trades Jimmy Haynes and Tony Mounce to Fleetwood for \$700,000.
61. Gem City trades Aaron Cook and Scott Stewart to Fleetwood 1 share of IMClone stock.
62. Gem City trades Rod Beck to Metropolis for \$200,000.
63. Brooklyn trades Akinori Otsuka to Metropolis for \$550,000.
64. Boston trades John Burkett and \$2,000,000 to Fleetwood for 2 packages of Big League Chew (grape flavored).

65. Ocala trades Endy Chavez and D.J. Carrasco to Port Richey for Port Richey's 2005 3rd and 5th round draft choices.
66. Toledo trades Ron Villone, Kevin Gryboski, Travis Blackley and Kazuhito Tadano to Cook County for David Ortiz and Cook County's 2005 5th round draft choice.
67. Springfield trades Orlando Merced and Dee Brown to Cook County for \$300,000.
68. Hessville trades Abraham Nunez (Pit) to Fleetwood for Fleetwood's 2005 8th round draft choice.
69. Springfield trades Corey Koskie to Stanley for Jose Mesa, Stanley's 2005 4th round draft choice and 2006 2nd round draft choice.
70. Gem City trades Adam Bernero to Cook County for \$50,000.

Upcoming League Deadlines

April 15

April Home Series Results deadline

Series results for April are due to home opponents, League Statistician and Backup Statistician.

May Trade deadline.

Trades must be reported to the LD by this date to be effective for May.

April 25

May Rotation deadline.

Starting pitcher rotations for May games due to the LD.

May Road Instructions deadline.

Instructions (HAL) for May games are due to road opponents.

League Membership Articles

Jim Clark submitted the March edition of Mets Watch

Glen Allen Welcomes New Players Selected in the Draft.

Rookie outfielder Reed Johnson was an early arrival in the Florida clubhouse this past week. "I was so anxious to get to the ballpark this morning, I woke up before the alarm went off. The sun was coming up and it was a beautiful drive over. Upon arriving, I was greeted warmly by Trot (Nixon.)"

The Mets expect to platoon these two in right field, with Nixon seeing the bulk of the action as the cleanup batter behind Pujols against right-handed pitcher. Johnson will probably bat sixth against the left-handed pitchers.

The bullpen gained a few new guys that throw from the port side. Tom Martin, Brian Shouse and Trevor Miller will compete for the left-handed set up spot. Bullpen coach John Stearns liked the competition between these guys; "These guys are not wide-eyed rookies looking to make the major league team for the first time. Any of these guys could be effective for us this season."



GOLD STAR For Mets Scouting Department

Last year six of the amateurs on the roster made it up to the Majors. This past winter there were a lot of late night studying the scouting reports to get prepared for the annual rookie draft. Met GM commented, "We have selected a nice group of amateurs to fill our roster. John Maine projects to be a top of the rotation pitcher in a few years. Jorge De La Rosa and Jesse Crain are both hard throwers that could be in our bullpen as early as next year. Jose Castillo is an infielder that could develop some power as his body fills out. Sledge and Krynzel are outfielders with a good combination of speed and power. Termel looks like a corner, while David has the range to play in center field. And we still

have Kevin Youkilis a great hitter playing third and waiting for the power to start."

"In addition, the Mets have an assortment of other minor league players that are waiting for their opportunities. One that our scouts were excited to land was Stephen Smitherman. He was the Cincinnati minor league player of the year and had a cup of coffee last year, so technically is not an amateur, but we feel he projects into a powerful left fielder."

"It seems like one can never have enough catchers so we selected Adam Melhuse from Oakland. Right now he seems to be no more than a platoon player, but if he hits with some power, he may work his way up the depth chart."

"Of course, the Mets have a vast array of pitchers in the minors. We wound up getting an extra one when Milton was selected by New Hampshire. Eric will be on the disabled list this season, but I was sorry that we lost him. I still think he could turn into a great one."



The Mets will start the season with a couple pitchers on the disabled list with tendonitis. Orlando and Runelvys Hernandez (Not brothers) will be unavailable for this month. Runelvys has been soft tossing so he will have an extended spring in Florida to be ready in May or June. Unfortunately, Orlando will not pitch this season. He hopes to recover and pitch next year.