

BRASSBALL: News and Notes

Volume II, No.5

April, 1996

IT'S TIME TO PLAY!!

Play Ball! Plenty of questions are soon to be answered. It's time to see whether Box City can win back to back championships. Whether Greg Maddux can win his 2nd straight Cy Young Award for Charlevoix. And who's this Nomo kid down in St. Lucie?! It should be an interesting year indeed. It is quite possible that there will be 6 different division champs this season. Many teams which took some serious lumps last year could make strong playoff runs in 1996. Included in this month's newsletter is a divisional breakdown, along with predictions and team summaries.

ONLY ONE LEAGUE STATISTICIAN THIS YEAR

Tom Taormina will be handling stats for BOTH leagues this year, since nobody else stepped up to handle the A.L. job. We all should thank Tom for his willingness to undertake this heavy burden. In order to make this task more manageable, Tom and I have agreed that we need to make a change in the way we report stats to the Statistician. Enclosed with this newsletter is a detailed instruction sheet laying out the new procedure. I think you will find it to be very simple. However, if you do have any questions, contact Tom immediately. **We will use this system starting with this month's games!** Please be sure to follow these instructions to the letter. Failure to comply will unfortunately be met with a penalty, in the form of a financial deduction to your bank account. Please keep the instruction sheet somewhere safe for future use.

The League Historian position is now available, too. Anyone interested in handling this job should contact me. Finally, Vaughn Nuestr will be the draft conductor for the 1997 rookie draft. Vaughn replaces the recently departed Jim Klugh in that capacity.

TRADES

58. Canyon Country trades Tommy Gregg and Milt Thompson to Bloomington for \$200,000.
59. Bloomington trades Jeff Nelson to Long Island for Todd Steverson and Long Island's #1 and #2 picks in 1998.
60. Bloomington trades Todd Steverson and Bloomington's #2 pick in 1998 to Long Island for Kevin Stocker.
61. Richmond trades Pedro Astacio and Chan Ho Park to Charlevoix for Chris Snopek, Brad Fullmer, and Jeremy Burnitz.
62. Richmond trades Domingo Cedeno to Arlington for John Vanderwal and \$600,000.
63. Nome trades Joe Orsulak and Geronimo Pena to Naptown for Mike Kingery.
64. Cook County trades Eddie Guardado and its #5 pick to Socal for Mike Fetters, Vince Palacios, Spike Owen, and \$50,000.
65. Long Island sends Chip Hale to Cook Co. for \$150,000.
66. Cook County acquires Joe Orsulak from Naptown for \$174,000.
67. Box City sends Joe Kmak and D. Berryhill to L. Island for \$450,000.

CONTRACT SIGNINGS---Signings effective for April games. (Remember, you shouldn't be using a player who has not been signed to a major league contract!!)

Midwest Storm: Sign Jose Offerman and JR Phillips to 3-year deals.

Cook County: Signs Tim Pugh and Keith Lockhart to 2-year deals. Sign Dave Hollins and Orlando Miller to 3-years.

Long Island: Damon Berrhill to 1 year, Pat Meares to 3 years.

Hessville: Jesus Tavarez to a 3-year deal.

Bloomington: Dave Mlicki and Scott Stahoviak to 3 years. Robby Thompson to 2 years. John Cummings and Milt Thompson to 1 year.

Richmond: Carlos Perez to a 4-year deal.

Canyon Country: Jeff Reed to 1 year. Jason Jacome to a 2-year deal.

Naptown: Joe Oliver to a 3-year deal.

1996 Divisional Previews

A.L. EAST

1. **St. Lucie Snook:** The Snook were edged out for a wild card spot last year, but don't expect that to happen in 1996. These fish have some serious teeth. As if the outfield wasn't good enough--Tony Phillips, Glenallen Hill, and oh yeah, that Albert guy, the Snook have the most potent infield in the league. From third to first, Vinny Castilla, John Valentin, Jeff Kent, and Mickey Tettleton. With Harold Baines as the DH, this could easily be the most lethal offense in all BRASSball. With Hideo Nomo, Dennis Martinez, and Al Leiter, the Snook have a solid 1-2-3 in the rotation. Steve Reed and Julian Tavarez will protect many leads in 96.
2. **Hessville Evereadys:** Hessville is shooting at back to back division titles, and will go as far as their pitching will take them. Led by ace Jack McDowell, the Evereadys have a deep and balanced starting five. In John Smiley and David Wells, Hessville has two of the better southpaws around. Frankie Castillo has had a good spring, and should be tough as well, with Jamie Moyer/Felipe Lira fighting for the final spot in the rotation. Sammy Sosa and Cecil Fielder will provide 75 homeruns and 220 RBI if healthy. Bernie Williams is primed for a breakthrough year. If Moises Alou can stay healthy, look out! The bullpen may be the weak link here, with no established closer to speak of. Rookie Doug Bochtler could be key in replacing last year's closer extraordinaire Pedro Martinez, who has been troubled all spring with arm trouble and may miss part of the season.
3. **Minnesota Mudcats:** Slowly but surely, this franchise is rising through the ranks. There is no questioning the future is bright here, but the present isn't too shabby either. Andy Benes, Tom Candiotti, Kenny Rogers, Roger Pavlik, and Steve Sparks provide the 'Cats with 5 solid hurlers out of the rotation. Mark Wohler, Eric Plunk, and Doug Henry are all high quality pitchers, too. Tino Martinez and Dave Magadan will be asked to lead a group of talented rookies in Charles Johnson, Troy O'Leary, Marty Cordova, and Ron Coomer. If not this year, gems like Alex Rodriguez and Andruw Jones provide Minnesota fans with the knowledge that the future is bright.
4. **Crown Point Comets:** This team is loaded with solid prospects, it just might be asking too much to expect much this year. Jeff Bagwell and Terry Pendleton will provide the experience and leadership youngsters like Ray Durham, Carl Everett, and Rondell White need. Juan Guzman and Jim Bullinger lead a young staff, which includes promising rookies Jason Isringhausen and Esteban Loaiza. With Johnny Damon a year away, this team looks poised to make some noise in the near future.

AL CENTRAL

1. **Richmond Madhatters:** Barring injuries, the Madhatters look to be the class of this division in 96. Tom Glavine, Pedro Martinez, and Shane Reynolds are all reliable pitchers. And when they do require some help, the Richmond bullpen is by far the best in the division, maybe the league. Greg McMichael, Todd Worrell, and rookie Troy Percival should provide opposing hitters with more than they want in those late-inning crunch time situations. The offense certainly rivals the one down in St. Lucie. Big Boppers like Larry Walker, Tim Salmon, and Jose Canseco will provide the home crowd with plenty to cheer about, as well as plenty of souvenirs. Walt Weiss and Roberto Alomar provide one of the best defensive duos in all BRASSball. Eric Karros looks like he's ready to bust loose with a career year, and prized rookie Chipper Jones is ready to debut as the every-day third baseman. Tough nuts for the rest of the division.
2. **Arlington Thoroughbreds:** Last year's 100-win squad was a post season disappointment, and they'll look to bounce back in 96. Ray Lankford and Matt Williams are back and will lead the attack. Newcomer Dante Bichette came over as part of the Tim Salmon deal, and he should provide some sock. Tim Lincecum and Andres Galarraga are back as well, and looking to put the Thoroughbreds back in the playoffs. They might get there, but will need some help from a questionable pitching staff. Ricky Bones is back as the ace, but it is a crapshoot after that. Willie Blair, Mark Gardner, and rookies Scott Karl and Glen Dishman are the leading candidates to fill out the rotation. However, recent trades of Greg McMichael and John Vanderwal may indicate that this club isn't looking to make much of an impact this year.
3. **Box City Parcelmen:** Last year's World Series Champs will have a tough time repeating their tremendous season this year. They still have All-World Barry Bonds and underrated Jay Buhner at the outfield corners, with rookie Tom Gooden taking over in center for oft-injured Lenny Dykstra. Charlie Hayes and Paul Sorrento provide some sock at the infield corners too, but as in Arlington, the pitching is a big question. Eric Hanson and Ken Hill are solid, (although the team is concerned about Hill's tender

shoulder) but after that, the Parcelmen will need to bank on Rheal Cormier, Shawn Boskie, and Steve Ontiveros. Not rheal encouraging, is it?

4. **Cook County Maulers:** It looks like another year in the cellar for this club, as the pitching just keeps getting worse and worse. In Jose Rijo, Aaron Sele, and Pete Harnisch, you'd think this club had potential. But with all three nursing various injuries in spring training, it could be another long year in Cook County. It is too bad, because the offense looks darn good on paper: Mike Piazza, Dean Palmer, Juan Gonzalez, Gary Sheffield, and Carlos Baerga are all among the best at their positions. It's just asking too much for the offense to offset this lousy pitching staff.

AL WEST

1. **Socal Golden Knights:** The Knights' road to repeating as divisional champ this year may be a bit tougher than last, when they clinched around May! The pitching and offense look slightly weaker, while the competition within the division is stronger. The rotation is led by the consistent Ramon Martinez. Doug Drabek, Jaime Navarro and Mark Gubicza should provide depth and stability. Jose Mesa assumes the full time job as closer. Fred McGriff and Dave Justice will be helped by recent acquisitions Greg Jefferies and young Jason Bates, while Steve Finley is solid in CF. While the offense is good, it is the pitching which gives the Knights the edge on its competition.

2. **Santa Barbara Outlaws:** If you thought the Outlaws could hit last year, wait 'til you see this year's crew. Where to start? Mo Vaughn is the team's MVP candidate, although he may spend much time as DH with slick-fielding JT Snow ready to shine at 1B. Raul Mondesi, Brian McRae, and Mike Greenwell are solid in the outfield, and help is on the way! Young stud Garret Anderson is expected to contribute heavily in 96. The middle infield has Carlos Garcia and young Alex Gonzalez, with Chris Hoiles behind the plate. Once again, however, the pitching could be a problem (do you see a league-wide pattern developing?). Scott Erickson and Kevin Tapani will provide innings, if nothing else. Young Todd Van Poppel could emerge as the ace before the season ends. After that, the manager will have to do a little mixing and matching with the rotation.

3. **Midwest Storm:** The Storm could easily finish higher, if the offense kicks in. Jim Thome and Wil Cordero will provide much of the thunder this year, with help from Hal Morris and Devon White. The rotation could be o.k, with ace Andy Ashby leading the way. Southpaws Denny Neagle and Trevor Wilson are solid, and Bob Tewksbury is around, too. Youngsters Brad Radke and Tyler Green may get a looksee this year as well. Fireballer Ricky Bottalico will ensure that those late inning leads don't get wasted.

4. **South Bend Golden Domers:** This team, focused on the future, may struggle this year. MVP Ken Griffey Jr is here, but like last year, he needs some help. Joe Carter and Todd Zeile will give Griff some protection in the lineup, and youngster Quilvio Veras should cause opposing pitchers some headaches. Alex Fernandez, John Burkett, and Greg Swindell give the Domers some hope for a decent rotation, while Tom Henke will likely close. With Derek Jeter and a solid minor league system, this team is on its way up.

NL EAST

1. **Long Island Tigers:** Last year's NL champs look to answer with another pennant. John Smoltz, Kevin Appier, and Orel Hershiser are a tough trio for certain. Recent addition Jeff Nelson will help an already strong bullpen which includes the Eck, Belinda, and Jeff Montgomery. As was the case last year, Big Frank Thomas will be the focus for opposing pitchers. Mike Blowers, Chad Curtis, Orlando Merced, and John Olerud will provide some support, though it is unlikely any will prevent opposing pitchers from being very careful when facing The Big Hurt. For Long Island to succeed, they'll need one or two other players to step up with big offensive years. The pitching will be there.

2. **Wauwatosa Wizards:** If Long Island doesn't win it, chances are Wauwatosa will. Wil Clark & Craig Biggio are a great right side of the infield. Greg Gagne is solid if unspectacular at SS. 3B could be a problem however, with Scott Cooper the likely starter. David Segui should be solid in LF, and Stan Javier will provide speed and defense in CF. The Wizards return with another lefty heavy rotation, as Avery, Fassero, and Langston all return. Free agent acquisition Kevin Ritz will be the #1 (and possibly only) righty in the rotation, with Sid Fernandez likely the #5 starter. With a good bullpen, the Wizards appear poised for a playoff run. A division title may be one big bopper away.

3. **Motor City Madmen:** With Otis Nixon in CF, Morandini and Vizquel up the middle, and Javy Lopez behind the plate, the Madmen sport a solid middle of the diamond. Then you have the offensive firepower of

a Ken Caminiti, Ryan Klesko, and hotshot rookie Shawn Green to contend with. Ohh, if only pitching wasn't important. Unfortunately, it is, and the Madmen are clearly a pint or two short in that area. Joey Hamilton is a solid #1, but after that, there are many questions. How strong is Donovan Osborne's flipper? Are Danny Jackson and Ron Darling over the hill? Can Jimmy Key contribute? Needless to say, there could be some slugfests in Motor City, 1996.

4. **Racine Heat:** Mike Mussina and Kenny Lofton are two of the game's best. They just don't seem to have enough support this year to pose much of a threat. Jeff King, Rusty Greer, and Al Martin will provide some sock, and Royce Clayton/Mark Lemke are great up the middle. However, as with Motor City, the pitching is a problem. Mussina is a given. Paul Quantrill has been a surprise this spring, though he is still unproven. Jason Bere reported to camp overweight and has struggled so far. After that, it's a crapshoot. John Wetteland is among the best closers around. How much work he gets this year is the question.

NL CENTRAL

1. **Charlevoix Cutters:** The defending champs of this division should be back near the top again, but as last year, it will be a dog-fight. The Cutters have the edge in the area that matters most....pitching. Well, that may be an oversimplification of things. One to ten, the Cutter's staff is good, but not outstanding. What sets it apart is their ace, Greg Maddux. Twenty wins is next to a lock, and the Cutters win most games he starts. Bobby Jones is a nice #2, and recent acquisition Pedro Astacio will be a big plus. Chris Hammond and rookie Bill Pulsipher provide a nice lefty-righty balance to the rotation. Bobby Bonilla, Rafael Palmeiro, Edgar Martinez, and Geronimo Berroa provide the punch, while ageless Brett Butler will again provide the judy.

2. **Naptown Blind Lemons:** This team could finish first or last, you just cannot tell. The hitting could be awesome, the pitching, well, it might not be quite that good. Here's the projected opening day lineup: R.Henderson, Sanchez, O'Neill, Edmonds, B. Jordan, Gaetti, Colbrunn, Daulton, Disarcina. Not an easy out in the bunch! (Not to mention five 20+ HR hitters) The big question is whether guys like Wilson Alvarez, Pat Rapp, Brett Saberhagen, and Darryl Kile can provide quality starts on a consistent basis. A bullpen of Brad Clontz and Bryce Florie, along with swingman Dave Burba, will help.

3. **Bloomington Bees:** Last year's divisional doormat begins its ascent to the top this year, with a balanced team which will surprise some people. The offense will be there, provided Ron Gant and Mark McGwire play. Robin Ventura is a rock at third, and Todd Hundley is one of the better all-around catchers in the league. Ruben Sierra and Brett Boone should also drive in some key runs this year. The Bees have a solid #1 in Kevin Brown. Rookies Andy Pettite and Dave Mlicki are vital to Bee hopes, and Pat Hentgen and Steve Trachsel need to perform better than they did this spring. With a better than average bullpen, the Bees will be stinging quite a few teams this year.

4. **East Indy Tiggers:** This team will definitely compete for the postseason, and could easily finish at the top of the division. It is just too close to call. Dave Cone gives the Tiggers the closest thing this division has to Greg Maddux. The rest of the rotation is solid as well, with Hitchcock, Stottlemyre, and Belcher the key players. Heath Slocumb is expected to close this year, with support from Mike Jackson, Jerry Dipoto, and Randy Veres. The offense is a bit short of last year's wild-card team, but it is still dangerous. Barry Larkin is the anchor of the infield, as well as the lineup. With help from John Jaha, Luis Gonzalez, Pedro Munoz, and Wally Joyner, the Tiggers will be in alot of ballgames.

NL WEST

1. **Nome Gnomes:** The Gnomes took their lumps last year, but it appears many of their youngsters are ready for prime-time now. Manny Ramirez-Brian Hunter-Reggie Sanders could be among the league's best young outfielders. Kurt Abbott and Travis Fryman are both young and potentially very productive on the left side of the infield. Veterans such as Don Mattingly and Eddie Murray will help to take some of the pressure off those youngsters. Ivan Rodriguez will catch a promising rotation led by Curt Schilling. Behind him are up and comers Pete Scourek and Ismael Valdes. Journeyman Mark Leiter has been the talk of camp, and will settle into the #4 slot in the rotation. I could say the bullpen may be a bit thin, but that's like finding a pimple on Miss America.

2. **Emerald City Cyclones:** Another team which had a tough '95 and looks ready to push for the playoffs. Randy Johnson should anchor a consistent staff which includes impressive youngster Mike Hampton, Flash Gordon, and Chris Bosio. Norm Charlton may close, with help from Rob Nen. To call the offense pesky

would be an understatement. There are seven potential .300 hitters on this team. Kirby Puckett, Derek Bell, and Jim Eisenreich will patrol the outfield. Mark Grace and Chuck Knoblauch are all-stars, and form an air-tight right side of the infield, while Shawon Dunston and Kevin Seitzer are no slouches offensively on the other side. Darren Lewis in CF provides more of the speed and "D" this team will rely heavily upon this year.

3. **Nashville Assassins:** They won the division last year, and they have a shot again this year. Jim Abbott and free agent acquisition Bobby Witt head up the rotation. If Tim Wakefield throws as he has this spring, he could be a most welcome surprise. Youngster Bill VanLandingham is slated as the #4 starter. The bullpen, with John Franco, Jeff Brantley, and Curt Lescanic, appears set. The Assassins hope last year's numbers put up by Rico Brogna weren't a fluke. If they weren't, and Chili Davis, Jeff Conine, and Bip Roberts play to their potential, it could be another exciting year in Tennessee.

4. **Canyon Country Cannons:** This team sports four sure-fire Hall of Famers. Tony Gwynn, Paul Molitor, Wade Boggs, and Cal Ripken. Unfortunately, although still productive, their best days are likely behind them. Terry Steinbach and Vince Coleman are still solid performers as well. This team, under new ownership, will likely look to rebuild through the draft. Don't be surprised if one or two of these aging stars finds himself with a new address as the season moves on.

More E-MAIL!

Brendan Conrad can be reached
Rob Workman can be reached at

FINES

Cook County is fined \$250,000 for a late mailing to league opponent.

---remember guys, if you are late on a mailing, please stand up and admit it. If your opponent has to be the one to inform me, I'll assume you're trying to get away with one, which cheats those who actually do maintain a perfect in-season mailing record.

ROSTER CORRECTION

Please add T. Bradshaw, R. Holbert, J. Frascatore, S. Watkins, and Brandenburg to Charlevoix's roster. They are all on (MO) deals, and were not listed on last month's rosters.

NEW ADDRESS

Scott Campbell has a new address. It is :

TRADE WIRE

Midwest says.....Tyler Green is available. Looking for prospects!

South Bend says...Tom Henke is now available to a contender. Interested in young pitcher w/potential.

Willing to make salary concessions. Also, Cianfrocco, Howard, Howard (yes, there's two), and D. Hansen could help a contender. Want young talent and draft picks.

Racine says.....Need AB's!!!

ROSTER CUTS

Steve Buechelle, Bill Taylor, and Matt Nokes should not be listed on Naptown's roster...they were cut.

DEADLINES

April 15: Series Report Form to your league reporter.

-series results due to road opponents.

April 20: Rotations, trade report/wires, news articles all due to commish.

-road instructions due to opponents.

April 25: Team leader form, printed hard copy of team stats, and team stats on 3.5 HD disk.

That's all for now!! Talk on you in May!!

Bee's Wax

"If it happens in Bees' Baseball, we make it your "bee's wax" to know about it.

March 1996

Franks Blows a Gasket

Bloomington (AP):

"Nyyeeeeeaaaaahhhh!!!," said Bloomington Bees General Manager Herman Franks as he stuck out his tongue, put his thumbs in his ears and wiggled his fat fingers back and forth.

"You all buried me. You said the kids I drafted would never pan out. You derided my 75 years in baseball and laughed at me. Now who's laughing. Huh? I ask you, who's laughing now?"

Well Herman, it's still the media who are laughing. But now we're laughing at you personally instead of laughing at you professionally.

Herman's mature outburst was directed at the group of Bloomington sportswriters who were assembled at the annual pre-season "Bees Chat" with the local media and invited guests.

Herman droned on and on, spewing tobacco juice, smacking his rear end in public in mock chastisement and just carrying on like a braying mule. He went on this way until the power to his microphone was cut and he was ushered off the stage by several of the Bees Brass.

Some quick-thinking staffer cued up the Bees team song and played it loudly when Franks' mike was cut, unwittingly adding another layer of comedy to the surreal scene. One was reminded of an old Keystone

Cops movie as the disheveled, red-faced man was awkwardly carted away to the strains of the frenzied techno-buzzing noises in the Bees' song.

It was after this odd but entertaining scene that Bees team president and CEO Larry Biitner stepped to the podium to restore a sense of decorum to the proceedings.

"What Herman *meant* was that we're all really excited about the progress of our youngsters around here, and we hope you are too," said Biitner. "Herman and his staff have worked many long hours, perhaps *too* many long hours, to ensure that there is a bright future for the Bees."

"His edginess is probably my own fault," admitted Biitner. "His lack of popular support has left him living on a salary that is below the poverty level."

Biitner was referring to the unique, incentive-based salary arrangement he insisted on when the club hired Franks to be their GM. Franks' pay is tied to how highly the fans think of his work.

Franks is paid from profits generated by the game-day sales of "Herman's Franks", a special type of polish sausage which fans purchase as a show of support. Not surprisingly, Herman's perceived poor performance to date has found the locals extremely unwilling to buy any of the franks and has Herman feeling the pinch financially as well as psychologically.

Team officials have been denying rumors for months that Franks was having personal problems, and dismissed as speculation reports that Herman has developed a three-bag-a-day circus peanut habit.

Franks calls for Independent Review

Citing the inherent unfairness of a fan opinion-based salary structure, Franks publicly called for the evaluation of his young players by a firm of independent talent evaluators, just before his mike went dead. Turning a phrase which should familiar to baseball historians, Franks predicted that the chances were slim of this review actually being funded since tight-fisted team owner Vaughn Nuest "throws nickels around like they were manhole covers."

Independent Firm Reviews Bees Minor Leaguers

Perhaps bowing to a now sympathetic public after Franks' meltdown, or to the constant harassment and picketing of the ASOJO's (Anti-Stress on the Job Organization), Nuest commissioned a team of impartial talent scouts to offer an independent review and ranking of the organization's top minor league prospects. The position player portion of that report is re-printed below.

Bloomington Bees Top 10 Position Player Prospects

1. BENJI GIL

AGE: 23 POS: SS
B: R T: R Ht: 6'2" Wt: 180

This gifted athlete out of Mexico has already developed into a fine defensive major league shortstop with a fine arm. His hitting has been a little slower to come around. Scouts believe the guy will eventually hit, but he needs to be more selective at the plate. Bees insiders think Gil will soon supplant Kevin Stocker as the starting shortstop and grow into the fine fielding, .260+, double-digit HR, double-digit stealer shortstop they projected. He has the tools to be an All-Star one day.

2. BOBBY HIGGINSON

AGE: 25 POS: RF
B: L T: R Ht: 5'11" Wt: 180

Tough, late-bloomer from south-Philly with a little speed, pretty good range, a fine arm and some good power. Scouts believe Higginson will develop into at least a .270-.280 hitter with 15-20 HR potential. The ceiling is higher than this for Bobby, but he has to stop swinging for the fences to reach it. Higginson will take a walk and has double-digit steal potential. Bees brass expects Higginson to win the right-field job from Ruben Sierra one day soon.

3. RICH BECKER

AGE: 24 POS: CF
B: L T: L Ht: 5'10" Wt: 199

After blazing through the low minors, hitting well, fielding well and drawing comparisons to a young Lenny Dykstra, Becker's development has lately been impeded by injuries. This may be the season where Rich puts all his demons behind him and shows the average, speed, extra-base power, range and arm that scouts know he possesses. If so, the Bees have a starting center fielder job just waiting for someone to step up and claim it.

4. TODD HOLLANDSWORTH

AGE: 22 POS: LF
B: L T: L Ht: 6'2" Wt: 193

Ranked as the No. 44 prospect in the land by *Baseball America* and the No. 23 young major leaguer by *Baseball Weekly*, Todd has the pedigree and skills to be a star. Hollandsworth has a nice, compact swing that produces surprising pop. He has good speed and is delightfully reckless on the bases and in the field. His fine outfield instincts and strong, accurate throwing arm make him a very strong candidate to one day push Bees' left fielder Ron Gant into a DH role.

5. DWAYNE HOSEY

AGE: 29 POS: CF
B: S T: R Ht: 5'10" Wt: 170

Ranked as the No. 44 young major leaguer by *Baseball Weekly*, Hosey is the Rodney Dangerfield of baseball prospects. He is a switch-hitter with power, speed and a good batting average. He can play defense. He has both tools and skills. He was the American Association Player of the Year in 1994. Dwayne has proven everything there is to prove at the minor league level and just may wind up as a Bees starting outfielder for many years to come.

6. SCOTT STAHOVIAK

AGE: 26 POS: 1B
B: L T: R Ht: 6'5" Wt: 222

This former first-round MLB pick is famous for his batting-practice power displays. Unfortunately, he seems to leave that swing in the batting cage when game time comes. A big guy with a nice left-handed stroke and fine defensive skills at first base, Stahoviak will find lots of PA's available behind the oft-injured regular Bees first baseman, Mark McGwire. If Scott were to blossom to his fullest power potential, the job may be his for the taking.

7. BILLY ASHLEY

AGE: 25 POS: LF
B: R T: R Ht: 6'7" Wt: 235

Another enigmatic player who blasts prodigious batting practice homers

and can't seem to muster the same stuff at game time. There's more hope for Ashley's power to arrive though since Billy has displayed it at every minor league stop.

He's an extremely poor outfielder, whose future probably lies as a first baseman or DH. Billy could see some platoon action with the Bees or if he figures out his problems, could win a full-time job at some point in the future. Few major leaguers display his raw power.

8. CHRIS WIDGER

AGE: 24 POS: C
B: R T: R Ht: 6'3" Wt: 195

Underrated catching prospect with excellent defensive skills, strong arm, calls a good game and has shown a rapidly improving offensive performance. Slugged over .500 at AAA last year. Already good enough to be a solid major league catcher, but Bees starter Todd Hundley stands in the way at present.

9. WILLIE GREENE

AGE: 24 POS: 3B
B: L T: R Ht: 5'11" Wt: 184

His quick, powerful bat has been his minor league calling card, but those traits have so far not been in evidence during any of his four major league auditions. Willie's major league opportunities will not present themselves indefinitely. He's talented enough to be a good major league ballplayer. But he has to show it or he can forget it.

10. RAUL CASANOVA

AGE: 23 POS: C
B: S T: R Ht: 6'0" Wt: 192

A switch-hitting catcher prospect with fine power and a good arm, Raul is a fine commodity to own. Casanova has a few holes in his game to work on, but has great talent and is just 23. He can spend the next two-three years improving his game before he's ready to try to challenge Hundley and/or Widger for playing time in the Bees catching department. It could be an interesting battle if Casanova develops to his considerable potential.

Next Month: Top 10 Pitcher Prospects

Annual Look at BRASSball's Rookie Talent

by Tom Taormina

It's back! As the title says, I plan to make this an annual newsletter article. This year's survey differs from last years. Last year the focus of the survey was on uncarded players only. Players who retained rookie status, but were carded did not score points for their BRASSball organizations. The reason was that I wanted to see how everyone stacked up in the amateur portion of their BRASSball dispersal draft. It would be unrealistic to try doing the same type of analysis based on this year's rookie draft. Most teams only had a few amateur spots open, Long Island had none. So I decided to do the analysis using both carded and uncarded players who retained rookie status. *Baseball America* and *Spring Training Baseball Yearbook* both publish top 100 prospect lists. They rank the players from 1 to 100. I assigned a point value to each player in reverse of his ranking, where the #1 ranked player got 100 points, the #2 got 99 points, and so on down to the 100th ranked player. As I said last year *Spring Training* does as good a job as *Baseball America*. Also don't worry that much about your player being ranked low on the list. There are plenty of players who rank high on these types of lists who flop, or are total busts. Conversely, there are a lot of players who rank low on these lists, or for that matter don't make them at all, who become stars. This chart is just for fun. 5 years from now a team at the bottom of the list might be laughing, while a team at the top might be saying, "What happened?" To prove my point, in last year's article, I said that even though St. Lucie had no amateurs on *Spring Training's* list, I thought they had some good talent, especially Vladimir Guerrero. They also owned Jeff Suppan, Scott Rolen and Bob Abreu. This year all 4 made *Spring Training's* list, and total 328 points. Guerrero is ranked number 7. See I told you so.

This year's dark horse organization is a tie. Both East Indy and Hessville scored low on the accompanying chart. However, they each have some good prospects in my opinion. Hessville's Estes is in the right MLB organization (SF) for a pitcher. Jimmy Haynes is a lock. East Indy picked Jonathan Johnson who was taken in the first round by Texas in the 1995 MLB draft. Like Detroit's Mike Drumright, Johnson was a college pitcher who is believed to be close to pitching in the majors. Rich Aurilia is a sleeper.

TEAM	BASEBALL AMERICA		SPRING TRAINING MAG		TOTAL POINTS
	# PLAYERS	POINTS	# PLAYERS	POINTS	
LONG ISLAND	6	527	6	469	996
BLOOMINGTON	6	429	7	444	873
RICHMOND	4	325	5	287	612
MINNESOTA	5	320	5	284	604
NASHVILLE	4	263	5	318	581
MOTOR CITY	6	366	5	207	573
CHARLEVOIX	6	306	4	245	551
ARLINGTON	4	239	6	271	510
ST. LUCIE	3	203	4	235	438
WAUWATOSA	5	229	2	149	378
EMERALD CITY	4	224	4	134	358
SOUTH BEND	4	202	2	116	318
COOK COUNTY	4	131	4	169	300
SoCAL	3	156	3	121	277
MIDWEST	2	122	3	150	272
CROWN POINT	2	109	2	153	262
NOME	2	91	2	155	246
SANTA BARBARA	1	15	6	217	232
BOX CITY	1	53	4	151	204
NAPTOWN	2	82	2	110	192
HESSVILLE	2	92	2	74	166
CANYON COUNTY	2	87	2	70	157
EAST INDY	1	2	1	28	30
RACINE	0	0	0	0	0

Some notes about the survey: Bloomington scored the most players on a list with 7 on *Spring Training's*. Watch out for those up and coming Bee's pitchers! The highest ranked player on one list, but not on the other is Motor City's Livan Hernandez. The reason probably is, that the list was compiled before Hernandez signed with Florida. The 2 highest un-owned players on the *Baseball America* list, I happen to own in an other league. That's the league where you can own as many minor league players as you want. There are over 3000 players on the league's rosters. It makes it a real challenge to build a team. As I said above, I had no amateur slots open, but if I did, the first player I would have taken is still available. No one took him, only 1 other league member knows who he is and he's been sworn to secrecy. Of the players taken, if I had a slot open, the first player I would have taken is St. Lucie's Rocky Coppinger. Nome's Trey Beamon has suffered a precipitous fall in *Baseball America's* ranking falling from #43 last year to #90. All this after moving up from AA to AAA and hitting .334, the knock on Beamon has been that he hasn't shown much power during his minor league career and he's not a real basestealing threat. They said the same thing about Jim Edmonds, at 6'3" Beamon has the size to develop power. SS Gabe Alvarez San Diego's 2nd round pick in 95 out of USC, and Cook County's 4th pick in the 3rd round of the BRASSball draft has been the talk of the Padres spring camp. As like last year, there were only a handful of uncarded left-handed pitchers chosen in the BRASSball draft, ensuring that they'll be plentiful in future drafts as carded players. Everyone knows they don't do as well in SOM as in real life, and we devalue them further with high ballpark homerun numbers.

SPRING TRAINING'S ROOKIE ANALYSIS CHART

Rank	Player	Owned By	Points	Rank	Player	Owned By	Points
1	Paul Wilson	Long Island	100	51	Alex Ochoa	Motor City	50
2	Andruw Jones	Minnesota	99	52	Rafael Orellano	Midwest	49
3	Darin Erstad	Arlington	98	53	Richard Hidalgo	Midwest	48
4	Ruben Rivera	Long Island	97	54	Trot Nixon	Long Island	47
5	Alan Benes	Bloomington	96	55	Kerry Wood	Bloomington	46
6	Derek Jeter	South Bend	95	56	James Baldwin	Nashville	45
7	Vladimir Guerrero	Richmond	94	57	Neifi Perez	Naptown	44
8	Ben Davis	Nashville	93	58	Steve Gibralter	Santa Barbara	43
9	Bartolo Colon	Bloomington	92	59	Tony Mounce	***Not Owned***	42
10	Billy Wagner	Nashville	91	60	Todd Hollandsworth	Bloomington	41
11	Karim Garcia	Long Island	90	61	Robert Smith	***Not Owned***	40
12	Todd Walker	Wauwatosa	89	62	Edgard Velazquez	***Not Owned***	39
13	Matt Drews	Charlevoix	88	63	Brian Barber	Box City	38
14	Jose Valentin	Santa Barbara	87	64	Jay Powell	Santa Barbara	37
15	Alan Embree	Richmond	86	65	Jose Pett	***Not Owned***	36
16	Bob Abreu	Crown Point	85	66	Shannon Stewart	Emerald City	35
17	Jeff Suppan	Bloomington	84	67	Luis Castillo	***Not Owned***	34
18	Jason Schmidt	Long Island	83	68	Ray Ricken	***Not Owned***	33
19	Jaime Jones	Minnesota	82	69	George Arias	Box City	32
20	Jermaine Dye	Charlevoix	81	70	Tony Clark	Arlington	31
21	Ugueth Urbina	Box City	80	71	Arquimede Pozo	Santa Barbara	30
22	Jay Payton	Nome	79	72	Jaret Wright	Minnesota	29
23	Chad Hermansen	St. Lucie	78	73	Quinton McCracken	East Indy	28
24	Luis Andujar	Cook County	77	74	Desi Relaford	SoCal	27
25	Trey Beamon	Nome	76	75	John Wasdin	Nashville	26
26	Jeff D'Amico	Motor City	75	76	Donnie Sadler	Richmond	25
27	Derrick Gibson	Cook County	74	77	Raul Casanova	Bloomington	24
28	Rocky Coppinger	St. Lucie	73	78	Geoff Jenkins	Minnesota	23
29	Jason Kendall	SoCal	72	79	Todd Helton	SoCal	22
30	Jose Cruz Jr.	Emerald City	71	80	Jose Herrera	South Bend	21
31	Jimmy Haynes	Hessville	70	81	Chan Ho Park	Richmond	20
32	Ben Grieve	Motor City	69	82	Chris Fussell	St. Lucie	19
33	Terrell Wade	Crown Point	68	83	Doug Million	Emerald City	18
34	Nomar Garciaparra	Arlington	67	84	Dante Powell	***Not Owned***	17
35	Roger Cedeno	Naptown	66	85	Steve Cox	Cook County	16
36	Scott Rolen	St. Lucie	65	86	Enrique Wilson	Canyon County	15
37	Derrek Lee	Charlevoix	64	87	Jamey Wright	Arlington	14
38	Edgar Renteria	Nashville	63	88	Matt Morris	***Not Owned***	13
39	Jim Pittsley	Richmond	62	89	Glenn Williams	Charlevoix	12
40	Mike Drumright	Bloomington	61	90	Danny Graves	Santa Barbara	11
41	Jason Varitek	Wauwatosa	60	91	Sergio Nunez	Emerald City	10
42	Glendon Rusch	***Not Owned***	59	92	Sal Fasano	Santa Barbara	9
43	Todd Greene	Arlington	58	93	Julio Santana	Motor City	8
44	Jose Guillen	***Not Owned***	57	94	Damon Hollins	***Not Owned***	7
45	Bret Wagner	***Not Owned***	56	95	Jimmy Anderson	***Not Owned***	6
46	Richie Sexson	Canyon County	55	96	Brooks Kieschnick	Motor City	5
47	Andy Yount	***Not Owned***	54	97	Will Cunnane	Hessville	4
48	Pokey Reese	Midwest	53	98	Adam Riggs	Arlington	3
49	Rey Ordonez	Long Island	52	99	Antone Williamson	Cook County	2
50	LaTroy Hawkins	Minnesota	51	100	Bob Wolcott	Box City	1

BASEBALL AMERICA'S ROOKIE ANALYSIS CHART

Rank	Player	Owned By	Points	Rank	Player	Owned By	Points
1	Andruw Jones	Minnesota	100	51	Jason Varitek	Wauwatosa	50
2	Paul Wilson	Long Island	99	52	Chris Snopce	Charlevoix	49
3	Ruben Rivera	Long Island	98	53	Dustin Hermanson	Wauwatosa	48
4	Darin Erstad	Arlington	97	54	Chad Hermansen	St. Lucie	47
5	Alan Benes	Bloomington	96	55	Andrew Vessel	***Not Owned***	46
6	Derek Jeter	South Bend	95	56	Matt Morris	***Not Owned***	45
7	Karim Garcia	Long Island	94	57	Roger Cedeno	Naptown	44
8	Livan Hernandez	Motor City	93	58	Jose Valentin	South Bend	43
9	Vladimir Guerrero	Richmond	92	59	Todd Greene	Arlington	42
10	Ben Davis	Nashville	91	60	Pokey Reese	Midwest	41
11	Jason Schmidt	Long Island	90	61	Wilton Guerrero	***Not Owned***	40
12	Matt Drews	Charlevoix	89	62	Mike Drumright	Bloomington	39
13	Derrick Gibson	Cook County	88	63	Neifi Perez	Naptown	38
14	Billy Wagner	Nashville	87	64	Terrell Wade	Crown Point	37
15	Bartolo Colon	Bloomington	86	65	Enrique Wilson	Canyon County	36
16	Kerry Wood	Bloomington	85	66	Jamey Wright	Arlington	35
17	Rey Ordonez	Long Island	84	67	Jay Powell	South Bend	34
18	Chan Ho Park	Richmond	83	68	Brad Fullmer	Charlevoix	33
19	Rocky Coppinger	St. Lucie	82	69	Doug Million	Emerald City	32
20	Richard Hidalgo	Midwest	81	70	LaTroy Hawkins	Minnesota	31
21	Jay Payton	Nome	80	71	Steve Gilbralter	South Bend	30
22	Todd Walker	Wauwatosa	79	72	Shawn Estes	Hessville	29
23	Jose Cruz Jr.	Emerald City	78	73	Hiram Bocachica	Wauwatosa	28
24	Jim Pittsley	Richmond	77	74	Carlos Garcia	***Not Owned***	27
25	Jeff D' Amico	Motor City	76	75	Robert Smith	***Not Owned***	26
26	Jason Kendall	SoCal	75	76	Dan Serafini	***Not Owned***	25
27	Scott Rolen	St. Lucie	74	77	Scott Elarton	Wauwatosa	24
28	Donnie Sadler	Richmond	73	78	Brian Rose	***Not Owned***	23
29	Bob Abreu	Crown Point	72	79	Luis Castillo	***Not Owned***	22
30	Jermaine Dye	Charlevoix	71	80	Julio Santana	Motor City	21
31	Jaime Jones	Minnesota	70	81	Antone Williamson	Cook County	20
32	Todd Helton	SoCal	69	82	Chris Carpenter	***Not Owned***	19
33	Edgar Renteria	Nashville	68	83	Glendon Rusch	***Not Owned***	18
34	Jaret Wright	Minnesota	67	84	John Wasdin	Nashville	17
35	Jeff Suppan	Bloomington	66	85	Brad Rigby	***Not Owned***	16
36	Nomar Garciaparra	Arlington	65	86	Danny Graves	Santa Barbara	15
37	Ben Grieve	Motor City	64	87	Steve Cox	Cook County	14
38	Jimmy Haynes	Hessville	63	88	Miguel Tejada	***Not Owned***	13
39	Trot Nixon	Long Island	62	89	Desi Relaford	SoCal	12
40	Marty Janzen	***Not Owned***	61	90	Trey Beamon	Nome	11
41	Derrek Lee	Charlevoix	60	91	Jeff Abbott	***Not Owned***	10
42	Paul Konerko	Emerald City	59	92	Gabe Alvarez	Cook County	9
43	Alex Ochoa	Motor City	58	93	Jose Pett	***Not Owned***	8
44	Todd Hollandsworth	Bloomington	57	94	Preston Wilson	***Not Owned***	7
45	Andy Yount	***Not Owned***	56	95	Damon Hollins	***Not Owned***	6
46	Shannon Stewart	Emerald City	55	96	Joe Fontenot	***Not Owned***	5
47	Brooks Kieschnick	Motor City	54	97	John Frascatore	Charlevoix	4
48	Ugueth Urbina	Box City	53	98	Michael Coleman	***Not Owned***	3
49	Geoff Jenkins	Minnesota	52	99	Billy Percibal	East Indy	2
50	Richie Sexson	Canyon County	51	100	Josh Booty	***Not Owned***	1

GALE SPENDING SPLURGE LEAVES BUDGET CUPBOARD BARE

[by Brick Shithouse]

Milwaukee - The Wauwatosa Wizards' public relations staff found itself enmeshed in some major league damage control recently in response to rumors that the ballclub was on the verge of bankruptcy following owner/operator Bob "Commander" Gale's wild spending spree in the free agency process.

"Financially, the club is on completely solid ground," said PR Director Geena Davis. "Trust me. We are looking forward to a long and successful run here in the metropolitan Milwaukee area."

Media reaction and radio talk show buzz ranged all the way from "sheer lunacy" to "bold and strident fiscal management" in characterizing the Commander's spending of over \$30 million of the club's resources in bringing in free agents or retaining the team's own players by matching offers.

The spree reduced the team's liquid assets to under \$2 million, it was reported.

Pressed for comment, the Commander allowed that "I may have misgauged the market to a slight extent, particularly in the area of relief pitchers. But you have to realize that this is my staff's first time through this process. We didn't want to force ourselves into a position of having to trade a key player, and we weren't certain what kind of quality we'd find in the fourth round of the rookie draft."

To charges that he's a "ridiculous, rock-headed greenhorn" Gale responded simply, "Let's wait and see what the Wizards' record is after 162 games this year. At that point we'll be able to get a truer reading on whether this was money well spent or not."

And the product that the Commander will put on the field in 1996 does appear to be a credible one. The catching crew will be headed by Tony Eusebio, a restricted free agent signed by Gale to a 3-year contract for \$5.1 million. He'll be backed up by returnees Mike LaValliere and Tom Pagnozzi.

Will Clark will be back at first base and will be hitting somewhere in the middle of the lineup. Barry Lyons was signed in the rookie draft for bench depth at first, as well as at DH and possibly as an emergency catcher.

Team MVP Craig Biggio, in the second year of a 5-year deal, returns at second. He'll occupy one of the top three slots in the order on a daily basis.

The solid Greg Gagne is back at shortstop. He'll again assume a "bottom feeder" role in the batting order. The "\$3 million dollar man," as he was sarcastically dubbed by some pundits, Luis Sojo, will back up Gagne. Sojo will also see time at DH, in the outfield and even at second base, if needed.

Scott Livingstone was signed to play third base and drive in some big runs from the middle of the lineup. Scott Cooper returns to share time there also. In addition, Todd Haney was signed in the rookie draft in a platoon role.

The everyday outfield is projected to be David Segui in left, Stan Javier in center, and a platoon of Mark Whiten and Jerome

Walton in right. Segui will also spell Clark defensively at first base. Other outfielders are Andre Dawson, Luis Polonia, Alex Cole, and Scott Bullett.

The starting rotation will be comprised of Steve Avery, Mark Langston, Jeff Fassero and Kevin Ritz, signed to a 3-year deal for a whopping \$6.8 million. Fernando Valenzuela and "El Sid" Fernandez will split the fifth starter job.

The bullpen will be anchored by eccentric lefthanded closer Randy Myers. He'll be joined by Lee Smith, Roger McDowell, Mike Timlin (all acquired in free agency), rookie draft properties Scott Service and Rick Honeycutt, and returning bullpen specialists Steve Howe and Mel Rojas.

"We thought we saw a bit of a void to be filled in the NL East this season," explained Commander Gale. "Whether that's true or not, you can't be sure. But you never know when your next chance to make a run for it will come along, and I couldn't let this one get away. We'll deal with 1997 when we come to it."

As your faithful NL Reporter, I would like to provide a little feedback as we head into our second year, specifically in regard to the substance of your series reports you send to me every month.

Without naming anyone in particular, a couple of you are going way overboard in the amount of detail you are giving me. If you check the size of an average monthly league report, you'll notice that there is only room for three or four paragraphs, at the most, about every team, for the entire month.

I'm looking for accounts of especially exciting games, comebacks in the late innings, huge games by individual players, unusual events, injuries, observations and comments by owners, just color in general. Please try to distill this sort of information into your reports. Also of interest are ongoing statistical performances or great or very bad series performances, statistically.

At the other end of the spectrum, a couple of you aren't even leaving enough meat on the carcass to feed even the hardest of buzzards. Either that or you're writing your reports in invisible ink. Even a one sentence description of a game's highlights can be enough. Thank you!

WELCOME TO INDIANAPOLIS!

Well, the seasons almost underway, and the Tiggers are about to break spring training and get started. But is this the same Tiggers team that went 96-66, earned a playoff spot, and took Long Island to seven games after winning the first 3 of 4. NO! But we're hoping we will still be in the thick of things once the season ends. Here's a quick look at the transition this team has taken since the final game.

POS	1995	HOW LOST	PROJ 1996	HOW ACQUIRED
1B	JOYNER		JOYNER	
2B	REED	TRADE	GATES	TRADE
3B	BONILLA	TRADE	SPRAGUE	TRADE
SS	LARKIN		LARKIN	
UTL	GREBECK	TRADE	LISTACH	95 DRAFT
LF	MITCHELL	JAPAN	GONZALEZ	TRADE
CF	THOMPSON	MINORS	T.HOWARD	TRADE
RF	HAMMONDS	TRADE	TARASCO	TRADE
RF	MUNOZ		MUNOZ	
RES	MCDOWELL	CUT	DEVEREAUX	TRADE
DH	NEEL	JAPAN	JAHA	TRADE
C	WILSON		WILSON	
RES	TURNER	CUT	FABREGAS	95 DRAFT
BNC	JOSE	MINORS	MANTO	95 DRAFT
BNC			VAUGHN	TRADE
SP1	CONE		CONE	
SP2	ASHBY	TRADE	STOTTLEMYRE	TRADE
SP3	Z.SMITH	TRADE	HITCHCOCK	TRADE
SP4	TEWKSBRURY	TRADE	BELCHER	FA
SP5	FAJARDO	CUT	DOHERTY	TRADE
CL	JACKSON		JACKSON	
RP	BRANTLEY	TRADE	SLOCUMB	TRADE
RP	PLESAC		PLESAC	
RP	WORRELL	TRADE	DIPOTO	TRADE
RP	GARDINER	CUT	VERES	96 DRAFT
RP	CARTER	CUT		

Whew! Did you keep up with all that? Sometimes we can't. We've spent a little more money than we had planned, but we should be a good team. We believe we're a much more balanced team than last year. But only time will tell.

Questions for this year:

1. Who will replace Mitchell's power?
an Hopefully Jaha can atleast ease the pain of losing Mitchell.
2. Can anyone replace Ashby as teams #2 starter?
an No. But we feel are 2-5 starters are much better than are 2-5 starters from last season.(two of which finished >6.30 era's)

3. Will we be able to run this year?
an Oh yes! Last year we only had two players in double digits.
Larkin w\27 and McDowell w\24. This year we have Larkin,
Tarasco, Howard, Vaughn, & Listach w\double digit potential.

4. Will we win our division?
an Hell, I don't know. We have to be in one of the toughest
divisions. Charlevoix(last years champ), Naptown(finished 2
games behind for wild card), and Bloomington(needs pitching but
much improved from last year) will all be coming out swinging.

It's going to be an interesting season and we, the tiggers, wish all
the other teams luck in there respective divisions. That's all from
Indianapolis so lets.....

PLAYBALL!!!!!!

EI TIGGERS