

The Press Box

A Publication of the BRASSball Strat-O-Matic Baseball League

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By Lenny Luchtefeld

Season #5 is Underway

The long waited start of the BRASSball season has finally arrived. The cards are here, the CD_ROM game is in and Super Hal is about to make his first appearance.

In this issue, we'll look at National League preseason preview brought to us by our N. L. reporter, Tony Galietta. We will also find information about how to generate, send and import subset stats. I also have some basic instructions on how to import the Super Hal computer manager.

The National League has some new members in the fold for this year. Joe Krause is steering the River Bend Blackhawks, John Winters is handling the Columbus Buckeyes, Dave Little is conducting the Gem City Wolfpack and Andy Wiesner and Joal Kjarsgaard are co-managing the Metropolis Avengers. Welcome to all of you. Based off conversations Kevin and I have had with them, they will all be fine assets to the BRASSball League. Hope your stay will be a long and prosperous one.

NL Preseason Predictions

By Tony Galietta

NL EAST

Predicted Order of Finish:

- 1- Long Island Tigers
- 2- Wauwatosa Wizards
- 3- Racine Heat
- 4- Glen Allen Mets

LONG ISLAND TIGERS:

KEY LOSSES: Appier, Bohannon,

KEY ACQUISITION: B.J. Surhoff, Daryl Strawberry

Long Island has been a dominant figure in the NL since the inception of Brassball. A World Series participant the past years, the Tigers have yet to fly that champion banner over their park. This year's team should be could be just as formidable as Kerry Wood will make his Brassball debut come this April. Free agent acquisition B.J. Surhoff and draft pick Daryl Strawberry bring some big lumber to lighten some of the long ball load from Frank Thomas. Jason Schmidt, Wood, Bobby Jones, along with rookies Seth

Greisinger and Elmer Dressens give the Tigers a formable pitching staff. Back that up with super-closer Trevor Hoffman and you can see that Long Island will contend again for the title.

WAUWATOSA WIZARDS:

KEY LOSSES: Boone, Segui

KEY ACQUISITION: Charlie Hayes, Jeff Reboulet, Shane Spencer, Mark Mulder, and Rick Elder

The Wizards pulled off a shocker in last year's playoffs, knocking off the mighty Bloomington Bees. With that roster pretty much intact, GM Gale will hope to keep pace with the Tigers. Karl, Hermanson and Remilinger appear to be the top guns in the rotation, and the offense will look towards the legs of 40 year old Ricky Henderson to provide a spark to the offense.

RACINE HEAT

KEY LOSSES: Wetteland, King, H. Rodriguez, Quantrill

KEY ACQUISITIONS: Masato Yoshii, Greg Olson, Homer Bush, Shane Monahan

The Heat will bring to the '99 season a surprising pitching staff. Omar Daal, Mike Mussina, and Juan Guzman should keep the Heat in many a game this year. Which is a good thing, as the lumber seems a bit thin for Owner/GM Fred Lambrecht. If they can get some mileage out of the #4 and #5 starters, the Heat could possibly contend for one of the wildcard spots.

GLEN ALLEN METS

Key Losses: Caminiti

Key Acquisitions: Andy Fox, F.P. Santangelo, Trot Nixon

The Mets hope to ride the big bats of Eric Karros and Javy Lopez. The pitching staff, led by Joey Hamilton and Cal Eldred, will be this team's strength. The Mets will be a competitive team, but may not have the weapons to challenge in the tough N.L. East this year, but look for minor/amateur players like Nixon, Stan Spencer, Giuseppe Chiamonte, and Armando Rios to carry this team into the next century.

NL CENTRAL

Predicted Order of Finish:

- 1- Bloomington Bees
- 2- Stanley Sioux
- 3- River Bend Blackhawks
- 4- Columbus Buckeyes

BLOOMINGTON BEES:

KEY LOSSES: Schilling, Whiteside, Hundley, Magadan, Stocker and O’Niell.

KEY ACQUISITION: Arthur Mills, Jesse Orosco, Brant Brown, Otis Nixon, Tim Raines

Once again, the mantle of “team to beat” falls on the shoulders of the Bloomington Bees. With a rotation that will consist of Clemens, Maddox, P. Martinez as the “Big 3”, the #4 and #5 spots in the rotation could be filled with rejects from the Bad News Bears, and the Bees would probably still break the century mark! A solid bullpen of Shaw, Orosco, Mills, Seanez and Mantei will contribute to the cause. On the offense side, Brassball Owners have petitioned the Commissioner’s Office to be allowed to move their fences back a good 25ft when the Bees come to town. With the likes of McGwire, Biggio, Bichette, Ventura and Palmeiro, loads of souvenir balls will be hit in the stands.

STANLEY SIOUX:

KEY LOSSES: Joyner , Schourek

KEY ACQUISITION: Dennis Cook, Jamie Moyer, Jeremy Giambi

Owner/GM Paul Wertz is ready for his first full year of leadership with the Sioux. With essentially the same team that started last year as the East Indy Tiggers, Wertz has assembled a fine pitching staff with Cook, Moyer, Irabu and Helling. Greg Vaughn and Ken Caminiti should bring some power to the plate. While the Sioux are not quite ready to challenge Bloomington for the top spot in the Central Division, a wild card spot is not out of the question.

RIVERBEND BLACKHAWKS:

The Blackhawks, with new ownership, are one of the NL teams that were involved in the reorganization draft held by the league. The Black Hawks, should have a potent offense. Players like Chipper Jones, Jeff Conine, Bobby Abreu, Damien Easley and Carl Everett should keep the scoreboard lit up. The Blackhawks have one of the premier closers in the league with Mariano Rivera. The question will be if the starting rotation, led by Hideo Nomo and Livan Hernandez, can go deep enough into the game to allow Rivera the opportunity to do his thing.

COLUMBUS BUCKEYES:

The Buckeyes are another franchise with new ownership that was involved in the reorganization draft. Owner/GM John Winters makes no bones about what his team will do. He feels that 50 wins would be a great season. Yet, he is still smiling. the future in Columbus belongs in the hands of players the like of Carlos Beltran, George Lombard, Wilton Guerrero, Carlos Lee, Darnell Stenson and Darryl Ward. Things do appear to be on the up swing, it just may be 2001 before all the pieces fall into place for Columbus.

NL WEST

Predicted Order of Finish: 1- Metropolis Avengers
 2- North Georgia Yellow Jackets
 3- Ocala Ocelots
 4- Gem City Wolfpack

METROPOLIS AVENGERS:

KEY LOSSES: Eckersley, Rodriguez, Gilkey

KEY ACQUISITION: Kerry Ligtenberg, Todd Dunwoody, Ron Gant, Chris Hoiles, Charlie O'Brian

The Surferdudes from Channel Island have gone in-land, and have been reincarnated as the Avengers. What hasn't changed is the caliber of the team; two consecutive division titles, with a third a definite possibility. David Wells heads up a solid, if not spectacular starting rotation, with Brassball rookie Kerry Ligtenberg and Scott Radinsky in the bullpen. Andres Galarraga provides the power, with Will Clark, Steve Finley and Travis Fryman expected to set the table for the big man. The Avengers are not a lock for the title, but the talent is there.

NORTH GEORGIA YELLOW JACKETS:

KEY LOSSES: Surhoff, Orosco, Myers, Green

KEY ACQUISITION: Sterling Hitchcock, Pete Schourek, Jeff King, Jeff Reed, Brian Meadows, Dave Magadan, Corey Patterson

The Yellow Jackets, with one Brassball season under their belt, learned a painful lesson in last year's bid to catch Channel Island; there is no such thing as too much pitching. To that end, the re-signing of Shane Reynolds was a top priority. Owner/GM Tony Galietta was also able to add Hitchcock, Schourek and Meadows through the draft/trades to provide depth at starting pitching. Relievers Jay Powell, Jason Christiansen, and Brassball NL Rookie of the Year Armando Benitez, form a powerful bullpen. Jeff King was acquired via the amateur draft to provide much needed power to the Jackets' lineup. Look for the Jackets to contend for a wild card spot, and possibly the division title if their hitters can give the pitching staff a few runs to work with.

OCALA OCELOTS:

KEY LOSSES: Hampton, Tucker, Miceli, Witt, Carr

KEY ACQUISITION: Todd Stottlemire, Edgardo Alfonzo, Harold Baines

Placing Ocala 3rd is deceptive. This team also has enough horses to gain a wild card slot, and possibly challenge for the division. A strong minor league system is starting to pay dividends as home-grown products like Brent Tomko, Todd Helton, and Shannon Stewart will get the opportunity to play everyday, with stars of the future J.D. Drew, Paul Konkero and Juan Encarnacion waiting for a September call-up. The future is definitely

bright for Ocelots, and the Ocala faithful may even be rewarded for their patience with some post-season activity.

GEM CITY WOLFPACK:

KEY LOSSES: Beck, Leiter, Wendell, Everett, Gaetti, Molitor, Offerman, Reboulet

KEY ACQUISITION: Troy Percival, John Rocker, Jeff Bagwell, Jose Canseco, Ivan Rodriguez, Reggie Sanders, Tony Womack, Eric Young

The Wolfpack are another dangerous team in the closely matched NL West division that have the potential to challenge at the top. A strong hitting team, led by the bats of Pudge Rodriguez, Canseco, and Bagwell, should score runs in bunches for the 'Pack. Which is a good thing because once you get past staff ace David Cone, the cupboard is pretty bare for starting pitching. Percival provides a stronger closer, so look for Gem City to win lots of games in the 10-9 range!

Subset Stats

Our league is evolving into more use of the web page and the age of the electronic medium. We have made a quick but smooth transition since starting this process last year. Although we have made great strides, I just want to take moment and make sure everyone knows how to create, use and e-mail subset stats. I will discuss later how to import the computer manager.

All of us should be playing our games on the CD-ROM computer game and the subset stat capability can be a powerful time saving tool. It's become clear that some people are still not comfortable with how to generate and/or import subset stats. Both the visiting and home managers need to do their part in order for subsets to be of any use. I'm going to explain how to generate subset stat files, how to send them to your opponents, and how to use the ones your opponents send you to update your team's stats in seconds. The following discussion assumes you're playing the CDROM version of the game and using Windows 95 or 98.

Generating Subsets. At the end of each game, a menu pops up with four choices: Delete Last Play, Get Box scores, Same Teams Again, or Exit Game. Assuming the last play is OK, choose Get Box scores. Now a list of choices will appear for both teams' stats. For each team, there will be ten boxes labeled 0 through 9, plus Team vs. Team, By Month and Home/Road. As a minimum, select one of the numbered boxes; the others are optional, and affect only the various breakdown reports you can generate for your own use. An X will appear in each box you selected. Now click OK.

For each numbered box you select, you will be prompted to enter a descriptive name. I like to use the dates of the series and the name of the opponent: "Jan. 20-23 vs. Cook County", for example. After subsequent games, the description you entered (or the first few characters of it) will appear in place of the digit in the selection menu; when you select that name, the existing subset file will be updated with the stats of the game you just played.

After you've entered each descriptive name, click OK or press Enter. You are now done as far as creating subsets is concerned. (You still need to print and/or save the game results)

For each numbered box you selected, a new subset file was created on the computer. It resides in the SUBSETS subdirectory, and its filename is based on certain choices you made when you set up the league. It takes the form of abcdxyz.SSn, where abcd is the year assigned to the league, xyz is 3-letter abbreviation assigned to the team whose stats are in the file, and n is the digit next to the box you selected above. For example, the league Brian created is designated 1999 BRASSball, and the Box City Parcelmen are abbreviated PAR. So a subset file for the Parcelmen assigned to box 0 would have the filename 1999PAR.SS0.

Note that for each team, there can only be ten subset stat files: one for each digit. Since each team plays only one home series against each other, most people will have only one subset for each visiting team. If you keep subsets for your own team, however, you'll fill up the ten slots real quick. I recommend that each month you delete a few of the older files *before you start play*. If at the time you finish playing a game all ten subset files for your team exist, you won't be able to create a new file for that series.

After the first game of a series, you'll create a file for each team as explained above. After every subsequent game in the same series, you'll select the same file you created; its description will appear in place of the digit next to its assigned box in the menu.

Even if your opponent hasn't asked for a subset file from you, I strongly suggest you create one. He might ask for it later, and in any case it's good practice. Each file takes up less than 8K of space on your drive; if you have one for each opponent and 10K for your team that's about a quarter of a megabyte total. Erase them after the season.

Sending Subsets to your Opponent. If you and your opponent have email, you may be able to Attach the subset file to an e-mail message. The mechanics of this depend on whether you use Internet Explorer or Netscape or AOL. They will work basically the same. After you have selected whom you are sending the e-mail to and the subject, select Attach or Insert. Then find the subset file, the box score file and the play by play file inside of the CD-ROM game and attach it. You can now send the files to your opponent.

To use Snail Mail with a disk, copy the subset file onto a floppy disk or print the information out and mail it. My experience is that a 3 1/2" floppy, wrapped in a single sheet of paper and placed in an ordinary envelope, will arrive undamaged most of the time. There are special padded disk mailers, but that would be entirely up to you if you wanted to use that method.

Importing Subsets. Copy the subset file your opponent sent you into the Import subdirectory. Start the game. Select the BRASSball league. Select Statistics from the

main menu, then Import Game Results or Subsets. The subset file in the Import subdirectory should appear in a selection box. Double-click on it to select it. A new box will appear containing the descriptive name of the selected subset file, plus any other subset files which were in the same directory. Each name will have a YES or a NO next to it. Clicking on each file will change the YES to NO, or vice versa. Click on all files until the one you want to import says YES and all the others say NO. Then click on the Import button. You will be informed whether or not the import was successful. The stats in the subset file will now be added to your stats.

There are a couple of things to watch out for here. Remember how the filename is determined? Well, your system is looking for filenames in the Import subdirectory which fit that format. If your league year is different from your opponent's, or your team's abbreviation is different, the game will reject the subset file. You need to rename the file; use the Rename command in File Manager or Explorer. For instance, my team (Box City) is PAR on my system, and the league year is 1999. If I get a file from an opponent named 1999BOX.SS0, I simply rename it to 1999PAR.SS0.

You also need to make sure your roster is up to date before you import. Let's say you acquired Joe Jones in a trade. You sent out instructions with Jones on the roster, but you haven't gotten around to moving him over to your team on the computer. One of your opponents plays his games and returns a subset file before you play any games for the month. If you import it, Jones won't get his stats updated, since as far as the computer knows he's not on your team. For best results, don't import anything until you've played at least one series that month. Another warning: don't import anything while you're in the middle of a series. The fatigue data for the imported series will override the one in progress.

I hope this has helped everyone feel a little more comfortable about subset stats and to take advantage of the power of subset stats. If anyone has any questions, I'm always happy to discuss them, whether by e-mail, phone, ICQ or on paper.

Importing Super Hal Instructions

Assuming you set up the league with Brian's file from 3/10, you should be able to import anybody's computer manager or Super Hal manager. For the sake of this discussion, we'll use the Stanley Sioux as the example team name of the computer manager that we are going to import.

Save the Sioux.mgr file from Stanley's email (don't open the file, just save to a directory on your hard drive or disk). You can save it to a Brassball directory or a directory you might just call Junk. For simplicity sake, I would NOT save it to a cdrombb directory). Now that you have saved it, open up the game. Highlight the Brassball league and then highlight Stanley. Go to the Team menu option, and go to import computer manager. At this point, you then select the Sioux.mgr file wherever you saved it to earlier on your disk/hard drive and choose Open. This will then update Super HAL or the computer manager in the Stanley directory. It's just that simple.

Bits and Pieces

I would like to take a moment to thank Tony Galietta for writing the preseason preview of the National League. It was quite apparent that Tony did his homework on this piece. We appreciate your efforts and your time.

I would also like to thank Brian Budzyn for creating the BRASSball league setup and rosters and e-mailing them to all of us. This was a great time saver for all of us in the league. Brian has made it very easy for us. He has saved us all a few hours in league setup time. Thanks again Brian.

March Contract Signings

The Stanley Sioux sign Amaury Telemaco to a 1-year contract and Bubba Trammell to a 3-year contract.

Wauwatosa Wizards sign the following players to contracts: Todd Walker 4 years, Willie Banks, Greg Cadaret and Yorkis Perez to 1 year deals.

The Bloomington Bees sign Mike Sweeney to a 3-year deal and Adrian Brown to a one-year deal.

Upcoming Deadlines

April 15th...League report form due to your leagues reporter. Jeff Howe for the AL and Tony Galietta for the NL. The report form is available on the web site.

April 15th...Series results are due out to your April opponents. You must send box scores, play by play and subset stats.

April 20th...You must submit your starting pitcher rotation to your LD for May games.

April 20th...If you make a trade during the of April, you must report the trade in writing to your LD for it to take effect.

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

April 20th...If you wish to submit an article for the newsletter, you must submit the article to your LD by the 20th of the month for it to be included in the following newsletter.

April 25th...Send a completed team leaders form and a hard copy printout of your teams primary stats to the leagues statistician, Tom Taormina.

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November, 98

Page 2

The Press Box

The Press Box