

THE PRESSBOX

By Lenny Luchtefeld
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NL Notes

I'm sorry but due to time restraints this month this will be an abbreviated newsletter.

We have come to the half way point as the leaders after last month have stayed in charge again this month. A lot of things can happen in the second half a season but it looks like the only drama will involve Stanley, Fleetwood and Columbus. All these teams seem destined to make the playoffs. Who will win the division and which other 2 teams will make up the Wildcards slots will be the only unanswered question as we evolve into the 2nd half.

Ocala opened up their lead in the West to 21 games. No other team in the division seems remotely able to challenge the Ocelots. The only battle may be for second as the Yellow Jackets and the Wolfpack are just 4 games apart.

Stanley stays in control of the Central by 4 games over Fleetwood and Columbus. The Walkers and Buckeyes have identical records at 46-38. They may be trailing Stanley in the Central Division but they both have a good grasp a top of the 2 Wildcard standings. Both teams are 6 games ahead of their Division rival Bloomington for the 2 spots.

No team in the East is still above .500 halfway through the season. Glen Allen did open up some breathing room over Long Island by pushing out to a 4 game lead. The Tigers and the Wizards could make some noise but they are going to have to make things happen soon.

2001 All-Star Game

BRASSball's 2001 All-Star Game will be played by John Winters of Columbus. John has graciously agreed to host the All-Star game this year. The game will be played in Columbus's home park, which is Fred Bridegdale Park.

. John will be playing the games as soon as we get the ballots returned on July 15th.

I have attached in this mailing an All-Star ballot for the National Leaguers to fill out and return to me by the 15th of July. After I receive all of the NL ballots, I will then tally the votes and inform John of who is to start at each position. John will then be in charge of everything else concerning the game from selecting the line-ups to when to change pitchers. I will also send all of you an e-mail to let you know the results of the voting.

Voting for the All-Star game is mandatory by all teams. Kevin is also sending out the American League All-Star ballot this month. The results of the game will be posted and discussed in next month's newsletter. **Go NL!**

Back-up Owner

For the first time in a long time we now have a back-up owner ready to go if we have an opening. Jon Kjarsgaard, brother of Walkers director of player personnel Joal Kjarsgaard and friend of Avengers CFO Andy Wiesner. has expressed interest in joining our league. Jon works with them on their team news sites -- they write the stuff and then he put it up. Because of his work with Andy, he currently promoted Jon to the position of "Chief Information Officer" of his team (Joal only lets him be "Roving bunting Instructor"). Jon also helped Andy out with his League Directory project by making the caps for each team.

Jon has been following the league since Joal and Andy joined in 1999. He was first exposed to Strat-O-Matic when my brother came home from college over Christmas break with his brand new 1993 cards. Most of his Strat experience has been via the old-fashioned cards. He doesn't have much experience with the Strat computer game the past couple of years, but he had some from before so it shouldn't take him anytime at all to get up to speed.

Like Joal and Andy before me, Jon is happy to say that he is a Wisconsin Badger. He is currently in my hometown of Altoona, Wisconsin (right next to Eau Claire, one-time minor-league home of the likes of Hank Aaron, Joe Torre, and Bob Uecker, among others), and he'll be moving down in Madison in approximately two months.

Trades

Bloomington trades Mark McGwrie, Mark McLemore and Kevin Appier to **Stanley** for Juan Gonzalez, Carlos Febles, Vinny Castilla, Stanley's 2002 2nd Round Draft pick, and \$2,500,000.

Fleetwood trades Ryan Anderson, Ricky Ledee (paid in full), Lee Stevens (paid in full) Fleetwood's 2002 #1, and \$1.5 Mil in Cash to **Morris** Monarchs for Jim Edmonds (paid in full).

Contract Signings

Bloomington signs D. Reichert (M0-2) M. Buehrle (M0-2) M. Suzuki (M0-1) and M. LeCroy (M0-1) contracts

Ocala signs JD Drew to his 3rd call-up in July.

Fleetwood signs Felipe Crespo to a 1-year major league deal, Ben Molina to a 1-year deal, Brad Penny to his first minor-league call up (MO-1) and Dan Plesac to a 2-year major league deal.

North Georgia signs Canizaro M0-2 and Valdes M0-2 contracts.

Glen Allen signs to Mora MO-2 contract.

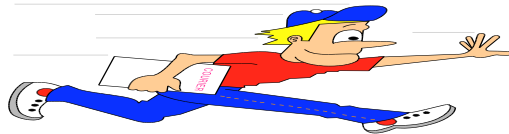
Wauwatosa signs R.Ortiz, Quinn and Richard to (MO-3) contracts. Sheldon and Ryan signed to (MO-2) contracts.

Metropolis signs Desi Relaford, Ramon Castro and Thomas Howard to MO-1 callups and Dan Serafini and Trinidad Hubbard to MTM deals.

Fines

Wauwatosa is fined 1,00,000.00 for not e-mailing their subsets stats for the second time to the back-up statistician.

Upcoming Deadlines



JULY 15:

- Σ Mailing deadline for July home game results to opponent, Statistician, **and BACKUP Statistician.** (Lenny)
- Σ Trade deadline for AUGUST games
- Σ All-star ballot due!
- Σ TRADE DEADLINE FOR INTERLEAGUE DEALS.

JULY 25:

- Σ Deadline to activate players for August games
- Σ Road instructions due to August Opponents
- Σ Starting rotations for August due to your LD
- Σ NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS due to your LD

News Article by Jim Clark

METS MOVE INTO FIRST PLACE!

Glen Allen (15-13 in June) moved ahead of Long Island to go into first place in the National League East Division. The Mets played .500 at the Yard but 8-6 in the A.L. East parks. Bullpen Coach John Stearns had this Quick analysis, "We only beat Minnesota once this month and we could not get them in our park. On the road, closer Bob Wickman saved five games and Wayne Gomes picked up three wins in eight games without allowing a run. For July we get Felix Heredia back in the pen after resting a tired arm last month."

Pitching Coach Jimmy Key showed confidence when talking about Barry Zito, "Not too bad for his first month: 2.38ERA 2CG 45 IP \$\$K 37 H and 4 homers allowed. Barry developed a blister on the tip of his middle finger, which affected his control that last start, so he'll go back to the minors for July, but I've already got him penciled into my rotation for August. Mark Gardner had some shoulder tightness so we will rest him for July. Joey Hamilton has been impressive in hi rehabilitation so he will join the rotation, but we will keep close watch on him and limit pitching to six innings. Lance Painter has also returned to the staff for the last half of this year. Eric Milton and Todd Ritchie have

been solid, but I have concern with Steve Trachsel. He gave up 7 homers in 21 innings in four road games so we need Steve to pick it up if we are to win the division."

Bench Coach Buddy Harrelson noted that Vizquel did not make an error in June, but the other guys contributed eight in 14 road games. Our pitchers made one at home but none on the road. "We need great defense to win because we don't have big sluggers."

This reporter had a chance to speak with hitting Coach Eddie Kranepool. "It seemed like all the extra batting practice at home finally paid off on the road. We raised our team average seven points: Omar 22, Flaherty 19 Ryan 16 Brook 13. Colbrunn took over the team lead in RBI with 11 in 13 games and did not ground into a DP on the road. The team had 34 2B, 4 3B, 13 HR and scored 79 runs but struck out 88 times. I'd like to see the guys continue to improve with the warmer weather, but a few guys may need a little time off down the stretch.

GM Clark was asked about any impending trades, "I've talked to a few guys, but nothing on the burner right now. Contenders are looking to get your top guys like Lawton or Klesko for their stretch run. Other guys are offering their free agents for your prospects. I do not plan on sacrificing the future for the present, nor am I giving up my horses when we still have a chance to win our division. I have already picked up a couple extra draft picks and have no problem getting more. What about my #1 pick last year? Albert Pujols looks like a great hitter! He plays 1B, 3B, LF, RF, DH and much more power than I expected for a 21 year old. The scouting reports that I heard, he is for real, but his defense needs work. I do like the flexibility he will bring to the team and once we decide on a position, probably 3B his defense should improve. Tom Davey has been pitching well out of the pen and scout say he has closer potential with that hard stuff he throws. Adrian Hernandez has been doing well in the lower minors, but needs some more experience,"

The Manager had the responsibility to get the most out of his current players and the general Manager has to balance the present with the future. Since Glen Allen has one man doing double duty Clark will be busy not only with the daily chores of managing, but also the prospect and free agent watching of the GM.