

# THE PRESSBOX

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## NL Season Ending Wrap-up

The Division winners were in the West-Ocala, in the Central-Stanley and in the East-Glen Allen. The Wildcard winners were Fleetwood and Columbus. Congratulations to the teams that made it to post season play.

Ocala cruised along all season and finished with a 46 game lead and the best record in the NL. The Ocelots have been tough to beat all year long while finishing with 113 wins. Here are some reasons why; they feature the leagues leading hitter, Alfonzo .356, the RBI leader in Helton 165 and the saves leader Percival 41.

Stanley stayed in control of the Central all season and actually more than double their lead in the final month as they pulled away from Fleetwood. Stanley won an impressive 103 games and their 2<sup>nd</sup> straight division title.

Glen Allen won another division title as they finished ahead of Wauwatosa by 5 games. With only 78 wins and a below .500 record the Mets won the division but this won't be the same team as last year that made it all the way to the Brassball championship series.

Fleetwood finished with the best record that didn't win a division title with 92 wins and find themselves in the Wildcard series against division foe, Columbus. Columbus finished 89-73 and will start on the road at Fleetwood to face the Walkers in the Wildcard matchup.

## Playoffs Begin

The playoffs are set to begin. Congratulations to the teams that made the post season. The teams have been notified and the games will begin as soon as possible. The first series of the playoffs will between the 2 Wildcards. The Division winners were Ocala, Stanley and Glen Allen. The Wildcard winners were Fleetwood and Columbus. Fleetwood (92-70) has home field advantage for the 7 game series with Columbus (89-73). Ocala (113-49) will meet Glen Allen (78-84) and will have home field advantage throughout the playoffs. The Wildcard winner will face Stanley with Stanley (103-59) having home field advantage.

There are considered to be two rest days between the final day of the regular season and the beginning of the Wildcard round. The division winners have a bye during the Wildcard round and as such, will be completely rested for their initial series. After the completion of the Wildcard round, the Second Round Playoff Series match-ups in each league are as follows: *Remaining playoff team with worst winning % @ Division*

*Winner with best record, and remaining playoff team with 3<sup>rd</sup> best record @ remaining playoff team with 2nd best record.*

The League Championship and World Series match-ups are as follows: *the team with the best record hosts the other team, except that a wildcard team can never host a series, unless two wildcard teams make the World Series.* All series are 7-game series and are conducted using the 2-3-2 format.

## On Time Mailing Records

Several teams this year have completed all of their mailings and deadlines on time for the entire year. In our busy lives this is really a credit to achieve such an accomplishment.

To reward these teams, they are given an extra sandwich pick between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> rounds of the draft. Here are the NL teams and congratulations on this feat. Bloomington, Fleetwood, Glen Allen, Metropolis, Ocala and Stanley.

## League Awards Ballot

Post season awards ballots will be sent out with this mailing. Now with the centralized stats it should make it much easier this year to select the players for the awards. When you get the ballot, please select your top 5 choices in each category. To find out which players are rookies, please look at the roster sheets and anyone who was signed to a 1,A\* contract would qualify. **Please send the ballots back to Mark Lentz.** Ballots are due back by October 25<sup>th</sup>. **It is mandatory for you to vote.**

## Home and Road Discrepancy Awards

In the BRASSball League, we hold maximum effort for our home opponents as a high League ideal. If everyone gives consistent effort in this regard, a team should perform to approximately the same degree above or below average at home as they do on the road. Knowing that the dissatisfaction with the lack of reliable road results and the lack of honest effort on the part of opponents are two problems which can fell a League, the BRASSball League uses the program detailed below to encourage and reward the honest effort at home which leads to small home/road discrepancies.

The average this year was 3.6 more wins at home than on the road per team. The highest win total was by Toledo with 24 more wins at home than on the road. On the other side of the coin, Wauwatosa won 7 more games on the road than at home.

Here is the breakdown of the home and road discrepancy awards.

Range	Variance	Amount Due	Teams		
Range #1	-4.89 to -7.0	3,000,000.00	Minnesota	Racine	Wauwatosa
Range #2	-4.88 to -2.77	2,500,000.00	Bloomington	Gem City	St. Croix
Range #3	+65 to -2.76	2,000,000.00	Georgia	Stanley	
Range #4	+64 to +1.47	1,500,000.00	Long Island		
Range #5	+1.48 to +3.6	1,000,000.00	Morris	No. Goergia	

## Trades

**Metropolis** trades Jason Johnson and Desi Relaford to **Gem City** for Luke Prokopec and Brad Wilkerson.

**Wauwatosa** trades Alfonso Soriano and their 2002 third-round draft pick to **Cook County** for Justin Morneau and Hank Blalock.

**Santa Barbara** trades John Burkett and the SB #4 (2002) to **Stanley** for Ted Lilly, Wes Helms, and SS #4 (2003).

## Fines

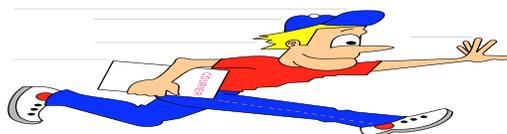
Long Island is fined \$2,000,000 (and loss of highest 1st round pick) for their second occurrence of failing to make a mailing to a League Administrator on time.

Gem City is fined 2,500,000.00 for over using Doug Creek by 5 innings pitched over the buffer.

North Georgia is fined 500,000.00 for over using Andrew Lorraine by 1 inning pitched over the buffer.

Racine is fined 9,500,000.00 for over using Jose Jimenez by 3 innings pitched and Dave Magadan by 17 plate appearances and Wally Joyner by 15 plate appearances over the buffer.

## Upcoming Deadlines



**Oct. 10** - new contract and roster cut report sent out - League Awards Ballot sent out by LD

**Oct. 25** - League Awards Ballot due to LD.

### Stanley Stationary September recap, Sioux season a success

Stanley ND, AP

Edited version compliments of the Stanley USA Today.

Stanley, ND:

After a solid 17 win month against the A.L. Central in August, the September schedule brought the challenge of the N.L. Central to town. The Sioux had a 5 game division lead against Fleetwood. The pennant chase appeared to be a potential wildcard chase and/or 3 team N.L. Central playoff qualifiers matching up for the month. Decent baseball during the month would need to be played.

### **Bloomington**

Perennial foe Bloomington came to Stanley for the first 4 games of the month. Stanley started strong with a victory in both game 1 & 2. Game 2 highlights were Randy Johnson winning his 19th game of the season in a 4 hit, 0 walk, 11 strikeout performance over 7 1/3 innings. Andy Ashby suffered the loss moving him to 6-16 for the Bees. September callup Julio Zuleta paid dividends as he hit 2 HR's to power the Sioux offense.

Game 3 proved to be the most thrilling. Each team scored 3 in the 3rd inning. Bees followed with a 3 run 4th to knock out Gil Meche. Sioux answered with 2 in the 4th to close within 6-5. A Preston Wilson double in the 7th gave the Bees a 7-5 lead. Sioux answered in the bottom of the 7th with 2 out, bases loaded, RBI singles by Jorge Fabregas and Frank Menechino to tie it 7-7. Sioux reliever Steve Reed was cruising along until he was Widgered! Chris Widger hits a solo HR in top 9 to power Bees to an 8-7 victory.

Demoralized and tired, the Sioux seemed to lie down in game 4. Several starters did get rest. Mike Mussina of the Bees took advantage and shut down the Sioux in a 9-1 drubbing. However, the rest would prove to pay dividends as a trip to Bloomington was to follow.

Game 1 on September 5th at Bloomington provided one of the more interesting boxscores of the year. Neither team scored in the first 8 innings. Rick Helling of the Sioux and Chris Carpenter along with help from the Bee bullpen pitched shutout ball until the 9th. Doug Henry started the 9th for the Bees. A leadoff walk to Joe Oliver proved costly. With 2 outs and runners on 2nd and 3rd Henry was forced to pitch to the hot Julio Zuleta or Moises Alou. Henry chose Zuleta and paid the price - giving up a 2 run double. 3 walks and a single later, Joe Oliver came up for the 2nd time in the 9th - this time with the bases load. Oliver provided a bases clearing triple to give Stanley and Felix Rodriguez a 7-1 victory.

Randy Johnson wasn't quite as dominant in the 2nd go around versus the Bees, but he did only give up 2ER on 5 hits, 2BB, and 6 strikeout performance for his 20th victory of the season. Bernie Williams, Mark McGwire, Ken Caminiti, and Joe Oliver homered in the 8-2 victory.

Game 3 saw Kevin Appier return to Bee-land amongst a chorus of boos from his former hometown fans. Appier seemed to thrive on the adversity as he pitched 6 strong innings

in a 3-2 Sioux win. Ken Caminiti hit a 3 run HR in the 3rd to provide the Sioux offense. Marlon Anderson of the Bees went 3 for 3, 2 RBI in the losing effort.

Game 4 the Bees came out strong again against Sioux starter Gil Meche. Bees scored 2 in the 2nd but stranded 3. Bee ace Mike Mussina didn't appear to have his best stuff, and gave up 3 right back in the top of the 3rd, and ended up giving up 7ER in 5IP on 13 hits and 3 walks. Sioux pulled away throughout the game for a 9-3 victory and what likely is the franchises only sweep ever at Bloomington. After the game, former Sioux RF Juan Gonzalez promised revenge next season. When asked why he pulled himself out of the game with a sore hammy in the 5th inning, Gonzalez replied "why not?"

### **Fleetwood**

An off day of travel on 9/9 brought the Sioux to Fleetwood for a potential division deciding 4 game match-up on the 10th-13th with a 3 game set to follow at Stanley on the 14th-16th.

Riding a wave of emotion from the Bee sweep and sensing a chance to get a jump-start on the Walkers, the Sioux went with ace Randy Johnson in game 1 against the tough Jeff D'Amico. After 3 shutout innings from both starters the Sioux jump on D'Amico with 2 run HR's each by Moises Alou and Rafael Palmeiro. Walkers answered with 2 in the bottom of the 4th, but that would be all the Unit would give up. Randy Johnson continued his September dominance and potential Cy Young chase with his 21st win - giving up 2 ER in 8 IP in an 8-2 Sioux win.

Game 2 match-up seemed to favor the Sioux with 18 game winner Rick Helling facing 3 game winner Reid Cornelius. Jim Edmonds knocked in 1 for the Walkers to start the scoring and a 1-0 walker lead in the 1st. Bernie Williams answered in top 3rd with a 2 run HR. Sioux exploded for 7 in the 4th capped by a 3 run HR by Bernie. Walkers never recovered as the Sioux's winning streak continued with a score of 11-5 in Helling's 19th triumph.

Game 3 featured Livan Hernandez of the Walkers versus Cal Eldred of the Sioux. Each starter made it into the 7th allowing only 2 runs. Unfortunately for Livan the bullpen offered no support - Mark Guthrie allowed 4 additional runs. Jermaine Dye was the offensive hero for the Sioux with a 3-5 day including 2 doubles, a HR, and all 6RBI's being credited to him. Felix Rodriguez picked up the win in relief.

Game 4 would be critical to the Walkers if there were to be any hopes of getting back into the division race. Hideo Nomo was set to match Gil Meche of the Sioux. The Sioux put together 3 quick hits to start the game and had a 2-0 lead after an inning. Bobby Abreu brought the Walkers back with a 2 run HR in the 2nd. The score remained 2-2 until the 7th when Shannon Stewart chased Meche with a 2 out double to score Counsell. With a 3-2 lead in the 9th the Walkers turned to ball over to Derek Lowe who would face the heart of the Sioux order. Mark McGwire greeted Lowe with a double. Pinch runner Darren Lewis was summoned from the bench, and he promptly scored on a Moises Alou

single. Game went into extra innings. Walkers stuck with Lowe in the 10th. With 2 on and 2 out Bernie Williams delivered a game winning single to provide the Sioux with their 2nd consecutive road sweep of the month!

Walkers traveled to Stanley to see if they could fair any better than the sour home cooking of the previous 4 days. Walker southpaw Al Leiter went to the mound to face the Unit, Randy Johnson. Sioux offense pecked away at Leiter for 3 in the first, 1 in the second, and one in the 3rd. Meanwhile Johnson was a little shaky in the middle innings giving up 1 each in the 3rd and 4th, and 2 in the 5th on a Chipper Jones HR. With the Sioux ahead 5-4 the score remained that way until the 9th. Antonio Alfonseca was summoned to close out Johnson's 22nd victory. After singles to Chad Curtis and Jeffrey Hammonds, Alfonseca proceeded to walk Jim Edmonds. With the bases loaded, Chipper Jones grounded into a force-out at the plate. Paul Konerko lined out to end the game. Sioux fans celebrate their 100th victory of the season.

A somewhat demoralized Walker squad faced Rick Helling in the middle game of the 3 game set at Stanley. Jeff D'Amico went for the Walkers. Moises Alou sparked the Sioux with a 3 run HR in the 3rd, giving Helling all of the offense he would need for his 20th victory. Sioux extend their winning streak to 10 games during the pennant stretch.

The final game of the regular season against the Walkers would see Pat Hentgen go up against Livan Hernandez. Bernie Williams of the Sioux seemed to have Hernandez figured out, lofting 3 HR's against Livan. Even with all that offense, Williams would come up in the 9th with the Sioux down 9-8 to face Derek Lowe. Williams just missed his 4th HR of the game and had to settle for a double off the top of the wall. Alou, Caminiti, and Dye all fail to bring him home, and thus ended the Sioux winning streak.

### **Columbus**

Buckeyes come to town looking to chase Fleetwood for home field advantage in the wildcard. Game 1 winner was Randy Johnson who continued his September dominance.

Columbus chased Rick Helling in game 2 with 6 in the 4th with HR's by Scott Rolen, Mitch Melusky, and Brian Jordan en route to a 10-8 victory.

Buckeyes pecked away for 4 runs in the top of the 3rd in game 3 without the benefit of an extra base hit against Gil Meche. That proved to be all Jim Parque and the Buckeye bullpen would need in a 4-3 victory in game 3.

Sioux managed to split the series with a middle-late inning surge in game 4 against Brian Anderson and Paul Quantrill. Rafael Palmeiro hit his 40th HR of the year. Buckeyes score 3 in the 9th off Alfonseca but come up short as Sioux hold on 6-5.

Stanley traveled to Columbus to finish the season with 3 games on the road. Randy Johnson finished the season with his 24th victory and recorded his 300th strikeout of the year in his final start of the regular season. Johnson's 24-8 season with a 2.93 ERA is one of the most dominating in Sioux history.

Sioux win 2 of 3 at Columbus to finish the month 16-6, and the season at 103-59.

Monthly record versus:

Bloomington 6-2

Columbus 4-3

Fleetwood 6-1

Sioux fans await their playoff opponent, which is quite likely to be one of their NL Central division rivals of Columbus or Fleetwood.

## **Stanley Stationary Year end results, leaders, and player voting**

Stanley ND, AP

Edited version compliments of the Stanley USA Today.

Stanley, ND:

As the Sioux readied themselves for the playoffs, management and players gathered for a small celebration of the Sioux's 103 victory season. Players were reminded they had not yet achieved their goals of playing in the Brassball World Series, and to that end everyone was in agreement.

Team MVP:

Bernie Williams. While Bernie didn't lead in one particular category other than runs scored, his .286 average, 38 HRs, 123 runs scored, 108 RBI's, 10 SB's, perfect defense (0 errors), and clubhouse leadership made this a unanimous selection among players.

Team Cy Young:

Co-winners Randy Johnson and Rick Helling. With two 20+ game winners, it was tough to give the award to just one ace. The Unit and Helling complimented each other all season. Johnson finished 24-8 (.750) with 300 strikeouts. Helling finished 21-6 (.778).

Rookie of the Year:

Felix Rodriguez provided solid bullpen innings all season. Felix won 8 games and recorded 97 strikeouts in 82 2/3 innings.

Most welcome off-season addition:

Rafael Palmeiro. Palmeiro was signed away from Bloomington to replace Rico Brogna at first base, and turned out to be a natural fit in the Sioux organization. Along with a .303 average, he led the Sioux with 41 HR's and 127 RBI's.

Most welcome in-season addition:

Mark McGwire. A blockbuster trade gave up the perennial whining and last years playoff choker Juan Gonzalez to division rival Bloomington Bees, but brought a fan favorite to Stanley. Big Mac hits 22 HR's in 215 AB's, and is looked at to provide playoff power. McGwire has the odd statistic of scoring more runs (64) than having base hits (63) due to being walked 89 times (leading the Sioux in that category)

Most promising prospect:

Gil Meche provided some nice starts at the major league level with 2 months of call-ups, but little known Paul LoDuca appears primed for the catching position next season.

Following is a synopsis of some various categories for the season....

**Regular season leaders:**

Average:	Alou .343, Dye .322, Palmeiro .303
Runs	Williams 123, Palmeiro 112, Dye 101, Alou 100
Homeruns:	Palmeiro 41, Williams 38, Dye 31
RBI's:	Palmeiro 127, Dye 116, Williams 108
Doubles:	Dye 46, Alou 38, Williams 36
Triples:	Perez 13, Williams 8, Palmeiro 6
Stolen Bases:	McLemore 11, Febles 11, Williams 10, Shumpert 10
Wins:	Johnson 24, Helling 21, Eldred 10, Hentgen 10
IP	Johnson 261, Helling 222, Hentgen 157
Strikeouts	Johnson 300, Helling 130, Hentgen 98
Saves:	Alfonseca 39, Rodriguez 5, Crabtree 4
ERA:	Johnson 2.93, Helling 4.01