

# AROUND THE HORN

November-December 1994

## Happy Trails Meets Superman in '56 Series Surprise

From the shadows of the Roy Rogers Museum in High Desert, California, the HIGH DESERT MAVERICKS and manager Mike Cascarano emerged as the surprise winner of the SPB I Western Division '56 pennant race with a solid 89-65 mark.

Their reward? No, not an autographed photo of Roy and Dale, but an opportunity to meet the fabled Supermen, disguised as the FRANKFORT TIGERS of Gary Plunkitt.

Interviewed just days before the series opener, pitting the Mavs' Whitay Ford and the Tigers' John Antonelli at Yankee Stadium, Plunkitt exuded confidence.

"We played as well on the road as we did at home," the Tigers' skipper proclaimed. However, using some well-calculated cliches, Plunkitt indicated that anything could happen in a short series. He was especially surprised to be facing the upstart Mavs, the pre-season pick by experts to finish in the lower echelon of the left coast contingent.

On the other hand, Cascarano was pleased with his full season results and would rely on the combo of Ford and Ron Kline and the relief hurling of Marv Grissom to combat the new Murderers' Row of Mickey Mantle, Gil Hodges, Eddie Mathews and Duke Snider, all 100+ RBI finishers. With final stats still pending, Mantle set the HR record with 53 and counting.

The Tigers top 4 hurlers, Antonelli (23 wins), Tom Brewers (22), Paul Foytack and Jack Harshman helped lead the Frankfort club to a record 110 win season.  
**PLAY BALL!!!!**

### 1945 AWARDS DINNER

A Laurel & Hardy handshake to John Ungashick for his yeoman effort in keeping us all on track during the premiere edition of SPB 2 over the past six months. John had to endure numerous managerial faux pas and temperments, late disks and a myriad of other miscues.

### MVP- Stan Musial Cy Young- Dizzy Trout

Batting	Andy Pafko 368
HRs	Roy Cullenbine 34
RBI:	Roy Cullenbine 141
Runs:	George Strnweiss Dixie Walker 128 ea.
Wins	Dizzy Trout 30
Losses::	Orval Grove 19
ERA:	Bill Voiselle 2.64

## Commissioner's Forum

You've probably already noticed that something is drastically different with this month's newsletter. Thanks to SPB's new league editor, Lou Ross, AROUND THE HORN is undergoing a change for the better.

Lou will be publishing the monthly tabloid, an action which exemplifies the sharing spirit of our league. So, hats off to Lou as he undertakes this new role and kudos to John Turnbull, John Ungashick and Dr. Diamond for their literary efforts in making SPB I&II great leagues to be involved in.

Remember, anyone is welcome to contribute to the newsletter. Send your prose directly to our own Hemingway, Lou Ross.

Of course, don't be surprised if Lou contacts you for a future interview.

Jim Wheeler

### '45 HOT STOVE REPORT

Judge Kenesaw Mountain died on November 25, 1944 at age 78...The Brooklyn Dodgers have invited two black players, Terris McDuffie and Dave Thomas to tryout for the club...Senators' Buddy Lewis receives the Distinguished Flying Cross for missions over the Burma Theatre. He is looking forward to his tenure with the EVANSTON ELEPHANTS.....There are 280 players with 4-F status on 1945 major league rosters. ...No recent retirees were elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame, but an old-timers committee selected Jimmy Collins, Roger Bresnahan, Fred Clarke, Dan Brouthers, Ed Delahanty, Hughie Jennings, Mike Kelley, Jim O'Rourke, Wilbert Robinson and Hugh Duffy...Mickey Grasso escapes from a POW camp. He was held since 1942.



### THE CLOCK IS TICKING!

January 14 is the 1957 Waiver Draft @ Andy Langert's 1 in Downers Grove, IL. HIGH NOON! Check the list on Page 4 to find out where you draft.

# Dr. ♦: THE DOCTOR IN A TIME WARP

by STEVE EHRESMAN

On hiatus from his assignment in baseball's Golden Age, the decade of the 50's, Dr. Diamond, the sage of the information highway, has landed in SPB's version of baseball purgatory, the 1945 season. Where else can one have a season with poor power, weak pitching and shoddy fielding. Along with a one-armed outfielder and a deaf pitcher (The Dr. is too politically correct to stoop to the jokes that you fallas have on your mind right now.)? The answer is of course, SPB II-45. Ah, fellow enthusiasts of diamond history, do not despair, for deliverance is close at hand. The 1946 rookie draft is in July, a mere nine months away!

After those magnificent '44 pennant races, hotly contested battles among 4Fers, the Doctor is hesitant to predict the course of the '45 flag chases. Nevertheless, the Doctor is not paid to be squeamish. Thus, as in all seasons past, the ol' Doc will rush in where angels fear to tread. Here are Dr. Diamond's pennant predictions, along with his usual illuminating commentary.

## EASTERN DIVISION

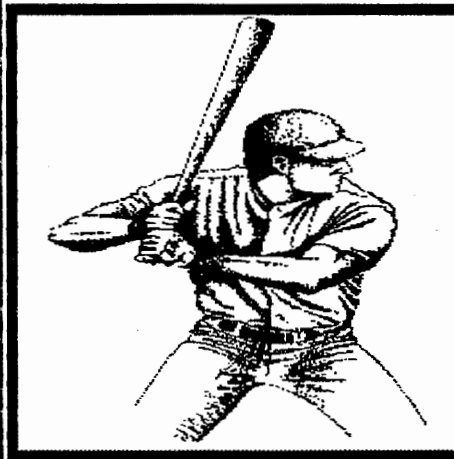
**FRANKFORT FORTRESS:** Typically, Mgr. Gary Plunkitt, alias "The Creator," is in the hunt after his usual first-year blues. Balance is the key to the Weirville success. Youngsters Andy Pasko and George Kell return leaner and hungrier. The mound corps, led by Hank Wyse, Dutch Leonard and newcomer Boo Ferriss, is the backbone of the Fortress, which is also in the running for the league's worst nickname.

**LAFAYETTE GOLD SOX:** Unlike Mgr. Ehresman's '50s team, the Blue Sox, this collection of ballplayers has largely stayed at home and not served as the farm club for the shrewd Plunkitt, the Branch Rickey of SPB. Vince DiMaggio, after a dismal '44, returns to the GSox outfield to supply speed, power AND strikeouts. Two Georges, Case and the newly acquired Stirmweles should burn up the base paths. Though solid, the pitching is not up to the standards set by the Fortress or White Sox. All that glistens is not gold. In the case of Lafayette, perhaps only a Fool's Gold.

**BROOKLYN DODGERS:** What an original

nickname! The Doctor wonders how long Lou "Mandrake" Ross spent thinking up this one.. Oh well, baseball is not a place, but a state of mind.. At least he did not name them the Spawning Salmon. Tommy Holmes will put on his best Stan Musial act, walk away with the MVP award, and lead an otherwise mediocre team further than they have any business going.

**OHIO REDBIRDS:** Manager Wheeler's Cheap Squad has a chance to surprise. There is no MVP caliber player, but they do have a number of solid performers and two spectacular hurlers: Joe Berry, the scourge of '44 and Roger Wolff, the foxey knuckleballer. Alas, unless Plunkitt suffers a brain cramp (a possibility), Ehresman gets less from his team than he should (ALWAYS a possibility),



or Ross forgets his magical tricks (NEVER!), the Lendis-like Wheeler seems destined for 4th.

**FAIRFIELD FEDERALS:** "War! What is it good for?" In the case of the Federals, war is a good way to wreck a team. Good bye Stan the Man and Ken Keltner. The Doctor would talk about the quality of players the Federals have returning, but this is a pennant forecast, not a humor column. Thank goodness for Nels Potter, Allie Reynolds and first-round selection Al Benton. Without them, Fairfield might finish somewhere in Lake Erie, wearing cement overshoes.

**ROSSVILLE HORNETS:** Babe Dahlgren, Mike

Milosevich, Mike Garbark AND the immortal Skeeter Webb.. Does not this say it all, sports fans? The Hornets (more like the Gnats) do have one of the league's very best, however: Hal "A Tiger in His Time" Newhouser. Somehow, Mgr. Ryan will scrape together a pitching staff out of his leftovers and will, much to the chagrin of the West Warwick Monarchs, escape the cellar in the East.

**WEST WARWICK MONARCHS:** Is this the Monarchs as in Emperors or as in butterflies? Talk about losing a team to the military. Would you believe Bobby Doerr, Pinky Higgins, Thurm Tucker, Al "He slud into Third" Zarilla and Clyde Shoun. Nevertheless, this team has a future as soon as it is "over, over there" and Bobby et al come marching home again. In the meantime, Dixie Walker, Claude Passeau and Dizzy Trout will do their best to hold off the explosive Hornets.

## WESTERN DIVISION

**ANTELOPE VALLEY MARAUDERS-** In addition to being the runner-up in the Dr.'s contest for worst nickname in SPB, Mgr. Cascarano's Marauders are ready to run amuck over the rest of the division, if not the league. Roy Cullenbine, the West's answer to Stan Musial in '44, is surrounded by a cast of good hitters, such as Wally Moses and Jimmy Wasdell and a corps of fine hurlers, which added rookie Vic Lombardi, the icing on the cake. You cannot touch what you cannot see and by the middle of the season, the Marauders should be invisible and untouchable to all, except maybe the Evanston Elephants.

**EVANSTON ELEPHANTS:** John Ungashick has a bad habit of finishing runner-up to some pretty good teams. Unfortunately, "Long John" shows no signs of changing his behavior. The White Elephants are a good team. Witness their excellent pitching staff of Steve Gromak, Nick Strincevich (sounds like a musical instrument, no? And playing that strincevich, the maestro of resonant run production, Johann Sebastian Ungashick), the Killer B's (Bovens, Bonham and Butcher), AND fresh out of the armed forces (get it?), Rapid Robert Feller. Yes, if one adds Augie Galan and Whitey Kurowski, this is a VERY good team. Good enough for a distant second.

(Continued on page 3)



## '57 Draft Order Set, New Trade Report Procedure in Place

At least the first two rounds! Andy Langert will host the January 14, 1995 draft in Downer's Grove. Those who will not be in attendance will once again follow the telephone ring-call-pick process or provide a draft list.

Here is the order of the first two rounds. The remaining rounds will be set in reverse order of finish which will be determined once final stats are compiled.

### \*\*\*\*\*ROUND 1\*\*\*\*\*

- 1-Rifles
- 2-Knights
- 3-Cascades
- 4-Blue Sox
- 5-Bluebirds
- 6-Flyers
- 7-Falcons
- 8-Saxons
- 9-Black Sox
- 10-Grays
- 11-Minors
- 12-Cubs
- 13-WS Loser
- 14-WS Winner

### \*\*\*\*\*ROUND 2\*\*\*\*\*

- 1-WS WINNER
- 2-WS LOSER
- 3-Rifles
- 4-Bluebirds
- 5-Flyers
- 6-Knights
- 7-Minors
- 8-Cascades
- 9-Blue Sox
- 10-Cubs
- 11-Falcons
- 12-Black Sox
- 13-Saxons
- 14-Grays



Beginning immediately please report ALL TRADES, for both SPB I & II to Gary Plunkitt who has volunteered to handle this additional responsibility to his other administrative tasks.

Trades may now be reported EITHER via phone or in writing.

Prior to draft day, all managers will receive an updated list of draft order which will reflect off-season trades.

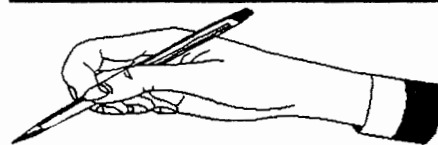
Each SPB I manager should have received a 1956-57 Protected list. This list must be returned, along with the \$30.00 annual dues to Jim Wheeler by December 14, 1994.

Teams which finished below .500 in '56 may protect only 18 players. Those over the .500 mark can protect 19 and the two pennant winners may keep 20 warm bodies on the roster.

## NEXT ISSUE

- '57 ROOKIES - Is Roger a "Sure Thing" @ #1????
- '45 - Month One
- Feedback on Editor's questions
- Were '56 stats really distorted?
- Much more.....

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



It was definitely fun putting together *AROUND THE HORN* in its new format.

Jim Wheeler and I had discussed the fact that many of the recent issues had become, by necessity, administrative logs. Do this, do that, don't forget. I jumped at the opportunity to incorporate those details into not only a fact sheet, but an interesting read.

It also gives me a chance to get more involved with the league in addition to the actual games. I look forward to your input on a regular basis and thus, will accept any submissions.

Since we all grew up in the era of "When It Was a Game," I thought we could run a piece in each issue whereby we each reflect upon what it was like going to the ballpark as kids, our memories and the sensations that come back nowadays only in flashbacks.

I'll kick off "Reflections" next month about my days at Ebbets Field and that great era of New York City baseball.

We can also use the newsletter as a sounding board/forum for issues pertaining to our league, PTP and improvements or changes we'd like to see in both.

Should we change our calendar to allow for more play mid-month, especially when both leagues run at the same time? Would a two-week trading period from the end of the season until we submit our protected lists result in less clutter on draft day and permit more creative player movement?

Let me know. Good luck. LJR