

AROUND THE HORN
THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SEASONS PAST BASEBALL
05/04/1994

56 ROSTERS

Get em while they're hot! Enclosed are the SPBI-56 team rosters based upon the rookie draft and trades reported through May 1, 1994.

The trading deadline ends at midnight EDST May 22, 1994 and while the deals have been few, several big names are reported on the block. Yours for the right deal are names such as Fondy, Torgeson, Jackie Robinson, Sauer, Whisenant, and Crowe. Remember, all deals must be reported by midnight EDST May 22, 1994.

The final season disks will be mailed to you on May 23, 1994 and season play begins on June 1, 1994.

56 TRADES

55. Grays trade ELSTON HOWARD, MARV BLAYLOCK, and 3rd round pick to Cascades for HARRY SIMPSON, JIM BROSNAN, 2nd round pick and 4th round pick.
56. Falcons trade ELLIS KINDER to Saxons for JIM HEARN.
57. Saxons trade ELMER VALO, RAY CRONE, and 5th round draft pick to Black Sox for HANK THOMPSON, GUS ZERNIAL, and 3rd round draft choice.
58. Flyers trade 3rd round pick to Falcons for RAY JABLONSKI.
59. Grays trade GENE FREESE, and ERNIE JOHNSON to Cubs for TED LEPCIO, ARNIE PORTACORROA, and 6th round draft pick.
60. Flyers trade GEORGE KELL and 2nd round pick to KNIGHTS for GENE WOODLING and 2nd round draft pick.
61. Tigers send JIM RIVERA, JIM FINIGAN, and 3rd round pick to Blue Sox for PETE WHISENANT, SAM MELE, 2nd round pick (10) and 6th round draft choice.
62. Saxons deal GUS ZERNIAL to Blue Sox for LOU BERBERET.
63. Blue Sox ship GENE BAKER and HAL GRIGGS to Grays for RED MUNGER and GEORGE STRICKLAND.

AGENDA ITEMS/DRAFT RESULTS

The results of the 56 rookie draft have been mailed to you courtesy of John Turnbull. BTW John, great job on the SPBI-55 yearbook.

At the April rookie draft, the SPB Rules Committee met and dealt with several proposed rule modifications. Their decisions are as follows:

1. No change to the 2nd round draft selection/order.

2. Managers WILL NOT be permitted to telephone instructions to opponents instead of mailing such.
3. There will be no limitation placed upon the number of team starts made by pitchers classified as "unlimited". However, those pitchers are still limited to 25 starts per season.
4. Relief pitchers will continue to be limited to the number of actual appearances made except those classified as "unlimited" relief pitchers.
5. Effective with the 1957 and 1946 seasons, batters will be limited to the next 50 highest at bats. For example, a batter with 309 at bats would be limited to 350 at bats. A batter with 351 at bats would be limited to 400 at bats during the season. Those hitters with batting averages of .199 or less may bat up to 200 times regardless of their actual number of at bats.
6. There will be no late season free agent draft.
7. The weather factor will be used in all SPB league games and the league schedule will designate which month is to be used.

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By now, the 1st month of the 1944 season should be completed and stats returned to each manager. Rumor has it that the Roosters, Fire, and Insects will be making mince meat of the rest of the league.

MANAGER BOIS

Name: Jack Wood
 DOB: 9/13/47
 Born: New York, New York
 Wife's Name: Single
 Occupation: Computer ballpark designer
 3 favorite players: Vic Davalillo, Jimmy Piersall, Charlie Williams
 3 favorite teams: 61 Indians, 51 Giants, 75 Red Sox

PRE-SEASON NOTES

FROM THE STATISTICIAN

As we head into another season, a few very important notes deserve reminding. Enclosed is the 1956 Schedule and the draft results. PLEASE check your schedule for any errors, and if you find any, please notify me immediately. Note the deadlines for road instructions and having your disks into me has moved up to the 1st of each month.

WEATHER: the weather month has been highlighted on the bottom of each schedule month. Make sure correct month is set before each game, as the game doesn't keep the same month after each game.

SERIES RECAPS: Will be optional this year, since the game will include game results from all teams in the REPORTS mode. If you have any unusual game/series tidbits, or any superlative boxscores (IE: No-hitters, 4HR games, etc...), feel free to send them in, and they will be included with the disks, and/or included in an abbreviated version of the monthly recaps which will still highlight the players of the month.

CLEARING STATS: Everyone should be familiar with this procedure from last year, but as a friendly reminder, please do all zeroing of stats in the LEAGUE mode. And just to double check your work, check the STANDINGS and the EXPANDED STANDINGS to see that EVERYTHING got zeroed out.

SENDING STATS TO ME: It is your option whether to send me the entire league sub-directory, or just the transfer files. Remember if you transfer stats, use the LEAGUE mode so that the game summaries will be included. If you send the sub-directory to me, if at all possible, please do not put it in a sub-directory on the floppies sent to me. It just makes it harder and longer for me to compile. THANK YOU!! And only send MONTHLY STATS, not YTD stats. Also, continue sending 2 disks to me, in case one is bad, and so that you'll receive monthly and YTD stats for each month.

This should be another exciting season, with plenty of balls leaving the yard, especially in Frankfort! If you have ANY questions about transferring statistics, or any other item mentioned above, please call me.

Good luck in '56!!



JOHN S. TURNBULL
SPBI Statistician

Doctor Diamond's Highly Informative 1956 SPB Preview
(With Talent on Loan from "the Creator" and "the Sarge")

Yes, folks, thanks to the Herculean efforts of that keeper of the SPB torch, Gary "the baseball encyclopedia that speaks" Plunkitt, and that smooth practitioner of arbitration, Jim "I'll take my ballgame and go home" Wheeler, yours truly, the old country Doctor, has something to write about during his summer vacation. Although the Doctor is enjoying his seasonal Rx of baseball, beer, and more baseball, fear not, loyal aficionados of SPB baseball, because your educations will not suffer. You will all have the benefits of the Doctor's wit, wisdom, and knowledge, which never take a day off.

Pennant races? Ah, yes. The Doctor predicts that the 1956 SPB league will enjoy a great deal of parity, except in the Eastern Division, where Gary Plunkitt is about to open a new stadium, Jurassic Park. In the Western Division, managers will be singing "My kind of town. The Greater Chicago Metropolitan Area is my kind of town." This tune may not play so well west of the Mississippi, however.

The SPB EAST

The Frankfort Tigers:

Mantle, Mathews, AND Snider? Having cornered all the talent in his division, Gary Plunkitt is now ready to control all ball park operations at Jurassic Park . . . uh . . . Briggs Stadium.

Reliable sources in the league office report that the empire-building Plunkitt plans to oversee all ballpark concessions and souvenir sales. In addition, Briggs Stadium will feature pay urinals this year. Smiling with pride, Plunkitt says that "a corporation can't afford to overlook even a little drop in the bucket." Long-term plans suggest that Plunkitt is planning a television superstation so that everyone can watch he calls "America's team." At the time of this writing, the Doctor has not been notified of negotiations to obtain Jane Fonda.

The Lafayette Blue Sox:

Cries of "Duke! Duke! Duke!" will not echo through Municipal Stadium in beautiful downtown Lafayette this season. The cries instead will be "Lemon! Lemon! Lemon!" This may turn out to be an apt description of the team, perhaps of the general manager/manager, not affectionate curtain calls for the two ballplayers, Bob and Jim (no relation), who have the unenviable task of pursuing the Tigers this season.

The Dayton Fliers:

The Doctor has heard (chuckle! chuckle!) that the Dayton manager, none other than the usually rational Jim Wheeler, believes (chuckle! chuckle!) that his Flyers have a chance to (CHUCKLE! CHUCKLE!) beat the Tigers this season (Please give me a moment to compose myself!). Cheer up, Mr. Commissioner/Manager/Comedian, Turnbull was right about Ehresman when he proposes and makes trades. You might beat HIM.

The Rossville Cubs:

If the Doctor admires the Venus de Milo., how could he RESIST the Cubbies? Ah, sometimes life imitates art, but nothing will be too artful on the mound for the Ursa Minors this season, unless you're a fan of slasher movies. Rick Ryan's Terrible Teddys do have Jimmy Piersall this season, but most of Rick's hurlers will pitch like Tony Perkins.

The Mountain Park Minors:

Manager Easley will have a better season. After all, last year he learned to live WITH mediocrity and WITHOUT pitching. Informed sources say that Vern has purchased stock in Roloids. Certainly, Vinegar Vern will need SOMETHING any time after the sixth inning, but when he tries to spell "relief," all he'll get is those little tablets and NO calcium.

The Doctor says try milk, Vern. It's good for ulcers.

The Springfield Rifles:

Welcome, Bob Calicchia. Your mission, if you choose to accept it (P. T. Barnum was right, heh, Jim?), is to assume control of a team that has been located and relocated everywhere, but never out of the second division. At some point, Bob, you should send a "Thank You " note to Paul Kenyon. He'll understand.

The Providence Grays:

As Jack Nicholson in his role as the Joker said, "Wait till they get a load of me." Perhaps rookie skipper Paul Kenyon is entertaining hopes that he can take the SPB by surprise.

NOT! Unfortunately, the rest of the league will UNload on the hapless Grays. Paul, please keep a sense of humor, and remember: If misery loves company, you and Bob are about to begin a beautiful friendship.

The SPB West

The Schaumburg Saxons:

This division is competitive, very competitive: no Jurassic Park, no Rifles, no Grays.

Nevertheless, the reigning SPB champions, led by Manager of the Year Tom Falduto, should successfully defend their division title, if not their World Series crown. "Spahn, Friend, and Do it again !" Or, is that "Spahn, Kaline, and Kiss our behinds!"

The Evanston Black Sox:

Once again, the Black Sox will play second fiddle to their Chicago area rivals the Saxons.

Frankly, the Doctor was tempted to flip a coin to decide the order of finish from second to seventh in this division. But, since no one plays the percentages like Manager Ungashick, the Doctor predicts that John's Evanstonians will once again have the dubious honor of falling a few games short of a divisional flag. Ever think of changing your team's nickname to the Bridesmaids, John? I mean, they ALREADY wear hose.

The Heartland Bluebirds:

Would you want to sit across from this manager in a high-stakes poker game? If you can calmly say, "I'll play with these," while everyone around you is drawing three cards, then you are Andy Langert, my son. All Manager Langert has to show for his cautious style is the highest winning percentage in SPB history (something John Ungashick shares) and one World Series championship. Watch out, SPBers! This soft-spoken Maverick may not be holding Jody Foster (a full house if ever the Doctor saw one), but he just might be holding another flush.

The Gurnee Falcons:

Speaking of things avian, Frank Papp's Gurnee team will no longer be the pigeons of the league. In fact, they have the ability to be legitimate Birds of Prey. Getting Ken Boyer and Frank Robinson in back-to-back drafts will do that for you, heh, Frank? For SPB rivals this season, a trip to the Falcons Nest (i.e., Sportsman's Park) may very well resemble the Hitchcock movie that changed the way we look at our fair-feathered friends.

The Pacific Cascades:

This is the best team west of the Mississippi. Managers Turnbull and Cascarano may take exception to their ranking below the Cascades, but no one finds a way to win like Lou "Mandrake" Ross. Thus, when the Doctor makes his pre-season predictions, he cannot ignore Lou's life-time winning percentage. All the same, Lou, the Doctor suggests you keep a fresh supply of cigars to chomp on close at hand. They could really save on the dentist's bills, if you have an uncontrollable urge to gnash your teeth.

The Nebraska Knights:

John Turnbull, SPB's own Boy Wonder, a la Bucky Harris and Lou Boudreau, is ready to

THE BASEBALL CURMUDGEON

(So, who is the BASEBALL CURMUDGEON? Just your basic old, gravel-voiced 1950's pressbox gadfly who has been living off ballpark food and Jack Daniels while chomping on thick cigars since the days of Cap Anson. Cynical and irascible might be the best way to describe him, although his basic philosophy is, "I'm here to protect this game.")

Late flash!!! Spirited negotiations are now underway between the Pacific Cascades and a group from Havana, Cuba to shift the franchise for the 1959 campaign. A new political force in Cuba, one Fidel Castro, former minor league pitcher and cigar-chomping buddy of Cascades' owner Lou Ross, is promising the world.

It is quite possible that with the new force Castro is hoping to bring to the flourishing country, a new stadium seating approximately 50,000 will be erected shortly. Castro has been working behind the scenes with undisclosed political forces off the island to secure the necessary financing for the project.

The club would be known as the SUGAR KINGS and potentially show a heavy infusion of Latin American players. The key date to watch is January 1, 1959.

Last time out, the Curmudgeon spoke of updating you on the trip by Harry Caray to Bavaria. Well, old Harry went to the snow-capped mountains ostensibly to be wined and dined by Gussie Busch, who had yet to start wearing Depends and be propped in a sleigh with his Clydesdales, like El Cid. But was there an agenda hidden in the closet?

Can you picture Harry swaying on the mountains, Busch beer in hand, yodeling to the local misses? Hardly? Well, despite the snow and chill, Harry wore knee length shorts and was heard to proclaim more than once his now infamous, "It's Gay, It's Friendly, It's Wunderbar." In fact, Caray described his ski outfit, a somewhat gharish collage of test pattern colors as "quite gay." Do we detect a pattern here?

As he traipsed deftly over the peaks, Caray decided that the new clothes he had purchased could be tax deductible. Why? Since he'd be sharing a broadcast booth, this was the perfect practice for stepping over the lines of mates Jack Buck and Joe Garagiola. Talk quick and hope.

The best part of the trip? The 1956 exchange rate was 4:1 for the American dollar which meant that more beer could be consumed by Americans.

Harry's favorite spot? A small town named Zugspitze. Guess we'll be hearing that roll off his tongue all year long in St. Louis.

On a modern note, got an opportunity to look at the COMPLETE BASEBALL CD-ROM during a demo at work (Egghead Software). It's a nice, glitzy program, seemingly tailored to mainstream crowd with stats taken from TOTAL BASEBALL. On the surface, it doesn't appear to have stats as detailed as we'd like, but I will have a copy soon and will pass along info and comments.

See you next time!!!!

make his move to respectability this year. The trouble is , John, everyone else in your division is better too. The Killebrew Watch continues (see also Brooks Robinson and Sandy Koufax), but the question remains: When John is finally able to stick Harmon's big bat into the lineup, will he have to stick a fork in the rest of his team?

The High Desert Mavericks:

The High Plains Drifter? The High Chaparral? No, just the second-division Mavericks.

The Doctor has both good news and bad news for Mike Cascarano: This is the best last place team in the SPB league. Although the Pacific Cascades, the Nebraska Knights, and the High Desert Mavericks should have a spirited competition among themselves, none of them have what it takes to occupy one of the divisional penthouses located in Lake Michigan country.

Thanks for listening, you members of a distinct sub-culture on the Information Highway. The Doctor hopes you have all profited from his freely-offered affable wit. If not, the Doctor still gets paid on vacation. Now, take a hike. The Doctor needs to get back to his home on an old country road, his Cubs on WGN, AND his cold brew in the ice box. You guys have a better way to pass the summer?