

# Vagrant League

## Fantasy Baseball

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### Master Blasters Defend Title

*Wins Second Consecutive Season*

#### Ed Feldman

Futurians

It was the closet battle for first place in the twelve year history of the league with the Master Blasters winning by just three points. Although the smart money down the stretch was on the Master Blasters to win it all they were severely pushed by the Futurians right through the last week of the season.

The two combatants were going head to head in many categories such as stolen bases, batting average, wins, saves and ratio. In the end, what spelled doom for the Futurians is that the Master Blasters passed them in both stolen bases and batting average with only a couple of weeks to go. While there was still time for the Futurians to over take the Master Blasters again in these categories they were never able to quite get over the hump despite remaining close throughout.

The Master Blasters finished up a second consecutive first place season by amassing 57.0 out of 60 hitting points for the second straight year. What enabled an actual pennant race this year was the "mere" 43.0 points

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### Notes From the Marauders

*Reflections of a Rookie Season*

#### Chris Oliva

Marauders

Congratulations to Ira and Ed for making the end of the rotisserie season exciting to watch, even for a team that finished 11<sup>th</sup>. The Marauders' first season was certainly a learning experience. I personally would like to thank Ed, Frank and everyone else in the league for making my first season of rotisserie a lot of fun.

The season was obviously filled with surprises and interesting highlights. On a personal note, my selection of Braden Looper at \$7 will haunt me for years to come, especially since I waived him prior to him re-taking the closer role in Florida. You are welcome Ed. Sadly, I must live with the fact that the Marauders will be saddled with the second worst Saves season in the history of the VFLB.

I tried to stay in the race as long as possible, but finally folded the tents and made some moves. I didn't want to be known as an owner that couldn't pull the trigger on a trade. The Marauders made trades with the MasterBlasters, Futurians, Krackerjacks and Double D. In return for those trades the Marauders have some nice choices for our sophomore season with names like Junior Spivey at \$3, Alex Sanchez at \$3, and Matt Williams at \$4 along with some returning role players like Craig Counsell at \$3, Danny Bautista at \$2, and Benito Santiago at \$3 as well as some up-and-coming rookies with a lot of potential for 2003 (Hee Seop Choi and Chin-Feng Chen). Gotta love the sleaze move. As I am sure all of you can attest, nothing is ever straight forward in rotisserie, but I feel good about the position we put ourselves in for next year.

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Consecutive Win

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the Master Blasters totaled in pitching. While the 43 points were good for third place in pitching it was 15 points below his 58 pitching points of a season ago.

Thanks should go out the Futurians for pushing the 'Blasters so much so that they had to trade off a lot of cheap contracts and minor leaguers for next season such as Marlon Byrd (likely selaze move), Heep Sop Choi (likely sleaze move), Sean Burroughs (\$3), Junior Spivey (\$1), Mark Derosa (\$1) & Adam Dunn (\$6). Losing these players, along with expired contract players such as Jim Edmonds, Lance Berkman, Mark Kotsay, Juan Pierre & Rob Nen and one player to death in Daryl Kile (may he rest in peace) means that it *possible* for a different team to win it all next season, just hopefully not the Mutts.

Some of the players that vaulted the 'Blasters to first place this season are Albert Pujols with 34 hr's, 127 rbi's, 188 runs and a .3136 average, Lance Berkman with 43 hr's, 128 rbi's, 106 runs, a .2924 average and 8 stolen bases. Leading the way in the speed department was Juan Pierre with 47 stolen bases and Bobby Abreu with 31. On the pitching side, while no one really lit it up consistency was the name of the game as the 'Blasters had only four players all season long with an ERA over 4.0 combining for a 4.83 ERA and a 1.47 Ratio. While these numbers are not great they represented only 18% of his total innings pitched resulting in first place in ERA and 4<sup>th</sup> in Ratio.

Key mid-season blue chip acquisitions that enabled him to finish first were Sammy Sosa, Jimmy Rollins, AJ Burnett, Steve Finley and Matt Morris, all of whom came through with key contributions.



## Reflections

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The auction in March should be wild with all of the players going back into the pool and all of the money there will be to spend. If there is one thing I will take away from my rookie season it is money management is the name of the game. Hopefully, we learned enough from our first auction to at least help us get through the second.

Thanks again, and remember Met fans, "Hope springs eternal".

Go Braves!!



## Worst back-to-Back Seasons Ever

*How Not To Do It*

### Ed Feldman

Futurian

The Worst all-time back-to-back seasons ever is not a title anyone ever wants to be linked with but unfortunately the Red Storm has earned the door mat of the league status by putting together two straight 12<sup>th</sup> place finishes. Adding insult to injury the 'Storm finished significantly worse in the 2002 campaign compared to their 2001 12<sup>th</sup> place finish although I suppose last place is last place. The insult part here is that the 'Storm dumped during the 2001 season to better themselves for the 2002 season which clearly did not pan out the way they hoped.

Lets take a closer look at the futility of this season starting with the pitching. Red Storm ended up in the bottom of pitching with a miniscule 8.0 total points, down from their meager 18.5 last place pitching tally in 2001. The 8 points amassed in 2002 ties a league record from the VLFB inaugural season of 1991 where the Power Brokers (a.k.a. BarBarryans) also finished with 8.0 total points. What puts Red Storm behind the Power Brokers as worst all time pitching is that in 1991 the league consisted of 10 teams thus resulting in the Power Brokers garnering 16% of the total pitching points. Red Storms masterful 8.0 performance was with 12 teams in the league resulting in 13.3% of the total pitching points. Offensively the 'Storm did not challenge the all-time lows as much but finishing last in three categories and with just 10 total hitting points in both 2001 & 2002 shows that there is work to be done.

Overall, the Red Storm finished with a mere 18.0 total points blowing away the previous record of futility set in 1996 by Ball 4. Again, what makes the 2002 performance of 'Storm so much poorer is that there were only 10 teams in 1996 resulting in Ball 4 garnering 23.5% of the maximum possible points where the 18.0 total points by Red Storm this season translates into a pitiful 15% of the maximum possible points.

A suggestion for a better showing during the 2003 campaign is surround your cheap young talent with legitimate blue chip talent and forgo the middle of the

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## WEBSITE LINKS

- [Vagrant League Fantasy Baseball](#) (Our home page)
- [USAStats](#) (Our stat service. League code and password are both vagrant).
- [Major League Baseball](#)
- [ESPN MLB](#)
- [Rotoworld](#)
- [Rototimes](#)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NONE



### Arms & Hammers Out Of The Money

*A Nice Run Ends*

**Ed Feldman**  
Commissioner

Condolences to Arms & Hammers for finishing out of the money for the first time since his inaugural season in 1997. From 1998-2002 Arms finished 5<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>. Overall the average position finish For Arms & Hammers is 5.7 which beats 7 of the currently active owners. That is a pretty good success rate for an expansion team although John did come into the league with rotisserie experience so maybe it is not that much of a surprise. Nice job John!

Just for comparison sake, the Monarchs, which also entered the league in 1997 have an average position finish of 6.8 which is still better than 5 of the active owners. Just so you don't think this is a Diamondbacks & Devil Rays situation, the Monarchs did come in 1<sup>st</sup> in just their second season of 1998 and 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2000. The last two years have been almost as hard on the Monarchs as they have been on Red Storm, where the Monarchs have finished 11<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>. It should be noted that neither Walter or Jim came into the league with any rotisserie experience and Jim did not know the NL as he is (was) a Yankee & AL fan. Ok fellas, were those first few years a fluke or will you bounce back? We will find out in 2003.



## How Not To Do It

road player as much as possible as those players tend to disappoint more often than not. Hopefully 2003 will be a bounce back year for the Red Storm or we may have to change the team name to Red Soft Breeze.



## Expansion & Replacement Team Analysis

*How the Rookies Fare*

**Ed Feldman**  
Futurians

Here is a quick look at how the Marauders did this season compared to the previous expansion and replacement owners in their first season.

Year	Team	Finish	# Teams	Total Points
1999	Red Storm	T-5th	11	68.0
1994	Shu's Crew	6th	11	60.0
1994	Barf Bags	8th	11	51.5
2000	Krackerjacks	11th	12	40.0
1998	Copperheads	T-9th	11	35.5
1997	Arms & Hammers	8th	10	33.0
1997	Monarchs	9th	10	32.5
1994	Beavis	11th	11	29.5
2002	Marauders	11th	12	29.0
1999	BarBarryans	11th	11	28.5
<b>Overall Average:</b>		<b>9th</b>		<b>40.8</b>

The average final total points for the first year owner is 40.8 with an average position finish of 9<sup>th</sup> place right on the nose. While the Marauders 29.0 points is a fair amount below the average points of 40.8, 41 points would have still landed the Marauders in 11<sup>th</sup> place, just one point behind the Monarchs illustrating what a competitive season it was. If they got the extra points in the right spot they could have passed the Monarchs. It is interesting to see that of the ten "new owner" teams we have had over the years, only two have finished in last place in their inaugural season. Just goes to show that rotisserie "veterans" can, and often do suck more than the rookies. One interesting not is that while the Monarchs finished 9<sup>th</sup> their first season they did win it all in year two. Despite their early success attendance has dropped dramatically for the Monarchs as they finished 11<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> the past two seasons respectively. Should we start calling you boys Doubleday & Wilpon?



## **The Braves, and the Rest of Baseball**

*One Mans Opinion*

**Chris Oliva**

Marauders

The Atlanta Braves are arguably the most dominant sports franchise over a 10 year period in the modern history of professional sports. Their winning percentage over the past 10 years is .6134 (that's an average of 99.4 wins per full season). Braves fans have been fortunate (or unfortunate as the case may be) to be able to say that practically every baseball game in October since 1991 has meant something (with the exception of 1994 – but that is a whole other article). That is 12 years in a row of playoff baseball and 12 years worth of excitement, drama, jubilation and yes, even heartbreak.

The Braves of the past 12 years have had only but a few constants throughout this string of seasons. These constants include: Tom Glavine, John Smoltz, John Schuerholz, Bobby Cox, and Leo Mazzone. In addition, for the past 10 years you can add Greg Maddux. I believe it is because of these 6 people, Braves fans have been able to say that they root for a winner. Yes, I agree that the Braves for the most part have come up small in the postseason, but it is hard to argue about their ability to beat the teams they are suppose to beat year in and year out. The Braves have had to deal with a number of teams having dream seasons and dream series. Most of them causing the Braves to lose. Look at Kirby Puckett and Minnesota in 1991 (in my opinion the most exciting World Series ever), Toronto in 1992, the Yankees' miracle in 1996 (I still can't stand the mention of Mark Wholers), the Yankees again in 1999, Curt Schilling and Randy Johnson in 2001.

Yes, without a doubt, it is difficult to be a fan of the Atlanta Braves. However, baseball is a lot of fun to watch from April to October, every year.

I am certainly upset about the possibility of Greg Maddux, Tom Glavine and Leo Mazzone leaving to finish out their careers somewhere else. As I had mentioned previously, they are 3 of the constants that has made Braves baseball as consistent and exciting as it has been over the past 12 years. Losing them will take some getting used to. But, I said the same thing about Steve Avery, Terry Pendleton, David Justice, Charlie Leibrandt and Dale Murphy.

We have new faces with the same professional attitude. Guys like Jason Marquis, Wilson Betemit, Ryan Langerhans

and Jung Bong will fill the void if needed.

As the off-season gets started with many questions to be answered for every major league team, the Atlanta Braves go in with some enormous decisions to make. Keep Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine? Let Leo Mazzone go manage or coach for another team? Once the questions are answered and spring training begins again I can realistically say, the Braves have a shot to win it all, again. That's a good feeling to have.



## **Fallen Records**

*This Years Successes & Failures*

**Ed Feldman**

Futurian

Kudos to the BarBarryans for placing 2<sup>nd</sup> on the all-time list for most saves this season. Barry amassed 94 saves to surpass Purgatory (a.k.a. the Mutts) from way back in 1992. Barry also finished just one save behind the all-time mark set in 1997 by the expansion team Monarchs with 95. Since the BarBarryans won saves by 24 I am sure Barry would have rather of had 23 less and finished higher in the standings but what can you do. Wait, maybe he was going for the record after all since he could have traded Mike Dejean, who had 27 saves, at some point in the season and gotten a player back that could have helped him somewhere else. Nice job anyway.

The other record that fell this season was a record no one thought would fall and also came in the saves category. The Marauders took over 2<sup>nd</sup> worst all-time in saves by amassing just 3 saves all season long. No, you read it right and it is not a typo, that was 3 saves. The Marauders supplanted Eight Men Out, where the previous ineptitude record for 2<sup>nd</sup> worst all-time was 5 set back in 1997. Lee, you should be thanking them for getting you name off a record like that. To make matters worse for the Marauders, when they waived Braden Loooper he had no saves, but as we know he became the closer in the second half of the season and wound up with 13 saves. To rub it in even more, the Marauders released Steve Kline just in time for him to pick up a couple of saves when Jason Isringhausen was sidelined for a few weeks. It seems like the best way to pick up some cheap saves is get the Marauders discarded relievers. Think someone will be bidding on a real closer next season?

