

Vagrant League

Fantasy Baseball

Volume 2, Issue 1

April 2004

Gods and Roto-Generals

Becoming A Believer?

Barry Greenberg

Team Owner

In a recent e-mail, the editor of this publication sought contributing articles from the league membership and reading public at large. One of the suggestions was that last year's winner submit an article to "pat [themselves] on the back". A good suggestion; however I was not the winner, merely finished in second place, and thus really shouldn't be patting myself on the back by recapping last year.

Nevertheless, I do have some comments about last season, mainly in rebuttal to the season ending synopsis contained in the league web site. Therein was contained a comment that, "...the Monarchs moved into first place the first week of June and never relinquished that hallowed position the remainder of the season. Their first place lead during the month of June remained fairly small but constant just inviting another team to make a run at them with so much time left...". This comment

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Waiver Rule

Here's How It Works

Ed Feldman

Rules Committee Chairman

As everyone knows we have had a waiver rule since the formation of the league. What most people don't know is how it works in the VLFB world. So here is how it works.

A player will be placed on waivers when:

- The player is either on the **23 man active roster** or the **bench** (this does not include the DL or farm system).
- The player meeting the above criteria is released from his team to the free agent pool.

Once a player is placed on waivers he can then be claimed off waivers the following week. To do this you claim him off waivers during your regular weekly roster moves and then in turn waive a player to make room on your active roster for the player you are claiming. The player you in turn waive does NOT have to be on the DL, sent down, etc.. This is a way to get rid of a bigger piece of dead wood (also known as crap) than you are claiming.

The player you are claiming off waivers **must** go into your active roster. He **cannot** be placed on your bench.

The player that you in turn waive is available to the rest of league as a waiver pickup the following week and the answer is no, you cannot claim your own player off waivers. You can pick him up as a normal free agent pickup the following week only if no other team, whether below or above you in the standings, claims him as a waiver pickup and no one below you claims him as a free agent pickup.

Lastly a player claimed off waivers maintains his current salary and contract.



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bothered me for two reasons, firstly because I believe it to be factually inaccurate, and secondly, it suggested that I as the second place team, did nothing to try to overtake the Monarchs and just let them walk away with the win.

The truth is that I realized by early June that if I made the proper trade I could give the Monarchs a strong run, but that I needed to make the trade soon so as to derive the maximum time benefit of the acquired players stats. The problem was that in early June, few teams were willing to make the lopsided dump-style trade that I needed to make in order to accomplish my task. So after lengthy discussions with the Futurians, wherein I initially sought to acquire the eventual NL RBI king Preston Wilson and his \$28 contract, on June 9, I settled for a package of Andruw Jones, Braden Loper, and Vance Wilson, who at that point was off to a hot start, but would eventually slump. In exchange, I gave up Eric Gagne, perhaps the most valuable closer of the last 10 years, with his insanely undervalued \$12 contract, as well as two throw in type players.

Then it happened. On June 16, I was at a Met game with several league members (I will not name the guilty to protect their privacy) where the beer flowed amply. Having not drunk enough; we went to a local drinking establishment after the game, where ESPN showed several of my players hitting the long ball, leaving me both ecstatic and drunk. Sure enough, the next morning, Tuesday June 17th, found me in first place, and I believed my strategy to be sound.

Alas, the glory was fleeting. Within days, the Monarchs had recaptured their lead, never to look back again. Their team was quite strong with an increasing lead and I was faced with a rash of injuries.

Although I attempted to make other trades soon after to chip away at the Monarchs lead, nothing worked out, and I would settle for second place. At the end of the season, I calculated that my trade netted me 5.5 points, however given the Monarchs ultimate margin of victory of over 25 points, far too few to make any difference.

Nevertheless, I do wish to make it clear that I did make the effort.

This brings me to my second subject: Is there truly a Roto God? For years, others have told me that such a divinity did exist, and one risked offending this almighty by engaging in overconfidence or by treating ones roto team as merely a statistical collection. I pooh-poohed this notion, figuring that that is exactly what a roto team is: a collection of stats.

Viewing the events involving my trade above however, at least left me open to believe in the possibility of this divinity, as I feel that I may have been rewarded in some way for at least risking to trade my way to victory. True, I did not win, but consider this. I aggressively sought Preston Wilson and almost let my failure to obtain him kill the deal, figuring if I were to give up Gagne and his \$12 contract, I at least was entitled to Wilson as a \$28 keeper for the following year. I did not end up with Wilson, but is that a bad thing? Ask the Futurians, who now have Wilson on the DL 'indefinitely' and needs knee surgery. There is even talk that he will miss the entire season. Thus, I am glad for the deal not made.

Likewise, I regretted my deal as I gave up the cheap and talented closer Gagne, but was again rewarded later that Fall when Billy Wagner was traded, leaving Octavio Dotel, and his \$6 roto contract in my pocket, as the Astros closer.

Lastly, there is the deal not made. I had sought a deal to obtain both Curt Schilling and Vlad Guerrero, essentially for an \$8 Jason Schmidt. The other team was not interested. Within two or three weeks, both Guerrero and Schilling were on the DL and stayed there for extended periods. So I ask, is there a Roto God? All I can say is that I really do not know, but I will no longer ignore the possibility.



Baseball Fact:

In 1966, Matty Alou of the Pittsburgh Pirates won the National League batting title with a .342 average. Runner up was Matty's brother Felipe, (.327) whilst playing for the Atlanta Braves. This was the first occasion in which **brothers** had finished **first and second** in the batting race.



Draft Analysis

Thoughts on the 2004 Draft

Ira Mandelbaum

Team Owner

Finally the draft is over. That was long and painful – like being at the dentist... although I don't look so forward to going to the dentist. Actually it was another great day and a lot of fun. Another weird draft filled with peaks and valleys of opportunity. Those that missed the boat on some bargains found themselves with a lot of money to spend on the likes of Jose Mesa....not that there is anything wrong with that.

Here are some of my assessments of draft day – This is not to offend anyone so don't take it personally (my legal disclaimer).

- I think just about every team has a shot this year. There is a lot of mediocrity. No clear-cut favorite. I do think the 2 best teams (the favorites) out of the draft are Ron and Doug. This is not much of a surprise to me as I felt they went in with the 2 best "valued" teams. They did a nice job not to screw themselves with a bad draft. This is not to say they don't have questions, however, any team you look at will have questions. If I can't win it this year I hope that someone like Ron or Doug does – A long time owner who has yet to taste the sweetness of 1st place.
- I think that Ed rebounded well after sleeping threw most of the first part of the draft. Even when he finally woke up and joined the draft his first player inked was Craig Counsell. Not a bad job considering.
- How many times did Howie bump up his own bid? Great strategy to squash all the holds.
- I want to know what publication Lee was reading that convinced him to do just the opposite of what he normally does. He said he was going to spend money on pitching and he did not disappoint. He spent more than anyone else.

Time will tell what destiny this new strategy will bring. If nothing else I give him credit for trying something new.

- If Prior is lost for any length of time I think the Monarch's mantra of good year bad year will continue. FYI – Coming off a first place season guess what year this will be.
- I think Doug has the best outfield (Bay, Jenkins, Roberts, Sanders, Patterson and Gonzalez in his utility) followed VERY closely by Craig (Finley, Jones, Greene, Berkman, Spencer/Goodwin).
- Shu's Crew has the best corner (Pujols, Ensberg, Bagwell) followed VERY closely by the Monarchs (Sexson, Thome, and Ginter/Simon). Monster corners.
- Red Storm has the best middle (Grud, Kent, Rollins) followed VERY closely by Shu's Crew (Polanco, Renteria, Perez)
- Best starting five is owned by Howie (Beckett, Eaton, Wolf, Miller, Armas Jr/Jackson) followed VERY closely by Ed (Millwood, Webb, Zambrano, Pettitte, Tomko/Marquis). Close call.

One final prediction/observation – although no player from my team, or my team itself, made any of my lists - I do think I have a balanced team that should be able to compete for money. That's the beauty of the beginning of the year – We are all still in it. I imagine this is what the Brewers tell themselves year in and year out. I wish everyone the best!!!

P.S. In case you were wondering, I was able to return the stopwatch and get every penny back. We can thank Sports Authority for the loaner.



Baseball Fact:

In 1984, Steve Garvey of the San Diego Padres became the first first baseman to finish the season with a **perfect fielding average of 1.000**



WEBSITE LINKS

[Vagrant League Fantasy Baseball](#) (Our home page)

[USAStats](#)

[Major League Baseball](#)

[ESPN MLB](#)

[Rotoworld](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEEKLY ROSTER MOVES

PLACE: EMAIL TO ED AT WORK

TIME: EVERY TUESDAY BY NOON

“Dibs” (not Rob Dibble) on players is based on who is lower in the standings on the Tuesday of reported moves.

TRADING DEADLINE

TIME: AUGUST 10TH, NOON

There is no trading after this deadline until the season is over.

SEPTEMBER EXPANSION

TIME: SEPTEMBER 7TH ROSTER MOVES OR LATER

Beginning with the September 7th moves you can expand your roster from 23 players to 24. The extra player can be either a hitter or pitcher.



Roster Moves

Changing Your Active Roster

Ed Feldman

League Commissioner

Roster moves are due on Tuesdays as usual by noon. **Reminder:** when activating a player from the DL you can waive or bench any active player on your roster as long as position eligibility is maintained. Also remember that you do NOT have to activate a player from your bench before picking up a player from the free agent pool. Email me the moves at edwardfeldman@kpmg.com. I prefer email over voicemail as much as possible so that I can keep move history more easily. Lastly, the stat period with respect to roster moves is based on a Tuesday – Monday week for those of you that don't remember.



1 Part Skill - 2 Parts Luck

More Lucky Than Skill?

Doug Drotman

Team Owner

A few weeks into the season I may have lucked myself into the top of the standings and accidentally picked this year's stars over this year's busts. I owe it all to you guys. Check this out.

I knew I wanted a second baseman that would steal some bases. I was very high on Durham, Alomar and Damian Jackson. Alomar has been a bust, Jackson was released and Durham looks like the real thing.

Instead of paying top dollar for a slugger like Bonds, Pujols or Bagwell, I decided to try and get multiple players under \$20. I was sick of having the least number of At Bats in the league. High on my list were Nick Johnson, Shane Hillenbrand, Larry Walker, and Carl Everett. All have done nothing to date. I had no interest in Reggie Sanders but the price and timing were right. He's been my best player to date. At catcher I wanted Pierczinski but ended up with Loduca – he's only hitting .500 so far.

So, if it were up to me, my third place team might actually be a last place team. Thanks everyone for helping me make so many good choices this year.

MY PREDICTIONS

These were my thoughts right after the draft:

Best Buys

Chad Cordero -1
Tony Womack – 1
Brady Clark – 3
Russ Ortiz – 17
Eric Milton – 20
Ryan Freel – 4
Roger Clemens - 21

Worst Buys

Termel Sledge – 10
Chad Fox – 4
Jose Mesa – 18
Ben Sheets - 23
Brandon Larson – 11
Edwin Jackson – 12
Luis Castillo – 23



Baseball Fact:

In 1988, Oakland A's outfielder Jose Canseco became the first player in Major League history to **hit over 40 home runs** and have at least **40 stolen bases**.



RULES REFRESHER

TRADING

- Unrestricted trading with other teams until noon on the second Tuesday in August. No trading after this date.
- After the start of the auction until the trading deadline, any players traded with a salary of \$12 or less will have \$4 added to his contract each time he is traded.
- After every trade, both teams must have eligible players at all 23 positions. You cannot leave a position “empty”.

FARM SYSTEM CONTRACTS

- Farm system players called up will have a contract of \$2 his call up year, \$6 his second year and \$10 his third year.

MINIMUM INNINGS PITCHED AND AT BATS

- *Minimum Innings Pitched:* 900 - Needed to earn your ERA & Ratio points. Otherwise you get moved to the bottom in each category (1 point for each)
- *Minimum At Bats:* 4250 - Needed to earn your Batting Average points. Otherwise you get moved to the bottom of BA and get only 1 point.

PLAYER POSITION ELIGIBILITY

- If a player did not play 20 or more games at one position then he is only eligible at the position he played the most at.
- Only 1 game once the regular season starts

ROSTER MOVES

- All roster moves are due to Ed by noon on Tuesday.
- Either call in moves at 631.425.6067 or email them to edwardfeldman@kpmg.com. (Email is preferred).
- Once per season each team can make a move on an active player that has not been placed on the DL, sent down, etc.. This is called the “Free Move”

“Extra” Auction Dollars

- Starting in 2005, 6th place gets \$4 extra, 7th gets \$3 and 8th gets \$2



Trivia

Test Your Knowledge

- 1) **How many strikeouts does Nolan Ryan have?**
a. 4728 b. 5000 c. 5714 d. 5632
- 2) **Which of the following players was a 20-time All-Star?**
a. Mickey Mantle b. Pete Rose
c. Jackie Robinson d. Willie Mays
- 3) **Who had an ERA of 1.12 in 1968?**
a. Nolan Ryan b. Bob Gibson
c. Tom Seaver d. Jim Palmer
- 4) **How many consecutive games did Cal Ripkin Jr. play in?**
a. 2132 b. 2632 c. 2428 d. 2876
- 5) **How many hits does Pete Rose have?**
a. 4192 b. 4256 c. 4557 d. 4329
- 6) **If you take Joe Dimaggio’s lifetime strikeouts and subtract his career home runs, what is the difference?**
a. 37 b. 3 c. 8 d. 126
- 7) **Which player averaged better than a .400 batting average over a 5-year span?**
a. Rogers Hornsby b. Ty Cobb
c. Ted Williams d. Honus Wagner
- 8) **Which pitcher gave up Mark McGwire’s 61st homerun in 1998?**
a. Dennis Martinez b. Steve Trachsel
c. Mike Morgan d. Carl Pavano
- 9) **Which of the following pitchers has a perfect ALCS record with 8 wins and no losses in his career?**
a. Dave Stewart b. Bret Saberhagen
c. Dave Stieb d. Steve Avery
- 10) **What is Ernie Shore most famous for?**
a. Hitting 2 walk-off home runs in a double header
b. Balking 5 times in one inning
c. Scoring 3 runs in one inning
d. Retiring 27 straight batters in relief in a single game



(Answers on page 8)

Notes From The Marauder's

Well, Half of The Marauders Anyway

Chris Oliva

Team Owner

Welcome to the 2004 Major League baseball season. You've got to love spring and you've got to love baseball. There is nothing quite like the excitement of "pitchers and catchers" and opening day.

The auction has come and gone. It was very exciting and excruciatingly long (thanks Doug). Here are my short notes on the draft, through the eyes of ½ of the Marauders team:

- 1) **Was the top-flight pitching high priced or was it just me?** Matt Morris \$27? Randy Johnson \$33? Roy Oswalt \$31? Sad thing is, I wish we had spent it for the Marauders.
- 2) **Steal of the draft (to date):** Barry's selection of Tony Womack for \$1! Nothing like getting (.360BA, 1HR, 4RBI, 11R, and 7SB) through April 20th for a buck!!
- 3) **Best overall draft:** BarBarryans. Additions of Mike Piazza, Derrick Lee, Pat Burrell, Mike Cameron, Tony Womack and Roger Clemens could spell success for Mr. Greenberg.
- 4) **Most surprising statistical anomaly through April 20th:** How in the hell can Double D's Paul LoDuca be batting 22 for 47 (.468) and have a line of (0HR, 6RBI, 4R, and 0SB)?? Talk about no one hitting around you. That's ridiculous.
- 5) **Best start through April 20th:** Barry Bonds of the Marauders (.514 BA (19 for 37), 9HR, 19RBI, 14R, 0SB). WOW!! Honorable Mention – Scott Rolen (\$34) of the Futurians (.362 BA (21 for 58), 7HR, 23RBI, 13R, 1SB).
- 6) **Worst start through April 20th:** Terrmel Sledge of the Marauders (.037 BA (1 for 27), 0HR, 0RBI, 0R, 0SB). WOW!! Dishonorable Mention – Jimmy Rollins (\$21) of the Red Storm (.125 BA (5 for 40), 0HR, 1RBI, 3R, 0SB).
- 7) **Mr. Oliva's Predicted order of finish:** 1st) BarBarryans (nice auction); 2nd) MasterBlasters (always finds a way to compete); 3rd) Monarchs (need Prior in a big way); 4th) DoubleD (needs to have big years out of Trachsel, Peavy, Wells, and Biddle); 5th) KrackerJacks (needs to find a way to keep the early season magic alive).
- 8) **Mr. Cottone's Predicted order of finish:** 1st) KrackerJacks (best rotisserie baseball team assembled in the history of the Vagrant League); Tied for 2nd) Double D, BarBarryans, MasterBlasters, Futurians, Eight Men Out, Marauders, Monarchs, Arms and Hammers, Shu's Crew and Red Storm; 12th) Mutts (worst rotisserie baseball team assembled in the history of the Vagrant League).

Have fun boys and Go Braves!!



Baseball Fact:

Baseball is rules by measurements. The distance between bases is **90 feet**. The distance from the pitcher mound to the back of home plate is **60 feet 6 inches**. Home plate is **17 inches wide**. The distance from home plate to second base is **127 feet 3 3/8 inches**, likewise from first to third.



I Love Rotisserie – I Can't Wait To Quit

A Love/Hate Relationship

Ed Feldman

Team Owner

I WANT TO QUIT ROTISSERIE! Let me explain. In 1987 I formed the Nomura Securities Rotisserie Baseball League, my first rotisserie league. I quit this league after the 1988 campaign when league owners voted, despite my stern opposition, to throw everyone back in after each season. After a one year hiatus in which I could not get a new league formed, 1990 saw the formation of a limited rules rotisserie league to help get friends feet wet with this new game that they have heard about recently. This was before Al Gore invented the Internet and I calculated stats each week in Lotus 123 based on the USA Today's weekly stats in the sports section. Talk about tedious work. This limited rules league was the precursor to our VLFB league, which officially formed in 1991 and is now in its 14th season.

Well, after 17 seasons in the last 18 years I have come to love rotisserie and hate it at the same time. I love the auction, tracking my players (well some of my players), talking trades or just baseball with you guys and believe it or not, running the league. What I hate, and what makes me want to quit almost every year *is that I suck at it.*

Now I can hear all you saying "no Ed, your ok at this, I wouldn't say you suck", but no, I have to admit that I am a cash cow (MOO) for others in the league and here is my proof. Of the 12 active teams in the league my average position finish is 6th meaning that 5 of you have done better than me and 6 have done worse. Of all the total 20 teams that have been in this league since its inception I have the 9th best average position finish meaning that 8 teams have done better and 11 have done worse than me. But numbers can be deceiving.

So you are saying to yourself, hmm, it doesn't sound like you suck at this, you are actually just a touch better than half the teams in the league now as well as half the teams going back to the beginning of the league so you are ok at this and don't really suck. Well here is the proof (if you really need it) that I actually SUCK. In the 16 completed seasons I have put into rotisserie I have finished in the money just 3 F**KING TIMES. Yeah, that's right, 3.

Now I see your heads bobbing up and down and you are probably saying out loud, WOW! He really does suck! And I'm screaming "S%\$T, F&%K, I HATE THIS AND WANT TO QUIT! I CAN'T STAND NOT KNOWING WHAT I'M DOING AND I JUST WANT TO RIP UP THE STATS EVERY WEEK AS SOON AS I PRINT THEM OUT! I AM TIRED OF THIS CRAP! IT IS NOT FUN SUCKING ALL THE TIME! THIS IS MY LAST SEASON FOR SURE!"

"Let me go look at yesterdays stats to get more fodder" Ed thought testily to himself. "Hmm, Zambrano did pitch a good game last night" Ed mused. "I'll be damned" he said aloud, "Hernandez went 2-4. I picked up Jose Hernandez because Cora is sucking and if Hernandez can hit a little he may take playing time away from Cora. Maybe that will turn out ok, Hernandez can even have a little pop in his bat, more than Cora anyway". "And I am holding onto 5th" he thought gleefully, "and if I can get Pettitte and Nick Johnson back in a week or so that will help. And Preston will hopefully be back in early June. That will allow Kit Pellow time to establish himself so that when Preston comes back he can still get some playing time" Ed thought to himself with a smile.

"This is awesome" Ed thought, "I can make a run at this. If I can pull off even one or maybe two good trades I CAN FIGHT FOR FIRST," he yelled jubilantly in his mind. "I'M GOING TO HAVE A GREAT SEASON! IT IS AWESOME! I'M GOING TO DO IT!!" Ed screamed with joy ***"I LOVE THIS GAME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"***



Trivia Answers

1) The correct answer is **C, 5714**.

2) The correct answer is **D, Willie Mays**

Willie Mays was an All-Star from 1954 to 1973

3) The correct answer is **B, Bob Gibson**

Gibson threw for the St. Louis Cardinals in that season. That was the lowest single season ERA he recorded

4) The correct answer is **B, 2632**

He beat Lou Gehrig's long-standing mark of 2130 in the 1995 season and several years later sat down after the final home game at Camden Yards.

5) The correct answer is **B, 4256**

In 1985, Rose nosed out Ty Cobb's long-standing mark of 4189. This mark was set from 1905 to 1928. Over that period, Cobb had over 200 hits 8 times.

6) The correct answer is **C, 8**

Dimaggio struck out only 369 times and homered 361 times

7) The correct answer is **A, Rogers Hornsby**

In the 5-year span 1921 to 1925, Hornsby averaged an incredible .402 with averages of:

1921 - .397 (154 games)

1922 - .401 (154 games)

1923 - .384 (107 games)

1924 - .424 (143 games)

1925 - .403 (138 games)

8) The correct answer is **C, Mike Morgan**

Mike Morgan was with the cubs. Mcgwire hit his 70th of Carl Pavano, his 62nd of Steve Trachsel and his 55th off Dennis Martinez

9) The correct answer is **A, Dave Stewart**

Stewart won 6 games with Oakland and 2 with the Toronto in various American league Championship Series. Stieb was 1-3 with Toronto in 2 ALCS, Saberhagen was 0-1 and Avery never pitched in an ACLS.

10) The correct answer is **D, retiring 27 straight batters in relief in a single game**

After walking the first batter of the game, Babe Ruth argued with an umpire over the base on balls. Babe Ruth was thrown out of the game and Ernie Shore came on in relief without warming up. Ernie Shore retired the next 26 batters in order after the catcher threw out Shore's inherited runner at second base on an attempted steal.

