



NEW SCOREBOARD  
DRAWS RAVES



The new tractor race has revealed that Craftsman has more than one paint color.

## Fans Amazed by Off-Season Color Upgrade

George Ellis  
Editor

Even the most casual of Cubs faithful has to appreciate the improvements made by their team this offseason. From Derrek Lee to Greg Maddux, the North Siders upgraded an already playoff-caliber roster. Still, nothing could have prepared fans for the biggest acquisition in 2004.

"The scoreboard's in color!" exclaimed 17-year-old Matt Newman on Opening Day. "It's like Play Station 2 up there!"

Newman isn't alone in his excitement. Fans have responded in record-breaking fashion, coming out in droves to experience the 256-color digital boards hanging in center field and on both grandstands.

"I used to think all Craftsman tractors were kinda yellow," said Glenview native Stacy Pogue. "But now that I've seen the tractor race in full color, I realize it was the old bulbs that were yellow, not the tractors. That's pretty exciting."

It's not just color, though. The scoreboards were also expanded to feature more information to help fans follow the game.

"Connie's Pizza is a great way to enjoy the seventh inning," said Pogue, referring to one of the ads featured simultaneously on all three scoreboards. "I guess I'd like to see more stats up there, but what I really want to see is the soft-side of Sears."

"A Butterburger would be nice, too."

While most fans are thrilled with the new scoreboards, a small minority can't help but wonder if they break with tradition.

"It's color. I get it. But I thought the Cubs promised never to put up advertisements inside the stadium," said die-hard fan Bobby Westmiller. "That McDonald's ad looks a lot like an ad to me."

Cub President Andy MacPhail insists fans have nothing to worry about.

"An ad? No, you're just confused by all those fancy colors," he said. "Did you know Craftsman guarantees their tools forever? It's true."

# WENDELL WAIVED

## School crossing guard replaces base coach

By Rob C. Christiansen  
Contributing Editor

After having a league-high 20 runners thrown out at home last year, the Cubs dumped third base coach Wendell Kim in favor of local school crossing guard Paula McGregor.

McGregor has 12 years experience in the related field of holding up traffic so that pedestrians may cross the street safely.

"We're impressed with Paula's track record," said Cubs General Manager Jim Hendry. "In her time as a crossing guard, there was never an incident of a student being hit by a car. While we wish Wendell the best, we also wish he had McGregor's fine sense of judgement."

Kim appeared to be righting this ship, with no Cub runners thrown out at home yet this year. However, he has made a few blunders, including once holding up two runners at third.

Players and coaches have been quietly doubting Kim for some time.

"Wendell has lost his baseball intuition," said Moises Alou. "In a game last week, after a hit by (Michael) Barrett, I was held up on third, but Wendell waved (base runner) Alex Gonzalez over from second to join me there."

"I don't know what happened to Wendell's faculties," Cubs skipper Dusty Baker said. "The other day he told me he didn't want to be known as 'Wavin' Wendell' anymore, so he wasn't going to wave our guys home at all. He was just going to hold everyone up at third."

"Wendell called it 'stacking the deck,'" Sammy Sosa said. "The way he explained it to me just before Opening Day is he was just going to hold up all our runners at third base, and when the moment was right, send everybody home. Personally, I hate to see Wendell go. If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't have become the first and only player in baseball history to smack a seven-run homer, like I did in that eight-run inning against Pittsburgh in April."



ED HELLER

Unlike Kim, new Cubs third base coach Paula McGregor knows how to use the stop sign.

"I look forward to working with Paula McGregor this year," said Baker. "She and I have talked quite a bit about base coaching and she has an interesting philosophy called 'cross at the green, not in between.'"

"In my job, success has always depended on the cooperation I received from the students,"

McGregor said. "In order to do well as Cubs third base coach, I need the players to obey me. I'm aware of the fact that the Cubs had a major league-leading five runners thrown out at home with no outs last year. If any

Please see 'WAIVED'

page 10

## Minor League Osprey-Killer Sentenced to Christensen Beanball

Craig Shparago  
Contributing Editor

As part of his punishment for last spring's killing of a protected osprey, Cubs double-A pitcher Jae-Kuk Ryu will have to endure an intentional beaning by his West Tennessee Diamond Jaxx teammate, righthander Ben Christensen. A warrant for Ryu's arrest had been issued in February when probation officials said Ryu had neither completed his required 100 hours of community service nor had he issued a formal apology, both part of a plea deal the 20-year-old agreed to last August. Last week, Volusia County Judge Theodore McDonnell issued the punishment.

"If a trademark Ben Christensen beanball won't knock some sense into that boy,



Ozzy



Ryu

nothing will," McDonnell said.

Before an April 21, 2003, spring-training game against the Port St. Lucie Mets, Ryu, a native of South Korea, took several tosses at an osprey from its nest. Ospreys are recognized by the state of Florida as a species of special concern, meaning their habitats are vulnerable.

The osprey, known affectionately as "Ozzy" to locals, eventually died, and Ryu apologized for his actions at the time.

"I am very sorry I repeatedly tried to hit that gentle, majestic,

Please see 'BIRD KILLER'

page 4

## Everything Fan Knows About Baseball Comes From PlayStation2 Game

Ian Schochet  
Contributing Editor

While attempting to pass himself off as a knowledgeable Cubs fan, Christopher Sulnik reportedly gets all his information from MVP Baseball 2004 for PlayStation2. His friends say that Sulnik, a 25-year-old computer consultant from Lincoln Park, regularly makes comments on



Sulnik thinks Wood's a great pitcher because he strikes out every batter with his "square button pitch," er, slider.

baseball that could only have come from playing the video game.

"Chris always liked baseball, but he never really got into it all that much," said longtime friend Kevin Horner. "But ever since he got that PlayStation 2, it's like we can't get him to shut up about it. He's always giving you his little insights as though he just came up with them on his own, but you know everything he says is just stuff he's seen happen in that game. And he doesn't really know what the hell he's talking about."

"Like this one time, Alex Gonzalez gets on first with a walk, and Chris starts saying how fast Gonzo is and how he's definitely going to steal. Well we're all just sitting around

Please see 'PS2'

page 5

Also inside: crossword, word find and Pete Rose PAGE 10

Lo-Carb fever hits  
Wrigley concessions  
PAGE 2

Political beat: Mmm  
... cinnamon rolls  
PAGE 4

Tax day 2004 no sweat  
for Dusty Baker  
PAGE 5

Go for a stroll with  
HBO's Jeff Garlin  
PAGE 12



# New Wrigley Foul Screens Sponsored by PitchBack

Jeff Norman  
Contributing Editor

The Chicago Cubs announced today that they have sold the naming rights to the new foul ball screen behind home plate to PitchBack Inc.—the popular children's throw-back companion screen.

The move comes fresh off of the Cubs first home stand of the year in which fans witnessed foul ball after foul ball bounce back off the foul screen—designed to protect those seated behind home plate—and onto the field. The returning foul balls have then been striking scores of unsuspecting batters, catchers, umpires and ball boys.

One of those hit by PitchBack Foul Ball Screen, as it will now be called, was Cubs first baseman Derrick Lee, during an at bat against the Reds. "I fouled a ball back behind me then thought nothing of it ... until it domed me in the head. I had nightmares about it all that night."

The Cubs, rather than simply loosen the slack of the screen to prevent further harm to the million-dollar players, decided to contact PitchBack Inc. instead. Three days and a \$3 million naming deal later, the PitchBack Foul Ball Screen will make its debut this Tuesday when the Cubs return to Wrigley to play Arizona—now, even springier than ever.

The PitchBack screen has undergone a few



Wrigley's foul screen returns a ball like a PitchBack.

enhancements while the Cubs were out of town to ensure that the screen meets PitchBack standards. PitchBack Inc. spokesperson Donald Collins oversaw the improvements himself. "The screen was pulled even tighter to make sure that balls hitting the screen will bounce back in accordance to PitchBack's claims in our commercials and the way that kids have become accustomed to it doing," Collins said. "Plus, we've put a gigantic box in the middle of the screen to better emulate the same PitchBack screen you'll find in any backyard in America."

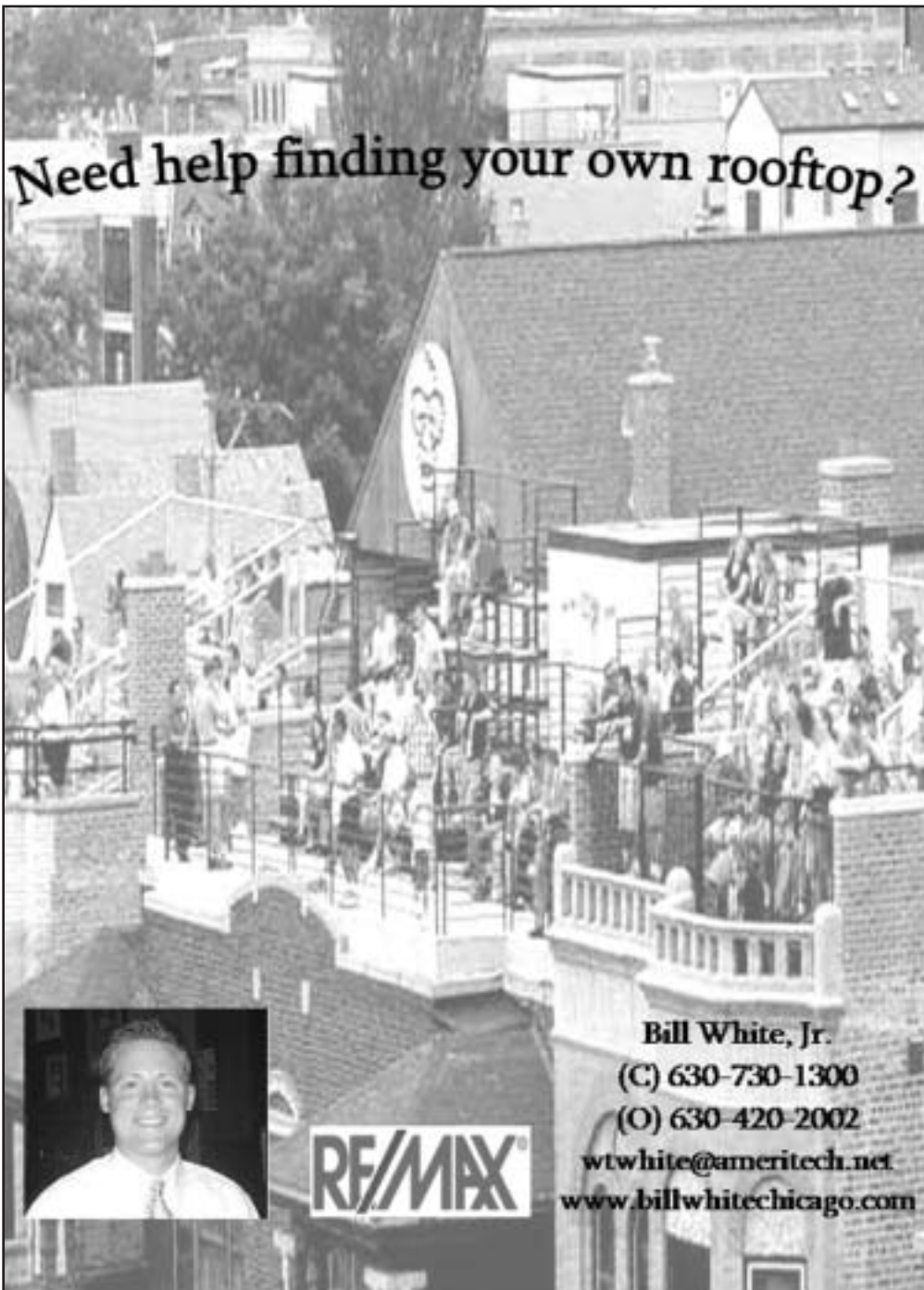
Fans attending the Cubs-Diamondbacks game May 4 will want to arrive early in order to see the screen's renaming ceremony. Well-known comedienne Joan Rivers will christen the screen by throwing a bottle of Dom Perignon at it. The bounce back will then be caught by local Pee-Wee Leaguer and PitchBack owner, Taylor Vos.

"We're very excited to have Joan Rivers be a part of the renaming ceremony," Collins said. "She's had her face pulled tighter than a snare drum over the course of the last decade or so. We think she's the perfect person to demonstrate the renowned PitchBack capability that has made us so popular with kids all over the states."



The new foul screen's close proximity to home plate makes for a perfect endorsement.

Need help finding your own rooftop?



**Bill White, Jr.**  
(C) 630-730-1300  
(O) 630-420-2002  
www.white@ameritech.net  
www.billwhitechicago.com

**RE/MAX**

# THE GREAT PRIOR INJURY OF '04 Prior Rumors Now Getting Ridiculous

## Injury faked in favor of Iditarod?

Pat Lytle  
Contributing Editor

In recent weeks, rumors have circulated regarding the health of ailing hurler Mark Prior. From accusations of steroid use to talk of a Tommy John cover-up, much has been suggested regarding the star pitcher. The Cubs have vehemently denied the rumors.

The newest rumor, however, has Cubs officials speechless. Unconfirmed reports say that Mark Prior is in fact injury-free and has begun training for the annual Iditarod sled dog race through Alaska. According to the rumor, Prior saw the Disney movie "Snow Dogs" back in March and instantly decided to take part in the race. Throwing his baseball career aside, he began intense training necessary for the grueling race. He is even reported to have sought the advice of actor Cuba Gooding Jr., the movie's star.

The Cubs organization, fearing a public backlash and decline in interest in this year's team, reportedly attempted to cover up the real reason for Prior's absence, while at the same time trying to convince him to return to baseball.

Not denying the rumor, Dusty Baker responded to it only by saying, "What the ... are you ... I can't believe you people. Get out of my face."

When asked if it was true that his new love of sled dog racing was inspired by Gooding, Jr.'s performance in "Snow Dogs," Prior replied, "Well, yeah, I do think Cuba was awesome in that movie, but I have no idea what you're talking about."

Without proof otherwise, the rumor remains alive, fueled by the speculation of fans and the press. As a result, opportunistic Wrigleyville stores have begun selling fur-lined anoraks with the number 22 and Prior's name on them, and according to reports, fans have been snatching them up as quickly as they're made, vowing to make the trek to Anchorage for the start of the race next March.

# New Lo-Carb Fare at Wrigley

Welcome to the Atkins-Friendly Confines

"Typical ballpark food is the reason fans can't fit into the seats," said Dr. Stuart Trager of the Atkins Center in New York. "Those hot dog buns are loaded with carbs."

Thanks to Trager, the Cubs unveiled the Hand Dog(TM), the first bunless hot dog in the 90-year history of Wrigley Field. Team management is quick to point out the Hand Dog(TM) has 65 percent less carbs than a regular hot dog at just 20 percent more the price.

But they didn't stop there. Next came Chipfree Nachos, Pretzel Salt and Diet Old Style with Atkins-Hole cups, which eliminates up to 90 percent of the carbs, depending on how slow you drink.

The new concessions are so anticipated, the Cubs have also made the Seventh Inning Stretch Atkins-Friendly, replacing peanuts and cracker jacks with "Hand Dogs and Pretzel Salt."

Article by George Ellis  
Editor

DIET OLD STYLE  
WITH ATKINS-HOLE CUPS



CHIPFREE NACHOS



THE HAND DOG (TM)



Graphic by  
Ed Heller

## ABOUT THE HECKLER

The Heckler is about life as baseball fans on Chicago's North Side. It has absolutely no affiliation with any sports team. Largely satirical, The Heckler also contains bonafide sports news and commentary. All names used in a satirical context are fictional, unless the individual represented is famous or otherwise noteworthy.

The Heckler is published 10 times during the baseball season (April to early-October). Special issues of The Heckler are published as warranted. There is a limited amount of each issue of The Heckler, so please take only one and treat it well. The Heckler can be found at various "honor boxes" throughout Chicago, as well as bars, restaurants and other establishments. Additionally, content from The Heckler can be found at TheHeckler.com. To advertise in The Heckler, call 773-220-1669.

Copyright 2004 by The Heckler. All rights reserved. No reproduction of any portion of The Heckler is allowed without written permission.

### Editor in Chief

Brad Zibung, brad@theheckler.com

### Editor

George Ellis, george@theheckler.com

### Business Manager

David Kunicki, dave@theheckler.com

### Head of Promotions

Chug-Chug the Comeback Clown

### Contributing Editors

Paul M. Banks  
Rob C. Christiansen  
Bill Dwyer  
Tom Evans  
J.D. Fleischer

Rich Fruin  
Pat Lytle  
Josh Mizrachi  
Jeff Norman  
Brian Sandalow

Ian Schochet  
Craig Shparago  
Doug Sullivan  
Marc Van Gilder  
Jen Zaletel

### Ad Sales

Terry Hanson

James Lower

Rachael Muhlenbeck

Pete Vercillo

### Graphics Wizards

Ed Heller

Brian Lyons

### Cartoonist

Paul Czarnowski

### Photographers

Joy R. Absalon, AbsalonPhoto@aol.com

Steve Kavanagh, KavanaghG5@aol.com

### Subscriptions - \$19

subscriptions@theheckler.com

### Letters to the Editor

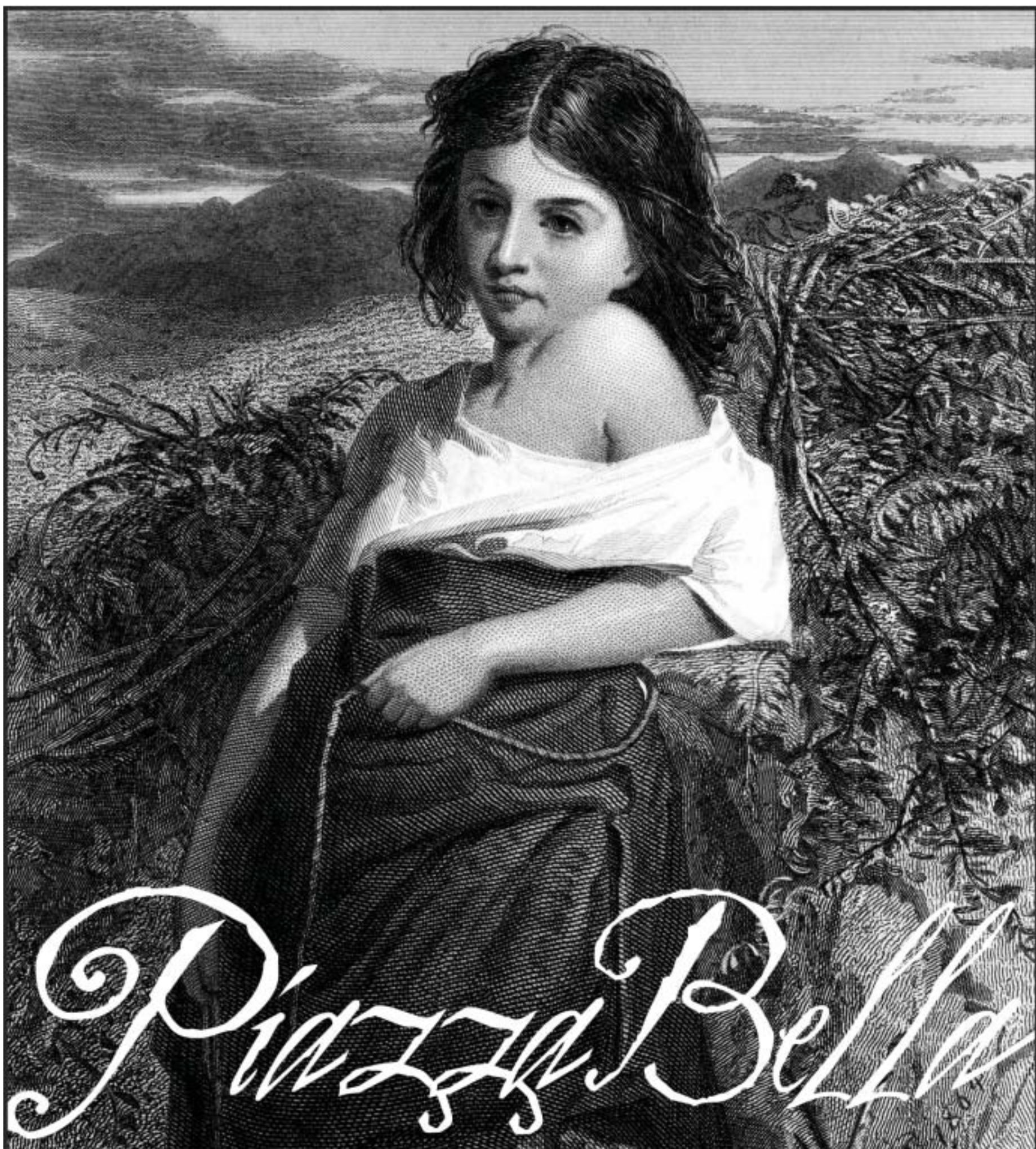
opinion@theheckler.com

### Cease and Desist Letters

legal@theheckler.com

### Submissions

submissions@theheckler.com



The essence of Italy in the heart of Roscoe Village.

Experience "la dolce vita" at this friendly Trattoria named one of  
"America's Top Restaurants" by *Gourmet Magazine*.

Authentic, regional Italian cuisine, inspired desserts and an  
excellent wine collection make this a true neighborhood gem!

Come dine under the sun and stars.  
Our outdoor café is now open!

Mention "The Heckler" and get 10% off.

### **Piazza Bella Trattoria**

2116 W. Roscoe Street • Chicago, IL 60618  
P: 773.477.7330 • F: 773.477.7335  
Lunch • Dinner • Carry Out • Delivery

# Cubs Announce Ann Sather's Cinnamon Roll Giveaway

Tom Evans  
Contributing Editor

If Wrigley Field smells a bit sweeter to fans this year, it might be due to more than just the wave of pennant fever sweeping over the park. This season, the team's launched a promotion in which fans on select dates will each receive a dozen free cinnamon rolls from Ann Sather restaurants, a north side Chicago fixture well-known for its cinnamon rolls.

Cubs General Manager Jim Hendry, in announcing the promotion, denied reports that there was a connection between the cinnamon roll giveaway and the fact that Ann Sather restaurants are owned by Alderman Tom Tunney, whose 44th ward includes Wrigley Field.

"There is a long-standing connection between baseball and cinnamon rolls," said Hendry. "The fact that Alderman Tunney is in the cinnamon roll business is purely a coincidence. There's really nothing unusual about us giving away 400,000 cinnamon rolls at a ballgame."

Hendry went on to claim that the original lyrics for "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" included a reference to cinnamon rolls that was deleted because of the then-powerful Cracker Jack lobby.

Tunney, for his part, demurred when asked if the cinnamon roll giveaway was a "thank-you" from the team for helping broker the recently announced settlement between the Cubs and the owners of rooftops around Wrigley, but



MMM ... cinnamon rolls.

admitted that he foresees more business opportunities with the team. "The Cubs and my office have a great relationship, and that's all I can say," noted Tunney. "But with the Cubs still looking to add seats to the bleachers at Wrigley, I am very hopeful that they'll take me up on my suggestion to replace all the ballpark's hot dog stands with Ann Sather Swedish meatball kiosks."



By Terry Hanson  
Contributor

#5 **Wrigley Field** — The Friendly Confines get new ads we're told aren't really ads.

#4 **Adam Dunn** — The Cincinnati Reds outfielder stepped to the plate with a coffee stirrer in his mouth in a recent game against the Cubs. What a chump.

#3 **Kyle Farnsworth** — Thanks to his new babe-repellant hairstyle, Kyle's on the list.

#2 **C.B. Bucknor** — This umpire nearly blew the game for the Cubs when he botched a double-switch versus the Reds April 16.

This issue's Goat Award goes to ...

#1 **ERIC COOPER** — The umpire threw Dusty Baker out of one day's ballgame, and then he ruined Kerry Wood's gem against the Reds in the next ballgame. After calling two balls that went right through the strike-zone, Cooper handed Cincinnati a walk, and then a run, and then the game. To top it off, Baker and Wood were both handed suspensions after the incident.

expressdater  
the 3 minute dating experience

The fastest way to round the bases!

www.expressdater.com  
773-477-8520

## 'BIRD KILLER'

from page 1

state-protected bird with my awesome 93 MPH fastball," Ryu said through an interpreter. "By the ninth throw, I was thinking to myself, 'Perhaps I should not be doing this,' and by the fifteenth throw, when I had finally winged the bastard and proceeded to beat its feathery, spasming carcass with a nearby fungo bat, I actually started to feel the oh-so-sharp pangs of remorse."

Following the incident, Ryu, then a member of the Class-A Daytona Cubs, was demoted to the lower-A Lansing Lugnuts. At the time, incensed Daytona general manager Buck Rogers said, "Jae-Kuk Ryu is no longer a Daytona Cub. What he did was an immature, atrocious act. Hence, management feels that shipping off this young, testosterone-swollen athlete to the sleepy capital of Michigan right in the middle of prime Florida bikini season might be the perfect punishment."

Judge McDonnell thought it not as fitting as a fastball to the forehead from the infamous Christensen, who was drafted by the Cubs amid much controversy in 1999. A top prospect at Wichita State, the 6'4" 215-pound fireballer was suspended by the NCAA's Missouri Valley Conference for beaming and severely injuring an opponent while he stood on-deck watching Christensen warm up before a game. Blackballed by most Major League teams after the incident, Christensen eventually plummeted down the ranks, allowing the Cubs to scoop him up as the 26th pick. After being plagued by injuries throughout much of his minor-league career, Christensen is certainly eager for another day in the sun.

"I really want to make the most of this," Christensen said, hurling an explosive slider at an innocent casaba melon balancing on top of a fencepost. "I'll show everyone why I should have been picked higher in the first place."

Since the sentencing, Ryu, who originally received a \$1.6 million bonus to sign with the Cubs, has yet to speak publicly. Through an attorney, however, he did issue a statement, saying only that, "I regret what I've done, but I regret the consequences a lot more. Goddamn bird."

It's still unclear whether Ryu will take the pitch to the head while standing in the batter's box or in the on-deck circle.

## ChicagoShakers Social & Adventure Club



Single? (double, triple, homerun)  
New to Chicagoland  
and want to join a club that's sure to win?  
Join ChicagoShakers,  
the club that's always on the move  
and meet other dynamic singles  
who are fun, active and interesting.

www.chicagoshakers.com  
773-404-7067



# Dusty Glides by Another Tax Day Unscathed

Rob C. Christiansen  
Contributing Editor

Dusty Baker marked his second consecutive April 15 income tax filing deadline without any stress.

"It was a great day, personally, for me, and for the Cubs, as we won our game," Baker said. "But my crowning achievement occurred after the game, when I casually walked across the street to the mailbox near the corner of Addison and Clark and dropped off my tax payment. It was only 5 in the afternoon, an entire seven hours before the filing deadline. It felt good. Not like those filing deadlines in the '80s and '90s I antic-

ipated with dread, knocking on my accountant's door a few minutes to midnight, begging him to let me hide in his basement."

It's no secret that Baker, heeding his brother's advice, made bad investments in tax shelters almost 25 years ago. The tax write-offs Dusty received from the shelters were disallowed in 1981 and 1982, and consequently he owed more than \$1 million in back taxes and penalties as of November 2002. The Cubs bailed him out by advancing him a large portion of his salary upon his signing with the team that same month.

"I know the first words going through everyone's head are that I'm

as bad as Willie Nelson," Baker said, referring to the legendary country singer and his infamous tax problems. "But I straightened out my tax problems just by signing with the Cubs."

"And when I'm 'On the Road Again' with the Cubs," Baker continued, "I'll be on a cool road trip to L.A. and San Diego playing before hundreds of thousands of fans and national TV audiences. I don't have to work at the Westbury Music Fair or at cigarette smoke-haunted dives like the Adler Theatre in Iowan corn towns like Nelson does for the rest of his life, just to be able to pay the hangman, I mean the taxman. I also

get to travel around with a great group of people—team-oriented Cub players—and not with a motley bunch of furniture movers."

Although the past two tax days have been incident-free for Baker, he still second-guesses his investments from all those years ago.

"I should have gone with my own instincts back then and put my money in new ventures like Starbucks Coffee or Blockbuster Video or even in blue chip stocks like General Electric," he said. "Left to my own devices, I might even have provided the financial backing for a young rock 'n' roll band out of Ireland called U2."



JOY ABSALON  
Dusty wasn't looking over his shoulder this tax day..

## The Cardinal Sign Challenge

Win a Heckler T-Shirt

We at The Heckler get all sorts of people asking if they can write for us. Well guess what: Now's your chance. Send us your best anti-Cardinals headline or slogan and we'll put it on a sign inserted in our next issue. In case you missed it, we printed fancy "W" signs in our paper last season as shown in the pic on the right. TV cameras couldn't get enough of them. Think how much they'll love your expression of hatred for the dirty birds.

Email your name and suggestion (one per person) to MyIdeasAreGreat@theheckler.com. If we print your idea, you get a free Heckler t-shirt. And we'll even run your name in the issue. If that's not worth it, we don't know what is.



Our "W" signsert from last year's playoffs was a big hit. It's up to you to write our next one. Do it and the shirt on the right is yours (Bleacher Bunny not included).



PHOTO: STEVE KAVANAGH

'PS2'

from page 1

thinking that Chris must steal with Gonzo a lot in MVP. Two pitches later, Barrett grounds into a double play and Chris is like, 'Well he would have gone if he had the chance,' and we all just kind of nod our heads. See, me and Pete [Johnson] and Stevie [Hill] all know more about sports, but none of us ever want to say anything cause nobody wants to make Chris look bad. He's just trying to fit in better. But man, it can get really annoying sometimes."

Sulnik does not reserve his comments solely for the Cubs. According to friend Hill, "Chris was telling me recently something about the way [Cardinal first baseman] Albert Pujols holds his bat at the perfect angle in relation to his head. I think he made up that little nugget just from looking at the freaking box the game comes in!"

While Sulnik may have started out just trying to fit in with his friends, he now seems to be attempting to position himself as a bit of a baseball expert. He has been disagreeing a lot with analysts, among other things saying that Cubs color commentator Steve Stone "doesn't know what the hell he's talking about. I keep hear him saying that Kerry Wood is a better pitcher now

cause he knows that he doesn't have to strike everybody out, but Kerry can still strike out every guy he faces using his square button pitch. I mean, his slider." Sulnik also called up a local sports radio show on The Score to say he likes the way the Cubs are aggressive on the base paths, always scoring from first on a double without ever getting thrown out at the plate. He also disagreed with host Mike North's claim that Sammy Sosa is not a very good fielder. "Sammy has never once missed a cut-off man," said Sulnik.

"I really like the guy, but sometimes I just have to completely ignore him or else I might just punch him in the face," Hill said. "I mean, he actually doesn't like Jim Hendry because he traded away Todd Hundley, if you can believe that. He says Hundley could have hit a ton of homers at Wrigley. Why does he think that? Cause he hit like forty of them using Hundley when he played with the Cubs in High Heat 2003."

Baseball is not the only sport for which Sulnik uses information taken from video games. At the beginning of the last football season, he claimed the Bears should start Chris Chandler at quarterback because "he can throw the ball like 60 or 70 yards down the field!"

7175 N. Lincoln Ave.  
Lincolnwood, IL 60712

# LINCOLNWOOD PRODUCE & GROCERY

847-329-0600  
847-329-0601 Fax

**A TRADITION IN LINCOLN PARK SINCE 1955**

<b>MONDAY:</b>	<b>50 CENT DRAFTS \$1.50 WELL DRINKS</b>
<b>TUESDAY:</b>	<b>\$2 DOMESTIC BOTTLES &amp; WELL DRINKS</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY:</b>	<b>\$2.50 PINTS      11 TO CHOSE FROM KARAOKE @ 9 P.M.</b>
<b>THURSDAY:</b>	<b>\$1.50 DOMESTIC BOTTLES</b>
<b>FRIDAY:</b>	<b>\$2.50 MICHELOB LIGHT AND MICHELOB ULTRA BOTTLES</b>
<b>SATURDAY:</b>	<b>\$10 BUCKETS! 5 DOMESTIC BOTTLES</b>
<b>SUNDAY:</b>	<b>\$6 PITCHERS BUD AND BUD LIGHT \$2.50 BLOODY PINTS</b>

- SATELLITE
- FREE DARTS
- BIG SCREEN TV
- GOLDEN TEE
- POOL TABLE
- CATCH ALL ILLINI ACTION

'Friends don't let friends drink at other bars'

748 W. FULLERTON (@ HALSTED & LINCOLN)  
CHICAGO, IL 60614  
773.327.8164  
www.theparkwaytavern.com

**Get your message in front  
of 14,999 die-hard Cubs fans.**

**And the one dude  
who's still on the fence.**

**Advertise in The Heckler.  
It's the best deal in Wrigleyville.**

**ads@theheckler.com  
or call 773-220-1669**

# D-Backs Mascot Seriously a Bobcat

Rob C. Christiansen  
Contributing Editor

The Diamondbacks have their share of problems, the most glaring being that they are boring and mediocre. They also feature an inconsistency between their name and their mascot. A diamondback is a rattlesnake, but their mascot is a bobcat. Here's a beautiful fact about the Diamondbacks.

They blame a child for coming up with the idea for the team's mascot. They say it came from the mouth of a babe, a Diamondback player's 5-year-old son, who won't be identified here because The Heckler doesn't give little kids a hard time. It's probably a story made up by someone inside the D-Backs' front office anyway.

Another problem with the Diamondbacks is that the abbreviated version of their birth name has in fact become the name of the team. The D-Backs are to the National League what the A's are to the American League. Soon enough the D-Backs will be known simply as the D's, and

why not? There are 11 letters in Diamondback, which is too many. The Diamondbacks should have seen this coming when the team was originally named. In the final analysis, they are getting what they deserve.

However, the Seattle Mariners are already known as the M's despite 'Mariner' having only 7-letters. It's symptomatic of the corporate desire to downsize, as well as our own tendency to use acronyms and take shortcuts.

The acronym for Bank One Ballpark, home stadium of the D-Backs, is BOB, and we're supposed to think that a kindergartener pieced all of this together in coming up with 'bobcat' as team mascot. Why don't the Diamondbacks just come clean and admit it was managing general partner Jerry Colangelo himself who thought of it?

Sometimes a name lends itself to an unfortunate acronym. Uh-oh. In Philadelphia, the First Union Center, home to the 76ers, has quietly been renamed the Wachovia Center.



Seriously. It's a Bobcat.

Interestingly, the First Union Spectrum, home to the Flyers, has not undergone a name change.

The Diamondbacks must think they're so clever in spinning a cute story on how a bobcat was appropriated as their official mascot. That little story, and the D-Backs' determination to stick to it, proves that the Diamondbacks are a bunch of lying snakes.

# Trixies Upset They Won't See Grace Play This Season

Hundreds of shallow women unload tickets

Paul M. Banks  
Contributing Editor

Due to Mark Grace's retirement and move to the Diamondbacks' broadcasting booth, many North Side women have expressed disinterest in this year's series against the Arizona Diamondbacks.

During Grace's Cub career from 1988-2000, yuppie women came to the park in droves. Lincoln Park Trixies remain a significant component of the Cubs fan-base today.

In 2001, Grace left for Arizona and promptly won a world championship. From 2001 to 2003, he returned to town with his D-Backs once a summer, and attendance was always high. Ticket sales did especially well among the ultra-materialistic Caucasian female demographic, one that now greets the matchup with apathy. Repercussions are expected throughout Wrigley Field.

With considerably less highlighted blonde hair shining in the sun, the "Budweiser Fan Cam" will feature fewer women than years past.

Likewise, spotting female fans to put on WGN during those three games will be more difficult.

Fans attending the series are warned to expect fewer drunk young women with pink Cub visors and Tiffany and Co. tag bracelets to be in the stands.

"Mark Grace is a Diamondbacks announcer now?" asked 29-year-old Jill McNally. "Are you totally serious? I won't see my favorite hottie on the field? I'm so over that."

"After I get my Jetta tuned up, I'm like so going to Banana Republic that day instead; they're having a 30 percent off sale that Tuesday. I've got to



No Grace for the D-Backs equals no flock of Trixies to chase him around.

get a new skirt. Then, I'm going to get trashed with my sorority sisters from University of Illinois."


One of McNally's 30 best friends and founder of ilovemarkgrace.com Katie Stobart was also shocked by the news.

"I was so totally going to go to the game with this attorney John who asked me, but then I learned he's only practicing public interest law and he's not one of those high powered corporate lawyers," said Stobart. "I'm so not interested in John or going to Wrigley now."

"After a long day of consulting at the office, I'll probably watch the Grace-less game at Murphy's Bleachers with my former UI Thetas. I just can't wait to see their new Kate Spade bags. I'll likely have a beer or two or 12. Crazy huh? Even if Gracie is not playing any more, they still have that street right by Wrigley named after him. Maybe after he's done with his telecast he will drop by. So I'm cool with What-EVER!"

**"A MUST-SEE FOR ANY CUB FAN!!!"**  
Dean Richards, WGN-TV (WB) & WGN RADIO

**THE HOTTEST TICKET IN CHICAGO OUTSIDE OF WRIGLEY FIELD!**

FEATURING GARY SANDY 

**Bleacher Bums**  
25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PRODUCTION

**NOW PLAYING!**

CONCEIVED BY JOE MANTEGNA  
DIRECTED BY JEFF LEE

**"HOLY COW...It's a GRAND SLAM HIT!"**  
Even south siders will laugh their heads off!  
Dean Richards, WGN-TV (WB) & WGN RADIO

**"Funny, entertaining... AN ENTIRELY LOVABLE TRIBUTE!"**  
Chris Jones, CHICAGO TRIBUNE

**"I LOVED THIS SHOW!!! IT'S TERRIFIC!!!"**  
Doug Buffone, WSCR/670 THE SCORE

**ROYAL GEORGE THEATRE**  
1641 N. Halsted/Chicago  
Box Office 312/988-9000  
Valet Parking Available

ticketmaster 312/902-1500 www.bleacherbums.com Group Sales Hotline 773/857-7741

670THESCORE KELLER WILLIAMS SHEDDEN GROUP INC. NORTH COMMUNITY BANK SHELDON GOOD & COMPANY

## CHUG-CHUG: INACTION

Hijinks of The Heckler Mascot by Paul Czamowski



Watch the Cubs-Astros game with The Heckler crew  
@ Irish Oak, 3511 N. Clark St.  
Wednesday, May 26, starting at 7p.m.  
Great food & drink specials

# Helton Boycotts All Road Trips

*Fear of deflated stats haunts star*

**Josh Mirzachi**  
Contributing Editor

Todd Helton is one of baseball's best hitters. This year he's batting .328 with five homeruns and 10 RBIs. He's flirted with .400 a few times during his career and recognizes that now's as good a time as any to try and break that plateau. He's beginning to get a big head.

"Ruth, Gehrig, Williams, Mays, Aaron, Helton," said the slugger. "It just rolls off the tongue."

What rarely rolls off Helton's tongue—at least in public—is his talk of his fear of road games.

"I'm not going," yelled an angry Helton as he stormed out of Rockies manager Clint Hurdle's office before a recent road trip to Chicago. A throng of reporters gathered around the All-Star first baseman's locker to find out what he meant.

"I'm not going to Wrigley; No way," reiterated Helton. "I just can't. I can't risk my stats being deflated. I need to play in Coors Field, where the air is rare, and I need to only play in Coors Field. If Clint doesn't understand that, so what?"

Sure enough, the stats back it up. Helton's career batting aver-



JOY ABSALON  
Helton in a road uniform? Never again.

age at Coors Field is a phenomenal .378, while his road batting average is much more plain at .295. Power stats are much the same. 136 of his 224 career homers have happened in the cozy confines of Coors Field.

Larry Walker, Helton's long-time Colorado teammate and friend, is all for Helton's boycott.

"Absolutely, it's the right thing to do," said Walker. "A while back, I unsuccessfully lobbied the Players Union to get all of our 162 games a year here.

"Would you rather have my .351 Hall of Fame-type home batting average or the .227 dog collar I wore on the road last year?"

"Yeah, I thought so."

# Estes Signing Leads to Fan Shelters at Coors

**Pat Lytle**  
Contributing Editor

The biggest renovation the Colorado Rockies' stadium crew faced this season was not for a new restaurant or expanded seating. Instead the Rockies were installing bomb shelters in Coors Field's bleachers for games when new Rockies' pitcher Shawn Estes takes the hill.

Cut by the Cubs shortly after a rough 2003 campaign, Estes wound up snagging a spring training invitation to the light-pitching Rockies' camp. From that moment, Coors Field's bleachers were readied for battle.

"We've seen what can happen



ED HELLER

Shelters have been built in the bleachers of Coors Field to protect fans from the punishing barrage of homerun balls when new Rockies pitcher Shawn Estes pitches.

to him out there, and we wanted to be prepared for the merciless shelling we know will occur," said Rockies General Manager Dan O'Dowd. "Fan safety is a top concern of ours. With our thin-air park already being so hitter friendly, these shelters were deemed necessary."

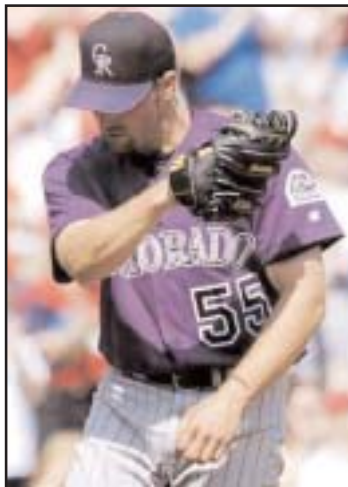
O'Dowd said that the team financed the project with the sure-to-be-unused \$250,000 in performance-based incentives offered to Estes this year.

"We know that bonus is going unused," said O'Dowd. "Might as well use it to prevent a few frivolous lawsuits."

Extensive research went into

the building of the shelter. Engineering specialists were brought in along with the U.S. soldiers who discovered Saddam Hussein's spider hole, in order to help provide the adequate protection needed for a typical Estes outing.

"You combine Shawn Estes and Coors Field, and you've got yourself some trouble," said Gerhardt Fleming, an Army vet and engineer assigned to the project. "We're here to make sure it's not as traumatic for the fans as it could be. When Shawn hangs his mid-80s curveball right over the plate, I get combat flash-backs."



Estes is sure to force fans into their new bleacher shelters often in 2004.

# Burnitz: 'Thin Air Much Easier to Wave Through'

**Josh Mirzachi**  
Contributing Editor

Jeremy Burnitz, the oft-injured, free-swinging slugger who signed with Colorado this off-season, is thoroughly enjoying his time with the Rockies in Coors Field. Burnitz already has 19 strikeouts—a pace of one a game—yet says he's not worried about that total.

"I wouldn't look too much into my stats right now," said Burnitz, when asked about his strikeout total. "I'm still adjusting my swing to the Rocky Mountain air, but I guarantee I will be around for the entire season."

When questioned about what his guarantee meant, Burnitz offered that he doesn't anticipate injuring himself while striking out, because "the thin air at Coors is much easier to wave through. There's not as much torque on my shoulder when I'm way out in front of a Greg Maddux changeup as there was at Shea or in Milwaukee. I really feel that I've turned over a new rock as far as my health is concerned."

Burnitz is happy with any publicity he can get. He looked genuinely excited when answering questions in front of his locker after the 4-1 win over Houston on Sunday. He even said he might the "opportunity" have to break the single season strikeout record if he stays healthy.

Puzzled reporters immediately asked why he'd want to break the strikeout record. A candid Burnitz responded, "You know, fellas, not everyone can be Barry Bonds and set home run records. My career's been pretty insignificant so far, and I'd do anything I can to be a part of baseball lore. And if that means getting the strikeout record, then that's what I'll strive for."

You heard it here first: the Jeremy Burnitz Strikeout Watch is in full effect.



Burnitz has learned it's even easier to K now than as a Met.

## Welcome Rockies Fans!

Sure, Chicago is fun to hang out in--big, clean, riding the El, friendly people and lots to do and see...and no T-Rex! BUT, it sure is good to get back home to Denver, right?!

After you enjoy the Wrigleyville experience, watch the Rockies sweep the Cubs and head home, be sure to check out the newest leagues and tournaments Denver Sports Monster is offering for summer 2004. We have the largest adult sports leagues in the mile-high city.

Softball at Kennedy Fields & Softball Country, Soccer at Ft. Logan, Sand Volleyball at Caldonia's, Tennis in Washington Park

## What do you want to play?

Teams, groups & individuals are welcome to play with Sports Monster for summer 2004

**303-231-9690**

[sportsmonster.net](http://sportsmonster.net)

Oh, did you move from Denver to Chicago? Well, good news! Sports Monster has leagues here too. In fact, we are the largest adult sports leagues in the city. We play throughout the north side neighborhoods and offer 10+ sports including basketball, kickball, golf, softball, soccer and football. Most summer leagues including North Ave Beach volleyball start in early June. Call 773-866-2955 for more info, go online to [sportsmonster.net](http://sportsmonster.net) or send us an e-mail to [chicago.info@sportsmonster.net](mailto:chicago.info@sportsmonster.net)



**SUBSCRIBE TO THE HECKLER**  
Bills. Parking tickets. Nothing matches the excitement of receiving *The Heckler* in your mailbox.

Subscribe today and we'll send you the entire 2004 season (10 copies) for **JUST \$19!**

Check the appropriate box below and mail this form to: The Heckler, 1408 W. Waveland, #2, Chicago, IL 60613. Info and questions can be emailed to [Subscriptions@theheckler.com](mailto:Subscriptions@theheckler.com).

**YOUR INFORMATION**

My \$19 check made out to "The Heckler" is enclosed.  
 Mail me an invoice.  
 Email me a PayPal invoice.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

# Sorry Kids—Game's Sold Out

Sponsored by StubHub

When I was 12 years old, I went to my first Cubs game with my Dad and my buddy Jeff. Jeff and I wanted to go back to Wrigley the next day, so we decided we would ride our bikes the 20 miles from my house to Wrigley.

We stayed up all night...and spent 6 hours deciding what our sign would read. Finally it struck us: "Put the Ump in the Dump!"

The next morning, sign in hand, we

ventured on our journey. After getting lost, and practically mugged, we finally arrived—two innings late. We went to the box office only to hear: "Game's sold out!"

My pre-pubescent emotions got the best of me, and I burst into tears. After peddling a block or so, a dude who looked like Howard the Duck approached us, asking if we needed tickets.

"Hundred bucks," the Duckman said. When he saw we didn't have the cash, he laughed and said, "Sorry kids."

We never made it to the game that day, but I've been going to Wrigley ever since. And whenever I see those characters around the park, I walk up to them, do a little chicken dance, and chirp: "Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack!"

—Dan Joyce, Morton Grove

While others told us about the records they set eating hot dogs (32) for tickets, a boy who undertakes a 20-mile trek shows true Cubs dedication. Besides there's a lesson: If you need tickets, go to StubHub to avoid the sketchy scalpers ... and if you see Dan doing his dance, don't forget to quack.

Want 10 percent off Cubs tickets? Send your ticket stories to us at [joneal@stubhub.com](mailto:joneal@stubhub.com).

# Because Nosebleeds Aren't Sexy.

Sit in better seats.  
Get your tickets on StubHub.

Visit [StubHub.com](http://StubHub.com) - Call 866.StubHub

HECKLER READERS SAVE \$10  
enter FanCode HECKLERCUBS.  
Offer valid thru JUNE 1.

Stub  Hub



THE FEMALE PERSPECTIVE

# Are the Stars Aligned for a Cubby Hookup?

Marci Van Gilder  
Contributing Editor

Strong independent women like us should relentlessly pursue what we want. But before you start Cub hunting this season, consult the heavens. Here is a list of the most compatible players for your sign.

**Aries:** Leo Corey Patterson is the lion you need to tame. Roar into his life by screaming your undying love every time he makes a catch. Those around you will appreciate you being a go-getter.

**Taurus:** You tend to be a homebody, so you most likely didn't leave your cats long enough to come to the game. Watching from the frilly confines of your sofa, you'll notice you're most compatible with the oh-so-stalkable Gemini Kerry Wood.

**Gemini:** Sassy twin, why bother stalking? Half of your personality needs the pursuit while the other half is busy checking out the cutie three seats down. Stay focused and hire a sky writer to proclaim your love to fellow Gemini Paul Bako.

**Cancer:** The restraining orders prove you have a lot of experience convincing your dream man to want you. Keep telling



Cancer's can't pass up Big Sammy.

Scorpio Sammy Sosa he will be yours. Tossing your best Victoria's Secret bra from the bleachers creates a cute story to tell your grandchildren.

**Leo:** You love those around you almost as much as you love yourself. If you plan to pounce, little lioness, your best choice is to sneak up on Aries Kyle Farnsworth. Like an antelope in the grasses, he'll never suspect you coming before you go in for the kill.

**Virgo:** You are known to be a perfection-

ist, so be sure to use a fresh Sharpie when asking Taurus Joe Borowski to sign your left breast.

**Libra:** You're a classic beauty who can often come off as pretentious. Gemini Carlos Zambrano will agree with your theory on the aesthetic quality of the ivy in contrast to the bright blue row of painted chests.

**Scorpio:** Saucy Cancer Mark Grudzielanek will be enthralled with your passion for baseball. Just remember your unwavering and penetrating gaze could be misconstrued for mental instability.

**Sagittarius:** You're known for speaking your mind, even when you don't know what you're talking about. Throw a curve ball to Aries Greg Maddux and prove that you might not know baseball, but you can teach him a thing or two off the field.

**Capricorn:** You sell yourself well, and Virgo Mark Prior is your perfect match. Convince him you can help that Achilles heel heal with a tantric massage. Pretending you actually know what that means while you get him drunk on Tequila shooters makes the pursuit all the more exciting.

**Aquarius:** You're a woman who loves an adventure. Your real challenge will be to convince Sagittarius LaTroy Hawkins's mom that you are the girl for him after parachuting onto the field during the lull of the fourth inning.

**Pisces:** Your strong intuition, need for romantic love, and six mai-tais will fuel your quest to reel in Cancer Moises Alou. Singing the seventh inning stretch while showing off your best Britney moves will let Moises and the whole world know how you feel.



Cutie Alou is a great for a Pisces.



## SHE MAKES THE CALL



Jen Zaletel  
jen@theheckler.com

# It's Called the 'Powder Room' for a Reason

The bathroom has long been a haven for females, whether out with friends at a bar or suffering through a bad blind date. It's easy to get distracted, since you could probably stare at your gorgeous reflection all day. Just remember that the only men you can pick up in the ladies' room are either dressed in drag or pushing a mop.

Executing the perfect bathroom trip at Wrigley takes some thoughtful planning. Besides making room for more Old Styles, you also have to fluff your hair, adjust your visor and check your makeup. Accomplishing all of this before your latest prospect loses interest is tricky, but if you heed my advice, you'll be back in the stands before the inning ends.

On the matter of hand washing, I'll say just this: If you don't know that you need to use a little soap and water after you finish your business, you're either not too bright, or you're a Sox fan who likes things dirty. Whichever the case, you shouldn't be reading this column.

That being said, the top item on your restroom agenda should be getting there in a timely manner. Before you even enter the little girls' room you'll probably be faced with a delay of some sort, not to mention the torture of trying to get your pants down. So don't wait until the last minute and then rush to the bathroom only to discover that the line's winding around the corner or your zipper's stuck. After several adult cocktails, your inability to "hold it" could lead to a reenactment of every third grader's worst nightmare—and drunken men are about as mature as eight-year-olds, so you can expect to be teased and shunned for the rest of the game in the event that you lose bodily control.

If you do find yourself at the back of a monstrous line ready to explode, think fast. Blatant cutting is not an option, since it will inevitably launch a mai-tai shower in your direction. You'll have to sweet-talk your way into the next stall. A sympathetic chick might see the look of agony on your face and let you jump in front of her. More than likely, though, creativity will be your only option: pretend to be on the verge of puking, mention how the baby is really pressing on your bladder, or throw on your sunglasses and ask if anyone would be willing to help a blind woman to a stall.

Once you flush (and wash), you can relax. Now is the time for you and your best friend to continue the debate on whether you should keep your jersey buttoned or show a little cleavage. Sure, you'll annoy everyone around you, but irritating a few jealous women is a small price to pay for all those sincere compliments about your nice rack. Likewise, ignore any catty, "high-maintenance" comments when you pull out your makeup bag and touch up your eyeliner or lip-gloss. You might not find any attendants wielding blow-pops or designer imposter body sprays like some of the other uppity neighborhood establishments, but as long as you have a mirror, you can uphold your number one priority: looking your best for the bleacher boys.

## DID YOU KNOW ...

### HR stands for 'Hours Ran'?

When sprinting to a base, the seconds it takes a player to reach the base are recorded. These seconds are added up throughout the season, and a player is credited with an HR when their base-running time totals an hour. Players continuously bank their time, making each hour ran around the bases another HR in the books. Players who are known for hitting long distances have more HRs because they can run to more bases. Each year, the players who earn the most HRs participate in the "Hours Ran Derby," where they try to hit as many balls as possible and log even more Hours Ran.

**Play Along!**

You can earn HRs in the stands by timing your trips to the bathroom, concession stand or souvenir shop. Instead of running like your favorite player, walk swiftly so as to avoid any collisions. Remember, standing on base doesn't count, so neither does standing in line!

## LET THE GOAT IN!

WWW.GORALLYGOAT.COM  
THE WORLD'S GREATEST FANS  
WILL HAVE A HAND IN IT!



SPIRIT RALLY GOAT'S FIRST CUBS GAME. SEC. 438  
FRIDAYS AWESOME RALLY SEE EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW AT  
WWW.GORALLYGOAT.COM

THE GOOD SPIRIT OF THE RALLY GOAT IN.  
THE CURSE IS OUT. IT'S THAT SIMPLE.  
WE BELIEVE!



## CUBS FANS LOVE THEIR TEAM AS MUCH AS...

# THE IRISH OAK

A Taste of Ireland in the Heart of Wrigleyville



The Irish Oak  
3511 N. Clark Street  
Chicago  
(773) 935-6669

www.irishoak.com

Party Rooms Big Screen TV

Best Irish Fare in the City

Join Us Before Or After The Game

# CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- You can't buy one after the 7th
  - According to Urban Outfielders, Really Busy Inning
  - Sammy
  - Other word for beer
  - Orange birds
  - Love glove or what pitcher stands on
  - Let's play this many
  - Dunston replaced him at SS
  - Anaheim Angels color
  - 110-year-old Reds SS
  - Place in the batting order
  - Zimmer's nickname
  - Sammy's boombox blares this
- DOWN**
- Hurler stat
  - Ubiquitous Cubs sponsor
  - Thin, geeky Astros starter
  - Suzuki
  - Outside the lines
  - Barry uses them
  - Left on base
  - Randy Hundley's nickname
  - Steroid company
  - Former redbird known for wildness
  - Patterson's hangout
  - Communists or team
  - Moses



# WORD FIND

"TOP 10 CARS OWNED BY SOX FANS"

E L L E V E H C S O  
 P T P E R S T O L C  
 O E T M O R L R P U  
 H N P E A L A A I T  
 T H I N V C R M N L  
 S L S M E E N A T A  
 N A V T A O H C O S  
 M O N E V C E C O S  
 M O R A M B L E R V  
 M V O V C L H E H L



Well, I took a bit of a bath last week when Larry Walker found that dead body on his property. I had ten large on Carl Everett being the first baseball player this year to find a dead body. Let's face it: Carl has some issues, and it was the smart bet.

Hopefully, some of Pete's picks will turn out better this time around, or I might have to write another book clarifying the fact that I think that I belong in Cooperstown.

**5** - Number of years the average Colorado starter is past his prime

**5** - Number of syringes more that the visitors club house at Wrigley will have when Arizona leaves vs. when Colorado leaves

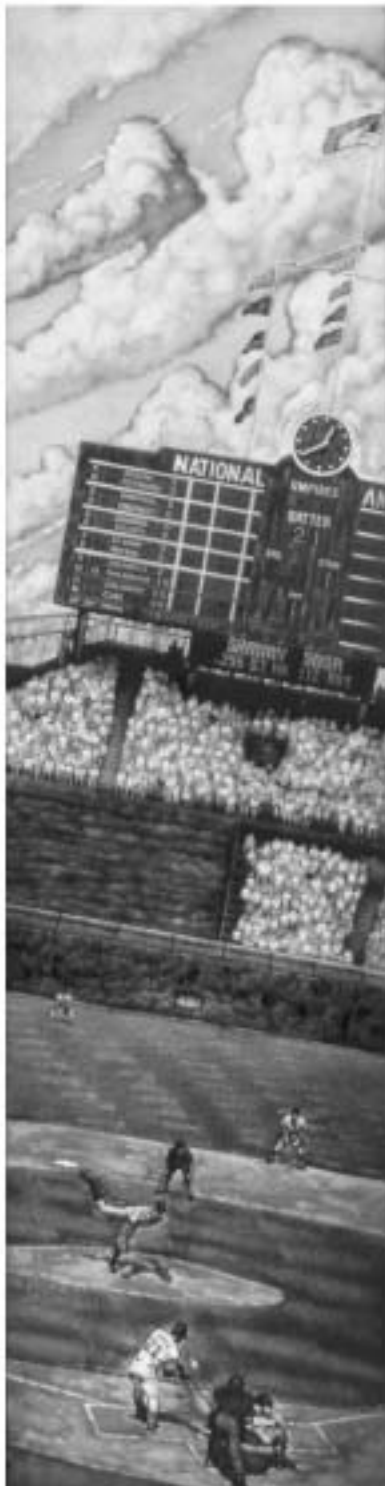
**10** - Number of seconds Rockies catcher Charles Johnson will beat Corry Patterson by in a 100 yard dash ... if Patterson carries a grand piano on his back during the race

Solutions to Crossword and Word Find in next issue, May 18.  
 Last issue's solutions found on page 12.

## WRIGLEY FIELD LIMITED EDITION PRINTS

IT IS KNOWN AS THE ULTIMATE PLACE IN WHICH TO VIEW BASEBALL. ARTIST JOHN HANLEY HAS CAPTURED THE INTIMATE, IVY COVERED CONFINES OF WRIGLEY FIELD.

INVESTED WITH MEMORIES AND TRADITION THE LEGENDARY BALLPARK IS AVAILABLE IN THREE LIMITED EDITION PRINTS. EACH FINE ART PRINT IS A TERRIFIC PIECE FOR THE DIE-HARD CUB FAN.



**7** - Number of area softball teams that Robby Alomar could start for before breaking his wrist

**8** - Number of waitresses Farnsworth would beat Grace by in an ass-tapping contest during the homestand

**45** - Percent of fans that thought Steve Finley was retired and eligible for the Hall of Fame

**176** - Number of pitchers that had to retire for Shawn Estes to get a spot in Colorado's rotation

**Catch The Heckler Half-Hour Comedy Spectacular May 23 & 30 at 10 p.m. on Chicago's Channel 19.**

'WAIVED'

from page 1

player doesn't listen to me, I'm going to report him to the principal, I mean, the manager. I also know the Cubs finished second last year in being thrown out unnecessarily at third base. They accomplished that eleven times.

"If any Cub tries to go from first to third and I'm holding up the stop sign," McGregor said, "it won't matter if he is called 'safe' at third, because I'm going to notify his parents, I mean, the manager, about that."

The Disney Magnet School was aware of Wendell Kim's lagging mental health prior to approving the trade. The principal didn't think it was a serious issue since the school offers a mental health class. "In the long run, Wendell will do fine here," said Principal Vernon Kosobud. "Wendell's judgment may be questionable now, but he's not going to start working until the start of the new school year in September. Our backup crossing guard will take over for now. And over the summer, our students will be assigned to read and memorize the important points of a new pamphlet we're currently printing. It's called, 'Just Say No, Thanks, When Wavin' Wendell Says You Can Beat That School Bus If You Run.'"

**JOHN HANLEY**  
 A R T I S T

815-459-1123

jhanley108@aol.com

VISIT [WWW.JOHNHANLEYARTIST.COM](http://WWW.JOHNHANLEYARTIST.COM)

BEHIND ENEMYVINES

# Cubs Bandwagon Overflowing

The atmosphere in Chicago right now is unprecedented in

recent memory. The level of excitement about the Chicago Cubs and their divinely ensured playoff appearance is at fever pitch. In fact, the entire season is already sold out, and scalpers are doubtless having a field day, peddling secondhand tickets for yuppies from all over the northwest suburbs. It's official: The Cubs bandwagon is filling up faster than a lifeboat on the Titanic. Faster than a frat boy's keg cup. Faster than the windbag in front of Chip Caray's face.

Usually, come late April, one sees placards popping up inside Wrigley Field with the familiar "Wait 'til next year." This year, however, signs are more likely to read "Bring on the Yankees!" North Siders' projections are inflated like Pam Anderson's bra size.

What accounts for this irrational exuberance? Certainly, the Cubs were within five outs of the World Series last year and added Greg Maddux to their excellent starting rotation. So, logic seems to dictate a repeat of the division title, with off-season additions providing the boost to move past a Cub-like near miss and into the Valhalla of World Series baseball.

But, what is really happening this season? The Cubs are hovering near first place with a mediocre 13-7 record (as of this writing), yet problems persist. It still costs \$40 to park

Doug the Sox Fan  
dougthesoxfan@theheckler.com

one's BMW within walking distance of Clark and Addison.

Mark Prior is still on the disabled list. And high schools still haven't let out for the summer, meaning the under-18 talent in the bleachers is sparse on weekdays.

Most Chicagoans seem not to have noticed the White Sox are also around first place, despite their less-than-remarkable pitching staff. Even though the Cubs are supposedly in the much stronger division, the two teams have nearly identical records. (In fact, all the division leaders are within a few games of each other.)

Remember Ivan Rodriguez? That guy who singlehandedly destroyed the Cubs in the NLCS last year? The catcher who makes Michael Barrett look like Paul Bako? Well, now he's on the Tigers, wreaking havoc on the other Chicago baseball club with his .350+ batting average. Maybe the Tribune Co. could have used \$10 million of the money they're extorting from neighborhood building owners to sign a catcher with at least a modicum of baseball ability.

So, as the Cubs zeppelin seems to be careening back towards planet earth (media and fan expectations can only keep it afloat for so long, you know...), Sox fans can revel in the knowledge that the notorious Sports Illustrated jinx will certainly portend the Cubs' inevitable June swoon.

# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF LOCO ROB



Rob C. Christiansen  
rob@theheckler.com

## Turk's Quirks Revealed

The mind of the relief pitcher in the classic mold is said to dwell within a prototypical left-handed comic book reader whose brains are beaten out. In that case, Turk Wendell misses the mark since he pitches with his right extremity. He's also a graduate of Quinnipiac University in Connecticut, which might preclude him from having brains of the beaten-out variety. He's been primarily a middle-reliever in the big leagues for 11 years and seems to know what he's doing, proof being his 3.88 lifetime ERA and a .241 batting-average-against.

But just because he's a college graduate doesn't mean he is without his share of peculiarities. For all we know, Turk Wendell reads The Heckler in the dugout. That would be as strange as brushing his teeth at the dugout water fountain between innings, which, in his defense, counters the effect of all the black licorice he chews during a game.

Wendell has been known to spend free time before games tossing candy to fans while walking nonchalantly around the bullpen. Maybe that's more of kindness than quirkiness, but what is the word for negotiating your contract so that it ends in 99 cents? Yes, Wendell does that, too, and the significance of '99' will be explained.

Wendell's off-the-wall beliefs give the Cubs fans' belief in the curse of the billy goat a good run for its money. There are unnamed curses just waiting to damn Wendell, so he has been known to take the following precautions: He runs to the pitcher's mound in leaps and bounds in an effort to lose his demons. He draws three crosses in the dirt on the mound to ward these demons off should they have followed him there. He wears number 99 on his jersey so he'll be as effective as Charlie Sheen's character in the movie "Major League." (Earlier in his career, Wendell wore number 13 in attempting reverse psychology against his demons, until he decided on the up-front approach.)

Wendell must pick up the ball from the mound to start an inning, as opposed to catch a ball on the fly from his catcher or the home plate umpire. He's been known to let the ball strike his chest and fall to the ground before picking it up.

Wendell waves to his center fielder and won't begin pitching until the center fielder waves back. He tips his cap to the right fielder and won't begin pitching until the right fielder tips in return. Wendell hurls the rosin bag to the mound with a vengeance to kill any evil spirit that might be hiding therein. An avid hunter, Wendell takes a bite from the raw heart of every new species he has brought down, although he waits to do so until he has gotten home and properly prepared the beast for supper.

Recently, Wendell has stated that Barry Bonds obviously is on steroids because "you can tell by looking at him," and that a lot of baseball players are overpaid. Turk Wendell must be flaky, or how else could he come up with notions as strange as these?

Wendell has a secret quirk that has never been revealed simply because no one ever figured it out. It has to do with his becoming "one" with the nickname of the team he happens to be playing for. Wendell has pitched for the Cubs, Mets and Phillies, and in the off-season he signed a contract with the Rockies minors organization in anticipation of landing a role with the parent club, which he has accomplished.

Shortly after he signed the contract (his trademarked 99 pennies bringing up the rear), Wendell was pursuing mountain lions in Colorado when his hunting dogs became stranded in the Rockies. Rather than leave the trusty dogs and come down the mountain without them, Wendell camped overnight within their proximity. In the morning Wendell led his dogs safely down to the base of the mountain.

The point is that he did this on purpose. Wendell's daring overnight camping experience in the Rockies was the fourth time overall that he deliberately became "one" with the nickname of the team he was employed with: Wendell slept in the Rocky Mountains because he was himself a member of the "Rockies." What a coincidence that he just happened to have his sleeping bag with him.

"Yeah, you got me," Wendell said while patting the polar bear and mountain lion claws, elk teeth, turkey spurs, wild pig teeth, and buffalo tooth he wears on a necklace in tribute to game he shot (except for the polar bear; an Eskimo sent him the claw).

Wendell further confessed that as a Cub player, he sometimes used to climb into Lincoln Park Zoo after hours and sleep with the bears.

"Not with the big bears, though," he said. "They'd rip me to shreds for sure. I slept with the smaller bears—the cubs."

As a New York Met, Wendell frequented the Manhattan scene and pursued a glorious nightlife in the Big Apple. No one suspected anything, but Wendell's hidden agenda was to simply meet as many different people as possible in New York's bars and restaurants, just so he could say that he had "met" so-and-so.

"Yeah, you got me again," Wendell said, chuckling and chewing licorice, his mouth starting to look like a coal mine. "I carried a notebook and a pen around New York and wrote down the name, contact information of every person I 'met,' only because I was a 'Met'. The reason I took such copious notes is that I didn't want to cheat myself. In meeting so many people, I would have forgotten most of them right away, or soon after, if I didn't write everything down. Otherwise, I wouldn't have felt that I had actually 'met' any of these people. And how could I then have faced myself in the mirror and told myself I'm a New York 'Met' with any degree of self respect?"

When Wendell was a Phillie, his task was easier. He simply introduced himself to everybody around Philadelphia as 'Phil' Wendell. He 'met' so many people as 'Phil' that sometimes "I thought I was back on the 'Mets', except without all the notes." Wendell said. "The cities (New York and Philadelphia) are only 90 miles apart, and one Sunday morning before a Phillies home game I woke up in my rented house in Pottstown and drove to Shea Stadium instead of to the Vet. That was embarrassing, but I made up for it by pitching three innings of one-hit middle relief for the Mets that day against the Astros. I figured, 'Why not? I'm already here. We won the game, too. The Mets, I mean. I forget how the Phillies did, although I probably heard the score on the radio while driving back to Pottstown.'"

While Wendell has adapted to life as a journeyman, he says there are teams he rather avoid playing for if he possibly can. "I couldn't be a Twin," he said, "because baseball fans consider me one of a kind."

"And please, not the Tigers. I wouldn't survive the night with them in the Detroit Zoo," he said. "And I couldn't play for the Giants. They might be Giants, but I'm just a little over six feet tall."

"As for the Cardinals, Blue Jays and Orioles, those teams are for the birds," Wendell said. "I rather end up on the Padres, since I'm a dad, even though I'd have to work on my Spanish if I were going to be a proper Padre."

Hey, don't look at Wendell as if he has two heads. He already said he could never be a Twin. You're the one who believes in the curse of the billy goat. How strange is that? Now brush your teeth and run along to bed, you crazy Cubs fan.



Newsletter by a Cub fan,  
for the Cub fans  
Get a taste at BleacherBanter.com

*John P. Carbon, Jr.*

ATTORNEY AT LAW  
45 NORTH ADDISON ROAD  
ADDISON, ILLINOIS 60101

(630) 833-3314  
FAX (630) 833-7282

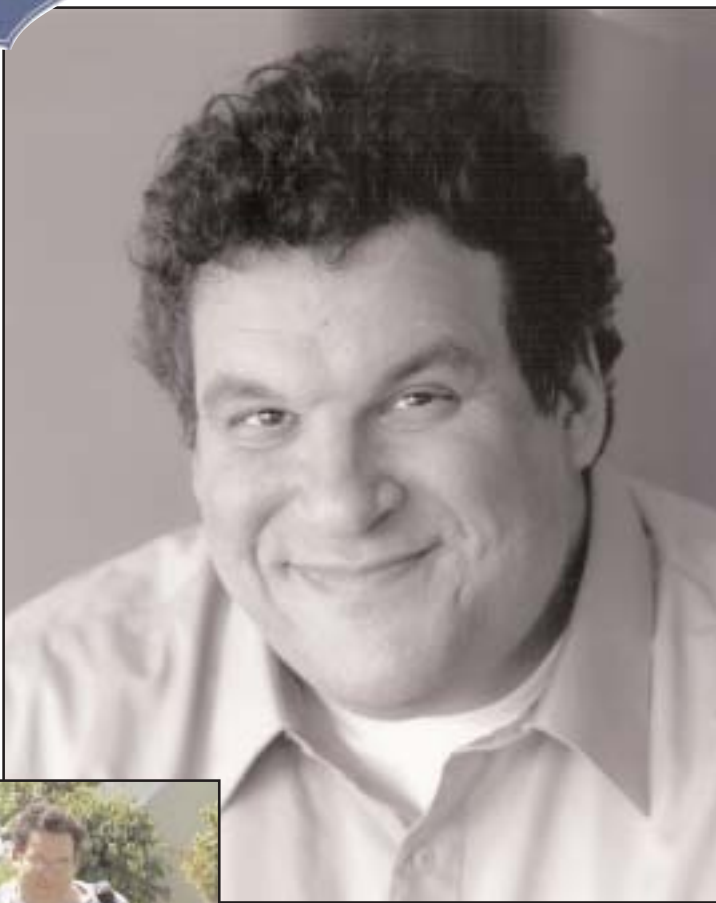
**Criminal / DUI Concentration**

**BOB INN**

# Spotlight on

## JEFF GARLIN

By Brad Zibung  
Editor in Chief



LEFT: Garlin sports an Ernie Banks jersey while strolling with fellow "Curb Your Enthusiasm" star Larry David.

A native Chicagoan, Jeff Garlin rose through the Improv ranks here in the '80s and for a while shared a Wrigleyville apartment with Conan O'Brien. He's perhaps best known for his role as Jeff Greene, the agent of eccentric and obsessive "Seinfeld" creator Larry David in HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm." He's also often found taking in games at Wrigley, where he's known to bleed Cubby blue.

**The Heckler:** When did you first become a Cubs fan?

**Jeff Garlin:** I'm a Chicago native, and in 1969 I was seven and my dad took me to a game. That was my introduction to the Cubs.

**TH:** Was there ever any doubt between being Cubs or Sox fan?

**JG:** Yes, actually. [laughs] When I was a kid I went to a game at Wrigley at they wouldn't let me bring in my bottle of water. I got so angry that I burned my Die-Hard Cubs Fan Card. I swore off the Cubs for the Sox. That didn't even last a month.

**TH:** You used to live in Wrigleyville with Conan O'Brien, right?

**JG:** Yes. We lived at Waveland and Kenmore. I'm not sure of the exact year, but the Cubs still had Andre Dawson. It was during the strike, and Conan had a show called the "Happy Happy Good Show." I was doing some stuff at Second City and some standup.

**TH:** When you go to games, where do you normally sit?

**JG:** I'll sit wherever. I like to have the more comfortable seats possible. I like to call them the "famous person seats."

**TH:** Would you consider yourself a bleacher bum?

**JG:** Not per se. If the bleachers happen to be the most comfortable seats that day, I'll try to get out there.

**TH:** What do you think about the concessions at Wrigley?

**JG:** Well, the food's gotten a lot better, but it's still not as good as the stuff at Dodger Stadium and Comiskey. For as great an experience as Wrigley is and as great as the Cubs are to watch, the food there doesn't match up.

I will say this. Last time I was at Wrigley I made (Cubs Vice President of Marketing and Broadcasting) John McDonough promise he'd never hand out thundersticks at Wrigley. They're obnoxious. He said he was ahead of me and that they'd never let those things in games.

**TH:** Any difference between the places you go before and after now and the ones you went to back in the day?

**JG:** Not really. I pretty much wander in and out around town and then go home after the game.

**TH:** Do you get a chance to watch the games in LA?

**JG:** I've got the DirecTV baseball package and WGN. I manage to catch about a game a week. I TiVo games too. And when the Cubs are playing the Dodgers, I try to get to all those games too.

**TH:** What do you think about the Dodgers?

**JG:** Aw. They're terrible. They finally got that ownership stuff straightened out with the McCourts taking over. It's too late for them to do anything this year. Maybe next year for the Dodgers.

**TH:** What friends of yours can you talk with about the Cubs?

**JG:** Most of my friends here are from Chicago, so I have a lot of fellow Cubs fans here. I've got a few friends I have fantasy baseball leagues with.

**TH:** Anyone who's name we'd recognize?

**JG:** Yeah, but I'm not getting into that. I hate when people mention other famous people they hang out with.

**TH:** Where were you during NLCS Game 6?

**JG:** I was filming a movie that's not been released yet called "Sleepover." I watched a lot of the game in the craft services truck in the studio lot. When I had to leave the TV, I wore headphones to listen to the game. But I saw the Bartman part.

**TH:** Shortly after that game, a movie studio said they were going to produce a movie about the Bartman incident starring Kevin James (from "King of Queens"). What do you think about that?

**JG:** Yeah. I remember reading about that. I don't think they're going to do that. I think they just came out with that news to get their name out there.

**TH:** Any chance we'll see the Cubs worked in an episode of "Curb Your Enthusiasm"?

**JG:** No. No chance. It doesn't fit with the characters. Jeff Greene's not a Cubs' fan. If the show was about me, Jeff Garlin, then it'd definitely be in there.

# Custom! WOO! Eyes! WOO!



Ronnie "Woo-Woo" Wickers BEFORE he got new glasses at CustomEyes.



Ronnie "Woo-Woo" Wickers AFTER he got new glasses at CustomEyes.



3539 N. Southport Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60657  
(773) 871-2020  
Fax (773) 871-2099

Opening May 2004  
1332 W. Madison  
Chicago, IL 60607  
(773) 871-2020

www.customeyes2020.com

Exams, Contacts, and Fashion Eyewear

### Last Issue's Crossword and Word Find Solutions



ANSWERS:  
Squirrel  
Pigeon  
Monkey  
Rabbit  
Possum  
Cat  
Canoe  
Raccoon  
Horse  
Rhino

Next issue: May 18  
Taking on the Giants  
and Cards

**TOO WHITE CREW**  
THE WORLD'S FIRST ALL-LIVE HIP HOP TRIBUTE BAND

5/13 Duffy's on Diversy in Chicago  
5/16 930 Club in Washington D.C. with Big Daddy Kane  
5/18 SOB's in New York City with KR5-One and Chuck D  
5/20 Durty Nellies in Palatine  
5/21 Par-a-Dice Casino in Peoria with Power 92 FM

LIVE HIP HOP HITS SERVED HOT WITH CRACKERS

WWW.TOOWHITECREW.COM