



BLEACHER CREATURE

Baseball Monthly for Fans of the New Orleans Zephyrs

ISSUE # 127

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

NOVEMBER, 2004

Jim Bowden Takes Over As Expos GM

From MLB.com

The New Orleans Zephyrs' new major league affiliate was on the move recently, filling its vacancy in the GM's office. The Washington-bound Expos named Jim Bowden as their interim general manager on November 2. Bowden becomes the 13th GM in franchise history and replaces Omar Minaya, who left in September to take a similar position with the Mets. For now, Bowden said he and his staff will work out of Melbourne, Fla., where the Expos have their Spring Training home while renovations to RFK Stadium in Washington are ongoing.

Bowden, 43, said that Commissioner Bud Selig, chief operating officer Bob DuPuy and Tavares approached him about talking over the reins, and Bowden took the job out of respect and loyalty to the three people he has known for two decades. Bowden has already gone to work as the GM, announcing he wants Frank Robinson for a fourth season

-continued on page 5



Photo courtesy S. Derby Gisclair

Pacific Coast League Will Realign for the 2005 Season

The Zephyrs will open their 13th season in a new division in the Pacific Coast League.

The Zephyrs move from the Eastern Division to the PCL's Southern Division in the American Conference. They are joined by Oklahoma RedHawks, Albuquerque Isotopes and Round Rock Express as new division rivals. The Zephyrs will play each of these teams 16 times, divided evenly between home and away contests. The 2005 home schedule was announced in August.

The realignment sets up an intriguing rivalry between the Zephyrs and the

Round Rock Express, who became the new affiliate of the Houston Astros, with the Zephyrs now affiliated with the Expos. The 2005 roster of the Round Rock Express is likely to feature a number of former New Orleans Zephyrs players. The two clubs will play two four game series in each home ballpark.

-From zephyrsbaseball.com

<p>Pacific Coast League American Conference South</p> <p>New Orleans Zephyrs (Expos) Oklahoma RedHawks (Rangers) Round Rock Express (Astros) Albuquerque Isotopes (Dodgers)</p>

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New Orleans Zephyrs Alumni 2004 Major League All Star Team

This season among the players active in the major leagues, we chose a very unofficial All-Star team consisting of former New Orleans Zephyrs. Some



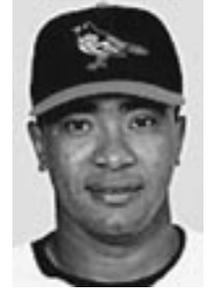
Mark Loretta



Mike Matheny



Carlos Guillen



Melvin Mora

Outfielders

Lance Berkman, Houston
Bob Abreu, Philadelphia
Richard Hidalgo, New York Mets

3rd Base

Melvin Mora, Baltimore

Shortstop

Carlos Guillen, Detroit

2nd Base

Mark Loretta, San Diego

1st Base

Daryle Ward, Pittsburgh

Catcher

Mike Matheny, St. Louis

Starting Pitchers

Roy Oswalt, Houston
Freddy Garcia, Chicago White Sox
Brandon Backe, Houston
John Halama, Tampa Bay

Relief Pitchers

Brad Lidge, Houston
Scott Linebrink, San Diego
Mike Gallo, Houston

of our all-star positions were easy to fill; some were much trickier. Several former Zephyrs not on our list had terrific years. Adam Everett put together a fine year for Houston until a broken hand sidelined him for the season's last several weeks. His numbers almost certainly would have given Carlos Guillen a run for the money at shortstop were it not for the injury.

Mark Loretta had an outstanding year for the Padres, batting .335, but don't mistake Loretta for a singles hitter. Among his 208 hits were 65 for extra bases. In addition, the 33-year-old veteran has emerged as one of the Padres on the field leaders. Loretta is our MVP among New Orleans Zephyrs alums.

For our Pitcher of the Year we look to Houston's Roy Oswalt, who came through with a 20-win season, after his club lost two of its starters to injury. Oswalt was outstanding also in the postseason for the Astros.

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Bleacher Creature is a conversation among baseball fans. It has been published monthly eleven times a year, since 1993. It is independent of the New Orleans Zephyrs ballclub and is made possible by our wonderfully loyal subscribers, supporters, contributors and friends.

Comparing Pitching Stats of Boston Red Sox Lefthanders Babe Ruth and Mel Parnell

In a statistical comparison between two of the Boston Red Sox' most effective lefthanded pitchers, we'll begin by pointing out that they pitched a generation apart and in two very distinct eras in baseball.

Babe Ruth pitched on a regular basis from 1914 through 1919, then appeared in five games as a pitcher between 1920 and 1933. Parnell's major league pitching career extended from 1947 through 1956.

The chart below shows that the Babe had a lifetime won-lost record of 94-46, for a winning percentage of .671. Parnell's career record was 123-75, for a .621 mark.

Ruth's career ERA was 2.28 to Parnell's 3.50. To illustrate how close the two outstanding pitchers were statistically consider a comparison of the average 9-inning performance of strikeouts, hits allowed and bases on balls.

Ruth allowed 7.2 hits per nine innings, 3.6 strikeouts and 3.3 walks. Parnell's line reads 8.8 hits per nine innings, 3.8 strikeouts, and 3.9 bases on balls, a very close comparison, given the differences in the way the game was played.

Babe Ruth pitched 1221 innings and gave up only 10 home runs. In a much more home run-productive age, Parnell yielded 104 homers in 1752 innings pitched. On a HR-per-inning basis, Ruth gave up one every 122.1 innings. Parnell allowed one HR every 16.8 innings.



Photos: National Baseball Library

Though they pitched in different eras, Babe Ruth and Mel Parnell are arguably two of Boston's best lefthanded pitchers.

CAREER STATISTICS

	Ruth	Parnell
Wins	94	123
Losses	46	75
Winning Percentage	.671	.621
Games	163	289
Games Started	148	232
Complete Games	107	113
Shutouts	17	20
Innings pitched	1221	1752
Hits allowed	974	1715
Runs allowed	400	797
HR allowed	10	104
Bases on balls	441	758
Strikeouts	488	732
Earned Run Average	2.28	3.50

TRIPLE MILESTONES - 2004

By Bill Gilbert

Offensive production in the major leagues increased again in 2004 for the second straight year but still remains below the recent peak in every category in 2000. Twelve players achieved the Triple Milestones of a .300 batting average, 30 home runs and 100 runs batted in, up from 8 in 2003. However, only two players made it in both 2003 and 2004, Albert Pujols and Manny Ramirez. All significant offensive categories were up from 2003 as illustrated in the table below:

Year	Runs/Game	HR/Game	Avg	OBA	SLG	OPS
1996	10.07	2.19	.270	.340	.427	.767
1997	9.53	2.05	.267	.337	.419	.756
1998	9.58	2.08	.266	.335	.420	.755
1999	10.17	2.28	.271	.345	.434	.779
2000	10.28	2.34	.271	.345	.437	.782
2001	9.55	2.25	.264	.332	.427	.759
2002	9.24	2.09	.261	.331	.417	.748
2003	9.46	2.14	.264	.332	.422	.754
2004	9.63	2.25	.266	.335	.428	.763

For the second year in a row, no players hit 50 home runs. A total of 9 players hit 40 home runs in 2004, compared to 10 last year. The 30 home run level was reached by 37 players in 2003, well below the peak of 47 in 2000.

A useful indicator for tracking offense is the number of players who hit for both power and average by achieving a .300 batting average, 30 home runs and 100 runs batted in. A record 26 players reached all three milestones in 2000, but that figure dropped to 21 in 2001, 12 in 2002 and 8 in 2003 before increasing to 12 in 2004. Four of the players are in the American League, all Dominicans, and eight in the National League including Albert Pujols who became the only player to do it in his first 4 seasons. Four players, David Ortiz, Adrian Beltre, Scott Rolen and Bobby Abreu recorded triple milestones for the first time.

In his 1988 Baseball Abstract, Bill James referred to triple milestone seasons as "Hall of Fame Seasons". This is because all of the eligible players with 5 or more triple milestone seasons have been elected to the Hall of Fame. This correlation may not hold in the future since triple milestone seasons are much easier to achieve now than in the past. Among active players, Bonds has 9, Ramirez has 8, Thomas has 7, Piazza, Sheffield and Guerrero have 6 and Bagwell, Juan Gonzalez, Chipper Jones, Alex Rodriguez and Todd Helton have 5.



Bonds



Pujols



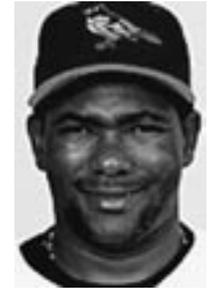
Berkman



Ramirez



Guerrero



Tejada

Photos courtesy MLB.com

In 2004, twelve players achieved the Triple Milestones of a .300 batting average, 30 home runs and 100 RBIs

Following is a listing of players who achieved triple milestones in 2004:

American League

Player	Times	Avg-HR-RBI	Comments
Manny Ramirez	8	.308-43-130	Sixth straight year.
Vladimir Guerrero	6	.337-39-126	Back again after missing out in 2003.
Miguel Tejada	2	.311-34-150	Better than MVP year in 2002.
David Ortiz	1	.301-41-139	Emerging superstar.

National League

Player	Times	Avg-HR-RBI	Comments
Barry Bonds	9	.362-45-101	Only Ruth and Gehrig have more.
Albert Pujols	4	.331-46-123	On track to be one of all-time greats.
Lance Berkman	2	.316-30-106	Made it in 2001.
Jim Edmonds	2	.301-42-111	Also made it in 2001.
Aramis Ramirez	2	.318-36-103	Another from class of 2001.
Bobby Abreu	1	.301-30-105	Came close before.
Adrian Beltre	1	.334-48-121	Classic breakout season.
Scott Rolen	1	.314-34-124	First .300 season.

Charts by Bill Gilbert

as manager and acknowledged that he's already in trade discussions. One of Bowden's top priorities is trying to resign top run producer Tony Batista, who has yet to file for free agency. The Expos have offered Batista a multi-year deal, but both parties are apart on the dollar figures.

Bowden said one of his goals is to replenish the farm system. He went so far as to say that he will spend more time focusing on the minor leagues than the big league level. That would be good news for the New Orleans Zephyrs, who recently signed a two-agreement to be the Washington club's Triple-A affiliate.

"That will be an area that we will evaluate as closely and



(Tom Uhlman/AP)

Jim Bowden was named Executive of the Year by Baseball America in 1999 when his Reds team went 96-67.

MINOR LEAGUE TRIPLE MILESTONES

By Bill Gilbert

In 2003, only one minor league player, Kyle Nichols, achieved triple milestones. In 2004, 10 minor leaguers made it, a difficult feat in a 140-game season. Four of these players finished the season in the major leagues.

Player	Team (Level)	Organization	Age	AVG-HR-RBI
Joe Dillon	Carolina(AA)	Florida	28	.342- 9- 31
	Albuquerque(AAA)			.325-30- 86
				.329-39-117
Jon Benick	Hickory (LoA)	Pittsburgh	25	.328-32-104
Andy Phillips	Trenton (AA)	New York (A)	25	.357- 4- 16
	Columbus (AAA)			.318-26- 85
	New York AL			.250- 1- 2
				.320-31-103
Ian Stewart	Asheville(LoA)	Colorado	19	.319-30-101
Dallas McPherson	Arkansas(AA)	Anaheim	23	.321-20- 69
	Salt Lake(AAA)			.313-20- 57
	Anaheim AL			.225- 3- 6
				.310-43-132
Andy Tracy	Colo. Springs	Colorado	30	.315-33-120
	Colorado NL			.188- 0- 1
				.310-33-121
Jason Dubois	Iowa(AAA)	Chicago (N)	25	.314-31- 99
	Chicago NL			.217- 1- 5
				.309-32-104
Brian Dopirak	Lansing(LoA)	Chicago (N)	20	.307-39-120
Kevin Witt	Memphis(AAA)	St. Louis	28	.306-36-107
Brad Eldred	Lynchburg(HiA)	Pittsburgh	23	.310-21- 77
	Altoona(AA)			.279-17- 60
				.301-38-137

maybe even more than the Major League team because you have to produce players," Bowden said. "I don't care what your market size is, I don't care what your payroll is, you have to get players through your system that can come up and perform at this level. You have to have players in your system. That allows you to make the trades to make your big league team better."

This will be Bowden's second stint as a general manager. He had the same title with the Reds from 1992-2003. The Reds won a division title in 1995 and reached the National League Championship Series the same year before losing to the Braves in four games.

Bowden's biggest triumph, however, came in 1999. With one of the lowest payrolls in baseball, the Reds went 96-67 and lost to the Mets in a one-game Wild Card playoff. Bowden was named Executive of the Year by Baseball America for his efforts.

Before taking the job with the Expos, Bowden was a baseball analyst for ESPN.

Bowden has been in baseball since 1984, starting as an intern with the Pirates. He was the club's assistant director of player development and scouting from 1985-88 before going to the Yankees as an assistant to senior vice president for baseball operations.

—From MLB.com

*Bill Gilbert of Baytown, Texas, is a longtime SABR (Society for American Baseball Research) member whose statistical analysis we have admired for years. It's an honor to print a small sampling of Bill's work in the pages of the **Bleacher Creature**.*

Todd Zeile's Major League Home Run Journey

TODD ZEILE never approached the home run production of a Barry Bonds or a Mark McGwire, nor is he listed among the game's most prodigious sluggers of all time. He does, however, hold a little known major league career home run record.

On September 5, 2003, as the Montreal Expos closed out their final "home" stand of the season in Puerto Rico, Zeile blasted two home runs at Hiram Bithorn Stadium in San Juan, to lead the Expos over the visiting Florida Marlins, 6-2. With his two round-trippers as an Expo, Todd Zeile became the first player in big league history to hit a home run for eleven different major league clubs. His record-breaking clout came off Marlins lefthander Mark Redman in the bottom of the 6th with two runners aboard to give Montreal a 3-1 lead. Zeile later added a solo shot in the 8th off Marlins reliever Rick Helling. Going into the record-breaking game Zeile was tied with 19th century sluggers Dan Brouthers and Tom Brown, who each homered for ten different teams. Zeile belongs to an exclusive club of twenty players who have hit home runs for eight or more major league teams.

Zeile began his career home run odyssey on August 20, 1989, at Cincinnati's Riverfront Stadium, as a member of the St. Louis Cardinals. Having been recently promoted from Louisville of the American Association, Zeile

connected for his first big league four-bagger off Reds starter Tim Leary in an 8-1 St. Louis victory. He went on to collect 75 career homers in parts of seven seasons with the Redbirds.

Traded to the Cubs on June 16, 1995, Zeile homered the very next day in a 12-5 Cubs loss to the Los Angeles Dodgers at Wrigley Field. Zeile's first homer as a Cub came off Ramon Martinez, a two-run shot in the 4th inning. It was the first of nine home runs Zeile hit in his 79 games as a member of the Cubs.

Zeile went on to hit a career total of 253 home runs, including the



Zeile belongs to an exclusive club of twenty players who have hit home runs for eight or more major league teams.

record-breaker for Montreal in 2003. It was in his first at-bat as a member of the New York Yankees, his tenth team, on April 2, 2003, that Zeile tied the century-old record held by Brouthers and Brown.

Zeile's First HR for Each of 11 Major League Clubs

Date	Club	Opponent	Score	Opposing Pitcher
08-20-89	St. Louis	Cincinnati	8-1	Tim Leary
06-17-95	Chicago Cubs	Los Angeles	5-12	Ramon Martinez
04-18-96	Philadelphia	Montreal	9-8	Mike Dyer
09-02-96	Baltimore	California	12-8	Shawn Boskie
04-06-97	Los Angeles	Pittsburgh	6-3	Rich Loiselle
06-01-98	Florida	Chicago Cubs	2-10	Jeremi Gonzalez
08-01-98	Texas	Chicago Sox	8-1	Mike Sirotko
04-30-00	NY Mets	Colorado	14-11	Brian Bohanon
04-08-02	Colorado	Houston	4-8	Roy Oswalt
04-02-03	NY Yankees	Toronto	9-7	Mark Hendrickson
09-05-03	Montreal	Florida	6-2	Mark Redman

Compiled by Lee Collin



Zeile's 253 HRs are distributed among eleven different major league clubs.

Years	Club(s)	Games	AB	HR
1989-95	St. Louis	757	2694	75
1995	Chicago NL	79	299	9
1996	Philadelphia	134	500	20
1996	Baltimore	29	117	5
1997-98	L.A.	200	733	38
1998	Florida	66	234	6
1998-99	Texas	208	768	30
2000-01	New York NL	304	1075	32
2002	Colorado	144	506	18
2003-04	New York AL	203	534	15
2003	Montreal	34	113	5
Total	11 Clubs	2158	7573	253

Pulling the Plug: Life Without TV

PASADENA, TEXAS

Dear Bleacher Creature,

I've never been much of a movie-goer, nor have I ever been a round-the-clock TV watcher. The scripted forms of entertainment don't appeal to me like the more active and the more unpredictable: hiking, camping, walking, softball and baseball. As for the movies, I've never been attracted to anyone else's nightmares, and I certainly don't invite anyone into mine.

Much of what is regularly shown on the TV can't hold my interest for ten minutes, but in October I found myself watching lots of playoff and World Series baseball on the tube. Nobody could have scripted the way it all unfolded, culminating with some history-making heroics by the Boston Red Sox, of all people. And talk about heroics, our Astros were one win from the World Series before finally bowing out in game 7 of the NLCS.

Fortunately for me, many of the best October moments occurred late at night, after Betsy's bedtime. During the Series Louis and I agreed that when the last baseball game was over, we would turn off the television and leave it off for at least one month. For Louis and me this is not unprecedented; we kept the set unplugged for a month one winter before Betsy was born.

Among the wonderful effects of unplugging are the conversations that are possible in a room with no tube. In homes where the TV is always on,

on the other hand, dialogue is kept to a minimum because it always has to compete with the audio-visual stimuli being projected from the TV. So far, I'm really loving the relative quiet and thoughtfulness in our home. Reading to Betsy, telling stories, singing songs, cooking, doing garden work—they're all better with no television. Betsy resisted at first, but Louis suggested that we make exceptions for her kiddie movies on dvd...still no regular TV. She's accepted it. Kids are wonderfully adaptable, especially at age 3.

As for Louis, when his buddies want him to join them to watch a football game, which he is sometimes inclined to do, he joins them somewhere other than in our den. He understands that I treasure the temporary quiet at home, and, since I'm not a football fan, this arrangement is alright with me.

Without the TV I can give Betsy the time and attention she needs, We go shopping, to the park, to the zoo, or we just play in her room. Right now I feel that I could leave it unplugged until 2005.

Finally, a word about playoff baseball and the Astros. For those who think that 2004 was Houston's "last best chance" to make it to the World Series, please do not despair. There are great young players in the system, and new GM Tim Purpura knows the Astros' minor league personnel like no one else. He may be able to retool the pitching staff by using some of the young talent in trades to acquire pitchers for 2005.



It seems to me that only a lack of pitching depth stood between the Astros and a World Series. Oh, I know we're likely to lose Kent and Beltran next season, but bats seem to be easier to replace than arms.

On the minor league level, I'm looking forward to the times when the Express and the Zephyrs will meet in the Pacific Coast League next summer. Louis has already started talking about our visits to Round Rock and New Orleans in 2005. We've made some friends in both places, and seeing our two favorite minor league teams playing each other will surely be a treat.

We'll be in New York visiting Louis' family for Thanksgiving this month, so I'll write again when we return to Houston. Until then, say hello to my baseball buds down there, and keep on keeping on.

— Rose

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is the region's only all-baseball monthly. We've been at it since 1993, supporting Zephyrs baseball and exchanging stories about the game and its players, past and present. We're also into the wit and wisdom, heroes and villains, and facts and fables about professional baseball. On-line newsletters are fine, but we offer real paper and ink. Sign up today to receive 11 monthly issues by First Class Mail. A subscription to the *Bleacher Creature* is only \$10 a year!

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