



CAMEL DROPPINGS

Well, the Shirts are Nice

The sun was shining and the sky was blue. Unfortunately, so were our spirits after IOB's first game. The Camel's arch-nemesis, the Slammers, served our newly-clad troops a side of humiliation.

After a strong start, Ishtar was able to hold onto a respectable lead. But the Slammers struck back with a vengeance in the 4th inning and never looked back.

New manager John was a pantheon of organization, not missing a beat with the line-up or defensive shuffling. For good measure, he kick-started the game by

calling the team into a huddle for a whooping "OUTS". It may have initially intimidated our foes, but they got over it.

Offensive player of the game would have to go to Amir for going 4-4 at the plate. We look forward to his power and consistency throughout the year.

Defensively, things were a little choppy, but kudos go out to our female corps for rough-and-tumble action in the infield. Laura received her customary bruise, while new addition Katrina brought her endurance to the game. She made key

plays even after biking miles to get to the field.

Luckily no injuries were reported in Ishtar's first outing, although it's not like we didn't try. GAM gets another award for his dramatic dive and fall going for a foul ball. And Mike Halfman and Tony avoided a potentially ugly "merger" in center field.



John directs his troops on the eve of their first battle

The Color Purple



The 'Purple Pirate!'
The 'Barney Slayer!'
The 'Bandana Bandit!'

GAM has proudly worn his lavender rag faithfully in just about every sporting event he has participated in the last two years.

(We won't delve into what some believe the color purple represents.) We just want to salute Greg for exhibiting his support for the current fight for rights.

Wear it proud, GAM!
Wear it loud!

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Dork Opponent of the Week



We got beat by this guy???

I hope he had serious chafing—wearing those goofy red cargo khakis with zippers.

Dude! Save it for the street fests.

Player Profile—Mike Halfman



Mike cups his balls

Mr. Halfman officially joins the ranks of the honored IOB this year after subbing last season. “I felt that I had a lot to add to the franchise,” adds Mike. “I mean, because of me, there are still two Mikes on the team (after Maddox left last year.)”

With a pointed wit and casual charm, “Half” is a welcome addition. He has become a mainstay in communal outings. What better qualification does he need than that!

We have great hopes for Mike... socially that is. And we know he will not disappoint. With his won-

derful wife and teammate, Paula, his cool dog, Chloe, his buddy, Jack, and borrowed shades, Mike Halfman is looking forward to all the privileges of membership.



“Bring me your finest meats and cheeses.”

Schedule/League Info

Next Game:

12:00 PM 105 - Burnham If You Got Em Vs. 101 - Ishtar on Beta Grant Park Field 16

Standings:

It's too early. We Lost. We're 0-1. Ok?

Picture Potpourri



Manager's Musings

By John Sangimino

As dawn broke this past Sunday morning, I thought to myself, "Today begins a new era." For the 12th time in twelve years, Ishtar on Beta takes to the field in Grant Park amidst an underwhelming array of slackers, misfits and nare-do-wells. (How I missed them all winter...)

Preparing for the game in my usual manner (i.e., blasting music loudly, searching frantically for my cleats and running late on all counts), I hustled through the apartment while Tom Ellis waited patiently on my front steps. There was a time when Mike Madden lay burdened with this task, but after one too many loops around the alley as I glanced outside thinking, "He can wait another five minutes"...he decided to pass the torch.

Once underway, Tom and I discussed the game as he biked ahead and I roller-bladed behind. Recognizing that this combination wouldn't last for long, I quickly asked for a "tow," which he obliged and I grabbed the back of his jersey. Hanging on with the leech-like panache that had gotten me this far in life, my thoughts turned to Ishtar captains past and the cleats I'd have to fill.

In four prior seasons with the team, I had played under three captains: Ty Sherman, Mike Madden and the infamous GAM. The latter was very good at batting me low in the order (granted, I showed up late for every game) and excelled at highlighting all the areas in which we needed to improve. Mike Madden's leadership style was best characterized by the phrase "Hmmm..." and I knew that perplexed look was something I could easily master – if not improve upon. Lastly, Ty Sherman always managed to look about as calm and composed as anybody I'd ever seen – in practically any situation. Whether it was during a game, at his own wedding or even discussing politics with Tony at 2:00 a.m. on Lincoln Avenue, he exuded a serenity and poise that's almost impossible to come by naturally. (Was it any wonder he led the squad to its only championship in 11 seasons?)

Archetypal to the core, there is at least one lasting image of Ty that I will never forget. It was a very sunny morning in June 2002, and Ishtar was scheduled for a

rare 10:00 a.m. start. Someone suggested bringing food and beer to the game, which was unanimously endorsed by the group. Arriving uncharacteristically early that day, I walked east toward the field as the mid-morning sun blazed brilliantly over the lake. Greeting the handful of others who had already arrived, I then gazed up the hill to behold a sight the likes of which is only ever referred to in legend and song.

Fully bathed in the glow of that mid-morning sun stood Ty Sherman, with his right foot perched on a cooler, his left foot on the ground, a lit cigarette *and* donut in one hand and an open beer in the other. Glancing down at me, he gave a quick nod, then returned to his thoughts...not unlike a Greek God overseeing his realm. Briefly nodding back, I turned to put on my cleats, knowingly reassured that our command was in good hands.

Returning to the present for a moment, I realized that Tom had downshifted to the lowest gear, and that his breathing had become more labored. "Have you put on

"Mike Madden's leadership style was best characterized by the phrase 'Hmmm...'"

weight?" he huffed, as I continued hanging onto his shirt. "Uh...just a couple of pounds," I replied, realizing that it was actually true. I let go for a bit, and we proceeded to alternate blading and towing every half mile or so from there.

Arriving at the field brought back a rush of memories as many smiling faces reunited. Scurrying about with all the pre-game prep, I occasionally glanced up the hillside and could almost see the vision of Ty standing there calmly eating, drinking and smoking away. I couldn't help but wonder if wherever he was at that very moment, he was assuming a similar pose. (What would smart money say?)

Well, with all due respect to Ty's iconic inspiration, the contest that followed was



"What, me worry? Yeah Ok."

one fit for neither legend nor song. Ishtar battled valiantly to stay in a competitive game with some glimmer of hope (if only a fool's hope by the end). There were some bobbles, some hits, some poor plays and some good...and at least one harrowing moment when Tony beseeched me to "Do something!" The opening cheer met with mixed reviews and GAM clearly reinforced that he never wanted to hear "OUTS!" bellowed again. (A respectable sentiment, I must concur, though any guy wearing a purple bandana really has little room to make comments.)

And though the outcome wasn't pretty, I feel good knowing that at least our only championship-winning captain didn't witness the display...though he would have certainly applauded the effort, esprit-de-corps and post-game revelry at Joe's.

At least we do one thing well, and relaxing in the beer garden on those semi-sturdy chairs...(How come they only break for some people?)...I glanced about the faces and thought, "We'll play better next week."

And at that very moment, Mike Halfman (who was mostly through his second double Jack, I might add) turned to me and slurred, "I've got an idea."

Now if that doesn't instill a resounding sense of optimism for next Sunday...then I don't know what will.

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[Any names or likeness to persons
living or dead is purely deliberate.]

This issue is
dedicated to
our new logo!

Thanks Paula!



Droppings

2004 Sponsor Search - With advertising already so big in Nascar and the MLB's 'ads on bases' scare this year, we at Camel Droppings thought it might be interesting to search for new sponsors that would want to share in our glory for their own benefit (you know, like Joe's.)

The following are actual company names:

Purple Mutt Enterprises Inc. — makes "an end-to-end contact management solution"

MonkeyBoy Technologies LLC — an ASP "of carrier-class Internet travel services"

Turbo Squid Inc. — "the online 3D content vendor"

Gazoontite.com — an online retailer of asthma and allergy relief products

YadaYada Inc. — "the first integrated wireless Internet service provider"

Dirty Water Integrated — "a branding services and marketing firm"

Slob-Trot Software — it's Finnish, so probably not really funny but what the heck

C Me Run Corp. — Internet company "offering consumer-focused application services"

BigFatWow Inc. — "provides Internet access in public areas"

Hitsgalore.com Inc. — "a rapidly growing B2B Internet company"

Gobosh Inc. — an acronym for Go Big or Stay Home, which "expresses our philosophy"

Crunchy Technologies — "a technology services and e-business consulting firm"



"Chico's
Bail
Bonds?!"

Why not?

Picture of the Week



1. "Hey Mike, did you have your V-8 juice today"
2. "Wow, Tony's last swing knocked the Earth off its axis!"
3. Mike finally finds a good use for a bat ... a counter-balance.
4. Paula: "If you guys fall on me, I shall be quite miffed!"
5. "Nobody puts Cathy in the corner!"