

BLEACHER CREATURE

A Monthly Conversation Among Baseball Fans

ISSUE # 130

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

MARCH, 2005



New Orleans Zephyrs 2005 Early Season Home Schedule

Date	Opponent
April 15	Nashville
April 16	Nashville
April 17	Nashville
April 18	Nashville
April 19	Memphis
April 20	Memphis
April 21	Memphis
April 22	Memphis
April 28	Albuquerque
April 29	Albuquerque
April 30	Albuquerque
May 1	Albuquerque
May 2	Round Rock
May 3	Round Rock
May 4	Round Rock
May 5	Round Rock

See You at the Ballpark!

THIS MONTH

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A New Era for Zephyrs Baseball

By Bill Catalanello

If you're a fan of baseball in the New Orleans area, this is an exciting time. LSU and Tulane, two of the great collegiate baseball programs in the nation, were ranked 1-2 in *Baseball America's* preseason poll. Both started the season sharply, and as March began it looked as though either (or both) could go to the College World Series this summer.

On the professional level, the New Orleans Zephyrs will begin a new affiliation with the Washington Nationals, the newly transplanted franchise that competed for 36 years in the National League as the Montreal Expos. Waning interest in baseball in Montreal along with economic woes caused the baseball owners to buy the Expos franchise with the intent to move the club. After an agonizing period of being a lame duck franchise in Montreal, playing "home" games in Puerto Rico, and the uncertainty of what would happen next, the move was finally made this winter.

The Zephyrs will have a completely new look for 2005. After eight seasons as an affiliate of the Houston Astros, the Zs are in spring training this March with the Nationals at Space Coast Stadium in Viera, Florida.



When the regular season begins next month, the Zephyrs will compete in the realigned Pacific Coast League in the same division as Houston's new Triple-A affiliate, the Round Rock Express. New Orleans' other division rivals will be the Oklahoma Red Hawks (Rangers) and the Albuquerque Isotopes (Marlins).

As for the Washington Nationals, until their new stadium is completed in three years, they will play in RFK Stadium, which is being hastily renovated. The multi-purpose stadium was home to the Senators from 1961 until their move to Texas after the 1971 season. There has been no major league baseball in Washington since. The Nationals will have to share their stadium with the district's professional soccer team, D.C. United.

continued on page 2

Zephyrs...cont'd. from page 1

The Expos/Nationals' minor league system was, according to *Baseball America*, "one of the worst in the game," posting a combined record of 288-392, .424 for the 2004 season. Their Triple-A affiliate last year, the Edmonton Trappers, finished with a record of 69-74. There are encouraging signs for Zephyrs fans, however.

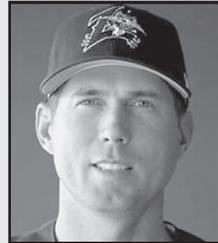
The MLB owners, who are also the Nationals' owners, having now relocated the franchise to Washington, will soon be looking to sell the franchise. One of the ways they can add value to the club is by building up its developmental apparatus, the minor league system. An organization that can develop its own talent at the minor league level has to spend less on free agents, and thus has money to keep its most talented players once they become proven major leaguers. The Expos in recent years brought plenty of talented players up through their system only to see them move on to teams with larger payrolls, once they became eligible for free agency.

The Nationals, from all indications,

Slugger Hiatt Likely Back with Zephyrs

Phil Hiatt, who hit 30 home runs as a Zephyr last season, has a good chance of being in New Orleans again in 2005.

Hiatt is the career home run king among active minor league players. Hiatt was invited to spring training



with the Washington Nationals. He has major league experience, having appeared briefly with Kansas City, Detroit and Los Angeles.

Hiatt has taken over as *The Times-Picayune's* spring training correspondent, a job done last spring by reliever Kirk Bullinger, who has moved on to the Pittsburgh Pirates organization.

will try to assemble a young, competitive club between now and their next move, which will be into a sparkling new ballpark, a couple of seasons hence. In the meantime, here at the Triple-A level we'll see some of the organization's best talent.

Baseball America's listing of the most talented players in the Washington organization is on page 4.

Zephyrs 2005 Spring Training Schedule

Friday, March 18 vs. Richmond @ Melbourne

Saturday, March 19 vs. Round Rock @ Kissimmee

Monday, March 21 vs. Round Rock @ Melbourne

Tuesday, March 22 vs. Las Vegas @ Vero Beach

Wednesday, March 23 vs. Las Vegas @ Melbourne

Friday, March 25* vs. Norfolk @ Melbourne

Saturday, March 26 vs. Round Rock @ Kissimmee

Sunday, March 27 vs. Las Vegas @ Vero Beach

Monday, March 28 vs. Richmond @ Melbourne

Wednesday, March 30* vs. Round Rock @ Melbourne

Thursday, March 31 vs. Las Vegas @ Vero Beach

Friday, April 1* vs. Las Vegas @ Melbourne

Sunday, April 3 Intrasquad @ Melbourne

* 10:00 AM CT start

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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.

1915—Babe Ruth's First Major League Homer Was Against the Yankees

On Thursday May 6, 1915, Boston Red Sox rookie lefty pitcher Babe Ruth hit the first of his 714 major league home runs. He hit it in the Polo Grounds in New York off a Yankees righthander named Jack Warhop. In the years before Yankee Stadium was built the Yankees rented the stadium from the Giants for their home games. Here's the way *The New York Times* described Ruth's first homer:

For Boston, the big left handed pitcher, Babe Ruth, was all that a pitcher is supposed to be and some more. He put his team into the running in the third inning by smashing a mighty rap into the upper tier of the right field grand stand.

Ruth was the first batsman to face Warhop in the third inning, and with no apparent effort he slammed a home run into the grand stand.

Babe Ruth, the Red Sox rookie lefthander, hit his first big league homer in the city in which he would later earn fame and fortune.

He hit it in the Polo Grounds against the New York Yankees on May 6, 1915.



BABE RUTH HOME RUN FACTS REGULAR SEASON GAMES

Career (1915-1935)	714
Ballparks	12
HR in Home Games	347
HR in Road Games	367
HR with Bases Empty	348
HR with One on Base	252
HR with Two on Base	98
HR with Bases Loaded	16
Two-Home Run Games	70
Three-Home Run Games	2
HR in Extra-Inning Games	16
Inside the Park HR	10
HR as a Pinch Hitter	1
HR Off Righthanded Pitchers	495
HR Off Lefthanded Pitchers	219

Thanks to my SABR colleagues, Bob McConnell and David Vincent, who edited The Home Run Encyclopedia. From this source I completed my notes on Ruth for this article.
—A.O.S.

Boxscore—May 6, 1915 Polo Grounds—New York, NY Babe Ruth's First ML Home Run

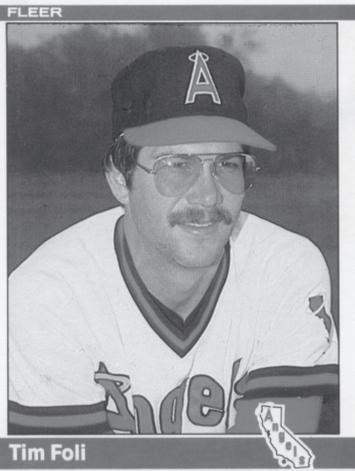
BOSTON						NEW YORK					
	AB	R	H	PO	A E		AB	R	H	PO	A E
Hooper, rf	5	0	0	1	1 0	Maisel, 3b	5	1	2	3	1 1
Wagner, 2b	5	0	3	4	2 1	Hartzell, lf	4	0	0	0	0 0
Speaker, cf	4	0	0	2	0 0	High, cf	6	1	3	4	2 0
Lewis, lf	6	1	3	2	0 0	Pipp, lb	6	0	1	14	0 0
Hoblitzel, lb	5	0	0	20	0 0	Cook, rf	5	2	2	2	0 0
Scott, ss	5	0	1	0	6 0	Peckinpaugh, ss	5	0	0	2	6 0
McNally, 3b	6	0	0	2	5 1	Boone, 2b	4	0	2	4	3 0
Carrigan, c	4	1	1	3	1 1	Nunnamaker, c	5	0	0	10	2 0
*Henricksen	1	0	1	0	0 0	Warhop, p	2	0	0	0	1 0
Thomas, c	0	0	0	2	0 0	**Mullen	1	0	0	0	0 0
Ruth, p	5	1	3	1	5 1	Piet, p	2	0	0	0	0 1
Totals.....	46	3	12	37	20 4	Totals.....	45	4	10	39	15 2

*Batted for Carrigan in 11th.
**Batted for Warhop in 8th.
Score by innings:
Boston..... 001 000 110 000 0 - 3 (one out when winning run scored)
New York..... 000 010 011 000 1 - 4
Summary: 2-base hits—Carrigan, Lewis, Scott, Boone. Home Run—Ruth. Stolen bases—Cook 2, Maisel, Hooper, Hartzell, Hoblitzel. Double play—Peckinpaugh to Pipp. Sacrifices—Speaker, Hartzell, Hoblitzel. Left on base—New York 9, Boston 10. Bases on balls—off Warhop 4, Ruth 3. Struck out—by Warhop 1, Piet 6, Ruth 3. Hits—off Warhop 10 in 8, Piet 2 in 5. Hit by pitcher—by Ruth (Cook). Wild pitch—Ruth. Umpires—Evans and Mullaney. Time of Game: 2:35.
Boxscore by Arthur Schott

Ruth's Career as a Pitcher at a Glance

Yr.	Club	IP	W	L	Pct.	ERA
1914	Bos.	23.0	2	1	.667	3.91
1915	Bos.	217.2	18	8	.692	2.44
1916	Bos.	323.2	23	12	.657	1.75
1917	Bos.	326.1	24	13	.649	2.01
1918	Bos.	166.1	13	7	.650	2.22
1919	Bos.	133.1	9	5	.643	2.97
1920	NY	4.0	1	0	1.000	4.50
1921	NY	9.0	2	0	1.000	9.00
1930	NY	9.0	1	0	1.000	3.00
1933	NY	9.0	1	0	1.000	5.00
Total		1221.1	94	46	.671	2.28

Source: Total Baseball



Tim Foli 1983 with the Angels

Zs' New Manager Had Solid Big League Career

Seasons	16
Games	1696
At-Bats	6047
Runs	576
Hits	1515
2B	241
3B	20
HR	25
RBI	501
Avg.251
OBP286
SLG309
Fielding Avg.973

Source: *Total Baseball*

College Baseball at Zephyr Field

March 12th
Tulane vs. Cal State Fullerton

March 23rd
Southeastern vs. LSU

April 6th—Wally Pontiff, Jr. Classic
LSU vs. Rice

April 19th
LSU vs. Tulane

May 3rd
Tulane vs. UNO

How *Baseball America* Ranks the Washington Nationals' Prospects

Baseball America annually rates the prospects in the organization of each major league club, as well as a list of the scouts' consensus on players with the best tools in each system.

Those lists for the New Orleans Zephyrs' new major league affiliate, the Washington Nationals, is shown below.



Ryan Church



Brendan Harris

BEST TOOLS

Best Hitter for Average
Brendan Harris

Best Power Hitter
Larry Broadway

Best Strike-Zone Discipline
Ryan Church

Fastest Baserunner
Jerry Owens

Best Athlete
Jerry Owens

Best Fastball
Collin Balester

Best Curveball
Danny Rueckel

Best Slider
Bill Bray

Best Changeup
Clint Everts

Best Control
Mike Hinckley

Best Defensive Catcher
Erick San Pedro

Best Defensive Infielder
Shawn Norris

Best Infield Arm
Josh Labandeira

Best Defensive Outfielder
Ryan Church

Best Outfield Arm
Edgardo Baez

BASEBALL AMERICA'S TOP TEN PROSPECTS

1. Mike Hinckley, lhp
2. Larry Broadway, 1b
3. Ryan Church, of
4. Clint Everts, rhp
5. Brendan Harris, inf
6. Bill Bray, lhp
7. Daryl Thompson, rhp
8. Darrell Rasner, rhp
9. Kory Casto, 3b
10. Collin Balester, rhp

Interestingly, only four of the top ten prospects in the Nationals system named by *Baseball America* are position players. Washington General Manager Jim Bowden acknowledged in a recent interview with Nationals.com that. "There are not a lot of bats in the big-league level and there's not a lot of bats in the minor league level. That's something we have to work on and it has to be corrected."

Church hit .343 with 17 homers and 78 RBIs last season, and was named the Expos' Minor League Player of the Year.



Baseball's 100,000th Game—Sept. 6, 1963

Washington's District of Columbia Stadium (later named RFK Stadium) was the site of a milestone game in major league history. The contest between the visiting Cleveland Indians and the host Washington Senators was major league baseball's 100,000th game. Opposing pitchers in the historic game were Dick Donovan for Cleveland and Bennie Daniels for Washington.

The Senators put a run on the board in the bottom of the 3rd inning on an RBI single by Minnie Minoso. The Tribe came back with single tallies in the 4th and 5th to take a 2-1 lead. The Senators rallied to take the lead with four runs in the 6th inning on an error, a 2-run single by catcher Ken Retzer, and an RBI double by Daniels, who went on to pitch a complete game victory for Washington, 7-2.

40-Man Roster

Pitchers	B/T	Ht	Wt	DOB
36 Tony Armas	R/R	6-3	225	04/29/78
56 Luis Ayala	R/R	6-2	185	01/12/78
55 Francis Beltran	R/R	6-6	230	11/29/79
32 Chad Cordero	R/R	6-0	200	03/18/82
54 Zach Day	R/R	6-4	215	06/15/78
58 Joey Eischen	L/L	6-0	215	05/25/70
61 Livan Hernandez	R/R	6-2	245	02/20/75
28 Michael Hinckley	R/L	6-3	170	10/05/82
59 Joe Horgan	L/L	6-1	200	06/07/77
50 Josh Karp	R/R	6-5	210	09/21/79
21 Esteban Loaiza	R/R	6-3	215	12/31/71
50 Gary Majewski	R/R	6-1	215	02/26/80
34 Tomo Ohka	R/R	6-1	200	03/18/76
13 Antonio Osuna	R/R	5-10	225	04/12/73
21 John Patterson	R/R	6-5	210	01/30/78
62 Darrell Rasner	R/R	6-3	210	01/13/81
51 Jon Rauch	R/R	6-11	260	09/27/78
60 Danny Rueckel	R/R	6-	175	09/25/79
52 T.J. Tucker	R/R	6-3	265	08/20/78
33 Claudio Vargas	R/R	6-3	230	06/19/78
Catchers	B/T	Ht	Wt	DOB
29 Gary Bennett	R/R	6-0	210	04/17/72
23 Brian Schneider	L/R	6-1	195	11/26/76
Infielders	B/T	Ht	Wt	DOB
5 Tony Blanco	R/R	6-1	175	11/10/81
44 Larry Broadway	L/L	6-4	230	12/17/80
5 Jamey Carroll	R/R	5-9	170	02/18/74
9 Vinny Castilla	R/R	6-1	205	07/04/67
25 Wil Cordero	R/R	6-2	230	10/03/71
15 Cristian Guzman	S/R	6-0	205	03/21/78
12 Brendan Harris	R/R	6-1	200	08/26/80
24 Nick Johnson	L/L	6-3	225	09/19/78
4 Henry Mateo	S/R	6-0	175	10/14/76
3 Jose Vidro	S/R	5-11	195	08/27/74
6 Brad Wilkerson	L/L	6-0	205	06/01/77
Outfielders	B/T	Ht	Wt	DOB
19 Endy Chavez	L/L	5-10	155	02/07/78
38 Ryan Church	L/L	6-1	190	10/14/78
26 J.J. Davis	R/R	6-5	250	10/25/78
-- Alex Escobar	R/R	6-1	190	09/06/78
1 Carlton Godwin	L/R	6-	200	07/10/79
6 Jose Guillen	R/R	5-11	190	05/17/76
48 Termel Sledge	L/L	6-0	185	03/18/77

Source: Nationals.com

Baseball's 100,000th Game

Sept. 6, 1963

	R	H	E
Cleveland	0 0 0	1 1 0	0 0 0--2 5 2
Washington	0 0 1	0 0 4	2 0 x--7 12 3

WP-Daniels (5-9) LP-Donovan (11-12)
T-2:25 Att: 12,054

How This Game Was Selected

A Hall of Fame committee, after researching the issue, determined that the 100,000th game would be played on September 6, 1963 at either New York, Philadelphia or Washington.

As it turned out, the Senators had a pre-game attraction scheduled for that date, a two-inning contest for charity between a team of Hollywood stars led by Jerry Lewis and a team of local press and TV personalities. The pre-game fun delayed the start of the game which caused the game between the Senators and Indians to be baseball's 100,000th.

* * *

Baseball's first major league game (in the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players) was played on May 4, 1871. Homestanding Fort Wayne defeated Cleveland, 2-0 before a gathering of 200.

1906–Wacky Rube Waddell Acted Up in Memphis

By Jay Gauthreaux

George Edward “Rube” Waddell was known for keeping things interesting during his 13-year Hall of Fame major league career as a lefthanded pitcher. He drove his managers crazy.

Fans attending the exhibition game between the Memphis Egyptians and Connie Mack’s Philadelphia Athletics on Saturday March 25, 1906 at Red Elm Park in Memphis were treated to one of Rube’s most talked about performances.

In the 9th inning and Philadelphia ahead, 5–0, Waddell sent all three outfielders and both middle infielders off the field and got the last two outs with only the catcher, first baseman and third baseman on the field. Memphis had runners on second and third and a run in. This is what the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* for Sunday, March 26, 1906 had to say:

He (Waddell) showed the ball to Mr. Owen, the promising mitt and mask man of the Memphi, and asked him if he would like to connect with it, and rudely struck him out.

Memphis manager Charlie Babb sent Alexander (first name unknown) to pinch hit. Again from the *Commercial Appeal*:

This act on Babb’s part caused Waddell to tickle himself in the rib region, wave all his helpers (fielders) to the bench, with the exception of his battery pal (catcher), third baseman and first baseman. He then proceeded with three assistants, the outfield being a deserted wilderness. Rube declared himself possessed of the ability to strike out the next two men to retire the Memphi. He accomplished his task with Alexander, but catcher Powell found Rube’s too swift, and the ball swept by when Alexander swiped the third time. Alec trotted to first, Cooley came home and Nicholls took third. Thief was next, and his grounder to Brouters carried the third baseman so far to the left that Thief outsprinted the throw to first. Nicholls tallied home with the third run.

Frank Manush, brother of Hall of Famer Heinie Manush, ended the game when he whiffed on three straight strikes.

As the 1906 season began, Waddell was at the top of his game. He was the dominant strikeout pitcher in the American League of his day. He finished the 1905

Rube Wadell’s Hall of Fame Career Credentials Included Leading the American League in Strikeouts Six Years in a Row



Photo courtesy National Baseball Hall of Fame

season with a record of 27–10, with a league-leading 287 strikeouts., but was missed the 1905 World Series against the New York Giants with a reportedly non-baseball injury. He won 196 major league games in his 13-year career.

In spite of his accomplishments on the mound, Waddell’s performance in the Memphis exhibition helped solidify his reputation as an eccentric, a clown, even a bit of a tragic character. He died at the age of 37 on, believe it or not, April 1, 1914–April Fool’s Day.

Rube Wadell was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1946. Wadell batted righthanded, but threw lefty.

Boxscore–Exhibition Game March 24, 1906 Red Elm Park–Memphis, Tennessee Philadelphia (A.L.) vs. Memphis (S.A.)

Philadelphia (A)					Memphis (SA)					
AB	R	H	PO		AB	R	H	PO		
Topsy Hartzel,lf	3	1	1	1	Buck Thiel,lf	5	0	1	1	
Art Brouters,3b	4	2	3	0	Frank Manush,cf	5	0	1	7	
Harry Davis,1b	4	1	1	11	Charles Babb,3b	4	0	1	0	
Socks Seybold,rf	4	0	2	1	Daniel Riley,rf	4	0	1	0	
Danny Murphy,2b	2	1	0	2	George Carey,1b	4	1	3	11	
Monte Cross,2b	4	0	1	1	Duff Cooley,2b	4	1	1	1	
Ossee Schreck,c,cf	4	0	0	7	Simon Nichols,ss	2	1	1	0	
Mike Powers,cf,c	4	0	0	4	Ed Hurlburt,c	2	0	0	3	
Eddie Plank,p	1	0	0	0	Frank Owen,c	2	0	0	0	
Chief Bender,p	2	0	0	0	George Suggs,p	1	0	0	0	
Rube Waddell,p	1	0	0	0	++ Jehl,p	2	0	0	0	
Totals	33	5	8	27	++ Eckstone,p	1	0	0	1	
					++ *Alexander	1	0	0	0	
					Totals	37	3	9	24	
Philadelphia	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Memphis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Summary: E – Thiel, Manush 2, Nichol, Powers 2. A – Babb, Carey, Cooley, Nichols 2, Suggs, Jehl, Eckstone 3, Brouter Brouters 2, Murphy 4, Cross 2, Schrek 2, Plank. 2B – Seybold, Riley. 3B – Hartzel. DP – Schrek to Davis. BOB – Off Suggs 1, Eckstone 1, Jehl, Plank 2. K – Plank 4, Suggs 1, Waddell 4, Jehl 1.										
T – 1:30 WP – Plank LP – Jehl Att: N/A										
Umpire: Frank Killen										
Boxscore by Jay Gauthreaux										

Pasadena, Texas
March 6, 2005

Dear Bleacher Creature,

As you know, this is my favorite time of year. My seeds are planted, robins are on the lawn, the mornings are perfect for walking, and, in Arizona and Florida, spring training is underway.

Betsy is now far too big now to ride in any type of cart with me in the park. In order to take my walks nowadays, I need my husband Louis to occupy Betsy. I walk alone in the early mornings about four days a week before Louis leaves for work. Another plus is I'm playing softball again. I found a league that has a shorter season than the one I played in two years ago. This season is four weeks long, with two games a week. If we win our division, we play for the championship. Short and sweet. I'm playing second base again. We've had two practices, and I'm loving it. I don't want to brag, but I'm seven pounds lighter than I was before I got pregnant. I have to give Louis credit for providing me the time to participate in the physical activities. I love that man.

I've told friends that we want another child before Betsy (and I) get much older. I'm thirty-something, but I feel no pressure. If God sends us another baby, I'll be thrilled. If not, I'll focus my love on Betsy and be very happy. Louis wonders if this might be the year that she begins to notice what is happening on the field and why all us people gather at the ballpark. Up until now she's been absorbed with other kids in the stands, snacks,

drinks, vendors, sound and lights—anything but what we're watching. She's really been quite well-behaved at the games we've taken her to, but the games themselves are totally abstract to her. I personally feel that it may be another couple of seasons before she gets curious about the game.

I understand some games have already been televised from Florida, but I haven't been able to watch any. Spring games have a totally different atmosphere than the ones played in the regular season. The relaxed coolness of spring training gives way in April to a more hard-nosed determination to win. Competitiveness heats up with the weather. When the scorching months of July and August are upon us, it seems that's when the competitive fires burn hottest.

Baseball gives us plenty that no other sport or game does. The every-day nature of the game puts it in a class by itself. As Louis tells it, baseball is not event-driven. It's a way of life. As the great manager Earl Weaver told it, "This ain't a football game. We do this every day." Because of this, a player has to forget what happened today, whether good or bad, and focus on the next game, because it comes the very next day.

The game has more of a sense of itself, a sense of its own history, than any other game. You frequently hear baseball players talk of respect for the game and its other players. You don't hear much of that kind of talk about the other major sports. In baseball it's never cool to show up an opponent or an umpire. The in-your-face attitude doesn't work in baseball.



Baseball is the only game that allows you to have a good visit with a friend *during* the game. The pace of the game allows for conversation, and not just on the superficial level. A person can tell you a lot from the chair next to yours during the course of one baseball game.

It's also the only game at which fans keep score for themselves. Keeping score opens up new levels of enjoyment of the game. Before Betsy was born, I scored nearly every game I watched in the ballpark. My dad taught me his way of keeping a scorecard, and I've done it the same way since I was a young girl. Even Louis has been unable to change my scorekeeping style.

March is the time of renewal, the season of hope. In the spring, every team is 0-0, and everyone has a chance for greatness. In baseball you don't need to be super-talented to accomplish something that will etch your name into immortality. You just need an opportunity and then to have what it takes to take advantage. That's baseball.

More later,

Rose

BLEACHER CREATURE

is the region's only all-baseball monthly. The 2005 season will be our 13th year supporting our hometown Triple-A New Orleans Zephyrs, and publishing a monthly conversation among baseball fans.

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