



# BLEACHER CREATURE

A Monthly Conversation Among Baseball Fans

Issue # 136

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

FEBRUARY, 2006

## Owner: "Zephyrs Will Remain in New Orleans"

# Zephyrs Prove Their Loyalty to Local Fans

By Bill Catalanello

The ownership and management of New Orleans Zephyrs have consistently pledged their loyalty to the New Orleans area, in spite of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and the catastrophic floods that destroyed much of the area. As early as September, owner Donald Beaver was quoted as saying, "The Zephyrs will remain in New Orleans, and I expect the relationship between the team and the people of the city to be greater than ever in years to come. The Zephyrs represent family values and affordable fun and there is no greater time to provide that for New Orleans than now." Given the ambivalence and mixed messages emanating from a couple of the city's other pro sports franchises, Beaver's statement was music to the ears of New Orleans area baseball fans.

### **Zephyrs Fans Will be Appreciated**

Zephyr Field suffered storm damage and reportedly fell victim to considerable additional disrepair at the hands of National Guard and FEMA personnel, who occupied it in the weeks after the storm. However, repairs and efforts to prepare the ballpark for the home opener are ongoing. Zephyrs general manager Mike Schline said that the *2005 Fan Appreciation Day* would be held on opening night, April 6. "We never got to do it on August 28, so we will do it April 6 and let our fans know we appreciate all their support and are glad to have them back."

### **New Scoreboard on the Way for This Season**

Zephyrs fans will enjoy a major improvement at the "Shrine on Airline" for the 2006 season. A modern new video scoreboard will grace the left-center field area. "We're shooting for April 6th, but that's



Bill Catalanello

optimistic," said Kevin Maney, Zephyrs' media relations coordinator. "If it's not ready for opening day it should only be a few games into the season. It's similar to what the Hornets have and it's the same board that the Round Rock Express have, so the video clarity should be excellent." The scoreboard at Zephyr Field has had pretty much the same look since the opening of the stadium in the spring of 1997, so the new board will be a major improvement.

### **Tulane Will Play Home Games at Zephyr Field**

Because of extensive storm damage to Turchin Stadium on the Tulane University campus, the Tulane Green Wave baseball program will play its entire 2006 home schedule at Zephyr Field. As the Zephyrs season begins on April 6th at home, there will be overlap with Tulane's season, and there will be seven days that the ballpark will host both Tulane and the Zephyrs. Permission had to be obtained from the Washington Nationals, the Zephyrs' major league parent organization, before the arrangement with Tulane could be made.

## A Note to our Readers

If you're still here in the New Orleans area, or anywhere in the destructive path of last year's hurricane, I don't need to tell you about all that our community has been through in the aftermath. For those who don't live here, no words or pictures can convey the scope and severity of the destruction here in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast. It must be seen to be believed.

"Baseball," as our columnist Pasadena Rose pointed out in our last issue back in August, "provides a parallel universe where talent, sound strategy and hard work are rewarded. It's where, over the long haul, order, justice and right prevail."

If we ever needed a pleasant "parallel universe" we need it now. As we go through the task of rebuilding our homes and our community, baseball can be one of the diversions we can count on to help us along the way. We appreciate the presence of the New Orleans Zephyrs, and we'll do what we can to support our local team. That's the team that pledged, not long after the storm, to remain here with us and be a part of the rebuilding. Not everyone or everything here is willing or able to do that, but we can count the Zephyrs organization as one that can.

## BLEACHER CREATURE

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

## Zs Fan in Alabama Rooting for Us

"I honestly feel that it would be best for the country to keep baseball going. There will be fewer people unemployed and everybody will work longer hours and harder than ever before, and that means they ought to have a chance for recreation and for taking their minds off their work even more than before."

—Franklin Roosevelt in a letter to baseball commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis at the start of World War II.

So here we are on the cusp of another baseball season in New Orleans. Since we last visited New Orleans baseball has been a steady flow in my life. September was a very humbling experience as I attended the Southern Association conference at Rickwood. One of the guys at the conference, Dr. Johnnie Grace who I had met at Rickwood Classic and told the guys there how much I loved New Orleans and the history of the Pelicans and supporting the Zephyrs. I kind of became the Pelican representative at the event. I was given a Pelicans poster and Mr. Schott's classic book on the Pelicans. It really was an honor.

This fall and winter I have enjoyed communicating with Derby, Bill, and other friends in Louisiana. You really appreciate being able click on your email account and read information from people who have been on your heart since August. Christmas morning came and my wife and daughter surprised me with a 1942 Pelicans hat and Pelicans t-shirt. The hat quickly climbed to the top of the Johnny hat rotation. My birthday came in January (Boy, 40 gets closer all the time!) and my daughter wanted me to have a Boudreaux cake. The look on the woman's face at the bakery was precious when I showed her the Zephyr logo to order the cake.

All of these things collectively bring reminders of New Orleans and the love for the old port city. I believe this season is probably one of the most important in the history of the franchise. I believe it will be part of the healing process along with faith and family for the community. It brings some normalcy back. It is as FDR stated "a chance for recreation" in the midst of rebuilding. Go Zephyrs, and more importantly, Go New Orleans.

Johnny Bowlin

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*Johnny Bowlin, a Zephyrs fan who lives in Birmingham, Alabama, is a frequent contributor to this publication.*



## Pelican Ike Boone Was One of Minor League Baseball's All-Time Greats

In 1921, Isac Morgan Boone, "Ike" as he was known batted .389 for the New Orleans Pelicans. This mark was not only good enough to lead the Southern Association, it still stands as the best single season batting average for a New Orleans regular. Last season, Rick Short threatened the mark by hitting .383. Boone's 46 doubles and an astounding 27 triples in 1921 led the league in both categories.

Boone, along with Larry Gilbert and Bert Griffith formed one of the Southern Association's most memorable outfielders. For the 1921 season here's a rundown on the trio's offensive numbers:

	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	Avg.
Boone	156	574	223	46	27	5	126	28	.389
Griffith	154	631	224	38	20	4	116	47	.355
Gilbert	140	527	172	30	10	5	40	35	.326

1921 was only Boone's second professional season and his only year with the Pelicans.

After leaving New Orleans, Boone went on to play with numerous clubs in several leagues, including a few stops in the majors. He put together a fine career, including two seasons (1929-1930) when Boone, playing with Mission in the Pacific Coast League had 462 hits in 1104 times at bat, for a two-season average of .418. In 1929 alone (in 198 games) he collected 55 homers and drove in 218 runs, while batting .407. His total of 323 hits led the PCL that year. He established an organized baseball all-time high of 553 total bases. With 2,521 minor league career hits in 6807 at-bats, Boone is regarded as one of the finest all-time minor league hitters, with an incredible career batting average in the minors of .370.

In all, Ike won six minor league batting titles in five separate leagues. He won batting crowns in the Georgia State League, the Southern Association, Texas League, Pacific Coast League, and the International League twice. His second IL batting title came in 1934 with Toronto, when Boone was 37.

In the majors, Ike's best season was with the Boston Red Sox in 1924, when he hit .333 with 13 home runs and 95 RBIs. In just 127 games, Boone had 157 hits off big league pitching. For his major league career, Boone was a .319 hitter, with 368 hits in 1154 big league at bats with the Giants, Red Sox, White Sox and Dodgers.

### Ike Boone Career Highlights

- 1920—Batted .403 in his first pro season with Cedartown in the Georgia State League. Led the league in batting, runs and hits.
- 1921—Had a breakout season with New Orleans: .389 average, 223 hits, 46 doubles, 27 triples all tops in the Southern Association.
- 1922—Boone made ML debut with New York Giants.
- 1923—241 hits, including a career-best 53 doubles with San Antonio. Led the Texas League in 6 categories.
- 1924—Boone's best ML season with Boston (AL): .333 average, 160 hits, 13 HR, 95 RBIs.
- 1929—.407 average, 55 HR, 218 RBI, 323 hits all led the PCL while playing for Mission.
- 1933—Won his last minor league batting title, hitting .372 with Toronto in the International League.

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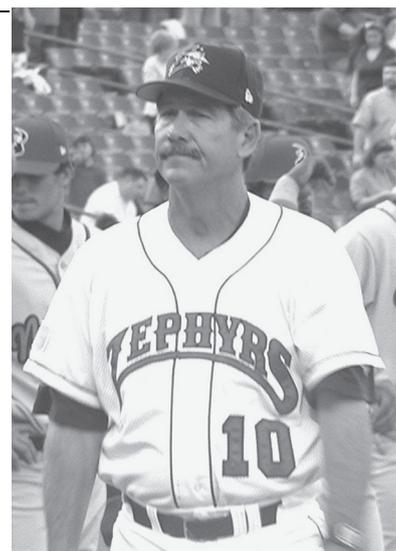
# Tim Foli Will Return as Zephyrs Manager for 2006

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## ***New Pitching, Hitting Coaches Named***

**T**he New Orleans Zephyrs announced in January that **Tim Foli** will return for his second season as the team's manager. **Rick Eckstein** has been named the new hitting coach, and **Steve McCatty** has been named the new pitching coach.

Foli was named the Zephyrs manager on January 17, 2005. In his first season with New Orleans and second ever as a manager, Foli compiled a 64-76 record. Prior to coming to the Zephyrs, he spent the three previous seasons (2001-03) on the Cincinnati Reds big league coaching staff. He also worked in the New York Mets' minor-league system as infield/base running coordinator from 1998-2000. Overall, Foli has spent 10 years as a coach in the major leagues, including



Eugene Witek

Tim Foli

***Rick Eckstein has been named the new hitting coach, and Steve McCatty has been named the new pitching coach.***

extended stints on the coaching staffs of the Milwaukee Brewers (1B coach/infield coach from 1992-95) and Texas Rangers (3B coach/infield coach from 1986-87), in addition to the Reds.

Eckstein begins his first season with the Zephyrs in 2006 and third overall with the Nationals organization. Eckstein was the pitching coach for the Vermont Expos in 2005, and was on the Harrisburg Senators staff the season before that. In addition, Eckstein has had coaching stints in the Minnesota Twins and Tampa Bay Devil Rays organizations. He has also coached at the collegiate level at the University of Georgia. Eckstein will have the honor this year of serving as the bullpen coach for the U.S. team in the World Baseball Classic March 3-20. Rick is the older brother of current St. Louis Cardinals shortstop David Eckstein.

McCatty will begin his first season with the Zephyrs in 2006. McCatty played nine seasons as a starting pitcher for the Oakland A's, compiling a 63-63 record and career ERA of 3.99. He spent the previous three seasons as the pitching coach of the Ottawa Lynx. Prior to his stint with Ottawa, McCatty spent 2002 as the pitching coach with the Detroit Tigers. He began his coaching career in 1996 with Visalia of the California League.

*From Zephyrsbaseball.com*

## **After Record-Breaking 2005, .383 Hitter Rick Short Heading to Japan**

New Orleans Zephyrs infielder **Rick Short** will not return to the Zephyrs, or the team's parent club – the Washington Nationals – in 2006. Short's contract has been purchased by Tohoku Rahoten of the Japanese Baseball League.

In 2005, Short had arguably the best season ever by a Zephyrs player, spending the last month of the year in an attempt to finish with a .400 batting average. His chase was followed closely at the national level because of the significance of the record.

Short's career story of spending 11 years in the minors before being called up to the big leagues for the first time in 2005 at age 32 helped to make him a fan favorite both in New Orleans and in Washington.

"I don't think I was going to get a chance in the big leagues, to be honest with you," Short told MLB.com.

"They didn't tell me straight up, but I think, in so many words, I was going to start the year in New Orleans. I don't think I have anything to prove there. I gave it my best effort and for whatever reason, I can't get a shot."

Short did not reach .400, but finished at .383, which broke the modern Pacific Coast League record that had been set in 1983. Short also hit 11 home runs and drove in 70 runs.

*From Zephyrsbaseball.com*



# Triple Play the Hard Way

by  
S. Derby Gisclair and Arthur O. Schott  
Member, Society for American Baseball Research

A triple play is one of baseball's more unusual occurrences. During a game between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Chicago Cubs on September 4, 1927 at Wrigley Field, one of the more sensational triple plays on record occurred. After all was said and done, it involved five players and took seven steps to complete.

In the bottom of the seventh inning the Cubs came to bat. Stephenson singled to lead off the inning. Cubs' centerfielder Hack Wilson then doubled into the overflow crowd. With runners on second and third and no outs, Charlie Grimm then grounded to Cardinals' second baseman Frankie Frisch who threw to Jim Bottomley at first base for the first out (4 - 3). However, from this ordinary beginning the ensuing play unfolded.

Wilson, it seems, paused between second and third to watch the play and was cut off when Bottomley threw to Cardinals'

shortstop Rabbit Maranville. The third base runner, Stephenson, broke for home on the throw to Maranville, but was chased back to third base when Maranville relayed the throw to Cardinals' catcher Bob O'Farrell.

Wilson was still standing between second and third when Stephenson reached third base safely, but O'Farrell threw to Frisch who ran down Wilson for the second out (6 - 2 - 4).



Three of the participants in the unusual double play:  
Left to right: Jim Bottomley, Frankie Frisch and Bob O'Farrell.  
It took a whole lot of throwing and foolish baserunning, but eventually three outs were made on one play.

The box score from the game at Chicago on September 4, 1927:

ST. LOUIS (NL)							CHICAGO (NL)						
AB	R	H	PO	A	E		AB	R	H	PO	A	E	
Orsatti, cf	3	1	1	5	0	0	Adams, 3b	3	0	1	1	3	0
Bottomley, 1b	4	0	0	7	2	1	English, ss	4	0	0	2	5	0
Frisch, 2b	4	0	1	3	3	0	Scott, rf	4	0	1	2	1	0
Clark, lf	4	1	2	4	0	0	Stephenson, lf	4	0	1	1	0	0
Helm, lf	0	0	0	0	0	0	Wilson, cf	3	0	1	2	0	0
Hafey, rf	4	6	3	3	0	0	Grimm, 1b	4	0	0	13	0	0
L. Bell, 3b	3	0	1	2	3	0	Hartnett, c	3	0	0	4	0	0
O'Farrell, c	3	0	0	3	1	0	a - Heathcote	0	1	0	0	0	0
Maranville, ss	3	0	0	0	5	0	Gonzales, c	0	0	0	1	0	0
Sherdel, p	3	0	0	0	1	0	Beck, 2b	3	0	1	1	6	0
							Root, p	2	0	1	0	1	0
							b - Tolson	1	0	1	0	0	0
							c - Pick	0	0	0	0	0	0
							Carlson, p	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	31	2	7	27	15	1	Total	31	1	7	27	16	0

a - Ran for Hartnett in 8th  
b - Batted for Root in 8th  
c - Ran for Tolson in 8th

St. Louis	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	-	2
Chicago	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-	1

SUMMARY

Two-base hits - Orsatti, Scott, Beck, Clark, Hafey, Wilson, Tolson. Sacrifices - Adam. Double Plays - Beck to English to Grimm 2; Bell to Frisch to Bottomley. Triple Play - Frisch, Bottomley, Maranville, O'Farrell, Frisch, Bottomley, and L. Bell. Left on Bases - St. Louis 3, Chicago 5. Bases on balls - Off Root 1, Sherdel 1. Struck out - By Sherdel 3, Root 3. Hits - Off Root 5 in 8 innings, Carlson 2 in 1 inning. Losing pitcher - Root.  
Umpires - McCormick, Moran and Reardon.  
Time - 1 hour 45 minutes.

Stephenson again broke for home when Frisch was chasing Wilson. Frisch threw to first baseman Bottomley who was covering the plate and the Cardinals now had Stephenson in a run-down. Bottomley threw to Cardinals' third baseman Les Bell who tagged out Stephenson for the third out (3 - 5).

The last triple play of the 1927 season turned out to be one of the most unusual in all of baseball history, involving five players and requiring seven steps to complete. The St. Louis Cardinals would finish the season in 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the National League, 1½ games behind the Pirates, but 7 games in front of the 4<sup>th</sup> place Chicago Cubs.

We would like to thank fellow SABR member Sandy Derenbecker for her valuable assistance in providing research for this article.



# Tulane Baseball Will Call Zephyr Field Home for 2006 Season

## Here's a Schedule of Collegiate and Professional Games at Zephyr Field

### 2006 Zephyr Field Schedule

As of 1/18/06

Day	Date	Game	Time	Day	Date	Game	Time
SAT	2/4/06	Tulane Alumni Game	1:30 PM	TUE	5/9/06	Z's vs. Fresno	7:00 PM
TUE	2/14/06	TUL vs. McNeese St.	6:30 PM	WED	5/10/06	Z's vs. Fresno	7:00 PM
FRI	2/17/06	TUL vs. Penn St.	6:30 PM	THU	5/11/06	Z's vs. Fresno	7:00 PM
SAT	2/18/06	TUL vs. Penn St.	2:00 PM	FRI	5/12/06	TUL vs.USM	12:00 PM
SUN	2/19/06	TUL vs. Penn St.	1:00 PM			Z's vs. Fresno	7:00 PM
FRI	2/24/06	TUL vs. Pepperdine	6:30 PM	SAT	5/13/06	TUL vs.USM	12:00 PM
SAT	2/25/06	TUL vs. Pepperdine	2:00 PM			Z's vs. Sacramento	7:00 PM
SUN	2/26/06	TUL vs. Pepperdine	1:00 PM	SUN	5/14/06	TUL vs.USM	12:00 PM
FRI	3/3/06	TUL vs. Manhattan	6:30 PM			Z's vs. Sacramento	7:00 PM
SAT	3/4/06	TUL vs. Manhattan	2:00 PM	MON	5/15/06	Z's vs. Sacramento	7:00 PM
SUN	3/5/06	TUL vs. Manhattan	1:00 PM	TUE	5/16/06	Z's vs. Sacramento	12:00 PM
FRI	3/10/06	TUL vs. Oral Roberts	6:30 PM			LSU vs. Rice	7:00 PM
SAT	3/11/06	TUL vs. Oral Roberts	2:00 PM	FRI	5/26/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	7:00 PM
SUN	3/12/06	TUL vs. Oral Roberts	1:00 PM	SAT	5/27/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	6:00 PM
TUE	3/14/06	TUL vs. Nicholls St.	6:30 PM	SUN	5/28/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	2:00 PM
FRI	3/17/06	TUL vs. S. Alabama	6:30 PM	MON	5/29/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	7:00 PM
SAT	3/18/06	TUL vs. S. Alabama	2:00 PM	THU	6/8/06	Z's vs. Nashville	7:00 PM
TUE	3/21/06	TUL vs. UNO	6:30 PM	FRI	6/9/06	Z's vs. Nashville	7:00 PM
WED	3/22/06	LSU vs. Southeastern	7:00 PM	SAT	6/10/06	Z's vs. Nashville	6:00 PM
TUE	3/28/06	TUL vs. Jackson	6:30 PM	SUN	6/11/06	Z's vs. Nashville	6:00 PM
FRI	3/31/06	TUL vs. Rice	6:30 PM	MON	6/12/06	Z's vs. Iowa	7:00 PM
SAT	4/1/06	TUL vs. Rice	2:00 PM	TUE	6/13/06	Z's vs. Iowa	7:00 PM
SUN	4/2/06	TUL vs. Rice	1:00 PM	WED	6/14/06	Z's vs. Iowa	12:00 PM
TUE	4/4/06	UNO vs. TUL	6:30 PM	THU	6/15/06	Z's vs. Iowa	7:00 PM
THU	4/6/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	7:00 PM	MON	6/26/06	Z's vs. Iowa	7:00 PM
FRI	4/7/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	7:00 PM	TUE	6/27/06	Z's vs. Iowa	7:00 PM
SAT	4/8/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	6:00 PM	WED	6/28/06	Z's vs. Iowa	7:00 PM
SUN	4/9/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	2:00 PM	THU	6/29/06	Z's vs. Iowa	7:00 PM
MON	4/10/06	Z's vs. Memphis	7:00 PM	FRI	6/30/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	7:00 PM
TUE	4/11/06	Tulane vs. Nicholls St.	12:00 PM	SAT	7/1/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	6:00 PM
		Z's vs. Memphis	7:00 PM	SUN	7/2/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	6:00 PM
WED	4/12/06	Z's vs. Memphis	12:00 PM	MON	7/3/06	Z's vs. Oklahoma	7:00 PM
THU	4/13/06	Z's vs. Memphis	7:00 PM	THU	7/13/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	7:00 PM
FRI	4/14/06	TUL vs. C. Florida	6:30 PM	FRI	7/14/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	7:00 PM
SAT	4/15/06	TUL vs. C. Florida	2:00 PM	SAT	7/15/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	6:00 PM
SUN	4/16/06	TUL vs. C. Florida	1:00 PM	SUN	7/16/06	Z's vs. Round Rock	6:00 PM
TUE	4/18/06	TUL vs. LSU	7:00 PM	FRI	7/21/06	Z's vs. Albuquerque	7:00 PM
FRI	4/21/06	TUL vs. Stephen F. Austin	12:00 PM	SAT	7/22/06	Z's vs. Albuquerque	7:00 PM
SAT	4/22/06	TUL vs. Stephen F. Austin	12:00 PM	SUN	7/23/06	Z's vs. Albuquerque	6:00 PM
		Z's vs. Albuquerque	7:00 PM	MON	7/24/06	Z's vs. Albuquerque	7:00 PM
SUN	4/23/06	Z's vs. Albuquerque	1:00 PM	WED	8/2/06	Z's vs. Tucson	7:00 PM
		TUL vs. Stephen F. Austin	7:00 PM	THU	8/3/06	Z's vs. Tucson	7:00 PM
MON	4/24/06	Z's vs. Albuquerque	7:00 PM	FRI	8/4/06	Z's vs. Tucson	7:00 PM
TUE	4/25/06	Z's vs. Albuquerque	12:00 PM	SAT	8/5/06	Z's vs. Tucson	6:00 PM
		TUL vs. Northwestern St.	7:00 PM	SUN	8/6/06	Z's vs. Las Vegas	6:00 PM
THU	4/27/06	Z's vs. Nashville	7:00 PM	MON	8/7/06	Z's vs. Las Vegas	12:00 PM
FRI	4/28/06	Z's vs. Nashville	7:00 PM	TUE	8/8/06	OFF DAY	
SAT	4/29/06	Z's vs. Nashville	6:00 PM	WED	8/9/06	Z's vs. Las Vegas	7:00 PM
SUN	4/30/06	Z's vs. Nashville	2:00 PM	THU	8/10/06	Z's vs. Las Vegas	7:00 PM
TUE	5/2/06	TUL vs. McNeese St.	6:30 PM	FRI	8/11/06	Z's vs. Omaha	7:00 PM
FRI	5/5/06	TUL vs. Marshall	6:30 PM	SAT	8/12/06	Z's vs. Omaha	6:00 PM
SAT	5/6/06	TUL vs. Marshall	2:00 PM	SUN	8/13/06	Z's vs. Omaha	6:00 PM
SUN	5/7/06	TUL vs. Marshall	1:00 PM	MON	8/14/06	Z's vs. Omaha	7:00 PM
				MON	8/28/06	Z's vs. Omaha	7:00 PM
				TUE	8/29/06	Z's vs. Omaha	7:00 PM
				WED	8/30/06	Z's vs. Omaha	7:00 PM
				THU	8/31/06	Z's vs. Omaha	7:00 PM
				FRI	9/1/06	Z's vs. Memphis	7:00 PM
				SAT	9/2/06	Z's vs. Memphis	7:00 PM
				SUN	9/3/06	Z's vs. Memphis	6:00 PM
				MON	9/4/06	Z's vs. Memphis	2:00 PM

Schedule courtesy New Orleans Zephyrs



Dear Bleacher Creature,

First, my heart goes out to all my friends from Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf Coast who have suffered through the aftermath of one of this country's worst catastrophes. As you may know, my husband Louis' sister Elizabeth and her husband Rick, who called New Orleans home, came to stay with us here in Houston for the first few days after Hurricane Katrina.

They live(d) in a home they had fixed up in a neighborhood called Lakeview. When the levees broke, they lost their beloved New Orleans home and almost everything in it. Rick's job was lost when the business that employed him relocated to Lafayette. Elizabeth is a dental hygienist, and she can work almost anywhere, but she just wanted to go back home. That wasn't possible. They decided to live here in Houston until they could determine whether they could ever move back to their adopted home town, or cut their losses and move on. Now, nearly half a year after the floods, they are still uncertain as to their long-term future. They are both working here in the Houston area, but I can tell you their hearts are still in New Orleans, and they yearn to be back there.

Certainly there are thousands of stories like Elizabeth's and Rick's, and that is a difficult concept to grasp. There are people, not only here in Houston, but all over Texas, who can't go home to the New Orleans area.

We Texans have done what we can to make our neighbors from Louisiana feel comfortable here, but we know there's no place like home. Of course, this disaster was even worse for those with school-age children. Trying to relocate, get the kids started in a new school, and tackle a new job in a strange city, now that's a tough assignment. For you who are living and working in the New Orleans and Gulf Coast area, our prayers are with you that your efforts to help bring the area back will be rewarded.

As you know, Louis and I love New Orleans. We visit at least twice a year, we stay in the French Quarter, we shop, we dine in the city's great restaurants and we drive out to Metairie to see the Zephyrs play. There were tears in our eyes when we first saw the destruction in your city with Elizabeth and Rick, but we will return there this summer just as we always do.



While you in New Orleans were digging yourselves out of the debris, the baseball fans of Houston were exuberantly heading into the uncharted territory of an Astros National League Championship. Our first-ever World Series, however, was a bittersweet experience. After waiting over 40 years, we were hoping for a better outcome.

Nevertheless, we're proud of our ballclub, who knocked off two of the National League's best when they defeated first the Atlanta Braves, managed by Bobby Cox, and then the St. Louis Cardinals under Tony LaRussa. The Astros emerged as heroes after being written off as dead back in July by one of the Houston area daily newspapers. Credit has to go to Phil Garner, who managed the club down the stretch as skillfully as he did in 2004, when the club made its great run in September to steal a playoff spot.

I'm grateful to my husband Louis, who somehow came up with World Series tickets, and even though we didn't win, I can tell my grandchildren that we were there at Houston's first-ever World Series game. It's just a shame that you guys couldn't share in our joy because of the trials and tragedy that you had to endure.

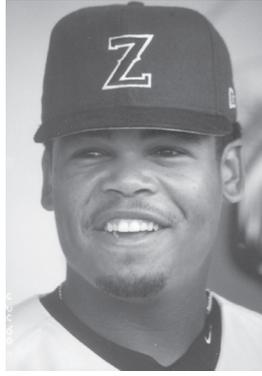
Louis, Betsy and I are praying for you all to make New Orleans better than it's ever been in the years ahead. We'll see you at Zephyr Field in May.

God Bless you all.

Rose



# Could Daryle Ward Be a Zephyr Again?



Eugene Witek

*From Zephyrsbaseball.com*

The Washington Nationals signed former New Orleans Zephyrs star **Daryle Ward** to a minor league contract with a Spring Training invitation.

Ward, 30, played with the Zephyrs from 1997-1999 when the team was an affiliate of the Houston Astros. He was one the heroes of the Zephyrs' championship season of 1998, when New Orleans captured the Pacific Coast League title, and then

went on to defeat Buffalo in the Triple-A World Series. Ward's best season with the Z's came in 1999, when he hit .353 (85 for 241) with 28 home runs. His single-season home run total was a Zephyrs record at the time is the third best all-time power-hitting season in New Orleans history.

Ward hit .260 with 21 doubles, 12 home runs and 63 RBI last season for the Pittsburgh Pirates. The left-handed hitting Ward is a major league career .259 hitter with 101 doubles, 76 home runs and 317 RBI in 682 big league games spanning eight seasons with Houston, Los Angeles (NL) and Pittsburgh. He has twice hit 15 or more home runs in a season, including a career-high 20 for the Astros in 2000.

His father, Gary, was a two-time American League All-Star outfielder, who hit 130 home runs and tallied 597 RBI in 12 big league seasons with Minnesota, Texas, the New York Yankees and Detroit.

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**First Class**