HURON DAILY BEACON

MAY 23, 2033 · THE HURON HERONS BEAT

Herons run past the champs, six of six; Topaz lead at 28-20

BY **LORRAINE PETROSKY** · HURON DAILY BEACON

Six games against San Juan, the champions. Six wins. Three in San Juan in the first week of April, three here at the turn of the month. I do not make much of April. Six of six is still six of six.

Huron is 28-20 and first in the Topaz by a game over San Juan and Kansas City. The club was 20-10 on May 1 and is 8-10 since. Against clubs with winning records today it is 12-5. Against the rest, 11-10. That is a strange shape for a first-place team, and this franchise has always been strange in May.

It runs. Huron has stolen 103 bases in 48 games, the most in the league by a wide margin. Yuji Kishi, 23, in center, is hitting .307 with 22 steals. Jeremy Albrecht, the first baseman who came from Chicago in February for a second, a first and a 17-year-old, is hitting .309 with 14 steals and has scored 34 runs. Danny Perez has 17. The club is third in the league in batting average and in on-base percentage, and 24th in home runs.

Justin Evans, the shortstop, is 25 and was a ninth-round pick, and he has 10 home runs. Chris Sandvik has 34 runs batted in, tied for fifth in the league. Francisco Rodriguez, the new catcher, is hitting .214 with one home run. Armando Ramirez and Dan Boyd have both spent time on the injured list.

The pitching walks nobody. Huron's staff has issued 120 walks, the fewest in the league, and allowed 42 home runs, second-fewest. It has also struck out fewer batters than any staff in baseball. Every ball is put in play and the defense has to catch it. Most nights it does.

Nick Agins, who finished second for Pitcher of the Year and began a five-year, $150.8 million contract this season, has a 4.22 earned run average and seven walks in 53 and a third innings. Joey Payne has a 3.28, Roberto Velazquez a 3.34, Steve Benton a 3.06 before he was hurt. Bobby Garcia has allowed 11 home runs, more than anyone on the staff.

In April I asked Daniel whether he would stay with Jose Erbetto at closer. He had seven saves, three blown and a 6.00 earned run average then. He has not added a save since. Gregg Quinn, the reliever who came from Denver in December, has six saves and a 2.36 and has not allowed a home run. Erbetto's earned run average is down to 3.31.

Jimmy Smith, whom Daniel let go to New Orleans in January, tore his labrum in March before throwing a pitch for them.

The draft came and went without a Huron pick in the first round. Matt Ray, the one Huron name on the game's Top 100, is 73rd and is hitting .239 in Huron.

Two in Oahu. Then four at home against San Diego and three with Phoenix. In 2017 this club won 115 games and went home in October. In 2020 it won 84 and won everything. I still cannot tell you which kind of year this is.
