PHILADELPHIA BULLETIN

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Shealy reaches 2,000; Eagles lose Meighan, stay above line

BY **FRANK IACOBELLI** · PHILADELPHIA BULLETIN

Mike Shealy struck out his 2,000th batter last month. He is 35, working out of the bullpen in Philadelphia on a $2 million deal, and he has 2,026 now. I wrote in the spring that I go to camp every year looking for the old pitcher nobody wanted. I have been doing that for 32 years. It is nice to be right once in a while.

The club he pitches for is 54-51. That is fourth in the Sapphire, 10 games behind Somerville and Montreal. It is also fifth of 16 in the Ice, three games clear of the last playoff spot, on the first of August, in Connor's third season.

Our readers have seen a lot of Augusts. They have not seen many like that one lately.

On June 20 the Eagles were 34-39 and it looked like about what I expected in March. They have gone 20-12 since. They won seven straight in late June. They swept Montreal at home in July, three games from the club tied for first, and they swept Memphis and Oklahoma City the same way.

Then they get on a plane, and it all goes away. Philadelphia is 35-16 at home. It is 19-35 on the road. It got swept in Chicago, and it got swept in Milwaukee last week, and that is how a 54-48 club on July 27 became 54-51 on July 31. I have been around a long time, and I can't give you a reason for a split like that. Connor can't either, I expect.

The bad news came all at once, and it came in the same place. Danny Meighan, who began the year as a reliever and became the best story on the staff, strained his elbow on July 25 and will miss about seven weeks. He is 9-3 with a 3.38, and he was Rookie of the Month for April and again for July. Bill Crum, 9-7 with a 3.15, strained an abdominal muscle on July 20 and is listed as day-to-day for about four weeks.

Gavin Sadler is done for the year, I am sorry to say. I watched him more than anybody in camp. He is 38, and he finished 5-3 with a 6.10 and 17 home runs allowed in 16 starts. In May I said he was earning his $4.8 million. By July he was not.

Ben Massie has filled in everywhere, 85 innings with a 2.22. Bobby Bumby has a 3.58. Ricky Magolan has 23 saves. The bullpen's earned run average is 3.17, sixth in the league. For the club that lost Garrett Hoenie last winter, that is still more than I had any right to expect.

The hitters are about what they were, only more so. Armando Jaramillo has 22 home runs and went to the All-Star Game with Alfonso Cordova, who is hitting .276 at shortstop. Bill Lord has stolen 34 bases. J.P. Schall came back from the injured list and has hit 15 home runs with 51 runs batted in in 60 games, and he is 24, and I would watch him every day if they would let me. Matthew Ryan is at .186 with 21 home runs. Colby Sims is at .222. Mike Dunfee has come back to .234 from the .258 I was bragging about in May, and I take a little of that back.

Josh Richards, the 13th pick in the draft, is 5-0 with a 2.13 in Rookie ball. Edwin Martinez is 71st on the game's Top 100 and Andy Taran has slipped to 95th.

Connor has a decision to make this month that nobody in his chair has had to make here in a long time. He has a club three games inside the line with two arms hurt, and one sim left to do something about it.

Three in San Diego, then Spokane and Myrtle Beach at home. The home part is the good news.