In a new weekly feature, Cris Sykes takes a trip around Major League Baseball. News, notes, observations, and humor to help you get caught up with whats been going on in the nations pasttime ...

Really?….. If the playoffs started today, the Cincinnati Reds, Colorado Rockies and New York Mets as division winners and the Houston Astros as the Wild Card would represent the National League. Yes that is 3 different division winners than last year. No, that is not very likely to happen.

When do the Chiefs start…. The Kansas City Royals are off to a frigid 5-19 start. That puts them on pace to win 40 games this year, unless they play the Indians and White Sox the rest of the year. Two of the American League preseason favorites have been the losers in 4 of KC's 5 wins.

Oh, that Chris Shelton…. Since April 18, when everyone had him tabbed as the next Albert Pujols, Shelton has hit a paltry .119 with 1 HR and 3 RBI in 13 games.

Past their bedtimes?…. The New York Yankees are currently 10-0 in day games, but just 3-11 in night games. Think they have filed the proper paperwork to get all their games moved to the afternoon?

The return of the traitors… About 5 minutes apart, Johnny Damon and Jim Thome made their first plate appearances in front of their former fans in Boston and Cleveland. Somewhat surprisingly, there seemed to be more love for Damon as a Yankee, than Thome with the White Sox in their returns. Thome was booed so harshly; he got his first day off in game 2 of the series. I wonder if his wife made that decision too?

Red Sox Nation… This is insane. The Red Sox were so sick of watching Josh Bard jogging to the backstop, they were forced to reacquire Doug Marabelli, a knuckleball-receiving specialist. Acquired on Monday afternoon, Marabelli flew to Boston, got a ride at 100 mph from a cop, got dressed in the car, and arrived at Fenway Park minutes before Tim Wakefield was to begin the first inning. Then Doug caught 7 innings of knuckleballs without a single passed ball.

Rocket Man…. Here we are, the beginning of May, and the Astros are allowed to negotiate with Roger Clemens. Most who know me realize my admiration of the greatest living pitcher. I think Rocket should do whatever he wants to do, include pitch whenever he feels like it. There is a risk though, as the Astros have been getting very good starting pitching from 3 young kids, one of whom would be bumped out of the way during the Roger Clemens Experience.

Steroid Rage…. Maybe there really are more pitchers than hitters taking these things. With runs scored and home runs hit increasing, it is hard to imagine any other explanation.

New Olympic Sport…. The IOC has turned down Delmon Young's request to include the bat toss in future Olympic games. With a suspension looking to be handed down in the next couple of days, Delmon is on pins and needles. Well, kid, let me take some of the guessing out of it for you: You will be suspended for

a very long time. I would like to see the number be close to 100 games. This is the single worst offense I have ever seen involving an umpire. For every game Randal Simon got a few years back for playfully hitting a sausage with a bat, there should be at least 30 games for Young. This just cannot happen, especially considering the call was not that bad.

Biggest Surprise…. Has to be a tie between the Cincinnati Reds and the Colorado Rockies. Both teams lead their divisions one month into the season. Both teams have done it without their biggest names, Todd Helton and Ken Griffey Jr for the last couple of weeks. The Reds have played well both at home and the road, while the Rockies are actually playing better away from Coors, winning a NL best 10 games as visitors.

Biggest Disapointment…. The Minnesota Twins. Their strength is supposed to be pitching, but they have allowed more runs than everyone but the D-Rays and Orioles. They thought they added some offensive punch over the winter, but Rondell White, Tony Batista and Ruben Sierra are combined 37 for 192 (.193) with 2 home runs and 9 runs batted in. They are also an embarrassing 3-12 away from the Metrodome.