

Society for American Baseball Research

Records Committee Newsletter

Lyle Spatz, Editor

October 1993

Not everything that counts can be counted;
not everything that is counted is worth counting.
--- Albert Einstein

From The Chairman: Welcome to new committee member Bob Hoie; 2210 Roanoke Road, San Marino, CA 91108; 818-282-3301. Bob, a past winner of the Bob Davids Award, is a leading authority on, among other things, the minor leagues and the career of Hal Chase.

There may be some newer Records Committee members that are unfamiliar with an organization called Retrosheet. It was founded, and is still led, by committee member Dave Smith, and is dedicated to the collection and computerization of play-by-play accounts of all Major League games played prior to 1984, (more recent games are available elsewhere). So far Retrosheet has collected more than 45,000 game accounts. As someone who has used information from that data base, I can attest to the inestimable value it has for all researchers. If anyone has a question about a game, a call to Dave will engender an almost instantaneous response. He says he's reading it off his computer, but I suspect he has these games committed to memory. Compiling play-by-play data for all major league games is obviously a tremendous undertaking. Dave and his merry band of volunteers are to be congratulated for their efforts. They are also in need of additional volunteers to help with the project. If, in your research, you come across a play-by-play account of a game, they would love to have a copy. Any questions about Retrosheet should be directed to Dave Smith; 6 Penncross Circle, Newark, DE 19702; 302-731-1570.

From The Great All-Time Baseball Record Book.
Fewest Games Missed During A Ten-Year Period (Since 1900)

Cal Ripken	1983-1992	0 of 1,617
Lou Gehrig	1929-1938	0 of 1,543
Pete Rose	1973-1982	4 of 1,562
Billy Williams	1962-1971	10 of 1,614
Nellie Fox	1952-1961	15 of 1,544
Stan Musial	1946-1955	17 of 1,533

In the August newsletter I reported a letter that I had received from Lefty Blasco asking that the Records Committee lend its support to an effort aimed at getting the American League of 1900 recognition as a Major League. My own belief, as I stated, was that the American League in 1900 was not of major league status, but rather that of a very good minor league. However, I felt that this was a question for the committee to decide, and if the committee showed strong support for recognition, I would support the proposal in the committee's name. I asked for you to voice your opinions, and many of you did, for which I thank you. Opinion was divided, although it seemed to run slightly against recognition. Following are representative comments.

While it had some of the trappings of a minor league, it was still relatively stronger in its first year than the AA in 1882, the UA in 1884 and the FL in 1914. Though it did not claim "major league" status in 1900, the name change from the Western League was an obvious and public move toward achieving parity with the NL.

---Bob Tiemann

I vote no. One reason for giving it favorable consideration may be that it might have been as good (or better) than the 1884 UA and the 1914-15 FL. I take the position that these should not have been classified as major leagues, but it is probably too late to do anything about that now.

---Ralph Horton

The AL in 1900 had many major-leaguers coming and going. Some winding down their careers, some in the middle, others just starting. Ban Johnson, in order to invade Chicago in 1900 had to downplay his AL major league intentions to satisfy Chicago NL and remain in the National Agreement.

---Joe Wayman

Who spoke for the American League in 1900? Ban Johnson, its founder and greatest booster. Johnson had a clear understanding of "major and minor league". If he felt that "his" league was major, he would have said so. He never missed a chance to boost the status of the AL.

---John Schwartz

The AL in 1900 wanted a new National Agreement for 1901 in which they would share equally with the NL. Ban Johnson accepted an agreement which stated the AL was a minor league in 1900. If this is allowed do we start thinking that the Federal League in 1913 was not a minor league?

---Frank Williams

At least 33 percent of players on AL rosters in 1900 returned in 1901. The fact that the NL cut down from 12 teams to 8 in 1900 made about 60 major leaguers available to the AL in 1900. If the AL had made claim to major league status in 1900, their claim would have been valid.

---Jim Smith

There is no historical evidence that I know of to support consideration of the 1900 AL as anything other than a strong and ambitious minor league. It did not claim for itself major league status until 1901, and I see no reason for us to reverse this long-held view.

---Fred Ivor-Campbell

The AL raided the NL in 1899 and took many stars with them. These players record's can be greatly enhanced by that one year. For example Dummy Hoy's runs scored total of 115 in 1900 would put him over the 1,500 mark in runs scored.

---Ted DiTullio

Talent wise it was clearly better than the Union Association and comparable to the 1914 Federal League. Had they gone into Chicago in 1900 without permission, thus withdrawing from the National Agreement, I don't think there would be any question that they would be considered a major league beginning in 1900. However, the Johnson-Hart agreement of March 1900 which allowed the Chicago NL team to draft two players from the Chicago AL team indicates that the AL was accepting an inferior status.

---Bob Hoie

There is an additional piece of information furnished, but not necessarily accepted, by Bob Hoie comes from the Sam Crawford chapter of The Glory of Their Times. It is a note which said that H.G. Salsinger, in the Detroit News of May 20, 1957, claimed that the National Commission ruled that any player from the Western League entering either the National or the new American League would be credited with his Western League hits.

The following list of players with the highest percentage of solo home runs in a season (minimum 30 home runs) comes from Dave Vincent and the Tattersall/McConnell Home Run Log. Lately, it seems that whenever someone hits a home run, before he reaches third base (second base for Barry Bonds) Dave has compiled a list putting the home run in historical perspective. Not since Ruth and Aaron has a name more often been linked with home runs than that of Dave's.

<u>Player</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>HR</u>	<u>Solo</u>	<u>Pct</u>
Brook Jacoby	Indians	1987	32	27	84.4
Joe Gordon	Yankees	1940	30	24	80.0
Gary Carter	Expos	1977	31	24	77.4
Frank Thomas	Mets	1962	34	26	76.5
Orlando Cepeda	Giants	1963	34	26	76.5

RECORDS POTPOURRI: Jim Smith says that reports of the Philadelphia Phillies breaking the National League record for most consecutive games without being shut out is premature. The 150 consecutive games of the 1924-25 Pittsburgh Pirates, as carried by The Elias Record Book, is only a post-1900 record. Let us not forget, as much of the media seems to, that the National League began play in 1876. The Sporting News Record Book, lists the record as belonging to Philadelphia, who went 182 games without being shut out from August 17, 1893 to May 10, 1895. Even that is incorrect, says Jim. The record should be 184; 39 games in 1893, 132 in 1894, and 13 in 1895. Jim cites the Reach Guide of 1895 that says Philadelphia played 132 games in 1894, not 130. The two games omitted are the second games of doubleheaders that Cincinnati played at Philadelphia on August 27 and September 6, of that year.

The following error in the record books was discovered by Jim Troisi, and verified by Bill Deane. On August 31, 1904, Louis "Bull" Smith of Pittsburgh hit an eighth-inning triple that scored Moose McCormick with the go-ahead run in Pittsburgh's 7-3 win over Boston. Because of an error on his "official sheet", Smith was never credited with the RBI. So now, 89 years after it happened, and 65 years after he died, Bull Smith gets his RBI. It is the only one he had as a major leaguer.

The list in the August newsletter of pitchers who have appeared in the most major league games prompted Ted DiTullio to provide us with a list of those pitchers who have the most games in organized baseball--majors and minors.

<u>Pitcher</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Majors</u>	<u>Minors</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Hoyt Wilhelm	1942-1972	1,072	234	1,306
2. Kent Tekulve	1969-1989	1,050	255	1,305
3. Gene Garber	1965-1988	931	190	1,121
4. Don McMahon	1950-1974	874	226	1,100
5. Charlie Hough	1966-1993	834	257	1,091*
6. Phil Niekro	1959-1987	864	223	1,087
7. Joe McGinnity	1893-1925	467	593	1,060
8. Earl Caldwell	1926-1954	200	859	1,059
9. Larry Andersen	1975-1993	663	389	1,052*
10. Jim Brillheart	1921-1951	86	956	1,042
11. Rich Gossage	1970-1993	964	77#	1,041*
12. Lee Smith	1980-1992	847	177	1,024*
13. Art Fowler	1944-1970	362	675	1,037
14. Bobby Tiefenauer	1948-1969	179	849	1,028
15. Rollie Fingers	1965-1985	944	83	1,027
16. Elroy Face	1949-1970	848	172	1,020
17. Diego Segui	1958-1985	639	378	1,017
18. Bill Thomas	1926-1952	---	1,015	1,015
19. Jim Kaat	1957-1983	898	107	1,005
19. Sparky Lyle	1964-1982	899	106	1,005
21. George Brunet	1953-1985	324	669	993
21. Lindy McDaniel	1955-1975	987	6	993
23. Jeff Reardon	1979-1992	867	74	941*
24. Cy Young	1890-1911	906	31	937

* Through September 20, 1993

Includes 23 in Japanese Pacific League