

Society for American Baseball Research Records Committee Newsletter

Lyle Spatz, Editor

October 1994

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

From The Chairman: Congratulations to Bob Davids for the well-deserved distinction of having a study room at the National Baseball Library named in his honor. Let us all hope that the research coming out of that room lives up to the standards that Bob has set.

The Records Committee welcomes two new members:

Kent Chapman; 311 Monroe Street; Washington, IL 61571; 309-444-7572

John McMurray; Dodge Osborn #202; Princeton, NJ 08544. Also a new address for

Frank D'Amico, 14 Rodgers Avenue; Dedham, MA 02026; 617-329-9227.

Thanks to those of you who have either called or written with a list of your areas of expertise or interest. I would hope that those who haven't done so will respond in the near future. These descriptions need not necessarily be in great detail, broad categories will do.

The following is an example of why this information is helpful. I received a letter from a gentleman in Los Angeles who wanted confirmation, and the details, of two events that he believed have occurred only one time. One was the execution of two triple steals by the Philadelphia A's in one game in 1930, and the other was two double steals by Willie McGee and Vince Coleman of the Cardinals in a single inning. I checked with **Bob Davids** (steals of home) and **Ralph Horton** (St. Louis baseball), both of whom had the required information.

From Bob: The game in which the A's had two triple steals was on July 25, 1930, at Cleveland. In the first inning, Al Simmons stole home, Bing Miller stole third and Dibs Williams stole second. In the fourth inning, Mickey Cochrane stole home, Simmons stole third and Jimmie Foxx stole second.

From Ralph: Coleman and McGee did execute two double steals in the first inning of a game at Wrigley Field on August 1, 1985. Coleman stole third and home, and McGee stole second and third.

Pete Palmer has completed his report on the inclusion and exclusion of forfeited and protested games, and what, if anything, should be done about them. He has sent it to other subcommittee members for their comments, which will result in a final recommendation.

Bob McConnell says that there is still incomplete data for 36 home runs in the Tattersall/McConnell Home Run Log. What is missing for each home run is either the inning in which it was hit, the number of men on base, or both. All of the home runs were hit in the 1880's and involve teams from Boston, Brooklyn, Detroit, Louisville, Troy, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Buffalo, Providence and Worcester. Twenty-seven of the 36 were hit in 1884 at Chicago (NL). Bob says most of the available sources, i.e. newspapers, have already been checked. However, if anybody is doing research in that decade in any of these cities, having Bob's list with you might help you find some of this missing information. Bob is at 210 Westcrest Road, Wilmington, DE 19803.

From the Home Run Log, here are a few age-related lists as furnished by Dave Vincent. All ages are expressed in years and days. The names on the Youngest Players lists don't change much as you reach new plateaus (200 HR's, 300 HR's) so I have concentrated on the Oldest Player lists, which do.

Youngest Players to Reach 100 HR's

Mel Ott	22.132
Tony Conigliaro	22.197
Eddie Mathews	22.292
Johnny Bench	23.161
Hank Aaron	23.191
Ken Griffey, Jr.	23.206
Frank Robinson	23.230
Mickey Mantle	23.242
Jimmie Foxx	23.250
Ted Williams	23.264

Oldest Players to Reach 100 HR's

Honus Wagner	41.193
Bob Boone	40.206
Lou Piniella	39.251
Jimmy Dykes	39.176
Ty Cobb	38.139
Dave Concepcion	38.103
Jay Johnstone	37.201
Gavvy Cravath	37.083
Tris Speaker	37.069
George Sisler	37.055

Oldest Players to Reach 200 HR's

Rico Carty	39.339
Ron Fairly	39.020
Cy Williams	38.261
Sid Gordon	38.001
Brian Downing	37.225
Felipe Alou	37.122
Hank Sauer	37.050
Buddy Bell	37.015
Gabby Hartnett	36.194
Richie Hebner	36.163

Oldest Player to Reach 300 Hr's

George Brett	39.363
Carlton Fisk	39.253
Ron Cey	38.077
Darrell Evans	38.063
Dave Parker	38.057
Rogers Hornsby	38.020
Graig Nettles	37.310
Fred Lynn	37.213
Reggie Smith	37.053
Don Baylor	37.022

Dixie Tourangeau has uncovered an error in the 1906 batting record of pitcher Jack Coombs of the Philadelphia Athletics. In a game at Boston on August 30, Coombs was knocked out in the first inning and relieved by Jim Dygert (*Boston Globe*). Coombs did not bat in the top of the inning, or, of course, at any other time in this game. Yet, he is listed on the "official" sheets at the Hall of Fame as having gone one for two. Dygert is also credited (correctly) with going one for two, so the origin of the mistake is obvious. I looked at the coverage of this game in the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, which confirmed that Dygert relieved Coombs in the first inning and that Coombs never came to bat.

Dixie also has a strong suspicion that Coombs' one for four against Detroit earlier that year, on July 13 is also an error. He thinks Coombs was actually 0-4, but got on once with an error. He just can't quite prove it as yet.

Walt Wilson has undertaken a meticulous review of the statistical accuracy of Games Started (GS) by pitchers as listed in The Baseball Encyclopedia and Total Baseball. By carefully studying game accounts and box scores, Walt has compiled for each pitcher the date of each of his starts. He then added up the total number of starts and compared them to those in the record books. In doing so, he uncovered several games where it seems that the wrong man was credited as having been the starting pitcher.

Bob Barr and Tony Madigan of Washington (NL), 1886: Barr had 23 GS, not 22, and Madigan had 13 GS, not 14. Madigan is credited with starting the July 16 game against Philadelphia, but the actual starter was Barr. Barr injured his hand in the first inning and was relieved by Madigan. (*Sporting Life, New York Times*)

Ed Cushman and Al Mays of New York (AA), 1886: Cushman had 38 GS, not 37, and Mays had 40 GS, not 41. Mays is credited with starting the September 10 game against St. Louis, but the actual starter was Cushman. Cushman pitched the first inning, and was relieved by Mays in the second. (*Sporting Life, New York Times, Chicago Inter-Ocean*)

George Keefe and Alex Ferson of Washington (NL), 1889: Keefe had 28 Gs, not 27, and Ferson had 33 GS, not 34. In one of the following two games in which Ferson relieved Keefe, he was mistakenly given credit for the start. Either on June 20, vs Indianapolis, when Ferson relieved Keefe in the third inning, or August 23 vs Boston, when he relieved him in the fifth inning. (*Sporting Life, New York Times*)

Win Mercer and Cy Swaim of Washington (NL), 1897: Mercer had 43 GS, not 42, and Swaim had 19 GS, not 20. In one of the following two games in which Swaim relieved Mercer, he was mistakenly given credit for the start. Either on June 25, vs New York, when Swaim relieved Mercer in the second inning, or July 30 vs Baltimore, when he relieved him in the seventh inning. (*Sporting Life, Chicago Tribune*)

Cy Voorhees and Ham Iburg of Philadelphia (NL), 1902: Voorhees had 5 GS, not 4, and Iburg had 29 GS, not 30. Iburg is credited with starting the June 12 game against Cincinnati, but the actual starter was Voorhees. Iburg replaced Voorhees in the second inning. (*Sporting Life, New York Times, Chicago Tribune*)

Bill Magee and Bill Duggleby of Philadelphia (NL), 1902: Magee had 7 GS, not 6, and Duggleby had 27 GS, not 28. Duggleby is credited with starting the June 4 game against Pittsburgh, but the actual starter was Magee. Duggleby replaced Magee in the second inning. (*Sporting Life, New York Times, Chicago Tribune*)

Frank Kitson and Jim Hughes of Brooklyn (NL), 1902: Kitson had 31 GS, not 30, and Hughes had 29 GS, not 30. Hughes was evidently credited with starting the game on August 25 against Pittsburgh. Kitson was actually the starter although Hughes appeared in the game as a substitute outfielder, relieving Jimmy Sheckard. There is no indication that Hughes pitched in this game. (*Sporting Life, New York Times, Chicago Tribune*)

RECORDS POTPOURRI: John O'Malley, the world's leading expert on Tim Keefe, is trying to reconcile a discrepancy in Keefe's 1884 pitching record. The game in question took place on May 8, 1884. It was an American Association game in which New York defeated Pittsburgh, 8-1. The discrepancy is in Keefe's strikeouts.

The game-by-game totals from the Hall of Fame Library give him eight.

The *Pittsburgh Dispatch* gives him six.

If anybody has access to a Pittsburgh newspaper for that date other than the *Dispatch*, John would greatly appreciate a photocopy of the game story and box score. His address is 116 Pinehurst Avenue, New York, NY 10033.

In the April 1994 newsletter there was list furnished by the Tattersall/McConnell Home Run Log of home runs hit by 40-year-old batters off 40-year-old pitchers. The first entry on that list is Joe Strauss of Louisville (AA) who hit one against Ted Kennedy of Philadelphia on July 8, 1886. However, Bob Hoie correctly points out that Strauss was only 28 at the time. In earlier editions of The Baseball Encyclopedia, Strauss was said to have been born in 1844, in Hungary. But in recent editions of both the encyclopedia and Total Baseball, Strauss is listed as being born in 1858, in Cincinnati.

Al Blumkin and Scott Flatow have compiled a list of 81 players who had at least 500 official at-bats in their final season in the big leagues. The first was Jack Manning of Baltimore (AA) in 1886 and the most recent is George Brett in 1993. Other notables on the list include, Joe Jackson, Al Kaline, Jesse Burkett, Bob Johnson, Monte Ward, Joe Wood, Bobby Richardson, and Dave Parker. Write to Al or Scott, if you would like the full register of players, their final season record, and some possible reasons why they didn't play again.

By using total putouts as the determining factor (as opposed to games played), Pete Palmer has concluded that there have been only three cases where the same outfield stayed together for six consecutive years.

Boston Red Sox	1910-1915	Duffy Lewis, Tris Speaker, Harry Hooper
St. Louis Browns	1919-1924	Baby Doll Jacobson, Ken Williams, Jack Tobin
Pittsburgh Pirates	1957-1962	Bob Skinner, Bill Virdon, Roberto Clemente

There have been five cases of five consecutive years.

Philadelphia Phillies	1891-1895	Ed Delahanty, Billy Hamilton, Sam Thompson
New York Yankees	1925-1929	Bob Meusel, Earle Combs, Babe Ruth
Pittsburgh Pirates	1928-1932	Adam Comorosky, Lloyd Waner, Paul Waner
Boston Red Sox	1954-1958	Ted Williams, Jackie Jensen, Jim Piersall
Cincinnati Reds	1975-1979	George Foster, Cesar Geronimo, Ken Griffey

If games were used as a measure: (1) the Browns' streak would be reduced to five (1920-1924). In 1919, Earl Smith had more games played than Williams. (2) The Pirates would have just four, Fred Brickell had more games played than Comorosky in 1928. (3) And the Washington Senators would have five, 1912-1916, with Danny Moeller, Clyde Milan and Howard Shanks.