

# Society For American Baseball Research

## Baseball Records Committee

Lyle Spatz, Editor

August 2006

Not everything that counts is counted; not everything that is counted is worth counting.

### THE 2006 SABR CONVENTION

If you were unable to attend the SABR convention in Seattle, you missed a great one. Putting these affairs together gets ever more difficult, and convention chairman **Anthony Salazar** and all the other people from the Northwest chapter who put in so much time and effort deserve our thanks. It's always wonderful to see old familiar faces, and also to meet new members and first time attendees. I hope to see you all in St. Louis next summer.

Congratulations to all those who won awards for their books, presentations, and research and especially to Bob Davids Award winner **John Thorn**, a seminal thinker who has been highly influential in contributing to our knowledge of baseball history.

The keynote speaker at our luncheon was Jim Bouton, who opened with a diatribe against steroids. He called the effect they'd had on baseball's record book an even greater menace to the game's integrity than was the Black Sox scandal. Whether or not you agree with that, it is certainly a defensible position. What followed was not. Bouton proposed that SABR investigate the impact that steroids had on home runs and then make adjustments to all the totals. He wanted SABR to determine how many home runs in the "steroid era" were tainted and then replace each "tainted" players' actual home run totals with this SABR adjusted total. (The actual number would appear alongside in parentheses.) Now such a proposal might go over well with an audience of Rotarians or members of the local church's softball team, but it took a while for most of this audience to realize that Bouton was not being his usual irreverent self. He was serious about this.

Coincidentally, Bouton and I happened to be waiting for cabs together that evening. I didn't mention that SABR's role was to get the numbers right, not to make judgments about them. I simply asked him if he was really seriously proposing this to a SABR audience. He said he was, and when I asked him if he'd thought through all the ramifications of such a proposal, like making adjustments to runs scored, RBI, ERA, hits allowed, etc. He said "nobody gives a shit about that stuff except you people."

I was surprised that Bouton, who obviously cares about preserving the integrity of the records, would so offhandedly dismiss what we are trying to do. Now I agree with **Mark Armour** and others who said that the average fan really doesn't care if things like runs scored and runs allowed in a season balance out. Yet surely it's not just SABR people who think the only numbers that count are home runs hit.

### A PHANTOM SAVE FOR GEORGE ROSS

George Ross's major league career consisted of one game pitched for the New York Giants in a 10-4 win against the Braves at Boston on June 27, 1918, which happened to be his birthday. The encyclopedias credit Ross, who pitched 2.1 innings in relief of starter Red Causey with a game finished and a save. However, in reviewing accounts of this game in the *New York Times* and the *Boston Globe*, **Mike Grahek** found that Ross relieved Causey in the third inning after Jim Thorpe had pinch hit for Causey following a rough second inning that left the Giants behind by a score of 3-1. Ross threw 2.1 innings of scoreless relief before manager John McGraw replaced him with Fred Anderson in the fifth. In the top of that inning, New York had scored five runs, making the score 6-3 when Anderson took over. Anderson finished the game, going 4.2 innings, and was credited with the victory.

Ross clearly did not finish the game and clearly did not earn a save. If anything, he could have gotten the win (the *Times* box score actually shows him as the winner), but, understandably, the win was given to Anderson. Mike checked with **Dave Smith** at *Retrosheet*, who verified that the daily records show Ross being relieved by Anderson and Anderson picking up the win. There is no apparent error in the official record, so the retroactive save credited to Ross should be deleted from the encyclopedias.

## THREE ASSISTS BY A CATCHER IN AN INNING

*The Sporting News Complete Baseball Record Book* (p. 71) and *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* (p. 57) agree that the record for Most assists in an inning by a catcher is three. However, there are an additional seven catchers that appear on the Sporting News list, but not on the Elias list. This is the kind of discrepancy that should be easily cleared up, and I welcome any and all input toward doing so.

The following seven catchers appear on both lists.

Jocko Milligan PHI (AA) 7/26/1887, 3rd inning  
Les Nunamaker NY (AL) 8/3/1914, 2nd inning  
Ray Schalk CHI (AL) 9/30/1921, 8th inning  
Bill Dickey NY (AL) 5/13/1929, 6th inning  
Bruce Edwards BRO (NL) 8/15/1946, 4th inning  
Jim Campbell HOU (NL) 6/16/1963 (2G), 3rd inning  
Jim Sundberg TEX (AL) 9/3/1976, 5th inning

The following seven catchers appear on the TSN list, but not Elias's.

Clay Dalrymple PHI (NL) 5/31/1961, 4th inning  
Jose Azcue CLE (AL) 9/20/1967, 5th inning  
Vic Correll ATL (NL) 9/17/1976 (2G), 5th inning  
Sal Butera MIN (AL) 9/7/1981, 3rd inning  
Bruce Benedict ATL (NL) 8/16/1982, 5th inning  
Bob Boone CAL (AL) 8/29/1986, 3rd inning  
Alan Ashby HOU (NL) 7/28/1987, 8th inning.



**Johnny Kling**

Furthermore, **Mike Grahek** found that another catcher, Johnny Kling, should be added to the list. On June 28, 1912, during the second game of a doubleheader between the New York Giants and the Boston Braves, Kling, catching for Boston, threw out three Giants base runners in the 5th inning. All three: Beals Becker, Dave Robertson, and Art Fletcher, were thrown out in steal attempts.

## THE JIGGS UP

**Trent McCotter** discovered that on the ICI sheets for July 25, August 8, and August 22, 1893, Jiggs Parrott's batting and fielding stats were mistakenly assigned to Tom Parrott. Both men played for Chicago at the beginning of the season, but Tom was playing for Cincinnati on those three dates. Here are the necessary changes for 1893 and for their career totals:

Tom Parrott, batting: Subtract three games played, 13 at bats, one run scored, two hits, one walk, two strikeouts.  
Tom Parrott, fielding: Subtract two games played, two putouts and two assists at 3B: one game played, one putout and four assists at second base.

Jiggs Parrott, batting: Add three games played, 13 at bats, one run scored, two hits, one walk, two strikeouts.  
Jiggs Parrott, fielding: Add two games played, two putouts and two assists at 3B: one game played, one putout and four assists at second base.

## LOOKING FOR HELP ON TWO POSSIBLE PITCHER STEALS OF HOME

In the last newsletter, I asked about two possible incidents of a pitcher stealing home: by Jesse Tannehill of Pittsburgh, in a home game against St. Louis, on September 20, 1900, and by Henry Schmidt of Brooklyn, in a home game against St. Louis, in the second game of a doubleheader on August 15, 1903.

**John Schwartz** said the *St. Louis Globe* had a fairly detailed account of the game, although it did not describe how all of the Pittsburgh runs scored. The box score had a stolen base column. Pittsburgh had seven, St. Louis, none. Honus Wagner had four, Fred Clarke, Claude Ritchey, and Chief Zimmer had one each, with none for Tannehill.

However, **Dan O'Brien** reported that the hometown *Pittsburgh Dispatch* reported in their game story that after doubling in the second inning, Tannehill did steal home as part of a double steal with Clarke.

## THE 1900 AMERICAN LEAGUE: MAJOR OR MINOR?

Back in the summer of 1993 I received a letter from committee member **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 has always been that this was something we should not try to change. Nevertheless, I felt that it was a question for the committee to decide, so I asked the members to voice their opinions. Many did, but because those opinions were divided, and seemed to run slightly against recognition, I let it drop. Here are some representative comments from the August 1993 Records Committee newsletter.

**Bob Tiemann:** 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.

The late **Ralph Horton:** 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.

**Joe Wayman:** 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.

**John Schwartz:** 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.

**Frank Williams:** 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?

**Jim Smith:** 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.

**Fred Ivor-Campbell:** 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.

**Ted DiTullio:** The AL raided the NL in 1899 and took many stars with them. These players records 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.

**Bob Hoie:** 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.

I recently received another letter from Lefty raising the issue once again, and because 13 years have passed, I thought it was worth revisiting. I'm assuming that those who had an opinion back in '93 still have that same opinion, I do) but we now have so many new members, it would be interesting to hear what they have to say. I'd also like to hear from members of the 19th Century committee.

I think the best place to discuss this issue is on the committee's e-group site at [SABR\\_Records@yahoogroups.com](mailto:SABR_Records@yahoogroups.com)

### KID GLEASON

Gleason's ICI sheet shows him with two doubles and two triples as a pitcher for Baltimore against Philadelphia on April 20, 1895. If true, it would tie the major league record for Most extra base hits in a game by a pitcher. I would appreciate it if someone with access to the *Baltimore Sun* could check this and let me know.

## CATCHING RUBE MARQUARD AND JACK CHESBRO

Walt Wilson's list of battery mates for Hall of Fame pitchers during their starts and shutouts continues with Rube Marquard and Jack Chesbro.

### CATCHING RUBE MARQUARD

Rube Marquard pitched for New York (NL) 1908-15; Brooklyn (NL) 1915-20; Cincinnati (NL) 1921, and Boston (NL) 1922. He made 407 starts and pitched 30 shutouts.

	<u>Starts</u>	<u>Shutouts</u>
Chief Meyers	182	15
Mickey O'Neil	40	3
Otto Miller	32	5
Ernie Krueger	25	1
Bubbles Hargrave	20	2
Ivey Wingo	16	0
Mack wheat	15	0
Art Wilson	14	0
Larry McLean	12	0
Earl Smith	12	0
Hank Gowdy	9	0
Rowdy Elliott	7	0
Frank Gibson	7	0
Red Dooin	5	0
Admiral Schlei	4	0
Harry Smith	3	1
Jimmy Archer	1	0
Roger Bresnahan	1	0
Grover Hartley	1	0
Lou McCarty	1	0
Total	407	30

Three of Perry's shutouts were with more than one catcher.



### CATCHING JACK CHESBRO

Jack Chesbro pitched for Pittsburgh (NL) 1899-1902; New York (AL) 1903-09, and Boston (AL) 1909. He made 332 starts and pitched 35 shutouts.

	<u>Starts</u>	<u>Shutouts</u>
Fred Kleinow	89	6
Jack O'Connor	73	14
Deacon McGuire	73	8
Chief Zimmer	30	3
Ira Thomas	17	2
Pop Schriver	14	0
Frank Bowerman	8	0
Walter Blair	6	1
Monte Beville	6	0
Jeff Sweeney	4	0
Harry Smith	3	1
Ed Phelps	3	0
Pat McCauley	2	0
Pat Donahue	1	0
Fred Jacklitsch	1	0
Tacks Latimer	1	0
Mike Powers	1	0
Total	332	35

All of Chesbro's shutouts were with one catcher.



## ROSS ADELL

As many of you already know, on Friday, June 2, 2006 our friend and colleague **Ross Adell** passed away at age 50 in Queens, New York. Ross, who died peacefully in his sleep, was a longtime member of the Records Committee. He will be missed.