

Originals.

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THE MONTH IN 19cBB.

Members of the Origins Committee used the 19cBB yahoogroup during the month of November to pursue a number of interests.

INQUIRIES.

Request: Athletic of Philadelphia boxscores.

Jimmy Leiderman posted a request for 1866 – 1868 box scores. John Thorn and Richard Hershberger replied with comments and sources, notably the *Clipper*, with which Jimmy reported great success. Tom Shieber posted the link to images of the Athletic Club's longtime president, Col. Fitzgerald.

football clubs in Baltimore, 1859-1860.

Finding a rare notice of a club sport besides cricket or some form of base ball, Richard Hershberger sent a request for comments on why such notices are not found for other sports. On a tangent, Skip McAfee wondered what that game of football would have looked like. Richard sent a brief essay which reached the conclusion that it the game played in Baltimore would have seemed a primitive form of modern

soccer. Elvis Cobb then inquired whether the clubs may have formed a league.

NABBP Conventions & NABBP Continued, 1859 to 1861.

John Thorn, replying to a request from Eric Miklich, provided summaries of the conventions from 1857 to 1861, inclusive.

PROGRESS REPORT.

the word is spreading.

George Thompson posted a (London) *Times Literary Supplement (TLS)* item in which *this* media bastion, at least, demonstrates it awareness of base ball's roots. John Montgomery Ward was also aware of those roots, as Richard Hershberger then noted, but had erroneous ideas about the relationships of the early forms.

DISCOVERIES.

Team uniforms – 1868.

Mark Aubrey forwarded a Plattsburgh, New York, article describing the wear of several ball clubs, and included the thoughts of the writer on which was the "prettiest".

Etymology of the Term "Home Run".

John Thorn discovered an 1851 note entry in the Knickerbockers' scorebook in which a home run is referred to as a "Big Ball".

Joanne Hulbert posted an 1858 Massachusetts Game summary in which the term was "home rap". Craig Waff's noted that his earliest note of a "home run" dates from 1856. Fred Ivor-Campbell noted that "home run" could have been used in more than one context, for instance to refer to an attempted steal of home. Craig Waff reviewed some references in 1856 and 1857 and drew the same conclusion. John Thorn noted that the term was used in horse racing after 1833, an assertion that Skip McAfee seconded.

game of October 1, 1845.

Richard Hershberger sent a newspaper report of a previously unknown game between New York and Brooklyn players.

Another Newspaper Account of an Early Triple Play.

Craig Waff posted another early triple play; it took place in July 1860, on an island in the area of Schenectady, New York. John Thorn thought it probably referred to Green Island, a later stumping ground of the Haymakers. Craig's account referred to a "passed ball" on the part of an infielder, and he inquired if that usage is known. Jack Little thought that it would make sense.

The Washington Club vs. Gotham vs. NYBBC.

John Thorn reprinted two 1860 articles and onther from 1857, one written by Chadwick and the others unattributed, which cover the origins of the game in the New York City area, but do not mention the above clubs from the 1830s and 1840s, now known to have been in the field. Richard Hershberger considered that the articles dealt with the New York Game only.

Knicks Play in Brooklyn, July 4, 1852.

John Thorn posted a note summarizing what would be the earliest known game held in Brooklyn. Craig Waff reported that the only note of an earlier game did not involve organized clubs.

Knickerbocker Baseball Broken Up by Riot

John Thorn posted an account of an 1851 match broken up by a major public disturbance called, at the time, the “Dutch Riot”, meaning a riot by ethnic Germans. David Ball noted that another source calls it the “Anti – German” riot.

Base ball at Red House, 1851.

Richard Hershberger sent a New York City note mentioning a base ball game played at Red House as part of Christmas (!) festivities. John Thorn summarized the other known base ball matches at the site and background on the police and fire officials mentioned in the

note. Craig Waff added a note of a January game in Massachusetts in 1859.

an early discussion of sliding.

Richard Hershberger sent a *Philadelphia Inquirer* opinion piece from 1865 (author unknown) about the onset of sliding in the game. It was opposed.

ballplaying and the bachelor life, medieval style.

Richard Hershberger sent an English poem dated to 1490 listing ball playing as one of the delights of the life of the bachelor. The poem perhaps referred to stool ball.

Base Ball in 1833.

John Thorn posted a 1949 Grantland Rice note in which Rice reported receiving a copy of an 1833 letter which makes a reference to Base Ball. Frank Ceresi wondered whether Rice’s letter (only a copy of the original, John Thorn pointed out) might be among his papers. Rod Nelson supplied the info that Rice’s papers are at Vanderbilt University.

REMINDER

Committee chair Mr. Larry McCray reminds you that information for applying to SABR for a Yoseloff grant in 2009 is expected to be online in the second half of December. See www.sabr.org

THIS MONTH IN BASE BALL.

Protoball Chronology, item #1837.1:

On November 27, 1887, the William Wheaton interview appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. An hellacious long time was to pass between the appearance of this set of recollections of a founding member (in 1837) of the Gotham Club of New York, perhaps the original base ball club, and its re-discovery and appreciation by baseball historians.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, December 11, 1861:

As Father Chadwick, notes, the war has begun to play havoc with the nascent national pastime, but lauds the patriotism of players:

“The matches played this season comparatively are few in number to what they were last season, when peace reigned supreme...The ball players are perhaps the association most largely represented in the ranks of the volunteers, every man is or was a ball player—where can you find a youth who is not fond of playing ball, or one that at least does not know something about it?”

MESSAGE

Committee chair Mr. McCray will mail a year-end committee progress report at the end of December.