

# Society for American Baseball Research Baseball Records Committee Newsletter

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Lyle Spatz, Editor

February 1998

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

## WILLIAM RUIZ

As many of you already know, on December 19, 1997 our friend and colleague William Ruiz, passed away at age 40 in New York City. William was a member of the Baseball Records Committee from its founding. He specialized in researching shutouts and low-hit games and contributed many items to this newsletter and other SABR publications. We will miss him.

## A FEW 1997 RECORD-SETTING PERFORMANCES

The following, which probably didn't appear in your local newspaper, come from former committee chairman John Schwartz.

1. Lee Smith became the first pitcher to finish more than 800 games in relief. John wrote that he ended his career with 802 games finished. Of course, since then Smith signed with the Kansas City Royals.
2. Lefthanders Jesse Orosco and Paul Assenmacher became the first pitchers to pass the 500 mark in games pitched in "middle relief." Orosco has 517 and Assenmacher 509. Middle relief is defined as those games that a pitcher neither starts nor finishes. John points out that while this is not an official category, it is becoming more and more a specialty. (While that's true, I find it a specialty that's annoying as hell, and propose that each year's leaders be given the Tony LaRussa Award.)
3. Dennis Eckersley finished 47 of the 57 games he pitched in relief in 1997. He's now finished 564 of 660, for a percentage of 85.5, the highest percentage for pitchers who have finished at least 500 games in relief.
4. Barry Bonds led the majors with 34 intentional walks in 1997 and now has 260, the most of any active player. Records in this category go back only to 1955, but since that time only Hank Aaron, with 293, has more than Bonds. We don't know presently how many (if any) of Aaron's 28 walks in 1954 were intentional.
5. Eric Davis stole six bases in six attempts. He now has stolen 335 bases in 389 attempts for a success rate of .861. That's the best for any player with at least 300 stolen bases.
6. Jose Canseco now has 1,107 runs-batted-in in 1,449 games. His RBI/Game ratio of .963 is exceeded by no one who is not currently a member of the Hall of Fame.

## 1899 BALTIMORE ORIOLES

The encyclopedias credit Orioles' pitcher Frank Kitson with two shutouts in 1899. However, Joe Wayman found (and Jim Weigand, Pete Palmer and I confirmed) that the 12-0 shutout at Cleveland on May 26 was not a complete game for Kitson. Ralph Miller (who, by the way, lived to age 100) pitched the final three innings. Therefore, give Kitson one shutout in 1899 and 18 lifetime; and give Miller seven games pitched in 1899 and 30 lifetime.

## UPDATES TO PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS

**F**rank Williams would like to add Wilson Alvarez's name to Pete Palmer's April 1997 newsletter list of pitchers who won at least 15 consecutive games (including streaks that extended over two seasons). Alvarez, then of the White Sox, won his last seven decisions in 1993 and his first eight in 1994.

**J**ohn O'Malley wants to add five "Honorable Mentions" to his list of Complete Game Pitchers that appeared in the December 1997 newsletter. These gentleman all started more than 250 games and completed 90% of them, but fell short of 250 complete games.

<u>PITCHER</u>	<u>YEARS</u>	<u>GS</u>	<u>CG</u>	<u>PCT</u>
JOHN WARD	1878-1884	261	244	93.49
STUMP WEIDMAN	1880-1888	269	249	92.57
GEORGE BRADLEY	1876-1884	265	245	92.45
KID GLEASON	1888-1895	266	240	90.23
ADDIE JOSS	1902-1910	260	234	90.00

**B**ob Davids says that the following list of hitting streaks of 20 or more games are like those discovered by Frank Williams that appeared in the December 1997 newsletter. That is, they have never appeared (to Bob and Frank's knowledge) in any record book. These streaks are all from the American Association.

<u>PLAYER</u>	<u>TEAM</u>	<u>GAMES</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BEGAN</u>	<u>ENDED</u>
DAVE ORR	NY	28	1886	AUG 4	SEPT 7
PETE BROWNING	LOU	26	1885	MAY 9	JUNE 15
HICK CARPENTER	CIN	25	1882	MAY 16	JUNE 28
TIP O'NEILL	STL	25	1887	AUG 23	SEPT 21
PETE BROWNING	LOU	24	1886	MAY 15	JUNE 12
PETE BROWNING	LOU	24	1887	SEPT 10	OCT. 9
DAVE ORR	NY	23	1884	JULY 19	AUG. 23
PETE BROWNING	LOU	23	1884	AUG. 27	OCT. 8
DUDE ESTABROOK	NY	22	1884	MAY 10	JUNE 10
HARRY STOVEY	PHI	21	1885	JUNE 15	JULY 12
PETE BROWNING	LOU	20	1882	AUG. 4	SEPT 2
JOHN REILLY	CIN	20	1883	JUNE 23	JULY 19
TIP O'NEILL	STL	20	1888	JULY 22	AUG. 14
TOMMY TUCKER	BAL	20	1889	APR. 30	MAY 22
DAN SHANNON	LOU	20	1889	AUG. 2	AUG. 30

## HOME RUNS IN MOST DIFFERENT PARKS

**A**t the end of the 1997 season, six players shared the record for hitting home runs in the most different ball parks. Ellis Burks, Gary Gaetti, Eddie Murray, Frank Robinson, Rusty Staub, and Dave Winfield each had homered in 32 parks. Close behind, with home runs in 31 different parks, are Hank Aaron, Chili Davis, and Fred McGriff. With several of the above-named players still active, and with two new parks scheduled to open this season and more in the near future, this will be a record that stays in flux for a while.

## ADD A GAME FOR GUIDRY

*Retrosheet*er Greg Beston discovered that Ron Guidry played in 11 games (not 10) in 1975, his rookie season. As confirmed by *RetroMeister* Dave Smith, Guidry's appearance was not as a pitcher, but as a pinch runner for Lou Piniella. It occurred in the eighth inning of the second game of a doubleheader against Cleveland on September 13. He was left at second base, so none of his offensive statistics change.

## BERNIE ALLEN

I found an error in Bernie Allen's 1973 and lifetime record in Macmillan's *The Baseball Encyclopedia* (tenth edition). When a player is with more than one team in a season, Macmillan shows only his games played and batting average for each team and full totals for the two or more teams combined. Allen played for the Yankees and Expos in 1973. His games and batting average for Montreal are correct (16G, .180), but Macmillan shows those same numbers for his stint with New York. Allen's Yankee numbers for 1973 should read (17G, .228). It appears that all of Allen's individual stats with Montreal were also applied to his New York totals. If you use *The Baseball Encyclopedia*, make the appropriate changes to Bernie Allen's 1973 batting and fielding totals. Here are the changes in Allen's lifetime batting stats:

	Games	SAV	At Bats	Hits	2B	HR	RBI	SO
Macmillan (10 <sup>th</sup> ed.)	1,138	.358	3,397	811	138	75	356	423
Corrected	1,139	.357	3,404	815	140	73	351	424

## SOME 1915 NATIONAL LEAGUE PITCHING CORRECTIONS

The following are pitching reconciliations that Walt Wilson made while comparing *Total Baseball's* 5<sup>th</sup> edition and Macmillan's *The Baseball Encyclopedia's* 10<sup>th</sup> edition.

Both Mac and TB show Boston playing 157 games. However, if you check the total starts by Braves' pitchers, they add to 158. The discrepancy is in the record of Bill James who made nine starts, not 10.

Mac incorrectly credits Braves pitchers with 15 shutouts, while TB has the correct total of 17. Mac is missing two combined shutouts; one by Bill James and George Davis on July 7 vs Brooklyn (a 0-0 tie), and one by Pat Ragan and Tom Hughes on July 26 vs Chicago.

Although Mac and TB agree that Chicago pitchers made 156 starts, Mac incorrectly credits them with 157 games played.

Both agree that the Giants played 155 games, but Giants pitcher starts add to 156. After checking each of the team's 1915 games, Walt says changes should be made in these pitchers Games Started totals.

Jeff Tesreau—39, not 38.

Pol Perritt—29, not 30.

Rube Marquard—21, not 20.

Rube Benton—6, not 7.

Hank Ritter—1, not 2.

Obviously, the same adjustment must be made to their lifetime totals.

## SEASON HR TOTALS WHILE PLAYING IN TWO LEAGUES

**M**ark McGwire's 58 home runs obviously broke the record for the most ever hit by a player splitting his season between leagues (and hitting at least one in each league). Home run expert Bob McConnell sent me a note discussing the progression of this record, which I will summarize.

The first players to do it were Charles Sweeney and Jack Glasscock in 1884. Sweeney had one for Providence of the National League and one for St. Louis of the Union Association. Glasscock had one for Cleveland (NL), but he had two for Cincinnati (UA), thereby establishing the record at three.

In 1902, two players, Roger Bresnahan and Cy Seymour, raised the record to five. Bresnahan had four with Baltimore (AL) and one with New York (NL). Seymour had three for Baltimore and two for Cincinnati (NL).

It rose to eight in 1934, when future pitching star Bucky Walters, then a third baseman, had four with the Red Sox and four with the Phillies. Roy Cullenbine, (one with the Dodgers, seven with the Browns) tied Walters's mark in 1940, as did Jimmie Foxx in 1942 (five with the Red Sox, three with the Cubs).

Johnny Mize more than doubled the record when he hit 19 in 1949—18 for the Giants and one for the Yankees. Twenty-four years later, in 1973, Deron Johnson had 20: one for the Phillies and 19 for the Oakland A's.

Dave Kingman set a new mark when he hit 26 home runs in 1977. Kingman did it with four teams. He hit 20 in the NL (nine with the Mets and 11 with the Padres) and six in the AL (two with the Angels, four with the Yankees).

Kingman's record lasted for 18 years, until 1995 when Bobby Bonilla hit 18 for the Mets and 10 for the Orioles for a total of 28. One year later, Greg Vaughan jumped it to 41, hitting 31 for the Brewers and 10 for the Padres, which was the "mark" that McGwire shattered in 1997.

**A**s I've mentioned previously, McGwire's major-league-leading 58 home runs last season, underscores a flaw in our record-keeping. Because his home runs were split between Oakland of the American League (34) and St. Louis of the National League (24), he wasn't the home run champion in either league. Future researchers scanning the list of league home run leaders will see Ken Griffey, Jr. as the AL leader and Larry Walker as the NL leader. Recent postings on SABR-L indicate that some SABR members (and perhaps HOF voters) judge players in part by the "black ink" (or league leadership) in their encyclopedia listings. However, with the increased in-season player movement between leagues "black ink" may be less meaningful in the future than it's been in the past. (Also, there is greater difficulty in leading a league that now consists of 15 teams rather than eight). The reason I've been harping on this issue is simply to suggest that in light of the increasingly radical changes in scheduling, and the mid season rent-a-player-movements between leagues, it may be time to re-examine the way we award statistical honors.



Messrs.  
Sweeney (left) &  
Glasscock (right)

