



PALACES OF THE FANS

The Newsletter of the SABR Ballparks Committee
June 2016

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CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: Ballpark Committee members please provide comments on what you have seen and want to see in the newsletter. Please forward on to Richard articles or links to articles on ballparks for inclusion in future newsletters as well as short research articles. Longer research articles can be accommodated via links on the SABR web site. The next issue is scheduled to come out in December of 2016.

COMMITTEE MEETING AT ANNUAL CONVENTION: This year's SABR Convention (SABR 46) will be held in Miami at the Hyatt Regency. The Ballparks Committee Meeting is scheduled for 9:00-10:00 pm on Saturday July 30.



Author Stuart Shea Speaks at last year's Ballparks Committee Meeting

BALLPARKS DATABASE PROJECT CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: The Ballparks Committee is looking for volunteers to collaborate on an important and imposing project: compiling a comprehensive database on all Minor League Ballparks throughout baseball history. The primary purpose of this project is to enter minor-league ballpark data (name, location, capacity, and dimensions) into Excel templates that already provide basic data like year, team, and league.

When we first re-launched this project, we stated we would not, in the initial stages, ask for volunteers to work only on researching a particular team, city, state or league. However, after hearing from the membership, we are now encouraging anyone who would like to help in researching this project, even if it's only to research a particular sub-set of parks such as the ones listed above, to please contact project leaders Chuck McGill (cmcgill.vt@gmail.com) or Jim Watson (watsonjk2000@yahoo.com).

HISTORICAL BALLPARK SITE MARKERS PROJECT: Brandon J. Grilc, SABR Yoseloff Scholar and 2015 USA Today Sports Weekly Award winner has been documenting historic ballpark site markers, home plate markers, and other remaining and replicated elements used to identify a historic or former ballpark.

The format of the data follows the form: [Ballpark] [Form of Preservation]@[Address or cross street]&[Location]. For example. Vaughn Street Ballpark Historic Marker @ NW 25th Avenue & NW Vaughn Street, Portland, OR.

Brandon is seeking volunteers to join him in the project by providing a photo and address or cross streets of:

1. Historic ballpark site markers
2. Markers indicating home plate, base path, batter's box, pitching rubber, bases, or outfield wall in their original location
3. Markers indication historic events, such as a plaque, stadium seat, or replica wall
4. Historic ballpark relics, such as original objects in their original location including walls, flagpoles, signage, and staircases

Brandon will be compiling and documenting all of the sites with a photo and address for others to follow on Twitter.

If interested Brandon may be contacted at brandonjgrilc@hotmail.com with photos and address information, which he will then use on Twitter @ballparkpres. If you tweet with @ballparkpres on Twitter, he will re-tweet your tweet.

SABR 45 CHICAGO HISTORICAL BALLPARKS SITE BUS TOUR:

Years	Name(s)	Location	What is There Now?
1856-?	Union Park (a public park)	Lake & Ashland (se)	Union Park (Chicago Public Park)
1868	Excelsior Grounds	22nd & State (sw)	Open Field
1870	Dexter Park (a horse race track)	Halsted & 42nd (sw)	Aramark Uniform Services
1871	Lake Park/White Stocking Grounds	Michigan & Randolph (se)	Millennium Park -- Wrigley Square
1872-1877	Twenty-third Street Grounds	23rd & Federal (s/se)	High School Football & Track Field
1878-1884	White Stocking Park/Lake Front Park	Michigan & Madison (ne)	Millennium Park -- Plaza Café/Ice Rink
1883-1884	Chicago Union Base-Ball Park	Pershing & Wabash (ne)	Commercial Structures & Empty Lots
1885-1891	West Side Park/Congress Street Grounds	Congress & Loomis (se)	Andrew Jackson Language Academy
1890-1893	Brotherhood Park/ South Side Park	35th & Wentworth (nw)	Parking Lot for Chicago White Sox
1893-1915	West Side Grounds	Polk & Wolcott (se)	Univ. of Illinois College of Medicine
1900-1940	South Side Grounds/Schorling's Park	Pershing & Wentworth (nw)	Wentworth Gardens Housing Project
1910-1990	Comiskey Park/ White Sox Park	35th & Shields (ne)	Parking Lot for Chicago White Sox



Excelsior Grounds – Photo taken from 23rd & Dearborn looking Northeast towards State Street
On this plot of land the first structure in Chicago built exclusively for playing baseball was constructed

On the last day of SABR 45, a group of convention attendees took a bus tour around the near West and South sides of Chicago to view sites of historical ball parks. The table above summarizes the locations visited. Among the highlights of the trip were stops by the West Side Grounds site to view a historical marker; by 23rd & State to view the Excelsior Grounds and Twenty-third street grounds sites and by U.S. Cellular Field (current home of the White Sox) to view the marker for home plate of Comiskey Park. In addition, the bus drove by Union Park which was likely the first place that organized baseball was played in the city.

Richard Smiley

EUGENE, OR – CIVIC STADIUM ALLIANCE: From Jim Watson ...



Until April, 2015 Civic Stadium in Eugene, Oregon was undergoing slow-motion demolition by neglect. The 77 year-old all wood structure had been owned by the school district and since 1969 leased to the minor league Eugene Emeralds. But starting in the early 1980s the owners and the ball team had deferred maintenance and in 2009, citing its inevitable need for extensive repairs, the Ems abandoned Civic.

So it was a big surprise when engineering reports, crediting the excellence of the workmanship and materials used by the WPA in its construction, proclaimed the “bones” of Civic to be in excellent condition. The key timbers were over 300 old-growth fir posts set on solid concrete piers. The wood had been donated by local forest product companies while the money to acquire the site came from members of the community. It was an amazing example of community spirit; especially happening as it did during hard times of the Great Depression.

When it became clear the Ems would be leaving Civic, a grassroots group called Friends of Civic Stadium began a long struggle to find a way to preserve it. Even though it gained listing on the National Register of Historic places, Civic came within one vote of demolition more than once in the next five years. But again the community came through – this time under a leadership coalition that became the non-profit Eugene Civic Alliance. In a whirlwind effort ECA managed to raise \$4 million to buy the site with plans to restore the grandstand, install a multi-sport field and build a fieldhouse for youth sports. A professional soccer team, Lane United Football Club, was to be the anchor tenant.

Contractors were lined up and plans were developed that started with grandstand restoration (including installation of a fire suppression system). Work was scheduled to begin in weeks. Then, on June 29, four 10 and 12 year-old boys trespassed into the press box and started a fire. The boys escaped but the stadium burned to the ground within an hour. The loss of Civic felt to many like losing a dear friend or even a member of the family. The tragedy was made even sadder by how close ECA came to restoring the stadium to its place as the center of community sports and entertainment.

There is no replacing an icon like Civic Stadium. She has joined nearly all our old wooden ballparks in having been destroyed by fire. But, in yet another example of community spirit, Eugene Civic Alliance is already at work - sticking with their plan for the site but now with a new stadium that bends over backwards to honor Civic. You can watch the plans evolve (and even pitch in) at www.eugenecivicalliance.org.

RESEARCH ARTICLES:

Charles Prochazka and his Outside Stands at Milwaukee Park **by Dennis Pajot, Milwaukee**

The Milwaukee Brewers of the Western League played at Milwaukee Park since the league's inception in 1895. The park, at the corner of 16th and Lloyd Streets, was built in late winter of 1895, after the club could not come to an agreement with the owner of the ball park at 8th and Chambers. (Thus the new Western League Park is commonly known as the Lloyd Street Grounds—the old park on Chambers is known as Athletic Park).

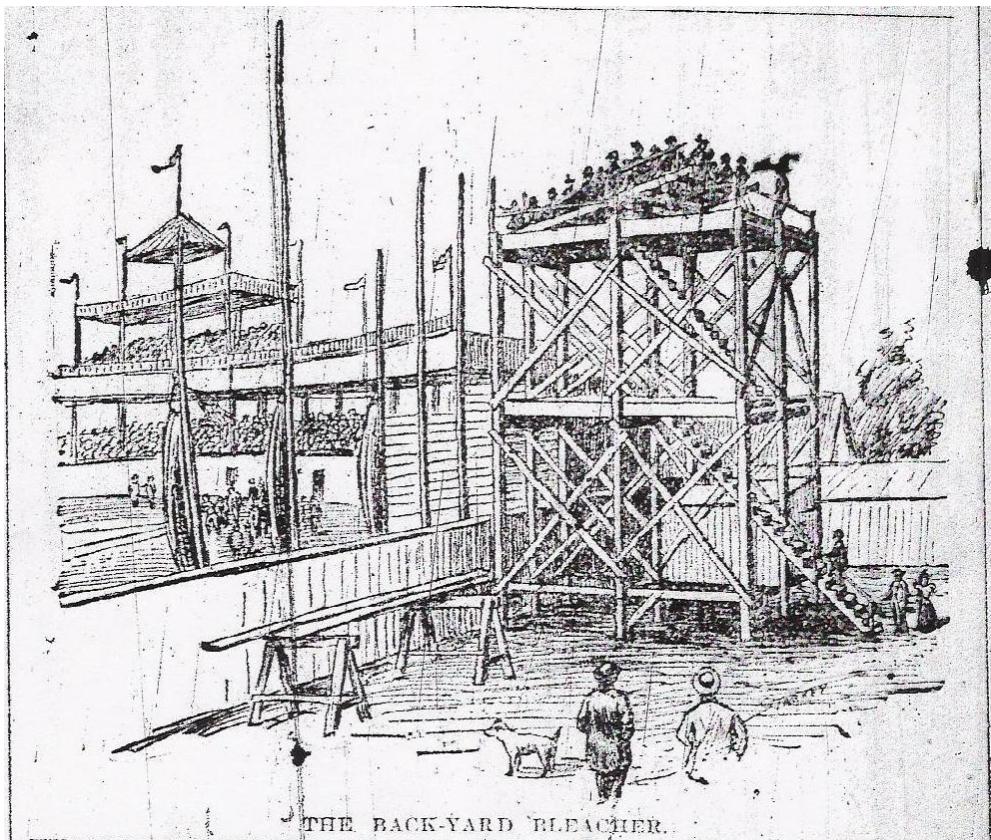
Spectators outside Milwaukee Park watching the game were an early problem at the park. The *Evening Wisconsin* of May 20, 1896, wrote:

There will be disaster some of these days outside the ball park. There are several stands built just outside the grounds and every day they are crowded with persons watching the game. The props are not substantial and they are liable to give way at any time under the weight. It is dangerous and the persons who have charge of them should strengthen them or limit the number of spectators. As a rule there is a larger crowd on the outside than in the park.

To emphasize this last sentence, the newspaper wrote the next day: "There were 800 persons who saw the game yesterday, 500 on the stands outside the park and 300 within the gates. It would not be a bad idea for the management to secure an interest in the stands on the outside."¹

For some time people around Milwaukee Park had erected "bleacher stands" outside the ballpark, providing access to see the game at a lower price than charged by the professional club. In 1896 Charles Prochazka, a shoemaker and saloonkeeper in the neighborhood, erected a platform outside the left field wall of Milwaukee Park, allowing the occupants to see the game at the reduced rate of 10 cents. It was not uncommon to see "from twenty to forty baseball enthusiasts perched up on the stand in the rear of Prochazka's yard", at 762 18th Street (later renumbered 2154 North 18 Street). It was reported "the management does not seem to have a just appreciation of the desire of the boys to see the game without squandering a quarter each time." Several times the City of Milwaukee building inspector warned Prochazka about the safety of the structure, revoking a permit he obtained in June, but Charles continued.

In the spring of 1897 the management of the Milwaukee baseball club spread a high canvas on top of the fence to shut off the view from Prochazka's structure. In early June the "enterprising shoemaker" had carpenters erect another story to his bleachers, expanding its seating capacity to 200. The structure was reported to be 37 feet high. The baseball management responded by adding another story to their fence and more roof garden canvas. This was not fool-proof, as the outsiders could still see the game through the holes in the canvas made to prevent the wind from blowing it away. Prochazka then decided to put his stand on wheels, "so that it can be moved to any point where an opening presents itself, and the management is lying awake nights thinking of schemes to head him off."



Evening Wisconsin June 5, 1897

In June the building inspector condemned the structure as not being strong enough. Prochazka was arrested and taken to court for not having a permit for the structure. Prochazka--"an average-sized man of middle age, spectacled and of a mild aspect, [who] had difficulty in expressing himself in English"--claimed the carpenters he hired were experienced men, had strengthened the structure and pronounced it safe. His attorneys also challenged the ordinance as it was enforced, and intimated that the building inspector and baseball management were working together. Prochazka was found guilty by Judge N.B. Neelen and fined \$10 and costs. It was "believed that the arrest of Prochazka will put a stop to the practice of erecting opposition stands, because the building inspector will refuse to issue permits for such enterprises."

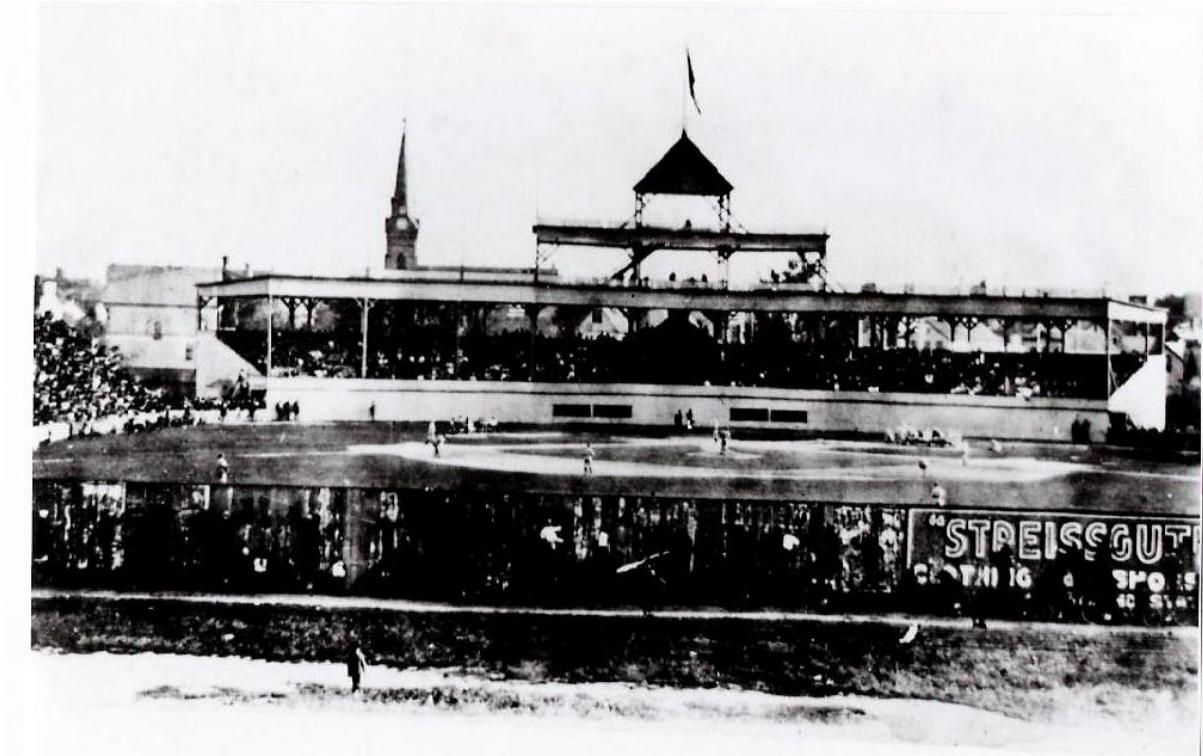
But Prochazka continued. Within days he was issued a permit "to build a reviewing stand under the ordinance governing the erection of buildings." His new stand was to be 47 feet high, seat about 100, and cost \$135. The club then erected a 50-foot fence of slats to shut off the view of the "Butcher's" stand. Prochazka then decided to move his stand 30 yards down the line to frustrate management. The papers never reported the final outcome of this battle.²

The action by the ball club of building a higher fence had another consequence: it made home runs out of the park very difficult. In late July 1897, both the *Milwaukee Sentinel* and *Journal* reported if it had not been for the high fence the Brewers would have had two or three more home runs—instead the balls hit against the fence. In April of the following year the *Washington Post* quoted a player as saying "I tell you fellers, a man that can plunk a homer over that sign exhibit down there must put a dab of Sandow elbow-grease on his stick."³

Charles Prochazka's life began to go extremely bad after his brief notoriety. He had trouble with alcohol and family problems, and was in jail at least twice in 1897 for assault and battery. It was reported he was arrested several times after this for vagrancy and drunkenness, and went to the

almshouse on one occasion. His wife, Anna, filed for and was granted a divorce in February 1898. She was given custody of the couple's four children, secured the family's dwelling on 18th Street, and opened a saloon at the premises. On April 21, 1899, Charles Prochazka went to the basement of his former home and shot himself in the right temple with a .32 caliber revolver. The colorful nemesis of the baseball management was dead at the age of 53.⁴

Thrifty Milwaukeeans had other ways to see games free. When first built, the double fence—eight feet on one side and four more feet on the other—was expected to stop small boys from peeping through and cracks to watch a game. However, the *Journal* was to write in 1897: "The freckle faced, tow-haired youngsters...with short trousers jauntily supported by the relics of suspenders (would have) their eyes firmly glued to kindly crevices and peepholes and spasmodic moans attested to sundry base hits or glaring errors." The scene around Milwaukee Park must have been almost comic on occasion as the *Journal* newspaper account continues: "Step ladders, painter's ladders, ladders whose construction from nondescript pieces of lumber had taxed to the utmost the constructive genius of their makers, and ladders that had seen property were thrown at all possible angles." Of course, others just clung to the top of the fence.⁵



Milwaukee Park on Lloyd Street. A close look shows people on outfield fence. Ad on fence at far right for Otto Streissguth Clothing & Shoe Co., located on northeast corner of 3rd and State Street. (Photo from Milwaukee County Historical Society)

Even with the problems of outside bleachers, peepholes and ladders, the Brewers—managed by Connie Mack--had a very good year financially. President Matt Killilea reported attendance at the games in Milwaukee in 1897 was nearly twice as large as it had been the previous year, and the *Kansas City Star* reported the Brewers netted a profit of \$20,000 for the season. After the season the club received a \$4,000 refund from the Western League's 10-per cent administration fund, the most ever given back by that league.⁶

- 1) *Evening Wisconsin* May 20, 21, 1896
 - 2) *Milwaukee Sentinel* June 12, 1896, June 7, 16, 20, 27, 30, July 25, 1897, November 2, 1898
Evening Wisconsin June 5, July 26, 1897
Milwaukee Journal November 6, 1896, June 7, 15, 21, 25, July 24, 1897, November 1, 1898
 - 3) *Milwaukee Sentinel* July 25, 30, 1897
Milwaukee Journal July 30, 1897; April 8, 1898
 - 4) *Milwaukee Journal* November 1, 1898; January 20, February 9, April 22, 1899
Milwaukee Sentinel October 31, November 2, 1898; April 22, 1899
 - 5) *Milwaukee Journal* March 26, 1895; July 24, 1897
 - 6) *Milwaukee Sentinel* October 3, 1897; January 16, 1898
Milwaukee Journal October 22, 1897
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Ron Selter has published numerous articles on the changing configurations of ballparks across time and their impact on home run totals. His contributions can be found in the McFarland series on historical ballparks and in his book *Ballparks of the Deadball Era: A Comprehensive Study of Their Dimensions, Configurations and Effects on Batting, 1901–1919* which won the SABR Deadball Era Committee's Larry Ritter Award. We are honored to present here his work on Boston's South End Grounds II and Chicago's West Side Park I.

South End Grounds II - Boston NL by Ron Selter (Revised July 2015)

The NL had a franchise in Boston since 1876—the first year of the NL's existence. In the 19th Century, the NL team, first called the Beaneaters, played in three ballparks located on the same site. The first, South End Grounds I, was a small wooden ballpark used by the NL Boston franchise in 1876-87. The second wooden ballpark at this location, South End Grounds II, was used from 1888 until May 1894, and was often called the Grand Pavilion because of its ornate and distinctive grandstand. Unfortunately, the grandstand and the rest of the ballpark burned down in May 1894. The Beaneaters then played their home games at Congress Street Grounds until June 1894, while a new wooden ballpark was being built on the burned out site of South End Grounds II. The new ballpark was also called South End Grounds (denoted as South End Grounds III); however, it had a smaller and less impressive pavilion for its grandstand. South End Grounds III opened on July 20, 1894, barely two months after the fire.

The NL franchise (called first the Beaneaters and later the Braves) played in South End Grounds III until late in the 1914 season before moving temporarily into Fenway Park.

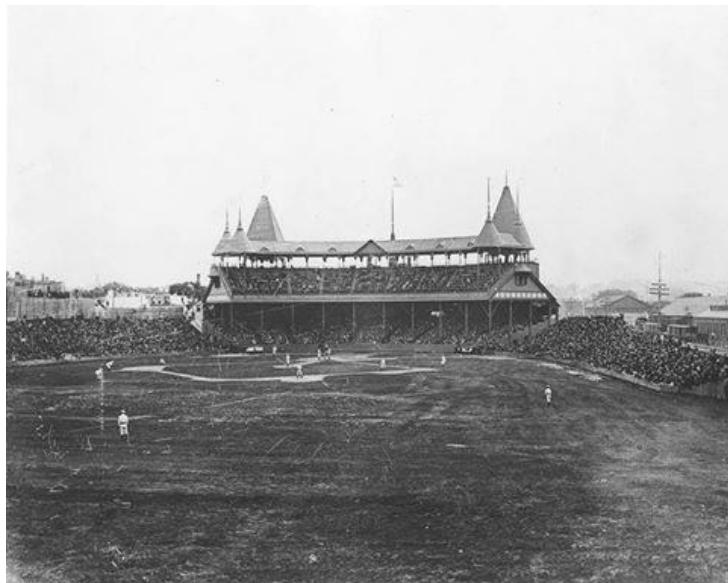
The South End Grounds II ballpark was used by the NL Boston franchise in 1888-94 after the prior ballpark on this site (South End Grounds I) had been torn down in September, 1887 to make way for the new and larger capacity park. This park and the Congress Street Grounds ballpark were Boston's only 19th Century double-deck ballparks. Six spires were located atop the grandstand roof behind home and earned the ballpark the nickname of The Grand Pavilion. Frugal fans could watch for free from Sullivan's Tower beyond the fence in right field.

The distances at all of the South End ballparks to both the LF and RF fences increased rapidly towards straight-away LF and RF. Note that the dimension at South End Grounds III for straightaway left field was 70 percent greater than at the LF foul line. A set of bleachers in CF and in the left side of RF (called the "pie bleachers" because of their shape) were added sometime

before the 1890 season. This ballpark was destroyed by the Great Roxbury Fire that started in the bottom of the third inning during the Beaneaters-Orioles game on May 15, 1894. The fire started in the right field bleachers, and eventually destroyed the ballpark and 177 homes.

This ballpark was noted for the number of home runs hit over the very close portion of the left field fence. These home runs (when hit by the home team) were usually described as “cheap home runs” by the visiting team’s sportswriters. In fact, there were 173 home runs hit over the left field fence (73 % of total home runs) at this park in little more than four full seasons. Bounce and Inside-the-Park Home Runs (IPHR) were both rare at this park-there was one Bounce home run and five IPHRs in 1890-94.

Note that the South End Grounds II ballpark was used by the NL for the entirety of the 1890-93 seasons, but was used for only the first four games home games of the 1894 season before the fire.



South End Grounds II Photo Source - Boston Public Library

AKA

Grand Pavilion, Walpole Street Grounds (II), Union Baseball Grounds, Boston Baseball Grounds

OCCUPANT

NL Boston Beaneaters May 25, 1888-May 15, 1894

LOCATION

(Same as South End Grounds I & III); Center Field (NE) railroad roundhouse, then Gainsborough St; Third Base (NW) New York, New Haven, and Hartford (later Boston and Providence) Railroad tracks, then starting in 1901 Huntington Avenue Baseball Grounds; Home Plate (SW) Walpole St, First Base (SE) Columbus Ave

CAPACITY

6,800 (1888), 8,500 (Est. 1893)

DIMENSIONS

Left Field: 250
 Straightaway Left Field: 424
 Left Center: 430
 Center Field: 415
 Right Center: 392
 Straightaway Right Field: 356
 Right Field: 255
 Backstop: 80

Home Run Data for South End Grounds II: 1890-94

Home Runs by Type

Year	Total	OTF	Bounce IP	
1890-92	145	141	0	4
1893-94	94	93	1	1
1890-94	239	234	1	5

OTF Home Runs by Field (Excludes Bounce)

Year	Total	LF	CF	RF	UNK
1890-92	141	102	2	33	4
1893-94	92	71	1	16	4
1890-94	233	173	3	49	8

Inside-the-Park-Home Runs by Field

Year	Total	LF	LC	CF	RC	RF	Unknown
1890-92	4	1	0	1	1	0	1
1893-94	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
1890-94	5	2	0	1	1	0	1

OTF: Over-The-Fence (Includes Bounce) Home Runs

Bounce: Bounce Home Runs

IP: Inside-the-Park-Home Runs

Batting Park Factors at South End Grounds II

Years	Runs	Home Runs
1890	116	115
1891	121	155
1892	123	155
1893	103	195
1894	80	181
Average (1890-93)	116	155

Note: 1894: Only four games played at South End Grounds II

Introduction: Chicago Baseball And The Major Leagues

by Ron Selter

Chicago was one of the original NL franchises, and the Chicago NL team started play in 1876 as the White Stockings. The White Stockings were an immediate success-winning the first NL pennant. In the time period 1876-1900 the NL team, called the White Stockings in the early years and later called the Colts, played in a total of five home ballparks. The first ballpark 23rd Street Grounds, was used from May 1876 to October 1877. The second ballpark, was known as Lake Front Park (AKA White Stocking Park) and used from 1878 to 1884. The third ballpark, West Side Park I was used from June 1885 to 1891. The NL team (by that time called the Colts) in the 1891 season then played about half of their home schedule at West Side Park I and the rest at a fourth ballpark, South Side Park II. The Colts continued to use South Side Park II, from 1891 to the end of the 1893 season. The Colts then played some games into West Side Grounds during the 1893 season-but only on Sundays. West Side Grounds became the only home field of the Colts starting in May 1895 and the team (called the Cubs beginning early in the 20th Century) continued to use that ballpark until the end of the 1915 season. The names of several of the early Chicago major league ballparks (e.g., South Side Park and West Side Grounds) were taken from their relative location in the city of Chicago. In addition, the short lived Union Association played its only season (1884) in South Side Park I and the one season Players League used South Side Park II for the 1890 season.

In 1900, the AL (in that year the AL was a minor league) placed one of its eight franchises in Chicago and the team built a new ballpark (South Side Park III) very near the location of one of the former NL ballparks-South Side Park II. The Chicago AL team took the name of White Stockings, formerly used by the NL club, and played one minor league season at South Side Park III. The team later modified their name to White Sox early in the first decade of the 20th Century. The White Stockings/Sox played at South Side Park III for nine-and-a fraction major league seasons (1901-10). In June 1910, the White Sox left South Side Park III and moved into the nearby and newly constructed Classic ballpark-Comiskey Park.

In 1914, a new major league came into being-it was the short lived Federal League. One of the eight Federal league franchises was in Chicago and the team was called the ChiFeds for the 1914 season and the Whales in 1915. A new and largely steel-and-concrete ballpark was quickly built before the 1914 season on the north side of Chicago. Unlike earlier Chicago ballparks, this new ballpark was not named for the ballpark's location in the city of Chicago (if following the pattern of earlier Chicago ballparks names it would have been called North Side Park). Instead the ballpark was named Weeghman Park, after the owner of the Chicago Federal League club-Charles A. Weeghman. The Federal League was essentially bought out by the AL and NL after the 1915 season. As part of the deal that ended the Federal League, the owner of the Federal League team, Charles A. Weeghman, was allowed to buy the Chicago NL franchise (the team by now called the Cubs). He promptly combined the rosters of the NL Cubs and the Federal League Whales and moved the team into Weeghman Park for the 1916 season. The Cubs still play to this day in that ballpark, now much better known as Wrigley Field-now the second oldest major league ballpark.

Both the Cubs and White Sox were successful franchises in the Deadball Era. The Cubs were, unlike in contemporary times, usually contenders for the NL pennant and had a fierce rivalry with the New York Giants. In the AL, the White Sox had pennant winning seasons: in 1901, 1906 (the year the "Hitless Wonders" shocked the Cubs, winners of 116 regular season game, by winning the all Chicago 1906 World Series), 1917, and the very talented but infamous Black Sox in 1919.

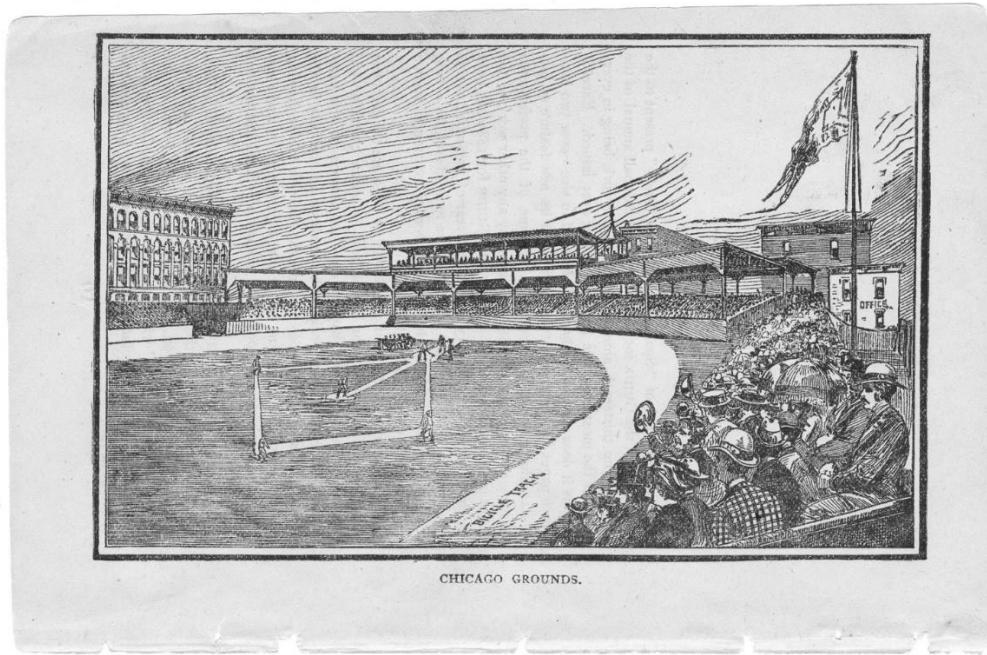
WEST SIDE PARK I

Chicago NL: 1885-91

The name of the ballpark was West Side Park as the ballpark was located in the western part of the city of Chicago. The designation West Side Park I has been used to distinguish the park from the later ballpark-West Side Grounds that also had an AKA of West Side Park. The first use of West Side Park I for major league baseball was by the Chicago NL club (called the White Stockings in the 1880's) and was used starting with the 1885 season. In 1885, the White Stockings opened the season with a very long road trip. This long road trip allowed time for the club to finish the construction of its ballpark-West Side Park I. Then on June 6, 1885, the White Stockings moved into the

newly built West Side Park I and opened their home schedule. The NL White Stockings used West Side Park I for all of the 1885-90 seasons. For the 1891 season the team played at West Side Park I on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays-31 home games in all that season

West Side Park I occupied all of a Chicago city block that was bounded by Harrison St, on the south, Congress St on the north, Loomis St on the west, and Throop St on the south. The park occupied the full width of the block in between. The total size of the park site was 4.0 acres, with a 500 foot dimension in the east-west direction and a 350 foot dimension in the north-south direction. The grandstand and infield were located in the west central portion of the park site and the home plate-CF axis ran due east-west. There was a bicycle racing track around the entire playing field. The LF and RF fences were at 135 degrees to the foul lines with a CF fence that was at 90 degrees to the home plate-CF axis. The double-deck stands consisted of a covered wooden grandstand of seven section on the lower level running from beyond first base to beyond third base. In addition, there was a small covered upper deck over the three central sections of the lower deck. Uncovered bleachers ran down both the RF and LF foul lines. The seating capacity of the park when opened in 1885 was 10,300.



The Basis of West Side Park I's Configurations and Dimensions

From a study of newspaper articles about the ballpark and game accounts, information on the park's configuration was obtained. An illustration in the 1888 Spalding Guide (see above) was the basis of the location and extent of the stands ⁽¹⁾. The grandstand extended from beyond first base to beyond third base. The exact LF and RF dimensions were determined as a result of a disputed home run in the first regular season game ever played in this ballpark. Early in the first game (June 6, 1885), a Chicago home run over the RF fence was challenged by the visiting team as not meeting the recently established major league minimum home run distance of 210 feet. To settle the dispute, the umpire used a tape measure to determine the RF distance-it was 225 feet-greater than both the major league minimum (210) and the park's listed LF/RF dimensions (216) ⁽²⁾.

The short LF and RF distances led to many home runs being hit into Congress St (over the LF wall) and into Harrison St (over the RF wall). All of the outfield fences were actually stone walls 12 feet high.

The location of home plate was fixed by the known dimensions of LF, RF, and CF. Once the location of home plate was determined, a park diagram was developed and the other outfield dimensions were derived from that park diagram. The deepest points (425) in the perfectly symmetrical ballpark were in LF and RF at 23 degrees off the foul lines at the junctions of the LF/RF and CF fences.

Park data and dimensions for West Side Park I are shown below:

Dimensions

Years	LF	SLF	LC	CF	RC	SRF	RF
1885-91	225	325	412	400	412	325	225

Backstop 60

Average Outfield Distances

Years	LF	CF	RF
1885-91	336	406	336

Fence Heights

Years	LF	CF	RF
1885-91	12	12	12

Capacity: 10,300

Park Size/Composite Average Outfield Distance: 359

Park Site Area: 4.0 acres

The Impact of the Park's Configurations and Dimensions on Batting

During most of its 19th Century seasons, West Side Park I was an above average NL offensive park. The Runs batting park factor averaged 110 for the 1885-91 seasons and never dropped below 99. However, with no known change in configuration the Runs batting park factor for West Side Park I dropped from 135 in 1887 to 99 for 1889.

West Side Park I was a huge homer haven. The park's batting park factor for home runs ranging from 169 to 305 with an average value of 204. About three quarters of the home runs at the park were Over-The-Fence type. Bounce home runs were rare-only four in six-and-a-half-seasons. Most of the Inside-The-Park-Home-Runs (a total of 25 per season) were hit to CF, right-center, or RF.

Home Runs by Type at West Side Park I

Years	Total	OTF	Bounce	IPHR
1885-89	458	331	2	127
1890-91*	138	105	2	33
Total	595	436	4	160

OTF Home Runs by Field at West Side Park I (Excluding Bounce)

Years	Total	LF	CF	RF	Unknown
1885-89	329	136	1	106	86
1890-91*	103	48	0	31	24
Total	432	184	1	137	110

Inside-the-Park Home Runs by Field at West Side Park I

Years	Total	LF	LC	CF	RC	RF	Unknown
1885-89	127	17	9	65	9	20	7
1890-91*	33	4	0	8	13	4	4
Total	160	21	9	73	22	24	11

*31 games in 1891-About half a season

Batting Park Factors-West Side Park I

	Runs	Home Runs
1885	119	305
1886	131	267
1887	135	316
1888	118	169
1889	99	200
1890	116	244
1891	119	240
1885-91	120	204

1 Spalding Official Baseball Guide 1888

Chicago Daily Tribune, June 7, 1885

SMOKIE LINKS – HISTORICAL PARKS:

The Crosley Field Historic Site opened this month on property where the Cincinnati Reds played for decades, with a colorful mural and replicas meant to jog memories and imaginations:

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/historic-site-opens-cincinnati-reds-home-39702884>

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE:

THE SABR URBAN BASEBALL PARK DESIGN PROJECT



Armour Field Scale Model



Armour Field Drawings

This note was sent to us by Philip Bess ...

I was the director and designer some twenty-eight years ago of what came to be known as The SABR Urban Baseball Park Design Project. It was initiated under Presidents Cappy Gagnon and Gene Sunnen, Executive Director Lloyd Johnson, and Ballparks Committee Chairman Robert Bluthardt; and funded by a small grant from Chicago's Graham Foundation, and a medium-sized grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (perhaps the first SABR project to be the beneficiary of grant money, though I'm not certain of that). The product that resulted was Armour Field, which was subsequently featured in a small volume entitled [City Baseball Magic: Plain Talk and Uncommon Sense About Cities and Baseball Parks](#), published in 1989, and republished again in 1991 and 1999.

I describe the Armour Field project in context in some further detail [here](#); and it [has received attention](#) (and [continues to receive attention](#)) as "the ballpark the White Sox should have built" and "the forerunner of the 'retro-ballparks' movement" of the 1990s and 2000s (though I have some serious misgivings and reservations about that).

In any case, I write to ask a favor. I am pondering placing ten original framed design drawings of Armour Field, plus a scale site model of the same, up for auction. They work has not been appraised, and I don't know what its value might be; but the drawings themselves when assembled cover wall space of approximately 10' in width by 5'-6' in height; and the model (including its plexiglass cover) measures about 3' wide x 5' long x about 18' high. I am attaching photos of the drawings as an ensemble and as they have been hung on my office wall; and also of the model, both as my professional shots of it and a photo of it in its current inglorious position in my basement.

I would be grateful, if you are willing, to let the SABR Ballparks Committee members know that the drawings and model for Armour Field may soon be available for purchase or auction, in the event that 1) they might know of a suitable venue for them, and / or 2) might have an interest in procuring them — I'm not really presuming the latter, but I might as well say that if anyone is interested it is certainly up for discussion. In any case, the drawings, the model, indeed the entire project have a history that goes well back to the early history of the SABR Ballparks Committee, and I don't want to proceed with auctioning or otherwise disposing of them with the Ballparks Committee unaware.

So if anyone on the Ballparks Committee has either an interest in the drawings and model themselves, or any ideas about who to talk to with respect an auction house or an institution that might be interested in the work, please contact Phil at pbess@nd.edu; at philipbess@gmail.com; or at his cell number (773) 727-2754.