THE Baseball Research JOURNAL

Ripken's Forgotten Streak:
8,243 Consecutive Innings

Brooklyn's Parade Ground:
Birthplace to Big Leaguers

Correcting Lou Gehrig's
RBI Totals Through 1939

Racing the Dawn
2 Teams, 29 Innings

Durocher the Spymaster
Did the Giants Prosper?

The 2012 Henry Chadwick
Awards

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2012 CHADWICK AWARDS

Note from the Editor

The way publishing works, I have to write this "Note from the Editor" before October begins, but by the time it lands in the mailboxes of SABR members, October will be over. As I write this, the Orioles are still in it, the Oakland A's are making a charge… will this be another September stretch run to the postseason like last year's? Last year's was epic. One might even say historic, in the hyperbolic usage of the word. By the time you read this, the winners and losers of the 2012 major league season will be decided.

In my role as gatekeeper for the *Baseball Research Journal*, I am up to my elbows in baseball history on a daily basis. So here I am, already thinking about games that haven't been played and championships that are yet to be won as if they are history. But even outside the slow-moving world of traditional printed-on-paper publishing, we don't get to time-travel. Even in the lightning-fast world of the Internet, where Twitter explodes with eyewitness accounts at-the-moment, whether from Oriole Park or Zuccotti Park, Kenmore Square or Tahrir Square, we can't learn it any faster than it actually happens.

Or can we? Not everyone who looks into history is doing it for the purpose of looking back. Many in our community are continually searching for the predictive value of the past, seeking the ability to foresee what is yet to come.

This issue of the *BRJ*, as usual, mixes together pieces that look back, look forward, and I daresay sometimes even look sideways at the game. New perspectives are always welcome. Without them we live in a world of lore, not fact. Herm Krabbenhoft's investigation into every RBI recorded (or mis-recorded, as the case may be) by Lou Gehrig in his entire big-league career is now complete and in these pages. Trent McCotter examines a Cal Ripken streak that is lesser-trumpeted and lesser-known that the consecutive games streak—the record for consecutive innings played.

The minor leagues are represented, too, in Brock Helander's overview of Organized Baseball in Altoona, Pennsylvania, while Sam Zygner focuses on a single historic night in the Florida State League. Mets fans, congratulations on enjoying your first franchise no-hitter this past season. Someday someone will undoubtedly reference that event in SABR's publications. For now, here are two articles that might interest you: Scott Schleifstein's piece regarding two epic pitching duels between Tom Seaver and journeyman hurler Dave Roberts, and Chuck Rosciam's exhaustive dissection of Mike Piazza's home-run numbers.

And there's more, of course. By the time you read this, the baseball season will be over. I hope the *Baseball Research Journal* makes a good wintertime companion. Before you know it, spring, and a whole new chapter in baseball history, will be upon us.

— Cecilia M. Tan

Ripken's Record for Consecutive Innings Played

Trent McCotter

Cal Ripken Jr.'s 2,632-consecutive-game streak is one of the most famous numbers in sports. Often forgotten is that Ripken also compiled an amazing record for consecutive innings played. *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and even the Orioles themselves claimed that Ripken once played 8,243 consecutive innings without sitting out, spanning June 1982 to September 1987.[1]

The entry is not in any record book. We don't know whose mark Ripken broke, nor the names of the other men with long streaks.

This article presents the top such streaks in major league history. It turns out that Ripken did not play in 8,243 consecutive innings. It was even longer: 8,264 innings without being replaced.

Ripken was replaced by a pinch-hitter on June 4, 1982. His amazing streak began the next day in the first inning against Minnesota. He played every inning to finish 1982, and he played every inning in 1983, 1984, 1985, and 1986.

Ripken set the all-time record on August 31, 1985, when he completed the first inning against the Mariners. It was his 5,153rd inning in a row, besting George Pinkney's mark of 5,152. Pinkney had set the mark over six seasons from 1885 to 1890, playing mostly in the American Association.

Pinkney's record had lasted for 95 years. For comparison, when Ripken played in his 2,131st consecutive game in 1995, Lou Gehrig's streak of 2,130 games had existed for a mere fifty-six years. Also, whereas 46,272 people were in attendance when Ripken surpassed Gehrig (and millions more watched on television), a mere 21,472 fans saw Ripken break Pinkney's streak.

The streak finally ended on September 14, 1987. Ripken played the first seven innings and batted in the top of the eighth, but he was replaced in the field by future manager Ron Washington. By then, Toronto was already up 17–3 and had hit nine home runs. When Ripken's manager (who was also his father) was asked why he pulled Cal from the game, he said, "What the hell—he couldn't hit a twenty-run homer."

Although there was wide consensus that Ripken held the all-time record for consecutive innings played, there was no "Top Ten" or accurate details on other streaks. I decided to compile a list of the longest streaks of consecutive innings in major league history.

Candy LaChance and Buck Freeman were the most frequent names I came across. After research, I confirmed that LaChance indeed compiled one of the longest streaks in major league history: 3,873 innings from 1902 to 1905.

Cal Ripken Jr. set the major league record for consecutive innings played, having gone 8,264 innings without being taken out of the lineup.

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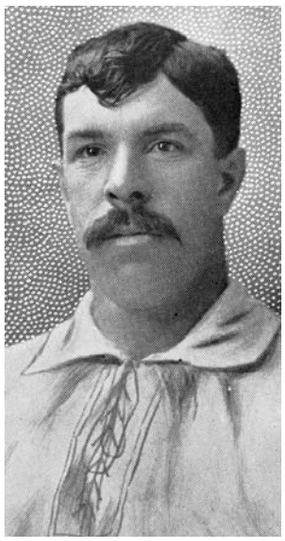
Until 1985, George Pinkney held the record for consecutive innings played with 5,152 in a row. The record had lasted for 95 years.



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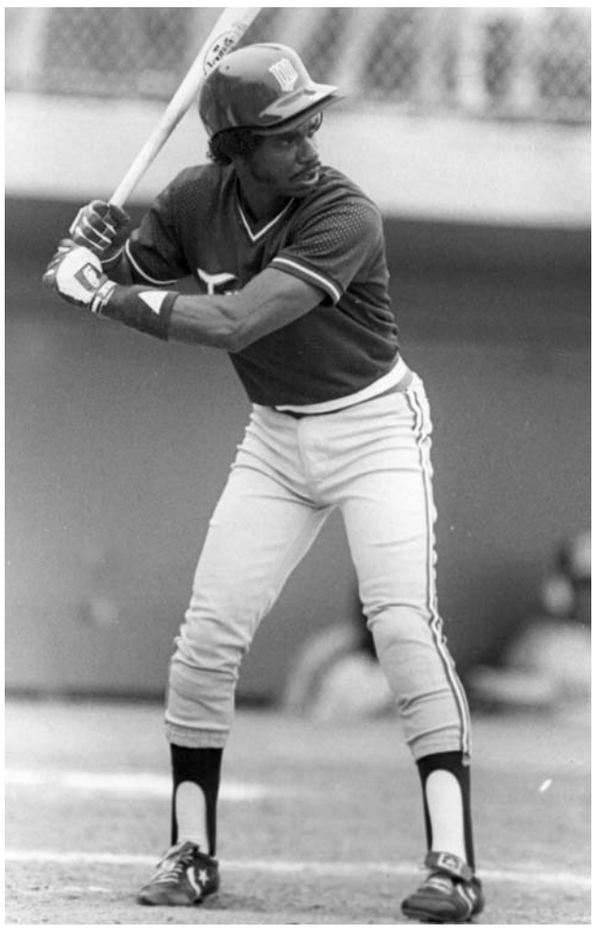
(Above left) Candy LaChance, who compiled the fifth-longest innings streak ever at 3,873 innings.

(Above right) Buck Freeman, who would have compiled the third-longest streak ever if he had not been ejected on September 9, 1903 (Game 2).



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Ron Washington during his playing days. He replaced Ripken in the eighth inning on September 14, 1987, the day Ripken's innings streak ended at 8,264.

Freeman, on the other hand, fell short of his legend. He would have compiled a streak of 4,884 innings—the third-longest ever—if he had not been ejected at some point on September 9, 1903 (game 2), in the middle of the streak. Instead, he ends up with separate streaks of 2,935 and 1,943 innings.

Similarly, Larry Gardner compiled a run of 2,753 consecutive innings from 1918 to 1920, but if he hadn't been replaced by a pinch runner in the ninth inning on August 26, 1920, he would have had a streak of 4,032 innings.

Perhaps most amazingly, I discovered that even Ripken's total was incorrect. It was reported as 8,243 for 25 years, but no one had bothered to double-check the total. Thanks to RetroSheet and Tom Ruane's help, I confirmed that 8,264 innings was the correct total.

In recent years, we have not seen anyone make a serious run at a long streak. The longest since Ripken was 2,480 innings by Travis Fryman from April 1994 to April 1996. Since Fryman, the longest is 1,689 by Richie Sexson from March 2003 to April 2004—barely one season!

Now, a note on my calculations. A player was given credit for a full inning played unless he was replaced during any part of that inning. When Ripken's streak ended on September 14, 1987, he batted in the top of the eighth inning but was replaced in the field in the bottom of the eighth. Since he did not play the entire eighth inning, he was credited with only seven innings for that contest. Gardner did play in the ninth inning on August 26, 1920, but he was replaced part-way through

Longest Streaks of Consecutive Innings Played

Innings	Player	Team(s)	Begin Date	End Date	CG	Partial G
8,264	Cal Ripken	BAL AL	6/5/1982 [1st inn]	9/14/1987 [7th inn]	903	1
5,152	George Pinkney	BRO AA/NL	9/21/1885 [1st inn]	4/30/1890 [9th inn]	577	0
4,620	Joe Sewell	CLE AL	7/1/1923 [1st inn]	8/7/1926(G2) [4th inn]	505	1
4,329	Gus Suhr	PIT NL	9/11/1931 [1st inn]	9/30/1934(G1) [9th inn]	474	0[3]
3,873	Candy LaChance	BOS AL	5/23/1902 [1st inn]	4/28/1905 [9th inn]	424	0
3,781	Rudy York	DET AL	4/16/1940 [1st inn]	7/30/1942(G2) [9th inn]	413	0
3,597	Tommy Holmes	BOS NL	7/30/1943(G1) [1st inn]	4/28/1946(G2) [6th inn]	386	1
3,274	Chuck Klein	PHI/CHN NL	9/14/1931(G2) [1st inn]	5/30/1934(G2) [2nd inn]	356	1
3,223	Ernie Banks	CHN NL	6/19/1957(G2) [1st inn]	7/24/1959 [1st inn]	351	1
2,935	Buck Freeman	BOS AL	7/29/1901 [1st inn]	9/9/1903(G1) [3rd inn]	321	1[4]
2,859	Glenn Wright	PIT NL	4/15/1924 [1st inn]	4/19/1926 [5th inn]	312	1[5]
2,804	Frank McCormick	CIN NL	4/19/1938 [1st inn]	9/29/1939 [2nd inn]	304	1
2,753	Larry Gardner	PHA/CLE AL	7/27/1918 [1st inn]	8/26/1920 [8th inn]	300	1
2,753	Richie Ashburn	PHI NL	6/19/1952 [8th inn]	6/10/1954 [9th inn]	303	1
2,726	Frank Malzone	BOS AL	6/12/1958 [1st inn]	6/7/1960 [9th inn]	298	0
2,611	Gene Baker	CHN NL	8/5/1954 [1st inn]	7/16/1956 [5th inn]	283	1
2,543	Eddie Brown	BRO/BSN NL	6/5/1924 [1st inn]	4/28/1926 [8th inn]	279	1

by another player, and so I did not give him an inning played. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that we are finding streaks where the player was never taken out of the game—the ultimate kind of iron man streak.

Similarly, if the bottom of the ninth was not played, or if an extra-inning game ended with less than three outs, the player was credited with one full inning so long as he was not replaced. For simplicity's sake, I avoided awarding fractions of innings.[2] After all, if the home team does not bat in the ninth inning, we still say it was a nine-inning game.

Even if we count only half-innings, or innings actually played in the field, we still do not come up with the 8,243 number that has been reported for years. It likely is just a product of the era—it was calculated the same day that Ripken's streak ended in 1987, when there was no easy way to count innings except by hand, and no easily accessible compendium of games from previous seasons. Today we have the benefit of every game being computerized.

After many months of research, the numbers are still not 100% complete. For instance, Gus Suhr played in at least 4,329 consecutive innings, but he might have completed one more inning on September 30, 1934 (game 2), before being pulled—the newspapers of the day just do not say when he was replaced. A similar problem exists for Glenn Wright's and Buck Freeman's totals. I have been conservative and credited them with the total I am sure about. As one last interesting note, Wright is the only person on the list who began his career with such an amazing streak.

The table above lists the details of all men who played in 2,500 or more consecutive innings. "CG" means how many complete games he played during the streak, with a separate column for any "partial" games at the beginning or end of the streak.

We see that Ripken holds the record by 60.4% over Pinkney, which is considerably greater than the 23.5% by which Ripken beat Lou Gehrig's 2,130 consecutive game streak. It seems as though "8,264" should be Ripken's most famous number, rather than "2,632." ■

Acknowledgments

Bob Davids, Bill Deane, Sean Forman, Marty Friedman, Tom Ruane, Dave Smith, and Tim Wiles. If any readers can supply details for Suhr's, Freeman's, or Wright's streaks (or any other streaks I might have somehow missed), please contact me through the SABR directory.

Notes

1. *The New York Times*, "Father Knows Best," September 15, 1987; Robert Fachet, "Ripken's Consecutive-Inning Streak Ends at 8,243," *Washington Post*, September 15, 1987; 2011 *Baltimore Orioles Media Guide*, pages 214, 319.
2. Otherwise there would be ⅙, ⅓, ½, ⅔, and ⅚ of innings.
3. I have credited Suhr with no innings on September 30, 1934(G2), but he possibly played one full inning in that game.
4. I have credited Freeman with three innings on September 9, 1903(G1), but he likely played more.
5. I have credited Wright with five full innings on April 19, 1926, but he likely played several more.

Lou Gehrig's RBI Record: 1923–39

Herm Krabbenhoft

INTRODUCTION

In his Hall-of-Fame career, Lou Gehrig established himself as a premier RBI producer. According to the 2012 edition of *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*, Gehrig led the American League in runs batted in five times: 1927, 1928, 1930, 1931, and 1934. Furthermore, according to *Elias* Gehrig holds the American League records for most RBIs for both a single season and lifetime.[1] However, as it turns out, many of the RBI statistics in Gehrig's official baseball records are erroneous. In a previous *Baseball Research Journal* article (Fall 2011), I presented my research on Lou Gehrig's RBI records from 1923 through 1930. I reported that I discovered—and corrected—more than 30 RBI errors in his official baseball records, including his AL-leading seasons of 1927, 1928, and 1930.[2]

In this article I present the results of my research for the second half of Gehrig's major league career, covering the seasons 1931 through 1939. Again, my research has demonstrated that Gehrig's official RBI records are afflicted with several errors.[3]

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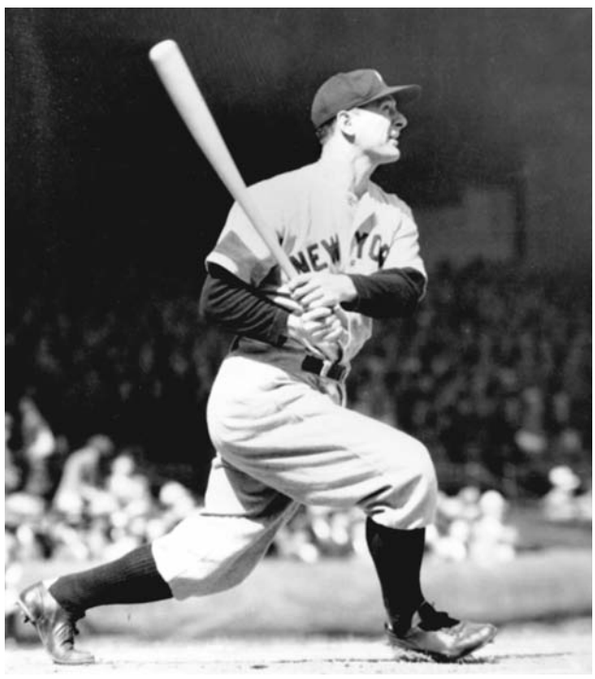

Based on these findings, Lou Gehrig accumulated 185 RBIs in 1931 and 166 RBIs in 1934.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

In order to ascertain an accurate RBI record for Lou Gehrig, I applied the most rigorous approach: obtaining the complete details for every run scored by the Yankees in all games Gehrig played.

"Complete details" means the following three facts were determined for each run-scoring situation:

(1) The identity of the player who scored the run.

(2) The run-scoring event. For example, a two-RBI single, a one-RBI groundout, a one-RBI grounder (batter safe on a fielding error), a no-RBI grounder (batter safe on a fielding error), a one-RBI bases-loaded walk, a no-RBI balk, etc.

(3) The identity of the player who completed his plate appearance during the run-scoring event. (Note: When a run scores on an event such as a steal of home, passed ball, or wild pitch, no batter completes his plate appearance during the run-scoring event.)

I was aided in my research by the complete (although unproofed) Retrosheet Play-By-Play (PBP) accounts—graciously provided by Dave Smith—for most of the 2,164 games that Gehrig played in his major league career. For the 1923–30 period, I had access to complete (unproofed) Retrosheet PBP accounts for 727 of Gehrig's 921 games. For the other 194 games I obtained the requisite run-scoring and RBI information from the game accounts in several relevant newspapers. For the 1931–39 period, I had access to complete (unproofed) Retrosheet PBP accounts for 577 of Gehrig's 1,243 games. For the other 666 games I obtained the complete details from the game accounts in the relevant newspapers. (See Table 1.)

Altogether, there were 51 games for which I was unable to acquire complete details. However, for each of these 51 games, the box score RBI information is identical to the RBI statistics in the official baseball records, suggesting that it is highly likely that the official information is accurate.

Table 1. RBI Errors and Corrections in Lou Gehrig's Official Baseball Record, 1931–39

Year	Month, Day	Game	Opp	Gehrig RBI (off)	Gehrig RBI (act)	Other players	RBI (off)	RBI (act)	Ret	Supporting Documentation
1931	Apr, 21		PHI	2	3	Babe Ruth	1	0	R	NYT-NYHT-NYWT-PINQ
1931	Apr, 22		BOS*	2	1	Tony Lazzeri	2	3	R	NYT-NYHT-NYWT-BG-BH-BP
1931	May, 03		BOS	0	1	–	–	–	R	NYT-NYHT-NYA-NYDN-BG-BH-BP
1931	Jul, 01		DET*	2	1	Ben Chapman	0	1	R	NYT-NYHT-NYWT-DFP-DN
1931	Jul, 02		DET*	2	1	See Note	–	–	R	NYT-NYHT-NYWT-DFP-DN
1931	Jul, 08	1	BOS	0	2	Sammy Byrd	2	0	R	NYT-NYHT-NYWT-BG-BH-BP
1933	Sep, 29		WAS	1	2	–	–	–		NYT-NYHT-WP
1934	May, 18		DET*	1	2	Harry Smythe	1	0	(R)	NYT-NYHT-NYP-DFP-DN-DT
1935	Jun, 08	2	BOS*	0	1	Ben Chapman	1	0	(R)	NYT-NYHT-BG-BH-BP
1936	Apr, 15		WAS*	0	1	George Selkirk	1	0		NYT-NYHT-NYP-WP
1936	Sep, 04		BOS*	1	0	Jake Powell	0	1	R	NYT-NYHT-BG-BH-BP
1937	Jun, 07		DET*	2	1	Bill Dickey	0	1		NYT-NYHT-DFP-DN-DT
1938	May, 13		PHI	3	2	–	–	–		NYT-NYHT-NYP-NYDN-PINQ
1938	May, 28		PHI*	1	2	J. DiMaggio	1	0	R	NYT-NYHT-PINQ

"Opp" identifies the team that opposed the Yankees; an asterisk indicates that the opposing team was the home team.

"Ret" indicates when Retrosheet PBP information was used to identify an RBI error: an "R" indicates that the PBP information covers the entire game; and "(R)" indicates that the PBP information covers only a portion of the game.

Newspaper sources: The relevant text accounts and box scores were found in these newspapers: *The New York Times* (NYT), *New York Herald Tribune* (NYHT), *New York World Telegram* (NYWT), *New York American* (NYA), *New York Daily News* (NYDN), *New York Post* (NYP), *Boston Globe* (BG), *Boston Herald* (BH), *Boston Post* (BP), *Detroit Free Press* (DFP), *Detroit News* (DN), *Detroit Times* (DT), *Philadelphia Inquirer* (PINQ), *Washington Post* (WP).

Note: Other players in addition to Gehrig with RBI errors in the official DBD record for July 2, 1931, are Bill Dickey (who actually had two RBIs, not three), Lyn Lary (who actually had three RBIs, not two), and Jimmie Reese (who actually had two RBIs, not one).

By comparing the run-scoring and RBI information presented in the unproofed Retrosheet PBP accounts and the various newspaper articles (including box scores), I identified discrepancies with the RBI statistics given in the official DBD records. Next, I resolved the discrepancies by carefully examining the game descriptions presented in multiple newspaper accounts. Then, I provided my conclusions and the supporting documentation to Retrosheet's Tom Ruane and Dave Smith for their review of the evidence and their assessments of my conclusions. I also provided the identical information to Pete Palmer, whose database is utilized by some baseball websites and the most-recently published hardcopy baseball encyclopedias. For those who would like to examine the evidence, the supporting documentation for the corrections to Gehrig's official record is provided in the Supplementary Material, available on the SABR website.

RESULTS

1923–30

Two adjustments to the RBI record presented in my previous article need to be made.

First, for the 1926 season, I actually discovered and corrected ten, not nine, RBI errors in Gehrig's official baseball record. I inadvertently neglected to include the RBI-error game on July 20, 1926. For this game, baseball's official Day-By-Day (DBD) records (compiled by the Howe News Bureau, the official statistician for the American League during Gehrig's career) show Gehrig with one RBI and Babe Ruth with two. In actuality, Gehrig had zero and Ruth three. This results in Gehrig's season total for 1926 actually being 109 RBIs (not 110 RBIs as previously claimed).

Second, for the 1928 season, Retrosheet deemed that the official DBD record is correct for the second game of the doubleheader on July 26, 1928. Gehrig did have only one RBI (not two) in this game. Thus, Gehrig's season total for 1928 is actually 147 RBIs (not 148 as previously claimed).

1931

As described in a presentation given at the annual national SABR Convention in 2011, Trent McCotter discovered and corrected five games with RBI errors involving Lou Gehrig.[4] Subsequently, I carried out an independent review of the runs scored and RBIs by the players on the 1931 Yankees. In addition to corroborating McCotter's findings for Gehrig, I also discovered and corrected yet another RBI error for Gehrig—in the

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Gehrig's lifetime total for RBIs has been variously recorded from 1,990 to 1,996 RBIs. If these findings are accepted, the record books will soon all agree on 1,995.

game on May 3, 1931. (See Table 1.) The net result of correcting these six RBI errors is plus-one RBI for Gehrig. Thus, Gehrig's season total for 1931 is actually 185 RBIs, not 184 as shown in the official records. (See also Table 2.)

1932–39

My research revealed that Gehrig was involved in eight games with RBI errors in during the 1932–39 seasons. As indicated in Table 1, there was at least one RBI-error game for Gehrig in each of his full seasons except for the 1932 campaign. Table 2 presents the consequences of correcting the RBI errors I discovered.

DISCUSSION

As previously mentioned, the evidence in support of correcting the RBI errors I discovered in Lou Gehrig's official baseball records is compiled on the SABR website under Supplemental Material. This documentation was provided to Retrosheet (specifically Tom Ruane and Dave Smith) and Pete Palmer. Both agreed with the conclusions I reached with regard to correcting the RBI errors in Gehrig's official records.[5,6] Retrosheet has already implemented the corrections in the box score file and Gehrig's daily file; Palmer indicated that he would be making the changes after the conclusion of the 2012 season.

With regard to the Elias Sports Bureau, they have not yet taken a position on corrections of the RBI errors in Gehrig's official baseball record for the 1931–39 seasons. In the 2012 edition of *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*, Gehrig is shown with league-leading RBI totals of 184 in 1931, and 166 in 1934. As shown in Table 2, according to my research, Gehrig actually had 185 RBIs in 1931 and 166 RBIs in 1934. Whether or not Elias updates future editions of the book remains to be seen, however, subsequent to the publication of my previous research on Gehrig's RBI record, 1923–30, Elias did incorporate the corrections for Gehrig's league-leading RBI totals for the 1927, 1928, and 1930 seasons in the 2012 edition.

Gehrig's lifetime total is also affected by my findings. According to my research, Lou Gehrig accumulated a total of 1,995 RBIs in his career, five more than the 1,990 given in the official baseball records (See Table 2). The official website of Major League Baseball (MLB.com) has Gehrig credited with 1,995 RBIs, but not because of the needed corrections. MLB.com's 1,995 lifetime total is merely fortuitous because the site has erroneous RBI stats for each of Gehrig's individual seasons (except for 1924, 1929, 1936, 1938, and 1939). It remains to be seen when/if the correct RBI statistics will be included on MLB.com. The 2012 edition of *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* states that Gehrig holds the American League record for most career RBIs with 1,994. Previous editions showed Gehrig with other lifetime totals:[7]

Table 2. Lou Gehrig's RBI Record, 1923–39

Year	Games Played by Gehrig	Official RBIs for Gehrig	Games with RBI-Errors for Gehrig	Net Change in RBIs for Gehrig	Correct RBIs for Gehrig
1923	13	9	1	-1	8
1924	10	5	0	0	5
1925	126	68	4	0	68
1926	155	107	10	+2	109
1927*	155	175	4	-2	173
1928*	154	142	7	+5	147
1929	154	126	5	-1	125
1930*	154	174	3	-1	173
1931*	155	184	6	+1	185
1932	156	151	0	0	151
1933	152	139	1	+1	140
1934*	154	165	1	+1	166
1935	149	119	1	+1	120
1936	155	152	2	0	152
1937	157	159	1	-1	158
1938	157	114	2	0	114
1939	8	1	0	0	1
Total	**2,164**	**1,990**	**48**	**+5**	**1,995**

* Gehrig led the AL in RBIs.

Edition	Total
1973	1,991
1974–95	1,990
1996–2006	1,995
2007–11	1,996

To facilitate consideration of corrections to Gehrig's RBI totals on MLB.com and in *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*, the final draft of this manuscript (including the Supplementary Material) was provided to John Thorn, the official historian for Major League Baseball, and Seymour Siwoff, president of the Elias Sports Bureau, the official statistician for Major League Baseball. ■

Acknowledgments

It is with tremendous gratitude that I thank the following people for their outstanding cooperation in helping me carry out the research for this article: Freddy Berowski, Cliff Blau, Steve Boren, Keith Carlson, Bob McConnell, Trent McCotter, Pete Palmer, Tom Ruane, Dave Smith, Gary Stone, and Dixie Tourangeau. And, special thanks to the "Retrosheeters"—all the people who volunteer their superb efforts to produce the database for Retrosheet—enablers of baseball research. Supplemental Material can be found online at http://sabr.org/node/25736.

Notes

1. Seymour Siwoff, *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* (New York: Elias Sports Bureau, 2012) 380, 26.
2. Herm Krabbenhoft, "Lou Gehrig's RBI Record," *The Baseball Research Journal 41* (Fall 2011), 12.
3. Herm Krabbenhoft, "Most Runs Batted In … Individual Player … Lifetime … American League," presentation at SABR 42 (June 2012, Minneapolis, MN).
4. Herm Krabbenhoft and Trent McCotter, "Most Runs Batted In … Individual Player … Single Season … American League," presentation at SABR 41 (July 2011, Long Beach, CA).
5. Tom Ruane, personal communication via email correspondence, June 16, 2012 and June 18, 2012.
6. Pete Palmer, personal communication, via email correspondence, June 24, 2012.
7. *The Little Red Book of Baseball* (the direct precursor to *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*) also lists Gehrig with 1,991 lifetime RBIs in each edition from 1940 through 1966.

Anomalies of Protested and Suspended Baseball Games

Stephen D. Boren MD, MBA

Most major league baseball games that are protested or suspended do not result in unusual situations. Actually, until 1943, suspended/successfully protested games were very rare: there were only five such games from 1876 through 1942. Since then, there have been 153 such games. Most protests are quickly dismissed by league presidents. Many suspended games are merely resumed the next day, or perhaps two days later. However, there have been some very peculiar box scores and results after protested/suspended games were finally finished. In addition there was the famous Pine Tar Game of July 24, 1983. George Brett of the Kansas City Royals hit a two-out home run in the ninth off of New York Yankee reliever Goose Gossage apparently giving them a 5–4 lead, but Brett was called out because there was too much pine tar on his bat, seemingly ending the game. However, the Royals' appeal was upheld and the game was resumed on August 18. The only further oddity of this game was that left-hander Don Mattingly was put in as a second baseman and pitcher Ron Guidry played center field.

ALMOST PLAYING FOR BOTH CLUBS IN THE SAME GAME

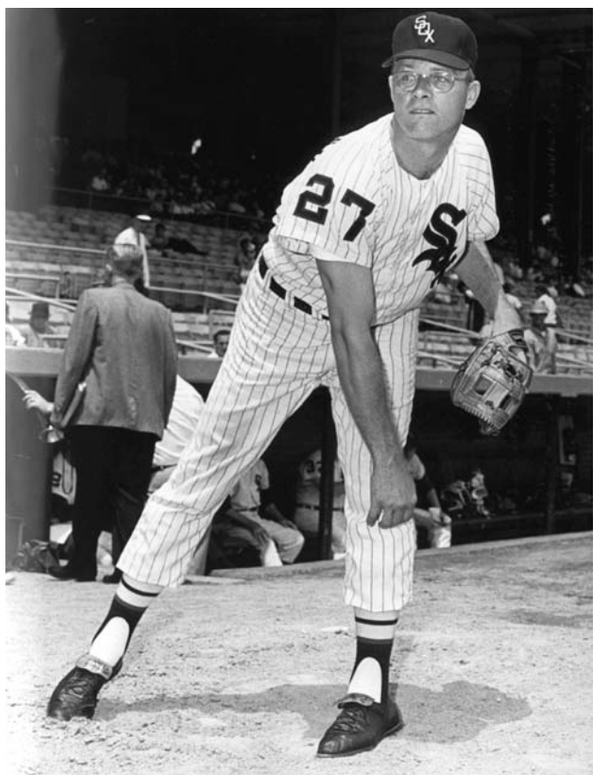
No player has played for both teams in a suspended or protested game. There is a misconception that Jim Brosnan did this. This belief probably originated from Harry Simmons' *So You Think You Know Baseball?* He posed a hypothetical situation where Brosnan was both the winning pitcher and the losing pitcher in one game because of being traded after a suspended game. Compounding the confusion, Brosnan was involved in a number of suspended games.

There have been a few times that a major league player could have played for both teams in a single game. Of note, this did happen in a National Basketball Association game originally begun November 8, 1978 and completed on March 23, 1979. Harvey Catchings and Ralph Simpson played for the Philadelphia 76ers and Eric Money played for the New Jersey Nets when the game began, but were traded to the opposing teams (February 7, 1979) by the time the suspended game was resumed. All three played for both teams (Al Skinner was also in the trade, but did not play in either game).

Baseball's first theoretical instance was June 17, 1945 when the Brooklyn Dodgers played the Boston Braves and the game was suspended and finished August 4, 1945. Reserve Dodger Morrie Aderholt (second baseman and outfielder) did not play on either date. However, he was a Dodger until he was sold to the Boston Braves August 1, 1945. Thus, he had the possibility of playing for both teams, though he did not.

The next situation occurred June 17, 1951 in a game between the New York Giants and the Pittsburgh Pirates. The game was suspended and then finished on July 25, 1951. Reserve infielder Hank Schenz pinch-ran for the Pirates in the eighth inning. He was sold to the Giants on June 30, 1951, but did not play on the resumed date.

Three players had the chance to play for both teams during the April 27, 1952 Chicago White Sox–St.



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No player has played for both teams in a suspended or protested game, but many believe that Jim Brosnan did, thanks to a hypothetical situation posed in a popular baseball trivia column in the *Saturday Evening Post*.

Louis Browns game that was suspended and then resumed July 3, 1952. On June 15, Leo Thomas and Tom Wright were traded by the Browns to the White Sox for Al Zarilla and Willie Miranda (Miranda was sold back to the Sox 13 days later). Thomas had played third base for the Browns on April 27; Cass Michaels replaced him when the game was resumed. However, Thomas did not play for the Sox on July 3. Wright and Zarilla did not play in either part of the game.

Chris Cannizzaro came close to performing this achievement. He was the starting catcher on May 16, 1971, in the first game of a San Diego Padres–Chicago Cubs doubleheader. Bob Barton, the regular Padres catcher caught the second game, which was suspended after six innings. Three days later, Cannizzaro was traded to the Cubs. On August 4, 1971 the game was completed, but Cannizzaro did not play. Ironically, he played in the schedule game that followed later that day.

Dave Hamilton also approached playing for two different clubs in the same game. The second game of a St. Louis Cardinals–Pittsburgh Pirates doubleheader on April 23, 1978 was suspended and resumed June 26, 1978. He pitched in the first game of the double header as a reliever (three scoreless innings). However, he was not used in the second game despite two other relievers being used. He was sold by the Cardinals to the Pirates May 28, 1978 and did not play in the resumed game. Like Cannizzaro, he did play in the regularly scheduled game that followed it that day.

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Al Zarilla was traded from the White Sox to the Browns before a suspended game was resumed, but did not play in the game.

PLAYING FOR TWO MAJOR LEAGUE TEAMS IN THE SAME DAY

Although no baseball player has played for two teams in the same game, seventeen have played for two clubs on the same day (besides Max Flack, Cliff Heathcote, and Joel Youngblood who were not in suspended games). This involved playing in a game for one team, and then being traded to a team that later continued a suspended/protested game.

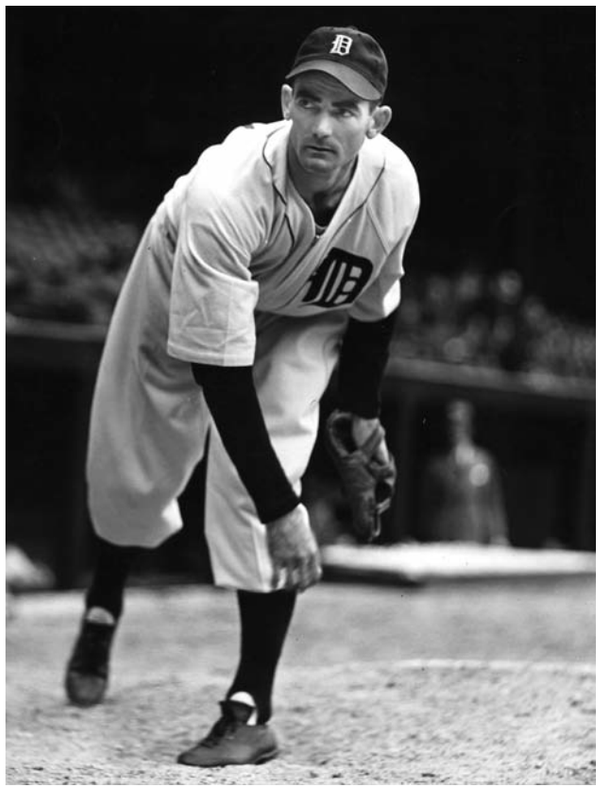
On June 13, 1943, Dee Moore of the Brooklyn Dodgers pinch-hit unsuccessfully for Frenchy Bordagaray in a game against the Boston Braves. That same day, the Philadelphia Phillies and the New York Giants had a 3–3 tie game suspended after nine innings. On July 19, Moore was sold on waivers to the Phillies. When the Philadelphia–New York game was resumed on August 6, Moore played first base for the Phillies in the tenth and again was 0-for-1 at bat. Thus he had played for two different teams in a June 13, 1943 game.

On July 16, 1944 Vern Kennedy of the Cleveland Indians pinch-ran in a game against the St. Louis Browns. That same day, the Giants and Phillies had a suspended game. On July 28, 1944, Kennedy was sold to the Phillies and he pitched in the resumed game. Thus on July 16, 1944, Kennedy played for both the Cleveland Indians and the Philadelphia Phillies in major league games.

Glen Gorbous on April 24, 1955, while playing for the Cincinnati Reds, pinch-hit for Johnny Temple in the seventh inning and was called out on strikes. On that same day, the Phillies and Pittsburgh Pirates had a game suspended with one out in the bottom of the eighth inning. On April 30, 1955, Gorbous, Andy Seminick, and Jim Greengrass were traded to Philadelphia for Smoky Burgess, Steve Ridzik, and Stan Palys. When the trade was completed on June 28, 1955, Gorbous replaced Bob Bowman in the ninth inning for the Phillies. Thus he played on two teams on the same day. Of note, Seminick did play in the resumed game, but had not played for Cincinnati on April 24.

Bill Virdon played for the St. Louis Cardinals against the Chicago Cubs in a May 13, 1956 doubleheader. He went 0-for-4 in each game. He was traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates on May 17, 1956. On May 13, 1956 the Philadelphia Phillies and Pittsburgh Pirates played a game that was suspended and later resumed on July 3, 1956. Virdon pinch hit for Eddie O'Brien in the ninth for the Pirates and singled.

Dee Moore appears to have played for two different teams on June 13, 1943, pinch-hitting for the Dodgers, and then after being sold to Philadelphia, playing first base in the August 6 resumption of a suspended Phillies game originally begun on that day.



On July 16, 1944, Vern Kennedy of the Cleveland Indians pinch ran in a game against the St. Louis Browns. That same day, the Giants and Phillies game was suspended. After Kennedy was sold to the Phillies on July 28, he pitched in the resumed game.

Bob Usher played for the Cleveland Indians against the Detroit Tigers on April 21, 1957. In the ninth he pinch-hit for Don Mossi and walked. He was traded to the Washington Senators May 15, 1957. On April 21, 1957 the Baltimore Orioles and Washington Senators played a game that was suspended and later resumed on May 27, 1957. Usher replaced Whitey Herzog in center field and went 0-for-2.

Danny O'Connell played for the Milwaukee Braves against the Cincinnati Reds on April 28, 1957, getting one double in three at-bats. He was traded to the New York Giants on June 15, 1957 in the Red Schoendienst transaction. He replaced Red in the lineup when the April 28, 1957 suspended game between the Giants and Phillies was resumed on August 16, 1957 and walked in his only appearance.

Ron Northey pinch-hit for Earl Battey for the Chicago White Sox against the Kansas City Athletics on April 28, 1957(he flied out). He later was released by the Sox on May 29, 1957 and signed with the Philadelphia Phillies the next day. On April 28, 1957 the Giants and Phillies played a game that was suspended and later resumed on August 16, 1957. Playing for the Phillies, Northey grounded out for Turk Farrell. Thus, Northey pinch-hit for two different teams on the same date, in different leagues.

On June 13, 1968, during a California Angels and Boston Red Sox game, Vic Davalillo while playing for the Cleveland Indians, pinch-hit for Tommy Harper and continued in right field. He was 1-for-3. On June 15, 1968, he was traded to the California Angels for Jimmie Hall. On June 13, 1968 the California Angels and Boston Red Sox played a game that was suspended and later resumed on August 8, 1968. Davalillo played center field in the ninth for the Angels.

On May 16, 1971, Leron Lee played for the St. Louis Cardinals and pinch-hit for Moe Drabowski (he struck out). He played right and left field and went 1-for-2. On June ll, 1971, he was traded to the San Diego Padres. On May 16, 1971 the second game between the Chicago Cubs and the San Diego Padres was suspended and later resumed on August 4, 1971. As a Padre, he grounded out for Tom Phoebus.

On May 10, 1979, Miguel Dilone of the Oakland Athletics played right field against the Baltimore Orioles and went 0-for-4. He was sold to the Chicago

Cubs on July 4, 1979. On May 10, 1979 the Cincinnati Reds-Chicago Cubs game was suspended and later resumed on July 23, 1979. Then he pinch-ran for Bill Buckner in the 11th inning.

Cliff Johnson, on May 28, 1980, was the designated hitter for the Cleveland Indians against the Baltimore Orioles. He was 2-for-4 with a walk. He was traded to the Chicago Cubs on June 23, 1980. On May 28, 1980 the Montreal Expos and Chicago Cubs played a game that was suspended and later resumed on August 8, 1980. He then struck out pinch-hitting for Mike Vail in the 11th inning. However, he hit a grand slam home run in the 14th to win the game. Thus Johnson drove in five runs that day: one for the Cleveland Indians and four for the Cubs.

On June 9, 1982 Larry Milbourne played second base for the Cleveland Indians and was 1-for-4. He was traded to the Minnesota Twins on July 3 and when the suspended Cleveland Indians-Detroit Tigers game of June 9, 1982 was resumed on September 24, he replaced Migel Dilone in the 14th inning at second base. He went 0-for-1.

On April 20, 1986, Bobby Bonilla was 0-for-4 for the Chicago White Sox against the Boston Red Sox. He was traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates July 23. Also on April 20, 1986, the Pirates and Chicago Cubs played a game that was suspended and later resumed on August 11. Bonilla replaced Mike Brown and played first base. He was 0-for-1 with an intentional walk.

On July 13, 1986 Tom Foley played shortstop for the Philadelphia Phillies against the Houston Astros. Then on July 24, 1986 he was traded by Philadelphia Phillies with Larry Sorensen to Montreal Expos for Skeeter Barnes and Dan Schatzeder. Also on July 13, 1986, the game between the Cincinnati Reds and the Montreal Expos was suspended with two out in the top of the sixth inning. When it was resumed on July 24, 1986 Foley was able to enter the game in the sixth inning and play shortstop "again" in the game of July 13.

On May 4, 1995 Luis Polonia of the New York Yankees played left field against the Boston Red Sox and was 0-for-3. On August 11, 1995 he was traded to the Atlanta Braves. When the May 4, 1995 Atlanta–Florida Marlins suspended game was completed on September 7, 1995, he pinch-hit for Brad Woodall in the ninth and singled.

Also on May 4, 1995 Buddy Groom of the Detroit Tigers faced two Cleveland Indian batters, but did not get either out. Fortunately, the Tigers hung on for a 4–3 victory. On August 7, 1995 he was traded to the Florida Marlins. Also on May 4, 1995, the Atlanta Braves and Florida Marlins had a suspended game. Thus, when their suspended game was resumed on September 7, 1995, he pitched the ninth inning for the Marlins.

On April 28, 2008, Ken Griffey Jr. of the Cincinnati Reds played right field against the St. Louis Cardinals and went 2-for-4. On July 31, he was traded to the Chicago White Sox. Also on April 28, 2008, the White Sox and the Baltimore Orioles had a suspended game. This was resumed on August 25, 2008, and Griffey pinch-hit for Brian Anderson and drew a walk.

Of note, Earl Rapp was in the minors (Oakland PCL) and later played in a suspended game in the majors (June 17, 1951) the same day while Pete Koegel (Eugene PCL) also performed this feat (August 1, 1971).

DEBUTS

The dates of debuts of baseball players become problematic when they later appear in a protested or suspended game. Table 1 shows the players who actually played major league games before their major league debut dates due to suspended games.

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Ron Northey pinch hit for two different teams in different leagues in games officially recorded as happening on April 28, 1957.

Table 1. Players Appearing in Suspended Games

Name	Debut	Suspension Date	Continuation Date
Luis Olmo	Jul 23, 1943	Jul 18, 1943	Sep 13, 1943
Bob Finley	Jul 4, 1943	Jun 13, 1943	Aug 6, 1943
Howie Schultz	Aug 16, 1943	Jul 18, 1943	Sep 13, 1943
Joe Vitellia	May 30, 1944	May 21, 1944	Aug 5, 1944
Frank Drews#	Aug 13, 1944	Jul 2, 1944	Augt 14, 1944
Frank Drews#	Aug 13, 1944	Aug 1, 1944	Sep 25, 1944
Vince Shupe	Jul 7, 1945	Aug 1, 1944	Sep 25, 1944
Ed Stevens	Jul 20, 1945	Augt 9, 1945	Sep 15, 1945
Al Jackson	May 31, 1959	May 3, 1959	Jun 2, 1959
Bill Harrelson*	Jul 31, 1968	Jun 13, 1968	Augt 4, 1968
Andy Messersmith	Jul 4, 1968	Jun 13, 1968	Aug 4, 1968
Oscar Gamble	Jun 15, 1969	Aug 27, 1969	Sep 2, 1969
Kurt Bevacqua	Jun 22, 1971	Jun 20, 1971	Sep 28, 197
Manny Muniz	Sep 3, 1971	August 1, 1971	Sep 7, 1971
Mike Anderson	Sep 2, 1971	Aug 1, 1971	Sep 7, 1971
Dave Parker	Apr 21, 1973	Jul 12, 1973	Jul 26, 1973
Jeff Reardon**	Aug 25, 1979	Jun 17, 1979	Aug 27, 1979
Jim Tracy	Jul 20, 1980	May 28,1980	Augt 8, 1980
Bud Anderson*	Jun 11, 1982	Jun 9, 1982	Sep 24, 1982
Carmelo Castillo	Jul 17, 1982	Jun 9, 1982	Sep 24, 1982
Kevin Rhomberg	Sep 1, 1982	Jue 9, 1982	Sep 24, 1982
Bill Moore	Jul 13, 1986	Jul 19, 1986	Jul 24, 1986
Barry Jones**	Jul 18, 1986	Apr 20, 1986	Aug 11, 1986
Barry Bonds	May 30, 1986	Apr 20, 1986	Aug 11, 1986
Luis Montanez	Aug 5, 2008	Apr 28, 2008	Aug 25, 2008
Alberto Castillo**	Jul 8, 2008	Apr 28, 2008	Aug 25, 2008
Cris Getz	Aug 12, 2008	Apr 28, 2008	Aug 25, 2008

Frank Drews was in two suspended games before his official debut.
*See Losing Pitcher section
**See Winning Pitcher section

LOSING PITCHERS NOT WITH THE LOSING TEAM

There have been a number of instances that the losing pitcher no longer pitched for the team, or lost the game before he actually pitched for the team. Table 2 shows the seven pitchers who lost games despite no longer being on the losing team.

Since Bill Harrelson, Manny Muniz, and Bud Anderson lost games before their official debuts, they had 0–1 records when they officially began their major league careers. Similarly, Jim Hearn had an additional loss two months after he ended his major league career.

Frank DiPino in 1986 had another oddity of losing a game. The April 20, 1986 Pittsburgh Pirates–Chicago Cubs game was suspended until August 11, 1986. At the time of the suspension, DiPino was with the Houston Astros. However, on July 21, 1986, he was traded to the Cubs and was the losing pitcher after it was resumed. Since the loss officially was on April 20, he lost a Chicago Cubs game while with the Houston Astros.

In addition, Cloyd Boyer of the St. Louis Cardinals almost lost a game while on the disabled list. On August 2, 1951, he was the apparent pitcher of record in a suspended game. It was resumed on September 14 and he officially lost the game then. However, he had injured his arm and did not pitch either in the majors or the minors after August 12. The Cardinals had not placed him on the disabled list or returned him to the minors, even though he was injured.

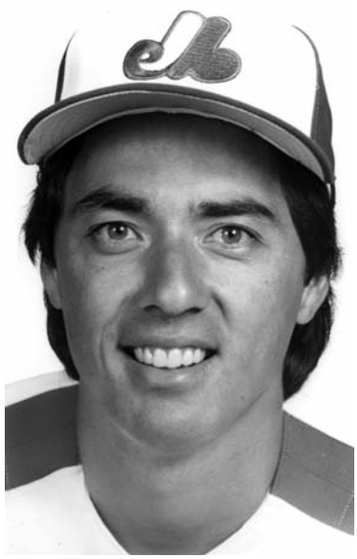
WINNING PITCHERS NOT WITH THE WINNING TEAM

Just as pitchers have officially lost games when they were not with their teams, there have been pitchers who have won suspended games when they were not on the winning team on the official date of victory or on the day the game was actually won. (See Table 3.)

Since Barry Jones was the winning pitcher of the April 20, 1986 game, and Frank DiPino was the losing pitcher, neither the winning nor the losing pitcher was with either team on the official game date. Similarly, since Williams was the winning pitcher of the August 1, 1971 game, and Manny Muniz was the losing pitcher, again neither the winning nor the losing pitcher was with either team on the official game date.

Since Reardon, Jones, and Castillo won their games before their debuts, they had 1–0 records when beginning their official major league careers. Hanrahan had been traded away before his suspended game was completed and thus earned a victory for the Nationals while pitching for the Pirates.

Holtzman was in the National Guard and he was spending two weeks (July 31 – August 14, 1971) with his military outfit when the game was resumed.



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On July 13, 1986, Tom Foley played shortstop for the Philadelphia Phillies and the Montreal Expos.

UNUSUAL REASONS TO NOT PLAY IN A SUSPENDED GAME

On June 5, 1943 the Philadelphia Phillies played the St. Louis Cardinals in a game interrupted after 7½ innings. Cardinal third baseman Jimmy Brown could not play in the resumption of the game on July 29. He was now in the United States Army (see Ken Holtzman). Whitey Kurowski, their regular third baseman replaced him in that game. There does not appear to be any player who was in the military when a game was suspended and then played in it when the game was resumed.

On June 1, 1958, the Cincinnati Reds and the Philadelphia Phillies played in game suspended with one out in the top of the ninth inning. It was resumed August 11. A number of players were traded or sold by their team or were added to their team before the continuation (Don Newcombe, Johnny Klippstein, Steve Bilko, Walt Dropo, and Jim Hegan). In addition Phillies first baseman Ed Bouchee now played. Bouchee had an outstanding rookie season in 1957, but during the offseason had pleaded guilty to multiple counts of exposing himself to young females. He did not go to jail but was placed on probation. In addition he was hospitalized in the Institute of Living (Hartford, Connecticut) for several months. Thus, he was residing in a psychiatric hospital during a game in which he officially played.

Table 2. Losing Pitcher No Longer with the Losing Team

Name	Team	Suspension	Continuation	Transferred	Team Status
Mickey Haefner	Washington Senators	7/07/49	8/20/49	sold 7/21/49	Chicago AL
Cliff Fannin	St. Louis Browns	4/20/52	5/26/52	Cut 5/14/52	San Antonio (TL)
Nellie King	Pittsburgh Pirates	4/24/55	6/28/55	Optioned 6/24/55	Hollywood (PCL)
Dave Cole	Philadelphia Phillies	5/29/55	7/08/55	6/07/55	St. Paul (AA)
Dick Hall	Pittsburgh Pirates	5/13/56	7/03/56	6/20–07/31/56	Disabled List
Luis Arroyo	Pittsburgh Pirates	7/01/56	8/10/56	minors 7/02/56	Hollywood (PCL)
Jim Hearn	Philadelphia Phillies	5/10/59	7/21/59	Released 5/22/59	Retired

Table 3. Winning Pitcher No Longer with the Winning Team

Name	Team	Suspension	Continuation	Transferred	Team Status
Ken Holtzman	Chicago Cubs	5/16/71	8/04/71	Unknown	In military
Stan Williams	St. Louis Cardinals	8/01/71	9/07/71	9/01/71	Sold by Minnesota Twins
Jeff Reardon	New York Mets	6/17/79	8/27/79	8/25/79	Not yet debuted
Barry Jones	Pittsburgh Pirates	4/20/86	8/11/86	7/18/86	Not yet debuted
Alberto Castillo	Baltimore Orioles	4/28/08	8/25/08	7/08/08	Not yet debuted
Joel Hanrahan	Washington Nationals	5/05/09	7/09/09	6/30/09	Traded to Pittsburgh Pirates

KEEPING A STREAK ALIVE

Stan Musial from April 15, 1952 through August 22, 1957 set the National League record for consecutive games played with 895 (subsequently broken by Billy Williams). However, it took a suspended game to keep the streak alive. After 862 games (beginning on the final game of the 1951 season), Musial did not play in the second game of the July 21, 1957 doubleheader. According to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "The combination of the doubleheader and the hot humid weather was too formidable," and Musial did not play. With one out in the top of the ninth, Ken Boyer singled and the game was suspended.

When the game was resumed on August 27, Musial immediately pinch ran for Boyer and then played first base for the bottom of the ninth. This extended his streak that eventually ended after the August 22, 1957 game. ■

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to acknowledge extensive use of Retrosheet.org.

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Beyond Player Win Average

Compiling Player Won-Lost Records

Tom Thress

The job of a major league baseball player is to help his team win games, for the ultimate purpose of making the playoffs and winning the World Series. Since the early history of major league baseball, pitchers have been credited with wins and losses as official measures of the effectiveness of their pitching. Of course, pitcher wins are a fairly crude measure of how well a pitcher did his job, as wins are the product of the performance of the entire team—batters, baserunners, and fielders—as well as the pitcher.

While the implementation of pitcher wins as a measure of pitcher effectiveness is less than ideal, nevertheless the concept is perfectly sound. The ultimate measure of a player's contribution—be he a pitcher, a hitter, a baserunner, or a fielder—is in how much he contributes to his team's wins. Using play-by-play data compiled from Retrosheet, I have constructed a set of player won-lost records that attempt to quantify the precise extent to which individual players contribute directly to wins and losses on the baseball field.

BASIC CALCULATIONS

The starting point for my construction of player wins and losses is context-dependent player wins and losses and the starting point for constructing context-dependent wins and losses is Win Probabilities. The concept of Win Probability was first developed by Eldon and Harlan Mills in 1969 and published in their book, *Player Win Averages*.[1]

The basic concept underlying win probability systems is elegantly simple. At any point in time, the situation in a baseball game can be uniquely described by considering the inning, the number and location of any baserunners, the number of outs, and the difference in score between the two teams. Given these four things, one can calculate a probability of each team winning the game. Hence, at the start of a batter's plate appearance, one can calculate the probability of the batting team winning the game. After the completion of the batter's plate appearance, one can once again calculate the probability of the batting team winning the game. The difference between these two probabilities, typically called the Win Probability Advancement or something similar, is the value added by the offensive team during that particular plate appearance (where such value could, of course, be negative).

If we assume that the two teams are evenly matched, then the initial probability of winning is 50% for each team. At the end of the game, the probability of one team winning will be 100%, while the probability of the other team winning will be 0%. The sum of the Win Probability advancements for a particular team will add up to exactly 50% for a winning team (100% minus 50%) and exactly -50% for a losing team (0% minus 50%). Hence, Win Probability Advancement is a perfect accounting structure for allocating credit for team wins and losses to individual players.

For my work, changes in win probabilities are credited to the individual players responsible for those changes. Positive changes in win probabilities are credited as Positive Player Game Points, while negative changes in win probabilities are credited as Negative Player Game Points.

Player Game Points are assigned to both offensive and defensive players on each individual play. Anything which increases the probability of the offensive team winning is credited as Positive Points to the offensive player(s) involved and as Negative Points to the defensive player(s) involved. Anything which increases the probability of the defensive team winning is credited as Positive Points to the defensive player(s) involved and as Negative Points to the offensive player(s) involved. Within any individual game, the number of Positive Player Game Points by offensive players on one team will be exactly equal to the number of Negative Player Game Points by defensive players on the other team and vice versa. Similarly, the number of Positive Player Game Points collected by members of the winning team will exactly equal the number of Negative Player Game Points accumulated by the losing team (and, again, vice versa).

Player Game Points assigned in this way provide a perfect accounting structure for assigning 100% of the credit for all changes in Win Probability to players on both teams involved in a game.

I then convert these Player Game Points into Context-Dependent Player Wins and Losses, which I call

pWins and pLosses. I simultaneously construct Context-Neutral Player Wins and Losses, called eWins and eLosses, which can be compared to Context-Dependent Player Wins and Losses to identify the contextual factors affecting players' performances and how those contextual factors affect the translation of player wins and losses into team wins and losses.

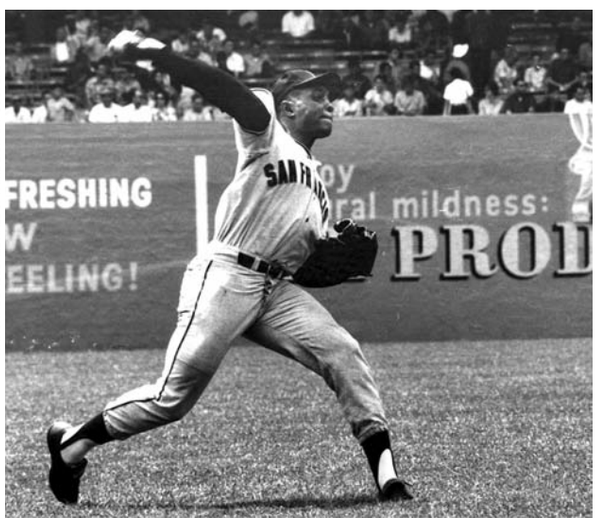
For both Context-Dependent and Context-Neutral Player Games, two adjustments are made to these results to move from initial Player Game Points to player won-lost records, as follows:

Normalizing Component Won-Lost Records to .500

A key implicit assumption underlying my player won-lost records is that major league players will have a combined winning percentage of .500. While this is trivially true at the aggregate level, almost regardless of what you do, it should also be true at finer levels of detail.

For example, if player won-lost records are calculated correctly, the total number of wins accumulated by baserunners on third base for advancing on wild pitches and passed balls should be exactly equal to the total number of losses accumulated by baserunners on third base for failing to advance on wild pitches or passed balls. Likewise, the total number of wins accumulated by second basemen for turning double plays on groundballs in double-play situations should be exactly equal to the total number of losses accumulated by second basemen for failing to turn double plays on groundballs in double-play situations.

To ensure this symmetry, I normalize Player Game Points to ensure that the total number of Positive Player Game Points is exactly equal to the number of Negative Player Game Points for every component of Player Game Points, as well as by sub-component, at the finest level of detail which makes logical sense in each case.



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Over the entire Retrosheet Era (1948–2011), the most pWins accumulated by a single player in a season was 29.1 by Willie Mays in 1962.

Normalizing Player Game Points by Game

The total number of Player Game Points accumulated in an average big league game is around 3.3 per team. This number varies tremendously game-to-game, however, with some teams earning two wins in some victories while other teams may earn six wins in team losses. At the end of the day (or season), however, all wins are equal. Hence, in my work, I have chosen to assign each team one player win and one player loss for each team game. In addition, the winning team earns a second full player win, while the losing team earns a second full player loss.[2] Context-neutral player decisions (eWins/eLosses) are also normalized to average three player decisions per game. For eWins and eLosses, this normalization is done at the season level, rather than the game level, however, so that different numbers of context-neutral player decisions will be earned in different games.

Why Three Player Decisions per Game?

The choice of three player decisions per game here is largely arbitrary. I chose three because the resulting player won-lost records end up being on a similar scale to traditional pitcher won-lost records, with which most baseball fans are quite familiar.

For example, expressed in this way, Jayson Werth led the major leagues in 2010 with 23.4 (Context-Dependent) player Wins, while Ichiro Suzuki led the majors with 21.6 losses. In comparison, C.C. Sabathia and Roy Halladay led all major league pitchers in 2010 with 21 wins (Sabathia amassed 16.3 pWins, while Halladay had 17.2.) while Joe Saunders (14.5 pLosses) led the major leagues with 17 losses. Over the entire Retrosheet Era (1948–2011), the most pWins accumulated by a single player in a season was 29.1 by Willie Mays in 1962 (against 18.4 pLosses). The most single-season pLosses were accumulated by Vladimir Guerrero in 2001 with 23.1 pLosses (and 25.4 pWins).

Why Do Players Get Wins in Games Their Team Loses?

If one is interested in assigning credit to players for team wins or blame to players for team losses, one might think that it would make sense to only credit a player with player wins in games which his team won and only credit player losses in games which his team lost. I have chosen instead to give players some wins even in team losses and some losses even in team wins. I do this for a couple of reasons.

Most simply put, baseball players do tons of positive things in team losses and baseball players do tons of negative things in team wins. Throwing away all of those things based solely on the final score of the game leads, in my opinion, to too much valuable data simply being lost. It makes the results too dependent on context.

As I noted previously, in the average major league game of the Retrosheet Era (1948–2011), the average team amasses 3.3 Player Game Points. The win probability for the winning team goes from 50% at the start of the game to 100% at the end, so that the winning team will amass exactly 0.5 more positive Player Game Points than negative Player Game Points by construction. This means that the players on an average winning team will amass a combined record of something like 1.9–1.4 in an average game. That works out to a .576 winning percentage, or about 93 wins in a 162-game schedule (93–69). Put another way, more than 40% of all Player Game Points (1–.576) would be zeroed out in a system that credited no player wins in team losses (or player losses in team wins). That's simply too much for me to be comfortable making such an adjustment.

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Hank Aaron has the most career pWins of any player since 1948.

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Barry Bonds has the most pWins above average of any player since 1948.

There are two reasons why such a large percentage of plays do not contribute to victory. First, it is indicative, I think, of the fairly high level of competitive balance within major league baseball. Even very bad MLB teams are not that much worse than very good ones.

But the other reason why such a large percentage of plays do not contribute to victory, and why I assign player wins even in team losses and vice-versa, is because of the rules of baseball. Because there is no clock in baseball, the only way for a game to end is for even the winning team to do some things that reduce its chances of winning: it has to make three outs per inning for at least four innings. Likewise, a losing team is guaranteed to do some things that increase its chance of winning: it must get the other team out three times per inning.

My system still rewards players who do positive things that contribute to wins more favorably than players who do positive things that lead to losses. As I noted previously, an average team will amass a player winning percentage of approximately .576 in team wins (and .424 in team losses). By assigning two wins and only one loss in team wins, however, players will amass a .667 player winning percentage in team wins (and .333 in team losses). So, player wins that lead to team wins will still be more valuable than player wins that happen in team losses. The latter are simply not worthless.

Relationship of Player Decisions to Team Decisions

Under my system, to move from players' team-dependent won-lost records (pWins and pLosses) to a team won-lost record, one subtracts out what I call "background wins" and "background losses." One-third of a player's decisions are background wins and one-third of a player's decisions are background losses. Mathematically, then, if the sum of the team-dependent won-lost records of the players on a team is W (wins)

and L (losses), then the team's won-lost record will be as follows:

Team Wins = W–((W + L) / 3); Team Losses = L–((W + L) / 3)

As some practical examples, a team of .500 players will be a .500 team (of course), but, for example, a team of 0.510 players (e.g., 248–238) will be a .530 team (86–76 in a 162-game season), and a team of .550 players (e.g., 267–219) will be a .650 team (105-57). At the other extreme, a team of .400 players (e.g., 194–292) will be a .200 team (32–130).

Basic Results: pWins and pLosses, eWins and eLosses

As mentioned, player wins (pWins) end up being on a similar scale to traditional pitcher wins: 20 wins is a very good season total, 300 wins is an excellent career total.

There are a total of 58 major-league players who have accumulated 300 or more pWins over games for which Retrosheet has released play-by-play data (1948–2011). They are shown in Table 1.

Accumulating 300 pWins is certainly a noteworthy accomplishment. But it's fairly clear looking at Table 1 that the list of the top players in pWins is not necessarily a list of the best players, period. For example, while Omar Vizquel and Rusty Staub both had fine, noteworthy major-league careers, did they really have better careers than, say, five-time Cy Young winner Randy Johnson, who "only" amassed 282.8 pWins in his illustrious career?

COMPARING PLAYERS ACROSS POSITIONS

Player won-lost records are an excellent overall measure of player value. When context and the effects of teammates are controlled for, player won-lost records

Table 1. Players with 300 or More pWins (1948–2011)

Player	pWins	pLosses	Player	pWins	pLosses
Hank Aaron	476.5	361.6	Dwight Evans	328.7	274.9
Barry Bonds	462.1	317.3	George Brett	327.3	272.1
Willie Mays	446.0	322.8	Ozzie Smith	326.5	302.7
Pete Rose	437.9	391.2	Gaylord Perry	326.1	298.0
Rickey Henderson	428.2	353.7	Derek Jeter	325.6	276.4
Carl Yastrzemski	426.3	361.3	Don Sutton	325.2	300.6
Frank Robinson	396.4	308.3	Chipper Jones	322.5	247.3
Dave Winfield	393.9	344.2	Vada Pinson	322.1	298.6
Al Kaline	380.0	301.4	Rusty Staub	321.8	305.2
Cal Ripken	377.2	347.3	Tony Gwynn	321.7	289.1
Reggie Jackson	367.5	298.6	Roger Clemens	319.9	229.0
Joe Morgan	363.0	282.6	Luis Gonzalez	319.1	295.3
Nolan Ryan	359.5	332.4	Sammy Sosa	318.1	284.4
Robin Yount	357.8	335.7	Manny Ramirez	317.9	252.4
Craig Biggio	352.9	319.4	Paul Molitor	315.3	270.8
Andre Dawson	348.9	315.8	Luis Aparicio	314.5	308.8
Mickey Mantle	348.8	227.9	Tim Raines	314.2	274.4
Eddie Murray	346.2	286.7	Dave Parker	314.1	276.4
Lou Brock	345.7	329.6	Tom Seaver	313.6	260.3
Brooks Robinson	344.2	305.3	Warren Spahn	312.9	262.8
Gary Sheffield	343.8	290.1	Omar Vizquel	312.3	321.2
Steve Carlton	343.7	309.6	Roberto Alomar	309.1	275.4
Roberto Clemente	336.9	283.0	Steve Finley	308.8	289.3
Ken Griffey Jr.	336.9	297.9	Rafael Palmeiro	308.7	266.9
Alex Rodriguez	335.0	261.1	Tony Perez	305.3	254.3
Phil Niekro	334.2	324.3	Willie Davis	304.5	274.9
Mike Schmidt	332.6	254.7	Graig Nettles	302.1	267.4
Greg Maddux	331.6	273.4	Eddie Mathews	300.5	224.1
Billy Williams	330.4	281.0	Darrell Evans	300.2	257.1

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Roger Clemens has more pWins above average than any other pitcher since 1948.

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Ken Griffey Jr. is one of 58 players with more than 300 career pWins since 1948, the earliest season for which we have reliable play-by-play data.

can also, in my opinion, serve as an excellent starting point for measuring player talent. As a means of comparing players who play different positions, however, raw player won-lost records are not necessarily an ideal comparative tool.

In constructing player won-lost records, all events are measured against expected, or average, results across the event. Because of this, fielding player won-lost records are constructed such that aggregate winning percentages are .500 for all fielding positions. Hence, one can say that a shortstop with a defensive winning percentage of .475 was a below-average defensive shortstop and a first baseman with a defensive winning percentage of .510 was an above-average defensive first baseman, but there is no basis for determining which of these two players was a better fielder—the below-average fielder at the more difficult position or the above-average fielder at the easier position.

From an offensive perspective, batting player won-lost records are constructed by comparing across all batters, not simply batters who share the same fielding position. In the National League, this means that offensive comparisons include pitcher hitting, so that, on average, non-pitcher hitters will be slightly above average in the National League, while, of course, because of the DH rule, the average non-pitcher hitter will define the average in the American League.

These are, in fact, two sides of the same coin. There is a nearly perfect negative correlation between the average offensive production at a defensive position and the importance and/or difficulty associated with playing that position. That is, players at the toughest defensive positions tend to be weaker hitters than players at easier defensive positions.

When comparing, for example, a left fielder to a shortstop, one has to somehow balance the fact that left fielders are expected to hit better than shortstops against the fact that shortstops are, on average, better defensive players than left fielders.

There are three ways to do this:

(1) One can adjust offensive player won-lost records based on the defensive position of the player,

(2) One can adjust defensive player won-lost records based on the defensive position of the player, or

(3) One can adjust the baseline against which players are measured.

I believe that the best choice is the third one, measuring players against different baselines based on the position(s) which they played.

Unique positional averages by position are calculated by season. A positional average winning percentage is then constructed for each individual player based on the positions at which the player accumulated his wins and losses.

The top 50 players in career pWins over positional average (pWOPA) over the Retrosheet Era (1948–2011) are shown in Table 2.

Focusing on players' wins above average helps to highlight players who had relatively short but brilliant careers, players like Pedro Martinez, whose 194.8 career pWins rank a fairly low 325th in the Retrosheet Era, while his 33.3 pWOPA ranks a much more impressive 15th, or Mariano Rivera, whose 119.6 pWins rank even lower than Pedro's (914th) but who ranks 30th in career pWOPA with 28.3.

WINS OVER REPLACEMENT LEVEL

Replacement level is the level of performance a team should be able to get from a player it can find easily on short notice—such as a minor-league call-up or a veteran waiver-wire pickup. Big league players only have value to a team above what the team could get from pulling players off the street. There is no real marginal value to having a third baseman make routine plays, since if a major league team were to lose its starting third baseman, it could and would fill the position with somebody who would, in fact, at least make those routine plays at third base. This is similar to the economic concept of opportunity cost.[3]

For my work, I define replacement level as equal to a winning percentage one weighted standard deviation below positional average, with separate standard deviations calculated for pitchers and non-pitchers. Unique standard deviations are calculated in this way for each year. These standard deviations are then applied to the unique positional averages of each individual player. Overall, this works out to an average replacement level of about .448 (.454 for non-pitchers, and .437 for pitchers). A team of .448 players would have an expected winning percentage of .343 (56–106 over a 162-game season).

The top 50 players in career pWins over replacement level (pWORL) over the Retrosheet Era (1948–2011) are shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Top 50 Players: Wins Over Positional Average (pWOPA)

Player	pWins	pLosses	pWOPA
Barry Bonds	462.1	317.3	59.1
Roger Clemens	319.9	229.0	51.0
Mickey Mantle	348.8	227.9	50.0
Willie Mays	446.0	322.8	48.7
Joe Morgan	363.0	282.6	45.7
Greg Maddux	331.6	273.4	44.8
Alex Rodriguez	335.0	261.1	41.7
Hank Aaron	476.5	361.6	40.0
Tom Seaver	313.6	260.3	38.4
Randy Johnson	282.8	222.6	37.9
Warren Spahn	312.9	262.8	37.1
Bob Gibson	267.8	222.7	33.7
Jim Palmer	246.8	189.8	33.5
Derek Jeter	325.6	276.4	33.5
Pedro Martinez	194.8	139.0	33.3
Eddie Mathews	300.5	224.1	32.8
Mike Schmidt	332.6	254.7	32.5
Juan Marichal	236.4	191.1	32.3
Chipper Jones	322.5	247.3	32.2
Whitey Ford	217.4	168.9	32.0
Steve Carlton	343.7	309.6	31.5
Albert Pujols	242.9	163.0	30.2
Rickey Henderson	428.2	353.7	29.2
John Smoltz	240.8	201.6	29.1
Yogi Berra	220.1	163.8	29.1
Lou Whitaker	298.8	253.1	28.8
Mike Mussina	225.0	174.9	28.6
Tom Glavine	282.1	252.2	28.6
Frank Robinson	396.4	308.3	28.5
Mariano Rivera	119.6	57.4	28.3
Johnny Bench	250.5	197.0	27.1
Cal Ripken	377.2	347.3	26.8
Barry Larkin	287.6	244.3	26.6
Manny Ramirez	317.9	252.4	25.9
Al Kaline	380.0	301.4	25.9
Duke Snider	266.2	198.6	25.8
Jackie Robinson	174.0	120.8	25.7
Fergie Jenkins	290.6	256.7	25.6
Kevin Brown	206.2	167.2	25.4
Reggie Jackson	367.5	298.6	25.3
Curt Schilling	208.1	173.1	25.2
Tommy John	287.0	254.6	24.6
Roy Halladay	160.0	118.2	24.4
George Brett	327.3	272.1	23.8
Don Sutton	325.2	300.6	23.8
Jim Thome	270.4	208.0	23.8
Bob Lemon	190.0	155.7	23.8
Alan Trammell	274.7	250.0	23.3
Frank Thomas	253.6	191.0	23.3
Gaylord Perry	326.1	298.0	23.3

Measuring against replacement level instead of a verage helps to weed out pure compilers (such as Rusty Staub) while showing a mix of short, excellent careers (e.g., Pedro Martinez) together with long, more modestly above-average careers, such as Brooks Robinson.

PLAYER WON-LOST RECORDS AS AN ANALYTICAL TOOL

Player wins and losses are calculated using a nine-step process, each step of which assumes average performance in all subsequent steps. There are four basic positions from which a player can contribute toward his baseball team's probability of winning: batter, baserunner, pitcher, and fielder. Player decisions are allocated to each of these four positions, as appropriate, within each of nine components.

Component 1: Basestealing

Player decisions are assessed to baserunners, pitchers, and catchers for stolen bases, caught stealing, pickoffs, and balks.

Component 2: Wild Pitches and Passed Balls

Player decisions are assessed to baserunners, pitchers, and catchers for wild pitches and passed balls.

Component 3: Balls not in Play

Player decisions are assessed to batters and pitchers for plate appearances that do not involve the batter putting the ball in play: i.e., strikeouts, walks, and hit-by-pitches.

Component 4: Balls in Play

Player decisions are assessed to batters and pitchers on balls that are put in play, including home runs, based on how and where the ball is hit.

Component 5: Hits versus Outs on Balls in Play

Player decisions are assessed to batters, pitchers, and fielders on balls in play, based on whether they are converted into outs or not.

Component 6: Singles versus Doubles versus Triples

Player decisions are assessed to batters, pitchers, and fielders on hits in play, on the basis of whether the hit becomes a single, a double, or a triple.

Component 7: Double Plays

Player decisions are assessed to batters, baserunners, pitchers, and fielders on ground-ball outs in double-

Table 3. Top 50 Players: Wins Over Replacement Level (pWORL)

Player	pWins	pLosses	pWORL	Player	pWins	pLosses	pWORL
Barry Bonds	462.1	317.3	96.9	Pete Rose	437.9	391.2	55.3
Willie Mays	446.0	322.8	92.2	Jim Palmer	246.8	189.8	54.6
Hank Aaron	476.5	361.6	86.9	Lou Whitaker	298.8	253.1	54.4
Mickey Mantle	348.8	227.9	82.7	Manny Ramirez	317.9	252.4	54.0
Roger Clemens	319.9	229.0	80.0	Juan Marichal	236.4	191.1	53.9
Joe Morgan	363.0	282.6	78.7	Don Sutton	325.2	300.6	53.9
Greg Maddux	331.6	273.4	76.8	Gaylord Perry	326.1	298.0	53.9
Alex Rodriguez	335.0	261.1	71.0	John Smoltz	240.8	201.6	53.1
Frank Robinson	396.4	308.3	68.1	Barry Larkin	287.6	244.3	52.3
Warren Spahn	312.9	262.8	66.5	Duke Snider	266.2	198.6	52.1
Rickey Henderson	428.2	353.7	66.2	Fergie Jenkins	290.6	256.7	52.0
Tom Seaver	313.6	260.3	65.9	Whitey Ford	217.4	168.9	51.9
Randy Johnson	282.8	222.6	65.1	Pedro Martinez	194.8	139.0	51.8
Al Kaline	380.0	301.4	64.3	George Brett	327.3	272.1	51.7
Derek Jeter	325.6	276.4	63.1	Harmon Killebrew	299.9	235.0	51.3
Steve Carlton	343.7	309.6	62.7	Willie McCovey	296.9	223.1	51.0
Eddie Mathews	300.5	224.1	62.5	Tommy John	287.0	254.6	50.8
Cal Ripken	377.2	347.3	61.1	Robin Yount	357.8	335.7	50.8
Carl Yastrzemski	426.3	361.3	60.5	Yogi Berra	220.1	163.8	50.8
Chipper Jones	322.5	247.3	60.2	Mike Mussina	225.0	174.9	50.6
Mike Schmidt	332.6	254.7	59.9	Brooks Robinson	344.2	305.3	50.4
Reggie Jackson	367.5	298.6	58.5	Albert Pujols	242.9	163.0	50.1
Bob Gibson	267.8	222.7	58.4	Craig Biggio	352.9	319.4	50.1
Tom Glavine	282.1	252.2	56.9	Johnny Bench	250.5	197.0	49.8
Nolan Ryan	359.5	332.4	56.4	Robin Roberts	280.1	257.0	49.4

play situations, based on whether or not the batter grounds into a double play.

Component 8: Baserunner Outs
Player decisions are assessed to batters, baserunners, and fielders on the basis of baserunner outs.

Component 9: Baserunner Advancements
Player decisions are assessed to batters, baserunners, and fielders on the basis of how many bases, if any, baserunners advance on balls in play.

As a result of this component-based calculation process, player won-lost records, as I calculate them, express the contributions of individual players (batters, pitchers, third basemen, etc.) and the impact of individual plays (stolen bases, ground outs, triples, etc.) in a common unit: wins (and losses).

In my work, I calculate two sets of player won-lost records: one tied to the context in which events happened and one which attempts to control for the context of a player's performance (including the quality of his teammates). Comparisons between these two sets of records enable one to isolate the specific contextual factors that can affect player (and, hence, team) won-lost records. These factors are again expressed in the same common unit as individual player contributions: wins (and losses).

All of the various factors that contribute to winning major league baseball games—individual player performance, specific types of performance, the timing and context of a performance, the inter-relationships between teammates (or opponents)—can hence be decomposed and expressed in the same common unit. And that unit is the ultimate goal of all big-league players in all games: team wins and team losses.

Because of this, in my opinion, player won-lost records, as I calculate them, provide a wonderful analytical tool for analyzing and understanding many (if not most) aspects of player performance. ■

Author's Note: The individual components of player won-lost records and more analyses, including contextual factors associated with player won-lost records and the complete player won-lost records for all the players and teams for whom Retrosheet has play-by-play data, are on the project website at http://baseball.tomthress.com. Because this analysis requires play-by-play data to be accurate, at this time my system can't be applied to historical greats like Cobb, Wagner, or Ruth. I'm an optimist, though, so I'm hopeful that eventually Retrosheet will have play-by-play data going back far enough to someday include those players in my analysis.

Notes

1. Eldon G. Mills and Harlon Mills, *Player Win Averages*, originally published by A. S. Barnes (1970). This book is available for free download (as a PDF) at http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_harlan/6/.
2. Ties are allocated as 1.5 Player Wins and 1.5 Player Losses for both teams.
3. Wikipedia defines "opportunity cost" as "the cost of any activity measured in terms of the value of the next best alternative forgone (that is not chosen)." See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opportunity_cost.

Game Scores

Matches, Correlations, and a Possible Umpire Bias

Peter Uelkes

INTRODUCTION

On Sunday July 17, 2011, the Boston Red Sox and Tampa Bay Rays hooked up for the rubber match of a three-game series, both teams' first after the All-Star break. Josh Beckett started for Boston while Jeff Niemann toed the rubber for Tampa Bay.

Both starting pitchers went eight shutout innings in the game, therefore handing off a scoreless tie to the bullpens. At that point nobody knew that it would be another eight innings before the first run was scored. Red Sox Dustin Pedroia drove in Josh Reddick for the game's only run in the top of the 16th inning, giving Alfredo Aceves the win (after the save by Jonathan Papelbon). Of course, neither starter figured in the decision.

Aside from the drama of a game going scoreless into the 16th inning, an interesting statistical tidbit came to light: each starter achieved a game score of 86. Beckett did it by giving up only an infield hit and no walks while striking out six. Niemann gave up two hits and two walks while getting into double figures in strikeouts with ten.

A high-eighties game score is in itself noteworthy. However, both starters achieving the same high game score struck me as remarkable. I therefore did some analysis on matching game scores and related issues, the results of which are presented in the following sections. The data were taken from over 117,500 MLB games in Retrosheet play-by-play data and cover the period 1948 through 2010. (This excludes the above mentioned Red Sox–Rays game which happened in 2011.)

Game scores were introduced by Bill James as a single number which gives an indication of the quality of a starter's performance and is calculated from standard box score items. The formula (in brief) looks like this:

GS = 50 + 1*(# of outs) + SO – 4*(H+R+ER) – BB + 2*(# of completed innings after the 4th)

A "quality start" is often defined as GS > 50. The highest game scores ever achieved exceed 100. The highest nine-inning GS is 105 from Kerry Wood's famous 20-K game in 1998. Game scores of 90 or higher are quite rare: many pitchers never achieve those lofty heights. Particularly bad starts, on the other hand, may even result in a negative game score.

Starting at matching game scores, which is more of a curiosity, we will analyze some properties of game scores, including the correlation to its constituent variables, relation to the won/loss decision for the starting pitcher, and the issue of a possible bias toward the home starter regarding the calling of balls and strikes.

MATCHING GAME SCORES

Figure 1 shows the count of matching game scores. A number of observations stem from this.

There are quite a few matching game scores for "mid-level" scores in the 40–60 range. Some game scores have more than 60 matches, e.g. a game score of 54 was reached 67 times by both starters in the same game.

For game scores in excess of about 80 there are rarely any matches. This is expected because such lofty game scores are relatively rare, much more so when required by both starters.

The highest matching game score is 92, achieved on September 13, 1967, by Sonny Siebert of the Indians and Gary Peters of the White Sox. Both pitchers went 11 innings and gave up no runs. The White Sox won it, 1–0, in the 17th inning, very similar to the Boston-Tampa Bay game mentioned in the introduction. One major difference, aside from the fact that both starters went three more innings than their modern successors, is that Gary Peters walked 10 (!) batters.

We find the next highest matching game score at 87, achieved twice, first in July 1953 by the Phillies' Bob Miller and the Braves' Max Surkont. Both pitchers went 10 innings, giving up no runs. This game ended in a tie after 10 innings and each pitcher were credited with a complete game but no decision. Then in September 1985 the Mets' Dwight Gooden and the Dodgers' Fernando Valenzuela, both among the brightest stars of their era, hooked up for an epic duel. Gooden went nine shutout innings with 10 strikeouts while Valenzuela pitched 11 scoreless innings. Neither starter figured in the decision as the Mets scored the winning runs in the top of the 13th inning. Please note that this is the

highest matching game score for which the starters got a different number of outs.

The next highest matching game score is 86, reached on May 31, 1975, by the Orioles' Mike Cuellar and the Angels' Bill Singer. Both pitchers were credited with a complete game and a decision, as Cuellar was on the winning end of a 1–0 score. Singer struck out 10 but gave up the game's lone run in the eighth inning. This game has the highest matching game score among contests that didn't require extra innings. Also, it's the highest matching game score for which at least one starter (in this case both) figured in the decision.

The recent Beckett-Niemann matchup follows next on the list, but is not included in the dataset as mentioned. It's the highest matching game score for which at least one starter (both, in this case) went less than nine innings.

The lowest matching game score is a meager 8, "achieved" on June 26, 1987. The culprits were Red Sox ace Rogers Clemens (the reigning AL MVP and Cy Young Award winner who would win another AL Cy the very same year) and Boston's arch-rival Yankees' Tommy John. Each starter coughed up eight runs in what turned out to be 12–11 win by the Yankees in 10 innings. (See Figure 1.)

HIGH-SPREAD GAME SCORES

After looking into matching game scores for both starters we will examine the maximum difference between the two opposing starters' game scores. Figures 2 and 3 show the spread distribution: the count of differences between home and road starter's game scores. The first one has a normal (linear) y axis, the second one represents the same data with a logarithmic y scale to better show the extreme tail ends of the distribution.

Some key results from the graphic and the corresponding data are represented in Figure 2.

The highest difference (in absolute terms) is a 104 point spread which happened on August 3, 1998. In the midst of the Yankees 114-win season, their starter Orlando Hernandez achieved a +83 game score with a complete game, nine- inning, one- run effort at the Coliseum in Oakland. The opposing A's starter Mike Oquist gave up 16 hits and 14 runs, all earned, in five innings. This resulted in a -21 game score.

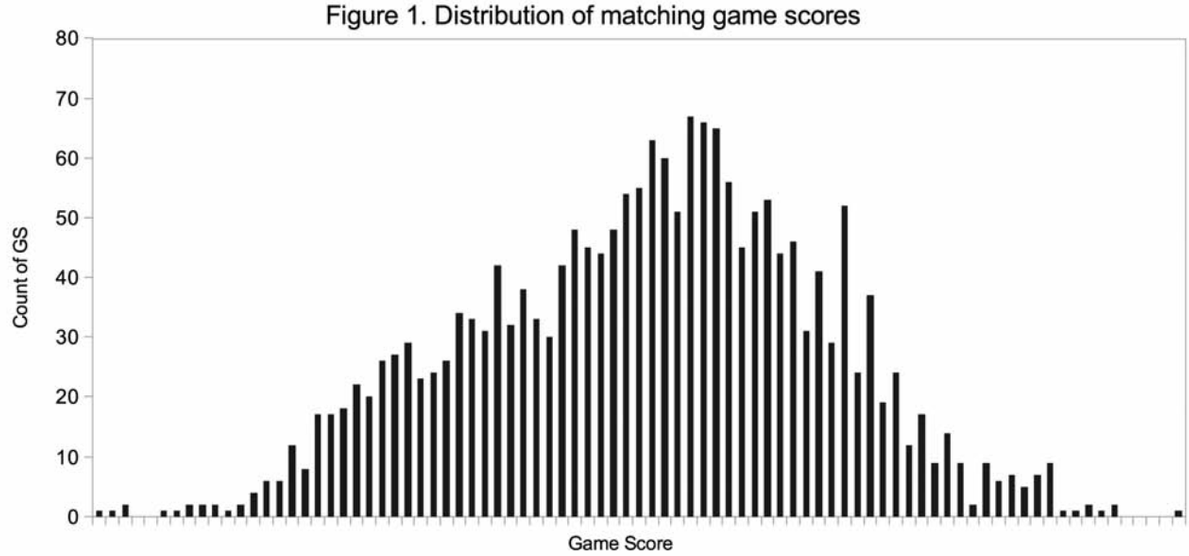
The next highest spread comes in at 89. This happened twice, both times the home starter ended up having the much better game score. (See Figure 3.)

On August 2,1996, the Montreal Expos' Pedro Martinez had a +84 game score on the strength of eight shutout innings with only two hits. The visiting Cincinnati Reds' starter Kevin Jarvis gave up 10 runs on 13 hits in 3.1 innings for a -5 game score.

On August 4, 2004, Brian Anderson of the Kansas City Royals pitched a complete game shutout with only two hits against the Chicago White Sox. It improved his record to 2–9 and his ERA to 6.33 (!). The Pale Hose's starter, Scott Schoeneweis, didn't fare nearly as well, giving up nine runs on nine hits while getting only four outs.

The distribution is quite symmetrical with a median of 1 and a mean of about 0.86. If one looks at the home and road GS separately, the average home GS is 51.8 while the average road GS is 49.3. The home starter tends to have a slightly better score. The difference is the equivalent of one additional hit given up

Figure 1. Distribution of matching game scores



by the road starter. We'll come back to this point later. Also, there is no correlation between the quality of the home and road starters' respective results: the overall correlation coefficient between home GS and road GS is 0.0386 for over 117,500 games.

GAME SCORES vs. DECISIONS

As is well known, not the least thanks to SABR members' efforts, pitcher won-lost records are a poor indicator of a hurler's performance or worth to his team. However, most starting pitchers are eager to earn a "W" for their effort every time they toe the rubber. We will therefore take a look at how decisions (W, L, ND) and game scores relate to each other. The offensive side of the game has a big impact on a pitcher's decision and is not measured in game score at all.

For home starters, the distribution of won-lost decisions in "bins" of GS ranges is shown in Figure 4.

As expected, the higher the game score, the higher the percentage of wins generally becomes. On the tail ends of the spectrum, the sample size is small, giving rise to large fluctuations. For example, there are 26 home starts with game scores in excess of 100, but just over half of them (14) have resulted in wins. There are quite a few tough-luck pitchers like Cincinnati's Jim Maloney, who pitched an 11-inning complete game with 18 strikeouts on June 14, 1965, giving up only one run for a game score of 106. He had some bad timing for his masterpiece, because the opposing pitchers for the New York Mets, Frank Lary and Larry Bearnarth, combined for 11 shutout innings, handing Maloney the loss.

For road starters, the distribution closely resembles the one for home starters, with an even smaller percentage of very high game scores resulting in actual wins for the starting pitcher. (See Figure 5.)

Only three out of twelve road starters with game scores above 100 got a "W" for their efforts!

This may be contrasted with very poor starts—low game scores—nevertheless resulting in a win because of great run support. For example, on May 31, 1979, future Hall-of-Famer Don Sutton of the Los Angeles Dodgers "earned" a win by giving up nine runs on 13 hits in 6⅔ innings for a game score of 14. His opponent,

Figure 2. Distribution of game score spreads

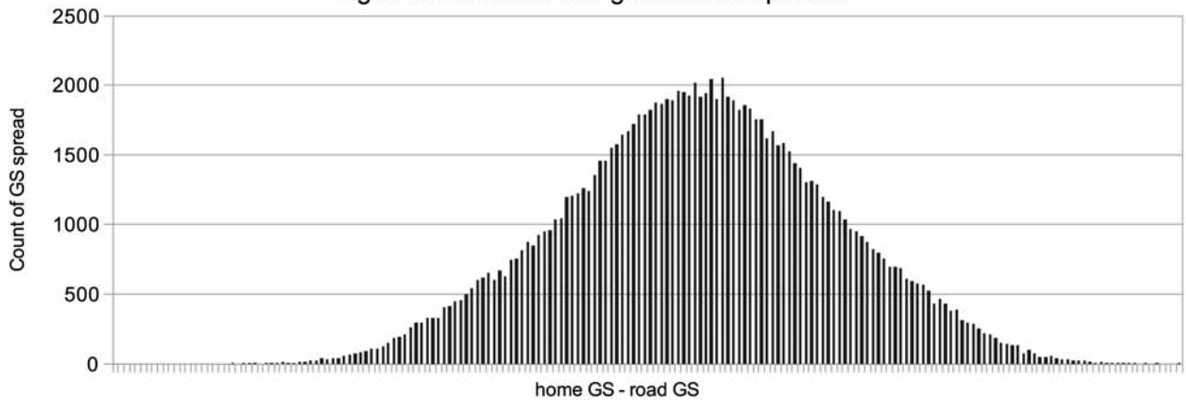
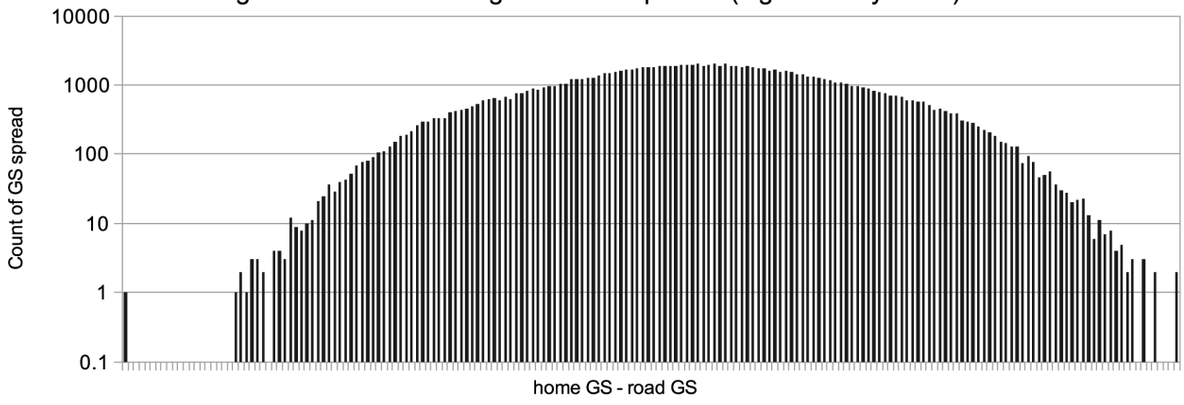


Figure 3. Distribution of game score spreads (logarithmic y scale)



Vida Blue, only needed 3⅓ innings in that game to also give up nine runs, resulting in a game score of 5.

So, to summarize the relationship between game scores and decisions, the general trend shows the expected results while also allowing us to easily identify very lucky or very tough decisions compared to the actual pitching performance.

GAME SCORE CORRELATIONS

Looking at the game score formula given previously, we see that GS is derived from six variables: innings pitched (i.e. outs), hits, runs, earned runs, bases on balls, and strikeouts. How strongly does GS correlate with each of these variables? A regression analysis was done for game scores versus each variable, separately for home and road starting pitcher. 117,534 game data sets were used for each—117,534 home starters and of course the same number of road starters.

Table 1 shows the correlation coefficients (r) and their squares (r2).

Table 1. Correlation coefficients of GS to variables

	Home Starter		Road Starter	
Variable	r	r2	r	r2
IP	0.785	0.616	0.778	0.605
R	-0.845	0.714	-0.856	0.733
ER	-0.831	0.691	-0.842	0.708
H	-0.420	0.177	-0.418	0.175
BB	-0.060	0.004	-0.064	0.004
SO	0.544	0.296	0.532	0.283

Figure 4. Home Starter Decisions for GS ranges

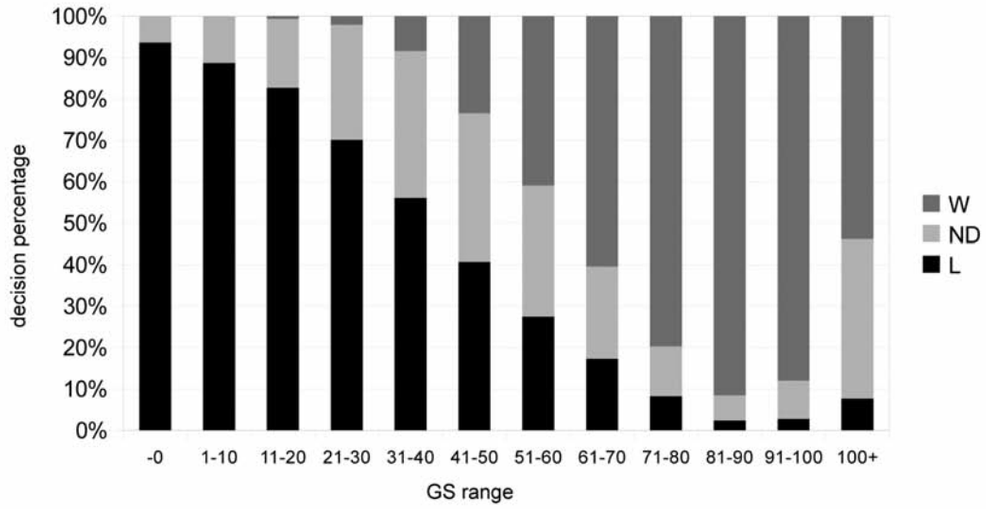
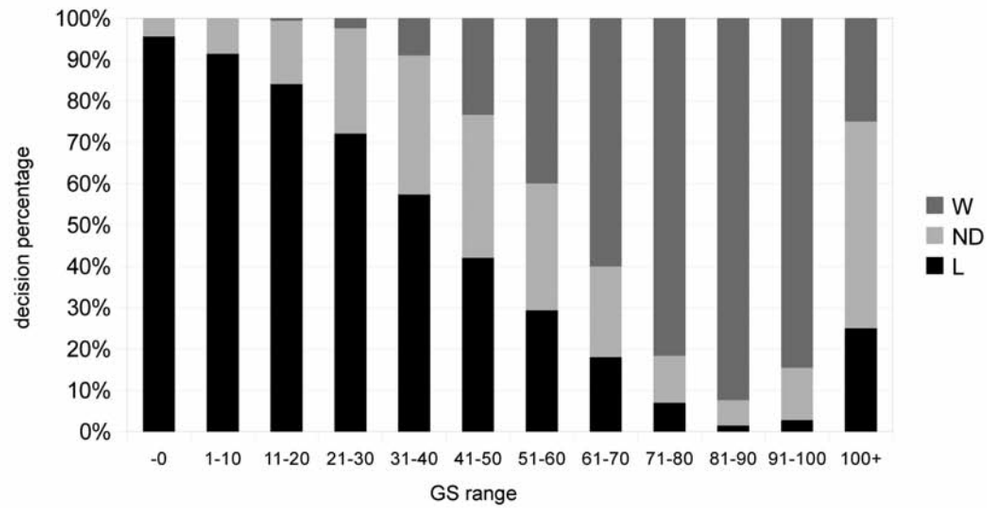
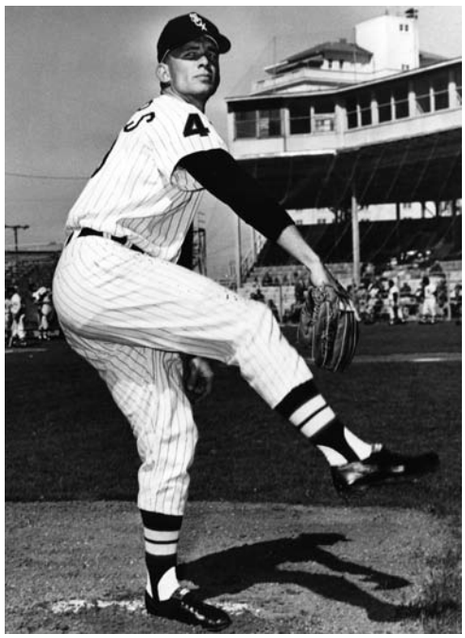


Figure 5. Road Starter Decisions for GS ranges





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Gary Peters faced Sonny Siebert on September 13, 1967. Both pitchers went 11 innings and gave up no runs, earning identical game scores of 92.

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Kerry Wood earned the highest nine-inning game score (105) in his famous 20-K game in 1998.

GS correlates positively with outs (IP) and strikeouts, as expected from the formula, and negatively with runs, earned runs, hits, and walks, also as expected. The correlation is rather strong with IP and (E)R, moderate for strikeouts, and weak for hits. For bases on balls, the correlation is basically non-existent. Of course, the r2 values don't add up to 1 (100%) because the variables are not independent of each other. (For example, all earned runs are also runs, and runs are correlated with hits and walks.)

I interpret the observation of a very weak correlation between GS and BB as meaning that walks in and of themselves are not that bad in regard to game score and therefore "quality of start." Rather, walks that turn into runs are what really hurts a pitcher's game GS.

HOME/ROAD SPLITS IN VARIABLES: UMPIRE BIAS?

While discussing game score spreads (difference between home and road starters' game scores) we noticed that on average the home starter has a slight edge—a higher game score by about two points. We will now look into which variables contribute to this difference.

For this purpose, the 117,534 games in the data set were analyzed with respect to average values for hits, runs, strikeouts, and walks for the home and road starter, respectively, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Variable averages for home and road starters

Variable	Home Starter	Road Starter	Difference
Hits	6.265	6.186	+1.27 %
Runs	3.047	3.188	-4.52 %
Strikeouts	3.981	3.596	+10.20 %
Bases on balls	2.141	2.220	-3.65 %
Innings pitched	6.392	6.040	+5.67 %

The "difference" column gives the percentage spread between home and road starters' variable with respect to the mean value of the two numbers.

The difference in hits is small: both starters give up about the same number of hits. The spreads in runs and bases on balls are somewhat larger, though—keep in mind that the results are highly significant because of the large data set. For whatever reason, road starters walk more batters than home starters. This contrast is even more pronounced when looking at strikeouts: the difference is more than 10%, a significant advantage for the home starter. Especially enlightening is the strikeout-to-walk ratio (K/BB) which is 1.859 for home starters and 1.620 for road starters—a 14.8 percent spread.

To illustrate that strikeout issue, Figure 6 shows the distribution of strikeouts per start for home and road starters,respectively. Please note the logarithmic y-axis to better represent the right (high-strikeout) tail of the distribution.

A piece of anecdotal evidence for a certain strikeout advantage for home pitchers is also the number of starts with very high K totals: there were three instances with the road starter achieving 19+ strikeouts (David Cone with 19 in 1991, Roger Clemens with 20 in 1996, and Tom Cheney with 21 in 1962) but 12 times this was done

by the home starter in the 1948–2010 time frame covered (including Nolan Ryan four times and Randy Johnson three times). (See Figure 6.)

A possible explanation for the home starters' strikeout advantage may be umpire bias in favor of the home pitcher when calling balls and strikes. This, in turn, may well be (part of) the explanation for the home field advantage existing in MLB.

The last row in Table 2 gives the mean number of outs per start. On average, the home starter gets through 6⅓ innings while the road starter gets through six innings flat. This may partly explain the strikeout difference, but on the other hand getting strikes called instead of walking batters or having to throw more pitches automatically results in more outs within the pitch-count limits. Also, the road starter walks more batters per start even though he is getting less deep into the games on average!

To further investigate the issue of different strikeout totals for home and road starters, we split the 10.2% figure from Table 2 into different eras. This yields results shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Historical Trend for Strikeout Rates

Era	Mean K per start for home start	Mean K per start for road starter	Difference
1948–60	3.371	2.961	+ 12.9 %
1961–70	4.283	3.801	+ 11.9 %
1971–80	3.745	3.353	+ 11.1 %
1981–90	3.798	3.458	+ 9.4 %
1991–2000	4.163	3.814	+ 8.8 %
2001–10	4.319	3.949	+ 8.9 %

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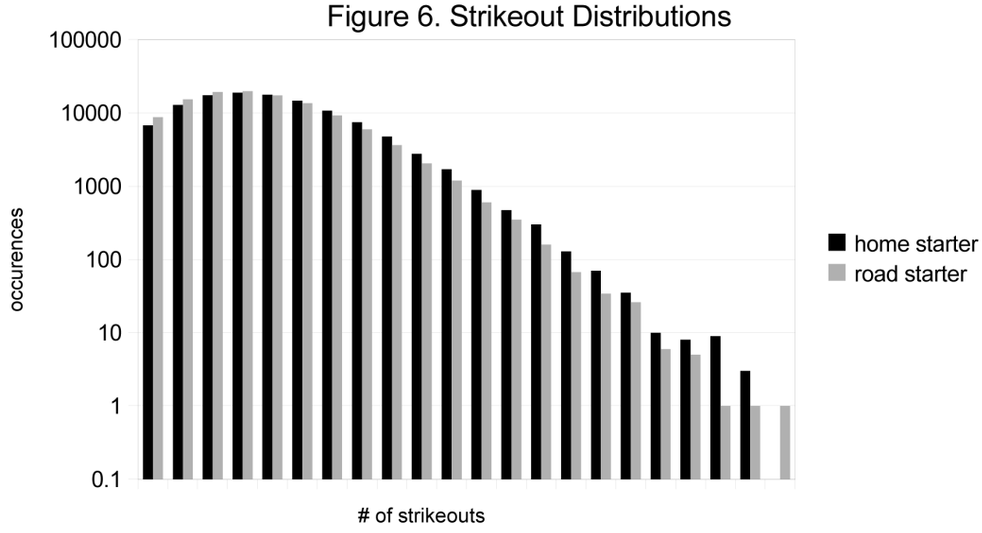
On June 14, 1965, Cincinnati's Jim Maloney pitched an 11-inning complete game with 18 strikeouts, giving up only one run for a game score of 106 (but lost the game, 1–0).

Figure 6. Strikeout Distributions



The overall strikeout totals follow the expected path: the pitching-dominated sixties, a decline in the seventies, and a steady rise since then because of the growth of the "all or nothing" approach at the plate in recent decades, batters who seem to specialize in the "Three True Outcomes" (walk, strikeout, or home run).

The difference, meanwhile, is in steady decline for the time frame covered by the data set. If the speculation of umpire tendencies to slightly prefer the home pitcher were true, this may slowly get dis-incentivized with more TV coverage and, in recent years, the introduction of systems for identifying balls and strikes (PITCHf/x) which are used by MLB to evaluate umpire performance.

CONCLUSION

We looked at the historical record to identify cases of matching game scores (home and road starter's game scores being equal) and found some games with quite high game scores meeting the criterion. Games with very high spreads between the two starters' performance were also analyzed.

The relationship between game scores and pitcher's won-lost decisions has the expected properties with noteworthy curiosities at the tail-ends of the distributions. An investigation into the correlation of game scores and its constituent variables yielded mostly expected results, as well as a somewhat surprising finding of an almost non-existent correlation between game scores and walks.

In the last section, a number of home/road splits for several variables was performed. We found a strikeout bias in favor of the home team, therefore providing a possible explanation for the home team advantage observed overall in MLB. Whether or not this bias may have to do with certain (possibly unconscious) preferences by the umpires cannot be satisfactorily answered by the current analysis, which was done on box score data exclusively, and may be an interesting topic for further research. ■

Sources

Racing the Dawn

The 29-Inning Minor League Marathon

Sam Zygner

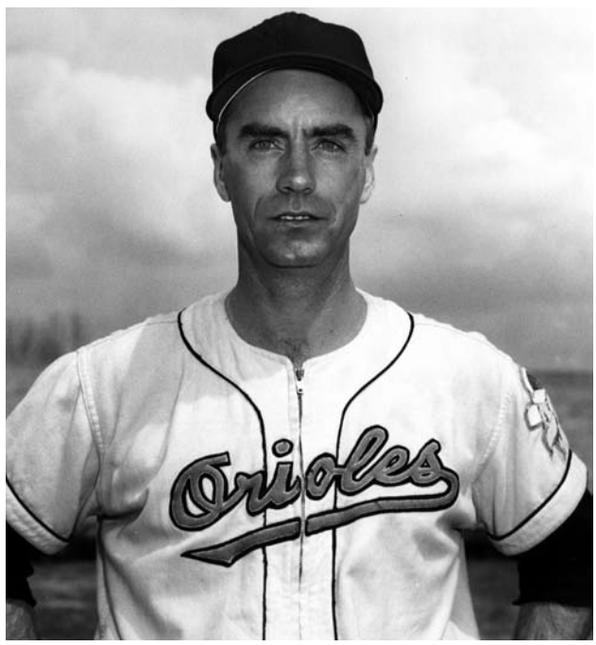
Baseball is one of the few sports not dictated by a time clock, but its beautiful symmetry is what makes it unique: the ultimate game of equal opportunity. Countless contests in history have extended into extra innings. In some cases, overtime matchups have turned into drawn-out affairs leaving only the most ardent fans waiting for the conclusion. This is the story of one of those contests and the players who fought it out.

Arguably, the most famous and well-documented extra-inning game occurred on April 18, 1981, at McCoy Stadium in Rhode Island between the Triple-A International League's Rochester Red Wings and Pawtucket Red Sox. The contest was halted after 32 innings with the score tied at 2–2 in the wee hours, when the umpiring crew ruled it would be continued at a later date. The conclusion would come more than two months later, on June 23, 1981, when Pawtucket's Dave Koza singled off of Cliff Speck in the 33rd inning, scoring teammate Marty Barrett and giving the PawSox the victory, 3–2. The one-inning finale took only 18 minutes, but the total game time registered at eight hours, 25 minutes, setting a record.[1] However, the longest uninterrupted professional game (in innings) took place 15 years earlier on a balmy June evening at Al Lang Field in St. Petersburg, Florida. What started as a typical game in the Class A Florida State League, would end up breaking a record of its own.[2]

On that fateful night, June 14, 1966, the struggling Miami Marlins (25–31) found themselves residing in seventh place out of ten teams in the FSL. The Marlins had already dropped the opening game of the two-game series to the second-place St. Petersburg Cardinals (39–17), by a score of 4–2.[3] The hometown Cardinals featured the FSL's best offense and pitching staff. By year's end they would lead the league in runs scored (567), and ERA (2.24). The Marlins' offensive attack (506 runs and 28 home runs that season) mirrored the career of their steely-eyed, but light-hitting manager, Billy DeMars. A middle infielder whose major league career consisted of three seasons—one with the Philadelphia Athletics in 1948 and two with the St. Louis Browns in 1950 and 1951—he was known as "The Kid," and finished his stay in the big leagues with nary a homer and only 14 RBIs in 211 at-bats.[4]

DeMars's professional career began in 1943 when, at the age of 17, he signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers to play in the Pennsylvania-Ontario-New York League at Olean, New York.[5] He rose slowly through the Dodgers farm system, climbing as high as Class B with Asheville of the Tri-State League before being rescued by the Athletics, who took him in the Rule 5 major league draft and placed him on their 1948 roster.[6] DeMars retired as a player following the 1958 season and began his managerial career with Class C Stockton of the California League in 1959. He made several stops in the lower minors before landing with Miami in 1966.[7]

On the other side of the diamond was future Hall-of-Famer George Anderson. Even then "Sparky," as he was more popularly known, was already sporting his customary white locks and endearing smile. Like his contemporary across the field, the 32-year-old Anderson was a light-hitting infielder who enjoyed a brief big-league stay, playing one season for the Philadelphia Phillies as their everyday second-sacker in 1959.



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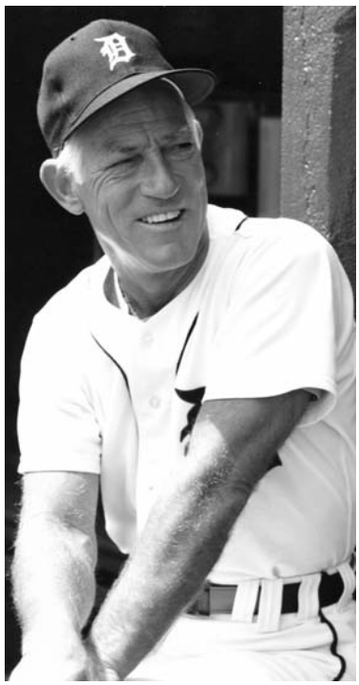
Billy DeMars followed up a successful minor league managing career by coaching in the majors for 19 years.



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George "Sparky" Anderson was elected to the baseball Hall of Fame in 2000.

Anderson's professional career began in 1953 after also signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers. He was assigned to Santa Barbara of the Class C California League and quickly worked his way up through the Dodgers system. By 1956 he was starring in the IL with the Montreal Royals, and in 1958 he came back for a second season. In 1960–63 he joined the Toronto Maple Leafs, before hanging up his cleats and accepting his first position as field manager for the same Leafs in 1964. By 1966 Anderson was managing in the Cardinals organization in St. Petersburg and was only four years away from his biggest break, being named skipper of the Cincinnati Reds.[8]

"Sparky" was looking to add another victory to the Cardinals winning streak and was confident that his staff ace, 21-year-old right-hander Dave Bakenhaster, would bring home his club's sixth straight. Bakenhaster was in his fourth season of pro ball. Although only 21, he had already enjoyed a cup of coffee with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1964, appearing in a couple of games (three innings) before returning to the minor leagues.

Squaring off against Bakenhaster would be a 24-year-old right-hander from Staten Island, Ben Bardes. Enjoying his second stint in the minors, "Big Ben" had just finished serving a two-year hitch in the military. Bardes would be used mostly in relief during the 1966 season, but on this evening his skipper was looking for the New Yorker to give him as many quality innings as possible.[9]

It was a typical, muggy night in St. Petersburg, and 740 fans passed through the turnstiles. Everything started out uneventfully enough, as both righties exchanged goose eggs through the first six innings. In the bottom of the seventh, the Cardinals drew first blood. With no outs, Cardinals first baseman Terry Milani popped a single into right field and advanced to second base on shortstop Steve Myshrall's throwing error. Sonny Ruberto followed with a bunt in front of home plate. Marlins catcher Charlie Sands fielded the ball cleanly, but threw wildly past first baseman Dick Hickerson, allowing Milani to score and Ruberto to move all the way to third base. Shortstop Frank Rodriguez then singled, plating Ruberto, and the Cardinals flew ahead, 2–0.[10,11]

DeMars, sensing that Bardes had gone long enough, signaled to the bullpen, calling for left-hander Hank King to face the next batter: Bakenhaster. King promptly retired the opposing pitcher as well as the next two batters, without allowing a run. King's appearance was the shortest stint of the night by any hurler: one inning.[12,13]

Meanwhile, Bakenhaster had been nearly flawless all evening until the eighth, when Sands cracked a ringing single. With Sands hugging first base, DeMars made a fortuitous move. Working with a limited-size roster, Miami's crafty manager was forced to use one of his pitchers as pinch-hitter. Looking down the bench, he called on one of his mainstays, Lloyd Fourroux, to pinch-hit for King. Bakenhaster worked carefully to Fourroux, running the count to 1–2. It looked as if the Cardinals ace would escape another inning unscathed, but on the next pitch, Fourroux caught hold of a juicy offering and sent the ball flying over the left-field screen, knotting the score at two apiece.[14] The husky, 6-foot-2, 215-pound native of Louisiana, having successfully completed his mission, headed to the clubhouse for a shower before making beeline to the concession stand for some hot dogs to watch the remainder of the game. "That was about nine-thirty," said Fourroux later. "I ran up to the concession stand, got what I wanted, then went and sat in the grandstand for five hours. The game didn't finish until two-thirty in the morning and I ate four dollars worth of concessions before it was over."[15]

Neither team put up a credible threat to break the tie until the 11th inning. With Miami batting in top of the inning, St. Petersburg's third pitcher of the night, Tim Thompson, allowed three consecutive singles to Fred Rico, Carl Cmejrek, and Frank Reed, handing the Marlins a 3–2 lead. In one of the night's most unusual plays, Rico, who had just scored the go-ahead run, was followed closely by Cmejrek trying to score from

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Charlie Sands as a member of the Pittsburgh Pirates.

second base. Thanks to a heads-up play by Milani, Cmejrek was caught between third base and home.[16]

Dennis Denning recounted the odd play:

> One of our guys got caught in a rundown. I think you…said it was Cmejrek, but their guy worked it perfectly. And [Milani] was running him down at third base. And so, as he was running he sorta', you know, was faking with his hand, which you really shouldn't do; you know. Just keep it there and when you throw it, you throw it, but don't be faking everybody out including the guy receiving the ball. But anyway, [Milani] lets the ball fly out of his hand accidentally, and he was maybe only fifteen feet from the runner so he had him dead between home and third… He should've walked home, you know, missing the ball. So it hits him in the leg, and it bounced straight to their catcher, and it was a bang-bang play at home and he was out. That was an unbelievable play.[17]

St. Petersburg answered in the bottom of the 11th, matching the Marlins' feat of three straight base knocks as Jose Villar, Tim Morgan, and Milani all singled off of Miami reliever Richard Thoms. With no outs and the bases loaded, catcher Gary Stone approached the plate with a good chance of driving in the winning run. Instead, he promptly sent a comebacker to Thoms who threw home to Sands for the force out. Sands, trying to take advantage of a double-play opportunity, snapped a quick throw to Hickerson at first base, but threw wildly and Morgan crossed the plate with the tying run. Thoms then settled down and retired the next two batters to close out the inning, but the damage was done. The score stood at 3–3.[18,19]

For the next 17 innings the two teams traded zeroes. The Cardinals did mount two threats, the first one coming in the 21st inning when they loaded the bases on a free pass to center fielder Archie Wade, followed by singles from Ruberto (who had replaced Rodriguez at shortstop in eighth inning), then Stone. With one out and Paul Gilliford now on the mound, the future Baltimore Orioles hurler coaxed a double-play ball out of Robert Taylor to dodge a bullet. In the 23rd inning with two outs and the Cardinals' fifth pitcher of the night, Charles Bowlby, on third base and Wade on second base, once again Taylor failed to deliver, grounding out to Gilliford, killing the Cardinals' chance to win the game.[20]

Miami's lone threat, after the 11th inning, came in the 22nd frame when third baseman Denning crushed a Bowlby offering to deep left field that looked like a sure home run. DeMars said after the game, "I knew it was in for a home run. Then this kid out there [Bob Taylor] leaps in the air, sticks his glove over the fence, and grabs the ball." Taylor, making up for his failure to hit in the clutch, had robbed Denning's late inning heroics.[21]

As the ballgame progressed, the attrition of fans in the stands was becoming noticeable. But at game's end, between 150 and 200 diehard rooters were present.[22] Ruberto commented, "A lot of fans left, and when the bars closed at one, they saw the lights on and came back."[23] The few that endured, or later returned, witnessed history. Even neighbors in a nearby apartment building took notice of the proceedings.

Right fielder Gary Carnegie remembers a particularly annoyed gentleman who was trying to catch a few winks:

> And then there was a guy when I was in right field, late in the game... I guess he worked midnight or something. And he came home from work and he was screaming from the balcony of an apartment building, "You guys still playing? What the hell is going on?" I hollered up to him, "Yeah we're still playing." He watched the game for a while and then he said, "I'm going to bed."[24]

As the game went deeper and deeper into extra innings, the players became more aware of the historic

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Sonny Ruberto played 19 games for the San Diego Padres in 1969, and got into two games with Cincinnati in 1972. He also served as a coach and manager in the St. Louis Cardinals minor league system.

significance that was building around them. Ruberto fondly recounts, "I don't remember who took the photo, but I think it was the twenty-sixth inning, one of the Marlins ran out there. Someone ran out there and took a picture of the scoreboard." He added, "Then word started spreading that this was the longest game in the history of professional ball and we said, 'Really?'"[25]

At 2:00 AM, Anderson, DeMars, and umpires Lou Benitez and George Molinari huddled around home plate and collectively decided to halt the game, if necessary, at 30 innings. As luck would have it, it would only take one more inning for the end to come.[26] An interesting sidelight to this historic game was that according to league rules, the game should have been halted at 12:50 AM. Umpire Benitez stated later, "I wasn't aware of a curfew rule, so I let them play." Later, FSL president George MacDonald determined that the game was in violation of league rules, but that the results would stand.[27]

The contest had dragged out to the top of the 29th inning. As if the game hadn't gotten strange enough, things got even weirder when Marlins pitcher Michael Hebert led off the inning with a ringing double off Bowlby. Denning then worked a base on balls, bringing Carnegie to the plate. Carnegie, who had replaced Frank Tepedino earlier in the game, bunted the ball towards the first baseman, Milani. His tap was perfectly placed and Milani was unable to make a play. The bizarreness continued when Rico followed with a ground ball to the right side of the infield. The ball struck Carnegie between first and second, causing him to be ruled out. Hebert, who had crossed the plate with the apparent go-ahead run, returned to third base and Denning remained on second, with the score still tied. The next batter, Cmejrek, strolled to the plate with only one mission, to put wood on the ball, and that he did, driving a fly ball to deep center field and into the waiting glove of Wade. Hebert immediately tagged from third to score, but Denning, in his zeal to pick up an extra run, also made the attempt. He was gunned down on the relay throw from Wade to Coulter to Stone. Going into the bottom of the inning, the scoreboard showed Miami up by one run.[28,29]

Having just scored the decisive run, Hebert confidently dispatched the Cardinals in the bottom of the inning, retiring Taylor and Coulter on fly balls, and then putting on the finishing touch by striking out Villar to end the game. After almost seven hours, the ecstatic but bone-tired Marlins congratulated each other and headed to the locker room for a well-deserved shower. Final score: Miami 4, St. Petersburg 3.

In a marathon game, there are always some performances that stand out. Arguably, the outstanding feat of the night belonged to Marlins backstop Sands for catching the entire 29 innings. Despite being nearly knocked-out midway through the game by a foul tip and fighting off dehydration, the sturdy Miami receiver played to the end without substitution. "It was hot as hell," said DeMars. "My catcher [Sands] lost ten pounds, you know."[30] Remarkably, Sands returned to action the next night, catching the second game of a doubleheader against Orlando.

Several players from both squads put in a yeoman's night of work. Going beyond the call of duty was Miami's fifth pitcher of the night, Paul Gilliford. He was brilliant in relief, hurling 11 frames (innings 15 through 25), without giving up a run, while striking out seven, walking two, and scattering seven hits. Astonishingly, he had started the previous day's game going seven innings,[31] giving him a total of 18 innings pitched over the course of two days. DeMars, who was short on pitchers, reluctantly chose Gilliford despite his lack of rest.

DeMars laughed heartily as he spoke about his ace lefty's performance:

> Paul Gilliford was a left-handed pitcher on my team… In fact, I forget how many wins [16], he had a great record with a 1.27 ERA… but he pitched the night before and he kept bugging me

> on the bus about pitching ten minutes of batting practice. And usually I would let them pitch the second day; then a day off, and then they would start the fourth. Well, again I get in this game and it's like the twelfth or thirteenth inning, you know, how many pitchers do I have? I don't have many pitchers left so I finally let him pitch ten minutes batting practice. Then we get into the game, it's in like the twelfth or thirteenth inning, and I said, "Paul go down into the bullpen and see how you feel." So he goes down there and comes back and he says, "I feel great." So I put him in the game and he pitches eleven shutout innings![32]

The game proved to be a pitchers' duel, but the evening's best hitter award belonged to Cmejrek, who collected five hits in 12 at-bats to go along with his sacrifice fly that brought home the winning run. The most crucial smash of the night was Fourroux's fence-clearer that tied the game. It was one of three homers the broad-shouldered pitcher would hit during the season in 104 at-bats, good enough for third highest on the team behind Carnegie and Rico.[33,34]

The Cardinals had their own heroes as well, including 19-year-old left-hander Jim Williamson, who chucked eight innings of relief (innings 14 through 21), striking out eight and allowing only one base on balls. Both Villar and Milani banged out four hits in 12 at-bats, and despite taking the loss, Charles Bowlby represented himself well in a relief role, allowing a paltry six hits in eight innings.[35]

Thus the previous record for longest professional game in innings, a 27-inning affair on May 8, 1965, between Eastern League foes the Springfield Giants and Elmira Pioneers, was broken. The Pioneers had beaten the Giants, 2–1 in a game that lasted six hours and 24 minutes.[36] In one of those strange coincidences that are eerily common in the annals of baseball history, there were two future Miami Marlins on the Pioneers roster that night, player/coach Hickerson and Fourroux. Hickerson had appeared as a pinch-hitter, going 0-for-1, and Fourroux had watched from the bench.

A few more numbers of note. Together Miami and St. Petersburg registered 203 official at-bats, 101 and 102, respectively. The two squads combined for 44 hits, of which only six went for extra bases, and 42 runners were left stranded. On the pitching side of the coin, 11 different hurlers appeared in the game, and as a group registered 41 strikeouts, while stingily walking only 12 batters and recording nary a single wild pitch (Sands did have one passed ball).[37]

Racing the Dawn

Miami	ab	r	h	rbi	St Pet'burg	ab	r	h	rbi
Tepedino, lf	4	0	1	0	Wade, cf	12	0	2	0
Denning, 3b	11	0	2	0	Taylor, lf	13	0	1	0
C'negie, ph-rf	8	0	2	0	Coulter, 2b	12	0	2	0
Hick'son, 1b	12	0	2	0	Villar, rf	12	0	4	0
Rico, cf	10	1	2	1	Morgan, 3b	12	1	3	0
Cmej'k, rf-lf	12	0	5	0	Milani, 1b	12	1	4	0
Reed, 2b	10	0	2	1	Ruberto, c-ss	10	1	2	0
Myshrall, ss	12	0	1	0	Rodriguez, ss	3	0	2	1
Sands, c	12	1	2	0	Stone, ph-c	8	0	3	0
Bardes, p	2	0	0	0	Bakenhaster, p	2	0	0	0
King, p	0	0	0	0	Davis, ph	1	0	0	0
Fourroux, ph	1	1	1	2	Robertson, p	0	0	0	0
Rawls, p	1	0	0	0	Thompson, p	0	0	0	0
Thoms, p	1	0	0	0	Raddock, ph	0	0	0	0
Gilliford, p	3	0	0	0	Williamson, p	2	0	0	0
Deputla, ph	1	0	0	0	Fiore, ph	1	0	0	0
Hebert, p	1	1	1	0	Bowlby, p	2	0	0	0
Totals	101	4	21	4	Totals	102	3	23	1

Miami—
000 000 020 010 000 000 000 000 000 01—4
St Petersburg—
000 000 200 010 000 000 000 000 000 00—3

Miami	IP.	H.	R.	ER.	BB.	SO.
Bardes	6	7	2	0	1	3
King	1	0	0	0	0	1
Rawls	3	3	1	1	1	3
Thoms	4	4	0	0	2	2
Gilliford	11	7	0	0	2	7
Hebert (Winner)	4	2	0	0	0	2
St. Petersburg	**IP.**	**H.**	**R.**	**ER.**	**BB.**	**SO.**
Bakenhaster	9	6	2	2	2	7
Robertson	⅓	4	1	1	0	2
Thompson	3⅔	4	1	1	0	2
Williamson	8	3	0	0	1	8
Bowlby (Loser)	8	6	1	1	3	4

E—Coulter, Myshrall 2, Bardes, Cmejrek, Sands, Ruberto, Milani, Carnegie. DP—St. Petersburg 3, Miami 2. LOB—Miami 21, St. Petersburg 21. 2B—Villar, Cmejrek, Carnegie, Morgan, Hebert. HR—Fourroux. SB—Rodriguez. SH—Coulter, Braddock, Rico, Carnegie. SF—Rico. PB—Sands. T—6:59 A—740

Marathon Of Marathons

MIAMI	ab	r	h	rbi	ST. PETERSBURG	ab	r	h	rbi
Denning 3b	11	0	2	0	Wade cf	12	0	2	0
Tepedino lf	4	0	1	0	Taylor lf	13	0	1	0
Carnegie ph-rf	8	0	2	0	Coulter 2b	12	0	2	0
Hickerson 1b	12	0	2	0	Villar rf	12	0	4	0
Rico cf	10	1	2	1	Morgan 3b	12	1	3	0
Cmejrek rf-lf	12	0	5	0	Milani 1b	12	1	4	0
Reed 2b	10	0	2	1	Ruberto c-ss	10	1	2	0
Myshrall ss	12	0	1	0	Rodriguez ss	3	0	2	1
Sands c	12	1	2	0	Stone ph-c	8	0	3	0
Bardes p	2	0	0	0	Bakenhaster p	2	0	0	0
King p	0	0	0	0	Davis ph	1	0	0	0
Fourroux ph	1	1	1	2	Robertson p	0	0	0	0
Rawls p	1	0	0	0	Thompson p	0	0	0	0
Thoms p	1	0	0	0	Braddock ph	0	0	0	0
Gilliford p	3	0	0	0	Williamson p	2	0	0	0
Deptula ph	1	0	0	0	Fiore ph	1	0	0	0
Herbert p	1	1	1	0	Bowlby p	2	0	0	0
Totals	101	4	21	4	Totals	102	3	23	1

Miami 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 — 4
St. Pete 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 — 3

E — Coulter, Myshrall 2, Bardes, Cmejrek, Sands, Ruberto, Milani, Carnegie. DP — St. Petersburg 3, Miami 2. LOB — Miami 21, St. Petersburg 21.

2B — Villar, Cmejrek, Carnegie, Morgan, Herbert. HR — Fourroux. SB — Rodriguez. S — Coulter, Braddock, Rico, Carnegie. SF — Rico.

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Bardes	6	7	2	0	1	3
King	1	0	0	0	0	1
Rawls	3	3	1	1	1	3
Thoms	4	4	0	0	2	2
Gilliford	11	7	0	0	2	7
Herbert—W	4	2	0	0	0	2
Bakenhaster	9	6	2	2	2	7
Robertson	⅓	2	0	0	0	1
Thompson	3⅔	4	1	1	0	2
Williamson	8	3	0	0	1	8
Bowlby—L	8	6	1	1	3	4

PB — Sands. Time — 6:59. Attendance 740.

Some discrepancies stand between the two published boxscores. "Racing the Dawn" from *The Sporting News*, June 25, 1966, page 49. "Marathon of Marathons" from *The St. Petersburg Independent*, June 18, 1966, page 16-A.

In the aftermath of the now-record longest game there was little rest for the weary. After some hasty freshening up, DeMars and his charges boarded their bus for a quick return trip to Miami to make a scheduled doubleheader at Miami Stadium that same day. It was so early in the morning that the players couldn't enjoy a late night snack. "One of things I remember, when we did get done with the game there wasn't even anywhere to eat," said Denning. "Then we had to drive home to Miami…Cripes, we slept for a couple hours and then we go back to the ballpark."[38] Showing visible signs of exhaustion, the Marlins were dispatched in both ends of a twin bill by the Orlando Twins by identical 3–1 scores.[39] The Cardinals fared little better, dropping their next match with the Fort Lauderdale Yankees, 6–2.[40] "We lost a doubleheader, but I told my kids, 'Hey, just do the best you can,' " recalled DeMars.[41]

Bardes, who spent the last 23 innings observing the game from the sideline, reminisced about the team's trip back home:

> The game finished at two-thirty, and then we had to wash up at the ballpark and then go back over to Tampa for our equipment and clothing because that was the last day of a road trip. And we traveled four and half hours back to Miami. And we had a twi-night doubleheader that night. We got in at, I believe, nine-thirty in the morning…. And by the time we all got our stuff in the car, it was eight of us that lived in this one place over in Miami, right on 78th Street right behind the Playboy Club where we had two apartments... So we got everybody packed, we got everyone in there and we got at least a couple of hours of sleep, but we came back that night and had a twi-night doubleheader… We just didn't have anybody left.[42]

In the Cardinals locker room, many of the crestfallen players sat bewildered by what had just transpired. Ruberto recalled Anderson addressing the team afterward with some prophetic words. "I remember after the game, well, we were all exhausted. Win, lose, or draw it was a classic game. We're all getting into the clubhouse and we're just sitting on our stools and Sparky got up and he says, 'I just want you guys to remember this. This is the only way most of us will ever make it to the Hall of Fame, and that was tonight.' "[43]

Hebert, the hero of the game, had little time to bask in his glory. Upon returning to Miami he was given the news by DeMars that he was being demoted to a lower classification league for rookies. He was sent to Aberdeen, South Dakota, of the Northern League. Despite his 3–3 record and 3.19 ERA, the 18-year-old prospect would spend the rest of the season with the Pheasants under the watchful eye of Cal Ripken Sr.[44]

DeMars remembers passing the bad news on to his winning pitcher:

> Mike Hebert, he was a left-handed pitcher, and before the game started I knew I was going to send him out to Aberdeen, South Dakota, after the game was over. So I didn't really want to use him in the game, but I think we only had eight pitchers, which means two had to start tomorrow night for the doubleheader, so it left me with six. And I had to use him late in the game, and he gets a double to help us win and he's the winning pitcher, at that time the longest game in the history of baseball. I couldn't tell him until we got back to Miami because it so ruined my whole night. Really, because there's nothing worse than telling a kid that he got sent down. So it was pretty bad.[45]

The majority of players that appeared during the 29-inning game registered relatively short minor league careers, most under five years. Two participants who made their mark were Dennis Denning and Archie Wade.

Denning, who was robbed of his game-winning home run in the 22nd inning, retired as an active ballplayer in 1967, but stayed in the game in another capacity. After a successful career of coaching at the high school level, Denning accepted a head coaching position in 1995 with the University of St. Thomas (Minnesota). He became one of the most successful coaches at the Division III college level. He was ultimately inducted into American Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2012.[46] Over his career with the Tommies, Denning garnered 522 wins (.769 win percentage), and two national championships (2001 and 2009).[47] He said of his 29-inning game experience, "It was probably the most fun game I ever played. I mean 29 innings, and I'm the kind of guy instead of playing one game I'd rather play a doubleheader."[48]

Archie Wade also retired as an active player in 1967, but his life took a much different course. Wade decided to return to school and pursue an education. After graduating from West Virginia University with his master's degree, he was accepted to the University of Alabama. It was a time when the Civil Rights Movement was in the forefront and in pursuit of his goals he

experienced untold racial discrimination. The first black man to integrate the stands during a football game, he was asked to leave during halftime. However, using some of the lessons he learned on the diamond, Wade persevered and earned his doctorate, becoming a Professor Emeritus of Physical Education at Alabama and one of its first black faculty members. Now retired after more than 30 years of teaching,[49] he still fondly remembers that June 14 night. "There wasn't but a few of us that played the entire game, but I was one of the ones that played the entire game. And I'll tell you what, about one or two o'clock in the morning, I was just trying to make it across the foul line." He added while chuckling, "I was hoping I wouldn't trip over anything. It was a long night."[50]

A handful of ballplayers from both clubs went on to the big leagues, not counting Bakenhaster who, as mentioned, had already spent time with the St. Louis Cardinals and would not get another big league chance. From the Miami Marlins, four men would make the majors: Paul Gilliford (1967 Baltimore Orioles), Fred Rico (1969 Kansas City Royals), Charlie Sands (1967 New York Yankees, 1971–72 Pittsburgh Pirates, 1973–74 California Angels, 1975 Oakland Athletics), and Frank Tepedino (1967, 1969–72 New York Yankees, 1971 Milwaukee Brewers, 1973–75 Atlanta Braves). Of St. Petersburg Cardinals, there were four more: Chip Coulter (1969 St. Louis Cardinals), Harry Parker (1970–71, 1975 St. Louis Cardinals, 1973–75 New York Mets, 1976 Cleveland Indians), Jerry Robertson (1969 Montreal Expos and 1970 Detroit Tigers), and Sonny Ruberto (1969 San Diego Padres and 1972 Cincinnati Reds).[51]

As to the opposing managers, Sparky Anderson's prolific career is well documented. His quotation to his players about ending up in the Hall of Fame proved prophetic. He was inducted into the hallowed hall in 2000. Nonetheless, Billy DeMars enjoyed his own lengthy and rewarding career in baseball. In total, the teaching-oriented manager of the 1966 Marlins spent 11 years in the Baltimore Orioles minor league system before leaving the organization in 1969. He later served as a coach for the Philadelphia Phillies (1969–81), the Montreal Expos (1982–84), and the Cincinnati Reds (1985–87)[52] solidifying his reputation as one of the premier hitting coaches in baseball. DeMars later served as a roving minor league batting instructor throughout the 1990s.

By season's end, Miami had pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, improving their overall record to 75–63, good enough for a fourth-place finish. The first half champion Leesburg A's would ultimately meet second half champion St. Petersburg in a five-game championship series. Although the Cardinals had the FSL's best record, they fell to the A's in the finals in five games, 3–2.[53]

Even though the game only received minor attention nationwide, both the Miami and St. Petersburg newspapers doled out extensive press coverage for the next two days, putting the spotlight on their respective clubs and the key players. The 6-hour-and-59-minute affair was somewhat forgotten until 1981, when Pawtucket and Rochester hooked-up for 33 innings. Although the game will go down as the second longest in professional history, it still holds the claim as being the longest uninterrupted. Given how ballplayers are monitored today, and various league rules and curfew laws, it is doubtful we will ever see a game of its like again. Sparky Anderson summed it up best, saying, "It was the darnedest thing I've ever seen."[54] ■

Acknowledgments

Over the course of researching this article I interviewed several of the participants involved in this historic 29-inning game who shared their remembrances and personal feelings from their own unique perspectives. To most of these men, the marathon affair was the highlight of their baseball careers and I stand amazed of their clear recollections of the events from that historic night. I would especially like to thank the following: Benjamin Bardes, Charles "Larry" Bowlby, Christopher "Gary" Carnegie, Billy DeMars, Dennis Denning, Sonny Ruberto, Archie Wade, and Jim Williamson for their time and their contributions to this article and our national pastime.

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The History of Baseball in Altoona, Pennsylvania

Brock Helander

Since the formation of the National League in 1876, many cities have failed to retain their major league teams. Fifteen such cities were represented in the majors before 1900. Most cities persevered in the minor leagues, but only Troy, New York suffered longer without professional baseball than Altoona, Pennsylvania, whose sole stint in the majors came with the Union Association of Professional Base Ball Clubs in 1884.

The upstart Union Association was masterminded and substantially financed by 26-year-old Henry Van Noye Lucas, heir to a family fortune accumulated in St. Louis. Henry's older brother, John B. C. Lucas, had served as president of the St. Louis team known as the Brown Stockings that played in the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players (1875) and the National League of Professional Base Ball Clubs (1876–77).[1] Henry himself sponsored and played third base for the Lucas Amateurs in 1883.[2]

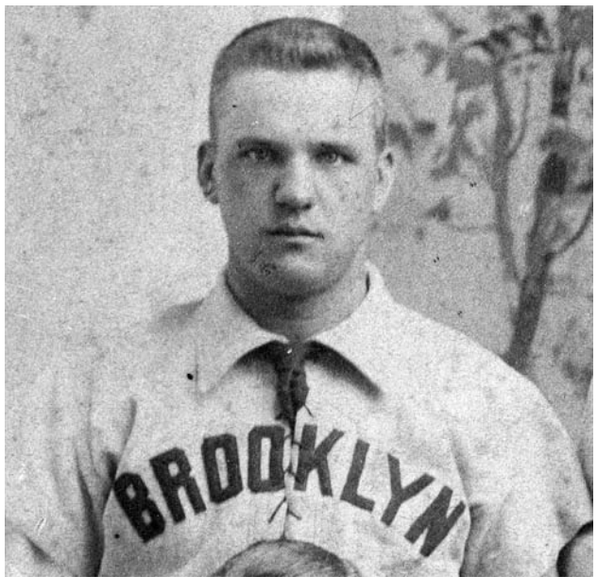
The Union Association faced direct competition from established major league teams in Philadelphia, St. Louis, Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, and Cincinnati. A seventh Union Association team vied for fans in Washington, DC.

The eighth Union Association team was based in Altoona, about two-thirds of the way from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. One of the smallest cities (1880 population: 19,710) ever to field a major league baseball team, Altoona was founded in 1849 and served as the headquarters and railroad hub of the Pennsylvania Railroad.[3] In 1854 the celebrated Horseshoe Curve, just west of Altoona, was completed, reducing travel time between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh from three to four days to a mere 15 hours. Designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1966 and still in use today, the Curve was regarded to be of such strategic importance that it was guarded by Union troops during the Civil War and was the object of a Nazi sabotage plot known as Operation Pastorius in 1942.[4]

The history of professional baseball in Altoona began with the formation of the Mountain Base Ball Club in 1862. The defeat of the Mountain City Club by the Keystone Club of Harrisburg, on August 20, 1862, was described as "the first match game of base ball ever played in Pennsylvania, outside of Philadelphia."[5] The club played at least one match game in each of its first three years of existence. Two were drubbings by the vaunted Athletics of Philadelphia: 73–22 at Prospect Hill in Altoona on September 11, 1863, and 63–2 in Philadelphia on September 27, 1864. The Mountain City Club played at least four match games in 1865 and at least six in 1866. Altoona was represented in the National Association of Base Ball Players, the nation's first formal baseball organization, by Mountain (1865–67), Star (1867) and Mountain Star (1868). By 1869 a new baseball club called Mountain City had been formed.[6]

No records have been found regarding games played by Mountain City in the early 1870s, although they did play several games in 1875 and at least three games in 1876.[7] Candy Cummings, the reputed "inventor" of the curveball, represented Altoona, as well as Allentown and the Live Oaks of Lynn, Massachusetts, at the February 1877 meeting in Pittsburgh that formed the International Association of Professional Base Ball Players.[8]

In the meantime a rich amateur sporting tradition developed in Altoona. Railroad employees formed

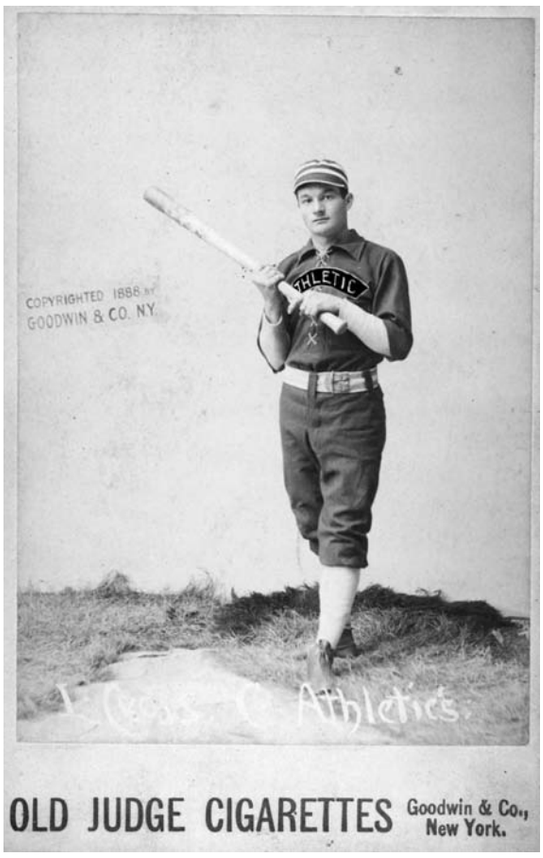


NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, NY

An excellent defensive shortstop, handsome George (Germany) Smith played for Altoona baseball teams both before and after his fifteen-year major league career.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, NY

One of three brothers to play in the major leagues, Milwaukee-born Lafayette Napoleon (Lave) Cross played for Altoona in 1886 and became one of the premier third baseman of baseball's pioneer era.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, NY

After Altoona, Lave Cross played for Philadelphia teams in the American Association, the Players' League, the National League, and the American League.

cricket teams in the latter half of the 1870s and, in 1878, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company constructed Cricket Field at Chestnut Avenue and Seventh Street. As interest in cricket waned, Cricket Field became the host of numerous railroader baseball games and, later, major league and Negro League exhibition games.[9]

By 1881 a semi-professional baseball team had formed in Altoona, featuring 18-year-old George "Germany" Smith at shortstop. Smith, who became a life-long resident of Altoona, played with Altoona teams into 1884.[10] In March 1883 sixteen local businessmen, led by Arthur Dively and William Ritz, formed the Altoona Base Ball Club.[11] Incomplete records indicate that Altoona competed in the Western Inter-State League that year against four Pittsburgh teams, plus teams located in New Castle, Johnstown, and Leechburg, Pennsylvania, and Youngstown, Ohio.[12]

The club reorganized as the Altoona Base Ball Association, Ltd., on February 9, 1884, and applied for admission into the Union Association of February 11. On March 8 league president Lucas arrived in Altoona and met with club officials. Assuring them of membership in the Union Association, Lucas personally contributed $2,500 to the club's coffers.[13]

However, the Altoona club operated at a distinct disadvantage. Not only was it located in the league's smallest city, its membership in an "outlaw" league debarred it from playing potentially lucrative games against teams in the National League, American Association, Eastern League, and Northwestern League. Moreover, Lucas stocked his St. Louis team with crack veteran players who had jumped from the established leagues. His team won its first 20 games and was never seriously challenged.

Fortunate to open on the road, Altoona lost its first two series in Cincinnati and St. Louis. The final game in St. Louis, played on Sunday April 27, attracted an astounding 8,000–10,000 onlookers.[14] Nonetheless, the game drew the ire of the Altoona press and its fans, since it violated Pennsylvania blue laws that prohibited Sunday baseball. The team never again played on Sunday.[15]

Altoona opened its home season on April 30 at Columbia Park, also known as Fourth Avenue Grounds. They finally won their first game on May 10, defeating Boston 9–4 before 3,000 spectators. However attendance subsequently waned, despite a four-game winning streak May 23 through 27. Henry Lucas returned to Altoona on May 29, met with officials, refused to offer additional financial support, and urged the team to disband. Following another loss on May 31, the stockholders met and did just that.

Altoona was replaced by a Kansas City team that picked up four of the former Altoonans.[16]

Only five of the 17 men who played for Altoona in 1884 ever played major league baseball thereafter. Among the fortunate, "Germany" Smith joined the Cleveland National League team, then moved to Brooklyn for the seasons 1885 through 1890, gaining a reputation as the game's best defensive shortstop and helping Brooklyn win pennants in 1889 in the American Association and 1890 in the National League. After six seasons with Cincinnati and one more in Brooklyn, Smith played his final major league game with St. Louis in 1898.[17]

Altoona was the first team to disband, but not the last. The Philadelphia Keystones disbanded in early August, to be replaced by a Wilmington, Delaware, team that disbanded on September 15, to later be replaced by a Milwaukee team that had won the Northwestern League pennant.[18]

Chicago moved to Pittsburgh in late August and the latter team disbanded in late September, to be replaced by a St. Paul team from the Northwestern League that never played a home game.[19]

Of the original eight teams, only St. Louis, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Boston, and Washington played as many as 105 games in the 112-game schedule. With the pennant race decided by July, perhaps the most exciting event of the Union Association season was when three players from the National League Cleveland team—catcher Fatty Briody, pitcher Jim McCormick and shortstop Jack Glasscock—jumped to the Cincinnati Union team in August.[20]

Although Lucas's losses in the venture were estimated at $100,000, suspicions remain that his true intent in forming the Union Association was to gain admission for his club into the National League, which he did in January.[21]

Altoona intermittently fielded teams in the minor leagues into 1912, with games played at Columbia Park/Fourth Avenue Grounds. Altoona joined the Pennsylvania State Association for the years 1886 and 1887. The 1886 roster included Altoonan Alexander Donoghue and two 20-year-olds, catcher-later-third baseman Lave Cross and pitcher Billy Crowell. Crowell led the league in strikeouts with 285, while Donoghue played for Altoona teams every year it had a minor league team in the nineteenth century except 1892.[22] Cross played 27 years professionally, 21 in the major leagues. He holds the distinction of having played in four different major leagues and was one of the first players to surpass 2,000 games played, principally with teams based in Philadelphia.[23]

The 1887 team featured 18-year-old outfielder Steve Brodie in his professional debut and 22-year-old pitcher Ben Sanders. Brodie joined the majors with Boston National League team in 1890 and was a key member of its 1891 pennant-winning team. His greatest acclaim came with the renowned Baltimore Orioles, for whom he played from 1893 to 1896, along with future Hall of Famers John McGraw, Willie Keeler, Joe Kelley, and Wilbert Robinson. Sanders was one of the few baseball players of the era with a college education, attending Roanoke College and later graduating from Vanderbilt University. From 1888–90 he won 19 games a year for Philadelphia teams.[24] Neither Brodie nor Sanders finished out the season with Altoona, as the Pennsylvania State Association disbanded on July 20, after Scranton and Wilkes-Barre abandoned the league to join the higher level International Association.[25]

Altoona returned to the minor leagues in 1890 with the Eastern Inter-State League, competing against five other Pennsylvania teams. In 1892 Altoona joined the Pennsylvania State League for three years. Finishing second that year, Altoona featured Charles "Jigger" Shaffer, who led the league in hits, pitcher George Hodson, who led the league in wins and strikeouts, and outfielder Ralph "Socks" Seybold, who patrolled the outfield for Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics from 1901 to 1908. After a third-place finish in 1893, Altoona transferred to Lancaster on July 7, 1894, during a season in which only four of the eight teams persevered in their original city.[26]

In the spring of 1902 native son and former Pennsylvania Railroad employee Charles Carpenter helped organize an Altoona team for the independent Tri-State League. Among its players was "Germany" Smith, following the conclusion of his major league career. He played for the team through 1904 and managed the team for part of 1905. Carpenter was chosen president of the Tri-State League in 1905, a position he held through 1913. In 1907 the Tri-State League joined Organized Baseball as a Class-B league.[27] During this era Altoona included second baseman Tom "Tido" Daly (1904–07) and pitcher Charles "Spider" Baum (1906–07). Daly was the only man to play for all three of Brooklyn's nineteenth century National League pennant winners (1890, 1899, 1900) while Baum later delivered a record nine 20-win seasons in the minor leagues, mostly in the Pacific Coast League.[28]

Finishing no better than fourth 1904–09, Altoona won its first Tri-State League pennant in 1910, behind pitcher Bill Steele and outfielder Bob Coulson. The team faded to fifth in 1911 and on June 13, 1912, the team moved to Reading, due to lack of patronage.[29]

From the turn of the century into the 1930s, Cricket Field hosted railroad-sponsored athletic events including baseball and football games, tennis matches, and track and field events, as well as exhibition games against major league baseball players. Initially seating 3,500 people, the stadium was expanded to seat 25,000 in 1922.[30] On October 3, 1924, Babe Ruth, on a 15-city barnstorming tour, homered in a game at Altoona, the "longest hit ever made at Cricket Field."[31]

In the early 1930s, Cricket Field was also the site of games against Negro League players. On September 3, 1931, Satchel Page pitched in a game there.[32] Furthermore, Cricket Field was the neutral site for home games of the Homestead Grays, a team that featured Oscar Charleston, Josh Gibson, and Willie Foster, all later inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame.[33]

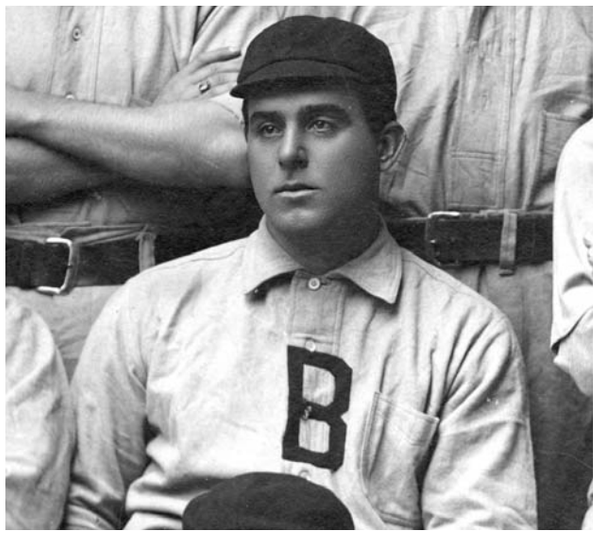
In 1931 Altoona briefly appeared in the Class C Middle Atlantic League. Another Pennsylvania team, from the town of Jeanette, moved to Altoona on May 23, playing its first home game on May 28. After compiling a record of 16–43, the team shifted to Beaver Falls on July 18.[34]

In the meantime, Altoonans could revel in the exploits of two native sons, Perce "Pat" Malone and James "Ripper" Collins. Malone pitched in the major leagues 1928–37, appearing in the World Series for the losing Cubs in 1929 and 1932 and the winning Yankees in 1936. First baseman Collins, a member of the heralded "Gas House Gang," played for St. Louis 1931–36, concluding his major league career in 1941. After leading the National League in slugging percentage, OPS, total bases, and home runs in 1934, he was an All-Star 1935 through 1937, appearing in three World Series, with the winning Cardinals in 1931 and 1934 and the losing Cubs in 1938.[35]

A hiatus of nearly six decades ensued, with Altoona returning to the professional leagues as the Rail Kings with two short-lived independent leagues, the North Atlantic League of 1996 and the Heartland League of 1997. The Rail Kings played at 3,000-seat Veterans Memorial Stadium.[36]

Ultimately Altoona rejoined Organized Baseball in 1999 with the Altoona Curve of the Class AA Eastern League. An affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates through 2014, the Curve play at Blair County Ballpark.[37] Beyond the right-field fence in Lakemont Park stands "Leap the Dips," the world's oldest operating wooden roller coaster and North America's last surviving "slide friction" roller coaster.[38] The 1902-built coaster lends a carnival atmosphere to the facility and as of this writing in 2012 is still operating.

The debut team included pitcher Bronson Arroyo



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Debuting with Altoona in 1887 as a teenager, Walter Scott (Steve) Brodie played with the rough and rowdy Baltimore Orioles from 1893 to 1896 alongside John McGraw and Willie Keeler.

(15–4 before his promotion to AAA Nashville), utility man Craig Wilson (111 games), and slugging outfielder Adam Hyzdu.[39] A remarkable minor league success story, the Curve consistently drew over 300,000 fans per year and expanded capacity at Blair County Ballpark by more than 1,000 seats for the 2003 season.[40] That year, with southpaw Sean Burnett (14–6 in 27 games), the team made the league playoffs but was eliminated in the first round by the Akron Aeros.

Attendance climbed to 365,376 in 2003, then peaked at 394,062 in 2004 as Altoona finished in first place in the South Division, only to be blanked by New Hampshire in the finals. The team featured pitcher Ian Snell (11–7 in 26 games) in his second season with Altoona, left-handed pitcher Zach Duke (5–1 in 9 games after his promotion from Lynchburg) and outfielder Nate McLouth, who led the league in hits and runs. The Curve again made the playoffs in 2005 and 2006 but were eliminated in the first round by Akron both years. The Curve hosted the 2006 Eastern League All-Star Game before a record crowd of 9,308. Curve outfielder Brett Roneberg won the award as the game's Most Valuable Player.[41] Dreadlocked center fielder Andrew McCutchen joined Altoona in 2006 and played 118 games for the team in 2007, before his promotion to triple-A Indianapolis.[42]

In 2010 Altoona won the Western Division of the Eastern League, defeating the Harrisburg Senators in the first round of the playoffs and winning the league championship by beating the Trenton Thunder three games to one. In 2012 the ballpark was renamed Peoples Natural Gas Field.[43]

Although Altoona was only briefly in the major leagues and devoid of minor league baseball for many years, fans now bask in the sunshine of professional baseball games at the foot of the Allegheny Mountains. Memories stir and tales are told of the glory days of local baseball, recent and past, as young and old share the joys of the national pastime. ■

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Braves Field

An Imperfect History of the Perfect Ballpark

Bob Ruzzo

The best stories should always be told last. That is why, in the waning days of a year marking Fenway Park's centennial, some time should be reserved for another, more complicated stadium saga.

The beginnings of this tale have a familiar quality to them.

In the midst of the Deadball Era, a jewel box ballpark rose a few miles west of the center of Boston's downtown, accessible by excellent streetcar service.[1,2] The park was universally acclaimed upon its opening. Serendipitously, it hosted a World Series in its inaugural year.

This is not, however, another Fenway tribute, but rather a testament to Fenway's younger but ultimately somewhat shabbier sibling, Braves Field.[3] The birth and subsequent demise of Braves Field serves as a "pivot point" in ballpark history, one that distinguishes two very different approaches to how baseball parks should be built and how they should relate to their host city and its citizens.

Braves Field, the last of the jewel box ballparks, resulted largely from the genius of one man, built by him within a matter of five months. When the park opened in 1915, it featured an unprecedented effort to integrate the workhorse of the urban transportation system, the streetcar, into the infrastructure of the facility. When Braves Field was abruptly abandoned in 1953, it didn't just take a village to replace it; it took an entire county. Milwaukee County Stadium was a publicly financed stadium, located on the site of an abandoned gravel pit that took three years to construct. County Stadium was divorced from the urban fabric and reflected the increasing dominance of the automobile in American life.[4]

Simply put, this one change changed everything.

THE ROGUE VISIONARY

More than anything else, Braves Field represented the triumph of James E. Gaffney, his vision of baseball as it should be played, and his appreciation for the fans, or cranks, who flocked to see it.

Who was James Gaffney? That was the central question posed by Braves chronicler Harold Kaese in his landmark history of the franchise, first penned in 1948. Gaffney came to the franchise from New York cloaked in the intrigue, allegations, and influence of the Tammany Hall political machine.

Kaese's portrait of Gaffney can only be characterized as somewhat charitable. Gaffney was a self-made man who rose from street cop to alderman. From there he wound his way into the lucrative construction trade through a variety of corporate vehicles, most notably the construction company of Bradley, Gaffney, and Steers. As the right hand man of Tammany chief Charles F. Murphy, he had ready access to cash and connections. Amongst his closest friends numbered the "Old Fox" Clark Griffith. Indeed, rumors abounded that Gaffney had, on behalf of Murphy, supplied the funding for Griffith's 1911 purchase of an interest in the Washington franchise. Gaffney also reportedly sniffed around the possible purchase of two American League franchises before setting upon the course of acquiring the Boston Nationals.[5]

That transaction was realized through a short-lived collaboration with John Montgomery Ward, a New York lawyer and former pitcher for the Providence Grays. Ward had also been an organizer of both the player-centric Brotherhood and the short-lived Player's League.[6] A third New Yorker, John Carroll, collaborated on the purchase of the franchise in December 1911, with Ward serving as the baseball man, Gaffney as the business man, and Carroll as the bridge-building "go between."[7] Boss Murphy was again alleged to have partnered with Gaffney, sharing profits and losses as they had supposedly done in the transaction with Griffith and in the operations of Gaffney's construction business.[8]

What are we to make of the string of allegations surrounding Gaffney, some 100 years after the fact? Here is what the record indicates: Boss Murphy insisted in 1913 to newly elected New York governor William Sulzer that if any change was going to be made in the office of state highway commissioner, Gaffney should get the job. When Sulzer demurred, Murphy delivered the message that it was "Gaffney or War."[9] Sulzer then became the first and only governor of the state of New York to be impeached. Gaffney had been accused in one case of taking a $30,000 payoff, and in another

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A crowd heads toward Braves Field. The ticket and administration building (shown at left) still stands and today serves as the headquarters for the Boston University police. Note the trolley tracks in the foreground, indicating the path of transit vehicles exiting from within the ballpark itself.

matter had apparently benefited from the expiration of the statute of limitations.[10] In one famous incident, a grand jury witness testified that he was "morally certain" that Gaffney had acted as a bagman for Murphy by seeking a five percent share of a construction contract.[11] The same witness, however, could not testify that he was "legally certain" as to Gaffney's identity.[12]

In retrospect, the *New York Herald* sounds understated in its assessment that "[a]s a power under cover, [Gaffney's] position has been unprecedented."[13] It did not take long for the "power under cover" in the Boston franchise to emerge. Gaffney and Ward clashed almost immediately. Notwithstanding Gaffney's "genial disposition, unaffected ways and his loyalty to friends,"[14] by August of 1912, Ward had resigned as president of the Braves. (The team had been renamed in tribute to the symbol of Tammany supremacy.) Gaffney, originally the treasurer, although always the principal shareholder, became president.

Even before this coup, Gaffney had been the man out front. Immediately upon purchasing the team, he had been quoted as pledging $100,000 to make the team an on-field success. The franchise itself had been a bargain. In 1912, a half-interest in the Red Sox sold for $150,000, a mere $37,000 less than a full stake in the Boston Nationals.[15]

After Ward's departure, Gaffney decried the inadequacy of the Walpole Street Grounds in Boston's South End and sought to replace the site. He quickly turned to the alternative approach of improving and expanding the tired facility, increasing the park's capacity as well as removing the principal distortion in its dimensions, a left-field fence within 275 feet of home plate.[16] It would now take a 350-foot wallop to clear left field.

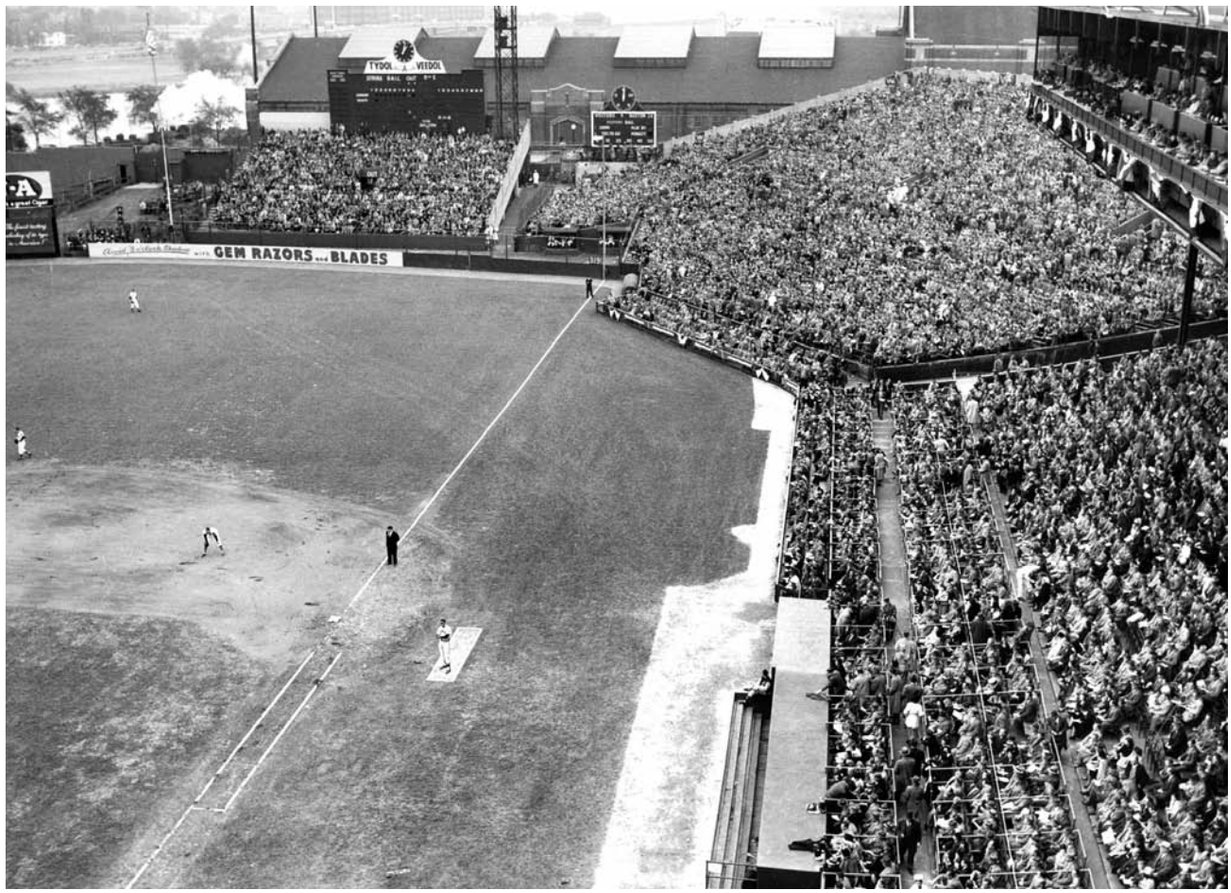
A body in motion tends to remain in motion, and when Gaffney's Tammany-based expectation of immediate success met with frustration on the field, rumors began to crop up as early as June of 1912 that he might be looking to sell his interest in the team.[17] By the early months of his third season in ownership, Gaffney was nearing the limits of his frustration. Disgusted, he remarked to his manager, George Stallings, in early 1914: "Do anything you want with them. Take them away. Drown them if you want to—I never want to look at them again."[18] On July 4 of that season, Gaffney's Braves were languishing in last place.

And then the impossible happened.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST BALLPARK

The Braves' World Series sweep of Connie Mack's men may not have been the only miracle of 1914. During the Braves' late summer surge, the whirling turnstiles of the Walpole Street Grounds had transformed James E. Gaffney from disgruntled Tammany owner into arguably the most ambitious baseball visionary of the decade.

Gaffney needed a fair amount of courage for the role, since 1914 did not present ideal economic circumstances for making an unprecedented investment in a baseball plant. 1913 brought the introduction of direct competition to Organized Baseball in the form of the Federal League, and 1914 had witnessed a months-long closure of the stock exchange and the beginnings of a European War that would eventually engulf the world.



In this photograph of a full house at Braves Field, the "jury box" section of the stands (in front of the right field scoreboard) is at capacity. The name stuck after one wag counted 12 fans in a section of stands built to accommodate 2,000.

Still, the turnout of bugs at the South End Grounds convinced Gaffney that his investment needed a new headquarters. Gaffney was able to secure the use of the two-year-old Fenway Park as home field for the Series from the new controlling owner of the Red Sox, Joseph J. Lannin, a hotelier who had only just previously acquired a small stake in the Braves franchise.[19] The World Series triumph, and the increased return stemming from the sizable gate at the Jersey Street locale, no doubt emboldened Gaffney to pursue a new facility, one that would surpass all other locations.

After Gaffney had titillated the public for over two months, members of the press were almost frothing when they gathered at the Braves' recently refurbished offices in the Paddock Building at 101 Tremont Street at five o'clock, on the evening of December 4, 1914. Gaffney, addressing reporters via telephone from New York City, unveiled the chosen location. Not surprisingly, it was a savvy real estate play, reflecting some very astute political connections.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts had earlier decided to construct an armory along Commonwealth Avenue at the site of the Allston golf course. In an ironic footnote to history, the architect for the armory, James E. McLaughlin, had overseen the recent construction of Fenway Park, a mere one mile to the east.[20] Gaffney secured the right to purchase the western portion of the golf course and immediately determined to reserve the valuable frontage along Commonwealth Avenue for commercial use, sliding his ballpark towards the rear of the site, abutting the Boston and Albany railroad tracks at a point where the Charles River makes an abrupt turn. The contours of the former golf course had featured a sweeping valley thought to make the site less than desirable for building purposes, driving down the expected price. The cost of the acquisition was $100,000.[21]

The location at first seemed ideal. *Baseball Magazine*, perhaps over-exuberantly, described Commonwealth Avenue as the "Fifth Avenue" of Boston. Gaffney set to work immediately, and became immersed in the details of the plans, serving as his own contractor, a decision likely both economic and egotistic. He reviewed the plans for each one of the new or recently

rebuilt jewel box parks with the aim of incorporating the best features of each into his new home for the Braves. It is widely believed that he copied the grandstand from Detroit's Navin Field (later Tiger Stadium), although *The New York Times* noted that the new field would be sunk below the street level "after the fashion of the Yale Bowl."[22]

On March 8, 1915, to much fanfare, Gaffney unveiled his design for the new facility. Work would be rushed in order to have the plant up and running by September 1, hopefully just in time for a defense of the Braves' World Series crown. A nine-foot square model, that would later be displayed prominently in the window of a downtown department store, previewed what would later come to be called the "perfect park."[23] While the model featured a single-deck grandstand extending from right field all the way around to left field, with seating for approximately 45,000 persons, some cost cutting changes were made before construction was completed. Through a process that today bears the more exotic label of "value engineering," Gaffney trimmed his design, cutting costs and settling upon revisions that resulted in a much smaller bleacher section of 2,000 seats. In addition, the right- and left-field "pavilions" were left uncovered.[24] For the second time in three years, Osborn Engineering was designing a major league park in Boston.

Time was the principal, but not the sole construction challenge. Gaffney had his leading engineer—one F.G. Collins Jr.—fresh from his role in the excavation and concrete work on the new Penn Station, create a natural amphitheater, with the diamond 17 feet below street level. Painful attention was paid to making sure that drainage was superb.

Gaffney had both a specific vision and a core constituency in mind as he constructed his ballpark. First, he rejected the anomalies of geometry that characterized many competing venues. The short right-field fence of the Baker Bowl and Fenway's left-field wall with its accompanying cliff were, in his view, detractions from the game as it should be played. The most exciting play in baseball was the inside the park home run. Gaffney was sure that was what the cranks wanted to see.

Hence, the playing field was enormous. Upon viewing the completed facility, Ty Cobb remarked "[t]his is the only field in the country on which you can play an absolutely fair game of ball without the interference

The jury has recessed, and the vast right field pavilion is empty as well.

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of fences." Cobb was utterly convinced, upon spying the 520-foot distance to the flag pole in right-center field that "no home run will ever go over that fence." *Baseball Magazine* calculated the distance to left field and to right field at 375 feet.[25] Other sources estimate these distances at 400 to 402 feet.[26]

In either case, the grounds were huge. A Boston bug who meandered from the edge of the right-field pavilion seats to the last seat in the far reaches of the left-field pavilion would have traversed a quarter mile in the process.[27] Construction began in March, with a September 1 targeted completion date. Following the practice of their American League cousins, the Braves would transplant the infield from the old South End Grounds to their new Allston home. When the old grounds became unplayable, the Red Sox afforded the Braves temporary quarters at Fenway.

Gaffney's demanding view of the game as it should be played was matched by his desire for his constituents to be whisked from the park with the ultimate convenience. While other fields had excellent streetcar service, Braves Field took things a step further, by incorporating a departure station into the ballpark itself, within the stadium walls. To do so, Gaffney used his persuasive and other powers to convince the Boston Elevated Railway System to construct a closed loop system that allowed trolley cars to depart from the Commonwealth Avenue mainline, then swing down Babcock street to enter a 600-foot by 50-foot pen within the park's perimeter. A departing patron could pay his fare at a mini pay station, enter a waiting car and be immediately returned to the mainline tracks and sent on his way home. Costs for the platform, capable of storing 20 trolleys at a time, exceeded $50,000, a pricetag that railway professionals doubted was worthwhile even given the fare-paying throngs that flocked to the field during the two World Series played there in 1915 and 1916.[28] It was also a cost that the Boston Elevated Railway Company, operating under increasing financial distress, could ill afford.[29]

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By the late 1940s, lights had been added to Braves Field and the dimension of left field had been set at 337 feet. Beyond the scoreboard (and some open space) lurked the rail yards.

In an independent but fortuitous development, the Elevated (which ran at street level in this area and was only elevated in portions of the system) began adopting a new trolley car that would prove particularly effective at handling crowds associated with sporting events, such as those at Braves Field. Entry into the car was afforded by a single door, located in the middle of the trolley car. Within a few years of the park's opening, these center entrance cars, known as "crowd eaters," would serve as the principal means of conveyance to the park and would retain that role for generations of Braves fans.[30]

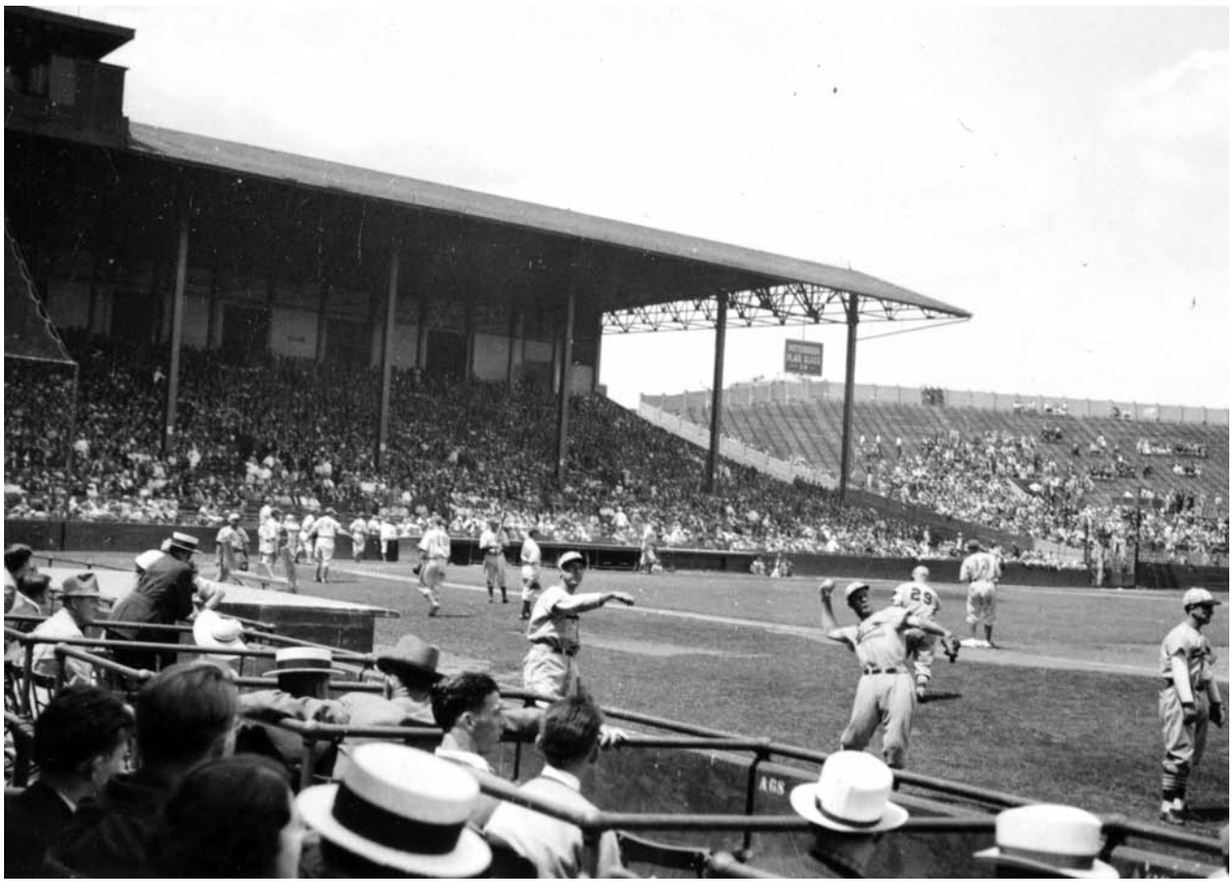
THE GRAND OPENING...AND AFTER

Braves Field represented the last of the jewel box ballparks. Unlike many of that genre, it was constructed entirely of steel (some 750 tons) and an estimated 8,200,000 pounds of concrete.[31]

Like a true Tammany man, Gaffney delivered when it mattered. The field was inaugurated ahead of the original scheduled delivery date of September 1, a daring feat in its own right.[32] Yet no signs of a rush to meet the deadline were in evidence at the festive opening, which came on August 18 in a successful tilt against the Cardinals. Fourteen mayors including Boston's own James Michael Curley attended, along with Governor Walsh of Massachusetts. The whereabouts of former New York governor Sulzer were not reported in contemporaneous accounts.

Clark Griffith threw out the first ball to the delight of some 10,000 Boston school children who attended as guests of the Braves. At least 6,000 presumably less delighted fans were turned away. Paid attendance was 32,000 which excluded the schoolchildren and over 4,000 other guests classified as dignitaries. The Braves claimed attendance of some 56,000 despite the fact that there were only 40,000 seats. Some Tammany habits really did die hard.

Baseball Magazine was impressed, dubbing the field "The World's Greatest Baseball Park." F.C. Lane, who had earlier said it was a "mad policy" emblematic of baseball's mismanagement to build another ballpark in the same city as the new Fenway Park, now declared, "The field at Boston is vast, simple in its line, Grecian in its architecture." According to National League President Tener: "It is the last word in baseball



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The original model of Braves Field envisioned the roof extending over both the left-field pavilion (shown) and the right-field pavilion.

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The Braves have left town, the left-field pavilion has already been demolished, and baseball's perfect ballpark is playing host to football. The initial vast outfield expanse of Braves Field is clearly illustrated by the large gap between the football bleachers and the light towers which had been located within the walled perimeter of the original park.

parks, its building was the biggest single event in ten years time."[33]

Not everything was perfect at the opening of Gaffney's "perfect park." From an operational perspective, the interior loading of trolley cars at game's end created a severe crush of humanity. The *Globe* reported that "[t]he rush for these cars was tremendous and for more than half an hour only the sturdiest were able to clamber aboard. There was a mad dash for every car and a battle at every step. Many climbed [in]... through windows and every car that passed out to Commonwealth Avenue was jammed, packed full. The women had no chance at all."[34]

AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO BUSINESS

But the events surrounding the opening of Braves Field that may have had the greatest impact on baseball history and the Braves franchise involved representatives of the Federal League, who had departed well before the opening ceremonies. The fact that Gaffney had Opening Day "boxes reserved for the Feds" as well as all owners in Organized Baseball represented a major shift by Gaffney in his thinking regarding the outlaws of the Federal League. In 1914, he had allegedly used his influence on the New York City docks to thwart the Federals' effort to meet and sign major leaguers returning from their 1913–14 world tour.[35] He had litigated aggressively, indeed almost zealously, against the Federals in an effort to combat their efforts to raid the rosters of major league teams.[36] Furthermore, when Gaffney sold the old Walpole Street grounds, he included, at the insistence of the National Commission, an "iron bound agreement" that the land could never again be used for baseball purposes, in order to prevent "any undesirable parties [the Federals] from eventually getting control of the grounds."[37]

Most notably, he had pulled his team off the field earlier in the 1915 season rather than allow John McGraw's Giants to use the services of "reverse jumper" Bernie Kauff, who had left his Federal League team for McGraw's National Leaguers. This infuriated the Little Napoleon who screamed, "That's a fine way to repay the favors I have done for you. I'll get even. You can't make a fool of me and get away with it."[38]

Like any good politician, Gaffney kept his options open and by shortly before the grand opening in August, he had definitively changed course. Not only did he offer a personalized tour of the new grounds to the Federals' inner circle of President Gilmore, George S. Ward, C.B. Comstock, and Harry Sinclair (later of Teapot Dome scandal fame), he reportedly wooed these insiders with his pitch to have his construction firm build the proposed new Federal League Park in New York City. At the same time, he was reportedly feeling out the Federals' reaction to possible peace negotiations. Subsequent events revealed that the ballpark proposal, which featured the prominent display of an architect's plans for a 40,000-seat stadium in a storefront window on 42nd Street, was part of the "Big Bluff" strategy of the Federals to secure more favorable peace terms.[39]

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Lou Perini, visionary or villain?

When peace between the Federals and Organized Baseball did come, the lion's share of the credit for concluding a peace treaty on terms favorable to Organized Baseball went to the Nationals, and Gaffney was credited with getting the peace talks started.[40]

A LEGACY ASSESSED

The month after Braves Field opened, the Boston Red Sox sprinted onto the grounds in an effort to acclimate themselves to the park that would serve as their "home field" during the 1915 World Series. Included on this squad was George Herman Ruth who—although he would not pitch in the 1915 series—would take to the Braves Field mound in 1916 for perhaps the most impressive pitching performance of his career.[41]

It was however, in his subsequent incarnation as a slugger, that Ruth would radically change the game, and, in so doing obliterate Gaffney's vision of the game as it should be played. Ruth's power display, beginning with his 29 home runs in 1919, relegated Braves Field to premature functional obsolescence. The vision had been irrevocably blurred and, as a result, the vast configuration of Braves Field would become a liability. In the years that followed, the diamond was the subject of almost constant tinkering. Bleachers and shorter fences were built and, in turn, demolished. The playing field was rotated toward right field. In all, Braves Field's dimensions were altered more than those of any other ballpark, although in the end, as Kaese noted, no one could figure out how "to move 8,200,000 pounds of cement stands closer to the playing field."[42]

Less than one month after peace with the Federals was declared, Gaffney stunned the baseball world by selling the Braves to a local group headed by Percy Haughton. He made no secret of why he closed the deal. Denying any preexisting intention to sell the club, Gaffney stated, "[w]hen I discovered I could secure a price…that would net me a substantial profit, I could not, as a business man, turn down the proposition."[43] The sale price was reportedly $500,000, making for a nice return on Gaffney's original purchase price of $187,000. Gaffney retained ownership control of Braves Field and from the very first reports, skepticism was expressed as to whether the terms of the sale and the lease cost of the ballpark afforded a realistic opportunity for a successful operation by the new owners.

For the first time since 1903, the Boston National League franchise was in the hands of local owners. Gaffney, for his part, was at various times rumored to be a potential purchaser of the Giants (in tandem with Sinclair), Brooklyn, or returning to Boston to rescue the beleaguered owners of the Braves.[44] Gaffney would thereafter from time to time make himself available to Boston reporters, occasionally stirring the baseball pot in Beantown. For example, just after the 1918 World Series, Gaffney and Red Sox owner Harry Frazee discussed the possibility of sharing Braves Field, allowing Frazee to capitalize on the rising real estate values in the Fenway area by selling his ballpark. Nothing ever came of it. Apparently, Frazee found some other way to raise the capital he needed.[45]

THE NEW VISIONARIES

Financially weak ownership would continue to plague the Braves franchise for decades after Gaffney's departure. Indeed, it seemed that simply owning the team was enough in itself to drive a once wealthy owner, Judge Emil Fuchs, into bankruptcy. The team languished for most of the twenties, teetered on the brink of collapse during the Depression, and did not begin to shake off the doldrums until a triumvirate known as the "Three Little Steamshovels" wrestled control of the team from their syndicate partners in early 1944. New Deal politics and wartime exigencies had killed Tammany Hall and replaced it with a less egregious, but still politically charged world of contracting. Lou Perini, Guido Rugo, and Joseph Maney were local construction men who mirrored that progression. In many respects, they were as much a product of their era as Gaffney was of his.

Like Gaffney, they saw an immediate need to improve the existing conditions at Braves Field, which had been allowed to languish over the years. Light towers were erected to introduce Boston to night baseball. The playing field was lowered by 18 inches to improve sight lines. Fir trees were planted beyond the outfield fence to offer some buffer from rail yard emissions.[46] Further renovations, including potentially covering the pavilions and enlarging the bleachers, were planned.[47]

As the on-field performance improved under the new owners, Boston fans, who had briefly entertained thoughts of a subway series in 1915 and 1916, had their quite realistic hopes dashed in 1948 when the Red Sox unraveled in a one-game playoff against the Cleveland Indians. While the Braves drew more than 1.45 million fans in 1948, the glory days of that season reversed themselves within four short years, as the Braves sunk to seventh place and attendance slid back down to alarmingly dismal but nonetheless familiar levels. As attendance dwindled, losses mounted, reaching in excess of $580,000 in 1952.[48]

But America was a different place by the early fifties and baseball was changing, too. In an era of seemingly limitless American power, failure was less acceptable and futility no longer an option. A new postwar, automobile-driven prosperity brought with it greater disposable income and more leisure, but also more leisure options. Baseball faced the issues and opportunities arising out of increased competition for the sports dollar, integration, more night baseball, and the beginnings of a fitful dance with television.

Like Gaffney, the steamshovels—down to two when Rugo left the scene, then diminishing to one when Perini bought out all his partners in late 1952—knew that baseball was, above all, a business.

AND THEN THEY WERE GONE…BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

Lou Perini had a secret in the winter of 1952–53, a secret he held so closely he did not divulge it even to his wife.[49] Warren Spahn, his star pitcher, while already a five-time All Star, was even further removed from this privileged information. Approximately one thousand miles away from Boston, meanwhile, the wave of the future was building, and the Braves would catch the early development of this wave just as surely as they had closed out the era of the jewel box ballpark in 1915.

Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, had undertaken the financing and construction of a new ballpark, originally aimed at replacing the outdated Borchert Field as the home of the Braves' leading minor league affiliate. The readily expandable nature of the park's design made it obvious that higher aspirations were in the minds of its sponsors. The site was a former gravel pit known as "Story quarry" that was far removed from the Milwaukee equivalent of Fifth Avenue. The quarry was an automobile-centric location, reflecting the nation's increasing reliance on the car; when County Stadium was completed, it was situated in the midst of a sea of parking.

Lou Perini's secret was his intention to disrupt the baseball equivalent of the Congress of Vienna. Ever since peace had been hammered out between the American and National Leagues in the National Agreement of 1903, the major leagues of Organized Baseball had been the exclusive province of 16 teams in an elite cadre of 10 cities.[50] This basic tenet underlying the National Agreement had withstood one baseball war (against the Federal League), the Great Depression, two World Wars, and the collapse of the National Com-

mission originally established to administer it.[51]

Once Perini toppled these foundations by moving the Braves to Milwaukee, a flood of relocations and expansions followed. Perini, like Gaffney, had a vision and he had foreseen the trend of transferring franchises. He believed "other cities can take a page from the Milwaukee book by providing for major league facilities."[52] Walter O'Malley, the Brooklyn Dodgers owner, added ominously, "This is bound to start a chain reaction."[53] The decision to relocate was, in the finest traditions of Gaffney's sale of the team in 1916, a good business decision, perhaps the best made by a Braves owner since Gaffney's time.

Braves fans had a different perspective. As Kaese recounts things, the end was as sudden and painful as the plan had been secret. On March 13, 1953, the word leaked out that the Braves, already in spring training at Bradenton, would be playing that very season in Milwaukee County Stadium. Warren Spahn, who had planned to open his new diner across the street from Braves Field, immediately became an absentee owner. The 1953 All-Star Game was quickly moved from Braves Field to Crosley Field. Braves fans, stunned, mourned the loss of the franchise in the only way appropriate, by stealing home plate.[54]

The same year the Braves left town, one of the old "crowd eater" trolleys dropped a brake shoe in the downtown core subway tunnel, wreaking havoc with the Boston morning rush hour. The center entrance cars that carried the echoes of countless Braves postgame celebrations and frustrations were immediately retired from service.[55]

Boston University acquired James Gaffney's overgrown "perfect ballpark" some four months later and, in the process of converting it for the university's own athletic purposes, demolished the majority of the plant, although much of the old right field pavilion remains and the Spanish Colonial ticket and administrative office building now serves as the headquarters for the Boston University police force.

The Boston Braves and Braves Field live on in the memories of a hardy group of preservationists known as the Boston Braves Historical Association. Over the years they have kept alive the spirit of their youth through a series of reunions and, as the ranks have thinned and grayed, by means of a newsletter and the bully pulpit of the Internet. Baseball, the game, and how the nation and its cities relate to that game, have changed several times over since that dismal March day in 1953, but somehow the love of the game, the love of one's team whether that team is good or bad, and our memories, live on. ■

Notes

1 The term "jewel box ballpark" for purposes of this article is meant to encompass those major league ballparks built or rebuilt between 1909 and 1915. The Baker Bowl presaged the jewel box era.

2. Subway service to Fenway Park did not begin until 1914. At its opening, the park was accessible by streetcar, on either the Ipswich Street or Beacon Street lines. Glenn Stoudt, *Fenway 1912* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 74.

3. There was nothing shabby about Braves Field at the time of its opening. Financially weak ownership, lack of routine maintenance against the elements and an unrelenting neighbor, the Boston & Albany Railroad, caused deterioration in its physical plant over time.

4. To be fair, construction was delayed by union strife and by steel shortages caused by the Korean War. Milwaukee County Stadium is frequently misidentified as the first publicly financed stadium used by major league baseball. It was not. That honor belongs to Cleveland Municipal Stadium.

5. "Magnate Gaffney Likes the Baseball Business," *The Pittsburgh Press*, December 24, 1911:17.

6. The Brotherhood was the first real players union. The Player's League lasted only one year. Daniel R. Levitt, *The Battle That Forged Modern Baseball* (Lanham, Maryland: Ivan R. Dee, 2012), 16.

7. Harold Kaese, *The Boston Braves 1871–1953* (Boston: Northeastern University Press edition, 2004), 128.

8. "Magnate Gaffney Likes the Baseball Business," *The Pittsburgh Press*, December 24, 1911:17.

9. Gustavus Myers, *The History of Tammany Hall* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1917), 352–369; Jay W. Forrest and James Malcolm, Tammany's Treason: Impeachment of Governor William Sulzer (Albany: The Fort Orange Press, 1913), 59–61. Myers also describes another corporate vehicle—the New York Contracting and Trucking Company—in which Gaffney, Murphy's brother John, and Murphy's lieutenant Richard J. Crouch owned five shares each. The owner of the remaining 85 shares was "never definitively explained.": 302.

10. Myers, *The History of Tammany Hall*, 366, 367.

11. "Met by Stewart, Gaffney Balks," *The New York Times*, January 23, 1914: 1.

12. After more than twenty-five years as a lawyer, the author is not surprised by a distinction between moral certainty and legal certainty; however, it is surprising that in this instance legal certainty appears to be the higher standard.

13. Kaese, *Boston Braves*, 129.

14. "James E. Gaffney," *Sporting Life* (May 4, 1912): 1.

15. Levitt, *Battle That Forged Modern Baseball*, 32.

16. "Boston National Park to Lose its Old Title as a Mere Bandbox," *Sporting Life* (October 18, 1913): 2.

17. T.H. Murnane, "Set for Real Race," *The Sporting News* (June 13, 1912): 2. These rumors may have been fueled by the Gaffney-Ward split.

18. "Sidelights on the New World's Champions," *Baseball Magazine* (February, 1915): 44.

19. "Boston Budget," *Sporting Life* (November 29, 1913): 3.

20. The Commonwealth Armory, located next door to Braves Field, the world's largest ballpark, was the world's largest armory. "World's Largest Armory To Be Dedicated Tonight," *Boston Globe*, December 30, 1915: 9.

21. Gaffney acquired the land in December 1914 using the corporate vehicle known as the Boston Realty Holding Company. When he arranged financing for the construction of Braves Field, the Commonwealth Realty Trust issued 100 shares of the trust to his Boston Realty Holding Company "in payment for the real estate." The par value of each share was $1,000. *Suffolk County Registry of Deeds*, Book 3868, Pages 408–440.

22. "Braves Park To Be Bowl," *The New York Times*, December 29, 1914: 9.

23. "Here's How the Braves' New Park in Allston Will Look," *Boston Globe*, March 9, 1915: 9.

24. Again, irony intercedes, as the decision to abandon a single, unitary roof structure for the entire structure may have facilitated the ultimate preservation of the right field pavilion some four decades later.

25. F.C. Lane, "The World's Greatest Baseball Park," *Baseball Magazine* (October 1915): 31.
26. Ronald M. Selter, *Ballparks of the Deadball Era* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2008): 34–35.
27. Lane, "World's Greatest Baseball Park," 104.
28. "Handling Traffic at Largest Baseball Park," *Electric Railway Journal* (September 25, 1915); "Are Special Peak Loads Profitable?" *Electric Railway Journal* (November 25, 1916): 1.
29. A later investigation of the conditions of the Elevated at this time described its cars as "antiquated" and its track conditions as "crooked, broken [and] patched." Within a few years, the Massachusetts Legislature would have to enact the Public Control Act to financially assist the system. Boston Finance Commission; Timothy F. Callahan, *Summary of Report of Investigation of Boston Elevated Railway* (Boston, 1939): 2.
30. Alfred Barten, "Center Entrance in Boston," *Electric Lines* (May–June 1992). Accessed April 5, 2012, www.virtualrailroader.com.
31. With the exception of Yankee Stadium (the first "stadium" as opposed to a "park" or a "field" or "grounds"), it would be the last major league baseball park constructed until the truly cavernous and multi-purpose Municipal Stadium opened in Cleveland in 1932.
32. Gaffney had already moved the target date up to August 15.
33. Lane, "World's Greatest Baseball Park," 29. Lane's earlier ruminations had come in February 1915, before Braves Field was begun.
34. Melville E. Webb, Jr., "Braves Dedicate New Park with Victory Before the Greatest Crowd That Ever Saw a Ball Game," *Boston Globe*, August 19, 1915: 1.
35. James E. Elfers, *The Tour to End All Tours* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2003); Levitt, *Battle That Forged Modern Baseball*, 101–102.
36. "Two $25,000 Suits Aimed at Federals," *The New York Times*, April 14, 1914.
37. T.H. Murnane, "Baseball Exit for South End Grounds," *Boston Globe*, December 20, 1914:15.
38. "Avert Base Ball Disaster," *Sporting Life* (May 8, 1915):1.
39. Robert Peyton Wiggins, *The Federal League of Base Ball Clubs* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2009): 281.
40. Francis C. Richter, "National League's Eventful Meet," *Sporting Life* (December, 1915):5.
41. Robert W. Creamer, *Babe the Legend Comes to Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974): 126. It should be noted that Ruth did pinch hit in Game 1 of the 1915 World Series.
42. Kaese, *Boston Braves*, 174.
43. *Sporting Life* (January 15, 1916): 8.
44. "Base Ball Facts, Fiction and Reminiscences," *Sporting Life* (October 28, 1916): 4; "National Agreement Again in Full Force," *Sporting Life* (February 5, 1916):7.
45. James C. O'Leary, "Red Sox May Join in Use of Braves Field," *Boston Globe*, October 31, 1918:4.
46. Kaese, *Boston Braves*, 261, 268. These improvements were welcome but did not do much to improve the basic competitiveness of the facility. It should not be forgotten that the only two surviving Jewel Box ballparks each had the benefit of early, large scale reconstruction efforts. Fenway was rebuilt by Tom Yawkey in 1934. Wrigley Field benefited from major work over the course of several renovations in the 1920s and 1930s.
47. Bob Brady, *Boston Braves Historical Association*, Spring 1910 newsletter.
48. Kaese, *Boston Braves*, 283.
49. David Perini interviewed in "A Braves New World," a feature for Wisconsin Public Television (2009).
50. This is sometimes erroneously stated as 11 cities. New York City swallowed Brooklyn in 1898.
51. The rules on the transfer of franchises were unique to each league's constitution. The National League required unanimous consent.
52. *The New York Times*, March 19, 1953: 1.
53. *The New York Times*, March 19, 1953: 39.
54. Bob Brady, the President of the Boston Braves Historical Association, notes that the theft was perpetrated by a member of the local "Mountfort Street Gang" and home plate now resides in the Sports Museum of New England. My thanks to him for this tidbit and for all of his counsel in preparing this piece. Bob Brady email, May 19, 2012.
55. Barten, "Center Entrance in Boston."

The Browns Get It Right

Winning the "World Series" in 1945 as Pete Gray Debuts

Roger A. Godin

After the St. Louis Cardinals captured the sixth and clinching game of the 1944 World Series, Browns owner Don Barnes and general manager Bill Dewitt made their way to the victor's offices to extend congratulations. As related in Bill Mead's *Even the Browns*, they found Cardinals owner Sam Beardon, who responded boorishly: "If we'd lost this Series to the Browns. I'd have to leave town. It would have been a disgrace to lose to the Browns."[1]

The fact of the matter is that when the Browns and Cardinals went head-to-head in the annual City Series, the Browns came out on top. The St. Louis City Series originated in 1903 and was played 60 times with the Browns winning 26–13 over their rivals, with 21 ending in ties. The games were held most often in the spring before the beginning of the regular season, though some were held in the fall. Series between crosstown rivals were also held in other places, most notably Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia, cities where both major leagues had a team. The practice survives to this day through the Los Angeles-Los Angeles (Anaheim) and San Francisco-Oakland preseason series.

As World War II wound down in Europe in the spring of 1945, American forces surged into Germany and were on the "Sands of Iwo Jima" in the Pacific. The Browns assembled for their second consecutive spring training at Cape Girardeau, Missouri, on March 12. The Cardinals would train in St. Louis, both teams restricted to Midwestern locations because of wartime travel constraints. As in the previous year, the Browns would be joined by their minor league affiliate, the Toledo Mud Hens. While weather conditions were not always desirable, other aspects were. Bill Mead described the scenario this way: "…[T]he Browns were blessed with a superb spring training camp. They used the gymnasium at Southeast Missouri State Teachers College; an arena built for horse shows, that had a dirt floor and thus could be used for infield practice; an outdoor baseball field; and a sandstone quarry, protected from the wind, with a running track." He added, "Batting cages were set up in the arena with nets to stop batted balls. While some other clubs whiled away inclement days waiting for sunshine, the Browns trained hard."[2]

The defending American League champions broke camp on the afternoon of April 6 after defeating their Toledo farmhands 7–6, finishing spring training with a 7–1–3 record. All of the exhibition games were against Toledo, as a three game series with the Cubs had to be cancelled because of travel restraints. Manager Luke Sewell was not totally pleased. As he told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "…I'm a little disappointed the way things have gone in the last week or 10 days. I would like to have been able to play more games.... If we had played about five more games I would have been better satisfied." As to his team, he added: "So far as

The 1945 St. Louis Browns, winners of that season's City Series. Pete Gray is the first player, row three.

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physical condition is concerned, we are probably just as well off as we were this time last year, or perhaps a little better."[3]

The City Series would get underway on Saturday, April 7 and all eyes would be on the Browns' new left fielder, the one-armed Pete Gray who had been named the Southern Association MVP while hitting .333 for Memphis in 1944. "The Browns will be a better box office attraction as champions of the league and in Pete Gray," reported the *Post-Disptach*. "They also will be able to present the league's outstanding box office attraction.... He has made good as a ball player, not as an unusual figure in a uniform. But it will be something to see a big league ball player who has overcome the handicap of having only one arm and no doubt Pete will help no little to make the turnstiles click."[4]

The teams would alternate the home-team role in Sportsman's Park with the Browns getting the honors in Game One. Sewell sent Sig Jakucki, who had started the fourth game of the 1944 World Series, to the mound against the Cardinals' Blix Donnelly, who had won the second game in relief. A crowd of 7,649 was on hand to see Vern Stephens' eighth inning home run win the game 3–2. The Browns had battled back from a 2–1 deficit to get runs in the fourth and sixth innings. The latter run came via a home run by rookie third baseman Len Schulte who never hit one in his brief major league career. Pete Gray went 0-for-4 with two putouts.

The largest crowd of the series, 15,300, came out for Game Two on Sunday and saw Jack Kramer, who had won the third game of the World Series, get pounded for ten hits and six runs in the first three innings. The Cardinals would get seven more hits off three other Browns pitchers en route to their 13–4 romp. When Mike Kreevich came up sick Sewell sent Pete Gray to center field, which he played flawlessly. From the *Post-Dispatch*: "In the Cardinal barrage there were many hits to center field; they were bouncing off the walls in both directions, but Pete handled each one faultlessly and his return throws got to the infield as quickly as any outfielder could have got them there."[5]

At the plate, Gray came up with a scratch single in four at bats. It was but one of five hits that the Browns collected off three separate Cardinals pitchers. Redbirds' rookie outfielder "Red" Schoendienst went 3-for-6 while "Whitey" Kurowski and Johnny Hopp poled four baggers.

The teams took Monday off and resumed play on Tuesday, April 10 before 1,956 fans as Mike Kreevich returned to center field, going two-for-three with a home run. First baseman George McQuinn added a two-run homer as the Browns got 10 other hits en route to a 7–2 win. Gray went 0-for-5, but did get a stolen base when he and second baseman Don Gutteridge executed a double steal.

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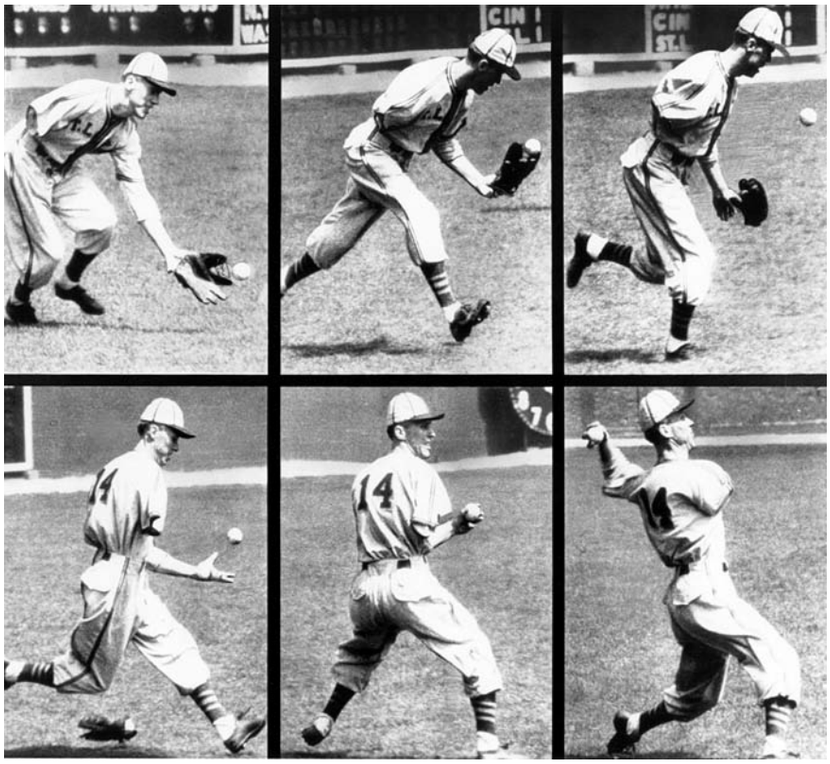
Sig Jakucki, a key hurler for the 1944 AL Champion Browns, would win two games in the City Series, but 1945 would be his last season in the majors.

McQuinn, who had hit the Browns' only home run in the World Series, got his second in a rain shortened six inning game the next day that the American Leaguers broke open with a six-run outburst in the top of the sixth. The Cardinals had taken an early 2–0 lead which the Browns had overcome in the fifth inning, in part through a Gutteridge home run that tied the score. Another run put them ahead and the subsequent six runs made the final 10–3. Sewell had started Nelson Potter, who had worked two World Series games with one loss, and he scattered seven hits in his four innings of work. There was good news on the Pete Gray front. According to the *Post-Dispatch*, "Pete Gray was another hero of the victory.... Pete, who indicated in previous games that he was nervous and perhaps pressing at the plate finally broke the ice with a line single to center in the fifth inning and he repeated in the sixth…Pete also made a tumbling catch of a fly in left-center, and everybody was happy about it. The small crowd (1,249) cheered lustily."[6]

Thursday, April 12 was "a day like all days, filled with those events which alter and illuminate our time," as the old CBS-TV show *You Are There* used to intone. That afternoon, while the Browns clinched the series with solid seventh and eighth innings, President Franklin Roosevelt died at Warm Springs, Georgia. Out of respect for the late President, the team presidents, Don Barnes for the Browns and Sam Beardon for the Cardinals, then cancelled the sixth game slated for Saturday, but retained the Sunday finale.

After surrendering two unearned runs to the Cardinals in the first inning of game five, Sig Jakucki



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(Above) Pete Gray made his Mound City debut in the City Series, but could not sustain his .240 series batting average over the full season.

(Left) Photo sequence shows how Gray went about fielding outfield grounders.

scattered six hits for the win as the Browns went ahead on Babe Martin's pinch-hit three-run homer in the bottom of the seventh. They added five more in the eighth as Vern Stephens and catcher Frank Mancuso came up with the big hits. The final read 8–3 and the Browns had won the springtime "World Series" in convincing fashion. Gray went 2-for-5 and had started the eighth inning festivities with a solid single to right-center. A crowd of 1,389 was on hand.

Rain before the Sunday game held the crowd to 2,029, but they would see a contest equal to the competitiveness of the first game. The Browns took a first-inning 1–0 lead when, after Gray's single sent Gutteridge to third, the latter scored on Stephens' sacrifice fly. Sewell had decided to give three of his starters three-inning stints and Jack Kramer and Nelson Potter gave the Cardinals nothing. But in the eighth with Tex Shirley on the mound, Schoendienst doubled in Augie Bergamo and Johnny Hopp for the Cardinals' 2–1 victory.

Reporting on Pete Gray's play in the series, the *Post-Dispatch*, April 16, 1945, said, "Pete Gray...showed enough to warrant the belief that he will be a useful member of the club. He handled 14 putouts and one assist without an error and batted .240, getting six hits in 25 times at bat."[7]

It would actually be a somewhat better performance than his .218 average in 77 regular season games. The Browns would finish third, six games out of first, but there were those on the team that felt Gray had cost them the pennant. In Bill Mead's *Even The Browns*, third baseman Mark Christman said, "[H]e cost us the pennant in 1945...There were an awful lot of ground balls hit to center field. When the kids who hit those balls were pretty good runners, they could keep on going and wind up at second base. I know that cost us eight or ten ball games. Because that took away the double play, or somebody would single and the runner would score, whereas if he had been on first it would take two hits to get him to score."[8]

A contrasting view is presented by William Kashatus in his *One-Armed Wonder: Pete Gray, Wartime Baseball, and the American Dream*: "[T]he '45 Browns finish had little to do with Pete Gray, who did not enjoy regular playing time during the final two months of the season, and everything to do with the dismal way the club performed that year.... The '45 Browns were a mere shadow of their pennant-winning club of the previous year. The pitching staff slumped...(and) was mediocre at best." Kashatus goes on to blame the offense. "[T]he Brownie offense left much to be desired...no regular (other than Vern Stephens) hit above .277 or collected more than seven home runs. The team batting average dipped to .249…(and) scored 87 fewer runs than they had in 1944. Under these

circumstances, it was more than a bit presumptuous to claim…that Gray cost the club the AL pennant."[9]

The Cardinals would finish three games behind the Cubs in the National League and would follow that up with a pennant and World Series victory in 1946. Gray was gone the next year and so were the Browns after 1953. But for a brief week in April 1945 they could live up to a line in their fight song, "Onward and upward, St. Louis Browns." ■

Game One April 7, 1945

Cardinals	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	–	2	9	0
Browns	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	x	–	3	9	2

Donnelly, Creel (6) and W. Cooper, Rice
Jakucki, Shirley (8) and Mancuso
WP Jakucki LP Creel HR Schulte, Stephens

Game Two April 8, 1945

Browns	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	–	4	5	2
Cardinals	2	2	2	3	0	2	2	0	x	–	13	17	2

Kramer, LaMacchia (4), Jones (5) and Hayworth, Mancuso
M. Cooper, Wilks (4), Byerly (7) and W. Cooper, Rice
WP M. Cooper LP Kramer HR Kurowski, Hopp

Game Three April 10, 1945

Cardinals	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	–	2	9	2
Browns	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	–	7	13	0

Burkhardt, Lanier (5), Trotter (8) and W. Cooper, Rice
Hollingsworth, West (7) and Mancuso
WP Hollingsworth LP Burkhart HR McQuinn, Kreevich

Game Four April 11, 1945

Browns	0	0	0	2	2	6	–	10	14	2*
Cardinals	0	1	1	1	0	0	–	3	7	1

Potter, Zoldak (5) and Hayworth
Byerly, Jurisich (6) and W. Cooper
WP Potter LP Byerly HR McQuinn, Gutteridge
* Game shortened by rain

Game Five April 12, 1945

Cardinals	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	–	3	8	1
Browns	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	x	–	8	8	3

Donnelly, Partenheimer (6), Creel (8) and Rice, W. Cooper
Jakucki, Caster (8) and Mancuso
WP Jakucki LP Partenheimer HR Martin

Game Six April 15, 1945

Cardinals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	–	2	4	0
Browns	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–	1	3	0

Burkhardt, Dockins (5), Jurisich (8) and O'Dea, Rice
Kramer, Potter (4), Shirley (7) and Mancuso
WP Jurisich LP Shirley

Notes

1. William B. Mead; *Even The Browns: The Zany, True Story of Baseball in the Early Forties* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, Inc., 1978) 186.
2. Mead, op. cit. 131.
3. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 6, 1945.
4. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 7, 1945.
5. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 9, 1945.
6. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 12, 1945.
7. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 16, 1945.
8. Mead, op. cit. 209–210.
9. William C. Kashatus; *One-Armed Wonder: Pete Gray, Wartime Baseball, and the American Dream* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1995) 118–119.

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The Elysian Fields of Brooklyn

The Parade Ground

Andrew Paul Mele

The dictionary defines the word "Elysian" as "something blissful; delightful,"[1] and for ballplayers, such a place has existed for 140 years in the city of New York. Brooklyn is one of the five boroughs of New York City and if considered as a separate entity would rank fourth in the country in sending players to the major leagues, behind Chicago, Philadelphia, and the other four non-Brooklyn boroughs combined.[2] There is a 40-acre tract of amateur playing fields lying in the Flatbush section—just a fungo hit away from where Ebbets Field once stood—that has been a nexus for the baseball-hungry borough to showcase its youth.

Established in 1869 and named for its original purpose, the Parade Ground has quite possibly produced more professional and major league ballplayers than any such piece of real estate in the nation. It is difficult to ascertain with any degree of certainty which players in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century may have played their early baseball there, but future stars like "Wee Willie" Keeler—who was born in 1872 on Pulaski Street and died 50 years later in a house just a few blocks away—undoubtedly got some playing time at the fabled "Park." Likely so did Joe Judge, whose 20-year major league career resulted in a .298 batting average, and pitcher Jimmy Ring.

The earliest player that we can be sure played at the Ground was a graduate of Erasmus Hall High School named Waite Hoyt. Hoyt grew up in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn and played his early games at the Parade Ground before embarking upon a major league career in 1918. He tried out in 1913 for his favorite ballclub, but the Dodgers turned him down. Signed by John McGraw of the Giants at age 15, Hoyt spent three seasons in the minor leagues. He did pitch one perfect inning for the Giants in 1918, in which he struck out two, only to find himself in the uniform of the Boston Red Sox the next season. In 1921 he joined his former Red Sox teammate, George Herman Ruth, in New York with the Yankees and his star began to shine. Hoyt won 19 games as the Yanks won the American League pennant.

In the World Series he pitched three complete games, winning two and losing Game Eight on an unearned run, 1–0. In fact, in 27 innings he gave up two runs total, both unearned. He would pitch in six more World Series, winning six games and losing four. He was a Yankee into the 1930 season before being traded to the Detroit Tigers. In 1927, backed by "Murderers' Row," Hoyt led the American league in wins with 22 and winning percentage at .759. He lost just seven games that year. After leaving New York, he went from Detroit to the Philadelphia Athletics, then to Brooklyn and back to the Giants. He was with the Pittsburgh Pirates for five seasons before Brooklyn acquired him in 1937. Hoyt was released by the Dodgers after throwing just 16⅓ innings. He was 0–3, his ERA had ballooned to 4.96, and on that note his big league career came to an end.[3] Waite Hoyt won 237 major league games over 21 seasons and in 1969 was inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame, one of five original Brooklynites enshrined at Cooperstown.

Waite Hoyt, however, was far more than numbers. A friend and teammate to both Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, he stood with his former teammates at Yankee Stadium on the day that the Iron Horse proclaimed himself to be "the luckiest man on the face of the earth." He was present when the Babe, dying of throat cancer, said his last goodbyes. Known for his vast store of baseball stories, Hoyt spoke for two hours on the air without notes in a moving tribute to Ruth two days after Ruth had passed away. He authored an oft-quoted book, *Babe Ruth As I Knew Him*, which Ruth biographer Robert Creamer called "by far the most revealing and rewarding work on Ruth."[4]

Upon being released as a player in 1938, Hoyt still had to earn a living. At age 39 he could still pitch, so he signed with a semi-pro outfit called the Brooklyn Bushwicks. He was paid $150 per game.[5] The Bushwicks played at a home field in Woodhaven, Queens called Dexter Park, and this was no bush baseball. Major leaguers who had played at the Parade Ground and who picked up some extra money with the Bushwicks included Gene Hermanski, Phil Rizzuto, Bots Nekola, and the Cuccinello brothers.[6] Tony and Al Cuccinello were from Long Island City and, along with Nekola, played for the Sanitation Department in the Parade Ground Industrial league. Francis Joseph Nekola

was from the Bronx and notched 20 innings of major league pitching before he became a scout for the Boston Red Sox. One of many who spent a good deal of time at the Parade Ground, he signed Chuck Schilling and Ted Schreiber from there, both of whom would go on to the majors. Nekola's crowning achievement, however, was inking Hall-of-Famer Carl Yastrzemski of Long Island.[7]

The World War II years took a heavy toll on the country and professional baseball. More than 5,000 players served in the armed forces, but the game went on and several Parade Ground players hit the big time in that era. One of these was Tommy Holmes. Raised in the Bay Ridge section at 57 street off Fort Hamilton Parkway, Tommy played with a neighborhood team called the Overtons, who used a park near his home called Overton Field in addition to the Parade Ground.

In 1945 while playing for the Boston Braves, Tommy Holmes hit in 37 consecutive games, a post-1900 National League record at the time. That season, Holmes led the National League with 224 hits and 28 home runs. He finished second in RBIs with 117 and his .352 batting average made him the runner-up to batting champ Phil Cavaretta of the Cubs. In 11 major league seasons, Holmes hit a collective .302.

On August 20, 1945, Tommy Brown, also of Bay Ridge—who played with the Ty Cobbs at the Parade Ground—became the youngest player to homer in the majors.[8] He was only 17 when he belted one against Pittsburgh.

Sid Gordon was a Jewish kid from the Brownsville section who was tailor-made for Ebbets Field and the Dodgers. Always on the lookout for ballplayers to cater to the large Jewish population in Brooklyn, the Dodgers missed this one when the Giants got to him first. Gordon went to Samuel J. Tilden High School and then attended Long Island University. He was signed by Giants scout George Mack in 1938 off the sandlots and made his major league debut on September 11, 1941. Gordon had a 13-year major league career hitting .283 with 202 home runs. Sid was a two-time All-Star while playing for three different teams.

Marius Russo played first base in high school and at Long Island University before taking over the pitcher's mound.[9] He played three seasons with the Newark Bears and five with the Yankees before entering the military in 1944. Russo won Game Three of the 1941 World Series. Larry Napp from Avenue U had a distinguished 24-year career as an American League umpire. The era also produced Saul Rogovin, Bill Lohrman, and Cal Abrams. Andy Olsen and C.B. Bucknor began as players before going on to careers as major league umpires. Brooklyn native Larry Yaffa—who played with Napp and Chuck Connors, future major leaguer and TV star—recalled in his 90th year, "everybody played at the Parade Grounds back then."[10]

Following the end of the minor league seasons in September, during the forties and early fifties many professional players appeared in sandlot games. A sampling was the 1–0 duel between Larry DiVita and Jerry Casale on Parade Ground diamond No. 13 which Casale cinched with a home run.[11] Casale would go on to play five seasons in the majors.

Milt Laurie was manager of a team called the Parkviews in the early fifties. They played their games at Dyker Park in Bensonhurst and at the Parade Ground. It was Laurie who moved a hard-throwing, left-handed first baseman to the pitcher's mound. As Sandy Koufax put it, "My sandlot manager, Milt Laurie, was the first to recognize my ability."[12] Koufax threw extremely hard on the sandlots, but struggled with his control, just as he would in his first several years in the majors. John Chino, a Brooklyn sandlotter remembers facing Koufax at the Park. "What velocity, nobody could catch him, he was so fast," Chino said. "Holy mackerel," he recalled thinking at the time, "where did this guy come from?"[13]

Koufax began as a boy with the Tomahawks, his first team in the Ice Cream League. The league president was a man named Milton Secol who liked to call himself "Pop" Secol. Laurie's sons, Larry and Wally, who also played for the Parkviews, brought Sandy to that ballclub.

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Waite Hoyt had a 21-year big league career which took him to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

Koufax was, of course, scouted by the many advance men who flooded the sandlot mecca on a regular basis. The Pittsburgh Pirates had a watchful eye on the prospect, but the Dodgers' Al Campanis was the one who got Koufax's name on a contract. To dissuade teams from handing out big bonuses, a rule at the time prohibited any player who received more than a $4,000 bonus from being farmed out. Keeping an untried kid on the major league roster for two seasons would take up a valuable spot and deprive the player of minor league seasoning, making most clubs leery of doing it. Koufax signed for $14,000 in December 1954 and joined Brooklyn for the 1955 season.

It was a difficult time for the youngster, who was used sparingly and was usually wild. He did, however, pitch a shutout in his seventh appearance (second start), blanking the Cincinnati Reds, 7–0. In those two mandatory years, Koufax went 4–6 in 100 innings, striking out 60. In retrospect, later historians blame manager Walter Alston for not using the young pitcher more regularly and some believe Koufax would have developed faster and sooner with regular use.[14]

Alston's clubs were in pennant races in both 1955 and 1956. The ace of his staff was Don Newcombe, who won 20 and 27 games respectively, backed by Carl Erskine as well as Johnny Podres before Podres went into the Navy in '56. By 1957 the scenario had been altered. The Dodgers' last year in Brooklyn would result in a third-place finish and a pitching staff that could have used a boost, but still Koufax was not part of the regular rotation. He threw just 104⅓ innings with a 5–4 record. He walked 51 and struck out 122. There were flashes of brilliance. On June 4 he struck out 12 Cubs and had at that point 59 strikeouts in 49⅔ innings, but it would be 45 days before he got another start. The combination of resentment by veteran players, lack of minor league training, irregularity of work, and pressure he felt from the anti-semitic faction contributed to discouragement felt by the young pitcher, and for a time he considered giving it all up.

Unlike in the major leagues, neither segregation nor anti-semitism was evident at the Parade Ground. Tommy Davis, an African-American from the Bedford Stuyvesant section, when told to be aware of the problem as he entered pro ball, was puzzled by the advice. "Never," the two time National League batting champion said, "had I ever encountered anything of the kind at the Parade Ground."[15]

Davis called Fred Wilpon, later owner of the New York Mets, "one of the best lefthanders at the Parade Ground."[16] Wilpon, like friend Koufax, was a Jewish pitcher from Lafayette High School, and echoed Davis's words when recalling the experience of playing there. "It was a very special place," he said. "There was never an incident that I experienced or heard of regarding race or anti-semitism."[17]

The scenario continued for Koufax with the then-LA Dodgers until a fateful spring training day in 1961. In a game against the Twins at Orlando, Koufax was scheduled to pitch seven innings. On the trip he sat with catcher Norm Sherry whose advice was to "get the ball over the plate." In the game he persisted, telling Koufax to "take something off the ball and let them hit it."[18] Inexplicably, Koufax threw even harder when trying to ease up. In seven innings he struck out eight, walked five, and didn't give up a hit. The ultimate result of the new approach was pinpoint control. Koufax liked to work the outside corner of the plate and he began to hug the black. In 1961, he went 18–13 in 255⅔ innings. He struck out 269. He walked just 96. The next year an injury held him to 14–7.

The mold would be completely broken as Koufax put together four incredible seasons. He won 97 games, losing 27. He had seasons of 25, 26, and 27 victories. Three times he struck out more than 300, topping out with 382 in 1965. He averaged just 65 walks a season and pitched 1,192 innings. Koufax pitched four no-hit games in four consecutive seasons; the last in 1965 was a perfect game. He pitched in four World Series and compiled a 4–3 record.

October 2, 1963, the opening day of the World Series, the opposing pitchers were Sandy Koufax and the Yankees' Whitey Ford. The two had several things in common. Both were fine left-handers, both excelled in World Series play, both were destined for Cooperstown, and both had toed the Elysian mounds of the Parade Ground. (Ford had thrown three perfect innings as a member of the Fort Monmouth Army team while stationed there during the Korean war.)[19] Koufax won the opener while striking out fifteen and breaking the record set by teammate Carl Erskine ten years before. He also won Game Four as the Dodgers swept the Yankees in four straight.

After winning 27 games in '66, the 31-year old shocked the baseball world by announcing his retirement, forced out because of an arm injury. In 12 seasons he won 165 games, 111 in the last five years. In 2,324⅓ innings, the kid from Brooklyn struck out 2,396 batters. Perhaps the most succinct description of Koufax's prowess came from Pirates slugger and Hall-of-Famer Willie Stargell, who said that trying to hit Koufax was like trying "to drink coffee with a fork."[20]

In 1972 Koufax became the youngest man ever elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. In re-

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Tommy Davis won back-to-back National League batting titles 1962–63 and compiled a .294 average over 18 seasons.

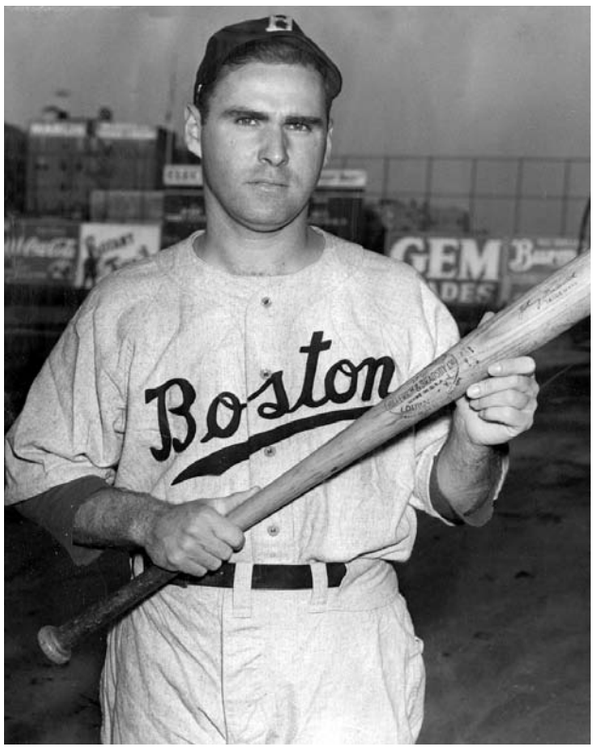
tirement, Koufax was somewhat elusive. He remained out of the limelight and preferred privacy. But, as broadcaster Vin Scully pointed out, the Brooklyn born-and-bred super-pitcher would forever be associated with the letter K: for Koufax and for strikeouts.

The period from 1947 through 1957 would be known as the "Golden Age of Baseball" in New York City. There were three major league teams and a plethora of terrific sandlot ball throughout the borough, with the Parade Ground being the flagship facility for baseball. These years were probably the most prolific in the prodigious history of this amateur facility. In the first half of the sixties alone, there were a number of men who made the major leagues. Rico Petrocelli would set an American League record for home runs by a shortstop with 40 while with the Boston Red Sox. Joe Pepitone took his bat, glove, and hair dryer to the majors. In spite of his faults—and his own laments that he failed to reach his potential because of them— Pepitone notched 12 seasons in the majors and 219 home runs. On the Parade Ground, he was notable for his skill with the bat, but Frank Chiarello recalls Pepitone had defensive skills, as well. Chiarello had played for Wellsville, New York, the PONY league and recalled a day that Pepi, playing right field, pulled down a Chiarello drive with a running catch in right-center field. A couple of innings later, Chiarello drilled one inside the first-base line and Pepitone, now playing first, made a diving stop. "He took two doubles away from me," Chiarello lamented, "playing two different positions."[21]

In addition to Koufax, the Dodgers had Tommy Davis and Al Ferrara and Joe Pignatano, a roommate of Sandy's for a time. The Aspromonte brothers, Ken and Bob, were playing in the National League, as were Frank and Joe Torre. Ted Schreiber was with the Mets, Tony Balsamo with the Cubs, and Don McMahon was in the midst of an 18-year major league pitching career. Jerry Casale played a few years with the Red Sox, then moved on to the Angels and Tigers. Second baseman Chuck Schilling put in five years of big league time 1961–65 with Boston. Larry Bearnarth pitched in relief for the New York Mets, 1963–66.

Parade Grounders were constantly in touch with each other at the major league level. When Koufax defeated Bob Gibson in a 1–0 sizzler in 1961, it was Tommy Davis who homered for the win. According to Jane Leavy, "they celebrated by dancing around the clubhouse crowing: 'Us Brooklyn boys got to stick together.'"[22] Joe Pepitone and Rico Petrocelli once playfully squared off while their respective ballclubs engaged in an on-the-field melee.[23]

On any given Saturday or Sunday the crowds at the Parade Ground were significant. Of the 13 diamonds, two were enclosed with cyclone fencing. Diamonds 1 and 13 often had as many as 1,000 to 1,500 spectators. They filled the wooden bleachers and lined up along the fencing. They leaned over the four-foot-high



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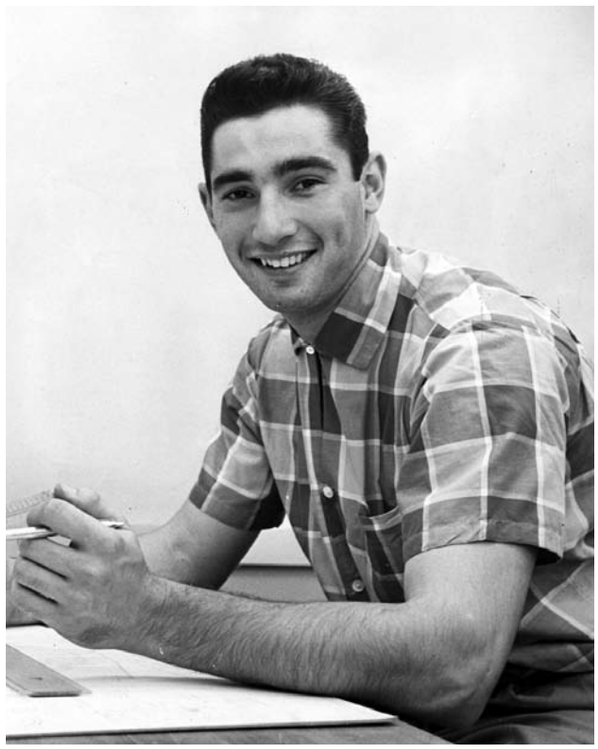
Tommy Holmes of Bay Ridge hit .302 in 11 big league seasons and hit safely in 37 consecutive games in 1945.



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Sandy Koufax became the youngest player ever elected to the Hall of Fame. His four no-hitters included a perfect game in 1965.

center-field fence, 363 feet away from home plate on diamond No. 1, a spot where 15-year-old Terry Crowley was once witnessed to have hit two over in one day.[24]

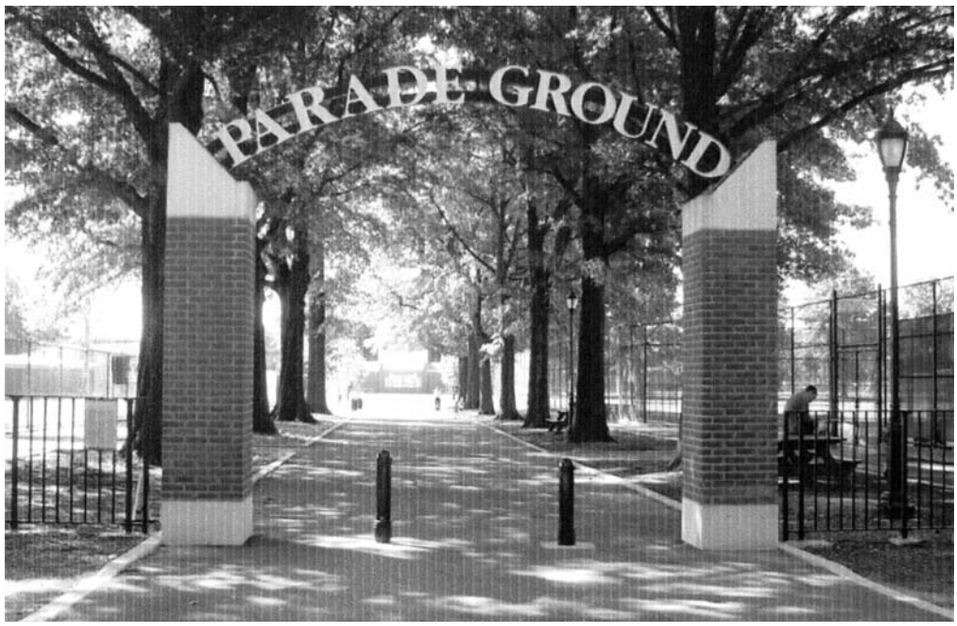
At about the time that Koufax was beginning his major league career, another potential Hall of Fame career was being nurtured in Brooklyn. At 14 years old, Joe Torre was already impressing Parade Ground regulars. Vincent "Cookie" Lorenzo, the director of the Parade Ground League, began to herald the chubby youngster with enthusiasm. Joe played third base and first base and pitched for the Brooklyn Cadets. Manager Jim McElroy already had a Torre moment with big brother Frank. In 1949 Frank Torre was the batting champ of the Federation Baseball tournament at Johnstown, Pennsylvania. When Joe took the same honors several years later, they became the only brother combination to boast this accomplishment.[25]

Young Joe, however, seemed to turn off the scouts because of his weight. They doubted his ability to go all the way, though partisans like Lorenzo and McElroy maintain that Joe's bat would have done the job and the excess baggage that he carried would melt away with maturity. It was brother Frank who insisted to McElroy that Joe go behind the plate where he thought he would have the best chance.[26] One of Joe's earliest games as a catcher came against a strong Parade Ground club called the Senecas. Prior to the game McElroy approached Ken Avalone, the Senecas catcher and manager, and asked that he run his fastest man when and if the situation called for it.[27]

Avalone explained what happened. "I sent McCallister on a steal attempt from first. The pitch hit the dirt in front of Torre and kicked off his chest protector and fell in front of him. He grabbed it and caught Earl by a mile."[28] There seemed to be very little to stand in Joe's way then. The Torre saga was near to being repeated. Frank had signed with scout Honey Russell of the Braves in 1950 and made his major league debut in 1956. The elder Torre, a first baseman, played seven years in the big time and hit .273. A highlight came in the 1957 World Series when Frank hit two home runs. Frank had an enormous influence on his younger brother's development as a player. He was a stickler for passing on the knowledge and experience he had acquired to his kid brother. The major league tie was strong as Joe spent time in big league club houses and relished the times that Frank brought friends and teammates home for dinner. One teammate was another Brooklyn boy who played at Erasmus Hall and the Parade Grounds, Don McMahon.

The same scout, Honey Russell, who had signed Frank, got Joe's name on a contract in the fall of 1959

COURTESY OF ANDREW PAUL MELE



The Parade Ground archway in the current day still welcomes ballplayers and their families to five diamonds, as well as tennis courts and soccer fields.

with a bonus of $22,000 included. In 1960, the Braves sent him off to Eau Claire, Wisconsin in the Class C Northern League for Joe's first taste of the pros. He savored the experience with a .344 batting average, 16 home runs, and a September call-up to the Braves. On September 25 Torre got his first taste of big league pitching when he pinch hit against Pirates left-hander Harvey Haddix. Joe hit a fastball away, up the middle for a single. Assigned to triple-A Louisville the next season, Torre was hitting at a .342 clip after 27 games when an injury to Braves catcher Del Crandall prompted a promotion to the big club. His first time out he caught Warren Spahn. Later that season he was behind the plate when baseball's winningest left-hander, Spahn, hurled his 300th career victory.

Torre ended the year with a .278 average and ten home runs and finished second to the Cubs Billy Williams for Rookie of the Year honors. In December 1963 Crandall was traded to the San Francisco Giants and Joe had the job all to himself in 1964. That year Torre hit .321, banged out 20 homers, and drove in 109 runs. He led all National League catchers with a .995 fielding percentage. He played in the second of five consecutive All-Star games, there would be eight all told, and the next season he hit 27 four-baggers.

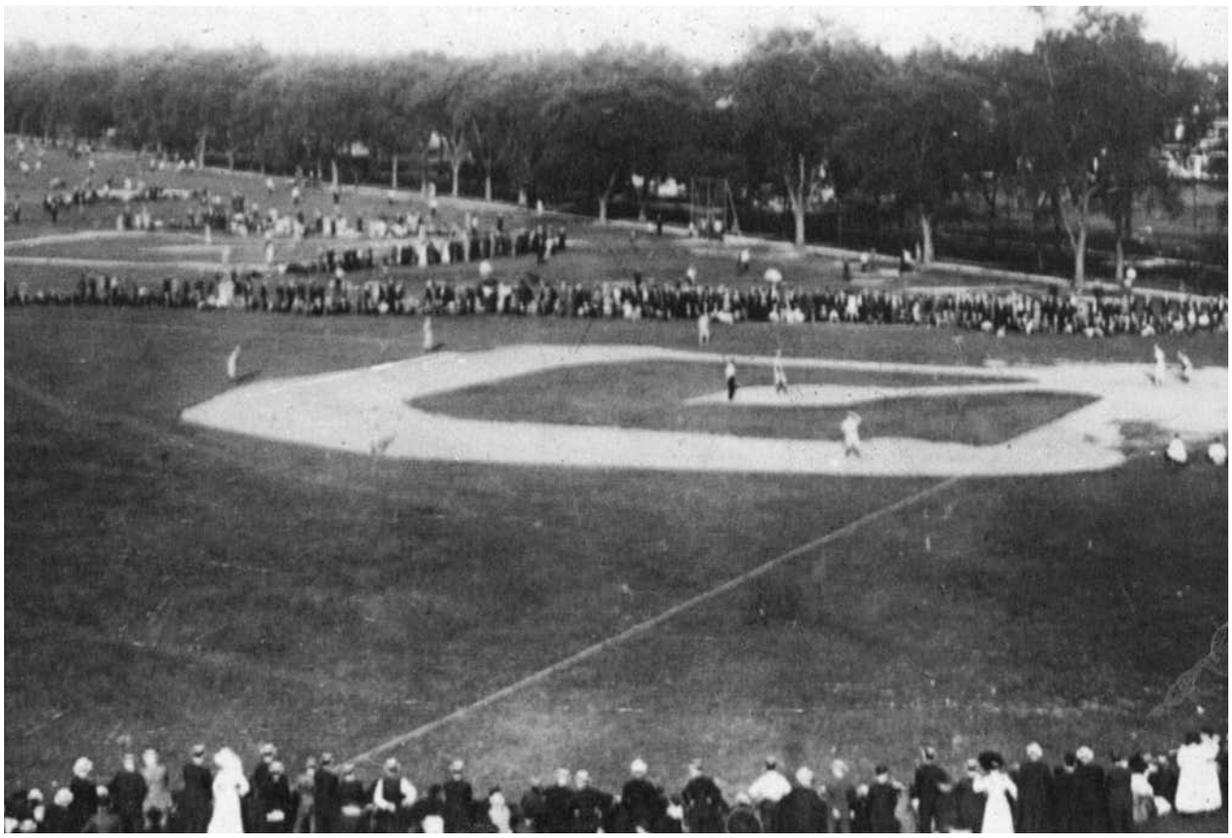
The next year the Braves relocated to Atlanta, opening the season at Atlanta Stadium, a haven for home-run hitters due to the high elevation and thin air. Joe hit 36, drove in 101, and batted .315. Traded to the Cardinals, Torre continued his effective hitting, confirming the belief of his sandlot manager, Jim McElroy, who once opined that Joe's hitting would carry him to the top regardless of what position he played.[29] In 1971, Torre won the National League batting crown with a .363 average and league-leading numbers in hits (230) and RBIs (137). Torre also took home MVP honors for the year. Joe Torre's 18-year career finished with a composite .297 batting average, 252 home runs, and 1,185 RBIs.

After finishing his playing career, Torre had stints that for the most part were unsuccessful as manager of the Mets, Braves, and Cardinals, with five years in the broadcasting booth sandwiched in between. Joe then signed to manage the New York Yankees for the 1996 season and therein the legend began. During Torre's first five seasons, the Yankees won four World championships, and during his tenure they racked up 10 American League East titles, six pennants, and twice Joe was named Manager of the Year. Currently fifth on the all-time managerial win list with 2,326 victories, Joe took over the reins of the LA Dodgers for three seasons before accepting the position he currently holds as Executive Vice President for Baseball Operations for Major League Baseball.

Torre's entire career may harken back to a day in 1959 at the Parade Ground. Early on a summer evening just days before he would sign his first pro contract, the chubby 19-year-old could be seen amid the uniformed Park players clad in white shorts and white T-shirt jogging over the expanse of the 40-acre facility. A long and sometimes arduous trek from Brooklyn's Parade Ground for Joe Torre has indeed proven a fulfilling experience.

In 1905 a huge edifice was erected at the Parade

COURTESY OF ANDREW PAUL MELE



Diamond No. 1 in 1958. Crowds on Saturdays and Sundays could top a thousand spectators on diamonds No. 1 and No. 13.

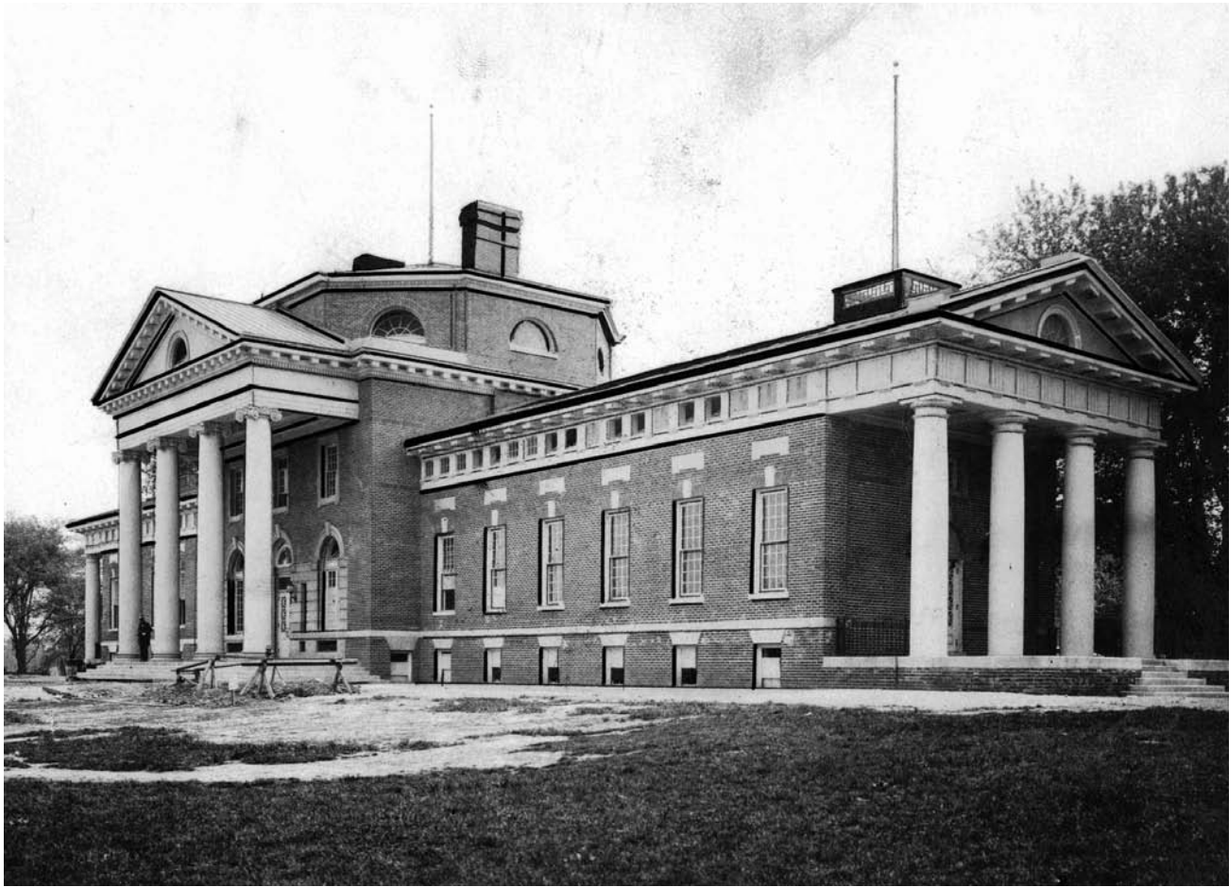
Ground. Known thereafter as "the Clubhouse," it contained locker rooms, showers, storage, and offices for the Parks Department, and a card room often exhuding cigar smoke and noisy chatter. Great stone columns rose at the entrance like a Roman colossus and the clacking of metal spikes on the cement steps was as much a sound of the Ground as the crack of the bat. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the park had as many as 21 baseball diamonds overlapping each other to the extent that more than one game seemed to be going on at the same field.[30] Wisely, it was reduced to 15 and then to 13 where it remained until the last renovation in 2004. Always reflecting the demographics of the community, the Parade Ground currently contains a mere five fields for baseball or softball. Now there are tennis courts and much space for the encroaching game of soccer.

The clubhouse was razed in the mid-sixties. Old, with cracked cement, warped wooden floors, and rusted shower pipes, it was replaced by a single-story building lacking the character of its predecessor. In the last decades of the twentieth century, the entire area was in much disrepair. Rocks and broken glass marred the fields. To past denizens it seemed as though the local talent would have deteriorated along with the entire complex, but that wasn't the case. Along came Shawon Dunston, 18 years a big leaguer, John Candelaria, whose family lived in an apartment on Caton Avenue just opposite the Park grounds, close enough for his mom to call him to dinner. Candelaria won 177 games in the majors including a no-hit gem against the Dodgers in 1976. Lee Mazzilli, a Lincoln High School graduate, was a hometown favorite when he played for the Mets, as did pitcher Pete Falcone.

Frank A. Tepedino was a former minor leaguer who played 11 seasons in the Cardinals chain, mostly in the Class D Coastal Plain League and Georgia State League, who finished his minor league career as a player-manager. After returning to New York, he took over the running of an American Legion team called Cummings Post. He saw it as a vehicle for his three sons and several nephews, and they all played for him over the years. His brother's boy, also named Frank, went from the Legion to pro ball and to the major leagues where he spent eight seasons.

Tepedino, the manager, worked for the NYC Housing Authority and, while always looking to enhance his ballclub, came upon a 14-year-old at the Tilden

COURTESY OF ANDREW PAUL MELE



In 1905 "the Clubhouse," containing locker rooms, showers, storage, offices for the Parks Department, and a card room, was erected at the Parade Ground. The building was razed in the 1960s.

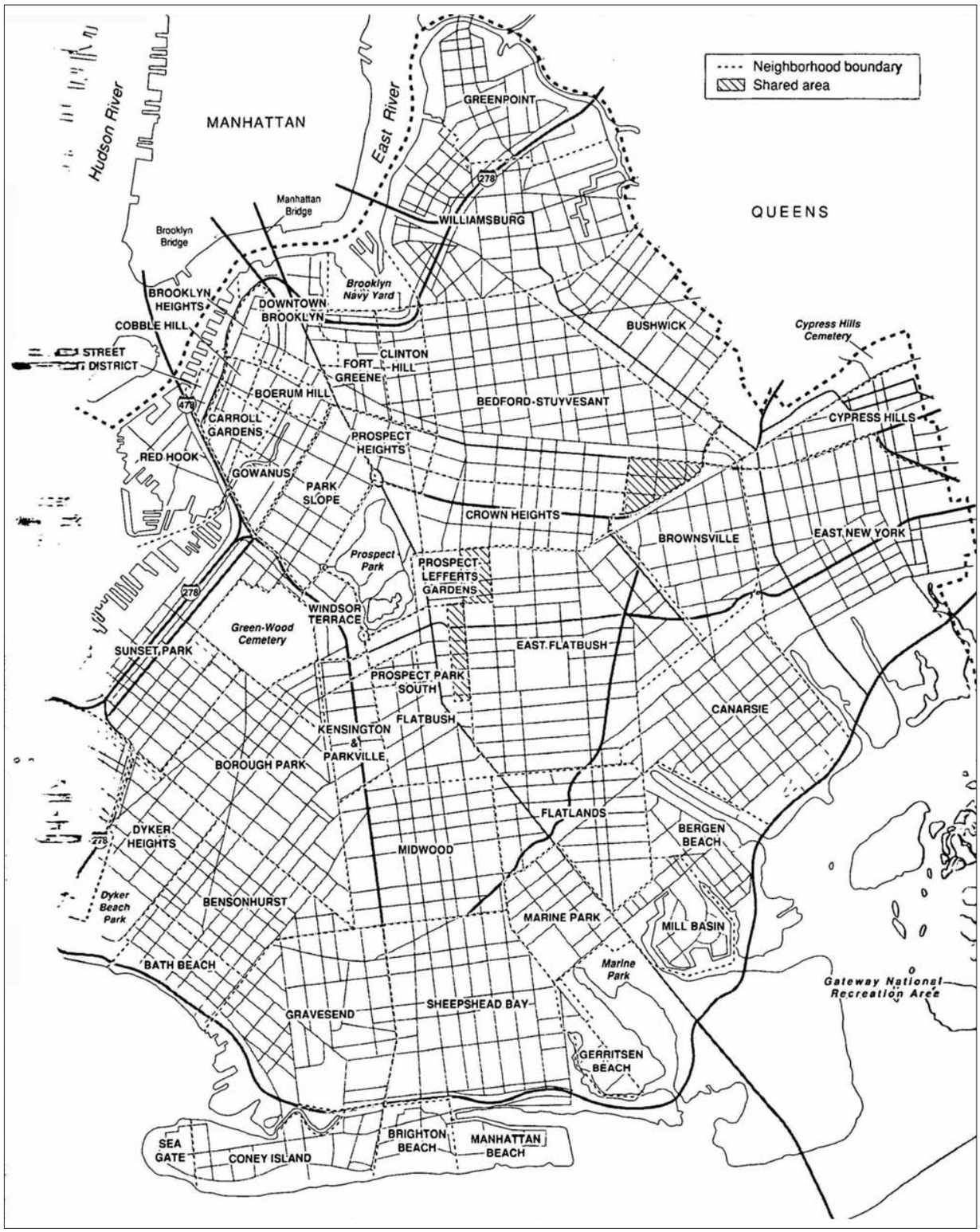
Projects in whom he saw some very good possibilities. The youth, Willie Randolph, was immediately invited to join the Cummings Post team. Frank's son Rick played alongside Willie in the infield and recalls him as a "wonderful guy who, even at fourteen, was all business on the field."[31]

Randolph was born in Holly Hill, South Carolina, and his family moved to Brooklyn where Willie attended Samuel J. Tilden High School. A star athlete in school and a top sandlot player, Randolph was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates in the seventh round of the 1972 draft. It was after coming off diamond No. 7 on Parkside Avenue that Randolph agreed to a contract. "I signed at field 7," he said. "The Pirates scout was nickel-and-diming me…and I signed for $5,000. Little did he know I would have signed for nothing."[32]

Randolph spent four seasons in the minors beginning in the rookie-level Gulf Coast League and winding up in triple-A Charleston in the International League. In 91 games there in 1975, he hit .339 before being called up to Pittsburgh. Before the next year he was traded to the Yankees and that began a string of 13 seasons in pinstripes. Randolph was a six time All-Star selection, played with two world championship teams in his career, and co-captained the Yankees from 1986–88. Following his stint with the Yankees, Randolph went to Los Angeles, Oakland, and Milwaukee before closing out his 18-year career at age 38 with 90 games for the New York Mets. He hit .276 lifetime, with a .373 OBP, 2,210 hits, and over 1,200 walks.

After retiring from playing, Randolph coached 11 seasons for the Yankees until he was named Mets manager in 2005. He completed that season with an 83–79 record, the first time since 2001 the Mets finished over .500. In 2006, they won the NL East title while tying for the best record in baseball (with the Yanks) at 97–65. The Mets, however, didn't get to the World Series, losing the seventh game of the NLCS to the St. Louis Cardinals. Randolph was second in the balloting for the Manager of the Year honors. On January 27, 2007, he signed a three-year, $5.65 million contract extension.

But the baseball gods said, "enough." In 2007 Willie's Mets stumbled at the finish line in one of the worse collapses in history. With a seven-game lead



The borough's quilt of neighborhoods, as mapped in the book *The Neighborhoods of Brooklyn* by Kenneth T. Jackson and John Manbeck.

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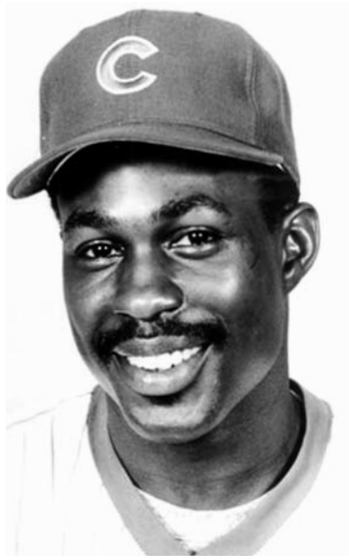
Brothers Frank and Joe Torre both went from the Parade Ground to the major leagues.



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Shawon Dunston went from Brooklyn to an 18-year career spent mostly with the Chicago Cubs. He was a two-time All-Star.

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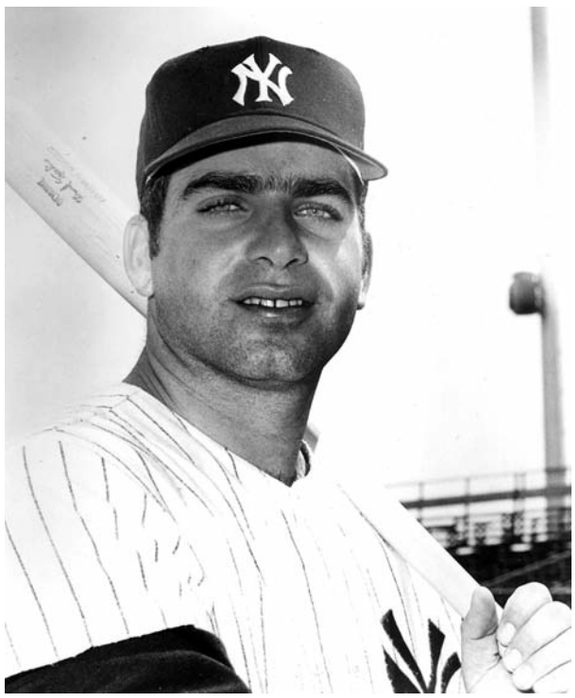


Frank Tepedino played for his uncle, also named Frank, who managed the American Legion Cummings Post team after finishing his minor league career.

and only 17 games left to play, the Mets went 5–12 and lost the division to the Phillies. After a slow start in 2008, Randolph was fired on June 17. Perhaps Randolph did not get a fair shake, especially in view of the fact that several key players had lingered on the disabled list for long periods. There were no gripes from Randolph.

In 1981, while Randolph was helping the Yankees to another pennant and being named to the American League All-Star team, Dan Liotta, a local umpire, was calling balls and strikes at the Parade Ground. It was in this year that Danny worked the plate in the last sandlot game that John Franco pitched before signing with the Dodgers. As Liotta remembers it, "Johnny threw an 8–0 shutout."[33] Shortly thereafter, on June 8, he was selected in the fifth round of the amateur draft and signed by Los Angeles. A local scout had this to say about the youthful pitcher while he was at St. John's University: "Great control, nothing above the knees. Good pitching selection. Far ahead of his peers in setting up hitters and changing speeds. Fastball moves away from right-handed hitters."[34]

Franco was scouted by Steve Lembo, whose major league career was limited to 11 at-bats, but who was a Parade Ground star before being a pro, and Gil Bassetti. Bassetti was a pitching star at the grounds before signing with the Giants. He reached the triple-A level

before turning to scouting. Both worked for the Dodgers and both evaluated and were involved with the signing of John Franco. Franco played at the fabled Lafayette High School, and then attended St. John's University where he pitched two no-hitters in his freshman year.

Conditions at the Parade Ground worsened during the years leading up to the 2004 renovation. Franco remembered playing there as a youth with mixed emotions. "I have a lot of fond memories of the place," he said, "but to be honest, the conditions weren't that great."[35]

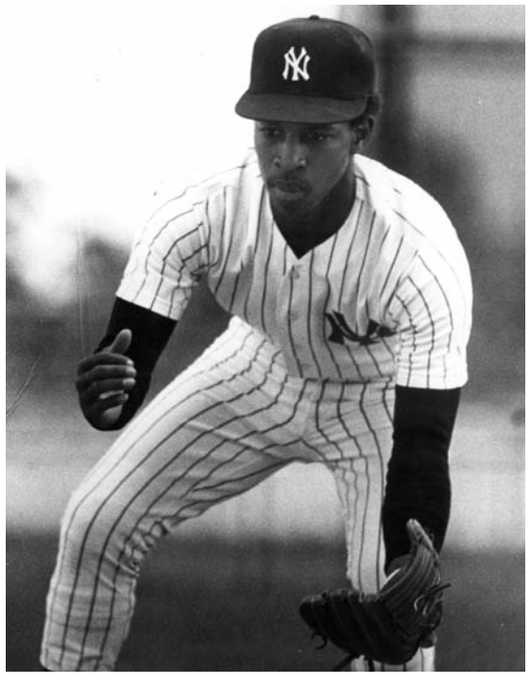
In two minor league seasons, Franco pitched for San Antonio, Albuquerque, and Vero Beach before being traded to the Cincinnati Reds in May 1983. Transitioned from a starting role to the bullpen while in the minors, Franco never started a game in the major leagues. Called up to the Reds in '84 he pitched in relief until traded to the Mets in 1990. He spent 14 seasons in a Mets uniform.

Franco missed the entire 2002 season after undergoing Tommy John surgery, but he recovered and returned in May 2003. Franco was not a hard thrower. His outpitch was a circle change. It had a screwball effect, spinning away from a right-handed hitter and running in on lefties. He signed a one-year deal with the Houston Astros for 2005 making him, at the age of 44, the oldest active pitcher in the major leagues. Released in July, Franco retired from baseball. Franco was inducted into the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame.

At his peak, Franco reigned as an elite closer. He was a four-time All-Star, the NL Rolaids Relief Man of the Year on two occasions, and in 2001 was the recipient of the Lou Gehrig Memorial Award. He played in the postseason in 1999 and the World Series in 2000. His postseason record is 2–0, with one save, and 1.88 ERA in 15 appearances. John served as the team captain of the Mets from 2001–04. The 5-foot-10 lefthander finished his career with 424 saves, fourth all time and the most by a lefty. If number of saves becomes an important stat to Hall of Fame voters, then John Franco, along with Joe Torre, may well eventually add to the Parade Ground roster of Hall of Famers in Cooperstown.

The Parade Ground was a field not only of unfulfilled dreams, but of realized ones as well. At least 50 World Series rings are worn by players whose early careers were to some degree nurtured there. Can any other amateur venue in the nation rival that?

But why Brooklyn? Why the Parade Ground? Population plays a role: Brooklyn currently has 2.6 million



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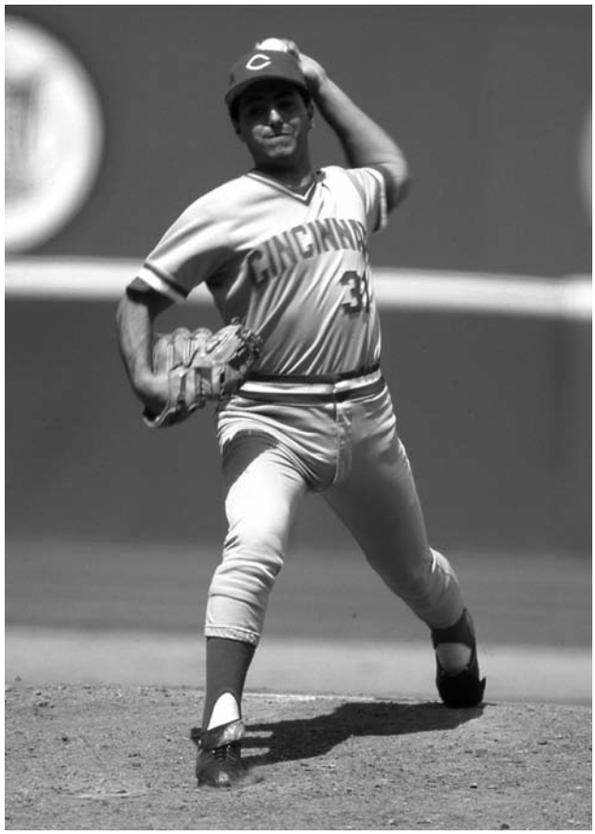
Willie Randolph signed a contract with the Pittsburgh Pirates at diamond No. 7 at the Parade Ground and played 15 years in the big leagues.



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With 424 saves, John Franco recorded more saves than any other lefthanded closer in history.

inhabitants. The Ground is a large facility, having 13 diamonds during the bulk of its history, with as many as 60 or more games being played on Saturdays and Sundays in its heyday. This schedule and the quality of the competition attracted players from all over the borough, concentrating the best the borough has to offer. Managers and coaches with the knowledge of the game and the wherewithal to instruct a willing bunch of dreamers were attracted to the fertile ground, as well.

The Parade Ground, Brooklyn's Elysian Fields, has been a place where dreams come true. But that sense of pride, of maturation, of discovery, and of memory is not confined to the greatest of the gems of the Parade Ground who made it to the major leagues. It is embodied with as much sanctity in the ones who simply were not good enough. Alton R. Waldon, later a congressman and a judge, recalled with reverence, "I once hit a home run at the Parade Grounds; I touched heaven with that wallop."[36] ■

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Durocher the Spymaster

How Much Did the Giants Prosper from Cheating in 1951?

Bryan Soderholm-Difatte

Leo Durocher, who is said to have said "nice guys finish last"—also the title of his autobiography—plausibly could have asked, "who said cheaters never prosper?"

I refer, of course, to the revelation by Joshua Prager—first in a 2001 *Wall Street Journal* article and then his book, *The Echoing Green*—that in 1951 the New York Giants employed an elaborate sign-stealing scheme. As detailed by Prager, Durocher installed coach Herman Franks in the manager's office of the Giants' clubhouse beyond center field in the Polo Grounds to steal opposing catchers' signals. Franks would look through a telescope and relay the sign through an electrical-buzzer system to the Giants' bullpen in deep right field, from where the sign would be flashed to the Giants' hitters.[1] The implication of this revelation is that Bobby Thomson might not have tagged Ralph Branca for arguably the most famous decisive home run in baseball history if not for spying, or at the very least that Thomson's date with history would not have come about. The Giants needed to overcome a 13½-game deficit of August 11 to finish the 154-game season in a flatfooted tie with Brooklyn to set up the historic showdown. The question is not whether the Giants stole signs, but what effect the sign-stealing had on the Giants' remarkable comeback.

DUROCHER'S GAMBIT

The spying began on July 20 against the Cincinnati Reds, with the Giants starting the day in third place, eight games behind the Dodgers, and having lost six of the 11 games they had played thus far in their latest homestand. The Giants' offense was not to blame for the skid. They had scored 69 runs in those 11 games, 6.3 runs per game, and knocked out 21 home runs. Team batting average stood at .258, up from .250 in early June, and New York was second in the league to Brooklyn in scoring. The problem was pitching, the Giants having surrendered 61 runs in the first 11 games of the current homestand. Only the last-place Pittsburgh Pirates had given up more runs than the Giants to that point in the season.

Nonetheless, when reserve infielder Hank Schenz—who aside from pinch-running duties had ridden the Giant's bench since being obtained on waivers from the Pirates at the end of June—told Durocher he used to hide in the Wrigley Field scoreboard and spy on the catcher's signs when he was with the Cubs, Durocher was intrigued.[2] Schenz still had the telescope. A Polo Grounds electrician (a Brooklyn fan, it turns out) installed the wiring and buzzer, and the technology-aided sign-stealing began.[3]

Surely this was cheating. If this illicit spying on opposing catchers' signals allowed the New York Giants to steal even just one victory during the regular season, it had a decisive impact on the 1951 pennant race: just one win fewer and the Giants' dramatic surge toward the National League pennant would have come up short. There would have been no Miracle on Coogan's Bluff, and Bobby Thomson's name would likely be lost to history. The first time Franks used Schenz's high-powered telescope from the

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Leo Durocher was intrigued when utility infielder Hank Schenz described a spying scheme previously used by the Cubs.

manager's office in center field, the Giants erupted for three runs in their half of the first inning. The outburst knocked out Ewell Blackwell, one of the toughest pitchers in the league to hit, on the way to an 11–5 blowout victory. He had held the Giants to only four earned runs in 18 innings pitched against them previously on the season. If just that once the sign-relaying scheme made a difference, it affected the outcome of the entire season. But it does raise the question: just how much of an advantage did the spying provide?

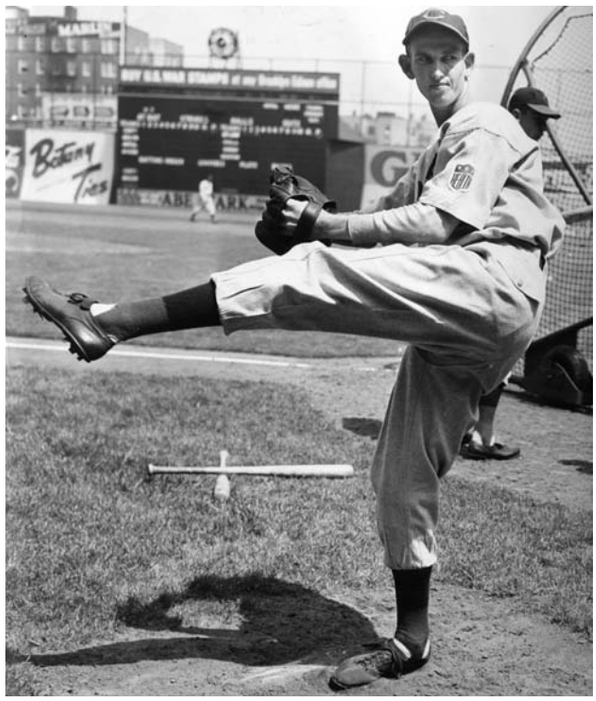
The following analysis addresses that broad query by asking a series of questions based on the presumed advantages telescopic spying might confer. Using Retrosheet play-by-play data for the 1951 season, we can analyze the outcomes of each game following the July 20 implementation of spying.

HOW MUCH DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HOME AND AWAY?

Beginning with Blackwell's start on July 20, the Giants had 28 games remaining on their home schedule at the Polo Grounds, in which they went a remarkable 23–5, an .821 winning percentage. After falling 13½ games behind (following a shutout loss to the Phillies on August 11 and before the Dodgers would lose the second game of their doubleheader that day), the Giants reeled off 16 straight wins to close the gap to five games on August 27. All but three of those 16 victories were at home.

The run of home wins seems consistent with the advantage of their center field spy, but remember that from July 20 to the end of the scheduled 154-game season, the Giants played 10 more games on the road than at home. With 38 of their last 66 games on the road, the Giants could not have won the 1951 pennant without also playing exceptionally well on the road, where they presumably had no spy. In those 38 remaining road games, Durocher managed the Giants to a 26–12 record (.684), not comparable to their final 28 home games (23–5, .821), but outstanding nonetheless.

Perhaps a better metric is the Giants' home-versus-road record and the distribution of home and road games in the schedule after the nadir on August 11. They had just finished an unimpressive 9–8 road trip, which included being swept three games in Brooklyn on August 8 and 9, the Dodgers serenading them with "Roll Out the Barrel" from the neighboring clubhouse at Ebbets Field.[4] From August 12 to the end of their 154-game schedule, the Giants played a few more games at home—23, of which they won 20—than on the road—21, of which they won 17. But although the Giants began their dramatic surge to the pennant with the advantage of 20 of the next 23 games at the Polo Grounds, they closed the regular season with 18 of their final 21 games on the road.



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Ewell Blackwell was the first victim of the Giants' catchers' signals intercept operation.

On September 5, the Giants started a 14-game road trip, trailing the Dodgers by six games. If the Giants were going to win, it would have to be on the road. Going 10–4 on the trip, they whittled Brooklyn's lead to four games at the beginning of their final three-game homestand. Scoring precisely four runs each game, the Giants swept the Boston Braves at the Polo Grounds, which still left them 2½ back, with two games remaining in Philadelphia and two in Boston. They won all four, while the Dodgers lost four of their final seven (also all on the road), to end the scheduled season tied for first. Winning 14 of the last 18 road games was indispensable to catching the Dodgers. (See Table 1.)

DID THE GIANTS SCORE MORE AT HOME THAN ON THE ROAD?

Before the start of play on July 20, the Giants' 458 runs scored through their first 88 games were second in the league, trailing only the Dodgers' 479 runs in 85 games. From then until the end of their scheduled season, the Giants scored 315 runs, the Dodgers, 361. Despite going 49–17 over that span, the Giants' runs total was matched by the Pirates—who won 19 fewer games on their way to a seventh-place finish—for fourth best in the National League. (The Braves were second, scoring 34 more runs, and the Cardinals were third, with one more run than the Giants.)

Table 1. GIANTS HOME AND AWAY BREAKDOWN

AT THE POLO GROUNDS	ON THE ROAD
Before July 20: 63% of home schedule	Before July 20: 51% of road schedule
Record: 26–22 .542	Record: 21–19 .525
Runs/Game: 5.5	Runs/Game: 4.9
After July 19: 37% of home schedule	After July 20: 49% of road schedule
Record: 23–5 .821	Record: 26–12 .684
Runs/Game: 4.7	Runs/Game: 4.8
After August 11: 30% of home games left	After August 12: 27% of road games left
Record: 20–3 .870	Record: 17–4 .810
Runs/Game: 4.6	Runs/Game: 5.0

Note: The Giants played 78 of their scheduled 154 games on the road and only 76 at home because a postponed game with the Cardinals at the Polo Grounds was made up in St. Louis.

One might expect that having magnified spying eyes would enable the Giants to score more runs at the Polo Grounds than elsewhere. The Giants' average of 4.7 runs in their final 28 home games was actually marginally worse than the 4.8 runs they averaged in their 38 remaining games on the road. In 48 home games before July 20, pre-spying, the Giants' average of 5.5 runs per game at home was much better than their 4.9 runs per game in other teams' ballparks.[5] In games after the August 11 nadir, their scoring average on the road—5.05 runs per game—was far better than at home, where they averaged 4.6.

Their most critical homestand of the season, however, was 14 games from August 21, when they still trailed Brooklyn by eight games, through September 3. They had only three games remaining at the Polo Grounds after that, on the next-to-last weekend of the schedule, so they needed to exploit every advantage they had—even an illicit one, such as a center field clubhouse telescope—while playing at home, before finishing the season mostly on the road. In that crucial stretch, the Giants scored 75 runs, an average of 5.4 per game. They went 11–3 and narrowed the Dodgers' lead from eight games to six.

DID THE GIANTS JUMP OFF TO BIG LEADS, ACCRUE BIG INNINGS, AND WIN MORE BLOWOUT GAMES AT HOME?

One might expect that their spying advantage at the Polo Grounds would have enabled the Giants to jump on the opposing pitcher for runs in the first inning. That would force the visiting team to play from behind, possibly from a deep hole. The Giants scored in the first inning in precisely half of their 28 games at home beginning on July 20, but the spying rarely allowed the Giants to jump off to big leads; only three times in those 14 games, including that very first day against Blackwell, did they score as many as three runs in the first inning. For comparison, the Boston Braves, Pittsburgh Pirates, and St. Louis Cardinals all had three or more games at home after July 19 in which they scored at least three runs in the first inning. Still, the Giants were more productive in the first inning at home than in other teams' ballparks, where they scored to open the game in only 11 of their final 38 games.

One might also expect that knowing what pitches were coming would result in the Giants having more big innings overall at home than on the road. Durocher's Giants scored three or more runs in an inning 13 times in only 11 of the 28 games (39 percent) they played at home after July 20. Three of the Giants' 13 big innings came in games against the Dodgers, including two four-run outbursts on their way to New York's 11–2 Sunday crushing of Brooklyn on September 2. The Giants had more such big innings on the road—19—after July 20, but in a marginally larger percentage of games, 15 of 38 (39 percent). The Giants' total of 32 innings scoring three runs or more from July 20 to the end of the scheduled regular season was at the average for big innings by the eight National League teams. (See Table 2.)

Every National League team but one—the Philadelphia Phillies, who finished sixth in the league in scoring—had more innings after July 20 in which they scored three or more runs at their home parks than the spying Giants. Moreover, the Giants' distribution of three-run innings at home was not weighted toward the late innings, either. They had four big innings in the last third of the game, all in the eighth and all contributing to victories, but only the Cardinals and Phillies had fewer big innings at home from the seventh inning or later.

Their unique and unknown home field advantage also did not result in the Giants winning games by blowout margins of five or more runs. Thirteen of the Giants' 22 blowout victories of five runs or more in 1951 were at the Polo Grounds, but only three came

Table 2. Teams listed in order of final standings

1st row = home games, 2nd row–away games

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	Extra	Total
NY	3	0	2	3	0	1	0	4	0	0	13H
	1	1	2	2	3	1	3	3	3	0	19A
BRO	0	2	2	1	1	4	5	2	1	0	18H
	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	4	3	1	21A
STL	4	5	3	1	4	1	2	1	0	0	21H
	1	0	4	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	12A
BOS	4	2	1	2	1	2	5	2	0	0	19H
	2	2	0	2	1	4	3	3	4	0	21A
PHI	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	5H
	1	2	1	2	2	3	0	2	3	0	16A
CIN	1	0	1	4	2	2	2	1	2	2	17H
	1	2	1	1	0	2	3	1	1	0	12A
PIT	4	0	2	3	4	5	4	3	0	1	26H
	3	0	2	0	2	2	2	3	0	0	12A
CHI	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	4	1	0	16H
	1	1	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	2	11A

after Durocher set up his spy operation. From July 20 on, the Giants won twice as many games by five runs or more on the road—six—as at home. One of their three blowout victories at the Polo Grounds was against Blackwell and the Reds in that very first game in which Herman Franks took up his new position behind the telescope. The only two others were, deliciously, at the expense of the hunted (and, by now, increasingly haunted) Brooklyn Dodgers, by 8–1 and 11–2, on September 1 and 2.

DID THE AT-HOME GIANTS HIT MORE HOME RUNS PER GAME?

Bobby Thomson's epic home run reminds us that the long ball is the most potent of weapons—one hit, one run, and more if anybody is on base. Even if having a center field spy did not contribute to more runs scored at home for the Giants, perhaps it helped facilitate more home runs? The Giants hit a total of 79 home runs in their first 48 home games in 1951, an average of 1.65 per game. Beginning July 20, the Giants hit 35 home runs in their final 28 games scheduled at the Polo Grounds, an average of only 1.25 per game. But before we draw conclusions from those raw numbers, let us look at home-run rates league-wide.

August is, of course, one of the hottest of months, and by September the baseball season has become a long grind. In 1951, home runs per game by National League teams in the final two months of the season declined by 26 percent from a per-game average of .91 from April through July to .67 per game in August and September. Notwithstanding that its dimensions—short distances down both the left and right field lines—helped make the Polo Grounds the most home-run-friendly ballpark in the National League, the 24 percent decline in home runs hit there by the home team Giants after July 19 is not far from league average.

However, the Giants were particularly prolific in hitting home runs, many of them at timely moments, during their 14-game homestand from August 21 to September 3, during which they won eleven, including their first seven to run their winning streak to 16 games. Giants batters hit 24 home runs in those 14 games, an average of 1.71 per game—slightly higher than their 1.65 per game average before July 20—and had eight multi-home run games, five in which they blasted at least three home runs. In their two-game rout of the visiting Dodgers on September 1 and 2, the Giants hit seven out of the park on their way to scoring 19 runs off Brooklyn pitching. There were only four games in that homestand that a Giants batter did not go deep. In their final three games at the Polo Grounds—September 22 through 24—the Giants (ironically) hit no home runs in their sweep of the Braves.

WERE THE GIANTS ABLE TO EXPLOIT THEIR SPY FOR COME-FROM-BEHIND VICTORIES?

One might expect that foreknowledge of what pitch is coming would be especially valued in games where the Giants were forced to make up a deficit to win. Ten of the Giants' 23 wins at home from July 20 to the end of the schedule were in games they trailed at some point after the first inning. Four of the Giants' 11 victories in that critical 14-game homestand from August 21 to September 3 were the result of late-inning

rallies to overcome a deficit—including a six-run eighth inning on August 21 to erase the Reds' four-run lead, a two-run ninth to walk off with a 5–4 win to snatch a victory from the Cardinals on August 24, and a two-run 12th inning on August 27 to stymie the Cubs, who scored to break an extra-innings tie in the top of the inning.

Stealing signs by illicit spying may have made the difference in at least some of these victories, but the Giants' come-from-behind record at home was not unusual in league context. The Brooklyn Dodgers, even as they saw their lead steadily erode, also won 10 games at home coming from behind in games after July 19, and the last-place Chicago Cubs had 12 come-from-behind victories at home from that date until the season ended. Durocher's team was less successful coming from behind on the road, where they trailed after the first inning in only six of their 26 wins, but the fact that they won 20 away games without having to play from behind indicates they were effective in scoring first and protecting their lead—one of the many traits of a winner. (See Table 3.)

Whether knowing what pitches were coming was the deciding factor in any of the five walk-off wins the Giants scored at the Polo Grounds between July 20 and the last day of the schedule (which became six when Thomson hit his walk-off pennant-winning home run in the third playoff game to determine the pennant), four other teams matched their total. The Dodgers in that same timeframe had five walk-off wins at Ebbets Field, the Reds had five in their home at Crosley Field, the Phillies five at Shibe Park in Philadelphia, and the Cubs had six last-at-bat victories at Wrigley Field.

WHICH GIANTS BATTERS MIGHT HAVE BENEFITED FROM SPYING EYES?

Prager recounts in *The Echoing Green* how Durocher canvassed his clubhouse to ratify his grand scheme.[6] Although some players indicated they preferred to trust in their own visual acuity, intuition, and skill, their manager's case was compelling enough (delivered perhaps in inimitable Durocher style, an offer his team really could not refuse?) that the system went into effect the following day, apparently to the detriment of Blackwell (who, of course, may have just had a bad day). (See Table 4.)

None of the core regulars on the 1951 Giants—all of whom, except catcher Wes Westrum, started every

Table 3. COME FROM BEHIND VICTORIES, JULY 20 TO END OF 1951 SEASON
Teams listed in order of final standings
Come from behind victories = victories when trailing at any time after 1st inning

Games After 7/19/51	NY	BRO	STL	BOS	PHI	CIN	PIT	CHI
Home	10	10	6	5	5	4	7	12
Away	6	8	5	8	9	5	3	2
Total	16	18	11	13	14	9	10	14
Total Wins, 7/20-end	49	43	37	39	31	26	30	27
% Come from Behind	33%	42%	30%	33%	45%	35%	33%	52%

Table 4. PERFORMANCE OF GIANTS' STARTING LINE-UP BEFORE AND AFTER JULY 20, 1951
(includes three-game playoff with Brooklyn for NL pennant)

Giants' batting order	Stats* as of 7/19	At Home before 7/20	At Home after 7/19	On the road before 7/20	On the road after 7/19	Stats* end of Season
Stanky	11 28 .258	9 15 .238	3 10 **.273**	2 13 .277	0 5 .197	14 43 .246
Dark	9 46 .317	7 32 .330	3 10 .229	2 14 .302	2 13 **.326**	14 69 .303
Mueller	7 29 .304	5 13 .315	7 19 .250	2 16 .294	2 21 .266	16 69 .277
Irvin	12 61 .302	5 30 .319	3 16 .300	7 31 .281	9 44 **.340**	24 121 **.312**
Lockman	6 36 .272	4 16 .266	6 21 **.313**	2 20 .280	0 16 .281	12 73 **.282**
Thomson	16 49 .237	10 30 .242	3 18 **.356**	6 19 .231	13 34 **.357**	32 101 **.293**
Mays	13 39 .280	8 22 .286	5 18 **.288**	5 17 .273	2 11 .253	20 68 .274
Westrum	15 45 .246	10 24 .211	4 10 .131	5 21 .280	1 15 **.213**	20 70 .219

* Stats = Home Runs / Runs Batted In / Batting Average

Bold Face Batting Average: At Home = higher than before July 20 / On the Road = higher than before July 20 / End of Season = higher than as of July 20

game after August 12—has ever admitted that his offensive exploits, especially those that turned games, had anything to do with Herman Franks squinting through a telescope, pushing a buzzer to the bullpen, and someone in the bullpen conveying the sign to the batter. The following analysis compares their cardinal batting statistics—home runs, runs batted in, and batting average—at home and away, both before and after July 19. (The data were derived from player game logs at Baseball-Reference.com.)

The player most questioned as a result of the spying revelation was Bobby Thomson, the implication being that his walk-off, come-from-behind, three-run home run off Ralph Branca was aided by knowing what was coming. Thomson was leading the Giants in home runs and was second to Monte Irvin in RBIs as of July 20, but had mostly struggled at the plate. With the arrival of rookie Willie Mays, Thomson was displaced from his starting center field job in late May, and by June he was being platooned in the outfield with the left-handed batting Mueller. By the end of June, Thomson's batting average was down to .220. Thomson had started only nine of the Giants' first 16 games in July, raising his average to .237, when two things happened. One was that third baseman Hank Thompson suffered what amounted to a season-ending injury on July 18 (although he pinch-hit several times and returned for the World Series). The other was that Durocher decided he really liked the idea of spying on catchers' signals. The first certainly presented opportunity for Thomson, whom the Giants had been shopping around for a trade, but who was suddenly their third baseman.[7] The second may have facilitated Thomson's dramatic turnaround at the plate; he finished the season with what would be his career high in home runs—32—and the second highest batting average of his career, .293.

Thomson would never say that his surge to the finish was a consequence of knowing what pitches were coming in home games. Indeed, Durocher's decision to platoon Thomson may have been the first step in rehabilitating his season. Thomson started July at .220, but had been hitting .333 (14-for-42) by the time July 20 rolled around. From that day until the end of the season, including the playoff with Brooklyn, Thomson hit .356 at the Polo Grounds—114 percentage points better than his batting average in the Giants' first 48 home games.

But the data would indicate Thomson was even more productive on the road, where he presumably did not benefit from illicit spying on catchers' signals. In 39 road games after July 20, including the first game of the three-game playoff, at Ebbets Field, Thomson hit .357—126 points better than he had in 39 road games before—with 13 home runs and 34 RBIs. Notwithstanding that the Giants played nine more games on the road than at home after July 20, including the playoff, those power numbers were much better than the three home runs and 18 RBIs he hit at the telescoped and wired-up Polo Grounds, and one of those home runs and three RBIs came on that immortalized swing of the bat against Branca.

First baseman Whitey Lockman and second baseman Eddie Stanky also hit substantially better at home after the spy system went into effect. Unlike Thomson, neither did nearly as well in away games. Lockman's batting average at home was 47 points better than before, and was 32 points higher than on the road after July 20. More significantly, however, Lockman's ratio of home runs and RBIs to games played at home was much better after July 20 and far better than his hitting performance away from the Polo Grounds. All six of the home runs Lockman hit after July 20 were at home, and his 21 RBIs at the Polo Grounds were five more than on the road in nine fewer games at home. Lockman had key hits in three of the four late-inning rallies that turned seeming defeat into victories in the August 21–September 3 homestand. Not to make an accusation, but the data seem compelling that Whitey Lockman may have benefited as much as anyone from the Polo Grounds spy operation, although Lockman is one of only two players in Prager's account—Irvin was the other—who supposedly did not want to know what pitch was coming, even from a runner on second base picking off signs.[8]

Stanky hit 35 points better at home after July 20, but with not nearly the same power numbers as before. Batting leadoff and renowned for his excellence in working the count and coaxing walks, Stanky was not expected to hit for power. The disparity between his home and away batting averages after July 20—he hit 76 points higher in the Polo Grounds and batted under .200 in other teams' ballparks—suggests Eddie Stanky might have liked the Polo Grounds' unique home-field advantage. Stanky's two-out, bottom-of-the-ninth single, in the Giants' last scheduled home game of the season, secured a 4–3 win over the Braves that kept his team's pennant hopes alive.

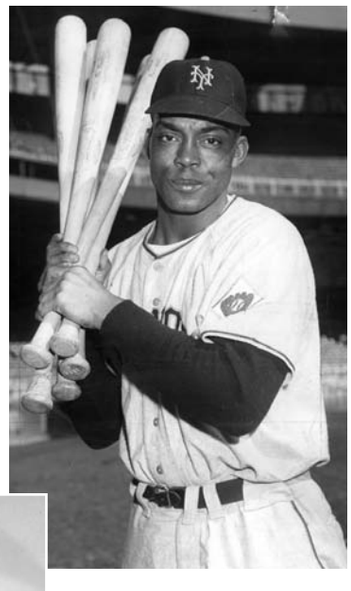
Catcher Wes Westrum's offensive productivity dropped off sharply after July 20, both home and away. In the Giants' remaining home games, however, Westrum had some clutch hits for a guy who hit only .131 in games at the Polo Grounds from then until the end of the season. His two-run, eighth-inning home run

on August 15 off Branca broke a tie game with Brooklyn. Against Cincinnati on August 21, Westrum blasted a three-run home run in the six-run eighth inning that helped erase a 4–1 deficit. Finally, on August 26 against Chicago, Westrum broke a tie game with a walk-off home run that gave the Giants their 13th consecutive win in what would become a 16-game winning streak.

Right fielder Don Mueller did not hit as well for batting average at home after July 20—65 points less than before—and hit for a higher average in away games, but he sure did channel his inner Babe Ruth when it came to hitting home runs at the Polo Grounds; he had more home runs and RBIs in fewer games at home than before spying eyes were in position to help. While Thomson hit the home run that killed off the Dodgers, it was Don Mueller who most deserved to be called the Dodgers' killer. Seven of the 16 home runs Mueller hit in 1951 were off Brooklyn pitching, six of them at the Polo Grounds, and all six of those were hit after Durocher's spying operation went into effect, including five in the two games on September 1 and 2.

After Mueller tagged Dodgers' pitching for three round-trippers in the September 1 game, Brooklyn coach Cookie Lavagetto told manager Charlie Dressen: "You notice when we come here, we never fool anybody? We throw a guy a change of pace, he seems to know what's coming?"[9] The next day, Mueller—who had hit only 18 home runs in his entire career to that point, and would hit only 42 more over the next six years and retire with 65 for his career—hit two more. His five home runs in consecutive games tied the major league record then held by Cap Anson (1884), Ty Cobb (1925), Tony Lazzeri (1936), and Ralph Kiner (1947). All four are in the Hall of Fame. No one is mistaking Don Mueller for a Hall-of-Fame slugger—certainly not Babe Ruth, who never hit as many as five home runs in consecutive games. (The real Babe did hit five home runs in two days in 1927 and six in two days in 1930, but over four games, accounting for doubleheaders.[10])

The data do not indicate any specific reason to be suspicious that three of the other four regulars in Durocher's line-up exploited the spy system to any great advantage. Alvin Dark's batting average in home games was 101 points lower than before, and he hit 97 points better on the road than at home after July 20. Monte Irvin's



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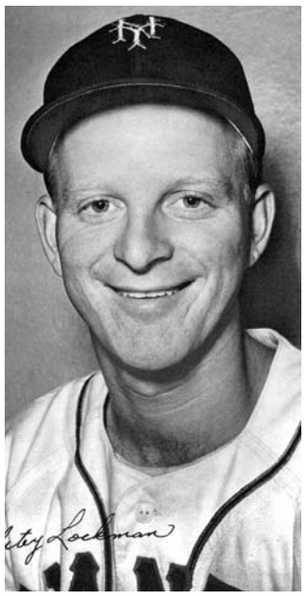
(Right) Monte Irvin led the NL with 121 RBIs and finished third to Roy Campanella and Stan Musial in National League MVP voting.

(Left) An injury to Hank Thompson limited him to pinch-hitting duty, creating more playing time for Bobby Thomson at third base.

(Right) Three of Wes Westrum's four home runs at home after July 20 were critical to Giants' come-from-behind victories.



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Though he claimed he did not want to benefit from knowing what pitch was coming, Whitey Lockman hit much better at the Polo Grounds than on the road after that advantage became available.

hitting carried the team at least as much as Thomson's, but his batting statistics at the Polo Grounds once the spy system went in effect, while not as good as before, were not indicative of any trend one way or the other. When Durocher was canvassing his clubhouse to get his team's buy-in, Irvin, according to Prager, told his manager that he didn't need any extra help to be a dangerous hitter.[11] During the Giants' stretch drive, Irvin made a practice of going into other teams' homes and tearing the place apart, batting .340 after July 20 with nine home runs and 44 RBIs in 39 road games. Rookie phenom Willie Mays did not play as well on the road as at home during that time, but there is nothing in his comparative before-and-after statistics to indicate Mays exploited the Polo Grounds' advantage.[12]

HOW MUCH OF AN ADVANTAGE WAS THE ADVANTAGE?

In a neutral context, one can plausibly argue the data suggest that the Giants' spying on catchers' signals from beyond center field provided only marginal advantage. Their runs per game on the road was almost the same as at home, and much better after August 11; they did not pounce on the opposing pitcher for many runs in the very first inning of home games to grab a big early lead; they won twice as many games by blowout margins away from home and had the second fewest big innings where they scored three runs or more in their home ballpark among National League teams; they did not have an unusual number of comeback rallies at home, compared to other teams in the league; and, let's not forget, the Giants had more games on the road after July 20, where failure to play as well as they did would have doomed their quest, whatever advantage they exploited at home. The Giants, however, did hit very well—including late-inning rallies to come from behind to win four games—in that critical homestand from August 21 to September 3.

But the context is not neutral. The Giants had to fight back from a large deficit to force a three-game playoff with the Dodgers to decide which team went to the World Series. While the impact of having a center field spy might have been marginal in the aggregate, a marginal advantage is not the same as irrelevant, and it seems likely—if not probable—that at least some of the Giants' home victories were facilitated by knowing what pitches were coming. Win just one fewer game than they did of the remaining 66 games after Franks made himself at home behind the spyglass, and the Giants would have had no playoff.

Of the 23 games the Giants won at home from July 20 to the end of the scheduled 154-game season, 10 were by one run. Meanwhile, they lost only one home game by a single run. While it cannot be definitively proven that any of those one-run victories were won because of their spy advantage, it is worth considering that the Giants scored at least three runs in an inning in four of those games and—more significantly—came from behind in seven of their 10 one-run victories. Of note in those come-from-behind victories were Whitey Lockman's eighth-inning double off Blackwell to break a 3–3 tie against Cincinnati on August 22, Lockman and Thomson (following Irvin) hitting consecutive singles to start a game-ending two-run rally that overcame a 4–3 deficit in the ninth on August 24 against St. Louis, Lockman's single that helped key a two-run game-winning rally in the12th inning against Chicago on August 27 after the Cubs had taken the lead in the top half of the inning, and—in their last scheduled home game of the season on September 24 against Boston—Thomson's single starting a game-tying rally in the sixth, Don Mueller's single in the ninth that started the game-winning rally, and Eddie Stanky driving him home with walk-off single. Lockman, Thomson, Mueller, Stanky, and Westrum—although only with home runs—were all players whose at-home performance after July 20 suggests they might have benefited at critical moments from knowing what pitches were being served up.

It seems all but certain, therefore, that the New York Giants' miraculous comeback to win the 1951 pennant would not have happened without the spying.

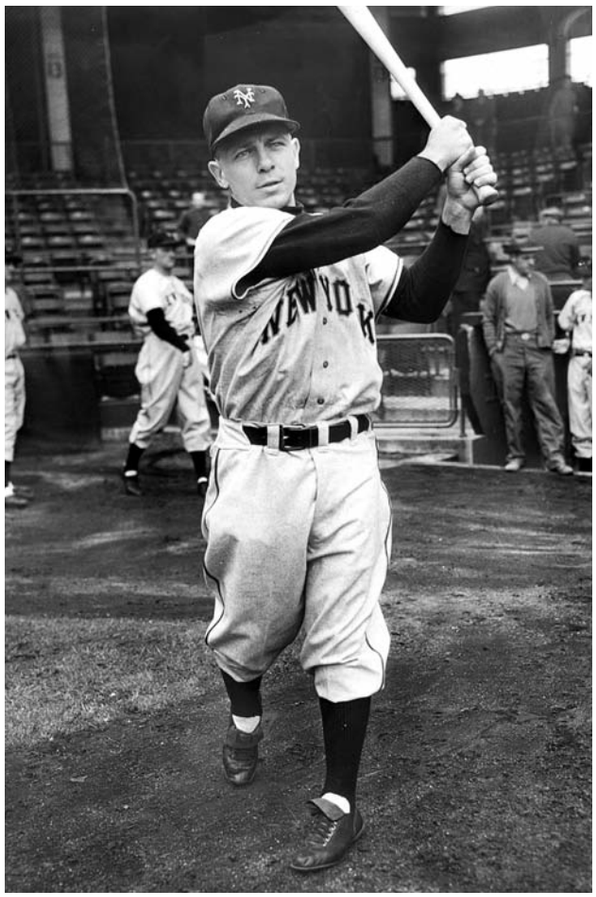
HOW SHOULD BEING A SPYMASTER IMPACT DUROCHER'S LEGACY?

Leo Durocher, who managed a total of 24 seasons in two acts (1939–55, 1966–73) but won only three

pennants (all in his first act), made his case for the Hall of Fame by leading the Giants to their stunning come-from-behind pennant in 1951. (That they lost the World Series to the Yankees in six games is beside the point.) Durocher's Giants also shocked the ostensibly superior Cleveland Indians in a four-game sweep of the 1954 World Series. Since much of Durocher's legacy comes from his team's dramatic finish in 1951, does deploying sidekick coach Herman Franks in the center field clubhouse with a high-powered telescope and an elaborate signaling system tarnish his reputation as a Hall of Fame manager? His personal reputation doesn't seem to have held sway: Durocher cultivated a "bad boy" image in his life outside of baseball that helped get him suspended for the 1947 season, for associations and behavior detrimental to the best interests of baseball.[13]

What about his managerial abilities, especially in 1951? Call him a scoundrel, a rogue, devious, unethical, lacking in integrity, whatever, but the New York Giants would not have won the National League pennant that year by cheating alone. What truly distinguished the Giants' exceptional run to close out the season was by far the stingiest pitching in the league. With a pitching staff that featured Larry Jansen, Sal Maglie, and Jim Hearn as Durocher's front-three starters, the Giants, who had given up the second-most runs in the league as of July 20, surrendered only 213 more the rest of the regular schedule. Providing Giants' batters with a unique home field advantage was one thing—and likely the critical variable to their success—but airtight pitching, holding opponents to an average of 3.2 runs per game in the 66 games remaining (versus the Giants' 4.6), was surely just as vital.

Durocher set the stage for the first of the New York Giants' two last great performances before they left New York for San Francisco by remaking the team he took over in July 1948. He gave the Giants, who had relied on the power game to score runs and had set a major league record with 221 home runs the previous season, a more multi-dimensional offense. Gone by 1950 were sluggers Johnny Mize, Sid Gordon, Willard Marshall, and Walker Cooper, who had combined for 235 of the Giants' 385 home runs in 1947 and 1948. Durocher's Giants still had sluggers—notably Bobby Thomson, who was there when Durocher arrived, Irvin and Hank Thompson, who debuted in July 1949 to integrate the team, and catcher Westrum, with Mays on deck for 1951—but now also better speed and hitters more skilled at getting on base at the top of the order in Stanky and Dark, both of whom were acquired from the Braves in 1950.[14]



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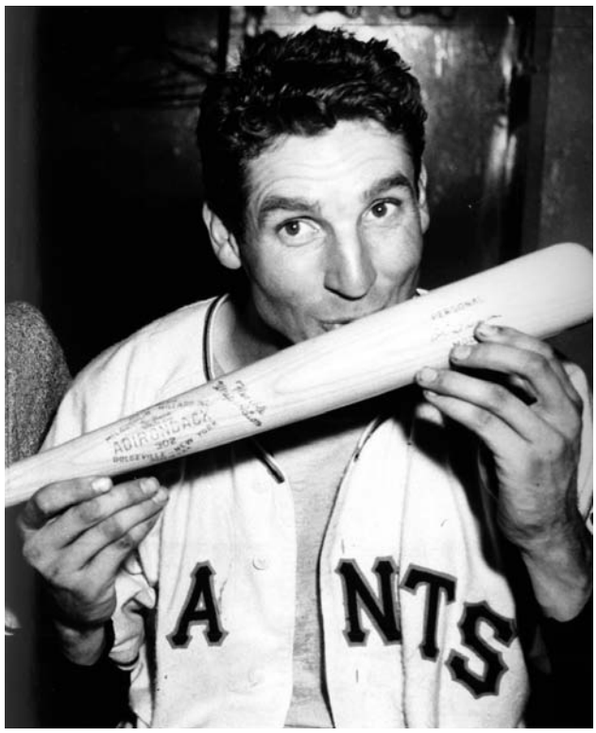
Eddie Stanky's walk-off single in the Giants' last scheduled home game on September 24 kept their pennant hopes alive.

The Giants' defense also improved under Durocher. In his first three full seasons as manager, 1949–51, the Giants led the league in defensive efficiency—turning batted balls in play into outs.[15] In 1947, under previous management, and 1948, when Durocher arrived in mid-season, the Giants' Defensive Efficiency Record was fifth in the league. Better fielding helped the Giants' pitchers, whose ERA improved from four consecutive years as second worst in the National League before Durocher's arrival, to third, then second, and finally best in the league, 1949–51.

Durocher had no tolerance for players who did not play with intensity and a fierce urgency to win every game. This urgency made the Giants' pursuit of the Dodgers in 1951 relentless, even when the season seemed a lost cause in mid-August. Durocher also had no patience for players who weren't prepared to play, which was why when he managed the Dodgers in 1948 he was at loggerheads with Jackie Robinson. Though Robinson played the game with great intensity, he had reported to spring training overweight, out of shape, and not baseball-ready.[16] Durocher did not tolerate



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Bobby Thomson's power numbers were much better on the road than at home after July 20, despite the Giants' scheme to steal signs at the Polo Grounds.

players making mental mistakes, such as failing to take the extra base, being out of position, throwing to the wrong base, or missing the cut-off man.

Even with future Hall-of-Famers Monte Irvin—whose best years were in the Negro Leagues—and Willie Mays, the New York Giants of 1951 and 1954 were not a great team. The rival Brooklyn Dodgers, on the other hand, had a memorably great team built around Robinson, Roy Campanella, Duke Snider, Pee Wee Reese, Gil Hodges, Carl Furillo, and Don Newcombe. The Giants were unlikely to have been as successful without Durocher in the dugout. Although difficult to play for and prone to antagonizing many of his players, Durocher was an astute judge of talent, skilled at nurturing and getting the best performance from the players he believed were most important to his team's success.[17] Indicative of the kind of stretch drive the Giants were to have in 1951, Durocher finished off 1950 by leading his team to a 41–21 record in the last two months of the season, the best in the league after July, and 3½ games better than the Dodgers in Brooklyn's failed bid to overtake the Whiz Kid Phillies.

For sure, Leo Durocher seized any advantage he could to win games, and he was not (or maybe I should say "would not have been") averse to underhanded tactics if he thought he could get away with them. In this case, his secret was safe for about half a century, even though there were unsubstantiated rumors soon after and along the way, according to Prager. (It doesn't seem anybody ever thought to ask, "where's Herman Franks if he's not in the dugout or on the coaching lines?") However much help the center-field spy may have been to Giants' hitters, they still had to win at a furious pace to overcome Brooklyn's midsummer lead—and to do so with more games on the road than at home. As manager, Leo Durocher was the driver who engineered the greatest comeback in pennant race history.

There's no cheating in baseball. Just ask Leo. He'll tell you himself. ■

Notes

1. Joshua Prager, *The Echoing Green: The Untold Story of Bobby Thomson, Ralph Branca and the Shot Heard Round the World* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006).
2. Prager, 23.
3. Prager, 45–46.
4. Prager, 85.
5. The Giants played 76 of their 154 scheduled games at home and 78 on the road. A postponed game against the Cardinals at the Polo Grounds had to be made up in St. Louis since the Redbirds were not scheduled to return to the East Coast after the rainout on August 24.
6. Prager, 32–34.
7. Prager recounts on page 5 that Durocher tried to deal Thomson to the Chicago Cubs for outfielder Andy Pafko before the June 15 trade deadline. Pafko was traded to Brooklyn instead.
8. Prager, 32.
9. Prager cites Lavagetto saying this to Peter Golenbock in his book, *BUMS: An Oral History of the Brooklyn Dodgers* (New York: Contemporary Books, 2000).
10. Ruth hit five home runs in three games on consecutive days in 1927, according to the home run log in Baseball-Reference.com: two in the first game of a double header on September 6 and one in the second game, and two on September 7. His six home runs on consecutive days in 1930 were hit in three games: three in the first game of a double header on May 21, none in the second game, two in the first game of a double header the next day and one in the second game.
11. Prager, 33.
12. James S. Hirsh in his recent authorized biography, *Willie Mays: The Life, The Legend*, wrote that "Willie Mays is circumspect on the issue." (New York: Scribner, 2010), 136.
13. See chapter 7 in William Marshall's book, *Baseball's Pivotal Era: 1945–1951* (University of Kentucky Press, 1999).
14. See Clay Davenport's article, "Durocher's Obsession: Static Versus Dynamic Offenses," in *It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over: The Baseball Prospectus Pennant Race Book*, edited by Steven Goldman (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 267.
15. Defensive Efficiency Record data for every team can be found on the "Team Statistics and Standings" page for each league in any season on Baseball-Reference.com.
16. Arnold Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1997), 194.
17. See "Leo Durocher in a Box" in *The Bill James Guide to Baseball Managers: From 1870 to Today* (New York: Scribner, 1997), 120–128.

Two Days in August

Scott Schleifstein

For two days in the summer of 1971, Tom Seaver dueled with another dominant hurler, splitting the games by scores of 1–0 and 2–1. Red Foley, writing for the *Daily News*, rhapsodized about this matchup, comparing it favorably to legendary contests between Dizzy Dean and Carl Hubbell, Mort Cooper and Whit Wyatt, and Christy Mathewson and Mordecai "Three Finger" Brown.[1] The interesting part is Seaver's competition. His foil wasn't a fellow Hall-of-Famer like Fergie Jenkins, Bob Gibson, or Steve Carlton. Who was it? Dave Roberts, southpaw for the San Diego Padres. Which naturally leads to the question: Just who was Dave Roberts?[2]

Roberts logged 13 seasons pitching for the Padres, Houston Astros, Pittsburgh Pirates, Chicago Cubs, Detroit Tigers, Seattle Mariners, San Francisco Giants, and the Mets. Martin Abramowitz, the baseball historian behind the website jewishmajorleaguers.org, teasingly paid homage to the well-traveled pitcher with the "Dave Roberts Wandering Jew Award."[3]

1971 was a breakout year for Roberts, as he posted 14 wins, 14 complete games, and a microscopic 2.10 ERA for the lowly San Diego Padres. The Padres' relative ineptitude makes Roberts's accomplishments all the more impressive. Founded a mere two years before, when the National League expanded to 12 teams and was split into East and West Divisions, San Diego would struggle to win 61 games in 1971.[4] When the curtain mercifully fell on their season on September 30, the Padres were 28.5 games behind the NL West division winners, the San Francisco Giants, and 17.5 games in back of the Houston Astros and Cincinnati Reds, who tied for fourth place. The Padres were mired in the basement of the NL West, not even in "shouting distance" of fifth place. Only the Cleveland Indians had a poorer campaign in 1971, winning 60 games and finishing an eye-popping 43 games out. The Padres would not escape the NL West cellar until 1975, with a fourth-place finish, and would not crack .500 for a season until 1978 (finishing fourth again). Compare that to the Expos, who approached respectability sooner, winning 73 games in 1970 and, in 1979, finishing 95–65, a mere two games behind the eventual World Series champions, the Pittsburgh Pirates.[5]

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Dave Roberts pitched 13 seasons in the major leagues, including stints for eight different franchises: San Diego, Houston, Pittsburgh, Chicago (NL), Detroit, Seattle, San Francisco, and New York (NL).

San Diego scored a paltry 3.02 runs per game, which was the worst in either league in 1971. To put this figure into perspective, the eventual-champion Pirates averaged 4.86 runs per game, and the NL average was 3.91. The Padres totaled only 486 runs, the lowest in major league baseball. Pittsburgh scored an astounding 302 more times than San Diego! The team batting average was .233, tied with the NL East cellar-dwellers, the Philadelphia Phillies. Only three AL clubs were worse. Some of the other "offensive" (pun intended) vital signs were only slightly better—the .293 on-base percentage was only the worst in the NL (the AL's California Angels finished last in this category with a .290 OBP); their .332 slugging percentage was also only the worst in the NL (but here, three American League squads—Milwaukee, California, and Washington—were less successful than San Diego with slugging percentages of .329, .329, and .326, respectively). If the 1960's Los Angeles Dodgers had a "pop gun" offense, the '71 Padres' offense could perhaps be characterized as a water pistol.

The lack of run support for Roberts was epitomized in the Padres' July 3 encounter with LA. Roberts lost to Al Downing, 1–0, with both pitchers tossing a

complete-game six-hitter. The Dodgers made their hits count, manufacturing a run in the top of the ninth with a Joe Ferguson single, a sacrifice bunt by Downing, and Willie Davis doubling home pinch-runner Bill Russell. The Padres' best chance to score was in the bottom of the sixth, when two singles (including one by Roberts who was 2-for-2 on the day) went for naught due to an Enzo Hernández force-out and a fly out by Leron Lee. During 1971, Roberts would repeatedly play the role of "hard-luck loser." Other instances were May 17 at Houston (four hits, three of them singles, in a 2–0 defeat at the hands of Don Wilson), May 31 vs. Philadelphia (five hits, all singles except for a double by Roberts, in a 3–1 loss to Jim Bunning), and June 16 at Montreal (a one hitter by Bill Stoneman for a 2–0 loss).

Things didn't go much better when the Padres were in the field. Only the Giants made more errors (179 to 161) or had a lower fielding percentage (.974 to .972). To put these numbers in context, the Cincinnati Reds led Major League Baseball with a fielding percentage of .984, while committing only 103 errors. Unlike the power-packed Giants with blue-chip hitters like Hall of Famers Willie McCovey and Willie Mays (albeit near the end of his career) and perennial All-Star Bobby Bonds, San Diego's virtually non-existent offense couldn't compensate for its numerous defensive lapses. Shortstop Enzo Hernández would tie Giants shortstop Chris Speier for the most errors in MLB, with a total of 33. Hernández's sometime double-play partner, Don Mason, committed 15 errors in 90 games at second base. Compare this to the statistics of the NL Gold Glove winners, the Mets' Buddy Harrelson at shortstop (16 errors) and the Reds' Tommy Helms at second (9 errors), and you begin to get a sense of some of the challenges faced by Roberts. Interestingly, notwithstanding Harrelson's contributions on defense, only Seaver's Mets in the NL turned fewer double plays than the Padres (144 to 135); on both coasts, the pitcher was forsaken by his proverbial "best friend." For a control pitcher like Dave Roberts who relied on his sinkerball and had only 135 strikeouts (as compared to Seaver's 289, tops in the NL), the erratic fielding surely had a devastating effect.

Consider, for example, Roberts's start at San Francisco on June 20. He went head-to-head with the Giants' Steve Stone, eventually losing 2–0. San Francisco's breakthrough came in the bottom of the fourth inning when Roberts himself and right fielder Ollie Brown both committed errors during the same play—Roberts's attempt to pick outfielder Ken Henderson off first base. The defensive blunders were costly as

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Tom Seaver was in his fifth big league season in 1971. He would end the year 20–10, with a 1.76 ERA (best in the league), but come in second in Cy Young Award voting (to Fergie Jenkins).

Henderson came around to score on the play. Given that Henderson reached base via walk, the Giants managed to score a run and take the lead, en route to sweeping both ends of a doubleheader, without the benefit of a single hit in the inning. Also illustrative is Roberts's August 29 outing in Montreal, where two errors by Hernández and another error by Mason in a disastrous second inning would lead to five Montreal runs against Roberts, four of which were unearned. Roberts was lifted by Padres manager Preston Gomez after 1⅔ innings of work, with San Diego eventually losing 6–1.

The Padres bullpen did a credible though unspectacular job for Roberts. On July 9 against the Cubs, Bob Miller preserved a 1–0 win for Roberts by inducing power hitter Jim Hickman to hit into a game-ending double play. On June 25, Dick Kelley recorded a save with Roberts getting the "W," by retiring LA's Bobby Valentine, Duke Sims, and pinch-hitter Bobby Darwin in order in the bottom of the ninth.

Things didn't always go as planned, though. On April 19, Roberts left the game against Los Angeles in the top of the eighth with men on first and second and no one out; San Diego held a 2–1 lead when Al Severinsen replaced Roberts on the mound. After a successful sacrifice bunt by Dick Allen (yes, the slugger Dick Allen, how's that for managing?) and an intentional walk to Bill Sudakis, infielder Billy

Grabarkewitz doubled off Severinsen, driving in two runs. This would prove to be the difference in the contest, which LA won, 3–2. Another case in point, going into the top of the seventh on June 29, the Padres and Giants were knotted at three. After retiring the first batter, Roberts yielded back-to-back singles. Roberts was removed; Miller came on in relief. An error by third baseman Ed Spiezio on Willie Mays's ground-ball followed by a clutch single by Bobby Bonds resulted in two runs for San Francisco. The Giants went on to win the game, 6–4.

GAME 1: AUGUST 11 AT SAN DIEGO

Over the first three innings, the Mets and Padres combined for three singles. One by Padres center fielder Larry Stahl in the bottom of the first; one by Mets left fielder Cleon Jones in the top of the second; and one by Roberts himself in the bottom of the third. None of the runners reached second base. Seaver recorded three strikeouts, Roberts two.

The stalemate continued through the middle three frames. The Mets offense consisted of a Don Hahn single in the fourth inning (Hahn would be stranded at second after a successful Wayne Garrett bunt) and a walk to Bob Aspromonte in the fifth (erased by a double-play groundball to second baseman Dave Campbell). The Padres accomplished even less, with Seaver showing his Cy Young form. San Diego only managed a Nate Colbert walk in the fourth, which was rendered meaningless as Seaver recorded all three outs via strikeout. After six innings, Seaver had fanned nine in total.

The drama continued to build as the game headed toward its conclusion. Donn Clendenon led off the eighth inning for the Mets with a single and advanced to second on a Bob Aspromonte bunt. Nothing came of the scoring opportunity when Jerry Grote lined into an inning-ending double play to Stahl in center field. According to Murray Chass's game recap in *The New York Times*, the Mets' "best scoring opportunity" against Roberts was defused when Stahl snared Grote's sinking line drive, robbing him of a "certain hit."[6] Clendenon, assuming that Stahl couldn't make the play, had already reached third base when Stahl made the catch, resulting in an easy 8–4 double play. Phil Collier of the *San Diego Union* concurred with Chass's analysis, noting that but for Stahl's "miraculous catch," Seaver would have been a 1–0 victor.[7]

Buddy Harrelson drew a walk to start the ninth, but Seaver ended the nascent rally by hitting into a 6–4–3 double play. Maybe the double play was Roberts's friend after all; all told the Padres would turn five of them in the game. Meanwhile, Tom Terrific continued to stonewall the Padres, adding five more strikeouts to his total, thereby keeping pace with Fergie Jenkins for the NL lead.[8] Perhaps the Padres' best threat came in the bottom of the ninth when Stahl worked a two-out walk, bringing Nate Colbert—San Diego's lone All-Star (who, by the way, the Mets were interested in acquiring in exchange for Mike Jorgensen, Tim Foli, and a "stack of cash"[9])—to the plate. Seaver struck out Colbert, sending the game to extra innings.

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Tommie Agee had won the Rookie of the Year award in 1966, and a Gold Glove in 1970. His fielding helped Seaver, but not enough to beat Roberts.

The Mets had their chances against Roberts in the top of the 10th and 11th innings. In the 10th, the Mets couldn't push across any runs despite having men on first and second with only one out. Roberts came up with a clutch strikeout of Clendenon; then, Tim Foli grounded out to end the inning. The 11th saw Ken Singleton (pinch-hitting for Seaver) and Hahn single consecutively with two outs, but Roberts got Wayne Garrett to ground out back to the box and Roberts had wriggled out of the jam.

San Diego didn't make any headway either. Seaver cruised through the 10th, retiring the Padres in order. (Playing "Monday morning quarterback," one wonders why Mets manager Gil Hodges opted to pinch-hit for the still dominant Seaver with two outs in the top of the 11th.) Hodges called in Danny Frisella to relieve. After a Bob Barton single, Frisella struck out Roberts

and pinch-hitter Angel Bravo. The game lumbered into the 12th inning: the crowd of a little under 11,000 people was getting their money's worth.

Roberts continued to stymie the Mets in the 12th as a double-play grounder from Donn Clendenon negated Cleon Jones' one-out single.

The bottom of the 12th saw the game abruptly end. Stahl touched Frisella for a lead-off double. The slugging Colbert was walked intentionally. The following batter, Leron Lee, bunted Frisella's first offering foul. As Lee tried to bunt the next pitch but missed, Stahl and Colbert broke for third base and second base respectively. Grote then threw to third to try to cut down Stahl. Grote's throw deflected off Garrett's glove and landed in left field. Jones's throw home came too late as Stahl had already crossed the plate.

Although Seaver clearly had outpitched Roberts, Roberts got the win; another example of the cruel inequities of baseball. Seaver allowed only three hits (all singles) and walked two, while recording 14 strikeouts. Roberts had a less dominant but still very respectable outing, giving up seven hits, issuing three walks, and striking out seven.

Padres skipper Preston Gomez called it "the best game that we've [the Padres] ever played,"[10] which was probably not an exaggeration given the futility that marked the Padres' short and unremarkable history to date. Gomez added, "Roberts and Seaver were both great and Stahl was the difference—with his glove, his bat and his baserunning."[11] Mets manager Hodges allowed that Roberts had pitched "a beautiful game."[12] But perhaps the most poignant postgame comments were provided by Roberts and Seaver themselves. Roberts generously said of his counterpart: "I have nothing against Frisella, but I'm glad Seaver didn't get the loss. He pitched too well to lose."[13] Seaver, ever the class act, complimented Roberts in kind: "His record shows that he has gone out there every fourth or fifth day and pitched well—that is as much as you can expect of anyone."[14,15] Given the Mets' struggles to consistently score runs for him, Seaver's comment transcends good sportsmanship and evinces a certain amount of empathy for Robertss' plight.[16]

GAME 2: AUGUST 21 AT NEW YORK

In stark contrast to almost all sequels (remember *Staying Alive*, the 1983 follow-up to *Saturday Night Fever*? How about 1998's *Blues Brothers 2000*?), Roberts-Seaver II actually was on a par with the original. The game drew a somewhat disappointing attendance of a little over 26,500.[17]

For the first three innings, Roberts retired the Mets in order. Meanwhile, San Diego touched Seaver for three singles. Two of them came in the top of the second, but the fire was doused when Larry Stahl—the hero of the earlier contest—hit into a 6–4–3 double play.

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Larry Stahl's "miraculous catch" on a sinking liner squelched the Mets' best scoring chance, resulting instead in an inning-ending double play.

Roberts continued to coast through the next three frames, yielding only a base on balls to Jones and a single to Clendenon with two outs in the home fourth. The Padres seemed on the verge of solving Seaver in the fifth. According to Phil Collier's write-up in the *San Diego Union*, Agee made a fine defensive play in center field to corral Ollie Brown's "prodigious" lead-off liner.[18] The Padres then grabbed a 1–0 lead on a solo homer by third baseman Ed Spiezio. After retiring Barton on a groundball to short for the second out, Roberts and the light-hitting Enzo Hernández (career average: .224) both singled. Seaver's strength as a pitcher can perhaps be found in how he bore down to strike out Don Mason to end the inning. Although the Padres "hit him hard" according to Bob Barton and Seaver, by his own admission, had "his worst stuff since the All-Star break,"[19] Seaver got the man that counted. The floodgates didn't open. After the fifth inning, the Padres would not register another hit off Seaver for the remainder of the contest. The only blemishes for Seaver thereafter were walks to Hernández in the eighth inning and to Stahl in the ninth (with Stahl stealing second base).

The game was another nail-biter, as Roberts was clearly in control, handling the Mets with relative ease with one major exception—Cleon Jones, who was responsible for two of the Mets' total of three hits in the game. Jones led off the home seventh with a triple, scoring on Tommie Agee's sacrifice fly to tie the game at one. Joseph Durso, writing in *The New York Times*, dubbed it a "charity triple";[20] like fellow columnists Foley of the *New York Daily News* and Collier of the *San Diego Union*, Durso characterized the handling of the defensive chance by center fielder Cito Gaston and right fielder Ollie Brown as an "Alphonse and Gaston" play (riffing on the center fielder's name for a delicious—or atrocious?—pun). Both outfielders tracked Jones's shot. Fearing an imminent collision, with neither Gaston nor Brown calling for the ball, both veered off at the last moment and the ball fell between them for a safety. Apparently, the gaffe didn't faze Brown, who almost threw Jones out at home on Agee's fly ball on the very next defensive chance. Then, with two outs in the bottom of the ninth, Jones clubbed a walk-off home run to give the Mets the win. And, just like that, the game was over. The homer by Jones—which according to the account in the *Union* "struck the top of the fence"[21] in right-center field and then went over—was something of an anomaly as Roberts yielded a league-best .3 homers per nine innings in 1971.[22]

Now Roberts was again in the familiar position of the "hard-luck loser," making the August 21 contest something of a mirror image of the August 11 game in San Diego. This time around, Roberts's statistics are marginally better than those compiled by Seaver. Roberts yielded half as many hits as Seaver (6–3) and one fewer walk (2–1), while striking out only one fewer batter than his mound rival (8–7).

To continue the analogy, where Roberts reaped the benefits of solid fielding in the earlier contest, the edge in fielding this time around clearly went to Seaver. The costly Gaston-Brown defensive blunder must have made Stahl's catch seem like a distant, dim memory to Roberts. In contrast, according to the various newspaper accounts of the game, the Mets' defenders turned in a string of stellar plays, "picking up" Seaver. In addition to Tommie Agee's catch on the ball hit by Ollie Brown in the fifth frame, third baseman Bob Aspromonte speared Enzo Hernández's liner in the top of the first and right fielder Ken Singleton leaped to make a one-handed grab of Ollie Brown's "rifle shot" in the seventh.[23] Perhaps most significantly, Mets outfielders would quell a potential rally in the ninth. Singleton would come up with two more defensive gems, first snaring a Nate Colbert liner and then an Ed Spiezio fly ball. Sandwiched between Singleton's exploits, Jones made a fine catch of his own in robbing Brown of an extra-base hit which likely would have scored Stahl to give San Diego a 2–1 lead: if Larry Stahl was the difference between victory and defeat in game one (at least according to Preston Gomez), then Cleon Jones was the difference in game two.

It seems fair at this juncture to second-guess Gomez in allowing Roberts to face Jones in the bottom of the ninth. After all, in addition to his "charity triple" and homer in this game, Jones had gone 2-for-4 against Roberts on August 11 for a total of 4-for-7 in the two games. While it contradicts conventional baseball wisdom to put the winning run on base, Roberts appeared to be in control and had a considerably easier time with the on-deck hitter Donn Clendenon, with Clendenon going only 2-for-8 against Roberts on August 11 and 21, while whiffing four times (including in the seventh of the same game right after Jones's three-base hit). By way of recent precedent, in the earlier game in San Diego, Roberts had issued Jones an intentional walk rather than having him hit with one out and a man on second in the 10th inning; Roberts took his chances with Clendenon instead, striking him out. Perhaps more tellingly, in the 12th inning of the earlier game, after a single by Jones, Roberts induced Clendenon to hit into a double play.

Both Seaver and Roberts displayed refreshing honesty, humility, and professionalism in reviewing their respective performances. Conspicuous was the absence of the chest-pounding and brashness so often heard from athletes today. In addition to noting that he did not pitch particularly well, Seaver admitted that his efforts were aided by a combination of luck and good plays in the field. Roberts believed he had the best command of his pitches all season. Focusing on Jones' fateful, final at-bat, Roberts credited Jones for hitting a "good" slider on the inside corner. More philosophically, Roberts also noted that "a couple of inches this way and it's [Jones's fly ball home run] in the park. I guess that's what makes the game fascinating."[24,25]

Roberts and Seaver would clash again several times over the course of their careers, but in 1971 both hurlers were perhaps at their most dominant. Almost exactly one year later on August 22, 1972, Seaver's Mets would defeat Roberts's Houston Astros 4–2 (Roberts was traded to Houston in the 1971 offseason for pitchers Bill Greif and Mark Schaeffer as well as infielder/outfielder Derrel Thomas) at Shea Stadium; on June 1, 1974, Seaver would outduel Roberts again

when the Mets beat Houston 3–1, with both tossing complete games.

Dave Roberts's moments of glory—and, much more importantly, his grace, class and dignity in the face of both victory and defeat—are well worth remem-bering. ■

Author's note: Ethnic pride first drew me to Dave Roberts. In the course of researching and writing my first SABR article ("A Small, Yet Momentous Gesture," *Baseball Research Journal* #34, 2005, discussing the decision by Oakland A's players Ken Holtzman, Mike Epstein, and Reggie Jackson to wear a black armband on their uniforms September 6, 1972 out of respect for the Israeli athletes murdered at the Olympic Games in Munich), I vaguely recalled Roberts as being a Jewish baseball player. A journeyman going pitch for pitch with a baseball legend such as Tom Seaver is, in and of itself, interesting; a Jewish journeyman made the story fascinating and intriguing to me. I saw Roberts's pitching prowess as a subtle but strong refutation of the anti-semitic canard that Jews are bookish and nonathletic. I later learned that Roberts was the child of a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother who was actually raised by a gentile step-father. Roberts would qualify as Jewish only under Reform Judaism by which one can claim Jewish identity through either parent (Conservative and Orthodox Judaism hold that only matrilineal descent is valid or "kosher," if you will). Moreover, Roberts apparently never acknowledged any connection to Judaism. In fact, in a San Diego Padres press release dated June 5, 1970, Roberts credits praying with his younger brother (who was studying to be a minister in the Greek Orthodox church) as helping him recover from a career-threatening injury to his pitching shoulder; Roberts made the same point in discussing his comeback in the *Houston Chronicle*.[30] His David and Goliath tale remained intriguing to me, nonetheless.

Notes

1. "Cleon Homers Padres, 2–1 for Seaver," *New York Daily News*, August 22, 1971.
2. This question is trickier than it may seem at first glance as the annals of Major League Baseball contain numerous players named Dave Roberts. Of the four Dave Roberts, perhaps the most famous (or infamous, depending on your favorite team) is the outfielder David Ray Roberts whose stolen base in the 2004 American League Championship Series was pivotal to the Red Sox historic comeback against the Yankees which would culminate in their first World Series championship since 1918. The Dave Roberts addressed in this article is David Arthur Roberts. See baseball-reference.com.
3. Burton A. Boxerman and Benita W. Boxerman, *Jews in Baseball: Volume 2, The Post-Greenberg Years, 1949–2008* (McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010).
4. The other NL expansion team was the Montreal Expos.
5. Oddly enough, Dave Roberts was a member of the 1979 world champion Pirates. The Pirates acquired him midseason from the San Francisco Giants in the same trade that brought the All-Star and batting champion Bill "Mad Dog" Madlock to the club.
6. "Padres Top Mets on Grote's Error in 12th Inning, 1–0," *The New York Times*, August 12, 1971.
7. "Roberts Hurls 12-Inning Shutout in Outdueling Mets' Seaver, 1–0," *San Diego Union*, August 12, 1971.
8. At season's end, Seaver would lead the National League in strikeouts, besting Jenkins (the National League's Cy Young Award winner in 1971) 289–263. Still, Seaver had fewer strikeouts than Detroit's Mickey Lolich (308) or Oakland's Vida Blue (301); Blue won both the American League's Cy Young and MVP Awards in 1971.
9. "Mets Beat Padres, 2–1, on Homer by Jones in Ninth," by Joseph Durso, *The New York Times*, August 22, 1971.
10. "Roberts Hurls 12-Inning Shutout in Outdueling Mets' Seaver, 1–0," see note 9.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. 10–12, with an ERA of 2.09, including the August 11 victory against the Mets.
15. "Roberts Hurls 12-Inning Shutout in Outdueling Mets' Seaver, 1–0," see note 9.
16. Throughout his Mets career, Seaver often experienced this kind of deflating result. For example, in 1971, Seaver suffered a dispiriting pair of complete game losses to the Astros in Houston. The first by the score of 3–1 on May 1; the second, a 2–1 defeat on July 17.
17. In comparison, Saturday contests against Atlanta (on May 22) and Chicago (on July 31) at Shea Stadium had attendance of approximately 43,700 and 43,900 respectively.
18. "Seaver Admits He's Lucky as Mets Shade Roberts," *San Diego Union*, August 22, 1971.
19. Ibid.
20. "Mets Beat Padres, 2–1, on Homer by Jones in Ninth," see note 9.
21. "Seaver Admits He's Lucky as Mets Shade Roberts," see note 18.
22. By way of context, Tom Seaver gave up .6 home runs per nine innings in 1971. The statistics for Fergie Jenkins (the 1971 National League Cy Young Award winner), Vida Blue, and Bart Johnson (1971's American League Leader) are, respectively: .8, .5 and .455.
23. "Seaver Admits He's Lucky as Mets Shade Roberts," see note 18.
24. "Mets Beat Padres, 2–1, on Homer by Jones in Ninth," see note 9.
25. Press Release and John Wilson, "Inside Dave Roberts' Battle to Escape Oblivion," *Houston Chronicle*, included in Dave Roberts's Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

Mike Piazza by the Numbers

The Hall-of-Fame Case

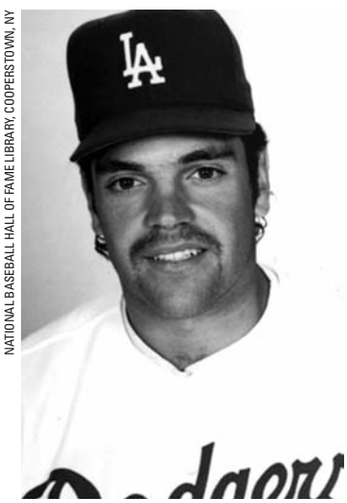
Chuck Rosciam

On September 12, 1992, in the fifth inning of a game between the Dodgers and the Giants at Dodger Stadium, Michael Joseph Piazza hit his first major league home run and his road to the catcher career home-run record began.[1]

This first four-bagger was a hard shot to right center with men on second and third and Los Angeles leading 3–0. The count was 1–0 and San Francisco's pitcher, Steve Reed, served up Piazza's first dinger. He would subsequently serve up three more to Piazza in years to come. It was also the first of 51 three-run home runs that he would hit, but the only home run that he would hit in his initial major league season.

In his 16-year career, Piazza would hit 30 home runs (or more) in a season nine times, including eight consecutive years—1995 through 2002—and would have likely had 10 straight seasons were it not for the strike-shortened 1994 (24). In all, he had 427 career home runs with 396 of them as a catcher.[2] Both are all-time catcher records.

In the course of his career, Piazza would pass all of the Hall-of-Fame catchers on the home-run list, including Johnny Bench, Yogi Berra, Carlton Fisk, and Gary Carter. Through the 2011 season, he ranked 43rd among all players in career home runs, ahead of some well-known non-catcher Hall-of-Fame sluggers such as Duke Snider, Al Kaline, Jim Rice, Tony Perez, Orlando Cepeda, and Joe DiMaggio.[3]



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Mike Piazza played 726 games in Dodger blue, catching 700 of them.

Table 1 shows career home-run tallies for Hall-of-Fame backstops, plus some notable non-HOF catchers, and the date Piazza passed each.

Table 1. Catcher Career Home Runs

Catcher	HR	Date
Ray Schalk	11	Jun 15, 1993
Roger Bresnahan	26	Aug 29, 1993
Buck Ewing	71	Jun 26, 1995
Mickey Cochrane	119	Aug 11, 1996
Ernie Lombardi	190	Aug 22, 1998
Bill Dickey	202	Apr 28, 1999
Gabby Hartnett	236	Sep 22, 1999
Roy Campanella	242	Apr 14, 2000
Ted Simmons*	248	May 12, 2000
Lance Parrish*	324	Jun 8, 2002
Gary Carter	324	Jun 8, 2002
Yogi Berra	358	Apr 6,2004
Carlton Fisk	376	Sep 13, 2004
Johnny Bench	389	Jul 24, 2005

* non-HOF catchers

Table 2 shows home runs while catching (as compared to playing any other position) by backstops and the dates that Piazza surpassed each.[4]

Table 2. Career Homers While Catching

Catcher	HRc*	Date
Ray Schalk (HOF)	11	Jun 15, 1993
Roger Bresnahan (HOF)	14	Jun 20, 1993
Buck Ewing (HOF)	35	Oct 3, 1993
Mickey Cochrane (HOF)	117	Aug 6, 1996
Joe Torre	123	Aug 8, 1996
Mickey Tettleton	126	Sep 22, 1996
Ernie Lombardi (HOF)	182	Jul 29, 1998
Ted Simmons	195	Sep 141998
Bill Dickey (HOF)	200	May 9, 1999
Gabby Hartnett (HOF)	232	Sep 19, 1999
Roy Campanella (HOF)	239	Apr 14, 2000
Gary Carter (HOF)	298	Aug 19, 2001
Lance Parrish	299	Aug 21, 2001
Yogi Berra (HOF)	305	Sep 30, 2001
Johnny Bench (HOF)	327	Aug 17, 2002
Carlton Fisk (HOF)	351	May 5, 2004

*HRc is a home run while catching.

Piazza's nine years of 30 or more home runs is more than double any other catcher. Johnny Bench, Roy Campanella, and Mickey Tettleton only managed it four times each. Where did Piazza get his swing and power? He was the second of five sons of Vince and Veronica Piazza. His father built a backyard batting cage at the family home in Valley Forge that was used all year long: Mike used to shovel snow out of the cage so that he could practice. One summer when Piazza was just 15 years old, Ted Williams was at a Pennsylvania card show and Vince invited him to look at his son batting.[5] Williams watched Mike's swing and remarked, "If this kid is swinging this well now and he's only 15, I guarantee you that he will hit in the major leagues."[6] Williams told Mike that good mechanics were just 50 percent of hitting and advised him about blocking out distractions and concentrating only on hitting.[7]

Table 3. Piazza Homers Season by Season

Year	HR	HRc
1992	1	1
1993	35	35
1994	24	24
1995	32	31
1996	36	36
1997	40	40
1998	32	30
1999	40	40
2000	38	35
2001	36	34
2002	33	30
2003	11	11
2004	20	11
2005	19	18
2006	22	20
2007	8	0

Piazza's 35 home-run season in 1993 made him an easy selection as the National League Rookie of the Year. In 1996 the fans selected him as a starter in the All-Star Game and he didn't disappoint; he hit a home run in that summer classic and was named the Most Valuable Player. Piazza is tied for third all-time amongst catchers with Johnny Bench who had 10 selections (nine by fans and one by managers). Ivan Rodriguez leads all backstops with 12, followed by Yogi Berra with 11.

Piazza's 40 homers in 1997 and 1999 are the fifth most by a catcher. Johnny Bench holds the record with 45 in 1970, followed by Javy Lopez's 43 in 2003, Roy Campanella's 41 in 1953, and Todd Hundley's 41 in 1996. Furthermore, his 201 hits in 1997 were the second most by a catcher in major league history right behind Joe Torre's 203 in 1970. His .362 average that year tied Bill Dickey (.362 for the 1936 Yankees) for second best all time (Jack Clements holds the record with .394 set in 1898); in 2009 Joe Mauer of the Minnesota Twins broke Dickey and Piazza's second-place record with .365.

In January 2005, Piazza married Alicia Rickter, a *Baywatch* actress and *Playboy*'s Miss October 1995, in Miami in a candlelight church ceremony. In attendance among the more than a hundred guests were his best friend and fellow player, Eric Karros, plus Ivan Rodriguez, another probable Hall of Fame backstop.[8] Later that year, he would pass Johnny Bench's career home run total of 389.

His most productive month was June. However, he was equally proficient before and after the All-Star break, having whacked 233 before and 194 after the midseason pause.

Table 4. Piazza Homers by Month

Year	HR
Mar	1
Apr	60
May	69
Jun	85
Jul	64
Aug	74
Sep	70
Oct	4

Mike had 36 two-home-run games and one three-homer game on June 29, 1996 at Colorado's Coors Field. He hit 219 solo home runs, 143 two-run shots, 51 three-run homers, and 14 grand slams, ranking him 15th (tied) in this category among all players and number one amongst catchers.[9] The nearest catchers to Piazza in slams are Johnny Bench and Gary Carter with 11 each. Yogi Berra, Ted Simmons, and Jorge Posada each had nine. He is tied with Mark McGwire and ahead of such notable players as Joe DiMaggio (13) and Barry Bonds (11). In 1998 he led the majors with four grand slams, his fourth slam and first as a Met came against the Diamondbacks' Andy Benes on August 22 at Shea Stadium.[10]

His first grand slam came on June 6, 1994, in the second inning against the Marlins, with Mark Gardner on the mound and Florida ahead 2–0. It was Piazza's 48th home run and his 224th game of his major league career. He hit three slams against the Rockies in his career (two at Coors Field and one at Dodger Stadium).

The 14 slams were scattered throughout the stands: four in left, four in left-center, two in center, two in right-center and two in right field. He clubbed six at home and eight on the road.

As a pinch-hitter he hit five homers and as a designated hitter, 18. He also had seven walk-off home runs, two in 1996, and one each in 1995, 1999, 2001, 2003, and 2004. Three of these end-of-game hits came against the San Diego Padres, and one each against the Astros, Expos, Giants, and Phillies.

He hit 195 of his 427 home runs at home and 232 away, with 105 coming at Shea Stadium and 92 at Dodger Stadium, seven of those as a visitor. His five favorite opponent parks were Olympic Stadium (19), Coors Field (17), Veteran's Stadium (16), Three Rivers Stadium (15), and Turner Field (14). Piazza is also in a select group of just a few players to hit a major league home run at Tokyo Dome in Japan.[11] In 2000 he tied the single-season major league record of putting the ball over the fence in 18 different parks.[12]

He was an equal-opportunity slugger, having hit a home run against all 30 major league teams (counting Montreal and Washington as one team). His top-seven list reads as follows: Philadelphia (44), Atlanta (38), Colorado (34), Montreal/Washington (28), and 27 each against Pittsburgh, San Diego, and San Francisco. He spread his homers across his teams with 177 for the Dodgers, 220 with the Mets, 22 with the Padres, and eight with the A's. His five-game stint in 1998 with the Marlins generated no home runs.

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Mike ready to swat one of his 177 homers for Los Angeles.

His favorite victims (pitchers) were Tom Glavine, Pedro Martinez, and Jason Schmidt, against whom he slugged six each. In all he homered against 280 different pitchers. Two were victims of five home runs (Jeff Suppan and Tim Worrell), 10 hurlers were bit four times each, 22 saw the ball sail out three times off Piazza's bat, 50 endured just two, and 193 were lucky enough to toss just one home-run ball to him.

Where did Piazza park his home runs? Left field accounted for 136 of the 427. Left center parked 75 of them, and dead center saw 78 of them land there. Right-center had 57 and right field had 81.

Of the six "milestone" home runs (1st, 100th, 200th, 300th, 400th and last) we've covered the first, so now on to the other five:

#100: Dodgers vs. the Reds at Riverfront Stadium on Tuesday, May 7, 1996, a ninth inning solo shot that tied the score at 1–1. Closer Jeff Brantley was on the mound and the count was 1–2. It was the 422nd game of his major league career. Although Piazza's shot tied the game, Cincinnati would come back in the bottom of the 12th to win the game, 3–2.

#200: Mets vs. the Astros at the Astrodome on Wednesday, September 16, 1998, a ninth inning shot with two men on and New York losing 2–0. Billy Wagner was tossing for Houston and the count was 2–2 when Mike sent the ball to deep right-center field in his 832nd career game. The Mets would go on to win the game, 4–3.

#300: Mets vs. the Red Sox in an interleague game, Piazza's 1,195th major league game, at Shea Stadium on Friday, July 13, 2001. Bottom of the ninth with Boston leading 3–0 with Derek Lowe on the mound. The count was 0–1 with the bases empty and Piazza parked the ball in left-center field. That was the only run that the Mets could muster and the Red Sox won the game, 3–1.

#400: Padres vs. the Diamondbacks at Petco Park on Wednesday, April 26, 2006. Bottom of the ninth with Arizona leading 3–1 and Jose Valverde on the mound. The count was even at 2–2 and Piazza sent one over the left-center wall for a solo home run. The Diamondbacks held onto their lead to win 3–2. This was Piazza's 1,718th major league game.

#427: Athletics vs. the Red Sox at Fenway Park on September 26, 2007, fifth inning with Oakland trailing 5–4 and Jon Lester on the mound. On the fifth pitch of the at-bat, with the count 1–2, he hit a hard shot to left field that tied the score. Boston would ultimately win the game, 11–6. This was Piazza's 1,909th game and the only hit that day in five at-bats. It was not his last game; he would go on to play three more against the Angels.

Table 5 details the breakdown of homers by Piazza's slot in the batting order.[14]

Table 5. Piazza Homers by Batting Order

Lineup #	HR
1	1
3	201
4	182
5	29
6	8
7	3
8	1
9	2

Piazza spread his homers across all innings with 133 of them in the top of the game (innings 1–3), the middle innings were his favorite with 167, and the late innings (7–9) saw 122. He also had five in extra innings.

He sent 91 first pitches into the stands, accounting for 21.3% of his career homer total. His worst pitch count was 3–0 where he hit only two. Table 6 shows how many homers he had in each of the 12 pitch-count situations.

Table 6. Piazza HR's by Ball/Strike Count

Balls	Strikes	HR
0	0	91
0	1	49
0	2	17
1	0	58
1	1	60
1	2	32
2	0	12
2	1	30
2	2	41
3	0	2
3	1	15
3	2	20

The number of outs on the scoreboard didn't seem to matter to Piazza as he had an almost even distribution of home runs from this perspective, 143 with no outs, 136 with one, and 148 with two. It also seems as though it didn't matter whether his team was ahead, behind or tied. He hit 155 when his teams were ahead, 115 with the score tied, and 157 when behind. In late innings (seventh or later) with his team tied or down by three runs or fewer, Piazza hit 59 (14%) of his dingers. Table 7 shows the number of home runs in each inning and the score differential (0 = score tied and minus means number of runs behind).

Table 7. Piazza HR's in Late Innings by Score

Inn	Diff	HR
7	0	2
7	-1	5
7	-2	4
7	-3	2
8	0	6
8	-1	8
8	-2	4
8	-3	5
9	0	7
9	-1	4
9	-2	6
9	-3	2
10	0	3
11	0	1

Piazza had a number of streaks in his 16-year career. He hit a home run on four consecutive days beginning June 25 through June 28, 1994. In one two-game stretch against the Phillies (August 26–27, 1995) he banged out two home runs in each game, tallying three RBIs the first day and seven the next. He had two long hitting streaks: 24 games from May 25, 1999 to June 22, 1999 with eight home runs in the mix, and 21 games from June 7, 2000 to July 3, 2000 with 10 home runs.

Mike was born September 4, 1968 in Norriston, Pennsylvania. What did he do to celebrate his birthday? In 1998 he hit a two-run shot against the Braves. In 2000 he hit a solo home run against the Reds, and in 2002 against the Marlins he hit one with a man on. Piazza hit 39 home runs in his home state, 18 in Philadelphia and 21 in Pittsburgh, not counting the one in the 1996 All Star Game at Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia.

There is a myth that if one plays long enough, one is bound to break a home-run record of some type. A simple ratio dispels this myth: career plate appearances per home run (PA/HR). Piazza leads all catchers in this category as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Catcher Career PA per HR

Catcher	HR	PA/HR
Mike Piazza	427	18.14
Roy Campanella (HOF)	242	19.90
Todd Hundley	202	21.31
Javy Lopez	260	22.28
Johnny Bench (HOF)	389	22.30
Yogi Berra (HOF)	358	23.35
Mickey Tettleton	245	23.45
Lance Parrish	324	24.06
Jorge Posada	275	26.00
Carlton Fisk (HOF)	376	26.20
Gene Tenace	201	27.50
Gary Carter (HOF)	324	27.84
Jason Varitek	193	30.25
Gabby Hartnett (HOF)	236	30.92
Ernie Lombardi (HOF)	190	33.43
Bill Freehan	200	34.50
Joe Torre	252	34.93
Bill Dickey (HOF)	202	34.97
Ted Simmons	248	39.05

Table 9 lists a few select players of the 50 with over 400 home runs and shows the company that Piazza keeps in the PA/HR category. Through 2011 Pizza ranked 15th all-time.[15]

Table 9. Career Ranking (PA/HR) for Select Players

Rank	Player	PA	HR	PA/HR
5	Barry Bonds	12606	762	16.54
15	Mike Piazza	7745	427	18.14
18	Hank Aaron	13941	755	18.46
19	Mickey Mantle	9907	536	18.48
21	Ted Williams	9788	521	18.79
22	Willie Mays	12496	660	18.93
29	Lou Gehrig	9663	493	19.60
32	Reggie Jackson	11418	563	20.28
45	Stan Musial	12717	475	26.77
46	Cal Ripken	12883	431	29.89

The 427 home runs during his 1,912 regular-season games were not the only ones. He had one in the Division Series, three in the League Championship Series, and two in World Series competition. On top of that he had two homers in All-Star Game action.[16]

The question is, "Are 427 career home runs enough to be elected into the Hall of Fame?" Piazza's stats were so impressive 1993–2002 that many adherents of the game couldn't comprehend how impressive he was. The decade from his debut to the start of his physical decline comprise 10 offensive years by a catcher never seen before. He had 10 consecutive years

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Piazza in his home run trot, one of 220 he made for the Mets.

with an OPS over 900. Hall-of-Famer Mickey Cochrane only had six such years; Bill Dickey, Carlton Fisk, and Gabby Hartnett had five each.

A "300–400–500" season (with a batting average of .300+, an on-base percentage of .400+, and a slugging average of .500+) is a benchmark of outstanding offense. Bill Dickey had four such seasons, Gabby Hartnett, four. Mike Piazza is tied with Mickey Cochrane with three 300–400–500 seasons.

Using Bill James' Win Shares (WS) as a measure and counting the number of seasons with 20 or more WS, Piazza had nine years tied with Gary Carter, Mickey Cochrane, and Bill Dickey. Only Yogi Berra (11) and Johnny Bench (10) had more 20+ WS seasons. Piazza holds the single-season WS record for catchers, with 39 in 1997. Berra's high was 34 in 1954 (one of his three MVP years); Campanella had 33 twice (1951 and 1953, both MVP years).[17]

Piazza should have been MVP in 1997 with a .362/.431/.638 line while playing for the Dodgers in a stadium that depressed offense by seven percent.

The winner that year was Larry Walker, playing for the Rockies in Coors Field, a park that inflated offense by 20 percent. This was the second time that Piazza finished second in the MVP voting (in 1996 he was runner-up to Ken Caminiti).

Although a batter really doesn't have much control over RBIs, Piazza has the second longest streak with 15 consecutive games with at least one RBI (2000 Mets); the record is held by Ray Grimes (1922 Cubs) with 17 straight games.[18]

Whatever one could say about this 62nd-round pick (1,390th player taken overall) of the 1988 amateur draft with his 34.5-inch, 31.6-ounce bat, he is baseball's greatest home run-hitting catcher.[19] Not only did he launch warheads, but he brought something special to the game. His game-winning home run against the Braves in the first sporting event held in New York after 9/11 lifted the morale of the city, if not the country. His smile, mustache, and mullet will likely be immortalized in bronze in Cooperstown in 2013.[20] ■

Author's Note: Supplemental Material can be found online at http://sabr.org/node/25744.

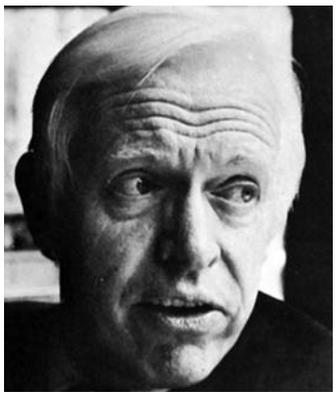
Notes

1. All game details obtained from Retrosheet and the author's own databases.
2. All "home run, only while catching"data provided by SABR member David Vincent.
3. Non-catcher home run data from Baseball-Reference.com and Sean Lahman's downloadable database.
4. Position-related home run data provided by SABR member David Vincent.
5. Wayne Coffey, "Hometown Hero Mets's Piazza Has Become Favorite Son of Phoenixville, PA," *New York Daily News*, June 7, 1998.
6. Maryann Hudon, "Coming Into His Own: Mike Piazza Isn't Really Lasorda's Godson, but He Has Become a Real Big Leaguer," *Los Angeles Times*, May 23, 1993.
7. Jason Diamon,"Piazza Has Valentine Dreaming of October," *The New York Times*, February 22, 1999.
8. "Piazza goes off market," *USA Today* (AP), January 30, 2005.
9. Grand slam information provided by SABR member David Vincent
10. Retrosheet.org
11. David Vincent, *Home Run's Most Wanted* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, Inc., 2009).
12. Ibid.
13. Baseball-Reference.com
14. A table listing all 427 of Piazza's home runs with pertinent fields is shown at the appendix to this article on SABR.org.
15. Data and ranking extracted from Baseball-Reference.com for all 50 players with career home runs over 400.
16. Postseason data obtained from MLB.com.
17. Bill James, *Win Shares*, (Northbrook, IL: Stats, Inc., 2002); Bill James, *Bill James Handbook*, 2002–2012 editions ((Northbrook, IL: Stats, Inc., 2002–2012).
18. Baseball-Reference.com
19. Amateur draft data obtained from MLB.com.
20. Thanks and gratitude to Cliff Blau for his fact-checking expertise and labors.

IN NOVEMBER 2009, SABR established the Henry Chadwick Award, intended to honor the game's great researchers—historians, statisticians, analysts, and archivists—for their invaluable contributions to making baseball the game that links America's present with its past.

Apart from honoring individuals for the length and breadth of their contribution to the study and enjoyment of baseball, the Chadwick Award educates SABR members and the greater baseball community about sometimes little-known but vastly important contributions from the game's past and thus encourage the next generation of researchers.

The roster of the previous fifteen Chadwick honorees includes researchers from the past and present and the current class is no different. Some are our colleagues, others our predecessors. All have contributed greatly to the field. This year we add five names to the ranks, and present their biographies, written by SABR members, here.



ROBERT CREAMER

by Dan Levitt

ROBERT CREAMER (1922–2012) wrote the first truly modern biography of an American sports personality. Roger Angell called *Babe: The Legend Comes to Life*, "perhaps the best portrait yet struck of an American sports hero." In his meticulous research, Creamer uncovered and fleshed out many of the Babe's more unsavory moments, and he did not shy away from including them in all their sordid detail. But the book was not an exposé; it was a full characterization of one of America's best known and most beloved heroes, fully capturing Ruth's humor, generosity, insecurities, and sophisticated sense of his own place in America.

Born in Bronxville, New York, Creamer grew up in nearby Tuckahoe and realized at a young age that he loved writing. "I found out when I was quite young that writing was something I could do," Creamer told interviewer Graham Womack just months before his death. "Other kids could do things well that I couldn't do well, like whistling through your teeth or shooting marbles or drawing pictures or singing in harmony or doing push-ups…But I could write."

After leaving the service after World War II, Creamer spent several years as an advertising copywriter and encyclopedia editor. When *Sports Illustrated* announced it was coming on the scene in 1954, Creamer, a big sports fan, jumped at the chance to sign on as a sportswriter, joining the magazine's staff several months prior to the first issue in August. Creamer spent over 30 years at *Sports Illustrated* and was a senior editor when he retired in 1985, although he remained active in his sports writing for the magazine and elsewhere.

A decade after the release of his Ruth biography, in 1984 Creamer came out with a second highly acclaimed biography. In *Stengel: His Life and Times* Creamer captured another American sports icon who, as Jonathan Yardley remarked in his review, "was an enormously funny man, but he was also a shrewd student of baseball and human nature…It's a life precisely suited to the talents of Robert Creamer." Yardley concluded that Creamer's "biography of Babe Ruth is the best ever written about an American sports figure. Now it can be said that Creamer has written the two best American sports biographies."

Creamer also wrote a couple of other well-received books: *Baseball in '41* and *Season of Glory: The Amazing Saga of the 1961 New York Yankees*, written with manager Ralph Houk. He further collaborated with several baseball personalities on autobiographies and memoirs, notably Jocko Conlon, Red Barber, and Mickey Mantle.

Creamer was known for his generosity and support of other authors and writers. *Sports Illustrated*'s Jack McCallum recently recalled Creamer's assistance and encouragement in his pursuit of a job at the magazine. In my own correspondence with Creamer relating to my biography of Ed Barrow, he was always enthusiastic and supportive in his responses. Despite the fact that it had been a long time since he had researched Ruth's life, Creamer took the time to respond and point me in a couple of potentially helpful directions, and regretted he couldn't do more: "I wish it were 35 years ago; I could have helped then. Time, you thief…" ■

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TOM HEITZ

by Steve Gietschier

Tom Heitz (b. 1940), lawyer, librarian, town ball enthusiast, and friend to hundreds of baseball researchers, ran the library at the Baseball Hall of Fame from 1983 to 1995. During that time, he oversaw a construction project that transformed an old-fashioned library into a modern research institution. "Up to that point," he told Rafael Alvarez of the *Baltimore Sun* in 1994, "it was a private hunting preserve for scholars and the privileged. The standard was that you had to be a serious researcher to get into our files, but who can tell that by looking at someone?" Heitz's changes opened the library to everyone. "We don't care how serious or whimsical you are, whether you're doing your dissertation or looking up Uncle Charlie's batting average when he was in the Piedmont League," he said. For this revolution, SABR members will be forever grateful.

Heitz was born in Kansas City. He played baseball as a child, but also tried to master the violin. "I had to practice my scales for three to four hours before I could play baseball, and my violin instructor was in some anxiety over my baseball career," he recalled. "He didn't have to worry. I was too near-sighted to be a hitter."

Heitz gave some thought to becoming a law professor like his father, but his goals changed when he joined the Marines in 1966. After his discharge, he attended library school at the University of Washington and worked as an assistant law librarian at the University of Puget Sound. He applied for the job at Cooperstown while working as a law librarian for the attorney general of the state of New York. Officials at the Hall of Fame "appreciated the fact that I was a fan, but you don't have to love your subject to do a good job," he said.

Heitz did love his subject, of course, and he quickly became recognized as an expert on baseball, its history, and its rules. While the contributions of librarians and archivists to scholarship often remain behind the scenes, such people occasionally let their scholarly lights shine, as Heitz did in compiling the monumental rules chronology, "Rules and Scoring," first published in the first edition of *Total Baseball*. (Later editions also acknowledge Dennis Bingham.)

Moreover, he promoted playing town ball, thereby at least indirectly encouraging the growth of the vintage baseball movement. Heitz helped organize the Leatherstocking Club that played town ball every weekend at Cooperstown's Farmers' Museum for more than a decade, and for many years he organized the town ball game at the Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture. This conference, which he co-founded as baseball's first annual academic symposium, will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2013.

The library's expansion, completed in 1993 at a cost of six million dollars, increased the facility's square footage from 7,000 to 29,000. It provided archival storage for the collection, adding temperature and humidity control, proper lighting, and enhanced security. The construction also created an interior connection between the library and the museum, a boon to visitors and scholars. The new Bullpen Theater became a space for movies, talks, book signings, and other events. Heitz hired additional professional librarians, and he began a preservation program to care for the Hall's documents. Under his leadership, the library expanded the scope of its collection beyond what earlier generations had envisioned.

Simultaneously, Heitz was a member of the North American Sports Library Network (NASLIN) and SABR. With Bob Davids and Steve Gietschier, he sat on the inaugural committee to decide the Macmillan-SABR Baseball Research Awards from 1987 to 1995, at which time he helped reconstruct the research awards program, redefining the Macmillan Award and creating the Seymour Medal and the Sporting News-SABR Baseball Research Award. ■

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F.C. LANE

by Rob Neyer

Ferdinand Cole Lane's (1885–84) professional career was, to say the very least, unorthodox. After spending most of his childhood on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, "F.C." performed a "variety of odd jobs" while attending Boston University—next door to Braves Field, and just a few "T" stops away from Fenway Park—first as an undergraduate, and later as a graduate student. During the latter years, he also worked part-time as an assistant biologist for the Massachusetts Commission of Fisheries and Game.

What might we expect from a bright young man with that sort of educational and professional history? Probably not a few decades as the editor of *Baseball Magazine*…yet that's exactly what happened, and quickly.

While Lane was working as a biologist, he was diagnosed with "weak lungs" and embarked for a therapeutic stay in Alberta, Canada. After "six months in a log cabin on the remote frontier," Lane returned to Boston and found a job with *Baseball Magazine*.

Lane arrived in 1910 or '11, just two or three years after the monthly magazine had been established. Within roughly a year—beginning with the January 1912 issue—Lane had taken over as editor, a position he would hold for twenty-six years. During those twenty-six years, Lane's writing and editing turned *Baseball Magazine* into both a successful business enterprise and a treasure trove for future baseball researchers and writers.

In 1937, Lane gave up his *Baseball Magazine* post. In 1955, he wrote, "While I loved the thrill of the game and prized the many interesting characters I was able to meet, sportswriting was always a vocation, never an avocation." He returned to Cape Cod, his boyhood home, and lived for nearly five more decades, traveling widely and writing a number of books—none of them remotely related to baseball—before his retirement.

Of course, if Ferdinand Lane had done nothing but edit *Baseball Magazine* for more than a quarter of a century, anyone interested in those years would owe him a huge debt of gratitude. But Lane was so much more than an editor. He also was an extraordinary journalist and a sort of proto-sabermetrician.

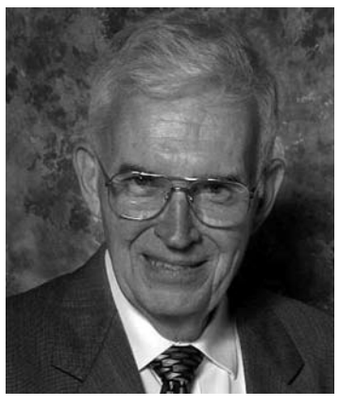
Instead of spending all his days in New York—the magazine moved there from Boston shortly into Lane's tenure—he regularly visited the game's top players at their offseason homes, and penned long profiles of Deadball Era stars like Sam Crawford, Eddie Collins, Jake Daubert, and Grover Cleveland Alexander (or "Dode," as Alexander's family and friends back home in Nebraska called him).

It's Lane's biographical research that we find most useful today. But while his statistical wonderings probably had little impact in their time—the sporting world just doesn't seem to have been interested in any but the already traditional statistics—Lane surely deserves some credit for his originality and his prescience. To wit, all the way back in 1916, Lane penned an article titled "Why the System of Batting Average Should Be Changed" … and, even more extraordinary, subtitled "Statistics Lie at the Foundation of Baseball Popularity—Batting Records Are the Favorite—And Yet Batting Records Are Unnecessarily Inaccurate." And within the article, Lane essentially invented something akin to Pete Palmer's Linear Weights and Bill James's Runs Created; for example, according to Lane's calculations, a triple was worth 0.90 run, a home run 1.16 runs.

Near the end of his long article, Lane expressed hope that with earned-run average recently having been introduced to the masses, a sophisticated method of measuring a hitter's production would soon take its place in the statistical pantheon.

Lane lived for nearly 70 more years, long enough to read both Bill James and Pete Palmer's work in popular books. But we have no indication that Lane took any special interest in baseball during the last few decades of his long life.

Not that we can hold that lack of interest against him. During those 25-odd years when Lane was interested in baseball—however professionally—he gave us more than nearly any other editor or writer has given us in a lifetime. ■



COURTESY OF RAY NEMEC

RAY NEMEC

by Mark Armour

At the time of SABR's founding, **Ray Nemec** (b. 1929) had already spent 30 years tracking minor league statistics and box scores, often traveling throughout the Midwest to do so. Longtime Hall of Fame historian Lee Allen once called him "the foremost authority on minor league players." So it was only natural that he would be one of the first people Bob Davids contacted about his idea of forming a society, and that Nemec was on hand in Cooperstown for SABR's first meeting on August 10, 1971. He soon became the first chairman of SABR's Minor Leagues Research Committee, and he has been one of SABR's most valued and productive researchers ever since.

Nemec was born in Chicago on June 19, 1929, which happened to be Lou Gehrig's 26th birthday. The doctor who delivered Nemec, apparently a Gehrig fan, declared the new baby "a future ballplayer." Nemec never reached the major leagues, but the natural lefthander would make his mark on the game he grew to love. He bought his first *Reach Guide* in 1939, which served to hook him for life. He began reading *The Sporting News* in 1940 and a year later was compiling statistics for minor league teams in lower classifications. He kept up this hobby throughout his high school years, and by 1950 had established contacts with other researchers around the country who shared his passion.

Among his new friends were Paul Frisz, Willie George, Karl Wingler, and Lee Allen, and they encouraged Nemec to continue his work on statistics for long-ago minor leagues, circuits that had not published their own year-end records. Nemec undertook such efforts as the 1915 Bi-State League (Illinois–Wisconsin) and the 1885 Western League, and it just kept going. He focused on leagues from the Midwest, allowing him to travel to nearby libraries to dig through newspapers. He told the *Chicago Tribune* in 1969: "I've been in almost every library of every town that's had a minor league team in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. I covered more than 2,000 miles compiling statistics of the 1884 Northwestern League."

As newspaper microfilm became more accessible, Nemec was able to reduce the driving and work at home with his own film reader. Allen, who worked at the Hall of Fame by the 1960s, began referring old players who wanted to know their own long ago statistics to Nemec. In exchange, the players could supply Nemec with names and other information about other minor leaguers. His files continued to grow. By this time he was supplying minor league data to *The Sporting News* for many versions of the book *Daguerreotypes of Great Stars of Baseball*.

Nemec first came to the attention of Bob Davids in 1963 when he mailed a correction to an article Davids had written for *The Sporting News*. The two men began a correspondence, and eight years later Nemec received Davids' famous call to meet in Cooperstown. SABR established the Minor Leagues Research Committee, and Nemec became its chair. In 1978 it published *Minor League Stars*, statistical records for dozens of former heroes, many of them little known even within SABR. In a way, Nemec had been working on the book for more than 30 years. Two other volumes followed, and SABR had firmly established the importance of the minor leagues to the history of baseball.

Ray married Loretta Majerczyk in 1954 and the couple raised four children. While still in high school he began working for Corn Products Company International (now Ingredion Inc.) and worked there for 45 years, involved in production planning and scheduling for such products as Mazola Corn Oil and Karo syrup. On the side, he made his mark as one of baseball's greatest researchers. ■

COURTESY OF DAVID SMITH

DAVID SMITH

by Lyle Spatz

Dave Smith had a dream when he founded Retrosheet in 1989. It was to collect play-by-play data for every game in Major League Baseball history. It seemed an impossible task and the naysayers were many, but as of 2012 more than 120,000 play-by-play accounts have been posted on Retrosheet's website. Now it seems impossible to imagine how researchers managed before what has come to be called the Retrosheet Era. "We are doing this to preserve history. We're not doing it for any other reason." Dave and his site are available to all, free of charge, and have been a go-to resource for every big league team, countless media outlets, and many thousands of baseball researchers. The Hall of Fame calls on a regular basis. Need help finding something? Dave will direct you to it, always with a kind and encouraging word. "He'd be perfectly happy to stay down in the basement for days on end, weeks on end, and come up for food occasionally," his wife Amy said.

And while answering a request from a big league team, like his beloved Dodgers, continues to give him great satisfaction—he remembers when some teams wouldn't even return his calls—equally satisfying is being able to supply an aged fan the play-by-play of the first game he saw decades ago. "Every game is someone's first game," Dave says. "The stories can be very touching. I almost want to cry reading the notes. One man was looking for a box score from his first game to frame and give to his dad for Father's Day. His father died two months later."

Alan Schwarz devotes five pages to the organization in his book *The Numbers Game: Baseball's Lifelong Fascination with Statistics*, praising Smith for both taking on the task and making sure the information would be free and accessible to the public. "In the end," Schwarz wrote, "Retrosheet has become a celebration of baseball built by fans for fans. Their sense of community and love for their favorite sport pulse through every web page."

A noted baseball historian himself, Dave has written and presented numerous papers based on his research. His work has been widely praised as a huge boon to baseball research and he has received a number of awards for his work, including The Sporting News-SABR Baseball Research Award in 2001 for his co-authorship of *The Midsummer Classic: The Complete History of Baseball's All-Star Game*, and most notably the Bob Davids Award in 2005. But Dave is more than a baseball researcher. Since 1975 he has been a professor of biology at the University of Delaware, and is director of the Department of Biological Sciences' undergraduate program. He won the university's Excellence in Teaching Award in 1977.

That Retrosheet has been such a success is attributable to the efforts of its cadre of volunteers. Dave has always been the first to acknowledge this, but as Retrosheet's secretary David Vincent has said: "He will never admit to this, but Dave is Retrosheet."

"This has all worked out ridiculously well for me," Smith says. "I never would have believed things would turn out to be this wonderful." That it has worked out so well has benefited thousands of researchers, all of whom owe a debt of gratitude to Dave Smith. ■

Contributors

MARK ARMOUR, the founder of SABR's Baseball Biography Project, writes about baseball history from his home in the Pacific Northwest.

STEPHEN D. BOREN MD, FACEP, MBA has been a member of SABR since 1979. Besides being a board-certified emergency medicine physician, he is medical director for Medicare B in eight states. He was stationed in the US army in Korea where the real *M*A*S*H* took place. In addition to multiple publications in the *Baseball Research Journal, The National Pastime, and Baseball Digest*, he has 53 medical publications. He believes that he is the only person ever to be published in *Baseball Digest*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, and the *Wall Street Journal* in a single calendar year. Contact him at sdboren@uic.edu.

STEVE GIETSCHIER is university curator and assistant professor of history at Lindenwood University, St. Charles, Missouri. He is also a former member of SABR's board of directors.

ROGER A. GODIN has been a SABR member since 1977. He is the author of *The 1922 St. Louis Browns: Best of the American League's Worst* (McFarland, 1991) as well as other articles that have appeared in the *Baseball Research Journal* and *The National Pastime*. His article, "The 1924 Junior World Series: The St. Paul Saints' Magnificent Comeback," appeared in the 2008 issue of *The National Pastime*. He works for the NHL's Minnesota Wild as team curator and lives in St. Paul, Minnesota.

BROCK HELANDER is the author of *The Rock Who's Who* (1982), *The Rock Who's Who Second Edition* (1996), *The Rockin' '50s* (1998), and *The Rockin' '60s* (1999), all published by Schirmer Books. Since joining SABR in 2002, he has been researching nineteenth century baseball, focusing on the history of baseball in cities that were represented in the major leagues exclusively in the nineteenth century. He lives in Sacramento with his wife Carol and their one-eyed cat Winky.

HERM KRABBENHOFT, a SABR member since 1981, is a retired research chemist. His baseball research has focused on ultimate grand slam home runs, leadoff batters, triple plays, the uniform numbers of Detroit Tigers, and most recently, consecutive games streaks for scoring runs and batting in runs—which requires having accurate game-by-game runs and RBI statistics—which requires correcting the runs and RBI errors in baseball's official records.

DANIEL R. LEVITT is the author of *The Battle that Forged Modern Baseball: The Federal League Challenge and Its Legacy* (Ivan R. Dee, 2012), *Ed Barrow: The Bulldog Who Built the Yankees' First Dynasty* (University of Nebraska Press, 2008), and co-author of *Paths to Glory: How Great Baseball Teams Got that Way* (Brassey's, 2003). He is also the editor of this past summer's issue of *The National Pastime* (2012) on baseball in Minnesota.

TRENT MCCOTTER is Vice Chairman of the SABR Records Committee. He is also an attorney living in Washington, DC, having previously worked for Judge Lanier Anderson on the U.S. Court of Appeals in Georgia. His research interests include hitting streaks and correcting errors in baseball's statistical records. This is his seventh article to appear in the *Baseball Research Journal*.

ANDREW PAUL MELE was born and raised in Brooklyn and retired from working at the Brooklyn Public Library in 2003. He played baseball at the Parade Ground from the late forties to the mid-sixties and is the author of *The Boys of Brooklyn: The Parade Ground, Brooklyn's Field of Dreams*. He is currently active as a baseball player with a group of septugenarians called the Old Boys of Summer, as seen in *The New York Times*.

ROB NEYER is *SB Nation*'s National Baseball Editor.

CHUCK ROSCIAM, a retired Navy captain with 43 years of active service and an amateur catcher for more than forty years, is the creator of www.baseballcatchers.com, a source for many sportswriters. His baseball writing has previously appeared in the *Baseball Research Journal* and *The National Pastime*.

BOB RUZZO is an affordable housing finance professional who lives and works in the Boston area. He is a former Massachusetts Deputy Secretary of Transportation, and is a staunch though whimsical advocate of Transit Oriented Development. He has authored a number of articles on real estate law for a variety of legal publications, but insists this does not make him categorically boring.

When not indulging his interest in (obsession with?) baseball in the 1970s, **SCOTT A. SCHLEIFSTEIN** practices promotion marketing/trademark law in New York City. As a life-long Yankees fan, Scott hastens to add that he is a fan of only the pitcher Dave Roberts.

LYLE SPATZ has been a member of SABR since 1973 and chairman of the Baseball Records Committee since 1991. His book *1921: The Yankees, the Giants and Battle for Baseball Supremacy in New York*, co-authored with Steve Steinberg, was the winner of the 2011 Seymour Medal, and his *Dixie Walker: A Life in Baseball* was the 2012 winner of the first Ron Gabriel Award. He was the chief editor for *The Team That Forever Changed Baseball and America: The 1947 Brooklyn Dodgers*, released in 2012, and *Bridging Two Dynasties, The 1947 New York Yankees*, scheduled for release in 2013.

BRYAN SODERHOLM-DIFATTE lives and works in the Washington, DC area and is devoted to the study of baseball history. His website, www.thebestbaseballteams.com, identifies the best teams of the twentieth century in each league using a structured methodological approach for analysis.

TOM THRESS is an economist who lives in Chicago with his wife and two sons. He has had baseball research published in the SABR Statistical Committee's publication *By the Numbers*.

PETER UELKES has been a SABR member since 2001. He holds a Ph.D. in Elementary Particle Physics and is currently working as a Senior Project Manager in the telco sector. Peter has considered himself a member of Red Sox Nation since 1990 and made it through the nightmare of 2003 and the redemption of 2004. He lives with his wife and their two boys in Germany, where he has to apportion his rooting interests between the Sox and his hometown soccer team, Borussia Moenchengladbach. "Starter Game Score" is Peter's third contribution to the *Baseball Research Journal*, the first one being a joint work with Ron Visco. He may be reached at peter@uelkes.com.

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