

THE Baseball Research JOURNAL

PITCHERS DIG THE LONG BALL

Major League Pitchers at the Plate

ALSO...

LOOKING AT THE NUMBERS

Hank Greenberg's American
League RBI Record

What Happened to the
Triple Crown?

Saved Runs and Fielding Shares

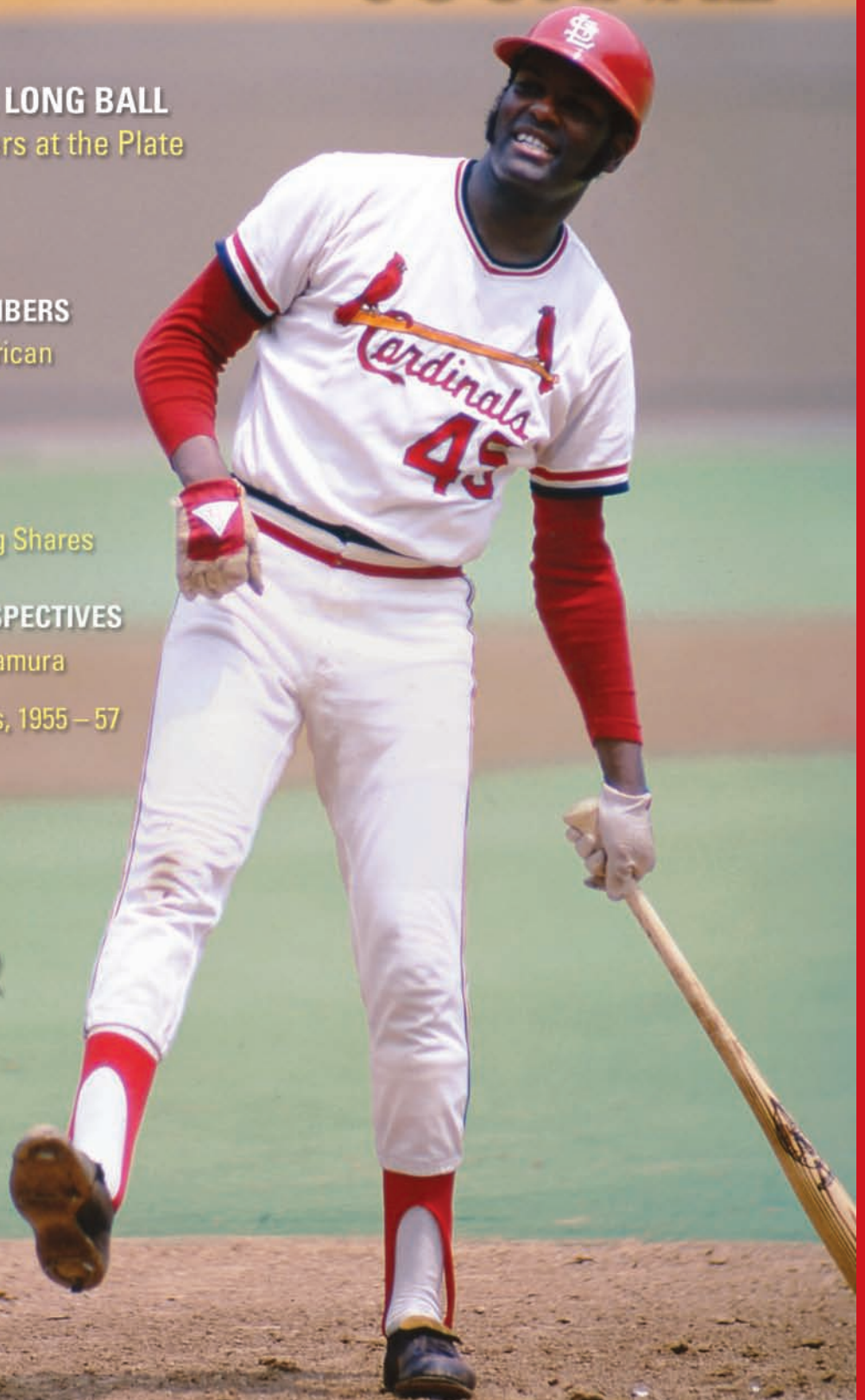
INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Babe Ruth and Eiji Sawamura

The Global World Series, 1955 – 57

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
and Baseball

Spring 2012



THE Baseball Research JOURNAL

**Volume 41
Number 1
Spring 2012**

**Published by
the Society for American Baseball Research**



THE BASEBALL RESEARCH JOURNAL, Volume 41, Number 1

Editor: Cecilia M. Tan

Design and Production: Lisa Hochstein

Cover Design: Lisa Hochstein

Fact Checker: Clifford Blau

Front cover: Bob Gibson, July 1, 1973. Photo by St. Louis Cardinals, LLC/Getty Images.

Published by:

The Society for American Baseball Research, Inc.

4455 E. Camelback Road, Ste. D-140

Phoenix, AZ 85018

Phone: (800) 969-7227 or (602) 343-6455

Fax: (602) 595-5690

Web: www.sabr.org

Twitter: @sabr

Facebook: Society for American Baseball Research

Copyright © 2012 by The Society for American Baseball Research

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-1-933599-32-8

All rights reserved.

Reproduction in whole or part without permission is prohibited.

Contents

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|-----|
| Note from the Editor | Cecilia M. Tan | 5 |
| <u>RECORDS, NUMBERS, AND ANALYSIS</u> | | |
| Pitchers Dig the Long Ball (At Least When They Are Hitting) | David Vincent | 7 |
| The Bible and the Apocrypha: Saved Runs and Fielding Shares | Jon Bruschke | 12 |
| Hank Greenberg's American League RBI Record | Herm Krabbenhoft | 20 |
| Are Baseball Players Superior to Umpires in Discriminating Balls from Strikes? | Christoph Kreinbucher | 28 |
| Breaking Balls with a Runner on Third <i>A Game Theoretical Analysis of Optimal Behavior</i> | William Spaniel | 32 |
| <u>MAJOR LEAGUERS AND THE MINORS</u> | | |
| Johnny Vander Meer's Third No-Hitter | Ernest J. Green | 37 |
| "Sparky" | Steve Ames | 42 |
| Pop Kelchner, Gentleman Jake, The Giant-Killer, and the Kane Mountaineers | Ed Rose | 46 |
| <u>INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES</u> | | |
| American Women Play Hardball in Venezuela | Jennifer Ring | 53 |
| Global World Series, 1955–1957 | Bob Buege | 57 |
| Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Baseball | Frank Ardolino | 67 |
| Babe Ruth and Eiji Sawamura | Robert K. Fitts | 70 |
| <u>BIG LEAGUE MOMENTS</u> | | |
| 1906 Cleveland Naps, Deadball Era Underachiever | Rod Caborn and Dave Larson | 78 |
| One Trade, Three Teams, and Reversal of Fortune | Sol Gittleman | 86 |
| Expos Get First Franchise No-Hitter Right Out of the Gate | Norm King | 90 |
| <u>BOOKS</u> | | |
| Whatever Happened to the Triple Crown? <i>Excerpt from The Runmakers: A New Way to Rate Baseball Players</i> | Frederick E. Taylor | 93 |
| Book Review: <i>The Most Famous Woman in Baseball</i> | Mike Cook | 97 |
| Contributors | | 100 |

Note from the Editor

Happy baseball season, everyone. Herewith, a new baseball season and a new issue of the *Baseball Research Journal*. In SABR, there really is no offseason. Our offices are as busy as any general manager's in the winter, as we've got year-round work with publications, conference planning, membership services, website updates, award announcements, and more. SABR Day, the annual mid-winter occasion on which SABR chapters around the globe all hold events, tallied 34 meetings and outings. The Seymour medal went to longtime SABR member Glenn Stout. The first ever SABR Analytics conference was held in Arizona in March, sponsored by MLB and Bloomberg Sports and featuring talks and presentations by front office execs of no fewer than six big league teams and scores of our community's top analysts and writers. It was a busy winter.

Many SABR members, too, do not hibernate, but buckle down on their research while the ritual of following live games is not eating up three or more hours of their time every day, as it may in mid-summer. The fruits of their labor, and that of the editor(s), peer reviewers, interns, proofreaders, designers, and fact-checkers who work on the *BRJ* team, are presented here. We often think of research as a solitary pursuit—with a perhaps romanticized view of the library sleuth or number-crunching analyst—but as the thanks and acknowledgments in these papers so often prove, it is a team effort.

Some of the papers presented here are the culmination of years of painstaking investigations, like Herm Krabbenhoft's efforts to present full and correct data on RBI totals for Hank Greenberg, while others are preliminary studies that one hopes will spur further research, like Christoph Kreinbucher's study of differences in strike-zone recognition ability between players and umpires. I have been surprised to see relatively little dialogue between the field of game theory and baseball strategy, and I hope William Spaniel's game-theoretical investigation of a well-known game situation might contribute to that conversation. Some writers shine a light on well-known topics like Steve Ames on Sparky Anderson and Sol Gittleman on the Joe Gordon-Allie Reynolds trade, while others reach the less visited corners of the baseball world, like Kane, Pennsylvania, and even our recent, but less heralded past, as in Jennifer Ring's account of the 2010 Women's World Cup in Venezuela. And these are just some of the articles in this issue.

It's all baseball. Major leagues, minor leagues, international, amateur, professional, college—just as players have something to learn at every level, I believe researchers do, too. Each league or era or region we focus on gives us a different angle from which to see the same thing: baseball. The more perspectives, the better our understanding. That goes for authors and researchers as well. Every SABR member can submit a paper for consideration, and I urge you to do so if you haven't before. The more eyes look at the game, the better we can all see it. Contributors to this volume range from school age to retired, from college professors to amateur hobbyists. All share a passion for this game.

Play ball!

—Cecilia M. Tan



Pitchers Dig the Long Ball

(At Least When They Are Hitting)

David Vincent

In 1999 there was a shoe company advertising campaign that featured the slogan: “Chicks dig the long ball.” The ad starred two Cy Young Award-winning pitchers who definitely did not dig the long balls hit by their opponents. However, most baseball players, when batting, do dig hitting home runs. This article will look at some of the most proficient home run-hitting pitchers in the major leagues and some of their accomplishments.

There have been many pitchers who also excelled with the bat, hurlers who could help their team with the stick as well as with their arm. Table 1 shows the career leaders for home runs hit by pitchers.¹ Wes Ferrell pitched in the majors from 1927 through 1941, a period of high-octane offense. Ferrell fit into that period well by hitting 38 four-baggers in his career, including a pinch hit homer in 1935.² The active career leader is Carlos Zambrano with 23 home runs and no other active pitcher has 15 or more home runs in his career.

Table 1. Most Career Home Runs Hit by a Pitcher

| Player | HR |
|--------------|----|
| Wes Ferrell | 37 |
| Bob Lemon | 35 |
| Warren Spahn | 35 |
| Red Ruffing | 34 |
| Earl Wilson | 33 |

Ferrell is also the record-holder for most home runs hit by a pitcher in one season. In 1931, he smacked nine dingers, including two in one game on August 31 in Chicago. Ferrell hit seven homers as a pitcher in 1933, which ties him with six other hurlers for second place on the single-season list. See Table 2 for the top one-season performances by pitchers.

Many of these hard-hitting pitchers also spent time playing other positions on the field. Ferrell played 13 games in left field for the Indians in 1933 but hit no homers in those games. Bob Lemon, tied with Warren Spahn with 35 homers as a pitcher, played in the outfield and at third base in his career. Lemon hit two pinch-hit homers in addition to his swats as a pitcher and hit seven four-baggers in 1949. Spahn hit all 35 of

his long balls as a pitcher but never hit more than four in one season.

Table 2. Most Home Runs in One Season by a Pitcher

| Player | Year | HR |
|---------------|------|----|
| Wes Ferrell | 1931 | 9 |
| Don Drysdale | 1958 | 7 |
| Don Drysdale | 1965 | 7 |
| Wes Ferrell | 1933 | 7 |
| Bob Lemon | 1949 | 7 |
| Don Newcombe | 1955 | 7 |
| Jack Stivetts | 1890 | 7 |
| Earl Wilson | 1968 | 7 |
| Mike Hampton | 2001 | 7 |

One of the most exciting plays in baseball is the game-ending home run. Only 33 times in big league history has the slugger who hit that game-ender been a pitcher, with the last occurrence on April 25, 1986. Craig Lefferts, who entered that game for the Padres in the eleventh inning, pitched two frames against the Giants, surrendering a run in the twelfth. In the bottom of that inning, Graig Nettles led off with a home run to tie the game. One out later, Lefferts hit a solo shot off Greg Minton to win the contest. Only two pitchers have ended more than one game with a

Wes Ferrell pitched in the majors from 1927 through 1941 and hit 38 four-baggers in his career.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

homer, Wes Ferrell and Kirby Higbe. Table 3 shows all pitchers who have ended a game with a home run.

Table 3. Pitchers Who Ended a Game with a Homer

| Player | Game Date |
|----------------|------------|
| Monte Ward | 05/02/1883 |
| Jack Stivetts | 06/10/1890 |
| John Clarkson | 09/18/1893 |
| Jouett Meekin | 09/06/1894 |
| Jack Powell | 08/01/1899 |
| John Malarkey | 09/11/1902 |
| Chick Fraser | 06/16/1903 |
| Jack Quinn | 04/21/1914 |
| Ferdie Schupp | 09/11/1919 |
| Pete Alexander | 05/31/1920 |
| Leon Cadore | 08/05/1922 |
| Jack Bentley | 08/29/1925 |
| Red Ruffing | 04/14/1933 |
| Wes Ferrell | 08/22/1934 |
| Wes Ferrell | 07/22/1935 |
| Dizzy Dean | 08/06/1935 |
| Jack Wilson | 09/02/1935 |
| Dizzy Trout | 05/30/1944 |
| Jim Tobin | 08/12/1945 |
| Claude Passeau | 06/07/1946 |
| Kirby Higbe | 09/11/1947 |
| Harry Gumbert | 08/23/1948 |
| Kirby Higbe | 08/27/1948 |
| Lou Sleater | 05/30/1957 |
| Bob Grim | 09/05/1957 |
| Dixie Howell | 09/06/1957 |
| Murry Dickson | 05/26/1958 |
| Glen Hobbie | 08/25/1960 |
| Lindy McDaniel | 06/06/1963 |
| Juan Marichal | 09/21/1966 |
| Steve Hargan | 06/19/1967 |
| Jim Hardin | 05/10/1969 |
| Craig Lefferts | 04/25/1986 |

At Braves Field in Boston on May 13, 1942, knuckleballer Jim Tobin pitched a complete-game victory over the Cubs, winning the contest, 6–5. Tobin led off the fifth and seventh innings with solo homers and the two clubs were tied, 4–4, when Tobin walked to the plate in the eighth inning with teammate Paul Waner on first base. Tobin proceeded to hit his third dinger of the day to give his squad the game’s winning margin. The previous day, Tobin had hit a two-run pinch homer in a losing cause for the Braves. Thus, Tobin hit four home runs in five plate appearances over two days. The only other pitcher to hit three four-baggers in one contest is Guy Hecker, who performed the feat

on August 15, 1886. All three home runs by Hecker were inside the park.

Many pitchers have hit two home runs in one game. The last to do so was Micah Owings of the Diamondbacks on August 18, 2007. He hit the two homers as part of a four-hit, six-RBI day in Atlanta. Wes Ferrell had five multi-homer games in his career, while Don Newcombe performed the feat three times.

The American League adopted the designated hitter rule in 1973. Consequently, pitchers did not bat except in extraordinary situations from that season until the start of Interleague play in 1997, and no American League pitcher homered from 1973 through 1996. The last pitcher to hit a homer in the Junior Circuit before the start of the DH Era was rookie Roric Harrison, who hit one for the Orioles in Cleveland on October 3, 1972. This was the last game of the season and Harrison’s four-bagger helped earn the win for the Birds.

Table 4 shows all the American League hurlers who have hit a home run since 1973. Two pitchers, CC Sabathia and Josh Beckett, have each hit two home runs in his American League career. Sabathia hit both of his while playing for the Indians, one in Cincinnati and one in Los Angeles. Beckett has hit two for the Red Sox, going deep twice in Philadelphia. Ten of 14 AL teams are represented on the list, with the Indians accounting for five of the 17 instances. The teams with no homers by pitchers are the Angels, the Athletics, the Twins, and the Yankees. The fact that the Bronx Bombers have no homers on this list is interesting, especially considering the fact that CC Sabathia has pitched for the team for three years.

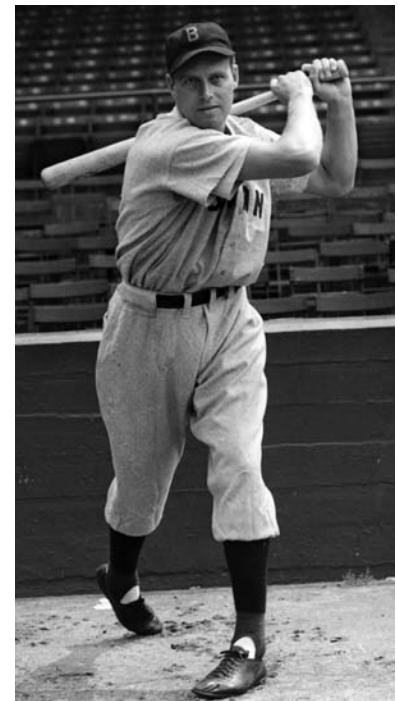
Table 4. AL Pitchers Who Have Hit a Home Run Since 1973

| Game Date | Player | Team |
|------------|------------------|------|
| 06/30/1997 | Bobby Witt | TEX |
| 06/07/1998 | Dave Burba | CLE |
| 06/11/1999 | Dwight Gooden | CLE |
| 06/04/2000 | Esteban Yan | TBA |
| 06/21/2003 | Mark Hendrickson | TOR |
| 06/20/2004 | Jason Davis | CLE |
| 05/21/2005 | CC Sabathia | CLE |
| 06/08/2005 | Jason Johnson | DET |
| 06/10/2005 | Zack Greinke | KCA |
| 05/20/2006 | Josh Beckett | BOS |
| 06/17/2006 | Kris Benson | BAL |
| 06/18/2006 | Jon Garland | CHA |
| 06/21/2008 | CC Sabathia | CLE |
| 06/23/2008 | Felix Hernandez | SEA |
| 06/14/2009 | Josh Beckett | BOS |
| 06/14/2009 | Mark Buehrle | CHA |
| 07/03/2011 | Zachary Britton | BAL |

The Reds hosted the Phillies on June 23, 1971, at Riverfront Stadium. The mound match-up that night was Ross Grimsley for the home team and Rick Wise for the visitors. After four innings, the Phillies led, 1–0. In the top of the fifth, Wise hit a two-run homer to left field to extend the lead. Grimsley was removed for a pinch-hitter in the sixth and replaced by Clay Carroll on the mound. Wise led off the top of the eighth with another homer to left field. The two home runs by Rick Wise made this a special game for the hurler. However, he did not forget about his pitching because of his batting feat. Wise pitched a no-hitter against the Reds, allowing only one runner to reach base on a sixth-inning walk to Dave Concepcion. Wise is the only pitcher to hit two home runs and pitch a no-hitter in the same game. Four hurlers have thrown a no-hitter and smacked one homer: Frank Mountain (June 5, 1884), Wes Ferrell (April 29, 1931), Jim Tobin (April 27, 1944), and Earl Wilson (June 26, 1962).

The name Jim Tobin has been mentioned a few times already in this article. He smashed 16 homers as a pitcher and one more as a pinch-hitter in his career. In 1945, his last in the majors, he pitched in 27 games for the Braves before being sold to the Tigers for \$15,000 on August 9. He had hit three homers for the Boston National League team and proceeded to hit two more for the Detroit American League squad in the 14 games he pitched. By doing so, Tobin became the first hurler to hit homers in both the National and American Leagues in one season. His feat was repeated by Earl Wilson in 1970. This long-time American Leaguer started the year with Detroit, hitting a home run on June 20. After being sold to the Padres on July 15, Wilson hit his last career homer on September 9. Wilson hit 35 home runs in his career, 33 as a pitcher and two while pinch-hitting; all but one came in the American League. The third pitcher to homer in both leagues in one season is CC Sabathia, who performed the feat in 2008. Sabathia started the year pitching for the Indians and hit a home run in an Interleague game in Los Angeles. After being traded to the Brewers for four players on July 7, Sabathia hit a four-bagger in his second start for the Brew Crew on July 13.

Dave Eiland pitched in 92 big league games in 10 seasons, spending most of his time in the American League. He made his major league debut on August 3, 1988, pitching for the Yankees in Milwaukee. The first batter he faced, Paul Molitor, hit a home run over the center field fence. Eiland is one of 95 pitchers to surrender a home run to the first batter he faced in the majors. After pitching parts of four seasons with the Yankees, Eiland was released and signed by the Padres



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Ferrell is one of five pitchers to have hurled a no-hitter and smacked at least one home run during the game.

in January 1992. Eiland had never batted in the American League but he hit for the circuit in his first game in the Senior Circuit. His first at-bat of the game and his career was against Bob Ojeda of the Dodgers in San Diego on April 10, 1992, and he smashed a line drive home run over the left-center field wall to give his team a 3-1 lead at the time. Eiland is the only player in history to both hit a homer in his first at-bat and surrender one to his first batter faced.

Warren Spahn hit 35 home runs in his 21-year Hall of Fame career. These came in 17 different seasons, the most seasons in which any pitcher has hit at least one home run. Walter Johnson hit 24 home runs in 16 different seasons for the Washington Nationals, while Red Ruffing hit 34 as a pitcher in 16 seasons for the Red Sox and Yankees. Table 5 shows the pitchers who homered in the most seasons.

Table 5. Most Years Homering as a Pitcher

| Player | Years |
|----------------|-------|
| Warren Spahn | 17 |
| Walter Johnson | 16 |
| Red Ruffing | 16 |
| Cy Young | 13 |
| Bob Lemon | 12 |
| Milt Pappas | 12 |
| Jim Kaat | 11 |
| Al Orth | 11 |
| Schoolboy Rowe | 11 |
| Dizzy Trout | 11 |
| Early Wynn | 11 |

Pitchers have hit 15 home runs in the World Series, with Bob Gibson and Dave McNally each hitting two. One of McNally's blasts, on October 13, 1970, was a grand slam for the Orioles. He is the only pitcher in Series history to hit one with the bases loaded. Ten days earlier, McNally's teammate Mike Cuellar hit a grand slam in the League Championship Series. They are the only hurlers to hit slams in the postseason. Mickey Lolich hit a four-bagger off Nelson Briles in the 1968 World Series, which was his only career home run. Joe Blanton hit his only career home run off Edwin Jackson in the 2008 World Series and Don Gullett hit his only career home run off Larry Demery in the 1975 NLCS. See Tables 6 and 7 for lists of postseason homers by pitchers. A pitcher has never hit a home run in the League Division Series nor in an All-Star Game.

Table 6. Pitchers Homering in the World Series

| Player | Team | Game Date |
|---------------|--------|------------|
| Jim Bagby | CLE AL | 10/10/1920 |
| Rosy Ryan | NY NL | 10/06/1924 |
| Jack Bentley | NY NL | 10/08/1924 |
| Jesse Haines | SL NL | 10/05/1926 |
| Bucky Walters | CIN NL | 10/07/1940 |
| Lew Burdette | MIL NL | 10/02/1958 |
| Mudcat Grant | MIN AL | 10/13/1965 |
| Jose Santiago | BOS AL | 10/04/1967 |
| Bob Gibson | SL NL | 10/12/1967 |
| Mickey Lolich | DET AL | 10/03/1968 |
| Bob Gibson | SL NL | 10/06/1968 |
| Dave McNally | BAL AL | 10/16/1969 |
| Dave McNally | BAL AL | 10/13/1970 |
| Ken Holtzman | OAK AL | 10/16/1974 |
| Joe Blanton | PHI NL | 10/26/2008 |

Table 7. Pitchers Homering in the LCS

| Player | Team | Game Date |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| Mike Cuellar | BAL AL | 10/03/1970 |
| Don Gullett | CIN NL | 10/04/1975 |
| Steve Carlton | PHI NL | 10/06/1978 |
| Rick Sutcliffe | CH NL | 10/02/1984 |
| Kerry Wood | CH NL | 10/15/2003 |
| Jeff Suppan | SL NL | 10/14/2006 |

Hitting a home run to win a 1-0 ballgame is a special event. Of the many times this has happened in the majors, a pitcher performed the feat 13 times. Table 8 is the list of pitchers who have hit a home run to win a 1-0 game. Seeing Red Ruffing (36 career home runs) or Milt Pappas (20) on this list is not surprising. However, Harry McCormick and Odalis Perez each hit his only career homer in a 1-0 contest, while Gene Packard

and Bob Welch only hit two career four-baggers. There are many long gaps between occurrences on this list and yet it happened twice in 1962!

Table 8. Pitchers Homering in 1-0 Game

| Batter | Game Date | Team |
|-------------------|------------|--------|
| Harry McCormick | 07/26/1879 | SYR NL |
| Tom Hughes | 08/03/1906 | WAS AL |
| Gene Packard | 09/29/1915 | KC FL |
| Red Ruffing | 08/13/1932 | NY AL |
| Spud Chandler | 05/21/1938 | NY AL |
| Early Wynn | 05/01/1959 | CH AL |
| Milt Pappas | 04/18/1962 | BAL AL |
| Johnny Klippstein | 08/06/1962 | CIN NL |
| Jim Bunning | 05/05/1965 | PHI NL |
| Juan Pizarro | 09/16/1971 | CH NL |
| Bob Welch | 06/17/1983 | LA NL |
| Odalis Perez | 08/28/2002 | LA NL |
| Yovani Gallardo | 04/29/2009 | MIL NL |

No discussion of pitchers hitting home runs would be complete without a mention of Babe Ruth, who started his career as a hurler for the Red Sox. Table 9 shows the 14 times he hit a home run as a pitcher. The first column is the career home run number for the Babe. He hit 12 of the 14 for the Red Sox, with five of those 12 against the Yankees. Ruth was the starting pitcher for the Yankees in the game on June 13, 1921 and hit a home run in the third and another in the seventh after being replaced on the mound and moving to center field. His mound exploits included striking out Ty Cobb and earning the win. *The New York Times* story, in typical style for that era, said that the Yankees tried out a young pitcher and that "he will be valuable to the team with a trifle more seasoning."³

Table 9. Babe Ruth's Home Runs as a Pitcher

| Nbr | Game Date | Site |
|-----|------------|-----------|
| 1 | 05/06/1915 | New York |
| 2 | 06/02/1915 | New York |
| 3 | 06/25/1915 | Boston |
| 4 | 07/21/1915 | St. Louis |
| 5 | 06/09/1916 | Detroit |
| 7 | 06/13/1916 | St. Louis |
| 8 | 08/10/1917 | Boston |
| 9 | 09/15/1917 | New York |
| 10 | 05/04/1918 | New York |
| 13 | 06/02/1918 | Detroit |
| 22 | 05/20/1919 | St. Louis |
| 34 | 07/21/1919 | Detroit |
| 123 | 06/13/1921 | New York |
| 686 | 10/01/1933 | New York |

Ruth's last home run as a pitcher came in the final game of the 1933 season against his former team, the Red Sox. He pitched a complete game, allowing 12 hits, 3 walks, and 5 runs. This was Ruth's last pitching appearance in the big leagues and came in a game that meant nothing to either squad.

Since 1876, 1,214 different pitchers have hit at least one home run in the major leagues, with 567 of them hitting a single four-bagger and 71 hitting at least 10 career blasts. The most home runs in one season by all pitchers combined came in 1970, when 51 dingers were hit by hurlers. The previous season has the second-highest total with 50, while no other season has

more than 38. Since the start of the designated hitter rule in 1973, the season with the most is 2000, when 26 home runs were hit by hurlers. Pitchers went deep only 24 times in 2011, so if you witness a pitcher hitting a home run, know that you have seen a rare event! ■

Notes

1. All home run statistics are from SABR's Tattersall/McConnell Home Run Log and include the 2011 season. Other data, including career statistics and trade information, was collected from www.retrosheet.org.
2. The totals for home runs by a pitcher do not count those hit while playing other positions, including as a pinch hitter. For example, Babe Ruth hit 14 homers as a pitcher, not 714.
3. "25,000 See Ruth Hurl 6-5 Victory," *The New York Times*, June 14, 1921.

The Bible and the Apocrypha

Saved Runs and Fielding Shares

Jon Bruschke

Take a moment and think about basic baseball statistics before the SABR era. The core batting and pitching measures invited improvement, but things like batting averages, earned run averages, home runs, RBIs, and win totals did give a meaningful overall picture of performance. Even without our many recent refinements, everyone could tell Bob Gibson was having a great season in 1968 and Roger Maris did something spectacular in 1961. It was not so with fielding; there was no number that could capture a great fielding season. Fielding percentage was certainly not up to the task. Recent developments have done much to undo this shortcoming, and this paper hopes to make an additional contribution toward this end.

There are two items on the agenda. The first section will be an assessment of extant fielding statistics. Special attention will be given to Dewan's Saved Runs, Bill James's Good Play/Misplay measures (both published in the *Fielding Bible II*), and my own system (published in *Baseball Research Journal*, volume 36). Second, a (somewhat) new approach will be offered, adding a few new measures to the lexicon. A close comparison of the new system with Dewan's Saved Runs will reveal some interesting points about baseball fielding and its measurement.

CURRENT MEASURES OF FIELDING

Initial attempts to measure fielding (putouts and assists) evolved into more advanced metrics such as range factor. An inherent limitation of newer approaches was the absence of any information about where balls in play were actually going, and hence what true "chance" a fielder had to get to a batted ball. Thus zone ratings evolved, where the location of a batted ball is recorded (along with other information such as the speed of the hit and whether it was airborne). The *Fielding Bible's* plus/minus system extends zone ratings, assigning values to the plays a defender does or doesn't make in a certain zone. The "state" of the game (runners on and outs) is compared before and after the play; if the state after the play lowers the chances of a run being scored, credit is given. If the state after the play increases the likelihood of runs, demerits are handed out. Dewan offers this especially lucid explanation:

Let's say there's a man on first with one out. The expected runs at that point are .528. The next play is a groundball to the shortstop. He boots it for an error and we now have men on first and second with one out. The expected runs went from .528 to .919. That's an increase of .391 (.919 minus .528) runs. The play itself, the error, cost the team .391 runs.¹

This explanation is not a full description of the system, but does usefully capture its basic nuts and bolts.

But the zone approach is also limited. Where the ball is "hit" to depends for some plays on the fielder. If a third baseman catches a line drive, the ball stays in the infield; otherwise, the ball lands in the outfield. Original positioning also matters; a third baseman fielding a ball on the right-field side of second base is doing nothing special if David Ortiz is at bat, since he begins the play ten feet from the bag. Zone ratings are, thus, increasingly accurate *estimates* of the number of good or bad plays made, but they remain *estimates*.

The only way to make an estimate entirely accurate is to replace it with a measured observation. Several "advanced" statistics, such as those on the Baseball-Reference.com website, take observable events and codify them. The number of times a runner advances on an outfielder, for example, can be recorded, as can participation in double plays. These measures provide rich new data and can often, by themselves, yield new insights.

But these more fine-grained observations do not exhaust what might be known about fielding. James and Dewan have two additional categories of observations. The first is to replace the concept of an error with a "defensive misplay" (or DME). A misplay is a "narrowly defined event" which recognizes an on-field event (such as a second baseman bobbling a ball that causes him to miss a double play opportunity) that puts the defense at a disadvantage. There are 58 of them, and they are carefully defined to minimize subjective scorer judgment.

My own counterpart to the misplay was the "Difficult Play Not Made," or DNM. I do believe that these concepts actually measure two distinct and important

parts of fielding. The *Bible*'s DME is a significant event not captured in the existing category of "error" but which represents a play that *should have* been made. Good defenders do not simply avoid bad plays, they make good ones.

But while James correctly notes that counting good plays is a matter of common decency, it is not enough to count the number of good plays by a defender. What about counting the number of playable balls that are *not* converted to outs? To do otherwise would be like counting the number of key hits without also counting the number of at-bats in pressure situations. Without knowing the number of difficult plays *not* made, it is impossible to calculate a percentage of difficult plays converted into outs.²

My current state of thinking, then, identifies three new directly observable categories of defensive failure: (a) the error (a botched routine play), (b) the DME (additional plays that disadvantage the defense without being errors), and (c) the DNM (un-converted opportunities to make an outstanding play).

On the other side of the ledger are the positive things a fielder can do. James calls such an instance a "good play," defined as "a play made when it appears most likely that it cannot be made" (a "GFP" in James' parlance). James notes that it is not "almost entirely objective," as the DME is. There are 27 defined Good Plays. My counterpart was the "hit saving play" (HSP).

The GFP and HSP concepts are largely similar, though they differ in meaningful ways. First, the HSP relies on an established definition of a hit, and although it is undoubtedly more subjective than the GFP, it requires the scorer to ask only this question: "Had that play not been converted into an out, would I have ruled it a hit?" The GFP includes a wider range of field activity, while the HSP is only concerned with the initial stop of the ball.³

My reading of James's description of the GFP makes it seem like the HSP might usefully serve as an umbrella for several GFP categories concerning the initial stop of the ball, while the GFP categories that involve other plays might remain distinct.

It all adds up to this picture of the state of fielding statistics: Zone approaches are giving increasingly accurate estimates of good and bad plays. New schemes are being created to make direct observations about whether a play is good or bad and its net effect on scoring outcomes. What prevents the widespread inclusion of these new measures in an impressive new host of statistics?

In a word, labor. To code 54 "bad" and 27 "good" types of plays requires that every game be re-watched

and re-scored. People have to be trained to use the system correctly. At present, the amount of labor makes James's scheme valuable enough to be proprietary, and all the categories—much less the raw data—have not been published. My HSP/DNM scheme is somewhat easier to incorporate and disseminate; the categories could even be easily added to the official scoring of the game, though they still require observations of every batted ball in play. The zone scoring schemes are similarly work-intensive (although they are relatively easy to find in published, aggregate form).

The measurement of all these elements will make possible the Holy Grail of fielding statistics: a unified measure (by position) cataloging all that a player has done, good or bad, and matching those actions against theoretical or actual game outcomes. But the day when all such data are available for a central analysis is not especially close, and in the meantime we have a number of pretty good measures which evaluate different performances for different positions in better and worse ways. Studenmund's advice that it is best to avoid a "one stat fits all mentality" is sage. Viewing players through a series of different measures can yield a decent overall picture.⁴

In the meantime, might it be possible to obtain meaningful measures of fielding without the labor intensity of direct observation or advanced zone schemes? Can we add to the mix another fairly meaningful measure of fielding prowess which uses some more readily accessible data? The answer to that question occupies the rest of this paper.

FIELDING SHARES: REASONING BACKWARDS

I began my thinking with two premises. The first, an empirical point proven by Voros McCracken, is that once a ball is in play the pitcher has very little influence on the outcome of the at-bat.⁵ It was not a finding McCracken expected and he made painstaking efforts to disprove the conclusion. At the end of his analysis McCracken believed the pitcher's influence dropped to almost nothing after the ball made it to the field of play. Others might find a link between a batting average on balls in play (BABIP) and fielding-independent hitting statistics (FIPS, usually BB, HR, and K). Regardless of the exact relationship between FIPS and BABIP, however, McCracken's work demonstrates that fielding matters quite a bit.

The second premise, which builds on the first, is that while no airtight measures of *individual* fielding exist, there are excellent measures of *team* fielding. The first "team" measure is simply the batting average of balls in play (BABIP). A team with a lower

BABIP does a better job of converting batted balls into outs than a team with a higher BABIP.

A second measure is runs allowed after accounting for Fielding-Independent Pitching statistics. It is possible to run regression equations to produce a predicted number of runs one would expect to be allowed given a particular pitching performance. A higher number than predicted means bad fielding, and a lower number than predicted means good fielding. This total—the actual minus predicted runs per game—is called a residual, labeled here “RPG-residual.”

My new thought was this: zones, HSP/DNM, and DME/GFP schemes all take individual events on the field and attempt to link them to valuable outcomes such as runs allowed or wins. What would happen if we worked backwards, taking our very good outcomes measures of team fielding (BABIP and RPG-residuals) and linking them back to individual activity? The rest of this paper explores this idea.

First, a couple of explanatory notes. This system uses the same logic that Bill James used for fielding Win Shares: Each individual player gets a portion of that team’s overall performance based on the number of outs they account for. Worded slightly differently, one starts by counting the number of a team’s runs or hits over (or below) average, and then tries to figure out which players are most responsible for the better (or worse) team fielding performance. If, for example, you have 100 points to give out and player A has accounted for 20 outs on defense but player B has accounted for only 10, player A gets twice the number of points. This system has many differences from Win Shares, but the core logic is the same, and the guts of the system involve tallying how many outs a player accounts for (roughly, putouts plus assists; more detail to follow) and dividing that figure by a number that meaningfully reflects a team’s fielding performance.⁶ The only other conceptual building block to be aware of is that while a bad team might have only 100 points to dish out, an average team might have 150–180 and a good team more than 250.

Compared to the more common fielding measures out there (mostly zone systems), this approach isn’t so much an advance as a different approach to the same thing that makes different choices about what to estimate. UZR starts by counting how many outs a player produces in their zone, then tries to figure out how many hits or runs those outs are worth. The system proposed here starts with how many hits or runs a team allowed and then tries to figure out who was most responsible for them. *Both* zone systems and this one estimate fielding performance but come from very

different starting points. In a nutshell, zone approaches *carefully measure individual performance*, but *estimate* productivity. My approach *measures productivity directly* but *estimates* individual performance.

On to the details. Three tasks are at hand. First, to build a unified measure of team fielding. Second, to apportion credit to individual fielders. Third, to compare the results to existing measures.

BUILDING A MEASURE OF TEAM FIELDING

Taking team pitching statistics from Baseball-Reference.com for 2008 and 2009, I ran a regression with runs per game as the criterion variable and HR/PA, BB/PA, SO/PA, and percentage of batted balls that were infield fly balls as the predictor variables.⁷ (Infield fly balls are included as fielding-independent because the out recorded usually requires minimal fielding effort.) The results, reported in Table 1, show that pitching accounts for 64–69% of runs scored (the remaining 30% or so is most likely due to the quality of fielding play).⁸

Table 1. Regression of Fielding-Independent Pitching Statistics with Runs Per Game

| Season | Adjusted R ² | Variables with Beta values |
|---------------|-------------------------|--|
| 2008 | 63.70% | SO/PA (-.61) BB/PA (.38) |
| 2009 | 68.60% | HR/PA (.56) SO/PA (-.41) BB/PA (.22) %IFFB (-.28) |
| 2008 and 2009 | 67.60% | SO/PA (-.47) BB/PA (.34) HR/PA (.37) %IFFB (-.18) |

The RPG-residuals for the combined data correlated highly with both the residuals for 2008 alone ($r = .87$) and 2009 alone ($r = .96$). Because more data are generally better, the equations built on the combined 2008 and 2009 data were used for the rest of the analysis. The RPG-residual correlated with BABIP ($r = .64$); this high but not singular correlation indicates that these metrics both measure the same basic phenomena but contribute independent information.

The two measures were combined into a single index by taking each team’s percentile score and then multiplying by 50 and adding a base of 50. Thus, for BABIP and RPG-residual, each team could earn a minimum of 50 points and a maximum of 100. By summing the scores for each measure, teams could

have a minimum of 100 and a maximum of 200 points. The results are included in Table 2; the Saved Runs from the *Fielding Bible II* are included for comparison. The bottom-line column is titled “Total Points,” and it is the combined score based on the two different measures of team fielding.

Table 2. Team Fielding Rankings 2008–09

| Team | BABIP | RPG- Residual | BABIP Points | RPG- Residual Points | Total Points | Saved Runs |
|------|-------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| PHI | 295 | -35 | 80.26 | 96.25 | 176.51 | 78 |
| SLN | 298 | -32 | 76.32 | 95 | 171.32 | 71 |
| OAK | 289 | -24 | 88.16 | 91.67 | 179.82 | 64 |
| TOR | 286 | -20 | 92.11 | 90 | 182.11 | 53 |
| MIL | 289 | -44 | 88.16 | 100 | 188.16 | 49 |
| NYN | 294 | -17 | 81.58 | 88.75 | 170.33 | 41 |
| ATL | 299 | -3 | 75 | 82.92 | 157.92 | 33 |
| CLE | 303 | 0 | 69.74 | 81.67 | 151.4 | 29 |
| TBA | 280 | -20 | 100 | 90 | 190 | 26 |
| HOU | 296 | -15 | 78.95 | 87.92 | 166.86 | 22 |
| WAS | 301 | 12 | 72.37 | 76.67 | 149.04 | 22 |
| BOS | 292 | -5 | 84.21 | 83.75 | 167.96 | 18 |
| SEA | 309 | 7 | 61.84 | 78.75 | 140.59 | 14 |
| FLO | 296 | 21 | 78.95 | 72.92 | 151.86 | 9 |
| CHN | 284 | 6 | 94.74 | 79.17 | 173.9 | 7 |
| LAN | 299 | -3 | 75 | 82.92 | 157.92 | 2 |
| ARI | 303 | 35 | 69.74 | 67.08 | 136.82 | -4 |
| SDN | 299 | 8 | 75 | 78.33 | 153.33 | -5 |
| SFN | 305 | 16 | 67.11 | 75 | 142.11 | -7 |
| COL | 313 | 39 | 56.58 | 65.42 | 122 | -10 |
| MIN | 303 | -6 | 69.74 | 84.17 | 153.9 | -11 |
| PIT | 316 | 4 | 52.63 | 80 | 132.63 | -11 |
| ANA | 299 | -2 | 75 | 82.5 | 157.5 | -15 |
| DET | 304 | 19 | 68.42 | 73.75 | 142.17 | -15 |
| CIN | 318 | 22 | 50 | 72.5 | 122.5 | -15 |
| BAL | 300 | -16 | 73.68 | 88.33 | 162.02 | -21 |
| TEX | 317 | 76 | 51.32 | 50 | 101.32 | -29 |
| CHA | 301 | 44 | 72.37 | 63.33 | 135.7 | -34 |
| NYA | 309 | 25 | 61.84 | 71.25 | 133.09 | -43 |
| KCA | 300 | 34 | 73.68 | 67.5 | 141.18 | -48 |

ASSIGNING FIELDING SHARES

Taking the logic of BABIP, if a team does a better job of converting balls in play to outs, the simplest way to assess fielding quality is to determine who is responsible for those outs. I divided each out according to a single formula. Only outs recorded on balls in play were included (i.e., strikeouts were excluded). If an out was unassisted, the fielder recording the putout was credited with the out. If an out was assisted, the number of players involved in the assist were each

given an equal out share; two assisters received .5 each, three assisters received .3 each, etc. (the putout is not credited if an assist occurs on the play). The data were obtained from the 2008 Retrosheet.org data files and each play was parsed with the BEvent program.⁹ The data were then summed with software of my own creation and validated by comparing out share totals for each team to its innings times three, minus strike-out totals (roughly the number of outs on balls in play, with slight variation due to the fact that not all strikeouts produce outs).

This approach assumes all fielders have the same number of fielding opportunities, an assumption that might not hold and one that future refinements might address. Even in its current form, however, this metric does assess total productivity. An analogy to RBI is apt. If one simply compares RBI totals, or even RBI per AB, the comparison assumes that all players have an equal number of RBI opportunities. They do not, and adjustments could be made for the number of runners on base, in scoring position, on third with fewer than two outs, and so on. But raw RBI totals do capture the total amount of productivity irrespective of opportunity, and having an equivalent for fielding measures would be quite an advance.

Each player’s out share total was then converted to a percentage of all outs recorded in the field by their team. For example, if a team records 3,204 outs in the field and a given player has 398 shares, the individual’s percentage of outs in play is 398 divided by 3,204, or 12.4%. That percentage is then multiplied by the team fielding share points (see Table 2); a player responsible for 12.4% of the outs on a team with 153 fielding share points receives a final score of 19.01.

Final Fielding Share scores are obviously biased toward those with more playing time. This is not unwarranted; a player logging more time and recording more outs on a good fielding team *should* be rewarded. But counting total fielding shares without adjusting for playing time is like counting hits without calculating batting average. Playing-time adjustments may be even more important on fielding than offense; a good hitter will generally get his at-bats, but a good fielder who can’t hit will have a much harder time cracking the lineup. Finding measures to uncover the performance for players with limited time is well worth the while. To adjust for playing time, Fielding Shares were divided by the number of plate appearances for which a defender was in the field while a ball was put in play (PABIP).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS: SYSTEM COMPARISONS

Because James’s Good Play/Misplay system is propri-

etary and therefore not fully published, comparisons to it are not possible, though some tidbits based on the partial figures that are published in the *Fielding Bible II* can allow comparisons that illuminate some other mysteries. Comparing Fielding Shares to Dewan's Saved Runs, however, yields important points. A good starting place is a detailed analysis of shortstops; Table 3 displays the data. Included are Saved Run and Fielding Share totals, as well as each measure divided by plate appearances with balls in play (SRPPA and FSPPA). All shortstops with 1,000 or more PABIPs in 2008 who were ranked in the top ten in Saved Runs (taken from *Fielding Bible II*), Fielding Shares, or FSPAA are included. SRPPA were calculated for all players in the Table; SRPPA ranks, therefore, did not include players who might have had better scores but were not published in the *Fielding Bible* analysis. All other rankings are compared against the 40 shortstops with 1,000 + PABIP.

Comparing the systems leads to interesting observations. Six players (Rollins, Escobar, Hardy, Theriot, Tejada, and Berroa) ranked very similarly among the different systems, while five rate quite differently (Crosby, Aviles, Vizquel, Wilson, and Cora). Most interesting is a group of four players with different Saved Run and Fielding Share totals but nearly identical SRPPA and FSPPA ranks (Izturis, Scutaro, Reyes, and Peralta; only Guzman and Cabrera had raw total ranks closer than their PABIP-adjusted ranks). The fact that

playing-time adjusted measures reveal more similarity between the systems suggests that each measure may be assessing the same core performance, and that each system is capable of evaluating fielding productivity in relation to playing time.

Additional evidence for the validity of the Fielding Shares scheme is that the total fielding point totals presented in Table 2 have a significant correlation with team wins ($r = .44$, $p = .013$) while saved runs do not ($r = .185$, $p = .33$). Thus 19.4% of a team's wins can be explained by their fielding shares scores (r^2 ; recall that this is a composite measure of BABIP and RPG-residual).

This is an important point that bears repeating: Fielding point totals do correlate with team win percentage while team Saved Run totals do not. This point alone suggests that the team-to-individual-performance estimation approach proffered here deserves serious consideration.

Where the rankings do differ, it is probably the case that the "better" ranking is the most accurate. Consider Aviles, ranked 22nd in fielding shares and 27th in FSPPA. He produced a mid-range number of UPO and assists on a bad fielding team. But he was third in Saved Runs, and bumped up to second in SRPPA. What gives?

The Saved Run rankings are only possible if Aviles converted more balls to outs than average and/or

Table 3. Shortstop Measures and Rankings, 2008–09

| Name | PABIP | UPO | ASST | FS | FSR | FS1k | FSPPA | SR | SRR | SRPPA | SPAR |
|-------------------|-------|-----|-------|------|-----|------|-------|----|-----|-------|------|
| Scutaro, Marco | 1387 | 30 | 161.3 | 11 | 28 | 5.9 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 5.8 | 1 |
| Aviles, Mike | 2350 | 77 | 232.5 | 13.4 | 22 | 5.9 | 27 | 13 | 3 | 5.5 | 2 |
| Wilson, Jack | 2335 | 44 | 274 | 12.4 | 24 | 5.9 | 33 | 12 | 7 | 5.1 | 3 |
| Izturis, Cesar | 3244 | 84 | 365.7 | 22.6 | 13 | 5.9 | 7 | 14 | 2 | 4.3 | 4 |
| Vizquel, Omar | 1926 | 62 | 175.8 | 10.9 | 29 | 5.9 | 28 | 8 | 8 | 4.2 | 5 |
| Rollins, Jimmy | 3669 | 109 | 384.1 | 26.6 | 4 | 7.3 | 5 | 15 | 1 | 4.1 | 6 |
| Escobar, Yunel | 3470 | 95 | 391.5 | 23.6 | 11 | 5.9 | 10 | 12 | 6 | 3.5 | 7 |
| Guzman, Christian | 3789 | 104 | 388.8 | 22.7 | 12 | 5.9 | 22 | 12 | 5 | 3.2 | 8 |
| Hardy, J. J. | 3970 | 103 | 425.5 | 30.4 | 1 | 7.7 | 2 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 9 |
| Tejada, Miguel | 4256 | 94 | 433.6 | 27.6 | 3 | 6.5 | 16 | 7 | 10 | 1.6 | 10 |
| Theriot, Ryan | 3768 | 127 | 337.2 | 26.1 | 6 | 6.9 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 1.3 | 11 |
| Cabrera, Orlando | 4375 | 130 | 457.7 | 24.7 | 8 | 5.6 | 29 | 3 | 14 | 0.7 | 12 |
| Ramirez, Hanley | 4137 | 123 | 395.1 | 24.7 | 7 | 6 | 23 | 1 | 17 | 0.2 | 13 |
| Berroa, Angel | 1780 | 38 | 215 | 12.7 | 23 | 5.9 | 6 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 14 |
| Reyes, Jose | 4357 | 121 | 415.1 | 28.4 | 2 | 6.5 | 15 | -2 | 19 | -0.5 | 15 |
| Bartlett, Jason | 3333 | 113 | 305.7 | 24.6 | 9 | 7.4 | 4 | -2 | 20 | -0.6 | 16 |
| McDonald, John | 1440 | 39 | 132 | 9.9 | 30 | 5.9 | 9 | -2 | 23 | -1.4 | 17 |
| Peralta, Jhonny | 4111 | 110 | 422.4 | 24.1 | 10 | 5.9 | 24 | -6 | 28 | -1.5 | 18 |
| Crosby, Bobby | 3864 | 99 | 373.5 | 26.2 | 5 | 6.8 | 11 | -6 | 29 | -1.6 | 19 |
| Cora, Alex | 1175 | 37 | 132.2 | 9 | 33 | 5.9 | 3 | | | 0 | 20 |

KEY: PABIP = Plate Appearances on balls in play; UPO = Unassisted Put Out; Asst = Assist Shares; FS = Fielding Shares; FSR = rank based on Fielding Shares; FS1k = Fielding shares per PABIP times 1000; SR = Saved Runs; SRR = rank based on Saved Runs; SPAR = rank based on Saved Runs Per Plate Appearance times 1000.

created those outs in situations which tended to save more runs. In addition, Aviles ranks in four of James's categories: Net Good Plays minus Misplays per touch (sixth), net grounders (third), net flies and liners (fourth), and net double plays (fourth). On the negative side of the ledger, he was also fifth in Misplays on throws, suggesting that his true ranking might not be as high as second. Still, the Fielding Share rankings probably underestimate his performance, and the higher Saved Run rankings better reflect his true fielding productivity.

The same might be said for Jack Wilson, loved by Saved Runs and hated by Fielding Shares. Wilson was the third most productive out producer on a mediocre fielding team; second baseman Freddy Sanchez and center fielder Nate McLouth both out-performed him. In this case, a decent defender might simply have been crowded out of Fielding Shares by outstanding teammates. According to James, Wilson was third in net good minus bad plays, fourth in net per touch, and sixth in double plays. In sum, Wilson's actual ranking is undoubtedly higher than 33rd.

It cuts the other way with good Fielding Share rankings. Jason Bartlett is ranked 20th in Saved Runs and 16th in SRPPA. James gave him the fourth most Misplays per touch. But his Fielding Share total ranks him ninth and fourth. Why the high Fielding Share ranking? Bartlett accounted for the second most outs on a team whose fielding ranked first overall and first in BABIP, with a RPG-residual of 20 runs (saved .2 runs per game beyond what pitching could explain), and even in the Saved Run team totals saving 20 runs in 2008 (ranking ninth overall). Is it really possible for his team to perform that well with its second most active out producer *costing* his team two runs a year? Were his teammates really covering that much for the subpar play of the starting shortstop? Probably not.

A more plausible explanation is that the Fielding Share rankings are capturing something about Bartlett's play that Saved Runs are not, or at the very least that the Saved Run rankings underestimate Bartlett's contribution.

A final observation about the systems can be made without resorting to the data. Fielding Shares probably under-reward good defenders on bad fielding teams. No matter how good you are, it is difficult to gain a large enough proportion of a team's outs to offset the lower overall Fielding Share total to go around. Conversely, Saved Runs may over-reward mediocre players on bad teams. Because bad teams typically have more run-laden situations (or "states")—they more frequently have the bases loaded with no outs, for example—

the same fielding plays "save" more runs and earn more credit.

I take home two points from this case study of shortstops. (1) The overall rankings, especially those adjusted for playing time, are close enough to suggest that each system has validity but is different enough to remind us that both are estimates, not precise counts of good and bad plays. (2) Where discrepancies exist, the better ranking is probably more accurate, or at least suggests that an upward correction is in order. To restate the point made earlier, Saved Runs and Fielding Shares both seek to estimate good plays and bad plays and their contributions to runs saved or lost; neither is as accurate as counting good and bad plays directly, as James does. But each is less labor intensive. Until exact counts are published in a full form, comparing different systems that estimate performance (including these and, at least, Ultimate Zone Ratings and the Total Run counts on the Baseball-Reference.com website) is highly productive and certainly far more revealing than Gold Glove vote totals.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS: PLAYER PERFORMANCE

Table 3 also reveals interesting things about individual performance, particularly for Scutaro, Rollins, and Crosby. Perhaps the most revealing point is that Marco Scutaro is a consensus pick for the best fielder per-PABIP. Although ranked ninth in Saved Runs and a very low 28th in Fielding Shares, his per-PABIP numbers rank him first in both categories. By all accounts, his time on defense was strikingly productive.

Jimmy Rollins is definitively in the upper echelon at his position, but he may not be the best. His Saved Runs per PABIP drops him from first to sixth, while his Fielding Shares rank fourth and fifth. On par with that performance is J.J. Hardy, tied with Rollins in cumulative ranks across the four categories. Sometimes a best player emerges at a position; sometime it's a toss-up between multiple contenders. In 2008, Hardy and Rollins ran a two-horse race for best defensive shortstop.

Bobby Crosby is better than expected. He ranks low in Saved Runs, but his PABIP-adjusted totals shoot him up ten ranks, and his Fielding Share totals put him around the bottom of the top ten. As argued above, the better ranking is probably more accurate; he was contributing a large share of the outs on a team that both the *Fielding Bible II* and this paper have identified as the third-best fielding team. The reasoning is somewhat backward, but it is hard to imagine a team producing the third best overall fielding with the 29th best shortstop. It is worth noting that his Total Runs reported by the Baseball-Reference.com website are .6

(modest but respectable) and better than the -6 Saved Runs assigned by Dewan. Crosby emerges as a player of midrange major-league productivity, and not the liability his Saved Run figure suggests.

Table 4 lists the top five players at the other positions. It is hoped that readers will find a rich set of comparisons in that data.¹⁰

CONCLUSIONS

The best way to assess fielding is to count the good and bad outcomes of a touch of the ball. This is, at present, too labor-intensive. The alternative is to estimate fielding productivity. One way to make these estimations is with advanced zone schemes. Another way, suggested here, is to apportion known and meaningful team fielding performances to each fielder.

Table 4. Top five players in Fielding Shares at positions other than SS, 2008–09, with Saved Runs for Comparison

| DSR | Name | Pos | PABIP | UPO | ASST | FS | FSA | SR | SR Rk | SRPPA |
|-----|-------------------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-------|------|-----|-------|-------|
| 1 | Rogers, Kenny | P | 620 | 11 | 49.5 | 2.6 | 4.1 | 12 | 1 | 19.4 |
| 2 | Webb, Brandon | P | 689 | 1 | 52.5 | 2.4 | 3.4 | 4 | 22 | 5.8 |
| 3 | Litsch, Jesse | P | 589 | 4 | 35.5 | 2.3 | 3.9 | 6 | 2 | 10.2 |
| 4 | Maddux, Greg | P | 527 | 2 | 42.7 | 2.1 | 4 | 10 | 4 | 19 |
| 5 | Kuroda, Hiroki | P | 611 | 3 | 38 | 2.1 | 3.4 | 3 | 16 | 4.9 |
| 1 | Kendall, Jason | C | 4,153 | 33 | 69.8 | 5.9 | 1.4 | 12 | 1 | 2.9 |
| 2 | McCann, Brian | C | 3,595 | 16 | 59.4 | 3.7 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 1.7 |
| 3 | Navarro, Dioner | C | 3,034 | 33 | 25.7 | 3.5 | 1.1 | -1 | 22 | -0.3 |
| 4 | Ruiz, Carlos | C | 2,611 | 18 | 38.3 | 3 | 1.2 | -2 | 26 | -0.8 |
| 5 | Molina, Bengie | C | 3,399 | 25 | 41.1 | 3 | 0.9 | 7 | 3 | 2.1 |
| 1 | Overbay, Lyle | 1B | 4,047 | 195 | 149.5 | 19.9 | 4.9 | 6 | 7 | 1.5 |
| 2 | Lee, Derrek | 1B | 4,006 | 233 | 103.6 | 18.9 | 4.7 | 5 | 8 | 1.2 |
| 3 | Berkman, Lance | 1B | 4,075 | 220 | 128.8 | 18.2 | 4.5 | 13 | 4 | 3.2 |
| 4 | Howard, Ryan | 1B | 4,411 | 234 | 97.3 | 17.9 | 4.1 | 0 | 15 | 0 |
| 5 | Fielder, Prince | 1B | 4,305 | 221 | 82.3 | 17.5 | 4.1 | -10 | 33 | -2.3 |
| 1 | Uteley, Chase | 2B | 4,386 | 144 | 455.6 | 32.4 | 7.4 | 33 | 1 | 7.5 |
| 2 | Iwamura, Akinori | 2B | 4,069 | 123 | 390.5 | 30.2 | 7.4 | 3 | 11 | 0.7 |
| 3 | Pedroia, Dustin | 2B | 4,141 | 105 | 441.6 | 29.1 | 7 | 12 | 4 | 2.9 |
| 4 | Roberts, Brian | 2B | 4,373 | 108 | 434 | 26.2 | 6 | -3 | 23 | -0.7 |
| 5 | Cano, Robinson | 2B | 4,291 | 134 | 475.2 | 25.4 | 5.9 | -13 | 33 | -3 |
| 1 | Wright, David | 3B | 4,399 | 91 | 280.8 | 19.7 | 4.5 | 5 | 11 | 1.1 |
| 2 | Longoria, Evan | 3B | 3,182 | 79 | 227.8 | 18 | 5.7 | 9 | 7 | 2.8 |
| 3 | Glaus, Troy | 3B | 4,063 | 82 | 274.3 | 17.9 | 4.4 | 7 | 10 | 1.7 |
| 4 | Kouzmanoff, Kevin | 3B | 4,339 | 104 | 273.2 | 17.6 | 4.1 | -1 | 18 | -0.2 |
| 5 | Ramirez, Aramis | 3B | 3,814 | 75 | 221.1 | 16.66 | 4.37 | -9 | 31 | -2.4 |
| 1 | Braun, Ryan | LF | 4,087 | 275 | 7.3 | 16.3 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 1.7 |
| 2 | Crawford, Carl | LF | 2,809 | 231 | 0.8 | 13.6 | 4.9 | 13 | 1 | 4.6 |
| 3 | Young, Delmon | LF | 4,380 | 282 | 8.8 | 13.2 | 3 | -11 | 35 | -2.5 |
| 4 | Ibanez, Raul | LF | 4,348 | 302 | 7.3 | 13.2 | 3 | -6 | 29 | -1.4 |
| 5 | Burrell, Pat | LF | 3,791 | 202 | 9.1 | 11.4 | 3 | -5 | 27 | -1.3 |
| 1 | Upton, B. J. | CF | 3,780 | 378 | 14.5 | 23.1 | 6.1 | -6 | 17 | -1.6 |
| 2 | Beltran, Carlos | CF | 4,336 | 418 | 7 | 22.5 | 5.2 | 14 | 1 | 3.2 |
| 3 | Gomez, Carlos | CF | 4,146 | 436 | 6.1 | 20.1 | 4.8 | 16 | 2 | 3.9 |
| 4 | Rowand, Aaron | CF | 3,885 | 411 | 5 | 19.1 | 4.9 | -4 | 18 | -1 |
| 5 | Young, Chris | CF | 4,244 | 393 | 3.3 | 17.6 | 4.1 | 12 | 8 | 2.8 |
| 1 | Pence, Hunter | RF | 4,301 | 340 | 13 | 18.5 | 4.3 | -1 | 8 | -0.2 |
| 2 | Hart, Corey | RF | 4,309 | 302 | 6.3 | 17.8 | 4.1 | 0 | 19 | 0 |
| 3 | Markakis, Nick | RF | 4,527 | 327 | 15.1 | 16.5 | 3.7 | 6 | 2 | 1.3 |
| 4 | Winn, Randy | RF | 3,366 | 309 | 2.5 | 14.3 | 4.2 | 9 | 6 | 2.7 |
| 5 | Francoeur, Jeff | RF | 4,171 | 282 | 9.3 | 14.1 | 3.4 | -7 | 23 | -1.7 |

KEY AND NOTES: All abbreviations match Table 2; FSA (Fielding Shares Adjusted) = Fielding Shares per PABIP. Pitcher rankings exclude stolen bases; outfield spots include plus/minus only; all others use Total Saved Runs taken from *The Fielding Bible Volume II*

Looking forward, there are three general directions for research on fielding.

The first is to decide what to count. Everyone agrees that counting errors, assists, and putouts is wholly insufficient. Extensive efforts are underway to code the zones where balls land and how balls get there. This paper suggests four useful new categories of information to track. First, those plays on the initial stop of a ball that prevent what would otherwise be scored as a hit. Second, those plays after the initial stop of the ball that advantage the defense. Third, those misplays that James has identified, which include a much more appropriate range of bad play than the current category of errors. Fourth, those difficult plays that are *not* made which arguably separate the good from the bad fielders as much as the misplays. At present no scheme, James's included, captures all this information.

A second direction is to identify how to assess the different demands of different positions. The catcher, in particular, has a number of measures unique to that spot on the field, including wild pitches allowed, passed balls, runners held, runners thrown out, potential wild pitches blocked (stops on balls in the dirt), unforced putouts at the plate (in chances to do so), etc. The first baseman is usually the least "important" fielder on the team, but still must dig balls out of the dirt, tag runners when throws pull him off the bag, and convert difficult-to-field balls into outs. The pitcher is the fielder closest to the batter; the demands on that position are generally not captured in measures appropriate for other positions.

Third, this approach could be refined and integrated with other systems. As noted earlier, the Fielding Shares utilized here are raw productivity totals, much like a seasonal RBI sum. They could be adjusted in a number of ways to better account for the true number of chances a fielder had. Adding elements like the number of ground balls to fly balls, the number of right- or left-handed pitchers, etc., would certainly refine the PABIP adjustments used here. Further, the analysis here is based on only two years' worth of data; the sample size is adequate for the conclusions offered above but is only a sliver of the information available. Team performances could be based on more than RPG-residual and BABIP, but could also integrate team Saved Runs, team UZR, the Total Zone ratings from Baseball-Reference, or the summed player totals from Michael Humphreys' *Wizardry*. Comparison and contrasts of the different systems, and perhaps even a super-measure of team fielding, would add to what is offered here.

I am repeatedly struck by how much of the information with which to assess fielding is already codified in places like Baseball-Reference's advanced fielding statistics. If we wished to take the catching position, for example, and toss aside the current and wholly inadequate measures of defense (fielding percentage) and replace them with richer information such as runner kills, percentage of bunts fielded converted to outs, runner bases added, and the like, this could be accomplished right now with no additional collection of information.

The purpose of SABR is "to encourage the study of baseball." There can be little doubt that compared to pitching and hitting, fielding is the most vastly under-analyzed part of the game. Despite this, it is vitally important to do so. My own estimates lead me to conclude that somewhere between 20 and 33 percent of variance in team win percentage is due to fielding. There is very good reason to hope that the greatest advances in our understanding of the game through statistics will come in the area of fielding measures. ■

Notes

1. John Dewan, *The Fielding Bible, Volume II*. Skokie, IL: ACTA Sports, 2009, 11.
2. Although my point is not to be evaluative, the differences between the measures are worth noting. First, the DME is more objective, although in my prior article I took pains to address the subjectivity issue. In a nutshell, subjective judgments can be made with a good deal of reliability. There are well-known methods to determine whether a subjective judgment can be made accurately. The DNM passes those tests. Second, James' DME covers a much wider range of activity on the field, whereas the DNM only covers the initial play.
3. The reliability of the HSP measure, like that of the DNM, has been demonstrated (and is included in my prior article).
4. *The Fielding Bible, Volume II*. Ibid, 351.
5. McCracken, Voros, "Pitching and defense: How much control do hurlers have?" www.baseballprospectus.com/article.php?articleid=878, January 23, 2001.
6. Unlike Win Shares, this system does not attempt to balance the different contributions of pitching and fielding to runs allowed or limit how much (or little) pitching can account for. Instead, it tries to remove the effect of pitching—focusing solely on fielding—then empirically link the result to team win percentage. A further difference is how outs are credited; the system here is much simpler and mostly counts only assists and unassisted putouts.
7. Although the denominators are different the regression method used here can readily accommodate the difference of scales. For example, it is possible to regress OPS (where at-bats is the denominator) onto runs per game (where runs are the denominator).
8. Another possibility is that "clutch" pitching might explain the remaining variance. Since the existence of clutch hitting is such an open question, and Dewan shies away from naming such a thing as clutch fielding, the issue is probably one for future research. Fielding certainly explains a large part of the remaining variance in Table 1.
9. The retrosheet.org resource can't receive enough thanks; I add mine now, and especially to Tom Tippet, David Nichols, and David W. Smith, the authors of BEvent.
10. A full set of searchable results is at <http://commfaculty.fullerton.edu/jbruschke/baseball.htm>.

Hank Greenberg's American League RBI Record

Herm Krabbenhoft

According to the American League's official records, Hank Greenberg amassed a total of 1,202 runs batted in during his junior circuit career, which was spent entirely with the Detroit Tigers and spanned the 17-year period from 1930 through 1946. (See Chart 1.)

Chart 1. Hank Greenberg's Official American League RBI Record

| Year | RBI | AL Career to-Date RBI |
|------|-----|--------------------------|
| 1930 | 0 | 0 |
| 1933 | 87 | 87 |
| 1934 | 139 | 226 |
| 1935 | 170 | 396 |
| 1936 | 16 | 412 |
| 1937 | 183 | 595 |
| 1938 | 146 | 741 |
| 1939 | 112 | 853 |
| 1940 | 150 | 1,003 |
| 1941 | 12 | 1,015 |
| 1945 | 60 | 1,075 |
| 1946 | 127 | 1,202 |

Twelve hundred RBIs over 17 years probably does not sound impressive. However, Greenberg was a full-season player for just eight of those 17 campaigns. Except for a solitary at-bat at the tail end of the 1930 season, he was a full-time minor leaguer for his first three years in professional baseball (1930–1932) and did not appear in a Tigers uniform again until 1933. He suffered a broken wrist in the twelfth game of the 1936 season and was out the rest of the year. And he was in military service from early in the 1941 campaign (after the 19th game) through the middle of the 1945 season.

During the eight full AL seasons that Greenberg did have (1933–1935, 1937–1940, and 1946), he batted in a total of 1,114 runs—an average of 139 RBIs per year. For comparison, Lou Gehrig averaged 148 RBIs per year for the eight-year period from 1931 through 1938 and Jimmie Foxx averaged 135 RBIs per season for the eight-year period from 1933 through 1940. In four of those seasons (1935, 1937, 1940, and 1946) Greenberg topped the AL in RBIs, while Gehrig and Foxx led the AL in RBIs in five and three seasons, respectively.

Hammerin' Hank's RBI numbers certainly place him in an elite group of run-producing first basemen.

Hank Greenberg's official RBI numbers are impressive. But are they correct?

As described in my recent article in the *Baseball Research Journal*, Lou Gehrig's official RBI record is plagued with numerous errors. Thirty-four errors were discovered and corrected in Gehrig's official RBI record for the 1923–1930 period alone. Significantly, the corrections of the RBI errors resulted in changes in Gehrig's league-leading RBI totals in 1927, 1928, and 1930.¹

So, what about the accuracy of the RBI statistics in Greenberg's official record? Not surprisingly, his official RBI record is also compromised with numerous errors, the corrections for which are given in this article. One of these corrections could mean a major change in baseball's record book.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

To ascertain the accuracy of Greenberg's official RBI record one needs to obtain the specific details for each run scored by the Detroit Tigers in each game Greenberg played. For each of these runs I determined:

- who scored the run;
- the run-scoring event (e.g., a 1-RBI single, a 1-RBI groundout, a 1-RBI safe-on-error, a 0-RBI safe-on-error, a 0-RBI steal of home, a 0-RBI balk, etc.)
- the player who completed his plate appearance during the run-scoring event.

I examined newspaper accounts for each game, including the three major daily Detroit newspapers (the *Free Press*, *News*, and *Times*) and at least one major daily newspaper from the city of the team that opposed the Tigers. In this way I was able to ascertain the exact details for each of the runs the Tigers scored in 1,234 (97.2%) of the 1,269 games in which Greenberg appeared, leaving 35 games extant. Fortunately, for 32 of those 35 games the run-scored and RBI information in the accompanying box scores agreed with the runs scored and runs batted in numbers in the of-

ficial day-by-day (DBD) records. For the three games where the newspaper box scores and the official DBD information are not in agreement regarding the RBI information, and the newspaper text accounts do not resolve the discrepancies, one must consider the official DBD RBI information to be correct. (See Appendix One, available online at sabr.org, for specific information on each of the 35 games with incomplete details for runs scored and runs batted in.)

From the detailed run-scored information I generated a game-by-game RBI ledger for Greenberg, which I then compared with the RBI information provided in his official DBD record. For those games where Greenberg's RBI statistics from the newspaper accounts did not agree with the official DBD records, I proceeded to examine all relevant newspaper accounts so as to unequivocally ascertain the RBIs Greenberg actually achieved. (Appendix Two, available online at sabr.org, provides the comprehensive supporting documentation for the corrections of the RBI errors in the official records.)

RESULTS

1930—Greenberg's First Major League "Season." After spending most of 1930 with Raleigh—the Tigers farm club in the Class C Piedmont League—Hank Greenberg made his major league debut on September 14, 1930, at Navin Field in Detroit in a game against the Yankees. He entered the contest with the bases empty in the eighth inning as a pinch hitter for the Tigers pitcher Charlie Sullivan; Detroit was on the short end of a 10–1 score. It turned out to be a match-up of future Hall of Famers: Red Ruffing got Hank to pop out to second baseman Ben Chapman. Obviously there was no RBI for Hank (which is in agreement with his official DBD record). That was his only appearance in the Big Show until the 1933 campaign.

1933—Greenberg's First "Full" Major League Season. After having spent the 1931 and 1932 seasons in the minors (Evansville of the Class B Three-I League and Beaumont of the Class AA Texas League), Greenberg headed north with the Tigers from spring training in 1933. On the bench during Detroit's first seven games, Hank was the starting first baseman against the Browns on April 22. At the plate, Hank went 0-for-3 with a walk, and while he did score a run, he did not bat in any runs. After another week of sitting on the bench, Hank got his next start in St. Louis on April 30. Hank collected his first major league RBI when his seventh-inning single knocked in Charlie Gehringer. A week later at Navin Field Greenberg slugged his first

Hank Greenberg made his Major League debut in 1930, but did not crack Detroit's regular lineup until May of 1933.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

big league big fly, a solo homer off Washington's Earl Whitehill. During the next two weeks, Hank saw limited action, appearing in just three more games. However, on May 21, Detroit's 30th game, he became the regular first baseman for the Tigers, relegating Harry Davis to the back-up role.

For the season, Hank Greenberg fashioned a commendable batting record—in 117 games, he compiled (officially) a .301 batting average (behind only Gehring's .325 on the team) with 12 homers (the most on the Tigers) and 87 runs batted in (second behind Gehring's 105 RBIs). League-wise, the only AL rookie with better numbers was Pinky Higgins of the Philadelphia Athletics—.314 with 13 homers and 99 RBIs in 152 games.

But is Greenberg's official 87-RBIs figure accurate? Unfortunately, no. I discovered three games with RBI errors:

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| June 3, 1933 | Official DBD, 1 RBI; actual, 0 RBI | - 1 RBI |
| Sept 16, 1933 | Official DBD, 2 RBI; actual, 0 RBI | - 2 RBI |
| Sept 23, 1933 | Official DBD, 0 RBI; actual, 1 RBI | + 1 RBI |

By this count, Greenberg achieved 85 RBIs (not 87 RBIs) in 1933. (See Appendix Two for complete supporting documentation.)

1934—Greenberg's First 100-RBI Season. Following his stellar rookie year, Hank avoided the classic "sophomore jinx." Starting at first base in 153 of Detroit's 154 games (every day but Yom Kippur), Greenberg primarily batted sixth and led the team in RBIs with 139. His official 139 RBIs tied the franchise record, Harry Heilmann also having officially driven in 139 runs in 1921.

But Greenberg's official RBI record is burdened with errors in two games:

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| June 13, 1934 | Official DBD, 3 RBI; actual, 2 RBI | - 1 RBI |
| June 15, 1934 | Official DBD, 0 RBI; actual, 1 RBI | + 1 RBI |

Because the corrections of the two RBI errors are self-compensating (i.e., - 1 RBI + 1 RBI = 0 RBI), the net change in Greenberg's official RBI record is zero—he did have 139 RBIs in 1934.

1935—Greenberg's "Record-Breaking" RBI Season. Going into the 1935 season, the official American League record for most runs batted in by a right-handed batter during a single season was 169 RBIs, held by Jimmie Foxx of the 1932 Philadelphia Athletics. Starting—and finishing—at first base in each of the 152 games the Tigers played in 1935, Hammerin' Hank proceeded to carve out another phenomenal performance—he topped the junior circuit in runs batted in with 170—thereby establishing a new official mark for the most RBIs by a right-handed batter. But, are the RBI stats in Greenberg's official DBD records correct? As it turns out, they are not.

I discovered and corrected errors in two games:

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| June 29, 1935 | Official DBD, 1 RBI; actual, 0 RBI | - 1 RBI |
| July 5, 1935 | Official DBD, 5 RBI; actual, 4 RBI | - 1 RBI |

Thus, for the entire 1935 season, Greenberg actually had 168 RBIs, not the record-setting 170 RBIs shown in his official DBD records. Therefore, he did *not* establish a new AL single-season record for the most RBIs by a right-handed batter. (Note: to my knowledge, the accuracy of Foxx's official RBI record for 1932 has not yet been ascertained.)

1936—Greenberg's Fractured Season. Following his spectacular 1935 campaign, for which he was selected as the Most Valuable Player in the American League, Greenberg's 1936 season began with high expectations. Through the first 11 games, the Tigers went 7–4 and were just one-half game behind the front-running Cleveland Indians. Greenberg himself was off to a fantastic start with 15 RBIs, a pace which translates into 210 RBIs for a 154-game season. However, on April 29 in Washington, Greenberg suffered a fractured left wrist during a collision at first base with Jake Powell as the Nat was running out a grounder. This was the same wrist he had broken in the second game of the 1935 World Series and Greenberg's season was through. His final official DBD record shows Hank

with 16 RBIs, crediting him with one in that fateful game. However, as clearly demonstrated by the evidence (Appendix Two at sabr.org), Greenberg did not have any RBIs in that final game:

| | | |
|----------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| April 29, 1936 | Official DBD, 1 RBI; actual, 0 RBI | - 1 RBI |
|----------------|------------------------------------|---------|

Thus, for Greenberg's abbreviated 1936 season, he actually had 15 RBIs, not 16 as shown in his official DBD records.

1937—Greenberg's "One-RBI-Short" Season. Would Greenberg rebound from the broken wrist when 1937 rolled around? Hammerin' Hank did not disappoint, *officially* driving in a total of 183 runs—just one short of the AL record for the most RBIs in a single season, held by Lou Gehrig of the 1931 Yankees. At least that's what Hank Greenberg's official DBD records show. However, my in-depth and comprehensive investigation of each and every run scored by the Tigers revealed that there is one game with an error in the record:

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| June 20, 1937 | | |
| (2nd game) | Official DBD, 0 RBI; actual, 1 RBI | + 1 RBI |

Greenberg actually had 184 RBIs—the same total that Lou Gehrig officially recorded in 1931.² In his autobiography, Greenberg wrote, "My goal in baseball was always RBIs, to break Gehrig's record of 184 RBIs. I would have loved to do that. I didn't accomplish it, but I came awfully close." As proven here, Hank came even closer than he thought.

1938—Greenberg's Almost-Ruthian Season. What could Hank Greenberg do in 1938 as an appropriate follow-up to his RBI performance in 1937? How about challenging the major league single-season record for home runs? Hammerin' Hank fell just two homers short of tying Babe Ruth's 60 in 1927. Greenberg's 58 did match Jimmie Foxx's 1932 major league record for right-handed batters (a figure which still stands in the American League). The homers helped him knock in 146 runs—according to the official DBD records. But I determined that there is one game which is incorrect:

| | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| May 4, 1938 | Official DBD, 0 RBI; actual, 1 RBI | + 1 RBI |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---------|

So, Greenberg actually had 147 RBIs—not 146.

1939—Greenberg's Not-Spectacular Season. In his autobiography, Greenberg states, "In 1939 the Tigers finished in fifth place. While I didn't have a sensational year, I still

led the team in hitting, with a .312 average [sic]; had 112 runs batted in, which was fourth in the American League; and hit 33 home runs, which was second in the league only to Jimmie Foxx, who hit 35. So, it wasn't a total disaster as far as my personal record was concerned."³ But, according to my research, Hank did even better than he thought he did because of yet another error in his RBI statistics:

July 2, 1939 Official DBD, 1 RBI; actual, 2 RBI + 1 RBI

So, for the entire season, Greenberg actually had 113 RBIs, not 112.

1940—Greenberg's Third 150-RBI Season. According to the official baseball records, only 15 junior circuiters have collected at least 150 RBIs in a single season. Lou Gehrig did it seven times, Babe Ruth five, Jimmie Foxx four, and Al Simmons and Hank Greenberg each three times. Hank's third 150-RBI season came in the 1940 campaign according to his official DBD records. I found no errors or discrepancies in the 1940 season.

1941—Greenberg's First Two-Uniform Season. Before the 1941 regular season began, Greenberg was drafted into military service and scheduled for induction on May 7, 1941. Prior to donning US Army fatigues, Hank wore his Tigers uniform for Detroit's first 19 games. According to his official DBD records, Hank batted in an even dozen runs in those 19 games. And, according to my research, the official DBD records are 100% correct with respect to Hank's RBI performance in 1941.

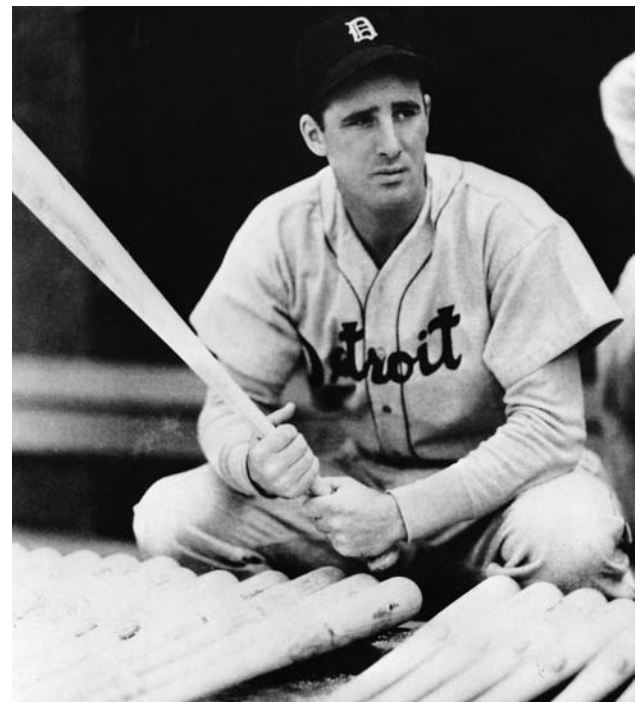
1945—Greenberg's Second Two-Uniform Season. After having spent four years in military service, Greenberg was discharged on June 14, 1945, and gave up his Army khakis. After working out at Briggs Stadium for a couple of weeks, he returned to the baseball diamond wearing the "Old English D" on the first of July and slugged a home run. He went on to play in 78 games and drive in 60 runs according to his official DBD record. Had he played the entire season at that rate, he would have ended up with around 90 runs scored, 25 homers, and 120 runs batted in—the latter two figures would have topped the league. If he maintained his .311 batting average, as well, he would have claimed the triple crown. According to my research, there are no games with RBI errors in Greenberg's official DBD records for 1945.

1946—Greenberg's Fourth RBI Crown. Throughout the history of the American League, several players have led

the loop in RBIs in two or more seasons. With 127 official runs batted in during the 1946 campaign Hank Greenberg again captured the AL RBI throne. Significantly, it was Hammerin' Hank's fourth RBI crown. According to the list of the AL's annual leaders in most RBIs presented in *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*, only one other AL player earned more first-place RBI trophies: Lou Gehrig, who finished first five times. Two other players led the AL in RBIs four times: Babe Ruth and Ted Williams.⁴ Yet another significant aspect of Greenberg's 1946 runs batted in blue ribbon is that with it he established the still-standing mark for longevity in being an RBI champion. Having first topped the league in 1935, Hank's 1946 first-place certificate came 11 years later. The next-longest span between a player's first and last RBI crowns is the 10-year span achieved by Teddy Ballgame (1939 and 1949). My research shows that there were no games with RBI errors in Hank's official stats, and the 127-RBI record stands.

SUMMARY

For Hank Greenberg's American League career, I discovered 11 games with errors in his official RBI record. Chart 2 (following page) presents the pertinent details for each of the 11 games with errors. Also included are those players who were directly connected to the RBI errors for Greenberg.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Greenberg reached at least 150 RBIs in a season three times in his career, a feat matched by Al Simmons, and surpassed only by Jimmie Foxx (4), Babe Ruth (5), and Lou Gehrig (7).

DISCUSSION

There are three topics that require discussion: (1) the reliability of the RBI information for Hank Greenberg presented in this article; (2) the consequences of making corrections to Greenberg's official RBI record; (3) the implementation of the corrections in Greenberg's RBI record.

Reliability of the RBI Information. The most important aspect of the information presented in Chart 2 is its reliability. Appendix Two compiles all the data used to determine the errors and provides the comprehensive supporting documentation for each of the RBI errors—and their corrections. Readers are encouraged to examine the evidence provided in Appendix Two, which is on the SABR website at sabr.org.

In the author's opinion, each of the corrections is irrefutable and, in legal terminology, beyond reasonable doubt. Indeed, prior to the submission of this article, I provided the penultimate draft of the manuscript to three fellow SABR members for their assessments of the supporting documentation and my conclusions: David W. Smith, Tom Ruane, and Pete Palmer. Here are their assessments of the evidence:

Smith: I have read the manuscript and have no changes to note. This is a fine job and is typical of your high standards for this painstaking research. Great job.⁵

Ruane: Thanks for the great work on this. Most of the games you discuss are pretty straightforward,

with the exception of the June 15, 1934, game. In that case, I'm inclined to agree with your conclusions, but I would be surprised if Elias finds it definitive. Once again, I agree with your research on these eleven games.⁶

Palmer: I believe your research is sound, so I don't have any additional comments, except that we have to figure a way to handle these changes.⁷

CONSEQUENCES

Chart 3 presents the net effect of correcting the RBI errors in Hank Greenberg's official American League DBD records. As can be seen, while Hammerin' Hank "loses" two RBIs in both 1933 and 1935 and one RBI in 1936, he gains one RBI in each season from 1937 through 1939. Thus, overall, he actually had 1,200 RBIs in his AL career, two fewer than shown in Chart 1 and in most record books.

The most significant consequence of correcting the RBI errors in Greenberg's official DBD records is that in 1937 he actually had 184 RBIs—the same number of RBIs credited to Lou Gehrig in his official DBD record for 1931, the number claimed by the *Elias Book of Baseball Records* to be the AL single-season record.

The inscription on the base of the statue of Hank Greenberg adorning Comerica Park will have to be changed. The inscription reads (in part):

SELECTED AL MVP IN 1935 AFTER LEADING THE LEAGUE WITH 39 HOMERS AND 170 RBI DROVE IN 183 RUNS IN 1937, ONE SHORT OF LOU GEHRIG'S 1931 LEAGUE RECORD

Chart 2. RBI Errors and Corrections in Hank Greenberg's Official American League Record (1930, 1933–41, 1945–46)

| RBI Error No. | Y | M | D | G # | OPP ¹ | Greenberg RBI (DBD) ² | Greenberg RBI (BOX–PBP) ³ | Other Players | RBI (DBD) | RBI (BOX–PBP) | Supporting Documentation ⁴ |
|---------------|------|-----|----|-----|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1933 | JUN | 03 | | CHI | 1 | 0–0 | Ray Hayworth | 0 | 1–1 | DFP-DN-DT-CHT |
| 2 | 1933 | SEP | 16 | 2 | WAS* | 2 | 0–0 | Jo-Jo White | 0 | 2–2 | DFP-DN-DT-WP |
| 3 | 1933 | SEP | 23 | | STL | 0 | 1–1 | Heinie Schuble | 1 | 0–0 | DFP-DN-DT-SLPD |
| 4 | 1934 | JUN | 13 | | BOS* | 3 | 2–2 | See Note 5 | | | DFP-DN-DT-BG-BH-BP |
| 5 | 1934 | JUN | 15 | | BOS* | 0 | 1–1 | Billy Rogell | 2 | 1–1 | DFP-DN-DT-BG-BH-BP |
| 6 | 1935 | JUN | 29 | | STL* | 1 | 0–0 | Goose Goslin | 0 | 1–1 | DFP-DN-DT-SLPD-SLGD |
| 7 | 1935 | JUL | 5 | | STL | 5 | 4–4 | — | — | — | DFP-DN-DT-SLPD-SLGD |
| 8 | 1936 | APR | 29 | | WAS* | 1 | 0–0 | — | — | — | DFP-DN-DT-WP |
| 9 | 1937 | JUN | 20 | 2 | PHI* | 0 | 1–1 | Rudy York | 3 | 1–1 | See Note 6 |
| 10 | 1938 | MAY | 4 | | BOS* | 0 | 1–1 | Rudy York | 1 | 0–0 | DFP-DN-DT-BG-BH-BP |
| 11 | 1939 | JUL | 2 | | CHI | 1 | 2–2 | — | — | — | DFP-DN-DT-CHT |

1. The "OPP" column identifies the team that opposed the Tigers; an asterisk indicates the opposing team was the home team.

2. The "Greenberg RBI (DBD)" column gives his RBIs as shown in baseball's official DBD records.

3. The "Greenberg RBI (BOX–PBP)" column gives his RBIs as shown in newspaper box scores and in newspaper play-by-play accounts, respectively.

4. The supporting documentation for the correction of Greenberg's RBI errors consists of the relevant text accounts provided in these newspapers: Detroit *Free Press* (DFP), Detroit *News* (DN), Detroit *Times* (DT), Boston *Globe* (BG), Boston *Herald* (BH), Boston *Post* (BP), Chicago *Tribune* (CHT), St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* (SLPD), St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* (SLGD), Washington *Post* (WP).

5. Goose Goslin [DBD, 0; BOX–PBP, 2–2]; Charlie Gehringer [DBD, 2; BOX–PBP, 1]; Gee Walker [DBD, 1; BOX–PBP, 0]; Marv Owen [DBD, 1; BOX–PBP, 2].

6. DFP, DN, DT, Philadelphia *Inquirer*, Philadelphia *Record*, Philadelphia *Daily News*, Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin*.

Chart 3. Hank Greenberg's Corrected American League RBI Record, 1930–1946

| Year | RBI Official DBD | Games with RBI ERRORS | Net Change for Corrections of RBI Errors | RBI Actual | Career to-Date RBI Actual |
|------|------------------|-----------------------|--|------------|---------------------------|
| 1930 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1933 | 87 | 3 | - 2 | 85 | 85 |
| 1934 | 139 | 2 | 0 | 139 | 224 |
| 1935 | 170 | 2 | - 2 | 168 | 392 |
| 1936 | 16 | 1 | - 1 | 15 | 407 |
| 1937 | 183 | 1 | + 1 | 184 | 591 |
| 1938 | 146 | 1 | + 1 | 147 | 738 |
| 1939 | 112 | 1 | + 1 | 113 | 851 |
| 1940 | 150 | 0 | 0 | 150 | 1001 |
| 1941 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 1013 |
| 1945 | 60 | 0 | 0 | 60 | 1073 |
| 1946 | 127 | 0 | 0 | 127 | 1200 |

Another subject which the correction of RBI errors can impact is consecutive games batting in at least one run. The American League record is 14 games by Tris Speaker of the 1928 Philadelphia Athletics.⁸ For Hank Greenberg, despite his impressive RBI totals, the longest Consecutive Games Run Batted In (CGRUNBI) streak he was able to achieve is the nine-gamer he assembled in 1937 from May 16 through May 25.⁹ As it turned out, correcting the errors did nothing to unseat Speaker from the top of the CGRUNBI leaderboard.

IMPLEMENTATION OF GREENBERG'S CORRECTED RBI INFORMATION

The final topic of discussion concerns the implementation of the corrected RBI information for Hank Greenberg: who is going to use it or where else will it appear?

In addition to the official DBD records compiled by the defunct Howe News Bureau for the American League, there are four fundamental databases of baseball statistics:

1. Pete Palmer's database
2. The Retrosheet database of game box scores and the derived daily statistical records for each player
3. The STATS database
4. The Elias Sports Bureau database

As previously indicated, Palmer has concurred with the corrections presented here. Since Palmer's database of baseball statistics is contractually used by several prominent websites, including Baseball-Reference.com,

Retrosheet.org, and SABR.org, implementation of these corrections will be broad-based and far-reaching. Similarly, Retrosheet's Smith and Ruane have concurred and the corrections will be incorporated on the Retrosheet website. They have already been implemented in the Retrosheet database of box scores.

With regard to the STATS database, Don Zminda, a longtime SABR member and Vice President and Director of Research for STATS, explained, "We [STATS] have contractual relationships with some major media clients, and those clients expect us to match the official numbers reported by MLB."¹⁰

The "official numbers" for Major League Baseball are currently compiled by the Elias Sports Bureau.

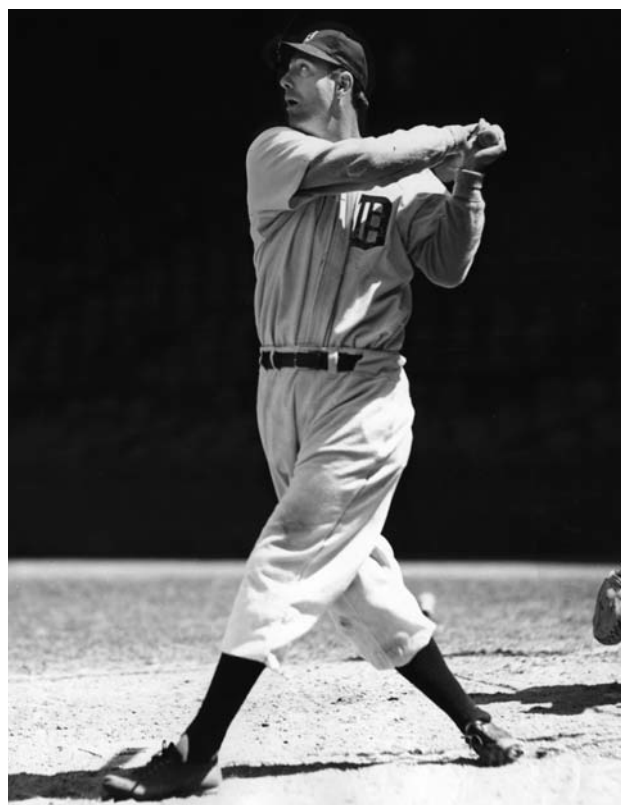
The final draft of this article—including the comprehensive supporting documentation—was provided to Seymour Siwoff (president of Elias), requesting his review of the evidence and his concurrence with or rejection of my conclusions. Whether or not Elias concurs with my conclusions regarding the 1935 or 1937 seasons will be clearly evident in future editions of *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*, since it includes RBI leaderboards from 1920 forward. As shown in Chart 3, Greenberg's actual AL-leading figures are 168 RBIs (not 170) for 1935 and 184 RBIs (not 183) for 1937.

Elias has, in fact, made several statements regarding the RBI errors in the official DBD records for the 1937 Detroit Tigers players:

- In a July 5, 2011, email to me, Steve Hirdt (executive vice president for Elias) wrote: "Thanks again for forwarding to Elias the work that you did on the Tigers RBIs in the 1937 season. As you know, as part of its duties for Major League Baseball, Elias reviews credible evidence potentially

involving bookkeeping errors that affect statistics from past seasons, and makes judgments regarding whether a change is warranted. As you and I have discussed, the subject of your inquiry has some degree of complexity, and we want to be confident that we have gathered and evaluated all available evidence in order to make the best possible judgment. The material that you have forwarded to us will definitely assist in that effort. We hope to conclude that process and to reach a determination as soon as possible, consistent with the criteria for these matters.”¹¹

- In a phone conversation with Seymour Siwoff on July 7, 2011, I asked if Elias would correct the RBI errors in the official DBD records for York and Greenberg for the second game of the double header on June 20, 1937. Here’s a close-to-verbatim version of what he said to me: “We can’t do this. It’s an embarrassment for us. We didn’t do it; Howe [News Bureau] did it. Do what you want; it’s a free country. Good luck; good luck.”¹²
- In an article in the Albany (NY) *Times Union*, Pete Iorizzo quoted Steve Hirdt as saying: “Herm is a dedicated researcher who has kindly shared with us the research that he did on RBIs for the Tigers’ 1937 season.... We are in the process of reviewing that material and trying to determine whether any other evidence exists that could be gathered and evaluated before making a judgment on the matter.”¹³
- In an article in the *Detroit News*, Tim Twentyman wrote: “Krabbenhoft presented his findings to the Elias Sports Bureau, the official statistician for Major League Baseball, but thinks that Elias hasn’t amended the record because Gehrig is an icon.” “‘They do not want changes, especially in significant records involving icons,’ Krabbenhoft said. ‘Getting things changed by Elias is difficult.’” “But Steve Hirdt, executive vice president of Elias, says this particular case isn’t about protecting an icon. It’s about getting all the facts to make a decision with historical ramifications.” “‘As part of its duties for Major League Baseball, Elias reviews credible evidence that might involve bookkeeping errors,’ he said. ‘We hope to have a determination on it as soon as we can, but we want to determine if any other evidence exists, notably a play-by-play of the game. Herm’s evidence by some of the newspapers, while it



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Greenberg wrote, “My goal in baseball was always RBIs, to break Gehrig’s record of 184 RBIs.” Did he come closer than he thought to doing so?

suggests an error might have been made, and it looks like something may be fishy there, the key play involves a case where there was a runner on base and Greenberg hits a ground ball and at the end of the play someone had made an error and the run scored. However, I’ve not seen a play-by-play that indicates the runner started the play on third base or second base. We want to be satisfied before we announce a change and we’ve exhausted looking at everything we can look at,’ Hirdt said. ‘To this point, we have not concluded that effort.’”¹⁴

- In an article in the *Detroit Free Press*, Steve Shrader quoted Hirdt as saying: “Where we are now is in the process of reviewing that material and trying to determine whether any other evidence exists that could be gathered and evaluated before we make a judgment.” And while Elias has made such changes, it doesn’t make such decisions lightly. It wants evidence “almost beyond a shadow of a doubt,” Hirdt said. “What’s the phrase, measure twice and cut once?” he said. “Well, we might add a zero. We might measure 20 times and cut once.”¹⁵

We await Elias's determination. The final draft of this manuscript, including the comprehensive supporting documentation, was also provided to longtime SABR member John Thorn, Official Historian of Major League Baseball as well.

CONCLUSION

In "Behind the Seams—the Stat Story," a special program recently put out by MLB Productions, narrator Bob Costas says: "Numbers are the foundation of a lot of what we love and understand about the game of baseball. ... They are numbers etched in memory and instantly and reverently recalled. They are a huge part of the foundation of baseball's narrative. ... The wealth of numbers begs to be analyzed, dissected and re-evaluated. ... SABR's research obviously impacts today's game, but also seeks to confirm certain numbers from the past."¹⁶

Let's reiterate that last clause: "SABR's research ... also seeks to confirm certain numbers from the past."

As it has turned out, baseball's official records, particularly those from the "pre-computer era" (i.e., prior to the early 1970s) are fraught with countless errors. For example, in my research on the longest consecutive games streaks for scoring at least one run by players on the Detroit Tigers, I discovered—and corrected—runs-scored errors in 13 games out of the 4,424 games the Tigers played during the period 1945 through 1972 (the last year that baseball's official DBD records were compiled "by hand"). That corresponds to 99.71 % accuracy. For the period from 1973 forward, the official DBD records appear to be 100 % correct with respect to the runs scored by the Tigers players.¹⁷

However, for the period from 1920 through 1944, I discovered—and corrected—runs-scored errors in 35 games out of the 3,871 games played by Detroit, corresponding to an accuracy of 99.10 %. This value might seem pretty good on the surface but is totally unsatisfactory for ascertaining accurate consecutive game streaks for scoring at least one run. All told I have discovered—and corrected—a total of 83 runs-scored errors involving 56 players, including seven Hall of Famers: Al Kaline, George Kell, Hal Newhouser, Hank Greenberg, Charlie Gehringer, Heinie Manush, and Ty Cobb.^{18,19}

My conclusion is that one should not blindly rely on the statistics presented in baseball's most popular encyclopedias (such as the Baseball-Reference.com website) and record books (such as *The Elias Baseball Record Book*). It is imperative that any researcher independently verify the accuracy of the statistics before drawing research conclusions.

It is my hope that others will also pursue research efforts to correct the errors in the official records for runs scored and runs batted in by the players on their favorite teams. ■

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following people for their fantastic cooperation in helping me complete the research needed to irrefutably correct the RBI errors in Hank Greenberg's official DBD records: Ron Antonucci, Jeff Bartold, Freddy Berowski, Steve Boren, Rich Bowering, Keith Carlson, David Furies, Mike Lynch, Bob McConnell, Trent McCotter, Mark Moore, Pete Palmer, Bernadette Preston, Dick Rosen, Tom Ruane, Dave Smith, Gary Stone, Dixie Tourangeau, and Tim Wiles.

Notes

1. Herm Krabbenhoft, "Lou Gehrig's RBI Record," *The Baseball Research Journal* (Fall, 2011): 12.
2. Trent McCotter reported the findings of his research on Gehrig's RBIs in the 1931 season at the SABR national convention. While he discovered and corrected five games with RBI errors involving Gehrig, the net effect of correcting the errors was no change in Gehrig's season total. See Herm Krabbenhoft and Trent McCotter, "Most Runs Batted In: By an Individual Player—During a Single Season—In the American League," presentation at the National Convention of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), July 7, 2011, Long Beach, CA.
3. Gehringer actually led at .325.
4. Ruth also led in RBIs before it became an official statistic, but pre-Elias records are outside the scope of this investigation.
5. David W. Smith, personal email, September 13, 2011 and December 3, 2011.
6. Tom Ruane, personal email, September 13, 2011 and December 1, 2011.
7. Pete Palmer, personal email, October 13, 2011 and December 10, 2011.
8. Trent McCotter, "Record RBI Streak Discovered: Hall of Famer Tris Speaker Put Together a String of 14 Consecutive Games with an RBI in 1928 That Was Unrecognized for 79 Years," *Baseball Digest* (May 2008): 62.
9. The longest reported CGRUNBI streak for a Detroit Tigers player are the 12-gamers accomplished by Mickey Cochrane in 1934 and Rudy York in 1940; see Lyle, Spatz, Editor, *The SABR Baseball List & Record Book*, (2007): 145.
10. Don Zminda, personal email, August 28, 2011.
11. Steve Hirdt, personal email, July 5, 2011.
12. Seymour Siwoff, telephone conversation, July 7, 2011; see also Cecilia Tan, "SABR 41: Day one research presentations," *Why I Like Baseball*, www.whylikebaseball.com, July 7, 2011.
13. Pete Iorizzo, "Man Driven to Set the Record Straight," *Times Union* (Albany, NY, July 10, 2011): C1.
14. Tim Twentyman, "Greenberg Could Share RBI Mark," *Detroit News* (July 22, 2011): B5.
15. Steve Schrader, "Greenberg RBI Total Off Base?," *Detroit Free Press* (August 2, 2011): B5.
16. "Behind the Seams—the Stat Story," MLB Productions, first aired on September 18, 2011.
17. Dave Smith, personal email, November 14, 2006.
18. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Authorized Correction of Errors in Runs Scored in the Official Records (1945–2008) for Detroit Tigers players," *The Baseball Research Journal* 37 (2008): 115.
19. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Authorized Correction of Errors in Runs Scored in the Official Records (1920–1944) for Detroit Tigers players," *The Baseball Research Journal* 40 (Spring 2011): 66.

Are Baseball Players Superior to Umpires in Discriminating Balls from Strikes?

Christoph Kreinbucher

INTRODUCTION

When umpires allegedly make a wrong call, they open themselves to criticism from players, coaches, spectators, or even newspapers.¹ Missed, bad or wrong calls are part of nearly every game and can have an influence on the run of the play as well as the final score. Recall the 2005 American League Championship Series between the Chicago White Sox and the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim when a controversial call in the ninth inning led to the difference in the game. Chicago had recorded two outs in the inning and their batter already had two strikes. He then missed strike three, but was allowed to take first base after the third strike bounced out of the catcher's glove (the catcher thought the same as a majority of the Angels players, that the inning was over). By advancing to first on the dropped third strike, the batter extended the inning and changed the outcome of the game.

The given example shows the importance of calls at home plate and what they can lead to. Emotions can run particularly high when a player perceives a pitched ball is out of the strike zone but the umpire calls "strike." Is it possible that a batter is better at judging whether a ball is in the strike zone than an umpire? If so, what can this be attributed to?

"Ball" and "strike" calls constitute a unique sports judging situation that can be found only in baseball or softball. The strike zone is virtual and not determined by clearly visible boundaries like in other sports such as tennis ("in"/"out") or soccer ("goal"/"no goal") in which fixed lines are indicated on the playing surfaces or defined by poles or other physical features. Accordingly, determining the specific moment in time when the ball is exactly above home plate is difficult. Moreover, it is problematic to estimate this point in time from behind; where the umpire positions himself could make calling balls and strikes more difficult. This was the main topic of an investigation in which the authors compared the traditional position of the home plate umpire with four alternative perspectives.² The results revealed that a position behind the outside corner, farther away from the batter, led to more accurate calls. The advantage of that particular position are two-fold: one, additional height and distance cues,

and two, the advantage of being able to see pitches pass in front of the batter. Umpires ought to be aware of this problem and should position themselves as advantageously as possible in order to increase the likelihood of making more accurate calls.

Another reason the ball/strike decision is unique is because the home plate umpire and the batter are positioned closer together than can be found in any other sport. One can say that they view pitches from nearly the same vantage point. In one of the first scientific investigations on officiating in baseball, the umpire's knowledge of the official rules was compared to that of the players.³ While umpires were more knowledgeable about the official rules than players, there was a different perception of the strike zone. Umpires admitted that they called the upper boundary of the strike zone significantly lower than the official rule specified. This is thought to be to the advantage of the batter, but still an error according to the rules. Further, a related study demonstrated that umpires sometimes adopt different criteria for calling borderline pitches balls or strikes depending on the pitchers' reputation.⁴ When participants were told that a pitcher has little control of his throws, the strike zone was enlarged and a borderline pitch was more often called a strike in comparison to a control pitcher, where the strike zone was narrowed and a borderline pitch was called a ball. Another investigation showed that umpires can be biased in their calls depending on the sequence of balls and strikes.⁵ These investigations demonstrate that certain factors can bias umpires in their decision-making process and lead to wrong calls.

For proper discrimination of balls and strikes, perceptual experience is important. Several studies in fast ball sports showed that experts have superior anticipation skills when compared to less skilled counterparts and novices.^{6,7} A common explanation for this is that experts have been more exposed to the corresponding sport-specific situations and as a result they are perceptually better attuned to the task-relevant information. One can therefore conclude that professional players and umpires share perceptual experience gained through watching many pitches in their careers. The fact that they have two different tasks to execute

makes the whole situation even more interesting. While umpires “only” have to give a verbal judgment as to whether the pitched ball was in or outside the strike zone, a batter has to not only make the same determination, but also to transfer that judgment into a swing, to hit the ball at the proper time. The difference in those tasks could have an influence on the decision-making process of umpires and players and therefore their abilities to discern balls from strikes. Two previous scientific investigations have addressed this issue.

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATIONS TO BALL AND STRIKE JUDGMENTS

In an investigation conducted in Canada, umpires, players, and control participants without any relevant baseball experience were compared on their ability to make ball and strike calls.⁸ Video clips in which several pitches were filmed from the umpire’s point of view were used as testing material. To emulate a game scenario the camera was mounted on the head of the umpire, who was asked to minimize his movements as much as possible. The researchers then recorded pitches from a left- and a right-handed pitcher. They asked the two pitchers to throw balls and strikes with varied pitches, such as fastball and slider. The starting point of each video clip was when the pitcher took the set position on the mound. Three experienced umpires judged the clips independently to determine the criteria ball or strike. In the end, 38 ball and 23 strike pitches were used. The results revealed that both umpires and players scored higher accuracies than the group of novices, whereas players scored the highest accuracy but without any significant differences between them and the umpires.

A further step was taken in an investigation in the Netherlands with a similar design but a different approach.⁹ They also used three different groups at three different levels of expertise (skilled baseball players, experienced baseball umpires, and novices) in the experiment. The basic idea of this experiment was to get an insight into the decision-making process of players and umpires by using both of their game-specific tasks in an experiment in a lab. Although both umpires and players are attempting to judge whether a pitch is a strike or a ball in a game situation, the umpire’s game-specific task is to announce verbally (or by use of hand signals) whether the pitch is a strike or ball, and the batter’s game-specific task is to decide whether to swing the bat or not.

All three groups were asked to judge some pitches by simply saying “ball” or “strike,” but a second task was also added. For other pitches, participants were given a real baseball bat, which they were instructed

to swing when they considered to be the proper time to “hit” the ball if they thought the ball was inside of the strike zone. Participants were also instructed to stand still or stop the swing if they thought the ball was going to be outside of the strike zone. As testing material, two sets of 60 video clips were presented on a life-size screen. In contrast to the investigation of the Canadian researchers, this experiment showed a difference in the accuracy of players and umpires in the ability to discern balls from strikes. In total, players’ ball and strike calls were much more accurate than umpires or novices, and no difference between the umpires and novices was found. Players were also more correct in discriminating balls from strikes than umpires, irrespective of the experimental condition, whether giving a verbal response or a motor response. It seems to be that players outperformed umpires not only in their accustomed game-specific task using the baseball bat, but also in the verbal task which is what umpires are used to doing in a real game situation. The authors argue that the superior performance of players seems to be related to the motor experience they gained while swinging their bat in many games throughout their career. This is an interesting finding which could lead to some speculations about how to improve the training of umpires. [Editor’s Note: We hope to present the full findings and details of this study in a future issue of the *Baseball Research Journal*.]

Although there are differences in the accuracy scores between players, umpires, and novices, the results from the presented investigation are limited to a certain extent. Due to the artificial situation in a laboratory one could argue that this is a completely new task for everyone. The advantage to using a controlled setting is that other influences such as the ones found in the earlier mentioned investigations can be eliminated.¹⁰ Still, there is a difference between having to judge a ball moving in three-dimensional space in a real-game situation than judging video clips on a two-dimensional screen.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the mentioned studies are mostly preliminary and further research has to be done to address which factors are responsible for differences in the accuracy between the groups in calling balls and strikes, possible practical implications should be discussed. If we follow the interpretation of the researchers that a baseball player’s motor experience in performing a bat swing could help them to perceive the difference between balls and strikes, one could ask if umpires could improve their pitch-calling abilities if they gained the

same motor experience of swinging a baseball bat at home plate. A similar question was asked by German researchers in relation to soccer.¹¹

Their research highlighted the difficulty of judging whether a foul should lead to a penalty kick or not. Nowadays, it is common for players to use theatrical abilities to fall down spectacularly when (almost) touched by an opponent in the penalty area in order to have a penalty called. For a referee, it is difficult to judge whether a foul was genuine or just a “dive.” The concept behind this investigation was that referees had to learn to fall like players in different training sessions (i.e. gain motor experience in performing this task) so they could better estimate the ambiguous tackling situation. The results revealed that referees who participated in the training sessions were more often correct in their later decisions concerning whether a situation shown via a video clip was a real foul or if the player pretended to be fouled. Similar training sessions could easily be conducted in baseball.

Independent of the differences between players and umpires, the investigation showed that wrong calls are common and cannot be avoided. In this respect the discussion of the usage of technological devices should be advanced. Since 2008, Major League Baseball allows instant replays, but only for boundary calls associated with home runs. Instant replay is used in sports such as ice hockey and tennis. In tennis, umpire decisions can be challenged with the help of a “hawk-eye” system three times in each set, with one additional challenge if a set is decided in a tie-break. Although the equipment and the possibilities exist, baseball is not using the technological potential. The question is one of what is wanted in this sport. Is there a wish for a complete technological observation, which will provide absolute clarity about the calls, yet also cause a possible delay in the game? Or, is it desirable to have the fruitful debates between fans, commentators, and the press? These animated discussions, heated arguments, and passionate face-offs are a major factor which keeps spectators interested in the sport.

The fact is, we should not forget that to err is human. If we are to follow that adage, then we should treat umpires and referees with respect and not only honor their work, but facilitate their attempts to improve the accuracy with which they are making decisions. We can do this by ensuring that further research is conducted directly on the baseball field to create and observe situations as close to reality as possible. Therefore, new technological improvements should also be included as long they do not affect the game in its general cycle. Furthermore, technologies



BRIAN MCENTIRE / ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

Umpires give a verbal judgment as to whether a pitched ball is in or outside the strike zone. A batter makes the same determination in deciding whether to swing. The difference in those tasks could have an influence on the decision-making process for each.

such as the PITCHf/x system should be used for the purpose of training umpires. The advantage of such training could be that immediately after the decision of an umpire, feedback can be given whether the ball or strike call was right or wrong. Umpires could therefore adapt their judgments with a cognitive reevaluation of their reference lines. The success of direct feedback after a judgment for umpires and referees has been shown in training studies in tennis and soccer.^{12,13}

Ultimately, umpires must be given the skills to succeed at their task. This study and the other research cited suggest that increased motor experience (swinging the bat) and training sessions involving PITCHf/x feedback on ball and strike calls would most likely improve umpires' abilities to judge the strike zone.

In an effort to close the discussion on the use of technology in baseball with regards to umpire training, consider the insightful summary as offered by *The New York Times*: “A mistake by a player cannot be reversed by technology. A mistake by an umpire can, if baseball would allow it.”¹⁴ ■

Notes

1. Tyler Kepner, At first, fireworks over the umpiring, *The New York Times*, October 23, 2011, Retrieved from www.nytimes.com.
2. Ford, G.G., Gallagher, S.H. & Lacy, B.A. (1999). Repositioning the home plate umpire to provide enhanced perceptual cues and more accurate ball-strike judgments. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 22, 28–44.
3. Rainey, D.W. & Larsen, J.D. (1988). Balls, strikes, and norms: Rule violations and normative rules among baseball umpires. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 10, 75–80.
4. Rainey, D.W., Larsen, J.D. & Stephenson, A. (1989). The effect of a pitcher's reputation on umpires' calls of ball and strikes. *International Journal of Sport Behavior*, 12, 139–150.
5. Paull, G. & Glencross, D. (1997). Expert perception and decision making in baseball. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 28, 35–56.
6. Abernethy, B. & Zawi, K. (2008). Pick-up essential kinematics underpins expert perception of movement patterns. *Journal of Motor Behavior*, 39, 353–367.
7. Van der Kamp, J., Rivas, F., van Doorn, H. & Savelsbergh, G.J.P. (2008). Ventral and dorsal contributions in visual anticipation in fast ball sports. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 39, 100–130.
8. MacMahon, C. & Starkes, J.L. (2008). Contextual influences on baseball ball-strike decisions in umpires, players and controls. *Journal of Sport Sciences*, 26, 751–760.
9. Kreinbucher, C., Cañal-Bruland, R. & Oudejans, R.R.D. (2010). Der Einfluss motorischer Expertise auf die Beurteilung von „Ball“ und „Strike“ im Baseball. [Motor experience influences strike and ball judgments in baseball.]. In G. Amesberger, T. Finkenzeller & S. Würth (Eds.). *Psychophysiologie im Sport – zwischen Experiment und Handlungsoptimierung* (149). Hamburg: Czwalina.
10. Rainey op. cit., Paull & Glencross, op. cit.
11. Pizzera, A. (2010). Verbessert „Schwalbentraining“ das Erkennen von Schwalben? [Does special “dive training” improve the recognition of dives]. In G. Amesberger, T. Finkenzeller & S. Würth (Eds.). *Psychophysiologie im Sport – zwischen Experiment und Handlungsoptimierung*, 149. Hamburg: Czwalina.
12. Jendrusch, G. (2002). Probleme bei der Bewegungsbeobachtung und -beurteilung durch Kampf-, Schieds- und Linienrichter. [Judges', referees', and linesmen's difficulties in the perception and evaluation of movements]. *Psychologie und Sport*, 9, 133–144.
13. Schweizer, G., Plessner, H., Kahlert, D. & Brand, R. (2011). A video-based training method for improving soccer referees' intuitive decision making skills. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 23, 429–442.
14. Kepner, op. cit.

Breaking Balls with a Runner on Third

A Game Theoretical Analysis of Optimal Behavior

William Spaniel

INTRODUCTION

With a runner on third base, the pitcher faces a dilemma. Throwing breaking balls is risky because the ball may go past the catcher, thereby allowing the runner to score without a hit. But if the pitcher avoids throwing breaking balls altogether, the batter can anticipate fastballs exclusively, increasing his ability to record a hit, which scores the runner anyway.

Using a game theoretical framework, this article shows how each player optimally solves the dilemma. Our intuition (and the broadcasters we listen to) might tell us that, to decrease the likelihood of the runner scoring on a wild pitch or passed ball, the pitcher increases his fastball frequency. Consequently, the batter anticipates more fastballs and is therefore more likely to record a hit, as the pitcher has adopted a more predictable strategy.

In actuality, after solving each player's optimal strategy, it turns out only one part of this intuition is correct. When the players strategize correctly, the batter anticipates more fastballs. However, the pitcher continues throwing breaking balls at the same frequency as before, which makes the batter equally successful at guessing the correct pitch with a man on third base as with third base empty.

THE MODEL

To establish a baseline for comparison, I begin this section by formally defining a pitching situation with the bases empty. I then introduce the added tradeoff of a man on third and find the solution of the more complex game. Afterward, I compare the results of the two models to prove my claims.

With the Bases Empty. For ease of analysis, I consider a model where the pitcher has only two pitches: fastball and slider. Although most pitchers throw more than two types, the results presented below straightforwardly extend to cases where the pitcher has more than two pitches.

To capture the batter's advantage from correctly guessing the type of pitch thrown to him, I begin by considering a simple, simultaneous move game. The

batter has two actions: guess fastball and guess slider. The pitcher has two actions: throw fastball and throw slider. If the batter guesses correctly, he earns 1 point and the pitcher earns -1. If the batter guesses incorrectly, both players earn 0.

The preference ordering models the batter's ability to hit a fastball equal to his ability to hit a slider. In practice, this is not the case, but the results presented here extend to cases where the batter has a strong pitch and a weak pitch. The important feature of these payoffs is that they exclude trivial cases where the batter cannot hit a particular pitch at all or the pitcher cannot adequately throw a particular pitch.

I make this assumption to create a more parsimonious model. Relaxing the assumption does not change the results but does make the corresponding analysis far less intuitive. Specifically, we could alter the payoffs to read as the probability each player's team wins the game given the players' strategy selections. In this manner, we could fully account for a pitcher throwing sliders blocked in the dirt that the batter cannot hit, or a batter's particular weakness to a fastball or slider. However, the results presented still hold in this generalized case.

Figure 1 is the payoff matrix that represents each player's strategies and preferences. By convention, the row player's payoff is the left numbers in each cell while the column player's payoffs is the right number.

| | | Pitcher | |
|--------|----------|----------|--------|
| | | Fastball | Slider |
| Batter | Fastball | 1, -1 | 0, 0 |
| | Slider | 0, 0 | 1, -1 |

Figure 1.

Since this is a simultaneous move game of complete information, I solve for its Nash equilibria. A Nash equilibrium is a set of strategies such that, given what the other player is doing, no player has incentive to change his strategy. In other words, no player can play a different strategy and improve his expected outcome.

It is easy to see that there are no Nash equilibria in pure strategies, or single strategies players use exclusively. For example, suppose the pitcher always threw

a fastball. Then the batter's best response is to always guess fastball. But if the batter is always guessing fastball, then the pitcher ought to always throw a slider instead. However, then the batter should always guess slider. That returns us to where the pitcher always throws a fastball. The loop repeats *ad nauseam*.

As such, the players must randomize between their strategies; intuitively, we and the players both know that the pitcher must sometimes throw a fastball and sometimes throw a slider, while the batter must sometimes guess fastball and sometimes guess slider. The players cannot fall into a predictable pattern.

We now search for mixed strategy Nash equilibria, which cover these randomized strategies. When both players must randomize their strategies, they select probability distributions over their pure strategies that leave their opponents indifferent between the two opposing pure strategies. This will become clearer as we solve the game.

Let $\sigma_{PF} \in (0,1)$ be the probability the pitcher throws a fastball. (The pitcher therefore throws a slider with complementary probability, or $1 - \sigma_{PF}$.) Then $EU_{BF}(\sigma_{PF})$, the batter's expected utility for guessing fastball, equals:

$$EU_{BF}(\sigma_{PF}) = \sigma_{PF}(1) + (1 - \sigma_{PF})(0) = \sigma_{PF}$$

This formula is the batter's payoff for guessing fastball multiplied by the probability the pitcher throws him a fastball plus the probability of getting a slider multiplied by the probability the pitcher throws him a slider.

Likewise, the batter's expected utility for guessing slider equals:

$$EU_{BS}(\sigma_{PF}) = \sigma_{PF}(0) + (1 - \sigma_{PF})(1) = 1 - \sigma_{PF}$$

Thus, the batter is indifferent to guessing fastball and guessing slider if:

$$EU_{BF}(\sigma_{PF}) = EU_{BS}(\sigma_{PF})$$

$$\sigma_{PF} = 1 - \sigma_{PF}$$

$$\sigma_{PF} = \frac{1}{2}$$

So if the pitcher throws a fastball as often as he throws a slider, the batter cannot gain an advantage by guessing one type of pitch over the other. Since he is indifferent between always guessing one type, he is also indifferent between all mixtures of guesses. That is, for $\sigma_{PF} = 1/2$, the batter's payoff for always guessing fastball is equal to guessing fastball a quarter of the time, which is also equal to guessing fastball half the time, which is also equal to guessing fastball five-sevenths of the time, and so forth.

Next, we calculate the pitcher's expected utility for each of his pure strategies as a function of the batter guessing fastball with probability $\sigma_{BF} \in (0,1)$.¹ The pitcher's expected utility of throwing a fastball equals:

$$EU_{PF}(\sigma_{BF}) = \sigma_{BF}(-1) + (1 - \sigma_{BF})(0) = -\sigma_{BF}$$

And the pitcher's expected utility of throwing a slider equals:

$$EU_{PS}(\sigma_{BF}) = \sigma_{BF}(0) + (1 - \sigma_{BF})(-1) = \sigma_{BF} - 1$$

Thus, the pitcher is indifferent between throwing his two pitches if:

$$EU_{PF}(\sigma_{BF}) = EU_{PS}(\sigma_{BF})$$

$$-\sigma_{BF} = \sigma_{BF} - 1$$

$$\sigma_{BF} = \frac{1}{2}$$

Note that when both players choose fastball and slider with equal probability, neither player can change his strategy and increase his payoff. Therefore, the game is in "equilibrium." The intuition here is that both players need to be unpredictable.² If one begins focusing on a particular pitch, the other can exploit the situation; either the batter begins to look for that particular pitch, or the pitcher starts throwing the opposite pitch.

With a Runner on Third. We now consider a slight alteration to the previous game. To model the risk throwing a slider entails, whenever the pitcher throws a slider, the batter gains X and the pitcher loses X , where $X > 0$.³ Figure 2 depicts the strategic interaction.

| | | Pitcher | |
|--------|----------|----------|-----------|
| | | Fastball | Slider |
| Batter | Fastball | 1, -1 | X, -X |
| | Slider | 0, 0 | 1+X, -1-X |

Figure 2.

To be clear, X incorporates many things: the probability the pitcher throws the ball in the dirt, the probability the catcher blocks such balls, and the speed of the runner at third. Since there is some risk that the runner scores on a wild fastball, X is the *extra* risk of throwing a slider.⁴ Both the batter and pitcher share a common evaluation for X (whether it is equal to .5, .75, 2, or whatever) before they play the game. By having X vary in this manner, we can solve for all possible scenarios and measure how the optimal strategies change as a function of the pitcher's ability to control pitches, the catcher's ability to block pitches, and the speed of the runner on third.

I solve for two different cases: $X > 1$ and $X \in (0, 1)$. When $X = 1$, there is a knife-edge condition, which is substantively unrealistic.⁵ Nevertheless, I include the proof for $X = 1$ in the appendix.

First, suppose $X > 1$. It is easy to see that regardless of what the batter does, the pitcher should always throw a fastball. Indeed, suppose the batter guessed fastball. Then the pitcher should throw a fastball, as $-1 > -X$. Now suppose the batter guessed slider. Then the pitcher should throw a fastball, as $0 > -1 - X$. So throwing a fastball is strictly better than throwing a slider regardless of what the batter does. Thus, the pitcher always throws a fastball.

From the above reasoning, the batter can infer the pitcher will throw a fastball with certainty. Thus, he selects his best response to a fastball. He earns 0 for guessing a slider and 1 for guessing a fastball, so he guesses fastball. So when $X > 1$, the pitcher always throws a fastball, and the batter always guesses fastball.

Second, suppose $X \in (0, 1)$. As in the game with the bases empty, no pure strategy Nash equilibria exist. Despite the added X dynamic, if the pitcher always throws a particular pitch, the batter always anticipates that pitch. But if the batter always anticipates a certain pitch, the pitcher optimally throws the opposite pitch, and we devolve back to the familiar strategic loop.

Therefore, we must look for a mixed strategy Nash equilibrium using the same process as before. Again, let the probability the pitcher throws a fastball be σ_{PF} . Then the batter's expected utility for guessing fastball equals:

$$EU_{BF}(\sigma_{PF}) = \sigma_{PF}(1) + (1 - \sigma_{PF})(X)$$

And the batter's expected utility for guessing slider equals:

$$EU_{BS}(\sigma_{PF}) = \sigma_{PF}(0) + (1 - \sigma_{PF})(1 + X) = (1 - \sigma_{PF})(1 + X)$$

Therefore, the batter is indifferent between guessing fastball and guessing slider if:

$$EU_{BF}(\sigma_{PF}) = EU_{BS}(\sigma_{PF})$$

$$\sigma_{PF}(1) + (1 - \sigma_{PF})(X) = (1 - \sigma_{PF})(1 + X)$$

$$\sigma_{PF} = \frac{1}{2}$$

Meanwhile, let the probability the batter guesses fastball be σ_{BF} . Then the pitcher's expected utility of throwing a fastball equals:

$$EU_{PF}(\sigma_{BF}) = \sigma_{BF}(-1) + (1 - \sigma_{BF})(0) = -\sigma_{BF}$$

And pitcher's expected utility of throwing a slider equals:

$$EU_{PS}(\sigma_{BF}) = \sigma_{BF}(-X) + (1 - \sigma_{BF})(-1 - X) = \sigma_{BF} - 1 - X$$

Thus, the pitcher is indifferent between throwing a fastball and throwing a slider if:

$$EU_{PF}(\sigma_{BF}) = EU_{PS}(\sigma_{BF})$$

$$-\sigma_{BF} = \sigma_{BF} - 1 - X$$

$$\sigma_{BF} = \frac{1 + X}{2}$$

To verify that this is a valid, non-deterministic probability distribution (that is, σ_{BF} is between 0 and 1), note that both the numerator and denominator are positive, and that $2 > 1 + X$ since $X \in (0, 1)$. These two properties preserve the fact that σ_{BF} is a strictly positive number less than 1.

Therefore, in equilibrium, when $X \in (0, 1)$ the pitcher throws fastballs and sliders both with probability 1/2, while the batter guesses fastball with probability $(1 + X)/2$ and guesses slider with probability $(1 - X)/2$.

COMPARATIVE STATICS

Comparative statics analyze changes in equilibrium behavior as a function of changes to the game's parameters. In the strategic situation presented here, there are two such parameters: whether the bases are empty or there is a man on third, and the likelihood that a ball goes past the catcher (represented by X).

Two things are immediately apparent. First, the pitcher only changes his behavior in the case with a runner on third and $X > 1$, where he throws fastballs exclusively. Substantively, when $X > 1$, the pitcher is so wild, the catcher is so ineffective at blocking balls in the dirt, and the runner at third is so fast that the pitcher would rather be predictable with his fastball than risk having a slider go past the catcher.

Although mathematically possible, the situation seems unlikely at the major league level; it requires a level of pitching inconsistency and catcher incompetence unbecoming of a professional baseball player. Perhaps the only major league application is when an emergency catcher is behind the plate or a position player is on the mound. At that point, the pitcher may simply want to throw fastballs exclusively.

The second obvious difference is that the batter looks for a fastball more frequently with a runner on third and $X \in (0, 1)$ than with the bases empty. To see this, recall that the probability he guesses fastball with the bases empty equals 1/2, while the probabil-

ity he guesses fastball with a man on third and $X \in (0, 1)$ equals $(1 + X)/2$. Note that $(1 + X)/2 > 1/2$ because $X > 0$. So, as X increases, the probability the batter guesses fastball increases.⁶

To the observer, the batter displays a type of risk aversion here. He knows if the pitcher throws a slider, the runner will score with some probability no matter what he guessed. So guessing fastball more frequently increases his minimum payoff. However, he cannot guess fastball too often—that is, more frequently than $(1 + X)/2$ —otherwise the pitcher’s best response is to always throw a slider, despite the risk of scoring the runner from third.

Given that, the pitcher’s optimal response is sensible. Throwing sliders remains risky. Yet throwing fastballs more frequently with a runner on third plays right into the batter’s hands, as the batter could focus on fastballs exclusively. Thus, the pitcher continues to throw risky sliders, knowing that he is more likely catch the batter off guard when he does.

Another question we might be interested in is how a runner on third affects the batter’s ability to put the ball in play. To find the probability the batter is “successful” in this regard, defined as the probability that he guesses correctly, we must first calculate the likelihood of particular outcomes in each model. First, consider the game with the bases empty. The equilibrium calls for the batter to guess fastball with probability $1/2$ and for the pitcher to throw a fastball with probability $1/2$. The probability the batter guesses fastball and the pitch is fastball equals the probability that each such event occurs, namely $(1/2)(1/2) = 1/4$. The probability the batter guesses slider and the pitch is slider equals $(1 - 1/2)(1 - 1/2) = 1/4$. Therefore, the probability the batter is successful is the sum of these probabilities, or $1/4 + 1/4 = 1/2$. So with the bases empty, the batter successfully guesses the correct pitch half of the time.

Now consider the game with a man on third and $X > 1$. In equilibrium, the batter always guesses a fastball and pitcher always throws a fastball. Therefore, the batter is successful with probability 1; put differently, he always guesses correctly.⁷

Finally, consider the game with a man on third and $X \in (0, 1)$. According to the equilibrium, the batter guesses fastball with probability $(1 + X)/2$ and the pitcher throws a fastball with probability $1/2$. Therefore, the probability the batter guesses and receives a fastball equals $[(1 + X)/2](1/2) = (1 + X)/4$. Similarly, the probability the batter guess and receives a slider equals $[1 - (1 + X)/2](1/2) = (1 - X)/4$. Thus, the total

probability the batter is successful equals $(1 + X)/4 + (1 - X)/4 = 1/2$.

In comparing these results, we see that the batter only gains an advantage over the pitcher when the rate of runaway sliders is extremely high, or $X > 1$. Outside of that, the likelihood the batter is successful equals $1/2$ in both the model with the bases empty and the model with a runner on third and $X \in (0, 1)$.

The pitcher’s optimal behavior explains the discrepancy between the intuition from the beginning of the article and the model’s results. Since the pitcher continues throwing fastballs and sliders at the same rate with a runner on third and $X \in (0, 1)$, the batter cannot increase or decrease the probability he records a hit; he could guess fastball or slider as a pure strategy, and he would see the same results. Therefore, to keep the pitcher honest the batter guesses fastball with increased regularity. This implies that even if a selfish batter determined to score the runner without the aid of a wild pitch or passed ball cannot strategically inflate his batting average or runs batted in focusing only on single type of pitch.

That said, the pitcher’s payoff decreases as X increases from 0 to 1. The pitcher’s expected utility is the sum of each of his payoffs times the probability that each outcome occurs in equilibrium. Recall the probability the pitcher throws a fastball equals $1/2$ and the probability he throws a slider also equals $1/2$. Meanwhile, the batter guesses fastball with probability $(1 + X)/2$ and guesses slider with probability $(1 - X)/2$. Thus, the probability the pitcher throws a fastball and the batter guesses fastball equals $(1/2)[(1 + X)/2]$, the probability the pitcher throws slider and the batter guesses fastball equals $(1/2)[(1 - X)/2]$, the probability the pitcher throws fastball and the batter guesses slider equals $(1/2)[(1 - X)/2]$, and the probability the pitcher throws a slider and the batter guesses a slider equals $(1/2)[(1 + X)/2]$. Multiplying these probabilities by the pitcher’s payoffs in the outcomes they represent yields the pitcher’s overall expected utility:

$$\begin{aligned} EU_P &= \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \left(\frac{1+X}{2}\right) (-1) + \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \left(\frac{1+X}{2}\right) (-X) \\ &\quad + \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \left(\frac{1-X}{2}\right) (0) + \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \left(\frac{1-X}{2}\right) (-1-X) \\ EU_P &= \frac{-1-X}{2} \end{aligned}$$

This shows that as X increases, the pitcher’s expected utility decreases.⁸ Thus, since the pitcher’s ability to control his slider and the catcher’s ability to block the slider decrease X , these skill sets increase the pitcher’s

overall payoff.⁹ However, pitcher and catcher incompetence can only reduce the pitcher's payoff by so much; if $X > 1$, the pitcher always throws a fastball and the batter always guesses fastball, leading the pitcher to earn -1 with certainty.

CONCLUSION

This article investigated the strategic dynamics of pitching with a runner on third base. I found that, when players strategize optimally, a runner on third only changes the pitcher's behavior in extreme circumstances. When the pitcher has some control over his breaking balls and the catcher can competently block balls in the dirt, pitchers optimally throw as they would with the bases empty. On the other hand, the batter focuses on fastballs, knowing that there is some chance the runner will score without a hit on a breaking ball.

Since the model provided derives specific expectations, future research could investigate whether players play according to the optimal parameters. However, this may prove complicated. Note that the model investigated a simplified world where the pitcher and batter are unconcerned about the type of out recorded. Yet, with one out, a deep fly ball out is much worse for the pitcher than a ground out, which increases the complexity of drawing direct comparisons between when the bases are empty and when there is a runner on third. Fortunately, this concern disappears with two outs, since the third out is strategically the same no matter how it is recorded.¹⁰ Given the incorrect intuition presented at the beginning of the article, it may very well be that players engage in suboptimal behavior. ■

Appendix

This appendix solves the game with a runner on third when $X = 1$. To begin, note that throwing a fastball weakly dominates throwing a slider for the pitcher. Both players selecting fastball is a pure strategy Nash equilibrium. However, infinitely many partially mixed strategy Nash equilibria also exist in which the batter plays fastball as a pure strategy and the pitcher mixes.

The batter's expected utility for guessing fastball as a function of the pitcher's mixed strategy σ_{PF} equals:

$$EU_{BF}(\sigma_{PF}) = \sigma_{PF}(1) + (1 - \sigma_{PF})(1) = 1$$

And his expected utility of guessing slider equals:

$$EU_{BF}(\sigma_{PF}) = \sigma_{PF}(0) + (1 - \sigma_{PF})(2) = (1 - \sigma_{PF})(2)$$

Therefore, the batter's best response to σ_{PF} is to guess fastball if:

$$1 \geq (1 - \sigma_{PF})(2)$$

$$\sigma_{PF} \geq \frac{1}{2}$$

Since the pitcher is indifferent to throwing a fastball and throwing a slider when the batter is guessing fastball, any $\sigma_{PF} \in (1/2, 1)$ constitutes a partially mixed strategy Nash equilibrium.

Notes

1. It follows that the batter guesses slider with complementary probability, or $1 - \sigma_{BF}$.
2. The mixtures σ_{BF} and σ_{PF} are equal to exactly 1/2 because the payoffs assumed the batter can hit fastballs equally as well as sliders. If we relaxed this assumption, then the mixtures would change, but how the mixtures evolve with man on third does not. In other words, making this simplifying assumption does not change the model's substantive results.
3. Note that when $X=0$, the altered game converges to the original game.
4. Historically, 0.24% of fastballs result in a wild pitch or passed ball, while the rate is 0.49% for changeups, 0.60% for curveballs, 0.73% for sliders, and 1.37% for knuckleballs. See "A Pitcher's Look at Passed Balls and Wild Pitches," Dave Allen, accessed February 24, 2012, http://baseballanalysts.com/archives/2009/11/a_pitchfx_look.php.
5. A knife-edge condition is when an input (here, X) must be equal to an exact value for the solution to hold. If we think of X as being drawn from a continuous probability distribution, then the probability of having X equal exactly 1 is 0. Consequently, the case is unrealistic and therefore unimportant.
6. That is, the derivative of $(1 + X)/2$ with respect to X equals 1/2. Since $X \in (0, 1)$ in this case, the derivative is always positive on the relevant interval for X and thus the probability $(1 + X)/2$ is increasing as a function of X .
7. The definition of success here does not imply the batter always records a hit, only that he is more likely to because he can always anticipate the pitch that is thrown to him.
8. That is, the derivative of pitcher's payoff with respect to X equals -1/2, so the payoff function is decreasing in X .
9. This result should be unsurprising. See Sean Forman, "Blocking Pitches: Assessing a Catcher's Ability to Save Runs with Bruises" (paper presented at the 37th Annual Society for American Baseball Research convention, St. Louis, Missouri, July 26–29, 2007).
10. I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out this issue and a way to work around it.

Johnny Vander Meer's Third No-Hitter

Ernest J. Green

The night of July 15, 1952, looked unpromising for baseball in Beaumont, Texas.¹ Storm clouds and a forecast of rain kept attendance low as the visiting Tulsa Oilers prepared for a Texas League night game. Only 335 customers would eventually file through the turnstiles, the lowest crowd count of the year to date at Stuart Stadium.² Gloomy weather notwithstanding, the game began on time. Former major leaguer and veteran left-hander Johnny Vander Meer warmed up for Tulsa. He waited on the bench as his teammates staked him to an uncharacteristic two run lead in the top of the first inning, and then took the mound. Johnny set the Roughnecks down in order in the first.

Beaumont's Stuart Stadium, built in 1923, featured a right field fence only 260 feet down the line from home plate. A vertical line had been painted on the fence in right center. Balls hit to the left of the line were home runs, while those clearing the fence to the right in fair territory were ground rule doubles.³ The ground rule

partly compensated for the odd distance, but even a pop fly from a late-swinging right-handed hitter could disappear over the short right-field fence for a double. Stuart Stadium was not a pitcher's ballpark.

The two Texas League teams had split previous series during the year, and the current three game set stood at one win each. Tulsa and Beaumont both hovered near the .500 mark in wins and losses, and were vying for at least fourth place in the eight-team Double A league. Finishing in one of the four top slots meant a place in the end-of-season playoffs, with the potential to advance to the postseason Dixie Series against the top Southern Association team.

Each team went down in order in the second inning. Tulsa's main problem during the 1952 season was run production. Recently, the Oilers had played a lackluster series against the league's leading team, the Shreveport Sports. Since moving over to Beaumont, Oiler bats had shown more life, and they had pounded the Roughnecks for ten runs the previous night. Now, in the top of the third, with one out, Tulsa advanced a runner to first on an error. Two weak groundouts followed and Vander Meer went back to work.⁴

After a routine out to begin Beaumont's half of the inning, Tulsa third baseman Jack Weisenburger handled a hot grounder and made an on-target throw to first base. Earl York, Tulsa's first baseman and leading home-run hitter, dropped the ball for an error. Johnny fanned the next hitter for the second out. During his major league career, The Dutch Master had possessed a lively fast ball and eventually developed an effective sinker. He had also carried a reputation for wildness and a tendency to lose command of the plate that could erupt at any time. At 37, his major league career behind him, control was still an issue for Vander Meer at times. He hit the next batter, Al Pilarcik, and walked Charles Bell to load the bases. Johnny Vander Meer, certainly not for the first time in his long and storied career, was in a jam.

Before arriving at that stormy night in Beaumont, Johnny's baseball career had followed a trajectory typical of career players in the mid-twentieth century. He was born in 1914 in New Jersey, and was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1933. Johnny toiled in the

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.



During his prime, Johnny Vander Meer was a mainstay of the Cincinnati Reds pitching rotation.

low minors from 1933 through 1935, winning almost the same number of games as he lost for the three years combined (29–28).⁵ The Cincinnati Reds acquired the young left-hander in 1935, and the following year he rocked the Class B Piedmont League by going 19–6 with an eye-popping 259 strikeouts. *The Sporting News* named him Minor League Player of the Year, and Cincinnati took a long look at him in spring training in 1937. Down for more seasoning in Syracuse for most of 1937, Johnny made the Reds as a starter in 1938. Except for a stint with Indianapolis in the American Association, where he was sent down as a cure for the omnipresent wildness in 1940, Johnny was a regular in the Reds pitching rotation through 1949 (missing two seasons during World War II). A sore arm and general ineffectiveness marred Johnny's last two major league seasons with the Cubs in 1950 and Cleveland in 1951. As many players did in those days, Johnny stayed in baseball by descending through the minors in a reversal of his ascent in the early 1930s. Pacific Coast League Oakland used him sparingly in 1951, and he posted a 2–6 record. Cincinnati's highest minor league affiliate, the Class AA Tulsa Oilers, offered Johnny a tryout in spring 1952. Tulsa represented the next rung down on the minor league ladder.⁶

On March 10, 1952, Tulsa Oiler batteries opened spring training in Eustis, Florida. Johnny Vander Meer was one of a handful of former major leaguers competing for a job, along with Kent Peterson and Niles Jordan, both southpaws, and right-hander Leo Cristante. Probably as a courtesy to a former Redleg, Johnny had worked out with the parent Cincinnati club for two weeks until reporting to the Oiler camp on March 13. He threw his first batting practice on March 14, and Tulsa manager Joe Schulz pronounced him in "...excellent physical condition."⁷ Johnny's physical wellness was a question mark. In the previous three seasons, his won-lost record with two major and one minor league team totaled only 16 games because of arm trouble. At 37, Johnny's place in the Oiler pitching lineup must have been problematic as spring training began.

On March 29, Vandy made his first appearance for Tulsa in an exhibition game, pitching the 7th, 8th and 9th innings against the Chattanooga Lookouts, and yielding only an infield hit.⁸ Most of the pitching work fell to younger Oiler hopefuls during the preseason, signaling plans for a limited role for Johnny. His next spring training pitching appearance consisted of four scoreless innings against the Memphis Chicks on April 7.⁹ On April 11, the day before the season opener, Manager Schulz assessed his team's prospects: "...top

flight defense, good speed, some good pitching, but needs more power."¹⁰ His words proved prophetic.

The Dallas Eagles beat the Oilers 13–6 in the away season opener. On April 15, the Oilers dropped their third in a row, 4–0, before a home opening crowd of 5,320, forecasting a troubling lack of ability to score runs.¹¹ John's first start came on April 22, eleven days into the season, another indication of his marginal status on the pitching staff. He acquitted himself well nevertheless, pitching eight innings and giving up just one earned run. A pinch hitter replaced him in the eighth, and Johnny lost the game to Elroy Face. According to the *Tulsa World* reporter, he showed "some wildness."¹² The Dutch Master's demon had accompanied him to Tulsa.

Vander Meer's first win came on April 30, a full game effort where he walked seven and struck out five.¹³ The Oilers struggled to a 24–30 record by June 4, eight games out of first place. The Texas League race was the closest in organized baseball at that time.¹⁴ Johnny won his third game (against four losses) on June 6 in Beaumont. In another Texas League contest the same day, Elroy Face pitched no-run, no-hit ball through nine innings for the Fort Worth Cats. He lost his no-hitter in the tenth but won the game.¹⁵

By June 20 the resurgent Oilers had won 11 of their last 17 games, but were incredibly still in sixth place in the tight eight-team race.¹⁶ Vandy played a minor part in another kind of baseball history on June 28. He pitched against Dave Hoskins, the Dallas Eagles' eleven-game-winning ace, and the first Negro to play in the Texas League. Johnny edged Hoskins 3–2 before a Tulsa crowd of 4,456 that included 754 Negroes.¹⁷

Johnny Temple, recovered from an injury, took over second base duties on July 1. The team thus solidified defense up the middle, with Hobie Landrith catching, future major leaguers Alex Grammas at short and Temple at second, and the fleet Gail Henley in center. Run production still loomed as a large problem, but in Temple's first game the Oilers beat the Oklahoma City Indians to move into fourth place.¹⁸

Vander Meer now started every fifth or sixth game for Tulsa. An Independence Day doubleheader gave fans twenty-three innings of baseball (13 and 10 inning games) and Johnny gave up three runs in seven innings of the opener.¹⁹ He lost again on July 9, his last outing before the July 15 game in Beaumont, giving up seven hits, striking out three and walking three.²⁰ At the season's midpoint, a generous assessment would have been that Vandy had performed adequately in his limited pitching role in Tulsa. His won-lost record stood at 5–7. He had stayed deep in most games, and

in none of his outings was he overpowered by opposing batters. Lack of run support often victimized him. However, little reason existed to predict that he would make headlines again within a week. On July 13, the league announced that Temple, Landrith, Grammas and pitcher Tommy Reis would represent Tulsa on the Texas League All-Star team for 1952. Johnny's name didn't appear in the article announcing the All Stars.²¹

The early stages of the July 15 game in Beaumont followed the path of a typical Vander Meer outing. He escaped the bases loaded jam in the third via a force out. Tulsa then added five runs in the top of the fourth, giving Johnny a 7-0 cushion. He issued a walk in the bottom of the fourth, but set the side down with no damage. A light drizzle began in the top of the fifth. In that inning, Johnny began relying almost exclusively on his fastball. Landrith, noting the movement and precision of his pitcher's fastball, called for very few breaking balls thereafter. The Roughnecks went down in order in the fifth and sixth.²²

Back in Tulsa, Johnny's wife Lois switched on the radio in the seventh inning. She wanted to see if the rain-threatened game was actually underway in Beaumont, and if Johnny was still pitching. She hadn't seen Johnny pitch in three years because, she later explained, baby sitters were difficult to find for daughters Evelyn, 9, and their youngest, still an infant of twenty-one months. Though the announcer followed long-standing baseball tradition by ignoring the developing possibilities in Beaumont, Johnny's wife heard or sensed something in his tone that made her leave the radio tuned to the ball game.²³

As Johnny bore down in the middle and late innings, the score became even more lopsided. Tulsa

added four more runs in the sixth to stretch their lead to 11-0; then pushed another across in the top of the eighth. By then the few fans still scattered around the damp ballpark remained only to watch the outcome of Johnny Vander Meer's pitching efforts. Tension crested in the eighth. Roughneck second baseman Bob Kline smashed a grounder between third and short. Alex Grammas plunged deep into the hole, backhanded the grounder, and fired the ball toward first. Earl York stretched, squeezed the ball, and the runner lost a base hit by half a step.²⁴

Tulsa mercifully failed to score in their half of the ninth inning, and the suspense continued. Beaumont's last three outs stood between Johnny and a no-hitter. The first two hitters made routine outs, and Johnny walked the cleanup hitter, Jim Greengrass, on a 3-1 pitch. Marshall Carlson, Beaumont's center fielder, ran the count to 2-2. He caught enough of the next pitch to send it to right field, where the short right field fence loomed. The damp air and perchance benign baseball Gods kept the ball in the park, and guided it into the glove of Tulsa's Francis Brown. Johnny had his third no-hitter in professional baseball. As he watched the Tulsa team mob their pitcher on the field, Beaumont manager Harry Craft may have been thinking of Ebbets Field, 14 years earlier, when he squeezed the final fly ball hit by Leo Durocher that had secured Vander Meer's double no-hitter and his place in baseball history.

Vandy sat the Roughnecks down in order in six of nine innings. Twelve balls made it to the outfield for putouts. As the Oilers celebrated in Beaumont, Lois Vander Meer woke her daughter Evelyn and told her that her father had just pitched a no-hitter.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.



The hard-throwing Vander Meer led the National League in strikeouts three seasons, but could lapse into wildness unpredictably.

“He did,” she agreed drowsily, and went back to sleep.²⁵

Johnny’s achievement made sports headlines in Tulsa, but elsewhere drew substantially the same reaction as that of his daughter Evelyn. Baseball was still the national pastime in 1952, but Beaumont and Brooklyn were worlds apart as stages for pitching triumphs. Also, national sports attention centered on the Olympic games in Helsinki that summer. The ever present Cold War had boiled down to the battle between the US and Russia for Olympic medals.

Johnny’s next outing was July 22 (the Texas League All-Star game intervened). He took the mound as one of the few pitchers ever to try for double-double no-hitters in professional baseball. That possibility lasted just one inning as opposing batters rocked him for eleven hits in the first three innings. The sloppily pitched and played game deteriorated as police escorted the Houston manager off the field. The teams combined for nine errors, and Tulsa lost it in eleven innings. The *Tulsa World* sports reporter, describing the drawn out affair the next day, wrote “...the fans finally went home to sleep, perhaps to another nightmare.”²⁶

On August 1 at Tulsa, Vandy lost to Beaumont. He gave up runs through the fifth inning, but then began putting up goose eggs, eventually running up a scoreless string of 22 innings. He shut out Beaumont on August 5, and Houston on August 11. In the latter game the veteran left hander fanned seven and walked one in intense 90-degree heat. The string of scoreless innings ended August 16 in the first inning as Houston assembled a run from two singles and a fielder’s choice. Johnny pitched well enough to keep Tulsa in the game through nine innings, however, and then watched from the dugout as the two teams played 22 innings, the second longest game in Texas League history.²⁷ Tulsa won 6–5.

Johnny took Tulsa to their year’s apex on August 21 by throwing a 1–0, ten-inning shutout against the Shreveport Sports, eventually the league champions.²⁸ The Oilers moved into third place and seemed positioned for a playoff run. However, Vandy beat himself on August 26, losing 3–1 when his error set up two unearned runs.²⁹ On Labor Day Johnny won his eleventh and last game for Tulsa.³⁰ The Oilers, still battling for a playoff slot, put everything on the line in a day-night twin bill on September 3. Johnny worked out of turn with only two days rest in the afternoon game against the Oklahoma City Indians. Behind 2–1, he left the game for a pinch-hitter in the bottom of the ninth with the tying run on first base. The Oilers went

down in both ends of the twin bill, dashing their playoff hopes. Mathematical elimination followed the next day.³¹

Johnny had thrown his last pitch for Tulsa. At season’s end on September 7, the Oilers fielded a makeshift lineup before just 835 fans.³² Prospects had moved up to other teams. Johnny’s name never appeared in another account of a Tulsa game, and the Vander Meers may have left town by then. Johnny had put in a full, productive season for Tulsa, but he had bought a half interest in a hardware store in Tampa, and his reason for being in Tulsa had disappeared with playoff elimination.

Statistically, Johnny’s Tulsa pitching campaign ranked a close second on the staff. His 11–10 won-lost record, for a sub .500 team, ranked second only to that of Tommy Reis in games won and won-lost percentage. His ERA of 2.31 led the pitchers, as did his ninety-six strikeouts.³³

Johnny continued to pitch after the Tulsa year, but never again as an integral part of a pitching rotation. He managed Burlington of the Class B Three-I League in 1953, filling in as a pitcher when needed. He logged seventy innings and appeared in nineteen games, but started only four times. Managing in the Piedmont League in 1954, he inserted himself into the lineup for only twenty-one innings and two starts. Johnny’s last pitches in organized baseball came at age forty, two innings for Daytona Beach in the Class D Florida League.³⁴ He continued to manage through 1962, and then settled in Florida to run a beer distributorship. The Dutch Master died in Tampa in 1997 at age 82.³⁵

Johnny’s minor league no-hitter for Tulsa was hardly a singular achievement that year. Seventy-eight no-hitters occurred in minor league baseball in 1952, though the number included less than nine inning games, two-pitcher efforts, and “lost” no-hitters like the tenth-inning win of Elroy Face. Ironically, Bill Bell, pitching for Bristol in the Class D Appalachian League, threw consecutive no-hitters in May 1952, thought to be the first such feat in the minors since 1908, and the first in organized baseball since Vandy did it in 1938.³⁶

In the seventy-plus years since 1938, no pitcher has thrown consecutive no-hitters in the majors. Ewell Blackwell came close in 1947, losing his second in a row after 8½ innings.³⁷ With today’s pitching specialization, even two complete games in a row garner special recognition, so Johnny’s record is probably safe. The Dutch Master won 119 and lost 121 in the majors. His minor league record was only slightly better, at 76–73. Vander Meer’s career totals pale by comparison to pitchers ensconced in Cooperstown. His

name, however, is branded onto the collective baseball consciousness. Long before that rainy night in Beaumont, he had joined the fraternity of players like Don Larsen, Bobby Thomson, and Bucky Dent, who each rose to one glorious occasion and captured the enduring imagination of the baseball world. ■

Biographical note: The author, as a 13-year-old baseball enthusiast, followed the fortunes of the 1952 Tulsa Oilers closely, and attended as many games as the thirty-five cent bleacher admission permitted. Vander Meer's no-hitter, sadly, was out of town and our radio was broken than night.

Notes

1. Approximately half the sources consulted for this article cited the wrong date and often the wrong opposing team for Vander Meer's minor league no hitter. The problem apparently stems from the usually reliable *The Texas League* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1987) by Bill O. Neal. On page 109 the correct date is mentioned, July 15, but the opposing team is misidentified as the Shreveport Sports. A second reference to the game correctly identifies the team opposing Tulsa as Beaumont, but incorrectly furnishes a date of July 12, 1952, instead of July 15 of that year (315).
2. *Tulsa World*, July 16, 1952, 20.
3. Michael Benson, *Ballparks of North America*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1989, 28.
4. The most detailed accounts of the game were reported in *The Tulsa Tribune* and *Tulsa World* on July 16, 1952.
5. SABR *Minor League Encyclopedia*, www.minors.sabr.org.
6. Vander Meer has not been the subject of a full length biography. His professional career can be reconstructed by combining major league pitching performances in John Thorn and Pete Palmer (Eds.) *Total Baseball*, 2nd ed., NY: Warner Books, 1991, 1846, and the SABR Minor Leagues Database.
7. *Tulsa World*, March 14, 1952.
8. *Tulsa World*, March 30, 1952.
9. *Tulsa World*, April 8, 1952.
10. *Tulsa World*, April 11, 1952.
11. *Tulsa World*, April 16, 1952.
12. *Tulsa World*, April 22, 1952.
13. *Tulsa World*, May 1, 1952.
14. *Tulsa World*, June 4, 1952.
15. *Tulsa World*, June 7, 1952.
16. *Tulsa World*, June 20, 1952.
17. *Tulsa World*, June 29, 1952. The breakdown of attendance by race was possible since at Tulsa's Texas League Park in 1952, separate turnstiles and segregated seating was the norm.
18. *Tulsa World*, July 2, 1952.
19. *Tulsa World*, July 5, 1952.
20. *Tulsa World*, July 10, 1952.
21. *The Tulsa Tribune*, July 13, 1952.
22. Game accounts are as reported by *Tulsa World* (morning) and *The Tulsa Tribune* (evening) editions for July 16, 1952.
23. *The Tulsa Tribune*, July 16, 1952.
24. After the game, Johnny credited "tight defense" as a reason for his pitching achievement, but according to the *Tulsa World* reporter at the game, only Grammas play was more than routine.
25. *The Tulsa Tribune*, July 16, 1952.
26. *Tulsa World*, July 23, 1952.
27. The author, as a 13-year-old Tulsa Oiler baseball fanatic, attended the game and sat through every inning, returning home about 3 A.M. to be greeted by an unhappy mother.
28. *Tulsa World*, August 22, 1952.
29. *Tulsa World*, August 27, 1952.
30. *Tulsa World*, September 2, 1952.
31. *Tulsa World*, September 5, 1952.
32. *Tulsa World*, September 8, 1952.
33. Wayne McCombs, *Let's Gooooo Tulsa: The History and Record Book of Professional Baseball in Tulsa Oklahoma 1905–1989*. Claremore, OK: 1990, 108.
34. *Minor League Encyclopedia*, op. cit.
35. Robert Weintraub, "The Legend of Double No Hit," *ESPN Magazine*, April 23, 2007, 2.
36. Lloyd Johnson and Miles Wolff, *The Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball*, 2nd ed. Durham, NC: Baseball America, 1997, 419.
37. Ira Berkow, "Vander Meer's Feat May Never Be Bettered," *The New York Times*, October 8, 1997.

“Sparky”

Steve Ames

The passion of a baseball player at Dorsey High School in Los Angeles led to a career that included managing the Cincinnati Reds and Detroit Tigers and to enshrinement in the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Speaking with some of George Lee Anderson's earliest friends in baseball, one learns of the fondness inspired by the man known as “Sparky.”

The late George “Sparky” Anderson was born on February 22, 1934, in Bridgewater, South Dakota, to LeeRoy and Shirley Anderson. Although it was the birthday of President George Washington, he was named for his grandmother’s boy George who died at birth. Anderson died on November 4, 2010, at his home in Thousand Oaks, California. He was 76. At Anderson’s request there was no funeral or memorial service and he was survived by his wife Carol, sons Lee and Albert, daughter Shirley Englebrecht, and nine grandchildren.¹

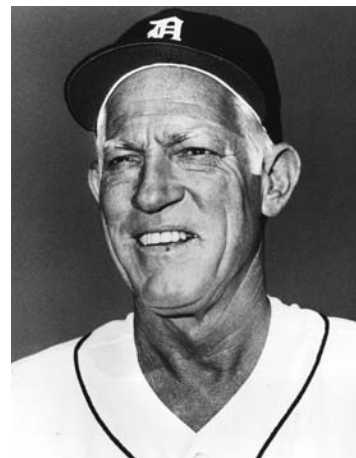
He was “Sparky” to his many fans throughout baseball, a nickname bestowed upon Anderson by former Fort Worth Cats broadcaster, the late Bill Hightower, when he observed that sparks were flying during an argument between Anderson and an umpire at a 1955 game at LaGrave Field, Fort Worth, Texas. “Bill said it on the radio and it stuck,” said the late pitcher Carroll “CB” Beringer, Anderson’s roommate that season, who coached in the majors with the Los Angeles Dodgers, 1967–72, and Philadelphia Phillies, 1973–78. “Today, everyone knows who you are talking about when the name ‘Sparky’ is mentioned.”²

David Hatchett, former director of communications for the Fort Worth Cats, said Anderson told him a few years ago that “it was an opening for people to remember my name. For some reason it stuck. Baseball is a sport that lends itself to some unique nicknames.”³

Anderson’s initial six-season minor-league ride began in 1953 with the Class C Santa Barbara Dodgers. “I signed for \$3,000, including the salary at Santa Barbara—and that was \$250 a month for five months (\$1,250). I didn’t have any money,” he said during an interview on the California Lutheran University campus. The \$3,000 he signed for included a \$1,750 bonus. “Travel—it was all bus. I know a lot of guys slept on the floor of the bus. I never did.”⁴

Anderson, who hit .263 that season, said it was a very important benefit to have the late George Scherger as the team’s manager his first season in professional baseball. “I played for a man that I consider one of the

George “Sparky” Anderson in the Detroit Tigers cap he wore as the team’s manager, 1979–1995.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

best baseball minds in the history of baseball,” he said. “Nobody knows him. He’s unbelievable. He was so far ahead of me. We weren’t even in the same league when it comes to knowledge of the game.”⁵

Also special to Anderson at Santa Barbara was the late Timmy Badillo, groundskeeper at Laguna Park. “He was my dear friend,” he said. “Every time I would come to town I would go find Timmy. You have to be so lucky when you meet people. You have to let them know. Timmy was my pride and joy.”⁶

Ralph Mauriello, pitcher on the 1953 Santa Barbara team who pitched in the majors for the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1958, remembers that Anderson, his roommate, played shortstop that season. “He shifted to second base the next season when it was apparent his arm wasn’t up to it at short,” the pitcher said.⁷

Because Anderson’s nickname had not been coined in 1953, his teammates used a diminutive of his first name. “We called him ‘Georgie,’ not ‘Sparky,’” Mauriello said. “He was the kind of a guy who was a spark plug, but we never called him that.”⁸

Anderson set a goal for runs scored at Santa Barbara: 100. “The thing I remember most,” Mauriello said, “was his zeal for wanting to score 100 runs and he did it the last day in 1953, and was very excited about it.”⁹

Anderson was married on October 3, 1953. “I knew her almost all my life, including about 10 years in

school," Anderson said. "We met in third grade and I was in class with her in the fifth."¹⁰

Anderson's season after spring training was in Colorado, playing the home half of his season at Runyan Park for the Single-A Pueblo (Colorado) Dodgers. He hit .296 and led the Western League in fielding for second basemen. "We lived in the basement of a home," Anderson said. "Those were the really great times. There were times to me that were even better than the big leagues. The big league takes care of itself. The minor leagues were, to me, the real fun. The other is work. I wouldn't change it for anything."¹¹

Mauriello said that in 1954 at Pueblo, he, Anderson, and George Witt played for that Dodgers team along with Maury Wills, who was Anderson's double play partner. Witt had also been on the 1953 Santa Barbara team, and later pitched for the Pittsburgh Pirates. At Fort Worth, Texas in 1955, Anderson played for the Double-A Cats, batted .266 and was named to the Texas League All-Star team.¹²

"Sparky didn't have the big strong body of a long ball hitter, but he certainly was sparky," said Beringer,

on the Cats, 1949-50 and again 1953-57. "He did everything he could to win a ball game."¹³

The Cats had five players on that roster who would go on to manage in the major leagues. In addition to Anderson were the late Danny Ozark, Norm Sherry, the late Dick Williams, and Wills. Two other players on that team, Beringer and Joe Pignatano, became major-league coaches.¹⁴

According to Beringer it was Anderson's contention that it takes more than talent to win in baseball. "That's the way the game is played," he said. "He was a Dodger growing up. They had 600 ballplayers and fundamentals. This was how they won."¹⁵

From Fort Worth, Anderson's next stops were Triple-A Montreal to play for the Royals and then to Los Angeles where he played for the Triple-A Angels. Mauriello, referring to 1957, the last year that the Pacific Coast League was in Los Angeles, said the Angels were not a great team. "We finished in sixth place, but [Anderson] never seemed to get down. His enthusiasm was the best. I remember I took movies on the last day of the season since we knew that the ballpark

was going to be torn down. We played Vancouver and we got beat and Sparky struck out to end the game. I also remember Georgie hit a grand slam in a 22-5 win over Sacramento. I was the lucky guy who happened to be pitching that day."¹⁶

Anderson also remembered playing the field in Los Angeles where, while playing shortstop, he once skipped a ball off the mound while throwing to first base. "It's the same Wrigley Field as in Chicago," he said of the since-demolished ballpark. "There really wasn't any difference between those two stadiums. They had vines on the walls. Everything was the same as they had in Chicago."¹⁷

Hall of Fame manager Tommy Lasorda pitched for the Angels, as did Mauriello and the late Larry Sherry. They also had the late infielder Steve Bilko and outfielder Tom Saffell, former Gulf Coast League president.¹⁸

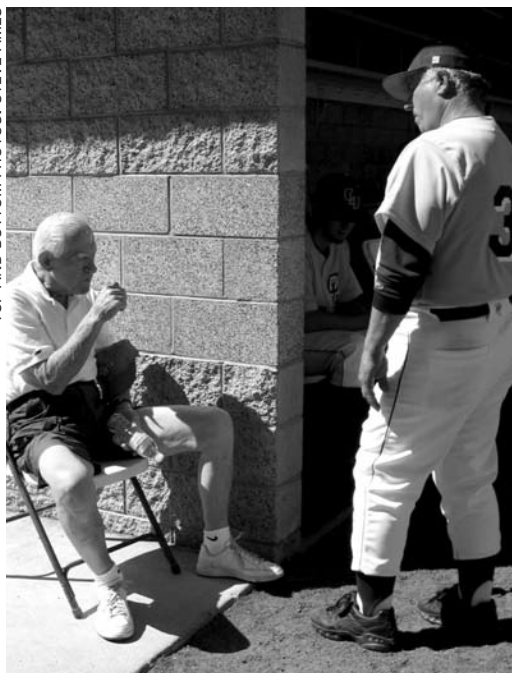
Anderson got a year closer to playing in the majors the next season. "Montreal, 1958, made the difference," he said. "The [minor league] Phillies had played very well in the International League. The Phillies needed a second baseman and the late Buzzy Bavasi

USED BY PERMISSION FORT WORTH CATS BASEBALL CLUB



Playing second base for the Fort Worth Cats in 1955, the late "Sparky" Anderson throws the ball to first base.

TOP AND BOTTOM PHOTOS: STEVE AMES



Left: The late George "Sparky" Anderson was a frequent visitor to George "Sparky" Anderson Field at Ullman Stadium at California Lutheran University, in his hometown of Thousand Oaks.

Right: Hall of Famers and teammates with the Los Angeles Angels of the Pacific Coast League, 1957 season, former pitcher Tommy LaSorda and the late former second baseman George "Sparky" Anderson chatted during a 2009 California Lutheran University baseball game.



[Brooklyn Dodgers vice president], made a deal with them. I always said that Buzzy was Jesse James pulling off that deal. To me, nothing was ever a big deal. I enjoyed playing so much. When I do something today, it's gone. I don't even keep a memory of it. I am not much for nostalgia. I never have been."²¹⁹

"He was a good solid hitter, at least at the minor-league level," Mauriello said. "When I was pitching for Montreal and he was in Toronto, if I got the ball up, he would hit a line drive somewhere."²⁰ After Anderson played four seasons with the Toronto Maple Leafs, he became the team's manager.

"When I left high school in Los Angeles, 1953, I knew as much baseball then as I know now," Anderson said. "I knew the game and I knew what to do. Everything was a picture to me. I have no idea why I knew this game as a 17-year-old."²¹

Mauriello said the most amazing thing was to run across Anderson at the Forum in Inglewood, California between the 1963-64 seasons. "I asked if he was still playing and, if so, where," Mauriello said. "He said he was the manager of Toronto of the International

League. I was surprised to hear that he was the manager of a Triple-A team. He was so young."²² Anderson was 30 at the time.

Anderson didn't forget George Scherger—his manager 17 seasons prior—when he made the big leagues. He named him as first base coach at Cincinnati, 1970-78. "Georgie wasn't the kind of guy to forget," Mauriello said.²³

Anderson said that Scherger "was just magnificent. There would be no way to describe him and it is too bad that the public doesn't know the real people and the real things. This guy was for real."²⁴

"I don't know how you could come from a little town in South Dakota that nobody even knows exists—with 600 people, and end up being in the Ohio Hall of Fame and the other Hall of Fame; [and] your number is retired," Anderson said.²⁵ His number 1 was retired by the Fort Worth Cats, Number 10 by the Cincinnati Reds, and Number 11 by the Detroit Tigers in 2011.²⁶ Anderson was also inducted into the Los Angeles Unified School District's Inaugural Sports Hall of Fame on June 5, 2011.²⁷

"I don't know how that could happen. I would never try to find out. They always say funny things happen to funny people and I look at it that way," Anderson added.²⁸

Beringer said he was coaching with the Dodgers when Anderson was at Cincinnati. "He did great at Cincinnati and then went on to Detroit and turned the ballclub around," he said. "There wasn't anybody who didn't want to play for him. There's never a problem when you have a winning ball club."²⁹

Anderson never failed to talk with Beringer before the Reds played against the Dodgers. "He always gave me some ideas of what a major league manager should do. He said to have confrontations with your top five or six players is not a good idea because, if they are to drive in the runs for you, they have to be on your side."³⁰

The late Ernie Harwell, longtime play-by-play announcer for the Detroit Tigers, who is himself honored in the "Scribes and Mikesmen" exhibit of Ford C. Frick award winners in Cooperstown, was an esteemed guest at the 2006 dedication of George "Sparky" Anderson Field at California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, California. He told the audience that Anderson's main asset was the fact that he knew how to work with people and that he was a people person.³¹

"I think that Sparky will probably tell you that all the honors that have come to him from national and international sources are really wonderful and satisfying," Harwell said, "but to be recognized in your own hometown by your own people is the highest honor of all. He appreciated goodness in people and had a lot of humanness in his own makeup, a great guy and a terrific person. I think that's what made him a good manager."³² ■

Notes

1. Joe Kay, "Hall of Fame Manager Anderson Dead at 76," Associated Press, November 4, 2010, <http://sports.yahoo.com/mlb/news?slug=txobitanderson>.
2. Carroll "CB" Beringer, telephone interview by author, April 25, 2006.
3. David Hackett, telephone interview by author, March 8, 2006.
4. George "Sparky" Anderson, personal interview by author, February 4, 2006.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ralph Mauriello, telephone interview by author, April 5, 2006.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Anderson interview, op. cit.
11. Ibid.
12. Mauriello interview, op. cit.
13. Beringer interview, op. cit.
15. 1955 Fort Worth Cats team roster; <http://fwcats.com/img/image/files/55new.htm>.
15. Beringer interview, op. cit.
16. Mauriello interview, op. cit. Historical records suggest the opponent was actually San Diego, not Vancouver, that day.
17. Anderson interview, op. cit.
18. Baseball-Reference.com, 1957 Los Angeles Angels statistics; www.baseball-reference.com/minors/team.cgi?id=e1c8676a
19. Anderson interview, op. cit.
20. Mauriello interview, op. cit.
21. Anderson interview, op. cit.
22. Mauriello interview, op. cit.
23. Ibid.
24. Anderson interview, op. cit.
25. Ibid.
26. Jason Beck, "Sparky's No. 11 retired in emotional ceremony, MLB.com/ June 29, 2011, http://mlb.mlb.com/news/article.jsp ymd=20110626&content_id=21026394&c_id=mlb
27. "Anderson to be honored in L.A.," *Thousand Oaks Acorn*, June 2, 2011.
28. Anderson interview, op. cit.
29. Beringer interview, op. cit.
30. Ibid.
31. Ernie Harwell, dedication of George "Sparky" Anderson Field, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, California, January 28, 2006.
32. Ibid.

Pop Kelchner, Gentleman Jake, The Giant-Killer, and the Kane Mountaineers

Ed Rose

PART I: THE GREAT GLASS ERA

In the damp and chilly spring of 1907, at the height of the great glass era, an erudite professor of languages, a polite young first baseman and an eccentric left-handed pitcher came to the Hilltop in Kane, Pennsylvania to play professional baseball. While their time together as teammates would end before the summer was over, each of these storied baseball characters would leave an indelible mark on the National Pastime.

Charles S. Kelchner, a professor of languages and college athletics director, took a summer sojourn from Albright College in Myerstown to become player-coach of the Kane team. Modest Jake Daubert, a talented first baseman from Shamokin, signed on with the Class D Mountaineers of the Interstate League to escape a likely career in the coalmines of eastern Pennsylvania. Harry Coveleski, a raw and rather peculiar portside pitcher, also fled the hard-knock life of the hard coal region for the chance to play baseball on the Hilltop for Coach Kelchner.

The Kane Mountaineers professional baseball club was a byproduct of the prosperous time when glass was king on the Hilltop. When local business leaders leveraged the area's ample workforce and seemingly endless supply of natural gas and high-grade limestone, *The Kane Republican* reported that the town earned reputé as "the largest glass-producing center in the United States."

In 1907, when the trio of future baseball icons "Pop" Kelchner, "Gentleman Jake" Daubert and Harry "The Giant Killer" Coveleski came to Kane, professional baseball was far from a gentleman's game, especially as it was played in the low minors. Betting on the games was out of control, and fans and players heaped verbal abuse on umpires while heckling relentlessly their foes from other teams. In DuBois an outfielder with the local Miners club, upset at being called out on strikes, bludgeoned the umpire to death in the batter's box.

The rough-hewn Kane ballpark and grandstand were built on a flat piece of land between the Kane Flint and Bottle Company and the Standard Window Glass Plant, near the current site of the Kane Manufacturing Corporation and the Kane Commons. On the rare occasion in the spring of 1907 that the weather was pleasant, gritty shift workers streamed from the mills to take in a game. On Saturdays women turned out in droves, weather permitting, to catch a glimpse of the "dandies" in their fancy wool baseball suits.

With the backing of local business leaders, the Kane Mountaineers ball club first joined the Class D Interstate League in 1905. In addition to vying for a share of the town's entertainment dollar, investors hoped that the team would help Kane's growing workforce ward off bouts of ennui.

Under the guidance of Coach C. A. Eichelberger in



1906 Kane Mountaineers.

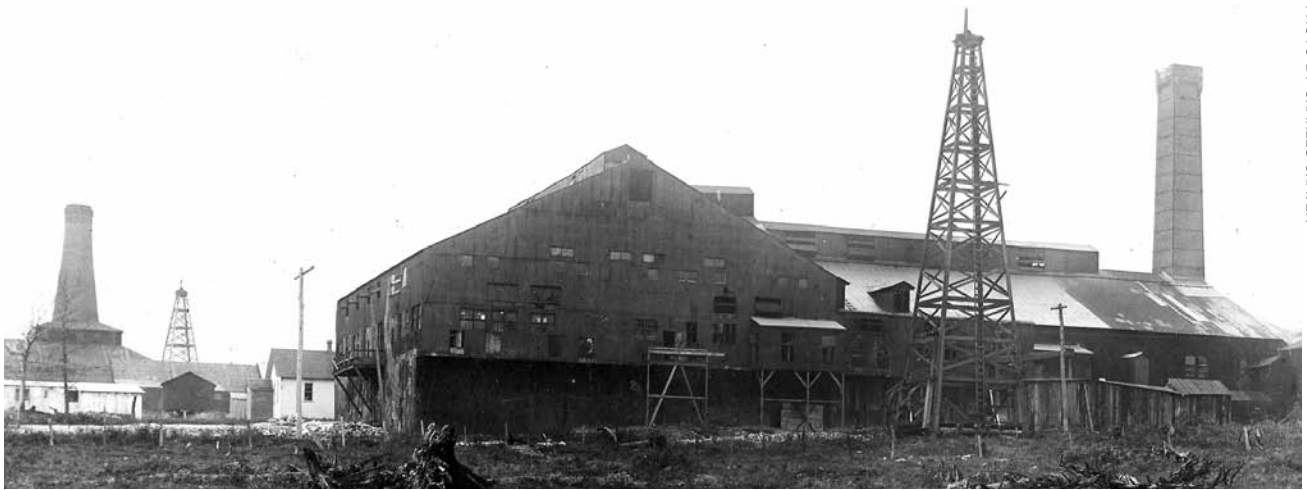


PHOTO BY CHARLES CRAVEN

The Standard Window Glass Works was adjacent to the Kane ballpark.

1905, the Kane Mountaineers finished in fifth place, winning 40 games and losing 56. Barrel-chested slugger Duke Servatius was the lone bright spot on the club, winning the league's batting crown with a .352 average.

According to the April 22 edition of *The Sporting Life*, the new Interstate League established clear financial requirements for member clubs, reporting "the salary limit was placed at \$750 per month for each team. It was decided that each team would guarantee the visiting club the sum of \$50 per game, with a rain guarantee of \$25. On Saturdays and holidays the gate receipts will be divided by the home and visiting teams."

The 1906 Kane club, managed by James Collopy, won 58 and lost 58, finishing 12 games behind the Erie Fishermen, who for the season drew more than 100,000 fans to their home park.

But with Pop Kelchner at the helm and in the outfield, the 1907 Kane Mountaineers were primed for a winning campaign. And with future Brooklyn Dodger great Jake Daubert anchoring first base and budding star hurler Harry Coveleski spinning his fancy curves, the outlook was bright for the plucky Kane Mountaineers.

PART II: GENTLEMAN JAKE AND THE GIANT KILLER

Already known as a keen judge of talent, the 31-year-old Charlie Kelchner was one of the organizers of the Tri-State League in addition to having owned and managed the Lebanon, Pennsylvania club 1902–1905.¹ In 1906 Kelchner was playing manager of the Milton team, before coming to Kane and the Interstate League in 1907. Despite living a comfortable life as a cultured college professor during the school year, in the summer months Kelchner was an incurable baseball enthusiast and intrepid ivory hunter, deep in the bushes.

One of Kelchner's earliest and most important baseball finds was Jake Daubert, who batted .299 for Kane in 1907, while showing flashes of brilliance at the plate and as a first baseman. Named "Gentleman Jake" for his dapper dress and calm demeanor, Daubert was a heady ballplayer and a smart businessman during his long professional career.

Jacob Ellsworth Daubert started his working life in Shamokin at age 11 as a "breaker boy," sorting out coal from pieces of slate. He finally escaped the mines at age 21, playing semi-pro baseball for a team in Lykens. When Coach Charles Kelchner first laid eyes on Daubert, he stood out like a diamond in a slag heap.

As a young player, Jake Daubert was also an extremely fast runner, and a chop hitter; a combination that helped him leg out many infield hits during his career. In addition, Jake posted 22 triples in 1922, thanks to his speed and line-drive hitting, a twentieth-century major league record for a first baseman (Dave Orr had 31 in 1886). He was also the finest bunter of his time, and still holds the National League career record for the most sacrifice hits. Pop Kelchner's first impression of Daubert back in 1907 was right on target.

Seven seasons removed from life in the mines and from his professional debut in Kane, Daubert led the National League in batting for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1913 and 1914, winning the Chalmers Award as the league's Most Valuable Player in 1913. Daubert was also named to *The Baseball Magazine* All-American team seven times.

In addition to Jake Daubert, the other budding star on Kelchner's 1907 Kane Mountaineers club was a young pitcher named Harry Coveleski. Also from Shamokin, Harry too spent his early years in the mines as a "donkey boy," helping mules haul coal wagons for \$3.75 per week until sharp-eyed Pop spied Harry's



*Professor Charles S. Kelchner,
Albright College, circa 1895.*

strong left arm. In fact, by the end of the 1907 season, Harry's star had already ascended to the major leagues with the Philadelphia Phillies.

And just a year after getting his professional start in Kane, Coveleski earned his immortal tag "The Giant Killer," when he beat the New York Giants three times in five days in 1908 while pitching for the Phillies. In baseball's most furious pennant race in history, the Cubs, Pirates, and Giants battled from start to finish. At season's end, Harry played the spoiler role, turning back the Giants with his fancy pitching by the scores of 7-0, 6-2, and 3-2, including a victory over baseball icon Christy Mathewson on Saturday, October 3.

According to a letter written in 1964 by Joe Sloan, managing editor of the Foreign Press Association, Harry's personality was "ding dong."

I remember him telling me one night in his café of playing for Charley "Red" Doooin, manager of the Phillies. Harry, a lefthander, wound up with a man on first base. Naturally the guy stole second base easily. Red Doooin was so incensed that he walked into the pitcher's box and asked Harry why he wound up with a man on first base. Harry said, "I forgot about him." Then Doooin called in all the fielders and the infielders around the pitchers mound. "Next time any man gets on first base with Coveleski pitching, I want every one of you players to yell and let Harry know because I don't want any secrets on my team."²

Coveleski's first taste of stardom was short-lived, however. This time, according to baseball lore, it was the Giants' tenacious manager, the illustrious Hall-of-Famer John McGraw, who had the last laugh as the spoiler when his coaches and players ridiculed The Giant Killer into submission. According to newspaper

reports, Tacks Ashenbach, a former manager of the Johnstown team in the Tri-State League, gave McGraw a magical antidote to defeat Harry Coveleski. "All you have to do is imitate a snare drum," he said.

"Rat-a-tat. Rat-a-tat-tat," sounded the Giants bench incessantly in their first meeting with Harry and the Phillies in the 1909 season. According to newspaper reports, "The deadly chorus was kept up in volleys until the umpire stopped it, and even after that it continually broke out in sporadic outbursts whenever a player could get away with it. Even McGraw, while coaching at third base, made motions as if he were beating a snare drum." Though the Phils won that game 5-1, Coveleski would never win another game against the New York Nationals.

But only Ashenbach could explain why this odd tactic had such a devastating effect on Coveleski:

Harry was a coal miner back in Shamokin, and he got stuck on some Jane who was a nut on music. Everybody who was anybody played in the Silver Cornet Band on Thursday nights, and this girl told Harry that she couldn't see him unless he broke in with the band. Having no talent for music, Coveleski picked out the snare drum as his victim and started to practice regularly. When the big concert came along, everything went all right until it came time for Coveleski to break in; he missed his signal entirely. But later when the leader waved for the violin solo, Coveleski came in strong on the snare drum. The result was that the bandmaster asked for waivers on Coveleski and the girl was not long in following suit. That snare drum incident has been the sore spot in his make-up ever since.

Although Harry's famous brother, Hall-of-Fame pitcher Stanley, disputed the many apocryphal stories about his brother's reported psychological flaws, Harry spent several seasons in the minors before finally resuming his major league career with the Detroit Tigers in 1914, where he won 65 games over the next three seasons. Harry's 2.34 ERA is still the Tigers' all-time career record.

While "Gentleman Jake" and "The Giant Killer" became baseball immortals, their time as teammates was fleeting in Kane. Harry Coveleski won four games and lost seven for the Mountaineers during the short summer of 1907 and Daubert played less than half a season in Kane. But for the rest of their lives both men would remember Kane Manager Pop Kelchner for helping them escape the brutish life of the coal mines.



Jake Daubert.

PART III: THE SHORT SEASON

When the 1907 Interstate League season opened on May 15, Pop Kelchner remained at Albright College to wrap up his professorial duties for the spring semester. He arrived in Kane on June 12, at the end of an unseasonably damp and chilly spring. Due to the lousy weather, business matters quickly went downhill for the Kane team and for the other unfortunate clubs of the Interstate League.

In his book entitled, *Joe McCarthy: Architect of the Yankee Dynasty*, author Alan Levy described the hard luck encountered by the teams of the Interstate loop in the spring of 1907:

Day after day rainouts occurred. One local paper described a steady pattern of 'chilling air and glum skies.' According to the Pittsburgh papers, 'Every team in the Interstate League is losing money, with weather killing off games and attendance. By July 1, Erie was the only club in the circuit not in debt.' Rainouts continued to frustrate the staging of games and promotion efforts. A Franklin Booster Day, for example, was rained out twice before it was finally held. On July 15, a desperate Franklin club announced a street fair, for the benefit of the team, with club officials admitting they needed to quickly raise \$600. Umpires were not always paid. League games sometimes took place without them. By July 20, the clubs of Kane and Olean had disbanded.

Despite having a talented roster with a rising young manager in charge, the Kane Mountaineers could not overcome their lost gate receipts and faded away for good.

During the final season of professional baseball in Kane in 1907, future Hall-of-Fame manager Joe McCarthy, then a fuzzy-cheeked 20-year-old, batted .314 in 71 games for the rival Franklin Millionaires. While young "Marse" Joe soon found out that he was not big league material as a player, the future skipper of the Yankees would later coach Lou Gehrig, Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio on his way to earning the highest career winning percentage of any manager in the history of the major leagues.

When the Kane Mountaineers folded on July 16, after winning only 17 of their 43 games, Jake Daubert was sold to the Marion, Ohio team, his first stop along the way to earning fame and popularity with the Dodgers, and Harry Coveleski would shuffle off for the summer to the independent Wildwood, New Jersey team, where he joined his brother John on the Ottens' roster. According to the book, *Deadball Stars of the American League*, edited by David Jones, "His performance in New Jersey was impressive enough to catch the attention of the Philadelphia Phillies, who signed Coveleski to a \$250 per month contract on September 3, 1907."

Pop Kelchner languished a few more years as a player and coach in the low minors and semi-pro leagues, including a two-year hitch as playing manager for nearby Clearfield of the Blue Ridge League. According to a letter written by Kelchner to *The Sporting News* in 1947, "During this period many players of note got their start and were developed under my management. This attracted the attention of major league owners with the result that I served as a scout during 1909, 1910 and 1911 for Connie Mack. I quit the game as a player in 1912." For the 1907 campaign, the last professional season in Kane, Kelchner hit a respectable .279, finishing third on the club in batting to Jake Daubert and Lavelle.

By this point in his career Kelchner had already earned his moniker, "Pop," as father figure, mentor, coach, and friend to a troupe of young ballplayers that would be forever known as "Pop's Boys." When the Kane Mountaineers gave up the ghost, Kelchner resumed the epic baseball journey that earned him the mark as baseball's "dean of scouts." He also served concurrently as athletic director and the chair of Latin and German at Albright until 1919. During this period Pop also found time to coach the college's baseball, basketball, and football teams.

Sportswriter Tiny Parry in a September 23, 1958, article in the *Lebanon Daily News*, remembers Kelchner's earliest days as a sports instructor, "Pop Kelchner's college association that lasted actively through twenty

years as head coach of all sports at Albright College, also won enduring friendships in the collegiate sports world. His familiar calls of encouragement to his charges, 'Come on boys, you can do it,' still rings in the ears of many old time fans."

According to a newspaper report from the February 3, 1955 edition of *The Fresno Bee*,

Kelchner well remembers his (Albright) football teams playing the Carlisle Indians, then coached by the late Pop Warner and starring the late Jim Thorpe. 'I remember they beat us one game exactly 100 to 0. Touchdowns were scored as four points apiece then, so you can see Thorpe had a big day,' Kelchner said. 'I remember Thorpe kicking a high, long spiraling punt downfield, running down and catching it to retain possession of the ball. That was a bad day for us, but I also remember they beat us only 6 to 0 on another occasion.

With a burning passion for athletics, this learned and traveled professor, sportsman, and Christian gentleman made a lasting impact on his ballplayers in Kane in the summer of 1907. And when his baseball career finally ended more than fifty years later, Kelchner numbered among his closest friends Branch Rickey and Connie Mack, both of whom were in attendance in 1952 when Albright's baseball diamond was named in his honor. In 1918, the modest "Dutchman," erstwhile skipper of the Kane Mountaineers, managed Babe Ruth and Rogers Hornsby on the same club in the Bethlehem Steel League, having arguably the game's greatest left-handed hitter and the greatest right-handed hitter in the same lineup. Despite walking with the giants of the sport, Kelchner never forgot his humble roots in the low minors and the players that he personally signed and recommended for advancement; for all times they remained "Pop's Boys."

PART IV: DEAN OF SCOUTS

When Pop Kelchner came to Kane in 1907 to coach in the Class D Interstate League, he was as out of place as a church deacon at a brothel. The game was played on a bumpy field with a lumpy tobacco-stained baseball and cheating was not only part of the sport, it was expected. Any player who did not try to take unfair advantage of his opponent became an easy mark for the other team.

If college boys were exceedingly rare in the ranks of professional baseball in those days, finding a bright multi-lingual college professor, accomplished

public speaker, and champion debater like Charles S. Kelchner deep down in the bushes was a one-in-a-million shot.

This loveable sage and baseball oddity spoke with a prominent Pennsylvania Dutch accent and was master of five languages. Newspaper writer Eugene F. Karst recounted a favorite story about how Pop once mystified an unsuspecting audience in St. Louis.

He spoke in a conglomeration of broken English, Pennsylvania Dutch and German, with occasional Greek and Latin phrases thrown in. His listeners thought it was natural and all of them tried to be as polite and interested as possible. Then at the height of their embarrassment, Kelchner burst forth into his flowery, fluent style of oratory and told them in the King's English that he had just been kidding them.

With his knack for rhetoric and his keen eye for spotting baseball flair, Pop gained his first formal experience as a professional baseball talent hawk after the Kane club folded in 1907, when he went to work for Connie Mack and his Philadelphia A's. The persuasive Professor Kelchner moved over to Robert Hedges' St. Louis Browns in the American League in 1912, before going to the St. Louis Cardinals in the National League in 1918, where he would remain for 40 years, a confidant to baseball's "Mahatma," Branch Rickey.

In a 1954 press release, H. Ralph Mueth of the St. Louis Cardinals' publicity office retold one of Pop's favorite stories about managing Babe Ruth on the 1918 Lebanon team. According to Kelchner,

One morning Babe broke up a practice session with his fungo hitting. Every time he hit the ball it went out of the park with the result that we were soon without baseballs and practice for that morning had to cease. Later on I discovered that there were scores of his admirers outside the park to whom he had promised baseballs, and he chose this means of supplying them!

From 1900 to 1912, Kelchner developed over 30 players that went on to the major leagues. At the top of this list are Jake Daubert and Harry Coveleski, who were teammates on the Kane Mountaineers. Pop also signed pitcher Allan Sothoron during this period, a right-hander for the Browns and Indians. Future Yankees manager, pitcher Bob Shawkey, a native of Sigel, was also one of "Pop's Boys." And it is said that it was Kelchner who recommended to Connie Mack and his

Philadelphia A's the talented Chippewa pitcher, Charles "Chief" Bender, a future Hall-of-Famer. During his long career with the Cardinals, Pop would also have a hand in signing the young sensation from Donora, Stan "The Man" Musial.

Among others, Pop found future Pittsburgh Pirates skipper Danny Murtaugh in Chester. Murtaugh was a 19-year-old second baseman when he signed on with the Cambridge, Maryland, Cardinals in 1937, but "The Whistling Irishman" is best remembered as the brilliant, if slightly narcoleptic, manager of the 1960 and 1971 world champion Pirates.

And future Pirates broadcaster Nellie King, whom Kelchner signed for the Cardinals in 1946, was also caught in Pop's wide scouting net. "I can still hear his voice, the way he used to encourage us on the field. During practice he would holler 'Yip, yip, yip. Yip, yip, yip.' When he said that he meant let's step it up out there; let's get moving, boys."

Perhaps the best prospect signed by the venerable former manager of the Kane Mountaineers was Joseph "Ducky" Medwick. Also known as "Muscles" for his powerful build, this Hall-of-Famer from Carteret, New Jersey, made his debut with the Cardinals in 1932. Along the way Kelchner also signed another cornerstone of St. Louis's Gashouse Gang, switch-hitting James "Ripper" Collins of Altoona.

Among the outstanding prospects that Pop recommended for hire that were passed over include Lefty Grove, Hack Wilson, Rabbit Maranville, and Mickey Cochrane, all of whom are enshrined in Cooperstown.

Ron Smiley, a rangy young shortstop from Old Forge, was the last in a line of the many hundreds of ballplayers in Kelchner's over 50 years of scouting who are remembered as Pop's Boys. "I was living in Reading at

the time and Pop came by and asked me for a tryout. He said he wanted me to be his last prospect and I was thrilled to work out for him at Kelchner Field," says Smiley, now 76 years old. "What an honor. I even had my tryout on the field that was named for him."

He used to come by our house and have dinner with us then. Even though Pop was a giant in scouting and a friend to all of the bigshots of the game, it's amazing how humble he was. During his career he was friends with Lefty Grove, Chief Bender, Connie Mack, Branch Rickey, Babe Ruth, Stan Musial, Rogers Hornsby, Joe Medwick and so many others; the guy must have had more Hall-of-Fame contacts than any baseball man in history.

When Kelchner died in 1958, at the age of 83, Tiny Parry, a sportswriter with *The Lebanon Daily News*, honored his long career.

(Pop's) direct association with the St. Louis Cardinals for four decades qualified him as both the dean of major league scouts in age and term of service. His personal life, exemplary habits, Christian beliefs and teachings were also outstanding facets of this lovable personality who graced the sports scene so long and so admirably. Pop Kelchner joins the ranks of the immortals because his conduct, his useful and purposeful life, his kindly deeds, friendly advice, cheery greetings and widespread wholesome influence are lasting monuments that will withstand time.

When *The Sporting News* published his obituary in September 1958, at the end of his long baseball odyssey, Pop was touted as "The Dean of Big Time Scouts." He had traveled more miles, bird-dogged more prospects, discovered more stars, made more friends in high places and dedicated more years of his life to hunting ivory than any baseball scout in history. From his humble beginnings in the low minors and the backwoods of Pennsylvania, Pop touched all the bases in his storied career before he finally made his way back home again.

"Baseball sure could use a man like him today," says Ron Smiley.

With all the scandal and all of the controversy that baseball has had to endure, Pop Kelchner would be a positive influence on the game in every way. When the Hall of Fame is struggling every day to find a way to sort out the cheaters

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.



Harry Coveleski on left, with his brother Stanley.

from the guys who played the game on the square, Pop deserves to be recognized for always standing tall and for preserving the integrity of the game. His day at the Hall of Fame will eventually arrive and all of the players, managers and owners associated with him will say 'Welcome Pop, what took you so long?'

PART V: RON SMILEY'S QUEST

Ron Smiley was the last prospect in a long line of ballplayers scouted by the former manager of the Kane Mountaineers, Pop Kelchner. A crackerjack shortstop from Mt. Penn High School, Smiley signed a contract with the St. Louis Cardinals in September 1957.

Always a baseball devotee, when he retired from his marketing position at IBM in 2000, Smiley looked for a project that he could submit for publication to the Society for American Baseball Research. "That's when I really began to dig into Pop's legacy," he says.

To my surprise, the only information that I could find about Pop back then was that he was a professor of languages at Albright, and a scout for the Philadelphia A's, St. Louis Browns and St. Louis Cardinals. His limited baseball dossier also said that he had signed Joe Medwick and Rip Collins. I really couldn't believe that there was so little data available about this man who was truly a giant of the game.

He signed 60 future major leaguers at a time when scouts uncovered talent on their own, rather than just monitoring prospects like they do now in today's vast scouting systems. He was a sophisticated college professor that spent his summers in the back alleys and backwoods in places like Kane and Clearfield hunting diamonds in the rough by his own unique methods," says Smiley. "And he dedicated more than 50 years of his life to professional baseball.

Kelchner, a 1967 honoree of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame, was also inducted into Reading's Baseball Hall of Fame in 2008, thanks to Ron Smiley's efforts.

According to a July 6, 2008, story in *The Reading Eagle* by sportswriter Mike Drago,

[Smiley] began researching Kelchner's career, and then went on a letter-writing and promotional campaign that continues to this day. He has compiled a 60-page binder that includes every detail of Kelchner's life and has sent it to dozens in the media and in baseball, including every member of the Hall of Fame's board of directors.

Having compiled boxes upon boxes of information about Kelchner in his almost ten years of research, Smiley admits to occasionally needing extra inspiration to continue waging what amounts to his own political war with Cooperstown's "illuminati" to get Pop Kelchner his due. He says he holds very dear the many letters of support he receives from people like Max Silberman, the Vice-Chairman of the Philadelphia A's Historical Society, and Roland Hemond, who now works for the Arizona Diamondbacks.

As the last in the line of "Pop's Boys," Ron Smiley fell short of making it big as a professional baseball player more than fifty years ago. That's why he accepts the burden of getting Kelchner elected in the National Baseball Hall of Fame as his own personal quest. "Pop gave me my best chance in the game many years ago and it's time to pay him back," Smiley says. Whether Smiley succeeds in finally earning Cooperstown's attention for Pop or not, he knows that the former manager of the 1907 Kane Mountaineers, who was baseball's immortal "Dean of Scouts," is smiling down upon him for his efforts. And like former Pirates broadcaster, the late Nellie King, Smiley occasionally heard Pop's high-pitched voice, still imploring as he did generations of ballplayers from the sidelines with his cheers, "Yip, yip, yip." ■

Notes

1. Kelchner also managed Milton in the Susquehanna League in 1905, Wildwood in 1906.
2. The story may be apocryphal or at least embellished. Coveleski never pitched for Doooin; he was traded two months before Doooin's first spring training.

American Women Play Hardball in Venezuela

Team USA battles invisibility at home, is celebrated abroad, and faces gunfire at the Women's World Cup

Jennifer Ring

A prevailing American cultural attitude holds that “girls can’t play baseball.” This belief makes it difficult for female baseball players to find a game, a team, a league, or encouragement to learn to play. Women have played for nearly two centuries in the United States, and still are greeted with incredulity: “Do you mean softball? I didn’t know girls played baseball!” Of the major American sports, baseball is the only one that continues to enforce a segregation so complete that girls are directed to an “equivalent” sport. Softball is a “parallel universe” that precludes the choice to play baseball for most American girls.¹

Yet generation after generation of women, from the late eighteenth century when baseball first arrived in the United States, to the USA Baseball National Team today, have refused to relinquish the nation’s diamonds. Many play Little League Baseball until they are twelve, but to continue to play with adolescent boys in otherwise single-sexed leagues is so daunting that many girls quit or turn to softball. The allure of college scholarships fuses the talent pipeline to softball for aspiring athletic girls. The girls who do play hardball are so isolated that many are unaware of each other’s existence. One teenaged rookie player on the USA Baseball National Team marveled at finally being able to play *baseball* with other girls: “Oh my gosh it was extraordinary. I have never had an experience like that in my life. I’ve never played with a group of girls who have the same passion for baseball—*not softball*—as me.”²

Yes, there is a US women’s national baseball team, made up of women who refuse to quit playing the game. The journey of Team USA 2010 from USA Baseball’s National Training Complex in Cary, North Carolina, to the fourth biennial Women’s World Cup Baseball Tournament in Caracas, Venezuela reflects the challenges they still face: invisibility at home; the difficulty of finding a team to play on from childhood on; lack of time for the national team to practice together before facing international competition; and most challenging of all, the lifelong pressure on girls to play softball instead of baseball.³

Since 2004, USA Baseball, operating out of its expansive, pastoral National Training Complex in Cary,

North Carolina, has sponsored a women’s team chosen every two years, and sent to the biennial Women’s Baseball World Cup Tournament to face teams from around the globe. USA Baseball exists primarily to showcase the best amateur boys and men in international tournaments.⁴ They sponsor and fund a range of boys’ youth teams and the elite NCAA collegiate baseball team, which includes the nation’s most promising draft picks for professional baseball. For the women, Team USA holds a very different meaning. It is a brief interlude lasting a little more than two weeks every two years, and is the only nationally validated elite-level baseball available to them. For the women, playing on Team USA is akin to being in the Olympics: the highest achievement available in their baseball careers. But unlike Olympians, they remain unknown in the United States.

In 2010 thirty-two women were selected from throughout the United States at six regional tryouts,⁵ invited to the National Training Complex in Cary, and then culled to a team of 20 players in four grueling, 12-hour days in the August heat. They had only four more days to get to know each other before they flew to Caracas, Venezuela on August 10, to face ten teams, including the powerful Team Japan, whose members play as a team all year round.⁶



PHOTO BY BRIAN FLEMING/USA BASEBALL

Catcher Anna Kimbrell and infielder Sarah Gascon have a talk on the mound with their pitcher Ashley Sujkowski.



Clarisa Navarro and Tamara Holmes.

When the 20 women who made the final cut arrived in Caracas for the fourth Women's World Cup Tournament on August 12, baseball-crazy Venezuela greeted them with television cameras, paparazzi, lights, and microphones. A brass band burst into song, the players were showered in American flags, presented with flowers, and ushered into a press conference. Treated as interlopers all their lives in the States, in Venezuela Team USA was greeted like a major league team arriving for the World Series. The press conference for the Americans ended only when Team Cuba stepped off their plane. As Cuban flags began to appear in the reception area, the Americans were directed onto a bus, surrounded by a police and military escort, including members of the Venezuelan National Guard armed with AK-47s and wearing bullet-proof vests, and followed by an ambulance. USA Baseball had also sent two private security officers to travel with the team.

On the second day of play in the tournament, the need for security became shockingly apparent. The shortstop on the Hong Kong team, Cheuk Woon Yee Sinny, was shot in the leg during a game against the Netherlands. All play was halted while the incident was investigated. The American team was placed in lock-down in their hotel rooms for 48 hours until Venezuelan authorities and tournament officials determined that the shooting was accidental: a gun had

been discharged into the air from outside the stadium, and the bullet had, freakishly, landed in the shortstop's leg.

The American players responded with a combination of concern for the wounded Hong Kong player, panic that the tournament would be cancelled, and fear that they might also be targets if they took the field again. Seventeen-year-old pitcher Marti Sementelli captured the general sense of dread: "We played one game, and they're saying we don't know if we're going to continue! We worked so hard. My heart was like 'I don't want to go home! We just started becoming a team. And we're going to be told that this tournament's over?'"

Seventeen-year-old Ghazaleh Sailors declared she would prefer to stay and risk being shot than miss the rest of the tournament: "If I'm going to die, I don't want to die like an old lady in a hospital bed. I'll die doing what I love."⁷ Tamara Holmes, a thirty-six-year-old Oakland firefighter, veteran of the team, and a former Silver Bullets professional baseball player, was less sanguine about dying with her cleats on: "I remember Ghaz saying 'Well if I have to die at least it will be playing baseball.'....I'm looking at her and I'm like, 'Later for you! I'm not going to get shot over this...!'"

Veteran catcher Veronica Alvarez was confident it was a one-time incident that did not pose a threat to the ballplayers. After being assured that the Hong Kong player would recover, she wisecracked, "If I knew it was only going to be a gunshot to the leg, I would have taken it. I'd take it if I got a little ESPN action!"⁸

Hong Kong withdrew immediately to accompany its wounded teammate home. The American coaches asked their players to decide whether they wanted to continue or to withdraw. Many of the other teams, including Australia, Canada, and Puerto Rico, awaited the Americans' decision. If the United States withdrew from the tournament, chances are the Women's World Cup 2010 would have been cancelled.

But the American women were not ready to go home. Their stress and pent-up energy was released on the field as play resumed and they promptly hit four out-of-the park home runs in three games. American left fielder Tamara Holmes hit two grand slams, including a 360-foot shot over the left-field fence against Team Canada. Malaika Underwood hit a line drive out of the park against Korea.

The most dramatic game of the tournament, however, was the one all Venezuela had awaited, their home squad against the United States. Although the official crowd was announced at 14,500 fans, a capacity crowd, more than 16,000 filled Jose Perez Stadium

**2010 Women's National Team
USA at VENEZUELA
Aug 19, 2010 at Maracay, Venezuela (Jose Perez Stadium)**

USA 6 (4-2)

| Player | ab | r | h | rbi | bb | so | po | a | lob |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Tara Harbert cf | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jenna Marston rf | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Clarisa Navarro ss | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Tamara Holmes lf | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Laura Espinoza-Watson 1b | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 2 |
| Karen Costes ph | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sarah Gascon 3b | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Veronica Alvarez c | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| Ashley Sujkowski pr | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wynne McCann dh | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Malaika Underwood 2b | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Marti Sementelli p | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Anna Kimbrell p | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lindsay Horwitz p | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 28 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 18 | 14 | 8 |

VENEZUELA 7 (6-0)

| Player | ab | r | h | rbi | bb | so | po | a | lob |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| BRITO Solmarys ss | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| REYES Leonel lf | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| GOMEZ Lelis 2b/p | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| VELASQUEZ Allinson 2b | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| PINEDA Nidia dh | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MENDOZA Kellyn rf | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| PEREZ Johana 1b | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| GIMENEZ Dailys 3b | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| ARRIECHI Ofelia c | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| PEREZ Marianne cf | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| TARAZAONA Raiza p | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| TOVAR Diana p | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Totals | 24 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 21 | 12 | 4 |

| Score by Innings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | R | H | E |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| USA | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 2 |
| VENEZUELA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | X | 7 | 5 | 3 |

E - Gascon; Underwood; BRITO S; PEREZ J; ARRIECHI O. DP - USA 1. LOB - USA 8; VEN 4. 2B - Underwood. HBP - Harbert; BRITO S; REYES L; PEREZ M. SF - Navarro. SB - Harbert; Navarro; Gascon; Sujkowski; PEREZ M. CS - Harbert.

| USA | ip | h | r | er | bb | so | ab | bf |
|------------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Marti Sementelli | 4.0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 14 | 14 |
| Anna Kimbrell | 0.1 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| Lindsay Horwitz | 1.2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 9 |

| VENEZUELA | ip | h | r | er | bb | so | ab | bf |
|------------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| TARAZAONA Raiza | 3.1 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 17 | 20 |
| TOVAR Diana | 2.2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 10 |
| GOMEZ Lelis | 1.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 5 |

Win - TOVAR D (1-0). Loss - Horwitz (0-1). Save - GOMEZ L (1).

WP - GOMEZ L. HBP - by Kimbrell (PEREZ M); by Kimbrell (BRITO S); by Kimbrell (REYES L); by TOVAR D (Harbert). PB - ARRIECHI O 2.

Umpires - HP: Liu Po Chun 1B: Yanet Moreno 2B: Paul Latta 3B: H. Myung Sun

Start: 7:07 PM Time: 2:00 Attendance: 14500

TOVAR D faced 1 batter in the 7th.

and thousands more had to be turned away. The USA-Venezuela game was televised in prime time in a country that loves its baseball. The Venezuelans turned out in force to watch their women play.

For American girls accustomed to playing before a handful of family members and friends, the spectacle of thousands of fans in a major league stadium was electrifying. Second baseman Malaika Underwood remarked, "The crowds were amazing. None of us had ever played in front of that many people before. And it was not just fifteen thousand sitting on their hands: they were all screaming and yelling the entire game. It was a great experience. The local support was astounding."⁹

USA center fielder Tara Harbert described it as a moment of vindication in a lifetime of neglect: "They loved us. They all knew our names, they all knew we played baseball. And then you come back to America and people are like 'Oh, you play softball?' We had sixteen thousand people at our game versus Venezuela... it was a dream come true. Even though they were cheering for Venezuela, in my mind they were cheering for us. Down there we were stars, and we come back here and you barely make ends meet, no one knows who you are. I feel like, 'Oh my God, I want to go back!'"¹⁰

The Americans lost to Venezuela in what was, to them, a heartbreaker. They took an early lead: the

Venezuelans were unable to hit American pitcher Marti Sementelli's curveball. Then the coach made a pitching change after four innings. Relief pitcher Anna Kimbrell struggled, hitting three batters and walking one. Momentum shifted, and the crowd, which had grown quiet, roared back to life. The American team succumbed to the noise and pressure. Catcher Veronica Alvarez felt helpless watching the game turn: "As a catcher looking out, I saw our team crumble. I'm trying to calm them down, but what can you do? They don't hear each other, there's so much chaos. The crowd went crazy, the bases were loaded, a run scored. Then she walked another. Our team crumbled."¹¹

The Americans lost their momentum after that game, and settled for the Bronze medal. Japan won gold and Australia silver. Both Japan and Australia make baseball available to girls and women from childhood through high school. Their national teams are chosen a full year before the tournaments, with both "A" and "B" teams so they can practice. Team USA veteran Malaika Underwood says the USA must adopt the same strategy in order to remain competitive:

If we are serious about having a women's team that can compete with Japan, we need to be able to play more often together. We know who we have to beat, and we know what they're doing. They're practicing consistently together for five to six days a week and it's not just the month leading up to the tournament. They are doing this throughout the year. If we are going to compete with that machine, we have to do more. We need more time together as a team, and more consistency from a structural perspective.¹²

There's hope. Ashley Bratcher has been hired as the first director of the women's program for Team USA, and she agrees. Not only has she pushed for a yearly international tournament and more systematic recruiting for the women's national team, she has been instrumental in making the Women's National Team "more than an afterthought of the men's teams."¹³ Bratcher believes that if Team USA is to succeed in international competition, the players need a chance to practice and play together for more than a few days every two years before a tournament, and girls need the opportunity to learn baseball from a young age.¹⁴

The United States must get over its cultural belief that softball is "baseball for girls." If the national team can win bronze with a group of players who had such limited access to baseball, imagine the possibilities if they had the opportunity to develop their skills and learn the intricacies of the game over a lifetime. When girls and women play baseball from Little League to the major leagues, the United States will truly possess a national pastime. ■

Notes

1. *Stolen Bases: Why American Girls Don't Play Baseball*, 2009. Champagne: University of Illinois Press. I wrote this book about the history of attempts to exclude American girls and women from organized baseball, beginning with the story of the resistance my younger daughter faced. It was legally mandated for her to play Little League in the 1990s, but the cultural barriers she faced weren't very different than what I faced when I was a girl who wanted to play in the 1960s.
2. Clarissa Navarro, Phone Interview, November 2, 2010.
3. This account is based on interviews with the players and coaches of Team USA, 2010, as well as some players from the 2008 team. All players and coaches were approached and invited to contribute shortly after the return of the team from the Women's World Cup Tournament in Venezuela, August 10–23, 2010. Interviews were either in person, or by phone.
4. USA Baseball is the National Governing Body of amateur baseball in the United States and is a member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). The organization selects and trains the World Baseball Classic Team and World Cup Team (and all other USA Baseball Professional Teams); the USA Baseball Collegiate National Team; the USA Baseball 18U, 16U and 14U National Teams; and the USA Baseball Women's National Team, all of which participate in various international competitions each year. USA Baseball also presents the Golden Spikes Award annually to top player in college baseball. www.USABaseball.com and www.GoldenSpikesAward.com.
5. Regional tryouts were held in late June, and over the July 4th weekend in Phoenix, San Francisco, Chicago, Orlando, New London Connecticut, and Cary, North Carolina. This was a well-intentioned effort to reach out to all available ballplayers. Problems with the plan included the fact that not all the coaches could be present at all of the tryouts, which were spread across the country; and outreach efforts were only marginally effective.
6. Previous tournaments have been held in Edmonton, Canada (2004), Taipei, Taiwan (2006), and Matsuyama, Japan (2008) The twelve teams in the 2010 Women's World Cup were: USA, Japan, Canada, Australia, Venezuela, Cuba, Puerto Rico, South Korea, India, Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, and The Netherlands.
7. Ghazaleh Sailors, Phone Interview, September 15, 2010.
8. Veronica Alvarez, phone interview, November 15, 2010.
9. Malaika Underwood, phone interview, September 9, 2010.
10. Tara Harbert, phone interview, September 21, 2010.
11. Veronica Alvarez, phone interview, November 16, 2010.
12. Malaika Underwood, phone interview, September 9, 2010.
13. Malaika Underwood, phone interview, September 9, 2010. "Ashley did a phenomenal job. She made us feel more like a USA baseball team than ever before. Not just a second thought to the boys' teams."
14. Ashley Bratcher, phone interview, September 29, 2010.

Global World Series: 1955–57

Bob Buege

Half a century before there was a World Baseball Classic, there was the Global World Series. The scars of World War II had not yet fully healed, but teams representing four continents and three island nations chose to set aside their political differences and do battle with a bat and ball between the white lines. The idea of an international baseball competition was not original. Ray Dumont founded the National Baseball Congress in 1938 and later created the national semipro tournament held annually in Wichita, Kansas. On May 30, 1948, Dumont conferred in St. Louis with J.G. Taylor Spink, publisher of *The Sporting News*, who also served as global commissioner of the NBC. Also attending the meeting was Alejandro Reyes, Mexican commissioner for the Congress. The three men met to discuss an annual non-professional world's baseball championship series.¹

For whatever reason, the planned competition did not reach fruition. However, in 1950 a Japanese all-star team comprising mostly college ballplayers hosted a best-of-seven-game inter-hemisphere championship series in Tokyo and Osaka. The young Japanese athletes were eager to test their skills against players from other countries. Mindful, no doubt, of the pre-war baseball tours of the likes of Babe Ruth and Lefty O'Doul, they naturally turned to the United States. Their opponents were the winners of the 32-team United States semipro championship tournament held in Wichita. In 1950, as in the three previous years, that team was the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Capeharts.

Perhaps more interesting than the baseball games were the timing and location of the competition. The series took place from September 10 through September 15, 1950, barely five years after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while thousands of U.S. soldiers still occupied the islands of Japan. What's more, the opening game was played less than three months after the outbreak of the Korean War, with President Truman authorizing General Douglas MacArthur to use American troops from the Japanese occupation to fight against North Korea. Travel to Japan was not yet normalized, so to expedite the series, all of the ballplayers were sworn in to active military duty during their stay.

The opening day festivities were delayed by a brief and fortunately mild earthquake. When the ground finally stood still, General MacArthur's wife threw out the first ball. Former Chicago Cubs shortstop Salvador Madrid belted two home runs and led the Americans to an easy 6–1 victory.

In 1950 the perpetually strong Fort Wayne ballclub featured a pair of southpaw hurlers that the Japanese batters found unhittable. Patricio "Pat" Scantlebury and Jim "Lefty" LaMarque were both all-star veterans of the Negro Leagues, LaMarque having led the Negro American League in ERA just two years previous, and Scantlebury having been selected for East-West All-Star games in 1949 and 1950.

The talented Fort Wayne team took the series quite handily in five games. Their ballclub had overwhelming pitching and power. They might have had even more power. Legendary sandlot and minor league slugger Joe Bauman had been invited to join the Capeharts for the Japanese series. In 1954 Bauman slammed 72 home runs for Roswell in the Class C Longhorn League. He declined Fort Wayne's offer to compete in Japan because he needed to work at his Texaco station along Route 66 in Elk City, Oklahoma.

The only game the host team won in the series was Game Three. Japan won, 1–0, in 12 innings when several of the American players were disabled by severe food poisoning.

On September 15 the Capeharts wrapped up their successful visit to the Far East by defeating the Japanese team, 6–1, behind series Most Valuable Player Pat Scantlebury. Meanwhile 750 miles to the west, across the Sea of Japan and the Korean peninsula, troops of the U.S. 10th Corps made a surprise amphibious landing at Inchon, directed personally by Douglas MacArthur.

Two years later the Korean War was still raging. In September 1952, the U.S. Navy introduced a new form of aerial combat. From the aircraft carrier *Boxer* they launched pilotless Grumman F6F Hellcats equipped with heavy explosives, in effect creating guided missiles to strike targets in North Korea.

War or no war, the International Baseball Congress again sponsored a Japanese-American series in Tokyo

in September 1952. The U.S. representative this time was a service team, the Fort Myer Colonials, from the military district of Washington, D.C., adjacent to Arlington National Cemetery.

Fort Myer's opponents never had a chance. The Colonials simply had too much pitching. In the series qualifying Fort Myer for the national tournament, for example, former Boston Braves bonus baby Johnny Antonelli fired a one-hitter and fanned 18 batters, not to mention slamming two triples and a single. Fort Myer overwhelmed Sherman Athletic Club of Charleston, 21-0.

In the Wichita tournament from August 15 to September 1, the Colonials swept all seven of their games, defeating six service teams and the Wichita Boeing Bombers. Antonelli won three of them. St. Louis Cardinals pitcher Tom Poholsky also won three, and future Pittsburgh Pirates hurler Bob Purkey and Jacksonville (Sally League) right-hander Chuck Fowler combined to win the other. The only game that was close was the championship contest, a 5-4 victory over Fort Leonard Wood of Missouri.

Besides their major league pitchers, the Fort Myer team also boasted New York Giants catcher Sam Calderone and Pittsburgh Pirates shortstop Danny O'Connell. O'Connell was voted Most Valuable Player among the 32 tournament teams.

Following their championship in Wichita, the Fort Myer ballclub flew to Hawaii for four exhibition games. Subsequently they continued on to Tokyo and took two out of three from the Japanese all-stars in the inter-hemispheric series. After that they traveled to Osaka and took two straight to wrap up the series championship, four games to one.

Fort Myer hammered the hosts in the series opener, 13-5. Future Milwaukee Braves Sam Calderone and

Danny O'Connell each blasted a three-run homer and Calderone added a solo shot to lead the assault. In Game Two O'Connell provided all of the offense with a two-run home run in support of Antonelli's four-hit, 2-0 shutout. The Japanese club earned its only victory in the third game, beating the Americans, 8-4, despite home runs by Calderone and O'Connell.

Game Four was a hard-fought 2-1 win for the Colonials, but the fifth agame was a blow-out. Antonelli won for the second time in the series behind a 17-hit attack. Calderone, who was voted the series MVP, smashed a grand slam to highlight a convincing 9-1 American triumph.

"We took the team to Japan for the international series," Albert B. (Happy) Chandler, president of the International Baseball Congress, said proudly, "and won four out of five games."²

Chandler was a former U.S. Senator from Kentucky and the Commissioner of Baseball following the death of Kenesaw Mountain Landis. Having replaced Spink as head of the IBC, Chandler was looking to expand the Japan-United States competition to a series involving four nations, or perhaps eight, in 1954. Japan had successfully hosted two series with the U.S. team, but in order to increase the number and scope of the teams in the tournament, Chandler felt that a more centralized location was necessary, i.e., an American city. He also knew that someone had to underwrite the cost and be willing to absorb possible financial loss.

Seeking a possible host city, Chandler visited Milwaukee in mid-August 1953. The Braves were out of town, playing the Cubs in Wrigley Field that day. Their starting pitcher was Johnny Antonelli. Chandler, though, traveled to County Stadium to confer with Dick Falk, Wisconsin's commissioner of semipro baseball, and to watch the Badger State's teams try to qualify for the national tournament in Wichita.

"Milwaukee is the talk of the baseball world," Chandler said. What's more, County Stadium impressed him as a perfect venue. "The playing field is ideal and this is one ballpark that has its fences at equal distances along the foul lines," he noted.³

Brooklyn Dodgers president Walter O'Malley had already volunteered the use of Ebbets Field for a world tournament. Chandler's ideal site, however, had two prerequisites: a hard-charging, energetic local host to oversee the tournament, and a large and enthusiastic fan base. In Dick Falk and the baseball-crazed patrons of County Stadium, Chandler found both.

Falk had served as a Marine Corps officer in World War II. He was a member of a prominent Milwaukee family, a civic leader and the secretary and assistant to



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Army Private Johnny Antonelli, on leave from the Boston Braves, dominated the Japanese in two games of their five-game series with the Fort Myer Colonials.



Kentucky's governor, then Senator, Albert B. "Happy" Chandler aspired to be the U.S. President. Instead he became Commissioner of Baseball and later the president of the International Baseball Congress.

the president of the Falk Corporation, a manufacturer of industrial gears in Milwaukee since 1895. Since 1939 he had also been the Wisconsin Commissioner of the National Baseball Congress, appointed by Ray Dumont. Falk was a tireless, loyal advocate of ballplayers and the game of baseball, the perfect man to direct the first Global World Series.

Falk and the IBC were unable to organize the first series in time for their intended 1954 date. Instead they staged the inaugural Global World Series September 23–28, 1955, after the Milwaukee Braves had completed their home schedule.

The cost of putting on an ambitious tournament was considerable. Falk managed to round up more than 100 local businesses as sponsors in order to stage a first-rate event. Every team's delegation was given an elaborate welcome as it arrived at Mitchell Airport. The teams passed beneath a flower-covered arch and onto a red carpet as they stepped down from the airplane. Each team received this royal treatment except the group from Puerto Rico, who arrived nearly five hours ahead of schedule and found no one to greet them. That night a one-hour parade through downtown Milwaukee kicked off the festivities with marching bands, drum and bugle corps, giant inflated balloons, and colorful floats.

The eight teams participating in the inaugural Global World Series spanned the globe, representing the continents of North America, South America, Asia, and Europe, plus Central America and island nations in the Pacific and the Caribbean. They spoke a variety of languages. The Colombians deplaned with only one English-speaking person, and that person was sick.

The Japanese interpreter was asked how his country's players would be able to argue with the umpires without speaking English. The answer was simple: "We never argue with the umpire."⁴

As might be expected, the American entry was the overwhelming favorite to win the championship. The ballclub representing the host nation was the Boeing Bombers from Wichita, Kansas, who had defeated the Sinton (Texas) Oilers in the national tournament. The Bombers were led by former New York Giants infielder Daryl Spencer, a Wichita native serving an Army hitch at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Spencer, the Most Valuable Player of the recent national tournament in Wichita, had been added to the Bombers roster. Except for Spencer and two former employees, everyone in the Bombers lineup worked at Boeing assembling B-47E Stratojets and B-52 Stratofortress bombers. All of them had minor league baseball experience.

The other North American ballclub in the tournament hailed from Canada. The Edmonton Eskimos had won the Western Canada League championship, but for reasons known only to them, they refused to accept five ballplayers from other league teams added to their roster, as required by their league rules. As a result, the Eskimos were disqualified and replaced by the club they had defeated, the Saskatoon Gems, most of whose players had competed in collegiate ball in the United States.

Somewhat surprisingly, a decade after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the team that was the clear fan favorite was the Japanese Kanebo All-Stars. Maybe it was because they had traveled so far to get to County Stadium, or perhaps because their players were so short and so polite. Japan's team lacked power, but every one of its players was a .300 hitter.

The Puerto Rican Baricuas, an all-star team from the best league on their island, were piloted by a manager familiar to many Milwaukee baseball fans. He was Luis Olmo, a former Brooklyn Dodger who had played the outfield for the Milwaukee Brewers in Borchert Field in 1951. Most of the Puerto Ricans had played winter ball with or against big leaguers like Bob Buhl and Sad Sam Jones. They presented a powerful lineup and were considered a title threat.

The Refinerias from Mexico were the perennial champions of the Poza Rica League in Central Mexico. This league had sent Bobby Avila to the major leagues. Avila won the American League batting crown in 1954 while hitting .341 and leading the Cleveland Indians to an amazing record of 111–43. Baseball had a long history in Mexico, although teams customarily played their games only between Thursday and Sunday.

The mountainous South American nation of Colombia has a capital city, Bogota, situated at such high altitude that it rarely gets warm enough for baseball. The Colombians played ball in the small towns closer to sea level. Their hitters were not powerful, but their infielders were collectively the finest in the field.

The delegation from Hawaii included perhaps the biggest celebrity at the tournament, but he was not a baseball personality. Duke Kahanamoku, the sheriff of Honolulu, had been the 100-meter Olympic swim champion in 1912, repeating in 1920. Hawaii was not a part of the National Baseball Congress because it was still a U.S. territory four years from statehood. The Honolulu Red Sox ballplayers, though, disliked being called “Hawaii,” comparing it to calling the Boeing Bombers “The United States Mainland.”⁵

The final entrant in the tournament was the European champion, the Spanish National All-Stars. They had a history of being Europe’s best, but they were in reality a weak ballclub. Until recent years they had played baseball on soccer fields, with the rules adapted to compensate for the restrictions of the playing environment.

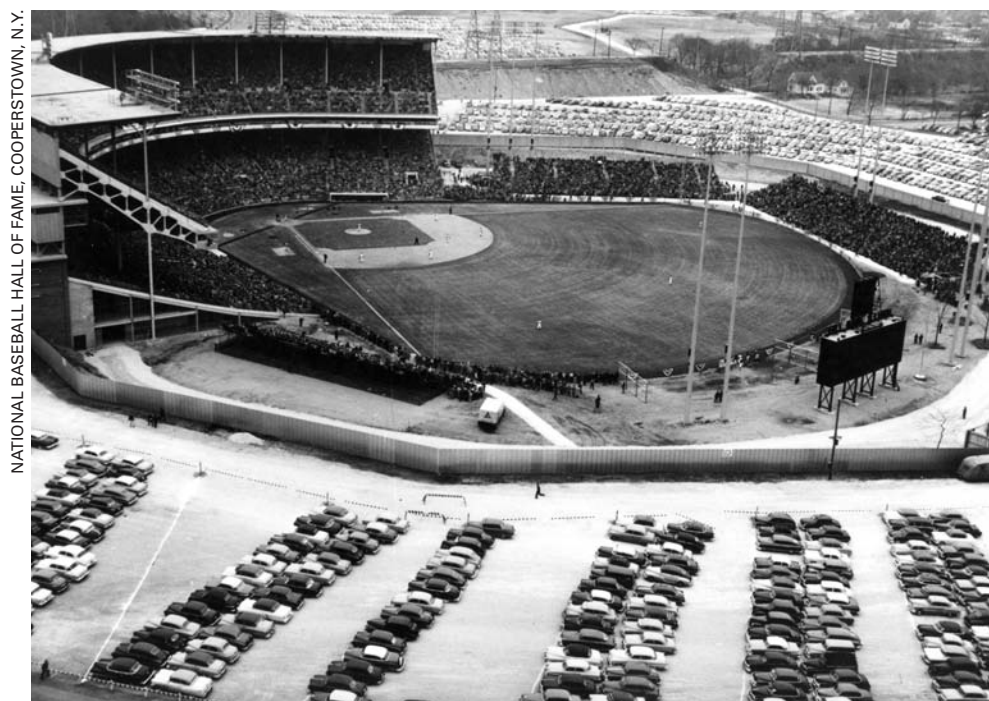
On Friday night, September 23, 1955, the first Global World Series got underway in Milwaukee County Stadium. The stadium lights were turned off and a spotlight shone on the Great Lakes training center band as they marched in and played the U.S. national anthem. Then the chorus of the Cudworth American Legion post sang “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.” The lights were turned back on, and all

eight teams, in uniform, lined up along the baselines and were introduced. Finally, the baseball began.

The opening game matched the Saskatoon Gems and the Japanese Kanebos under a cool autumn sky. Japan scored two runs in the top of the first, but they never scored again off Canada’s Charlie Bogan. Meanwhile the Canadians scored four times in the bottom of the first, paced by a home run by first baseman Jim Ryan, to give Bogan all the runs he needed. In the fifth inning the Gems also pulled off a triple play, the first ever in County Stadium. The Japanese club tried everything, including the use of three different third base coaches in the eighth inning, but Canada defeated Japan, 5–2.

The next day featured a full slate of four games. The afternoon’s first contest quickly became the most entertaining of the week. The *Milwaukee Journal* described it aptly as “a comedy in six and one-half acts.”⁶ The Hawaii Red Sox overwhelmed the team from Spain, 23–0, in a game that was not as close as the score would suggest. The tournament had a “mercy rule” terminating any game in which a team was losing by eight runs or more after seven innings.

Spain’s hitters were obviously ineffective, but their greatest deficiency appeared to be pitching. Their starting hurler, Pedro Seda, threw softly and had no curve ball. As a result, by the time he was relieved in the fourth inning, he had allowed 14 runs and 12 hits while walking six, hitting three batters, and letting go of four wild pitches. His teammates were also charged with five errors though in reality they probably had



Milwaukee County Stadium was built for the Milwaukee Brewers of the American Association before the Braves' move from Boston was announced. The park was in its third season when it hosted the inaugural Global World Series in 1955.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

twice that number. After the game was halted, the enthusiastic Spaniards sprinted across the diamond and joyfully shook the hands of their Hawaiian rivals. Later, when asked why his manager left him in so long, Seda replied, “He had confidence in me.”⁷⁷

In the day’s second game Colombia surprised Puerto Rico’s Baricuas, 5–3, defeating their mound ace, Kelly Searcy, who had recently signed a contract for 1956 with the Baltimore Orioles. While the Colombian infield performed admirably, Searcy’s teammates betrayed him with five errors. Most members of the Puerto Rico team had not played baseball since the end of winter ball in February. The effects of their inactivity were visible.

The Boeing Bombers met Mexico in the evening’s first game. If the U.S. team was expecting a cakewalk, they were disappointed. They scored first, but the Refinerias answered with a three-run inning. After nine innings the score was tied at four apiece. It remained that way until the 12th inning. With a runner on second and one out, Minor Scott came to the plate. Scott had played seven seasons of minor league ball, including a short stint as Eddie Mathews’s infield mate with the Atlanta Crackers.

Mexico’s pitcher, Rafael Pedroza, was in the process of walking Scott intentionally when the feisty hitter reached out and lined an outside pitch to right field. The runner scored from second, touching off a five-run rally that gave the Wichita team a 9–4 victory.

In the night’s last competition, the Hawaii Red Sox, who had not been challenged at all by Spain early in the afternoon, earned their second win by beating the team from Canada, 5–2.

On Sunday the Mexican ballclub rebounded from their tough loss to the U.S. team by clobbering the Puerto Rican team, 7–2, dealing Luis Olmo’s guys their second defeat in the double-elimination format. Mexico’s relief pitcher Ramon Brown entered in the third inning and held Puerto Rico to just one hit the rest of the way.

Japan eliminated Spain, 8–0, on a pitching masterpiece by right-hander Kasuo Fukushima. He came within one out of a no-hitter in a game ended after seven innings by the eight-run rule. Ironically, the only hit came from pitcher Pedro Seda. Maybe that’s why his manager had confidence in him.

Canada, meanwhile, put Mexico out of the tournament with a 5–1 triumph nearly overshadowed by Mexico’s fine shortstop, Miguel Fernandez, who owned three of his club’s four hits, plus a stolen base and consistently brilliant defense.

The final Sunday night game presented two undefeated teams, the Bombers from Wichita against the

Colombians. Western League veteran Mike Werbach, formerly in the Brooklyn Dodgers organization, pitched the complete game and received all the support he needed on offense from Daryl Spencer, who tripled with the bases loaded in the fifth inning, as the host team defeated the club from South America, 5–3.

The following night two teams met who were both on the brink of elimination. In the tourney’s best pitching battle, Colombia’s Enrique Hernandez outdueled Japan’s Sadao Kawai, winning 1–0. Hernandez also drove in the only run with a double in the second inning, thus eliminating the popular Japanese team.

Also Monday night the U.S. team took on their territorial cousins from the former Sandwich Islands. The Boeing club defeated Hawaii, 5–3, beating 32-year-old Dartmouth College graduate Jim Doole. After Bombers starter Jim Upchurch failed to locate home plate consistently with his pitches, Vern Frantz relieved him and allowed just three hits in the last six and two-thirds innings to earn the victory.

On Tuesday night the tournament field was whittled to two. As expected, the American team ousted the Saskatoon Gems, 8–2. Jim Morris hurled a six-hitter and received slugging help from two former New York Giants, outfielder Les Layton, who homered, and shortstop Daryl Spencer, who tripled. Canada’s loss put them into Wednesday’s consolation game against Colombia.

The Colombians were consigned to the third-place contest by a 13–0 thrashing at the hands of the Hawaii Red Sox. Sox pitcher Len Kasparovitch, a 36-year-old Honolulu foot patrolman, allowed only three hits as the islanders easily earned a meeting with the Wichita Bombers.

The Saskatoon Gems led off Wednesday evening with a 4–3 win over Colombia to gain a third-place finish in the first Global World Series. That set the table for the anticipated coronation of the champion as the undefeated Boeing Bombers faced the once-defeated Hawaii ballclub. After three innings the outcome seemed a foregone conclusion. Wichita led, 6–0, and the only suspense was whether Boeing’s Mike Werbach would throw a no-hitter.

In the sixth inning, though, the Red Sox broke the hitting drought in a big way, scoring five runs off Werbach and relief man Delos Smith. In the seventh inning Hawaii catcher Sol Kaulukukui’s bases-loaded single drove home two runs to give his team an unlikely 8–6 victory over the team from the mainland.

The surprise win by Hawaii delayed the championship game until Thursday night. Once again the Bombers seized an early lead, 4–0, in the top of the

third inning. Again, the Hawaiians rallied to tie the game. Wichita reliever Vern Frantz held the Sox scoreless for the final eight innings of an 11-inning ballgame. Kasparovitch matched him until the 11th. In the final frame the Boeing team used four bases on balls, two of them with the bases loaded, to score three runs and escape with a 7-4 victory over the gritty Hawaiians. It was a struggle, but the Wichita Boeing Bombers reigned as the 1955 Global World Series champions. Len Kasparovitch of the runner-up team was named the Most Valuable Pitcher, and Daryl Spencer of the winners was voted the Most Valuable Player.

The weather throughout the tournament had been cold and sometimes wet. Expenses far exceeded expectations, and attendance at County Stadium was disappointing. Nevertheless, the series was declared a success by everyone involved, and plans began at once for the 1956 event.

In reality the 1956 Global World Series champion was decided during the week before the international competition began. In the U.S. National Semipro Tournament in Wichita, Kansas, the top American teams battled each other for the right to represent their country. The favored team was the Texas Alpine Cowboys. It would not be an exaggeration to describe them as the prohibitive favorite.

The Alpine Cowboys boasted three star ballplayers. Their starting catcher, Clyde McCullough, had played 15 years in the big leagues, most recently with the Chicago Cubs until he was released on July 27. (His backup was Milwaukee native John Kloza, Jr., whose father had played for the St. Louis Browns.)

Most prominent were the Cowboys pitchers. Lefty Johnny Podres was a member of the world champion Brooklyn Dodgers. In fact, he was the MVP of the 1955 World Series. He was given leave and allowed to play semipro ball in 1956 while serving in the U.S. Navy, stationed at Norfolk, Virginia. Right-hander Jack Sanford was on leave from the Army. He was destined to make his debut with the Philadelphia Phillies three days after the Global World Series ended. In 1957 he won 19 games for the Phillies and was the National League Rookie of the Year.

The *Milwaukee Sentinel* was so sure of the national tournament's outcome that they printed a photo of Podres with the caption, "Former Dodger Ace Headed for Global Series."⁸ This was the Milwaukee paper's equivalent of "Dewey Defeats Truman." Despite their big-name ballplayers, however, the Alpine Cowboys lost in the semi-finals in Wichita. The tournament winner and U.S. representative was the Allen Dairymen from Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The Dairymen lacked big-name star-power, but all of them except two had played minor league ball. One who had not was shortstop John Kennedy, a veteran of the Negro Leagues who, the following April, would become the first African American to play for the Philadelphia Phillies. The other was Don Pavletich, a recent graduate of Nathan Hale High School in the Milwaukee suburb of West Allis. After school let out, Pavletich had signed a \$35,000 bonus contract with the Cincinnati Redlegs. Pavletich, who would ultimately play a dozen years in the big leagues as a catcher and first baseman, was added to the Fort Wayne team's roster for the Global World Series.

As in 1955, the ballclubs from Colombia, Mexico, and Puerto Rico were all-star squads primarily comprising winter league stars. The European champion this time was from Holland, known as the Honkballers. They were reputed to be far superior to last year's Spanish entry. The Canadian representative was the North Battleford Beavers. The Japanese team was the Nippon Oil Cal-Tex club from Yokohama. The only holdover was last year's runner-up, the Honolulu Red Sox from America's future fiftieth state.

Hope springs eternal and the international teams visiting County Stadium were no exception. The manager of the Hawaii Red Sox, Larry "Peanuts" Kunihiha,



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Drafted into the military a few months after being the hero of the 1955 World Series, Johnny Podres was allowed to pitch semipro ball in 1956. His team, however, failed to qualify for the Global World Series.

said, “We were just a couple of outs from the title last year, so we plan to claim it this time.”⁹

As soon as he got off the plane, Canadian baseball commissioner Jim Robison told reporters, “We finished third last year, and we’re here with a more balanced club for this tourney.”¹⁰

Mexican commissioner Salvador Mondragon called his country’s representative “by far the best ever assembled” in Mexico, “100 percent improved at every position.”¹¹

Through an interpreter, Japanese manager Masuyama exclaimed proudly, “Our team has strengthened its batting power and therefore feels more confident of its chances.”¹² His team wasted no time in proving itself, although they did so more with finesse than with power.

On Friday night, September 7, in the tournament’s opening game, the ballclub from Yokohama played spectacular defense throughout but still had to come from behind in the ninth inning to edge Canada, 5–4. The Japanese rally consisted of a walk, a bloop single to right, a bunt single, a sacrifice fly, and a perfectly executed suicide squeeze.

Saturday featured a tripleheader involving the other six tournament teams. In the afternoon the Fort Wayne Dairymen led off by defeating Hawaii, but not easily. The U.S. club scored four runs in the first inning on four singles and an error. They added a fifth tally in the second inning when shortstop John Kennedy stole home. After that the Dairymen failed to score. The Hawaiians, trailing 5–3 going into the ninth, loaded the bases with no outs against starting pitcher Walt Wherry. Pete Olsen came in to relieve Wherry and escaped unscathed by striking out the first two batters and getting the final out on a grounder to the shortstop.

In the evening’s first game, Puerto Rico overwhelmed the Dutch “Honkballers,” 14–2, in a game shortened to six and a half innings by the 12-run-advantage mercy rule. Despite losing badly, the players from Holland lined up after the game, faced the Puerto Rico dugout, doffed their caps, and bowed deeply toward their conquerors. The Dutch defeat was not surprising. They had never before played a game under the lights, nor had they ever played on a regulation diamond.

Mexico rallied from a 4–0 deficit in the sixth inning to beat Colombia, 8–5, in the night’s finale. Eduardo Beltran earned the victory with three strong innings in relief for Mexico.

In the first Sunday afternoon game, Colombia outfielder Carlos Bustos slammed the first home run of the series to lead his club to an easy 7–1 victory against

Holland. The Honkballers played better in the field than they had Saturday, but they managed just three base hits, struck out nine times, and were eliminated.

Also making a hasty exit were the North Battleford Beavers from north of the border. Hawaii hurler John Sardinha, formerly of the U.S., allowed them only three hits, all of them by third baseman Curt Tate, in a 10–1, eight-inning contest. The loss dropped Canada from the tournament.

Both Sunday evening games matched undefeated teams. The Allen Dairymen milked a three-run second inning and a two-hitter from lefty Pete Olsen and coasted to a 6–2 triumph over Puerto Rico. The U.S. team recorded only five base hits of their own but added nine bases on balls from the generous Puerto Rican pitcher.

The night’s most fan-pleasing performance came from Japanese pitcher Motoji Fujita. Standing just five and a half feet tall and weighing at most 130 pounds, the little right-hander completely baffled the free-swinging Mexico team. He gave up only three hits and struck out 15 in a 5–0 whitewash. Fujita had pitched seven and one-third against Canada on Friday night without allowing an earned run. The Yokohama ballclub narrowly missed another thrill for the crowd when Yu Hanai, often called the “Babe Ruth of Japan,” hit a high drive off the top of the 355-foot sign in right field, inches short of a home run.

The biggest shock of the tournament was delivered on Monday afternoon. Although grossly overmatched in size and strength, the Japanese team out-hustled, out-pitched, and out-scored the American club from Fort Wayne, 6–3. The Asian visitors were simply the more aggressive ballclub, as evidenced by the fact that when they won the coin toss, they elected to bat first. The Japanese manager said that it reflected his team’s desire to be on the attack. He felt that the American custom of choosing the last bats was a sign of a defensive attitude.¹³

Milwaukee sandlot player Don Pavletich gave the U.S. team a 2–0 lead in the second inning by smashing a triple to the fence in center field, then scoring on a sacrifice fly. The Americans added another run in the third.

Japan scored twice in the fifth inning, though, then tacked on four more in the sixth with daring base-running augmented by several U.S. errors. Meanwhile relief hurler Sadayoshi Osawa worked six and one-third shutout innings to gain a 6–3 victory. The American defeat left Japan as the only team in the tournament without a loss. Osawa’s joyful teammates hoisted him onto their shoulders in tribute.

The two evening games were decided by late rallies and each one eliminated the losing club. Mexico scored two runs in the top of the seventh and held on for a 4–3 win over Puerto Rico. The Hawaii Red Sox were scoreless until the seventh inning when Shin Yogi belted a solo home run over the left-field fence. The Red Sox still trailed, 2–1, going into the bottom of the ninth. The Watanabe brothers, Riki and Tsune, both singled, as did pitcher Vane Sutton, to tie the score. Colombia's 19-year-old pitcher, Edgardo Venegas, then balked in the winning run for Hawaii.

The Fort Wayne team ousted Mexico the following night. The Dairymen led by just 2–1 when they came to bat in the bottom of the fifth. Suddenly they blew the game open with a four-run burst in the inning, then terminated the contest early via the mercy rule with seven runs on seven straight line-drive hits in the bottom of the sixth for a 13–1 decision. Mexico tried a series of pitchers but with no success. Third Baseman Jim Higgins and second baseman Ed Wopinek each drove in three runs for the winners.

Tuesday's nightcap produced another surprise. Hawaii and Japan each called on their ace hurler, and each pitched heroically. For Hawaii, Len Kasparovitch fired a six-hit shutout, aided immeasurably by five double plays from his infielders. Motoji Fujita worked the complete game and gave up just five base hits, but unfortunately for him, his Hawaiian rivals manufactured two runs, one scoring on a sacrifice fly and the other on a squeeze bunt, for a 2–0 Red Sox victory.

As a result, the teams from the U.S., Japan, and Hawaii each showed one loss. They drew lots to determine which two clubs would play each other, with the bye team playing the winner for the championship. The Allen Dairymen drew the bye, so the Wednesday night game was a replay of Tuesday, Hawaii vs. Japan.

In these days of pitch counts and five-man rotations it seems impossible, but Motoji Fujita, who pitched the complete game the previous evening, started the game for Japan. He had nothing left, though. The Hawaiians belted him for four runs in just over two innings. The three subsequent relief men did no better, and the Yokohama infield made six errors. The Red Sox from the islands took a 9–1 lead into the ninth inning. Japan bunched three hits off John Sardinha and scored a pair of consolation runs, but the Yokohama Nippon Oil team finished in third place after a 9–3 pounding.

For the second year in a row, the clubs from the U.S. and Hawaii met for the Global World Series title. Hawaiian manager Peanuts Kunihisa sent five-foot four-inch junk-ball artist Cris Mancao to the mound.

The Dairymen's skipper, John Braden, called on 22-year-old southpaw Pete Olsen, who stood more than a foot taller than his pitching rival. Both pitchers performed admirably.

Olsen shut out the Red Sox on three hits. Mancao only gave the Americans six hits in six and one-third innings, but for the Dairymen it was enough. Shortstop John Kennedy singled in the first inning, went to second on an errant pick-off throw, and scored on a base hit by Wilmer Fields. That turned out to be the winning run. The Dairymen tacked on an insurance run in the seventh and held on for an exciting 2–0 victory. The sparse crowd of 2,637 was disappointed—they rooted for the Hawaiians—but the U.S. repeated as champions.

Despite the high level of competition that the tournament offered, ticket sales for the second year in a row were meager. The baseball mania surrounding the Milwaukee Braves had not transferred to the semipro series played in County Stadium, but rather overshadowed it. In 1957, therefore, the venue was changed to Detroit's Briggs Stadium, home of the Tigers, where attendance averaged half of Milwaukee's. The only change in the list of competing nations was the substitution of Venezuela in place of Puerto Rico.

For the third straight year the series opener matched the teams from Japan and Canada. On Friday the 13th of September, the two clubs battled through 13 tension-packed innings. Against three Japanese pitchers, the Canadian team from Edmonton managed only one run through 12 innings. At the same time, Ralph Vold, the Canadian hurler, who had labored for five years in the low minors of the Brooklyn Dodger organization, worked all 12 innings and allowed a single run. In the top of the 13th Canada scored an unearned run to take a 2–1 lead.

In the bottom of the inning, Vold, who had retired the last 19 hitters, suddenly could not find the plate. He walked three batters, one of whom he picked off first base, and gave up a short single to load the bases. With two outs, Japan's first baseman, Yuji Takenouchi, sliced a liner off right-fielder Joe Riney's glove, driving in two runs and producing a 3–2 Japan win.

The Saturday afternoon game was a blowout with, as usual, the European representative on the losing end. The new kids on the block from Venezuela punished the Netherlands nine, 13–2. For the South Americans, Panteleon Espinoza slammed a bases-loaded double and Fernando Basante belted two home runs, the only batter to do so in Global World Series play.

The American representatives in the series were the Plymouth Oilers from Sinton, Texas, the first club from the Lone Star State ever to win the national semipro

title. The Oilers added two other ballplayers to their tournament roster, both from the Wisconsin champion, the Falk Corporation team from Milwaukee. Slugging outfielder Paul Schramka, a cup-of-coffee player with the Chicago Cubs in 1953, had impressed the Oilers with a long home run in the Wichita tournament. The other Milwaukeean, right-handed pitcher Arnie Campbell, had won 12 games while losing just once during the season.

The U.S. team's first opponent was Colombia, led by young hurler Edgardo Venegas. Schramka tripled to greet Venegas and drive in the game's first run in the top of the opening inning. Single runs in the next two frames put the Oilers ahead, 3–0, but the Colombians tied the score in the eighth on a two-run homer by Dagoberto Lopez. The game went to the tenth inning tied, 3–3. With one out Schramka slammed his second triple. Clint Hartung, 35-year-old former New York Giants phenom who both pitched and played right field in the Polo Grounds, singled Schramka home with the lead run. Wilmer Fields put the game on ice by blasting one off the second deck, and the Texans ended up on the plus side of a 6–3 margin.

Saturday's final outing became a pitchers' duel between Perry of Hawaii and Flores of Mexico. Each threw a complete-game four hitter. With the help of two Hawaii errors, though, Mexico prevailed, 3–1.

Sunday presented all eight teams in action, beginning with the Sinton Oilers versus another oil producer, Venezuela. The Latin team featured fancy-fielding short-stop Manuel Carrasquel, 19-year-old brother of Chico Carrasquel, the four-time all-star from the Chicago White Sox who was the first Latin-American all-star in the major leagues. Arnie Campbell took the mound for the U.S. team and shut down the South American club. He had a no-hitter for four innings and for six frames did not allow a ball to be hit out of the infield. With relief help from Howard Reed with two outs in the eighth, Campbell shut out the Venezuelans, 3–0. Clint Hartung singled and doubled and drove in one of Sinton's runs.

The tournament's two weakest competitors were quickly eliminated on Sunday. Canada soundly defeated the Holland club, 8–2, behind lefty Blaine Sylvester from the University of Utah. Canada scored four times in the first inning and cruised to an easy win. Hawaii then drubbed Colombia, 13–0, in a mercy-rule game shortened to six innings. Larry Kamishima smashed two home runs for the victors.

Sunday's most exciting game was its last, a seesaw affair between Japan and Mexico. Japan scored first; Mexico tied them. Japan scored three in the third to jump ahead, 4–1. Mexico tallied one in the third and

two runs in the fifth, and it was tied at four apiece. In the seventh, though, Japan scored what proved to be the winning run in a 5–4 decision, giving Mexico its first loss.

The first two games on Monday eliminated two more ballclubs from contention. The team from Edmonton, Alberta, outslugged the Hawaii Red Sox, 11–6, to send them home to their island paradise. The winning pitcher for Canada was Ernie Nevers, nephew of the legendary football star of the same name who in 1929 scored 40 points in a game against Red Grange and the Chicago Bears.

In the day's second contest, Venezuela dispatched Mexico, 3–2, the second one-run defeat for the unlucky team from south of the border. Mexico led, 2–1, until the eighth inning when pinch hitter Luis Boyer, with two outs, doubled home Fernando Basante and Miguel Martinez to make Venezuela the winner and disqualify Mexico.

Monday night's late game saw the only remaining undefeated nations, the United States and Japan, square off. In the second inning the Oilers allowed the Japanese club to put two men on base, one by catcher's interference and one by an unsuccessful fielder's choice. Pitcher Shiro Shimazu then doubled home both runners for a 2–0 lead.

Clint Hartung promptly tied the score for the U.S. with a two-run homer, his second blast of the series. Japan took a one-run lead in the last of the third, and Shimazu made it stand up until the eighth. He had help from the Americans, though. In the fifth inning, U.S. pitcher Parnell Hisner was on first base when Paul Schramka belted a long double to the wall in right-center. Hisner sprinted around third and safely reached the plate with the tying run. The problem was, he had failed to touch third base.

With one out in the eighth, Schramka singled, Wilmer Fields doubled, and the Texas team was back in business. Unfortunately for them, Shimazu was replaced by Takashi Suzuki, who retired the next two batters on a pop-up and a strikeout. The final score was 3–2, and Japan had its third straight one-run victory.

The showdown between the North American teams occurred on Tuesday night. To say that the game's outcome was shocking would be a wild understatement. The two-time defending champion United States team, whose country invented baseball, not only lost but also suffered the ignominy of the mercy rule as their game was shortened to seven innings by the score of 8–0. Twenty-year-old southpaw Dale Ziegler, a college kid from the University of Southern California, silenced the Plymouth Oilers sluggers and surrendered

just one base hit, a single by Jim Higgins. Meanwhile the Canadians pounded Dave Baldwin and Arnie Campbell, scoring five runs in the third and three runs in the fourth, to put the game out of reach and the United States out of the tournament.

Japan, the only undefeated team in the tourney, didn't stay that way for long. In the evening's second ballgame, Venezuela surprised the Japanese club with three-hit pitching from Francisco Cirimele and an inning of scoreless relief from Valentin Arevalo. Venezuela scored three runs in the second inning, all they needed for a 3-0 win.

So then there were three. Canada, Venezuela, and Japan entered the tournament's final doubleheader deadlocked for first place. In the first game, Canada continued its winning ways by trouncing Venezuela, 5-1. Ernie Nevers pitched the complete game. The victory earned the Edmonton club the right to meet Japan's Constructors for the title.

The 10,457 paying customers at Briggs Stadium received their money's worth and then some. As usual, the crowd threw its support solidly to the players from Japan. Canada scored a run in the third inning and added another in the sixth. Ralph Vold held Japan scoreless until team captain Sadayoshi Osawa smashed a solo home run in the seventh to make it 2-1.

In the ninth inning, down to their final out, Japan rallied again, and again it was Osawa to the rescue. He doubled to drive in the tying run and send the game to extra innings.

In the 11th Canada's third pitcher, Mike Blewett, lived up to his last name. He walked two batters, including Osawa, then surrendered a line-drive single up the middle by second baseman Masayuke Furuta, scoring two runs. Takashi Suzuki shackled the Canadians in the bottom of the inning, and Japan had a 4-2 triumph and the first non-American championship of the Global World Series.

For the vanquished Oilers of Sinton, Texas, the only honors were individual. Clint Hartung and Wilmer Fields earned selection to the all-tournament team, as did the two players borrowed from Milwaukee Falk, Paul Schramka and Arnie Campbell. Schramka was voted the top outfielder in the series.

And so it ended. Everyone close to the tournament agreed that it was a wonderful event that deserved to be continued. Attendance, however, had been only marginally better than in Milwaukee, and financial losses again were large. Dick Falk and members of the International Baseball Congress tried mightily to revive the tournament in 1959, but it was not to be. The Global World Series was destined to enjoy only a three-year life span and then disappear into the annals of history. ■

Notes

1. "Dumont, Reyes Confer on International Series," *The Sporting News*, June 2, 1948, 22.
2. "Hap Chandler Likes the Stadium; Talks About World Meet There," *Milwaukee Journal*, sec. III, August 16, 1953.
3. Ibid.
4. "Hotel 'Goes International' as Global Ball Stars Arrive," *Milwaukee Journal*/final edition, September 21, 1955.
5. Bob Teague, "Hooks and Slides," *Milwaukee Journal*, Sports sec., September 25, 1955.
6. Ibid.
7. "Spanish Pitcher Has Rough Time," *Milwaukee Journal*, sec. 2, September 27, 1955.
8. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, sec. B, September 2, 1956 (caption, photo of Johnny Podres).
9. Gene Tackowiak, "Four Lay Claim to Global Title," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, sec. 2, September 6, 1956.
10. Ibid.
11. "US and Hawaii Will Tangle in Top Global Series Opener," *Milwaukee Journal*, sec. 2, September 2, 1956.
12. Tackowiak, "Four Lay Claim."
13. Tackowiak, Reliever Allows Three Hits for Winners, *Milwaukee Sentinel*, sec. 2, September 11, 1956.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Baseball

Frank Ardolino

This article will trace the interest of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930), the creator of Sherlock Holmes, in baseball as a sometime-participant, an avid fan, and a zealous promoter of the game in Britain. Doyle's analysis of its qualities and strategies as compared to cricket provides insights into the way baseball was perceived and promoted by a distinguished English man of letters who from his personal experience appreciated the skills needed to excel in the game.

Doyle's interest in baseball flowed from his lifelong participation in many sports. In his autobiography *Memories and Adventures*, he describes himself as an "all-rounder" athlete who pursued many sports throughout his life but never became particularly good at any of them, although he was still able to play football at the age of 44 and cricket at 55.¹ Doyle defines sports as the organized physical activities that "a man does" which have a beneficial effect through the promotion of fitness and community:

It [sport] gives health and strength but above all it gives a certain balance of mind without which a man is not complete. To give and to take, to accept success modestly and defeat bravely, to fight against odds, to stick to one's point, to give

credit to your enemy and value your friend these are some of the lessons which true sport should impart.²

Through sporting competition individuals build their character and in turn benefit the nation through their physical and mental acuity.³

In his description of his participation in cricket, "a game which has . . . given me more pleasure . . . than any . . . sport," Doyle reveals an awareness of bowling (pitching) strategy that is closely related to his subsequent enjoyment and appreciation of baseball as a "true" sport which promotes physical, mental, and character strength.⁴ He explains his success as a "fairly steady and reliable" right-handed bowler able to baffle batters with his delivery, including W. G. Grace, the greatest of all cricketers. Grace, however, gained a measure of revenge by pitching in his "subtle and treacherous" slow way and causing Doyle to feel futile after he failed to time it.⁵ Doyle also describes his successful pitching strategy against a Dutch team in The Hague in 1892, when, after observing that his opponents were orthodox in playing "with a most straight bat," he delivered "good length balls about a foot on the off side."⁶ After he won the match, he was carried off on the shoulders of his jubilant team members.

He was introduced to major league baseball on the second of his four trips to North America, which occurred between 1894 and 1924. In 1914, he was invited by the Canadian government to inspect the National Reserve at Jasper Park in the northern Rockies. The first stop on this trip was a week at the Plaza Hotel in New York. On Saturday May 30, he and his wife attended the afternoon game of a twinbill between the Yankees and the Philadelphia Athletics at the Polo Grounds, which the Yanks won, 10–5, after losing the morning game, 8–0. The *New York Times* reported that the "afternoon game was one of those wild, reckless affairs that keep the crowd good-natured and give the official scorer a brainstorm." There were 18 hits, 27 men left on base, and 23 walks in the "grand old swatfest."⁷

Doyle considered this game a "first-class match, as we should say or 'some game,' as a native expert

BAIN COLLECTION / LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, photographed here in 1913, made four trips to North America.



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his family on a sight-seeing trip to New York City in 1922.

described it.”⁸ He viewed the activities from the perspective “of an experienced though decrepit cricketer.” The ballplayers appeared fitter than cricketers because they train all the time and practice abstinence, which produces mental acuity. The “catching” was “extraordinarily good, especially the judging of the long catches near the ‘bleachers,’ as the outfields which are far from any shade are called.” The pitchers throw the ball harder than they do in cricket and earn the highest salary of £1000 to £1500 because they have “mastered the hardest part of the game.”⁹ He laments that money determines the best team “the largest purse has the best team” and that there is no actual geographical connection between the players and their teams. He prefers games “between local teams or colleges [which] seem to me to be more exciting” as there are stronger affiliations between the players and their teams.¹⁰

After the week in New York, the DoYLES proceeded on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway across the breadth of Canada, and on June 14 they attended a baseball game between Jasper and Edson at the diamond in Jasper Park, which he extolled “as one of the great national playgrounds and health resorts.”¹¹ Doyle was asked to open the game by taking a swing at the plate.

He was nervous, but he steadied himself by imagining he was batting in a cricket game: “[T]he pitcher, fortunately, was merciful, and the ball came swift but true. . . . Fortunately, I got it fairly in the middle and it went on its appointed way, whizzing past the ear of a photographer, who expected me to pat it.”¹²

On his fourth North American tour in 1923, Doyle crossed Canada again, this time from west to east. The trip started in New York in April, ended in Montreal in July, and included more than thirty cities. He, his wife, and three children arrived in Winnipeg on Sunday July 1, and on his second day there, the family attended “the international baseball match” at Wesley Park between the Winnipeg Arenas and the Minneapolis All-Stars, who won the game 13–6. Doyle praised the fielding and throwing abilities of the players as “far superior to that of good English cricket teams.”¹³

After the game, he admitted that “I have all the prejudices of an old cricketer, and yet I cannot get away from the fact that baseball is the better game,” because “it has many points which make it the ideal game both for players and spectators.” However, he expressed the hope that if the game became popular in England, it would be played “in a clean, straight way” rather than with the “dirty tricks” practiced in America, which “have been condoned far too easily by public opinion,” but thankfully are being purged.¹⁴

His summary of the tricks, as described in Christy Mathewson’s book of reminiscences, sounds thoroughly contemporary. In a parallel to recent revelations about the New York Giants rigging a sign detection system at the Polo Grounds in 1951, a visiting team “discovered a hidden wire under the turf on the home team’s field, by which messages and signals were conveyed to the coacher and the manager,” who laughed when he was caught.¹⁵ In addition, soap was mixed with the dirt around the mound to help the pitcher throw wet ones. Such illegal tactics led to increased crowd unruliness, which sometimes resulted in the fans throwing bottles at the players. But, fortunately, the game is moving beyond the tricks because of “the players being drawn from a higher class, many college-bred men being attracted by the high pay.”¹⁶

Doyle’s views on the possibility of baseball becoming popular in England are summarized in two articles in *The New York Times* in the early 1920s. In the first one, dated June 19, 1922, which appeared during his tour of the U.S. to promote his work on spiritualism, Doyle declares that England needs baseball and that he and his two sons, Denis and Malcolm, intend to introduce the game to benefit English youth. He recommends promoting baseball on English university

campuses by teaching students the game and “‘organizing several teams in each college and arranging matches between the best of the teams,’” and by publishing the rules in British newspapers to educate the public. He calls baseball a noble sport played by young men, which should prove popular in England but would not replace cricket, an old man’s sport. He concludes by declaring that he is proud that he was able to play shortstop at the advanced age of fifty-two in an impromptu game against an American team in Switzerland, which his team won.¹⁷

The second *New York Times* article appeared on October 28, 1924, with the headline “Baseball Gains Conan Doyle as a Champion in England.” He notes that the game’s tradition of “‘continual ragging,’” or the fans’ cheering and booing, would not suit the English temperament, but he claims that this is not an essential part of the game: “What is essential . . . is that here is a splendid game which calls for fine eye activity, bodily fitness and judgment in the highest degree.” The game would be easily adopted by any village club, which could construct a field that needs no special leveling; it would take only 2–3 hrs to play, and the players, unlike in cricket, would be on their toes and “not be sitting on a pavilion bench while another man makes his century.” As a summer game “‘it would sweep this country as it has done America . . . [and] would not more interfere with cricket than lawn tennis has done.’”¹⁸

Doyle’s optimism concerning the popularity of baseball in England proved unfounded. Although the game was introduced to the United Kingdom in 1890 and continues to be played today under a four-league organization in a season that lasts from April to August, baseball has never achieved the national import in Britain that Doyle had envisaged.¹⁹ ■

Notes

1. Arthur Conan Doyle, *Memories and Adventures* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1924), 262.
2. *Memories and Adventures*, 285–86.
3. Diana Barsham, *Arthur Conan Doyle and the Meaning of Masculinity* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000), 5, 84, 105.
4. *Memories and Adventures*, 273.
5. *Memories and Adventures*, 274–75.
6. *Memories and Adventures*, 277.
7. Yankees Turn and Smite Athletics, *The New York Times*, May 31, 1914, sec. 4, 5.
8. *Memories and Adventures*, 287.
9. *Memories and Adventures*, 287, 288.
10. *Memories and Adventures*, 288.
11. *Memories and Adventures*, 298.
12. *Memories and Adventures*, 288.
13. Arthur Conan Doyle, *Our Second American Adventure* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1924), 224. See also Michael W. Homer, *Arthur Conan Doyle’s Adventures in Winnipeg*, 2. www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/25/doylein-winnipeg.shtml, October 25, 2010.
14. *Second American Adventure*, 224, 225.
15. *Second American Adventure*, 225.
16. *Second American Adventure*, 225–26.
17. Doyle Says England Needs Baseball: Sir Arthur Going to Introduce the Game Abroad to Benefit Youth, *The New York Times*, June 19, 1922, 11.
18. Baseball Gains Conan Doyle as a Champion in England, *The New York Times*, October 28, 1924, 19.
19. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baseball_in_the_United_Kingdom.

Babe Ruth and Eiji Sawamura

Robert K. Fitts

NOVEMBER 20, 1934; SHIZUOKA, JAPAN

With a flick of his wrist, the boy received the ball from the catcher. He felt confident as if his opponents were the fellow high schoolers he had shut out just a few months before. The one o'clock sun came directly over Kusanagi Stadium's right field bleachers, blinding the batters. He knew this. It had enabled him to retire the leadoff batter, Eric McNair, on a pop fly and to strike out Charlie Gehringer. The batters saw his silhouette windup, then a white ball exploded in on them just a few feet away. It was nearly unhittable. Fanning Gehringer thrilled the boy as he saw no flaws in his swing. When facing the Mechanical Man, the pitcher imagined them as samurai dueling to the death with glittering swords. It was a spiritual battle, who could outlast the other—who could will the other to submit. Gehringer, alone among the Americans, showed the spirit of a samurai.¹

The third batter strode to the plate. He was old—more than twice the boy's 17 years—and with a sizable paunch, he outweighed the boy by some 100 pounds. His broad face usually bore a smile, accentuating his puffy cheeks and broad nose. His twinkling eyes and boyish, infectious good humor forced smiles even from opponents. Instinctively, the boy looked at his face...this time, a mistake.

There was no friendly smile. The Sultan of Swat glared back like an oni—those large red demons that guard temple gates. The boy's heart fluttered, his composure lost. Babe Ruth dug in.

Eiji Sawamura breathed deeply, steadying himself. This was, after all, why he had left high school early and forfeited a chance to attend prestigious Keio University—an opportunity to face Babe Ruth.

Just three months ago, Sawamura had been pitching for Kyoto Commerce High School when Tadao Ichioka, the head of the Yomiuri Shimbun's sports department, approached his grandfather. Ichioka explained that the newspaper was sponsoring a team of major league stars, including Babe Ruth, to play in Japan that fall. There were no professional teams in Japan, so Yomiuri was bringing together Japan's best to challenge the Americans. Ichioka wanted the 17-year-old pitcher on the staff. The newspaper would pay 120 yen (\$36) per

month, more money than most skilled artisans made. The Sawamura family needed the extra income to support Eiji's siblings, but the invitation carried a price. The Ministry of Education had just passed an edict forbidding both high school and college students from playing on the same field as professionals. If Sawamura joined the All-Nippon team, he would be expelled from high school and would forfeit his chance to attend Keio University the following semester.

But to pitch against major leaguers! To pitch against Babe Ruth! The boy accepted.²

Sawamura wound up, turning his body toward third base before slinging the ball toward the plate. The blinded Ruth lunged forward, his hips and great chest twisting until they nearly faced the wrong direction. The fastball pounded in catcher Jiro Kuji's mitt. Strike one.

The All-Americans were even better than Ichioka had promised—one of the greatest squads ever assembled. The infield of Lou Gehrig, Gehringer, Jimmie Foxx, and defensive wizard Rabbit Warstler at short would be tough to top. The outfield contained Bing Miller in center, flanked by sluggers Earl Averill and Ruth. Only at catcher was the team weak. Star Rick Ferrell cancelled at the last minute, his spot filled by Philadelphia A's rookie Frankie Hayes and an amusing fellow named Moe Berg, who did his best to address Sawamura in Japanese. Lefty Gomez led a staff that also included the intense Earl Whitehill and Cleveland hurler Clint Brown. Connie Mack, the grand old man of American baseball, led the team with lovable Lefty O'Doul as his coach.

Baseball exchanges between Japan and the United States had become common by this time. Between 1905 and 1934, more than 35 collegiate, semi-pro, and professional teams crossed the Pacific. The Chicago White Sox and New York Giants had come to promote the game in 1913; teams that included major leaguers barnstormed in Japan in 1920 and '22; and a Negro league team known as the Philadelphia Royal Giants played top collegiate teams in 1927 and '32. In 1931, the Yomiuri newspaper decided to bring over a team of true stars. A squad that included Gehrig and O'Doul, as well as Lefty Grove, Al Simmons, Mickey Cochrane, and Frankie Frisch, had played 17 games against

Japan's best, winning each contest. Although these exchanges created close friendships among Japanese and American players, relations between the nations' governments were becoming increasingly tense.

After emerging from isolation in 1853, Japan modernized with dizzying speed and began its own policy of colonialism in the 1890s. The bellicose nation defeated China in 1894–95 and Russia in 1904–05 and annexed Korea in 1910. Throughout the 1920s, Japan increased its interests in Manchuria before seizing control of the province in 1931 and creating the puppet state of Manchukuo. Faced with international condemnation, Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in February 1933 and threatened the following year to withdraw from the Washington and London Naval Treaties which limited the size of their navy. As the United States and Japan vied for control over China and naval supremacy in the Pacific, it was apparent that the countries were drifting toward war.

Politicians on both sides of the Pacific hoped that the good will generated by Babe Ruth and the two nations' shared love of baseball could help heal these growing political differences. Many observers, therefore, rejoiced when nearly 500,000 Japanese lined the streets of Ginza to welcome the American ballplayers on November 2, 1934. As the ballplayers traveled by motorcade from Tokyo Station to the Imperial Hotel, rows of fans—often ten to twenty deep—surged to catch a glimpse of Ruth and his teammates. The pressing crowd reduced the broad streets to narrow paths just wide enough for the limousines to pass. Confetti and streamers fluttered down from well-wishers leaning out of windows and over the wrought-iron balconies

of the avenues' multi-storied office buildings. Cries of "Banzai! Banzai, Babe Ruth!" echoed through the neighborhood as thousands waved Japanese and American flags and cheered wildly. Reveling in the attention, the Bambino plucked flags from the crowd and stood in the back of the car waving a Japanese flag in his left hand and an American in his right.

Finally, the crowd couldn't contain itself and rushed into the street to be closer to the Babe. Downtown traffic stood still for hours as Ruth shook hands with the multitude. The following day, *The New York Times* proclaimed: "The Babe's big bulk today blotted out such unimportant things as international squabbles over oil and navies." Umpire John Quinn added "on the day the tourists arrived there was war talk, but that disappeared after they had been in the empire twenty-four hours."³

The All-Americans won each of the first nine games. At first the fans divided their loyalty. Many reveled in seeing former Japanese collegiate stars play on the same team and believed, or maybe just hoped, that they could match the major leaguers. Others came to see the American stars, especially Ruth. Yakyukai, Japan's top baseball magazine, reported, "the fans went crazy each time Ruth did anything—smiled, sneezed, or dropped a ball." Once the crowds realized their hometown heroes were unlikely to win, most switched allegiance to the visitors—clamoring for home runs. The fans' enthusiasm impressed and flattered the Americans, helping them overcome cultural differences to develop a deep appreciation for their host country.⁴

The All-Americans had pounded Sawamura in his first start ten days ago on November 10. The 17-year-old remembered how nervous he was before taking the field. It didn't help when Ruth homered in the first inning, delighting the sold-out Meiji Jingu stadium crowd of 60,000. Sawamura had lasted eight innings, giving up 10 runs on 11 hits, including home runs to Ruth, Averill, and weak-hitting Warstler. But the *Japan Times* noted that he "pitched courageously to the murderers row" as he struck out both Ruth and Gehrig.⁵

Fanning Ruth and Gehrig helped the boy grasp that even the greatest had weaknesses. Ruth, for example, had difficulty with knee-high inside curves. As Sawamura told a writer for Yakyukai, "I was scared but I realized that the big leaguers were not gods." He was noticeably calmer and more effective three days later in Toyama when he relieved Shigeru Mizuhara in the fourth after the starter had surrendered 11 runs. The schoolboy ace held the Americans scoreless until Jimmie Foxx belted a three-run homer in the eighth.⁶

Recalling how he had struck out Ruth before, Sawamura wound up and fired another fastball.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.



Babe Ruth presented with flowers prior to a game.

In 1934, Ruth was no longer the American League's best player. He was 39 years old and had grown rotund. He knew his career was finished, or at least in its twilight. In August, he announced that he would not return as a full-time player in 1935. The reception in Japan, however, had revitalized the Babe. He reveled in the chants of "Banzai Babe Ruth" and the constant attention. His ego bolstered, his bat responded. After ten games, the Sultan of Swat had belted ten home runs with a .476 average.

Sawamura's fastball burst through the glare. The Bambino flailed his 36-inch, 44-ounce Louisville Slugger at the ball, but it was too late. The ball smacked into Kuji's glove. Strike two.

The sellout crowd at Kusanagi Stadium roared. The park was small, by both American and Japanese standards. Only 8,000 spectators could fit into the grandstands ringing the field. The fans, primarily men, wore light wool overcoats with fedoras or wool driving caps in the pleasant 48-degree afternoon. (Once home, they would remove their western garb, bathe, and don the traditional kimono.) Here and there, however, a man dressed in the traditional manner could be seen in the stands. The fans cheered and shouted on every play, making them louder than an average American crowd. But to the Americans, a familiar sound was missing from the din: no vendors were advertising their wares. No "Hot dogs! Get your hot dogs here!" No "Popcorn!" or "Cracker Jack!" or even the heavenly sound of "Beer! Ice cold beer here!" Eating in the stands was not a Japanese tradition. In fact, eating while walking or sometimes even standing was considered rude. Those who wanted to eat would purchase a small bento (boxed lunch) from an outside

vendor or a stand just inside the stadium's entrance, then quietly eat fish or octopus with rice, or maybe fried noodles, using chopsticks.

Both the fans and players noticed differences between American and Japanese baseball. The much smaller Japanese were solid fielders and quick runners but weak hitters. Most still hit off their front foot and hadn't mastered the hip rotation technique that had enabled Ruth to change the way Americans played the game. They played the field with precision acquired from hours of repetition but without flair—seemingly without joy. John Quinn described them as playing with the seriousness of a professor.⁷

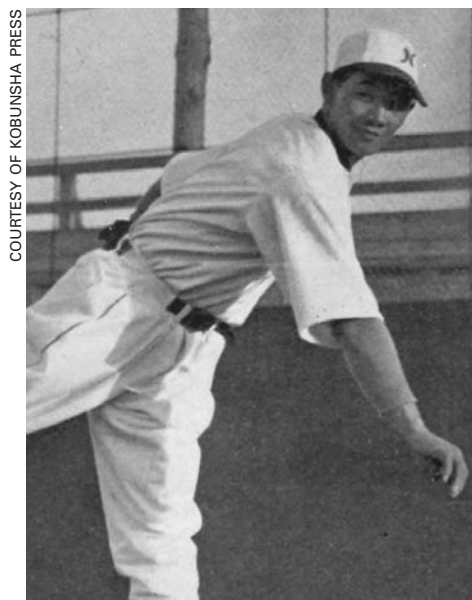
The Japanese also approached the game differently. They believed that it took more than just natural ability and good technique to win a ball game; it also took a dedicated spirit. Borrowing from a heavily romanticized version of samurai behavior, Japanese players in the 1880s created a distinctive approach to the game, one that emphasized unquestioning loyalty to the manager and team as well as long hours of grueling practice to improve both players' skills and mental endurance. This "samurai baseball" offered hope to the All-Nippon team. Infielder Tokio Tominaga explained, "Many fans think that the small Japanese can never compete with the larger Americans, but I disagree. The Japanese are equal to the Americans in strength of spirit."⁸

With Ruth in the hole, Sawamura knew just what to do. Like any good warrior, he attacked his adversary's weakness. As he readied himself, the boy twisted his lips in a peculiar fashion. He then raised his arms, kicked his leg high, and fired.

Ruth brought his bat back, raising his rear elbow to shoulder height before taking a short stride with his front foot and snapping his hips forward. The bat followed along a level plane through the strike zone. Just before contact, the ball "fell off the table." Fooled by the curve, Ruth's momentum carried him forward, his body twisting around like a corkscrew.

As Ruth walked back to the dugout, a surge of confidence and hope swelled through Sawamura and the crowd. Maybe today would be the day. The Japanese had improved with each game. Both their fielding and pitching were sharper even if their hitting was still weak. Maybe today their fighting spirit would be strong enough to defeat the Americans.

By the next morning, as readers unfurled their newspapers and scanned the headlines, Sawamura had become a national hero. He held the All-Americans hitless into the fourth and scoreless into the seventh, when Gehrig belted a solo home run to win the game, 1-0. Although the Japanese had not won,



Eiji Sawamura.

COURTESY OF KOBUNSHA PRESS

they showed that they were capable of conquering their opponents. Many Japanese felt that with enough fighting spirit their countrymen could surpass the major leaguers, just as they believed their military would surpass the Western powers. As years passed, the duel between Sawamura and Ruth took on greater meaning as the nations battled in the Pacific.

The All-Americans stayed in Japan for a month, winning all 18 of their games. Many declared the tour a diplomatic coup and marveled over Ruth's success as an ambassador. "Ruth Makes Japan Go American" proclaimed *The Sporting News*.⁹ Connie Mack summed up the consensus that the trip did "more for the better understanding between Japanese and Americans than all the diplomatic exchanges ever accomplished." Soon after the All-Americans returned, Mack told reporters, "When we landed in Japan the American residents seemed pretty blue. The parley on the naval treaty was on, with America blocking Japan's demand for parity. There was strong anti-American feeling throughout Japan over this country's stand. Things didn't look good at all and then Babe Ruth smacked a home run, and all the ill feeling and underground war sentiment vanished just like that!"

A month later at the 12th Annual New York Baseball Writers' Association meeting, Mack told the assembly, "that there would be no war between the United States and Japan," pointing out that war talk died out after his All-Star team reached Nippon.¹⁰ Many Americans wanted to believe Mack. With the isolationist movement dominating foreign policy and national sentiment, Americans eagerly seized on signs of peace, turning a blind eye to Japan's increasingly aggressive military.

Of course, the war that could never be eventually came. Babe Ruth was in his 15th-floor Manhattan apartment on December 7, 1941 when he heard the news. For the Babe, Pearl Harbor was a personal betrayal. Cursing the double-crossing SOBs, he heaved open the living room window. His wife Claire had decorated the room with souvenirs from the Asian tour—porcelain vases, plates, exquisite dolls. The Babe stormed to the mantle, grabbed a vase and heaved it out the window. It crashed on the street below. Other souvenirs followed as Ruth kept up a tirade about the Japanese. Claire rushed around the room, gathering up the most valuable items before they joined the pile on Riverside Drive.¹¹

The Sultan of Swat knew how to take revenge. Using the same charisma that made him an idol in Japan, he threw himself into the war effort, raising money to defeat the Japanese and their allies. Ruth worked closely with the Red Cross, making celebrity

appearances, playing in old-timers games, visiting hospitals, and even going door-to-door seeking donations. He became a spokesman for war bonds, doing radio commercials, print advertisements, and public appearances to boost sales, and even bought \$100,000 worth himself.

Perhaps the Babe's most publicized event came on August 23, 1942, when 69,136 fans packed Yankee Stadium to watch Ruth play ball for the first time in seven years. The 47-year-old Babe faced 54-year-old Walter Johnson in a demonstration before an old-timers game. Johnson threw 15–20 pitches and the Bambino hit the fifth one into the right-field stands. In the hyperbolic style of the time, sports columnist James Dawson wrote, "Babe Ruth hit one of his greatest home runs yesterday in the interest of freedom and the democratic way of living." The event raised \$80,000 for the Army-Navy relief fund. Ruth's biographer Marshall Smelser concluded that "Ruth ... had become a patriotic symbol, ranking not far below the flag and the bald eagle."¹²

The attack on Pearl Harbor did not surprise or upset Eiji Sawamura. On December 7, 1941, Sawamura sat in a staging area on the Micronesian island of Palau awaiting orders. Soon, he would board a crowded transport as part of a massive assault group. He did not know where he would land, but he hoped that he would get to fight the Americans, whom at this point he considered to be little more than animals.¹³

After the tour, Sawamura and most of the All-Nippon players signed pro contracts with the newly-created Yomiuri Giants. The Giants toured the U. S. before participating in the inaugural season of the Nippon Professional Baseball League in the fall of '36. Sawamura was the circuit's top pitcher, leading the league in wins that year, then capturing the MVP award in '37. On July 7, 1937, after Eiji finished a one-run complete game, Japanese troops provoked a skirmish at the Marco Polo Bridge, setting off the Second Sino-Japanese War. The conflict would last eight years, cause over 22 million casualties, and spiral into World War II.

Eiji received a draft notice in January 1938 and was assigned to the 33rd Infantry Regiment of the 16th Division. Most of the regiment was currently in Nanking, becoming notorious as "the most savage killing machine among the Japanese military units."¹⁴ Sawamura's 33rd Regiment was at the center of the atrocities against both civilians and prisoners of war during "The Rape of Nanking" and would become one of the perpetrators of the notorious Bataan Death March.

Like most Japanese, Sawamura supported his country's military expansion and did not question the



The All American Baseball Team.

decision to go to war. Since 1890, when the Meiji government announced the Imperial Rescript on Education, all Japanese school children had been trained to obey the Emperor and state. American Ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew told readers in his 1942 book *Report from Tokyo*,

In Japan the training of youth for war is not simply military training. It is a shaping...of the mind of youth from the earliest years. Every Japanese school child on national holidays ... takes part in a ritual intended to impress on him his duties to the state and to the Emperor. Several times each year every child is taken with the rest of his schoolmates to a place where the spirits of dead soldiers are enshrined. ... Of his obligation to serve the state, especially through military service, he hears every day. ... The whole concept of Japanese education has been built upon the military formula of obeying commands.¹⁵

As a result of this education, most Japanese believed that the Western powers were not only thwarting Japan's right to control Asia through the so-called Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere but were also unfairly strangling the nation through oil and material embargoes. When Japanese radio announced the attack on Pearl Harbor, "the attitudes of the ordinary people," according to literary critic Takao Okuan,

was a sense of euphoria that we'd done it at last; we'd landed a punch on those arrogant great powers Britain and America, on those white fellows. ... All the feelings of inferiority of a colored

people from a backward country, towards white people from the developed world, disappeared in that one blow... Never in our history had we Japanese felt such pride in ourselves as a race as we did then.¹⁶

Whereas most of the All-Americans finished the 1934 goodwill tour with warm feelings toward Japan, Sawamura had grown to hate Americans. His loathing began during the Yomiuri Giants' first visit to the United States in 1935. Just before returning to America in 1936, a piece by Sawamura entitled "My Worry" appeared in the January issue of *Shinnseinen*. He wrote:

As a professional baseball player, I would love to pitch against the Major Leaguers, not just in an exhibition game like I pitched against Babe Ruth, but in a serious game. However, what I am concerned about is that I hate America, and I cannot possibly like American people, so I cannot live in America. Firstly, I would have a language problem. Secondly, American food does not include much rice so it does not satisfy me, so I cannot pitch as powerfully as I do in Japan. Last time I went to America, I could not pitch as well as I do in Japan. I cannot stand to be where formal customs exist, such as a man is not allowed to tie a shoelace when a woman is around. American women are arrogant.¹⁷

Eiji completed his basic training and joined his regiment in Shanghai. Soon after his arrival, the 33rd joined an offensive against Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist army. Relying on his baseball skills, Sawamura

became renowned for his grenade throwing and was often given the task of cleaning out strong Chinese positions with a difficult toss. But in September 1938 he took a bullet in his left hand. He spent an undisclosed amount of time in a military hospital before being discharged in October 1939.¹⁸

Sawamura took the mound again for the Yomiuri Giants during the 1940 season, but throwing heavy grenades had damaged his arm, limiting him to a sidearm motion. He no longer had the velocity of his pre-service years but he remained crafty, tossing a no-hitter against the Nagoya team on July 6. It was the third no-hitter of his career, but it lacked the luster of his first two as the war in China had depleted the pro baseball rosters. Five no-hitters were thrown in 1940, more than any other season in Japanese pro baseball. Eiji finished the 1940 season with a seemingly strong 2.59 ERA, but in truth, his mark fell well above the league ERA of 2.12.

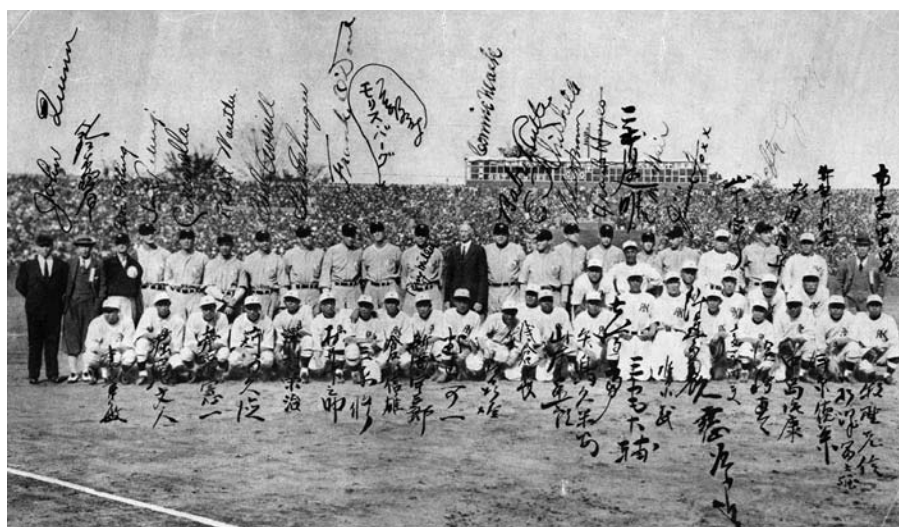
As the military furthered their control of Japan in the late 1930s, the movement to cleanse Japan of Western influence and trappings strengthened. Pulitzer-prize-winning historian John Dower has shown that Japanese of the 1930s and '40s did not necessarily see themselves as physically or intellectually superior, but they did view themselves as more spiritually virtuous than others.¹⁹ Propaganda of the time focused on the development of a pure Japanese spirit, Yamato Damashii. This entailed a return to traditional Japanese life ways, emphasis on self-denial and self-control, and reverence for the Emperor. Western influences were viewed as corrupting, as they emphasized individuality and undermined Japanese culture and spirit. Army General Sadao Araki, for example, proclaimed, "frivolous thinking is due to foreign thought."²⁰ Imported amusements fell out of

fashion. By the mid-1930s, military marches had replaced jazz as the most popular music. During the war, jazz would be outlawed and even musical instruments used in jazz, such as electric guitars and banjos, were banned. In the late '30s, the Ministry of Education decreed that scholastic sports should be stripped of "liberal influences" and replaced with traditional Japanese values and physical activities designed to enhance national defense. In 1940, Nippon Professional Baseball's board of directors followed suit. They declared that all games would be played following "the Japanese spirit" and banned English terms. Henceforth, the game would only be known as *yakyu* (field ball) and not *besuboru*. "Strike" would now be "yoshi" (good), and "ball" became "dame" (bad). Other English terms were also replaced with Japanese equivalents. Team nicknames, such as Giants and Tigers, were abandoned. Yomiuri became known as *Kyojin Gun* (Giants Troop) and the Hanshin Tigers became *Moko Gun* (the Fiery Tiger Troop). Two years later (1942), uniforms were changed to khaki, the color of national defense, and baseball caps were replaced with military caps.²¹

Not surprisingly, Babe Ruth was no longer revered. The jovial, overweight, self-indulgent demi-god of baseball became a symbol of American decadence. In 1944, Japanese troops were screaming, "To hell with Babe Ruth!" as they charged to their deaths across the jungles of the South Pacific. The Babe's response to the insult was classic Ruth: "I hope every Jap that mentions my name gets shot—and to hell with all Japs anyway!" He then took to the streets to raise money for the Red Cross telling reporters that he was spurred on by the Japanese war cry.²²

Although still hampered by his damaged arm, a continuing bout with malaria, and difficulty sleeping,

The All American and All Nippon teams.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Sawamura threw 153 innings for Yomiuri during the 1941 season. He was no longer a top pitcher. His 2.05 ERA was the highest of the team's five regular pitchers and was .19 runs above the league average. Just before the end of the season, Eiji married his long-time girlfriend Ryoko, but marital bliss was short-lived. Only three days later, Sawamura received a second draft notice. He was to report immediately to the 33rd Regimental headquarters. Units across Japan were being mobilized on the double.²³

The 33rd left Nagoya on November 20, 1941 (the seventh anniversary of his near-win against the All-Americans) and headed by transport to the island of Palau in Micronesia, where they joined a 130,000-strong invasion force. In early December, the 33rd split. The second and third Battalions left with the majority of the assembled troops, while Sawamura and his first Battalion remained on Palau. On the night of December 16, Sawamura and his comrades boarded a transport and set sail for the Philippines.

As the main body of the invasion force attacked the island of Luzon and pushed toward Manila, Sawamura's force invaded the city of Davao on the island of Mindanao. They occupied the city without a fight as the outnumbered American/Filipino garrison withdrew. Davao was the only area in the Philippines with a significant Japanese population; nearly 20,000 had immigrated to work on the nearby hemp plantations. With Davao secured, the Japanese pushed into the surrounding jungles in pursuit of the American and Filipino troops. The Allies retreated before the superior Japanese force, only to mount swift counter-attacks when they spotted a weakness. Sawamura found such behavior dishonorable and cowardly. "When we were strong and solid, the western devils got quiet as a cat. But, when they saw that we were not prepared, they would attack like a cruel evil." To Sawamura's shock, the outnumbered Americans soon surrendered. "They surrendered immediately even if they had enough bullets and guns," he later wrote with disgust. "While Japanese put their hands up in the sky in a banzai cheer at victory, Americans put their hands up in a halfway manner shamelessly as soon as they realized that they could not win and there was no way out."²⁴

As Sawamura's First Battalion fought in Mindanao, the rest of his regiment and division had just defeated the main American force at the Battle of Bataan. The Japanese took 75,000 American and Filipino prisoners and force-marched them 60 miles through tropical jungles without water or food. Stragglers were killed. Escorting Japanese, including members of Sawamura's regiment, beat, shot, and beheaded prisoners for sport

as they traveled by the winding column. Over a quarter of the prisoners died before they reached an internment camp at Capas. Known as the Bataan Death March, the incident became one of the most famous atrocities committed by the Japanese army.

Sawamura stayed in the Philippines for just over a year, returning to Japan with his regiment in January 1943. He rejoined the Yomiuri Giants for the 1943 season, but three years in the Imperial Army had taken its toll. His famous control was gone. Eiji pitched just 11 innings, giving up 17 hits and walking 12. He finished out the season as a pinch-hitter.

No longer a soldier, Sawamura capitalized on his baseball fame to support the war effort. In November 1943, he published a nine-page article about his combat experiences in the baseball magazine *Yakyukai*.²⁵ Articles supporting the war effort were common in Japanese magazines. Unlike the Nazis or Soviets, who had centralized bureaus responsible for propaganda, in both Japan and the United States private enterprises willingly created propaganda to boost morale on the home front.²⁶ The piece includes themes common in most Japanese propaganda. Sawamura depicts both the suffering and daily toil of military life to remind readers that self-sacrifice was the moral obligation of all Japanese to support the war effort. Civilians were expected to bear their difficulties without complaint as the military faced the true hardships. He praises the uniqueness of the Japanese spirit, emphasizing the virtues of self-sacrifice, respect, and duty. Following a universal theme of wartime propaganda, Sawamura depicts the enemy as cruel, demonic savages. One particularly unbelievable story has the American garrison of Davao gathering the entire Japanese population of 20,000 in basements rigged with mines. The Americans, according to Sawamura, were planning on blowing up the prisoners before the Imperial Army entered the city but the speed of the Japanese advance startled the Americans and caused them to retreat before setting off the explosives. Another story, which Sawamura admits he did not witness, has American soldiers executing prisoners by pouring boiling water over their heads. With Sawamura's popularity and *Yakyukai's* wide circulation, thousands, if not millions, read the article. Just as Babe Ruth was using his popularity to support the America war effort, Japan's great diamond hero did what he could to support his nation. Sawamura, however, would ultimately give more than the Bambino.

Before the start of the '44 season, the Giants decided not to renew Sawamura's contract. Devastated, Eiji announced his retirement. In October, another letter

arrived from the Imperial Army. The 33rd was being reactivated and sent into combat. By the fall of 1944, the tide of the war had turned against the Japanese. The Battle of Midway in June 1942 had crippled the Japanese Navy allowing the Allies to begin their offensive. In the spring and summer of '44, Americans captured Saipan, Guam, and Palau and readied to retake the Philippines. On October 20, 1944, 200,000 American forces, commanded by General Douglas MacArthur, landed on Leyte to begin the campaign. The Imperial Army's 16th Division, Sawamura's old combat group, defended the area. Heavily outnumbered, the Japanese rushed reinforcements to the area.

The 33rd left Japan on November 27 and steamed toward the Philippines, but Sawamura never reached his destination. On December 2, an American submarine incepted his transport off the coast of Taiwan and sank it. The hero of the 1934 goodwill tour was dead, killed by the creators of the game he loved.

After his death, Eiji Sawamura became an icon of Japanese baseball. In 1947, the magazine *Nekkyo* created the Sawamura Award to honor the best pitcher in Nippon Professional baseball. Twelve years later, he became one of nine initial members of the Japan Baseball Hall of Fame. Later, statues of the pitcher would be raised outside Shizuoka Kusanagi Stadium and his old high school in Kyoto. Sawamura's image would also be placed on a Japanese postal stamp. Many consider him to be the country's greatest pitcher. But in truth, he was a standout pitcher for only two years. Why then, was he elevated to the pantheon of immortals?

In his short life, Sawamura personified the trials of his country. In 1934, as Japan strove to be recognized as an equal to the United States and Britain, he nearly overcame the more powerful American ballclub. Many viewed his performance as an analogy of Japan's struggles against the west—with the proper fighting spirit Japan could overcome their rivals. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Japan and Sawamura went to war. Eiji wholeheartedly supported the war effort, both as a soldier and spokesman. The press updated fans on his life at the front and upheld him as a patriot who sacrificed his career and endured hardships to serve his Emperor and country.

After the war, Sawamura's life took on a different meaning. Many Japanese felt betrayed by their leaders for initiating a futile war that destroyed their country and lives. To help reconcile the two nations, American occupational forces propagated the myth that a cadre of military extremists had pushed Japan into an unwanted conflict. This enabled the Japanese

populace to view themselves as victims of wanton militarism and a repressive government.²⁷ Sawamura came to symbolize an entire generation whose dreams and lives were shattered by evils of war.

Eiji Sawamura had become more than a ballplayer. Like Babe Ruth, he had become a national symbol. ■

Notes

1. This narrative on the November 20, 1934 game is based on *Japan Times* November 21, 1934:5; *Osaka Mainichi* November 21, 1934; Sotaro Suzuki, *Sawamura Eiji: The Eternal Great Pitcher* [in Japanese] (Tokyo: Kobunsha, 1982):75–7; *Yakyukai* 25, no. 1 (1935): 160–1; *Yomiuri Shimbun* November 20, 1934:5.
2. Sotaro Suzuki, *Sawamura Eiji: The Eternal Great Pitcher* [in Japanese] (Tokyo: Kobunsha, 1982):65–75.
3. *The New York Times* November 3, 1934; Spalding, Spalding Official Base Ball Guide 1935:264.
4. *Yakyukai* 25, no. 3 (1935):184.
5. *Japan Times*, November 11, 1934:1
6. *Yakyukai* 25, no. 1 (1935): 160–1.
7. John Quinn, "Radio Address on NBC November 9, 1934." John Quinn Scrapbook, private collection.
8. *Yakyukai* 25, no. 1 (1935): 138.
9. *The Sporting News*, November 15, 1934:3
10. *The Sporting News*, February 7, 1935:1.
11. Interview with Julia Ruth Stevens, November 7, 2007.
12. Marshall Smelser, *The Life that Ruth Built* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1975): 525—7; Gary Bedingfield, "Babe Ruth in World War II," *Baseball in Wartime* (www.baseballinwartime.com, accessed 3/17/2010); Dawson quote from Robert Elias, *The Empire Strikes Out* (New York: The New Press, 2010): 137.
13. Eiji Sawamura, "Memoirs of Fighting Baseball Player [in Japanese]," *Yakyukai* 33, no 11 (1943): 92–100.
14. Masahiro Yamamoto, *Nanking* (New York: Praeger, 2000): 92.
15. Joseph Grew, *Report from Tokyo* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1942):51.
16. Quoted in Ian Buruma, *Inventing Japan, 1853-1964* (New York: The Modern Library, 2003):111.
17. Eiji Sawamura, "My Worry [in Japanese]," *Shinnseinen* (January 11, 1936): 258–9.
18. Sotaro Suzuki, *Sawamura Eiji: The Eternal Great Pitcher* [in Japanese] (Tokyo: Kobunsha, 1982).
19. John Dower, *War Without Mercy* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986): 203–233.
20. Harry Emerson Wilde, *Japan in Crisis* (New York: Macmillian, 1934):52.
21. *The Sporting News*, November 7, 1940:10; Joseph Reaves, *Taking in a Game: a History of Baseball in Asia* (Lincoln: Bison Books, 2004):78–9; Ian Buruma, *Inventing Japan, 1853–1964* (New York: The Modern Library, 2003):93; Abe, Ikuo, Yasuharu Kiyohara and Ken Nakajima, "Sport and Physical Education Under Fascism in Japan," *Yo: Journal of Alternative Perspectives* (June 2000); Masaru Ikei, *White Ball Over the Pacific* [in Japanese] (Tokyo: Chuokoron, 1976); Ben-Ami Shillony, *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981):144.
22. *New York Times*, March 3, 1944:2; *New York Times*, March 5, 1944:37.
23. Sotaro Suzuki, *Sawamura Eiji: The Eternal Great Pitcher* [in Japanese] (Tokyo: Kobunsha, 1982).
24. Eiji Sawamura, "Memoirs of Fighting Baseball Player [in Japanese]," *Yakyukai* 33, no 11 (1943): 92–100.
25. Eiji Sawamura, "Memoirs of Fighting Baseball Player [in Japanese]," *Yakyukai* 33, no 11 (1943): 92–100.
26. For discussion of Japanese wartime propaganda see Barak Kushner, *The Thought War* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007) and John Dower, *War Without Mercy* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).
27. James J. Orr, *The Victim as Hero* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001).

1906 Cleveland Naps

Deadball Era Underachiever

Rod Caborn and Dave Larson

Baseball history is littered with heroic performances by great teams that ran rampshod over their competition, as well as teams that over-achieved. Less remembered are the underachievers—teams that, at least on paper, appeared great, but failed to achieve their full potential.

THE 1906 CLEVELAND NAPS: LEADERS ON PAPER, THIRD PLACE IN THE STANDINGS

One of the classic underachieving teams is the 1906 Cleveland Naps, who fielded a hard-hitting lineup, a great pitching staff, and fielders with a strong defensive efficiency rating

In 1906, the Forest City squad led the American League in virtually every important batting category. Their pitching staff led the AL with a minuscule 2.09 ERA. On defense, the Naps led the league in fielding, committing 26 fewer errors than the White Sox, while reeling off a league-leading 111 double plays.¹ An AL all-star team announced during the World Series saw six of the 14 players being from the Forest City.²

On paper, without looking at the final standings, one would guess that the Naps ran away with the AL crown. And where did they finish? Third place, five games behind the White Sox, the “Hitless Wonders” who went on to win the World Series in six games against the Chicago Cubs, who set a single-season record with 116 wins in 154 games, a record that still stands. The question is, particularly after considering their statistics, how did the Naps fail to capture the 1906 AL pennant or even finish in second place?

Let’s examine this puzzling team more closely and see how they managed such an underachievement.

NAPS WERE AN AL OFFENSIVE POWERHOUSE IN 1906

The team, named after their player-manager, Hall-of-Fame second baseman Napoleon Lajoie, was easily the best offensive team in the AL in 1906. They led the league in batting average, total base hits, runs scored, on-base percentage, doubles, total bases, slugging percentage and OPS. AL champion Chicago had an OPS of .588 compared to Cleveland’s .682.³

In their 89 wins, the Naps outscored their opponents 503–168. That breaks down to 5.65 runs per

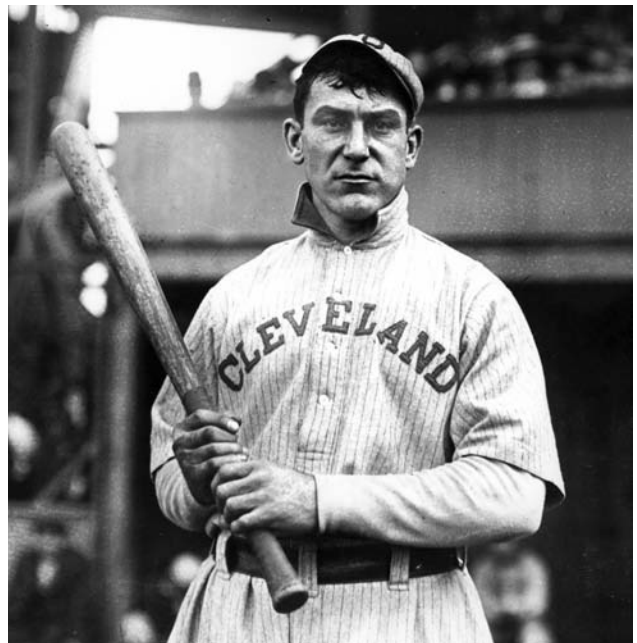
game for the Naps, a remarkable total at the height of the Deadball Era when runs were hard to manufacture. In the Naps’ 89 wins, their opponents averaged only 1.89 runs, almost four runs a game fewer than the Clevelanders.

In blowout games (games where they scored five or more runs) the Naps were 31–7. They were shut out only eight times. The rest of the AL was shut out an average of 19 times.⁴

A HARD-HITTING OFFENSE

Cleveland’s .279 team batting average was 30 points higher than the league average (.249) and 13 points better than the New York Highlanders (.266), who ranked second in American League batting. The Naps also outhit the league champions, the White Sox, by 49 points. Individually, the Naps were led by Hall-of-Famers Nap Lajoie and outfielder Elmer Flick, both of whom had standout seasons. The pair were the top offensive duo in the AL.

Lajoie’s .355 batting average was only three points behind league leader George Stone (.358) of the St. Louis Browns. Lajoie led the league in doubles with 48.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

In 1906, Cleveland player-manager Napoleon Lajoie was second in the AL in batting with an average of .355.

He was second to Stone in on base percentage (.392), total bases (280), slugging percentage (.465), and OPS (.857). Lajoie was second in RBIs with 91, five fewer than the Philadelphia A's hard-hitting Harry Davis.

Elmer Flick played in 157 games, led the league in runs scored (98) and triples (22), was tied for the league lead in stolen bases (39), was third in hits (194), doubles (34), total bases (275), and fourth in on base percentage (.372), slugging (.441), and OPS (.813).⁵

The Naps' offensive might was not limited to Lajoie and Flick. Part-time first baseman Claude Rossman hit .308. The catching duo of Harry Bemis (.276) and Jay "Nig" Clarke (.358) hit a combined .307. Clarke, although limited due to a broken finger, had an OPS of .890. Right fielder Bunk Congalton hit .320, OPS .757. Shortstop Terry "Cotton" Turner hit .291, OPS .710. Center fielder Harry "Deerfoot" Bay and third baseman Bill Bradley each hit .275. Infielder George Stovall, who filled in at a variety of positions, hit a solid .273. George Davis of Chicago, to compare offenses, had a team best OPS of .694.⁶

Of course, not all of the hitters were as fortunate at the plate; the primary backups were:

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Jim Jackson OF | .214, OPS .549 |
| Jap Barbeau 3B | .194, OPS .536 |
| Ben Caffyn OF | .194, OPS .524 |
| Fritz Buelow C | .163, OPS .436 |

Overall, the Naps easily fielded the league's most productive offense. So where was the problem?

Let's examine the pitching for clues.

NAPS PITCHING STAFF LED THE LEAGUE IN KEY CATEGORIES

Collectively, the Naps pitching staff was as potent as their offense. The Naps league-leading 2.09 ERA was slightly better than the pennant-winning White Sox (2.13) and their FIPS ERA was fifth in the league. The staff led the league in complete games (133) and their 27 shutout wins were second in the AL, five behind the White Sox. Cleveland's pitching staff did allow 22 more runs (482) than the White Sox, who permitted 460 tallies. The staff also was second in the league in opponents batting average, with a .233 OAVG, behind St Louis at .230. The Naps also had the third best opponents on base percentage at .290, behind Chicago .281 and St Louis .284.⁷

The Naps pitchers allowed only 7.6 hits per game, almost identical to the Browns' 7.5 hits per game. Cleveland pitching issued 365 total bases on balls, 110 more than the White Sox. But their total was still the fifth lowest walks allowed in the AL.

The Cleveland staff threw the most innings in the league (1,413), 31 more innings than the hapless Boston Americans' staff, who threw 1,382 innings. They uncorked the fewest wild pitches (23) in the league.⁸

Anchoring the pitching staff was Hall of Famer Addie Joss, who went 21-9 with a 1.72 ERA. Joss was followed in the rotation by the Naps only left-handed pitcher Otto Hess (20-17, 1.83), Bob Rhoads (22-10, 1.80) and Bill Bernhard (16-15, 2.54). Happy Townsend (3-7, 2.91) was a spot starter and Harry Eells (4-5, 2.61) served as a spot starter and made six relief appearances.⁹

Clearly, the Naps pitching was a strength. Was it the fielding that was to blame?

FIELDING WAS NOT THE CULPRIT

Cleveland's fielding was statistically the best in the American League. Nap fielders committed the fewest errors (217) and their .967 fielding percentage was tops in the AL. Their 111 double plays led the league, turning 25 more than the next best team. Their total chances (6,626), was comparable to league-leading Chicago (6,632).¹⁰

DID THE TEAM STRUGGLE IN ANY PART OF THE SEASON?

They had two good runs; May and down the stretch in September. But their record in August starts to show a problem.

| Month | W-L |
|------------------|-------------|
| April | 6-5 |
| May | 15-8 |
| June | 16-13 |
| July | 14-12 |
| August | 11-14 |
| September | 23-9 |
| October | 4-3 |

The Naps reached first place in the league on June 15 and hovered mostly in first or second place until July 7 when a two-game losing streak dropped them to third place. Cleveland again reached second place on July 19, before dropping back to third. They would reside in either third or fourth place the rest of the season. The July 19 date, as it turns out, proved to be a key moment in the Naps' fortunes in 1906.

DID THE NAPS WIN A LOT OF BLOWOUT GAMES BUT LOSE THE CLOSE-SCORING GAMES?

Cleveland was a high-scoring team. They outscored their opponents by 3.76 runs in their victories. When

the Naps lost, the losses were tighter. They scored 150 runs while losing, while their opponents tallied 303 runs. That breaks down to an average of 2.34 runs in losses while allowing 4.73 runs, a differential of 2.39 runs, considerably closer than the differential in their 89 wins. This does not completely answer the question as to whether or not they won big and lost close.

INABILITY TO BEAT THE TOP TEAMS WAS THE NAPS' ACHILLES HEEL

The Naps finished third behind the White Sox and the Highlanders. Between the White Sox, the Highlanders and the Naps, Cleveland had the worst record against the five teams that finished below them in the standings. Each team's record against the fourth-place through last-place teams:

| | | |
|-----------|-------|------|
| Chicago | 69-38 | .645 |
| New York | 69-39 | .639 |
| Cleveland | 69-41 | .627 |

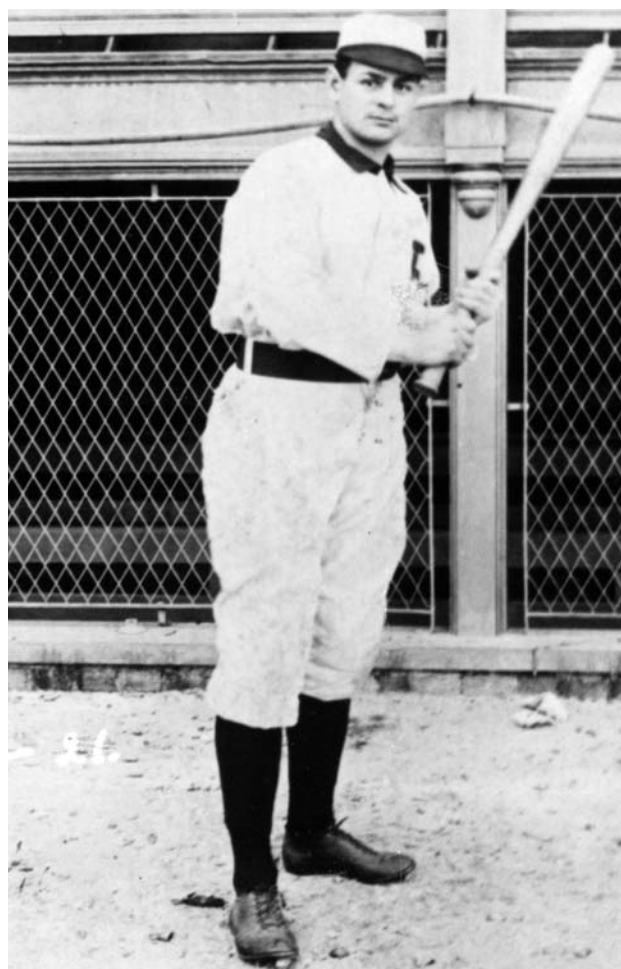
That narrows it down to head-to-head play between the Naps, Chicago, and New York. As it turns out, the Naps' failure to win against the teams they had to beat was their undoing. While their failure to beat the top two teams came by only a narrow margin, it was enough to keep them out of first place. The Naps went 10-12 against the first-place White Sox and 10-11 against the second-place Highlanders. What's interesting is that the Naps outscored the ChiSox in those 22 games, 107 to 89. Chicago won each of their season series against six other teams in the AL, with the exception of Detroit, with whom they split with 11 wins apiece.¹¹

The White Sox and Highlanders both finished with 151 decisions and the Naps had 153, but the schedule differential did not make any difference in the final outcome. The Naps lost six more games than their rivals and, had the White Sox and Highlanders played out their schedules, the Naps still would have been short of the flag.

DID INJURIES AFFECT THE TEAM'S PERFORMANCE?

Two season-ending injuries affected the Naps and diminished their chances for a pennant.

Center fielder Harry Bay suffered a split finger while batting on June 13 and missed the following two weeks. The team went 8-6 in his absence. Bay was an explosive base runner, a valuable hitter, and solid defensive outfielder. The Naps were in either first or second place while Bay missed the two weeks but once he returned, he was not as effective. Bay was hitting .320 when injured. Usually the number two hitter behind Flick, when returning from the injury,



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Outfielder Elmer Flick led the AL in batting average 1905. The future Hall of Famer led the AL in runs scored in '06.

Bay struggled, and the Naps went 11-8 through July 18. That would be the last day that Bay played that season. He would race in for a short pop fly and pull up to avoid colliding with shortstop Turner and wrench his knee.¹²

July 19 was the date of an even more damaging injury. During the first five years of the American League's existence, Bill Bradley was considered one of the better all-around third basemen in baseball, although not as good as Jimmy Collins, generally considered the premier third baseman in baseball at that time. Bradley was solid on defense and was a looming threat at the plate. Four seasons earlier, Bradley had a slugging percentage of .515, a remarkable figure during an era where few players slugged over .400.

On July 19, Bradley was hit by a pitch on the right wrist by Highlander Bill Hogg. Bradley suffered a fracture that knocked him out of action for the rest of the season. The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* sub-head the next day read, "Bradley's Injury Is Likely To Cost Cleveland The Pennant."¹³

DID THE LOSS OF BRADLEY AND BAY HAVE THAT MUCH IMPACT?

On July 19, Cleveland had a record of 48–32, a .600 winning percentage. The rest of the season they went 41–32 for a .562 winning percentage. The team was still winning, but not at the same rate. Chicago finished with a percentage of .616 while New York ended up with a .596 percentage.

Three players got the bulk of the playing time once Bay and Bradley went down. Jap Barbeau took over at third base until mid-September when Stovall was moved from a platoon role at first base to third. Ben Caffyn and Jim Jackson got the playing time in the outfield for Bay. Bay and Flick, when batting one and two, had each reached base 80 times in the first 44 games of the season, proving that they were effective at table setting.

Prior to the two stars leaving the lineup, the Naps averaged 4.49 runs scored per game while giving up 3.24. The team's offense lost .56 runs per game after losing Bay and Bradley. The offensive decline clearly illustrates that the injuries were detrimental.

In an odd turn, while both Bay and Bradley were known as excellent defenders, the team actually *improved* on their runs allowed average once they were gone. The Naps allowed 2.87 runs per game after July 19, an *improvement* of .37 runs per game.

Terry Turner also missed a week in late July with a dislocated thumb, which forced Lajoie to play short with Flick moving to second base. With Bay gone and Flick in the infield, Otto Hess and Addie Joss ended up playing outfield. Hess, who hit .201 in 1906, even batted cleanup one game. At one point in August, the Naps had just 14 players in uniform, nine position players and five pitchers. Catchers Fritz Buelow and Nig Clarke each missed time with split fingers and Harry Bemis had a muscle tear.

The loss of Bradley hurt the most. Lajoie would move himself from second to third and play George Stovall at second. Jap Barbeau was later inserted at third base and played 32 games from the middle of July to mid-September. Barbeau hit just .194 on the season and had an abysmal fielding percentage of .830 at third base. Stovall would ultimately take over at third on September 13. With Barbeau at third, the Naps went 15–17. Lajoie played 14 games at third during August and the team went 7–7. Once Stovall was put at third, the Naps went 20–8, a .714 winning percentage.

You can't however say injuries were the only reason for the team's problems. The White Sox had injury problems all season and only one player appeared in 150 or more games. New York had just two players who played 150+ games, the same as Cleveland.

WAS THE PITCHING STAFF HURT BY ANY INJURIES?

The Naps lost ace Addie Joss for almost a month. Joss came down with a sore shoulder after losing a game to Cy Young on July 24. Joss also played center field on the 26th so you have to wonder if that added to his arm problems.

Joss started just two games in the month of August. He was effective in one of those starts, throwing a shutout against eighth-place Boston. The other game was against Washington, the AL seventh-place team. The Washington game was a win, but it was a 9–8 nailbiter. Joss was pulled for a pinch-hitter after three innings. Newspaper reports said "his smoke was gone." The fact that he missed several weeks after this may be telling. Cleveland went 9–14 in games not started by Joss in August.

Otto Hess was chosen to pick up some of the games Joss missed. Hess started seven times in the 26 August games but the team was just 2–5 in his starts. Bill Bernhard and Bob Rhoades each started another six games that month. The Naps went 2–4 in the Bernhard games and 2–3 with one tie in the Rhoades starts. Those three pitchers started 19 games in August. The extra work seems to have hurt their performance.

The Naps had a chance to gain some ground in August, playing 13 of the 26 games against some of the weaker AL teams. They ended up dropping five of nine to Philadelphia, splitting six games with Boston, beating up on Washington by winning five of seven, and losing all four games they played against New York and Chicago. Clearly the injuries were costly to the team. And Joss's injury appeared to put extra stress on the other starters. August was the only month where the Naps had a losing record.

WAS NAPOLEON LAJOIE A GOOD MANAGER?

During the 1908 season, the Cleveland writer for *The Sporting News* posed the question: how many pennants would Cleveland have won if Fielder Jones had managed the team instead of Napoleon Lajoie?¹⁴ During the 1906 season, the Cleveland press frequently talked about Jones's success with the White Sox.

Napoleon Lajoie was one of baseball's all-time great hitters. He hit .426 in 1901 and led the league in batting five times. He was one of the initial inductees into the Baseball Hall of Fame. But he was a reluctant manager.

During this era, Branch Rickey said there were two types of player-managers. One was the most powerful, physical man on the team, one who could control the team by brute strength. Frank Chance was of this mold. Nicknamed Husk, Chance was a golden gloves

boxer who inherited a team, from the man who put most of the talented pieces together, Frank Selee. It's debatable as to whether or not Chance was a great game strategist but you can't argue the success the Cubs had from 1906 to 1908.

The other type of manager Rickey referred to was the in-game technician. Fielder Jones was this type of manager. Jones was able to take lesser talent and make his team competitive through strategy and guile. While Chance casually dismissed the White Sox in the '06 World Series, Jones spotted the flaws that made the Cubs susceptible to defeat. Chicago newspapers widely credited Jones for the Sox championship while Chance still insisted he had the better team. Even a *Cleveland Plain Dealer* headline at season's end read, "Pennant Was Won By Brains."¹⁵

So, what type of manager was Lajoie? In an age when most players were about 5-foot-10 and 160 pounds, Nap Lajoie was 6-foot-1, 195. He was a large presence on the field. The question arises, like many great natural players, was Lajoie able to understand and work with players of lesser abilities? John C. Skipper in his book *A Biographical Dictionary of Major League Baseball Managers* writes that "Lajoie frequently exhibited a trait common to superstars—impatience..." He also cites Lajoie from 1909: "You can't win in the major leagues unless you have players who know the game. We don't have time to teach and train youngsters up here. Our job is to win pennants, not run schools."¹⁶ Lajoie's teams would finish as high as second just once during his managerial career.

Steve Constantelos cites George Stovall in his SABR BioProject article, commenting on Lajoie, "He wasn't what I would call a good manager. 'Bout all he'd ever say was 'let's go out and get them so-and-so's today.' He knew he could do his share but it didn't help the younger fellows much." He adds that Stovall criticized Lajoie's lack of on-field managing savvy, including not having any signs worth mentioning.¹⁷

WHAT DID THE PRESS SAY ABOUT LAJOIE?

By mid-July 1906, the *Plain Dealer* was openly questioning Lajoie as a manager. The paper had comments like, "bad coaching" or "Lajoie left Bernhard in the box too long."¹⁸ Sports writer Harry P. Edwards openly praised White Sox manager Fielder Jones and compared him to Lajoie. Commenting on Chicago he wrote, the Sox are "seldom guilty of making a dumb play." "Larry makes the mistake of not varying his style of play more." "The team plays by a rigid set of rules that the opposing team knows as well as Cleveland." He goes on to say the Naps don't protect base

stealers by swinging at pitches and that Lajoie has never tried the squeeze play. He even requested that Lajoie utilize the hit and run play which the White Sox use so well.¹⁹ At season's end, Edwards wrote that Cleveland "lost due to poor base running and poor head work. The inattention to inside work caused Cleveland to lose many a game."²⁰

Sabermetricians have come up with a method to predict a team's won-loss percentage. The Pythagorean method takes the team's runs scored and the runs allowed and puts them into a percentage to create what the team's final record should be. This method says the Naps should have had a record of 98-55 in 1906.²¹ That record would have eclipsed the White Sox for the pennant. The Naps however finished nine games worse than expected. How much of this was Lajoie's fault? This method when applied to Lajoie's managerial career shows his teams won two more than expected in '05, eight more than expected in '07, but in '08 the Naps were minus two, and in '09, they played to expectations. The PM shows he was one game worse than expected while managing.

Total Baseball uses a similar method to figure expected wins and has a statistic which is based on actual wins versus expected wins. In '06, *Total Baseball* shows Lajoie was a minus 7.6 victories. This method shows he was +1.1 in '05, +8.4 in '07, even in '08, and 3.4 in '09.²² This shows that Lajoie was 5.3 games above expected in his four-plus years overall. Neither method proves that Lajoie was a good or bad manager, but both show his team underperformed in '06.

A CHANGE IN THE BATTING ORDER

Lajoie was quoted at the start of the season as to having "fixed" his batting order and he didn't plan on making any changes before June 1, no matter how things went. The changes to the order started in mid-May. The changes would continue the rest of the year.

Elmer Flick, a career .313 hitter, was third on the Naps in 1906 in batting average and on base percentage, behind Lajoie. Flick, who started the season hitting in the third spot in the batting order, was moved into the leadoff spot on May 10. The Naps promptly beat Ed Walsh and Chicago 15-1. The team caught fire in May, winning 15 of their 23 games. Flick would end up leading the league in runs scored. Bill Bradley started the season hitting second. The slugger Bradley was asked to sacrifice himself to move the leadoff hitter along. Bradley had 14 sacrifice hits, twice as many as any of his teammates, in the middle of May. He was also hitting just .197 and found

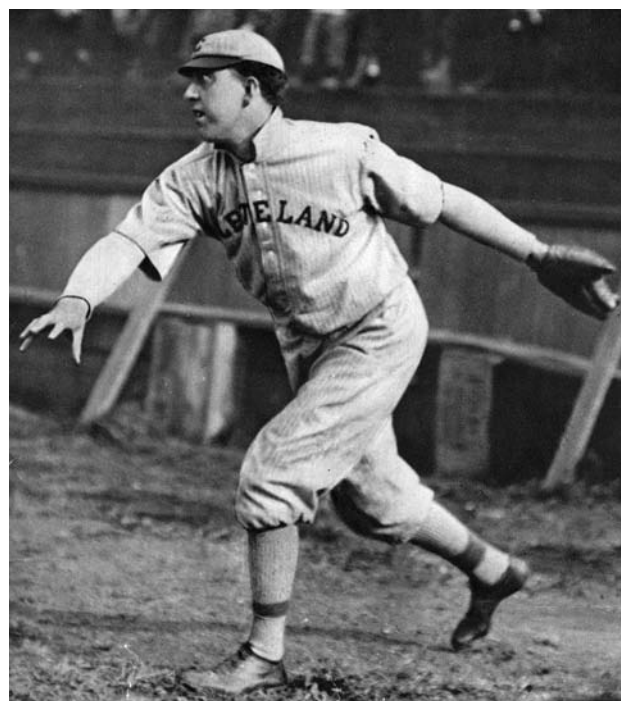
himself batting seventh on May 18, a spot in the order where he would stay. The move to seventh must have agreed with him, as he hit over .300 the rest of his games, to up his average to .275. Lajoie believed in the standard practice of bunting if the leadoff man got on base, regardless of the batter.²³

Lajoie did have a tendency to place his backups in the same spot of the batting order as the player he replaced. For example, “Muskrat” Bill Shipke, who had a career average of .199, filled in for Lajoie at second two games early in the year, and hit cleanup. He was 0 for 6. Hurlers Otto Hess and Addie Joss needed to play some games in the outfield as injuries piled up late in July. Hess even hit third one game when Terry Turner was out of the lineup. Barbeau, the .194 hitter, also hit third for several games for Turner.

But on August 25, the month the Naps went 11–14, Flick was dropped in the batting order, ultimately ending up batting sixth the rest of the season. With the injuries to Bay and Bradley, Lajoie started tinkering with the batting order. George Stovall played games at second and third base down the stretch. Stovall on the season hit .273 with an on base percentage of .288. Stovall was inserted into the second spot in the batting order. Lajoie ended up leading off Ben Caffyn, just up from Des Moines, and Jim Jackson the last six weeks of the season. Caffyn had a .194 batting average with an on base percentage of .291. Jackson hit .214 on the year with an on base percentage of .290. Would Flick’s average of .311 and .372 on base percentage at the top of the order have allowed the Naps to score more runs? Even with the top of the order being tied up by Caffyn, Jackson, and Stovall, the Naps did go 27–12 in September and October.

Lajoie played light-hitting Jap Barbeau for 32 games at third base after Bradley went down. Barbeau, while a fan favorite due to his diminutive size, was roundly criticized for his poor play by the press. Lajoie did have another option for third base, George Stovall. Stovall had been platooning at first base with Claude Rossman. Would the Naps have been able to outrun the White Sox down the stretch if Lajoie had shifted Stovall to third earlier?

The Cleveland press noted that the White Sox were able to make the most of their base hits. As a comparison, the ChiSox scored .500 runs per base hit while Cleveland scored .439 runs per hit. The seventh place Nationals, who scored 145 fewer runs than the Naps, also plated .440 runs per base hit. Chicago was clearly able to take better advantage of their hits than Cleveland.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Addie Joss, “the human hairpin,” was 21–9 with an ERA of 1.72 in ’06. His injury in August helped ruin the Naps’ title hopes.

DID THE NAPS LOSE CLOSE-SCORING GAMES?

The Naps struggled on the season in close games, finishing 21–25 in one-run games.²⁴ Without the play-by-play records, one can’t really tell if Lajoie cost his team in those games. But Cleveland lost five one-run games against the White Sox. Change those losses to wins and Cleveland wins the pennant. In contrast, the weak-hitting White Sox were 29–19 in one-run games while New York was 29–16.²⁵ Extra innings also caused problems for the squad as they dropped 8 of the 17 overtime contests. Did Lajoie’s use of the sacrifice hurt the team in those tight ballgames? An example of their struggles in close games came on September 11. The Naps played 11 innings against Detroit, losing 4–3. Cleveland left 16 men on base including leaving the bases loaded in both the 10th and 11th innings.

DID CLEVELAND STRUGGLE AGAINST ANY PARTICULAR PITCHER(S)?

Cleveland had a strong lineup of left-handed hitters. As a result, the Naps went 10–20 in games started by opposing southpaws.²⁶ They averaged over one run scored per game fewer against the left-handed starters than against right-handers, 4.55 runs vs 3.46.

Was this something on which Lajoie could have improved? Only Terry Turner, Bill Bradley, George Stovall, and Lajoie had decent batting averages for right-handed hitters and we know that Bradley missed almost half the season. Lajoie made the final decisions

as to which players to keep on the roster. Did he make the right choices? Based on the players he had during spring training, it appears he took the best of the lot he had available. Cleveland did try to add players during the season as the injuries mounted up. They made an offer to Detroit for disgruntled outfielder Matty McIntyre but were denied.²⁷ They were only able to add minor league outfielders Ben Caffyn and Joe Birmingham during the season.

DID THE NAPS PLAY BETTER AT HOME OR ON THE ROAD?

Cleveland was the best road team in the American League in 1906, winning 42 of their 76 away games for a winning percentage of .553. They were 47–30 while at home for a percentage of .610. The White Sox did play well on the road with a winning percentage of .527 but they dominated the league in Chicago, winning 54 of 77 games. New York, which finished the year playing their last 25 games on the road, had a sub .500 record in out-of-town games, 37–38. But they also played better at home than Cleveland, finishing with a record of 53–23, .697.²⁸

THE WHITE SOX 19-GAME WIN STREAK MADE THE DIFFERENCE

The most telling statistic of all is the Naps' won-lost record from July 20 through the end of the season. Hampered by the loss of third baseman Bill Bradley and center fielder Harry Bay, the Naps simply could not keep pace. The Naps played at a .562 pace from July 20 to the end of the season, far behind that of the White Sox, whose 19-game win streak from August 2–23, propelled them to a .686 pace the rest of the season. New York also ran off a 15-game winning streak that started in late August. The two winning streaks kept the Naps from getting close.

The standings from the start of the season through July 19 illustrate the drop off in Cleveland's performance pre-and-post injuries:

From the season's start through July 19, the Naps were right with the league leaders:²⁹

| Team | W-L | Pct. | GB |
|--------------|-------|------|-----|
| Philadelphia | 48–31 | .608 | — |
| Cleveland | 48–32 | .600 | 0.5 |
| New York | 47–32 | .595 | 1.0 |
| Chicago | 45–36 | .556 | 4.0 |

From July 20 through the rest of the season, the White Sox, bolstered by their 19-game win streak, ran away with the AL race:

| Team | W-L | Pct. | GB |
|-----------|-------|------|-----|
| Chicago | 48–22 | .686 | — |
| New York | 43–29 | .597 | 6.0 |
| Cleveland | 41–32 | .562 | 8.5 |

Clearly, the Naps were slowed by the loss of Bay, Bradley, and Addie Joss during most of August.

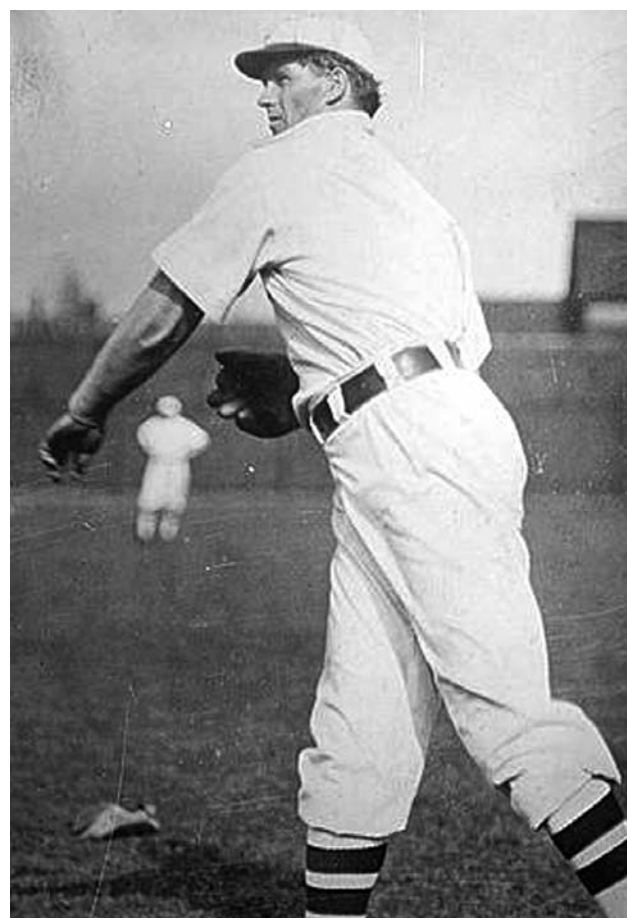
SO, WHAT HAPPENED TO CLEVELAND IN 1906?

Injuries to Harry Bay, Bill Bradley, and Addie Joss hurt the team. The loss of Addie Joss for most of August was damaging. August was the only month on the season where the team didn't have a winning record.

Cleveland had losing records against the two teams that finished ahead of them in the standings.

The White Sox got hot when they had to and got into the pennant race. The Highlander winning streak pushed the Naps farther down in the standings. Even though the Naps got hot in September, they had fallen too far behind to catch the front runners.

The Naps struggled against left-handed pitchers. A .500 record against southpaws would have seen them win the pennant.



BAIN COLLECTION/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Naps' only left-handed starter, Otto Hess, finished the year with a record of 20–17 and an ERA of 1.83.

Cleveland had a losing record in one-run and extra-inning games. Take away the five one-run losses to Chicago and the Naps would win pennant.

The Forest City Nine weren't as effective as Chicago and New York playing in their home ballpark.

Lack of pitching depth. Pitchers Harry Eells and Happy Townsend were simply a qualitative drop off from the loss of Addie Joss during most of August.

The Naps were never able to replace Bay and Bradley. Jim Jackson and Ben Caffyn tried to fill in for Bay but both had offensive and defensive struggles. Hess and Joss were forced into the outfield for a few games. Lajoie tried to replace Bradley with Barbeau, who hit and fielded poorly, and it wasn't until Stovall was finally moved to third base in late August that the team started winning again.

The press openly questioned Lajoie's strategy, or rather, lack of strategy. It was pointed out that Chicago specifically did not make "dumb" plays and made the most of their base runners.

The injuries appear to be what hurt the Naps most in 1906, but these nine elements combined, dropped what may have been the best team in the league into a team whose record has faded into obscurity.

THE NET RESULT: CLEVELAND UNDERACHIEVED

Cleveland's underachievement put them, chronologically, at the top of the list of "what could have been" or "what should have been" for the many outstanding teams who simply either lacked the luck or intangible characteristics that dropped them into the category of also-ran.

The 1906 Naps were a solid team. However, key injuries, along with the memorable 19-game win streak generated by the White Sox in August, dropped the Naps into obscurity and prevented them from becoming Cleveland's first pennant winner. ■

Notes

1. Bill James, John Dewan, Neil Munro, and Don Zminda, editors, *Stats All-Time Major League Sourcebook*, Stats Inc., 1998.
2. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, October 13, 1906.
3. James, 1998, op. cit.
4. www.Baseball-Reference.com.
5. James, 1998, op. cit.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. www.Baseball-Reference.com.
12. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, July 20, 1906.
13. Ibid.
14. *The Sporting News*, September 17, 1908.
15. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, October 7, 1906.
16. John C. Skipper, *A Biographical Dictionary of Major League Baseball Managers*, McFarland & Company, 2003.
17. SABR BioProject.
18. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, July 8, 1906.
19. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, July 15, 1906.
20. Ibid., October 7, 1906.
21. www.Baseball-Reference.com.
22. John Thorn, Pete Palmer, Michael Gershman, editors, *Total Baseball*, 6th Edition, Total Sports, 1999.
23. Skipper, op. cit.
24. www.Baseball-Reference.com.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, August 11, 1906.
28. www.Baseball-Reference.com.
29. Retrosheet.org, www.retrosheet.org/boxesetc/1906/07191906.htm.

Other References

The Sporting News and *Sporting Life*, 1906, 1907, 1908.
www.Baseball-Almanac.com.
www.BaseballChronology.com.
 J.M. Murphy, *The National Pastime*, The Society for American Baseball Research, 1988.
Cleveland Plain Dealer, March 1 – October 31, 1906.

One Trade, Three Teams, and Reversal of Fortune

Sol Gittleman

The 1946 season had been a deep disappointment for the New York Yankees and the Cleveland Indians. Hopes had been high for both organizations. After two dismal war years when NY finished third and fourth in 1944 and 1945, the Yankees were looking forward to securing their normal perch on top of the AL pack, led by their returning war veterans: Joe DiMaggio, Joe Gordon, Phil Rizzuto, Tommy Henrich, Bill Dickey, Red Ruffing, and Marius Russo. But, Dickey at age 39 had nothing left. Ruffing, who had seemed indestructible, finally ran out of gas at age 41. It took a while for Rizzuto and Henrich to regain most of their pre-war form, but they made it back for respectable seasons. The shock to the system came about when the front office realized that three returning veterans had aged far beyond expectation. Russo, a promising left-hander, was completely ineffective, went 0-2, and was sent to the minors. Just 31 years old, he never pitched again in the majors.

But what had happened to MVPs DiMaggio and Gordon struck fear into Yankees executives Larry MacPhail and George Weiss, two of the most knowledgeable baseball people in the business. DiMaggio, the heart of the Yankees dynasty from 1936, at age 31,

returned from military service an old man. For normal mortals, a year with a .290 batting average, 25 home runs, and 95 RBIs would register as a solid performance; for DiMaggio, it was a bitter disappointment, the first time he finished under .300 with fewer than 100 RBIs. Worse yet was Joe Gordon's year. In 1942, Gordon hit .322 with 18 home runs and 103 runs batted in, an MVP year in the American League. He fell off offensively in 1943 yet remained an acrobatic second baseman, a perennial All-Star who always got the nod over his Boston Red Sox rival, Bobby Doerr; but, 1946 proved to be a disaster for Gordon. He hit an anemic .210, played in just 112 games, knocked in 47 runs with 11 homers. Worst of all, his fielding collapsed. Gordon gave every indication that the war had sapped his talents, and he was through. Weiss and MacPhail decided in the fall of 1946 that they would get whatever they could for him in a trade. Gordon, they were certain, was finished. MacPhail, franchise president acting as his own general manager, trusted his farm director's advice; Weiss wanted another starting pitcher.

For the Cleveland Indians and their new owner Bill Veeck, 1946 had been just as frustrating. The only bright spot was the returning star Bob Feller. Feller, a

With Cleveland, Joe Gordon was no longer "The Flash," but still could turn the double play.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

war hero, gave up three prime years by enlisting in the US Navy immediately after Pearl Harbor. Now the 27-year-old flamethrower was back and turned in a 26–15 mark with a sixth-place team, leading the league in complete games (36), innings pitched (371), strikeouts (348), and shutouts (10). On Opening Day he beat the Chicago White Sox, 1–0, with a three-hitter, striking out 10. On the final day of the season, Feller threw a six-hitter beating the Detroit Tigers and Hal Newhouser, the league's other 26-game winner, 4–1. Feller was back, with a vengeance. His 2.18 ERA was bested only by Newhouser and the Yankees' Spud Chandler.

The rest of the Cleveland team flopped. They had the league's worst team batting average at .245; and the worst of the worst was second base, where two war-time retreads, Ray Mack and Dutch Meyer, batted .205 and .232 respectively. Veeck looked around for available talent and set his eyes on the disappointing Yankees second baseman. Acting as his own general manager, he guessed that Gordon needed only a little more time to get straightened out and return to pre-war form; and Veeck had pitchers to spare. The only untouchable was Feller; every other pitcher was expendable. The Yankees, he told MacPhail and Weiss, could have anyone else.

MacPhail and Weiss looked over the Indians roster. They liked a 28-year-old righthander named Red Embree, who Weiss believed was just coming into his own. In 1946 he had been moved into the starting rotation for the first time, threw 200 innings, and baseball people generally felt that his 8–12 record was only a stop on the way to a brilliant career. For a moment, they considered a converted third baseman whom the Indians had shifted to the mound. But no one believed that the 25-year-old Bob Lemon would have much of a career as a pitcher. Mel Harder was too old; Steve Gromek didn't throw hard enough; and Allie Reynolds, Veeck's biggest disappointment, showed that, after four years, he really could not be a consistent winner in the big leagues. Now he was 29 years old, couldn't finish games he started, and could not control a fastball that many felt was the equal of Feller's. What good was it if you couldn't throw strikes and faded after the fifth inning?

Reynolds, who was 18–12 in the wartime year of 1945, was supposed to give Cleveland the most powerful one-two punch in the American League, the equal of Newhouser and Dizzy Trout with the Tigers. Instead, he finished 11–15, starting 28 games and completing nine. With 108 bases on balls, he gave one more walk than strikeouts. His 3.89 ERA was well above the team average.

The Cleveland press never let up on Reynolds. He was one-quarter Creek Indian, whose ancestors had been driven to Oklahoma from Georgia and Alabama generations earlier and had settled on Indian land. When he consistently ran out of gas in the final innings, he was dubbed "The Vanishing American." Comparisons were made to the first native American in major league baseball who also happened to play in Cleveland at the turn of the century, Lou Sockalexis, a Penobscot Indian from Maine who was immediately dubbed "Chief" and who, the newspapers reported, could not hold his "firewater." Sockalexis eventually drank himself out of baseball. One Cleveland sports-writer wrote his eulogy: "Socks swears by the feathers of his ancestors that he hasn't removed the scalp from one glass of foamy beer since last Spring, when he whooped up a dance on Superior Street...but the wiles and temptations of the big cities stimulated poor Lou's thirst and set him forth in search of the red paint." So much for native American baseball players. The beat writers firmly believed that Reynolds lacked some inner character that would prevent him from ever reaching his potential. (No one suspected that Allie had early-stage diabetes, and once he started drinking orange juice during games, his stamina improved dramatically.)

The Cleveland-New York discussions began immediately after the season's end; all the Yankees had to do was to confirm that they wanted Embree. But, MacPhail, at the last moment, told Weiss that he wanted to hear from two more voices: DiMaggio and Henrich. He called them personally. Each gave the same answer: "Get Reynolds." When the surprised MacPhail told Weiss, the farm director was hesitant. Reynolds had pitched his last start in 1946 against the Yankees and was dreadful. Weiss remembered; DiMaggio, even more strongly than Henrich, didn't care: "If you can get Reynolds, get him," said the Yankee Clipper; and the deal was made on October 11, 1946: straight up, Joe Gordon for Allie Reynolds.

Joe Gordon was a much beloved Yankee, a genuinely selfless player who gave everything to the team, a gentleman of considerable character. When Larry Doby arrived to integrate the American League and the Cleveland Indians in the summer of 1947, he was met with a frosty hostility, until Gordon pushed his way past the turned backs, walked up to Doby with extended hand, and welcomed him to the clubhouse. Doby remembered that act of sincere humanity for the rest of his life.

When the 1947 season got underway, everyone in baseball was delighted that Gordon almost instantly

reverted to form and put together a regenerative year for the Indians and for his career. At age 32, he played 155 of the 157-game season, hit .272, smashed 29 home runs, and knocked in 93. No longer was "Flash" Gordon the acrobat around the key-stone, but he played a respectable second base and with Lou Boudreau at shortstop gave Cleveland the offensive punch it needed in the infield. The Indians moved up two notches in the American League to fourth place, and were ready for the surge to come.

Everything came together in 1948, when the Cleveland Indians, to everyone's amazement, won the American League pennant, beating the Boston Red Sox in a one-game playoff, then went on to defeat the Boston Braves to become baseball's champions of the world. Player-manager shortstop Lou Boudreau hit .355 for the year and ran away with the league's MVP award, but Veeck always insisted that the heart of that team was their second baseman, Joe Gordon, who had career highs in home runs(32) and RBIs (124). He was sixth in the MVP voting. Veeck knew that it was Gordon who helped Larry Doby integrate the Cleveland clubhouse and to fulfill his promise. Doby hit .301 and anchored the Cleveland outfield. (The converted infielder the Yankees didn't want, Bob Lemon, had the first of his six twenty-victory seasons.) Cleveland home attendance of 2.6 million surpassed by nearly 400,000 the previous record, set by the Yankees in 1946.

Joe Gordon was indeed in the twilight of his career. He gave Cleveland two more respectable years, then hung up his spikes after the 1950 season and began a career that would lead him to managing four different major league teams between 1958 and 1969, including three years at the helm of the Indians. But, for millions of Cleveland fans, Joe Gordon will always be connected to the fantasy year of 1948 and the role he played in bringing so totally without expectation a world's championship to the city.

For Allie Reynolds, there was also a rebirth, and one that would totally reverse what most baseball people saw as the inevitable decline of fortune. The universal consensus after the 1946 season believed that the Yankees dynasty was over. The shock of seeing the diminished skills of Joe DiMaggio left the sportswriters stunned and certain that the age of the



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Eddie Lopat and Allie Reynolds: two of the Yankees' "Big Three."

Red Sox was upon American League baseball, in spite of the unexpected loss to the St. Louis Cardinals in the 1946 World Series.¹ The Red Sox were loaded with stars Ted Williams, Bobby Doerr, John Pesky, and Dom DiMaggio. In 1947 and 1949 they executed trades with the St. Louis Browns that brought them Ellis Kinder, hard-hitting shortstop Vern Stephens, and all-star outfielder Al Zarilla. The Boston Red Sox were labeled the team of the decade. It never happened.

In 1947, the Yankees unexpectedly stormed back. This was no longer the Bronx Bombers. The fans didn't see the dominant DiMaggio of the 1936-41 years, but he still carried the offense as much as he could. The 32-year-old outfielder hit 20 home runs to lead the team, knocked in 97, and hit .315: a little better than 1946. But, there was a new leader on the mound; and it was Allie Reynolds, back from the dead. He immediately took over as the Yankees ace at the top of the rotation, started a team-leading 30 games, 17 of which he completed, finished at 19-8 with a 3.20 ERA, under the team and league average. No Yankee hurler was close to his 242 innings pitched.

For Allie Reynolds, 1947 was the *annus mirabilis*; for Joe Gordon, the magic struck in 1948: one trade, two World Series. The Age of the Red Sox never arrived. They lost the American League pennant in two consecutive years—1948 and 1949—on the last day of the season, once to Cleveland and again to the Yankees. From 1949 to 1953, Boston's nemesis was Allie Reynolds, who became a dominant pitcher in the American League—the first in history to throw two no-hitters in a season (1951, when he was given the Ray Hickok Award as Professional Athlete of the Year)—and a superstar in the post-season, leading the Yankees to five consecutive World Series triumphs, a record that arguably will never be broken. Reynolds, along with Vic Raschi and Eddie Lopat, gave the Yankees three ace starters, and when Whitey Ford joined them permanently in 1953, Branch Rickey stated that this was the best starting rotation in baseball history.

Joe Gordon passed away in 1978, at age 63. In 2009, the Veterans Committee of the Hall of Fame elected him to membership. Allie Reynolds, who as a Yankees stalwart went 131–60, threw two no-hitters, won seven World Series games and saved four others,

died in 1994, age 77. He was on the Veterans Committee election ballot of 2011. These two veteran ballplayers are joined together in baseball immortality by a trade in which everyone was a winner, except perhaps the Boston Red Sox. ■

Notes

1. Unexpected to everyone except those who knew that the Cardinals had three off-speed left-handers in Howie Pollet, Harry Brecheen, and Al Brazle, who would drive Ted Williams to distraction. Williams collected five singles, drove in one run, and hit .200 in his only WS appearance. Harry Brecheen won three games.

Sources

- Bennett, Stephen. "The Longest Season," in *Cooperstown Review*. Premiere Issue, 1993, 122.
- Gittleman, Sol. *Reynolds, Raschi, and Lopat*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 2007.
- Golenbock, Peter. *Dynasty*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Press, 1975.
- Halberstam, David. *Summer of '49*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1989.
- Henrich, Tommy with Bill Gilbert. *Five O'Clock Lightening*. Carol Publishing, 1992.
- Kahn, Roger. *The Era, 1947–1957*. New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1993.
- Rizzuto, Phil with Tom Horton. *The October Twelve*. New York: Forge, 1994.
- Spatz, Lyle. *Yankees Coming, Yankees Going*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 2000.

Expos Get First Franchise No-Hitter Right Out of the Gate

Norm King

The San Diego Padres have been around since 1969 and are awaiting their first. The New York Mets have been around since way back in 1962 and, amazingly, still do not have one.¹ Yet the Montreal Expos, who started play in the same year as the Padres, set a record for the fewest games needed to have one of its pitchers pitch a no-hitter, when Bill Stoneman whitewashed the Philadelphia Phillies 7-0 in only the franchise's ninth game.

Stoneman walked five and struck out eight in what proved to be his first win as an Expo and only the fourth in the team's history. It was also the first complete game of Stoneman's career. Jerry Johnson took the loss for the Phillies in front of only 6,496 fans at old Connie Mack Stadium in Philadelphia.²

Considering the way the Expos and Stoneman, a 10th-round selection in the 1968 expansion draft, started the 1969 season, no one would have predicted a no-hitter. They won their first-ever game against the Mets 11-10 on April 8 and got pounded 9-5 in their second game the next day. Stoneman started and lost that one, giving up four earned runs in one-third of an inning and leaving the game with a 108.0 ERA.³

Stoneman's second outing was only slightly better. He pitched 8½ innings and gave up all seven runs (one earned) in a 7-6 loss to the Cubs. He wasn't helped by the team's three errors.⁴

Neither of these two starts, nor his pre-Expos days with the Cubs, foretold the immortality that was to come. Stoneman began his major league career in 1967. He earned the nickname "Toy Tiger" during his tenure in "the friendly confines," as much for his height (5 feet, 10 inches), as for his determination. At a time when managers used relievers more as mop-up men than as specialists, Chicago skipper Leo Durocher gave him only two starts, while using him in relief 44 times. He also refused to let Stoneman use his curveball, even though Stoney ended up having one of the best in the National League.

His career with the Cubs was ancient history that night in Philadelphia. Stoneman faced 31 Phillies batters in the game, and the Expos scored three in the top of the ninth—including one by Stoneman himself—to give Stoneman more breathing room in the bottom of

the inning. He finished the game in style, striking out Ron Stone and Johnny Briggs, then inducing the dangerous Deron Johnson to ground out to shortstop Maury Wills.⁵

As with many no-hitters, fielding played a role. Don Bosch recovered from a late jump to grab a sinking fly ball from Don Money in the second, and Rusty Staub snared a liner off the bat of Tony Taylor in the third.

The no-hitter proved to have miraculous healing powers. "'I'm supposed to have a dentist's appointment today, for a new filling but maybe I won't need it now,' said Stoney, feeling no pain after his great personal triumph," wrote Ted Blackman in *The Sporting News*.⁶

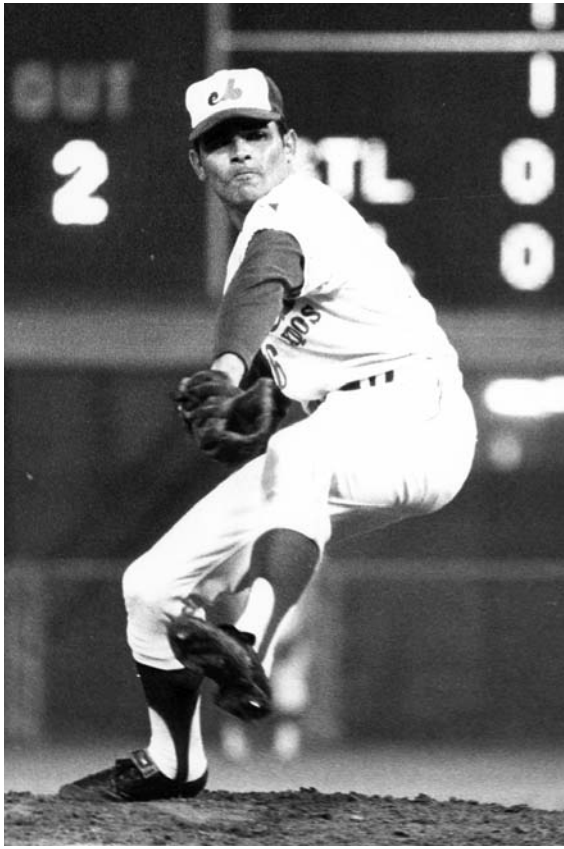
The game also provided some revenge for Expos manager Gene Mauch, who was facing his former team for the first time since the Phillies fired him 54 games into the previous season. Not only did his new team lay a beating on his old one, but he was serenaded by the fans chanting "we want Mauch" from the seventh inning onward.⁷

The Expos' reaction to the event seems almost quaint by today's standards. Management ripped up Stoneman's contract and gave him a new one with a \$2,000 raise. Then, between games of an April 20

Bill Stoneman, one of the Montreal Expos' first heroes.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

*Stoney pitching at Jarry Park.*

doubleheader against the Cubs, the public address announcer asked fans to stay in their seats and then called Stoneman out of the dugout. Team president John McHale pointed to a new Renault car in center field, a gift from the Renault Company. However, the big surprise came when one of the car's doors opened and out stepped Stoneman's mother and a brother just back from Vietnam.

In his history of the team, former Expos broadcaster Jacques Doucet described how photos captured the atmosphere of that event, and how it reflected the impact of Stoneman's achievement:

The photos of the event spoke eloquently. Little Jarry Park, filled to bursting despite the wind and the cold. All the spectators, standing, many wearing toques and coats, acclaiming another of their new heroes. No more doubt existed, even among those who had remained the most sceptical: the meeting between Montreal and its baseball team was more than a success: it was love at first sight.⁸

The no-hitter was one of the few pitching bright spots for the first-year Expos. Stoneman went 11–19 and led the league in walks with 123. He did pitch five shutouts, which remains the franchise record (since tied by Steve Rogers, Dennis Martinez and Carlos Perez). The staff had a league-worst 4.33 ERA as the team struggled to a 52–110

record. That did not matter to Expos fans, though, who were so happy to have major league baseball that more than 1.2 million fans flocked to see the team, even though their tiny ballpark had a seating capacity of only 28,456.⁹

"The early years of the Expos were a great time," said Stoneman. "Even though we only won 52 games in 1969, people cheered from the first out to the last, and we drew 1.4 million [*sic*], which was pretty good attendance then."

"Being on an expansion team didn't matter. We were happy to be in the majors and in Montreal. We

Table 1. Number of Games to First Franchise No-Hitter

| Team | Season of Operation | Franchise Game No. | Date | Pitcher | Opponent | Score |
|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|-------|
| Angels | 2 | 181 | May 5, 1962 | Bo Belinsky | Baltimore | 2–0 |
| Astros | 2 | 199 | May 17, 1963 | Don Nottebart | Philadelphia | 4–1 |
| Marlins | 4 | 458 | May 11, 1996 | Al Leiter | Colorado | 11–0 |
| Royals | 5 | 659 | April 27, 1973 | Steve Busby | Detroit | 3–0 |
| Diamondbacks | 7 | 1,010 | May 18, 2004 | Randy Johnson | Atlanta | 2–1 |
| Senators/Rangers | 13 | 2,029 | July 30, 1973 | Jim Bibby | Oakland | 6–0 |
| Rays | 13 | 2,039 | July 26, 2010 | Matt Garza | Detroit | 5–0 |
| Mariners | 14 | 2,103 | June 2, 1990 | Randy Johnson | Detroit | 2–0 |
| Blue Jays | 14 | 2,183 | Sept 2, 1990 | Dave Stieb | Cleveland | 3–0 |
| Rockies | 18 | 2,703 | April 17, 2010 | Ubaldo Jimenez | Atlanta | 4–0 |
| Pilots/Brewers | 19 | 2,863 | April 15, 1987 | Juan Nieves | Baltimore | 7–0 |

loved playing there. It was like going to Europe and getting paid for it. We got a taste of a culture we didn't even know was there."¹⁰

Years later, Stoneman admitted that he wasn't overpowering that night. "People think that a pitcher who throws a no-hitter totally dominates the game, but that isn't always true," he said. "I had trouble with my control and gave up five walks, which is something that happened a lot in my career."¹¹

Nonetheless, Stoneman's first no-hitter was no fluke. He repeated the feat on October 2, 1972, at Montreal's Jarry Park against the Mets, winning by the same 7-0 score. Stoneman struck out nine, but had control problems, walking seven. Ironically, this was the last complete game of his career. He is the only pitcher in major league history to pitch no-hitters in his first and last career complete games.¹²

Although that was the first major league no-hitter ever pitched outside the United States, Stoneman had almost performed that accomplishment on June 16, 1971. Cito Gaston of the Padres broke up his no-hit bid with a seventh-inning single during a 2-0 Expos win at Jarry Park. Stoneman contributed to his own cause in that game with an RBI single.¹³

Stoneman pitched with the Expos until the end of the 1973 season, compiling a 51-72 record with the club. He pitched part of the 1974 season for the California Angels; after tallying a 1-8 record with a 6.14 ERA, the Angels called his career to heaven in July of that year. He was 54-85 with a 4.08 ERA lifetime.

While he had a modest record as a player, his post-baseball career was extremely successful. He became one of those rare former Expos who continued to live in Montreal after his playing days, working for Royal Trust, a Canadian financial institution. He then joined

the Expos' front office from 1984 to 1999, serving in a number of senior capacities. He was Vice-President for Baseball Administration and later Vice-President for Baseball Operations. He was also General Manager and Assistant General Manager.

In November of 1999, he became General Manager of the Anaheim Angels and held that post until 2007. Under his leadership, the Angels won the 2002 World Series. He now serves as a senior advisor to the team.

But to Expos fans, and there are still many, he will be best remembered for a pitching triumph on a cool night in Philadelphia that helped cement a love affair between a city and its new baseball franchise.

Table 1 (previous page) shows how many games it took each post-1960 expansion team to record its first no-hitter. The Mets and Padres are still waiting to be added to the list. ■

Notes

1. Baseball-almanac.com (www.baseball-almanac.com/recbooks/rb_noh2.shtml)
2. Baseball-Reference.com (www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/PHI/PHI196904170.shtml)
3. Baseball-Reference.com (www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/NYN/NYN196904090.shtml)
4. Baseball-Reference.com (www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/CHN/CHN196904130.shtml)
5. Baseball-Reference.com (www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/PHI/PHI196904170.shtml)
6. Ted Blackman, *The Sporting News*, May 3, 1969, 5
7. Jacques Doucet and Marc Robitaille, *Il était une fois les Expos, Volume I*, Hurtubise, 82
8. Doucet and Robitaille, *Ibid*, 84 (*author's translation*).
9. Ballparks.com (www.ballparks.com/baseball/national/jarryp.htm)
10. Al Doyle, "Bill Stoneman: the game I'll never forget: right-hander who tossed two no-hitters during his career recalls victory over Padres in which he fanned 14 batters" *Baseball Digest*, June 2005 (http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FCI/is_4_64/ai_n13684079/)
11. Doyle, *Ibid*.
12. www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Bill_Stoneman

Whatever Happened to the Triple Crown?

Excerpted from “The Runmakers”

Frederick E. Taylor

The Runmakers: A New Way to Rate Baseball Players

by Frederick E. Taylor

Johns Hopkins University Press (2011)

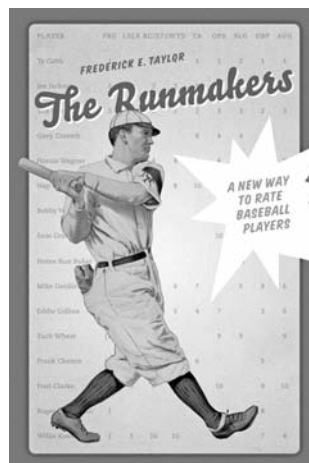
272 pages

Hitting a baseball is the single most difficult thing to do in sport. . . . A hitter . . . is expected to hit a round ball with a round bat and adjust his swing in a split second to 100-mile-per-hour fastballs, back-breaking curveballs, and, occasionally, knuckleballs that mimic the flight patterns of nearsighted moths. . . . Even the vaunted major leaguer who hits at the magic .300 level . . . fails seven times every ten at bats.

—Ted Williams, *Ted Williams’ Hit List*

It has been 43 years since any baseball player has won the Triple Crown of baseball (leading the league in batting average, home runs, and runs batted in). Carl Yastrzemski, of the 1967 “impossible dream” Boston Red Sox, was the last player to win the Triple Crown. It was the ninth time it had been done in the previous 41 years, for an average of about once every four and a half years. The times have changed, and the Triple Crown now seems like another impossible dream.

Table 1 lists the players who have won the Triple Crown of baseball, and table 2 expands this list into a Triple Crown hierarchy. It has always been difficult to win the Triple Crown. In the entire 134-year history of the National League, it has been done only five times for an average of once every 26.8 years. It hasn’t been quite as difficult in the American League, as it has been accomplished nine times in 109 years for an average of once every 12.1 years. Some of the greatest players of all time never won a Triple Crown, Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Joe DiMaggio, and Barry Bonds, to name just a few. Rogers Hornsby and Ted Williams were the only two players to win two Triple Crowns. Only once, in 1933, was the Triple Crown won in both leagues in the same year: Jimmie Foxx in the American League and Chuck Klein in the National League. It was a truly unique happening, as they both played for teams from the same city: Foxx played for the Philadelphia Athletics, and Klein played for the Philadelphia Phillies. Ty Cobb was the youngest player to win the Triple Crown (a few months shy of his 23rd birthday), and Lou Gehrig was the oldest (three months after his 31st birthday).



Why is it so difficult to win the Triple Crown? And why has it seemed almost impossible in recent years? The answer to the first question is no great secret. Almost anyone who has played baseball knows the answer. Just hitting a baseball is difficult enough, as Ted Williams so articu-

lately explained above. To win the Triple Crown of baseball, you have to combine hitting for strength (home runs) with hitting with skill (batting average) and do it in a timely fashion, that is, with runners on base (runs batted in). Triple Crown hitting is three times as difficult as ordinary hitting. It takes three very special talents to win the Triple Crown. You also have to have a little luck because runs batted in are from the bases and you therefore have to have teammates on base when you come to bat.

Table 1. The Triple Crown of Baseball

| Year | Winner | Team | League |
|------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1878 | Paul Hines | Providence Grays | National |
| 1887 | Tip O'Neill | St. Louis Cardinals | American Assoc. |
| 1901 | Nap Lajoie | Philadelphia Athletics | American |
| 1909 | Ty Cobb ¹ | Detroit Tigers | American |
| 1922 | Rogers Hornsby | St. Louis Cardinals | National |
| 1925 | Rogers Hornsby ¹ | St. Louis Cardinals | National |
| 1933 | Jimmie Foxx | Philadelphia Athletics | American |
| 1933 | Chuck Klein | Philadelphia Phillies | National |
| 1934 | Lou Gehrig ¹ | New York Yankees | American |
| 1937 | Joe Medwick | St. Louis Cardinals | National |
| 1942 | Ted Williams ¹ | Boston Red Sox | American |
| 1947 | Ted Williams | Boston Red Sox | American |
| 1956 | Mickey Mantle ¹ | New York Yankees | American |
| 1966 | Frank Robinson | Baltimore Orioles | American |
| 1967 | Carl Yastrzemski | Boston Red Sox | American |

1. Ty Cobb, Rogers Hornsby, Lou Gehrig, Ted Williams, and Mickey Mantle constitute an elite of the elites: in these years they led both leagues in batting average, home runs, and runs batted in.

Table 2. The Triple Crown Hierarchy**A. Players who led both leagues in BA, HR, & RBI**

1. Ty Cobb (1909)
2. Rogers Hornsby (1925)
3. Lou Gehrig (1934)
4. Ted Williams (1942)
5. Mickey Mantle (1956)

B. Players who won the Triple Crown in their league only

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Paul Hines (1878) | 6. Chuck Klein (1933) |
| 2. Tip O'Neill (1887) | 7. Joe Medwick (1937) |
| 3. Nap Lajoie (1901) | 8. Ted Williams (1947) |
| 4. Rogers Hornsby (1922) | 9. Frank Robinson (1966) |
| 5. Jimmie Foxx (1933) | 10. Carl Yastrzemski (1967) |

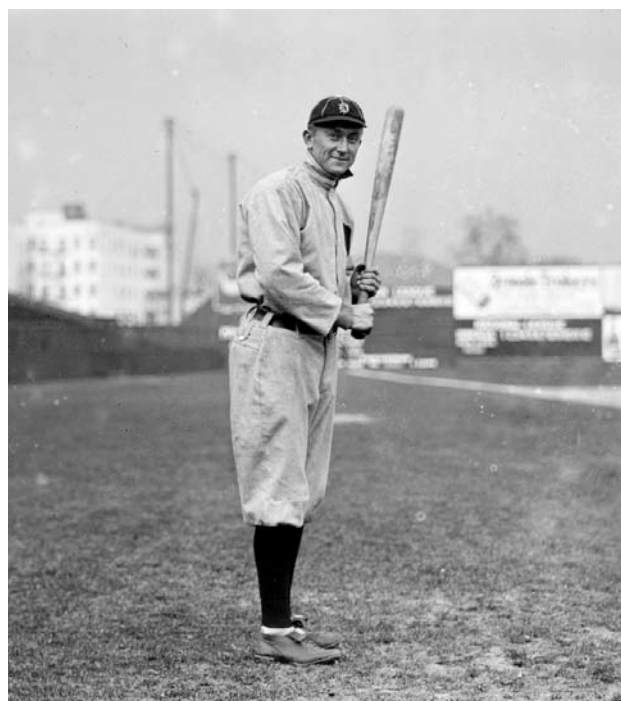
C. Players who narrowly missed winning the Triple Crown¹

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. John Reilly (1884) | 7. Rogers Hornsby (1921 and 1924) |
| 2. Hugh Duffy (1894) | 8. Babe Ruth (1923, 1924, and 1926) |
| 3. Cy Seymour (1905) | 9. Jimmie Foxx (1932 and 1938) |
| 4. Ty Cobb (1907 and 1911) | 10. Ted Williams (1949) |
| 5. Honus Wagner (1908) | 11. Al Rosen (1953) |
| 6. Gavvy Cravath (1913) | |

1. First in two events and second in one event.

The answer to the second question is found partly in the nature of our times. This is an age of specialization, and baseball is no different from other activities. Baseball players emphasize either the home run or the batting average, but not both. Power hitting has become the name of the game. Twenty-six of the 50 all-time leaders in career home run percentage (with 1,000 or more games) are playing or played during the current Live Ball Enhanced Era, and eight of them ranked in the top 13 (Barry Bonds, Jim Thome, Adam Dunn, Alex Rodriguez, Albert Pujols, Sammy Sosa, Juan Gonzalez, and Manny Ramirez). Only 4 of the 50 all-time leaders in batting average (with 1,000 or more games) are playing in the current Live Ball Enhanced era (Albert Pujols, Ichiro Suzuki, Todd Helton, and Vladimir Guerrero), and none of them ranks in the top 10. Albert Pujols and Vladimir Guerrero are the only players active in the current Live Ball Enhanced Era who rank in the top 50 in both home run percentage and batting average.

Perhaps the biggest factor working against winning the Triple Crown is the expansion over a number of seasons from 8 to 14 teams in the American League and from 8 to 16 teams in the National League. The more competition there is, the more difficult it is for one player to lead the league in all three events, but it



BAIN COLLECTION/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Ty Cobb was the youngest player to win the Triple Crown, a few months shy of his 23rd birthday.

does not make it impossible. Frank Robinson and Carl Yastrzemski won the Triple Crown in a 10-team American League. Larry Walker (1997) and Barry Bonds (2002) narrowly missed leading the National League (with 14 teams in 1997 and 16 teams in 2002) in batting average and home runs, the most difficult of the Triple Crown events to win simultaneously, and almost as difficult as winning the Triple Crown itself. Possibly the most hopeful observation of all is that five Triple Crown winners led both leagues (16 teams at that time) in all three events.

Table 3 lists the players who have won the so-called "Double Crown" of baseball that is, players who have won two legs of the Triple Crown but not the third leg. The Double Crown has been won 123 times: 92 in home runs and runs batted in, 25 in runs batted in and batting average, but only 6 times in batting average and home runs. Thus, the most difficult Double Crown combination is batting average and home runs. In the 134 National League and 109 American League seasons, a player has led his league in batting average and home runs only 19 times (14 Triple Crowns and 5 Double Crowns), for an average of once every 16.8 years in the National League and once every 9.9 years in the American League. One Triple Crown was won by an American Association player (Tip O'Neill), and one Double Crown was won by a Union Association player (Fred Dunlap). Both of these leagues were regarded as major leagues at that time.

Table 3. The “Double Crown” of Baseball**A. Batting average and home runs**

| | | | |
|------|------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1884 | Fred Dunlap | St. Louis Maroons | Union Assoc. |
| 1894 | Hugh Duffy | Boston Braves | National |
| 1912 | Heinie Zimmerman | Chicago Cubs | National |
| 1924 | Babe Ruth | New York Yankees | American |
| 1939 | Johnny Mize | St. Louis Cardinals | National |
| 1941 | Ted Williams | Boston Red Sox | American |

B. Batting average and runs batted in¹

| | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| 1881 & 1888 | Cap Anson | Chicago White Stockings | National |
| 1883 & 1892 | Dan Brouthers | Buffalo Bisons & Brooklyn Dodgers | National |
| 1907, 1908 & 1911 | Ty Cobb | Detroit Tigers | American |
| 1908 & 1909 | Honus Wagner | Pittsburgh Pirates | National |
| 1920 & 1921 | Rogers Hornsby | St. Louis Cardinals | National |

C. Home runs and runs batted in²

| | | | |
|---------|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 6 times | Babe Ruth | New York Yankees | American |
| 4 times | Mike Schmidt | Philadelphia Phillies | National |
| 3 times | Hank Greenberg | Detroit Tigers | American |
| 3 times | Hank Aaron | Milwaukee Brewers & Atlanta Braves | National |

1. Fourteen players led their league in batting average and runs batted in once each: Deacon White, Sam Thompson, Ed Delahanty, Nap Lajoie, Cy Seymour, Sherry Magee, Paul Waner, Jimmie Foxx, Stan Musial, Tommy Davis, Joe Torre, Al Oliver, Todd Helton, and Matt Holliday.

2. Fourteen other players led their league in home runs and runs batted in twice each: Ed Delahanty, Harry Davis, Home Run Baker, Gavvy Cravath, Bill Nicholson, Johnny Mize, Willie McCovey, Harmon Killebrew, Johnny Bench, George Foster, Jim Rice, Cecil Fielder, Alex Rodriguez, and Ryan Howard; 49 players did it once each.

The players who have won the Triple Crown and those who have won or have come close to winning the Double Crown in batting average and home runs are listed in table 4. Ted Williams was the only player in the entire history of major league baseball to lead his league in batting average and home runs 3 times (two Triple Crowns and one Double Crown), and he narrowly missed two other times in 1949 (when he missed a third Triple Crown because he lost the batting title to George Kell .3428 to .3429) and in 1957. Rogers Hornsby led his league in batting average and home runs twice (by virtue of his two Triple Crowns), and 15 other players did it once. It hasn't been done in the National League since 1939 (Johnny Mize) and in the American League since 1967 (Carl Yastrzemski).

It is interesting to look at the winners of the Triple Crown in relation to the positions they played. The

position that has produced the most Triple Crowns is left field (five): Ted Williams (two), Joe Medwick, Tip O'Neill, and Carl Yastrzemski. Three center fielders (Ty Cobb, Paul Hines, and Mickey Mantle) and two right fielders (Chuck Klein and Frank Robinson) also won the Triple Crown. The infield has produced five Triple Crowns: Rogers Hornsby (two) and Nap Lajoie at second base, and Jimmie Foxx and Lou Gehrig at first base. No shortstop, third baseman, or catcher has ever won a Triple Crown.

It is also interesting to look at the teams that the winners of the Triple Crown played for. The St. Louis Cardinals had the most Triple Crown winners (Rogers Hornsby twice, Tip O'Neill, and Joe Medwick). The Boston Red Sox were second (Ted Williams twice and Carl Yastrzemski). The Philadelphia Athletics had two (Nap Lajoie and Jimmie Foxx), as did the New York Yankees (Lou Gehrig and Mickey Mantle). Four other teams had one each, the Philadelphia Phillies, the Detroit Tigers, the Baltimore Orioles, and the Providence Grays.

All except three Triple Crown winners were elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. Fred Dunlap, Paul Hines, and Tip O'Neill played when the home run was rare and therefore not recognized as a major statistic. Paul Hines and Ty Cobb won the Triple Crown with only four and nine home runs, respectively. Only later when the home run became more common and therefore extolled was the Triple Crown recognized as a prize, whereupon Dunlap, Hines, and O'Neill became retroactive winners of the Triple Crown. The fact that John Reilly (a near Triple Crown winner) and O'Neill played most of their careers in the American Association may have been another factor in their being passed over for the Hall of Fame.

The probability of someone winning the Triple Crown in the near future is not great. Among active players, only six have even won a Double Crown: Todd Helton (2000), Alex Rodriguez (2002 and 2007), Andruw Jones (2005), Ryan Howard (2006 and 2008), David Ortiz (2006), and Matt Holliday (2007) and none of them combined batting average and home runs or led the league in home runs and ranked as high as third in batting average. Someone will win the Triple Crown again sometime. An exceptional player will have an exceptional season, or less emphasis may come to be placed on strength and more on a balance of strength and skill. The talented player who combines strength, skill, and timeliness stands a much better chance for genuine baseball immortality than the one-dimensional power hitter who concentrates solely on hitting home runs.

Table 4. Batting Average and Home Runs—A Jewel in Itself

| Player | Triple Crown | Double Crown (HR&AVG) | Almost a Double Crown (HR&AVG) ¹ | Total |
|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---|-------|
| Ted Williams | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| Rogers Hornsby | 2 | — | 2 | 4 |
| Jimmie Foxx | 1 | — | 3 | 4 |
| Babe Ruth | — | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Ty Cobb | 1 | — | 2 | 3 |
| John Reilly | — | — | 2 | 2 |
| Lou Gehrig | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Paul Hines | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Chuck Klein | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Nap Lajoie | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Mickey Mantle | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Joe Medwick | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Tip O'Neill | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Frank Robinson | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Carl Yastrzemski | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Hugh Duffy | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| Fred Dunlap | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| Johnny Mize | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| Heinie Zimmerman | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| Other players | — | — | 17 ² | |

1. First in one and second in the other event.

2. Barry Bonds, Dan Brouthers, Pete Browning, Gavvy Cravath, Sam Crawford, George Hall, Tommy Holmes, Derek Lee, Fred Lynn, Willie Mays, Alex Rodriguez, Al Rosen, Jimmy Ryan, Cy Seymour, George Sisler, Honus Wagner, and Larry Walker.

The Triple Crown performances of the past were truly remarkable. Let's hope that we will witness such performances in the future. Be on the lookout for the player who has the potential for leading his league in both batting average and home runs. A player with the ability to combine hitting for accuracy with hitting for power will inevitably have a lot of runs batted in. Maybe the dream of a Triple Crown winner is not an impossible one after all.

In the meantime, each major league should give an annual Strength, Skill, and Timeliness (SST) Award. Only players ranking in the top five in batting average, home runs, and runs batted in or players ranking first in two of those events would qualify. For each of the three events, the league leader would get five points, the runners-up would get four points, and so on through the top five. The player with the most total points would win the SST Award. If this award had

been in effect the past five years, Albert Pujols would have won the award three times and Matt Holliday and Ryan Howard once each (2007 and 2008, respectively) in the National League. Alex Rodriguez would have won the award twice and David Ortiz and Mark Teixeira once each (2006 and 2009, respectively) in the American League. No American League player would have qualified in 2008.

We live in an age of specialization. In the baseball world, batters try to concentrate on getting hits or hitting home runs. Players who do both are rare, and those who do both with runners on base are even rarer. Being able to do more than one of these things is a great talent. Any team would like to have such a player in its batting order. Giving an annual SST Award would be a great way to recognize players who come closest to the Triple Crown ideal. ■

The Most Famous Woman in Baseball: Effa Manley and the Negro Leagues by Bob Luke

Reviewed by Mike Cook

The Most Famous Woman in Baseball: Effa Manley and the Negro Leagues

by Bob Luke

Publisher: Potomac Books Inc. (2011)

256 pages

Business woman. Community leader. Socialite. Baseball executive *par excellence*. Keeper of the Negro Leagues' flame. Hall of Famer. Throughout her lifetime Effa Manley wore all these hats and more, but none more proudly than that of her beloved Newark Eagles, the Negro National League franchise that she and husband Abe Manley owned and operated from 1934 until 1948. *The Most Famous Woman in Baseball*, Bob Luke's excellent new biography of her, shows us how Effa left her indelible mark on the Eagles, the community of Newark, and the game of baseball.

Effa was born to Bertha Ford Brooks, a married seamstress of mixed Native American and European heritage. Her biological father was Mrs. Brooks' employer, a white stockbroker. Following this extra-marital union, Brooks and her first husband divorced, and she soon remarried an African-American man. Effa was thus raised in an African-American family alongside five black step-siblings. Early in her life she identified as white, sometimes using it to her advantage to gain employment in shops that didn't hire African-Americans. That said, she was still thoroughly a member of the black community in her social and family life, and would later become active in racial causes in the city of Newark.

Abe Manley, Effa's future husband, hailed from Hertford, North Carolina. As a young man he made his way up the Eastern seaboard working a variety of jobs before settling in Camden, New Jersey, where he began making serious money running numbers. He became treasurer of the Rest-A-Way Club, Camden's all-purpose social club for the city's Negro elite, an establishment with an \$8,000 piano and poker pots worth twice that much. In 1932 a bombing of the club led Abe to relocate to Harlem where he began courting Effa. In the summer of 1933 they were married, Abe lavishing his new bride with a five-carat ring, mink coats, and other luxuries.

Both Abe and Effa grew up loving baseball, and Abe had briefly owned a ball-club, the Camden Leafs, for part of the 1929 season. With his large bankroll and an enthusiastic business partner in Effa, Abe applied for and won a franchise in the Negro National League in late 1934. He and Effa became owners of the

NNL's Brooklyn Eagles, but before getting to work building the team, they turned their attention to league matters at the owners' meeting of January 1935.

Bob Luke describes in detail the pressing financial and organizational issues that faced the owners: adopting a constitution, preventing players from breaking their contracts for better offers overseas, protecting umpires from abuse, and establishing a central league office. As would become a theme of NNL owners' meetings though the years, the proceedings were acrimonious and not always productive. The strong-headed Effa frequently found herself at odds with fellow owners like Cum Posey of the Homestead Grays and Tom Wilson of the Baltimore Elite Giants, particularly with regard to the the appointment of an impartial, outside party as commissioner.

Effa and Abe worked out distinct roles in managing the Eagles, their division of labor reflecting their personalities. Effa, the more vociferous partner, handled much of the player negotiations and was the primary public face of the team. Abe was quieter, more reserved, and concerned himself with player evaluation and trades. As the financier behind the operation, Abe also exerted more influence over big-picture financial decisions, like departing the crowded New York City baseball market for neighboring Newark, New Jersey following the 1935 season. Abe bought the Newark Dodgers and combined their roster with that of his Brooklyn Eagles. They were christened the Newark





Effa surveys her Newark Eagles during a game at Ruppert Stadium.

Eagles, and in the spring of 1936 they began play at Newark's lighted Ruppert Stadium.

Luke explores every aspect of Effa's role with the team, including her romantic involvement with several Eagles players. Although she loved Abe, and remained married to him until his death in 1952, that didn't stop her from having relationships with ballplayers. Terrie McDuffie, a young hurler with a wide array of pitches, was one of Effa's lovers, and Luke notes that "she ordered [Eagles' manager George] Giles to start McDuffie for games when she wanted to show him off to her lady friends." (p. 14) About a decade later, when trying to recruit Monte Irvin to return for the 1946 season, Effa met him at home wearing just a negligee and invited him in, saying, "Abe won't be back until tomorrow." (p. 123) To his credit, Luke doesn't sensationalize this aspect of Effa, and makes note of other times when she showed concern for players in completely non-romantic ways. She helped former Negro Leaguers like George Crowe break into Major League Baseball, served as godmother to Larry Doby's first child, and helped other former players land jobs or make down payments on a first home.

As busy as Effa was with the Eagles, she was passionate about social issues, the nascent civil rights movement, and supporting the war effort. While living in New York in the early 1930s, she led boycotts of Harlem businesses which served mostly black customers without employing any African-American employees. In Newark, Effa continued to push for reform of Jim Crow segregation, while also creating a haven for African-Americans at the ballpark. As she

wrote in a letter to sportswriter Wendell Smith, "The important thing is large crowds of Negroes have somewhere to go for healthy entertainment." (p. 126).

Luke paints Effa as a reformer in all areas of her life. She was someone who saw possibility and then set out to achieve it, whether that meant creating better professional opportunities for blacks in Newark, ensuring that the Negro National League operated in a more transparent manner, or creating a better performing and more profitable ballclub within the confines of Ruppert Stadium. In the offseason of 1945-46, after years of playing second fiddle to the Homestead Grays, Abe and Effa redoubled their efforts to bring a championship to Newark.

The '46 season began auspiciously with an opening day no-hitter from Leon Day, who was making his first start after three years in the Army. The war years had been hard on the Eagles' line-up, as they lost about a dozen players to the draft, but at the gate it was a different story, with the war-time economic boom producing healthy attendance figures. Effa knew the team would be poised for a pennant run, with its coffers well stocked from the last few years and its roster augmented by returning stars like Day. Sure enough, the Eagles took the NNL by storm, capturing the first-half pennant, and after a brief June swoon, rebounding to take the second-half crown as well. Monte Irvin paced the club with a .389 average, and they advanced to face the Kansas City Monarchs, champions of the Negro American League, in the World Series.

The series went the distance and was contested in not two but four different ballparks: Ruppert Stadium for games two, six, and seven, the Polo Grounds for game one, Kansas City's Blues Stadium for games three and four, and Chicago's Comiskey Park for game five. The Eagles emerged victorious in the seventh game, helped by home-field advantage but also by the absence of Monarchs' stars Satchel Paige and Hilton Smith, who had left the team before game seven to join a barnstorming tour. Abe and Effa rewarded their championship ballclub with diamond rings and a new \$15,000 luxury bus. Meanwhile, the Satchel Paige All-Stars held their own against the Bob Feller All-Stars (a team made of MLB's best), a surprising achievement since Paige's team lacked such stars as Jackie Robinson, Roy Campanella, Irvin, and Doby. To open-minded baseball observers, it was becoming abundantly clear that the stars of Negro ball could hold their own against major league competition.

Effa achieved another goal during the following offseason, when a non-owner commissioner, the Rev. John H. Johnson, was finally appointed to oversee the

Negro Leagues. He drafted a new constitution that limited World Series venues to the two cities competing, included more protections for players and umpires, and re-affirmed a five-year ban on players who jumped their contracts to play abroad. But just as the Negro Leagues were becoming better organized, the foundation of the league, its most talented players, was starting to slip away. First went Jackie Robinson to Branch Rickey's Brooklyn Dodgers. Then an Eagles' star, Larry Doby, followed suit by signing with Bill Veeck's Cleveland Indians. While Veeck compensated the Eagles to the tune of \$15,000 (a figure Effa negotiated), many other Negro League stars would be signed away to the majors without their old clubs getting any compensation. In any case, money couldn't buy players of the same skill level or cachet as those departing to MLB. As Luke keenly observes, these were times of mixed emotion for Effa and others who loved Negro League baseball and made it their life's work. While it was rewarding to see black players finally integrate, and thrive in, the major leagues, it was equally painful to witness the decline of the Negro Leagues.

It all happened relatively quickly. Following the 1948 season, Effa and Abe's Eagles, along with the Grays and the New York Black Yankees, opted to disband. They sold the team for the paltry sum of \$15,000 (the same amount Abe had ponied up for the team's new bus just two years earlier), and the new owner relocated the club to Houston. Without the Eagles in her life, Effa stepped up her involvement in the local Newark NAACP chapter, becoming its treasurer. Baseball was still at her core though, and she remained as outspoken as ever. Effa condemned the way major league teams had raided the Negro Leagues of their top talent and did what she could to keep the collective memory of Negro baseball alive. As journalist Wendell Smith, her sometimes adversary, noted, she was "trying to fight off the inevitable and cling to the great days." (p. 151)

Unfortunately for Effa, while integration came to MLB's clubhouses in 1947, it would be decades before African-Americans had any real positions of influence within its executive halls. Some great baseball minds, like Effa and Abe, or John and Billie Harden of the Atlanta Black Crackers, were left on the outside looking in, with no role available to them in organized

Enshrined in 2006, Effa Manley is the first female inductee in the National Baseball Hall of Fame.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

baseball. In 2001, the Baseball Hall of Fame formed a special committee of Negro Leagues scholars to examine the records of former players and the contributions of influential owners. Effa Manley was among the select group of past executives chosen for induction. In 2006, twenty-five years after her passing, she was enshrined in Cooperstown, the Hall's first female inductee.

Bob Luke's research was comprehensive, using interviews and Effa's correspondence to paint a complete picture of this complex woman. His portrayal of Effa is thorough but fair, casting light on issues like her marital infidelity without glamorizing or overstating them. He handles her complicated racial identity well, showing how Effa's sense of self and her race consciousness evolved. As far as criticisms go, the proofreading by Potomac Books left some room for improvement; there were more typos than I expected in a hardbound edition from a major publisher. In terms of organization, the book dragged a bit in the middle chapters, as each recapped a season with an approach that became a bit repetitive: winter owner's meeting, contract negotiations, opening day, the story of the season. That said, the chronological approach probably makes the most sense, and revisiting certain topics year after year serves to emphasize some of the major challenges Effa faced. Overall, this is a comprehensive biography of a fascinating figure in baseball history. And like the best historical baseball writing, it teaches us as much about America, in the time and place that Effa lived, as it does about the subject. Effa Manley, and this excellent biography by Bob Luke, won't soon be forgotten. ■

Contributors

STEVE AMES, EdD., taught college and university journalism and advised student publications for 38 years—including at Merced College, Pepperdine University and California Lutheran University. His BA degree in journalism and MS in mass communication are from San Jose State University; his doctor in education is from Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He has 15 years experience as a newspaper reporter and magazine writer. Ames's love for baseball began with his first trip with his dad to see the Oakland Oaks play in 1948. His SABR interests include the minor leagues and baseball parks.

FRANK ARDOLINO is a professor of English at the University of Hawaii where he teaches courses in Shakespeare and modern drama. He has published articles on sports films and literature, Hawaiian baseball history, and the Brooklyn Dodgers, especially Jackie Robinson.

JON BRUSCHKE is a professor at baseball powerhouse CSU Fullerton and is the webmaster for the DebateResults.com and asfbl.com websites. He appeared in the Emmy-nominated documentary *Resolved*. His first contribution to the *Baseball Research Journal* came in 2007, and he has an ongoing interest in measuring the impact of fielding on game results.

Milwaukee native **BOB BUEGE** was born the day before Bob Feller no-hit the New York Yankees. Bob (Buege, not Feller) has attended every SABR Convention since 1990. He is the author of *The Milwaukee Braves: A Baseball Eulogy* (1988) and *Eddie Mathews and the National Pastime* (1994). He is currently writing a history of Borchert Field, Milwaukee's minor-league ballpark from 1888–1952.

ROD CABORN and DAVE LARSON both live in the Orlando area and are co-chairmen of the Auker-Seminick chapter in Central Florida. Larson had an article on the 1906 White Sox in the 2001 issue of the *Baseball Research Journal* and authored the Fielder Jones biography on the SABR BioProject website.

MIKE COOK is a member of the SABR Boston Chapter and is currently serving as a SABR Digital Publications Intern. He has helped produce two titles in SABR's Digital Library: *Run, Rabbit, Run* and *Great Hitting Pitchers* (to which he also contributed a new chapter). Mike is a former schoolteacher and professional poker player who aspires to work in baseball operations. Visit his blog at: <http://cook-sportsresearch.wordpress.com/>

ROBERT K. FITTS graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and received a PhD from Brown University. Originally trained as an archaeologist of colonial America, Fitts left that field to focus on his passion, Japanese baseball. He founded the SABR Asian Baseball Research Committee. He is also the author of *Remembering Japanese Baseball: An Oral History of the Game* (winner of the 2005 SABR/TSN Award for Best Baseball Research), *Wally Yonamine: The Man Who Changed Japanese Baseball*, and *Banzai Babe Ruth: Baseball, Espionage & Assassination during the 1934 Tour of Japan*.

SOL GITTLEMAN is the Alice and Nathan Gantcher University Professor at Tufts University, where he has taught for forty-eight years. For the past five years, he has taught a seminar in the History Department called *America and the National Pastime*. He joined SABR in 1986 and published his first article in 1992. That article led to a book in 2007, *Reynolds, Raschi and Lopat: New York's "Big Three" and the Great Yankee Dynasty of 1949–1953*.

ERNEST J. GREEN is a former Chair of SABR's Minor League Committee, and is author of the baseball travel book, *The Diamonds of Dixie*. Other contributions to the *Baseball Research Journal* include "Minor League Big Guns," a comparison of career minor league top home run hitters. He lives near Washington, DC, within easy driving distance of five minor league baseball teams.

NORM KING lives in Ottawa, Ontario and has been a SABR member since 2010. His interests focus on baseball history from the Black Sox scandal onwards. He is retiring in November 2012 and plans to finally put his BA in history to good use; he'll devote more time to conducting baseball research, particularly on players and events in the history of the Montreal Expos. He still misses them dearly.

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.

CHRISTOPH KREINBUCHER is a sport psychologist currently working at the Technische Universität in Munich, Germany. He studied psychology in Graz, Austria and spent some time in Amsterdam, Netherlands where he conducted the experiment presented in this journal. In his PhD thesis, he specializes on neuronal correlates of judgment and decision making. Next to his research work, he works as both a sport psychological consultant with athletes from various sports and as a professional tennis umpire.

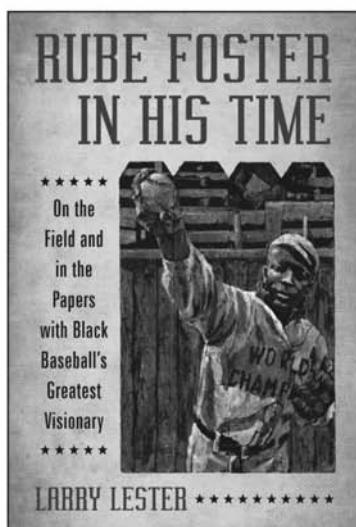
JENNIFER RING is Professor of Political Science at the University of Nevada, Reno. She has published widely on the exclusion of girls and women from the national pastime, including *Stolen Bases: Why American Girls Don't Play Baseball* (2009, University of Illinois Press). She is currently writing *The Shut Out: American Women and the National Pastime*, (to be published by the University of Nebraska Press), a book of interviews and oral histories of players and coaches involved with the USA Baseball Women's National Team. Ring has received a SABR-Yoseloff Baseball Research Grant, and grants from the American Women's Baseball Federation and the University of Nevada College of Liberal Arts.

Fifteen years ago, **ED ROSE** purchased a bargain book in High Point, North Carolina that revealed a clue that his beloved, tiny hometown of Kane, Pennsylvania had once hosted a professional baseball club named the Kane Mountaineers. Since then he has spent many weekends unlocking the long lost story. A career newspaperman, Ed is the operations director for the Southern Oregon Media Group based in the Southern Oregon Riviera, where he lives with his wife, Cheryl, and children, Ella and John. A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, he now spends his weekends writing his first novel, a baseball fantasy/homage called *Hidden Vigorish*.

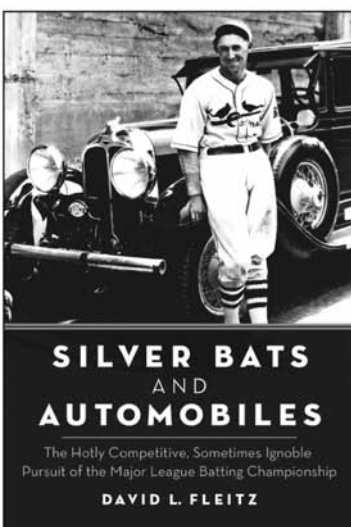
WILLIAM SPANIEL is a PhD student in political science at the University of Rochester, author of the best-selling game theory textbook *Game Theory 101: The Basics*, and creator of gametheory101.com. You can contact him at williamspaniel@gmail.com.

FREDERICK E. TAYLOR worked for the departments of Commerce and Defense and was a professor at several universities. His interest in baseball began in the 1930s when he saw his first major league game in which Lefty Grove and Jimmie Foxx played for Boston and Connie Mack managed Philadelphia. Dr. Taylor is the author of *The Runmakers: A New Way to Rate Baseball Players*, from which his article in this *Baseball Research Journal* is excerpted, courtesy of The Johns Hopkins University Press. His email address is: ruthfredtaylor@verizon.net.

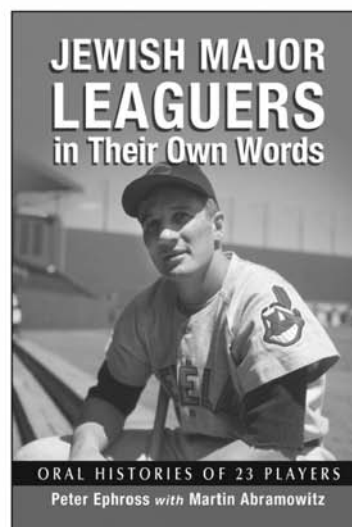
DAVID VINCENT is the official custodian of SABR's Home Run Log, a database which contains every big league home run hit since 1871, and is recognized as the preeminent authority on the history of the home run.



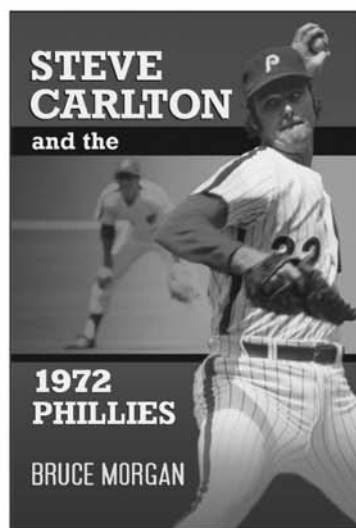
Larry Lester
 \$40 softcover
 Ca. 65 photos, appendices,
 notes, index
 978-0-7864-3927-0



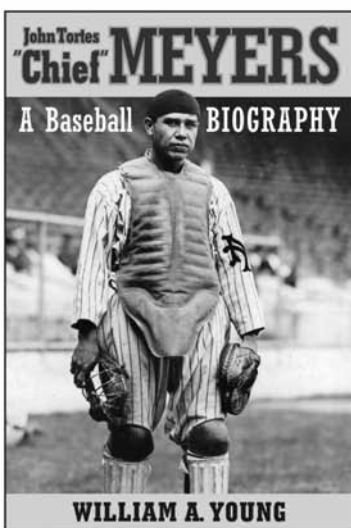
David L. Fleitz
 \$29.95 softcover
 27 photos, notes,
 bibliography, index
 978-0-7864-5879-0
 ebook 978-0-7864-8684-7



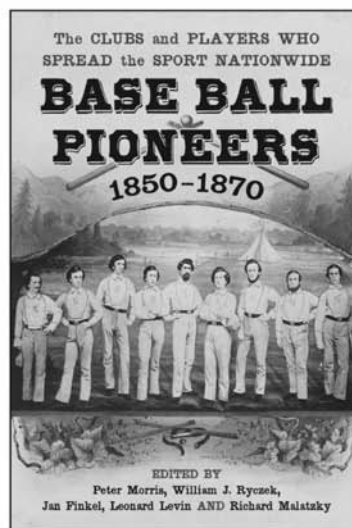
**Peter Ephross
 with Martin Abramowitz**
 \$35 softcover
 23 photos, appendix, index
 978-0-7864-6507-1
 ebook 978-0-7864-8966-4



Bruce Morgan
 \$29.95 softcover
 Ca. 15 photos, notes,
 bibliography, index
 978-0-7864-6836-2
 ebook 978-0-7864-8983-1



William A. Young
 \$29.95 softcover
 Photos, notes, bibliography, index
 978-0-7864-6801-0
 ebook 978-0-7864-9133-9



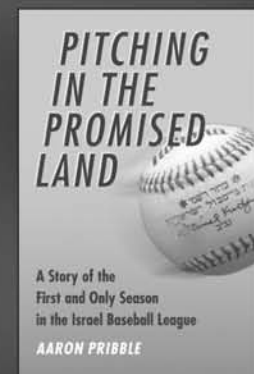
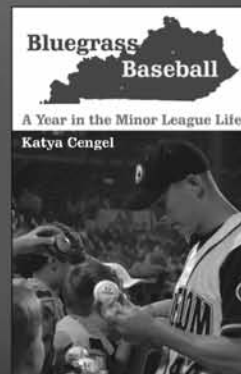
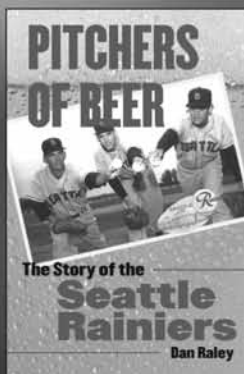
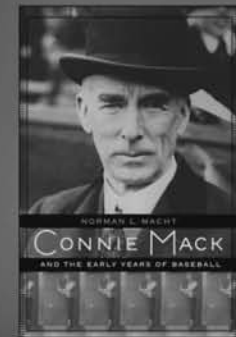
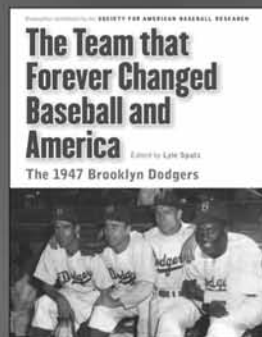
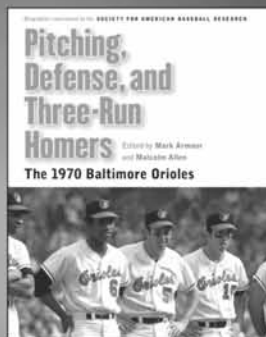
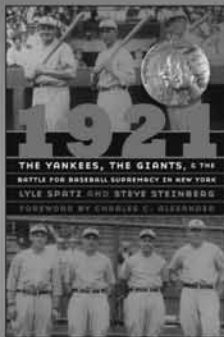
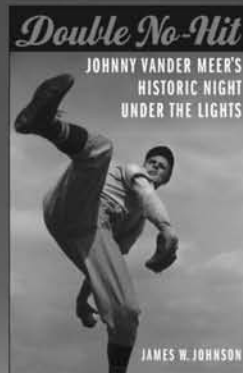
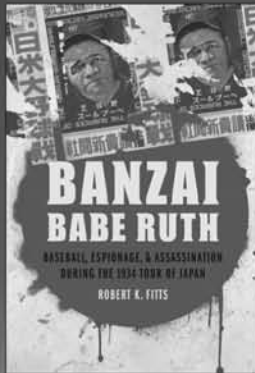
**edited by Peter Morris,
 William J. Ryczek, Jan
 Finkel, Leonard Levin
 and Richard Malatzky**
 \$49.95 softcover
 Photos, notes, bibliography, index
 978-0-7864-6843-0
 ebook 978-0-7864-9001-1



To order call 800-253-2187 • www.mcfarlandpub.com

A Winning Lineup

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS



Available at fine bookstores or
www.nebraskapress.unl.edu

Order toll free:
800-848-6224



UNIVERSITY OF
NEBRASKA PRESS

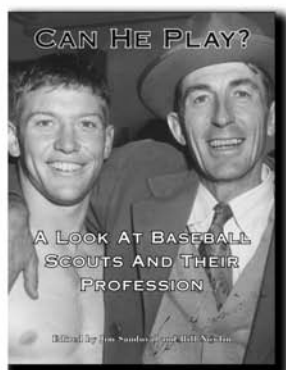
publishers of
Bison Books



The SABR Digital Library

The Society for American Baseball Research, the top baseball research organization in the world, disseminates some of the best in baseball history, analysis, and biography through our publishing programs. The SABR Digital Library contains a mix of books old and new, and focuses on a tandem program of paperback and ebook publication, making these materials widely available for both as traditional printed books and for digital devices.

Are you a SABR member? SABR members may purchase the printed books at a drastically reduced price, typically 50% or more off the cover price, and download the ebook editions *free* upon first release and then at a discount in the future.



CAN HE PLAY?

A LOOK AT BASEBALL SCOUTS
AND THEIR PROFESSION

EDITED BY JIM SANDOVAL
AND BILL NOWLIN

\$19.95 PAPERBACK

\$9.99 EBOOK

978-1-933599-23-6 PAPER

978-1-933599-25-0 EBOOK

200 PAGES, 8.5"X11", 100 PHOTOS

Can He Play? collects the works of some 26 SABR members on scouts, including biographies and historical essays. The book touches on more than a century of scouts and scouting with a focus on the men (and the occasional woman) who have taken on the task of scouring the world for the best ballplayers available. We meet the "King of Weeds," a Ph.D. we call "Baseball's Renaissance Man," a husband-and-wife team, pioneering Latin scouts, and a Japanese-American interned during World War II who became a successful scout—and many more.



RUN RABBIT, RUN

THE HILARIOUS AND MOSTLY
TRUE TALES OF RABBIT
MARANVILLE

BY WALTER J. "RABBIT" MARANVILLE

\$9.95 PAPERBACK

\$5.99 EBOOK

978-1-933599-26-7 PAPER

978-1-933599-27-4 EBOOK

100 PAGES, 5.5"X8.5", 15 PHOTOS

Few fans alive today have had the privilege of sitting down for a few beers with the Rabbit and listening to him spin his tales. But a year before his death in 1954, Rabbit reached back forty years into his memory and put his stories down on paper. The book also includes an introduction by the late baseball scholar Harold Seymour and historian Bob Carroll wraps up the book with a historical account of Maranville's life and Hall-of-Fame career.

COMING SOON:

Coming up in 2012 in the SABR Digital Library, look for re-releases of SABR books like *Great Hitting Pitchers* and *19th Century Stars*.

Brand new books are also forthcoming, like *The Boston Red Sox in the Days of Ike and Elvis*, which will include biographies of every Red Sox player from the 1950s, and our long-awaited history of baseball broadcasters: *Calling the Game* by Stuart Shea.

Each book will be available in a trade paperback edition as well as in digital form (PDF, epub, or mobi formats) suitable for reading on a home computer or e-reading device like Nook, Kindle, or iPad/tablet.

nook[®]
by Barnes & Noble

amazonkindle

