

The Right Call

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Wanted: Hall of Fame Umpire Bios

MLB Umpires can really get down

- Total squats by all 2011 home plate umpires was 718,437
- Average squats by full-time MLB umpires, 9,313.
- 2012 squats leaders: Joe West (10,914); Jeff Nelson (10,584); Dale Scott (10,577)
- 2011 squats leader was Bob Davidson (11,064).

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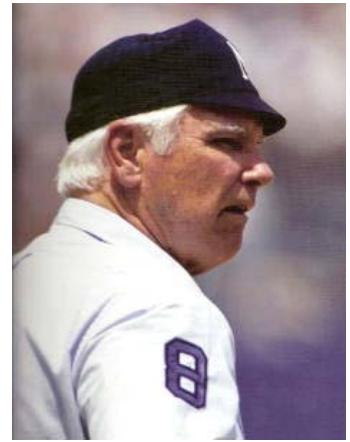
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Recently an author contacted me as the committee chairman. He is working on a book about Doug Harvey who was enshrined in the Hall of Fame in 2010. The author asked me to compare Harvey with Bill Klem who is widely regarded as the greatest umpire ever. In preparation for the interview, I went straight to our own SABR Bioproject site. There I found an outstanding bio on Klem by Dave Anderson, but nothing on Harvey. In fact, of the nine major league umpires in the Hall of Fame, only three have Bioproject profiles. Al Barlick, Billy Evans and Klem. Furthermore, if you search the site you will find that there are only 34 bios included of the more than 300 um-

pires that have called 'em as they see 'em in the big leagues.

The right call here is for the Umpires and Rules Committee members to pick up the slack and start working on umpire bios to fill in the cavernous gap.

The obvious place to start is with the missing hall of famers; Nestor Chylak, Jocko Conlan, Tom Connolly, Doug Harvey, Cal Hubbard and Bill McGowan. Please contact me if you have an interest in researching and writing a bio on any of these men in blue. I'll be happy to coordinate and work with the fine editors at Bioproject to help give these arbiters their due. Of course there is no reason to stop there. A look



Doug Harvey , HOF 2010

at retired umpire numbers provides three more interesting Bioproject candidates. In addition to Klem, Barlick and Conlan, Major League Baseball has retired the uniform numbers of Nick Bremigan, Bill Kunkel and Lou DiMuro.

—Rodney Johnson

Umpire Milestones

Committee member Todd Bolton passed along some interesting milestones reached by MLB umpires this year;

- April 8: Gary Darling 3,000 game.
- April 21: Brian Runge called Phil

Humber's perfect game.

- May 2: Tim McClelland 4,000 game.
- May 2: Mark Carlson called Jared Weaver's no-hitter.

Honorable Mention: April 27: Home plate umpire and criminal justice major Jeff Kellogg grew impatient with Baltimore PD and tackled a fan who ran onto the field during the Orioles-A's game at Camden Yards.

Remembering Bill Shannon, Dean of Official Scorers

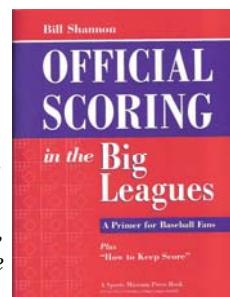
On October 26, 2010, Bill Shannon, the dean of MLB official scorers was killed in a house fire in West Caldwell, New Jersey. Shannon's 92-year old mother was rescued through the front door by neighbors, but Shannon was trapped on the second floor and did not survive.

Shannon was an official scorer for both Mets and Yankees games. He started scoring Yankee games in 1979 and Mets games a year later. He was considered by some to be the best of all official scorers. Shannon wrote a 48 page booklet on the

profession which included may suggestions and observations. Some of the best advice he offers for scorers is to pursue their primary responsibility of getting the call right:

"A scorer shouldn't allow stubbornness to permit a bad call to stand. If a reasonable request for a review is made, it should always be granted. Clearly it is always best to make the right call the first time, but don't be afraid to make a correction if it is warranted."

Bill worked on four World



Bill Shannon provided advice and instruction to official scorers.

Series scoring crews and scored four no-hitters including David Cone's perfect game in 1999. He was also in the scorer's chair for Tom Seaver's 300th win in 1985.

Shannon was the first scorer to work both the ALCS and NLCS in the same season

A sportswriter and reporter since the 1950s, Shannon was a member of the Baseball Writers Association of America (B.B.W.A.).

Shannon's last scoring assignment came in game 5 of the ALCS. he was 69 years old..

In Memoriam: Umpires Wendelstedt and Springstead

This year baseball has lost two giants of their profession. Marty Springstead, a American League umpire for 20 years passed away on January 17 at the age of 74. Springsted called 'em in the big leagues from 1966-85. He worked in three World Series, four ALCS and three All-Star games. After completing his on-field career, Marty served as the A.L.'s Executive Director of Umpires from 1986-2000 and as an

Umpire Supervisor for MLB from 2000-2010.

On March 9 Harry Wendelstedt passed away in Daytona Beach, Florida after a battle with brain cancer. A National League Umpire for 33 years, Wendlestedt worked in five World Series , seven NLCS and four All-Star games. Only five umpires have worked more MLB games than the 4,500 that Harry worked between 1966-98. In 1968

Harry was behind the plate for Gaylord Perry's no-hitter against the Cardinals, and then at third base the next day as Ray Washburn no-hit the Giants.

He groomed hundreds of umpires at the Harry Wendelstedt Umpire School in Ormand Beach, Florida. His son Hunter has been an MLB umpire since 1998. Wendelstedt was 73.

Help Needed For Committee Meeting At SABR 42

Minneapolis will be the host for SABR's 42nd annual convention on June 27–July 1. The Umpires and Rules Committee has meeting time scheduled for Saturday, June 30 from 3:00-4:00 in the Elks Room. Unfortunately it is unlikely that committee chair



SABR 42 is in Minneapolis on June 27-July 1.

Rodney Johnson will be able to attend the convention due to other commitments. If there is a committee member who is attending the convention and is willing to lead the meeting, please contact Rodney Johnson

sabrrodney@aol.com. A meeting agenda and materials will be provided.

Check the convention schedule for a official scorers panel that includes MLB scorers Stew Thornley, David Vincent and Gregg Wong.

2012 MLB Umpire Crews

Crew A:

22 Joe West (34)
 34 Sam Holbrook (11.5)
 49 Andy Fletcher (12.5)
 30 Rob Drake (4)

Crew B:

24 Jerry Layne (23)
 61 Bob Davidson (23)
 21 Hunter Wendlestedt (13)
 2 Dan Bellino (2)

Crew C:

19 Ed Rapuano (21.5)
 55 Angel Hernandez (19)
 6 Mark Carlson (12.5)
 15 Ed Hickox (7)

Crew D:

38 Gary Cederstrom (18)
 25 Fieldin Culbreth (15)
 23 Lance Barksdale (8)
 80 Adrian Johnson (4)

Crew E:

3 Tim Welke (28)
 57 Mike Everitt (13)
 43 Paul Schrieber (14)
 63 Laz Diaz (13)

Crew F:

33 Mike Winters (22)
 35 Wally Bell (19)
 47 Mark Wegner (13)
 91 Brian Knight (3)

Crew G:

20 Tom Hallion (19)
 7 Brian O'Nora (15)
 72 Alfonso Marquez (12.5)
 75 Chad Fairchild (4)

Crew H:

9 Brian Gorman (20)
 27 Larry Vanover (19)
 11 Tony Randazzo (12.5)
 97 Todd Tichenor (2)

Crew I:

36 Tim McCelland (29.5)
 65 Ted Barrett ((15)
 18 Brian Runge (13)
 51 Marvin Hudson (12.5)

Crew J:

32 Dana DeMuth (28)
 44 Kerwin Danley (15)
 88 Doug Eddings (13)
 39 Paul Nauert (11.5)

Crew K:

13 Derryl Cousins (33)
 66 Jim Joyce (23)
 46 Ron Kulpa (13)
 28 Jim Wolf (10)

Crew L:

4 Tim Tschauder (26)
 45 Jeff Nelson (14)
 52 Bill Welke (12.5)
 68 Chris Guccione (5)

Crew M:

12 Gerry Davis (28)
 53 Greg Gibson (13)
 1 Bruce Dreckman (12.5)
 10 Phil Cuzzi (4)

Crew N:

17 John Hirschbeck (28.5)
 77 Jim Reynolds (12.5)
 16 Mike DiMuro (12.5)
 92 James Hoye (4)

Crew O:

5 Dale Scott (26)
 14 Bill Miller (13)
 54 CB Bucknor (13)
 58 Dan Iassogna (10)

Crew P:

37 Gary Darling (25)
 41 Jerry Meals (15)
 50 Paul Emmel (41)
 87 Scott Barry (3)

Crew Q:

8 Jeff Kellogg (19.5)
 56 Eric Cooper (13)
 60 Marty Foster (13)
 95 Tim Timmons (12.5)

—*Crew Chief in bold.*

—*Years of MLB service in parentheses.*

—*Uniform number to left of name. .*

Scoring Rules Casebook Project

One of the common threads discussed by official scores is the need for a casebook to unravel the rulebook which sometimes seems like it has been written in legalese. Recent efforts to clarify the rules and make for uniform interpretation have resulted in notes or comments to be included following selected rules. On May 17, committee chairman

Rodney Johnson met with Phyllis Merhige, Senior Vice President of Club Relations for Major League Baseball. One of her duties is to oversee official scorers. Phyllis has endorsed a plan for the SABR Umpires and Rules Committee to work with MLB Official Scorers to produce casebook that will better explain the intent and application of

each rule in section 10 of the Official Baseball Rules. The results of the committee's work will be presented to MLB for review and consideration for distribution to official scorers as a supplement. Any committee members interested in participating should contact Rodney Johnson at sabrrodney@aol.com.

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The Umpires and Rules Committee currently has more than 200 SABR members enrolled. The committee has been largely inactive for the past several years. New committee goals are in alignment with the mission of SABR: “...to foster the research, preservation, and dissemination of the history and record of baseball.” To those ends, the Umpires and Rules committee is embarking on two projects that will also serve to engage membership and reinvigorate the committee as a contributor to SABR. These new projects are to write biographies of former Major League Umpires for Bioproject (see page 1). A second project, a ambitious one at that, is to create a casebook for section 10 (rules of scoring) for the Official Baseball Rules (see page 3). This casebook is intended to serve as a supplement for official scorers. Finally, as a broad long range goal, the committee will seek to expand recognition for umpires and the profession of umpiring. Please join me in striving to make the Umpires and Rules Committee an active and productive part of SABR.

—Rodney Johnson, Committee Chairman

Official Scorers Meet in NYC



For the first time ever, official scorers representing all 30 Major League teams met to discuss scoring rules and interpretations. The meetings were held at the MLB offices in New York City in February. SABR members Stew Thornley (Twins—kneeling) and Rodney Johnson (Diamondbacks—over Stew's right shoulder) were among to scorers to participate in the meetings.

When three's not a crowd.

Committee member Stanley Cohen reports that he attended the Phillies at Nationals game on May 4. The game was played using just three umpires as crew chief Joe West was ill and could not work the game.

Phillies manager Charlie Manuel was ejected after arguing a third strike call on a check swing call on a left handed batter because the play could not be appealed as no umpire was stationed at third base.