

THE BALTIMORE CHOP



SABR Babe Ruth Chapter

Vol. 1, No. 4

Winter 2017-18

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President's Message

As February gives way to March, excitement rises as we know that winter will give way to spring. Anticipating this, professional baseball has already started, evaluations are being written, talking heads are talking, players are politely but reluctantly giving interviews. This means that the greatest of all seasons is at hand... Baseball Season!

No game or athletic event has been loved for so long by so many as baseball. The people of America could not imagine life without it, even those who don't watch or participate. Daylight Savings Time has been said to the new harbinger of the warmer parts of the year, but it could be legislated away tomorrow.

As James Earl Jones's character, Terence Mann, so skillfully orates in *Field of Dreams*:

"They'll arrive at your door as innocent as children, longing for the past.

► Continued on Page 9

BBRC 3 Draws Big Crowd at Brewery

By D. Bruce Brown

The third annual official meeting of the Baltimore Babe Ruth Chapter moved to a new venue with a nice increase in attendance.

Dick O'Keefe, owner of the Peabody Heights Brewery in Baltimore, generously offered his site to us for our meeting this year. He was pleased with the outcome and told us that we could count on this location for as long as we need.

The brewery is located on the former site of Oriole Park V, also known as Terrapin Park, which was the home of the Federal League Baltimore Terrapins from 1914 to 1915, and the International League Orioles from 1916 to 1944. The brewery also is across the street from the site of Oriole Park II and IV, where the American League Orioles played in 1901 and 1902.

Our lineup of presenters was equal to the location. Go to:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sabr-photos/sets/72157690000420052/show/> for a gallery of photos of the presenters.

Veteran ESPN baseball commentator [Tim Kurkjian](#) regaled us with baseball stories drawn from his experience.

Chapter board member [David Stinson](#) then explained in detail the historical significance of our meeting place. David's efforts, with considerable historical help from Bernard McKenna, were the principal rea-

son for bringing the brewery and SABR together. Coincidentally, [McKenna](#) was our next presenter and gave us a preview of his soon-to-be-released research on the Baltimore Black Sox. He is a professor of English at the University of Delaware and a former chapter board member.

SABR national Vice President and board member Leslie Heaphy next spoke about her research on women players in the early Negro Leagues. [Heaphy](#) is a professor of history at Kent State University.

Following a lunch about which everybody was excited about how much better it will be next year, we heard from newly elected chapter treasurer Ken Mars who previewed his book, [Baltimore Baseball Before the Orioles](#). It has been published and while copies are available, a synopsis is available here, narrated by the author. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvmhMfZT15Y>.

Baseball writer and raconteur [Charlie Vascellaro](#) regaled us with tales of spring training in Arizona.

Our last presenter of the day was [Brian Bass](#), former Orioles pitcher had a 14-year professional baseball career, including playing in Venezuela, Korea and for three major league teams. He now counsels players on making wise investment choices. It was evident almost immediately that he was a worthy source of wisdom for them. His knowledge of the game and his place in it formed a very entertaining wrap-up for our day.



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Getting to Know...Michelle Freeman

In each issue, we will profile one of our members.

SABR Baltimore Babe Ruth Chapter secretary Michelle Freeman is a Kansas City native and, not surprisingly, her favorite team is the Royals.

She saw her first game at Kauffman Stadium in the 1980s, and her fondest baseball memory is of attending the 1985 World Series parade for the Royals. Her favorite player, past or present, is Yordano Ventura, the young Royals pitcher who died last year in his native Dominican Republic. However, Camden Yards has won her over as her favorite ballpark.

Michelle lives in Laurel and works for the federal government as a senior economist.

She lists her hobbies as baseball, volunteering, reading, theater and opera.

Something most people don't know about her?

"I've been to Jim Morrison's grave three times (in Paris); and Jimi Hendrix's grave (in Seattle) three times."



Calendar

March

7: Inaugural Peeps @ The Peeb, Peabody Heights Brewery, 401 E. 30th St., Baltimore, 7-9 PM

9-11: SABR Analytics Conference, Phoenix

21: Called Shot lunch, noon, Babe Ruth Museum

29: Orioles opener, Camden Yards

29: Opening Day Block Party/BBQ lunch/50-50 raffle/store specials/Babe Ruth Museum

30: Baseball Media Roundtable, 11:30 AM-1 PM, location TBA

April

4: Peeps @ The Peeb, Peabody Heights Brewery, 401 E. 30th St., Baltimore, 7-9 PM

5: Nats home opener

7: Talkin' Baseball, 9 AM, Brighton Gardens, Columbia (David Rapp "Tinker to Evers to Chance")

18: Called Shot lunch, noon, Babe Ruth Museum

20-21: Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19th Century Base Ball Conference, Cooperstown

May

2: Peeps @ The Peeb, Peabody Heights Brewery, 401 E. 30th St., Baltimore, 7-9 PM

5: Talkin' Baseball, 9 AM, Brighton Gardens, Columbia (Ted Leavengood "Dick Bosman on Pitching")

16: Called Shot lunch, noon, Babe Ruth Museum

June

2: Talkin' Baseball, 9 AM, Brighton Gardens, Columbia (Paul Dickson "Leo Durocher: Baseball's Prodigal Son")

6: Peeps @ The Peeb, Peabody Heights Brewery, 401 E. 30th St., Baltimore, 7-9 PM

18: Babe Ruth's Golf Outing, 9 AM shotgun, The Woodlands Golf Course

20: Called Shot lunch, noon, Babe Ruth Museum

20-24: SABR 48, Pittsburgh

First Wednesdays at the Peeb

Inaugural PEEPS @ THE PEEB March 7:

Eat, drink and talk baseball from 7-9 PM

What: An informal chapter meeting similar to The Called Shot luncheon, but a PM version. In response to popular demand, this monthly gathering of baseball cognoscenti will be the newest opportunity for SABR members and friends to get together and share thoughts about the national pastime and its history.

The ownership and staff of the Peabody Heights Brewery has generously extended the offer of their Conference Room on a monthly basis for fellowship, a bite to eat and the immediate availability of the best local beer. G-Rated libations are also welcome.

Where: What is fast becoming the most famous brewery/ex-stadium in all of baseballdom:

The Peabody Heights Brewery at 401 E. 30th St. in Baltimore.

When: Every FIRST WEDNESDAY, 7 till 9 PM. Inaugural meeting is Wednesday, March 7.

Who: Restricted to card-carrying SABR members of the Baltimore Babe Ruth Chapter. (Just kidding!) Everyone is welcome. There is no age restriction.

No need to confirm—just drop in.

How much: Free. Bring what you'd like to eat, maybe buy a beer at the brewery or bring something of your own.

Grand Kickoff Bonus: The chapter will provide free pizza (or equivalent) for the meetings in March, April and May!

Join us. We'd love to have you. Come be one of the Peeps @ the Peeb.

Peabody Heights Brewery

At Historic Old Oriole Park



The Very First Oriole Game: May 1, 1883

By Ken Mars

The 1882 American Association Baltimore Base Ball Club was so bad that the franchise was scuttled and re-formed at the end of its first and only season, and the entirety of the operation was rebooted top to bottom; from new owners Bill Barnie and Alphonsus Houck to a new ballpark.

The '82 club played at Newington Avenue, Baltimore's premiere diamond since 1871, but throughout the season fans griped about the shabby conditions, while neighbors complained about fans littering and urinating indiscriminately outside the park. The old venue was great for amateur nines, special events, circuses and the like, but that was about it.

The search for a diamond in the rough led the new club across the city to an empty lot on the east side of Greenmount Avenue, south of Huntingdon Avenue (25th Street). As soon as the ink was dry on the lease, construction began on the Huntingdon Avenue Grounds, the very first Oriole Park. It was an off-season of furious and confusing activity, with grandstands being built for a team still signing its first contracts.

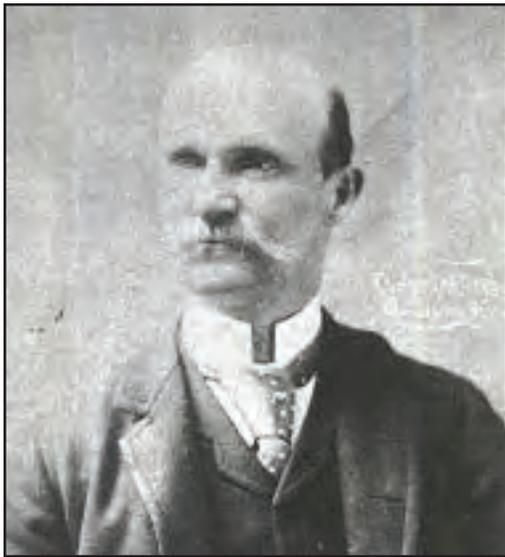
A Baltimore Base Ball Club - The Oriole

Mr. William Barnie, manager of the "Oriole" Base Ball Club of Baltimore for 1883 (American Association) has arrived in the city with the complete list of engagements of players with which he will open the season... The uniform of the club will consist of white trousers and shirts, orange and black caps and stockings.

-*Baltimore Sun*, November 25, 1882

After beginning with a bang, construction slowed to a crawl when the winter thaw made the ground muddy and unworkable. Though smaller in acreage than previous ballparks in the city, the Orioles built upward instead of spreading out.

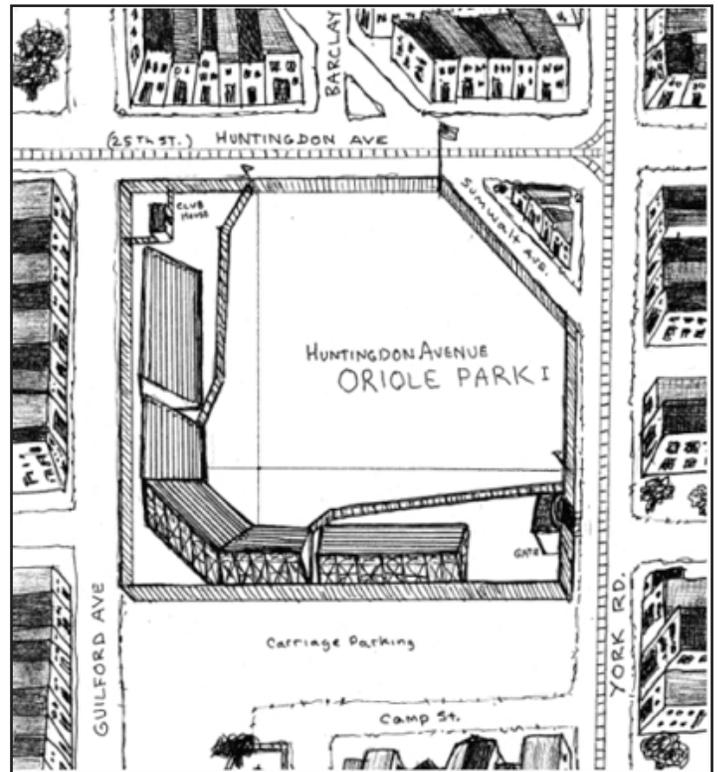
A central amphitheater-style grandstand seated 1,200. The main structure was raised above field level with the bottom portion serving as the backstop. Along the right and left foul lines were two long sets of bleachers that held over 2,000 each, with space in the deep outfield for standing room. A 10-foot high wooden fence enclosed the entire perimeter to discourage on-lookers.



Bill Barnie

But with less than a month left before the start of the season, the infield was not yet pressed flat by groundskeeper George Foy's heavy rollers, and there was little chance that grass would have time to grow.

Newspapers boasted of the clean and saloon-free neighborhood, safe for ladies and free of riff-raff. That wouldn't last,



Huntingdon Avenue Grounds (Ken Mars map)

though. The American Association was also known as the Beer and Whiskey League and lived up to the name to its fullest.

Over 5,000 turned out to see the Baltimore Orioles break the shell on their first season against the New York Metropolitan in their brand-new ballpark on May 1, 1883. A block of 15-cent tickets for boys sold out in moments, and hundreds of disappointed fans were turned away at the gate.

The game started out slow until Orioles got a run in the third and another in the fourth off future Hall of Famer Tim Keefe to take a 2-0 lead.

But in the top of the sixth, O's catcher John Kelly split a finger open and had to leave the game. Dressed in his Opening Day finest, Bill Barnie quickly suited up in the clubhouse and replaced Kelly. Barnie hadn't planned to catch so soon in the season but had little trouble handling John Fox. However, the Metropolitan pressed the attack and promptly tied the game.

Baltimore left seven men on base, squandering numerous chances while the Mets committed 12 errors. The New Yorkers came back to tie it up in the seventh, but neither club could push anything across, and the game went into extra innings. Arguments with umpire Ben Sommers over questionable calls ensued, and the game stayed gridlocked into the 11th. But then ... the birth of Oriole Magic!

Keefe was tiring, and Phil Baker worked the count to draw a walk. Dan Stearns then smacked a long flyball over the right fielder's head and Baker, bolted around second and headed for third while the Mets scrambled to get the relay in. Baker crossed home plate just ahead of the throw. Safe! And the Baltimore Orioles, in their very first game, won it in walk-off fashion! Fans swarmed past the police, over the picket fence and onto the field to celebrate with the home team. The win was completely unexpected. Newspapers do not mention if Stearns

Orioles ▶ Continued on Page 4

February 1935 News Flash: Babe Ruth Goes to the NL as Braves VP and Right Fielder

By Fred Glueckstein

The public learned the news from *The New York Times* on February 26, 1935. Under the headline *Ruth Gets His Wish*, James P. Dawson informed readers that Babe Ruth had terminated his 15-year contract with the Yankees to become an executive of the Boston Braves, as well as assistant manager and active player.

The deal to bring Ruth from the American League to the National League was sealed with Judge Emil Fuchs, president of the Boston club. A three-year contract had been agreed upon. Colonel Jacob Ruppert, owner of the Yankees, gave Ruth his unconditional release. Ruppert was also instrumental in persuading American League owners to waive the Babe, which made his transfer to the National League possible.

Ruth's move to the Braves began when he announced during the 1934 World Series (St. Louis Cardinals vs. Detroit Tigers) in October that he would not again sign a player contract. Ruth insisted that because of his years of service, age, and the possibility of an injury that might permanently incapacitate him, he would only sign as a player-manager.

One person interested in Ruth was Fuchs, who, in partnership with Christy Mathewson, had bought the Braves in 1923, but he had brought it to the edge of bankruptcy. Fuchs petitioned the National League owners for the right to bring dog racing to Braves Field on nights the team didn't play. After being denied the request, Fuchs looked at Ruth as the answer to restoring the team's finances.

"He wanted the Babe to sell tickets to a Boston public that had packed Fenway Park, at the Babe's last appearance. He wanted the Babe to play, hit home runs, fill seats. That was all he wanted, an attraction. He wanted the Babe to ride the elephant," wrote Leigh Montville in *The Big Bam: The Life and Times of Babe Ruth*.

In view of Ruth's interest in being a player-manager, Fuchs reached out to him. In agreeing to a deal, it was announced that Ruth would become a Braves vice president and would be consulted on all club transactions, in addition to playing. He was also made assistant manager to Bill McKechnie.

In a long letter to Ruth a few days before the press conference, Fuchs promised Ruth a share in the Braves' profits, with the possibility of becoming co-owner of the team. Fuchs also raised the possibility of Ruth's succeeding McKechnie as manager, perhaps as early as 1936.

With respect to the Yankees releasing Ruth, one report said Ruppert would insist on retaining his owner's interest in him, with the understanding ultimately of installing Babe as manager of the Yankees. Actually, Ruppert had no intention of hiring Ruth to become the Yankees manager and was eager to see Ruth leave the Yankees on good terms. While Ruth and his wife Claire were on a world tour, Ruppert and Fuchs met and worked out plans that led to the Braves owner hiring Ruth.

Ironically, Ruppert said of Ruth's leaving the Yankees: "It would have been unsportsmanlike of me if I didn't grant Ruth's request. Opportunity knocks but once at the door of any man, and I saw here the greatest opportunity Ruth ever had. There are no strings on the release I give him. I get not a penny in

METROPOLITAN.							
	A.	B.	R.	HR.	P. O.	A.	E.
Nelson, s. c.....	5	0	0	0	1	1	0
Esterbrook, 3d b.....	5	1	1	1	3	6	1
Roseman, c. f.....	5	1	0	0	3	0	0
Brady, r. f.....	5	0	1	1	3	0	1
O'Rourke, 1st b.....	5	0	4	0	0	0	3
Keefe, p.....	5	0	0	0	0	7	4
Holbert, c.....	5	1	1	1	6	4	3
Kennedy, l. f.....	5	0	2	0	0	0	0
Crane, 2d b.....	4	0	0	0	5	2	0
Total.....	44	3	9	30	30	12	

BALTIMORE.							
	A.	B.	R.	HR.	P. O.	A.	E.
Fox, p.....	5	0	0	0	3	8	2
Say, s. r.....	5	0	0	0	0	2	1
Clinton, l. f.....	5	0	1	2	0	0	0
Kelly, c.....	5	0	0	14	4	0	0
Baker, r. f.....	5	3	2	1	0	0	0
Stearns, 1st b.....	5	0	1	5	0	0	0
Reid, 2d b.....	4	0	2	4	0	1	1
McCormick, 3d b.....	4	0	0	3	1	1	1
Eggler, c. f.....	4	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total.....	42	4	6	33	15	5	

, INNINGS.

Metropolitan.....	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	—	3	
Baltimore.....	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	—	4

Earned runs—none. Three base hits—Holbert and Stearns. Two base hits—Nelson, 1; O'Rourke, 2. Left on base—Metropolitan, 8; Baltimore, 7. Passed balls—Holbert, 1; Kelly, 3; Barnie, 1. Wild pitches—Fox, 3. Double plays—Barnie and Reid.
Umpire—Ben Sommers.
Time of game, 2 hours and 40 minutes.

Box score from *National Republican*, May 2, 1883

or Baker was pie'd.

Note that Bill Barnie is not listed in the box score after replacing John Kelly and should be attributed two plate appearances. This is a good example of the many problems one faces when exploring the 19th century.

References:

[National Republican May 2, 1883](#)

[Baltimore Sun May 2, 1883](#)

Trivia Corner

Since 1954, the Orioles have won their share of MLB Awards. See if you can fill in the correct name of the player with the year of his award.

MVP	Cy Young	Rookie of the Year
1964	1969	1960
1966	1973	1965
1970	1975	1973
1983	1976	1977
1991	1979	1982
	1980	1989

(Answer on Page 10)

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Babe Ruth

► Continued from Page 5

return, not a promise, nothing. Ruth is a free man.”

Babe Ruth attended spring training in 1935 with the Braves in St. Petersburg, Fla., which was also the spring training home of the Yankees. Ruth arrived at Waterfront Park on March 5. He hit a home run in the first intrasquad scrimmage, and later the Braves beat the Yankees back to back in two exhibition games.

On the trip north to Boston, Ruth hit his first home run as a Brave in a 13-1 defeat of Southern Georgia Teachers College in Savannah. Ruth also hit two home runs in an exhibition game against the Yankee's top minor-league team, the Newark Bears.

On Wednesday, April 17, 1935, with a crowd of 25,000 in attendance, Babe Ruth made his memorable National League debut against the New York Giants at Braves Field in Boston. *The Christian Science Monitor* wrote the next day:

“Today, baseball fans throughout the land are talking about Ruth, and they should be. Branded as an all-done ball player by a score of writers and experts, the big fellow proved yesterday beyond all doubt that he is still one of the greatest players in the game and the biggest favorite of them all.

“As he strode out on the Braves Field turf yesterday afternoon, he must have been trying with every ounce of his big frame to make his debut as a National Leaguer, one that will long be remembered. Unquestionably, he accomplished just that.”

In a 4-2 victory over the Giants, Boston scored all four runs off New York's star left-hander, Carl Hubbell. In his National League debut, Ruth accounted for three of the four runs.

In the first inning, with the crowd applauding loudly, Ruth came up to bat. With Billy Urbanski on second base, Ruth, on a one-ball and no-strike count, smashed Hubbell's pitch through the legs of first baseman Bill Terry and Urbanski scored the first run of Boston's season. Ruth came up again in the second, but he did not get a hit.

In the fifth, Ruth had his big inning both in the field and at the plate.

“Playing left field in place of Hal Lee, who was moved over to right, Ruth made a remarkable fielding play. Hubbell, a right-handed batter, caught an Ed Brandt pitch on the inside of his bat and drove it into short left field over near the foul line.”

“Babe was after it the minute it was hit, although no one



Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth in St. Petersburg in 1935.

thought he would get it. But he did, with his outstretched glove hand, barely keeping his balance after a long-running catch,” reported *The Christian Science Monitor*.

In the bottom half of the fifth inning, Ruth came to the plate with Urbanski again on second base. With the count two and two, Ruth blasted the next pitch off Hubbell. The ball landed in the runway between the right-field bleachers and pavilion, where a policeman caught it on the bounce. It was Ruth's first National League home run, and it had traveled about 425 feet.

Ruth's blast at Braves Field was his 724th major league home run. He had hit 708 in regular-season American League games and 15 in the World Series. Meanwhile, Ruth's old teammates played the other Boston team at Yankee Stadium, losing, 1-0, to the Red Sox behind the two-hit pitching of Wes Ferrell.

Ruth then caught a cold that he couldn't get rid of. By mid-May, he had played in only four games. He also finally realized that age and his baseball skills had abandoned him. After being struck out by Lon Warneke of the Cubs on May 12, Braves Field fans could hear him say, “I'm through,” as he walked back to the dugout. On May 13, Ruth asked Fuchs to put him on the voluntarily retired list. With tickets sold and a Babe Ruth Day scheduled during the forthcoming trip west, Fuchs asked him to take the trip. Ruth agreed.

The Braves played three games in St. Louis and two in Chicago, where Ruth hit his third home run of the year. The team then went to Pittsburgh, where Ruth again resembled the player of old. On May 25, the Pirates' Red Lucas started, and Ruth hit a home run into the right-field stands.

Lucas was replaced by Guy Bush, who had handled Ruth with sinkers in the 1932 World Series. Bush faced Ruth in the third, and he threw a sinker. Ruth blasted the pitch out of the park for his second home run of the game. Ruth again faced Bush in the fifth and singled.

In the seventh, Bush faced Ruth for the final time. Bush gave up on the sinker and went to fastballs. Ruth hit one of the fastballs far over the right-center-field fence for his third home run of the game. The estimated distance of the home run was over 500 feet, and it was the longest home run hit at Forbes Field.

On Memorial Day, in the first game of a doubleheader in



Babe signs autographs in Newark before his retirement.

Babe Ruth ► Continued on Page 6

Babe Ruth ▶ Continued from Page 5

Philadelphia, Ruth batted in the first inning and grounded out to Dolph Camilli at first. Ruth went back to the dugout and took himself out of the game. As it turned out, it was Ruth's last major-league game. Soon after in Boston, the Babe and Fuchs quarreled, and Fuchs fired Ruth.

Ruth's and Fuchs' relationship had deteriorated during the season. As the season proceeded, it became clear to Ruth that Fuchs had no intention of meeting the agreements in the deal that brought him to the Braves.

First, Bill McKechnie, the manager that Ruth was to replace, had no plans to leave; second, the position of vice president was a sham, as his duties involved attending store openings and autographing 500 tickets for the first 500 patrons; third, the stock options were worth nothing, as the team's finances were in dreadful condition, and fourth, there were numerous stories circulating of Fuchs trying to sell the team.

After an argument with Fuchs, Babe Ruth retired on June 2, 1935. He finished the season with a .181 average, and the final six home runs of the 714 he hit in his career.

When Ruth left the Braves, the team had a record of 10-27. The Braves ended the season 38-115, with a .248 winning percentage, the worst in modern National League history. Since Fuchs was bankrupt, he gave up control of the Braves before the end of the season, and the National League took over the franchise.

For Babe Ruth, his short stint with the Braves was the culmination of a great career. Unfortunately, Ruth's time in Boston as player-manager, coincidentally the city where he started his illustrious career, never gave him the opportunity to be a manager, only a player.

Babe Ruth Stats - 1935 Boston Braves

Games	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	BB	SO	AVG	OBP	SL
28	72	13	13	0	0	6	12	24	.181	.359	.431

Source: *Total Baseball*



Babe Ruth's Boston Braves uniform

Your Input Welcome

We asked if you'd share your favorite team (and why). We're still taking your responses and hope to run them in the Spring issue.

We'd also like your predictions (remember, nobody's wrong yet!) for division winners, wild cards, pennant winners and the Series champ. Send to r68sadler@earthlink.net.

The Orioles' Other DHs: Stepping Up to the Plate to Make a Pitch Since 1979

By Peter Coolbaugh

The Baltimore Orioles Designated Hitters program is a volunteer sales force started in 1979 and is made up of local professionals passionate about Orioles baseball. We came into existence at a time when the Orioles were dominant but the team had trouble getting fans to come to Memorial Stadium. So ownership asked local business and community leaders to volunteer and help sell group tickets.

DHs work within the regional business community, as well as with nonprofit organizations, schools, local government and individual customers, to sell Orioles tickets and build excitement for baseball across Birdland.

Now entering my fourth season as a Designated Hitter, I am here to help all baseball fans get the most bang for their buck. And I do that by offering lower price tickets than you can get normally at the box office or online via the Orioles website. My goal is to get baseball fans to come out to Oriole Park at Camden Yards as often as possible and for them to have a fun and affordable experience.

Being a season ticket holder is the best option for those who like to go to games often. Currently there are full-season plans, 29-game plans, and several 13-game plans. Season ticket holders get many perks such as 15% discounts off single-games tickets, an account rep and an online account, access to opening day and postseason tickets, replay dates for games you miss and wish to "cash in", discounts on suite rentals, complimentary tickets to spring training and fanfest, early admission to the ballpark and numerous other offers (some vary depending on the type of plan).

For those who cannot attend enough games to justify having a season plan, you can still come to me. As a DH, I can get you tickets at the group rate no matter how many you need. The Orioles advertise that you need a minimum of 15 to make a group, which is true if you are buying straight from the team. Buying through a DH means you always get the group rate, whether you need two seats to a game or 200. The one small caveat is that for orders under 12, we do it online, which is faster and easier, though there is the 10% online fee (although the online fee is much smaller than if you ordered direct from the main Orioles ticket site). For orders of 12 tickets and up, I send in a form and you can get the tickets in the mail or pick them up at will call, always at the group rate, of course.

For those who remember the Orioles 6-pack of tickets that were offered for several years, those have been discontinued officially. However, through a DH we could set up a customizable 6-pack of games should you desire that option. You would not be a season ticket holder or receive those benefits, but you could possibly get the same or very similar seats for six different



DH Program ▶ Continued on Page 7

Roy Sievers: Underrated and Undervalued

By Paul Scimonelli

St. Louis native Roy Sievers was literally born into a baseball life. Roy's dad, Walter Sievers, had a tryout with the Detroit Tigers in 1916 and was offered a minor-league contract. He wanted to be a pitcher, but with his lethal bat, the Tigers wanted him in the outfield to play every day. They offered him \$50 a month, but Walter's father William said no, he needed to make his money in St. Louis to aid his family. Walter instilled his love for baseball into his young son Roy.

An outstanding three-sport athlete at St. Louis's famed Beaumont High School, Roy was signed by the St. Louis Browns in 1945. After a two-year hitch in the Army and two years in the minors, Sievers was brought up to the parent club in 1949, and he astounded everyone with his career-best .306 batting average, 16 home runs (which led all rookies), and 91 runs batted in (ranking sixth in the league). He was named the first American League Rookie of the Year by the Baseball Writers Association of America.

Roy slumped badly in 1950, but his managers remained confident he would come out of it.

In '51, he continued to slump and was sent down to San Antonio for "seasoning." There he suffered a terrible shoulder dislocation on August 1, which ended his season. In '52, Roy tried to come back in spring training, only to dislocate his shoulder again, and he was out for the year. Bill Veeck, then owner of the Browns, paid for a harrowing experimental surgery to repair Sievers' injured shoulder, which ultimately proved to be a success. In '53, Roy got into 92 games playing part time, and hit a respectable .270, with eight home runs and 35 RBIs.

Traded to the Washington Senators in 1954, Roy rose to his full potential. In his six years with the Senators, he set the franchise home run record four years in a row, and averaged 30 home runs, 95 RBIs and a .266 batting average in his six years with the Senators.

Veeck, by then owner of the Chicago White Sox, traded for Sievers in the spring of 1960. Roy averaged 27 home runs, 92 RBIs and a .295 batting average in two years with the Sox. Veeck got sick and had to sell the team in 1962. The new owners, wanting speed over power, traded Sievers to the Philadelphia Phillies, where he was platooned at first base by manager

Gene Mauch. Sievers played respectably, but was traded to the expansion Senators after another debilitating injury in 1964. He ended his career pinch hitting for manager Gil Hodges in 1965.

For his career, Roy had 318 home runs, 1,147 RBIs and a .267 batting average. At the time Roy hit his 300th home run, he was only the 16th man in baseball history to reach that plateau; now there are 146.

Yet, despite Sievers' career statistics, his mammoth home runs, timely hits and great run production, he has been overlooked for numerous honors.

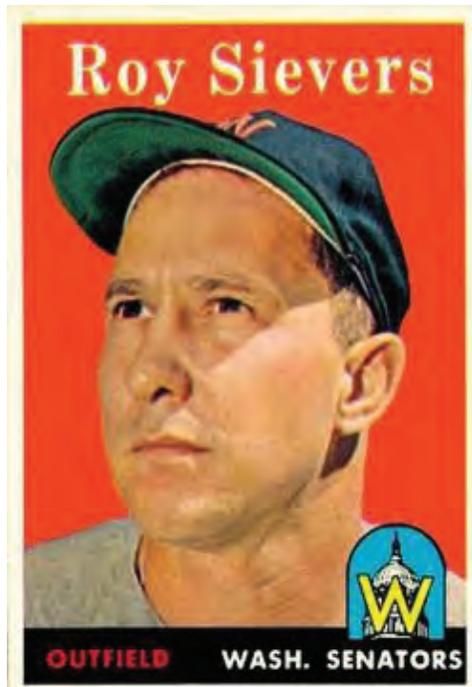
Why?

Bill James, noted baseball historian and statistician, in *The New Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract*, describes Sievers:

"Can you name another player who had a value pattern as Roy Sievers? I'm not sure there is one. Sievers was a standout rookie in 1949 (for the St. Louis Browns), hitting 306 with 91 RBI, and winning the American League Rookie of the Year award. After that, however, he drifted into a prolonged slump, lost his regular status, had two serious injuries, drifted completely out of the Major Leagues, and had to go back to the minors and re-establish himself. He didn't re-emerge as a regular until five years later, 1954, but then became a star, driving in almost 100 runs a year for a decade."

James has also established what he calls his "underrating system" to explain why so many players are overlooked when it's time to hand out accolades. I have bracketed those categories into where Roy fits:

1. Specialists and players who do two or three things well are overrated; players who do several things well are underrated.
2. Batting average is overrated; secondary offensive skills, summarized as secondary average, are underrated. BA [.267] SecA [.339] RC/G [5.9].
3. Driving in runs is overrated; scoring runs is underrated. RS [945] RBIs [1,147] Hits [1703]
4. Players who play on championship teams are sometimes overrated; players stuck on bad teams are often underrated. [Sievers]
5. Players who play in New York or Los Angeles are sometimes overrated, while players on small-market teams are often underrated. [Sievers]
6. Players who are glib and popular with the press are sometimes overrated, while players who are quiet are



DH Program ► Continued from Page 6

games. I know of people who like to see all the Yankees games or all the Blue Jays games in a season. Feel free to inquire further.

On more thing worth mentioning is the High 5 Program. That is for nonprofits that wish to do fundraising and make a few bucks per ticket sold. The Orioles will sell you tickets at \$5 off the list price. The difference with the High 5 is that this is done off the individual rate vs. the group rate, as the team, of course, is still trying to make a profit. But a \$30 seat would be sold at \$25 to the group. For example, if your group bought 100 tickets at \$25 each, the tickets would be printed with the regular price of \$30. If your group sells them all, it would make \$500. Every year, schools, church groups and other nonprofits use Orioles tickets as a group event and fundraiser.

Being a DH allows me to help the team I love. Sure, there are some personal perks for selling tickets, but my ultimate goal is to get people in the seats and keep our passion for the game going each and every season. Feel free to contact me at any time to inquire further as to how I can help you or your group and I will see you at Oriole Park in 2018.

Sievers► Continued on Page 8

Sievers ► Continued from Page 8

sometimes underrated. [Sievers]

7. Players who play in parks which do not favor their skills are always underrated; players who play in parks which favor them--hitters in Colorado, left-handers in Yankee Stadium, pitchers in the Astrodome--are always overrated. [Sievers]

8. Hitters from big-hitting eras (the 1890s, 1920s and '30s) are overrated and pitchers from the dead-ball era and the '60s are overrated. Pitchers from the big-hitting eras and hitters from the '60s are underrated.

9. Undocumented skills (leadership, defensive skills, heads-up play) tend to be forgotten over time. Everything else deteriorates faster than the numbers. [Sievers]

10. Anything which "breaks up" a player's career tends to cause him to be underrated: injury, switching positions, switching teams. A player who has a good career with one team will be thought of more highly than a player who does the same thing but with three different teams. Switching positions causes players to be underrated. [Sievers]

If great character were to be a flaw, then it would be Roy Sievers' shortcoming. Sievers was quite literally the "nice guy" who not only finished last but started last, with both the cellar-dwelling Browns and Senators. The quiet Midwesterner may never have uttered an unkind word about teammates, managers or umpires nor questioned a bad call, but was definitely never, ever thrown out of a ballgame. He was a team leader and a willing mentor to younger players. He always made time for his fans, never refused an autograph and was beloved for it.

Noted baseball writers Shirley Povich and Bob Addie wrote that there was never a good reason to go to a Senators ballgame in the 1950s other than to watch Roy Sievers. Roy's prodigious home-run hitting was the only thing that kept the fans coming to cavernous and dreary Griffith Stadium, increasing attendance by 45% between 1955 and 1959. During those years, Senators attendance was either seventh or eighth in the eight-team American League, yet Calvin Griffith was able to run the team in the black.

In 1956, Roy's All-Star status, along with minority owner H. Gabriel Murphy's fierce protestations and threatened lawsuit, forced the parsimonious Griffith to keep the team in Washington after being courted by interests in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Minneapolis. Perhaps Roy's celebrity and the intersection of baseball and politics caused powerful Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver to open Senate antitrust proceedings after hearing of Griffith's intentions to move the team from the federal city. After all, Roy had the "ear" of Richard Nixon, a self-avowed Sievers fan and a frequent guest at Griffith Stadium; Sievers visited the the vice president's home on several occasions. Many a politico was entertained by Griffith during Roy's tenure from 1954 to 1960, and they enjoyed free passes to the game or sat in the owner's box for free. All the while, Murphy's running feud with Griffith over keeping the team in Washington escalated to suits in D.C. and federal courts and an unsuccessful appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

Ultimately, Major League Baseball agreed to expand both the American and National leagues in 1960, allowing Griffith to move the Senators to Minnesota on the condition that a new team would be installed in Washington.

If Roy Sievers had not set franchise home run records from 1954 through 1957, hit an all-time franchise home run mark



A 1957 Associated Press photo shows Roy Sievers with House Republican whip Leslie C. Arends (left) of Illinois and Vice President Richard Nixon before a Senators game in Washington. Sievers was a frequent guest at the vice president's home.

of 42 in 1957 and been responsible for increased attendance for five straight years, there would have been no Washington Senators team staying in D.C., no expansion Senators in 1961, no Frank Howard to overtake that mark with 48 homers in 1969, and no current Washington Nationals team. Statisticians far more skilled than I will point out that Sievers' lifetime numbers do not warrant enshrinement into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

However, I contend that for the reasons above, Roy Sievers deserves to be enshrined into the Washington Nationals Ring of Honor. The Ring of Honor was ostensibly created to honor those players and managers who are enshrined in the National Baseball Hall of Fame. With the induction of Frank Howard into the Ring, a precedent that would allow Roy Sievers into that company.

The current Washington Nationals have broken attendance records year after year, showing that D.C. has always been a baseball city.

In my opinion, this is because of Roy Sievers.

Hurry, Authors, for Book on Babe

There's another Babe Ruth (besides our chapter) in the SABR universe. Glenn Sparks and SABR biographer extraordinaire Bill Nowlin are spearheading this project. They put out a call for writers and ideas through the Feb. 17 SABR-L listserv.

The response was swift. "Most everything was claimed and we had more ideas than we could possibly fit in a book," Nowlin emailed late last month.

However, he and Sparks are open to ideas for articles. So, if you have an idea, share it with them, but hurry:

Glen Sparks glen_sparks@att.net
Bill Nowlin bnowlin@rounder.com



Orioles All-Time Leaders (1954-2017)

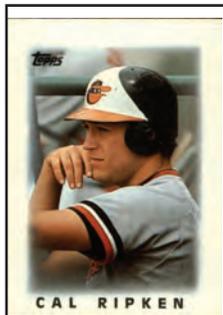
Hitting

Average (1,200 AB)

R. Alomar	.312
M. Tejada	.305
B. Nieman	.301
B. Boyd	.301
H. Baines	.301
F. Robinson	.300
E. Murray	.294
J. Lopez	.293
B.J. Surhoff	.291
T. Davis	.291

Runs

C. Ripken	1,467
B. Robinson	1,232
E. Murray	1,084
B. Anderson	1,044
A. Jones	821
B. Roberts	810
B. Powell	796
A. Bumbry	772
N. Markakis	749
P. Blair	737



CAL RIPKEN

Pitching

Wins

J. Palmer	268
D. McNally	181
M. Mussina	147
M. Cuellar	143
M. Flanagan	141
S. McGregor	138
M. Pappas	110
D. Martinez	108
S. Barber	95
M. Boddicker	79
S. Erickson	79

ERA (500 IP)

S. Miller	2.37
H. Wilhelm	2.42
E. Watt	2.74
P. Dobson	2.78
J. Palmer	2.86
B. O'Dell	2.86
D. Hall	2.89
J. Hardin	2.95
T. Phoebus	3.06
R. Roberts	3.09

At-Bats

C. Ripken	11,551
B. Robinson	10,654
E. Murray	7,075
B. Anderson	6,271
B. Powell	5,912
A. Jones	5,805
M. Belanger	5,734
P. Blair	5,606
N. Markakis	5,331
B. Roberts	5,214

Home Runs

C. Ripken	431
E. Murray	343
B. Powell	303
B. Robinson	268
A. Jones	248
C. Davis	225
R. Palmeiro	223
B. Anderson	209
K. Singleton	182
F. Robinson	179



ADAM JONES outfielder

Winning % (50 starts)

S. Stone	.656
M. Mussina	.645
J. Palmer	.638
W. Bunker	.620
M. Cuellar	.619
D. Hall	.619
D. McNally	.616
A. Mills	.604
M. Pappas	.598
W. Chen	.590

Strikeouts

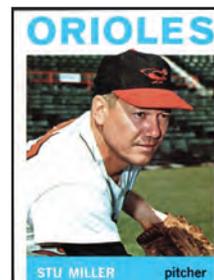
J. Palmer	2,212
M. Mussina	1,535
D. McNally	1,476
M. Flanagan	1,297
M. Cuellar	1,011
M. Pappas	944
S. Barber	918
S. McGregor	904
D. Martinez	858
M. Boddicker	836
S. Ponson	836

Hits

C. Ripken	3,184
B. Robinson	2,848
E. Murray	2,080
A. Jones	1,618
B. Anderson	1,614
B. Powell	1,574
N. Markakis	1,547
K. Singleton	1,455
B. Roberts	1,452
P. Blair	1,426

RBIs

C. Ripken	1,695
B. Robinson	1,357
E. Murray	1,224
B. Powell	1,063
A. Jones	803
K. Singleton	766
B. Anderson	744
R. Palmeiro	701
M. Mora	662
N. Markakis	658



STU MILLER pitcher

IP

J. Palmer	3,948
D. McNally	2,652 $\frac{2}{3}$
M. Flanagan	2,317 $\frac{2}{3}$
S. McGregor	2,140 $\frac{2}{3}$
M. Cuellar	2,028 $\frac{2}{3}$
M. Mussina	2,009 $\frac{2}{3}$
D. Martinez	1,775
M. Pappas	1,632
S. Barber	1,414 $\frac{2}{3}$
S. Ponson	1,375 $\frac{1}{2}$

ERA (500 IP)

S. Miller	2.37
H. Wilhelm	2.42
E. Watt	2.74
P. Dobson	2.78
J. Palmer	2.86
B. O'Dell	2.86
D. Hall	2.89
J. Hardin	2.95
T. Phoebus	3.06
R. Roberts	3.09

Trivia Answer

MVP

1964: Brooks Robinson
1966: Frank Robinson
1970: Boog Powell
1983: Cal Ripken
1991: Cal Ripken*

Rookie of the Year

1960: Ron Hansen
1965: Curt Blefary
1973: Al Bumbry
1977: Eddie Murray
1983: Cal Ripken
1989: Gregg Olson

*The longest time between MVPs for any American League multiple-time winner.

Cy Young

1969: Mike Cuellar
1973: Jim Palmer
1975: Jim Palmer
1976: Jim Palmer
1979: Mike Flanagan
1980: Steve Stone



President

Continued from Page 1

And they'll walk out to the bleachers and sit in shirt-sleeves on a perfect afternoon.

"They'll find they have reserved seats somewhere along one of the baselines, where they sat when they were children and cheered their heroes. And they'll watch the game, and it'll be as if they'd dipped themselves in magic waters. The memories will be so thick, they'll have to brush them away from their faces.

"America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It's been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt, and erased again. But baseball has marked the time.

"This field, this game—it's a part of our past. It reminds us of all that once was good, and it could be again."

I can't be positive he was speaking for ALL Americans, but he sure was speaking for me.

