

# NINETEENTH CENTURY NOTES

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SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN BASEBALL RESEARCH

Nineteenth Century Notes is a publication of the Nineteenth Century Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research

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Inside this issue:

Chief Zimmer: 7-9  
19th Century's Premier Catcher

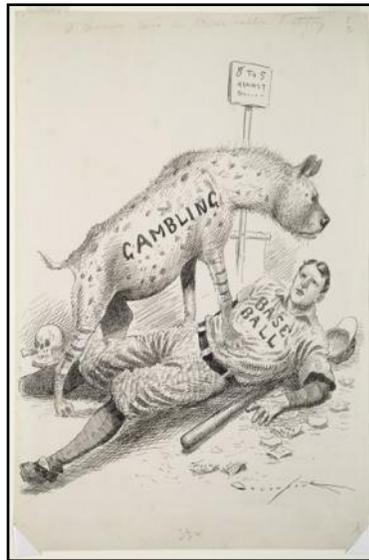
The 26 Run Half-Inning 10-11

News & Notes 12

## Baseball's War Against "Throwing" Games: The Evolution of the Rules by Bruce Allardice

**G**amblers and gambling have long been smirched sporting events. In the early 19th century horse racing suffered its share of thrown races due to gamblers bribing participants or substituting "ringer" horses. Horse racing even had its "Black Sox" scandal when gamblers rigged the English Derby in 1844.

The emerging sport of baseball also had its difficulties with gambling. As one historian has ob-



served, "To study the history of Baseball scandals, it is necessary first to un-

derstand the true cause of the scandals: gambling... Gambling ...threatened the survival of baseball."

Baseball's response to gambling and game-throwing resembled many other attempts by society to deal with aberrant behavior. While everybody thinks it's a problem, nobody is quite sure how to craft rules that can solve the problem. Rules and laws on a piece of paper have proven to be blunt instruments, often ineffective in curbing

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Chairman's Corner by Peter Mancuso

**The 2020 "Fred" Rescheduled.** Having what seems like a great line-up and a sold out crowd, made the decision to re-schedule the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19<sup>th</sup> Century Base Ball Conference (April 24 & 25, 2020) a hard decision, until we had to consider the health risks involved in

continuing forward with this year's conference dates. Then, it was a no-brainer.

About a week ahead of the Baseball Hall of Fame's announcement that they were closing their venerated institution to the public indefinitely on March 15<sup>th</sup>, we had reached the conclusion to "reschedule" the

entire (or as near to entire as possible) conference. We needed to choose dates that would both distance us from current health risks and, in a time frame that we felt the vast majority of the ninety-three persons (conference attendees and their guests) would most

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Baseball's War (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

cheating. In the formative years of baseball, three different rule-making bodies attempted to craft such rules. This article will trace how effective, if effective at all, such attempts were.

## National Association (Amateur) Rules

Early (pre-1857) baseball doesn't seem to have had any major problems with gambling and gamblers. The first club rules we know of, that of the Olympic Club of Philadelphia in 1837, forbade just about every kind of misconduct, from "improper" uniforms to "disorderly behavior" but failed to mention wagering. The 1845 Knickerbockers banned profanity, but similarly didn't mention wagering. As baseball gained popularity in the 1850s, it was inevitable that betting would follow and with it, the temptation of a player to wager. Baseball pioneer Henry Chadwick emphasized that the "model base ball player...comport[ed] himself like a gentleman on all occasions" but by 1867 he felt compelled to warn that this model player "never permits himself to be pecuniarily involved in a match...he values its welfare to much to make money an object in view in ball playing." Since not all players lived up to Chadwick's lofty model, formal rules against player betting were instituted.

The National Association of Base Ball Players, the first body that claimed to govern baseball, adopted the following anti-gambling rule in 1857:

"No person engaged in a match, either as umpire, scorer, or player, shall be, either directly or indirectly, interested in any bet

upon the game..."

At first glance, this rule seems comprehensive enough to address what the 1862 *Beadle Guide* labeled, the "evil" of betting. For example, it doesn't require that the person actually throw the game, just bet on the game. And it also seems to ban betting on your own team to win. This baseball rule was more draconian than the rule in organized horse-racing, which only banned the fixing, not the betting.

However, the rule had several problems:

1. It didn't ban crooked play *per se*. Rather, it banned the wagering that led to crooked play. Arguably, a player could throw a game for non-betting reasons and not violate this rule.
2. It didn't include non-playing managers and owners. Which wasn't much of an issue in 1859 but would become an issue later.
3. It lacked an enforcement mechanism. What would happen if it was alleged that a player had made a bet on a game? Who would determine the truth of the allegation? What would the penalty, if any, be? Who would enforce that penalty? And would other teams be able to hire the expelled player, thus negating the penalty of expulsion.

In practice, the rule was not enforced, in part because enforcement mechanisms were lacking. Betting remained open and rampant. As early as July 1860, the *New York Clipper*, then baseball's unofficial national organ, editorialized against the open betting by players in a game between two top NYC amateur teams, the Eagles and Gotham. The *Clipper* noted that the rule was "violated with impunity" during the match

and noted that the umpire failed to exercise his power to dismiss the players who transgressed the betting rules. The gambling remained open in the succeeding years. As the 1865 *Beadle Guide* admitted, "This rule was almost entirely ignored last season..." In 1866 Henry Chadwick, the dean of American sports writers, warned that baseball games were rife with "hippodroming" (fake spectacles) and asked "Do these clubs play as good as they can play in each and every match, or do they purposely 'throw off' for betting purposes?"

As to enforcement, while a club could, and sometimes did, expel a player, another club could sign that player the next day. In 1870 Short-stop Bill Craver, one such "serial revolver," was expelled from the Chicago Club for insubordination and gambling. But Craver went on to a 7-year career in professional baseball, with 7 different teams.

In 1865 Tom Devyr of the NYC Mutuals confessed to throwing a game (for only \$30) but two years later, the Mutuals readmitted him. Baseball gambling historian Daniel Ginsburg calls the 1865 fix "baseball's first great scandal."

## Professional Baseball Rules

Professional baseball leagues began in 1871 with the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players, which (basically) operated under the old rules. The Association's Article 10, for example, copied the language of the 1859 rule quoted above. Predictably, the problems continued, one being that with weakly-financed clubs, players could earn more by throwing games than they were paid by the club (if they were paid at all). As the 1875 *Beadle Guide*

(Continued on page 3)

# Baseball's War (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

sourly commented, "Any professional base ball club will 'throw' a game if there is money in it. A horse race is a pretty safe thing to speculate on in comparison with the average base ball match." In an 1875 game between Chicago and Philadelphia, the Chicago players learned before the game that Philadelphia had conspired with gamblers to lose the game... so the Chicagoans tried to lose "in retaliation for not being included in the crooked deal." Each team tried to throw the game, and in the "comedy of errors" committed 21 muffs. The irate *Chicago Tribune* declared that because of this and other recent games, the "noble and healthful game is being operated in behoof of betting men."

## The National League Rules

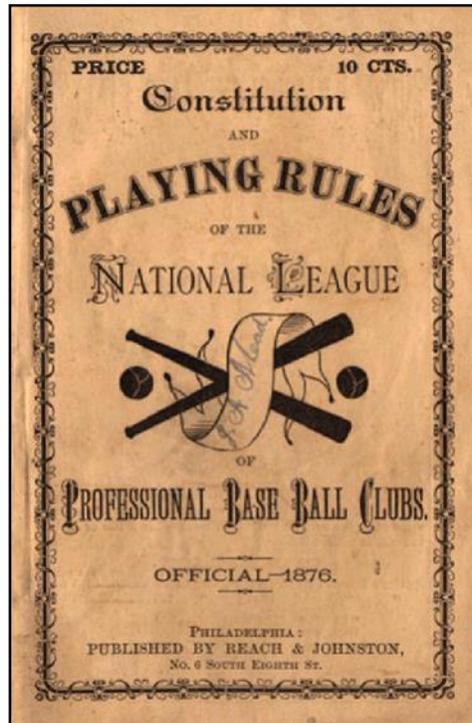
The National League (NL), established in 1876 to supersede the National Association, was created in part to curb or eliminate the gambling and game-throwing allegations that were demoralizing the ticket-paying public. The NL wrote its own league constitution, which expanded the conduct that was banned and mandated that the clubs enforce such rule. The relevant sections are summarized as follows:

Article V, Sec. 1. No club will employ a player expelled from any club, and any club that employs such a player will forfeit its membership in the NL. No NL club can play said expelled member.

Article VIII, Sec. 3. A player can appeal suspension by the club. The NL Executive Council decides disputes between the player and the club.

Article XI. A player expelled by a club can only play for another club if the NL Board, on appeal, sets aside the expulsion.

Playing Rules (adopted by the NL under Article X of the Constitution), Rule III, Sec. 2: "Any player who shall, in any way, be interested in any bet or wager of the game in which he takes part,



whether as umpire, player, or scorer, or who shall purchase or have purchased for him any 'pool' or chance—sold or given away—on the game he plays in, shall be dishonorably expelled, both from the club of which he is a member, and from the League. A player who shall be similarly interested in any regular match game between two clubs of the League, shall be suspended from legal service as a member for the season during which he shall have violated this rule."

This set of rules seems compre-

hensive enough. It even penalized players who bet on other NL teams. 1877 changes to the Constitution (effective in 1878) altered the language a little:

"Any player.... who shall be proven guilty of offering, agreeing, conspiring, or attempting to lose any game of ball, or of being interested in any pool or wager thereon, or of any dishonorable or disreputable conduct, shall be at once expelled by such club."

NL rules echoed this prohibition, and expanded on it:

"Rule III, Sec. 1. Any player, manager or umpire who shall, in any way, be interested in any bet or wager on any game... shall be expelled.

Sec. 2. Any player who shall conspire with any person whatever, against the interests of the club .... may be expelled by his club."

The Constitution's rule expands the defined offenses of the old rules to include "any dishonorable conduct," "conspiring" to throw a game, or merely "offering" to throw a game, but the rule also introduces the concept that, to be punished, the player must be "proven guilty." Proven guilty by who? A court of law? It can't mean that, since gambling *per se* was legal in many cities, and not prosecuted in most others. Logically, the entity determining the "guilt" must either be the NL and/or the club.

In practice, betting on your own team was allowed (or at least acquiesced in), and players as prominent as Cap Anson openly boasted of betting on their own team to win.

The NL rules were strict on wagering, and mandate that the club expel the betting player, but

(Continued on page 4)

## Baseball's War (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

in the Sec. 2 case of conspiring... against the interests of the club” only says that the club “may” expel the player—much weaker language than the mandatory “shall expel” of Rules Section 1 and of the NL Constitution.

The seminal case of game-throwing under the NL involved the 1877 Louisville Grays. Four players came under suspicion for their poor play during a pennant race. Under questioning, one player confessed to taking bribes. Two others were obviously guilty after telegrams revealed that they threw games in return for gambler's payoffs. A fourth suspected player, the aforementioned “serial revolver” Bill Craver, was expelled when he refused to cooperate with the probe. The four were expelled not just from Louisville, but from baseball (by the League). None ever played again. Perhaps fortunately for professional baseball, with the confessions and telegrams there was no possible dispute as to “proving guilt.”

Most cases of alleged betting were not so cut and dried as the “Louisville 4.” Without confessions of the principals, it was almost impossible to “prove” guilt. A typical case involved star hurler Tony Mullane. In June of 1886 the *Cincinnati Enquirer* charged that Mullane had written to two gamblers in Indianapolis to bet against Mullane's team in two separate games. The newspaper even printed affidavits from the gamblers. Mullane branded the charges “an unmitigated lie,” and the Cincinnati club refused to suspend him. At a June 30<sup>th</sup> hearing, the Directors of the American Association held a hearing, took testimony, and found Mullane “not guilty.” The verdict even urged Mullane to

sue the newspaper for libel. The newspaper promptly labeled the verdict a “whitewash.”

The League acted more forcefully in another case. In 1882 Detroit Wolverine owner William G. Thompson received a letter in



Dick Higham

which umpire Dick Higham allegedly advised a well-known gambler how to wager on a Detroit game Higham was umpiring. Thompson immediately revoked Higham's authority to umpire for the team. The NL Board of Directors immediately held a hearing in which the letter was presented, with three handwriting experts affirming that the letter was signed by Higham. Although Higham vigorously denied the allegations, the Board found that the charges were justified and banned Higham from ever umpiring games again. While it was unclear how, if at all, Higham's umpiring favored one club over another, the mere association of an umpire with wagering on a game was enough (in the NL's view) to warrant expulsion.

Another problem in enforce-

ment came up when a new “major league,” the American Association (AA), was formed in 1882. Players banned in the NL could “jump” to the AA, which declined to honor the NL bans and proceeded to woo the affected players. The NL was forced to sign an agreement with the AA to curb jumping. In March 1882, the AA set its own maximum penalty for drunkenness, insubordination, dishonorable or disreputable conduct: suspension for the balance of the season, plus the entire following season. Other offenses, however, might result in permanent ineligibility.

The NL Constitution's rule against cheating was further rewritten for 1881 to apply to clubs as well. And the “proven guilty” NL Constitution rule of 1877 was extended to managers, with the guilty party now to be expelled “at once.”

By 1885 the rules were once again changed, to make clear that the President of the NL was the ultimate enforcer, not the club. The new language banned games played “otherwise than on its merits” (quaint 19<sup>th</sup> century phrasing!), which seems to be a catch-all phrase for cheating that cannot otherwise be clearly defined.

### Gambling in the Ballparks

In 1883 the NL addressed the problem of gambling in the ballparks, even where the gambling wasn't directly related to the players on the field. The NL evidently realized that open gambling contributed to the spectators, and fans in general, losing confidence in the game being honest. Historian Lee Allen lamented the gambler's foothold in the ballparks: “The situation was especially bad in

(Continued on page 5)

## Baseball's War (cont.)

*(Continued from page 4)*

Brooklyn where the Atlantic club fostered so much open betting that one section of the grounds was known as the Gold Board, with activity that rivaled that of the Stock Exchange." One particular form of betting that was especially frowned upon was "pool selling," an early form of bookmaking. "Pool selling" increased the amount of money wagered on ballgames, and thus the incentive to bribe players. In 1878 one magazine worried that pool selling in the ballparks could even corrupt America's youth: "Pools are sold, not only in rooms in the city, but openly on the base-ball ground itself. ... Boys who go at first merely for the fun and excitement of witnessing a match, are likely to become fascinated with the desire to 'try their luck;' and seeing no harm in doing what is done all around them, get gradually into the vicious habit of gambling. Bad associations are all too easily formed on the base-ball grounds." The Chicago club, for one, considered the practice so heinous it tried to stop any "pool selling" on its games, even outside the ballpark, and pushed for a state law banning the practice.

The 1883 rule said the club risked forfeiture of membership if the club allowed any open gambling in the ballpark: "Sec. 54. Forfeiture of Membership... By allowing open betting, or pool selling, upon its grounds." Corresponding NL rules stated "No club shall allow open betting or pool selling upon its grounds..."

Sadly, this rule was rarely enforced. As late as 1917 American League President Ban Johnson fulminated against the open betting

that was going on during games at Boston's Fenway Park. That year the gamblers even initiated a mid-game riot, hoping to halt a game they stood to lose money on. This gambler's riot confirmed the need for a rule against wagering at the ballpark.

### Guilty Knowledge

The case of Buck Weaver and the 1919 Black Sox scandal raised a question of "guilty knowledge." Could a player who played honestly, yet knew of a game fix, be punished under baseball's rules?

The NL rules at the time didn't directly deal with this issue. The prohibition against "conspiring" against the interests of a club could (arguably) encompass the actions of a player who knew about a fix but didn't report it, since the player's action would aid the conspiracy. Judge Landis's banning of Weaver was essentially based on this theory.

We have no 19<sup>th</sup> Century cases directly on this point, yet at least two cases of baseball misbehavior indicate the NL punished actions that didn't require proof that the participant threw games. The case of Bill Craver of Louisville is mentioned above. One of four players suspected of throwing ball games, he refused to cooperate with the investigation and for that was dismissed from the club. The concealing of evidence of the conspiracy was enough for dismissal, even without evidence of active participation in the game throwing.

A minor league case from 1906 also sheds light on baseball's punishment of "guilty knowledge." Minneapolis manager Mike Kelley and team secretary L. A. Lydiard

passed along to the American Association affidavits from alleged gamblers stating that an umpire had wagered on games played by Minneapolis. The allegations were part of a long-standing feud between the umpire and Kelley. Upon investigation, the American Association concluded that Kelley had knowingly submitted forged affidavits. Despite Kelley's claim that he didn't solicit the forgeries, the Association suspended him.

### Conclusion

The various 19<sup>th</sup> century attempts by organized baseball to ban, by rules, bribery and game-throwing, ranged from prophylactic bans against all betting, to bans against specific actions by clubs, players and umpires connected with gambling and game-throwing. Penalties generally consisted of expulsion, either of the player/umpire/club, or of the club that condoned the player's actions. The individual clubs were generally charged with policing the players, with the League as the overall court of judgment over the guilt and punishment of the players, umpires and clubs. The rules, and their enforcement, did not and could not eliminate dishonest play, but at least they eliminated the more flagrant abuses to the game.

Editor's Note: Dr. Allardice submitted Endnotes with this article. As we only rarely include Endnotes they have not been included here. If you wish the 27 Endnotes along with the originally submitted article, please e-mail your request to the Newsletter Editor at [bobbailey@cox.net](mailto:bobbailey@cox.net).

## Chairman's Corner (cont.)

*(Continued from page 1)*

likely be available.

Our goal was to take the entire 2020 "Fred": fifteen Research Presenters, a Special Presenter, an Interviewer and Interviewee, A Panel Moderator and Panel, a Luncheon Keynote Speaker, The Conference Luncheon, its' morning coffee services and its' afternoon refreshment breaks, its' two optional evening dining events and, along with all of its registrants, and their guests, with double-tracked Research Presentation selections intact, and place them all back down again on the same corresponding Friday and Saturday in the 2021 calendar. **Therefore, the dates of the rescheduled 12th Annual "Fred" are, Friday & Saturday, April 23 & 24, 2021 at the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, N.Y.**

**NOW, SAVE THIS DATE: Saturday, November 21, 2020**

(along with a possible Sunday, Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> optional historic baseball tour) and note this location, **St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St. in the Historic Brooklyn Heights neighborhood of Downtown Brooklyn, N.Y.**

These are the dates and the location of what will be our fifth city-specific symposium, the **"Brooklyn, 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Symposium"**. There is wide consensus among baseball historians that Brooklyn, NY (then an independent city, prior to its consolidation in 1898 with Greater N.Y. C.) was one of the most, if not the most, effectual environments to baseball's growth from recreational amateur play to a spectator driven professional sport.

**Tom Gilbert** has been kind enough to investigate possible

venues for this symposium and to visit St. Francis College and meet with the Chair of its History Department, Dr. Eric Platt. Dr. Platt has replied that the College is holding Founders Hall/Callahan Center for this event. Also, the **History Department of St. Francis College** has agreed to **co-sponsor** the symposium which will greatly help with our expenses and will bring additional persons interested in this vibrant history of 19<sup>th</sup> century Brooklyn baseball to this event. St. Francis College is nearby to Brooklyn's Borough Hall subway stop and other mass transportation and hotel lodging. See our summer issue (approx. July 1<sup>st</sup>) of this newsletter for further details.

Stay safe and well, Peter Mancuso, ...because baseball history is not only baseball history.

## Time To Collect Future Newsletter Submissions

**F**or the past almost two years we have had a steady stream of article submissions that have appeared in *Nineteenth Century Notes*.

I am grateful [you have no idea how grateful I am] to each author and hope you have found the Newsletters to have good articles and complete news of the committee's activities.

Sadly, the e-mail folder of articles is now empty and I am looking for new submissions to con-

tinue running a wide range of nineteenth century baseball articles as we move through the 2020s.

Topics on history, biography, cultural effects, oddities, new discoveries, and novelties are welcome.

If you have an idea for an article you can either send me an e-mail describing your topic or send a draft of the article.

Submission should be sent to [bobbailey@cox.net](mailto:bobbailey@cox.net).

Articles are generally 1,500

to 2,000 words in length, although we have run longer pieces. Submissions should be in a Word document with photos and other items placed after the article itself (this helps greatly in laying out the newsletter). We generally do not include endnotes, but if they are important to the article we can have them posted on the SABR website linked to the newsletter or we can make them available on request.

Thanks for your help.

# Chief Zimmer: 19th Century's Premier Catcher

by Bob Mayer

Charles Louis “Chief” Zimmer was a baseball player. However, he was more than that, since he was one of the first players to be known more for his intellect than his athletic skills. That is not to say he was lacking in the skills department. No, throughout his playing career as a catcher, he was lauded for his defensive prowess and his innovative play behind the plate.

The “Chief” was one of the first catchers to play right behind the plate and he is credited with being the first to take that position full time. This change in position of the catcher, from (previously) several feet behind home plate, was instrumental in 1) reducing the number of passed balls, 2) providing the pitcher with a better target to throw to, and 3) a higher percentage of success in throwing out runners attempting to steal bases.

In reviewing catchers with the most career assists in the SABR Baseball List & Record Book (2007), Chief Zimmer ranks 5<sup>th</sup> all time with 1580. However, when looking at the number of assists per game, Chief leads all catchers with a 1.234 average. Red Dooin, Johnny Kling and Ivy Wingo are all close, but not the top three career assist leaders (Deacon McGuire 1.153, Ray Schalk 1.049, and Steve O’Neill 1.108). When looking at modern era

catchers the averages are well under one assist per game (Hartnett .699, Carter .585, Lopez .581, Fisk .471, Bench .684).

I first saw the name C. L. Zimmer on a photograph of a baseball team I had won in a 1995 auction run by Leland’s Auction House in New York City. The 4” by 6 ½”

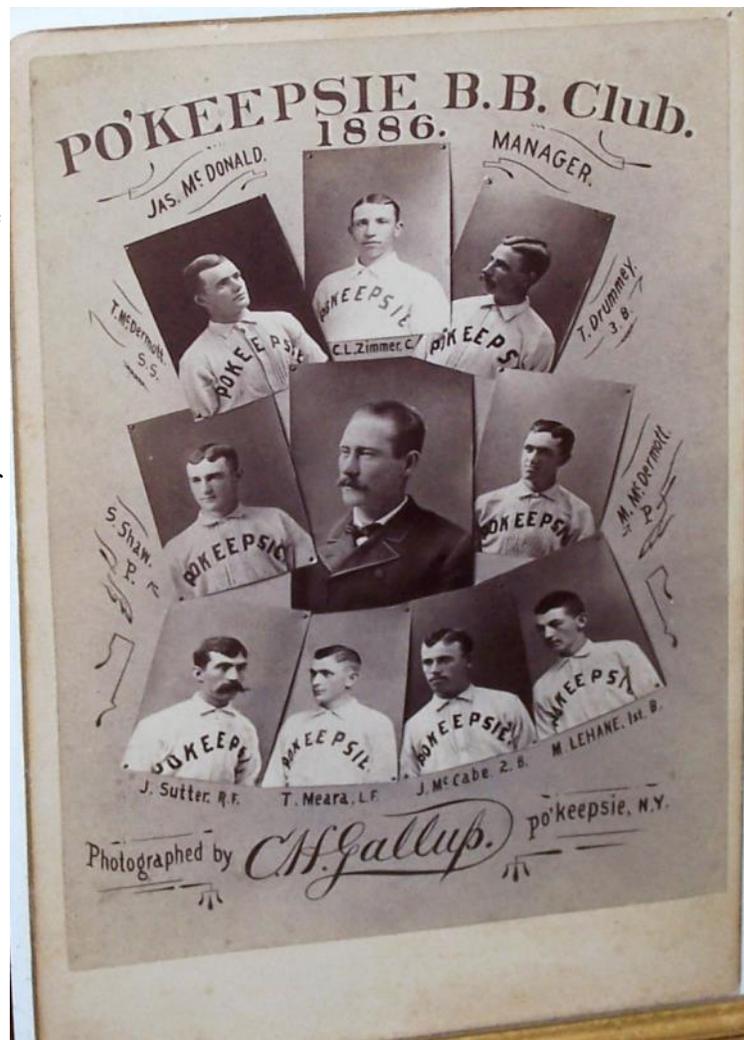
south of Poughkeepsie in Putnam County, but at the time I knew nothing about early baseball in the area. When I got the photo, I looked up the player names and found out that several actually made it up to the major leagues, and one, C. L. Zimmer, had been known as “Chief” Zimmer throughout his baseball career. Over the years since, I’ve learned a bit about the local baseball roots, and always had an interest in finding more about Charles Louis “Chief” Zimmer.

“Chief” Zimmer had a lengthy career as a professional catcher, having played from 1884 through 1903. He is known for possibly being the best defensive catcher of his era and being Hall of Fame pitcher Cy Young’s catcher for eight years, beginning in Young’s rookie year of 1890. He also had an opportunity to catch Jack Chesbro’s famous spitter while both were with the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1900. Chesbro is also in the Hall of Fame. Zimmer, as noted above, changed the catcher’s positioning assisting pitchers in controlling base runners and providing a more consistent

target for the pitcher.

Charles Louis Zimmer was born in Marietta, Ohio on November 23, 1860, just at the early stages of the Civil War. His parents, Charles and Elizabeth

(Continued on page 8)



cabinet photo showed the players on the 1886 Poughkeepsie (spelled Po’keepsie) N. Y. entry in the original Hudson River (Minor) League.

I suppose I bid on the photo since I live less than one hour

## Chief Zimmer (cont.)

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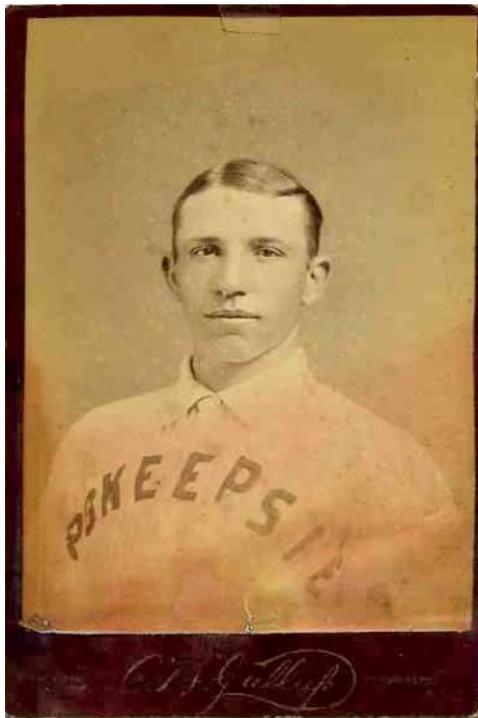
had emigrated from Bavaria, and Charles Junior was the eighth of nine children.

Charles grew up in Marietta on the family farm. In 1881 at age 20, his baseball career began playing amateur ball in Ironton, Ohio. Baseball had been played in Ironton since 1867 when the first town team, the Excelsior Club was organized by members of the Excelsior Fire Company. In 1881 the Ironton team was still an amateur club, but in 1884, Ironton entered the Ohio State League and Charles became a professional ballplayer. Later that same year, he had a brief stint with the Detroit Wolverines of the National League, playing in eight games, but was unable to earn a spot with the big league club.

He re-surfaced in 1886 with Poughkeepsie, leading New York State's Hudson River League in batting and helping the team win the League Championship with a 47-18 record. Zimmer's .409 average nosed out future NY Giant player Myron Allen, who batted .403.

The Hudson River League was comprised of teams from towns and cities along the Hudson including: Saratoga, Troy, Kingston, Newburgh, and Poughkeepsie. Yonkers, Peekskill and Albany had also planned to join the league, but Yonkers and Peekskill dropped out before play began, while Albany only played five games before folding. Saratoga disbanded in August after 44 games. Several other players on Poughkeepsie spent some time in the majors including pitcher Mike McDermott, grandfather of

Maurice "Mickey" McDermott who pitched in the big leagues 1948-61. According to Zimmer, it was while playing with Poughkeepsie that he got his "Chief"



nickname that would last his whole life. "Since we were fleet of foot, we were called the Indians. As I was the head man of the Indians, somebody began to call me Chief". The name stuck.

"Chief" had another short tryout with a major league club that year. This time it was catching six games for the New York Metropolitans in the American Association (A.A.). However, he did not impress the team.

In 1887, Zimmer batted .331 for Rochester (NY) in the International League, and was called up to play for the Cleveland Blues in the American Association. This time he was successful and became the team's first string catcher in 1889, the same year the team switched

from the AA to the National League and became known as the Cleveland Spiders.

From 1890 – 1898 "Chief" was Hall of Fame pitcher Cy Young's battery mate. During an interview in his later years, Young stated that Zimmer had gotten his nickname because of a strain of Indian blood in his ancestry, and that his dad looked even more Indian than the Chief. This apparently was a made up story because of the Chief's facial resemblance to Native American features.

Zimmer was known best for his handling of pitchers and for changing the positioning of catchers. Several other catchers of the time were playing up close to the batter, but generally only when a batter was on base, in order to be in better position for an attempted steal. Although he wasn't known for his hitting, between 1893 and 1899 he batted over .300 four times. With Young and Zimmer, the Spiders managed to get into the post season championship series in 1892, 1895, and 1896. The team won the coveted Temple Cup Series in 1895 by defeating Baltimore four games to one. He played for the Spiders into the 1899 season, then was traded to the Louisville Colonels.

Zimmer was popular with the other professional players, and when a new ball player's organization, the Baseball Players' Protective Association was formed in 1900 to represent the players with the owners of the big league clubs,

*(Continued on page 9)*

## Chief Zimmer (cont.)

*(Continued from page 8)*

he was chosen President. The principal purpose of the new association was to fight the team owners on the matters of selling and farming players, and to alter the current practices including those related to player contracts.

When Louisville owner Barney Dryfuss, who also owned the Pittsburgh Pirates, liquidated the Colonels at the end of 1899, he wanted Zimmer to sign with the Pirates for 1900. Union leader Harry Pulliam enticed Zimmer to join the team. This was a coup for Dryfuss, as it helped dissipate the bargaining power of the players association.

As president of the Association, Zimmer had taken a strong stance against the players who jumped contracts from the National League to play with the newly formed American League in the spring of 1901. His suspension of these players aligned many of the American League players against him. However, at the Association's meeting to elect officers in June 1901, Zimmer was re-elected by the team representatives. Feeling totally vindicated, he then resigned the position and Tom Daly was elected the new president.

While with the Pirates, Zimmer became battery mate of another Hall of Fame pitcher, Jack Chesbro. Chesbro had been a rookie with the Pirates in 1899, and had had a mediocre year winning only 6 of 15 decisions. With Zimmer's help, from 1900-1902, he put together seasons of 15 - 13, 21 - 10, and 28 - 6, leading the league with the best winning percentage and most shut-outs in 1901 and 1902, and most wins in 1902. During the Chiefs three years with Pittsburgh, the

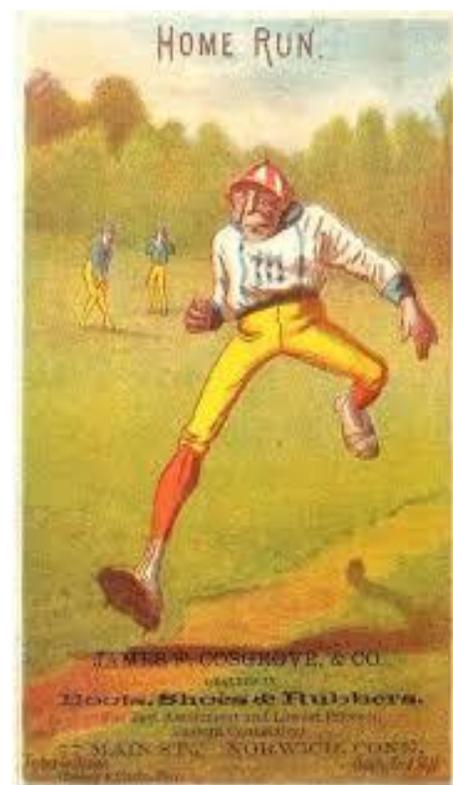
team won two National League pennants.

Chief's last year in the Major Leagues was in 1903 when he was player manager for the Philadelphia Phillies. The Phils had a poor year, and finished in 7th place with only 49 wins. In 1904, he spent the year as an umpire in the National League. He then returned to the minors for three more seasons umpiring in the Southern League in 1905. The following year he managed the Little Rock Travelers in the Southern League, but they finished in last place 49 games behind the Birmingham Barons.

As an umpire, Zimmer has been given credit for being the first to raise his right hand to indicate a strike in 1905. This innovation first made it to the Major Leagues during the 1906 World Series, and then became general practice beginning in 1907.

When Zimmer left baseball he remained in the Cleveland, Ohio area. He and his wife Minnie had three daughters, Leona (1883), Edna (1885) and Galatea (1886). After retiring from baseball he worked as a cabinet-maker and cigar roller. For a while he owned a cigar store.

Zimmer passed away August 22, 1949 at the age of 88. A year earlier, he had commented to the Sporting News that "Connie Mack and I are running a race to see who becomes the oldest living catcher. Connie is exactly two years and one month younger than I am." (Mack won the race, living to 94) Zimmer is interred at Crown Hill Cemetery in Twinsburg, Ohio., along with Hall Famer Elmer Flick.



# The 26 Run Half-Inning; October 19, 1861

Submitted by Bob Tholkes

**E**ver wonder what a 26-run half-inning looks like? The October 20, 1861 *New York Sunday Mercury* recorded the

play by the Atlantic BBC's feat against the Mutual BBC of New York in the second of their best-of-three match on October 16; the Mutuals, reckoned the strongest club on their side of the East River, had won the first game with the perennial champions, two weeks

earlier. In the Civil War's first year, the liberal use of military jargon can be excused.

"The game stood 8 to 7, the Mutuals having the lead. Matty O'Brien then took the bat to open the third inning. He hit the ball in good style, but it was well fielded, and he could not get further than the first base. Price then came up to the bull-ring, and before he struck, Matty took a run for the second base, McMahon making a pretty throw to Brown to head him

off. It was a sort of "nip and tuck" affair between Matty and the ball ; but the umpire said Matty had the best of it, and that was enough, although Brown's

he sent a whizzer away "over the fence," which, according to the rule adopted, entitled him only to one base. F. Seinsoth hit a fine grounder, and carried Pe-

ter to the second and himself to the first base. Pearce then put in a good shoulder hit, which H. B. Taylor made extraordinary exertions to catch but missed, and Peter and Seinsoth came in with a hurrah, while



Atlantics— 1865

underjaw was seen to drop about a foot or a foot and a half. Price then put in a "big lick" and brought Matty home, while he got to the third base, from which he got home on a pass ball.

Boerum followed with another splendid crack, and also made the third base. Then came "Peter," who felt that the pride of the Atlantics was at stake, and that "heavy hits" was the programme to save the country, and

"Dicky" safely reached the second. John Oliver followed with a fine hit, and made second base ; and was driven home by Smith, who made a clean home run for himself, and was congratulated with a round of applause. Joe Oliver got to first base on his strike. Matty O'Brien then came up to take part in round No. 2 ; and when he struck, Brown rather muffed the ball, and Joe got to the second base, and Matty to the first.

(Continued on page 11)

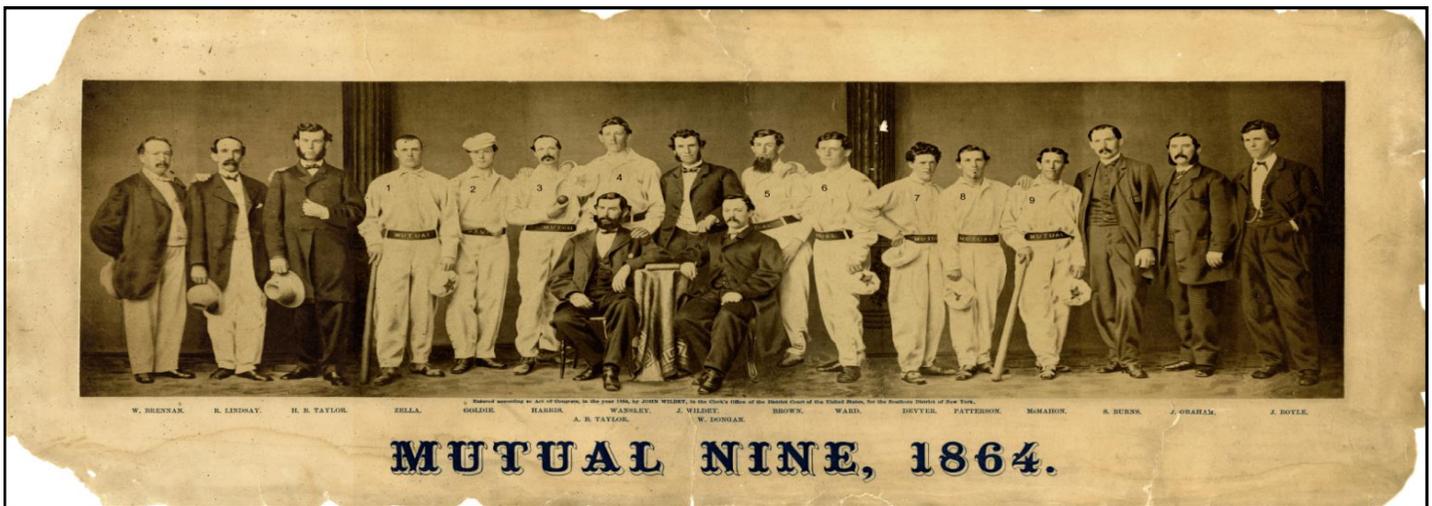
## The 26 Run Half-Inning (cont.)

(Continued from page 10)

Each ran and made a base. Price then "whistled" them both home, and took command of the second base. Boerum sent him orders to "come in", and placed himself on the first base. "Peter" drove him home, and did picket duty on the

Matty made a good attempt keep the ball rolling, but Brown, on the second base, stuck a pin in the score, by stopping and passing the ball to the first base in time to head off the striker. He then served Price (who followed Matty) in the same way.

to the scorer's table to take a drink. Price indulged in another heavy crack, but only reached the first base, though Matty went along home. Boerum knocked a fine ball, but it was rather too airy to be safe, and H. B. Taylor, who began to think that if the



second base. Seinsoth signalled Peter by a sky-rocket to leave his post ; but Peter didn't "see it", and neither did Burns (the pitcher) for that matter ; and Frank got to the first base. Pearce then discharged a big gun, and Peter rushed in to see what was the matter, and found that Pearce had taken his place on the second base, and Seinsoth had toddled round to the third. John Oliver sent a messenger, which sailed home both Pearce and Seinsoth, and he acted as advance guard on the second base. Smith brought Johnny in in a very leisurely manner, and made the third base himself. Joe Oliver followed with a good crack, but brought up on the first base. Matty O'Brien then came up for the third round in this inning-- *seventeen runs* had been made without the loss of a single man.

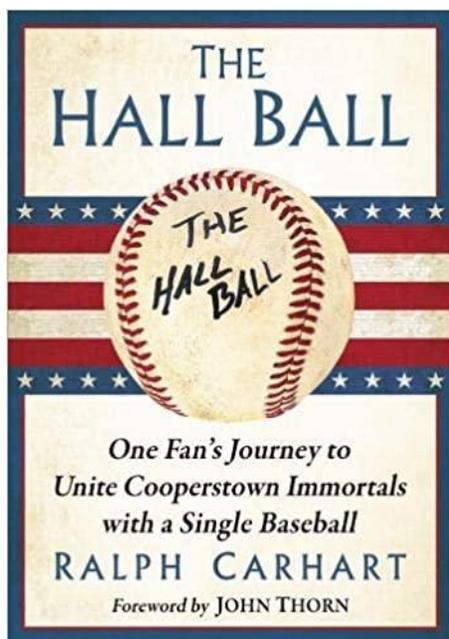
Two hands were thus put out and it was believed that the business of that inning was about ended. But Boerum renewed the long and vigorous batting by a telling hit to the right field, and made the third base. He was followed by Peter, and a home run. F. Seinsoth made the second base on his bat. Pearce only succeeded in reaching the first base; but John Oliver again brought them both home, by a good safe hit, and made second base. Smith followed with a "sockdollager" which carried him to the second base, and John Oliver home. Joe Oliver made another good effort, and reached first base safely, and Smith came home. Matty O'Brien took the bat for the *fourth* time in this inning, and got off a good hit, on which he made the second, sending "Joe"

Atlantic's kept on batting there wouldn't be ball enough left to finish the game, made a determined stand, grabbed Boerum's ball, and dropped the curtain on the Atlantic's performance in the third act. The number of runs scored in this inning was *twenty-six* and this, as we have shown, was not in consequence of misplays or indifferent fielding on the part of their adversaries-- as is usually the case when so large a score is made in a single inning-- but by long, heavy, and superior batting, which baffled all the exertions of three good fielders."

The tie-breaking game was not played.

## News & Notes

-Ralph Carhart, chairman of our Grave Marker Committee, has a book coming out in May. *The Hall Ball* will be published by McFarland and covers Ralph's journey to get a photo of all Hall of Famers with the Hall Ball. Described as "Part travelogue, part baseball history, part photo journal..." follow Ralph's travels and stories with this ball.



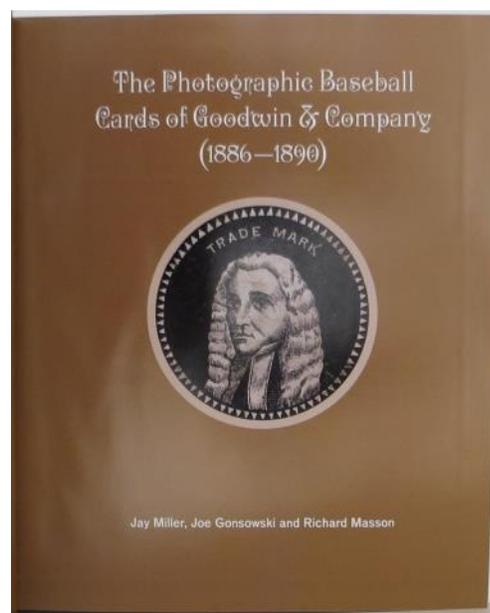
Craig Brown of Threads of the Game asks, "Can a baseball uniform be blackballed? He then answers the question with a "Yes" and an explanation: "With their uniforms, Boston was the most inventive team of the 19th century. They were the first to put their city name on the shirt in 1871, first to have a true road uniform in 1886, first to reject the pillbox cap in 1891, and the first to sew a letter onto their cap in 1894. But then, there was the Boston road uniform of 1897, described by some writers as 'a

marvel of ugliness.' Frank Selee designed it with a big, black baseball on the shirt, and after a 1-6-2 start in April, the superstitious Boston players voted to black-ball the black ball. There are no known photos of this unique uniform, so its *Threads* to the rescue. Follow this link:

<https://www.threadsofourgame.com/1897-boston/>

-The following question came in recently: Do you happen to know if I could find info on the ABBC of Brooklyn members? Stephen A. Mann was a VP in 1857, and I'm trying to see if this is the same Mann who was a sailmaker and Assessor, but am having difficulty finding definitive ties. If the baseball Mann's address is listed on any ABBC docs, I could connect them that way. Contact Tom Valenti at [thomasvalenti@gmail.com](mailto:thomasvalenti@gmail.com) with any ideas.

-Got a note on a book titled: *The Photographic Baseball Card of Goodwin & Company (1886-1890)*.



The book was compiled by Jay Miller, Joe Gonsowski and Richard Masson. Contact Masson at [Richard@ponymass.com](mailto:Richard@ponymass.com) for ordering information.

-Don Jensen, editor of *Base Ball* sends this note: *Base Ball: New Research on the Early game* published by McFarland is seeking authors for its 2021 edition. Articles are usually 6-10,000 words, plus illustrations, with premium placed on rigorous research and good writing. Book reviews are usually 1-2,000 words.

Please send you article proposals or questions to Don at [donaldjensen8@gmail.com](mailto:donaldjensen8@gmail.com). Deadline for final drafts will be approximately August 1, 2020.

-Andy McCue chairman of the Bibliographic Committee, sends this: As part of SABR's 50th Anniversary celebration, Mark Armour has asked me to lead a project to identify the 50 best baseball books published in the "SABR Era," from August 1971 until today. "I'll be compiling a list of the nominations and then working with a select screening committee to choose the final 50. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at [mccue@sabr.org](mailto:mccue@sabr.org) or [agmccue48@gmail.com](mailto:agmccue48@gmail.com)