

# Society for American Baseball Research

## BIBLIOGRAPHY COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

January 2000 (00-1)

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### Comments from the Chair

**Andy McCue**

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Welcome to the last year of the second millennium.

I regret to report that Morris Eckhouse has resigned as Executive Director of SABR. Morris has been a staunch supporter of our Research in Baseball Index (RBI) project and other initiatives from the Bibliography Committee in the almost 10 years he has served as Executive Director. The Committee, and its projects, will miss him.

I had a rather disappointing response to my request last quarter asking if the availability of *Current Baseball Publications* (CBP) on SABR's Web page meant you still wanted a paper copy. One person told me he wanted paper; two said they'd prefer to get it electronically. This is a less than overwhelming response. If I took it literally, I could immediately cease the printed edition, making one quick copy for our non-electronic member, and let it go. But somehow I suspect I did not get a representative sample. So I'll let it go for another quarter. Please, if there is no way you can accept a purely electronic reproduction of CBP, please let me know. A reminder: *Current Baseball Publications* is available on the SABR Web site (<http://www.sabr.org/cbp.shtml>).

On a second and similar issue, there has been some discussion on a SABR electronic mailing list for individual committees. Is there any interest in such a thing, which would put us in much more frequent contact?

Ted Hathaway proposed that the Bibliography Committee produce a list of newspapers printed in major- and minor-league cities in the United States and Canada and the years they were in existence. Thus, if you were interested in the 1927 season in Detroit, the list would reveal what papers were being produced that year. Well, Jerry Jackson (P.O. Box 620218, Oviedo, FL 32762-0218; e-mail: [Orayzfam@aol.com](mailto:Orayzfam@aol.com)) has produced such a directory and has been updating it. Thus, there is no need for us to embark on this project alone. However, I would suggest that anyone interested in this project could help Jerry.

As I write this, I am in the middle of Committee member Tom Hetrick's 1999 biography of Chris Von der Ahe (*Chris Von der Ahe and the St. Louis Browns*, Scarecrow Press, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706; 1-800-462-6420). For anyone interested in 19th century baseball or owners or reading a book about one different individual, I highly recommend it.

John Matthew has a new email address ([john.matthew@home.com](mailto:john.matthew@home.com)).

### Research in Baseball Index (RBI) 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 1999 Report

**Ted Hathaway**

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I'm happy to report we have a new volunteer indexer for RBI: **Bob Timmerman**. Some of you from the Los Angeles area and SABR-L may already know Bob. He is a fellow librarian from the Los Angeles Public Library and, therefore, has ready access to that library's fine collection. Bob has cataloged 115 articles from *Black Sports* (1971-1973); I did 1974-1978 years ago, but until now had no access to the earlier years. The full run (258 articles) is completed now.

**David Marasco** has also returned to RBI by completing 218 articles cataloged from *International Baseball Rundown*. This is a vital publication covering amateur and professional ball in other countries as well as the Major League Baseball scouting scene abroad. We have completed nearly the entire run with 956 articles cataloged. David is responsible for 588 of these.

**Steve Roney** has finished several years worth of Bill James' *Baseball Analyst* (1982-1989) for a total of 226 entries cataloged. Steve has also contributed many new subject terms reflecting statistical concepts to our latest revision of the RBI data entry manual.

**Terry Sloope** has continued work on early issues of *Sport* (graciously loaned by member **Steve Milman**), completing the 1959 issues for another 171 cataloged articles.

**John McMurray** catalogs current issues of *Sports Collector's Digest*, as well as occasional articles from local newspapers. John contributed 41 cataloged articles this quarter.

The largest volume of work this quarter comes, as usual, from **Brad Sullivan**. Brad scattered his work on *The Sporting News* by cataloging 2029 articles from 1971, 1977, and 1989 issues. Brad has also begun cataloging articles from *Broadcasting*, an important media publication, completing 82 articles cataloged from 1938 and 1939.

I have gleaned source references from a variety of publications:

- *Spirit of the Times* (1867, 1870) – 218 articles (1495 total; 1856-1859, 1864, 1866-1867, 1869-1870)
- *Leslie's Weekly* (1909, 1912) – 297 articles (complete run: 1157 articles; 1888-1920)
- *Liberty* (1931-1950) – 174 articles (complete run: 244 articles; 1924-1950)
- *Yank* (1942-1945) – 112 articles (complete run)
- *Stars and Stripes* (May 1953) – 169 articles (606 total; 1918-1919, 1943-1945, 1953)
- *Esquire* (1934-1947) – 99 articles (126 total; 1934-1947, 1959-1967)
- *New York Times* (1999) – 71 articles (2457 total; scattered issues from 1856 to 2000)
- *Sports Illustrated* (scattered issues from 1980, 1989, 1990, & 1995) – 61 articles (4911 total; 1954-1971, 1991-1993, 1998-1999, scattered years)
- *American Physical Education Review* (1907-1929) – 23 articles (26 total)
- *Country Gentleman* (1920-1941) – 25 articles (62 total; 1920-1942)

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At the suggestion of SABR director Norman Macht, **Evelyn Begley** has spent some time researching grant possibilities for the RBI project. Specifically, we are attempting to gain funding for a means to search the RBI database directly from the SABR Web site (a "Web-based search interface"). This will cost approximately \$3000 to \$4000 to develop. The ability to search the database from the Web site will not only make it much easier for researchers to use RBI, it will also make the database readily available to far more people than it is now. Using a grant proposal I prepared, Evelyn has been researching potential funders at the Foundation Center in New York, while I have recently begun similar research at the Foundation Center Cooperating Collection at the Minneapolis Public Library where I work. Any suggestions or assistance from members in this effort would be much appreciated.

## SABR Education Committee Project to Create Minimal Bibliographies

**Rodney Johnson**

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SABR's Education Committee is designed to build relationships with young people by helping them do baseball research. We would like to start a project to create minimal bibliographies to the SABR Web site as guides for members, educators, and students. I would like about five, more or less, entries in each category for elementary school, middle school, high school, and college/adult. Some crossover can be expected.

A starting-point list of categories might be: 1) reference; 2) biography; 3) history; 4) oral history; 5) periodicals; and 6) fiction.

We can work on these categories, as I understand that not all categories lend themselves well to certain age groups. A short synopsis of each work should accompany the bibliographic information.

Anyone interested should contact me, with a copy to Andy McCue.

## Book Reviews

**Leverett T. (Terry) Smith**

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### **EARLY INNINGS: A Documentary History of Baseball, 1825-1908**

Dean A. Sullivan, comp. & ed. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1995. 312p. ISBN 0-8032-4237-9

### **MIDDLE INNINGS: A Documentary History of Baseball, 1900-1948**

Dean A. Sullivan, comp. & ed. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1998. 238p. ISBN 0-8032-4258-1

*Early Innings* and *Middle Innings* are quite different sorts of "documents" books from Univ. of Nebraska's earlier *Sol White's History of Colored Base Ball with Other Documents on the Early Black Game, 1886-1936*, edited by Jerry Malloy. Sullivan's canvas is much broader, the whole of the first 125 years of baseball, and not even just in the United States.

But these two books are in no way encyclopedic, and several of the documents are excerpted. Though they certainly can be used for reference, and can with profit be read alongside the standard histories of Seymour and Voigt, they seem designed to be read straight through on their own. And they read very well. Sullivan provides very brief introductions to ensure continuity between documents, and the documents themselves are usually quite short. None is longer than 10 pages.

There are 120 documents in *Early Innings* and 105 in *Middle Innings*. Each volume has 12 pages of photographs.

In *Early Innings*, Sullivan divides the material into eight chapters, of which six are highly focused: the emergence of a national game (before 1860); the development of baseball as a commercial spectacle (1861-1871); the formation of the first professional leagues (1871-1882); the players' revolt (1887-1890); the formation of the American League (1899) and the National Agreement (1903); and the report of the special commission to determine the origins of baseball (1908). Less highly focused are the chapters on baseball's prosperity (1883-1888) and the tumultuous 1890s. There are many sorts of documents, newspaper articles, rules, articles of incorporation, accounts of games. Though there is much talk of contracts and the reserve clause, there is no actual player's contract included.

*Middle Innings* is naturally a shorter book, and the material emphasizes different aspects of the game. There are six sections, the first two of which cover roughly the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An especially interesting document describes the possible formation of a league of African-American women's baseball teams in 1908. The decade of the teens is titled "Rumblings of Unrest"; that of the twenties is "The Age of Ruth". Among the more fascinating documents in the latter are the charter of the Negro National League (1924), W.O. McGeehan's *New York Herald Tribune* column on Ruth's 60<sup>th</sup> home run (1927), and a newspaper report of Margaret Gisolo's career as an American Legion baseball player (1928).

The chapter on the thirties is titled "Lights, Action, History" and contains not only a newspaper account of Bill Terry's unfortunate remarks about the Dodgers before the 1934 season, but also, in an article on the business of promoting baseball from the May 1937 issue of *American Mercury*, a critique of the Giants manager's public-relations skills. The chapter on the forties is titled "Baseball in Wartime and Peacetime" and properly ends with the signature events of the end of the decade: the emergence of Jackie Robinson (1947) and the death of Babe Ruth (1948).

There is perhaps just one complaint to be made about these books. Nebraska's soft-cover books have always seemed reasonably priced, and *Early Innings*, a soft-cover, is listed at \$15. I have a cloth edition of *Middle Innings* that I bought at the 1998 SABR convention. There is no price on the book, but, understanding it was on sale for half price, I paid \$22. A price of \$44 is pretty stiff for a 238-page book, and unless you're a library, you may want to wait for the soft-cover version.

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**ERRATUM.** In the Oct. 1999 issue of the Bibliography Committee newsletter, Andy McCue's "Comments from the Chair" noted that Terry Smith indexed *Batting: One Thousand Expert Opinions* by Frank C. Lane and Ted Hathaway's RBI report mentioned that Terry has indexed articles (1912-1937) by Frank C. Lane from *Baseball Magazine*. The correct name of the author is **Ferdinand Cole Lane**. Ferdinand was Committee member Fred Ivor-Campbell's mother-in-law's great uncle.