

A History Of
SAN DIEGO BASEBALL



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HISTORY OF SAN DIEGO BASEBALL

Greetings!

The Ted Williams Chapter Welcomes You To San Diego!

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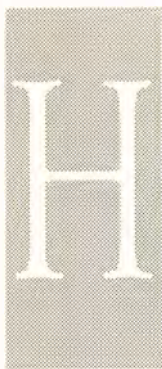
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San Diego: A Rich Baseball Tradition

By Earl Keller

*Ted
Williams, a
hometown
hero.*



San Diego, with a population of 2,000, wasn't much more than a speck on the map in 1876, the year the National League was organized. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and Father Junipero Serra had set foot here, but it would be many years before baseball would arrive and help establish San Diego's place on the globe as a major city.

But, over the years, even before the Padres joined the Major Leagues in 1969, there were a number of talented local ballplayers who made their mark with the Pacific Coast League Padres, and professional baseball in general.

Of all the San Diego natives who made it in baseball, none made more of an impact than Theodore Samuel Williams. Ted, the "Splendid Splinter," was born in San Diego in 1918 and first began to draw the attention of fans while a player at Herbert Hoover High School. As word spread that a tall, gangling youngster named Ted was smashing drives over the right field fence and into the yards of surrounding homes, people began flocking to the

games to see if the stories they'd heard about the outfielder were true.

One afternoon H.W. "Bill" Lane, late owner of the PCL Padres, was in the Hoover High bleachers at the encouragement of his friend, umpire Bill Engeln. Lane wasn't disappointed as Williams connected for two home runs and two doubles. Engeln was given a job as a PCL umpire and Williams a \$150-a-month contract.

Williams got off to a rather slow start with the Padres in 1936, failing to hit a home run in 107 times at bat. He did, however, make a strong impression on many, and a great future was predicted for him. "Never let anyone change that beautiful swing," Lefty O'Doul, then manager of San Francisco and later to become the Padres' skipper, told Williams while he was taking his cuts in the batting cage at Lane Field.

In 1937, Ted connected for 23 home runs and played a key role in the Padres' pennant triumph in the Shaughnessy Playoffs. The successful season was Williams' last in San Diego as the Boston Red Sox immediately signed him and sent him to Minneapolis for more seasoning. There Ted blasted 43 homers and drove in 142 runs to earn a promotion to the Red Sox in 1939. The rest is history.

In 19 seasons with Boston (interrupted by Military service in 1943 and 1952), Williams compiled a lifetime average of .344 and a career slugging percentage of .634, second only to Babe

Ruth. Other accomplishments include: 2,654 hits; 1,839 runs batted in; 521 home runs (career-high 43 in 1949); MVP in 1946 and 1949; Triple Crowns in 1942 and 1947; the AL record of drawing 100 or more bases on balls for six straight seasons; most years, 20 or more home runs, (16). And, in 1958 at age 40, he became the oldest player to win the batting championship with a .328 average.

Williams was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1966 becoming San Diego's first, and only, native so honored. He stays involved in the game now by serving as the Red Sox batting instructor during spring training and has, over the years, managed the Washington Senators and the Texas Rangers.

While Williams was the most notable native son to make it in the Major Leagues, there were a number of other PCL Padres who had their start with San Diego before moving on to successful Major League careers.

One of the players the Padres obtained from the Red Sox in the Williams sale was outfielder Dominic Dallesandro, who was built like a fire plug. He delivered two fantastic seasons here - 22 homers, 91 RBI and a .309 batting average in 1938, and 18 homers, 98 RBI and a .368 average in 1939 - before going back up with the Chicago Cubs for seven seasons.

The first player the PCL Padres actually sent to the Major Leagues was second baseman Bobby Doerr, who went to the Red Sox after hitting .342 here for the 1936 season. He remained with them for 14 years. Doerr finished with a .288 lifetime average, with a .325 mark in 1944 his best. He batted in more than 100 runs for six seasons - 120 in 1950 being his high figure. Twice he hit 27 home runs. A bad back finally ended Doerr's playing days in 1951.

Although he had only a .226 lifetime average, Eddie Pellagrini spent the 1941 season playing shortstop for the Padres before going up for eight seasons with the Red Sox, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh.

Shortstop George Myatt, who formed a smooth double play combination with Doerr here in 1936, went to the New York Giants for the 1938 season and stayed in the majors for seven years, ending his career in Washington. While with the Padres Myatt figured in an unusual incident at Lane Field in 1937: he was married in ceremonies at home plate.

Myatt managed in the minor leagues before



Ted Williams signs with the Padres

coaching at Washington, with the Chicago White Sox, the Cubs, Milwaukee, Detroit, and the Phillies.

Myatt's partner in the 1937 double-play Padres combination was Jimmie Reese. Many consider him the best fungo hitter in the history of baseball.

The powerhouse Padres teams which owner Bill Start (a catcher with the Padres from 1937-39) produced from 1947 through 1950 were the talk of the baseball world. Old Lane Field saw much excitement as balls flew over the fences off the bats of Luke Easter, Max West, Harry Simpson and Jack Graham. Attendance for those four seasons alone was 1,711,631.

Easter, who was a security guard when killed by bank robbers in Cleveland in 1979, was one of the greatest drawing cards in the history of the minor leagues. The Padres attracted 493,780 in 1949 when Cleveland sent Easter here on option. Fans used to pour into Lane Field well ahead of game time to watch Easter in batting practice. He hit so many home runs that Starr had a big screen put up to protect cars on Pacific Highway. When the Padres were on the road, overflow crowds greeted Easter, especially in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

One day in 1949 Easter played with a sore

This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in the January 1985 issue of *Baseball Gold*.

knee. As usual, the infielders played very deep when Luke came to bat. So on his first time at bat, Easter laid a bunt down third, and beat it out as he hobbled down to first. The crowd went wild. In 273 trips to bat, he collected 99 hits, including 23 doubles and 25 homers and drove in 92 runs with a .363 average before going up. In six seasons with the Indians, Easter hit 93 homers and drove in 340 runs. He came back to the Padres in 1954, but wasn't as productive as he had been in 1949, hitting .278 with 42 RBI.

West and Graham were drafted by major league teams after strong performances with the Padres, but neither stayed up long. West, now in the sporting goods business in Alhambra, came to the Padres in 1947 after playing with Boston and Cincinnati for six seasons. In his first season with the Padres, Max, a left-handed batter like Easter, Graham, and Simpson, hit 43 homers and drove in 124 runs with a .306 average. After batting only .178 for Pittsburgh in 1948, West was back with the Padres. Starr gave him \$30,000 for the 1949 and '50 seasons - a lot of money then - and West responded, hitting 48 homers and batting in 166 runs in 1949 and 30 homers and 109 RBI the following year. He wound up his career in 1953 with Los Angeles and compiled a career-total 295 home runs and 1,235 RBI, with a lifetime average of .278.

Graham was headed for a PCL home run record until he was beamed by Red Adams on a Sunday in July before a capacity crowd at old Wrigley Field in Los Angeles. He had 46 homers at the time, but after recovering from the injury he hit only two home runs. His .298 average and 136 RBI did, however, give him a chance to play for the St. Louis Browns, but he returned to the Padres in 1950 after hitting .238 in St. Louis. In his second go-round with the Padres, Graham hit 33 homers and drove in 136 runs. He was sold to Baltimore of the International League after the 1952 campaign. Graham lives in Long Beach.

Simpson, who died four years ago, was a tremendous hitter for the Padres in 1950. His 33 homers tied him with Graham for the club lead and he led in hits (225) and RBI (156). His totals earned him a shot with Cleveland, and he played in the majors for eight years, compiling a .266 lifetime average before returning to the Padres for the 1961 season. That year, his last in baseball, Simpson batted .303 and had 105 RBI and 24 home runs.

One of the most colorful Padres in PCL

days was Orestes "Minnie" Minoso. With the Padres in 1949 and 1950, Minoso led the club in hitting during the 1950 season with a .339 average. He also scored 130 runs, and stole 30 bases. Minoso wound up playing for Cleveland, the White Sox, Washington and St. Louis for 15 years compiling a lifetime average of .299. Over his career he hit more than 20 home runs four times and hit over .300 eight times. He also drove in more than 100 runs four times, including a career-high 116 for Chicago in 1954.

Al Rosen, was also a member of the Padres who went on to an illustrious 10-year career in the majors after playing for San Diego in 1949. A lifetime .285 hitter, Rosen hit 37 home runs for Cleveland in 1950. Three years later his 43 home runs and 145 RBI brought him the American League's MVP award. He finished his career with a lifetime total 192 homers and 717 RBI.

The Padres also had one of the famous DiMaggio brothers on their roster in 1936. Vince struck out a lot and didn't have the power of his brother, Joe, but he did have a great arm, once throwing out pitcher Jack Salveson at first after he had singled to right field. Vince went on to the Boston Braves in 1937 and stayed in the majors for 10 seasons ending his career with a lifetime mark of .249.

In exchange for Vince, the Padres acquired Jim Chaplin, a talented pitcher who earned 43 victories for San Diego in 1937-38, before dying in a car accident. Another great Padres pitcher was Yank Terry, who earned 26 wins and lost only eight in 1941, an all-time Padres record, but then only posted a 20-28 record in five seasons.

Other pitchers fared somewhat better after first gaining experience with the PCL Padres. Herb Score, a member of the 1961 Padres, was 55-46 in eight years with Cleveland and the White Sox and now does color commentary for a television station in Cleveland. The hard-throwing left-hander had his best season in 1956, earning a 20-9 record with 263 strikeouts for the Indians.

Hard-throwing Gary Bell, who showed promise in 1957-58, went on to put together a 121-117 record in 12 years with Cleveland, Boston and Seattle. Sam "Toothpick" Jones, an ace fastballer with San Diego in 1951, was 16-13 and struck out 246 batters. He went on to a 12-year ML career, posting a 102-101 career record, with 1,376 strikeouts and winning 21 games for San Francisco in

1959. He often struck out the side, top batters included.

Jack Harshman, a native of San Diego who pitched and played first base for the Padres in 1945-46 and 1961 was 69-65 in eight years as a Major League pitcher for the New York Giants and the White Sox.

Cal McLish, who won 17 games for the Padres in 1955, finished with a 92-92 record for nine years in the majors with the Indians, Reds, White Sox and Phillies. In 1957 while with the Indians, McLish had the dubious distinction of tying a Major League record when he allowed four homers in one inning. McLish, now a coach for Milwaukee, is believed to have the longest name of any ballplayer in history: Calvin Coolidge Julius Caesar Tuskahoma McLish.

Other former Padres pitchers made names for themselves in the majors. Left-hander Gary Peters, a member of the Padres in 1960-61, led AL pitchers in ERA in 1966 with a 1.98 mark for the Chisox, marking the second time he was No. 1. His 2.33 ERA also was low for 1963. Joel Horlen, on the '61 club here, was the ERA leader (2.06) in the AL in '67 for Chicago.

Joe Nuxhall, who went up to Cincinnati at the age of 15 and pitched here in 1962, earned a 135-117 record in 16 years in the majors. Sammy Ellis, another fastballer who was with the Padres in 1962-63, and now is the New York Yankees' pitching coach, compiled a 63-58 record in seven years with the Reds, Angels and White Sox. He was a 22-game winner for Cincinnati in 1965.

One of the most colorful PCL Padres pitchers of all time was Jim "Mudcat" Grant, who also threw bullets. After turning in an 18-7 record, with a 2.32 ERA for the Padres in 1957, Mudcat entered the majors and wound up winning nearly 150 games in both leagues through the early '70s. His 21-7 record for Minnesota in 1965 was tops in the AL.

Another ERA Leader was lefty Hank Aguirre, who was on the mound here in 1957. His 2.21 figure for Detroit in 1962 set the AL pace.

Harry Elliott, who coached baseball at El Cajon Valley High School, was optioned to the Padres by the Cardinals for the 1954 season, and he wound up the league's best hitter at .350. He drove in 110 runs, pounded out 42 doubles, four triples and 15 homers. After nearly two seasons with the Cards, Elliott finished with a lifetime .256,

before returning to San Diego in 1956.

Another heavy hitter for the Padres was Ed Bailey, who batted .282, with 16 homers and 60 RBI here in 1955, then delivered 155 homers and drove in 540 runs in 14 seasons with the Reds, the Giants and the Angels.

Deron Johnson, a native San Diegan, played for the Padres in 1963 and went on to spend 15 seasons in the Major Leagues with the Phillies, Oakland, Milwaukee, the White Sox and Boston. His lifetime average was .244, with 923 runs batted in, 130 of them coming in 1965 for the Reds.

Steve Boros, who played every infield position except first for the Padres from 1964-65, saw Major League duty with Detroit, Chicago and Cincinnati. His lifetime average for just under six seasons was .245, but he has been successful as a manager and coach.

Carroll Hardy, who played in the Padres outfield in 1958 before putting in eight seasons in the majors with Cleveland, the Red Sox, Houston and Minnesota, now is head scout for the Denver Broncos.

Tommy Helms, the late Steve Mesner, and Whitey Wietelmann were among the leading shortstops for the Padres in minor league days. Wietelmann is still in baseball, having been a Padres coach since 1969. After a big 1940 season here, Mesner went to the Cardinals in 1941 where he hit .341, collected 232 hits, scored 114 runs, and was credited with 601 assists to lead the team and

Deron Johnson



figured in 129 double plays. Helms batted .3093 in 1964 to nose out Tony Perez, who finished at .3089. Perez, who played first, third and the outfield while here on option from the Reds, went on to a long stand in the majors after hitting 34 homers, driving in 107 runs and batting .309 for San Diego in 1964. In 1970, his best year for the Reds, Perez hit 40 homers, 129 RBI, and compiled a .317 average. He wound up his playing days with the Red Sox ten seasons ago and finished with a lifetime average of .276.

Boros isn't the only ex-Padres player who became a manager. Billy Hunter, an infielder on the 1959 club, managed the Texas Rangers for more than a year after serving as a coach for more than 10 years under Earl Weaver at Baltimore.

Don Heffner, Dave Bristol, Bucky Harris, and Bob Skinner were all other former Padres managers who became managers in the Major Leagues. Heffner, who led the team to the 1962 pennant, managed Cincinnati in 1966, but was replaced by Bristol in July. Bristol managed the Reds through 1969, then Milwaukee, Atlanta and San Francisco. Now he's a Philadelphia coach.

Aside from players who got their start in professional baseball with the early Padres, there have been, over the years, many players from San Diego's local high schools and colleges who've made their mark in the Major Leagues. Going back a bit, catcher Dave Duncan, out of Crawford High School, put in 11 years with Oakland, Kansas City, Baltimore and Cleveland, with a lifetime average of .214 and 109 home runs. He is now pitching coach for the White Sox.

Don Larsen, a graduate of Point Loma High School, pitched a perfect game for the New York Yankees against the Brooklyn Dodgers for a 2-0 victory in the fifth game of the World Series on October 8, 1956. The performance helped the Yanks win the series, four games to three. Oddly enough, Larsen's first major letter in sports at Point Loma came in basketball in the late '40s.

Umpiring down the right field line the day Larsen spun his masterpiece was Ed Runge, a resident of San Diego since 1945. Runge was

behind the plate on September 16, 1965, when Dave Morehead, a graduate of Hoover High, pitched a no-hitter for the Red Sox against Cleveland. Morehead, who still resides here, was 35-56 in six seasons with Boston.

Ted Williams was not the only outstanding Major Leaguer to graduate from Hoover High School. Ray Boone, who began his career in 1948 with Cleveland, was also a Hoover High product. Boone's 13-year career was highlighted by a league-leading 116 RBI for Detroit in 1955. He finished his career with a lifetime .275 average and 737 RBI. Boone's son, Bob, spent several seasons behind the plate for the California Angels after 10-years with the Phillies. A three-time Gold Glove winner, Bob attended Crawford High School and

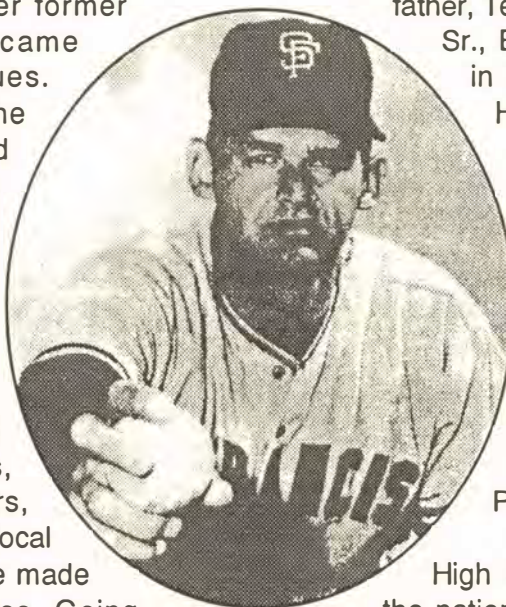
Stanford University. Someday, he may join his father, Ted Williams, the late Earle Brucker, Sr., Bob Skinner, and Deron Johnson in San Diego's Hall of Fame in the Hall of Champions in Balboa Park.

Skinner, a native of La Jolla, graduated from La Jolla High School and spent 12 years in the majors as a first baseman and outfielder for Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis. He turned in a lifetime average of .277 and later managed in the minors (leading the Padres to the PCL flag in 1967) and at Philadelphia.

Brucker played on the San Diego High School baseball team which won the national championship (his homer won the game), then, in 1937, started catching for Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics of the American League, and stayed 13 years.

San Diego High graduate Floyd Robinson began an outstanding career in the majors in 1960 with the White Sox after batting .318 for the Padres. He also saw action with Cincinnati, the Red Sox and Oakland before retiring after nine seasons with a .283 lifetime average. Robinson's best year was 1962 when he hit .312 and drove in 109 runs for Chicago.

The first San Diego State ballplayer to do well in the majors was Jim Wilson, a native who attended high school in the East. He went on to the Red Sox in 1945, and in 14 years with seven teams he compiled an 86-89 record with a 4.91 ERA. He's now head of the Central Scouting Bureau in L.A.



Don Larsen



Ray Boone

One of San Diego State's best-known graduates is the Padres' Graig Nettles: a third baseman known for his sensational fielding and powerful bat. He led the AL in homers in 1976 with 32, then hit five more the next year. In his career Graig hit over 300 homers and had over 1,000 RBI's. His brother Jim, also a native of San Diego, played with the Twins and the Tigers for four years.

Detroit's shortstop Alan Trammell is a graduate of Kearny High School. A three-time Gold Glove award winner, Trammell signed in 1977 when only 19. He batted .306 in '79 and .300 the next year.

Going up to the majors after playing for Oceanside High, Mira Costa Junior College and UCLA was Chris Chambliss, who batted .270, hit 20 homers and drove in 86 runs for Atlanta in 1982. Chris was with the Yankees five years before moving on to the Braves. Chris had a lifetime average of .280, plus 151 homers, and 815 RBI.

Other former Aztecs wearing big league uniforms now are outfielder Tony Gwynn of the Padres, and Buddy Black, a left-handed pitcher for San Francisco who started with Seattle in 1981.

When the Padres moved to Westgate Park in 1958, Ralph Kiner, former National League home run king, was their general manager. He now does broadcasting for the New York Mets.

Among managers the Padres had in the '40s was John "Pepper" Martin, one of the most colorful players in the National League's history.

He's the third baseman who used to stop hot grounders with his chest as a member of the St. Louis Cardinals Gas House Gang.

San Diego and the PCL have also given the Major Leagues some notable umpires. No San Diegan has spent more time umpiring in the majors than Doug Harvey, a San Diego State graduate. After one season in the PCL, he went to the NL. Paul Runge, a real estate man in the off season here, is following in the footsteps of his father, Ed, and will be umpiring in the NL for a 10th year in 1983. Ed was in the AL for 17 seasons, starting in 1954. John Kibler of Oceanside and Lakeside's John McSherry, both in the NL, are other umpires living in the San Diego area.

With the success of the PCL Padres, it was inevitable that a Major League franchise would come to town, and 24 years ago the San Diego Padres became a National League team. Yet, as the record clearly shows, the modern Padres are only a continuation in the long history of San Diego's rich baseball tradition. ♦

Floyd Robinson



Down Memory Lane With Vintage (PCL) Padres

By Chris Cobbs

*Pepper
Martin-
Padre
Manager
in 1946*

SAN DIEGO—Trivia question: Who hit the longest homer in Padres history? A. Dave Winfield B. Al Ferrara C. Nate Colbert D. Ted Williams.

(Hint—His salary, in the days before Southern California inflation hit 25%, was \$150 a month.)

Answer: Collect one free Big Mac if you said Ted Williams. This was at Lane Field, the Padres' first home, down at the foot of Broadway, next to the railroad station. The ball landed in & freight car and got a free ride to Los Angeles.

If you didn't realize Williams was once a Padre, perhaps you didn't know the following were also: Bobby Doerr, Pepper Martin, Bob Lemon, Tony Perez, Rocky Colavito, Vince DiMaggio, Herb Score, Luke Easter, Minnie Minoso and Al Rosen.

These were vintage Padres, the Pacific Coast League version.

Rosen, a Padre for half of 1949, spent a lot of time on the seat of his flannel uniform. Batting

behind slugger Max West, Rosen was often a target of retaliation for irate pitchers. During a game at Oakland,

West connected for one of his 48 homers that year, and down went Rosen.

But this time Rosen decided to exact a little retaliation of his own, and he charged angrily toward the mound.

Waiting for him, fists up, ready to defend his pitcher, was none other than that noted pugilist, Billy Martin. Rosen and Martin embraced, then rolled around the mound a little. But evidently Martin was saving his best uppercut for a future marshmallow salesman, and Rosen escaped without so much as a scratch.

The Padres of the Depression and post-War years are in their sixties now, and none too happy with the state of affairs in baseball. But most of them remember their time in the Pacific Coast League fondly, if only infrequently.

The pay was modest, the season stretched to 184 games and beyond, but something drove a man like Al Olsen to devote 11 years of his youth to the pursuit of... what? Camaraderie? Survival?

Johnny Ritchey, the first black in the Coast League and the Padre catcher in '48 and '49, says he endured racial slurs and harassment that made his life almost intolerable. Yet he hung on in the minors for nearly a decade. Why?

"Oh, I couldn't begin to tell you now, too many years have passed," Ritchey said. "Maybe it was pride. Or just the need to make a buck."

There were no six-figure salaries and no unions to enhance the bargaining



power of athletes 40 years ago. By merely mentioning the word “union” a player would find himself discarded from the roster. Of course, Marvin Miller hasn’t done much to enrich today’s Triple-A farmhands, either, and that bothers ex-Padre Johnny (Swede) Jensen.

Now a semi-retired building contractor in Escondido, Jensen, 63, thinks today’s minor leaguers are “neglected.” He wouldn’t want his son to go into baseball, although if he had it to do over again, he would probably choose the same career.

What would make Jensen relive his days with the Padres was the kind of juvenile fun exemplified by a stunt he and catcher Del Ballinger perpetrated one day on umpire Jack Powell.

In those days, baseballs were supplied to the plate umpire simply by tossing them from the home team’s dugout. At the suggestion of the prankster Ballinger, Jensen obtained a length of twine from trainer Les Cook and nailed one end to a ball.

When Powell called for a new baseball, Jensen unlimbered his arm and rolled the doctored ball into foul territory. Ballinger rose from his crouch behind the plate and signalled to Jensen each time Powell bent over to pick up the ball. Jensen would yank on the string, and Powell would wind up empty-handed as the ball danced back toward the dugout.

After about the fourth attempt to retrieve the ball, Powell ejected Ballinger from the game. Jensen went undetected.

Del Ballinger was always getting into mischief. A boyhood buddy of Ted Williams, Ballinger caught for the Padres from 1941-46. He was probably more accomplished as a flaky character than as a catcher.

Although he often accompanied Williams on fishing trips around San Diego County, Ballinger, a short, stocky fellow with virtually no neck, never learned to swim. The failing almost cost him his life one time when, in pursuit of a foul ball, he tumbled into a foreign dugout four feet deep in water. Incidentally, Ballinger made the catch.

Mention Ballinger’s name to any former Padre over the age of 40 and you’ll immediately be told the classic tale of how the man once pulled a gun on an umpire. But Ballinger, now a bartender in East San Diego, recounts the story with more attention to detail than anyone else.

“I put the gun up to the ump’s chest and he starts retreating toward the backstop. I start firing off the caps, and it sounds real, and the fans in the stand behind the plate are all scattering and knocking each other down trying to get out of the way.”

“I was sitting beside Pepper Martin (the Padres manager in 1946 and a legend unto himself) in the dugout when we heard this loud noise from the tunnel leading to the dressing room. So Pepper sends me to check it out, and there’s the kid holding a big pistol that looks like a .45, only he’s firing caps.

“I ask the kid if I can keep the gun for him, and he lets me, I go back to dugout. Along about the seventh inning, we’re losing, and Pep sends me up to pinch hit. Naturally, the gun is in my back pocket when I go up to the plate.

“Well, the first pitch knocks me down, and I get up kind of upset, y’know? The next pitch, I’m takin’ all the way, and the umpire calls it a strike. All I can think to do is turn and argue, and so I go to my hip pocket to get my point across.

“I put the gun up to the ump’s chest and he starts retreating toward the backstop. I start firing off the caps, and it sounds real, and the fans in the stand behind the plate are all scattering and knocking each other down trying to get out of the way. I happen to glance over in the other dugout – we’re playing against Oakland – and there’s old Casey (Stengel, the Oakland manager) lying on the bench, laughing his head off and kicking his feet up in the air.

“The umpire decides he’s had enough and throws me out, and when our next hitter, Jack Angle, comes up to the plate, he has to be

This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in an issue of *Baseball Gold*.

searched by the umpire to see if he's clean. I wind up being fined \$300.

That same year, 1946, the Padres were playing a day game in Sacramento, and Ballinger was penciled into the lineup to catch the opener of a double-header. As pitcher Ed Vitalich remembers it, one inning was all Ballinger could hold up in the brutal heat.

"He came out to catch the second with nothing but his mitt," said Vitalich, now 60 and an optometrist in San Diego. "He had taken off his mask and his chest protector and his shin guards, and he caught the whole inning that way. I think somebody else relieved him in the third."

Vitalich, like a number of former Padres who were contacted, doesn't enjoy watching or contemplating the game of baseball these days. For one thing, says Vitalich, the pace of the game seems slow compared to football. "I was a fast worker when I was out there on the mound," he said. "I'd get the ball and fire. Otherwise, your fielders would get fidgety."

Vitalich was watching television recently and happened to tune in a show called "It's Incredible." One of the segments featured a gentleman with trained dogs, and Vitalich thought the face looked familiar. "Turned out to be Chuck Eisenmann, our first baseman in '46," Vitalich said.

"I hadn't seen the guy in more than 30 years, but I surely wouldn't forget the name or the face. He was a real flake. We used to call him 'Maj.' He'd walk down the street in his major's uniform, looking for broads. I'm not surprised he wound up in Hollywood."

Where some other Padres wound up:

— Al Olson, 60, who put in 11 years with the team, later became athletic director at San Diego State. Now he teaches physical education.

— Frank Kerr, 62, who caught for the Padres in '47, later became a Coast League umpire, and then put in 20 years as a draftsman for San Diego County. Retired.

— Jimmy Reese, 74, former teammate of Babe Ruth, played in San Diego in 1937 and '38. Hasn't been out of baseball since.

— Al Rosen, who starred with the Cleveland Indians in the 1950s, later became an executive with the New York Yankees. He's now an executive at an Atlantic City casino. "A prolonged strike would

"I was born in San Diego, and I didn't know racism existed until I entered baseball," said Ritchey, now a salesman. "I always thought prejudice was just a fairy tale, but in my first game with the Padres, I got my chest protector cut off when a guy slid into home with his spikes high."

have a disastrous effect on baseball," he said. "you know, out of sight, out of mind. Baseball is competing for entertainment dollars, like any other enterprise."

— Bob Kerrigan, who pitched the pennant-clincher for the Padres in 1954, is now operations manager for the San Diego Convention and Performing Arts Center. Infielders' wives wore black and. outfielders kidded them by practicing over-the-fence catches before games he pitched.

For Johnny Ritchey, 56, there are no lighthearted moments to remember. His career in baseball was anything but pleasant. He broke the color barrier in the Pacific Coast League. He thinks the pressure ruined his chances of making it to the big leagues.

"I was born in San Diego, and I didn't know racism existed until I entered baseball," said Ritchey, now a salesman. "I always thought prejudice was just a fairy tale, but in my first game with the Padres, I got my chest protector cut off when a guy slid into home with his spikes high. The only consolation was that I walked away from that collision. The other guy, Bill Shuster, was out of the lineup for three weeks."

Ritchey said he was treated more cruelly by other ballplayers than by fans. "Nigger" was the nicest thing he was called. He ate and roomed alone. His only friend was trainer Les Cook. He is proud of his role as a trailblazer, but he would rather not have experienced the things that went with being first.

Ritchey, a good-natured man who says he never hated any of his tormentors ("I never wasted any time thinking about them"), believes the pressure made him into a fringe player. "I always believed I had as much or more ability as Jackie Robinson," Ritchey said.

"I had my shot and I blew it. I had a chance a lot of white guys never get. I'm not bitter."

From the wooden bench outside the shop, he could see them hitting.

The kid was obsessed. Impatiently he waited for his turn. An hour passed, then two. Finally the coach told him to grab a bat. On the first pitch the kid connected. The ball soared more than 300 feet, the longest hit of the day by any of the 15-year-olds.

"What's your name, kid?" asked the Herbert Hoover High School coach, Wofford Caldwell. The kid said, "Ted Williams."

This was the spring of 1934. Williams was trying for a spot on the Hoover team. He had just transferred to the school from junior high.

The kid was so skinny that he wore up to three pairs of socks to make his legs look more muscular. But he loved to hit. At recess, he made the other kids shag while he took his cuts.

He paid no attention to girls. He liked to hunt for rabbits in Mission Valley and would ride the streetcar to Ocean Beach to fish for perch (the conductor would make him and his frequent companion, Del Ballinger, sit in back because the fish smelled). But his main interest was hitting.

The playground director at University Heights, near the Williams residence, was Rod Luscomb. More than anyone, he helped the kid learn to hit. Luscomb would toss balls at the kid on a handball court, to develop a more level swing. Then they would go out on the diamond for hours. The kid had exceptional vision – he later claimed 'he could see the ball flatten against the bat at impact – and he practiced endlessly. He became so adept that by his senior year at Hoover, they wouldn't pitch to him, and tears would roll down the kid's face.

Years later, when Rod Luscomb lay dying in a hospital in San Diego, a letter from Williams was taped to the wall beside his bed, describing how much his help meant to Williams.

As Luscomb drifted in and out of unconsciousness, he would look at the letter and talk about Ted Williams. He didn't want to see

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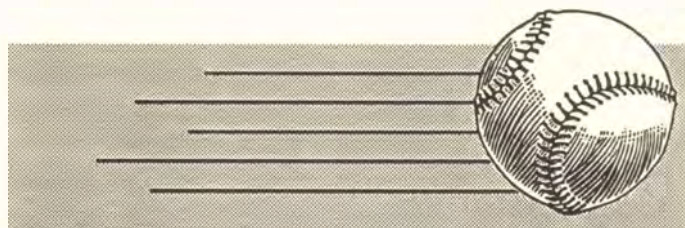
As Luscomb drifted in and out of unconsciousness, he would look at the letter and talk about Ted Williams. He didn't want to see anything but that letter from Ted Williams.

anything but that letter from Ted Williams.

The kid signed with the Padres in June of 1936. He got \$150 a month. In his first game, the kid volunteered to work in relief of the starting pitcher, who was getting bombed. The kid got a couple of quick outs, then the hitters started timing his fastball. He never pitched again.

The kid played for the Padres in '36 and '37 before being sold to the Boston Red Sox before the 1938 season. He invited the father of one of his closest companions, named Les Cassie, to make the cross-country bus trip with him to Florida.

"Ted had been really close to my parents because his own home life wasn't too good," said Cassie, 52, retired supervisor of athletics for San Diego schools. "Ted's dad was a shirttail politician and was rarely around. His mother worked for the Salvation Army. Without baseball Ted would have been in trouble." ♦



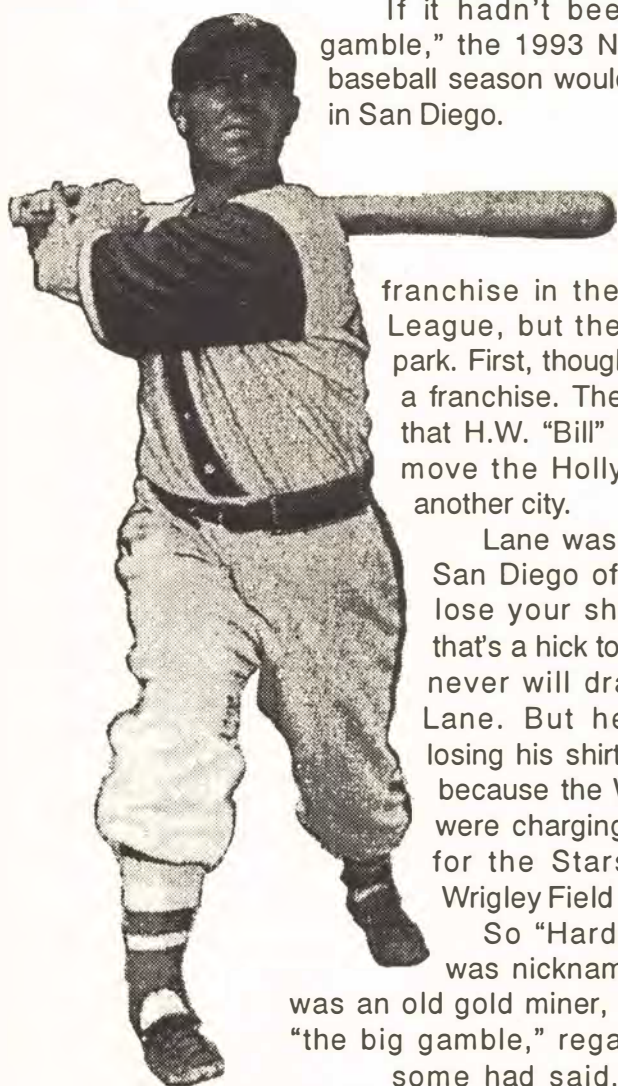


Padres

PCL Baseball History

By Earl Keller

If it hadn't been for "the big gamble," the 1993 National League baseball season wouldn't be going on in San Diego.



Tommy Thompson

It all goes back to 1935. San Diego wanted to get a franchise in the Pacific Coast League, but there was no ball park. First, though, there must be a franchise. There were rumors that H.W. "Bill" Lane wanted to move the Hollywood Stars to another city.

Lane was approached by San Diego officials. "You will lose your shirt down there, that's a hick town and baseball never will draw," some told Lane. But he already was losing his shirt in Los Angeles because the Wrigley interests were charging exorbitant rent for the Stars to share old Wrigley Field with the Angels.

So "Hardrock," as Lane was nicknamed because he was an old gold miner, decided to take "the big gamble," regardless of what some had said, and the Stars moved here – even though there was only \$11,000 in Lane's bank roll. Lane had considered moving back to Salt Lake City, where he owned a club starting in 1918. Then he moved and the

team became the Hollywood Shieks in 1926. A few years later the nickname was changed to Stars.

San Diego had to get busy in a rush because Lane wanted to start the 1936 season here. No time was wasted starting to build a ball park at the foot of Broadway. WPA funds were used and the park was named Lane Field in honor of Bill Lane. Meanwhile, a nickname had to be decided on. After a few sessions, the committee selected Padres because of the building of the first Mission here by Father Junipero Serra.

Baseball in San Diego was a success from the opening pitch March 31, 1936, despite the fact Lane Field wasn't completed. There were a few lean years, especially during World War II when there was a shortage of player talent, but there were many seasons when attendance was excellent. The first season saw 178,075 go through the turnstiles, then the gate jumped to 216,870 in 1937, the year the Padres won the pennant in the Shaughnessy Playoffs.

Many fans never will forget the first season here, particularly those who suffered broken noses and other injuries from foul balls. This happened because the roof wasn't completed for the opening pitch. There was only a small screen behind home plate and foul balls flew everywhere into the stands. Unless a fan kept alert, he could be struck – and many were.

The press box was on the first

level behind home plate and fans were telling sports writers how to score games. In the opener, the Padres beat Seattle, 6-2 by scoring five times in the third inning to decision "Kewpie Dick" Barrett, thus called because he had a face like a doll. Many years later he pitched here for the Padres. Barrett's briefcase always was a big topic. He carried his favorite medicine – whiskey – in it.

Attendance for the opening of the big show here was 8,178 and Lane was an extremely happy man. He knew he had made the right decision to leave the Los Angeles area.

There were some big names in the Padres' starting lineup. Bobby Doerr was at second. He hit .342 that season and then went up to the Boston Red Sox for 14 years. Lane was a close friend of Eddie Collins, boss of the Red Sox, so thus the dealings between the teams that year and later.

Never will I forget a Saturday afternoon at Lane Field (now a parking lot) in 1936. The San Francisco Seals, managed by Frank "Lefty" O'Doul, were in town. The Padres' bats were smoking that day, especially Doerr's. Bobby managed to go an amazing 6-for-6 in San Diego's collection of 25 hits. Even O'Doul took a turn trying to get Doerr out and failed.

George Myatt, who went to the major leagues after the 1937 season, teamed with Doerr as the Padres' double play combination for the first game at Lane Field. The late Cedric Durst, later to follow Frank Shellenback (Padre skipper from 1936 through '38) as manager for nearly five seasons, was the center fielder. Durst, who had played with the New York Yankees and Babe Ruth, stole two bases in the opener.

The right fielder was the oldest of the DiMaggio baseball family, Vince, who went up to the Boston Braves for 1937 despite more than 100 strikeouts (I recall him swinging at pitches a foot or

more outside). He had some power and also a great arm – plus the name of DiMaggio. The opposition didn't gamble on going from first to third or trying to score from second with Vince in right field.

Lane was gruff (he actually scared some people) and, like most owners, he wanted to hold onto his money as long as possible. He needed a good amount to buy the cigars a day he puffed on.

Lane gave Ted Williams \$150 a month on his graduation from Herbert Hoover High School in June of 1936, but veterans like Doerr and Myatt were receiving at least four times as much. Williams got a \$100 raise for the 1937 season, his last before he went on to fame with the Boston Red Sox – and a place in the Hall of Fame with a lifetime average of .344.

"Hardrock" was a shrewd baseball man. He knew a good ball player when he saw one. When he sold Williams to the Bosox, he told his friend Eddie Collins, boss of the American League club, he wanted Dominic Dallesandro in the deal. Dallesandro came here and went on to turn in two of the greatest seasons a player ever enjoyed in the minor leagues anywhere in this land.

Dom batted .309, with 22 homeruns and 91 RBI, in 1938, getting 167 hits in 541 times at bat. The next year he also went to the plate 541 times, but he collected 199 hits, including 50 doubles, nine triples and 18 homers, for a .368 average, best in the league.

Lane also had his eyes on a certain pitcher and a certain outfielder with the Braves when DiMaggio was taken by Boston. The pitcher was big Jim "Tiny" Chaplin, who had won 70 games in five seasons in the Southern Association (including 24

This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in the April 1983 issue of *Baseball Gold*.

Lane Field as it looked from center field in the 1940's. It is now a parking lot at the foot of Broadway.



in 1935) before going to the Braves to post a 10-15 record in 1937, and the outfielder was Rupert "Tommy" Thompson; Lane got both players.

Chaplin, a right-hander with every pitch in the book, gained 23 wins and lost 15 here in 1937 and came back with a 20-16 mark the next year. Then bad luck struck the Padres' workhorse pitcher.

Spring training was under way in El Centro in 1939 and Chaplin was working out, although he hadn't signed a contract. He rode over to San Diego with me on a Friday afternoon because he wanted to talk salary with Lane and C.A. "Spider" Baum, General Manager of the Padres and once an outstanding spitball pitcher in the PCL.

I dropped Chaplin off at Lane Field and told him he could ride back to El Centro with me the next day. That evening he went to Tijuana with friends and on their return, their car smashed into a vehicle without lights that was being pushed along the highway in the National City area. Chaplin's jugular vein was severed when he went through the windshield and he died on the hospital steps at the age of 31. (Another Padre player, Herb Gorman, died in left field during a 1953 game at Lane Field.)

I never will forget the time a fan went in to Lane's office and said, "Mr. Lane, if you would keep your pitchers out of bars and night clubs, they might win more games." He was referring to Chaplin, who had lost a heartbreaking 1-0 decision a few days before.

Thompson, who died in 1971 of cancer, was one of the most colorful players ever to don a Padre uniform. They talk about Pete Rose's hustle, but believe me Thompson had as much and possibly even more. His spirit inspired teammates. Whether the Padres were ahead or trailing, Thompson's determination remained the same all the time. He never let down.

Thompson sent chills up and down the spines of fans. Some still talk about his spectacular efforts. Numerous times he hit dramatic homeruns in late innings or in overtime games – almost as though he were swinging a magic wand from the left side. After a great 1937 season here (he hit .326, gathered 211 hits, belted 10 homeruns and drove in 92 runs), he spent time with the Chicago White Sox and the St. Louis Browns (his major league lifetime average was .266) before closing out his career with the Padres from 1944 through 1946. Of those seasons, a .280 mark in '44 was tops.

Thompson, who also played first and third

when necessary, was involved in two unusual incidents in Padre minor league history. One night at Lane Field he somersaulted over the 4-foot right field fence to make a never-to-be-forgotten catch. The umpires huddled for a long period before ruling Thompson was in the air and off the playing field at the time of the catch so the putout wasn't allowed.

Another time in Portland, Thompson started for a flyball and suddenly disappeared. A board over a water control box had given in under his weight and Thompson went down up to his head. Luckily, he wasn't hurt.

Lane saw his last game Aug. 30, 1938. That Wednesday afternoon, the Padres and Angels hooked up. Dick Ward pitched no-hit, no-run ball for the Padres for 12 2/3 innings. His rival, left-hander Ray Prim, would stop often and tie his shoe laces to catch his breath.

Ward allowed a hit with two out in the 13th and another in the 14th, but none in the 15th and 16th before finally gaining a 1-0 verdict. Lane suffered a stroke after the game and died Oct. 9, 1938, at 78.

The new owners of the Padres for the start of the 1945 season were headed by Bill Starr, who caught for the team from 1937 through 1939 and was the only player who ever pinch hit for Ted Williams in the minors. Ted, ordered to bunt, failed on his first attempt and was lifted for Starr.

One of the new owners was Vic Schulman, who still owns Lloyd's Furniture. Starr and his associates bought the Padres for a song. They paid \$220,000, but since there was \$90,000 in the bank in stock, the actual cost was only \$130,000 – indeed a big bargain. That same franchise now is worth many millions.

Starr also was a shrewd baseball man. Fans who have lived here for many years know what power-packed lineups he produced before selling to C. Arnholt Smith in 1956. Attendance for 1945 was 346,057, then in 1947, with Max West ripping opposing pitchers to bits with 43 homeruns and 124 runs batted in, the gate jumped to 353,951.

The following year, attendance climbed to 424,200 because of a slugger named Jack Graham. His home runs packed 'em in. If bad luck hadn't struck in July in Los Angeles, Graham might have bested Tony Lazzeri's league record of 60. The Angels' Red Adams beamed Graham when he had smashed 46 homers. After recovering, Jack

came back to hit only two more homeruns. His RBI total was 136.

Starr presented the greatest showman in PCL history in 1949 in Luscious "Luke" Easter, another powerful left-handed swinger like Graham and West. Cleveland's Hank Greenberg discovered Easter and sent him to the Padres for seasoning.

The first day in spring training camp at Ontario, Easter lined a pitch over the right field fence in his initial time at bat and he immediately became a big attraction. He was here for 80 games and in 273 times at bat, Luke belted 25 home runs and drove in 92 runs for a .363 average.

Fans literally poured out to see Easter here and also in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Most of the time there were overflow crowds, most fans coming out early to see Easter in action in batting practice. The Padres gate for the year hit 493,780, largest ever. Luke was back here for part of 1954, but his bat didn't produce the figures it had in 1949.

However, Easter did go on to play in the International League, hitting 40 homers for Buffalo in 1957 and 30 the next year. Luke was a security guard, taking a bag of money to a bank in Cleveland in 1979, when he was gunned down and killed by bank robbers. Oldtimers here will never forget his hitting shows — especially line drives to center field that kept rising and sometimes sailed over the outfielder's head.

Pitchers risked their lives when they faced Easter with all his power.

By the time termites had all but eaten up the Lane Field wooden band box, 5,505,922 had attended games there from 1936 through 1957. Flying termites were at work during games and those of us in the press box often wondered if we might have to climb down the screen to safety. Smith promised fans a new ball park and in 1958 the Padres moved to beautiful Westgate Park (Fashion Valley stands there now).

Talk of major leagues for San Diego, as well as many other larger minor league cities, hurt



attendance and it fell off at Westgate Park from Lane Field days. When San Diego Stadium was completed in 1968, the Padres moved there for what proved to be their last season in the minors.

Now while Ol' Hardrock Lane gave us organized baseball and the groundwork for a major team, the Padres wouldn't be in the majors today if Smith hadn't been patient and kept spending while waiting for the chance to get a team.

Jim Mulvaney, an attorney and Smith's right hand man, and the late Eddie Leishman, General Manager after Kiner, worked extremely hard to get a team here and so did Dr. Al Anderson and Bud Porter of the Chamber of Commerce. They beat the drums at baseball conventions and their efforts finally paid off when San Diego got an expansion

team. Smith sold out to Ray Kroc.

Starr, later a successful real estate developer and now a fan, believes too much credit can't be given Smith.

"It wouldn't have been easy to find another person or a group which would have been willing to gamble \$10 million to bring major league baseball here," Starr said. "If we had given up the minor league franchise, we wouldn't have been in line for a major team. It cost him considerable to keep the minor team going."

"In my opinion, Smith did much to give San Diego class. Everything he constructed was with style, good taste and top quality. He set the pattern for some of the fine buildings we now have in the downtown area." ♦

San Diego Padres 1937 Pacific Coast League





History Of San Diego Ballparks

By Vic Pallos

Memories of Lane Field & Westgate Park

Franklin Roosevelt swamped Alf Landon to win a second term as President, King Edward VIII abdicated the British throne to court Mrs. Simpson, and Bing Crosby introduced his newest hit, "Pennies from Heaven."

The year was 1936.

In the East, the New York Yankees captured their first of four consecutive World Series crowns under new manager Joe McCarthy, Lou Gehrig's 46 homers led the majors, and the Giants' Carl Hubbell emerged as National League MVP.

And, in the West, Pacific Coast League baseball arrived in San Diego.

Although the National League Padres would not make their debut for another 33 years, the decades of PCL action that followed were filled with memories and nostalgia for San

Diego baseball fans.

An outgrowth of three former Coast League clubs, the 1936 team formed originally in Tacoma, Wash.

(1904-05). It picked up later in Salt Lake City (1915-25) and Los Angeles (1926-35), sharing Wrigley Field with the Angels and calling itself, among other names, the Hollywood Shieks.

Financially, the Shieks were losers. Club owner H.W. "Hardrock Bill" Lane, after several seasons of hard times, decided to move the club south where a new WPA-constructed ballpark would be partially ready for the '36 season.

It wasn't nearly the showplace as Wrigley Field, but the new facility certainly had a better view – San Diego Bay was just a fungo's clout away at the foot of Broadway.

A reported 8,178 fans, including state and local dignitaries, piled into Lane (as in "Hardrock Bill") Field on March 31, 1936, to cheer their Padres to an opening day 6-2 victory over Seattle.

BROKEN NOSES

In the beginning, there was no grandstand roof and only a minimal backstop screen to protect the crowd against foul balls. Spectators between the bases were right on top of the action – home plate was only 30 to 35 feet from the backstop – and they suffered the consequences with broken noses and bruised jaws from errant fouls.

A roof and lighting were added by

**This is an article
that appeared in the August 1984
issue of *Baseball Gold*.**

*"They (West and
Easter) hit 20 dozen
balls over the fence
in batting practice in
one week," recalled
former Padres
catcher and trainer
Les Cook.*

the end of the decade, and screens were later installed to protect fans in the boxes and upper grandstand.

Frank Shellenback managed the Padres to a second place finish in their inaugural year, with future major leaguers Bobby Doerr, George Myatt, Vince DiMaggio and Ted Williams on the roster.

Williams, a gangling hometown youngster, broke into organized baseball at Lane Field. He joined the Padres part-way through the season and managed two triples and eight doubles while batting .271 in 42 games.

Williams returned the following year and was more impressive – 23 homers, 98 RBI's and a .291 batting average before the Boston Red Sox grabbed him for a reported \$35,000.

The picturesque Pacific Ocean offered other than visual benefits, especially to left-handed hitters. Williams and other lefties through the years took advantage of brisk on-shore breezes that carried many a homer well beyond the right field fence onto Pacific Coast Highway.

While the favorable winds often helped, the

park's cozy right field dimensions also played a role. For years, Lane Field's assumed right field foul line distance was 335 feet. That's what was painted on the wall.

But a curious groundskeeper in 1954 actually measured the chalk line and revealed the truth. It was only 325 feet.

DAFFY DISTANCE

Another measurement, however, made widespread headlines. In the 1953 season, groundskeeper Bob McGivern discovered the actual distance from home plate to first base – 87 feet!

Whatever the distance, the right field barrier was an inviting target for such popular Padres as Max West, Luke Easter, Jack Graham and Harry "Suitcase" Simpson in the late 1940's and early '50's.

"They (West and Easter) hit 20 dozen balls over the fence in batting practice in one week," recalled former Padres catcher and trainer Les Cook.

Lane Field as it sat at the foot of Broadway pier in downtown San Diego.



Graham smacked 48 homers in 1948, West and Easter combined for 73 in 1949. Easter is credited with Lane Field's longest drive, a 500-footer against the center field scoreboard. In fact, Graham was well on his way toward breaking Tony Lazzeri's record of 60 homers, amassing an incredible 46 round-trippers by July. But Angels' pitcher Red Adams beamed the Padres' slugger before a packed house at Wrigley Field, and Graham managed only two more homers for the remainder of the season.

As the Padres' home run production increased in the post-World War II years, attendance mushroomed. Nearly half-a-million rooters whirled the turnstiles in 1949, a club record.

Capacity crowds of 12,000+ were common, particularly for the popular Sunday afternoon doubleheaders. Oftentimes, fans without grandstand or bleacher tickets lounged on the grass in deepest center field. Sometimes, temporary seating was necessary. The seat cushion rental business flourished.

Lane Field was typical of many minor league ballparks – wooden grandstands (they were green in later years) and colorful promotional signs ringing the outfield. An occasional post may have hampered some fans' visibility, but most folks enjoyed a great view. Front row box-holders literally sat at eye level to the field.

TERMITE HAVEN

Aging wooden grandstands and constant dampness, however, proved a lethal combination as the ballpark entered the 1950's. Portions of the grandstands and bleachers were condemned by the city's building inspector, victims of termites and dry rot.

"Lane Field Termites Angry... They're Losing Their Home," proclaimed a San Diego **Tribune** headline in 1956. Indeed, the ballpark was in its waning years. Some seating sections down the baselines had to be removed or closed. At one time, fans reportedly occupied some seats "at their own risk."

The left field stands at Lane Field were a favorite roost for die hard Padre fans in the 1940's



As the termites continued to gnaw, Lane Field earned the unenviable reputation as the "most decrepit in the league."

Meanwhile, on the field, the Padres achieved one of their brightest moments in 1954 in capturing their first clear-cut PCL championship. Former American League MVP Bob Elliott, who later managed the team, chalked up five RBI's with two memorable home runs to defeat the Hollywood Stars, 7-2, in a one-game playoff. Veteran southpaw Bob Kerrigan went the distance to record the historic win.

Just a year prior, Lane Field's most notable batting accomplishment made PCL history. Hollywood outfielder Ted Beard, former Pittsburgh Pirate, clubbed four consecutive home runs, all over the right-center field fence, for only the seventh time in baseball annals.

But the next day, tragedy struck. Padres' outfielder Herb Gorman collapsed during a game after belting successive doubles, the victim of a heart attack. He died en route to a hospital.

A remarkable exhibition of throwing strength astonished Lane Field spectators in 1956 when Rocky Colavito, destined for stardom with the

Cleveland Indians, heaved a baseball 437 feet. It just missed the world record.

Pitchers, too, had their moments of glory.

Old-timers may recall a pitching dual in 1938 when manager Shellenback, in the nightcap of a Sunday doubleheader, narrowly defeated an 18-year-old Seattle rookie, 2-1. Pitching in his professional debut, the kid was Fred Hutchinson who eventually became a yeoman of the Detroit Tigers mound staff and, later, a popular manager of the Tigers, Cards and Reds.

Also in the '38 season, Dick Ward of the Padres hurled 12 2/3 hitless innings against Ray Prim of the Angels before winning, 1-0, on a two-hitter.

A host of noted future major league pitchers performed for the hometown team in Lane Field's latter years, among them Gary Bell, "Sad" Sam Jones, Cal McLish, Hank Aguirre and Jim "Mudcat" Grant.

"Hardrock Bill" witnessed few of the historic moments in the ballpark that carried his namesake. He died of a heart condition after the 1938 season.

Lane's estate carried on the franchise until 1945 when it was purchased by former Padres

Westgate Park, the site of the present Fashion Valley.



catcher Bill Starr and associates.

In the early '50's Starr stirred up controversy when he installed some soft drink vending machines at the ballpark after union vendors had increased their commission demands. The dispute was settled by the following season.

NEW PARK NEEDED

Starr's main ambition, however, was to build the Padres a new home. Several sites were proposed, including Balboa Park, rural Mission Valley and property adjacent to the Convair plant along Coast Highway.

By the mid-1950's, all of Starr's proposals had fouled out.

In 1955, well-known San Diego businessman C. Arnholt Smith and the Westgate-California Tuna Packing Co. purchased controlling interest in the Padres, determined to move the club into new quarters. This, despite the threat of major league baseball coming to the West Coast. (The Dodgers and Giants arrived in 1958.)

"In the event such a thing happens, minor league baseball here in all likelihood would suffer or even diminish," predicted **Evening Tribune** sports editor George Herrick in 1956.

Nevertheless, the aggressive Smith had the funds and the property, and plans were announced for a new \$500,000 stadium in Mission Valley. Lane Field's days obviously were numbered.

After 22 seasons in their breezy abode, the Padres bade farewell to the waterfront and the termites at the end of the '57 season. The final homestand concluded with a doubleheader against Sacramento.

The team finished fourth in the standings.

In October 1957, a football game between the University of San Diego and Marine Recruit Depot closed out the field's scheduled events.

During the next few months the facility was a storage site for overflow goods, including cotton, from nearby warehouses. Meanwhile, speculation ran high on the future of the valuable property owned by the Harbor Commission.

Amidst discussion of a new convention center-office complex rising on the land, a wrecker's truck rolled over the pitcher's mound and deposited its demolition gear around home plate.

The date was March 5, 1958.

Within weeks the familiar landmark was gone.

Grandiose plans have been proposed

during the past 25 years, but the place where Lane Field once was, today is mostly a parking lot.

But some San Diegans remember with great affection the days of large Sunday afternoon crowds, long homeruns, gnawing termites and cool breezes in the old ball park.

WESTGATE PARK

"A beautiful park in a beautiful setting" the **Evening Tribune** noted.

Westgate Park was called one of the nation's most attractive minor league layouts. Once the site of horseback riding trails, the Padres' new home was hollowed out in a country setting in Mission Valley at Highway 395 and Friars Road.

Ground was broken on February 27, 1957, and within 14 months one of baseball's few privately-financed ballparks became a reality.

Crowds of 4,619 and 7,129 fans turned out for a day-night double-header against the Phoenix Giants to dedicate Westgate Park in April 1958.

Permanent seating was installed for 8,248 spectators, facing a playing field measuring 320 feet down the foul lines and 410 feet to center field. A six-foot-high wire fence surrounded the outfield, and the only advertising was located atop the left field scoreboard – a plug for Breast-O'-Chicken Tuna.

Among the ballpark's distinctive features were four twin-support light towers leaning protectively over the infield from above the covered grandstand.

Also noteworthy were more than \$20,000 in trees, shrubs, flowers and tropical plants brought in to beautify the already-attractive grounds.

During the inaugural season upwards of 233,000 spectators cheered such Padres as Earl Averill (he hit 24 homers before being recalled to Cleveland) and Carroll Hardy, and pitchers Gary Bell and Hal Woodeschick, all bound for the Indians.

Off the field, former Pirates star and National League home run king Ralph Kiner became the Padres' new general manager.

Without favoring ocean breezes, fewer homers cleared the fences at Westgate Park than at Lane Field. Nevertheless, Tony Perez blasted 34 round-trippers in 1964 before joining Cincinnati's famed "Big Red Machine." Deron Johnson hit 33 in 1963 and Tommy Harper 26 in 1962.

Harper's home run output plus catcher

Jesse Gonder's 116 RBI's hoisted the Padres to a PCL championship in the '62 season.

NO-HITTERS

Locals Al Worthington and Sammy Ellis both fired no-hitters at Westgate. Worthington's masterpiece was preserved late in the game when outfielder Jim Bolger turned in one of the park's greatest catches to rob a Hawaii batter of hit.

Ellis pitched his gem on a Monday, which is usually a slow night for attendance. But an unexpected 9,000 fans turned out, apparently sensing something special was due.

The longest "no-hitter," however, occurred in 1959 when the Padres' Dick Stigman fired 10 2/3 innings before Salt Lake City broke the spell. San Diego finally won, 1-0, in the 15th, but Stigman had since bowed to a reliever and didn't figure in the decision.

Fans of the Westgate era also may remember the daring base stealing of "Go Go" Chico Ruiz in the '62 and '63 seasons, plus the flashy infield play of Tommy Helms and Bobby Klaus.

Few parking problems plagued Westgate Park as adjacent lots accommodated up to 3,000 cars.

Inside the stadium, U.S. Navy sailors and other military personnel were frequent visitors. They helped set individual game attendance marks of 15,154 in 1958 for a dairy night promotion and 15,229 in 1967 just before the Padres moved into the new San Diego Stadium.

Overflow crowds usually lounged on the grassy slopes beyond the outfield fence.

VARIETY OF EVENTS

Throngs also filled Westgate for a variety of non-baseball activities, including a circus, jazz festival, rodeo, pianist Victor Borge concert-event, Easter services and the Ice Capades. These ventures oftentimes made the ballpark a profitable

operation for a team that seldom was.

"It breaks my heart to think of this park being torn down," lamented one fan after the Padres caged the Denver Bears, 6-2, in their final game of the regular '67 season.

"I've never seen a more compact, better family type park than Westgate," added Eddie Leishman, then general manager. "We're going to hate to vacate it."

To mark the occasion, a crowd of more than 15,000 fans was treated to 10-cent concessions. The gathering responded by devouring 17,000 hot dogs, 11,000 bags of peanuts and almost enough beer and soft drinks to fill San Diego Bay.

But the fate of Westgate Park, indeed, was certain.

Throngs also filled Westgate for a variety of non-baseball activities, including a circus, jazz festival, rodeo, pianist Victor Borge concert-event, Easter services and the Ice Capades. These ventures oftentimes made the ballpark a profitable operation for a team that seldom was.

City fathers were dreaming of attracting a major league franchise. In May 1965, that dream took a turn toward reality. The City Council approved plans for a 50,000-seat, \$27.75 million multi-use stadium and proposed as the site some land along the sometimes-active San Diego River about five miles east of Westgate Park.

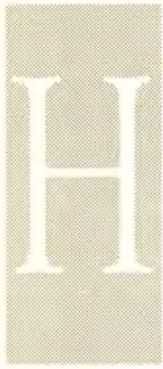
An enabling bond issue was presented to the voters, and it passed by a 72 percent majority. San Diego

Stadium, later to be renamed for former **Evening Tribune** sports editor Jack Murphy, would change the sports future of the city, beginning with the arrival of the Chargers in 1967.

Westgate Park and the surrounding countryside, where horses once galloped, soon would become a huge shopping center.

The Padres played their last game in Westgate before an overflow house in September 1967. They remained as a PCL team for one more year in San Diego Stadium before giving way to National League expansion the following season.

After 33 summers in the minors – in breezy Lane Field and cozy Westgate Park – San Diego had become Big League! ♦



Ted Williams

Even Better Than The Record Shows!

By Paul R. Maracin

On June 26, 1936 a gangling young Hoover High School graduate named Ted Williams signed a baseball contract on the kitchen table at neighbor Johnny Lutz's house on Utah Street in San Diego's North Park district. The contract, offered by the San Diego Padres of the Pacific Coast League, was for \$150 a month. As a signing bonus, pay for the entire month of June was generously included. This inauspicious

event launched the career of possibly the greatest hitter to ever step into a batter's box.

In that initial professional year of 1936, Williams hit for an average of .271, appearing in 42 games. Playing a full season with the Padres the following year, he hit .291, with 23 home runs and 98 RBI's. In December 1937 his contract was sold to the Boston Red Sox and the rest is history.

The native San Diegan's batting accomplishments over a

nineteen year big league span (twice interrupted by tours of military duty) are legendary. His lifetime average in the majors was .344, with 521 homers,

despite the fact that he drew a walk every 4.8 times at bat - more than any other hitter in the history of the game.

In 1941 he astounded the sports world by ending up with a prodigious .406 batting average. During that season his worst month was April, when he hit "only" .389. He compensated for this mediocre month by hitting .436 in May. No major leaguer has reached the elusive and magic .400 mark since for a full season. What makes the feat all the more remarkable is the fact that when Williams attained his lofty average he did so without benefit of the sacrifice fly rule.

Simply stated, the rule provides that a batsman will not be charged with a time at bat and a sacrifice fly will instead be registered when (before two are out) the batter hits a fly ball or a line drive handled by an outfielder which (1) is caught, and a runner scores after the catch, or (2) is dropped, and a runner scores, if, in the scorer's judgement, the runner could have scored after the catch had the fly ball been caught.

The sacrifice fly rule has been the subject of controversy over the years, with official rules makers having a difficult time deciding whether or not the rule should be used. The rule was initially adopted in 1908, abolished in 1931, restored for one season in 1939, again abolished in 1940, and then re-instituted

The sacrifice fly rule has been the subject of controversy over the years, with official rules makers having a difficult time deciding whether or not the rule should be used.

This is an article that appeared in the September 1985 issue of *Baseball Gold*.

in 1954.

Thus, in 1941 a fly ball caught by an outfielder (which resulted in a base runner scoring after the catch) was just another out, and the batter was duly charged with a time at bat when batting averages were computed - to the detriment of the batter. The record books show that (under 1941 playing rules) Williams was at bat 456 times, with 185 hits, for an average of .406.

The question that has intrigued baseball fans is: What would Williams' batting average have been in 1941 if the sacrifice fly rule had been in effect?

Oddly, this information will not be found in the usual sources: the voluminous archives of organized baseball, or the multitude of sports periodicals that contain just about every bit of trivia and minutia conceivable, with the

possible exception of the maiden name of the mother-in-law of the last shortstop to commit an error in the uniform of the St. Louis Browns.

Thanks to indefatigable researcher John B. Holway, the matter has been resolved. Holway, a member of the Society for American Baseball Research, reconstructed Williams' 1941 season

with a comprehensive at-bat by at-bat summary. He found that Williams hit six fly balls that scored runners from third base that year. Under present rules, therefore, Williams' average would be computed at .411 (450 at bats, 185 hits). Taking this factor into consideration, Williams' achievement 44 years ago was even more impressive!

Along with Joe DiMaggio's amazing 56 game consecutive hitting streak of the same year, it is a level of excellence that may never be reached again. ♦



ANOTHER LOOK AT A HOMETOWN BASEBALL HERO!

Ted Williams Field

By G.J. Walker

According to my best calculations, it's approximately 2,580 miles as the crow flies from home plate at San Diego's

North Park playground to home plate at Fenway Park. Drive your old Mustang and we're talking 3,000 miles plus. Literally and figuratively it represents the long road Ted Williams traveled from being a lanky, skinny kid in what was then small-city San Diego to his Hall of Fame career in the Hub.

Your reporter has also traveled the same road in his life – only in reverse. A native New Englander, I almost made it to home plate at Fenway the same age as Ted. Unable to hit a good curveball (come to think of it, good fastballs gave me problems, too), I had to settle for staring at the Fenway light towers from my Boston University dormitory room by winter and

cheering from the bleacher seats by summer.

And while I never planned or even thought about it, those weird and unexpected twists and turns that life takes now find me, nearly 20 years later,

with a wife and 2 kids living a few blocks west of home plate at the North Park playground.

When my son got so he could throw those rolled up socks around the living room pretty well, we decided it was time to hit the big time with a real ball and glove. And where else to go but the North Park playground. Now understand Southern California is not New England, meaning tradition is not our forte. Advertisements saying things like "proudly serving San Diegans for over 8 years" don't leave us with bemused smirks. And if you ever want to get something named after yourself, your best bet is to be a 16th century explorer or an 18th century missionary. So it didn't seem all that unusual to the California way of life that the playground would have nothing indicating that Ted Williams had learned to play ball here. And the only ones who seemed to be aware that Ted had grown up here were the old timers and the small remnant of snow-fearing Red Sox fans. Still, throwing that ball around with my young son, one could almost see the footprints in the sand and imagine the skinny kid working at developing that perfect swing, swatting line drives into the fading sunset. Sure – why not – was there really anything to keep this from being called Ted Williams Field? I mean it was our neighborhood field and we were now the neighborhood.

A proposal to name the field Ted Williams Field was put before the North

"We lived in a little \$4,000 house on Utah Street. The North Park playground was a block and a half from my house. It had lights and we could play until 9:00 at night. I was there all the time... The playground director was my first real hero. When they inducted me into the Hall of Fame, he was one of the people on my mind, one of the people who made it possible. I tagged after him almost every day of my life for the next six or seven years, hanging around like a puppy waiting for him to finish marking off the baseball field. I was so eager to play, and hitting a home run off him in those makeshift games was as big a thrill for me as hitting one in a regular game. For those next seven years, I don't suppose I missed a day at the North Park playground. – Ted Williams in My Turn at Bat

This is an article that appeared in *The Red Sox Journal*.

Park Recreation Council in mid-1990. The proposal passed and began to move its way up the Parks and Recreation bureaucracy in mid-1990. By early 1991 the proposal was before the City Council where it received final approval. The Parks and Recreation staff members working at the North Park playground had been supportive of the idea all along, and when final approval was given they decided to make the ballfield dedication the highlight of the North Park Family Day at the playground on July 6, 1991.

It was intended to be just a little neighborhood thing, but in the 2 weeks before the dedication, other parts of the city began talking about it. *San Diego Union* TV critic Don Freeman abandoned the world of show business for a day to devote his entire column to previewing the event. It was confirmed that the *Union's* leading sports columnist, Barry Lorge would be covering the event. And the City Council had managed to contact Ted and extend a formal invitation to attend. Unfortunately he already had plans for that weekend with an old fighter pilot buddy named George Bush at the All-Star game in Toronto, but the word was that he would be forwarding a letter.

The big day arrived. After introductory remarks by the proposal's originators and City Councilman John Hartley, it was time for the three guest speakers. First up was Wilbert Wiley, probably Ted's closest friend during most of his years at the playground. Ted relates in *My Turn at Bat* how he and Wilbert would call out what type of pitch they were going to throw to each other. One day Ted told Wilbert to just throw whatever he wanted without first announcing it. He relates how pleased he was that he was still able to hit the ball so well, and describes it as one of those key days in his life that you always remember. Next came former American League umpire Ed Runge. A born storyteller, he managed, between jokes, to tell how Ted was the greatest that he ever saw. Finally came Bob Breitbard, Ted's high school friend and now director of the Hall of Champions (basically a San Diego all sports Hall of Fame). Bob brought along a number of items from the Hall of Champions collection including the bat Ted used for a good part of the 1941 season when he hit .406. Then he said that Ted's letter had arrived by express mail, and read it to the crowd:

"I'm sorry I'm not there with you today, because there is no place on earth besides Fenway

Park, that I remember more than the North Park playground. I spent the first 18 years of my life there only a block and a half from my house."

Ted spends a few paragraphs reminiscing about some of the people and events of San Diego baseball at that time. He then concludes:

"I sincerely want to thank everyone who had anything to do with those days. I can't think of a nicer or more everlasting memory than to have played in that playground as a kid, and then, nearly 60 years later, to have the same playground named after me."

The signs proclaiming Ted Williams Field were hung up around the diamond with a plaque to follow. The *San Diego Union* carried Barry Lorge's column of the event on the front page of the Sunday sports section the next day.

Besides the satisfaction of seeing the park named for Ted, the events surrounding the ball park dedication provided me with a few answers to things I had wondered about. First, the impression is given in some quarters that Ted Williams was happy to leave San Diego and never turned back once he left. The truth is that Ted has maintained friendships with a number of boyhood friends over the years and has visited San Diego off and on throughout his adult life, the most recent being the 50th reunion of high school graduation. Second, I had wondered if there was any indication when Ted was a boy that he would turn into the great player that he was; any indication that he was to be the anointed one. While obviously a good player, apparently nothing stood out that marked Ted above the other good players around the neighborhoods at that time. As one old friend put it, "He was good all right, but it wasn't until about 15 that he started shooting ahead of the rest of us. After that, there was just no stopping him."

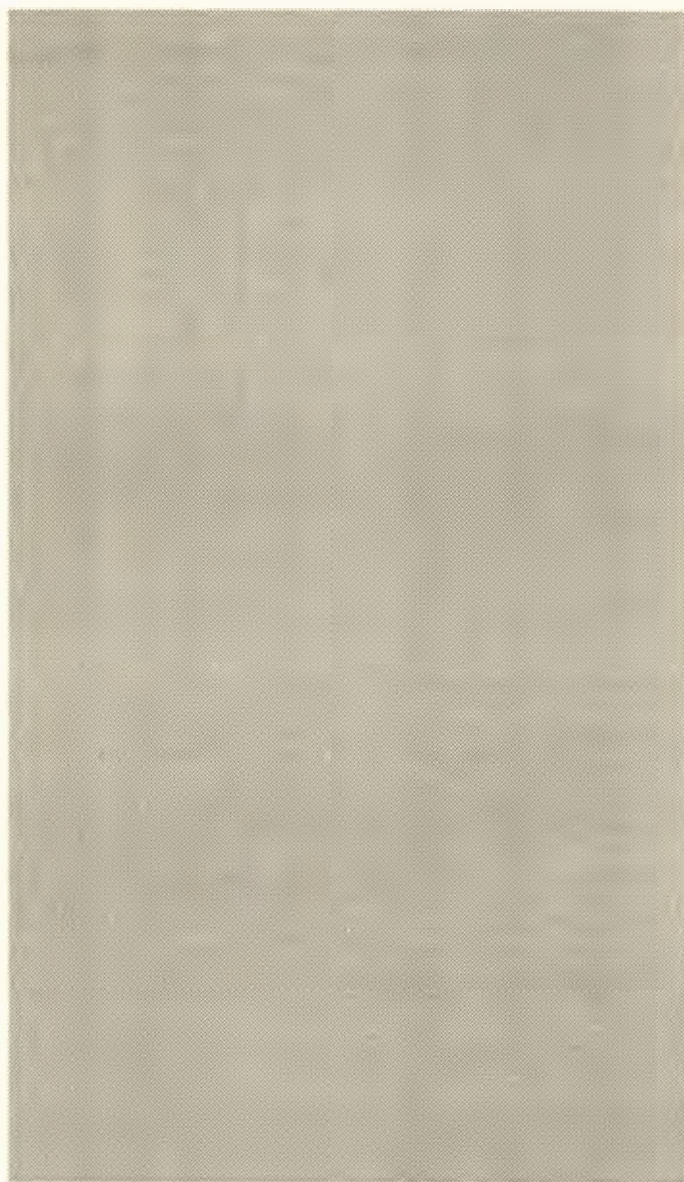
Then there was Ted's sayonara song to the North Park playground. It was the winter of 1938, the last winter Ted would spend in San Diego. He had just finished a strong year with the Red Sox farm team in Minneapolis, and would soon be leaving for spring training. Within a year he would be a household name. But for now he was hanging out with his buddies in his last few months of relative anonymity, hunting, fishing and playing some baseball. In one makeshift game at the playground that winter (for all I know, possibly the last game he ever played there), Ted lit into a pitch and said to his mates "keep an eye on that one".

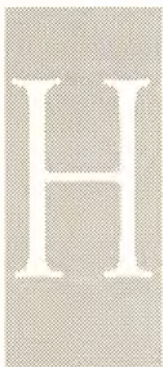
The ball went over the backstop in deepest center field and into Oregon Street. The backstop is about 400 feet from home plate (392 feet by my tape measure), and 15 feet high. It was the type of poke that would not be unusual for Ted in the future, but for then it was the final affirmation that all those hours of practice in the playground had paid off as he was about to embark on his big league career.

You may feel you're the greatest Red Sox fan around, but can you really say you've done it all until you make the pilgrimage to San Diego, go to the North Park playground, stand at home plate at Ted Williams Field, stare intently west into right field and the setting California sun and let these words echo through your mind:

"I wanted to be the greatest hitter who ever lived. A man has to have goals – for a day, for a lifetime – and that was mine, to have people say, 'There goes Ted Williams, the greatest hitter who ever lived.' Certainly nobody ever worked harder at it. It was the center of my heart, hitting a baseball. They used to say I lived for the next turn at bat, and that's the way it was. I felt in my heart that nobody in this game ever devoted more concentration in the batter's box than me, a guy who practiced until the blisters bled and loved doing it."

(The North Park playground is about 3 miles northeast of downtown San Diego at 4044 Idaho St. If you get to North Park, just look for the big green watertower. Ted Williams field is one block directly to the south.) ♦





1981 Non-Expos Ended Up As Padres' Future

By Joe Naiman

The National League's two 1969 expansion teams, the San Diego Padres and the Montreal Expos, took different courses. In the 1968 expansion draft the Padres sought younger talent while the Expos went after older, more proven players. (The shoestring budget of the C. Arnholdt Smith years kept the team in the prospect stage for longer than General Manager Buzzie Bavasi had planned.)

In the first decade of the teams'

histories, the Padres never escaped the second division of the National League West – in fact they were not to do so until their 1984 pennant – while the Expos toyed with the National League East title on occasion. The two 1969 expansion teams shared two of the top three spots in the 1977 Rookie of the Year voting (Andre Dawson, Gene Richards) and the top two spots of the 1978 Cy Young voting (Gaylord Perry, Steve Rogers).

By 1981 the teams were at opposite ends of the success ladder. The Expos would win the National League's Eastern Division, the only title in the team's history, while the Padres

would take disadvantage of the split-season format to finish in last place twice in the same year. Yet 1981 was the turning point which catapulted the Padres ahead of the Expos over the next decade – or more appropriately hurled the Expos below the Padres.

Despite the success of the Expos on the field, the 1981 drafts were a disaster for the Expos, while the Padres were successful in signing June 1981 picks Kevin McReynolds and Tony Gwynn. (Gwynn, drafted in the third round, was passed up earlier because of fears that he might play professional basketball; the outfielder/guard decided, however, that he had more of a future as a third-round baseball pick than as an eight-round NBA pick.)

A few of the Expos' 1981 draftees would have an effect on San Diego – some on the Padres. The major signee of the Expos, a second baseman from San Diego State, was traded to the Padres in December 1983, never played for the Padres in the Major Leagues, but was traded back to the Expos in the summer of 1984 for one of the relievers who kept the Cubs in check during the 1984 playoffs. One signee played two years for the Padres before a trade which led to a Cy Young Award winner. Another was traded to the Padres in the 1989 stretch run.

One failed Expo signee was the "brother" of a future Padres pitcher. And the most notable of the Expos' unsigned draft picks had a brother who excelled in

1981 was the turning point which catapulted the Padres ahead of the Expos over the next decade – or more appropriately hurled the Expos below the Padres.

another sport at San Diego State University.

The Expos' successful signee was Al Newman, taken in the first round of the secondary stage of the June draft. After three years in the Expos' organization, Newman came to the Padres with Scott Sanderson for Gary Lucas in a three-way trade – Sanderson immediately went to the Cubs for Carmelo Martinez, Craig Lefferts, and a minor league third baseman. During the 1984 season the Padres traded Newman for Greg Harris (the first of three pitchers with that name who would play for the organization); Harris proved to be a successful set-up man in the Padres' time of need that October.

The Expos' 25th-round pick in the June draft was Gene Walter, a left-handed pitcher from Eastern Kentucky. Walter waited another year to join the pros; in the June 1982 draft he was the Padres' 29th and last pick and to this day the lowest Padres pick to make the majors. After joining the big league team in the summer of 1985, Walter played the entire 1986 season with San Diego before going to New York along with Kevin McReynolds and another minor leaguer for five players. One of those players was Kevin Mitchell, who was a disappointment in San Diego but was traded in July 1987 to the San Francisco Giants for relief pitcher Mark Davis, whose 44 saves in 1989 earned him the Cy Young Award.

The Expos' fifth-round pick in the 1981 June draft was Wichita State first baseman Phil Stephenson. Stephenson was drafted by the Oakland A's in the third round of the June 1982 draft, and after his tenure with the Cubs went to San Diego in late August of 1989 along with Darrin Jackson and Calvin Schiraldi in exchange for Luis Salazar and Marvell Wynne. Although Stephenson played behind Jack Clark and Fred McGriff at first base, he was able to spell the sluggers and make a contribution of his own when he played.

The Expos' third-round pick of the January 1981 draft was first baseman-outfielder Glenn Davis, one of two unsigned future major leaguers in that draft from Middle Georgia Junior College (the other was second baseman Jeff Treadway, the Expos' 18th and final pick of the January draft). Davis was a juvenile delinquent in his adolescence before living with a more stable family, unrelated but with the same last name. To this day Davis and 1987 Padres pitcher Storm Davis call each other brothers, even if they didn't become brothers until

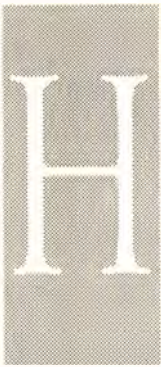
high school.

In the eighth round of the 1981 draft, the Expos' chose a right-handed pitcher from Damien

The Expos' future would surely have been different had they signed Glenn Davis, Jeff Treadway, Nelson Santovenia, Phil Stephenson, Mark McGwire, Marvin Freeman, and Gene Walter in 1981. As it turned out, that would not have been good news for Padres' fans.

High School in Claremont, California. The pitcher decided to go to college, specifically the University of Southern California, where he played the position at which a throwing arm is least needed, and in the June 1984 draft was taken in the first round by the Oakland A's. After a silver medal in the 1984 Olympics and two years in the minor leagues, he became a star with the Oakland A's, dispatching the A's other first baseman to the Padres in exchange for the above-mentioned Storm Davis. His brother, after a year as a thrower in Iowa, transferred to San Diego State to get his throwing opportunities with the Aztecs' football team. After sitting out a year because of NCAA transfer rules, Dan McGwire became the Aztecs' starting quarterback and, along with running back Marshall Faulk, led the Aztecs into the 1991 Freedom Bowl. Although Dan McGwire's contribution to the record books is as the quarterback of the highest-scoring non-winning team in an NCAA Division I football game (the Aztecs twice scored over 50 points without winning in McGwire's career), Mark McGwire holds the Major League record for most home runs by a rookie, and sabermetric projections indicate that Mark McGwire may become one of the leading home run hitters of all time.

The Expos' future would surely have been different had they signed Glenn Davis, Jeff Treadway, Nelson Santovenia, Phil Stephenson, Mark McGwire, Marvin Freeman, and Gene Walter in 1981. As it turned out, that would not have been good news for Padres' fans. ♦



Remembering The 1984 Padres

By Fred O. Rodgers

The baseball world was stunned by the sudden burst of the Detroit Tigers to open the 1984 baseball season. By late May, they were well in front of the American League East Division with a 35-5 record. The race was over before the summer had begun.

In the American League West, the upstart Kansas City Royals, led by pitchers Bud Black and Dan Quisenberry, along with outfielder Willie Wilson,

overtook the California Angels and Minnesota Twins with a late season splurge but lost three straight to the Tigers in the League Championship Series.

But over in the National League all eyes were on the Chicago Cubs. Never champions of anything since the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, the Cubs started the season strong and stayed in contention the whole way. Second baseman Ryne Sandberg emerged as the National League's MVP, while pitcher Rick

Sutcliffe, obtained from the Indians in June, captured Cub fan's hearts with a 16-1 record.

Standing in the way of the 1984

World Series for the Cubs were the San Diego Padres, winners of the Western Division by 12 games over the Atlanta Braves, the Padres first pennant in sixteen years of existence.

The first two games of the LCS were won by the Cubs in Chicago by a combined score of 17-2. The Padres were dominated in all phases of the game; out-hit 24-11, and out-homered 5-0. It was a dreadful flight home, the team was in a deep depression knowing they would have to win three straight against a team that most of America was rooting for. They felt completely alone.

Until they got back to San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium.

Unbeknownst to the Padres, more than 3,000 staunch supporters had stayed up most of the night, cheering wildly, waiting for their heroes to return home, hoping to pump them up and get the winning edge back on track. Bedlam ruled. Shortstop Garry Templeton waved his cap at the fans before the start of Game 3, stirring them into a frenzy never seen before in San Diego.

The Padres won 7-1 behind the pitching of Ed Whitson, setting the stage for Game 4 and Steve Garvey's greatest performance as a Padre. His double in the third inning staked the Padres to a 2-0 lead. When Garvey came to bat in the fifth the Padres were behind 3-2, but Garvey tied it at 3-3 with a two-out single. In the seventh, another two-out single made it 5-3 Padres. But he would save the best for last.

*Standing in the
way of the 1984
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Padres*

The Cubs best reliever, Lee Smith, came on in the ninth with the score tied at 5-5. Alan Wiggins led off and struck out, but Tony Gwynn lined a single bringing up Garvey once again with the game on the line. Garvey, whose eight home runs were his lowest season total during his career, had not had a roundtripper in almost two months. But 58,354 people yelled and stomped their feet pinching themselves in disbelief as Garvey lined Smith's 94 mile an hour fastball over the right field wall. That blast was truly the turning point in the history of the franchise.

No longer would the Padres be known as the kissing cousins of the Los Angeles Dodgers. No longer would they be remembered for finishing last in their first six seasons in the National League. No longer did they wear those putrid brown and yellow uniforms that made them look like honeybees or tacos. And no longer was the franchise attached to names like Arcia, Gaston, Friesleben, or Spiezio. Now it was Garvey, Kennedy, Gossage and Gwynn.

The next day the Padres reduced Cub fans to tears, as they came back from a 3-0 deficit against their ace, Rick Sutcliffe, and wound up with a 6-3 win. Their loss in five games to the Tigers in the World Series was anti-climactic, the mental and physical letdown from the tough series with the Cubs was visible among all the players. Despite losing the Series this was a baseball team that took heart from the front office down to the casual fan and will always be remembered for capturing the the cities fancy as it had never been seen before.

But how did it happen? What brought about the dramatic climb out of the NL West's second division? Who were the important cogs in this winning transformation?

The General Manager

The miracle of Mission Valley actually began when Padres President Ballard Smith hired **Jack McKeon** to be the new general manager in September of 1980. In four short years, Trader Jack made 22 moves involving more than 50 players leaving only four holdovers from the old regime: pitchers Andy Hawkins, Eric Show, Mark Thurmond and utilityman Tim Flannery.

McKeon's designated youth movement was shored up with the signing of free agents, Steve Garvey and Goose Gossage. Garvey gave the Padres a bonafide star and power hitter while Goose became the stopper in the bullpen. A three-

way deal with Montreal and Chicago brought the Padres reliever Craig Lefferts and power hitting outfielder Carmelo Martinez. Power was further

The gruff, but candid, Williams meshed the veterans, like Nettles, Garvey, and Gossage, with the raw talents of youngsters, such as Wiggins, Dravecky, and McReynolds.

strengthened when veteran third baseman Graig Nettles was acquired from the Yankees for southpaw Dennis Rasmussen.

McKeon was also responsible for the drafting of NL batting champ Tony Gwynn by the Padres; the shifting of Alan Wiggins, the 1984 NL stolen base king, from the outfield to second base; and the drafting of outfielder Kevin McReynolds in the first round even though he had torn up a knee and would need a year of rehabilitation. Clearly, the man knew talent and could project it to the future.

The Manager

To mold all this talent together on the field, the Padres hired **Dick Williams** as their new manager. Williams, who had directed the Boston Red Sox to the 1967 AL title and Oakland to world championships in 1972 and 1973 was from the old school of managing as taught to him by the likes of Charlie Dressen, Bobby Bragan, and Paul Richards.

The gruff, but candid, Williams meshed the veterans, like Nettles, Garvey, and Gossage, with the raw talents of youngsters, such as Wiggins, Dravecky, and McReynolds. He permitted Gary Templeton to assume a quiet leadership as unofficial captain of the Padres while maintaining complete control as a stern but respected manager.

The Lineup

The Padres leadoff man was second baseman **Alan Wiggins**, a converted outfielder

who had the ability to cover more ground than any other infielder in the league. His 70 stolen bases set a team record as well as his 104 runs scored.

Batting third was veteran first baseman Steve Garvey who saved the Padres' season with "the Home Run" against the Cubs. The 35-year-old Garvey gave the Padres the leadership and professionalism they had sorely lacked in their formative years.

Wiggins set the table for 24-year-old rightfielder **Tony Gwynn** who usually batted in the second slot. Tony's .351 average led the major leagues, 30 points higher than his next closest NL competitor. A former basketball and baseball star at San Diego State, Tony's speed and daring led to 33 stolen bases and a Gold Glove in right field.

Batting third was veteran first baseman **Steve Garvey** who saved the Padres' season with "the Home Run" against the Cubs. The 35-year-old Garvey gave the Padres the leadership and professionalism they had sorely lacked in their formative years. After a career-threatening thumb injury the year before, Steve came back with a .281 average, second on the club, and a team leading 86 RBI's. His perfect fielding at first helped stabilize Alan Wiggins in his shift to second base.

Kevin McReynolds missed the World Series when he broke his wrist sliding in the fourth game of the LCS against the Cubs. The Padres sorely missed his 20 home runs and 75 RBI's against the Tigers. McReynolds' ability to cover center field helped give the Padres one of baseball's best outfields.

Veteran third baseman **Graig Nettles** solidified the Padres weakest position in their history. After being acquired from the Yankees, Nettles contributed 20 home runs and 66 RBI's in just 120 games. Known as a streak hitter, Nettles dry wit and sense of humor kept the Padres loose all year.

After being acquired from the Cubs, **Carmelo Martinez** proved that he could play the outfield and also demonstrated a fine throwing arm as well. His 13 homeruns and 66 RBI's helped relocate Alan Wiggins to second base. Carmelo's 28 doubles paced the club and he also tied Steve Garvey for the most sacrifice flies with 10.

Catcher **Terry Kennedy** had an off year with the bat with a .240 average, 14 home runs and 57 RBI's. But he came on strong at the finish and his defense behind the plate was superb all year long. The pitching staff depended a lot on his cool confidence in calling the game in crucial situations all year long.

Although he usually hit in the eighth spot, **Gary Templeton** led the NL with 19 intentional walks supporting the statement that Gary was one of the best 8th place hitters in the game. A solid defensive shortstop, Gary also hit .258 with a lot of punch in the bottom of the order.

The Starters

On the mound the Padres were led in victories by righthander **Eric Show** (15-9, 3.40 ERA). His outstanding arsenal of pitches featured a sinking fastball and a sharp-breaking slider. Drafted late in the 18th round in 1978, Show became one of the Padres best steals ever.

Ed Whitson had his finest season in baseball with a 14-8 record and a 3.24 ERA. Ed could have won a lot more with a little more luck. Eight times he had no decision while holding the opposition to two runs or less.

Stylish lefthander **Mark Thurmond** had the best record of his young career with a 14-8 record and a 2.97 ERA, ninth best in the league. Not an overpowering pitcher, Mark teased the hitters all year by hitting all the corners of the plate. He was by far the most consistent pitcher during the 1984 season.

Tim Lollar was the best hitting pitcher in the NL with 2 homeruns including the game-winner that clinched the Western Division title. His biggest problem during the season was consistency, concluding with a 11-13 record and a 3.91 ERA. His 195 innings pitched was second on the club while his 131 strikeouts paced the pitching staff.

The Relievers

Goose Gossage wasn't used as much in the stretch run because the Padres had such a big

lead, but he had a hand in 33 of the Padres first 77 games. His 25 saves and 10-6 record was the best by a Padre reliever since the days of Rollie Fingers.

*The 1984 Padres played
the best they possibly could,
although they fell a bit short
in the World Series against
the Tigers.*

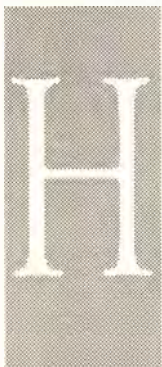
His 25 saves was good for fifth in the NL.

The left-handed complement to the Goose, Craig Lefferts posted the lowest era on the club (2.13) while his 10 saves were second only to the Goose. Craig used his screwball and slider effectively to allow only 25 walks and 89 hits in 105 innings.

Dave Dravecky did not find his niche on the pitching staff in 1984. He was exceptional as a starter and as a reliever. His 9-8 record, 2.93 ERA and eight saves showed how valuable he was helping the Padres to their highest win total ever (92). Dave gave up only 125 hits in 156 innings, the second best ratio on the club.

The 1984 Padres played the best they possibly could, although they fell a bit short in the World Series against the Tigers. But when nostalgic waves of memories take us back to those last three playoff games against the Cubs, there can be nothing more exciting and fulfilling as to remember Garvey's ninth-inning drive over the right field fence, and the jubilation it brought to San Diego and its patient fans. Those were great times. That was baseball. ♦





San Diego Major League Home Grown Players

Compiled By The San Diego Hall Of Champions

CLIFFORD CARLTON "GAVY" CRAVATH

O.F.; Escondido H.S.; Boston Red Sox, 1908; Wash. Senators, Chi. White Sox, 1909; Phil. Phillies, 1912-1920; Manager Phillies, 1919-1920.

ARTHUR JOSEPH "TILLIE" SHAFFER

In.F., O.F.; New York Giants, 1909-1913; Attended Santa Clara College.

LELAND STANFORD McELWEE

In.F., O.F.; Phil A's, 1916

"SMOKEY" JOE DAWSON

P., Clev. Indians, 1924; Pitt. Pirates, 1927-1929

JOE COSCARART

In.F.; Escondido H.S.; Boston Braves, 1935-1936

EARLE BRUCKER

C.; San Diego H.S.; Phil. A's, 1937-1943

PETE COSCARART

In.F.; Escondido H.S.; Brooklyn Dodgers, 1938-1941; Pitt Pirates, 1942-1946

BOB ELLIOTT

In.F.; Pitt Pirates, 1939-1946; Boston Braves, 1947-1951; N.Y. Giants, 1952; St. Louis Cardinals, Chi White Sox, 1953

TED WILLIAMS

O.F.; Hoover H.S.; Boston Red Sox, 1939-1960; Manager, Wash Senators and Tx Rangers

AL OLSEN

P.; San Diego H.S.; SDSU Athletic Director; Boston Red Sox, 1943

JIM WILSON

P.; San Diego H.S.; Boston Red Sox, 1945-1946; St. Louis Browns, 1948; Phil A's, 1949; Mil Braves, 1953-1954; Balt. Orioles, 1955-1956; Chi White Sox, 1956-1958

BOB USHER

O.F.; San Diego H.S.; Cinn Reds, 1946-1951; Chi. Cubs, 1952; Clev. Indians, 1953-1956; Wash. Senators, 1957

JACKIE ALBRIGHT

In.F.; San Diego H.S.; Phil Phillies, 1947

RAY BOONE

In.F.; Hoover H.S.; Clev Indians, 1948-1953; Det Tigers, 1953-1958; Chi White Sox, 1958-1959; K.C. A's, Mil Braves, 1959; Mil Braves, Bos Red Sox, 1960

JACK HARSHMAN

P.; San Diego H.S.; N.Y. Giants, 1948; Chi White Sox, 1954-1957; Balt Orioles, 1958-1959; Bos, Clev, 1959; Clev, 1960

SOLLY HEMUS

In.F.; St. Augustine H.S.; St. Louis Cardinals, 1949-1951; St. Louis Cardinals, Phil Phillies, 1956; Phil Phillies, 1957-1958; St. Louis Cardinals, 1959; Cardinals Mgr, 1960-1963

DUANE PILLETTE

P.; San Diego H.S.; N.Y. Yankees, 1949-1950; St. Louis Browns, 1950-1953; Balt Orioles, 1954-1955; Phil Phillies, 1956

BOB THORPE

O.F.; San Diego H.S.; Bos Braves, 1951-1952; Mil Braves, 1953.

DON LARSEN

P.; Point Loma H.S.; St Louis Browns, 1953; Balt Orioles, 1954; N.Y. Yankees, 1955-1959; K.C., 1960-1961; Chi White Sox, 1961; S.F. Giants, 1962-1964; Houston Astros, 1964-1965; Chi. Cubs, 1967

BOB SKINNER

O.F.; La Jolla H.S.; Pitt Pirates, 1954-1963; Cinn Reds, 1963; St. Louis Cardinals, 1964-1966; Mgr Phil(N), 1968-69; Mgr S.D. Padres, 1977 (one game)

EARL WILSON

P.; M.C.R.D.; Bos Red Sox, 1959-1966; Det Tigers, 1966-1970; San Diego Padres, 1970

GENE LEEK

In.F.; Hoover H.S.; Clev Indians, 1959; CA Angels, 1961-1962

DERON JOHNSON

In.F.; San Diego H.S.; N.Y. Yankees, 1960-1961; Oak A's, 1961; Cinn Reds, 1964-1967; Mil Braves, 1968; Phil Phillies, 1969-1972

FLOYD ROBINSON

O.F.; San Diego H.S.; Chi White Sox, 1960-1966; Cinn Reds, 1967; Oak A's, Bos Red Sox, 1968.

LARRY LEE ELLIOT

O.F.; Hoover H.S.; Pitt Pirates, 1962-1963; N.Y. Mets, 1964-1966

DAVE MOREHEAD

p.; Hoover H.S.; Bos Red Sox, 1963-1968; Oak A's, 1969-1970

TOM REYNOLDS

In.F.; Lincoln H.S.; K.C. A's, 1963-1965; N.Y. Mets, 1967; Oak A's, 1969; CA Angels, 1970-1971; Mil Brewers, 1972

DAVE DUNCAN

C.; Crawford H.S.; K.C. A's, 1964-1967; Oak A's, 1968-1972; Clev Indians, 1973-1974; Balt Orioles, 1975-1976

RANDY SCHWARTZ

In.F.; Helix H.S.; U.C.L.A.; K.C. A's, 1965-1966

KEN HENDERSON

O.F.; Clairemont H.S.; S.F. Giants, 1965-1972; Chi White Sox, 1973-1975; Ala Braves, 1976; TX Rangers, 1977; N.Y. Mets, Cinn Reds, 1978; Cinn Reds, Chi Cubs, 1979; Chi Cubs, 1980

RON TOMPKINS

P.; Chula Vista H.S.; K.C. A's, 1965; Chi. Cubs, 1971

DON SHAW

P.; Helix H.S.; N.Y. Mets, 1967-1968

GRAIG NETTLES

In.F.; San Diego H.S.; Minn Twins, 1967-1969; Clev Indians, 1970-1972; N.Y. Yankees, 1973-1983; San Diego Padres, 1984-1986; Alt Braves, 1987

ED HERRMANN

C.; Crawford H.S.; Chi White Sox, 1967-1974; N.Y. Yankees, 1975

BOB CHRISTEN

In.F., O.F.; Helix H.S.; Det Tigers, 1968; Chi White Sox, 1969-1970

LOU MARONE

P.; Lincoln H.S.; Pitt Pirates. 1969-1970

RON SLOCUM

In.F., C.; La Jolla H.S.; S.D. Padres, 1969-1971

BOB SPENCE

In.F.; St. Augustine H.S.; Chi White Sox, 1969-1971

***DICK WOODSON**

P.; Minn Twins, 1969-1974

***JIM FULLER**

O.F.; Balt Orioles, 1973-1974; Houston Astros, 1974

JERRY DAVANON

In.F.; Hoover H.S.; S.D. Padres, St. Louis Cardinals, 1969; St. Louis Cardinals, 1970; Balt Orioles, 1971; CA Angels, 1973; St. Louis Cardinals, 1974; Houston Astros, 1975-1976; St. Louis Cardinals, 1977.

JIM NETTLES

O.F.; San Diego H.S.; Minn Twins, 1970-1972; Det Tigers, 1974

DAVID ROBINSON

O.F.; La Jolla H.S.; S.D. Padres, 1970-1971

STEVE DUNNING

P.; University H.S.; Stanford University; Clev Indians, 1970-1973

CHRIS CHAMBLISS

In.F.; Oceanside H.S.; Clev Indians, 1971-1973; Clev Indians, N.Y. Yankees, 1974; N.Y. Yankees, 1975-1979; Atlanta Braves, 1980-1986; N.Y. Yankees, 1988

TERRY FORSTER

P.; Santana H.S.; Chi White Sox, 1971-1976; Pitt Pirates, 1977; L.A. Dodgers, 1978-1982; Atlanta Braves, 1983-1985; CA Angels, 1986

GARY THOMASSON

O.F.; Oceanside H.S.; S.F. Giants, 1972-1975

BOB BOONE

C.; Crawford H.S.; Stanford University; Phil Phillies, 1972-1981; CA Angels, 1981-1988; K.C. Royals, 1989-1990; Manager, Tacoma, Pacific Coast League

BRENT STROM

P.; San Diego H.S.; U.S.C.; N.Y. Mets, 1972; Clev Indians, 1973; S.D. Padres, 1975-1977

JOHN D'ACQUISTO

P.; St. Augustine H.S.; S.F. Giants, 1973-1976; St. Louis Cardinals, S.D. Padres, Montreal Expos, 1980; CA Angels, 1981

TIM BLACKWELL

C.; Crawford H.S.; Bost Red Sox, 1974-1975; Phil Phillies, 1976; Phillies, Mont Expos, 1977; Chi Cubs, 1978-1981

MIKE REINBACH

O.F.; Granite Hills H.S.; Balt Orioles, 1974

GREG MINTON

P.; San Dieguito H.S.; S.F. Giants, 1975-1987; S.F. Giants, CA Angels, 1987-1990

JOHN WATHAN

C.; St. Augustine H.S.; University of S.D.; K.C. Royals, 1976-1985; Mgr K.C. Royals, 1988-May 1991

ALAN TRAMMELL

In.F.; Kearny H.S.; Det Tigers, 1977-present.

JEFF BYRD

P.; El Capitan H.S.; Tor Blue Jays, 1977.

THAD BOSLEY

O.F.; Oceanside H.S.; CA Angels, 1977; Chi White Sox, 1978-1980; Mil Brewers, 1981-1982; Chi Cubs, 1984-1986; K.C. Royals, 1987.

STEVE BAKER

P.; Monte Vista H.S.; Grossmont College; Det Tigers, 1978-1979

BRUCE ROBINSON

C.; La Jolla H.S.; Stanford University; Oak A's, 1978; N.Y. Yankees, 1979-1980

CHUCK RAINEY

P.; Crawford H.S.; Bos Red Sox, 1979-1982; Chi Cubs, 1983-1984; Oak A's, 1984-released

JOE PRICE

P.; Santana H.S.; Cinn Reds, 1980-1986; S.F. Giants, 1987-1988; S.F. Giants, Bos Red Sox, 1989; Balt Orioles, 1990-present

DAVE SMITH

P.; Poway H.S.; Houston Astros, 1980-1990;
Chi Cubs, 1991-retired

BRAD MILLS

In.F.; Mt Miguel H.S.; Mon Expos, 1980-1983

TY WALLER

O.F.; Hoover H.S.; St Louis Cardinals, 1980; Chi
Cubs. 1981

BRIAN GILES

In.F.; Kearny H.S.; N.Y. Mets, 1981-1984; Mil
Brewers. 1985

DAVE ENGLE

C.; Crawford H.S.; U.S.C.; Minn Twins, 1981-1985;
Det Tigers, 1986; Mon Expos, 1987; Mil Brewers,
1989-

RAY SMITH

C.; Lincoln H.S.; Minn Twins, 1981-1983

JOEL SKINNER

C.; Mission Bay H.S.; Chi White Sox, 1982-1984;
Chi White Sox, N.Y. Yankees, 1986; N.Y. Yankees,
1987-1988; Clev Indians, 1989-present

RANDY JOHNSON

In.F.; Escondido H.S.; Atlanta Braves, 1982-1984

AL NIPPER

P.; Helix H.S.; Bos Red Sox, 1983-1987; Chi Cubs
1988; Clev Indians, 1989

CECIL ESPY

O.F.; Pt. Loma H.S.; L.A. Dodgers, 1983; TX
Rangers, 1987-1989; Pitt Pirates, 1991-1992; Cin
Reds, 1993

CHRIS JONES

O.F.; Granite Hills H.S.; Grossmont College;
Houston Astros, 1984; S.F. Giants, 1984-1985

BILLY BEANE

O.F.; Mt Carmel H.S.; N.Y. Mets, 1984-1985; Minn
Twins, 1986-1987; Det Tigers, 1988; Oak A's, 1989

NELSON SIMMONS

O.F.; Madison H.S.; Det Tigers, 1984-1985; Balt
Orioles, 1987

KEVIN MITCHELL

In.F., O.F.; Clairmont H.S.; N.Y. Mets, 1984-1987;
S.D. Padres, S.F. Giants, 1987; S.F. Giants,
1987-present.

MATT NOKES

C.; Patrick Henry H.S.; S.F. Giants, 1985; Det
Tigers, 1986-1989; N.Y. Yankees, 1990-present

EDDIE WILLIAMS

In.F.; Hoover H.S.; Clev Indians, 1986-1988; Chi
White Sox, 1989; S.D. Padres, 1990; Japan, 1991;
Minor League, 1993

MARK McLEMORE

In.F.; Morse H.S.; CA Angels, 1986-1989; Clev
Indians, 1990; released 1991; Balt Orioles, 1993

JEFF ROBINSON

P.; Christian H.S.; Det Tigers, 1987-1989; Balt
Orioles, 1991.

MARK WILLIAMSON

P.; Mt Miguel H.S.; Balt Orioles, 1987, 1989-1993

RANDY MILLIGAN

In.F., O.F.; San Diego H.S.; Mesa College; N.Y.
Mets 1987; Pitt Pirates, 1988; Balt Orioles, 1989;
Cin Reds, 1993

DAVID WELLS

P.; Pt Loma H.S.; Tor Blue Jays, 1987-1992;
Detroit, 1993-

TOMMY HINZO

In.F.; Hilltop H.S.; Clev Indians, 1987-1989; K.C.
Royals, 1990; Japan 1991-92; Minor Leagues 1993

SAM HORN

In.F.; Morse H.S.; Bos Red Sox, 1987-1988; Balt
Orioles, 1989-present; Released 1993

BOB GEREN

C.; Clairmont H.S.; N.Y. Yankees, 1988; SD
Padres, 1993

BRADY ANDERSON

Carlsbad H.S.; Bos Red Sox, 1988; Balt Orioles,
1989-present

MIKE HARTLEY

P.; El Cajon H.S.; L.A. Dodgers, 1989-1990; Phil
Phillies, 1991; Minn Twins, 1993

ERIC ANTHONY

O.F.; Mt Carmel H.S., Houston Astros, 1989-;
Tucson, Pacific Coast League, 1992; Hou
Astros, 1993

PHIL PLANTIER

O.F.; Poway H.S.; Bost Red Sox, 1990-1992;
SD Padres, 1993

GINO MINUTELLI

P.; Sweetwater H.S.; Cinn Reds, 1991; S.F.
Giants, 1993

ERIC KARROS

F.B.; Patrick Henry H.S.; L.A. Dodgers, 1992-

DAN WALTERS

Santana H.S.; S.D. Padres, 1993

BENJI GIL

Castle Park H.S., Texas Rangers, 1993

JIM TATUM

InF.; Santana H.S., Colorado Rockies, 1993



*Less than "Home Grown"

CONVENTION NOTES:



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