

SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN BASEBALL RESEARCH
MINOR LEAGUE NEWSLETTER
VOLUME 3, NUMBERS 1&2

Minor league committee members,

Several events led to the combining of the first two letters of volume 3; The death of Vernon Luse, one of the leading researchers and organizers of the minor league committee, and the availability of this new computer and the time I allotted for doing the newsletter. I am quite certain that the completion of my academic work and the end of centennial history activities in South Dakota will lead to a more regular schedule for the newsletter. I hope the contents are worth the delay.

VERN LUSE

When Vern Luse passed away in January we lost one of the great baseball researchers. Vern specialized in the 19th Century and possessed encyclopedic recall of even the most obscure teams and players from that era.

Whether he was in Page, Arizona, Liberal, Kansas, Parkersburg, West Virginia, Lomita, California, Novi Sad, Yugoslavia, Kansas City, Houston, San Diego, Saudi Arabia, and probably a few others we've missed Vern continued to spend countless hours compiling minor league statistics from newspaper box scores. He was tenacious in tracking down missing information, even visiting towns such as Dawson, New Mexico, that once had a professional team only to discover the town no longer existed.

Besides his prestigious research Vern served SABR over the years as Secretary, Director and Chairman of the Minor League Committee, becoming the first member to receive both a SABR Salute and the Bob Davids Award for meritorious service. -----
Bob Hoie

I first corresponded with Vern in July, 1972. We shared information regularly by mail. The more I got to know Vern, the more impressed, or maybe awed, I was of his research effort. Around the world, he spent hours and hours with his microfilm reader and whatever newspaper reel he had. It was unbelievable.

He will be missed by many but his baseball research will perpetuate his memory for years to come. There aren't words to express the outstanding individual Vern was.

---- John Pardon

Vern submitted several pieces for eventual use in the newsletter. It is our understanding that his research materials will become an important part of the SABR Minor League collection.

EVOLUTION OF MINOR LEAGUE CLASSIFICATIONS by VERN LUSE

The continuous playing history of the minor leagues dates from the season of 1883, with the organization of the Northwestern League and the Interstate Association. The first Agreement - usually called the TriPartite Agreement - between leagues was formulated in the autumn of 1882 concurrent with the peace negotiations between the warring American Association and the National League. Although the Northeastern League was a co-equal signatory of this pact, the only indication of its relatively minor standing was that its reserve salary was to be \$750 per year for each reserved player, while the American Association and National League had a reserve salary of \$1,000 per year. Each team, in each league, was allowed to reserve up to eleven players, and all were equally bound by the provisions of the agreement.

... Verbatim copy of TPA enclosed, from Reach Guide of 1883.

Each league was allowed to establish "alliance" teams or leagues. Under this provision, the Interstate Association became an Alliance League of the American Association, and the Northwestern League took on alliance clubs at Port Huron, Michigan, and Rock Island, Illinois. These alliance clubs were intended to be the source of replacement teams in the event of a franchise failure.

The season of 1883 was exceptionally successful on all fronts. Not only did the two major leagues have exceptionally profitable seasons, the Northwestern League successfully completed its season without franchise shift and the Interstate Association survived with the loss of only one franchise. Baseball men rightly attributed this overall success to the stability deriving from the TPA.

In 1884, a new agreement was signed, expanded into a National Agreement between the now-recognized minor leagues and the two major leagues. In spite of the major dislocations engendered by the incursions of the Union Association into both the major and minor league territories and rosters, the National Agreement was renewed for 1885, and in each succeeding year through 1901.

By 1901, the minor leagues had been under a National Agreement administered by Nick Young, the president of the surviving National League, for almost ten years. Although "protected" by their agreement with the National League, the pretensions of the American League to major status in 1901 had caused raiding of minor league rosters by both leagues, but especially by the Nationals in the endeavor to replace established stars who had jumped to the "outlawed" Americans.

Over the nineteen seasons of continuous minor league baseball, seasoned executives had been developed, many of whom could see the independent minor leagues as third parties between the two major leagues destined to be ground between the two millstones. On September 5, 1901, seven league presidents, armed with proxies from four other league presidents, met in Chicago and established the National Association of Professional Baseball

Leagues. In the morning session of this meeting, the first firm classification system was set forth:

Classification:	A	B	C	D
Minimum population:	1,000,000	400,000	200,000	up to 200,000
Salary limit:	\$1,800/mo	\$1,000	800	700
Draft \$ limit:		\$300	200	100
Protection costs:	\$50/team	30	20	10
Maximum individual salary:	\$175/mo	125	100	75

Not all existing minor leagues joined the National Association for 1902. Key exceptions were the American Association, organized with pretensions of major league status, but restricted geographically to the middle west, and the California League, so far from the "Eastern" clubs that protection was believed to be unnecessary. The first exception to the classification rules was made after the 1902 season in order to attract the American Association into the National Association. The Western League, competing with the American Association for the Milwaukee and Kansas City territories, was guaranteed Class A status in perpetuity, and allowed to chose to move out of Milwaukee without violating the minimum population rule.

In the winter of 1907-08, the eastern League, American Association, and Pacific Coast League threatened to withdraw from the National Association unless they were given rights to draft from the other two Class A Leagues, the Southern Association and the Western League. This situation was resolved by creation of the AA classification for those leagues.

The five tier (AA,A,B,C,D) classification system survived until the 1936 season. Demographics - the tremendous expansion of population of the Texas League and Southern Association areas - caused those two leagues to demand AA classification based on their actual populations of the 1930 census, and their projected growth by 1940. However, the AA league populations had also been increasing (the Pacific Coast League now had a population of over 3,000,000). As a result, an intermediate A-1 classification was created for the Texas and Southern organizations. At the same meeting, a new Class E was created which was intended to attract some of the many strong independent and semi-professional leagues existing throughout the country. (Only one league ever tried to operate in E classification - the Twin Ports League of Duluth/Superior in 1943).

At the National meetings held in 1945, after the completion of World War II, the classification system was slightly revised, creating the AAA classification for erstwhile AA leagues, and reclassifying A-1 leagues into AA. The class E was dropped as unsuccessful.

The final change in the old classification system was made in 1951. The Pacific Coast League now included one of the top

metropolitan centers in the nation, and a major secondary center in San Francisco (larger than both Pittsburgh and Cincinnati). In an endeavor to achieve major league status, and most especially to relieve itself of the major league draft, the PCL sought a new classification, called OPEN. This classification, and the attendant intentions of forming a third major league, undoubtedly were motivating factors in allowing the intercontinental transfers of 1958 by the National League.

A completely new reclassification was accomplished in 1963. The old AAA and AA leagues were undisturbed, but all the B, C, and D leagues were absorbed into a new A classification, with a new Rookie classification added to take care of the "summer leagues". This has since been changed to an "A-Summer" name.

It should be noted that all the reclassifications were by the National Association, although as major league ownership of franchises, and effective control through working agreements, increased, the major leagues were more and more powerful in the National Association deliberations. The National Agreement has, since 1902, been between the two major leagues and the National Association, acting on behalf of the overall group of minor leagues.

Minor League Committee in Albany Society of American Banana Republics

Lloyd Johnson made certain that new SABR member, Sal Artiaga, National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues President, became a part of our committee. We welcome Mr Artiaga to our committee. Sal plans to be in attendance at the Albany convention. We hope that our members will be of assistance to the National Association in future months.

I will be unable to attend the national convention this June. The move of the meeting dates to June has led to direct conflicts with several events I am involved with during South Dakota's centennial. I certainly hope that I will not be removed as a result of my absence. Bob Hoie and Bob McConnell have agreed to chair the minor league meeting.

John Pardon has agreed to escort Mr Artiaga to the meeting. In a series of letters that appeared in a period of three weeks back in January the planning committee determined that the minor league meeting would be scheduled at 7:00 A.M. Saturday morning. John Pardon has notified me that we may move it up to 8:00 A.M. These letters arrived at a time when I was working 400 miles away from my home. I did not receive the correspondence until after the decision had been made. Considering that I will not be able to attend I did not feel that I had the right to tell the minor league members that do attend when they should get together. Let us hope that you all do gather at a reasonable time. We have several important matters to review and discuss.

I have been able to attend one national convention in the East. At the convention in Providence, Rhode Island was the first time that I spent time with Vern Luse. I recall discussing several matters. I sat with Vern at the annual meeting. Vern was quite concerned what the effect of the large

increase in memberships and the resulting influx of funds would be. I believe that Vern's proposals to bring about stricter regulation of the organization structure were lost in the heat and humidity of the colonial meeting room at Providence. One long time member asked Vern, in jest, whether he was trying to impose democratic practices into our little banana republic.

The committee collection has received as a reference work, member Jerry Jackson's INDEX OF MICROFILM COLLECTIONS FOR MINOR LEAGUE CITIES. Jerry has also sent along a first draft of his latest project, "Minor Leagues - Everything You Always Wanted To Know, But Were Afraid To Look Up". The chapters include: Towns, Leagues, and Affiliations. Jerry notes that many of the chapters are incomplete but they are building rapidly. Any committee member who wishes to contribute to Jerry's project may obtain a working first draft from Jerry Jackson, 425 Palm Valley Dr. Oviedo, Florida, 32765.

Jim Brown, who has witnessed 305 minor league baseball games in 62 different ballparks in the past 3 years, has put together some awards for the ballparks he has visited. They are included in "Ballparks In The Bushes", which appeared in the THE BALLPARKS BULLETIN, in November, 1988.

John Dillon, 2222 Valentine Ave. Bronx, New York, 10457 hopes to obtain further information on Timothy Paul Sullivan, a native of County Clare, Ireland native, who played with Kansas City (Union Association), in 1884, and managed several minor league clubs in the 1880's.

Irv Kawarsky, 900 Sherry Lynn, #20, Des Moines, Iowa, 50317, is seeking the addresses of former minor leaguers who were members of the Manila (Phillipines), Dodgers. The Dodgers were organized to entertain troops during 1945 and 1946. Irv. needs the addresses of the following players: John Newman, Wally Borden, Scott Minor or Minor Scott, John Stowe, Ted Wendt, Zig Emery, Joe Janet, Ray Moore, Al Ott, and Bill DeZerne. Former Brooklyn Dodger, Kirby Higbe was the team's manager. Irv has been in contact with Jack Smalling, but Jack's records include only former major leaguers.

Bill Haelig, The Ripkens' Biggest Fan,,735 Tamarack Trail, Reading, Pa., 19607 hopes to obtain further information on Cal Ripken Sr.'s brother, William Ripken. William was an outfielder in the Brooklyn Dodger organization.

Yoichi Nagata, 574 Imaiminami, Nakahara-ku, Kawasaki, Japan, 211, is currently doing biographical work on Japanese-American ballplayers. The Rex Stucker Chapter, here in Sioux Falls, will be welcoming Yoichi in May. Yoichi is researching the career of Jimmy Horio, A Japanese-Hawaiian, who played for Sioux Falls in 1934.

MINOR LEAGUE STARS III

Bill Simpson disagrees with the information on Roy Sanner in the previous newsletter. He notes that in Minor League Stars I and on his TSN player card file entry(which he inspected in the old Sporting News office in 1968), Sanner's birthdate is given as August 22, 1920. There seems to be no reason to doubt its accuracy. Bill notes that the correct name of Sanner's birthplace is Gueda Springs. His TSN card gives his birthplace as Gueda Springs. It is misspelled, however.

Bill offers these further questions and additions:

How many saves could be credited belatedly to Steve Gerkin, who pitched for Minneapolis(American Association) in 1947? Gerkin pitched in 83 games, winning 10, for a 77-77 club.

In Minor League Stars I Hal Turpin's birthdate is given as September 28, 1905. The official roster card published by the Seattle Rainiers in 1945 has September 28, 1904. In an article on elderly pitchers, which appeared on page 8, of the March 29, 1945 of The Sporting News, Turpin was said to be 42 years old. That would have made his birthdate September 28, 1902.

According to Guy Fletcher's TSN card file entry his middle name was William.

For those members who possess the required guides the slow and thorough process of selecting candidates for MLS III continues. The Bob's, Hoie and McConnell have revised the rough criteria for consideration.

Regulars(140-150), Automatic selection: 2350 hits(or 2000 prior to World War I), .333 average for a career of 9 or more seasons, 250 HR's.

Cutoffs at: 10 .300 seasons, four 20 HR or 100 RBI seasons, 6 league leading seasons in a major offensive category. Catchers, shortstops, and second and thirdbasemen with over 200 career hits or a .300 lifetime average in the higher minors.

Pitchers (50-60), Automatic selection: 225 wins or 200 wins including either 150 wins in the top 3 minors or 5, 20 win seasons: 2000 strikeouts.

Cutoffs: 200 wins, .650 win-loss percentage(250 decisions), 6 to 8 league leading seasons in wins, strikeouts or ERA.

When making final decisions extra weight will require an excellent sales job by their advocates.

As was the case with MLS I and II there will be a few minor league players included who excelled in other sports or activities or had Stave Dalkowski type of careers.

Listed below is the latest list of perspective candidates:

Angel Alcares	✓ Zane Grey	George Quellich
Thomas Angley	Art Griggs	Joe Rabbitt
Dave Barbee	Ed Hartness	Earl Rapp
Charles Baron	Charles High	George Rawlings
Richard Barry	Elmore Hill	Andrew Reese
John Bassler	Myril Hoag *	John Reider
Charles Baumann	Ed Hoffman	Frank Reiger
Erv Beck	Jim Hudgens	William Rhie
Fred Beck	Art Hunt	Kenneth Richardson
Wayne Blackburn <i>BOALS SICKEN</i>	Don Hurst	Virgil Richardson
George Blackerby	Joe Hutcheson	Don Richmond
Ping Bodie	George Jackson	Dave Roberts
✓ Bernard Borgmann	Ray Jacobs	Ray Rohwer
Art Bowland	Irvine Jeffries	Harry Rosenberg
Joe Bratcher	Joseph Jenkins	John Roser
Joe Brovia	Len Johnston	Ewell Russell *
Edward Brown	John W. Jones	Robert Schmidt
Paul Bruno	Tim Jordan	John T. Sheehan
Glenn C. Burns	Walt Judnich	Sylvester Simon
Russell G. Burns	Joseph Kelly	Carr Smith
Ben Cantrell	William Kelly	Moses Solomon
Ed Carnett *	George Kihm	Joseph Sprinz
Arnoldo Castro	John Knight	Charles Stevens
Jim Caveney	Charles Knoll	Edward Stevens
Harry Clark	Bill Lamar <i>LEN KOENIGKE</i>	John L. Stone
James Clarkson	Jess Levan	George Stumpf
✓ Paul Cobb	Ed Levy	William Sweeney
Andrew Cohen	William H. Lewis	Douglas Taitt
Jimmie Collins	Keith Little	Fred Tauby
Herb Conyers <i>CHUCK CANNON</i>	Mike Lutz	Danny Taylor
Clifford Crawford <i>JIM GABETT</i>	Emil Mailho	Joseph Taylor
Cecil Davis <i>VIC DAVALLIO</i>	Herschel Martin	Chester Tolson
Edward Delahanty	Horace McBride	Coaker Triplett
Frank Delahanty	James R. McDaniel	Leonard W. Tucker
James Delahanty	Osborne C. McDaniel	Jose Vidal
Joseph Delahanty	Frank McGowan	Ned Waldrop
Thomas Delahanty	Minnie Mendoza	Charles Walker
William Delahanty	Conklyn Meriwether	Jim Warner
Otto Denning	Charles Milner <i>FRANK METZ</i>	J. Royce Washburn
George Detore	William Mizeur	Art Weiss
Vince DiMaggio	Pete Monahan <i>JOHNNIE MONROE</i>	Stanley Wentzel
Carl Dittmar	Felipe Montemayor	Lewis Whistler
Charles Dorman	Andres Mora	Harrison Wickel
Willie Duke	Greg Mulleavy	Fred Williams <i>DENNY WILLIAMS</i>
Charles Eagan	Fred Muller	Marvin Williams
Babe Ellison	Albert Neil	George Wilson
Gilbert English	Orville Nesselrode	William Wilson
Francisco Estrada	Paul Owens	Tom Winsett
Woody Fair	Stan Palys	Burnis Wright
Beattie Feathers	Ben Paschal	Elmer Yoter
Wes Ferrell *	Les Peden	Dutch Zwilling
Walter French	Alonzo Perry	John Wallace White
Del Gainor	Edgar Pick	
Adrian Garrett	Alfred Platte	
Joe Grande <i>CECIL GARRETT</i>	Harlin Pool	
✓ Romer Grey	John Powers	

* Pitching record included

Pitchers to be included in MLBS III (70)

Andres Ayon
Abe Bowman
Ed Bryan
Charlie Chech
Bob Couchman
Howard Craighead
Wheezer Dell
Cesar Diaz
Eddie Donalds
Fred Ehman
Gary Fortune
Art Fowler
Oscar Fuhr
Wheeler Fuller
Harry Gardner
Sal Gliatto
Howard Gregory
Herb Hall
Luke Hamlin
George Harper
Charles Hawley
Carmen Hill
Roy Hitt
Berwyn Horne
Ed Hovlik
Tom L. Hughes
Hensel Hulvey
Elmer Jacobs
Earl Johnson
Claude Jonnard
Mike Kash

RUBE KISSINACH

GEORGE BAMBERGER
RANON BRAGANA

CHARLIE CUELLAR
CARROLL DIAL

RALPH GARCIA

BUNN HEARN
CLARENCE HOWLEY

Fred Klobedanz
Louis Leroy
Jake Levy
Willie Ludolph
Jim Lyle
Red Lynn
Walter Mails
Leo Mangum
Howard Merritt
Otto Merz
George Milstead
Leo Moon
Al Osorio
Antonio Polloreana
Ray Prim
Francisco Ramirez
Vicente Romo
Andy Rush
Tom Seats
Norm Shope
Miguel Solis
Ray Starr
Claude Thomas
Fay Thomas
John Tillman
Jim Turner
T. Roy Walker
Jimmy Whelan
Dick Whitworth
Kemp Wicker

RAY LINDSAY

JACK WARNOB