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A Great Day for Jackie Robinson

by Carl Lundquist

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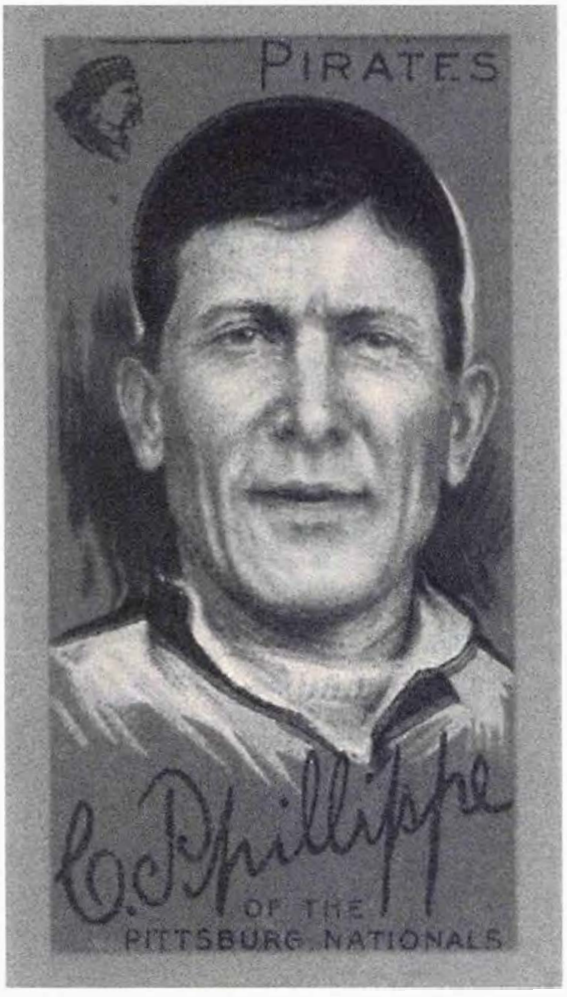

Deacon Phillippe, above, and Sam Leever, on the inside back cover, are depicted on 1911 T-205 tobacco cards. They are the subjects of Lawrence S. Katz's article, beginning on page 133. Images furnished courtesy of Mark Rucker at Transcendental Graphics.

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The Society for American Baseball Research

History

The Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) was founded on August 10, 1971, by L. Robert "Bob" Davids and fifteen other baseball researchers at Cooperstown, New York, and now boasts more than 6,700 members worldwide. The Society's objectives are to foster the study of baseball as a significant American institution, to establish an accurate historical account of baseball through the years, to facilitate the dissemination of baseball research information, to stimulate the best interest of baseball as our national pastime, and to cooperate in safeguarding proprietary interests of individual research efforts of members of the Society.

Baseball Research Journal

The Society published its first annual ***Baseball Research Journal*** in January 1972. The present volume is the twenty-sixth. Most of the previous volumes are still available for purchase (see page 144). The editorial policy is to publish a cross section of research articles by our members which reflect their interest in history, biography, statistics and other aspects of baseball not previously published.

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Drama in Philadelphia

The catch, the homer ... Jackie Robinson's forgotten great day

Carl Lundquist

Let excitement never become monotonous, but it became nearly unbearable in 1951 on what was supposed to be the last day of the National League season.

The teletypes in the National headquarters of the United Press sports department in New York clattered with the usual clutter of routine items that would be forgotten before the next sunset. At phone-side on a direct line from Philadelphia was Milton Richman, one of baseball's top-flight reporters, grumbling because that sunset was closing in and he had nothing to report.

The Giants, a team of destiny that had gotten off to a late start, already had won a 3-2 decision in Boston to clinch a tie for the pennant. Call that incredible no matter what else would happen, because on August 26 they had trailed the Brooklyn Dodgers by 13-1/2 games.

Now the Brooks were fighting for their lives in what seemed to be a never-ending struggle against the Phillies and that sunset was right out there on the horizon. Brooklyn had been behind, 6-1 and 8-5, but had tied the game, 8-8, in the ninth. This writer, as the National Baseball Editor for the United Press, could not leave his post until things finally were settled in Philadelphia, where the indomitable Jackie Robinson had literally knocked himself out in the twelfth preserving the game for the Dodgers. Baseball had not yet become sufficiently enlightened to turn on the lights to complete a day game, so this upcoming inning, the fourteenth, would surely be the last.

The question lingers. Did Jackie Robinson make that diving catch on Eddie Waitkus with the bases loaded and two out in the twelfth—or did he trap it, in which case it would have been a game-ending hit with the Dodgers done for '51?

Just in case you were not in shabby Shibe Park on that last Sunday in September, this was the way it was for the Dodgers.

In what had seemed a runaway race in which they had their fans convinced that they had it all but won by Mothers Day, they had come to within one pitch of oblivion. Ace Don Newcombe, already a 20-game winner, had come in to save the game and the season in the eighth, and pitched hitless ball after Richie Ashburn singled. Now, though, he had walked two and hit a batter.

Waitkus, the Phillies first baseman drove what looked like a game-winning low liner up the middle. Robinson sprinted to his right, dove flat out and speared the ball inches off the ground. When he fell, his left elbow jammed deep into his stomach. He blacked out briefly, and when he got up, he clutched his shoulder in pain. Lon Warneke, working in the middle position as base umpire, called Waitkus out and the game verged on pandemonium. Many observers called it one of the greatest defensive plays they'd

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Carl Lundquist is 84, too old to retire. He was National Baseball Editor for United Press 1943-56, when he became public relations director of the minor leagues, 1957-62. He returned to New York to handle sports public relations for Grey Advertising. A lifetime member of the Baseball Writers of America, he now is an assignment writer for various publications.

ever seen. Others dwelt on it as yet another example of Robinson's passionate will to win.

Robinson lent weight to this perception in the fourteenth, when he shook off any residual pain and whacked a homer to give the Dodgers a 9-8 triumph, a share of the league lead, and a date with destiny and Bobby Thomson.

Waitkus, a good clutch hitter who got off low line drives almost every day, stood stunned after the catch. He protested but knew he could not argue Warneke into changing the call. It was wilder in the Phillie dugout, lengthily livid from end to end. Most voluble was pitcher Russ Meyer, the Mad Monk, who hollered until warned that more abuse would mean ejection.

Transcendental Graphics

Eddie Waitkus

Meyer, back in home town Oglesby, Illinois, confirmed he had calmed down "just a little but I still feel the ball bounced into Jackie's glove.

"But Warneke was right there and he made the quick call and was closer to the play than anybody else," he added. "Besides later when I was traded to the Dodgers and reported to spring training, the very first guy I saw when I walked into the clubhouse was Jackie. And he said, 'we fought each other, now let's fight together.' Wow, what a guy."

Richman, a Hall of Fame writer and one of the game's all-time top reporters, described the dramatics as he covered the action in Philly, but had no opinion on the call, and his brother Arthur Richman, senior vice president of the Yankees, remembered that he never expressed his views.

"We always talked about a lot of things but that never came up," said Arthur. "You know he always spoke out when he was sure about anything, and he had coke bottle eye glasses."

How about the always-available Eddie Sawyer, the Phillies manager, who may have been the only guy on the bench without postgame laryngitis? Before passing away in September, he recalled it vividly—but with a disclaimer.

"You know about baseball dugouts," he said. "We've got one of the worst seats in the house with the pitcher's mound in the way for a play like that. I just didn't get a good look. And Warneke was right there to make the call."

Bob Broeg, neutrally observant as a visiting baseball writer for the St. Louis *Post Dispatch*, felt strongly that Jack had made as great a play as he ever had seen. When Robinson noisily declared later, "I held on to the ball," Broeg said that was the clincher. "I believed him and I felt then and now that if he trapped it he would not have claimed he caught it."

Roscoe McGowen, known as the "Dean of Dodger Tech," as the senior writer covering for the New York *Times*, doffed his conservative wraps and declared that the all-time record National League attendance for the ancient stadium comprised 31,755 fans roaring as though they had migrated from Brooklyn.

At this sitting, more than forty-six years later, here is another question. If Robinson had not delivered in the fourteenth, would new National League President Warren Giles have told the Phillies to hit the light switch, or would the game have been suspended to be completed the next day? No one knows, because no one asked.

It was one of Robinson's greatest days on the diamond, but it is largely forgotten because of what it lead to. Just think. If Jackie hadn't made that great catch or hadn't hit that clutch home run, Bobby Thomson might well be remembered as the only major league player to be born in Glasgow, Scotland. And Ralph Branca, a quality pitcher who did not do well in the early innings of this encounter, would have been spared the ignominy of serving up that barely fair "home run heard 'round the world" to Thomson in what many observers— including this one—still describe as the greatest game in major league history.

Previous Playoffs

Big League Baseball went all the way to 1946 before there was a tie for the pennant but for a backward glance down Memory Lane, take a look at a dynamo decade, beginning four years earlier when there was almost annual madness.

The Cardinals and Dodgers, the same teams that deadlocked for the banner in 1946 as St. Louis made quick work of a best of three playoff with two victories in a row, could have had a "flag-lock" in '42. On the final day that season St. Louis had a two game lead. If the Dodgers won and the Cardinals lost that would have made things even. For historical purposes both teams won but the suspense was authentic.

But that touched off a ten-year stretch where on eight occasions there was a pennant race that went to the final day—and on three occasions was not over even then.

In 1944 there was a rarity that overshadowed a tense AL pennant race when the St. Louis Browns finally won their only pennant by finishing just a game ahead of Detroit. That was almost patriotic as an accommodation to war-time transportation problems since they stayed right at home to meet the Cardinals in a lively six-game set with both teams playing in their home park. The Cards won, but it was a struggle.

It was even closer in 1945 when the Tigers ended just a half game ahead of Washington. Detroit had a rained out game but no make-up was considered because of war-time travel limits.

Then came the NL tie in 1946 and just two years later a single game AL finale with Cleveland and Boston deadlocked. The Indians won, then conveniently stayed right there to take on the Braves, short-circuiting what would have been the only all-Boston World Series. It was instead an Indian Summer Classic as the Indians topped the Braves in six games.

The AL had another furious finish in 1949 when the Red Sox came to New York leading by a game. They lost two to the Yankees who then started a run of five straight world championships.

In 1950 the Phillies broke a tie with the Dodgers, winning an extra inning battle with a homer by Dick Sisler in the 19th, then losing four straight tough games to New York in what was called the "closest one-sided World Series of all time."

You know all about that '51 earth-shaker, featuring the antics of JR, who won it not quite single-handed and surely not before anybody could say Jack Robinson. This one took nearly four hours.

—C. L.

Texas Leaguers

After the close of the Texas League season of 1888, three members of the Houston team, Bill Joyce, Emmett Rogers, and Arthur Sunday, were all sold to Toledo of the old American Association. All three were reputed to be big sluggers, and in a game versus Syracuse, all three were getting on base by short hits to the outfield. A disgusted Syracuse player came back to the bench and supposedly said 'All those durn chumps can do is hit out those little old dinky Texas Leaguers.' The remark reached the press box and lived on to this day. (From *The Sporting News*, November 23, 1916.)

—Kerry Keene

Isolated Anemia

Who were the greatest table setters in the history of baseball? At last a stat reserved for the little guy!

Guy Waterman

So many baseball stats spotlight the big sluggers: home runs, RBI, slugging average, total bases, extra-base hits. But where is the stat that credits the scrappy little batsman, the fellow who gets on base somehow, there to be driven home by those big sluggers?

In theory on-base percentage gives the little guy his chance. But look at career leaders in OBP (page 2,274 in *Total Baseball IV*). Whom do you see? Ted Williams, Babe Ruth, Gehrig, Foxx. Table setters? These are the same names you find in the next column as leaders in slugging average. Sure, a couple of nineteenth century little guys (McGraw and Hamilton) make the top ten in OBP, along with one modern singles slapper (Boggs). But otherwise muscle men have muscled in on this stat too. C'mon guys, give us a chance. Look on down the line. Within the top twenty-five are Mantle, Ott, Greenberg. The top 100 include Kiner, Mize, Hack Wilson.

So OBP is cluttered with too many good folk whom you'd never bat leadoff or second. Us little guys need a list of our own, one where the true table-setters get due acclaim.

Here's an idea. A few years back Sabermetricians popularized the concept of "Isolated Power": essentially, extra bases divided by at-bats. This is a great way of focusing on pure power. Eliminates all that singles nonsense.

Why not turn that idea upside down? Delete all extra bases. Take singles plus walks only, and divide them by at-bats plus walks. Banish all hint of extra-base power. The little guy's private preserve.

THOMAS, Fielder, Phila., N

Roy Thomas.

Transcendental Graphics

Call it "Isolated Anemia." Or the "Table-Setting Index." It identifies the Great Men who couldn't loft a ball on the fly past second base very often, but who got on base consistently to give the big boppers some RBI-bait. They're the great table-setters of history, the mighty mites overlooked in all the other stats.

The career list is on the next page. Yes, I know, Williams and Ruth still. And Cobb. But no more Gehrig or Foxx or Mantle or Mize. Look at those names: truly the legendary Lilliputians of the diamond.

Guy Waterman is a Vermont homesteader and devoted member of SABR's Larry Gardner Chapter. He treasures the memory of attending 53 home games of the Boston Braves in 1943.

Ground Rules: Twentieth century careers only. Minimum of 1,000 games played. Apparent ties are listed in the order they'd be in if carried to further decimal points.

Right off, note that this stat is focused on one thing only, and that's a negative: lack of power. To rank higher or lower is not a measure of overall value. More is not necessarily better here.

Thus, you'll note that Rickey Henderson ranks no higher than No. 17, despite all his walks and speed. This definitely does *not* refute the case for Rickey as the greatest leadoff hitter of all time. Henderson, as is well known, had plenty of pop in his bat, the all-time leader in game-starting home runs. One can hardly penalize him for that.

But right now we're focusing on table-setting.

Isolated Anemia

Career leaders: singles plus walks divided by at-bats plus walks.

1.	Roy Thomas	.382
2.	Ted Williams	.366
3.	Max Bishop	.364
4.	Ferris Fain	.362
5.	Eddie Collins	.362
6.	Eddie Stanky	.359
7.	Wade Boggs	.352
8.	Richie Ashburn	.347
9.	Miller Huggins	.346
10.	Babe Ruth	.342
11.	Luke Appling	.341
12.	Ty Cobb	.340
13.	Mike Hargrove	.338
14.	Johnny Pesky	.337
15.	Dave Magadan	.337
16.	Elmer Valo	.335
17.	Rickey Henderson	.334
18.	Willie Keeler	.333
19.	Roy Cullenbine	.333
20.	Stan Hack	.333
21.	Joe Cunningham	.331
22.	Rod Carew	.331
23.	Lu Blue	.331
24.	Greg Gross	.331
25.	Mickey Cochrane	.331
26.	Ed Yost	.329
27.	Topsy Hartsel	.329
28.	John Kruk	.327
29.	Brett Butler	.327
30.	Willie Randolph	.326

Roy Thomas? Somewhere I recall someone (but I can't recall where or who) saying that on an all-time team of leadoff hitters, Roy Thomas would lead off. Here is statistical proof of Thomas' unique qualities. Look how far out front he lies. The mirror image of Babe Ruth. A wimp's wimp. It is no coincidence that, of all full-time players in history, Thomas holds the lowest mark in Isolated Power (.019). He's the greatest pure singles hitter (and walk-gatherer) there ever was.

Some of these table-setters are indelibly paired with specific mealtickets (our metaphor's getting a bit mixed here): Bishop with Foxx, Collins with Home Run Baker, Ashburn with Del Ennis, Pesky with Williams.

Some are just who you'd expect: Bishop, Stanky, Ashburn, Yost. But others are surprises, hitherto unsung men who were getting on base a whole lot and never much noticed: Hargrove, Valo, Cullenbine, Cunningham. It's great to give them their due at last.

Nice to see some modern heroes placing so high: Boggs, Butler, Henderson, of course. Some readers may be surprised to see Greg Gross and Dave Magadan rank so high. And John Kruk!

One technical note: Should HBP be included in both numerator and denominator? Probably. It's omitted here only because it is not readily available in published sources.

Did we say this is the little guy's stat? Keeler stood 5' 4-1/2", Huggins 5' 6-1/2", Stanky 5' 8". But Cullenbine and Cunningham (not to mention Williams, Ruth, and Cobb) were six-footers. Thomas stood 5' 11".

Topsy Hartsel? What a perfect name and image (5' 5", 155 lbs.) for this list. Who's heard of him today? But Topsy Hartsel's what this is all about.

Note the absence of some famous lead-off men and singles hitters. Luis Aparicio enjoyed a reputation as a great leadoff man, but in fact rarely drew a base on balls. Lloyd Waner hit a ton of singles, but also took few walks. Recent baseball scholarship has properly downgraded their value as leadoff hitters. Vince Coleman is a more recent example.

But to end on a positive note, observe some of the great table-setters here. Besides Roy Thomas, Ferris Fain (also a fine defensive first baseman, incidentally) rarely gets the credit which his standing here suggests he deserves. "Camera Eye" Bishop and the Brat have always been saluted for their propensity for walks, Collins and Keeler and Carew for all-around excellence. Huggins is a name usually mentioned only for his managerial career. Butler ... Pesky ... Hack ... Lu Blue ... Willie Randolph ... Isn't it nice to see these names on a proper pedestal?

Family Baseball Teams

By one who knows

Charlie Bevis

It was a box score nightmare.

Tom Lennon was the first baseman, Ray Lennon the second baseman, Allie Lennon the third baseman, with Peter Lennon the shortstop. The battery consisted of pitcher Ed Lennon and catcher Artie Lennon. In the outfield were Joe Lennon, Maurice Lennon and Dan Lennon. They were all brothers.

The year was 1890 and the Lennon Brothers Nine of Joliet, Illinois, was one of the first organized family baseball teams.

Teams composed entirely of siblings are a nearly forgotten part of baseball's past. Family teams are, though, an important footnote to baseball history. As an extension of the town team concept, family teams helped baseball develop in rural areas of the country in the late nineteenth century and carried forward the adult amateur aspects of the sport into the twentieth.

Family baseball teams began to fade as the country changed from agricultural to industrial, and were killed off by the shift to smaller families. By the end of World War II it was highly unusual to see a family with the necessary nine sons to form a baseball team.

One of the first documented family baseball teams was the Madden Brothers, who played in 1876.

"Base ball runs in families, sometimes," a 1906 article in *The Sporting News* reported. "There were the Madden brothers, famous in Massachusetts 30 years ago. There were just nine of them and they were a fine team. They won many games. Mike Madden was the only one of the family who became a professional. He was a third baseman and played with the old Syracuse Stars."[1]

Then the Lennon Brothers came onto the scene in 1890, along with several other family teams.

"It is proper that the names of a nine, consisting of members of one family, should go on the record as among the noteworthy matters of a base ball season. Joliet, Ill. has a nine composed of the brothers of a family named Lennon," the 1891 *Spalding Guide* reported of the previous season on pages in a section entitled "Base Ball Family Nines."[2]

"Joliet has a wonder in the base ball line which the world is challenged to duplicate," *The Sporting News* wrote that year. "It is an expert amateur base ball club, all brothers. There are eleven in the club, the father being umpire and the youngest brother being the mascot. These are the Lennon brothers, all sons of John Lennon, a prosperous marble dealer, who in addition to the ten boys has eight girls, making eighteen in all in the family."[3]

"They are all sober, steady, good boys, without any bad habits," the article went on to comment.

On September 27, 1890, the Lennon family team defeated the Karpen family team of Chicago, 3-2, in a game before a crowd of 1,500 at the Joliet Base Ball Park.

"The two families put up a surprisingly fine game, the features being the battery work of both teams, the short stop work of the Karpens, and the batting of the

Charlie Bevis lives in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, and has authored several baseball history articles for TNP and BRJ during his twelve years as a SABR member. He is also the son of the shortstop on the 1932 All-Bevis Baseball Team, the inspiration for the research into this article.

Lennons," *The Sporting News* wrote that fall under the headline "A Brotherly Contest."[4]

In 1964 Al Meyer, a Joliet neighbor of George Lennon, the mascot of the team, helped create a Lennon Brothers Nine team exhibit to be displayed in the Hall of Fame at Cooperstown.[5]

A team of Thompson brothers from Winchester, New Hampshire, played from 1896 to 1899.

"The team was started by Winfield, home from Amherst College the summer of 1896," a 1972 *Yankee* magazine article noted. "After chores on the family dairy farm were finished, he'd round up the other Thompson brothers and play ball on their practice diamond in the big pasture. They became known in many parts of the country, and when farm chores permitted, accepted offers to play in several Midwestern towns."[6]

Another early family team was the Birkenmeyer Baseball Team from Wappinger Falls, New York, composed of ten sons of Mary and Adolph Birkenmeyer, a German wagon maker.

"Jimmy Gleason became the team manager in 1906 and for several years played the best teams up and down the Hudson Valley from Brooklyn and Queens up to Hudson, New York," a short biography of the team written by the Dutchess County Old Timers Baseball Association notes.[7]

In the late 1970s a newspaper writer interviewed Jimmy Birkenmeyer, the team's center fielder, celebrating his ninety-seventh birthday, posing in front of the team picture displayed on the wall of a tavern in Casselberry, Florida. "If you meet Birkenmeyer and get him talking about his baseball team," the writer noted in his article, "have him tell you about the time a herd of cows broke through a fence and spent some time grazing in the outfield before a game."

The Skillicorn All-Brother Baseball Team played in 1920-21 in the Monterey Bay area of California. "Above team organized for sole purpose of playing exhibition games in immediate area of their home town, Watsonville, California" a note with a team photo at the National Baseball Library states. "Several contracts were offered for this team to barnstorm the nation. However, because of domestic and occupational responsibilities none were accepted."

The nine sons of George and Mary Skillicorn ranged in age from third baseman William, 30, to right fielder Richard who was just nine years old.

On July 8, 1921, the front page of the Orange County *News*, published in Gordonsville, Virginia, trumpeted a game between two local family baseball teams.

"The scorching heat of the day did not detract from the ardor of approximately fifteen hundred fans and admirers who gathered at Orange, Va. on the Fourth of July to witness a game of baseball ... when two family teams clashed, composed of nine brothers from each clan.

"The aggregation of Flanagan brothers, who hail from Powhatan County, and the nine Gillum brothers from Madison Mills, in Orange County, staged this unique game in the annals of our national sport, and although some of these brothers on both sides have advanced to middle age ... Monday they passed the horsehide around with enthusiasm of boys."

The article chronicled the Flanagan 31-21 victory play by play. Paul Flanagan, left fielder and a clerk of the U.S. District Court of Norfolk, VA, went 5-7 including a third-inning homer, while Leonard Gillum, first baseman and a merchant at the family business, went 5-6, being put out only on a third-inning strikeout.

The Frederickson Brothers Baseball Team from Eidswold, Minnesota, experienced some success in the late 1920s as the family farm began its decline in this country.

"For the Fredericksons, baseball was a release from their flat-as-the-prairie lifestyle, from the boredom of working on their father's 220-acre farm," Chad Millman wrote in a 1994 *Sports Illustrated* article.[8]

"Playing baseball was the only enjoyment my brothers and I got out of life," Arthur Frederickson commented in that 1994 article. "There was literally nothing else to do."

"There was, of course, at least one other thing to do, which was apparent from the size of the Fredrickson clan," writer Millman noted. "Besides the twelve baseball-playing brothers, there were two other brothers and four sisters. In 1927 Otto, the aptly named eighth brother, corralled his male siblings and persuaded them to band together as a traveling amateur baseball team.

"Nels Jr., who was 29 at the time and owned the general store on Main Street in neighboring Elko, supplied gray wool uniforms at wholesale prices. Wearing jerseys with the letters FB embroidered on them, white pinstriped caps with gray bills, and tattered leather shoes with triangular cleats, the brothers spent the next three summers driving 30-mile circuits to play games. They played almost every Sunday, and occasionally on Saturday, from the spring thaw until the first snow blanketed the plains, 35 to 40 games a year."

One of the brothers' sharpest memories however,

was of their parents Nels and Emelia.

"They never saw one of our games," Arthur Frederickson recalled. "When we started, they forbade us to play on Sunday. That was a day for milking the cows and relaxing, nothing physical that wasn't necessary. So they wouldn't watch us play."

"To the boys, baseball was a religion, it wasn't just a game," family friend Leonard Bentson said in that 1994 article in regard to the belief of Nels Fredrickson that playing baseball on Sunday was a sin. "They were such fun to watch, not because they were great, but because they loved it so much."

A team of ten Simon brothers from Olsburg, Kansas, played 1927-29.

"We won about 75 percent of the time," Ed Simon asserted in a 1987 newspaper retrospective on the team. "We tried to win them all, of course." [9]

The Simon Brothers team played throughout central Kansas and played its home games on a ten-acre alfalfa field on the Simon homestead.

"One day a black team from Fort Riley came up to the farm to play us," Nile Simon, the team's shortstop recalled of a team that hoped to impress some Negro League Kansas City Monarch scouts. "They made it a contest among themselves to see how far they could hit the ball and they could hit it pretty far. I found one of those balls during harvest that autumn out in the cane field."

Although the Fredrickson and Simon family teams disbanded when the Great Depression hit in the early 1930s, family teams in general experienced a revival.

One of the more prominent teams was the Haas brothers, who played in Napierville, Illinois, in the early 1930s.

The youngest brother on the team was Bert Haas, who would go on to play 721 major league baseball games from 1937-51 with the Brooklyn Dodgers, Cincinnati Reds, and several other teams. Brothers Ted, Bill, and Joe all played minor league baseball.

"Bert was at first farmed out to a Warrenville team by his older brothers, who thought he needed more experience before playing with them," according to material from Bert Haas. "The brothers relish telling this to show how they underestimated the kid brother's potential.[10]

"The only game they lost was the one they played against the Aurora All-Stars. So disgusted was their dad that he left in the sixth inning and went home."

Reportedly in 1932 "The Coombs boys of Wichita Falls [Texas]—11 of 'em—have arranged a complete schedule of spring games with the eight Texas League clubs. The Coombs brothers team has been organized for several seasons and has a record of having played better than .600 baseball during that time."[11]

In New Jersey a team of the Curley family played near their Bridgeton home. "We played sandlot ball in South Jersey area in the early '30s," Robert Curley noted in 1963. "Ages of brothers at that time was from 15 to 36. We also had three sisters."[12]

And in New England, "During the depths of the Great Depression in 1932, the Bevis family, like many others, struggled for work in the small Massachusetts town of Bridgewater," this author's 1994 *Yankee* magazine article noted. "My resourceful grandfather decided to organize his family into a baseball team to have some fun and make a few bucks. My father and seven uncles played the field and Grampa Jack at age 54 was the catcher. They sold tickets or passed the hat, collecting enough to gas up the cars, imbibe some bootleg, and buy a few groceries."[13]

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, the team of the May Brothers traveled throughout eastern Kentucky and southern West Virginia.

"We looked forward to the weekends," Blaine May Jr. recalled of those days. "We worked five days a week in the mines and would play baseball on Saturday and Sunday. We played for nothing except the fun of it. We just enjoyed being together as a family and playing baseball."[14]

"Everyone looked forward to the weekends. Baseball was the most popular sport at the time," May continued. "People just don't take an interest in it like they used to. They just won't come out and watch."

Adult amateur baseball went into a significant decline following World War II. Parents were more interested in attending their children's Little League games than playing the sport itself. Family baseball teams began to disappear.

The Acerra All-Brother Baseball Club of Long Branch, New Jersey, was one of the last family baseball teams.

"The team started to play as a unit in the summer of 1938," Paul Acerra recalled in a 1996 letter, at the age of 82. "When the war broke out, six brothers were inducted into the services of the Country. After the war ended, we resumed playing again."[15]

Louis "Pop" Acerra, the father, managed the team which consisted of twelve brothers spanning ages from 42 to 16 during the 1947 season.

Unlike most family teams, the Acerra Brothers received a fair amount of publicity. "The Acerras believe they are the only all-brother team in the country, but they are willing to meet any others, if

there are such," Arch Ward wrote in a 1946 *Chicago Tribune* column of their search for other family teams to play.[16]

Wire services picked up their unusual story and articles were published about the team across the country, with headlines such as "Fabulous Brothers Baseball Team Turns Down All Rich Offers."[17]

The Acerras appeared on the television show "We The People" in 1950.[18]

"And of course there was the *Ripley's Believe It or Not* write-up," Paul Acerra remembered in a 1978 retrospective on the fortieth anniversary of the team's inception.[19]

A few incidents on the playing field stick out in Paul Acerra's memory.

"The Trenton League that played their games at night selected an all-star team to play against our team. We lost a thriller in the late innings when our sure-fielding shortstop missed a ground ball that was hit toward him. The score was 3-2," Paul Acerra recalled in his 1996 letter, poking fun at himself as "I played shortstop for the family until Frederick got a little older, then I went to second base."

Then there was that game with the Jamesbury A.C.

"The field we played on was not up to par, as baseball fields go. The left field had a large slope toward the foul line, sometimes the left fielder was out of view. The umpire wasn't too sharp as he called balls and strikes from behind the pitcher's mound. I think the game was very close and around the sixth inning one of their players hit a long fly ball to left and James, who was playing left field, gave it a good chase but the ball went deep into the woods in foul territory. The umpire did not move from behind the pitcher's mound and called the ball fair. The crowd that was present booed the umpire. My father got so upset that he ordered us off the field. And we went home.

"We had to stop," Paul Acerra recalled of the disbanding of the team. "Some of us were getting a little too old and just didn't want to go running around anymore."

Many believed their family baseball team to be unique.

"Probably tens of thousands of baseball teams have been formed since the game was originated in the mid-nineteenth century," the Simon Brothers newspaper article stated. "But there is no record of any parallel all-brother team at any professional or amateur level."

Even a 1947 inquiry to the Baseball Hall of Fame by Paul Acerra provoked a similar thought.

"You have a very unusual baseball team and I wonder whether in the history of baseball there has been another team composed entirely of brothers," Paul Kerr, treasurer of the Hall, responded.[20]

Of course, there have been other family baseball teams over the years—more even than the ones covered in this article. The National Baseball Library in Cooperstown has pictures of several other family teams with little further information: the Ladouceur Brothers of Ogdenburg, New York; the Newell Brothers of Plankinton, South Dakota; the Stanzak Brothers, whose location is unidentified; and the Van Tassel Brothers of Pennsylvania. No doubt there have been others, too.

Family baseball teams deserve their place in baseball history.

Notes

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2. "Base Ball Family Nines," 1891 *Spalding Guide*, p. 97.
3. "Joliet's Unique Ball Nine," *The Sporting News*, September 13, 1890.
4. "A Brotherly Contest," *The Sporting News*, October 4, 1890.
5. "Lennon Team Earns Hall of Fame Place," *Joliet Herald-News*, September 13, 1964.
6. "The Thompson Nine," *Yankee*, September 1972.
7. Letter to National Baseball Library from Joseph Poillucci dated August 3, 1995, with copy of unidentified newspaper article.
8. "Oh, Brother, What a Team," *Sports Illustrated*, July 11, 1994.
9. "The Baseball Simons," *Manhattan* (Kansas) *Mercury*, August 9, 1987.
10. Letter to author from Bert Haas dated June 7, 1995.
11. "Brothers' Team to Play Texas," unidentified newspaper clipping at National Baseball Library.
12. Supplemental information on photograph at National Baseball Library.
13. "Call it Bevis-Ball," *Yankee*, July 1994.
14. "The Brothers May," unidentified newspaper clipping at National Baseball Library.
15. Letter to author from Paul Acerra dated March 25, 1996.
16. "In the Wake of the News," *Chicago Tribune*, May 22, 1946.
17. "Fabulous Brothers Baseball Team Turns Down All Rich Offers," *Midland* (Texas) *Reporter*, July 13, 1947.
18. Letter to Paul Acerra from "We The People" dated September 7, 1950.
19. "Long Branch's Acerra Brothers Celebrating 40th Anniversary," *The Sunday Register* (Shrewsbury, NJ), June 18, 1978.
20. Letter to Paul Acerra from Hall of Fame dated February 18, 1947.

Percentage of Extra-Base Hits

A new indicator of power

Mary Ashworth, Gabriel Costa, Dale Edmiston, William Fox, Michael Huber, Jonathan Roginski, and Emett White

Much attention is given to the sluggers of the game: Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig; Jimmie Foxx and Mel Ott; Frank Robinson and Hank Aaron; Willie Mays and Mickey Mantle; Reggie Jackson and Mike Schmidt; Frank Thomas and Ken Griffey, Jr. Fans become obsessed with how many home runs a favorite player has hit. When a player hits eleven round-trippers in the month of April, as Brady Anderson of the Baltimore Orioles did to start the 1996 season, fans excitedly contemplate whether he will break Roger Maris's record of 61 in a season. What about the other base hits? How does the *percentage* of extra-base hits describe a player's power? In 1995, Albert Belle hit 50 home runs, 1 triple, 52 doubles, and 70 singles, for a total of 173 hits. More important, he totaled 103 extra-base hits. And, he accomplished the feat in only 143 games! His percentage of extra-base hits for 1995 was 0.5954, the highest individual percentage *in history*.

This research was the idea of ***Rev. Gabriel Costa****, a SABR member, who is a Roman Catholic priest of the archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey, and an associate professor of mathematics and computer science at Seton Hall University. In 1988, he began teaching a course in sabermetrics at Seton Hall, and he started offering the course in 1996 at the United States Military Academy (USMA), where he was a visiting professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences.* ***Lt.-Col. William Fox*** *is professor of Operations Research at USMA and a co-instructor in sabermetrics, as is* ***Maj. Michael Huber****, who is also a SABR member and was assistant professor of mathematics at USMA.* ***Mary Ashworth****,* ***Dale Edmiston****,* ***Jonathan Roginski****, and* ***Emett White*** *were all the first sabermetrics students of Rev. Costa at USMA and have been commissioned as lieutenants in the United States Army. The initial article was a combined project of the entire group. The data for 1996 players and teams was added by Maj. Huber and Rev. Costa.*

The percentage of extra-base hits (PXBH) is defined as a player's number of extra-base hits (XBH) divided by his total number of hits (H), or

$$PXBH = \frac{XBH}{H} = \frac{HR + 3B + 2B}{H}$$

In contrast, a player's slugging percentage (SLG) is defined as his total bases (TB) divided by his total at-bats (AB),

$$SLG = \frac{TB}{AB} = \frac{1(1B) + 2(2B) + 3(3B) + 4(HR)}{AB}$$

PXBH is a statistic that convincingly shows the hitter's potential to influence the game offensively. With a PXBH of over 0.5000, a player will get *at least* a double once in every two hits. So, if Albert Belle went 2 for 4 in a game last season, we could assume that one of those hits was for extra bases, possibly driving in a run, definitely placing him in scoring position. Using *Total Baseball*[1] as a reference, only two of the top ten leaders in career extra-base hits are also in the top ten PXBH list—Ruth and Gehrig. The top 100 career extra-base hit leaders are listed in Table 1 on the next page, which includes XBH, H, PXBH, and SA (for comparison). Only 21 players in major league history have collected over 1,000 extra-base hits in their careers, and only eight of these players have a PXBH over 0.4000. It is interesting to see in Table 1 that only five players— Greenberg, Ruth, Gehrig, Foxx, and Ted Williams—have a lifetime PXBH over 0.4000 and career slugging percentages over 0.600. Conversely, two players, Dave Kingman

Table 1: Career Extra-base Hits Leaders

	Player	Extra Base Hits	Base Hits	PXBH	SA		Player	Extra Base Hits	Base Hits	PXBH	SA
1	Hank Greenberg	781	1628	0.4797	.605	51	Dave Parker	940	2712	0.3466	.471
2	Babe Ruth	1356	2873	0.4720	.690	52	Del Ennis	715	2063	0.3466	.472
3	Mike Schmidt	1015	2234	0.4543	.527	53	Cal Ripken, Jr.	831	2405	0.3455	.455
4	Dave Kingman	707	1575	0.4489	.478	54	Rogers Hornsby	1011	2930	0.3451	.577
5	Lou Gehrig	1190	2721	0.4373	.632	55	Ron Santo	774	2254	0.3434	.464
6	Willie Stargell	953	2232	0.4270	.529	56	Don Baylor	732	2135	0.3429	.436
7	Harmon Killebrew	887	2086	0.4252	.509	57	Jim Rice	834	2452	0.3401	.502
8	Jimmie Foxx	1117	2646	0.4221	.609	58	Al Simmons	995	2927	0.3399	.535
9	Ted Williams	1117	2654	0.4209	.634	59	Yogi Berra	728	2150	0.3386	.482
10	Willie McCovey	920	2211	0.4161	.515	60	Eddie Murray	1089	3218	0.3384	.480
11	Reggie Jackson	1075	2584	0.4160	.490	61	Carl Yastrzemski	1157	3419	0.3384	.462
12	Dick Allen	750	1848	0.4058	.534	62	Goose Goslin	921	2735	0.3367	.500
13	Eddie Mathews	938	2315	0.4052	.509	63	Dan Brouthers	771	2296	0.3358	.519
14	Frank Robinson	1186	2943	0.4030	.537	64	Graig Nettles	746	2225	0.3353	.421
15	Willie Mays	1323	3283	0.4030	.557	65	Harry Heilmann	876	2660	0.3293	.520
16	Johnny Mize	809	2011	0.4023	.562	66	Roger Connor	812	2467	0.3291	.486
17	Duke Snider	850	2116	0.4017	.540	67	Al Kaline	972	3007	0.3232	.480
18	Joe DiMaggio	881	2214	0.3979	.579	68	Joe Morgan	813	2517	0.3230	.427
19	Mickey Mantle	952	2415	0.3942	.557	69	Tris Speaker	1131	3514	0.3219	.500
20	Hank Aaron	1477	3771	0.3917	.555	70	Cecil Cooper	703	2192	0.3207	.466
21	Ernie Banks	1009	2583	0.3906	.500	71	Charlie Gehringer	904	2839	0.3184	.480
22	Jack Clark	711	1826	0.3894	.476	72	Vada Pinson	868	2757	0.3148	.442
23	Johnny Bench	794	2048	0.3877	.476	73	Ted Simmons	778	2472	0.3147	.437
24	Dwight Evans	941	2446	0.3847	.470	74	Mickey Vernon	782	2495	0.3134	.428
25	Earl Averill	767	2019	0.3799	.534	75	Ed Delahanty	808	2597	0.3111	.505
26	Bob Johnson	779	2051	0.3798	.506	76	Rusty Staub	838	2716	0.3085	.431
27	Stan Musial	1377	3630	0.3793	.559	77	Enos Slaughter	730	2383	0.3063	.453
28	Fred Lynn	737	1960	0.3760	.484	78	Robin Yount	960	3142	0.3055	.430
29	Andre Dawson	1039	2774	0.3745	.484	79	Lou Whitaker	701	2296	0.3053	.423
30	Dale Murphy	787	2111	0.3728	.469	80	Heinie Manush	761	2524	0.3015	.479
31	Mel Ott	1071	2876	0.3724	.533	81	Al Oliver	825	2743	0.3008	.451
32	Chuck Klein	772	2076	0.3719	.543	82	Sam Crawford	864	2961	0.2918	.452
33	Gil Hodges	713	1921	0.3712	.487	83	Honus Wagner	993	3415	0.2908	.466
34	Bobby Bonds	700	1886	0.3712	.471	84	Steve Garvey	755	2599	0.2905	.466
35	George Foster	702	1925	0.3647	.480	85	Jimmy Ryan	726	2502	0.2902	.444
36	Gabby Hartnett	696	1912	0.3640	.489	86	Paul Waner	909	3152	0.2884	.473
37	Reggie Smith	734	2020	0.3634	.489	87	Brooks Robinson	818	2848	0.2872	.401
38	Jim Bottomley	835	2313	0.3610	.500	88	Paul Molitor	857	3014	0.2843	.453
39	Carlton Fisk	844	2356	0.3582	.457	89	Roberto Clemente	846	3000	0.2820	.475
40	Lee May	725	2031	0.3570	.459	90	Willie Davis	715	2561	0.2792	.412
41	George Brett	1119	3154	0.3548	.487	91	Nap Lajoie	903	3242	0.2785	.467
42	Hal McRae	741	2091	0.3544	.454	92	Jake Beckley	802	2930	0.2737	.435
43	Tony Perez	963	2732	0.3525	.463	93	Ty Cobb	1136	4189	0.2712	.512
44	Dave Winfield	1093	3110	0.3514	.476	94	Zack Wheat	780	2884	0.2705	.450
45	Joe Cronin	803	2285	0.3514	.468	95	Bill Buckner	721	2715	0.2656	.408
46	Darrell Evans	779	2223	0.3504	.431	96	Lou Brock	776	3023	0.2567	.410
47	Orlando Cepeda	823	2351	0.3501	.499	97	Cap Anson	749	2995	0.2501	.466
48	Billy Williams	948	2711	0.3497	.492	98	Frankie Frisch	709	2880	0.2462	.432
49	Joe Medwick	858	2471	0.3472	.505	99	Pete Rose	1041	4256	0.2446	.409
50	Gary Carter	726	2092	0.3470	.439	100	Sam Rice	716	2987	0.2397	.427

and Reggie Jackson, have high extra-base hit percentages yet career slugging percentages below .500.

The mention of Ruth conjures up thoughts of a great home run hitter. His 714 homers rank second all-time, and he single-handedly out-homered entire teams 90 times from 1918 to 1932! The Sultan of Swat also had 1,356 extra-base hits, third highest in history. Only 52.6 percent of his extra-base hits were home runs. He stands 28th on the career doubles list with 506, and his 136 triples put him 69th all time. Ruth's PXBH is 0.4720, second all time. His career slugging percentage is 0.690, which is the highest ever, but it does not completely indicate his power potential. A slugging percentage of 0.690 roughly means that Ruth had two bases for every three at-bats. His career PXBH translates to at least a double for every second hit. From a power point of view, he drove in a run, or got in position to be driven in, with every second base hit over his entire career.

Hank Aaron, who compiled 1,477 lifetime extra-base hits, ends up 20th on the career PXBH list with a value of 0.3917, almost 0.0900 below the career leader, Hank Greenberg. Greenberg dominated the majors in PXBH from 1934 to 1938. Consider Ty Cobb, one of the greatest hitters ever. Cobb's lifetime average was .364. He got 4,189 hits in his career, of which 1,136 were for extra bases, 8th all-time. However, Cobb's PXBH is 0.2712, 93rd on the career list, despite a career slugging percentage of .512. Pete Rose is number 99 on the all-time PXBH list. His 1,041 extra-base hits of the record 4,256 hits leave him with a PXBH of 0.2446. How did other big hitters fare? Dave Kingman had only 1,575 hits in his career, with 442 home runs (62.5 percent of his extra-base hits were homers). His home run percentage ties him with Mickey Mantle. Kingman's career PXBH is 0.4489, 4th highest in history. The Commerce Comet falls in at 0.3942, one notch above Hank Aaron. The most astonishing player in the career category is Harmon Killebrew. He had 887 extra-base hits, with 573 home runs. This equates to almost 65 percent of his XBH being blasts. He still ranks 7th all-time on the PXBH list at 0.4252.

The individual season PXBH is ranked and shown in Table 2[2]. Ruth makes the top 100 nine times, Hank Greenberg seven times, and Lou Gehrig and Mike Schmidt six times each. Ruth is in the top ten list three times. His first season in the majors, 1915, would rank 20th, since he had 15 extra-base hits out of a total of 29 hits. Even then he averaged better than a double with one out of every two hits. Belle's, 0.5954 PXBH performance in 1995 is an awesome indicator of power. He also posted impressive PXBH figures in 1993 (0.4477) and 1994 (0.4966).

The individual list contains players with at least 70 XBH in a season[3]. 1996 was a banner year for extra base hits. Ten players from the American League alone and six from the National League entered the top 100 individual season list, with five, Mark McGwire (0.5530), Henry Rodriguez (0.5374), Brady Anderson (0.5349), Todd Hundley (0.5286), and Ed Sprague (0.5000), breaking the 0.5000 level. It is interesting to note that McGwire and Anderson also hit at least 50 home runs in 1996. Belle was the only player in 1995 to break the 0.5000 mark. Other recent players include Frank Thomas in 1994 (0.5177), Barry Bonds (0.5102) in 1992, and Howard Johnson (0.5205) and Jose Canseco (0.5000) in 1991.

Joe DiMaggio's famous 1941 season does not make the top 100. His PXBH was 0.4352. During his 56-game hitting streak, he had 35 extra-base hits (15 HR, 4 3B, 16 2B) out of 91 hits. Ted Williams' 1941 season in which he batted .406 also does not make the top 100, since his PXBH was only 0.3946 (73 XBH in 185 hits). Finally, regarding the single-season records, only eight of the ten players to have more than 100 extra-base hits make our top 100 list. Chuck Klein had 107 extra-base hits in 1930, but his 250 overall hits gave him a PXBH of 0.4280. Coincidentally, Rogers Hornsby had 250 hits in 1922 and also had over 100 extra-base hits (102), but his PXBH was only 0.4080.

How does PXBH describe a team's power? In the shortened 1994 season, the Cleveland Indians had a PXBH of 0.3665 in 115 games. This equates to *better than every third hit being at least a double*. How many managers would like to have that "guarantee"? The 1994 Astros are right behind the Indians, with a team PXBH of 0.3612, also in 115 games. However, both teams were in second place in their divisions at the time of the strike. Regarding teams from a full season, 1996 again fills the chart. The 1996 Orioles, Mariners, and Athletics each broke the 1961 Yankees season home run record of 240, and the three teams, in that order, top the list shown in Table 3. The 1996 Baltimore Orioles have set the new record for a team with a PXBH of 0.3757. In fact, ten teams from 1996 made the top 23 teams of all time. This table only includes those teams with at least 500 XBH (except for 1994). The 1953 Dodgers and 1936 Yankees are the only teams in the top ten *not* from this decade! The 1996 Mariners broke every extra-base hit record previously held by the 1936 Yankees, including most extra-base hits, most total bases, and most extra bases

Table 2: PXBH Leaders (Individual Season)

	Player	Extra Base Hits	Base Hits	PXBH
1	Albert Belle 1995	103	173	0.5954
2	Babe Ruth 1921	119	204	0.5833
3	Willie Stargell 1973	90	156	0.5769
4	Babe Ruth 1920	99	172	0.5756
5	Reggie Jackson 1969	86	151	0.5695
6	Mark McGwire 1996	73	132	0.5530
7	Kevin Mitchell 1989	87	158	0.5506
8	Gorman Thomas 1979	74	136	0.5441
9	Mike Schmidt 1979	74	137	0.5401
10	Babe Ruth 1919	75	139	0.5396
12	Hank Greenberg 1946	78	145	0.5379
13	Henry Rodriguez 1996	79	147	0.5374
14	Lou Gehrig 1927	117	218	0.5367
15	Mike Schmidt 1975	75	140	0.5357
16	Brady Anderson 1996	92	172	0.5349
17	Todd Hundley 1996	74	140	0.5286
18	Babe Ruth 1928	91	173	0.5260
19	Hank Greenberg 1939	82	156	0.5256
20	Harmon Killebrew 1962	70	134	0.5224
21	Howard Johnson 1991	76	146	0.5205
22	Reggie Jackson 1975	78	150	0.5200
23	Frank Thomas 1994	73	141	0.5177
24	Mike Schmidt 1980	81	157	0.5159
25	Hank Greenberg 1937	103	200	0.5150
26	Barry Bonds 1992	75	147	0.5102
27	Mike Schmidt 1977	76	149	0.5101
28	Roger Maris 1961	81	159	0.5094
29	Willie Mays 1964	87	171	0.5088
30	Hank Greenberg 1940	99	195	0.5077
31	Babe Ruth 1927	97	192	0.5052
32	Stan Lopata 1956	72	143	0.5035
33	Mark McGwire 1987	81	161	0.5031
34	Jose Canseco 1991	76	152	0.5000
35	Ed Sprague 1996	73	146	0.5000
36	Ralph Kiner 1950	74	149	0.4966
37	Albert Belle 1994	73	147	0.4966
38	Jim Gentile 1961	73	147	0.4966
39	Jeff Bagwell 1994	73	147	0.4966
40	Ernie Banks 1960	80	162	0.4938
41	Eddie Mathews 1953	86	175	0.4914
42	Edgar Martinez 1996	80	163	0.4908
43	Willie Stargell 1971	74	151	0.4901
44	Howard Johnson 1989	80	164	0.4878
45	Reggie Jackson 1977	73	150	0.4867
46	Barry Bonds 1993	88	181	0.4862
47	Hank Greenberg 1938	85	175	0.4857
48	Cecil Fielder 1990	77	159	0.4843
49	Babe Ruth 1923	99	205	0.4829
50	Hank Greenberg 1935	98	203	0.4828
51	Juan Gonzalez 1996	82	170	0.4824
52	Juan Gonzalez 1993	80	166	0.4819
53	Ralph Kiner 1951	79	164	0.4817
54	Ken Griffey, Jr. 1993	86	180	0.4778
55	Hank Greenberg 1934	96	201	0.4776
56	Mike Schmidt 1976	73	153	0.4771
57	Jay Buhner 1996	73	153	0.4771
58	Manny Ramirez 1996	81	170	0.4765
59	Willie Mays 1962	90	189	0.4762
60	Albert Belle 1996	89	187	0.4759
61	Johnny Bench 1970	84	177	0.4746
62	Ted Williams 1946	83	176	0.4716
63	Dave Kingman 1979	72	153	0.4706
64	Hank Aaron 1969	77	164	0.4695
65	Jimmie Foxx 1932	100	213	0.4695
66	Andres Galarraga 1996	89	190	0.4684
67	Harmon Killebrew 1961	73	156	0.4679
68	Frank Robinson 1966	85	182	0.4670
69	Jimmie Foxx 1938	92	197	0.4670
70	Ken Griffey, Jr. 1996	77	165	0.4667
71	Hack Wilson 1930	97	208	0.4663
72	Mickey Mantle 1961	76	163	0.4663
73	Gary Sheffield 1996	76	163	0.4663
74	Willie McCovey 1969	73	157	0.4650
75	Harmon Killebrew 1969	71	153	0.4641
76	Lou Gehrig 1929	77	166	0.4639
77	Lou Gehrig 1926	83	179	0.4637
78	Fred Lynn 1979	82	177	0.4633
79	Babe Ruth 1930	86	186	0.4624
80	Jimmie Foxx 1933	94	204	0.4608
81	Babe Ruth 1924	92	200	0.4600
82	Stan Musial 1953	92	200	0.4600
83	Ralph Kiner 1949	78	170	0.4588
84	Robin Yount 1980	82	179	0.4581
85	Lee May 1970	70	153	0.4575
86	Frank Howard 1968	75	164	0.4573
87	Rudy York 1940	85	186	0.4570
88	Chuck Klein 1932	103	226	0.4558
89	Willie Mays 1959	82	180	0.4556
90	Lou Gehrig 1930	100	220	0.4545
91	Earl Averill 1934	85	187	0.4545
92	Carl Yastrzemski 1969	70	154	0.4545
93	Lou Gehrig 1936	93	205	0.4537
94	John Mayberry 1975	73	161	0.4534
95	Barry Bonds 1996	72	159	0.4528
96	Mel Ott 1929	81	179	0.4525
97	Jeff Bagwell 1996	81	179	0.4525
98	Lou Gehrig 1934	95	210	0.4524
99	Jim Thome 1996	71	157	0.4522
100	Greg Luzinski 1977	77	171	0.4503

Table 3: PXBH Team Leaders

	Team	Extra Base Hits	Base Hits	PXBH	SLG
1	1996 Orioles	585	1557	0.3757	.473
2	1996 Mariners	606	1625	0.3729	.484
3	1996 Athletics	547	1492	0.3666	.453
4	1994 Indians (115 G)	427	1165	0.3665	.484
5	1994 Astros (115 G)	397	1099	0.3612	.445
6	1996 Rangers	576	1631	0.3551	.469
7	1996 Blue Jays	514	1451	0.3542	.420
8	1953 Dodgers	541	1529	0.3538	.474
9	1936 Yankees	580	1676	0.3461	.483
10	1996 Indians	576	1665	0.3459	.475
11	1987 Tigers	531	1535	0.3459	.451
12	1996 Rockies	555	1607	0.3454	.472
13	1980 Brewers	537	1555	0.3453	.448
14	1979 Red Sox	538	1567	0.3433	.456
15	1977 Red Sox	527	1551	0.3398	.465
16	1940 Red Sox	526	1566	0.3359	.449
17	1927 Yankees	552	1644	0.3358	.489
18	1996 Red Sox	547	1631	0.3354	.456
19	1930 Yankees	560	1683	0.3327	.488
20	1996 Brewers	522	1577	0.3310	.441
21	1936 Indians	562	1715	0.3277	.461
22	1996 White Sox	512	1586	0.3228	.447
23	1921 Yankees	506	1576	0.3211	.464

on extra-base hits. The great 1927 New York Yankees team, in comparison, ranks 17th in our study, with a team PXBH of 0.3358. As a final note, the 1996 American League (14 teams), had a combined *league* PXBH of 0.3360, higher than eight teams on our list. In 1996, the 14 teams set new records for most extra-base hits (7,366), most 2Bs (4,204), most HRs (2,742), and most hits (21,921). The 1996 National League's PXBH was 0.3155. This year's NL also set new records for extra-base hits (6,436), 2Bs (3,782), and HRs (2,220).

This study provides a good indicator of ways in which a hitter's power can influence the national pastime. This statistic is purely offensive and does not take any pitching or ballpark factors into account. Yet, the percentage of extra-base hits (PXBH) is another way to look at the offense. While new players may break into the single-season and career records, those players will have a definite impact on the offensive power of a baseball team.

Notes:

1. *Total Baseball*, Fourth Edition, edited by John Thorn and Pete Palmer with Michael Gershman, Viking (Penguin Books), New York, 1995.
2. The table of individual PXBH seasons was compiled *without* the use of an automated database. We apologize for any errors or omissions, and we welcome information on any players to be included in the table.
3. 70 extra-base hits was chosen as an arbitrary cutoff. In 1992, for example, Mark McGwire had 64 extra-base hits out of 125 hits, giving him a PXBH of 0.5120.

Hey Joe! Kids Delay Game Four Times

Four times youngsters ran out on the field to ask Joe DiMaggio for his autograph during the second game of the twin - bill at Yankee Stadium, July 25. The invasion started when DiMag obliged one tot who dashed out to centerfield between innings after Joe had hit a homer. The park announcer asked parents to keep their children off the field, but the crowd of 45,000 hooted. It is believed that television is one reason for kids running out on the field—parents want their offspring to get in on the act. (From *The Sporting News*, August 4, 1948.)

—Andy Moursund

Baseball's 'Iron Men'

Men who have played over 500 consecutive games in the majors

Jerry Sulecki

In 1997, Cal Ripken, Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles continued to add to his all-time consecutive games total of 2,300 plus. I asked myself which position has the best chance of playing consecutive games without a day off?

Research showed that most of the men who played in successive games competed mostly at one position. However, some of them played a few games during their streak at something other than their established position, the exceptions being Pete Rose, who played 500 or more games at five different positions (the only one ever to do so) and Ernie Banks, who despite playing more than twice as many games at first base came to be known as "Mr. Shortstop." Consequently, these findings are based on predominant position—the one the players are most often remembered as playing.

The best location to play continuously is center field. Of the 31 ballplayers who have played more than 500 consecutive games, eight patrolled the middle field. (Second baseman Charlie Gehringer played over 500 consecutive games twice in his career. Ensuing tables will show him twice for accuracy and to simplify the listings.)

If a player lacks the range, speed, and arm required to play center, chances for continued longevity are much greater in the infield than in right or left.

Nineteen players on this list have been infielders: six first basemen, five shortstops, five second basemen, and three third basemen. Only two left fielders and one right fielder make the list. No catcher has ever managed it.

Four of this 'Iron man' group began their careers before the turn of the twentieth century, four started between 1907 to 1917, ten between 1920 and 1945, six between 1946 and 1960, and seven made their debut in the majors after 1961.

One player was in the old American Association, fifteen were National Leaguers, fourteen were American Leaguers, and Joe Carter played in both the AL and the NL. In fact, Joe's streak started with Cleveland in the AL, continued in San Diego in the NL, and ended in Toronto in the AL.

The best places for a player to take the field every day have been in Boston and Cincinnati. Five players spent at least a part of their record-setting time in Beantown and four others played in the Ohio city.

Following are several tables examining the records of all the men who have played 500 or more consecutive games.

Iron Men By Games

Player	G	Pos	BA	Teams	League	Yrs.
Cal Ripken, Jr.	2315*	SS	.276	Balt.	American	1981- 1997
Lou Gehrig	2130	1B	.340	NY	American	1923-1939
Everett Scott	1307	SS	.249	Bos/NY	American	1914-1926
Steve Garvey	1207	1B	.294	LA	National	1969-1987
Billy Williams	1117	LF	.290	Chi.	National	1959-1976
Joe Sewell	1103	SS	.312	Cle.	American	1920-1933
Stan Musial	895	LF	.331	St.L.	National	1941-1963

Jerry Sulecki is a football official and a nice guy. He loves Babe Ruth and Karen—not necessarily in that order.

Eddie Yost	829	3B	.254	Wash.	American	1944-1962
Gus Suhr	822	1B	.279	Pitt.	National	1930-1940
Nellie Fox	798	2B	.288	Chi.	American	1947-1965
Pete Rose	743	3B	.303	Cin.	National	1963-1986
Dale Murphy	740	CF	.265	Atl.	National	1976-1993
Richie Ashburn	730	CF	.308	Phil.	National	1948-1962
Ernie Banks	717	SS	.274	Chi.	National	1953-1971
Earl Averill	673	CF	.318	Cle.	American	1929-1941
Frank McCormick	652	1B	.299	Cin.	National	1934-1948
Sandy Alomar, Sr.	648	2B	.245	Cal.	American	1964-1978
Eddie Brown	618	CF	.303	Bkn/Bos	National	1920-1928
Roy McMillan	598	SS	.243	Cin.	National	1951-1966
George Pinkney	577	3B	.263	Bkn.	Am.Assoc.	1884-1893
Steve Brodie	574	CF	.303	Bos/StL	National	1890-1902
Aaron Ward	565	2B	.268	NY	American	1917-1928
Candy LaChance	540	1B	.280	Bos.	American	1893-1905
Fred Luderus	533	1B	.277	Phil.	National	1909-1920
Buck Freeman	525	RF	.294	Bos.	American	1897-1907
Clyde Milan	512	CF	.285	Wash.	American	1907-1922
Charlie Gehringer	511	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
Vada Pinson	508	CF	.286	Cin.	National	1958-1975
Joe Carter	507	LF	.262	Cle/SD/Tor-AL & NL		1983-1997
Charlie Gehringer	504	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
Omar Moreno	503	CF	.252	Pitt.	National	1975-1986

*Streak in progress at the end of the 1997 season.

Iron Men By Most Prominent Position Played

Player	G	Pos	BA	Teams	League	Yrs.
Dale Murphy	740	CF	.265	Atl.	National	1976-1993
Richie Ashburn	730	CF	.308	Phil.	National	1948-1962
Earl Averill	673	CF	.318	Cle.	American	1929-1941
Eddie Brown	618	CF	.303	Bkn/Bos	National	1920-1928
Steve Brodie	574	CF	.303	Bos/StL	National	1890-1902
Clyde Milan	512	CF	.285	Wash.	American	1907-1922
Vada Pinson	508	CF	.286	Cin.	National	1958-1975
Omar Moreno	503	CF	.252	Pitt.	National	1975-1986
Lou Gehrig	2130	1B	.340	NY	American	1923-1939
Steve Garvey	1207	1B	.294	LA	National	1969-1987
Gus Suhr	822	1B	.279	Pitt.	National	1930-1940
Frank McCormick	652	1B	.299	Cin.	National	1934-1948
Candy LaChance	540	1B	.280	Bos.	American	1893-1905
Fred Luderus	533	1B	.277	Phil.	National	1909-1920
Cal Ripken, Jr.	2315	SS	.276	Balt.	American	1981-1997
Everett Scott	1307	SS	.249	Bos/NY	American	1914-1926
Joe Sewell	1103	SS	.312	Cle.	American	1920-1933
Ernie Banks	717	SS	.274	Chi.	National	1953-1971
Roy McMillan	598	SS	.243	Cin.	National	1951-1966
Nellie Fox	798	2B	.288	Chi.	American	1947-1965
Sandy Alomar, Sr.	648	2B	.245	Cal.	American	1964-1978
Aaron Ward	565	2B	.268	NY	American	1917-1928
Charlie Gehringer	511	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
Charlie Gehringer	504	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
Eddie Yost	829	3B	.254	Wash.	American	1944-1962
Pete Rose	743	3B	.303	Cin.	National	1963-1986
George Pinkney	577	3B	.263	Bkn.	Amnesiac.	1884-1893
Billy Williams	1117	LF	.290	Chi.	National	1959-1976
Stan Musial	895	LF	.331	St.L.	National	1941-1963
Joe Carter	507	LF	.262	Cle/SD/Tor-AL & NL		1983-1997
Buck Freeman	525	RF	.294	Bos.	American	1897-1907

Iron Men By Time Period

Player	G	Pos	BA	Teams	League	Yrs.
Before 1900						
George Pinkney	577	3B	.263	Bkn.	Amnesiac.	1884-1893
Steve Brodie	574	CF	.303	Bos/St.L	National	1890-1902
Candy LaChance	540	1B	.280	Bos.	American	1893-1905
Buck Freeman	525	RF	.294	Bos.	American	1897-1907
1907-1917						
Everett Scott	1307	SS	.249	Bos/NY	American	1914-1926
Aaron Ward	565	2B	.268	NY	American	1917-1928
Fred Luderus	533	1B	.277	Phil.	National	1909-1920
Clyde Milan	512	CF	.285	Wash.	American	1907-1922
1920-1945						
Lou Gehrig	2130	1B	.340	NY	American	1923-1939
Joe Sewell	1103	SS	.312	Cle.	American	1920-1933
Stan Musial	895	LF	.331	St.L.	National	1941-1963
Eddie Yost	829	3B	.254	Wash.	American	1944-1962
Gus Suhr	822	1B	.279	Pitt.	National	1930-1940
Earl Averill	673	CF	.318	Cle.	American	1929-1941
Frank McCormick	652	1B	.299	Cin.	National	1934-1948
Eddie Brown	618	CF	.303	Bkn/Bos	National	1920-1928
Charlie Gehringer	511	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
Charlie Gehringer	504	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
1946-1960						
Billy Williams	1117	LF	.290	Chi.	National	1959-1976
Nellie Fox	798	2B	.288	Chi.	American	1947-1965
Richie Ashburn	730	CF	.308	Phil.	National	1948-1962
Ernie Banks	717	SS	.274	Chi.	National	1953-1971
Roy McMillan	598	SS	.243	Cin.	National	1951-1966
Vada Pinson	508	CF	.286	Cin.	National	1958-1975
After 1961						
Cal Ripken, Jr.	2315	SS	.276	Balt.	American	1981-1997
Steve Garvey	1207	1B	.294	LA	National	1969-1987
Pete Rose	743	3B	.303	Cin.	National	1963-1986
Dale Murphy	740	CF	.265	Atl.	National	1976-1993
Sandy Alomar, Sr.	648	2B	.245	Cal.	American	1964-1978
Joe Carter	507	LF	.262	Cle/SD/Tor-AL & NL		
1983-1997						
Omar Moreno	503	CF	.252	Pitt.	National	1975-1986

'Iron Men' By League

Player	G	Pos	BA	Team	Yrs.
American Association					
George Pinkney	577	3B	.263	Bkn.	1884-1893
American League					
Cal Ripken, Jr.	2315	SS	.276	Balt.	1981-1997
Lou Gehrig	2130	1B	.340	NY	1923-1939
Everett Scott	1307	SS	.249	Bos/NY	1914-1926
Joe Sewell	1103	SS	.312	Cle.	1920-1933
Eddie Yost	829	3B	.254	Wash.	1944-1962
Nellie Fox	798	2B	.288	Chi.	1947-1965
Earl Averill	673	CF	.318	Cle.	1929-1941
Sandy Alomar, Sr.	648	2B	.245	Cal.	1964-1978
Aaron Ward	565	2B	.268	NY	1917-1928
Candy LaChance	540	1B	.280	Bos.	1893-1905
Buck Freeman	525	RF	.294	Bos.	1897-1907
Clyde Milan	512	CF	.285	Wash.	1907-1922
Charlie Gehringer	511	2B	.320	Det.	1924-1942
National League					
Steve Garvey	1207	1B	.294	LA	1969-1987
Billy Williams	1117	LF	.290	Chi.	1959-1976
Stan Musial	895	LF	.331	St.L.	1941-1963
Gus Suhr	822	1B	.279	Pitt.	1930-1940
Pete Rose	743	3B	.303	Cin.	1963-1986
Dale Murphy	740	CF	.265	Atl.	1976-1993
Richie Ashburn	730	CF	.308	Phil.	1948-1962
Ernie Banks	717	SS	.274	Chi.	1953-1971
Frank McCormick	652	1B	.299	Cin.	1934-1948
Eddie Brown	618	CF	.303	Bkn/Bos.	1920-1928
Roy McMillan	598	SS	.243	Cin.	1951-1966
Steve Brodie	574	CF	.303	Bos/StL.	1890-1902
Fred Luderus	533	1B	.277	Phil.	1909-1920
Vada Pinson	508	CF	.286	Cin.	1958-1975
Omar Moreno	503	CF	.252	Pitt.	1975-1986
Both American and National Leagues					
Joe Carter	507	LF	.262	Cle/SD/Tor	1983-1996

'Iron Men' By Years Of Service

Player	Games	Pos	BA	Team	Career	Total
20-Plus Years						
Pete Rose	743	3B	.303	Cin.	1963-1986	24
Stan Musial	895	LF	.331	St.L.	1941-1963	23
15 to 19 Years						
Steve Garvey	1207	1B	.294	LA	1969-1987	19
Eddie Yost	829	3B	.254	Wash.	1944-1962	19
Nellie Fox	798	2B	.288	Chi.	1947-1965	19
Ernie Banks	717	SS	.274	Chi.	1953-1971	19
Charlie Gehringer	511	2B	.320	Det.	1924-1942	19
Charlie Gehringer	504	2B	.320	Det.	1924-1942	19
Billy Williams	1117	LF	.290	Chi.	1959-1976	18
Dale Murphy	740	CF	.265	Atl.	1976-1993	18
Vada Pinson	508	CF	.286	Cin.	1958-1975	18
Lou Gehrig	2130	1B	.340	NY	1923-1939	17
Cal Ripken, Jr.	2315	SS	.276	Balt.	1981-1997	17
Roy McMillan	598	SS	.243	Cin.	1951-1966	16
Clyde Milan	512	CF	.285	Wash.	1907-1922	16
Richie Ashburn	730	CF	.308	Phil.	1948-1962	15
Frank McCormick	652	1B	.299	Cin.	1934-1948	15
Sandy Alomar, Sr.	648	2B	.245	Cal	1964-1978	15
Joe Carter	507	LF	.262	Cle/SD/Tor	1983-1996	15
19 to 14 Years						
Joe Sewell	1103	SS	.312	Cle.	1920-1933	14
Everett Scott	1307	SS	.249	Bos/NY	1914-1926	13
Earl Averill	673	CF	.318	Cle.	1929-1941	13
Steve Brodie	574	CF	.303	Bos/St.L.	1890-1902	13
Candy LaChance	540	1B	.280	Bos.	1893-1905	13
Aaron Ward	565	2B	.268	NY	1979-1928	12
Fred Luderus	533	1B	.277	Phil.	1909-1920	12
Omar Moreno	503	CF	.252	Pitt.	1975-1986	12
Gus Suhr	822	1B	.279	Pitt.	1930-1940	11
Buck Freeman	525	RF	.294	Bos.	1897-1907	11
George Pinkney	577	3B	.263	Bkn.	1884-1893	10
Less Than 10 Years						
Eddie Brown	618	CF	.303	Bkn/Bos	1920-1928	9

'Iron Men' By Batting Average

Player	Games	Pos	BA	Team	League	Career
Over .300						
Lou Gehrig	2130	1B	.340	NY	American	1923-1939
Stan Musial	895	LF	.331	St.L.	National	1941-1963
Charlie Gehringer	511	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
Charlie Gehringer	504	2B	.320	Det.	American	1924-1942
Earl Averill	673	CF	.318	Cle.	American	1929-1941
Joe Sewell	1103	SS	.312	Cle.	American	1920-1933
Richie Ashburn	730	CF	.308	Phil.	National	1948-1962
Pete Rose	743	3B	.303	Cinn.	National	1963-1986
Eddie Brown	618	CF	.303	Bkn/Bos	National	1920-1928
Steve Brodie	574	CF	.303	Bos/StL.	National	1890-1902
Over .290						
Frank McCormick	652	1B	.299	Cinn.	National	1934-1948
Steve Garvey	1207	1B	.294	LA	National	1969-1987
Buck Freeman	525	RF	.294	Bos.	American	1897-1907
Billy Williams	1117	LF	.290	Chi.	National	1959-1976
Over .280						

Nellie Fox	798	2B	.288	Chi.	American	1947-1965
Vada Pinson	508	CF	.286	Cinn.	National	1958-1975
Clyde Milan	512	CF	.285	Wash.	American	1907-1922
Candy LaChance	540	1B	.280	Bos.	American	1893-1905
Over .270						
Gus Suhr	822	1B	.279	Pitt.	National	1930-1940
Fred Luderus	533	1B	.277	Phil.	National	1909-1920
Cal Ripken, Jr.	2315	SS	.276	Balt.	American	1981-1997
Ernie Banks	717	SS	.274	Chi.	National	1953-1971
Over .260						
Aaron Ward	565	2B	.268	NY	American	1917-1928
Dale Murphy	740	CF	.265	Atl.	National	1976-1993
George Pinkney	577	3B	.263	Bkn.	NL, AA	1884-1893
Joe Carter	507	LF	.262	Cle/SD/Tor-AL & NL		1893-1997
Over .250						
Eddie Yost	829	3B	.254	Wash.	American	1944-1962
Omar Moreno	503	CF	.252	Pitt.	National	1975-1986
Over .240						
Everett Scott	1307	SS	.249	Bos/NY	American	1914-1926
Sandy Alomar, Sr.	648	2B	.245	Cal.	American	1964-1978
Roy McMillan	598	SS	.243	Cinn.	National	1951-1966

These thirty-one Iron Men averaged over fifteen years service in the majors. Two men played over twenty years, sventeen between fifteen and nineteen (with Cal Ripken, Jr. still going strong with seventeenand Joe Carter still playing with fifteen), and only Eddie Brown uncharacteristically playing a scant nine years—undoubtedly because he didn't become a regular until age 31!

Surprisingly, three of the top six Iron Men played shortstop: Ripken, Jr., Everett Scott, and Joe Sewell. Short is a physically demanding position, but this is perhaps offset by the fact that it is played by some of the best athletes.

Undoubtedly outstanding fielding skills contributed to the streaks of center fielders and shortstops. Managers keep them in the lineup even when not hitting.

Of course, most of these Iron Men could hit. Their mean combined batting average of .286 would have kept them in anybody's everyday lineup. Nine of these men batted over .300 lifetime, four over .290, four over .280, four over .270, four over .260, two over .250, and three over .240.

By position and around the horn, the mean average was .273 for third base, .271 for shortstop, .280 for second base, and .295 for first base. In the outer pastures, the mean average was .294 in left, .290 in center, and .294 in right where only Buck Freeman could crack this prestigious lineup.

Most of these determined men have passed on, leaving a legacy of stamina and greatness mere mortals can only struggle to duplicate.

Sources:

Baseball Encyclopedia, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, New York. 1996.

The Ballplayers, Edited by Mike Shatzkin, William Morrow, New York, New York. 1990.

Total Baseball, Edited by John Thorn and Pete Palmer, Warner Books, Inc., New York. 1989.

Cobb Quotes

"I think I'd hit him in the knee and then try to pick him off first base." (Billy Hoeft, asked how he would have pitched to Cobb.)

"There's no doubt in my mind that Ty is the best all-around hitter who ever lived. He can bunt, chop-hit, deliver long drives or put the ball out of sight." (Tris Speaker.)

"Ya got to remember that he went for the plate like a freight train. Oooooooo, he was scary." (Casey Stengel, on Cobb's 35 steals of home.)

"We thought Cobb would crack up any day. One day he would be riding high and working well with his lineup, next day he'd go around with the whites of his eyes flared and be the meanest guy you ever saw. He had spells, fits. Unimportant things made him blow. Some of the boys thought it was a case of brain fever." (Fred Haney.)

"When I came up to Detroit I was just a mile mannered Sunday-school boy." (Cobb.)

—Art Neff

Cutting Across the Grain

Undefeated pitchers on 100-loss teams

Greg Crouse

The 1991 Cleveland Indians were not a very good team. In fact, they were a very bad team. They suffered a team record 105 losses, scored an American League-low 576 runs while hitting a league-low (by 36) 79 home runs, and were shut out a league-leading 18 times. The league's worst fielding percentage, .976, and most errors, 149, were Indians achievements.

Cleveland's pitching did not shine either. In his 35-1/3 Cleveland innings, Denis Boucher managed to commit four balks to tie for the league lead. Rod Nichols' eight consecutive losses from May 14 to July 12 gave him the longest losing streak by any American League pitcher in 1991. The only Indians pitchers among the league leaders in 1991 were Tom Candiotti, who was traded to Toronto on June 27, and Greg Swindell, who was traded to Cincinnati on November 8. The only official positive record set or tied by Cleveland in 1991 is for most years in the league—91, (tied with Boston, Chicago and Detroit).

But there was another unofficial record established by Cleveland's 27-year-old lefthanded pitcher, Eric Bell. He was 4-0. What record did he set? His four wins without a loss are the most by any pitcher since 1901 in either league on a team with at least 100 losses. Eric Bell did not just set a record in 1991, he blew away the old one (2).

The first pitcher to be undefeated on a 100-loss team was 20-year-old lefthander Floyd (Rube) Kroh who won the only game he pitched and earned his first major league win for the 1906 Boston Americans. He threw a two-hit shutout against St. Louis on September 30 for the 49-105 Bostons. The first National League pitcher to be undefeated on a 100-loss team was Billy Burke. The lefty was 1-0 in 1910 for the 53-100 Boston Braves.

In 1912, another lefty, Bill McTigue, won two games without a loss for the 52-101 Boston Braves, to establish a National League record. McTigue had been 0-5 the previous year on his way to a 2-5 lifetime record. Meanwhile, Kroh and Burns shared the American League record until 1915 when Bill Morrisette fashioned a 2-0 mark for the 43-109 Philadelphia A's. Morrisette, the first righthander to appear on the list, was joined by teammates Joe Sherman and Elmer Myers, each 1-0, to make the A's the first 100-loss team with more than one undefeated pitcher.

McTigue's and Morrisette's records were unequaled until the mid-1960s when Ron Moeller of the 56-106 1963 Washington Senators (AL) and Jim Bethke of the 50-112 1965 New York Mets (NL) posted matching 2-0 records in 1963. Eight pitchers matched the 2-0 mark between 1967 and 1989. Then, in 1991, Eric Bell stepped into the record book by posting a 4-0 record for the 57-105 Indians.

Bell's debut with Cleveland on September 9, 1991, against the Boston Red Sox was a good one. He threw 33 pitches over three scoreless innings in relief of Willie Blair. Bell left the game tied in the eighth and the Indians allowed a run in the ninth for a 4-3 loss before 1,695 stunned Cleveland fans. In his next appearance, September 14 at Baltimore, Bell picked up his first win of the year by pitching 1-2/3 scoreless

Greg Crouse is a baseball fan in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. His favorite season is 1991, despite more recent Indians success.

innings. The Indians scored a run in the eleventh and Steve Olin saved the 6-5 victory for Bell.

On September 22, Bell was even better. He won his second game, also against the Orioles but this time in Cleveland, when he threw 57 pitches to 15 batters and pitched four scoreless innings. The Indians erupted for two runs in the home ninth to reward Bell with a 2-1 win. A crowd of 6,863, including Cleveland's one millionth fan of the season, watched Mark Lewis and Carlos Baerga each drive in runs to overcome the 1-0 Oriole lead that Jim Thome's error produced in the first inning. When Swindell lost 3-0 to the New York Yankees on September 27, Cleveland's record fell to 52-100 and Eric Bell was tied for the record.

The next day Bell had his chance to win again. He started the fifth inning in relief of Shawn Hillegas trailing New York by a score of 3-2. He allowed an unearned run in the fifth—the only run he allowed in any of his first seven appearances—and then shut out the Yankees through the eighth. In the sixth, Cleveland bunched four hits and a sacrifice fly to take a 5-4 lead. When Steve Olin held the lead through a shaky ninth to earn his fifteenth save, Eric Bell had his third win and a record.

The Indians rolled into October. On the second, Bell had his only bad outing. He walked Dale Sveum, the only man he faced, in Cleveland's team record 103rd loss. Sveum eventually scored the only earned run Bell allowed in 18 innings all year. Two days later in New York, Bell relieved Shawn Hillegas again. He shut out the Yankees for 2-1/3 innings, but Cleveland entered the top of the ninth trailing 2-1. Indian rookie third baseman Jim Thome hit a two-out, two-run home run—his first in the major leagues—to give Cleveland a 3-2 lead. Again, Steve Olin retired New York in the ninth to give Bell his fourth win.

The season ended two days later. Cleveland finished with a 57-105 record. Not only did Eric Bell establish a new mark for the most wins without a loss on a team that lost at least 100 games, he was joined by teammates Jesse Orosco (2-0) and Sergio Valdez (1-0) to form the trio with the most total wins (7) on such a team.

Bell was a ninth-round draft choice by the Baltimore Orioles in 1982. His American League debut on September 24, 1985, was the first of his four appearances that year. He made four starts for the Orioles in 1986 before becoming a full-time starter in 1987. Bell and Mike Boddicker were the only two pitchers to stay on the Orioles roster the entire 1987 season. Bell was 10-13 that year, tying Boddicker and Dave Schmidt for the team lead in wins.

An elbow injury and eventual "Tommy John surgery" kept Bell out of the majors during 1988-90. He pitched those years at Rochester and Hagerstown. The Indians acquired him as a free agent on October 14, 1990. After spending most of 1991 at Canton-Akron and Colorado Springs, his September recall by the Indians gave Eric Bell new life in the majors. Unfortunately for Bell and the Indians it did not last. After seven appearances in 1992, Bell was demoted with an 0-2 record and a 7.63 ERA.

There are several interesting names on the list of pitchers who were undefeated on teams with at least 100 losses. In 1945, slugger Jimmie Foxx was 1-0 in nine games for the 46-108 Philadelphia Phillies. Don Larsen, who five years earlier threw a perfect game for the Yankees in the World Series, was 1-0 for the 61-100 Kansas City A's in 1961. Joe Coleman was 2-0 in 1978 for the 59-102 Toronto Blue Jays after he was sold by the 69-93 Oakland A's on May 22. His record for Oakland was 3-0. Ed Vande Berg and Mike Armstrong each were 1-0 as members of the 61-101 Cleveland Indians in 1987. Armstrong's ERA that year was 8.68 in 14 games. Vande Berg's win broke a streak of 61 games in which he appeared without a decision or save—another unofficial record.

There are 53 pitchers who have at least one win during an undefeated season for one of the 118 teams that lost 100 or more games. Ten of those pitchers ended their careers with 1-0 records. Twenty-five pitchers finished with fewer than ten lifetime wins. The pitcher with the most wins is Joe Coleman (142-135). The pitcher with the most losses is Ned Garver (129-157). Seven 100-loss teams had two undefeated pitchers. Cleveland's 1991 Indians joined Morrisette's 1915 Philadelphia A's as the only two 100-loss teams with three undefeated pitchers.

Undefeated Pitchers on 100-Loss Teams

Year	Team	W	L	Pct	Pitcher	W	G	IP	H	BB	SO	ERA
1906	Boston AL	49	105	0.318	Rube Kroh	1	1	9	2	4	5	0.00
1910	Boston NL	53	100	0.346	Billy Burke	1	19	64	68	29	22	4.08
1912	Boston NL	52	101	0.340	Bill McTigue	2	10	35	39	18	17	5.40
1915	Philadelphia AL	43	109	0.283	Bill Morrisette	2	4	20	15	5	11	1.35
					Joe Sherman	1	2	15	15	1	5	2.40

Year	Team	W	L	Pct	Pitcher	W	G	IP	H	BB	SO	ERA	
					Elmer Myers	1	1	9	2	5	12	0.00	
1919	Philadelphia AL	36	104	0.257	Walter Anderson	1	3	14	13	8	10	3.86	
1921	Philadelphia AL	53	100	0.346	Bill Barrett	1	4	5	2	9	2	7.20	
					Fred Heimach	1	1	9	7	1	1	0.00	
1921	Philadelphia NL	51	103	0.331	Lefty Weinert	1	8	12	8	5	2	1.50	
1923	Boston NL	54	100	0.351	Joe Batchelder	1	4	9	12	1	2	7.00	
1925	Boston AL	47	105	0.309	Hal Neubauer	1	7	10	17	11	4	12.60	
1928	Boston NL	50	103	0.327	Bunny Hearn	1	7	10	6	8	8	6.30	
1932	Chicago AL	49	102	0.325	Clarence Fieber	1	3	5	6	3	1	1.80	
1939	Philadelphia NL	45	106	0.298	Elmer Burkart	1	5	8	11	2	2	4.50	
1940	Philadelphia NL	50	103	0.327	Frank Hoerst	1	6	12	12	8	3	5.25	
1941	Philadelphia NL	43	111	0.279	Paul Masterson	1	2	11	11	6	8	4.91	
1945	Philadelphia NL	46	108	0.299	Jimmie Foxx	1	9	23	13	14	10	1.57	
1949	St. Louis AL	53	101	0.344	Ed Albrecht	1	1	5	1	4	1	5.40	
1952	Detroit AL	50	104	0.325	Ned Garver	1	1	9	9	3	3	2.00	*After going 7-10 for Browns*
1954	Philadelphia AL	51	103	0.331	Bobby Shantz	1	2	8	12	3	3	7.88	
1961	Kansas City AL	61	100	0.379	Don Larson	1	8	15	21	11	13	4.20	*7-2 for Chisox after this*
					Bill Fischer	1	15	21	26	6	12	3.86	*After going 3-2 for Tigers*
1964	Washington AL	56	106	0.346	Ron Moeller	2	8	24	31	10	10	6.29	*After going 0-0 for Angels*
					Art Quirk	1	7	21	23	8	12	4.29	
1965	New York NL	50	112	0.309	Jim Bethke	2	25	40	41	22	19	4.28	
1966	Chicago NL	59	103	0.364	Dave Dowling	1	1	9	10	0	3	2.00	
1967	New York NL	61	101	0.377	Jack Hamilton	2	17	31	24	16	22	3.77	*9-6 for Angels after this*
1969	San Diego NL	52	110	0.321	Tom Dukes	1	13	22	26	10	15	7.36	
1970	Chicago AL	56	106	0.346	Lee Stange	1	16	22	28	5	14	5.32	*After going 2-2 for Bosox*
1971	San Diego NL	61	100	0.379	Mike Caldwell	1	6	7	4	3	5	0.00	
1973	Texas AL	57	105	0.352	Rick Henninger	1	6	23	23	11	6	2.74	
1974	San Diego NL	60	102	0.370	Dave Tomlin	2	47	58	59	30	29	4.34	
1976	Montreal NL	55	107	0.340	Gerald Hannahs	2	3	16	20	12	10	6.75	
					Wayne Granger	1	27	32	32	16	16	3.66	
1977	Atlanta NL	61	101	0.377	Mike Marshall	1	4	6	12	2	6	9.00	*2-2 for Rangers after this.*
1978	Toronto AL	59	102	0.366	Joe Coleman	2	31	61	67	30	28	4.57	*After going 3-0 for A's.*
1979	Oakland AL	54	108	0.333	Alan Wirth	1	5	12	14	8	7	6.00	
1982	Minnesota AL	60	102	0.370	Jeff Little	2	33	36	33	27	26	4.12	
1982	Cincinnati NL	61	101	0.377	Ben Hayes	2	26	46	37	22	38	1.97	
1987	Cleveland AL	61	101	0.377	Ed Vande Berg	1	55	72	96	21	40	5.10	
					Mike Armstrong	1	14	19	27	10	9	8.68	
1988	Baltimore AL	54	107	0.335	Bob Milacki	2	3	25	9	9	18	0.72	
					John Habyan	1	7	15	22	4	4	4.30	
1988	Atlanta NL	54	106	0.338	Juan Eichelberg	2	20	37	44	10	13	3.86	
1991	Cleveland AL	57	105	0.352	Eric Bell	4	10	18	5	5	7	0.50	*The Record!*
					Jesse Orosco *	2	47	46	52	15	36	3.74	
					Sergio Valdez	1	6	16	15	5	11	5.51	
1993	New York NL	59	103	0.364	Kenny Greer	1	1	1	0	0	2	0.00	
1993	San Diego NL	61	101	0.377	Tim Scott	2	24	38	38	15	30	2.39	*5-2 for Expos after this.*
					Mark Ettles	1	14	18	23	4	9	6.50	
1996	Detroit AL	53	109	0.327	Gregg Olson	3	43	43	43	28	29	5.02	*1-0 for Astros after this*

Wins Above Average

Rating the pitchers

Scott McClellan

"The idea is to win," said John McGraw, and this applies not only to managers, but to players as well. The recognition of this fact lies at the heart of sabermetrics. It seems ironic, then, that pitchers' won-lost records often draw scorn as a measure of their success. Of course, a pitcher's won-lost record is influenced greatly by the amount of run support he receives, and recognition of that is nothing new: Ban Johnson removed pitchers' wins and losses from the American League records for a period of seven years beginning in 1913.[1] But it also should be recognized that a pitcher's won-lost record has the potential to reveal clutch pitchers, if such creatures exist. Even if they don't, and a pitcher's record really amounts to nothing more than the natural result of the runs he allows and his run support, a won-lost record gives us a quantitative measure of how many wins a pitcher contributed to his team.

With ERA one must always consider the number of innings the pitcher worked, the relative level of offense in the league that year, and the characteristics of the pitcher's home park, among other things. Winning percentage, on the other hand, remains a constant. So won-lost records do have value in evaluating pitchers—as long as we put them in the context of a pitcher's run support.

Fortunately, won-lost records can be placed in context by applying Bill James' Pythagorean Method. Take the average number of runs scored per nine innings by a pitcher's team while he was in the game and divide it by the average number of runs per game for teams in that league. Then square the result and divide it by one plus itself.[2] The resulting figure is the winning percentage an average pitcher would have garnered with that level of run support. Multiply this by the number of decisions gained by a pitcher, subtract the result from the actual win total of the pitcher in question, and you have the number of wins above average that the pitcher actually contributed to his team.

To see the value of this method, let's look at Bob Gibson's 1968 season, when he had a phenomenal 1.12 E.R.A., but a less impressive won-lost record of 22-9. Peter M. Gordon was good enough to figure Gibson's run support in an article on his 1968 season,[3] so we can apply the method here. The Cardinals scored 2.8 runs per game in Gibson's starts, whereas National League teams averaged 3.4 runs per game that year. Dividing the former number by the latter yields 0.824, the square of which is 0.678. This divided by 1 plus 0.678 gives us 0.404, the winning percentage an average pitcher would have had that year with Gibson's run support. Gibson had 31 decisions that year, so

$$0.404 \times 31 = 12.53$$

which rounds up to 13. Gibson won 22 games in 1968, so we conclude that he meant 9 more wins to the Cardinals than they would have gotten out of an average pitcher. The Cardinals won the pennant by

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exactly 9 games that year. Sounds like an MVP to me.

Some might argue that it would be better to compare pitchers to replacement-level pitchers than to average pitchers. While this argument is certainly not without merit, the problem lies in determining exactly what to define as "replacement-level," since this seems to vary from team to team, and can even vary among players on a particular team. An average pitcher, on the other hand, can be defined in quantifiable terms as a pitcher who allows an average number of runs, and, additionally, as a pitcher who is average in his ability to pitch in the clutch. Some might also argue that all this is too complicated to deal with, but they've probably stopped reading by now. For those of you who were good enough to carry on, here are the 1995 starters with at least 20 decisions by order of their wins above average. The statistics are for games started only.

Andy Benes	SD-Sea	11	9	6.04	-1
Radke	Min	11	14	4.90	-1
Bosio	Sea	10	8	6.46	-1
Sparks	Mil	9	11	5.21	-1
Tewksbury	Tex	8	7	6.87	-2
Erickson	Min-Bal	13	10	6.82	-2
Bergman	Det	7	10	5.25	-2
Darling	Oak	4	7	5.37	-2
Bones	Mil	10	12	5.50	-2
C. Finley	Cal	15	12	6.65	-2
Hentgen	Tor	10	14	5.11	-2
W. Alvarez	Chi	8	11	5.55	-2
Guzman	Tor	4	14	3.79	-2
Z. Smith	Bos	8	8	7.42	-3
Gross	Tex	9	15	5.18	-3
Bere	Chi	8	15	5.56	-4
Moore	Det	5	15	5.83	-6
AL Average				5.12	

American League Starters

	Team	W	L	Run Support	W Above Avg.
R. Johnson	Sea	18	2	5.12	8
Mussina	Bal	19	9	4.91	6
K. Rogers	Tex	17	7	5.41	4
Wakefield	Bos	16	8	4.98	4
Hershiser	Cle	16	6	6.08	3
A. Leiter	Tor	11	11	3.84	3
Hanson	Bos	15	5	6.61	2
J. McDowell	NY	15	10	5.17	2
D. Martinez	Cle	12	5	5.87	2
Gubicza	KC	12	14	3.97	2
Cone	Tor-NY	18	8	6.51	2
J. Abbott	Chi-Cal	11	8	5.03	2
Clemens	Bos	10	5	5.85	2
Pavlik	Tex	10	10	4.41	1
Pettitte	NY	12	9	5.20	1
Lira	Det	7	10	3.63	1
Stottlemyre	Oak	14	7	6.48	1
Appier	KC	15	10	5.81	1
Brown	Bal	10	9	4.91	1
Gordon	KC	12	12	4.76	1
Ontiveros	Oak	9	6	5.62	1
A. Fernandez	Chi	12	8	5.79	1
Belcher	Sea	10	12	4.37	1
M. Clark	Cle	8	7	4.98	1
Langston	Cal	15	7	7.19	0
Nagy	Cle	16	6	8.14	0
Boskie	Cal	7	7	5.00	0
K. Hill	StL-Cle	10	8	5.75	0
Hitchcock	NY	11	10	5.45	0
Harkey	Oak-Cal	7	8	4.95	0
Witt	Fla-Tex	5	11	3.77	-1

National League Starters

	Team	W	L	Run Support	W Above Avg.
G. Maddux	Atl	19	2	4.34	9
Glavine	Atl	16	7	4.94	4
Smiley	Cin	12	5	4.66	3
Navarro	Chi	14	6	4.90	3
Schourek	Cin	18	7	5.49	3
R. Martinez	LA	17	7	5.32	3
Nomo	LA	13	6	4.75	3
P. Martinez	Mon	14	10	4.30	3
D. Wells	Det-Cin	16	8	5.28	2
I. Valdes	LA	13	11	4.16	2
Smoltz	Atl	12	7	4.81	2
M. Leiter	SF	10	11	3.73	2
F. Castillo	Chi	11	10	4.16	2
Ashby	SD	12	10	4.39	2
Neagle	Pit	13	8	5.37	1
C. Perez	Mon	10	8	4.66	1
Morgan	Chi-StL	7	7	4.25	1
Rapp	Fla	14	7	6.19	1
Hamilton	SD	6	9	3.55	0
Petkovsek	StL	5	6	4.02	0
B. Henry	Mon	7	9	4.05	0
Hammond	Fla	9	6	5.75	0
Saberhagen	NY-Col	7	6	5.24	0
Bullinger	Chi	12	8	5.94	0
Candiotti	LA	7	14	3.45	0
Ritz	Col	11	11	4.92	-1
B. Jones	NY	10	10	5.01	-1
Drabek	Hou	10	9	5.35	-1
Mlicki	NY	9	7	5.56	-1
Green	Phi	8	9	4.92	-1
Loaiza	Pit	8	9	4.93	-1

Quantrill	Phi	11	12	4.65	-1
Hampton	Hou	9	8	5.56	-1
Burkett	Fla	14	14	5.11	-1
Reynolds	Hou	10	11	5.09	-1
Mercker	Atl	7	8	5.72	-2
Swindell	Hou	10	9	5.61	-2
Foster	Chi	12	11	5.86	-2
Avery	Atl	7	13	4.36	-2
Portugal	SF-Cin	11	10	6.19	-2
Fassero	Mon	13	14	5.52	-3
Tapani	Min-LA	10	13	5.32	-3
P. Wagner	Pit	5	16	3.73	-3
Kile	Hou	4	12	4.13	-3
Trachsel	Chi	7	13	5.09	-4
Mulholland	SF	5	13	4.66	-4
NL Average				4.65	

Although the 1995 season belonged largely to the hitters, these lists reveal several truly outstanding pitching performances. Greg Maddux and Randy Johnson certainly earned their Cy Young Awards; in fact, both could have been the MVPs of their respective leagues. Maddux's performance in 1995 compares to Gibson's in 1968, and Johnson was almost as good. And not all the great pitchers in 1995 were starters.

In evaluating relief pitchers we needn't worry about run support because the principal job of relievers—or at any rate of closers—now is to come in with their team leading and finish the game with their team leading. Saves were invented to measure relievers' performance in this regard. Raw save totals, however, don't reflect how often a closer fails to hold a lead, so Blown Saves eventually came along to supplement them. Additionally, Holds appeared as a reward for middle relievers who didn't finish a game but did protect a lead successfully. By combining these three statistics, we can evaluate relief pitchers in the same context as starters—by the number of wins they contributed to their team beyond the performance expected of an average pitcher in the same context.

After figuring the "Save Plus Hold Percentage" for a league (Saves plus Holds, divided by Saves plus Holds plus Blown Saves) we can multiply the result by the number of opportunities of a pitcher in that league to see how many leads an average reliever would preserve in that context. Subtracting this from the combined total of Saves and Holds that the pitcher in question accumulated gives us the additional number of leads that pitcher preserved. Since Blown Saves are essentially wins that got away from a team, they can be equated with losses as far as the pitcher is concerned even if the game does not end in a loss. For example, in 1995 Jose Mesa registered 46 Saves, no Holds, and only two Blown Saves, a total of 48 Save Opportunities. The American League "Save Plus Hold Percentage" of 81 percent multiplied by 48 yields a combined total of Saves and Holds which rounds off to 39. Mesa's 46 Saves surpasses this by 7, indicating that he meant seven extra wins—or at least seven fewer blown leads—to the Indians than what they could have anticipated from an average reliever. Mesa stands out among the relievers listed below, those with at least 20 Save Opportunities in 1995.

American League Relievers

	Team	Save + Hold %	Opportunities	W Above Avg.
Mesa	Cle	96%	48	7
L. Smith	Cal	90%	41	4
Percival	Cal	91%	35	3
Charlton	Sea	93%	28	3
Aguilera	Min-Bos	89%	36	3
D. Jones	Bal	88%	25	2
Wetteland	NY	84%	37	1
Orosco	Bal	86%	21	1
Russell	Tex	84%	25	1
Fetters	Mil	83%	29	1
Tavarez	Cle	83%	23	0
Montgomery	KC	82%	38	0
Eckersley	Oak	76%	38	-2
R. Hernandez	Chi	76%	42	-2
Risley	Sea	70%	20	-2
Ayala	Sea	72%	29	-3
Wickman	NY	71%	31	-3
T. Castillo	Tor	69%	26	-3
AL Relievers		81%		

National League Relievers

Team	Save + Hold %	Opportunities	W Above Avg.
Henke	StL	95%	38	4
Todd Worrell	LA	89%	37	2
McMichael	Atl	92%	24	2
Henneman	Det-Hou	90%	30	2
D. Veres	Hou	91%	22	2
Brantley	Cin	88%	32	1
R. Myers	Chi	86%	44	1
Wohlers	Atl	87%	31	1
Holmes	Col	87%	31	1
Scott	Mon	88%	24	1
Slocumb	Phi	85%	41	1
Borland	Phi	85%	20	0
Y. Perez	Fla	85%	20	0
Bottalico	Phi	84%	25	0
Leskanic	Col	83%	35	0

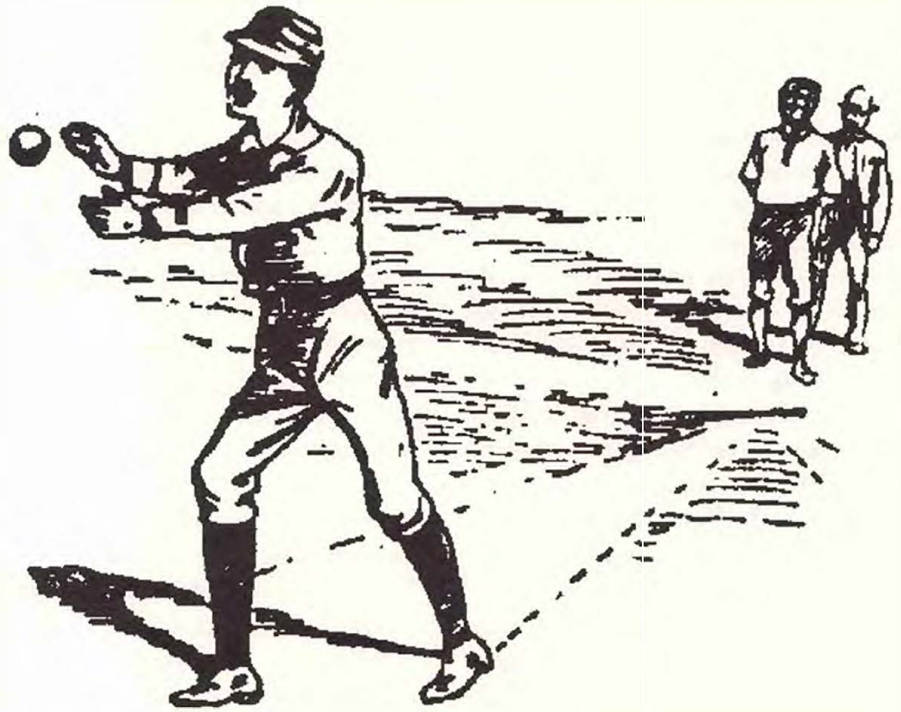
T. Jones	Hou	82%	28	0
Hoffman	SD	82%	38	-1
Carrasco	Cin	80%	20	-1
Franco	NYN	81%	36	-1
Miceli	Pit	79%	29	-1
Nen	Fla	79%	29	-1
Rojas	Mon	79%	42	-2
Beck	SF	77%	43	-3
Arocha	StL	67%	21	-3
NL Relievers		**83%**		

Notes:

1 John Thorn and Pete Palmer, eds., *Total Baseball*, 3rd ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 613.

2 The formula for this, as well as the 1995 statistics in this article, were taken from STATS' *1996 Baseball Scoreboard*.

3 Peter M. Gordon, "Bob Gibson in 1968," *The Perfect Game* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1993), p. 66.



The *Real* World Series

Cubans again dominate Olympic action

Peter C. Bjarkman

Baseball's recent summers have been more like its winter of discontent. Attendance has been down in big league parks from Atlanta to Los Angeles to all points between and beyond. Owners and players continue to squabble over slaughtering their sacred cash cow while fan interest wanes. Pennant races have been turned into wild-card tournaments and ballparks converted to shopping malls and high-tech entertainment complexes. World Series play is no longer as inevitable as the first leaves of autumn (as the 1994 debacle proved), and our one-time idolized diamond heroes vanished somewhere along the line and were replaced by spoiled brats and selfish video celebrities. Beyond the wasteland of big league parks the once teeming sandlots are also seemingly empty as today's youngsters turn to video games, rap music, and bouncing basketballs for their leisure-time activities.

And if all that news wasn't bad enough for fans of America's pastime, the Olympics brought another sobering dose of reality from Atlanta's Fulton County Stadium in the form of another laughably easy Gold Medal run for Cuba's "Wonder Team" of seemingly invincible international stars. The Cubans dominated last summer's "Real World Series" (Olympic baseball, after all, is global in more than name alone) with as much pizzazz as they have dominated all such international competitions in the past. And for the second straight "official" Olympic baseball festival (medal play only began in Barcelona four years ago) Team USA, stocked with highly touted collegiate stars and top big league draft picks like Kris Benson, Mark Kotsey, and Jacque Jones, collapsed against Japan in semifinal action. Despite $5 million in training and travel expenses and a crack team that toured together for two summers of intense preparation, coach Skip Bertman's squad simply could not capture must-win games against Cuba and Japan. A bronze medal victory over surprising Nicaragua was the sad consolation for a disappointing USA squad that had to sit helplessly on the sidelines while Cuba and Japan battled it out before a crowd of 44,221 mostly American spectators for the pride of world baseball domination.

Lessons—Several lessons seemed to emerge from the exciting two weeks of baseball round-robin action in Fulton County Stadium. Foremost was the striking fact that a perhaps underestimated Cuban juggernaut was far less susceptible to the threats of defections, inevitable aging, or improved USA and Japanese talent than had been anticipated earlier in the summer. Despite a suspect and often shaky pitching staff anchored by 31-year-old southpaw Omar Ajete (hero of Cuba's Gold Medal romp in Barcelona) and 23-year-old Pedro Luis Lazo (who saved both the 10-8 victory over Team USA and the title game with Japan), the Cubans effectively exploited the long ball (slugging 30 of the 133 homers banged out during 32 games

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played) and often brilliant infield defense (especially from diminutive shortstop Eduardo Paret) to leave the rest of the field in the dust. On the heels of their 13-9 championship pasting of Japan—sparked by three round-trippers from Omar Linares, who demonstrated time and again why he may well be the best third sacker on the planet—Cuba's unbeaten string in international competitions had run up to an incredible 143 consecutive games. Rey Ordoñez may have fled Castro's communist island for the New York Mets and former star pitchers like Osvaldo Fernandez and Livan Hernandez may also now be major league properties, but Cuba's diamond dynasty is alive and very well indeed—defections and all.

Omar Ajete, Cuban Olympic hero.

A second lesson, painful for U.S. boosters, was that the United States simply no longer measures up in international competitions. No whining is needed here about Castro sending professionals. If national heroes like Linares and slugging star Orestes Kindelan are state-supported, it is nonetheless likely that they suffer a lifestyle several notches below that of most of our own college players. And let's not start screaming about the need for a baseball "Dream Team" composed of Griffey, Jr. and Roger Clemens and the like. After all, such a maneuver (which does seem likely enough somewhere down the road, if not in Sydney in the year 2000) could put either Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic squarely at the head of the Gold medal chase.

The simple fact is that a nation which once lived, ate, and slept the diamond sport ought still to find talent enough on thousands of heartland sandlots to challenge the handpicked few from Castro's tiny island. That this is no longer the case is clearly the sharpest indicator of the demise of baseball as the genuine national pastime.

There were other stark lessons emerging from Atlanta. One was a realization that the spectacle of big-league-level baseball played with aluminum bats in major league parks is not at all the sham that traditionalists have long decried, and may in fact be just the antidote needed to rescue a sport that modern fans find too slow-paced and too low-scoring for an era worshipping instant gratification and constant stimulation. Cuban sluggers Linares (eight homers) and Kindelan (nine circuit clouts, including two exceeding 500 feet) opened a rare window on the future and gave bleacherites a momentary preview of what the thrill-a-minute sport might indeed be like once metal warclubs are put into the hands of Mark McGwire, Albert Belle, Juan Gonzalez, Fred McGriff, and the other great sluggers who populate the majors these days.

Finally, baseball as staged by Atlanta's Olympic organizers—with scoreboards that flashed only lineups and line scores and offered no rock music or video blooper-highlights or blaring commercials—was a source of quiet joy very much in tune with those rhythms that have always moved the summer game. Here was ample evidence that the game itself generates plenty of excitement and joy without the noisy and noisome trappings a new generation of owners and promoters think they have to provide for today's fans-turned-consumers. One highly exciting, rally-filled Cuba-USA game—played on a sparkling Sunday afternoon before a throng of 50,000 fans feeding on nothing but the raw energy of the game itself—felt to middle-aged fanatics like one of those Giants-Dodgers slugfest of the '50s. And if there was something slightly eerie about the constant ping of aluminum lumber, it was nonetheless clear that at the Olympics, at least, America's greatest game was still alive and well. For those who sat in Fulton County Stadium in the sunshine of late July rather than the arc-lights of late October, there was also an unabashed glee in knowing that they themselves—not those corporate high rollers who would arrive three months hence for the big league's now-much-tarnished finale—had indeed stumbled upon baseball's Real World Series.

What has Divisional Play Wrought?

The big benefit is greater competition

Mark Kanter

Many serious baseball fans bemoan the fact that divisional play and the subsequent inclusion of wild card teams in the playoff structure have led to more runaway races. While it is true that Cleveland did run away with the 1995 American League Central Division race, the Indians might well have run away with the old American League East race. Instead of having one of two American League divisional races over by the All-Star break, only one of three was.

In fact, divisional play has *not* created a higher percentage of one-sided races as compared to the nondivisional races of 1901 through 1968. Since divisional play began in 1969, teams seem to have come to realize that the most important thing is to win the division and then win the pennant to advance to the World Series. One could make the case that it is nonsensical to "blow away" a division. There is no need to decisively win the battle to gain a playoff berth if the war is ultimately lost.

For the purposes of this research, a team must win a division and/or gain a playoff berth by more than 4 games to be considered decisive. Through 1972, the teams that won the pennant had also won their divisions decisively (that is, by more than 4 games) and had a winning percentage equal to or greater than .599. However, this phenomenon changed in 1973 when the Mets won 82 games, had a winning percentage of .509, and had the next three teams finish within 3.5 games.

From 1901 through 1968, 68 teams finished within 4 games of the first-place team. Given a total of 136 league seasons (68 for each league), this corresponds to .5 teams per year. Conventional wisdom suggests that splitting a league into divisions would diminish close races. However, from the beginning of divisional play in 1969 to the beginning of the wild card era, the number of teams within 4 games of the first place team was .552. Moreover, the spread of the average number of games won (prorated to 162 games), as defined by standard deviation, within a league and/or divisional season has generally declined (Tables 1,2, and 3 and Figures 1, 2, and 3) throughout the twentieth century. Matthew Lieff and I, and Bill James, have suggested that the standard deviation of the number of wins within a league and/or division season can be used as a measure of the competitiveness of that league and/or division season. An inverse relation exists between standard deviation and competitiveness. Therefore, competitiveness can be viewed as increasing when standard deviation is decreasing.

The beginning of divisional play at the end of the 1960s coincided with the fact that competitiveness had been gradually increasing. Logic would suggest that close races and competitiveness would decrease, especially if the top teams were placed in opposite divisions and that competitive teams were reasonably evenly distributed. And, in fact, competitiveness hit

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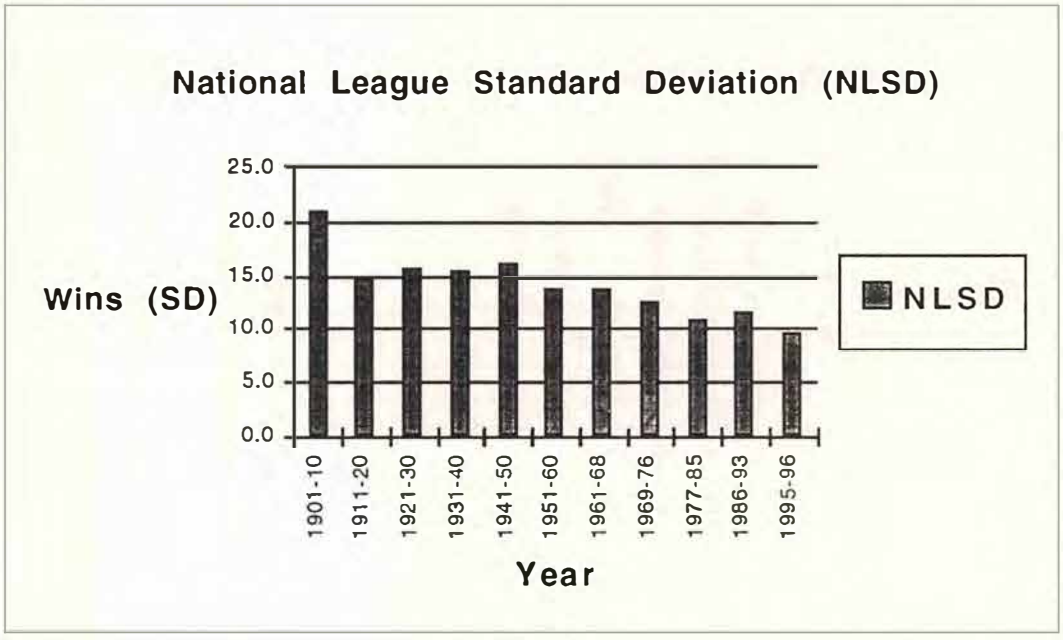

Figure 1

an immediate low, as evidenced by a spike in standard deviation for the National League in 1969 (16.8) and for the American League from 1969 through 1971 (14.4). These data may have been the results of expansion, of course, and the relative lack of competitiveness in the American League may be attributable to the true dominance of the great Baltimore Orioles teams. After this dip, though, overall competitiveness within the major leagues increased through 1993 (Table 2 and Figures 1 and 2).

The number of teams within 4 games of the divisions' first place teams went up to .552 for the 24 years of two-division play as compared to .5 for the 68 years of league play. This corresponds to a total of 53 teams finishing within 4 games of the first place team per division. (I did not include the years 1981 and 1994 because in 1981 the rules for getting into the playoffs were changed in midseason and the 1994 season was not completed).

These results suggest that while it may take some time, franchises realize that winning the battle within the division is paramount, and they tend to start

Table 1: Standard Deviation of the Number of Wins (Prorated to 162 Games); 1901 through 1968

	Standard Deviation	
Year	NL	AL
1901-10	21.0	16.8
1911-20	14.8	17.8
1921-30	15.6	15.5
1931-40	15.5	17.9
1941-50	16.1	15.6
1951-60	13.6	15.7
1961-68	13.6	12.5

Table 2: Standard Deviation of the Number of Wins (Prorated to 162 Games); 1969 through 1993

	Standard Deviation					
Year	NL	AL	NLE	NLW	ALE	ALW
1969-76	12.3	12.0	10.7	14.0	12.1	11.8
1977-85	10.7	11.8	11.3	10.2	12.6	11.1
1986-93	11.3	9.7	11.0	11.6	10.2	9.2

Table 3: Standard Deviation of the Number of Wins (Prorated to 162 Games); 1995 and 1996

	Standard Deviation									
Year	NL	AL	NLE	NLC	NLW	NLWC	ALE	ALC	ALW	ALWC
1995-96	9.4	12.6	10.8	9.0	8.3	6.9	14.9	14.1	8.8	9.6

building their teams in relation to the other teams in their divisions. They clearly understand that the divisional battle must be won if the team is going to have a chance in the war to win the pennant, but they also seem to realize that they don't have to win the battle decisively. As more teams understand this concept, the overall competitive balance in the division should become greater. This second phenomenon is illustrated by the overall lessening of the spread between teams from 1969 through 1993. (In 1995 and 1996, the numbers have increased. It is unclear whether this is an anomaly due to a change in how teams compete, a characteristic of having more divisions, or the fact that some teams have chosen to not pay for talent to keep them competitive [James, 1992].)

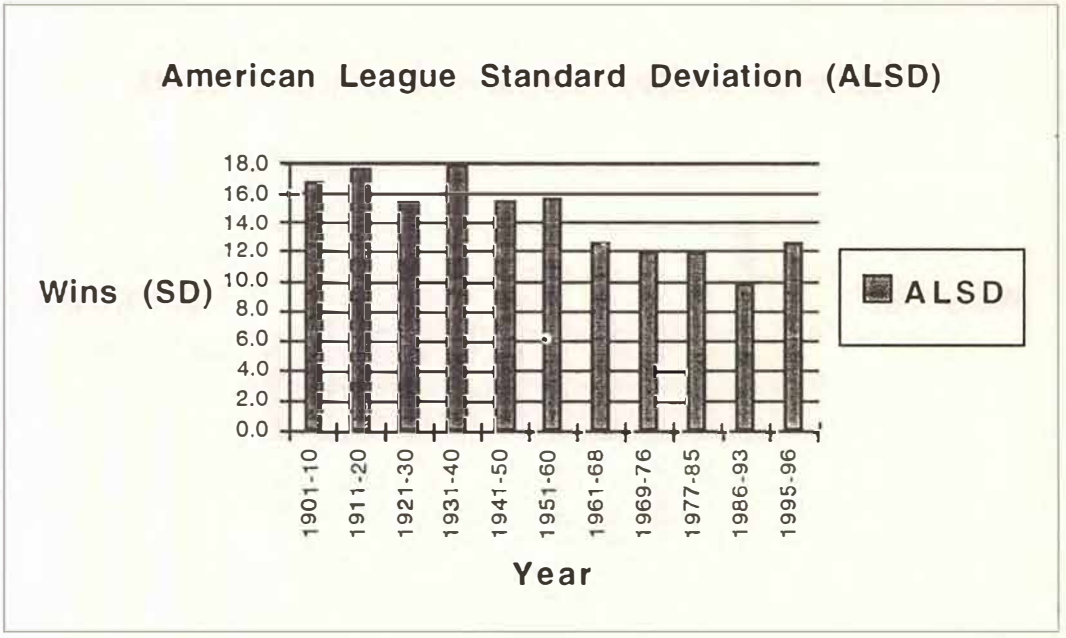

Figure 2

With divisional play, the only needed regular season victories are the ones that garner a playoff berth. Everything else is superfluous. That is one reason the percentage of teams within 4 games of divisional winners is .552, instead of the .50 before playoffs started. As competition increases and teams learn to play for a divisional title and/or playoff berth, the overall result is that divisional play (and subsequently the inclusion of wild card teams) keeps more teams seeking a playoff berth.

By competing within divisions, more teams feel that they are in a race than if they were all competing for a single spot at the top of the league. With many teams contending for playoff berths, clubs in any kind of contention keep their premium free agents longer to avoid giving up on a playoff berth. They stay competitive deeper into the season. Eventually, this leads to a spreading out of the victories among all of the teams in a division which, in turn, decreases the standard deviation of the number of wins within that division. In short, the division becomes more competitive. Hence, the best teams in the league need fewer victo-

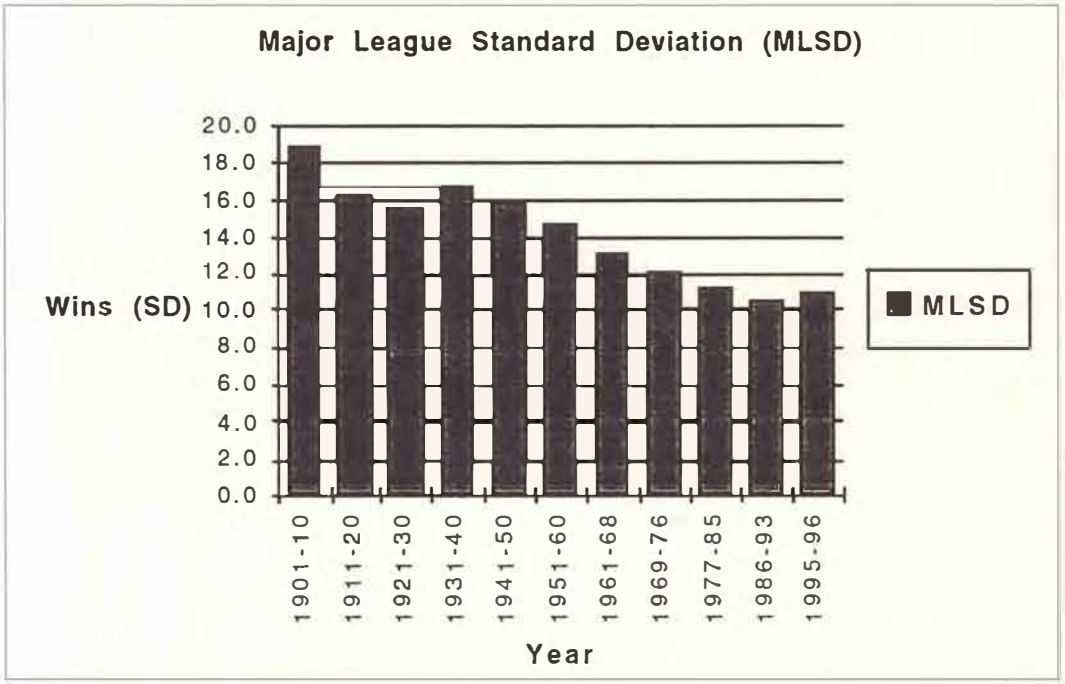

Figure 3

Figure 4

ries to gain a playoff berth.

It is difficult to believe that anybody could state with any certainty that if the divisional groupings were different, or if there were no divisions, that the same teams would have won the same number of games. Teams today are created to win a division, although management naturally hopes to go on to a pennant and a victory in the World Series. Because of this approach, the average number of wins needed to win the World Series did decrease from 1969 through 1993 (Figure 4).

Having two divisions within each league (1969-1993) appears to have kept more than 55 percent of the teams within close range of first place and more teams in the hunt for a playoff berth. More teams and their fans probably feel that they have a legitimate chance to make the playoffs. Remember, teams only have to win the number of games needed to enter the playoffs. Everything else is superfluous because, after that, winning the playoffs is a whole new ball game.

List of Abbreviations

American League	AL
American League Championship Series	ALCS
American League East	ALE
American League Standard Deviation	ALSD
American League West	ALW
American League Wild Card	ALWC
American League Central	ALC
Major League Standard Deviation	MLSD
National League	NL
National League Central	NLC
National League East	NLE
National League Standard Deviation	NLSD
National League West	NLW
National League Wild Card	NLWC

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RBI Efficiency

A better way to measure RBI productivity

Matthew Salganik

In 1996 Brady Anderson had a strange year for a leadoff hitter. He hit 50 homers and drove in 110 runs, which ranked him 18th in the American League in RBIs. This ranking, however, doesn't really tell the whole story about Anderson's RBI productivity because his RBI total was hampered by his role as a leadoff hitter. How would he stack up in RBI productivity against the other players in the league if his handicap of batting leadoff could be neutralized?

This question can be answered by using a new statistic called RBI Efficiency. This is the ratio of a player's actual RBI total to his Expected RBI total, where Expected RBI total is defined as the number of RBIs the average player in the league would have earned batting in the same situations.

RBI Efficiency of player X =
Player X's actual RBI total/Player X's Expected RBI total

The difficulty of this statistic comes in trying to calculate a player's Expected RBI total. We need a method that can take a set of plate appearances and yield the number of RBIs that the average player would have produced in those plate appearances.

I decided that this method should account for three factors: the number and location of baserunners, the number of outs, and the stadium. I did not include other factors because they introduce more complexity than clarity. RBI Efficiency doesn't account for everything, but it is a simple process that involves only addition, multiplication, and division. Yet it is a vast improvement over the method we usually use—simply looking at a player's RBI total. The problem with the current method is that it artificially inflates players who bat often, bat in hitter-friendly parks, and bat often with runners on base.

One possible refinement is to compare players' RBIs per plate appearance, but this also has problems. It assumes that all plate appearances are just as likely to produce RBIs. This is simply not the case. Some appearances are more likely than others to produce RBIs. For example, the cleanup hitter for a good offensive team bats in better RBI situations than an eight hitter on a weak offensive team. RBIs per plate appearance contains a bias that inflates values for players who come to bat in favorable situations.

Calculating RBI Efficiency—Every plate appearance can be classified as a combination of the three factors I chose. There are eight possible distributions of the runners (nobody on, man on first, man on second, and so on), three possible numbers of outs (0,1, 2), and fourteen possible stadiums in which a plate appearance can take place. Therefore, all plate appearances fall into one of 336 (8x3x14) possible scenarios per league.

To calculate the number of RBIs the average player would earn in a scenario, I divided the total number of RBIs in that scenario by the number of total plate appearances in that scenario.

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Nunber of RBIs the average player would earn in scenario X =

Number that occured in scenario X/Number of plate appearances in scenario X

Below is a chart with the first eight scenarios from the 1996 season in the AL. Once the number of RBIs the average player would earn in each of the 336 scenarios is determined, we can begin to calculate Expected RBI total by multiplying his appearances in scenario 1 by the number of RBIs that the average player would earn in scenario 1. We repeat this process for all the scenarios, then sum the results.

Scn	Stadium	Runners	Outs	Apps	RBIs	RBI/ App
1	Baltimore	none	0	1581	57	.04
2	Baltimore	first	0	354	28	.08
3	Baltimore	second	0	104	9	.09
4	Baltimore	third	0	23	176	.74
5	Baltimore	first and second	0	95	27	.28
6	Baltimore	first and third	0	45	23	.51
7	Baltimore	second and third	0	24	16	.67
8	Baltimore	first, second, and third	0	28	21	.75

Because Chris Hook had only two plate appearances in 1996, he serves as a good example of how to calculate RBI Efficiency. He had one plate appearance in scenario 302—man on first and third, one out, in San Francisco. The Expected RBI value for this scenario is .59. He had another plate appearance in scenario 305—no runners on, two outs, in San Francisco, and as we would guess, the Expected RBI value for this scenario is much lower: .04. To calculate his Expected RBI total, we multiply the number of plate appearances in each scenario by the expected RBI value for that scenario, then sum. For Hook we calculate (1 x .59) + (1 x .04), for an Expected RBI value of .63.

We calculate Hook's RBI Efficiency by dividing his actual RBI total (1) by his Expected RBI value (.63). His rating is 1.59. This Efficiency would place him near the top of the National League, but he did not have nearly enough plate appearances to qualify.

Setting the record straight—With RBI Efficiency, Brady Anderson is not penalized for batting with few runners on base, and Andres Galarraga's advantage of batting in Coors Field is accounted for. Another interesting feature of RBI Efficiency is that it can be compared across seasons despite rule changes and changes in offensive production. This is because RBI Efficiency is measured relative to other players from the same season, while RBI total is measured as an absolute number.

An RBI Efficiency of 1 means the batter drove in exactly as many runs as the average player would have. In the same situations, an RBI Efficiency of 1.50 means that the batter drove in 50 percent more runs, and an RBI Efficiency of .5 means the batter drove in 50 percent fewer runs. The top ten players from 1996 for both the AL and NL are listed below. (Because of pitchers' plate appearances in the NL, the RBI Efficiency of NL batter are inflated. This inflation prevents cross-league comparisons.)

Top 10 RBI Efficiency, American League 1996

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank	
Juan Gonzalez	1.59	1	144	2	
Albert Belle	1.54	2	148	1	
Mark McGwire	1.52	3	113	15	
Frank Thomas	1.50	4	134	7	
Ken Griffey Jr.	1.49	5	140	5	
Brady Anderson	1.44	6	110	18	
Alex Rodriguez	1.43	7	123	8	
Jim Thome	1.35	8	116	12	(tie)
Mo Vaughn	1.34	9	143	3	
John Jaha	1.34	10	118	9	

Top 10 RBI Efficiency, National League 1996

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank	
Gary Sheffield	1.63	1	120	6	(tie)
Barry Bonds	1.60	2	129	4	
Mike Piazza	1.59	3	105	16	
Henry Rodriguez	1.58	4	103	18	
Andres Galarraga	1.57	5	150	1	
Ken Caminiti	1.54	6	130	3	
Bernard Gilkey	1.50	7	117	8	
Todd Hundley	1.45	8	112	11	
Sammy Sosa	1.43	9	100	19	
Chipper Jones	1.43	10	110	14	

Now we can see how Anderson stacked up against other AL batters. With a few additional calculations we can also see how many RBIs the Orioles sacrificed by batting him in situations that were not conducive to RBI production. This can be determined through a comparison with Bobby Bonilla, someone the Orioles batted in their better RBI producing situations.

To do this we can compare the number of RBIs that Brady would have produced batting in Bonilla's plate appearances with the number of RBIs that Bonilla actually produced. From previous calculations we know that the average player would have driven in 98 runs if he had batted in all of Bonilla's appearances,

and we know that in 1996 Anderson was 44 percent more efficient than the average player (his RBI Efficiency is 1.44). We can find the number of RBIs he would have driven in batting in Bonilla's place by multiplying 1.44 and 98. This yields 141 RBIs, 25 higher than Bonilla's actual total of 116.

Predictably, RBI Efficiency also deflates the contributions of some players. In 1996 four Colorado Rockies, playing their home games in hitter-friendly Coors Field, were in the top ten in RBIs. Once park effect is taken into account, all but one of these players drop out of the top ten in RBI Efficiency. Andres Galarraga drops from 1 to 5, Dante Bichette drops from 2 to 11, Ellis Burkes plummets from 5 to 21 and Vinny Castillo slips from 10 to 16.

RBI Efficiency also provides some surprises. The most surprising from 1996 was Paul Molitor. He hit .341, led the league with 225 hits, accumulated 41 doubles, hit 9 homers, and drove in 113 runs. His RBI total of 113 tied him for 14th in the American League, but his RBI Efficiency of 1.01 ranked him 49th among AL players with at least 502 plate appearances. It is important to remember that because of the way RBI Efficiency is calculated, the average player has an rating of 1.00. This means that in RBI Efficiency, Paul Molitor was about average despite offensive numbers that appear to be stellar. What could account for this huge drop?

This example illustrates a fact that RBI Efficiency highlights: power hitters are more efficient at driving in runs than high-average hitters, even when opportunities are equal. This result can be further illustrated by comparing Paul Molitor with Carlos Delgado, a batter who hits for lower average but has more power. In '96 Delgado hit .270, with 25 homers and 92 RBIs. These offensive numbers appear inferior to Molitor's, but Delgado had an RBI Efficiency of 1.32. This means Delgado was 30 percent more efficient at driving in runs than Molitor. If Delgado had batted in all of Molitor's plate appearances he would have driven in 148 runs, 56 more than he actually drove in. Further research could explore the relationship between batting average, home runs, and RBI Efficiency.

The measurement's usefulness is clear. It is an important end-of-season evaluator of player performance because it is an unbiased measure of RBI production. Below are the top five batters in RBI Efficiency from each league for each season from 1992 through 1995 and those whose RBI Efficiency was highest over the last five years (1992-1996). Again, it is important to note that RBI Efficiency cannot be compared across leagues.

Top 5 in RBI Efficiency, American League 1995

Minimum of 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Mo Vaughn	1.58	1	126	1(tie)
Albert Belle	1.58	2	126	1(tie)
Jose Canseco	1.52	3	81	33
Jay Buhner	1.47	4	121	3
Mike Blowers	1.44	5	96	16

Top 5 in RBI Efficiency, National League 1995

Minimum of 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Mike Piazza	1.77	1	93	11
Dante Bichette	1.53	2	128	1
Eric Karros	1.52	3	105	4
Sammy Sosa	1.51	4	119	2
Ron Gant	1.48	5	88	16

Top 5 RBI Efficiency, American League 1994

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Ken Griffey Jr.	1.61	1	90	7
Albert Belle	1.56	2	101	3
Joe Carter	1.53	3	103	2
Kirby Puckett	1.53	4	112	1
Kirk Gibson	1.46	5	72	22

Top 5 RBI Efficiency, National League 1994

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Fred McGriff	1.77	1	94	4
Matt Williams	1.72	2	96	2
Gary Sheffield	1.69	3	78	10
Barry Bonds	1.67	4	81	9
Jeff Bagwell	1.67	5	116	1

Top 5 RBI Efficiency, American League 1993

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Juan Gonzalez	1.71	1	118	4
Chris Hoiles	1.53	2	82	27
Albert Belle	1.49	3	129	1
Frank Thomas	1.47	4	128	2
Ken Griffey Jr.	1.45	5	109	10

Top 5 RBI Efficiency, National League 1993

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Mike Piazza	1.76	1	112	4
Barry Bonds	1.59	2	123	1

Matt Williams	1.53	3	110	5
Phil Plantier	1.50	4	100	9
Dave Justice	1.48	5	120	2

Top 5 RBI Efficiency, American League 1992

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Mark McGwire	1.80	1	104	11
Ken Griffey Jr.	1.56	2	103	12
Juan Gonzalez	1.49	3	109	7
Joe Carter	1.40	4	119	2
Dave Winfield	1.38	5	108	8

Top 5 RBI Efficiency, National League 1992

Minimum 3.1 plate appearances per game

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Gary Sheffield	1.65	1	100	5
Darren Daulton	1.64	2	109	1
Andre Dawson	1.56	3	90	10
Ryne Sandberg	1.56	4	87	13
Barry Bonds	1.55	5	103	4

Acknowledgments:

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Top 10 in RBI Efficiency, American League 1992-1996

Minimum of 1,750 plate appearances

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Mark McGwire	1.60	1	356	29
Juan Gonzalez	1.53	2	538	3
Albert Belle	1.50	3	616	1
Ken Griffey Jr.	1.46	4	484	9
Frank Thomas	1.40	5	589	2
Mo Vaughn	1.37	6	509	7
Jose Canseco	1.36	7	386	21
Rafael Palmeiro	1.30	8	512	6
Joe Carter	1.30	9	526	5
Jay Buhner	1.25	10	504	8

Top 10 in RBI Efficiency, National League 1990-1996

Minimum of 2000 plate appearances

Batter	RBI Efficiency	Rank	RBI	Rank
Mike Piazza	1.66	1	409	11
Barry Bonds	1.56	2	540	1
Gary Sheffield	1.53	3	417	10
Dante Bichette	1.42	4	453	5
Sammy Sosa	1.39	5	407	12
Andres Galaraga	1.39	6	478	4
Ron Gant	1.38	7	367	17
Jeff Bagwell	1.37	8	507	2
Bobby Bonilla	1.36	9	277	35 (tie)
Larry Walker	1.34	10	424	8

Are "One-Run" Games Special?

A search for their alleged importance

Bob Boynton

Games decided by a single run constituted about a quarter of those played in the American League during the 1995 season. Sportscasters, writers, managers, fans, and players alike often attribute a special importance to these so-called "one-run games." It is surprising, therefore, that an analysis of the distribution of runs scored during the 1995 American League season fails to reveal any evidence to support the idea that one-run games have a special significance. Rather, the scores of these closest games appear to result from a random process that applies to baseball scores in general.

To illustrate the approach to this research, evidence from the 1995 AL season will first be presented in detail. It will then be shown that these results are consistent with the data from six other major-league seasons.[1]

Raw Frequencies Exceed Predictions—For the 1995 AL season, there were 1,010 games, yielding a total of 2,020 run values. Without regard to their pairing, these were distributed as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. The p-values listed on the bottom line of the table (bar-heights in the figure), which sum to unity, represent the fraction of games for which a score occurred in each category.

If the values of the run-pairs that make up game scores are assumed to be independent of one another, then the probability that a game will conclude with a particular score can be obtained by treating the two p-values as probabilities and computing their product. For example, to determine the probability that a visiting team will defeat a home team by a score of 3-1, multiply (.127) by (.084) to get .0107 (roughly one time in a hundred). In addition, a 1-3 score (where the home team wins) will occur with that same probability, which doubles to .0214 the probability that one of the teams will win by a score of 3-1. To determine how many games are predicted to end with this score during the season, multiply .0214 by the number of games played (1010): a 3-1 score would be expected to occur 21.6 times.

In general, the predicted number of game scores of $N_{i,j}$ is

$$(1)\ N_{i,j} = 2.p_i.p_j.N_s,$$

where i and j are run values, p_i and p_j are the probabilities that each will occur, and N_s is the number of games played by teams in the league during the season.

In the scatter diagram of Figure 2, each symbol represents the location of a game score, with observed (actual) frequencies plotted as a function of calculated frequencies. If the calculated and observed frequencies agreed exactly, all symbols would lie along the diagonal line. A few game scores that occur most frequently are identified, and those that differ by one

Bob Boynton has previously published articles in SABR journals about managers, Cleveland's ballparks, and deficiencies in the current major league playoff system.

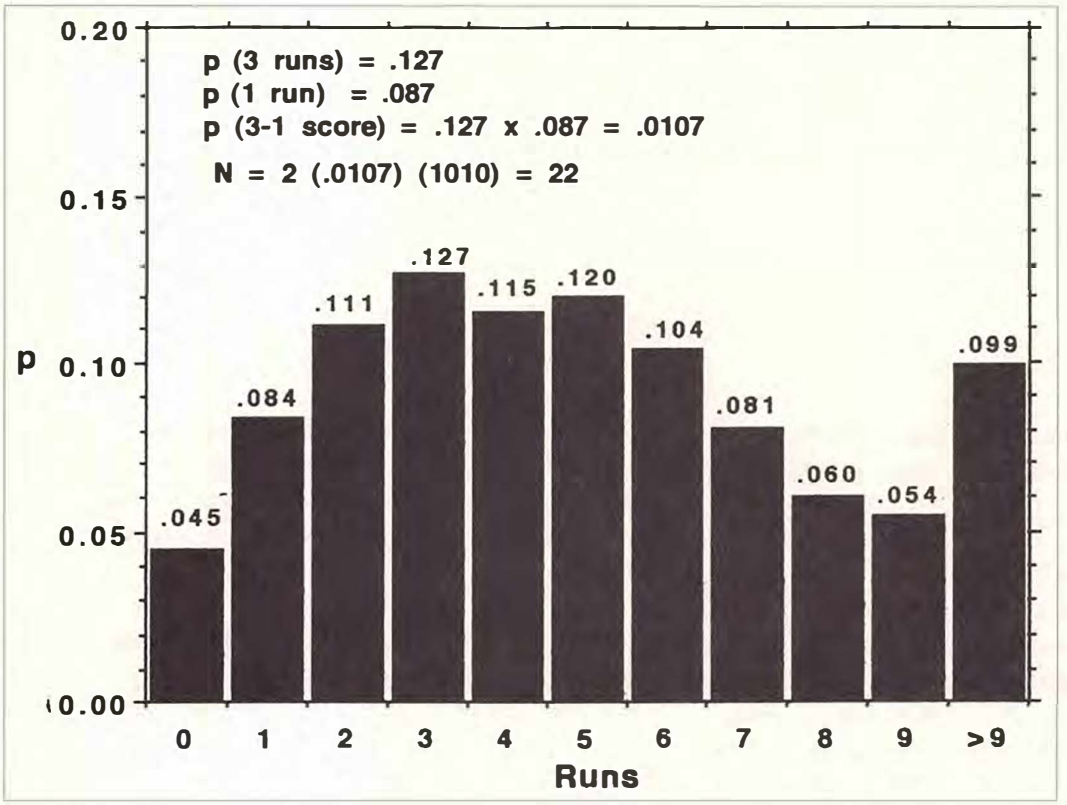

Figure 1. Distribution of the numbers of runs scored by both teams, without regard to their pairing, in games played during the 1995 AL season. The calculation (see text) illustrates that about 22 games would be expected to end in scores of 3-1 or 1-3 if the numbers of runs scored by the two teams were independent of each other.

run are highlighted. Looking from top to bottom, it can be seen that the most common actual game score during the season was 4-3, closely followed by 3-2, and then 6-5 and 5-3 in that order. By calculation, looking from right to left, the ordering is 5-3, 4-3, 3-2, and 5-4. All eight of the one-run scores lie above the line, meaning that there are many more one-run games than expected. Indeed, the ratio of actual to calculated one-run games is 247/171—a whopping 44 percent excess relative to what is predicted.

Sources of the Extra One-Run Games—Although a 44 percent prediction error seems flatly to contradict the idea that run pairings could be random for the AL in 1995, nearly 80 percent of extra-inning games were one-run affairs which may have served to inflate the observed frequencies represented by the filled squares in Figure 1. To find out, extra-inning games have been reconsidered as ties based on the actual scores after nine innings. The eighty-one such tie scores for the 1995 AL season are distributed as shown in Table 2.

The slightly altered distribution of probabilities caused by converting extra-inning scores to nine-inning ties is given in Table 3. Based upon these new p-values, Figure 3 shows the observed vs. calculated frequencies of tie scores after nine innings of the extra-inning games, along with scores of regulation contests. Tie scores, shown as open circles, cluster toward the bottom of the chart because—unlike the untied scores that can occur in two orders (e.g., 3-1 and 1-3)—there is only one way that each kind of tie (e.g., 4-4) can occur. Therefore, for ties, the factor 2 drops out of Equation 1 which then becomes

$$(2)\ N_1 = p_1^2 . N_s .$$

The most obvious difference between Figure 3 and Figure 2 is that the data points for one-run games have moved downward in Figure 3 so that they lie closer to the perfect-prediction line. The ratio of actual to calculated one-run games has been reduced

Table 1.

Frequency of runs making up the final scores of games played in the 1995 American League season. The fraction of times that each score occurred is shown on the bottom line, labeled "p" for "probability."

Runs	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	>9
count	90	169	225	256	233	242	211	164	122	109	199
p	.045	.084	.111	.127	.115	.120	.104	.081	.060	.054	.099

Table 2.

Frequency of occurrence of scores tied after nine innings. There were no ties greater than 10-10.

0-0:	1	3-3:	9	6-6:	6	9-9:	3	
1-1:	8	4-4:	17	7-7:	6	10-10:	1	
2-2:	15	5-5:	12	8-8:	3			

Table 3. Same as Table 1, except that extra-inning scores have been converted to tie scores after nine innings.

Runs	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	>9
count	92	177	237	252	233	239	206	159	116	108	195
p	.046	.088	.117	.125	.115	.118	.102	.079	.057	.054	.097

from 1.44 to 189/173, or 1.10. Had there been 15 fewer actual one-run scores, this ratio would have been one.

The Last of the Ninth—The remaining discrepancy of ten percent is probably attributable to excess one-run scores caused by games that ended suddenly in the last half of the ninth inning—a circumstance which obviously prevents the possibility of further scoring. For the 1995 AL season, there were 38 one-run games that were won in the home half of the ninth (along with nine others with larger margins attributable to last-minute home runs with at least one runner on base). Exactly half of the one-run games ended with one of the three scores that plot farthest above the line in Figure 3—4-3, 3-2 or 6-5. It is not unreasonable to suppose that 15 rallies nipped in the bud would have produced additional scoring had the final inning been allowed to continue, thereby removing these games from the one-run category. Simulations by John Jarvis (see Acknowledgement) appear to confirm this.

One-Run vs. Seasonal Winning Per- centage—An independent team-by-team analysis also fails to demonstrate that the winning of one-run games was of any special importance during the 1995 AL season. Figure 4 shows the relation between winning percentage for one-run games compared to that for the season as a whole. Each team that suffered a losing season is plotted to the left of the vertical line, with winners at the right. Points plotted above the diagonal line represent teams that won a larger share of one-run games than would be expected from their overall season

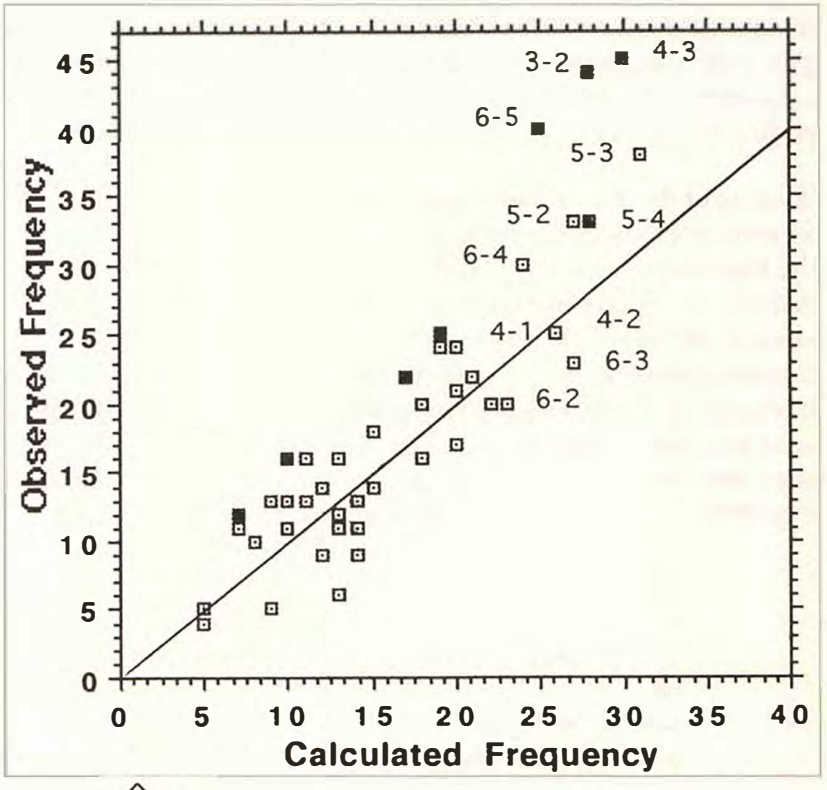

Figure 2. The observed frequencies of game scores for the 1995 American League season, plotted as a function of calculated frequencies based on Equation 1 in the text. Data points for some of the most common scores are labeled. Scores of one-run games are highlighted (filled squares) and most lie well above the prediction line.

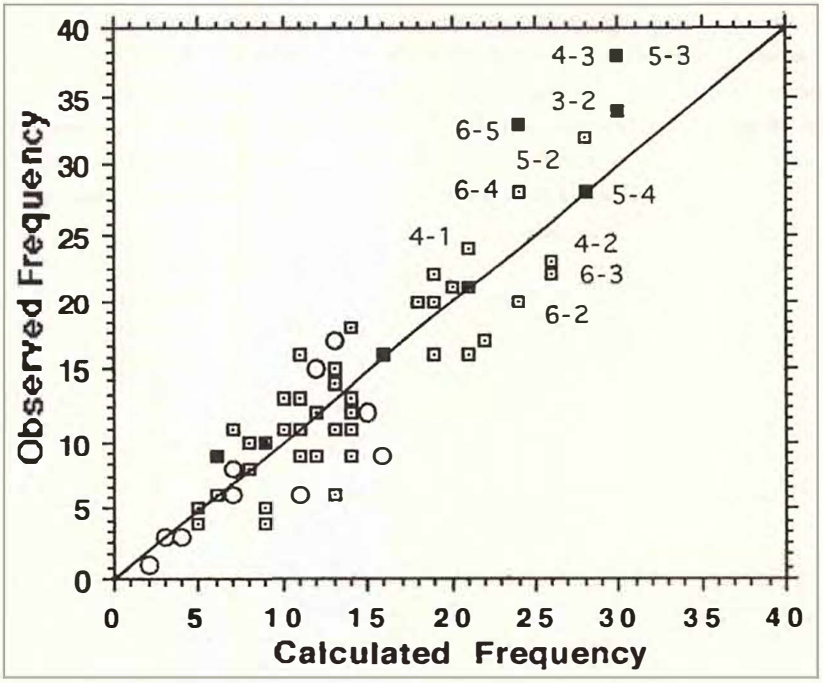

Figure 3. Observed vs. calculated frequencies, as in Figure 2, except that extra-inning games are treated as ties after 9 innings (shown as circles). Scores for one-run games are closer to the prediction line than in Figure 1.

records. On this basis, five of the eight teams with losing seasons won more than the expected number of one-run games, whereas four of the six teams with winning seasons lost more than expected. Still, four of six season winners (New York and Seattle being the exceptions) did win more one-run games than they lost, whereas seven of eight season losers (Kansas City being the exception) were also losers in the one-run department. Thus it should not be concluded that one-run games are unimportant. The point is that they appear to have no *special* significance relative to games decided by larger margins.

Other Seasons—The ratios of actual to predicted one-run games are shown in Table 4 for seven seasons that have been examined. (AL 1995, already discussed, will be found in the middle of the list.) The figures for all seasons tell the same story. On average,

Table 4. The ratio of actual to calculated one-run games examined for seven major-league seasons and some other data as shown.

Year	Condition	No. 1-run Games in Season	No. Games in Season	Pct 1-run Games in Season	Ratio of Actual to Calculated 1-run Games
1967	AL Final Scores	277	810	34.2	1.61
1967	AL 9-inning Scores	223	810	28.8	1.28
1983	AL Final Scores	308	1135	27.1	1.44
1983	AL 9-inning Scores	214	1135	18.9	1.11
1986	AL Final Scores	307	1134	27.1	1.47
1986	AL 9-inning Scores	209	1134	18.4	1.12
1995	AL Final Scores	247	1010	24.5	1.44
1995	AL 9-inning Scores	171	1010	16.9	1.10
1983	NL Final Scores	298	974	30.6	1.45
1983	NL 9-inning Scores	206	974	21.1	1.13
1986	NL Final Scores	345	969	35.6	1.74
1986	NL 9-inning Scores	198	969	20.4	1.29
1995	NL Final Scores	293	1007	29.1	1.59
1995	NL 9-inning Scores	223	1007	22.1	1.20
Average, Final Scores				29.7	1.53
Average, 9-inning Scores				20.9	1.18
(7 seasons, weighted equally)					

Table 5. Distribution of teams depending on their overall season performance and their records in 1-run games. Winners are defined as those teams with season winning percentages above .500. Winners for 1-run games are similarly defined. Losers are teams below .500 in both categories. One of the 1983 NL teams ended the season exactly at .500 and therefore is not included.

1-run Games Only		
	Winners	Losers
1967 AL Winners	2	3
1967 AL Losers	2	3
1983 AL Winners	2	4
1983 AL Losers	5	3
1986 AL Winners	3	4
1986 AL Losers	3	4
1995 AL Winners	2	4
1995 AL Losers	5	3
1983 NL Winners	2	4
1983 NL Losers	3	2
1986 NL Winners	2	3
1986 NL Losers	5	2
1995 NL Winners	3	3
1995 NL Losers	5	3
Winners, Total	16	25
Losers, Total	28	20

there is a 53 percent excess of actual one-run games relative to what is predicted, all but 18 percent of which is accounted for by extra-inning games.

Table 5 reveals that Figure 4 is no fluke. For the seven seasons examined, teams with winning records generally did worse than expected in one-run games, whereas losing teams usually did a little better.

Table 6. Average number of times that game scores occurred after 9 innings of play. Data are for the seven seasons given in Tables 4 and 5. Numbers in parentheses indicate how many times the indicated score was the most common one (tied frequencies account for these numbers adding to greater than 7). Data are shown for actual and calculated values. Note that the largest differences between actual and calculated frequencies are mainly for 1-run games.

	Mean Frequencies	
Score	Actual	Calculated
3-2	43.14 (2)	38.43 (3)
4-3	42.00 (4)	38.00 (3)
2-1	38.29 (1)	31.00
4-2	34.71	37.40 (2)
5-2	34.14	30.71
5-3	32.00 (1)	31.57 (1)
5-4	31.86	30.57
3-1	30.00	31.14
4-1	27.85	30.29
6-5	26.57	20.43
6-4	25.86	24.29

The Most Common Scores—By far the most common scores are 4-3 and 3-2, whether for complete games (including extra innings) or for scores considered after nine innings. Frequencies for some other scores are also given in Table 6, together with their calculated counterparts.

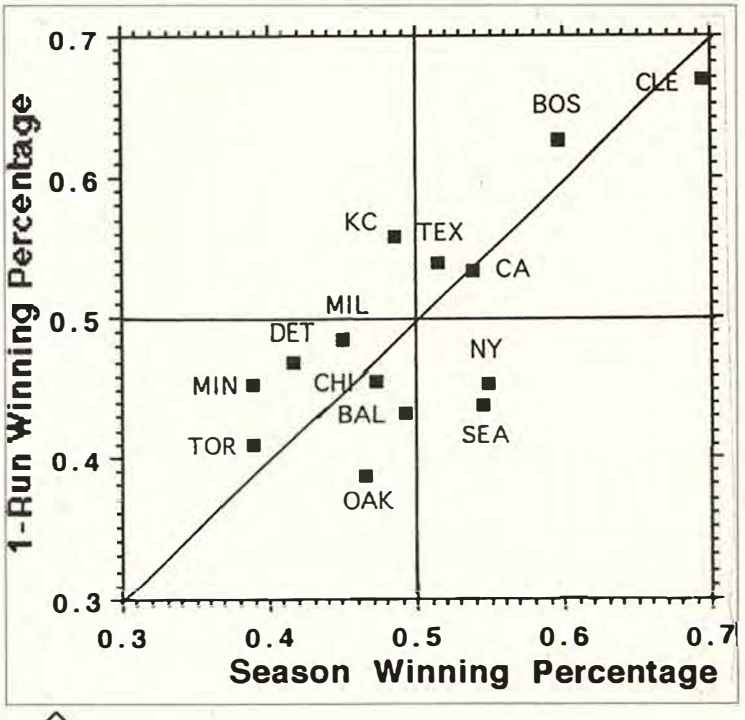

Figure 4. For the 1995 American League season, winning percentages for one-run games are shown for the 14 teams plotted as a function of overall season winning percentage (one-run games included). Teams to the right of the vertical line had winning seasons; teams above the horizontal line had winning percentages for one-run games. Teams above the diagonal line had better winning percentages for one-run games than for their games as a whole. Four of six teams with winning seasons did relatively poorly in their one-run games.

Discussion and Conclusions—It is not unreasonable to suppose that the number of runs scored by the losing team in a major-league baseball game should depend to some extent upon the number of runs scored by its opponent. Consider, for example, the following.

- If a pitcher with a big lead early in a game eases up a bit, this would be expected to increase the probability that the opposing team will score.
- A pitcher starting the ninth inning with a lead of three or four runs would be wise to groove a 3-1 pitch and hope for the best, rather than to risk walking the leadoff batter.
- Late in a game when the score is close, a manager is more likely to call for a sacrifice bunt than when the scoring margin is four or five runs.

Although it would seem that such considerations ought to make game scores somewhat closer than if the run pairings were independent, chance events evidently overwhelm their influence, because no support for the role of tactics has been found in the analysis of one-run games. For the seven major league seasons examined, the frequency of run pairs that comprise game scores, including one-run games, is accounted for instead on a straightforward statistical basis which assumes that the number of runs scored by one team is *not* influenced by the number scored by the other. To show this, it has been necessary to take into account complications related to: (1) extra-inning contests, and (2) games won in the last half of the ninth inning, both of which inflate the number of one-run games. If extra-inning games are treated instead as nine-inning ties, the proportion of one-run games decreases by a third, from about 30 to 20 percent. The last half of the final extra inning produces extra one-run games because potential rallies are prematurely terminated by application of MLB rule 4.11(c), which dictates (with some game-winning home runs excepted) that "the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored." The same rule applies, of course, to games won in the last half of the ninth inning.

For both winners and losers of one-run games, and the fans and writers who enjoy talking and writing about them, the illusion seems to persist that the scores of such contests are tipped one way or the other by strategy and clutch play that somehow does not seem as important for other games. To the contrary, teams with winning records are not found to excel disproportionately in such games (if anything, they tend to do a little bit worse). Mythical views about the importance of one-run games tend to discount the important role of chance, and are probably reinforced by understandable second-guessing by losers who ruminate about how these squeaky-close games might have been won, and self-congratulatory analyses by those who perceive themselves as having been clever enough to win more than their share of them. To the extent that brilliant game tactics have validity in helping to explain why a team does well or badly (and it seems reasonable that they *should*), their influence applies equally to *all* of a team's games and not merely to those that happen to be won or lost by a single run.

Note:

1. A paper entitled "Are 'One-Run' Games of Special Importance?" was presented by the author at SABR 27 in Louisville, and is on deposit in the SABR Research Library (Len Levin, 282 Doyle Avenue, Providence, RI 02906-3355) from which it can be ordered for postage and handling of 72 cents. It extends the analysis to include ten additional seasons.

Acknowledgment:

After I had assembled the 1995 AL data "by hand," using the 1996 *Sporting News Baseball Guide*, I was fortunate to begin an e-mail conversation with John Jarvis, who was in a position to cull such information relatively easily from a computerized data base that he had acquired to implement a play-by-play simulator that he had developed. The source of the 1967 and 1983 season data was *Project Retrosheet* (David W. Smith, 6 Pencross Circle, Newark, DE 19702); for the 1986 and 1995 seasons the source was *The Baseball Workshop* (Gary Gillette, 619 Wadsworth Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19919.) Dr. Jarvis kindly supplied data for the seven major-league seasons discussed in this paper and also provided some of the calculations that I needed. It is reassuring that, except for two tiny errors that I had made, his data and calculations confirmed mine for the 1995 AL season. I am extremely grateful to John for this help, as well as for his comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

Dominating Pitchers and Fielders

Let's define our terms

Richard Kendall

There were two articles in BRJ recently about dominating pitchers. Each gave an interesting viewpoint on what makes for a dominating pitcher. In thinking the subject over I came to realize that "dominating" is a vague term, much like "most valuable" as in MVP. So I thought about what constituted a "dominating" pitcher. What I came up with also led me to consider who were the "best" or most "dominating" fielders.

My definition of "dominating" is standing out from and above one's contemporaries. For example, if a pitcher led the league in wins, winning percentage, strikeouts, baserunners per nine innings, opponents' batting average, and ERA, most people would agree that he dominated the other pitchers in his league that year. We're not talking about dominating opposing batters, as I believe the other articles were doing. I wanted to see which pitchers led their leagues most often in categories I consider most suggestive of dominance.

Therefore, in this study I counted the number of times a pitcher led his league in the categories of wins, winning percentage, strikeouts, baserunners (walks plus hits) per nine innings, opponents' batting average against, and earned run average, and divided that number by the number of total chances the pitcher had to lead in those categories. Since we're considering dominance, I counted only the years from the beginning of full-time status till the end of his full-time pitching. For example, Babe Adams became a full-time starter in 1910, when he pitched 245 innings. The year before he had only 130 innings, so he really wouldn't qualify for any leadership. His last year as a full-timer was 1923. He missed the 1917 season entirely, so he had 13 seasons to demonstrate his dominance. Six categories times 13 years equals 78 chances to lead the league. He led the league in these six categories a total of eight times. His percentage is therefore 10.3 percent—not very good, as you shall see. The following list consists of the pitchers who led their leagues in these most "dominating" categories 20 percent of the time or more. For comparison I've listed some other well-known pitchers, whose percentages were below 20 percent.

1.	Sandy Koufax	46	Steve Carlton	10
2.	Lefty Grove	34	Dizzy Dean	19
3.	Walter Johnson	31	Don Drysdale	7
4.	Dazzy Vance	29	Whitey Ford	12
5.	Bob Feller	26	Bob Gibson	7
6.	Pete Alexander	22	Dwight Gooden	12
	Christy Mathewson	22	Ron Guidry	15
8.	Tim Keefe	21.8	Catfish Hunter	12
9.	Roger Clemens	21.7	Fergie Jenkins	4
	Amos Rusie	21.7	Juan Marichal	9
11.	Nolan Ryan	20.5	Jim Palmer	8
12.	Greg Maddux	20.4	Robin Roberts	7
13.	Carl Hubbell	20.2	Tom Seaver	17
14.	Rube Waddell	20	Warren Spahn	19
15.	Lefty Gomez	19.7	Cy Young	16

Richard Kendall is a middle school social studies teacher in Buffalo, Wyoming. He also coaches middle school football and youth baseball, and collects baseball cards and rock and roll music.

It's interesting to note that all these pitchers are in the Hall of Fame, except Nolan Ryan, Greg Maddux, and Roger Clemens, who almost certainly will be. Of course, the careers of Maddux and Clemens are not over and they can either rise or fall in the rankings.

An interesting aspect of Koufax's dominance is that he did it in a time when pitchers ruled. It was the era of Koufax, Drysdale, Marichal, Gibson, McLain, Jenkins. He was the overwhelmingly dominant pitcher during the Decade of the Pitcher. The flip side to his high percentage is that because he retired on top of his game, his career did not suffer the decline phase most players experience in their last years.

One advantage of using this method to compare players is that it eliminates the problem of dealing with the different playing conditions of different eras. Instead of comparing a pitcher from the Dead Ball Era with one from a lively ball period like the '20s or '30s, you are establishing a pitcher's comparative standing with the players of the same era. The same goes for fielders. With this method you can compare the fielding prowess of players from eras when the equipment was rather primitive with players of today who use much superior equipment. The real question is, "Was he the best of his time with the glove he used?"

Fielders—In the matter of "dominating fielders" the same general method was used. What percentage of fielding stats did they lead in during their time as a regular player? For second basemen, third basemen, and shortstops the categories included were putouts, assists, double plays, fielding percentage, and fielding runs saved. For the other positions double plays were not included.

The top ten finishers at each position are listed. This gives a good variety, including players from several different eras at each position.

Catcher		First Base		Second Base	
1. Bill Killefer	44	1. Donn Clendenon	46	1. Bill Mazeroski	55
2. Johnny Edwards	42	2. Bill Terry	45	2. Bid McPhee	47
3. Jim Sundberg	40	3. Ed Konetchy	41	3. Fred Pfeffer	46
4. Del Crandall	39	4. Frank McCormick	39	4. Nap Lajoie	43
5. Muddy Ruel	39	5. George Kelly	38	5. Nellie Fox	40
6. Ray Schalk	38	6. Elbie Fletcher	36	Horace Clarke	40
7. Earl Battey	36	7. Fred Tenney	36	Oscar Melillo	40
8. Gary Carter	35	8. Chick Gandil	34	8. Jerry Priddy	37
9. Frank Snyder	35	9. Vic Power	34	9. George Cutshaw	33
10. Yogi Berra	34	10. Ernie Banks	31	10. Bobby Doerr	32
		Keith He'nandez	31	Billy Herman	32

Shortstop		Third Base		Outfield	
1. Lou Boudreau	60	1. Ned Williamson	58	1. Richie Ashburn	38
2. Eddie Miller	43	2. Ron Santo	42	2. Max Carey	34
3. Ron Hansen	40	3. Willie Kamm	37	3. Mike Griffin	27
George McBride	40	4. Heinie Groh	36	4. Johnny Callison	23
5. Mickey Doolan	38	5. Billy Nash	34	Orator Shaffer	23
6. Jack Glasscock	35	Willie Jones	34	6. Tris Speaker	22
Joe Sewell	35	Frank Baker	34	7. Dom DiMaggio	20
8. Hughie Jennings	34	8. Brooks Robinson	33	8. Vince DiMaggio	19
9. George Davis	30	Frank Malzone	33	9. Sam Chapman	15
10. Luis Aparicio	29	10. Ken Keltner	32	10. Ken Berry	14

Looking at the results of these rankings makes one wonder why it took so long for Nellie Fix to be elected to the Hall of Fame, and why preeminent glovemen like Bill Mazeroski and Ron Santo are still not in, since along with their golden gloves they were in no way weak sticks. But that's another story.

Heads Up!

In a game against the St. Louis Browns on June 30, 1926, Harry Heilmann of the Tigers was the runner at third when Marty McManus put him out with the hidden ball trick. The Tiger coach at third was none other than player-manager Ty Cobb. The double embarrassment was alleviated somewhat when the Tigers won, 4-1.

—Bob Davids

"50, count 'em, 50!"

A special club with some recent new members

Kenneth Matinale

In 1927 in the home clubhouse at Yankee Stadium Babe Ruth had supposedly shouted "Sixty, count 'em, sixty! Let's see some other son of a bitch match that!" It was 34 years before someone did.

However, 50 homers is an amazing milestone itself. The fifteen players to reach that height have done it only twenty-three times through 1997. Just because a player does not reach or even approach sixty does not mean that hitting 50 isn't deserving of special praise. Here are some other milestone totals: 150 RBI—38 times, most recently by Andres Galarraga in 1996; 150 Runs—43 times, most recently by Ted Williams in 1949; 230 hits—36 times, most recently by Kirby Puckett in 1988; .390 BA—48 times, most recently by Tony Gwynn in 1994.

Regarding the frequency of any season record, inflation must be taken into account. Here's one example. In 1996 50 players had 100 RBIs. Many observers, including some who should know better, were citing this as a record that proved that hitting standards had reached new heights. Wrong! The old record of 32 had been set in 1930. In 1930 there were only 16 teams. In 1996 there were 28 teams. That's 75 percent more teams. Fifty is not 75 percent more than 32. The hysteria had not taken inflation into account.

A table showing the exclusive 50 club is on the next page.

In 1919, playing for the Boston Red Sox, Babe Ruth set the home run record of 29. He was traded to the Yankees in the off-season and immediately became the first player to hit 30 homers. Then the first to hit 40. Then the first to hit 50. All in that same 1920 season. He set home run records four times in three different ball parks: Fenway Park Boston in 1919, the Polo Grounds in New York in 1920 and 1921, and in Yankee Stadium in 1927. Ruth held the record from 1919 until 1961, 42 years. Roger Maris has held it since then, 37 years. Ruth's final record of 60 stood for 34 years.

The Babe set the standard in many ways. He hit 50 the most times—four. He was the first player to hit 50 in consecutive seasons (Mark McGwire did it in 1996-97) and he did that twice. In 1920 he hit 50 in fewer than 500 at bats. McGwire in 1996 became the only other player to do that. George Foster took a whopping 615 at-bats.

This 50 club is a rich collection of special sluggers. Of the retired players, all are in the Hall of Fame except Maris and Foster. Brady Anderson, Jimmie Foxx, and Mickey Mantle are the only players to hit 50 and not win the league home run crown. The 58 hit by McGwire in 1997, the highest total since Hank Greenberg's 58 in 1938, and the fourth highest ever, were split between his two teams, Oakland (34) and St. Louis (24) in different leagues.

It looks as if the Yankees really like hitting 50. Not only have they done it the most times but they have won the pennant each and every time. Albert Belle's Indians and Ken Griffey, Jr.'s Mariners are the only other team to even win a division title. Ralph Kiner's

Kenneth Matinale has published The Baseball DataBase *and would like to do an intergalactic baseball database created and available to all through the Internet.*

The Fifty Home Run Club

Player	HR	Yr	Fin	Tm	Lg	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	RBI	BB	SO	BA
Maris	61	1961	1	NY	A	161	590	132	159	16	4	142	94	67	.269
Ruth	60	1927	1	NY	A	151	540	158	192	29	8	164	138	89	.356
Ruth	59	1921	1	NY	A	152	540	177	204	44	16	171	144	81	.378
Foxx	58	1932	2	Phi	A	154	585	151	213	33	9	169	116	96	.364
Greenberg	58	1938	4	Det	A	155	556	144	175	23	4	146	119	92	.315
McQwire	58	1977	-	O-SL	A/N	156	540	86	148	27	0	123	101	159	.274
Griffey	56	1977	1	Sea	A	157	608	125	185	34	3	147	76	121	.304
Wilson	56	1930	2	Chi	N	155	585	146	208	35	6	190	105	84	.356
Ruth	54	1920	3	NY	A	142	458	158	172	36	9	137	148	80	.376
Ruth	54	1928	1	NY	A	154	536	163	173	29	8	142	135	87	.323
Kiner	54	1949	6	Pit	N	152	549	116	170	19	5	127	117	61	.310
Mantle	54	1961	1	NY	A	153	514	132	163	16	6	128	126	112	.317
Mantle	52	1956	1	NY	A	150	533	132	188	22	5	130	112	99	.353
Mays	52	1965	2	SF	N	157	558	118	177	21	3	112	76	71	.317
Foster	52	1977	2	Cin	N	158	615	124	197	31	2	149	61	107	.320
McGwire	52	1996	3	Oak	A	130	423	104	132	21	0	113	116	112	.312
Kiner	51	1947	8	Pit	N	152	565	118	177	23	4	127	98	81	.313
Mize	51	1947	4	NY	N	154	586	137	177	26	2	138	74	42	.302
Mays	51	1955	3	NY	N	152	580	123	185	18	13	127	79	60	.319
Fielder	51	1990	3	Det	A	159	573	104	159	25	1	132	90	182	.277
Foxx	50	1938	2	Bos	A	149	565	139	197	33	9	175	119	76	.349
Belle	50	1995	1	Cle	A	143	546	121	173	52	1	126	73	80	.317
Anderson	50	1996	2	Bal	A	149	579	117	172	37	5	110	76	106	.297

Pirates of the late 1940s were clearly the worst club, with the '47 team being the only last-place team to boast of the accomplishment.

Ruth had the most runs: 177, Foxx the most hits: 213, Belle the most doubles: 52. He's the only player in history to reach 50 in both homers and doubles in the same season. The Babe had the most triples: 16, while McGwire is the only shutout. Wilson's 190 RBI is the record, but look at the totals for Foxx and Ruth. Anderson had the fewest RBIs, but he batted leadoff most of the time. McGwire in 1996 comes next but he had the lowest number of at-bats. Mays, who never led the league in RBIs, had a shockingly low total for 558 at-bats in 1965.

In walks it's Ruth, Ruth, Ruth, Ruth. Amazingly, of the 23 occurrences of 50 homers, only 13 resulted in 100 walks. Mays was in the seventies both times that he hit 50. Foster had 61 walks! With his high of 615 at-bats, George must have been hacking.

Perhaps the most shocking stat is strikeouts. Only seven times did a 50-homer guy strike out 100 times! And that includes our hacking friend, Mr. Foster. However, when Cecil Fielder did it, he really went all out. His 182 strikeouts exceeded the second highest total by 70! Big Daddy! Ruth's totals were all in the 80s and Mays had the second lowest—60. Maris struck out only 67 times the year he hit 61 homers. But our award goes to Johnny Mize. The Big Cat is the only player to have fewer strikeouts than his 50 homers and by a lot: 51 homers and 42 strikeouts! Wow!

Finally, let's look at their batting averages in those seasons. Only four times was the BA below .300 and Anderson just missed at .297. That's really something. Six times players were over .350, with Ruth in the .370s twice.

Jimmie Foxx (1932) and Mickey Mantle (1956) are the only ones to win the triple crown. They actually had quads by also leading in runs. More on that later.

Roger Maris's accomplishment of breaking the immortal Babe Ruth's record should not be underestimated. The pressure that Roger faced from both the fans and the media was enormous, which is why I do not think that his record will be broken. Many players have faded in September. Of the seventeen players to hit 30 homers by the All Star break, only Maris, Anderson, and Griffey went on to hit 50. The only mitigating circumstances for Maris are expansion, Yankee Stadium, and Roger's teammate, Mickey Mantle.

1961 was the first year of expansion, the American League going from eight teams to ten. The National League followed in 1962. Five of the top six AL leaders in home runs, all except Killebrew who hit 46, set personal home run highs in 1961: Maris (61), Mantle (54), Gentile (46), Colavito (45) and Cash (41). However, the 1991 *Elias Baseball Analyst* had a special section on the 1961 Yankees and concluded "overwhelmingly that Maris did not exploit lesser pitchers."

The short right field porch in Yankee Stadium was supposed to be an advantage to lefthanded hitters like Maris and Ruth. Maris hit 31 homers on the road in 1961.

However, The Mick was a huge help to Roger. They are the only teammates to hit 50 and combined for the most homers by two teammates. Elias reluctantly concludes "It's doubtful Maris could have achieved such season-long success" (without Mantle hitting

behind him). Although Roger had a career high in walks, none was intentional. But when it came to crunch time, Mantle was out of the lineup with injuries and Roger hit his final homers without the benefit of having Mickey on deck. In 1960 Maris batted behind Mantle most of the season. In his first 355 at-bats, Roger hit 35 home runs and was leading the league by eight. He had a shot at 60 in 1960 but suffered a rib injury and missed several weeks.

Roger Maris is the only player to hit his 50th home run in August. Roger entered September with 51. In 1960 and 1961 he hit 100 home runs. Only Ruth (four times) Foxx, Kiner, McGwire, and Griffey ever did that in consecutive seasons. Albert Belle came close, hitting 98 in 1995 and 1996. Of the 45 times that it occurred, Maris and Mantle, are the only 50-club members to homer in all parks in their league—ten.

Not counting McGwire who changed leagues during 1997, of the twenty-two 50-homer seasons, fifteen were by American Leaguers. Seven were by Yankees, three were by Giants, two each were by As, Tigers, and Pirates, one each by a Cub, a Red Sox, a Red, an Indian, an Oriole, and a Mariner. Two were by a switch hitter: Mickey Mantle both times. Eight were by lefthanders: Maris, Ruth (4), Mize, Anderson, and Griffey. Twelve were by righthanders: Foxx (2), Greenberg, Wilson, Kiner (2), Mays (2), McGwire (2), Foster, Fielder, and Belle.

Of the multiple achievers, Ruth and McGwire are the only ones to do it in consecutive years. Belle just missed: 50 in 1995 and 48 in 1996. And Griffey just missed: 49 in 1996 and 56 in 1997. Kiner did it two out of three years. Mays had the biggest spread. Say hey, ten years! Multiple occurrences in the same year: 1938, 1961, and 1996 in the AL; 1947 in the NL, and 1997 with McGwire splitting leagues. It has never been done in both leagues in the same year. There were no 50-homer seasons between 1938 and 1947.

Other than Ruth's two individual achievements, the only other times that 50 were hit in consecutive years were: Mays (1955) and Mantle (1956); Belle (1995) and McGwire and Anderson (both in 1996), and McGwire and Griffey (both in 1997)—the only time it was done in three consecutive years.

The modern MVP award was first awarded in 1931, so neither Ruth nor Wilson were eligible. 50 club MVPs: Foxx (both times), Mantle (1956), Maris, Foster, and Griffey

Four players were only 24 when they did it. Mays was the youngest, being the only one whose birthday was before the season's end—May 6. He and the other three—Foxx, Kiner and Mantle—all did it again. The Babe was next youngest at 25. They were the only players to hit 50 more than once until McGwire did it at 33 and 34. Kiner was finished hitting 50 at 26.

Four first-timers (Mize, McGwire, Anderson and Wilson) were over 30. Only McGwire did it again. Mize, at 34, was the oldest. Mays was four months younger when he did it the second time after his ten-year hiatus. Next came McGwire and Ruth.

By decade: 1920s—4 (all Ruth); 1930s—4; 1940s—3; 1950s—2; 1960s—3; 1970s—1; 1980s—0; 1990s—6. Before getting too excited about the 1990s remember my earlier admonition about inflation. To merely equal the record of the '20s and '30s, the '90s would need one more 50-homer season in the final two years of the decade.

An unusual look—The table on the next page shows some unusual data. First, let's define the terms. Ratio is AB divided by HR. For instance, in 1927 it took Ruth, on average, exactly nine at bats to hit a homer. The lower the Ratio the better. L_AB and L_HR are the league totals in those years. L_Rat is L_AB divided by L_HR. The higher the L_Rat the bette,r because it means that the player accomplished his feat by going against the trend that year. Dif_Rat is L_Rat minus Ratio, i.e., the difference between the individual's ratio and the league's. The higher the Dif_Rat the better. The column "Lead" shows the difference between the individual and the next closest player.

The table is sorted in descending order by Dif_Rat. Ruth's numbers continue to astonish. He takes the top four spots while our newest members are at the bottom. Ruth hit his homers when there were not a lot of homers being hit. In his first 50-homer season, the entire American League hit only 369 homers. In 1996 the Baltimore Orioles set the new team record for a season with 257. Two other AL teams also broke the old record. In 1997 the Seattle Mariners broke the Orioles record with 264. Even allowing for eight more games and the DH, that's still an amazing contrast.

This approach seems to make more sense than simply going gaga over an individual's ratio without putting it into context. While we were all impressed by Mark McGwire's 1996 Ratio, we need to see how much he was going against the tide. Compare the achievements of McGwire in 1996 to Ruth in 1920. Which is more impressive? I think Ruth's. Cecil Fielder is the only player since Ralph Kiner in 1949 to buck the trend and climb as high as twelfth.

Prev_High is that player's previous high in homers prior to the season in which he hit 50. Sub_High is his high in subsequent seasons. Prev_Dif is the difference between HR and Prev_High. Sub_Dif is the difference between HR and Sub_High. This is more of a point of interest and I'm not sure that any merit should be attached to it.

Prev_High ranges from 60 for Ruth to 14 for Fielder. Fielder hit those 14 in 175 at bats in1987 and spent 1989 playing full-time in Japan. Not surprisingly, Cecil has the greatest Prev_Dif. Anderson, on the other hand, had been a regular for several seasons and was 32 years old when he finally became a slugging lead-off hitter. For a first timer, McGwire had the smallest Prev_Dif: only three.

Sub_High suggests that the 30-year-old Hack Wilson had pretty much run out of gas; he never again managed more than 23. The star-crossed record-holder, Maris, did it all in his first three seasons with the Yankees: 39, 61, 33. That's 133 home runs. Prior to joining the Yanks, Roger's high was only 19. Following those first three Yankee seasons, his high was 26 in 513 at bats. Sixteen times members of the 50 club went on to hit at least 40 homers. Wilson and Anderson had the greatest Sub_Dif. Next comes Maris. Wilson and Maris hold their league's season record for homers.

The Lead category is another example of Ruth's dominance. The first two times he hit 50, the Babe led by 35! In 1927, when he hit 60, his teammate Lou Gehrig closed the gap to 13. In 1928 the Babe showed that he wasn't slipping by doubling Gehrig's second-place total and leading by 27. Mickey Mantle, in his 1956 Triple Crown season, is the only other player to lead by as much as 20.

The bottom line, though, is that it takes something special to earn the right to exclaim: "50, count 'em, 50!"

Player	Age	Year	Lg	HR	AB	Ratio	L_HR	L_AB	L_Rat	Dif_Rat	Prv_High	Sub_High	Prev_Dif	Sub_Dif	Lead
Ruth	25	1920	A	54	458	8.48	369	41,979	113.76	105.28	29	60	25	6	35
Ruth	32	1927	A	60	540	9.00	439	42,117	95.94	86.94	59	54	1	-6	13
Ruth	26	1921	A	59	540	9.15	477	42,829	89.79	80.64	54	60	5	1	35
Ruth	33	1928	A	54	536	9.93	483	42,117	87.20	77.27	60	49	-6	-5	27
Foxx	24	1932	A	58	585	10.09	707	43,430	61.43	51.34	37	50	21	-8	17
Greenberg	27	1938	A	58	556	9.59	864	42,500	49.19	39.60	40	44	18	-14	8
Wilson	30	1930	N	56	585	10.45	892	43,693	48.98	38.54	39	23	17	-33	16
Foxx	30	1938	A	50	565	11.30	864	42,500	49.19	37.89	58	36	-8	-14	-8
Kiner	24	1947	N	51	565	11.08	886	42,434	47.89	36.82	23	54	28	3	
Mize	34	1947	N	51	586	11.49	886	42,434	47.89	36.40	43	40	8	-11	
Kiner	26	1949	N	54	549	10.17	935	42,711	45.68	35.51	51	47	3	-7	18
Fielder	27	1990	A	51	573	11.24	1,796	76,800	42.76	31.53	14	44	37	-7	12
Mays	34	1965	N	52	558	10.73	1,318	55,377	42.02	31.29	51	37	1	-15	13
Foster	28	1977	N	52	615	11.83	1,631	66,700	40.90	29.07	29	40	23	-12	11
Mantle	24	1956	A	52	533	10.25	1,075	42,007	39.08	28.83	37	54	15	2	20
Mantle	29	1961	A	54	514	9.52	1,534	54,904	35.79	26.27	52	35	2	-19	-7
Maris	27	1961	A	61	590	9.67	1,534	54,904	35.79	26.12	39	33	22	-28	7
McGwire	34	1997	A	58	540	9.31	2,477	78,235	31.58	22.27	52		6	4	
Mays	24	1955	N	51	580	11.37	1,263	41,773	33.07	21.70	41	52	10	1	10
Belle	29	1995	A	50	546	10.92	2,164	69,522	32.13	21.21	38	48	12	-2	2
Griffey	27	1997	A	56	608	10.86	2,477	78,235	31.58	20.72	49		7	-2	
McGwire	33	1996	A	52	423	8.13	2,742	79,085	28.84	20.71	49	58	3	6	
Anderson	32	1996	A	50	579	11.58	2,742	79,085	28.84	17.26	21	17	29	-33	13

Federal League Legacies

Its brief life had many affects on the game

Joseph M. Wayman

The failed Federal League, in its short-lived attempt to establish itself as the third major league (1914-1915), left an iteresting legacy.

1. The final settlement of the Federal League venture was the Supreme Court's ruling in 1922 that decreed baseball a sport, not a business subject to antitrust laws. Among other things, this allowed the continuation of the controversial reserve clause.

2. Earlier, a Federal judge in Chicago named Kenesaw Mountain Landis had aided established owners by delaying a 1915 FL verdict, and given them time to reach an out-of-court settlement (November 1915) with all the Federal League clubs except Baltimore. When the owners restructured baseball's leadership in 1920 after the Black Sox revelations, their friend Landis emerged as commissioner.

3. Robert Creamer noted that the Federal League was "directly responsible for the precipitous rise of [Babe] Ruth to the majors."[1] The International League Baltimore Orioles were being badly hurt at the box office by the well-supported Federal League Terrapins, and owner Jack Dunn was forced to sell Ruth in 1914. Without the pressures of the FL, Dunn certainly would have retained Ruth until he could have gotten more money for him—just as he did in the next decade with Lefty Grove. The Babe might not have made it to the majors until 1917 or 1918.

4. The Philadelphia Athletics entered the 1914 World Series with the Boston Braves as heavy favorites, but they were swept. Athletics manager Connie Mack blamed the outcome on the FL which "wrecked our team spirit and undermined us with their persistent offers. I knew Chief Bender and Eddie Plank had already jumped. We tore up two, and in some cases three, contracts with other discontented stars that season, trying to keep up with Federal demands. The wonder is that we won the pennant."[2]

5. Part of the Federal League settlement in 1915 allowed Charles Weeghman, owner of the FL Chicago Whales, to purchase the NL Chicago Cubs. Weeghman moved the Cubs over to his FL playground, Weeghman Park. Today we wax nostalgic about the old park, now known as Wrigley Field.

6. Recognizing Federal League records as major league splits the statistical community. Officially, they are accepte, and included in most works. But *The Sporting News Daguerreotypes* does not include Federal League figures in its player records. This was J. G. Taylor Spink's position (his father was tolerant of the FL). FL box scores were carried by the Associated Press in the newspapers of the time, which indicates that the league and its statistics were considered major league at the time.

7. Donald Honig sums up the Federal League's place in the overall history of the game: "it was to establish once and for all the unchallengeable position of the two big leagues."[3]

Joe Wayman is the publisher of Grandstand Baseball Annual. *He is a lifelong fan who won't quit following the game—past and present.*

Notes:

1. *Babe: The Legend Comes to Life*, 1974, by Robert W. Creamer, page 83.

2. *Baseball and the American Dream*, 1986, by Joseph Durso, page 125.

3. *Baseball America*, 1985, by Donald Honig, page 90.

Baseball Playoffs

The wild card impact

Jess S. Boronico

Professional Baseball: The land of upsets. Every year, fans debate the strengths and weaknesses of all playoff-bound teams, only to spend the winter months over the hot stove dreaming of what "might have been" if it hadn't been for that surprising turn of events. Recent memory brings a few such surprises to mind: the 1973 New York Mets defeating the unstoppable Big Red Machine, or the 1987 Minnesota Twins beating both the Detroit Tigers and the St. Louis Cardinals. Recent history has also seen its share of 100-game winners fall by the wayside. This dubious distinction has been claimed since 1974 by Los Angeles (1974), Philadelphia (1977), New York (1980 Yankees and 1988 Mets), St. Louis (1985), Oakland (1988 and 1990), and Atlanta (1993). In kindness, a pardon might be granted to others, such as the 1971 Oakland As, 1976 Philadelphia Phillies, and 1977 Kansas City Royals. These teams fell to opponents who also won at least 100 regular season games. Virtually by definition, upsets are exceptions to the rule, but this study suggests that in the current wild card playoff structure, upsets are the rule, rather than the exception.

As Chuck Tanner once noted, professional baseball teams all lose and win 40 games. It's what you do in the other 80 games that makes a difference. A baseball team is usually considered dominant if it wins close to 100 games, which translates into a winning percentage of 61 percent. If a team wins 105 games or more, a .650 winning percentage, it is almost always considered dominant. However, in hockey, football, and basketball, a .650 winning percentage is much more common and does not indicate such dominance.

Since the adage that "any team can win on a given day" is truer in baseball than in other sports, it makes sense that playoff upsets in baseball occur with some regularity.

Results from playoff seasons confirm this. For the twenty-five regular seasons from 1969 through 1993, the playoff team with the highest winning percentage has won the World Series only eight times, a mere 32 percent. This shouldn't really surprise us.

First consider one playoff series. Assume that team A, the team with the higher regular season winning percentage, is expected to beat its opponent 60 percent of the time. In a one-game series, we would expect A to advance to the next round this often, thus allowing a fair chance, 40 percent, for an upset. Longer series are usually played, which reduces the chance of an upset. For example, consider what would happen if we play a best-of-three series. If *W* is used to represent an outcome resulting in A winning, with *L* representing team A losing, then the outcomes *WW*, *LWW*, or *WLW* for this series result in A advancing. Assuming that the results of each game are independent of one another, the appropriate probabilities for each game can be multiplied in order to

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generate the chances, or probability, of any one of these playoff outcomes occurring. Summing these results then gives us the overall probability that A wins the series and advances. This result is illustrated below, where *Pr* stands for a probability calculation:

Pr(*WW*)	=	(.6)(.6)	=	.360
Pr(*LWW*)	=	(.4)(.6)(.6)	=	.144
Pr(*WLW*)	=	(.6)(.4)(.6)	=	.144
Sum			=	.648

The sum simply tells us that A has a 64.8 percent chance of winning this three-game series against an opponent that it is expected to beat 60 percent of the time. While additional increases in the length of the series will increase this probability further, this is the biggest single jump in the odds. A similar calculation for a best of five series is shown below:

Pr(*WWW*)	=	(.6)(.6)(.6)	=	.216
Pr(*LWWW*)	=	(.4)(.6)(.6)(.6)	=	.086
Pr(*WLWW*)	=	(.6)(.4)(.6)(.6)	=	.086
Pr(*WWLW*)	=	(.6)(.6)(.4)(.6)	=	.086
Pr(*WWLLW*)	=	(.6)(.6)(.4)(.4)(.6)	=	.035
Pr(*WLWLW*)	=	(.6)(.4)(.6)(.4)(.6)	=	.035
Pr(*LWWLW*)	=	(.4)(.6)(.6)(.4)(.6)	=	.035
Pr(*WLLWW*)	=	(.6)(.4)(.4)(.6)(.6)	=	.035
Pr(*LWLWW*)	=	(.4)(.6)(.4)(.6)(.6)	=	.035
Pr(*LLWWW*)	=	(.4)(.4)(.6)(.6)(.6)	=	.035

The sum of these figures equals .684, or equivalently, a 68.4 percent chance that A will win this best of five series, representing a modest 3.6 percent increase over a best-of-three series. Increasing the length of the series to a best-of-seven increases this probability again, but not as dramatically. The chances of winning a best-of-seven series turn out to be 71 percent, representing only a 2.6 percent increase relative to a best-of-five games series. In general, this pattern continues; that is, longer series tend to be more favorable to A, but the marginal impact of increasing the series length diminishes. Increasing the wild card series from five to seven games really does not have a dramatic impact on the outcome.

Figure 1, at the top of the facing page, generalizes these results, and illustrates the probability that A will win a single-game series, as well as a best-of-three-, five-, and seven-game series. The horizontal axis represents the percentage of time (p_1) that A will beat its opponent whenever they play a single game. The vertical axis represents the desired probability, namely, that A wins the given series. The different curves represent outcomes for series of different lengths.

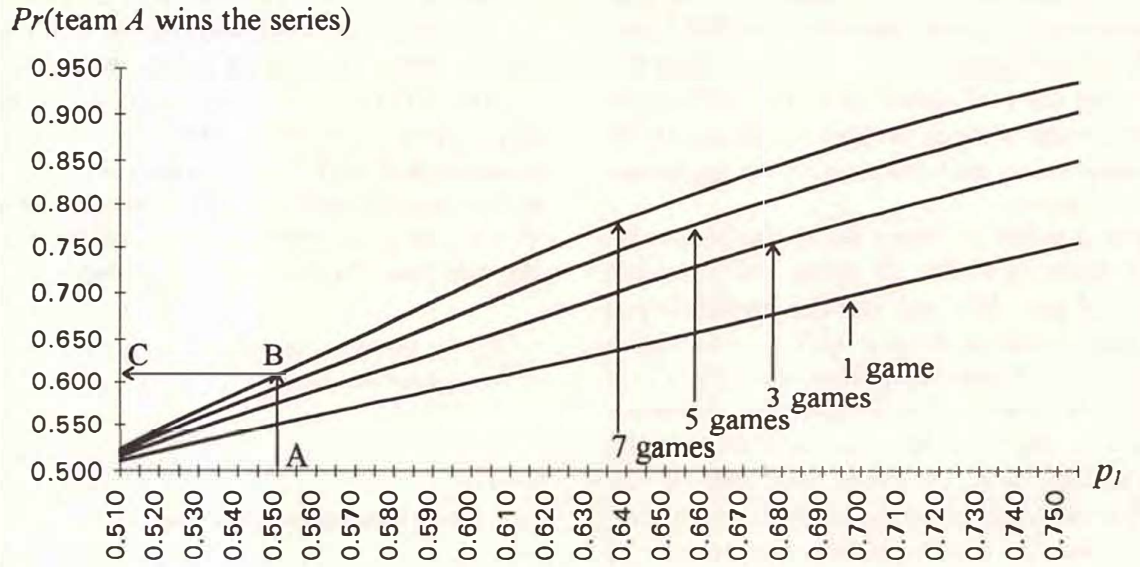
For example, assume that the Cleveland Indians are facing the Baltimore Orioles in the championship round, and that Cleveland (team A), having the best winning percentage, is expected to defeat Baltimore approximately 55 percent of the times they play. To find the probability that Cleveland will advance to the World Series, simply move along the horizontal axis to the .55 mark (point A), then up to the seven game series curve (point B) and then across to the vertical axis, where we find that the probability of Cleveland advancing to the World Series is approximately 61 percent.

These results can be extended to multiple series as well. This allows us to consider the impact of a two tier playoff format, where the team with the best winning percentage in either league must win two playoff series in order to advance to the World Series.

Figure 2, at the bottom of the facing page, illustrates the impact of the wildcard format on playoff participants. Consider the playoffs from the perspective of the team with the best winning percentage (Team A). The horizontal axis will again measure how often A will beat its first round opponent whenever they play a single game. The vertical axis measures the desired result, that is, the probability that A will reach the World Series. To get to the Series, A must also beat its second round opponent. The percentage frequency that this best team defeats its second round opponent whenever they play a single game is given by the respective curve.

To understand how to use the figure, consider a specific example. Assume that the Cleveland Indians face the Seattle Mariners in the preliminary round, with the winner facing the Baltimore Orioles in the championship round. Further, assume that the Cleveland Indians had the best record in the American League, and are expected to beat the Mariners 57 percent of the time, and the Orioles 55 percent of the time. We would like to determine the probability that Cleveland will win the best of five against the Mariners and the best of seven against the Orioles, thus advancing to the World Series. First move along the horizontal axis to the .57 mark (point A), then proceed vertically until you reach the 55 percent curve (point B). If we move to the left, we intersect the vertical axis at 37 percent (point C). Contrary to our intuition about "upsets," this relatively small percentage represents the probability that the Indians will

Figure 1: Single Series Results for Playoff Advancement

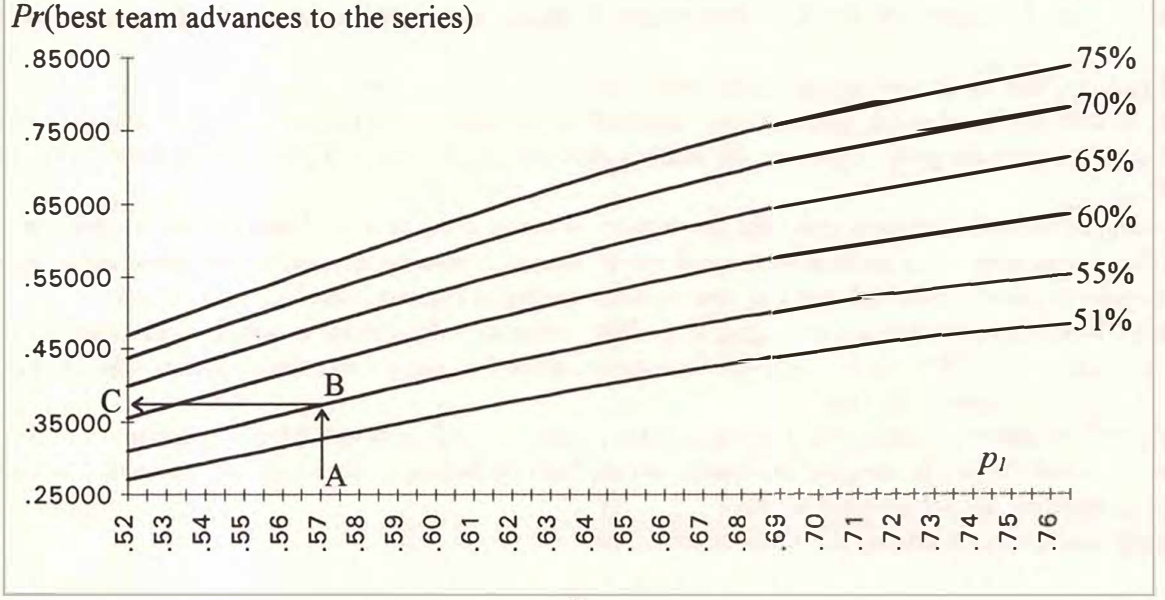


reach the World Series.

Recall Figure 1, where we assumed that the Indians only had to play a championship round against the Orioles. The chance that the Indians would advance to the World Series was 61 percent. Comparing percentages, we see that the introduction of a wildcard round has decreased the chances of the Indians making it to the Series by approximately 24 percent (from 61 percent to 37 percent). Naturally, a similar effect takes place in the National League. Clearly, the wildcard round has a significant impact on the chances of the best two teams meeting in the World Series.

In order to check whether this model accurately predicts what has happened in the past, consider all two-tiered playoff series from 1969 to 1993. The overall winning percentage for all favored teams (defined as that team with the higher winning percentage) in these playoff series was .629. The winning percentages for the weaker teams in the first round

Figure 2: Multiple Series Results for Playoff Advancement



(championship) and the second round (World Series) were .58 and .59, respectively. To determine how often the better team is expected to defeat its opponent, we can utilize the Log5 rule* introduced by Bill James in 1983. From our figures, we may determine from the Log5 rule that the probability that the better team wins any particular game in the first round equals .56, with a corresponding probability of .55 for winning a second round game.

Use Figure 2 as before: move across the horizontal axis to .56, move up to the .55 curve, and move left to the vertical axis. We find that the probability of the best team advancing through both rounds, which at that time would have made this team the world champion, is 36 percent. Not surprisingly, this result is very close to the 32 percent of the time that the best team actually won the World Series during this period. This empirical evidence supports the notion that this model accurately predicts the number of upsets that have occurred in professional baseball over the past 25 years. Moreover, it suggests that the number of upsets that has occurred is not unexpected.

Of course, there exist many factors that are not captured in this analysis. Injuries, hot pitchers, and pressure all play a role in determining the outcome of any playoff series. What this analysis does suggest, however, is that the introduction of a wildcard series will impact the outcome of the baseball playoffs, and that the upset has been and will continue to be more the rule than the exception in postseason play.

* The reader's knowledge of the Log5 rule is neither assumed nor required in order to proceed with the analysis

Reference:

James, Bill (1983) *The Bill James Baseball Abstract*, p. 12, New York: Ballantine Books.

Senators Failed to Beat Mudcat Jinx

Perhaps no professional sport has more superstitious players than baseball. But few teams have resorted to superstition as the Washington Senators did on July 2, 1960, in an effort to end Cleveland pitcher Jim "Mudcat" Grant's mastery over them. By July, the Senators' pitching jinx boasted a perfect 13-0 mark against the club (12-20 against the rest of the league).

The righthander whipped the Senators five times as a rookie in 1958, added six more wins in 1959, and had a 2-0 record early in the '60 season. He had been driven from the mound on several occasions but always managed to escape a loss.

The Nats hoped that the law of averages and some celestial intervention would provide the elixir to destroy the Grant hex. They distributed 2,000 rabbits feet and large lapel buttons labeled "Beat Mudcat" to fans. Grant got a button himself, and wore it before the game. However, he made a slight change by placing a piece of tape with "Win" written on it over "Beat."

Boy Scouts, attired as Indians and under the assumption they were doing their good turn for the day, performed a snake dance at the mound prior to the game to banish evil spirits. Grant, somewhat amused and warming up on the sidelines, shot an occasional glance at the kids romping around with writing live snakes clutched in their teeth.

Manager Cookie Lavagetto resisted the urging of the Nats' promotion department to start Don Lee against Grant, thus denying the game a Civil War theme. Instead, he tapped Camilo Pasqual in an effort to end two hexes: Grant's and Pascual's 1-11 record against the Indians.

But when all the theatrics ended, the Tribe routed the Senators, 12-2, getting 18 hits. In addition to a fine pitching performance, Grant heaped further embarrassment on the Nats by batting in three runs with a sacrifice fly and a two-run single to maintain his unblemished record.

Mercifully, the streak ended July 17 in Cleveland.

—Gary Hong

Measuring Luck in Batting Average

(Or could Mickey Mantle really have batted .300 lifetime?)

Dan Niemiec

Baseball is not only a game of skill, but luck as well. Just fifteen changes of a hit to an out for a player with 600 at-bats in a season due to a scoring change, batter fatigue, spectacular defensive play, etc. can turn a .300 hitter (180 hits) to a .275 hitter (165 hits)—that's less than one hit every 10 games! Likewise, adding just fifteen hits can make this .300 hitter into a .325 hitter (195 hits). This brings an interesting question to mind: Are some really high (or low) batting averages in a given season due to luck (or lack of luck) for the reasons outlined above? Specifically, would a .300 hitter in a season really hit .300 if we played the whole season again? What about a career? We will deal with these questions using statistics—specifically the binomial distribution and its normal distribution approximation. The normal approximation is used instead of calculating the binomial because the number of at-bats is large enough that this makes it easier to compute and find the results in a table. Look in an elementary statistics book for more information about this.

If we were to play a particular season over, there is no guarantee that a batter hitting .300 would hit .300 again. He might hit above or below, depending on a variety of circumstances. However, we do have some confidence that given an observed batting average, a player's "true" average would fall between a range of values around the observed average for a given season. Using this idea, we can use normal approximation to the binomial distribution in statistics to determine the probability of a player batting above or below a certain value, given his observed batting average for a season or a career.

To do this we define a hit as a "success" and an out as a "failure," with the odds of success equal to the observed batting average and odds of failure equal to one minus the odds of success. Once we do this, we can get the rest of the statistics needed for the binomial distribution and its normal approximation. Again, look in a statistics book. I will show the calculations for a specific example then show a couple tables with various results.

Example: Given a player who batted .300 in a season of 600 at-bats, what is the probability that he could have batted at least .325 due to chance?

Step 1: Calculate the number of hits. Here that would be .300 x 600 = 180.

Step 2: Calculate the variability of the batting average (in different terms: a measure of the fluctuation in batting average in a typical 600 at-bat season). This is the square root of the number of at-bats multiplied by the batting average multiplied by (1-the batting average). In our example, it is the square root of 600 x .300 x (1-.300) = 11.22

Step 3: Calculate the number of hits needed for the new batting average given the same number of at-bats. In this case it is .325 x 600 = 195 hits. In other words, the player would need 195 hits to have a .325 batting average in 600 at-bats.

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Step 4: Convert everything into a Z-score to look up the probability under the normal distribution table in a statistics book. To do this, subtract the observed hits number (180 in this case) from the needed hits number (195) and divide the result by the measure of the variation found in Step 2. In our case, the value is (195 - 180) / 11.22 = 1.34. Look 1.34 up in a statistics book under the normal table with Z = 1.34 to get a value of .0907.

(This subtraction would have to be reversed if we wanted to find the probability of less than .325. If the value is negative, find the positive number in the table, calculate the percentage value and subtract from one to find the Z-score.)

We learn that this player, who hit .300 in a season of 600 at-bats, actually had a 9.07 percent chance of batting .325 or above due to chance alone.

This technique yields some interesting results when it is applied to actual performances. For example, let's do the same set of calculations for Rogers Hornsby's .424 in 1924, when he had 536 at bats. What are the odds that he was actually very lucky, and that with a lot of bad luck he could have batted less than .400?

Step 1: Hits = 227

Step 2: Variability = square root of 536 x .424 x (1 - .424) = 11.44

Step 3: Number of hits needed for a .400 average in 536 at-bats is .400 x 536 = 215.

(This is a difference of only twelve hits over the 143 games he played that year, or less than one hit recategorized as an out every twelve games!)

Step 4: (215 - 227) / 11.44 = -1.05 = 1 minus the normal table result of 1.05 = .1354

Therefore, Hornsby had a 13.54 percent chance of batting under .400 in 1924. Put in other terms, if the same season were played repeatedly, about fourteen out of every 100 seasons Rogers would have batted less than .400. I'm sure he would not have been happy to know that!

We can do this kind of calculation for career numbers as well. As an example, Mickey Mantle always expressed disappointment that he finished with a career average under .300—falling .002 points short at .298. Let's calculate the odds that Mickey could have batted .300 due to luck alone.

Step 1: Career hits = 2,415

Step 2: Variability = square root of 8,102 x .298 x (1-.298) = 41.17

Step 3: Number of hits needed for a .300 career average on 8,102 at-bats is .2995 x 8,102 = 2,427. Notice again how small the difference is between actual and needed hits—only twelve. This is less than one per season. That's how close Mantle was to being a career .300 hitter.

Step 4: (2,427 - 2,415) / 41.17 = 0.2915 for a normal table result of 0.3895

Therefore, Mantle had a 38.95 percent chance of batting .300 in his career. Or as stated before, if Mickey somehow could play his career over 100 times, about 39 times he would have batted .300 or above due to luck alone, all other things remaining equal.

Following are two tables, one for career batting averages and one of seasonal batting averages that show what the chances are of various players hitting above or below a certain mark.

Table 1 - Career Averages

Player	Actual BA	Alternate BA	Chance of Occurring
Hank Aaron	.305	<.300	9.21%
Frank 'Home Run' Baker	.307	<.300	9.97%
Ginger Beaumont	.311	<.300	3.34%
Frank Chance	.296	>.300	32.06%
Roberto Clemente	.317	<.300	0.01%
Sam Crawford	.309	>.314	19.30%
	(needed .314 for 3,000 hits)		
Jim Kaat	.185	>.200	10.05%
Willie Mays	.302	<.300	30.71%
Minnie Minoso	.298	>.300	42.09%
Jim Rice	.298	>.300	39.19%
Frank Robinson	.294	>.300	11.89%
Willie Stargell	.282	>.300	0.02%
Rogers Hornsby	.358	>.366	6.10%
	(needed .3667 to pass Cobb)		
Joe Jackson	.356	>.366	5.33%
	(needed .3667 to pass Cobb)		

Table 2 - Seasonal Averages

Player	Actual BA	Alternate BA	Chance of Occurring
George Brett, 1980	.390	>.400	33.60%
Rod Carew, 1977	.388	>.400	27.88%
Roger Maris, 1961	.269	>.300	5.02%
Joe Medwick, 1937	.374	>.400	9.60%
Babe Ruth, 1923	.393	>.400	37.56%
Ted Williams, 1941	.406	<.400	39.37%

Roberto Clemente's is an interesting line. According to these calculations, he had virtually no chance of hitting below .300 lifetime. This is primarily due to

two factors. First, the confidence level of the test has a direct relationship to the number of at-bats. As they increase, so does our confidence that the observed batting average really does reflect a player's true average for that time period. Had Roberto's number of at-bats been cut by 90 percent, his odds of batting less than .300 would have increased to 11.95 percent.

Second, as the distance between the observed and alternate batting averages decreases, the odds of the alternate batting average occurring increase (and vice versa). If Roberto had batted .307 in his career instead of .317, his odds of hitting less than .300 would have increased to 5.79 percent. Whereas if he had batted .327 in his career, his odds would have decreased to 0.000001 percent.

Thirteen Men In

How the banned players would have performed

David Shiner

In 1920, the eight men known to posterity as the "Black Sox" were banned from organized baseball for life. In the same period, several other players were publicly expelled, informally blackballed, or "convinced" to retire. In each case, the result was the same: the player never again appeared on a major league field.

Fans have periodically speculated on how the exiled players might have performed had their careers continued normally. In order to give such speculation a rational basis, I will be utilizing the so-called "Brock2 Method," devised by Bill James in the mid-1980's. In certain cases I will augment this method with others.

The Brock2 method is based on the empirically verifiable premise that, in general, a position player's longevity is directly correlated with the number of runs he creates. If a first baseman creates more runs per game than the league average, according to the Brock2 system he keeps his job. Once his production declines to below that level he is on the road out of the majors. A catcher or middle infielder does not need to create as many runs, but he too needs to keep his offensive production above a certain level (something akin to the "Mendoza line") or he too will soon be gone.

My projections are based on the assumptions of the system that James created. Since these assumptions are not relevant to pitchers, I considered only position players. Two additional adjustments: I modified the runs created formula to take into account the home park in which the player played, and I adjusted the projected totals to reflect the substantial increase in offensive production that took place in the early 1920s.

The banned players can be divided into three groups:

1. The Hal Chase group. Chase was an inveterate game-fixer, and in his later years he involved others who were subsequently caught and banished from baseball. These included Lee Magee, a teammate of Chase's with the Reds in 1918, and Heinie Zimmerman, a teammate with the Giants in 1919. All three men were finished in organized baseball after 1919.

2. The Black Sox and company. Of the seven White Sox who conspired to throw the 1919 World Series, two were pitchers and therefore do not figure in this study. The other five were Happy Felsch, Chick Gandil, Joe Jackson, Fred McMullin, and Swede Risberg. Their teammate, Buck Weaver, was banned for "guilty knowledge." Joe Gedeon, second baseman of the St. Louis Browns, also was banned for guilty knowledge.

3. Miscellaneous cases. Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis came to the commissioners' office with a mandate to clean up organized baseball, and his bans were not limited to the Black Sox. Gene Paulette of the Phillies was banned for offering to throw games while

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he was with the Cardinals in 1919. Benny Kauff was ruled ineligible in early 1921 because of alleged criminal activities. Jimmy O'Connell was banned in 1924 for offering an opponent money to throw a game.

The Chase group—*Hal Chase* was selected as the greatest first baseman of all time by Connie Mack, Babe Ruth, Walter Johnson, Nap Lajoie, and Bill Klem. But besides being an outstanding ballplayer he was also a crook, and his reputation as a great player has not stood the test of time.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	1919	7417	980	2158	322	124	57	942	.291
Projected	2425	9150	1293	2707	422	155	86	1163	.296

Chase was 36 at the end of the 1919 season, which has led commentators to assume that his major league career was nearly finished regardless of his enforced retirement after that season. The Brock2 system sees it differently, giving him three additional years as a regular and two more as a part-timer. Even at age 36 he was still producing runs at well above the National League average, and his considerable fielding skills were still largely intact. Not many major leaguers played beyond age 40 in those days, but Brock2 envisions Chase as one of the select few.

Lee Magee was a journeyman who played every position other than pitcher and catcher during his major league career. He had a fine year at second base for the Reds in 1918 after which he, like Chase, was dispatched elsewhere, perhaps due to the suspicion that he was involved in Chase's shenanigans. The Cubs released him at the end of the 1919 season, which cost him the final year on his contract. The outraged Magee tried to retaliate by blowing the lid off the Chase situation, which baseball had been trying to handle without publicity until that time. This in turn led to the discovery that Magee had bet against his own team in 1919, and he was summarily banned from organized baseball.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	1015	3741	467	1031	133	54	12	277	.276
Projected	1270	4591	578	1287	178	68	14	360	.280

Magee was 30 in 1919. Granting him a small position bonus for playing several positions for the Cubs, he projects as a player who would have played fairly regularly in 1920 and then been a part-timer for two or three more years. Given his age, his mediocre 1919 season (.270 with a .346 slugging percentage, mostly in Wrigley Field), and his release by an average ball club, it seems unlikely that he would have done better than that.

Heinie Zimmerman had been a big star, first with Frank Chance's Cubs and then with John McGraw's Giants. Originally a middle infielder, he became a third baseman, and was one of the best at his position during the 'teens. McGraw suspended Zimmerman late in the 1919 season, then apparently persuaded him to retire. It later turned out that he and Chase had tried to convince several other players to help them fix games, and he was banned for life.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	1456	5304	695	1566	275	105	58	796	.295
Projected	1999	7130	975	2153	378	134	77	998	.302

Zimmerman turned 33 early in 1920. He had missed about thirty games in each of the previous two seasons, and it would be natural to assume that he was quickly approaching the end of his career in any case. The system disagrees, giving him three more years as a regular and another 150 or so more games as a part-timer after that. He was probably still the third-best third baseman in the National League in 1919, behind only Rogers Hornsby (who would move to second the following year) and Heinie Groh, and the projection reflects that.

In the absence of Zimmerman, McGraw was forced to give the veteran Larry Doyle a final shot at second base and play his crack youngster, Frankie Frisch, at third. Doyle, who was older than Zimmerman and had not been an everyday player since 1917, no longer had the defensive skills to play second, and McGraw's team finished second to the Dodgers. If Zimmerman had been clean he would likely have continued at third base with Frisch at second, and that combination might have meant a pennant for the Giants.

The Black Sox Group—*Happy Felsch* had a reputation as a fine defensive center fielder. The statistics corroborate this, and he still shares several defensive records. He had played six seasons as a regular by 1920, when he was still only 28. Brock2 believes that his career was cut short by more than half:

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	749	2812	385	825	135	64	38	446	.293
Projected	1603	5939	715	1815	374	125	128	861	.306

As a player, Felsch was reasonably comparable to

the fine Giants outfielder, George Burns. By the time he reached age 28, two years earlier than Felsch, Burns had also spent six seasons as a major league regular. At that time he had a lifetime average of .287, six points lower than Felsch. Felsch had more power. Burns was the better on-base man. After age 28, Burns spent five more years as a regular and two as a semi-regular before retiring. Brock2 projects an almost identical "future" for Felsch.

Chick Gandil was the leader of the players who plotted to throw the 1919 World Series. He was regarded as a good clutch hitter and a fine defensive first baseman. He was 32 by the end of the 1919 season, after which he refused to return to the White Sox for reasons that did not become clear until the Black Sox scandal broke in late 1920.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	1147	4245	449	1176	173	78	11	556	.277
Projected	1331	4891	523	1371	209	86	13	617	.280

According to this projection, Gandil was close to the end of the line. He had barely exceeded the league norm for runs created per game in both 1918 and 1919, and that only by virtue of adjustments for Comiskey Park, which favored pitching over hitting. His fielding statistics were mediocre, although defensive statistics for first basemen are suspect. The projection has him losing his regular job after 1920 and out of the majors soon afterward.

Joe Gedeon, a close friend of White Sox shortstop Swede Risberg, was told in advance about the World Series fix and may have been involved in the planning. It is possible that playing in St. Louis put him in a good position for this, as several gamblers who played a role in the Black Sox scandal resided there.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	584	2109	259	515	82	19	2	171	.244
Projected	836	3105	420	775	141	26	3	260	.250

Gedeon was only 26 in 1920 and had already been a major league regular for about five years. Nevertheless, the system does not envision him holding a fulltime job for much longer. His offensive totals for each of his seasons before 1920 placed him near the bottom of American League regulars. In his final year he created about 4-1/2 runs per game, but given park adjustments for hitters' paradise Sportsman's Park he still barely exceeded the acceptable minimum for second basemen. His defensive statistics were very poor. In 1920 he handled 5.3 chances per game; every other regular American League second baseman handled between 5.7 and 6.6. There is little reason to think that Gedeon's career would have outstripped the Brock2 projection.

Gedeon's departure forced the Browns to start the 1921 season with 21-year-old Marty McManus at second base. McManus struggled for much of his rookie season, but he soon became a fine ballplayer and remained one for fifteen years. Even if Gedeon had evaded Landis' edict, it is likely that McManus would soon have taken his job.

Joe Jackson was widely regarded as one of the great hitters of his time.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	1330	4981	873	1772	307	168	54	785	.356
Projected	2748	10006	1553	3685	814	278	156	1474	.368

Shoeless Joe created more than ten runs per game in 1920, when the American League average was well under half that. This was normal for him; his runs-created totals were better than twice the league norms for most of his years as a regular. Brock2 projects that he would have played regularly until age 39 and finished up with two more years as a part-timer, retiring about the time he turned 42—just like Ty Cobb.

The projection that Jackson's career batting average would have topped Cobb's and everyone else's seems surprising. Most of the projections cited in this article give higher final batting averages because of the substantial boost in offense in the major leagues after 1920, but would Jackson's increase really have been as great as suggested here?

To look at this issue in another way I conducted a small side study, examining the records of all Hall of Fame position players who were born within two years of Jackson—that is, between July, 1887, and July, 1891. There are six such players, five of them outfielders. Chronologically, they are Harry Hooper, Tris Speaker, Zack Wheat, Casey Stengel (selected for his achievements as a manager), Max Carey, and Dave Bancroft. Here are their overall batting averages, first through 1920 and then for their careers as a whole:

Player	Birth Date	Career BA 1920	Career BA Final	% Increase
Hooper	August, 1887	.2722	.2807	3.1
Speaker	April, 1888	.3417	.3443	0.8
Wheat	May, 1888	.3023	.3167	4.8
Stengel	July, 1889	.2757	.2843	3.1
Carey	January, 1890	.2706	.2846	5.2
Bancroft	April, 1991	.2583	.2790	8.0

Jackson finished his career with a batting average of .3558. The projection has him raising that average to .3683, a 3.5 percent jump. This is in line with the increases of his celebrated contemporaries. (We should mention, however, that Ty Cobb and Eddie Collins, who were a few months too old to be included in this study, saw their career batting averages change by -0.9 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively, after 1920.) The data suggests that Shoeless Joe Jackson might well have challenged Ty Cobb for the highest career batting average in major league history.

Fred McMullin was a utility infielder with the White Sox for five years. He was originally not part of the Series-throwing scheme, but overheard teammates discussing it and insisted on being included.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	304	914	120	234	21	9	1	90	.256
Projected	338	1004	138	258	25	11	1	93	.257

McMullen had been a productive player before 1920, when he slumped badly. Given that he turned 29 shortly after the end of the season and that his playing time had been declining steadily, Brock2 sees his career as nearly over after that.

Swede Risberg, White Sox shortstop, was reputedly Chick Gandil's main confederate in orchestrating the Black Sox scandal. He was, in the words of Joe Jackson, "a hard guy" whom Shoeless Joe believed might try to kill him after his confession.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	476	1619	196	394	72	27	6	175	.243
Projected	861	2968	374	748	149	49	20	317	.252

Risberg was only 25 during his final major league season, and had essentially been the Sox regular shortstop for four years by then. He was always under the league norm for runs created per game, and his slight rise in this category in 1920 was more than offset by the greater rise of the American League as a whole. This still left him above the minimum acceptable offensive production for a shortstop, but Brock2 predicts that this would not have lasted long.

Risberg had a reputation as a good clutch hitter, which the statistical methods developed by Pete Palmer and rendered in *Total Baseball* corroborate. He was also reputedly a pretty good fielder, good enough to move Buck Weaver to third base. The statistics do not support his reputation here. Risberg had the worst fielding percentage among regular American League shortstops as a rookie in 1917, and he was still at the bottom of the pack in his final season. His range factors were always last in the league until 1920, when he improved to about the league average. On an overall statistical basis, he was never among the top half of AL shortstops.

Risberg's career is similar to that of Gedeon, but one year later (Gedeon was a year older). If we add a typical season to the Swede's record, we would have an excellent match for Gedeon's actual career totals. Brock2 figures Risberg for a few more home runs than Gedeon. Otherwise, it sees their projected careers as similar to their real-life ones.

Buck Weaver is considered by many the tragic hero of the era. Not a participant in the World Series fix, he nevertheless knew about it. This made him one of probably dozens of players who were aware of game-fixing scandals during the 'teens but did not participate in them. But Buck picked the wrong time to know and not tell, and he was banned along with the rest.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	1254	4810	625	1310	199	69	21	421	.272
Projected	1636	6221	824	1709	270	87	29	571	.275

This projection is at first glance surprising. Weaver had perhaps his best year in 1920, setting or tying personal highs in games played, at bats, runs, hits, doubles, RBIs, and batting average. He was a nine-year regular who did not turn 30 until a few weeks before the scandal broke. Nevertheless, Brock2 sees his career taking a sharp downturn after that.

By 1920 Weaver was generally regarded as the top third baseman in the American League. His opposite number in the 1919 World Series, Heinie Groh, was considered tops in the NL. Groh's totals through 1920 and for his career as a whole are given below:

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
1920	1145	4132	619	1218	207	70	17	363	.295
Career	1676	6074	920	1774	308	87	26	566	.292

These figures are strikingly similar to Weaver's actual and projected totals. Groh was almost a year older than Weaver, but had better defensive statistics and drew many more walks, so the comparison seems reasonably fair.

I ran another projection that assumed a more modest decline in Weaver's 1921 season than that predicted by Brock2, leaving all other factors constant. This projection gave Buck approximately an additional 200 games and 250 hits. It still shows him

losing his regular job at age 33, as Groh did, and falling short of 2,000 hits.

While we will never know, it seems likely that Buck Weaver had peaked by 1920. Had his career continued uninterrupted he might have given way to young Willie Kamm around 1923, hanging on for several years as a part-timer and backup.

The Miscellaneous Group—*Benny Kauff* made sports headlines in 1914-1915, when he starred in the Federal League. He hit .370 in his first year, ran wild on the bases and played a terrific center field, all of which earned him a reputation as the "Ty Cobb of the Federal League." He then went to the Giants, with whom he played for five years. Problems of various sorts occasionally led to his absence from the lineup, with George Burns moving to center. After the 1920 season he was acquitted of an auto-theft charge. Landis, who disagreed with the decision, declared Kauff ineligible to return to organized baseball on the grounds that his continued participation would "burden patrons of the game with grave apprehension as to its integrity."

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	859	3094	521	961	169	57	49	454	311
Projected	1623	5379	954	1707	389	86	109	749	.317

Brock2 regards Kauff as a player who would have been productive enough to play fairly regularly for five more seasons and then hang on for a while after that. Since he was only 30 in 1920 and his offensive and defensive talents were still intact, this is certainly possible. Intrestingly, the Giants won only one pennant during his five seasons with them and then won four in a row following his departure.

Jimmy O'Connell's story is in some ways similar to that of Benny Kauff. Like Kauff, he was a talented but erratic center fielder. He too starred in a lesser league (in his case, the Pacific Coast League) and then moved to the Giants, for whom he played until he was banned. In late 1924 O'Connell, acting on the authority of a Giants coach and perhaps several teammates, offered Heinie Sand of the Phillies $500 to throw a game. (This situation was explored thoroughly in an article in the 1982 *Baseball Research Journal*.) He was banned for life, the last major leaguer to suffer this penalty during the Landis era.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	139	356	66	96	13	4	8	54	.270
Projected	1602	4171	722	1109	153	38	98	497	.266

O'Connell was essentially a platoon regular in 1923, his first year in the majors, and turned in a solid but unspectacular rookie season. The following year, at age 23, he was in and out of McGraw's doghouse. He posted good numbers when in the lineup, hitting .317 with an on-base average of .388 and a slugging percentage of .432. Brock2 projects that his talents would have carried him past his problems and that he would have been a regular for the next decade or so.

Gene Paulette was connected with gamblers for at least part of his nearly three seasons in St. Louis. In 1919 he offered to throw games, in exchange for which he received a "loan" from gamblers that was never repaid. He was then traded to the Phillies, with whom he played regularly for the next season and a half. His shady dealings were discovered after the 1920 season, and he was banned for life.

	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
Actual	500	1780	160	478	66	19	2	165	.269
Projected	569	2065	191	558	77	21	2	191	.270

Paulette had not become a regular until he was 26. He would have been 30 at the beginning of the 1921 season. He was a mediocre defensive first baseman who was creating fewer runs per game than the National League average even though he was playing in the best hitter's park in the league, the Baker Bowl, for most of 1919 and all of 1920. According to Brock2, his expulsion did not shorten his career by much.

World Series Versus Career Batting

Do hitters hit as well in the fall?

Eugene E. Heaton, Jr., and Alan W. Heaton

Baseball books, journals, and other publications are full of statistics and anecdotes concerning batting performance, both current and historic. Lists abound of the players with the highest batting averages, most home runs, most runs batted in or scored (in either a career or a single season), and so on. Much of the same information has been compiled and published about World Series batting performances: year-by-year leaders, all-time leaders in hits, home runs, runs batted in, batting average, etc.

Oddly, however, very little has been done to compare batters' World Series performance with their career batting records. Occasionally, a player who has had a great regular season and then flops in the Series becomes notorious (e.g., Ted Williams in 1946 or Dave Winfield in 1981); or a player who has had a mediocre year but a great Series enjoys a brief fling with fame (e.g., Dusty Rhodes in 1954 or Brian Doyle in 1978). But over the long sweep of World Series contests, who have been the top performers, both in absolute terms and in comparison to their regular-season careers? And, in fact, how have World Series batters done as a group, compared with their non-Series efforts?

The answers to these questions would provide important information about World Series performance, and, more generally, about how major league hitters perform under pressure. There is, after all, no greater test of baseball skills than the World Series.

One possible impediment to meaningful comparisons between career and World Series batting performance is the lack of a good summary statistic for batting performance. There are plenty of possible individual measures: batting average; slugging average; home runs; number of hits in a series, and so on. None of these measures, however, provides a single *overall* gauge of hitting productivity.

The total production average (TPA), introduced and discussed in the 1995 *Baseball Research Journal*, provides a clear basis for such comparisons.

The TPA is simple to compute. Sum the total number of bases resulting from the batter's hits, add bases on balls, runs scored, and runs batted in (minus home runs, to avoid double-counting), and divide that sum by number of plate appearances (at-bats plus walks).

This article will focus on comparisons between position players' career and World Series batting records, based primarily on the TPA, but also including batting and slugging averages for those who prefer, or are more accustomed to, conventional measures. It will not only make overall comparisons, but will also identify the best World Series batting performers of all time.

The Research—We included all World Series from 1903 through 1989 (there was no Series in 1904), using the Eighth Edition of *The Baseball Encyclopedia*. Post-1989 career records of recent World Series performers are not included.

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We focused on position players who had one or more World Series at-bats. Pitchers and players who did not come to the plate are excluded. We also excluded the six position players of the 1919 Chicago "Black Sox" who were later banned from baseball for their roles in throwing that year's World Series: Happy Felsch, Chick Gandil, Joe Jackson, Fred McMullin, Swede Risberg, and Buck Weaver.

A total of 1,184 players had one or more plate appearances in the eighty-six World Series studied. Some of these players appeared at the plate but did not register an official World Series at-bat.

For reasons that will be discussed in more detail below, we broke these 1,184 players into four groups, in terms of number of World Series at-bats:

World Series AB	Number of Players	Percent of Total
0-9	417	35%
10-39	510	43%
40-79	188	6%
80+	69	6%

As you can see, over a third of all the position players who ever appeared in a World Series had fewer than ten at bats. Clearly, we are not looking at "regulars" in this group, even for players who appeared in only one four-game series. Because the batting statistics of this group would be extremely volatile, based on the small sample, we noted and counted the players but did not include their batting statistics in the analysis.

The next group is the 510 players with 10-39 at-bats. A sizable majority (66 percent) played in only one World Series, and nearly all the rest played in just two. To simplify the study of these players, we randomly selected every second one for analysis. Findings for this large a sample are unlikely to differ very much from an analysis of the total number, and the pattern we found for players with 10-39 at bats is similar to that for those who got to the plate more often.

The 188 players with 40-79 World Series at-bats played in an average of three World Series, with two-thirds (68 percent) playing in three or more.

The sixty-nine World Series batters who had 80 or more at bats are indeed an elite group. The typical (median) player took part in five Series, and the average (mean) number of Series in which these players competed was six.

Following are the results of the analysis.

Batting Average—How did the career and World Series batting averages of the three groups of players compare?

The results show a consistent and significant batting average decline in World Series competition for all three groups.

	10-39 AB	40-79 AB	80+ AB
Career BA	.268	.281	.284
World Series BA	.238	.254	.260
Percent decline	11%	10%	8%

Clearly, batters do not hit for as high an average in the World Series as in their career as a whole. We will discuss this phenomenon and its possible causes after presentation of comparable figures for these players' slugging and total production averages.

One clear finding of this analysis is that players who played in multiple World Series are better career hitters than those who had few World Series appearances. The difference between those with 10-39 at-bats and 40-79 is especially notable. These differences are mirrored in their Series performances.

Slugging Average—A similar and slightly more pronounced decline in slugging average is found among the three groups of players.

	10-39 AB	40-79 AB	80+ AB
Career SA	.386	.409	.439
World Series SA	.335	.366	.404
Percent decline	13%	11%	10%

The pattern of slippage found for slugging average generally follows that for batting average comparisons, except that the falloff of slugging in the World Series is slightly greater.

As with batting average, we see that the better sluggers are more likely to have had a large number of World Series at-bats. (Note that while there was only a tiny difference between the batting averages of players in the middle and the top group, the difference in slugging average is pronounced, although the two groups' World Series decline is similar.)

Total Production Average—Once again, we see significant World Series declines in batting as measured by the Total Production Average, which we feel is the single most comprehensive index of offensive performance. These declines are slightly greater than found for both batting and slugging averages. This is due in part to the more comprehensive nature of the TPA, and the greater range in possible TPA scores (generally from the mid-.400s up to around 1.000).

	10-39 AB	40-79 AB	80+ AB
Career TPA	.653	.692	.742
World Series TPA	.550	.596	.648
Percent decline	16%	14%	13%

A dropoff of 13 percent to 16 percent represents a major deterioration of batting production, one that obviously results in fewer runs being scored in a typical World Series game than in a regular season game (a point that is in itself a subject for further research).

Why the decline?—What are the likely factors behind this dramatic dropoff in batting performance between players' careers and their World Series performances? Some explanations appear relatively simple; others are more complex and speculative.

Your opponent is at least a very good team, probably with very good pitching. Batters are relatively unfamiliar with these pitchers from the other league, they are facing the best pitchers and pitching rotation that the opposing manager can bring to bear, and these good pitchers are certainly bearing down even more than usual. All of these factors argue for diminished World Series batting performances.

The best World Series batting performers—Which players over these 86 World Series compiled the best batting records? For this analysis, we focused on the 257 players with 40 or more World Series at-bats, so that the results would identify the players with a solid record of accomplishment in multiple World Series.

The twenty players with the highest World Series TPAs are listed below. They include players from the early days of the World Series, through baseball's "Golden Age," up to recent times. Most are familiar names. Perhaps the least well-known is Joe Harris, who played in the 1925 Series for the Washington Senators, and in the 1927 Series for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

It seems fitting that the top two World Series batters are Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth, with very similar scores. Ruth and Gehrig, in that order, also have the two highest career TPAs of all time, and along with Ted Williams, are the only players to have career TPAs of 1.000 or better.

Next on the list is former American League president Dr. Bobby Brown, who recorded the greatest improvement between career (.693) and World Series TPA (1.130). In seventeen World Series games, Brown batted .439 (including 3 for 6 as a pinch hitter), slugged .707, scored *and* batted in 9 runs, and had 5 doubles and 3 triples.

"Mr. October" Reggie Jackson is in fourth place, followed by yet another Yankee, Charlie Keller. And four other players, for a total of nine out of the top 20, achieved TPAs of 1.000 or more: Hank Greenberg, Pepper Martin, Al Simmons, and Dave Henderson.

Highest World Series TPAs

Lou Gehrig	1.159
Babe Ruth	1.136
Bobby Brown	1.130
Reggie Jackson	1.097
Charlie Keller	1.038
Hank Greenberg	1.020
Pepper Martin	1.017
Al Simmons	1.013
Dave Henderson	1.000
Dwight Evans	.947
Lou Brock	.946
Jimmie Foxx	.904
Earle Combs	.900
Carl Yastrzemski	.887
Duke Snider	.877
Frank Baker	.875
Willie Stargell	.869
Henry Aaron	.867
Billy Martin	.865
Joe Harris	.860

These twenty players competed in World Series in every one of the decades between 1904 and 1989. The 1920s and 1930s are most represented, with eight of the twenty having performed in those decades, but two to four of the twenty appeared in World Series in each of the other six decades. These twenty ballplayers thus represent "the best of the best" in terms of batting performance under pressure, over the long history of World Series baseball.

Hall of Famers (87 players with 10 or more at-bats.)

Career Batting Average:	.303
World Series Batting Average:	.282
Percent Decline:	7%
Career Slugging Average:	.471
World Series Slugging Average:	.430
Percent decline:	9%

68 players with 40 or more at-bats.

Career TPA:	798
World Series TPA:	696
Percent Decline:	14%

Ready for the New Asterisk War?

Is this the man who suggested its first use?

Gene Karst

One of these days, some major league slugger is going to break the home run records set by Babe Ruth and Roger Maris. Ruth hit 60 in 1927 and Maris 61 in 1961. When one or both of these marks is surpassed there is certain to be a revival of the asterisk war sparked by Ford Frick, then commissioner of baseball. He pointed out that Maris participated in a 162-game schedule while the Bambino smote his round-trippers in a 154-game season.

I was young and naive and it never occurred to me to use a birth-control pill. So I, at this late date, suppose I have to admit that I probably fathered the idea that eventually became famous—or more likely infamous—when the asterisk was trotted out to impugn the legitimacy of Roger's new record. All this because I wrote an innocent suggestion to a magazine publisher in the late 1920s or early 1930s, before Maris was born (1934).

If the asterisk had not been used for league-leading purposes Ford Frick undoubtedly would have used some other weapon to defend the Babe's honor. Frick, in his earlier days as a New York sports writer, knew and loved Ruth, and acted as his ghostwriter at times. Like fans everywhere, he considered Ruth a folklore legend, a demigod, no ordinary human. Maris, on the other hand, was relatively colorless. All he did was play baseball extremely well. Frick—and millions of others—never forgave Roger, or some years later Hank Aaron, for daring to break Babe Ruth's immortal records.

My innocent letter was written to F. C. Lane, publisher of the Baseball Magazine, a monthly national publication. Mr. Lane also published annually a small booklet entitled *Who's Who in Baseball*, 5 inches by 6-1/2, selling for 25 cents. It contained the statistical records of perhaps 200 major league players year by year. These figures included their minor league marks, games played, times at bat, runs, hits, fielding records, errors, pitchers' earned run averages, games won and lost, etc.

I never met Mr. Lane but I sold him about a dozen articles over the years, starting with one in October, 1928. Our correspondence was laconic, impersonal. I sent him articles. He published most of them and sent me modest checks. My first recompense was $10. Most of the other submissions earned me $15 apiece. One article brought me $20. Money had a different value then—especially for a guy just out of college during the Depression.

In January, 1931, I presented a plan for baseball publicity to Branch Rickey, then general manager of the St. Louis Cardinals. He liked the scheme and I became the first person hired as a publicity man for any major league team. Briefly, I offered radio stations

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Gene Karst has written numerous articles for SABR publications. The Sporting News, the Baltimore Sun, Liberty, the Christian Science Monitor, the Philadelphia Bulletin and other newspapers, not only on baseball but on other subjects. As a publicist, he was with the 1931-34 Cardinals, two years with the Cincinnati Reds, three with the Montreal Royals, and one season with the Hollywood Stars of the Pacific Coast League. He had 27 years in the United States Foreign Service with assignments in Manila, Paraguay, El Salvador, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, as well as heading the Latin American Division of the Voice of America during the early 1960s. He was the principal author of the book, Who's Who in Professional Baseball, *a series of over 1,000 biographical sketches of baseball players, officials and umpires. He now lives in retirement in St. Louis, age 91.*

and metropolitan and rural newspapers within a 300-mile area baseball material featuring the Cardinals. This resulted in our getting great quantities of space in numerous sports pages and lots of free time on the radio. The game was not so commercialized in those days. Players cooperated, making public appearances on the air and at community-sponsored luncheons and dinners, for free.

Sometime or other I got the idea that Mr. Lane's annual publication could be improved if he starred, or used an asterisk, to indicate which of all those statistics he was publishing were league-leaders. I didn't keep a copy of my letter, nor did he acknowledge my suggestion. All I know is that the 1933 edition of his booklet did use a few—a very few—asterisks. I don't think any asterisks had ever been used before in baseball statistics. Remember that there were very few, if any, other such publications.

The 1933 edition had Chuck Klein of the Phillies on the cover. And on page 32 Klein had asterisks after his league-leading run total, 152, his 226 hits, and his 20 stolen bases. Mr. Lane also awarded an asterisk to Jimmie Foxx for leading the American League with 151 runs scored. He also gave Bob Grove an asterisk for his 2.84 earned run average which topped the American League. These were all for 1932 performances. Lefty O'Doul got one for leading the National League in hitting.

There were no asterisks for Bill Terry's .401 batting average of 1930, nor for Ruth's 60 home runs in 1927. But there was an asterisk for Al Simmons leading the American League with 216 hits in 1932.

Who's Who in Baseball was slightly more generous with asterisks in the 1934 edition. Besides those listed in the 1933 edition there was one each for Ted Lyons and Dolf Luque.

So it went. But when Alan Roth edited the 1955 edition there were plenty of asterisks throughout the booklet. Ever since then record books, including those published by *The Sporting News*, have tried to put an asterisk after each figure which led the league in any year throughout a player's career.

Nowadays asterisks are a dime a dozen in baseball statistics. Look for a revival of the asterisk war any day now. As for myself, I'm sorry I wrote that letter to Mr. Lane more than a half century ago. Until now I don't think anybody knew who started the whole thing! My only excuse is that if I hadn't suggested the asterisk somebody else probably would have done so. Forgive me, Roger Maris and Hank Aaron.

Surprising Gus

I like to check Macmillan for players whose career stats total between 500 and 700 at-bats. Their "bottom line" then looks like a single season, sometimes with interesting results. Constantine Gregory "Gus" Niarhos was a serviceable backup backstop for four teams in a nine-year career from 1946 through 1955. He had only 691 at-bats in 315 games. He was a mediocre hitter (.252) with negligible power (one homer, .308 slugging average), but one of his stats jumps off the page: 153 walks. This walk total inflates his on-base percentage to .387, or better than Pete Rose's. It also accounts for a good a decent total of runs scored: 114. Gus also had an impressive batting eye, judging from his walk/strikeout ration of 52/15 and 47/9 in 1948 and 1951. He finished second to Ted Williams in this category both years.

—Cappy Gagnon

Great Clouts

Top home run performances in America's classic ballparks

Ray Miller

Has SABR's *Home Run Encyclopedia* whetted your appetite for more home-run action? Well, here's something else to sink your teeth into—one man's list of the top home run performances in our classic ball parks!

First, some definitions. By "classic ball parks", I have in mind the 13 concrete-and-steel major-league facilities that opened between 1909 and 1915, plus the Phillies' Baker Bowl (1895), and Yankee Stadium (1923)—in other words, the first generation of modern baseball stadia. "Home run performance" is obviously a broader term than "home run." Though it can denote a single hit, it can also signify four homers in a game, several homers over two games, or a World Series, or an entire season. It can refer to one player, two teammates, or an entire team.

Now, what makes for a "*top* home run performance?" In general, to make the list, the homers had to have made the difference in a crucial ball game, represented some significant personal or team milestone, or have been otherwise unique, and thus memorable. The first to make the cut were those homers that affected the outcome of a World Series, a play-off, or a pennant race. (No one needs to defend Bobby Thomson's or Bill Mazeroski's inclusion in any "greatest home runs" list!) Then come big All Star home runs. These are not nearly as important as those in the first category—the midsummer classic is, after all, nothing more than an exhibition game. But it can be just as noteworthy, and no less important in crafting a great player's legend.

Next, I sorted through multihomer games, selecting those that were momentous because of when or where they occurred. For example, I contend it was much harder for righty Jimmie Foxx to hit three home runs in Cleveland's League Park with its cavernous left field, than for Mike Schmidt to stroke four at Wrigley Field with the wind blowing out. There-fore, Foxx's performance makes the list. Schmidt's does not, although no one would say it wasn't remarkable.

Finally, there are personal and team milestones, including record-setting hits, and what we could call "physically memorable" home runs. This, of course, can mean pure length, and we need to heed other writers' caveats about glorifying tape-measure jobs. The ones included in this list, however, are still remembered today as testaments to the players who hit them, and the length of their prodigious flights are well-attested. But my term can also refer to those funky home runs made unique by the architecture of the park in question. Rogers Hornsby, for example, could have drilled a liner through a closed clubhouse window only at Baker Bowl in Philadelphia.

General comments—This list says as much about the original 16 MLB teams as it does about the parks they played in, and it tells us something about the nature of the game, as well. For example, lousy teams don't hit a lot of *important* home runs, even if they play in

Ray Miller lives in Bath, Maine, where he teaches, writes songs, and collects baseball caps. He hit just over the Mendoza Line this year for the Gardiner Orioles of the local Senior League.

a band box. The Phillies of the 1920s and '30s blasted a lot of round-trippers—and their pitching staff gave up a bunch, as well— but few are remembered because the games themselves didn't mean anything. Similarly, long stretches of ineptitude on the part of the Dodgers, Reds, and Tigers make it relatively difficult to find really big home-team homers for Ebbets and Crosley Fields, and Tiger Stadium, though all three parks were conducive to the long ball.

By the same token, the homers I chose for big parks tended to come from enemy bats, or in All Star games, even if the home club was relatively decent. Take Comiskey Park in Chicago. Because it was a "pitchers' park," the good White Sox clubs who won in it were built on pitching, speed, and high-average slashing. They didn't hit a lot of home runs, but their pitching staff didn't give up many, either.

The least controversial choices come from the classic stadia that are still in use today and especially venerated: Fenway Park, Wrigley Field, and Yankee Stadium. This, I think, reflects their place in baseball history, as well as that of their teams. The last-named is one of only two parks at which the home team hit all of the homers on the list, hardly surprising given the Yankees' long period of dominance. Curiously, the only other park to claim this distinction was Braves Field in Boston—odd, because for much of its service life Braves Field was huge, the wind usually blew in, and the club that played in it was one of the worst NL teams in the first half of the twentieth century.

Finally, it is a testament to Babe Ruth's importance in the development of the modern game that he appears on this list in no less than six different places, plus three more among the honorable mentions. In two cases he is with the Braves at the end of his career, 40 years old and out of shape.

The list—I tried to find the three most memorable home-run performances for each ballpark. In only one case, Baker Bowl, was this not possible (for reasons alluded to above), although I may have been stretching my own definition of "memorable" in a couple of instances. Here and there, I've included "honorable mentions"—homers that many of us remember today, but which weren't quite significant enough to make the main list. Several of these are "physically memorable" home runs—moon shots, or hits unique to the given setting.

The list is arranged alphabetically, according to the ball park's most familiar name. Although most of my readers are no doubt familiar with the particulars of each, their history and the details of their layout, I have included a few salient facts to put the performances in some context.

In the list, * denotes home runs hit by the visiting team, while + signifies an All Star game homer.

Baker Bowl, Phillies (1895-1938)

*1. Game 5, 1915 WS. Harry Hooper bounces two home runs into temporary seats in center to give the Red Sox the game and the Series.

*Honorable Mention. 1929. Rogers Hornsby of the Cubs drills a shot through a closed clubhouse window in straightaway center. This beetling, quasi-medieval structure dominated center field, and was one of the park's signatures.

Baker Bowl, aka Philadelphia National League Park, was the original bandbox. Although displaying fairly healthy dimensions in left and center (341' and 408', respectively), right field was a joke. The famous "tin wall" (actually, tin on brick) was about 279' away from home plate down the line, a miniscule 300' in the power alley. The Phillies and their opponents regularly scored in double digits here, and the Phils often dominated the league offensive stats. Even the last-place 1930 outfit managed to hit .315 as a team! The flip side to all this is that Baker Bowl statistics tend to be discounted. Indeed, it is well known that Chuck Klein had a hard time getting into the Hall of Fame because voters felt the park inflated his stats. Also for this reason (I'm sure), plus the fact that the Phillies were the NL's laughing stock from the late 'teens till the mid-'40s, the above are the only specific Baker Bowl home runs ever regularly mentioned in the literature.

Braves Field (1915-1952)

1. 9/26/48. Bob Elliot clinched the Braves' first pennant in 34 years with a three-run homer to right center vs. the Giants.

2. 9/30/33. Last game of the season. With Philadelphia leading, 1-0, Wally Berger lined a seventh-inning, pinch-hit grand slam into the left-field bleachers. Boston held the lead, and the win propelled them into fourth place for their highest finish in 14 years.

3. 4/16/35. Opening day. Babe Ruth made his return to Boston a memorable one by walloping a homer to right off Carl Hubbell.

Honorable Mention.

+Augie Galan helped win the 1936 All Star game with a home run off the right-field foul pole. (It was the NL's first All-Star victory in four tries.)

*On 5/28/25, nearly 10 years after Braves Field

opened, Frank Snyder of the Giants became the first man to hit a ball out of the park to left.

*Ralph Kiner remembers one of his long home runs of the 1940s clearing the scoreboard in left, sailing over the railroad tracks beyond, and landing on the bank of the Charles River. (*Baseball Digest*, Nov., 1990, p. 30).

Braves owner James Gaffney loved inside-the-park home runs, so he made sure Braves Field was built with 400' foul lines and a 550' corner in dead center. These gargantuan dimensions, plus the breeze blowing in constantly from the Charles River meant that the park was not ready for the new power game introduced in the 1920s. (No one even hit the left-field wall on the fly till 1921.) Throughout the 1930s and into the '40s, the club tinkered with the outfield configuration on an almost annual basis in an effort to cut the distances down. Home plate was moved around, bleacher sections and inner fences were installed, then removed. Nothing really seemed to help. Still, however, this is an impressive home run list for a pitcher's park owned by a traditionally weak team.

Comiskey Park, White Sox (1910-1991)

1. 10/1/59. Ted Kluszewski homered twice in the White Sox' first World Series game since 1919.

+2. 7/6/33. Babe Ruth smashed a home run in the first All Star game ever played.

+3. 7/6/83. On the 50th anniversary of that historic occasion, Fred Lynn of the Angels became the first All Star ever to hit a grand slam.

Honorable Mention.

*Jimmie Foxx and Greg Luzinski were among the few players who cleared the upper deck in left. (Only Foxx did it on the fly—6/16/36.)

*Foxx, *Hank Greenberg, and Dick Allen were among those who reached the distant center field seats.

*Babe Ruth cleared the right field roof on 8/16/27.

Chicago's famous South Side shrine was designed, in part, by a pitcher—Hall-of-Famer Ed Walsh—so it's no wonder the outfield dimensions were so generous. When the Sox were good (the 'teens, the '50s and '60s), they were built on pitching and speed—remember the "Go-Go White Sox?"—which cut down on both home and enemy home runs. When they were not so good, management would try to stimulate the offense by installing inner walls to make it easier to hit the ball out. This usually just benefited the opposition, as the Braves discovered in Boston, and countless other teams have found out since.

Crosley Field, Reds (1912-1970)

1. 1956. The Reds tied an NL record with 221 home runs, 128 of which were hit at Crosley Field. The only home team to hit more HRs in one of these classic ballparks was the Giants, who hit 131 at the Polo Grounds in 1947. Given the miniscule foul lines in the Giants' bathtub, the Reds achievement is noteworthy.

2. 6/24/70. Lee May and Johnnie Bench hit back-to-back home runs in the eighth to give the Reds a come-from-behind, 5-4 victory in the last game ever played at Crosley Field.

*3. 6/10/67. Houston's Jimmy Wynn stroked what many consider the longest Crosley homer ever, over the 58-foot scoreboard in left-center and into the expressway beyond.

Honorable Mention.

Ernie Lombardi purportedly once drove a ball over the left field wall and into a passing truck for a 30-mile homer.

*Pittsburgh's Waner brothers once bounced back-to-back freak home runs over the left field wall. (See the Gene Mack cartoon for Crosley Field.)

Crosley always looks small in the old photographs. In fact, its original dimensions were quite generous: 360' down the lines, 420' to dead center. Subsequent renovations cut them down considerably, to 328' in left, 342' in right, and less than 400' in center.

Ebbets Field, Dodgers (1913-1957)

*1. 10/1/50. Dick Sisler blasted a dramatic three-run home run on the last day of the regular season to win the game and clinch the Phillies' first pennant in 35 years.

2. 8/31/50. Gil Hodges hit four home runs and a single in a 19-3 rout of the Braves.

*3. 7/31/54. The Braves' Joe Adcock went Gil one base better, stroking four HRs and a double to set a record for total bases by a batter in a single game.

Honorable Mention.

*9/16/24. The Cards' Jim Bottomley ripped a grand slam and a two-run homer among six hits as he drove in 12 runs. This still stands as the ML record, though Mark Whiten of the Cardinals tied it in 1993.

Ebbets Field was a hitter's paradise, and no team has dominated the NL the way the Bums did in the '40s and '50s. So why is it so hard to find really memorable Dodger home-field home runs? Is it because they were so lousy in the '20s and '30s? Or because Jackie Robinson brought a more speed-oriented game to Brooklyn in 1947?

Fenway Park, Red Sox (1912-Present)

1. 10/22/75. Bells ring throughout New England as Carlton Fisk won "the greatest World Series game of all time" and forced a dramatic Game 7 vs. Cincinnati.

*2. 10/2/78. Bucky Dent's fly ball would have been caught short of the track in any other ball park, but it settled into the net over the Green Monster, and gave the Yankees a lead they never relinquished in their one-game playoff vs. Boston.

3. 9/28/60. Ted Williams homered to right center in the final at-bat of his career.

Honorable Mention.

6/9/46. Williams broke the straw hat of a gentleman sitting in the 37th row of the right field bleachers, 502' away from home plate. (This is the only individual hit commemorated at Fenway Park.)

10/22/75. Bernie Carbo set up Fisk with a dramatic three-run pinch homer that tied Game 6 in the 7th. Only a select few ever hit the ball all the way out of Fenway to the right of the center-field flag pole in the days before the giant electronic message board. Jim Rice was the last to do it, in 1975.

Fenway's odd dimensions are as well-known to baseball fans as any in the game. But, Bucky Dent notwithstanding, it is arguably harder to hit a homer to left there than down the line in right. That 37' wall turns many screaming, rising liners that would be HRs in more conventional stadia into singles. Meanwhile, lefthanded dead pull hitters can aim at the right field foul pole, at 302' the majors' shortest current home run distance.

Forbes Field, Pirates (1909-1971)

1. 10/13/60. Bill Mazeroski clinched an improbable Series victory over the Yankees with a leadoff homer in the bottom of the ninth in Game 7—arguably the most famous home run of all time.

*2. 5/25/35. Babe Ruth hit the final three HRs of his career. The last was a titanic shot, the first ever to clear the right field roof.

*3. 7/10/36. Chuck Klein showed once and for all that there was more to him than Baker Bowl's tin wall. He whacked four homers for the Phils, two onto that distant roof in right.

Measuring 460' at its deepest point and a daunting 365' down the left field line, Forbes Field was not built with the power hitter in mind. Still, the Bucs' traditional slashing offense flourished here, and it was always a park James Gaffney would have loved. If your center fielder missed a shoestring catch, it was inside-the-park time for even the slowest of runners.

Griffith Stadium, Senators (1911-1961)

*1. 4/17/53. Mickey Mantle hit the first famous tape-measure home run, a 565' rocket that glanced off an old scoreboard at the back of the left field bleachers and wound up in a back yard a block away.

*2. 10/7/33. Mel Ott won the World Series for the Giants with a long 10th-inning homer to center in Game 5.

3. 1945. Joe Kuhel hit an inside-the-park homer—the Senators' only home-field homer all year.

Honorable Mention.

Green Cathedrals reports that Josh Gibson cleared the left field bleachers twice for the Homestead Grays.

*Red Sox fans claim that Ted Williams hit the longest home run at Griffith Stadium, a 475' blast to right-center in 1960.

Washington's curious ball park, too, did not lend itself to home run heroics. Its left field line was over 400' long, and the furthest point in right-center nearly 460'. What is more, the left field corner was acute (the distances in the alley in left were actually shorter than down the line), and the center field wall had to jut around five duplexes and a big tree, forming a right angle in the playing field. (Babe Ruth, for one, once dropped a homer into that tree.)

League Park, Indians (1910-1946)

1. 10/10/20. Cleveland outfielder Elmer Smith hit the first grand slam in World Series competition (1st inning, 5th game, vs. the Dodgers).

*2. 7/10/32. Jimmie Foxx hit three homers (and got two other hits) in a wild, 18-inning, 18-17 A's win.

*3. 8/11/29. Babe Ruth became the first man to hit 500 home runs in the majors with a shot over the right field wall.

Probably the most obscure of the classic parks, the Indians' old home is not remembered for much of anything now. In its day, though, it served as the American League's answer to the Polo Grounds, a schizophrenic ballpark that could drive fielders (and pitchers and hitters, too, for that matter) absolutely crazy. It was only 290' down the line in right, but a stunning 375' down the left-field line, and a whopping 460' to its furthest point in left-center. This is why I give Foxx the number-two spot. For a righthanded hitter to stroke three homers at League Park is nothing short of amazing. Incidentally, people tend to forget Smith and his historic grand slam, because this was the same game in which Bill Wambs-ganss pulled off his unassisted triple play.

Polo Grounds, Giants (1911-57), Mets (1962-63)

1. 10/3/51. Bobby Thompson's "shot heard 'round the world" ranks with Fisk's and Mazeroski's among the top HRs in baseball history.

2. 9/29 & 30/54. Dusty Rhodes, a lightly regarded pinch hitter, smacked a homer in the 10th inning to give the underdog Giants an unexpected win in Game 1 of the Series against the vaunted Indians. The next day he hit another as New York took two at home on its way to a four-game sweep.

*3. 6/17/62. With the Mets occupying the old park, the Cubs' Lou Brock blasted a drive into the center field bleachers, half a time zone away. (Two Braves—Joe Adcock and Hank Aaron—were the only other people to reach these distant seats. The two Milwaukee sluggers were renowned for their slugging, but Lou was a basestealer and high-average hitter with middling power. Former Cubs say that this was the longest home run they ever saw. Brock himself claims he didn't know it was out until he sprinted around the bases and reached the dugout. When he saw the second-base umpire twirl his finger in the familiar home run sign, he assumed the ump was telling him that he'd have an inside-the-park homer if he hurried!)

Honorable Mention.

*Playing against the Yankees, Joe Jackson became the first player to homer over the right field roof

The Polo Grounds remains one of the game's storied stadia. Its bathtub shape was distinctive, its home run distances perverse—well under 300' down each line, but a daunting 480' to straightaway center. For all the just fame they received Thompson's and Rhodes's dingers may not have gone out anywhere else.

Shibe Park, Athletics (1909-52), Phils (1938-70)

1. 10/12 & 13/29. Mule Haas broke the Cubs' back with clutch homers in successive Series games. His three-run, inside-the-parker was the big blow in the A's devastating 10-run 7th inning in Game 4 which obliterated an 8-0 Chicago lead. His dramatic 9th-inning, two-run shot tied Game 5, and set the stage for the Series-winning hit three batters later.

2. 1911. A's third baseman Frank Baker clubbed 11 home runs to lead the AL during the regular season, then earned himself a nickname with two more in the World Series against the Giants (the first at Shibe). Home Run Baker became the first 20th-century player to win national fame for hitting homers, and can be seen as a precursor of Babe Ruth.

*3. 6/3/32. Yankee great Lou Gehrig became the first player in the 20th century to hit four home runs in a game.

Shibe Park was the first spectacular 20th-century baseball palace. To judge the effect it must of had on the sporting public when it opened in 1909, check out the famous 1929 aerial survey photo of North Philly found in Bruce Kuklick's book *To Everything a Season: Shibe Park and Urban Philadelphia*. In the foreground is Shibe Park, stately and serene with its columns and French Renaissance cupola, looking as solid and dignified as the Library of Congress. In the background, in the upper right hand corner, you can see Baker Bowl, indistinguishable from the surrounding warehouses and train sheds, looking like it could fit inside the A's park with plenty of room to spare. It's easy to forget that Baker Bowl was *the* modern "baseball palace" less than 15 years before!

Connie Mack's field was a near-perfect square, which means another center field prairie. (Indeed, the batting cage used to stand uncovered and in play in the farthest reaches, just as in Forbes Field.) Left field was spacious, too, before the double-decked bleacher section was added in the '20s (380' in 1921). Still, Shibe Park was a hitter's park. Bill James has speculated that it "inflated offenses by about 5 percent" (*Historical Abstract*, p. 427).

Sportsman's Park, Browns (1909-53), Cardinals (1920-66)

1. (Tie) 10/1/44 & *9/30/45. Sportsman's Park is the only park in which pennant-winning homers were hit in successive years: Chet Laab did in for the Browns in '44, Hank Greenberg for the Tigers in '45.

2. 5/2/54. Stan Musial had a doubleheader to remember, hitting five home runs vs. the Giants.

3. 10/10/31. Cards' outfielder George Watkins drove a two-run shot over the right-field pavillion, winning the deciding game of the World Series against the A's.

The site of a ballfield since at least 1866, the best-known incarnation of Sportsman's Park displayed a generous left field (351' at the line), a relatively short right field (310'), and a pasture in center. Like Shibe Park, which featured a similar layout, it was "hitter friendly" (see *Historical Abstract*, p. 347).

Tiger Stadium, 1912-Present

+1. 7/13/71. Six future Hall-of-Famers launched home runs in the All Star game. Reggie Jackson's is the most famous—a tracer off a light transformer on the right field roof—but at least three others (from the bats of Johnny Bench, Harmon Killebrew, and Roberto Clemente) might have been even longer.

(For the record, the other two were hit by Frank Robinson and Henry Aaron.)

2. 10/14/84. The Padres' Goose Gossage refused to walk Kirk Gibson in the eighth inning of a tight game with runners on second and third. The result? A rocket into the upper deck that ices the game and the Series for Detroit.

+3. 7/8/41. Ted Williams won the All-Star game for the AL with a ninth-inning homer off of Claude Passeau.

Honorable Mention.

*Williams, Gibson, *Dick Allen, and, of course, Cecil Fielder are on the short list of players who managed to hit the ball onto or over the second-deck bleacher roof.

This is another ball park cast in the mold discussed above—generous in left, short in right, wide-open in center. The overhanging upper deck in right is one of America's best-known and most inviting home run targets, but you're going to get no help at all in center and left-center.

Wrigley Field, Whales (Federal League, 1914-1915), Cubs (1916-Present)

1. 9/28/38. With the gathering darkness threatening a crucial game between the Cubs and the Pirates, Gabby Hartnett smashed his game-winning, 9th-inning "homer in the gloaming," propelling Chicago into first place over Pittsburgh.

*2. 10/1/32. Did he or didn't he? We'll never know for sure. But it's a lot of fun to believe that Babe Ruth called his shot in the fifth inning of Game 3 of the 1932 World Series.

3. 5/12/70. Ernie Banks, Chicago's beloved "Mister Cub," hit a rope into the left field bleachers for his 500th career home run.

Everybody's favorite ball yard and the quintessential hitter's park, Wrigley Field features the longest foul lines still to be found in the majors (both are over 350'), but these are more than compensated for by the tight power alleys and the 400' center field. Of much greater moment, however, is Lake Michigan a few blocks away, which can generate gale-force winds blowing out toward those ivy-covered walls.

Yankee Stadium, Yankees (1923-Present) [Rebuilt In 1974-75]

1. 10/1/61. Roger Maris hit # 61.

2. 10/18/77. Reggie Jackson smashed three home runs on three swings in Game 6 to clinch the Series vs. the Dodgers.

3. 9/30/27. Babe Ruth hit # 60.

Honorable Mention. Where do you start? Babe Ruth christened the Stadium on opening day in 1923 with a game-winning 3-run homer against the Red Sox; Mickey Mantle hit the roof facade in 1956 and 1963; Chris Chambliss won the 1976 pennant for the Yanks with a ninth-innning shot vs. the Royals in the playoffs; *George Brett finally paid back the favor in the1980 playoffs against Gossage.

You can talk all you want about "Death Valley" in left and center, but the fact remains that more big home runs have been hit at Yankee Stadium than anywhere else. Lefties, of course, have always loved hitting here, with that puny right field line (296' before the mid-'70s refurbishing, now 314'), but a right handed hitter who can make a line drive walk the left field line also has an inviting target (originally 301', currently 318').

Notes:

This article was the source of an oral presentation given at the New England SABR regional, Warwick, RI, 5/11/96. I, and my paper, benefited greatly from everyone's comments—thanks to all!

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Chet Hoff at 106

The last eyewitness to an era

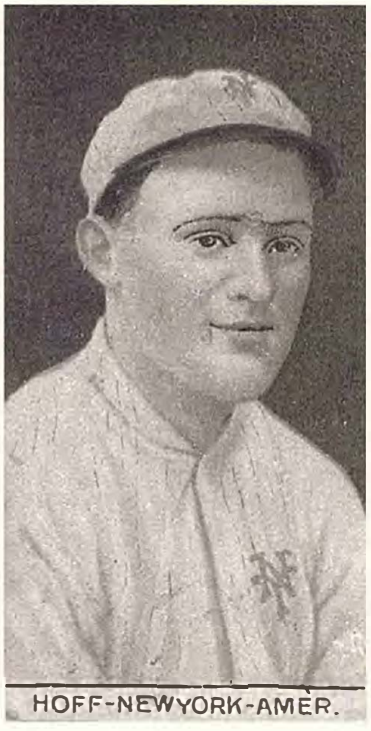
James A. Riley, John F. Pardon, James D. Smith III

Chester Cornelius Hoff was born in Sing Sing (now Ossining), New York on May 8, 1891. At that time, there were only 44 states in the Union, Benjamin Harrison was president, John L. Sullivan was the heavyweight boxing champion, the Boston Beaneaters won the National League pennant and the American League did not even exist.

Americans were still using the horse and buggy for conveyance. It would be another five years before Henry Ford made his first automobile, and a dozen years before the Wright brothers would wobble aloft at Kitty Hawk and remain airborne the length of a football field. Ninety years later, at the age of 102, Chet Hoff took his first trip in an airplane. And now he is a rarity—the last eyewitness to an era.

After all, how many men still living have struck out Ty Cobb, or played for the Yankees before they *were* the Yankees, or played against Babe Ruth before he *was* "The Babe"? How many have been managed by Branch Rickey, pitched to Jim Thorpe and Shoeless Joe Jackson, or were present at the dedication of both Ebbetts Field and Fenway Park?

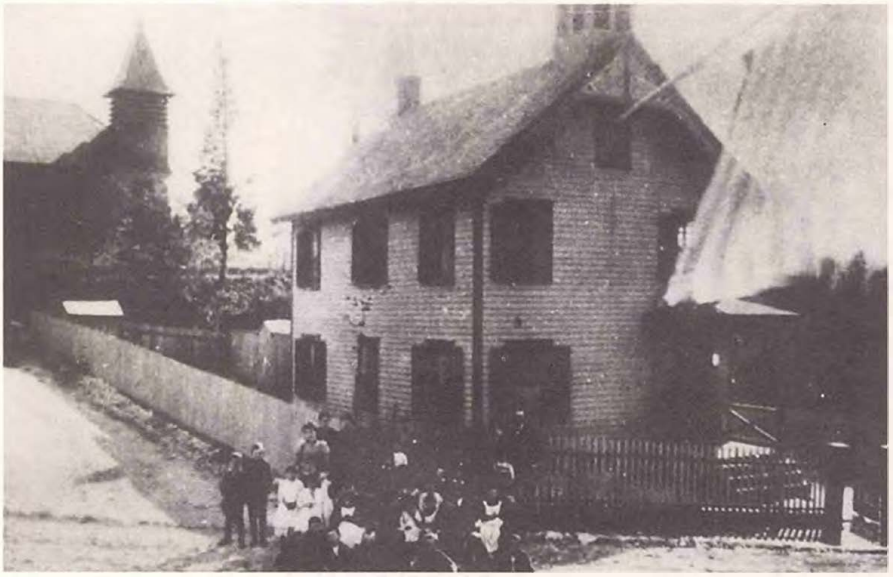
When he joined the American League's New York team in 1911, they were called the Highlanders, their uniforms had no pinstripes and there was no Yankee Stadium. No one sang "*Take me out to the ball game*" because, not only had the song not been written, but Cracker Jacks had not yet been invented. His workday world was populated by such legends as Connie Mack, Tris Speaker, Eddie Collins, Nap Lajoie, Hal Chase and Frank Chance.



Chet Hoff's 1912 T207 card. His New York temmate of that year, Paul Otis, also achieved his 100th birthday.

The old warhorse has become a celebrity in his waning years. At 106, not only is he the oldest *living* ex-major league ballplayer, but he holds the all-time record for longevity among ex-major leaguers. While his time in the big leagues may have been brief, he had a front row seat to baseball history and the story of his life is vintage Americana.

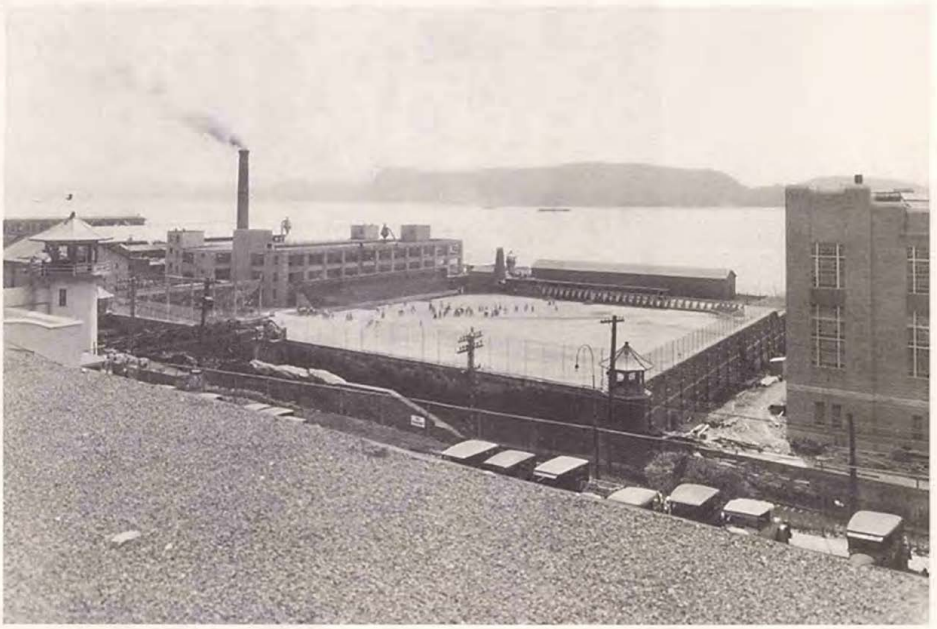
Jim Riley is the author of six books, including The Biographical Encyclopedia of the Negro Baseball Leagues *and* Nice Guys Finish First. *John Pardon, a former sportswriter and now retired from the Department of Veterans Affairs, is a charter member of SABR. As a youngster he lived in the Sparta section of Ossining. Jim Smith most recently contributed to a two-volume history of* The Pacific Coast League Padres: Lane Field. *He is pastor of Clairemont Emmanuel Baptist Church and adjunct professor at the University of San Diego and Bethel Theological Seminary–West*



Ossining Historical Society, courtesy of Roberta Arminio, director

Did Chet Hoff go to school here? This is a photo of the school in the Sparta section of Sing Sing, New York, where Hoff grew up, in 1895 or 1896. (Sing Sing was renamed Ossining around the turn of the century.) Hoff and family lived on Agate Avenue, a long block away. He would have been five years old at the time this photo was taken. Today, the building is a family residence, still standing at the corner of Spring and Fairview.

Chet starred for an Ossining semipro club after his professional career was over. His team sometimes played exhibition games against the inmates at Sing Sing Prison. Chet said he didn't mind going inside as long as they let him out when the game was over.



James A. Riley

James A. Riley

In 1912 the Yankees had their spring training camp in Bermuda, where Chet (second from the right in the middle row) posed with a group of his teammates. This picture was on the back of a postcard that Chet sent to his mother.

James A. Riley

Like most pitchers, Chet likes to talk about his hitting more than his pitching. Here Chet "hefts the lumber" as a semipro at Nelson Park in Ossining.

James D. Smith III

Chet's career was bicoastal. This is his 1917 E137 Zeenut PCL card.

James A. Riley

Chet poses with his daughters at his 100th birthday party. That morning he became a minor celebrity when he appeared on the Today Show *hosted by Joe Garagiola.*

Not Hungry Anymore?

The effect of winning arbitration on ballplayer performance

David Dumble

It is no secret that the fans of the mid-1990s are probably more cynical about baseball and baseball players than at any time since the 1919 "Black Sox" scandal. What with strikes (the labor kind), spitting incidents, income tax trials stemming from undeclared card-show earnings, free agents acting as hired guns, and so on, it is easy to find evidence that supports the proposition that baseball players are overpaid prima donnas who care only about their millions and nothing about the fans or the game itself.

One small piece of evidence supporting this viewpoint was the conclusion reached by Prof. Paul Sommers in 1993 that the performance level of a ballplayer who won in arbitration in the off-season declined significantly the following season. Sommers offered two possible explanations for this effect: aging and a loss of drive and ambition. Neither alternative seems persuasive. Since arbitration is generally available only to players in the third through sixth year of major league service, a significant number would not yet be at their peak, let alone fearful of declining skills.

As for the possibility of sloth on the part of arbitration winners, this also does not make much sense. Economists like to believe that people, including major league players, behave as if they were rational, and there is no rational reason for a ballplayer to become a slacker after winning arbitration. Ballplayers have relatively short careers, and the risk of injury means that a career could end at any time. Why would a ballplayer early in his career not try to make the most of his earning potential?

Further, after the season following arbitration a player will face either the possibility of another round of arbitration or free agency. Players winning in arbitration should seek to convince their employers not to go to arbitration again by earning their higher pay, or at least maximize their chances of winning at next year's arbitration. Players choosing arbitration after their sixth year of service would be facing the free agency market in the next year, and the rewards they could reap with a good season would be enormous. In either case, slacking off makes no sense.

As a general matter, an economic theory known as the "fair wage/effort hypothesis" states that workers who believe themselves to be well paid are more productive than those who believe they are underpaid. Since a ballplayer who wins in final-offer arbitration will be paid the wage he asked for, productivity should rise, not fall. As a matter of economic analysis, the decline in productivity by arbitration winners would appear to be a puzzle. Prof. Sommers did not come to a conclusion as to the cause, but he did conclude that there was a causal, not just correlational, relationship between winning in arbitration and having a less productive next season.

David Dumble has an M.S. degree in Applied Economics from the University of California, Santa Cruz. His Masters' thesis was on the research presented in this article. He also has a law degree from Columbia University and B.A.s in Government and Economics from California State University, Sacramento. He is Legislative Analyst for the Santa Clara County Department of Social Services.

However, there is a possible statistical explanation, grounded in the likelihood of a player choosing to enter arbitration and the probability of winning once arbitration is entered. It is known that there is a random element to performance on the ballfield; that is, player performance fluctuates from game to game and season to season for reasons that appear to be random. What would happen if ballplayers coming off unusually good seasons were more likely to enter arbitration, and were also more likely to be victorious in an arbitration hearing? Given the laws of statistical probability, the next season would likely see the ballplayer's performance "regress to the mean," that is decline to the ballplayer's typical level. The effect would be a measurable decline in performance after an arbitration victory.

Both assumptions behind the theory appear to be reasonable. A player and a club might be more likely to come to an impasse in their labor negotiations if the player had had an unusually good year; the player might insist on being paid commensurate with his last season's performance, while the club might focus more on his career statistics and treat the prior year as a fluke. Given that players in arbitration are all in the early part of their careers, an arbitrator might see the most recent year's performance as more indicative of a player's value than the first years of major league service. The problem is to test the two assumptions, both based on the decision-making of individuals, statistically, which is what I attempted to do.

I began by confirming Prof. Sommers' conclusion, that arbitration winners did indeed show a decline in performance the following year. Thanks to help from the Major League Baseball Players' Association, I obtained a list of players who had been eligible for arbitration from 1986 (following the 1985 season) through 1992 (following the 1991 season). To avoid comparing apples and oranges, I chose to focus solely on batters (since more ballplayers are batters than pitchers), and I measured performance using Thorn and Palmer's Linear Weights method. Data on performance was gathered from Thorn and Palmer's *Total Baseball*, 3rd edition. The results of measuring pre- and post-arbitration performance are in Table 1 (numbers in parentheses are standard deviations).

The data confirm Sommers' conclusion: the drop in productivity the year after winning arbitration is statistically significant at the 90 percent level. The apparent positive effects of losing arbitration are less significant. The table also appears to lend support to the idea that players having better years are more likely to engage in arbitration.

Table 1

	Winner	Loser	Non-arbitrator
avg. pre-arbitration performance	.957 (1.621)	.614 (1.980)	.282 (1.763)
avg. post-arbitration performance	.294 (1.226)	.814 (2.061)	.273 (1.790)
avg. difference in performance	-0.663 (1.749)	.200 (1.300)	-0.009 (1.785)

Let me discuss the simpler of the two assumptions first, namely the determination of what arbitrators look for in deciding arbitration cases. The Players' Basic Agreement says that the factors that arbitrators shall rely on in making their decisions include the player's productivity the previous year, the player's career productivity, and the player's contribution to the team's success. The first two I measured using Linear Weights, the last using the number of games the player's team won. I also computed several other variables, such as how far the prior year's performance deviated from the season before that, and how much it deviated from the player's career performance levels (although, as noted above, since all of the players in arbitration have less than six year's experience, each year's performance would tend to strongly influence their career levels). I also included data on the player's age.

I tried to construct a probit model using these factors that would explain the arbitrator's decision-making process. The best model that I could arrive at was one that consisted of the equation

$$D = a1 + a2PRODt + a3TEAMW + a4AGE + a5DEVt\text{-}1 + v$$

where D is the decision of the arbitrator (which equaled 1 if the player won and 0 if the team won), PRODt is productivity in the year before arbitration, TEAMW is the number of games the player's team won, AGE is the player's age at the time of arbitration (typically in February), and DEVt-1 is the difference between performance in the prior season and the season before that. The final factor is a random error term. The equation as a whole predicted 66.7 percent of the arbitrator's decision's correctly, although the only significant variable was the difference in performance, which was a positive number (.293) and statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Arbitrators appear to reward players who show unusual improvement over the season before. While not

precisely the answer I was looking for, this conclusion does supply some support for the proposition that a player having an atypically good year was more likely to win in arbitration.

I expected that testing the first assumption, that players having unusually good seasons were more likely to enter arbitration, would be the more difficult hypothesis to test. A great many factors could influence a player's decision, many of them either not reducible to numerical measures or impossible to find out about. What has been the player's relationship with team management during his career? How aggressive is his agent? How much of a gambler is the player? All of these less tangible factors could drive the decision to arbitrate instead of to settle more than the raw numbers measuring performance over the seasons.

This proved to be the case. All of the probit models tested predicted that virtually all of the players would choose settlement over arbitration. None could explain why a player would choose to arbitrate. In no model was deviation from the player's career average or deviation from the prior year's performance statistically significant. The factors that did tend to show up as statistically significant in various models were whether the player had arbitrated before (players who had arbitrated before were likely to arbitrate again), whether the player had an agent who tended to resort to arbitration (no surprise), and age (being older made a player more likely to arbitrate rather than settle).

However, failure to find statistical proof does not undermine the basic logic of the claim that a player's lack of performance in the season after winning arbitration is due more to random variations in performance rather than player sloth. At the least this analysis offers confirmation of Prof. Sommers' claim that the decline in performance is real and not just based on the anecdotal perceptions of disgruntled fans.

Despite occasional evidence to the contrary, baseball players are just as rational as ordinary human beings. (This may not be a compliment.) I believe that a player's failing to live up to expectations after winning in arbitration is due more to the biases that drive the decision to arbitrate in the first place, and by the way arbitrators are influenced by sudden increases in productivity. If this is correct, then perhaps arbitrators should look more toward the evidence of a player's career statistics and less at the prior year's performance, which is more likely to be a flash in the pan than a sign of true ability.

Overall, the use of final-offer arbitration appears to have been a positive influence in resolving labor disputes in baseball. If the influence arbitration outcomes appear to have on performance are correlational but not causational, then the arbitration process should not be blamed for the subsequent decrease in player productivity. However, if the baseball public is repeatedly exposed to instances of players winning big in arbitration then not producing the next season, the process may come into disrepute and add yet another nail in baseball's coffin. If additional research can determine the reason for the established reduction in post-winning arbitration performance, then perhaps some adjustment can be made to the process, in the best interest of baseball. Until then, the myth of the lazy ballplayer will continue to grow, to the detriment of the owners, the players, and the game itself.

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"One Player Away"

An analysis of midseason trades in the free agent era

John Sasman

It's an annual ritual. Every July and August contending teams keep the phone companies in business in a search of one or two veterans who can make a difference in September. The laggards, ready to call it a season, are willing to unload aging, high-priced talent for a few minor league prospects. Therefore, we have the "Proven-for-Prospect" trade. It's potentially the most rewarding, yet also the most risky trade in baseball.

In the first season of expanded playoffs, there was a flurry of these transactions. Nearly half the league made late season moves. The World Champion Braves acquired three veterans who would be free agents following the 1995 season (Mike Devereaux, Alejandro Pena, Luis Polonia). The Indians picked up Ken Hill, the Mariners Vince Coleman, the Reds Darren Lewis and Mike Portugal. Every team that made the playoffs traded for at least one veteran in 1995.

Such transactions raise several questions. For one, who comes out ahead in the short term and who comes out ahead in the long term? Are these transactions necessary to stay competitive in a pennant race? Are rent-a-players (those who can become free agents after the current season) becoming more popular?

Methodology—To answer those questions, I studied every "Proven-for Prospect" trade from 1976 to 1988. I wanted to evaluate every trade from the beginning of free agency, but cut off the study in 1988, as many principals involved in later trades were still active in 1996.

To isolate these specific trades, I established the following ground rules. Any trade occurring in the regular season of one of these years was eligible as long as:

1. One of the teams involved in the trade was a contender. I considered any team that finished within 15 games of first as a contender. Theoretically, most of these teams were probably closer than that in July or August when the trades took place. Certainly, however, this included some teams that were not really making "pennant push" moves. The effect of these trades on the study is certainly minimal.

2. The contending team acquired at least one veteran player (five years in the majors with three as a regular). In exchange, the contending team sent at least one prospect to the other team. A prospect was defined as a player with fewer than 200 games, 800 at-bats, or 80 games or 150 innings pitched.

3. While other players who were not veterans or prospects could be included in the trades, the contending team could not acquire any prospects and the other team could not acquire any veterans.

4. The contending team did not finish more than 10 games behind the other team.

After defining the type of trade (there were 88 over the 13-year span), I first tracked the individual perfor

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mance of each player. Rather than totaling games played or other statistics, I used Bill James' Approximate Value (AV) technique to evaluate the trades. While this is not an extremely accurate measuring tool, it is an easy and balanced way to compare individual player seasons.

For those unfamiliar with AV, every player's season is assigned a productivity value between 0 and 20+. A player's AV is based on various statistical accomplishments. Hitting .250 earns one point, .275 two points, etc. A season of 15 or more points is outstanding. (Jay Bell's season at 15 was the highest in the 1993 study.) Most regulars earn around 10. Solid bench players may receive a 5 or 6.

In order to evaluate the trades, I totaled each players AV until he was released, drafted, or lost as a free agent. If a player was traded, I continued to count his AV. I did not count the AV of the players he was traded for, as this would mix my evaluation with another trade.

The Results—I had surmised that the teams acquiring veterans almost always ended up on the short end of these deals. In fact, the contending teams "won" 55 of these trades. The veteran players totaled more AV than the prospects in 63 percent of the trades (There were two ties). If we count only single-season AV above 3 (since most seasons of this type are of marginal value anyway), the contenders winning percentage drops, but only slightly. The contenders still win 40 of the 67 "significant" trades (60 percent).

What's the reason for this? One is that many of the prospects never appear in the majors. Of the 149 prospects involved in these trades, 38 (a whopping 25 percent) never put on a major league uniform. The following table shows the attrition rates of both the veterans and the prospects. (The "neither" category tracks the performance for the seven players involved in these trades who could not be classified as either veterans or prospects.)

Active Major Leaguers

		Yr0	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7
Veterans	94	94	86	70	54	43	35	25	21
Prospects	150	79	77	77	70	63	55	46	46
Neither	7	7	7	4	4	3	3	2	1

As you can see, the veterans will most likely play in the majors for at least a few more years after the trade. On the other hand, many of the prospects never play in the majors. Once the marginal players are removed, however, the core of the prospects lasts much longer than the veterans.

While the contending teams will most likely win the Proven-for-Prospect trade, they normally post small victories. While the prospects they traded away may not pan out, the veterans they acquired may be on the verge of free agency or retirement. On the other hand, the lesser teams sometimes steal great players in these trades. Thus, while they lose the majority of the trades, they actually come out ahead overall. The following table shows individual wins for each trade and the overall AV.

	Veterans	Prospects
Trades	55 wins	31 wins
Significant Trades	40 wins	27 wins
AV	15.54	19.07
Significant AV	8.12	10.13

As you can see, while the veterans prove more valuable in 60 percent or more of the trades, the prospects account for 25 percent more overall production. These results indicate that while the Proven-for-Prospect trade is frequently a bust for the pretenders, it is a good deal for them overall.

The Teams—Of the players involved in the trades, thirty-two were acquired by teams that made the playoffs. Fifteen of those played in the World Series and seven played for the World Champions. In other words, slightly more than half the division, league, and World Series winners made Proven-for-Prospect trades.

It is almost impossible to determine if these trades made the difference for these teams, but it is easy to track team performance over several years. Thus, I compared team won-loss records for the year of the trade and the five years following the trade. Once all principles involved in the trade were no longer counting toward the trade, I stopped comparing team records. These were the results:

	Wins	Change in Wins				
	Yr0	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
Contenders	90.0	-4.9	+0.2	-0.7	-1.3	+0.5
Pretenders	74.1	+2.5	+1.6	+0.1	+1.3	+0.5

The teams acquiring the veterans dropped immediately and the teams acquiring the prospects improved immediately. This change in the next season is probably about what would be expected for any good or bad teams. After the first year, the decline of the one-time contenders is small, while the lesser teams make

slow progress toward .500. In fact, five years after these trades, when most of the veteran players are long gone, they are still a few games worse than the contenders.

Rent-a-Player—In 1986 there were only four Proven-for-Prospect trades. Only one of the veterans traded was eligible for free agency after the season. In 1987, tight pennant races spawned nineteen of these trades. Still, only five of the players involved were eligible for free agency after the season. In 1988, there were ten trades with three players who could test the free market following the season. In all, of these thirty-three trades, slightly more than 25 percent (nine players) were of the "rental" variety.

In 1995, of the twenty P-for-P trades, fourteen involved players eligible for free agency following the season. Only four re-signed with their new team. Two players, in fact, signed with the team they were traded from. Thus, teams can expect to sign their "rented" players fewer than a third of the time. Contenders making these trades are taking a huge gamble.

Conclusions—Though difficult ot measure the precise effects of trades on team performance, I believe we can conclude the following from the results of this study:

1. In the majority of P-for-P trades, the contending team comes out ahead.
2. About 25 percent of the prospects involved in these trades never play in the majors.
3. While these trades are most often a loss for the lesser teams, they often pay huge dividends.
4. Because the lesser teams are the benefactors of most of the lopsided trades, they are the overall winners of the P-for-P swap.
5. The won-loss record of the contenders drops in the years following these trades. That of the lesser teams increases. These changes, however, are probably too small to be a result solely of these trades.
6. The number of these trades will probably increase with expanded playoffs.
7. The trading of soon-to-be free agents is becoming more popular. Draft pick compensation may make these trades more favorable for the contenders.

Year-by-Year Results—Here, I have highlighted the significant or interesting trades from each of the study's years:

1976—There were only two trades. Neither mattered.

1977—The Tom Seaver trade was the blockbuster. While this trade is often cited as a steal for the Reds, I would contend the Mets came out ahead in the deal. In terms of AV, the four players acquired by the Mets accumulated 137 points to Seaver's 61. If we count significant AV, it's still a 63-42 advantage for the Mets. While none of the four players was nearly as good as Seaver, they combined for many solid seasons. Pat Zachry won 41 games for the Mets with an ERA under 4.00 before the Mets traded him to the Dodgers in 1983. Doug Flynn notched five seasons as the Mets starting second baseman. While a poor offensive player, he was a Gold Glover. Steve Henderson spent four years with the Mets, hit .300 once, had a little power and a little speed, and was valuable enough to acquire Dave Kingman in a one-for one trade before the 1981 season. Dan Norman was the only one of the prospects who did not pan out. He accumulated just over 300 at bats with the Mets in four seasons. While Seaver was still terrific, these four players combined for many years of good-not-great performances and were all used to acquire future talent.

1978—The Dodgers acquired Billy North and Joe Ferguson on their way to the World Series. North was hitting just .212 for Oakland before being acquired for Glenn Burke. He hit .234 and stole 27 bases as a Dodger regular before heading back to the bay area with the Giants in 1979. He was 1-16 in postseason play. Burke never really panned out. Ferguson was acquired from the Astros for Rafael Landestoy and Jeffrey Leonard. Ferguson strengthened the Dodger bench and had an outsanding year in 1979 with 20 homers in only 363 at-bats. Landestoy had a few mediocre seasons for the Astros, but Leonard proved the key acquisition in this trade. He spent most of his productive years with the Giants, but the Astros still come out ahead, 36-11 in terms of significant AV.

1979—The Pirates acquired Bill Madlock, Lenny Randle, and Dave Roberts from the Giants for Fred Breining, Al Holland, and Ed Whitson. Madlock hit .328 and stole 21 bases in 85 games for the Pirates. He hit .300 three more times for the Pirates before he was traded to the Dodgers. The three pitchers the Giants acquired all had at least two decent seasons in them. Overall, this trade was a tie, 53-53. The edge goes to the Pirates: they won the Series.

1980—Willie Montanez for Tony Phillips? Yikes! For some reason the Expos thought acquiring a 32-year old first baseman with a .329 OBA and a .353 slugging average would help them win the pennant. It didn't. He totaled 167 more at-bats in the majors after the trade. Phillips was traded by the Padres to the A's where he spent eight years before moving via free

agency to the Tigers. This was a 22-4 win for the prospects.

1981—Houston swapped pitcher Randy Niemann, outfielder Kevin Houston, and second baseman Johnny Ray for 32-year old Phil Garner. The Astros made the playoffs despite Garner's poor hitting. He spent five more years as a regular before being trades to the Dodgers. Ray was one of the better players on a crumbling Pirate team. He hit .300 three times in his 10-year career. Another steal for the lesser team, 65-26.

1982—Several interesting trades, including the worst fleecing in the study. The Angels, looking for middle infield help to back up Tim Foli and Bobby Grich, got Rob Wilfong and reliever Doug Corbett from the pathetic Twins. They won the division before losing to the Brewers in the ALCS. Unfortunately, they traded Tom Brunansky in the deal. Brunansky hit 163 homers playing in Minnesota. Wilfong had 107 RBI in five years as the Angels utilityman. Corbett notched 22 saves in his five years with the Halos. The lesser team wins this trade 86-6.

The Angels also picked up 39-year old Tommy John for 23-year old Dennis Rasmussen. John won 24 more games for the Angels before being released. Rasmussen was swapped numerous times before going the free-agent route after nine years in the majors. Advantage to the lesser team, 24-13.

While the Angels acquired John, the Brewers landed Don Sutton. He cost them pitchers Frank DiPino and Mike Madden, as well as a young Kevin Bass. Sutton went 4-1 for the Brew Crew and was a key player in their stretch drive. He posted five more solid seasons (two with the Brewers) before becoming a free agent. Bass proved the key for the Astros, with four seasons as a regular. Overall, the Astros win this trade 47-37.

1983—The big swap this year was between the Dodgers and the Rangers. Rick Honeycutt went 2-3 with a 5.77 ERA for the Dodgers after leading the AL with a 2.42 ERA. Dave Stewart went 5-2 with a 2.14 ERA for the Rangers. Honeycutt turned in several middle-of-the-road seasons after 1983. Unfortunately for Texas, Stewart exploded and was waived by the Phillies before turning in his 20-win seasons. The contenders win this trade, 31-7.

1984—Who won the Rick Sutcliffe trade? Everyone knows what he did for the Cubs in 1984. Chicago also picked up a still-productive Ron Hassey and George Frazier in the blockbuster trade with Cleveland. The Indians, however, gained 23-year old Mel Hall and 24-year old Joe Carter. Hall had some pop in his bat and Carter knocked in 100 runs three times for the Indians before bringing Sandy Alomar, Jr. and Carlos Baerga from the Padres. All in all, a huge victory for the pretenders, 130-40.

1985—With tight races in every division, this year saw numerous trades that would affect those and future pennants. In the biggest of the trades, the Angels acquired George Hendrick, John Candelaria, and Al Holland from the Pirates for outfielder Mike Brown and pitchers Pat Clements and Bob Kipper. Candelaria went 7-3 for the Angels, but they finished one game behind the Royals. Brown excited Pirate fans by hitting .332 after the trade, but came down to earth the next year. Kipper and Clements never really put it together. In the study this went as a 16-14 win for the Angels.

In June the Tigers swapped minor leaguer Duane James for 31-year old Frank Tanana. James never made the majors, while Tanana pitched seven more years for the Tigers including in the 1987 playoffs. This was the largest victory for the contenders in the study, 42-0.

While Tanana could not make the difference for the Tigers in 1985, it's safe to say that Cesar Cedeno did for the Cardinals. Traded from the Reds for never-to-be-major league outfielder Mark Jackson, he had a phenomenal September. A backup for Pete Rose, Cedeno had hit just .241 with 3 homers in Cincinnati. Filling in for an injured Jack Clark, Cedeno crushed National League pitching for a .434 average, a .750 slugging average, 6 homers and 19 RBIs in just 76 at-bats. Though his post-season was not as glittering, the Cards would probably not have been there in the first place without him, as the Mets finished only three games behind. His success with the Cardinals was short-lived, however, as he signed with the Dodgers following the season. He managed only a .231 average in 78 at-bats in 1986, his last season.

The Dodgers used the late-season acquisition of Bill Madlock to push them over the top. "Mad Dog" hit .360 in 114 at-bats for Los Angeles and filled a gaping hole at third base. The price for Madlock? The Pirates received Cecil Espy, R.J. Reynolds and Sid Bream. Reynolds, was so-so and Espy was drafted away by the Rangers, but Bream was the Pirates regular first baseman for several seasons, including the 1990 pennant-winning year. Madlock lasted only two more years. A 39-12 win for the Pirates.

Another trade in 1985 that featured an instrumental player on the early 1990s Pirates involved Minnesota and Cleveland. The Twins were 10 games out on August 1 when they acquired Bert Blyleven for

four prospects. Though 34, Blyleven was on his way to leading the American League in innings pitched, complete games, and strikeouts. Blyleven won 50 games in his three-plus years with the Twinkies. He also won three games in 1987's postseason to help Minnesota to the championship. Unfortunately, Jay Bell was one of the four prospects given up by the Twins. He was only 19 at the time, and was, of course, later traded to the Pirates. Both sides got something in this trade, but the contenders come out ahead, 56-32.

1986—Boston made the biggest trade of this year, sending four players, all long forgotten, to the Mariners for center fielder Dave Henderson and shortstop Spike Owen. The Red Sox would most likely have won the division without them, but Henderson's postseason play was truly outstanding. Owens was traded after a couple of years in Boston and Henderson's big seasons in Oakland came after he was a free agent. Nevertheless, this is a clear win for the contenders, 41-14.

1987—There were nineteen P-for-P trades, the most of any year in the study. Among the highlights: Doyle Alexander went 9-0 with a 1.53 ERA for Detroit as the Tigers edged out the Blue Jays by two games. He lasted two more years, but ended his career at 39 after posting a 6-18 W-L in 1989. Still, his late season performance rivals Cedeno's as the best in the study. But 20-year-old John Smoltz was the price the Braves extracted for Alexander. The Braves have the advantage for this one, 39-15 and still counting.

Also in 1987, Oakland nabbed Rick Honeycutt for added depth, but swapped unproven Tim Belcher to Los Angeles for the privilege. Honeycutt was a contributor on pennant winners, but so was Belcher. This goes as a 29-10 win for the lesser team.

1988—Remember Ken Phelps? Seattle fans do. He was an effective player for several years, but near the end at 33 when the Mariners traded him to the Yankees for three prospects. One of those prospects was Jay Buhner. So far, it's 36-5 in favor of the Mariners.

The Orioles made a similar deal when they sent Mike Boddicker to the Red Sox for Curt Schilling and Brady Anderson. Boddicker pitched effectively for the Red Sox during the pennant drive and over the next two years, including appearances in the postseason in 1988 and 1990. The Sox, in fact, finished only one game ahead of Detroit and 3-1/2 ahead of *fifth* place New York in 1988. Schilling, however, was tradeable and Anderson continues to contribute for the O's. Currently, it's 51-20 in favor of the laggards.

The Orioles made another outstanding trade in 1988 when they realized that Fred Lynn at 36 was a different player than Fred Lynn at 26. His trade to the Tigers brought Chris Hoiles to Baltimore. The Orioles are still reaping the benefits from that deal and are ahead 29-6.

Vestigial superstitions

Some of the most popular superstitions among oldtime players have become obsolete from changing times. Seeing a wagonload of empty barrels was considered a lucky omen for hitters. You don't see many wagons anymore. Picking up a hairpin was good for a hit, while crossed bats lying on the ground meant a bad day at the plate. Seeing a cross-eyed person was a sure jinx. The only way to exorcise it was to spit in a hat as quick as you could.

—Norman Macht

1996: The Year of the Whiffled Ball

A season of strikeouts

David Cain

The Year of the Homer? It was the Year of the Strikeout.

The Detroit Tigers amassed 1,268 strikeouts, smashing the season mark of 1,203 set by the New York Mets in 1968. Detroit's Melvin Nieves broke the record on September 21, recording strikeout number 1,204 in the sixth inning of a game against the Brewers at Milwaukee.

Nineteen of the twenty-eight major league teams in 1996 whiffed more than 1,000 times, shattering the 1991 mark of eight. By contrast, in 1968, the fabled "Year of the Pitcher," in which Bob Gibson's 1.12 season ERA led to the lowering of the mound, only five teams struck out more than 1,000 times.

In 1996, eight major league teams fanned more than 1,100 times. No more than two teams in a single season had ever missed that much.

While patrons were busy marveling at the home run derby, both the American League and National League were quietly setting strikeout records. The previous AL record of 13,442 (1987) was broken on Sunday, September 22; at the end of that day the AL had 13,495. The junior circuit ended 1996 with 14,056 whiffs.

The NL record of 13,358, set in 1993, was passed on Saturday, September 7. By the end of that day the NL had 13,442. The senior circuit finished the year with 15,253 strikeouts.

The major league record was also broken. The prior mark of 26,310 strikeouts, established in 1993, was broken on Wednesday, September 11, when the day closed with 26,316. On the full year, there were nearly 30,000 strikeouts in the big leagues.

How did this happen? What does it mean? Is it a problem, or just the onset of baseball pattern baldness?

Table 1: Number of teams with more than 1,000, 1,100, and 1,200 strikeouts per season.

Yr.	Teams over 1,200	over 1,100	over 1,000
1996	1	8 (5 NL, 3 AL)	19 (13 NL, 6 AL)
1995	0	0	2 (2 NL; 144 games)
1994	0	0	0 (112-117 games)
1993	0	1 (AL)	6 (4 NL, 2 AL)(14 NL teams)
1992	0	0	5 (3 NL, 2 AL)
1991	0	1 (AL)	8 (5 NL, 3 AL)
1990	0	0	5 (2 NL, 3 AL)
1989	0	0	4 (3 NL, 1 AL)
1988	0	0	3 (2 NL, 1 AL)
1987	0	1 (NL)	8 (4 NL, 4 AL)
1986	0	2 (AL, NL)	5 (3 NL, 2 AL)
1985	0	0	1 (NL)
1984	0	0	2 (NL)
1983	0	0	2 (NL)
1982	0	0	1 (NL)
1978-1981	0	0	0 (1981 short season)
1977	0	0	1 (NL) (14 AL teams)
1972-76	0	0	0

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1971	0	0	3 (2 NL, 1 AL)
1970	0	1 (NL)	4 (4 NL)
1969	0	2 (NL)	6 (5 NL, 1 AL)(12-team lgs.)
1968	1 (NL)	1 (NL)	5 (3 NL, 2 AL)
1967	0	0	7 (1 NL, 6 AL)
1966	0	0	4 (1 NL, 3 AL)
1965	0	2 (NL, AL)	6 (4 NL, 2 AL)
1964	0	2 (2 AL)	6 (1 NL, 5 AL)
1963	0	1 (AL)	3 (2 NL, 1 AL)
1962	0	0	1 (NL) (10 NL teams, 162 g.)
1961	0	0	2 (NL, AL) (10 AL tms., 162 g.)
1960	0	0	1 (NL) (8-team lgs., 154 g.)
1871-1959	0	0	0

Diary of a breeze—Early in the 1996 season there seemed to be an unusual number of strikeouts. A sampling of misses from the Friday, May 3, local sports page went like this: Montreal 9; Florida 10; Colorado 12; Mets 9; Cubs 10; Phillies 9; Reds 14.

It amounted to nine or more team strikeouts for half of the day's National League games. In two of those games the teams combined for over twenty strikeouts.

A week later, there it was again. This time six clubs had nine or more misses. The Dodgers and Cardinals combined for 27 (in 12 innings); the Red Sox and Blue Jays totalled 26 (in 12), more than one miss per team per inning.

If these teams continued at a one strikeout per inning pace, it penciled out to over 1,400 strikeouts for a team on the year, a record number.

Through May 5 (five weeks of play out of twenty-six), eight of the sixteen National League teams had amassed at least 220 strikeouts. By simple extrapolation, one could have concluded that seven teams would have at least 1,100 strikeouts for the 162-game year. And if you threw in the NL teams that had 193 or more at that time, thirteen of fourteen were on track to finish with over 1,000.

Over in the American League the pace was a bit slower. Three squads were over 200 K's and four others had 190 or more.

Through June 2, the Phillies led the majors with 442 strikeouts. A month later, about halfway through the season, they had 605. At that point eight teams were on pace to whiff 1,100 times. Eighteen were on target to miss 1,000 times.

The first teams cracked 1,000 strikeouts with an entire month left to play. As of September 1, the Detroit Tigers had struck out on 1,031 occasions, while the Dodgers led the National League with 1,013. By then twelve major league teams had more than 900 strikeouts. A week later the Tigers had 1,095, with Oakland and San Francisco joining those who had made the journey across the 1,000 strikeout divide.

By September 15, the Tigers had 1,152 and were chasing the Mets' season record in earnest. Three AL teams had over 1,000, while eight NL teams had reached that mark. By the end of the next week the Tigers had broken the record, and two NL teams had 1,145 (SF, LA), while only three NL teams had fewer than 1,000.

Three American League franchises set team strikeout records (Detroit, Oakland, Toronto), while Boston tied its record set in 1967. Ten National League teams set records (New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and San Diego avoided that fate). Colorado and Los Angeles broke their records by over 150 strikeouts.

Individual whiffers—Strangely enough, while teams were going through the roof, no individual season records were set. Through June 30, Sammy Sosa led the National League with 89 strikeouts. Andres Galarraga was next with 83, and then Henry Rodriguez with 81.

Through August 11, Sosa had 123, Galarraga 110, and Rodriguez 130. By September 1, Henry had been zeroed 146 times. Galarraga, leading the league in HRs and RBI, had 134 K's. Even at a pace of roughly one strikeout per game, it became apparent that no batter would likely reach 175 strikeouts on the season, a level that ranks only eighth on the season record list. (Tops is Bobby Bonds' 189 whiffs in the 1970 campaign.)

With a week to go in the season, Jay Buhner led the American League with 154 strikeouts, while Rodriguez held the NL lead with 153. Buhner finished first in the AL with 159. Rodriguez claimed the NL title with 160.

Although no individual season records were set, many players logged triple digits in strikeouts. In 1995, twelve NL batters and seventeen AL batters had more than 100 strikeouts. In 1996, *after the first week of September*, twenty NL and twenty-six AL hitters had turned the trick. By season's end, thirty-two American League players had struck out over 100 times, nearly double the number who had crossed the century barrier the prior year. Seattle had five players who reached that level: Buhner, Dave Hollins, Alex Rodriguez, Ken Griffey, Jr., and Paul Sorrento. Oakland and Detroit had four each. (The year before, only Detroit and California had four batters over the

century mark). Twenty-six National League players finished with over one hundred strikeouts, though no team had more than three players who fanned that often.

Cause and effect—One can probably rule out a few possible causes of the strikeout bonanza. While the ball may have been juiced, we have no evidence that it was also being tampered with on the mound, by the ump, or at the manufacturer's. There didn't seem to be any new, baffling pitches this year. There was no bumper crop of knuckleballers. There was no rule change affecting how at bats or strikeouts were logged. The designated hitter has been around for twenty years. National League pitchers who bat (and whiff) have been around forever. The number of games being played has remained fairly constant for more than thirty years. And it wasn't a case of the spring jitters. The pace of strikeouts remained fairly constant throughout the year.

The world-beating whiffs don't appear to be a result of a rise in the number of opportunities to miss. NL teams averaged 5,507 at-bats; AL teams, 5,649. The total at-bat-to-strikeout ratios: NL, 5.05; AL, 5.63. By contrast, in 1993, when just six teams whiffed 1,000 times (4 NL, 2 AL), the average number of NL at-bats was *higher* (5,534), while the AL figure was only slightly lower (5,536). A hundred fewer at-bats per team translates to 1,400 fewer at-bats. At the 1996 ratio, though, this would only account for an expected increase of 300 AL strikeouts in 1996 compared to 1993, not the actual increase of 700 more AL misses.

In 1991, when eight teams struck out over 1,000 times, the AL had only 97 more total at-bats; without Colorado and Florida, the NL average was only slightly lower at 5,447. In 1987, another year when eight teams had 1,000 misses, the number of at bats was nearly the same as in 1991. Thus, the boom in strikeouts does not appear to be a result of more chances to miss. At-bats have remained level at about 5,500 per team per year for quite some time.

The mass of strikeouts was not a necessary by-product of a great hitting year. In the 1930s, when the players were on a 1996-style hitting rage, strikeouts were under control. The 1930 Cubs batted 5,581 times, with 635 strikeouts, one miss every 8.8 at-bats. The 1996 Cubs batted 5,531 times, but struck out 1,090 times, one miss every 5.07 at-bats.

The 1930 Giants had 5,553 at-bats and 382 misses, one whiff every 14.5 at-bats, in a year they hit .319 for the season. The 1996 Giants batted 5,533 times, and had 1,189 strikeouts, a miss every 4.65 at-bats.

It would be difficult to attribute the rise in strikeouts to an expansion-caused dilution of talent. The Rockies and the Marlins have been in the NL for four years and are no longer considered expansion clubs. The Colorado entry has been a playoff-caliber team, and has been crushing the ball in its new park. Today's new parks help teams hit the ball, not miss it. And Colorado and Florida were not the missingest teams in the NL. (That high honor went to Los Angeles and San Francisco.)

There are several more plausible explanations for the strikeout explosion. One is that there are more good pitchers. Or that the pitchers did something different or better. This is a fine theory, but the facts don't support it. Pitchers performed poorly in 1996. ERAs were among the highest ever. Twenty-three NL players hit over .300, and only five NL starting pitchers had ERAs under 3.00. In the AL, thirty-four players hit over .300, and only one pitcher had an ERA under 3.00. How could the same pitchers giving up 4 to 5 runs per outing also be responsible for a record number of strikeouts? Also, no individual pitchers set any strikeout records. No one struck out 300. If the pundits are right, pitching quality is declining. So why are strikeouts rising?

How about the alleged new, more generous strike zone? At the outset of 1996, umpires indicated they would be calling a lower zone, one that extended to the knees. One TV analyst suggested that the NL umpires called the low strike, but that the AL umps didn't. That might explain the discrepancy between the two leagues, with the NL featuring nearly twice as many 1,000-whiff teams as the AL. It would also explain the numerous incidents of players going ballistic after being called out on strikes, though such tantrums seemed to occur as frequently in the AL as in the NL (e.g., Albert Belle, Tony Phillips, Roberto Alomar). We might be able to document an ump-caused strikeout increase if there were statistics distinguishing between called third strikes and swinging strikeouts.

But if hitters felt the 1996 strike zone was particularly unfair, a formal complaint would have been lodged by someone, and we would have had a groundswell of negative opinion from the players. Perhaps with so many homers they chose not to complain. But the strikeout surge essentially went unnoticed all year. And other reports indicated that most umpires continued to call the zone that they had always called. During the playoffs, analyst Tim McCarver stated that the strike zone was actually

shrinking due to the disappearance of the called high strike. If so, one would expect fewer misses, not more.

The most plausible explanation is that this year, more hitters decided to try to hit home runs, or to put a home run swing on the ball, instead of trying just to make contact. This was the biggest year ever for home runs in baseball, and strikeouts follow homers like shadows. Seven of the fifteen 500-homer players are among the top twenty for career strikeouts. (No, the Babe isn't among them. He's only forthieth on the all-time strikeout list. Hank is thirty-third. Mays eighteenth.)

Table 2: Correlation between new season highs in homers and season highs in strikeouts

	1996 HR	Prior high HR	1996 K's	Prior high K's
Ellis Burks	40	21	114	98
Andres Galaragga	47	31	157	169
Todd Hundley	41	16	146	76
Henry Rodriguez	36	8	160	58
Sammy Sosa	40	36	134	150
Brady Anderson	50	21	106	111
Kevin Elster	24	10	138	77
Dean Palmer	38	33	145	154
Ed Sprague	36	18	146	96
Terry Steinbach	35	16	115	74

So why is everyone swinging for the fences?

Used to be, the line between home run sluggers and everyone else was fairly well drawn. The guys who tried for the fences were Babe and Boog, men who sat high in the saddle. It was a world of clearly defined big guys and little guys.

Today your average player is simply much stronger. Weight training and steroids have pulled the fences within reach of many players. Your average player has also noticed that the ball carries better in the new parks (Cleveland, Baltimore, Colorado, etc). They may have a new sense that homers are possible even for them.

Swinging for the fences might explain why the NL had more strikeouts than the AL. The NL has always had a reputation for being a league filled with contact hitters. If players in both leagues are now swinging with everything, such a change would be more severe for the NL, and likely result in more strikeouts.

And management may be encouraging those with home run hopes. It's good marketing, baseball's answer to Dr. J's slam dunk, which ushered in a golden age for the NBA. When Julius Erving performed the first epic dunks, players were in awe, much as they were of Babe's prodigious swats. Then an occasional imitator dared to dunk. After several years, even the little guys tried it (Spud Webb). Now, the dunk is *de rigueur*. If you don't dunk you don't get noticed.

And it's going to get worse, or better, depending on your viewpoint. In 1998, two new teams, Arizona (NL) and Tampa (AL) will be swinging for the fences. There may be more interleague play. McGwire already has the chance to hit at Wrigley on a windy day. What happens when he's joined by Griffey, Thomas, et al.?

A Cost-Effective All-Star Team

"Put a dollar mark on muscle...that's the important thing in this business."
—Branch Rickey

Jim Storer

Suppose you've been hired as the General Manager of a "small market" major league team—we'll call them the Podunk Paupers. Your unenviable assignment is to assemble a roster of major league players who will allow you to field a competitive team, yet whose salaries will not break the bank. Wendy McKaughlig, the owner of the Paupers and CEO of a Fortune 500 company, has imposed a limit of $10 million that she is willing to spend on players' salaries for the coming year. You protest that it can't possibly be done, that the *average* major league team spent over $32.6 million on salary in 1996, and that even the 53-109 Detroit Tigers paid out over $17.2 million in salary just to be the laughingstock of the American League.* She impassively reminds you that a $10 million budget averages out to salaries of $400,000 for the entire 25 man roster, which is plenty of money for a bunch of grown men playing a child's game, and nearly half of the annual stipend she receives for sitting on the Board of Directors of U.S. MegaCorp. She calmly advises you that if you can't assemble a decent team within this budget, she'll find someone who will!

Duly chastened, you read of Albert Belle's $55 million contract for five years and Roger Clemens's $31.25 for four years, and wonder whether you can persuade one of them into playing for you, perhaps on a part-time basis. Would one game per month be too much to ask? Or maybe that 17-year-old kid you saw pitching in American Legion ball last weekend might be willing to work cheap? What will you do? What *will* you do?

After weighing just how much you really want this job, and finding out that your alma mater just filled that assistant coaching position you were considering, you knuckle down with your year-end stat sheet and list of 1996 salaries. After a few hours of study you've come up with an impressive list of affordable players, so talented and cheap that you're sure you've misplaced a zero somewhere. After double-checking, you realize that one really could construct the following frugal lineup:

1. RF-Bobby Higginson, Det., .320 BA, .577 Slugging Average, 65 BB: $170,000
2. 3B-Chipper Jones, Atl., .309 BA, .393 OBA, 114 R, 110 RBI: $775,000
3. SS-Alex Rodriguez, Sea., .358 BA, 215 H, 54 2B, 36 HR: $442,334
4. LF-Ryan Klesko, Atl., .282 BA, .530 SA, 34 HR, 68 BB: $315,000
5. 1B-Henry Rodriguez, Mon., .276 BA, .562 SA, 42 2B, 36 HR: $220,000
6. C-Javy Lopez, Atl., .282 BA, .466 SA, 23 HR, 69 RBI: $290,000
7. DH-Tony Clark, Det., .253 Isolated Power, 27 HR in 376 AB: $109,000
8. CF-Ernie Young, Oak., .424 SA, 19 HR, 64 RBI, 52 BB: $112,000
9. 2B-Ray Durham, ChiW, .275 BA, 33 2B, 30SB/4CS: $170,000

TOTAL COST: $2,603,334

So far, you're way under budget, but how good are these guys really? Good enough to compile a .291 composite team batting average, .359 OBP, .517 Slugging Average, 2,368 total bases, and a 75 percent stolen base success rate (including "Lead-Foot" Lopez's getting nailed in 6 out of 7 attempts). Trans-

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lating this into projected runs scored using the Bill James Runs Created technique, you are astounded to find that this offensive unit could reasonably be expected to slug its way to about 6.67 runs per game, or 1,080 for the entire season, eclipsing the twentieth-century record of 1,067 runs scored by the '31 Yankees!

It seems too good to be true, and you harken back to that wizened old scout who once told you that pitching is 90 percent of baseball. You maintain that pitching is maybe not *quite* as dominant a concern as the sage had thought, but that offensive records or not, you've got to have *somebody* toeing the slab or you'll be losing a lot of 12-10 slugfests to the Rockies. Incredibly enough, after a little more digging, you construct a pitching staff that will be the envy of the entire league:

S1-Ismael Valdez, LA., 15-7, 3.32 ERA, 54 BB, 173 K: $425,000
S2-Pedro J. Martinez, Mtl., 13-10, 70 BB, 222K, 189 H in 216 IP: $315,000
S3-Steve Trachsel, ChiC., 13-9, 3.03 ERA, 181 H in 205 IP: $220,000
S4-Shane Reynolds, Hou., 16-10, 44BB, 204K: $330,000
S5-Andy Pettitte, NYY., 21-8, 3.87 ERA, 72 BB, 162 K: $195,000
R1-Troy Percival, Ana., 100 K and 38 Hits Allowed in 74 IP: $355,000
R2-Robb Nen, Fla., 5-1, 1.95 ERA, 2 b's in first name: $340,000
R3-Mariano Rivera, NYY., 8-3, 2.09 ERA, 1 HR in 107.2 IP: $131,125
R4-Ron Villone, Milw., 3.28 ERA, 14 Hits in 24 2/3 IP: $130,000
R5-Billy Wagner, Hou., 67 K and 28 Hits Allowed in 51.2 IP: $109,000
TOTAL COST: $2,550,125

This staff's cumulative stats for 1996 yield a record of 93-52 with a 3.22 ERA, a K/W ratio of nearly 3-1, over 8 K per 9 IP, and barely 10.5 total baserunners per game, in a year when the American League ERA was 5.00 and the NL's was 4.22. Extrapolated over a full season, this staff would allow about 519 earned runs. Although you'd gladly make room for John Smoltz, in '97 he'll earn more money by the end of May than this entire staff did in all of '96, so you'll simply have to make do. With average fielding support, this unit would be expected to give up a miserly 590 total runs for the entire season.

Giddiness soon yields to absolute delirium as you use the Bill James Runs Scored/Runs Allowed formula to project that your team, by scoring 1,080 runs and giving up only 590, should post a record of 125-37, shattering the all-time best won-lost record. After assembling this juggernaut, your mind wanders as you contemplate how you'll look in your Paupers uniform at your own certain Hall of Fame induction ceremony, and whether the Branch Rickey or Casey Stengel plaque should be moved to make room for yours. But ever the perfectionist, you anticipate the injury bug and search for the insurance provided by having a deep bench. You quickly espy a pair of Rookies of the Year and some valuable but underappreciated talent, and compile the following backup squad:

C-Dan Wilson, Sea., .285 BA, 18 HR, 83 RBI, 39% CS: $400,000
SS-Derek Jeter, NYY., .314 BA, 104 R, 78 RBI: $130,000
OF-Rusty Greer, Tex., .332 BA, 41 2B, 100 RBI, 9/9 SB: $258,333
IF-Jeff Frye, Bos., .372 OBA, 27 2B, 18/22 SB: $125,000
UT-Craig Paquette, KC., .452 SA, 22 HR, 67 RBI: $150,000
OF-Todd Hollandsworth, LA., .291 BA, 26 2B, 21 SB: $136,000
TOTAL COST: $1,199,333

Now you've got depth at all positions and an experienced defensive catcher to help the young pitching staff along. You've assembled a dynamo of a team that will dominate the entire league on the field and that cost you a grand total of $6,352,792 for the year, or just a little less than John Olerud's 1996 salary of $6.5 million.

OK, so the other GMs also realize that these guys are great bargains and won't part with them easily. But there is still plenty of cheap talent around. How about filling in your roster with some of these players?

C-Charles Johnson, Fla., 13 HR, 48% CS: $220,000
1B/OF-John Mabry, StL., .297 BA, 161 H, 13 HR: $200,000
2B-Mike Lansing, Mtl., .285 BA, 99 R, 40 2B, 23 SB: $315,000
3B-Jeff Cirillo, Milw., .325 BA, 101 R, 46 2B, 83 RBI: $187,500
1B/3B/OF-Jason Giambi, Oak., .291 BA, 40 2B, 20 HR: $120,000
SS-Jose Valentin, Milw., 90 R, 24 HR, 95 RBI, 17/21 SB: $300,000
OF-Melvin Nieves, Det., .485 SA, 24 HR: $170,000
OF-Shawn Green, Tor., .280 BA, 32 2B: $287,500
1B/DH-Carlos Delgado, Tor., .490 SA, 25 HR, 92 RBI: $165,000

And the pitching talent is just as plentiful:

SP-Ugueth Urbina, Mtl., 10-5, 3.71 ERA, 44 BB, 108 K: $112,000
SP-Jose Rosado, KC., 8-6, 3.21 ERA, 26 BB, 64 K: $109,000
SP-James Baldwin, ChiW., 11-6, 4.42 ERA, 57 BB, 127 K: $115,000
RP-Arthur Rhodes, Balt., 9-1, 4.08 ERA, 48 H and 62 K in 53 IP: $300,000
RP-T. J. Mathews, StL., 3.01 ERA, 62 H and 80 K in 83.2 IP: $130,000
RP-Chan Ho Park, LA., 3.64 ERA, 82 H and 119 K in 108.2 IP: 124,000

A more complete listing of the truly cost-effective talent is beyond the scope of this article, but suffice it to say that Willie Greene ($130,000), Cliff Floyd ($150,000), Charlie O'Brien ($500,000), Johnny Damon ($180,000), Bill Taylor ($135,000), Paul Shuey ($138,000), and Brad Radke ($175,000) could easily surpass the accomplishments of some much

pricier players. Furthermore, by taking advantage of these truly bargain basement deals, there is still plenty of room left in the budget, if one is so inclined, for stars of the next monetary echelon, such as Hideo Nomo of the Dodgers for $600,000, Cleveland's Jim Thome for $1.6 million or Houston second baseman Craig Biggio for $2.075 million.

At this point, you're feeling pretty smug as you attend the Winter Meetings and compare notes with one of your fellow GMs who has accumulated the following high-priced list of big names:

OF: Mike Greenwell, Lenny Dykstra and Danny Tartabull
IF: Mike Blowers, Ozzie Smith, Robby Thompson, and Cecil Fielder
C: Darren Daulton
DH: Ruben Sierra
SP: Jose Rijo, Bret Saberhagen, Doug Drabek, Chris Bosio, and Melido Perez
RP: Kent Mercker, Greg Hibbard, Ricky Bones, Lee Smith, and John Franco
Bench: Mark Carreon, Tony Fernandez, Jose Offerman, Kirt Manwaring, Rey Sanchez, and Derrick May.

Although this may have been a decent collection of talent a few years ago, this old, injury-ridden team will finish about 60 games behind you, and, most of all, cost an unbelievable $91,583,825 in salary! That's right, this roster made in excess of $91.5 million in 1996. You will be sure to point this out to Ms. McKaughlig as you remind her of the fact that you came in $3.65 million under budget and demand a raise for yourself.

The cost-effective All Star team will no doubt cost more in 1997 than it did in 1996, but most of these players are not eligible for either salary arbitration or free agency yet, so their leverage in negotiating pay increases is negligible. And, as shown above, there is plenty of cheap talent from which to choose. By aggressively developing and pursuing young, inexpensive talent, the GM of even a "small market" team should be able to adhere to reasonable budgetary constraints while fielding a competitive, if not dominant team.

*All 1996 salary figures are taken from "1996 Major League Baseball Salary Survey," *USA Today*, November 15, 1996, page 15C.

SportsCenter? Who Needs It!

A June 9, 1886, exhibition game between the National League's Detroit Wolverines and Utica (New York)of the International League introduced a novel way to bring game reports to communities around Utica. Homing pigeons owned by H. Saxby of Ilion and Dr. H.S. Gardener of Hamilton, were used to transport game updates and the final score back to their hometowns. Detroit beat the eventual IL champs, 7-3.

—Scott Fiesthumel

A Strong Finish

Pitchers who retired looking good

Denis Repp

The Pirates-Phillies game of September 29, 1993, was just another late-season, play-out-the-string matchup between the World Series-bound Phillies and the fifth-place Pirates. Bob Walk and Joel Johnston faced a Philadelphia lineup loaded with September call-ups, and beat them, 9-1. The win was Walk's thirteenth of the year, and as it turned out, that game marked his final major league appearance. During the following winter, the 36-year-old Walk traded in his spikes for a microphone, becoming a Pirate broadcaster.

It occurred to me that there might be some interesting stories about the pitchers who were able to win double figures one year, but never threw another major league pitch. Here are some of them.

Ray Fisher: The victor—When the Reds won the 1919 World Series they may have done so with the assistance of their opponents, but they didn't get much help from Ray Fisher. He had the poor fortune to face the White Sox' only honest starter, Dickie Kerr, in the third game, and he appeared in just one other game, which the Reds also lost. He had gone 14-5 in 1919, but when the Reds fell to third place in 1920, Fisher fell with them, finishing at 10-11.

In the following off-season, Fisher was dissatisfied with the Reds' 1921 contract offer, which called for an 18 percent pay cut. Fisher, now 33 years old and perhaps looking to his future, learned that the position of baseball coach at the University of Michigan was open. He requested and received permission from Reds manager Pat Moran to visit Ann Arbor to interview. He was offered the job, but before taking it he went back to the Reds, perhaps to give them another chance to sign him. The Reds now decided that maybe he was more valuable than their initial offer indicated. Their new offer called for him to come back at his 1920 salary, and when that didn't tempt Fisher, they offered him a raise. That satisfied Fisher, but when they turned down his request for a two-year contract, he signed with Michigan. He asked Reds owner Garry Herrmann to put him on the voluntarily retired list, but soon learned that he was actually on the ineligible list.

At a chance meeting with Judge Landis, Fisher explained his side of things and asked for some clarification, but got no answer from the new commissioner.

Once his college season had started, an outlaw team in Pennsylvania approached him about pitching after his coaching duties were over. Fisher wired Landis to check on his status before doing anything. Learning that he was still blacklisted, he signed with the outlaws.

In Landis's official report, Moran claimed that he had not given Fisher permission to visit Michigan, that the Reds had offered a "large increase" in salary to keep him, and that since he was dealing with an outlaw team anyway, the suspension would have to

Denis Repp lives near Pittsburgh and has a difficult time sticking to the task at hand while looking at old microfilm.

stand. Historian Harold Seymour's theory held that Landis, in his first year on the job, was doing a favor for one of his supporters, Herrmann.

As for that scoundrel Fisher, who had the gall to look for a job with a university while still reserved by a baseball team, things worked out all right. He stayed on as Michigan's baseball coach for another thirty-seven years. In 1967, the University of Michigan rededicated their ballfield, naming it Ray Fisher Stadium.

Benny Frey: The best laid plans—In September, 1936, the Reds were about to finish in fifth place, their best performance in eight years, and team president Larry MacPhail spent most of that September acquiring almost twenty minor leaguers. The word was out that "every Red will be on trial in '37."

Things didn't quite work out as planned. Cincinnati finished a distant eighth in 1937, with the Reds posting their second-worst record ever. Of MacPhail's September signees, only Johnny Vander Meer amounted to much. MacPhail was long gone by then, though. He had quit the Reds at the end of the 1936 season, citing "health reasons," although by 1938 he was running things in Brooklyn. And then there was the sad case of Benny Frey.

Frey, the "dean" of the Reds' staff, had gone 10-8 in 1936, and went south to Tampa with the Reds in the spring of 1937. A sore arm kept him out of action for most of spring training, and he didn't pitch in any of the games as Reds and Red Sox barnstormed their way back north.

Back in Cincinnati, the Reds arranged for Frey to go to a short-staffed Nashville team and work himself into shape. He refused to report and went to Michigan.

His arm apparently never did come around, because he didn't pitch anywhere that year. In November, his body was found in his car in his sister's garage, with a hose running from the car's exhaust pipe to its interior. He was 31.

Max Butcher: What, no 20-man pitching staff?—During World War II, *The Sporting News* ran a column called "In The Service," which covered the inductions, assignments, and whatnot of major and minor league ballplayers, umpires, and other officials. By late summer of 1945, "In The Service" was joined by "Mustered Out," a list of the dozens of players who were being discharged each week, along with their teams. Headlines like HIGBE RETURNING FROM PACIFIC and FELLER SHEDS NAVY BLUE, HEADS BACK TO INDIANS appeared regularly. The replenished player supply left every major league team with huge rosters in 1946.

It was in this setting that Max Butcher reached the end of his career. Butcher was a big (6'2", 220) Pirate who had been the Bucs' second-winningest pitcher during the war and had gone 10-8 in 1945. His final appearance in 1945 came in early September when he picked up a win in relief of Preacher Roe.

In 1946, however, the Pirates were looking to the future. Armed with rookies Ralph Kiner and Billy Cox, the Pirates were expecting a big improvement. Butcher intended to be a part of it, but he held out when the Pirates' contract offer called for a $3,000 pay cut. He was dropped from the team late in spring training. Havey Boyle summed it up in the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette*:

> There was no great surprise occasioned by the Butcher release. He had been a holdout.... The impasse came from a salary cut which the Pirate bosses thought was appropriate in view of Butcher's indifferent record on top of the labor glut....
>
> He was rated a smart fellow with good control. One thing that weighed against him—and on him— was excess suet. Butcher missed the boat when he didn't make the most of his opportunities coming from the humpty-dumpty period in wartime when the big leagues were filled with minor league batters. Rip Sewell's grasping the opportunity to become a big star was in direct contrast to Butcher's failure to do so.

Rip Sewell would hang on to win 33 games over the next four years, but Max Butcher never appeared in another major league game.

J. R. Richard: His blood was against him—For the first half of the 1980 season, 6'8" J.R. Richard's performance was as dominant as his appearance. In a mid-June game against the Cubs, however, he began to complain of a "dead arm." He left after five innings, but still improved his record to 9-3. After skipping a start, he was taken out of his next game after three ineffective innings. Except for his complaints, he appeared to be healthy enough, and the Astros were unable to find anything wrong with him. The team doctor, in fact, recommended that Richard just needed "to cut down on his social life."

Richard was named to the All Star squad, but the

Astros were not sure if they were going to allow him to go. A strong outing against Atlanta (6 IP, 2 R, 8 K) in his last start before the All Star break decided things, however, and Richard went to Los Angeles.

He was given the ball to start in the All Star Game. To allow for a prime-time start in the east, it began at 5:40, Los Angeles time. Batters had a hard time doing anything with Richard's fastball in the twilight, and he allowed just one hit while striking out three in his two innings. While in town for the game, he had visited Dr. Frank Jobe, who recommended that after pitching in the game, he skip a start and then take it easy for a while after that.

Richard made what turned out to be his final start six days later against the Braves. They managed only one hit in three innings, but when the Astros took the field for the fourth inning, Richard remained on the bench, blankly staring toward the field. Manager Bill Virdon roused him and he made his way to the mound. He faced just one batter, however, and Virdon removed him. After the game, he appeared to be his normal self, but the Astros placed him on the disabled list, determined to get to the bottom of things.

Extensive tests now revealed the source of his troubles. Back in June, a blood clot had developed in the subclavian artery supplying blood to Richard's right arm. That explained the deadness he had experienced. It is not unusual for the body to respond to such a blockage by developing a secondary circulatory system around the clot, and this is what happened in Richard's case. This restored most of the blood supply to his arm, and explained his temporary recovery before the All Star Game. The doctors decided not to do anything about the clot at that time, but felt that, with supervision, Richard would be able to pitch again.

On July 30, however, the clot moved or grew into his carotid artery, blocking the blood supply to his brain. During a workout with former teammate Wilbur Howard, Richard suffered a stroke. After recovering from its gross effects—he was fully paralyzed on his left side for a week, and full use of his arm and leg did not return until much later. Richard made a brief, unsuccessful comeback attempt. He had trouble picking up the ball coming off the bat, as well as gloving his catcher's return throws, and never appeared in another major league game.

Phil Douglas: A Giant mistake—In a little more than two seasons with the Giants, Phil Douglas had won over thirty games, including two in the 1921 World Series. Douglas, however, did not earn his nickname of "Shufflin' Phil" because he liked to play cards. His drinking habits were such that John McGraw regularly assigned a coach to keep an eye on him when he was away from the ballpark. In August, 1922, with the Giants in a tight race with St. Louis, Douglas slipped his handler and went on a bender for a few days.

When the Giants' detectives found him, they checked him into a hospital while he sobered up. After his discharge, he received a tongue-lashing from McGraw, who told him that in addition to being docked for the time he was away from the team, he would be paying his own hospital bill.

Douglas' addled mind then decided that the best way to get back at McGraw and the Giants would be to desert them again, this time for good. In a letter to Cardinal outfielder Les Mann, he indicated that if "the boys" (the Cardinal players) would make it worth his while, he would go fishing for the rest of the season.

Douglas badly misjudged his correspondent, however. Mann turned the letter over to his manager, Branch Rickey, who informed Commissioner Landis. Landis suspended Douglas for life.

Sig Jakucki: The hazards of unchecked baggage—Sig Jakucki was another wartime pitcher. He had done his time in the military back in the late '20s, and had had his first stint with the Browns in 1936. He did nothing to impress the Browns—0-3 in seven games—and was sent back to the minors, presumably forever. Indeed, by 1944, he was hanging wallpaper in Texas and pitching for a semipro team on the weekends.

In 1944, however, major league teams were desperately searching for anyone with a live arm and a deferment. A scout brought Jakucki's name to the Browns' attention. They gave him a chance, and he stepped into the starting rotation, finishing 13-9. On the day the Browns clinched their only pennant, Jakucki was the winning pitcher.

Jakucki was a drinker, however, and this caught up with him in 1945. After a slow start, the Browns had worked their way back up to third place in late August. Jakucki was shelled in a game against the first-place Tigers. He was taken out in the fourth inning, complaining all the while about the early hook. Manager Luke Sewell told him that "if you'd stay in condition, I wouldn't have to yank you." Jakucki pouted, later complaining that Sewell was always "picking on me for having a few drinks," and that he

"contributed as much as anyone else on the staff."

After coming back to beat the Tigers, the Browns gathered the next morning at St. Louis's Union Station to catch a train to Chicago. Jakucki showed up with a suitcase in one hand and a bag of whiskey in the other. That was the last straw as far as Sewell was concerned, and he told Sig not to bother boarding the train. He sneaked on anyway, but Sewell spotted him in short order and had Jakucki thrown off at the first stop, in suburban St. Louis. Jakucki called GM Bill DeWitt from the station, and apparently thought things were straightened out because he then made his way to Chicago on his own. (His teammates guessed that he got there by hopping some freight trains.) When he got to town, there was no reservation for him at the Browns' hotel, so he spent the night lurking in the lobby. He was finished. The next day, Sewell announced Jakucki's indefinite suspension, giving as his reasons, "a lack of conditioning, insubordination, and a general belief that the team will be better off without him." The Browns reinstated him in time for the winter meetings, hoping for a trade, but none was forthcoming. Sig Jakucki's major league days were over.

Larry French: Anchors aweigh—The last week of the 1942 season was an eventful time around Ebbets Field. The Dodgers held a scrap metal drive for several days—a free ticket to the day's game for anyone bringing ten pounds of scrap. (One boy showed up with his mother's new toaster, but the papers didn't say whether that donation was accepted.) The Dodgers were making a final, ultimately unsuccessful run at the first-place Cardinals. On September 23, team president Larry MacPhail announced that he was resigning his post to enlist in the Army. And that same day, Larry French made his last start before joining the Navy.

Eight thousand metal donors, along with 5,000 paying customers, watched French retire the Phillies in order in the first inning. In the second, the Phils' Nick Etten singled but was promptly erased by a double play. That was the extent of the Phils' offense. French faced just 27 batters while winning his one-hitter, 6-0.

Two days later, French made his final appearance, working against the Braves in relief. During the winter he entered the Navy.

Although he was listed on the Dodgers' roster well into the spring of 1946, French had announced his retirement following his discharge the previous November. He remained in the Naval Reserve until called back to active duty during the Korean conflict. He remained in the Navy, ultimately retiring as a captain in 1969.

Paul Derringer: First victim of the Cubs' Curse?—By now, many fans have heard about the Cubs' Curse, the one that was thrust upon them by a disgruntled fan when the club would not let him bring his pet goat to a 1945 World Series game. Was Paul Derringer the curse's first victim?

Derringer, an ace with the Cincinnati pennant winners in 1939-40, was winding down his career with the Cubs in 1945. Indeed, his 223rd and final major league win came in late September, the day before the Cubs won their sixteenth pennant.

Unfortunately, things went downhill from there. He didn't start a game in the World Series against Detroit. He pitched in middle relief in Games 4 and 5, two Cub losses. In Game 6, manager Charlie Grimm didn't use *any* of his relief pitchers. He used all of his starting pitchers instead. Claude Passeau started, was relieved by Hank Wyse (the Game 2 starter), who yielded to Ray Prim (the Game 4 starter). Derringer remained on the bench in the ninth, when ace Hank Borowy entered the tie game. Borowy picked up the win when the Cubs scored in the twelfth inning.

Two days later, a tired Borowy started Game 7. Nine pitches into the game, he was finished, having allowed a run on three singles. Derringer relieved, retired two batters, but then allowed four Tigers to score, including one on a bases-loaded walk. In the second inning Derringer loaded the based again, ans walked in another run.

His bad luck continued into December as he and his wife were involved in an Illinois train wreck. (They walked away from it.) In January the Cubs released him. He wrote to the other fifteen teams, but quickly signed instead with minor-league Indianapolis. Derringer never appeared in the majors again.

Henry Schmidt: The ultimate one-year wonder—The 1902 Brooklyn Superbas were just two years removed from their most recent pennant. They were in need of retooling and finished in second place, 27-1/2 games behind the Pirates. For the 1903 season, manager Ned Hanlon found 29-year-old Henry Schmidt, who had won 35 games for the Oakland Clamdiggers of the California State League in 1902. The Clamdiggers and the CSL folded at the end of the season, and Hanlon stepped into the breach, signing Schmidt for his Superbas.

Schmidt pitched well enough for Brooklyn in South Carolina that spring, as well as on their northward return. On opening day, he made his first major league start, beating the Giants and Christy Mathewson, 9-7.

Brooklyn used three regular starters in 1903, and among them, Schmidt allowed the most walks (and walks per game), the most hits (and hits per game), the most baserunners per game, and had the highest ERA, and the fewest complete games. On the other hand, he led the team in wins and shutouts. Following a win in September, the papers described him as having been "very effective, especially with men on base." He would seem to have had a lot of practice.

He beat the Pirates on September 22 to pick up the 22nd win of his rookie year (the Pirates had clinched their third straight pennant, with Brooklyn finishing fifth), but it turned out to be the final win of his major league career. Back in Oakland, the new Oakland Oaks and the Pacific Coast League had replaced the Clamdiggers and the CSL, and the Oaks laid claim to Schmidt.

The National Agreement had collapsed following the American League's elevation to major league status. The war between those two leagues grew to include the minor leagues as well, with the minors in the eastern and western parts of the country making raids on each other. The American and National Leagues had called a truce by 1903, but some time would pass before each minor league came back into the fold.

Oakland was now looking eastward, specifically toward the Eastern League, for players. The new owner of the Baltimore franchise in the Eastern League was none other than Ned Hanlon, who continued to manage Brooklyn as well. As a sort of goodwill gesture, Hanlon agreed to release Schmidt back to Oakland. Schmidt apparently preferred California to New York anyway, and stayed on the coast for the rest of his career.

Pitchers with 10 or more wins in their final major league season (1901-1994)

	Player	W-L	Yr/Tm	Lg	Age	Career
1.	Sandy Koufax	27-9	1966-LA	NL	30	1955-1966
2.	Henry Schmidt	22-13	1903-BKN	NL	30	1903-1903
3.	Lefty Williams	22-14	1920-CHI	AL	27	1913-1920
4.	Eddie Cicotte	21-10	1920-CHI	AL	36	1905-1920
5.	Britt Burns	18-11	1985-CHI	AL	26	1978-1985
6.	Chief Johnson	18-17	1915-KC	FL	29	1913-1915
7.	Ted Lewis	16-17	1901-BOS	AL	28	1896-1901
8.	Ed Doheny	16-8	1903-PIT	NL	28	1895-1903
9.	Paul Derringer	16-11	1945-CHI	NL	38	1931-1945
10.	Larry French	15-4	1942-BKN	NL	34	1929-1942
11.	Monty Stratton	15-9	1938-CHI	AL	26	1934-1938
12.	Jim Hughes	15-11	1902-BKN	NL	28	1898-1902
13.	George Kaiserling	15-15	1915-NEW	FL	22	1914-1915
14.	Hugh Bedient	15-18	1915-BUF	FL	25	1912-1915
14.	Win Mercer	15-18	1902-DET	AL	28	1894-1902
16.	Bert Husting	14-6	1902-B/P	AL	24	1900-1902
17.	Van Lingle Mungo	14-7	1945-NY	NL	34	1931-1945
18.	Elden Auker	14-13	1942-STL	AL	31	1933-1942
18.	Johnny Lush	14-13	1910-STL	AL	24	1904-1910
20.	Allie Reynolds	13-4	1954-NY	AL	39	1942-1954
21.	Dutch Ruether	13-6	1927-NY	AL	33	1917-1927
22.	Harry Moran	13-9	1915-NEW	FL	26	1912-1915
23.	Lew Moren	13-14	1910-PHI	NL	26	1903-1910
23.	Red Donahue	13-14	1906-DET	AL	33	1893-1906
23.	Brian Holman	13-14	1991-SEA	AL	26	1988-1991
23.	Bob Walk	13-14	1993-PIT	NL	36	1980-1993
27.	George Suggs	13-17	1915-BAL	FL	32	1908-1915
27.	Larry Jackson	13-17	1968-PHI	NL	37	1955-1968
29.	John Tudor	12-4	1990-STL	NL	36	1979-1990
30.	Hooks Dauss	12-6	1926-DET	AL	36	1912-1926
31.	Max Fiske	12-9	1914-CHI	FL	25	1914-1914
32.	Erv Lange	12-10	1914-CHI	FL	26	1914-1914
32.	Jerry Nops	12-10	1901-BAL	AL	26	1896-1901
32.	Sig Jakucki	12-10	1945-STL	AL	35	1936-1945
35.	Elmer Stricklett	12-14	1907-BKN	NL	30	1904-1907
36.	Doc Medich	12-15	1982-TX/ML	AL	33	1972-1982
37.	Jack Cronin	12-23	1904-BKN	NL	30	1895-1904
38.	Phil Douglas	11-4	1922-NY	NL	32	1912-1922
38.	Dutch Leonard	11-4	1925-DET	AL	33	1913-1925
40.	Joe McGinnity	11-7	1908-NY	NL	37	1899-1908
41.	John Denny	11-10	1986-CIN	NL	33	1974-1986
42.	Fred Toney	11-12	1923-STL	NL	34	1911-1923
43.	Don Wilson	11-13	1974-HOU	NL	29	1966-1974
43.	Joe Bowman	11-13	1945-CIN	NL	35	1932-1945
45.	Earl Moore	11-15	1914-BUF	FL	34	1932-1945

46.	John Malarkey	11-16	1903-BOS	NL	31	1894-1903	55.	Max Butcher	10-8	1945-PIT	NL	34	1936-1945
47.	Bill Carrick	11-17	1902-WAS	AL	28	1898-1902	58.	Dan Marion	10-9	1915-BKN	FL	24	1914-1915
48.	Ham Iburg	11-18	1902-PHI	NL	24	1898-1902	59.	Doc Reisling	10-10	1910-WAS	AL	35	1904-1910
49.	Pete Dowling	11-27	1901-ML/CL	AL	?	1897-1901	59.	Vida Blue	10-10	1986-SF	NL	36	1969-1986
50.	J.R. Richard	10-4	1980-HOU	NL	30	1971-1980	59.	Wilbur Wood	10-10	1978-CHI	AL	36	1961-1978
51.	Ed Durham	10-6	1933-CHI	AL	24	1929-1933	62.	Ray Fisher	10-11	1920-CIN	NL	32	1910-1920
51.	Jack Morris	10-6	1994-CLE	AL	39	1977-1994	62.	Wally Hebert	10-11	1943-PIT	NL	35	1931-1943
53.	Tom Seats	10-7	1945-BKN	NL	34	1940-1945	64.	Pete Broberg	10-12	1978-OAK	AL	28	1971-1978
53.	Cy Barger	10-7	1915-PIT	FL	30	1906-1915	65.	Tiny Chaplin	10-15	1936-BOS	NL	30	1928-1936
55.	Frank Smith	10-8	1914-BAL	FL	34	1904-1915	66.	Mal Eason	10-17	1906-BKN	NL	27	1900-1906
55.	Benny Frey	10-8	1936-CIN	NL	30	1929-1936							

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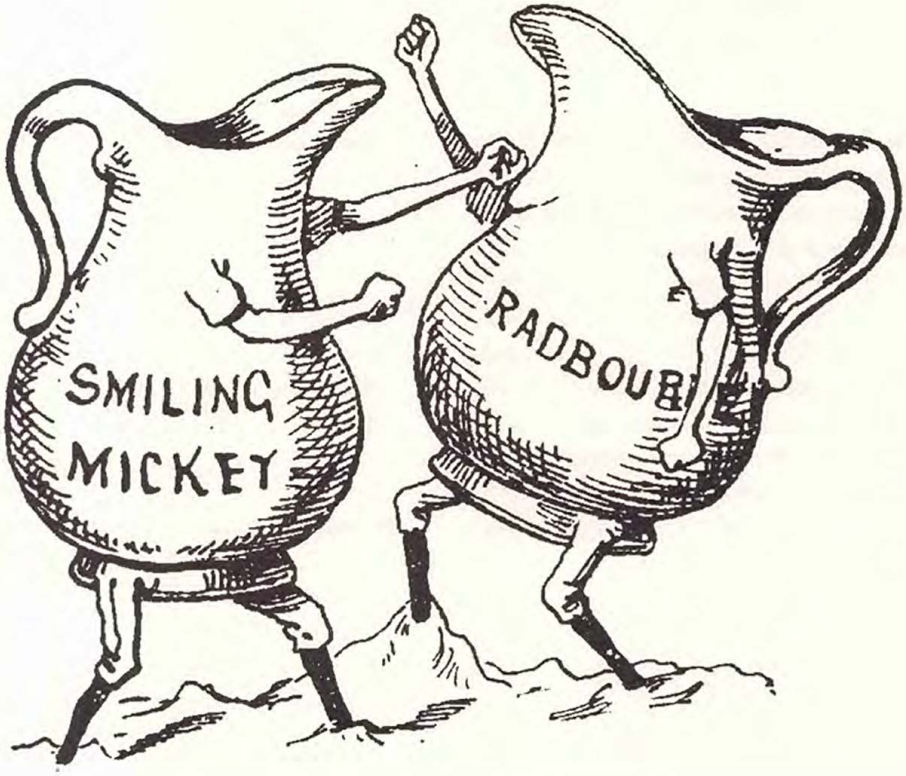

The Shutout Story

It's the frequency that counts

Joe Murphy

In his 21-year career, Walter Johnson hurled 110 shutouts. I confidently nominate this as baseball's most unapproachable record—an achievement which will never be challenged, much less bettered.

His closest competitors (all long since deceased) are Grover Alexander (90), Christy Mathewson (80), and Cy Young (76). The top "modern" pitcher is Warren Spahn, who retired in 1965 with 63 shutouts. In more recent times Tom Seaver, Nolan Ryan, Bert Blyleven, and Don Sutton have concluded their careers with 61, 61, 60, and 58, respectively. Of current pitchers, the "Shutout King" is Roger Clemens, with 41 through 1997.

An analysis of *The Baseball Encyclopedia* (10th Ed.) gives us some fascinating insights into almost twelve decades of pitching brilliance. I submit that the true test of shutout supremacy is the frequency of shutouts, as measured by the number of games in which the hurler is the starting pitcher. In an article in the 1987 *Baseball Research Journal*, Robert E. Shipley analyzed the performance of those pitchers with more than 50 percent of their appearances as a starter over ten or more years. My list may not be quite as restrictive. It embraces all pitchers with 10 or more shutouts, who blanked the opposition once in every seven or fewer starts. Here are the results:

Frequency of Shutouts Pitched as Measured by Games Started

(20 or more shutouts)

	ShO	GS	GS/ShO
Ed Walsh	57	315	5.53
Joe Wood	28	158	5.64
Addie Joss	46	260	5.65
Mordecai Brown	56	332	5.93
Walter Johnson	110	666	6.05
Orval Overall	30	182	6.07
Reb Russell	24	147	6.13
Grover Alexander	90	599	6.66
Lefty Leifield	32	216	6.75
Rube Waddell	50	340	6.80
Lew Richie	20	137	6.85
Christy Mathewson	80	551	6.89

(10-19 shutouts)

	ShO	GS	ShO per GS
Harry Krause	10	57	5.70
Jimmy Dygert	16	104	6.50
Rube Foster	15	103	6.86
Lou Fette	14	97	6.93

It may be argued that the correct ratio is the rela-

Joe Murphy is a charter member of SABR's Lefty O'Doul Chapter. Lefty had one major league victory in his pitching career. It was not a shutout.

tionship of shutouts to games won. If such a standard is chosen, these statistics are revealed:

Frequency of Shutouts Pitched as Measured by Games Won

(20 Or More Shutouts)

	ShO	GW	GW/ShO
Irv Young	21	63	3.00
Reb Russell	24	81	3.38
Ed Walsh	57	195	3.42
Addie Joss	46	160	3.48
Nap Rucker	38	134	3.526
Orval Overall	30	106	3.533
Lew Richie	20	74	3.70
Bob Porterfield	23	87	3.783
Walter Johnson	110	417	3.791
Ken Raffensberger	31	119	3.839
Rube Waddell	50	192	3.840
Lefty Leifield	32	124	3.875
Dean Chance	33	128	3.878
Mort Cooper	33	128	3.878
Johnny Vander Meer	30	119	3.967
Lefty Tyler	32	127	3.969

(10-19 Shutouts)

	ShO	GW	ShO per GW
George Bell	17	43	2.53
Lou Fette	14	41	2.93
Bill Burns	10	30	3.00
Steve Arlin	11	34	3.09
Jim Pastorius	10	31	3.10
Carl Willey	11	38	3.45
Elmer Stricklett	10	35	3.50
Al Javery	15	53	3.53
Jimmy Dygert	16	57	3.56
Mal Eason	10	36	3.60
Bill Stoneman	15	54	3.60
Harry Krause	10	36	3.60
Fred Glade	14	52	3.714
Frank Miller	14	52	3.714
Rube Foster	15	58	3.87
Johnny Lush	17	66	3.88
Otto Hess	18	70	3.89

Consider for a moment a pitcher who is handed the ball for his one and only start in the majors. He not only pitches a complete game, but he hurls so effectively that the opposition does not score. Herewith, a most select group: Those who pitched a shutout in their only major league start::

Shutout in Only Start

	GS	G
Larry Anderson	1	16
Don Fisher	1	2
Luis Aloma	1	116
Frank Williams	1	333

Larry Anderson (not to be confused with Larry Andersen)pitched in 41-1/3 major league innings for the Milwaukee Brewers and Chicago White Sox between 1974 and 1977. His only big league start, at age 22, was with the Brewers in 1975. His other career win, and his three career losses, came in relief.

Don Fisher appeared in only two major league games—in 1945, with the New York Giants. He came to them in late August off the Cleveland sandlots at the age of 29, having been scouted by Marty Purtell. In welcoming him, the New York *Times* observed that he had "made quite a name for himself in Cleveland semipro circles the past summer." Several days after his arrival, he gave up two hits in five innings of relief against the Brooklyn Dodgers. His only other appearance—and his only big league start—occurred on September 30, the last day of the season. Before 4,717 half-frozen fans at Braves Field in Boston, he pitched thirteen innings of scoreless ball. His first baseman, Napoleon Reyes, hit a home run in the top of the thirteenth to give the Giants a 1-0 victory. Although Fisher went to spring training in Miami the following spring, manager Mel Ott apparently wasn't impressed. As the team prepared to head northward in late March, the *Times* correspondent noted that Fisher was one of five rookie pitchers who "haven't thrown a single ball in an exhibition." One week later he was optioned to Jersey City. He appeared in only 9 games during the 1946 International League season—seven as a starter—winning two (neither one was a shutout) and losing three. He was released in early July, and then returned to Cleveland, where he worked for many years as a foreman for the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company.

Luis Aloma and Frank Williams were career relief pitchers. Aloma pitched in 116 games with the Chicago White Sox in the early 1950s. On June 17, 1951, he made his first and only start after 46 previous relief appearances. He shut out the Philadelphia A's, 9-0. Williams, a workhorse, pitched in 333 games, with three clubs in the 1980s. In 1984—his rookie season with the San Francisco Giants—he relieved in nine games before starting his first, and only, major

A "Different" Sort of Shutout

Mention should be made of two pitchers, each of whom won only one major league game. Macmillan credits each with having pitched a shutout. However, in each instance, the shutout is listed as having occurred in a season in which each did not record a victory!

Major league scoring rules did not originally define shutouts. However, both major leagues had "in-house" guidelines, and the early baseball guides and the major newspapers contained annual shutout compilations. It was not until 1951 that the rules specified: "No pitcher shall be credited with pitching a shutout unless he pitches the complete game." This concept has been applied retroactively by baseball statisticians and researchers.

We first consider the career of Herb Bradley. He toiled for three undistinguished years—from 1927 to 1929—with the Boston Red Sox, winning one and losing four. His lone win came during the 1927 season, when he defeated the Philadelphia Athletics, 6 to 1, on September 29th. The records credit him with one shutout—in 1928—a season in which he won no games and lost three. How can this be?

On April 14, 1928, Bradley, pitching for the Red Sox, opposed Milt Gaston of the Washington Senators. The game was scoreless through five innings, each pitcher having allowed only two hits. Washington threatened in the top of the fifth, when Bennie Tate doubled, advanced to third, but was thrown out attempting to steal home in a double steal. After five innings, rain forced cancellation of the game. Both Macmillan and Total Baseball credit *each* of the pitchers with a shutout.

While the concept of a double shutout may seem to challenge the modern fan's imagination, I had the good sense (at the suggestion of Lyle Spatz) to seek the input and expertise of Joe Wayman, one of SABR's shutout gurus. Joe's research discloses that on many occasions, opposing pitchers in a scoreless game were each given credit for a shutout. For example, between 1901 and 1910, there were 16 such instances in the American League, and 9 in the National League. Overall, since 1876, there have been at least 80 double-shutout games. While there has not been historical consistency in the major league record-keeping shutout department, the guiding principle adopted by modern-day baseball statisticians seems to be: If a scoreless complete game (at least 4 1/2 innings) was played, both pitchers will be awarded a shutout, provided each has pitched all the way. We thus have the occasional anomalous statistic, exemplified by Herb Bradley, of a winless pitcher being credited with a shutout.

George Benjamin Stephens is shown in Macmillan as having pitched one shutout, in 1894, when he concluded his big league career with a no-win, one-loss record for the Washington Senators. In his two previous major league seasons, he had won one game—a 9 to 2 victory over Chicago in 1892—and lost seven. In the three games in which he appeared in the 1894 season (in each instance he was the starting pitcher), the Senators lost 9 to 8, 9 to 0 (a forfeit), and 15 to 5. In the forfeited game, Washington was ahead, 2 to 0, in the top of the sixth inning. Brooklyn scored a run, and when Stephens' teammates vigorously protested an adverse ruling by the umpire, and refused to continue playing, a forfeit was declared. Stephens clearly did not pitch a shutout in 1894, and Total Baseball, correctly, it would appear, does not credit him with having pitched one.

—J.M.

league game. He pitched a 5-inning, rain-shortened shutout against the Cardinals, winning 7-0, and allowing only two hits.

Next, we consider players who may have started many a game, but who won only one of them—and , in their only major league victory, pitched a shutout. Here they are:

Pitchers Whose Only Win Was a SZhutout

Herb Bradley	Washington	AL	1928
Bob Clark	Cleveland	AL	1920
Bill Cristall	Cleveland	AL	1901
Morrie Critchley	Pittsburgh	AA	1882
Dave Downs	Philadelphia	NL	1972
Don Fisher	New York	NL	1945
Claral Gillenwater	Chicago	AL	1923
John Hibbard	Chicago	NL	1884
Bill Lattimore	Cleveland	AL	1908
Don Loun	Washington	AL	1964
Paul Marak	Atlanta	NL	1990
John McPherson	Philadelphia	NL	1904
Spike Merena	Boston	AL	1934
Mike Modak	Cincinnati	NL	1945
Grover Powell	New York	NL	1963
Lefty Russell	Philadelphia	AL	1910
Dick Rusteck	New York	NL	1966
John Scheible	Cleveland	NL	1893
John Singleton	Philadelphia	NL	1922
Oad Swigett	Pittsburgh	NL	1939
Claude Thomas	Washington	AL	1916
George Walker	Baltimore	AA	1888
Ed Warner	Pittsburgh	NL	1912
Jesse Whiting	Brooklyn	NL	1906

Finally, there are those who labored mightily, and at some length, but the shutout was never theirs. Here are those who have started at least 80 games but have never achieved a shutout:

Most Games Started Without a Shutout

Roy Mahaffey	(1926-1936)	128
Al Nipper	(1983-1990)	124
Roger Erickson	(1978-1983)	117
Jim Hughey	(1891-1900)	113
Dan Daub	(1892-1897)	102
Bob Miller	(1957-1974)	99
Chris Knapp	(1975-1980)	99
Greg A. Harris	(1981-1995)	98
Eddie Solomon	(1973-1982)	95
Les German	(1890-1897)	92
Shawn Boskie	(1990-1995)	90
Scott Kamieniecki	(1991-1995)	89
Omar Olivares	(1990-1995)	87
Rheal Cormier	(1991-1995)	80

I find myself wondering whether Roy Mahaffey ever met Walter Johnson. Roy broke in with the Phillies in 1926, just as Walter was winding up his career. Somehow, I don't think they would have had much to talk about.

I wish to thank SABR members Joe Overfield, Lyle Spatz, and, most especially, Joe Wayman for their suggestions and assistance in the preparation of this article.

Mercy, Mercy, Mercy

Perhaps the most lopsided baseball game for which somebody actually bothered to keep score was played in Buffalo on June 5, 1869. The Niagara club beat the Columbia club, 209-10. In their biggest inning the Niagaras scored 58 runs. Third baseman S. Cowing and shortstop Hawley each scored 25 runs for the winners, while three of the Columbias scored twice each.

—David McDonald

Baseball's Perfect Hitters

Who says it's impossible to bat 1.000?

John Hillman

Many seek perfection, but few obtain it. In the history of baseball only sixty-four players have retired with perfect batting marks.

The majority garnered a solitary single in a solo at-bat. Nevertheless, these 1 for 1, one-hit wonders produced when the opportunity arose and exited baseball with their 1.000 averages intact. Eleven of this elite group belted doubles, four legged out triples, and one walloped a home run. Through 1995 eight men bettered their 1 for 1 counterparts. Seven achieved a 2-for-2 lifetime mark, and a solitary soul reigns supreme at 3 for 3. Three of the miniscule minority who collected multiple hits also slugged for extra bases.

The breakdown of perfect hitters by position yields interesting results. Twenty-four position players and forty pitchers left baseball at the 1.000 level.

The first 1.000 hitter in the majors played for the Columbus Buckeyes of the old American Association. Charles "Sparrow" McCaffrey caught two games in 1889 and gathered a single, a walk and scored a run. Three players joined the elusive 1.000 club in the 1990s: Matt Maysay, Jeff Banister, and Dave Liddell.

Michael "Skinner" Hopkins of the 1902 Pittsburgh Pirates remains the most obscure of baseball's perfect men. The native of Glasgow, Scotland, caught one game on August 24, 1902, and went 2 for 2 including a double. No other playing record of Hopkins exists. The elusive catcher might have been a sandlot player signed for only a few days or an outlaw player using an assumed name.

Fred Schemanske, a pitcher for the 1923 Washington Senators, collected his hits the hard way. He hurled in but a single game yet delivered twice in pinch-hit opportunities.

Pitcher Frank O'Connor never won a major league game in three mound opportunities, but carved a niche in the record book with his 2-for-2 performance at the plate. He belted the only home run among all perfect hitters for the 1893 Philadelphia Phillies.

Charlie Lindstrom, the son of Hall of Famer Fred Lindstrom, Scott Munninghoff, and Ed Rodriguez achieved one of the rarest baseball feats. In solitary at bats, they pounded the ball for the diamond's toughest hit, a triple. Lindstrom, who caught several innings of the season finale for the White Sox in 1958, remembers the day well. "My parents were at the ball park, and they were very excited," he recalled. "The first time up I walked, and the second time I hit the triple."

The Northwestern graduate admits to receiving some assistance. "The guy catching was Frank House," according to Fred. "He knew this was the only ball game I'd been in. It was a 3-1 pitch, and he said, 'I'd be looking for a fastball.' I was, and I hit it off the right field wall."

Hal Deviney threw only three innings for the 1920 Boston Red Sox and allowed seven hits and five runs. At the plate, however, the righthander smashed two hits, including a triple, to join the lifetime 2-for-2 club.

John Hillman, former college teacher, lives in Waco, Texas. His first book, co-authored with wife Kathy, will be released in Summer, 1998.

John Paciorek, brother of eighteen-year veteran Tom Paciorek, stands alone among baseball's perfectos. An injury played a major role in Paciorek's entry into the record book. According to the former bonus baby, "My back was bothering me at Modesto, so they brought me to Houston for treatment. They wanted to start an all-rookie team in the last game of the season. I didn't know if I could swing the bat, but I didn't want to miss the opportunity."

Future stars Joe Morgan, Rusty Staub, and Jimmy Wynn participated in this glorified exhibition finale against the New York Mets. Paciorek, however, stole the show with his hitting prowess. The eighteen-year-old right fielder batted seventh and stepped to the plate five times. Twice he walked and three times lined solid singles through the infield. Paciorek scored four runs and batted in two in his dreamlike debut.

Unfortunately, the back injury ruined his career, and the king of the 1.000 batting average never saw additional major league action. "I got so I couldn't bend over and couldn't throw," recalls the one-day veteran. "I lost flexibility, and Houston released me in 1967." The Indians organization signed Paciorek, but the old injury caused them to say farewell in 1969.

An old proverb states that a good man is hard to find. Logically, a perfect one would be almost impossible to locate. Baseball fans know, however, that 66 are listed as perfect in the annals of the sport's history.

Pitchers with 1.000 Batting Averages

Name	Team
George Abrams	1923 Cincinnati Reds
Claude Crocker	1944 Brooklyn Dodgers
Hal Deviney (3B, 2/2)	1920 Boston Red Sox
Mike Dupree	1976 San Diego Padres
Don Eddy (2B)	1971 Chicago White Sox
Uel Eubanks (2B)	1922 Chicago Cubs
Jay Fry	1923 Cleveland Indians
Miguel Garcia	1989 Pittsburgh Pirates
Ramon Garcia	1948 Washington Senators
Brett Gideon	1987 Pittsburgh Pirates
Larry Gowell (2B)	1972 New York Yankees
Lou Grasmick	1948 Philadelphia Phillies
Dave Gray	1964 Boston Red Sox
Jim Holloway	1929 Philadelphia Phillies
Bob Ingersoll	1914 Cincinnati Reds
Chet Kehn (2/2)	1942 Brooklyn Dodgers
Oscar "Huh" Knolls (2B)	1906 Brooklyn Superbas
John Kull	1909 Philadephia Athletics
Tom Lanning	1938 Philadelphia Phillies
Steve Lawson	1972 Texas Rangers
Tom Lipp	1897 Philadelphia Phillies
Larry Loughlin (2B)	1967 Philadelphia Phillies
Matt Maysey	1993 Milwaukee Brewers
Bill Meehan	1915 Philadelphia Athletics
Earl Mossor	1951 Brooklyn Dodgers
Scott Munninghoff (3B)	1980 Philadelphia Phillies
Frank O'Connor (HR, 2/2)	1893 Philadelphia Phillies
Pete Rambo	1926 Philadelphia Phillies
Ed Rodriguez (3B)	1973 Milwaukee Brewers
Mike Rowland	1981 San Franscisco Giants
Dave Sells	1975 Los Angeles Dodgers
Steve Shirley	1982 Los Angeles Dodgers
Pete Sims	1915 St. Louis Browns
Charley Suche (2B)	1938 Cleveland Indians
Bud Swartz	1947 St. Louis Browns
Chuck Tompkins	1912 Cincinnati Reds
Doc Tonkin (2/2)	1907 Washington Senators
Rupe Toppin	1962 Kansas City Athletics
Charles "Buzz" Wetzel	1927 Philadelphia Arhletics
Ade White	1937 St. Louis Cardinals

Position Players with 1.000 Batting Averages

Name	Team
Jeff Banister	1991 Pittsburgh Pirates
William "Doc" Bass	1918 Boston Braves
Steve Biras (2/2)	1944 Cleveland Indians
Charlie Burns	1902 Baltimore Orioles
Jackie Gallagher	1923 Cleveland Indians
Roy Gleason (2B)	1963 Los Angeles Dodgers
Mike Hopkins (2B, 2/2)	1902 Pittsburgh Pirates
Steve Kuczek (2B)	1949 Boston Braves
Dave Liddell	1990 New York Mets
Charlie Lindstrom (3B)	1958 Chicago White Sox
Louis "Red" Lutz (2B)	1922 Cincinnati Reds
Charles "Sparrow" McCaffrey	1889 Columbus Buckeyes
John Mohardt	1922 Detroit Tigers
Heinie Odom	1925 New York Yankees
Ralph "Curly" Onis	1935 Brooklyn Dodgers
John Paciorek (3/3)	1963 Houston Colt .45's
Bill Peterman	1942 Philadelphia Phillies
Clarence "Ty" Pickup	1918 Philadelphia Phillies
Fred Schemanske (2/2)	1923 Washington Senators
Roe Skidmore	1970 Chicago Cubs
William "Tige" Stone	1923 St. Louis Cardinals
Allie Watt (2B)	1920 Washington Senators
Al Wright	1933 Boston Braves
George Yantz	1912 Chicago Cubs

Legend: 2B-Double, 3B-Triple, HR-Home Run, 2/2 - 2 for 2, 3/3 - 3 for 3.

Anatomy of a Streak

A Yankee record that's lasted over sixty years

Sandy Litwin

On Sunday, August 2, 1931, the New York Yankees played a doubleheader against the Boston Red Sox in Boston. At the start of play the Yankees were in third place, trailing the league-leading Philadelphia Athletics by an insurmountable 15 games. The Washington Senators were 11 games behind the Mackmen.

Washington beat Philadelphia that day, 10-6, gaining one game in the standings, while the Yankees split the twinbill, winning the first game 4 to 1 behind Red Ruffing and losing the nightcap as former Yankee pitching ace Wilcy Moore hurled a 3-hit shutout beating George Pipgras, 1-0. Singles by centerfielder Earle Combs, third baseman Joe Sewell, and first baseman Lou Gehrig accounted for the only Yankee hits.

This had been a seemingly uneventful doubleheader, except for what proved to be one very interesting fact: it would be the last time the Yankees were shut out that season.

The New York team began the 1932 season having scored in the last 55 games of the previous year. By season's end, the shutout streak had grown to 211 consecutive games as Ruth, Gehrig, et. al., scored at least one run in every game of the season. This had never happened before. And it hasn't happened since.

The Yankees continued their winning ways by sweeping the Chicago Cubs in the World Series.

The New York team kept the streak alive well into the summer of 1933, but on August 2, playing in their ninety-eighth game of the year, Philadelphia's ace, Lefty Grove, blanked Joe McCarthy's men, 7-0, posting his 16th win against only 6 losses. Grove, who fanned six, was en route to a 24-8 record. The future Hall of Famer yielded only five singles (three to Earle Combs, one to second baseman Tony Lazzeri and one to catcher Bill Dickey). Four Yankee runners reached second. Only one reached third.

The Yankees had numerous scoring opportunities against Grove. In the fourth inning, Combs singled and advanced to second on Joe Sewell's infield out. Grove then walked Ruth. With runners on first and second, Grove struck Gehrig out and got left fielder Ben Chapman to ground out, third to first.

In the sixth with one out, Combs again singled and Sewell followed with a walk, but Grove fanned both Ruth and Gehrig.

The Yankees came closest to scoring and continuing the streak in the eighth inning. Shortstop Frankie Crosetti led off with a walk. Pitcher Red Ruffing pinch-hit for starter Herb Pennock and flied out. Combs collected his third single of the afternoon sending Crosetti to third. Then Grove, working very carefully to Sewell, walked him, loading the bases for Ruth, with Gehrig to follow. Grove struck the Babe out for the third time in the game; Gehrig ended the threat flying to Doc Cramer in center.

Thus, the astounding record of 308 consecutive games played without being shut out came to an abrupt end. The best previous record had been 132

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consecutive games set thirty-nine years earlier, in 1894, by Boston (NL) and Philadelphia (NL)

The Yankee team of 1931, which had begun the streak, was blessed with some very talented ballplayers in addition to Ruth and Gehrig. The lead-off hitter was generally center fielder Earle Combs, a lifetime .325 batter and future Hall of Famer (1970). The lefthand-hitting Combs played his entire career in the Bronx, where he batted over .300 nine times. He had an accurate arm and outstanding speed, leading the AL in triples in 1927 (23), 1928 (21), and 1930 (22).

Hitting second and playing third base was Joe Sewell, who came to the Bronx after a successful 11-year stint with the Cleveland Indians. Sewell batted over .300 in ten of his fourteen seasons. The lifetime .312 hitter was elected to the Hall in 1977. Sewell had been the player who took over for Ray Chapman, following his death after being struck by a Carl Mays pitch. He is best known, however, for being the most difficult man in the history of the game to strike out. The lefty batter fanned only 114 times in 7,132 at-bats. In 1925, Sewell fanned just four times in 608 times up.

Batting fifth, behind the four future Hall of Famers, was left fielder Ben Chapman, a temperamental and combative player with a respectable career average of .302. An infielder in his rookie year of 1930, "Chappy" was moved to left when the Yankees obtained Sewell the following year. Chapman brought blazing speed to an already fleet-footed team.

Righthanded-hitting shortstop Lyn Lary batted sixth. The versatile infielder succeeded Mark Koenig at the position. Lary knocked in 107 runs in 1931, the most ever by a Yankee shortstop.

Hitting seventh and playing second base was righthand-hitting Tony Lazzeri, another future Hall of Famer (1991). A great clutch hitter, Lazzeri was the club's regular second baseman for his entire twelve-season career with the Yankees.

Batting in the eighth spot was the great lefthand-hitting catcher Bill Dickey, the sixth future Cooperstown inductee (1954) in the regular lineup. A lifetime .313 hitter, Dickey was a member of eight World Series teams.

In 1932, the Yankees won 107 games while losing only 47. There was one basic change in the lineup from the previous year—a 21-year old rookie by the name of Frankie Crosetti took over at shortstop from Lary. "The Crow" played his entire seventeen-year career in the Bronx and was a member of seven American League Champion teams.

The '32 Yankees took the season series from Boston (17-5), Cleveland (15-7), Chicago (17-5), Detroit (17-5 with one tie and one game replayed), Philadelphia (14-8), and St. Louis (16-6). They were 11-11 with Washington. The Yankees were limited to one run scored only eleven times the whole season, and three of those games they won.

In a particularly interesting game played on August 13, the Yankees and Senators met for the first time since the July 4 doubleheader between the teams in which Bill Dickey drew a 30-day suspension and a then-hefty fine of $1,000 as a result of a clash with outfielder Carl Reynolds, who suffered a broken jaw.

Red Ruffing dueled Tommy Thomas for nine scoreless innings. The shutout record had never been in such jeopardy. With two outs in the tenth, however, Ruffing homered (his third hit of the game) and the streak was preserved.

On September 2, against these same Washington Senators, the Yankees scored their only run in the bottom of the ninth off Firpo Marberry. The headlines read, GEHRIG TRIPLES OFF MARBERRY WITH ONE OUT IN 9TH TO SCORE RUTH AND KEEP STREAK INTACT.

A week later, on September 9, in the second game of a twinbill against Detroit, the Yankees scored in the top of the third off righthander Buck Marrow. Yankee pitcher Danny MacFayden doubled and scored when utility outfielder Sammy Byrd singled. These two hits represented the total Yankee offense in a game called after five innings because of darkness.

With the very same lineup, the 1933 Yankees continued the streak, adding 97 more games, until that fateful day in August against Lefty Grove. In the 97-game stretch (60-37), only three times did the Yankees come close to ending the streak. They lost, 5-1, to the Browns in the first game of a doubleheader played on May 14. On July 20, Cleveland's Mel Harder tossed a three-hitter at them. The lone Yankee tally came when Ruth's walk was followed by Gehrig's single and Chapman's sacrifice fly.

Two days later Cleveland again defeated the Yankees, this time 2-1, behind the eight-hit pitching of righthander Monte Pearson. The Yankees scored in the third inning when Ruth singled, advanced to second on Gehrig's ground out, and came home on Chapman's single to center.

The Yankees had put some rather impressive statistics together in the streak. Gehrig hit .335 (406 hits in 1,213 at bats) with 69 homers and a truly amazing 310 runs batted in. The Babe batted .334 (329 hits in 986 at bats) with 84 homers and 271 RBIs. Dickey

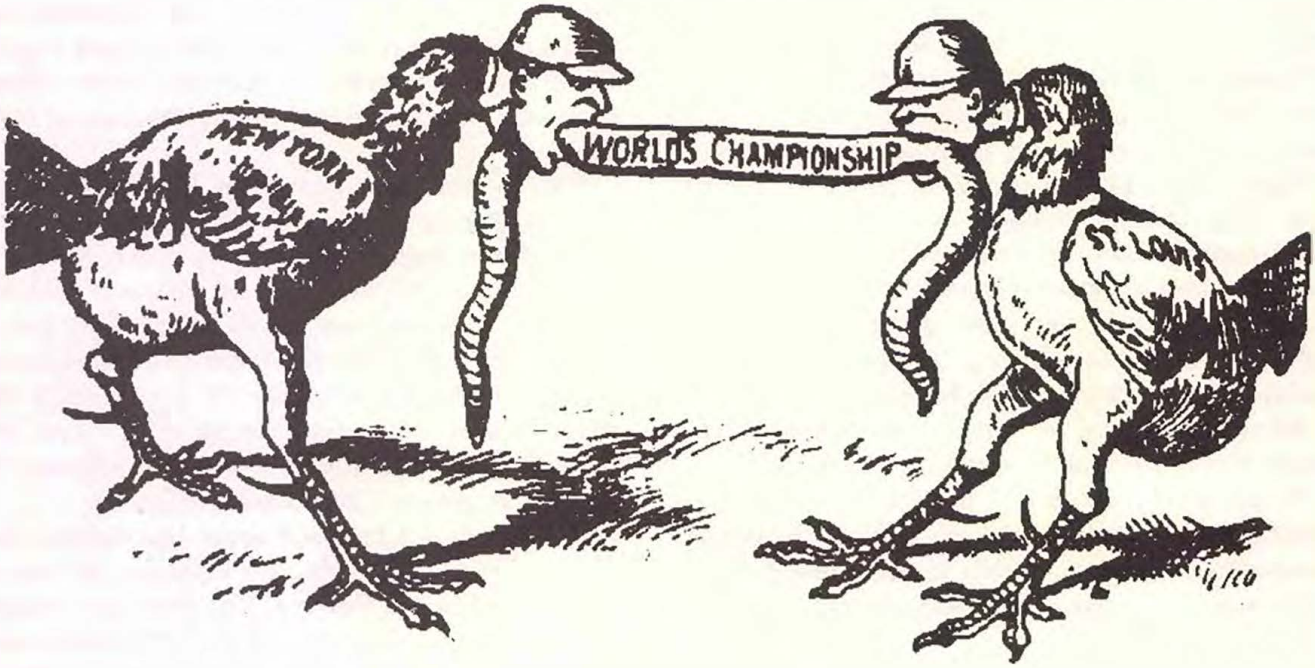
batted .318 in the 243 games in which he participated. Ben Chapman finished the streak at .310 while Combs compiled a .308 average. Tony Lazzeri batted .297, Sewell .286, and Crosetti .252. The entire team, including pitchers, batted .288 (3,137 hits in 10,886 at bats).

In 52 doubleheaders, the Yankees swept 24, lost 10, split 17. One doubleheader resulted in a tie in the second game.

The Yankees had a decisively winning record against six of their American League opponents. Overall they were winners in 203 games of the streak (a .666 winning percentage).

The team recorded one six-game winning streak, three seven-game streaks, two nine-game streaks and two ten-game streaks. Never did they lose more than four games in a row, and that happened twice. The Yankees were 10-12 in extra-inning contests and scored in double-digits a whopping 55 times. The team from the Bronx scored at least two runs in 289 out of 308 games played.

During the Yankee streak, the seven other AL teams suffered a total of 115 blanks for an average of 16+ shutouts while the eight NL clubs were shut out a total of 158 times for an average of just under 20 apiece. The Philadelphia Athletics, led by Foxx, Simmons, and Cochrane, were scoreless a mere five times—an impressive performance in its own right. But statistically, at least one team was shut out almost every time the Yankees played.



A Great Day for Baseball

San Diego's string of home games without rainouts

Joe Naiman

A week before Cal Ripken surpassed Lou Gehrig's record for consecutive games played, the San Diego Padres achieved a milestone streak of their own. On August 31, 1995, the Padres played their thousandth consecutive home game without a rainout. As of the end of 1997 the streak stood at 1,178 consecutive home games without a rainout and 1,065 consecutive home dates (the thousandth was reached on September 20, 1995) without a rainout.

The Padres' last home rainout was on April 20, 1983. But there are asterisks with regard to their lack of subsequent rainouts. On September 28, 1983, the game between the Padres and the Dodgers ended in a tie when rain fell in the fourteenth inning and the game was called. In 1991 a spring training home game in Yuma was rained out. And just as the last-minute decision to scrap the replacement players and delay the 1995 season saved Cal Ripken's streak, the delay saved the Padres' streak. On April 16, 1995, nearly half an inch of rain fell in San Diego, which almost certainly would have resulted in postponement of the Padres' game against Florida that Easter Sunday afternoon.

The location of the Padres' home games in San Diego (except for the three 1996 "home" games in Monterrey, Mexico, which count in the team's home attendence totals and are thus included in the streak, and the three "home" games, including one doubleheader, in Hawaii) is one reason why the Padres became the first major league team in an outdoor stadium to play 1,000 home games without a rainout. The Dodgers and Angels also have had streaks of avoiding rained-out home games which reached the seven hundreds. The longest streaks of the Giants and Athletics are in the four hundreds.

Then again, the September, 1983, game called by rain illustrates a disadvantage of the Padres. San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium is used not only by the Padres, but also for football by the Chargers and San Diego State University Aztecs. In 1983 the San Diego Sockers played home games at the stadium during a season corresponding approximately to that of the Padres. The promotion on the Padres' schedule known as the KGB Sky Show, a laser show sponsored by a local radio station, is currently held in conjunction with Padres' games, but has been held after Sockers' games and also in conjunction with rock concerts held at the stadium. Such a rock concert was held in September, 1983, and along with the football and soccer games left the field in poor condition by September 28.

The rainfall between 4:30 p.m. September 28 and 4:30 p.m. September 29 measured only .05 inches at the Lindbergh Field weather station and .04 inches at the San Diego State University measuring station, but in addition to the field's poor shape the ground crew did not have the key to unlock the storage area that held the equipment to repair the field. The game was called at 11:55 P.M., only 46 minutes after the

Joe Naiman is a freelance writer who lives in Lakeside, California. *He wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Padres official scorer Bill Zavestoski, who has performed independent research on the Padres' streak of games without a rainout.*

rainfall began at 11:09 P.M.

Exact meteorological totals for rain-postponed games are sketchy. The San Diego *Union* did not provide data for all three measuring stations, and even if other sources were used for the smaller weather stations it would still not necessarily be reliable because rainfall totals are often measured for 24-hour periods other than midnight through midnight. The rainfall totals provided here are only intended to provide an indication of the level of rainfall.

San Diego receives an average of 9-1/2 inches a year, mostly between October and April, but because of the variations among different areas, the Montgomery Field and San Diego State University weather stations are probably more applicable for meteorological information concerning San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium. Official San Diego rainfall totals are taken from the Lindbergh Field airport, which is coastal, but the stadium is six miles inland. The Montgomery Field airport is approximately one and one-half miles west and two miles north of the stadium; San Diego State University is within a half-mile latitude and about three miles east of the stadium.

Monthly rainfall totals from Montgomery Field, which has an annual rainfall of 10.44 inches, were available only from July, 1990. During that time (through August, 1995) Montgomery Field's annual average was 0.62 inches in April, 0.11 inches in May, 0.16 inches in June, 0.16 inches in July, 0.01 inches in August, 0.04 inches in September, and 0.24 inches in October.

The San Diego State weather station averages 12.16 inches annually. Monthly averages taken from measurements between April, 1958, and January, 1991 included figures of 1.06 inches for April, 0.31 inches for May, 0.08 inches for June, 0.02 inches for July, 0.08 inches for August, 0.29 inches for September, and 0.40 inches for October.

The Lindbergh Field station averages 9.90 inches annually, including 0.79 inches in April, 0.19 inches in May, 0.07 inches in June, 0.02 inches in July, 0.10 inches in August, 0.24 inches in September, and 0.37 inches in October. Lindbergh Field uses 30-year totals, recomputed every ten years.

By comparison, the Los Angeles Dodgers, whose measurements come from the Los Angeles Civic Center, cite an average annual rainfall of 1.17 inches in April (in which the Dodgers have had seven rainouts since moving to Los Angeles), 0.23 inches in May (two rainouts), 0.03 inches in June, 0.00 inches in July, 0.12 inches in August (two rainouts), 0.27 inches in September (four rainouts), and 0.21 inches in October.

The Padres' April, 1983, rainout coincided with 0.39 inches of rain falling at the Lindbergh Field station that day (midnight to midnight). Prior to that storm the Padres' last rainouts were on consecutive days, April 28 and 29, 1980. The San Diego Union of April 30, 1980, reported 0.46 inches of rain at Lindbergh Field between 4:30 p.m. April 28 and 4:30 p.m. April 29; the San Diego *Union* also reported 0.79 inches of rain at San Diego State University.

Reported measurements for the April 16, 1995, game which was not played due to the strike settlement rather than due to the rain were 0.47 inches at Lindbergh Field and 0.49 inches at Montgomery Field. Two other stations close to San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium, La Mesa and Lemon Grove, reported 0.78 inches and 0.85 inches respectively.

The most recent threat to the streak was a 22-minute rain delay on May 5, 1995, the 943rd game of the streak. Lindbergh Field measured 0.14 inches, but the more applicable Montgomery Field measured only 0.05 inches of rain that day. The game was continued after the first-inning rain delay, preserving both the nonrainout streak and the Padres' losing streak at the time.

The Padres have had a total of fourteen home rainouts. Twice they have lost two consecutive games to rainouts: April 8 and 9, 1975, and April 28 and 29, 1980.

By comparison, entering the 1995 season the Giants had twenty-three home rainouts, the Dodgers fifteen, and the Angels fourteen plus one game postponed due to a power blackout.

The luck of scheduling has also played a part in the Padres' streak. It may rain in all three Southern California cities, but if the Padres are on the road their streak is preserved. The Padres were the visiting team for the last three rainouts in Dodger Stadium, which took place on three consecutive days, April 19 through April 21, 1988.

Other Southern California streaks—Although the Angels were rained out four times during their stint at the Dodger Stadium site (or Chavez Ravine, as the Angels called it when they played there), the Dodgers were not rained out in Dodger Stadium during that time. The Dodgers' first rainout in Los Angeles was against the Cardinals on April 21, 1967, ending a streak of 737 consecutive home games.

The streak was in jeopardy three days earlier at 734 when the April 18 season opener was delayed an hour and 18 minutes in the seventh inning. The stadium

was already soggy when the showers began falling at 6:00 P.M. on April 21. At 8:36 the 11,000 fans still on hand were told that the game had been postponed. Los Angeles' measured rainfall that day was .62 inches.

The Dodgers then racked up a streak of 724 consecutive games without a rainout. That streak ended on April 12, 1976, as the Dodgers' scheduled home opener against the Padres fell victim to .32 inches of rain and was called at 8:15 p.m. The rainout also extended Tommy John's streak of not playing. He was scheduled to make his return from his elbow surgery that night.

The Dodgers had also been rained out on the road two days earlier. The April 10, 1976, rainout in San Francisco was the last before the Giants accumulated a streak of 454 consecutive games before the rainout of October 2, 1981. The Giants' longest streak partially coincided with that of their Bay Area neighbors. The Athletics' longest streak, 413 home games, spanned from the rainouts of September 27, 1972, to April 14, 1978.

The Angels endured consecutive rainouts on September 18 and 19, 1965 before moving into Anaheim Stadium the following year. The first rainout in Anaheim Stadium was a preseason exhibition game which was to have been played on April 4, 1967. The first regular-season game lost to a rainout in Anaheim was on April 9, 1975, a night when the Angels were supposed to be playing the Royals. That was also the night when the Padres first lost consecutive games to rainouts, thanks to a rainfall of 1.96 inches at Lindbergh Field.

More on the Padres—The Padres' last rainout came close to being a second consecutive rainout. The night before the Atlanta Braves had a 7-0 lead in the fifth inning before a 33-minute rain delay in the fifth inning. The rain stopped, allowing the game to continue and become official, and the Braves defeated the Padres, 9-2, before 18,931 fans.

The Padres' last rainout also resulted in the game that ended Steve Garvey's consecutive-game streak at 1,207 games. The game against the Braves was made up as part of a doubleheader on July 29. It was during the first game of that doubleheader that Garvey broke his thumb sliding into home plate to end his streak.

Following the April 20 rainout, the Padres went on the road. They next played April 22 at St. Louis, where the Padres won 4-1. The winning pitcher was Dave Dravecky, and the losing pitcher was Bob Forsch. The win gave the Padres a 7-8 record, putting the team one game under .500.

After the road trip the Padres returned home to play the first game of their current streak before a crowd of 16,842. Again the Padres faced St. Louis, winning 4-3, and again Dravecky was the winner and Forsch the loser. And again, the Padres moved to within one game of .500, improving their record to 11-12.

The Padres, who finished the season with an 81-81 record, had a chance to reach .500 in the first game against the Braves July 29. However, a 2-1 loss to the Braves, with Pasqual Perez as the winning pitcher and Tim Lollar as the loser, put the Padres' record at 49-51. But the Padres won the second game and ended the night one game under .500.

The September 28 game which lasted 13-1/3 innings ended in a tie and did not count in the standings (although it counted as an official game) and was replayed a part of a doubleheader the next day. Sid Monge was the winning pitcher as the Padres took the opener, 7-1. After a 4-1 win in the nightcap to sweep the doubleheader, the Padres' record stood at 79-80, again one game under .500.

The Padres' thousandth consecutive home game without a rainout resulted in Ron Villone being handed his first major league loss as Darrin Fletcher homered in the tenth inning to give Montreal a 4-3 win. The loss gave the Padres a 56-59 record. Had they won that game, they would have been 57-58, one game under .500.

Nellie Fox

The long road to Cooperstown

David Gough

The distance between Interstate 88 and Cooperstown, New York, is just nineteen miles of pleasant driving along Highway 28. But for the fan making a first pilgrimage to baseball's mecca the final few miles of the trip seem to take an eternity.

Nellie Fox, were he still alive, might also speak of the long and winding road to Cooperstown. Jacob Nelson Fox was the 1950s version of "Charlie Hustle." Described by some as a "self-made player," he was a classic overachiever who became one of baseball's best clutch players. He epitomized a Chicago White Sox club built on speed and guts. Known as the "Go-Go Sox," the team combined great defense and an offense that manufactured runs one at a time, and when it finally won the American League pennant in 1959 it was a victory of sorts for all hardworking, blue collar Americans. It was only fitting that Nellie Fox was named that season's Most Valuable Player, beating out teammates Early Wynn and Luis Aparicio, who finished second and third in the voting.

Humble beginning—Few could have foreseen that the small kid from St. Thomas, Pennsylvania, would become a major league All Star. Born on Christmas Day in 1927, Fox often credited his father Jake's semi-pro baseball career and his mother's playing catch with him behind the family barn for his early love of the game. In the spring of 1944, when he was barely 16, he convinced his father to drive him the short distance from his home to Frederick, Maryland, where the Philadelphia Athletics were holding a tryout camp. The war had depleted much of the country's best baseball talent, and anyone with potential was being given a look. Already sporting a huge wad of tobacco plugged into his left cheek, the youngster exuded confidence. What he lacked in natural ability he made up for with hustle and hard work. Connie Mack, age 81 at the time and in his forty-seventh year of managing, was impressed enough with the teenager to get his name on a contract.

Fox was assigned to the Lancaster (PA) Red Roses of the Class B Interstate League, beginning his career as an outfielder and first baseman. Too short at 5'8" to be an everyday first baseman, he was soon switched to second, where he struggled making the pivot in turning the double play. He coaxed anyone who would do it to stand in at shortstop and feed him hundreds of baseballs so that he could perfect his movements around the bag. The extra work paid off, and by 1949 he was part of an Athletics team that completed a major league record 217 double plays.[1]

Although he batted .314 in 1945 and led the Interstate League in games played, at bats, runs, hits and triples, he was not considered one of the A's top offensive prospects. A military stint cut into his professional career in 1946 and 1947, and despite a brief major league visit during the '47 season he was back in the minors the following year. Leading the Western League in base hits that summer earned him another look, and by 1949 he was in the majors to

David Gough's first baseball glove was a J.C. Higgins "Nellie Fox" autographed model. The moment he put it on, Fox became his favorite player.

stay. But Mack was not sufficiently impressed with Fox's .255 average in 88 games that season, so in October he traded him to Chicago for journeyman backup catcher Joe Tipton. At the time he supposedly told a fellow American League owner, "That shrimp is too small. He'll never hit big league pitching."[2] Mack's blunder has been called one the most lopsided deals in baseball history.

Fox struggled to make the White Sox roster in 1950, but by the following season he began a string of eleven consecutive years as an American League All-Star selection. He batted eighth in the order on opening day of the 1951 season, but soon was penciled into the number two slot where he stayed for thirteen years. Still his success didn't come easily. Hours of extra batting practice and soaking up everything he could learn from rookie skipper Paul Richards and coaches Jimmy Adair and Roger "Doc" Cramer resulted in his becoming one of baseball's most consistent hitters. Richards and Adair were instrumental in molding his fielding skills, while in Fox's own words some years later, "Cramer took care of the hitting."[3]

Transcendental Graphics

Fox leaping over a sliding Jim Lemon of the Senators to complete a double play.

Cramer got him to hit with a large barreled "bottle" bat which, along with his huge cheek of Red Man chewing tobacco and a red bandanna which he carried in his back pocket, became Fox's trademarks during the fifties. Fox learned to hit off his back foot, to cut down on his swing, to stay within himself, to go with the pitch, and to hit to all fields. Joe DeMaestri, former White Sox teammate, remembered, "He got that old-model bottle bat and made himself into a .300 hitter. He'd just stand there and blump, blump, blump. Nellie wasn't much of a power hitter, but he could do everything else with that bat."[4]

Achieving stardom—Richards was enamored of the youngster's determination. "I've never seen anybody who wanted to play more than Fox did," the veteran skipper once said. "In spring training you had to run him off the field to get him to rest. I mean literally run him off the field."[5] So confident were the White Sox that Fox would develop into their everyday second baseman that they packaged All- Star Cass Michaels in a trade with Washington on May 31. Fox batted .313 in 1951, and the club climbed from sixth place to fourth. "It got," noted Gus Zernial, who was in Chicago during Fox's first two years there, "so that I would rather see Nellie at the plate in a clutch situ-

ation than anybody on our ball club."[6] Starting in 1952 the Chisox finished third five years in a row until Al Lopez joined the club from Cleveland and managed the team to a pair of second-place seasons. Finally, in 1959, Chicago captured its first American League flag in forty years by five games over the Indians, Lopez's former club.

Fox, meanwhile, was the model of consistency, hitting above or near .300 every year and being among the league leaders both offensively and defensively. He was the undisputed team leader and fan favorite. "[His] constant banter reverberated throughout the stands," recounts one writer, "and no one ever knew whether it was hustle or nervous energy (or both) that kept him in constant motion."[7] Few turned a double play better than Fox, who had the unique good fortune of being paired with two outstanding Venezuelan shortstops during his White Sox career, Chico Carrasquel and Luis Aparicio. In 1958 he was rewarded with a $42,000 contract, making him the highest-paid player in team history. During the pennant-winning MVP season of 1959 he batted .306. Although the Sox dropped the six-game World Series to the Dodgers, Fox batted .375 in the fall classic.

Fox was a "meat and potatoes" guy, both on and off the field. He played through injuries to put together a string of 798 straight games, still the tenth-best consecutive games mark of all time. He always gave a hundred percent, ever sacrificing his body to record a putout or an assist. The story is told, whether apocryphal or not, that during Fox's first year with the White Sox, 6'4" 220-pound Johnny Lindell barrelled into him in an attempt to break up a double play and knocked him unconscious. With Fox prone on the infield dirt, a pair of Yankee runners scored as his teammates tried frantically to pry the ball out of his hand.

He was never an easy out and seldom struck out, going 98 games in one stretch without being fanned. Eleven times he led the league in fewest strikeouts. For his career, he struck out a mere 216 times in 9,232 at bats, or once every 42.7 trips to the plate. The Yankees' Whitey Ford once said, "Nellie was the toughest out for me. In twelve years I struck him out once, and I think the umpire blew the call."[8] He became one of the game's best drag bunters using his better-than-average speed to beat out many an infield hit. He was an outstanding two-strike hitter, as hard throwing Ryne Duren testified: "Nellie Fox was the toughest guy in the league for me to face: foul ball, foul ball, foul ball, foul ball, base hit or walk."[9]

Throughout his career he was noted for arriving at the ballpark hours before the game. He could often be found hitting pregame fungos to a teammate who needed the extra work.

Nearing the end—As the '60s began, however, the White Sox started showing their age. Their climb to the top had been gradual, but their decline was quick. The pennant-winning year was followed by third-, fourth-, and fifth-place finishes. The club kept Fox on board long enough for the 35-year old veteran to collect his 2,500th hit in a White Sox uniform. But that winter he was dealt to the Houston Colt 45s for a pair of pitching prospects and some cash. It was a bitter pill for both Fox and his fans to swallow, for he had believed that he would retire a White Sox and be provided a position within the organization. Though deeply disappointed, he never openly complained and apparently didn't harbor a grudge. He was a regular at Old Timers games at Comiskey Park once his playing days were over.

Following a respectable season with Houston in 1964, he retired as an active player early the next summer. His production had tailed off since 1960 and he finished as a career .288 hitter. Fox was named a Houston coach, a position he held through the 1967 season. While there he took under his wing an error-prone second baseman named Joe Morgan and helped transform him into an All Star and future Hall of Famer. Leaving Houston, Fox became the first-base coach and hitting instructor with the Washington Senators. He stayed with the team when it relocated to Texas, until the Ted Williams regime departed in 1972.

Leaving the game—Despite his fiery temperament on the field, Fox lived a simple life off it. He married the first girl he ever dated, Joanne Statler, and the couple raised two daughters, Tracy and Bonnie. He never strayed far from his roots, blending in easily with the community during the winters once he hung up his spikes. A man of staid habits and a chronic early riser, he believed in eating a huge breakfast and getting the most out of each day. Like most ballplayers of his era, Fox worked in the off-season to supplement his baseball salary. For a time he was a clothing salesman in a Chambersburg department store. He was variously described as "a good neighbor," "a good friend," and "an ordinary guy" in his home town. His love for country and western music, especially Ferlin Husky, contributed to his "good ole boy" personality. Jim Landis recalled a trip back home with Fox when they were teammates. "It was just the opposite of what you'd expect when a hero returns home. Instead of

him waiting for people to call attention to him, he was the one honking the horn and waving at Joe Blow. That meant more to me than anything else because I really got to see what a good guy he was."[10]

No longer active in the game, Fox returned to his native Pennsylvania, where he operated his own bowling alley in the Chambersburg area. Ever the sportsman, enjoying every form of competition from pinochle to deer hunting, Fox was an exceptional bowler. Even as a ballplayer, he would challenge his teammates at local bowling alleys during spring training and on road trips. But baseball remained the passion of his life.

Unfortunately, he was not able to enjoy much of a retirement. In just his mid-forties he was diagnosed with cancer. Doctors attributed its origin to a virus that had likely lain dormant in his body for years. He spent the last five weeks of his life at the University of Maryland Hospital in Baltimore, where he died on December 1, 1975. He was three and a half weeks shy of his 48th birthday. In his death as in his life, he refused to passively surrender, and battled to the final out. In the words of one White Sox historian, it was "a brilliant life snuffed out early."[11] In a memorial service at his graveside in St. Thomas this summer, a minister eulogized him by saying, "Nellie was not a big man; he was not imposing in stature. But he left his mark in a big way. He accomplished much more than it appeared he should have."

Bidding for Cooperstown—Five years after his retirement from baseball, the name "Nellie Fox" appeared for the first time on the Hall of Fame ballot. For five years thereafter he received little support. The year following his death he received twice as many votes by the baseball writers, but still fell well short of election. In 1985, his fifteenth and final year on the ballot, he missed selection by a mere two votes.[12] His entrance into the Hall would be delayed for another twelve years.

In 1996 he exceeded the required seventy-five percent vote for election by the fifteen-member Veterans Committee, but because the committee is limited to electing only one former player each year Fox was again bypassed in favor of Jim Bunning, who received one more vote. Fox's long wait finally ended this past spring. He was formally inducted during official Hall of Fame ceremonies on August 3.

No one was of more value to the Chicago White Sox during the '50s than Nellie Fox. He was the consummate number two hitter, leading the American League in base hits four times. Six times he was the league's top fielding second baseman, winning three Gold Gloves. For ten consecutive seasons he received votes as the league's Most Valuable Player, winning the award the White Sox' pennant-winning season in 1959. In thirteen All Star games he batted .368, and in his only World Series he hit .375. Aside from the well-pronounced bulge in his cheek from the chewing tobacco with which he loaded up before each game, he was an ideal role model for young players. He was popular with both fans and teammates and, remembering the investment in his career made by Paul Richards and Doc Cramer, was an unselfish mentor to younger players.

His recognition as one of baseball's all-time greats was long overdue. "Pitchers couldn't strike out Fox," wrote the Associated Press' Tom Withers on the day of his election, "and neither could the Hall of Fame."[13]

Notes:

1. In time Fox became the master of the "phantom tag" of second base in turning the double play. It was a trick he learned from A's teammate Pete Suder, and was a major reason he avoided serious injury throughout his career. (See Norman Macht's discussion in "The Old A's Were Masters of the Double Play," *Baseball Digest*, December 1989, pp.68-70).

2. Shirley Povich, "Hall Door Closed Too Long for Fox," The Washington *Post*, 24 February 1997, p. C1.

3. Roger Kahn and Harry Wismer (Paul Lapolla, ed.), *The 1955 Mutual Baseball Almanac*, (Garden City, N.Y.:Doubleday, 1955), p. 26.

4. Danny Peary (ed.), *We Played the Game*, (New York:Hyperion, 1994), p. 170.

5. John Thorn, "Total Sports," http://www.totalwhitesox.com/players/info/pbio/fox-n101.html, p. 1.

6. Peary, *op. cit*, p. 133.

7. Eddie Gold, "One-Sided Swaps," *OldTyme Baseball News* (1996), vol. 7, no. 6, p. 6.

8. Rich Marazzi and Len Fiorito, *Aaron to Zuverink: A Nostalgic Look at the Baseball Players of the Fifties*, (New York: Stein and Day, 1982), p. 67.

9. Peary, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

10. Peary, *op. cit.*, p. 418.

11. Richard Lindberg, *Who's On 3rd?* (South Bend, IN: Icarus Press, 1983), p. 117.

12. In 1985, Fox received 295 votes; 297 were required for enshrinement. It was the closest losing margin in the history of the voting.

13. Tom Withers, "Nellie Fox, Lasorda Elected to Baseball Hall of Fame," Chicago *Tribune*,March 5, 1997, p. 2.

"That Ball's on the Queer!"

The day the dead ball was juiced

Mark G. Manuel

"Do you think the ball is juiced?" Looking at the offensive explosion of recent seasons, some might conclude that the question deserves consideration. But many factors can explain what we've witnessed: better hitters, weaker pitching, lighter bats, hitter-friendly parks, etc. Cries of "Juiced ball!" seem to accompany any noticeable jump in offensive stats. It can be argued, however, that a "juiced" ball, for the most part, is as mythical as Doubleday's invention of baseball. Usually a combination of factors, not a covertly altered ball, works to increase offensive production. The cork and rubber center ball of 1911, a significant change in the physical make-up of the ball, is about as close as twentieth century professional baseball has come to having a "juiced" ball. (Allegations of a "juiced" ball in the Southern Association's 1906 season will be discussed later.)

The older the deader—The "old" dead ball, used from the 1880s until 1910, consisted of a rubber center encircled by yarn and covered with hand-stitched horsehide. The strategy of the era differed markedly from that of today's game. Conventional tactics included choking-up on the heavier, thicker-handled bats of the day and slapping or punching the ball to "hit it where they ain't." Tobacco juice, licorice, dirt, and saliva all conspired to make the ball difficult to see and hit. Teams employed bunting, stealing, and hit-and-run to advance a base at a time and gain a run whenever possible. In his autobiography, Ty Cobb declares that teams fought for runs the way tug-of-war teams fight for an inch of turf. Then, in 1910, changes made to improve the quality of the ball inadvertently loosed the juice.

The juice is loosed—The cork and rubber center ball, used experimentally in the 1910 season and in a few 1910 World Series games, then permanently in 1911, came as an effort to provide a more durable, higher quality ball. In the quest for quality, quantity seems to have been an unintended consequence. The 1911 season produced the first .400-hitter duet (Cobb and Jackson) since the 1890s, and the AL batting average jumped 30 points. The number of .300 hitters jumped noticeably. The absence of any significant changes in rules or in overall style of play (except perhaps the free-swinging style of Shoeless Joe) leaves the ball as the ostensible source of the increased averages. After the 1913 season, however, averages in both leagues dipped a bit closer to the pre-1911 levels. Perhaps hurlers grew a bit wiser in their pitch selections and better able to deal with this unintentionally "juiced" ball. Regardless, most baseball historians extend the Dead Ball Era through 1919.

Juice II: the yarn—Many consider the ball of the 1920 season, the so-called "rabbit ball," a deliberate attempt at juicing. The introduction (or possibly reintroduction) of the better quality Australian yarn, in short supply during WW I, conceivably injected a bit of spunk. But according to SABR's Bill Curran, au-

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thor of *Big Sticks*, the ball was not wound tighter or "juiced" in any intentional way. Other factors, such as a change in hitting style, the decision to keep only clean balls in play, rules against "trick" pitches like the spitball, and thinner pitching ranks seem more likely to have brought about the offensive gains of the '20s. The advent of the cushioned cork center in 1926 doesn't seem to have inflated offense, despite Ruth's 60 homers in 1927.

As Curran indicates, talk of a "juiced" ball makes interesting press, but not always good physics. Readers interested in this topic are encouraged to consult his fascinating book for a more detailed discussion of the development of the "live" ball. But for now, back to the dead one.

"That ball's on the queer!"—In 1906, the ball, like Francisco Franco in Chevy Chase's *Saturday Night Live* report, was still dead, and one that acted a tad spunkier than normal might quickly arouse suspicions. A ball that cleared the center field fence, bleachers, and scoreboard by thirty feet and landed in a pond in an adjacent public park for the longest home run to date in that ballpark, might seem to be "on the queer," to use a phrase of that time. This was the shot heard 'round the league that ignited the great "Rubber Ball" controversy (aka "The Summer of the Living Dead Ball") of the Southern Association's 1906 baseball season.

A good crowd attended the game in New Orleans on June 15, 1906, when Moxie Manuel, "the smiling ladies' day pitcher" for the New Orleans Pelicans, faced captain Otto Jordan and the visiting Atlanta Firemen. Early in the game suspicions had surfaced that something was different about the balls in play, but not until the bottom of the eighth did the substance hit the fan, culminating in a small-scale riot and the arrest of Jordan, Atlanta's second baseman.

The June 16 edition of the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* reports that the Pels trailed 5-3 with one out in the bottom of the eighth when:

> ... O'Brien, the next man up, cracked the ball into deep center. The ball struck the ground and bounced into the bleachers, and O'Brien made the circuit. The crowd went wild with delight. Stratton hit to third and beat the ball to first, and then Moxey [sic] Manuel came up, smiling under his Roman nose. Moxey saw the ball coming, swung at it and struck it fair amidships. The ball soared skyward, took a long flight over the center field fence and committed suicide by drowning in the lake in Athletic Park. Everybody stood up and yelled, and Moxey was the hero of the hour.

Substance ... meet fan! Umpire Kennedy threw out another ball, but before base-stealing ace "Bullet Joe" Rickert could step into the box, Jordan snatched up the new ball with the cry, "That ball's on the queer!" Umpire Kennedy ignored Jordan's plea that another ball be put into play.

Contending that the balls had rubber in them and that Atlanta was being robbed, Jordan declared his team would not finish the game. According to the June 16 Atlanta *Georgian* :

> Otto Jordan was ordered out of the game on account of kicking. He refused and in a moment a mob of angry fans swarmed onto the field and mobbed him. He was knocked in the face, but was rescued by ten policemen and as he was led out of the grounds was assailed and jeered by the crowd.

Umpire Kennedy declared the game a forfeit. Jordan, escorted by the police to a ballpark office, refused to relinquish the ball until put under arrest (at the urging of New Orleans manager Charlie Frank) by the Crescent City cops and charged with, among other things, petty larceny. As the paddy wagon made its way to Athletic Park, other accusations flew: O'Brien slid into home in the fourth intending to hurt Atlanta catcher Evers, and even said so at the time. (O'Brien had reached first on an infielder's error. Stratton's bunt and Manuel's single moved him around.) Manuel was throwing at the Atlanta boys' heads. Evers was knocked unconscious, but recovered and played the rest of the game. Atlanta papers carried the accusations of attempted beanballs. In New Orleans, opinions differed as to who had introduced the "live" balls.

Foreshadowing the fracas—Determining exactly when the Atlantans first became curious proves difficult. Several times early in the game, Atlanta players tested balls by throwing them to the ground and observing the rebound. The *Times-Picayune* explains: "The balls, though, did not seem to have much life in them." If a juiced ball had been introduced, it seemed to help the Firemen at the expense of the Pels. Atlanta touched up Manuel for five runs on four hits in the top of the first, two of the hits for extra bases. Shortstop Morse singled in the third and left fielder

Crozier added another double in the fourth. Meanwhile, the Pels, though they managed one run on one hit in their half of the first, rarely hit one out of the infield until the sixth when O'Brien doubled, scoring Beck, who had walked, and Pel catcher Stratton singled, sending O'Brien home.

In the seventh, the *Times-Picayune* reports: "...the Atlantans seemed to be playing with a ball that had a good deal of elasticity in it." A pitch, swung on by Jordan, hit in front of the plate and took a high bounce all the way to shortstop Chick Cargo. Cargo threw Jordan out at first, but the suspicious Jordan wrestled the ball from Beck and relayed it to his manager, Billy Smith, on the bench. Surrounded by Pels and not wishing to lose in this little game of keep away, Smith wound up and sent the ball out of the park and into the streets. Umpire Kennedy ordered Smith out of the park and into the streets. Pel center fielder Bird retrieved the ball, and play resumed.

In the bottom of the seventh, one buoyant ball, a foul, cleared the grandstand behind home plate. As a new ball was put into play, Atlanta right fielder Winters somehow managed to pocket a sample sphere. Vigilant fans yelled in protest, and Winters returned the ball to Kennedy. Then came the fateful eighth.

Dead ball postmortems—The revolving door justice of 1906 New Orleans put Captain Jordan out of the jailhouse and into the ballpark the next day. For their home plate heroics, Manuel and O'Brien received fashionable new hats from a local haberdasher. New Orleans papers told of the increased police presence at the park and bemoaned the number of incidents and problems occuring in the Southern Association that season: teams raiding each other's rosters, retaining suspended players, violence against umpires, etc. And on top of these charges came, as the June 19 *Times-Picayune* indicates: "...the cry of rubber balls in the game." Interestingly, the next sentence of the same article begins: "Granting there is a good deal of truth in the last claim...."

Truth or not, in the succeeding days rubber ball "sightings" became as common as Elvis (or UFO) sightings reported in supermarket tabloids. From Little Rock came the story of a curious autopsy. It seems that after the Atlanta club's first swing through New Orleans in May, it stopped for a series in Little Rock. There, in the office of Judge Kavanaugh, the league president, manager Smith protested that New Orleans had used "live" balls, one of which Smith had snuck out of New Orleans. Prior to purloining, Smith had conferred with umpire Rudderham, who worked the Atlanta-New Orleans games. Smith proposed to snatch one ball and mark it with indelible pencil for easy identification later. Rudderham, the June 16 *Times-Picayune* says, told Smith to "help himself to the mustard."

When Kavanaugh asked for evidence, Smith excused himself to retrieve the ball from his hotel. Meanwhile, Rudderham, umpiring in Little Rock at the time, paid Kavanaugh a visit. On his return, Smith produced the ball, recalled for the umpire the conversation in New Orleans and reminded him of the plan to mark the ball for identification. Rudderham remembered, and the eagle-eyed veteran ump scanned the suspect sphere, but found no marking. As if to prove that managers always see things more clearly than umpires, Smith detected a mark which the umpire finally recognized. The ball now quite literally resided in Judge Kavanaugh's court.

Like Shakespeare's Shylock waiting for the decision that would give him his pound of flesh, Smith looked on as the judicious league president gathered data. The ball measured not more than nine inches in circumference. It weighed the regulation five ounces. Kavanaugh reached for his knife. Smith watched expectantly. Kavanaugh made the cut, but the severed horsehide revealed the same insides as any other ball used in the league. The good judge turned to Smith, who muttered something about possibly having made a mistake and edged toward the door with the yolk—actually the whole omelet—on him.

Weeks later, in Shreveport, another dead ball suffered an unkind cut. Center fielder Apperious of the Montgomery club became suspicious of the last ball hit in the June 10 game, the last of Montgomery's series in New Orleans. After catching the unusually high fly, he concealed it until he reached the bench, where he turned it over to manager Mullaney. Mullaney took the ball with him to Shreveport, met with Pirate manager Gilkes, and the two dug in. Mullaney's report to club president Amerine charged that instead of the regulation twine, elastic surrounded the rubber center.

Sounding more like Clarence Darrow than a baseball manager, Charlie Frank fired back. The Montgomery team remained in New Orleans for two more days after the June 10 game. Why wasn't the ball examined in that time and in the presence of umpire Kennedy, who had worked the series? What evidence proves the ball Mullaney and Gilkes cut open originated in New Orleans and not in Montgomery's ball bag? Or Shreveport's? Frank recalled an incident (one umpire Kennedy also

remembered) from an earlier Montgomery-New Orleans game played in Montgomery. A ball, hit in front of the plate, bounded on one hop into the outfield. New Orleans chose to let the matter pass and not sling accusations at the Montgomery club. Perhaps, Frank suggested, Mullaney had cut open that ball. As his parting shot, Frank reminded everyone that the Montgomery club had tried to steal a New Orleans player the previous spring. Can such an outfit be trusted?

All's well that ends—Though not forgotten, the issue became secondary to the pennant race, and until September, rarely appeared again in New Orleans newspapers. One item in the July 20 *Times-Picayune* repeats rumors from Atlanta that Fireman fans had purchased rubber balls by the gross to pelt the Pelicans in an upcoming series of games in Atlanta.

In Atlanta on September 13, 1906, Otto Jordan filed suit for damages against both Charlie Frank and the New Orleans Baseball Club. Alleging false arrest, the suit sought $2,000 in damages, Judge Pendleton ordered the seizure of the Pels' share of gate receipts for the last series at Atlanta's Piedmont Park. A now taciturn Frank offered only, "My interests are in the hands of attorney Charles Hopkins, and I have nothing to say."

But Frank need not have worried. A new spirit of forgive and forget prevailed. On September 17, the *Times-Picayune* relates the "last chapter of the famous rubber ball incident." Judge Skinner, in the First City Criminal Court, dismissed theft charges, while Acting Recorder Connors dropped disturbing the peace charges in the First Recorders Court. According to the article, Pelican secretary Heinemann and club attorney J. J. Reilly "fixed matters up" with Judge Skinner and the Acting Recorder. The article concludes:

> This is the final chapter of the rubber ball talk. The charges and counter charges, damage suits and the like have all been wiped off the slate, and the Atlanta team has also withdrawn its charges against the Pelicans before the Southern League.

As the cool of autumn crept up on the summer of discontent, everyone seems to have been willing to kiss and make up. Did Jordan's suit influence the New Orleans club's willingness to "fix matters up?" Did the league, weary of all the bickering and parading around of dirty laundry, put pressure on folks to bury their hatchets? Had so much negative publicity begun to hurt teams at the ticket window? We can only try to read between the lines, for the principal players in the drawn out drama have since passed on.

One of these, Mark G. "Moxie" Manuel, has been the focus of this writer's research since June, 1993. June, it seems, was always an exciting month in the life and times of Moxie Manuel. June, 1906, found him embroiled in the Great Rubber Ball affair. A year later, June 15, 1907, he pitched a doubleheader shutout against 1906 league champion Birmingham. Two complete nine-inning games with identical scores of 1-0. No walks issued in either game. June, 1908 yielded his only major league victories. Pitching for Charlie Comiskey's White Sox, he got credit for defeating St. Louis, Philadelphia (and Eddie Plank), and the New York Highlanders. Ban Johnson himself awarded Moxie the New York win, overriding the decision of the game's official scorer. In June of 1910, in his debut with Mobile, Mox pounded out two singles and an RBI double to help his own cause in a 3-1 victory over Memphis, despite being, as *The Sporting News* asserts, "full of malaria" at the time. Perhaps the most significant June event came in 1912, while Mox pitched for the Bloomington Bloomers of the class B Three-I league. After a game with the Danville club, he met a future bride (his second of three), Miss Mayme G. Bates. My grandparents married in November of that year.

Acknowledgments

I wish to acknowledge and thank my Creator, who gave me the time and the energy to complete this work; Bill Curran, who spent a great deal of time on the phone New Year's Eve educating me on the development of the "live" ball; and the ladies at the Kenai (Alaska) Community Library, who got me the material I needed and tolerated my monopolizing the microfilm reader for days on end.

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The Limestone League

Spring training in Indiana during WWII

Steve Krah

When America went to war in the 1940s, baseball, like the rest of the nation, was forced to tighten its belt.

Balls were made of balata rubber, a "nonessential" wartime material. Travel restrictions during World War II affected the national pastime. All major league teams were forced to conduct spring training in the north. Six clubs—Chicago Cubs, Chicago White Sox, Cincinnati Reds, Cleveland Indians, Detroit Tigers, and Pittsburgh Pirates—landed in Indiana 1943-45. They formed an informal circuit that came to be called the Limestone League.

The Cubs, managed for two years by Jimmie Wilson and in '45 by Charlie Grimm, trained at French Lick and stayed at the French Lick Springs Hotel, turning a golf course fairway into a baseball field.

Also blowing into the quiet Orange County resort town from the Windy City were the White Sox, managed by Jimmy Dykes. The Pale Hose drilled in French Lick for two years, sharing hotel and training space with the Cubs, then moved to Terre Haute and took up residence at the Terre Haute House. The Chisox worked out at Memorial Stadium.

Indiana University in Bloomington was the training site and the Graham Hotel was the headquarters for Bill McKechnie's Reds. The Indians did their best to get in shape at Purdue University and Columbian Park in Lafayette. Members of Lou Boudreau's Tribe were guests at the Fowler Hotel. Evansville's Bosse Field and the Hotel McCurdy were the spring home of Steve O'Neill's Tigers. Muncie welcomed Frankie Frisch's Pirates to McCulloch Park and the Hotel Roberts. When soggy or frigid conditions prevailed, the Bucs took to the Muncie Fieldhouse.

Spring training during the war was a no-frills affair. It generally lasted just two or three weeks. Several fields were of the makeshift variety and many workouts were forced inside because of Indiana's often inclement March weather. Long underwear was standard issue. Sun tans were replaced by frostbite cases.

Because of the acute manpower shortage caused by the draft, most clubs went to camp with 25 to 30 players instead of the normal 40. Many players, including pitchers, were counted on to play multiple positions. Teams were always on the lookout for 4-F, overage, underage, and service discharged candidates to fill in for regulars who were in the service, at war plants, or reclassified and awaiting call.

By the start of the '44 season, about 340 major league players were in military service, not to mention more than 3,000 minor leaguers. The St. Louis Cardinals went from 22 farm clubs in '42 to six in '43. Only nine of the forty-one minor leagues that had operated in '41 were in business in '43. In '42, the seasno began with 31 began the season, finished with 26.

Cubs and White Sox in French Lick, Terre Haute— For years, French Lick had attracted visitors, including boxing champion Joe Louis, to its mineral

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baths. The Cubs and White Sox availed themselves of the opportunity to soak in the soothing sulphur springs 80 miles northwest of Louisville.

After a run around a sheltered horse track, along the Lost River, or over the wooded hills surrounding the spacious 600-room French Lick Springs Hotel, players would head for the basement bathhouse for a relaxing dip in the medicinal waters or a rubdown. Sox trainer Packy Schwartz was there with his ointments and medicines.

In 1943, according to the Associated Press, the hotel had only 175 rooms occupied, half of them by ballplayers. The hotel went all-out for its baseball tenants, allowing them to practice pitching in the auditorium when it rained and even donating mattresses for backstops. When weather permitted, the teams honed their skills on the 14th fairway just a step from the lobby. In return, the clubs permitted hotel guests to join them in calisthenics. Arguments at the corner drugstore were now not always war-related. Many centered on which was the better team, the Sox or Cubs.

Phil Cavarretta, MVP in the NL in '45, reflected on the French Lick experience.

"Boy, it was cold," recalled Cavarretta in a newspaper article decades later. "But it was wartime, and things weren't easy. Whatever they asked of us, we did. I was thankful just to be in spring training. Think of those kids who had to get into the service."

The Cubs were not always accommodating to the White Sox when it came to sharing facilities. So manager Dykes and White Sox coach Muddy Ruel scouted the countryside for a dry place to practice. They learned of several big barns in the community, which could be made ready for batting practice with some energetic use of pitchforks and rakes.

In '45, the Sox moved to Terre Haute. There they enjoyed celebrity, but not among everyone. "Some of the girls are all excited because there are ball players in town and are collecting autographs," said a Terre Haute waitress in a column written by Chicago newspaperman Arch Ward. "I'm not that way. I think they should be asking for *my* autograph."

Reds in Bloomington—The AP set the scene in 1943: "Missing are the palms, the petunias, the oleanders, and the mockingbirds, but Cincinnati's Reds, long accustomed to such things—and steaks this thick as well—are doing a bit of all right under their own program of hothouse training.

"March winds cannot reach the players to prevent them from getting the full benefit of their perspiration," wrote Tom Swope for the Cincinnati *Post*. Nine of the Reds' first ten workouts were indoors. Just once did they get on Jordan Field. Almost five inches of rain fell the first week the club was in Bloomington.

But after just three days, McKechnie reported that his team, in physical condition alone, was 25 percent better off than it was for the corresponding period of work in '42 in Florida.

Exclaimed Deacon Bill in the Bloomington *Telephone*, "They could go through a ballgame right now."

Part of the reason was "muscle magician" Bill Miller. The expert on body relaxation and scientific body flow had the Reds toe-dancing, squeezing little rubber balls in the palms of their hands, swinging and swaying their hips, pivoting and turning and stretching to develop back, shoulder, and abdominal muscles.

Indiana University coach Paul "Pooch" Harrell saw the Reds as an inspiration to his Hoosiers. "They watch the flawless play of the big-name stars," Harrell told the *Telephone*. "And then go about imitating them to the best of their abilities."

Ted Kluszewski, who broke in with the Reds in 1947, was spotted by the club as a slugger for IU. Kermit Wahl, IU's captain in 1944, was invited to camp in '45. In camp in '44 was 15-year-old pitcher Joe Nuxhall. He pitched in one game that summer, then returned to the majors eight years later. Today he is a Reds broadcaster.

The Reds batting cage was a masterpiece of wartime salvage. It was built by Matt Schwab and his brothers entirely of scrap materials—iron, pipes, wheels, etc.—and was retractable.

Indians in Lafayette—The huge fieldhouse at Purdue was a beehive of athletic endeavor in 1943. Buzzing here and there was a company of sailors and collegiate track men preparing for the Purdue Relays, as well as 25-year-old manager Boudreau and his Indians.

That's not to say the manpower problem was not present. Indians vice president Roger Peckinpaugh admitted to trying to buy players he once wouldn't have claimed on waivers "for fear I might get them."

"Spring training at Purdue was tough," said Cleveland pitcher Allie Reynolds in Harrington E. Crissey's book *Teenagers, Graybeards and 4-F's*. "Working on the soft ground outside and hard ground inside gave me a beautiful case of shin splints. Because so many players were going into the service, several of us worked out at two positions. My second position was center field."

A feature of the brand new Purdue Relays track

meet March 27, '43 was a 60-yard "Baseball Dash." Running in full uniform were representatives from Limestone League teams. Pirates outfielder James Russell won the race in 6.9 seconds, followed by Reds outfielder Bob Usher, Indians rookie pitcher Reynolds, Cubs outfielder Mizell Platt and Indians outfielder Hank Edwards.

Another Cleveland outfielder, Amboy, IN, native Oris Hockett, left a job as a toolmaker in Dayton, Ohio, to join the Indians camp. "I really was tempted to give up the game," Hockett told AP. "But after thinking the thing over from all the angles, I decided my place was with the team. Now don't misunderstand me. If I had thought by leaving my workbench to play ball I was depriving the army or navy of so much as a single round of ammunition, I'd have stayed in the factory. But I knew I could be replaced."

The foul Indiana weather had Boudreau worried about his team's conditioning. NL president and Wawaka native Ford Frick agreed. "There is no use pretending," he said. "A team cannot get into shape in weather like this. A team must be outside, really playing baseball, to get into proper condition."

Tigers in Evansville—The Pocket City hosted the eventual 1945 world champion Detroit Tigers. Dizzy Trout, born in Candcut, near Terre Haute, defended his right to stay on the diamond during the war. "I'm sticking with the only job I know how to do," he said. "I consider the ballplayer who quits baseball and takes a war job just to stay out of the army a slacker."

Decades before mound Goliath Randy Johnson, the Tigers sported a 6'11" batting practice pitcher. Ralph Siewert, 20, of Mount Clemens, Michigan, was too tall for the service and Detroit picked him up. But even with the regular-season success, many Tigers were not sold on training in the North. "Spring training above the Mason-Dixon Line is not conducive to loosening up the muscles," said Detroit second baseman Eddie Mayo in *Teenagers, Graybeards and 4-F's*. "We spent most of our time outdoors in Evansville on a regular diamond, but it wasn't a good way to get ready for the season."

Pirates in Muncie—An 18-inch potted palm at the Hotel Roberts was a taunting reminder of the Pirates' usual spring digs in San Bernadino, Calif.

Upon arriving in Muncie to groom McCulloch Park for the Pirates in 1943, the first thing that groundskeeper John Fogarty did was grab a snow shovel. The temperature that March 8, according to the Muncie *Star*, was -8F. The mercury had risen to a balmy 52 by the time Frisch led the Bucs through their first outdoor drills March 18.

A week later, Muncie mayor John Hampton put on his catcher's mitt and drilled with the Pirates. He also umpired an intrasquad game.

Hall of Famer Honus Wagner, 69-year-old Pirates coach, remembered attending his first spring training in West Baden, IN, back in 1897 when he was with the Louisville Colonels of the NL.

Following the workout, Wagner strolled uptown in search of a bowling alley. He finally picked City Recreation and was warned by a newspaperman "that place is run by Bill Cotton, an old umpire, and you may have some trouble with him." Said Wagner in the Star, "I'll straighten him out in a hurry. I may even chase him out of the park!"

The Pirates often found themselves playing basketball at the Muncie Fieldhouse. Pitcher Bill Brandt, of Guilford Indiana., twisted his knee in one game. "I told him he was a fine example," said a bemused Frisch to the *Star*. "The only Indiana boy on my ball club starts running around in a game that is supposed to be red hot in this state and what happens—why he's the only one that winds up on his ear! A great advertisement for the Hoosier State you are, I tell him!"

Limestone League
The Regulars, 1943-45

@ denotes World War II veteran. * denotes left-handed pitcher.

Sources: *Total Baseball, The Sports Encyclopedia of Baseball, The Complete All-Time Pro Baseball Register.*

Chicago Cubs

Managers: Jimmie Wilson (1943-44); Charlie Grimm (1945).

First Baseman: Phil Cavarretta (1943-45).

Second Basemen: Eddie Stanky (1943); Don Johnson (1944-45).

Third Baseman: Stan Hack (1943-45).

Shortstop: Lennie Merullo (1943-45).

Outfielders: Bill Nicholson (1943-45); Peanuts Lowrey@ (1943, 1945); Ival Goodman (1943); Andy Pafko (1944-45); Dom Dallessandro@ (1944); Mickey Livingston (1945).

Catchers: Clyde McCullough@ (1943); Dewey Williams (1944); Mickey Livingston (1945).

Pitchers: Claude Passeau (1943-45); Paul Derringer (1943, 1934); Hank Wyse (1943-45); Ed Hanyzewski (1943), born in Union Mills; Bob Chipman* (1944); Bill Fleming@ (1944); Ray Prim* (1945); Hank Borowy (1945); Hy Vandenberg (1945).

Chicago White Sox

Manager: Jimmy Dykes (1943-45).

First Basemen: Joe Kuhel (1943); Hal Trosky (1944); Kerby Farrell (1945).

Second Basemen: Don Kolloway@ (1943); Roy Schalk@ (1944-45).

Third Basemen: Ralph Hodgin@ (1943-44); Tony Cuccinello (1945).

Shortstops: Luke Appling@ (1943), Hall of Famer; Skeeter Webb (1944); Cass Michaels (1945).

Outfielders: Wally Moses (1943-45); Thurman Tucker@ (1943-44); Guy Cartwright (1943); Eddie Carnett@ (1944); Oris Hockett (1945), born in Amboy; Johnny Dickshot (1945).

Catcher: Mike Tresh (1943-45).

Pitchers: Orval Grove (1943-45); Bill Dietrich (1943-45); Buck Ross (1943); John Humphries (1943-440; Eddie Smith*@ (1943); Eddie Lopat* (1844-45); Gordon Maltzberger (1944); Thornton Lee* (1945).

Cincinnati Reds

Manager: Bill McKechnie (1943-45), Hall of Famer.

First Baseman: Frank McCormick (1943-45).

Second Basemen: Lonny Frey@ (1943); Woody Williams (1944-45).

Third Baseman: Steve Messner (1943-45).

Shortstop: Eddie Miller (1943-45).

Outfielders: Max Marshall@ (1943); Gee Walker (1943-44); Eric Tipton (1943-45); Dain Clay (1944-45); Al Libke (1945).

Catchers: Ray Mueller@ (1943-44); Al Lakeman (1945).

Pitchers: Elmer Riddle (1943); Bucky Walters (1943-45); Johnny Vander Meer*@ (1943); Clyde Shoun*@ (1943-44); Ray Starr (1943); Ed Heusser (1944-45); Arnold Carter* (1944); Harry Gumbert@ (1944); Tommy de la Cruz (1944); Joe Bowman (1945); Howie Fox (1945).

Cleveland Indians

Manager: Lou Boudreau (1943-45), Hall of Famer.

First Baseman: Mickey Rocco (1943-45).

Second Basemen: Ray Mack@ (1943-44); Dutch Meyer (1945).

Third Basemen: Ken Keltner@ (1943-44); Don Ross (1945).

Shortstop: Lou Boudreau (1943-45).

Outfielders: Roy Cullenbine (1943-44); Oris Hockett (1943-44), Amboy; Jess Heath (1943, 1945); Pat Seerey (1944-45); Felix Mackiewicz (1945), Purdue U. graduate.

Catchers: Buddy Rosar (1943-44); Frankie Hayes (1945).

Pitchers: Al Smith* (1943); Jim Bagby (1943, 1945); Allie Reynolds (1943-45); Vern Kennedy (1943); Mel Harder (1943-44); Eddie Klieman (1944); Steve Gromek (1944-45); Pete Center@ (1945).

Detroit Tigers

Manager: Steve O'Neill (1943-45).

First Baseman: Rudy York (1943-45).

Second Basemen: Jimmy Bloodworth@ (1943); Eddie Mayo (1944-45).

Third Basemen: Pinky Higgins@ (1943-44); Bob Maier (1945).

Shortstops: Joe Hoover (1943-44); Skeeter Webb (1945).

Outfielders: Ned Harris (1943); Doc Cramer (1943-45); Dick Wakefield@ (1943-44); Jimmy Outlaw (1944-45); Roy Cullenbine (1945).

Catchers: Paul Richards (1943-45), born in Sandcut; Virgil Trucks@ (1943); Tommy Bridges@ (1943); Hal Newhouser* (1943-45); Stubby Overmire* (1944-45); Rufe Gentry (1944); Al Benton@ (1945).

Pittsburgh Pirates

Manager: Frankie Frisch (1943-45), Hall of Famer.

First Basemen: Elbie Fletcher@ (1943); Babe Dahlgren (1944-45).

Second Baseman: Pete Coscarart (1943-45).

Third Baseman: Bob Elliott (1943-45).

Shortstop: Frankie Gustine (1943-45).

Outfielders: Johnny Barrett (1943-45); Vince DiMaggio (1943-44); Jim Russell (1943-45); Al Gionfriddo (1945).

Catcher: Al Lopez (1943-45), Hall of Famer.

Pitchers: Rip Sewell (1943-45); Bob Meyer (1943); Max Butcher (1943-45); Wally Hebert* (1943); Hank Gornicki@ (1943); Nick Strincevich (1944-45), born in Gary; Preacher Roe* (1944-45), Fritz Ostermueller*@ (1944); Xavier Rescigno (1944); Ken Gables (1945).

Other Indiana Connections

Commissioner: Kenesaw Mountain Landis (1943-44), once resided in Logansport.

National League President: Ford Frick (1944-45), born in Wawaka; Hall of Famer.

Manager: Freddie Fitzsimmons, Phillies (1943-45), born in Mishawaka

First Baseman: Bruce Konopka@, Athletics (1943), born in Hammond.

Second Baseman: Billy Herman@, Dodgers (1943), born in New Albany, Hall of Famer.

Third Baseman: Pinky May@, Phillies (1943), born in Laconia.

Outfielder: Pete Fox, Red Sox (1943-45), born in Evansville.

Catcher: Stew Hofferth, Braves (1944-45), born in Logansport.

Pitchers: Bill Brandt@, Pirates (1943), born in Aurora; Len Gilmore, Pirates (1944), born in Clinton; Don Hanski@, White Sox (1943-44), born in LaPorte; Don Hendrickson, Braves (1945), born in Kewanna; Bert Shepard@, Senators (1945), born in Dana; Yank Terry, Red Sox (1943-45), born in Bedford.

Spring Training Sites

1943-45

American League

Boston Red Sox—Medford, Mass. (1943-44); Pleasantville, N.J. (1945).

Chicago White Sox—French Lick, Ind. (1943-44); Terre Haute, Ind. (1945).

Cleveland Indians—West Lafayette, Ind. (1943-45).

Detroit Tigers—Evansville, Ind. (1943-45).

New York Yankees—Asbury Park, N.J. (1943); Atlantic City, N.J. (1944-45).

Philadelphia Athletics—Wilmington, Del. (1943); Frederick Md. (1944-45).

St. Louis Browns—Cape Girardeau, Mo. (1943-45).

Washington Senators—College Park, Md. (1943-45).

National League

Boston Braves—Wallingford, Conn. (1943-44); Washington, D.C. (1945).

Brooklyn Dodgers—Bear Mountain, N.Y. (1943-45).

Chicago Cubs—French Lick, Ind. (1943-45).

Cincinnati Reds—Bloomington, Ind. (1943-45).

New York Giants—Lakewood, N.J. (1943-45).

Philadelphia Phillies—Hershey Pa. (1943); Wilmington, Del. (1945).

Pittsburgh Pirates—Muncie, Ind. (1943-45).

St. Louis Cardinals—Cairo, Ill. (1943-45).

A Review of 1946

When Johnny (Sain), and hundreds more came marching home again

John L. Green

Nineteen forty-five wasn't such a bad year, despite the lower quality of wartime ball. Any season with a conclusion and a pennant is a good one. The 1946 season, though, with its large number of returning military service veterans brought back the quality game. Fans flocked to parks in record numbers, and returning players recorded fantastic performances.

The 1945 pennant races were close, particularly in the American League, as Detroit won over the Washington Senators by a narrow game and a half. The deciding blow in the pennant-clinching victory was Hank Greenberg's grand slam home run. Greenberg had rejoined the team in midseason. His home run indicated what these returning veterans would do in the next season.

Over in the National League, Chicago's Cubs beat the St. Louis Cardinals by three games. Chicago had an excellent .636 winning percentage (98-56). Who could have imagined that this would be their last World Series appearance through 1997? Although the war continued through much of the season, attendance records were set as almost 11 million fans attended major league games.

Detroit took the Series in seven, as Hal Newhouser's and Dizzy Trout's pitching, along with Greenberg's and Doc Cramer's hitting, overtook Chicago. The Cubs were led at bat by manager Phil Cavarretta and Stan Hack. Hank Borowy picked up two Chicago victories.

Individual Performances in 1945

	American League		National League	
Batting Average	.309	Stirnweiss, NY	.355	Cavarretta, Chi
Home Runs	24	Stephens, StL	28	Holmes, Bos
RBI	111	Etten, NY	124	D. Walker, Brk
Slugging Average	.476	Stirnweiss, NY	.577	Holmes, Bos
Wins	25	Newhouser, Det	22	Barrett, StL-Bos
ERA	1.81	Newhouser, Det	2.14	Borowy, Chi

Returning veterans—Of the 636 major league players in 1946, 243 (38 percent) of them were returning veterans who missed all of 1945. Returning vets were 32 percent (95 of 296) of all pitchers, and 44 percent (148 of 340) of all position players. They accounted for 35 percent of innings pitched and 44 percent of official plate appearances.

Here is a look at key statistics for 1946, showing statistics for the major leagues, the returning veterans, and all other players:

	Total	Returning Vets	Others
Batting Average	.256	.262	.251
Slugging Average	.360	.370	.352
At-bats per Home Run	69	68	70
At-bats per Run Scored	8.5	8.2	8.7
Winning Percentage	.500	.507	.497
Earned Run Average	3.46	3.37	3.51
Walks Per 9 Innings	3.6	3.6	3.6
Strikeouts Per 9 Innings	3.9	4.0	3.9

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While overall performance was just slightly better for the composite returning veteran, individual returning veterans really put on a show. Here are a few of them that led in major performance categories during 1946, starting with the National League.

Stan Musial. The Man played in every one of the Cardinals' 156 games. He played almost 75 percent of them at a new position (first base). Stan tried to make up for missing the 1945 season by fitting two years of performance into 1946. He led the NL in batting average (.365), slugging average (.587), doubles (50), triples (20), runs scored (124), and hits (228). He was selected the NL's Most Valuable Player, and the Major League Player of the Year.

Enos Slaughter. Slaughter had missed three full seasons, 1943-1945. He played in all 156 games in 1946, led the NL in RBIs with 130, batted .300, and scored 100 runs.

Howie Pollet. Pollet completed the major threesome that returned to St. Louis. Pollet had been away all of 1944 and 1945. In 1946 he led the NL in ERA with 2.10, wins (21), innings pitched (266), and shutouts (4). It's interesting to note that during 1946, and some years before and after, an ERA qualifier had to pitch ten complete games, regardless of innings pitched. In 1946, twenty-three National League pitchers were eligible. In 1995 only Greg Maddux would have been eligible, and in 1996 only Pat Hentgen, with ten complete games each. Pollet completed 22 of his 32 starts.

Johnny Sain. Sain had played only one year in the majors. He had been primarily a relief pitcher in 1942, starting only three of his 40 games. In 1946, at 28, he was 20-14, with a 2.21 ERA, and led the league in complete games, finishing 24 of his 34 starts. He also hit .298 in 94 official at bats—and he did not strike out once. (To show his hitting ability was no fluke, he matched it in 1947, hitting .346, and striking out only once in 107 official plate appearances. By the way, he also won 21 games.)

Ted Williams. Williams lost prime years, 1943-45, but he came back as if he had never been away, with a .342 batting average, .667 slugging average, 38 home runs, 123 RBIs, 142 runs scored, and 156 walks. He was selected the AL's Most Valuable Player.

Mickey Vernon. Washington's Vernon had missed the 1944 and 1945 seasons, but he came back to lead the AL in hitting at .353 and in doubles with 51.

Hank Greenberg and Feller had been discharged from the military in 1945 (Greenberg in midseason, and Feller toward the end), but they really turned it on in 1946.

Hank Greenberg was the first big name player to join the military. He took the oath in early 1941, well before Pearl Harbor. Greenberg had been the AL's Most Valuable Player in 1940 as he led Detroit to the pennant. His Army-issue M-1 rifle must have weighed about the same as his bat, because he came back in 1946 to lead the AL in home runs and RBIs, with 44 and 127 respectively.

Bob Feller joined the Navy and missed almost four full seasons, 1942-45. He didn't wait long in 1946 to star, as he pitched a no-hitter in the third week of the season, winning 1-0 over the Yankees. Look at his remarkable records in his previous two seasons and his first full post-war season.

Year	1940	1941	1946
Age	21	22	27
Wins	27	25	26
ERA	2.62	3.15	2.18
Innings	320	343	371
K	261	260	348

Hail and Farewell—1946 saw the arrival of two future Hall of Famers and the departure of two others. It also was the year two heros of previous seasons passed away: Walter Johnson, 59, and Tony Lazzeri, 41.

Ralph Kiner came up to Pittsburgh, led the NL with his 23 home runs, and was fifth in RBIs. He was twenty-three years old.

Yogi Berra joined the Yankees just long enough to bat .364 in seven games, and get in a couple of home runs.

Hall of Famer Bill Dickey came back from the war to have one more season with the Yankees, hitting .261 in 54 games, as he passed the "tools of ignorance" to the young Berra. The Dickey-Berra tandem covered the Yankees' catching position for a 33-year span.

The second departing Hall of Famer was Ted Lyons, the 45-year-old White Sox pitching ace for over twenty seasons. Lyons came back from the military to manage the Sox after the first 30 games of 1946. He

posted a winning record of 64-60, and thought he would show the youngsters how to pitch. He started five games, and completed each of them (but after all, who was going to pull the manager from the mound?). His ERA was a sparkling 2.30, but he could accomplish only a 1-4 record, as the supporting batters must have mutinied.

Other first-year players later to become big contributors to the game were: Bobby Brown, Yankees (future AL president); Sherm Lollar, Indians (seven-time All Star with the White Sox); Dale Mitchell, Indians (two-time All Star); Ellis Kinder, Browns (23 wins for the Red Sox in 1949 and ace reliever of mid-'50s); and Vic Raschi, Yankees (132 career wins, and four-time All Star).

In the NL, rookies included Del Ennis, Phillies (*Sporting News* Rookie of the Year, in top five of batting average, slugging average, home runs, and total bases); Bill Rigney, Giants (manager of over 1,200 wins); Alvin Dark, Braves (three-time All Star with the Braves and Giants, and manager of 994 wins and two World Series teams (the 1962 Giants and the world champion 1974 A's); Carl Furillo, Dodgers (two-time All-Star and 1953 batting champ); Joe Garagiola, Cardinals (Yogi's boyhood buddy, and media personality); and Bobby Thomson, Giants (three-time All Star, and provider of possibly the greatest baseball moment with his 1951 "Shot Heard Round the World").

Turning to those players who called 1946 their last year in the majors, aside from Dickey and Lyons, these notables are among them: Joe and Dom's brother, Vince DiMaggio (ten-year career and two-time All Star during the war years); Dick Bartell (eighteen-years and two-time All Star shortstop for the Giants) finished up with just a couple of games following his return from the military; Babe Dahlgren, best known as Lou Gehrig's replacement at first base for the Yankees in 1939; a couple of future managers of note, Paul Richards and Pinky Higgins; and Tommy Bridges, a six-time All Star and 194-game winner during his sixteen years with the Tigers.

There were thirty-five players who made 1946 their only year. Probably the best seasons of the bunch were turned in by shortstops on the two Philadelphia teams. Jake Caulfield played in 44 games for Connie Mack's A's, hit .277 in 94 official at-bats, and had eight doubles among his 26 hits. John O'Neil appeared in 46 games for the Phillies, hitting .266, with three doubles among his 25 hits in 94 official at-bats. Only one "only year player" appeared at bat more than 100 times. Anse Moore, a Detroit outfielder, appeared in 51 games, batted 134 times and achieved a .209 batting average. Moore also hit one of the two home runs hit by only-year players during 1946. Only one victory of the 1,233 game victories was recorded by an only-year pitcher, Earl Reid of the Boston Braves.

The toughest "only-year" player performance was that of 25-year-old pitcher John Carden of the New York Giants. He relieved in one game. In two innings, he gave up four hits, four walks, seven runs, five earned runs, and hit a batter. His own error resulted in the two unearned runs. His career line? 0-0, 22.50 ERA, and a .000 fielding average. But at least he made it to the majors.

Now that we've looked at special instances of first year/last year/only-year players, let's review them as a group. The following illustrates the probable reasons for them being last/only/or stick around:

Season	First	Last	Only	Others
Number of Players	72	144	35	385
Batting Average	.250	.225	.204	.260
Slugging Average	.360	.290	.264	.367
On Base Average	.263	.260	.238	.340
Fielding Average	.963	.972	.946	.975
At-Bats Per Home Run	57	148	267	67
Number of Pitchers	30	70	15	181
Won-Lost Record	66-72	65-116	1-6	1,101-1,039
Winning Percentage	.478	.359	.143	.514
Earned Run Average	3.54	4.43	7.41	3.33
Walks Per 9 Innings	4.6	4.3	6.6	3.4
Strikeouts Per 9 Innings	3.9	3.2	3.7	4.0

Of course, while all this was going on, another returned veteran was having a decent season with the Dodger AAA farm team in Montreal. During 1946, Jackie Robinson led the Royals to the International League's best record. He hit .349 with 40 steals, and 113 runs scored in 124 games. He would hit the majors in 1947 and make it clear that postwar baseball would never get "back to normal."

Bugs Raymond

The nickname tells the sad story

Jack Kavanagh

There have always been baseball players of promise or prominence who have destroyed their own careers. Today's million-dollar stars most often do it with drugs. Alcohol was the demon of choice when Arthur Raymond set the pace for those who drink themselves into oblivion. Few players ever followed such a determined, if unsteady, path to disaster as "Bugs." His nickname is the tipoff. It was given him for his behavior, a shortened form of "bughouse," as insane asylums were called.

Raymond might have passed, like a hiccup in the night, had he remained in the last-place obscurity of the St. Louis Cardinals. However, he became a reclamation project for John J. McGraw, the martinet manager of the New York Giants. In 1908, the Giants lost the pennant to the Chicago Cubs in a playoff game caused by "Merkle's boner." The story of how rookie Fred Merkle failed to run to touch second when he saw "the winning run" score on a base hit has been told many times. And it is also well known that McGraw never turned his famous temper on the young first baseman. What did leave McGraw furious was the lack of another top flight pitcher to join 37-game winner Christy Mathewson. Between seasons he looked for a way to improve the team he considered the best in the league, no matter what tricky decisions umpires called against him. He knew where a superstar pitcher was buried with a last-place team.

Jack Kavanagh is co-authoring Uncle Robbie, *a biography of Wilbert Robinson, with Norman Macht, and is writing regularly for magazines. He lives in "catered retirement" and is enjoying it.*

Bugs Raymond had already earned his nickname and a drinker's reputation. But in a rotation that only required he be reasonably sober every fourth day, he had won 15 games, nearly a third of the meager 49 the Cardinals won all the 1908 season. True, he had led the league in losses, with 25, but he had a 2.03 ERA and had been fourth in strikeouts with 145. Mathewson had led everyone with 259. Still, despite his renowned dissipation, Bugs Raymond was tied for second with 48 games pitched. In shape or not, he showed up when his turn came around. All he needed, McGraw reasoned, was a strong hand to steer him onto the right path and he would join Matty at the top of the staff. Connie Mack once had held the same expectation of Rube Waddell. Mack was a saintly man with enduring patience, but it had run out after six seasons of the Rube's antics. McGraw's temperament was the opposite of Mack's. However, McGraw knew he could not browbeat Bugs Raymond into becoming a reformed drunk. It would take strategy, John McGraw's strong suit.

First, he had to get the Cardinals to give up their one prize player. McGraw held an ace card. St. Louis, in the manner of managements of tailenders, believed a change of managers was necessary. John McCloskey, having suffered his second eighth-place finish, was perhaps too tolerant. The Cards coveted the Giants' great backstop, Roger Bresnahan, to run the team from behind the bat. McGraw made them pay a high price. In addition to Raymond, he took Red Murray, a hard-hitting outfielder, whose immediate return in

Bugs Raymond.

1909 was to lead the National League with a Dead Ball Era home run total of seven.

Needing a catcher to replace Bresnahan, McGraw persuaded St. Louis to get Admiral Schlei, nicknamed for a now forgotten naval hero, from the Cincinnati Reds and include him in the Bresnahan package. Schlei was a first-class catcher. To get him the Cards turned over two starting pitchers. One, Art Fromme, won 19 games for the Reds the next season.

Bresnahan failed to make a significant change in the Cardinals' future pennant races. After four second-division finishes he was replaced by Miller Huggins, who began a Hall of Fame managerial career in St. Louis.

Bugs Raymond arrived penniless in Marlin, Texas, where McGraw's Giants assembled for spring training. Warned of Bugs's insistence on spending all his money for booze, McGraw had drawn up a contract with Mrs. Raymond. She was an invalid and lived in Chicago, where Raymond had grown up. She was paid her husband's salary directly. This met her bills and enabled her to put away money for the times between seasons. She was forbidden to send Bugs any money. What pocket money he obtained he got directly from McGraw, one thin dime at a time. It would buy an ice cream soda, nothing stronger.

This began a series of maneuvers between two adversaries, the tyrannical manager and the wily drunk. Bugs Raymond was a man of great charm when it suited his purpose. As his purpose was to drink himself insensible, Raymond spent his time trying to find ways to outwit McGraw's stratagems. McGraw learned not to give Bugs a pack of cigarettes, which he could sell. Bugs had to roll his own with Bull Durham. Other players were ordered to always open a pack Bugs might wheedle from them and take out several cigarettes to spoil the resale value.

McGraw was responsible for keeping his pitcher clothed, but when he bought a suit, Bugs immediately returned it to the clothing store and persuaded the tailor to exchange it for a less expensive model. He came out seven dollars ahead and was off on a monumental drunk.

1909 was the only useful season McGraw got out of his wayward spitball pitcher. Bugs turned in an 18-12 record, behind Matty's 25-6 and leading 1.14 ERA.

Even with Hooks Wiltse contributing 20 wins, the Giants were no match for Honus Wagner and the 1909 Pittsburgh Pirates. McGraw's team fell short and ended the season without the services of Raymond.

At one point the exasperated McGraw hired a former New York policeman, Dick Fuller, to keep track of the wandering pitcher and file a report. Raymond spotted the detective and decided to lead the flatfoot on a tiring trail. He strolled along, eyeing items in store windows, cutting across lots covered with broken bricks and shards of smashed glass. He walked miles and roundabout miles back to the hotel. It took hours and Fuller, his feet aching, trailed Bugs all the way. He wrote a report for McGraw and turned in a masterpiece of injured self-justification.

McGraw summoned Raymond to his dressing room office and closed the door. "Listen to this," he roared and read aloud from Fuller's account of trailing Raymond. "It says here, after leaving the ball park, instead of going directly back to the hotel, you walked down Eighth Avenue and went to Tom Fannion's bar over on 145th Street. You went to the free lunch counter and helped yourself to a cheese and onion sandwich."

Raymond was outraged. "That's a dirty lie. I never ate an onion in my life!"

The stories of Bugs Raymond's determined efforts to evade McGraw's surveillance are part of baseball legend. The one which is told most often is of him trading a baseball for two shots of whiskey, but the swap involved a lot more. At the Polo Grounds, there was an exit from the clubhouse onto Eighth Avenue, which was lined with bars. Bugs was warming up in the bullpen late in a game when suddenly he was gone from McGraw's view. The manager sent one of his substitutes out to the center field warmup area to locate Raymond. Then, suddenly, Bugs was seen again, tossing his warmup pitches. Confronted by McGraw after the game, his nonchalant explanation was that he had gone into the clubhouse briefly to relieve himself.

Someone snitched and McGraw learned that Bugs Raymond had slipped out the back way to Eighth Avenue. Bugs made an impassioned appeal to the first bartender he found for a drink on the cuff. Fortified, he scrambled back into the Polo Grounds. McGraw tracked down the friendly bartender and told him, and every bartender along the street, that if Bugs Raymond ever tried that trick again, he'd have his friends at City Hall cancel the bar's license.

The next time Raymond decided in the middle of his bull pen warmup that his thirst needed slaking, he took the ball, offering it in trade but with no takers. Finally, he entered a bar far enough uptown that McGraw's warning had not reached its owner. Here Bugs Raymond swapped the ball for a couple of shots of rye and washed them down with beer chasers. He got back to the ball park, but the game was over and the jig was up. Bugs Raymond never finished a season with the Giants. Even the year he won 18 games, he was suspended in the final weeks. Ironically, it was a breach of conduct while soberly having a glass of water with his dinner in a restaurant that caused his downfall.

The waiter, a baseball fan, kept pressing Bugs to reveal how he threw his spitball. The waiter pestered Bugs. How did he get the ball to break? Finally, Raymond drained his water glass and used it to demonstrate his spitter. He wet two of his fingers and wrapped them around the glass. Standing beside the table he took an elaborate windup and threw the glass across the room, shattering it against the wall.

"There," he said resuming his dinner, "did you see it 'break'?"

Finally, Bugs Raymond disrupted McGraw's peace of mind a final, and for him, fatal time. He was banished. There was no place for him and his thirst in baseball. Instead of contributing to a string of Giant pennants, Bugs Raymond was doomed by his unquenchable thirst.

He went back to Chicago to pitch semipro ball. Then baseball fans read in the papers that Arthur "Bugs" Raymond was dead at age 30. He was found in a rooming house and, at first, it was thought he had died of heat and suffocation on September 7, 1912. But an autopsy showed he had died of a cerebral hemorrhage and a fractured skill. Investigation turned up an assailant who admitted being with Bugs at a ball game at Lawrence and Elston Avenues. He admitted having coshed him with a brick in a fight. Bugs made it back to his rooming house to die.

Mrs. Arthur L. Raymond appeared at the inquest and explained that they had been separated for several years. His drinking had become intolerable. Bugs Raymond's potential, perhaps nearly as good as Matty's, was never realized. Bugs is forever trapped in baseball's memory for his alcoholic sprees and not for the victories he might have won had he been able to win the critical one over himself.

Doubleheaders Spell Disaster

The 1928 Braves set a record never to be broken

Richard W. Juline

No National League team in the 1920-28 period was more inept as a baseball organization than the Boston Braves, except for the Phillies. The Braves compiled a record of 547-830-.397 and the Phillies 495-880-.360. The Phillies finished seventh or last in every year while the Braves did reach fourth in 1921 and fifth in 1925. Both teams suffered through four seasons with more than 100 losses.

But the Braves did set one record in 1928 that, to the best of my knowledge, no other team has matched. From September 4 through September 16, they played nine consecutive doubleheaders.

The Braves entered the 1928 season having finished seventh in the previous two seasons, just ahead of the last place Phillies. In an effort to increase the home run production of catcher Frank "Shanty" Hogan, management installed seats in Braves Field's left and center field reducing home run distances in left by fifty feet and in center by 163 feet. But by season's opening Judge Emil E. Fuchs had traded Hogan and outfielder Jimmy Welsh to the New York Giants for second baseman Rogers Hornsby. The new sections spelled only heartache for the home team. By mid-June, 47 home runs had fallen into the new area, most of them off the bats of the visitors. Management then decided to dismantle the 6,000 seats, and the new fence was installed in the outfield. It would play a vital role in a September game.

Richard W. Juline is a retired periodical editor, book publisher, and sports researcher.

When the Braves began the 1928 season 11-20, rookie manager Jack Slattery, a reserve catcher in 1901-1909, "resigned" and the Braves were put in the hands of Hornsby. The team did not improve, however, but slid to 39-83-.320 during the balance of the season. Fuchs said good-bye to the difficult and expensive Hornsby, who moved on to the Chicago Cubs.

Other regulars of the 1928 Braves were:

George Sisler, 1b. Obtained from the Washington Senators early in 1928 with thirteen years' experience behind him.

Doc Farrell, ss. Obtained from the New York Giants in 1927. His .316 average of 1927 dropped to .215 and he was traded back to New York in 1929.

Les Bell, 3b. Obtained from St. Louis Cardinals with six years' experience.

Lance Richbourg, rf. Came up from Milwaukee (American Association) in 1927 after years of .321, .312, and .346. The only Brave one could say pulled his own weight in 1928, with .327.

Jack Smith, cf. Obtained from the Cardinals in 1926 with fourteen years of major league experience.

Eddie Brown, lf. This was to be his last year in baseball after seven years and a .303 average. Average dropped to .268 in 1928.

Zack Taylor, c. Nine years in the majors. After a year and a half with the Braves, he finished up with the Giants in 1927 and returned to the Braves for the 1928 season.

The ace of the pitching staff with six years' experi-

ence was Bob Smith. His main support came from two rookies who recorded nine wins apiece.

The hapless seventh-place Braves, trying to stay out of the cellar occupied by the Phillies, returned to Boston on September 2 after a series in New York, to meet Brooklyn in a Labor Day doubleheader on September 3. They were 23 games behind the sixth-place Robins. But rain necessitated the cancellation of the games and it was the beginning of more troubles, setting up the first of a series of doubleheaders.

In the first game on September 4, Jake Flowers, Brooklyn second baseman, propelled one out of the park in the tenth inning to break a 2-2 tie, giving Dazzy Vance his nineteenth win of the season.

Reporter John Drebinger in the New York *Times* wrote, "How the Robins ever contrived to drag out the opener to ten innings behind the excellent pitching of Vance, instead of winning hands down over the regulation distance, must remain one of those subtle mysteries which make life with the Dodgers so highly fascinating." Flowers' hit was the fifteenth of the game for Brooklyn.

In the nightcap the Dodgers exploded for a pair of homers in the fourth inning by Babe Herman and Del Bissonette. On the momentum gained by these two wallops, the Robins coasted to an easy 9-2 victory.

The following day, September 5, the Braves and Dodgers met for another doubleheader, which Boston swept. Eight errors figured in the Dodgers' 9-2 loss in the first game, despite their 13 hits. Drebinger wrote that "the Robins bowed themselves out of Boston" after the game "in the manner of a fancy ballet that trips lightly over the footlights and falls into the orchestra." The Braves collected 13 hits off Bill Doak (8) and Rick Ehrhardt (5), including four for five by first baseman Sisler.

Bob Smith gave the Robins only two hits to beat them in the second game.

The Braves moved on to Philadelphia after their home stand for a game on September 6, but rain cancelled the game, setting up a doubleheader on the following day, a Friday. A doubleheader was already scheduled for Saturday, because the Pennsylvania Blue Law prohibited Sunday baseball altogether.

The Braves and the Phillies split on Friday. Rookie Ray Benge, 8-18 for the cellar-dwelling Phillies, pitched splendidly in the opening game to shut out the Braves, 4-0.

In the second game the Braves were without a hit off rookie John Milligan until two were out in the seventh inning, when the Braves scored two runs to tie the game at 2-2. Boston took the lead in the top of the ninth, but Cy Williams, the Phillies left fielder, homered in the bottom of the inning to tie the game and send it into extra innings. The Braves went on to win in the eleventh 4-3.

The next day the Braves, playing their fourth consecutive doubleheader, dropped both games. Bob McGraw won the first game, 10-6, over Bill Clarkson. In the second game Earl Caldwell, a former University of Michigan pitcher, made his big league debut shutting out the Braves, 4-0.

On Sunday, September 10, the Braves went home to await the opening of four consecutive doubleheaders scheduled against the Giants who were trying to cut down the three-game lead of the Cardinals.

James R. Harrison wrote for the New York *Times*, "The Giants arrived feeling especially chipper. Rogers Hornsby and his Braves happened to be down in the mouth over something. At least they acted that way ...."

Reporting on the first game, he wrote, "Round Fred Fitzsimmons was so complete a master of Hornsby, Sisler, Bell, Farrell and others who do the hitting ... that he allowed only four hits in the first eight innings of the first game. The Giants though they made only seven hits off Bob Smith, bunched them sufficiently to win 4-1."

But even Fitz wasn't as good as Joe Genewich. In the second game Joe, who had been traded by Boston to the Giants on June 15 for Ben Cantwell, Al Spohrer, Bill Clarkson, and Virgil Barnes, came back to haunt the Braves. Pitching a seven-hitter, he shut them out, 11-0.

Boston got swept again the following day, 11-6 and 7-6. They almost came back in the second game against rookie Carl Hubbell, but New York's ace, Larry Benton, saved the game.

The Braves got a break on September 12. It rained. But the next day the Braves and Giants resumed play, and Harrison of the *Times* wrote that "following the day off the Braves came back with a resurgence and militant attitude." Nonetheless, Benton beat them, 12-2. The Giants got a break from the start when Les Mann, their right fielder, drilled a homer to left field, "the ball rolling coyly through a hole at the base of the wooden fence. Judge Fuchs, Boston owner, immediately rushed a corps of artisans out to plug up the crevice," according to Harrison.

Giant Joe Genewich started the second game and took a fearful lacing from the start as Boston scored three runs on Lance Richbourg's triple, Eddie Brown's double, and singles by George Sisler, Rogers Hornsby and Les Bell. That was it for Boston, though, and

Hubbell came in in the ninth to secure a 7-4 Giants victory.

September 14 brought one more doubleheader against New York, and it was another disaster. Fitzsimmons won the first game, "holding the cod fish folk to six hits. Old Jack Scott (age 36) gave the Beaners a scant half dozen singles in the next massacre and galloped, if you can image Jack (Scott) galloping, to an easy 6-2 victory." After eight straight wins in four days, the Giants returned home only one game behind the Cardinals.

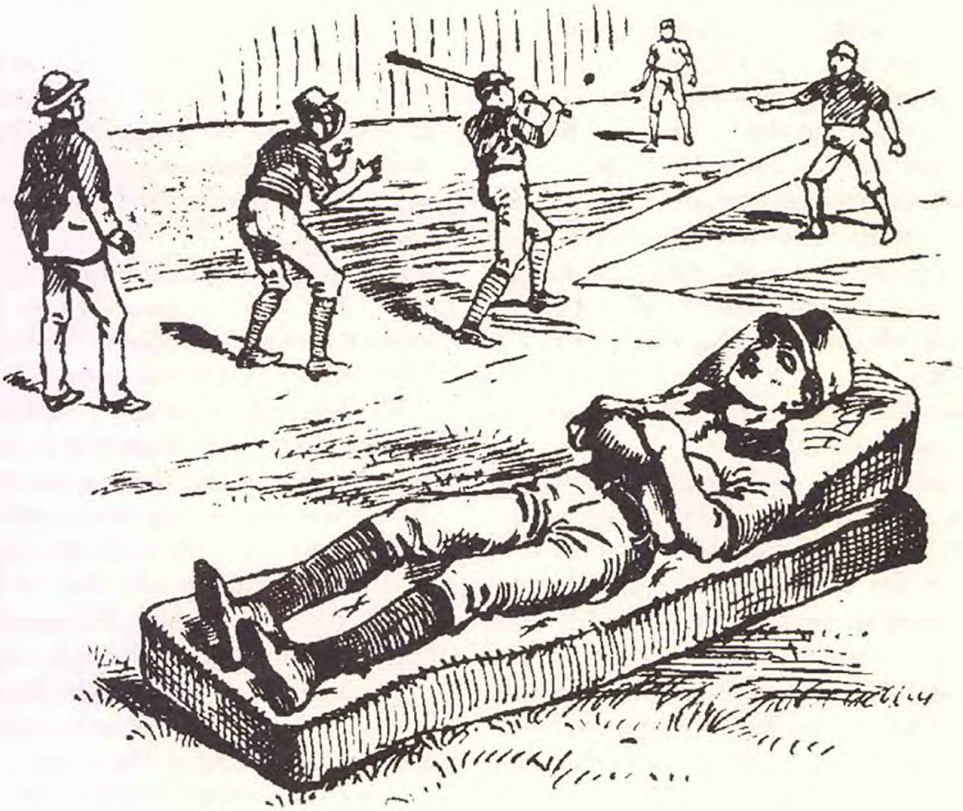
Now that the Giants were gone, in came the third-place Chicago Cubs. The Cubs were still in the race for the National League pennant and Charlie Root, ultimately a 14-game winner, was ready to take them on—in yet another doubleheader.

The Braves had a short taste of ecstasy, defeating the Cubs, 5-2, in the first game. The victory ended a ten-game losing streak against the Phillies (2) and the Giants (8). They returned to normal in the second game, for a split.

When play resumed on Monday, the 17th, the Braves played their first single game since September 2. They lost it, 15-5.

Thus ended the stretch of nine consecutive doubleheaders, a major league record that still stands. Fourteen of the games were in Boston, but the Braves won only three of them. Their only other win during this stretch came in that extra-inning victory over Philadelphia on September 8.

When the Braves started this doubleheader streak they were playing .331 ball (40-81). Despite playing only .222 ball during the doubleheaders, they ended the season at .327, winning six of their last fourteen games.



Bat Over

Chick Leahey's "Manager's Option"

Karl Lindholm

Chick Leahey is a baseball man. Now 72, he has been intimately connected with baseball as a player, a coach, and a fan for his entire life.

He was the varsity baseball coach at Bates College, in Lewiston, Maine, for 36 years. Upon his retirement in 1990, the baseball diamond was named Chick Leahey Field. He is a member of the Maine Baseball Hall of Fame and the Lewiston-Auburn Hall of Fame. In 1976, his Bates team was ECAC Division III Champions.

After serving a three-year stint in the Marines in World War II, Chick signed a contract in 1946 to play infield in the Yankee system. After seasons in Joplin (Class C) and Norfolk (Class B), he took a hard look at the Yankees' infield and decided "it was in my best interest to go to college and get on with my life."

He enrolled at Bates, a 23-year-old freshman on the GI Bill. Ineligible to play any sports in college because of his professional past, he volunteered to help coach football and baseball and discovered his vocation. After graduation, he accepted a high school teaching and coaching job in New York and continued to play baseball in semi-pro leagues. In 1955, a position in athletics at Bates opened up and Chick was invited to join the staff. He never left, and generations of athletes at Bates are grateful.

In considering the impact of the game on the young men he has coached, he doesn't offer "any large philosophical observations." He says, "Sometimes coaches make too much of the fact that this is great preparation for life. When you're at the plate with two outs in the bottom of the ninth, I don't know if that will carry over. The larger picture is more important—to make a commitment to be part of the team, to win graciously and have respect for your opponent."

The Intentional Walk—In 1971, Chick presented to the NCAA Rules Committee an idea that had been incubating for some time. He thought it would improve the game by increasing fan interest and adding to the strategic options of the coach. He called it the "Manager's Option," though he says, "I wasn't committed to that term."

"Baseball had such a staid configuration for so many years," he says. "I thought it would be a good time to suggest a change. It didn't get very far. The rules committee was wary of any change and innovation. I got a polite letter."

"I always cringed when a team's best hitter was intentionally passed—or was pitched to so carefully that it amounted to the same thing," he says in explaining the background of his proposal. "Everyone is disappointed when this happens in a game. First of all, the hitter is frustrated. Then the fans feel cheated. They're hoping he gets his swings; they came to see this guy play.

"You can make a case that there is nothing comparable in sports to the intentional walk. In baseball, you can purposefully take a player out of the flow of the game. You can just eliminate the other team's best offensive weapon through no very special effort or

Karl Lindholm is teaches at Middlebury College. As a kid in the '50s, he watched Chick play semipro baseball for the Auburn (Maine) Asas.

strategy. First base is open late in the game, walk him. Weak hitter up next, walk the good hitter. We have come to expect this now, but it really isn't fair to the fans."

The intentional, or unintentional intentional walk, is an entirely passive play. It is the absence of action, not the equivalent of tight checking, double-teams, or special defenses in other sports. In 1996, Barry Bonds of the Giants led the majors with 151 walks, 31 of which were intentional. During the season, Bonds complained to Peter Gammons of the Boston *Globe*:

"The thing that bothers me the most is, when I put this uniform on I'm here to do a job and they're not letting me. If I was Jerry Rice and I couldn't make my own moves, if I got negative yardage, it would be me, not someone else. If I could be Michael Jordan and take my own shots ... I can't."

Ted Williams was another player who was often walked rather than pitched to with men on base at a big moment in a game. He was walked over 2,000 times in his career and eight times led the league in bases on balls. We often are moved to consider what Williams might have accomplished had he not missed nearly five years in his prime to military service. Add to this consideration the absence during much of his career of a strong supporting cast to protect him in the lineup. He rarely saw a fat pitch and was criticized as selfish for not swinging at bad pitches.

So what? Walks are a part of the game, one can argue. Baseball is a team game. It's in the nature of baseball to isolate and pitch around the Big Guy.

True. But with Chick Leahey's slight modification it would be possible to maintain excitement in these dramatic situations.

Bat Over—Chick Leahey's proposal would in effect allow the Big Guy (or another hitter) to "bat over" after a walk. Only once a game, at any point in the game, at the manager's discretion or "option."

Here's how it would work conventionally: A hitter is walked, either intentionally or unintentionally, perhaps with first base open and a weaker hitter following, late in a close game. The fans chant, "option ... option." The manager signals to the umpire and sends in a pinch runner to first.

Bat over.

The Big Guy trots back to the plate, picks up his bat, and gets his hacks with another man on base. "You can walk him again," Chick points out, "but that's two walks. It ups the ante."

Simply put, the "manager's option" would allow the manager on one occasion in a game to allow an individual hitter to bat again immediately after a base on balls.

This could be fun, right? Fans would like it, so would hitters, and managers would have something else to do besides spit and scowl. It would not have major statistical implications: the better hitters would pick up a few extra at-bats over time.

It is likely that in many games the "option" would not be employed at all, but it would exist, out there, in the background, encouraging managers and pitchers not to pitch around tough hitters.

Implementation—All right. Where should we start? Who might like to experiment in games with a change of this sort?

I know. Let's get Mike Veeck, owner of the extraordinarily successful St. Paul Saints, to propose the "manager's option" to the lords of the independent Northern League in the upper Midwest. Like his dad, Mike is a free spirit who loves the game but not necessarily its sacred traditions. An independent league might be a great place for the introduction of an innovation like this one that does not strike at the heart of the game.

Perhaps a minor league that is trying to increase attendance through fan involvement could "market" this idea as fan-friendly. Or a college or high school conference that is not connected to national monoliths like the NCAA could give it a try.

Before purists dismiss the "manager's option" let's put it within the context of change in the game. This innovation would not attack the timeless structure and organization of the game in any significant way. And it would hardly be a change on the scale of allowing a "designated hitter" to bat repeatedly for the pitcher, or playing games on a polyester rug instead of grass, or switching from wooden (crack!) to aluminum (plink) bats, or evolving a strike zone the size of a postage stamp.

Also consider the recent changes in the "experience" of the game that the marketing geniuses have sold in the past ten years that we have come to accept: ear-splitting music between innings (and batters!), ingratiating P.A. announcers, obnoxious fuzzy mascot things, tofu burgers ....

A baseball man like Chick Leahey would not offer an innovation that detracted from the game itself.

Worth a try?

Pittsburgh's Pitching Twins

Pittsburgh's tandem answer to New York's Christy Mathewson

Lawrence S. Katz

Nineteen hundred was an emergent year for pitching in the National League. While nineteenth century icons like Cy Young and Kid Nichols would continue to lead staffs featuring the likes of Iron Man Joe McGinnity, Jack Chesbro, and Vic Willis, a new star appeared on the horizon destined to eclipse all the rest.

Christy Mathewson made his debut in 1900. For the first two decades of this century, and until the arrival of Babe Ruth, Mathewson was perhaps the most celebrated figure on the American sports scene. The country's obsession with Matty was based on more than his boyish good looks and charm. Pitching for the New York Giants from 1900 to 1916, he won 373 games and lost only 188, a .665 winning percentage. His career earned run average was 2.13. He struck out 2,5102 batters. In 1936 he became one of the five charter members of the Baseball Hall of Fame.

As Mathewson was earning his reputation as one of the great hurlers in the history of the game, two tall, slim righthanders, Sam Leever and Charles "Deacon" Phillippe, were quietly carving niches of their own.

Prior to the turn of the century, the Pittsburgh Pirates could generally be found near the bottom of the National League standings. In 1900, however, the club was transformed by its merger with the defunct Louisville Colonels and the acquisition of the nucleus of a contending team. The new Pirates now boasted the explosive bats of outfielder-turned-shortstop Honus Wagner, outfielder-manager Fred Clarke and third baseman-outfielder Tommy Leach. The deal also blessed the Bucs with the steady arm of Deacon Phillippe.

If 1900 was a landmark year for the Giants, it was no less so for the Pirates. Phillippe joined holdover Sam Leever, who had been a Pirate workhorse in 1899, his first full year, to form the core of a team which would bring the Pirates and new owner, former Colonels' boss Barney Dreyfuss four N.L. pennants—in 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1909—topped off with a world championship in 1909.

The careers of the two pitchers climaxed in 1903 when each posted 25 victories to lead the Pirates to a senior circuit flag and the first World Series ever played. The pitching staff, however, already hurt by the defection of Jack Chesbro and Jesse Tannehill to the American League the previous year, then lost southpaw Ed Doheny to a nervous breakdown and Leever to a shoulder injury in a trapshooting contest.

With 573 2/3 combined regular season innings and seven out of eight Series starts, including Phillippe's five complete games—a record—the Pirates' weary-winged warriors were unable to defeat the Boston Pilgrims on courage alone.

Both would remain in the game long enough, however, to share the glory of Pittsburgh's victory over the Detroit Tigers in the 1909 Series, where Phillippe allowed only two hits and no runs in six innings.

Lawrence S. Katz is the author of Baseball in 1939: The Watershed Season of the National Pastime *(McFarland, 1995) and a past contributor to SABR publications. He practices law in Sterling Heights, Michigan, and lives in West Bloomfield with his wife and two children.*

Leever and Phillippe were born shortly before the advent of major league baseball and exactly five months apart. By the turn of the century they had embarked upon virtual mirror image careers. Witness: Each won 20 games in his first full year at the age of 27. Each pitched in the major leagues for 13 years. Each was a 20-game winner for the Pirates at least four times (Phillippe did it five). Each had an earned run average as high as 3.00 only once in any full season with the Pirates. Each completed over 80 percent of his starts. Each won almost two-thirds of his decisions. Each received his last decision in 1910 and retired at the age of 38.

Their career records are remarkable for their similarities:

Deacon Phillippe

							W	L	PCT	ERA	G	GS
CG	IP	H	BB	SO	ShO							
1899 LOU	20	17	.541	3.17	42	38	33	321	331	64	68	2
1900 PIT	18	14	.563	2.84	38	33	29	279	274	42	75	1
1901	22	12	.647	2.22	37	32	30	296	274	38	103	1
1902	20	9	.690	2.05	31	30	29	272	265	26	122	5
1903	25	9	.735	2.43	36	33	31	289.1	269	29	123	4
1904	10	10	.500	3.24	21	19	17	166.2	183	26	82	3
1905	20	13	.606	2.19	38	33	25	279	235	48	133	5
1906	15	10	.600	2.47	33	24	19	218.2	216	26	90	3
1907	14	11	.560	2.61	35	26	17	214	214	36	61	1
1908	0	0	-	11.25	5	0	0	12	20	3	1	0
1909	8	3	.727	2.32	22	12	7	131.2	121	14	38	1
1910	14	2	.875	2.29	31	8	5	121.2	111	9	30	1
1911	0	0	-	7.50	3	0	0	6	5	2	3	0
13 yrs.	186	110	.628	2.59	372	288	242	2607	2518	363	929	27
World Series												
2 yrs.	3	2	.600	2.88	7	5	5	50	40	4	22	0

Sam Leever

	W	L	PCT	ERA	G	GS	CG	IP	H	BB	SO	ShO
1898 PIT	1	0	1.000	2.45	5	3	2	33	26	5	15	0
1899	20	23	.465	3.18	51	39	35	379	353	122	121	4
1900	15	13	.536	2.71	30	29	25	232.2	236	48	84	3
1901	14	5	.737	2.86	21	20	18	176	182	39	82	2
1902	16	7	.696	2.39	28	26	23	222	203	31	86	4
1903	25	7	.781	2.06	36	34	30	284.1	255	60	90	7
1904	18	11	.621	2.17	34	32	26	253.1	224	54	63	0
1905	20	5	.800	2.70	33	29	20	230	199	54	81	3
1906	22	7	.759	2.32	36	31	25	260.1	232	48	76	6
1907	14	9	.609	1.66	31	24	17	216.2	182	46	65	5
1908	15	7	.682	2.10	38	20	14	192.2	179	41	28	4
1909	8	1	.889	2.83	19	4	2	70	74	14	23	0
1910	6	5	.545	2.76	26	8	4	111	104	25	33	0
13 yrs.	194	100	.660	2.47	388	299	241	2661	2449	587	847	38
World Series												
1 yr.	0	2	.000	6.30	2	2	1	10	13	3	2	0

As teammates from 1900 to 1910, neither ever had a losing season and their combined achievements transformed the Pirates into winners every one of those years

	Phillippe	Leever	Combined	Pirates	Finish
1900	18-14	15-13	33-27	79-60	2
1901	22-12	14-5	36-17	90-49	1
1902	20-9	16-7	36-16	103-36	1
1903	25-9	25-7	50-16	91-49	1
1904	10-10	18-11	28-21	87-66	4
1905	20-13	20-5	40-18	96-57	2
1906	15-10	22-7	37-17	93-60	3
1907	14-11	14-9	28-20	91-63	2
1908	0-0	15-7	15-7	98-56	3
1909	8-3	8-1	16-4	110-42	1
1910	14-2	6-5	20-7	86-67	3

Moreover, while relatively unknown outside of Pittsburgh, this pitching pair achieved a combined record remarkably comparable to Mathewson's:

Christy Mathewson

IP	H	W-L	Pct.	ERA	BB	SO	CG	ShO
4783	4216	373-188	.665	2.13	846	2,502	439	83

Phillippe and Leever

IP	H	W-L	Pct.	ERA	BB	SO	CG	ShO
5268	4967	380-210	.644	2.53	950	1,776	483	65

Phillippe and Leever, however, were more than mere halves of a whole. Both were widely respected for their classic nineteenth-century ethics and etiquette. Phillippe's unimpeachable integrity and gentle manner, even in the face of teammates' miscues, earned him the nickname "Deacon." Leever, a trained teacher who practiced the values of thrift, was known as the "Goshen Schoolmaster.". Their mutual friendship with the affable Honus Wagner was the bond of their relationship.

Owner Barney Dreyfuss appreciated his two stalwarts and made sure they were provided for during their occasional bouts with arm trouble. By mid-June of 1910, local sportswriter David Davies observed, "Phillippe and Leever can't stand the strain of pitching regularly." After only three appearances in the spring of 1911, the Deacon retired, but Dreyfuss kept him on the payroll as a scout. Although Leever's skills had likewise deteriorated, he expected a pay raise and was offended when Dreyfuss offered to give him the proceeds of his sale to any minor league team. He demanded and obtained his outright release.

The loss of Phillippe and Leever left only Wagner, Leach and Clarke remaining from the club's turn-of-the-century merger with the Louisville Colonels.

The two men crossed paths on the diamond one last time in 1913, when each was appointed manager in the newly created Federal League. Phillippe had been a manager-pitcher for Pittsburgh in the short-lived 1912 United States League, and in '13 took over the helm of that city's entry in the F.L. Meanwhile, Leever was named manager of the Covington, Kentucky, club, which moved to Kansas City in June.

Though Phillippe and Leever toiled in relative obscurity, never approaching Matty's popularity, each left his distinctive imprint on the game. Phillippe hurled a no-hitter for Louisville against the New York Giants in his rookie year and topped off his career in 1910 with 13 consecutive victories. His career record shows fewer walks per game than any other twentieth century pitcher (1.25) and he is ninth on the all-time list for fewest base runners allowed per nine innings (9.95). Leever posted the best winning percentage (minimum 100 wins) in the major leagues for the years 1900 to 1909 and his .660 lifetime percentage is the eighth highest in major league history among non-active pitchers. He pitched three one-hitters—on July 2, 1900, July 26, 1902, and June 13, 1903. He left the majors with a streak of 11 straight winning seasons.

Indeed, standing alone, each one amassed a record comparable or superior to Hall of Famers Jack Chesbro (199-131, 2.68 ERA), Dizzy Dean (150-83, 3.03 ERA), Lefty Gomez (189-102, 3.34 ERA). Addie Joss (160-97, 1.88 ERA), Sandy Koufax (165-87, 2.76 ERA), Rube Marquard (204-179, 3.08 ERA), Dazzy Vance (197-140, 3.24 ERA), Rube Waddell (191-141, 2.16 ERA), and Ed Walsh (194-130, 1.82 ERA).

Teammate Tommy Leach, in Lawrence Ritter's *The Glory of Their Times*, described both pitchers as among the greatest of their era. More than that, Deacon Phillippe and Sam Leever, thrust together in the first decade of the twentieth century, formed a pitching tandem unparalleled in major league history for longevity, dependability, and consistent success.

Bill Voiselle and the $500 Pitch

Ott enraged by 0-2 triple

Bob Mayer

Bill Voiselle stood atop the mound in Sportsman's Park, St. Louis, just one pitch from his tenth straight victory. It was a typically sultry night in late June, 1945 as Voiselle took the sign from catcher Ernie Lombardi. At the plate for the Cardinals, with two outs in the bottom of the ninth, the count two strikes and no balls, was the lefthanded-hitting Johnny Hopp. The New York Giants were ahead, 1-0.

Fifty-two years later, Voiselle vividly recounts the game and inning, including The Pitch, which would eventually define his big league career. "I was 9 and 0 at the time and I thought I had my tenth easy," he said. It brought to mind a meeting of all the Giants' pitchers early in the season. "Mel Ott was our manager," he said, "and told all the pitchers that anyone who doesn't waste an 0-2 pitch...'it'll cost you $100,' which was a lot of money in those days."

Voiselle had won 21 games for the Giants the year before, when he was a rookie righthander on a ballclub that finished a remarkable 38 games out of first place. Now, in his second season, he was sailing along and well established as the ace of New York's pitching staff. Until he uncorked The Pitch.

Voiselle took his big windup and let up on a fastball which sailed "high and away," according to the pitcher. But Hopp swung and ripped a line drive into the gap in left-center field for a triple. Moments later, Ray Sanders stroked a broken-bat single to right, tying the game.

Whitey Kurowski, up next, lined an apparent single to center, which would hold Sanders at second base. But Kurowski's shot had eyes and bounced over center fielder Red Treadway's head. Sanders easily scored the winning run.

It was a galling defeat for the Giants and a heartbreaking loss for Voiselle. Ott, at the tail end of a brilliant career, stormed in from right field and headed straight for Voiselle. The legendary Mr. Nice Guy was livid, Bill remembers.

"He caught up to me in the dugout," he said. "Ott told me he wouldn't fine me $100 for that pitch...he was fining me $500.[1] He said he'd fine me $1,000 if he could," recalled Voiselle.

Hopp, who is 81 years old and lives in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, was asked about The Pitch. "Oh, he wasted it," he said. "It was high and outside." Why did Hopp swing? "I thought I could hit it," he recalled.

Hopp also remembers Ott's anger. "I was there when he came after Voiselle, just inside our dugout," he said. "Both teams used the same tunnel to get to the clubhouse. Ott exploded. He used every word in the book."

"You know," added Hopp, "Voiselle threw real hard. He was tough to hit, but he had a lot of bad luck after that night. That pitch cost him more than $500."

Kurowski, who had the game-winning hit, was at the bat rack when Voiselle faced Hopp. "The one thing I remember is the pitch was high, up around Hopp's eyes, and he smacked it real good," said Kurowski. "He was a tough pitcher to hit against," he

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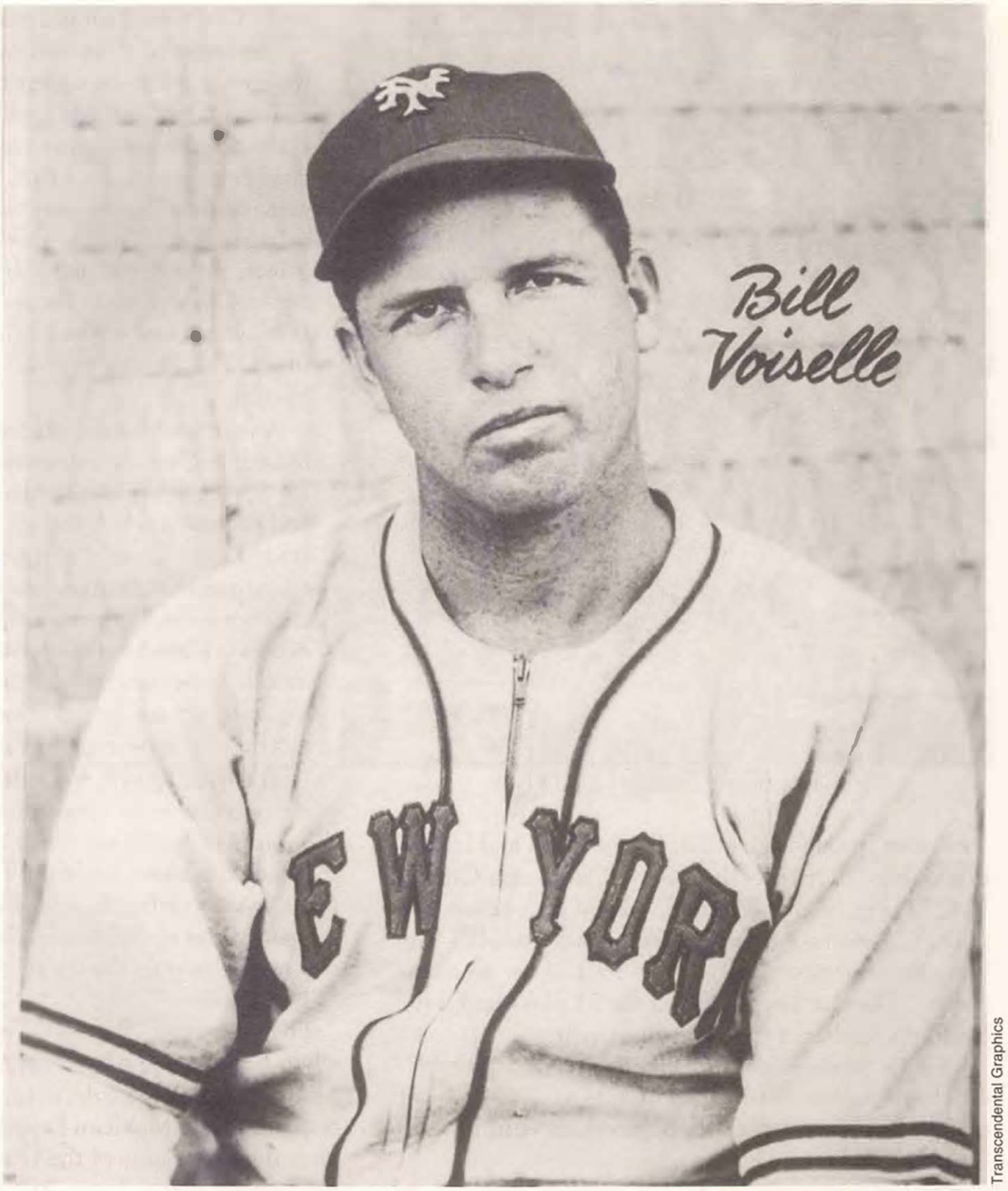
Bob Mayer writes about baseball's Golden Age, when ballplayers left their gloves on the field and their jewelry in the clubhouse.

added.

The Pitch was big news in New York and Voiselle was a headline in all the tabloids among the city's seven newspapers. Fans were stunned by the amount of the fine as well as its provocation: $500 for an 0 and 2 pitch. And by the mild-mannered Ott's uncharacteristic outburst.

Voiselle's solid career beginning, which featured 30 wins in less than a season and a half, suddenly went south. After the loss in St. Louis, he won only five of eighteen decisions and finished the season at 14-14. He pitched for five more years and never won more than thirteen games in any of them.

The big right-hander was crushed by the fine, which cost him a big chunk of his $3,500 salary.[2] And it drained his spirit. "It hurt me more than anything, that fine. It just knocked me for a loop," he said. "I pitched my arm off for him and the first chance he had, he cut my throat.



Transcendental Graphics

A lot of dough for a pitch up and away.

"It was awfully quiet in the clubhouse after the game," he said. "Billy Jurges...he was our captain...he came up to me and asked if Ott fined me for the pitch. When I said 'yes,' he just shook his head, didn't say a word and walked away.

"After that, the writers boycotted me. They kinda made fun...and never asked me my version of the pitch."

There would be few glorious days left in a Giants uniform for Voiselle, who at 6"4' and 200-plus pounds was known as "Big Bill." In June, 1947, he was traded to the Boston Braves for veteran pitcher Mort Cooper.

"The writers were on me again," he recalled. "They wrote that Ott traded a sore head for a sore arm."

Voiselle's first baseball journey was in 1938, when, as a teenager, he was signed out of high school and sent to Moutrie, Georgia. "I was one of nine children and it was the first time I was ever away from home," he said. "I was miserable." But he managed to win eight ball games and was paid $75 a month.

Transcendental Graphics

Johnny Hopp: "I thought I could hit it."

He rose through the minor league ranks and landed in Double-A (then called "A1") Oklahoma City in 1942. There he met Virginia, a local girl, before the start of an afternoon game. "Well," said Voiselle, "she just came out there one day and asked for an autograph." They've been married for 53 years and have lived in Oklahoma City since last year.

Voiselle pitched for the Double-A (then the highest classification) Jersey City Giants in 1943 and lost twenty-one games for a ballclub that Voiselle said "couldn't buy a run."

After spring training in '44 with the Giants in Lakewood, New Jersey, Voiselle was handed the ball on opening day. Just a rookie, a 21-game loser the previous year...chosen to start the season that would be most memorable.

He won twenty-one games and led the National League in games started, innings pitched, and strikeouts. He was named the league's Most Valuable Pitcher by *The Sporting News*, and "top rookie" by the Chicago writers. He still treasures the watch the paper gave him and the plaque he got from the scribes.

And, on a morning in May, after pitching the previous night against the Dodgers, Bill and Virginia were married. "It must have been catching," Voiselle said. "Old Lombardi got married two weeks later."

The highs of 1944 and nine straight wins in '45 were reduced to dust after the fine...until Bill got to Boston in the trade for Cooper. There manager Billy Southworth gave him a clean slate and a chance to pitch. In 1948, Voiselle won thirteen games as the Braves won the pennant.

In the World Series, which Cleveland won in six games, Voiselle pitched 3-2/3 innings of shutout relief in Game Three. He started Game Six against Bob Lemon and worked 7-1/3 innings before being lifted. The Braves lost, 4-3. It would be Bill's last hurrah.

A year later he was traded to the Cubs for Gene Mauch and never got untracked in Chicago. Sent to Springfield, Massachusetts, to get into shape and become a relief pitcher, Voiselle was eventually traded for Chuck Connors, better known as television's "Rifleman," in a minor league transaction with the Dodgers. Bill's big league days were over. He played out the string in Little Rock, Richmond, Vancouver and Louisville. At Richmond, Voiselle set an International League record for pitchers by appearing in 72 games.

Today, at age 78, Voiselle could be a trivia buff's delight: he wore uniform number 96, which was the name of his home town in South Carolina. He roomed with three eventual Hall of Famers: Johnny Mize, Ernie Lombardi, and Warren Spahn. He was a 20-game loser in the minors one year, a 20-game winner in the majors the next. And he was traded for "The Rifleman."

The essence of "Big Bill" Voiselle, though, surfaces when he tells you what being a big leaguer meant to him. "You know," he drawled, "I was offered $25,000 to jump to the Mexican League in 1946. It was a year after the fine. Some of the Giants went and I thought hard about going. I was still angry and that was big money."

"But," he continued, "I'm glad I didn't because baseball gave me a whole life. You know, I pitched four straight openers for the Giants. Being a big leaguer made me feel like Seventh Heaven."

Notes:

1. Was Ott preoccupied with that number? Five weeks later he became the third player in history (first in the NL) to hit 500 home runs.

2. John Thorn and John B. Holway, *The Pitcher*.

From A Researcher's Notebook

Al Kermisch

"Patsy" O'Connell Deserves Own Entry In Encyclopedias

Patrick "Patsy" O'Connell played 11 games with the Brooklyn American Association club in 1890, but his record in the various baseball encyclopedias has become part of another O'Connell—Patrick H.—who spent one year in the majors with Baltimore, American Association, in 1886. Patrick H., an outfielder, played 41 games for the Orioles and batted .181. Born in Bangor, Maine, on June 10, 1862, he died in Lewiston, Maine, on January 24, 1943.

"Patsy," an infielder, batted .225 in his 11 games for Brooklyn in 1890. He was a Brooklyn boy who died after a short illness in Brooklyn on May 5, 1892, at the age of 30. The following notice of his death appeared in the Brooklyn Eagle on May 6, 1892:

> Patrick O'Connell, a well known baseball player, died yesterday at his home in South Brooklyn, of pneumonia after a short illness. He was about 30 years old and, unlike many professional players, was strictly temperate in his habits. 'Patsy,' as he was called by his friends and admirers, learned how to play ball on the famous Nassons, which for years met all comers on the lots in the Twelfth ward. From the Nassons have graduated many crack ball tossers, not a year passing in which one or two of them were not taken up by the major organizations. O'Connell showed himself to be a first-class third baseman in addition to being a heavy batter and was soon signed by an International association team up the state. During the Players' league scare, two years ago, O'Connell played on the Brooklyn association team at Ridgewood park. After the club disbanded O'Connell joined the Albanys and later played in the New England league. He took cold while practicing last week and died suddenly. The funeral occurs today from Court and Union streets.

Lasorda Started With Connie Mack All-Stars

Tommy Lasorda spent 52 years in Organized Baseball as player, coach, and manager. He grew up in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and in the summer of 1944, joined the Connie Mack All Stars, a team that was organized by the venerable Mack to keep tabs on young talent in the Philadelphia area. At sixteen Tommy would play with the All Stars in the up-coming All-American Amateur Baseball Association's tournament in Baltimore.

The All Stars lost both of their games in the double-elimination tournament. In their first, they were no match for the veteran players on the Cummins Construction Company team of Baltimore, which included many players with minor league experience. Cummins won, 29-0, in a 6-1/2-inning game.

Al Kermisch has contributed to all but two Baseball Research Journals.

Lasorda played left field and was 0 for 3. Eighteen-year-old Bobby Shantz, who went on to pitch 16 years in the majors, was in right field and was 1 for 3. The All Stars next lost to the Elkton Triex, 5-3, in seven innings. Shantz was in left field and had two hits in four at bats with one RBI. Lasorda played first and pitched and was 1 for 3 with one run scored. Shantz and Lasorda accounted for three of the four hits made by the All Stars. Although he was the losing pitcher, Tommy gave up only two hits in 5-1/3 innings, walking four and fanning two.

Lou Gehrig Has Topped Grand Slam List Since 1934

There was a record number of grand slam home runs in the majors in 1996—141: 81 in the American League and 60 in the National League. On the individual side, Lou Gehrig still reigns supreme as the grand slam leader with a total of 23. On July 5, 1934, Gehrig hit his 17th grand slam—an inside the park drive off southpaw Wally Stewart of the Washington Senators at Yankee Stadium. That blow pushed Gehrig past Babe Ruth's total of 16 slams, and he has remained atop the slam list for 63 years. Gehrig added six more to his total before he was tragically forced to retire in 1939.

Gehrig hit his first grand slam at Yankee Stadium on July 23, 1925, a little over seven weeks after he started his string of playing 2,130 consecutive games. In a game against the Senators, Gehrig led the Yanks to an 11-7 victory, hitting two home runs—a two-run drive off Tom Zachary in the fifth inning and a grand slam off Fred Marberry in the seventh. His grand slam was not a typical Gehrig home run. It was a fly to left field that Goose Goslin misjudged. Goslin and shortstop Everett Scott ran toward the ball which looked like it would go foul, but it dropped fair by a couple of feet and bounded into the stands, scoring Aaron Ward, Babe Ruth, and Bob Meusel. It was a home run under the rules in effect until 1931.

"Say It Ain't So, Joe" Never Reached Jackson's Ears

"Say it ain't so, Joe" is now part of baseball lore. It started as an AP story out of Chicago on September 29, 1920, and included the following:

"When Joe Jackson left the grand jury after his confession, a crowd of small boys gathered round their heavy-hitting idol and asked:

"'It ain't true, is it Joe?'

"'Yes, boys, I'm afraid it is,' Jackson replied.

"'Well, I'd never have thought it,' sighed one lad." Eventually, "It ain't true, Joe" became "Say it ain't so, Joe."

In *The Sporting News* of September 24, 1942, Jackson gave a rare interview to Carter (Scoop) Latimer, sports editor of the Greenville (South Carolina) News, in which Jackson debunked the legend. Latimer stated that a sob sister writer was believed to have concocted the yarn for sensationalism as a fabricated "scoop." Latimer also said that Jackson called it a lie and declared by oath that no such words ever reached his ears.

After the eight White Sox players were acquitted in Chicago in 1921, a column written by Gordon McKay in the Philadelphia Inquirer on August 4, 1921, included the following excerpt:

"Ten nice clean well-kept American dollars to a Spanish peso and an Austrian thaler that no kid stood outside the court room after the jury announced its verdict in the baseball scandal, and waltzing up to Joe Jackson wept:

"'Say it ain't so, Joe.'

"Not the Chicago kids. They know their town and juries much, much better. They know that jurors are dead set against anybody interfering with the principal outdoor industries of plain and open-face banditing and grafting."

Manager Took Lie Detector Test In Spitting Incident

When Roberto Alomar, Oriole second baseman, lost his cool and spit in the face of umpire John Hirschbeck in an important American League game in Toronto on September 27, 1996, there was no doubt that Alomar was guilty, since television replays were shown all over the country for days. Such was not the case on August 8, 1953, when Jack Tighe, manager of the Buffalo Bisons, was accused of spitting in the face of umpire Max Felerski over a disputed call. Tighe was immediately suspended indefinitely by Frank Shaughnessy, International League president.

Tighe vehemently denied that he had spit in Felerski's face, and asked for a lie detector test in order to clear his reputation of an attempt to smear it. The test was administered by the police department's lie detector expert, Patrolman Romain A. Gunther, who said that Tighe had answered all the questions truthfully. Tighe admitted that he did curse the umpire and also called him a liar, but did not spit in his face. Three Buffalo players—Frank Carswell, Jack

Wallaesa, and Johnny Maldovan also took the test on behalf of their manager. It was the first time that a lie detector test was used in Organized Baseball. Less than 24 hours after receiving the results of the test, Shaughnessy lifted Tighe's suspension and fined him $100. Tighe went on to manage the Detroit Tigers in 1957, finishing fourth with a record of 78-76.

Singer Charley Pride Got Hit Off Jim Palmer

When the Anaheim Angels inserted singer Bruce Hornsby as a pinch runner in an exhibition game last March, it reminded me of the time in 1974 that the Texas Rangers used Charley Pride, the well-known country singer, in their lineup as a designated hitter against the Orioles. The game was played at Pompano Beach on March 18, 1974. Facing the Oriole ace Jim Palmer in the second inning with two on and two out, Pride grounded out to second baseman Rob Andrews. But leading off the fourth inning, Charley singled off the Hall of Fame hurler. Baltimore won the game easily, 14-2. Pride was no stranger to baseball. He had been a pitcher-outfielder for both Memphis and Birmingham in the Negro American League before settling down to concentrate on his singing career.

Gus Triandos' Lone Inside-the-Park Home Run

Gus Triandos spent 13 years in the majors with Baltimore and Detroit in the American League and Philadelphia in the National League. He was a fine catcher and was behind the bat for Baltimore's first American League no-hit game, pitched by Hall of Famer Hoyt Wilhelm, a 1-0 victory over the Yankees at Memorial Stadium on September 20, 1958. Gus accounted for the only run with a home run in the seventh inning off Bobby Shantz, who had relieved Don Larsen, who had given up but one hit and no runs in six innings. Triandos also caught Hall of Famer Jim Bunning's perfect game against the Mets, a 6-0 win at Shea Stadium on June 21, 1964.

Triandos hit 167 home runs during his career but had the misfortune of spending his best years with the Orioles at Memorial Stadium, one of the most difficult parks to hit home runs in the 1950s and early 1960s. Gus was a notoriously slow runner. He hit only one inside-the-park home run during his career. It came on Saturday, August 31, 1957, at Memorial Stadium as the Orioles defeated the Boston Red Sox ,4-1. In the fifth inning Gus hit one down the third base line that looked like a single, but the ball took a freak ricochet off the wall and rolled along the track to the wire fence in left center with Ted Williams in frantic pursuit. Before Ted could get the ball back in play Triandos was home with the run that broke up a scoreless duel.

It was ironic that Williams was the victim of Triandos' only inside-the-park home run since Ted himself had but one insider in his 19 years and 521 home runs in the majors. It came at League Park in Cleveland on Friday, September 13, 1946. The Red Sox needed just one more victory to clinch their first pennant in 28 years. In the very first inning Williams, who usually defied the Cleveland "shift" by refusing to hit to the opposite field, for once deliberately poked one to left field. It went over the head of Pat Seery, who was playing a deep short and the ball rolled down in front of the bleachers in left center, where Felix Mackiewicz finally retrieved it. The fluke home run proved to be the only tally of the game and clinched the pennant for the Red Sox.

Conductor Left Train To See Cubs Play

Baseball fans today, even if they can't get to the ball park, can see their favorite players often enough on TV to satisfy their longings. But such was not the case in the old days of afternoon baseball when there was no TV and it was difficult for some working persons to get to a game. Perhaps then it might be easier to understand the actions of one conductor of a Chicago elevated train who was the subject of the following item which appeared in The Chicago *Tribune* on June 18, 1923:

> Passengers on a Northwestern elevated train at Addison Street, who were on their way to the Cubs' ball park yesterday, stopped to observe Guard Thomas J. Canavan, 5727 Calumet avenue, who was trying to put the trolley pole of his train on an imaginary wire. Failing, he jumped from the train and joined the crowd for the ball park. When Motorman J.R. Lester, 6131 Prairie avenue, did not get the signal to go ahead, he discovered he had no conductor. He notified officials, who found Canavan enjoying the game from a seat in the bleachers. He was taken from the park to his home.
>
> The Phillies won the game, 6-4

Give Me The Guy

Give me the guy
Who thinks "team" comes first,
Who'll give himself up for a run.
Give me the guy
Who gives it his all,
And still thinks the game is great fun.

Give me the guy
Who plays with his head,
Knows a cutoff man when he sees one.
Give me the guy
Who'll lay the ball down,
A run's still a run if you "squeeze" one.

You take the guy
Who swings from his heels,
And stands to admire the ball in its flight.
You take that guy
Who thinks "me" not team,
A loser when things get real tight.

So give me the guy
From a time that's long past,
When just meeting the ball was no crime.
Give me that guy
With his head screwed on right,
And I'll beat you every time.

—Ev Parker

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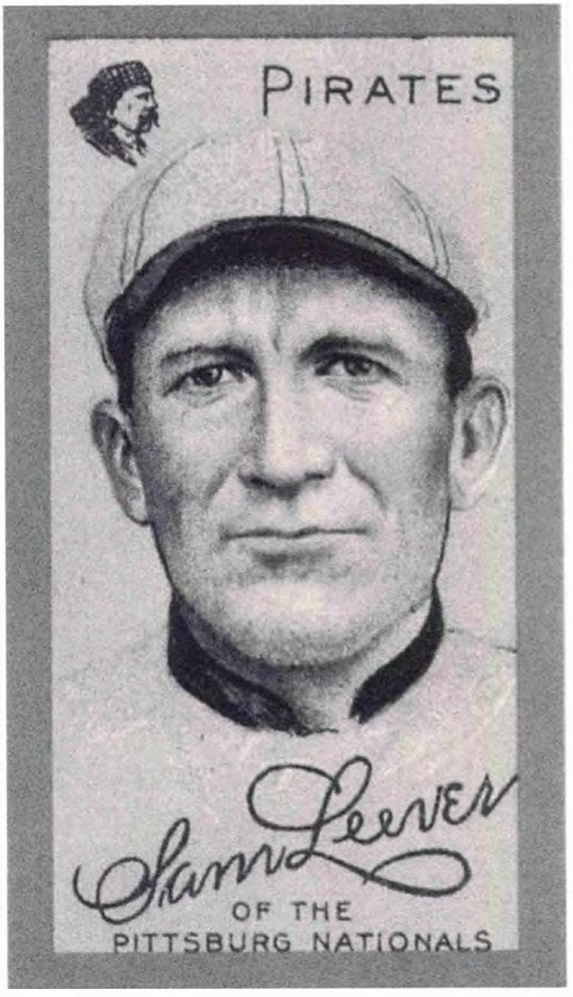
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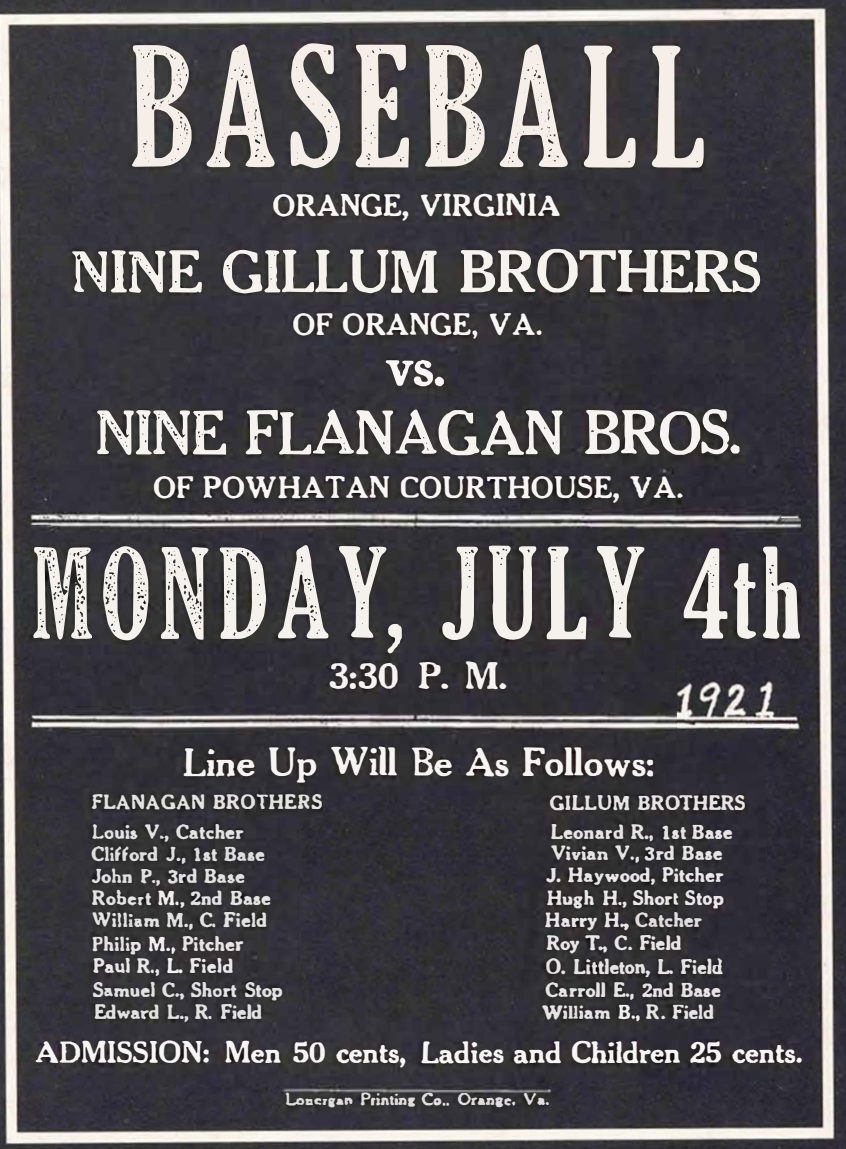

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