

The INSIDE GAME

The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

Volume 5, Number 4: "Let's get this lumpy, licorice-stained ball rolling!" Nov. 2005

Chairman's Column

By David Jones

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In our age of airplanes, automobiles, and locomotives, it's rather rare to travel by ship. When I told people that I had reached Toronto by taking a two-hour ferry over Lake Ontario, some of them looked at me as if I had just said that I had alighted on the hotel aboard a hot air balloon. Nonetheless, the unique sensation of being at sea, with all that implies, colored my experience of the 2005 SABR convention. I reached the Port of Toronto aboard the *Spirit of Ontario*, a doomed ferry that, for the moment, shuttles people from Rochester, New York to Toronto. Even during the two-hour boat ride, as I sat staring out the window at the non-descript waters of Lake Ontario, I could hear whispers of the *Spirit of Ontario's* imminent collapse as a business enterprise: "They don't have enough passengers...It's only a matter of months." Thus when I set foot on Canadian soil, passed through customs, and found a cab to take me to the Holiday Inn on King, where the convention was being held, the death rattles of the *Spirit of Ontario* still echoed in my head.

Toronto feels like New York City writ small. Perhaps this comparison will seem out of place or even provincial, but walking through the streets of Toronto I couldn't help but be reminded of New York City. The architecture, though not as dense and claustrophobic as the Big Apple's, is similar; the nightlife of the city and its internal rhythms are somehow reminiscent of the city on the Hudson.

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Perfect Pitch: A Deadballer's Perspective on SABR 35

by John Zinn

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In his presentation about the 1955 and 1965 Dodgers, David Smith described what has to be the most dominant stretch of clutch pitching of all time. Over their last 16 games in 1965, Dodger pitchers allowed only 17 runs, six of which were in one game and four of which came with one swing of the bat. Later that afternoon, Roberta Newman also discussed pitching and the Dodgers, but a very different kind of pitching—pitching products or, in other words, advertising. In an informative and entertaining presentation, Ms. Newman described how advertising both by and through the Dodgers reflected life in Brooklyn and how it changed from the 1890's to the

Dodgers' departure for California after the 1957 season.

While the presentation covered this entire period, I want to focus on the beginning of the period through the Deadball era. By going back prior to Brooklyn's consolidation as a borough of New York City, Ms. Newman was able to describe a very different Brooklyn than was reflected in baseball marketing and advertising. She began by discussing an 1890's Ladies' Day promotion where women could purchase tickets for the reduced price of 25 cents, a promotion that dated back to the 1870's.

As ridiculously cheap as that may seem to us today, it limited the potential crowd to the middle class citizens of Brooklyn. That this was the target market was further demonstrated by the programs of the day, which included ads for champagne, clearly directed at the middle class.

However, all of this changed after consolidation into New York City, as more and more working class people

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Tinker, Evers, Chance

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A History of Bennett Park- Detroit's First Major League Ballpark: Part 1

By **Ron Selter**

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Bennett Park was named for Charlie Bennett, a popular catcher with Detroit's National League team for eight seasons (1881-88), who lost both legs in a railway accident in 1894. The park, which came to be called Bennett Park, opened in 1896. It was the home field of the Western League Detroit Wolverines (also known as the Tigers) for 1896-99. In 1900, the Western League was renamed the American League and the league continued to use Bennett Park for its only minor league season. Major league baseball returned to Detroit in 1901 with the debut of the now major league American League. The Tigers on Opening Day sent the overflow crowd home happy that day with a memorable 10-run rally in the bottom of the 9th inning to defeat Milwaukee 14-13. The Tigers, led by Ty Cobb and Sam Crawford, won three consecutive pennants from 1907-09, and Bennett Park hosted the World Series in those years. Bennett Park was built of wood, but unlike many of the other contemporary wooden ballparks, it never burned. The park was demolished after the 1911 season to make way for Navin Field.

The park was located at the northwest corner of Michigan and Trumbull, in the city of Detroit and not far from downtown. The site of the park was in what was at that time a semi-rural area, and was not large—consisting of a land plat only of 3.6 acres. Note that the park's site used only a portion of the land used for the next ballpark at this location (Navin Field 1912). Bennett Park when opened in 1896 had a seating capacity of about 5000. Total capacity was expanded to accommodate 8500 fans for the 1901 American League season (All capacity figures refer to permanent seating—which excludes temporary bleachers added for the 1907-09 World Series. The 1901 ballpark structure consisted of (1) a covered grandstand, which

extended past third base and about as far as first base, and (2) uncovered bleachers that extended down the left field and right field lines in foul territory. Home plate was in the southeast corner of the site and the left field line ran about West to East—thus, left-handed batters got the afternoon sun to look into. Because the shape of the land plat was a trapezoid and not a rectangle, the outfield fences were oriented at more than 90 degrees in left field and less than 90 degrees in right field. In the park's original configuration, a clubhouse and a groundskeeper's shed stood in center field and both buildings were in play.

Before the 1908 season, the Tigers purchased the property behind right field (previously used as a lumber yard) and extended the ballpark property to the North to Cherry Street. At the same time, additional rows of seats were added in front of the existing grandstand. To accommodate these additional seats, the playing field was shifted about 40 feet towards the outfield. At this time permanent right field bleachers, with a capacity of about 2000, were built in what had been the lumberyard. The bleachers added for the 1908 season extended from right center to within about 50 feet of the right field foul line. During this expansion a clubhouse was built beneath the grandstand. This allowed the removal of the center field clubhouse and it was replaced with a short diagonal centerfield fence adjacent to the left center field scoreboard.

There were other bleachers from which to view games, however, they were outside the park. These were the "wildcat bleachers" built on the roofs of homes and barns and were sited behind the not-very-tall left field fence. Not until the 1910 season were inside-the-park left field bleachers added in front of, and thus blocking the view from, the wildcat bleachers. These new left field bleachers were shallow in depth and extended from the left field line most of the way to left center. With this and the prior additions, seating capacity was increased from 8500 in 1901 to 14,000 by 1910. These capacity figures were exclusive of as many standees as could be squeezed into the outfield for big games. The popularity of the park as an advertising venue may be judged from the double-billboards making up the fence in left-center in the last two years of the park's existence.

In its early years of use as an American League ballpark, Bennett Park was a bit smaller in the size of its playing field, while the park was about average in capacity. After the last outfield bleachers were installed in left field in 1910, Bennett Park now possessed the shortest and smallest left field in the American League while right field was about average in size. Thus, Bennett Park had become a hitter's park with home run park factors for 1910 and 1911 of better than 150.

A comparison was made of the number and type of home runs in 1910-11 Bennett Park, after the left field bleachers had been built, versus home runs in the 1908-09 seasons.

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Time Period	Total HRs	OTF	Bounce OTF	IP
1908-09	33	3	0	30
1910	39	17	5	22
1911	36	20	4	16
1910-11	75	37	9	38

HR Codes:

OTF: Over-the-Fence HRs

Bounce OTF: Bounce HRs are included in the OTF category

IP: Inside-the Park HRs

Source: Home run data from game accounts in the *Detroit Free Press*

The comparison shows that home runs per season more than doubled between 1908-09 and 1910-11. The effect is exaggerated because the 1911 season was the first full American League season with the cork center ball. Note that major league home runs increased 42% with the introduction of the cork center ball. Of the OTF home runs (excluding Bounce home runs) in 1910 at Bennett Park nearly all were into the left field bleachers (11 known home runs to the left field bleachers and one home run with field unknown). In 1911, the left field bleachers accounted for 75% of the OTF home runs (12 into the left field bleachers, two to right field, and two home runs with field unknown).

Dimensions: All (except left field in 1910-11) were estimated from photos and the dimensions of the land plat.

Time Period	LF	CF	RF
1901-07	335	432	345
1908-09	325	456	375*
1910-11	295	456	375*

* Straightaway RF was 362

Average OF Distances

Time Period	LF	CF	RF
1901-07	379	405	358
1908-09	368	431	372
1910-11	340	431	372

Fence Heights

Time Period	LF	CF	RF
1901-07	12	12	12
1908-09	12	12	4
1910-11	8	16	4

Chairman's Column, continued from page 1.

Toronto has a dazzling variety of restaurants; so many, in fact, that one wonders if the natives ever cook on their own. King Street pulses with activity well into the night. Walking down the street after finding a bite to eat late Thursday night, I was struck by the throngs of revelers still packed inside the clubs. But as you move further away from King, toward the business district, Toronto can take on the appearances of a ghost town once all the workers have commuted home. On Friday night, I walked up and down untold city blocks, searching for a 24-hour copy center. Here the streets were empty.

I go into this detail because, for me, every SABR convention is a kind of dialogue between the enclosed arguments and discussions of the baseball research world gathered at the hotel, and the metropolis that surrounds it, beckoning the newcomer to forget the familiar (and unfamiliar!) discussions of baseball history and statistics and lose oneself in the strange terrain of the city's street grids. Thus, my memories of this year's Toronto convention are a balance between the presentations I saw, the people I met, the ordinary business of the Deadball Committee meeting on the one hand, and on the other the record stores along Yonge Street, the surprising number of homeless people who took shelter late at night over street grates and under bank awnings, and the orange elevators climbing up and down the CN tower overlooking the Skydome.

Many of the DEC's best citizens, and good friends of mine, were missing from this year's convention, which added a touch of absence to my four days in Toronto. After sleeping through much of the ride back home on the *Spirit of Ontario* on Sunday, I awoke just as the boat docked in the Port of Rochester, and stumbled into the sunlight and back onto American soil. A collection of television cameras and reporters greeted us. They were covering a story on the *Spirit of Ontario*, and its future—if indeed it even has one—but their presence made me feel as if I had just disembarked from one of those sea vessels of antiquity, the so-called "Ships of Fools," which shuttled the deranged of Europe from one port of call to another. *Who are these people? Where have they been? What will they do?* ♦



Bennett Park, 1907 World Series, The Chicago Cubs vs. the Detroit Tigers
 Photo Courtesy of the Library of Congress, American Memory, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/>

The Neyer/James Guide to Pitchers: An Historical Compendium of Pitching, Pitchers, and Pitchers, by James, Bill, and Rob Neyer. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. ISBN 0-7432-6158-5. Softcover. \$16.95

Reviewed by **Jan Finkel**
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The subtitle says it all. Bill James and Rob Neyer have put together an ambitious book that will be helpful to all readers. Most of it works, but there are some rough spots.

James and Neyer explain that the book had its genesis some years ago when they were talking about various pitchers. Both knew quite a bit about many pitchers: righty or lefty, who threw a no-hitter, who contributed to some good teams or was a fair pitcher on outstanding teams or an excellent pitcher on lousy teams, and so on. However, they couldn't always answer one question: "What did he throw?" A book was born with the effort to ascertain the repertoire of every pitcher of consequence (and many not so consequential) in major league history, a number of Negro leagues standouts, a few minor leaguers, and some whimsical choices.

The book is divided into three parts of unequal length. Part I is "Pitches," wherein Neyer and James provide brief articles ranging on topics from "What Do You Call That Thing?" to "All the Pitches We Could Find" (a glossary of all commonly known pitches) to "The Mighty Fastball" and "The Best Fastballs of Each Half-Decade" and on to the curve, change-up, slider (it's "undefinable"), knuckleball, forkball, screwball, and spitball. The only obvious error is crediting Ewell Blackwell instead of Rip Sewell with making the eephus pitch famous, even saying that Blackwell threw the pitch to Ted Williams in the 1946 All-Star Game. This is a minor quibble, as the articles are illuminating and often

entertaining.

Part II, "Pitchers," is by far the longest section of the book. Leading off are discussions of ten pitchers, all of them good, none of them in the Hall of Fame: Tommy Bond, Tony Mullane, Wilbur Cooper, Eddie Rommel, Mel Harder, Lon Warneke, Tommy Bridges, Bucky Walters, Billy Pierce, and Bob Friend.

Following these essays is the "Pitcher Census," the heart of the book. It is fascinating to browse the treatments, which vary in length depending on the significance of the pitcher and the material available on him. Each entry, in encyclopedic fashion, gives the pitcher's height and weight, throwing hand, won-lost record, ERA, saves, and years pitched. The main part of the entry lists his pitch selection, in many cases at various stages of the pitcher's career as he varied his repertoire. Much of the material comes from invaluable old sources like *Baseball Magazine*, *Baseball Digest*, *The Sporting News*, and *The Sporting Life*, along with fellow pitchers, teammates, hitters, managers, scouts, and so on. The result is an anthology of material not readily available to readers.

Most major league pitchers are listed. One even finds Jimmie Foxx, who pitched effectively a few times when he was trying to hang on late in his career. Making the inclusion of Foxx curious is the omission of the Phillies' Johnny Lush; with a 66-85 slate and 2.68 ERA, he was never confused with his Athletics counterparts Eddie Plank and Rube Waddell, but he was a "real" pitcher. Babe Ruth was an outstanding pitcher, but his pitch selection gets one line. Omitted are Roger Bresnahan and George Sisler, who started their Hall of Fame careers as reasonably promising pitchers. If Bresnahan and Sisler are out and Ruth gets such short shrift, why is Foxx in? The authors somewhat atone for such omissions with a few whimsical touches for the alert reader: Sidd Finch, Gil Gamesh, Henry Wiggen, and Charlie Brown.

Part III, "Pitching," is the shortest section of the book and could be absorbing, but it doesn't always measure up. Several articles work. "E=M Cy Squared," in which James

presents a fairly simple formula for predicting the winners of the Cy Young Awards, is a solid piece. The formula, James notes, has worked about eighty percent of the time.

Also fun is "Lucky Bastards," a spin-off from segments in *The New Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract*, in which James had noted his choice for the "Tough Luck" pitcher's season of each decade, typically a pitcher with a low ERA and a losing record. Among the "lucky" winners, as it were, is Byron Houck in 1913 (4.15 as opposed to the league average 2.93 but still 14-6). His choice of Wild Bill Donovan in 1907 (a 25-4 slate with a 2.19 ERA against the league average 2.69 that James says should have been 16-13) as the luckiest pitcher begs explanation given that his ERA was a half-run better than the league average, albeit by only nineteen percent (*Total Baseball*, 8th ed.). James doesn't deign to do so: "Most of the method for doing this was so straightforward that I'm not even going to explain it, other than to say that we used the Pythagorean system to project winning percentages and made park adjustments" (p. 472). That's fine, but not everyone is familiar with the Pythagorean system.

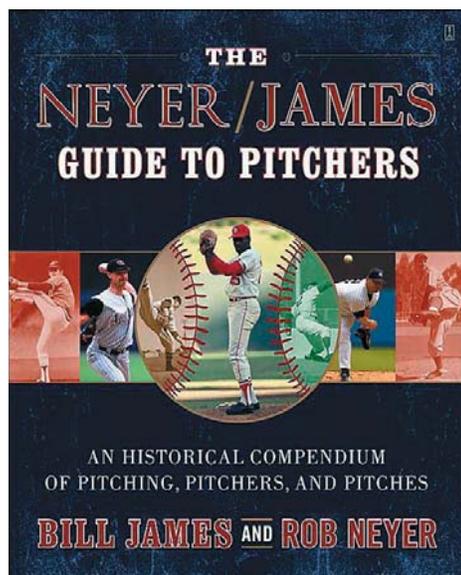
Enjoyable too is "Unique Records," dating back to 1910. Deadball Era fans will learn that George Bell in 1910 is the only pitcher ever to go 10-27. In the same year Buster Brown (9-23) and Cliff Curtis (6-24) achieved uniqueness, however dubious. Jack Nabors, pitching for Connie Mack's depleted Athletics in 1916, must have felt lonely at 1-20. Ed Walsh, Joe Wood, Walter Johnson, and Eddie Cicotte's winning slates even things out a bit. It's not profound, just fun.

Less fortunate is James' long discussion of "Abuse and Durability." Here he takes issue with the concept of Pitcher Abuse Points (PAP) set forth several years ago by Rany Jazayerli and Keith Woolner. (James graciously invites Jazayerli and Woolner to respond in defense of their theory; they accept and respond with equal grace.) James' discussion, a report of eight studies he conducted to challenge the PAP theory, becomes hopelessly entangled. Also problematic is James' assumption that

the reader understands his concept of Win Shares, a concept some informed observers say he has never explained satisfactorily. Ending the book is James' proposed system for "coding" every pitcher for every year, a proposal more complicated than it needs to be.

Ultimately, the shortcomings of *The Neyer/James Guide to Pitchers* hinge on the writing. The greater blame, sad to say, lies with Bill James. Irreverent, breezy, opinionated, and amusingly digressive from the beginning of his career, James has maintained much of what made him enjoyable and downright fun to read, but he has carried it to extremes here. One gets the impression—and it may be just that—that he is dictating whatever comes to mind with no thought to editing or streamlining his prose. One clue is the frequency with which he begins sentences with "Anyway," giving the reader the sense that James realizes that he's gone off on a tangent and should get back to his knitting. Rob Neyer, as irreverent, breezy, and opinionated as James, keeps a grip on his writing, getting a chuckle or smile from the reader while staying on track.

Problems aside, *The Neyer/James Guide to Pitchers* is a valuable contribution, full of indispensable material on the long-neglected area of pitchers' repertoires. With judicious tightening, it could evolve from a sound, useful book into a great one.◆



Guys, Dolls, and Curveballs: Damon Runyan on Baseball, edited by Jim Reisler. New York: Avalon Publishing Group, 2005.

ISBN: 0786715405.

Paperback, \$16.95, 400 pages.

Book Review by **Gabriel Schechter**
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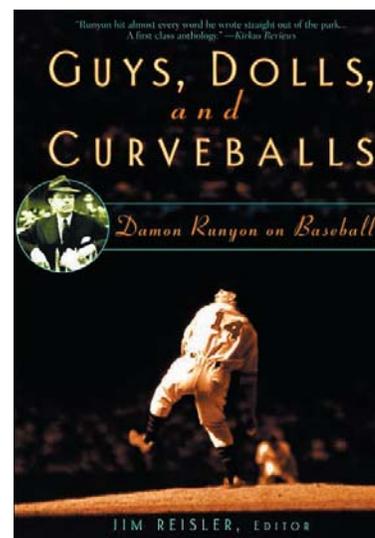
A decade ago, when I got serious about writing baseball history, I made a list of ten books I wanted to write. I've done the first two, learned that two others already existed, and now have to cross #5 off my list. That one is "Runyan anthology," a book that somebody needed to do sometime. Jim Reisler has beaten me to it, editing *Guys, Dolls, and Curveballs*. This collection of Damon Runyan's best baseball writing is a consistently entertaining read.

The majority of the material in the collection concerns Deadball Era events, and even the post-1920 material frequently focuses on players who debuted before 1920, like Babe Ruth and Walter Johnson. Kudos to Jim Reisler for his selection of material. We are presented with an appetizing smorgasbord of Runyan delicacies: World Series stories ranging from 1911 through 1934; game accounts told with unmatched color; eyewitness reports of the 1911 burning of the Polo Grounds, Babe Ruth's first major league home run and many further home run exploits, and the 1913-14 world tour; spring training ramblings and assorted profiles of players and their quirks; coverage of the Black Sox and an intimate portrait of the finer points of Arnold Rothstein's character; and many other treats.

Runyan shines forth here as much more than a wisecracking perpetrator of the purple prose popular at the time. A keen observer of the experience of watching ballgames, as well as a shrewd analyst of baseball skills, he provides a thorough, vivid portrait of arguably the most fascinating quarter-century

of baseball history. Of course, there is humor aplenty here, as well as ornate descriptions of ordinary plays, but it is the details of the players, the managers, their behavior, and their performance that sparkles most. Runyan, who was there, gives us the inside dope on events like the hiring of Miller Huggins by the Yankees, the death of Eddie Grant, and John McGraw visiting the tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Unfortunately, the publisher did Reisler and Runyan a major disservice by not employing the services of a human being to proofread the text. A computer spell-check failed to catch literally dozens upon dozens of errors (more than a dozen just in the 11-page section on Victory Faust). Many of the errors cause only minor hiccups in the reading, but others will leave the reader wondering "what was this supposed to say?" Sometimes the result is gibberish; the worst example is the statement that Rube Marquard "in 1912 earned wins in his first 19 decisions that remains a major-league record for consecutive-win record." The cumulative effect of so many errors is that we begin to wonder whether we're reading Runyan or not; when we reach his account of the 1927 World Series and see Wilcy Moore repeatedly called "Wiley," we don't know whether Runyan was being clever or Carroll & Graf negligent. It is too bad, and it serves as a warning to other authors to check the text before it goes to print. But don't let these editorial problems spoil your enjoyment of this rich volume of Americana.◆



Tinker, Evers, and Chance: A Triple Biography, by Gil Bogen. McFarland & Company Inc., Jefferson NC, 2003. ISBN: 0786416815. 262 pages, paperback, \$29.95.

Book Review by **David Shiner**
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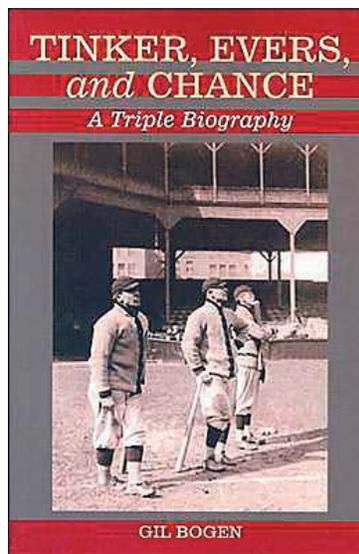
We live, happily, in an era when biographies of Deadball stars are being published at an unprecedented rate. This makes for great reading and learning, but it also presents certain problems. What, for example, is to be done about Joe Tinker, Johnny Evers, and Frank Chance? There seems to be little point in undertaking a biography of any of the three individually; their historical significance is largely as an entry. However, joint biographies also involve difficult decisions, including how much to include on each man as an individual. Still, it is important not to let the memory of these Hall of Famers and the great teams for which they played fade into oblivion. This is Gil Bogen's motivation for writing his triple biography.

Given that three players are profiled, it is somewhat surprising that this book is shorter in length than the typical Deadball era biography. As a result, it lacks the detail characteristic of the works of contemporary writers on oldtime baseball such as David Fleitz and Mike Sowell. In fact, the book has more of the flavor of a 50's tome than a contemporary one. This is most noticeable in the prose style. Bogen is an octogenarian; his interest in baseball began in the heyday of "hero journalism." That plainly influenced his writing, which is peppered with lines like "He just knew he would make good" and "If only he could find someone to love and who would love him" and "Something had to be done. And it had to be done now!" The appreciation—or otherwise—of this style is a matter of taste.

Bogen's bow to modern research-oriented practice is reflected in the inclusion of a large number of

endnotes. Most, however, refer either to secondary sources like Peter Golenbock's *Wrigleyville* or interviews with descendants of the trio of Bear Cubs, rather than to newspapers and magazines of the day. At times, this results in curious anomalies. To cite a single example: during his playing career Johnny Evers often gave his birthdate as 1883, presumably to cast himself as being two years younger than he really was. Although it has long since been established that 1881 was the actual year of his birth, the incorrect 1883 date still appears in some sources. Bogen correctly asserts that Evers was born in 1881, but on several occasions cites his age as if he were actually born in 1883. This disparity is unsystematic; it appears that Bogen is simply unaware of the discrepancy.

The space allotted to the events in each man's life is reasonably good, but there are some exceptions. For instance, Bogen devotes almost as many words to the question of whether Tinker was born out of wedlock as to the entire Miracle Braves' 1914 season, for which Evers won the MVP award. The publisher, McFarland, shows a similar variation in quality, doing its usual job with respect to typeface (attractive), photo reproduction and placement (excellent), pricing (high), and editing (nonexistent). On the whole, *Tinker, Evers, and Chance* is a pleasant read, but it's hardly the final word on the three stars of yesteryear. ♦



Wrigley Field: The Unauthorized Biography, by Stuart Shea with George Castle. Brassey's Inc., Washington DC. ISBN: 1574885863. Hardcover, \$26.95, 339 pages.

Book Review by **Mark Dugo**
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As another disappointing baseball season ends in Chicago (at least on the North side) what better way to forget than reading everything you could hope to learn about Wrigley Field and Chicago Cubs lore?

Wrigley Field is as much a part of the mystique of the lovable losers as curses and goats, foul ball interference, and bleacher bums. Living in Chicago all of my life, I have always been fascinated at the number of times people visit me just to partake in a game at Wrigley (though the ability to just drop by and get tickets without paying too much is long gone).

Shea and Castle do a very admirable job in recreating the glamour for those of you who may have never had the pleasure of seeing the vines and the bleacher bums up close and in person.

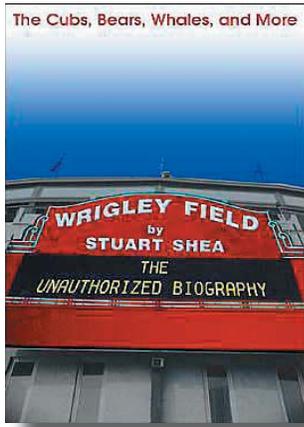
Leading off with "The Construction of a Shrine," the title of chapter one lays the foundation for what is obviously a labor of love for the authors. Each chapter is broken up into short, concise headings that usually span less than a page each so the reading is light, quick and enjoyable (I for one hate books that have chapters that span 40-50 pages. Reading becomes almost as a chore).

The entire first four chapters, and part of a fifth, deal exclusively with the pre and dead ball eras. The pre-Wrigley days (Weeghman Park, 1914, Cubs Park 1918) make for fascinating reading as the ideas and thought processes of establishing a new major league ball park are detailed and discussed in amusing fashion. Reviewing historical Wrigley Field to what has become today's icon, Shea writes "...the neighborhood landscape hasn't been altered significantly, and

with the grass and dirt on the field and the mediocrities in the home dugout, how much has changed?”

The early chapters read as if a significant history of Chicagoland baseball and baseball in general is developing as Veeck, Comiskey, and the Federal League Whales and the impact each had on the local baseball environment are documented and dissected. Wartime baseball and its effects and the 1919 White Sox scandal are all interwoven nicely to round out a unique and significant history of the Cubbies baseball world during the days of Tinker, Evers and Chance, Mordecai Brown, and World Series glory.

Dispersed throughout each chapter are other significant baseball occurrences that tie nicely in with the events in Cubbieland. It is easy to correlate the events that shaped the Cubs with surrounding happenings to assist one in capturing the essence and feel of what makes the Cubs the franchise they have become—the ability to maintain and develop a devoted, loyal fan base regardless of losing season after losing season. Make no mistake about it though, Shea and Castle’s work is a winner—no need to wait until next year to grab this one!◆



SABR 35, cont. from page 1 became part of Brooklyn. This change was reflected in the advertising in game programs, as ads were aimed at a very different drinking clientele as well as promoting tobacco and chewing gum products.

The changes in Brooklyn’s population, and therefore in the potential market of ticket buyers, continued throughout the Deadball era and was in turn reflected in

advertising. By the time of World War I, the ban on Sunday baseball was a major impediment to the Dodgers’ ability to expand their fan base. The restriction dramatically limited the ability of working class fans to attend games and also was an artificial barrier for Jewish fans for whom religious concerns were not an issue. This led Charles Ebbets and the Dodger leadership into the political arena in an attempt to eliminate the Sunday restrictions. Part of the strategy employed by the team’s ownership used advertising to support their political agenda. Again, social change changed the potential audience, which the team tried to address at least partially through advertising.

Ms. Newman went on to describe further changes for the next four decades with the ultimate conclusion of the Dodgers abandoning what ownership perceived to be a limited market for the potentially unlimited market of southern California. At the conclusion, Ms. Newman provided a therapeutic moment for all of us old Brooklyn fans by allowing us to boo Walter O’Malley.

The Dodgers were not the only one with perfect pitch: consider the case of Charles Ives.

Music has always been part of baseball, whether it is today’s popularity of “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” or Boston’s Royal Rooters of the Deadball era who took up “Tessie” as their fight song. However, according to Mr. Timothy Johnson’s presentation at SABR 35, Charles Ives, the “Father of American Music” tried to take this to a new level during the early 20th century. Ives, who was a successful insurance executive as well as a successful composer, also liked to consider himself a ball player. According to Mr. Johnson, when queried by the musically minded as to what he played, Ives’ favorite response was “shortstop.”

Baseball was very much a source of Ives’ identity and Mr. Johnson indicated that Ives’ memoirs are full of baseball analogies. In addition to his other careers, Ives did have some success as a player especially when he pitched the Hopkins Grammar School (a prep school for Yale) to a victory over the Yale team. The significance

of this accomplishment was proven beyond doubt when the principal gave the entire school a day off in recognition of this great victory.

Eventually, Ives moved to New York City and began attending major league baseball games. This ultimately led to two musical sketches about major league players, one about Johnny Evers and Mike Donlin and the other about Wee Willie Keeler. In describing these sketches, Mr. Johnson noted that Ives was attracted to players with unusual nicknames as well as contentious, argumentative players like Evers and show-off types like Donlin.

In the piece about Evers and Donlin, Ives tries to portray a ball hit by Evers over Donlin’s head at the Polo Grounds in 1907 or at least 1907 is the date given in his notes. The problem with this portrayal is that Donlin sat out the entire 1907 season, but according to Mr. Johnson, Ives had a reputation for fabricating dates. Another characteristic of Ives’ music was “borrowing” from other musical pieces both to make connections and to increase understanding. In this piece, Ives intended to use the Civil War song, “When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again,” to portray Evers going home on his long hit.

Unfortunately, Ives never finished either piece nor did he complete enough to allow future generations to fill in the blanks. One thing that does seem clear is that Ives was trying to illustrate every baseball event musically. In the Wee Willie Keeler piece, the flight of the ball was portrayed through the strings, the umpire through a trumpet, with a flute to symbolize bats. Ives took this to the detailed level of using an absence of the “B” flat note until the very end of the piece to symbolize Keeler’s famous motto, “Hit ‘em where they ain’t.”

Johnson believes that part of what Ives was trying to do was to use baseball as a connection to make his music accessible to his friends. In any event, Mr. Johnson, who won the Sporting News-SABR Baseball Research Award for his book on Ives and baseball, was able to connect baseball and music in a way that even this musically challenged attendee could appreciate. ◆

Why Hot Springs?

by **R. J. Lesch**

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As you read this, we're preparing for "Boiling Out 2006," the third biennial celebration of all things Deadball and Spring Training. This year, the Deadball Era Committee is pleased to share the experience with the SABR's Robinson/Kell Chapter, as we visit Hot Springs, Arkansas, once again.

By the time of the Deadball Era, spring training was a well-established practice among professional baseball teams of all levels. Kevin Saldana and the Spring Training Committee have compiled a substantial list of spring training sites. (To get it, go to www.sabr.org, select "Research", and look under "Spring Training Committee".)

The list is a work in progress, and researchers are still filling in gaps in the record. The earliest recorded instance of Hot Springs hosting a professional ball club for spring training is 1886. This is the famed Chicago White Stockings trip, which was reported in the first issue of *The Sporting News*, and which led many to credit Chicago manager A.C. Anson with the invention of spring training.

As we know now, spring training predates the 1886 trip. The earliest I've been able to find was by the White Stockings in 1871 (five years before Baby Anson donned the pale hose). The Chicagos spent two weeks in New Orleans and played practice games against five of the local ball clubs – all of which were explicitly designated as "practice" games. They then toured through Memphis and St. Louis, playing practice games in each city, prior to their first official National Association game in Cleveland on May 8, 1871. The New York Mutuals traveled to Savannah that same year, about a month and a half after the White Stockings started south, and likewise played practice games in Georgia's sunny climes before their first scheduled NA contest.

Knowing this, why venerate Hot Springs, instead of, say, New Orleans or Savannah?

Hot Springs hosted 58 known spring training trips, by sixteen different ballclubs (ten major-league and six minor-league), between 1886 and 1919. During the Deadball Era, Hot Springs hosted twelve different clubs on 41 visits. The nearest challenger seems to have been Macon, Georgia

(eighteen spring training visits by six clubs during the Deadball Era, and only three known trips earlier). In 1910 alone, five major-league clubs trained in Hot Springs: Boston AL, Brooklyn NL, Chicago NL, Cincinnati NL and Pittsburgh NL. Further, many ballplayers went to Hot Springs at their own expense, for some advance "boiling out." Cy Young made a practice of visiting Hot Springs every February, prior to reporting for his club's regular spring training.

New Orleans remained a popular spring training destination during the Deadball Era (sixteen visits by four clubs), as did Savannah (eleven visits by six clubs). But neither enjoyed the popularity of Hot Springs during this period. Nor did they produce the same number of champions. Savannah can claim one World Champion (the 1911 Athletics), Macon two (the 1903 Americans and the 1914 Miracle Braves) and New Orleans two (the 1906 White Sox and 1907 Cubs). Hot Springs claims five: the 1909 Pirates and the 1912, 1915, 1916 and 1918 Red Sox.

Hot Springs must be considered the queen of all Deadball Era spring training sites. We're delighted to return there this March to revel in this rich history, and to tread ground once trod by Honus Wagner, Tris Speaker and Dode Paskert.

Not that we'd say no to a trip to Macon or Savannah in 2008...

Known Spring Training Visits to Hot Springs Prior to 1920:

Chicago (NL) 1886-88, 1890, 1892, 1909-10
Des Moines (WA) 1887
Pittsburgh (NL) 1889, 1896, 1901-16
Cleveland (NL) 1890, 1896, 1898-99
Cincinnati (NL) 1891, 1910-11
Saint Louis (NL) 1894-95 (1895 split camp with Little Rock) 1899
Minneapolis (WL) 1897
Detroit (AL) 1908
Boston "Red Sox" (AL) 1909-10, 1912-18
Brooklyn (NL) 1910-12, 1917-18
Saint Louis "Browns" (AL) 1911
Denver (WL) 1912
Philadelphia (NL) 1912
Saint Paul (AA) 1912
Indianapolis (AA) 1914
Providence (IL) 1915



John McGraw lives! (in the Dugout Grille at SBC Park, San Francisco)

Photo taken by Charles Crawley, September 10, 2005