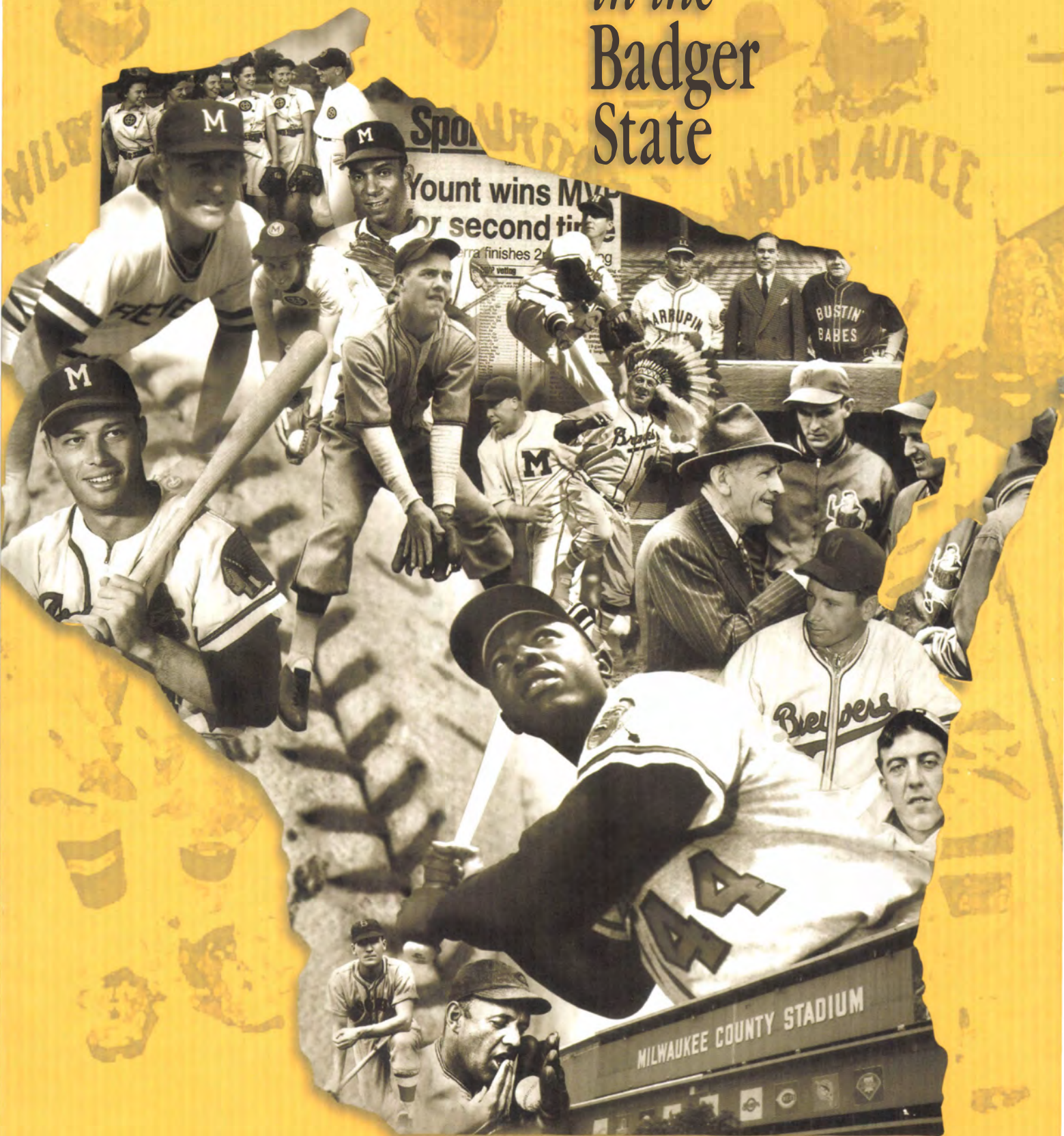


# Baseball *in the* Badger State



SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN BASEBALL RESEARCH





# SABR 31

# Baseball in the Badger State

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# Professional Baseball Comes to Milwaukee

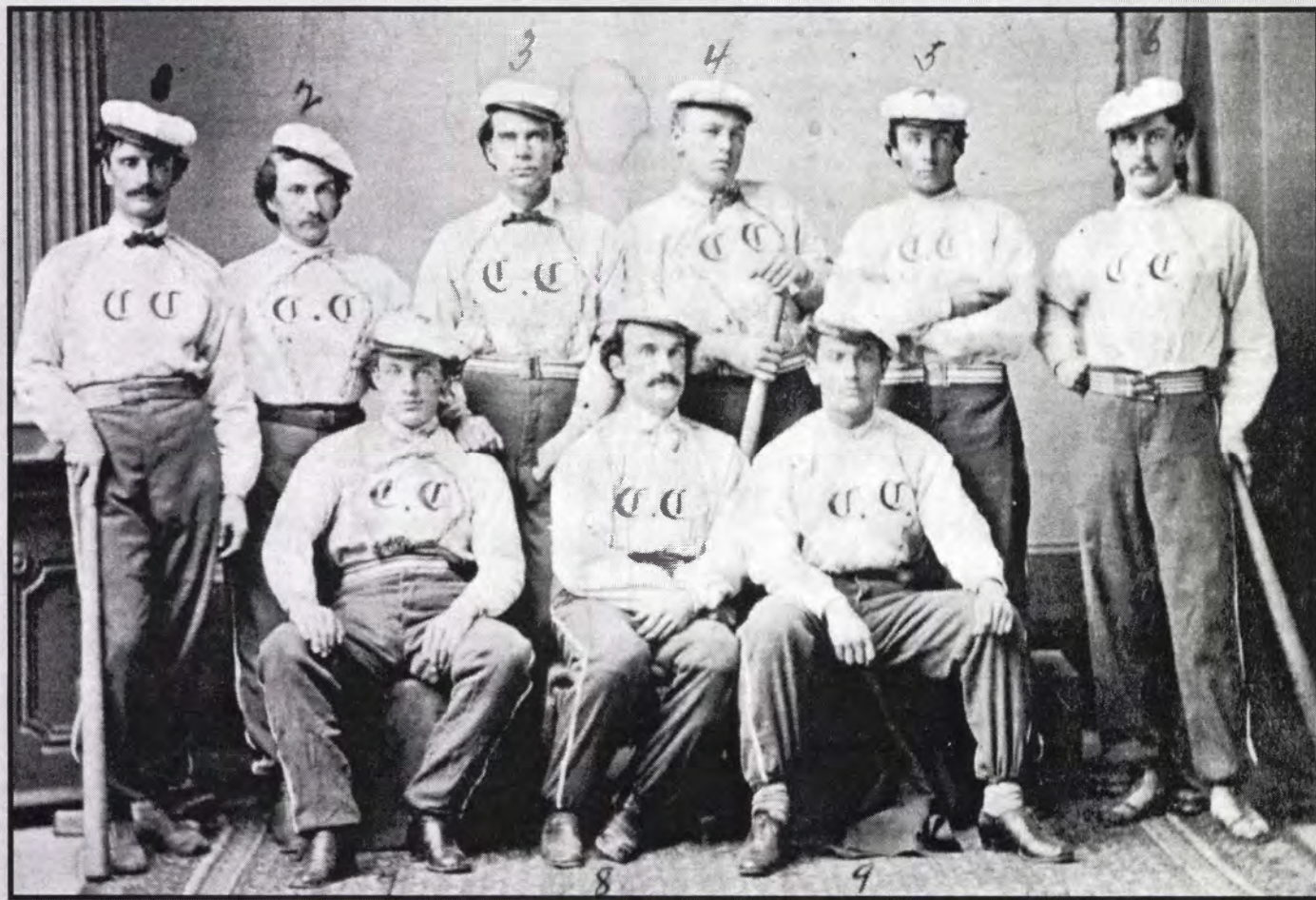
By Larry Baldassaro  
(from *Lead Off*, 1999)

The future course of baseball was forever changed in 1869. That year, the Cincinnati Red Stockings became the first admittedly all-professional team and embarked on a fifty-seven-game nationwide tour that lifted baseball to an unprecedented level of popularity.

It was July 30, four years after the Civil War, when professional baseball made its Wisconsin debut. The Cream City nine of Milwaukee, an amateur team billed as the state champions, hosted the touring Red Stockings. The game was a harsh lesson in the changing reality of the sport as the pros overwhelmed the local heroes by a score of 85-7. More about the game later.

The Red Stockings were probably not the first team to pay all its players, but they were the first club to admit it openly. Before the Reds went public, ball clubs maintained the pretense of amateurism by giving their paid players phantom jobs which required them to do little or no work. In 1868, for example, when the Reds were still nominally an amateur club, four players were paid. Officially, however, two worked in an insurance agency, one in a marble quarry, and one in a jewelry store.

The central figure in the Reds' move to all-out professionalism was Harry Wright, a native of England who had originally gone to Cincinnati in 1865 to be a bowler for the



*The Cream City nine were declared champions of Wisconsin, but they were out of their league against the professionals from Cincinnati.*



Union Cricket Club. But when he realized that baseball was more popular than cricket, Wright agreed to play for the Cincinnati Base Ball Club and to recruit an all-professional squad.

One of the first players Wright hired was his brother, George, who was recognized as the best shortstop in baseball. At a salary of \$1,400, George was the highest-paid player on the club, earning \$200 more than Harry, who was the center fielder and manager. Asa Brainard, the pitcher, was paid \$1,000. The lowest salary, \$600, went to Richard Hurley, the one substitute and the only left-handed hitter on the team. The total payroll for the ten-man roster was \$9,300.

Wright was also responsible for introducing what would become the traditional baseball uniform. Until then, baseball players had worn the same long trousers worn by cricket players. In their place, the Cincinnati club wore white flannel knickers and the long red stockings that gave them their nickname.

By the time the Red Stockings came to Milwaukee, they had won all thirty games they had played, usually by a wide margin. Their most recent game, in Rockford, Illinois, on July 24, had been their closest contest to date, a 15-14 win over the Forest City team.

On the morning of the game, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* reported that the Cincinnati players had arrived by train from Chicago the day before and were escorted to the Plankinton House by the Cream City squad. Following a reception in their honor, they were given a tour of the city.

The *Sentinel* reporter predicted that the contest was certain to attract "a large assemblage of citizens desirous of seeing the noble game as played by its distinguished votaries." He also predicted that the game that afternoon "cannot fail to prove the most interesting ever witnessed in our city."

It may have been interesting, but it certainly wasn't close. From the start it was evident that the Cream Citys, which the *Sentinel* identified as "the champions of our state," were outclassed. Cincinnati scored in every inning, including outbursts of fifteen, sixteen, and nineteen runs. In the sixth inning, nineteen straight batters reached base before a single out was made. George Wright had a perfect day at the plate, going 10 for 10, with two homers, three doubles, and a triple. Asa Brainard, the pitcher, had eleven hits and scored ten runs.

In what must have been an early application of the "mercy rule," the game was called after seven innings, which took three hours to play. By that time, the Red Stockings had 77 hits good for 147 total bases. The Milwaukee club got a total of nine hits.

The 85 runs against the Cream Citys would prove to be the third highest total scored by Cincinnati on their 1869 tour.

(On August 31, they would defeat the Buckeye club in Cincinnati by a score of 103-8.)

In its July 31 story on the game, the *Sentinel* acknowledged the inevitability of the outcome, noting that "(o)ur boys entered into the contest with their famous antagonists, not in the hope of victory which was out of the question, but for the purpose of scoring a creditable number." The writer did not offer an opinion as to whether seven runs (against 85) qualified as a creditable number, but he noted that "the C.C.'s played heroically to the end." He added, however, that "we have seen better fielding and batting on the part of the C.C.'s."

An estimated 2,000 fans attended the game, which was played at Cream City Park at Camp Reno, the home field of the Cream City club from 1867 to 1875. The first enclosed ballpark built in Milwaukee, Cream City Park was located on Prospect Avenue near the lakefront. It was built by John Plankinton, who also owned the streetcar line that ran to the park.

Following the game, the Reds, who were scheduled to play the next day in Rockford, returned to Chicago on the steamboat *Manitowoc*.

On their six-month, cross-country tour, which took them from Boston to New Orleans to San Francisco, the Red Stockings played in 24 cities in fifteen states and went undefeated in 57 games. Playing the game at a level of excellence never before seen, they generated great enthusiasm among the estimated 200,000 fans that paid to see them.

The great success of the tour had a major impact on the future of baseball. In addition to generating great interest among fans, it also fostered envy among other cities, which were inspired to form their own professional teams capable of competing with the Red Stockings. These urban rivalries, in turn, led to the formation of the National League in 1876, only seven years after the Reds' historic journey.

Two years later, in 1878, the Milwaukee Grays, who played at the Milwaukee Base-Ball Grounds located at West Michigan and Tenth, joined the National League. Milwaukee's first professional franchise proved to be short-lived. Following a disastrous season in which the Grays won only fifteen of sixty games, the National League revoked Milwaukee's franchise and awarded it to Troy, New York. Nevertheless, 120 years later, when the Brewers moved from the American League to the National League, the franchise was, in effect, returning to the roots of professional baseball in Milwaukee.

# Watertown, Wisconsin

by David Stalker

Watertown, Wisconsin is located approximately thirty-five miles west of Milwaukee and about the same distance east of the state capital, Madison. Watertown's population during the Dead Ball Era was in the 8,000 range, and its current population is roughly 20,000. Between 1888 and 1915 Watertown claimed three baseball distinctions: it was the birthplace of a great ballplayer remembered more for his blunder than for his outstanding career; it was home for a team that would have a future Hall of Fame pitcher; and it had a ballpark that played host to major league baseball clubs.

On his baptismal record found at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Watertown, his name is listed as Carl Fredrick Rudolf Merkle. He was born on December 20, 1888, and baptized on January 1, 1889. At the time of Fred's birth, his family lived at the Immanuel Lutheran School, where his father, Ernst Merkle, taught from 1884-1889. The school building, no longer standing, was located next to the current location of Immanuel Lutheran Church. It is uncertain how long Fred lived in Watertown. He attended Toledo High School in Toledo, Ohio.

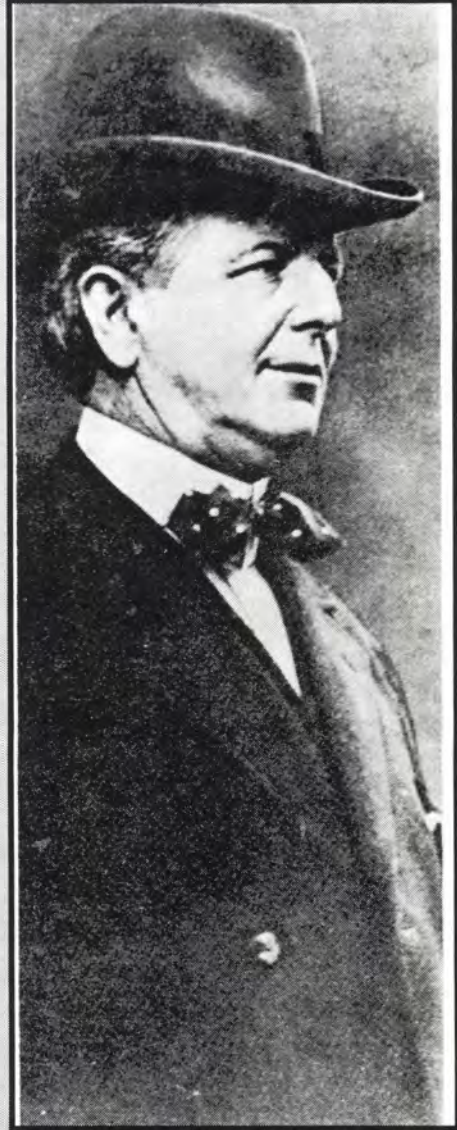
Fred Merkle is the only Watertown native to make the big leagues, and he would go on to have an outstanding baseball career. He played for the Giants, Dodgers, Cubs, and briefly the Yankees. Fred played on five World Series teams, three with the Giants (1911, 1912, 1913), one with the Dodgers (1916), and one with the Cubs (1918). The Cubs were the team he helped get to the 1908 World Series while playing in the rival Giants uniform. He was involved in the most controversial play that our national pastime has witnessed.

On September 23, 1908, the Cubs and Giants were facing each other at the Polo Grounds in New York. In the bottom of the ninth inning, with the score tied, 1-1, the Giants were at bat, hoping for a base hit to bring in the winning run. With Moose McCormick on third base and Merkle on first, Al Bridwell hit what appeared to be a game-winning single. Bridwell slashed the ball into centerfield, and McCormick should have scored the decisive run. With fans running onto the field, however, Merkle headed toward the dugout before touching second. The contest was ruled a tie, and the Cubs and Giants finished the season in a tie. The makeup game was played at the Polo Grounds on October 8, 1908. The Cubs devastated the Giants and their fans with a 4-2 victory. The Cubs then went on to beat the Tigers in the World Series. Fred Merkle would forever be known by the undeserved nickname of Bonehead.

On June 15, 1899, manager Charles Comiskey brought his St. Paul team of the Western League to Watertown to face the Sacred Heart Academy team. The battery for the Watertown club comprised two future major league players. Pitcher Addie Joss would go on to have a Hall of Fame career with the Cleveland Naps, and catcher Pete Kleinow would enjoy an eight-year career with the Yankees, Red Sox, and Phillies. Joss had been born on April 12, 1880 in Woodland, Wisconsin and grew up in

Juneau, Wisconsin. Pete "Red" Kleinow had been born on July 20, 1879, in Milwaukee.

Before a crowd of 1,000 fans at Washington Park, Joss took a 3-0 lead into the third inning. At that point Addie started



*Less than one year before helping to found the American League, Charles Comiskey, shown here, brought his St. Paul team to Watertown.*

to struggle as the St Paul team loaded the bases. With one swing of the bat, Lally gave the visitors a 4-3 lead. Watertown evened the score in the fourth inning with a base-clearing hit from Schultz. St Paul went on to score five more runs and won the game, 9-4.



Playing for Watertown were Kronitz 2b, Johnson 1b, Kleinow c, O'Malley rf, Krebs 3b, Walthers ss, Schultz cf, Ruetz lf, and Joss p. Sacred Heart went on to win the Wisconsin college championship. Connie Mack, the manager of the Milwaukee club of the Western League, showed interest in Joss that season. In fact, the Watertown newspaper stated that the Milwaukee team had claimed him.

Playing for St. Paul were Burke rf, Geier 3b, Glenalvin 2b, Lally ss, Isbell 1b, Shugart ss, Preston cf, Spies c, and Fischer p. In 1901 Charles Comiskey would become the owner of the Chicago White Sox in the newly formed American League. Isbell, Burke, and Shugart would play for him.

While Fred Merkle made his biggest mistake in 1908, Addie Joss had his greatest day. On October 2, 1908, with the American League in a tight three-team pennant race similar to the one in the National League, Joss faced Ed Walsh of the White Sox in Cleveland. Walsh gave up one run and struck out fifteen Cleveland batters, but it was not enough to get the victory. Joss pitched a perfect game and became the toast of the baseball world. Sadly, Addie's career ended prematurely when he passed away on April 14, 1911, from meningitis.

On May 23, 1913, the Chicago White Sox played the Watertown Goslings of the Central State League at Washington Park in Watertown. One week prior to the big event Paddy Ryan put up hundreds of posters in the towns of neighboring counties and stated that the enthusiasm in the coming game was running high and that every town would be sending hundreds of fans to see the game. Ryan stated that he had never before scheduled a game where the interest ran so high. It was announced that the pitchers for the White Sox would be Ed Walsh and Frank Lange.

Fifteen members of the White Sox arrived at Watertown's train station shortly before 1:00, with the start of the game scheduled at 3:00. With the train station just a few blocks away from Washington Park, there was time for the White Sox to warm up in front of the fans who arrived early. Six to seven thousand fans were expected for the game. Most of the factories, barbershops, and other businesses closed early so that the employers and employees could attend the game.

Frank Lange was born in nearby Columbus, Wisconsin, on October 28, 1883. He grew up in Columbus and pitched for their baseball team. Some of the Goslings had batted against Frank, which built their confidence to make a good showing.

Lange hurt the Goslings' confidence early, though, by striking out the first five men he faced. In fact he struck out eleven of the fifteen men he faced through the five innings he pitched. A pitcher named Smith then held the Goslings scoreless through the eighth inning, while striking out four more Goslings. In the ninth inning manager Nixey Callahan, who had not pitched a big league game since 1903, came in to face the Goslings. Ruesch led off the inning with a double, and the shortstop, Schumann, slammed the game's only home run to avoid the shutout. The White Sox, though, hit the Gosling pitchers hard, belting ten hits off Woelffer and seven off Richards. The White Sox won the game by the score of 13-2.

Out of the fifteen players from Chicago who made the trip, only twelve actually played. Ed Walsh did not play in the game.

It is not known if he was one of the three White Sox who sat out, or if he did not make the trip. For Chicago the line-up included Schaller lf, Roth 2b, Berger ss, Fournier 1b, Bodie 3b, Zieder cf, Mattick rf, Sullivan c, Kuhn c, Lange p, Smith p, and Callahan p.

The Watertown players were Powers lf, Ruedig 3b, Hahn cf, Schumann ss, Kronitz 1b, Woelffer p, G. Richards p, W. Richards 2b, Hornickle c, Demin ss-3b, Weihert cf, Heye rf, and Ruesch ph.

On September 10, 1915, the Watertown Goslings played host to the Chicago Cubs at Washington Park. This was the conclusion of a week-long fair that began with a parade on Labor Day, September 6. The Watertown newspaper declared that no announcement in the history of baseball in this section of the state had created as much excitement as the announcement of the coming of the Chicago Cubs to Watertown.

The Cubs left Chicago by train, taking the Milwaukee Road to Watertown. Delirious fans greeted the Cubs at the train station. The ball yard at Washington Park was soaked from rain that had fallen the night before. The grounds crew spread bundles of shavings across the infield, and the game proceeded as scheduled.

The Goslings brought the fans into the game from the start. They scored three runs on three hits and took a 3-0 lead off Cubs pitcher Karl Adams. It would not be until the third inning that the Cubs would score any runs off Watertown's pitcher Kiepert, who was from Johnson Creek, Wisconsin. The Cubs scored two runs in the bottom half of that inning. Adams settled down after his shaky first inning and only gave up two more runs, one in the fourth and one in the sixth, and went on to strike out ten Goslings through seven innings.

Kiepert took a 5-4 lead into the ninth. With two men on base and one out, Vic Saier came to bat for the Cubs. Saier hit a fly ball to Watertown's right fielder, Henke, who misjudged the ball and started to run in as the ball sailed over his head. The Cubs scored what would be the game-winning two runs. Pete Standridge pitched the final two innings for the Cubs and allowed no runs. The Cubs won the game, 6-5.

Because of the wet, slippery field the Cubs business manager, Cook, was not supposed to have brought the Cubs to play the game. There had been some mistake made in Chicago, however, and the game was played. The Cubs received \$185 as their share of the gate.

Three players on the Gosling team played against both the White Sox and the Cubs: Powers, Schumann, and Hornickle. Of the three, only Schumann collected hits off both the White Sox and the Cubs.

After the game the Cubs stated that they would be interested in returning to Watertown. However, there never was a return trip. All that remained was the fond memory of how the local ball club came within an error of possibly beating the Chicago Cubs, a team that had finished in the National League's first division for twelve straight years. No major league ballclub ever played another game in Watertown.

# The Birth of the American League

by Bob Buege

Ask a baseball fan, what is the only city that has been the home of two different teams in the American League and two in the National League, all since 1900? Without thinking, many will say New York—which is, of course, wrong. The correct answer is Milwaukee. Beertown has been home to the National League Braves (1953-1965) and Brewers (1997-present). Before the Brewers switched leagues, they were an American League franchise (1970-1996). And long before the defunct Seattle Mariners moved to the shores of Lake Michigan, way back in 1901, the Milwaukee Brewers were charter members of baseball's junior circuit until they were unceremoniously transformed into the St. Louis Browns.

Even most baseball "experts," though, including those who know about the 1901 Milwaukee Brewers, are not aware that Milwaukee was, in fact, the birthplace of the American League. More than a century ago, in a room inside a long-forgotten Milwaukee hotel, a small group of baseball entrepreneurs and pioneers met and changed the history of major league baseball.

The new league evolved slowly. In 1892 long-time St. Louis Browns first baseman-manager Charlie Comiskey took over the same positions with the Cincinnati club when the National League and the American Association merged. Comiskey had begun his professional baseball career in Milwaukee as a \$35-a-month pitcher for a team called the Alerts. In Cincinnati, Comiskey enjoyed only modest success, but he had the good fortune to become a drinking buddy of a pudgy sports-writer named Byron Bancroft "Ban" Johnson. Comiskey helped Johnson become president of the Western League, and in 1895 Comiskey joined his league. With the financial backing of Milwaukee businessman George Heaney, Comiskey became owner-manager of the Sioux City club, promptly moving it to St. Paul.

At the same time, Cornelius McGillicuddy (Connie Mack) was managing the Pittsburgh Pirates to a level of mediocrity. In 1897 he found his way to Milwaukee to manage the Brewers in the Western League. He took up residence in a downtown hotel called the Republican House. Another resident of the Republican House was Matthew Killilea, a Milwaukee attorney who was president and part owner of the Brewers. Also within the same hotel was the law office of Henry Killilea, brother of Matt and co-owner of the Milwaukee Brewers. What's more, Henry Killilea just happened to be the lawyer, confidant, and close friend of Ban Johnson. Henry Killilea would remain counsel to the American League for as long as Johnson remained president.

Whenever Ban Johnson visited Milwaukee, which was often, he was a house guest of Henry Killilea. In summer and early autumn of 1899, Johnson and Killilea frequently discussed Johnson's long-held intention of making the Western League into a second major league, to challenge the National League.

Killilea's daughter, Florence Boley, recalled at the time of Johnson's death, "My father often told the story of how the



*Ban Johnson, the American League's first president, served until October of 1927.*

American League was organized at our old home at 1616 Grand Avenue." She remembered Johnson, her father, and Charlie Comiskey, among others, laying the plans for the new league. Also present in the meeting were Matt Killilea, Milwaukee meat packer Fred C. Gross, and local boxing promoter Tom Andrews.

By Andrews' description, this was no ordinary meeting. "Unlike most meetings among baseball men of that time," Andrews said, "our gathering had no refreshments. As Johnson said, 'Boys, we are here for business.'"<sup>6</sup>

The business was a new league to challenge the National



League. Johnson's message in Killilea's parlor invoked fire and brimstone: "Our idea of forming a new major league is to invade the larger eastern cities. Don't be discouraged if the National League tries to bluff us. Fight them with fire, gentlemen!"<sup>7</sup>

The first visible sign of the fight occurred on October 11, 1899, when the Western League convened its annual meeting in the Great Northern Hotel in Chicago. The meeting began in late afternoon, and within five minutes, W.F.C. Golt of Indianapolis made a motion, seconded by James Franklin of Buffalo, to change the name of the league to the American League. Initially the Milwaukee contingent opposed the change, but after a brief discussion, the vote was announced as unanimous in favor of the new name.<sup>8</sup>

Despite its nominal existence, however, the American League had yet to be created. After conducting some routine business—formally awarding the pennant, reading and approving the annual report—the owners broke for the evening. At 11:00 the next morning they reconvened. After agreeing to lengthen the season to 140 games, the owners and representatives adjourned at 2:00 P.M. until the spring meeting on March

14. At adjournment the league still included teams in St. Paul and Grand Rapids, although both were expected to move. Comiskey's St. Paul club appeared headed for Toronto, but Cleveland was also mentioned.<sup>9</sup>

According to *Chicago Inter-Ocean* of October 12, 1899, "This much is certain, there will be a club in Chicago, with Tom Loftus [of Grand Rapids] at the head of it."<sup>10</sup>

Loftus did not attend the meeting; he was attending the funeral of his former partner back in Michigan.

The next day, however, *The Evening Wisconsin* reported, "The prospective holder of the prized Chicago franchise, it has developed, will not be Tom Loftus, as had been predicted, but Charley Comiskey...Loftus, if he wanted it, can have the other new location, which, if expectations are realized, will be Toronto."<sup>11</sup>

Completion of the new league's eight-team alignment faced several obstacles. First and foremost, the placing of a club in Chicago would constitute a clear challenge to baseball's National Agreement. Under this agreement, all minor leagues pledged to respect the territorial rights of the National League



*The American League was born in Room 185 of the Republican House, shown here around 1900. Connie Mack lived in the hotel.*

and to yield their players to the “draft rights” of the established major league at established prices. Ban Johnson’s clear intent was to violate that agreement.

Between the name change on October 11, 1899, and the start of March, 1900, surprisingly little was accomplished toward the creation of the new American League. Newspapers across the country reported continual rumors and threats concerning the future of major league baseball. The apparent strategy of the National League to combat an incursion on its Chicago territory was to intimidate Johnson and his allies with talk of placing rival minor league teams in American League cities.

“That scheme of a revival of the old Western League is extremely practicable,” said Jim Hart, president of Chicago’s National League club, “and I have little doubt that it will be started.”<sup>12</sup>

Hart went on to say, “The National League rarely bluffs. Baseball without the National Agreement don’t amount to a pinch of snuff. This [Western] league can be organized under the protection of the National Agreement by simply sending out contracts and signing players. In a day or so, everything ready and no brain worry.”<sup>13</sup>

Johnson received Hart’s threat of competition with amusement. “The next thing we know,” Johnson said, “he will be planning a baseball tour over to that region across the Styx with the idea of playing with snowballs and batting with icicles.”<sup>14</sup>

Comiskey was no more intimidated than was Johnson. “I will either have a team in Chicago or else go on the police force,” Commie said. “I am tired of being the filler for the Western League....I shouldn’t want to travel a beat, but I guess I could if worst came to the worst. I am pretty near six feet tall and weigh over 180 pounds. I ought to be able to qualify as a policeman.”<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile the National League faced internal troubles. With failing franchises in a number of cities, the league looked to reorganize and consolidate. After eight years as a 12-team league, it looked to reduce its number of clubs, preferably to eight. Less than two months before opening day, however, it remained in flux.

Ban Johnson ignored the National League’s threats and went about assembling his new American League. Besides Chicago, another obstacle Johnson encountered was Cleveland. The N.L. team in that city in 1899, the Spiders, had set a new standard of futility, winning only 20 games while losing 134. The National League dropped the Cleveland franchise, but owner/president Robison refused to allow an American League club to play in old League Park. In exchange for the use of the ballpark, Robison demanded that Johnson abandon his plan to locate Comiskey’s club in Chicago.<sup>16</sup>

Johnson traveled to Cleveland on February 28 to negotiate with Robison. The former Cleveland owner remained adamant. Johnson, though, was not to be denied. He arranged for two new owners, wealthy businessmen Charles Somers and J.F. Kilfoyle, to purchase the Grand Rapids club and move it to Cleveland. Rather than continue trying to deal with Robison, they made

plans to construct a new ballpark in Cleveland for \$12,000, in a more upscale neighborhood, to be completed in five weeks.<sup>17</sup>

On the evening of March 3, before returning home to Chicago, Johnson said, “I have worked on the Cleveland situation for weeks and weeks, and I am going away tonight the happiest baseball man that there is in the country, because I have solved the problem.”<sup>18</sup>

Before boarding his train, Johnson sent a telegram to President Killilea of the Milwaukee Brewers: “Closed Cleveland deal to-day. Highly satisfactory. Come to Chicago to-morrow.”<sup>19</sup>

Killilea did. He met with Johnson and Comiskey at the Great Northern Hotel. They discussed the success in Cleveland and strategized about Detroit. While Johnson had been in Cleveland, emissaries from Milwaukee, Gus Koch and J.D. O’Brien, had journeyed to Detroit with Johnson’s blessing to buy the ballclub if the opportunity arose. The league wanted the club to remain in Detroit but wanted to oust owner George A. Van Derbeck. James Burns, of whom Johnson approved, was attempting to purchase the team from the reluctant Van Derbeck; complicating the situation was a lawyer seeking additional alimony for the former Mrs. Van Derbeck.<sup>20</sup> In the Great Northern meeting, Killilea and Comiskey agreed with Johnson that the sale to Burns appeared likely, but they agreed to send Koch and O’Brien to Detroit just in case.

That night Killilea took the train back to Milwaukee. The next afternoon Johnson and Comiskey did the same. They caught a cab from Union Depot to the Republican House and met Killilea in Room 185. Also joining them were Connie Mack and Killilea’s brother, Henry. In the ensuing six hours on the night of March 5, 1900, baseball history was made.<sup>21</sup>

The discussion in the meeting centered on Chicago. They had long since decided to move Comiskey’s club into Chicago; now was the time to actually do so. With Cleveland in the fold and Detroit needing only to resolve a few legal issues, the final piece of the American League puzzle was the Chicago franchise.

But this was a poker game. The National League and American League were playing for high stakes, and neither wanted to show its cards. The Nationals had not yet decided how many teams they would have or in which cities they would play. To illustrate the point, just before the annual spring meeting of the National League, on March 7, Ed Hanlon of Baltimore said confidently, “You may safely say that it will be a ten-club league. I am in a position to know and that is my prediction.”<sup>22</sup> By the conclusion of the meeting, the National League had eight teams and Baltimore had been bought out.

If Comiskey filed articles of incorporation for his club in Chicago, as expected, the Windy City newspapers would be all over the story. That open declaration of war might influence the National League’s meeting and subsequent actions. Ban Johnson spoke defiantly when the National League threatened to place Western League teams in American League cities: “All right; let them go ahead. I think it is a bluff to scare us out.”<sup>23</sup> But he was no fool. He was not seeking a challenge.

What Comiskey and Johnson did instead was to incorporate not in Chicago but in Milwaukee—in Room 185 of the Republican House. Comiskey was not a Milwaukee or Wisconsin



sin resident, so the signatory officers of the club were three Milwaukee businessmen: George Heaney, the insurance tycoon whose backing first allowed Comiskey to become an owner in Sioux City and who resided in the Republican House; William Lachenmaier, a clothier whose shop was near the Republican House; and Charles Friedrich, an attorney in Henry Killilea's office. The signing of the incorporation papers was witnessed by Moritz Weil, a notary public with office in the Republican House. Henry Killilea actually notarized the document.<sup>24</sup>

By eleven o'clock that Monday night, when the meeting broke up, the American League Base Ball Club of Chicago had been signed into existence. On Thursday the document was recorded by the Milwaukee County Register or Deeds.<sup>25</sup> Eight days later, after the National League had reduced to eight teams, Johnson announced officially at an American League meeting in Chicago that Comiskey's team would make its home at the old cricket club grounds at 39<sup>th</sup> and Wentworth in Chicago.<sup>26</sup>

That completed the American League's eight-team alignment. The following day President Hart of the Chicago

National League club conceded, saying that Comiskey's team could play in Chicago without violating the National Agreement and could use the name "White Stockings," a former National League team name, with the stipulation that the word "Chicago" not be part of the team name.<sup>27</sup> This semantic face-saver was readily accepted by Johnson and Comiskey. They figured that fans would know which city the White Stockings called home.

The incipient American League played one year as a minor league. After the season ended, the league reorganized, dropped its clubs in Indianapolis, Buffalo, Minneapolis, and Kansas City, and added new teams in the East: Washington, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore. With its new eastern members, the league went from regional to "American." With two more teams in National League cities, it clearly had flouted the National Agreement's territorial rights. It also stopped allowing its players to be drafted by the National League. The National Agreement was broken. The American League in 1901 was, by its own proclamation and in practice, baseball's second "major" league.



*Henry Killilea, shown here as a young man, served as counsel to the American League as long as Ban Johnson was president.*

1. *Milwaukee Journal*, October 26, 1931
2. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, January 24, 1929
3. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 29, 1931
4. *Milwaukee Journal*, March 29, 1931
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Milwaukee Journal*, October 12, 1899
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, October 12, 1899
10. *Evening Wisconsin*, October 13, 1899
11. *Chicago Daily News*, March 1, 1900
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 2, 1900
14. *Chicago Tribune*, March 3, 1900
15. *Chicago Tribune*, March 1, 1900
16. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 8, 1900
17. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 4, 1900
18. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 4, 1900
19. *Detroit Free Press*, March 1, 1900
20. *Chicago Tribune*, March 6, 1900
21. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 6, 1900
22. *Chicago Daily News*, March 7, 1900
23. *Chicago Tribune*, March 13, 1900
24. *Articles of Incorporation of the American League Base Ball Club of Chicago*, March 5, 1900 and *City of Milwaukee Directory*, 1900
25. *Recorded Articles of Incorporation*, Henry A. Verges, *Register of Deeds*, March 8, 1900
26. *Chicago Tribune*, March 17, 1900
27. *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 1900

# Milwaukee A.L. Opener an Omen to Another Franchise Failure

by Dixie Tourangeau

In the third year of its existence, the National League shook off half its six 1877 franchises and selected Milwaukee to be one of the three replacements. Harry Wright's Boston Red Caps won the pennant in that 1878 season, behind the wondrous flings of Tommy Bond (40–19), its pitcher in 50 of 60 games. Providence's fleet-footed CF Paul Hines won the Triple Crown (.358, 4 home runs, 50 rbi) in the 60 game campaign. Poor Milwaukee Grays pitcher Sam Weaver absorbed 31 losses as his team finished dead last at 15–45. Philadelphian Weaver allowed the fewest walks per game, gave up the lowest on-base percentage, and fashioned an ERA under 2.00. Rookie LF Abner Dalrymple was second to Hines with a .354 mark but managed only 15 rbi. He was fifth with 54 runs scored and second to Providence's Joe Start in hits with 96. Milwaukee was ousted for the 1879 season.

Come 1901, Ban Johnson was trying to significantly revamp his seven-year old, eight-club Western League. Having already renamed his circuit the American League for the 1900 season to gain a mental foothold, Johnson was fanatical about challenging the snooty 25-year old senior circuit for the nation's major league baseball dollar. Kansas City and Minneapolis were cut loose and joined the "new" Western League, while Buffalo found a home in the Eastern group and Indianapolis landed in the Western Association. They were replaced by the eastern population and financial strongholds of Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. Milwaukee, an annual participant in Ban's Western League, was rewarded for finishing second in 1900 and for having the second best attendance. It again found itself in the big time after 22 years. After the first week, though, perhaps Milwaukee team president Matt Killilea wished he hadn't been that fortunate.

Milwaukee opened the new century's baseball schedule in Detroit a day late because of rain. It was April 25, 1901, when an estimated record 10,000 fans packed Bennett Park, at the corner of Michigan and Trumbull Streets, named in honor of Charlie Bennett, the catcher for those 1878 Brewers (and 1880s Detroit teams), who lost both of his legs in a train accident in 1894. Behind the bat of SS Wid Conroy (four hits, 4 runs), veteran ex-NL hurler Emerson "Pink" Hawley cruised to a 13–4 lead that lasted into the ninth inning. Hawley was resting comfortably by then, but the Detroit fans were not. By the late stages of the contest, they slowly began crowding the rope barriers and melting the size of the outfield. Fond du Lac native and former University of Wisconsin pitcher Bert Husting got two outs in relief but could not get the last. Five final-inning balls flew into the surging crowd for doubles, and one error by 3B Jim Burke sealed Milwaukee's awful fate. 1B Frank "Pop" Dillon had four two-baggers, including the one that brought in the winning runs, for a stunning 14–13 victory—after a century still

the league's biggest opening day, ninth-inning, come-from-behind margin. Dillon was carried off the field by the excited throng.

Most of those same fans probably remembered the complete despair of opening day 1900 (April 19), when Buffalo's Morris "Doc" Amole no-hit the Detroiters, 8 to 0, to open new Bennett Park on the sourest of notes. Milwaukee on the other hand, shocked eventual champ Chicago, 5–4, in ten innings in the Windy City club's opener of 1900 as Pete Dowling beat Jack Katoll.

Meanwhile in 1901, manager/CF Hugh Duffy's spirited boys bounced back the next afternoon as Ned Garvin led 5 to 2 in the eighth before Detroit rallied for two tallies. With two down in the ninth, "Kid" Elberfeld smashed a ball deep to the clubhouse that scored the winning runs in a 6–5 comeback.

Still fighting in game three, the Brewers came from behind to lead, 9–8, in the eighth when Dillon whacked another double that capped a five-run rally for a 13–9 victory. Despite doubles by Conroy and starter Husting and two by Duffy, Milwaukee had a third loss and another 9,000 fans went home happy.

More Tiger fans came the next day to see their never-say-die heroes. Resilient Milwaukee again pasted Detroit's suspect pitching, gaining an 11–5 lead after blowing an early 5–0 cushion. Steadfast Conroy had singled, doubled and homered. In the eighth Detroit rallied for three runs and in the ninth, as the faithful now readily expected, Tigers scampered around the bases for four more, winning 12–11 on a final two-run single by 1900 Cincy rookie OF Jimmy Barrett.

Duffy's disgruntled troops escaped Detroit for Lake Erie's south shore and Cleveland's League Park. Would things be different there as the visitors once again carved out a lead, this time 3–1 in the eighth? No. Hawley gave up a single, triple and single before loading the bases and allowing a one-out fly ball by Cleveland's Bill Hallman that scored the winning run. This time 7,500 Clevelanders went wild.

On May 1, two things changed. First, it was no longer horrible April, and second, that day, instead of leading early, the Brewers fell behind quickly to an onslaught of Blues' hits. Down 5–4 in the sixth, Milwaukee scored four times and won the game, 8–5, despite Cleveland's 16 hits to their eight. LF Billy Gilbert had two safeties and scored three times behind Garvin's tight-rope pitching performance. The next day Cleveland hammered out a 12-to-six-hit edge as they won again, 6–3, with four runs in the opening frame.

Finally on May 3 it happened. Trailing 5–3 in the eighth inning to veteran loser "Uncle Billy" Hart (66–120 lifetime), Duffy's boys tied the score, only to see the hometowners retake a 7–5 margin off Husting. This time, though, it was the Milwau-



kee bats that came alive in the ninth as John Anderson's three-bagger sparked a four-run rally to take the contest, 9-7. Conroy had three hits as did C Billy Maloney, who scored the same number of runs. "Honest John" Anderson was Milwaukee's switch-hitting willow wonder (.330, sixth in AL and his career high) in 1901, finishing second to Triple Crown Nap Lajoie of Philadelphia in hits (229 to 190) and doubles (48 to 46) and third in RBI with 99. Considered a poor fielder, he surprisingly led 1B in fielding percentage in only his second year after switching from being a flychaser.

Milwaukee (2-6) plodded home to its Lloyd Street Ball Park (a field uncannily similar to the 1950s Polo Grounds in configuration) on the good spirit of their rally, only to be met head-on by defending champ Chicago,

which on consecutive days gained 8-0 and 6-0 advantages in the first two innings and coasted to two 11-3 victories. On May 5 something snapped in Beertown. Hustung was facing Chicago's Roy Patterson, and first place was in sight for Charlie

Comiskey's club. To "kill the hoodoo" the Brewers batted first but were down 4-1 after three frames. Hustung walked 10 before being rescued by Reidy. Then Milwaukee scored eight runs and mercilessly whipped Patterson for five more innings on their

way to a 21-7 victory. As they had been the first AL club to score 10 runs (before losing), now they were the first to reach 20. Gilbert and Bill Hallman each had five hits, while Irv Waldron made four and scored four times. Conroy smacked another homer during the carnage.

Duffy's Brewers had other bad days in the late innings. They finished in last place at 48-89, and their record for late-scoring outcomes stood at 10-19. In late-scoring games the Brewers were 2-4 with the White Stockings and 3-7 versus the Tigers.

Milwaukee did best with Baltimore (2-0-1) during

the season as Reidy (4-4 in late outcomes) won both. For most of the year, though, the Brewers played poorly and drew small crowds. Milwaukee was not asked back for 1902 and would not embrace local major league action again until 1953 with the NL Braves.



*Hugh Duffy, who batted .438 in 1894 for Boston, was the Brewers manager and outfielder in 1901, Milwaukee's final A.L. season until 1970.*

**Retrosheet Play-by-Play Account (courtesy of Dave Smith)  
Game of Thursday, 4/25/1901 — Milwaukee Brewers at De-  
troit Tigers (D)**

**Starting Lineups:**

Milwaukee		Detroit	
1. I.Waldron	rf	D.Casey	3b
2. B.Gilbert	2b	J.Barrett	cf
3. B.Hallman	lf	K.Gleason	2b
4. J.Anderson	1b	D.Holmes	rf
5. W.Conroy	ss	P.Dillon	1b
6. H.Duffy	cf	K.Elberfeld	ss
7. J.Burke	3b	D.Nance	lf
8. T.Leahy	c	F.Buelow	c
9. P.Hawley	p	R.Miller	p

**BREWERS 1ST:** I.Waldron reached on an error by K.Elberfeld-ss [I.Waldron to first]; First AL game for teams; overflow crowd on field First pitch by Alderman Jacob Haarer; B.Gilbert singled [I.Waldron to second]; B.Hallman out on a sacrifice bunt (F.Buelow-c to P.Dillon-1b) [I.Waldron to third, B.Gilbert to second]; J.Anderson reached on a fielder's choice (D.Casey-3b to F.Buelow-c) [I.Waldron out at home, B.Gilbert to third]; B.Gilbert was caught stealing home (F.Buelow-c to K.Elberfeld-ss to F.Buelow-c); 0 R, 1 H, 1 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 0, Tigers 0.

**TIGERS 1ST:** D.Casey grounded out (P.Hawley-p to J.Anderson-1b); J.Barrett flied to B.Hallman-1f; K.Gleason singled to left field; K.Gleason stole second; D.Holmes grounded out (B.Gilbert-2b to J.Anderson-1b); 0 R, 1 H, 0 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 0, Tigers 0.

**BREWERS 2ND:** W.Conroy singled; H.Duffy grounded out (P.Dillon-1b unassisted) [W.Conroy scored (no RBI) (error by P.Dillon-1b)]; J.Burke flied to D.Nance-1f; T.Leahy reached on an error by K.Elberfeld-ss [T.Leahy to second]; P.Hawley reached on an error by D.Holmes-rf [T.Leahy scored (unearned) (no RBI), P.Hawley to first]; I.Waldron reached on an error by K.Elberfeld-ss [P.Hawley to second, I.Waldron to first]; B.Gilbert grounded out (D.Casey-3b to P.Dillon-1b); 2 R (1 ER), 1 H, 4 E, 2 LOB. Brewers 2, Tigers 0.

**TIGERS 2ND:** P.Dillon reached on an error by W.Conroy-ss [P.Dillon to first]; P.Dillon was picked off first (P.Hawley-p to J.Anderson-1b); K.Elberfeld popped to J.Burke-3b; D.Nance flied to B.Hallman-1f; 0 R, 0 H, 1 E, 0 LOB. Brewers 2, Tigers 0.

**BREWERS 3RD:** B.Hallman reached on an error by K.Gleason-2b [B.Hallman to first]; On a bunt J.Anderson singled [B.Hallman to second]; W.Conroy doubled [B.Hallman scored (unearned), J.Anderson to third]; H.Duffy walked; J.Burke singled [J.Anderson scored, W.Conroy scored, H.Duffy to second]; T.Leahy out on a sacrifice bunt (P.Dillon-1b to K.Gleason-2b) [H.Duffy to third, J.Burke to second]; P.Hawley singled [H.Duffy scored, J.Burke scored]; E.FRISK REPLACED R.MILLER (PITCHING); I.Waldron forced P.Hawley (K.Gleason-2b to K.Elberfeld-ss) [I.Waldron to first]; E.Frisk threw a wild pitch [I.Waldron to third]; B.Gilbert grounded out (K.Gleason-2b to P.Dillon-1b); 5 R (4 ER), 4 H, 1 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 0.

**TIGERS 3RD:** F.Buelow grounded out (J.Burke-3b to J.Anderson-1b); E.Frisk grounded out (B.Gilbert-2b to J.Anderson-1b); D.Casey reached on an error by B.Hallman-1f [D.Casey to second]; J.Barrett grounded out (T.Leahy-c to J.Anderson-1b); 0 R, 0 H, 1 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 0.

**BREWERS 4TH:** B.Hallman grounded out (E.Frisk-p to D.Casey-3b to P.Dillon-1b); J.Anderson flied to D.Nance-1f; W.Conroy singled to shortstop; W.Conroy was caught stealing second (F.Buelow-c to K.Elberfeld-ss); 0 R, 1 H, 0 E, 0 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 0.

**TIGERS 4TH:** K.Gleason grounded out (B.Gilbert-2b to J.Anderson-1b); D.Holmes reached on an error by J.Burke-3b [D.Holmes to second]; P.Dillon hit a ground rule double [D.Holmes scored (unearned)]; into overflow crowd; K.Elberfeld hit a ground rule double to centerfield [P.Dillon scored]; into overflow crowd; D.Nance flied to H.Duffy-cf; F.Buelow flied to B.Hallman-1f; 2 R (1 ER), 2 H, 1 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 2.

**BREWERS 5TH:** H.Duffy flied to J.Barrett-cf; J.Burke singled to left field; J.Burke was picked off and caught stealing second (E.Frisk-p to P.Dillon-1b to K.Elberfeld-ss); T.Leahy flied to J.Barrett-cf; 0 R, 1 H, 0 E, 0 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 2.

**TIGERS 5TH:** On a bunt E.Frisk singled to third base; D.Casey forced E.Frisk (B.Gilbert-2b to W.Conroy-ss) [D.Casey to first]; D.Casey stole second; J.Barrett grounded out (J.Burke-3b to J.Anderson-1b) [D.Casey to third]; K.Gleason doubled [D.Casey scored]; D.Holmes grounded out (W.Conroy-ss to J.Anderson-1b); 1 R, 2 H, 0 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 3.

**BREWERS 6TH:** P.Hawley walked; I.Waldron popped to F.Buelow-c in foul territory; B.Gilbert forced P.Hawley (E.Frisk-p to K.Elberfeld-ss) [B.Gilbert to first]; B.Gilbert was caught stealing second (F.Buelow-c to K.Elberfeld-ss); 0 R, 0 H, 0 E, 0 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 3.

**TIGERS 6TH:** P.Dillon lined to B.Hallman-1f; K.Elberfeld walked; D.Nance popped to J.Burke-3b in foul territory; F.Buelow flied to H.Duffy-cf; 0 R, 0 H, 0 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 7, Tigers 3.

**BREWERS 7TH:** B.Hallman grounded out (K.Elberfeld-ss to P.Dillon-1b); J.Anderson singled; W.Conroy forced J.Anderson (K.Elberfeld-ss to K.Gleason-2b) [W.Conroy to first]; H.Duffy doubled [W.Conroy to third]; J.Burke doubled [W.Conroy scored, H.Duffy scored]; T.Leahy singled [J.Burke scored]; P.Hawley grounded out (E.Frisk-p to P.Dillon-1b); 3 R, 4 H, 0 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 10, Tigers 3.

**TIGERS 7TH:** P.DOWLING REPLACED P.HAWLEY (PITCHING); E.Frisk grounded out (P.Dowling-p to J.Anderson-1b); D.Casey struck out; J.Barrett walked; T.Leahy allowed a passed ball [J.Barrett to second]; K.Gleason popped to B.Gilbert-2b; 0 R, 0 H, 0 E, 1 LOB. Brewers 10, Tigers 3.

**BREWERS 8TH:** I.Waldron walked; B.Gilbert singled [I.Waldron to second]; B.Hallman flied to D.Holmes-rf; J.Anderson walked [I.Waldron to third, B.Gilbert to second]; W.Conroy singled [I.Waldron scored, B.Gilbert scored, J.Anderson to third]; H.Duffy singled [J.Anderson scored, W.Conroy to second]; J.Burke flied to D.Holmes-rf; T.Leahy flied to D.Holmes-rf; 3 R, 3 H, 0 E, 2 LOB. Brewers 13, Tigers 3.

**TIGERS 8TH:** D.Holmes struck out; P.Dillon hit a ground rule double; P.Dowling threw a wild pitch [P.Dillon to third]; K.Elberfeld struck out; D.Nance singled [P.Dillon scored]; F.Buelow singled [D.Nance to second]; E.Frisk singled [D.Nance to third, F.Buelow to second]; E.Frisk was picked off first (P.Dowling-p to J.Anderson-1b); 1 R, 4 H, 0 E, 2 LOB. Brewers 13, Tigers 4.



BREWERS 9TH: P.Dowling flied to D.Holmes-rf; I.Waldron flied to D.Holmes-rf; B.Gilbert flied to D.Holmes-rf; 0 R, 0 H, 0 E, 0 LOB. Brewers 13, Tigers 4.

TIGERS 9TH: D.Casey hit a ground rule double to leftfield; J.Barrett singled to third base [D.Casey to third]; K.Gleason singled to center field [D.Casey scored, J.Barrett to second]; D.Holmes doubled [J.Barrett scored, K.Gleason to third]; P.Dillon hit a ground rule double [K.Gleason scored, D.Holmes scored]; K.Elberfeld doubled to right field [P.Dillon scored]; B.HUSTING REPLACED P.DOWLING (PITCHING); B.Husting threw a wild pitch [K.Elberfeld to third]; D.Nance grounded out (W.Conroy-ss to J.Anderson-1b); delay to push crowd back in outfield (done by Det players); F.Buelow walked; E.Frisk singled to left field [K.Elberfeld scored, F.Buelow to second]; On a bunt D.Casey singled [F.Buelow to third, E.Frisk to second]; J.Barrett was called out on strikes; K.Gleason reached on an error by J.Burke-3b [F.Buelow scored (unearned) (no RBI), E.Frisk to third, D.Casey to second, K.Gleason to first]; D.Holmes singled to third base [E.Frisk scored (unearned), D.Casey to third, K.Gleason to second]; P.Dillon hit a ground rule double to leftfield [D.Casey scored (unearned), K.Gleason scored (unearned), D.Holmes to third]; 10 R (6 ER), 10 H, 1 E, 2 LOB. Brewers 13, Tigers 14.

Final Totals	R	H	E	LOB
Brewers	13	15	4	7
Tigers	14	19	6	10

#### Retrosheet Expanded Box Score

Game of Thursday, 4/25/1901 — Milwaukee at Detroit (D)

Milwaukee	025	000	33	0	-13
Detroit	000	210	01(10)	-14	

2 outs when winning run was scored.

MILWAUKEE	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	po	a
I. Waldron, rf	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
B. Gilbert, 2b	6	1	2	0	0	0	1	4
B. Hallman, lf	4	1	0	0	0	0	4	0
J. Anderson, 1b	4	2	2	0	1	0	12	0
W. Conroy, ss	5	3	4	3	0	0	1	2
H. Duffy, cf	4	2	2	1	1	0	2	0
J. Burke, 3b	5	2	3	4	0	0	2	2
T. Leahy, c	4	1	1	1	0	0	4	1
P. Hawley, p	3	0	1	2	1	0	0	2
P. Dowling, p	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
B. Hustling, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	41	13	15	11	4	0	26	13

BATTING 2B: W.Conroy (off R.Miller); H.Duffy (off E.Frisk); J.Burke (off E.Frisk). 2-out RBI: J.Burke 2; T.Leahy. RBI, scoring position, less than 2 outs: B.Hallman 0-1; J.Anderson 0-2; W.Conroy 3-3; H.Duffy 1-1; J.Burke 2-3; P.Hawley 2-2. S: B.Hallman; T.Leahy. BASERUNNING CS: B.Gilbert 2 (HP by R.Miller/F.Buelow; 2nd base by E.Frisk/F.Buelow); W.Conroy (2nd base by E.Frisk/F.Buelow); J.Burke (2nd base by E.Frisk/F.Buelow). Team LOB: 7. FIELDING E: W.Conroy (fumble); B.Hallman (dropped fly); J.Burke (throw); J.Burke (fumble). PB: T.Leahy.

DETROIT	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	po	a
D.Casey, 3b	6	3	2	0	0	1	0	3
J.Barrett, cf	5	1	1	0	1	1	2	0
K.Gleason, 2b	6	2	3	2	0	0	2	2
D.Holmes, rf	6	2	2	2	0	1	6	0
P.Dillon, 1b	6	3	4	5	0	0	7	2
K.Elberfeld, ss	4	1	2	2	1	1	5	3

D.Nance, lf	5	0	1	1	0	0	2	0
F.Buelow, c	4	1	1	0	1	0	3	4
R.Miller, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E.Frisk, p	5	1	3	1	0	0	0	4
Totals	47	14	19	13	3	4	27	18

BATTING 2B: P.Dillon 4 (off P.Hawley; off P.Dowling; off P.Dowling; off B.Husting); K.Elberfeld 2 (off P.Hawley; off P.Dowling); K.Gleason (off P.Hawley); D.Casey (off P.Dowling); D.Holmes (off P.Dowling). 2-out RBI: K.Gleason; D.Holmes; P.Dillon 2; D.Nance. RBI, scoring position, less than 2 outs: J.Barrett 0-3; K.Gleason 1-1; D.Holmes 1-1; P.Dillon 3-3; K.Elberfeld 2-3; D.Nance 0-2; E.Frisk 1-1. BASERUNNING SB: D.Casey (2nd base off P.Hawley/T.Leahy); K.Gleason (2nd base off P.Hawley/T.Leahy). Team LOB: 10. FIELDING E: K.Elberfeld 2 (fumble); P.Dillon (throw); K.Elberfeld (throw); D.Holmes (dropped fly); K.Gleason (throw).

PITCHING		ip	h	r	er	bb	so
MILWAUKEE							
P.Hawley		6.0	5	3	2	1	0
P.Dowling	*	2.0	10	7	7	1	3
B.Husting	L	0.2	4	4	0	1	1
DETROIT							
R.Miller		2.1	6	7	5	1	0
E.Frisk	W	6.2	9	6	6	3	0

\* Pitched to 6 batters in 9th

Inherited Runners - Scored: P.Dowling 0-0; B.Husting 1-1; E.Frisk 1-0. WP: E.Frisk; P.Dowling; B.Husting

GAME DATA - T: 2:35; A: 10023; Temp: Unknown; Wind: Unknown direction, Speed: Unknown. UMPIRES - HP: Sheridan, 1B: Mannassau, 2B: (none), 3B: (none)

Game of 4/25/1901 — Milwaukee at Detroit (D)  
Box score generated at Fri Apr 27 11:20:53 2001

Milwaukee	AB	R	H	RBI	Detroit	AB	R	H	RBI
Waldron I, rf	5	1	0	0	Casey D, 3b	6	3	2	0
Gilbert B, 2b	6	1	2	0	Barrett J, cf	5	1	1	0
Hallman B, lf	4	1	0	0	Gleason K, 2b	6	2	3	2
Anderson J, 1b	4	2	2	0	Holmes D, rf	6	2	2	2
Conroy W, ss	5	3	4	3	Dillon P, 1b	6	3	4	5
Duffy H, cf	4	2	2	1	Elberfeld K, ss	4	1	2	2
Burke J, 3b	5	2	3	4	Nance D, lf	5	0	1	1
Leahy T, c	4	1	1	1	Buelow F, c	4	1	1	0
Hawley P, p	3	0	1	2	Miller R, p	0	0	0	0
Dowling P, p	1	0	0	0	Frisk E, p	5	1	3	1
Husting B, p	0	0	0	0					
	41	13	15	11		47	14	19	13

Milwaukee	025	000	33	0	-13
Detroit	000	210	01(10)	-14	

2 outs when winning run was scored.

Milwaukee	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Hawley P	6.0	5	3	2	1	0
Dowling P*	2.0	10	7	7	1	3
Husting B (L)	0.2	4	4	0	1	1

Detroit	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Miller R	2.1	6	7	5	1	0
Frisk E (W)	6.2	9	6	6	3	0

\* Pitched to 6 batters in 9th

E - Elberfeld K 3, Dillon P, Holmes D, Conroy W, Gleason K, Hallman B, Burke J 2 LOB — Milwaukee 7, Detroit 10. 2B — Conroy W, Dillon P 4, Elberfeld K 2, Gleason K, Duffy H, Burke J, Casey D, Holmes D. SB — Gleason K, Casey D. CS — Gilbert B 2, Conroy W, Burke J. SH — Hallman B, Leahy T. WP — Frisk E, Dowling P, Hustling B. PB — Leahy T. T — 2:35. A — 10023.

# Milwaukee's American Association Brewers

By Robert Koehler

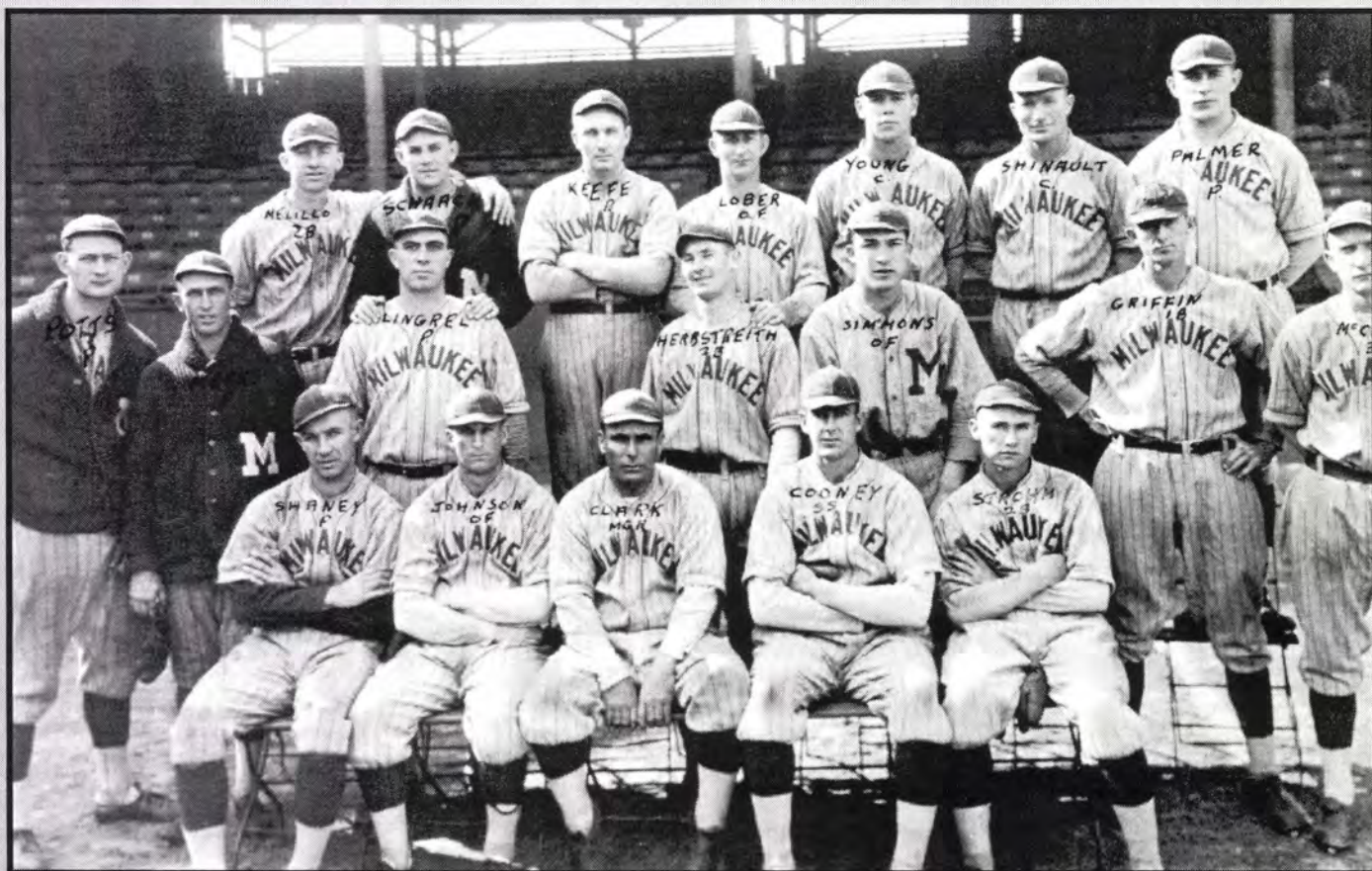
Milwaukee has had a rich history of baseball dating back even before its first entry in the National League for one season in 1878. In 1901 they again became major league when the American League, with Milwaukee as a charter member, challenged the National League and declared itself an equal. Milwaukee lasted only one season in the American League, however, losing its franchise to St. Louis. Milwaukee then became a charter member of the newly formed American Association. In its first year of operation the American Association was considered an "outlaw league," as it was not part of the National Association of Professional Ball Leagues or the organized minor leagues. The hostile actions of the National Association included inducing players to walk away from their A.A. contracts, making it difficult for the new league to prosper. The league, however, did thrive by never hiring any contract jumpers from other leagues and by playing a fine brand of ball.

Thus the years of 1902-1952 were Milwaukee's and the

league's finest years. During this time all teams remained the same except the Toledo team. They were transferred to Cleveland in 1914 and 1915 to prevent the Federal League from establishing a franchise in those two cities.

The Milwaukee Brewers secured eight pennants, second only to St. Paul's nine in their fifty-one years in the league. League batting championships seemed to be the Brewers' forte, as they claimed twelve over the years. The first of the leaders was George Stone, who pounded out a fantastic .405 for the 1904 season. He was then promoted to the St. Louis Browns, where he lasted for six years, topping the American League with a .358 average in 1906. After finishing his big league career in 1910, Stone returned to the Brewers in 1911, where he came back to reality with an average of .282.

Nineteen-thirteen saw Larry Chappell capture the batting crown with a .349 average for the champion Brewers. Being sold for a reported \$50,000, poor Chappell never batted over



*The 1923 version of the American Association Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Club.*



.231 in the majors and was back to Milwaukee in 1915, hitting a respectable .309. He never again reached his early potential. He died a tragically early death in 1918 at the age of 27,

Wheeler "Doc" Johnston took the championship in the war-shortened season of 1918, hitting .374. Johnston was sold to Cleveland mid-season for \$7,500 and actually played more games for the Indians that year than for the Brewers. His eleven-year career ended in 1922.

The next two champions, Lester Bell and Glen Myatt, only played one year each for the Brewers. Myatt was obtained by shrewd owner Otto Borchert in his sale of Al Simmons to Connie Mack of the Athletics. Myatt hit the apple for a robust .370 before being sold to Cleveland at the end of the 1922 season. Bell passed up Johnny Neun, famous for his unassisted triple play, in the last week of the 1924 season. He ended with a fine .365 average. Bell carved out a lifetime major league average of .290 over eleven seasons.

It would be ten years before Milwaukee saw another champion batsman. Earl Webb came to Milwaukee in 1934 after finishing a seven-year big league career. His .368 topped the Association that year. His follow-up of .338 failed to grab the honors in 1935.

Milwaukee's Lou Novikoff, the "Mad Russian," was the top batsman of the league in 1941 with his .370. It's been said that he could have stayed in the high minors and won championships every year—he had four consecutive batting titles in four different leagues, concluding with his Brewers laurels in 1941. In his 356 game major league stint, though, he batted only .282.

The year of 1942 followed with Eddie "The Brat" Stanky's .342 season topper. His career spanned eleven years and five teams, evoking a statement from Leo Durocher that Stanky couldn't hit or field but always came up with some way to beat you.

The war year of 1943 saw Milwaukee's third consecutive batting crown. Grey Clarke hit .358 to lead the league and earn a promotion the following year to the White Sox. Unfortunately, he lasted just one season in the big show. After three straight batting titles, the Brewers had to wait until 1947 for their next one. This time it was German-born slugger Heinz Becker, who paced the league with a .363 mark. His heroics that year led the third-place Brewer team to a Little World Series championship over Syracuse of the International League.

Milwaukee's final batting champion was Bob Addis in 1950. His club only finished in sixth place, but Addis outdistanced the league with a .323 batting average. His hitting earned him a call from the Braves. He appeared in parts of four seasons in the majors and showed promise with a .295 average in 93 games with the Cubs in 1952, but he was out of the majors for good before his 28<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Controversy surrounds a possible thirteenth batting champion for the Brewers. In 1931 Gus Dugars of Kansas City hit .419 but only played in 93 games with 327 at-bats, while the



*Two Milwaukee legends—Brewers owner Otto Borchert and American Association superstar Bunny Brief.*

Brewers' Art "What a Man" Shires hit .385 in 623 times at bat. Different sources list two different leaders. Shires only played one year with the Brewers, with much aggrandizement. He also performed as a professional boxer and played four years in the big leagues, averaging .291.

The Brewers' first pennant came in the twelfth season of the American Association. Harry Clark's team brought the bunting home in 1913. "Pep" Clark holds the Association record for most games played with 1,834, all with the Brewers. He also managed for seven full seasons and part of another. Clark's team of 1913 was known for its come-from-behind wins. The team's mascot was a goat that kept the outfield grass short by constant nibbling. He also kept the press outraged as he liked to sleep in their press box, leaving a distinctive aroma. Happy Felsch, of Black Sox infamy, broke in with this team, which was led by a pitching staff that included Cy Slapnicka's 25 wins coupled with goat owner Ralph Cutting's 21 victories. Veterans such as Phil Lewis and Tom Jones brought their experience to steady the team to 100 victories. The team repeated its pennant accomplishment in 1914 as Felsch blossomed into a star. He was helped by the steady pitching of Cy Young the 2<sup>nd</sup>, spitballer Joe Horlik, and "Sugar Boy" Tom Dougherts, whose winning percentage of .778 led the league.

Following these two championship teams was a long drought of "almost winners" that finally ended in 1936. The Brewers that year had one of the greatest minor league teams ever—some would say the greatest. A working agreement with the Detroit Tigers brought Rudy York and Chet Laabs. They formed a nucleus that secured a pennant. The Brewers swept through the league's playoffs, crowning the year with a Little World Series victory over Buffalo. The pitching staff was blessed with a trio that produced almost sixty victories—Tot Pressnell, Joe Heving, and Luke Hamlin. Tedd Gullic, the soul



of the team, wore the team flannels for eleven years and that season had one of his best, with a .329 average.

Unfortunately, the team's loss of key players left a void that didn't bring another pennant until the war year of 1943. The three-year reign of 1943, 1944, and 1945 was the result of Charlie Grimm and Bill Veeck's wholesale rebuilding. They combined rookies and retreads into championship teams for these years. Grimm managed the 1943 team, leaving early in the 1944 season to return to managing the Chicago Cubs. He was replaced by Casey Stengel, who guided the team to the 1944

was led by Ernie Johnson's 15-4 record, backed by Murray Wall's 15-5 and Bert Thiel's 14-9 coming out of the bullpen. The crew breezed through the playoffs and held off a tough Montreal Royals team to win the Little World Series.

The 1952 representatives won the flag by twelve games over the second place Kansas City team, topping their nine-game margin over St. Paul the previous year. Buzz Clarkson made a major contribution with a .318 average in 74 games. The Brewers also got a boost from two new black players, Billy Bruton and Luis Marquez. Bruton played in all 154 games,



### 1943 MILWAUKEE BREWERS

Rudie Schaffer General Manager	Bob Feron Trainer	Tommy Nelson	Bob Bowman	Jimmy Pruett	Frank Secary	Red Smith Coach	Bill Veeck President
Hugh Todd	Bill Norman	Bill Fleming	Earl Caldwell	Heinz Becker	Charlie Sproull	Wes Livengood	Ted Norbert
Hershel Martin	Joe Berry	Hank Heli	Tony York	Charlie Grimm Manager	Charlie Gassaway	Grey Clarke	Don Johnson

*The 1943 Brewers won the first of three straight pennants for Bill Veeck's club*

pennant. However, Stengel and Veeck didn't get along, so Stengel was not rehired for 1945. Nick Cullop came aboard to give them the last wartime pennant.

Milwaukee's last two pennants were won in 1951 and 1952. The 1951 team would rival the 1936 unit for the title of "best ever." Integration had come to the American Association with St. Paul's Roy Campanella in 1948, and the black players' contributions to the last two Milwaukee championships were unmistakable. George Crowe, first baseman, was voted outstanding freshman of the year in the circuit. Playing in 150 games, Crowe batted .339, helping the club with his overall play. Jim "Buzz" Clarkson, the other black player on the team, contributed with a .343 average in 97 games. The pitching staff

batted .325, and Marquez, a Puerto Rican speedster, hit .345. The team was the class of the league. Pitching was led by Don Liddle's outstanding 17-4 record, and five other pitchers contributed double figures in wins. The Brewers' downfall, however, came in the seventh game of the final round of the playoffs, when they lost to a scrappy Kansas City team, denying Milwaukee a chance for a Little World Series repeat. The last game was played at Borchert Field, ending the colorful life of the historic park built in 1888 for \$40,000.

Over the years the Brewers developed many players who went on to star in the majors, while a few came to Milwaukee on the down side of an illustrious career. Young Ray Schalk broke in with the team as a backup catcher in 1911. After starring the



next year, Schalk went on to earn Hall of Fame induction for a long career with the Chicago White Sox. The opposite was the case of big spitballer Ed Walsh. After his high-caliber years on the White Sox, Walsh finished with the Brewers in 1919, quitting before the end of the season.

The worst year the Brewers ever had was 1916, with a cellar finish of 54 wins and 110 losses. Even the presence of the "world's greatest athlete," Olympic hero Jim Thorpe, could not save the Brewers from the basement. At age 30 Thorpe could still run, stealing a league-leading 48 bases, but he struggled with hitting the curve ball and batted an unspectacular .274.

The 1920's saw the development of Joe Hauser, whose first two seasons of 1920 and 1921 earned him a promotion to Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics. Unfortunately, a broken kneecap in 1925 seriously hampered his major league career. The rest of his tenure, in the high minors, was outstanding, capped by home run totals of 69 and 63. The former total, in 1933 with Minneapolis, gave him the American Association record. A brief return to the Brewers in 1929 did not prove successful, with an uncharacteristic average of only .238. "Unser Choe" finished his baseball days with Sheboygan of the Wisconsin State League, playing until he was 43 years old and managing after that.

Al Simmons, a Milwaukee native, was discovered on the local sandlots. He debuted in 1922 for fewer than twenty games with the Brewers, then was farmed out to the wilds of Aberdeen in the Dakota League. Brought up for the last part of the season, he hit .398 and was sold to Connie Mack for a large sum of money and several players. After playing for twenty years, Simmons was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1953.

Following nine successful seasons with Kansas City, Bunny Brief (born Antonio Bordetzki) joined the Brewers for the 1925 campaign. In his first year as a Brewer he batted .358 and led the league with 37 home runs and 175 runs batted in. Brief is the all-time American Association leader in home runs (276), hits (2196), runs scored (1342), doubles (458), and runs batted in (1451). He is the classic example of the ballplayer who falls just short of major league ability. He batted just .223 in four major league seasons. After his four years with the Brewers, ending in 1928, Brief settled in Milwaukee and became a leader in the city's municipal recreation program for youth baseball. Along with Milwaukee native Jack Kloza, a "cup of coffee" big leaguer who played five years for the Brewers, Brief conducted baseball schools for a generation of lucky elementary and high school youngsters. In a sense, Bunny Brief may have been the most important ballplayer Milwaukee ever had.



*Milwaukee's only native Hall of Famer was Al Simmons, "The Duke of Mitchell Street," shown here with his big league manager, Connie Mack.*





Top Row: Walter Post, Buzz Clarkson, Pete Whisenant, Murray Wall, Billy Reed and Bert Thiel; Middle Row: Red Smith, Gen'l Mgr., Don Liddle, Dewey Williams, Bill Bruton, George Estack, Bill Allen, Dick Conley, Luis Marquez, Dick Donovan, Eddie Blake and Bob Feron, Trainer; Front Row: Al Unser, Dick Hoover, Hank Ertman, Bucky Walters, Mgr., Joe Just, Coach, Billy Klaus, Bob Montag, Gene Mauch; Bottom: Billy Walters and Johnny Reiter, Bat Boys. 1952

*The 1952 Brewers, shown in Borchert Field, featured a host of future major leaguers, including Gene Conley, identified here as "Dick."*



*Quirky old Borchert Field was home to the Brewers through 1952, even though part of the grandstand roof blew off in a storm in June, 1944.*



# Ginger Spices Up Wisconsin's Baseball: Summer of 1898

by Dixie Tourangeau

Clarence Howeth Beaumont was a ballplayer of some local notoriety as the spring of 1898 began in southeastern Wisconsin. A native of the farmland around Rochester, about 25 miles southwest of Milwaukee, as a kid he played for a handful of area town teams. But from April to September 1898, his stature grew quickly from interesting talent to professional star. By the time 1899 dawned, his exciting play on three levels of organized ball had propelled him to the unexpected thrill of being drafted for a National League roster.

Born during the U.S. centennial, the first National League season, and just over a month after General George Custer's eastern Montana Territory battle at the Little Big Horn River, Clarence played his fantastic baseball summer under blaring headlines in American newspapers about the U.S. armed forces' exploits during the Spanish-American War. Our battleship Maine exploded in Havana Harbor on February 15. War was declared on April 25. Admiral Dewey captured Manila Harbor on May 1. The Rough Riders charged up San Juan Hill during the first days of July. The one-sided war ended in mid-August.

Meanwhile, Wisconsin's peaceful southeast quadrant was Beaumont's personal ballyard even before 1898. Thanks to just-down-the-road neighbor and East Troy school chum Merle "Babe" Adkins, teenager Clarence was no stranger to town and semi-pro ball. Adkins, four years older, got him into leagues starting in 1894 with East Troy (champs in 1895), Sharon (state line town), Harvard (just south in Illinois) and Waupun (60 miles north), where he reportedly played in 1896-97.

Circumstantial evidence suggests it was Adkins who convinced Clarence to transfer his talents from little Rochester Academy to Beloit (College) Academy for the 1898 season. Beloit is a college town on the Illinois line, about 35 miles southwest of Rochester. According to unearthed school records, Beaumont arrived in March. For his one semester Beaumont lived with the school's "Instructor of Physical Culture," Dr. Charles M. Hollister, M.D. Clarence enrolled in the "classical division" and studied Greek and Latin. Even with subsequent tutoring, though, his just-passing grades suggested his genius was saved for the diamond.

Then called "Reddy" by his mates because of his red hair, and "Butch," his childhood nickname, Beaumont began his baseball odyssey against the Janesville YMCA on April 1. He was at 3B for that 23-1 pasting, as he was on April 9 when Rush Medical College lasted two innings in the rain before bowing,

14-3. Beloit's official schedule against school opponents listed only 14 games, including three against Northwestern. The first was on April 15, when the home Beloiters won handily, 19-7. LF Beaumont got one hit and scored three times. Adkins in RF scored twice and shared the pitching duties with Fond du Lac-born lefty, Bob Blewett. Blewett and Adkins both later made it to the major leagues for the shortest of careers. Blewett was 0-2 for the Giants in 1902, while Adkins was 1-1 for Boston's A.L. club that same year.

Traveling to the University of Chicago's Marshall Field next, Beloit was edged, 4-3. Reddy had three of his team's seven hits, including a triple. Back home at Keep Athletic Field on the 20th, Beloit shocked Michigan, 5-2, on a 12-strikeout performance by Adkins behind one-man gang (SS) Beaumont's triple, double, two runs, rbi and steal of home that proved to be the winning run in the ninth (Beloit batted first). Who could have thought that Clarence was only a year and a day from making his major league debut as a Pirate in St. Louis and getting his first hit? After thumping Lake Forest, 33-5, Beloit did likewise to the University of Minnesota at Keep Field. Beaumont's 5 for 6 with four runs scored, matched by CF Kinsley, paced a 25-2 victory for Adkins. Growing in reputation, the Beloit boys finally fell to rival Wisconsin, 5-3. Another Fond du Lac product, Bert Husting, beat Adkins. (Husting made the Pirates in 1900 for a few innings but was 9-15 for Milwaukee's inaugural AL squad in 1901.) SS Beaumont got two of the four hits off Bert and knocked in a run with a fly ball. He was also thrown out at second and later at the plate during the contest.

Speed was one of Reddy's best qualities. Participating in a June "Track and Field Day" meet against Lawrence College, he won the 100 yard dash easily.

Over the next few weeks Beloit beat DePauw twice, downed tough Chicago, and lost to strong Michigan on Beloit's first trip to Ann Arbor. In mid-June, Wisconsin and Husting won again, 7-3. A week later revenge was sweet at Keep Field as Blewett's ninth inning single beat nemesis Husting, 7 to 6. Beaumont had three hits, scored, and knocked home three mates. Husting and 2B Aston made a triple play in vain, putting out "off-and-running" baserunners Adkins and Clarence on a comeback blooper. Catcher Beaumont received an Adkins pitch in the mouth, but Reddy kept right on playing in the game that would allow Beloit, ridiculed by larger schools, to have a just

claim on the western college championship. They had beaten all major challengers. June and school were ending so Beaumont, Adkins and Blewett headed north for some spirited semi-pro baseball.

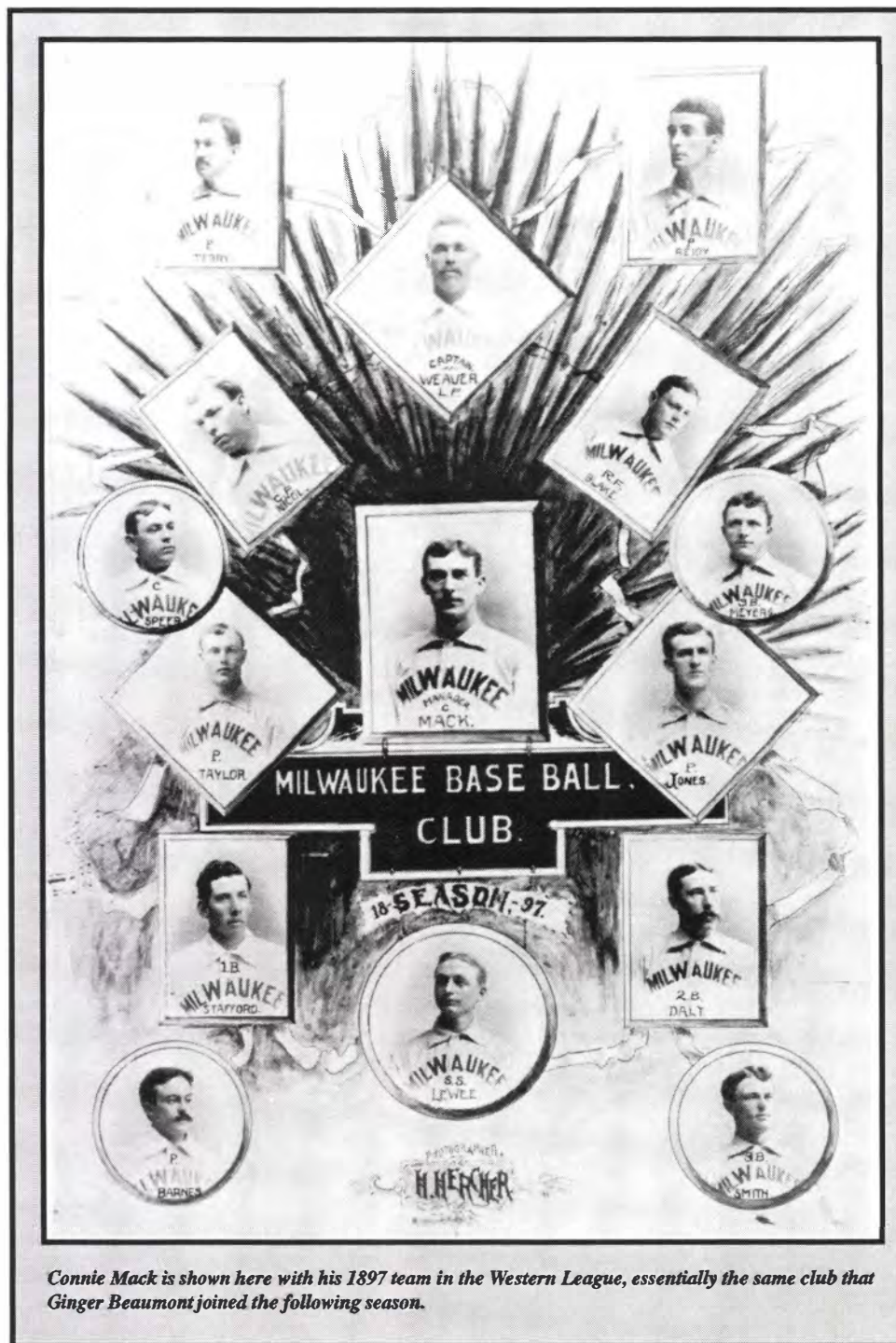
Though sources can be found that claim Beaumont played for upstate Wausau, no evidence shows he ever ventured that far north (about 150 miles from Rochester). It was the Waupun "Prisoners," a.k.a. "Convicts," who gained his service. He and pal Adkins arrived there and donned the black and gray striped uniforms and hose for a third summer. Waupun, about 15 miles southwest of Fond du Lac, was home to the state's largest prison. Waupun's season had begun a few weeks before the schoolboys were able to get on the roster.

Squads from the area towns of Sheboygan, Stevens Point, Oshkosh, Juneau, and Fond du Lac repeatedly scheduled "challenge games" with each other for a hundred or more dollars, which the winner pocketed. In 1900 the *Utica Globe* (NY) referred to a Fox River Valley League in a short biographical sketch on Beaumont. However, no mention

is made of any 1898 official league (name) by the main regional press: *The Waupun Times*, Fond du Lac's *Daily Commonwealth*, *The Oshkosh Weekly Northwestern* or *The Milwaukee Journal*. The weekly town papers covered the games but the reporting was often spotty, incomplete, and confusing. Infrequent

boxscores make it impossible to record Beaumont's contributions exactly—one late July win over Fond du Lac gave Beau a home run in the written story and a triple in the boxscore. What is certain is that the Convicts were at least 14–5 from the time he and Babe Adkins joined them until August 22, when Reddy was called to Milwaukee by Connie Mack. They beat all opponents and were 5–1 against the rival Fond du "Lackers," counting as a win a game "lost" on July 4 because an umpire of known "malice" forfeited the contest to Fond du Lac after Waupun rallied in the ninth for a 5–4 "win" on Beaumont's two-rbi triple and subsequently disallowed score on a outfielder's wild throw.

Adkins' pitching and hitting were equally important to Waupun's success. He twice faced former Beloit mate, now





hometown Lacker twirler, Blewett. Hustung hurled for Juneau along with the young Addie Joss, but pitchers often roamed the area and took the mound for the highest bidder. Adkins tossed a one-hitter at Portage in August, and the only hit came off the bat of a Convict regular playing for Portage, which was short a player. At various times Reddy played the outfield, short, second base and catcher. Just as he did for Beloit, Beaumont sometimes caught games and batted in the leadoff position. Helping Beau and Babe claim a second mythical 1898 championship within Wisconsin were these fellow Convicts: Disch (LF, power hitter), Schaetzke 3B, Red Kleinow C (NY Highlander 1904–9), Hanneman RF, Johnson 1B (clutch hitter, major rbi man), Foley 2B-P, Metzler CF, Buege P, and Walthers SS. Waupun had a better winning percentage than 25–15 Fond du Lac, which claimed the state title based on its number of wins before the season actually ended.

The *Daily Commonwealth* on August 4 informed ball fans of talk about a league being formed that would include Waupun,

Fond du Lac, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Oshkosh and possibly Stevens Point. Citing a three-game schedule against each other city, planners wanted “to awaken a spirit which is necessary to the financial success which has not been manifested so far this season.” For a circuit looking for a good crowd of paying customers, August 22 was supposed to see Connie Mack’s Milwaukee Brewers invade Fletcher’s Park in Waupun to play the locals. Thirty-eight business owners in Prison City signed a *Waupun Times* notice saying they were closing their stores from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. for the big game. Mack’s team failed to show, however, and Fond du Lac scored a 5-2 win as a replacement opponent. Instead, Mack made off with Beaumont for his light-hitting Brewers. Another scheduled game on September 8 that would have featured Beaumont’s return to his semi-pro stomping grounds was also never played. Prior news reports said Mack was going to donate all gate receipts to the Waupuns for failing to play the first game.

There are two stories about Connie’s snagging of Beau.



Shown here with his manager, Connie Mack, Al Simmons was Milwaukee’s only native-born Hall of Fame member, inducted in 1953.



One printed in June of 1931 recalled that Tom Andrews, a sports reporter in Milwaukee, induced Mack to give Beaumont a tryout late in the season. In fact, Mack was cited as being interested in Butch Beaumont from his spring play at Beloit, and there were guesses that the fleet-footed line-drive hitter would certainly be with Mack by 1899. Mid-August was supposedly the second time Mack wired Beau for help, but there is no record of him playing a single Brewer game before then. For certain Connie couldn't wait until 1899. His outfield was depleted by injuries, and the Brew Crew weren't that solid with their sticks even when healthy. Nonetheless, Milwaukee had a decent chance for the Western League flag, so getting Beaumont's talents was crucial. If Rochester's Pride spurred Beloit and Waupun to greatness, he virtually carried Milwaukee into September on his back.

Detroit's Bill Phyle no-hit the Brewers, 11-0, on August 20. Beau arrived on August 23 as Milwaukee was hosting Kansas City, which boasted the two best hitters in the league. CF Jimmy Slagle swung the circuit's top (lefty) stick, while just behind him was slugging (righty) 3B Jimmy Williams. At the time Indianapolis, Milwaukee and KC were bunched at the top, a few losses apart.

Kansan Dale Gear was on the mound for the visiting Blues. He had thrown a few games for Cleveland in 1896 and would be 4-15 for Washington's inaugural AL squad in 1901. But that day he lost to Milwaukee, 5-3, as LF Beaumont went 2 for 2 with a home run, stole a base, and scored twice in a rainy six-inning game. Beau's game-winning blast sailed over Slagle's head to the fence, and it was a memory that "Ginger" recalled joyously three decades later. "Human Mosquito" Slagle played in the NL for 10 seasons, first for Washington in 1899 and later from 1902 to 1908 for the pennant-winning Cubs. Inspired, the Brewers won the next day, 13-5. Future lawyer Gear was pitching again on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and Beaumont again whacked a home run off him to help win the game, 2-1.

Minneapolis then came to Beertown and lost three of four as Beaumont was 6 for 17. Next Mack's Brewers polished off the Columbus Senators three of four (Beau 10 for 19, 7 runs, 2 homers). By September 2, Reddy from Rochester was hitting .435 after 11 games (9-2), and Milwaukee was in first place.

Hitting the road brought Milwaukee back to earth as they split in Detroit with the lowly Tigers and were swept three games in Indianapolis in which Beau didn't play. Traveling from Indiana to Minnesota, Mack again failed to go to Waupun for that second scheduled exhibition game, probably to save his club's energy. In St. Paul, Beau homered off Phyle in an 8-4 win and then went 3 for 5 (2 runs, steal) while the Brewers lost, 9 to 8. Flag hopes were finally snuffed when Minneapolis beat Mack's boys, 7-6, and then champion Kansas City swept them in

three games at KC's Exposition Park. Beau was only 2 for 11 in KC and was shut down by the formerly "easy" Gear. Reddy ended his season with a three-game sweep of St. Joe/Omaha (4 for 11, 4 runs). Milwaukee (82-57) finished six games behind Kansas City (88-51) and seven behind Indianapolis.

In his 24 games, Beaumont hit .354, second to Slagle's .378 and just ahead of Williams' .343. The best-hitting full-year regular for the Brewers was 2B Daly at .288. One odd aspect of Butch's short minor league term was that his parents objected to his playing on Sundays. As a result, his name never appears in any Sunday box score after August 28. As the season closed, *The Milwaukee Journal* reported this fact and added how he played in September Sunday contests under the names of injured players from his team, usually OFs Nicol and Weaver.

In October a convoluted system saw Beaumont become the property of the Louisville Colonels of the National League in a "protective" draft. He was soon "returned" to the Brewers as a courtesy to Connie Mack and was eventually chosen by the Pittsburgh Pirates for the 1899 season.

Clarence Beaumont joined the Pirates for the 1899 season and with Jimmy Williams formed possibly the best rookie twosome in history for players from the same team. Williams hit .355 with a record 28 triples while Reddy hit .350, including a game on July 22 in which he made six successive bunt hits off lefty Wiley Piatt of Philadelphia in an 18-4 rout. The day after his 23rd birthday, in a doubleheader with Philadelphia at Pittsburgh, slugger Williams won the first game, 9-8, with a homer in the ninth inning with Beau and another Buc aboard. In the second game Reddy hit one over the fence in the final frame with two on and two out, but was (as the game-ending rules stated then) credited with just a triple off journeyman Bill Magee in the exciting 5-4 victory.

It was in 1900 that Reddy finally became "Ginger." Pittsburgh's new owner, Barney Dreyfuss, relished his fast, aggressive play and bestowed the nickname we use today. Dreyfuss had craftily combined the best players of his own Louisville Colonels with Pittsburgh's best when the National League announced plans to drop the Louisville franchise for 1900.

Beaumont returned to the area of his birth after his playing days were over in October of 1911. He still swung a bat in some town games for a few years but eventually settled in as a farmer. Beaumont had won the NL batting title in 1902, one of the few times his pal and teammate Honus Wagner didn't, and of course Ginger will always be remembered as the first batter in modern World Series history—in October 1903, he faced Cy Young in Boston. Ginger was selected to the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame in 1951. He died at Burlington Hospital in April, 1956.



# Babe Ruth in Milwaukee

by Bob Buege

Between October, 1901 and April, 1953 Milwaukee did not have a major league baseball team. That deficiency, however, did not mean that Beertown fans had no opportunity to enjoy the skills of baseball's greatest heroes. Even the national pastime's biggest star, the immortal Babe Ruth, made his Milwaukee visits.

Following the 1921 season, the Bambino was the toast of the sporting world. He had just rewritten the single-season home run record by blasting 59, more than five American League teams hit that year, and leading the New York Yankees to their first pennant. Such was the scope of Ruth's fame that he made his first Milwaukee appearance not in the local ballpark but on the stage of the Majestic Theater.

During the third week of February 1922, billed as "The King of Swat" and assisted in his act by veteran comic Wellington Cross, Ruth brought his vaudeville routine to Milwaukee. The previous headline act at the Majestic had been Helen Keller—"Blind, deaf, and formerly dumb." Sharing the bill with Ruth were such vaudeville staples as a soft-shoe tandem, a singing and dancing one-legged Englishman, and an animal aggregation called Follette's Monkeys. Ruth told a few stories, demonstrated his grip on a baseball bat, and even sang a duet with Cross.

Was Ruth any good at show biz? While visiting Commissioner Landis in Chicago during his run there the previous week, Ruth told him, "It's going over big, Judge. It looks like a big winner." And a Milwaukee critic described The Babe as having "a good-natured smile and considerable stage presence."

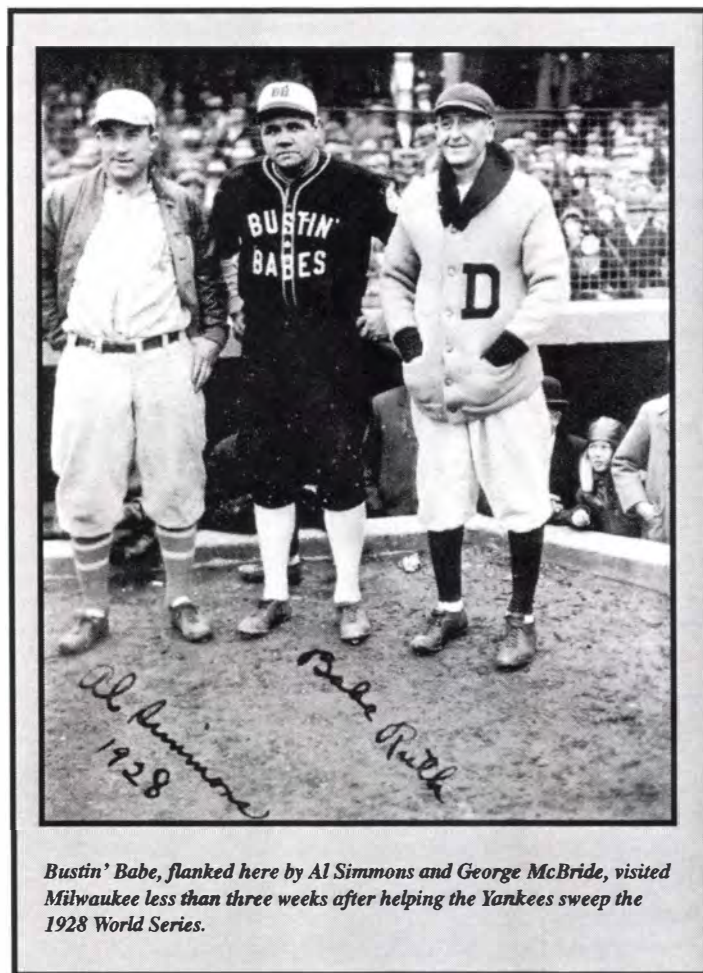
On October 28, 1928, Ruth returned to Milwaukee, this time to play ball. Less than three weeks after the Yankees swept their second straight World Series, with Ruth slamming three homers in the final game, Ruth and his sidekick, Lou Gehrig, barnstormed into Borchert Field. The "Bustin' Babes" and "Larrupin' Lous," with local talent filling out the teams, faced off before 8,000 screaming hero-worshippers on a frigid Sunday afternoon. Said Ruth, "I don't think I ever played on a colder day. Why, my mitts felt as though they would break off every time I hit a ball."

In batting practice Ruth slammed a ball that hit high off the centerfield scoreboard, narrowly missing a chance to be the only batter ever to clear that barrier. He hit a number of drives out of the park, but he reserved his most prodigious blast for the ballgame.

To make himself more visible to the fans, Ruth played first base for the first eight innings. At the plate he failed to distinguish himself in his first four tries. He singled to right in the first, but he fouled out to Gehrig, grounded weakly to second, and, batting out of turn in the seventh inning, lined out to Gehrig at first base. In his final plate appearance, though, he gave the crowd what they had come to see. Facing ex-Boston Brave and Milwaukee Brewer Dinty Gearin, The Babe smashed

a towering fly ball high over the rightfield fence, across Seventh Street, over a house and into the back yard behind it. It was, by the accounts of the day, the longest home run ever seen at Borchert Field.

To climax his show, Ruth switched gloves and pitched the ninth inning, or what passed for the ninth inning. After one out, the batting order was forsaken and local product Al Simmons



*Bustin' Babe, flanked here by Al Simmons and George McBride, visited Milwaukee less than three weeks after helping the Yankees sweep the 1928 World Series.*

was brought to the plate. "Bucketfoot Al," known locally as "The Duke of Mitchell Street," received several opportunities to match Ruth's wallop, but the best he could produce was an easy fly to left.

For his finale, Ruth pitched to Gehrig for several minutes. Lou had singled and tripled earlier, but against his Yankee teammate he could not connect. He lifted several flies toward the short fence in right but none over it. Finally, on a mighty swing, he struck out. Ruth retrieved the ball, flung it into a gaggle of excited youngsters, and ran to catch a train for Sioux City.



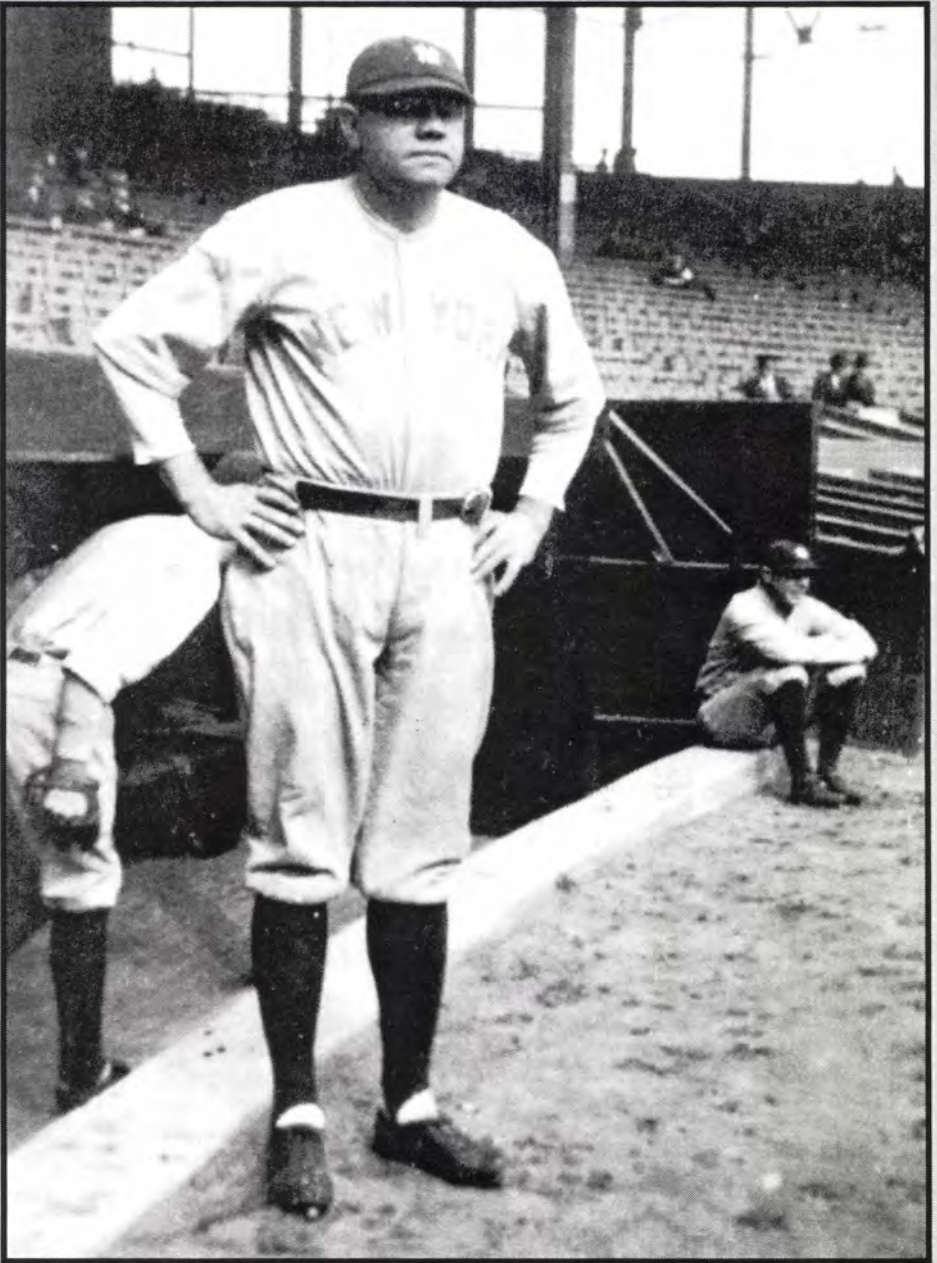
Two days later, on a train carrying Ruth and Gehrig from Sioux City to Omaha, a 65-year-old man suffered an attack of apoplexy. Because no doctor was on board the train, passengers asked the two Yankees to minister to the stricken man. The two ballplayers tried to comfort the victim but were unable to help him. He died, reportedly in Ruth's arms, a few minutes later. The Milwaukee newspaper that reported the story used the headline, "Ruth Fails To Save Man Stricken on Train."

On October 11, 1931, one day after Connie Mack's A's lost the World Series to the Cardinals, The Babe came back to Borchert Field, this time without his "Iron Horse" sidekick. Ruth announced that it would be his last barnstorming tour. Playing on a team called Babe Ruth's Universal Stars, managed by native Milwaukeean and ex-Washington Senator George McBride, Babe was defeated by the Milwaukee All-Stars, managed by ex-Brewer and longtime White Sox catcher Ray Schalk. Whether because the novelty had worn off or because of the cold temperature, only about 2,200 fans showed up.

Before the game Ruth took ten minutes of batting practice against 46-year-old Buster Braun, star hurler of the 1914 Brewers, who had pitched in 1931 for Sheboygan in the Wisconsin State League. The great slugger hit mostly pop-ups and managed to clear the rightfield fence just four times.

"I would have hit a couple of more over that wall," the Sultan of Swat said, "but the high wind just kept blowing them pills back in my face."

After his batting exhibition, Ruth faced another Milwaukee Brewer legend, Ulysses Simpson Grant McGlynn, commonly called Stoney. The rubber-armed McGlynn had been known in his prime to hurl both games of doubleheaders and in 1907 had pitched 352 innings for the St. Louis Cardinals. He became a Milwaukee hero in 1909 by throwing an American Association record 13 shutouts and nearly leading the Brewers to the pennant. McGlynn, age 59, worked one pregame "inning" against The Babe. Always the showman, Ruth pleased the crowd by fanning magnificently for the third out, then slamming



*Ruth and his Yankee teammates filled Borchert Field to overflowing for a mid-season exhibition game with the Brewers in June, 1932.*

the dirt in mock disgust.

The ballgame itself proved anticlimactic. No one, least of all The Babe, hit a home run. Against the mound offerings of Buster Braun and Humpty Hill, Ruth produced only two harmless singles and a base on balls in four plate appearances. Ruth played first base for seven innings, then pitched one inning, allowing a walk, a hit, and a run. Probably no one noticed, but Ruth's team lost, 6-1.

For his final Milwaukee visit, The Babe brought his whole team with him—well, nearly the whole team. On Friday, June 17, 1932, the American League-leading New York Yankees, on



their way to another pennant and World Series title, took a day off from their series in Chicago against the White Sox and traveled to Borchert Field to play the American Association's fourth-place Milwaukee Brewers. The Louisville Colonels had agreed to let the Brewers interrupt their series so Milwaukee could return home for a day to play the Bronx Bombers. This was at the depth of the Depression, and the money from an exhibition was significant. In fact, road secretary Mark Roth said the Yankees' half of the gate in Milwaukee would be "more than we get for our weekday series with the White Sox." Of course none of the ballplayers for either club received a nickel extra for the added game.

The Yankee ballclub that reached Milwaukee was not quite complete. Manager Joe McCarthy stayed in Chicago; the team was piloted by coach Jimmy Burke. Burke had played third base for Connie Mack's Brewers in 1900. In addition, Earle Combs, Bill Dickey, and Tony Lazzeri were given the day off. They were barely missed.

The big attractions, naturally, were Ruth and Gehrig, baseball's reigning home run kings. Gehrig had set a league record the previous year with 184 runs batted in, and exactly two weeks before arriving in Milwaukee he had become the first modern ballplayer to hit four home runs in one game. Ruth was running second in homers behind Jimmy Foxx's career year but remained the biggest drawing card in sports. The game was announced eleven days in advance and quickly sold out. No paying customer in 1932, however, was ever turned away. Part of left field was roped off for standing room as 11,469 fans jammed the little wooden park.

The Yankees used their "official exhibition game pitcher," Gordon (Dusty) Rhodes. Ruth, as was his custom, played first base. Gehrig obligingly moved to the outfield, alternating with

Ben Chapman between left and right. Against the pitching of career minor leaguer Larry Kessenich, the Yanks jumped to a 7-0 lead after two innings. Gehrig and Joe Sewell each contributed a single and a double, while Norwegian catcher Art Jorgens homered and doubled. The Babe received huge ovations but struck out and grounded to second.

Except for Ruth's failure to hit a home run, the game proceeded in crowd-pleasing fashion. The Bambino singled twice and played flamboyantly at first base. Milwaukee left-fielder Cuckoo Christensen smoked a cigar at his position and in the later innings wore a fireman's hat. Eleven extra-base hits and 23 singles caromed around the ballpark. The Brewers scored four times in the eighth to tie the game. Although both teams had trains to catch, the game went to extra innings tied at nine.

In the bottom of the eleventh, with one out and Milwaukee's Pip Koehler on first, The Babe made the game-ending play. Catcher Russ Young bounced a ball near first base. Rather than field it, Ruth let it bounce down the line into the short right-field corner. Gehrig, playing right field, suddenly turned spectator while the ball rolled free and Koehler circled the bases with the winning run. Both Gehrig and Ruth disappeared quickly under the stands, and the exhibition was over.

Babe Ruth, baseball's biggest hero, played all eleven innings of a two hour forty-five minute exhibition game for which he was not paid extra. The next day the Milwaukee sportswriters roasted him for his lack of effort. Wrote Sam Levy of *The Milwaukee Journal*, "The Bambino disappointed more than 11,000 fans with his listless effort....He made Larry Kessenich look like Lefty Grove."

## ***Coup de Grace***

*Lots of hitters have ended a ballgame with one swing of the bat, and everyone has heard of someone threatening to "take my ball and go home." Al Simmons once found a way to combine the two.*

*On Sunday, October 12, 1930, four days after the Philadelphia Athletics won their second straight World Series, three of their stars played in an exhibition game at Borchert Field in Milwaukee. American League batting champ (and native son) Al Simmons, slugger Jimmie Foxx, and righthander George Earnshaw joined a group of local minor and ex-major leaguers, signed hundreds of autographs and shook fans' hands, and played a ballgame.*

*This game was an exhibition, clearly for fun—Foxx caught for three innings, played first base for four, and pitched the last two. Simmons also pitched the ninth inning for his team, allowing one single.*

*In the bottom of the ninth, losing 13-6, Simmons stepped to the plate against Foxx. With a mighty swing he blasted the ball high above the leftfield fence, across the street, over a house—foul by a few feet. That swing, though, ended the ballgame. The baseball had been the last one available to the teams.*

# Our Forgotten World Champions: The 1944 Milwaukee Chicks

By Thomas J. Morgan and James R. Nitz

Despite enjoying professional sports teams since 1878, Milwaukee has relished just three world champions: the 1971 basketball Bucks, the 1957 baseball Braves, and the 1944 baseball Chicks. Many of us fondly recall the Bucks winning the National Basketball Association championship and the Braves earning their World Series rings. But, who were the Chicks and what league did they dominate? Furthermore, what happened to the team after they captured their championship?

The Milwaukee Chicks were one-year wonders in the All-American Girls Professional Ball League, the same circuit portrayed in the 1992 hit movie, *A League of Their Own*. The AAGPBL was started by Chicago Cubs owner and chewing gum millionaire Philip Wrigley in an attempt to keep professional baseball alive during World War II. The United States war effort had siphoned away more than half of the major league ballplayers and closed down a majority of the minor leagues. This created the genesis of the Milwaukee Chicks. Wrigley desired an alternative in the event professional baseball shut down completely, so he founded his league in 1943 in the four mid-sized, Midwestern war-production towns of Rockford, Illinois; Kenosha and Racine, Wisconsin; and South Bend, Indiana. Elated by the successful inaugural season, Wrigley confidently ventured into the larger cities of Minneapolis and

Milwaukee in 1944. Little did he know that, because of poor attendance, the Chicks would last only one season in Milwaukee. And the last-place Minneapolis Millerettes were so unpopular that they became the “Orphans” halfway through the season and played only road games before moving to Fort Wayne in 1945.

The AAGPBL launched the 1944 season in May with tryouts in Peru, Illinois. The best players signed one-year contracts with the league itself, not the individual clubs, and were then allocated to the six franchises. The Chicks, who opened the season on Saturday, May 27 at venerable Borchert Field against the South Bend Blue Sox, were supplied with many rookies who needed time to mesh as a unit. Consequently, the expansion franchise started slowly, compiling only a 10-16 win-loss record by June 20.

Injuries suffered by pitching ace Connie “Iron Woman” Wisniewski (twisted knee), first baseman Dolores Klosowski (broken leg), and third baseman Vivian Anderson, a native Milwaukeean (two badly broken fingers that almost had to be amputated), necessitated an infusion of talent by the league. South Bend “gazelle-like” center fielder Vickie Panos and heavy-hitting rookie Merle “The Blonde Bombshell” Keagle were added to the Chicks in June. Lead-off hitter Panos, a native of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, proceeded to finish



*Late season photo of the 1944 Chicks AAGPBL championship ball club.*



second in the league with 141 stolen bases and sixth in hitting with a .263 batting average. Right fielder Keagle, who was moved from shortstop due to her erratic fielding, led the circuit with 7 home runs, finished fourth with 122 stolen bases and fifth in batting with a .264 average. In addition, the AAGPBL shipped 1943 batting champion Gladys "Terrie" Davis from the Rockford Peaches to Milwaukee and introduced rookie Doris Tetzlaff as the new third baseman. Davis, a Toronto native, subsequently supplanted Klosowski at first base but was then shifted to shortstop so that Keagle's explosive bat could remain in the lineup. Tetzlaff would play more games (102) at the hot corner than any other league player in 1944.

The pitching staff of the Chicks was bolstered by the additions of left-hander Clara "Cookie" Cook from the Kenosha Comets and Milwaukeean Sylvia "Roni" Wronski, a 5' 2" right-handed rookie. Wronski and Cook became the fourth and fifth starters, respectively. Wronski was so proficient that she came within one out of pitching a no-hit game against the Racine Belles on July 9. Nine days later, she pitched an exhibition game at Chicago's Wrigley Field, defeating the South Bend Blue Sox, 20-11. The nineteen-year old "Roni," who grew up in the shadow of Borchert Field near the intersection of Hubbard and Locust streets, also hurled in the Chicks' last home game and in their final regular-season road contest.

Wronski was effective as the fourth starter, but South Carolinian Viola "Tommy" Thompson and Detroit natives Wisniewski and Josephine Kabick were outstanding as the team's top three pitchers. The 5' 8", twenty-two-year old "Iron Woman" finished second the AAGPBL with 23 victories and 9 shutouts. Kabick, described as the "stately Chicks' fastballer" and "fashionable double windup twirler" by the local press, topped the league with 26 wins and 43 games started. Wisconsin's original "Tommy" Thompson, the Chicks' best left-handed pitcher and the sister of a Mrs. America, finished with a very respectable 15-12 record.

The first half of the 1944 season ended on July 16 with the Chicks in third place owning a 30-26 record. The Kenosha Comets led the six-team league at 36-23, earning the right to later play the second-half champs for the league title. This play-off method is still employed in the minor leagues.

During the second half of the season, the now-healthy, cohesive Chicks seized first place on August 9 and never looked back. An eleven-game winning streak, concluding on August 22, gave the club a 29-11 record and an insurmountable 5 1/2-game lead. The Chicks closed the season on September 6

against the Orphans in Oshkosh (the game was moved there in hopes of greater crowds than attended at Borchert Field) with 40 victories and 19 defeats during the second half of the season. Overall, the Milwaukee team possessed the league-best record of 70-45.

In an ordinary championship play-off, the healthy Chicks would have been heavily favored due to their second-half heroics and a rash of injuries that had beset the Comets late in the season. But, the equalizer was that all seven play-off games were to be played at Kenosha's Lake Front Stadium, since the Milwaukee Brewers were utilizing Borchert Field for the American Association play-offs. Undaunted by this turn of events, the Chicks pulled out a thrilling 4-games-to-3 triumph over Kenosha as Connie Wisniewski pitched in five contests, winning four.

After Kenosha had gone ahead

in the series 3 to 2 by thrashing Jo Kabick and Viola Thompson for nine runs in game 5, "Iron Woman" Wisniewski pitched back-to-back, three-hit complete games in contests 6 and 7. Game 6 was an eleven-inning evening affair in which the Comets seized a 1-0 lead, thanks to a Keagle muff, in the top of the eleventh. However, the Chicks stormed back with the two winning runs (would-be goat Keagle scoring the first) in the bottom of the eleventh to force the decisive seventh game. Wisniewski later explained her grueling 46-inning series performance this way: "I pitched with my whole body, not just my arm."

The fearless Chicks did not allow the Comets' home-field advantage to affect them. Many of them actually preferred playing in the friendlier, more enthusiastic confines of Lake Front Stadium. Even third baseman Doris Tetzlaff, a native of Watertown, Wisconsin and the 1943 Wisconsin speed skating champion, survived the daily commute to Kenosha. As a fledgling twenty-three-year old physical education teacher in the Jefferson school system, she had a longer ride to Kenosha than to Milwaukee.

Even though the Chicks were league champions, they had



*Milwaukee native pitcher Sylvia Wronski posing in front of the wooden, hand-operated scoreboard at Borchert Field.*

not received the expected spectator support in Milwaukee. Local press coverage was minimal all season long, and Milwaukee fans never embraced the team as did their counterparts in the smaller AAGPBL cities. Exact Chicks' attendance figures cannot be determined, but the smaller cities such as Rockford (population 85,000 in 1940) and Racine (67,000) greatly outdrew Milwaukee (590,000). Without any local uproar, the Chicks were relocated for the 1945 season to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where the 175,000 residents strongly supported the team until the AAGPBL ceased operations after 1954.

A myriad of reasons, some involving bad luck and others poor management decisions, led to the team's attendance problems and subsequent departure from Milwaukee. Chief among them were the following:

Wrigley's 100% ownership of the Chicks meant that he had complete control over the franchise, just as he did with his other experimental big-city team in Minneapolis. His inflexibility in some matters (ticket prices, team name, and player nicknames) discouraged local interest in the ball club. More importantly, the absence of local ownership meant that no one in Milwaukee had a vested interest in promoting the Chicks and making them successful at the box office. In the four smaller towns, local proprietors, who co-owned their teams with Wrigley, labored diligently to stimulate attendance and make their clubs an integral component of the communities.

Borchert Field, located at Eighth and Chambers on the North Side, was much larger than other league ballparks and fans were too remote from the action. The Chicks' larger crowds of just over 4,000 looked lost, while the same gathering would have resembled packed sardines in a more intimate setting such as Racine's Horlick Field. In addition, playing on the same site as the Brewers invited unwanted comparisons. Wrigley strove to make the AAGPBL its own unique entity, but this was impossible in Milwaukee, home of the American Association Brewers. Just the changes made in the dimensions of the infield alone courted comparison, as the Chicks ran on 68-foot base paths set out inside the Brewers' 90-foot diamond. The pitching mound was only 40 feet away from home plate versus baseball's 60-foot 6-inch distance. In addition, unlike the brand of overhand hardball pitching depicted in *A League of Their Own*, the 1944 AAGPBL featured fast-pitched underhand delivery with a twelve-inch softball. Only near the end of the AAGPBL did the ball become as small as a regulation baseball. As Milwaukee second baseman Alma Ziegler later remarked, "We played glorified softball on a baseball diamond." No doubt the women played a rousing, unique brand of softball with lead-offs, stolen bases, nine fielders, and nine innings, but fans responded to Borchert Field home runs hit onto North Seventh and Eighth Streets as the Brewers did, but the Chicks could not.

The 1944 American Association's regular season saw the Brewers, under manager Casey Stengel, run away with the league championship with a 102-51 record. The Brewers led the AA with attendance of 235,840 under the colorful ownership of the P. T. Barnum of baseball, Bill Veeck. The maverick Veeck, enshrined today with his 1944 manager Stengel in the Baseball Hall of Fame, cooperated with the Chicks by subleasing Borchert Field. His Brewers, however, still retained the prime home dates

and played as many night games as possible, leaving the women with a less desirable daytime schedule. Both Milwaukee clubs did perform in several morning contests for swing-shift workers at local war production plants, a 1943 innovation of Veeck's. On opening day, the Brewers drew 13,694, while the Chicks, who had advertised more extensively in the local papers than Veeck's club, could only muster 2,300 for their entire initial four-game series. According to the Chicks' team captain Alma Ziegler, "They were here before us, and fans never got used to having both teams in Milwaukee."

The ninety-five cent grandstand ticket for admission to Chicks' games was too expensive. The few editorials that did appear in the Milwaukee papers concerning the Chicks harped on the fact that it cost as much to attend an AAGPBL game (which often took only seventy-five minutes to play and had many more errors) as it did a Brewers' game. In contrast, the Racine Belles and Kenosha Comets, playing in towns without professional minor league competition, charged only seventy-four cents for their grandstand seats. Wrigley justified the pricing policy at a 1944 league meeting:

Prices of admission cannot be reduced, because that would be an admission that what we offer is not as good as that which is offered at other times in the same ballpark. To cut the price in half would be the same as telling people in Milwaukee that the girls' games are only half as good as those offered by the Brewers.

Because of longer work weeks and World War II gas and tire rationing, fans from the other league cities—Rockford, Kenosha, Racine, and South Bend—could not travel very far for their entertainment. The AAGPBL became the prime recreation for those war-industry workers who needed a convenient local form of relaxation. Rationing restrictions also prevented their following the local teams to Milwaukee for road games. In addition, Milwaukee hosted other diversionary activities that competed with the Chicks such as Brewer games, State Fair, concerts, and frequent Borchert Field boxing and wrestling matches.

As already noted, the minimal press coverage in *The Milwaukee Journal* and *The Milwaukee Sentinel* contributed to the team's inability to generate substantial local support. The Chicks and their fans missed out on the regular, detailed newspaper accounts that other AAGPBL towns received in their dailies. The league did place frequent, eye-catching ads in the Milwaukee papers, but this was not enough to promote interest. In addition, the lack of radio broadcasts meant that the game programs sold at Borchert Field became a prime source of information on the Chicks.

Area amateur baseball also hampered local support for the Chicks. As Vivian Anderson explained, "Local women's teams in West Allis had always been a great draw!" The ballplayers on these company-sponsored clubs were well recognized in the area, while all of the Chicks except Wronski and Anderson were from out of town. Milwaukee fans apparently were not interested in offering the Chicks emotional and financial support since they had already embraced their own local women's leagues.

The league also delayed in providing the ball club a nickname. Irritated with this procrastination, *The Milwaukee*



*Journal* dubbed the team the “Schnitts.” In German, that meant “small beer” or, in other words, “little Brewers.” Finally, the name “Chicks” was selected thanks to the combination of the last name of the team manager, former major league star, Max Carey, and a popular children’s book of that era, *Mother Carey’s Chickens*. As Connie Wisniewski contended, “I was glad when they settled on Chicks. With all those names flying around, I thought Chicks was a nice name. It was a lot better than being a Schnitt.” *The Milwaukee Sentinel* and out-of-town newspapers also tagged the team the “Brewerettes” or “Brewettes” until the league finally decided upon “Chicks.” The *Journal* never dropped the “Schnitts” label.

Most Chicks had colorful nicknames which the public address announcer was not allowed to broadcast. The AAGPBL believed it was “ungentlemanly” to advertise the vivid nicknames that baseball fans have always enjoyed. In their promotional efforts, management could have taken advantage of the following:

“Gabby,” “Ma,” or “Ziggy”—for bubbly second baseman and team captain Alma Ziegler. As *Sentinel* sportswriter Stoney McGlynn once penned, “And Ma? She’s the smarty of the outfit—just a playing manager and fielding gem out there on the diamond.”

“Tiby,” “Little Pigtales,” or “Ty”—for fleet-footed left fielder Thelma Eisen, who explained that Tiby is Hebrew for Thelma. Eisen, who is Jewish, also had her hair rebraided for good luck before every contest (even for second games of doubleheaders) by beloved team chaperone Dorothy “Dottie” Hunter. “Ty” stood for Ty Cobb, for Eisen possessed great speed as did the Detroit Tiger star. The *Journal* described the Los Angeles native as “a wisp of a thing with glasses, pigtales and iron biceps” after she slugged a home run on opening day.

“The Blonde Bombshell,” “Speedy,” or “The People’s Choice”—for stylish Phoenix native Merle (sometimes called Pat) Keagle, sturdily built at 5’ 2” and 144 pounds. Connie Wisniewski remembered Keagle as a “showboat who was built like a brick house, could run like the wind, and was a team of her own.”

“Stevie”—for top pinch hitter and back-up catcher Emily Stevenson, an eighteen-year-old from Champaign, Illinois.

“Iron Woman”—for Connie Wisniewski, whose Polish-born mother argued that “only bad girls leave home.” “I gave her several options,” recalled Wisniewski. “I said it’s either the military for four years or baseball for four months.” The Chicks were delighted with the ultimate family decision, but the other teams may have preferred Wisniewski and her windmill-style wind-up to have been in military uniforms.

“Jo”—for Josephine Kabick, the “statuesque Detroit girl” who possessed such flawless posture that manager Carey often asked her to relax.

“Mickey”—for stalwart starting catcher Dorothy Maguire of Cleveland, who caught in an amazing 108 of 115 games (including 55 of the Chicks’ first 56 games) and was a member of the champion 1943 Belles. The twenty-five-year-old acquired her nickname because of her spirited style of play which resembled that of prominent major league catcher Mickey Cochrane of the Philadelphia Athletics and Detroit Tigers.

“Tommy”—for Viola Thompson, the lefty who had a pick-off move that manager Carey claimed was superior to that of any Brooklyn Dodger pitcher he had managed in the 1930s.

“Roni”—for Sylvia Wronski.

“Teeny”—for nineteen-year-old utility player Ernestine Petras of New Jersey, a mid-season addition who later developed into a star shortstop at Grand Rapids. Her nickname was derived from her first name, not her size, as “Teeny” was of rather average height and weight at 5’ 5” and 125 pounds.

“Cookie”—for Clara Cook.

“Andy”—for Milwaukeean and West Division High School graduate Vivian Anderson.

“Whitey”—for Betty Whiting, a “Handy Hannabelle” who handled shortstop, left and right field, and catcher before settling in at first base for the stretch drive.

Ill-timing also assailed the Chicks at season’s end, when their second-to-last home stand coincided with the ever-popular Wisconsin State Fair. Another stroke of bad luck was the Milwaukee polio quarantine that kept all children in the city twelve years old and under confined to their dwellings during the last home stand. Parents may have wanted to bring their children to watch the winning Chicks but could not because of the quarantine.

Given all of this adversity, the Chicks banded together to present their non-supporting city a rare championship. Manager Max Carey, a ten-time National League stolen-base leader, patiently instructed his studious athletes in the finer points of base running and bunting. As the former manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, Carey knew how to lead and was revered by his players. Vivian Anderson stated, “We admired him. He was hard but good.” Teeny Petras recalled, “Max could handle our physical errors but not mental errors.” The serious-minded fifty-four-year-old leader was nothing like the fictional manager played by Tom Hanks in the movie, *A League of Their Own*.



*Popular chaperone Dottie Hunter providing speedy left fielder Tiby Eisen with her lucky pigtails before a 1944 Chicks contest.*

"He was a perfect gentleman," according to Sylvia Wronski. "I have no clue who Hanks was supposed to be like, but it sure wasn't Carey. No manager ever, ever walked into the ladies' locker room."

Only one Chick did not see eye-to-eye with her manager, and that was rookie third baseman Judy Dusanko. Frustrated at being relegated to a back-up role behind local favorite Anderson, Dusanko commenced to writing letters on the bench during one game in June. Carey, who had never given the Canadian ballplayer even one at-bat or inning in the field, banished the shocked Dusanko from the Chicks in front of her teammates. To this day, Dusanko states, "I just wanted to play!" The league allowed her to join Minneapolis and, later, Racine for the balance of the 1944 season, where she performed in a total of 76 games. Unfortunately for the twenty-two-year-old, she was not invited back to play in 1945. Carey had by then become league president and informed Dusanko in a terse letter that her services were no longer needed in the AAGPBL.

Carey was capably assisted by the 1944 Chicks' chaperone, Dorothy Hunter. A first baseman for the 1943 Racine Belles,

this Winnipeg, Canada, native considered herself too old at age twenty-eight to play in 1944. Instead, she moved into the meaningful role of confidant and guardian to her younger charges. With eighteen-year-old players such as Betty Whiting and Emily Stevenson on the ball club, "Dottie" was the authority figure who could assuage parents' concerns over the welfare of their daughters. This first-class mentor was the one who arranged for the Chicks to live in private homes in the Borchert Field neighborhood. She also served as the team travel agent, with bus scheduling and hotel accommodations for road trips being part of her responsibilities. By blending discipline and humor, Hunter was very successful in her position, to the point where she remained the Chicks' chaperone through 1954 and has resided in Grand Rapids ever since.

Wearing the official AAGPBL chaperone uniform in 1944, Dottie Hunter did not get to model the Chicks' one-piece gray dresses with red trim and belts. Knee-length black socks and spikes were standard issue, and each Chick wore a small black cap with a large red bill and a black M inside a yellow circle. The short dresses were not conducive to sliding, so "strawber-



ries” were the norm for the frequent base stealers. As Carey exclaimed in admiration of his Chicks, “Show me a big league ballplayer who’ll slide into home plate bare kneed and bare legged!”

With fifty years of hindsight, it might appear that sexism was rampant not only in selection of the team name, “Chicks,” but also in the limited press coverage. However, sports reporters were men and the era allowed for game accounts that included discussions of players’ hair, figures, or femininity. Terms such as “curvaceous and talented gals,” “comely,” “the girls, as sweet, as young, as shapely,” and “Baseball Babes” were typical in the press, but the players did not object to the attention. As Thelma Eisen, who was the “wisp of a thing,” later explained, “We had swell write-ups. They even started calling me ‘Little Pigtailed,’ which was true. I had good legs, but I wasn’t a raving beauty.” The *Sentinel* once described Tiby’s excitement over a newly purchased dress in this fashion: “[It] only goes to prove that women are women, even on the diamond.”

The male sports writers adored Merle Keagle. The *Kenosha Evening Times*, which provided extensive coverage of the AAGPBL, characterized “The Blonde Bombshell” as having “murder in her bat and speed to spare in her strong, sturdy shanks.” More than one prospective suitor’s heart sank, however, at the sight of Keagle’s husband, Staff Sergeant Richard Keagle. Unfortunately, the Chicks’ star right fielder died prematurely of cancer in her thirties.

Philip K. Wrigley stressed femininity in a player’s appearance both on and off the field. Certainly the uniforms were unlike the slacks that were worn in the local women’s industrial leagues. In addition, charm school was a requirement so that the players would “dress, act and carry themselves as befits the feminine sex.” Vivian Anderson, who broke several toes when posture-improving books tumbled off of her head, deemed charm school a “nightmare.” Wrigley wanted no tomboys in the AAGPBL, only graceful 1944 role models. The women were willing to endure this, as they knew they were privileged to have been among the few athletes to survive the May training camp cuts.

The generous paychecks, issued directly from the league, were also tremendous incentives to tolerate stringent dress codes and curfews. In that era’s job market, a young woman between

the ages of eighteen and twenty-five could normally expect to earn ten to thirty dollars a week. Rookies in the AAGPBL would merit fifty dollars starting pay, with the stars drawing up to ninety-five dollars weekly.

That special summer of 1944 presented many unequaled experiences for the champion Chicks. The opening series at Borchert Field did not offer much hope to the few fans (2,300 for the weekend) as the club dropped the first three games to the South Bend Blue Sox before barely salvaging the finale in extra innings. Memorial Day was spent in Rockford as the Chicks split a doubleheader with the Peaches before a splendid crowd of 4,300 at Beyer Stadium.



*Star right-handed hurler Connie Wisniewski displaying her classic windmill wind-up. The “Iron Woman” finished second in the AAGPBL with 23 wins and 9 shutouts in 1944.*

The week of D-Day (June 6, 1944) was memorable in more ways than one. The game that day at Racine was canceled in respect for the Allied invasion at Normandy. After consecutive

rain-outs on June 8 and 9, the 10<sup>th</sup> brought the mournful news that catcher Mickey Maguire's husband had died in combat in Italy. After receiving the word before the contest at Kenosha, Maguire, the consummate team player who once stated, "Tape and guts keep me going," elected to play anyway without informing her teammates or the press. Seven weeks later, the Chicks' catcher received two letters from Corporal Maguire. Amazingly, he was found alive after surviving severe burns that had left him mistaken for dead. Thomas Maguire was shipped home after the season; the couple divorced several years later.

A week later, the Chicks had several prime home dates wiped out. A Friday contest on June 16 was postponed when a 100-foot section of the Borchert Field grandstand roof was blown off in a fierce thunderstorm. The still rainy conditions on Saturday forced cancellation of a potentially big doubleheader. On top of all that, the Monday night game on June 19 was shelved due to cold weather.

With all of these scheduling difficulties, Ken Sells, the Chicago Cub executive assigned by Wrigley to be AAGPBL president in 1944, recalled, "We knew as early as mid-June that [Milwaukee] was a bust. [Milwaukee] was an experiment to see if a women's team could survive playing in a big minor league park while the men were on the road. This was the sole reason for playing at Borchert Field all year." In an effort to rescue his "big-city experiment," Wrigley undertook an unparalleled baseball promotion. The chewing gum mogul hired the Milwaukee Sinfonietta to perform before many Chicks' contests in the second half of the campaign. The following promotional piece describes the situation best:

*Friends . . . come to Borchert field Sunday . . . into a world of relaxation and wholesome, healthful entertainment. It will be an afternoon such as you've never known before. Music . . . the kind of music you love . . . and an exciting sports event. It's something you must see and hear for yourself . . . a brand new kind of entertainment . . . a big afternoon of fun and excitement, combining the rich satisfying pleasure of familiar music . . . and one of the most interesting sports events you've ever seen. So come out of this world . . . Come to Borchert Field, 8<sup>th</sup> and Chambers. Bring the family . . . Sunday at 1:30.*

Even several shifts in musical style did not generate sufficient interest from Milwaukee fans, who still would not support the women in the same manner as they did the Brewers. As Sylvia Wronski later recalled, "I thought it was crazy. It was the same attendance, the same people." Wrigley would not admit defeat, but before the 1944 season was over the league began considering a new home for the 1945 Chicks. Oshkosh, Green Bay, Madison, and Grand Rapids became candidates, with the team actually playing several late-season home dates in Oshkosh and Green Bay.

A mid-season intermission gave the Chicks a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to play at Chicago's hallowed Wrigley Field. This exhibition against South Bend went in favor of

Milwaukee, 20-11, before 16,000 Windy City fans.

Another game on August 25 demonstrated how earnest the women players were about their sport. A scuffle erupted after a Blue Sox runner was tagged out on the base paths. The ensuing fracas was short-lived, although "Gabby" Ziegler, the scrappy second baseman, received a jab to the face. After the game ended, both sides rushed to second base to possibly resume the melee, but cooler heads prevailed. Tiby Eisen, in defense of her fellow Californian and roommate, was ready to continue what the press called the "rolling pin motif" as she "prudently and artfully handed her glasses to Vickie Panos just in case." As this skirmish proved, the Chicks were a close-knit, unselfish team. Max Carey and Dorothy Hunter instilled a sense of family amongst their charges. Before each game, the seventeen players, manager, and chaperone would clasp hands in a human chain and seek inspiration with an exhortation such as the following from Carey: "May this chain, with its nineteen golden links, its ideals and principles, carry us through to victory in the final tests just ahead, and also through the years that are to come." "Roni" Wronski best expressed the players' attitude when she observed, "Baseball was my only passion until I got married."

Throughout the season, Manager Carey knew when to play his ace, as when Connie Wisniewski threw a four-hit shutout before the largest Borchert Field crowd to witness a Chicks' contest. On Saturday, August 12, a free Red Cross "Thank You" night gathering of 4,409 came to display their patriotism and witnessed the performance of a splendid pitcher as part of the affair. As "Tommy" Thompson explained, "Connie was extra strong. One or two runs was enough for her. If it was a must-win game, Connie pitched it." Manager Carey loved the gritty determination of the "Chicks' husky Polish hurler," as Wisniewski was called, and relied upon her talented right arm more and more as the season progressed.

After Wisniewski's sterling championship series performance and the end of the season, the Chicks were quietly transferred to Grand Rapids. Even though members of the 1944 Chicks who were interviewed for this article (Sylvia Wronski, Vivian Anderson, Thelma Eisen, Connie Wisniewski, Viola Thompson, Judy Dusanko, Ernestine Petras, and Alma Ziegler) all delighted in playing in Milwaukee, none seriously regretted leaving for Michigan in 1945. While "Teeny" found Milwaukee to be a "wide open, very exciting" town, the "Iron Woman" recounted, "We wanted to play ball more than anything else."

And play ball they did! Fifty years later, the city of Milwaukee should be reminded of their achievement and be proud to recognize the Chicks as its first professional world championship team. This group of pioneering women athletes came to Borchert Field from all over the U. S. and Canada. Even though they toiled in relative anonymity and with plenty of adversity, they accomplished what no other Milwaukee team had ever done before. As Max Carey proclaimed in recognizing the 1944 champions of the All-American Girls Professional Ball League, "Right here in this room is the greatest girls' ball club in the world."



# Aaron with the Bears: Great from the Start

By Ted Hathaway

Hank Aaron's 1952 season with the Eau Claire Bears of the old Northern League (Class C) gave little indication of his future as an outfielder and power hitter. Although his high average and lanky physique reminded some sportswriters of Ted Williams,<sup>1</sup> he hardly matched Williams' power, managing only nine homers that season. Though capable in the field, Aaron played shortstop, not outfield, and owing to his throwing style there was concern about the strength of his arm. He was quickly recognized as an excellent player, though, with managers and fellow players predicting a standout career for him in the major leagues. Fellow Northern Leaguer Glenn Gostick described him as a very fast runner, a good hitter with average power, and a superb fielder. Despite his youth (age 18), he already exhibited some of the mannerisms later associated with him during his major league career, such as his habit of rubbing dirt on his hands with his bat tucked under his arm.<sup>2</sup> Evidence of some other "mannerisms"—playing the outfield and sending ball after ball over outfield fences—came later.

Hank Aaron began his professional career with the Indianapolis Clowns of the Negro American League. He had been playing for the local semi-pro Mobile Black Bears. The manager, Ed Scott, also did some scouting for the Clowns and soon alerted Clowns' business manager Bunny Downs to Aaron's hitting. The Clowns offered Aaron \$200 a month and signed him to a contract. Aaron joined the team in Winston-Salem before the end of his senior year of high school.<sup>3</sup>

Originally a barnstorming team called Syd Pollock's Ethiopian Clowns, the Clowns entered the Negro American League in 1943 and began operating exclusively out of Indianapolis in 1946. By the early 1950's declining attendance at Negro Leagues games led the Clowns to return to their old barnstorming ways. Their appearances in Indianapolis became fewer and farther between. Charles Preston of the *Indianapolis Recorder* wrote, "The Indianapolis Clowns have as much to do with Indianapolis as the Globetrotters have to do with Harlem."<sup>4</sup> Their fan base was flagging, partly owing to a general decline in baseball attendance, but also because of the growing number of African American players in the major leagues. Integration gradually created a talent shortage in the Negro Leagues. In light of this, it is not surprising that Aaron hit over .400 with the Clowns.<sup>5</sup>

Aaron first came to the attention of the Boston Braves in early 1952 in a postscript to a letter from Clowns' owner Syd Pollock to several major league teams: "We've got an 18-year-old shortstop batting cleanup for us."<sup>6</sup> This note was enough for the Braves to send one of their scouts, Dewey Griggs, out for a look. Griggs scouted Aaron during a doubleheader with the Monarchs, in which Aaron went seven-for-nine and turned five double plays. Impressed, the Braves offered Pollock a \$2,500 option on Aaron, with a \$10,000 fee if they decided to sign him. The Giants had also expressed interest in Aaron, offering Pollock less money up front, but more in the long run.<sup>7</sup> Pollock later claimed that as many as six teams were interested in Aaron.<sup>8</sup> Whether this was a later exaggeration or a ploy at the time calculated to drive the deal, Pollock was fortunate to have the Giants and Braves to play off each other. Pollock decided on the Braves, who agreed to sign Aaron, paying out \$2,500 upfront to Pollock, with a guarantee of another \$7,500 if the Braves kept him for thirty days.<sup>9</sup> This was a lot of money at the time for the Braves,

whose franchise was failing in Boston. But they were confident in their choice: "I'll put up the twenty-five hundred option fee myself," Dewey Griggs later was quoted as saying. "That's what I think of this kid."<sup>10</sup>

Although the number of blacks among the population of Northern League cities in 1952 was quite low, the sight of African American players on NL teams was nothing new when Aaron joined the Bears in June. The Bears had already seen some of their alumni move up the minor league ladder: Bill Bruton (who eventually was promoted to the Braves in 1953) and Horace Garner, both of whom had been named Rookie of the Year in their respective seasons in the Northern League (1950 and 1951). The 1952 Bears were already blessed with two excellent black players in John (Wes) Covington and Julie Bowers when Aaron arrived. Other fine black players in the Northern League that year included Joe Caffie and Dick Newberry, both of the Duluth Dukes. But Aaron had never played against whites before and was not looking forward to playing in Eau Claire. His greatest anxiety, however, was over his trip to Eau Claire: Aaron had never flown on a plane.

"The only reason I was glad to get to Eau Claire was to get off that plane,"<sup>11</sup> Aaron later recalled. A nervous wreck when he arrived, Aaron was relieved to have the company of Covington and Bowers and found he could make the adjustment to playing in the whites' league quickly. In his first game, he hit two singles, going two-for-four and driving in a run. Aaron later wrote, "It didn't take long to find out that the ball was still round after it left a white pitcher's hand, and it responded the same way when you hit it with a bat."<sup>12</sup> By the end of his first week, the *Eau Claire Leader* was calling Aaron "the Bears' sensational shortstop."<sup>13</sup> By early July, he led the league in batting.

Despite his successful debut, there were dark clouds over Aaron's period of Adjustment. A few days after his debut, while turning a double play, Aaron beamed the sliding Chuck Wiles, of the Superior Blues. Wiles spent several days in the hospital and never played again.<sup>14</sup> This incident and Aaron's habit of flipping the ball sidearm led observers to believe he threw too low and that he lacked throwing strength.<sup>15</sup> Aaron later admitted he did not like having runners bear down on him in the middle of double plays.<sup>16</sup>

Despite winning a spot on the '52 Northern League All-Star squad, Aaron was unimpressed with his abilities as a shortstop. "Don't let anybody try to kid you about my fielding,"<sup>17</sup> he later wrote. He was most troubled, however, by homesickness. Feeling isolated and lonely in a community of whites, Aaron was ready to head home to Mobile. With his bags packed, he called his mother to say he was coming home. His older brother Herbert, however, quickly got on the phone and talked Aaron into staying with the club. Aaron later described the conversation with his brother as "a real shot in the arm."<sup>18</sup>

The Northern League was a low minors circuit that had operated off and on since the beginning of the century, its greatest years coming after WWII. During this time, the NL nurtured some 335 players who eventually made it to the majors, including Aaron's younger brother Tommie (1958-59). Apart from Aaron, some of the league's big names included Jim Palmer, Steve Carlton, Lou Brock, Willie Stargell, Gaylord Perry, Roger Maris, Orlando Cepeda, and Joe Torre.<sup>19</sup> The league endured until 1971,<sup>20</sup> but even in 1952, as



was the case throughout the minors, declining attendance and the continued existence of the league were a regular concern. The same was true for the Bears. Clell Buzzell of the *Eau Claire Leader* wrote, "Unless there is a big climb in attendance that holds up all season, there may be no Eau Claire Bears in 1953."<sup>21</sup>

The Bears had been at or near the top of the league the previous three years but got off to a rocky start in '52, dropping their first three, then playing at or below .500 for the next several weeks. The Superior Blues were considered the favorite and, indeed, ended the season with a comfortable seven game lead. By the time Aaron arrived in mid-June, the Bears had begun to improve and moved above .500, where they remained for the rest of the season. Attendance, after being down 40% over the first several weeks, also improved, nearing the 1951 level by early July.<sup>22</sup> Aaron's superb play from the start propelled the Bears even more. A series sweep of

the Blues and a timely winning streak in mid-July brought the Bears into contention, moving to within five games of the Blues.

The Bears accounted for five of the sixteen players elected to the '52 Northern League All-Star Team. Elected by sportswriters and managers, the All-Stars played an annual game against the league-leading Blues. Aaron later observed, again denigrating his own ability as a shortstop, that earning the All-Star spot was no great honor, as the Northern League didn't have any good shortstops that year.<sup>23</sup> To make matters worse, Aaron twisted his ankle during the game after only one at-bat (a single) and missed the next few games. Adding insult to injury, the Blues downed the All-Stars, 8-6.<sup>24</sup>

By August the Bears had moved into second place but by now could not hope to catch the Blues, who were nine games in front. Disaster struck when Sioux Falls' Howard Simmons beamed Wes Covington.<sup>25</sup> It was several minutes before Covington regained



The 1952 Eau Claire Bears featured a pair of future Milwaukee Braves, 18-year-old Henry Aaron (middle row, far left) and 20-year-old Wes Covington (back row, third from right.)



consciousness, and he spent the next three weeks in the hospital. Injuries began to plague the Bears, who were little more than a patchwork by mid-August. Aaron made his own unfortunate contribution to this when his bat struck Dick Engquist in the face during pre-game warmup drills.<sup>26</sup> Utility man Johnny Goryl and outfielder Collins Morgan went down with pulled muscles. At one point, manager Bill Adair was forced to insert himself in the lineup. The Bears lost five in a row and dropped to third place. As the Bears' hopes faded, so did the fans'—attendance dropped well below 1951 levels. A last effort to gain second place in late August failed as the Bears dropped a key doubleheader against the second place Sioux Falls Canaries. The Bears finished with a 72-53 record, ten games back of first. Facing the Blues again in the playoffs, the Bears dropped 2-1 in the first series.

Aaron provided the only bright spot to this disappointing season for the Bears: Northern League sportswriters, managers, and umpires voted him top rookie of 1952. Despite the ups and downs of his team, Aaron showed remarkable consistency through the season, always near or at the top of the batting race. His late entry into the league sometimes caused questions as to his eligibility for the batting crown, but with a regular place in the lineup and a relative lack of injuries, he ended up in second place, only six points behind Joe Caffie. Aaron's consistency was presaged by his debut. Typical are the following games:

June 21 – 3 for 4, with 2 runs and 2 rbi's  
 June 30 – 3 for 5, with a homer and 3 rbi's  
 July 11 – 3 for 4, with a homer and 3 runs scored  
 July 14 – 3 for 4, with a homer and 3 rbi's  
 August 11 – 2 for 3, with an rbi and a run scored  
 August 13 – 2 for 3, with 2 runs scored

Such consistency would seem to indicate that Aaron had become relatively comfortable in his surroundings and, indeed, his recollections of his stay were generally positive. He enjoyed the company of Wes Covington—not always an easy person to get along with—and thought very highly of his manager, Bill Adair.<sup>27</sup> As for the city: "Eau Claire," Aaron later wrote, "was not a hateful place for a black person—nothing like the South—but we didn't exactly blend in."<sup>28</sup> It was not unusual for residents to stop and stare at Aaron as if he were some exotic creature. In describing his stay in the Eau Claire hospital, Wes Covington related how one of the nurses was so disturbed by Covington's blackness that she could not bring herself to look at him (although she eventually overcame these fears).<sup>29</sup>

Among teammates and against opponents, Aaron reported no incidents. Glenn Gostick described Aaron as "quiet, placid, and businesslike"—quite different from the outspoken Covington.<sup>30</sup> Gostick reported the treatment of blacks in the league as "neutral" and said he was unaware of any racial disparagement from either players or fans. On the other hand, he was also unaware of any social interaction between black and white players off-field. This suggests that while black players were tolerated by white players and the community, they were not exactly made welcome.<sup>31</sup>

Nevertheless, Aaron considered his experience with Eau Claire and the Bears "very, very important."<sup>32</sup> When the city erected a statue of him in 1994, Aaron traveled to the dedication to express his appreciation for the honor and for his treatment during the 1952 season: "There was absolutely no way I was not going to be here," he said to the crowd of 4,000. "If it had not been for my first year having the people accept me as a human being rather than as a baseball player, I think my career would have stumbled a bit."<sup>33</sup>

When Aaron was promoted to Jacksonville in the Sally League the next year, any racial tribulations experienced in the Northern League seemed trivial by comparison. "It was like going from the bathtub into a big pool, and I didn't know how to swim,"<sup>34</sup>

he recalled. Indeed, despite Jackie Robinson's breaking of the color barrier with the Dodgers in 1947, integration at the minor league level—particularly in the South—was still very much a work in progress in the early 1950's. The more tolerant, or at least not overtly racist, climate of the Northern League offered better conditions to develop these young men. Aaron certainly seems to have benefited from the experience, growing both as a man and as a player. It was a solid beginning to a great career.

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6. Bisher, Furman, "Born To Play Ball," *The Saturday Evening Post* (August 25, 1956), p. 74.
7. *I Had a Hammer*, p. 38.
8. "Born To Play Ball," p. 74.
9. *I Had a Hammer*, p. 38.
10. "Born To Play Ball," p. 74.
11. Aaron, Henry, with Furman Bisher, *Aaron* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1974, revised), p. 21.
12. *I Had a Hammer*, p. 42.
13. Bears Whip Twins, 5-3 in 10," *Eau Claire Leader* (June 22, 1952), p. 8.
14. *Aaron*, p. 25.
15. "Ex-Bears Doing Well; Appleton Needs Help," *Eau Claire Leader* (June 25, 1952), p. 13.
16. "Born To Play Ball," p. 74.
17. *Aaron*, p. 23.
18. *Aaron*, pp. 22-23.
19. Brackin, Dennis, "Northern Exposure Fruitful in Previous Incarnation," *Star Tribune* (Minneapolis), June 13, 1993, Sports 17C.
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23. *Aaron*, p. 23.
24. *Eau Claire Leader* (July 17, 1952), p. 16.
25. "Bears Win, 8-7, Sweep Series; Covington Injured; Canaries Lose Two," *Eau Claire Leader* (August 6, 1952), p. 10.
26. "Patch-Work Bears Lose to Pheasants; Engquist Injured, Goryl, Morgan Out," *Eau Claire Leader* (August 12, 1952), p. 10.
27. *Aaron*, pp. 21-22.
28. *I Had a Hammer*, pp. 40-41.
29. Interview with Gostick.
30. Miller, Scott, "Aaron Returns North—A Short Stop Again," *Sr. Paul Pioneer Press* (August 18, 1994), p. 1C.
31. Kerkhoff, Blair, "Statue Honors Aaron Where Career Began," *Kansas City Star* (August 21, 1994), p. C12.
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# Latin Ballplayers in Milwaukee

By Eduardo Valero

Three Cubans were the first Latin American players to wear a Milwaukee uniform, all in the American Association with the Brewers. The pioneer in 1935 was Gilberto Torres (El Jibarito de Regla). Pitcher, infielder, and outfielder, Torres reached the major leagues with the Washington Senators in 1940, twenty years after his father joined the same club. Gilberto led American League shortstops in putouts in 1945.

Torres was followed by catcher Salvador (Chico) Hernandez, who moved on in 1942 from Milwaukee to the Chicago Cubs, where he was the battery mate of Puerto Rican pitcher Hiram Bithorn, an 18-game winner with the Cubs.

After Hernandez, southpaw Julio (Yuyo) Acosta was the third Cuban to join Milwaukee, though he never participated in the big leagues. Acosta became a legend in Milwaukee, though, when he was purchased from Norfolk by Bill Veeck and made his first appearance by climbing out of a 15-foot birthday cake as a gift to manager Charlie Grimm. Acosta won three of his starts and helped the Brewers win the 1943 pennant.

Outfielder Luis Olmo became the fourth Latin and first of 30 Puerto Ricans who have donned a Milwaukee uniform since 1951. He was followed by his countryman Luis A. (Canena) Marquez in 1952. Both also played in the outfield of the Boston Braves. In addition to Olmo and Marquez of the minor league Brewers, the Milwaukee Braves had four Puerto Ricans: Santos Alomar Sr., Felix Mantilla, Juan (Terin) Pizarro, and Roberto Vargas.

The Brewers, in both the American and National leagues, have employed 24 Puerto Rican ballplayers: Ricky Bones, Robinson Cancel, Raul Casanova, Jaime Cocanower, Alex Diaz, Edgar (Kiki) Diaz, Angel Echevarria, Pedro Garcia, Jose Hernandez, Sixto Lezcano, Luis Lopez, Willie Lozado, Candido Maldonado, Angel Miranda, Jaime Navarro, Juan Nieves, Rafael Novoa, Edwin Nunez, Carlos Ponce, Eduardo Rodriguez, Edgardo Romero, Jaime Rosario, Dickie Thon, and Carlos Velazquez.

In addition to the three Cuban Brewers in the American Association, Miguel de la Hoz played for the Braves in 1964 and 1965. Known in Milwaukee as "Mike," de la Hoz batted .344 as a pinch-hitter in 1964, getting six straight pinch base hits at one stretch.

The Dominican Republic gave the Braves two batting stars, Felipe R. Alou and Rico Carty, plus right-handed relief pitcher Federico (Chi Chi) Olivo. The Brewers (National League) have had three players from the Dominican Republic: Valerio de los Santos, Josaias Manzanillo, and Rafael Roque.

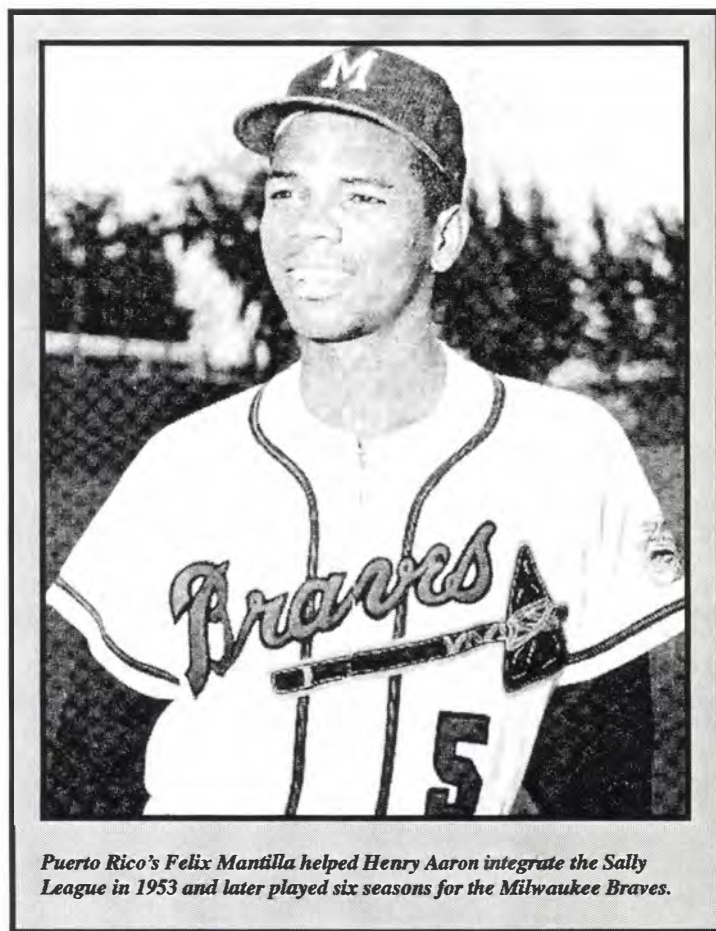
Venezuela has given the Brewers (American and National leagues) Henry Blanco, Juan Castillo, Horacio Estrada, Ramon Garcia, and Julio Machado.

Panama sent one man to the Braves—right-handed pitcher Humberto Robinson, who pitched strong relief on the 1958 pennant-winning team. Three Panamanians have played

for the Brewers: Carlos Maldonado, Roberto Pena, and Ben Oglivie. Oglivie helped lead Milwaukee to the 1982 World Series. He was a three-time all-star (1980, '82, '83) and led the A.L. in home runs in 1980 with 41. Three times Oglivie hit three home runs in one game for the Brewers.

Mexico provided the Braves with one player, former batting champ Roberto (Bobby) Avila. Two Mexican natives have played for the Brewers, Juan Acevedo and Ted Higuera. The left-handed Higuera was the Sporting News Rookie of the Year in 1985. He won 89 games in his first six years with the Brewers, including 20 in 1986, the same year he pitched three shutout innings for the American League in the All-Star Game. That year Higuera finished second in the balloting for the Cy Young Award, and he became the first Mexican-born 20-game winner, beating Fernando Valenzuela by a few days.

Several other accomplishments by Milwaukee's Latin players are worthy of mention. Sixto Lezcano was a Gold Glove outfielder in 1979. Pedro Garcia led the A.L. in doubles in 1973 with 32. Finally, Juan Nieves became the first Milwaukee (A.L.) Brewer to pitch a no-hitter, blanking the Baltimore Orioles, 7-0, on April 15, 1987.



*Puerto Rico's Felix Mantilla helped Henry Aaron integrate the Sally League in 1953 and later played six seasons for the Milwaukee Braves.*



# County Stadium: The White Sox Home Away from Home

By Rodney Johnson

The Milwaukee Braves deserted County Stadium after the 1965 season and took their act to Atlanta. The Braves were scheduled to leave after 1964 but were forced to play a lame duck season after a group led by Bud Selig sued major league baseball to keep the Braves in Milwaukee. Selig's group eventually lost their bid to keep the Braves when baseball's attorneys, headed by Bowie Kuhn, won in the courts. Milwaukee was without a big league team for the first time in 13 years.

County Stadium sat empty in 1966, but baseball would return in 1967. Perhaps inspired by football's Green Bay Packers, who traditionally played three "home games" in Milwaukee each year, the Chicago White Sox decided to experiment with an in-season exhibition at County Stadium. On July 24, 1967, the White Sox, much to the delight of Selig and his Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Inc., played the Minnesota Twins in front of 51,144 fans. The experiment was so successful that the Sox signed on to play a series of regular season home games in County Stadium in 1968. White Sox owner Arthur Allyn said the games were being transferred "to develop the Milwaukee market for our enterprises." It was the first time an American League team had scheduled a substantial number of regular-season games away from its home city. In the National League the Brooklyn Dodgers had played a total of 15 "home games" in Jersey City, New Jersey in 1956-57.

The American League agreed to allow the White Sox to play one game each against the other nine A.L. teams at County Stadium. Baltimore was the only team to vote against the transfer of games to Milwaukee. Oriole Vice-President Frank Cashen said, "It's going to give us the shabby image of one-night stands." In Milwaukee, support for the games was mixed. Some fans looked at the games as a move to pacify the city and as a deterrent to getting their sought-after National League franchise. Selig, however, saw the games as a chance to show that Milwaukee could still draw big crowds for major league baseball. In January, 1968, Selig announced that 7,000 season tickets had been sold for the nine County Stadium White Sox games.

Two games each were played in May, June, and July, with three games in August. Two of the nine games drew more than 40,000 fans and, in spite of some poor weather, only one of the contests drew fewer than 20,000. In all, the Sox drew 264,436 in their Milwaukee games, an average of 29,382. In their 72 games at Comiskey Park, Chicago drew only 538,323, with their biggest crowd topping out at 21,853.

Although the County Stadium games were a success at the gate, the team was not as fortunate on the field. The White Sox won only one of the nine contests in Milwaukee. The club's only win at County Stadium came on June 17, their third

game in Milwaukee. The Sox beat Cleveland, 2-1, on Bill Voss' two-run pinch triple in the seventh inning. Voss, a rookie, broke up a scoreless pitching duel between Jack Fisher and Steve Hargan. Fisher hung on to win but needed relief help from Bob Locker in the ninth after Cleveland scored on Sandy Alomar's error and Willie Smith's double.

The White Sox were close in several of their losses, losing by one run three times. They were shut out four times and scored only 16 runs in nine Milwaukee games. Twice they were beaten 1-0, first by Dean Chance of the Twins on June 24 in a five-inning, rain-shortened game, and then by Ray Culp of Boston on August 8. Catfish Hunter of Oakland and Earl Wilson of Detroit also shut out the Chisox.

Perhaps the most exciting contests of the 1968 Milwaukee series came against the Orioles on May 28 and the Yankees on July 11. Against the Orioles, Tommy John pitched two-hit ball for eight innings but gave up a two-run homer to Curt Motton in the third. The White Sox struck back by scoring single runs in the fourth and fifth innings to tie the game. Tom Phoebus of the Orioles allowed just four hits in his eight innings of work. Pete Richert followed Phoebus to the mound and picked up the win when Paul Blair hit the leftfield foul pole for a home run leading off the tenth inning.

More than 40,000 fans jammed County Stadium to see the White Sox play the Yankees on July 11. Perhaps visions of the 1957 and '58 World Series brought the crowd in to see the once-mighty Tanks. A decade after his October battles with the Braves, though, Mickey Mantle was in his final season and had been moved to first base, while the closest Whitey Ford got to the mound was the first base coaching box. New York was in eighth place and Chicago was in ninth, yet the fans got their money's worth. New York took a 5-1 lead, but Chicago battled back and trailed 5-3 in the ninth. Ken Berry singled and with one out was forced on Leon Wagner's grounder. Luis Aparicio doubled to left-center, scoring Wagner and putting the tying run at second base. The Yankees brought in southpaw reliever Steve Hamilton to face left-hand hitting Pete Ward. Hamilton struck out Ward on three pitches to preserve the 5-4 Yankee win. In case you're wondering, Mantle batted second and went 0-for-5. The Yankees' hitting star was Andy Kosco, who batted fourth and figured in all of New York's scoring rallies with a double and an RBI single.

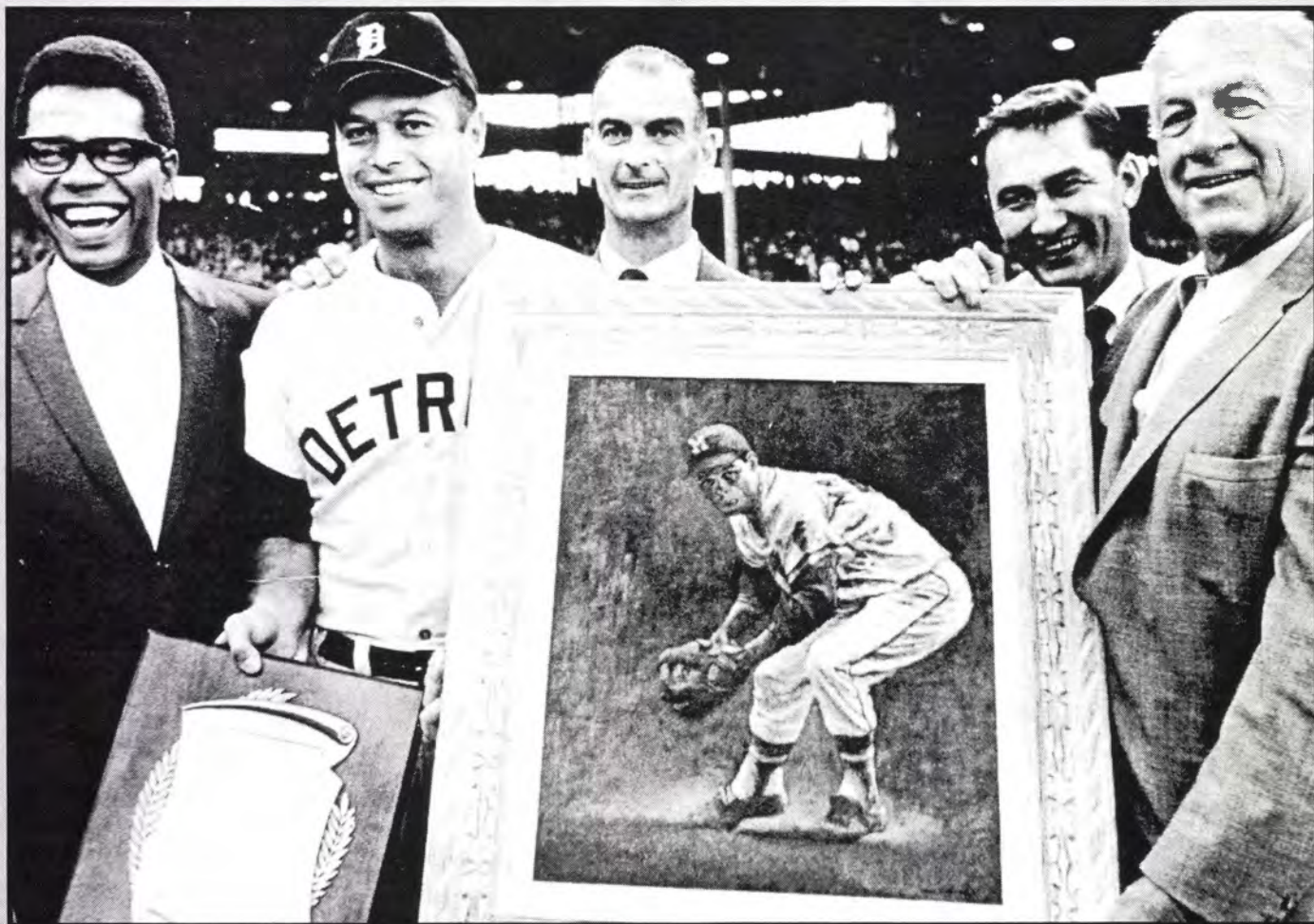
Other interesting notes about the '68 games include Reggie Jackson's 17<sup>th</sup> homer of the year for Oakland on July 22. Reggie hit 29 for the season. The blast was number 18 of Jackson's 563 career home runs. In that same game, Catfish Hunter pitched the A's to a 4-0 win. It was one of two shutouts for Hunter that season (the other was May 8 against Minnesota, 4-0), and one of 42 for his career.



On August 2 Ron Hansen and Tim Cullen switched dugouts before the start of the game between the Washington Senators and the White Sox. Hansen, who had pulled off an unassisted triple play for Washington just three days earlier against Cleveland, was swapped to the White Sox for Cullen. Hansen had been playing shortstop for the Senators, and Cullen was Chicago's second baseman. When the two players switched teams, they also switched positions. Cullen started the game for Washington at short, while Hansen started for the Sox at second. The trade returned each player to the team with which he finished the 1967 season. Both players contributed to their new

Earl Wilson pitched a six-hit shutout and drove in two runs as the Tigers stopped a four-game losing streak and increased their lead over the second-place Orioles to five-and-a-half games.

The outstanding attendance figures of 1968 for White Sox games at County Stadium spurred rumors that the club would soon move to Milwaukee. Amid these rumors, team owner Arthur Allyn assured Chicago fans that they would "never, never lose the White Sox." Still the Sox would play each A.L. team one game in Milwaukee in 1969. Because of expansion, the number of County Stadium "home games" for Chicago increased to 11.



*At the Milwaukee Chisox 1968 finale, ex-Brave hero turned Detroit Tiger Eddie Mathews was given a "night," joined by Braves teammates Mantilla, Buhl, Logan, and manager Charlie Grimm.*

team that day as Cullen went 3-for-5 and Hansen was 2-for-4. The game, won by Washington, 11-6, was also marked by Frank Howard's 31<sup>st</sup> homer of the year. Hondo would lead the A.L. with 44 that season.

The final game at Milwaukee in 1968 was against the eventual World Series champion Detroit Tigers. The game drew the biggest crowd of the season at County Stadium (42,808).

The 1969 games were far less successful at the gate than a year earlier. Even with two more games on the Milwaukee schedule, the Sox drew more than 80,000 fewer fans than in 1968. The 11 contests in 1969 drew 181,615 fans, an average of 16,510. This was nearly 13,000 fewer per game than watched the Milwaukee series the previous season. While the '68 games drew more than 30,000 four times, none of the '69 contests



could top 27,000. All but one game attracted more than 20,000 paying customers in '68, but in '69 only four of 11 games reached that mark, and twice the gate tallied under 10,000.

Although fewer people were there to watch them, the White Sox turned around their on-field performance and won seven of 11 games in County Stadium in 1969. The Sox won their first five games and six of seven before losing three of their last four to close out the season series in Milwaukee. Scoring increased from 1968, and there were

Only two shutouts in the '69 Milwaukee series. The first was on July 7 as Gary Peters blanked the A's on two hits, a bloop single by Danny Cater in the second inning and a double by Joe Rudi in the eighth. Luis Aparicio scored both White Sox runs in the game. The other shutout came on September 1 when Jim Palmer and the Orioles beat the Sox, 8-0. The win improved Palmer's record to 14-2. Boog Powell belted his 34<sup>th</sup> homer in the contest.

On May 22 the Sox beat Detroit, 7-3, as they bombed Denny McLain for all seven runs in six innings. The loss dropped McLain to a 6-4 record. McLain would go 18-5 for the rest of the season and win the Cy Young Award for the second straight season (shared this time with Baltimore's Mike Cuellar).

Although the 1969 Milwaukee contest against the Yankees drew less than half the number of fans as the '68 game, it was just as exciting as in the previous year. Interestingly, Pete Ward, who left the tying run on second in the ninth inning in 1968, was the hero for the Sox in '69. Ward smashed a three-run homer in the bottom of the fifth off Yankee Al Downing as Chicago built a 7-2 lead. Luis Aparicio had four hits for the Sox. Aparicio must have enjoyed playing in County Stadium as he compiled a .304 average (24 for 79) in the White Sox "home" games there. The Yankees battled back to cut the lead to 7-6, but Joe Pepitone popped out against Wilbur Wood to end the game. New York's starting pitcher was Bill Burbach, a native of Dickeyville, Wisconsin. In spite of pitching in front of his mother, four brothers and a sister, and family friends, Burbach didn't have it that day. He walked five batters in just two innings and did not figure in the decision.

On June 16 Billy Wynne, a 6'5" right-hander, won his first big league game as the Sox beat Seattle and Mike Marshall, 8-3. Milwaukee fans didn't know it then, but in less than a year the Seattle Pilots would become full-time tenants of County Stadium.

Harmon Killebrew belted his 19<sup>th</sup> homer on July 2 as the Twins stopped Chicago's five-game Milwaukee winning streak with a 4-2 win over Tommy John. Frank Howard of Washington became the only opposing player to hit two homers against the Sox in the Milwaukee games when he connected for his 36<sup>th</sup> of the season on August 6. In spite of Howard's blast, the Senators needed a ninth inning home run by Paul Casanova off Wilbur Wood to beat Chicago, 4-3.

The final Milwaukee "home" game for the White Sox came on September 26, 1969, against the Kansas City Royals. Fewer than 10,000 watched as the Royals spoiled Chicago's farewell to County Stadium by beating the Chisox, 5-3. Kansas

City scored three in the eighth and two in the ninth to erase a 3-0 Chicago lead.

At the winter meetings, Chicago received approval to stage 11 more games at County Stadium in 1970, but the eleventh-hour move by the Pilots to Milwaukee scuttled the plan. Nevertheless, Chicago's two-year experiment was a success for everyone involved. The 181,615 fans who attended the 11 Milwaukee games in 1969 accounted for nearly one-third of the White Sox total for their 81 dates that season. The city of Milwaukee and club president Bud Selig got what they wanted: a major league baseball team. The situation was not quite perfect, however. Milwaukee really preferred a National League team, and the N.L. wanted to put a team there. In addition, Milwaukee inherited a franchise in disarray.

The White Sox returned their complete home schedule to Chicago in 1970 after making major changes in their front office. The changes, though, didn't help, as the Sox finished the season with the worst record in the major leagues (56-106) and worst home attendance of any club (495,355). By 1972 the Sox' fortunes had turned around both on the field and at the box office as they improved their record to 87-67 and finished third at the gate in the A.L. with an attendance of 1,177,318.

Meanwhile, on April 7, 1970, the Milwaukee Brewers opened the season in front of a crowd of 37,237 in spite of the team being transferred to the city just four days before opening day. The Brewers went on to draw nearly one-million fans in their first season, a tribute to a real baseball city and its fans. In 1982 the Brewers reached the World Series, and in 1998 they rejoined the National League.

#### CHICAGO WHITE SOX HOME GAMES AT COUNTY STADIUM

DATE	OPPONENT	W-L	SCORE	WINNER	LOSER	ATT.
May 15, 1968	California	L	4-2	Brunet	Locker	23,510
May 28, 1968	Baltimore	L	3-2*	Richert	Wilhelm	18,748
June 17, 1968	Cleveland	W	2-1	Fisher	Hargan	28,081
June 24, 1968	Minnesota	L	1-0**	Chance	Priddy	25,362
July 11, 1968	New York	L	5-4	Peterson	Peters	40,575
July 22, 1968	Oakland	L	4-0	Hunter	Fisher	30,818
August 2, 1968	Washington	L	11-6	Pascual	John	20,662
August 8, 1968	Boston	L	1-0	Culp	Horlen	33,872
August 26, 1968	Detroit	L	3-0	Wilson	Carlos	42,808
April 23, 1969	California	W	7-1	Peters	Brunet	8,565
May 22, 1969	Detroit	W	7-3	Nyman	McLain	15,948
May 28, 1969	New York	W	7-6	Horlen	Downing	16,749
June 11, 1969	Cleveland	W	4-3	Osinski	Tiant	15,715
June 16, 1969	Seattle	W	8-3	Wynne	Marshall	13,133
July 2, 1969	Minnesota	L	4-2	Boswell	John	23,525
July 7, 1969	Oakland	W	2-0	Peters	Krause	26,659
August 6, 1969	Washington	L	4-3	Higgins	Wood	25,520
August 13, 1969	Boston	W	5-3	Horlen	Culp	24,708
Sept. 1, 1969	Baltimore	L	8-0	Palmer	Wynne	16,575
Sept. 26, 1969	Kansas City	L	5-3	Drabowsky	Horlen	9,587

TOTALS: Won 8, Lost 12 446,051

Average 22,303

\*Ten innings

\*\*Five innings

# The Unforgettable Milwaukee Braves

by Francis Kinlaw

Sit back, SABRites, and consider the tale  
Of the Braves in Milwaukee, featuring joy and a wail;  
Has there ever been anything like the Braves' rise and  
fall?  
Surely not in the annals of major league ball.

Thirteen short years...how the time did fly!  
The whole scenario unfolded in the blink of an eye;  
From the exciting fifties and days of glory  
To the less riveting sixties and a sadder story.

Recall, for example, remarkable fanaticism  
That developed, for some, into a catechism;  
This Midwestern city was more than ready for action  
When events to the east created a pro-movement  
faction.

For Milwaukee's initial major league toss  
Developed from Boston's inevitable loss;  
The '52 Braves had lacked fans and competitive bark,  
As the appealing Red Sox filled seats in Fenway Park.

Those Braves were only better than the Bucs from  
Steel City,  
A cellar-dwelling outfit that elicited pity;  
Though the Perinis, in November, bought out lesser  
owners,  
Braves Field seemed fated for more empty seats and  
boners.

But Lou Perini, the main boss, harbored a yen:  
To exit for Milwaukee...the question was "When?"  
Clearly his franchise was truly a wreck,  
But Perini had a problem by the name of Bill Veeck.

Veeck was anxious to move his Browns from St. Louis,  
And of beckoning sites County Stadium was the  
newest;  
But conniving Perini saw his Braves in that place,  
So Veeck settled for Baltimore, with slight loss of face.

Two days after league owners denied Veeck that move,  
Perini jumped to Milwaukee — and did the locals  
approve!  
Few mourned that 50 years without club moves had  
ended  
For Wisconsin's beer capital came so recommended.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Baseball thus inspired a great love affair,  
City and team became an identifiable pair;  
Brewtown embraced its new heroes in '53,  
And a second-place finish produced nothing but glee.

Optimism flowed in April at a welcoming parade,  
Surkont's three-hitter in the first game earned a good  
grade;  
Bruton won the home opener with a tenth-inning drive,  
His only blast of the year kept early flag dreams alive.

Adcock hit a ball 500 feet at the Polo Grounds,  
Proving again his power had unlimited bounds;  
Back home, attendance figures kept on climbing,  
As the club's cash registers were continuously chiming.

Surkont fanned eight straight Reds in late May  
By ringing up Seminick after a rain delay;  
Mathews hit the team's first grand-slam in July,  
Appropriately enough...he was the home run guy.

Spahn, in August, stopped the Phils on one hit,  
Because Jim Pendleton at shortstop was not the best fit;  
A perfect game might have happened had Logan been  
sound,  
And had he retired Ashburn on a roller by the mound.

But Pendleton, a rookie, nearly thirty years of age,  
Hit well when used, and once assumed the front page;  
Becoming a rare rookie to homer three times in a  
game,  
He amazed those in Forbes Field and gained deserved

Pitcher Jim Wilson had no success for awhile,  
And in May his name appeared on the waiver file;  
But when he no-hit the Phils in the middle of June,  
Charlie Grimm's banjo carried an upbeat tune.

"Jolly Cholly" managed the club in those years,  
And like all skippers he heard the jeers;  
He felt joy when Adcock hit four out at Ebbets Field,  
And anger when, the next day, Labine's pitch made Joe  
reel.



Two of the Milwaukee Braves' Hall of Fame players, Eddie Mathews and Warren Spahn.

fame.

Joey Jay, in late season, posted a three-hit win,  
Although, at 18, he was a boy among men;  
Mathews, no old man, stayed in a long-distance mode,  
Forty-seven round-trippers, thirty on the road!

\*\*\*\*\*

The '54 season brought a pleasing outcome,  
The Braves came in third, trailing the Giants and a  
Bum;  
Bobby Thomson's broken ankle, in a spring training  
slide,  
Gave Aaron a chance: he gave 13 pitches a ride.

While Henry wore number 5, not the famous "forty-  
four",  
His skills served notice that great things were in store;  
But in early September Hank himself was gone,  
Due to (what else?) a cracked ankle bone.

A good magazine found its way to fans' hands,  
When the first *Sports Illustrated* hit newsstands;  
The first cover in August featured Mathews and  
Westrum,  
Inside were Topps cards — but, alas, not the gum!

\*\*\*\*\*

The Dodgers dominated the '55 race,  
But the Braves were able to regain second place;  
The first big play of the season involved Chuck Tanner,  
Who broke into the majors in an unusual manner.

Pinch-hitting for Spahn against Gerry Staley,  
Tanner homered on the first pitch: you don't see that  
daily!  
Another special moment from the season is remem-  
bered fondly,  
This one involving tall Gene Conley.



The All-Star game that summer was played in Milwaukee,  
And Conley got the best of an employee of Yawkey;  
Gene fanned three big threats in the top of the 12<sup>th</sup> inning,  
Then Musial racked Frank Sullivan to put a cap on the winning.

Ray Crone won ten games (five against the Cubs),  
Some might snicker "That's like beating other teams' subs!"

George Crowe's pinch homer ruined a no-hitter by Hacker,  
A highlight of the year for the part-time first sacker.

\*\*\*\*\*

The number "3" was significant in '56,  
And not just because three crowns were proclaimed to be Mick's;  
A trio of teams pursued the National League flag,  
But in the last days Brooklyn put it in the bag.

The Braves finished one game behind, the Reds trailed by two,  
So both faced cold winters in moods of Dodger blue;  
The Braves had better pitching and were quite a bit younger,  
But the Dodgers' experience overcame the Braves' hunger.

After nine innings in May, the Braves did lack  
A hit against the Reds' Klippstein, Freeman and Black;  
Our team won in the eleventh, after a Dittmer called Jack  
Had erased the no-hitter with a key two-base whack.

Memorial Day was truly somber for the Cubs' Russ Meyer,  
Who surrendered three homers before he could tire;  
When Mathews, Aaron and Thomson homered in the first frame,  
Meyer's moniker ("The Mad Monk") became an accurate name.

In one game Danny O'Connell hit three triples,  
That feat generated the type of applause which ripples;  
But on June 17<sup>th</sup>, with the team in a slump,  
The front office decided to provide a kick to the rump.

Charlie Grimm was replaced by a coach — Fred Haney,  
And the club's outlook promptly became less rainy;  
On the day of change, Adcock victimized Roebuck,  
Joe's shot to Ebbets' roof made bleacherites duck.

Milwaukee assumed first place in the last week of June,  
Aaron would begin a 25-game hitting streak soon;  
An angry Adcock charged Ruben Gomez on the mound,  
But the sensible Giant didn't stick around.

Gomez demonstrated that he was bright  
When he declined at once to stay and fight,  
Using legs, not fists, he sought the Giants' dugout,  
Following in haste the most direct route.

The Braves still led by three games on Labor Day,  
But as time went on fortunes would sway;  
They swooned in September, Brooklyn won 15 of twenty-two,  
A couple of bad weeks...and away the pennant flew.

The heartbreak was terrible, and could have been lasting,  
Apparently the next year would bring similar casting;  
Trivia freaks pondered the club's use of bunts,  
Eleven sacrifices by Adcock? The tactic of a dunce!

\*\*\*\*\*

For years fans had imagined a baseball heaven,  
And the dreams came true in '57;  
The path wasn't easy but the ending was good,  
And this team left its mark and did all that it could.

Fifteen Braves were fanned in May by Dick Drott,  
But that was before the team and weather got hot;  
In mid-June Schoendienst was obtained in a trade,  
With his arrival a more complete team was made.

Red's most important contribution was leadership  
Which was offered subtly rather than with a whip;  
His guidance was needed when injuries occurred,  
Since it took a long time for some to be cured.

Adcock broke his leg sliding into second base,  
An act he performed with too little grace;  
Then Bruton and Mantilla collided at Forbes Field  
When one or the other neglected to yield.

Bruton was out for the year with a very bad knee,  
The speedster on crutches was tough sight to see;  
But as the hobbled Bruton coped with his pain  
The baseball world observed a Hurricane.

By hitting .403 in forty-one games,  
Bob Hazle acquired that clever nickname;  
And by winning ten straight in the month of August,  
His team left the Cards high and dry in the dust.

Frank Torre, Adcock's slick-fielding replacement,  
Scored six runs in a game, provoking amazement;  
Then, in the 11<sup>th</sup> inning on a night that was chilly,  
The pennant came courtesy of a Cardinal named Billy.

Aaron's drive can't be blamed on the hurler Muffett,  
For "The Hammer" abused nearly every pitcher he met;  
But this blast's significance and the emotions it stirred  
Brought bedlam to the city as car horns were heard.

Waiting in the World Series were the powerful Yanks,  
A franchise sometimes compared to the banks;  
Confident, consistent, a perennial force,  
Its motto could have been "Will we win? Why, of course!"

The teams captured one game each,  
Then a Milwaukee native transformed into a leech;  
Who would have expected such power from Kubek?  
Tony's third-game homers put the Braves on the deck.

Now came THE moment for a reserve named Nippy,  
Who to ump Donatelli became rather lippy;  
Insisting that a pitch had glanced off his shoe,  
Our man Jones made his point with the man in blue.

When umpire Augie reversed his decision,  
Casey Stengel greeted the change with derision;  
His frustration mounted when the home team rallied,  
Before the third out, decisive runs were tallied.

But this Series was dominated by Lew Burdette,  
Whose fingers — it was alleged — were often wet;  
Aided by three singles and a Wes Covington catch,  
Lew won the fifth game, then the whole shooting match.

In the seventh game of the Classic, Burdette again blanked  
Hitters who, among sluggers, were impressively ranked;  
When Mathews backhanded Skowron's ninth-inning smash,  
The whole region erupted in an unimaginable bash.

\*\*\*\*\*

Success brought new pressures and a hope to repeat,  
But returning to the Series would be no easy feat;  
Though forecasts by scribes were favorable in '58,  
Lengthy seasons can play havoc with any team's fate.

The Giants and Dodgers moved to the west coast,  
Leaving behind a host of Gotham ghosts;  
And as LA dropped deep into the second division,  
The Braves resumed their pennant-chasing mission.

There were more than a few individual heroics,  
Though some felt the team was stocked with stoics;  
Aaron, Mathews and Covington successively homered off Kline,  
Carl Willey won his first start with an impressive line.

When Willey was relieved in that game by McMahon,  
Don rode to the mound — other firemen walked or ran;  
Three hundred eighty feet might not seem very far,  
But he got there quicker in a scooter's sidecar.

Injuries plagued the team throughout this campaign,  
For several key players they were a definite bane;  
But without Buhl and Conley pitching was deep,  
So those who were rooting had no reason to weep.

Jay, Willey and Pizarro were steady when tapped,  
With power and average Wes Covington rapped;  
Mel Roach filled in well at the keystone sack,  
Hitting .309 'til the injured Redhead came back.

The Braves lost five times when facing Don Drysdale,  
The intimidating righty had the Braves by the tail;  
But the Braves held off Pittsburgh to repeat,  
The Yanks won, too, to set up another Series treat.

The Braves jumped to a lead of three games to one,  
And people were preparing for a long night of fun;  
But after offensive failures and defensive mistakes,  
The Series was tied and New York was getting the breaks.

When Skowron's sock in Game Seven put the Yankees ahead,  
For all intents and purposes Milwaukee was dead;  
Losing three straight, the last two games at home,  
Sent legions of fans looking for beverages with foam.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Braves started slowly in '59,  
And through August they walked a perilous line;  
But since they won fifteen of their last twenty games  
This season of struggle didn't go up in the flames.

The event of the year was Harvey Haddix' gem,  
Well-pitched games are still defined by him;  
His achievement in Milwaukee will not be forgotten  
And the fact that he lost is truly quite rotten.

Thirty-six up and thirty-six down,  
And then base-running worthy of a clown!  
But here's one fact upon which trivia addicts chew:  
Clemente and the Pirates were blanked by Lew.  
When the Braves and Dodgers wound up in a tie,



Milwaukee fans were tempted in anguish to cry;  
For had Adcock's Coliseum homer not been ruled a double,  
The Midwestern team wouldn't have been on the bubble.

The first-game surprise was not that the Braves bowed,  
But that they played before a disappointing crowd;  
Consecutive losses by a run were so hard to swallow,  
After the second loss feelings were especially hollow.

Ahead by three in the ninth with Lew heavin'  
It appeared that the playoff was about to be even;  
But LA tied the score, and Mantilla's off-balance throw  
Past Frank Torre in the 12<sup>th</sup>...what a tale of woe!

\*\*\*\*\*

Close as they came, the Braves were league champs no more,  
And soon after they lost Haney went out the door;  
He was succeeded in '60 by bold Charlie Dressen,  
Who was determined to teach every player a lesson.

Burdette no-hit the Phillies, then Spahn did the same,  
(Mauch's last place club wasn't at all tough to tame);  
Spahn also set a club mark by whiffing fifteen,  
Clearly, on that day, the lefty was keen.

Pittsburgh won the pennant, its first in ages,  
As fading Braves tolerated Dressen's rages;  
They ultimately finished in the bridesmaid's spot,  
But seven games out seemed like a lot.

\*\*\*\*\*

By '61 the club was in a state of decline,  
Since players age less gracefully than wine;  
Bruton and Logan were traded, in came Frank Bolling,  
He was okay but the Braves just weren't rolling.

A bad shoulder in the spring disabled Del Crandall,  
Without him pitchers' concentration would ramble;  
But Spahnnie and Lew operated on their own,  
They won 39 games...Who said Del was gone?

Spahn came very close to joining Vander Meer  
By hurling a no-hitter and then again coming near;  
He was denied that record by a Roach misplay in left,  
Mel's fielding on that play was certainly not deft.

Spahn won his 300<sup>th</sup> and was the league's best southpaw  
He won with style and without a noticeable flaw;  
There were other high kickers like Juan and Sandy,  
But longevity still made Spahn the most handy.

Willie Mays had a four-homer game in the Braves' home —  
One more achievement to include in his tome;  
He almost hit a fifth after breaking his bat,  
Trotting around bases, he couldn't lose his hat!

The Phillies that year were *really* weak,  
But they did break a 23-game losing streak;  
With a 7-4 loss in Milwaukee to John Buzhardt  
The Braves assumed the Good Samaritan's part.

Dressen was removed in September from the manager's post,  
His results had provided no reason to boast;  
Birdie Tebbetts took over, and he didn't tarry,  
Replacing familiar faces as necessary.

Off to the Cubs went old favorite Bob Buhl,

(He beat the Braves four times that year — how cruel!)  
New names appeared, like "Menke" and "Maye",  
Each of these talents, Birdie attempted to weigh.

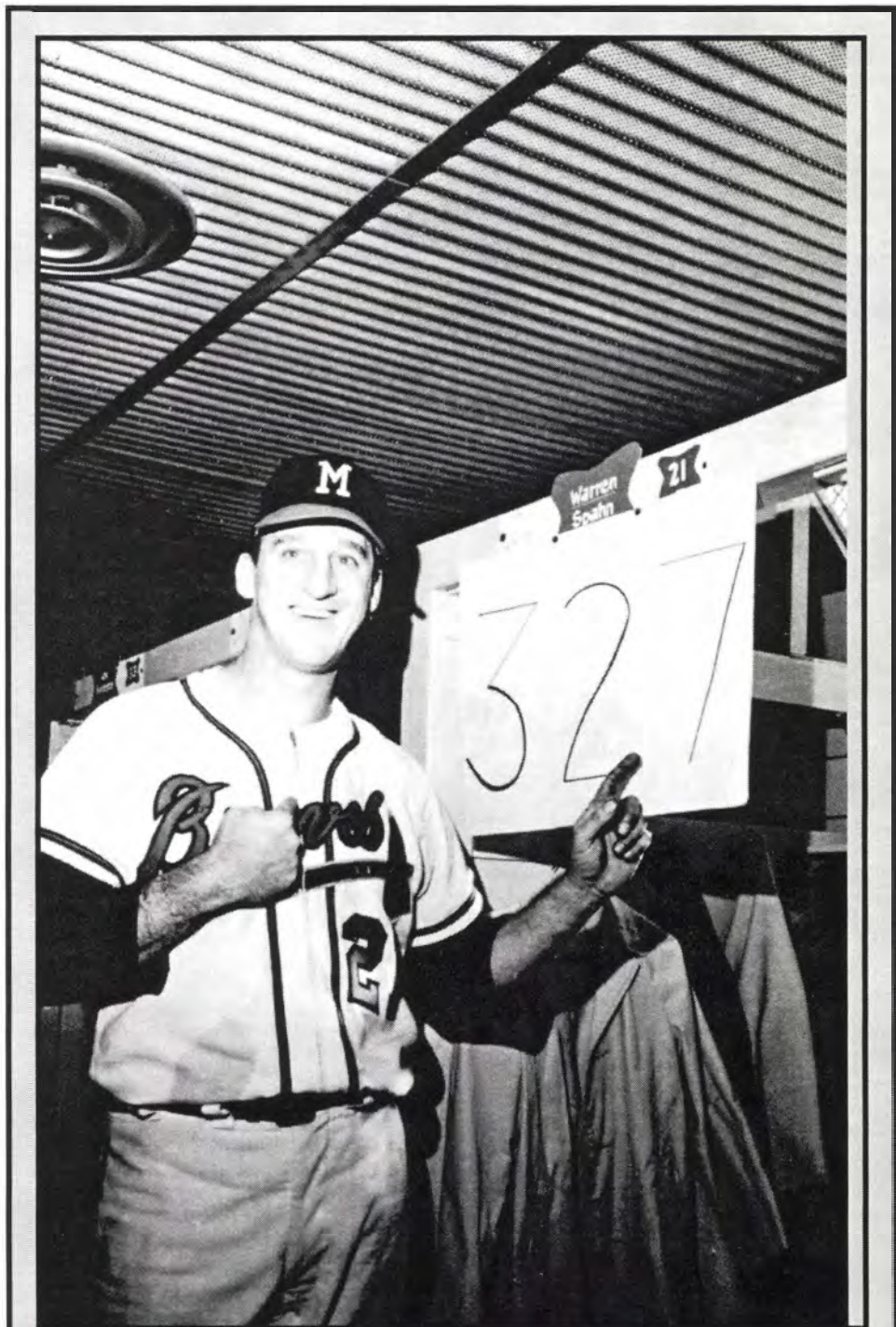
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1962 introduced the Mets and Colt .45s,  
Purists who saw them broke out in hives;  
But the established Braves, deep in a May haze,  
Lost two twin bills to the Mets in only eight days!  
Off-the-field matters now demanded attention,

And concern increased about Perini's intention;  
Suspensions were raised over his regional loyalty,  
It seemed like ages since he had been hailed like royalty.

Bringing beer into County Stadium had been banned,  
Among fans this new policy was universally panned;  
For five straight years attendance had dropped,  
Ownership's failures irritated while the team flopped.

Perini sold most of the club's precious stock



*The winningest left-hander ever, Warren Spahn seemed to reach a milestone each time he pitched.*



To Bill Bartholomay and his Midwest-based flock;  
But TV was now a factor, and Milwaukee's small  
market  
Invited other suitors to make the franchise their target.

\*\*\*\*\*

Bobby Bragan, long before, as the Pirates' skipper  
Had provoked the umps as an on-field sipper;  
In '63 he moved into the manager's seat  
Thinking, "At least the Mets will be easy to beat!"

Burdette and Adcock were traded, transition would  
continue,  
In the post-season Crandall moved to a new venue;  
Spectators observed in July an unbelievable sight:  
Burdette dueling against Spahn...that didn't seem right!

Sixth place was the worst finish since the team had  
arrived,  
But more alarming to brass, attendance figures had  
dived;  
Avid fans no longer knocked down the stadium gate,  
And the Packers were now top dog in the Badger State.

\*\*\*\*\*

The owners looked for a door in '64  
As their dispositions became increasingly sore;  
Bartholomay announced that at the end of the year  
He'd be viewing County Stadium through a rear-view  
mirror.

Bud Selig and city fathers, in a stubborn mood,  
Consulted attorneys and promptly sued;  
Charging that local buyers and a stadium lease were  
ignored,  
They struck an extremely acrimonious chord.

The Braves and the league prevailed in the courts,  
As former fans remained quite out of sorts;  
Forced to stay in Milwaukee through '65 as lame  
ducks,  
Club chieftains would surely lose a few bucks.

The '64 team climbed in the standings to fifth  
As some promising players provided a lift;  
Lee Maye and Menke, Joe Torre and Carty  
Hit the ball well and seemed refreshing and hearty.

Ty Cline led the league with 14 pinch hits,  
In late innings he gave the opposition fits;  
But a slipping Spahn must have felt simply forlorn,  
He won his last game in a Braves' uniform.

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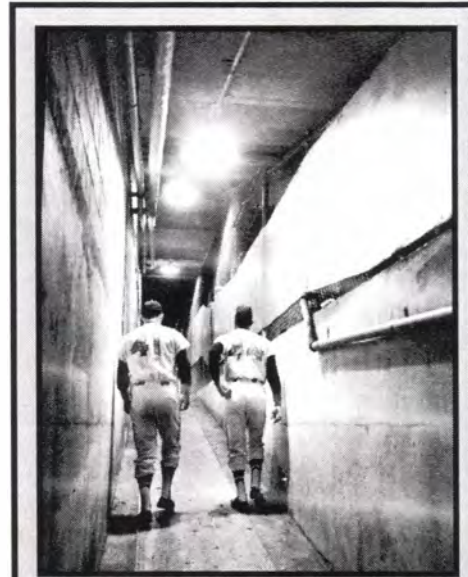
The club simply fought to survive in '65,  
Joy in that setting was hard to derive;  
Bob Sadowski was impressive on Opening Day,  
Pitching a four-hitter to hold the Pirates at bay.

Although the dreaded move to Atlanta was looming  
And business at turnstiles was certainly not booming,  
This team competed like ones fans loved to remember  
And remained in the pennant race 'til early September.

Eddie and Hank set a mark for career homers by two,  
As teammates they surpassed Babe and Columbia Lou;  
And four other guys blasted more than twenty,  
So those who liked long drives got to see plenty.

Braves' hurlers recorded back-to-back one-hitters,  
The victimized Mets were some frustrated critters!  
Tony Cloninger won twenty-four and deserved every  
cheer,  
Spahn hadn't done that in his best year!

But these highs couldn't override all of the woes,  
And eventually the last season came to a close;  
Attendance for the final home game, with hope down  
the drain,  
Matched a crowd that greeted the '53 team at its train.



*The greatest home run duo of all time walk up  
the ramp at County Stadium for the final time.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Decades later fond memories cannot be erased,  
Of moments and players who were embraced;  
Those mentioned in these verses, and so many others,  
Left a thick cloud of spirits that to this day hovers.

We may recall (but not recite) everyone's name:  
Tommie Aaron and Alou, and Wade Blasingame;  
Dick and Dave Cole, and Mike de la Hoz —  
He won a '65 game with three late-inning blows.

DeMerit, Hank Fischer, and Charlie Lau,  
How we wish we could see them all again now;  
Denny Lemaster, Chet Nichols, and Bob Shaw,  
Time has erased their every pitching flaw.

Roy McMillan, Len Gabrielson, and Del Rice,  
They provided kind thoughts that carry no price;  
Ernie Johnson, Hanebrink, and Dave Jolly,  
Their teams were the best of the fifties, by golly!

Nottebart, Murff, and Billy O'Dell,  
When called upon they each answered the bell;  
Piche and Raymond, the French-Canadian pair,  
Were called to the mound from their bullpen lair.

Taylor Phillips, Bob Rush, and Bob Trowbridge,  
They tried to keep opposing bats in the fridge;  
Gene Oliver, Spangler, and the Jones named Mack —  
Mack, more than Nippy, could make the bat crack.

Crandall was backed by Sawatski and White,  
Carl and Charlie seldom caught but at any time might;  
Bob Uecker, later among the receiving staff,  
Gained a well-earned reputation for making us laugh.

Thoughts of Sleater and Woodward and Casey Wise  
Remind us again how quickly cherished time flies;  
Chi Chi Olivo and the club's only "Catfish" —  
Metkovich, in '54, had our every good wish.

Andy Pafko was a player and later a coach,  
That role brings to mind other names we may broach:  
Ryan, Cooney, Keely, Riddle and Root  
Were known to occasionally holler and hoot.

Jo-Jo White, Fitzpatrick, and Billy Herman  
May have, now and then, compared umpires to vermin;  
How many times would George Myatt or Whit Wyatt  
Suggest a technique and urge a player to try it?

Through long seasons players had to be pesky,  
Their focus was honed by Susce and Silvestri;  
Coaches, like Bucky Walters and Dixie Walker,  
Shared one common trait: each was a talker.

So was Earl Gillespie — "Milwaukee's Pied Piper" —  
Who made our own burdens seem just a bit lighter;  
Earl corralled foul balls with his fishing net,  
As his warmth exuded from a television set.

Four men in the role of Earl's sidekick  
Were blessed with a keen ability to "click";  
Bob Kelly, Blaine Walsh, Tom Collins, and Chris  
Schenkel  
Entertained or noted an unusual wrinkle.

Merle Harmon entered the booth for the years of  
decline,  
Challenged to tout the estranged Milwaukee nine;  
He did his job well and exhibited grace  
Even while enduring an angry fan base.

These broadcasters chronicled an incredible ride  
From arrival to great heights before the dream died;  
But as time passed and deep wounds healed  
An enlightening fact was slowly revealed:

A franchise, in truth, never departs,  
Even when circumstances tug at fans' hearts;  
For in those hearts, strong feelings survive,  
And as long as they're present, the team is alive!

# Batting First for Milwaukee ... from Bruton to Belliard

by Herman Krabbenhoft  
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Somebody has to step up to the plate first – to start setting the table for the sluggers comprising the heart of the batting order. In this article two important historical questions are answered about the players who have been the leadoff batters for Milwaukee's modern major league baseball teams:

(1) Who have been the principal leadoff batters for the Milwaukee Braves (1953-1965) and the Milwaukee Brewers (1970-2000)?

(2) How have Milwaukee's first-up batters performed relative to the principal leadoff batters of the opposing teams?

In dealing with the first question, a team's principal leadoff batter is defined as the player who was the game-starting leadoff batter for the most games in a given season. With regard to ascertaining the relative performances of the principal leadoff batters, on base percentage (OBP) is utilized as the criterion.

## The Milwaukee Braves

The National League Braves moved from Boston (where they had been continuously located since the founding of the senior circuit in 1876) to Milwaukee (just) prior to the start of the 1953 campaign. With this fresh start, the Braves began their 13-year tenure in Milwaukee with a brand new leadoff batter – Billy Bruton. The rookie center fielder replaced Sam Jethroe (the 1950 NL Rookie of the Year), who had been the Braves' principal leadoff batter in the 1952 season.

Bruton would go on to be Milwaukee's principal leadoff batter for 5 seasons – 1953-1955 and 1959 and 1960. While Bruton captured the NL's stolen base titles in each of his first 3 years and led the loop in runs scored in 1960, he was never the circuit's top principal leadoff batter in terms of on base percentage. As shown in Table 1, Bruton's OBP generally ranked about 5th (out of 8) in the league.

During the 1956-1958 seasons Milwaukee utilized second basemen Danny O'Connell and Red Schoendienst. Both of them turned in OBP numbers and rankings that were similar to what Bruton had produced. Schoendienst, who joined the Braves in a mid-1957-season trade with the New York Giants (for Danny O'Connell, Bobby Thomson, and Ray Crone), led the NL in hits that year.

Following the conclusion of the 1960 season, Bruton was traded to the Detroit Tigers (for keystone Frank Bolling). During his Milwaukee Braves career, Bruton led off a total of 707 games – still the most career leadoff games for the Braves in over 9 decades (1909-2000).

Three players served as principal leadoff batters for the Braves during their final five seasons in Milwaukee – Lee Maye (1961 and 1963); Roy McMillan (1962); and Felipe Alou (1964 and 1965).

Like their predecessors, none of them came close to having the highest on base percentage among the NL's principal leadoff batters. Alou, however, did distinguish himself in one important area – in 1965, he became the first National League player to clout 20 homers in a season while batting in the leadoff slot.

In summary, 41 different players started at least one game as the Braves' game-starting batter. Following Billy Bruton (707) in terms of most career leadoff games for the Milwaukee Braves are O'Connell (166), Alou (162), Schoendienst (146), McMillan (92), and Felix Mantilla (68). As a point of reference, the players with the most game-starting leadoff batter games in the NL during the 1953-1965 period were: Richie Ashburn (1039 NL leadoff games); Jim Gilliam (1023); Maury Wills (797); Tony Taylor (755); Johnny Temple (747, plus 276 in the AL); Don Blasingame (717, plus 219 in the AL); Billy Bruton (707, plus 113 in the AL); and Bill Virdon (642).

Turning now to leadoff homers, Milwaukee Braves batters collected a total of 29 game-starting round trippers. Not surprisingly, Billy Bruton hit the most with 10. A complete list of the Braves who smacked these special homers is provided in the Appendix.

Finally, two of the Milwaukee Braves leadoff batters eventually earned enshrinement in the Baseball Hall of Fame – Schoendienst and Eddie Mathews (44 leadoff games).

## The Milwaukee Brewers

The 1969 AL expansion Seattle Pilots relocated (under the new ownership of Bud Selig) to Milwaukee before the start of the 1970 season and became the Brewers. Throughout their on-going 31-year history (1970-2000), the Milwaukee Brewers have utilized 72 different players as game-starting leadoff batters. Thirteen of these players were employed as the principal leadoff batter in one or more seasons. Table 2 chronologically lists these principal leadoff batters. Three principal leadoff batter eras are clearly discernible – 1970-1977; 1978-1991; and 1992-2000.

### *1970-1977 – Searching for prolonged stability at the top of the order*

During the first 8 years of Milwaukee Brewers history, the team utilized five different players as their principal leadoff batters. Tommy Harper was the first one. [Prior to his stint with Milwaukee, he had been the principal leadoff batter for Cincinnati (1965-1967) and Seattle (1969).] Harper had a tremendous leadoff batter season in 1970, turning in a nifty .380 on base percentage, which ranked second among the loop's principal leadoff batters. Tommy was also the Brew Crew's principal leadoff batter in 1971. His .333 OBP ranked fourth (among the AL's 12 principal leadoff batters).





*Speedster Billy Bruton was the Milwaukee Braves' first leadoff batter and the National League's best base-stealer his first three years.*

On October 11, 1971, in a multiple-player trade, Harper was dealt to Boston in exchange for George "Boomer" Scott. So, in the 1972 campaign, Milwaukee utilized Rick Auerbach as their prin-

cipal leadoff batter (67 games); Ron Theobald was the secondary leadoff batter (60 games). Then, in 1973, the Brewers turned the principal leadoff batter duties over to Tim Johnson (43 games),

**Table 1. Principal Leadoff Batters — Milwaukee Braves (1953-1965) and OBP Leaders**

Year	Braves Player	LOG/G	OBP	Rank	OBP Leader	Team	LOG/G	OBP
1953	Billy Bruton	146/151	.306	6	Jim Gilliam	BRK	145/151	.383
1954	Billy Bruton	129/142	.336	5	Richie Ashburn	PHI	76/153	.442
1955	Billy Bruton	143/149	.325	4	Richie Ashburn	PHI	134/140	.449
1956	Danny O'Connell	122/139	.344	5	Jim Gilliam	BRK	153/153	.400
1957	Red Schoendienst	73/93	.345	4	Richie Ashburn	PHI	156/156	.392
1958	Red Schoendienst	73/106	.314	7	Richie Ashburn	PHI	148/152	.441
1959	Billy Bruton	81/133	.339	5	Jim Gilliam	LA	137/145	.388
1960	Billy Bruton	133/151	.332	5	Richie Ashburn	CHI	118/151	.416
1961	Lee Maye	61/110	.340	3	Richie Ashburn	CHI	68/109	.375
1962	Roy McMillan	65/137	.338	5	Richie Ashburn	NY	92/135	.426
1963	Lee Maye	62/124	.331	8	Harvey Kuenn	SF	96/120	.361
1964	Felipe Alou	54/121	.310	9	Curt Flood	STL	148/162	.356
1965	Felipe Alou	108/143	.340	5	Joe Morgan	HOU	72/157	.375

*LOG/G gives the player's leadoff games (LOG) and total games (G). The players listed in the "OBP Leader" column are the OBP leaders among the principal leadoff batters. Boldface entries in the "OBP Leader" and "OBP" columns indicate the player led the entire league in OBP.*

who was backed up by Bob Coluccio (36 games) and several other players. Both Auerbach and Johnson had the lowest OBPs among the league's principal leadoff batters.

Don Money took over the principal leadoff batter responsibilities for the 1974 and 1975 seasons. He performed reasonably well in that role, producing on base percentages that ranked 4th and 6th, respectively, among the circuit's principal leadoff batters.

However, for the 1976 and 1977 campaigns, Brewers manager Alex Grammas opted to employ Von Joshua as the principal leadoff batter. Joshua came to Milwaukee in a June 2, 1976, cash deal with San Francisco. (Prior to Joshua's arrival, Grammas had relied upon Robin Yount as his primary leadoff batter.) Unfortunately for the Brewers, Joshua's OBPs were the lowest among the loop's principal leadoff batters. But, better days – and years – were in the offing.

*1978-1991 – Sustained order at the top of the order*

Rookie Paul Molitor became the principal leadoff batter for Milwaukee in 1978. His .303 on base percentage placed a modest 10th among the 14 principal leadoff batters in the AL. Molitor continued as Milwaukee's principal leadoff batter for the next five seasons (1979-1983). His OBPs generally placed between fourth and seventh, although in 1979, his .375 OBP ranked second. In the 1982 World Series, he established a new (and still-standing) standard for most hits by a leadoff batter in a single contest – in the third game, the Brewers' third baseman collected 5 hits in 6 at bats. (The previous mark of 4 hits had been shared by 10 players, including Hall of Famers Fred Lindstrom and Lou Brock.)

In 1984, Molitor was on the disabled list for virtually the entire campaign due to a spring training elbow injury that required surgery. In his absence, Milwaukee used a group of leadoff batters: Dion James (39 games), Rick Manning (39), Ed Romero (33), Randy Ready (21), Robin Yount (19), and a few other players.

**Table 2.** Principal Leadoff Batters — Milwaukee Brewers (1970-2000) and OBP Leaders

Year	Brewers Player	LOG/G	OBP	Rank	OBP Leader	Team	LOG/G	OBP
1970	Tommy Harper	146/154	.380	2	Don Buford	BAL	122/145	.409
1971	Tommy Harper	144/152	.333	4	Don Buford	BAL	112/122	.415
1972	Rick Auerbach	67/153	.277	12	Pat Kelly	CHI	95/119	.356
1973	Tim Johnson	43/136	.261	12	Al Bumbry	BAL	89/110	.399
1974	Don Money	111/159	.349	4	Roy White	NY	100/136	.369
1975	Don Money	83/109	.333	6	Ken Singleton	BAL	104/155	.418
1976	Von Joshua	86/107	.297	12	Steve Braun	MIN	62/122	.388
1977	Von Joshua	67/144	.289	14	Mike Hargrove	TEX	75/153	.424
1978	Paul Molitor	114/125	.303	10	Mike Hargrove	TEX	108/146	.391
1979	Paul Molitor	119/140	.375	2	Mike Hargrove	CLE	<b>70/101</b>	.438
1980	Paul Molitor	108/111	.375	6	Willie Randolph	NY	137/138	.429
1981	Paul Molitor	48/64	.341	6	Rickey Henderson	OAK	107/108	.411
1982	Paul Molitor	158/160	.368	4	Rickey Henderson	OAK	144/149	.399
1983	Paul Molitor	135/152	.336	7	Rickey Henderson	OAK	137/145	.415
1984	Dion James	39/128	.353	7	Wade Boggs	BOS	126/158	.409
1985	Paul Molitor	125/140	.358	5	Rickey Henderson	NY	141/143	.422
1986	Paul Molitor	95/105	.342	7	Kirby Puckett	MIN	128/161	.366
1987	Paul Molitor	105/118	.438	1	Paul Molitor	MIL	105/118	.438
1988	Paul Molitor	153/154	.386	3	Wade Boggs	BOS	91/155	.480
1989	Paul Molitor	119/155	.384	3	Wade Boggs	BOS	123/156	.434
1990	Paul Molitor	91/103	.344	8	Rickey Henderson	OAK	132/136	.441
1991	Paul Molitor	155/158	.400	4	Wade Boggs	BOS	108/144	.425
1992	Pat Listach	108/149	.353	10	Rickey Henderson	OAK	110/117	.429
1993	Darryl Hamilton	72/135	.365	5	Tony Phillips	DET	147/151	.446
1994	Jody Reed	55/108	.362	7	Kenny Lofton	CLE	111/112	.417
1995	Pat Listach	44/101	.276	14	Chuck Knoblauch	MIN	134/136	.424
1996	Fernando Vina	68/140	.342	11	Chuck Knoblauch	MIN	151/153	.448
1997	Fernando Vina	76/79	.312	14	Brady Anderson	BAL	137/151	.393
1998	Fernando Vina	158/159	.386	3	Craig Biggio	HOU	154/160	.403
1999	Mark Loretta	73/153	.354	10	Rickey Henderson	NY	114/121	.423
2000	Ron Belliard	92/152	.354	6	Luis Castillo	FLA	135/136	.418

*LOG/G gives the player's leadoff games (LOG) and total games (G). The players listed in the "OBP Leader" column are the OBP leaders among the principal leadoff batters. Boldface entries in the "OBP Leader" and "OBP" columns indicate the player led the entire league in OBP.*



Molitor came back the next year and held the principal leadoff batter role for seven consecutive seasons (1985-1991). It was during this period that Paul was sometimes referred to as "The Igniter." That label was entirely appropriate as he was generally near the top of the list in terms of on base percentage among the AL's principal leadoff batters. His OBPs placed third twice and fourth once. And in 1987 (when he crafted a 39-consecutive games hitting streak – the 7th longest in ML history), his .438 OBP was the top mark among the AL's 14 principal leadoff batters.

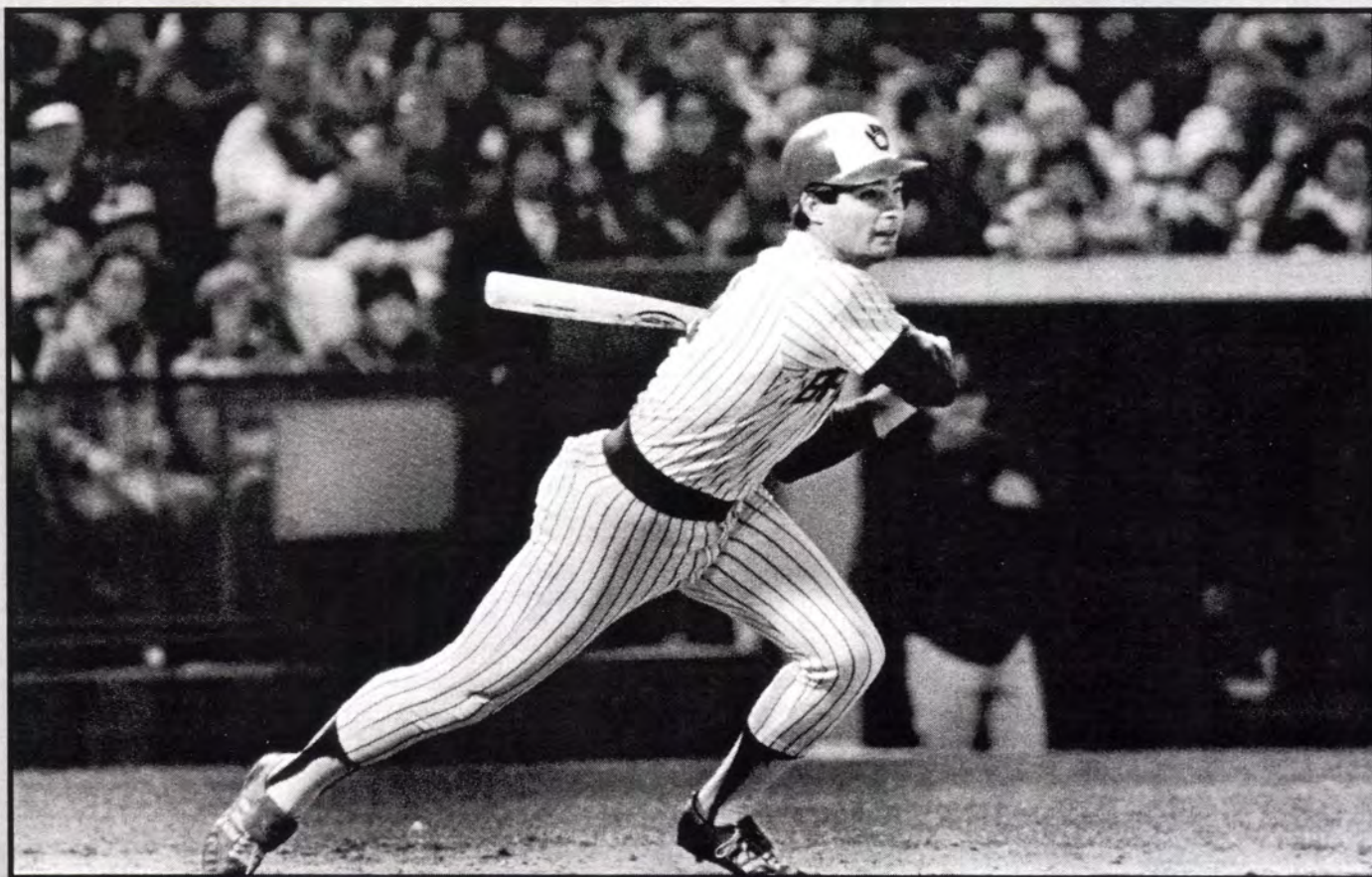
In 1991 (which turned out to be his final season as a principal leadoff batter), Paul Molitor achieved two significant leadoff batter feats. First, he became only the 17th first-up batter to knock in at least 75 runs from the number-one slot in the batting order. (Milwaukee native Harvey Kuenn held the top mark at the time – 85 leadoff batter RBIs for the 1956 Detroit Tigers.) Then, in his final plate appearance of the season, he was walked (intentionally) and eventually scored his 133rd run of the year (his 132nd as a leadoff batter). That gave him 190 leadoff runs produced (132 leadoff runs + 75 leadoff RBIs – 17 leadoff game homers = 190 leadoff runs produced), the fifth highest total in major league history. (Augie Galan held the top mark at the time – 200 leadoff runs produced for the 1935 Chicago Cubs.) Moreover, Molitor became only the second player to reach the 180 leadoff runs produced plateau twice, having first surpassed that level in 1982 with

187 leadoff runs produced. (Hall of Famer Earle Combs was the first to achieve that feat – 184 for the 1927 Yankees and 197 for the 1930 Bronx Bombers.)

#### *1992-2000 – Change at the top; a great start, but ...*

In 1992, a rookie was entrusted by the Brewers with the duties of the principal leadoff batter – Pat Listach. The first-year player did a commendable job, assembling a .352 on base percentage and receiving the American League Rookie of the Year Award.

Paul Molitor was employed as a leadoff batter in only 35 games in 1992, which turned out to be his last season with the Brewers. He signed as a free agent with the Toronto Blue Jays, with whom he played from 1993 through 1995. In his 15-year career with Milwaukee, Paul was a leadoff batter in 1,569 games, a total which at the time ranked fifth in ML history for most career leadoff games. [At that time, the players with more leadoff games were Pete Rose (2297), Lou Brock (1893), Rickey Henderson (1801), and Eddie Yost (1729).] Furthermore, among the 40 players who have amassed at least 1000 career leadoff games during the 1909-2000 period, Paul Molitor's .369 lifetime on base percentage ranks 13th, i.e. in the top one-third. It should also be added that Molitor led the entire American League in runs scored three times (in 1982, 1987, and 1991) and hits (1991), doubles (1987), and triples (1991) once each. So, all in all, Molly was a top-notch top-of-the-order batter.



*Paul Molitor, "The Igniter," earned his nickname by sparking rallies for the Brewers*

Since Molitor left the Brewers, their principal leadoff batter situation has been mixed. In 1993, Pat Listach's performance faltered substantially and Darryl Hamilton emerged as Milwaukee's principal leadoff batter. He produced a respectable .368 OBP, which placed 5th in the junior circuit among his first-up batter colleagues.

Jody Reed finished up the strike-shortened 1994 campaign with the most leadoff games (55) for the Brewers; his .362 OBP ranked 7th. Then, with only 44 leadoff games, Pat Listach headed a group of several players (including Fernando Vina, Darryl Hamilton, and Jeff Cirillo) who were selected by Milwaukee skipper Phil Garner to occupy the top slot in the batting lineup for the 1995 season. However, his .276 on base percentage was the lowest in the league.

Beginning in 1996, Fernando Vina was Milwaukee's principal leadoff batter for three straight seasons. While his OBPs in the first two years were unimpressive, his .386 OBP in 1998 placed third in the NL. But then, early in the 1999 season, he suffered a knee injury that sidelined him for virtually the remainder of the season. The principal leadoff batter responsibility was passed on

to Mark Loretta, who turned in a 10th place .354 on base percentage. (Subsequently, on December 20, 1999, Vina was traded to the St. Louis Cardinals.)

Most recently, for the 2000 diamond campaign, Ron Belliard was the choice of new field manager Davey Lopes to be the Brewers principal leadoff batter. He fashioned a .354 OBP which ranked 6th among the NL's principal leadoff batters.

In summary, during the first thirty-one years of Milwaukee Brewers history, only one of their principal leadoff batters has assembled the highest on base percentage among his peers – Paul Molitor in 1987. Molly also produced one second place and two third place finishes. Other noteworthy showings were the second place by Tommy Harper in 1970 and the third place by Fernando Vina in 1998.

In terms of most career leadoff batter games for the Brewers, the players with more than 100 (i.e., the top-eleven) are: [1] Paul Molitor (1569); [2] Fernando Vina (375); [3] Tommy Harper (290); [4] Robin Yount (266); [5] Pat Listach (264); [6] Don Money (222);

### Appendix *Game-Starting Home Runs by Milwaukee's Leadoff Batters*

Milwaukee's leadoff batters have connected for a total of 114 game starting circuit clouts. The Braves accounted for 29, with Billy Bruton having collected the most, 10. The Brewers have slugged 85 so far, with Paul Molitor having smashed the most, 33. The accompanying table lists 1 all the Milwaukee players who have hit leadoff homers, the number of career leadoff games played for Milwaukee, and the number of career leadoff homers hit for Milwaukee. With respect to most leadoff homers in a season, the Braves' Felipe Alou connected for 5 in 1965, while the Brewers' Tommy Harper and Paul Molitor each collected 6 in 1970 and 1991, respectively.

Milwaukee Braves (1953-1965)					
<u>Player</u>	<u>LOG</u>	<u>LOHR</u>	<u>Player</u>	<u>LOG</u>	<u>LOHR</u>
Billy Bruton	707	10	Fernando Vina	375	5
Felipe Alou	162	5	Von Joshua	153	4
Rico Carty	39	3	Marquis Grissom	89	3
Denis Menke	48	3	Gerald Williams	35	2
Red Schoendienst	146	2	Dave May	44	2
John DeMerit	2	1	Ron Belliard	92	2
Eddie Mathews	44	1	Mike Felder	131	2
Mack Jones	50	1	Jim Gantner	133	2
Felix Mantilla	68	1	Darryl Hamilton	58	2
Roy McMillan	92	1	Robin Yount	266	2
Lee Maye	149	1	Ken Berry	8	1
			Joe Lahoud	15	1
			Juan Castillo	17	1
Milwaukee Brewers (1970-2000)					
<u>Player</u>	<u>LOG</u>	<u>LOHR</u>	<u>Player</u>	<u>LOG</u>	<u>LOHR</u>
Paul Molitor	1569	33	Jeff Cirillo	39	1
Don Money	222	10	Randy Ready	41	1
Tommy Harper	290	8	Bob Coluccio	59	1
			Ron Theobald	68	1
			Pat Listach	264	1

### Information Sources

The information presented in this article was culled from the author's research, some of which has been published in *Baseball Quarterly Reviews* and elsewhere. A comprehensive list of references is available from the author for a SASE – P.O. Box 9343, Schenectady, NY 12309. The on base percentages given in Tables 1 and 2 are from *Total Baseball IV* (through the 1994 season) and the *STATS Major League Baseball Handbooks* (the 1995-2000 seasons). Information on most hits in a game by leadoff batters in the World Series was obtained from *The World Series* (from 1903 through 1985) and *The Sporting News Baseball Guides* (for 1986-2000). The table in the Appendix was prepared from information given in *The Home Run Encyclopedia* and verified/corrected by comparison to the SABR Home Run Log.

### Acknowledgments

It is a pleasure to thank Tony Nistler of STATS for providing an advance copy of the "Who Gets the Slidin' Billy Trophy" table for the 2001 edition of *STATS Baseball Scoreboard*, which greatly facilitated the presentation of the 2000 principal leadoff batter discussion. It is also a pleasure to thank fellow SABR member David Vincent for verification of the leadoff home run information presented in the Appendix. Finally, thanks are gratefully extended to Dave Smith of Retrosheet for providing play-by-play information for some of Milwaukee's leadoff batter games.



# A Scotsman in Wisconsin

by Crawford Bunney

In the summer of 1998 I came to America for the first time. Growing up in Britain constantly touched by the influence of American culture, it had been a long held ambition of mine to experience this exciting country first hand.

I knew little about the game of baseball and had no real desire to encounter it. I'd always assumed that baseball was a similar sport to the English non-event that is cricket, which I find mind numbingly tedious. I was to spend that summer working in Wisconsin on a summer camp for disadvantaged inner city children from Milwaukee. The camp was located in Almond County, not far from Waupaca, situated in a region of long, straight, quiet roads and a multitude of small lakes.

My preferred American sport was football and I'd hoped that I would be able to visit Lambeau Field, home of the world famous Green Bay Packers. A visit to a baseball game was not at the top of my things to do and see in the USA list.

It was more by chance than that I ended up in the bleachers at County Stadium on Friday 31st July to see the Milwaukee Brewers play host to the Arizona Diamondbacks. That night I discovered that your National Pastime certainly does not bear any resemblance to cricket!

I have many special memories of that long, hot summer: the incredible friendliness and hospitality of the local people, the joy on the faces of the children at camp as they left the city behind, beautiful sunsets at the nearby lake, nights drinking ice cold beer with friends and colleagues in the bars of Waupaca and Stevens Point following tiring and humid days and of course previously unseen episodes of Seinfeld! However, the 31st of July 1998 will remain a clear highlight in my memory as the night I was introduced to a new passion - the game of baseball.

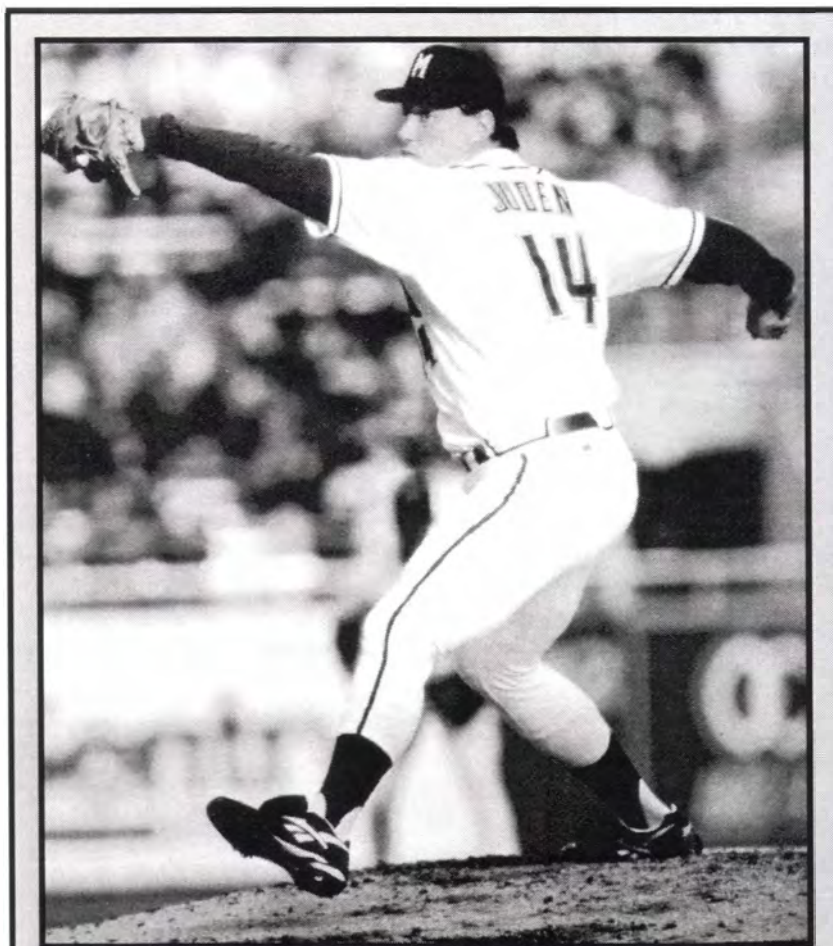
I was extremely fortunate to have chosen to journey to the USA that year as baseball was obviously very much in the spotlight due to the McGwire and Sosa home run race, which was gripping the American public's attention. I too became caught up in this excitement and my new found interest in the game intensified as July, August and September rapidly passed

by. It was with mixed feelings that my time in Wisconsin came to an end. The area had been my home for a brief but unforgettable spell and I had grown very fond of the place and its people. However I had been apart from my wife for over three months and I thought I better return home before she forgot who I was!

Since that summer I have returned on three occasions to this vast and amazing country, in the process attending baseball games in a number of states. These trips have produced so many outstanding baseball memories: Pedro Martinez striking out sixteen Braves at Fenway Park; The intense rivalry of a Mets versus Yankees confrontation at Yankee Stadium. Witnessing Sammy Sosa hit a homer in front of his devoted fans at Wrigley Field. Sitting in a packed

Coors Field watching hit after hit as the sun was going down behind the Rocky Mountains.

I have traveled to most major cities in the United States and taken in a plethora of sights, sounds and experiences. Ultimately though, there is a corner of my consciousness that will forever belong to the hospitable state of Wisconsin. I eagerly anticipate the day when I can bring my family there for a vacation and amongst other things see the Brewers play in their new abode at Miller Park.



*Jeff Juden stood six-foot eight but failed to come up big for the Brewers. He was traded to the Angels one week after the author saw him pitch.*



# Into the 1982 World Series

By Gregg Hoffmann  
(excerpted from his book, *Down in the Valley*)  
© 2000

No season in Brewers' history provided more memorable moments to the history of County Stadium than the 1982 season. But, it did not start well. Under Buck Rodgers the Brewers struggled to a 23-24 record in the early part of the season.

Expectations were much higher. Finally, on June 2, [President Bud] Selig and [G.M. Harry] Dalton made the difficult decision. Rodgers was fired, and longtime hitting coach and minor league instructor Harvey Kuenn was named manager.

The change brought instantaneous results. Robin Yount, Jim Gantner, Gorman Thomas and many of the Brewers had been mentored by Kuenn on their way up. They loved the man, and showed it by turning their play up a notch.

Homers started rocketing out of County Stadium and other ballparks around the league. For the first time since Bambi's Bombers, the Brewers earned a nickname—Harvey's Wallbangers. During a 15-game stretch, starting on June 18, the Wallbangers hit 35 home runs, a major league record at the time. Many records came at County Stadium.

On July 3, with a Bat Day crowd of 55,716 watching, the Brewers hit four homers. Paul Molitor led off with a homer. Cecil Cooper also hit one in the first and added another in the ninth. Between Cooper's shots was a three-run homer by Yount. Milwaukee fans, in love with the home run since the days of Aaron, Mathews, and Adcock, had a slugging team to watch in County Stadium.

Yount led the way, with a .331 batting average, 210 hits, 29 homers and 114 RBI. By mid-season, chants of "MVP, MVP" rang out at County Stadium each time Rockin' Robin came to the plate.

"He's the best all around shortstop I've ever seen play," Kuenn said. "He's leading us with his play on the field."

On July 18, the Brewers completed a five-game sweep of the White Sox to move into sole possession of first place. On August 1, they took over first place for good. Big crowds jammed County Stadium to root on the team. Milwaukee fans were starved for a pennant winner in a normal season.

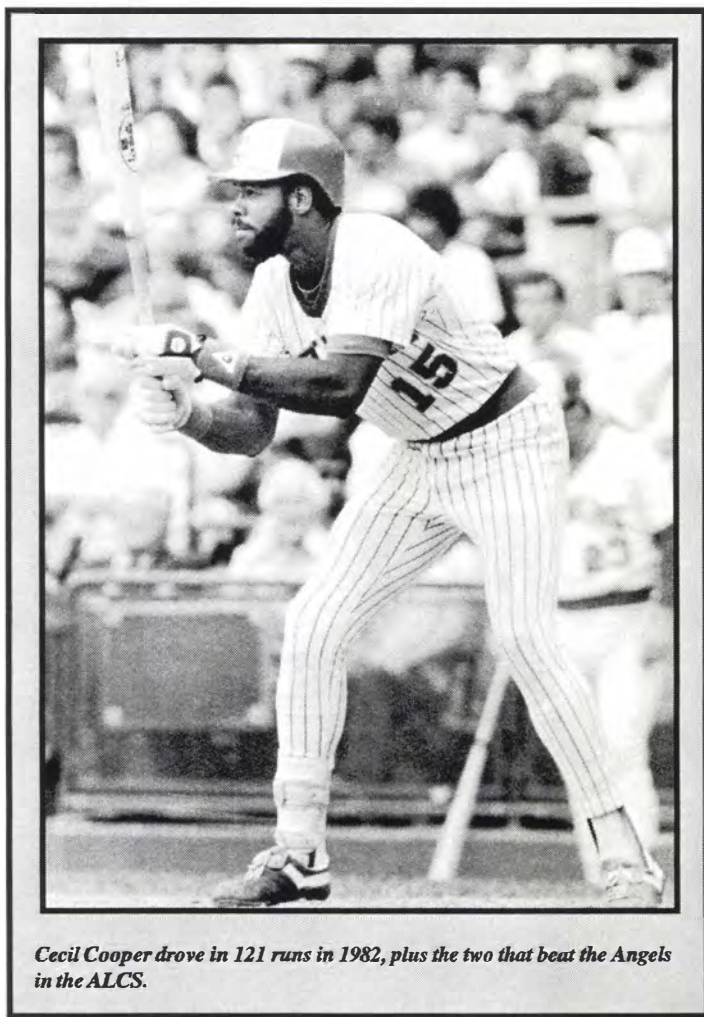
In August, an opposing player gave these fans a bonus moment at County Stadium. On August 27, Rickey Henderson, then of the Oakland A's, stole his 119<sup>th</sup> base of the season, to pass Lou Brock's record for the most steals in a single season. Second base was given to Henderson. The fans, always appreciative of good baseball, gave him a standing ovation.

But, overall, County Stadium became a tough place for opponents to play. It became even tougher after August 30, when the Brewers acquired veteran pitcher Don Sutton. Dalton, seeing the need for an experienced pitcher down the stretch, picked up Sutton for outfielder Kevin Bass and pitchers Frank DiPino and Mike Maddux.

Sutton made his Milwaukee debut on September 2 and dropped a 4-2 decision to the Cleveland Indians, but he would win his next five games. September 2 would go down as a bad

day, however, as Rollie Fingers injured his elbow and didn't pitch again. His absence would be felt in the playoffs and World Series.

Sutton joined a staff anchored by Pete Vuckovich, who would win the Cy Young Award, and Mike Caldwell. On September 20, Vuckovich won his eighth straight for the second time in the season, with a 4-3 win over the Boston Red Sox in 11 innings. Two nights later, Caldwell won his seventh straight with a 3-1 win over the Bosox.



*Cecil Cooper drove in 121 runs in 1982, plus the two that beat the Angels in the ALCS.*

The Brewers concluded their home schedule on September 26 with a 48-34 record at County Stadium and a club record attendance of 1,978,896.

They would need some final game heroics at Baltimore to clinch the pennant, but County Stadium would be the host to post-season play for the second straight season. The playoffs started in Anaheim, and the Brewers dropped two games to the Angels. They would return home with their backs against the



wall, for three games that still stand as the most memorable Brewers games in stadium history.

Sutton had been acquired specifically for the stretch run and post-season play. He had demonstrated his value with five straight wins, including one in the contest that clinched the pennant at Baltimore. He would again prove his worth on October 8, in the first playoff game at County Stadium.

The righthander beat the Angels, 5-3, before a crowd of 50,135. Molitor hit a two-run home run to provide the margin of victory. The Brewers had their first playoff win and would not be swept.

"It's fun to play when it's on the line," Sutton said. "It was on the line, and I was going to go out and enjoy myself."

It was still on the line in the next game, and once again the Brewers came through. Before a crowd of 51,003, reserve outfielder Mark Brouhard, filling in for Ben Oglivie, who had injured himself crashing into a wall, collected a single, double, and home run and scored four runs in a 9-5 win over the Angels. Brouhard's two-run homer, in the bottom of the eighth, wrapped it up.

"It was pretty hard to top that in my career," Brouhard said. "That was the highlight of my career."

Brouhard's heroics set up a showdown on October 10. The Brewers fell behind, 3-2, but Charlie Moore, who also would be a hero in the field with a diving catch and great throw to chop down Reggie Jackson, blooped a single to right in the bottom of the seventh.

California's shortstop Tim Foli, second baseman Bobby Grich, and first baseman Rod Carew all converged on Moore's blooper. Grich claimed he caught it with a diving effort. Umpires Al Clark and Larry Barnett signaled Moore out, but the boos turned to thunderous cheers when their ruling was overturned.

Jim Gantner followed with a single, and Yount walked to load the bases. Cecil Cooper, who was only 2 for 19 in the playoffs and had stranded two runners in the fifth inning, came to the plate. [With two out, Cooper lined a clutch base hit to left field that scored Moore and Gantner to put the Brewers ahead, 4-3.]

The Brewers still had to hold the Angels for two innings, and without Fingers that would not be easy. Lefty Bob McClure pitched the eighth inning and got out of it thanks to a leaping

catch against the centerfield wall by Marshall Edwards on a Don Baylor drive.

Pete Ladd, who had been subbing for Fingers, then came out for the ninth. It would be Ladd's day-in-the-sun and his immortalization among those who have provided memorable moments at County Stadium.

Ladd quickly got two outs and then had to face Carew, one of the great hitters at the time, and perhaps of all time.

"I can remember thinking that we were an out from the World Series and Rod Carew was up," Bud Selig later recalled. "Why couldn't it have been somebody else?"

Ladd worked Carew outside, and in his typical style the great hitter went to the opposite field, just like Cooper had done a couple innings earlier. But, Carew sent a one-hopper to Yount at shortstop, who launched a throw to Cooper at first.

What followed might be the most memorable moment in Brewers history at the stadium. As Carew was retired, the fans seemed to freeze for a moment. Then, they exploded, tumbling onto the field to mob the Brewers.

"I still remember that play vividly," Yount later recalled. "It was so loud, you couldn't hear anything. You could usually hear the bat hit the ball. You can hear things going on during the game, but not this time. All you did was react to the sights. I remember catching it and when I threw it, it seemed like it took five minutes for the ball to get over there. I could see it going through the air, and I wasn't sure if it ever was going to get to the first baseman."

It did, and the celebration started. Down in the bowels of

the stadium, reporters and family and friends crammed the Brewers' clubhouse. Champagne flew through the air like rain. Gorman Thomas tossed mustard packets, and just about everything else around the room. Despite the party inside, the roar of the crowd could still clearly be heard outside.

The party spilled out of the stadium and turned into a spontaneous parade down Wisconsin Avenue. It lasted hours, as Milwaukee fans celebrated their first pennant since 1958. Meanwhile, County Stadium already was being decked out in its best attire, for the World Series.



# Birthdates of Wisconsin Players

Name	BirthDate	City			
Fritz Ackley	04/10/1937	Hayward	Trevor Enders	12/22/1974	Milwaukee
Doug Adams	01/27/1943	Blue River	Russ Ennis	03/10/1897	Superior
Doc Adkins	08/05/1872	Troy	Jack Enzenroth	11/04/1885	Mineral Point
Bob Allen	10/13/1894	Muscoda	Anton Falch	12/04/1860	Milwaukee
Morrie Arnovich	11/16/1910	Superior	Fast		Milwaukee
Jerry Augustine	07/24/1952	Kewaunee	Happy Felsch	08/22/1891	Milwaukee
Ed Barney	01/23/1890	Amery	Bill Fischer	10/11/1930	Wausau
Ed Barry	10/02/1882	Madison	Paul Fitzke	07/30/1900	La Crosse
Les Bartholomew	04/04/1903	Madison	Ken Frailing	01/19/1948	Madison
Russ Bauers	05/10/1914	Townsend			
John Baxter	07/27/1876	Chippewa Falls			
Ginger Beaumont	07/23/1876	Rochester			
Rudy Bell	01/01/1881	Wausau			
Henry Benn	01/25/1890	Viola			
Ray Berres	08/31/1907	Kenosha			
Bob Blewett	06/28/1877	Fond du Lac			
Bruno Block	03/13/1885	Wisconsin Rapids			
Dick Bosman	02/17/1944	Kenosha			
Bob Botz	04/28/1935	Milwaukee			
Gene Brabender	08/16/1941	Madison			
John Braun	12/26/1939	Madison			
Sam Brenegan	09/01/1890	Galesville			
Mandy Brooks	08/18/1897	Milwaukee			
Cal Broughton	12/28/1860	Magnolia			
J.T. Bruett	10/08/1967	Milwaukee			
Ed Bruyette	08/31/1874	Manawa			
Art Bues	03/03/1888	Milwaukee			
Cy Buker	02/05/1919	Greenwood			
Bill Burbach	08/22/1947	Dickeyville			
Ray Callahan	08/29/1891	Ashland			
Fred Carisch	11/14/1881	Fountain City			
Charlie Chech	04/27/1878	Madison			
Bruce Christensen	02/22/1948	Madison			
Ted Cieslak	11/22/1916	Milwaukee			
Otie Clark	05/22/1918	Boscobel			
Willis Cole	01/06/1882	Milton Junction			
Lave Cross	05/12/1866	Milwaukee			
Jerry Dahlke	06/08/1930	Marathon			
George Davies	02/22/1868	Portage			
Jim Delsing	11/13/1925	Rudolph			
John DeMerit	01/08/1936	West Bend			
Biddy Dolan	07/09/1881	Onalaska			
Charlie Dougherty	02/07/1862	Darlington			
Ryne Duren	02/22/1929	Cazenovia			
Al Eckert	05/17/1906	Milwaukee			
Darrell Einertson	09/04/1972	Rhineland			
Claud Elliott	11/17/1876	Pardeeville			



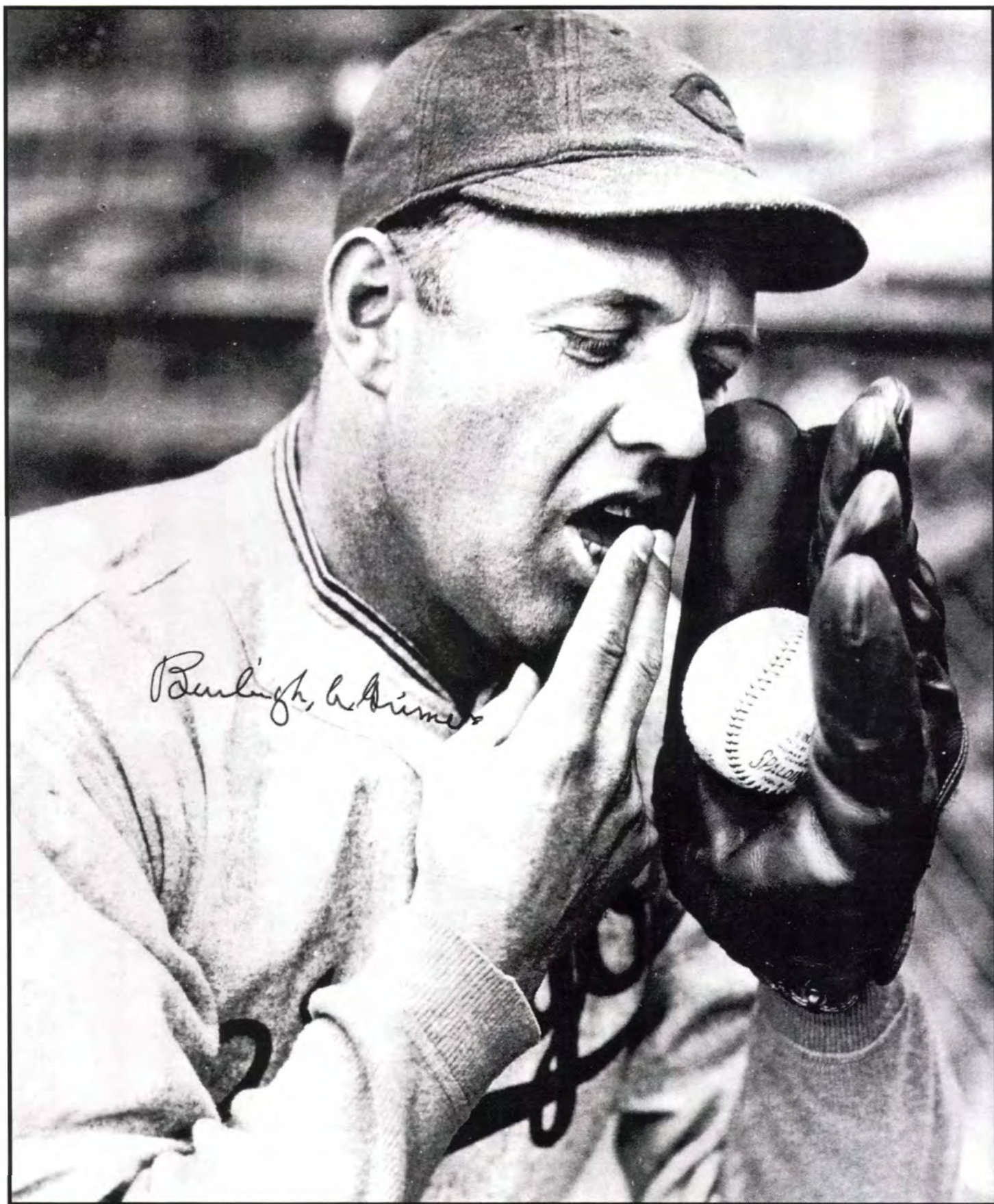
*Al Simmons, shown here on his front porch being greeted by his alderman after returning from a trip to Japan, grew up, lived, and is buried on Milwaukee's south side.*



Todd Frohwirth	09/28/1962	Milwaukee	Art Kores	07/22/1886	Milwaukee
Vern Fuller	03/01/1944	Menomonie	Dave Koslo	03/31/1920	Menasha
Fabian Gaffke	08/05/1913	Milwaukee	Gus Krock	05/09/1866	Milwaukee
Stan Galle	02/07/1919	Milwaukee	Mike Krsnich	09/24/1931	West Allis
Jim Gantner	01/05/1953	Fond du Lac	Rocky Krsnich	08/05/1927	West Allis
Charlie Ganzel	06/18/1862	Waterford	Tony Kubek	10/12/1936	Milwaukee
Vern Geishert	01/10/1946	Madison	Harvey Kuenn	12/04/1930	West Allis
Johnny Gerlach	05/11/1917	Shullsburg	Duane Kuiper	06/19/1950	Racine
Lefty Gervais	07/06/1890	Grover	Craig Kusick	09/30/1948	Milwaukee
Tony Ghelfi	08/23/1961	La Crosse	Chet Laabs	04/30/1912	Milwaukee
Martin Glendon	02/08/1877	Milwaukee	Frank Lange	10/28/1883	Columbia
Bill Gogolewski	10/26/1947	Oshkosh	Bill Lathrop	08/12/1891	Hanover
Bernie Graham	1860	Beloit	Tom Lee	06/08/1862	Milwaukee
Jimmy Grant	10/06/1918	Racine	Louis LeRoy	02/18/1879	Omro
Harvey Green	02/09/1915	Kenosha	Fred Liese	10/07/1885	
Frank Gregory	07/25/1888	Spring Valley Twp.	Lyman Linde	09/30/1920	Rolling Prairie
Burleigh Grimes	08/18/1893	Emerald	Stu Locklin	07/22/1928	Appleton
Connie Grob	11/09/1932	Cross Plains	Rich Loiselle	01/12/1972	Neenah
Ernie Groth	12/24/1884	Cedarburg	Dick Lowe	01/28/1854	Evansville
Mark Grudzielanek	06/30/1970	Milwaukee	Fred Luderus	09/12/1885	Milwaukee
Roy Hansen	03/06/1898	Beloit	Rube Lutzke	11/17/1897	Milwaukee
Jason Hardtke	09/15/1971	Milwaukee	Dad Lytle	03/10/1862	Racine
George Harper	08/17/1866	Milwaukee	Jim Magnuson	08/18/1946	Marinette
Mike Hart	02/17/1958	Milwaukee	Lou Mahaffey	01/03/1874	Madison
Bob Hartman	08/28/1937	Kenosha	Greg Mahlberg	08/08/1952	Milwaukee
Phil Haugstad	02/23/1924	Black River Falls	Lou Manske	07/04/1884	Milwaukee
Joe Hauser	01/12/1899	Milwaukee	Joe Mathes	07/28/1891	Milwaukee
Pink Hawley	12/05/1872	Beaver Dam	Bob Mavis	04/08/1918	Milwaukee
Fred Hayner	11/03/1871	Janesville	Scott May	11/11/1961	West Bend
Val Heim	11/04/1920	Plymouth	George McBride	11/20/1880	Milwaukee
Don Heinkel	10/20/1959	Racine	Harry McCurdy	09/15/1899	Stevens Point
Chuck Hockenbery	12/15/1950	La Crosse	Fred Merkle	12/20/1888	Watertown
Billy Hoeft	05/17/1932	Oshkosh	Tom Metcalf	07/16/1940	Amherst
Bert Husting	03/06/1878	Fond du Lac	Damian Miller	10/13/1969	La Crosse
Beany Jacobson	06/05/1881	Port Washington	Paul Miller	04/27/1965	Burlington
Vic Johnson	08/03/1920	Eau Claire	John Morrissey	12/30/1856	Janesville
Davy Jones	06/30/1880	Cambria	Tom Morrissey	1861	Janesville
Terry Jorgensen	09/02/1966	Kewaunee	Willie Mueller	08/30/1956	West Bend
Addie Joss	04/12/1880	Woodland	Tom Nagle	10/30/1865	Milwaukee
Joe Just	01/08/1916	Milwaukee	Dan Neumeier	03/09/1948	Shawano
Jack Kading	11/27/1884	Waukesha	Charles Newman	11/05/1868	Juda
Ken Keltner	10/31/1916	Milwaukee	Kid Nichols	09/14/1869	Madison
Ed Killian	11/12/1876	Racine	Pete Norton	06/19/1850	Watertown
Thornton Kipper	09/27/1928	Bagley	Ted Odenwald	01/04/1902	Hudson
Tom Klawitter	06/24/1958	La Crosse	Red Ostergard	05/16/1896	Denmark
Ted Kleinhans	04/08/1899	Deer Park	Ernie Ovitz	10/07/1885	Mineral Point
Nub Kleinke	05/19/1911	Fond du Lac	Andy Pafko	02/25/1921	Boyceville
Red Kleinow	07/20/1879	Milwaukee	Karl Pagel	03/29/1955	Madison
Len Koenecke	01/18/1904	Baraboo	Roy Patterson	12/17/1876	Stoddard
Hal Kolstad	06/01/1935	Rice Lake	Don Pavletich	07/13/1938	Milwaukee
Ed Konetchy	09/03/1885	La Crosse	Hal Peck	04/20/1917	Big Bend
Howie Koplit	05/04/1938	Oshkosh			







*Burleigh Grimes of Clear Lake, Wisconsin, "Ol' Stubblebeard," was the last legal spitballer. He won more games than any other pitcher in the 1920's. Elected to Cooperstown in 1964.*



#### COVER LEGEND

1. Max Carey
2. Billy Bruton
3. Robin Yount
4. Alma "Gabby" Ziegler
5. Ken Keltner
6. Eddie Mathews
7. Warren Spahn
8. Lou Gehrig
9. Christy Walsh
10. Babe Ruth
11. Red Smith
12. Charlie Grimm
13. Casey Stengel
14. Andy Pafko
15. Addie Joss
16. Henry Aaron
17. Len Koenecke
18. Burleigh Grimes







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