

# The INSIDE GAME



The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

Volume 7, Number 1: "Let's get this lumpy, licorice-stained ball rolling!" February 2007

## Chairman's Column

By David Jones

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As I write this, the Northeast is getting pounded with ice, lending a somber, gray veneer to everything outside my office window. An unusually warm winter seems to have finally caught up with us: temperatures this week are supposed to dip down into the single digits here in upstate New York.

For this graduate student, it has been a long winter break, spent putting the finishing touches on my article on the murder trial of Deadball Era player Dan Shay, reading the wonderfully mischievous writings of Michel Foucault, and listening to the newly-released box set from Mosaic Records, *Duke Ellington: 1936-1940 Small Group Sessions*, which is a special treat for anyone who loves Ellington's music, or for anyone who is a fan of Johnny Hodges's brilliant saxophone playing, though the price (\$119 + shipping) is higher than the bonus Washington paid Walter Johnson when they signed the Weiser Wonder in 1907.

Ah yes, baseball. As I write this, I have yet to see a copy of *Deadball Stars of the American League*, though I am informed that copies have just been delivered to SABR headquarters. Needless to say, I am anxious to see the fruit of the last three years of work put in by myself and so many others. I can only hope that it will measure up to its predecessor and do SABR proud.

I plan to spend the last months of my chairmanship of this committee

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## Three Finger: An Interview with Cindy Thomson

**Editor's Note:** For those of you who don't watch *The Simpsons*, there was an episode entitled "Homer at the Bat," where Homer's boss Montgomery Burns wants to field a team of Honus Wagner, Three Finger Brown, and Cap Anson. The mention of Three Finger Brown shows the status that the old Cubs hurler has received in posterity. Not to be outdone by the Simpsons, we were rewarded this past fall with the release of *Three Finger: The Mordecai Brown Story*, by Cindy Thomson and Scott Brown. The following is an interview with Cindy on her famous baseball relative.

**Charles Crawley:** In reading your book, I was struck by how such a peaceful man as Three Finger Brown co-existed with Frank Chance and some of the other Cubs, who were always willing to settle an argument with their fists (witness the beating of Heinie Zimmerman). How did Brown manage to make these relationships work?

**Cindy Thomson:** How? I'm not sure. We do know that he was seen as a peacemaker. This team surely needed one. I think it was just not his personality to be quick-tempered. They all seemed to see Mordecai as a friend, so he did manage to stay on their good sides.

**CC:** Why do you think Three Finger Brown was overlooked so long for the Hall of Fame? He certainly had the numbers and the reputation.

**CT:** I think that perhaps it was because he finished his major league career long before the Hall was created. By that time, there were newer players to think

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Rafael Almeida, Early Latino Ballplayer. See page 5 for more in Chris Hauser's Review

# Davy Gets His Due

By David Stalker  
attheballyard@yahoo.com

On August 6 2006, a monument in memory of Davy Jones was dedicated in his hometown of Cambria, Wisconsin. Approximately twenty-five Jones family members from eight different states traveled to Wisconsin for a festive weekend.

On Saturday, the entire family was included in a Cambria parade, followed by a "let's talk baseball" session at the Cambria Historical Society grounds. The "let's talk baseball" gathering gave the public the opportunity to meet and talk with the family as well as myself. They could also view a large exhibit of Davy Jones pictures and baseball cards from my collection. Among the attendees was a grandson that lived with Davy for about the first 15 years of the grandson's life. He shared stories of meeting Davy's friends, while they would come to their home and visit. They were friends such as Sam Crawford and Ty Cobb.

Sunday was the dedication of the monument. Among those speaking at the dedication were one of Davy's grandsons and two great-grandsons. They shared their memories of Davy and expressed their appreciation for all that was done to honor and remember their beloved one, Davy Jones.

The family was very generous to give me a two-hundred page copy of Davy's personal scrapbook. His grandson is going to donate a plaque to the Cambria Historical Society's Wagoner House Museum. The plaque is one that was given to Davy when he was elected to the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame. The museum is scheduled to open in 2007, and the memorial is also located there. The address is 112 N. Madison Street, Cambria, Wisconsin.

The Jones monument is my second in a series of Wisconsin Native Deadball Players. Fred Merkle's monument was the first, donated in September of 2005 by his family and myself in Fred's native town of Watertown, Wisconsin. Billy Sullivan's is the third, donated 100 years to the day that his White Sox claimed victory over the heavily

favored Chicago Cubs in 1906. The Sullivan monument is located in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.

The inscription on the Jones memorial reads:

"This memorial is dedicated to the life of David J. Jones. Born in Cambria, WI. June 30, 1880. Davy grew up in Cambria playing baseball with well known local players such as the Dodge Brothers, Willard and Ben. Davy was an aggressive leadoff hitter, known for his quickness. His major league career spanned from 1901 to 1915. On Sept. 15, 1901 he made his major league debut with the Milwaukee Brewers of the newly formed American League. He also played for the St. Louis Browns, Chicago Cubs, Detroit Tigers, Chicago White Sox and Pittsburgh Rebels. With the Tigers he played in the 1907, 1908 and 1909 World Series. The Tigers trio of Davy Jones, Ty Cobb and Sam Crawford formed one of the greatest outfields in baseball history. He was elected to the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame in 1964. Donated in 2006 by The Jones Family, David J. Stalker & Archie Monuments."♦



David Stalker with the Davy Jones Monument,  
Cambria, Wisconsin

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### ***Three Finger, cont. from page 1.***

about ([Babe] Ruth and Walter Johnson, for example.) Also, because he was mild mannered, he probably didn't draw much press attention after he retired. I do know that there were many fans at the time (especially in Indiana and the Chicago area) who were not happy about the oversight.

**CC:** Tell me about the writing process with Scott Brown. I cannot tell that the book was written by two people; it seems like one voice. Did you take turns writing chapters, or did one of you serve as editor and the other as writer or was there some other process?

**CT:** I'm so pleased to hear that it read that way. That was one of our goals. We both did the writing, with the exception of the introduction and the chapter analyzing Brown's pitching, which I did alone (although Scott did get the feedback from Gordie Gillespie for that chapter.) For most it, this is how it worked: We met in person and worked out an outline with suggested deadlines. Scott wrote a chapter, emailed it to me at the deadline, and I re-wrote it and added to it. I emailed it back to him and sometimes he made suggestions to change it and corrected errors. Even so, there are parts that are strictly his words. Having two sets of eyes (plus that of the editors) really helped. Scott saw things I didn't see and visa versa. Even at the last minute, he was finding spelling mistakes of surnames. No book is ever error-free, but we certainly gave it our best shot.

Scott had lots of information he had been collecting for years before we started writing. I am a freelance writer. He is a public speaker and natural born promoter. We think it's a good combination. The fact that we are cousins who grew up together and really like each other helped too because we are still speaking to each other after all that!

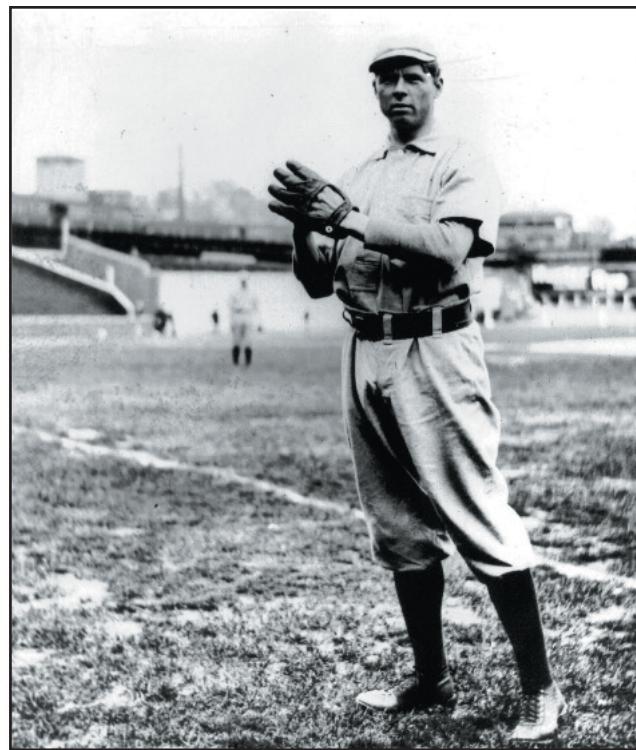
**CC:** How did writing *Three Finger* compare to the other writing you do, which is more fiction-oriented? Did it make you nervous with all those SABR readers ready to pounce at the first mistake?

**CT:** Oh, it's very different, at least on the surface. Some people jump to the conclusion (not SABR people, by the way) that because I'm female I don't know baseball. But they are wrong. I've been a baseball fan all my life, and despite what a man in my writing group said, I did not have to find out what ERA meant before I started.

Writing for an academic press means citing your sources, as you know. You don't have to do that with fiction. However, because I write historical fiction, there is still a lot of research, and I love research. Of course, knowing this book would be read and judged by SABR members did make me nervous, as Scott can tell you.

I received a lot of assistance from SABR members and I knew from the beginning I was going to need them! You can see from the acknowledgements how much they helped. The thing about research is that the more you do, the more confident you are in what you are saying. There may be mistakes, but no one can say we didn't do research.

And really, there is a correlation with my published novel. I was nervous about the Irish people reading it, as my agent can tell you. But so far, they seem to think I got the historical details right.



**Mordecai Brown, 1904.**  
Photo courtesy of Cindy Thomson

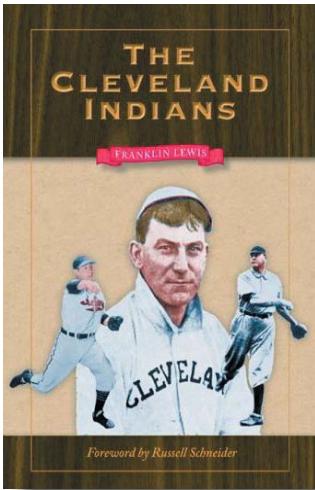
**CC:** One of the great themes in the book is Three Finger Brown's rivalry with Christy Mathewson. They had many epic battles, especially on October 8, 1908, when Brown had to take over for Jack Pfiester to win what was probably the most crucial game of his career. What do you make of their rivalry, and the terrific way it ended when they pitched their final games against each other at Wrigley Field in 1916?

**CT:** There are two aspects to it. First, it was media driven. The Cubs and the Giants were rivals, so whenever their aces matched up, fans loved it. The newspapers talked it up. That was surely the reason for the final match-up because Mathewson came out of retirement for it. It was a Labor Day game for two teams who were out of the race. What better way to bring fans in than to advertise the final major league game for two of the game's best pitchers? Second, they really did respect each other and enjoyed pitching against each other. They were fierce competitors on the field and friends off the field—that's what Mordecai said.

**CC:** There is a lot of discussion about why the Chicago Cubs were so successful from 1906-1910. While I would tend to favor your attitude that Three Finger Brown was the key, what would you say to those who point to Johnny Kling, and the fact that his absence from the Cubs in 1909 was the reason they didn't win the pennant that year?

**CT:** I'd agree that that was a factor. We said in the book that the catcher was extremely important. Mordecai himself gave a lot of credit to Kling and later to Jimmy Archer. Mordecai Brown certainly couldn't carry the team himself. The Cubs had an awesome pitching staff in those days,

***Continued on page 8.***



## The Cleveland Indians

By Franklin Lewis

Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 978-0873388856] 286 pages. \$18.00, paperback..

Reviewed by **Mark Sternman**

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Many entries in G.P. Putnam's Sons' baseball team series excel only for the years when the author worked the beat. Since Franklin Lewis began writing for the *Cleveland Press* in 1929, his analysis of the deadball teams in *The Cleveland Indians*, like that era's squads, falls short of success.

Elmer Flick, Addie Joss, Nap Lajoie, and Tris Speaker all attained baseball immortality, but Lewis reveals little of Flick and Joss, and he pays tribute to Lajoie and Speaker by frequently noting their batting averages.

In reviewing the proposed trade of Ty Cobb for Flick, Lewis offers no evaluation of Flick. While few could have anticipated that Flick would become a Hall of Famer (Flick received one vote in 1938 before a Special Veterans Committee inducted him at 87 in 1963), Lewis ignores Flick's standing as one of the league's leading hitters in 1905-1907.

Lewis appears to appreciate Joss by writing, "No name is more hallowed in Cleveland baseball memories than Joss's." Lewis entitles Chapter VII "Addie Joss the Incomparable," but this incomparability fades fast as Joss' demise merits but three just-the-facts sentences and ignores the historic

exhibition game in his honor.

Lewis' coda to the 1917 season makes his dismissal of Joss' death more abrupt: "From a tragic standpoint, the 1917 routine of the Indians was interrupted by the death on July 25 of Larry, the world-famous dog owned by Jack Graney. Larry accompanied the Indians on the road and performed tricks in all ball parks. His death resulted in deep grieving by all the Redskins." Lewis puts more into this passage on Larry – no doubt a canine for the ages – than he does on Joss. Graney, who played with Joss before becoming the radio voice for Cleveland, must have spoken more of Larry than of Addie to his impressionable press colleague Lewis.

Lajoie and Speaker both receive statistical bouquets from Lewis. Writing two years before Turkin and Thompson released their baseball encyclopedia, Lewis shows a flair for batting averages, statistics that his readers may not have known. So Lewis on five separate pages notes what Lajoie hit in 1901, 1904, 1906, 1907, 1909, and 1910.

Lewis gets his facts wrong when writing that Lajoie hit .384 in 1909 rather than 1910. Later, Lewis claims Lajoie had eight hits in eight times at bat (actually nine) during the season-ending doubleheader. What an intergenerational imbroglio: sportsmanship went missing in 1910, Lewis screwed up in 1949, and Commissioner Kuhn ruled in 1981 that Cobb would keep his crown although Lajoie had actually beaten him.

Lewis fails to explain how a team with Lajoie and Joe Jackson never won the pennant. He does confess: "Something was forever happening to the Nats and 1913 was no exception."

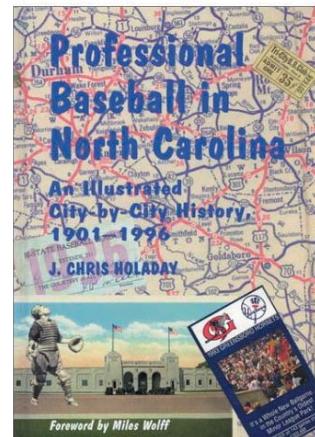
Fortunately, Tris Speaker comes along, allowing Lewis to share Speaker's minor league, World Series, and Cleveland batting averages (for five separate seasons).

Outside the Deadball Era days, Lewis calls Joe Vosmik, Earl Averill, and Richard Porter "one of the best all-around outfields in the history of any baseball team" and portrays executives whose careers overlapped with Lewis', two cases of first loves seeming unusually special.

Lewis titles Chapter XXVIII "Larry

Doby, Negro" as if skin pigmentation can summarize a person. This attitude recurs when Lewis refers to the Negro Leagues as "semipro," which, while representative of prevailing views then, appears repugnant today.

Lewis wrote a book with many flaws, but the final season it covered featured the last Indians World Series win. Cleveland fans have suffered since. Call what has followed the curse of *The Cleveland Indians*. ♦



## Professional Baseball in North Carolina: An Illustrated City-By-City History, 1901-1996

By **J. Chris Holaday**

Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc, 2006. [ISBN: 978-0786405329] 251 pages, \$24.95, paperback. Order at (800) 253-2187 or at [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com).

Reviewed by **Mark Dugo**  
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Having recently relocated to North Carolina, dearth of professional baseball, from Chicago (some would say the North side of Chicago has also been dearth of professional baseball for 100 years), I must admit I felt a sad loss of having lost day-to-day coverage of my beloved Cubbies. What better way to eliminate those thoughts than by immersing myself in J. Chris Holaday's *Professional Baseball in North Carolina: An Illustrated City-By-City History, 1901-1996*.

Covering the time frame between 1901 and 1996, Holaday states that the purpose of this book is to lay the groundwork for future writings due to the volume of information that is available but not presented. This philosophy is apparent as the book is separated into mini chapters recognizing the teams, managers and players from each city that hosted professional baseball during that time span and not much else.

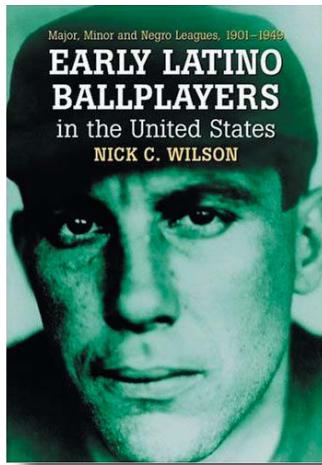
I would surmise most of the information gathered by the author was developed through newspapers culled from the particular city and not through interviews or personal remembrances of those having played during the time. Because of this approach, many of the historical references which are noted occurred well outside of the Deadball Era. I would guess Holaday does so because there are relatively few newspapers that would have survived from the smaller cities in the early 1900's to the 1910s.

Consequently, the major cities like Charlotte, Asheville and Greensboro which hosted teams during the Deadball Era are covered in more depth than are their more modern counterparts. Asheville, for example, provides enough information on the Deadball era to encompass six paragraphs. Team summaries are wrapped up in sentences, and highlights culled from individualized newspaper accounts are detailed (Earl Mack, son of Connie, played for Asheville in 1916, a flood destroyed their field in July, Jim Hickman won the league batting title with a .350 batting average).

Charlotte is summarily captured with brief seasonal paragraphs that provide the highlight of each season but not much else.

Luckily it is clearly evident that Holaday has a passion for the topic about which he writes, and many of the photos used throughout the book are from the author's personal collection. Images of 1909 league batting champ Al Humphrey of Charlotte and the 1909 Greensboro Champs (Champs indeed, as they won the championship of the Carolina Association that year) are key highlights.

Referencing Holaday's intent that we use this book as an introduction to more detailed future editions, I enjoyed the book for its easy to read style and for providing me an opportunity, while dearly missing Wrigley Field, to drive around the Charlotte area to look for areas and stadiums referenced throughout this likeable book.♦



## *Early Latino Ballplayers in the United States: Major, Minor and Negro Leagues, 1901-1949*

by Nick Wilson

Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc, 2006. [ISBN: 978-0786420124]  
208 pages, \$35.00, paperback.  
Order at (800) 253-2187 or at [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com).

Reviewed by Chris Hauser  
CPHaus@nyc.rr.com

In *Early Latino Ballplayers in the United States: Major, Minor and Negro Leagues, 1901-1949*, author Nick Wilson notes that twenty-five percent of modern major league rosters are typically made up of Latin American players. This statistic will not be surprising to baseball fans. The fact that the Latin American presence in American baseball dates back to 1871, when Esteban Bellan played with the Troy Haymakers, may be. Still, it was another forty years before Clark

Griffith signed Rafael Almeida (whose portrait is featured on the book's cover) and Armando Marsans for the Cincinnati Reds in 1911 beginning the steady, though at first slow, influx of Latin American players into the major leagues. There was scattered participation throughout the 1920s and 1930s, but their numbers were given a boost during World War II, when the demands of the Armed Forces drained the major leagues of talent. When the GIs returned, the Latin American presence dwindled for a short time only to rebound again, this time permanently, in the 1950s. During that decade, players like Roberto Clemente, Orlando Cepeda, and Luis Aparicio helped, along with the newly accepted African-Americans, to transform the National Pastime.

Wilson, a baseball writer for *La Voz Hispana de Colorado*, set out to document this infusion of baseball talent that "cleared the road for A-Rod, Manny Ramirez and Pedro Martinez." In the course of his research, Wilson conducted 56 interviews and mined 160 newspapers and journals. The book comprises chronologically-arranged biographical portraits of those Latin American players who in the first half of the twentieth century made the trek to the United States. It also includes those who, faced with the color barrier, toiled in the Negro Leagues. Wilson explains that a comprehensive treatment was outside the scope of this book, but he still manages to include a vast number of bios, many that you won't find in the mainstream literature.

Among these players, some, like Armando Cabanas, had marginal careers in the United States. The ten lines devoted to him reflects his brief career. Similarly, the more substantial careers of Armando Marsans, Rafael Almeida and Dolf Luque get a much broader treatment; thirty pages in Luque's case. Despite the worth of these deeper portraits, it seems that the book's value lies with the lesser-known players. Where else would a reader turn for information on Luis Castro, who played 42 games for the Philadelphia Athletics in 1902 and

***Continued on page 6.***

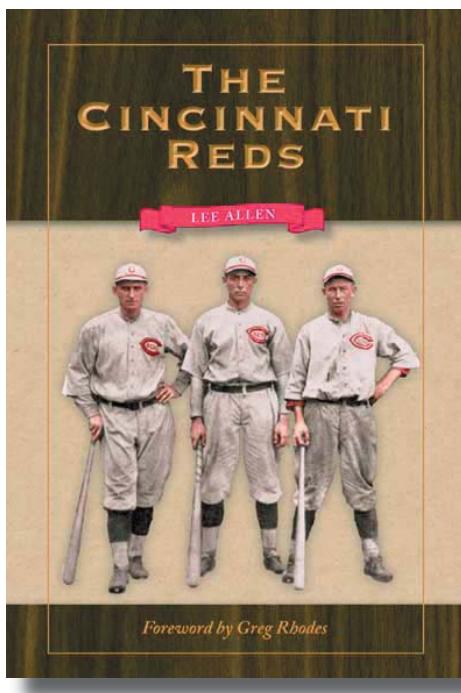
## Wilson, cont. from page 5.

then, after a brief minor league stop in Seattle, fell off the baseball map? Or Angel Valdes Aragon, who became the first Latin-born New York Yankee in 1914 and who stayed with the club for portions of four seasons? Such players outside the mainstream discussion and won't be found in standard biographical encyclopedias. But Wilson has made them accessible.

Among the book's most interesting themes is race. Race permeates the Latin American experience in American baseball, just as it permeated all aspects of culture during this period. In the book's second chapter, Wilson touches on the speculation that Armando Marsans and Rafael Almeida weren't white, which, if true, would have ended their major-league careers. While they were ultimately welcomed in the major leagues, many others were barred and forced to play in the Negro Leagues. Players like Jose Mendez, Cristobal Torriente and Martin Dihigo, players whom few doubt would have excelled in the major leagues, were confronted with racial barriers unknown to them in their native Cuba. Ironically, many of these same players faced major leaguers in Cuban winter ball.

One weak point is the book's organization. Five of the seven chapters are devoted to a particular decade; the other two profile Marsans and Almeida in one chapter and Luque in the other. This arrangement is somewhat confusing. The profile of Mike Gonzalez, for example--whose major-league playing career began with Boston Braves in 1912, concluded in 1932, and was followed by a major-league coaching and managing career that went well into the 1940s--is included in the "1920s" chapter. Luis Tiant, similarly, began his career in the 1930s but was still going strong when he helped the New York Cubans defeat the Homestead Grays in the Negro Leagues championship in 1947, is found in the "1930s" chapter. Inconsistencies like these make the chapter divisions seem artificial and not very useful. Still, that is just a minor criticism for an otherwise solid book that makes a strong contribution

to our understanding of the Latin American baseball experience in the United States.◆



## The Cincinnati Reds by Lee Allen

Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 0-87338-886-0] 352 pages. \$18.00, paperback.

Reviewed by **Cindy Thomson**  
[cindyswriting.com](mailto:cindyswriting.com)

First published by G.P. Putman's Sons in 1948, *The Cincinnati Reds* by Lee Allen has been reissued by the Kent State University Press with a foreword by SABR member and Executive Director of the Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame and Museum Greg Rhodes. Rhodes's foreword provides a concise summary of the life of Lee Allen and will entice those who haven't read the book to continue on.

Cincinnati native Lee Allen was once the historian of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and before that a sportswriter. He penned ten baseball books before he died in 1969. Known for ferreting out personal stories and information on players, Allen writes in a conversational tone that is easy and pleasurable to read. In the preface he says, "Because the fan is the hero, little attention is paid in these pages to the inner workings of the front office

or the business aspects of the sport." He says that baseball is primarily just a game and that the players are fans too. He brings the reader to an understanding of how and why the Reds players played the game.

The book covers the inception of the Reds from the amateur team in 1866 through 1947. For the interest of this group, I'll hit the highlights from the Deadball Era; but true Reds fans will enjoy the whole book.

The Reds, at least in this era, had a habit of obtaining star players when they either had not yet achieved a high level of success or their best years were behind them. In 1904 Orval Overall was a Red, but the club traded him in 1906 to the Cubs for pitcher Bob Wicker. Overall became a formidable part of the great Cubs team of that era and that year alone the Cubs won 116 games. The Reds had one of the game's best hitters in Cy Seymour, but in July of 1906 he also was gone, sold to the Giants for cash. In 1904 they could have signed Branch Rickey, but he refused to play on Sundays. In 1913 Three Finger Mordecai Brown pitched for the Reds following a knee injury and did not provide Cincinnati with many wins. In 1915 they obtained Tommy Leach when he was 38 years old. When the Federal League folded, they obtained Hal Chase, a superior first baseman who was so much trouble no other team wanted him. The Reds also had as rookies Noodles Hahn and Sam Crawford. But perhaps the most surprising, for those who like me were uninformed, involved Christy Mathewson. According to Allen the Giants purchased Mathewson's contract in 1900 from a team in Norfolk, Virginia. Mathewson appeared in three games that year, losing them all, and the Giants canceled his contract. After that season the Reds drafted Mathewson for the minimum of \$100 and immediately traded him back to the Giants for Amos Rusie, who by that time Allen says was "just about out of sparks." Perhaps it had been done to cheat Norfolk out of the money. At any rate, Allen says, "If a worse deal was ever pulled by a club, it hasn't been recorded." Rusie never won any games for the Reds and Mathewson beat the Reds 22 times in a row.

Despite that, and many manager changes, the Reds did put together a superior team in 1919 and won the World Series. But we all know that the Black Sox Scandal would taint that win.

Some Deadball Era trivia can be gleaned from the book. Allen believed that Reds manager Ned Hanlon was the first manager to use left-handed hitters against right-handed pitchers, and visa versa. It's a practice that many people believe is a modern invention. Hanlon was also likely the cause for the Reds losing future superstars. Allen contends that Hanlon was impatient with young players.

Allen told plenty of anecdotes in this book, some of the most entertaining about Reds owner Garry Herrmann. Herrmann was known for his love of sausage, sauerkraut, and beer. Once he sold a player who was in the hospital with a broken leg to a San Francisco team for \$2,500. Herrmann said the team's owner, J. Cal Ewing, should have checked out the player's condition before paying. The disgruntled Ewing sent Herrmann five barrels of sauerkraut C.O.D. After Herrmann paid for them, he discovered that the whole lot was rancid. When he complained, Ewing simply said that Herrmann should have checked out the condition of the sauerkraut before paying for it.

The book is loaded with entertaining stories. If you haven't already read Lee Allen's *Cincinnati Reds*, I recommend it.♦

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#### ***Chairman's Column, cont. from page 1.***

promoting the book in any way that I can. I have expressed as much to SABR, and hope that, with the help of the publisher, this spring we can organize book signings in multiple cities around the country. I will be sending out announcements when these take place: it would be great to get as many authors to come to these events as possible. And, of course, we will have to organize some event at this year's SABR convention in Saint Louis, the city that produced the worst AL and NL franchises during the Deadball Era.

Every book comes with an acknowledgements section, of course, and I hope I did not forget any of the people who contributed so much to this project. I thought, however, that in the space of this column I could write a few more words about some of the people who put in extra labor and went beyond the call of duty in the preparation of this volume. This is not an exclusive roll call, just a list of those names which come to me on a bleak Monday afternoon.

Eric Enders did a tremendous job fact-checking every bio, catching thousands of mistakes made by myself and others. Whatever problems remain with the text are assuredly my responsibility (though if you want to blame him, I'm not going to stop you), and the final product, whatever its faults, represents a monumental improvement over the versions Eric so carefully reviewed. Eric has been a great asset for the Committee, things somehow just don't feel the same here in upstate New York ever since Eric moved back to Texas last fall. Thankfully, he remains the Vice Chair of the committee, and hopefully we will see his name more often in connection with Deadball projects in the future.

I'd like to thank Glenn LeDoux and Jim Charlton for all their hard work in corralling photos, laying out the text, and getting the book to the publisher. SABR and the Deadball Committee both owe them a debt of gratitude not only for their hard work, but for their championing of the entire Deadball Stars project. Speaking of which, F.X. Flinn was, from Day One, our staunchest supporter within the organization, and it is doubtful that these books would have come to fruition without his dedication to the project.

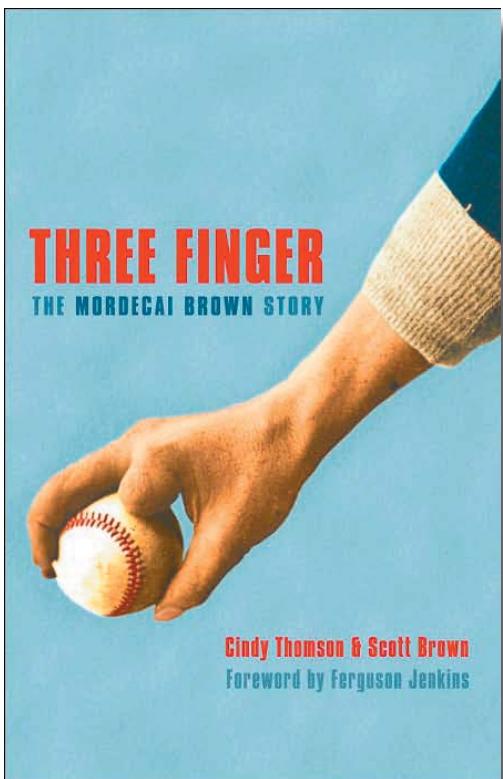
John McMurray proved himself to be a tireless worker, offering his help and expertise in innumerable areas and also writing bios that were dropped by their original authors. The same should be said for John Stahl, whose enthusiasm for the work of the committee is unmatched. For that matter, I have to give a shout out to Gabe Schechter, who repeatedly supplied me with needed files from the Hall of Fame and never once

complained that I was pestering him too much, even though I undoubtedly was. I also have to mention Paul Esacove, who did yeoman's work coordinating the acquisition of so many of the signatures that appear in this book. Thanks to Paul, I feel confident that we left no stone unturned in augmenting the bios with as many authentic signatures as possible.

There are many others to thank. Norman Macht and Steve Constantelos for their editing, advice, and support, RJ Lesch, Nathaniel Staley, and Jan Finkel, for their words of encouragement that often came when they were most needed, and Angelo Louisa for doing a fantastic job with the lineups project. There are others, but listing more will only exhaust myself and my readers. Undoubtedly, though, the most important person to thank is Tom Simon, who not only founded this committee seven years ago and created the blueprint for Deadball Stars with the NL volume, but also has provided me with critical advice and support many times throughout the last three years. The Deadball Committee is extremely fortunate to have such a magnanimous individual as its founder.

This has been a tremendously rewarding experience for me. Not only have I learned a great deal about the hazards of the publishing industry, but I also had the privilege of working with a group of tremendous researchers, historians, writers, and friends. According to SABR, the books should start arriving in members' mailboxes by the end of January. I encourage anyone and everyone to email me at [crawjo@gmail.com](mailto:crawjo@gmail.com) with any comments—positive or negative—about the book, or just to chat about the road we have traveled and the future of the DEC.♦

### ***Three Finger, cont. from page 3.***



great hitters, smart infielders, and a great catcher. They were all important.

**CC:** How did you come to develop that idea of organizing the book around all the different names for Three Finger Brown? It seems so obvious for the reader, but I'm sure it wasn't that way when you started writing the book.

**CT:** Well, he had a lot of nicknames. I starting thinking about that and how each name represented something about him. Three Finger was given to him by the press. Brownie was what his friends called him. Royal Rescuer was what the newspapers starting calling him when he was used more as a reliever. His great nephews called him Uncle Mort. I didn't have too much trouble coming up with some others to fill in the different eras of his life.

**CC:** I have always thought that the Merkle game of September 23, 1908, would make a great movie. If it were made into a picture show, who would you imagine playing the part of Three Finger Brown, and any of the other major figures of that game (Matty, McGraw, Chance, Evers, et al)?

**CT:** I'm so surprised how often we are getting this question about actors! But I'm not surprised about the movie idea. Everyone says that, even people who don't know baseball but hear this story think it should be a movie. Any movie producers out there?

Scott and I had to get help with this one since we don't see many movies. Interestingly, when I asked my three sons (21, 19, and 16) independent of each other, they all came up with same actor to play Mordecai: Russell Crowe. It had something to do with Cinderella Man (which I did see.) Scott came up with Ben Affleck for Matty, but I'm thinking Brad Pitt. My oldest son could only come up with Danny DeVito for McGraw. I think we need help with this. I'd welcome suggestions!

**CC:** Three Finger Brown was disabled but parlayed that disability into an asset, as pointed out by Ferguson Jenkins in the Foreword. What does that have to teach us, both the abled as well as the disabled?

**CT:** Certainly his life serves as inspiration. What this should teach us is that hard work and determination pay off. That having good character can take you a long way. That whatever talent we possess should be nurtured and developed, even when the odds seem stacked against us. Disabilities can be overcome by either finding a way to make them into an advantage or finding a way around them, but hard work is required. We are all disabled in some area. The easy thing is to give up. But Mordecai Brown didn't give up, and look where it landed him. That is really the story. Ferguson Jenkins's autobiography has a great title: *The Game is Easy, Life is Hard*. We hope that people read *Three Finger* not only for the baseball story, but also for a story about overcoming adversity.♦



Cindy Thomson at the Great American Ballpark,  
Cincinnati, Ohio