

THE BALTIMORE CHOP



SABR Babe Ruth Chapter

Vol. 2, No. 4

Hot Stove 2018-19

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President's Message



For several years, I was hesitant to attend SABR's annual convention.

Still, with encouragement from my wife, I signed up for SABR 32 in Boston in 2002. It was fantastic! The presentations, the speakers, the camaraderie and the sheer amount of baseball knowledge gathered in one place nearly overwhelmed me. It was an intellectual and social experience that I am very glad I was able to have.

I have attended [every SABR convention](#) since Boston, and this year will be no different. [SABR 49](#) will be in San Diego, June 26-30. I encourage all members, particularly any who have never been before, to give this one serious consideration. It will be a highlight you won't forget.

See you there!

BBRC Brews Up Successful SABR Day

By Michelle Freeman
Chapter Secretary

The Baltimore Babe Ruth Chapter (BBRC) celebrated "BBRC4" (SABR Day) on January 20, 2019. This was the second year with our annual event at the Peabody Heights Brewery (a tip of the cap to owners Dick and Eddie O'Keefe)—former site of Oriole Park in Baltimore. Although the day was cold and blustery, 55 people braved the temperature and conditions to join us for an eventful day discussing all things baseball!

Due to circumstances beyond our control, this year's event took place in the brewery itself! It made for an interesting day, as our speakers competed with the sounds of a lively wedding reception on the other side of the wall. Further, since we were in the actual brewery, the temperature was somewhat cold. However, as Bryant Gumble once said: "The other sports are just sports. Baseball is a love." In this spirit, the chapter forged ahead and conquered each obstacle along the way. Chapter vice president Peter Coolbaugh, secretary Michelle Freeman and at-large member David Stinson ran unopposed and were re-elected by acclamation for two-year terms.



Author Jane Leavy and brewman Dick O'Keefe

We were delighted to have current and former SABR national officers on a roster filled with dynamic speakers. F.X. Flinn, SABR's national treasurer, provided an overview of the history of SABR and the exciting challenges and opportunities that will help move SABR forward into the 21st century and beyond. Former SABR national president Cappy Gagnon provided a brief overview of the demographics of SABR's current membership and the efforts necessary to attract a more diverse group of members.



Chapter members and guests heard wonderful presentations covering a variety of baseball topics. John Burbridge delivered a colorful presentation on Billy Martin's infamous fight at Baltimore's Cross Keys Inn in September 1985.

BBRC member and baseball writer Charlie Vascellaro delivered an intriguing presentation on baseball inside Japanese internment camps during World War II. During a dark and horrible chapter in American history, baseball again provided a ray of hope and served as a measure of

BBRC4▶ Continued on Page 8

SABR Baltimore Babe Ruth Chapter Formed 2015

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Calendar

Regularly scheduled events

Peeps @ The Peeb

Conversation, nibbles, libations

First Wednesday of the month, 7-9 PM

Peabody Heights Brewery, 401 E. 30th St., Baltimore

Talkin' Baseball

Since 2001, Bob Davids Chapter hosts a guest speaker

First Saturday of the month, 9 AM

Brighton Gardens, Columbia

Called Shot lunch

BYO lunch and talk baseball

Third Wednesday of the month, noon

Babe Ruth Museum, 216 Emory St., Baltimore

April

3: Peeps @ The Peeb

6: Talkin' Baseball, Jane Leavy, "Big Fella"

17: Called Shot lunch

May

1: Peeps @ The Peeb

4: Talkin' Baseball, Anne Keene, "The Cloudbuster Nine: The Untold Story of Ted Williams and the Baseball Team That Helped Win World War II"

15: Called Shot lunch

June

1: Talkin' Baseball, Cesar Brioso, "Last Seasons in Havana: The Castro Revolution and the End of Professional Baseball in Cuba"

1: Orioles game (vs. Giants) and outing; details TBA

5: Peeps @ The Peeb

19: Called Shot lunch

26-30: SABR 49, San Diego

August

Minor-league game and outing in Delaware, co-sponsored by the Connie Mack Chapter; details TBA

Getting to Know...John Burbridge

In each issue, we will profile one of our members.

Jersey City native John Burbridge remains a New York Giants fan ("I know they are now the San Francisco Giants").

He saw his first game at the Polo Grounds in New York City, and, "given my childhood memories, it remains his favorite ballpark. Today's favorite is AT&T Park in San Francisco. No surprise that his favorite player past or present is Willie Mays and his favorite baseball memory is Bobby Thomson's home run that gave the Giants the 1951 pennant. The greatest Giants-Dodgers game he attended was a 1-0 Giants' victory in Jersey City in 1956. (Yes, the Dodgers did play in Jersey City in 1956 and 1957.)

He's a 40-year-plus SABR-ite, joining sometime in the 1970s. He has presented at SABR conventions and Seymour meetings.

Before moving to Seven Valleys, Pa., he was a professor and dean of the Love School of Business at Elon University, where he introduced and taught "Baseball and Statistics." He is Professor Emeritus at Elon and an adjunct at York College of Pennsylvania.

His non-baseball interests are film noir, reading and walking.

You may not know: "I met Bobby Thomson on my 30th birthday waiting for a train in Newark, N.J., as we both were going to New York City. We talked about the Giants and his home run. He was more excited talking about a win the football Giants had the day before. I later had him speak to a professional group in New Jersey. He was a very nice guy."



John Burbridge, player (above).



John Burbridge in the lobby of his alma mater, Lincoln High in Jersey City (left).

Michelle Freeman Honored

BBRC Chapter Secretary Michelle Freeman was one of three recipients of the 2018 John Coates Next Generation Award. This award, presented by SABR's Negro Leagues Committee, recognizes outstanding achievement and dedication by newcomers to the research field. She was honored for her work as president of The Leon Day Foundation, Inc., and as a charter member and chapter officer of the SABR Baltimore Babe Ruth Chapter.



David vs. Goliath: 'Wee Willie' Sherdel and Babe Ruth

John G. Coulson is the author of Wee Willie Sherdel: The Cardinals' Winningest Left-Hander. In his research, he discovered that his great-grandparents lived across the street from Sherdel's parents in McSherrystown, Pa.

By John G. Coulson

Through my two years of research for the book *Wee Willie Sherdel: The Cardinals' Winningest Left-Hander*, I discovered an interesting matchup between the small pitcher Sherdel and Baltimore's own "Big Fella" Babe Ruth.

Willie Sherdel began his major-league career with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1918. His career spanned 15 years and included starting assignments in the 1926 and 1928 World Series against the powerful New York Yankees. He left the majors in 1932 and still ranks first in left-handed wins and fourth in overall victories behind Bob Gibson, Jesse Haines and Bob Forsch for the Redbirds.

Sherdel was listed as 5 feet 10 and 160 pounds in the major-league records. That may have been generous since his draft card stated 5-8. Regardless, he was the smallest pitcher on the Cardinals staff and was given the nickname "Wee" by a St. Louis sportswriter in the 1920s. He possessed an average fastball and an excellent curve in Branch Rickey's bullpen. By 1922 Sherdel had developed a change-up that made him a star. He became known as "Rickey's Ready Relief." In 2004, Bill James and Rob Neyer listed Sherdel's change-up as ninth-best all-time in their *Guide to Pitchers* book. Sherdel and Ruth first faced each other in spring-training exhibition games and Willie prevailed over his much larger opponent.

The first official meeting of the two occurred in the 1926 World Series. Sherdel was chosen to start the opener and lost



while allowing only five hits. Babe collected one harmless single in two official at-bats. Later, in Game 4, Ruth amazed the baseball world with three home runs to tie the Series at two games apiece. Sherdel took the mound to start Game 5. Willie pitched another great game, losing 3-2 in 10 innings when he should have won 2-0 in nine. Critical errors cost him a victory. Once again, he handled Ruth. The Great Bambino went 0-for-3 with two walks. To the surprise of many, the Cardinals bested Ruth, Gehrig and Murderers' Row in

seven games to become world champions.

Sherdel's slow ball had frustrated baseball's Sultan of Swat. Ruth said, "I can't hit those soft ones and Sherdel is one fellow who will not give you any kind of a good ball to work on."

In 1928, Sherdel had his best year. He finished the regular season with 21 wins and five saves and earned an honorable mention for National League MVP. The Cardinals and Yankees returned to face each other in another World Series. Sherdel was again selected to pitch the opener. Hard-luck Bill surrendered



St. Louis Post Dispatch, October 10, 1928

only four hits in his seven innings, but the Cards lost 4-1. This time, Ruth collected two doubles in three at-bats against the little lefty.

After two more Cardinals losses, St. Louis manager Bill McKechnie handed Willie the ball for Game 4 to avoid a Yankees sweep. In the first inning, Ruth hit into a double play. With Sherdel ahead 1-0 in the fourth, Babe tagged Sherdel for his first home run to tie the score at 1-1. The Cards clawed ahead 2-1 into the seventh inning when David faced Goliath again. Sherdel delivered two strikes to Ruth. It was then that the story became interesting. Ruth was in the box. Sherdel was on the rubber as the catcher returned the throw to Willie. The Wee One quickly delivered what he thought was strike three, but umpire Charles Pfirman disallowed the pitch claiming he had called timeout. If you look at the attached picture, you can see the Cardinals surrounding the umpire as Ruth stands calmly to the side waiting for play to resume. The umpire's call remained. Sherdel was so incensed by the no-call that he delivered a perfect strike to Ruth on the next pitch. Babe stepped into the pitch and deposited the ball into the right-field stands. The Yankees finished off the Cards in four games and became world champions for the second consecutive year (with a second straight sweep).

Through their battles, Willie Sherdel and Babe Ruth became very good friends. Ruth visited Sherdel at his home in McSherrystown, Pa., and even accompanied Willie to the local Catholic church after their baseball careers ended.

Trivia Corner

In December 2018, the Orioles hired Brandon Hyde as manager, his first major-league managerial position.

He is the ninth man the team has hired who had never managed in the major leagues, except as a fill-in or to finish a season. Name the other eight.

Bonus: Name those who finished a season, then were hired full-time by the O's. (Hint: There were four.)

Bonus 2: Name those who never managed elsewhere. (Hint: There were six.)

Answer on Page 11.

How 'Historic' Were the 2018 O's?

To assess their epic awfulness, they go head-to-head with the '88 team

By Bill Lewers

Much has been written on how the 2018 Baltimore Orioles were not just bad—they were historic. But did they surpass the 1988 Orioles in terms of “badness”?

I remember the '88 Orioles. I went up to Memorial Stadium a number of times that year (could it actually have been 30 years ago?). And, yes, they were bad. At the time, I had no special interest in the O's and was able to look at them with a certain clinical detachment. But since folks seem to regard them as the gold standard in terms of what constitutes a bad team, I thought it might be fun to do a 2018-1988 comparison to see just which team was the worst.

Let's begin!



<p>First base Eddie Murray/Jim Tabor vs. Chris Davis/Trey Mancini</p>
<p>It's easy to forget that in '88 Murray and the O's were on the outs. His attitude was bad. His defense was substandard. He DH'ed about a third of the time. They had high hopes for Jim Tabor that never materialized. Still this is an easy pick. Huge edge for '88.</p>
<p>Second base Bill Ripken vs. Jonathan Schoop/ Jonathan Villar</p>
<p>I was amazed to see that Bill Ripken actually played 150 games while sporting a .207 batting average and a .258 slugging percentage. Nepotism was alive and well in 1988. At least Schoop and Villar are functioning major-league players. Huge edge for the '18 team.</p>
<p>Shortstop Cal Ripken vs. Manny Machado/Tim Beckham</p>
<p>For the first half of the season, Manny's offense tops Cal's defense. For the second part of the season, Cal's "everything" tops Beckham's "nothing." On balance, I'll give the slight edge to Cal and '88.</p>
<p>Third base R.C. Gonzalez/Rick Schu vs. Tim Beckham/Chase Peterson/Danny Valencia/ Renato Nunez</p>
<p>Are we really going to try to figure this one out? OK, Schu and Nunez have about the same stats, so we'll cancel them out. The best hitter of the rest is Valencia, who the O's released midseason. Peterson and Gonzalez are utility types who don't hit a lick. Beckham we've already covered. I'm calling this even.</p>
<p>Left field Pete Stanicek/Joe Orsulak/Larry Sheets/Ken Gerhart vs. Trey Mancini/Jace Peterson/Joey Rickard/Craig Gentry</p>
<p>Stanicek, who was really a second baseman, got most of the starts for the '88 team, while Mancini, who is really a first baseman, got most of the starts this year. Clear edge for Trey and '18.</p>
<p>Center field Fred Lynn/Brady Anderson/Ken Gerhart vs. Adam Jones/Cedric Mullins</p>
<p>Interesting comparison. Jones has a higher batting average, Lynn more power. Both had declined defensively. Anderson was all "potential"-no "actual" at this time in his career. Gerhart was what passed for a prospect back then but never amounted to much. I'm going with Adam and the '18 team on this one.</p>
<p>Right field Joe Orsulak vs. Joey Rickard</p>
<p>There were others who played right field for both teams, but I'm sticking with these two because I find them to be an interesting matched set. Both were/are players of modest skills who hustled their way to decent careers. Orsulak was the better hitter while Joey is better defensively. I'm calling this one even.</p>

'18 vs. '88 ► Continued on Page 9

Ruth Signs with Pantages for Vaudeville Tour in 1926

By Fred Glueckstein

Alexander Pantages (1867-1936) was a Greek-American vaudeville and early motion-picture producer and impresario who created a large and powerful circuit of theatres across the western United States and Canada. At the peak of his empire, Pantages owned or operated 84 theatres. In late August 1926, the public learned that Babe Ruth signed a contract with the Pantages Theatre Circuit.

On Tuesday, Aug. 31, 1926, *The New York Times* reported:

Ruth Signs in Vaudeville

Babe to Get \$100,000 for 12-Week Tour on Pantages Circuit

The tour opens in Minneapolis and will take the home run king to the Pacific Coast. He will return East before the Spring training season begins.

While others had bid for Ruth's contract, Pantages through a long-distance telephone call from Los Angeles offered the largest offer in the history of vaudeville. The amount was more than received by W.C. Fields, Al Jolson or Fanny Brice, vaudeville's top performers at the time. The \$100,000 contract was also significantly higher than the major-league salary high of \$52,000 paid in 1926 to Ruth by the New York Yankees.



Ruth's 12-week tour with the Pantages vaudeville theatre chain began after the Yankees lost Game 7 of the 1926 World Series to the St. Louis Cardinals on Oct. 10. Ruth's vaudeville tour opened in Minneapolis on Oct. 30, 1926. As in each of the other cities that Ruth would visit, he first went from the train station to the local newspaper office. There he placed himself in front of a typewriter, posed for a photograph and assumed his "role" as the paper's sports editor for the day. The following morning, readers found a column penned in Ruth's name.

At the Minneapolis Pantages Theatre, the audience was predominantly young boys wanting to see their baseball idol. Ruth's act entailed a seven-minute picture that included his home runs in the recent World Series. The motion picture included "showing him doing his best Bambino stuff and Ruth training at Artie McGovern's gym." Then Ruth stepped through the screen into the footlight and appeared on stage.

Ruth told stories of his feats on the baseball diamond, particularly his years with the Yankees, what it was like to be a player in the major leagues, demonstrated his grip on the bat, and his method of swinging. Ruth then summoned a handful of kids—five or so—to the stage to receive batting tips and an autographed baseball. He also offered each youngster the opportunity to sing a song or dance or recite a bit of poetry.

While in Minneapolis, Ruth visited the Catholic Boys Home, worked out with the University of Minnesota football

Gophers, and visited a friend in the hospital. Appearing at such personal events happened at most of Ruth's vaudeville stops.

Ruth's second stop was Duluth, Minn., where he arrived early on the morning of Saturday, Nov. 6, 1926. That day, he visited the 50 orphans at the Superior orphanage. Ruth appeared at the Lyric Theatre and performed four shows in two days. His presence in Duluth, as in each city, was widely reported.



Babe Ruth at the Catholic Boys Home in Minneapolis

Ruth was also constantly photographed by the press, as on Nov. 7 by the *Duluth News Tribune*, which ran a photo of Ruth standing among 2,000 "junior baseball fans" at the Lyric.

Before Ruth left Duluth, he was joined by three Detroit Tigers, manager George Moriarity and outfielders Heinie Manush and Harry Heilmann, for some duck hunting. Afterwards, Ruth headed west to Fargo, N.D., for the third leg of his tour.

Ruth arrived at Fargo on Nov. 8 and performed his three-day vaudeville show at the newly built Fargo Theatre. From the Dakotas, Ruth traveled to the West Coast, where he thrilled audiences in every major city, including Spokane and Seattle. Ruth visited many other cities on the West Coast.



Vancouver Mayor L.D. Taylor catches and the chief of police umpires for Babe Ruth onstage.

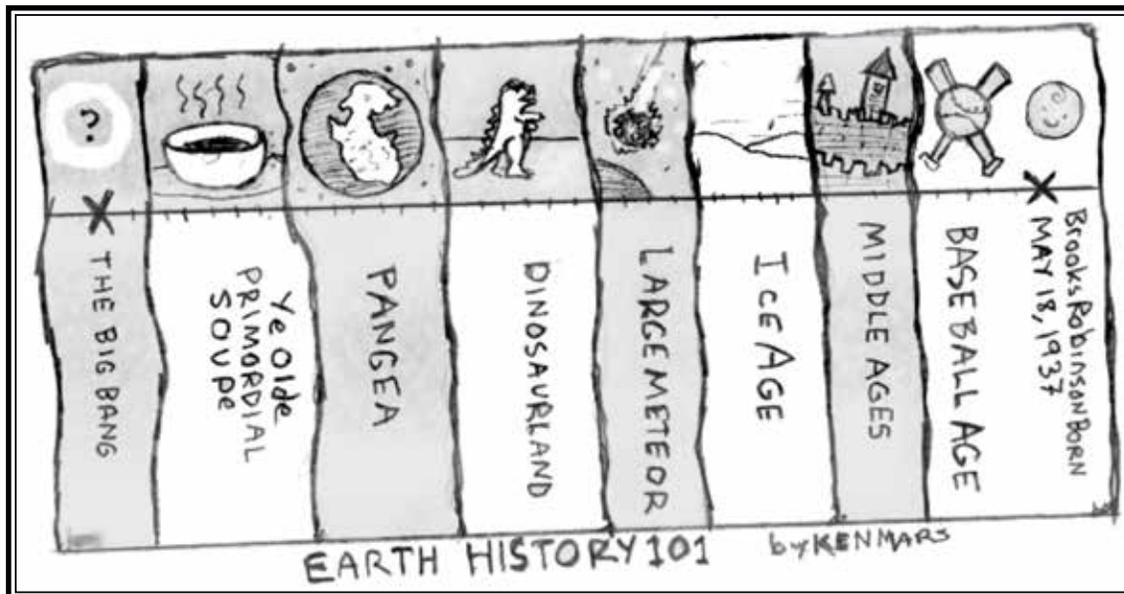
On Nov. 29, Ruth was in Canada in the Vancouver, the British Columbia seaport. While in Vancouver, Ruth performed his vaudeville show at the Pantages Theatre. He posed as a batter with Vancouver Mayor L.D. Taylor crouching behind him as a catcher and the city's chief of police umpiring.

Ruth was in Salem, Ore., on Dec. 20-21 for two days of performances at the Capitol Theatre. On Dec. 17, *The Statesman Journal* reported: "The Babe is not only the greatest baseball player that ever lived, but he is also said to be something of an actor. He puts on a monologue, tells who he thinks will win the 1927 American league pennant and also gives a few sidelights on how to knock home runs by the dozens."

The Capital Journal and the *Statesman Journal* both found ways to get more boys to see Ruth in person. The *Capital* sponsored afternoon matinees at the Capitol Theatre for 10 cents and a coupon from the newspaper. The *Statesman* sponsored an essay contest about sportsmanship. The winner of the 100-

Babe Ruth on Tour ▶ Continued on Page 10

Cartoon Break



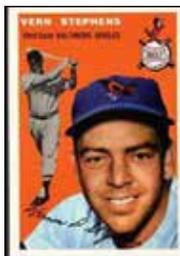
By
Ken Mars

2019 Will Not Resemble 1954 in Baltimore

By Francis Kinlaw

The terms “launch angle” and “exit velocity” will undoubtedly be spoken and heard in seemingly every baseball conversation during the 2019 baseball season as ball after ball will be hit over fences and walls. Seeking a respite from the current trends in the sport, many fans—and especially Orioles fans—may derive enjoyment by traveling back in time to recall a season that contrasted dramatically with the one that lies ahead. So, let us turn our minds to the summer of 1954 (the first season after the St. Louis Browns took up residence near the Chesapeake Bay) when home runs in Memorial Stadium were relatively rare and certainly earned by the men who hit them.

Effective pitching may have been a factor in reducing the number of home runs by the 1954 Orioles and their opposing dimen- sion- playing field were more so. While ments of 309 feet concrete walls 11 feet were simi- other major-league great difficulty of 10-foot-high served as the limits of the extreme power alleys in right- and left-center field (each of which were 446 feet from home plate) as well as the center-field barrier (445 feet away). In June (after Orioles center fielder Jim Diering had leaped into those bushes to deprive Mickey Mantle of a home run), a wire fence 8 feet in height was installed a very short distance in front of the row of hedges. As would be expected, statistics confirm that the presence of the fence provided scant assistance to hitters as they sought to slam round-trippers. Baltimore outfielder Gil Coan summarized the dilemma encountered by both fielders and batters: “That outfield, to play it right, you would need five out- fielders. ...We had long-ball hitters—Sam Mele, Vic Wertz, Clint Courtney. But what they hit, fair or foul, were going to be long, high outs.”



runs by the 1954 Ori- ponents, but the chal- sions of the stadium’s as significant—if not foul-line measure- from home plate to standing slightly over lar to those in several ballparks, batters faced in reaching a row hedges that initially

Orioles hit only 19 homers in 77 home games, and the other seven American League teams combined for a meager total of 23 while playing 11 games each in Baltimore. Larry Doby of the Cleveland Indians, Chico Carrasquel of the Chicago

Indians	Larry Doby (2), George Strickland, Al Rosen
Yankees	Andy Carey, Bob Cerv, Joe Collins, Gil McDougald, Gene Woodling
White Sox	Chico Carrasquel (2), Cass Michaels, Jim Rivera
Red Sox	Sammy White, Ted Williams
Tigers	Walt Dropo
Senators	Mickey Vernon (2), Roy Sievers, Eddie Yost, Ed Fitz Gerald
Athletics	Gus Zernial, Don Bollweg

White Sox and Mickey Vernon of the Washington Senators were at the top of the “1954 slugging list” among visiting play- ers by circling the bases twice each. Here is a list of those who sent balls flying over a hedge or the wire fence, by team:

Vern Stephens hit five homers for the Orioles and was joined on the “multiples list” by Cal Abrams, Bob Kennedy, and Gil Coan—who hit two each. The other Baltimore favorites who provided one rare sight each for fans were Clint Courtney, Ed- die Waitkus, Billy Hunter, Jim Fridley, Chuck Diering, Sam Mele, Joe Durham and pitcher Joe Coleman.

Annapolis-area Breakfast Get-togethers

SABR members in the Greater Annapolis area have begun meeting for breakfast on the third Saturday of each month. Our footprint ranges from Severna Park to Mayo, and from Bowie to Stevensville, but all are welcome. Breakfast starts at 8:30, and we are rotating locations until we find the one we like best. If you’d like to check us out, please send an email to jerry@themanheims.net to join our mailing list.

Mike Trout and the MVP Award Shares Company He Keeps

By Tom Hanrahan

Much has been said and written about the exploits of one Mike Trout, the “Best Player in Baseball” since shortly after he arrived. Here is a perspective on how Mike Trout compares to some all-time greats across the age range at which he has played to date—using one metric long recognized as one significant measure of greatness; that is, MVP voting.

Baseball’s MVP award has been with us in more or less its current form since the 1930s. So, we cannot compare old-timers like Honus Wagner, Ty Cobb, Rogers Hornsby and Babe Ruth this way. We can make side-by-side comparisons since that time.

The number of MVP votes has changed over time with the expansion of the major leagues, but it is simple to construct a measure which levels the playing field. Baseball-reference.com reports MVP “award shares” on its player pages; these are calculated by awarding a full share of an MVP award to a player who wins unanimously—he received as many votes as he possibly could. Other players receiving votes are awarded shares by [number of MVP points received] divided by [maximum number of points available]. The MVP voting points are awarded 14 points for a first-place vote, 9 for second, and then 8 through 1 point for third through 10th place. There are two voters per team in each league—currently 30 voters per league. So, in the 2018 National League season, the top MVP award shares were given to

Player	1st place votes	Total points	Share
Christian Yelich	29	415	99%
Javier Baez	0	250	60%
Nolan Arenado	0	203	48%

The players who have gotten the most MVP award shares over their careers, only counting from 1936 onward, to limit ourselves to the current MVP system, are (in order of most to fewest award shares) Barry Bonds, Stan Musial, Albert Pujols, Ted Williams, Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle, Hank Aaron,

Joe DiMaggio, Alex Rodriguez and Mike Trout. [see https://www.baseball-reference.com/leaders/mvp_cya.shtml]. Only

two of these players are active, and it seems unlikely Pujols will add much to his career MVP record.

Some of these players picked up MVP award shares throughout their careers (Teddy Ballgame and Stan the Man). Some were particularly great in their primes (Mantle, DiMaggio). One was famous for his late-career exploits (the likely-chemically-enhanced Mr. Bonds). Below, I show a graph of their cumulative MVP award shares earned by age, where “age” is the traditional “baseball age,” their age on the first of July in that year.



We begin at age 20, as none of these men received any MVP votes before then. Only Williams and Musial got some award recognition at age 41.

General observations:

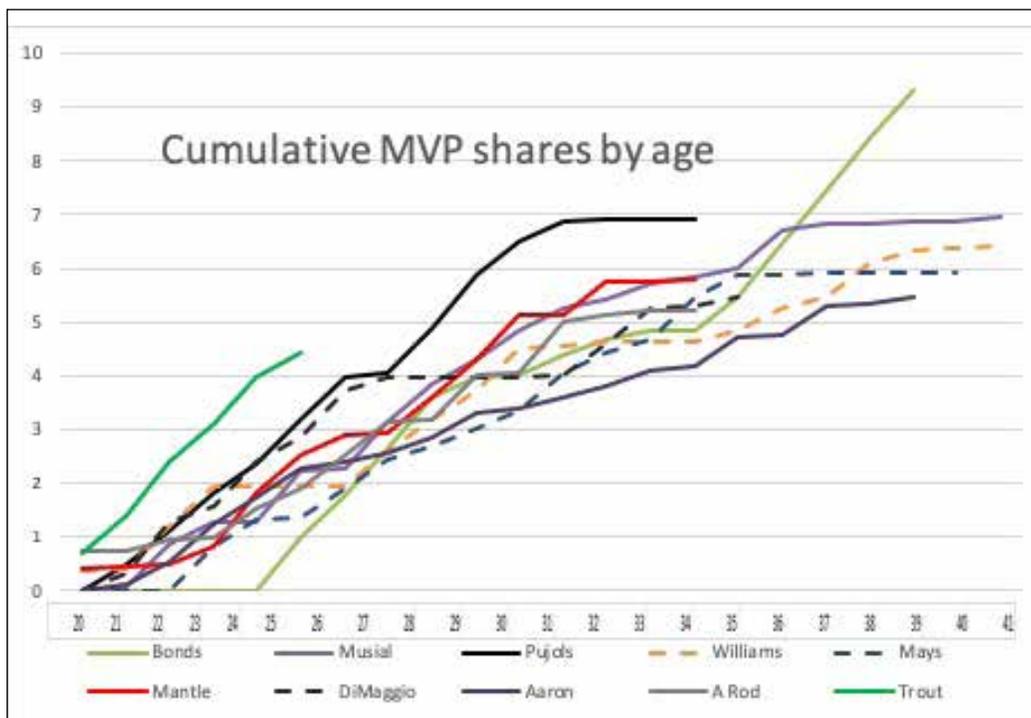
1. Among this group, the ages where most award shares were won were 22 to 32, excluding Trout. The true peak years were 23 to 29.

2. Bonds is an outlier—overall, and late in his career. Of this group, only two players won MVP awards after age 32: Mays once, and Bonds four times.

3. DiMaggio and Pujols each had gained about 5 award shares by age 27. DiMaggio then lost three seasons to World War II. Before the past few years, they had the highest MVP recognition at young ages. Ted Williams was also on fire early in his career before losing his age 24 to 26 seasons to World War II.

Troutian observations:

Once again, Trout has lapped the field. Not only does he stand out among current players, he has far and away more won MVP recognition at every age through his current age-season (26) than any other player, including the men here who are considered among the best who have ever played the game. Is there any doubt we are witnessing something amazing?



	MVPs	Age
Aaron	1	23
Williams	2	27, 30
Mays	2	23, 34
Trout	2	22, 24
Musial	3	22, 25, 27
DiMaggio	3	24, 26, 32
Rodriguez	3	27, 29, 31
Pujols	3	25, 28, 29
Bonds	7	25, 27, 28, 36, 37, 38, 39

Breaking news: See Page 10

dignity amid a period of uncertainty and distress.

BBRC chapter officers Ken Mars and David Stinson provided updates on their continuing research on Oriole/Giant Hall of Famer John McGraw. Last year, they visited McGraw's hometown of Truxton, N.Y., to help town historian Donald McCall inspect the 90-year-old grandstand at John J. McGraw Field in preparation to submitting an application for the structure to the National Register of Historical Places. Mars and Stinson also wrote a Letter of Historical Recognition for the town and had it approved by the SABR Rochester Luke Easter and Cooperstown Cliff Kachline chapters to aid the effort. The audience was also treated to a brief snippet of their upcoming documentary *Little Napoleon: The John McGraw Story*, which is set to premiere at the Baseball Hall of Fame Film Festival in Cooperstown in September.



Ken Mars: on the trail of John McGraw

The highlight of the day was a presentation by Jane Leavy, author of the one of the newest books on *Babe Ruth, The Big Fella*. Leavy delighted the audience by detailing her journey of filling in information for the first 20 years of the Babe's life. She dispelled longstanding myths of the Baltimore native and provided a keen insight into his personality. Afterward, she signed copies of her book.

Warren Grill, chef for the Washington Nationals, shared his memories of preparing meals for the Nats. He had many funny anecdotes of his years feeding major-league baseball players and the wonderful opportunities to meet a host of famous people along the way.



Warren Grill: Catering to the stars

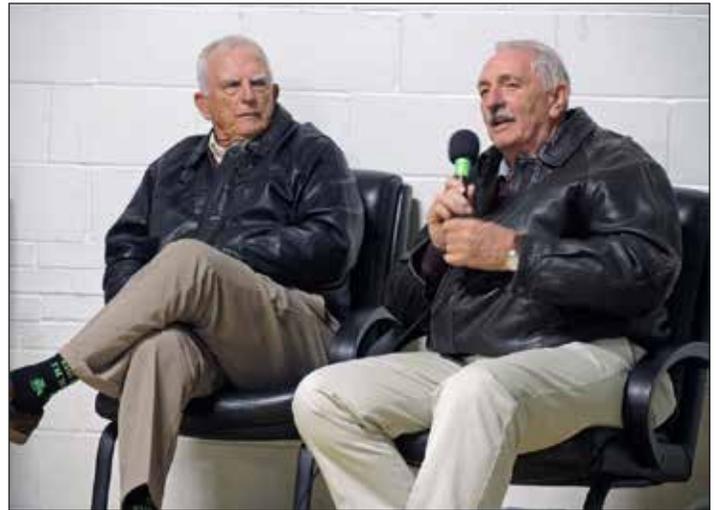
The day concluded with former Orioles Larry Haney and Ron Hansen sharing stories of their time in the majors. The panel was moderated by Bill Stetka, Director of Orioles Alumni.

In addition to a host of top-notch speakers, the group dined on barbecue catered by Mission BBQ. The event was planned and directed by Renee Coolbaugh of RCC Weddings and Events.

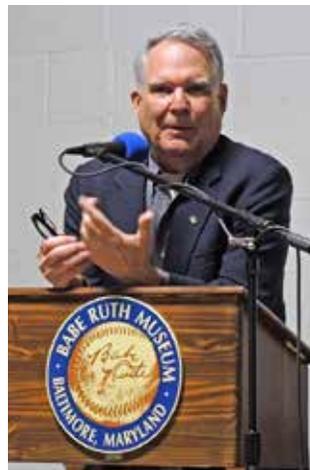
Although the day was cold, the presentations were warming to our souls and served as a reminder that Opening Day is just weeks away.



Charlie Vascellaro: baseball in Japanese internment camps during World War II.



Former Orioles Larry Haney (left) and Ron Hansen shared memories of their major-league experiences.



Former SABR president Cappy Gagnon



SABR treasurer F.X. Flinn



John Burbridge: Billy Martin at the Cross Keys Inn



A mike's-eye view of the proceedings.

<p>Catcher Mickey Tettleton/Terry Kennedy vs. Caleb Joseph/Chance Sisco/Austin Wynns</p>
<p>This one is easy. Although Tettleton was no great shakes as a receiver, he was a dangerous major-league hitter for several years and clearly laps the field. Solid edge for '88.</p>
<p>Designated hitter Eddie Murray/Larry Sheets/Jim Taber vs. Mark Trumbo and a bunch of spare parts</p>
<p>Murray gets the nod over Trumbo. Sheets was nothing special. Pretty much everyone on the '18 roster has taken a turn at DH. I'll go with Eddie and '88.</p>
<p>Bench Kennedy/Sheets/Taber/Gonzalez/Gerhart vs. Peterson/Valencia/Gentry/Anthony Santander</p>
<p>The current fad for bloated bullpens has pretty much done away with the idea of a bench. Probably the two best "bench players" on the '18 Orioles were Valenica and Gentry, both of whom were released so younger, inferior players could get a chance to show us nothing. I'm going with the '88 team here.</p>
<p>Top three starting pitchers Jose Bautista vs. Dylan Bundy</p>
<p><i>Retrosheet</i> regards Bautista as the ace of the '88 staff. I can't say I remember him. He was a rookie in '88 and bounced around the majors for a decade afterwards. Half of his career innings came in '88. Even with all his baggage, I have to take Dylan Bundy over this. Edge to '18.</p>
<p>Jay Tibbs vs. Alex Cobb</p>
<p>I do remember Jay Tibbs. He was awful. Sold edge to '18.</p>
<p>Jeff Ballard vs. Andre Cashner</p>
<p>Ballard had promise. He won 18 games the following year but stalled after that. I'm calling this one even.</p>
<p>Liberated starting pitcher Mike Boddicker vs. Kevin Gausman</p>
<p>Both these pitchers escaped in midseason to contending teams. How you rate this depends on whether you really believe Gausman has turned the corner. Maybe he has, but I need to see it. Edge to the '88 team.</p>
<p>Number 4 starting pitcher Oswaldo Peraza vs. David Hess</p>
<p>You had to have been there to fully realize how bad Peraza was. Hess clears the low bar. Edge to '18.</p>
<p>Washed-up starting pitcher Scott McGregor vs. Chris Tillman</p>
<p>McGregor's ERA was 8.83. Tillman was 10.46. McGregor was given four starts before being released. Tillman had seven. Seven minus four = three. Edge by subtraction goes to '88.</p>
<p>Closer Tim Niedenfuer vs. different people</p>
<p>Yes, the '88 team actually had a closer and he wasn't half bad. Edge to '88.</p>
<p>Bullpen Mark Williamson/Dave Schmidt/Doug Sisk/Mike Morgan/Mark Thurmond/Don Aase vs. Brad Brach/Miguel Castro/Mike Wright/Tanner Scott/ Mychael Givens/Paul Frey/ and others too numerous to mention</p>
<p>I like Castro. I like Givens. I don't especially like Scott, but the O's are high on him. I'm going with the '18 bunch because I think Camden Yards might make them look worse than they actually are.</p>

Putting it all together

The '88 team gets the edge at first base, shortstop, catcher, DH, bench, liberated starting pitcher, washed-up starting pitcher, and closer.

The '18 teams gets second base, left field, center field, starting pitcher 1, starting pitcher 2, starting pitcher 4, and the bullpen.

So the '88 team "wins" 8-7 (with three ties). And of course, the '88 disaster morphed into the '89 contender. So there's always hope. And that's why we keep coming back. What does the summer of 2019 have in store for us? Who knows, but I can hardly wait. Play Ball!

Julia Ruth Stevens Dead at 102

Julia Ruth Stevens, 102, the last surviving child of Babe Ruth, died March 9, 2019 in Henderson, Nev., of a pulmonary embolism, according to her son, Tom Stevens. "With the passing of Julia, it's kind of the end of the line for Babe Ruth, of people who knew him firsthand," said Mike Gibbons, director emeritus of the Babe Ruth Birthplace and Museum, told the *Baltimore Sun*. Gibbons told *The Sun* she often visited the museum and he had interviewed her many times there, where she regaled crowds with her memories of her father. "She always had time for one more autograph, even as she got older and older," he told *The Sun*. "She never stopped being an ambassador for her father, baseball and the museum."

Judy Johnson Memorial in Snow Hill

A memorial to Hall of Fame third baseman Judy Johnson will be placed in front of the library in in hometown of Snow Hill, Md., in April. William Julius Johnson was born in 1899 and died in 1989.

Johnson, who played in the Negro leagues in the 1920s and '30s, was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1975, the year after he resigned from the Hall of Fame's Committee on the Negro Baseball Leagues. He is regarded as one of the best third basemen in the Negro leagues.

A consortium of groups is responsible for the memorial: the Library Association of Worcester County, Worcester County Commissioners, mayor and town council of Snow Hill and the Worcester County Historical Society.

Trout Gets Huge Contract Extension

Making Tom Hanrahan's Page 7 article on Mike Trout all the timely: The Los Angeles Angels and Trout agreed on a contract extension of nearly \$430 million over 12 years.

The 27-year-old outfielder was already owed \$66.5 million for 2019 and 2020, based on the extension he signed in 2014. The extension would keep him under contract through 2030 and could be said to be \$360 million on top of the money remaining on his 2014 extension, or \$430 million for the next 12 years.

It is the richest deal in professional sports history, and will net Trout more than Bryce Harper will get from the 13-year, \$330 million contract he signed with the Philadelphia Phillies early in March; that one was the most lucrative in baseball for less than a month. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Trout's contract includes no opt-outs.

word essay got a bat and signed baseball from Ruth. The Yankees star reportedly judged the essays with the help of Salem High School English teacher Ada Ross. The winner was Jack McCullough of Salem.

When Ruth wasn't on stage for the four daily performances, he spent time throughout the city. He was taken on a tour by Capitol Theatre owner Frank Bligh. Ruth also visited students at the Oregon School for the Blind as well as the Oregon School for the Deaf. He went to the Chemawa Indian School and stopped by a boys training school.

Hundreds of people from Salem and the surrounding area saw Ruth at the Capitol Theatre. Some, like 14-year-old Richard Baker, wanted to meet him. The youngster was persistent, and he met the Babe and received a signed photograph. *The Capital Journal* reported what transpired: "Richard insisted on seeing Babe Ruth one night when he was here. He wasn't satisfied with just a glimpse, he wanted to see him, look him over, and even [have a] feel of him, if that high estate were possible to achieve. So he went to Frank Bligh with his troubles, and Frank saw that Richard got back to Babe's dressing room. A chat and the photograph followed."

After appearing on New Year's Day 1927 at the Pantages Theatre in San Francisco with boxer James J. Corbett, Ruth arrived on Jan. 2, 1927 in Los Angeles for a week of vaudeville shows.

Upon his arrival, Ruth was greeted by Mayor George Cryer, football coaches Pop Warner of Stanford and Howard Jones of Southern Cal, president Harry Williams of Pacific Coast Light, and the local heads of the Shriners, Elks and Knights of Columbus. In Los Angeles, Ruth performed three shows daily and four on Sunday.

After his vaudeville act in Los Angeles, Ruth traveled to San Diego. He arrived on Jan. 10 for a week's stay at the Pantages Theatre. For 25 cents, locals saw Ruth on a bill along with other vaudeville acts, which included Bishop & McKenzie and the oddly named "Ernest Evans & 1927 Ripples." As usual, there was a movie (a romantic silent flick *Love's Blindness* that is lost today).

On Jan. 14, one of the youngsters Ruth invited on stage in San Diego was an 8-year-old movie actress named Baby Annette Lumb, who recited a poem. Eight days later, Ruth traveled to Long Beach for an outing with his fishing party and a vaudeville show.

That day, Ruth was served with a warrant for violating labor laws during the late performance at the Pantages Theatre in San Diego on Jan. 14. Ruth learned that he'd been indicted by San Diego deputy state labor commissioner Stanley M. Gue on charges of violating labor law.

Gue, who was very publicity conscious, accused Ruth of making children part of his act without obtaining required work permits. He also charged Ruth with keeping Baby Annette Lumb onstage after a 10 PM curfew.

Jane Leavy, in *The Big Fella: Babe Ruth and the World He Created*, wrote what happened next: "Ruth turned himself in at the Long Beach Police Station in stage makeup and smelling of fish. He was photographed posting five hundred-dollar bills in the baseball uniform he wore for his act, street shoes, and the argyle sweater he had worn to the Rainbow Angling Club [a fishing resort in the San Bernardino Mountains]. 'I've only tried to give them a little bit of sunshine,' he said of the chil-

Babe Ruth on Tour ► From Page 10

dren whom he invited to the stage at every performance. ‘I have never been so mad in my life.’”

When the presiding judge in the child labor violation case in San Diego agreed to postpone the trial, Ruth continued the tour as planned. In February, a San Diego judge dismissed the charges and ridiculed Gue for demanding licenses for children “to step up onto a stage to get a free baseball.”

On Jan. 26, Ruth arrived in Salt Lake City for the final stop of his vaudeville act. Ruth’s performances were at the Pantages Theatre. Vaudeville stars such as Eddie Carr and Verna Hayworth preceded Ruth’s appearance on stage.

In Salt Lake City, Ruth visited the St. Ann’s Orphanage. *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported his visit to the orphanage: “Upon Ruth’s arrival, he met the baseball team and, as a surprise, presented an autographed bat to its captain, a nervous boy named Tony Renovich. A signed baseball was also gifted, but held in reserve for the boy who would lead the team in homers that year. As he stood in front of the assembled orphans, who didn’t have fathers to teach them baseball, Ruth demonstrated how to properly hold a bat. And it’s a safe bet that to wherever those children advanced throughout their lives, they never forgot that lesson.”

Of Ruth’s time in Salt Lake City, the local city newspaper reported: “For that week, Salt Lake City belonged to Babe Ruth, and, however briefly, Babe Ruth belonged to Salt Lake City.” The same could be said by the other cities that Babe Ruth visited in his celebrated 12-week vaudeville tour across the country in late 1926 and early 1927.

THE END

Note: Before travelling east from Salt Lake City, Ruth returned to California where he starred with Anna Q. Nilsson in his first movie, a silent sports comedy named *Babe Comes Home*.



Trivia Answer

	Finished season, then rehired	Never managed elsewhere
Billy Hitchcock 1962-63		
Earl Weaver 1968-82, 1985-86	X	X
Cal Ripken Sr. 1985-88		X
Johnny Oates 1991-94	X	
Phil Regan 1995		X
Lee Mazzilli 2004-05		X
Sam Perlozzo 2005-07	X	X
Dave Trembley 2007-10	X	X

