



Society For American Baseball Research Baseball Records Committee

Trent McCotter, Editor
trent.mccotter@gmail.com

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Not everything that counts is counted; not everything that is counted is worth counting. ---Albert Einstein

RECAP OF 2022 SABR RECORDS COMMITTEE MEETING IN BALTIMORE

The annual Records Committee meeting was held August 20, with presentations by **Herm Krabbenhoft** (“Achieving a .300 Batting Average ... by NOT Playing”) and by **Tom Thress** (discussing work he’s done on compiling statistics from the Negro Leagues). Thanks to Tom for also handling hosting duties for the meeting.

Herm has compiled a detailed article as a complement to his excellent presentation on batters who sat out the end of a season to keep their .300 average. A copy of that article is appended to this newsletter.

BALKING AROUND THE BASES

Miami Marlins reliever **Richard Bleier** made news on September 27, 2022, for racking up three balks during the eighth inning against the **New York Mets**. Even more noteworthy, all three balks occurred while one batter (**Pete Alonso**) was at the plate.

But Bleier is not the first pitcher with three balks during a single plate appearance. On April 30, 1885, **Charlie Sweeney** of the **St. Louis Maroons** had three balks in the first inning while **King Kelly** of the **Chicago White Stockings** was at bat. The next day’s *Chicago Tribune* noted that “Sweeney did not catch onto the new pitching rule, and after Gore was given a base on balls he scored on three successive balks by Sweeney. The spectators did not understand the rule either, and protested loudly.” The “new pitching rule” was the requirement that a pitcher must “do all his throwing to bases before he has taken his stride as if to pitch ball.” Sweeney apparently figured out the rule, as he subsequently allowed only one more run the rest of the game.

Sweeney’s “achievement” was discovered by the author a few years ago and is now shown in the *2021 Elias Book of Baseball Records*. The other pitchers known to have three balks in one inning are:

Milt Shoffner, Cleveland v. Philadelphia, May 12, 1930 (3rd inning)

Jim Owens, Cincinnati v. Los Angeles, April 24, 1963 (2nd inning)

Bob Shaw, Milwaukee v. Chicago, May 4, 1963 (3rd inning)

Don Heinkel, Detroit v. Oakland, May 3, 1988 (6th inning)

Jim Gott, Pittsburgh v. New York, August 6, 1988 (8th inning)

BETTER THAN THE BABE—AGAIN?

In the last newsletter, we noted that in June 2022, the **Los Angeles Angels' Shohei Ohtani** had 8 RBI in one game and then 13 strikeouts as a pitcher the next day, making him the first player to have an 8-RBI game and a 13-K pitching performance in the same season, let alone in back-to-back games.

By season's end, Ohtani drew another comparison to **Babe Ruth** by finishing the season with 34 home runs as a batter and 15 wins as a pitcher, making him only the second major leaguer to reach even double digits in both of those categories in the same season. The other of course was Ruth, who won 13 games and had 11 homers for the **Boston Red Sox** in 1918.

THE ULTIMATE-SQUARED GRAND SLAMS

In the old *Total Baseball* books, there was a list of batters who had hit game-winning grand slams when their team was down by three runs—aptly titled “ultimate grand slams.” Perhaps the ultimate-ultimate grand slam, however, would be when this feat was accomplished in extra innings.

On August 17, 2022, **Josh Donaldson** of the **New York Yankees** added his name to this list, hitting an ultimate grand slam in the 10th inning to beat the **Tampa Bay Rays** by a score of 8-7. The only other such ultimate-ultimate grand slams (i.e., in extra innings) are:

Babe Ruth, New York v. Chicago, September 24, 1925 (10th inning to win 6-5)

Roger Freed, St. Louis v. Houston, May 1, 1979 (11th inning to win 7-6)

Jason Giambi, New York v. Minnesota, May 17, 2002 (14th inning to win 13-12)

Ryan Roberts, Arizona v. Los Angeles, September 27, 2011 (10th inning to win 7-6)

And if we want the “ultimate-cubed grand slams”: Freed's and Roberts' slams both came with 2 outs.

SWAT MARGIN

Aaron Judge of the **New York Yankees** not only set a new American League record for home runs in a season with 62, but he also finished 16 homers ahead of any other player in the major leagues (**Kyle Schwarber** of the **Phillies** finished runner-up with 46 homers).

That is the biggest margin of victory for the home run crown since 1932, when **Jimmie Foxx** of the **Philadelphia Athletics** hit 58 and Babe Ruth of the **New York Yankees** hit 41. The record margin belongs, of course, to Ruth himself, who in 1920 hit 35 more homers than any other batter (beating **George Sisler** of the **St. Louis Browns** by a total of 54 to 19).

INSTANT CONTACT

Committee member **Dan Hill** sends along this note about **Steven Kwan**:

Kwan, who helped Cleveland win the AL Central title in 2022, displayed strike-zone knowledge and ability to put the ball in play that placed him among the elite rookies since divisional play began in 1969. The left fielder became the first rookie since **Dustin Pedroia** in 2007 to qualify for the batting championship by making the required 502 plate appearances (PA) while walking more than he struck out.

He also ranks eighth on the ensuing chart of rookies in the divisional era to compile the most PA with more bases on balls (BB) than strikeouts (K):

Name	Year	PA	BB	K	BA/OBP/SLG	Pos.
Johnny Ray	1982	703	36	34	.281/.318/.382	2B
Alvin Davis	1984	678	97	78	.284/.391/.497	1B
Greg Gross	1974	676	76	39	.314/.393/.377	RF
Ozzie Smith	1978	668	47	43	.258/.311/.312	SS
Tim Teufel	1984	652	76	73	.262/.349/.400	2B
Kenny Lofton	1992	651	68	54	.285/.362/.365	CF
Ted Sizemore	1969	650	45	40	.271/.328/.342	2B
Steven Kwan	2022	638	62	60	.298/.373/.400	LF
Chuck Knoblauch	1991	636	59	40	.281/.351/.350	2B
Billy Doran	1983	629	86	67	.271/.371.364	2B

Interestingly, despite such keen awareness of the strike zone, only one of these batters achieved a .300 batting average for the season.

MUCH BETTER THAN THEIR RECORDS

Dan Hill also passed along this interesting note about **Aaron Nola**, who is currently leading the **Philadelphia Phillies** into a surprise playoff run:

In 2022, Nola, displayed enough skill and endured enough bad luck during the 2022 regular season to earn second place on an all-time list requiring both. The right-hander recorded a win-loss (W-L) record of 11-13, 235 K and 29 BB, making him only the second hurler since 1900 to finish with a losing W-L record, at least 200 innings pitched (IP) and a K-to-BB ratio of greater than 8-to-1.

Nine prior players have had a losing record with 200+ IP and even a 5-to-1 K-to-BB ratio:

Name	Year	W-L	IP	K	BB	Ratio
Ben Sheets	2004	12-14	237	264	32	8.25
Aaron Nola	2022	11-13	205	235	29	8.10
Cliff Lee	2012	6-9	211	207	28	7.39
Cy Young	1905	18-19	320.2	210	30	7.00
Jeff Samardzija	2017	9-15	207.2	205	32	6.41
Cy Young	1906	13-21	287.2	140	25	5.60
Greg Swindell	1991	9-16	238	169	31	5.45
Corey Kluber	2015	9-16	222	245	45	5.44
Brandon McCarthy	2014	10-15	200	175	33	5.30
Brad Radke	2005	9-12	200.2	117	23	5.09

ACHIEVING A .300 SEASON—BY NOT PLAYING

As noted on page one, Committee member **Herm Krabbenhoft** gave an excellent presentation during this year's Committee meeting about batters who sat out games to keep a .300 average—hardly shades of **Ted Williams** playing the season finale double-header in 1941 to bat .406.

To maintain proper formatting, Herm's full article is appended to this newsletter, starting on the very next page. We are pleased to provide this exhaustive work as another in the Committee's series of longer pieces featuring excellent and interesting research.

Players Who Achieved a .300 Batting Average ... by *NOT* Playing

A Decade-by-Decade Survey (1920-2022)

Herm Krabbenhoft

“At some point in the 1880s.’ says John Thorn, MLB’s official historian, ‘.300 came to be seen as a good barometer of batting skill, as no National League club had batted .300 between 1877 and 1892. The .300 mark survived as a benchmark for good hitters even after the 1894 campaign when NL hitters averaged .309.”[1] Nowadays, however, the traditional batting average is not viewed with esteem and utility by many baseball analysts.[2]

Nonetheless, batting .300 is still highly regarded today by players (and managers), as illustrated by the opinion given by Albert Pujols for a 2019 article on .300 hitters — *“Definitely!” Pujols exclaimed when asked if .300 means something to him. “It’s very special to be able to hit .300 in this game, even in the course of a year. It’s not easy to hit .300 in this game. It’s pretty special. If someone doesn’t care about it, they’re crazy. It’s something they should focus on all the time. It’s not easy.”*[3] For the record, it is noted that during his 22-year ML career (2001-2022) Pujols achieved a .300 batting average in ten seasons (2001-2010) and finished with a lifetime batting average of .296.

The high regard players have for hitting .300 has been demonstrated numerous times throughout MLB’s history — by players choosing to prematurely end their seasons in order to preserve their .300 batting averages. Thus, during the past 103 major league seasons (1920-2022) a multitude of players has chosen to *not* play in their team’s final game(s) of the season or to leave their last game early to avoid plate appearances, which, if resulting in outs, would have caused their batting averages to fall below .300. For example, Mr. October in the Yankees’ final game in 1980 — *“And Reggie Jackson reached the .300 mark for the first time in his [14-year] major-league career. Jackson batted in the second and sliced a triple into the left-field corner. It gave him an average of .2996108, which translates officially to .300 when rounded to the next whole number. His first .300 assured, Reggie removed himself from the game with figures of .300, 41 home runs, and 111 RBIs. At the time, he led Milwaukee’s Ben Oglivie by one homer for the league lead and chose to gamble against Oglivie hitting a home run rather than risk his .300 average. It was a bad gamble as Oglivie homered in the ninth against Oakland and tied Jackson for the home run title.”*[4]

In this article I present the results of my research to ascertain the identities of those players who “chose” to protect their .300 batting averages by (A) *NOT* playing in their team’s final game(s) of the season or (B) by *NOT* playing the entire game, i.e., leaving their team’s final game early so as to avoid at bats which, if resulting in outs, would give a sub-.300 batting average. As it turned out, there have been a number of interesting aspects associated with this group of players — herewith dubbed as “Did Not Play .300 Hitters” (DNP-.300 Hitters). The time period covered is 1920 through 2022, i.e., from the beginning of the live ball era through the just completed 2022 campaign.

As will be seen, not all DNP-.300 hitters actually “chose” to not play. Some players were injured and physically precluded from playing. For example, in 1959 Bill Tuttle of the Kansas City Athletics had a .301 batting average through the first game of the double header on September 13. In the second game he grounded out in his first at bat, which reduced his batting average to an even .300 (precisely, .30022). Then, in the bottom of the first frame he broke the finger on his right hand, which shelved him for the remainder of the season; he missed the last 12 games remaining on the KC schedule. The importance of batting .300 for Tuttle was apparent from the coverage of the game provided in *The Kansas City Star* — which included a sidebar with the headline **At Least Bill Tuttle Gets His .300**. In the article, sports writer Joe McGuff quoted Tuttle as saying, “*Did I end the season hitting .300?*”[5] Other DNP-.300 hitters did not play because their managers wanted to rest them before upcoming post-season games, as exemplified by Rusty Greer being held out of the Rangers’ final two games of the 1999 campaign. Still other DNP-.300 hitters were not in the lineup for the final game because their manager wanted to make sure that the player finished the season with a .300 batting average; such was the case for Harold Reynolds in 1989. As it turns out, it’s not always clear, based on the game accounts provided in various newspapers, if the player or his manager (or both) decided that the player would not play to preserve the .300 average.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Using the Stathead search engine on Baseball-Reference, I generated a list of players who achieved a full-season batting average of at least .29950 while accumulating 400 or more at bats (or qualifying for the batting championship in the abbreviated seasons of 1981 and 2020). Next, using Retrosheet’s Daily Records for each player and Retrosheet’s Game Logs for each player’s team, I identified those players (A) who did *NOT* play in their team’s final game(s) or (B) who left their last game early. I then checked the game accounts provided in newspapers to ascertain interesting aspects for those players who “chose” to *NOT* play in order to preserve their .300 batting averages. In addition, I also used this procedure to identify all players who achieved an interim .300 batting average during their team’s final game of the season. This information is important with regard to the conclusion that “the performance of baseball players is consistent with the notion that a round number, a batting average of .300, can act as a goal and influence behavior.”[6]

RESULTS

[A] Frequency of DNP-.300 Hitters

According to my research, there have been 129 players who employed the DNP-.300 technique during the 1920-2022 period; there were a total of 136 DNP-.300s, meaning that some players had multiple DNP-.300s. Before focusing on the players themselves, it is beneficial to get an appreciation for the numbers of players who utilized the DNP-.300 strategy from a chronological perspective. Table 1a presents the number of DNP-.300 hitters on a decade-by-decade basis for the 1920-2019 period. Also included in Table 1a are the number of team-seasons within each decade.

As can be seen, the number of DNP-.300 hitters has generally increased from decade to decade — from four in the 1920s decade to five to seven to eleven followed by a substantial decrease to just four in the 1960s decade. The trend of increasing numbers returned with twelve DNP-.300 hitters in the 1970s decade followed by 16, 22, and 32 through the 2000s decade before falling off to 17 during the 2010s decade. It is also noted that, as consequence of MLB’s expansion in the number of major league franchises beginning with the 1960s decade, the number of team-seasons within each

subsequent decade has increased. Thus, to make decade-to-decade comparisons more manageable, I have normalized the number of DNP-.300 hitters to 160 team-seasons. The normalized numbers are provided in Table 1b.

Table 1a. The Number of DNP-.300 Hitters in Each Decade (1920-2019).

Decade	\sum Team-Seasons (T-S)	DNP-.300 Hitters
1920-29	160	4
1930-39	160	5
1940-49	160	7
1950-59	160	11
1960-69	198	4
1970-79	246	12
1980-89	260	16
1990-93; 1995-99	250	22
2000-09	300	32
2010-19	300	17

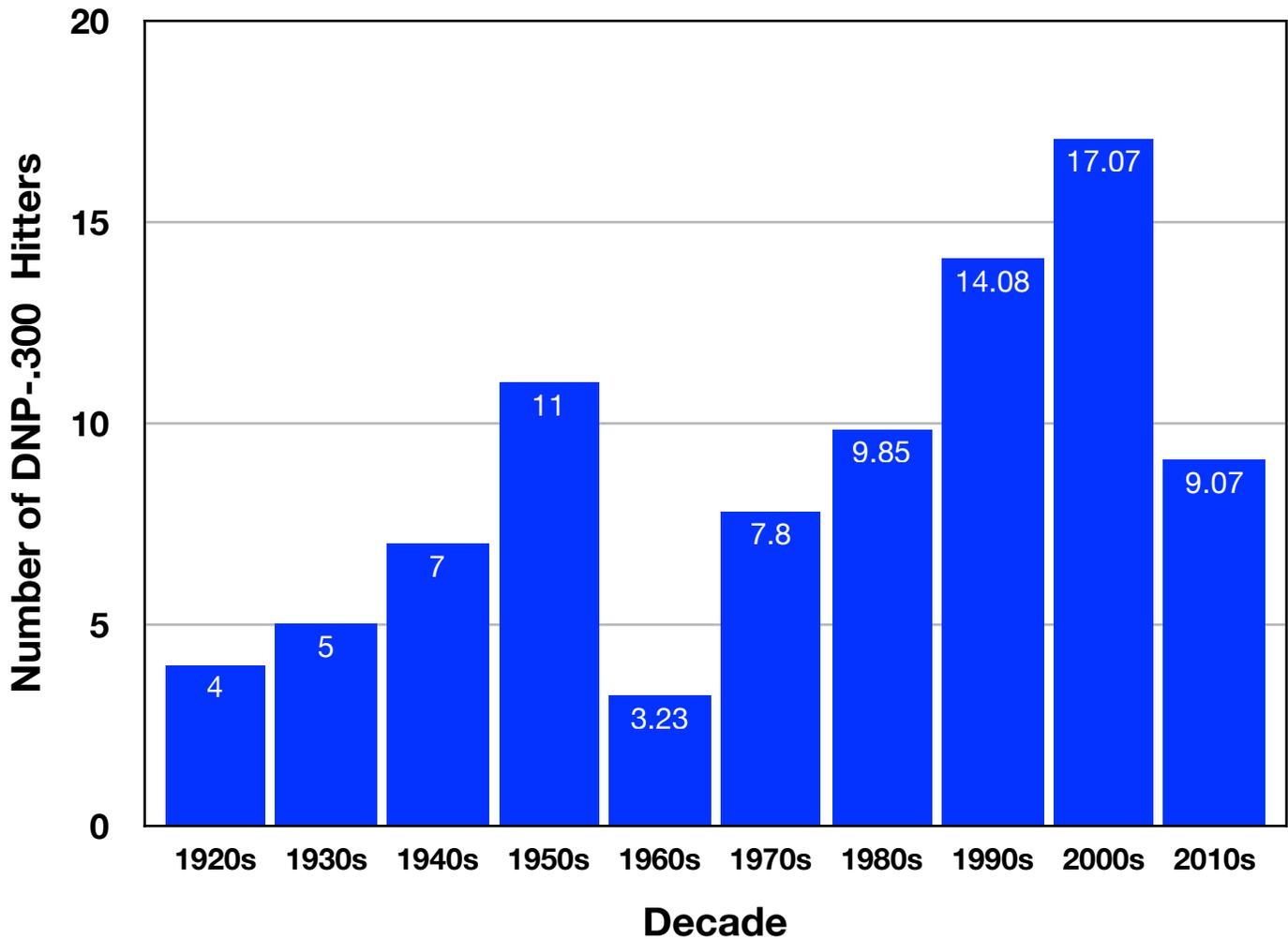
NOTES: (1) The 1990-1999 decade does not include the 1994 season because a players' strike resulted in the season not having any of the scheduled final games being played.

Table 1b. The Normalized Number of DNP-.300 Hitters in Each Decade (1920-2019).

Decade	\sum Team-Seasons (T-S)	DNP-.300 Hitters (Actual)	DNP-.300 Hitters (Normalized, 160 T-S)
1920-29	160	4	4.00
1930-39	160	5	5.00
1940-49	160	7	7.00
1950-59	160	11	11.00
1960-69	198	4	3.23
1970-79	246	12	7.80
1980-89	260	16	9.85
1990-93; 1995-99	250	22	14.08
2000-09	300	32	17.07
2010-19	300	17	9.07

As can be seen, the normalized number of DNP-.300 hitters has increased from four in the 1920s to nine in the 2010s, with the highest number having been 17 during the 2000s. To visualize the chronology of the normalized number of DNP-.300 hitters Figure 1 presents a bar graph of the data. Clearly, the importance of achieving a .300 batting average has been continuous and generally increasing across the decades between the 1920s and the 2010s.

Figure 1. Bar Graph of the Normalized Number of DNP-.300 Hitters in Each Decade (1920-2019).



[B] Survey of DNP-.300 Hitters

Moving on now to the players who achieved a .300 batting average by having not played in the their team's final game(s) of the season, Table 2 presents an alphabetical listing of the DNP-.300 players; Tables 3 through 13 present the pertinent information for each DNP-.300 hitter in chronological order.

Table 2. Alphabetical List of DNP-.300 Hitters (1920-2022)

<i>Hank Aaron</i>	Earle Combs	<i>Richie Hebner</i>	Pepper Martin	Benito Santiago
<i>Bobby Abreu (2)</i>	<i>Joey Cora</i>	George Hendrick	Gary Matthews	Ron Santo
<i>Roberto Alomar</i>	Doc Cramer	Walter Holke	Bake McBride	Richie Scheinblum
<i>Jose Altuve</i>	<i>Harry Danning</i>	Matt Holliday	Ducky Medwick	<i>Jean Segura</i>
Rich Aurelia	<i>Alvin Dark</i>	Austin Jackson	<i>Orlando Merced</i>	Norm Siebern
<i>Bobby Avila</i>	<i>Corey Dickerson</i>	Conor Jackson	<i>Doug Mientkiewicz</i>	<i>Harry Simpson</i>
Gus Bell	Shawon Dunston	<i>Reggie Jackson</i>	Dale Mitchell	Chris Singleton
Carlos Beltran	Adam Eaton	Brook Jacoby	<i>Jerry Mumphrey</i>	Ken Singleton
Adrian Beltre	Scott Fletcher	John Jaha	Dale Murphy	Enos Slaughter
<i>Hank Blalock</i>	Cliff Floyd	Derek Jeter	John Olerud	<i>Eddie Stanky</i>
Bruce Bochte	George Foster	<i>Jacque Jones</i>	<i>Al Oliver</i>	<i>Evar Swanson</i>
Xander Bogaerts	Bill Freehan	<i>Jason Kendall</i>	<i>David Ortiz</i>	Mike Sweeney
Bobby Bonilla	Freddie Freeman	Adam Kennedy	David Peralta	Cesar Tovar
<i>Mike Bordick</i>	<i>Rafael Furcal</i>	Paul Konerko	<i>Gerald Perry</i>	Alan Trammell
<i>Phil Bradley</i>	<i>Ralph Garr (2)</i>	<i>Corey Koskie</i>	Brandon Phillips	<i>Melvin Upton</i>
Michael Brantley	<i>Doug Glanville</i>	<i>Jason Kubel</i>	Mike Piazza	Elmer Valo
Scott Brosius	Luis Gonzalez	Joe Kuhel	<i>A.J. Pierzynski (3)</i>	<i>Arky Vaughan</i>
Brett Butler	<i>Mike Greenwell</i>	<i>Carney Lansford</i>	Luis Polonia	Mo Vaughn
<i>Lorenzo Cain</i>	Rusty Greer	Tony Lazzeri	Aramis Ramirez (2)	<i>Fernando Vina</i>
Alberto Callaspo	<i>Ken Griffey Jr</i>	<i>Carlos Lee</i>	<i>Jose Reyes</i>	<i>Dixie Walker</i>
Johnny Callison	<i>Marquis Grissom</i>	Ron LeFlore	Harold Reynolds	<i>Vernon Wells</i>
Jamey Carroll	<i>Dick Groat</i>	Mike Lieberthal	<i>Alex Rodriguez</i>	<i>Sam West</i>
Starlin Castro (2)	<i>Pedro Guerrero</i>	<i>Nicky Lopez</i>	Ivan Rodriguez	Randy Winn
<i>Frank Catalanotto</i>	Vladimir Guerrero	Greg Luzinski	Al Rosen	Gene Woodling
Shin-Soo Choo (2)	Stan Hack	<i>Nick Markakis</i>	Jack Rothrock	Christian Yelich
Will Clark	Bucky Harris	Al Martin	Tim Salmon	-----

NOTES: (1) A number in parentheses following a player's name gives the number of times the player utilized the DNP-.300 strategy. (2) A player's name shown in italics indicates that his DNP-.300 was less than .30000 but equal to or greater than .29950. Abreu and Garr each had one such DNP-.300; Pierzynski had two such DNP-.300s.

The 1920s Decade

As shown in Table 3, there were 4 players from the 1920s decade who utilized the DNP strategy to secure their .300 batting averages — Bucky Harris, Walter Holke, Jack Rothrock, and Evar Swanson. Each player entered his last game with a sub-.300 batting average but proceeded to collect enough hits to elevate his average to .300; the player then left the game, being replaced by a player who had one or more plate appearances. For three of the players — Harris, Rothrock, and Swanson — their last games were their team’s final game. For Holke, his last game was his team’s penultimate game. For Holke, Rothrock, and Swanson, had each of them remained in his last game and been retired in the plate appearances avoided, their batting averages would have been reduced to below .300 (to .29912, .29895, and .29913, respectively). Had Harris remained in his last game and been retired in his avoided plate appearance, his batting average would have declined to .29980, which would round up to a “toenail” .300.[7] Thus, Harris executed a perfect titration of his at bats — starting the final game with a .29482 average, he hit safely in his first at bat to raise his average to .29622. He then collected another hit in his second at bat to up his average to .29762. In his third at bat he produced another hit, elevating his average to .29901. And in his fourth at bat he reached the ideal endpoint of his titration by collecting his fourth hit of the game, producing a batting average of .30040; i.e., a “pure” (not a rounded-up “toenail”) .300.

Table 3. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1920-29]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1920	Bucky Harris (WAS)	10-03	152/506	.30040	“0”	.295—[4/4]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
1924	Walter Holke (PHP)	9-27	169/563	.30018	1+	.299—[1/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 6]
1929	Jack Rothrock (BOS)	10-06	142/473	.30021	“0”	.299—[1/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1929	Evar Swanson (CIN)	10-06	172/574	.29965	“0”	.296—[3/3]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]

NOTES: (1) The “LG” column gives the date of the player’s Last Game. (2) The “H/AB” column gives the player’s Hits and At Bats for the entire season, as shown on the Baseball-Reference website. (3) The “BA” column gives the player’s final official Batting Average for the season, expressed to five decimal places. (4) The “GNP” column gives the number of Games Not Played by the player. A “0” entry indicates that the player *did* play in his team’s final game, but left the game before it was completed. A “+” indicates that the player also left his last game before it was completed. (5) The “Last Game NOTES” column provides what the player did in his last game — (a) the first number gives the player’s batting average at the start of the game; (b) the bracketed entry gives the player’s hits and at bats in his last game; (c) the number following the arrow gives the player’s final batting average; (d) the “RP (x PA)” term indicates that another player replaced the player and had x Plate Appearances; (e) the “[PAA = y]” term gives the total number (y) of Plate Appearances Avoided by the player. For simplicity, four (4) plate appearances are assigned for each game not played by the player. To illustrate — Walter Holke had one (1+) GNP; in his *last* game (not Philadelphia’s final game) he collected one (1) hit in two (2) at bats, which raised his batting average from .299 to .300; the player who replaced him in the batting lineup had two (2) plate appearances; thus, Holke had a total of six (6) Plate Appearances Avoided — 2 from his last game and 4 from the game (his team’s final game) in which he did not play.

A few other interesting items about these four players are mentioned here. Bucky Harris’s DNP-.300 was the only .300 batting average he achieved in his entire playing career (1919-1931, 1920-1928 full-time seasons). Thus, he accomplished his .300 in his rookie season. It should also be pointed out that according to the Retrosheet Discrepancy File, Harris had one more at bat and one more hit in 1920 than given in the official records. Thus, according to Retrosheet’s account for the game on May 16, 1920, Harris had five (5) at bats, while the official Day-By-Day (DBD) records show him with four

(4) at bats. Retrosheet does not yet have a Play-By-Play (PBP) account of this game. For the game on August 22, 1920, Retrosheet shows Harris with two (2) hits while the official DBD records show him with one (1) hit. Retrosheet's PBP for this game states that Harris (a) singled in the first inning, (b) grounded out in the second inning, (c and d) popped out in the fifth and seventh sessions, and (e) singled in the ninth stanza. So, if major league baseball accepts Retrosheet's information, Harris would have an official batting average of .302. Like Harris, Rothrock's DNP-.300 was his only full-season .300. Also like Harris, Swanson achieved his DNP-.300 as a rookie. In his last game, Holke began with a .299 (.29893). After singling in his first at bat (in the second inning), raising his average to .301 (.30071), he was retired in his second at bat (in the fourth inning), dropping his average to .300 (.30018). He would have had his next at bat in the seventh inning, but was pinch hit for. Had he batted for himself and been retired, his average would have still been .300 (.29964). Had he remained in the game till the end and also been retired in his fourth at bat, his average would have fallen below .300 — .29912. In the newspaper coverage of the game, three relevant items were reported — “Holke was hurt in this putout of Terry, Giant first baseman, in second;”[8(a)] “Holke was spiked by Bill Terry and obliged to retire;”[8(b)] “Holke retired in favor of a pinch-hitter in the seventh.”[8(c)] While the second inning spike injury may have played a part in Holke being obliged to retire from the game in the top of the seventh, his .300 batting average was simultaneously preserved, and then cemented when he did not play at all in the Phillies final game the next day.

The 1930s Decade

Table 4 presents the pertinent formation for the five players who utilized the DNP-.300 technique during the 1930s decade.

Table 4. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1930-39]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1931	Pepper Martin (SLC)	9-26	124/413	.30024	2+	.299—[1/1]—>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 11]
1932	Tony Lazzeri (NYY)	9-25	153/510	.30000	“0”	.299—[1/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1933	Earle Combs (NYY)	10-01	125/417	.29976	“0”	.300—[1/3]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
1935	Sam West (SLB)	9-28 (1)	158/527	.29981	3+	.298—[PH 1/1]—>.300 (3 PA) [PAA = 15]
1939	Joe Kuhel (CWS)	10-01	164/546	.30037	“0”	.299—[2/4]—>.300; RP (1 PA); [PAA = 1]

Pepper Martin, a rookie on the 1931 St. Louis Cardinals, had an interesting DNP-.300 story. In the third-to-last regular season game, “Pepper fell as he rounded first on some soft ground after making a single in the second inning and sprained his left knee. After receiving first aid he walked to the clubhouse where the club trainer bandaged the knee and gave it as his opinion that Pepper would be able to play tomorrow.”[9] However, he did not play in the final 2 games (a Sunday double header), probably as a safeguard so he would be fully ready to play in the upcoming World Series, starting on Thursday. The precautionary strategy was beneficial — it certainly secured his regular-season .300 and probably contributed to his stellar performance in the Fall Classic — 12 hits in 24 at bats.

Two of the five DNP-.300 hitters from the 1930s decade were eventually elected (via Veterans Committees) to the Baseball Hall of Fame — Tony Lazzeri and Earle Combs. In the Yankees final

game of the 1932 campaign, Lazzeri went 1-for-2 to lift his average from .299 to .300 and then took the rest of the day off. Combs began the Yankees final game of the 1933 season with a .300 (.29952) average. It was a “meaningless” game as New York was in second place, eight games behind the pennant-winning Washington Senators and 19 and a half games ahead of the third-place Philadelphia Athletics. Nonetheless, Combs played — he walked in the first inning; doubled in the second stanza (which elevated his average to .30120); flied out in the fourth frame (which lowered his average to .30048); and grounded out in the sixth session (which dropped his average to .29976). Combs was scheduled to bat in the eighth inning; but Dixie Walker was called on to pinch hit for him. Had Combs taken his turn at bat and been retired, his average would have fallen to .29904. So, Combs ended up keeping his *official* .300. However, according to Retrosheet’s Discrepancy File, there are two games with discrepancies which could impact Combs’ actual 1933 batting average. According to Retrosheet, Combs had four (4) at bats in the game on June 17 at Chicago, not five (5) at bats as given in the official Day-By-Day (DBD) records. More significantly, Retrosheet shows that Combs played in the second game of the double header on July 26 in Boston, going hitless in five (5) at bats; the official DBD records show that Combs did not play in that game. Retrosheet has Batter-By-Batter Play-By-Play accounts for each of these games to support its discrepancy claims. So, if major league baseball accepts Retrosheet’s information, Combs will actually have a final 1933 batting average of .29691.

“Well, you know, if you don’t hit .300, you’re a lousy hitter. Any time, even today [i.e., the 1983-1984 time period]. If you hit .300, you’re a great hitter; if you hit .299, you’re a lousy hitter. Just that one point difference.” [10] That’s what Sam West said about hitting .300 for a career. West, who played in the majors from 1927 through 1942, collected eight batting-title-qualifying .300 seasons in assembling a lifetime .299 batting average. As the 1935 season was coming to a close, West’s batting average was hovering around .300, i.e., between a point or two above or below the cherished mark. After the 9-21 game he was at .300; after the 9-22 game he was at .297; after the first game on 9-24 he was at .301 and after the second game he was at .298. He did not play in the 9-25 game. The Browns then had open dates on 9-26 and 9-27. While West did not start in the first game of the double header on 9-28, he did come in as pinch hitter, delivering a single, which elevated his average to .300. That turned out to be his final appearance in 1935, as he did not play in the second game nor in either of the two games in the season-ending double header on 9-29. It was apparently not reported why West played (as a pinch hitter) in just one of the Browns final five games. His customary center field position was filled by rookie Mel Mazzera in three games and by Ray Pepper and Moose Solters in the other two games. Whatever the reason(s) for West’s not playing in the Browns final three games, West emerged as a “great hitter” in 1935.

Joe Kuhel’s final game is another example of a player titrating his at bats based on the results of previous at bats. Kuhel began Chicago’s final game with a .29889 average. He singled in his first at bat, giving him a .30018 mark. This afforded him a buffer to be retired in his next at bat and still retain his .300. That’s exactly what happened when he remained in the game and was retired in his second at bat, which lowered his average to .29963. Apparently feeling confident he could get a hit in at least one of the next two plate appearances he was likely to have, he continued playing — but he was retired in his third at bat, which reduced his average to a sub-.300 — .29908. Fortunately, he was able to smack a single in his fourth at bat, restoring his average to .300 (.30037). He then left the game — even though he was guaranteed of having at least a “toenail” .300 average (.29982) if he made an out in his fifth at bat.

The 1940s Decade

Moving on now to the players from the 1940-1949 decade who protected their .300 batting averages by not playing in their team's final game, Table 5 provides the pertinent information.

Table 5. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1940-49]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1940	Harry Danning (NYG)	9-28	157/524	.29962	1	.297 — [3/5] —>.300; [PAA = 4]
1940	Arky Vaughan (PIT)	9-29	178/594	.29966	"0"	.298 — [2/3] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1942	Joe Medwick (BRK)	9-25	166/553	.30018	2+	.301 — [PH 0/1] —>.300; (3 PA) [PAA = 11]
1942	Stan Hack (CHC)	9-27 (1)	166/553	.30018	1	.299 — [2/4] —>.300; [PAA = 4]
1943	Doc Cramer (DET)	9-29 (2)	182/606	.30033	3	.298 — [3/5] —>.300; [PAA = 12]
1945	Dixie Walker (BRK)	9-30	182/607	.29984	"0"	.299 — [1/1] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1947	Elmer Valo (PHA)	9-26 (2)	111/370	.30000	2	.295 — [3/4] —>.300; [PAA = 8]

NOTE: Valo, who had only 370 at bats, is included in the tabulation since he played in 112 games (thereby satisfying the unofficial requirement of playing in at least 100 games to qualify for the batting average title).

The 1940s decade produced seven DNP-.300 hitters, including Hall of Famers Arky Vaughan and Ducky Medwick. Vaughan's DNP-.300 seems pretty straightforward — in Pittsburgh's final game in 1940, he raised his batting average from .298 to .300 by collecting two hits in his first three at bats and then leaving the game, forgoing the two plate appearances that his replacement had, and thereby securing his .300. In contrast, Medwick's DNP-.300 was rather choppy. After the 9-16 game he had .307 BA. Then he went 0-for-4 and 0-for-5 in the next 2 games, reducing his average to .302. After not playing in the next 3 games, he then went 0-for-3 in the 9-22 game, further lowering his average to .301. He did not play in next 2 games. Then, on 9-25 he was retired as a PH, which dropped his average to .300, which turned out to be his final BA since he did not play in Brooklyn's final 2 games. Insight into the choppiness of Medwick's performance during the last two weeks of the season is provided by the following newspaper items — [September 21] "Joe Medwick hasn't been hitting recently, and there was a report that Medwick had asked Manager Leo Durocher to bench him." [11(a)] [September 27] "Joe Medwick was outhitting all three but the Dodger outfielder has slipped badly in Brooklyn's nose-dive." [11(b)] [September 29] "Usually, when a championship team loses the next year, there is dissension. But this [Brooklyn] club was remarkably, almost completely free of any wrangle. Lone guy in disfavor was Joe Medwick. Joe wasn't on the train from Philly. He headed directly home to St. Louis. Word was that Joe, two weeks ago, conceded the pennant to St. Louis and asked club officials to arrange his transportation home from Philly on the last day of the season. They did so. And Durocher promptly benched him for the rest of the campaign." [11(c)]

Dixie Walker's DNP-.300 has an interesting feature — Going into Brooklyn's final game in 1945, "The People's Cherce" had a BA of .29868. After drawing a base on balls in the first inning, he uncharacteristically laid down a bunt single in the his next plate appearance, leading off the top of the fourth frame. Then, to finalize his .300 batting average, in the bottom of the fourth he was replaced in the field by Eddie Basinski (who took over the shortstop position for Tommy Brown, who moved to

Walker's right field territory). Here's what was reported in *The Brooklyn Eagle*: "Dixie Walker got a bunt base hit which he needed to finish with .300." [12] For perspective, it is pointed out that Walker — as a bunter — had only ten sacrifice bunts during the four seasons from 1943 through 1946 (four, three, one, two, respectively). Walker's DNP-.300 in 1945 was the sixth of nine .300 seasons he assembled in his ML career, which included a .357 for the 1944 NL batting crown.

The 1950s Decade

As shown in Table 6, eleven players joined the DNP-.300 hitters fraternity in the 1950s decade. Eddie Stanky was involved in two of them. First, playing with the New York Giants in 1950, he secured the only full-season .300 batting average in his 11-year ML career (1943-1953) thanks to the DNP-.300 strategy. As reported in the *Boston Globe*, for the October 01 game between New York and Boston, "Stanky singled over second to open the Giant first. It was The Brat's 1000th ML hit and he was given the ball by umpire Al Barlick. Stanky then left the game, taking his bat, ball, and glove with him." He was replaced by pinch runner Bill Rigney. Manager Durocher then replaced each of the remaining starters in the second and third innings such that each starter (except starting pitcher George Spencer) had only one at bat. [13] Since Stanky began the final game with a .298 batting average, his game-starting single elevated his average to .300 (.29981), which, thanks to skipper Durocher's wholesale change in the lineup, was locked in place.

Table 6. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1950-59]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1950	Eddie Stanky (NYG)	10-01	158/527	.29981	"0"	.298 — [1/1] —> .300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
1952	Enos Slaughter (SLC)	9-26	153/510	.30000	2	.298 — [2/3] —> .300; [PAA = 8]
1952	Bobby Avila (CLE)	9-27	179/597	.29983	1+	.297 — [2/2] —> .300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 6]
1953	Dale Mitchell (CLE)	9-23	150/500	.30000	3+	.300 — [1/4] —> .300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 13]
1953	Gus Bell (CIN)	9-26	183/610	.30000	1	.301 — [1/5] —> .300; [PAA = 4]
1953	Al Dark (NYG)	9-27	194/647	.29985	"0"	.299 — [1/2] —> .300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
1954	Al Rosen (CLE)	9-26	140/466	.30043	"0"	.301 — [PH 0/1] —> .300; [PAA = 3]
1955	Harry Simpson (<i>KCA</i>)	9-24	119/397	.29975	1	.300 — [1/4] —> .300; [PAA = 4]
1958	Dick Groat (PIT)	9-26	175/584	.29966	2	.297 — [3/4] —> .300; [PAA = 8]
1958	Norm Siebern (NYY)	9-28 (1)	138/460	.30000	"1"	.298 — [2/3] —> .300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5] DR
1959	Gene Woodling (BAL)	9-23	132/440	.30000	3	.300 — [1/4] —> .300; [PAA = 12]

NOTES: (1) The "[PAA = 3]" entry for Al Rosen was determined as follows — while he did play in his team's final game, he entered the game as a pinch hitter and did not remain in the game; thus, he essentially had 3 plate appearances avoided, the same as a player who started the game and left after 1 plate appearance and having his replacement have 3 plate appearances. (2) Harry Simpson's team (*KCA*) is shown in italics because he played for two teams (Cleveland and Kansas City); his season-ending team was Kansas City. (3) The GNP entry for Norm Siebern ("1") indicates that while he did play in his team's final game of the season, he came into the game as a Defensive Replacement (DR) and had no plate appearances, i.e., essentially not playing (*as a batter*) in the game. "DR" is also included in the Last Game NOTES.

Stanky's second DNP-.300 came a couple years later (in 1952), with the St. Louis Cardinals, when he was the player-manager of the Red Birds. As reported in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*: "[Manager] Eddie Stanky said he would protect the .300 batting averages of Capt. Enos Slaughter and Red Schoendienst. 'Personally, I don't judge ball players by statistics, but those fellas have done a great job,' Stanky said. 'And I'm going to see that statistically they're as great as I think they are.'" Slaughter entered the third-to-last game of the season with a .29783 average. He then went 2-for-3 plus a walk, which elevated his BA to a perfect .30000. Pursuant to Stanky's lineup decisions for the final two games of the season, Slaughter did not play at all, back-up flyhawk Hal Rice taking Slaughter's spot in covering the right field garden. Schoendienst, who completed the third-last game with a .305 average, did start at the keystone in each of the two final games. However, he had only two at bats in each game before he was replaced. In the penultimate game, after being retired in his first two at bats, he was replaced by Stanky (who also went hitless in two at bats). In the final game of the season, Schoendienst was also retired in his first two at bats before Tommy Glaviano replaced him. The four hitless at bats reduced Schoendienst's batting average to .30323.

Of the twenty DNP-.300 hitters presented thus far, Slaughter is the first one for whom I was able to find a definitive statement that the player did not play in order to protect his .300 batting average. Subsequently, there have been quite a few more DNP-.300 hitters for whom the DNP strategy was expressed or explicitly implied. For example, Bobby Avila in 1952. As reported in *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*: "Since the last two games here are meaningless as far as the standings are concerned, the players are interested only in their individual marks. Bobby Avila, for instance, hit safely in his first two official times at bat and was then taken out of the game. His average had reached an even .300." [14]

Similar to the presentation of Avila's 1952 DNP-.300 is the coverage of Alvin Dark's 1953 DNP-.300. As reported in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, "[Giants] Manager Leo Durocher, in order to, as he put it, 'have a little fun, as this is the last game of the year,' started infielder Al Dark on the mound and he pitched one inning." [15(a)] And, as pointed out in the *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, "Dark then moved to third and stayed in action long enough to make a single and post a .300 batting average for the season." [15(b)]

There were a variety of explanations for justifying the DNP-.300 seasons achieved by Al Rosen, Harry Simpson, Dick Groat, Norm Siebern, and Gene Woodling — minor injury, protecting .300, acting manager, protecting .300, and family illness, respectively:

Al Rosen had a toenail .300 (.29957) BA going into the penultimate game of the 1954 campaign. He singled in his first AB, increasing his average to a bonafide .300 (.30108) and was immediately replaced by a pinch runner. The following was reported in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* — "Al Rosen, whose line single in his only appearance boosted his average to .301, is still suffering from a tender right thigh muscle and will watch the final game of the season from the bench." [16] However, as the final game proceeded into overtime, Rosen was summoned from the dugout to pinch hit in the 11th inning — he was retired, reducing his batting average to .30043.

Harry Simpson had a .300 (.30025) at the start of the next-to-last game in 1955. He singled in his first at bat, which upped his average to .302. However, he went hitless in his next three at bats, reducing his BA to .29975. To preserve his .300, Simpson did not play in Kansas City's final game, Bill Renna taking over his duties in right field.

Dick Groat went 3-for-4 in Pittsburgh’s third-to-last game in 1958, jumping his batting average from .29655 to .29966 — “Manager Danny Murtaugh insisted he sit out the final two games after he reached the .300 circle, although Groat pleaded for a chance to improve his average.”[17(a)] So, while Groat did not play in the next two games, he did participate in at least the penultimate game — “Danny Murtaugh handed over the job of managing the Pirates Saturday night to Dick Groat and few people knew it. Groat’s mother was sitting in the stands Saturday night when Dick walked to the mound to replace Vern Law and she turned to her daughter and said, ‘That doesn’t look like Danny Murtaugh going out there; wonder who it is?’ A moment later she recognized her son.”[17(b)] That appears to be Groat’s only game as a manager, which the Pirates lost to the Phillies, 3-7.

Norm Siebern had an 0-for-5 performance in the third-to-last game of the season; it reduced his batting average from .301 to .298. He rebounded in the next-to-last game (the first game of a Sunday double header) — after walking in the first frame and flying out in the third inning, he clouted a solo homer leading off the fifth session and a two-run downtowner in the sixth stanza. At that point, his average stood at a perfect .30000. Scheduled to bat in the eighth, manager Casey Stengel called on Hank Bauer to pinch hit for Siebern, thereby preserving his .300. The game account presented in the (New York) *Daily News* provided the pertinent details — “Casey Stengel explained the ‘inside’ of the Siebern situation. ‘Before the game, I asked him about his average and hitting .300. I told Siebern I’d take him out when he got to .300 if he wanted me to. He said it was up to me, but I told him, no. It was up to him. So, when he got the second homer and reached .300, he said he’d like to remain at .300 and I took him out.’”[18] [NOTE: While Siebern did not start in the second game of the season-ending twin bill, he did enter the game in the 8th inning as a defensive replacement for Mickey Mantle. Siebern had no plate appearances.] So, Norm Siebern is the first player for whom I have found definitive proof that the player himself chose to secure his .300 batting average by not playing.

Gene Woodling began the fourth-to-last game of the 1959 campaign with a .300 batting average (.30046). But, after going hitless in his first three at bats, his BA had dwindled to .29841. Fortunately, he singled in his fourth (and last) at bat, which returned his BA to the .300 Hitters Circle (.30000). After an off-day, the Orioles were scheduled to close out the season with a three-game series in New York. However, “Gene Woodling, who batted an even .300, missed the last three games to be with his ailing mother in Ohio.”[19]

The 1960s Decade

Compared to the trend of increasing numbers of DNP-.300 hitters exhibited in the previous four decades, the 1960s decade had a significant decrease in the number of DNP-.300 hitters — only four players utilized the DNP strategy to ensure retaining their .300 batting averages; see Table 7.

Table 7. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1960-69]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1962	Johnny Callison (PHP)	9-30	181/603	.30017	“0”	.301 — [PH 0/1] —>.300; [PAA = 3]
1964	Bill Freehan (DET)	10-02	156/520	.30000	1	.297 — [3/4] —>.300; [PAA = 4]
1967	Ron Santo (CHC)	10-01	176/586	.30034	“0”	.301 — [0/2] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1969	Hank Aaron (ATL)	9-30	164/547	.29922	1	.299 — [1/2] —>.300; [PAA = 4]

Probably the most interesting was the sweet-bitter DNP-.300 story involving Bill Freehan, who reached the coveted .300 Hitters Circle only once in his career — in 1964. In the penultimate game of the season, Freehan went 3-for-4 to elevate his BA from .29651 to .30000. — **SWEET!** Freehan then sat out the final game, preserving his .300 BA — **SWEET!?** However, according to the Retrosheet Discrepancy File, Freehan had 4 at bats in the 1964 game on August 9, *NOT* 3 at bats as given in the official records. Retrosheet has a batter-by-batter play-by-play description of the game which shows that Freehan went 1-for-4 and that Dick McAuliffe went 0-for-2 (plus 2 walks) while the official records show Freehan having gone 1-for-3 (i.e., 3 plate appearances) and McAuliffe having gone 0-for-3 (plus 2 walks — i.e., 5 PAs). Since McAuliffe batted immediately after Freehan in the batting order, it is logistically *impossible* for McAuliffe to have had more plate appearances than Freehan. Clearly, there was a transcription error in the official records — one of Freehan's at bats having been erroneously entered into McAuliffe's stat line. If MLB accepts Retrosheet's stats, Freehan will have a BA of .29942 — **BITTER!**

Ron Santo of the Cubs started the third-to-last game of the 1967 season with a .306 batting average, But consecutive 0-for-4s in the next two games shaved off five points, leaving his BA at .301 going into the final game. His string of hitless at bats continued when he struck out in the first frame and grounded out in the fourth inning, which reduced his average to .30034. While he had room to make an out in his next at bat and still maintain a .300 (albeit a toenail .300 — .29983), he instead opted to leave the game in the bottom of the fourth, thereby securing a bonafide .300.

Hank Aaron and his Atlanta teammates began the last day of the 1969 season having secured first place in the National League West Division, thanks to a ten-game winning streak. Thus, the final game was meaningless for Atlanta in terms of the standings. But, the final game did offer the opportunity for players to achieve statistical milestones. Such was the situation for Aaron — his batting average was already at the cherished .300 mark (.29982) and he had slugged 44 homers — just one less than the 45 amassed by NL leader Willie McCovey, whose final game had already been completed. Nonetheless, as described in a newspaper article with the title **Aaron Sits Out Finale**, Aaron “sat on the Atlanta bench and watched his chance for a [fifth] home run title fade away.”[20] However, at the same time he did secure his eleventh .300 season.

The 1970s Decade

Eleven players took advantage of the DNP-.300 tactic to secure admission to the .300 Hitters Circle in the 1970s decade. One player utilized the technique twice.

Ralph Garr of the White Sox became the first player to make use of the DNP-.300 technique twice — in consecutive seasons, 1976 and 1977. In 1976, he entered the final game of the campaign with a .29981 average — thus, he could have not played at all to have a (toenail) .300. Here's what was reported in *The Burlington (Vermont) Free Press*: “The only time the White Sox got a runner to second was in the first inning when Alan Bannister walked and Ralph Garr sacrificed him to second. Garr, hampered by a leg injury, was taken out of the game after the first inning to protect his .300 average.”[21] In 1977, Garr began the final game with a .301 BA. Here's what was reported in *The Chicago Tribune*: “Ralph Garr started Sunday's game, bounced out [to the pitcher] in each of his first two at bats, then retired for the season with a .300 average, same as last year.”[22]

Table 8. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1970-79]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1970	Cesar Tovar (MIN)	10-01	195/650	.30000	"0"	.299—[1/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1972	Richie Scheinblum (KCR)	10-03	135/450	.30000	1+	.301—[0-2]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5]
1972	Richie Hebner (PIT)	10-03	128/427	.29977	1	.299—[1/2]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
1973	Gary Matthews (SFG)	9-26	162/540	.30000	3+	.298—[2/3]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 13]
1975	George Foster (CIN)	9-27	139/463	.30022	1+	.302—[0/2]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5]
1975	Bake McBride (SLC)	9-27	124/413	.30024	1+	.301—[PH 0/1]—>.300; [PAA = 7]
1975	Greg Luzinski (PHP)	9-28	179/596	.30034	"0"	.301—[PH 0/1]—>.300; [PAA = 3]
1975	Ken Singleton (BAL)	9-28 (1)	176/586	.30034	1+	.299—[1/1]—>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 7]
1976	Ralph Garr (CWS)	10-03	158/527	.29981	"0"	.300—[0/0]—>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
1977	Ralph Garr (CWS)	10-02	163/543	.30018	"0"	.301—[0/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1979	Ron LeFlore (DET)	9-30	180/600	.30000	"0"	.298—[2/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1979	George Hendrick (SLC)	9-27	148/493	.30020	4	.293—[5/5]—>.300; [PAA = 16]

Other DNP-.300 players from the 1970s decade with interesting stories include Cesar Tovar, Richie Hebner, Gary Matthews, Ken Singleton, Ron LeFlore, and George Hendrick:

Cesar Tovar of the Minnesota Twins began his final game in 1970 with a .29838 BA. "He bunted for a hit in the first."^[23(a)] This increased his average to .30046. Then, after being retired in his next at bat (which reduced his BA to a perfect .30000), he was replaced in the field by Rick Rennick. The following was reported in *The Minneapolis Star*: "["If I play every day, I hit .300,"](#) the Twins' Venezuelan-born outfielder told club President Calvin Griffith last spring. Thursday Tovar played in his 162nd game (every day) and finished with his first .300 mark."^[23(b)]

Richie Hebner, playing for the Pittsburgh Pirates, had a .299 batting average going into the penultimate game of the 1972 season. He connected for a homer in his first AB (second inning) which lifted his average to .30047. Then, after drawing a base on balls in the fourth and hitting a sacrifice fly in the fifth, he popped out in his second official at bat (in the eighth) which dropped his BA to .29977. Here's what was reported in *The Pittsburgh Press* after the final game: "Richie Hebner was originally slated to start last night's game, but was pulled when [manager] Bill Virdon learned the third baseman's average had reached an even .300."^[24]

Gary Matthews, who would be voted NL Rookie of the Year for 1973, entered the fourth-to-last game with a .298 batting average. As reported in *The San Francisco Examiner*: "Matthews flied out the first at bat last night, but in the third and fifth innings he stroked singles that raised his average a few points to .300. After that, manager Charlie Fox sent out Gary Tomasson to finish the game in left field. There's an outside chance that Matthews won't play in the last three games of the season, Skipper Fox saying that he will unleash the sprouts — Tomasson, Mike Phillips, Steve Ontiveras, and

Bruce Miller — in the weekend games against the Reds.”[25(a)] Matthews, indeed, did not play in any of the last three games of the campaign — “Gary Matthews, a strong Rookie of the Year candidate, was held out of the [final] game and finished with .300 on the nose.”[25(b)]

Ken Singleton, who had maintained a .300 average after every game since August 12 in the 1972 campaign was expelled from the prestigious .300 Hitters Circle on September 27 when he was collared with a pair of 0-for-3s in a double header on the penultimate day of the season. But, he rebounded in the first game of the season-ending twin bill. As reported in *The Baltimore Sun*: “Another item of importance was Ken Singleton’s bunt single in the first inning. The hit enabled him to wind up with a .300 average in his first season as an Oriole.”[26] After his leadoff bunt single, Singleton was immediately replaced with a pinch runner, thereby precluding three plate appearances. Singleton also did not play in the second game of the double header, avoiding four more plate appearances, guaranteeing his .300.

Ron LeFlore of the Tigers began the final game of the 1979 season with a .298 batting average. In his first at bat, he led off the game with a single to center; this boosted his average to .29883. In his second at bat (in the second session) he went downtown; this pumped his average up to .30000. He was scheduled to bat in the third stanza; but Dave Stegman was sent up to bat in his stead, thereby sealing the .300 BA for LeFlore. Here’s what was reported in the *Detroit Free Press*: “[Manager] Sparky Anderson removed LeFlore from the ballgame in the third. The Tiger centerfielder’s 2-for-2 afternoon gave him 180 hits in 600 at bats, a .300 average on the nose, and the manager wanted to keep it that way. ‘I’ve done that for every player I’ve ever had if the game doesn’t mean anything,’ said Anderson. ‘I told him after he got the first hit I was gonna take him out if he got another.’”[27]

George Hendrick, playing his first full season with the St. Louis Cardinals, had maintained a .300 average plus-or-minus a few points since the end of July. Going into the fifth-to-last game of the 1979 season his average was at .293 (.29303). He had a perfect 5-for-5 day at the plate that September 27 day at Three Rivers Stadium — in the second inning he singled to center (BA —> .29448); in the fourth frame he doubled to left (BA —> .29592); in the fifth session he singled to left (BA —> .29735); in the seventh stanza he singled to center (BA —> .29878); and in the ninth inning he homered (BA —> .30020). Since the Cardinals won the game in the regulation nine innings, Hendrick had no more at bats in the game. And, as it turned out, also in the season. Here’s what was reported in the September 30 edition of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*: “[Manager] Ken Boyer said George Hendrick will be rested to protect his .300 average.”[28(a)] A few days later Hendrick was asked about his season-ending performance: “Q — Was hitting .300 important to you and are you satisfied with your season? A — *‘It wasn’t really that important. Well, yes, it is that important. Everybody wants to hit .300. But I didn’t think I would get the last four days off. I wasn’t even aware that I was at .300 until I heard a guy talking to Boyer the other day. Three hundred is nice, everybody wants to hit .300, but overall, I’m not very satisfied or pleased with my year. I don’t know how to explain it, but I didn’t swing the bat very well all year.’*”[28(b)]

The 1980s Decade

Moving on to the decade of the 1980s (Table 9), there were 16 players who utilized the DNP-.300 strategy, with at least one DNP-.300 hitter in each year of the decade.

Table 9. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1980-89]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1980	Reggie Jackson (NYY)	10-05	154/514	.29961	"0"	.298 — [1/1] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1980	Alan Trammell (DET)	10-05	168/560	.30000	"0"	.299 — [1/2] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
1980	Bruce Bochte (SEA)	10-05	156/520	.30000	"0"	.301 — [PH 0/1] —>.300; [PAA = 3]
1981	Pedro Guerrero (LAD)	10-03	104/347	.29971	1+	.294 — [3/4] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5]
1982	Jerry Mumphrey (NYY)	10-03	143/477	.29979	"0"	.298 — [1/1] —>.300; RP (4 PA) [PAA = 4]
1983	Al Oliver (MON)	9-28	184/614	.29967	3+	.300 — [1/4] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 13]
1984	Carney Lansford (OAK)	9-29	179/597	.29983	1	.297 — [3/4] —>.300; [PAA = 4]
1985	Phil Bradley (SEA)	10-06	192/641	.29953	"0"	.300 — [0/2] —>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
1985	Dale Murphy (ATL)	10-06	185/616	.30032	"0"	.300 — [0/0] —>.300; RP (4 PA) [PAA = 4]
1986	Scott Fletcher (TEX)	10-05	159/530	.30000	"0"	.300 — [1/4] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
1987	Brook Jacoby (CLE)	10-03	162/540	.30000	1+	.297 — [2/2] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5]
1987	Benito Santiago (SDP)	10-04	164/546	.30037	"0"	.298 — [2/2] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1987	Bobby Bonilla (PIT)	9-30 (2)	140/466	.30043	4+	.301 — [PH 0/1] —>.300; [PAA = 19]
1988	Gerald Perry (ATL)	10-01	164/547	.29982	1+	.301 — [0/2] —>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 7]
1989	Harold Reynolds (SEA)	9-30	184/613	.30016	"1"	.300 — [1/4] —>.300; [PAA = 4] DR
1989	Luis Polonia (NYY)	9-30	130/433	.30023	"1"	.298 — [2/4] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5] DR

The first DNP-.300 hitter from the 1980s was Reggie Jackson. A description of his DNP-.300 was provided in an introductory paragraph. Here's some additional information. On the day before (October 04), Jackson had hit a three-run homer in the first game of a double header versus Detroit; the bottom-of-the-fifth round tripper provided the eventual game-winning run, which clinched the AL East crown for the Yankees. In the second game, as reported in *Newsday*: "He knocked in the Yanks' first run with a triple. He walked twice, once intentionally, popped up, and struck out, remaining just shy of a season's average of .300, one accomplishment he has never reached in his professional career. With a one-for-one today [i.e., on October 05] he could reach .300." [29(a)] That last sentence turned out to be prescient — here's what was reported the next day, covering the October 05 game: "Reggie Jackson got the one hit he needed to reach .300 — or to be perfectly exact, .29961089 — for the first time in his major-league career. He poked a triple to left-field off Dan Schatzeder in the second inning, motioned from third base for coach Yogi Berra to call the press box and confirm his .300 status, scored on Eric Soderholm's homer, then removed himself from the game. Although he has been speaking for months about reaching .300, [having had twenty end-of-game .300s since getting his first one on July 20 and his last one on August 16], he minimized getting there. *'It isn't just .300. That's not where it's at. It's what a guy does with it,' Jackson said after the game. 'There are*

ballplayers who hit .320 who can't hit 30 home runs. A guy who hits .280 with 30 home runs is more valuable. Now that I've hit .300 I can say it for sure.”[29(b)]

Another article provided some more quotes by Reggie Jackson on his DNP-.300: *“I don't see what the big deal is. What's the difference if I hit .297 or .300. To me, .300 is not where it's at unless you hit .300 with 30 home runs and 100 RBIs. A guy who hits .280 with 30 home runs is a lot more valuable than a guy who hits .307 with 2 home runs and 41 RBIs. I just can't believe .300 is such a big deal. Did Oglivie hit a home run? That's my main concern.”* “Told that Oglivie had indeed homered, Jackson's reply was not printable.”[29c] Was Jackson's reply unprintable because he was cursing Oglivie for hitting a home run. Or, was his reply unprintable because he was cussing himself out for not staying in the game and having at least two more plate appearances — in which he might have clouted a homer (or two) and thereby occupied the Home Run Throne all by himself. Oglivie was quoted as follows about his homer — “I don't want to try to hit one out every time, but I did try for it today.”[29(d)]

With regard to Oglivie tying him for the home run title, the following was also reported: “Long after the game, as the Yankees were packing their bags, a reporter from the Associated Press found out that in the bottom of the ninth, against the Oakland A's, Oglivie slammed a game-trying homer, his 41st. Jackson couldn't believe it. *'You don't think,' he muttered, 'you don't think? Billy? Martin? [Oakland's manager] No, I don't believe it. If I knew Oglivie was going to hit one, I would have stayed in the game. But that's the way it goes.'*”[29(e)]

In addition to Mr. October's DNP-.300, several other players had interesting stories accompanying their 1980s DNP-.300s — Alan Trammell, Jerry Mumphrey, Dale Murphy, Scott Fletcher, Benito Santiago, Bobby Bonilla, Gerald Perry, Harold Reynolds, and Luis Polonia:

Alan Trammell achieved his DNP-.300 in the very same game that Reggie accomplished his. The Tigers shortstop, who began the game with a .299 BA, walked in the first inning, singled in the third inning, upping his average to .30053, a figure which allowed him the flexibility to remain in the game for at least one more at bat. He flied out in his next at bat, which dropped his average to exactly .30000. His safety buffer was now depleted. Instead of batting again, he was pinch hit for by Champ Summers in the eighth inning, thereby solidifying his .300. Had Trammell batted and been retired, his BA would have declined to .29947. Here's what was reported in the *Detroit Free Press*: “Shortstop Alan Trammell became the team's only .300 hitter when his bunt single gave him a 1-for-2 afternoon. That put him at exactly .300. Manager Sparky Anderson removed Trammell from the ballgame in the eighth inning to preserve the statistic. ‘And I think when you've played as hard as Alan has, you deserve something. He's probably the first shortstop in a long time in Detroit to hit .300. You probably have to go all the way back to Harvey Kuenn.’”[30]

Jerry Mumphrey began the final game of the Yankees 1982 season with a .298 BA. Here's what was reported in the *Poughkeepsie Journal*: “Jerry Mumphrey singled in the first, got his average to .300, and took the rest of the day off.”[31]

Dale Murphy entered Atlanta's final game in the 1985 season with a .300 average — .30032. He was also the NL leader in three important statistical departments — home runs (37, four more than Dave Parker in second place with 33), runs scored (118, three more than Tim Lincecum in second place), and bases on balls (89, three more than Carmelo Martinez in second place). And, since Murphy was not in the running for the leadership in any other statistical departments, it was not essential that he play

in Atlanta's final game of the campaign. Atlanta was also solidly in fifth place in the NL West Division; so the game was "meaningless" from the perspective of team standings. Nonetheless, Murphy did play in Atlanta's final game. Here's what was reported in the (Montgomery) *Alabama Journal*: "Dale Murphy, the National League home run champion with 37, played in his 657th consecutive game for Atlanta, but was lifted following a first-inning walk and preserved his .300 average." [32] So, Murphy played because he wanted to preserve his consecutive-games-played streak. Even if he had been retired in his first-and-only plate appearance, his batting average would still have been a (toenail) .300 — .29984. [Murphy's consecutive games played streak eventually reached 740 games.]

Scott Fletcher titrated his 1986 season batting average from .30038 at the beginning of the final game for the Rangers to perfect .30000 by the game's end. He singled in his first at bat, which raised his average to .30171. Had he been retired in his first at bat, his BA would have dropped to .29981 — a toenail .300. He might (probably would) have then left at that point. However, buffered by even more flexibility because of his .30171 BA, he proceeded to take three more at bats, each of which resulted in an out, thereby sequentially reducing his average to .30114 to .30057 to .30000. At that point, his buffer had been consumed — the next hitless at bat would result in a sub-.300 BA — .29944. Consequently, when it was his turn to bat again, he was replaced by a pinch hitter, thereby securing his .300.

Benito Santiago achieved his DNP-.300 in his rookie season. Here's the chronology of his only ML .300 campaign: After going 0-for-3 on August 23, Santiago's batting average was a solid .284. He then embarked on a hitting streak that reached 30 games on September 28. In his 30-game hitting streak he batted .350, lifting his season average to .299; curiously, he never had an end-of-the-game .300 BA during his 30-game streak. He then extended his streak to 32 games with a 1-for-4 on September 29 and a 1-for-2 on September 30, which finally gave him an end-of-the-game .300 (.29963). He further increased his streak to 34 games with a 1-for-4 on October 1st and a 1-for-3 on October 2nd ... but his season BA dipped below .300 — to .29945. In the October 3rd game (San Diego's penultimate game of the season), a streak-ending 0-for-3 further lowered his average to .298. After the game, Padres skipper Larry Bowa said, "I plan to give him just one at bat tomorrow; but if he gets a hit, I'll let him try to get up to .300. That sounds a lot better than .299." [33] Fortunately, Santiago hit safely in his first 2 at bats, elevating his average to .300 — .30037. After his second hit he was replaced by a pinch runner, thereby securing his .300.

Bobby Bonilla, with a 3-for-5 performance against the Mets on September 26, joined the prestigious .300 Hitters Circle (.30152) for the first time since the second game of the 1987 campaign. And, when he went one-for-four in the next (September 27) game, as reported in *The Pittsburgh Press*: "Bobby Bonilla stretched his hitting streak to 11 games, a career best and the best for the Pirates this year." [34(a)] Moreover, he remained a .300 hitter (.30108). There were still six games left in the Pittsburgh schedule. However, as pointed out in an article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*: "It isn't likely Bonilla will add to those numbers [15 homers and 77 runs batted in] in the remaining days of the season though. The right thumb he injured in St. Louis a week ago is giving him trouble, and he just might play or pinch hit against left handers for the rest of the season." [34(b)] Indeed, Bonilla did not play in the first game of the September 30 double header and only entered the second game as a pinch hitter, going 0-for-1, which dropped his average to .30043. That turned out to be Bonilla's last game of the year. As reported in *The Pittsburgh Press*: "Bonilla missed last night's double header [except for his pinch hitting assignment] because he aggravated a thumb injury." [34(c)].

Gerald Perry had the fourth headline on the first page of the Sports section for the October 02, 1988 edition of *The Atlanta Constitution* — **Braves Perry Opts to Sit, Not to Hit, to Keep .300** — and the article began with the following, “Gerald Perry decided to quit while he was ahead, ending his season Saturday while he was still a .300 hitter. During a 45-minute rain delay in the fourth inning of a game against the Cincinnati Reds, Perry phoned the press box to verify his batting average. Braves PR man Jim Schultz told Perry his average was .2998. With that, Perry hesitantly approached manager Russ Nixon and asked to come out of the game while he was still a .300 hitter. ‘He was afraid I was going to be mad at him,’ Nixon said. ‘I was thinking about taking him out, but I leave that in the player’s hands.’ With Schultz’s assurance and Nixon’s consent, Perry won’t bat Sunday in the season finale. *‘I wanted to hit .300,’ Perry said. ‘It’s important. So, I talked to the skipper.’*”[35]

Harold Reynolds went into Seattle’s penultimate game in 1989 with a .30049 BA. In his first at bat, he flied out to left, dropping his average to a perfect .30000. In his second at bat, he flied out to right, lowering his average to .29951 (a “toenail” .300). He remained in the game and in his third at bat he flied out to center, reducing his batting average to .29902. Then, in his fourth and final at bat, he singled to right, returning his BA to the coveted .300 level — .30016. With regard to playing in the final game, here’s what was reported in *The (Tacoma) News Tribune*: “Reynolds didn’t play Sunday, largely because [manager] Jim Lefebvre wanted him to have that .300 average. *‘I didn’t ask for it, and I wanted to play,’ Reynolds said, ‘but maybe in a couple years, looking back, it will mean something to me.’*”[36(a)] Reynolds did, however, play in the Mariners final game — but only as defensive replacement in the top of the ninth inning; Seattle did not bat in the bottom of the ninth. As it turned out, Reynolds’s DNP-.300 was the only (full-season) .300 he achieved in his major league career (1983-1994); his lifetime batting average was .258 (1233 hits in 4782 at bats). When recently asked what his .300 means to him now, looking back 33 years, Reynolds said, *“It’s amazing! It means a lot! We’re all competitors and want to play. It’s nice to hit .300. My manager, Jim Lefebvre, had been a switch hitter like I was and he knew how difficult it is to hit from both sides of the plate and carry that [.300] batting average; he was not going to let me blow it [in the last game].*”[36(b)]

Luis Polonia, who split the 1989 campaign with the Athletics (59 games, .286 batting average) and the Yankees (66 games, .313 BA), entered the penultimate game of the season with a .298 batting average. It turned out to be an “up-in-down-up-out” day — Polonia singled in his first AB, elevating his average up to .30000. He remained in the game and was retired in his next 2 plate appearances, his average dropping successively down to .29930 and .29861. Then, in his fourth plate appearance, he singled, again upping his average to .300 (.30023). When he was due to bat again (in the 8th inning), he was taken out for a pinch hitter. What about the next day? Here’s what was reported in the (New York) *Daily News*: “[Manager] Bucky Dent protected the averages of Roberto Kelly (.302) and Luis Polonia (.300) by keeping them on the bench.”[37] Polonia actually did play in the final game — he was a defensive replacement in the top of the 9th inning; his slot in the batting order did not come up in the bottom of the 9th.

The 1990s Decade

During the last decade of the twentieth century there were 22 players who finished in the prestigious .300 Hitters Circle thanks to the DNP-.300 strategy; see Table 10. The only season that did not have a DNP-.300 hitter was 1994 — because that season ended prematurely as a consequence of a players’ strike. The players whose DNP-.300 stories are highlighted here include Ken Griffey Jr., Mike Bordick, Will Clark, Mo Vaughn, Brett Butler, Roberto Alomar, John Jaha, Al Martin, Scott Brosius, and Rusty Greer.

Table 10. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [1990-99]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
1990	Ken Griffey Jr (SEA)	9-30	179/597	.29983	3	.298 – [2/4] –>.300; [PAA = 12]
1991	Mike Greenwell (BOS)	10-06	163/544	.29963	“0”	.300 – [PH 0/1] –>.300; [PAA = 3]
1992	Mike Bordick (OAK)	10-03	151/504	.29960	“1”	.297 – [2/2] –>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5] DR
1992	Will Clark (SFG)	10-04	154/513	.30019	“0”	.301 – [0/2] –>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
1993	Luis Gonzalez (HOU)	10-03	162/540	.30000	“0”	.299 – [1/2] –>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1995	Mo Vaughn (BOS)	10-01	165/550	.30000	“0”	.301 – [0/2] –>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
1995	Brett Butler (LAD)	10-01	154/513	.30019	“0”	.299 – [1/1] –>.300; RP (4 PA) [PAA = 4]
1995	Orlando Merced (PIT)	9-30	146/487	.29979	1	.298 – [2/3] –>.300; [PAA = 4]
1995	Roberto Alomar (TOR)	9-26	155/517	.29981	4	.302 – [0/4] –>.300; [PAA = 16]
1996	Jason Kendall (PIT)	9-28	124/414	.29952	1+	.298 – [1/1] –>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 7]
1996	John Jaha (MIL)	9-28	163/543	.30018	1	.302 – [0/4] –>.300; [PAA = 4]
1996	Al Martin (PIT)	9-27	189/630	.30000	2+	.300 – [DR 0/1] –>.300; [PAA = 11]
1996	Ivan Rodriguez (TEX)	9-27	192/639	.30047	2	.302 – [0/4] –>.300; [PAA = 8]
1997	Alex Rodriguez (SEA)	9-27	176/587	.29983	1	.299 – [2/5] –>.300; [PAA = 4]
1997	Shawon Dunston (PIT)	9-24	147/490	.30000	3	.301 – [1/5] –>.300; [PAA = 12]
1997	Doug Glanville (CHC)	9-27	142/474	.29958	1+	.300 – [0/1] –>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 7]
1997	Joey Cora (SEA)	9-28	172/574	.29965	“0”	.300 – [0/1] –>.300; RP (4 PA) [PAA = 4]
1998	Tim Salmon (ANA)	9-25	139/463	.30022	2	.301 – [1/4] –>.300; [PAA = 8]
1998	Scott Brosius (NYY)	9-27	159/530	.30000	“0”	.302 – [0/3] –>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
1999	Rusty Greer (TEX)	10-01	167/556	.30036	2+	.301 – [0/2] –>.300; RP (0 PA) [PAA = 8]
1999	Chris Singleton (CWS)	10-03	149/496	.30040	“0”	.301 – [0/1] –>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
1999	Mike Lieberthal (PHP)	10-03	153/510	.30000	“0”	.301 – [0/1] –>.300; RP (3PA) [PAA = 3]

Ken Griffey Jr. of the Seattle Mariners began the fourth-to-last game of the 1990 season with a batting average of .298. Thanks to a 2-for-4 showing, he brought his BA up to a toenail .300 (.29983); he left the game after the top of the eighth. He did not play in any of the final three games. As reported in *The Bellingham (Washington) Herald*: “Ken Griffey Jr. (sore shoulder) did not play in his second consecutive game Tuesday (i.e., the penultimate game on October 02).”[38(a)] Then, as reported in *The (Tacoma) News Tribune*, “Neither Ken Griffey Jr. nor Ken Griffey Sr. saw action Wednesday (i.e., the final game on October 03). Junior was on the bench with a sore shoulder and, perhaps not coincidentally, a .300 final batting average.”[38(b)]

Mike Bordick had been a .300 hitter pretty-much the entire 1992 season — from his first game (April 06) through his 151st game (September 30) his average was .300 or higher after 118 games; he had ended each month with a .300 BA — (April, .355; May, .352; June, .314, July, .308; August, .300; September, .300). However, in his first October game (Oakland's third-to-last game), he suffered an 0-for-5, which dropped his BA to .297. Fortunately, in the Athletics' penultimate game (Saturday, October 03), he responded with a 2-for-2 performance (plus a walk) before being removed for a pinch hitter in the seventh inning; this restored Bordick's membership in the prestigious .300 Hitters Circle. Here's what was reported in the *Oakland Tribune*: “[Manager] Tony LaRussa will sit Bordick today (Sunday, October 04) to ensure that the infielder will become the only middle infielder in Oakland to bat .300 for a full season. *‘I understand; I think that’s a once in a lifetime opportunity,’ Bordick said. ‘It’s Tony’s decision. If it was my decision to play tomorrow? I’d probably play.’*”[39(a)] In an article in *The San Francisco Examiner*, with the headline **Bordick to sit it out at .300**, the following was reported “Mike Bordick will not play Sunday to ensure that he finishes the regular season with a .300 average. Manager Tony La Russa was aware of what was at stake, but let Bordick hit one more time because the outcome of the game still was in doubt. Bordick drew an intentional walk. Just before he came to bat again in the seventh, Bordick was told to take a seat on the bench, one which he won’t leave during the final game. *‘It’s unbelievable,’ Bordick said, grinning. ‘Unbelievable.’*”[39(b)] The following was reported in *The Sacramento Bee*: “As expected, A’s manager Tony LaRussa kept Mike Bordick away from the plate. Bordick played defense in the ninth, but his season average remained exactly at .300.” Fast-forwarding now to 2022, at the annual National Convention of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), Mike Bordick was a special guest for the Oral History Committee. In the interview he mentioned, *“That year, 1992, for two months in the Big Leagues I might have been leading the league in hitting. I had a Kirby Puckett, I had a Griffey. I was hitting like .400. Are you kidding me?! I ended up hitting tenth in the Big Leagues that year. I hit .300.”*[40] Following the interview I had the opportunity to chat with Bordick. I mentioned that I had done research on players who hit .300 by not playing in their team’s final game. Bordick immediately commented, repeatedly pointing his finger to his chest, *“That was me! Tony Larussa called me into his office and told me that he wasn’t going to play me in the last game to protect my .300. I told him that I wanted play. He said that I’d thank him down the road.”* I then asked Bordick how he felt about it now, some 30 years later. Bordick replied, *“Yeah, it was good, as you heard what I said today. It’s really good to be able to say I batted .300 in the majors. Tony was right.”* [41]

Will Clark entered the Giants fourth-to-last game (Wednesday, September 30, 1992) with a .299 average. After going 2-for-2 (plus a sacrifice fly), his BA was .30137. Then, as reported in *The San Francisco Examiner*: “Will Clark, who has a .301 average, sat out the game [Thursday, October 01], but Craig said he’ll play against the Reds, ‘if he wants to.’”[42(a)] Evidently Clark didn’t want to “play against the Reds,” at least in the first game (Friday, October 02) of the three-game series, as reported on October 03 — “And Will Clark kept his .300 average — on the bench.”[42(b)] While Clark also did not play in the next game (Saturday, October 03), he did play in the final game of the season (Sunday, October 04). Here’s what was reported in the *Dayton (Ohio) Daily News*: with the subtitle **Protection Plan**, “San Francisco first baseman Will Clark batted twice [being retired each time] Sunday, then left the game. An injury? No, just pride. His average was right at .300 and he sat to protect it.”[42(c)] Similarly, the *Tallahassee Democrat* had this: “Will Clark was in the starting lineup Sunday after sitting out the last two [should be three] games. He went 0-for-2 and then went to the bench, keeping his average at .300.”[42(d)]

Mo Vaughn, like Hank Aaron did in 1969, chose a guaranteed .300 batting average over a possible home run achievement in 1995. Here's what was reported in *The Boston Globe*: "The Red Sox Most Valuable Player candidate ended the season with 39 home runs, going 0 for 2 before being taken out to preserve a .300 average in yesterday's 8-1 loss to the Brewers. 'It's nice to finish at .300,' said Vaughn. 'It was a good year. I didn't get 40 [home runs], but I've always said the home runs don't mean that much to me.'"[43]

Brett Butler went into the Dodgers final game in 1995 with a .299 average. Here's what was reported in *The Los Angeles Times*: "The only Dodger regulars in the starting lineup at San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium were center fielder Brett Butler and first baseman Eric Karros, both wanting to stay in the game long enough to bat .300 for the season. Butler, who began the game batting .299, achieved his goal with a first-inning single, and was lifted for a pinch runner. Karros, who was also hitting .299, went hitless in his first two at bats, and came out of the game in the fifth with a .298 batting average."[44] (Even if Karros had remained in the game and collected a hit in his next at bat, his average would have been .29891.)

Roberto Alomar went 0-for-4 in the fifth-to-last game of the 1995 season for the Toronto Blue Jays; that performance dropped his batting average down to a toenail .300 (.29981). In an article in the *York (Pennsylvania) Daily Record*, Alomar, who would become a free agent at the end of the season, was quoted as saying, "It's been a difficult year. We had the losing, then I had somebody try to shoot me, and then I had some fans mad at me. I was upset when David Cone was traded, but that's not why I asked for the day off. I wasn't playing well, and I needed a day off. Right now, I need to get away and think about things. I think the best thing for me is to see what's out there."[45(a)] Since Alomar did not play in any of Toronto's remaining four games, his .300 BA was final. The following was reported in the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*: "2B Roberto Alomar did not play in the final series for Toronto because of a sore back."[45(b)]

John Jaha saw his .302 BA drop two points in the penultimate game (Saturday, September 28) of the Brewers 1996 season as he was collared in four at bats. He did not play in the final game the next day. Here's what was reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: "First baseman John Jaha got the day off Sunday, partially to rest a sore Achilles tendon, but primarily to protect his .300 batting average. 'I didn't give him a choice,' Brewers manager Phil Garner said. 'If we needed this game [to finish third], I'd have played him. But I thought it was the right thing to do.' Jaha didn't mind. 'I would have played,' he said. 'That wouldn't have bothered me. But I don't mind not playing. I'd have been happy either way.'"[46]

Al Martin began the final Friday of the 1996 season with a .302 batting average. But, after going 0-for-3 in the first game of the double header, his average was an even .300 (.30048). To protect his .300, he did not play in the second game of the twin bill — until he was inserted as a defensive replacement to play left field. in the bottom of the eighth inning. However, he was the first-up batter in the top of the ninth frame — he was retired in his lone at bat, which reduced his BA to exactly .30000. Here's what was reported in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*: "Al Martin, his average at .300, won't play again. 'I wanted to make sure Albert hits .300,' [manager] Jim Leyland said."[47]

Scott Brosius left the Yankees final game in 1998 after going 0-for-3, which lowered his BA from .302 to a perfect .30000. He was replaced at third base in the top of the seventh stanza by Mike Lowell, who had one plate appearance. Had Brosius remained in the game and gone hitless in his fourth at bat, his batting average would have dropped to .29944. As indicated in the game account provided

in *The (White Plains, NY) Journal News*, Brosius chose to keep his .300 rather than risk it for a possible home run and/or RBI accomplishment — “Scott Brosius finished the season batting .300 with 19 homers and 98 RBIs. *‘Honestly, I would have liked 100 RBIs,’ Brosius said. ‘I’ve hit .300 before, and with guys hitting 70 homers, 20 homers isn’t so awesome. It would have been nice to reach that mark, but the success of the season didn’t hinge on it.’*”[48]

Rusty Greer went 0-for-2 in the Rangers’ third-to-last game (October 01) in 1999, dropping his BA from .301 to .300 (.30036). As reported in the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*: “Greer was a late scratch from last night’s lineup (October 02). Greer has a bruise just above his right elbow, the result of getting hit by a pitch from Anaheim’s Mike Holtz in the seventh inning of Friday’s game. He remains day-to-day.”[49(a)] Greer also sat out the final game (October 03), as described in the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*: “*Rusty Greer missed his second consecutive game. ‘I went in there and told [manager] Oates I could play if needed,’ Greer said. ‘If it had been game 1 of the playoffs, I would have been ready.’*”[49(b)]

Mike Lieberthal had just one at bat in the Phillies final game in 1999 — he grounded out, third to first, in the bottom of the second inning and was then replaced in the top of the third frame. That one hitless at bat reduced his batting average from .301 to a perfect .30000. Here’s what was reported in the *Philadelphia Daily News*: “[Manager] Terry Francona lifted catcher Mike Lieberthal after one at bat, assuring that his final average will be .300.”[50]

The 2000s Decade

The 2000s decade emerged with a total of 32 DNP-.300s; 13 of them are included in Table 11a (covering the years 2000-2004) while the other 19 are presented in Table 11b. Among the perhaps most-interesting DNP-.300 stories are those involving Mike Piazza, Marquis Grissom, Doug Mientkiewicz, Bobby Abreu, David Ortiz, Randy Winn, and Jason Kubel.

Mike Piazza, had a .299 BA going into the Mets’ penultimate game (October 06) of the 2001 season. After being hit by a pitched ball in the bottom of the first inning, he singled in the third, elevating his average to .30020. He remained in the game until the top of the fifth when he was replaced by Jason Phillips in the catcher’s box. Here’s what was reported in the (New York) *Daily News*: “This afternoon (October 07) the Mets will play the last game of the season and they probably will play it without Piazza. [Expos pitcher] Carl Pavano hit Piazza in the left elbow with a pitch in the first inning, and after Piazza singled in the third, raising his average to .300, he caught for half an inning and left the game. For the first time in a full season Piazza will not reach 100 RBI, but he has never finished below .300 since breaking in as a full-time major leaguer.”[51(a)] This was stated in the coverage of the final game by *Newsday*: “Catcher Mike Piazza did not play and finished the season with a .300 batting average, achieving that plateau for the ninth straight year.”[51(b)] Achieving a .300 batting average clearly was important to Piazza. What if Piazza had not singled in his second plate appearance? Would he have continued playing in the October 06 game? Would he have played in the October 07 game?

Table 11A. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [2000-04]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
2000	Cliff Floyd (FLA)	10-01	126/420	.30000	"0"	.301 — [PH 0/1] —>.300; [PAA =3]
2000	Corey Koskie (MIN)	10-01	142/474	.29958	"0"	.299 — [1/2] —>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
2000	Fernando Vina (SLC)	10-01	146/487	.29979	"0"	.298 — [2/4] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2001	Aramis Ramirez (PIT)	10-07	181/603	.30017	"0"	.301 — [PH 0/1] —>.300; [PAA =3]
2001	Mike Piazza (NYM)	10-06	151/503	.30020	1+	.299 — [1-1] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 6]
2002	Jacque Jones (MIN)	9-29	173/577	.29983	"0"	.296 — [3/3] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2002	John Olerud (SEA)	9-29	166/553	.30018	"0"	.302 — [0/3] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2002	A.J. Pierzynski (MIN)	9-29	132/440	.30000	"0"	.301 — [0/2] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2003	Marquis Grissom (SFG)	9-27 (2)	176/587	.29983	1	.301 — [1/5] —>.300; [PAA = 4]
2003	Doug Mientkiewicz (MIN)	9-28	146/487	.29979	"0"	.298 — [1/1] —>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
2003	Bobby Abreu (PHP)	9-28	173/577	.29983	"0"	.299 — [1/2] —>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2003	Hank Blalock (TEX)	9-28	170/567	.29982	"0"	.301 — [0/3] —>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2004	Bobby Abreu (PHI)	10-03	173/574	.30139	"0"	.299 — [2/2] —>.301; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]

Marquis Grissom saw his .301 (.30069) batting average whittled down to a toenail .300 (.29983) when he endured a 1-for-5 performance in the penultimate game of the Giants 2003 season. After singling in the first (raising his average to .30189), Grissom was retired in each of his next four at bats. His .300 became carved in stone when he didn't play in the final game of the campaign — a potentially very important game from the team's perspective — "[Manager] Felipe Alou played all of his regulars except center fielder Marquis Grissom and catcher Benito Santiago in hopes of still getting the home field [advantage]."[52] If the Giants won their game (which they did) they would have the home field advantage during the post-season, provided Atlanta lost its final game. Since Atlanta won, it ended up not mattering.

Doug Mientkiewicz of the 2003 Minnesota Twins and his manager, Ron Gardenhire, combined to give Mientkiewicz his DNP-.300 in a *not* straightforward way. Here are the particulars: The Twins had clinched the AL Central Division on Tuesday, September 23. Minnesota then rested 8 of their regulars — including Mientkiewicz — for the next 2 games (Wednesday and Thursday). The regulars were back in action for Friday's game (September 26) — except for Mientkiewicz, who sat out, resting a sore left wrist. Here's what was reported in the (Minneapolis) *Star Tribune* — on Saturday, September 27 with the sub-headline **Mientkiewicz rests**: "Most regulars returned to the starting lineup on Friday. But not first baseman Doug Mientkiewicz, who will probably be used sparingly until the playoffs begin. This gives Mientkiewicz time to rest his sore left wrist. 'He'll be fine when we get to New York,' manager Ron Gardenhire said. 'That's my goal for when we get to New York, whether it's one at bat, two at bats. There won't be very many because I don't want him getting banged up. He's got plenty of swings in him. He takes batting practice every day and he feels pretty good.'[53(a)]

However, Mientkiewicz was in the starting lineup for Saturday night's game against the Tigers in Detroit — the penultimate game of the season. He stepped into the batter's box 4 times — going 0-for-3 plus a sacrifice fly. This performance dropped his BA from an even .300 to .298. Here's what was reported on Sunday, September 28: In the article, the following question was posed (presumably to Mientkiewicz) — “So, how's Doug Mientkiewicz's left wrist, which was rested for 3 days before he started on Saturday?” Mientkiewicz's reported response — *“My wrist still hurts. I'm playing today [Saturday] to ease my manager's mind. I didn't want to play.”*[53(b)] Sounds like there was some misunderstanding between Mientkiewicz and Gardenhire. Mientkiewicz also started in Sunday's season-ending game. After drawing a walk in the first inning, he went 1-for-1, beating out a ground ball to second base. This performance increased his BA to .2997 — i.e., .300. Mientkiewicz was then replaced by a pinch runner. Here's what was reported on Monday, September 29 — In an article with the headline **Mientkiewicz hits .300** and the sub-headline **He and Gardenhire discuss disagreement**, the author, La Velle E. Neal III, wrote — “Twins first baseman Doug Mientkiewicz finished the season with a .300 batting average after a very interesting and somewhat intense day. It began with manager Ron Gardenhire responding to a comment by Mientkiewicz made Saturday, when he said the only reason he was playing was to *‘ease my manager's mind.’* Gardenhire claimed that Mientkiewicz, who has a sore left wrist among other bumps and bruises, asked to play. ‘He came up to me and said he wanted 2 at bats a day. I don't know where he came up with that. When a player comes up and says he wants 2 at bats, I put him in the lineup. I had no intention of doing anything with that young man. And he says that in the paper? That's disappointing. It's all about hitting .300. I know it is.’ Mientkiewicz and Gardenhire discussed the issue before Sunday's game. After the game, Mientkiewicz [reportedly] said the following — *‘That was more pressure than I'll feel for the next two weeks. The last two days were not fun.’*” Sports writer Neal also included the following — “Mientkiewicz said he preferred to sit out the [final] series and that he would have no problem being ready for the post-season.”[53(c)] Clearly, there was some mis-communication between Gardenhire and Mientkiewicz. Regardless, Mientkiewicz ended up with a .300 BA. ... However, in the ALDS vs. the Yankees, Mientkiewicz went 2-for-15 as Minnesota lost the series, 1 game to 3 games.

Bobby Abreu had two DNP-.300 seasons, back to back — with the Phillies in 2003 and 2004. In 2003, he entered the final game with a .29913 BA. After being retired in his first at bat (a 1-RBI groundout), he collected a single in his second at bat (in the bottom of the third inning), which gave him a .29983 average. He remained in the game until the top of the sixth when he was replaced in right field; he was scheduled to bat in the bottom of the sixth. In 2004, Abreu began the final game with a .29895 BA. He singled in his first at bat, which upped his average to .30017. The .30017 gave Abreu a buffer — he could afford to go hitless in his next at bat and still retain a (toenail) .300 (i.e., .29965). Since he also had 29 homers, he chose to remain in the game and try for 30. As it developed, he did connect for the circuit in his second at bat and simultaneously elevated his batting average to .30139. He then was replaced in the field before his next scheduled at bat.

David Ortiz employed the DNP-.300 strategy — one plate appearance later than would have been expected. The game account given in *The Boston Globe*, with the sub-headline **Clubbing for .300**, provides the details: “David Ortiz began yesterday 179 for 599 on the season, batting .299 (.298831, to six decimal places). He whiffed, walked, and singled through four innings, lifting him to .300, then walked in the sixth, his final plate appearance of the year, thus finishing at .300. But he hit .300 thanks to something called rounding. Ortiz went 180 for 601 this season, which figures — to six decimal places — to .299500.”[54] The question that jumps out is, Why did Ortiz bat in the sixth

inning? What if he had he been retired instead of drawing a base on balls? — his BA would have dropped to .29900, necessitating one more hit to return to .300.

Table 11B. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [2005-09]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
2005	Adam Kennedy (ANA)	10-01	125/416	.30048	1+	.300—[1/3]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 6]
2005	Mike Sweeney (KCR)	9-30	141/470	.30000	2	.298—[2/4]—>.300; [PAA = 8]
2005	David Ortiz (BOS)	10-02	180/601	.29950	“0”	.299—[1/2]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2006	Rafael Furcal (LAD)	9-30	196/654	.29969	1	.300—[1/5]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2006	Frank Catalanotto (TOR)	9-30	131/437	.29977	1	.303—[0/4]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2006	Jamey Carroll (COL)	9-30	139/463	.30022	1+	.298—[2/3]—>.300; RP (5PA) [PAA = 9]
2006	Carlos Lee (TEX)	9-30	187/624	.29968	1	.302—[0/4]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2006	Rich Aurilia (CIN)	9-29	132/440	.30000	2	.297—[3/5]—>.300; [PAA = 8]
2006	Jose Reyes (NYM)	9-30	194/647	.29985	1+	.301—[0/3]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 6]
2007	Melvin Upton (TBR)	9-29	142/474	.29958	1	.302—[0/4]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2007	Nick Markakis (BAL)	9-29	191/637	.29984	1	.297—[3/5]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2007	Randy Winn (SFG)	9-30	178/593	.30017	“0”	.299—[1/1]—>.300; RP (4 PA) [PAA = 4]
2008	Conor Jackson (ARZ)	9-27	162/540	.30000	1+	.302—[0/4]—>.300; RP (0 PA) [PAA = 4]
2008	Derek Jeter (NYY)	9-26	179/596	.30034	2+	.301—[0/2]—>.300; RP (4 PA) [PAA = 12]
2008	Vernon Wells (TOR)	9-28	128/427	.29977	“0”	.293—[4/4]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2009	A.J. Pierzynski (CWS)	10-03	151/504	.29960	1	.303—[0/5]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2009	Jason Kubel (MIN)	10-06	154/514	.29961	“0”	.300—[1/4]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2009	Alberto Callaspo (KCR)	10-04	173/576	.30035	“0”	.298—[2/3]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2009	Shin-Soo Choo (CLE)	10-03	175/583	.30017	1	.299—[2/4]—>.300; [PAA = 4]

Randy Winn had a .29899 BA going into the Giants final game of the season in 2007. By getting a hit in his first at bat in the top of the first inning he upped his average to .30017. Prior to the start of the bottom of the first inning he was replaced in left field, thereby securing his place in the .300 Hitters Circle. Here’s how Winn’s DNP-.300 was described in *The Sacramento Bee*: “The Giants took a 1-0 lead off Eric Stults in the first on Randy Winn’s RBI double. The hit raised Winn’s average to .300, and he was replaced in left field in the bottom of the inning. *‘It’s nice on a personal note,’ Winn said. ‘It’ll be nice to look back at 10 years from now.’*”[55]

Jason Kubel utilized the DNP-.300 strategy twice — in the same season! Kubel went 3-for-4 in Minnesota’s regularly scheduled final game for 2009; this raised his batting average from .29644 to a

perfect .30000. And, to protect his .300 BA, he was replaced by a pinch runner, Carlos Gomez, in the seventh inning; Gomez remained in the game and ended up having one plate appearance. However, the Twins and Tigers wound up tied for first place in the AL Central Division, which necessitated a one game playoff at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome. Kubel played in that game. He popped out in the first inning, which lowered his supposedly secure .300 batting average to .29941. In the third frame he struck out, which reduced his average even further, to .29883. In the sixth stanza he connected for a circuit clout, restoring his average to .300 (.30019). Then, in the seventh session, he flied out, which dropped his average to .29961, a toenail .300. The Twins had a 4-3 lead at that time. So, before the Tigers batted in the top of the eighth, Kubel was replaced in the outfield by Carlos Gomez, who had a .227 batting average and a .997 fielding average (132 games); Kubel's fielding average was a perfect 1.000 (although he had been primarily utilized as a DH, having played just 58 games in the outfield). As it developed, the Tigers tied the score in the eighth and the game proceeded to extra innings. The Twins eventually won the game in the twelfth inning. Interestingly, Gomez, who had two plate appearances, was retired in the ninth inning and then led off the twelfth with a single and came around to score the game-winning run. Kubel's DNP-.300 turned out to be the only .300 in his major league career.

The 2010s Decade

As shown in Table 12, there were 17 players who benefitted from the DNP-.300 strategy during the 2010s decade; there were none, however, in the 2019 season. Among the players whose DNP-.300 stories are given here are Shin-Soo Choo, Carlos Beltran, Aramis Ramirez, Matt Holliday, and AJ Pierzynski.

Shin-Soo Choo, like Ralph Garr and Bobby Abreu, utilized the DNP-.300 approach in back to back seasons — 2009 and 2010. In 2009, he began Cleveland's penultimate game with a sub-.300 average and proceeded to go 2-for-4 to enter the .300 Hitters Circle, and then sat out the final game to cement his .300. In 2004, he had a toenail .300 (.29982) entering the penultimate game and proceeded to go 1-for-3 to get a perfect .30000, before not playing in the final game. Choo's two DNP-.300s were the only full-season .300s in his ML career (2005-2020).

Carlos Beltran achieved his DNP-.300 by playing for two teams in 2011 — first the New York Mets (98 games, .289 BA) and then the San Francisco Giants (44 games, .323 BA). Going into the Giants final game, he had an overall batting average of .30116. Utilizing the titration approach, he went hitless in his first two at bats before exiting the game to finalize his .300 (a perfect .30000). Here's what was reported in *The San Francisco Examiner*: “[Manager] Bruce Bochy removed Carlos Beltran after two hitless at bats to keep Beltran at .300 for the year.”[56]

Starlin Castro picked up two DNP-.300s in the 2010s decade. He had his first with the Cubs in 2010 by going 2-for-3 in Chicago's penultimate game to raise his average from .298 to .30022. He got his second DNP-.300 in 2017 with the Yankees by leaving New York's final game after one hitless at bat which lowered his BA from .301 to .30023.

Aramis Ramirez collected a pair of DNP-.300s with a 10-year gap between his first (2001) and his second (2012). In 2001, with Pittsburgh, he had a .301 BA going into the Pirates final game, in which he did not start; he came in as a pinch hitter and was retired in his only at bat, reducing his average to .30017. In 2012, with Milwaukee, he entered the Brewers final game with a .299 average and

proceeded to get a single in his first at bat, raising his BA to .30000; he was then replaced at third base in the top of the third, i.e., before his next scheduled at bat.

Table 12. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [2010-19]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
2010	Shin-Soo Choo (CLE)	10-02	165/550	.30000	1	.300—[1/3]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2010	Starlin Castro (CHC)	10-02	139/463	.30022	1	.298—[2/3]—>.300; [PAA = 4]
2010	Vladimir Guerrero (TEX)	10-03	178/593	.30017	“0”	.301—[0/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2011	Brandon Phillips (CIN)	9-27	183/610	.30000	1+	.300—[1/3]—>.300; RP (4 PA) [PAA = 7]
2011	Paul Konerko (CWS)	9-25	163/543	.30018	3	.299—[1/2]—>.300; [PAA = 12]
2011	Carlos Beltran (SFG)	9-28	156/520	.30000	“0”	.301—[0/2]—>.300; RP (2PA) [PAA = 2]
2012	Aramis Ramirez (MIL)	10-03	171/570	.30000	“0”	.299—[1/1]—>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
2012	Austin Jackson (DET)	10-03	163/543	.30018	“0”	.298—[2/3]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2013	Matt Holliday (SLC)	9-24	156/520	.30000	1+	.299—[1/1]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 6]
2014	Adam Eaton (CWS)	9-28	146/486	.30041	“0”	.296—[3/3]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2015	A.J. Pierzynski (ATL)	10-02	122/407	.29975	2+	.300—[1/3]—>.300; RP (0 PA) [PAA = 8]
2015	Christian Yelich (MIA)	10-04	143/476	.30042	“0”	.302—[0/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2016	Adrian Beltre (TEX)	10-02	175/583	.30017	“0”	.299—[1/2]—>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
2017	Jean Segura (SEA)	9-29	157/524	.29962	2+	.296—[3/3]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 10]
2017	Starlin Castro (NYY)	10-01	133/443	.30023	“0”	.301—[0/1]—>.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
2017	Lorenzo Cain (KCR)	10-01	175/584	.29966	“0”	.301—[0/2]—>.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2018	Corey Dickerson (PIT)	9-29	151/504	.29960	1+	.299—[1/3]—>.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 5]

Matt Holliday began the Cardinals penultimate game of the 2013 season with a .299 BA. By going 1-for-1 he elevated his average to a perfect .30000. After he walked in the third inning he was replaced by a pinch runner. With regard to playing in the final St. Louis game, here’s what was reported in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*: “Matt Holliday raised his season average to .300 for the first time this summer with a two-run homer in the first inning. He had one more plate appearance, walked, and was removed for a pinch-runner. [Manager] Mike Matheny said he would speak with Holliday about whether he wants to play Sunday or hold firm at .300, a number ‘that means more to us probably than him,’ the manager said.” Holliday apparently “chose” to hold firm at .300.

AJ Pierzynski is currently the only player to have utilized the DNP-.300 tactic three times — with Minnesota (2002), the White Sox (2009), and Atlanta (2015). In 2002, he used the titration technique to ensure a .300 — beginning the final game with a .30137 BA, he went hitless in each of his first two at bats which reduced his batting average to .30068 to .30000. In 2009, he also titrated his at bats to

stop at .300 — starting the penultimate game with a .30261 average, he had five consecutive hitless at bats, reducing his BA sequentially to .30200 to .30140 to .30080 to .30020 to .29960; he then sat out the final game. In 2015, he began with a .29950 in Atlanta’s third-to-last game and proceeded to surrender it in his first at bat by popping out before he retrieved it with a double in his second at bat; after being hit by a pitched ball in his third plate appearance and striking out in his third at bat, his batting average was .29975, which he finalized by not playing in Atlanta’s final two games.

The 2020s Decade (2020-2022)

Moving on to the current 2020s decade, there have been six players who have utilized the DNP-.300 process in the decade’s first three years; see Table 13. Three of these players — David Peralta, Xander Bogaerts, and Michael Brantley — were from the 2020 campaign, which was shortened to just 60 games due to COVID-19 pandemic. Nicky Lopez and Freddie Freeman joined the DNP-.300 hitters club in 2021. And, in 2022, Jose Altuve joined the fraternity.

Table 13. Players Who Protected Their .300 BA By Ending Their Season Early [2020-22]

Year	Player (Team)	LG	H/AB	BA	GNP	Last Game NOTES
2020	David Peralta (ARZ)	9-26	61/203	.30049	1	.307 — [0/4] — >.300; [PAA = 4]
2020	Xander Bogaerts (BOS)	9-27	61/203	.30049	“0”	.295 — [2/3] — >.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 2]
2020	Michael Brantley (HOU)	9-27	51/170	.30000	“0”	.298 — [1/2] — >.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
2021	Nicky Lopez (KCR)	10-03	149/497	.29980	“0”	.299 — [1/2] — >.300; RP (3 PA) [PAA = 3]
2021	Freddie Freeman (ATL)	10-03	180/600	.30000	“0”	.300 — [1/3] — >.300; RP (1 PA) [PAA = 1]
2022	Jose Altuve (HOU)	10-04	158/527	.29981	1	.296 — [3/3] — >.300; RP (2 PA) [PAA = 6]

SUMMARY

[1] Players who played in the Team’s Final Game, but exited early or entered late

Of the 136 DNP-.300 games, there were 68 where the DNP-.300 hitter did play in his team’s final game; see Table 14. Exactly half (34) of these players began the final game with a sub-.300 batting average and then proceeded to collect one or more hits to reach the .300 plateau before leaving the game. The other half of those players began their team’s final game with a .300 batting average and titrated their at bats resulting in outs such that they still had a .300 before exiting the game. Eleven of those players did not start their team’s final game, but entered as substitute players — seven came in as pinch hitters and were each retired and then left the game; four came in as defensive replacements and did not have any plate appearances.

Table 14. Players Who Played in Their Team's Final Game, but Exited Early or Entered Late.

Players who began final game with a BA < .300		Players who began final game with a BA ≥ .300	
Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]
Harris (1920) [1]	Koskie (2000) [3]	Combs (1933) [1]	Vaughn (1995) [2]
Rothrock (1929) [2]	Vina (2000) [1]	Rosen (1954) [3] {PH}	Cora (1997) [4]
Swanson (1929) [1]	Jones (2002) [1]	Siebern (1958) [5] {DR}	Brosius (1998) [1]
Lazzeri (1932) [2]	Mientkiewicz (2003) [3]	Callison (1962) [3] {PH}	C. Singleton (1999) [1]
Kuhel (1939) [1]	Abreu (2003) [2]	Santo (1967) [2]	Lieberthal (1999) [3]
Vaughan (1940) [2]	Abreu (2004) [3]	Luzinski (1975) [3] {PH}	Floyd (2000) [5] {PH}
Walker (1945) [2]	Ortiz (2005) [1]	Garr (1976) [3]	Ramirez (2001) [5] {PH}
Stanky (1950) [3]	Winn (2007) [4]	Garr (1977) [2]	Olerud (2002) [2]
Dark (1953) [3]	Wells (2008) [1]	Bochte (1980) [3] {PH}	Blalock (2003) [1]
Tovar (1970) [2]	Callaspo (2009)	Bradley (1985) [3]	Pierzynski (2002) [1]
LeFlore (1979) [2]	Ramirez (2012) [1]	Murphy (1985) [4]	Kubel (2009) [2]
R. Jackson (1980) [2]	A. Jackson (2012) [1]	Fletcher (1986) [1]	V. Guerrero (2010) [2]
Trammell (1980) [1]	Eaton (2014) [2]	Reynolds (1989) [5] {DR}	Beltran (2011) [2]
Mumphrey (1982) [4]	Beltre (2016) [3]	Polonia (1989) [5] {DR}	Yelich (2015) [2]
Santiago (1987) [2]	Bogaerts (2020) [2]	Greenwell (1991) [3] {PH}	Castro (2017) [5]
Gonzalez (1993) [2]	Brantley [2020] [3]	Bordick (1992) [5] {DR}	Cain (2017) [2]
Butler (1995) [4]	Lopez (2021) [3]	Clark (1992) [3]	Freeman (2021) [1]

[2] Players Who Did Not Play in Their Team's Final Game

There were 68 games in which the DNP-.300 hitters did not play at all in their team's final game. Most of these players (42) did not play in only the final game; 19 of these players also left the penultimate game of the season early after picking up enough hits to transform their game-starting sub-.300 batting average to the cherished .300 level. Table 15 provides a listing of these 42 players.

Table 15. Players who did not play in their team’s final game to protect their .300 BA.

Players who also left the penultimate game early		Players who played the entire penultimate game	
Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]
Holke (1924) [6]	Kennedy (2005) [6]	Danning (1940) [4]	Furcal (2006) [4]
Avila (1952) [6]	Carroll (2006) [9]	Hack (1942) [4]	Catalanotto (2006) [4]
Scheinblum (1972) [5]	Reyes (2006) [6]	Bell (1953) [4]	Lee (2006) [4]
Foster (1975) [5]	Phillips (2011) [7]	Simpson (1955) [4]	Upton (2007) [4]
McBride (1975) [7] {PH}	Holliday (2013) [6]	Freehan (1964) [4]	Markakis (2008) [4]
K. Singleton (1975) [7]	Dickerson (2018) [5]	Aaron (1969) [4]	C. Jackson (2008) [4]
P. Guerrero (1981) [5]	Altuve (2022) [6]	Hebner (1972) [4]	Pierzynski (2009) [4]
Jacoby (1987) [5]		Lansford (1984) [4]	Choo (2009) [4]
Perry (1988) [7]		Merced (1995) [4]	Choo (2010) [4]
Kendall (1996) [7]		Jaha (1996) [4]	Castro (2010) [4]
Glanville (1997) [7]		A. Rodriguez (1997) [4]	Peralta (2020) [4]
Piazza (2001) [6]		Grissom (2003) [4]	

[3] Players Who Did Not Play in Their Team’s Final Two Games

There were 14 DNP-.300 players who did not play in their team’s final two games, including five players who left the third-to-last game early to secure their .300s. Table 16 presents their PAA information.

Table 16. Players who did not play in their team’s final two game to protect their .300 BA.

Players who also left the third-last game early		Players who played the entire third-last game	
Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]
P. Martin (1931) [11]		Valo (1947) [8]	Greer (1999) [8]
Medwick (1942) [11]		Slaughter (1952) [8]	Sweeney (2005) [8]
A. Martin(1996) [11]		Groat (1958) [8]	Aurelia (2006) [8]
Jeter (2008) [12]		I. Rodriguez (1996) [8]	Pierzynski (2015) [8]
Segura (1017) [10]		Salmon (1998) [8]	

[4] Players Who Did Not Play in Their Team’s Final Three or Four Games

Extending the summary to those DNP-.300 hitters who did not play in their team’s final three or four games, Table 17 provides the pertinent information.

Table 17. Players who did not play in their team’s final 3 or 4 games to protect their .300 BA.

Players who also left the fourth-last game early		Players who played the entire fourth-last game	
Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]
West (1938) [15]	Oliver (1983) [13]	Cramer (1943) [12]	Dunston (1997) [12]
Mitchell (1953) [13]		Woodling (1959) [12]	Konerko (2011) [12]
Matthews (1973) [13]		Griffey Jr. (1990) [12]	
Players who also left the fifth-last game early		Players who played the entire fifth last game	
Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]	Player (Year) [PAA]
Bonilla (1987) [19]		Hendrick (1979) [16]	Alomar (1995) [16]

[5] Meaninglessness of DNP-.300 Games

Of the 136 DNP-.300 games from the 1920-2022 period, 132 would reasonably be considered “meaningless” games — i.e., there would have been no change in the final standings for the DNP-.300 hitter’s team if he had played and his team won the game(s) in which he did not play (perhaps benefitting from his batting performance). There was no financial impact for the teammates of the DNP-.300 player. There were, however, four DNP-.300 games for which there could have been a change in the final standings if the DNP-.300 hitter had played and his team had won their final game(s) instead of losing them. The pertinent information for these games is provided here:

- (1) In 1959, the Baltimore Orioles finished in sixth place with a 74-80 W-L record, one game behind the fifth-place Boston Red Sox (75-79). Gene Woodling did not play in Baltimore’s final three games, of which the Birds lost one of the games. Had Woodling played in that game and helped the O’s win the game, Baltimore and Boston would have been tied for fifth place. But, since fifth place was not in the first division (i.e., the teams that finished first through fourth), there would not have been any allocation of the World Series shares to them.
- (2) In 1983, Montreal finished with an 82-80 W-L record, which placed them in third place in the National League East Division, two games behind the second place Pittsburgh Pirates (84-78). Since the Expos lost each of their final three games with Al Oliver not in the lineup, had Oliver played and helped Montreal win each of those games, the Expos would have finished in second place. The difference between second and third place in terms of World Series shares was not insignificant — each second-place Pirates player’s full share was \$3,694.63 while each third-place Expos player’s full share was \$813.30 — a difference of nearly \$2900.[57] Here’s what was reported in *The (Montreal) Gazette*: “Al Oliver, who may well have spent his final day in an Expos’ uniform yesterday, did not play at all on the weekend and finished the season at exactly .300, marking the eighth successive season he has hit .300 or better. By not making a field appearance on the weekend, Oliver assured himself of another .300 season. *‘It was a mutual*

agreement between [manager] Bill Virdon and myself,' the veteran first baseman said. 'Once there was no chance for us to finish first, there was no sense my playing. Second or third place doesn't mean anything to me.' Virdon said, 'besides the .300 thing, there was the opportunity for me to see someone else (Mike Stenhouse) at first base.'"[58]

- (3) In 1991, the Boston Red Sox and Detroit Tigers tied for second place in the American League East Division with identical 84-78 W-L ledgers. Boston lost its final game with Mike Greenwell on the bench (until he entered the game as a pinch hitter). Had Greenwell played the entire game and helped his team win the game, Boston would have occupied second place alone, which would have resulted in a substantial increase in the World Series share the Red Sox players received — The World Series share (3%) for each of the second-place teams was \$385,520.43; the World Series share (1%) for each of the third place teams was \$128,506.81. For teams that tied for second place (like the Red Sox and Tigers) the World Series share was \$257,013.62. Thus, by finishing in second place alone the Red Sox would have received \$128,506.81 more, which when divided into the customary 30-35 full shares for the individual players would have been an additional \$3500 to \$4300 per player.[59] Here's what was reported about Greenwell for Boston's season-ending three game series with the Milwaukee Brewers — "Mike Greenwell is still suffering from a groin injury and didn't play last night [Friday, October 04]. Greenwell is hitting an even .300 and has to avoid going 0 for 2 or drop below .300."[60(a)] Then, after also not playing at all in the game on Saturday (October 05), he entered the Sunday (October 06) game as a pinch hitter — "Greenwell grounded out in his pinch hitting appearance in the ninth, leaving him a .2996 for the season, or .300 in the books."[60(b)]
- (4) And, as previously discussed, the fourth non-meaningless game in which a DNP-.300 player participated was the one-game playoff between the Twins and Tigers to determine the 2009 AL Central Division champion, who would proceed to the post-season.

In contrast to the potentially negative financial impact of the DNP-.300 achieved by Al Oliver in 1983, the 1954 season provided two examples of a player *not* not-playing in his team's final game because it was financially meaningful — trying to gain the first division so as to earn an allotment of the World Series receipts. Going into the final game of the season, the Cincinnati Red Legs (74-79) were one game behind the fourth place Philadelphia Phillies (75-78). If the Redlegs won their final game and the Phillies lost their final game (against the Giants), they would end up tied for fourth place and then divide the fourth-place allocation of the 1954 World Series shares. Cincinnati's Gus Bell began that crucial final game (against the Chicago Cubs) with a batting average of .29912 (184 hits in 615 at bats). After being retired in his first at bat, he came through with a double in his second trip to the plate. This raised his average to .29984 — i.e., .300 when rounded to three decimal places. If the game had been meaningless, Bell would probably have left the game at that point to secure his .300 batting average. Bell had actually utilized the DNP-.300 strategy in the previous season (1953); see Table 6. In the penultimate game in 1953, Bell began with a .301 (.30083) batting average. But after going 0-for-4, his BA had dropped to .299 (.29885). Fortunately, he managed to collect a hit in his fifth at bat, which restored his average to .300 (.30000). He cemented his first .300 by not playing in Cincinnati's final game, which was essentially meaningless since the Reds were locked in sixth place. But, with the outcome of Cincinnati's final 1954 game financially critical, Bell remained in the game. He was retired in each of his final two plate appearances, which dropped his batting average to .299 (.29887). The Redlegs lost the game, 2-5, thereby finishing out of the WS money.

The other 1954 player who sacrificed his .300 batting average in his team's final game was Granny Hamner of the Phillies. With Philadelphia holding a one game advantage over the Redlegs, it was important for Philadelphia to try its very best to win its final game (against the World Series bound

New York Giants) — a win would guarantee the Phillies players sole possession of fourth place and the entire share of the fourth place allotment of the World Series receipts. Hamner entered the Phillies final game with a .301 (.30118) batting average (178 hits in 591 at bats). The game was a nail-biter with the teams being deadlocked, 2-2, after the regulation nine innings. Hamner had gone hitless in his first four at bats, which reduced his batting average to .299 (.29916). If the game had been a meaningless game, Hamner might have exited after his third hitless at bat with a toenail .300 (.29966). However, thanks to the extra innings, he would have a chance to restore his .300. But, after the Giants had taken a 3-2 lead in the top of the eleventh frame, Hamner was retired in the bottom half, which finalized his .299 (.29866) average. Fortunately, thanks to Cincinnati's loss of its final game, Hamner did have the consolation of getting a full fourth-place share of the 1954 World Series receipts — \$648.36. As it developed, while Bell achieved a full-season .300 batting average two times in his 15-year ML career, Hamner never had a full-season .300 in his 17-year Big League career [although he did assemble a .301 batting average (40 hits in 133 at bats in 35 games) in 1958].

Other examples of players *not* not-playing to protect their .300 batting averages are given in Appendix A.

[6] Players Whose DNP-.300 BA Was Their Only .300 BA in the Majors

Of the 136 DNP-.300 achievements, 53 were toenail .300s and 83 of them were bonafide .300s, including 34 which were perfect .30000s. For 31 of the 129 DNP-.300 achievers their DNP-.300 was the only full-season .300 in their careers. Table 18 lists them along with their lifetime batting averages. Three of these one-time .300 hitters achieved their .300 in their rookie season — Bucky Harris, Benito Santiago, and Chris Singleton. For 14 of the players (shown in *italics*) listed in Table 18 their only .300s were toenail .300s.

For those players who achieved a toenail .300 as their only .300 it may be quibbled that they did not actually achieve a .300 batting average. A batting average of .29950 to .29999 ... is customarily rounded up to .300 for the sake of convenience. However, rounding up is not utilized in other measurements, such as the voting for election to the Hall of Fame. For a player to be elected to the Hall of Fame, his name must be included on at least 75.0% of the ballots, not a rounded-up 75%. For example, in the 1985 Hall of Fame voting, Nellie Fox (in his fifteenth and final time on the BBWAA ballot) was included on 295 ballots; 395 ballots were turned in — thus, Fox's percentage was 74.68. He was not elected to the Hall of Fame by the BBWAA. (He was, however, subsequently, in 1997, elected to the diamond pantheon in Cooperstown by the Veterans Committee.) So, according to “the letter of the law” argument, a .300 hitter is one who achieves hits in 30 % (or more) of his at bats. The alternative “the spirit of the law” approach allows for a player to be regarded as a .300 hitter if he collects hits in 29.50 % (or more) of his at bats.[57]

It may also be perceived that exiting a game early to protect a toenail .300 — or even a bonafide .300 — is unprofessional. In fact, there should be no stigma attached to a player for doing so. As pointed out in the introductory paragraph, achieving a .300 batting average has been a highly valued accomplishment for well over a hundred years. The alternative to achieving a .300 batting average is being retired in 70 % of one's at bats. Thus, if a player has a .300 batting average going into his last at bat of the season, there's a 70 % chance he will make an out in his next at bat, which could result in his BA falling below the coveted .300. So, it makes good sense for the player to not take the risk if the game is otherwise meaningless in terms of his team's position in the final standings — the

prudent decision for the player (and/or his manager) is to leave the game early and guarantee membership in the cherished .300 Hitters Circle.

Table 18. Players Whose DNP-.300 was Their *ONLY* .300

Player	DNP-.300	Career BA	Player	DNP-.300	Career BA
Bucky Harris (R)	1920	.274	<i>Joey Cora</i>	1997	.277
Jack Rothrock	1928	.276	Chris Singleton (R)	1999	.273
<i>Eddie Stanky</i>	1950	.268	<i>Corey Koskie</i>	2000	.275
<i>Harry Simpson</i>	1955	.266	<i>Hank Blalock</i>	2003	.269
Johnny Callison	1962	.264	Rafael Furcal	2006	.281
Bill Freehan	1964	.262	Jamey Carroll	2006	.272
Richie Scheinblum	1972	.263	<i>Melvin Upton</i>	2007	.243
<i>Reggie Jackson</i>	1980	.262	<i>Conor Jackson</i>	2008	.271
Scott Fletcher	1986	.262	<i>Jason Kubel</i>	2009	.262
Brook Jacoby	1987	.270	Alberto Callaspo	2009	.265
Benito Santiago (R)	1987	.263	Shin-Soo Choo	2009	.275
<i>Gerald Perry</i>	1988	.265	Shin-Soo Choo	2010	.275
Harold Reynolds	1989	.258	<i>Brandon Phillips</i>	2011	.275
<i>Mike Bordick</i>	1992	.260	Austin Jackson	2012	.273
John Jaha	1996	.263	Adam Eaton	2014	.276
Al Martin	1996	.276	<i>Nicky Lopez</i>	2021	.262

NOTES: (1) A “(R)” indicates that the player had his DNP-.300 in his rookie season. (2) A player’s name in *italics* indicates that his DNP-.300 was a toenail .300.

[7] Because a .300 batting average is a round number, it acts as a motivating goal.

The results of research conducted by Devin Pope and Uri Simonsohn on “round numbers as goals” — with a focus on the achievement of a .300 batting average by baseball players — were reported in 2011.[61] They described their findings on the testing of “two predictions arising from the hypothesis that round numbers act as motivating goals:

- (a) that fewer than the expected number of players will end the season with a batting average just below a round number, and more than the expected number of players will end the season with a batting average above it, and
- (b) that players with batting averages that are very close to a round number as the season is ending adjust their behavior to attempt to end the season with an average above the round number.”

Their research focused on players with “batting averages around .300, the roundest number [i.e., the most commonly achieved round number] in that range [i.e., the range comprised of the round number batting averages of .200-.300-.400].” Their research was “restricted to players who had at least 200 at bats during the season” for the seasons “from 1975 to 2008.” This gave them an overall sample size of “8,817 player-seasons.” They found that “season averages were markedly less likely to be just below .300 than just above .300.” For example, they found that “the percentage of players ending the season with a .298 or .299 [BA] (0.97 %) was lower than the percentage of players ending the season with a .300 or .301 [BA] (2.30 %), [with statistical analysis figures of] $Z = 7.35$, $p < .001$.” They also reported that there was a “marked increase between .299 (0.38 %) and .300 (1.40%), $Z = 3.54$, $p = .001$, which implies that batters are nearly 4 times as likely to end with a .300 than with a .299 average.” Pope and Simonsohn concluded that “our findings were consistent with the notion that players use round numbers as goals ... [and] ... suggest that players find a way in their last few scheduled plate appearances to ensure that they finish above .300.”

Pope and Simonsohn offered three ways in which players were able to finish at or above .300 (rather than at .298 or .299):

1. By getting a hit in their last plate appearance of the season — “in the last scheduled plate appearance of the season, a higher percentage of players achieved a base hit when their average was .298 or .299 (35.2 %) than when their batting average was .300 or .301 (22.4 %), $Z = 2.36$, $p = .018$.” The researchers concluded, “These differences suggest that players that are just below .300 adjust their behavior on the last play of the season to increase their chance of getting a hit.”[62]
2. By not getting a base on balls in their last plate appearance of the season — “players were in fact less likely to walk when their batting average was .298 or .299 (2.5 %) than when their batting average was .300 or .301 (8.6 %), $Z = 2.14$, $p = .032$.” They also stated that “not a single player (out of 61) walked when his season average was .299.”
3. By not playing the entire game, i.e., by being replaced by a pinch runner, a pinch batter, or a defensive substitute — “players with a .298 or .299 average were less likely to be replaced by a pinch hitter on their last scheduled plate appearance (4.1 %) than those with an average of .300 or .301 (19.7 %), $Z = 3.85$, $p < .001$.” While Pope and Simonsohn also mentioned that “players might have skipped the entire last game or last few games if their batting average was already at .300,” they provided no evidence in support of that conjecture.

Pope and Simonsohn concluded their discussion by stating, “Overall, the behavior of baseball players proved consistent with the hypothesis that a round number, such as a batting average of .300, can act as a goal that influences behavior.”

Here’s what my research discovered relevant to what Pope and Simonsohn concluded:

- According to my research (summarized in Table 19), during the 1920-2019 period there were 150 players who (a) achieved an interim .300 batting average (i.e., between .29950 and .30049) at some point while playing in their team’s final game and (b) finished with a batting average of .300 or lower; see Appendix B for complete details. Of these 150 players, 103 eventually finished with a .300 — 68.7 %; the corresponding normalized numbers are 113.42 and 74.50 — 65.7 %; see Table 19. However, when one looks at the split between the players who maintained or surrendered their interim .300 batting average in their team’s final game on a decade-by-decade basis, one finds that

during the 1970-2009 period (which closely encompasses the 1975-2008 time period studied by Pope and Simonsohn) there were 66 interim .300 hitters [39.27 normalized], of which 56 [33.21 normalized] ended up with a .300 BA — 84.8 % [84.6 % normalized]. For the 1920-1969 period, the analogous percentages are 53.7 and 54.4 [normalized]. Therefore, there is a substantial difference in the percentage of .300 hitters for the 1920-1969 and 1970-2009 periods — 53.7 [54.4] versus 84.8 [84.8].

Table 19. Players Who Had Interim Batting Averages of .300 During Their Team’s Final Game (1920-2019).

Decade (Team Seasons)	# Players (.300 during G) [N]	# Players (.300 end of G) {N}	# Players (< .300 end of G) [N]	% Players .300 BA
1920s (160)	20 [20]	11 [11]	9 [9]	55
1930s (160)	14 [14]	7 [7]	7 [7]	50
1940s (160)	11 [11]	8 [8]	3 [3]	73
1950s (160)	12 [12]	7 [7]	5 [5]	58
1960s (198)	10 [8.08]	3 [2.42]	7 [5.66]	30 [30]
1920-1969 (838)	67 [65.08]	36 [35.42]	31 [29.66]	53.7 [54.4]
1970s (246)	12 [7.80]	9 [5.85]	3 [1.95]	75 [75]
1980s (260)	13 [8.00]	11 [6.77]	2 [1.23]	85 [85]
1990s (250)	15 [9.60]	13 [8.32]	2 [1.28]	87 [87]
2000s (300)	26 [13.87]	23 [12.27]	3 [1.60]	88 [88]
1970-2009 (1056)	66 [39.27]	56 [33.21]	10 [6.06]	84.8 [84.6]
2010s (300)	17 [9.07]	11 [5.87]	6 [3.20]	64.7 [64.7]
1970-2019 (1356)	83 [48.34]	67 [39.08]	16 [9.26]	80.7 [80.8]
1920-2019 (2194)	150 [113.42]	103 [74.50]	47 [38.92]	68.7 [65.7]

- Pope and Simonsohn reported for their domain — players with 200 or more at bats during the 1975-2008 seasons — “that batters are nearly 4 times as likely to end with a .300 than with a .299 average.” The actual ratio of .300 hitters to .299 hitters is 1.40 : 0.38, i.e., 3.68 : 1 (the “nearly 4 times” ratio mentioned by Pope and Simonsohn). Inspection of Table 19 shows that, according to my research, for the 1970-2009 period, the players in my domain ended up with a .300 average 56 times and a sub-.300 average 10 times, which yields a ratio of 5.60 : 1; the corresponding normalized numbers are 33.21 and 6.06, affording a normalized ratio of 5.48 : 1. Significantly, the ratio for the 1920-1969 period is dramatically lower — 1.16 : 1 (based on 36 and 31 players with .300 and sub-.300 averages, respectively); the corresponding normalized numbers are 35.42 and 29.66, yielding a normalized ratio of 1.19 : 1.

A possible explanation for the extraordinary shift in the final-game .300 : sub-.300 ratio (from 1.19 : 1 for the 1920-1969 period to 5.48 : 1 for the 1970-2009 period) is the emergence of free agency and the concomitant economic benefit for players beginning in the early 1970s. In their book, “Scorecasting — The Hidden Influences Behind How Sports Are Played and Games Are Won,” Moskowitz and Wertheim suggested this and stated, “We took a look at the data [i.e., Pope and Simonsohn’s data] going way back before free agency. We found that the number of players hitting round numbers exactly, relative to those just missing them, diminished significantly before the free agency era.”[63] However, Moskowitz and Wertheim provided no detailed evidence or documentation whatsoever to support their statements “the data going way back before free agency” and “diminished significantly.” While my rationalization, “the emergence of free agency and concomitant economic gain for players,” seems entirely reasonable, there may be other factors (such as the use of performance-enhancing drugs by some players during the so-called “steroid era” [64]) contributing to the astounding difference in the final-game .300 : sub-.300 ratios for 1920-1969 and 1970-2019 periods my research has discovered — 1.16 : 1 [1.19 : 1] and 5.60 : 1 [5.48 : 1], respectively.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As shown in Tables 1a and 1b (and Figure 1), major league players — and their managers — have, during the 1920s decade through the 2010s decade (as well as the first three years of the 2020s decade), continuously valued a .300 batting average as judged by the fact that they have chosen to not play in their team’s final game(s) in order to protect their .300 batting averages. The number of players benefiting from the DNP-.300 technique has generally been increasing from one decade to the next with the overall (normalized) change from the 1920s decade to the 2010s decade being 4 to 9 with a high of 17 during the 2000s decade; there have been six DNP-.300 players so far during the first three seasons of the 2020s decade, a rate which would afford twenty [ten normalized] DNP-.300 hitters when the decade is complete in 2029.

According to my research, of the 129 players from the 1920-2022 period who achieved a .300 batting average by not playing in their team’s final game (or by avoiding plate appearances in their last games) I was able to document only four players who specifically asked to be removed from the final game or not play at all — Norm Siebern (1958), Reggie Jackson (1980), Al Oliver (1983), and Gerald Perry (1988), and perhaps also Matt Holliday (2013) — to protect their .300 batting averages. The players’ managers appear to be the persons who actually chose — i.e., decided — that the players would not play to protect their .300 BAs, in some instances in opposition to the player’s preference — for example, Dick Groat (1958), Harold Reynolds (1989), and Mike Bordick (1992).

The DNP-.300 hitters include players who were only one-time .300 hitters in the majors (the 31 players listed in Table 18). Other groups of players include seven multiple DNP-.300 hitters, nine rookies, 15 players who were or would become batting champions, 13 players who were or would become Most Valuable Player Award winners, and 16 players who would be elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame:

Multiple DNP-.300 Hitters — Ralph Garr (1976, 1977); Bobby Abreu (2003, 2004); A.J. Pierzynski (2002, 2009, 2015); Shin-Soo Choo (2009, 2010); Aramis Ramirez (2001, 2012); and Starlin Castro (2010, 2017).

Rookies — Bucky Harris (1920), Evar Swanson (1929), Pepper Martin (1931), Gary Matthews (1973), Benito Santiago (1987), Jason Kendall (1996), Doug Glanville (1997), Chris Singleton (1999), and Starlin Castro (2010). Matthews, Santiago, and Kendall were selected Rookies of the Year by The Sporting News.

Batting Champions — Hank Aaron, Jose Altuve, Bobby Avila, Ralph Garr, Dick Groat, Matt Holliday, Carney Lansford, Joe Medwick, John Olerud, Al Oliver, Jose Reyes, Alex Rodriguez, Arky Vaughan, Dixie Walker, Christian Yelich

Most Valuable Player Award winners — Hank Aaron, Jose Altuve, George Foster, Freddie Freeman, Dick Groat, Reggie Jackson, Joe Medwick, Dale Murphy, Alex Rodriguez, Ivan Rodriguez, Al Rosen, Mo Vaughn, and Christian Yelich

Hall of Famers — Hank Aaron, Roberto Alomar, Earle Combs, Ken Griffey Jr., Vladimir Guerrero, Bucky Harris, Reggie Jackson, Derek Jeter, Tony Lazzeri, Joe Medwick, David Ortiz, Mike Piazza, Ivan Rodriguez, Ron Santo, Enos Slaughter, Alan Trammell, and Arky Vaughan

Finally, I discovered that, for players with an interim .300 batting average in their team's final game, there was an astonishing difference in the percentage of players who finished with .300 averages for the 1920-1969 period and the 1970-2009 periods — about 54 % versus 85 %, respectively. Similarly, the .300 : sub-.300 ratios for the 1920-1969 period (about 1.2 : 1) and the 1970-2009 period (about 5.5 : 1). The substantial difference is attributed to the emergence of free agency for all players and perhaps the use of performance-enhancing drugs by some players.

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APPENDIX A – Other Examples of Players *Not* Not-Playing to Protect .300 Batting Averages

Three players who did NOT not-play to protect their .300s by exiting a playoff tie-breaker game —

Enos Slaughter in 1946. Going into the "final" regularly-scheduled day of the 1946 campaign, St. Louis and Brooklyn had identical 96-57 W-L records, the best in the National League. Each team's "final" game was crucial. Slaughter of Cardinals had a .29766 batting average. In the Red Birds "final" game, Slaughter singled and doubled in his first two trips to the plate, boosting his BA to .30000. He was retired in his next at bat, lowering his average to .29950. Under different circumstances, Slaughter might have taken the rest of the game off to protect his .300 (as he would do in 1952 — see Table 6). But, in this critical game he had to remain in the battle. He was retired in his fourth at bat, which lowered his average to .29900. However, since both the Cardinals and Dodgers lost their "final" games, they remained tied for first place, necessitating a best-of-three playoff to determine the pennant winner. With this reprieve, Slaughter proceeded to go 2-for-4 and 1-for-3 (plus 2 walks) in the first two games (both of which St. Louis won), thereby ending with a final batting average of .30049.

Maury Wills in 1962. At the conclusion of the Dodgers penultimate game, Wills had a .30088 batting average; and with 100 stolen bases he had already broken Ty Cobb's ML single season record (96). Thus, it would not have been out of line for Wills to skip the final game to secure his .300. However, going into the "final" regular-season game, Los Angeles (101-60) had only a one-game lead over San Francisco (100-61). So, it was a "must play game" for Wills — he could not not-play to protect his .300. Unfortunately, he went 0-for-4 which caused his average to drop to .29912. Fortunately (at least for Wills), since the Dodgers lost while the Giants won, each team "finished" with identical 101-61 W-L records — they tied for first place, thereby requiring a best-of-three tie-breaker playoff series. In each of the first two tie-breaker games, Wills went 0-for-4, plummeting his average to .2956. Since the Dodgers and Giants split the first two games, the regular season came down the third and final playoff game. Through the bottom of the seventh inning, Wills had proceeded to go 4-for-4, elevating his BA to .29971. The Dodgers held a 4-2 lead, which if they maintained through the top of the ninth inning, they would emerge as the victorious pennant winner — and Wills would not come to bat again, finalizing his .300 BA. But, the Giants rallied for four runs in the top of the ninth, taking a 6-4 lead. In the bottom of the ninth for Los Angeles, Wills led off and grounded out, reducing his average to .29928. And, since the next two Dodgers batters were also retired, Wills' season was over.

James Loney in 2013. At the conclusion of the "regular" season, the Tampa Bay Rays (AL East Division) and the Texas Rangers (AL West Division) were tied for the Wild Card Team for the post season — there would be a one-game tie-breaker playoff. Loney had finished the "regular" season with a .30037 batting average, having gone 1-for-4 in Tampa Bay's "final" game, which the Rays won, giving them a W-L record of 91-71 — the fourth best record in the junior circuit. Texas, which also won its "final" game of the campaign, also finished with a 91-71 W-L record. In the playoff game, Loney went 0-for-3 (plus an intentional walk) which lowered his BA to .299. Nonetheless, while Loney surrendered his .300, the Rays won the game and proceeded to the Division Series.

APPENDIX B — Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team’s Final Game (1920-2022)

Tables B-1 through B-11 provide the pertinent information.

Table B-1. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team’s Final Game (1920-1929).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
<i>Bucky Harris</i>	WAS	1920	<i>.29482 (148/502)</i>	4/4 [1]	Start	Final	.30040
<i>Dave Robertson</i>	CHC	1920	<i>.29899 (148/495)</i>	2/5	.29860	.30040	.30000
Ed Konetchy	(PHP)	1921	.30087 (139/462)	0/3	Final	Start	.29892
Topper Rigney	DET	1922	.30206 (161/533)	0/3	Final	Start	.30037
Lu Blue	DET	1922	.30172 (175/580)	0/4	Final	Start	.29966
Joe Sewell	CLE	1922	.29964 (166/554)	1/4	.29910	.30036	.29928
Goose Goslin	WAS	1923	.30151 (180/597)	0/3	Final	Start	.30000
<i>Bing Miller</i>	PHA	1923	<i>.29890 (136/455)</i>	1/3	.29825	.29978	.29913
<i>Curt Walker</i>	(CIN)	1924	<i>.29590 (137/463)</i>	3/5	Start	.29979	.29915
Howard Freigau	(CHC)	1925	.30060 (150/499)	0/3	Final	Start	.29880
Eddie Moore	PIT	1925	.29963 (163/544)	0/3	Final	Start	.29799
Jimmy Johnston	BRK	1925	.29977 (128/427)	0/4	Final	Start	.29698
Earle Combs	NYY	1926	.29900 (180/602)	1/4	.29851	.29967	.29868
Bud Clancy	CWS	1927	.30000 (138/460)	1/4	Final	.30152	.29957
Frankie Frisch	SLC	1928	.30203 (164/543)	0/4	Final	Start	.29982
Doug Taitt	BOS	1928	.29979 (143/477)	1/5	Final	.30126	.29876
<i>Lou Gehrig</i>	NYY	1929	<i>.29818 (164/550)</i>	2/3	Start	.30072	.30018
<i>John Rothrock</i>	BOS	1929	<i>.29936 (141/471)</i>	1/2 [2]	Start	.30085	.30021
Buddy Myer	WAS	1929	.30000 (168/560)	1/3	.29893	Final	.30018
<i>Evar Swanson</i>	CIN	1929	<i>.29597 (169/571)</i>	3/3 [1]	Start	Final	.29965

NOTES: (1) The “Start BA (H/AB)” column gives the player’s batting average and his Hits/At Bats at the start of his team’s final game of the season. (2) The “H/AB [PAA]” column gives the Hits/At Bats and [Plate Appearances Avoided (as a consequence of being replaced by a pinch runner or a pinch hitter or a defensive substitute)] for the player in his team’s final game of the season. (3) The “Lowest BA” column gives the player’s lowest batting average during the game —if it was his game-starting BA, “Start” is entered; if it was his final BA, “Final” is entered. (4) The “Highest BA” column gives the player’s highest batting average during the game. (5) The “Final BA” column gives the player’s final batting average. (6) A player’s name shown in boldface indicates that he achieved a final batting average of .300 (i.e., between .29950 and .30049; his entry in the Final BA column is also emboldened). (7) A player’s name shown in italics indicates that his game starting BA was less than .29950; his entry in the Start BA (H/AB) column is also shown in italics. (8) When the player’s team is shown in parentheses it indicates that the player also previously played for another team.

Table B-2. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (1930-1939).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Harry Rice	(NYY)	1930	.29574 (139/470)	3/4	Start	Final	.29958
Tony Lazzeri	NYY	1932	.29921 (152/508)	1/2 [2]	Start	.30059	.30000
<i>Ben Chapman</i>	NYY	1932	.29983 (173/577)	1/4	.29879	.30000	.29948
Goose Goslin	SLB	1932	.30159 (171/567)	0/5	Final	Start	.29895
Pinky Whitney	PHP	1932	.29952 (186/621)	0/3	Final	Start	.29808
Earl Combs	NYY	1933	.29952 (124/414)	1/3 [1]	Start	.30120	.29976
Sam West	SLB	1933	.29767 (153/514)	2/3	Start	.30039	.29981
<i>Danny Taylor</i>	BRK	1934	.29851 (120/402)	1/3 [1]	Start	.30025	.29877
Ray Pepper	SLB	1934	.30000 (168/560)	0/4	Final	Start	.29787
Red Rolfe	NYY	1935	.29874 (190/636)	2/3	.29827	Final	.30047
<i>Jake Powell</i>	(NYY)	1936	.29907 (160/535)	1/3 [1]	.29851	.29981	.29926
Earl Averill	CLE	1937	.30083 (182/605)	0/4	Final	Start	.29885
Joe Kuhel	CWS	1939	.29889 (162/542)	2/4 [1]	Start	Final	.30037
Cookie Lavagetto	BRK	1939	.30017 (175/583)	1/4	.29863	Start	.29983

Table B-3. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team’s Final Game (1940-1949).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Mike McCormick	CIN	1940	.30120 (125/415)	(0/2) [1]	Final	Start	.29976
Arky Vaughan	PIT	1940	.29780 (176/591)	2/3 [2]	Start	Final	.29966
Jimmie Foxx	BOS	1941	.29897 (145/485)	(0/2) [2]	Start	.30000	.29979
Mickey Vernon	WAS	1941	.29981 (158/527)	1/4	.29868	.30000	.29944
Charlie Keller	NYN	1941	.29960 (151/504)	0/3	Final	Start	.29783
Lou Novikoff	CHC	1942	.29854 (143/479)	2/4	.29793	.30083	.29959
Johnny Lindell	NYN	1944	.29831 (176/590)	2/4	Start	.30017	.29966
Dixie Walker	BRK	1945	.29868 (181/606)	1/1 [3]	Start	Final	.29984
Bobby Estalella	PHA	1945	.29978 (134/447)	1/4	.29778	Start	.29933
(Enos Slaughter)	SLC	1946	.29766 (178/598)	2/4	Start	.30000	.29900
Enos Slaughter	SLC	1946	.30033 (182/606)	1/3	.29934	Final	.30049
Harry Walker	(CIN)	1949	.30128 (141/468)	1/5	.30000	.30149	.30021

NOTES: (1) The “Final Game H/AB [PAA]” entry for Mike McCormick — (0/2) [1] — indicates that he did not start the game; he entered the game as a pinch runner in the first inning and played the rest of the game, going 0-for-2 plus a sacrifice and a walk; the [1] indicates that he avoided 1 plate appearance. (2) The “Final Game H/AB [PAA]” entry for Jimmie Foxx — (1/2) [2] — indicates that he did not start the game; he entered the game as a defensive substitute in the fourth inning and played the rest of the game, going 1-for-2; the [2] indicates that he avoided 2 plate appearances by not starting the game. (3) The first entry for (Enos Slaughter) is for the regularly-scheduled final game of the season. The second entry for Slaughter is for the second and final game of the playoff to determine the pennant winner. The playoff statistics officially count in the regular-season totals. See also Appendix A.

Table B-4. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (1950-1959).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Eddie Stanky	NYG	1950	.29848 (157/526)	1/1 [3]	Start	Final	.29981
Dee Fondy	CHC	1952	.30000 (165/550)	1/4	.29946	.30072	.29964
Al Dark	NYG	1953	.29922 (193/645)	1/2 [3]	.29876	.Final	.29985
Al Rosen	CLE	1954	.30108 (140/465)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30043
Mickey Mantle	NYY	1954	.29945 (162/541)	1/2	.29889	Final	.30018
<i>Gus Bell</i>	CIN	1954	.29919 (184/615)	1/4	Final	.29984	.29887
Granny Hamner	PHP	1954	.30118 (178/591)	0/5	Final	Start	.29866
Frank Thomas	PIT	1954	.30017 (172/573)	0/4	Final	Start	.29809
Jim Gilliam	BRK	1956	.30169 (178/590)	0/4	Final	Start	.29966
Wally Moon	SLC	1956	.30037 (161/536)	0/4	Final	Start	..29815
Gil Hodges	BRK	1956	.29861 (172/576)	1/3	Start	.29983	.29879
Nellie Fox	CWS	1958	.30048 (186/619)	1/4	.29904	Start	.30016

Table B-5. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (1960-1969).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Joe Adcock	MIL	1960	.30059 (153/509)	0/5	Final	Start	.29767
<i>Don Hoak</i>	PIT	1961	.29860 (149/499)	1/4	Final	.30000	.29821
Johnny Callison	PHP	1962	.30066 (181/602)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30017
(Maury Wills)	LAD	1962	.30088 (204/678)	0/4	Final	Start	.29912
<i>Maury Wills</i>	LAD	1962	.29565 (204/690)	4/5	Start	.29971	.29928
Rich Rollins	MIN	1962	.29952 (186/621)	0/3	Final	Start	.29808
Billy Williams	CHC	1962	.29967 (184/614)	0/4	Final	Start	.29773
Joe Christopher	NYM	1964	.30056 (162/539)	1/4	Final	.30185	.30018
<i>Jim Ray Hart</i>	SFG	1965	.29642 (174/587)	3/4	Start	.30000	.29949
<i>Donn Clendenon</i>	PIT	1966	.29912 (169/565)	2/6	Start	.30106	.29947
Ron Santo	CHC	1967	.30137 (176/584)	0/2 [2]	Final	Start	.30034

NOTES: (1) The first entry for (Maury Wills) is for the regularly-scheduled final game of the season. The second entry for Wills is for the second and final game of the playoff to determine the pennant winner. The playoff statistics officially count in the regular-season totals. See also Appendix A.

Table B-6. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (1970-1979).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Dick Dietz	SFG	1970	.29796 (146/490)	2/3	Start	Final	.30020
Cesar Tovar	MIN	1970	.29938 (194/648)	1/2 [2]	Start	.30046	.30000
<i>Hank Aaron</i>	ATL	1970	.29688 (152/512)	2/4	Start	.29961	.29845
Willie Stargell	PIT	1973	.30116 (156/578)	0/4	Final	Start	.29885
Dave Cash	PHP	1974	.30059 (205/682)	1/5	.29927	.30029	.29985
Greg Luzinski	PHI	1975	.30084 (179/595)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30034
Ralph Garr	CWS	1976	.29981 (158/527)	0/0 [3]	Start	Start	.29981
Rusty Staub	DET	1976	.30137 (176/584)	0/5	Final	Start	.29881
Dan Driessen	CIN	1977	.30019 (160/533)	1/3	.29906	Final	.30037
Ralph Garr	CWS	1977	.30129 (163/541)	0/2 [2]	Final	Start	.30018
Cecil Cooper	MIL	1977	.29577 (189/639)	4/4	Start	Final	.30016
Ron LeFlore	DET	1979	.29766 (178/598)	2/2 [2]	Start	Final	.30000

NOTES: (1) Ralph Garr had one (1) plate appearance in the 1976 final game: he started the game and made a sacrifice hit; he then left the game.

Table B-7. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (1980-1999).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Bruce Bochte	SEA	1980	.30058 (156/519)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30000
Alan Trammell	DET	1980	.29928 (167/558)	1/2 [1]	Start	.30054	.30000
Reggi Jackson	NYN	1980	.29825 (153/513)	1/1 [2]	Start	Final	.29961
Eddie Murray	BAL	1980	.29984 (185/617)	1/4	.29934	.30048	.29952
Dusty Baker	LAD	1982	.29859 (169/566)	2/4	Start	Final	.30000
Jerry Mumphrey	NYN	1982	.29832 (142/476)	1/1 [4]	Start	Final	.29979
Dale Murphy	ATL	1985	.30032 (183/616)	0/0 [4]	Start	Start	.30032
Jose Cruz	HOU	1985	.29945 (162/541)	1/3	.29834	Final	.29963
Phil Bradley	SEA	1985	.30047 (192/639)	0/2 [3]	Final	Start	.29953
Bill Buckner	BOS	1985	.29790 (199/668)	2/5	.29746	.29955	.29866
Scott Fletcher	TEX	1986	.30038 (158/526)	1/4 [1]	Final	.30171	.30000
Benito Santiago	SDP	1987	.29779 (162/544)	2/2 [2]	Start	Final	.30037
Greg Brock	MIL	1987	.30057 (159/529)	0/3	Final	Start	.29887

NOTES: (1) Dale Murphy had one (1) plate appearance in the 1985 final game: he started the game and was walked; he then left the game.

Table B-8. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (1990-1993, 1995-1999).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Fred McGriff	TOR	1990	.30072 (166/552)	1/5	.29910	Start	.29982
Mike Greenwell	BOS	1991	.30018 (163/543)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.29963
Will Clark	SFG	1992	.30137 (154/511)	0/2 [3]	Final	Start	.30019
Luis Gonzalez	HOU	1993	.29926 (161/538)	1/2 [2]	.29870	Final	.30000
Travis Fryman	DET	1993	.30017 (181/603)	1/4	.29967	.30083	.29984
Brett Butler	(LAD)	1995	.29883 (153/512)	1/1 [4]	Start	Final	.30019
Paul O'Neill	NYN	1995	.30330 (138/455)	0/5	Final	Start	.30000
Mo Vaughn	BOS	1995	.30109 (165/548)	0/2 [2]	Final	Start	.30000
Lee Stevens	TEX	1997	.29858 (126/422)	2/4	Start	.30118	.30047
Joey Cora	SEA	1997	.30017 (172/573)	0/1 [4]	Final	Start	.29965
<i>Bobby Higginson</i>	DET	1997	.29889 (162/542)	1/4	Final	.30018	.29853
Scott Brosius	NYN	1998	.30171 (159/527)	0/3 [1]	Final	Start	.30000
Wally Joyner	SDP	1998	.30046 (131/436)	0/3	Final	Start	.29841
Chris Singleton	CWS	1999	.30101 (149/495)	0/1 [1]	Final	Start	.30040
Mike Lieberthal	PHP	1999	.30059 (153/509)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30000

Table B-9. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (2000-2009).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Cliff Floyd	FLA	2000	.30072 (126/419)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30000
Bobby Higginson	DET	2000	.29680 (176/593)	3/4	.29630	Final	.29983
Fernando Vina	SLC	2000	.29814 (144/483)	2/4 [1]	.29691	Final	.29979
Corey Koskie	MIN	2000	.29873 (141/472)	1/2 [3]	.29810	Final	.29958
Aramis Ramirez	PIT	2001	.30066 (181/602)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30017
Alfonso Soriano	NYN	2002	.30246 (209/691)	0/5	Final	Start	.30029
John Olerud	SEA	2002	.30182 (166/550)	0/3 [2]	Start	Final	.30018
Ryan Klesko	SDP	2002	.30224 (162/536)	0/4	Final	Start	.30000
A.J. Pierzynski	MIN	2002	.30137 (132/438)	0/2 [1]	Final	Start	.30000
Jacque Jones	MIN	2002	.29617 (170/574)	3/3 [1]	Start	Final	.29983
Alex Rodriguez	TEX	2002	.30000 (186/620)	1/4	.29856	Start	.29968
<i>Todd Walker</i>	CIN	2002	.29934 (182/608)	1/4	.29836	.29951	.29902
Bobby Abreu	PHP	2003	.29913 (172/575)	1/2 [2]	.29861	Final	.29983
Hank Blalock	TEX	2003	.30142 (170/564)	0/3 [1]	Final	Start	.29982
D. Mientkiewicz	MIN	2003	.29835 (145/486)	1/1 [3]	Start	Final	.29979
<i>Brian Giles</i>	(SDP)	2003	.29857 (146/489)	1/3	Start	.30000	.29878
Lew Ford	MIN	2004	.30088 (170/565)	0/4	Final	Start	.29877
Coco Crisp	CLE	2005	.30000 (177/590)	1/4	.29899	.30017	.29966
David Ortiz	BOS	2005	.29883 (179/599)	1/2 [1]	.29833	Final	.29950
Ivan Rodriguez	DET	2006	.29596 (161/544)	3/3	Start	Final	.29982
Randy Winn	SFG	2007	.29899 (177/592)	1/1 [4]	Start	Final	.30017
Justin Morneau	MIN	2008	.30161 (187/620)	0/3	Final	Start	.30016
Vernon Wells	TOR	2008	.29314 (124/423)	4/4 [1]	Start	Final	.29977
Justin Upton	ARZ	2009	.30268 (158/522)	0/4	Final	Start	.30038
Alberto Callaspo	KCR	2009	.29843 (171/573)	2/3 [1]	Start	.30087	.30035
<i>(Jason Kubel)</i>	MIN	2009	.29644 (150/506)	3/4 [1]	Start	Final	.30000
Jason Kubel	MIN	2009	.30000 (153/510)	1/4 [2]	.29883	.30019	.29961

Table B-10. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (2010-2019).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Vladimir Guerrero	TEX	2010	.30118 (178/591)	0/2 [2]	Final	Start	.30017
Jose Tabata	PIT	2010	.30175 (121/401)	0/4	Final	Start	.29877
Carlos Beltran	(SFG)	2011	.30116 (156/518)	0/2 [2]	Final	Start	.30000
Albert Pujols	SLC	2011	.29965 (172/574)	1/5	Final	.30087	.29879
Josh Hamilton	TEX	2011	.30021 (145/483)	0/4	Final	Start	.29774
Aramis Ramirez	MIL	2012	.29877 (170/569)	1/1 [3]	Start	Final	.30000
James Loney	TBR	2013	.30037 (164/546)	0/3	Final	Start	.29872
Howie Kendrick	LAA	2013	.29958 (142/474)	0/4	Final	Start	.29707
Adam Eaton	CWS	2014	.29607 (143/483)	3/3 [2]	Start	Final	.30041
Christian Yelich	MIA	2015	.30169 (143/474)	0/2 [2]	Final	Start	.30042
<i>Mike Trout</i>	LAA	2015	.29843 (171/573)	1/2	Start	.29965	.29913
Adrian Beltre	TEX	2016	.29948 (174/581)	1/2 [3]	Start	.30069	.30000
Devon Travis	TOR	2016	.29877 (121/405)	2/5	.29803	.30147	.30000
Aledmys Diaz	SLC	2016	.30250 (121/400)	0/4	Final	Start	.29950
Starlin Castro	NYY	2017	.30090 (133/442)	0/1 [3]	Final	Start	.30023
Lorenzo Cain	KCR	2017	.30069 (175/582)	0/2 [2]	Final	Start	.29966
Joey Wendle	TBR	2018	.29959 (145/484)	1/3	.29897	.30041	.29979

NOTES: (1) See also Appendix A for James Loney.

Table B-11. Players with an Interim .300 BA in Their Team's Final Game (2020-202).

Player	Team	Year	Start BA (H/AB)	Final Game H/AB [PAA]	Lowest BA	Highest BA	Final BA
Xander Bogaerts	BOS	2020	.29500 (59/200)	2/3 [2]	.29353	Final	.30049
Michael Brantley	HOU	2020	.29762 (50/168)	1/2 [3]	.29586	Final	.30000
Freddie Freeman	ATL	2021	.29983 (179/597)	1/3 [1]	.29933	Final	.30000
Nicky Lopez	KCR	2021	.29899 (148/495)	1/2 [3]	.29839	Final	.29980
Andres Gimenez	CLE	2022	.29979 (146/487)	0/4	Final	Start	.29735