



SPOTLIGHT ON THE MINORS

MINOR LEAGUE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr 1998 Vol 5.1

Committee Chairman:

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I. Committee News:

1. WESTERN INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE REUNION

Professional ballplayers from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s will assemble on Sunday, May 17, for the 61st anniversary reunion of Western International League players. Under the sponsorship of the Pierce County (Tacoma) Softball Hall of Fame, the reunion and banquet will be held in the Puyallup (Wash.) Elks Lodge, beginning at 2 pm. The public is invited. For information, contact Marc Blau (253) 848-1360.

2. KOM LEAGUE 52ND BIRTHDAY PARTY

One of the largest gatherings of former professional baseball players in minor league history is scheduled for Carthage, MO on June 15-18, 1998. The Kansas-Oklahoma-Missouri League provided training for many future minor leaguers in the late 40s/early 50s, including Bill Virdon, who will attend the reunion. The meeting features an old-times game in a ballpark where Mickey Mantle once played, a golf tournament, barbecue, and banquets. Registration is \$100. Contact: John G. Hall, 1707 Rainwood Place, Columbia, MO 65203.

3. SABR 28 NATIONAL CONVENTION

The Minor League Committee will have a table at the convention at San Francisco. Committee members are asked to participate in spreading the word about the joys of minor league baseball in two ways:

1st: Man the table! Please volunteer an hour to sit at the table, hand out materials, and talk to passersby about the committee and minor league baseball. Let me know before the convention, so I can make out a schedule. E-mail, fax or mail me a time when you can be available. Thanks.

2nd: If you have a book on the minors or one of substantial interest to committee members, please send me a flyer or order form. Do not send in copies of your books; the tables aren't secure enough to take responsibility for books. Feel free to send other material, like articles to hand out, that you think would publicize committee work. You can send it to me (please reproduce copies before sending) before the convention if you don't plan to attend.

Our committee is scheduled for one hour. Please let me know if you need time for announcements, to provide information or other purposes. We will have to schedule time pretty carefully. Let me know as soon as you can. Thank you.

4. A DAY AT THE MINORS

The Bob Davids Chapter of SABR is hosting "A Day at the Minors" on July 11th at Municipal Stadium at Hagerstown, Maryland. Activities will begin at 3:00 pm with presentations by those connected with the Class A Hagerstown Suns, including the owner, media, general manager, umpires and players. A picnic with ballpark food will be opened at 5:30 pm, followed by a South Atlantic game between the Hagerstown Suns and the Delmarva Shorebirds. The historic stadium seems certain to heading for replacement or abandonment; this is a good chance to see it outfitted for professional baseball. Hagerstown is about an hour from both Washington and DC beltways. This meeting is for fans and families. A playground is located next to the picnic area. Cost is (approx.) \$15 per person, including game tickets, food, and an education on how it is done in the minors. Contact Bob Savitt for reservations or details and exact cost (301) 983-8708, e mail Bobsavitt@aol.com, fax (301) 299-8785.

II. New Committee Members:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>INTERESTS</u>
Timoty Hannan 28 Shady Lane Fairport, NY 14450	Rochester NY baseball
Royse M. Parr 2521 E 31 st St. Tulsa, OK 74105	Players from Oklahoma
Paul Sallee 66A White St. Eatontown, NJ 07724	Tri-State League of 1907 Southern League 1905-06 Cotton States League 1905
Rebecca Kraus 3936 Ettrick Court Bowie, MD 20716	Orioles, teams in Maryland
Tom Simon 311 North St Burlington, VT 05401	New York-Penn League Baseball in Vermont
Chuck Partington 1056 S. E. 23 rd Court Gresham, OR 97080	Minor League Baseball in the Northwest; Portland Beavers

Welcome!

III. Names in the News:

1. **Royse M. Parr** is co-author with Bob Burke and Kenny Franks of a book to be published by the Oklahoma Heritage Association on the history of Oklahoma baseball. His primary responsibility is high school, American Legion, sandlot, semi-pro and minor league baseball.
2. Congratulations to **Robert Gaunt** for publication of The Coastal Plain League History Book. Ordering details are in the publications section.

IV. Research Requests:

1. Dean Sullivan, author of Early Innings: A Documentary History of Baseball, 1825-1908, is working on a baseball history covering the mid-1940s through the mid-1990s. He is asking for committee members to help identify subjects and events that deserve inclusion in the planned book. The minors, he notes, are often ignored or slighted in standard histories of baseball:

It is difficult, for example, to find documents on an important event in minor league baseball if you know nothing about it. Certain reference books (like the Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball) have been invaluable, but they cannot substitute for the knowledge of dedicated researchers. I am hoping that you can send me, either through e-mail or letters, your suggestions for subjects to consider. Please include the date and location of the events you mention, along with a brief explanation of the reason for your choice. Keep in mind that there may be a variety of different ways to represent the subject you have in mind. For instance, which document would best explain the demise of the Negro leagues, or would best explain the umpiring career of Pam Postema --her rise to AAA, her release, or her sexual discrimination lawsuit?

Dean Sullivan donsull@erols.com
3508 Queen Anne Dr
Fairfax, VA 22030-1831

2. Paul Sallee would like to talk to others who are researching Birmingham or any other Southern League team. He is interested in the 1905-06 years in particular. Paul' s address is in the Newsletter under new members.
3. Minor League Pension Fund? Ed Tassinari writes:

In 1957, a 10 year minor league veteran, pitcher Duke Markell, attempted to create a pension plan for minor league vets with at least 10 years experience. Apparently his idea was for the players to contribute a monthly amount proportionate to their minor league classification; together with contributions from each minor and major league club, the basis of a pension fund could be established. A 5/8/57 article in The Sporting News gave the essentials of the story, but a scan of the next few issues revealed no additional information. Nor have I seen any other mention of Markell' s proposal. The SABR Research in Baseball Index had no information either.

Anyone who knows the specifics can contact Ed through his SABR directory address. Could you also let me know for a newsletter entry? This should be of general interest to committee members.

4. Ron Selter found a discrepancy in home run date for the 1915 Central Association. Spaulding Guide lists Albert Durham with a league leading HR total of 8, a figure also indicate in the Minor League Register. (I read the Register as crediting Durham with 4 HR' s for Racine in the Bi-State League, and 8 for Muscatine in the Central Association). Bob McConnell' s Minor League Home Run Record Book and the 2nd ed. of Minor League Encyclopedia have Durham with

18 HR. Durham had only 208 AB that season. (The Register indicates 209 for Muscatine, 174 for Racine in the Bi-State League).

Ron also notes that the 1901 Three I League home run leader in McConnell and the 2nd ed. Minor League Encyclopedia is Frank Roth of Evansville. Ron writes, "Does anyone have other extra base hit or total base data for Roth that season? If such data is available he would likely replace Frank Huelsman as the Minor League Slugging leader for that year."

If anyone has clarifying information on the two above situations, please send it in.

5. Mike Lackey has traced pitcher Bob Ewing's career records in organized baseball from 1897 to 1913 about as far as standard references allow. He is still missing information from 1901 (Kansas city), 1911 (affiliation unknown, if any) 1912 (possibly Buffalo) 1913 (Minneapolis and Pasadena). Anyone who can fill in missing statistics on Ewing please send the information directly to Mike at the address in the SABR directory.

6. Ed Rose is researching the 1905-06 Kane (PA) Mountaineers and seeks sources of information about the league or the club. Anyone with similar interests or expertise can contact Ed at his SABR directory address or at enr@herald-sun.com.

7. Elbert Chance is working on a history of the Wilmington Blue Rocks of the Interstate League, with a section on the current Carolina League team. If others have information or can contribute possible sources for data, please contact him at: 202 Grantham Place, Newark, DE 19711-4508, (302) 366-5526.

8. Robert Schulz is researching minor league managers who have never played professional ball, and has compiled a surprisingly long list of possibles. Anyone who has an interest in the subject, or can help confirm the background of his list of managers can contact him at the address in the SABR directory. Also, I have a copy of the list and would be happy to fax it to anyone.

V. Research Resources: -

Mike Dempsey passed along some valuable information about the availability of Independent League reports from Howe Sportsdata. Howe has records on the following leagues:

Atlantic Coast League, 1995	North Central League, 94-95
Big South League, 1996-97	Northeast League, 95-97
Frontier League, 1994-97	Northern League, 93-97
Heartland League, 1996-97	Prairie League, 95-97
Mid-America League, 1995	Texas-La. League, 94-97
North Atlantic League, 1995-96	Western League, 95-97

Each report costs \$15. Contact:

Howe Sportsdata Intl, Inc.
Boston Fish Pier, West Building #2, Suite 306
Boston, MA. 02210
Tel. (617) 951-0070/Fax (617) 737-9960

V. Minor League Articles Available for Order:

Short articles which are of general interest to committee members should be mailed to the chairman for inclusion in this section. Copies will be reproduced and disseminated at cost, which is indicated after the article. Please make checks payable to Ernest J. Green, and not to SABR. If you have written an article (published or unpublished, except those already in SABR volumes) on the minors, or have compiled data and are willing to have it circulated, please send it in.

16. McReynolds, John, "Nate Moreland, Mystery to Historians," Grandstand Baseball Annual 1997. An article discussing the career of a black player whose career in white professional baseball began only a month after Jackie Robinson first appeared in Brooklyn. 12 pages. \$1.00

17. Lingo, Will, "Minors Rebirth," Baseball America, Apr 13-26, 1998. Traces the rebirth of the minors from their low point 25 years ago through the major events and people who have been important in the resurgence. 6 pages. \$1.00.

VI. Publications:

1. Gmelch, George and J.J. Weiner. In the Ballpark: The Working Lives of Baseball People. Washington, D.C.: The Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998. \$21.95. Pub. Scheduled for Apr, 1998. Interviews with ushers, beer vendors, groundskeepers, front office people, announcers, others who support the on-field game. About 40% of the interviewees work in minor league baseball. In bookstores.

2. Kayser, Tom. Texas League Media Guide and Texas League Newsletter. **SPECIAL OFFER FOR SABR MEMBERS!** The Newsletter is published at least 22 times during the season. The Media Guide is published in February and is ready for mailing in late March. For SABR members, a subscription to both is available for \$30.00 (regularly \$47). For just the Newsletter, the price is \$25.00 (instead of \$35) and the Texas League Media Guide for \$9.00 instead of \$12. Mail your orders to the League President's office at 2442 Facet Oak, San Antonio, TX 78232. Ph (21) 545-5297; Fax (21) 545-5298.

3. Gaunt, Robert. The Coastal Plain League History Book. Durham, NC: Baseball American, 1997. From 1937 to 1952, the class D Coastal Plain League operated in eastern North Carolina. Gaunt portrays the 14 cities, ballparks, players, games and ballparks as "an American treasure." 400 pages, \$17.95. Order from Baseball American, P0 Box 2089, Durham, NC 27702. Add \$5 S&H.