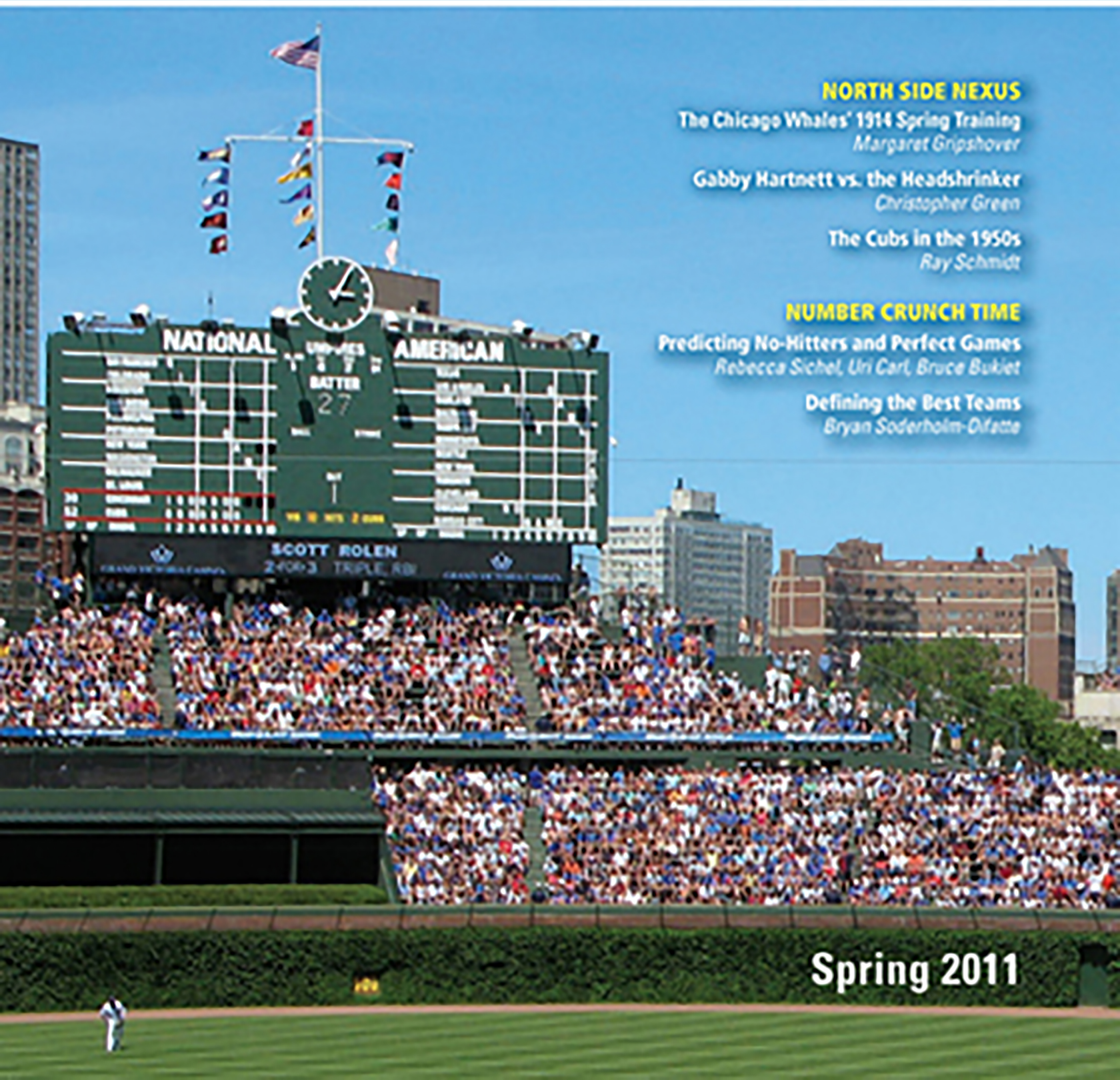
THE Baseball Research JOURNAL



NORTH SIDE NEXUS

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Margaret Gripshover

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The Cubs in the 1950s
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NUMBER CRUNCH TIME

Predicting No-Hitters and Perfect Games
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Editor: Stuart Shea
Design and Production: Lisa Hochstein
Cover Design: Lisa Hochstein
Fact Checker: Clifford Blau
Photo Consultant: Mark Fimoff
Proofreader: Norman L. Macht

Front cover: Jacob Pomrenke, SABR

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Phone: (800) 969-7227 or (602) 343-6455
Fax: (216) 575-0502
Email: info@sabr.org
Web: www.sabr.org
Facebook: Society for American Baseball Research
Twitter: @SABR

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Note from the Editor

You'll notice some changes to the *Baseball Research Journal*.

First off, there's a new name at the bottom of this page. It is an honor to edit this issue of the *BRJ* and I hope the results equal the high level of quality set by former SABR publications director Nick Frankovich, whose work in the past few years made SABR a lot of friends.

When the SABR board asked me to edit this issue (Cecilia Tan will edit the next *BRJ*), we agreed that it would be interesting to explore a "themed" issue. Therefore, you'll see several articles about Chicago's National League representatives as well as related pieces about the early days of Chicago professional baseball and the Chicago Whales of the Federal League.

For those of you not naturally drawn to the Cubs, I hope you still enjoy the articles; many of them have truths and lessons transcending the experiences of one team or era.

Of course, there are plenty of the articles in this issue that explore topics far beyond the scope of the long-suffering North Siders. We hope you enjoy the variety contained within these covers.

This *BRJ* also features several pieces one might define as "think pieces" or "personal history." We feel that Ray Schmidt's and Eric White's first-person tales, and the sociological perspective offered by Bill Savage, make compelling reading.

It is a point of pride to me that many authors in this issue are making their first appearances in a SABR publication…and that they hold their own against some storied veterans. As SABR works to expand its membership in the coming years, its publications should and will reflect the increasingly diverse world of baseball fans and researchers.

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I would like to thank designer and production coordinator Lisa Hochstein, who patiently and expertly guided me through the intricacies of constructing this publication from scratch. Bill Nowlin, Gary Gillette, and Cecilia Tan answered questions and gave good advice. Marc Appleman offered ideas and showed plenty of faith.

Fact-checker Cliff Blau was invaluable, while Norman Macht skillfully proofread the issue. John Horne at the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library provided many photos and Mark Fimoff helped locate others. George Ann Ratchford at SMU Press graciously sent the shot of Charles Alexander.

The staff in Cleveland's SABR office—Susan Petrone, Eileen Canepari, and Peter Garver—were very helpful, as always. I also appreciate Jacob Pomrenke's assistance.

Finally, my deep appreciation goes to the peer reviewers who carefully read these articles, made suggestions, and paved the way for the pieces to be published. I'd like to thank them all by name, but the process requires that they stay anonymous. Given these folks' selfless natures, I anticipate that they'll understand.

Thank you all for your support of, and interest in, SABR. Please feel free to send feedback on this issue to me at sshea@sabr.org.

—Stuart Shea


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THE BIG
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The Cubs Fan Paradox

Why Would Anyone Root for Losers?

Bill Savage

Cubs fans raise a fundamental question about the nature of games and spectatorship. It seems paradoxical for a franchise that hasn't won a World Series since 1908, or a National League pennant since 1945, to have such a large, loyal, and vocal fan base, not just on the North Side of Chicago but nationwide.

Explanations include the aesthetic allure of Wrigley Field, the lively neighborhood bar scene, and easy access to Cubs games via WGN television and radio.

Each of these explanations works to some degree, but then again, no. Wrigley is cramped and below current standards of food and amenities to be found even at some *minor*-league ballparks. Wrigleyville's bar scene is an embarrassing delayed-onset frat party. In addition, many Cubs games are on local TV or cable only and as such *not* accessible to everyone in Chicago, much less nationwide.

I would offer an alternative that grows from a fundamental question posed in my baseball literature courses: what do we mean when we say "baseball" or "the game"? Writers and film-makers use these terms interchangeably, but the words we take most for granted always need analysis. Does "baseball" mean just the major leagues? Or professional baseball? What about little league, high school or college ball, sand-lot pickup games, or even the physical ball itself?

Is "the game" just the action on the field from first pitch to final out, or does it include fans, vendors, owners, gamblers, sportswriters, listeners and viewers at home, neighbors who rent their parking spaces, local bartenders, and barbers arguing stats with customers? In other words, what are the boundaries of "baseball"? For the Cubs and their fans, perhaps it's not whether you win or lose but rather how you define the game.

In the case of the Chicago Cubs and their fans, those boundaries are broadly drawn, and examining Cubs fan loyalty in terms of the game and its definition synthesizes many different explanations for their seemingly inexplicable loyalty.

Of course, most major league franchises have their die-hard fans; nothing about the Cubs is entirely unique. But Cubs culture has developed many different ways to engage with the game, and that sets its fan culture apart.

The most germane comparison to the Cubs is their cross-town rival White Sox. If romanticized losing could by itself bring in fans, the White Sox, with their World Series victory drought from 1917 to 2005, should give Cubs fans plenty of competition. And at many periods during the 20th Century, the White Sox outdrew the Cubs. But differences between their media strategies, their ballparks, and their neighborhoods show how the broadly drawn boundaries of Cubs baseball create its fan base.

Both Wrigley Field and Comiskey Park (the original and its replacement, now U.S. Cellular Field) were built in densely populated neighborhoods. But the 1980s seem to be the turning point. While Wrigleyville flourished, the White Sox' "reconstruction" of Comiskey changed its relationship to Armour Square and Bridgeport. Like too many modern ballparks, U.S. Cellular Field sits in the middle of a sea of parking lots, offering fans little to do before or after games; McCuddy's, a family-owned tavern where Babe Ruth was renowned to have beers during Yankees games, was demolished and never rebuilt. The park is clearly designed to ensure that every dollar spent by fans coming to the game is spent *inside* the ballpark.

Wrigleyville, on the other hand, was transformed since the early 1980s from a working-class neighborhood into a year-round music and night-life district. Scores of bars allow tens of thousands of fans to participate in the Cubs experience without ever having to buy a ticket. Local businesses of all sorts get into the act: besides the inevitable souvenir stands and ticket brokers, a pet supply shop on Clark Street offers discounts with that day's ticket stub, and at least one local tattoo parlor runs specials on Cubs logo tattoos.

The Cubs experience is not just inside the park, where "the game" narrowly defined occurs. It takes in the whole neighborhood, an expansive boundary which defines the game broadly and inclusively. Rooftop clubs offer some of the highest-priced tickets in town across the street from the ballpark itself. Due to its small size (even after bleacher expansion), batted balls regularly leave the physical confines of the

field, and so 81 days a year, the ballhawks lurk on Waveland and Sheffield to snag batting practice and game home runs.

Freelance T-shirt and peanut vendors (some of whom are also scalpers) wander around. Street musicians play for spare change and rickshaw cyclists offer tourists rides back to their cars. Local homeowners make a few bucks by renting out their parking spaces. The Chicago Transit Authority's Red Line stop at Addison is decorated with the team name and with original artwork celebrating Cubs players like Ernie Banks, Fergie Jenkins, and Ryne Sandberg. The neighborhood really is *Wrigley*ville; everyone can take part in the broadly defined game.

Historically, the Cubs media outlets have had similar effect. The Cubs have long been on powerful WGN-TV, later a cable super-station, which helped maintain and expand their Chicago Diaspora fan base. The White Sox, in contrast, were early adopters of both UHF, with its lesser reach and poorer over-air reception, and cable TV, when much of the city had not been wired for it. Even when playing only day games at home, Cubs baseball was more accessible than White Sox baseball, and it was easier for young fans to be part of the game. In newspapers, the Cubs commonly appeared beyond the sports pages, with stories about the Billy Goat Curse, or in columns by Mike Royko, who wrote frequently about the team.

Inside the ballpark, the space is small and intimate, bringing fans closer to players. But other aspects of the Cubs experience also break down barriers between the fans and the game narrowly defined. The tradition, begun by Bleacher Bums in the late '60s, of throwing back opposing players' home run balls is not tolerated at most other ballparks, and is in fact in violation of major league rules (the fact that many of these balls are actually BP homers surreptitiously handed off by regulars notwithstanding).

Even the Cubs scorecard helps fans connect. Many teams only give fans the option of a bare-bones scorecard without much (if any) game day information, or the purchase of an expensive program with a better scorecard included. While the Cubs do sell such a program, the stand-alone scorecard is a work of art: the trifold cardboard scorecard has both teams on one page, eliminating the need to flip the card over every half inning. It includes all the information necessary to follow the out-of-town games on the center field scoreboard (numbers for all the MLB pitchers, for example, and umpires). The Cubs scorecard offers fans another way to connect to the game at Wrigley and beyond.

All of this happenstance and deliberate work to connect the team and fan base can, of course, change. A greater percentage of Cubs games now appear on cable or local UHF outlets, a process begun long before the Tribune Company sold the franchise to the Ricketts family. With more night games, the Cubs are less accessible to youngsters coming home from school (and, of course, more so to those who work 9-to-5).

Rising prices for game tickets have caused the Cubs fan base to age out: young people cannot afford games on their own, and their parents cannot bring them as often. So while one-game-a-year out-of-town fans populate Wrigley, the local fan base is in danger of shrinking.

But for time recently past and the time being, Cubs baseball has broadly defined and expansive boundaries, allowing many sorts of connections between fans and the game, regardless of the team's lack of championships. ■

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Much of the information in this essay comes from material to be found in the following sources, as well as my own personal observations and research.

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Chicago's Role in Early Professional Baseball

Richard Hershberger

Most Cubs fans with historical interest know that the Chicago club was once a powerhouse. If any 1880s franchise could have been called an "evil empire" it would have been Chicago. Less widely known is the club's earlier role in creating and preserving the enterprise of professional baseball as we know it.

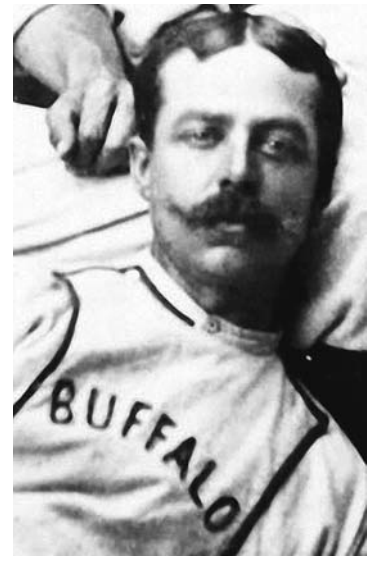
Chicago's first professional baseball club was founded following the 1869 season. Prior to that season, the National Association of Base Ball Players (NABBP) had changed its rules from mandating exclusively amateur play to allowing clubs to declare themselves professional. A dozen or so organizations took advantage of this. The Cincinnati Base Ball Club (widely called the "Red Stockings") had the most spectacular run. Their manager, Harry Wright, collected a dominant team of mostly eastern ballplayers and took them on an undefeated tour from coast to coast. Such a sporting enterprise had never been seen.

Civic pride demanded that Chicago answer, and a group of businessmen gathered to create a team to match Cincinnati's. Chicago made its first contribution to professional baseball with this very act. The club was organized along lines new to baseball: the joint-stock company.

Earlier clubs were founded on a fundamentally different model. They began existence as social organizations in which like-minded young men gathered to take their exercise together by playing baseball. The modern use of "baseball club" survives from these days. (Compare this with professional football, which arose decades later under different circumstances; no one would call an NFL team a "football club.") Most early play was within the club, with the members dividing up into sides for the day.

Most clubs, however, naturally wanted to test their mettle against others in "match games." As match games became more frequent and more important, clubs started surreptitiously hiring ringers to strengthen their nine. By 1869 this process was complete, with professionals exclusively holding the jobs on the top clubs and the membership taking the role of *sponsoring* these professionals.[1]

The Chicago businessmen eliminated the dues-paying club membership, instead raising capital through the sale of stock. The joint-stock company was a familiar business model in the booming Chicago economy. This was the organizational model of the future. By 1876 all top professional clubs followed the pattern, which continues to this day.



COURTESY OF MARK FIMOFF

Davy Force, shown in the early 1880s with Buffalo, was one of the "revolving" players whose penchant for jumping contracts led directly to the establishment of both the reserve clause and the National League.

While the new organization was well funded for its 1870 debut, more than money was required to put together a winning team. The Cincinnati club had Harry Wright, imported from New York, with his detailed knowledge of eastern ballplayers. Chicago had no Harry Wright. Management dithered while top players found employment elsewhere:

> Instead of proceeding at once to attend to the matter by the selection and formal engagement of a nine, these bunglers allowed the days, and weeks, and months to slip by, doing many things which they ought not to have done, and leaving undone many things which they ought to have done.[2]

The results were disappointing. Chicago's final record for the 1870 season was a respectable 22–7 against other professional clubs, but it still failed to live up to the pre-season hype. Most embarrassing was a game played on July 23. The Mutual club of New York shut out the Chicagos 9–0.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

A young "Cap" Anson. He played in each of Chicago's first 22 NL seasons (1876–97). Anson, who retired at 45, was productive from the day he entered the majors to the day he left.

Shutouts were virtually unheard of in those days. Changes to the pitching rules, a smaller and less lively ball, and improved fielding technique would change this, but in 1870 a shutout was a wonder. After intemperate boasting by the organizers of the new club, it was also a delight to the onlooking baseball community. For years afterwards, to be held scoreless was to be "Chicagoed".[3]

This first Chicago professional club fell prey to the great Chicago fire of October 1871, which destroyed all the team's assets (the baseball season routinely ran into November in those days). The Chicagos finished the season as a road team dependent on charity—even for its uniforms.

A new club was founded the following year, but would not field a team until 1874. (This is the organization now known as the Cubs.)[4]

One shareholder in the new club was William Hulbert, a local coal dealer. In early 1875 he traveled to Philadelphia as the club's delegate to the annual convention of the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players (conventionally abbreviated as NA), successor to the NABBP.

The NA gets a bad rap. It was the first professional league in any sport, and had to invent new ways to organize competition. It did several things very well. It created a championship system which in its essence survives today and solved the old problem of players "revolving," i.e. moving from club to club during the season.

But it did other things poorly, for example the handling of disputes between clubs over off-season player signings. A steady trickle of cases flowed in which a player signed with two clubs. The NA had a standing judiciary committee to resolve these disputes.

The Chicago club was embroiled in one such fight, having signed star shortstop Davy Force for the upcoming season. But Force also signed with the Athletic Club of Philadelphia. The judiciary committee, meeting before the annual convention, ruled in favor of the Chicagos. But the league convention subsequently elected, as president, Charles Sperling of the Athletic club. One of the jobs of the president was to appoint the standing committees, so Sperling persuaded the convention as a whole to reject the ruling of the old judiciary committee and to refer the matter to the new one. In due course, the new committee ruled—to Hulbert's outrage—in favor of the Athletics.

The following year Hulbert (now president of the Chicago club) took the lead in the creation of a new organization: the National League of Professional Base Ball Clubs, known now as the National League (NL). While some modern writers see this move as his revenge for the Force case, such a thing is implausible. The NA completed the 1875 season with eight clubs. Six of these (including the Athletics, with Sperling as president) formed the new NL, joined by two new clubs. The NA had no day-to-day institutional existence. Its members alone *were* its existence. The NL was not created to compete with the NA, but rather to replace it. Despite some talk of reforming the NA from the rump, it was a dead letter the day the NL formed.

The NL is better interpreted as the reorganization of the NA's stronger clubs and the institution of rules on how to interact with one another and with outside clubs. This reorganization was necessary to solve several problems. The largest was that the NA was open to any club which chose to declare itself professional and pay the nominal entry fee. This resulted in weak clubs joining and failing mid-season, often unable to meet their travel obligations. Some joined out of unrealistic optimism, while others simply wanted to get in lucrative games with famous clubs, and never intended to keep their end up. The NL solved this problem by becoming a closed organization in which new member clubs could only join with the assent of the existing membership.[5]

While the Force case was not the primary motivation for the creation of the new league, it certainly was a consideration. To prevent such problems in the future, NL clubs chose to make the office of league secretary a paid position. Clubs were required to notify the secretary of player signings, and he would publish these signings to the member clubs. This protocol removed potential confusion about who was signed, or when, and would become a fundamental part of future sports leagues.

Chicago captured its first pennant in 1876, the new NL's initial season. Hulbert had staged a signing coup,

luring four stars, most notably pitcher Albert Spalding and infielder Adrian Anson, away from Boston and Philadelphia respectively. The canny move set the stage for Chicago's glory years, with "Cap" Anson leading on the field and Spalding heading the front office.

Despite the excitement surrounding the NL, professional baseball was not yet secure. The national economy was in a depression following the Panic of 1873. The depression hit the baseball economy, which would not truly recover until the early 1880s. As a result of this tumult, the NL experienced rapid turnover in its first five years; several clubs were unable to finish their schedules, while others stumbled through the end of a season and dropped out of the league.

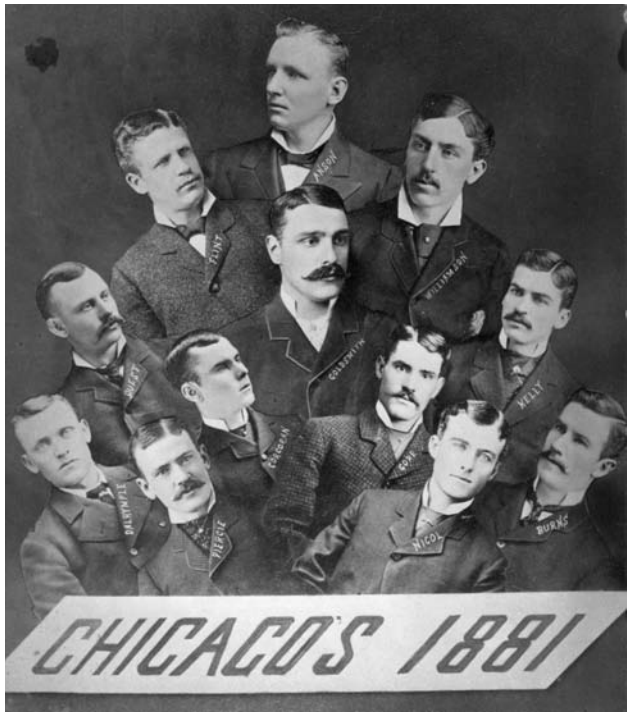
Throughout this era, Chicago was the exception. At a time when a crowd of 1,000 was considered good, Chicago consistently drew several times that. Holiday games could draw overflow crowds. Visiting teams at that time took somewhere between 30 and 33% of the gate receipts (and half on holidays). The effect of this was that Chicago essentially subsidized the rest of the league.

Hulbert became president of the NL in 1877 and held the office till his death in 1882. Under his leadership, and bolstered by the size of the Chicago market, the league persevered through the dark early years. He held onto the vision of national competition, resisting the impulse to cut expenses by withdrawing into local and regional play. The model of a closed circuit comprising the highest level of competition on a national scale has become the standard for top-tier American professional sports leagues.

It is unlikely that the enterprise of professional baseball would have disappeared in the depression, but the National League could very easily have collapsed. If it had, professional baseball could well have been reorganized along different lines. Other models are possible. One need only look at Britain's Football Association, with its multiple tiers of divisions and clubs promoted or relegated between them, or at college football, with its regional conferences and limited inter-conference play.

All American professional sports leagues are ultimately modeled after the National League. The Chicago club was at the center of the League in its early formative years, and the ideas which formed the club became standard practice. Hulbert's ideas would influence how leagues are organized to this day, and the club, by its mere existence, sustained these ideas during the National League's early days. The club soon entered its golden age on the diamond, but before that ever happened it helped set the course for modern organized professional sports. ■

COURTESY OF MARK FIMOFF



The 1881 Chicago White Stockings finished first in the NL at 56–28. Adrian "Cap" Anson is top center; he batted a league-leading .399 and also paced the league in hits and RBI. Pitcher Fred Goldsmith, 24–13, is below Anson, and Larry Corcoran, the club's top hurler at 31–14, below that and to the left.

Notes

1. This shouldn't be taken to suggest that amateur ball playing was dying out. Only a dozen or so clubs were fully professional.
2. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, 20 January 1870, reprinted in the *Chicago Tribune*.
3. Dickson, Paul, *Dickson's Baseball Dictionary* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), 181–182.
4. *Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean*, 31 July 1876. This issue of the paper has a history of the founding of the organization, but the entire affair becomes a trivia question with an ambiguous answer: what is the oldest baseball club currently in existence? If the club of 1870 is taken to be the same as that of 1874, then the Cubs are the oldest. If not, then the modern Braves, founded in Boston in 1871, can claim this status. Baseball-Reference.com lists Chicago as a single organization, but is not always reliable on such connections within early organizations. It fails to recognize, for example, that the 1884 Union Association Washington club and the 1886 National League Washington club were one and the same. The modern Cincinnati Reds claim descent from the Red Stockings of 1869, but this claim is baseless; the current organization first played in 1891. If we remove the requirement that the organization still play baseball today, the oldest seems to be the Wamsutta Club of New Bedford, Massachusetts, founded in 1866 as a baseball club. It evolved into a purely social club.
5. The 1876 NL constitution is available at http://bizofbaseball.com.

The 1906–10 Chicago Cubs

The Best Team in National League History

Bryan Soderholm-Difatte

Once upon a time, the Chicago Cubs dominated the world. They were the best team in baseball not just for the one incredible year of 1906, but for five years, winning nearly 70 percent of their games, four National League pennants, and two World Series. Let's go to the bullet points:

- In 1906, the Cubs won 116 games and—not counting Union Association or National Association teams—posted the highest season winning percentage in history (116-36, .763), finishing 20 games ahead of the New York Giants—coming off back-to-back pennants of their own— whose 96 wins in any other year would have had them in contention at the very least. Chicago moved into first place for good May 9 and was virtually unbeatable the last two months of the season. From the beginning of August until the season ended on October 7, the Cubs went 50-8, running off winning streaks of 11, 14, and 12 games. Their longest losing streak of the year was three games in May. Prior to the World Series, the last time they lost back-to-back games had been on July 23–24.

- In 1907, Chicago repeated with 107 wins, finishing a comfortable 17 games up on the second-place Pittsburgh Pirates. The Cubs took over first for good on May 28, and on July 4 already held an 11½-game lead. In 1906 and 1907, the team had a streak in which it won 122 of 154 contests.

- In 1908, Chicago fought a three-way pennant race for the ages—maybe the greatest ever—winning by one game over arch-rivals New York and Pittsburgh. From there, Chance's men captured what is famously their second (and last) World Series. August had ended with the Cubs and Giants tied and the Pirates down by a mere half-game. Despite starting September 14–6, the Cubs found themselves in second place, 4½ games behind the Giants, on the eighteenth. With only 16 games remaining, the deficit seemed so difficult that even firebrand second baseman Johnny Evers doubted their chances of winning a third straight pennant. Undaunted, and helped by Fred Merkle's rookie "boner" on September 23 of failing to touch second base on a game-winning hit, the Cubs won 14 of their last 16 (excluding two ties) to eke out the pennant. At 99 wins, this was the only year of the five the Cubs failed to win 100.

- In 1909, the Cubs improved their victory total to 104. It so happened, however, that Pittsburgh won 110.

- Chicago again won 104 games in 1910, which this time was good for a fourth pennant as they ended 13 games ahead of second-place New York. The Cubs went into first for good on May 24 and led the Pirates by 10 games and the Giants by 12 games by the end of August. The 1910 Cubs were also the inspiration for that greatest of American poems—at least according to me—Franklin Pierce Adams' ode to that "trio of bear cubs," Tinker, Evers, and Chance, suitably entitled "Baseball's Sad Lexicon." The poem was printed in the *New York Evening Mail* on July 12, when the Giants were in Chicago. McGraw's men trailed the Cubs by only 1½ games, but the writing was perhaps apparent on the wall. The Giants' loss to the Cubs on July 11 was the first of five straight defeats and nine losses in 12 games, effectively finishing them for the season and allowing Chicago to cruise to pennant number four in five years. (You may have gathered by my calling this the greatest of American poems that literary criticism is not my day job.)

The extent to which the Cubs dominated the league from 1906 through 1910 leads one to wonder whether they are the best National League team since the advent of what is called the "modern era" at the start of the twentieth century. But consider the time. This was the dead ball era. It was also a time when baseball was still developing its professional skills. There was much

greater variability than today in the quality of teams and players in the major leagues. The refined skills of players and the absolute quality of baseball itself inexorably improved as the game became ever more scientific, markedly diminishing that variability. Taking into account, therefore, some of the great National League teams that followed—the New York Giants from 1920 to 1924 that won four consecutive pennants; the St. Louis Cardinals from 1942 to 1946, winners of four pennants and three World Series in five years; the Brooklyn Dodgers from 1949 to 1956 with five pennants in eight years; the Cincinnati Reds' 1972 to 1976 "Big Red Machine" that won four division titles, three pennants, and two World Series in five years; and the Atlanta Braves with their 14 consecutive division titles from 1991 to 2005—where do the 1906–10 Cubs stand among the best NL teams since 1901?

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

I begin this analysis with a structured methodological approach that attempts to balance quantitatively these teams' records of achievement and assess their relative dominance over the National League in their time. It is necessary to rate the performance of their core players relative to the league in both contemporary and historical context. I deliberately did not assign greater or lesser weight to any of the three categories—achievement, dominance, or players—because their relative importance may be variable according to time (or era) and circumstance, such as the extent to which pitchers were allowed to finish what they started.

The methodology yields a "score" for each category as well as a "total" score for comparative purposes. The specifics for each category will be discussed when I use this methodology to provide a baseline for evaluating the 1906–10 Cubs' place in history. First, some ground rules.

My one basic requirement is that the teams being considered—those mentioned above—have a consistently strong record of no less than five consecutive years. All of the teams being considered in this analysis won or could have won five consecutive pennants. Were it not for the Pirates and their 110 victories in 1909, the Cubs would have taken five flags in a row.

Teams are defined by their core group of regular position players and pitchers for the years under consideration. In all but one case, the core group of players corresponds with the teams' consecutive years of remarkable success. The exceptions are the 1991–2005 Atlanta Braves, which I break down into two different teams—1991 to 1997 and 1998 to 2005—based on a nearly wholesale turnover of their core position players by 1998, although their stellar trio of starting pitchers in Maddux, Glavine, and Smoltz overlapped both teams. *Core players must have been on the team for at least four years, including at least half of the years being considered in this analysis*. Table 1 identifies the core players on their team for at least half the years under consideration for the teams (besides the Cubs) mentioned above.

Table 1.

POS	20–24 Giants	42–46 Cardinals	49–56 Dodgers	72–76 Reds	91–97 Braves	98–05 Braves
1B	Kelly		Hodges	Perez	McGriff	
2B			Robinson	Morgan	Lemke	
SS	Bancroft	Marion	Reese	Concepcion	Blauser	Furcal
3B		Kurowski	Cox		Pendleton	C. Jones
MPR	Frisch, IF	Musial, OF/1B Hopp, 1B/OF	Gilliam, IF/OF	Rose, RF-3B		
LF	Meusel				Klesko	
CF		*	Snider	Geronimo		A. Jones
RF	Youngs	*	Furillo		Justice	
C	Snyder	W. Cooper	Campanella	Bench	Lopez	Lopez
P	Nehf	M. Cooper	Newcombe	Nolan	Maddux	Maddux
P	Barnes	Lanier	Roe	Gullett	Glavine	Glavine
P		Brecheen	Erskine	Billingham	Smoltz	Millwood
P				Norman	Avery	
SP/RP	Ryan				Mercker	Smoltz
RP			Labine	Carroll Borbon	Wohlers	

MPR = Multi-Position Regular

* Terry Moore (CF) and Country Slaughter (RF) served in the US armed forces during World War II from 1943 to 1945, and so do not count as core regulars for the 1942–46 Cardinals because they played only two years.

Finally, and most important, this structured approach *is intended only to inform, not dictate, the final analysis*. My final analysis will use this structured methodological approach for each team as the foundation for evaluation, but other data-based factors are surely in play to test the proposition that the 1906–10 Chicago Cubs, despite playing in the deadball era at a time when the game was still discovering itself, were the National League's best team ever.

This analysis would not have been possible without the indispensible website Baseball-Reference.com.

ACHIEVEMENT AND DOMINANCE: THE CUBS WON OFTEN AND WON BIG

I measure "achievement" by what a team accomplished over a period of no less than five years, with greatest emphasis on accomplishment during the regular season rather than post-season success. *Achievement is weighted according to accomplishment*: three points for each time finishing first; two for each second-place finish; and one for every third-place finish.

Winning the World Series (and, since 1969 when divisional alignments began, winning the pennant) count for only one point in my methodology. Total achievement points are divided by the number of seasons (at least five) for the team under consideration, multiplied by ten (in order to deal with double-digit numbers).

The obvious point of controversy is that winning the World Series, and (since 1969) even the pennant, counts the same as finishing third during the regular season, and for less than finishing second. But while winning the World Series is the ultimate achievement in any year, it is also valid to evaluate teams by which are the best over the course of l-o-n-g baseball seasons. World Series and League Championship Series are short series, and sometimes a team which has established itself as the best or even dominant over a long season doesn't win in the post-season, because, as is so often stated, anything can happen in a short series. The 1973 Cincinnati Reds, for example, with 99 wins, were upended in the NLCS by the New York Mets, who with a mere 82 victories had posted the fourth-best record in the National League.

The 1906–10 Chicago Cubs' achievement score by this methodology is shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

1st place (x 3)	2nd place (x 2)	3rd place (x 1)	World Series (x 1)	Score
4 x 3 = 12	1 x 2 = 2	0	2 x 1 = 2	16

ACHIEVEMENT SCORE = 16 / 5 years x 10 = **32**

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From left to right, Joe Tinker, Johnny Evers, and Frank Chance—the defensive heart of the 1906–10 Cubs—standing in the large foul territory of West Side Grounds during the 1910 campaign. Note that the sleeves on Evers' uniform shirt are cut very short, perhaps to aid him in throwing.

I define a dominant team as one so superior to its rivals that it is unlikely to be seriously challenged for first place except on rare occasions (usually by another dominant team). To put it another way, a dominant team typically blows away the competition and cruises to the finish line. I measure a team's "dominance" by four *equally weighted factors: the number of 100-win seasons, the number of times finishing first by a margin of at least eight games, the number of times leading the league in runs, and the number of times leading the league in fewest runs allowed*. Total dominance points are divided by the product of four (for each dominance factor) times the number of seasons (at least five) for the team under consideration, which I multiplied by ten in order to deal with double-digit numbers.

Why use these four factors? A team that meets any *one* of these factors is very good, but dominant teams have to indeed dominate. The first two factors are related but not mutually exclusively; in none of the blowout pennant races won by Stengel's Yankees, for example, did they win 100 games or more. The one year they did win 100—1954—they finished second. The second two factors are related to number of wins according to baseball's Pythagorean Theorem, but not necessarily in reality. The 72–76 Reds won four division titles, had the best record in the NL three times, but led in scoring only once and were never better than third in runs allowed. The McCarthy-era Yankees were great not only because of their six 100-win

seasons and eight blowout pennants, but also because they led in runs seven times and in fewest runs allowed seven times. Taken together, this represents a dominance that would be lost if we just went with 100 wins.

- I chose 100 victories rather than 90 as my first benchmark for dominance; a 100-win team is far more likely to dominate. From 1901 through 2000, 163 NL teams won between 90 and 99 games. Of those teams, 87 (or 53%) finished first; on the other hand, 35 of the 39 NL teams (90%) that won 100 or more games finished first. The 1909 Cubs were the first of the four that did not.

- I chose finishing first by a margin of at least eight games as a reasonable standard for dominating the league (or, since 1969, the division). Including division titles since 1969, not counting the 1981 split-season and the terminated-by-strike 1994 season, there were 134 pennant races in each major league in the twentieth century. In the National League, 49 of those 134 pennant races were decided by margins of at least eight games. That's 37%, virtually the same as the 47 of 134 pennant races decided by three games or fewer.

The 1906–10 Cubs were well-balanced, and with few weaknesses, dominated in every facet of the game. We've already seen their dominance in the win column and in claiming three pennants by decisive margins (and a fourth in the tightest of pennant races, which can be cited as a mark of greatness). The Cubs' pitching and fielding were phenomenal. Four times during this five-year run, Chicago led the NL in fewest runs allowed, and did so by substantial margins. In 1906, the Cubs allowed only 381 runs, 89 fewer than the next club, Pittsburgh. In 1907, Chicago's 390 runs allowed were 86 fewer than the Philadelphia Phillies' second-lowest total. In 1909, the Cubs allowed a mere 390 runs while the pennant-winning Pirates allowed the second fewest runs, 447. And in 1910, Chicago again led the league in fewest runs allowed with 499, New York coming in second with 567. These are big differences. (The Cubs did not lead the league in fewest runs allowed in 1908, ceding 16 more runs than the Phillies, who had the lowest total.)

One reason the Cubs' pitching was so great was their team fielding. According to data available on Baseball-Reference.com, Chicago led the league in defensive efficiency—making outs on balls put into play—every year of the five except 1908. Their rate of making outs on 72.6% of playable balls in 1906–10 was far better than the league average of 69.9%. In 1906 and 1907, the Cubs' defensive efficiency rated 4.2 and 3.0 percent better than the second-best NL team. While the Cubs never led the league in double plays—thanks in large part to their stinginess in allowing base runners—"Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance" deserved to have a poem written about them for their overall defensive prowess.

The 1906–10 Cubs also had an impressive offense to go along with great pitching and terrific defense. They led the league in runs scored only once—in their incredible 1906 season—but finished second each of the next four years. Arch-rivals Pittsburgh and New York both led the league in scoring twice. Of no small significance, however, was the offensive efficiency of these Chicago Cubs in taking advantage of scoring opportunities. The Cubs had the best ratio of runs to hits, as well as runs to total base runners (determined by total hits, walks, and hit batsmen), of any NL team from 1906 through 1910, besting the league average by 12.6 and 12.8 percent, respectively. This team not only won blowouts—a record of 147-49 in games decided by five or more runs, a five-year percentage of .750—but also the close ones; they were 146-82 in one-run games for an excellent .640 percentage.

The 1906–10 Chicago Cubs' dominance score, the highest of any National League team for a five-year period since 1901, is shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

100 Wins	8 Games Ahead	NL1/Runs Scored	NL1/Fewest Runs Allowed	Score
4	3	1	4	12

DOMINANCE SCORE = 12 / 20 (4 x 5 seasons) x 100 = **60**

THE PLAYERS: CUBS STRONG AT THE CORE

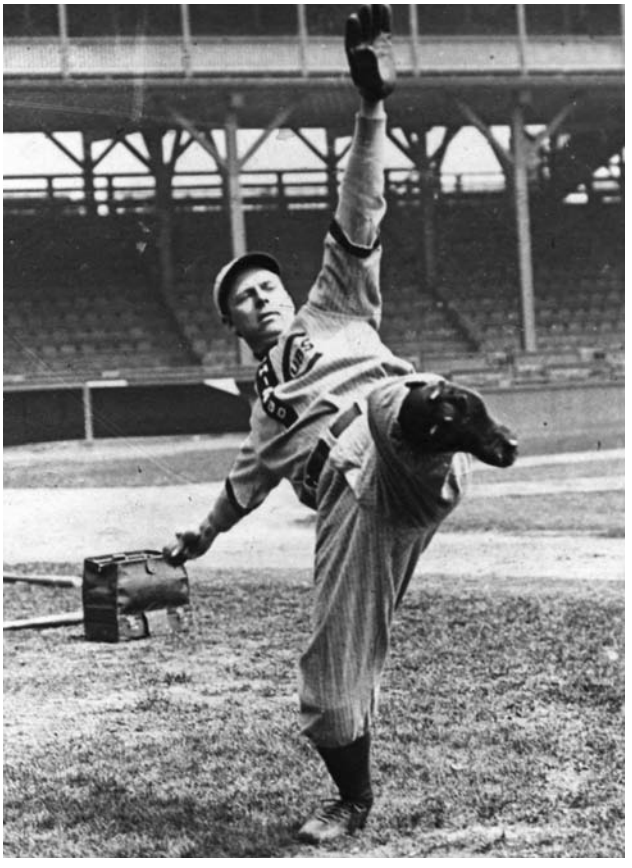
A great team's players go a long way toward establishing its legacy. The 1906–10 Cubs, for example, are perhaps even better known for their double play combination of Tinker, Evers, and Chance than for their accomplishments (except, of course, for that historical trivia about 1908 being the last time the Cubs won a World Series). The great teams are often identified by their Hall of Fame players, but what really matters is who the best players on the team were and how good they were relative to their contemporaries and others in baseball history. It is that three-part question that the "players" component of my methodological approach attempts to answer.

To measure quantitatively the "players" part of the methodology, I rely on the Wins Above Replacement (WAR) metric developed by Sean Smith of Baseball-Projection.com. I believe that three elements must be considered: first, the relative importance of the core players to their team's success for the years under consideration; second, the number of core players on that team who were the best at their positions at the time of their team's achievement; and third, the number of players on that team who were among their league's best in the surrounding decade, in the half-century, or in the full century based on their performance (particularly as captured by the WAR metric) specifically during the five or more years under consideration for their team.

WAR presents the number of wins any specific player added to his team above what a replacement-level player from Triple-A, or one shuttling between the major leagues and Triple-A, would contribute. WAR data for players and team rosters are both readily available at Baseball-Reference.com.

Measuring the overall impact of a team's core regulars to the success of their team is key because, notwithstanding that teams lacking depth are much less likely to have sustained success—especially over multiple years—this analysis is intended to determine the best team, at least in part, by who had the best core players. *The first part of my "players" equation represents, for the years under consideration, the core regulars' combined WAR as a percentage of the total WAR earned by the team's entire roster*. The equation begins by adding the percentage of the team's core regulars' collective WAR to the average annual total WAR of the team's entire roster for the years under consideration and dividing by ten, thereby attaining a single digit number to serve as a baseline for building a total "players" score.

The 1906–10 Cubs had remarkable stability among their core regulars, with eight position players and four pitchers on the roster for all five years. In this era, core regulars received nearly all of the playing time, and with rosters at just 18, bench players filled in only when necessary. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that the Cubs' core players—eight position players and five pitchers (see table below), including Carl Lundgren who was on the team only through 1908—accounted for 96% of the team's total WAR over those years. In 1906, for example, aside from their eight starting position player regulars, Chicago had only three position players appear in more than five games: second catcher Pat Moran, who caught 61 games; infielder-outfielder Solly Hofman, who appeared in 64 games; and outfielder Doc Gessler, who appeared in 25. Only Moran and Hofman made more than 100 plate appearances.



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Mordecai "Three Finger" Brown is shown here in 1909, when he compiled a 27–9 mark. In 1906, 1907, and 1910, he allowed the fewest base runners per inning of any pitcher in the league. From 1906 through 1910, "Miner" performed at a level that puts him among the most dominating pitchers in the history of baseball.

For the second element of my players score, I made an *informed judgment* based primarily on the WAR metric as to how many of the team's core regulars were the best in the league at their positions, with the stipulation that the player must have been the best in the league at his position for at least five consecutive years (to avoid one- or two-year wonders). Being best in the NL at his position takes into account one player for each fielding position (including three outfielders); a multi-position regular (Stan Musial, alternating between first base and the outfield throughout his career, may be the most notable multi-position regular in league history); and five starting pitchers and a dedicated relief ace (the concept of which really did not come into vogue until after WWII). *Each player must have been the best in the league at his position for at least half of the years of achievement for the team being considered*, meaning that a minimum of three of the player's five-or-more years as the best in the league must correspond with

his team's run of success. The number of players who were the best at their position is divided by the total number of the team's core players.

I count the Cubs with four position players (first baseman and manager Frank Chance, second baseman Johnny Evers, catcher Johnny Kling, and outfielder Jimmy Sheckard) and two pitchers, Mordecai "Three Finger"Brown and Ed Reulbach, with five or more years as the best in the league at their position including at least three consecutive between 1906 and 1910. And were it not for Honus Wagner at shortstop, Joe Tinker would have made five. Chicago's pitching ace, Three Finger Brown, could have been counted as the National League's best reliever as well as one of its best starting pitchers during these years. From 1908 to 1910 in particular, Brown was a workhorse out of the bullpen in addition to starting and completing more games than any other pitcher on Chicago's formidable pitching staff. Brown started 96 of the 467 games the Cubs played those three years, completing 86, but also finished 41 games started by other pitchers, going 7–5 and collecting 19 retroactively-awarded saves. To put his role in perspective, Three Finger Brown was in at the finish of 27% percent of the Cubs' games and with a record of 81–32 and those 19 saves, had a direct stake in 100 of the Cubs' 307 victories—almost exactly one-third—from 1908 to 1910.

The third and final part of my "players" equation uses a point system for core regulars on the team who have a place among the best players in their league during all or part of the twentieth century. If a player on the team under consideration, based on his best consecutive years, was one of his league's ten best position players, five best starting pitchers, or the best reliever in the *decade surrounding* his team's run of success—which is always in the middle of that ten-year period—that counts for *one point*. The 1906–10 Cubs had four players and two pitchers among the NL's ten best position players and five best pitchers in the surrounding decade, as shown in Table 4.

The team under consideration earns *an additional two points* if the player—based on his best consecutive years performance in the surrounding decade—was also one of his league's 25 best position players, 15 best starters, or three best relievers in the first half of the twentieth century (1901–50) or one of his league's 30 best position players, 18 best starters, or six best relievers in the second half-century (1951–2000). (The number of best players in each league is higher for the second half-century because of expansion, and I selected only three relievers in the first half-century because few teams had a dedicated relief ace over many seasons until the mid-1940s.)

Finally, teams under consideration receive *three more points* if a player was also one of the 50 best position players, 30 best starting pitchers, or six best relief pitchers in his league from the beginning of the twentieth century to date (a century-plus legacy) based on his best consecutive years performance in the decade surrounding his team's specific five years (or more) of achievement. These totals are added to the baseline number, based on WAR, and to those for best in the league at their positions to comprise the total "players" score.

My position player and pitcher rankings are based on their *highest sustained level of performance* for five or more consecutive years, within which, of course, might be a sub-par season or two. I examined the pattern of WAR scores falling within the range of bookending (for the most part) All-Star quality seasons—defined on Baseball-Reference.com as five wins above replacement—that determine a player's best consecutive years, looking at high and low anomalies, their frequency, and level of performance he maintained for

Table 4.

10 BEST NL POSITION PLAYERS (based on best consecutive years), 1904–1913	**5 BEST NL PITCHERS (based on best consecutive years), 1904–1913**
Honus Wagner, SS, Pittsburgh, 1904–12	Christy Mathewson, New York, 1904–13
*Johnny Evers, 2B, Chicago, 1907–12 (-1) **	*Three Finger Brown, Chicago, 1906–10*
Sherry Magee, OF, Philadelphia, 1905–10	Nap Rucker, Brooklyn, 1908–12
Frank Chance, 1B, Chicago, 1904–08	*Ed Reulbach, Chicago, 1905–09*
Fred Clarke, OF, Pittsburgh, 1905–09	Babe Adams, Pittsburgh, 1909–13
Art Devlin, 3B, New York, 1904–09	
Joe Tinker, SS, Chicago, 1908–13	
Ed Konetchy, 1B, St. Louis, 1909–13	
Larry Doyle, 2B, New York, 1909–13	
Jimmy Sheckard, OF, Chicago, 1906–11	

* Evers missed most of the 1911 season due to illness.

most of those years. I looked for consistency at a high level over at least five consecutive years, not just highest average annual WAR because averages can be skewed by exceptionally good or bad years. Allowance is granted for "best years" to be interrupted by complete or nearly complete seasons lost to military service, injuries, or illness (realizing that some may question equating military service with the other two).

All of these judgments are mine, informed (once again) by WAR. *They are not based on the totality of the player's career, but on the player's five or more best consecutive seasons, with at least three years corresponding with his team's five-year run of success, or four years for teams (like the 1949–56 Dodgers or the 1991–97 and 1998–2005 Braves) whose achievements span seven or eight years*. In this construct, Cubs' first baseman Frank Chance—who, based on WAR for his best consecutive years, has not only a half-century legacy as one of the 25 best position players in National League history, but also a legacy as one of the league's 50 best since 1901—does not, repeat *not*, count for any historical legacy points for the 1906–10 Cubs because his five best consecutive years began in 1903 and overlapped only the first two of his team's five-year run of greatness.

Unlike the factors I considered for achievement and dominance scores and the use of WAR to measure the direct contribution of core players to their teams' success, where the numbers are objectively what they are, I acknowledge that my determinations of the league's best players at each position and, even more, about their historical legacy—whether for the ten-year period, the half-century, or century-plus—are necessarily subjective. While based primarily on the WAR metric, they are also informed by historical narratives about the teams and their players which touch on leadership or baseball intelligence that cannot be easily, if at all, captured in an all-encompassing metric. Consequently, I expect some disagreement with my judgments about players; this methodological framework should be considered a shared framework which allows readers to make their own subjective determinations about players and see how they fit within this construct.

Only one of the eight core position regulars on this team—second baseman Johnny Evers—has a century-plus legacy in my considered opinion, and no other has even a half-century legacy for his best consecutive years as a player covering at least three between 1906 and 1910. Of the five pitchers on the Cubs' roster for all or most of those years, Three Finger Brown has a century-plus legacy and Ed Reulbach a half-century legacy among the NL's 15 best pitchers.

The 1906–10 Chicago Cubs' players score by the methodology just explained is in Table 5.

1906–10 CUBS ARE NL'S BEST BY THIS METHODOLOGY

Using this methodological framework, here is how the 1906–10 Chicago Cubs—who had by far the best winning percentage—compare to the other National League teams considered in Table 6.

It is important to note that the advent of divisional play in 1969 forced me to adjust for calculating "achievement" scores in the divisional era. Winning the division after 1969 counts for the same three first-place points as winning the pennant before then, to which I also add half-point (.5) if the division winner had the best record in the league, and an additional point if the division winner went on to win the pennant (which now counts the same as winning the World Series) in the league championship series (LCS).

This means that teams in the divisional era can have a higher achievement score than teams before, despite having exactly the same accomplishments over the same number of years, because their pennants count for four points (three for finishing first in their division, plus one for winning the LCS) compared to only three for teams like the 1906–10 Cubs, to whom I give no additional point for winning the pennant by virtue of finishing first. This seeming inequity should not be

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Catcher Johnny Kling, shown in 1910, when he returned to the Cubs after holding out for a full season. An inconsistent but often excellent hitter, Kling was prized for his acumen, grit, and knowledge of pitchers.

Table 5.

CORE REGULARS (years with team)	WAR 1906–10	BEST at POSITION	Decade 1904–13	1st ½ 20th C	20th C +
1B Frank Chance, 1903–10	22.6	1903-08	1904-09	no	
2B Johnny Evers, 1903–13	23.1	1906-14	1907-12	yes	yes
SS Joe Tinker, 1902–12	21.4	No	1908-13	no	
3B Harry Steinfeldt, 1906–10	19.8	No	no		
LF Jimmy Sheckard, 1906–12	14.8	1902-12	1906-11	no	
RF Frank Schulte, 1905–16	11.9	No	no		
OF/IF Solly Hofman, 1905–12	15.6	No	no		
C Johnny Kling, 1901–10 (-1)	13.6	1902-08	no		
P Mordecai Brown, 1904–12	34.3	1906-11	1906-10	yes	yes
P Ed Reulbach, 1905–12	19.4	1905-10	1905-09	yes	no
P Orval Overall, 1906–10	19.6	No	no		
P Jack Pfiester, 1906–11	14.3	No	no		
P Carl Lundgren, 1902–08	5.6	No	no		
TEAM WAR, 1906-10 = 247.0	233.2				
Core WAR= 94.4 % of Team 49.4	96.0 / 10	6 / 13 x 10	6 x 1	3 x 2	2 x 3
Av. Team WAR + 94.4 %	**9.6**	**4.6**	**6**	**6**	**6**

PLAYERS SCORE = 9.6 (Base WAR) + 4.6 (Best at Position) + 18 (NL Best) = **32.2**

Table 6.

	D-P-WS	Win%	Achievement	Dominance	Players	Total
1906–10 Chicago Cubs	4-2	.693	32	60	32	124
1942–46 St. Louis Cardinals	4-3	.659	34	60	19	113
1998–2005 Atlanta Braves	8-1-0	.603	34	44	32	110
1972–76 Cincinnati Reds	4-3-2	.626	41	35	32	108
1991–97 Atlanta Braves	6-4-1	.610	39	43	21	103
1949–56 Brooklyn Dodgers	5-1	.622	28	31	37	96
1920–24 New York Giants	4-2	.601	32	25	22	79

considered discriminatory against teams prior to 1969, because the current setup makes it *more* difficult to win a pennant than in the days when finishing first and winning the pennant were one and the same. Modern teams deserve credit for the increased difficulty.

My inclusion of Johnny Evers as a "century-plus" player for the Cubs, based on his best consecutive years beginning in 1907 and an understanding derived from historical accounts of his leadership on the team, is bound to be controversial. The argument has been advanced, after all, that neither he nor double-play partner Joe Tinker were deserving of Hall of Fame enshrinement based on their career performance. I'm comfortable with my selection, but should I concede that Evers was *not* a century legacy player based on his best consecutive years (including 1907 to 1910), the 1906–1910 Cubs would still have the highest overall score (121) of any National League team in history by my methodological approach. It would still be true even if his best consecutive years did not make Evers one of the NL's 25 best position players in the first half-century, which would give the Cubs a total score of 119.

My analysis does not end here, however, because, as I already mentioned, this multidimensional structured methodology is intended to inform, not dictate, the results as to which National League team was the best in history. Let's examine the 1906 through 1910 Cubs relative to each of the other teams under consideration with the results of this methodology as a foundation. The following analysis is data-based so that conclusions may be seen as substantiated rather than merely subjective.

1920–24 NEW YORK GIANTS: A WEAK CASE

In becoming the second major league team in history (the first since 1885 through 1888) to win four consecutive pennants (1921 to 1924), the 1920–24 Giants accomplished something even the 1906–10 Cubs, great as they were, could not. New York's five-year stretch began with a second-place finish behind Brooklyn. The Giants won the World Series in 1921 and 1922, and—but for catcher Hank Gowdy tripping over his

mask and failing to catch a pop foul, and a bad hop over third baseman Freddie Lindstrom's head—might have won the 1924 Series as well.

Notwithstanding four straight pennants, the 1920–24 Giants were hardly dominating. Their .601 winning percentage over the five years was the lowest of any of our teams under consideration, and they have by far the lowest dominance score by my methodology of any of the teams. The Giants had no 100-win seasons—the most games they won was 95 in 1923—and their pennant winning margins were by 4, 7, 4½, and 1½ games. In 1921, New York had spent only eight days in first place (excluding off days) before taking over for good on September 9 amid a 10-game winning streak. They did not command the 1922 pennant race until the end of August. Only in 1923 were the Giants comfortably ahead for most of the season, and in 1924 New York squandered a 9½-game lead on August 8, spending all of September never more than 2½ games ahead of pennant rivals Brooklyn and Pittsburgh.

This Giants team did not overwhelm the competition, and their pennant rivals were not as strong as those of the 1906–10 Cubs. It is true that Chicago played against 13 teams during their five-year run that lost at least 90 games, while the Giants played against only nine such losers. The 1906–10 Cubs, however, also faced eight other teams that won 90 or more games, while only five other teams won as many as 90 during the Giants' run. Even more significantly, the Giants' record against their rivals for the National League pennant—including the 1922 second-place Reds (winners of only 88)—was barely above .500, at 68–64. The 1906–10 Cubs, on the other hand, played exceptionally well against their pennant rivals, all with 90 or more wins, posting a 98–77 record. Put another way, extrapolated over the full 154-game season played at the time, the Giants would have won only 79 games, compared to the Cubs' 86, against the other contemporary best teams in the league.

1942–46 ST. LOUIS CARDINALS: A LEGACY DIMINISHED BY WAR

By winning one more World Series than the 1906–10 Cubs, the 1942–46 Cardinals' four pennants and three World Series championships in five years exceed the Cubs' combined achievement and dominance scores. The Cardinals finished second to the Cubs in 1945 by three games, which of course led to the last World Series sighting of Chicago's north side team.

The Cardinals' first and last pennants in this stretch were clearly legitimate because U.S. involvement in World War II had yet to claim many major leaguers in 1942; by 1946, the war was over and most of the players were back home. The middle two pennants, however, came when the war had stripped teams of many of their biggest talents. They probably would have been the first team in history to win *five* straight pennants had Stan Musial not spent 1945 in the uniform of his country instead of that with a bird balancing on a bat—finally, the team had lost its own biggest star, as others had.

Those players included Cardinals right fielder Enos "Country" Slaughter, who was in the service from 1943 through 1945, and therefore does not meet my requirement of playing for his team in at least half of their years of achievement. Even accounting for his three years in the military, I consider Slaughter to have been one of the National League's three best outfielders from 1939–49, and his best consecutive war-interrupted years, 1940 through 1948, give him a half-century legacy. Without him, the Cardinals have the lowest players score of the teams under consideration in this analysis; with him—by beginning St. Louis's run in 1941, when they won 97 games and finished 2½ behind Brooklyn—their players score is slightly better (23 to 22) than that of the 1920–24 Giants.

Putting World War II aside for a moment, the 1942–46 Cardinals' winning percentage of .659 is the closest to the 1906–10 Cubs' .693 over any five-year period for an NL team. With three consecutive 100-win seasons, two blowout pennant races, and three times leading the league in scoring and four times in fewest runs allowed, the Cardinals were as dominant in their time as the Cubs in theirs. Moreover, the relative balance between offense and pitching as a percentage of team WAR for both the Cubs and Cardinals over their five-year runs is virtually identical. Coincidentally, their records were nearly comparable in run differential against game opponents; the Cubs outscored their game opponents by 226 runs over their five years, and the Cardinals outscored theirs by 221.

At .598, St. Louis had a better winning percentage, going 67–45 against their four runners-up and the 1945 NL champion Cubs, than Chicago's .560 (98–77) record against its rivals for the pennant, but the 1906–10 Cubs played against eight other teams with 90 or more wins, twice as many as 1942–46 Cardinals. And we cannot overlook that the Cardinals' two runaway pennants came in 1943 and 1944, when arch-nemesis Brooklyn was particularly hard hit by our country's call to arms.

1949–56 BROOKLYN DODGERS: "BOYS OF SUMMER" LESS IMPOSING

The 1949–56 Dodgers won five pennants in eight years, but were a hair's breadth from winning seven, including potentially five in a row (which would have

matched the 1949–53 New York Yankees). They had a chance to tie for first and force a playoff on the final day of the 1950 season, but lost to the pennant-winning Phillies, and then of course blew a 13-game lead the next year and lost on Bobby Thomson's legendary home run.

If extended to an eight-year period during which the 1906–10 core players were intact—which includes 1903 to 1910 for Tinker, Evers, and Chance—the Cubs were not as successful as the 1950s Dodgers. We are focused, however, on each team's best seasons. Brooklyn had eight years, while Chicago claims only five; the New York Giants captured three straight pennants after 1910.

Few teams in history had as many dominant players as the 1950s Brooklyn Dodgers. Their core regulars included the likes of Gil Hodges, Jackie Robinson, Pee Wee Reese, Duke Snider, Carl Furillo, Roy Campanella, Don Newcombe, Preacher Roe, Carl Erskine, and Clem Labine, who were together for all or most of the eight-year run. Seven of Brooklyn's twelve core players during these years were the best at their position for at least four years, five counted among the league's ten best position players and two among the five best starting pitchers in the surrounding decade (1948–57), and Robinson, Snider, and Campanella all have a century-plus legacy. These "Boys of Summer" give the 1949–56 Dodgers the highest "players score" of all teams being considered in this analysis, including the 1906–10 Cubs. Moreover, Newcombe's record over his best consecutive years from 1949 to 1956 suggests he might well have had a century-plus legacy had he not lost two seasons to the Korean War. It would be reasonable to suppose that any team with those four guys, not to mention Reese and Hodges, should get the nod over Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance and Three Finger Brown. (See Table 7.)

Despite their star power, the Dodgers were not as balanced as the 1906–10 Cubs. While Dem Bums were an offensive powerhouse, leading the league in scoring six times and finishing second the other two years, their pitching was merely good, not great. During their eight-year run, Brooklyn was one of the top three teams (in an eight-team league at the time) in fewest runs allowed five times, only once the stingiest in giving up runs. Chicago, of course, was most conspicuous for its superb pitching and fielding—four times giving up the fewest runs in the league—but was also first (although only once) or second in scoring every year between 1906 and 1910. The Dodgers' position players had a lopsided 74-to-26 advantage over their pitchers in their percentage contribution to Brooklyn's team WAR between 1949 and 1956, whereas the 1906–10 Cubs had a much more balanced 58-to-42 ratio

Table 7.

	Best at Position	Best Years in Surrounding Decade	Historical Legacy Based on Best Years
1906–10 Cubs	**6 of 13:**	**4 of 10 Best NL Position:**	**2 Century–Plus:**
	Chance, 1B, 1903–08	Evers, 1907–12	Evers
	Evers, 2B, 1906–14	Chance, 1904–08	Brown
(13 core players)	Sheckard, LF, 1902–12	Tinker, 1908–13	
	Kling, C, 1902–08	Sheckard, 1906–11	
	Brown, P, 1906–11		
	Reulbach, P, 1905–10		
		2 of 5 Best NL Pitchers:	**1 Half–Century Only:**
		Brown, 1906–10	
		Reulbach, 1905–09	Reulbach
1949–56 Dodgers	**7 of 12:**	**5 of 10 Best NL Position:**	**3 Century–Plus**
	Hodges, 1B, 1949–57	Robinson, 1949–53	Robinson
	Robinson, 2B, 1948–52	Snider, 1949–56	Snider
	Reese, SS, 1942–54	Campanella, 1949–55	Campanella
(12 core players)	Snider, CF, 1949–56	Reese, 1951–55	
	Campanella, C, 1949–55	Hodges, 1951–55	
	Newcombe, P, 1949–51, 1954–57		
	Roe, P, 1947–52		
		2 of 5 Best NL Pitchers:	
		Newcombe, 1949–51, 1954–56	
		Roe, 1948–52	

making up their team WAR. The Cubs' combination of offense, pitching, and fielding play was more impressive. This was reflected in the Cubs outscoring their game opponents by an average of 226 runs during their run, while the Dodgers did so by an average of 167 runs during theirs.

As formidable as the Boys of Summer were, their team did not dominate the league to the extent of the 1906–10 Cubs. They won 100 games only once—in 1953—compared to four 100-win seasons for the Cubs, and won the pennant by blowout margins of eight games or more only twice in winning five pennants (by 13 in 1953 and 13½ in 1955), while the Cubs did so three times in winning their four. The Dodgers were not as dominant despite the Cubs facing a tougher competitive environment for the pennant. Pittsburgh and New York combined for eight 90-win seasons during the five years the Cubs won four pennants, while Brooklyn faced off against only eight 90-win teams over eight years. Only once did the Dodgers have to contend against two 90-win teams (in 1956 when Milwaukee won 92 and Cincinnati 91 to Brooklyn's 93).

Finally, the Cubs played their toughest rivals better than the Dodgers played theirs. Chicago won four of their eight season series between 1906 and 1910 against teams with 90 or more wins, split two others, and lost only two. For their part, against the eight other teams that won 90 or more games between 1949 and 1956, Brooklyn won the season series only twice, split the season series twice, and had a losing record four times. The Dodgers' winning percentage against 90-win competition was a losing .480, and they posted losing records against 90-win teams in three of their five pennant-winning seasons.

1972–76 CINCINNATI REDS: ONE-DIMENSIONAL "MACHINE"

The Cincinnati Reds of the mid-1970s are always in the argument about baseball's best teams, and deservedly so—particularly for their blowout NL Western Division championships in 1975 and 1976 that resulted in back-to-back World Series triumphs. Many would say they were the best National League team in history. Their 108 wins in 1975 is the third highest victory total in their league's history (tied with the 1986 Mets) after the 1906 Cubs and the 1909 Pirates. The cornerstone players on the 1972–76 Reds that won four division titles, three pennants, and the two World Series in five years were Joe Morgan, Johnny Bench, Pete Rose, Tony Perez, and Dave Concepcion. The team became even stronger when Ken Griffey, Sr. and George Foster became outfield regulars in 1975; they are not counted by me as core players on the 1972–76 Reds, even though they played important roles when the Big Red Machine was at its very best, because they were regulars only the last two years.

Considering that Bench, Morgan, and Rose all have a century-plus legacy that the Cubs can really only rival with Three Finger Brown (I count Evers as having a century-plus legacy also, but his best consecutive years are not close to their class), and that their overall players score may be depressed relative to the Cubs' because the National League had expanded from eight to twelve teams—representing a 50 percent increase in potential players competing for best at their position and best in the surrounding decade—it would be hard to dispute that the Reds did not have a better team, at least as far as their players, than the deadball-era Cubs. (See Table 8.)

Cincinnati batters dominated their team's collective WAR over those five seasons to an even greater extent than did Brooklyn's sluggers in the 1950s. When compared to the 1950s Dodgers, therefore, the Cubs' excellence in all facets of the game—pitching, fielding, and offense—made them more multidimensional, and hence better all-around relative to their time, than the 1970s Reds. While the Big Red Machine had a deadly efficient offense (with Rose, Morgan, Bench, and Perez as headliners) combining ability to hit, run, get on base, drive in runs, and hit for power that may even have been more dynamic than any of the great Yankees' teams, their pitching was much less imposing, even pedestrian. Cincinnati's adjusted earned run average—which normalizes ERA to the context of the time and the team's home park—was always around the league average, and only in 1975 much better. The Reds' starting rotations were weak, especially when either of their two best pitchers—Gary Nolan and Don Gullett—was on the disabled list (which was often). Manager Sparky Anderson earned the moniker "Captain Hook" for his extensive use of his bullpen to secure victories.

The Cubs, however, were more dominant in their league than were the Reds. Most notably, Chicago outscored its opposition—which included two perennial 90-plus-win teams in the Giants and Pirates—by 53%; the Reds scored 29% more than their opponents.

It would be fair to argue on the Reds' behalf that the major leagues were much more competitively balanced in the 1970s than they were in the first decade of the twentieth century. One-third of the National League teams that took the field of play from 1906 to 1910 lost 90 or more games, compared to less than 25 percent of NL teams from 1972 to 1976. That being established, however, the Cubs still had to compete against a greater

Table 8.

	Best at Position	Best Years in Surrounding Decade	Historical Legacy Based on Best Years
1906–10 Cubs	**6 of 13:**	**4 of 10 Best NL Position:**	**2 Century–Plus:**
	Chance, 1B, 1903–08	Evers, 1907–12	Evers
	Evers, 2B, 1906–14	Chance, 1904–08	Brown
(13 core players)	Sheckard, LF, 1902–12	Tinker, 1908–13	
	Kling, C, 1902–08	Sheckard, 1906–11	
	Brown, P, 1906–11		
	Reulbach, P, 1905–10		
		2 of 5 Best NL Pitchers:	**1 Half–Century Only:**
		Brown, 1906–10	
		Reulbach, 1905–09	Reulbach
1972–76 Reds	**6 of 12:**	**3 of 10 Best NL Position:**	**3 Century–Plus**
	Morgan, 2B, 1965–82	Morgan, 1971–77	Morgan
	Concepcion, SS, 1973–81	Bench, 1969–75	Bench
(12 core players)	Perez, 3B–1B, 1969–74	Rose, 1969–76	Rose
	Rose, OF, 1967–74	Reese, 1951–55	
	Rose, 3B–1B, 1975–81		
	Bench, C, 1968–76		
	Carroll, RP, 1968–75		
		Best NL Reliever:	
		Carroll, 1970–74	

number of very good 90-plus wins teams (eight) relative to the league than the Reds. Cincinnati faced off against seven other 90-win teams over five years in what was now a twelve-team league, but only three of those teams (the Dodgers in 1973, 1974, and 1976) were in the Reds' division. Their winning percentage against such teams was almost exactly the same—.560 for Chicago, .559 for Cincinnati—but the Cubs played 23 percent of their total games from 1906 to 1910 against 90-win teams, while the 1972–76 Reds played 90-win teams in only 13 percent of their games.

All things considered, therefore, these are the saddest of possible words for the Big Red Machine to have to hear: "Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance" and Mordecai "Three Finger" Brown.

1991–2005 ATLANTA BRAVES: LONGER BUT NOT BETTER

The 1991–2005 Atlanta Braves are famous for winning their division 14 consecutive years (not counting 1994, when division titles were not awarded on account of the players' strike) and infamous for coming away with only five National League pennants and one World Series championship for their efforts. I split the Braves into two separate teams—1991 to 1997 and 1998 to 2005—based on a wholesale turnover of position players by 1998. Chipper Jones became the Braves' regular third baseman in 1995, playing only three years on the 1991–97 Braves, and Andruw Jones became a regular in the outfield in 1997, so both are counted as being part of the 1998–2005 Braves.

Both Atlanta teams dominated the National League. In winning six division titles, the 1991–97 Braves had the best record in the league five times, won over 100 games twice—including in the last of the pre-1994 pennant races (when a team had to finish first just to get into the playoffs), when they needed every one of their 104 victories to beat the 103-win Giants—and four times won their division by at least eight games. In winning eight division titles, the 1998–2005 Braves had the league's best record four times, won 100 or more games four times, and four times finished eight games ahead of their division rivals. On top of that, with Greg Maddux, Tom Glavine, and John Smoltz anchoring the starting rotation from 1993 through 2002 the Braves led the league in fewest runs allowed for 11 consecutive years between 1992 and 2002.

If the strengths of the 1950s Dodgers and 1970s Reds were overwhelmingly centered on their offense, superb pitching was the particular calling card of the first Atlanta team. The balance between position players and pitchers was almost exactly 50/50 in the Braves' collective WAR between 1991 and 1997. This equilibrium, however, is not a good thing in comparison to the Cubs because, as implied by Bill James when he developed "win shares" to measure players' contributions to their teams' success, position players

collectively *should* contribute more. The near 60/40 split between position players and pitchers for both the 1906–10 Cubs and 1942–46 Cardinals seems closer to the optimum for a truly dominant team. The 1991–97 Braves are the only team being considered here that did not have a single position player among the league's ten best in the surrounding decade. The second Braves team, despite winning only one pennant for their eight division titles from 1998 to 2005, carried over their great pitching—at least until 2003, after which both Maddux and Glavine were gone—but were more well-rounded, with both Joneses having century-plus legacies for their best consecutive years during that run.

The winning achievements and relative dominance of the National League by both Atlanta teams can fairly be said to match up well with the 1906–10 Cubs, notwithstanding their relative paucity of pennants. It's important to remember that, unlike the Cubs, the Braves had to survive first one and then two rounds of National League postseason series to even *get* to the World Series. The 1998–2005 Braves compare favorably to the 1906–10 Cubs in numbers of players who were the best at their position and with century-plus legacies. The Cubs, however, were much more dominant in their games; they outscored their opponents by 53 percent from 1906 to 1910, compared to the 1991–97 Braves outscoring their opponents by 24 percent between 1991 and 1997 and 22 percent between 1998 and 2005. More significantly, although a much higher percentage of teams lost 90 or more games in the Cubs' era, the 1906–10 Cubs still played 23 percent more games against teams with 90 or more wins because of a balanced schedule calling for 22 games against each team, and had a better record (a .560 winning percentage) playing the league's best competition. The 1991–97 Braves played 18 percent of their games against 90-win teams to the tune of a .524 winning percentage, while the 1998–2005 Braves' .545 record against 90-win competition (which now also included American League teams on their schedule with the inauguration of inter-league play in 1997), accounted for only 19 percent of their games.

CUBS ONCE HAD THE BEST TEAM IN NATIONAL LEAGUE HISTORY

Whatever misfortunes have plagued the Cubs over the last one hundred years, whatever curse devoted Cubs fans may believe has stricken their team because they have not won a World Series since 1908 and not even been to one since 1945, from 1906 to 1910 the Chicago Cubs had the best team in National League history. The Cubs were so dominant in all aspects of the game that no other NL team in the modern era over any five-year period is even close to the percentage by which they outscored their opponents. The team that comes closest—the 1942–46 Cardinals—did so during World War II years that stripped the major leagues of both established veterans and promising young players, and only two other teams even approached outscoring their opponents by 30 percent. Finally, though this was the dead ball era and the dregs of the league were probably as bad as they ever were, the 1906–10 Cubs played a much higher percentage of their games against teams with at least 90 victories than the other teams considered, and were very successful in those games; they have by far the best combined total of percentage of games played against 90-win teams and winning percentage against them. (See Table 9.)

Are the 1906–10 Cubs the best team in major league history? Well, there is the matter of the New York Yankees, and given what happened to the Cubs in the 1932 and 1938 World Series, it's probably best not to go there. ■

Table 9.

	WAR Balance		vs. 90-win Teams *			
	WAR % Batters	WAR % Pitchers	% of total games	Win % v. 90-win	Combined	% Outscored Oponents
1906–10 Cubs	58.3	41.7	.229	.560	789	53.2
1920–24 Giants	74.6	25.4	.143	.509	687	29.4
1942–46 Cardinals	58.8	41.2	.117	.611	728	42.8
1949–56 Dodgers	74.0	26.0	.145	.480	625	25.1
1972–76 Reds	81.5	18.5	.127	.559	686	29.5
1991–97 Braves	50.1	49.9	.177	.524	701	24.1
1998–2005 Braves	62.7	37.3	.187	.545	732	21.8

* Includes teams whose winning percentage in strike-shortened 1994 and 1995 seasons would have projected to 90 wins over 162 games. No other NL teams had 90 or more wins in 1922, 1943, and 1955 besides the Giants, Cardinals, and Dodgers, respectively.

Weathering Spring Training

The Chicago Federals in Shreveport, Louisiana, 1914

Margaret M. Gripshover

INTRODUCTION

Someone should have told Charles H. Weeghman to be "careful of what you wish for," because wishes sometimes come true.

Weeghman found fame and fortune in turn-of-the-century Chicago with a chain of downtown quick-lunch restaurants. Like many of his contemporaries, he itched to be involved in the world of sports, and after a few early bumps, became in 1914 perhaps the key backer in the Federal League, which was moving from small minor league to "major." He was rich, he was ambitious, and he often thought with his heart instead of his head.

The story of Weeghman's Horatio Alger-like rise to fame and fortune, told in newspapers across the country, was a popular feature of Federal League promotion. Charlie crafted his life story with a heavy dose of revisionism when he said he arrived in Chicago with only a few dollars in pocket and, without much help, rose to millionaire status in little more than a decade; in reality, his wife provided much of the brains of the operation.

Weeghman claimed to have an innate sense of geography when it came to selecting a good spot for a Chicago Loop restaurant and was fond of referring to this talent by saying he never picked a "dead" location. He believed this Midas touch would carry over to his Federal League venture. "I knew what I was starting when I went into this baseball thing," he said, "and I have never (played) a dead one yet."[1]

As early as 1911, Weeghman, known to Chicagoans as "Lucky Charlie," had made it known that he was keenly interested in joining the elite group of baseball magnates, and made a bid to purchase the St. Louis National Leaguers.[2] He was unsuccessful in his first attempt but his wish came true when, in 1914, he headed up the Chicago team in the Federal League, which had distinctly minor-league status in 1913 but was now thinking big. Weeghman rose from humble beginnings in Richmond, Indiana thanks to his string of restaurants, but soon learned that the economics of operating in baseball differed greatly from those of a lunch counter. Weeghman opened his baseball business much the way he would have held a grand opening for a new lunchroom in the Loop: with much planning, fanfare, and publicity, plus plenty of glad-handing. But before you can open the front doors of a restaurant for your customers, you must first train your staff. And before you can field a baseball team, they need to practice. Unfortunately, the Federals' first spring training, which took place in Shreveport, Louisiana, would not be very grand at all. Instead, it was a soggy, muddy, and expensive misadventure. Weeghman didn't pick a live one. This article examines the factors contributing to the Chicago Federals' troubles during the 1914 spring training season, particularly due to geographic location and weather. The outcomes of the Chifeds' (one of many team nicknames) 1914 spring training influenced not only the team's fortunes, but also Weeghman's.

Weather, an important variable in baseball history, perhaps has not been as deeply investigated as it might. In the case of the Chicago Federals, the weather was almost a tenth player and was responsible for many errors!

The primary sources for this research are newspaper archives and meteorological and climatological records. I compared newspaper accounts of spring training events with Shreveport weather records to determine the impact of environmental factors on the team's financial losses from mid-March through early April, 1914.

(Many of the descriptions of the Chicago Federals' activities during spring training were reported by Sam Weller of the *Chicago Tribune*. He traveled with Weeghman and the team on the train from Chicago to Shreveport and on the trip back to Illinois. Weller was on site for the duration of the 1914 spring training season and other newspaper accounts of the Chicago Federals appeared to have been based on his writings.)

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

First things first: where to conduct spring training? The Chicago Federals' decision on where to hold spring training was heavily influenced by the need to produce revenue for the team and underwrite the costs of the venture. On February 12, 1914, Chifeds Secretary Charles Williams was reported to have advised president Weeghman that the team should train in

Shreveport, Louisiana. The club cast another option, Mineral Springs, Texas, aside because its "…poor practice field and the small chance to play before any crowds" would be unfavorable for the bottom line.[3] To say that Mineral Springs was unsuitable was an understatement given that train service ended there in 1910; by the 1940s, it was considered a ghost town.[4]

COURTESY MARGARET GRIPSHOVER. SOURCE ESRI; PREPARED BY KEVIN CARY, GISP

Weeghman was certainly aware of Secretary Williams' fiscal concerns, but did his best to give the press, the public, Organized Baseball, the Federal League, and his players the impression that his pockets were deep and his resources almost without limit. In the midst of pulling together his club's first spring training, Weeghman was also trying to build his North Side ballpark in time for opening day, do battle over the reserve clause's hold on Bill "Reindeer" Killefer and others, and run his restaurant, bowling alley, and movie theatre businesses. But the decision to conduct spring training in Shreveport was, in many ways, the beginning of Lucky Charlie's spectacular financial downfall, a collapse which only became evident several years later during his brief presidency of the Chicago Cubs. While Shreveport may have been viewed more favorably by Williams as the inaugural spring training site for the Federals, few sunny days were ahead for the franchise.

Spring training in Shreveport was fraught with numerous and costly problems for Weeghman's team. The Chicago Federals did not know it at the time, but March 1914 would not be kind to the team's exhibition game or training schedules. The weather in Shreveport was wetter and cooler than normal and few Louisiana baseball fans found the conditions ideal for attending a game.

The decision to select Shreveport as the team's spring training site was heavily influenced by organized baseball's prohibition against the "outlaw" Federal League using any of its fields for training or exhibitions;[5] any training locations with affiliations to the two major leagues (and, one assumes, organized minor leagues) were off limits. Organized baseball had a monopoly on the most suitable and potentially profitable spring training sites, leaving only less desirable locations for the Federals. Given that Weeghman had counted on exhibition game admission fees to underwrite the ever-spiraling costs of his baseball venture, cash flow was headed in the wrong direction from the beginning.

How did this lockout impact the Chicago Federals' income and physical well-being? Note this description of the travails that Weeghman's squad endured in New Orleans in April.

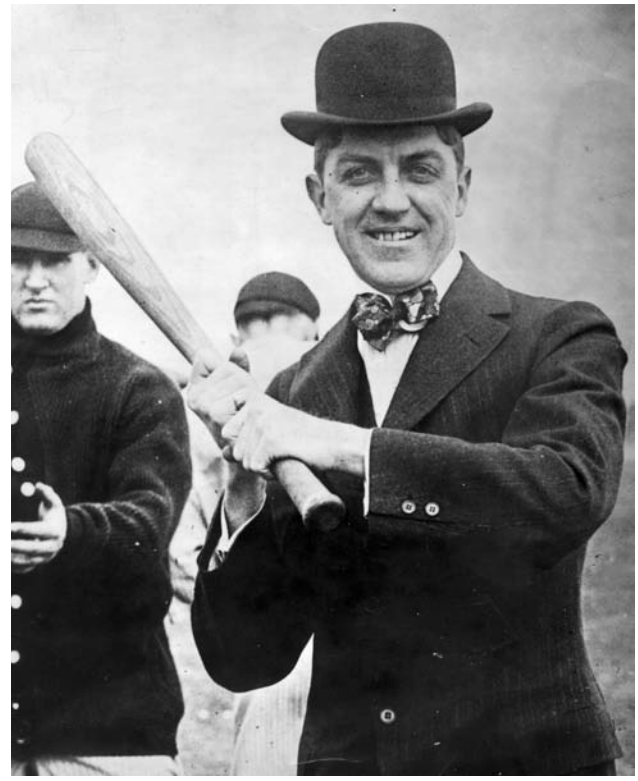
> Joe Tinker knows something about the woes of an "outlaw" since coming to New Orleans with his band of Chicago Feds. It is pretty tough to come into a town and find that organized ball has blocked the path. Joe brought his athletes down here to show the people of the south how great the Federal League is. About 400 persons looked at him and his boys on Sunday and Monday there were about 100 who paid and about fifty small boys who crawled under the fences but didn't care about the ball game after they got in. Tinker was so disgusted and fearful some of stars might get injured on the impossible diamond that he sent Jimmy Block and his Blokes against the New Orleans Eddys and allowed the regulars to play catch at one side of the field.[6]

The plan? Offer Shreveport's citizens a chance to see "major league" play in a town not especially known for its baseball heritage. Although professional baseball was organized in the city as early as 1895, the last team to play in Shreveport prior to 1914 had been the Shreveport Pirates of the Texas League, who had folded in 1910. The Chicago squad would be divided into two teams with Manager Joe Tinker's "Regulars" (the first string) playing catcher Jimmy Block's "Blokes" (the second string). When possible, the Chifeds would play Mordecai "Three Finger" Brown's St. Louis Federals and also suit up against local ama-

teur and college teams. Brown's team, which went by a variety of nicknames including the "Sloufeds" and "Brownies," had set up their spring training camp in Monroe, Louisiana, about a one-hour train ride from Shreveport. Mordecai's team offered the most professional competition but, unfortunately for Weeghman's balance sheet, the two squads played infrequently.

Another possible reason that Weeghman and Williams selected Shreveport: Lucky Charlie was angling to sign Ty Cobb, who would be participating in spring training for the Detroit Tigers in both New Orleans and Gulfport, Mississippi.

While Weeghman was certainly sincere in his desire to sign the "Georgia Peach" to the Chifeds roster, all the resulting public relations stunts only benefited Cobb's salary negotiations with the Tigers. On several occasions, Weeghman would duck out of training camp and go to New Orleans on "business." The nature of that "business" was never clearly stated, although writers implied that Charlie was pursuing Cobb and other possible "jumpers" to the Federal League.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

At times, Chicago Whales owner Charles "Lucky Charlie" Weeghman even suited up for practice with his charges. He was not, however, a batting instructor.

TRAINS FOR TRAINING

On a snowy Sunday evening, March 8, 1914, the Chifeds departed Chicago, heading south to Shreveport. The weather wasn't much better in Louisiana than at home, as frost was predicted. Chances are that the 65 passengers (only 28 of whom were players) on the "de luxe [sic] special" didn't even notice. Also aboard the train was *Chicago Tribune* reporter Sam Weller, who documented the team's entire spring training adventures. The planning leading up to the spring training trip was optimistic and lighthearted. As the departure date drew closer,

> Secretary Williams, Manager Tinker, and Trainer "King" Brady passed the afternoon packing the ball suits and baseball paraphernalia. President Weeghman and Vice President Walker were present and saw that their own uniforms were placed in the trunk. Walker declares he intends to reduce thirty pounds and Weeghman will attempt to put on fifteen…so many friends of the two arrange for another car for the special train. Many of the rooters are taking their wives along, so the extra car will be a compartment car. This will make two compartment cars, one a combination compartment and observation, three regulation sleeping cars, one dining car, and one combination baggage and library car. [7]

The elaborate and luxurious excursion from Chicago to Shreveport was compared to "… a grand opera company on a continental tour."[8] Weller reported that the "Weeghman express, so far as can be learned, is as classy as any of the swell trains engaged by Charles A. Comiskey, the White Sox boss, in sending his players on the spring jaunt." After arriving in Shreveport, Weller was impressed with the hotel and claimed that the Chifeds had the "best rooms in the house" and that "…Charles A. Comiskey never had anything on this fellow Weeghman when it comes to doing things right."[9] This is exactly what Lucky Charlie wanted to read in the paper: that he was in the same league—almost literally—as Comiskey.

The train ride itself was described as a pleasure trip, even though "war" with organized baseball loomed on the horizon. Aside from Weeghman, the team's vice-president, William Walker, and Federals president James A. Gilmore also traveled with the team. All three magnates were accompanied by their wives.

> It was a beautiful day with the mercury up in the seventies and the sun pouring inspiring rays on every one. In the men's car the club officials and their friends, prominent members of the Chicago Athletic association, passed the time

> gaily at whist. So far as is known this is the first time that whist has broken into baseball. In the parlor car on the rear the women members of the party played bridge for boxes of chocolates and white garbed waiters served them with pink punch. One had to mingle with the hard palmed fellows in the middle cars of the train to assure him that he was really on a baseball trip. There the old game of draw went along in the regular major league style, one table being filled with former stars of the American and National league, who tossed their two bit pieces into the contest with the reckless abandon of hardened veterans.[10]

Weller added this anecdote to the end of his report to sum up the carefree good humor enjoyed during the trip to Shreveport. As the train neared the destination, Tinker summoned his men to a meeting in the rail car explaining their practice schedule over the coming days.

He talked to some extent of training rules, diligence, and loyalty. "But above all, boys," he said, "we must have harmony on the club." When he left one of the recruits nudged another in the ribs and said; "Say, what team did this 'Harmony' ever play on?"[11]

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

The first day of practice, Tuesday, March 10, would be the warmest day experienced by the Chifeds that week. Thirty-three players took to what might loosely be described as a field for the inauguration of spring training in Shreveport. It was a sunny 72-degree day, but the makeshift diamond—actually the infield of the Louisiana State Fairgrounds horse racing track—was reportedly waterlogged by the previous week's rain. The poorly drained wetland soils upon which the fairgrounds were built were not conducive to baseball even in dry conditions. While the team had sent down a groundskeeper from Chicago weeks before, any conditioning work done to the field was undone by rain and boggy soils.[12] The playing surface was described as "hard," "jumpy," and even "dangerous," and two weeks of downpours certainly didn't help the situation.[13]

Tribune reporter Weller tried to shine a positive light on the situation by noting:

> The practice field… has a swell concrete grand stand, used for the races, and it has a lot of other swell buildings, but a bum baseball field. A good field would be of great help to the ball team, but it is hard to see where the players will benefit much from the grand stand and buildings. The townsmen have gone to much expense to provide a regular clubhouse under the grand stand. There are six shower baths and a locker for everyone, so no one is kicking.[14]

The average elevation for Shreveport is 40 feet above sea level and the land surface is very flat. The city is located along the west bank of the Red River and the soils are clayey and slow to drain. Chicago's elevation is nearly 500 feet above sea level, with most of the city situated within the Chicago Lake Plain with soils that formed from lake clay, sand, silt, and gravels.[15] Although both Chicago and Shreveport are situated on landscapes formed along bodies of water, the soil that a groundskeeper would work on the glaciated shores of Lake Michigan could do little to prepare him to condition a baseball field in Louisiana.

During the first week of practice, the weather slowly improved. Day one was fraught with muddy conditions from previous rains while day two was so cold, rainy, and windy that practice had to be moved indoors to the State Fairgrounds Coliseum. All parties worried that the chilly conditions might scrub the games scheduled for the weekend.[16]

> Being in Dixie didn't help the Chicago Federals any Wednesday. They could have trained just as well in a Chicago Y.M.C.A. gymnasium, for when they awoke it was dark and drizzly with the wind coming down from the north as it sometimes comes off Lake Michigan. [Tinker] hustled the athletics out to the breezy fair grounds just as if the sun were pouring down baseball rays upon them, but instead of exercising on the lumpy field he led the boys to the coliseum building on the grounds where the walls shut out the cold wind.[17]

Luckily for Charlie's team, the sun came out on Saturday the 14th for their first public scrimmage. Mordecai Brown's "Sloufeds" were in town for the weekend to challenge Tinker's "Regulars."

> It was the first real game of ball played here in four years and everybody in town was hungry for it. The weather was the best of the week, the skies being cloudless and the air balmy. The spectacle of more than fifty baseball players in action in front of the grandstand was delightful to the hungry fans and they applauded everything, even the umpires.[18]

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Joe Tinker, seen here in 1914 with two young Whales ball boys, guided Chicago to a second-place finish that year and a championship in 1915.

The "Tinkers" and Sloufeds split their weekend series and the weather was cooperative for the time being. An unnamed "special correspondent" to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* raved about the teams' play and the weather and wrote that,

> The game was bitterly contested with features galore and, contrary to all expectations, was really a creditable exhibition. Only one error blemished the affray. Weather conditions were ideal, a real Dixie sun beaming on the athletes, while the hustling little city did itself proud in its efforts to show it welcomed the attention showered upon it by the Northerners.[19]

Despite the sunshine, neither team seemed to be making any financial headway during spring training in Louisiana. While Chicago and St. Louis played before sizable crowds by spring training standards that opening weekend, the *Post-Dispatch* noted on March 16 that the $600 split was the first real money that the Feds had taken in all spring.

Weeghman was on hand for the opening weekend and was so enthusiastic that he actually tried his hand at the bat and ball. Weller noted "This morning he [Weeghman] went to the grounds, put on his new baseball uniform, and took a hand in the practice. After watching him we are positive he couldn't make his own team."[19] Perhaps Charlie should have been back in Chicago minding his restaurants and the construction of the Chifeds' ballpark instead of tinkering around in Shreveport?

That weekend, rumors had Lucky Charlie slipping off to New Orleans for a clandestine meeting with Ty Cobb, something the Tigers star flatly denied.[20] Although it would have been difficult for him to be in two places at the same time, Weeghman did depart for Chicago Monday March 16, and according to Weller, "…went by way of New Orleans, partly to see if any major league stars were loitering there with an idea of jumping and partly to have a feast of river shrimp."[21]

The weekend crowds were long gone as the second week of spring training progressed. Monday was sunny and warm, so much so that "Bill Brennan, the chief of the Federal umpires, took advantage of the hot sun and, encased in a rubber shirt, reduced five pounds in an awkward attempt to play ball."[22] Tinker noted that Monday's weather allowed for more training as "any three days of the last week," and that the "temperature was above 80 and one could not have found a cloud in the sky at any time even with a field glass."[23] But the hot and humid weather would not continue. Temperatures declined through the week, with overnight lows near freezing by Friday.

Tuesday's scrimmage between Block's Blokes and Shreveport's Centenary College drew a crowd of 400, about 100 of whom were students.[24] The climate was the best of the week: "The weather was perfect, being bright and hot. The college is situated in the outskirts of the city amidst a forest of pine trees, and Tinker's Regulars were given a half holiday so they might attend the game and breathe the pine scented air."[25] Who knew that the aroma of pine trees could improve baseball performance? It must have worked as the second-string Chicago team won 8–2.

The Blokes seemed disappointed, however, that there was no "college yell" offered by the collegians; the students were most likely even more crestfallen than the Blokes after Umpire Brennan introduced them as representing "Sanitary College."[26] Brennan's amusing gaffe was not indicative of his competence as an umpire. He played a critical role in helping shape the Federals, and his leadership as the head umpire for the entire league was invaluable. Brennan had umpired in the National League from 1903–13, and called games for the Federal League until it folded.

Meanwhile, considerably farther to the north, at

the Jerome Hunting and Fishing Club situated on Trude Lake near the town of Mercer, Wisconsin, the sweet smells of conifers were also influencing the well-being of baseball men. While Weeghman's team was tutoring the student athletes of Centenary College on the art of baseball, the health of White Sox President Charles Comiskey was also being restored by "his rest among the pines…although he was weak on his arrival at the camp, Comiskey gained and on Wednesday walked two miles through deep snow after breakfast and repeated the trip after lunch."[27]

While the "Old Roman" and his cronies, the "Woodland Bards," were being invigorated by the bracing cold and sweet smells of the north woods, Charlie Weeghman was being regaled at Bismarck Gardens in Chicago by the "Bravo El Toro Club," a group of North Side businessmen and Chifeds rooters who planned to parade in "Mexican costumes, headed by the club's mascot, a real bull," on opening day at Weeghman Park.[28] One can only assume that the odors wafting from the beer gardens were not nearly as healthful as the brisk Wisconsin air!

Pine trees, however, would not make up for the variable weather and field conditions in Shreveport. By the second week, players were being kept out of practice by the "grippe" as well as injuries sustained from playing on the uneven and often muddy field. On Wednesday, March 18, Tinker cancelled a planned intra-squad scrimmage due to a "crippled catching staff."[29] Hopes were for hot weather on Thursday so the team could work on its defensive skills, but rain and cold kept the players off the field.

The weather was much better in Gulfport that day, however, and over 3,000 fans paid to see Ty Cobb and the Tigers defeat the New Orleans Pelicans.[30] There were no such income opportunities for Weeghman's team. In lieu of a Thursday practice, Joe Tinker took pitchers Ad Brennan and Tom Seaton and their wives to visit a circus wintering just outside of Shreveport. The irony of the situation was not lost on the Chifeds' manager.

> The party asked Joe to pose for a picture shaking hands with the young bear. When Joe approached the little fellow the cub made an angry pass at him with claws set for action, so Tinker decided never to try to shake hands with a cub again.[31]

Friday arrived and the weather once more limited Tinker's men to indoor baseball. With the "diamond too wet and the air too chilly," indoor baseball, a popular amateur and semi-pro winter sport in Chicago, was a workable substitute for regular play.[32] And if the climate wasn't slowing down players' conditioning, various weather-related illnesses and injuries inhibited training progress. Tinker was now dealing with both poor weather and three catchers in sick bay. Wilson, Block, and Mulvaney were described as being, "on the hummer [an early 20th century expression for being laid off from work], but took the work as medicine, and at noon said they could go out and catch a full game if the rain would let up."[33]

> When the 7 o'clock call was sounded in the morning a fine rain was pouring down and a wind was coming from the Dakotas, and it would have been impossible to have done any outdoor work. Tinker could have used the Coliseum building at the fair grounds, but decided it would be taking a chance of exposure, as there is no heat in the place, so he gave the boys the day off…The rain and chilly weather of yesterday were the cause of about fifteen members of the "Fed" party catching colds, and today they all are sneezing. Several of the athletes were affected, but not severely enough to keep them out of the practice. "Doc" Brady, the trainer, was busy last night and tonight making the rounds of the rooms of ailing ones and handing out pills and something warm out of a bottle.[34]

Plans were made for a weekend series in Monroe between the Blokes and Mordecai Brown's Sloufeds, while the everyday players would remain in Shreveport and play against a local nine.[35] Chifeds Secretary Williams also announced that Tinker's team would be heading for New Orleans for games on April 5, 6, and 7 and then begin their trek back north via Cincinnati.[36] But Saturday's weather was not favorable for the team's bottom line. Fewer than 200 tickets were sold for the Blokes' game in Monroe.

> Brown's boys showed far superior in both fielding and batting. The Blokes fumbled frequently and the game was pretty much a farce. However, a few fans were present to all the mistakes. The gateman said he sold fewer than 200 tickets. The reason for that was because the wind was coming from the northeast and felt as if it had just come off Lake Michigan.[37]

It was also noted that while Tinker's men may have had a better hotel, Mordecai Brown's team benefited in the long run from, "…what really mattered, a better ball field and training facilities."[38]

Claude Hendrix, pitcher for the Blokes, decided for himself it was too cold to play baseball in Monroe, Louisiana, so he went fishing.[39] Meanwhile, back in Shreveport, the weather wasn't much better. Although Tinker's Regulars demolished the Shreveport Athletic Club team 13–1, the "leaden skies and piercing cold tending to take the 'pep' out of the athletes, but all made a creditable showing despite the handicaps…The game was called in the seventh because of the cold."[40]

Sunday's weather was just as unkind as the day before. Mordecai Brown's St. Louis squad beat Jimmy Block's Blokes 16-10 with play so poor that most of the spectators left "in disgust" before the game was completed.[41] Chicago pitcher Claude Hendrix gave up five runs in the fifth inning alone, with four outfield errors by the Blokes blamed on the sun. Certainly the players had seen little of the glary yellow orb over the previous two weeks.

There was bad pitching and horrible fielding on both sides. Fly balls were misjudged and dropped, ground balls were fumbled and kicked, and base runners were wild. Along with it all there was a chilly wind, and one shivered any time he got in the shade. About 800 persons went to see the farce, and tonight the citizens of Monroe haven't a high opinion of the Federal league.[42]

Perhaps Claude Hendrix should have remained at his fishing camp, as his performance was no keeper. Another casualty of the spring training conditions was second baseman Harry Fritz, who had a fever and was unable to play. His symptoms were serious enough to require a visit from a doctor. In Fritz's place was Fred Beck who "…played second in spite of being left handed [sic]," and catcher Bruno Block moved to first and played "…in Hal Chase style."[43]

The third week of spring training started with forgettable performances on Sunday in both Shreveport and Monroe, but brighter days were in store. Monday March 23 was sunny but a bit chilly, with highs in the low 60s. Given the number of fielding errors committed by outfielders the previous day, Tinker called for practice drills centered on looking.

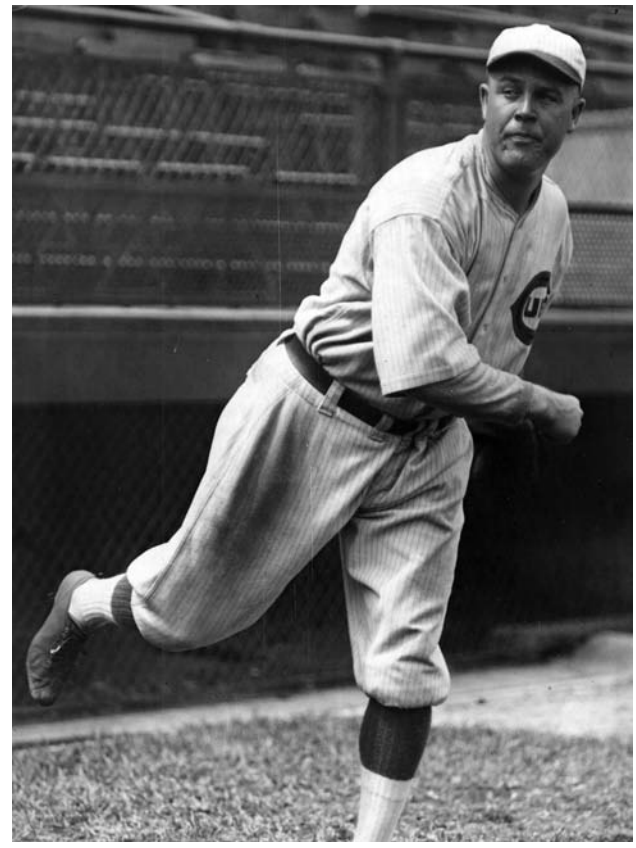
> The feature of the afternoon practice was a search for sun fielders. Tinker had nearly all the outfielders out facing the sun, which was unusually bright, and then liners and high ones were hit to them. He concluded that the best sun fielders were "Little Aleck" Zwilling and Cadwallader Coles. The players will pick a few out of the sun every day from now on and one of the two is likely to be the right fielder when the team plays on the Chicago grounds because right field is the sun field in the new park.[44]

Tuesday's game against Centenary was deemed the best so far, with the Regulars roughing up the collegians 9–0. The weather was sunny and warm and would continue that pattern through Wednesday afternoon when Centenary again fell to Tinker's squad, 14–0. The mood that evening was lighthearted as the veterans pulled a prank on rookie pitcher Harry Swann, tricking him into participating in a dog and badger fight.[45]

RAINING ON THEIR PARADE

On Thursday, March 26, the rains returned to Shreveport, along with the circus. During a circus parade through the town, the clown acts were not limited to the circus employees. The Chifeds were featured as special guests of the parade, with Umpire Bill Brennan acting as barker, shouting announcements to the crowds as they lined the streets. It must have been a memorable experience. The parade included

> …some burlesque stuff by the local Elks who were made up as policemen and eugenic couples. The fake "cops" had a mule patrol wagon, and



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Claude Hendrix, shown here at Weeghman Park in 1915, lived and died with the spitball…just check the stain on his pants.

> when passing down Main Street they chased young Pitcher Swann, firing historic pistols at the fleeing athlete. Swann was arrested for refereeing a dog and badger fight last night and hauled off in the patrol. Manager Tinker was billed as one of the attractions for the concert that followed the circus performance both afternoon and night, but because of the downpour of rain the manager backed out. Claude Hendrix entertained the guests at the hotel for a time by popping balloons with bent pins. Every balloon was popped before the peddler could escape. Claude had so much fun out of it that he paid the man for the whole stock.[46]

The rain did not stop the parade or Tinker's plans for practice. After the festivities in town were over, the team headed back to the fairgrounds for more workouts. Unfortunately, it rained even harder as the day progressed and the only option was more indoor baseball. To make things worse, the injuries continued. Between the uneven and often muddy field, and the hard and unforgiving surface of the indoor facility (better suited for exhibiting livestock), the team's trainer had his hands full. Outfielder Cadwallader "Cad" Coles was out with what started as a bruised knee (incurred during sliding practice) that became infected; the rookie was prescribed bedrest at the hotel. The doctor later "extracted" a boil from Coles' knee and Cad needed a cane to walk.[47]

Coles might have felt a little better when he learned the next day he had been traded to the Kansas City Federals (George Stovall's team which was training in Wichita Falls, Texas); he had hoped for a deal after realizing his chances of a starting position with the Chifeds were scant.[48]

Catcher Jim McDonough had a "slight infection in his throwing arm" and was also sidelined.[49] Unfortunately for the injured players, it would be over two decades before antibiotics would be available to treat these simple infections.

The Federals were not the only Chicago team bearing the heavy costs of unfavorable weather. The Cubs, training in Tampa, were likewise hampered by the unseasonable conditions and the deleterious effects on the players' health and the team's bottom line. Even when traveling, the Cubs couldn't evade the foul weather; that Friday's game "was doubtful unless the local ball yard has unusual capacity for absorbing moisture."[50]

> Rain greeted the Cubs at Louisville, making practice in the open impossible. O'Day gave the athletes a rest, but had them at work early today in the big stock pavilion. Indications are that the rain may force the postponement of this afternoon's game, and a contest tomorrow is exceedingly doubtful. Since leaving Tampa the Cubs have not found good weather, and there is fear in camp that the team will be forced to start the season out of condition. The annual spring trip of exhibition games through a part of the country that is not warm is responsible. In an effort to pick up some coin and pay expenses of the trip, the ownership flirts with the danger of getting the men out of shape. O'Day is bossing the squad, the regulars of which are veterans, and they need hot weather.[51]

In April, the rain followed the Cubs from Kentucky to Indiana. At Indianapolis, "…Tommy Leach had the athletes out in the heavy going and they worked a strenuous two hours in the mud."[52]

In fact, one Chicago paper applauded the Federals' decision to conduct spring training in Louisiana versus the more northern locations chosen by the Cubs in April.

> Instead of hiking his men north through the arctic zone just before the season opens, [Tinker] is taking them through the south, and will give them a final pointing for the initial dash. Good health is prevalent among the athletes, and they should remain at top form with the help of warm weather.[53]

Apparently the newspaper had somehow forgotten the woeful weather endured by Tinker's men in March.

While the Cubs and Federals were faced with unfavorable weather, the White Sox managed to get through nearly the entire spring training season before canceling a game due to weather. [54] Then again, they spent most of their pre-season time in Paso Robles, California.

The weather and injuries, however, did not dissuade Manager Tinker from planning a "double workout" on Friday. Tinker had lined up two exhibition games for the weekend, one with the Regulars facing Mordecai Brown's St. Louis Federals in Shreveport on Saturday and another pitting the Blokes against a "squad of second string men" in Marshall, Texas, on Sunday.[55] But like so many best laid plans, the double practice and game against the Sloufeds were not to be. Despite warm temperatures, heavy rains from the previous day had "…left the diamond too sticky to work on," so work

was limited to the grassy areas along the edges of the race track infield where there was room for "…batting, sprinting, and perspiring."[56] Pitchers were working on "…hook curves and spitters off on a dry spot at the side of the race track."[57]

Catcher Jimmy Block was apparently not satisfied with simply working up a sweat in practice; he later went into the clubhouse and "climbed into a bake oven constructed by Trainer Brady and boiled out several more pounds."[58] Block was not alone in his quest to "boil off" his excess weight. Tinker noted "three or four other athletes who still are carrying some superfluous flesh around" and had "all the fat boys out in the far grass of left field at the afternoon session."[59] Later in the day, Tinker received a telegram from Brown informing him that the Sloufeds would not be coming to town, thereby cancelling the game. In its place, an intra-squad scrimmage between the Regulars and Blokes was slated for Saturday.

The weather gods were apparently not informed about Tinker's grand plans for the weekend, and the rains returned to Shreveport with a vengeance. The headline for Weller's story on March 29 read, "Tinker's Chifeds Hit Rainy Season."[60] The exhibition game between the Regulars and Blokes and scheduled practice sessions were called off due to the rain, leading to another lost opportunity for "…the few dollars that might have been taken by the gate."[61]

> Shreveport is having a rainy season and the ballplayers will be lucky if they get on the diamond by Tuesday. Everything was soaked and floating this morning, because the rain had been coming down all night. The clay around the edge of the diamond here is as sticky as mucilage, and one dares not tread upon it until the sun has had a couple of days at it.[62]

Despite the inclement conditions, there was optimism. Exhibition games were being booked along the route back home to Chicago. The weather may have inhibited the paying public from the games and hindered the players' conditioning, but Weller concluded his report of the day's events with this upbeat sentiment:

> With another week of good warm weather, which is quite likely, the Feds will return north for the opening of the season in excellent condition. In fact, they are ready to go at top speed right now.[63]

The final week of spring training in Shreveport was like the first week: a mix of sunshine, rain, and turmoil. On Sunday, March 29, in Marshall, Texas, the Blokes played in dry conditions before 1,000 fans,[64] defeating the Marshall Independents 10–1. The sun was also shining back in Shreveport, leading to lamentations that if only the game between the Sloufeds and Regulars had been scheduled for Sunday, they would have been able to play and likely drawn a sizeable crowd. It was hot and sunny for a change so Tinker took advantage of the conditions and for the first time in days conducted infield practice.[65]

Any dark clouds looming on the horizon were less related to the weather than to the ongoing "war" between the Federal League and Organized Baseball. Weeghman and Federal League President James Gilmore had their hands full with lawsuits over players who had "jumped" from the Organized Baseball teams to the Federal side (including the landmark Killefer case) and trades and contract battles within the FL itself. While juggling these issues, Charlie Weeghman was also trying to manage his non-baseball enterprises, construct his new ballpark, and keep his family happy and gainfully employed. Lucky Charlie couldn't control the weather, but it was becoming clearer that he would have trouble keeping his head above water in other aspects of his life as well.

THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF CADDO PARISH

On Monday, March 30, Tinker announced that spring training would conclude with a three-game championship series between Tinker's Regulars and Block's Blokes before the team left Shreveport for New Orleans. The winners would be crowned the kings of Caddo Parish and members of the winning team would receive one dollar "providing they agree to spend that dollar in Shreveport before leaving for New Orleans."[66]

> With all that money at stake, the series promises to be the hottest thing that has taken place here since the training began. Jimmy Block, the Milwaukee inkeeper [sic], will manage the Blokes, and he has promised to set all his players up with a shrimp supper if they get the money. Tinker will handle the regulars and it will be cigars for all if they cop. The townsmen are interested in the affair, just as the fans of New York get wrought up over the world series [sic] every fall, and the betting promises to be brisk. A quarter admission is to be charged spectators, and out of this money the winners are to get their bit. If there isn't enough gate money in the series, Charley Weeghman will have to wire some down from Chicago.[67]

Tinker's squads headed straight for the practice fields on Monday. That morning it was hot and sunny and they held a practice game. Unfortunately, that afternoon, the rains returned and play was suspended. While the men were preparing for their one-dollar contest, it was announced that several exhibition games were being planned at stops along the way back home to Chicago. One game was slated for New Orleans on either April 8 or 9, with two contests in Knoxville, Tennessee set for April 10 and 11.[68] At one point a game was penciled in for Memphis, but since the rail route did not pass directly through, a stop would have required additional logistics. The plans were scrapped.

Nearly three inches of rain fell on Shreveport on Tuesday, March 31. Thunder and lightning accompanied the downpours and streets were flooded.

> There was danger of being drowned if one ventured out of doors today, so the Chicago "Feds" did their training in the card room and dining hall of the hotel. At least seventeen separate and distinct showers hit the town during the day and made rivers of the streets. It simply poured.[69]

Another storm of sorts was brewing in Shreveport that day. Rumors were flying that William "Effingham Willie" Shettsline, secretary of the Philadelphia Phillies, was in town to convince Chifeds pitchers Tom Seaton and Ad Brennan to return to the City of Brotherly Love and remind them that they "belong to the Phillies because of the reserve clause in their 1913 contracts."[70] Neither player would return to the Philadelphia squad in 1914, however; Seaton was traded to the Brooklyn Tip Tops Federal team while Brennan spent the season with the Chifeds. But there was good news from Chicago—"The final rivet connecting the steel girders at the Chifed park was driven at noon yesterday and it is expected the structure will soon be under cover."[71]

On Wednesday, April 1, 1914, it was April Fools' on the Blokes as Tinker's Regulars captured the first game of the championship of Caddo Parish. The hot and sunny weather was a welcome respite and if the rain stayed away, the series would end on Thursday. But the previous rains had left the field in miserable condition. Catcher Block committed an error as he attempted to catch a foul ball, winding up mired in a mud hole. Weller reported that Block could have "taken it with ease, but in going after it the path led right through a pond six inches deep…he staggered bewilderingly through the water and it slowed him up just enough to miss the ball."[72]

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Joe Tinker exhorts his troops in 1914.

The championship of Caddo Parish went to Tinker's Regulars on Thursday, April 2, when they blanked Block's Blokes for the second consecutive day. Each Regular received his one-dollar bonus, to be spent in Shreveport before the team departed for New Orleans on Friday. Thursday was a rare good weather day and practice was held in the afternoon. Sam Weller reported "No ball player ever saw better weather for training than has existed here for the last two days. It was terribly sunny and hot both days and many of the boys are sorry the stay here is to end."[73]

The Regulars may have won the Caddo Parish championship, but the weather really dominated the Chifeds' spring training. March 1914 saw above-average precipitation and below-normal temperatures for most of Louisiana.[74] In Shreveport, it rained for 12 out of 21 days, which either resulted in the cancellations of exhibition games for the paying public or forced the Chifeds to alter their practice plans, relegating them to indoor baseball in the fairground's Coliseum. Thunderstorms occurred during five of the 12 days and 3.45 inches of rain fell over one 24-hour period (March 30–31). Temperatures fluctuated wildly; it was either very hot or unseasonably cold. The daytime highs ranged from the low 80s to the 40s. Killing frosts were reported on March 22 and 23, whereas the average late frost date for the area was March 10.[75]

Although the effects of the El Niño weather phenomenon were not understood in 1914, analysis indicates such a weather pattern. An El Niño develops in the equatorial Pacific Ocean when mean water temperatures depart from normal for three consecutive months.[76] For the southern U.S., this usually results in above average rainfall, which is exactly what the Chifeds experienced during their stay in Shreveport.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-

tration (NOAA) identified 1914–15 as El Niño years based on a review of the historic meteorological records.[77] Recent climate studies indicate that cooler and wetter conditions in Shreveport are related to El Niño-related oscillations in the Pacific Ocean.[78] It is very likely, therefore, that the Chifeds experienced a developing El Niño. Unfortunately for Charlie Weeghman, he didn't take climate into consideration when agreeing to send his team to Louisiana. If only the *Weather Channel* had been invented 68 years earlier, Weeghman might have actually made some money!

CONCLUSION: CHECKING OUT

Weeghman's Federals left their Shreveport spring training grounds Friday evening, April 2, 1914, on a train bound for New Orleans. Before they departed, the Hotel Youree manager presented a bill for over $4,800 for the 25-night stay at his inn, and, not surprisingly, encouraged the team to come back and stay with them again next year.[79] Although it is difficult to determine exactly how many fans paid to see the Chifeds play, a very generous attendance figure for the entire spring training season would be 6,000. Using twenty-five cents as the average ticket price, the entire gate would have totaled $1,500. To erode the bottom line further, as many as 2,500 of those customers attended games between the Chicago and St. Louis Federal League teams, meaning that not all of the proceeds landed in Weeghman's coffers. As much as $625 of the $1,500 could have ended up with Mordecai Brown, leaving as little as $875 in admissions collected by Tinker's team.

Even calculating earnings using one of the highest ticket prices at the time ($1.00), the best that Weeghman could have received in receipts for the entire spring training gate would have been approximately $3,500, still $1,300 less than the team's hotel bill. Considering that the hotel charge was only one part of the expenses and did not include the "de luxe" train transportation, salaries, fairgrounds rental, room and board in other cities, or any other incidentals, Lucky Charlie's pockets were getting shallower all the time.

Tinker and his men boarded the train for New Orleans, but the poor weather and economic conditions followed them through Louisiana and into Gulfport, Mississippi. Only about 400 fans turned out to watch the Regulars/Blokes exhibition at Tulane University in New Orleans. The two practice games planned for Gulfport were both cancelled due to rain and chilly temperatures. According to one report, "The Feds didn't take in much more than enough to pay for a crawfish dinner."[80]

> Incredible as it may seem, the ball game booked here today for the Chicago "Feds" was called off on account of cold weather. It wasn't any bluff, either, for the wind was whizzing down from the north at terrific pace, and it was cloudy. The athletes went to the grounds, put on their suits, and indulged in a brief but vigorous workout, but Manager Tinker was afraid to take the chance of playing a game lest his men stiffen up by staying out too long. About 200 spectators gathered, in spite of the chilly blasts. The southerners among them came out without overcoats, because down here they hate to admit that it ever gets cold.[81]

The sun reappeared in Knoxville, but the air still had a "tinge of frost to it" when the Federals played a few more exhibitions then headed to Covington, Kentucky, before finally arriving back home in Illinois.[82] Storm clouds of another type, however, followed Weeghman and his team to Knoxville. While eating popcorn and watching the Regulars and Blokes play in Tennessee, Lucky Charlie was informed that the Federals had lost the Killefer reserve clause case and "Reindeer" Bill would not wear a Chifeds uniform.[83]

The poor weather conditions during spring training were a harbinger of things to come for the Chicago Federals and, in fact, the young Federal League itself. More legal troubles loomed on the horizon for Federal teams as they fought with organized baseball over players' contracts. Although Weeghman's club captured the 1915 Federal League pennant, the league folded under the weight of these and other financial issues at the conclusion of that season.

Charles Weeghman's investment in the Federal League brought him fame and an entry into the social circle of Chicago's sporting elite, but at a heavy cost. The one-time millionaire saw his fortunes evaporate through his years in baseball as president of the Chicago Federals (1914–15) and later the Cubs (1916–19). In baseball, he was accused of spending too freely on talent, on frippery, and on celebrations. His lunch-counter businesses suffered during World War I and the Influenza outbreak of 1918. When he died in 1938, his millions were long gone; his last occupation was as a greeter at a New Jersey supper club.

It all seems to have begun to fall apart during spring training 1914. One might venture to say that when it came to baseball, Lucky Charlie Weeghman did not weather well. ■

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Wrigley Field

A Century of Survival

Sam Pathy

Wrigley Field's idyllic charms—the ivy, hand-operated scoreboard and bleacher sunshine—belie a tenuous past. The North Side ballpark, in fact, is lucky to be around at all.

On January 22, 1914, Charlie Weeghman leased land to build a ballpark at Clark and Addison streets for his team in the upstart Federal League. But resistance sprang up immediately and rumors hinted that organized baseball drove much of the opposition.[1] Cubs President Charles Murphy tipped organized baseball's hand, saying, "It is my opinion that the Federal League will not start. There are some surprises in store for the promoters of the 'outlaw' circuit."[2]

First, an unknown person tried to purchase a parcel of land on the property. Weeghman put up $15,000 of his own money to buy it and keep the site viable for his ballpark.[3] Soon after, persons unknown circulated a petition through the North Side neighborhood. Mr. Herman Croon, who lived across the street from the proposed site, at 3649 Sheffield Avenue said:

> None of the property owners want the park. They know that a park of the kind will decrease the value of their real estate 25 to 50 per cent and practically kill good rental because of the kind of people that such a park will bring into the locality."[4]

Finally, in March, an injunction nearly stopped construction.[5]

But progress on the steel and concrete structure continued and Weeghman Park opened to great fanfare on April 23, 1914. The Federal League, however, lasted just two seasons. In the deal to dissolve the league, Weeghman was allowed to purchase the National League Cubs, his heretofore West Side-based rivals.

Weeghman now seemingly carried leases on two ballparks: Weeghman Park and the Cubs' West Side Grounds. Many felt the west side held more promise for the Cubs, owing to their rich history there.[6] But West Side Grounds' antiquated wood construction left it a relic compared to other major-league parks. Consequently, on January 21, 1916, the Cubs moved their lockers and uniforms from West Side Grounds to Weeghman Park.[7] That day, the Cubs became Chicago's "North Side" team. In the process, Weeghman Park did what most other Federal League ballparks could not: successfully outlive its league.

In 1918, Murphy, who owned West Side Grounds, repurchased stock in the Cubs. He didn't hide his desire to see them vacate Weeghman Park. "I hope and think the Cub management will eventually see the wisdom of returning to the west side location and building a modern, up to date plant."[8] Murphy's stance led the *Christian Science Monitor* to erroneously report that the team would "move back to its former grounds on the West Side" before opening day 1919.[9]

Murphy sued the Cubs' management for back rent, claiming they broke their lease when they left West Side Grounds.[10] In 1920 he filed another suit, trying to keep the National League from scheduling games at the North Side park, now called Cubs Park.[11] But later that year, Murphy finally sold his rotting West Side Grounds to the state of Illinois which razed it and built a hospital complex on the site, thus ending any talk of the Cubs moving back to the old neighborhood.[12]

William Wrigley, Jr. eventually purchased the Cubs and their grounds, and the park, soon renamed Wrigley Field, flourished. The new management expanded it twice in the 1920s. Moreover, Wrigley and later his son, P.K., made Wrigley Field the cleanest and most comfortable in the majors. Add exciting Cubs teams to the mix and the North Siders led the league in attendance from 1926 through 1932.

After World War II, P.K. Wrigley was rumored to be purchasing the Riverview amusement park, two miles west of Wrigley Field, and constructing a new stadium on the site. The Riverview property encompassed over 70 acres, large enough to provide parking that was scarce at Clark and Addison streets. But Wrigley squelched the rumor. "We have too much money invested in Wrigley Field to make such a move," he said, "and we're pretty well satisfied with it."[13]

The Cubs finished last in both 1948 and 1949, beginning a 20-year hold on the second division that sapped fan support. In 1962 the Cubs finished last in major-league attendance for the first (and only) time at

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Fans depart Wrigley Field via the diamond following either Game One or Game Two of the 1929 World Series against Philadelphia. Note the temporary bleachers set up beyond the left field wall on Waveland Avenue as well as the "jury box" section in left-center field.

Wrigley Field. After the season, the other National League owners made an extraordinary request of P.K. Wrigley: They asked him to install lights at the North Side ballpark. By now the Cubs and their paltry 609,802 turnstile count were drags on the league.

Visitors received 29 cents from each ticket sold at the time, so road teams averaged only $2,185 per game at Wrigley Field in 1962. In contrast, visiting teams took in an average of $9,627 per game at new Dodger Stadium.[14]

While P.K. Wrigley wouldn't even install lights at his nearly 50-year-old park, most major league cities were throwing up modern, multi-purpose stadia. This new era of building commenced in 1960 with Candlestick Park. The ballpark featured cantilevered construction that eliminated most of the view-obstructing posts that came with every previous ballpark. And another convenience—acres of parking—surrounded it.

Modern stadia also went up in Washington, New York, and Houston. Pressure mounted for Chicago to join the other cities and replace Wrigley Field as well as the White Sox's cavernous Comiskey Park. Newspapermen threw around words like "old", "ancient", and "antique" to describe the North Side ballpark, and Wrigley Field's reputation suffered.

The neighborhood around Wrigley Field aged, too. The Lake View area became a port-of-call for many first-generation immigrants, and with white flight to the suburbs a key fact of post-World War II urban life, residents became more transient and the area showed signs of neglect. A 1963 newspaper article on Alta Vista Terrace, a Victorian-inspired block of residences just a few hundred feet north of the ballpark, for example, called the homes "an island in the middle of a blighted area."[15]

In January 1964, amid this talk of modernity, P.K. Wrigley said, "I am in favor of building a community stadium in Chicago; something like a domed arena going up at Houston…The Cubs, White Sox and Chicago Bears would play there…We would tear down Wrigley Field and sub-divide it for residential use."[16]

Shortly after, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley named a committee to investigate the feasibility of a modern stadium. The final report, released in December 1964, called for a 55,000-60,000 seat $34-million multi-purpose stadium which would replace Soldier Field. It would have a grass field and an open roof.[17]

Chicago Bears owner George Halas supported the plan and P.K. Wrigley seemed willing to move forward. White Sox owner Art Allyn, however, did not. Earlier, he said this about the prospects of a civic stadium in Chicago: "If there is any possibility, however remote, of making use of the city's credit or utilizing the taxpayer's dollar, I'll not have a damn thing to do with it."[18]

When the stadium report went public Allyn railed against it, estimating his team would lose $1.25 million a year in gross income from concessions, parking,

and rent.[19] His ferocious opposition doomed the project. Wrigley Field and Comiskey Park stayed right where they were.

At the opening of St. Louis' new Busch Stadium in 1966, *Chicago Tribune* writer Richard Dozer seconded the feelings of many, saying, "The fact remains that tonight Chicago fell another peg in its tumble towards the bottom of the list with its increasingly archaic north and south side baseball plants."[20]

In 1967, Art Allyn himself revealed plans to build a $50-million private sports complex on the near South Side. It included a 46,000-seat ballpark, a 60,000-seat football/soccer stadium, and a 15,000-seat indoor arena. To ensure team identity, he'd call the ballpark (patterned after new Anaheim Stadium) "White Sox Park" when his Sox played and "Cubs Park" when the North Siders played. If the Bears joined in, he would name the football arena "Halas Stadium."[21]

But Allyn's proposal went nowhere. He received little help from Mayor Daley, who was still pushing his own stadium plan. New public or private stadium plans were floated again in 1968, 1971, 1975, and 1977, but they never amounted to much. The modern stadium era had passed Chicago by.

After the Tribune Company bought the Cubs from the Wrigley Family in 1981, neighbors worried that the team would install lights at the ballpark. Grassroots groups, including the newly formed C.U.B.S. (Citizens United for Baseball in Sunshine), claimed that night baseball would exacerbate parking problems, increase vandalism, and diminish property values.[22] The neighbors lobbied hard and made themselves heard. Both the Illinois House and Senate banned nighttime sporting events at Wrigley Field.[23] In July 1983 Chicago's City Council passed a zoning code amendment further outlawing night baseball.[24]

Even before the city law, Cubs General Manager Dallas Green reasoned that the team, lights or no lights, might need a larger park to raise revenues to compete in the 1980s and beyond. Despite intense fan criticism of Green's statement, Cubs CEO Jim Finks added:

> People have narrowed the issue down to do we put lights in Wrigley Field or not. The day-night issue is important. But I feel to leave it at that, as most people do, is missing a significant option for us—a new stadium.[25]

When the Cubs lost a suit against the city and the state, management met with the Schaumburg, Illinois village manager about a possible move to the Northwest suburb.[26] With the White Sox ready to abandon Comiskey Park, the time finally seemed ripe for a multi-purpose domed stadium for the Cubs, White Sox, and Bears.

The threat intensified when ABC television, the game's postseason rightsholder, exercised a contract clause requiring that all 1985 World Series games be played in prime time. Dallas Green said that if the Cubs made it that far, he'd move the games to another National League city instead of using Comiskey Park. That scenario, Green said, would be "the death blow."

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

The moribund postwar Chicago Cubs suffered low attendance and didn't recover their fan base until 1967.

Tribune Company executive vice president John Madigan, minus the hyperbole, said, "…it would be very difficult to remain in Wrigley Field without lights."[27] Anticipating a loss of upwards of $150 million in income if the games moved out of Illinois, the state senate quickly voted to allow up to 18 night games a year at Wrigley Field.[28]

Chicago Mayor Harold Washington, long opposed to night baseball at Wrigley Field, rethought his position as well. First, a new poll showed citywide support for lights.[29] Second, the status quo meant huge economic losses, should the Cubs host postseason games outside the city. Finally, the Cubs were dabbling with the suburbs and the White Sox arguing with the state over their own stalled stadium deal. The loss of even one team would devastate the mayor politically. While Washington had limited control over the White Sox situation, he did have a say in the lights issue.

On November 13, 1987, the mayor, attempting to head off political losses came out in support of lights at Wrigley Field.[30] He had the votes to repeal the four-year-old law. Lights seemed assured. But less than two weeks later, on November 25, a fatal heart attack claimed Mayor Washington.

After some political scrambling, Washington's successor, Eugene Sawyer, pulled together a coalition that finally allowed lights on the North Side. The Cubs played their first official night game at Wrigley Field on August 9, 1988.

Further threats began to chew at Wrigley Field. The neo-classical ballpark era began with Oriole Park at Camden Yards in 1992. The wildly successful retro-looking brick ballpark started a two-decade long succession of new ballpark construction. Each new stadium created revenue streams unheard of just a few years earlier, including banks of skyboxes, seat licenses and wide concourses lined with concessions. These new-era parks were self-contained entertainment venues with batting cages, playgrounds, and in some cases Ferris wheels and swimming pools. Dave Van Dyck of the *Chicago Sun-Times* asked the proverbial question: "Can a baseball park built for $250,000 in 1914 survive the economic reality of the 1990s?"[31]

The answer by 2000 was an emphatic "probably not"; eight of these new parks, in Cleveland, Baltimore, San Francisco, Denver, Atlanta, Houston, Phoenix, and Seattle, outdrew the Cubs even when the North Siders registered their second-highest attendance mark to date. Randy Minkoff, writing in *Crain's Chicago Business*, made the logical conclusion that "Wrigley Field, as we know it, has got to go."[32]

But a funny thing happened on the way to extinction. The Cubs made peace (and profits) with the neighbors and the city, instituting income-sharing with rooftop owners, a bleacher expansion, and high-priced field seats. In addition, the Wrigleyville neighborhood has come full-circle, becoming a destination in its own right for both local residents looking for a good time and tourists wanting a tangible piece of the past.

Yes, Wrigley Field is old. But Wrigley Field is REAL. It's one of only two major-league ballparks where you can watch a game in nearly the same environment as your grandfather did 70 years ago. It's this historical context, the dichotomy of grass and ivy in the city, and the yesteryear neighborhood surrounding the ballpark, that make today's Wrigley Field experience unique. It's something modern-era stadiums from the 1960s can't touch and something the recent neo-classic ballparks can only hope for. By 2010, the Cubs, playing in 96-year-old Wrigley Field, outdrew all eight franchises that only a decade earlier had outsold them.

Having survived the great wave of new parks, Wrigley Field is safe from extinction. Major external threats may not occur until the next cyclical frenzy of ballpark construction, which should come by 2030 at the very latest. In the meantime, its greatest threats will be internal. Is the ballpark structurally sound? Can it bring in enough revenue to support the sport's ever-escalating salaries? And just as important, who will pay to ensure that these things happen?

Between 1950 and 1971, the Cubs replaced Wrigley Field's entire grandstand—every seat, every slab of cement, and much of its supporting steel structure. Even though three fist-sized spallings (fragments) fell from the upper deck flooring in 2004, the grandstand, on average, is only as old as Dodger Stadium and is in no threat of falling.[33] For now, the Cubs need to address the spalling issue should they hope to remove the makeshift netting that has wrapped the upper deck floor since 2004.

In November 2010, Cubs Chairman Tom Ricketts unveiled plans to renovate the ballpark. Beyond the aforementioned structural issues, the changes would increase Wrigley Field's "footprint," enabling the team to extract more revenue from the park and its environs.

For example, the new plans show a "Cubs' Alley" immediately west of the ballpark, filled with shops and restaurants in the style of the popular Yawkey Way outside Fenway Park. The plans also include the long-talked about "Triangle Building" which would house team offices and a parking lot. Other revenue-raising ideas include enlarging the main concourse, opening the park's lower roof with added space for eating and

meeting, and moving the team's clubhouse from its current location under the third-base grandstand to underneath left field![34]

Ricketts sought to utilize a portion of the State of Illinois' ticket amusement tax to float bonds for about half ($200 million) of the renovations. The request seemed logical enough; in the past two decades the amusement tax financed, among other things, the Chicago White Sox's new Comiskey Park, the renovation of Soldier Field, and at least some of the construction of the United Center.[35]

But the state squelched Ricketts' funding request. Illinois today is $13 billion in debt and the state was in no mood to assist a private enterprise with public money, even one that is the state's third-largest tourist attraction.[36] The Cubs will get public support eventually, but not until Illinois rights its financial ship.

For nearly 100 years, Wrigley Field survived a series of threats from organized baseball, new-era ballparks, and warring neighbors. But the ballpark's future is now bright. Its history-laden charm is a major draw and a social and financial asset to the Cubs, the Wrigleyville neighborhood, the city of Chicago, and the state of Illinois.

Unlike those of the 20th century, future threats will be internal and preventable. The Cubs' leadership has signaled its commitment to ensuring the park's physical integrity. They have plans to increase its revenue-enhancing potential. And the neighborhood, the city, and the state all have a stake in seeing it succeed. ■

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The Chicago Cubs and "The Headshrinker"

An Early Foray into Sports Psychology

Christopher D. Green

The 1937 season had been frustrating for the Chicago Cubs. After a slow start, they had climbed their way through the National League standings, taking over first place on June 15. They maintained a lead over the second-place New York Giants for all but one day of the next 10 weeks. By August 3 the Cubs' lead had stretched to a season-high seven games.

Two weeks later, however, true to their snake-bitten history, the Cubs' hopes of a World Series appearance began to crumble. A five-game losing streak starting August 14 reduced their lead over the Giants to just two games. Another bad run in which the club lost nine of twelve between August 25 and September 6 dropped Chicago into second place, three games behind the Giants. The Cubs never recovered and finished the season in exactly that position. The American League champion New York Yankees outscored the Giants in the World Series 21–3 in the first three games and wrapped up the title in five.

Much of the Cubs' frustration with the 1937 finish came from the feeling that they had unfinished business with the Yankees. The Bronx Bombers had swept the Cubs in the 1932 Series (the one in which Babe Ruth is reputed to have "called his shot" off Cubs' starting pitcher Charlie Root). The Cubs didn't return to the Series until 1935, but by then Ruth was gone and the Detroit Tigers won the American League pennant. Detroit went on to edge the Cubs in a six-game Series. The Yankees returned to the Series in 1936 and 1937, but both times the Cubs fell short of the NL crown, which was taken by the Giants. The Cubs needed something extra to push them over the top.

Philip Knight Wrigley had run the Cubs since his father William's death in 1932. The younger Wrigley had earned a reputation for progressive thinking as the head of his family's chewing gum empire, bringing in new technologies and even drawing on scientific research to establish the putatively healthful effects of gum chewing.[1] These apparent interests in science and technology were, of course, as much a part of Wrigley's marketing strategy as they were intended to actually improve the quality of the product.

In addition to cultivating the image of being a progressive business leader, Wrigley was known as a bit of a crank. One year, for instance, he hired an "Evil Eye" to attend games to "put the whammy" on opposing teams. So, when he hatched the idea to bring in a university psychologist to work with the Cubs, no one was sure whether Wrigley's scientific side or his more instinctive "outré" dynamic was actually at work.

After the 1937 season ended, Wrigley contacted Coleman Roberts Griffith, a psychologist working at the University of Illinois. Griffith had been studying the psychological aspects of sport since the late 1910s[2] and had completed his Ph.D. at Illinois in 1920. His doctoral research had been on the vestibular system of the white rat. He had raised the animals entirely on a spinning wheel to see what effect this might have on the development of the organs in the ear responsible for one's sense of balance.

Immediately after he graduated, Illinois hired him as an instructor and soon promoted him to professor. Research on rat balance, however, was not Griffith's first love. As an undergraduate student at Greenville College in southern Illinois, he had played baseball and other varsity sports. During his graduate studies he had also struck up working relationships with Illinois football coach Robert Zuppke (one of many credited with developing the forward pass) and athletic director John Griffith (no relation), who in 1922 was named first Commissioner of the Big Ten collegiate athletic conference, which he would lead for more than two decades.

In 1918, Coleman Griffith started working with athletes, measuring their reaction times to see how they correlated with on-field performance, among other things. In 1921 he gave his first public talk on the psychology of athletics. The next year, the *New York Times* took notice of his work. In 1923 he taught the first U.S. college course on psychology and athletics and, the year after that, started a correspondence with legendary Notre Dame football coach Knute Rockne (and, later, other college coaches) about how they handled their players.

In 1925 Griffith published his first journal article on the mental aspects of athletic competition. That same year, University of Illinois offered him more than

COURTESY OF CHRISTOPHER GREEN

Coleman Griffith

a thousand square feet of research space in a newly built sports complex. There he founded America's first laboratory dedicated specifically to the physiological and psychological study of athletics. Over the next few years, Griffith published two books on the topic (Griffith, 1926, 1928) and eight articles in John Griffith's *Athletic Journal*. In 1932, however, the university's Board of Governors decided to close Griffith's laboratory, ostensibly for budgetary reasons related to the Great Depression.[3] In exchange for his lab, Griffith was given an administrative position heading up the Office for Institutional Research, which collected internal data on matters such as teacher-student ratios.

For the next five years, it looked as though Griffith's pioneering foray into the psychology of athletics was at an end. But unexpectedly, in fall 1937, Wrigley came calling. He asked Griffith to bring his unique expertise to the Cubs. Griffith asked for and received a generous budget (over $1,500, which today is equal to about $20,000) to establish a laboratory specifically for his work with the Cubs. (Of course, this was still far less than a couple of top players would have cost Wrigley.)

Griffith's equipment included a $350 chronoscope to measure reaction times down to the thousandth of a second as well as a setup to record moving pictures at high speed (so that the actions of players could be watched in slow motion).[4] Griffith had learned high-speed film photography back in his days of observing rats growing up on spinning wheels. Griffith also hired an assistant, John E. Sterrett, who had earned a Master's degree in physical education at the University of Iowa.

In March 1938, Griffith and Sterrett headed off with the Cubs to spring training on Santa Catalina Island off the California coast. Griffith issued the first of what would be sixteen short reports to Wrigley in March.[5] Entitled, "The Psychological Point of View," Griffith suggested that everyone, including a baseball manager, is a psychologist because of their need to, as he put it, "handle men." Griffith seems to have gotten along well with the players, but Cubs manager Charlie Grimm, was not in much of a mood to be cajoled by a "headshrinker," as he once termed Griffith.

Grimm had reached the majors as a player in 1916 and had spent the last 12 years of his playing career with the Cubs. He had managed the team since 1932. In short, Grimm had plenty of baseball experience and felt little use for this eggheaded interloper from Urbana.

Just a week into the regular season Sterrett wrote Griffith, then back at school, that Grimm was discouraging the players from cooperating with the psychologists. The Cubs quickly settled into their customary place—second behind the Giants—and were still there by late June.

Griffith ignored Grimm's animosity as well as he could, issuing four more reports during May. They argued (1) that a better regular training regimen would improve the players' performance, (2) that batting practice should be organized around full at-bats to practice how to approach various ball-strike counts, (3) that a newly acquired skill must be practiced at full speed repeatedly in order to be useful, and (4) that a number of "achievement tests" should be constructed to assess players' speed, strength, coordination, accuracy, and "visual judgment." None of these recommendations were implemented.

Despite pushing their way into first place for three days in the first week of June, the Cubs then lost nine of eleven games to drop back into second. On June 24 they fell to third place. A day later, Grimm announced that players heretofore were no longer allowed to watch the films Griffith and Sterrett were making of their play.

That action seems to have provoked Griffith to abandon the detached professional demeanor he had exhibited thus far. On July 1 he issued a highly critical report that denounced the spring training sessions as having been "aimless, disorganized, and unproductive." Only 47.8 minutes per day, he declared, had been spent on practice "effective for the playing of baseball."

The Cubs' situation was, in the meantime, becoming dire. They lost six in a row between July 4 and 12, dropping them into fourth place, 8½ games behind the first-place Giants. In the midst of the slide, on July 10, Griffith filed two more reports, one of which suggested that Grimm did not understand how to instill the "will to win" in his players. Although the Cubs moved into third place with a seven game winning streak in mid-July, Grimm's time at the helm was coming to a close. On July 20, Wrigley replaced him as manager with future Hall-of-Fame catcher Gabby Hartnett. It is unclear what effect, if any, Griffith's reports had on Wrigley's decision to fire Grimm, but there is little doubt that Griffith, for one, was glad to be rid of him.

At first, Hartnett's arrival seemed to signal a new day for Griffith and his research. Hartnett met with him nearly every day to discuss instruction. Sterrett wrote Griffith, "I thought I enjoyed the confidence of the players one hundred percent, but it was only one-tenth of what I am getting now." Griffith issued five more reports in August and September but, despite improved relations superficially, none of Griffith's recommendations was put into action. The Cubs, meanwhile, remained mired in third or fourth place throughout August.

September, however, saw a remarkable turnaround. Back in mid-July, the Pittsburgh Pirates, who hadn't won an NL championship since 1927, had moved past the Giants into first place. Chicago, meanwhile, won six in a row beginning in the first week of September, including two wins over the league-leading Pirates, to claw their way into second past their rivals from New York. Still in second on September 27, but riding a seven-game winning streak, the Cubs hosted the Pirates for the first of a three-game set that would likely decide the pennant.

The Cubs won the first game to pull within a half-game of the Pirates. In the second game, with light fading fast in the bottom of the ninth, player-manager Hartnett hit the famed "Homer in the Gloamin'" to win, pushing the Cubs into first place for the first time since June 7. The next day they won the final game against Pittsburgh as well.

Chicago captured just one of the final series of the season, a four-gamer against the St. Louis Cardinals, and tied another, but this was enough to squeeze out the National League pennant.

The Cubs met the Yankees in the World Series, but their long-awaited revenge was not to be. Chicago was swept in four games, the New Yorkers outscoring them 22–9. On the train coming home, Hartnett is said to have threatened to trade the entire team during the off-season (Hartnett himself had managed only one hit). After viewing Hartnett's leadership at close range over two months, Griffith's opinion of him cooled considerably. In his year-end General Report to Wrigley, he wrote that Hartnett "was not at all a smart man… Not a teacher nor would he have the ability to adapt himself to any other style of training and coaching but that with which he had been familiar throughout his playing career."

Even if Wrigley had been inclined to replace Hartnett during the off-season, the player-manager's heroics in the late-season series against Pittsburgh endeared him to fans. Firing him would have been deeply unpopular.

In spite of it all, Wrigley retained Griffith for another season, though in a reduced capacity. The psychologist submitted reports on the performances of nine individual players in February and March of 1939. Most interestingly, he predicted, incorrectly, that young Phil Cavarretta would not amount to much (he eventually was a three-time All Star and the 1945 NL MVP). Griffith wrote four short reports about the team during 1939, but things did not improve much for him. In a June report Griffith wrote that "as far as the team and its management is [sic] concerned, we have met not only with failure but with a large amount of suspicion and distrust." There was to be no repeat of the team's 1938 turnaround: the Cubs sat in third place for most of the season and finally finished fourth. Griffith continued to blame Hartnett for the team's failure: "The center of the whole problem is Hartnett…. Hartnett is a man who must satisfy his ego at all costs."

Despite the poor showing, and Griffith's judgment, Wrigley retained Hartnett as manager for the 1940 season as well. Griffith wrote only one report during that season. In it, he recommended that Wrigley cut all the players' salaries and make their pay dependent on performance. It seems that Griffith had become just another disgruntled fan.

Griffith's relationship with the Cubs ended after the season. Back at Illinois, he was promoted to Provost in 1944, a position he held until 1953. He retired from his professorial post in 1962 and died in 1966, just as the new discipline of Sport Psychology, of which he is now often regarded as the "father," came into being.

The Cubs fired Hartnett after the 1940 season, and the veteran played his last season, 1941, as a backup catcher for the New York Giants. The Cubs did not return to the World Series until 1945, when, after re-hiring Grimm as manager, they lost to the Tigers four games to three. The Cubs have not, of course, been back to the World Series since.

Although Griffith's experience with the Cubs was not particularly successful, it appears to mark the first time that a professional sports team engaged an academic psychologist on a long-term basis with the purpose of helping to improve the team's performance.

It would be some time until the next chapter. In 1950, the St. Louis Browns hired a hypnotist named David Tracy. The Browns didn't do any better as a result, but Tracy, who was more showman than academic, wrote a book about the experience.[6] With the emergence of sports psychology as an academic discipline in the 1960s, baseball slowly opened up to some of the possibilities. Now, of course, every team has a sports psychologist on staff. ■

Notes

1. Golenbock (1996, p. 266) claimed that Wrigley commissioned Columbia University psychologist Harry Hollingworth to write the book *The Psycho-Dynamics of Chewing* (1939). This is not correct; Wrigley's competitors at Beech-Nut commissioned Hollingworth's monograph. (Thanks to Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr. of Texas A&M University for pointing this out.) Wrigley was happy, nevertheless, to cite this study in his efforts to convince the U.S. Army to include gum as a standard part of its field rations (see Anonymous, 1943, p. 126).
2. A more detailed account of Griffith's life and career can be found in my biographical chapter on him (Green, 2006). Evidentiary archival citations can be found there as well. A more detailed account of his work with the Cubs can be found in (Green, 2003).
3. It has also been suggested that his research program had lost the confidence of coach Zuppke. This is difficult to confirm, but it is interesting to note that an unfinished and unpublished manuscript on psychology and football, co-authored by Griffith and Zuppke, is in the Griffith collection in the University of Illinois archives.
4. Griffith was not the first to use film to record the movements of baseball players. Industrial researcher Frank Gilbreth had filmed baseball players for Brown University and for the New York Giants in the late 1910s, but this was more of a publicity stunt, aimed at promoting his work filming factory workers to improve efficiency, rather than a serious study of athletes (see Belliveau, 2011, pp. 17, 76-78, 143).
5. The short reports, along with a 183-page end-of-season General Report, are located in the University of Illinois Archives. There are also copies at the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library along with a number of reports on individual players. Thanks to Robert T. Chapel of the University of Illinois and Tim Wiles of the Hall of Fame for their kind assistance.
6. See Kornspan & MacCracken (2009). Tracy's 1951 book was titled *Psychologist at Bat*.

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Growing Up with the 1950s Cubs

Ray Schmidt

For a youngster passionately devoted to baseball and living on the north side of Chicago during the 1950s, every summer revolved around the fortunes of the Chicago Cubs and getting to Wrigley Field as often as possible. There, in a ballpark that dominated the immediate neighborhood, we were always swept up by the most colorful and exciting surroundings our young imaginations could handle.

Even though we were neither sophisticated followers of baseball nor willing to easily accept the many Cub losses, we soon learned that the excitement and agonies of pennant races were usually something to be suffered by fans of teams like the Dodgers, Braves, and Giants. For us, dreaming of a possible first-division finish and following the day-to-day affairs of the Cubs were all the rewards we needed from baseball during the years of our youth.

For me it started one day in June 1952 when my dad took the family to Wrigley Field for a game between the Cubs and New York Giants. Emerging from the stairway to the first-base grandstand, I was at once overwhelmed by the colorful scene unfolding before me as the players in their grey or white uniforms warmed up on the greenest grass I had ever seen in my young city life. I had no idea who the various Cubs players were except for Bob Rush, their top pitcher, and big Hank Sauer, on his way to an NL MVP award that season, but Sauer sent everyone home happy when he slugged a home run to pace a 6–2 Cubs win. I was hooked. For the next few seasons it seemed like Sauer was almost always good for a round-tripper when I was there.

In 1954 I had the good fortune to go to the Cubs home opener against the power-hitting Cincinnati Reds. Sauer and "Handsome" Ransom Jackson each slugged a home run, but the Reds finally broke things open with a grand slam by Jim Greengrass for an 11–5 win.

That day was especially historic, although few realized it at the time, as the Cubs started a pair of young African-American players, their first ever, as their keystone combination. Ernie Banks and Gene Baker had been brought up at the tail end of the 1953 season and both were given starting spots for 1954. Banks, batting sixth in the lineup, unimpressively went hitless for the day while also making two errors at shortstop. While keystone partner Baker was not bound for glory, Banks wouldn't be out of the Chicago lineup for nearly two decades.

During the 1955 season the Cubs challenged for a first-division spot all season long and attracted much larger crowds. In late May the Cubs hosted the talented Milwaukee Braves, and in the third inning Banks came to the plate against Lew Burdette with the bases loaded. At this time in his career Banks had a reputation for always taking the first pitch thrown to him, no matter what, standing there like a statue as pitchers merely fired the first one right down the middle for a strike. That's what everyone, including Burdette, expected as the Braves hurler threw a fast ball right down the middle.

This time though, Banks jumped all over the first pitch and rocketed a blast into the left field bleachers for a grand slam—one of five bases-loaded shots he hit that season as my dad, my uncle, and I joined the large Wrigley Field crowd in going crazy. The next time at the plate Banks went right back to his first-pitch statue routine and the Cubs continued on to a 9–6 win.

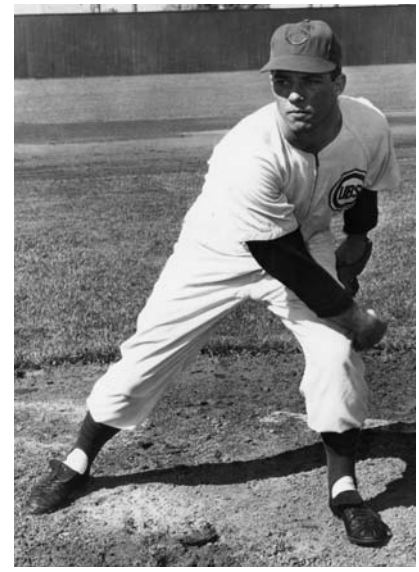
For the 1957 season the Cubs had come up with a pair of impressive young pitchers in fireballer Dick Drott and the pride of Ozanna, Poland, Moe

Hank Sauer did not become a regular in the majors until age 31, but he hit 225 homers between 1948 and 1954 and was voted the NL's MVP in 1952 while patrolling left field for Chicago.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Drabowsky. Early that summer a bunch of us headed to the ballpark for a doubleheader against the Phillies which featured the Drott/Drabowsky duo handling the pitching chores. In the opener Drott fired a three-hitter with eight strikeouts for a 9–0 Cubs win, and then in the second game Drabowsky outlasted Robin Roberts for a 4–3 victory and the sweep, helped along by a pair of home runs from outfielder Walt Moryn.

After the second game, when I attempted to get my first baseball autograph ever from no less than Drott himself, the young pitcher brushed past us and just walked off. This taught me that baseball stars were not necessarily nice guys. Minutes later, though, I did get that first autograph, when journeyman pitcher Dick Littlefield (in his only year with the Cubs in a career that included nine different major league stops) patiently stood and signed for everyone there. I had another hero.



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Dick "The Hummer" Drott was 15–11 as a Cub rookie in 1957, but blew out his arm two years later and was done by age 27.

A short time later we were hanging around inside the ballpark waiting for my mom to pick us up; we were the only ones there except for the grounds crew. As we stood down along the low brick wall that separated us from the field and with nobody else in sight, my friends challenged me to hop the fence and run out on the field.

Well, I was over the short wall in a flash and dashed the short distance to home plate where I turned and gaped at the double-deck grandstand towering over me behind the plate. I can still see this view clearly in my mind. At the time it didn't occur to me to think of all the great legends of baseball that had stood in that same spot…and all too quickly a voice boomed out, "Hey kid, get off the field!" Quickly I dashed back to the seats where my friends greeted me like a conquering hero.

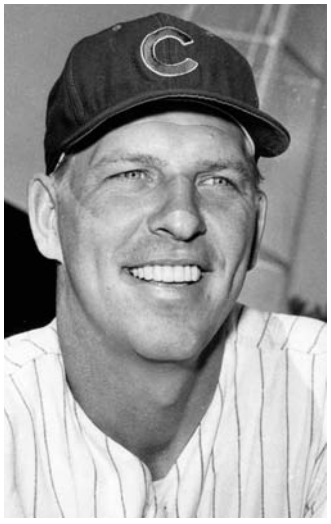
On another day in 1957 a few of us were sitting in the first row of the left-center bleachers next to the fence that screened off the dead center-field seats to provide a backdrop for the hitters. These were the days when it cost a mere sixty cents for a bleacher seat, which were all unreserved. On weekdays at sparsely attended Wrigley Field we had our choice of seat locations. That day Banks crashed a home run that landed in the second row, maybe two feet just inside the screened off area next to us. It might as well have been in another ballpark though, as none of us could reach the precious ball, no matter how hard we tried.

That summer held one more disappointment for us. With a day off in late August, my dad decided to take us to see the great Stan Musial play against the Cubs on a Friday afternoon. My dad never did care for too many of what were then considered the modern-era players, but Musial was a big-time exception that he felt we just had to see in person. That afternoon we sat among the first few rows of the right field bleachers, all set to watch "The Man." It turned out, unfortunately, that Musial was not in the Cardinals lineup that day, and over fifty years later I have no way to adequately describe our disappointment.

Yet our spirits were soon picked up as we found that we were among colorful characters who must have been the models for the famous 1970s play "Bleacher Bums." These folks were gambling on most everything happening in the game and arguing about all things pertaining to baseball as cigar smoke drifted over all of us. (To this day the smell of cigar smoke instantly reminds me of being at a ballgame). Above all, the bleacher fans took plenty of time to taunt Cubs right fielder Walt Moryn.

I had always thought that Moryn was not too bad of a player: no gazelle on defense, but I liked the occasional home runs he unloaded. The cigar-smoking men around me apparently didn't agree with my views, as they continued their razzing. Finally, by about the seventh inning, Moryn had heard enough, and while standing at his position he simply raised one arm in the air and gave the right-field bleachers behind him the universally recognized obscene gesture—heck, even I knew what it meant—which, of course, drew a howl from the bleacher crowd, along with plenty of laughter.

By the 1958 season I was in high school and the summers began to include a lot of other things besides the occasional trips to Wrigley Field. One afternoon a group of us went to watch the Cubs host the newly minted San Francisco Giants, expressly for the purpose



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Walt "Moose" Moryn patrolled left and right field for the Cubs from 1956 through 1960. He was traded to St. Louis in June 1960, just one month after making a catch that saved teammate Don Cardwell's no hitter—against the Cardinals.

of seeing the great Willie Mays. The Giants outfielder had recently signed a contract that paid him an average of about $500 per game, and we all sat there and marveled at how anyone could be paid so much money for playing baseball.

That afternoon Mays showed that he was worth it all, first clubbing a home run into the left field bleachers in the first inning. In the seventh inning Mays leaped up near the top of the center field wall to haul in a towering blast by Cubs catcher Sammy Taylor; at first I thought the drive was going to hit the centerfield scoreboard, a near impossibility. Yet, with Banks and Tony Taylor each hitting a pair of home runs, along with two hits each from former Giants stars Alvin Dark and Bobby Thomson, the Cubs had enough for a 9–5 win.

The 1958 and 1959 seasons both produced excitement around Wrigley Field as the Cubs finished in fifth place both years, narrowly missing the first division both times by a mere four games. Banks was named the National League MVP both years.

A trade livened up the 1960 season, as newly acquired Don Cardwell threw a no-hitter against the Cardinals at Wrigley Field in May in his first Cubs start. But for me 1960 is most remembered for the almost two weeks I spent hanging around Wrigley Field with my younger brother. My parents had gone on vacation and, amazingly, left the two of us with my grandmother, an old Cubs fan who lived three blocks from the ballpark.

Fortunately the Cubs were in town for a long home stand, and nearly every day my brother and I haunted Wrigley Field. The thing that made this financially possible is that after every game we would stay, along with a lot of other kids, and each pick up a bag of trash

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Don Cardwell, a hard thrower with a protracted pitching windup, began his Cubs career with a bang, firing a no-hitter in his first start after a 1960 trade from Philadelphia, but went just 30–44 for Chicago overall.

from the stands or flip up the seats. For this fairly easy work we would receive a free general admission ticket for the next game.

This practice was a link to Cubs history and to my family's past, as my dad had told us about doing the same thing as a kid back in the late 1920s and early 1930s when he saw all the great Cubs teams of that era. What made our stay with my grandmother even better is that we collected a lot of autographs from the players; my brother got signatures from nearly the entire Cubs roster and still treasures his collection to this day.

This long home stand was, in some ways, the end of my childhood. By the summer of 1961 I was off to college, followed by a stint in the Army, and so missed a number of years at Wrigley Field. When I finally returned the club had a new manager, Leo Durocher, and some exciting pennant races were beginning to unfold for the Cubs. But no matter how much I would enjoy those winning times around Wrigley Field, nothing would replace the colorful and exciting memories I have from my days growing up with the Cubs in the 1950s. ■

29 Years and Counting

A Visit with Longtime Cubs Scout Billy Blitzer

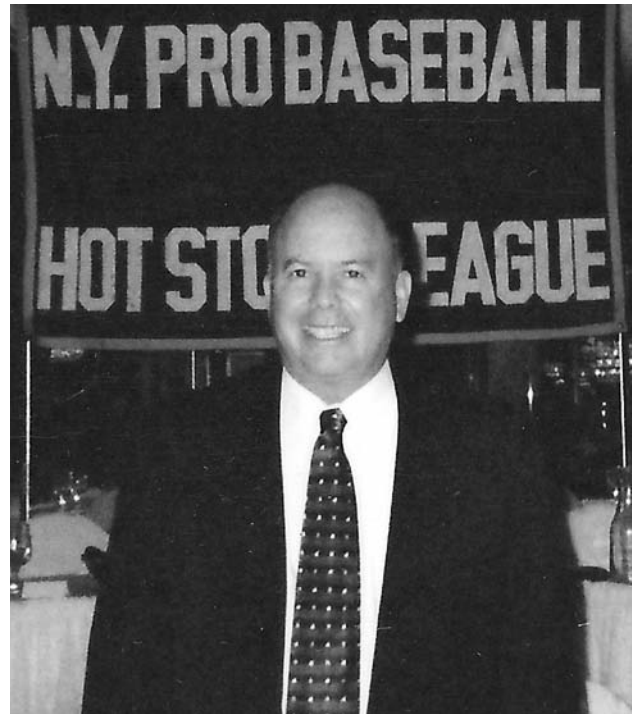
Lee Lowenfish

The 2011 season marks Billy Blitzer's 29th consecutive year scouting for the Cubs, a rarity in these days of rapid turnover when too many owners and team managements are looking for quick fixes and think the development process can be miraculously speeded up. The Reds' Gene Bennett probably holds the modern record for scouting longevity, retiring at the end of 2010 after 58 years with Cincinnati, but the personable Blitzer, who will turn 58 on August 14, is halfway there.

During his time with the Cubs, Blitzer has worked for six general managers (from Dallas Green to the incumbent, Jim Hendry), eight scouting directors, and 11 East Coast scouting supervisors, but he dismisses any profound explanation for his job security. "My father always told me to do my job and work hard at it," says Blitzer, adding that he is usually one of the first scouts to send in his reports to the main office. While he built his reputation scouting the amateur free agent market, in 2011 Blitzer's primary duties have become professional scouting, in which he evaluates other organizations' minor leaguers.

The jewels in Blitzer's scouting resume are shortstop Shawon Dunston, the number one pick in the nation in 1982, and 267-game winner Jamie Moyer, who signed as a sixth-round pick in 1984. "Jamie only threw 85 miles per hour when I saw him in college, and he may be down to 83 now, but he still knows how to pitch," Blitzer asserts. "He may have had the least talent of all the players I've signed, but he has been the most successful." (It wasn't the scout's decision to give up on Moyer after the 1988 season, which allowed all but 28 of Moyer's victories to come in uniforms other than Chicago's.) Moyer will miss 2011 after having "Tommy John" surgery, but hopes to resume his career in 2012 near age 50.

Like all good scouts, Blitzer is proud of the players he has guided into pro baseball, even the ones who did not enjoy stellar big-league careers. Some have stayed in the game as coaches, instructors, and scouts, notably Alex Arias of the Orioles, Derrick May of the Cardinals (son of former major league outfielder Dave May), and Greg Smith of the Rangers. "All three of them were somewhat shy as players and have learned now to be more vocal as coaches," Blitzer notes with a smile, understanding how the challenges of daily life in baseball can widen and deepen personalities.



COURTESY OF LEE LOWENFISH

Longtime scout Billy Blitzer at the New York Pro Scouts dinner in 2005.

Being a part of baseball was a lifelong goal for Blitzer, who grew up in the Brighton Beach neighborhood of Brooklyn and still makes his home near Coney Island. While a senior at Abraham Lincoln High School, one of his sophomore teammates was the future Mets outfielder Lee Mazzilli. "I didn't have to be a scout to see that Lee would be in the big leagues one day," Blitzer recalls.

Billy went on to Manhattan's Hunter College where by his own scouting report he was a "good hit, can't run" outfielder. Yet he grasped the subtleties of the game well enough that while still an undergraduate he was named a staff assistant, making him at the time probably the youngest coach in the country. He continued playing and coaching in Brooklyn, often on the legendary Parade Grounds, a hotbed for budding talent where such future big leaguers as Tommy Davis, Willie Randolph, and Joe Torre once honed their craft.

One summer afternoon in 1975, Ralph DiLullo, a longtime scout for the Cubs who had just gone to work for the Major League Baseball Scouting Bureau, called Blitzer over. Billy thought DiLullo wanted to discuss the merits of highly-touted high school outfielder Dallas Williams, who had just legged out an impressive triple and would become the Baltimore Orioles' first-round pick in next year's amateur free agent draft.

"No, I want to talk about you!" DiLullo said. "I've seen you working with young players and correcting their mistakes. I want your help in setting up a tryout camp."

And so Billy Blitzer's professional career began as a bird dog for the Scouting Bureau. (A bird-dog does not draw a salary but receive some expenses and may get a commission if any of his discoveries make the major leagues.) Working with DiLullo provided a great apprenticeship for Blitzer, who was captivated by the life story of his mentor. DiLullo was born in a small Italian village east of Rome and came to America as a six-year-old after his father, a corporal in the Italian army, was killed in World War I.

The family settled in Paterson, New Jersey, where Ralph fell in love with baseball. Coming of age in an era when the sport was indeed the national pastime and every aspiring athlete dreamed of playing in the major leagues, Ralph was thrilled when the Browns offered him a minor-league contract in 1931. A sturdy, savvy catcher, DiLullo never reached The Show but was hired by Pittsburgh in 1946 as a scout. Two years later, he was managing in the Tigers farm system. During the 1950 season he became future Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Bunning's first minor league manager, and the longtime United States Senator always paid homage to the tutelage he received from his first pro skipper.

From 1953 through 1974, DiLullo served as a valuable Northeast scout for the Cubs. Two of his prize signings were future Hall of Fame relief pitcher Bruce Sutter and hurler Joe Niekro, both of whom DiLullo signed as undrafted free agents for only $500 apiece.

DiLullo cut a distinctive presence at amateur games, Blitzer remembers fondly. Always attired in a shirt and tie and a floppy fisherman's hat, many people called him "Corp," a tribute to his father's military background, but Blitzer called him "The Jet," for the way he rushed out of one ballpark on his way to scout at another. (It is probably no coincidence that The Jet's two sons became aviators.)

Another of Blitzer's early mentors was Herb Stein of the Minnesota Twins, who established his reputation by signing future Hall of Famer Rod Carew in 1964, future Cy Young award-winner Frank Viola, and 1991 World Series hero Gene Larkin. Stein spent his whole career with one organization, having been signed by the Twins' lineal descendant, the Washington Senators, off the New York sandlots. World War II service in Europe denied Stein his chance of reaching the majors, but after the war, the infielder resumed his career as a player-manager in the Senators' minor-league system and then started scouting, remaining with the franchise when it moved west in 1961.

Like DiLullo, Stein ensured that Blitzer became well-versed in the nuts and bolts of the scouting profession, evaluating unsentimentally the talent at hand. He stressed the importance of assessing mechanics, breaking down a pitcher's arm and body motion, and a hitter's approach to the ball.

Even more importantly, Blitzer learned from Stein an appreciation of the intangibles in evaluating a prospect. Does he carry himself with confidence not cockiness? Does he approach practice seriously? (Like many veteran scouts, Blitzer laments the decline of pre-game infield drills, which can reveal the condition of a player's arm and his readiness to play.) How does he react to failure in a game that is based on failure? Stein taught Blitzer to watch carefully how a pitcher behaves when he has been hit hard. "You don't want him to get too domestic out there," the older scout warned.

From Stein, Blitzer also picked up the necessity of optimism as a credo for his craft. "The day a player signs a pro contract, he is automatically a better player because the monkey is off his back," the Twins legend liked to say, and Blitzer imbibed the message.

Herb Stein was a founder of the New York Professional Scouts Hot Stove League, an organization of scouts and coaches that celebrated its 46th annual dinner in January 2011. Several years ago, Stein—who passed away in December 2010 at age 93—handed Blitzer the baton of organizing the dinner. At the latest dinner, 6' 8" Dellin Betances, the promising Yankees minor-league right-hander, received the first annual Herb Stein "Star of the Future" Award.

Scouts often disagree passionately about whether a pitcher can be too tall to master the mechanics of his craft. In an irony that Blitzer enjoys (and Stein would have too), Betances's parents are actually of "ordinary" size.

After bird-dogging for the Scouting Bureau for seven years, Blitzer was offered a position as a Cubs full-time Northeast area scout in fall 1982. Before he could accept the job, Blitzer realized that his mother would have to be convinced that the job offered the kind of security she wanted for her son.

Gary Nickels, one of many scouts who migrated from Philadelphia to Chicago when Dallas Green, the 1980 field manager of the Phillies' world champions, took over as Cubs general manager, proved a good salesman. He was about Billy's age, not far removed from college himself, a graduate of Illinois-Normal in Bloomington, and pleasant and straightforward. He had once appeared in a State Farm insurance commercial.

Nickels assured Lillian Blitzer that scouting would provide her son a decent livelihood, an opportunity to travel the country meeting interesting people, and a challenge and privilege of helping young athletes to choose a career in baseball. Mrs. Blitzer knew how much her son enjoyed scouting and how he wouldn't be happy at a desk wearing a shirt and tie. It didn't take too long for Nickels, who later signed Northwestern University's Joe Girardi for the Cubs and now scouts for the Dodgers, to seal the deal.

Technically, the credit for signing Shawon Dunston belongs to Nickels and his superior Gordon Goldsberry, because Blitzer did not begin his Cubs career until fall 1982. Yet Blitzer for years had alerted the baseball scouting community about the extraordinary talents of the Brooklyn youngster who Chicago eventually drafted first in the country in June 1982. (The Mets selected Dwight Gooden fifth in the first round that year.)

Blitzer had known Dunston since he was 12 years old and playing for the charitable organization Youth Service League teams on the Parade Grounds. "Shawon's coach told us we have to see this kid play," Blitzer remembers about the day he and YSL coach Mel Zitter first glimpsed the athletic youth with the rifle arm. Dunston was indeed as good as advertised.

Zitter—who later prodded Manny Ramirez to success on YSL teams and has scouted for Tampa Bay and other big league teams—and Blitzer quickly took Shawon under their collective wing. They made him batboy for the older Youth Service teams and watched him develop into an outstanding prospect, helping him with tips on fielding, hitting, and running "always straight through the bag at first base."

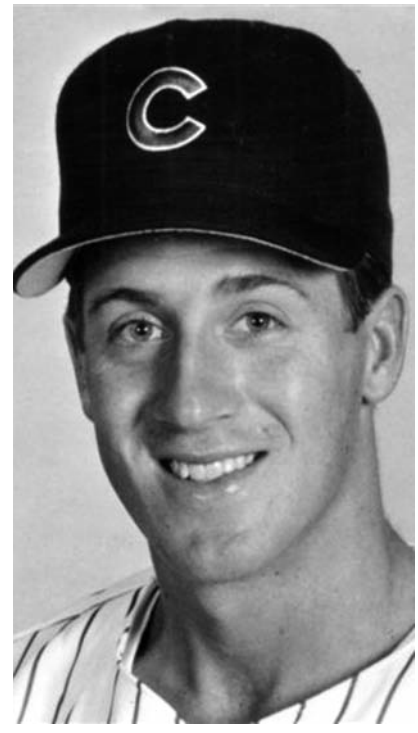
Oddly, during Dunston's senior year at Brooklyn's Thomas Jefferson High School, he was not playing shortstop but rather third base; his coach thought the team possessed a better shortstop. Blitzer feared that this eccentric fellow might also be tempted to use Dunston on the mound due to his strong arm. Sure enough, one night Shawon came home from a game with a sore arm after pitching in relief. He had never pitched before.

In a compelling example of the genuinely paternal care that good scouts display for gifted talent, Blitzer rushed to the Dunston home to tell Shawon's father in no uncertain terms that if ever again his son was told to pitch, he should refuse and leave the team. The father complied, and when draft day came on June 6, 1982, a rested and ready Shawon Dunston—fresh off a senior year in which he'd batted .790 was picked first in the nation. He went on to enjoy a 14-year career, the first 11 with the Cubs, and now lives in Fremont, California not far from the San Francisco Bay area after having made (according to Baseball-Reference.com) nearly $25 million in his career.

To some baseball analysts Dunston's career numbers might look disappointing considering he was a #1 pick. He collected 1,597 hits, 150 homers, and 668 RBI and batted .269 with just a .296 OBP and a .416 SA (actually impressive for a shortstop). He had a quite unfavorable walk-strikeout ratio of 203:1,000.

But don't tell that to Billy Blitzer. He remains very proud of a neighborhood kid who fulfilled his dream of making the major leagues and even starring there for a time.

A few years ago Blitzer tried to make the same point in person to another of his signees, third baseman Gary Scott, who was being honored by his Philadelphia alma mater Villanova University for his stellar college career. After an MVP season for the Cubs affiliate in the Carolina League and sensational spring training, Scott opened the 1991 season as the



The Cubs chose Gary Scott—scouted by Billy Blitzer—in the second round of the 1989 draft. Desperate for Scott to plug their hole at third base, the Cubs promoted the youngster too quickly and he couldn't hold the job.

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Cubs starting third baseman. Hailed as "the next Ron Santo," he fizzled and lost his position after only 79 at-bats. He was out of major-league baseball before the end of 1992 with a career average of .160 in only 175 at-bats.

Scott, who has since gone on to a very successful business career, saw Blitzer at the Villanova ceremony and averted his eyes. When the scout came over to greet him, Scott said, "I'm sorry I disappointed you."

"Never think like that," Billy replied. "You made the major leagues and that's a great achievement."

Blitzer recently experienced a far happier moment on a Philadelphia campus. After the 2009 season Jamie Moyer's alma mater, St. Joseph's University, honored him with a Doctorate for Public Service. The award was a tribute to the admirable charitable work of the Jamie Moyer Foundation, which among its other projects has established a bereavement center for young people who have lost parents and other loved ones.

Without telling Moyer, Blitzer drove down to attend the ceremony and bask—privately—in the accomplishment of his most successful protégé. As he settled into the audience, Blitzer was flooded with warm memories of the pitcher. How he haggled over his first contract in the kitchen of Moyer's parents, Jamie wanting $15,000 to sign, Billy offering $10,000. Tempers got a little frayed until Mrs. Moyer, who ran a bakery, brought out some milk and cookies and ultimately the two sides compromised at $12,000.

Blitzer also thought back to the day when he saw Moyer, gone from the Cubs and not yet established in the big leagues, struggling on a national TV game, showing little command and getting hit hard. And how he phoned him after the game and scolded him as only one professional could do to another in the spirit of constructive criticism.

"You're not the pitcher I signed!" Billy exclaimed. "Your motion, your mechanics, they're all out of whack!"

Moyer listened and continued to work at his craft, and after intermittent success in Boston and Baltimore, it all came together for him in Seattle at age 34. And he got on a roll that may lead him to the Hall of Fame when it's all over.

Billy was reliving these vivid memories as he settled into the festive crowd at St. Joseph's when suddenly he heard an animated female voice.

"Jamie, look who's here! It's Billy!" Karen Phelps Moyer, daughter of basketball maven Digger Phelps and Jamie's collaborator in all his charitable work, was calling out to her husband.

"What are you doing out there?" Jamie asked. "Come down here and sit with the family."

There are some moments in a baseball scout's life that all the money and long-term contracts cannot buy.

Blitzer experienced one that afternoon at St. Joseph's and he expects another one some time in the future when the Cubs finally break their World Series drought. Nobody knows, of course, when that time will come, but Blitzer is confident as only a scout trained in realistic optimism can be. In the meantime he traverses the country nearly every month of the year, meeting new people, reconnecting with old friends, and enjoying his job of looking for future talent. He says simply, "The day I get bored, I leave." ■

Why a Curse Need not Be Invoked to Explain the Cubs' Woes

Joe Gray

The most striking facet of the Chicago Cubs' long-term underachievement has been the team's lack of World Series success. In early 1909, following the Cubs' back-to-back triumphs of 1907 and 1908, it would have been unthinkable to all but the most pessimistic of fans that 102 years would elapse without a single additional grand prize. After stripping the strike-shortened 1994 season, which featured no World Series, from this run of disappointment, a 101-season sequence remains with no championship for the North Siders.[1] During this stretch of 101 deflations, the team has fallen at the final hurdle seven times.[2] The last of these World Series defeats occurred back in 1945: a 4–3 reverse, at the hands of the Detroit Tigers, represents the only Cubs' post-1908 championship loss in which the series went the distance.[3]

But just how improbable is the Cubs' run of failure in the Fall Classic? This brief article has three aims: first, to present numbers that help to put the 101-year drought into context; second, to explore the extent to which league expansion may have hurt the Cubs; and third, to highlight some important over-riding considerations in addressing problems of this nature.

To simplify the calculations for the purposes of concentrating on the salient points, it is assumed in the first half of this article that all teams have an equal chance of winning the World Series at the beginning of each season. The more realistic scenario—of teams having gradated probabilities of success that fluctuate from season to season—is discussed in the second half of the piece.

HOW NOT TO ANSWER THE QUESTION

A relatively easy, but incorrect, method of quantifying the probability of a run of failure like the Cubs' would be to calculate the chance that a given team would fail to win the World Series in 101 straight attempts. In order to do this, it would be necessary to multiply together 101 numbers, each one representing the probability of failure in a particular year.[4] Based on the changing league structure that the Cubs have played in since 1909, the chance of a 101-year string of World Series failures calculated by this method is 0.0046, or just over 1 in 220.[5] If this number gave us a true indication of the probability of the Cubs' run, even an ardent skeptic might consider believing in a curse.

So why is this way of estimating the probability incorrect? The problem with the method is that we have specified the team and the years in question *after* the event. Our calculations must take into account the possibility of *any* team failing to win a championship in at least 101 straight attempts, beginning in *any* season between 1903 (the first year of the Fall Classic) and 1909. This is because, in the context of the probability calculations, there is nothing special about the Chicago Cubs or the year 1909.[6] Had this run of failure been experienced by the Detroit Tigers, the Pittsburgh Pirates, or any other current franchise in existence in the first decade of the 20th Century, I would still be writing this article. And had the drought started in 1906, say, I could have been writing about a 101-year run back in early 2008.

WHAT A BETTER APPROACH LOOKS LIKE

If the method of devising the probability described in the previous section could be adjusted in order to account for *multiple* possible teams and drought-beginning years, the long-hand calculations would become extremely cumbersome. Thus, a computer model was developed for the purpose of this article.[7] The model was used to "re-run history" 100,000 times and track the number of iterations in which one or more of the 16 franchises in existence since the first decade of the 20th Century had a run of at least 101 World Series failures starting in 1903, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, or 1909 (no World Series was contested in 1904).

Among the simulations carried out, 8.7% featured one or more teams with a run at least as bad as that of the real-life Chicago Cubs. So instead of just over 1 in 220, as calculated by the erroneous method first described, the probability of a "Chicago Cubs," up to the end of the 2010 season, is a little over 1 in 12. Thus, the persistent failure of the North Siders represents an improbable happening, but not an implausible one.

The simulations took into account actual expansions in team numbers over the history of the World Series. Since more teams now contend for the championship at the start of a season, it is less likely that

any given one can emerge victorious. It is possible to quantify the effect that MLB's expansions have had on the chances of seeing a sequence of sustained failure like that of Wrigley Field's residents by re-running history with a modified pattern of league size.

Among 100,000 simulations run with no league expansion at all, only 3.0% had one or more teams with a sequence of failures running at least 101 seasons. Thus, the growth in team numbers that has taken place in the Major Leagues appears to have made it approximately three times as likely that there would be a "Chicago Cubs."

FLUCTUATING AND GRADATED SUCCESS PROBABILITIES AMONG TEAMS

As noted at the start of this brief article, the values calculated above are based on the assumption that all teams had an equal chance of winning the World Series at the start of each season. In order to get a more accurate estimate than the ballpark figure of 8.7% of the improbability of what has unfolded with the Cubs, it would be necessary to build in realistic fluctuations in season-by-season success probabilities across teams. This would include, but not be limited to, periods of relative weakness for expansion teams in their early years and periods of relative strength for one or more "dynasty teams."

In order to properly incorporate the fluctuations at a season-by-season level, a highly sophisticated model is needed, not least because the probability of success each year is related not only to the probability of success in preceding seasons but also to the actual outcome for each team.[8] ("Success breeds success," in more concise but hackneyed wording.[9]) Building such a model would be excessive for the humble purposes of this article, but it is worthwhile to at least test the effect of basic fluctuation patterns and simple periods of sustained weakness and strength.

Dynasty teams. It can be assumed that dynasty teams—most famously, the New York Yankees—are not simply a quirk of random fluctuations, particularly given the relationship between magnitude of financial backing and probability of success. It is thus meaningful to explore the effect of incorporating dynasty effects into the model. One way to do this is to build multipliers, or "Dynasty Factors," into the success probabilities. For example, Dynasty Factors of 4.0/3.0/2.0 would mean that the best team has four times the success probability of non-dynasty teams, the second-best team has three times the success probability, and the third-best team has double that probability.[10] In the simplest case, with these example Dynasty Factors of 4.0/3.0/2.0 in effect for the duration of the simulation (i.e. all 106 seasons), the chance of seeing a Cubs-like run grows to 24.3%. Softening the Dynasty Factors to 2.5/2.0/1.5 changes this value to 14.5%. Restoring the Dynasty Factors of 4.0/3.0/2.0 but dividing history into three eras—so that the first three dynasty teams are different from the second trio of dynasty teams, and all six are different from the third trio—yields a value of 15.7%.[11] Finally, having three-era Dynasty Factors of 2.5/2.0/1.5 gives an output of 10.9%.

Sustained relative weakness of expansion teams. Another variation to the model worth testing is building in a phase of gradual improvement, up to the level of an average team, for expansion franchises. With a 15-year period for expansion teams to reach the success probability of a typical established franchise, the chance of seeing a run like that of the Cubs works out as 7.0%, which is less than basic model's output of 8.7%. This makes sense, because the only teams in the reckoning for a 101-year drought are the original 16 franchises, and they all benefit by the reductions in the expansion teams' success probabilities.

Of course, in the one iteration of baseball history that has actually played out—namely, real life—some expansion teams have performed notably well inside the early years of the franchise. The New York Mets won in 1969, year eight, while the Florida Marlins claimed two championships in their first 11 seasons. We cannot be certain whether this is a quirk of history or whether there exists some underlying reason why we should expect this type of phenomenon. If it is the latter, then it that could be incorporated into the model as an alternative to the adjustment described above.

Natural cycles of strength and weakness. Overlaid on any long-term patterns of dynasty-team strength or expansion-team weakness will be the shorter-term cycles of ups and downs experienced by every team. These are a consequence of many factors, including the pulses in farm-system quality that result from the periodic strategy of trading away young talent to gain rapid enhancement of the Major League roster. Setting up the teams in the model with staggered, eight-year cycles of waxing and waning in which there is a 50% increase in success probability—relative to an average team—at the peak of the cycle, and a 50% reduction at the trough of the cycle, yields a chance of seeing a run like that of the Cubs of 8.6%, just fractionally less than the output of the basic model.[12] Making the eight-year cycles more extreme by having peak-year

adjustments of +100% and trough-year adjustments of –100% brings the value down to 8.1%.

The balance of these effects. Of the various adjustments described in this section, dynasty effects have the greatest potential to modify the output of the model. Therefore, if strong, sustained dynasties are an almost inevitable feature of baseball history, it could well be that the value of 8.7% is something of an underestimate, and that the North Siders' drought is even *less* of an anomaly.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Once it is realized that the Chicago Cubs are not a special team, and—to a lesser extent—that 1909 is not a special year, it can be seen that what might at first be considered an *implausible* happening is merely *improbable*. I do not know whether this is any consolation for long-suffering Cubs fans, but it might at least offer some reassurance that a curse is not the only possible explanation.[13] ■

Sources

Baseball-Reference.com

Notes

1. At the point that the 1994 season was brought to an abrupt halt, the Cubs were propping up the National League's newly formed five-team Central Division with a 49–64 record and no realistic hope of a postseason berth.
2. I was disappointed to learn that "101 damnations" had already been used as a pun, including by the *Chicago Tribune* in late 2009 (thus counting the 1994 season), and so I settled on some wordplay that was weaker but at least original.
3. The Cubs had forced Game Seven in dramatic fashion: the winning run in Game Six was plated on a two-out double from Stan Hack in the bottom of the 12th.
4. For each year, this would be calculated as: (number of teams – 1) / number of teams.
5. Sixteen teams had a shot at the World Series each year between 1909 and 1960, 18 in 1961, 20 between 1962 and 1968, 24 between 1969 and 1976, 26 between 1977 and 1992, and 28 in 1993 and between 1995 and 1997. Thirty franchises have competed since 1998.
6. This thinking could be extended with the argument that nothing is "special" about baseball and that the calculations should take into account other major sports with a history of crowning teams as champions over a period of at least 101 seasons; this article, however, is comfortably rooted in the context of one sport—baseball—and it is thus seems reasonable to restrict the calculations in this way.
7. The software used for the model was Microsoft Excel.
8. A Markov chain model could be constructed that incorporated these factors in a simulation, but the parameters that guided the fluctuations would need to be carefully researched to ensure that the results were reflective of what we might expect to see in reality.
9. The reverse-standings draft order counters this to a certain degree, and further complicates matters.
10. In this example, for a 16-team league, the probabilities of winning the championship are approximately 18.2% for the strongest team, 13.6% for the second-strongest team, 9.1% for the third-strongest team, and 4.5% for all other teams.
11. In the scenario, the first and last eras were 35 seasons in length and the middle era was 36 seasons.
12. For a team beginning the cycle at the peak, the adjustments to success probability—relative to that of an average team—are as follows: in year 1, +50%; year 2, +25%, year 3, no adjustment; year 4, -25%; year 5, -50%; year 6, -25%; year 7, no adjustment; year 8, +25%.
13. The author does not believe in curses.

Now I Can Die in Peace

Bill Nowlin

You the living, you're stuck here with the Cubs, So it's me that feels sorry for you!
—Steve Goodman, from "A Dying Cub Fan's Last Request" (1983)

It's getting on 30 years since Steve Goodman wrote those words. Steve died on September 20, 1984, less than two weeks before the Cubs won the first two games of that year's League Championship Series.

All they needed was one more win to have another shot at a World Championship. They didn't get it. Not even a shot. Starting with 1984, the Cubs have appeared six times in the postseason. But something always blocks them, and it probably isn't a Billy Goat Curse. 102 years and counting. Name the sport: Not one other professional team in North America can claim a longer drought.

Any Red Sox fan with a few years under their cap identified with Cubs fans. Even if they couldn't name a single player in the NL Central, Red Sox fans knew in their hearts that the Cubs were "their" National League team. Until 2004.

Back then, Red Sox fans always dreamed of a World Series between Boston and the Cubs, but realized that a battle of the underdogs would suffer one sad ending. One of the teams would have to lose.

Things changed in 2004. And more so in 2007. Now there are Red Sox fans in their first year of college who were 11 when Boston won its first World Championship since 1918. Sure, they'd waited all their lives for the Bosox to win it all. But now the waiting is a part of their childhood, maybe only a dim memory. The dying Cubs fan implored, "Play that lonesome losers tune, that's the one I like the best." Red Sox fans today no longer see their team as the lovable losers of the AL, the Davids fighting against the twin Goliaths of the Yankees and a Curse. Those of us Red Sox fans who lived through decades of losing know that in winning, we've lost something, too.

For almost my whole life, certainly in 1972 (that last-day loss) and 1975 (The Series), but particularly after 1986, 1988, and 1990, and then 1995, we Sox fans (I'm talking Boston here, not the South Siders of the Second City) frequently asked each other: "What would it be like if the Red Sox won it all? Would we lose something special, something that defined us as Red Sox fans?"

I did worry about it…but not so much that I wanted the Red Sox to lose! My response was always, "I believe in the scientific method. Let's see it put to the test and we'll find out what it feels like." What could be fairer than that? Give us a chance to test the hypothesis.

Not only did the Red Sox win their first crown in 86 years (when they had prevailed over the Cubs, as it happens, way back in 1918), but the way they won it also made the victory taste all the sweeter. Sweeping the Cardinals in four was nice; those with long memories or a good sense of history knew there

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Ron Santo spent almost his entire professional life trying to help the Chicago Cubs win a World Series. Here he is in 1971 forcing Montreal's Rusty Staub at third base.

was some payback there for 1946 and 1967, but beating the Yankees—four straight after being down three games to none—was just delicious.

As so many of us wrote at the time, a Hollywood writer who'd submitted that script would have had it sent back by every studio in town.

It did feel good. In fact, it felt great. And so much of the country was happy for Red Sox fans to finally have the chance to savor a win. Then we did it again (here, of course, I identify as baseball fans do with the teams they support) in 2007. And they've been in contention since 2003, when two enhanced Game Seven home runs by an admitted Yankees steroids user and a manager who ignored the explicit instructions he'd been given before the game regarding Pedro's pitch count did them in.

Then close as can be in 2008. Close but no cigar in 2009. Stocked up now for 2011…it's pretty close to a golden age.

Unfortunately, some Red Sox fans aren't wearing the laurels gracefully.

It really doesn't come as a surprise to learn that a good portion of the country now sees "Red Sox Nation" as the second-most insufferable set of fans.

(It goes without saying who ranks first.) And Boston can't really plead poverty. A Yankees/Red Sox game has become more like Goliath against Goliath, Jr. A lot of baseball fans have become weary of all the hype around The Rivalry.

But Cubs fans have their own rivalries…with the Mets, with the White Sox, but foremost with the Cardinals. The hated birds from the southwest have been in the World Series nine times (and won five of them) since Chicago's last appearance in 1945.

There are parallels to the Cubs/Cardinals and Red Sox/Yankees struggles…for one, both the Cubs and Red Sox gave their rivals franchise players for essentially nothing, players who helped those rivals win World Series. Babe Ruth for a sack of money stacks up very well against Brock for Broglio, doesn't it?

For another parallel, The Cubs and Bosox both play in gritty urban parks while the Yankees and Cardinals now toil in shiny new stadia. And clearly, should the Cubs ever win the World Series, portions of their fandom would become as obnoxious as those in Boston are accused of being.

So, Cubs fans, it's not all milk and honey on the other side. We Red Sox fans really have lost something. Life just ain't what it used to be. It's better in some ways, of course. Now we can die in peace. But it's not going too far to say there truly is something that's been lost. Poignant, you know, and all that.

You don't have to feel too sorry for us, though. Some year that the Red Sox don't reach the World Series, I'm pretty sure plenty of longtime Boston fans hope the Cubs do, and that they have that trophy rest in Wrigleyville. ■

Modeling Perfect Games and No-Hitters in Baseball

Rebecca Sichel, Uri Carl, and Bruce Bukiet

Through Major League Baseball's first 134 years, 1876–2009, some of its most interesting and uncommon events have been the 260 no-hitters (18 of which have been perfect games[1,2]). In 2010, pitchers threw six no-hitters, two of which (and almost a third) were perfect. In this paper, we investigate whether simple mathematical models can explain the frequency of perfect games and no-hitters over the years. We also investigate whether the pitchers who actually pitched the perfect games were those who "should have been expected" to do so.

PERFECT GAMES

From 1876 through 2009, pitchers threw 18 perfect games. Each was achieved by a different pitcher and only once before 2010 (way back in 1880) did two perfect games occur in the same year (see Table 1). Of these perfect games, 17 came during the regular season. In this paper, we only consider regular-season events.

SIMPLEST MODEL

Possibly the simplest approach to modeling the occurrence of perfect games is to treat all seasons, all pitchers, and all batters alike. Given this seemingly unrealistic assumption, one may ask, how many perfect games *should* have been pitched?

Over the first 134 years of Major League Baseball history, the overall on-base percentage (OBP) has been approximately 0.3279,[3] meaning that in about ⅓ of plate appearances, the batter reached base. Yet, in order to pitch a perfect game, a starting pitcher must retire the 27 consecutive hitters he faces. The probability of pitching an out is (1-OBP), and so the probability of pitching a perfect game is $(1\text{-OBP})^{27}$.

In general, therefore, the number of perfect games to be expected according to this analysis is:

$$\text{Perfect games} = 2 * \text{Number of games} * (1 - \text{OBP})^{27} \quad (1)$$

The reason for the "2" is that either team in a game may pitch a perfect game. 195,177 regular season games were played from 1876–2009, so the number of perfect games to be expected from 1876–2009 is $195{,}177 * 2 * (1\text{-}.3279)^{27} = 8.55$, just half of the 17 observed.

One can approach this matter in the opposite way and compute the OBP needed in order to obtain the result of 17 perfect games. Solving equation (1) for OBP, we have

$$OB = 1 - \left(\frac{\text{Perfect Games}}{2 * \text{Number of games}} \right)^{1/27}$$

This leads to a 0.3106 OBP. From the perspective of the OBP, a difference of 0.0173 (that is, .3279 - .3106), or about 5% of OBP value, can account for the difference between the observed number of perfect games (17) and the number expected from this simple model (8.55). This demonstrates the sensitivity of the expected number of perfect games to variations in OBP. We present in Graph 1 the relationship between OBP and the expected number of perfect games. As OBP increases, more batters get on base and the likelihood of a perfect game shrinks.

We note that OBP has ranged from a low of 0.267 in 1880 to a high of 0.379 in 1894. If these values persisted through the 134 years studied, the expected

Table 1. Perfect Games in Major League Baseball History

Year	Pitcher	Year	Pitcher	Year	Pitcher
1880	Lee Richmond	1965	Sandy Koufax	1998	David Wells
	John Ward	1968	Catfish Hunter	1999	David Cone
1904	Cy Young	1981	Len Barker	2004	Randy Johnson
1908	Addie Joss	1984	Mike Witt	2009	Mark Buehrle
1922	Charlie Robertson	1988	Tom Browning	2010	Roy Halladay
1956	Don Larsen *	1991	Dennis Martinez	2010	Dallas Braden
1964	Jim Bunning	1994	Kenny Rogers		

*Don Larsen's perfect game was in the post-season. Our computations use regular- season data only.

number of perfect games would have been 89 and one respectively. The year-by-year game-weighted standard deviation of OBP is 0.0150, so a one standard-deviation range for OBP gives a range of 0.3129 to 0.3429 (that is, .3279 ± 0.0150. This results in the expected number of perfect games to range from 4.6 to 15.5, which comes close to but does not reach the observed number of 17 perfect games. This further demonstrates the sensitivity of expected perfect games to small changes in OBP. It also indicates that while this simple model is not very satisfying, it is not entirely incompatible with the observed number of perfect games.

YEAR-BY-YEAR MODEL

The results of the simple model led us to consider a revised model in which the same approach is used but in which each year is considered separately. Clearly, not all years in baseball have been alike, as indicated above by the range of observed OBP values over the years. If we consider each year separately, with its own OBP, how would the expected number of perfect games change?

Applying equation (1) to each year individually and taking into account the number of regular season games played, we computed the expected number of perfect games for each year. After summing these games, we found that the expected number of perfect games in 1876–2009 was 10.6. The year with the lowest expected number of perfect games was 1894, with 0.004 expected perfect games; the number of games played (799) was small and the OBP (0.379) high.

The greatest number of perfect games (0.451) was expected in 1884, when the OBP was a low .279 and the number of games played a high 1,544, the fourth highest number of games in a season prior to 1960. That 10.6 perfect games were expected by this model rather than the actual 17 indicates that an improved approach is needed in order to obtain a more realistic result. Even more troubling is that the standard OBP omits reaching base on error (ROE), which actually counts toward an out in the at-bat term, lowering the OBP, and a single player reaching base on an error foils an otherwise perfect game. At least five near-perfect games, broken up by merely a single error, have occurred in baseball history.[4]

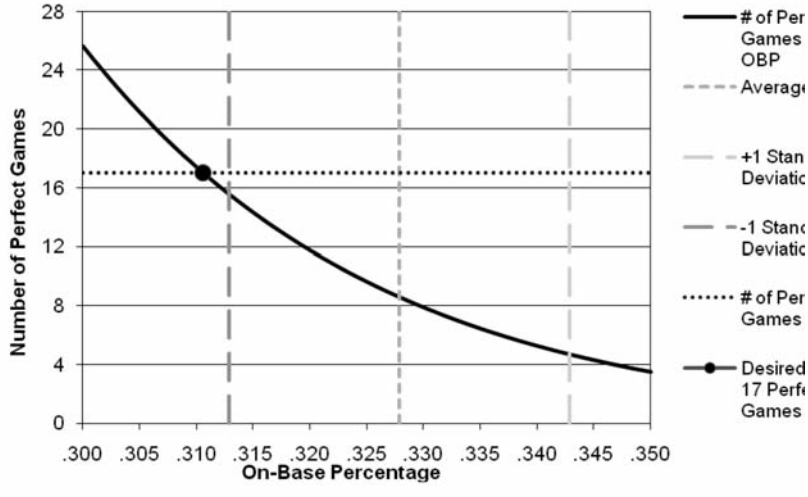
INCORPORATING BATTERS REACHING BASE ON ERRORS

Complete data for batters reaching base on an error is only available for 40 of the years from 1960 to the present.[5] The total number of errors each year for all years from 1876 to the present, however, can easily be located. Interestingly, for the 40 years of complete data, the ratio of batters reaching base on an error to the total number of errors is almost constant, averaging 63.4% with a standard deviation of 1.1%. Thus, we can reasonably take 63.4% of the total number of errors throughout baseball history, or year-by-year, for those years for which there is incomplete or no ROE data, as an estimate for the number of batters reaching base on an error. The OBP adjusted to incorporate reaching base on an error thus becomes:

$$OB_{ROE} = \frac{H+BB+HBP+ROE}{AB+BB+HBP+SF}$$

Note that the plate appearances by those batters reaching base on an error have already been included in the denominator (as outs) in AB. Performing the same analysis as done for the Simplest Model (OBP_{ROE} = 0.3490 with standard deviation 0.0165) leads to the expected number of perfect games from 1876 through 2009 of 3.6; a one-standard-deviation range yields 1.8 to 7.1 expected perfect games. These results are presented in Graph 2, where it is clear that the one

Graph 1. Sensitivity of Perfect Games to On-Base Percentage

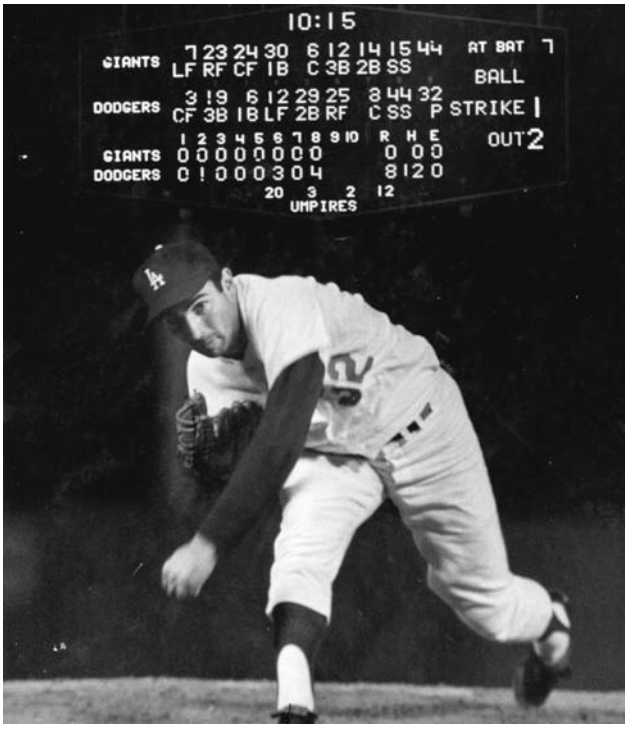


standard deviation range of OBP_{ROE} comes nowhere near including the true number of perfect games. Applying the OBP_{ROE} to the year-by-year model leads to the marginally more realistic expectation of 4.3 perfect games from 1876–2009. We see, however, that adjusting OBP to incorporate ROE exacerbates the error and further highlights the need for a more careful look at the occurrence of perfect games.

PITCHER-BY-PITCHER MODEL

For the previous models, all batters and pitchers were presumed to have equal ability throughout baseball history (in the simplest model) or for each year individually (in the year-by-year model). This leads to the expectation of less than one-third of the actual number of perfect games when ROE is taken into account. Because the equal ability assumption is unrealistic, we explored a more sophisticated model. Since the course of a game, and surely of a no-hitter, would seem to depend more on a pitcher's performance than on that of any single hitter (see, for example, Frohlich's paper on no-hitters), as a next step, we considered a model in which pitchers have different abilities. Specifically, we considered the performance of each individual pitcher. How often does a particular pitcher generate outs? Will this variation in pitching ability lead to results more in line with those that have occurred in baseball history?

To answer these questions, we compiled the data (the OBP_{ROE}) for every pitcher in each year of his career (i.e. if a pitcher pitched ten years, he has ten separate data sets).[8] Since ROE data for each pitcher is not available, we assumed that each pitcher was subject to the same probability of a batter reaching base on an error as all other pitchers in each particular year.



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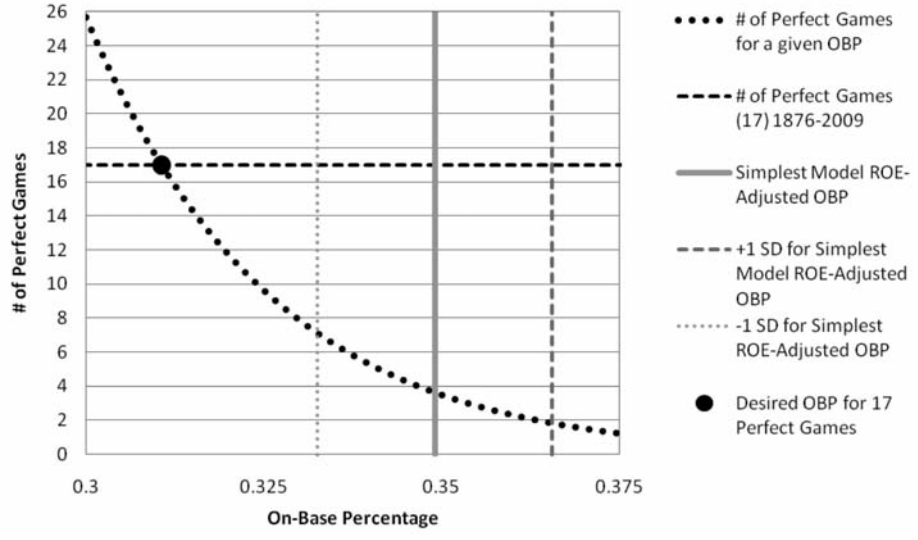
Sandy Koufax pitched no-hitters in four consecutive seasons (1962–66). This is Koufax hurling #2 against the visiting Giants on May 11, 1963. He is throwing the final pitch of the game, with which he induced Harvey Kuenn to ground out, Koufax to first baseman Ron Fairly.

That value is the difference between the year-by-year OBP with and without including ROE, which we denote by **ROE_diff**. For early years of baseball, when on average about ten errors per game were committed, this value is as high as 0.097, meaning that approximately 10% of all batters reached base on an error. For recent years, the value is about 0.01, meaning about

Graph 2. Simplest Model for Perfect Games Adjusted for Reaching Base on Errors



1% of all batters reach base on an error. Naturally, this results in a large handicap for pitchers in baseball's early years with respect to ease of pitching a perfect game. For a pitcher, the probability of getting a batter out becomes (see Appendix for the derivation):

$$P(\text{Out}) \approx \frac{\text{Outs}}{(1+\text{ROE\_diff})(\text{BB}+\text{HBP}+\text{H}+\text{Outs})}$$

We then considered how many games each pitcher started each year (since a pitcher cannot pitch a perfect game if he does not start). We further considered only pitchers who pitched at least 54 outs in a season to eliminate cases of very low data (We note that relaxing this condition to the minimum 27 outs needed to pitch a perfect game leads to a difference of less than half a perfect game over the 134 years considered). The probability of the pitcher pitching a perfect game is, as before, the probability of an out raised to the 27th power, $P(\text{Out})^{27}$.

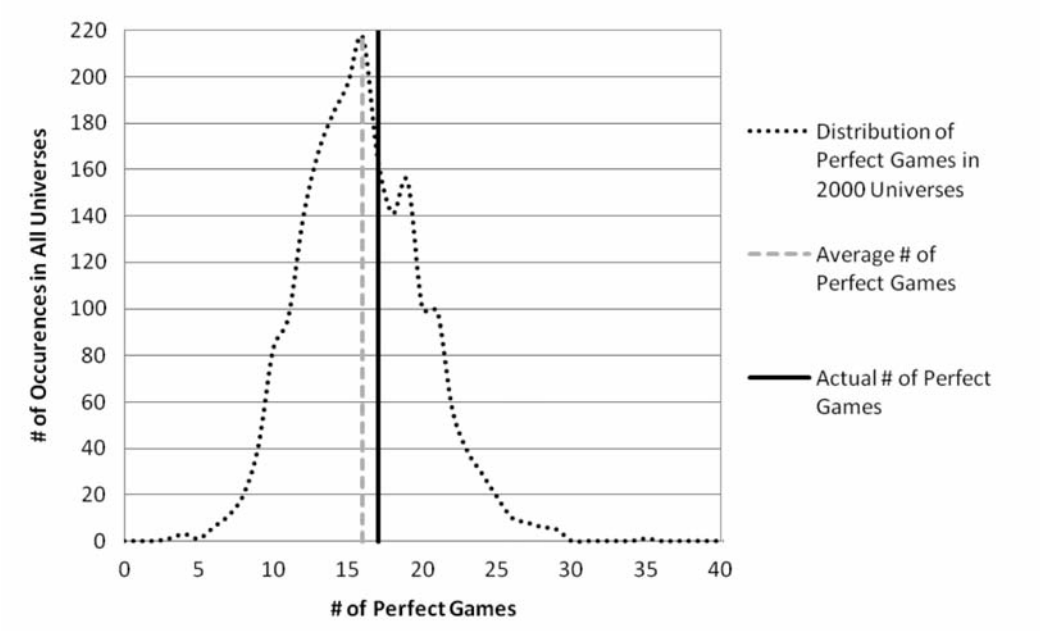
We then used a computer to simulate whether a given game would be "perfect" by using a random number generator that would mark off a perfect game when the (uniformly distributed on [0,1]) random value was less than $P(\text{Out})^{27}$. This was done for each game started by each pitcher in each year—more than 39,000 cases in all.[9] This simulation method is very similar to that which was used by Arbesman and Strogatz in their study of Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak.[10] One such computation yields a baseball "universe," a simulation of baseball history from 1876–2009 using pitcher OBP values from these years' games. We ran the simulation for 2,000 universes and analyzed the output for the average number of perfect games and their distribution. In addition, we compiled results for which pitchers should have been most likely to pitch perfect games.

In our universes, the estimated number of perfect games ranged from 3 to 35 over the 134 years, with the average being 15.9 (see Graph 3) with a standard deviation of 4.1, meaning the true value of 17 falls well within one standard deviation of the computed value.

Of course, one can include more aspects of the game of baseball, such as variation in hitting ability among the different teams' lineups or variation in hitting ability within a *single* lineup. In his study of no-hitters, Frohlich[6] discussed this hitting variation issue and found the effect to be small. We have excluded some other baseball events such as strikeouts, double and triple plays, and reaching base on interference from our paper. These events and others may be difficult to include in the modeling, may be problematic to obtain reliable data for, occur rarely, or are unlikely to have a major influence on the results.

As a check on the reasonability of the computations, we looked at how the pitchers who actually pitched perfect games fared in the simulations as well as at the pitchers who most often pitched perfect games in these simulations. We ranked the pitchers in order of number of perfect games "pitched" by each pitcher in the 2,000 universes and investigated where the actual 17 perfect game pitchers placed. Eight of the 17 were in the top 1% (in the top 84 of the over 8,300 pitchers who have pitched in the Major Leagues) in our ranking, while six others were in the top 5%

Graph 3. Results of Perfect-Game Simulation



(85th–420th), one more in the top 10%, and the other two in the top 25%. These results appear in Table 2.

The top 10 pitchers with the greatest number of perfect games in the simulations are presented in Table 3. All are well known among baseball fans, although just one of them (Sandy Koufax) actually pitched a perfect game. One of the others (Walter Johnson) pitched a "near-perfect game."[4]

We note that only about 2,700 of the more than 8,300 pitchers in baseball history ever pitched a perfect game in the simulation of 2,000 baseball universes. The others either lacked the needed skill level or never started a game. The standard deviation for the results listed in Table 3 is about 16 games.

NO-HITTERS

All perfect games are no-hitters, but no-hitters are more common than perfect games since they are not broken up by a walk, hit-by-pitch, or error. Still, pitching a no-hitter is quite an achievement. In a perfect game, the only probabilities involved are of getting on base and of an out. In contrast, in modeling no-hitters, one must also deal with the probabilities of a walk, a hit-by-pitch and reaching base on an error. There were 250 single-pitcher no-hitters during the 1876–2009 regular seasons.

Frolich[6] approached the more general question of how often any given number of hits should be obtained in a baseball game. He considered hits and outs, while ignoring all other events, and developed a negative binomial formula for the distribution of the number of hits that can be expected in a game given the overall probability of a hit each year he studied. He then built on that model, first varying the average pitchers' abilities and then varying the average batters' abilities. He found good agreement with predicting the number of three-hit games through ten-hit games for the five-year period from 1989 to 1993. His results outside of this range of hits, however, were less satisfactory. His model predicted only about two-thirds the actual number of no-hitters for the 1900–93 period.

Our efforts are focused on obtaining improved results in modeling no-hitters. We modeled mathematically the number of no-hitters in 1876–2009 and then compared our result to the true value.

SIMPLEST NO-HITTER MODEL

We revised our computer model to recreate our universes of baseball history by incorporating three types of events that can occur in a baseball game: (1) hits; (2) walks, hit-by-pitches and reaching base on an error; and (3) outs. To investigate the no-hitter issue, we needed to go through lineups one batter at a time through each game (where all batters are assumed to have equal ability). A random number was chosen uniformly distributed on [0,1] to determine whether a batter was out, got a hit, or reached base by a walk,

Table 2. Placement of Actual Perfect Game Pitchers in Simulation (and total number of perfect games pitched by each in 2000 universes)

Percentile in simulated number of perfect games	Perfect Game Pitchers in that percentile
99th or better	Sandy Koufax (165), Cy Young (147), Catfish Hunter (140), Randy Johnson (140), Addie Joss (102), Jim Bunning (97), Dennis Martinez (79), and David Wells (61)
95th-99th	Tom Browning (44), David Cone (42), Mark Buehrle (27), Kenny Rogers (27), John Ward (24), and Mike Witt (24)
90th-94th	Len Barker (9)
75th-89th	Lee Richmond (7) and Charlie Robertson (2)

Table 3. Top 10 Pitchers in Ranking of Perfect Games Obtained

Player	Total Number of Perfect Games obtained in the 2,000 universes
Greg Maddux	234
Walter Johnson	221
Juan Marichal	187
Don Sutton	186
Christy Mathewson	185
Pedro Martinez	182
Tom Seaver	180
Grover Cleveland Alexander	168
Sandy Koufax	165
Curt Schilling	150

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Interestingly, despite 355 career wins and four times leading his league in lowest ratio of base runners to innings pitched, Greg Maddux never pitched a no-hitter in the majors.

hit-by-pitch or reaching on an error. If a hit was obtained prior to 27 outs being recorded, the game failed to be a no-hitter. On the other hand, if 27 outs were recorded without any hits being obtained, the game was deemed to be a no-hitter. This was repeated to simulate 2,000 universes with 195,177 games in each.

First, as we did for modeling perfect games, we used the probabilities of outs, hits, and BB + HBP + ROE (as described earlier) for the 134 years from 1876 through 2009. The probability of an out was 0.6510; the probability of a hit was 0.2374; and the probability of a BB, HBP, or ROE was 0.1116. This initial simulation projected an unsatisfactory 123 no-hitters in an average universe with a standard deviation of 14.5 no-hitters. (The target number of no-hitters was 250).

YEAR-BY-YEAR NO-HITTER MODEL

We ran the simulation again, but now we computed t he probabilities of outs, hits, and BB + HBP + ROE separately for each season. The probabilities were input into the program along with the number of games taking place each year. Once again we simulated 2,000 baseball universes. These results were slightly better but still unsatisfactory. This simulation produced 135.4 no-hitters on average with a standard deviation of 14.8. This indicated, as with our perfect game analysis, that we might be better off repeating our pitcher-by-pitcher approach.

PITCHER-BY-PITCHER NO-HITTER MODEL

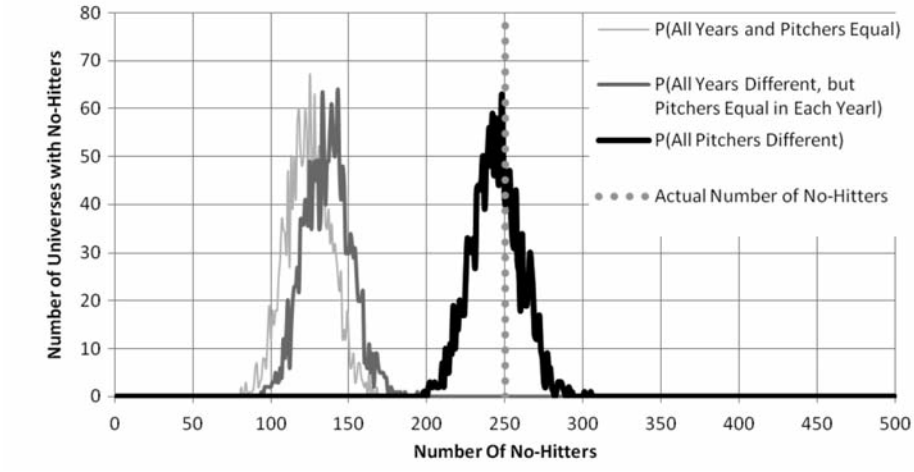
We revised our pitcher-by-pitcher approach for perfect-game modeling to investigate no-hitters in the same manner as we did using the Simplest No-Hitter and Year-by-Year No-Hitter models; that is, we considered the case of getting on base without a hit in addition to the case of hits and the case of outs. We looked at the probabilities of the various occurrences for each pitcher who started a game for each year and proceeded as described in the above "Perfect Game" section. Once again we only considered pitchers who started at least one game and pitched at least 54 outs in that season. The results were striking. In the 2,000 universes we ran, we found an average of 243 no-hitters, off by less than 4% from the 250 single pitcher no-hitters that actually occurred in 1876–2009. The standard deviation was 15.7 no-hitters. Thus, this last model, which uses individual pitcher data, once again provides a vast improvement over the previous models. Results of the simulations of the three methods for investigating no-hitters are presented in Graph 4.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Modeling rare events is prone to significant relative error whether one is modeling extreme behavior in financial markets or rare weather events. The same is true in modeling rare occurrences in baseball. Our analysis and simulations demonstrate that using multi-year combined data leads to inaccurate predictions for the occurrence of rare events (such as perfect games and no-hitters). Using year-by-year data improved the results a bit, while including pitcher-by-pitcher data in each year of his career greatly improved the results for both the perfect game and the no-hitter studies. This indicates that those who have pitched no-hitters and perfect games had, in general, far superior pitching ability than the average pitcher in baseball history.

In order to perform the computations, we needed to adjust for the incomplete data available concerning batters reaching base via error. Despite the lack of data in the early years of Major League Baseball, the results obtained are quite realistic. Since we performed the analysis during the 2010 season, we only included

Graph 4. Results of No-Hitter Computer Simulation



complete seasons. With the plethora of perfect games (and one perfect game broken up by a poor call by an umpire) and no-hitters in 2010, it appears that 2010 was a special season of the sort that ought not to come along very often, at least for perfect games and no-hitters. While a pitcher's ability to throw a perfect game is surely enhanced by the much lower rate of errors in the modern game, we might consider ourselves fortunate to have witnessed such a special season.

One might ask whether the teams defeated in the perfect games had less offensive ability than the league average and whether this aspect should influence the number of perfect games. It turns out that in the 17 regular-season perfect games, the defeated team had a better standard OBP than the league average seven times and a worse OBP ten times. On average, the standard OBP of the defeated team was 0.0046 less than the league average. Details are presented in Table 4. We conclude from this, just as Frohlich[6] did in the no-hitter case, that the variation in batter ability has a small effect on perfect games.

Table 1 indicates a 42-year gap between the regular-season perfect game pitched by Charlie Robertson in 1922 and the one pitched by Jim Bunning in 1964. This made us wonder whether a similar large gap phenomenon occurs in the simulations. We looked at the longest gap in each of our 2,000 universe perfect game pitcher-by-pitcher simulations. Our longest gap between perfect games averaged 24.1 years with a standard deviation of 12.4 years, with the minimum longest gap being three years and the maximum longest gap being 86 years in our 2,000 universes.

We have demonstrated in this paper how one can apply mathematical methods to model even rare aspects of baseball. We hope that this work will lead to further mathematical investigations into questions concerning America's greatest game. ■

Notes

1. "No-Hitter – BR Bullpen." *Baseball-Reference.com - Major League Baseball Statistics and History*. Web. June-July 2010. www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/No_hitter.
2. "Perfect Game." *Baseball-Reference.com - Major League Baseball Statistics and History*. Web. June-July 2010. www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Perfect_game.
3. The standard definition of OBP is (H + BB + HBP)/(AB + BB + HBP + SF). Reaching base on an error is not used in this definition. For a listing of abbreviations used in this paper, please see the Appendix.
4. We thank an anonymous referee for suggesting incorporating ROE in our analysis.
5. Ruiz, William. "Near-Perfect Games." *The Baseball Research Journal* 20 (1991): 46-51. Print.
6. Retrosheet ML batting and pitching splits for each year. This is for the 1996 season, http://www.retrosheet.org/boxesetc/1996/YS_1996.htm
7. Frohlich, Cliff. "Baseball: Pitching No-Hitters." Chance 7 (1994): 24–30. Print.
8. *Sean Lahman's Baseball Archive*. Web. June-July 2010. www.baseball1.com.
9. For example, since Roger Clemens pitched 23 years, 23 of the 39,000+ cases are the years pitched by Clemens.
10. Arbesman, S., and S.H. Strogatz. "A Monte Carlo Approach to Joe DiMaggio and Streaks in Baseball." arXiv:0807.5082v2. 1 August 2008.

Table 4. Opponent OBP vs. League OBP

Year	Perfect Game Pitchers	Opponent	Opponent OBP	League OBP	Better or Worse
1880	Lee Richmond	Cleveland Blues	0.261	0.267	Worse
	John Ward	Buffalo Bisons	0.249	0.267	Worse
1904	Cy Young	Philadelphia Athletics	0.298	0.295	Better
1908	Addie Joss	Chicago White Sox	0.298	0.294	Better
1922	Charlie Robertson	Detroit Tigers	0.373	0.348	Better
1964	Jim Bunning	New York Mets	0.296	0.311	Worse
1965	Sandy Koufax	Chicago Cubs	0.307	0.311	Worse
1968	Catfish Hunter	Minnesota Twins	0.299	0.297	Better
1981	Len Barker	Toronto Blue Jays	0.286	0.321	Worse
1984	Mike Witt	Texas Rangers	0.313	0.326	Worse
1988	Tom Browning	Los Angeles Dodgers	0.305	0.310	Worse
1991	Dennis Martinez	Los Angeles Dodgers	0.326	0.317	Better
1994	Kenny Rogers	California Angels	0.334	0.345	Worse
1998	David Wells	Minnesota Twins	0.328	0.340	Worse
1999	David Cone	Montreal Expos	0.323	0.342	Worse
2004	Randy Johnson	Atlanta Braves	0.343	0.333	Better
2009	Mark Buehrle	Tampa Bay Rays	0.343	0.336	Better

Appendix

The following abbreviations have been used in this paper.

AB – At-Bats
BB – Bases on Balls
BF – Batters Faced
H – Hits
HBP – Hit by Pitches
OBP – On-Base Percentage
ROE – Reached Base on Error
SF – Sacrifice Fly

Derivation of the Probability of Out, Hit, and Reaching Base without a Hit for Individual Pitchers from Available Data

We first consider computing a true on base percentage, i.e., batters reaching base (without causing an out) divided by total batters faced. We consider this to be the definition of OBP in this analysis.

$$OB_{ROE} = \frac{BB+HBP+H+ROE}{BF} \tag{A1}$$

Especially in baseball's early years, however, the number of batters faced by each pitcher is not easily found. Thus, we consider the approximation

$$\text{Batters Faced} \approx BB+HBP+H+ROE+Outs \tag{A2}$$

We also do not know the value of ROE for individual pitchers. However, we have from the text:

$$ROE\_diff = \frac{ROE}{BB+HBP+AB+SF} \tag{A3}$$

Since SF is not usually available for pitchers we use

$H+Outs \approx AB+SF$, so

$$ROE\_diff = \frac{ROE}{BB+HBP+H+Out} \quad \text{or } ROE \approx ROE\_diff\ (BB+HBP+H+Out) \tag{A4}$$

From (A1) and (A2), we have

$$OBP_{ROE} \approx \frac{BB+HBP+H+ROE}{BB+HBP+H+ROE+Outs} \tag{A5}$$

Substituting for ROE from (A4) gives

$$OBP_{ROE} \approx \frac{BB+HBP+H+ROE\_diff\ (BB+HBP+H+Outs)}{BB+HBP+H+ROE\_diff\ (BB+HBP+H+Outs)+Outs} \tag{A6}$$

After a little algebra, we obtain

$$P(Out) = 1 - OBP_{ROE} \approx \frac{Outs}{(1+ROE\_diff)\ (BB+HBP+H+Outs)},$$

$$P(Hit) \approx \frac{H}{(1+ROE\_diff)\ (BB+HBP+H+Outs)} \quad \text{and } P(BB+HBP+ROE) \approx 1-(P(Hit)+P(Out)$$

The Authorized Correction of Errors in Runs Scored in the Official Records (1920–44) for Detroit Tigers Players

Herm Krabbenhoft

The run is the most fundamental and the most important statistic in baseball.Regrettably, clerical (e.g., transcription) errors have been made in the process of crediting the runs scored by the individual players in MLB's official records.[1,2]

For example, according to the 1961 official American League records, New York Yankees Mickey Mantle and Bill Skowron scored 132 runs and 76 runs respectively. More than three decades later, however, tabulation errors in the records were discovered for the second game of the September 10 doubleheader between the New York Yankees and the Cleveland Indians. The official records indicated that Mantle scored two runs and that Skowron scored no runs in that game. In actuality, Mantle and Skowron each scored once in the game.[3] Therefore, for the entire season, Mantle actually scored 131 runs and Skowron actually scored 77. The requisite changes/corrections were subsequently made to the official records.

The consequences of correcting errors in the official Day-By-Day (DBD) records can be extremely significant. For example, correcting the Mantle-Skowron runs-scored mistake resulted in Mickey Mantle no longer being a co-leader in runs scored for the AL in 1961. Thus, before the error was corrected, it appeared that Mantle and Roger Maris tied for the AL (and major league) lead, each player having been officially credited with 132 runs. Following the correction, Maris was officially the sole leader in runs scored.[4]

As can be clearly seen from the runs-scored errors for Mantle and Skowron, it is essential when carrying out research that relies on the actual numerical information provided in the official DBD records that the investigator first independently verify the accuracy of the statistics critical to his/her research objectives—i.e. identify and correct any errors in the official DBD records.

An area of particular interest to me concerns ascertaining the longest Consecutive Games Runs Scored (CGRUNS) streaks achieved by Detroit Tigers players. To properly conduct the research in order to accomplish my objective, it is mandatory to have accurate runs-scored information on a game-by-game basis for each Tigers player.

In this article I present results from my comprehensive investigation of the accuracy of the official baseball records for runs scored by Detroit Tigers players. As mentioned in a previous article, my research plan consisted of first dividing the hundred-plus years of Tigers history into manageable time periods: 1945–present, which I term Phase One; 1920–1944, which I call Phase Two; and 1901–1919, which I refer to as Phase Three. The results from Phase One were provided in a previous report.[5] This article presents the findings for Phase Two.[6]

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Here are the specifics of my modus operandi in obtaining reliable runs-scored information.

1. Record the runs scored by each Detroit player in each Tigers game according to the box scores published in *The New York Times*.
2. Generate DBD runs-scored lists from the runs-scored information extracted from the box scores in *The New York Times* for each Tigers player.
3. Compare the newspaper box score-generated DBD information with the official DBD information to identify runs-scored discrepancies.
4. Resolve the runs-scored discrepancies by examining the game accounts in three Detroit newspapers (*The Detroit News*, the *Detroit Free Press*, and the *Detroit Times*) and at least one newspaper from the city of the Tigers' opponent, thereby ascertaining the exact batter-by-batter details for each run the Tigers scored.
5. For the runs-scored discrepancies where the official DBD records are wrong, provide the supporting documentation to the Elias Sports Bureau (the official statisticians of Major League Baseball) for their review and approval.

With regard to assembling the supporting documentation needed to achieve the appropriate corrections of the runs-scored errors in the official DBD records, I adhered strictly to the guidance specified by Elias:

"We employ a standard of proof that lies somewhere between two of the standards common to judicial matters in this country: that is, somewhere be-

tween proof that is clear and convincing and proof that is beyond reasonable doubt."[7]

It is important to point out that, as discussed in my Phase One article, "If there is a run-scored error in both the newspaper boxscore and the official DBD record, the procedure I followed would not catch the error."[5]

RESULTS

Table 1 presents in chronological order the 57 runs-scored errors I discovered for the 1920–44 Detroit Tigers players. Thirty-seven players, including four subsequently elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame, had runs-scored errors.

For each error I discovered, I also determined unequivocally the corrections, which I submitted to the Elias Sports Bureau. After careful review of the supporting documentation I provided to them, Elias sanctioned each of the changes/corrections proposed in Table 1.[8]

Inspection of the information provided in Table 1 reveals that for 22 of 35 games with runs-scored errors, two players were involved—one player under-

Table 1. Runs-Scored Errors and Corrections for Detroit Tigers Players in Individual Games (1920–44)

Date (G)	Player	Incorrect Runs (official DBD)	Correct Runs	Player	Incorrect Runs (official DBD)	Correct Runs
1920/5/19				Babe Pinelli	1	0
1920/6/12	Eddie Ainsmith	0	1	Babe Pinelli	1	0
1920/7/26	Sammy Hale	0	1			
1920/9/18	Ty Cobb	1	2			
1923/4/18	Del Pratt	0	1	Fred Haney	1	0
1924/5/24	Heinie Manush	0	1			
1924/8/02	Topper Rigney	0	1			
1924/8/14	Bob Jones	0	1	Ty Cobb	1	0
1925/5/08	Lu Blue	0	1			
1925/8/04	Heinie Manush	0	1			
1927/5/13	Al Wingo	0	1	Bob Fothergill	1	0
1927/8/03 (2)	Bob Fothergill	0	1	Heinie Manush	2	1
1928/4/30	Jack Warner	0	1	Charlie Gehringer	1	0
1928/5/30 (1)	Bill Sweeney	0	1	Marty McManus	2	1
1929/6/07				Bob Fothergill	2	1
1930/4/17	Billy Rogell	0	1			
1930/8/02	Roy Johnson	2	3			
1931/6/19	John Stone	1	2			
1931/7/11 (2)	Marty McManus	0	1	Ray Hayworth	1	0
1932/5/26	Gee Walker	2	3	Roy Johnson	3	2
1932/8/19 (2)	Tommy Bridges	0	1			
1933/7/14	Charlie Gehringer	1	2	John Stone	3	2
1934/5/27	Marv Owen	1	2	Schoolboy Rowe	1	0
1934/6/08	Billy Rogell	1	2	Pete Fox	2	1
1934/8/04	Pete Fox	1	2			
1934/9/14	Charlie Gehringer	1	2	Pete Fox	2	1
1935/8/28	Roxie Lawson	0	1	Hank Greenberg	1	0
1935/9/18	Billy Rogell	0	1	Schoolboy Rowe	1	0
1937/5/24	Gil English	0	1	Billy Rogell	1	0
1939/6/02	Dixie Walker	1	2	Hank Greenberg	2	1
1940/6/01	Buck Newsom	1	2	Billy Sullivan	3	2
1943/5/01	Pinky Higgins	0	1	Paul Richards	1	0
1943/5/16 (2)	Joe Wood	0	1	Dixie Parsons	1	0
1943/6/19	Paul Richards	0	1	Joe Wood	1	0
1944/5/21 (1)	Eddie Mayo	0	2	Joe Hoover	2	0

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Billy Rogell, a fine defensive shortstop, was never a star, but he kicked in enough offense to help the Tigers win the AL title in 1934 and the World Series in 1935.

credited with runs scored and another player over-credited. For example, the official DBD records for the April 18, 1923 game show Del Pratt with no runs scored, when he actually scored one run, and Fred Haney with one run scored, when in actuality he did not score.

In 13 of the 35 games with runs-scored errors, only one player was involved. This means that for each of those 13 games the sum of the runs scored by the Tigers players participating in the game *did not equal the runs scored by the Tigers team*. For 11 of those 13 games the official DBD records did not credit the player with all the runs he actually scored. For example, in the September 18, 1920 game, the official DBD records credit Ty Cobb with scoring one run. The Georgia Peach actually scored two runs in that game, in which the Tigers scored four runs. The uncorrected official DBD records show one run each for Claire, Cobb, and Veach and no runs for any of other Tigers player.

For two of those 13 games, the official DBD records credited the player with one more run than he actually tallied. On June 7, 1929, Bob Fothergill was credited with scoring twice when he actually scored only one of the team's 17 runs scored.

The authorized corrections of these runs-scored errors in the individual games also have consequences in both the single-season and career records of the players. The next two sections deal with these consequences.

CONSEQUENCES–SINGLE SEASON

Table 2 presents the consequences of applying the single-game corrections (Table 1) to the final runs-scored totals for the specific seasons for each of the players, listed alphabetically. As can be seen, most are one-run corrections; some are zero-run corrections (Fothergill in 1927, Paul Richards in 1943, and Joe Wood in 1943) as a result of compensating errors (i.e., plus one run in one game and minus one run in another game); some are two-run corrections (Joe Hoover in 1944, Eddie Mayo in 1944, and Babe Pinelli in 1920).

Some players had more than one season of runs-scored errors; Cobb, Fothergill, Greenberg, Roy Johnson, Marty McManus, Schoolboy Rowe, and John Stone each had runs-scored errors in two separate seasons. Charlie Gehringer and Heine Manush had runs-scored errors in three different seasons. Billy Rogell had runs-scored errors in four individual seasons.

All but three of the Table 2 players were full-season Detroit Tigers (Gil English in 1937, Roy Johnson in 1932, and Marty McManus in 1931). For these three, the single-season runs shown in Table 2 are for their time with *only the Detroit Tigers*.

A check of the various baseball record books and encyclopedias shows that only one Table 2 player led the league in runs scored: Charlie Gehringer in 1934. With the correction of Gehringer's 1934 runs-scored error, his AL-leading runs-scored total is now 135 (not 134), increasing his margin over runner-up Bill Werber (who tallied 129 runs, according to official DBD records). It is also noted that Gehringer led the Tigers team in two other seasons in which there were run-scored errors in his official DBD records (1928 and 1933). In each instance, his corrected runs-scored totals still topped the Tigers team.[9] Similarly, in 1924, Ty Cobb's corrected runs-scored total was a team-leading 114 (not 115).

CONSEQUENCES – CAREER

Table 3 presents career runs-scored information for the 37 players for whom I discovered 1920–44 runs scored errors. For most of the Table 3 players, accurate runs-scored totals *during their Tigers careers* are presented. For those Table 3 players who also played with the Tigers after 1944 (Tommy Bridges, Hank Greenberg, Joe Hoover, Eddie Mayo, and Paul Richards), their accurate post-1944 runs-scored information (from Phase One of my research) is included.[5]

For those players whose Tigers tenures included seasons *before* 1920 (Eddie Ainsmith, Ty Cobb, and Bob Jones), however, their Tigers runs-scored totals may not be accurate; it all depends on the correctness of the pre-1920 runs-scored information in their official DBD records. Accordingly, the values shown in Table 3 for their "Tigers Career Runs" are bracketed with question marks. Their accurate Tigers career runs-scored values will be ascertained during Phase Three (1901–20) of my research.

Table 2. Single-Season Runs-Scored Consequences for Detroit Tigers Players (1920–44)

Player	Year	Correction	Single-Season Runs-Scored Consequence
Eddie Ainsmith	1920	+ 1	20 runs (not 19)
Lu Blue	1925	+ 1	92 runs (not 91)
Tommy Bridges	1932	+ 1	6 runs (not 5)
Ty Cobb	1920	+ 1	87 runs (not 86)
Ty Cobb	1924	- 1	114 runs (not 115)
Gil English	1937	+ 1	7 runs (not 6) with the Tigers; see text
Bob Fothergill	1927	0	93 runs (unchanged, but compensating errors)
Bob Fothergill	1929	- 1	41 runs (not 42)
Pete Fox	1934	- 1	100 runs (not 101)
Charlie Gehringer	1928	- 1	107 runs (not 108)
Charlie Gehringer	1933	+ 1	104 runs (not 103)
Charlie Gehringer	1934	+ 1	135 runs (not 134)
Hank Greenberg	1935	- 1	120 runs (not 121)
Hank Greenberg	1939	- 1	111 runs (not 112)
Sammy Hale	1920	+ 1	14 runs (not 13)
Fred Haney	1923	- 1	84 runs (not 85)
Ray Hayworth	1931	- 1	27 runs (not 28)
Pinky Higgins	1943	+ 1	63 runs (not 62)
Joe Hoover	1944	- 2	65 runs (not 67)
Roy Johnson	1930	+ 1	85 runs (not 84)
Roy Johnson	1932	- 1	32 runs (not 33) with the Tigers; see text
Bob Jones	1924	+ 1	53 runs (not 52)
Roxie Lawson	1935	+ 1	2 runs (not 1)
Heinie Manush	1924	+ 1	84 runs (not 83)
Heinie Manush	1925	+ 1	47 runs (not 46)
Heinie Manush	1927	- 1	101 runs (not 102)
Eddie Mayo	1944	+ 2	78 runs (not 76)
Marty McManus	1928	- 1	77 runs (not 78)
Marty McManus	1931	+ 1	40 runs (not 39) with the Tigers; see text
Buck Newsom	1940	+ 1	10 runs (not 9)
Marv Owen	1934	+ 1	80 runs (not 79)
Dixie Parsons	1943	- 1	1 run (not 2)
Babe Pinelli	1920	- 2	31 runs (not 33)
Del Pratt	1923	+ 1	44 runs (not 43)
Paul Richards	1943	0	32 runs (unchanged, but compensating errors)
Topper Rigney	1924	+ 1	82 runs (not 81)
Billy Rogell	1930	+ 1	21 runs (not 20)
Billy Rogell	1934	+ 1	115 runs (not 114)
Billy Rogell	1935	+ 1	89 runs (not 88)
Billy Rogell	1937	- 1	84 runs (not 85)
Schoolboy Rowe	1934	- 1	14 runs (not 15
Schoolboy Rowe	1935	- 1	18 runs (not 19)
John Stone	1931	+ 1	87 runs (not 86)
John Stone	1933	- 1	85 runs (not 86)
Billy Sullivan	1940	- 1	35 runs (not 36)
Bill Sweeney	1928	+ 1	48 runs (not 47)
Dixie Walker	1939	+ 1	31 runs (not 30)
Gee Walker	1932	+ 1	72 runs (not 71)
Jack Warner	1928	+ 1	34 runs (not 33)
Al Wingo	1927	+ 1	16 runs (not 15)
Joe Wood	1943	0	22 runs (unchanged, but compensating errors)

Table 3. Career Runs-Scored Consequences for Detroit Tigers Players (1920–44)

Player	Tigers Career Years	Tigers Correction (1920–present)	Tigers Career Runs	ML Career Years	ML Correction	ML Career Runs
Eddie Ainsmith	1919–21	+ 1	? 68 (not 67) ?	1910–24		
Lu Blue	1921–27	+ 1	670 (not 669)	1921–33		
Tommy Bridges	1930–46	+ 1	84 (not 83)	1930–46	+ 1	84 (not 83)
Ty Cobb	1905–26	0	? 2,088 ?	1905–28		
Gil English	1936–37	+ 1	7 (not 6)	1931–44		
Bob Fothergill	1922–30	- 1	380 (not 381)	1922–33		
Pete Fox	1933–40	- 1	669 (not 670)	1933–45		
Charlie Gehringer	1924–42	+ 1	1775 (not 1,774)	1924–42	+ 1	1,775 (not 1,774)
Hank Greenberg	1930–46	- 4	976 (not 980)	1930–47	- 4	1,047 (not 1,051)
Sammy Hale	1920–21	+ 1	16 (not 15)	1920–30		
Fred Haney	1922–25	- 1	263 (not 264)	1922–29		
Ray Hayworth	1926–38	- 1	218 (not 219)	1926–45		
Joe Hoover	1943–45	- 1	177 (not 178)	1943–45	- 1	177 (not 178)
Roy Johnson	1929–32	0	352	1929–38		
Bob Jones	1917–25	+ 1	? 400 (not 399) ?	1917–25		
Roxie Lawson	1933–39	+ 1	17 (not 16)	1930–40		
Heinie Manush	1923–27	+ 1	386 (not 385)	1923–39		
Eddie Mayo	1944–48	+ 2	271 (not 269)	1936–48		
Marty McManus	1927–31	0	350	1920–34		
Bobo Newsom	1939–41	+ 1	19 (not 18)	1929–53		
Marv Owen	1931–37	+ 1	364 (not 363)	1931–40		
Babe Pinelli	1920	- 2	31 (not 33)	1918–27		
Del Pratt	1923–24	+ 1	100 (not 99)	1912–24		
Paul Richards	1943–46	0	95	1932–46		
Topper Rigney	1922–25	+ 1	234 (not 233)	1922–27		
Billy Rogell	1930–39	+ 2	670 (not 668)	1925–40		
Schoolboy Rowe	1933–42	- 2	81 (not 83)	1933–49		
John Stone	1928–33	0	381	1928–38		
Billy Sullivan	1940–41	- 1	64 (not 65)	1931–47		
Bill Sweeney	1928	+ 1	48 (not 47)	1928–31		
Dixie Walker	1938–39	+ 1	115 (not 114)	1931–49		
Gee Walker	1931–37	+ 1	476 (not 475)	1931–45		
Jack Warner	1925–28	+ 1	160 (not 159)	1925–33		
Al Wingo	1924–28	+ 1	216 (not 215)	1919–28		
Joe Wood	1943	0	22	1943	0	22

Furthermore, with regard to the "ML Career Runs" for the 37 Table 3 players, most of the players have blank spaces. That is because they also played with other teams, and any additional runs-scored errors in their non-Tigers games are not included in my research. The only exception was Hank Greenberg, who played for the Tigers for his whole career except for his final season spent with the Pirates. For Greenberg, I researched his 1947 season with Pittsburgh and found no runs-scored errors.[5] Thus six players are listed in Table 3 with accurate career runs-scored totals: Tommy Bridges, Charlie Gehringer, Hank Greenberg, Joe Hoover, Dixie Parsons, and Joe Wood.

Turning now to the Tigers players with the most career runs scored, Table 4 presents relevant information for the Top 25.

As can be seen, five of the top 11 Tigers (Cobb, Bush, Heilmann, Crawford, and Veach) played a significant number of seasons before 1920. Accordingly, the runs values shown for these players in Table 4 are

Table 4. The Top 25 Tigers in Career Runs Scored

Rank	Player	Years with Tigers	Net Correction	Correct Runs Scored	Incorrect Runs Scored
1	Ty Cobb	1905–26	?	? 2,088	? 2,088
2	Charlie Gehringer	1924–42	+ 1	1,775	1,774
3	Al Kaline	1953–74	0	1,622	–
4	Lou Whitaker	1977–95	–	1,386	–
5	Donie Bush	1908–21	?	? 1,242	? 1,242
6	Alan Trammell	1977–96	–	1,231	–
7	Harry Heilmann	1914–29	?	? 1,209	? 1,209
8	Sam Crawford	1903–17	?	? 1,115	? 1,115
9	Norm Cash	1960–74	- 1	1,027	1,028
10	Hank Greenberg	1930–46	- 4	976	980
11	Bobby Veach	1912–23	?	? 859	? 859
12	Dick McAuliffe	1960–73	–	856	–
13	Rudy York	1934–45	–	738	–
14	Bobby Higginson	1995–2005	–	736	–
15	Bill Freehan	1961–76	–	706	–
16	Kirk Gibson	1979–95	–	698	–
17	Willie Horton	1963–77	–	671	–
18	Lu Blue	1921–27	+ 1	670	669
18	Billy Rogell	1930–39	+ 2	670	668
20	Pete Fox	1933–40	- 1	669	670
21	Mickey Stanley	1964–78	–	641	–
22	Harvey Kuenn	1952–59	–	620	–
23	Travis Fryman	1990–97	–	607	–
24	Lance Parrish	1977–86	–	577	–
25	Jim Northrup	1964–74	–	571	–

Outfielder Gerald "Gee" Walker, pictured swinging in the mid-1930s at Chicago's Comiskey Park, hit for high averages, rarely walked or struck out, and in 1936 collected 55 doubles to rank second in the AL.

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As a rookie with the 1929 Tigers, Roy Johnson topped the AL in doubles. In 1931, he led in triples. The next spring, he was dealt with Dale Alexander to the Red Sox for Earl Webb, who set the single-season big-league record with 67 doubles in 1931. In this picture, Johnson is wearing the uniform of the 1937 Boston Braves.

preceded by questions marks ("?") to indicate the uncertainty of their accuracy. Finding the correct runs-scored totals for these players will be accomplished when the Phase Three (1901–19) research is completed.

The officially authorized corrections of the runs-scored errors have precipitated changes in the rank orders for some players. Thus, Lu Blue's Tigers career runs-scored total is now 670 (instead of 669); likewise, Billy Rogell's Tigers career runs-scored total is also now 670 (instead of 668). Pete Fox's Tigers career runs-scored total is now 669 (instead of 670). Thus, Blue now occupies the 18th position (instead of having the 19th slot). Similarly, Rogell is now tied (with Blue) for 18th (instead of being in the 20th spot). Fox is now positioned 20th instead of having the 18th.

DISCUSSION

With the completion of the research for the first two phases of my program to achieve accurate game-by-game runs-scored information for each and every Detroit Tigers player, I have discovered and corrected 83 runs-scored errors involving 56 players including seven Hall of Famers: Al Kaline, George Kell, Hal Newhouser, Hank Greenberg, Charlie Gehringer, Heinie Manush, and Ty Cobb.

During 1920–44 (i.e., Phase Two), the Detroit Tigers played 3,871 regular-season games. As shown in Table 1, 35 games had runs-scored errors in the official DBD records. Thus, 3,836 of the 3,871 games had correct runs-scored statistics in the official DBD records for the individual players who participated in those games. That corresponds to an accuracy of 99.1%—which might seem pretty good. But, to ensure that one obtains accurate results in researching runs-scored streaks, 100% accuracy is needed on a game-by-game basis. So, the as-is (i.e., uncorrected) official DBD records compiled by the Howe News Bureau for the 1920–44 AL seasons are clearly not suitable for game-by-game research efforts focused on runs scored.

For comparison, during the 28-year period from 1945 through 1972 (i.e., when the Howe News Bureau was also the official statistician of the American League), the Tigers played 4,424 regular-season games. As described previously, 13 games had runs-scored errors in the official DBD records, which[5] corresponds to 99.71% accuracy. The prognosis for accuracy in runs-scored information in the official DBD records for 1901–19 does not seem encouraging, particularly since three Hall of Famers played for the Tigers during that period.

Having now assembled the reliable runs-scored information from the research described in this article, I have achieved the principal objective of my research program: to accurately ascertain the longest single-season CGRUNS streak for each Tigers player for each year from 1920 through 1944. The salient findings from that effort are provided in a companion article.[10]

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As part of my rigorous and systematic examination of the runs-scored statistics in the official DBD records for Detroit Tigers players for 1920–44, I discovered and corrected 57 errors affecting 37 players. Significantly, the Elias Sports Bureau, pursuant to its review of the relevant supporting documentation I provided to them, eventually approved each runs-scored correction. Thus, this article serves as the formal public disclosure of the authorized corrections/changes in the official runs-scored records single-season and career—for these 37 players, including four Hall of Famers (Ty Cobb, Heinie Manush, Charlie Gehringer, and Hank Greenberg), for their Detroit Tigers careers. Accordingly, the appropriate corrections/changes can now be legitimately made in the various baseball encyclopedias, record books, information guides, and Web sites.

While the single-season corrections/changes for runs-scored stats can be implemented for those 37 players for their seasons *with the Detroit Tigers*, they should *not*, I feel, be incorporated into their career runs-scored stats if the player also played for any other team(s)—unless the accuracy of the runs-scored stats in the relevant official DBD records has been verified.

From the results reported here for the Detroit Tigers, it is not unreasonable to presume analogous numbers of runs-scored errors for the players on the other major league clubs, particularly the other teams in the American League (for whom the Howe News Bureau was official statistician through 1972). Accordingly, my hope/recommendation is that others also pursue similar run-scored research efforts for their favorite teams. ■

Acknowledgments

With gratitude, I thank the following individuals for their contributions in helping me carry out the research described in this article: Ron Antonucci, Steve Boren, Keith Carlson, Mike Lynch, Bob McConnell, and Dixie Tourangeau for providing photocopies of game accounts in newspapers to which they had access; Freddy Berowski, Trent McCotter, Dave Smith, Gary Stone, and Tim Wiles for their cooperation in my efforts to review the pertinent official DBD records; and Seymour Siwoff and Steve Hirdt (Elias Sports Bureau) for their cooperation in reviewing the documentation needed to effect the corrections in the runs-scored errors in the official DBD records.

Notes

1. Two possible sources for errors can enter the official records. The first possible source for errors in the official record is the transcription of the information on the official scorer's scorecard to the "official score report" (sometimes referred to as the "official game report"). When the game is over, the official scorer is required to prepare a report of the game on a form prescribed by the league president. The official score report prepared by the official scorer includes (i) batting records (e.g., at bats, runs, hits, runs batted in, etc.) for each batter and runner, (ii) fielding records for each fielder, and (iii) pitching records for each pitcher. Significantly, in compiling the official score report, the official scorer is required to list each player's name and fielding position(s) in the order in which the player batted – i.e., the batting order. The "batting records" portion of the official game report resembles the upper portion of the traditional box score, with columns for the various statistical categories. The second possible source for errors in the official record is the transcription (by a staffer in the league statistician's office) of the information on the official game report to the official Day-By-Day (DBD) records, which are organized by player on a game-by-game basis. Finally, and critically, the following is stated in the Official Rules of Major League Baseball [Rule 10.01(a) Comment]: "In the event of any discrepancy in records maintained by a league statistician and the rulings by an official scorer, the report of such official scorer shall control."
2. For the entire period of time covered in this article (i.e., 1920–44), the Howe News Bureau was the official statistician for the American League.
3. Ron Rakowski, "*Another "Asterisk" for Roger Maris? Did Maris really lead the AL in RBI's in 1961?," Society for American Baseball Research convention (SABR 25), Pittsburgh, 17 June 1995. See also the "Retrosheet Newsletter," Volume 2, July 1995, and the Baseball Records Committee newsletters, April, 1995, and August, 2010.
4. Seymour Siwoff, *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* (New York: Elias Sports Bureau, 2010), 383.
5. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Authorized Correction of Errors in Runs Scored in the Official Records (1945–2008) for Detroit Tigers Players," *The Baseball Research Journa*l 37 (2008): 115.
6. Some of the results presented here were described in my presentation "The Longest Consecutive Games RUN Scored (CGRUNS) Streaks by Detroit Tigers Players (1920–44)," given at the annual meeting of the Baseball Records Committee at the Society for American Baseball Research convention (SABR 40), Atlanta, August 5–8, 2010.
7. R. Chamberlain, "SABR Nine Questions," *The SABR Bulletin*, July–August, 2006, 6.
8. Personal communication (21 July 2010) with Steve Hirdt (Executive Vice President, Elias Sports Bureau). In a telephone conversation, Mr. Hirdt informed me that Elias has accepted the corrections to all of the runs-scored errors presented in Table 1.
9. The official DBD records for Gehringer's 1930 season show him with 143 runs scored. In fact, however, he scored 144 times in 1930. The runs-scored error in the official DBD records was for the game on June 30, 1930: the Tigers scored only once in that game (against the Athletics in Philadelphia); however, the official DBD records for each of the players who participated in that game for Detroit indicate that no one scored the Tigers' solitary run. According to the box scores and game accounts in various Detroit and Philadelphia newspapers, Gehringer is the player who scored. This runs-scored error was discovered and corrected several years ago, as suggested by the following: according to the 1950 edition of "The Little Red Book of Baseball" (published by the Elias Sports Bureau), Gehringer had a lifetime total of 1,773 runs scored, a value consistent with the incorrect 143 runs scored in 1930. Sometime between the 1971 edition of "The Little Red Book of Baseball" and 1996 edition of "The Elias Book of Baseball Records," Gehringer's lifetime runs scored total was officially changed to 1,774, a value consistent with the correct 144 runs scored in 1930. Furthermore, the various baseball encyclopedias all ten editions of the Macmillan *Baseball Encyclopedia; Total Baseball* (first through eighth editions); the Neft & Cohen *Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball* (each edition from 1980 through 2007), and the *ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia* (first through fifth editions) have reported 1,774 for Gehringer's career runs scored total. Each of these encyclopedias also show Gehringer with 144 runs scored for the 1930 season.
10. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tiger Has Scored a Run (1920–44)," *The Baseball Research Journal*, submitted for publication, 31 August 2010.

The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tiger Has Scored a Run (1920–44)

Herm Krabbenhoft

In a companion article, I described my findings on the accuracy of Major League Baseball's official runs-scored statistics for each Detroit Tigers player from 1920 through 1944.[1] I discovered and corrected 57 runs-scored errors affecting 37 players, including four Hall of Famers. Significantly, based on the ironclad supporting documentation I provided to them, the Elias Sports Bureau (the official statisticians of MLB), eventually approved each of the corrections/changes to the official baseball records.[1]

So, having firmly established an accurate, official game-by-game runs-scored database, I am able to reliably ascertain the longest Consecutive Games Run Scored (CGRUNS) streak achieved by each Detroit Tigers player in each season during the period from 1920 through 1944. Some of the results of my CGRUNS streak research are described in this article.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The major league record for the longest CGRUNS streak is 24 games by Billy Hamilton of the 1894 Philadelphia club.[2] The American League record is 18 straight games, shared by Red Rolfe of the 1939 New York Yankees and Kenny Lofton of the 2000 Cleveland Indians.[2] The post-1900 mark in the senior circuit is 17 games, by Rogers Hornsby of the 1921 St. Louis Cardinals and Ted Kluszewski of the 1954 Cincinnati Redlegs.[2]

The record for the longest CGRUNS streak by a player on the Detroit Tigers has apparently not yet been reported. In a previous article, I described my findings on the determination of the longest CGRUNS streak by a Tigers player during the period 1945-2008.[3] For that 64-year period, Johnny Groth of the 1950 Tigers assembled the longest CGRUNS streak, a 13-gamer.[3]

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The official DBD records (with the officially-authorized runs-scored corrections applied) for Detroit Tigers players were examined to ascertain the longest CGRUNS streak for each player for each season during the period from 1920 through 1944.[1]

Major League Baseball's official rules do not specifically cover CGRUNS streaks. [4] Therefore, I used the following guidelines to define the extension or termination of a CGRUNS streak:

- If a player scores at least one run in a game, that game extends the CGRUNS streak.
- If a player completes at least one plate appearance in a game but does not score at least one run, that game terminates the CGRUNS streak.[5]
- If a player is used only as a pinch runner in a game and does not score at least one run, that game terminates the CGRUNS streak.
- If a player is used only as a defensive player in a game (and thus does not have a completed plate appearance), that game does not terminate the CGRUNS streak.
- If a player is announced as a pinch hitter and is then replaced by another pinch hitter (and thus does not have a completed plate appearance), that game does *not* terminate his CGRUNS streak. Similarly, if a player enters the game as a pinch hitter, but the inning ends via a caught-stealing or a pickoff before he can complete his plate appearance, that game does *not* terminate the CGRUNS streak.
- If a player had at least one opportunity to score a run in a game, he must have scored at least one run in that game in order to extend his CGRUNS streak; if he had at least one opportunity to score a run in a game and did not score his CGRUNS streak is terminated.[5]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 lists the player(s) who compiled the longest CGRUNS streak for the Tigers in each season during the 1920–44 period.

Table 1. The Tigers with the Longest CGRUNS streaks (1920–44)

Year	Player (Runs Scored, season)	CGRUNS Streak
1920	Bobby Veach (92*)	12
1921	Harry Heilmann (114)	13
1922	Ty Cobb (99)	8
	Bob Jones (65)	8
1923	Lu Blue (100)	6
	Harry Heilmann (121*)	6
1924	Harry Heilmann (107)	11
1925	Fred Haney (84)	11
1926	Lu Blue (92)	9
	Charlie Gehringer (62)	9
	Heinie Manush (95*)	9
1927	Jackie Tavener (60)	9
1928	Harry Rice (87)	9
1929	Harry Rice (97)	13
1930	Charlie Gehringer (144*)	12
1931	Dale Alexander (75)	8
	Charlie Gehringer (67)	8
1932	Heinie Schuble (58)	7
1933	Pete Fox (82)	8
	Gee Walker (68)	8
1934	Pete Fox (101)	10
1935	Hank Greenberg (121)	10
1936	Charlie Gehringer (144*)	11
1937	Pete Fox (116)	14
1938	Billy Rogell (76)	10
1939	Roy Cullenbine (31)	10
1940	Hank Greenberg (129*)	15
1941	Pinky Higgins (79)	8
1942	Barney McCosky (75)	7
1943	Doc Cramer (79)	10
1944	Doc Cramer (69)	16

Table 2. Tigers Players with CGRUNS Streaks of at Least 10 Games (1920–2010)

CGRUNS Streak	Player	Year
16	Doc Cramer	1944
15	Hank Greenberg	1940
14	Pete Fox	1937
13	Harry Heilmann	1921
13	Harry Rice	1929
13	Johnny Groth	1950
12	Bobby Veach	1920
12	Charlie Gehringer	1930
12	Charlie Gehringer	1940
12	Rudy York	1940
12	Rocky Colavito	1961
11	Harry Heilmann	1924
11	Fred Haney	1925
11	Roy Johnson	1929
10	Jack Burns	1936
11	Charlie Gehringer	1936
11	Jerry Lumpe	1964
11	Dean Palmer	1999
10	Al Wingo	1925
10	Pete Fox	1934
10	Hank Greenberg	1935
10	Billy Rogell	1938
10	Roy Cullenbine	1939
10	Doc Cramer	1943
10	Hank Greenberg	1946
10	Ray Boone	1953
10	Dan Gladden	1992
10	Junior Felix	1994
10	Mickey Tettleton	1994
10	Bobby Higginson	1996

An * indicates that the player led the team in runs scored that season. It is interesting to note that the Tigers player who fashioned the longest CGRUNS streak led the team in runs scored only six times during the 25 seasons covered in Phase Two.

Inspection of Table 1 shows that Doc Cramer assembled the longest CGRUNS streak from 1920–44, scoring at least one run in 16 straight games from August 30 through September 17, 1944 (first game). Cramer's 16-gamer is the longest streak for a Detroit Tigers player from 1920 through 2010. [6] Moreover, Cramer's 16 CGRUNS streak falls just two games shy of the American League record.[2]

The Tigers player who led his team the most times in longest CGRUNS streaks from 1920 through 1944 is Charlie Gehringer; "The Mechanical Man" led the team four times.

Considering the 91-year period from 1920 through 2010, Table 2 presents a list of all Tigers players with single-season CGRUNS streaks of at least 10 games. Inspection of Table 2 reveals that Charlie Gehringer and Hank Greenberg each had three CGRUNS streaks of at least ten games, while Harry Heilmann and Doc Cramer had two CGRUNS streaks of ten or more. The last Detroit player to have accomplished a double-digit CGRUNS streak was Dean Palmer in 1999.

CONCLUSION

In my research program to ascertain the player with the longest CGRUNS streak for the Detroit Tigers since 1901, I have completed Phase One (1945 to the present) and Phase Two (from 1920 through 1944).[3,7] Employing the relevant official DBD records, including the officially-sanctioned corrections of the runs-scored errors I discovered, I have determined that Doc Cramer's 16-game CGRUNS string in 1944 is the longest for the Detroit Tigers since 1920. In Phase Three, I will address the 1901–19 period and complete the project. ■

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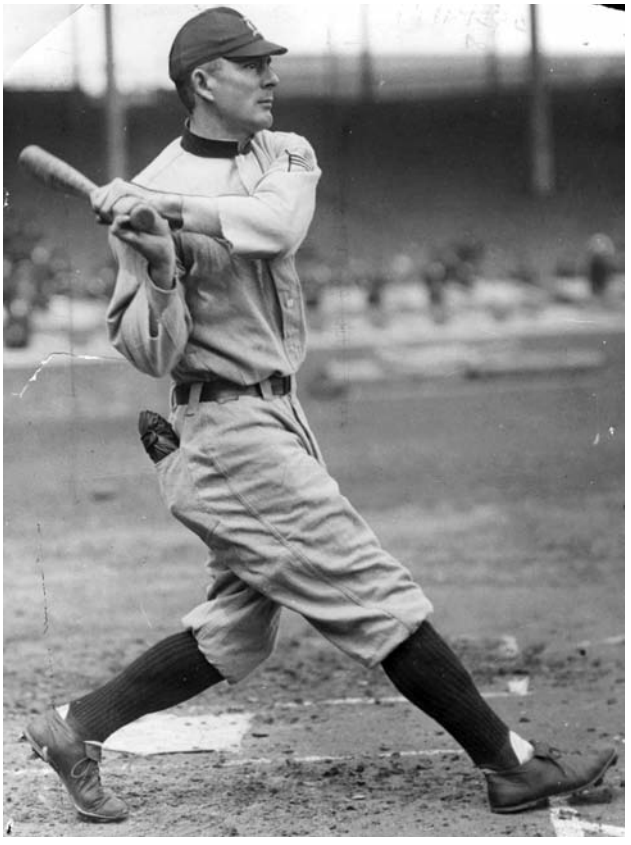

Between 1912 and 1923, Bobby Veach provided superb offense in the Detroit outfield. He did not reach the World Series, however, until his final season, 1925, which he finished in Washington.

Notes

1. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Authorized Correction of Errors in Runs Scored in the Official Records (1920–44) for Detroit Tigers Players," *The Baseball Research Journal*, submitted for publication, 31 August 2010.
2. Seymour Siwoff, *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*, (New York: Elias Sports Bureau, 2010), 383.
3. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tiger Has Scored a Run (1945–2008)," *The Baseball Research Journal*, 37 (2008):123.
4. *The Official Baseball Rules* (copyright 2010 by the Commissioner of Baseball) are available online at mlb.com. "Rule 10.23 Guidelines for Cumulative Performance Record" deals with consecutive streaks: consecutive hitting streaks, consecutive-game hitting streaks, and consecutive-game playing streaks.
5. There can be situations in which a player completes at least one plate appearance in a game without scoring a run and yet that game does not terminate the CGRUNS streak. For example, consider the following scenario: The player is used as a pinch hitter and gets on base by being hit by a pitched ball on the first pitch delivered to him; the player is then immediately replaced by a pinch runner. Because the player did not have an opportunity to score a run (the ball is dead upon hitting the batter), that game does not terminate his CGRUNS streak.
6. According to the player daily records provided on the Retrosheet website, the Tigers players with the longest CGRUNS streaks in the 2009 and 2010 seasons are Magglio Ordonez (8) and Austin Jackson (7), respectively.
7. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Consecutive Games RUN Scored (CGRUNS) Streaks by Detroit Tigers Players (1920–44)," Baseball Records Committee Annual Meeting, Society for American Baseball Research National Convention, Atlanta, GA, 7 August 2010.

Observations of Umpires at Work

Dan Boyle, Bob Hicks, David Kinney, Tom Larwin, Li-An Leonard,
Andy McCue, Fred O. Rodgers, and Andy Strasberg

PREFACE

By Tom Larwin

This article is a summary of observations from seven individuals who watched a ball game in an unusual way: We watched the umpires—the umpires only—and not the players. Our observations and resulting viewpoints were augmented the following day in an informal meeting with two of the umpires, who discussed certain aspects of the game with us.

The resulting article is a composition of these seven viewpoints. The writing styles are different and reflect the authors' individual and differing views of the umpire team as the game transpired. During the game the focus—the entire focus—was on each of the four umpires and their individual behavior and actions while on the field. *For each of us, the game and the final score were secondary for the first time ever while watching a major league baseball game.*

There was no attempt to restrict the observations to key plays, or controversial decisions. In fact, other than the home plate umpire, most of the individual umpires' actions were seemingly insignificant, and not involved in making a call. On any particular play most fans watching the game action would pay no attention to any of the umpires or what they might be doing... until it's time to make a call.

Certainly much of what the umpires have to do during the game can be considered routine, and from that point of view we did not uncover many significant revelations.

Taken as a collective experience, however, over the course of an entire game, watching the umpires perform brought us a heightened appreciation for what they do on the field for two-and-half to three hours or more during every major league game.

INTRODUCTION

By Tom Larwin

> Despite his role, the umpire is the most neglected, least appreciated, and most misunderstood participant in the National Pastime.[1]
>
> —Larry Gerlach

> The cardinal rule of umpiring is to follow the ball wherever it goes.[2]
>
> —Shag Crawford, NL Umpire (1956–75)

On September 10, 2010, the San Diego Ted Williams SABR Chapter had a unique opportunity to benefit from unprecedented access to Major League Baseball (MLB) umpires. MLB Umpire Crew Chief Jerry Crawford gave his approval to a Chapter project that would involve an in-depth examination of his four-umpire crew during the conduct of a baseball game.

> As an umpire you can't really appreciate a ball game. You have to concentrate so much on your job that you don't enjoy the game. I said many times that when I got out of umpiring, I wouldn't go near a ball park as long as I lived. But I have. Still, I look at the umpires, not the ballplayers. I can't help it. I get a big kick out of watching the umpires, anticipating what they are going to do.[3]
>
> —Joe Rue, AL Umpire (1938–47)

The Project

The intent of the project was to observe and document each of the four umpires throughout the playing of a baseball game, beginning with their pre-game meeting at home plate and continuing through their exit from the field following the final out.

Umpires are usually ignored by the casual fan. It's often said that a well-umpired game is one in which you don't even remember seeing the umpires. "Let 'em play" is the common refrain.

Indeed, focusing on the umpires would not be an attractive option for most fans. Essentially, you cannot watch the game. You cannot track the ball, the pitcher, the batter, the fielders, or the runners when your full concentration is on the umpires.

Our objective was to better understand and appreciate the active and important role of each umpire. If umpires are the "most neglected, least appreciated, and most misunderstood" participants in the game, then we would choose to focus on the umpires continuously.

Unlike the players, the four umpires remain on the

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The four umpires (left to right: Chris Guccione, Brian O'Nora, Phil Cuzzi, and Jerry Crawford) gather at the plate before the night's work begins.

field between turns at bat—they are there, standing on the field continuously, for the entire game, including any extra innings. In the 2009 season the average game lasted just under three hours (2:55:23, to be exact).[4] No rest breaks. What do they do all the time? We wanted to find out.

> Working the plate is rough. I didn't like it, but I had to do it to keep my job. It's the hottest place in the park. You have to call about 250 decisions a day with the sun beating down on the back of your neck and nobody to hand you a sponge and no time in the dugout.[5]
>
> —Beans Reardon, NL Umpire (1926–49)

> Calling pitches is the toughest job in the game, but I loved it because you're really in the game back of the plate. On the bases you start daydreaming when there isn't much action, and the next thing you know you're in trouble.[6]
>
> —Joe Paparella, AL Umpire (1946–65)

> From a crouched position behind home plate, a plate umpire makes between 270 and 300 ball or strike calls per game. The pitches he watches move at 70 to 95 miles per hour. At such speeds, it's impossible to watch the pitch's entire movement, so the umpire tracks the pitch as best he can and makes his call on the basis of its afterimage—that is, the momentary picture one has of an object after it has completed its trajectory. Like hitting, calling balls and strikes requires a high level of concentration; it also requires good eyesight and being in the best position to see the pitch.[7]

> The 2009 Squats Leader: (Tim) McClelland compiled 11,417 squats in his 37 plate assignments, including the postseason. He averaged 308.6 squats per game.[8]

The Assignments

A team of seven SABR members attended the game on Friday, September 10, 2010, when the San Francisco Giants were in San Diego to play the Padres at Petco Park (7:05 P.M. game start). The Crawford Crew, MLB Crew 'J', umpired the game.

Each of the seven SABR members was assigned one umpire to watch throughout the entire game. Thus, we ended with three teams of two members each and one solo assignment:

Umpire	SABR Members
Home Plate, Chris Guccione	Dan Boyle, Andy McCue
1B, Jerry Crawford	Fred O. Rodgers
2B, Phil Cuzzi	Li-An Leonard, Andy Strasberg
3B, Brian O'Nora	David Kinney, Bob Hicks

The charge for each member was to observe a designated umpire and to maintain an ongoing log—in their own way and style—describing on a continuous basis what the umpire was doing, including his positioning throughout the game and between innings.

On the day following the game, Saturday, September 11, 2010, each of the members was provided an opportunity to discuss with two members of the Crew (Cuzzi and Guccione) any of their observations or issues concerning actions taken by "their umpire" during the game.

Following this meeting each member was asked to prepare a written report of their observations and subsequent discussion with Crew members. The end product, this report, is essentially a compilation of the individual authored reports summarizing the actions of the umpiring crew throughout the game.

It is important to note that the assignment was NOT about evaluating the *performance* of the umpires.

> I conditioned myself like a fighter, so I would never have to leave the field during a ball game. I didn't drink too much liquid or eat much food before a ball game. If you overdo one or the other,

> either you have to go to the bathroom or you get logy.[9]
>
> —Ed Sudol, NL Umpire (1957–77)

> We always try to help each other. If you see that a guy's too slow, or you notice something he's doing that he normally doesn't do, you tell him so that he can correct it. One of my partners last night said he has been struggling at first base and didn't know why. The play was just collapsing on him. It was bang, bang—and he was having a hard time reading it. I told him to move further away from the bag: 'You have to get to where your eyes work best for you. It's all in the angle and the eyes.' He moved further away, made a little adjustment, and his problem cleared up. That's the way it is—you depend upon your partners to help you with that fine tuning.[10]
>
> —Durwood Merrill, AL Umpire (1976–99)

MLB Umpire Crew 'J'

Crew J's four umpires have worked an average of more than 2,250 MLB games, with Crawford leading the group with 4,267 games umpired over a 33-year span. By the end of the 2010 season, he stood at ninth on the all-time list of MLB games umpired.

Here are the four umpires in the Crawford Crew (statistics through 2009[11, 12]):

Uniform No.	Name	Year	1st MLB Games	Ejections
2	Jerry Crawford, Chief	1976	4,267	79
7	Brian O'Nora	1992	1,934	27
10	Phil Cuzzi	1991	1,456	57
68	Chris Guccione	2000	1,390	44

Jerry Crawford was born in August 1947 in Philadelphia and resides in Florida. His father, Henry "Shag" Crawford, was a National League umpire from 1956–75 and his brother, Joe, is a referee in the National Basketball Association. Crawford attended umpire school in 1967 and worked his way up through the minor leagues until joining the Major League staff in 1977. At 33 years he has the longest tenure of any present umpire and is four years shy of the record of 37 years set by Bruce Froemming and Bill Klem. He has umpired 108 postseason games, second only to Froemming. Over the course of his career he has averaged 1.85 ejections per 100 games.

Brian O'Nora was born in February 1963 in Youngstown and still lives in Ohio. He is a graduate of the Joe Brinkman Umpire School in 1985. His ejection rate has been 1.40.

Phil Cuzzi was born in August 1955 in New Jersey where he still resides. He umpired his first major league game in 1991, and joined the MLB staff full-time in 1999. Cuzzi was the home plate umpire for Bud Smith's no-hitter on September 3, 2001. His ejection rate has been 3.91.

Chris Guccione, who resides in Colorado, was born in June 1974 in Salida, Colorado. He has 14 years of professional baseball umpiring experience. His ejection rate has been 3.17.

> My theory for the general lack of curiosity about umpires is that fans tend to find all the anomalies distancing rather than appealing. They make umpiring too peculiar, too enigmatic, too difficult to analyze. It's not that umpires are hidden exactly, or even inconsequential. Rather, it's as if, both on the field and off, they inhabit a parallel world to that of the rest of baseball. If you watch a game the way you normally do, focusing on the ball and the players throwing it, hitting it, or chasing it, the umpires will seem to be absent—it's a little weird, actually; you just don't see them, even though they're often right in the middle of the action. The next time a catcher goes back to the screen for a foul pop, for example, take a moment to look for the plate umpire. You'll find him surprisingly nearby, just a few feet from the catcher, peering intently at the ball as it descends, to make sure it doesn't graze the screen before it hits the catcher's glove.[13]

NOTES ON OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

By Bob Hicks

On the evening of Friday, September 10, 2010, the San Francisco Giants defeated the San Diego Padres at Petco Park 1–0 in front of more than 30,000 fans. The two teams combined for just ten hits. Each team collected only one extra-base hit each—a double. Neither extra-base hit factored in the scoring. As in virtually every Major League Baseball game, this contest was officiated by a team of four umpires responsible for ensuring the game is played under the *Official Baseball Rules of Major League Baseball*.[14]

All in all, the lack of offense may lead the casual observer to conclude that the ball game was fairly easy to officiate. "Not so," stated two of the umpires who

were asked that question the following day over breakfast. The game pitted the two top teams in the National League Western Division, magnifying the importance of each play. The fact that the game was so close meant that every call was critical.

The game included several close calls, including a few line drives down the third-base line, a couple of "bang-bang" plays at third, a critical caught stealing at second, a few close plays at first base (the sole run scored on a 5–4 fielder's choice which just missed being a 5–4–3 inning-ending double play), and, finally, an unusual ninth-inning call at home plate which killed a bases-loaded rally—a call that neither umpire interviewed had ever invoked during their combined 30+ years of professional umpiring. Yet that rule had to be recalled and confidently conveyed to the players and the crowd in a matter of a second or two. Not an easy day at the office.

Even the most casual baseball fan is aware of an umpire's responsibility to understand and immediately apply the *Official Baseball Rules* to the games they work. The *Official Baseball Rules*, a 129-page document published by the Office of the Commissioner, is divided into 10 sections. Nine of those sections—87 pages—describe rules directly relating to the umpire and the conduct of the game, the equipment, and the field on which the game is played.

Contained within those sections are the obvious and the obscure. Every application of those rules must be accurately and confidently recalled within a second or two in the heat of the action under the watchful eyes of the 50 or so uniformed combatants, the press and broadcast personnel, 30,000+ fans in the stands, the MLB umpire evaluation staff, thousands watching live on TV or the web, and thousands more who will acquire an account of the game via newspaper, newscast, MLB.com, or various other means available to the millions of baseball fans throughout the United States and abroad.

The *Official Baseball Rules* have undergone more than 45 revisions from the time they were revised and codified in 1949. The two leagues have slightly different rules, most of the differences surrounding the designated hitter. Each ballpark has different ground rules, grounds crews, official scorekeepers, ball boys and girls, public address announcers, and audio/video staff with whom the umpires may interact.

Although the average baseball fan is aware of the *Official Baseball Rules* (which are available to the public at MLB.com), the umpires must fully comprehend and execute another book: the *MLB Umpire Manual*,[15] published by the Office of the Commissioner of Baseball and not available to the public. Over 150 pages it details desired "Conduct & Responsibilities," "Procedures and Interpretation," and "Mechanics for the Four-Umpire System," covering virtually every potential game situation and the "Umpire Evaluation and Training" system.

In my view, the most interesting section of the *MLB Umpire Manual* is the "Mechanics" section. Within those 40-plus pages are dozens of combinations of umpire movement and responsibilities depending upon what runners are on which base and the number of outs. Perhaps most impressively, MLB outlines the responsibilities of each umpire (unless field conditions require temporary alterations), but the positioning executed to meet those responsibilities varies somewhat depending upon the desires of the crew chief and his arbiters. Positioning and other such issues are negotiated and decided upon before a crew works together for the first time. To me this is another example of the high level of knowledge and teamwork MLB requires of its umpiring crews.

Consider that a crew is occasionally altered by a substitute umpire filling in due to illness or vacation. Even more challenging is a last-minute illness or game injury which may leave the four-man crew short one member. When taking these situations into account, these positioning variations—which may uniquely distinguish each crew—add another degree of difficulty to umpiring. Many of us never considered this interesting subtlety of the game before undertaking this project.

UMPIRE OBSERVATIONS AT HOME PLATE

By Dan Boyle with Andy McCue

Prior to the September 10 game, Dan practiced watching umpires for an inning or two and found it to be much harder than he had guessed; after many years of watching baseball, the first instinct is to follow the ball after the crack of the bat. These preliminary observations revealed certain patterns that each umpire has, and these patterns or rhythms are virtually identical with every pitch.

For this evening, the two of us watched home plate umpire Chris Guccione. He has been a full-time major league umpire since the start of the 2009 season and umpired his first MLB game in 2000. One of us watched the umpire closely for the top half of an inning, while the other described where each batted ball was going so that the watcher would have a sense of what the umpire was reacting to. Every half inning, we switched roles. We also kept track of the number of decisions made by the home plate umpire throughout

the course of the game. (Swinging strikes, foul balls, balls in play, and intentional walks did not count.) Our guess prior to the game was that Guccione would have to make 200 decisions during the course of the day. The final total is at the end of this section.

We recorded our observations by inning and noted our questions, since we knew that Chris would be at breakfast the next day.

First Inning. Prior to the game we thought of (and promptly forgot) two great questions: how did Chris develop his style of calling strikes and how does he time a visit to the mound? We noted that he hustled three-quarters of the way down the first-base line on a popup that could be fair or foul, since the first-base umpire has to make the fair-foul call and also call any play at first base.

Second Inning. We had become acclimated to Chris's rhythm by this point. He stands well behind the catcher then moves up and crouches as the pitcher is in his windup. He sets up to look over the inside corner with his outside hand resting on the catcher. This movement was consistent throughout the game. In this inning, he threw a new ball to the pitcher after a foul; in later innings, he handed the new ball to the catcher. We noticed him nod toward the San Diego dugout during this inning for no obvious reason.

After the third out, he threw a new ball to the mound prior to the next inning. Between innings, he took new balls from the ball boy and stood halfway down the first-base line watching the pitcher throw his warm-ups.

Third Inning. Padres first baseman Adrian Gonzalez made a between-the-legs catch on a bounced throw from third base after the ball had been called foul. Guccione came out to the mound and said something to pitcher Clayton Richard. Afterwards, we realized that he was taking the ball, which had bounced in the dirt, out of play.

Upon closer inspection, we found a slight variation in Chris's stance: for left-handed batters, his feet are even, but for right-handed batters, his left foot is slightly closer to the catcher than his right.

Before the last warm-up pitch between innings, he signals with his right hand to the batter, waiting on deck, to move up to the plate.

Fourth Inning. Another thought we had but forgot to ask him about: how many balls are in his ball bag at any one time?

The between-inning routine was different this inning. Chris had a long conversation with someone in the Padres dugout. We assumed it must be a coach, but the conversation partner turned out to be Yorvit Torrealba. We also noticed that he disallowed Jonathan Sanchez' first pitch on an intentional walk, making it a rare five-pitch IW.

Fifth Inning. Chris called time and took a ball out of play after it had bounced in the dirt. This was when we realized the answer to the question back in the third inning about the visit to the mound.

With a man on first base, Chris goes all the way down the line to the first-base bag on a fly ball to right field. In the same situation, he goes halfway down the third-base line on a fly ball to left-center.

Chris holds his ball-strike indicator in his left hand, but only looks at it between at-bats or with a full count. Our guess is that he is re-setting it.

Sixth Inning. Chris motioned to the press box when a pinch-hitter entered the game. He picked up a bat down the first-base line for the batboy. He went out to the mound to check the ball after a throw to first had bounced in the dirt.

Somewhere around this time, we realized that we had no idea of what was going on in the game. Giants pitcher Sanchez came out after issuing seven walks; this was news to us. Is Buster Posey in the lineup tonight? Who's coming up next inning? What inning is it, precisely? We had no clue. The one watching closely often had to ask what happened on a particular play; every now and then, we'd look up briefly and find men on base when we didn't expect to. Of course, this only meant that we were doing our job, but it was still disconcerting.

Seventh Inning. What proved to be the only run of the game scored on an attempted double play. Chris kicked the bat out of the way and stood just behind the plate when it was obvious that there would be no play at home.

With a man on first, he came down the line only a little bit on a blooper to right field. We surmised that if the ball had taken a funny hop, there could have been a play at home.

Eighth Inning. Chris gave some extra time to Padres catcher Nick Hundley, who had been hit by a foul ball. Chris walked out in front of home and kicked dirt off the plate. One of us asks the other, "Has he dusted off the plate yet tonight?" We remember seeing him kick dirt

off the plate just as he had here, but neither of us recalled seeing him use the brush. Maybe he forgot it tonight?

Chris had a discussion with the San Diego dugout before the visitor eighth, apparently regarding a new Padres pitcher. With a man on first, he trotted down the third-base line on a single to left. He chatted with Aubrey Huff at the plate while Hundley visited the mound (this happens twice during the at-bat). It's the only time we observed him talking to a hitter or catcher, although the mask made it difficult to tell. He chatted with the ball boy between innings.

Ninth Inning. With one out and the bases loaded in the top of the ninth, Giants pitcher Brian Wilson hit a comebacker to the mound. Ryan Webb threw to the plate to force Jose Uribe, but catcher Hundley did not throw to first. After a second, Guccione signaled that Uribe had interfered with Hundley and ruled it a double play. Giants' manager Bruce Bochy came storming out of the dugout but retreated after about five seconds of conversation. Replays clearly showed that as Uribe slid into home, he reached out and grabbed Hundley's ankle. Chris was positioned slightly to the third-base side of home plate.

HOW MANY DECISIONS?
(Measuring pitches that the umpire needed to "rule" on, meaning swinging strikes and fouls were not included)

Inning 1: 22 (16 balls, 6 called strikes)

Inning 2: 26 (15 balls, 11 called strikes)

Inning 3: 12 (9 balls, 3 called strikes)

Inning 4: 11 (6 balls, 5 called strikes, intentional walk not counted as a decision)

Inning 5: 20 (17 balls, 2 called strikes, one fair/foul on a foul ball off the batter's foot)

Inning 6: 13 (10 balls, 3 called strikes)

Inning 7: 17 (12 balls, 4 called strikes, one checked swing)

Inning 8: 10 (7 balls, 3 called strikes)

Inning 9: 19 (12 balls, 5 called strikes, one checked swing, one interference call)

Total: 150 decisions (in our inexperience, we may have missed some pitches)

UMPIRE OBSERVATIONS AT FIRST BASE

By Fred O. Rodgers

Ozzie Guillen, the current manager of the Chicago White Sox, once stated that nobody comes to the park just to watch an umpire work. That is no longer true. I watched one umpire for the entire game.

The game lasted 3:03 with the only run scoring on a fielder's choice. There were 289 pitches thrown and 72 batters made plate appearances.

I covered Jerry Crawford, the first-base umpire, who is also the crew chief. This is Jerry's 34th year as a major league umpire and would be his last (he retired following the 2010 postseason). Interestingly, both Jerry and his father, Shag Crawford, spent over ten years of their careers working on the same crew as recently inducted Hall of Fame umpire Doug Harvey.

During the course of the nine innings that Jerry covered first base,

- 39 batters (54%) came up with no one on base;
- 18 batters came up (25%) with a runner on first;
- 4 batters (6%) hit with a runner on second;
- 9 batters (13%) appeared with runners on first and second;
- One batter came up (1.4%) with runners on first and third; and
- One batter appeared (1.4%) when the bases were loaded.

So what did Jerry Crawford do with nobody on base?

Jerry began each pitch standing approximately 15–20 feet behind the first-base bag and just outside the foul line. This was meant to increase the chances that if he was hit with a batted ball, it would be foul. Jerry would start moving in about four or five paces as the pitcher started his windup. As the pitcher planted his foot Jerry would freeze and either keep his hands on his knees or be at the ready with his hands by his side. He would do this on virtually every pitch.

You could see how focused and how intently Jerry would watch each pitch; he knew he might have to help the home plate umpire on checked swings, balls in the dirt, foul balls hit off the batter, and foul tips on third strikes. There is no relaxing during a pitch.

In two instances, Jerry had to call a ball down the right-field line "fair" or "foul." He also ran into the outfield on three occasions on fly balls hit to right field and right-center.

With runners on first base, Jerry would situate himself about ten feet from the bag with a perfect angle to watch the pitcher for a balk or a pickoff throw to first. During the game a pitcher threw over to first seven times. Only once did Jerry have to make a tough call on a pickoff attempt.

The closer the call, the more need to "sell" the call so that the crowd understands you are in charge and that you saw it correctly. A little bit of confidence and showmanship is needed to make sure that everyone in the park understands a delicate call.

Jerry would move approximately ten feet toward second base and about five feet behind the first baseman once a ball was hit to the infield. This is considered the best position to be in to see the first-base bag and to listen for the ball in the mitt to make a decisive call. Jerry had to "sell" two tough plays. The only run in the game scored when Jerry called the batter safe running to first on the backside of an attempted double play. There was no argument.

Because the teams combined for only two extra-base hits, umpire rotation was at a minimum. Only twice did Jerry have to run toward second base in case he would need to make a call. Neither time was a play made.

Between innings Jerry seldom moved from the area directly behind first base where the grass and the dirt meet. Never once did he excuse himself from the field. In the sixth inning, Jerry ambled over to the first-base seats just past the dugout and shook hands with ex-Padres ballplayer Kurt Bevacqua, who introduced Jerry to his wife and two kids. Then Jerry actually signed a ball for Kurt, which I'm sure is not a normal occurrence during a game.

Most of the time between innings, Jerry showed amusement at what the Padres showed on the scoreboard, be it the Kiss-Cam or baseball bloopers. I could also tell that Jerry was entertained when the grounds crew (one of whom put on a dance routine) raked the infield between innings.

I found it amazing that a 1–0 game could go over three hours. The very next night, another 1–0 game lasted only 2:07.

My observation of Jerry Crawford working first base for the whole game made me more aware of all the work umpires do just to prepare to make a call that may not even come their way. The stress from pitch to pitch is huge. Working the bases can be just as demanding as working home plate.

I think I would rather sit up in the stands and watch the players—and I guess now, *the umpires*—entertain me.

UMPIRE OBSERVATIONS AT SECOND BASE

By Li-An Leonard and Andy Strasberg

Regardless of the number of baseball games you have seen, you are probably missing a vital aspect of the game that has eluded fans, broadcasters and the baseball media since the first pitch was called by an umpire some 150 years ago.

Realistically, few, if any, attend a baseball game for the express purpose of following one umpire for an entire game. No one charts an umpire's every move on every pitch and batted ball. And certainly no one makes notes of what an umpire does between innings. But if you did, you would see a baseball game from the inside-out and upside-down guaranteed.

We followed and detailed every move of the second base umpire, Phil Cuzzi, during this game. We were provided unprecedented access to the umpire after the game and were able to find out the reason for each movement or gesture. We were also informed of casual conversations or argumentative conversations by the umpire himself. It was a revelation; the explanations were interesting, intriguing, and revealing.

Our observations took place in a three-hour, three-minute game during which the second-base umpire was constantly on his feet in a "get ready" position every time a pitch was thrown, hustling into position, then hustling back. He didn't take a bathroom break nor did he get anything to drink while working the game.

Other observations (some involving all umpires)

- Each umpire taps the chest protector of the plate umpire after the conclusion of the pregame meeting between the two teams where clubs exchange lineup cards.

- On double plays beginning at second base and involving a relay throw, the second-base umpire sees only the play at second base. He does not watch a throw after it leaves the middle infielder's hand.

- When a runner is on base, the second-base umpire watches the pitcher for the possibility of a balk.

- On balls hit to the outfield, the second-base umpire does not run toward the ball but

rather slightly away from it for the express purpose of getting a better angle to see whether a catch is made.

- When a pitcher throws to first base, the second-base umpire appears to relax and back up on his heels. In reality he is expanding his vision, anticipating the possibility of a play at second base.

- After the third out of each inning, the second-base umpire removes a stop watch from his pants pocket and begins monitoring the two minutes and five seconds needed for the commercial break to ensure that the game does not resume before the TV/radio audience returns.

- The second-base umpire looks for every player to touch second base when traveling the bases.

- Every umpire must wear the gear necessary for the weather conditions and the position he works.

- A demonstrative up-and-down hand-clap before the next batter signifies to the other umpires the possibility of the infield fly rule taking effect. (The signal for the infield fly rule may vary from umpire to umpire or from crew to crew.)

- The rotation to cover the bases by the umpires is not an exact science, but rather the closest thing one may ever see to teamwork.

- Anticipating the possibilities is an ongoing process for every umpire for every play imaginable.

- An umpire's physical condition could impact how a crew works a game. There is always the possibility that one of the four umpires might not be able to complete the game, and as a result, the umpires must be prepared to adjust their approach to the game.

- Discussing the play with a player or manager is part of the game, but generally only happens in case of a disagreement. Many times this takes place with elevated emotions and voices.

- Looking for the best angle is the quest of every umpire on every play. Positioning is the key to a good angle.

- Every move and possible play is not only anticipated but must also be instantaneously applied to the official rules of the game.

- Most media members covering a game have little knowledge of the rules of the game and often base their opinions and criticisms of umpires on misinformation or lack of knowledge of a rule.

THE CHALLENGES

Loneliness. An umpiring crew consists of four men. The support team of an umpire crew is limited to only the other three men.

Travel. After spending a series of games in one city, the crew must travel to another city to work the games of two new teams. It is MLB policy that the umpire crew *not* continue to work the same two clubs.

Stressful conditions. Instant recall of applicable knowledge of the rules in front of thousands or millions of people must occur within seconds of a play. When an umpire is working, situations that happen infrequently require umpires to recall the applicable rule immediately and perfectly.

At the end of the day, who appreciates the work of an umpire? There is no home team. They have no fan club, and the MLB office doesn't appreciate the intricacies of their work, essentially because the MLB office has never experienced it. As the adage says, "The only time an umpire is noticed is when something goes wrong"—or, in most cases, "appears" to go wrong. Yet umpires are dedicated and proud of the work they do. MLB umpires are the best baseball fans the game has. They don't root for a team or a player, but they love the game as much if not more than any die-hard fan.

UMPIRE OBSERVATIONS AT THIRD BASE

By David Kinney and Bob Hicks

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Prior to a pitch, third base umpire Brian O'Nora takes a preliminary position at the point where the infield dirt meets the outfield grass. As the pitcher looks in for the sign from the catcher, O'Nora moves a couple

of steps toward third base, straddling the third-base/left-field chalk line with one foot in fair territory and one in foul. Like the infielders, as the pitch is thrown he takes a set position. Usually this set is a modified scissors position with left leg forward. He repeats this motion with every pitch. Brian does not vary his starting point based on right- or left-handed batter, power hitter, or potential bunting situation. He is achingly consistent with this pattern.

With a left-handed batter, he would not follow the pitch to the plate but instead would focus on the batter to be prepared for a check swing. With a runner on base, the umpire would observe the pitcher until he was past the possible balk point and without following the pitch immediately turn his glance to the batter to observe a possible check swing. Also, when a runner occupied second base, immediately after the set O'Nora would cast a quick glance at the runner, much like a third basemen would, presumably to gauge the runner's lead and possible intent to steal.

When an action was unlikely to produce a play at third base (either a ground ball or fly ball to an area of the diamond other than near third base, and with no runners on base) the umpire would basically remain in position but turn and follow the play.

With runners on base, his focus was always on any possible action at third base. For example, with a runner on base and an infield ground ball, O'Nora would not watch the resulting play at first base but would be in position to observe the runner touching third.

With fly balls to left field, the umpire had the responsibility to observe the catch, determine fair or foul, and observe any action at third base. Sometimes he was required to do all three on one play. On a foul pop-up toward the far end of the third-base dugout, O'Nora appeared to gauge where he thought the ball and defender would end up. He ensured that he didn't interfere with the defender's path to the ball, but immediately after that danger was averted, sprinted to a position where he could see the open glove as the fielder caught the ball. This cone of vision, in which every umpire tries to center each play, provides the best angle for a catch, tag, drop, or trap. It appeared that O'Nora attempted to be at a standstill before the catch was made.

Between the top and bottom of the third inning O'Nora drank from a water bottle offered by the Padres' ball girl.

Between some innings, the grounds crew quickly drags the infield, rakes around the base areas, replaces the bases, etc. Often the Padres send out a dancer dressed as a member of the grounds crew to perform for the crowd in shallow center field just beyond second base. His routine usually generates a good response from the crowd and, on the rarest occasion, a simple acknowledgement from the third-base umpire as the dancer exits the field. O'Nora's body language seemed to communicate to the dancer that no acknowledgement would be forthcoming. "No harm, no foul," but no high-five either.

O'Nora never sat down and never left the field until the game was over. At the conclusion of the game the umpires gathered together between home and third base and left the field as one.

He often watched the promotions on the video screen between innings, albeit never in their entirety. It appeared that recent baseball highlights held none of O'Nora's interest. He did, however, glance at the screen for a blooper segment or two.

Between innings, early in the game, O'Nora talked briefly with Padres third-base coach Glenn Hoffman and with Giants third-base coach Tim Flannery.

He spoke, very briefly, with Giants left fielder Pat Burrell before the bottom of the first as the latter was walking to his position from the Giants dugout on the third-base side.

SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

On a number of plays, the umpire had to move in various directions on the field:

Easily played fly ball to outfield. Umpire moved five or six feet toward the shortstop position.

High foul fly toward right field. Umpire moved ten feet on infield grass near shortstop position.

Deep drive to center. As the second-base umpire went out to observe the catch, the third-base umpire moved toward second anticipating a play.

Ground ball down the third base line. Umpire moved several feet into foul territory to observe whether the ball was fair or foul.

Deep drive to right field with runners on first and third. Umpire moved closer to third to observe the touch of the two baserunners. He did not observe the flight of the ball or the catch.

Long foul ball to left field. Umpire went out to observe the catch.

Pop up to pitcher. Umpire moved toward the pitcher's mound to observe the catch.

Fly ball to left field. Umpire went out to observe the catch and raced back to third anticipating a play.

Ground ball to short with runners on first and second. Umpire moved to a position near third in foul territory.

Foul pop-up near third base stands. Umpire waited for the fielder to take his route, moved in toward the infield several feet, and raced toward the stands to observe the catch. (See comments above.)

Fly ball to left field runners on first and second. Umpire went out to observe catch.

BREAKFAST MEETING THE DAY AFTER

By Dan Boyle

On our reaction. At breakfast the next day, Phil Cuzzi first asked us if this project had affected our views of umpires. We said, "Yes, absolutely." Even in a low-scoring game, without much action on the bases, much happened that we would have never otherwise observed.

General comments on positioning. Chris described the flight of the ball and the path of the runner as forming a V on plays at the plate, and the umpire wants to be at the intersection of the two lines. Home plate umpires typically are slightly up the first-base line in foul ground because throws to the plate are usually caught in front of the plate. The idea is to have a clear line of sight between the runner and the catcher (the runner's side of the V) to determine whether the tag is made.

The diagram shown earlier for the interference play at the plate indicated that Guccione was slightly to the left of and behind home plate, which seems to contradict the idea of being at the intersection of the V. On that play, however, the bases were loaded and the home plate umpire was looking at a force, not a tag play. Chris was in the best position to see whether the runner beat the throw.

On our observation that this seemed to be an easy game to call. A tight game like this is never easy, especially in a pennant race. Any one call could change the game, unlike in an 8–0 game.

The stopwatch. As the second base umpire, Phil had the stop watch to monitor the time between innings. In response to a question, he said that everything ran smoothly.

PHOTO COURTESY BOB HICKS

Umpires Phil Cuzzi and Chris Guccione (left to right) meet with SABR members the day after being "watched."

On whether he needs to unwind after a game, particularly when working the plate. Chris said he always falls asleep quickly once he's back in the hotel.

Why his left foot is closer to the catcher than his right foot for right-handed batters. Chris said that he does move in a little closer for righties. It seems that he could not move closer for lefties because of the possibility of interfering with the catcher's throw. Phil was surprised by the answer; he never noticed Chris doing this.

The conversation with Torrealba. Chris knows Torrealba from when they were both in the California League (as umpire and player). In the game the night before, after a controversial call at first base, the television cameras picked up some back-and-forth between Adrian Gonzalez and Guccione. Torrealba was telling Chris that Adrian had asked him if Guccione always goes back at you, and Torrealba responded, "Nah, only if you piss him off."

The five-pitch intentional walk. Someone called time before the first pitch for reasons unknown.

Brushing off home. Guccione had the brush (he said, while patting his shirt pocket) but had no reason to use it in a 1–0 game.

The interference call. Chris noted that he did not call interference immediately. During the delay of perhaps a second, his brain ran through everything he was seeing, and he decided that it clearly was interference. Especially interesting is that this was the first time in

his career that Guccione had called interference on a play at the plate. Bochy assumed that the interference call was because the runner was out of the baseline (the typical interference call on the bases) and wanted to show the path of Uribe's slide to Guccione, but Chris quickly told the manager that he called interference because Uribe hooked the catcher's ankle with his hand. Once Bochy heard that, the argument ended.

In response to a question, Chris said that whether Hundley had a play on the man at first had no bearing on the interference call. It was not the home plate umpire's job to determine whether the runner might have been out at first without the interference, primarily because there was no way to make that determination. Jerry Crawford, the first-base umpire, told Guccione after the game that the batter was running far inside (i.e., on the fair side) of the baseline. A throw might have hit the runner in fair territory.

CONCLUSION

By Andy Strasberg

> People only know to hate us. We are a misunderstood group. People don't really know us, but to know us is to love us.
>
> —Phil Cuzzi

Our Saturday morning get-together with Cuzzi and Chris Guccione provided the perfect opportunity to ask questions about the game they had umpired the previous evening at PETCO Park. Our questions ranged from what was said during the game to players in between innings, to the umpires' hand signals for a potential infield fly rule possibility, and a catcher's interference call. The umpires appeared candid and forthright with their responses.

It became evident as they responded that the umpires love their job, take an enormous amount of pride in their profession, and are extremely knowledgeable of baseball in general, not only the rules. They were generous in sharing insights about what goes on during a game for those men standing on a baseball diamond who are not players, coaches, or managers. Our conversation was speckled with humor and revelations.

As a result of the questions we asked and the answers we received, our conclusion was that an umpire's approach to the game is a combination (in no particular order) of sociability, knowledge of the rules, ability to make split-second decisions, and at times—when it is needed—to control the game so that is played fairly for both teams.

While the fans watch the pitcher and batter get ready for a pitch, each umpire is preparing for the play and constantly aware of his (so far, *his*) field conditions and player positioning, ready to anticipate any number of rule possibilities depending on game situations.

For instance, we discussed a play from the previous night's game in which Giants closer Brian Wilson hit a comebacker to the mound and runner Juan Uribe interfered with catcher Nick Hundley. This was not a play that could have easily been anticipated, but yet was called in less time that it took to write this sentence. We asked Chris how many times he had called that play and were surprised to hear him respond, "That was the first time I ever made that call."

That play, and that call, indicate how an umpire must be decisive, have an instant and accurate recall of rules, and remain continuously observant. The umps may appear to be enjoying the game in a casual manner, but they are working the entire time the game is being played.

As we departed our meeting with Guccione and Cuzzi, we realized that we had a better understanding of what it was to be an MLB umpire. We learned about their challenges and found them to be personable and—clichés be hanged—even likeable. ■

Notes

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When a Dream Plays Reality in Baseball…

Roberto Maduro and the Inter-American League

John Cronin

Independent minor leagues returned to the baseball landscape in the 1990s and have continued to sprout during the first decade of this century. Some leagues lasted just one season while others have been more successful. This is a return to older times. During the earliest parts of the twentieth century, minor leagues were part of Organized Baseball but operated in an independent manner; they were not owned by (or even had working agreements with) major league teams. Therefore, these teams had to fend for themselves, financially, operationally, and, in particular, in securing and maintaining a competitive roster for each season.

All this had changed long before the 1970s. All minor-league teams by that time had an affiliation with the major-league teams. The one exception during that era was the Inter-American League, a true "indie" which began play in the 1979 season. The realities, however, of independent baseball—the need for purposeful marketing and business development, a developed fan base and low overhead costs—put the Inter-American League in jeopardy from the outset.

The league was the dream of Roberto Maduro, a wealthy man born on June 27, 1916, in Cuba. He had been the owner of the Havana Sugar Canes, a team that played in the Triple-A International League in the 1950s. After Fidel Castro came to power, Maduro fled Cuba with his riches left behind, lived in exile, and began his life all over again. The franchise shifted to Jersey City in 1960. Commissioner William D. Eckert named Roberto Maduro Coordinator of Inter-American Baseball in 1966.

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Roberto "Bobby" Maduro spent several decades in baseball, forever clinging to his dream of a professional summer league in Latin America.

In this position, Maduro boldly asked the United States State Department to purchase baseball equipment that would be given to Latin American countries. Maduro stated that such a donation would generate good will for the United States in those countries. Notwithstanding the fact that by 1963, Cuba was now ruled by Castro, an ardent baseball fan, Maduro had stated, "Wherever baseball is played, people love the Americans."[1]

Was this an overly sunny view? Many instances prior to 1966 show Roberto Maduro to be an eternal optimist who viewed the baseball world in Latin America with rose-colored glasses.

At the start of the 1955 season, Maduro stated that every effort would be made to raise the Sugar Canes' attendance to 500,000 from the previous season's total of 295,453. When the season was concluded, however, "only" 313,232 fans had attended Sugar Canes games.[2]

Two months after opening day, he toned down his prediction by pointing out that during the 1954 season, the team had drawn 200,000 fans during the first half of the season but only 95,000 during the second half.[3]

During that same 1955 season, Maduro stated, "I believe our chances of securing a major-league franchise in the next few years are good."[4]

Toward the close of 1957 season, Maduro reaffirmed his intention of operating his Havana team in 1958. He said he believed that the Cuban political situation would be resolved by the start of the season.[5] Baseball people in the United States, however, felt that the political unrest in Cuba made the Sugar Canes' future uncertain. A hopeful Maduro stated that the Castro uprising was no factor at all.[6]

During the offseason between the 1958 and 1959 seasons, Maduro was quoted predicting that "I think there will be less political unrest"[7] when questioned about Cuba's political situation.

In January 1959, *The Sporting News* reported that in Maduro's opinion, the culmination of the political

upheaval in Cuba—with Castro successfully overthrowing dictator Fulgencio Batista—would have a beneficial effect on International League baseball. Maduro boldly stated, "For the first time in the five-year life of the club, it now appears we will be able to operate in an atmosphere of peace and security."[8]

Several weeks later, Maduro was again reported to believe that Castro's regime would benefit baseball on the island.[9] [10]

Within the next year and a half, however, Maduro and his family had to flee Cuba for fear of their lives and the Havana Sugar Canes were uprooted and replanted in Jersey City.

Maduro's grasp of reality concerning baseball in Latin America may well have been severely blinded by his dreams. This frame of mind and reference are paramount to keep in mind as Maduro took further positions in baseball.

Maduro continued as Coordinator of Inter-American Baseball under the direction of Eckert's successor, Bowie Kuhn.

Maduro resigned his position with the commissioner's office on December 26, 1978, effective year-end. He left because he felt that it was an opportune time to make his dream a reality. During the late 1970s, the minor leagues were beginning to show signs of a revival. Columbus, Ohio had been without a professional baseball team for six years after a long history of fielding teams which competed in the Triple-A American Association and the International League. The local government spent over $5 million to refurbish its existing stadium. As a result, Columbus was able to secure a franchise in the IL for 1977. While the team finished in seventh place, they won the attendance prize that year in the minor leagues by drawing 457,251 fans.

Such success stories may have pushed Maduro to pursue his dream even more fervently. He assumed that the rivalry between the countries in Latin America would stir up fan interest.

His decision to form a new league did create a rivalry in Latin America, but one that Maduro neither anticipated nor wanted. The Inter-American League (IAL) was immediately decried by operators of clubs in the winter leagues in Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. In fact, following Bowie Kuhn's approval for the establishment of the IAL, officials of the Puerto Rican Winter League vowed to vote at the end of the 1979 baseball season to end the contract between the Caribbean Baseball Confederation and the major leagues.[12]

Even with these threats, the IAL began play as a six-team Triple-A league on April 11, 1979. The Miami Amigos represented the United States, the Caracas Metropolitanos and the Maracaibo Petroleros de Zulia played for Venezula, Panama boasted the Banqueros, the Puerto Rico Boricuas played in San Juan, and the Santo Domingo Azucareros took the field in the Dominican Republic.

The league was widely dispersed geographically, making travel expenses considerably higher than those in other Triple-A leagues. Distance between IAL cities made air travel for all teams a necessity. The problem of already prohibitively high air fares was further compounded by the grounding of the DC-10 airplane.[13]

And the teams in the other Triple-A leagues (the International, Pacific Coast, and Mexican Leagues and the American Association) had one important difference: the financial support of major league teams.

Another travel-related problem was visa problems on players entering and leaving the league's various localities. Since Cuba and Nicaragua did not have good diplomatic relations with Venezuela, travelers were required to obtain permission from the Venezuelan government in order to enter the country. Because several players in the league hailed from these countries, teams often entered Venezuela shorthanded.[14]

By Maduro's directive, each team posted $50,000 to defray costs relating to the commissioner's office and umpires. Maduro, in retrospect, was overly optimistic when questioned if the league had the capability to finish its first season with a 130-game, five-month schedule. His response was, "We are not worried about finishing the season. We have enough money to operate three or four years."[15] But on June 30, 1979, the league suspended operations for the season and never played another game.

It appears that Maduro's desire to promote Latin American summer professional baseball clouded his sense of sound business practice. He felt that the league's stadium capacities, which ranged from Miami (the smallest, at 9,500) to Caracas (the largest, at 35,000), would ensure success. The stadium sizes and the average attendance per game for each team are listed below:

Team	Stadium Capacity	Average Attendance Per Game
Caracas	35,000	3,500
Maracaibo	28,000	1,100
Puerto Rico	18,000	650
Santo Domingo	16,000	1,000
Panama	14,000	800
Miami	9,548	1,350

That the IAL's games were played in nearly empty stadiums tells the story of the league's financial position. Stadium size does not insure automatic success, contrary to the *Field of Dreams* catch phrase ("If you build it, they will come"). To be successful, a product must be good and must be marketed properly. Radio and television contracts were to be an important source of revenues for the teams and the league, but only Caracas, Maracaibo, and Santo Domingo had full-season radio broadcasts. Caracas had the league's only television package and that for just a few early-season contests. Miami broadcast only one game on the radio and Panama had no media exposure whatsoever.[17]

After the league suspended operations, Maduro conceded that the league didn't begin marketing until late January 1979; at which point it "was too late to interest TV or big advertisers." In his rush to move forward with his decade-long dream, he instead created a financial nightmare.

He had held this dream for over ten years. Back in 1968 on a trip to Mexico, Maduro stated that he was working on plans to establish other summer leagues besides the Mexican League in Latin American.[18] This is what is difficult to understand: Why, after waiting all those years, did Maduro feel that he had to rush his dream, the Inter-American League, onto the playing field in 1979 without proper marketing or cost analysis?

In retrospect, league officials should not have rushed their product. Instead of actually playing baseball, they should have spent 1979 planning baseball. Bernardo Benes, part owner of the Panama Banqueros, concurred and said, "The idea was good, but the planning should have taken another year."[19] Maduro should have required written business plans from each potential team owner. Such plans should have included a feasibility study, a financial plan with several contingency scenarios analyzed, facility viability, a marketing plan, demographic studies, and an analysis of all potential revenue sources.

It is quite possible that had these studies been conducted, the league might have never gotten off the ground. There is no proof that any high-placed officials did due diligence prior to Commissioner Bowie Kuhn giving his approval to the new league. In his autobiography, *Hardball: The Education of a Baseball Commissioner*, Kuhn makes it obvious he was a big fan of the minor leagues. He wrote the following:

> One of the joys of travel for me was the minor-league ballparks and people. I always felt that the heart of baseball was in those nostalgia-laden bandboxes and hard-striving people. There was a rich-textured, profound feel of the game in the minors that I found nowhere else, something closer to the game I first knew as a lad in Griffith Stadium and Forbes Field. So I beat my way across the minors from the Carolinas to Oregon, from Connecticut to West Texas, and I ate their hot dogs, savored their hospitality, and told them how much I cherished them. [20]

Kuhn, however, makes no mention of either the Inter-American League or Roberto Maduro in his 440-page book. It is possible that Kuhn didn't want to dwell on a negative of his administration. Had Commissioner Kuhn and/or his advisors done their homework, they might have offered some well-placed constructive criticism to urge IAL officials to delay the league's inaugural season to 1980.

With better planning, the IAL might have been ruled an economically unfeasible enterprise. Proper business practices might have burst Maduro's bubble before it had been blown. It is possible that Kuhn was thinking like a fan rather than the Commissioner of Baseball when he gave his approval for the IAL, and there may have been some sentiment toward letting Maduro have his own way.

Some baseball officials saw the foolishness in the league. *The Sporting News* ran the following quote from an unidentified major-league official shortly after the IAL's demise:

> It's another example, in my opinion, of the head people in baseball not listening to knowledgeable baseball men. It was a big political deal. They were afraid of two guys who got it started in Washington. They announced the formation of the league in Washington at the headquarters of the Organization of American States. We all knew in our hearts this thing wouldn't work. It couldn't work. They were flying 15, 18, 20 people across the seas. You know what air fares are today. It was absurd.[21]

Further research has disclosed that this unidentified official was Dallas Green,[22] who at the time was the manager of the Philadelphia Phillies. This after-the-fact prediction of failure might have been the result of Green's feelings toward Kuhn. Green, later a GM for the Cubs and manager of the Yankees and Mets, apparently resented lawyers (Kuhn was a lawyer) and also resented directions from the Commissioner. Kuhn felt that Green had "chafed" over his decisions in a number of cases.[23]

Was the league a success in *any* way? To decide, it may help to examine the league's players. In an article "Summer Baseball Returns to Latin America" that appeared in *TSN* on May 5, 1979, Michael Janosky wrote:

> Because it has no major-league affiliation, the IAL is not a Triple-A league in the classic sense. It's more a clearing house for career minor leaguers, players who have run out of organizations offering them chances, former big leaguers making a last gasp attempt to get back and kids who have never played pro ball.[24]

Using Janosky's above statement, we can separate the IAL players into three categories for further analysis. These categories will be simply called "Last Chance/ Career Minor Leaguers," "Former Major Leaguers," and those who "Never Played Pro Ball Before the IAL." All players will be classified in one of those three categories for analysis purposes. It is possible to argue that some of the players could be classified in multiple categories, but to simplify the process, players will be placed in only one category.

Several things can blur these categories. If a player spends most of his career in the minors but had one or more "cups of coffee" in the Show, how should he be classified? For this article, I place him with the career minor-leaguers. Also, if a player eventually appears in the majors after his participation in the IAL, he will also be classified as a career minor leaguer. A player who appears in the majors for an extended period of time after playing in the IAL will also be classified as a career minor leaguer. My reason for this is quite simple; in 1979, he *was* a minor leaguer.

One hundred seventy-three (173) men appeared in the short-lived IAL season. Of these, 102 were position players and 71 were pitchers. A majority of the IAL players—62.43%—are classified as *Last Chance/Career Minor Leaguers*.

The next category, *Former Major Leaguer*, accounted for 23.12% of the players in the league. These two categories totaled 85.55% of the IAL's participants. This would support the IAL classification as a Triple-A league, the highest rung in the minor league ladder. Rosters of teams in this classification usually are stocked with veteran minor leaguers and former major leaguers. The one anomaly in the chart is that this league had 25 true professional rookies—men who never played professional baseball prior to their appearance in the IAL. Obviously, few in baseball begin their careers at the Triple-A level. Why 14% of the leagues' players were rookies can be explained by the its (very) international nature and its independence from major league affiliations.

In order to fully evaluate the overall success or failure of this league, it would help to receive some input from actual players in the league. Therefore, I sent a questionnaire to a sample of IAL players. Their answers provide valuable insight into the league's short history.

Former players were asked questions such as, Did you enjoy playing in the IAL? Do you feel that playing in the IAL helped, hurt,or had no effect on your career? And why? What was your favorite thing about playing in the IAL? What was your least favorite thing about playing in the IAL? Please describe the quality of play in the IAL. Why do you think that the IAL failed? All but one of the responding players enjoyed playing in the league. The player with the negative response was injured while playing in the league, making his response understandable. Another interesting response was from a former major leaguer who felt that telling the story of the IAL was a big money-maker and he wanted to be compensated for answering my questionnaire. (Maduro apparently wasn't the only dreamer connected with the league!)

The reason players enjoyed the IAL could be attributed to the fact that they realized they were in the twilight of their careers and weren't wearing rose-colored glasses. They absolutely knew "the score" of their individual careers at that point. An overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated that playing in the league had no *effect* on their baseball career. The responses from players indicate that these guys had no grand illusion that the IAL was a career-saver or a rebirth. One player indicated "No Effect— Over the Hill." Another said, "No Effect. I was going to retire as a player and go into coaching after the season, anyway."

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Dallas Green was rarely shy about expressing his views. This made him both valuable for his honesty and likely to be fired.

Regarding their favorite thing about playing in the IAL, their answers were a little more diverse. Positive factors included travel, great cities, good food, and great fans. The most interesting response was, "The Comrade [sic]—Playing baseball with some of organized baseball's renegades." These men knew that they were unique players in a unique league that ended too soon for them.

Some of the former players' least favorite things about the IAL give clues as to why the league fell apart. The players cited travel, customs, first-time problems, low pay, and the disorganized franchises in the Latin American countries. Obviously, most of these things were caused by and/or caused financial burdens that the teams couldn't bear.

The IAL was classified as Triple-A, but interestingly, a majority of the veteran minor leaguers and former major leaguers polled pegged the level of play as Double-A. (Could false advertising be another reason for the league's quick demise? Fans paid for and naturally expected a certain product that they did not necessarily receive. Disappointment with the level of play may have led to poor attendance.)

In all, it is difficult to attribute the failure of the IAL to one cause. A more accurate statement might be that several factors worked together to cause its downfall.

First and foremost, Roberto Maduro must shoulder the blame. He felt that his dream could become a reality in 1979 and was anxious to get the IAL off the drawing board and onto the baseball fields of Latin America. As discussed earlier in this article, Maduro admitted that the league didn't start marketing itself until January 1979. What success could the league have experienced if instead of playing baseball during that season, Maduro and other league leaders as well as individual team executives had spend that season putting the league on a sound financial footing?

The best team in the league drew 3,500 fans per game, with the next highest average gate only 1,350. Why were the IAL's games so poorly attended? The poor marketing of the league played a big part, but other factors contributed. There didn't appear to be any real rivalries between the teams, at least the kind that generate fan interest. Had play been delayed for a year, fan interest could have been cultivated as part of the league's preparation work.

Another key factor was high costs. Every trip had to be made by air, a very expensive mode of travel back in 1979, and it doesn't take an accountant to see the disaster of low revenues and high expenses.

When Maduro passed away on October 16, 1986 at the age of 70 from brain cancer, it was front page news of *El Nuevo Herald*, the Spanish newspaper of Miami, Florida. Fausto Miranda, the dean of Cuban sportswriters, eulogized Maduro:

> To remember the personality of Bobby Maduro as a distinguished Cuban sportsman does not do him justice. The death of Maduro is a loss for Latin America. The dreamer and enthusiast dedicated more than half a century of his 70 years to the enlargement of baseball 'without borders and without prejudices,' as he said himself. Maduro traveled all the paths of the great national sport.[25]

In fitting tribute to Maduro, Miami Stadium was renamed Bobby Maduro Stadium in 1987. This stadium was home to the Miami Amigos. It also hosted spring training games for the Orioles and Dodgers as well as those of another doomed indie, the Senior League. The park stood as tribute to the man until it was demolished in 2001 to make way for an affordable rental housing complex.

Roberto Maduro's dream of bringing summer professional baseball to Latin America met reality in 1979, and reality won. In the thirty years since, no summer pro baseball teams have played in Latin America. Maduro's dream has remained just that: a dream. ■

Notes

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8. *The Sporting News*, 14 January 1959, 19.
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10. *The Sporting News*, 11 February 1959, 23.
11. *The Sporting News*, 4 May 1968, 36.
12. *The Sporting News*, 3 February 1979, 46.
13. *The Sporting News*, 4 August 1979, 47.
14. *The Sporting News*, 9 June 1979, 42.
15. *The Sporting News*, 5 May 1979, 41.
16. *The Sporting News*, 5 May 1979, 41 and 21 July 1979, 52.
17. *The Sporting News*, 21 July 1979, 52.
18. *The Sporting News*, 4 May 1968, 36.
19. *The Miami Herald*, 3 July 2004, "Inter-American League Folded in Less Than a Year."
20. Bowie Kuhn, *Hardball—The Education of a Baseball Commissioner* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1987), 44.
21. *The Sporting News*, 18 August 1979, 47.
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23. Bowie Kuhn, *Hardball—The Education of a Baseball Commissioner* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1987), 372.
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Interesting IAL Items

John Cronin

- Wayne Tyrone, who played for the Miami Amigos and led the IAL with eight homers, was a contestant on "The Price Is Right" in 1983. He ended up winning a car valued at approximately $6,500.

- Jim Tyrone, Wayne's brother, who also played for Miami, led the league in batting.

- Mike Anderson, a pitcher, developed an unusual offering while playing for the Panama Banqueros: a one-finger knuckleball.

- Before joining the Maracaibo Petroleros, pitcher Luis Aponte had been retired for three years after spending four years in the Boston Red Sox farm system. While pitching in the IAL, he developed a great forkball. This impressed the Red Sox, who re-signed him. He pitched for Boston 1980–83 and for Cleveland in 1984.

- One player responded that his favorite thing about playing in the IAL was "Great steaks, shrimp, and beer." This same player also indicated that his least favorite thing about playing in the IAL was "Luis Aparicio." He also indicated that "Luis Aparicio" was the reason that he thought the IAL failed. Apparently this player was no fan of the Hall of Fame shortstop.

- Another player said that his most memorable IAL moment was "winning $500 in a casino in Panama."

- One player indicated that his "scary" IAL moment involved his team not being able to leave the Dominican Republic for unknown reasons. Another player noted, "Getting out of Panama City just ahead of the Sandinistas."

- The Santo Domingo Azucareros couldn't catch a break during the first six weeks of the season. During that time, 12 of their games were cancelled because of rain.

- Panama also experienced "technical difficulties" during an afternoon game in mid-April 1979. The scoreboard was inoperable because the man who ran it worked only at night. A 30-minute rainstorm preceded the game, giving the grounds crew the opportunity to unfurl the stadium's new tarpaulin. There was only one small problem, however; the crew, composed of mostly kids, didn't know how to spread the cover over the field.

- During a night game in Venezuela, the lights went off and stayed off, necessitating that the game be called.

- Jose Alfaro, pitcher for Panama, had previously thrown a no-hitter for Dubuque Packers of the Class A Midwest League in 1975. Oddly, four other pitchers on Panama's club had hurled no-hitters prior to the IAL.

- The Miami Amigos got beautiful new uniforms to start the season. Before the team played a game, however, someone stole the uniforms from Miami Stadium. The club temporarily had to wear uniforms reading "Miami Marlins."

- At least one former IAL player met a tragic fate. Outfielder Danny Thomas of the Miami Amigos committed suicide in a Mobile, Alabama jail cell during July 1980. He was being held on a rape charge.

LEAGUE LEADERS

Batting

Batting Average	Jim Tyrone, Miami	.364
Home Runs	Wayne Tyrone, Miami	8
Runs Batted In	Brock Pemberton, Miami	51

Pitching

Wins	Mike Wallace, Miami	11
ERA	Ron Martinez, Miami	0.89
Strikeouts	Al Williams, Panama- Caracas	52

The Marathon Game

Endless Baseball, its Prelude, and its Aftermath in the 1909 Three-I League

William Dowell

The Illinois-Indiana-Iowa baseball league started its ninth consecutive season of play in May 1909. While the league was better known then as the Three-I or Three-Eye league, the name was actually a misnomer. The eight teams in the league that year were located only in Illinois and Iowa. (This would not be the last time that the Three-I league would pretend to be what it was not.) Classified at the time as a class B league, the Three-I in 1909 would be comparable to high-A or double-A ball today.

The Bloomington Bloomer club began 1909 at a disadvantage compared to the league's other teams. While six of the eight teams started spring training the week of March 29, and the Cedar Rapids Rabbits opened their practices the following week, Bloomington was forced to wait until April 13 to call their players into action because their playing grounds were undergoing a major renovation and work could not be completed before April 10. Even when the Bloomers reported April 13, the *Bloomington Pantagraph* noted that "players will work out at the Armory until the grounds are in shape to play," indicating that renovations took longer than expected.

To add another wrinkle to an already inauspicious beginning, on Monday, April 12, before the team even held its first practice, the *Pantagraph* reported "Baseball Co. Needs Money." Like many small-town teams of the time, the Bloomers were owned by local citizens interested in baseball. The 1909 season brought with it a new group of local investors. As a welcome gesture, the old association members donated $100. The coffers, however, were not as full as the new management had hoped. Expecting to find their share of league revenues approximately $400 in the treasury, the owners instead found a $150 league assessment fee. Coupled with pre-season expenses, the cost of renovations, and a limited influx of revenue, the organization was $1,475 in debt.

Fifty miles south in Decatur, Illinois, a very similar circumstance faced the Decatur Commodores, another Three-I club trying to secure its professional and organizational livelihood. After a disastrous 1908 season in which club owners ended with a net loss of $4,500, provisions were made to transfer a majority of the team's stock in the Decatur Baseball Association to a local resident, Dr. C.F. Childs. The first order of business for Childs was to recruit a number of fellow Decatur baseball enthusiasts to act as board members and stir up interest in the community. Faced with the substantial financial deficit from the previous year, Childs made a number of moves, including selling $3,300 worth of players, which allowed him to pay off his debt.

Childs and his magnate pals in Decatur then found $4,000 to build a new ballpark and spent another $1,000 to replace players sold. In addition, the May 2 *Decatur Daily Herald* reported that the owners "dug liberally for the necessary expenses of training." While the Commodores were able to begin practice earlier than the Bloomers, the weather was an impediment during the first two weeks of April for both teams, and hosting exhibition games was difficult.

The spring of 1909 was very wet, which made it difficult to play *any* spring training games. Several practice scrimmages were cancelled due to both the wet conditions and the difficulty and expense of holding such a game. Teams scrambled to find dry ground, and when a field was found, the games usually pitted Three-I clubs against local amateurs.

The Bloomington Bloomers were one club that took advantage of its immediate surroundings. Bloomington was home to Illinois Wesleyan University, a small liberal arts college with a baseball program. As soon as dry grounds could be produced, Illinois Wesleyan signed up, providing the opportunity to scrimmage without the cost of traveling or pressure of making box-office receipts to help offset traveling expenses.

Friday, April 16, the Bloomers were playing their first exhibition game of the 1909 season against Illinois Wesleyan at the school's Wilder Field. The minor leaguers bested the collegians 6–4. The Bloomers agreed to a rematch the next day at the newly renovated South Side Grounds. Not surprisingly, spring showers canceled the game.

The Bloomers' first "official" exhibition game of the season was to be against the Burlington, Iowa team of the Central Association on Sunday, April 18. The 3:00 P.M. game was billed as "opening season—Grand

Dedication Game." The game was to mark the dedication of the renovated ballpark under its new management. Infield admission was twenty-five cents and grandstand seats lining the outfield were free. Burlington, previously in Decatur for an exhibition game with the Commodores, boarded the 11:00 A.M. Interurban train to Bloomington, providing plenty of time to warm up. Unfortunately, the weather again did not cooperate and Burlington boarded the 4:00 P.M. train back to Decatur. Burlington manager Ned Egan was sorely disappointed in the cancellation, saying that this would be the last time he would play exhibition games with other Three-I clubs because of high costs. The dedication game's postponement also hit the Bloomers hard; the club was relying on gate receipts to alleviate its financial crisis.

On Wednesday, April, 21 Bloomington was able to scrape enough money together to send a group of fourteen Bloomers, along with Manager William McNamara, to Kewanee, Illinois for four exhibition games with the town's Central Association team. Manager McNamara had left the "regulars" home to practice. The manager of the Kewanee squad was Bloomington-Normal native William Connors, who had managed the Bloomers in 1908. Connors actually rode the train with the Bloomers, as he had recently returned home to take care of personal matters. As fate would have it, the first two games of the trip were canceled due to—yes uncooperative weather.

On Sunday, April 25, Bloomington played what the local papers dubbed its inaugural exhibition game at newly renovated South Side Grounds, beating Three-I rival the Peoria Distillers, 8–3. On the same day another squad of Bloomers traveled to Decatur to play the Commodores. The game remained tied 1–1 until the last of the ninth when Decatur pushed across the winning run.

Lack of funds and the fear of further wet weather forced the Bloomers to cancel their next scheduled exhibition games in Quincy and Jacksonville. With twelve days left before opening day, the financially strapped Bloomers had only two more exhibition games scheduled (both at home). On Thursday, April 29, the Bloomers faced the collegians of IWU at South Side Grounds and won convincingly, 5–0. The last scheduled exhibition game of the season was with Decatur on Sunday, May 2, in Bloomington. Unfortunately, this game, too, had to be canceled because the grounds crew was unable to get the field in shape following a circus held there earlier in the week. Decatur was also unable to host as there was a scheduling conflict with their field. At the last minute, however, a game with the Springfield Senators was secured in Springfield. Bloomington lost to the Senators 9–6.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y

Bloomington second baseman George Cutshaw is the most famous alumni of the 26-inning game against Decatur on May 31, 1909. Sold to Oakland of the PCL later that season, Cutshaw was in the majors by 1912. He played more than 1,500 major league games.

The Decatur Commodores' two-week head start on spring training allowed the club to play a good amount of exhibition games, as they found enough dry grounds and willing opponents. Like Bloomington, the Decatur ball club also benefited from having a local liberal arts college in the city limits. On April 3 the Commodores faced off against Millikin University. It was not much of a game, as Decatur handled the college boys 20–6.

Decatur was also home to an independent ball team called the Decatur Blues. This happenstance afforded the Commodores the chance to schedule additional games at little to no cost. On April 4, a day after crushing Millikin, the Commodores welcomed the Blues to League Park and won a 6–5 squeaker. Over the next week the Commodores practiced when weather allowed and held intra-squad scrimmages dividing into

"Jakes," named after team member Albert "Beany" Jacobson, and "Moores," named after team manager Fred Moore.

By April 10, the Commodores saw their first real exhibition opponent when the Hannibal Cannibals from Missouri arrived at League Park. The Commodores escaped with a 3–1 victory and the *Decatur Daily Herald* ramped up its coverage of the team. Over the next several days Decatur hosted games with minor league teams from Appleton, Wisconsin; Buffalo, New York; Burlington, Iowa; and Jacksonville, Illinois. On April 20, Fred Moore loaded up his team for an extended road trip which included Jacksonville, Illinois; Hannibal, Missouri; Burlington, Iowa; and Pekin, Illinois. Even though rain and cold weather was a problem throughout April, the Commodores squeezed in at least 16 pre-season games. According to the *Daily Herald*, which published simple batting statistics for its nine main players, Otto Burns led the club with a .319 average. While the newspaper downplayed the successful averages it did go on to note:

> Decatur has nothing to worry about in the makeup of its team. It has the fielders, the batters, and the pitching staff and it has the manager to get everything out of them. More than that it has a club back of him that has already shown its intention of strengthening any weak point that develops with the idea of giving Decatur fans the best ball team they ever had.

Although Decatur fared well in getting in their games, a lack of exhibition games was a problem throughout the league. The home newspaper of league champion Springfield Senators, the *Illinois State Journal*, noted on May 2, "This was the most disheartening training season in history, not a team in the circuit has been able to make feed money and have been hustling to secure money to meet expenses."

Regardless of how little baseball was played, the respective newspapers of each city still stirred up controversy. On April 3, the *Decatur Daily Review* reported that the Commodores had been chosen over the Bloomington Bloomers to play the May 2 dedication game at Pekin Park. Bloomington thought it had a signed contract in hand from the Pekin manager, Doug Jeffries, and as a result were threatening to "set the law dogs on Jeffries." Decatur probably thought the dedication game at Pekin was rightfully theirs, as Jeffries was a respected former outfielder with the Commodores.

Bloomington did, in fact, have the contract (as the Decatur newspaper admitted on April 10), but the unwanted attention pressured the Bloomers to promise to send their top players. Written barbs between Bloomington and Decatur papers appeared quite frequently not only before the season but as the season progressed. The rivalry between the cities was obvious and was no subdued matter. It was not uncommon for a sarcastic comment to appear in "Glints from the Diamond" or "Brevities of Sport" wishing luck to the losing team or telling fans to be thankful that they were not experiencing the misfortunes of the other club.

By April 29 the rivalry got a little more heated. The *Decatur Daily Herald* took exception to comments made by the Bloomington sports reporter about their beloved Commies in a series of articles that appeared in a Springfield, Illinois publication. The Bloomington reporter apparently referred to Decatur players as "untried and inexperienced and even unfit for [a] high school league." The *Daily Herald* reporter, in turn, ended his rebuttal column with, "But what's the use of enumerating. We might not expect anything more from a Bloomington man."

Not lost in all the give-and-take between the newspapers was the fact that Bloomington canceled its commitment to the May 2 grand dedication game at Pekin. Decatur gladly stepped in to fill the spot. Encounters like these undeniably added to the rivalry between the cities and their respective clubs.

The Three-I League's fans and players eagerly anticipated opening day. On Thursday, May 6, Bloomington's baseball bugs were prepared. The Bloomers and their opponent, the Peoria Distillers, paraded through downtown Bloomington in automobiles supplied by the Automobile Club of Bloomington. Fred Ashton's fifteen-piece band accompanied them on the parade route, which started at the Hills Hotel and proceeded through the downtown square and to the newly renovated South Side Grounds. Prior to the game, newly elected Mayor Richard Carlock made an impassioned speech about the importance of baseball to the community.

The rains held off, and opening day in Bloomington appeared to be a big success. (In fact, the weatherman cooperated in all Three-I cities and all scheduled games were played.) Bloomington's opening-day attendance was reported as 1,491, slightly less than the previous year's opening crowd (1,911) but significantly more than the 880 who had showed up in 1907. The Bloomers lost, 3–2 in 10 innings to Peoria. The next time the two clubs took the field, they also took 10 innings to decide matters, and again Bloomington lost, this time 4–2. Ed Clark went the distance for Bloomington in the second game.

Bloomington's first two games were an indication of things to come—losing close games that took more than nine innings. The Bloomers started slowly, losing their first four games and nine of their first 14, and were soon in the cellar of the eight-team league.

The Decatur Commodores had the privilege of opening their season on the road against the defending league champion Springfield Senators. Opening day in the state's capital city, like that in most other Three-I cities, featured a parade—this one beginning at the St. Nicholas Hotel an hour before the game. Led by the Watch Factory band and followed by 300 representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, both teams' players paraded through the business district to League Park. A special carriage took Mayor Jon Schnepp to the ball field to throw out the ceremonial first pitch.

Fourteen hundred fans braved cold and windy conditions to fill the seats and were rewarded with an 8–6 win from Manager Dick Smith and his Senators, although the visiting Commodores perhaps made the game most memorable.

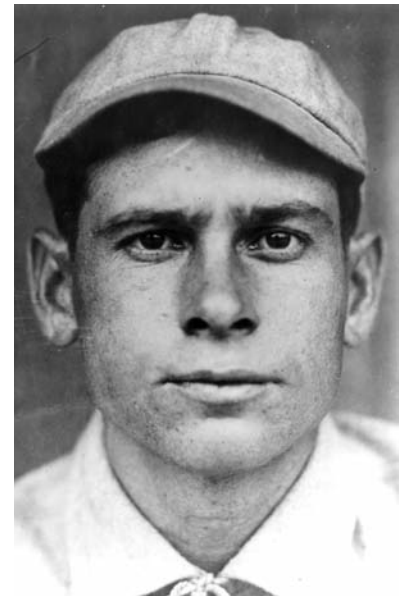
In the bottom of the fifth inning with two outs and Springfield up 7–2, Decatur catcher Bert Fisher became upset with umpire Burke and in a fit of anger threw the ball against the backstop as a protest and muttered a few choice words. Umpire Burke immediately threw him out of the game.

Moments later, Blauser, Springfield's shortstop, scored on a passed ball that looked suspicious to Decatur manager/second baseman Moore, who charged in from his position at second to protest umpire Burke's ruling. According to the *Illinois State Journal*, Moore rushed in, waved his arms wildly, and talked at random, finally falling to the ground in a failed attempt to be funny. An unamused Burke also threw him out of the game and then out of the park altogether, but Moore refused to leave, necessitating that a Springfield police officer escort him out.

Decatur's opening game presaged their season as well, marked as it was by controversial calls, managerial protests, and the need for substitutions.

While extra inning games, controversial calls, and rain dotted Bloomers and Commodores baseball that summer, a particular extra-inning game between these two teams on May 31 particularly stands out.

Sunday, May 30, 1909, was Memorial Day. Like all other Three-I teams, the Bloomington Bloomers and the Decatur Commodores (often shortened to Commies) were set to play a holiday doubleheader. The league office had scheduled morning-afternoon twin bills to double the gate receipts. Bloomington, however, was given special dispensation to hold a traditional afternoon doubleheader. Bloomington had made the case to league President M.H. Sexton that the teams stood a better chance to attract a larger crowd with an afternoon doubleheader. This was a key matter because at the time, all gate receipts for Memorial Day ball games were pooled collectively and dispensed evenly among all the teams in the Three-I League. Memorial Day games drew far larger crowds than typical ball games, and splitting the money evenly was nearly essential, considering most teams' financial struggles. President Sexton accepted the overture, claiming that "by playing two afternoon games the fans will get a double run for their money." The first game of the afternoon doubleheader between the Bloomers and Commodores began at 2:00 P.M.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y

Bill Purtell spent five seasons as an infielder with various AL teams. His brother Mark never reached those heights; he batted just .135 for Decatur in 1909, but the little shortstop did collect the winning hit on May 30.

Neither team was in particularly good shape at the time. While Decatur was able to claim a 12–10 record, the Bloomers had just lost two in a row to Springfield and limped in at a less than respectable 7–14. Uglier than the records were the teams' physical (and in one case emotional) well-being. Both teams' pitching corps had been exhausted. The Commodores had just suspended one of their best twirlers, "Beany" Jacobson, for violating training rules on the western trip. The disciplinary move caused a rift between manager Fred Moore and team president Doc Childs. Moore soon resigned as manager, forfeiting his responsibilities to make player personnel decisions but as field captain would still make all on-field game related decisions. The good news for the Commodores was that first baseman Sam Foster was reinstated after serving *his* suspension for striking an umpire in Dubuque.

The Bloomers, on the other hand, had just replen-

ished their pitching by picking up William Miller, on loan from Springfield, and William Steen, a free agent who chose to sign with the struggling Bloomers. Unfortunately, neither man would be available for Memorial Day duty. Catcher Nig Langdon, however, had just returned to Bloomington and would be with the team for the Memorial Day matchup.

For Game One, Bloomington manager McNamara gave the starting mound assignment to Ed Clark, who had struggled early on but also suffered from hard luck. He was just 1–4, but each of his first five games of the season had been decided by two runs or fewer. Fred Moore was so desperate for pitching that he sent backup infielder/outfielder Otto Burns to the "pitcher's box."Burns had never pitched professionally and not taken the hill competitively since his youth in Ohio.

It rained May 30 in Bloomington and the grounds were soggy. The sun did appear briefly just after noon, giving some hope of decent weather. At precisely 2:00 P.M., in front of 1,200 onlookers, Umpire Clarke called the game into action. The field was muddy from the morning showers, but these games had to be played for financial reasons. Scarcely had the first pitch been thrown when a light drizzle began.

In the home first, Decatur second baseman Moore dropped Frank Long's grounder, allowing him to safely reach first base. The speedy Long immediately stole second. Joe Keenan and George Cutshaw were unable to advance Long any further, but the cleanup hitter, first baseman Frank Melchior, "smash[ed] a hit through John Barkwell" at third, allowing Long to score the first run of the game.

Decatur would tie the score in the third when Otto Burns led off with a single to right and advanced to second on Moore's sacrifice. Barkwell doubled to left, plating Burns.

The gentle rain persisted until the fifth inning when the drops became larger, forcing players off the field and the fans to run for the cover of the grandstand. After 30 minutes play resumed, and both coaches decided to keep their starting pitchers in the game. Neither team mustered much offense, although the Commies filled the bases in the seventh with one out but could not score.

The game—just the first in a doubleheader—progressed to the thirteenth inning. In the top of the frame, Decatur's Jesse Ruby walked. Bloomington's Clark, still on the hill, plunked Barkwell and walked Sam Foster. The Commodores now had the bases loaded with nobody out. Moore called for the squeeze play, but Jenkins bunted right to the pitcher, Clark, who forced Ruby at the plate. With the bases still packed, Cote hit a tailor-made double play ball that got the Bloomers out of the inning. With the threat averted the Bloomers and the Commies proceeded to play 12 *more* innings of no-run baseball.

More than four hours had passed and it was well beyond 6:00 P.M. The rain continued to fall soaking the players and making the field conditions questionable. Infielders and base runners were slowed by the mud caking on their cleats and the outfielders remained cautious of slippery footing.

But the rain did not keep the fans away, nor send home many of the ones already there. As the game progressed into innings 20 and beyond, word had spread through the community that something historic was taking place at South Side Grounds. Few fans had left and more were undoubtedly attracted to the possibility of history being made.

Adding to the excitement of the contest was whether or not the game would be allowed to officially end with a winner. Not only were the teams battling to a 1–1 tie, the continued rain made playing conditions border on dangerous and the dark weather coupled with late afternoon skies made it difficult to see. On top of the physical limitations, Decatur was pressed to catch the last train of the night which left within the next half hour.

Twenty-five innings had elapsed, and all eighteen players who started the game were still fighting, including both starting pitchers. Bloomers pitcher Clark still appeared strong, as Jenkins and Cote of Decatur opened the twenty-sixth by grounding to Roy Snyder at short. The next batter, Bert Fisher, took the first pitch for a strike then hit a high, but easy, pop foul down the first base line. What would appear to be a sure third out landed harmlessly between catcher Langdon and first baseman Melchior. With an 0–2 count and a second chance to swing the bat, Fisher stepped back in the batter's box. On the next pitch, Clark threw one inside which hit Fisher in the ribs; this was Clark's third hit batter of the game.

Decatur second baseman Mark Purtell dug in. On the first pitch he saw, he scorched a line drive over Melchior's head at first which rolled all the way to the scoreboard. By the time Bloomington right fielder Jim Novacek retrieved the ball, Fisher had scored and Purtell was standing on third base.

Manager McNamara of the Bloomers came storming out of the dugout protesting that Purtell had "cut" second base. The umpire agreed with McNamara that Purtell had, in fact, missed second and proceeded to call him out, ending the inning. McNamara was still not satisfied. He argued that Fisher had not yet crossed

home plate at the time that Purtell had approached second base, and therefore the run should not count. The umpire disagreed, awarding Decatur the run, claiming that Fisher had already crossed home.

In the span of three pitches a foul ball had been misplayed, a batter hit in the ribs, and a pitch driven for a run-scoring "single"—all this activity after 26 innings of baseball, with the last 23 innings being scoreless. Someone had finally crossed the plate, albeit under protest. Decatur was in the lead 2–1.

The Bloomers bats fell silent in the bottom of the twenty-sixth, and with two outs, manager McNamara installed himself as a pinch-hitter. It was the first and only substitution of the game. The strategy did not pay off, as McNamara was easily retired to end the game. Although Bloomington would protest the game, the Commodores left South Side Grounds victorious. Not surprisingly the second game of the doubleheader was called off, due to darkness and the visitors' need to catch the night's last train home.

A rather large crowd, estimated at more than 1,000, had gathered outside the *Decatur Daily Herald* offices, where recaps of the action were posted. Once the final score was announced, the crowd erupted and moved to the Transfer House to welcome the team home.

From start to finish the game had taken five hours: four hours, 30 minutes of actual baseball and 30 minutes of rain delay, with only the one substitution. Clark of Bloomington and Burns of Decatur pitched complete games.

Over 26 innings Ed Clark faced 98 Commodore batters, allowing two runs, eleven hits, and six walks, and hitting three batters. He was so dominant that he only ceded multiple hits in one inning (the third when Decatur pushed across their first score). His counterpart, Burns, pitching his first professional game, faced 88 Bloomers, allowing 13 hits and one walk and plunking one batter. Bloomington committed two errors and stranded 11 men, while Decatur committed three errors and left 16 runners on. (Oddly, the walk Burns issued wasn't recognized until the June 2, 1909 *Pantagraph*. The Bloomington scorer was either caught up in the excitement of the game or overcome by its length and neglected to record a free pass given to Nig Langdon in the eighteenth inning, a tactical move which loaded the bases and allowed a force out.)

Defensively the game was well played with both the Decatur and Bloomington papers reporting a number of fine catches and throws. Decatur's second baseman, Moore, first baseman Foster, and catcher Fisher each committed one error. On the Bloomers' side, second baseman George Cutshaw and third baseman Joe Keenan were guilty of blunders. Both first basemen were kept busy, claiming 58 putouts between them.

Decatur pitcher Burns and right fielder Jenkins led the team with three hits each, while Bloomington's catcher Langdon and right fielder Novacek also paced their club with three hits. Decatur's scorekeeper credited the game's hero, Purtell, with two hits, one being the game-winning triple, while Bloomington's scorebook also credited Purtell with two hits but—correctly—credited him only with singles.

This marathon game was, at the time, the longest professional baseball game played in innings, surpassing the previous high count of 25 innings on July 18, 1891 in Devils Lake, North Dakota, when the Grand Forks Black Stockings and Fargo Red Stockings jousted to a scoreless tie.

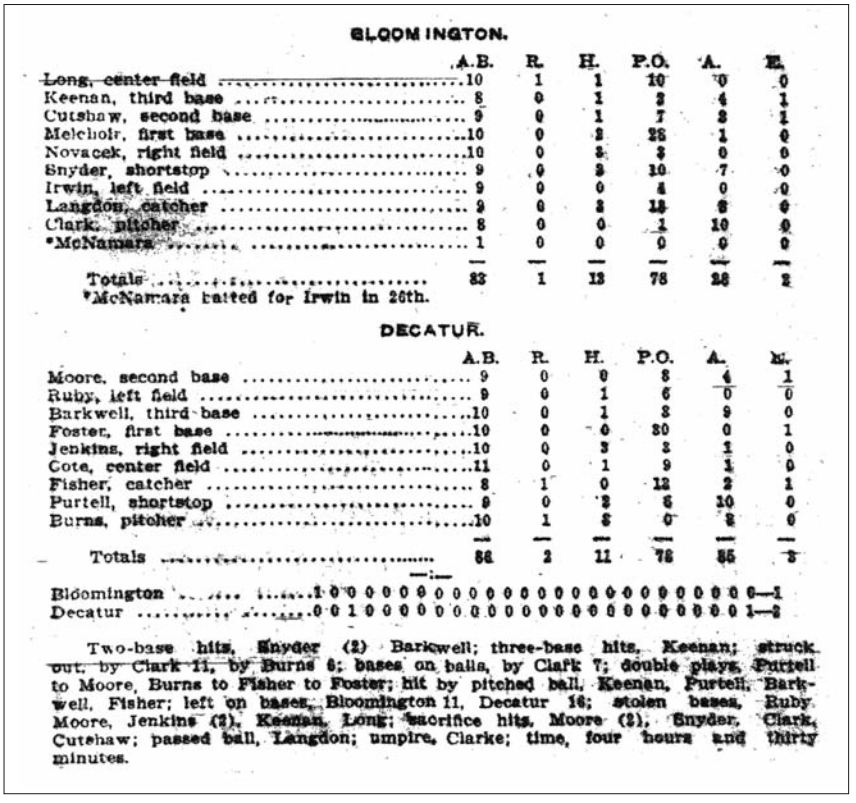
The headlines in the *Pantagraph* the next day read "Bloomers Lose Longest Game." The *Decatur Daily Review* posted the entire inning-by-inning score across the top of the page with the number one posted in the bottom of the first and the top of the third and 26th innings, with 49 zeros filling the rest. The *Daily Herald* headlined its story "Decatur Wins Longest Ball Game 2–1 in 26 Innings." Both cities' papers dedicated a great deal of space to the game, and rightfully so as this was a record-breaking event. While all newspapers had essentially the same stories, the demeanors were certainly different.

Decatur papers ran pictures of their heroes: "Little" Mark Purtell, Fred Moore, and, of course pitching ace Otto Burns. The paper provided extended detailed coverage of the game and lauded the perseverance of the ball club in holding strong and scrapping to victory. The paper also published photos of the crowds that had gathered the night before outside the paper's offices to keep track of the game courtesy of the news wire. The excited crowd spilled over the curbs and into the street as fans followed the game. Of course, mention was also made of the "unsportsmanlike" protest Bloomington had made regarding the controversial run.

While the *Bloomington Pantagraph* also featured extended coverage of the game, the tone was more somber. The Bloomers fought until the end, it was written, but just didn't have enough when it counted. Pictures of Ed Clark and manager William McNamara graced the pages of the sports section.

The next day, at the Sherman House in Chicago, where each Three-I team president had convened to discuss payroll and roster sizes, they read about the Bloomers' and Commodores' exploits like the rest of the country. From New York to California and every-

where in between, the "marathon game" had been recounted and recognized as the longest official professional baseball match. As the day's first order of business, President Sexton made sure to congratulate the representatives of both clubs and recognize the attention that this distinctive game had brought to their circuit. The fact that the longest baseball game played now belonged to the Three-I League was not lost on the representatives at the meeting. In a moment of levity, President Kinsella of the Springfield Senators publicly offered the Bloomington management a large sum if they would send their team to Springfield and pull off a similar stunt.



BLOOMINGTON.

	A.B.	R.	H.	P.O.	A.	E.
Long, center field	10	1	1	10	0	0
Keenan, third base	8	0	1	2	4	1
Cutshaw, second base	9	0	1	7	3	1
Melchoir, first base	10	0	2	25	1	0
Novacek, right field	10	0	3	3	0	0
Snyder, shortstop	9	0	3	10	7	0
Irwin, left field	9	0	0	4	0	0
Langdon, catcher	9	0	2	13	2	0
Clark, pitcher	8	0	0	1	10	0
*McNamara	1	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	83	1	13	76	28	2

*McNamara batted for Irwin in 26th.

DECATUR.

	A.B.	R.	H.	P.O.	A.	E.
Moore, second base	9	0	0	8	4	1
Ruby, left field	9	0	1	6	0	0
Barkwell, third base	10	0	1	3	9	0
Foster, first base	10	0	0	30	0	1
Jenkins, right field	10	0	3	2	1	0
Cote, center field	11	0	1	9	1	0
Fisher, catcher	8	1	0	12	2	1
Purtell, shortstop	9	0	2	5	10	0
Burns, pitcher	10	1	3	0	2	0
Totals	86	2	11	76	35	3

Bloomington .....1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0—1
Decatur .....0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1—2

Two-base hits, Snyder (2) Barkwell; three-base hits, Keenan; struck out, by Clark 11, by Burns 6; bases on balls, by Clark 7; double plays, Purtell to Moore, Burns to Fisher to Foster; hit by pitched ball, Keenan, Purtell, Barkwell, Fisher; left on bases, Bloomington 11, Decatur 16; stolen bases, Ruby, Moore, Jenkins (2), Keenan, Long; sacrifice hits, Moore (2), Snyder, Clark, Cutshaw; passed ball, Langdon; umpire, Clarke; time, four hours and thirty minutes.

COURTESY OF WILLIAM DOWELL

The box score from the legendary 26-inning game between Bloomington and Decatur on May 31, 1909. Note that the home team is listed first.

Later in the evening, Decatur president Doc Childs received a telegram asking for the price on pitcher Otto Burns for immediate delivery. The telegram was signed "Charles Comiskey, manager, Chicago White Sox." Childs was said to have smiled as he read the message, knowing it was a practical joke. It was later revealed that the prankster was the president of the Bloomington club.

The nostalgic game made for a more relaxed meeting and might help to explain how the Three-I magnates so quickly agreed on new roster and salary limits. The news out of the Sherman House on June 2 was that league teams would be allowed to now carry 14 men, one more than previous, and that the salary limit had been increased to $1,750.

Even if they had wanted to, neither team could escape attention for long. On Tuesday morning, two days after the record-breaking game, the Bloomers boarded the train to start their next road trip. First stop, Decatur, Illinois, to play the Commies! The marathon game of the previous day undoubtedly raised interest, as attendance was estimated at 1,500 for the afternoon game. Among the attendees were 500 women who were each presented with a special carnation to commemorate the previous day's game. Before the action could begin, Otto Burns was presented a bouquet of roses in recognition of his work on the slab.

Bloomington won this game, 3–2, in nine innings with no late dramatics. Newspapers from both cities were quick to point out that both teams showed the effects from the previous day's game, noting listless efforts and sleepy play.

When the Bloomers returned home from their road trip on June 6, arrangements had been made by the local community to recognize the club for its participation in the record-setting game. Baseball magnate E.E. Donnelly delivered a brief speech before the game and a group of appreciative and enthusiastic fans presented the team with a floral emblem containing what the local paper called the cabalistic number 26 in the center. Unfortunately, the Bloomers failed to play up to the expectations and lost to Rock Island. Coincidentally, on the same day Bloomington was recognized for their part in the historic game, Otto Burns—who had beaten them a week earlier—pitched his second professional game, winning 4–3 in ten innings.

Shortly after the historic game, Bloomington's Clark was called home to Chicago to take care of his ailing mother, the *Pantagraph* reported. He did not return to the team until June 7, when he promptly returned to the pitcher's box. In his first start after the marathon game, Clark lasted only four innings; the lowly Cedar Rapids Rabbits tagged him for six runs. While one could assume that he was ineffective due to his recent workload, it also must be noted that early in the game, he had been hit in the pitching arm by a batted ball. Oddly,

the umpire for Ed Clark's return game was Clarke, the same umpire from the extra-inning affair. And as fate would have it, the catcher for the Cedar Rapids team was called out after an apparent home run for—what else?—failing to touch second base.

Ed Clark did not pitch again for eight days. When he returned to the hill, it was once again for no ordinary game. On June 15, Clark pitched a complete-game win—this time 15 innings—over the Peoria Distillers. Clark faced 58 batters in the 15 innings and went 2-for-7 at the plate. The game lasted all of three hours and was, interestingly, umpired again by Clarke. In two of three starts, Ed Clark pitched a combined 41 innings and faced 156 batters. It's no surprise that the *Pantagraph* labeled him "The Long Distance Hurler."

Over the following weeks the two teams received more notoriety as other newspapers around the county picked up on the novelty of the 26-inning game and local citizens did what they could to keep the memory of the event alive. One citizen just outside of Bloomington, sign painter North Livingston, reproduced the entire box score of the game, including player names and positions, on the blackboard at the Metropole.

Much of the outside attention was acknowledged in various papers' sports sections under headings like "Glints of the Game" or "Brevities of Sport." On June 10, the *Pantagraph* noted, "Man returns from visit out east proclaiming 26-inning contest put Bloomington on the map." Similarly, on June 18 a Los Angeles newspaper was cited as giving the 26-inning game "big space." The acknowledgment that their game meant something outside their communities was important to both Decatur and Bloomington.

Nearly lost and forgotten in the publicity of the record-breaking game was the protest filed by the Bloomers. On June 16 the protest was finally resolved. The following day's papers reported that President Sexton announced the awarding of the 26-inning game to the Commodores. It is said that after careful consideration, Sexton came to the conclusion that the Commodores had won the game "fairly and squarely." Of course reporters from both cities had a slightly different understanding of what "fairly and squarely" meant, but both cities and teams had accepted the outcome.

On Monday, June 7, the Bloomers lost to last-place Cedar Rapids, 9–4. Following the game, William McNamara resigned as manager and left the team. According to news reports, McNamara had attempted to quit at the end of May but was dissuaded by the directors. At the time of his resignation Bloomington was 9–18.

Just two days later, the Cedar Rapids Rabbits were in town to play the Bloomers and had just lost their catcher to injury. McNamara accepted the invitation to play against his former team for the day and came through with a double. In another odd turn of events, McNamara replaced Bert Fisher in the Decatur lineup and finished the season with the Commies.

The *Decatur Daily Herald* was reporting by June 5 that Fred Moore would soon be released. The club finally parted ways with its second baseman on July 16. Third baseman Johnny Barkwell took charge.

The Bloomers began to play better ball and finished the season in fourth place (among eight teams) at 70–67. The Commodores couldn't keep pace and finished seventh with a 63–73 record. The Bloomers won 10 of 19 games between the two clubs.

Otto Burns remained in the Decatur rotation for the rest of the season pitching soundly for his team. Ed Clark also remained in the starting rotation for the Bloomers until late August, when his struggles were too badly hurting the club. According to the *Pantagraph*, he was loaned to the Central Association's Kewanee Boilermakers. Clark did rejoin the Bloomers late in the season and pitched in the season's penultimate game. He hung around after the season to collect a few extra dollars by barnstorming around central Illinois with some other Bloomers.

Mark Purtell, hero of the marathon game, engraved his name in the Three-I record books at the end of the 1909 season, but not positively. The man who had the game-winning triple, or single, set an all-time low in batting average for regular players. His .135 season average still stood as the record of hitting futility at the end of the Three-I league's existence nearly five decades later. Mark never reached the heights of his brother Billy, who spent five years in the major leagues—including 1909 with the Chicago White Sox.

George Cutshaw, Bloomington's second sacker, experienced the most success of all the players in the historic game. Cutshaw broke into major league baseball in 1912 with Brooklyn and played there for six seasons. He also spent four seasons in Pittsburgh and finished his career with two seasons in Detroit. During his twelve-year career, he collected 1,487 hits, amassed a .265 batting average, and swiped 271 bases.

For 57 years, the Bloomers and Commodores held the distinction of playing the longest completed professional ballgame in the United States (the Class C Mexican Center League featured a 27-inning game in 1960). Not until 1966, when Miami needed 29 innings to defeat St. Petersburg in a Florida State League matchup, did the Three-I League lose hold on the

history books. In 1981, the Pawtucket PawSox and Rochester Redwings played a 33-inning game in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. The game actually started on April 18, 1981, when 32 innings were played, and finished with the deciding inning on June 23, 1981.

What was a great sense of pride for two Illinois cities has now been lost to history. The Three-I League has folded and all players, fans, umpires, and writers associated with the marathon game have long since passed on. Accounts of the game are posted in local newspapers only when on a noteworthy anniversary. Even descriptions of the game are severely limited. We may find mention of the 26-inning contest in newspapers under the headings "Almanac," "On This Date," or "Yesteryears." But for five decades, two small farming towns in Central Illinois held a record that brought their teams, cities, and league a great deal of notoriety. For fifty years those teams shared the spotlight, remembered their exploits together, and laid their claim to baseball fame. ■

Sources

This essay called on information mainly culled from three Illinois newspapers: the *Bloomington Pantagraph*, the *Decatur Daily Herald*, and the *Springfield* (Illinois) *State Journal*. These papers provided information in editions printed between April 3, 1909 and July 17, 1909. In addition, the *ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia*, edited by Pete Palmer and Gary Gillette and published in 2004 by Barnes & Noble, was used.

Choosing Among Winners of the 1981 AL ERA Title

Bill Nowlin and Lyle Spatz

The strike-shortened 1981 season resulted in confusion as to who had the lowest earned run average in the American League. To qualify, a pitcher has to have pitched one inning for each of his team's games played. In most years this would mean 162 innings, but the strike had reduced each team's games to just over 100. The apparent winner was Sammy Stewart of the Baltimore Orioles, with an ERA of 2.32356 in 112⅓ innings pitched. Finishing just behind Stewart was Steve McCatty of the Oakland A's, whose ERA was 2.32670 in 185⅔ innings pitched.

Due, however, to a no-longer-extant rule regarding the rounding of innings pitched, McCatty was declared the official leader. Stewart's 112⅓ inning total was rounded down to 112, while McCatty's 185⅔ innings were rounded *up* to 186. McCatty got credit for an extra third of an inning without allowing a run, and Stewart lost a third of a scoreless inning. That made McCatty's ERA 2.32 and Stewart's 2.33. While the findings were appealed, the Rules Committee of the day upheld the result because it conformed to the established practice. The rule was changed the next year and fractions of innings were no longer rounded up or down.

Results were not applied retroactively (nor should they be), however, so nearly all sources continue to list McCatty as the AL's ERA leader in 1981. There is one exception, though. Baseball-Reference.com has Dave Righetti of the Yankees as the 1981 leader. Righetti's ERA was 2.05, significantly lower than McCatty's or Stewart's. But Righetti pitched just 105⅓ innings, and his team played 107 games.

It takes at least a slight bending of the rules to recognize Righetti as the official leader, an interpretation that would never be contemplated in a normal season. But 1981 was different, which leaves us with legitimate arguments for three different pitchers as the American League's ERA leader that year.

The Infinitely Long MLB Plate Appearance

Brian Yonushonis

To those who live and breathe baseball as I do, the game was aptly described by the late A. Bartlett Giamatti in the November 1977 issue of Yale's alumni magazine. In "The Green Fields of the Mind," Giamatti notes, "The game breaks your heart. It is designed to break your heart. The game begins in spring, when everything else begins again, and it blossoms in the summer, filling the afternoons and evenings, and then as soon as the chill rains come, it stops and leaves you to face the fall alone."

Not everyone has the same love for baseball, or enjoys the pitch-by-pitch nuances of the sport. Ray Fitzgerald wrote in the 1970 *Boston Globe* that one critic once characterized baseball as "six minutes of action crammed into two-and-one-half hours."

I understand that baseball is not the quickest action sport. Should a person think that a major league game lasting two hours and 47 minutes—the current average—is a long time, then they might run screaming from the idea of an infinitely long plate appearance. Such an event is, of course, thoroughly unlikely, but it *could* happen.

A standard baseball plate appearance, with its strategic mix of balls, strikes, and foul balls can, mathematically, take an infinitely long time to complete…in fact, four times infinitely long to complete, which is just infinitely long.

For our purposes, we will define a plate appearance as **PA = H + BB + K + HBP + SH + SF + DI + E+ DFO** where:

- **PA** = Plate Appearance
- **H** = Hit (single, double, triple, or home run)
- **BB** = Walk (Four balls before three strikes)
- **K** = Strikeout (Three strikes before four balls)
- **HBP** = Hit by Pitch
- **SH** = Sacrifice Hit
- **SF** = Sacrifice Fly
- **DI** = Defensive Interference
- **E** = Batter reaches base due to a defensive fielding error
- **DFO** = Defensive Fielding Out – fly out, foul out, or ground out

An official plate appearance is completed when the batter reaches base via a hit, walk, strikeout, is hit with a pitch, sacrifices to attempt to advance a runner, reaches on Defensive Interference, reaches on a defensive fielding error, or is retired by a defensive fielding out.

The reason these calculations are monumental is because one cannot derive the probability of walks or strikeouts based on the pitches you have seen, because in one calculation equation there are multiple unknowns, giving an infinite number of solutions. My calculations allow a person to calculate the expected probability of a ball, a strike, and a foul, which in turn could yield the true probability of a resulting batting line of walks, strikeouts, and the pitch put in play results that a player actually achieved.

As you will see, 57 ways exist to walk and 84 ways to strike out; this also includes an infinite number of pitches thrown in some instances. This is easily proven by using an infinite geometric series.

INFINITE GEOMETRIC SERIES

An *infinite geometric series* is an infinite series whose successive terms have a common ratio. Such a series converges if (and only if) the absolute value of the common ratio is less than one ($|r| < 1$). Its value can then be computed from the finite sum formula

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} ar^k = \lim_{n\to\infty} \sum_{k=0}^{n} ar^k = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{a(1-r^{n+1})}{1-r} = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{a}{1-r} - \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{ar^{n+1}}{1-r}$$

Since:

$$r^{n+1} \to 0 \text{ as } n \to \infty \text{ when } |r| < 1.$$

Then:

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} ar^k = \frac{a}{1-r} - 0 = \frac{a}{1-r}$$

Any pitch put in play, or that does *not* end with a walk or strikeout, automatically ends the plate appearance. Non-hit balls that do not end a plate appearance (and are not inclusive of a walk or strikeout) are classified into four categories:

B – Ball
S – Swinging Strike, Called Strike, or Foul Ball
F – Strike – Foul Ball
K – Strike – Called Strike or Swinging Strike… where P(B), P(S), P(F), and P(K) are all between [0,1] and sum to 1 inclusive of those Put in Play (PIP), i.e. P(B)+P(S)+P(PIP)=1. P(S) = P(F)+P(K)

An infinitely long at bat, for example, is the 57th described way that a batter can walk.

Batter Pitch 1 – S, Strike
Batter Pitch 2 – S, Strike
Batter Pitch 3 – F, Fouls a ball to infinity
Batter Pitch 4 – B, Ball
Batter Pitch 5 – F, Fouls a ball to infinity
Batter Pitch 6 – B, Ball
Batter Pitch 7 – F, Fouls a ball to infinity
Batter Pitch 8 – B, Ball
Batter Pitch 9 – F, Fouls a ball to infinity
Batter Pitch 10 – B, Ball Four – Plate Appearance completed resulting in a BB.

All 57 combinations that result in a walk, and all 84 combinations of events resulting in a strikeout, are detailed below.

WALK	Comb	Pitches->	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	1	3-0, B B	B	B	B							
2	1	3-1, B B	B	B	S	B						
3	2	3-1, B B	B	S	B	B						
4	3	3-1, B B	S	B	B	B						
5	4	3-1, B S	B	B	B	B						
6	1	3-2, B B	B	B	S	S	B					
7	2	3-2, B B	B	S	B	S	B					
8	3	3-2, B B	B	S	S	B	B					
9	4	3-2, B B	S	B	B	S	B					
10	5	3-2, B B	S	B	S	B	B					
11	6	3-2, B B	S	S	B	B	B					
12	7	3-2, B S	B	B	B	S	B					
13	8	3-2, B S	B	B	S	B	B					
14	9	3-2, B S	B	S	B	B	B					
15	10	3-2, B S	S	B	B	B	B					
16	1	3-2, 1F, B B	B	B	S	S	F	B				
17	2	3-2, 1F, B B	B	S	B	S	F	B				
18	3	3-2, 1F, B B	B	S	S	B	F	B				
19	3	3-2, 1F, B B	B	S	S	F	B	B				
20	3	3-2, 2F, B B	B	S	S	F	B	F	B			
21	4	3-2, 1F, B B	S	B	B	S	F	B				
22	5	3-2, 1F, B B	S	B	S	B	F	B				
23	5	3-2, 1F, B B	S	B	S	F	B	B				
24	5	3-2, 2F, B B	S	B	S	F	B	F	B			
25	6	3-2, 1F, B B	S	S	F	B	B	B				
26	6	3-2, 1F, B B	S	S	B	F	B	B				
27	6	3-2, 1F, B B	S	S	B	B	F	B				
28	6	3-2, 2F, B B	S	S	F	B	F	B	B			
29	6	3-2, 2F, B B	S	S	F	B	B	F	B			
30	6	3-2, 2F, B B	S	S	B	F	B	F	B			
31	6	3-2, 3F, B B	S	S	F	B	F	B	F	B		
32	7	3-2, 1F, B S	B	B	B	S	F	B				
33	8	3-2, 1F, B S	B	B	S	B	F	B				
34	8	3-2, 1F, B S	B	B	S	F	B	B				
35	8	3-2, 2F, B S	B	B	S	F	B	F	B			
36	9	3-2, 1F, B S	B	S	B	B	F	B				
37	9	3-2, 1F, B S	B	S	B	F	B	B				
38	9	3-2, 1F, B S	B	S	F	B	B	B				
39	9	3-2, 2F, B S	B	S	F	B	F	B	B			
40	9	3-2, 2F, B S	B	S	F	B	B	F	B			
41	9	3-2, 2F, B S	B	S	B	F	B	F	B			
42	9	3-2, 3F, B S	B	S	F	B	F	B	F	B		
43	10	3-2, 1F, B S	S	B	B	B	F	B				
44	10	3-2, 1F, B S	S	B	B	F	B	B				

WALK	Comb	Pitches->	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
45	10	3-2, 1F, B S	S	B	F	B	B	B				
46	10	3-2, 1F, B S	S	F	B	B	B	B				
47	10	3-2, 2F, B S	S	F	B	F	B	B	B			
48	10	3-2, 2F, B S	S	F	B	B	F	B	B			
49	10	3-2, 2F, B S	S	F	B	B	B	F	B			
50	10	3-2, 2F, B S	S	B	F	B	F	B	B			
51	10	3-2, 2F, B S	S	B	F	B	B	F	B			
52	10	3-2, 2F, B S	S	B	B	F	B	F	B			
53	10	3-2, 3F, B S	S	F	B	F	B	F	B	B		
54	10	3-2, 3F, B S	S	F	B	F	B	B	F	B		
55	10	3-2, 3F, B S	S	F	B	B	F	B	F	B		
56	10	3-2, 3F, B S	S	B	F	B	F	B	F	B		
57	10	3-2, 4F, B S	S	F	B	F	B	F	B	F	B	

STRIKEOUT		Comb	Pitches->	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	1	0-2, K	S	S	K								
2	1	1-2, K	S	S	B	K							
3	2	1-2, K	S	B	S	K							
4	3	1-2, K	B	S	S	K							
5	1	2-2, K	S	S	B	B	K						
6	2	2-2, K	S	B	S	B	K						
7	3	2-2, K	S	B	B	S	K						
8	4	2-2, K	B	S	S	B	K						
9	5	2-2, K	B	S	B	S	K						
10	6	2-2, K	B	B	S	S	K						
11	1	3-2, K	S	S	B	B	B	K					
12	2	3-2, K	S	B	S	B	B	K					
13	3	3-2, K	S	B	B	S	B	K					
14	4	3-2, K	S	B	B	B	S	K					
15	5	3-2, K	B	S	S	B	B	K					
16	6	3-2, K	B	S	B	S	B	K					
17	7	3-2, K	B	S	B	B	S	K					
18	8	3-2, K	B	B	S	S	B	K					
19	9	3-2, K	B	B	S	B	S	K					
20	10	3-2, K	B	B	B	S	S	K					
21	1	0-2, 1F, K S	S	S	F	K							
22	1	1-2, 1F, K S	S	S	B	F	K						
23	2	1-2, 1F, K S	S	S	F	B	K						
24	3	1-2, 2F, K S	S	S	F	B	F	K					
25	1	1-2, 1F, K S	S	B	S	F	K						
26	1	1-2, 1F, K B	S	S	S	F	K						
27	1	2-2, 1F, K S	S	S	B	B	F	K					
28	2	2-2, 1F, K S	S	S	B	F	B	K					
29	3	2-2, 1F, K S	S	S	F	B	B	K					
30	1	2-2, 2F, K S	S	S	B	F	B	F	K				
31	2	2-2, 2F, K S	S	S	F	B	F	B	K				
32	3	2-2, 2F, K S	S	S	F	B	B	F	K				
33	4	2-2, 3F, K S	S	S	F	B	F	B	F	K			
34	1	2-2, 1F, K S	S	B	S	B	F	K					
35	2	2-2, 1F, K S	S	B	S	F	B	K					
36	3	2-2, 2F, K S	S	B	S	F	B	F	K				

STRIKEOUT		Comb	Pitches->1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
37	1	2-2, 1F, K	S	B	S	F	K					
38	1	2-2, 1F, K	B	S	B	F	K					
39	2	2-2, 1F, K	B	S	F	B	K					
40	3	2-2, 2F, K	B	S	F	B	F	K				
41	1	2-2, 1F, K	B	B	S	F	K					
42	1	2-2, 1F, K	B	S	S	F	K					
43	1	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	B	B	F	K				
44	2	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	B	F	B	K				
45	3	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	F	B	B	K				
46	4	3-2, 1F, K	S	F	B	B	B	K				
47	1	3-2, 2F, K	S	F	B	F	B	B	K			
48	2	3-2, 2F, K	S	F	B	B	F	B	K			
49	3	3-2, 2F, K	S	F	B	B	B	F	K			
50	4	3-2, 2F, K	S	B	F	B	F	B	K			
51	5	3-2, 2F, K	S	B	F	B	B	F	K			
52	6	3-2, 2F, K	S	B	B	F	B	F	K			
53	1	3-2, 3F, K	S	F	B	F	B	F	B	K		
54	2	3-2, 3F, K	S	F	B	F	B	B	F	K		
55	2	3-2, 3F, K	S	F	B	B	F	B	F	K		
56	3	3-2, 3F, K	S	B	F	B	F	B	F	K		
57	1	3-2, 4F, K	S	F	B	F	B	F	B	F	K	
58	1	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	S	B	B	F	K			
59	1	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	S	B	F	B	K			
60	1	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	S	F	B	B	K			
61	1	3-2, 2F, K	S	B	S	F	B	F	B	K		
62	2	3-2, 2F, K	S	B	S	F	B	B	F	K		
63	3	3-2, 2F, K	S	B	S	B	F	B	F	K		
64	1	3-2, 3F, K	S	B	S	F	B	F	B	F	K	
65	1	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	B	S	B	F	K			
66	2	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	B	S	F	B	K			
67	3	3-2, 2F, K	S	B	B	S	F	B	F	K		
68	1	3-2, 1F, K	S	B	B	B	S	F	K			
69	1	3-2, 1F, K	B	S	S	B	B	F	K			
70	2	3-2, 1F, K	B	S	S	B	F	B	K			
71	3	3-2, 1F, K	B	S	S	F	B	B	K			
72	1	3-2, 2F, K	B	S	S	F	B	F	B	K		
73	2	3-2, 2F, K	B	S	S	F	B	B	F	K		
74	3	3-2, 2F, K	B	S	S	B	F	B	F	K		
75	1	3-2, 3F, K	B	S	S	F	B	F	B	F	K	
76	1	3-2, 1F, K	B	S	B	S	B	F	K			
77	2	3-2, 1F, K	B	S	B	S	F	B	K			
78	3	3-2, 2F, K	B	S	B	S	F	B	F	K		
79	1	3-2, 1F, K	B	S	B	B	S	F	K			
80	1	3-2, 1F, K	B	B	S	S	B	F	K			
81	2	3-2, 1F, K	B	B	S	S	F	B	K			
82	3	3-2, 2F, K	B	B	S	S	F	B	F	K		
83	1	3-2, 1F, K	B	B	S	B	S	F	K			
84	1	3-2, 1F, K	B	B	B	S	S	F	K			

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y

Phillies center fielder Richie Ashburn was famous for long counts, in part because of excellent strike zone judgment—he led the NL in walks four times—and in part because he could foul off pitches like nobody's business.

Here is an example in which a batter will see pitches which result in a walk or strikeout but does not complete his at-bat with a pitch in play (PIP).

Ball – B	**0.4000**	P(B)
Strike – S	0.6000	P(S)
Foul – F	**0.2400**	P(F)
Str-NonF – K	0.3600	P(K)=P(S)-P(F)
TotBBK – T	1.0000	P(PA)=P(B)+P(F)+P(T)
TotPIP – P	0.0000	P(PIP)=1-P(B)-P(S)

Results using the preceding combinations of events yield

Prob (Walk) – 25.303%
Prob (Strikeout) – 74.687%
Prob (PIP Plate App) – 00.000%

A more realistic example is of a more typical MLB player. Said player walks 8.86% of the time, strikes out 18.87% of the time, and puts a ball in play 72.27%. Although we know how many walks and strikeouts a player experiences based on the amount of pitches seen, the actual pitches do not accurately translate into the real world results of the exact P(B), P(K), P(F), or P(PIP). This formula allows you to reverse-calculate how many balls, strikes, foul balls, and PIP balls that a batter SHOULD have seen throughout his season to recreate his final walk, strikeout, and PIP results.

Ball – B	**0.3611**	P(B)
Strike – S	0.4167	P(S)
Foul – F	**0.1667**	P(F)
Str-NonF – K	0.2500	P(K)=P(S)-P(F)
TotBBK – T	0.7778	P(PA)=P(B)+P(F)+P(T)
TotPIP – P	0.2222	P(PIP)=1-P(B)-P(S)

Results using the preceding combinations of events yield

Prob (Walk) – 8.859 %
Prob (Strikeout) – 18.866%
Prob (PIP Plate App) – 72.274%

So although a game may seem to be slow, with each inning or plate appearance seeming to take forever, be thankful that it does not *actually* take forever…even though it could—four times over!

Play Ball!!! ■

Surprise Swings at Intentional Balls

Bill Deane

In 2009, on SABR-L (SABR's on-line list-serv), Trent McCotter cited two instances of a player taking a swing while being walked intentionally and wondered if anyone knew about other instances of a batter hitting a deliberate ball. I responded with two such incidents I had happened on during my research. Several other SABR members, including Brian McMillan, Stew Thornley, Bob Timmermann, and Michael Hoban, contributed more instances. Later, having found notes I had made about three more surprise swings, I thought it was time to collect all these occurrences together.

I decided to eliminate instances of players taking half-hearted, empty swings at intentional balls. For example, it has been written that pitcher Jack Coombs once deliberately struck out while the opposition was trying to walk him, because it was a hot day and he didn't want to run the bases. In May 1976, Rod Carew took a couple of insincere swings at deliberate balls, hoping to encourage the pitcher to pitch to him with two strikes, but wound up walking anyway. A similar thing reportedly happened to Mel Ott on the last day of the 1929 season, as Phillies pitchers denied him the opportunity to catch their teammate, Chuck Klein, in the NL home run race.

To date, we have uncovered only eleven instances in which a batter, in the process of being intentionally walked, swung and actually put the ball in play:

- On August 8, 1907, Detroit's Ty Cobb tripled against the Athletics' Eddie Plank to cap a four-run third inning, leading the Tigers to a 5–3 win. Cobb came up with one out and runners on second and third when Plank tried to put him on, but the third pitch was close enough for Cobb to whale down the right field line, scoring both runners.
- On September 20, 1908, Philadelphia's Eddie Plank (again!) lost to the White Sox, 1–0 (Chicago's Frank Smith threw a no-hitter) on a freak ninth-inning run. With runners at first and third and one out, Plank was trying to walk Freddy Parent intentionally. Parent crossed things up by reaching out at the third pitch and swatting a grounder to second baseman Scotty Barr, who threw home too late to get Frank Isbell.
- On May 28, 1937, according to *The Sporting News*, "Instead of accepting an intentional pass to first base, Second Baseman Odell Hale of the Indians rifled the fourth ball to [White Sox'] Center Fielder Mike Kreevich in the ninth inning… With Hal Trosky on second and the score tied, Vernon Kennedy, Chicago right-hander, was trying to walk Hale to take a chance on a double play with Frankie Pytlak at the bat." Cleveland wound up losing 3–2 in ten innings.
- On May 1, 1955 in the 16th inning, with the Giants' Whitey Lockman on second base, one out, and a 3–0 count, Don Mueller singled off the Reds' Bob Hooper. Lockman moved to third and scored moments later to give the Giants a 2–1 victory.
- On May 7, 1959, with runners on second and third and one out in the eighth inning, the Dodgers' Stan Williams tried to walk the Giants' Willie Mays intentionally. Mays, perhaps inspired by the memory of his former teammate, took a cut at the 3–0 pitch. But unlike Mueller, Mays fouled out to the catcher and the Giants lost, 2–1.
- Just 22 days later, on May 29, 1959, Milwaukee's Joe Adcock came up in the bottom of the ninth of a tie game with one out and runners on second and third. The Phillies' Gene Conley tried to put Adcock on, but Joe swung at the first pitch, grounding the ball up the middle. Second baseman Sparky Anderson, stationed far behind the bag in case of an errant pickoff attempt, fielded the ball but threw home too late to get Hank Aaron, who scored to give the Braves a 6–5 win.
- As Reds' manager, Sparky probably enjoyed this one a lot more. In the first game of a May 16, 1972 twin bill, with one out in the eighth and Dave Concepcion on second, Pete Rose swung at a deliberate ball thrown by the Giants' Ron Bryant. Third baseman Jim Ray Hart "was caught by surprise and fumbled [the] ball, allowing Concepcion to score," according to *The Sporting News*. It proved to be the winning run for the Reds, making the score 4–2 en route to a 4–3 victory.

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Amazingly enough, one pitcher—Hall of Fame lefty "Gettysburg" Eddie Plank, shown here in 1913—was twice victimized by batters swinging at intentional balls.

- On September 27, 1973, the Phillies' Bob Boone came up against the Pirates' Chris Zachary in the 13th inning with one out and Greg Luzinski on second. Zachary tried to put Boone on, but Bob slapped the first pitch for a single, moving Luzinski to third. The Bull promptly scored on a wild pitch to give the Phils a 3–2 win.
- On August 25, 1980, the Dodgers led the Phillies 6–4 in the ninth. Joe Ferguson came up with runners on second and third and one out. Ferguson swung at Tug McGraw's second intentional pitch and got a two-run single out of it. McGraw drilled the next batter in retribution, starting a bench-clearing brawl. The Dodgers won, 8–4. Interestingly, that day's Phillies lineup included the two most recent perpetrators of the surprise swing.
- On September 2, 1996, Colorado's Andres Galarraga came up in the eighth inning with a runner on third, one out, and a 4–3 lead. Pittsburgh's Matt Ruebel tried to pass Galarraga intentionally, but the Big Cat swung and reached on an error by second baseman Jeff King, bringing in a run. This ignited a four-run inning and an 8–3 win for the Rockies.
- On June 22, 2006, Miguel Cabrera was being walked intentionally by the Orioles' Todd Williams when he took a surprise swing at the first pitch and came through with an RBI single, knocking in the go-ahead run and sparking the Marlins to an 8–5, ten-inning victory.

One thing I have noticed is that walks described as "intentional" yesteryear were often what we would today call "pitching around" a batter. For example, the *Detroit Free Press* account of Cobb's hit said that team captain Harry "Davis instructed Plank to pass Cobb, so that any field grounder by the next batter would be good for a double play. Plank apparently intended to follow instructions, but did not keep them away far enough. The third ball that he tried to waste went just *inside* the plate [Italics mine]. Ordinarily a batter would take a ball on it, but it was just the right hight (sic) and Cobb smashed it."

Below is the list in table form. Interestingly, of the 11 documented instances, nine resulted in positive results: five in hits, two in errors by the caught-off-guard defense, and two in game-winning RBI. Of course, it could simply be that successful results are more likely to be reported. ■

Note: This is presented as a work in progress rather than a definitive list. Should anyone know other instances which belong on this list, please contact the author at 408 Christian Hill Road, Cooperstown, NY 13326; (607) 547-4426; or DizDeane@PeoplePC.com.

Date	Inn.	Batter, Team (Lea.)	Pitcher, Team (Lea.)	Count	Result
August 8, 1907	3	Ty Cobb, DET (A)	Eddie Plank, PHI (A)	2-0	3B, 2 RBI
Sept. 20, 1908	9	Freddy Parent, CHI (A)	Eddie Plank, PHI (A)	2-0	FC, RBI
May 28, 1937	9	Odell Hale, CLE (A)	Vern Kennedy, CHI (A)	3-0	Line out
May 1, 1955	16	Don Mueller, NY (N)	Bob Hooper, CIN (N)	3-0	1B
May 7, 1959	8	Willie Mays, NY (N)	Stan Williams, LA (N)	3-0	Foul out
May 29, 1959	9	Joe Adcock, MIL (N)	Gene Conley, PHI (N)	0-0	FC, RBI
May 16, 1972 (1)	8	Pete Rose, CIN (N)	Ron Bryant, SF (N)	2-0	ROE
Sept. 27, 1973	13	Bob Boone, PHI (N)	Chris Zachary, PIT (N)	0-0	1B
August 25, 1980	9	Joe Ferguson, LA (N)	Tug McGraw, PHI (N)	1-0	1B, 2 RBI
Sept. 2, 1996	8	Andres Galarraga, COL (N)	Matt Ruebel, PIT (N)		ROE
June 22, 2006	10	Miguel Cabrera, FLA (N)	Todd Williams, BAL (A)	0-0	1B, RBI

Sid Loberfeld

Brooklyn's Early Radio Baseball Broadcaster

Rob Edelman

In the history of New York baseball broadcasting, Sid Loberfeld is as far removed from Red Barber and Mel Allen as Crash Davis is from Babe Ruth.

He was a downtown Brooklyn lawyer, and his place in baseball circles came through his decades-long contacts with local sports stars.

But Sid holds a distinction that he was reluctant to discuss. Back in the early 1930s, when barely out of his teens, he was—ever so briefly—a radio play-by-play man for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

I got to know Sid in the mid-1970s, when I was the arts and sports editor at *Courier-Life*, a weekly Brooklyn newspaper chain. I had heard stories about Sid's link to baseball broadcasting, and would pepper him with questions. Unsurprisingly, his responses were purposefully vague. Sid was a modest gentleman who seemed more comfortable organizing charitable events or hyping the recently-deceased Gil Hodges, his long-time friend, to whom he had been legal counsel. To savvy Brooklyn baseball fans, Hodges was a sacred figure, first as the Dodgers first sacker during the "Boys of Summer" years and, later, as the manager who guided the New York Mets to their first world championship.

Sid passed away in 2002 at age 92. Recently I decided to research his early career. In 1930, when he was 20 years old, Sid was a budding radio personality. During that summer, he regularly appeared on the radio in various guises. A schedule for WPCH, then a popular (albeit short-lived) New York station, was printed in the July 26 *New York Times* "Today on the Radio" program guide. Sid was one of the headliners on "Sid Loberfeld and Miriam Ray, Songs," listed for the 2:15 P.M.–3:00 P.M. time slot. On August 9, also at 2:15 P.M., WPCH presented a program titled "Sports Talk—Sid Loberfeld."

By the following year, Sid had moved to WMCA, which later broadcast New York Giants games. He is listed on the October 31, 1931 "Talk of the Radio" schedule as the host of "Baseball—Sid Loberfeld," which commenced at 3:00 P.M. and ran fifteen minutes.

It was Sid's modest popularity that positioned his destiny as a footnote in the history of New York-area radio play-by-play. On April 12, 1932, the *Times* printed the following announcement:

> Both of today's opening major league baseball games in the metropolitan district will be on the air. Ted Husing will give a play-by-play description of the Phillies-Giants game at the Polo Grounds over Station WABC of the Columbia Broadcasting network.
>
> This game will also be broadcast by Graham McNamee over the National Broadcasting Company's WEAF network. Both broadcasts will begin at 3 P.M.
>
> The Robins-Boston Braves game at Ebbets Field will be broadcast over two stations. At 2:45 P.M. Ford Frick will start a description of the preliminary ceremonies over station WOR. Sid Loberfeld also will announce the game over WCGU, the United States Broadcasting station in Brooklyn.

So there was Sid, in the heady company of two radio broadcasting legends and one future baseball commissioner.

In his capacity as budding media personality, Sid mingled with the era's baseball stars. One photo, found on the web site for Fraser's Autographs, a British memorabilia dealer, features Babe Ruth in uniform shaking hands with a young man garbed in a double-breasted suit and pale fedora hat. The inscription reads: "To Sid Loberfeld('s) Mother, the Mother of a swell boy—Sincerely Babe Ruth."

A second still, on Artfact, an online auction database service, is not pictured, but is described as a "classic image of Babe Ruth holding his bat, taken on the field at Yankee Stadium. Ruth is posing in front of the stands with the friends to whom he has inscribed the photo: 'To Sid Loberfeld and his beautiful wife—Sid my favorite radio baseball announcer—Sincerely Babe Ruth'."

Sid, of course, was not the first radio play-by-play man. That honor goes to Harold Arlin, a Westinghouse foreman who broadcast a game between the Pittsburgh Pirates and Philadelphia Phillies over Pittsburgh's KDKA on August 5, 1921. Nor was he the first to host a baseball chat show. On June 10, 1922, Dan Daniel

broadcast baseball commentary on WEAF in New York. But Sid was, in his own modest way, a pioneer.

In the early 1930s radio play-by-play still was new and not all ball clubs allowed their games to be broadcast. As Red Barber recalled in *The Broadcasters*, "... usually one announcer comprised the entire broadcasting crew—working with one engineer." He added, "... around 1930 Fred Hoey did the games in Boston, Ty Tyson in Detroit, Franz Laux in St. Louis, Harry Hartman in Cincinnati, Tom Manning in Cleveland... and in Chicago were Hal Totten, Johnny O'Hara, Pat Flanagan, Quin Ryan, and Bob Elson." Barber was referring to Sid and his sort when he noted, "The other fellows who did games were on mostly spotty schedules—like ships that passed in the night, they came and went. There are no footprints in the air."

In 1978, in a *New York Times* profile, Sid briefly recalled his time on the air. The paper reported that Sid "remembers 'selling a bill of goods' to the Dodgers and winning the right to broadcast play-by-play." He explained, "In the old days, we'd announce the games from the back of the Dodger dugout, and the fans and players would slip us notes telling how the game was going."

Sid offered baseball commentary on WMCA through 1934. In the March 6 "Today on the Radio" schedule, he is listed as the host of "Baseball Forecasts—Sid Loberfeld," starting at 7:00 P.M. and running for fifteen minutes.

By then, Sid no longer had the opportunity to pursue a career as a play-by-play man and remain in New York. It was around this time that the three New York major league clubs agreed to prohibit radio broadcasts of their games for a five-year period. The ban, scheduled to expire at the end of the 1938 season, was instituted because the clubs feared that fans would choose to listen to games free rather than pay to sit in the stands.

Larry MacPhail, who became the Dodgers general manager in 1938, fervently believed that the opposite held true: radio broadcasts would promote the game, and increase attendance. MacPhail boldly announced that he was going to bring the ban to a close and promptly hired Red Barber (who previously had broadcast games for MacPhail in Cincinnati).

The Ole Redhead eventually became the Voice of the Dodgers, as recognizable a figure in Brooklyn as Oisk and The Duke of Flatbush, Hilda Chester, and Happy Felton. But before Red Barber, there was Sid Loberfeld.

By the time Barber came on the scene, Sid had opted for a law career. Had this been several decades

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Red Barber, shown announcing the Dodgers over WOR in the early portion of his Brooklyn career, which began in 1939. Larry MacPhail made him the club's first regular radio broadcaster.

in the future, he might have become a successful players' agent. Sid remained a great fan of and spokesperson for the game, and frequently organized charitable baseball-related events. Occasionally, Sid even returned to his baseball roots. In August 1978, he and Mets broadcaster Bob Murphy did the play-by-play of a softball game at Brooklyn's Gil Hodges Field between the Joe Torre All-Stars and Gil Hodges All-Stars (the teams consisted of Mets players' wives) to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Starting in the early 1950s, Sid began escorting youngsters to major league baseball games. In his "Young Ideas" column, published in *The Sporting News* on May 21, 1977, Dick Young wrote, "It takes special unacclaimed people to make things work, men like Sid Loberfeld, a New York attorney, who enters his 26th year of chaperoning Little Leaguers to big league ballparks."

Often, these forays were connected to Hodges. Young noted, in his May 19, 1973 column, "On June 9, some 1,500 boys from Gil Hodges' Little League in Brooklyn will pass up their regular Saturday games to attend a Shea Stadium tribute to their benefactor. Gil's lifetime friend, Sid Loberfeld, is coordinating the kids' arrangement with Arthur Richman, promotions director for the Mets."

Hodges had died suddenly the previous year in West Palm Beach, Florida, near the end of spring training. By mid-decade, Sid had become a prime mover in lobbying for his friend's election to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

On May 29, 1976, the "unofficial kickoff" of a campaign to get Hodges enshrined took place at Loberfeld's Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, home. Present were then-New York Mets players Joe Torre, Jerry Koosman,

Ed Kranepool, and Bud Harrelson, coach Joe Pignatano, and Gil Hodges, Jr. With the exception of Pignatano and Torre, all the Mets had played for Hodges, while Piggy played with and coached for him.

I wrote a report of the event that appeared in the June 7 issue of *Flatbush Life*. "The sooner Gil is in the Hall of Fame, the better it will be for the kids," Sid told me. "He was a great humanitarian, and he stands for truthfulness and honor. After the Watergate scandal, kids certainly need as many heroes as possible to look up to.

"A couple of years before Gil died, a Met ballplayer was scheduled to appear at a temple here in Brooklyn for a fee," Sid continued. "But at the last minute, he called up to cancel out. Hy Schwartz [a philanthropic leader in the Manhattan Beach community] went to Gil's house on Bedford Avenue, told him of the situation, and that night Gil showed up with his wife, Joan. He refused to accept the fee, and insisted that the money go to charity. This was the kind of man Gil was."

Sid even roped me into the Gil-for-Cooperstown campaign. It was through him that I ghostwrote an article, credited to Frances J. Mugavero, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, titled "One Vote for Gil Hodges: A Man of Integrity." The piece ran in the *New York Times* on December 25, 1977.

By this time, Sid was regularly purchasing box seats at both of New York's major league ball yards. Through his generosity, my paper sponsored a series of contests in which young readers were encouraged to pen essays on various baseball-related subjects. The first was on why Gil Hodges merited election to Cooperstown. The winners got to spend a Sunday afternoon at Yankee Stadium or Shea Stadium. They visited the home team's dugout during batting practice, met ballplayers and got their autographs, and sat in Sid's box during the game. I would savor these afternoons, because I chaperoned the youngsters.

On one of these trips, to Shea Stadium, Sid escorted me, the kids in my charge, and a number of other youngsters to a small room in the bowels of the ballpark. One by one, various Mets ballplayers entered and signed autographs. There must have been a dozen kids in the room; most were garbed in their Little League jerseys, and were carrying gloves.

Each Met who came in was instantly recognized by the group, which gave out a collective cheer. The final one may no longer have been an active player, but he was the most famous face of all—and received the loudest cheer. That was Willie Mays.

For an instant, Willie looked directly into my eyes, maybe because I was the lone adult in the room. He then smiled broadly, as if to say, "Isn't this great. What a great day to be in a ballpark!"

Had destiny been different—had Sid Loberfeld not exchanged his microphone for a law book—he might have gone on to use these very words to describe, to his listeners, hundreds of sunny summer afternoons at Ebbets Field. ■

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A Baseball with a Story

Fireworks in Philadelphia, July 4, 1911

Eric Marshall White

This is the story of a remarkable day in baseball, one that occurred exactly a century ago. The retelling of this tale began 26 years ago when I found the baseball that I now keep displayed above my fireplace. The old ball was perched on a low, dusty shelf in a not very distinguished antique shop in Philadelphia; I spotted the ball only by chance just as I was about to leave the store. Even though I was an impoverished college sophomore who had no business spending $40 on a used baseball, I figured any ball as old and brown as the ones I'd seen at Cooperstown was worth a quick glance.

I was surprised to find that the ball bore a long black ink inscription winding its way along the curving contour of the seams:

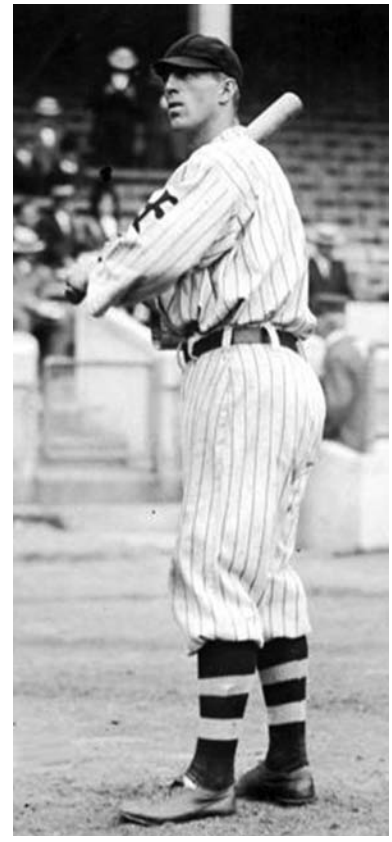
> This ball was a home run knocked into the center field bleachers by Fred Merkle the N.Y. Giants 1st baseman, and was caught by Fred T. Brown. July 4th 1911 – 2nd Game Double Header. This was the day that both the Athletics and Phillies took the lead.

Suddenly, I knew this $40 sacrifice was worth it. While my girlfriend looked on with more than a little disbelief, I emptied my wallet for the prized ball, trying my best not to let the proprietor catch on that he was dealing in relics far more precious (to me) than he knew.

Frederick Charles Merkle, born December 20, 1888, in Watertown, Wisconsin, was one of early baseball's most famous figures. He was not a great player, but rather a very good one who became baseball's greatest laughingstock, the patron saint of life's wrong turns, inopportune disasters, and public embarrassments. I surmised that the shop owner had little or no baseball in his religion, or at least that he had not bothered to educate himself about Merkle's infamous failure to step on second base in a crucial game of the epic 1908 National League pennant race.

Inexpressibly excited about the piece of American history nestled in my coat pocket, I told tales of Merkle all the way home.

The ball was dark brown all over and shiny like a well-varnished antique. The "Official National League" label was worn almost beyond recognition, and the seams were not the familiar red zig-zags found on virtually every baseball since the 1930s. Instead, the stitches alternated red and blue, betraying the ball's manufacture in the Merkle era. Mud-stained, tobacco-splattered, and scuffed, the ball clearly had been through more than an inning or two of diamond warfare. It brought to mind a passage in Lawrence Ritter's classic *The Glory of Their Times*, in which Merkle's teammate Fred Snodgrass recalled how hard it was to see the dark brown balls in the afternoon shadows:



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Fred Merkle in 1912, when he hit .309 with 11 homers (third best in the NL), 84 RBI, and 37 steals and finished 18th in MVP voting. Pretty good for a "bonehead."

> We hardly ever saw a new baseball, a clean one. If the ball went into the stands and the ushers couldn't get it back from the spectators, only then would the umpire throw out a new one. He'd throw the ball out to the pitcher, who would promptly sidestep it. It would go around the

> infield once or twice and come back to the pitcher as black as the ace of spades. All the infielders were chewing tobacco or licorice, and spitting into their gloves, and they'd give that ball a good going over before it ever got to the pitcher.

This is much more interesting than today's "game-used" balls, which are hardly used at all, being banished as soon as they show so much as a nick or a smudge.

Against the brown patina of my new 1911 ball, the printed black letters of Fred T. Brown's inscription betray a slow-paced clumsiness—though not quite childlike—which suggests a certain lack of practice. Given his eagerness to record the details of his quarry, it seems our scribe was not an indifferent older spectator, but a dedicated young fan.

All that night my curiosity about the 1911 game ball ran wild. Had Christy Mathewson pitched for the Giants that day?

The next morning I went straight to the university library to look up the box score in the archival microfilms of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. There, amid the front page news of Independence Day aeroplane exhibitions and boat races, I found the jubilant headline reporting that both of Philadelphia's teams, the Phillies and the Athletics, had taken over first place that Tuesday, just as the ball's inscription had boasted.

The Phillies had swept a doubleheader from John McGraw's Giants in front of 18,000 fans at National League Park (rechristened the Baker Bowl in 1913) on Huntingdon and Broad streets, and Jack Coombs of the A's had won both games of a twin bill over the Highlanders up in New York:

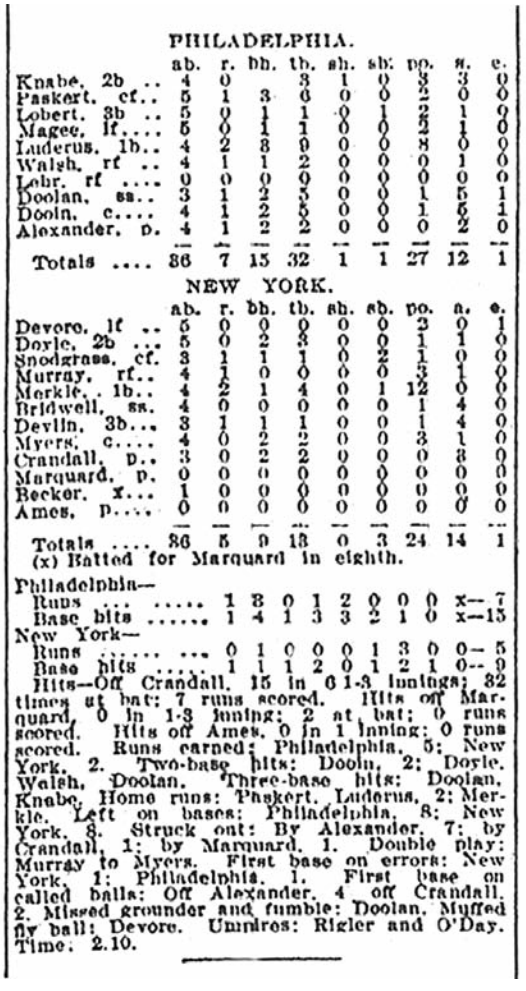
National League	W	L	GB	American League	W	L	GB
Phillies	43	26	–	Athletics	47	22	–
Cubs	42	26	0.5	Tigers	47	23	0.5
Giants	42	27	1	White Sox	34	30	10.5

The story continued in the sports pages. The account of the Phillies game described Merkle "lacing a wallop into the bleachers in the seventh" with two runners on base. That phrase alone, forever engraved in the annals of the sport, made it all worth my forty bucks! But now I wanted to learn everything else about Merkle's homer and its circumstances. My eyes raced through the lengthy game summary and checked the box score. The first question? Who had thrown Merkle the gopher ball so long ago? Surely he was some forgotten nobody whose lowly stature had not merited a mention on Fred T. Brown's souvenir ball.

As it turned out, the pitcher was a 24-year-old still only midway through his rookie year. Despite the punishing 96-degree heat, the freshman weathered Merkle's late-inning blast to finish with a complete game 7–5 triumph over New York's Doc Crandall, Rube Marquard, and Red Ames.

The victory improved his record to 16–4, and the writers were already calling him "the pitching wonder of the year." Yes, the pitcher that July 4 was none other than Grover Cleveland Alexander.

The baseball gods truly were smiling down upon me, as the ball I had acquired the night before had been thrown by one of the greatest pitchers in the history of the game, the storied hero of the 1926 World Series, and holder of National League records for lifetime victories and shutouts! Eager to possess some documentation that would authenticate the significance of my sacred relic, I photocopied the entire newspaper account, including the box score.



PHILADELPHIA.

	ab.	r.	bh.	tb.	sh.	sb.	po.	a.	e.
Knabe, 2b ..	4	0		3	1	0	3	3	0
Paskert, cf..	5	1	3	6	0	0	2	0	0
Lobert, 3b ..	5	0	1	1	0	1	2	1	0
Magee, lf....	5	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0
Luderus, 1b..	4	2	3	9	0	0	8	0	0
Walsh, rf ..	4	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	0
Lobr, rf	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Doolan, ss..	3	1	2	3	0	0	1	5	1
Dooln, c....	4	1	2	5	0	0	1	6	1
Alexander, p.	4	1	2	2	0	0	0	2	0
Totals	36	7	15	32	1	1	27	12	1

NEW YORK.

	ab.	r.	bh.	tb.	sh.	sb.	po.	a.	e.
Devore, lf ..	5	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1
Doyle, 2b ...	5	0	2	3	0	0	1	1	0
Snodgrass, cf.	3	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	0
Murray, rf..	4	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	0
Merkle, 1b..	4	2	1	4	0	1	12	0	0
Bridwell, ss.	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0
Devlin, 3b...	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	0
Myers, c....	4	0	2	2	0	0	3	1	0
Crandall, p..	3	0	2	2	0	0	0	3	0
Marquard, p.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Becker, x...	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ames, p....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	36	5	9	13	0	3	24	14	1

(x) Batted for Marquard in eighth.

Philadelphia—										
Runs	1	3	0	1	2	0	0	0	x—	7
Base hits	1	4	1	3	3	2	1	0	x—	15
New York—										
Runs	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	0	0—	5
Base hits	1	1	1	2	0	1	2	1	0—	9

Hits—Off Crandall, 15 in 6 1-3 innings; 32 times at bat; 7 runs scored. Hits off Marquard, 0 in 1-3 inning; 2 at bat; 0 runs scored. Hits off Ames, 0 in 1 inning; 0 runs scored. Runs earned: Philadelphia, 5; New York, 2. Two-base hits: Dooln, 2; Doyle, Walsh, Doolan. Three-base hits: Doolan, Knabe. Home runs: Paskert, Luderus, 2; Merkle. Left on bases: Philadelphia, 8; New York, 8. Struck out: By Alexander, 7; by Crandall, 1; by Marquard, 1. Double play: Murray to Myers. First base on errors: New York, 1; Philadelphia, 1. First base on called balls: Off Alexander, 4 off Crandall, 2. Missed grounder and fumble: Doolan. Muffed fly ball: Devore. Umpires: Rigler and O'Day. Time: 2.10.

COURTESY OF ERIC WHITE

The box score from the July 4, 1911 game between the Giants and the Phillies.

Although nothing carries more documentary weight in baseball than an official box score, I noticed that this one misspelled Chief Meyers' name as "Myers" and contained some numerical discrepancies, the most obvious being Philadelphia's fielding statistics. They gave catcher Red Dooin the identical totals as the shortstop Mickey Doolan, but the catcher must have had at least seven putouts on Alexander's strikeouts, and he probably had no errors (only one was charged to the team) and somewhat fewer assists. In addition, this box score missed a catcher's interference error charged to M(e)yers.

Other interesting notes from the game: while Philadelphia's center fielder Dode Paskert, taking advantage of the rules of the day, bounced a ball into the left-field bleachers for a home run, first baseman Fred Luderus walloped a pair of homers onto Broad Street in right, becoming the first player to hit two balls out of Philadelphia's home park on the fly in the same game. New York's starting pitcher Doc Crandall slammed a liner high off the big Bull Durham tobacco sign in right center but later had to be carried off the field after being hit in the head by a line drive that, amazingly, leftfielder Josh Devore almost caught on the fly. Crandall, therefore, was almost credited with an assist while getting knocked unconscious.

Like the old box score, the newspaper report of the game was a marvelous find in its own right. The *Philadelphia Inquirer*'s writer covering the Phillies, Edgar F. Wolfe, signed his article with the pseudonym "Jim Nasium." He was also a cartoonist of some talent, who (in the absence of game photos) illustrated his account with a caricature of a toothless New York Giants player being blasted from below by an exploding Phillies firecracker.

Wolfe had a distinct gift for slangy ballpark lingo. From his prolix typewriter flowed a tangled ribbon of old-fashioned diamondese, the likes of which one just doesn't see any more. He renamed the Giants the "Joints" while the home team became "Dooin's Drubbers" after their catcher-manager. An error was either a "bum chuck" or "foozle." Hometown hitters with "venom in their bludgeons" connected for a "psychological pelting" of the New York pitchers that included a "timely two-base soak" and a "three-cushion shot." The 18,000 fans felt "effervescent joy" whenever a Phillie "pasted one on the snoot" and more runners "pattered over the pan." The colorful Mr. Nasium described Merkle's home run like this:

> Alexander was effective throughout the affray, save in the seventh, when, with two down, a freak break in the fortunes of war and a little perspiration in the eyes of Ump Rigler on a third strike or two on Murray allowed the Giants to chase in three runs. But 'Alex' wasn't in danger even then… Snodgrass got a scratch hit by bounding one that Alexander checked just enough to turn it into a hit, and then Snodgrass stole second, as what Dooin thought was the third strike came over on Murray, Charlie not throwing because he thought the side was out. Rigler, however, called it a ball, and then Murray walked on another that looked mighty good. Merkle then caught one under the lug and lifted it into the bleachers, scoring Snodgrass and Murray ahead of him.

The *New York Times* described the same blast by Merkle more precisely as a "long drive" into the *left* field bleachers. Since Fred T. Brown recorded that he was sitting in center field when he caught or retrieved the home run—and what a thrill that must have been!—let's split the difference and call it left-center.

Those bleachers, built in 1910, were 408 feet from home plate in center, and 379 to left-center, meaning

COURTESY OF ERIC WHITE

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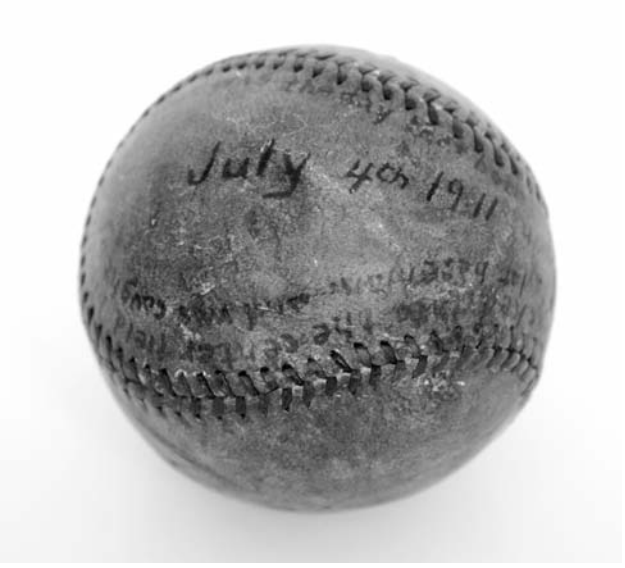

The baseball purchased by the author that led him to find out more about the events of July 4, 1911.

that even though the homer was hardly Ruthian, it certainly was a long drive for the time. Although home run totals shot up in 1911 (a record 316 were hit in the National League, as opposed to 214 in 1910 and 150 in 1909), their relative rarity in those days is shown by the fact that Giants hit only 16 four-baggers on the road that year, with Merkle's July 4 rocket one of only four of the three-run variety.

Although Merkle, fearing for his safety and having lost 15 pounds from stress, wanted to quit baseball after his 1908 blunder, John McGraw gave him a $300 raise and had the foresight to stick with him as he developed into a right-handed power-and-speed standout. He walloped a career-high 12 homers in 1911, ranking fifth in the league (Wildfire Schulte led with 21), one better than Home Run Baker's high for the American League. Leading the Giants with 84 RBI, he put on two memorable power-hitting displays, doubling and tripling in one inning on June 5 then setting a record on May 13 (since broken) with six RBI in a single inning via a homer and a double. He also stole 49 bases in 1911.

Widely considered the fastest man in the league after Honus Wagner, Merkle swiped 272 bases during his sixteen-year career, including eleven thefts of home. No matter what else he did out on the diamond, however, the newspapers and fans knew him only as "Bonehead" Merkle. Finally, in 1950, after avoiding ballparks and reporters for decades, he agreed to attend an old-timers game at the Polo Grounds and was greeted with a touching and unforgettable standing ovation. He died on March 2, 1956.

Grover Cleveland "Pete" Alexander, born the February 26 1887, in Elba, Nebraska, likewise owed the majority of his fame to a single moment in baseball lore. Unlike poor Merkle, however, Pete emerged as the hero, saving the seventh game of the 1926 World Series for the Cardinals by striking out Yankee slugger Tony Lazzeri with the bases full in what his Hall of Fame plaque calls the "final crisis at Yankee Stadium." It was a truly dramatic moment, especially for a 39-year-old all-time great who had never won a championship, but it was only the seventh inning, and Alex had already provided plenty of heroics by winning both of his Series starts. The notoriety of this single confrontation (re-enacted by Ronald Reagan in the 1952 film *The Winning Team*) nearly overshadows the pitcher's three 30-win seasons, his 28 wins as a rookie in 1911 (a post-1900 record), his record 16 shutouts in 1916, and his 373 lifetime victories.

As a rookie in 1911, Alexander allowed only five home runs in 367 innings. According to the *SABR Home Run Encyclopedia*, Alexander was Merkle's favorite target, serving up five of the first baseman's 61 career long balls. In those deadball days, neither man could have been unaware of such a concentration of gophers, so it is likely that Merkle and Alexander grew to feel a sense of rivalry.

The two men faced each other down six or seven times a year for seven seasons, and in 1915, Merkle broke up one of Alexander's many unsuccessful no-hit bids. Although they became teammates on the Cubs in 1918, their final "encounter" was in the famous seventh game of the 1926 World Series. Merkle was on the bench as a Yankees coach, hired by skipper Miller Huggins on account of his baseball acumen.

He was eligible to play, and we might picture Merkle saying to himself, "C'mon, Hug, put me in there! I used to pound this guy!" A key hit would have been a nice way to redeem 1908, but he never got the chance.

Although my old brown baseball's day of baptism, the Fourth of July in 1911, was exactly a century ago, the game of baseball was different in so many ways it seems like an eternity. Yet fans like Fred T. Brown were not unlike us: they shared our love of the national game, cheering for the home team in the Independence Day heat, and they too felt that wary thrill whenever a ball came spinning their way.

Unlike Mr. Brown, I have never caught a home run or even snagged a foul ball after it came to rest amid the peanut shells. But just as he took care to inscribe his baseball, I always mark my ticket stubs with some salient occurrence of the day's game. Pulling out three faded tickets from 1990, I see that I made note of the

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Despite being taken downtown on July 4, 1911 by Fred Merkle, Grover Cleveland Alexander (shown that season) would go on to a Hall of Fame career as one of the greatest pitchers of all time.

record ten double plays (nine of them grounded into) produced by the Red Sox (6) and Twins (4) on July 18, one night after the Bostonians had grounded into a record two triple plays…of Boston's tenth straight victory in a Sunday game against the Yankees on September 2…and of the best time I ever had at the old ballgame, the "Jeff Stone Game" on September 28 (ask a diehard Red Sox fan).

The old Alexander-Merkle ball, now in a display case on the fireplace mantel in my home, is a silent souvenir of that roaring hot day of a century ago. Like all worthy pieces of archaeology, the ball offers those who contemplate its history a much clearer picture of long-ago events. By piquing our curiosity about the pastime of an earlier era, these pieces of history inform us about important aspects of our own traditions. Such an artifact also connects us with our historical heroes, who suddenly become living and breathing people with imperfect destinies, not just names with records attached.

Of course, all of this comes from our awareness of the ball's original context. For this we must thank Mr. Fred T. Brown of Philadelphia for his foresight in documenting his trophy with the particular circumstances of its time and place. That is what makes the old baseball relic so precious: not the imagined monetary value added by its associations with Hall of Famers and legendary "losers," but its ability to retell a story of our national pastime which otherwise might be forgotten. ■

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The Italian Immigrants' Game

Larry Bonura

Beyond DiMaggio: Italian Americans in Baseball
By Lawrence Baldassaro
University of Nebraska Press (2011)
$34.95 (hardcover); 520 pages

I know you've heard of Yogi Berra, Joe Torre, Tony La Russa, and Joe DiMaggio. But have you heard of Ed Abbaticchio, Lou Schiappacasse, Francesco Pezzolo, or Prospero Bilangio? If you haven't, then you need to read this book, a beautifully written story of a particular group of immigrants to America—Italians—and how their descendants came to enter, conquer, and meld into baseball.

Lawrence Baldassaro writes that one goal of this book is to "document the many ways that the descendants of those immigrants enriched baseball throughout the twentieth century, both on and off the field." While not claiming that Italian Americans fundamentally changed the way the game is played, he says his book "is more about the impact the game has had on Italian Americans, as both participants and spectators, in terms of their sense of self identity."

Baldassaro accomplishes both in a richly researched and thoroughly documented work. *Beyond DiMaggio* matches the scope of two other essential books on the social history of immigrants, reaching the depth of Peter Levine's *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field: Sport and the American Jewish Experience* (Oxford, 1992) and matching the sheer joy of reading provided by *Reaching for the Stars: A Celebration of Italian Americans in Major League Baseball*, edited by Larry Freundlich (Ballantine, 2003).

In looking beyond Joe DiMaggio, Baldassaro digs deeply into Italian pioneers from Ed Abbaticchio to Tony Lazzeri. He soon arrives at the turning point: the 1930s, when Italian American players rose to the top of the game. Next, Baldassaro writes about the postwar boom and baseball in New York during the game's "golden age," a time in which Italian Americans were still dominant. The 1960s are what he calls the "last Italians," the ones still rooted in the old Italian tradition but losing their "Italianness."

Lastly, Baldassaro describes "transitional Italians" from the 1970s, who were clearly more American than Italian. In addition to ballplayers, he also writes about those Italian Americans in labor and management as well as the executive suite.

The history of Italians in American baseball mirrors the history of Italians in America. There was much derision of the Southern and Eastern Europeans who came to America. Name calling was common throughout the early years of their entry, from Ed Abbaticchio's first games in Philadelphia in 1897, through the end of the 1940s. Outright discrimination was not unusual. At the turn of the twentieth century, Italians were not considered white; they were often not allowed to live in white neighborhoods. Lynching of Italians for various "crimes" was not uncommon. But through it all and despite it all, Italian Americans made their mark in baseball.

Throughout the book, Baldassaro leads off with a short historical background for each section. Then he introduces an Italian player, presenting family information and ending with how the player broke into baseball. He next succinctly blends a short history of the individual as a player, tossing in quotations from his many interviews. He includes wonderful statistics, relating how a player ranked in accomplishing his baseball feats as an Italian and sometimes comparing those stats against those of other major leaguers. Here's an example on page 72 about Tony Lazzeri:

> [Lazzeri in 1927] again hit eighteen homers (third best in the league), drove in 102 runs, raised his batting average to .309, and stole twenty-two bases. On June 8 he hit three home runs against Chicago, becoming only the sixth man in American League history to do so. But then, it was an extraordinary year for the entire Yankee team, still considered by many to be the greatest in Major League history. Six players from that roster that won 110 games and swept the World Series are in the Hall of Fame, as well as Manager Miller Huggins and General Manager Ed Barrow.

Baldassaro presents a fair view of the how the nation responded to the influx and advances of immigrants from the 1880s through the 1940s. The 1920s saw the KKK, the Sacco and Vanzetti trial and execution, and the passage of the immigration laws that severely restricted Southern and Eastern European immigration. All of these developments created an atmosphere of hostility not only toward Italians but also to other immigrant groups. Lazzeri, one of 16 players identifiable as Italian who appeared in the 1920s, was subject to vilification and called "wop" and "dago" among other terms of derision.

When reading about the success of so many Italians in the major leagues in the 1930s, one gets a clear picture of the struggle they personally had to internalize while at the same time performing the job they were paid to do. You sense the agony of leaving the security and safety of their families and making it on their own, becoming strangers in a strange land. It all makes the reader feel just how difficult it was to be an immigrant in baseball.

Following the Second World War, in which more than one million Italian Americans fought for their country, baseball cleaned up its act and began to rid itself of ethnic slurs. And when Jackie Robinson joined the majors, everyone else was "white" regardless of nationality.

Baldassaro devotes two chapters to labor and management and executives. Here he shows how Italian Americans made their mark in sports media, as umpires, as managers and general managers, and as owners. His last section is about A. Bartlett Giamatti, who gave up his prestigious position as president of Yale University in 1986 to become the twelfth president of the National League, and then commissioner of baseball in 1989. In the author's words, "No one, I think, better epitomizes the culmination of the evolution of Italian Americans in baseball—or in American society, for that matter—than Angelo Bartlett Giamatti."

This is an American story as well as a comprehensive study of Italians in baseball. Baldassaro conducted more than 50 interviews with players, coaches, managers, and executives—some with careers dating back to the 1930s—to put all these figures and their stories into the historical context of baseball, Italian Americans, and, ultimately, the culture of American sports. *Beyond DiMaggio* includes 30 photos, 165 bibliographic entries, and a fairly thorough index.

A reviewer's job is to help guide you to a book of value, quality, insights, fairness, and, ultimately, revelations about its subject in the hope that you will be transformed. *Beyond DiMaggio* is one such book. ■

Beating the Bushes

Fred Taylor

Cougars and Snappers and Loons (Oh My!); a Midwest League Field Guide
By Dave Hoekstra
Can't Miss Press (2009)
$24.95 (hardcover), 289 pages

Jeremy Justus became a ballpark beer vendor because "I wanted to give something back to the fans…be part of the team." But although he liked vending, he missed being able to watch the game. So Justus decided to pack it in and continue his travels that have taken him to ballparks in 45 of the lower 48 states. Jeremy's story is one of 66 short chapters about Midwest League baseball in this fascinating and readable book.

Dave Hoekstra, who has written about travel, music, culture, and sports for the *Chicago Sun-Times* for a quarter-century, has traveled to all the cities of the Midwest League. In this "field guide," Hoekstra collects MWL-themed articles he wrote for the paper over the last 15 years and adds a few brand-new essays about the league. Along the way, the author touches on topics as varied as the House of David baseball team, families who host minor league players, and baseball in Japan. Another chapter discusses a Midwestern microbrewery which helps to acquire headstones for unmarked graves of Negro Leagues players. Want to find a good, varied beer list and a vegetarian food menu? Try Elfstrom Stadium in Geneva, Illinois, home of the Kane County Cougars. What is the best place in America to understand minor league baseball? Hoekstra believes that it's Clinton, Iowa.

In Geneva, Hoekstra interviews Ria Cortesio, an umpire with aspirations of getting to the big time. (Updates are included at the end of many chapters; Ms. Cortesio was released after the 2007 season.) Peoria owner Pete Vonachen lists the requirements of being a friend of Harry Caray, one of which is to "keep your divorce lawyer on retainer." Some of Hoekstra's chapters discuss the economic realities of the league. He discusses baseball marketing strategy with Mike Veeck (Bill's son) and reveals what the West Michigan Whitecaps do to try to increase attendance in the Grand Rapids area.

What is the smallest town in the U.S. with a full-season non-independent league team? It's Burlington, Iowa, which now is even smaller than when the book went to press. 2011 projections estimate Burlington's population at 38,500. Hoekstra devotes several chapters to the ways that the locals keep professional baseball alive in this shrinking town.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from Burlington is Dayton, Ohio, home of season-long consecutive sellouts at a $22.7 million ballpark. Dayton has sold out 774 straight games and typically draws over 500,000 fans per season, a total almost unheard of for a low Class A league.

Some of the book's most poignant chapters concern Midwest League alumni. The late Dan Quisenberry is described as "more poet than baseball player" by his former teammate Paul Splittorff, while Moe Hill, who

led the Midwest League in home runs four times and was a four-time All-Star, is profiled; he remains a league legend but never advanced above Double-A. There are also chapters about Midwest League players who achieved success, including Adrian Gonzalez, Earl Weaver, and Edgar Renteria.

The book's concluding chapter concerns former Yankees shortstop Tony Kubek and his divorce from baseball. Kubek's story is included due to his residence in Appleton, Wisconsin, which for years was a Midwest League mainstay. In places, *Cougars and Snappers and Loons* is dated, but that is part of the game when reading collected essays. It is a pleasure to read a book by a writer of Mr. Hoekstra's caliber, and the foreword by 283-game winner Jim Kaat is a nice touch, even though he never actually pitched in the Midwest League after initially being assigned to Appleton in 1957.

Books on the Midwest League are difficult to come by and this is an excellent addition to any library of minor league baseball. ■

Arms and the Man

Gail Rowe

High Heat: The Secret History of the Fastball and the Improbable Search for the Fastest Pitcher of All Time
By Tim Wendel
DaCapo Press (2010)
$25.00 (hardcover), $15.00 (paperback), 288 pages

From the day in 1859 when Jim Creighton of the Niagara Club displayed his rising speed pitch against the Star Club of Brooklyn—and perhaps even prior to that—observers of baseball have debated who is "the fastest pitcher of all time."

Across the years the controversy has rung out on baseball diamonds, in clubhouses, bars, barbershops, banquet halls, and SABR meetings. It has filled the pages of newspapers, magazines, and sports journals. William Curran, John Thorn and John Holway, Rob Neyer, Bill James, Martin Quigley, Jack Newcombe, and Roger Kahn have written entire books on pitching and pitchers. Tim Wendel is the latest author to offer a book-length celebration of fastballers.

Wendel concedes up front that the task of identifying the fastest pitcher of all time is both impossible and improbable. He is correct, of course. His aspiration is impossible because for most of the history of the game there has been no consensus among players, managers, scouts, agents, or fans as to who deserves the honor. Nor, most of that time, has there existed an instrument capable of measuring accurately the speed of a thrown ball.

The search is also improbable because it is highly unlikely that a single standard can be reached on how to measure the pitch that is quickest to the plate. Is such an achievement to be predicated on the speed of a pitch as it leaves the pitcher's hand or as it crosses the plate? Is it to be based on several pitches calibrated by a speed gun? Numerous pitches throughout a game? Consistent speed in the strike zone? Measured speed over a several-year period? Should the quickest pitch be judged by batters' perception? Do pitchers exist whose deliveries appear to be the quickest to the plate even though their measured speed is appreciably below 100 mph?

Under chapter headings constituting the various aspects of the pitcher's motion ("Windup," "Pivot," "The Stride," "Arm Acceleration," "Release," and "Follow Through"), Wendel explores the components associated with the ability to throw a baseball swiftly: a hurler's physical and emotional makeup, his mechanics, his circumstances, the impact upon readers of writers and commentators describing the act, and pure luck.

Timing, too, is important. Those fortunate enough to watch Amos Rusie in 1890–91, Rube Waddell in 1903–04, Joe Wood in 1912, Walter Johnson in 1913–14, Lefty Grove in 1930–31, Sandy Koufax in 1963–66, or Bob Gibson in 1968 saw greater speed from those pitchers than if they'd witnessed them at other periods in their careers.

Before getting deep into his research for *High Heat*, Wendel understood that his conclusions would be equivocal, and that few readers—no matter who he chose as the fastest ever—would wholeheartedly embrace his choices. So rather than embarking on a systematic and comprehensive effort to identify a ranked list of the game's hardest throwers, Wendel opted for a personal and clearly idiosyncratic journey in search of opinions, anecdotes, press accounts, recollections, and other sources of lore about hard-throwing hurlers.

High Heat takes its readers on a serpentine journey to Cooperstown and the Baseball Hall of Fame, to Jim Creighton's grave site in Green-Wood Cemetery, New York, to the new Durham Bulls Athletic Park in Durham, North Carolina, to Billy Wagner's home in the hills of Virginia, and to the American Sports Medicine Academy in Birmingham, Alabama.

Along the way, beyond comparisons of hard throwers, Wendel and friend Phil Pote treat readers to observations on topics such as the surprising number of

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Steve Dalkowski

fastballers spawned by small towns, the height of the pitching mound and its impact on pitching speed, the movie *Bull Durham*, the peculiarities of speed guns (the JUGS is the 'fast' gun, the RAGUN the 'slow' gun), the cadence of Joan Didion's prose, and even Wendel's own ability—lack of, actually—to throw heat.

Not surprisingly, Wendel and his readers discover the faulty recollections, myths, hyperbole, miscalculations, and outright lies that constitute much of baseball's collective memory. *High Heat* shows that the line between myth and reality in baseball, although very fuzzy, is part of its charm. The result is an entertaining, informative, and provocative read.

Whether it's persuasive is a different matter. Wendel reminds his readers that each generation of baseball people have their favorites for the hardest-throwing pitcher, but makes no comprehensive effort to judge the usual suspects. There is no mention of Asa Brainard, Jim Whitney, Guy Hecker, Larry Corcoran, Jouett Meekin, Kid Nichols, Dazzy Vance, Robin Roberts, or Kyle Farnsworth, and only passing mention of the likes of George Zettlein, Tommy Bond, Charlie Sweeney, Rube Waddell, Grover Cleveland Alexander, Sam McDowell, or Jim Maloney.

He admits to giving more space to Amos Rusie, Walter Johnson, Joe Wood, Lefty Grove, Bob Feller, Nolan Ryan, and Sandy Koufax not only because of speed but also because their fastballs attracted the attention of eloquent and persuasive wordsmiths.

Joel Zumaya, Stephen Strasburg, Tim Lincecum, Joba Chamberlain, and Aroldis Chapman—the most recent candidates for the honor of throwing harder than anyone else—are discussed, but coverage of them is surprisingly skimpy. David Price and Billy Wagner fare somewhat better.

Based on the assessment of his "experts," Wendel selects twelve of the game's hardest throwers in order: Nolan Ryan, Steve Dalkowski, Bob Feller, Walter Johnson, Sandy Koufax, Billy Wagner, Satchel Paige, Joel Zumaya, Amos Rusie, Goose Gossage, Bob Gibson, and J.R. Richard. For all his earlier equivocating, Wendel insists that he is "comfortable" with his selection of Ryan as the fastest pitcher in the history of organized baseball.

In addition to realizing that satisfaction comes from the journey as much as from his ultimate choices, Wendel argues implicitly that it is necessary to fully value the factors that go into succeeding on the big league level even for young men with the God-given ability to throw hard. The list of young men with a capacity to buzz the ball by batters who failed to succeed in the higher echelons of baseball is long and sad.

It's more than the speed with which an endless parade of young pitchers has thrown the ball that draws Wendel to the subject. He is drawn to the men themselves, their promise, their emotional and psychological battles to deal with their talent and with their separation from mere mortals, and the mental and physical battles in harnessing their amazing athletic gift. He demonstrates how having the ability to throw in the 100 mph range can be both a blessing and a curse, and his skill as an observer and a writer permits readers to vicariously experience that actuality.

For Wendel, no one exemplifies the tribulations confronting hard throwers better than Steve Dalkowski, a left-handed phenom from New Britain, Connecticut who never made it to the majors. Dalkowski's story is the thread that holds Wendel's disparate tale together, supplies its momentum, and provides much of its emotional impact. The prototype for "Nuke" LaLoosh in *Bull Durham*, the tragic Dalkowski, whose career succumbed to wildness on and off the mound, remains for Wendel the epitome of both the promise and reality of baseball.

Wendel, who teaches writing courses at Johns Hopkins University, offers his students an exemplary lesson in how to exercise the writer's craft. He holds his readers' attention through graceful and clear prose, informative chapters, thoughtful and entertaining observations, and intelligent judgments, carefully qualified when warranted.

Although his omissions and commissions will lead to arguments, most readers will probably put the book down and want to buy Wendel a drink and continue the debate. Early in his book Wendel says that his quest "promises to be a lot of fun" (p. xii). He delivers on that promise, which is high praise for any author. ■

HENRY CHADWICK AWARD

In November 2009, SABR established the Henry Chadwick Award, intended to honor the game's great researchers—historians, statisticians, analysts, and archivists—for their invaluable contributions to making baseball the game that links America's present with its past. Apart from honoring individuals for the length and breadth of their contribution to the study and enjoyment of baseball, the Chadwick Award will educate SABR members and the greater baseball community about sometimes little-known but vastly important contributions from the game's past and thus encourage the next generation of researchers.

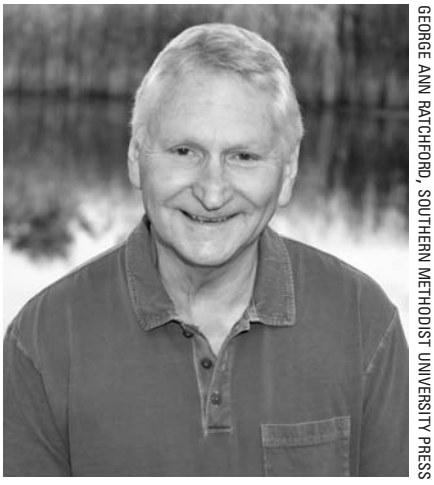
This February, SABR announced the second class of Chadwick Award recipients, all of them giants in the field of baseball research. Following are biographies of the five 2011 honorees, written by fellow members of SABR. And while at first glance Taylor Spink, a newspaper publisher born some 125 years ago, may not seem to have much in common with Sean Forman, whose website is now baseball *lingua franca*, all of our winners share an important characteristic: they had (and have) big ideas about how baseball should be researched, documented, and presented for the greater edification and enjoyment of lovers of this great game.

CHARLES C. ALEXANDER (1935–) was born in Cass County, Texas, the son of educators C.C. Alexander and Pauline Pynes Alexander. His mother gave up teaching before he was born, but his father worked as a teacher, principal, and school superintendent for 35 years. Alexander grew up in China, a small town in southeastern Texas. He earned his B.A. in history from Lamar State College (now Lamar University) in 1958 then earned two graduate degrees at the University of Texas, studying history throughout.

Alexander served on the history faculties at three major universities before settling in at Ohio University in 1970. Some years later, when Alexander began writing about baseball, he had one big advantage: He had already spent 20 years teaching, researching, and writing about various aspects of 20th-century American history (including books about the Eisenhower administration and the Ku Klux Klan). So when Alexander turned his attentions to his beloved baseball—specifically, to a scholarly, comprehensive biography of Ty Cobb ultimately published in 1984—he was familiar with the many tools available to the historian.

"I have wanted to do more than write a book about baseball and a particular ballplayer," Alexander wrote in *Ty Cobb*. "A deeply flawed, fascinating personality, Ty Cobb would be a compelling subject even if he had been something besides a celebrated professional athlete." Alexander's book is a probing yet sympathetic look at one of baseball's most fascinating men.

Alexander followed up *Ty Cobb* with the first scholarly biography of John McGraw, arguably the game's most notable figure before Babe Ruth. In the *New York Times*, John C. Hough, Jr. wrote of that book, "Mr. Alexander blows away the golden dust of myth and weaves his history with such restraint and precision that we recognize the game of McGraw and Cobb."



GEORGE ANN RATCHFORD, SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY PRESS

Charles C. Alexander

Since then, Alexander has penned books about Rogers Hornsby (1995) and Tris Speaker (2007). His oeuvre has inspired a veritable flood of copiously researched baseball biographies written by authors who learned from Alexander that it was okay to take baseball seriously.

But Alexander has written other sorts of baseball books, too. In 1992, Henry Holt published *Our Game: An American Baseball History*. In 2003, Alexander's *Breaking the Slump: Baseball in the Depression Era* garnered the Seymour Medal, awarded by SABR to "the best work of baseball history or biography published in the preceding year." This summer, Southern Methodist University Press will publish his latest work, *Turbulent Seasons: Baseball in 1890–1891*.

For nearly all of those years, Alexander continued to teach at Ohio University, ultimately retiring in 2007 as Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History. Alexander now lives in Butler County, Ohio, with JoAnn Erwin Alexander, his wife of 51 years.

—Rob Neyer

SEAN FORMAN (1971–) recognized the need for an easy-to-use comprehensive baseball player database and, on April 1, 2000, launched Baseball-Reference.com, now the game's premier statistical website.

By the end of the twentieth century, bound baseball encyclopedias, despite their increasing sophistication, were no longer sufficient to address the increasing interest in baseball statistics and their analysis. At the same time, as the Internet matured and computing power multiplied, web-based solutions to this problem became feasible.

Almost single-handedly Forman fabricated and engineered what has become the go-to site to look up statistics for any baseball player or team. For serious baseball researchers, analysts, sportswriters, announcers, or historians, baseball-reference is often the first stop.

In creating B-R.com, Forman embraced four principles. First and most fundamentally, the site had to be useful; it needed to be comprehensive and the data easy to find. Second, any data search needed to be fast, and Forman specifically designed the site to meet this criterion. Third, Forman also understood the importance taking full advantage of the unique characteristics of the Internet. Accordingly, his site overflows with links, so that users can easily jump elsewhere on the site. Finally, Forman wanted to make the site fun, and he infused it with his own personality and with some inside jokes.

Over the past decade, Forman has refined the site to go well beyond the standard statistics found in baseball encyclopedias and transformed the way researchers can retrieve information that once was mostly inaccessible. B-R.com offers sabermetric statistics, leader boards for all categories in which a player qualified, and a list of a player's transactions.

In his most significant enhancement, Forman harnessed information from Retrosheet to provide single-game data, splits based on those data, and a wide variety of player records, such as how a pitcher fared against every batter he faced or a list of each double a batter hit. The site can also generate a list of every starting lineup used by a team in a season, from both a defensive standpoint and the batting order. More recently he has also added a significant amount of minor league data.

Forman came to his interest in sabermetrics through Rotisserie baseball. At first limited to player rating systems, Forman soon branched out and has now authored numerous original sabermetric essays. His article "Blocking Pitches: Assessing a Catcher's Ability to Save Runs with Bruises," won Forman the 2006 Doug Pappas Research Award, which recognizes the best oral research presentation at the Annual Convention.

SEAN FORMAN

Sean Forman

Prior to launching Baseball-Reference, Forman cofounded BaseballThinkFactory.org, a website devoted to modern sabermetric analysis and discussion.

Forman grew up in small-town Iowa, the son of a high school football coach, and as a schoolboy he starred in baseball and golf. For his undergraduate studies, Forman attended Grinnell College, where he played Division III golf. After graduation, Forman continued his education at the University of Iowa, earning a Ph.D. in Applied Mathematical and Computational Sciences. Forman's Ph.D. led him to a career in academia, and he eventually became a tenured math and computer science professor at Saint Joseph's University. As the popularity of his website grew, Forman made the difficult decision in 2006 to resign his professorship and concentrate fulltime on B-R.com.

Because of its huge, easily accessible array of baseball statistical information, the site's popularity has exploded over the past ten years. When Forman first unveiled the site, it generated around 3,000 to 4,000 visitors per day; today that number is roughly 90,000. Forman's creation has forever changed the way analysts, writers, and historians access and view baseball statistics. Research that might once have taken weeks or months can now be done in minutes. The richness of modern baseball analysis and historical investigation owes much to Forman's wonderfully crafted site.

—Dan Levitt

JOHN B. HOLWAY (1929–) has been researching baseball since 1944. Few, if any, may boast longer or more noteworthy contributions to baseball research.

Looking at baseball beyond America's major leagues has been his specialty. After a stint as a parachute lieutenant in Korea, he wrote the first book in English on Japanese baseball, *Japan Is Big League in Thrills*, in 1954. The next year he penned *Sumo*, the first English book on that subject.

Since then he has served as an economics analyst for the Voice of America, covered conferences around the world, written for major newspapers from Boston to San Diego, and covered the Olympic Games in Mexico City and Los Angeles and World Series from 1948 through 1986. He published a major oral history of the Tuskegee Airmen, *Red Tails, Black Wings: The Men of America's Black Air Force* (1997). But it is not for this astonishing range of activity that SABR has named him to receive the Henry Chadwick Award.

John B. Holway has published many notable books on the Negro Leagues, perhaps most notably *Voices from the Great Black Baseball Leagues* (1975), a collection of interviews with the then virtually unknown Cool Papa Bell, Buck Leonard, Bill Foster, and Willie Wells, and *The Complete Book of the Negro Leagues* (2000). Holway saw his first Negro League game—in which Satchel Paige's Monarchs battled Josh Gibson's Grays—in Washington, D.C. in 1945. It is not too much to say that without John Holway's efforts, several Negro League stars would not have entered the Baseball Hall of Fame when they did.

Holway has also researched intently and written frequently about Ted Williams, whom he saw strike the famous home run off Rip Sewell's eephus pitch in the 1946 All-Star Game.

> I was sitting in right field in Fenway Park… when Ted came up for his last at bat against blooper-ball pitcher Rip Sewell. Ted fouled one off into the third base dugout. The next pitch was lobbed up and would fall short. I'll never forget Ted doing a little Fred Astaire two-step hop and under-cutting the ball, which climbed up and up and up. A short fly, I moaned. But it kept soaring, and right fielder Enos Slaughter back-pedaled until the ball dropped over his head into the bullpen next to me.

JOHN HOLWAY

John B. Holway

Holway's books about his favorite player include *The Last .400 Hitter* (1991) and *Ted the Kid* (2006).

A former chairman of SABR's Negro Leagues committee, Holway has received the Bob Davids Award and the Casey Award for *Blackball Stars*, voted the best baseball book of 1988. His other books on black baseball include *Black Diamonds, Josh Gibson*, and *Josh and Satch*. With Dick Clark, he edited the Negro Leagues section of *Macmillan's Baseball Encyclopedia*. To do this, they undertook research into many hundreds of box scores from papers across America.

With Yoichi Nagata, John has contributed to the Japanese baseball section in many editions of *Total Baseball*. With John Thorn he co-authored *The Pitcher* (1987).

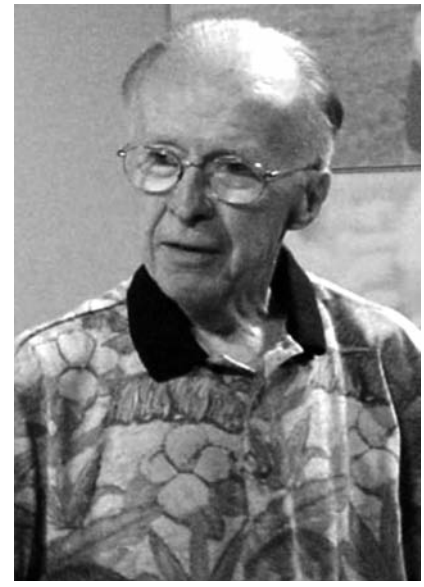
Henry Chadwick was involved with baseball from 1856 until his death in 1908. John Holway has spent a longer time contributing to the game, and baseball fans are grateful that he is still at it.

—John Thorn

CLIFFORD S. KACHLINE (1921 – 2010) left an indelible mark on the world of baseball research, a lifelong love he initiated at age 18. In early 1940, Kachline read an advertisement in *The Sporting News* about the forthcoming first edition of its *Baseball Register*. The ad showed the year-by-year statistics of a couple of players, and young Kachline noticed a few errors. He promptly wrote a letter to Taylor Spink, the paper's publisher, who wrote back to ask if Kachline would proofread the entire book before it went to press. He did so, and did the same for the 1941 and 1942 editions. In 1943, the 21-year-old joined the newspaper's staff in St. Louis. For the next 24 years, Kachline wrote many feature stories for the paper and edited many of TSN's annuals including the *Official Baseball Guide, Baseball Register*, and *Baseball Dope Book*.

In 1969, following a two-year stint as PR director for the soccer association known both as the United Soccer League and the North American Soccer League, Kachline replaced Lee Allen as historian at the National Baseball Hall of Fame. In this role, Kachline acquired many large file collections which might otherwise have been thrown out: financial records from the Yankees, contract cards from the National Association (the governing body of the minor leagues), and documents from the commissioner's office, among others. He wrote the text on the plaques for new honorees and the placards for most of the exhibits in the museum.

Kachline was also one of SABR's founding members. When the group convened for the first time in August 1971, the meeting took place just outside Kachline's office in the Hall of Fame library. Kachline spent eight years on the SABR board, including two as its president. In 1983 he was named the group's first Executive Director, and SABR's headquarters moved to his house in Cooperstown. He served in this post for three years, during which time SABR's membership grew from fewer than 2,000 to over 6,000.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Clifford S. Kachline

Through all this, Kachline retained his doggedness for getting the facts straight, a tendency he first made clear to Taylor Spink in 1940. When Bob Feller was thought to have broken Rube Waddell's single-season strikeout record in 1946, Kachline went through Waddell's 1904 season game by game and found six more strikeouts, which put Rube one ahead of Feller. His connections throughout baseball helped him not only find discrepancies in the record books, but also work with the right groups to get the record books changed. In 1977 he first became aware that Hack Wilson might have driven home 191 runs in 1930 rather than his presumed 190. Although other researchers were involved in the case over the years, Kachline led the charge that caused the record to be changed in 1999.

Kachline and his wife Evelyn were fixtures at SABR conventions and local meetings for nearly forty years. He remained a thoughtful researcher and a friend to many throughout the world of baseball until his death in 2010 at age 88.

— Mark Armour

TAYLOR SPINK (1888–1962) occupied a command post in the business of American sports journalism for nearly a half-century.

As publisher of *The Sporting News* from 1914 until his death, he oversaw production of a weekly newspaper so indispensable to the baseball fraternity that it was venerated for decades as the "Bible of Baseball." Players, managers, umpires, executives, broadcasters, sportswriters, and fans felt compelled to read *The Sporting News* each week for its mixture of news, features, statistics, opinions and "inside dope."

At the head of this enterprise stood the diminutive and indefatigable Spink. Addicted to long hours, married to the telephone, and obsessed with accuracy, he achieved legendary status for both himself and his publication.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Taylor Spink

John George Taylor Spink was born in St. Louis on November 6, 1888. His uncle, Al Spink, had started publishing *The Sporting News* two years before as an all-sports weekly, but his father, Charles Spink, soon took control of the business and focused the newspaper on baseball. When Charles died suddenly in 1914 after attending the St. Louis Terriers' opening Federal League game, Taylor found himself at the head of a rather substantial business.

He was no mere rookie. Having broken in as an office boy, he had done editorial work on *The Sporting News* and *The Sporting Goods Dealer*, a profitable monthly trade magazine, and in 1909 had created *The Sporting News Record Book*, which was published continuously through 2008. Moreover, Spink served as the American League's official scorer during the World Series, a position given to him by Ban Johnson; this was a return favor for Charles Spink's support of Johnson's successful quest to gain major league status for the American League.

Taylor immediately made two significant editorial changes. Having criticized his late father for employing only two full-time reporters, Spink made the paper livelier, more current, and more authoritative by creating a network of correspondents, one for each major league team. He also withdrew editorial support from the Federal League, aligning *TSN* with organized baseball and against *The Sporting Life*, an East Coast competitor that went out of business shortly thereafter.

The Sporting News began naming its own major league all-star team in 1925 and selecting its own players of the year in 1929. Spink extended his influence by publishing the first edition of *Daguerreotypes*, a series of biographical and statistical sketches of old players, in 1934, and the first annual *Baseball Register* in 1940. Two years later, when the A.G. Spalding and Brothers Company discontinued publication of its annual baseball guide, Spink prevailed upon commissioner Kenesaw Landis to award him the contract. All these books soon became standard sources for baseball research.

Throughout the world of American sports journalism, Spink was regarded as a character—gruff, demanding, competitive, impatient, and dedicated to getting the story. Most of those who exalted him also felt his wrath but respected him all the same.

Near the end of Spink's life, some sportswriters advanced the unprecedented idea that he should be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Journalists were not eligible for induction, and the Hall of Fame declined to change its rules. In response, the New York chapter of the BBWAA gave Spink its Bill Slocum Memorial Award in January 1962 for "long and meritorious service to baseball," and the national BBWAA unanimously adopted a resolution creating the J.G. Taylor Spink Award for outstanding baseball writing. This award is presented annually at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Spink, posthumously, was the first recipient.

—Steve Gietschier

Contributors

MARK ARMOUR is the founder and director of SABR's Baseball Biography Project, and the author of *Joe Cronin—A Life in Baseball* (Nebraska, 2010).

LARRY BONURA is an independent sports historian and a member of the newly formed New Mexico SABR chapter.

DAN BOYLE is president of SABR'S Ted Williams Chapter (San Diego). He grew up in the Bronx and hates the Yankees. He is a consultant for public transit agencies, no doubt a result of all those weekend subway rides he made his parents go on with him as a kid. Despite his grandfather's admonition that "anything west of the Hudson is just camping out," he is very happy to be living in San Diego.

BRUCE BUKIET is Associate Professor of Mathematical Sciences and Associate Dean of the College of Science and Liberal Arts at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

URI CARL is an undergraduate student majoring in mathematics at Yeshiva University in New York, NY.

JOHN CRONIN, a longtime SABR member, currently serves on the Minor League Committee. He is a lifelong Yankees fan whose special interest is Yankees minor league farm teams over the years. A CPA and retired bank executive, Cronin has a B.A. in History from Wagner College and an M.B.A. in Accounting from St. John's University.

BILL DEANE is in his 30th year as a SABR member, and has been a frequent contributor to its publications and Listserv.

ROB EDELMAN is the author of *Great Baseball Films* and *Baseball on the Web* and is a frequent contributor to John Thorn's *Base Ball: A Journal of the Early Game*. His film/television-related books include *Meet the Mertzes*—a double biography of *I Love Lucy*'s Vivian Vance and fabled baseball fan William Frawley—and *Matthau: A Life*, both co-authored with Audrey Kupferberg. He is a film commentator on WAMC (Northeast) Public Radio and a Contributing Editor of Leonard Maltin's *Movie Guide*. His byline has appeared in *Baseball and American Culture*, *Total Baseball*, *Baseball in the Classroom*, and dozens of other books. He authored an essay on early baseball films for the DVD *Reel Baseball*, has been a juror at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum's annual film festival, and is an interviewee on several extras on the director's cut DVD of *The Natural*. He teaches film history courses at the University at Albany.

STEVE GIETSCHIER is university curator and assistant professor of history at Lindenwood University. He is the former editor of the *Complete Baseball Record Book*.

JOE GRAY, who co-chairs SABR's Project Cobb Chartered Community, is a British-based baseball statistician with a particular interest in the game's history. He is author of the 2010 book *What about the Villa? Forgotten figures from Britain's pro baseball league of 1890* (fineleaf.co.uk).

CHRIS GREEN is a professor in the Department of Psychology at York University in Toronto. He is the co-editor (with Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr.) of *Psychology Gets into the Game: Sport, Mind, and Behavior, 1880–1960* (University of Nebraska Press, 2009). He can be contacted at christo@yorku.ca.

MARGARET M. GRIPSHOVER, PH.D., an assistant professor of cultural geography in the Department of Geography and Geology at Western Kentucky University, in Bowling Green, Kentucky, is a member of the Grantland Rice–Fred Russell Tennessee SABR chapter. She has previously contributed a chapter on "Wrigleyville" to *Northsiders: Essays on the History and Culture of the Chicago Cubs* (McFarland, 2008) and an article on dog fighting and baseball for the *BRJ*. Dr. Gripshover is currently writing a book on Charles H. Weeghman, onetime owner of the Chicago Federals and the Chicago Cubs.

RICHARD HERSHBERGER has published numerous articles in *Base Ball: A Journal of the Early Game*, with his primary interests being pre-modern baseball and the institutional development of early organized baseball. He is a paralegal in Maryland.

BOB HICKS writes from Ramona, California. He was introduced to SABR in 2004, when his son won the Boynton Baseball Research Award sponsored by the San Diego Ted Williams Chapter. He serves as webmaster of the Ted Williams Chapter.

DAVID KINNEY is the director of a nonprofit in San Diego, where he lives with his wife Julie and his cat George Herman. He is treasurer for the Ted Williams Chapter.

HERM KRABBENHOFT, a SABR member since 1981, has documented—via official scorecards or game-action newspaper photos—the uniform number(s) of every Detroit Tigers player, manager, and coach for each season from 1931 forward except Frank Doljack (1932), Luke Hamlin (1933), and Roxie Lawson (1933). He is seeking a photocopy of an official Detroit Tigers scorecard from May 1, 1945 or May 2, 1945 (against the White Sox) in order to learn the uniform number of Dutch Meyer, a "phantom" Tiger that season.

TOM LARWIN is secretary of the Ted Williams Chapter and grew up on Chicago's south side. He remains a die-hard Cubs fan, but after 34 years in San Diego now shares his allegiance with the San Diego Padres. His baseball research has included the 1907 Pacific Coast Championship, Ted Williams in San Diego, and several Bio Projects.

LI AN C. LEONARD is an attorney at Duckor, Spradling, Metzger, & Wynne. She comes from a long line of Padres fans, going back to the time when the Padres were in the Pacific Coast League. During college, she worked for the San Diego Padres in the ticket office. She is married to a former high school baseball coach who is a devout Giants' follower. She also enjoys watching her son play baseball and her daughter play softball.

DAN LEVITT's forthcoming book on the battle between the Federal League and Organized Baseball will be published by Rowman & Littlefield in spring 2012. He is the author of *Ed Barrow: The Bulldog Who Built the Yankees' First Dynasty*—a Seymour Medal Finalist—and *Paths to Glory: How Great Baseball Teams Got That Way* (with Mark Armour), winner of the Sporting News–SABR Baseball Research Award.

LEE LOWENFISH's biography, *Branch Rickey: Baseball's Ferocious Gentleman* (University of Nebraska Press), won SABR's 2008 Seymour medal. His first book, *The Imperfect Diamond: A History of Baseball's Labor Wars*, is now out in a third edition, also from the University of Nebraska Press.

ANDY MCCUE had the skills of Ken Oberkfell scaled down to park softball leagues. He is now mostly retired while serving as president of SABR.

ROB NEYER is SB Nation's National Baseball Editor.

BILL NOWLIN has authored somewhere around 30 books on the Boston Red Sox. He is active in SABR's Bio Project and is a VP of SABR. He's also co-founder of Rounder Records of Massachusetts.

SAM PATHY is a public librarian from Worthington, Ohio.

FRED O. RODGERS, a SABR member since 1976, is a past president of the Ted Williams Chapter. He was editor of *Baseball Gold*, the Official San Diego Padres newspaper, from 1982–86.

G. S. [GAIL] ROWE earned his Ph.D. from Stanford University and taught early American History at the University of Northern Colorado for over three decades. He is the author of seven books; three concern aspects of early American law and politics and are four baseball mysteries. A longtime member of SABR, he has served as both member and chair of SABR's Seymour Medal Committee. Currently he is the book review editor for *The Inside Game*.

BILL SAVAGE teaches at Northwestern University, where he is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English. His course "Baseball in American Narratives" focuses on the ways in which baseball stories create a sense of American identity. His last SABR publication was "The '59 White Sox in Literature: Haunted by the Ghosts of the Black Sox" in *Go-Go to Glory: The 1959 Chicago White Sox*. A lifelong resident of Chicago's north side, he is a Cubs season ticket holder.

RAY SCHMIDT, a retired systems programmer, now lives in Southern California. He is the author of *Two-Eyed League*, a book on 1890s minor league baseball, as well as an article on early Chicago semi-pro baseball that appeared in *Chicago History* magazine.

REBECCA SICHEL is a student at SAR Academy in New York, New York. Her work related to this paper began as a summer project through the Liberty Science Center and has been entered in the New York Science and Engineering Fair.

BRYAN SODERHOLM-DIFATTE lives and works in the Washington, DC, area and is devoted to the study of baseball history. His article is adapted from a larger project about the best teams in each league in the 20th century, which can be found on his website www.thebestbaseballteams.com.

ANDY STRASBERG is vice president of the Ted Williams Chapter and coauthor of *Baseball's Greatest Hit: The Story of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."* He is currently at work on *The Baseball Fantography Project* (www.Fantography.net). The project's objective is to collect "baseball experience" snapshots (not of game action) taken by fans who are not professional photographers for the purpose of publishing a book and an exhibit tour.

FRED TAYLOR has been a baseball fan since 1959 and is a retired federal employee. He enjoys visits to all ballparks and has never met one he didn't like.

JOHN THORN's current book is *Baseball in the Garden of Eden*. He is the Official Historian of Major League Baseball and serves on its Baseball Origins Committee.

ERIC MARSHALL WHITE, PH.D., is a rare book librarian at Southern Methodist University in Dallas whose research usually involves Gutenberg and the development of printing in 15th-century Europe.

BRIAN YONUSHONIS was born and raised in DuBois, Pennsylvania. He manages a large software testing team in the casino gaming industry and enjoys the pure mathematics of his work. He always encourages his staff to work hard and stay sharp by educating themselves anytime they get the chance and keeps them moving forward in the face of tough economic times. As Satchel Paige said, "Ain't no man can avoid being born average, but there ain't no man got to be common."