



# EMIL ROTHE CHICAGO CHAPTER

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**RICH HANSEN, CHAIR - RICHARD SMILEY, VICE CHAIR**

**DAVID MALAMUT, SECRETARY - PETER YEE, TREASURER - BILL PEARCH, NEWSLETTER EDITOR**



*On Saturday, November 2, members gathered for lunch at Mo Dailey's Pub & Grille prior to the chapter's meeting at the Chicago Public Library's Roden Branch.*

## CHICAGO BLACK SOX SYMPOSIUM A GREAT SUCCESS!

BY: BRUCE ALLARDICE 

The bad weather couldn't put a damper on The SABR Black Sox Scandal Centennial Symposium, which was held on September 27-29, 2019, in Chicago. The SABR Black Sox Scandal Research Committee hosted this once-in-a-century event to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1919 World Series.

I recall two years ago when SABR publications guru, and Black Sox Committee head, Jacob Pomrenke, broached to me the idea of such a symposium. At the time, he hoped that 50 people would sign up and attend. A few months ago he upped the estimate to 75, and worried about finding a proper room at the Chicago History Museum. In the end, nearly 200 people attended, including many members of Chicago's Emil Rothe SABR Chapter. Almost half were from out-of-town, a testament to the public's continued interest in the Scandal.

The event was highlighted by a research symposium on Saturday, September 28 at the Chicago History Museum. Other events included a walking tour of Chicago's Black Sox sites (two tours, both sold out) and a ticket bloc for the White Sox-Tigers game (unfortunately, the pouring rain caused the games to be rained out).

The research symposium featured nearly all the leading authors and authorities on the Scandal. The first panel discussion focused on the Scandal's legacy. Authors Daniel Nathan, David Pietrusza and Bill Savage explored how the Scandal influenced mainstream literature (from F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* to the current tv series *Boardwalk Empire*), and why people still care about a 100-year-old scandal. Professor Mike Hauptert dispelled the myth of Charles Comiskey's cheapness by citing payroll documents to prove that the 1919 White Sox had MLB's highest payroll. Dr. Susan Dellinger, the granddaughter of Cincinnati Reds star Edd Roush, presented a well-received Cincinnati perspective on the 1919 World Series. Gaming attorney Kevin Braig shed light on the business of gambling, in the 1910s and today, and concluded that just on the economics, today's gamblers would not be able to fix a World Series. The Research Symposium concluded with a panel discussion of the book and movie "8 Men Out," and how modern research disproves many of the myths surrounding the scandal.

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BY JASON A. SCHWARTZ

Four cards, one player. Can you guess who?

# WHY THE BASEBALL POSTSEASON IS A PART OF MY SOUL

BY: TIM CZUBA



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Another memorable MLB postseason is behind us. Who would have thought a full seven-game playoff series, in any professional North American sport, would happen where the road team won each game? Those kind of unforgettable moments is what imprints the MLB playoffs in my sports fan DNA as the best of all the sports. But why? The reason is the same as the criticism our American pastime has taken over the years.

I am a sports junkie and have plenty of great memories from the postseasons of our North American sports. To me, the Stanley Cup playoffs are easily the most exciting. Anything can happen in the Stanley Cup playoffs and usually do. Don't believe me? See what happened to both the Tampa Bay Lightning and hated St. Louis Blues in last year's playoffs. How about the NBA? Sure, I have memories of the Lakers and Celtics in the 1980s, our Bulls dynasty in the '90s, and even the fun to watch Golden State teams of the last few years, but let's face it, the NBA playoffs are just about always chalk. The NFL? It has produced great individual moments: Lynn Swann in Super Bowl X, the drive in 1986, Montana in Super Bowl XXIII to mention a few and some memorable games like the NFL championship in 1958, the Dolphins/Chargers divisional playoff in 1981 and the comeback in Super Bowl LI come to mind, but usually the NFL's biggest game, the Super Bowl, has, most times, been anticlimactic. Baseball, on the other hand, while not as consistently exciting as the Stanley Cup playoffs, has produced the kind of exciting moments that etch into our soul and never leave us. Baseball is always a wide open tournament, at least in my lifetime (born 1967), and since the inception of divisional play, gives multiple teams a better chance. Finally, the World Series, the climax of a long and deliberate season, rarely disappoints. Let me show you how my MLB postseason memories have stayed with me.

My first playoff memory was my father telling my uncle during the 1973 World Series that Willie Mays could not play anymore. It really seemed to bother him. Now to this six-year-old kid, I really had no idea who Willie Mays was at that point, but he meant something to my father, so I figured it must be important. I watched the seven-game Series with my dad and got to see a historic A's team win the middle of three straight world titles. They also had cool uniforms.

Since then, here are a few of my memories of the MLB postseason: the 1975 World Series, Bernie Carbo and Carlton Fisk, Reggie's three homers on three swings, Reggie sticking his hip out in 1978, Willie Stargell's leadership, Keith Hernandez singling off Bob McClure to tie Game Seven in 1982, Paul Molitor's great Series that year, Sparky Anderson putting up four fingers with Kirk Gibson flashing back 10 and then homering off Goose in 1984, Don Denkinger's bad call, Joaquin Andujar's subsequent meltdown in Game Seven of 1985, Kirk Gibson's homer off of Eck, Billy Hatcher's memorable offense in 1990, the 1991

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**Top:** A view of Nationals Park prior to Game Three of the 2019 World Series. (Photo: Jessica Pearch)

**Middle:** Willie Mays argues with home plate umpire, Augie Donatelli, during Game Two of the 1973 World Series. (Photo: Mets Police)

**Bottom:** Kirby Puckett hits the game-winning home run off of Charlie Leibbrandt during Game Six of the 1991 World Series. (Photo: Heinz Kluetmeier, Sports Illustrated)



**CLICK HERE TO PLAY**  
**CAN YOU NAME ALL 32 MEMBERS**  
**OF THE 3,000 HIT CLUB?**

# NOVEMBER 2019 CHAPTER MEETING

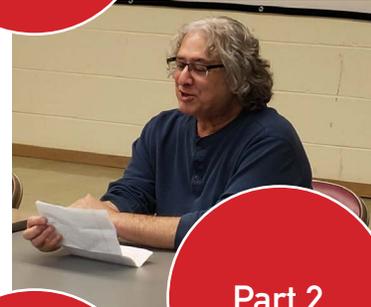


## SCOREBOARD PUZZLER

Here are two old photos of familiar Chicago scoreboards. One is from old Comiskey Park. The other is Wrigley Field. From a series of clues provided in each photo, can you identify the specific dates of each game? If you have an idea, send Bill Pearch an email at [wcpearch@comcast.net](mailto:wcpearch@comcast.net). Good luck and happy hunting.



Part 1



Part 2



Part 3

If you were not able to attend our most recent chapter meeting on Saturday, November 2 at the Chicago Public Library's Roden Branch, there is no need to fear. We have all of the presentations available on our Facebook page. Click the links below and enjoy.

- Part 1 - LaMond Pope, who covers the Chicago White Sox for the Chicago Tribune, discussed the state of the team looking toward 2020.
- Part 2 - Chapter member Abbey Botkin discussed the state of the Chicago Cubs and their efforts to retool for the 2020 season.
- Part 3 - Chapter member Bruce Allardice discussed the recent Black Sox Scandal Centennial Symposium and highlighted myths and realities of the 1919 World Series.

## WHAT'S ON DECK?

GET YOUR PENCILS AND SCORECARDS READY

- **CHAPTER LUNCH - SAVE THE DATE**  
Saturday, December 14. Details coming soon.

## GET SOCIAL WITH SABR'S EMIL ROTHE CHICAGO CHAPTER



## CHICAGO BLACK SOX SYMPOSIUM (CONTINUED)

Authors Rick Huhn, Bruce Allardice and Bill Lamb answered questions from event moderator Jacob Pomrenke on what has been discovered, and what aspects of the Scandal could use further study.

I've attended many symposiums (too many!) but I can't recall another one that had so many high-quality presentations as this one did.

During and after the presentations, we gathered in the event space to discuss the continued relevance of the 1919 World Series. A book signing with SABR authors followed. As mentioned in the previous Rothe Chapter newsletter, Rothe Chapter member Jason Schwartz helped provide attendees with replica playing cards of players on the 1919 clubs.

CLICK FOR ALL SYMPOSIUM PRESENTATIONS



**ANTHONY RIZZO**

## TOP 10 CHICAGO BASEBALL OPS (MINIMUM 475 PLATE APPEARANCES)

RANK	PLAYER	TEAM	AVG	OBP	SLG	OPS
1	ANTHONY RIZZO	CUBS	.293	.405	.520	.924
2	YOAN MONCADA	SOX	.315	.367	.548	.915
3	KRIS BRYANT	CUBS	.282	.382	.521	.903
4	KYLE SCHWARBER	CUBS	.250	.339	.531	.871
5	TIM ANDERSON	SOX	<b>.335*</b>	.357	.508	.865
6	JAVIER BAEZ	CUBS	.281	.316	.531	.847
7	JOSE ABREU	SOX	.284	.330	.503	.834
8	ELOY JIMENEZ	SOX	.267	.315	.513	.828
9	JAMES MCCANN	SOX	.273	.328	.460	.789
10	JASON HEYWARD	CUBS	.251	.343	.429	.772

**\*LED LEAGUE**

HAVE YOU COMPILED A TOP TEN LIST THAT THE CHAPTER WOULD FAWN OVER? SEND IT TO JOHN RACANELLI VIA EMAIL AT [J.RACANELLI@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:J.RACANELLI@HOTMAIL.COM).

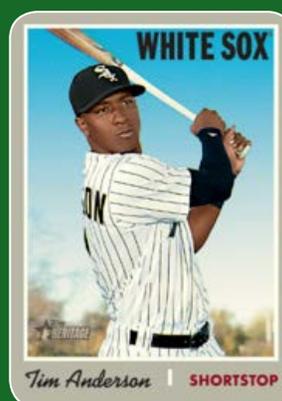
Photo: John Racanelli



**Don Denkinger makes his controversial call during Game Six of the 1985 World Series between the Kansas City Royals and St. Louis Cardinals. (Photo: ESPN.com)**

classic Series, Kirby Puckett in Game Six of that Series, Joe Carter off Mitch Williams, Jim Leyritz in 1996, Craig Counsell in 1997, the Big Unit and Schilling in 2001, Dusty Baker's dumb curtain call in 2002, the Red Sox breaking the curse, my beloved White Sox, Albert Pujols in 2011, the Cubs finally winning after 108 years. Why do I remember these moments? The reason shouldn't surprise any baseball fan.

Baseball is a slow and deliberate game. Critics call it boring nowadays, but that pace lends itself to helping retain absolute classic moments. See a great play in football or basketball and the next one comes right behind it. Baseball gives us the opportunity to digest great plays, greatness in a player and the greatest series' long before any of it is over. This kind of introspection of events is lost in today's society. While most will see this year's memorable World Series as a footnote in the last two weeks of October 2019, I will choose to savor it, knowing I saw history unfold slowly in front of my eyes with an event that will probably never happen again. ON TO HOT STOVE!



## CHICAGO RANDOM TANDEM TIM ANDERSON AND DERREK LEE

Tim Anderson of the White Sox captured the 2019 AL batting title with a .335 average. The last Chicago Cub to win the NL batting title was Derrek Lee in 2005, who also hit .335.

If you have a sweet Chicago Random Tandem to share, send it to John Racanelli at [j.racanelli@hotmail.com](mailto:j.racanelli@hotmail.com).

# A SEASON WITHOUT STRASBURG: A YEAR WITHOUT BASEBALL'S YOUNG STAR

BY: BILL PEARCH 

*On Wednesday, October 30, the Washington Nationals defeated the Houston Astros, 6-2, to win the 2019 World Series. Following the game, Nationals starting pitcher, Stephen Strasburg, earned World Series Most Valuable Player honors. The 31-year-old pitcher compiled a 2-0 record, a 2.51 ERA and a 1.047 WHIP during his 14 1/3 innings during the seven-game Series. He finished the 2019 postseason with 5-0 record and a 1.98 ERA in six appearances. On Saturday, November 2, Strasburg opted out of the four years and \$100 million remaining on his contract to explore the free agent market. With sports, it's always fascinating to look back and reflect upon predictions from yesteryear. Here's an article the author originally posted on his blog, [billpearch.com](http://billpearch.com), on March 19, 2011.*

Effortless.

He mowed down a franchise record 14 batters in seven innings of work while allowing only two earned runs. He made the game look effortless as he picked up his first career win at the expense of the Pittsburgh Pirates. The pitcher's name was Stephen Strasburg and he made the Washington Nationals relevant. Not bad for a major league debut before a crowd of 40,315.

Prospects are plentiful. Every fan base can claim they have the next big thing in their farm system, but in reality, they don't. Some prospects break into the big leagues and become solid players. Others become journeymen who never maximize their potential and bounce from team to team. Then again, some simply fade away. On rare occasion, a player emerges on the scene surrounded by resounding hype and fanfare. So much that all eyes around the big leagues - both management and fans - are fixed upon him. Last year, that happened in our nation's capitol.

The Washington Nationals finished the 2008 regular season with a record of 59-102. They finished 32 1/2 games out of first place in the National League East. When the June 2009 Major League Baseball Draft arrived, the Nationals found themselves with the first overall pick. They selected Strasburg, a junior from San Diego State University. Almost one year to the date later, he donned a red and white uniform and stood atop the mound at Nationals Park prepared to deliver his first pitch to Andrew McCutchen.

He picked up another win in his second start at Cleveland, and a no-decision in his third at home against Chicago. He struck out eight Indians, and 10 White Sox respectively. With 32 strikeouts after three starts, he established a major league record. Was this 21-year-old for real? Questions were raised if he was eligible for the All-Star Game in July. Charlie Manuel, manager of the NL All-Star team, opted not to give Strasburg a spot on the NL roster for the mid-summer classic.



**Top: Stephen Strasburg embraces Washington Nationals General Manager Mike Rizzo after winning the 2019 World Series. (Photo: Jonathan Newton, The Washington Post)**



**Bottom: Strasburg pitched against the Chicago Cubs at Wrigley Field on August 25, 2019. He pitched six innings, fanned 10 and allowed two earned runs and walked away with a no-decision. (Photo: Bill Pearch)**

During his final two starts in June, he tallied his first two losses. The first came at the hands of the Kansas City Royals. Despite pitching six innings, and surrendering only one earned run, the Nationals failed to generate any offense. The Atlanta Braves delivered a second blow when they beat the Nationals, 5-0. Strasburg gave up three earned runs over six-plus innings. Then the calendar flipped to July.

July started with another no-decision against the New York Mets. Not a bad start, but it was the shortest of his rookie season. He only pitched five innings. Between July 9 and July 21, Strasburg picked up three wins in three consecutive starts against the San Francisco Giants, Florida Marlins, and Cincinnati Reds. In those three starts, he logged six innings twice against the Giants and Marlins, and 5 2/3 against the Reds. Just when Strasburg seemed primed to take the next step, the injury bug snuck in. Inflammation in his right shoulder forced the Nationals to place Strasburg on the 15-day disabled list.

## SABR MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

We all have great baseball stories to share. We like to highlight SABR Chicago Chapter members. Contact Bill Pearch, newsletter editor, via email at [wcpearch@comcast.net](mailto:wcpearch@comcast.net) to schedule a brief interview.



# STRASBURG (CONTINUED)

On August 10, he returned to face the Florida Marlins in Washington. Two starts prior, he faced the Marlins in Florida. He pitched six scoreless innings. In the rematch, the Marlins did not make the same mistake. Strasburg lost his third game of the season while giving up six earned runs and striking out a season low four. Five days later, he returned to the mound against the Arizona Diamondbacks. Again, he pitched five innings and fanned seven. He left the game with the score tied 3-3. The Nationals scored once in the seventh, and once in the eighth to win the game. Strasburg left the game with another no-decision.



**Stephen Strasburg in his MLB debut against the Pittsburgh Pirates on June 8, 2010.**  
(Photo: *The Toronto Star*)

When the Nationals traveled to the City of Brotherly Love on August 21, they grabbed an early lead against the Phillies. They scored three in the first, and two in the third. With a 5-1 lead in the bottom of the fifth inning, Strasburg left the game with a forearm injury.

On August 24, he was once again placed on the 15-day disabled list. A few days later, on September 1, he was transferred to the 60-day DL. Strasburg's 2010 season was finished. The Nationals announced that Strasburg had torn his ulnar collateral ligament and needed Tommy John surgery. When word of surgery broke, it meant the 2011 season was lost. Or most of it anyway.

Jim Riggleman, manager of the Washington Nationals, hung his head. He had witnessed this before in Chicago. Certainly, memories of Kerry Wood crossed his mind.

Just like that, his season was finished. As Strasburg walked off the field, his numbers were complete. He finished with a 5-3 record in 12 starts. His earned run average was 2.91 and he tallied 92 strikeouts.

Now Major League Baseball looks toward a season minus one of its brightest young stars. In Washington, D.C., attendance spiked on days when Stephen Strasburg pitched. It even spiked around days he might have pitched. A city that was somewhat indifferent toward its National League franchise did care on days when Strasburg pitched. He has been working out with his team during spring training, but Tommy John surgery generally requires a 12-18 month recovery time. If his recovery and rehabilitation continues without any setbacks, Strasburg could return to the mound in September when rosters expand from 25 to 40.

When he returns to action, what type of pitcher will he be? Will he return to form and never skip a beat? Will he be like Kerry Wood and leave so much hype and potential untapped?

# ZEMAN'S ZINGERS: NOVEMBER 2019

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BY: DAVE ZEMAN



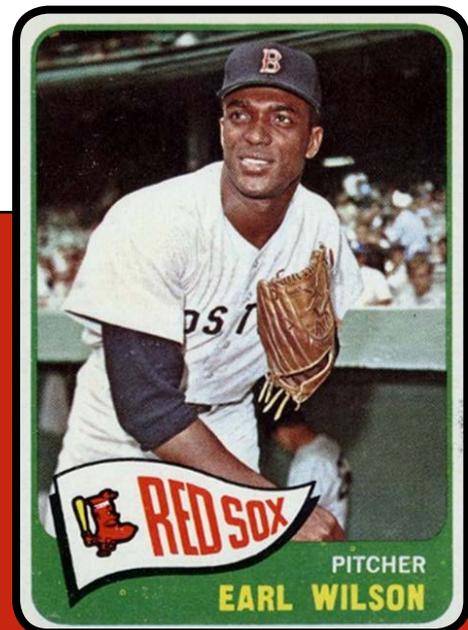
Missing baseball already? Here are five questions to get you ready for the offseason and test your baseball knowledge. Ready? Play ball!

1. Which World Series featured three extra inning games?
2. Who was the first pitcher to throw no-hitters for two different teams?
3. The Cubs are only 3-13 in World Series games at Wrigley Field. Who are the only three Cubs hurlers to win at the Friendly Confines?
4. Two of the top five picks in the 2011 amateur draft finally made their major league debuts in 2019. Name these patient prospects.
5. Which is the only team to have at least one league MVP in every decade since the 1930s?

## SEPTEMBER 2019: HOW DID YOU DO?

In case you missed the answers to September's quiz, we are publishing the answers again.

1. Going into 2019, the Washington Senators/Minnesota Twins franchise saw only three different batters hit at least 40 home runs in a season. Who were they? **Harmon Killebrew (8 times), Roy Sievers in 1957 and Brian Dozier in 2016.**
2. Name the three teams that have won the last three World Series in which they have played. **The Boston Red Sox, who actually have won their last four Fall Classics, in 2004, 2007, 2013, and 2018; the Cincinnati Reds in 1975, 1976 and 1990; the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1960, 1971 and 1979; and the San Francisco Giants in 2010, 2012 and 2014.**
3. Who is the only American Leaguer to have a 50 home run season and also a 50 stolen base campaign (different years)? **Brady Anderson swiped 53 bags in 1992 and hit 50 homers in 1996.**
4. Two teams, the San Diego Padres and the Tampa Bay Rays, have won exactly one World Series game. Who were the sole winning pitchers for their respective clubs? **The Padres' Andy Hawkins won Game Two of the 1984 World Series and James Shields earned the victory in the second game of the 2008 Fall Classic for Tampa Bay.**
5. What current National League city was once named Losantiville? **Cincinnati, Ohio.**



## PASTIME PASSAGE...

**"A BASEBALL GAME IS SIMPLY  
A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN DIVIDED INTO NINE INNINGS."**

— EARL WILSON

Source: *Daily Press (Newport News, Virginia)*,  
December 23, 1963, 21.

Do you have a favorite baseball-related quote? Send it to  
John Racanelli via email at [j.racanelli@hotmail.com](mailto:j.racanelli@hotmail.com).

# UPDATE FROM SABR'S OSCAR CHARLESTON CHAPTER

BY: TRENT MORTON

On Saturday, October 26, the SABR Oscar Charleston Chapter hosted a meeting at the Indianapolis Public Library-Haughville Branch.

First, Professor David Goss, formerly of the Indiana University School of Optometry, presented on the use of eyeglasses in professional baseball. In fact, starting with pitcher William White, players have worn eyeglasses dating back to 1877. Professor Goss described the past stigma that visually-impaired players confronted, but also noted that modern sensibility and sturdier eyeglass frames have helped change that. Finally, if you want to see how much vision—obviously—affects the game, compare George Sisler's stats before 1923, when a sinus infection damaged his vision, and after. The contrast is shocking.

Second, Jeff Stanger, author of several baseball books, discussed backstories behind some of baseball's famous artifacts. For Bobby Thomson's "Shot Heard 'Round the World," both the spectator who caught the ball, and the ball's subsequent chain of custody, have been subject to forensic and historical debate. And the priceless Honus Wagner T206—indeed the entire legendary T206 set itself—underwent criminal controversy at the hands of inept fabricators. Mr. Stanger covered these tales, and others, during his presentation.

Third, Jim Blessing, perhaps our Chapter's most frequent traveler, chronicled the history of Baseball Hall of Famer gravesites and his adventures in tracking those down. With graves located in states ranging from here to Hawaii, and New York to California, Jim has visited 215 of the 232 known gravesites. California leads with 21 gravesites, while Indiana hosts six. Offering interesting trivia, Jim pointed out that the first American League president, Ban Johnson, is buried in Indiana. That's one Hoosier gravesite that none of our meeting's attendees could name!

Thank you to all our presenters!

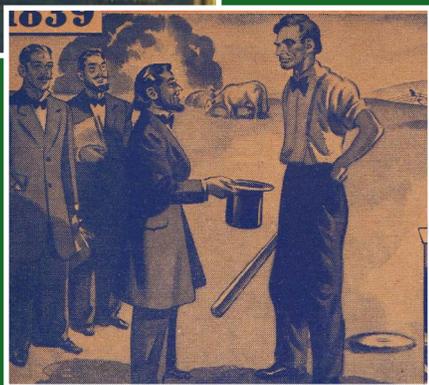
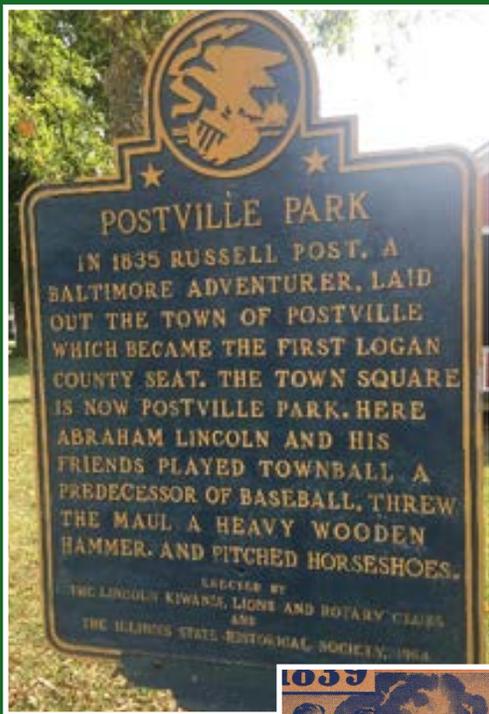
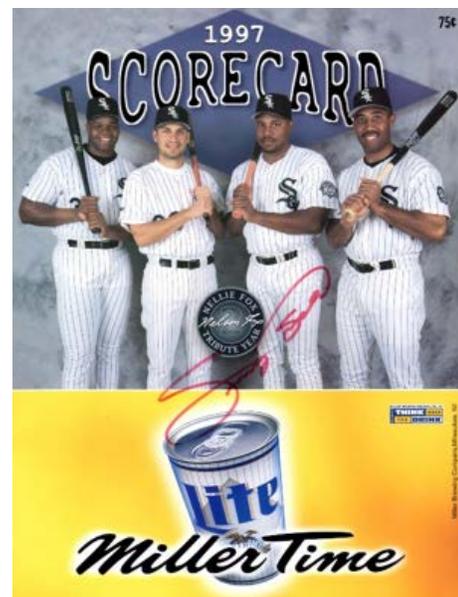
Finally, I'd like to extend a hearty congratulations to Jim Blessing on his World Series trivia victory!

## COLLECTOR'S CORNER

BY: JOHN RACANELLI

Sammy Sosa signed scorecard – June 17, 1997: Cubs at White Sox. Why red sharpie? Who knows!

It's okay to brag here – we want to see your coolest stuff! Send photos and descriptions of your coolest baseball cards or memorabilia to John Racanelli via email at [j.racanelli@hotmail.com](mailto:j.racanelli@hotmail.com).



## HISTORY HUNTERS

This historical marker at Postville Park in Lincoln, Illinois (40.146752, -89.383469) commemorates Abraham Lincoln playing townball with his friends at the site. Visited September 27, 2019.

If you go out of your way to visit old ballparks, historical markers, statues or gravesites we would love to hear about it! Send your experiences and photos to John Racanelli at [j.racanelli@hotmail.com](mailto:j.racanelli@hotmail.com).

Photos: John Racanelli; Cards That Never Were

## GET YOUR BASEBALL RESEARCH PUBLISHED

Are you conducting baseball research? SABR's Emil Rothe Chicago Chapter can help. We are looking for new articles to publish in the Chapter's monthly newsletter and social media outlets. Submit your articles to Chapter Secretary David Malamut via email at [david@malamut.net](mailto:david@malamut.net). Submittal deadlines are the 15th of each month for inclusion in the next edition.