

Society for American Baseball Research Collegiate Baseball Committee Newsletter May 2004 (04-2)

Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the position or official policy of SABR or its Collegiate Baseball Committee

Co-Chairmen	E-mail	Address	City	State	Zip	Home	Office	Cell
Rick Benner	rickb@titlelaw.com	3426 Highland Pine Way	Atlanta	GA	30096- 3817		(678)406- 8915	(770)366- 1242
Jay Langhammer	jay@totalshow.com	7209 Laurelhill Court South	Fort Worth	TX	76133- 8124	(817)346- 7183	(800)334- 9102, ext. 619	

SABR CONVENTION

The 2004 SABR Convention will be held July 15-18 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Collegiate Committee has been assigned the 6 p.m. slot on Saturday night. Though this time is inconvenient for those of you wishing to attend the minor league baseball game in Dayton, it provides the perfect time for us to gather and discuss the past year and upcoming research year. I hope that you all will attend and I look forward to seeing each of you at the Cincinnati.

COLLEGE BASEBALL REGISTER

A couple of years ago, I was asked to chair this Committee based on a research project that I was working on. As a result, my research project ripened into the primary focus of this Committee, and later became a world famous website (www.ncaa-baseball.com/sabr).

My project will now become a published reality. McFarland Publishing has agreed to allow me to edit the first ever *College Baseball Register*. It is my hope that the Register will be the first of many editions, and I liken it to the initial effort of the MacMillian Baseball Encyclopedia. It will contain many errors and omissions, but as the research continues will become the bible of college baseball.

The Register will present the information now available on the website, but also so much more. The baseball history section will be expanded to include year-by-year win-loss records and coaches. Coaches who played in the major leagues will be highlighted. A section will also be added to include major league players who attended the college but did not play baseball. College baseball players who went on to fame in other arenas will also be noted, i.e. Sammy Baugh, A.A. Stagg. Highlights of the baseball program will be presented. And, of course, acknowledgements.

The first ever College Baseball Register will be limited to the current NCAA colleges and universities (Division I, II and III). Discussion is already underway to produce another volume which may include NAIA, junior colleges and closed colleges. Some of you have already contributed information in the furtherance of this objective. All of you who have contributed or will contribute will be acknowledged in print. Publication of this register will not allow me financially to retire to western Nebraska anytime soon, nor will there be free copies available for everyone, but there is a tremendous opportunity to be a part of history. No one has ever compiled a single publication on college baseball of this magnitude. Bits and pieces appear in various locations, but the opportunity to discover the baseball history of a specific college or all colleges has never been available.

Now as you can imagine, a project of this size is overwhelming for a single person, group of persons, or the entire population of Pittsburgh PA (even including Pittsburg KS), but not so for the members of the Collegiate Baseball Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research. The goal is to gather all of this information and have it ready for publication by September 2005.

As editor, I am asking for your assistance. If you are willing to go to college libraries, visit with the Sports Information Directors, look through microfilm of college newspapers or local publications, then please contact me. I need help in all areas of the country and at all sizes of schools. One of the biggest roadblocks has been the colleges who either don't currently have a baseball team, or those whose program was interrupted and only recently reinstated. The colleges generally lack the year-by-year records that are so vital to this endeavor. If you want to be part of this historic publication, let me know what colleges, or region that you are willing to work on, and I can provide you with the specific information needed and some guidance on how to obtain it. Of course, there are still players to be verified.

COMMITTEE MISSION

Since Jay and I have been co-chairs, we have never established a mission statement of the Collegiate Baseball Committee. As a member of this Committee what would you like to see the purpose of this Committee be? Please email your thoughts to me and we will discuss them at the convention meeting in Cincinnati.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Here are some things that I have been thinking about, or have been asked, regarding college baseball:

1. What constitutes a college baseball game? This may seem like a silly question in 2004, but as we research the history of college baseball, this becomes a vital question. College nines were sometimes forbidden to venture off campus to play other colleges and as such would play high school teams, local amateur or semipro clubs and sometimes even the local professional minor league club.
2. Who is a college baseball player? There are two schools of thought here. My belief is that if a college or university forms a “university team” and they play other teams then those who participate in those games are college baseball players. Another thought is that it should be noted if the player participated at the highest level of competition available to him, i.e. intramural or “class” baseball. I have also noted players who played on the freshman team only before signing professional contracts.
3. What constitutes a junior college baseball game? This one is tougher because of the lack of widespread juco programs in the 1920s through 1950s. Some jucos of that era played local high school teams and freshman college teams.
4. What is the status of a military academy? Many players of bygone times would play baseball at a military academy before become a professional or entering a college program. I expect that this was the equivalent of entering a prep program. Should these be considered college programs? Staunton Military Academy, for example, played junior colleges and freshman teams.
5. What about the Catholic schools? Many of the catholic colleges started out offering the complete package—secondary school, high school and college. If a high school student was good enough, he may have been placed on the college team.
6. What constitutes a college coach? Prior to about 1920, many colleges did not hire full-time coaches for their baseball teams. A local professional would come in and train the team before departing for his own spring training or season opener, then the team would be taken over by the team captain. The team also had a manager, usually a student, who would schedule the games, make travel arrangements and the like.
7. What about the V-12 program? During WW-II, many colleges hosted military training and inevitably formed a baseball team. Some of our major leaguers played at these colleges for their teams before becoming professionals. Should they be considered college baseball players?

PROJECTS

Here are some ideas for projects that members of the Collegiate Committee might consider:

1. The creation, evolution and history of collegiate baseball conferences.
2. Compiling a list of All-Americans.
3. Canadian college baseball.
4. Asian college baseball—especially Korean and Japanese.
5. Fall baseball—apparently only existed in the 1960s.
6. History of the NCAA and NAIA regarding baseball.
7. State college baseball champions.
8. College graduates in the major leagues.
9. Creation of a “chat room” similar to SABR-L in which members of the Committee can share ideas and inquire of other members.
10. List of drafted players by college.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Due to the potential appearance of impropriety, I would like your opinion on my status as co-chairman of the Committee. Since much of my committee work (and all of my “free” time) revolves around the *College Baseball Register*, do you think I should remain as co-chairman of this Committee? Jeremy Mills, who has been hosting the committee’s website, has volunteered to replace me.

BITS AND PIECES

As much as I would like to bore you with another “Travels With Rick” adventure, I will abstain, but want to pass along some items of interest.

There is a new book available entitled *The Encyclopedia of College & University Name Histories* by Morgan G. Brenner, published by Scarecrow Press. I have been providing name histories to assist in the research process, obtaining these histories from university websites and inquiries. This book does the same thing for all existing senior colleges.

I hope that all of you are taking advantage of the free service SABR has provided online. *ProQuest*, which has a searchable database of the New York Times, Washington Post and Los Angeles Times is helpful in locating box scores, articles and other interesting items.

There is also a pay service called www.paperofrecord.com which has all issues of The Sporting News digitized and searchable, though not as user friendly as *ProQuest*.

AND FINALLY....

If I have done this correctly, I have included an article reprinted from the May 8, 1910 New York Times entitled *College Players on League Teams*. One of the quotes in the article states, "The big leagues contain many collegians, whose very schools are forgotten by all save the men themselves, and no list of big league college men ever printed has been correct for this strange reason."

SELAH.