

# BLACK SOX SCANDAL



Vol. 9, No. 2, December 2017

Research Committee Newsletter

## Leading off ...

### What's in this issue

- ◆ 1922 Ex-Major League Stars tour of the Midwest . . . . . **PAGE 1**
- ◆ Get your copy of *Scandal on the South Side* e-book . . . . . **PAGE 2**
- ◆ Darby Rathman's banishment from baseball . . . . . **PAGE 3**
- ◆ Diamond Joe and the Black Sox jury celebration . . . . . **PAGE 9**
- ◆ Film review: *Dawson City: Frozen Time* . . . . . **PAGE 11**
- ◆ Jake Daubert's 1919 World Series scrapbook . . . . . **PAGE 11**
- ◆ Comiskey interview lends credence to claim . . . . . **PAGE 12**
- ◆ 'Shoeless' José Altuve heats up in July . . . . . **PAGE 12**
- ◆ *Beckett Vintage* highlights Black Sox baseball cards . . . . . **PAGE 15**
- ◆ South Side Sox re-creates 1917 White Sox season . . . . . **PAGE 21**
- ◆ Furman University's scholarship for Shoeless Joe . . . . . **PAGE 21**
- ◆ Planning a 100th anniversary newsletter for 2019 . . . . . **PAGE 22**

### Chairman's Corner

**By Jacob Pomrenke**  
buckweaver@gmail.com

In the nine years since this committee was first formed, we've expanded our knowledge of the Black Sox Scandal in so many ways. But still, the old myths persist.

As the 100th anniversary of the 1919 World Series draws near, it's time to take what we've learned and make a concerted group effort at (again) correcting what we know to be untrue and explaining the story to an audience that will be ripe to hear some of this new information.

The final page of this

► **Continued on Page 2**



One year after they were banned from Organized Baseball, five Black Sox players embarked on a baseball tour of the Midwest during the summer of 1922. The tour was not a financial success, leading to a fight over money between Eddie Cicotte and Swede Risberg. Lefty Williams replaced Cicotte, who left the team after he wasn't paid in advance. Pictured above: second row, starting fifth from left: Happy Felsch, Buck Weaver, Risberg, and Cicotte with the "Ex-Major League Stars." (BlackBetsy.com)

## Ex-Stars tour splits when Risberg spars with Cicotte

**By Jacob Pomrenke**  
buckweaver@gmail.com

In the spring of 1922, just months after the Black Sox were banned from professional baseball for life, Eddie Cicotte and Swede Risberg partnered with a Chicago theatrical executive to form an independent traveling baseball team called the "Ex-Major League Stars." They planned to tour throughout the Midwest, hoping to capitalize on their fame from the 1919 World Series scandal and giving small-town fans a chance to see big-league talent up close.

Following their banishment from Organized Baseball, the players involved in the Black Sox Scandal found an enthusiastic, if not always lucrative, market in which to continue earning a living playing ball during the 1920s and '30s. In the era between the world wars, when

baseball was truly the national pastime, every American town of any significant size fielded its own competitive baseball team. Most teams were strictly amateur, but some paid their players a stipend or salary. Revenue was generated by sponsorships from local merchants and municipal officials, gate receipts and, of course, America's other favorite pastime — a wager or two placed on the games.

Their business manager, William C.V. Meek, was a 42-year-old New York City native who served in the U.S. Navy during the Spanish-American War. He left his job as treasurer of Chicago's Auditorium Theatre to launch a promotional agency called the Entertainment Service Bureau.<sup>1</sup> The agency was based at the Garrick Building on Randolph Street in the Loop, and the Black Sox were one of Meek's first clients. His assistant at the time was David Idzal, an

► **Continued on Page 6**

## ► CHAIRMAN

Continued from Page 1

newsletter includes an outline for a special 100th anniversary committee newsletter, scheduled for publication in October 2019, tackling the most significant stories about how and why the Black Sox Scandal took place, what it all means, and how it affects the sport today.

A preliminary list of article topics is in the outline on page 22, but more suggestions are welcome. We're seeking additional writers, editors, and proof-readers to help make this edition a special keepsake for Black Sox enthusiasts and all baseball fans. As we plot out the coverage and begin work on the newsletter over the next year, I encourage all of you to help with this effort in any way you can.

It's hard to compete with the half-century head start that *Eight Men Out* has had in ingraining the well-worn story of underpaid, disgruntled ballplayers, seduced by slick gamblers, striving to get back at their miserly owner by throwing the World Series. Or that the team owner conspired with gamblers to exploit a corrupt legal system and secure the players' freedom before the ultimate authority banned them from baseball for life.

It's a story that was repeated in a new book by a longtime Associated Press sports writer and in several other books and articles that have come out in recent years. An explosion of media coverage on the Black Sox Scandal is expected in 2019, and it'll take a strong, comprehensive effort on our part to combat those old myths.

This special newsletter, along with an accompanying media-friendly "fact sheet" that we'll publish before Opening Day, will help more baseball writers and fans find the most up-to-date research that we have available and hopefully will make a difference in some of the forthcoming anniversary coverage.

We're also beginning to make plans for a Black Sox 100th anniversary symposium in Chicago sometime during the fall of 2019, so we hope you'll join us for some featured panels, research presentations, and discussion on the scandal. I hope to have more details to share in the newsletter next June. We'll plan to make a weekend out of it, with a downtown walking tour of historic baseball sites, some Jazz Age-themed bar-hopping, and maybe even a ballgame if the schedule works out.

While it may feel a little early to start planning for 2019 before the calendar flips to 2018 — especially for a known procrastinator like me! — this committee won't ever have a brighter spotlight to highlight our work than it will with the 100th anniversary of the 1919 World Series.

There's no better time than the present to share our knowledge with the world and shed light on what really happened a century ago.

For more information about SABR's Black Sox Scandal Research Committee, e-mail [buckweaver@gmail.com](mailto:buckweaver@gmail.com).

## Download your free copy of *Scandal on the South Side*

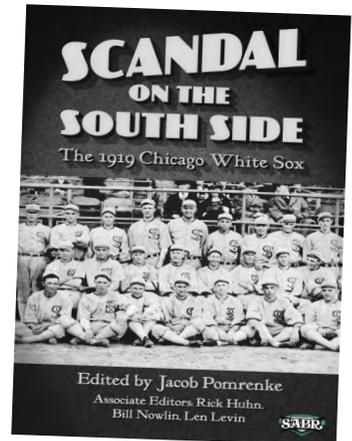
*Scandal on the South Side: The 1919 Chicago White Sox*, edited by Jacob Pomrenke, with associate editors Rick Huhn, Bill Nowlin, and Len Levin, is **now available from the SABR Digital Library**.

*Scandal on the South Side* is the first comprehensive book focused on the star-studded, dissension-riddled team that won the 1919 American League pennant and then threw the World Series — with full-life biographies of every player and official involved with that fateful team.

This book isn't a rewriting of *Eight Men Out*, but it is the complete story of everyone associated with the 1919 Chicago White Sox.

### Order the book:

The book can be ordered online at [SABR.org/ebooks](http://SABR.org/ebooks).



Free download available at [SABR.org/ebooks](http://SABR.org/ebooks)

All SABR members can download the e-book edition for free in PDF, EPUB, or Kindle formats. SABR members also get a 50% discount to purchase the paperback edition. The retail price is \$19.95 for the paperback or \$9.99 for the e-book.

**Read the bios online:** All biographies from the book can also be read online at the SABR BioProject. Visit [SABR.org/category/completed-book-projects/1919-chicago-white-sox](http://SABR.org/category/completed-book-projects/1919-chicago-white-sox) to find them all.

### Black Sox Scandal Research Committee

#### Committee chairman:

Jacob Pomrenke, [buckweaver@gmail.com](mailto:buckweaver@gmail.com)

#### E-mail list manager:

Rod Nelson, [rodericnelson@gmail.com](mailto:rodericnelson@gmail.com)

**Newsletter editors:** Mark Dugo,  
Rick Huhn, Steve Klein

**Post questions, discussion at our**

**Yahoo group:** <http://bit.ly/1919SoxYahoo>

# Birds of a feather: Darby Rathman's baseball ban

By Jacob Pomrenke

buckweaver@gmail.com

Banned from professional baseball during the prime of their careers, Happy Felsch or Buck Weaver might have expressed a lament like this later in life: "I'll never know what kind of ballplayer I could have been. I might have been in the Hall of Fame."<sup>1</sup>

Instead, those are the words of their one-time teammate, a Chicago-born infielder named Harvey R. "Darby" Rathman, who gained a measure of fame in the 1980s after he was interviewed by *Esquire* magazine about his fateful experiences with Felsch, Weaver, and Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis.

You won't find Rathman's name listed in any baseball reference sources. He never played in the minor leagues, let alone the majors — and he claimed that his association with the Black Sox was the reason why.

Back in 1922, just a few months after the Black Sox were banned for life by baseball commissioner Landis, Buck Weaver applied directly to the judge for reinstatement to clear his name. Weaver was adamant that he hadn't accepted any bribe money to throw the 1919 World Series with his teammates, but he had attended pre-Series meetings and knew about the plot all along. For the first time (but not the last), Landis rejected Weaver's effort to resume his professional career. The commissioner's words were ominous: "Birds of a feather flock together."<sup>2</sup>

Landis's statement made it clear that Weaver could not expect any leniency because of his close ties to the World Series fixers. But his message had a deeper meaning, too. He was also warning other players who associated with the Black Sox that they could expect to receive similar treatment in the future. They might put their own careers in jeopardy. It was a message that many aspiring professional players took to heart.

Landis formalized his threat in a 1921 letter to a team in Saginaw, Michigan, that attempted to hire Eddie Cicotte to pitch: "Any baseball player engaging in the sport with or against Eddie Cicotte in a scheduled semi-pro game here Saturday will be placed on the ineligible list, fined, and barred from further participation in professional baseball."<sup>3</sup>

While some amateur and semipro teams refused to play against the Black Sox for fear of being ostracized, there were still plenty of teams without a connection to Organized Baseball that wanted to share the same field with real big-leaguers. In the spring of 1922, Risberg and Cicotte formed a traveling team with Felsch and Buck Weaver called the Ex-Major League Stars, and they made plans to



**At 24 years old, Darby Rathman played second base on a traveling team organized by Eddie Cicotte and Swede Risberg in 1922. Later in life, he claimed he had been barred from playing professional baseball by Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis because of his association with the Black Sox. (Photo: *Esquire*, October 1984)**

embark on a summer tour of the Midwest, playing a series of games against independent teams from towns in the Fox River Valley in Wisconsin and the Mesabi Iron Range of northern Minnesota.

The four Black Sox players recruited a misfit collection of talent to fill out their lineup card. There was James Webb, a Pullman freight mechanic from Chicago who had played once before with the suspended major-leaguers in 1921 when they formed a team called the South Side Stars while waiting for their criminal trial to begin. He filled in at third base and right field, and occasionally pitched in place of Cicotte and Williams. John Zillmer was a big, strapping first baseman from Marion, Wisconsin, a depot man for the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad who played competitive baseball until he was 50 years old. Catcher Clarence Croke grew up near Happy Felsch in Milwaukee; he was an Army veteran in World War I and a one-time Marquette University football player.

After watching the team play, one Wisconsin reporter

► Continued on Page 4

## ► RATHMAN

Continued from Page 3

remarked, “Half of their club is composed of players of ordinary semi-pro ability who were picked up to fill in. ... The Ex-Stars have several ‘weak sisters’ in their organization.”<sup>4</sup>

This was the team that 24-year-old infielder Darby Rathman joined in 1922. Rathman, a Chicago native, was working as a stockyards superintendent and his only apparent connection to baseball was his position as a coach at Mt. Carmel High School. His name does not show up in any box scores for prominent semipro teams in Chicago, which were stocked with former major-league players such as Jim “Hippo” Vaughn, Jack Quinn, and Vic Saier. Rathman’s baseball pedigree remains unclear, but it certainly wasn’t noteworthy — which means he fit right in on the Ex-Stars’ makeshift roster.

Rathman portrayed himself as being on par with the big-leaguers. He said he must have been as good as Risberg and Weaver “or they wouldn’t have let me stay.” He once told a reporter that he grew up in Chicago going to White Sox games in Comiskey Park. “I used to sit in the bleachers ... and watch Eddie Collins, who ended up in the Hall of Fame, and I knew there wasn’t much difference between us.”<sup>5</sup> He said he joined the team because the Black Sox promised him a salary of \$100 per week.

Surviving box scores show that Rathman mostly played second base and hit at the bottom of the lineup during the Ex-Stars tour. Like most of the players recruited to play, he struggled at the plate, hitting just .176 with one double and one home run in nine documented games.<sup>6</sup> The quality of their opponents was mixed. Ex-Boston Braves pitcher Bill Upham was one of five former major-leaguers who suited up for the Hibbing, Minnesota team, but other than the Black Sox, few players on the field in any given game ever sniffed a big-league roster.

One of Rathman’s favorite stories to tell about the tour was when an angry fan approached him at the team hotel and accused him of fixing a game after he made a crucial error in the late innings.<sup>7</sup> “That was the first time it occurred to me that my own good name might be blemished, too,” he said. “I took my glove and got on a train home.”<sup>8</sup>

Rathman’s last known appearance for the Ex-Stars came in a July 4 doubleheader against Eveleth. Although the Ex-Stars lost the second game 3-2 in 10 innings, Rathman (who went 0-for-4) made no errors and the winning run was scored cleanly on a walk-off single against Lefty Williams.

When Rathman got home to Chicago, he wrote a letter to the Newark Bears of the International League, who he claimed had expressed interest in signing him to a minor-

## 1922 BLACK SOX TOUR RESULTS

**June 3:** Ex-Stars 5, Marinette (WI) 3  
**June 4:** Ex-Stars 15, Marshfield (WI) 2  
**June 12:** Ex-Stars 4, Waupaca (WI) 1  
**June 15:** Ex-Stars 8, Hurley (WI) 2  
**June 18:** Ex-Stars 7, Stevens Point (WI) 0  
**June 23:** Ex-Stars 4, Merrill (WI) 3  
**June 25:** Hibbing (MN) 8, Ex-Stars 6  
**June 27:** Hibbing 13, Ex-Stars 12 (at Eveleth)  
**July 1:** Hibbing 4, Ex-Stars 3  
**July 2:** Chisholm (MN) 12, Ex-Stars 9  
**July 3:** Hibbing 9, Ex-Stars 6  
**July 4:** Ex-Stars 4, Eveleth (MN) 0 (at Virginia)  
**July 4:** Eveleth 3, Ex-Stars 2  
**July 5:** Ex-Stars 6, Eveleth 3  
**July 6:** Chisholm 13, Ex-Stars 10  
**July 7:** Ex-Stars 3, Hibbing 2  
**July 8:** Ex-Stars 8, Hibbing 6 (at Superior)  
**July 16:** Hibbing 7, Ex-Stars 3 (at Duluth)

league contract. But Judge Landis found out he had played with the Black Sox and — according to Rathman — added his name to professional baseball’s official blacklist.

In an interview with *Esquire* magazine in 1984, Rathman offered more details of his exchange with the commissioner:

“I sat outside Judge Landis’s chambers every day for two weeks. His secretary would smile and say, ‘Oh, I’m afraid the judge can’t see you now.’ Finally, he saw I wasn’t going to disappear and he brought me into his office. I explained the story, start to finish, of how I came to play baseball with the Major Stars. He heard me out and then he leaned over the desk and said, ‘Mr. Rathman, you can talk your goddamn ass off, but you’re not going to play baseball for anybody, now or ever.’ And then he said, ‘You don’t know it, but I’m doing you a favor. Anywhere you played, people would think you were on the fix. Birds of a feather flock together.’”<sup>9</sup>

One can easily imagine the scene of Landis hauling a young ballplayer into his office and reading him the riot act about associating with the Black Sox, squashing a promising pro career. But his threat about banning anyone who played with or against the exiled Chicago players usually had more bark than bite. Dozens of players in Rathman’s situation did go on to play professionally — and some of them even made it up to the major leagues.

A year after the Ex-Stars tour ended, Ernie Wingard and Verdo Elmore, teammates at the University of Alabama,

► Continued on Page 5

## ► RATHMAN

Continued from Page 4

joined an independent semipro team based out of Bastrop, Louisiana — which was captained by Shoeless Joe Jackson.<sup>10</sup> Jackson took Wingard under his wing and when the young pitcher signed with the St. Louis Browns before the 1924 season, Jackson accompanied him north to help him get acclimated to the big leagues.<sup>11</sup> Both Wingard and Elmore made their major-league debuts with the Browns that year; their connection with Jackson apparently did not ruffle too many feathers in the commissioner's office.

In 1926, Syd Cohen and Vern Underhill played regularly against Chick Gandil, Buck Weaver, Lefty Williams, and Hal Chase in El Paso, Texas, as part of the outlaw Copper League. Underhill went on to pitch for the Cleveland Indians in 1927-28 and Cohen later spent parts of four seasons with the Washington Senators. Roy "Hardrock" Johnson, who pitched briefly for the Philadelphia A's in 1918, was Lefty Williams's manager and teammate in the Copper League; he later served as the Chicago Cubs' manager for a short stint during World War II. Emmett Nelson, who was teammates with Swede Risberg for one season with the independent Sioux Falls Canaries in South Dakota, later pitched with the Cincinnati Reds in 1935-36.

These were just a few of the thousands of players who stepped on a baseball field with the Black Sox in the years after they were banned. Most of the players who turned pro languished in small Class D leagues, but a few rose to the cusp of the majors in top-flight circuits like the International League or Pacific Coast League.

If Judge Landis was serious about keeping players with connections to the Black Sox out of Organized Baseball, he wasn't always diligent about enforcing that hard line. Given Darby Rathman's demonstrated abilities while on tour with the Ex-Stars — his .176 batting average was nothing to write home about — and a lack of corroboration about his possible opportunity with the Newark Bears, his story doesn't seem to add up.

Rathman also had a tendency to exaggerate other qualifications throughout his life. After his baseball career ended, he claimed to have graduated from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. However, school officials there have no record of his enrollment.<sup>12</sup>

After Rathman moved to Florida in the 1940s, he became a publicity director for the minor-league Miami Marlins and was involved with a local baseball old-timers' association. The *Miami News* frequently misreported that he had been an infielder "in the major leagues" with the Chicago White Sox in the '20s. This error continued appearing

in print for more than a decade.<sup>13</sup>

Rathman gave his first interview about the Ex-Stars tour to the *Palm Beach Post* in 1977 — a half-century after the fact.<sup>14</sup> Then, he clarified that he had never played professional baseball and he blamed Judge Landis for ruining his career. For the rest of his life, until his death in 1986, he told the story to anyone who would listen. There are no letters or public statements from Landis or anyone else to confirm or deny Rathman's claim.

Perhaps baseball's first commissioner did single out Darby Rathman and make him an example for any other aspiring ballplayer who associated with the Black Sox. If so, Rathman would have been one of the only players punished for that transgression. In that way, he would have had something in common with his old teammate Buck Weaver, who wasn't alone in his "guilty knowledge" of the 1919 World Series fix but was banned for life anyway. Birds of a feather, indeed.

### Notes

1. Randy Schultz, "Black Sox Scandal Revisited," *Palm Beach Post*, July 21, 1977.
2. "Buck Weaver Asks For Reinstatement," *New York Herald*, January 14, 1922.
3. "Landis to Bar Players in Game with Cicotte," *New York Tribune*, September 22, 1921.
4. "New Hurler to Make Debut in Stiff Contest," *Stevens Point Daily Journal*, June 17, 1922.
5. Pete Dexter, "Black Sox Blues," *Esquire*, October 1984, 265-67.
6. Special thanks to author Alan Muchlinski for sharing his research files on the Minnesota portion of the 1922 tour. Muchlinski wrote the first extended study of Swede Risberg's outlaw career in *After the Black Sox: The Swede Risberg Story* (Bloomington, Indiana: AuthorHouse, 2005).
7. See, for example, Shelby Strother, "A man's guilt by association," *Florida Today*, June 26, 1985.
8. Dexter, "Black Sox Blues."
9. *Ibid.*
10. For more details, see John Bell, *Shoeless Summer* (Americus, Georgia: Vabella Publishing, 2001).
11. Kevin T. Czerwinski, "Wingard carved out a career to remember," *MiLB.com*, August 20, 2008.
12. Rathman claimed to graduate from Northwestern in a May 28, 1985, interview with the *Palm Beach Post* and the claim also appears in his December 25, 1986, obituary in the same newspaper. University officials were unable to find any record of his matriculation. E-mails to the author from Brittan Nannenga of NU Libraries on October 11, 2017, and Abigail Smith of the NU Registrar's Office on October 16, 2017.
13. See *Miami News* articles on February 23, 1949; March 18, 1956; and July 17, 1960, among others.
14. Schultz, "Black Sox Scandal Revisited."

*Fight on Merrill street corner brought an end to the Black Sox*

**CICOTTE, RISBERG FIGHT; MAY END 'BLACK SOX' TOUR**

**CICOTTE MINUS TEETH BATTLES WITH RISBERG**

**3,000 Fans Gather**

**900 FANS WANT FORMER MAJORS IN QUEEN CITY**

**Hibbing Will See Great Team When "Black Sox" Meet Brady's Fast Club**

**RAY CANNON PITCHES FOR BLACK SOX NINE**

**Witness Colts Trim**

**Former Major Leaguers**

Johnny Edmon Brings Petition to Judge Brady With 900

**► EX-STARS**

**Continued from Page 1**

up-and-coming star in the film industry who later went on to manage the prestigious Fox Theatre in Detroit.

Meek and Idzal had no contacts in baseball, so they left the building of the roster to Risberg and Cicotte, who quickly recruited Happy Felsch and Buck Weaver to play ball with them. The rest of the team was composed of a group of undistinguished amateur, collegiate, and semipro players, some of whom they picked up along the way. The Ex-Major League Stars wore gray pinstriped jerseys with the team name on the front in a cursive script. The amateur players were promised \$100 a week<sup>2</sup>, while the four Black Sox and Meek were to divide up the rest of the profits.

Weaver's involvement might have surprised some fans, because it had been widely reported in a syndicated newspaper column<sup>3</sup> that he refused to play with his old teammates after they were banned from the majors. When some of the Black Sox formed a team during the summer of 1921 to play ball on weekends at a Chicago amusement park while they were awaiting trial, Weaver backed out because he thought the venture wouldn't be profitable; he was making good money working at his brother-in-law's drug store instead.<sup>4</sup> But Weaver would go on to play with and against the other Black Sox on many occasions throughout the 1920s.

To advertise their new team, Meek and Risberg sent out dozens of postcards asking for games: "WANTED — Open Dates for Baseball Games With World's Champions."<sup>5</sup> Some teams wanted nothing to do with baseball's black sheep. One manager in Michigan said, "We don't care how much money it would mean to us to have a game with players of this kind. We are willing to sacrifice a hundred dollars or so to keep our clean name in the national pastime."<sup>6</sup>

Meek was able to schedule a series in early June against teams from northern Wisconsin, and the summer seemed to get off to a promising start. With Cicotte overpowering the semipro hitters, the Ex-Stars beat up on teams from Stevens Point, Waupaca, Marshfield, Marinette, and Hurley. Risberg, who had a strong arm and had been a pitcher in his

youth, took a regular turn on the mound, too. His talent far outmatched the local nines.

The Wisconsin tour drew crowds of up to 3,000 for some games, and the fans were generally friendly toward the banished players. But the venture was marred by bad weather and a lack of funds stemming from high hotel and transportation costs. Despite the Black Sox running up the scores, they were also accused of indifferent play at times. Felsch and Risberg sometimes spent their mornings on a nearby lake or river with a fishing pole and a case of beer, showing up to some games half-sober, just before the first pitch.

Cicotte and Risberg stirred up more controversy on June 11 when they were recruited, with amateur catcher Charles "Buck" Moore, to play for last-place Appleton against Menasha in the independent Fox River Valley League. By the time the three players showed up in the second inning, Menasha had already built a six-run lead and won easily. Appleton owner August Brandt's decision to use the exiled Black Sox set off a firestorm that nearly got his team kicked out of the league.<sup>7</sup> While the Fox River Valley League was outside the purview of Organized Baseball, commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis had warned that any player participating in a game with the Chicago outcasts would also be blacklisted from professional baseball, as well.

In the meantime, the Black Sox players were also preoccupied by a new round of legal battles following their acquittal in a criminal trial on conspiracy charges. In Chicago, Buck Weaver filed suit seeking back pay and bonuses he claimed he was owed by the White Sox and owner Charles Comiskey. Swede Risberg, Happy Felsch, and Shoeless Joe Jackson soon followed with their own lawsuits. The cases would take several years to resolve, and headlines across the country criticized the players for airing baseball's dirty laundry once again.<sup>8</sup>

Two weeks after the Appleton debacle, the Ex-Stars were scheduled to play a game on June 23 in Merrill, Wisconsin. Cicotte wasn't keen on pitching, weary from the travel and lack of compensation. Who took his place on the mound? Ray Cannon, one of the Milwaukee lawyers representing Felsch, Risberg, and Jackson in their lawsuits

**► Continued on Page 7**

## ► EX-STARS

Continued from Page 6

against the White Sox.

Cannon's purpose in making the 200-mile trip to Merrill was likely just to discuss the players' cases, but he also happened to be an accomplished semipro pitcher. He acquitted himself well against the Merrill nine, allowing just two hits over seven innings. Cicotte pitched the final two innings and preserved a 4-3 victory for the Ex-Stars at the Lincoln County Fairgrounds.<sup>9</sup>

Afterward, Risberg told the team he had booked them to play about twenty more games on the Mesabi Iron Range in northern Minnesota. Tired of being away from home for so long, Cicotte demanded to be paid for his participation in advance — he had famously made the same request before the 1919 World Series — or else he would quit the team. Risberg, never known for diplomacy, responded by punching Cicotte in the mouth and knocking him to the ground in front of a downtown moonshine tavern.

Leonard Schmitt, a college student at the time and later an attorney in Merrill, witnessed the scene and recalled:

“Risberg figured Cicotte was running out on him, which he was, and started the fight. Risberg took Cicotte down in the gutter right on the corner and I remember Cicotte had his arms over his face.

Risberg was the bum of the bunch. Anyway, Felsch, who really was just a big kid, pulled Risberg off and threw him halfway across the sidewalk and back to the tavern. Risberg then challenged Moore [the catcher who was] sitting in a chair in the corner. Risberg asked him where he was going. I remember that Moore picked up a bat, laid it across his knee, and said, ‘I’m staying right here.’”<sup>10</sup>

The fight was picked up by the *Chicago Tribune* and the Associated Press, and some version of it was reported in hundreds of newspapers. Cicotte's sudden departure signaled an end to his collaboration with his old major-league teammates. Although he continued pitching for a few more years, he never again stepped on a field with any of the other Black Sox players. A few weeks later, while visiting his brother's cabin at Muskallonge Lake in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Cicotte took the mound for a team from nearby Newberry. Against Marquette on August 27, he used his “shine ball” that once dominated American League hitters to record 17 strikeouts in a thrilling 17-inning game.<sup>11</sup>

Cicotte then went home to Detroit, took a job as a game warden, and continued to pitch semipro ball in southeastern

Michigan before embarking on a second career in the service department at the Ford Motor Company.

Without Cicotte and the catcher Moore — who never did leave Merrill, living there for the rest of his life<sup>12</sup> — the Ex-Major League Stars traveled by train to Hibbing, Minnesota, and resumed their tour in early July. Their new starting pitcher was another familiar face: Lefty Williams, one of the American League's top young left-handers before he was banned for life in the Black Sox Scandal.

When the 29-year-old Williams got the call to join the team, he was having trouble keeping a job in Chicago and had developed a severe drinking problem. But he still knew how to pitch. On his way to Minnesota, he tuned up with a 19-strikeout performance for the Crivitz, Wisconsin, team against Wausaukee at an American Legion picnic.<sup>13</sup> But he never reached those heights with the Ex-Stars. Williams was not in shape and his arm was constantly sore; he played first base more often than he pitched in the three weeks he was with the team.

The Ex-Stars played 12 games, winning just four, against teams from Hibbing, Eveleth, and Chisholm. Hibbing, which defeated the Black Sox team in five out of seven games, was also stocked with a handful of former big-leaguers, including Bill Rumber — who had been implicated in a 1919 Pacific Coast League gambling scandal — Bill Upham, Lee Dressen, Joe Fautsch, and Harry Niles. The fans were more upset that the Black Sox's biggest stars, Eddie Cicotte

and Shoeless Joe Jackson, failed to show up as advertised.

Chisholm was the home of Dr. Archibald “Moonlight” Graham, a one-time New York Giants outfielder who gained lasting fame when his name was used in W.P. Kinsella's novel *Shoeless Joe* and the film *Field of Dreams*. Some writers have claimed Jackson once played against Graham's team in Chisholm, but there is no evidence this ever happened.<sup>14</sup> However, his Black Sox teammates Felsch, Risberg, Weaver, and Williams did play two games in Chisholm during the Ex-Stars tour on July 2 and July 6, losing both games. The ballplayer-turned-physician Graham did not play in these games, but perhaps he was in the grandstands to watch. That tantalizing possibility may remain lost to history forever.

Midway through their tour of the iron-mining country, the Ex-Stars's business arrangement with William Meek abruptly collapsed. Some players had not received a dollar in salary during the trip, and the team refused to take the field for a July 4 doubleheader against Eveleth until Meek handed over a little cash.<sup>15</sup> Their games so far had reportedly brought in about \$6,000 in gate receipts, but when the former major-leaguers asked for their share of the revenue,

► Continued on Page 8



**Attorney Ray Cannon, a talented semipro pitcher, often visited the Chicago Cubs spring training camp in the 1920s. He played one game for the Black Sox's traveling team in Merrill, Wisconsin, in 1922.** (Author's collection)

## ► EX-STARS

Continued from Page 7

Meek only produced \$500, claiming he needed the rest to pay off hotel and transportation bills. The players began to suspect he was double-crossing them and called a meeting to overthrow their manager.<sup>16</sup>

The Black Sox players engaged in talks with officials from Duluth and Virginia, Minnesota, to stick around and play in the Mesabi Range independent league, but ultimately they couldn't work out a deal. So they decided to play their final scheduled game on July 16 in Duluth and then go their separate ways. Fittingly, Williams was outpitched by Hibbing's Bill Upham and they lost 7-3. The tour had been a financial failure; by the time the bills and other players were finally paid off, the former major-leaguers earned only about \$100 apiece for their two months on the road.<sup>17</sup>

On the field, the Black Sox outclassed the inferior competition — Weaver and Felsch both hit over .400 in the ten games where box scores are available, and Risberg hit .317 with a 2.63 ERA in 48 innings pitched — but the rest of the team played poorly no matter who they were facing. By the end of the summer it was clear that if they wanted to earn a living playing ball, a barnstorming tour wasn't the answer. They managed to find other ways to hold down steady jobs and spend quality time on the baseball field. But never again would this many of the banished Black Sox play together on the same field.

After the 1922 tour fizzled out, Swede Risberg stayed in Minnesota, marrying a woman from Rochester and buying a farm there, where he sold eggs and vegetables to the nearby Mayo Clinic. He continued pitching, which he had discovered was a far more lucrative position in independent baseball than his usual shortstop. From 1923-25, he was the captain and star for the Rochester Aces semipro team. He played ball, somewhere, every summer until 1934 before making his way west and settling in Northern California.

Happy Felsch went back home to Milwaukee and continued playing ball for semipro teams there until well into his forties. He and Buck Weaver joined forces to play together in Wisconsin during the summer of 1924 and he and Risberg toured western Canada, Montana, and the Dakotas for several years in the late 1920s. Later, he opened a successful tavern in his hometown and was one of the main primary sources for author Eliot Asinof's *Eight Men Out*.

Buck Weaver and Lefty Williams both returned to Chicago. In 1925, fellow exiles Hal Chase and Chick Gandil recruited Weaver to Douglas, Arizona, a copper-mining town on the Mexican border, to play in the outlaw Copper League. Williams joined them in 1926 and became one of the league's pitching stars in Fort Bayard, New Mexico. That seems to be the last of his playing days. He got sober, found religion, and then planted roots in Southern California. Weaver spent two seasons in the Copper League

before heading home to Chicago, where he played ball until the mid-1930s and lived out the rest of his days. He never stopped trying to clear his name.

### Notes

1. 1920 US Census; 1922 Chicago City Directory, accessed via Ancestry.com.
2. Randy Schultz, "Black Sox Scandal Revisited," *Palm Beach Post*, July 21, 1977.
3. James L. Kilgallen, " 'Black Sheep' Can Play, But Their Morale Hangs Low," *Dallas Morning News*, June 14, 1921.
4. Al Spink, "Al Spink's Column," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, February 6, 1922.
5. Jess Puryear, "Sport Comment," *San Diego Union*, April 17, 1922.
6. "It's-All-In-The-Slant," *Ironwood (Michigan) Daily Globe*, May 4, 1922.
7. "Appleton bows to Menasha despite Black Sox," *Green Bay Press-Gazette*, June 12, 1922; "Playing of Black Sox in Appleton condemned," *Oshkosh Northwestern*, June 13, 1922; "Valley League has fuss over Black Sox use," *Sheboygan Press*, June 13, 1922; "Appleton will retain team in Fox Valley league," *Wausau Daily Herald*, June 21, 1922.
8. For more detail on the Black Sox civil lawsuits against Comiskey and the White Sox, see chapter 17 of William F. Lamb, *Black Sox in the Courtroom: The Grand Jury, Criminal Trial, and Civil Proceedings* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2013).
9. "Ray Cannon Pitches for Black Sox Nine," *Green Bay Press-Gazette*, June 24, 1922; "Black Sox in dispute, may end the tour," *Manitowoc Herald-Times*, June 26, 1922; Bill Haglund, "Fight on Merrill street corner brought an end to the Black Sox," *Wausau Daily Herald*, October 15, 1970.
10. Haglund, op cit.
11. "17 inning game gives Newberry 2 to 1 victory," *Sault Ste. Marie Evening News*, August 28, 1922.
12. Buck Moore stayed in Merrill after the Cicotte-Risberg fight and lived there the rest of his life. After his own playing days ended, he managed Merrill's powerhouse semipro team and became the town's American Legion youth baseball director. Dave Christenson, "Sport Chatter," *Wausau Daily Herald*, January 2, 1953.
13. "Black Sox hurler beaten 6 to 3 in ten inning clash," *Green Bay Press-Gazette*, June 26, 1922.
14. See Jimmy Keenan's [Moonlight Graham biography](#) at the SABR BioProject for details on the legend of Jackson playing in Chisholm. Jackson's outlaw baseball career is fairly well documented between 1921 and 1925, and there is no evidence that he ever played in Minnesota.
15. "\$6,000 a Year Would Be Princely Salary For Black Sox Now," *Hibbing Daily Tribune*, July 13, 1922.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.

# Diamond Joe and the Black Sox jury celebration

By Jacob Pomrenke  
buckweaver@gmail.com

The jury in the Black Sox criminal trial took two hours and forty-seven minutes to return its heavily anticipated verdict on August 2, 1921, in Chicago. As soon as the courtroom clerk began reading the announcement — “We, the jury, find the defendant, Claude Williams, not guilty” — the room erupted into pandemonium after the acquittal of the 1919 World Series fixers.

As the *Chicago Tribune* reported: “The courtroom was like a love feast as the jurors, lawyers, and defendants clapped each other on the back and exchanged congratulations.”<sup>1</sup> Shoeless Joe Jackson and Lefty Williams were lifted onto jurors’ shoulders<sup>2</sup> and paraded around the courtroom before the entire group gathered on the Cook County Courthouse steps for a photo.

Later that night, the ballplayers and their attorneys reportedly gathered for a celebration party “at a little Italian restaurant on Chicago’s west side.”<sup>3</sup> During their dinner, they “accidentally met the twelve jurors” in an adjoining room. The “doors were thrown open” and the joint celebration “did not end until sunrise.” The jurors and the ballplayers “left the restaurant together singing, ‘Hail, Hail, The Gang’s All Here.’”<sup>4</sup>

It was an unusual confluence of events, to say the least, but the entire trial was full of strange shenanigans in Prohibition-era Chicago. One question that has seemingly never been answered: Where did this wild party take place?

The daughter of Eddie Cicotte’s attorney provided a clue to unlocking this mystery. Dan Cassidy was a childhood friend of the White Sox pitcher and a lawyer based in Detroit. In an interview with the *Detroit Free Press* in 1975, Betty Cassidy Swift talked about her father’s most famous case:

“I remember Dad telling us how Cicotte snuck into town from Chicago to see him. Dad went back to Chicago and successfully defended him. After the trial, Dad said they threw a big party at a place owned by Joe Esposito that was eventually taken over by Al Capone.”<sup>5</sup>

Giuseppe “Diamond Joe” Esposito was an influential bootlegger, labor racketeer, and political operative in the “Bloody 19th” Ward on the west side of Chicago. Overseeing a large district filled with Italian immigrants, Esposito helped former Illinois governor Charles S. Deneen get elected to the U.S. Senate. Deneen led a faction of the Republican party that clashed with Mayor William Hale Thompson and State’s Attorney Robert E. Crowe, whose office spear-

headed the Black Sox prosecution in 1921.

At the time, Esposito owned and operated the popular Bella Napoli cafe, on South Halsted Street near Jane Addams’s Hull-House and the present-day University of Illinois at Chicago campus. This is likely where the Black Sox gathered on the night they were set free by the jury. It’s unclear if Esposito had any other connection to the trial, but he surely would have been pleased by

the defendants’ victory over Crowe, his benefactor’s rival.

Originally opened in 1913, the Bella Napoli was called “the bright light of the near west side”<sup>6</sup> and its owner, called “Dimey” by his friends, made everyone in town feel welcome. Every year, Esposito hosted hundreds of poor and itinerant children for a catered Christmas party and distributed baskets of toys to neighborhood kids. Esposito became renowned for his extravagant banquets, where a who’s who list of guests from the political and gangland worlds freely mingled. Diamond Joe lived up to his nickname by flaunting a gem-studded belt buckle with his initials engraved on it.

After the Volstead Act was passed in 1919, the Bella Napoli became a haven for illegal alcohol sales and distribution



Minutes after the Black Sox were acquitted on August 2, 1921, the players, their attorneys, and members of the jury (in shirt sleeves) celebrated the verdict by posing for a photo on the courthouse steps. (*Chicago Tribune*)

► Continued on Page 10



“Diamond Joe” Esposito, left, a political operative with connections to Al Capone, owned the popular Bella Napoli cafe on South Halsted Street. This is likely where the Black Sox gathered on the night they were set free by the jury. (Chicago History Museum, Chicago Daily News, SDN-0074988)

## ► DIAMOND JOE

Continued from Page 9

and, naturally, it was one of Al Capone’s favorite hangouts. Esposito’s restaurant employed some of the country’s most notorious bootleggers. Paul Ricca — who later took over Capone’s operation after the mob boss was sent to prison — acquired his nickname “The Waiter” after Esposito hired him to be the Bella Napoli’s *maitre d’*.<sup>7</sup>

Esposito’s political connections couldn’t always shield him from Prohibition raids, and less than a year after the Black Sox and their jurors held a raucous party at the Bella Napoli, a federal judge ordered the cafe to shut down following a massive booze bust by U.S. Treasury agents.<sup>8</sup> It re-opened in December 1923 for one night only — when Esposito was allowed to host his annual Christmas party for more than 800 children from the neighborhood slums and tenements.<sup>9</sup>

As his old friend Al Capone knocked off rival gang leaders and consolidated his power in the city throughout the 1920s, Esposito got caught up in Chicago’s mob wars. On March 21, 1928, one night after hosting a party for Sen. Deneen at the Congress Hotel — where the guest list included Judge Hugo Friend, who was on the bench for the Black Sox trial<sup>10</sup> — Esposito was killed after a mysterious volley of shotgun blasts outside his home.

Among those attending his funeral in the freezing rain at Mount Carmel Cemetery were attorneys Michael Ahern and Thomas Nash, who had defended some of the Black Sox back in 1921.<sup>11</sup> No one was ever charged with Esposito’s murder.

## THE JURORS

- ♦ **William Barry** (jury foreman), 5949 West Lake Street, hydraulic press operator
- ♦ **William H. Deutcher**, Forest Park, automobile mechanic
- ♦ **Emil J. Groskopf**, Harvey, Illinois, clerk
- ♦ **Andrew A.A. Johnson**, 2855 Union Avenue, store fixtures
- ♦ **Herbert J. Jordan**, 6121 Kenwood Avenue, stationary engineer at Congress Hotel
- ♦ **Edward Linman**, 1366 East 61st Street, clerk
- ♦ **Paul E. Luebcke**, 3926 North Hamilton Avenue, employee of Chicago Telephone Co.
- ♦ **John Schoenhofer**, 5124 South Paulina Avenue, foreman for Darling & Co. packers
- ♦ **Stephen Shuben**, 2524 North Springfield Avenue, a merchant
- ♦ **Joseph Vesely**, 3155 North Ridgeway Avenue, foreman for Air Motor Company
- ♦ **Harry Willis**, 7933 Muskegon Avenue, heater for Inland Steel Company
- ♦ **Paul J. Zieske**, 1635 Olive Avenue, florist  
— *Chicago Tribune*, July 16, 1921

### Notes

1. “Jury Frees Baseball Men,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1921.
2. “Jury Acquits White Sox After 2 hrs.; Lifts Them on Shoulders,” *New York Tribune*, August 3, 1921.
3. *Des Moines Tribune*, August 3, 1921, as cited in William F. Lamb, *Black Sox in the Courtroom: The Grand Jury, Criminal Trial, and Civil Litigation* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2013), 142-144.
4. Ibid.
5. Toni Jones, “Dan Cassidy is 93 and Still Active as an Attorney,” *Detroit Free Press*, August 27, 1975.
6. James O’Donnell Bennett, “Killings Show Close Alliance With Politics,” *Chicago Tribune*, March 31, 1929. Accessed online at <https://chicagology.com/notorious-chicago/gangland9/> on June 14, 2017.
7. “Mob Head Ricca Dies,” *The Desert Sun* (Palm Springs, California), October 12, 1972.
8. “Dry Agents Raid Cafes in Chicago,” *The Brook Reporter* (Brook, Indiana), July 7, 1922.
9. “When Santa and Uncle Sam Collaborate,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 23, 1923.
10. Bennett, “Killings Show Close Alliance With Politics.”
11. “Thousands Brave Blizzard to Attend Esposito Funeral,” *Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 1928.

# Review: *Dawson City: Frozen Time*

The introduction to our *Scandal on the South Side* book told the story of a remarkable silent film collection that was preserved for decades underneath a swimming pool-turned-ice rink in a tiny Klondike Gold Rush town called Dawson City.

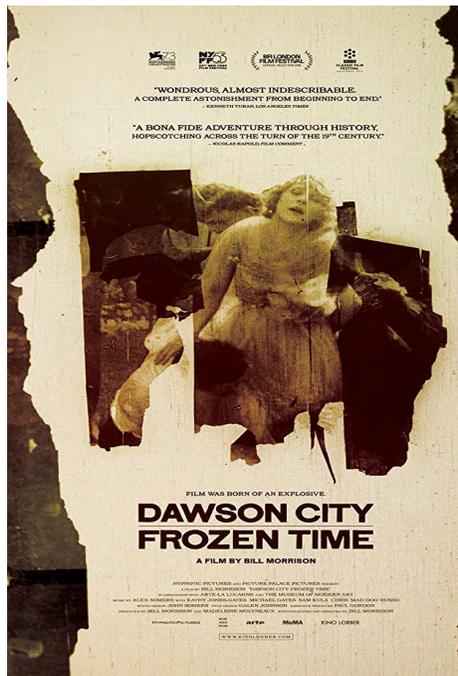
More than 500 silent films from the early 20th century were eventually converted to digital formats and made available for researchers at the Library and Archives Canada. One of those re-discovered newsreels included nearly [five minutes of game action](#) from the 1919 World Series, now available on YouTube.

During the SABR 47 convention this past June, a group of Black Sox committee members had the opportunity to see Bill Morrison's *Dawson City: Frozen Time*, a new documentary about this invaluable collection of old silent films, at the IFC Center in New York's Greenwich Village. It was a magical experience I will not soon forget.

We've spent the past few years dissecting every second of the 1919 World Series footage, but it was still breathtaking to see those clips appear on the big screen in virtually high definition — as HD as you're ever going to get for a nearly 100-year-old film reel!

Watching the infamous [Cicotte-Risberg double play attempt](#) from Game One in slow motion on a 25-foot-tall screen will stay in my mind's eye for a long, long time. The explainer text about the scandal did unfortunately repeat some old myths about the Black Sox players' low pay and motivation for fixing the World Series.

The two-hour film focuses primarily on Dawson City's rise during the Klondike Gold Rush in the late 19th century, using silent film clips and historical photographs to tell the story



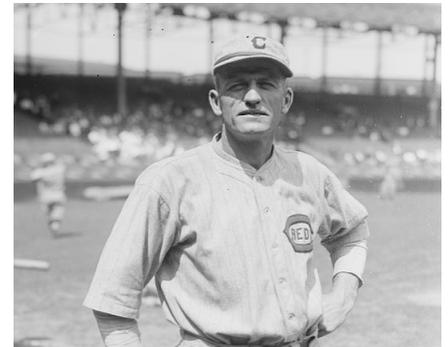
of the town and its famous collection. Most of these films had not seen the light of day in decades. It's a compelling, improbable story well told by Morrison, a Chicago-based filmmaker who uncovered the 1919 World Series newsreel footage in 2014, in the course of his research for this film.

If you're a film or history buff, I recommend checking out *Dawson City: Frozen Time*. While it may not be back on the big screen anytime soon, it's now available for purchase on DVD and Blu-Ray or streaming on [Amazon.com](#).

The DVD/Blu-Ray release also includes the new short "Dawson City: Postscript," an interview with Morrison, and six reels from the Dawson City collection.

Thanks to fellow SABR members Bob Byrne, Ruth Sadler, Marc Gold, and Tracy Greer for coming along for the ride with us in New York this summer — and to Morrison for giving us another fun piece of the Black Sox puzzle.

— Jacob Pomrenke



(Photo: Library of Congress)

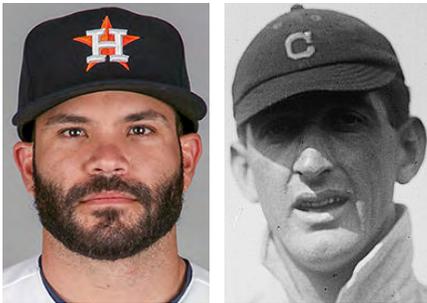
## Jake Daubert's 1919 Series scrapbook now available online

Jake Daubert's scrapbook filled with clippings and photos from the 1919 World Series and Black Sox criminal trial is a new addition to the Baseball Hall of Fame's PASTIME digital collection.

The veteran first baseman was a two-time batting champion and former National League MVP who joined the Cincinnati Reds in 1919 and helped them win the World Series. He had seven hits, including a triple in Game One, against the White Sox.

Daubert's 51-page scrapbook, which is titled "World's Series - Cincinnati-Chicago - October 1919," is available for viewing online in high resolution at [collection.baseballhall.org](#). It was compiled by H.W. Meyer and Charles E. Witte of Brooklyn, where Daubert played for nine seasons at the beginning of his career.

The articles include extensive coverage of the 1919 World Series games, mostly from the *New York Herald*, *New York Sun*, and *Brooklyn Eagle* newspapers. There are also six pages of clippings from the Black Sox criminal trial in July-August 1921 and another page with coverage of the 26-inning game between the Brooklyn Robins and Boston Braves on May 1, 1920.



## ‘Shoeless’ José Altuve heats up, nearly .500 in July

In 2017, José Altuve accomplished just about everything he set out to do, earning American League MVP honors, winning his third batting title, and leading the Houston Astros to their first World Series championship.

Altuve just missed out on another milestone this past season: He fell two hits shy of hitting .500 during the month of July. The Astros star second baseman had 48 hits in 99 at-bats for a .485 average in 23 games played. According to Retrosheet, only eight players since 1908 have hit over .500 in a single calendar month (minimum 75 plate appearances), but no one's done it since Detroit Tigers catcher Iván Rodríguez in June 2004.

Who did it the most? Shoeless Joe Jackson, who recorded .500 averages four times: July 1912, September 1912, May 1913, and June 1916. Ty Cobb is the only other batter to hit .500 in a month twice, in July 1912 and July 1918.

The others were: Todd Helton (May 2000), Roberto Alomar (September 1997), Harry Heilmann (August 1927), Rogers Hornsby (August 1924), and George Sisler (June 1920). Sisler's .526 average is the highest ever recorded in any month since 1908, the earliest year Retrosheet splits are available.

## Comiskey Wanted to Cancel 1919 Series

Reviews Scandal in Which Eight of His Players Were Ruled Out of Baseball After Reds' Victory.

BY SID KEENER,  
Sports Editor of The Star.  
Copyright, 1930 by The Star-Chronicle Publishing Co.

TWO strenuous pennant races brought the 1919 baseball season to a rousing finish. Chicago was celebrating another victory. Cincinnati was thrilled to the core, preparing for its first World Series. Thousands and thousands of fans were standing in line awaiting the grand rush through the entrance gates. Scattered throughout the nation were millions of baseball rooters, buoyed up by wild enthusiasm. They were the ones who would receive the returns of the championship production from the

Owner of White Sox in Court



Wanted to Retire Following Exposure of Fraud, but Refused to Let Crooks Drive Him Out.

baseball to aid me in obtaining convincing evidence.  
"I hired detectives and sent them all over the country during that winter, but I was unable to obtain facts that would bring about a conviction. Baseball is like the show—it must go on.  
"Other owners in the league were assembling their players and signing them for the 1920 season. I could not fire my players without proof of their crookedness, and during the winter I signed seven of the eight who were charged with being implicated in the plot. Chick Gandil was the one who decided to remain out of baseball.  
"The 1920 season opened with

Charles Comiskey's interview with sports editor Sid Keener was published in the *St. Louis Star* on December 13, 1930. (Newspapers.com)

## New Comiskey interview may lend credence to Fullerton claim

By Jacob Pomrenke  
buckweaver@gmail.com

One of the central questions of Gene Carney's groundbreaking 2006 book *Burying the Black Sox* was: What did Charles Comiskey know about the 1919 World Series scandal — and when did he know it?<sup>1</sup>

The answer, which remains unclear due to conflicting accounts, is a crucial piece of the puzzle in explaining how the scandal unfolded. In *Burying*, Carney uncovered evidence that Comiskey was told of the fix by sports writer Hugh Fullerton hours before Game One began.<sup>2</sup>

Fullerton's story, printed in *The Sporting News* in 1935, four years after Comiskey's death, includes details of his confrontation with the White Sox owner in Cincinnati's Sinton Hotel before the World Series opener.

According to Fullerton, Comiskey replied that he already knew about the fix but made it clear he could not report his suspicions to American League president Ban Johnson, with

whom he had been feuding for years.<sup>3</sup>

Carney asserted that Comiskey, Johnson, and many other baseball officials had more than enough knowledge to take action but failed to do so, essentially engaging in a cover-up of the fix until a Chicago grand jury forced them to air the game's dirty laundry nearly one year later.

Like almost everyone else involved, Comiskey offered several different versions as to how much he knew about the Black Sox plot and how early he knew it.

In September 1920, just days before Eddie Cicotte and Shoeless Joe Jackson blew open the scandal by testifying to the grand jury, Comiskey released a public statement defending his own actions. He said he had heard rumors that his team was fixed "on the morning of the second day of the world's series last fall."<sup>4</sup> He said he ordered manager Kid Gleason to "take out any player who did not appear to be doing his best." After the World

► Continued on Page 13

## ► COMISKEY

Continued from Page 12

Series ended, Comiskey offered a \$10,000 reward for “proof of the fixing of any of my ball players.” Later, he said there was “no evidence that justified legal action.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1923, Comiskey stuck to the same story — he testified in a deposition for Shoeless Joe Jackson’s back-pay lawsuit that he learned about the fix via a phone call from gambler Mont Tennes on the morning of Game Two.<sup>6</sup>

National League president John Heydler told a similar story under oath in 1920, claiming that Comiskey was “all broken up”<sup>7</sup> about the rumors between the first two games. Heydler added that the White Sox magnate called him on the morning of Game Three, and they met at Comiskey Park to discuss what was going on.

But Comiskey altered that timeline in a 1929 letter to *Cleveland Plain Dealer* sports editor Sam Otis that was printed publicly in the newspaper.<sup>8</sup> Comiskey claimed he talked to Heydler “immediately after the first game” and said “something was wrong with the playing of the Chicago team.” He authorized the NL president to report his suspicions to Ban Johnson “or anyone else he saw fit.”<sup>9</sup> However, Comiskey was frustrated when Johnson replied with the infamous retort, “That’s the yelp of a beaten cur.”

One year later, Comiskey changed the sequence of events again. In a December 1930 interview with *St. Louis Star* sports editor Sid Keener<sup>10</sup> that was not mentioned in Carney’s book, Comiskey offered what appears to be the closest corroboration yet with Hugh Fullerton’s *TSN* account. With “tears rolling down his cheeks,” Comiskey gave more details about what he knew (emphasis mine):

“The first inkling I received that something was crooked came when I was informed *several hours before Game 1*. ... While I was holding a conference in my hotel room, I was told these gamblers were operating openly in the lobby of the Sinton Hotel, holding \$1,000 bills. ... *I sent several officials over to investigate*. I was shocked when I received their report. ... *I met Mr. Heydler out at the park before the game started*. I told him what I had heard. He was stupefied. It was too late to hold a conference before the game, but I decided to see with my own eyes what was taking place. I was startled at the apparent nonchalance with which my players played. ... Were they selling out on me?”

Comiskey again cast blame on a familiar foe — the league president with whom he had never stopped feuding — and improbably suggested that he was willing to end the World Series early if that’s what it took to clean up baseball:

“Johnson, Johnson, Johnson! Why didn’t he stop it? I couldn’t interfere. I would have given anything I owned to

have called off the whole series after the first game.”

After Game Two, Comiskey said, he “had had enough. ... I went to Mr. Heydler and pleaded with him to get in touch with Johnson and [Cincinnati Reds owner] August Herrmann, then chairman of the National Commission, and tell the baseball public they were not satisfied with the playing of my ball club and had decided to call off the series. ... But Ban refused to attempt an immediate investigation. ... After the two games in Cincinnati ... I called Kid Gleason, my manager, and told him we had to go through with this terrible thing. I pleaded with him to do everything in his power to try to double-cross the players who were double-crossing baseball.”<sup>11</sup>

While it’s possible that Comiskey considered stopping baseball’s crown jewel event because he knew his team was throwing the World Series, there is no evidence he or anyone else suggested this idea at the time. The discrepancy in his 1930 story compared to his other versions may be explained by his haste to place more blame on Ban Johnson.

But this interview with Keener — published under the explosive headline “Comiskey Wanted to Cancel 1919 Series” — does lend some credence to Hugh Fullerton’s claim that the White Sox owner had knowledge about the fix before a single pitch was thrown.

As is often the case when trying to fill in the pieces of the Black Sox puzzle, the conflicting details open up even more questions than they answer.

*Click here to download the St. Louis Star article (PDF):*  
<http://bit.ly/comiskey-keener-1930>

### Notes

1. Gene Carney, *Burying the Black Sox: How Baseball’s Cover-Up of the 1919 World Series Fix Almost Succeeded* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2006), 40-43.
2. Hugh Fullerton, “I Recall,” *The Sporting News*, October 17, 1935.
3. *Ibid.*
4. “Benton Charges That 5 Players Accepted Bribe,” *Moline Dispatch*, September 24, 1920, as cited in William F. Lamb, *Black Sox in the Courtroom: The Grand Jury, Criminal Trial, and Civil Litigation* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2013).
5. Lamb, 41.
6. *Ibid.*, 157.
7. *Ibid.*, 43.
8. “Comiskey Tells His Story of Black Sox and Feud with Ban,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, January 13, 1929.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Sid Keener, “Comiskey Wanted to Cancel 1919 Series,” *St. Louis Star*, December 13, 1930.
11. *Ibid.*

# Beckett Vintage highlights Black Sox baseball cards

By Jacob Pomrenke

buckweaver@gmail.com

The August 2017 issue of *Beckett Vintage Collector* magazine includes a list that might be more valuable to Black Sox researchers than one of the famous Shoeless Joe Jackson tobacco cards pictured on its pages.

Beckett Media's Mike Payne and Andy Broome have compiled a comprehensive list of every baseball card featuring one of the "Eight Men Out" from their playing careers, ranging from about 1908 to 1920. The list is reprinted in this newsletter with the authors' permission.

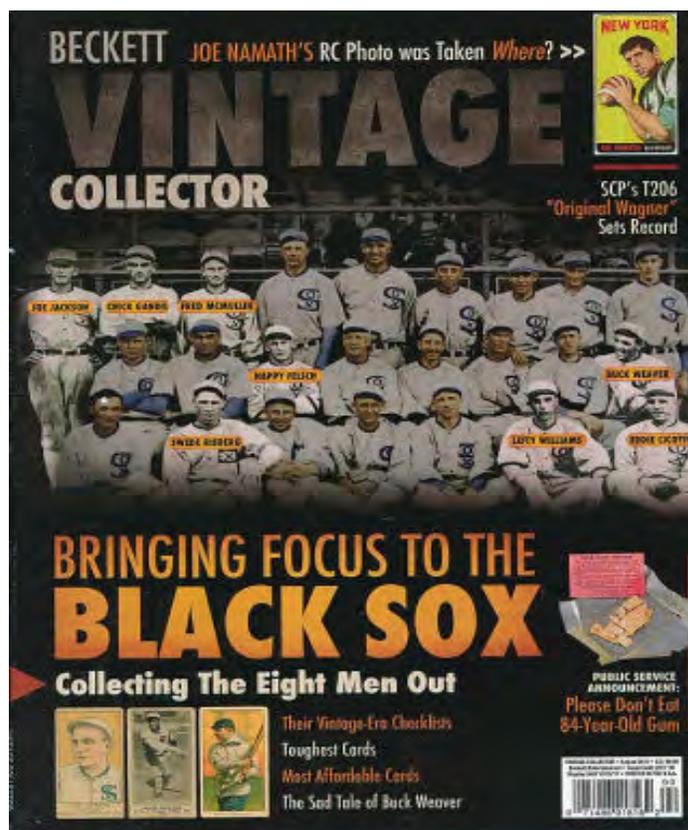
Some of those cards, like Jackson's 1914 Cracker Jack card, regularly sell for hundreds or even thousands of dollars at online auctions. Others, like Fred McMullin's only individual card — a 1915 Zeenut made when he was still in the minor leagues with the Los Angeles Angels — are virtually impossible to find today.

"I still receive a number of requests for Black Sox cards and material, but I suspect that many of these inquiries are from flippers," longtime vintage card dealer and SABR member Mark Macrae told Beckett. "The highest demand has always been for Jackson. The toughest is McMullin. The most plentiful, and the player that seems to hang around the longest in stock, is Eddie Cicotte."

By virtue of having the longest major-league career, Cicotte has more cards (70) of the 268 in Beckett's list than any other Black Sox player. His cards range from a 1909 supplemental card published by the *Boston Herald* to a 1920 D327 card issued in packages of Holsum Bread.

Macrae says one of the most sought-after sets, and one of the least expensive for casual collectors, is the 1919-21 W514 strip card series that included seven of the eight Black Sox (all except McMullin). Beckett offers recommendations with the most "affordable" cards for each player and the W514s fit the bill for Buck Weaver, Happy Felsch, Lefty Williams, and Swede Risberg. For Cicotte, his T205 card issued in 1911 is relatively easy to find and sometimes sells for less than \$100. Chick Gandil's T206 card from 1910 — in the same set as the most valuable baseball card in the world, the iconic Honus Wagner card — is regarded as the Black Sox first baseman's most affordable card, according to Beckett.

Shoeless Joe Jackson's cards could hardly be considered "affordable," with many selling for anywhere between \$1,000 and \$500,000. Beckett also includes a list of "dream" cards for each player, and Jackson's list includes two cards from early in his career, a 1909 E90-1 American



Beckett Vintage Collector's August 2017 cover

Caramel card and a 1910 T210-8 card, plus the well-known 1914 Cracker Jack card.

Beckett's "dream" cards for the other players include:

- ♦ **Cicotte:** 1914 Cracker Jack #94
- ♦ **Felsch:** 1916 M101-4
- ♦ **Gandil:** 1914 Cracker Jack #39
- ♦ **McMullin:** 1917 White Sox Team Issue
- ♦ **Risberg:** 1916 Zeenut (Vernon Tigers)
- ♦ **Weaver:** 1911 Zeenut (San Francisco Seals)
- ♦ **Williams:** 1915 Zeenut (Salt Lake Bees)

The only set that features all eight Black Sox players is the 1917 White Sox "Team Issue" cards, produced by Davis Printing Works in Chicago and sold as a complete boxed set by the team. The cards feature full-length, black-and-white photos of the players on a light background, with the player's name and position underneath. Only one original set is known to exist, according to baseball card historian Bob Lemke, and it was last sold in 2001 for more than \$50,000. (A reprint set was issued in 1992 by card dealer

► Continued on Page 15

## ► BECKETT

Continued from Page 14

Greg Manning, who had bought the original cards a year earlier.) Many of the cards in Beckett's list are from the same M101-4 and M101-5 sets issued in 1916, but they each feature different business names on the back, from *The Sporting News* to the Weil Baking Company. Chicago-based printer Felix Mendelsohn produced these sets of

cards and took out an ad in *The Sporting News* to sell space on the cardbacks to other businesses. TSN began offering the cards with their own company information stamped on the back later that summer. Six of the eight Black Sox (all except McMullin and Williams) were included in the Mendelsohn card sets.

While a majority of these cards may remain out of reach for even the most dedicated Black Sox collector, the list compiled by Beckett should be a useful resource for years to come.

### Black Sox vintage baseball cards

List compiled by Mike Payne and Andy Broome; reprinted by permission of Beckett Media

#### Joe Jackson

Set	No.
1901-17 Police Gazette Supplements	49
1902-11 Sporting Life Cabinets W600	192
1909-11 American Caramel E90-1	56
1909-11 Colgan's Chips E254	141
1909-13 TSN Supplements M101-2	69
1910 Old Mill T210 (New Orleans)	633
1911 Pinkerton T5	616
1912 Colgan's Chips Red Border	141
1912 Colgan's Chips Tin Tops E270	141
1912 Schmelzter's Sporting Goods Pins	5
1913 Baseball Player Stamps	3
1913 National Game WG5	21
1913 Tom Barker Game WG6	21
1913-14 Indians Postcards	3
1914 B18 Blankets (yellow bases)	39B
1914 B18 Blankets (purple bases)	39A
1914 Boston Garter Color	6
1914 Cracker Jack	103
1914 E and S Publishing	4
1914 Polo Grounds Game WG4	10
1914 Texas Tommy E224	23
1915 Cracker Jack	103
1916 Ferguson Bakery Felt Pennants BF2	13
1916 M101-4 Altoona Tribune	87
1916 M101-4 Blank Back	87
1916 M101-4 Block and Kuhl	87
1916 M101-4 Burgess-Nash	87

Set	No.
1916 M101-4 Everybody's	87
1916 M101-4 Famous and Barr	87
1916 M101-4 Gimbels Italic	87
1916 M101-4 Globe	87
1916 M101-4 Green-Joyce	87
1916 M101-4 Herpolsheimer	87
1916 M101-4 Indianapolis Brewing	87
1916 M101-4 Mall Theatre	87
1916 M101-4 Morehouse Baking	87
1916 M101-4 Sporting News	87
1916 M101-4 Standard Biscuit	87
1916 M101-4 Ware's Basement	87
1916 M101-4 Weil Baking	87
1916 M101-5 Blank Back	86
1916 M101-5 Block and Kuhl	86
1916 M101-5 Famous and Barr	86
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Large Block)	86
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Small Block)	86
1916 M101-5 Herpolsheimer	86
1916 M101-5 Holmes to Homes	86
1916 M101-5 Morehouse Baking	86
1916 M101-5 Standard Biscuit	86
1916 M101-5 Successful Farming	86
1917 Boston Store H801-8	82
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135	82
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2	82
1917 Weil Baking Co. D328	82



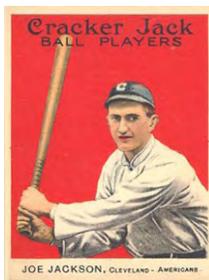
**Eddie Cicotte**  
T205  
(1909-11)



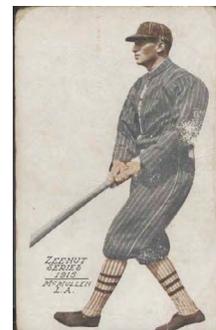
**Chick Gandil**  
T206  
(1909-11)



**Buck Weaver**  
Zeenut  
(1911)



**Joe Jackson**  
Cracker Jack  
(1914)



**Fred McMullin**  
Zeenut  
(1915)



**Swede Risberg**  
W514  
(1919-21)

**Joe Jackson cont'd**

Set	No.
1917 White Sox Team Issue	11
1917-20 Felix Mendelsohn M101-6	46

Set	No.
1919-21 W514	15
1921 Holsum Bread D327	85

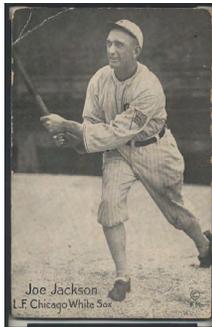
**Eddie Cicotte**

Set	No.
1902-11 Sporting Life Cabinets W600	64
1909 Boston Herald Supplements	3
1909 Boston Herald Supplements Pairs (T. Tuckey)	1
1909 Boston Sunday Post Supplements (H. Niles)	5
1909 Philadelphia Caramel E95	4
1909 Ramly T204	25
1909-11 Colgan's Chips E254	50
1909-11 T206	88
1910 American Caramel Die Cuts E125	9
1910 Darby Chocolates E271	7
1910 Ju Ju Drums E286	9
1910 Sweet Caporal Domino Discs	24
1910 W555	13
1910-11 Sporting Life M116	43
1910-12 Plow Boy Tobacco	9
1910-12 Sweet Caporal Pins P2	27
1911 Baltimore News Newsboy's Series M131	6
1911 Baseball Bats E-Unc.	9
1911 Close Candy E94	6
1911 Helmar Stamps	2
1911 Mecca Double Folders T201 (J. Thoney)	7
1911 S74 Silks	2

Set	No.
1911 T205 Gold Border	34
1912 Colgan's Chips Red Border	50
1912 Colgan's Chips Tin Tops E270	50
1912 Hassan Triple Folders T202 (J. Stahl)	76
1912 T207 Brown Background	31
1914 Cracker Jack	94
1914 Piedmont Stamps T330-2	22
1915 Cracker Jack	94
1916 M101-4 Altoona Tribune	32
1916 M101-4 Blank Back	32
1916 M101-4 Block and Kuhl	32
1916 M101-4 Burgess-Nash	32
1916 M101-4 Everybody's	32
1916 M101-4 Famous and Barr	32
1916 M101-4 Gimbels Italic	32
1916 M101-4 Globe	32
1916 M101-4 Green-Joyce	32
1916 M101-4 Herpolsheimer	32
1916 M101-4 Indianapolis Brewing	32
1916 M101-4 Mall Theatre	32
1916 M101-4 Morehouse Baking	32
1916 M101-4 Sporting News	32



**Happy Felsch**  
W514  
(1919-21)



**Joe Jackson**  
M101-6 Mendelsohn  
(1917)



**Buck Weaver**  
W514  
(1919-21)



**Fred McMullen**  
1917 Team Issue  
(1992 reprint shown)



**Joe Jackson**  
Holsum Bread  
D327 (1921)



**Eddie Cicotte**  
W514  
(1919-21)

**Eddie Cicotte cont'd**

Set	No.
1916 M101-4 Standard Biscuit	32
1916 M101-4 Ware's Basement	32
1916 M101-4 Weil Baking	32
1916 M101-5 Blank Back	31
1916 M101-5 Block and Kuhl	31
1916 M101-5 Famous and Barr	31
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Large Block)	31
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Small Block)	31
1916 M101-5 Herpolsheimer	31
1916 M101-5 Holmes to Homes	31
1916 M101-5 Morehouse Baking	31
1916 M101-5 Standard Biscuit	31
1916 M101-5 Successful Farming	31

Set	No.
1917 Boston Store H801-8	28
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135	28
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2	28
1917 Weil Baking Co. D328	28
1917 White Sox Team Issue	3
1917-20 Felix Mendelsohn M101-6	16
1919-21 W514	82
1920 W516-1	21
1920 W516-1-2	21
1920 W519 Un-Numbered	1
1921 Holsum Bread D327	28
1921 W516-2-1	30
1921 W516-2-2	30

**Swede Risberg**

Set	No.
1915 Zeenut	136
1916 Zeenut	142

Set	No.
1917 White Sox Team Issue	18
1919-21 W514	105

**Fred McMullen**

Set	No.
1915 Zeenut	13

Set	No.
1917 White Sox Team Issue	16



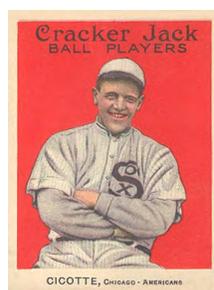
**Joe Jackson**  
Old Mill T210  
(1910)



**Lefty Williams**  
Boston Store-ERR  
Hugh High (1916)



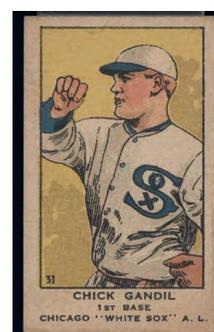
**Happy Felsch**  
M101-4 Sporting  
News (1916)



**Eddie Cicotte**  
Cracker Jack  
(1915)



**Swede Risberg**  
Zeenut  
(1916)



**Chick Gandil**  
W514  
(1919-21)

**Happy Felsch**

Set	No.
1916 M101-4 Altoona Tribune	56
1916 M101-4 Blank Back	56
1916 M101-4 Block and Kuhl	56
1916 M101-4 Burgess-Nash	56
1916 M101-4 Everybody's	56
1916 M101-4 Famous and Barr	56
1916 M101-4 Gimbels Italic	56
1916 M101-4 Globe	56
1916 M101-4 Green-Joyce	56
1916 M101-4 Herpolsheimer	56
1916 M101-4 Indianapolis Brewing	56
1916 M101-4 Mall Theatre	56
1916 M101-4 Morehouse Baking	56
1916 M101-4 Sporting News	56
1916 M101-4 Standard Biscuit	56
1916 M101-4 Ware's Basement	56
1916 M101-4 Weil Baking	56
1916 M101-5 Blank Back	57
1916 M101-5 Block and Kuhl	57

Set	No.
1916 M101-5 Famous and Barr	57
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Large Block)	57
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Small Block)	57
1916 M101-5 Herpolsheimer	57
1916 M101-5 Holmes to Homes	57
1916 M101-5 Morehouse Baking	57
1916 M101-5 Standard Biscuit	57
1916 M101-5 Successful Farming	57
1916 Mothers' Bread D303 (UER - photo of Ray Demmitt)	8
1916 Tango Brand Eggs (UER - photo of Ray Demmitt)	10
1917 Boston Store H801-8	47
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135	47
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2	47
1917 Weil Baking Co. D328	47
1917 White Sox Team Issue	8
1917-20 Felix Mendelsohn M101-6	31
1919-21 W514	3

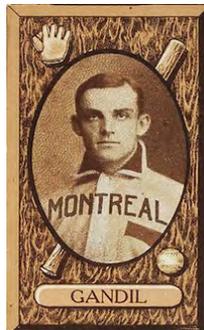
**Chick Gandil**

Set	No.
1909-11 Obak T212 (Sacramento)	40
1909-11 T206	183
1910 American Caramel E90-3	14
1910-12 Plow Boy Tobacco	14
1910-19 Coupon T213 (Cleveland)	138

Set	No.
1910-19 Coupon T213 (Washington)	139
1910-19 Coupon T213 (Chicago)	285
1911 Pinkerton T5	758
1912 Imperial Tobacco C46	65
1914 B18 Blankets (brown pennant)	28B



**Happy Felsch**  
1917 Team Issue  
(1992 reprint shown)



**Chick Gandil**  
Imperial Tobacco  
C46 (1912)



**Buck Weaver**  
M101-4 Sporting  
News (1916)



**Lefty Williams**  
W514  
(1919-21)



**Eddie Cicotte**  
W516-2-1  
(1921)



**Joe Jackson**  
M101-4 Indianapolis  
Brewing (1916)

**Chick Gandil cont'd**

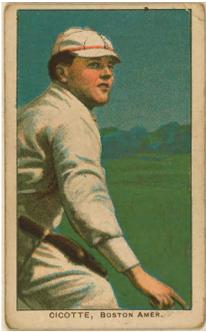
Set	No.
1914 B18 Blankets	28A
1914 Cracker Jack	39
1915 Cracker Jack	39
1915 Victory T214	21
1916 Ferguson Bakery Felt Pennants BF2	23
1916 M101-4 Altoona Tribune	64
1916 M101-4 Blank Back	64
1916 M101-4 Block and Kuhl	64
1916 M101-4 Burgess-Nash	64
1916 M101-4 Everybody's	64
1916 M101-4 Famous and Barr	64
1916 M101-4 Gimbels Italic	64
1916 M101-4 Globe	64
1916 M101-4 Green-Joyce	64
1916 M101-4 Herpolsheimer	64

Set	No.
1916 M101-4 Indianapolis Brewing	64
1916 M101-4 Mall Theatre	64
1916 M101-4 Morehouse Baking	64
1916 M101-4 Sporting News	64
1916 M101-4 Standard Biscuit	64
1916 M101-4 Ware's Basement	64
1916 M101-4 Weil Baking	64
1917 Boston Store H801-8	55
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135	55
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2	55
1917 Weil Baking Co. D328	55
1917 White Sox Team Issue	9
1917-20 Felix Mendelsohn M101-6	33
1919-21 W514	31
1920-26 Peggy Popcorn	3

**Lefty Williams**

Set	No.
1917 Boston Store H801-8 ERR (photo of Hugh High/black stockings)	190A
1917 Boston Store H801-8 COR	190B
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135 Hugh High ERR (photo of Williams)	76A
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135 ERR (photo of Hugh High/black stockings)	190A
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135 COR	190B
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2 Hugh High ERR (photo of Williams)	76A

Set	No.
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2 ERR (photo of Hugh High/black stockings)	190A
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2 COR	190B
1917 Weil Baking Co. D328 ERR (photo of Hugh High/black stockings)	190A
1917 Weil Baking Co. D328 COR	190B
1917 White Sox Team Issue	24
1919-21 W514	35
1921 Holsum Bread D327	190



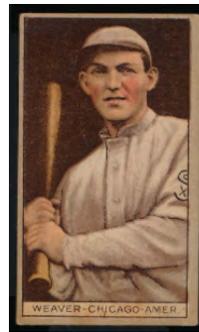
**Eddie Cicotte**  
T206  
(1909-11)



**Joe Jackson**  
W514  
(1919-21)



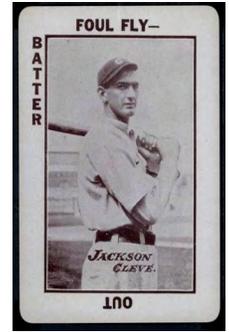
**Chick Gandil**  
American Caramel  
E90-3 (1910)



**Buck Weaver**  
T207  
(1912)



**Eddie Cicotte**  
M101-4 Sporting  
News (1916)



**Joe Jackson**  
National Game  
WG5 (1913)

**Buck Weaver**

Set	No.
1909-11 Obak T212 (San Francisco)	338
1909-17 Max Stein/United States Publishing House PC758	17
1911 Bishop and Company Pacific Coast League E100	30
1911 Pacific Coast Biscuit D310	70
1911 Zeenut	105
1911-12 Obak Premiums T4	87
1912 T207 Brown Background	192
1916 Ferguson Bakery Felt Pennants BF2	21
1916 M101-4 Altoona Tribune	186
1916 M101-4 Blank Back	186
1916 M101-4 Block and Kuhl	186
1916 M101-4 Burgess-Nash	186
1916 M101-4 Everybody's	186
1916 M101-4 Famous and Barr	186
1916 M101-4 Gimbels Italic	186
1916 M101-4 Globe	186
1916 M101-4 Green-Joyce	186
1916 M101-4 Herpolsheimer	186
1916 M101-4 Indianapolis Brewing	186
1916 M101-4 Mall Theatre	186
1916 M101-4 Morehouse Baking	186
1916 M101-4 Sporting News	186

Set	No.
1916 M101-4 Standard Biscuit	186
1916 M101-4 Ware's Basement	186
1916 M101-4 Weil Baking	186
1916 M101-5 Blank Back	188
1916 M101-5 Block and Kuhl	188
1916 M101-5 Famous and Barr	188
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Large Block)	188
1916 M101-5 Gimbels (Small Block)	188
1916 M101-5 Herpolsheimer	188
1916 M101-5 Holmes to Homes	188
1916 M101-5 Morehouse Baking	188
1916 M101-5 Standard Biscuit	188
1916 M101-5 Successful Farming	188
1916 Mothers' Bread D303 UER (photo of Joe Tinker)	22
1916 Tango Brand Eggs (photo of Joe Tinker)	19
1917 Boston Store H801-8	185
1917 Collins-McCarthy E135	185
1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2	185
1917 Weil Baking Co. D328	185
1917 White Sox Team Issue	23
1917-20 Felix Mendelsohn M101-6	102
1919-21 W514	91

## Minnesota man sets up Shoeless Joe Jackson scholarship

SABR member **Warren Woods**, 80, of Fridley, Minnesota, claims that “baseball is in my blood.”

That’s why he struck up a correspondence with Bud Selig in 1999 when Major League Baseball’s then-commissioner spoke at a banquet in Minneapolis.

The pair became frequent pen pals, according to Woods, sharing dozens of letters over the next 15 years. “He always wrote back to me. We became ‘Bud’ and ‘Warren’ (in our letters),” he said.

But whenever Woods brought up Shoeless Joe Jackson and his conviction that the former White Sox star deserved to have his name cleared by Major League Baseball, Selig demurred on the subject.

So Woods decided to put his money where his mouth was. “I was thinking of what I could do in Shoeless Joe’s name in his home state,” he said.

In 2015, he established a \$1,500 Shoeless Joe Jackson Scholarship at Furman University in Jackson’s hometown of Greenville, South Carolina.

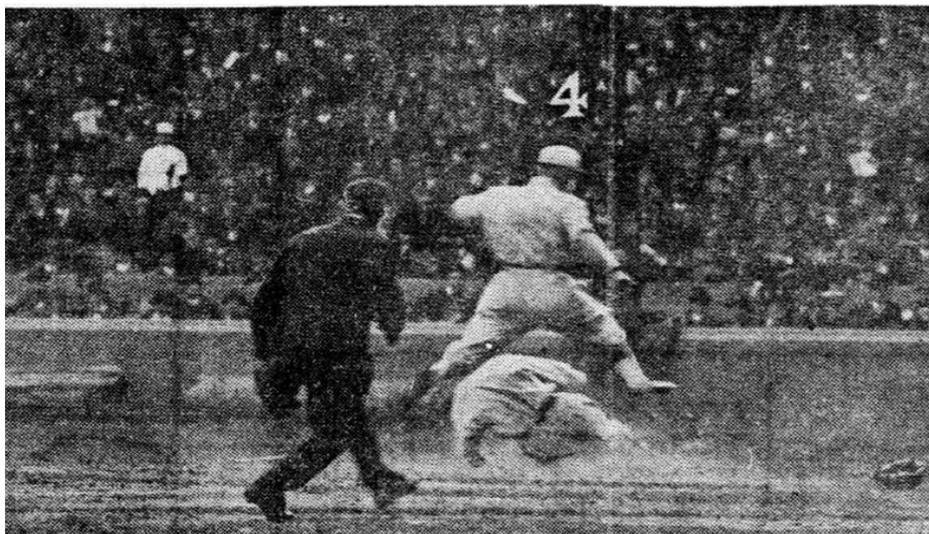
School officials say the scholarship is open to any currently enrolled junior and is based on demonstrated financial need.

The scholarship is funded for four years through 2019, totaling \$5,000 — “the exact amount,” Woods said, “that was under Joe’s pillow in 1919.”

Woods said he has no connection to Furman, but he was inspired by his letters from Selig to do more.

“Baseball has been reluctant to exonerate Shoeless Joe. I just wanted to help out,” he said.

## AROUND THE WEB



**Eddie Collins of the Chicago White Sox slides across home plate as he is chased by New York Giants infielder Heinie Zimmerman and umpire Bill Klem looks on during Game Six of the 1917 World Series. The White Sox took a 1-0 lead on the memorable play and clinched the championship with a 4-2 win. (SouthSideSox.com)**

## South Side Sox re-creates 1917 World Series championship season

The Chicago White Sox’s 95-loss season in 2017 was nothing to write home about, but SABR member **Jim Margalus**, editor of the SB Nation website SouthSideSox.com, gave fans an entertaining day-by-day retrospective look back at a world championship season from 100 years ago with his “Sox Century” series:

<http://www.southsidesox.com/100-years-later-1917-white-sox>

Beginning in January, Margalus wrote hundreds of stories covering all aspects of the White Sox’s 1917 season, from their [acquisition of Chick Gandil](#) to [Eddie Cicotte’s no-hitter](#) against the St. Louis Browns to the [Fenway Park gamblers’ riot](#) to [Heinie Zimmerman’s “mad dash”](#) in the World Series.

Other memorable stories include entries on the [Tim Murnane benefit game](#) in Boston, the extra-inning [pennant-clinching win](#) over the Red Sox, the [controversial Labor Day](#)

[sweep](#) of the Tigers, and the start of the [U.S. military draft](#) in World War I.

Margalus’s excellent coverage of the White Sox’s centennial anniversaries began in 2013 with a [daily recap of the Giants-White Sox world tour](#) with help from author **Jim Elfers**. There will surely be more interesting updates to come as we approach another big anniversary in 2019.

Here are a few more recent articles and interviews of interest:

- ♦ In July, the This Week in Baseball History podcast, with **Mike Bates** and **Bill Parker**, devoted [an episode to the Black Sox criminal trial](#).

- ♦ UNLV student **Strom Dahlgren** ([dahlgsl@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:dahlgsl@unlv.nevada.edu)) invites readers to check out his paper on the [historiography of the Black Sox Scandal](#) (PDF).

- ♦ The Minnesota Opera has commissioned a new opera, *The Black Sox Scandal*, composed by **Joel Puckett**, for the 2018-19 season.

# Planning a 100th anniversary newsletter for 2019

By Jacob Pomrenke  
buckweaver@gmail.com

The 100th anniversary of the 1919 World Series is fast approaching, and as we've seen with other centennial commemorations such as the opening of Fenway Park (2012) and Wrigley Field (2014), and with Shoeless Joe Jackson and Buck Weaver in the news again recently, there will surely be a lot of attention paid to the Black Sox Scandal in 2019.

Earlier this summer, **Bill Lamb** proposed a project for this committee that we briefly discussed at our annual meeting at SABR 47 in New York City. He suggested a "consumer guide" on the scandal separating fact from fiction that we can distribute widely with the media, SABR members, baseball organizations, and anyone else interested in an accurate history of the 1919 World Series and the entire Black Sox saga.

Lamb correctly anticipates that "the World Series fix will be subject to various retrospectives in October 2019 ... and most of these retrospectives will recycle inaccuracies, myths, and other forms of misinformation that have become embedded in the Black Sox canon, not to mention the egregious 1988 movie adaptation of Eliot Asinof's *Eight Men Out*."

No group is better situated than our committee to correct these long-accepted myths and provide a deeper understanding of the events surrounding the 1919 World Series scandal. So here's what we have in mind for 2019:

1) A **media-friendly "fact sheet"** on the Black Sox Scandal intended to set things straight on the most glaring errors commonly repeated about the scandal. It would also point to the most



complete, up-to-date research on the scandal. This easy-to-digest reference guide would be published online at SABR.org in early 2019, preferably before Opening Day, when the anniversary coverage is likely to heat up.

2) A special **100th anniversary "keepsake edition"** of this newsletter, with comprehensive articles covering big-picture angles and stories about the scandal. This newsletter would be published on October 1, 2019. (For reference, see the SABR Deadball Era Committee's [100th anniversary newsletter on the Fred Merkle Game](#) in 2008.)

These articles would need to provide as much context as possible and be accessible to readers who haven't been keeping up with all the research we've done in recent years. More specialized topics can continue to be published in the regular newsletters, still scheduled for June and December.

This special newsletter would focus on the most important angles of the Black Sox story, on the myths that still

remain in the public eye and need to be dispelled once and for all.

For example, the idea that the White Sox were underpaid or that Charles Comiskey was more miserly than any other owner (also included: the nonexistent Eddie Cicotte bonus); that the big-city gamblers "seduced" the uneducated players to fix the World Series (it was more the other way around); that the Cincinnati Reds were vastly inferior to the White Sox; and that the Black Sox were embarrassed or intimidated into silence after they were banned for life.

Other topics that could be covered are: an overview of the gamblers involved and their roles; an overview of the legal proceedings (grand juries, criminal trial, civil litigation); an article on Judge Landis coming to power, with context on the feud between Comiskey and Ban Johnson; a century's worth of reinstatement efforts on behalf of Joe Jackson and Buck Weaver; the legacy of *Eight Men Out* and all the myths it created/ingrained in popular culture; on the reporters and baseball officials who helped uncover the fix (Hugh Fullerton, *Collyer's Eye*, etc.); and the culture of gambling that led to dozens of players (including Ty Cobb and Tris Speaker) getting caught up in scandals.

These are just some of the topics that we could cover in the 100th anniversary newsletter. But in order to have this ready by the fall of 2019, we'll need to get started soon.

**If you are interested in contributing as a writer or editor** to the 100th anniversary newsletter on any of the topics above, or if you have any other ideas or suggestions for articles or features to include, please get in touch with me at [buckweaver@gmail.com](mailto:buckweaver@gmail.com).