

Society for American Baseball Research, Rogers Hornsby Chapter

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BBQ , early season highlights and HOF quiz on the plate for April meet- ing



APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER

With the baseball season under way, nearly a dozen chapter members and guests gathered for barbecue and baseball chatter on Sunday.

Among the topics of discussion were the fast start by the Tampa Bay Rays (they won 13 times to start the season but dropped the first two this weekend against the Toronto Blue Jays, who were just three games back going into Sunday's play), the unexpectedly poor pitching early on by the St. Louis Cardinals and the slightly below .500 start for the defending World Series Champions Houston Astros.

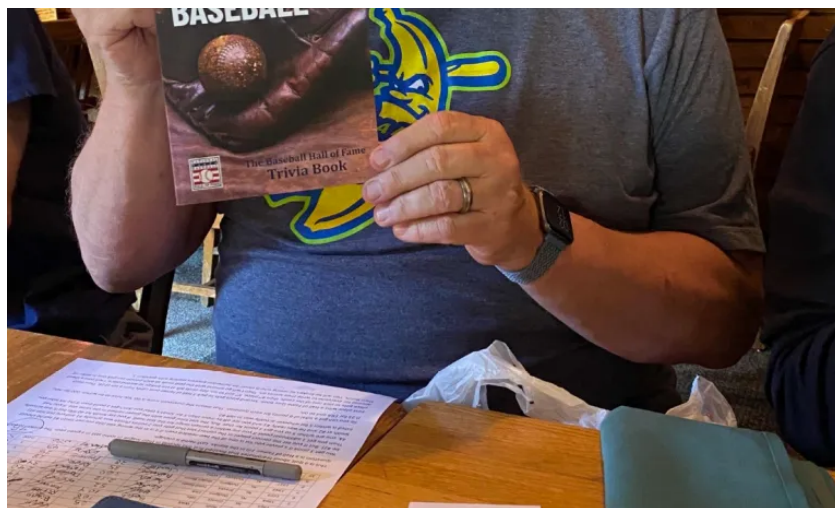
As chapter commissioner, I made two important announcements involving the national SABR office's efforts to work with chapters and make the SABR experience more uniform. First, under direction from SABR HQ, the Hornsby Chapter will hold an election for the chapter commissioner position next month. More details will be shared with chapter members about the self-nomination process early in May, followed by an online election open to all members who have the Hornsby Chapter designated as their primary chapter in mid-May.

Second, this month's summary marks the chapter's first newsletter. Moving forward, the monthly summary will be called the monthly newsletter, which will include a summary of the monthly meeting, along with other items, such as occasional research tidbits being worked on and discussed by our members, updates from Jim Baker's Predictatron, Ryan Pollack's Awardatron contest and other items.

As winner of last month's quiz, Cy Morong gave us a quiz in which we had to identify teammates that led (first and second on the team) in various statistics. His hint was that all answers were Hall of Famers.

With a quiz maximum of 60 points, Jim Baker took the contest with 46, squeaking by Jerry Miller with 45, followed by Jan Larson with 42 and Ira Siegel with 37. Cy brought prizes for everyone – Jim traded a National Baseball Hall of Fame trivia book with second-place finisher Jerry (pictured below) and got the privilege of picking three postcards from a set featuring Hall of Famers who played for the Minnesota Twins.





Give the quiz a try below. The answers follow the questions.

Baseball Memories

Several of our chapter members are actively involved in volunteer efforts in our Baseball Memories program, which uses memory therapy and exercises to support Alzheimer's patients and their family and caregivers. The program got a nice mention in an article published on MLB.com: [SABR's 'Baseball Memories' keeps people with memory disorders connected to the game](https://www.mlb.com/news/sabr-baseball-memories-keeps-people-with-memory-disorders-connected-to-the-game)

For more information about our baseball memories program, please see the About page at this link: <https://www.sabrhornsbys.org/about-basebalz/>

Predictatron

On April 9, Jim Baker shared the first update on his Predictatron contest in which 21 chapter members attempt to forecast division standings, playoff teams and the World Series champion. With divisions named after last season's winners (Chuck Kaufman and Gilbert Martinez), Jan Larson got off to a quick start to lead the Martinez Division and the entire contest, followed by Jerry Miller and Brian Rogers. In the Kaufman Division, Syd Polk leads early, with Ryan Pollack and Chuck Kaufman trailing. In Baker's summary, he noted that I was "anchoring" my division, which is another way of saying I was in last. Somehow, it sounds better the way he said it! But as Predictatron veterans know, the contest is cruel

and merciless. Those on top can easily find themselves dropping faster than an Ohtani sinker. It's a long season filled with twists and turns. Will Jan lead from beginning to end? Will I keep anchoring the whole contest? We'll find out!

Awardatron

For the second consecutive year, Ryan Pollack challenged members to predict the winners of baseball's major awards (MVP, Cy Young, Rookie of the Year, Manager of the Year). It's hard to predict these awards in March, but that's what he tasked us to do. With 17 prognosticators, Ryan created two divisions named after the first MVP award winners by the BBWAA in 1931, Lefty Grove and Frankie Frisch. Among the favorites predicted are Shohei Ohtani for AL MVP and AL Cy Young, Ronald Acuña for NL MVP, Corbin Burnes for NL Cy Young, Gunnar Henderson for AL Rookie, Corbin Carroll for NL Rookie, Phil Nevin for AL Manager, and Bob Melvin for NL Manager. Contestants win points for correct predictions, but also earn some points for predictions that are near misses. Ryan also allows predictors to make one change before the All Star Break, but those selections earn fewer points. Who's going to win these awards? Who knows, but it'll be fun to track this all season long.

Research Spotlight

On Twitter, Cy Morong (@CyrilMorong) put together a list of active left-handed batters with the highest OPS against left-handed pitchers (minimum of 500 plate appearances). Care to guess who? That would be the Astros' Yordan Alvarez with an OPS of 0.966, followed by Joey Votto (0.851) and Max Muncy (0.842). Others include Charlie Blackmon (0.83), Juan Soto (0.83), Ohtani (0.824), Bryce Harper (0.821), Kyle Tucker (0.812), Seager (0.797), and Anthony Rizzo (0.794).

This is a new feature for the newsletter. If you're a Hornsby Chapter member and have a research tidbit you'd like to share in the monthly newsletter, please email me (gmartinez46@mac.com).

On a personal note, I was very happy to receive a small gift from Jim Baker. He

found old photos of the Astrodome from a thrift store. Based on printing on the back of the photos, they may have been taken in May 1967. (Thanks so much, Jim! – Gilbert)



This was the 197th consecutive month in which the chapter has met. The streak started in December 2006. Information for next month's meeting will be shared via our email lists soon.

One-Two Quiz

By Cy Morong

This is a quiz about teammates that finished first and second in their league in some stat in a given year. The answer to each question is a Hall of Famer. Fill in the blanks. Last name is enough.

You get 1 point if a player you list is one of the two needed even if it is in the wrong slot (like you put Smith #1 but he should be #2). But if you list the correct player in the correct slot, that gets you 2 points (Smith was actually #1 and you put him #1).

Then you get 1 additional point if you are within a certain range for the stat itself. If you say Smith hit 40 HRs but it was actually 44, you are within 5 so you get 1 point for that. But, the stat total goes with the player named in the same slot. If you had Smith at #2 and he was really #1 and you are off by more than 5 for Smith's total you don't get a point even if the HR total you listed is within 5 for whoever actually was in slot #2.

So you can get a total of 6 points for each question. That means the maximum score is 60. You have to be within .020 for AVG, 0.25 for ERA and so on.


First place wins a Hall of Fame Quiz book. Second place gets to pick 3 Hall of Famer post cards from a set of 28. Then third place gets to pick one of the cards, then 4th place, 5th and so on. Any cards left at the end go to second place. I will pass a sheet around for everyone to write their scores on. Then I will go around with the postcards so each person can pick one in order of their finish. Ties will be broken by seeing who is closer on numerical answers starting with question 1.

Q	Year	League	Team	Stat	Player #1	Stat total	Player #2	Stat total	Within
1	1994	NL	Astros	Win Shares					5
2	1983	AL	Orioles	Runs					10
3	1972	NL	Reds	WAR					1.0
4	1965	NL	Giants	HRs					5
5	1964	NL	Dodgers	ERA					0.25
6	1959	NL	Braves	Total Bases					20
7	1949	NL	Dodgers	Stolen Bases					5
8	1937	AL	Yankees	Wins					5
9	1927	AL	Yankees	HRs					5
10	1925	NL	Cardinals	Batting AVG					0.020

Answers

Year	League	Team	Stat	Player #1	Stat	Player #2	Stat
1994	NL	Astros	Win Shares	Bagwell	30	Biggio	26
1983	AL	Orioles	Runs	Ripken	121	Murray	115
1972	NL	Red	WAR	Morgan	9.3	Bench	8.6
1965	NL	Giants	HRs	Mays	52	McCovey	39
1964	NL	Dodgers	ERA	Koufax	1.74	Drysdale	2.18

1959	NL	Braves	Total Bases	Aaron	400	Mathews	352
1949	NL	Dodgers	Stolen Bases	Robinson	37	Reese	26
1937	AL	Yankees	Wins	Gomez	21	Ruffing	20
1927	AL	Yankees	HRs	Ruth	60	Gehrig	47
1925	NL	Cardinals	Batting AVG	Hornsby	0.403	Bottomley	0.367

 Gilbert Martinez / April 17, 2023 / Hornsby News

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