

# The INSIDE GAME



The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

VOL. XIX, No. 5: "LET'S GET THIS LUMPY LICORICE-STAINED BALL ROLLING!" NOVEMBER 2019

## Q & A WITH TOM SIMON

In February 2000, SABR's Deadball Era Committee was founded by Tom Simon, an accomplished civil litigator with the Burlington, Vermont, law firm of McCormick, Fitzpatrick, Kasper, & Burchard, P.C. In addition to serving as first DEC chairman, Tom was also the founder of the Vermont (Gardner-Waterman) chapter of SABR and has long been active in youth baseball in the greater Burlington area. Set out below are Tom's responses to questions posed about Deadball and other subjects by newsletter editor Bill Lamb.

*Bill:* Tom, thanks much for agreeing to the interview. Why don't we start with a thumbnail self-portrait? *Tom:* Son of Georgetown University shortstop Hal Simon ... spent most of childhood playing tabletop baseball, favoring Strat-o-Matic ... second team New Jersey All-State outfielder, 1983 ... intern for Maine Guides of International League, 1986 ... host father of Vermont Expos shortstop (and later Chicago Cubs catcher) Michael Barrett, 1995 ... served with Peter Morris on Hall of Fame's Pre-Integration Committee, 2013 ... coached Mariners to Burlington city championship, 2016 ... coached Burlington 9/10 all-stars to Vermont softball championship game, 2017 ... father of



**Tom Simon**

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Burlington High School and Colchester Cannons infielder Nolan Simon ... father of former Burlington Waves first baseman Calista Simon ... best friend of renowned baseball artist Lance Richbourg ... Senior League teammate and confidante of Bill "Spaceman" Lee.

*Question:* Do you have a special boyhood baseball memory? *Answer:* My favorite player when I was a kid was Willie Mays, so when I was about eight my father's friend Bus Saidt, sportswriter for the *Trenton Times*, arranged for me to meet Mays and his Mets teammates in their dugout when they came to the Vet on September 12, 1973. Unfortunately, Mays got injured shortly before the big day and I didn't get to meet him. But Tug McGraw picked me up, spun me around, blew a big bubble in my face and became my new favorite player.

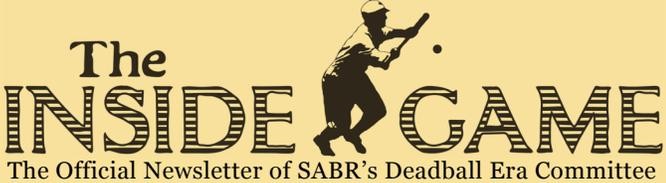
*Question:* Who do you currently root for? *Answer:* I used to be a Montreal Expos fan. In 2004 I became a Chicago Cubs fan when Michael Barrett joined them. Nowadays I root for the Burlington High School Seahorses, Colchester Cannons of Vermont Legion Baseball, Virginia

Cavaliers, Vermont Lake Monsters, and Orleans Firebirds of the Cape Cod League.

*Question:* Most newsletter readers know you as founder and first chairman of SABR's Deadball Era Committee. To what do you attribute your interest in Deadball? *Answer:* I trace my interest in Deadball to reading *The Glory of Their Times* when I was about eight and acquiring a Christy Mathewson T-206, which I still have, in a trade for all of the 1974 Hank Aaron Special cards when I was nine.

*Question:* Almost twenty years ago, you were editor-in-chief of *Green Mountain Boys of Summer: Vermonters in the Major Leagues, 1882-1993*, said to be the inspiration for SABR's BioProject. What prompted the Vermonters project, and how did you go about recruiting writers for the work? *Answer:* In 1993 we started what later became known as the Gardner-Waterman SABR Chapter and around 1997 we thought it would be fun to work on a research project together as a group. Somebody suggested researching the lives of all the Vermont-born major leaguers, and that's how the *GMBOS* project started. Just about everybody who was active in the chapter took on at least one player, and Lance Richbourg did the painting of Larry Gardner that graces the cover. He later gave it to me as a wedding present and it now hangs above the mantel of our fireplace.

*Question:* At about the same time that you were shepherding the Vermont major leaguers book toward publication, you also launched the Deadball Era Committee. Do you recall any particular challenges or problems in getting the committee off the ground? And how were the committee's early membership rolls filled? *Answer:* Here's what I remember. Around 2000 I was checking things off my list (finishing *GMBOS*, buying a "forever house," getting married, etc.) so I could start the new millennium fresh. Since I've been a member, SABR has always had an active Nineteenth Century Committee, of which I'm a proud member. But my favorite era has always been the Deadball Era and I wondered why there was no Deadball Era Committee. I sent a post to



**The INSIDE GAME**  
The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

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SABR-L, asking if anyone else would be interested in being part of a DEC, and received a huge number of emails in response. Within a week or two we were calling ourselves the “Deadball Dozen,” and within a month we eclipsed the half-century mark. Incidentally, I printed hard copies of all those early emails and gave them to John McMurray when I turned over the DEC chairmanship.

*Question:* How did you get *The Inside Game*, the DEC newsletter, started? Same question for the Larry Ritter Award, and relate the purpose of each. *Answer:* Each research committee has to have a newsletter but that was my biggest hesitation in agreeing to serve as the DEC’s first chairman: I was afraid that I would get stuck doing the newsletter and I didn’t want to. Fortunately, Bill Lamberty, who was then in sports information at Montana State, agreed to produce the newsletter. All I’d have to do was write a Chairman’s Column, which I loved doing. The name of the newsletter comes from my love of the language of the Deadball Era – take a look at any issue of *Baseball Magazine*, especially the stuff written by F.C. Lane, to see what I’m talking about. From the day we started the DEC, I always thought the newsletter should be called *The Inside Game*. I think the motto “Let’s get this lumpy, licorice-stained ball rolling” came from R.J. Lesch. The image of the bunting ball player on the masthead comes from a photo of Benny Kauff that I found in his file at the Hall of Fame.

One of the first emails I received came from Larry Ritter, whom I had met a few years earlier when he recorded the intros for the audio edition to *The Glory of Their Times* with my friend Hank Thomas (whose biography of Walter Johnson I edited). Larry said he’d heard that I was starting some secret society for the worship of Dode Paskert (or something like that, I can’t remember his exact words) and he wanted in. Not only did Larry introduce many thousands of people to the wonders of the Deadball Era, myself included, he was also a playful spirit who was extremely generous with his time and encouragement for the next generation of baseball researchers. When we decided to hand out an annual award

for the best book about the Deadball Era, calling it the Larry Ritter Award was a no-brainer. Incidentally, note that it’s the Larry Ritter Award, not the Lawrence S. Ritter Award. That was at Larry’s request, and I took it as a sign of his accessibility.

*Question:* By my count you have contributed 19 separate profiles to the BioProject. Do you have a favorite one, and why? *Answer:* Coming up with my favorite one is easy. It’s Heinie Stafford, whose entire MLB career consisted of a single plate appearance in the last game of the 1916 season. Stafford was a Renaissance man whose interests went well beyond baseball, but the thing that I like about him is that he followed baseball closely until his death in 1972 and probably would have enjoyed SABR membership if he’d known about it.

*Question:* What connection, if any, exists between the Vermont major leaguers book and *Deadball Stars of the National League*, the well-received SABR book project that you edited in 2003? *Answer:* They are the same format: SABR members divvying up the research of a collection of ball players who are related in some way (*GMBOS* by birthplace; *Deadball Stars* by the era in which they played). Many of the great books Bill Nowlin has edited follow the same concept. I was inspired by the Nineteenth Century Stars books but wanted *Deadball Stars* to be more visually appealing. I care a lot about the aesthetics of books (see Mike Lackey’s wonderful Bob Ewing bio for an example of what I consider a beautiful book). I’m still sad that SABR/Potomac chose not to use my idea of putting T-205 gold border cards on the cover of *Deadball Stars*. A few years later, a re-print of *The Glory of Their Times* used the idea and it looked great.

*Question:* You have long been actively involved in Burlington-area youth baseball, and served as one of the coaches of the local Little League squad that played against their counterparts in Cuba in Spring 2016. What strikes you as the most memorable aspect of that trip? And what do you think the kids got out of it? *Answer:* Here we are, more than three years later, and I bet

that I don't go a week without talking about some aspect of that trip. We were there only days after President Obama attended the MLB exhibition in Havana and all the same people who worked that game – the announcer, the umpires – also worked our series! (And no, we didn't win a single game; not even close.) Here's the part that I found most amazing. Every day the Cuban Baseball Federation trotted out another legend of Cuban baseball for us to meet – guys like Omar Linares, Carlos Tabares, and Yosvani Aragon – and my tongue was hanging out. But our kids didn't know who they were and the Cuban kids didn't seem to care! Imagine if you brought Jeff Bagwell, Derek Jeter, and Mike Mussina to any Little League field in America. You would start a riot! But Cuban baseball stars aren't any different from anybody else – at least that's how I took it.

As for what the kids got out of it, I don't know. But let me tell you this: We brought down six sets of uniforms so we could strip off our jerseys after the games and give them to the other team. What we didn't expect is that they would reciprocate, but that's what happened. And their jerseys were a lot cooler than ours. After each game both teams went to a restaurant together for a post-game meal and the kids from both countries ran around together getting their jerseys signed by kids from the other team. Now my son has a nice collection of Cuban jerseys, and I have one too. Yosvani Aragon gave me his last Sancti Spiritus jersey.

*Question:* Are you still doing baseball research?  
*Answer:* The reason I gave up the chairmanship of the DEC in 2004 was that my first child was about to be born and I wanted to devote all my non-working time to being a father. I forced myself to stay away from SABR and baseball research because I knew how absorbed I get in them and didn't want to be distracted from parenting when the kids were little. But now Nolan is in high school and Calista is in middle school, and to be honest, neither wants me around much anymore. So over the past year I've been waking up at 4 a.m. each morning to work on a history of the Cape Cod League called *The Cape Cod League Encyclopedia*, which I

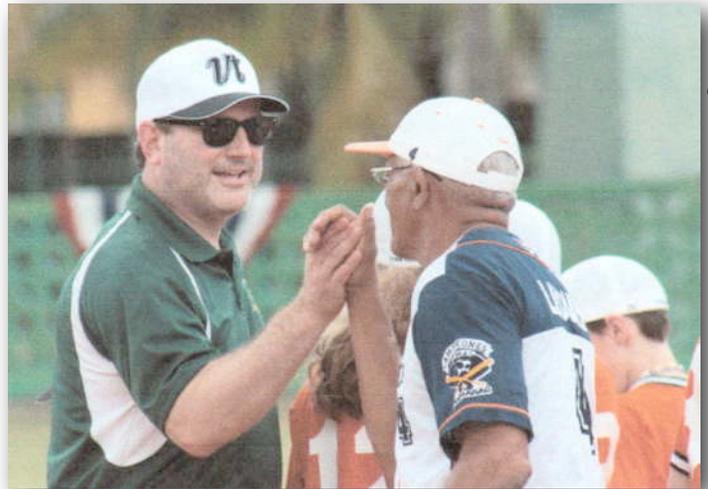


Photo by Alexandre Silbermann

**Coach Simon congratulates a Cuban counterpart**

modeled after David Nemeč's encyclopedia of nineteenth century baseball. I just started shopping it around to publishers.

*Question:* Select your own personal Deadball Era Team. *Answer:* Catcher: Chief Meyers; First Base: Jake Daubert; Second Base: Larry Doyle; Shortstop: Rabbit Maranville; Third Base: Larry Gardner; LF: Sherry Magee; CF: Dode Paskert; RF: Jimmy Sheekard; Utility: Germany Schaefer; RHP: Walter Johnson, Ed Reulbach, and Ray Fisher; LHP: Rube Waddell, Babe Ruth, and Ray Collins; Manager: Me.



*The Pittsburg Press, August 9, 1907*

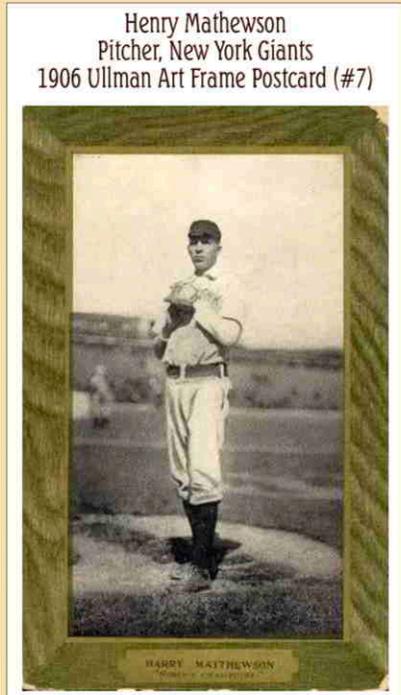
# Henry Mathewson, "Kid Matty"

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On October 5, 1906, making his first and only major league start, New York Giants rookie pitcher Henry Mathewson, the younger brother of Hall of Famer Christy Mathewson, sets a modern National League single game record walking 14 Boston Beaneaters in a 7-1 loss before 400 less than enthused spectators at the Polo Grounds ... the game starts off badly for the Bucknell University product as he walks two, allows two hits and hits a batter in the first inning ... his final line shows seven runs allowed on seven hits, 14 walks and one hit batter.

Mathewson's dubious record stands for nine years before Philadelphia Athletics' left-hander Bruno Haas walks 16 (and issues three wild pitches) in his professional baseball debut on June 23, 1915, in a 15-7 loss to the New York Yankees ... much like Mathewson, Haas will pitch in several more games at the major league level before playing nearly 2,100 games over an ensuing 20 minor league seasons.

For Mathewson, the second-youngest player to make his major league debut during the 1906 season, the Friday afternoon contest will be his only career complete game and his only decision ... the 6-foot-3 right-hander will pitch only two more innings over two years before being released on July 12, 1907.



"Pitching talent was hardly an inherited Mathewson characteristic."

- New York Giants manager John McGraw

Not predisposed to playing professional baseball despite attaining success playing with independent teams in Lewisburg and Scranton and at Bucknell College, Mathewson is recommended to McGraw by his brother Christy ... Mathewson signs with the Giants on January 18, 1906, and is told to report to the team's spring training in Memphis, Tennessee, when it begins in March.

"He now has as much speed as I had when I broke into the game. He has control and a splendid assortment of curves. All he wants is experience, and with that I am sure he will develop into a star."

- New York Giants pitcher Christy Mathewson

Mathewson has a difficult spring training ... on March 27, during warm-ups, he loses the grip on his bat and it smashes into the face of catcher Roger Bresnahan, shattering four of his teeth.

In addition to his three games with the Giants, Mathewson either signs with, or plays for, the Wilmington Peaches (1907), Sharon Giants (1908), Savannah Indians (1909), Columbus Foxes (1909), Jacksonville Braves (1909), Rome Romans (1913), Kingston Colonials (1913) and the Lowell Grays (1914).

Page 1 of 3:

## "KID MATTY" GIVES 14 BASES ON BALLS

Big Matty's Little Brother so  
Liberal Bostons Can't  
Help Winning.

Boston.				N.Y.			
AB.	B.	P.	A.	AB.	B.	P.	A.
Dolan, lf.	4	1	3	1	0	0	0
Tenney, 1b.	1	1	8	2	0	3	3
Brain, 3b.	4	0	4	2	0	4	0
Bates, cf.	3	0	4	0	0	3	4
Howard, 2b.	5	1	1	4	0	2	12
Conna'n, ss.	4	0	2	1	0	1	0
Camer'n, rf.	3	0	1	0	0	3	2
Brown, c.	3	1	4	2	0	3	1
Pfeffer, p.	3	1	0	4	0	4	0
Totals..				30	5	27	16
Boston .....				1	0	0	0
New York .....				0	0	0	1

Runs—Dolan 2, Tenney, Brain, Bates, Connaughton, Cameron, Strang. Left on bases—New York 7, Boston 11. First on balls—Off Mathewson 14, Pfeffer 2. Struck out—By Mathewson 2, Pfeffer 4. Two-base hits—Strang 2. Sacrifice hit—Mathewson. Stolen bases—Smith, Brain, Bates, Brown, Pfeffer. Double plays—Mathewson, Hannifin, Smith; Hannifin, Strang; Smith, Mathewson, Bowerman; Brown, Howard, Brain; Connaughton, Tenney, Howard. Passed ball—Bowerman. Hit by pitcher—By Mathewson 1, Pfeffer 1. Umpire—Klein. Time—1.45. Attendance—400.



## Henry Mathewson [2 of 3]:

### Major League Career Wins by Brothers

Phil (318) and Joe (221) Niekro	539
Gaylord (314) and Jim (215) Perry	529
Greg (355) and Mike (39) Maddux	394
John (328), Art (39) & Walt (18) Clarkson	385
Christy (373) and Henry (0) Mathewson	373

Henry and his older brother (by six years) Christy, a charter member to the Hall of Fame, combine for 373 major league wins in their careers - good for fifth place among major league brother combinations.

In his final season of professional baseball in 1914, Mathewson plays for the Lowell Grays of the New England (B) League ... on May 4, after going 0-4 in a 4-2 win over the Lewiston Cupids, Lowell manager Jim Grey releases Mathewson (now an outfielder) because of "poor play."

"He was brought up before he was ready because I got the diphtheria at the start of the '06 season. The Giants' management thought they could sell tickets if there was still a Mathewson pitching at the Polo Grounds. But they should have waited. It cost them a good ballplayer. Hank just wasn't ready."

- New York Giants pitcher Christy Mathewson

In mid-June, reports have Mathewson, who has been living in Arizona for health reasons, returning to Factoryville, Pennsylvania to visit his parents ... on July 1, 1917, Mathewson passes away from tuberculosis at the age of 30.

## MATHEWSON CHRONOLOGY

January 17, 1906

After declining an offer from the Chicago Cubs, Henry Mathewson signs with the New York Giants.

### Henry Mathewson Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	G	INN	SO	BB	ERA	
1906	New York Giants	NATIONAL	ML	0-1	2	10	2	14	5.40	
1907	New York Giants	NATIONAL	ML	0-0	1	1	0	0	0.00	
1907	Wilmington Peaches	Tri-State	B	0-1	-	-	-	-	--	
1907	Orange Valley	-	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1907	Pottsville Quakers	Atlantic	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1908	Sharon (Pa.) Giants	Ohio-Penn	C	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1909	Three Teams	Two Leagues	B	-	14	-	-	-	--	
1909	Savannah Indians	South Atlantic	B	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1909	Columbus Foxes	South Atlantic	B	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1909	Jacksonville Braves	Central Association	B	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1910	Douglass	Cactus League	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1911	Brooklyn Dexters	-	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1913	Rome Romans	Appalachian	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1913	Kingston Colonials	New York-New Jersey	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1914	Lowell Grays	New England	B	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1914	Bronx Athletic Club	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1915	Inter-Borough of New York	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	
1916	Newburg	Frisco League	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	
<b>Major League Totals</b>				<b>2 Years</b>	<b>0-1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4.91</b>
<b>Minor League Totals</b>				<b>5 Years</b>	<b>0-1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>---</b>

### Mathewson's Missing Brother

Cincinnati Times-Star, August 12, 1906

During the winter months and early in the spring there was considerable sporting-page space devoted to announcements of the acquisition by the New York club of Henry Mathewson, brother of the famous Christy, and the progress he was making in the direction of being a rival of the eminent twirler of the Giants. Suddenly these promises and epenmiums ceased, and the baseball public began to wonder what had become of Henry.

Inquiry develops the fact that on the first and fifteenth of every month Brother Henry, unguarded by Secret Service men, calls upon Secretary-Treasurer Knowles, of the New York club, and relieves him of that portion of the stipend stimulated in his contract that two weeks' work calls for.

"Henry is still with us," remarked Manager McGraw, when information was sought regarding the now obscure brother. "He has been working hard and faithfully in practice at the Polo Grounds, and also has been making some spare change pitching for various independent teams in this vicinity. Incidentally, Henry has learned a lot about the pitching game and by next spring will be ready to make his appearance in fast society as a promising debutante. I would not say that he is going to be as great a pitcher as Brother Matty, but from the form he has shown us so far, I feel I am justified in predicting that he will win more games than some of the twirlers who now are posing as stars."

October 5, 1906

Mathewson pitches a complete game in major league debut ... the righthander walks 14 in a 7-1 loss to the Boston Beaneaters.

May 4, 1907

In New York's 10-0 win over the Brooklyn Superbas, Mathewson pitches a scoreless inning in his final major league appearance ... Nashville is rumoured to be after Mathewson's services.

June 21, 1907

The Giants release Mathewson to the Wilmington Peaches of the Tri-State (B) League ... it is reported that Mathewson has "plenty of speed and curves, but he lacks the control."

## Henry Mathewson [3 of 3]:

August 30, 1907  
Pitching for the Pottsdown Quakers, Mathewson walks seven in the first two innings and is relieved by Johnson in a 7-3 loss to the Brooklyn Atlantics.

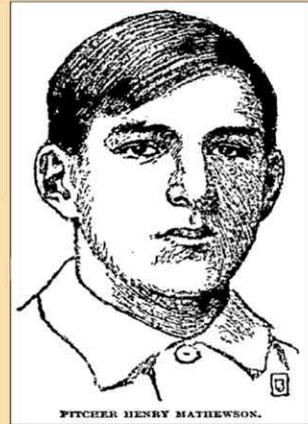
December 22, 1907  
Mathewson reportedly retires from baseball and enters the automobile industry in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

July 12, 1908  
The New York Giants release Mathewson.

March 1908  
Signs with the Sharon Giants of the Ohio-Penn (C) League

### QUITS GAME.

Hank Mathewson, younger brother of Christy, has been convinced there is no place in base ball for him, and has gone in the automobile industry in Scranton, Pa. Hank failed in only three leagues last season—the National, Tri-State and Atlantic.



## "NICK" MATHEWSON A SUICIDE; PUTS A BULLET INTO BRAIN

WELL KNOWN BASE BALLIST,  
BROTHER OF THE FAMOUS  
CHRISTY, SHOT HIMSELF  
WHILE DESPONDENT.  
DIED IN SCRANTON  
HOSPITAL.

SCRANTON, Pa., Jan. 15.—Nicholas Mathewson, one of the most promising young base ball pitchers in the country and brother of the famed Christy Mathewson, star pitcher for the New York Giants, shot himself through the head at his home in Factoryville late yesterday afternoon and died at 7:10 this morning at Dr. Reed Burns' private hospital. There is no other explanation for the suicide than that of overstudy and intense suffering from pains in the head.

November 1908  
Savannah announces the signing of pitcher Henry Mathewson.

January 14, 1909  
Nick Mathewson, the younger brother of New York Giants pitchers Christy and Hank Mathewson, commits suicide by shooting himself with a .32-caliber revolver ... three weeks earlier, Hank, a promising pitcher, receives a \$3,000 offer to sign with the Detroit Tigers ... a freshman at Lafayette College, he was not yet 20 years old.

May 30, 1909  
Mathewson, "a good twirler, but has been unable to get in shape." is released by Savannah.

May 31, 1909  
Twenty-four hours after being released by Savannah, Mathewson signs with South Atlantic League foe Columbus Foxes.

June 7, 1909  
Mathewson returns to Savannah to undergo an operation for varicose veins.

July 1909  
Mathewson recovering from the effects of the operation, signs with his third team of the season - the Jacksonville Braves of the Central (D) Association.

November 7, 1910  
After playing for a semipro team in Douglass, Arizona, Mathewson signs with the Oklahoma City Indians of the Texas (C) League.

March, 1913  
Mathewson signs with the Rome Romans of the Appalachian (D) League.

April 1, 1914  
Lowell's Jim Gray announces that he has received a contract from Henry Mathewson.

May 2, 1914  
Citing that his work "has been poor", Mathewson is released by Lowell.

July 1, 1917  
Mathewson passes away in Factoryville, Pennsylvania from tuberculosis at the age of 30.

### HANK MATHEWSON DIES

Factoryville, Pa., July 2.—Henry Mathewson, 30 years old, only brother of Christy Mathewson, manager of the Cincinnati team, died at his home here yesterday, a victim of tuberculosis. Henry was a baseball player, too, and was with the Giants for one season several years ago. Later he played with minor leagues. He returned here a week ago from Arizona. His wife and four daughters survive.

**Editor's Note:** A principal source for the Paul Cobb article that I wrote for the September newsletter was a Cobb profile published on the DiamondsInTheDusk website, a baseball blog that I was previously unfamiliar with – much to my chagrin. The Henry Mathewson piece above was published on the website on July 8, 2014, and is reprinted herein to introduce DintheD to newsletter readers who may not yet be acquainted with this exceptionally well-researched and informative outlet. The site was created by SABR member Brian Morrison of Greensboro, North Carolina, and debuted on April 12, 2012. Since then, some 367 stories have been posted on

DiamondsintheDusk.com, a great many of which focus on lesser-known characters and events from the Deadball Era. In Brian's own words, "The site is intended to be a 'celebration' of America's National Pastime and [show] that the fabric of the sport is far richer and deeper than just superstar recognition." The stories are listed in chronological and alphabetical (first name) order on the site, and produced in Adobe PDF format for easy reading and printing. When time permits, do yourself a favor and check out the wide array of fascinating articles posted on DiamondsInTheDusk, a great resource for Deadball Era reading and research, and much more. Bill Lamb

### **DEATH CLOSES ROOF STANDS**

#### **COURT ACTS AFTER FATAL FALL OF EXCITED BASEBALL FAN**

#### **THREE OWNERS ENJOINED**

#### **JUDGE HEARD DECIDES HOusetOP BLEACHERS ARE DANGEROUS**

The death of Willie Hudson, the 14 year old boy who fell from the roof of a neighboring building during the Cubs-Giants baseball game Friday afternoon has sounded the knell of the "housetop grandstands," which have been a bone of contention between the city and the building owners for years.

In an order issued yesterday Judge Oscar E. Heard enjoined the owner of the stand from which the Hudson boy fell and the owners of two other stands near the Chicago National League park from permitting their use by spectators. The victory for the city is not complete, however, for in another order the city is enjoined from removing the stands from the roofs. It is expected by the city and baseball park owners that if the matter ever comes to a hearing again the building owners will meet with decisive defeat.

The men enjoined are:

Philip Amsterdam, 451 Wood Street.

Morris Wilensky, 440 Wood Street.

Andrew Brennan, 783 West Taylor street.

#### **DOWNEY WARNED THEM**

Former Building Commissioner Joseph Downey a year ago warned these men that their roof stands were a menace to public safety in that they were not provided with sufficient safeguards for patrons.

Commissioner Downey threatened to remove the stands if they were not equipped immediately with fire escapes. The owners applied to the courts and secured restraining orders. Temporary injunctions were granted and the cases have been argued several times since then. Judge Heard, who issued the restraining order, listened to arguments two weeks ago.

#### **BOY'S FALL PROVES FATAL**

The Hudson boy died at the county hospital in the morning without regaining consciousness. He fell from the stand on Amsterdam's roof during the excitement in the fifth inning of Friday's game when "Joe" Tinker batted a home run. His skull was fractured and several bones broken.

*Chicago Tribune, July 19, 1908*

## HARRY SINCLAIR'S INVESTMENTS WITH PHIL BALL

by **Tim Newman**

Midwest business tycoons Harry Sinclair and Phil Ball were among the most dynamic ball club owners of the late-Deadball Era. This article examines the relationship between the two, with particular focus upon the largely undisclosed interest that Sinclair held in the St. Louis Browns franchise that Ball acquired as part of the settlement that put the Federal League out of business.

**When Harry Met Phil:** Philip deCatesby Ball is best known as the owner of the St. Louis Browns of the American League from 1916 until his death in 1933.<sup>1</sup> Previously, Ball had been a cowhand, a construction worker on a Tennessee railroad, and a killer of buffalo for hides in Texas. When he was about 19, Ball lost all his money gambling in Shreveport.<sup>2</sup> His finances recovered as a maker of ice-making machinery, and he is remembered as a leading citizen of St. Louis.<sup>3</sup>

Before he bought the Browns, Ball invested in the St. Louis franchise of the independent minor Federal League in 1913.<sup>4</sup> In 1914, the Federals declared themselves a major league, spending lavishly for players in competition with the American and National Leagues. This took a toll on the Feds' Kansas City franchise, and after the season, the league arranged to sell the club to oil magnate Harry Sinclair for \$25,000.<sup>5</sup> When this sale went unconsummated, Sinclair bought the 1914 Federal League champion Indianapolis Hoosiers for \$81,000, and then moved the club to Newark.<sup>6</sup>

Harry Ford Sinclair was raised in Independence, Kansas. When he was 19, Sinclair played high stakes poker with his inheritance.<sup>7</sup> In 1901, Sinclair was a partner in an Oklahoma bucket shop<sup>8</sup> headquartered in St. Louis. By the next year, he was on the run from the law, a "natural-born speculator" accused of embezzling the local "sporting crowd" out of \$6,000.<sup>9</sup> Around this time, he started buying and selling oil leases in Kansas and Oklahoma.<sup>10</sup> Fortune smiled, and



*Harry Sinclair*

shortly before the 1906 baseball season began, Sinclair was able to acquire the Independence team in the newly-formed Class D Kansas State League.<sup>11</sup> Reflecting the close connection then between gambling and the game, the local newspaper published the betting odds on games on its front page.<sup>12</sup> Sinclair and other Independence "sports" lost \$2,000 betting on a single game in 1907, but stated that they would wager the same amount on the next contest.<sup>13</sup>

Phil Ball was also active in Oklahoma oil fields, and may have met Sinclair when their respective companies divided a 50-acre lease on property just north of Tulsa. Sinclair's portion was valued at more than a half-million dollars.<sup>14</sup> In 1912, Sinclair moved to Tulsa to be near the bulk of his holdings which numbered more than 60 oil companies by the following year.<sup>15</sup> Ball, meanwhile, had been busy in Tulsa before Sinclair moved there, building waterworks and an ice-packing plant in 1905,<sup>16</sup> and forming a gas and electric company that was "the largest concern in the city" in 1906.<sup>17</sup> Three years later, Ball and his business associates, including Dan Murphy of the Brea Canyon Oil Company,<sup>18</sup> applied for the right to pipe natural gas to St. Louis and Dallas.<sup>19</sup> And

in 1913, Ball helped finance a modern packing plant in Tulsa.<sup>20</sup>

While his Federal League St. Louis Terriers team was training in Havana in 1915, Ball told reporters that he had known Sinclair for a good many years, but denied that Sinclair wished to invest in his ball club.<sup>21</sup>

**When Harry Paid Phil:** Given this denial, it is odd that only four months later, Newark club owner Sinclair started paying one-half of the St. Louis Feds' expenses. Over a five-month period in 1915, Sinclair made seven more payments on St. Louis accounts: June 18 — \$ 15,000; July 23 — \$10,000; August 17 — \$10,000; August 26 — \$6,000; September 9 — \$2,500; September 16 — \$2,000; October 1 — \$4,000, and November 20 — \$3,000.<sup>22</sup>

After the 1915 season, the financially-failing Federal League and Organized Baseball settled their differences. The Federal League (and Harry Sinclair's Newark Peppers franchise) was now defunct. Under the settlement, Ball and several associates were permitted to purchase the American League St. Louis Browns. Papers filed by the new Browns ownership revealed that Ball owned 2,350 shares in the club. St. Louis brewer Otto Stifel owned 733 shares, and 117 shares were owned by several others.<sup>23</sup> Sinclair was not listed as a club owner, and Federal League President James A. Gilmore "emphatically denied that Sinclair's money was invested in the ... St Louis deal."<sup>24</sup>

We now know that the Browns actually issued 800 additional shares of club stock, and that by the end of 1916, Sinclair owned 29.35% of the team and a little more than 35% of Sportsman's Park, the Browns' home ball grounds.<sup>25</sup> This makes it probable that Sinclair owned all of the 800 shares unaccounted for (and more, for the 800 shares would represent only 20% of Sinclair's 29.35% total share of club ownership).

Decades after the fact, the sale price for the Browns was reported as between \$425,000 and \$525,000.<sup>26</sup> A contemporaneous *Sporting Life* report provided the most specific detail, putting the price at \$425,000, with a \$100,000



*Phil Ball*

commission going to several individuals for the option that they held to buy the Browns.<sup>27</sup> The fact that the total sale price was exactly ten times the amount that Sinclair had contributed to Browns coffers the previous year, however, seems a coincidence.

It is possible that Sinclair acquired some of Otto Stifel's 18.325% interest in the club. Stifel committed suicide in August 1920, owing \$38,000 to murdered St. Louis gambler Harry "Kid" Becker and complaining of mistreatment by Ball.<sup>28</sup> Sinclair also received 122 shares of Browns stock in December 1922.<sup>29</sup> This would have increased Sinclair's stake in the Browns to 32.15% of club ownership, assuming that Sinclair had not sold any of the stock that he held at the end of 1916 in the interim.

The author is only aware of a single media report commenting on Sinclair's stake in the Browns

prior to Phil Ball's death. In 1929, the sometimes sensationalistic gambling periodical *Collyer's Eye* published an expose entitled "Secret Hand of Sinclair Bared" which, citing no sources, reported that "until this week it was presumed" that Ball alone had owned the Browns.<sup>30</sup>

When the 69-year-old Ball died in October 1933, his obituaries noted that he was a director in Sinclair's Consolidated Oil Company. No reports mention Sinclair having any interest in the Browns, although several did say that Sinclair had previously owned a stake in the club.<sup>31</sup> Years later, J.G. Taylor Spink of *The Sporting News* said that Ball, Stifel, and Sinclair had "bought the Browns," but that Stifel "soon sold out, and Sinclair followed."<sup>32</sup> Whatever the case, there is no record that Sinclair retained any interest in the St. Louis Browns by the time of Ball's death. The Ball assets, including stock in Sinclair Consolidated Oil and Brea Canyon Oil, passed to his wife, son, and daughter.<sup>33</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

1. See generally, Steve Steinberg, *Baseball in St. Louis, 1900-1925* (Arcadia Press: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, 2004), 76.
2. As reported in the *St. Louis Star and Times*, April 28, 1932: 3.
3. Per the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 10, 1914: 36. See also, Peter Golenbock, *The Spirit of St. Louis: A History of the St. Louis Cardinals and Browns* (Harper Entertainment: New York, 2001), 75.
4. "Messrs. Stifel and Ball the Joint Owners of the St. Louis Feds," *Baseball Magazine*, October 1915, 70. Ball had associated with big leaguers at least since 1912 when he went fishing with Fred Clarke and Claude Hendrix, as reported in the *Tulsa Daily World*, November 14, 1912.
5. Per the *Baltimore Sun*, March 11, 1915: 9, and Robert Peyton Wiggins, *The Federal League of Base Ball Clubs: The History of an Outlaw Major League, 1914-1915* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2009), 186-187.
6. See Daniel R. Levitt, *The Battle That Forged Modern Baseball: The Federal League Challenge and Its Legacy* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2012), 203.
7. F.C. Lane, "Harry Sinclair, Oil Wizard, the Live Wire of the Feds," *Baseball Magazine*, August 1915, 31-32.
8. A bucket shop was an establishment through which a customer bought a derivative interest in a stock or commodity, but no actual delivery of the asset occurred. Instead, it went into the bucket. In effect, the purchaser and broker were simply betting on whether the value of the stock or commodity went up or down. The potential for bucket shop fraud was so high that many jurisdictions, including New York, outlawed them, per Bill Lamb, "A History of the New York Giants Franchise," *Outside the Lines*, Spring 2017, 6.
9. "Introducing Mr. Harry F. Sinclair," *Barron's*, October 24, 1921, 11; *Coffeyville (Kansas) Daily Journal*, May 10, 1901: 3; *Independence (Kansas) Daily Reporter*, August 12, 1902: 3.
10. Per the *Norton (Kansas) Courier*, May 15, 1924: 7. See also, William L. Connelly, *The Oil Business As I Saw It: Half A Century with Sinclair* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), 38. Sinclair also sold lumber for the oil derricks sprouting up in the area.
11. *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, May 19, 1906: 5.
12. See e.g., *Independence Daily Reporter*, May 24, 1906: 1.
13. As reported in the *Coffeyville (Kansas) Daily Journal*, July 1, 1907: 4. Sinclair apparently once even bet on a fixed footrace. See *The (Nashville) Tennessean*, January 23, 1916: 30.
14. *Independence Daily Reporter*, May 18, 1909: 3.
15. Bobby D. Weaver, "Sinclair Oil and Refining Corporation," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=S1007>, accessed may 2019.
16. *Goodnight (Indian Territory) News*, July 5, 1906.
17. *Cordell (Indian Territory) Herald-Sentinel*, December 29, 1905.
18. Per the (Oklahoma City) *Oklahoma State Capital*, December 21, 1906. Brea Canyon Oil was founded in 1897 by Edward L. Doheny, who was later responsible with Harry Sinclair and others for the embarrassment of the Harding Administration in the Teapot Dome scandal. Doheny was the inspiration for Upton Sinclair's novel *Oil!*, adapted for film under the title *There Will Be Blood*, and is the namesake of the Southern California state park to which the Beach Boys urged surfers to make their way.
19. Per the *Fuel Oil Journal*, May 1916, 120-121, and *Vinita (Oklahoma) Daily Chieftain*, November 11, 1909: 4.

20. *Tulsa Daily World*, December 3, 1913: 3.
21. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 10, 1915: 2. Later, Ball said that he had known Sinclair for several years. In 1928, Ball testified that he had known Sinclair for 21 years, and was a Sinclair Consolidated stockholder. See *St. Louis Star and Times*, April 18, 1928: 11.
22. As calculated via P.D.C. Ball Account for Year Ending December 31, 1915, and H.F. Sinclair: Baseball Enterprises December 1916, Financial Records for Harry F. Sinclair, Box 2, Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Ball claimed losses of \$88,000 in 1914, and \$94,000 in 1915, per Wiggins at 305, citing the *Chicago Tribune*, February 18, 1916: 16.
23. According to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 11, 1916: 18.
24. *Sporting Life*, January 15, 1916: 5.
25. April 11, 1917 letter of Arthur Young & Company to Harry Sinclair, preserved in the Sinclair papers maintained at the Huntington Library.
26. See e.g., *The Sporting News*, July 15, 1951: 14 and August 1, 1951: 15.
27. *Sporting Life*, January 15, 1916.
28. Per the *St. Louis Star and Times*, August 19, 1920: 3. Kid Becker once ran a handbook at both the American and National League ballparks in St. Louis. See "Police Fail to Stop Gambling at Ball Parks," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 11, 1913.
29. According to *The Sporting News*, July 25, 1951.
30. Collyer's Eye September 7, 1929: 1. Thanks to Dan Levitt."
31. See e.g., *St. Louis Star and Times*, October 23, 1933: 14; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 23, 1933: 16: Sinclair was once the second largest stockholder in the Browns with as much as 40%; *Des Moines Register*, October 25, 1933: 11: "It is understood that Sinclair formerly owned considerable stock in the Browns, but sold his holdings to Ball several years ago."
32. See again, *The Sporting News*, July 25, 1951.
33. Per *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 26, 1933: 1.

Judge Kenesaw M. Landis, a thirty-third degree baseball fan and the man who tried to put Standard Oil out of business, once said: "I wouldn't umpire a baseball game for the world," he said; "it requires too much judicial and temperamental balance."

*The American Magazine*, June 1911

## "BAN" PAYS WARD

### PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN LEAGUE TALKED HIMSELF OUT OF \$1,000

NEW YORK—Ban Johnson, president of the American League, has settled the libel suit brought against him by John W. Ward. The case was on the calendar of the United States circuit court of appeals last Wednesday, on that day Johnson withdrew his appeal and sent a check for \$1,000, the full amount of damages awarded in the lower court, to Ward, who thereby received complete vindication.

The suit grew out of Ward's candidacy for the office of president of the National League, in December, 1910. Johnson, in a public statement, declared that he would not stand for Ward's election, and would refuse to sit with Ward as a member of the national baseball commission. Johnson explained his hostility by declaring Ward was a trickster, in that he had induced player George S. Davis to sign with the Giants ten years ago, although Davis was bound by a contract approved by Ward to accept an engagement with the Chicago White Sox.

Partially because of Johnson's opposition, Ward was unable to secure more than four votes for election when the National League convened. There was a deadlock, the other half of the circuit supporting R. W. Brown, of Louisville. Thomas J. Lynch then was offered as a compromise candidate, and the deadlock was broken. Ward promptly instituted a suit for \$50,000 damages against Johnson. It was tried before Justice Hand and a Jury in the federal court in this city a year ago last spring, and Ward received a verdict of \$1,000. Johnson's attorneys appealed and the case had been dragging along ever since.

*The Topeka State Journal*, November 23, 1912

# ACCURATE RUNS-SCORED RECORDS FOR PLAYERS OF THE DEADBALL ERA: THE PLAYERS ON THE 1905 DETROIT TIGERS

by **Herm Krabbenhoft**

In previous articles I have described the findings from my research program to ascertain accurate runs-scored numbers for players on the Detroit Tigers for the 1906-1919 seasons.<sup>1</sup> In this article I present my results for the players on the 1905 Tigers.

## RESEARCH PROCEDURE

For the 1905 season, I utilized the same rigorous *modus operandi* employed in my previous research efforts to ascertain accurate runs-scored numbers and runs-batted-in numbers.<sup>1</sup> The Appendix for this article (available at SABR.org) provides the complete details of my research procedure.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the originally-generated official DBD records, the 1905 Detroit Tigers played 155 games, winning 79 and losing 75, with one tie game. In achieving that record (which allowed them to finish in third place in the American League) Detroit scored a total of 509 runs. However, summing the runs scored by the Tigers according to the game scores gives 512 runs. So, there's a three-run disconnect between what the official DBD records show and what actually transpired on the baseball diamond. Careful examination of the official DBD ledger allows one to pinpoint the sources of the three-run discrepancy.

The Tigers-Browns game played on September 17 in St. Louis was simply omitted from the game-by-game tabulation of the *team* performance lines. (This omission is akin to neglecting to enter a check in a check register). Detroit scored two runs in that game. With regard to the individual *players* who participated in that game, the official records *do* have their performance lines, including one run scored by George Mullin and one run scored by Matty

McIntyre. So, it was just a clerical error on the part of the American League office — while the performance lines of the *players* were properly recorded, the performance line of the *team* was inadvertently omitted. Therefore, Including those two runs brings the team total up to 511.

The other missing run in the official DBD records is from the Tigers-Red Sox game played on September 28 in Boston — the Tigers scored four runs in the game, but the official DBD records show that the Detroit team scored three runs. According to the game account provided in the *Detroit Free Press*, the Tigers runs were scored by Jack Warner (third inning), Ed Killian (third inning), Chris Lindsay (sixth inning), and Sam Crawford (sixth inning). Six other players participated in the game — Matty McIntyre, Germany Schaefer, Ty Cobb, Bill Coughlin, Charlie O'Leary, and Bill Donovan. According to the official DBD records for these ten Detroit players, Crawford is shown with one (1) run scored, Killian is shown with one (1) run scored, Lindsay is shown with one (1) run scored, and Warner is shown with one (1) scored; each of the other six players is shown with no runs scored (i.e., the runs scored cell is blank). Thus, it was just another clerical error — a “3” instead of a “4” was mistakenly entered in the “Runs” cell.

So now, after nearly 120 years, the three-run disconnect for the Tigers *team* has finally been resolved. However, my research has ascertained that there are also runs-scored errors in the official DBD records for some of the *players*. Thus, in ascertaining complete details for each of the 512 runs scored by the 1905 Tigers players I discovered that there were two games in which the run-scorers were not accurately transcribed to the official DBD records.

In the Tigers-versus-Athletics game on August 25 in Detroit, the Jungaleers tallied three runs. According to the official DBD records, the run-scorers were Duff Cooley, Sam Crawford, and Matty McIntyre. However, according to the text descriptions and box scores provided in the game accounts from several newspapers (*Detroit Free Press*, *Detroit News*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Philadelphia North American*, *Philadelphia*

*Press*, and *Philadelphia Record*), the three runs were scored as follows:

- 1 (Second Inning) — Cooley scored on a 1-RBI single by Lowe
- 2 (Third Inning) — McIntyre scored (from second base) on a 1-out fielder's-choice-force-out coupled with a fielding error (wild throw to first) by the shortstop Monte Cross; the batter, Crawford, was safe on the fielding error.
- 3 (Sixth Inning) — Schaefer scored on a 1-RBI fielder's-choice-force-out by Coughlin.

Furthermore, the box scores presented in each of the newspaper game accounts list McIntyre (1), Schaefer (1), and Cooley (1) as the run-scorers. Thus, the official DBD records are wrong in showing Crawford with one (1) run scored and Schaefer with no runs scored (i.e., blank cell).

In the Tigers-versus-Highlanders game on August 30 in the Motor City, the Bengals scored five markers. According to the official DBD records, the run-scorers were Lew Drill (1), Chris Lindsay (1), Matty McIntyre (1), George Mullin (1), and Germany Schaefer (1). However, according to the text descriptions and box scores provided in the game accounts from several newspapers (*Detroit Free Press*, *Detroit Journal*, *Detroit Times*, *New York Evening World*, *New York Sun*, and *New York Tribune*), the five runs were scored as follows:

- 1 (First Inning) — McIntyre scored on a 1-RBI single by Lindsay.
- 2 (First Inning) — Lindsay scored on a 1-RBI double by Cobb.
- 3 (Third Inning) — Schaefer scored on his steal of home.
- 4 (Seventh Inning) — Drill scored on a 1-RBI fielder's-choice-force-out by McIntyre.
- 5 (Seventh Inning) — McIntyre scored on a 1-RBI double by Schaefer.

Moreover, the box scores given in each of the newspaper game accounts list McIntyre (2), Lindsay (1), Schaefer (1), and Drill (1) as the run-scorers. Thus, the official DBD records are not

correct in showing McIntyre with one (1) run scored and Mullin with one (1) run scored.

Table 1 summarizes the corrections of the runs-scored errors for these two games; the relevant supporting information from the newspaper game accounts for these two games is provided in the Appendix (which is available on the SABR website). Three of the four players included in Table 1 were afflicted with runs-scored errors in their official DBD records in seasons previously researched — Crawford (1907), Schaefer (1907 and 1908), and Mullin (1907 and 1909).<sup>1-3</sup> McIntyre is the fiftieth Tigers player with at least one game with a runs-scored error in the official DBD records during the 1905-1919 period. The player with the most games with runs-scored errors in the official DBD records is Ty Cobb, with eight such games — 1906 (1 game), 1907 (1 game), 1911 (1 game), 1912 (4 games), 1918 (1 game).<sup>1,4-7</sup> Next in line with five games with runs-scored errors are Ossie Vitt and Bobby Veach.<sup>6-9</sup>

Table 2 presents the full-season runs-scored numbers, according to my research, for each of the thirty players who participated in at least one game for the 1905 Detroit Tigers; also included are the runs-scored numbers shown in the official DBD records.

Inspection of Table 2 reveals that Sam Crawford was the leader in runs scored for the 1905 Detroit Tigers — with a total of 72 runs, not 73 as shown in the official DBD records. With accurate game-by-game runs-scored numbers now in hand one can accurately ascertain the longest Consecutive Games RUN Scored (CGRUNS) streaks for each player. Thus, according to my research for the 1905 Detroit Tigers, Bill Coughlin achieved the longest CGRUNS streak — a seven-gamer. Charlie O'Leary was next in line with a six-gamer. Four players put together five-game streaks — Sam Crawford, Chris Lindsay, Charlie Hickman, and George Mullin. For comparison, Table 3 presents the longest CGRUNS streaks achieved by a Jungaleers player each season during the 1905-1919 period of the Deadball Era.

As can be seen from Table 3, the longest CGRUNS streak achieved by a Tigers player during the 1905-1919 period of the Deadball Era is the 12-gamer accomplished by Bobby Veach in 1916. Two other Tigers achieved double-digit CGRUNS streaks — Ty Cobb (a 10-gamer in

1909) and Donie Bush (10-gamers in both 1910 and 1912). Considering post-Deadball Era seasons, the longest CGRUNS streak achieved by a Tigers player is the 16-gamer manufactured by Doc Cramer in 1944. Other Bengals players with CGRUNS streaks of a dozen or more games



include Hank Greenberg (15 in 1940), Pete Fox (14 in 1937), Harry Heilmann (13 in 1921), Harry Rice (13 in 1929), Johnny Groth (13 in 1950), Bobby Veach (12 in 1920), Charlie Gehringer (12 in 1930 and in 1940), Rudy York (12 in 1940), and Rocky Colavito (12 in 1961).<sup>10,11</sup> For comparison, it is mentioned that the major league record of the longest CGRUNS streak is the 24-gamer assembled by Billy Hamilton in 1894 for the Philadelphia Phillies.<sup>12,13</sup> The NL and AL single-season records for the longest CGRUNS streaks since 1900 are currently held by Rogers Hornsby (a 17-gamer with the 1921 St. Louis Cardinals) and Ted Kluszewski (a 17-gamer with the 1954 Cincinnati Red Legs) and Red Rolfe (an 18-gamer with the 1939 New York Yankees) and Kenny Lofton (an 18-gamer with the 2000 Cleveland).<sup>12</sup> Also discernible from Table 3 is the fact that Bush led the Tigers team in longest CGRUNS streaks six times (1910-1914 and 1917); Cobb was the Tigers leader in longest CGRUNS streaks five times (1908-1910, 1914, and 1919). It may also be added that Cobb was Detroit's leader in longest CGRUNS streak in 1922, thereby giving him a grand total of six CGRUNS crowns, equaling Bush's half-dozen trophies for the most by a Tigers player. Other Detroit players with five CGRUNS blue ribbons include Al Kaline, Ron LeFlore, and Lou Whitaker.<sup>10,11</sup>

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The 1905 season is the earliest American League season supported by official DBD records. Whatever official DBD records generated for the Junior Circuit for the 1901-1904 seasons are no longer extant. The only (unofficial) *game-by-game* AL records for the 1901-1904 seasons currently available (at the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library and Museum) are those generated in the mid-1960s by the research team directed by David S. Neft for *The Baseball Encyclopedia* published by Macmillan in 1969. However, official *full-season* runs-scored numbers are available for the 1901-1904 season since they were included in the annual baseball guides published contemporaneously by Spalding and by Reach (i.e., in 1902-1905).

Looking ahead, 1904 is the next season on the agenda for my project on accurate runs-scored numbers for players on the Detroit Tigers. The top-five run full-season scorers for the 1904 Tigers according to the official records (as shown in the 1905 Reach Official American League Base Ball Guide) were Jimmy Barrett (83), Matty McIntyre (73), Bobby Lowe (47), Sam Crawford (46), and Charlie O'Leary (39). According to the unofficial runs-scored numbers given in *The Baseball Encyclopedia*, the top-five run scorers for the 1905 Tigers were Barrett (83), McIntyre (74), Lowe (47), Crawford (46), and O'Leary (39).

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I gratefully thank Dave Newman for providing scans of several game accounts from various newspapers. And I thank Retrosheet's Tom Ruane and Dave Smith for reviewing the evidence I assembled in support of the runs-scored numbers ascertained in my research and reported in this article.

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10. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tigers Has Scored a Run (1920-1944)," *The Baseball Research Journal*, Volume 40, Number 1 (2011), 74.
11. Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tigers Has Scored a Run (1945-2007)," *The Baseball Research Journal*, Volume 37 (2008), 123.
12. Seymour Siwoff, *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* (New York: Seymour Siwoff, 2019), 12.
13. Other 19th century players with known CGRUNS streaks of twenty or more games include Jack Rowe (23 for the 1887 Detroit Wolverines), Herman Long (20 for the 1893 Boston Beaneaters), Billy Hamilton (20 for the 1894 Philadelphia Phillies), Jimmy Bannon (22 for the 1894 Boston Beaneaters), Joe Sullivan (21 for the 1895 Philadelphia Phillies), and Jesse Burkett (23 for the 1896 Cleveland Spiders). See Herm Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Consecutive-Game-Run-Scored Streaks for the 1887 Detroit Wolverines," *Nineteenth Century Notes*, Winter 2015, 5.

**TABLE 1. GAMES WITH RUNS-SCORED ERRORS IN THE OFFICIAL DBD RECORDS FOR PLAYERS ON THE 1905 TIGERS**

Game	Player A	Runs (This Work)	Runs (Official)	Player B	Runs (This Work)	Runs (Official)
August 25	S. Crawford	0	1	G. Schaefer	1	0
August 30	M. McIntyre	2	1	G. Mullin	0	1

**TABLE 2. RUNS-SCORED NUMBERS FOR PLAYERS ON THE 1905 DETROIT TIGERS**

Player	Runs (This Work)	Runs (Official)	Player	Runs (This Work)	Runs (Official)
Jimmy Barrett	2	2	Herby Jackson	1	1
Andy Bruckmiller	0	0	Walt Justis	0	0
Eddie Cicotte	1	1	Ed Killian	12	12
Nig Clarke	1	1	Frank Kitson	8	8
Ty Cobb	19	19	Chris Lindsay	38	38
Duff Cooley	25	25	Bobby Lowe	17	17
Bill Coughlin	48	48	<b>Matty McIntyre</b>	<b>*60*</b>	59
<b>Sam Crawford</b>	<b>*72*</b>	73	<b>George Mullin</b>	<b>*14*</b>	15
George Disch	0	0	Charlie O'Leary	47	47
Bill Donovan	16	16	<b>Germany Schaefer</b>	<b>*65*</b>	64
Tom Doran	8	8	John Sullivan	4	4
Lew Drill	17	17	Frosty Thomas	0	0
John Eubank	1	1	Jack Warner	12	12
Gene Ford	0	0	Jimmy Wiggs	1	1
Charlie Hickman	21	21	Bob Wood	1	1

NOTE: A player whose name is shown in boldface indicates that the player's actual runs-scored number [shown in the "Runs (This Work)" column] is different from the runs-scored number shown for him in the "Runs (Official)" column; the actual runs-scored number is also emboldened and bracketed with asterisks.

**TABLE 3. YEARLY LEADERS IN LONGEST CGRUNS STREAKS FOR DETROIT TIGERS PLAYERS (1905-1919)**

Year	Player	Runs (Rank)	CGRUNS Streak
1905	Bill Coughlin	48 (4)	7
1906	Matty McIntyre	63 (2)	7
1907	Sam Crawford	103 (1*)	7
	Davy Jones	101 (2)	
1908	Germany Schaefer	98 (3)	7
	Ty Cobb	88 (4)	
1909	Ty Cobb	115 (1*)	10
1910	Donie Bush	90 (2)	10
1911	Ty Cobb	148 (1*)	8
	Donie Bush	126 (2)	
1912	Donie Bush	106 (2)	10
1913	Donie Bush	98 (1)	6
1914	Donie Bush	96 (1)	7
	Ty Cobb	69 (2)	
1915	Bobby Veach	81 (4)	8
1916	Bobby Veach	91 (2)	12
1917	Donie Bush	112 (1*)	9
1918	Bob Jones	43 (4)	6
1919	Ty Cobb	92 (1)	7

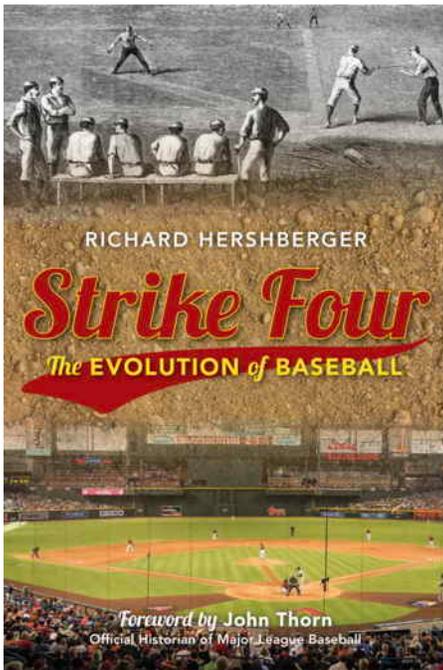
NOTE: The "Runs (Rank)" column gives the number of full-season runs scored by the player and the rank on the Tigers team; an asterisk indicates that the player also led the entire American League in runs scored.

### YAHOO DEADBALL ERA SITE DISCONTINUED

Recently, it was announced that Yahoo Groups would no longer host user-content sites like that devoted to discussion of Deadball Era-related topics. Yahoo stopped posting messages submitted by DEC members on October 28, and plans to obliterate the site and access to Deadball discussion site archives on December 14. The same fate awaits the Black Sox discussion group and other Yahoo user-content sites of interest to SABR members. As this issue of the newsletter goes to print, SABR headquarters is working to find or create new homes for the Deadball and Black Sox discussion groups with archives preserved, but the situation is fluid at the moment. Further developments will likely be disclosed in upcoming SABR bulletins.



Walt Hoban 1914



## STRIKE FOUR: THE EVOLUTION OF BASEBALL

By Richard Hershberger

2019, Rowman & Littlefield  
[ISBN: 9781538121146. 295  
pp. \$38.00 USD. Hardcover]

Reviewed by

**Dennis Auger**

dennisauger@charter.net

In *Strike Four*, Richard Hershberger addresses baseball's evolution with special emphasis on rule changes. The book contains 36 chapters focusing on such topics as strikeouts and the dropped third strike, foul territory, three-out innings, nine-inning games, called strikes and base on balls, the diamond, the batter's box, gloves, and the foul strike. This is only a partial list of the major innovations systematically analyzed by the author. In a few words, a

superb effort has been achieved.

Even though the most significant rule changes occurred during the last four decades of the nineteenth century, Hershberger discusses later ones such as banning the spitball, the designated hitter, video reviews, and the proposed automated calling of balls and strikes. He favors establishing the designated hitter in both major leagues along with implementing the technology concerning calling balls and strikes. One can disagree with the latter recommendations but cogent arguments are provided for the proposed changes.

Premodern baseball existed until the mid-nineteenth century and it was marked by innumerable variations including the barbaric custom of hitting the runner with the ball to record an out. According to one contemporary, this could have "fatal results!" Hershberger has the ability to intertwine humorous elements into a discussion about rules. With his methods, the presentation avoids becoming a linguistic nightmare filled with mental gymnastics. In other words, reading about rules is interesting and comprehensible.

By 1867, the New York version of baseball had become the standard in organized adult play. The National Association of Base Ball Players (1857), the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players

(1871), and the National League (1876) contributed in establishing a consensus about the rules. For all intents and purposes, the modern game was in place by the end of the nineteenth century.

What about the author's style? For some, reading a book about rules is not enjoyable. Hershberger deals with this concern by his narrative approach. His format of addressing one topic at a time allows him to trace the rule's origin in a detailed manner. Besides identifying the reason for the rule change, the analysis does not become cumbersome and muddled in technicalities. The one caveat is that certain chapters are not a quick read. Despite a clear and concise presentation, I sometimes needed several readings to achieve an understanding.

An example of the above occurs in the discussion about the infield fly rule. Later commentators explain that this rule was devised to deal with the "runner's dilemma" and/or the "fielder's perverse incentive." Hershberger clarifies that this was not the purpose but "the rule exists to avoid a question: What is a catch?" Why? Because there is no "objective" standard to determine what constitutes a catch. Initially, a catch was vaguely defined as the ball being "momentarily held." With men on base, the rule was unclear. Eventually, the umpire in this situation and with less than two outs could declare the

infield fly ball an out whether it was caught or not. The issue concerning the runner's dilemma did not surface until 1894. This chapter confirms that extra diligence is needed in examining the nuances of certain rules.

Another asset in *Strike Four* is that each chapter is well documented. Citations are based upon the baseball guides, the rule books, and commentaries from newspapers of the time periods in question. These references substantiate the narrative. The notes and bibliography are self-explanatory. Hershberger also effectively incorporates some underlying themes into his presentation. Below are several of the more notable ones:

1. The purpose of a rule is to deal with a problem, and it can have unintended consequences which leads to additional changes.
2. Initially, the duel was between batter and fielder (somewhat analogous to slow pitch softball) but eventually the duel was between batter and pitcher.
3. Baseball had two pitching revolutions: the fastball in the early 1860s and the curveball in the 1870s. The latter resulted in the overhand delivery.
4. Length of games and scoring being too low or high are problems

## PUBLISHERS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As before, review copies of the books covered in this issue were generously provided to us by their publishers. *Ball Four: The Evolution of Baseball* comes from Rowman & Littlefield and can be ordered by telephone (800-462-6420) or email (orders@rowman.com). *Babe Ruth, A Superstar's Legacy* was published by WordCraft Communications, Inc., and can be obtained from Amazon and other book retailers. *The Hidden Language of Baseball* comes from the University of Nebraska Press and can be ordered by calling 800-848-6224 or emailing orders@longleafservices.org. Your patronage of these publishers is appreciated.

throughout baseball's history.

5. Most significant rule revisions occurred prior to 1901 and were met with minimal objections. Since then it has been a matter of tweaking the rules accompanied by the birth of the baseball purist. Francis Richter, editor of *Sporting Life*, is a representative of this ideology. Since 1883, he had never argued that any of the rule changes were radical. In 1901, Richter objected strenuously to changes in the foul strike rule. In my terminology, yesteryear's innovator can become today's purist.

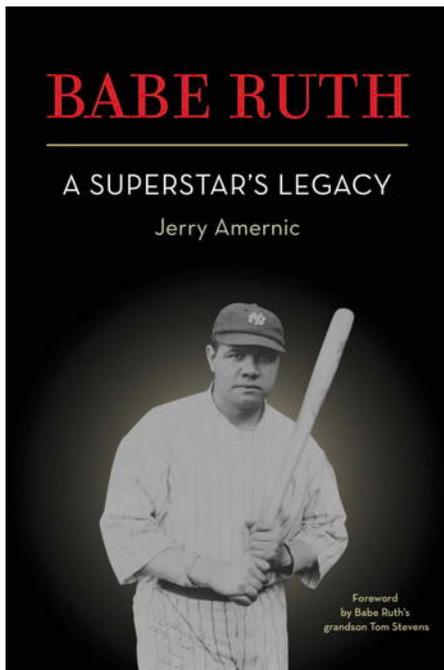
*Strike Four* is Richard Hershberger's first book. In one volume, he has been able

to identify and analyze the major rule changes in baseball. The author's style is highly commendable, and I would encourage an individual to read the comments by John Thorn and David Nemecek as found on the book's back cover. They are effusive in their praise. Mr. Thorn writes that "while no one but he (Hershberger) reads the rules for fun ... there is no better word to describe his book about the rules." *Strike Four* is a wonderful read and resource.

*Dennis Auger is a SABR member and has written articles covering baseball during the 1893-1919 period. He provided substance abuse counseling for 30 years but in retirement enjoys playing softball in a Senior League.*

Bescher pulled the "blind bull" trick when Miller popped to Niehoff in the eighth. Bescher was easily doubled at first and then blamed Dolan who was coaching at first.

*(Philadelphia) Evening Public Ledger, July 15, 1915*



## BABE RUTH — A SUPERSTAR'S LEGACY

By Jerry Amernic

2018, Wordcraft  
Communications

[ISBN: 978-1775239901. xxx  
pp. \$19.95 USD. Softcover]

Reviewed by

**Rodger McKelvey**

remckelvey@gmail.com

In *Babe Ruth — A Superstar's Legacy* author Jerry Amernic takes on Ruth's influence beyond baseball and beyond his life. His historic baseball highs were even topped by his on-going legacy to this day. The book has a vast and wide-ranging subject matter and stories that could have made organizing it daunting, but Amernic made it all make sense. The organization of this book was excellent and clear. The forward written by Tom Stevens (Ruth's grandson) was wonderful to read. His

personal touch to this book was something special. It is almost impossible to overstate Ruth's celebrity while he played, and it has only grown over the years. As Amernic shows Ruth has become one of America's largest "brands."

I knew of Ruth's baseball achievements and the "sultry stories" of his night life, but I did not know of his connection to little league baseball and Japanese baseball, his objection to baseball's color line, and his caring so much for kids, all kids. I grew up in Bloomington, Minnesota, and knew the BAA ("Bloomington Athletic Association"), a great youth baseball organization, and had only heard of the Babe Ruth League in passing. I was surprised and impressed with how involved the Ruth family was and is today.

The Japan trip of 1934 All-Stars, the description of the incredible reception Ruth received, and the personal stories shared by his daughter were entertaining. The fact that during WWII the US even considered having Ruth broadcast to the Japanese to lay down their guns, demonstrated his international appeal. Ruth's stance against Nazi persecution of the Jews in WWII was never mentioned in anything I had previously read. Amernic also highlights Ruth's willingness to play against black baseball teams despite the institutionalized racism in baseball. His daughter Julia believed that if he ever got to manage he would have signed

African American players. Ruth was as color blind as anyone in baseball at the time.

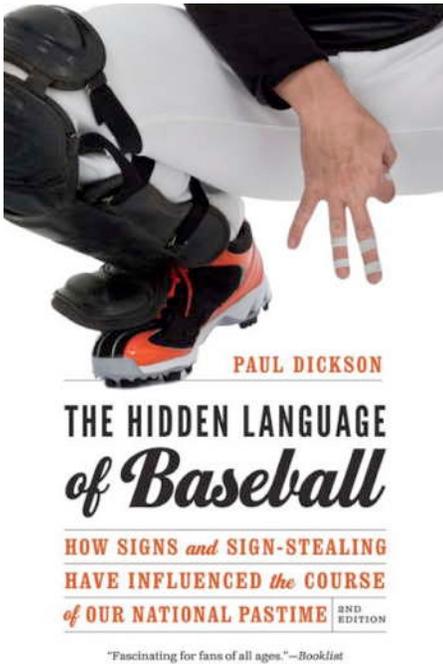
Anybody who reads this book will come away with a greater respect for this giant of American history. His legacy continues to this day. The marketing of Babe Ruth is arguably the easiest of any celebrity or professional athlete, past or present.

At the end of this very enjoyable book, my impression of Ruth is that he was an everyman superstar in every sense of the word. It continues today. I recently saw the new 2019 advertisement for the Jeep Cherokee Legacy — at the very beginning of this advertisement, it showed the picture of Babe Ruth. Babe Ruth was always a hero to me, but now after reading this book even more so today. I remember reading somewhere that the most important thing to get out of a review was if the book was readable or not. Amernic's book is one of the most gratifying books I have read, and I would recommend it for anybody — baseball fan or not.

*Rodger McKelvey is a diehard Twins fan from Bloomington, Minnesota. He is retired from the US Department of Veterans Affairs and is also a US Navy veteran.*



McGonigle  
(Philadelphia) Public Ledger  
September 30, 1914



**THE HIDDEN LANGUAGE  
OF BASEBALL: HOW SIGNS  
AND SIGN-STEALING HAVE  
INFLUENCED THE COURSE OF  
OUR NATIONAL PASTIME**

**By Paul Dickson**

2019, University of Nebraska  
Press

[ISBN: 978-1496214638. 224  
pp. \$19.95 USD. Softcover]

Reviewed by

**Vince Guerrieri**

vaguerrieri@gmail.com

Baseball is a game of subtleties, and that includes in its nonverbal communication, from the language of the bat flip (or the possible ensuing brushback pitch) to the signals used to communicate among team members. It's that kind of communication that author Paul Dickson tackles in his second edition of *The Hidden Language of Baseball: How Signs and Sign-Stealing Have*

*Influenced the Course of Our National Pastime*. Dickson's a prolific historian — you could fill a bookshelf with his works — who also writes at length about baseball, including biographies of Leo Durocher and Bill Veeck (which I discussed several years ago at [didthetribewinlastnight.com/blog/2012/08/07/new-veeck-book-chronicles-his-wacky-life](http://didthetribewinlastnight.com/blog/2012/08/07/new-veeck-book-chronicles-his-wacky-life)), both of whom have prominent roles in this book.

The book begins by exploring the origin of nonverbal communication in the game's nineteenth century days, part of the evolution of non-playing managers and coaches and also due in large part to Dummy Hoy, a deaf ballplayer whose illustrious career (he was the subject of an independent movie in 2019) led to the development of hand signals used by players, coaches, and umpires. [Hearing-impaired players also led to another development we now take for granted in football: Players from Gallaudet University were the first to huddle up so their sign language communication could not be seen by players from opposing teams at other schools for the deaf.] But the main point of Dickson's book is that as long as there have been signs, there has also been efforts to *steal* signs, the most famous of which are the allegations against the 1951 Giants, who were able to come back from a 13 1/2-game deficit in August to tie the Dodgers and ultimately beat them in a three-game playoff for the pennant. Almost since the Giants won the

pennant, rumors have persisted that players set up in the clubhouse in deep center field of the Polo Grounds with a telescope to try to decode the catcher's pitches.

The Giants, managed at the time by Durocher, weren't even the only team in that day to do so. Veeck said two teams he owned — the Indians in the 1940s and the White Sox in the 1950s — both actively tried to steal signs. And both were pennant winners, so it might have worked, one way or the other. One of the recurring themes in the book is the idea that stealing signs may not necessarily give you an edge, but it makes you think it does — which might in itself give you an edge.

There's a relatively fallow period in the history of sign-stealing in the 1980s and 1990s, but it's returned mightily in the 21st century, aided in part by advances in modern technology. That's actually one of the reasons a second edition was written, 16 years after the first edition. It covers the issue with signs allegedly being stolen and relayed from the clubhouse to the dugout by the Red Sox with an Apple Watch. Indeed, the advent of modern technology has led to what Dickson calls a *paranoia* around using electronics to help steal signs, including how replay and high-definition screens have led to pitchers and catchers talking on the mound with gloves over their faces to avoid lip-reading like Robert DeNiro and Joe Pesci in "Casino."

One of the fascinating themes of the book to me was the morality around sign-stealing. It's never been considered in the same league as, say, a pitcher throwing the spitter or a scuffed ball or a player using a corked bat — and it's certainly not as disreputable as the use of performance-enhancing drugs. Throughout the game's history, it was always thought of as a cost of doing business, one more way to gain an edge. But like George Washington Plunkitt's idea of honest or dishonest graft, there are even unwritten rules to sign stealing. A runner on second is always trying to figure out the catcher's pitch calls. But it's considered bad form for the batter to "peek," to look back at the catcher's signal or where he's setting his glove for the pitch.

Dickson's an excellent writer, the book's relatively slim (200 pages, including a glossary and footnotes — which are worth reading; Dickson's one of those authors that likes to include little vignettes in his footnotes — bibliography, and index) and the subject matter is fascinating even to anyone well-versed in baseball history and rules, written or unwritten. It's worth your time.

*Vince Guerrieri is a SABR member and Indians fan from Youngstown, Ohio (hometown of Jimmy McAleer, Bonesetter Reese, and Billy Evans). He is a journalist and author who has written for POLITICO, Smithsonian, Ohio Magazine, and Popular Mechanics, among others.*

## TO GRANTLAND RICE

We knew him in the bush league where he hit .363  
 With equal grace he penned a quip or scribbled poetree.  
 The sunny southern baseball fan, altho obtuse at times,  
 Was often forced to laugh out loud at Grantland's funny rhymes.

He wrote with great fecundity and quite a bit of skill  
 And sporting writers copped his stuff, as sporting writers will;  
 'Tis said a Cleveland drummer (yes, his line was suits and cloaks)  
 Once traveled into Georgia and read one of Grantland's jokes.  
 He laughed so loud folks thought he was delinquent in the dome,  
 But Mr. Drummer knew his biz and wrote a letter home.

So Grant went north; he left the spot where sweet magnolias bloom  
 And up and down old Peach Tree street there oozed a lot of gloom.  
 He took with him his jester's cap and eke his rhyming dic.  
 And soon the blasé northern fans were laughing themselves sick.

He hit the pellet on the nose and fielded like a Cobb,  
 Until the eastern scouts arrived and took him off the job.  
 They teased him with their yellow gold and also used the draft,  
 And soon the Forest City wept where formerly it laughed.

So now he plays to big-league time and heightens Broadway's joy;  
 The busy buyers from Vincennes, from Kankakee and Troy  
 Vie with the carefree chorus girls (from Piqua and Oshkosh)  
 In giving chuckling tribute to the adept Grantland's josh.

And even in benighted Chi we love his Grandoldope.  
 So in our woolly western way we voice this earnest hope  
 That while the major magnates plot and crafty Feds intrigue,  
 He bats a cool .500 in the New York Tribune League

— Howard Mann, Sporting Editor Chicago Evening Post.

*New-York Tribune, January 1, 1915*



Walt Hoban

*Omaha Daily Bee, March 8, 1914*

## THE INSIDE GAME: THE YEAR 2019 IN REVIEW

Continuing a newsletter practice commenced several years ago, we conclude the 2019 run of *The Inside Game* with a look back at what has been published since last year's report. To begin with, we exceeded our goal of delivering at least four newsletter issues annually for the sixth consecutive year, a testament to the diligence of staff and the industry of our relatively small complement of newsletter contributors. In this year's five issues, readers were provided with seven Deadball Era-related news items, 19 original research articles, the informative columns of DEC Chairman John McMurray, and 32 book reviews. We even published an opera review, Dan Levitt's take on the premiere of the Black Sox-themed opus *The Fix*, as well as our annual interview of a major contributor to appreciation of the Deadball Era. This year's interview subject is DEC founder and first committee chairman Tom Simon.

During the past year, we were pleased that veteran newsletter contributors Dennis Auger, John Zinn, and David Nemecek were joined by first-timers Stephen D. Lutz, Matt Rothenberg, Brian Morrison, and Tim Newman. And as with newsletters in almost every issue published since April 2014, the authoritative, record-revising Deadball Era research and analysis of Herm Krabbenhoft graced our pages this past year. Another recurring newsletter feature was Doug Skipper's insight into the Larry Ritter Award process and his commentary on the 2019 award winner: *September 1918: War, Plague and the World Series* by Skip Desjardin. Meanwhile, coverage of Deadball at SABR 49 in San Diego was illustrated via the splendid photography of Dixie Tourangeau. Our thanks to all the above newsletter contributors.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the 1919 World Series, the June newsletter was devoted entirely to Black Sox-related material, our first single-subject issue since the September 2008 newsletter revisited Merkle's Boner. Leading Black Sox scholars Jacob Pomrenke, Bruce

Allardice, and David Fletcher expanded our knowledge of the scandal, while relatively new book entries in the Black Sox canon were reviewed by Rick Huhn, Mark Dugo, and John McMurray (plus the Dan Levitt Black Sox opera review). Interspersed within the Black Sox issue, and the other four 2019 newsletters as well, were informative and/or amusing vintage cartoons, news items, and other miscellany discovered by newsletter design editor Bob Harris.

All told, *The Inside Game* delivered 194 pages of Deadball Era text to newsletter readers, a volume that easily exceeds last year's 165 newsletter pages, and dwarfs the output of any other SABR committee newsletter (we note, immodestly). To sustain, or even come close, to this pace in 2020, we would very much like to enlarge our cadre of newsletter contributors. So, if you have Deadball Era-related research that you would like to see in print, or have interest in reviewing a book, or come upon some Deadball-relevant ephemera that you think might be of interest to readers, kindly contact me or another newsletter staff member. As always, we begin the new year with the newsletter cupboard almost bare, and would appreciate submissions of any type – particularly from those who have not previously sent anything to us. All contributions to the newsletter will be most welcome.

Finally, I want to thank staff colleagues Dan Levitt, Bob Harris, Mark Dugo, and DEC Chairman John McMurray for another year of conscientious and untiring effort in getting out this past year's newsletter issues. I look forward to working with them again in the new year. And thanks, as always, to newsletter readers for your interest and support of *The Inside Game*. Look forward to having you back out there in February. Till then, best wishes for the upcoming holiday season.

Bill Lamb, Editor  
*The Inside Game*

## THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

by **John McMurray**

With October passing, we are now more than 100 years removed from the conclusion of the Deadball Era. Joe Wood, the last living player from our period of inquiry, died more than 35 years ago. The Deadball Era recedes into history while also being ever present.

When Charles Alexander addressed the annual meeting of our Committee in Chicago in 2015, he noted that Honus Wagner did not exclaim when he arrived at spring training in 1901 that he now played in the modern era. It was a change recognized in retrospect. Similarly, no one formally drew the curtain down on the Deadball Era at the end of 1919. Events would facilitate that transition.

When the final World Series game of 1919 — a 10-5 Cincinnati throttling of the White Sox in Game 8 which wasn't really that close — concluded on October 9, 1919, hints of a transition in baseball were already evident. Babe Ruth's groundbreaking hitting performance with Boston, girded by a record-setting 29 home run clouts in 1919, gave notice that baseball was going to be played differently going forward. Yet, Ruth aside, baseball at the end of the century's second decade had already shifted noticeably towards the modern, without the sky-high batting averages or stratospheric stolen base totals which had characterized the middle of the century's first decade. Nevertheless, we still identify those final years of the teens as part of the Deadball Era, even if the playing style had, for the most part, already changed.

In the Introduction to *Deadball Stars of the American League* (2006), editor David Jones says that "the Deadball Era (1901-1919) occupies a unique place in the historical imagination." First, Jones says that the Deadball Era provides much of which is "familiar" in baseball, from a stable framework dominated by two leagues to the foundations of the contemporary rulebook to the introduction of several ballparks which would remain in use throughout much of the century. At



*The American Magazine, July 1910*

**Honus Wagner**

the same time, especially in the periods when offense was meager, Jones emphasizes that the Deadball Era provided a stylistic approach which no other period does.

Yes, the Deadball Era is the measurable things, such as the spate of fans coming to the ballpark for the first time; the manufacture of runs underwritten by cunning, guile, and careful strategy; and the refinement of the rules which made Deadball Era games more modern than those which came before. Even so, what remains in the mind's eye from the Deadball Era more than a century later are the things which are intangible. It is Christy Mathewson gallantly walking across the field at the Polo Grounds and Johnny Evers using his wit and preparation to affect the game's outcome. Tom Simon, in early issues of *The Inside Game*, reveled in the Dode Paskerts and the Dick Egans, the journeymen figures who glued this period of baseball together. It is the crusty and sometimes comical characters, heroic and tragic, big and small, who operated in

an every-ballplayer-for himself landscape. It is as much a tale of Americana, of resilience and perseverance, and of the country growing as it is of baseball itself.

More than a century later, the Deadball Era resonates. Longtime DEC member Herm Krabbenhoft tells *The Inside Game* that: “The Deadball Era, particularly the end of the Deadball Era — thanks to Babe Ruth — remains particularly relevant today because of Shohei Ohtani — his remarkable production both from the pitcher’s mound (although injury-limited to just one season with 52 innings-pitched) and from the batter’s box (although as a DH, exclusively). Such combined accomplishments have not been seen since Babe Ruth achieved them in the Deadball Era.”

Then there is simply the fact that the Deadball Era players and their accomplishments endure in a quotidian sense more than in any other sport. Said Lyle Spatz, one of SABR’s most prolific authors: “Since the end of the Deadball Era, an innumerable number of players have left their names in the record books. Yet 100 years later, we find so many Deadball Era players still considered among the very best to have played the game, and continue to appear on ‘greatest players ever’ lists. Included among them are Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Honus Wagner, Nap Lajoie, Tris Speaker, Walter Johnson, and Christy Mathewson. Perhaps, most interesting is Wagner. More than a century after he played his last game, he is still considered by most observers to be the greatest shortstop ever.”

That the Deadball Era is of a different time and place cannot be brushed aside. Norman Macht, renowned author of a three-volume biography of Connie Mack, suggests that the Deadball Era may not, in fact, not have as much currency in today’s game as many might suspect: “The Deadball Era baseball has no more relevance to today’s game than World War II warfare has to today’s conflicts. Sure, the objective remains the same, and the bases are still 90 feet apart, and it’s still strike three you’re out, but the changes in equipment, schedules, rules, strategy, pitchers’ roles — have made comparisons of Deadball Era players’ and teams’ abilities and stats with those of today misleading and meaningless. The bunt —



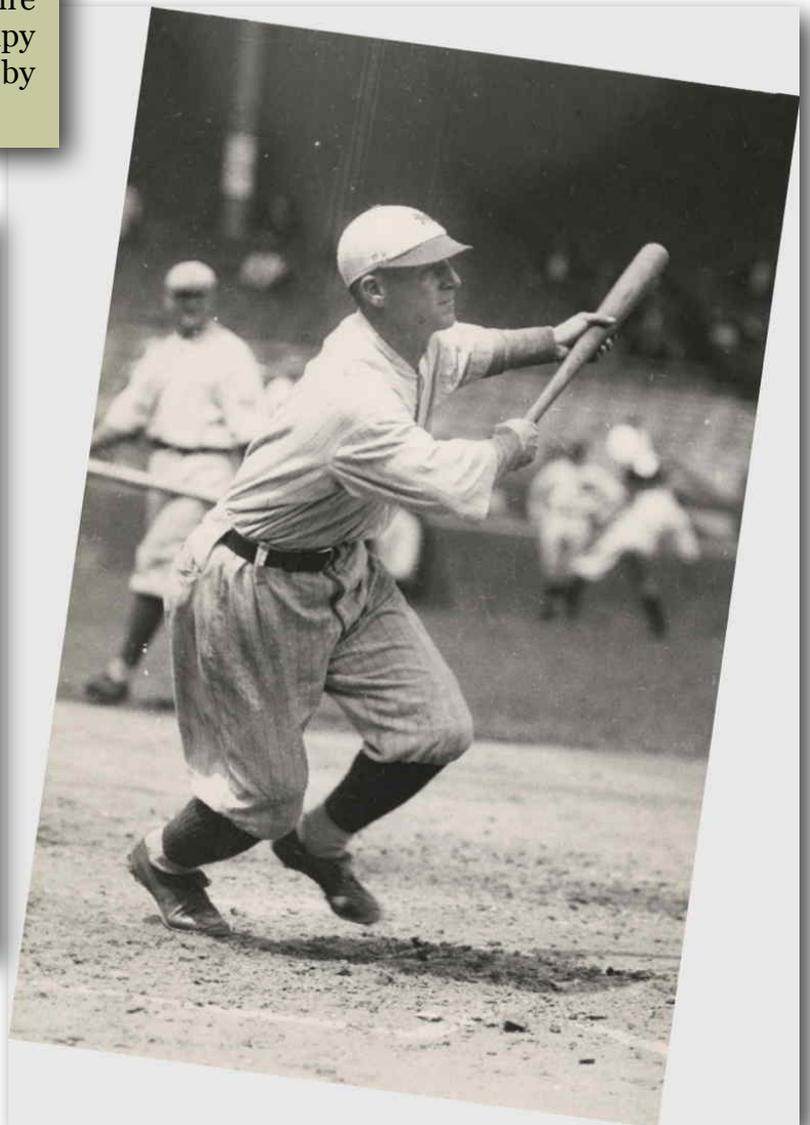
***Dode Paskert***

even to foil a shift — is seen as often as Bigfoot. Brush back pitches — once routine — are now considered high crimes and misdemeanors. Getting on base is not enough; home run hitters are richly rewarded even if they strike out four or five times for every one they hit. The Deadball Era is history, as dead — and at the same time as interesting to study and understand — as the Roman Empire, the American Revolution, the Civil War.”

It is that study — of the tales and the times — which makes the Committee’s work worthwhile. To study and research is to make reasoned observations and inferences, whether the people and events are to be admired or not. There is still much to do, from understanding the social undercurrents of the Deadball Era to writing full-length biographies of several prominent players whose lives have not yet been chronicled to gaining a broader understanding of how these figures got from here to there. To that end, may we continue to keep that “lumpy, licorice-stained ball rolling.”

## THE NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD FIGURE

A reader inquiry about the origin and identity of the bunting figure incorporated into the newsletter masthead left current staff perplexed. None of us knew who it was or where the image came from. All we knew was that the silhouetted figure did not appear in the early issues of *The Inside Game*. Rather, it debuted in the September 2003. To our rescue, however, came DEC founder and first committee chairman Tom Simon. As Tom explains in this issue's contributor interview, the image was drawn from a Hall of Fame Library photo of Benny Kauff taken during his NY Giants days. In 2014, newsletter design editor Bob Harris sharpened the masthead, giving the Kauff silhouette greater resolution. Mystery solved. PS: The newsletter motto, "Let's Get This Lumpy Licorice-Stained Ball Rolling," was coined by longtime committee member R.J. Lesch.



## NEW DEADBALL ERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*The Inside Game* is pleased to welcome to the committee the following SABR members who have expressed interest in the Deadball Era:

*Steve Behnke  
James Braswell  
Stanley Enzweiler  
Steven Jeremko  
Gregory P. King  
David White  
Mike Whiteman  
Brent Wilson  
Jay Wigley*

As 2019 comes to a close, we at the newsletter have been pleased by the growth in DEC membership this past year. There are now almost 500 in our ranks. Yet we would like to see the committee grow larger still. So to newsletter readers who have not yet become DEC members, we ask you to consider officially joining us for the new year. The process is painless; just add the DEC to your SABR membership profile. The Deadball Era Committee imposes no dues, and resumes and references need not be submitted. All that is required is something that you already have: interest in Deadball. Thanks for consideration of this request to become a DEC member and hope to have you with us soon.

### PRETTY TOUGH ON MR. KLING

CINCINNATI—August Herrmann, chairman of the National Baseball commission, said today that if John Kling, the holdout catcher of the Chicago National League club, played with the Kansas City team of semi-professionals against the Logan Square team of Chicago, as reported, he would come under the rule banishing from organized baseball for a term of three years any player who while on the reserve list of a national agreement club, plays with or against a team harboring ineligible players. The Logan Square team is said to contain several such players.

*Youngstown Vindicator, September 11, 1909*

## GAMES AND BIOPROJECT

Since our last issue, the Games Project has been busy, with its output including an array of Deadball Era games. A number of these game accounts first appeared in the recently-published SABR book on Cincinnati's Crosley (nee Redland) Field, edited by Gregory H. Wolf. Meanwhile, and in keeping with the 100th anniversary of the playing of the infamous 1919 World Series, Jacob Pomrenke and Mike Lynch provide accounts of each of the eight Series contests. The past months were a more fallow period for the BioProject, with published Deadball-related profiles confined to Oliver Faulkner, Doc Tonkin, Howdy Caton, and Carl Sawyer. As always, we urge you to give these new project entries a look if you have not already done so.

## DEC MEMBERS INTEREST: REDUX

This past February's newsletter contained a listing of interests of Deadball Era Committee members that we would like to update and enlarge in next year's initial issue. To that end, DEC members listed last year who would like to amend their listing (new interest, changed email address, etc.) are requested to let the editor know. Otherwise, we will simply reproduce your listing as it appeared last February. DEC members who were not mentioned in last year's listing are cordially invited to submit one. Just compose something like: Bill Lamb, contact wflamb12@yahoo.com – Interests: George Davis, NY Giants organizational history, Black Sox. Then email it to me any time before January 31, 2020. As before, we believe that informing fellow committee members and other newsletter readers of your particular interests alerts like-minded spirits to mutual interest in a subject and may well result in the sharing of beneficial research and other pertinent information.

Bill Lamb, Editor  
wflamb12@yahoo.com