

**TNP**

Who *are* those guys on the cover? The first reader to identify all twelve correctly may skip the rest of this introduction and go directly to page 2, where the real action begins. The rest of you are expected to slog through to the end of the column (you're on the honor system), where the editor has thoughtfully supplied the answers.

Nothing sets the blood of a baseball fan a-racing like The Question of The Hall of Fame, variously cast as: How can they keep Nellie Fox out? How did they let George Kelly in? Can't we forget about the 1919 World Series and give Shoeless Joe his plaque? What if Jim Kaat had been a Yankee? And what about Reggie? And Ryan? And Rizzuto? The debate is endless and too often merely partisan, but it is good for baseball and better for The Hall, whose officials are delighted that there are folks out there writing letters for departed worthies like Tony Mullane and Vic Willis and Riggs Stephenson. Long-winded letters protesting voting procedures may shed more heat than light, and are surely bothersome to answer, but they too are the bellows that fan the flame of the old hot stove. Besides . . . it's just plain fun to repopulate Cooperstown's Hall of Fame according to one's own vision, just as it is to make "paper trades" in the off-season, or predict pennant winners, or debate whether the 1936 Yankees would defeat the 1976 Reds.

Winter is the time for such cracker-barrel wisdom, and in this, the fifth issue of *The National Pastime*, Bob Carroll dispenses more than his two cents' worth. In a virtuoso performance as writer and artist (of the cover and twelve drawings on pages 16-27), Carroll presents the images and credentials of his deserving dozen, plus an innovative plan for cracking the logjam in the Hall of Fame Committee on Baseball Veterans. (The task confronting that group of selectors grows more difficult each year, with their choices remaining limited to two from an ever widening "talent pool.")

Winter is also the time for holiday greetings, and our back cover features a delightful rarity: Babe Ruth's personal Christmas card from 1931. It is a combination of photograph and water color from the collection of the editor, who extends to TNP readers the message in the crossed bats in the foreground.

The next issue of TNP will return to the pictorial format first displayed in the summer of 1984; scheduled for spring, it will be a lavish celebration of the games most beautifully photographed period, the dead-ball days of 1901-19. Also slated for 1986 publication is a "regular" TNP, the estimable *Baseball Research Journal* and a rookie called *The SABR Review of Books*.

ALL RIGHT—so who are the guys on the cover? Left to right, giants all: (top) Dick Allen, Ron Santo, Richie Ashburn, Bill Mazerowski; (center) Indian Bob Johnson, Ernie Lombardi, Hal Newhouser, Bobby Doerr; (bottom) Bid McPhee, Dickey Pearce, William Hulbert, Bill Dahlen.

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PICTURE CREDITS Bob Carroll: front cover, 16-27. Barry Halper: inside front cover, 79. Lew Lipset: inside back cover, 84, 85. John Thorn: back cover, 13, 15 (top), 61, 63, 82, 83. National Baseball Library, Cooperstown, N.Y.: 3, 9, 15 (bot.), 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 47 (top), 49 (bot.), 52, 58, 59, 62, 64, 69, 70, 71. Joseph M. Overfield: 4. Stuart Leeds: 11. John Holway: 28. David Kemp: 45. Les Mann, Jr.: 47. Bill Sayles: 48 (top). Grover Galvin: 50, 53. Carson J. Thompson: 51. Bill Shaw: 54. John Richmond Husman: 67. Donna Berry: 74-77.

THE NATIONAL PASTIME (ISSN 0734-6905, ISBN 0-910137-19-6), Winter 1985, Vol. 4, No. 2. Published by the Society for American Baseball Research, Inc., P. O. Box 1010, Cooperstown, NY 13326. Editorial and Advertising Offices, 18 Virginia Avenue, Saugerties, NY 12477. Postage paid at Manhattan, Kansas. Copyright © 1985 the Society for American Baseball Research, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

FIRST PRINTING—Ag Press, Manhattan, Kansas.

## MINOR LEAGUES

# Zane Grey's Redheaded Outfield

JOSEPH M. OVERFIELD

**Z**ANE GREY POSSESSES no merit whatsoever either in style or in substance," wrote Burton Rascoe, the brilliant but acerbic New York literary critic. And this was the view of another critic, Heywood Brown: "The substance of any two Zane Grey books could be written upon the back of a postage stamp."

The public disagreed. According to the authorized biography of Grey written by Frank Gruber in 1970, the 85 books he wrote sold 100 million copies. Millions more saw the 100 movies based on his books.

Most of Grey's books were about the American West, but those he wrote about deep sea fishing and on his world travels were widely read as well. Often forgotten is the fact he wrote numerous baseball stories that gained wide popularity among young readers. Grey's short story "The Redheaded Outfield" is one of the most famous and widely read baseball stories ever written. Published by the McClure Syndicate in 1915, it was reissued in 1920 along with ten other baseball stories under the title *The Redheaded Outfield and Other Stories*.

It is not surprising that Grey wrote about baseball. He started to play as a youngster in Zanesville, Ohio, where

he was born January 31, 1875. It has been suggested that he was forced to excel in sports to overcome the stigma of the name his mother had given him, Pearl Gray. Eventually he dropped the Pearl and assumed his middle name, Zane, and at the same time changed his surname from Gray to Grey. As a teenager he was recognized as one of Zanesville's better young pitchers. Equally adept as a ballplayer was his younger brother, whose unusual first name, Romer, seems somewhat prophetic for one destined to attain a degree of fame as an outfielder in professional baseball.

When the Gray family moved to Columbus in 1890, the brothers' baseball horizons broadened. Both joined the Capitols, a strong amateur nine, for whom Pearl soon became the star pitcher. A scout for the University of Pennsylvania watched him defeat Denison College of Granville, Ohio, whose star pitcher was Danny Daub, a future major leaguer. Penn offered him a baseball scholarship, and to satisfy his dentist father he decided to enter the dental school. After barely passing his entrance examinations, he began his college career in 1892. His graduation in 1896 was by the slimmest of margins.

Undistinguished as he was in the classroom, he more than made up for it on the diamond. He played college baseball for four years, first as a pitcher and then as an outfielder. In 1896 he helped Penn defeat the New York Giants in an exhibition game, and then in the last game of the season he hit a home run with one man on in the last of the ninth to defeat the University of Virginia.

Helped financially by his father and by Romer, who had already started his professional baseball career, Grey set up a dental practice in New York City in 1896. Since the income from his practice was small, or possibly because he much preferred baseball to dentistry, he continued to play baseball in the succeeding summers. The entire story of Grey's professional baseball activity is somewhat shrouded in mystery. Biographer Jean Karr writes that he played in the Eastern, Tri-State, and Michigan State Leagues, but cites no years and no cities. Gruber's book paints another picture. He wrote: "Pearl was sorely tempted to turn professional but he knew it would be the end of his dream of becoming a writer." According to the Grey obituary in the *Sporting News*, he played for Wheeling in the Iron and Oil League in 1895, Fort Wayne of the Interstate League in 1896, and Toronto of the Eastern League in 1899. SABR members Vern Luse and Robert Hoie have uncovered some pertinent data. Luse found an item in *Sporting Life*, April 15, 1896, reporting that Pearl Zane Gray had signed with Jackson of the Interstate League. Hoie has found he played for Newark of the Atlantic League in 1898, batting .277 in 38 games.

The haziness of his baseball career notwithstanding, his exposure to the game was such that it was only natural he should write about it. His first substantial check came from *The Shortstop*, published by A.C. McClurg

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JOSEPH M. OVERFIELD, frequent contributor to SABR journals, wrote *The 100 Seasons of Buffalo Baseball*.

of Chicago in 1909. Another success was *The Young Pitcher*, in which the author, transformed into "Ken Ward," is the hero and brother Reddie Grey is the shortstop. A few years later he wrote *The Redheaded Outfield*, starring Red Gilbat, Reddy Clammer and Reddie Ray of the Rochester Stars of the Eastern League.

Two of the redheads were trouble personified. "Gilbat was nutty and his average was .371. The man was a jack-o-lantern, a will-o-the-wisp, a weird, long-legged, redhaired phantom." Clammer was a grandstand player "who made circus catches, circus stops and circus steals, always strutting, posing, talking, arguing and quarreling." Reddie Ray, on the other hand, "was a whole game of baseball in himself, batting .400 and leading the league." "Together," wrote Grey, "they made up the most remarkable outfield in minor league baseball."

The story revolves around a single crucial game between the Stars and the Providence Grays, a game in which the Stars' manager Delaney (first name not given) flirts with apoplexy before it is over. First, Gilbat is playing ball with some kids four blocks away and is rounded up only as the game is about to start. In an early inning Clammer is forced to make a onehanded catch (a no-no in those days) because his other hand is filled with the peanuts he is munching on. Then Gilbat, enraged by some remarks about the color of his hair, leaps into the stands to battle the hecklers and is put out of the game. In the sixth Clammer crashes into the wall in making one of his circus catches and is knocked cold. "I'll bet he's dead," moans Delaney. He revives but is through for the day. With no substitutes available for Gilbat or Clammer, the Stars are forced to play the last three innings with just one outfielder, Reddie Ray, "whose lithe form gave the suggestion of stored lightning." It comes down to the last of the ninth, the bases are full, the Stars are down by three and Reddie Ray is at the plate. He smashes one to

right center for an inside the park home run and victory for the Stars. "My Gawd!" exclaimed Delaney, "wasn't that a finish! I told you to watch them redheads."

Such was the Redheaded Outfield in fiction. In fact, it was the outfield of the 1897 Buffalo Bisons of the Eastern League, not of the Rochester Stars. In the story Gilbat, Clammer, and Ray make up the redheaded trio; in fact, their names were Larry Gilboy, Billy Clymer, and Romer (R.C. or Reddie) Grey, the author's younger brother. In the story the harassed manager is one Delaney; in fact, the manager was Jack Rowe, a hard-

stretching the truth. But who can say it was not the most unusual? People who know about such things tell us there is one chance in nineteen of being a redhead, which makes the emergence of three redheads in one outfield on one minor league team the longest of long shots.

Perhaps not the greatest, but they were good nonetheless. "Fast and sure, both in the field and at bat," wrote a Buffalo reporter. The headline in the *Express* after the Bisons' opening day win at Springfield was: "REDHEADS GREAT PLAYING!" In the game account we are told that "the redheaded outfield dis-



*U. of Penn, 1896—Grey in middle row, third from right*

bitten veteran of the baseball wars who had been a member of the famed Big Four (with Dan Brouthers, Deacon White, and Hardie Richardson) of Buffalo's National League days. Such a dramatic game as described by Grey was never played by the 1897 Bisons. Closest to it was a game played against Scranton on August 5 when the Bisons rallied in the last of the ninth for a comeback win. Clymer and Grey participated in the rally with hits, but the tying and winning runs were driven in by non-redheaded third baseman Ed Greminger.

In the story Grey calls it the greatest outfield ever assembled in the minor leagues; in fact, that would be

tinguished itself by covering every inch of ground," and that "Gilboy stood the fans on their heads with a spectacular onehanded catch off the bat of Dan Brouthers." In game two of the season, Bill ("Derby Day") Clymer was the star, "catching seven balls that were labeled for hits." On May 8 at Scranton, Gilboy made an acrobatic catch, called "far and away the best catch ever seen at Athletic Park." After a game at Wilkes-Barre, a writer called them great, "as good as any outfield in the game," then added: "Clymer and Gilboy were really sensational. They made some of the most startling plays ever seen in Wilkes-Barre. Both have evidently been with a circus."



Reddie Grey

When the Bisons opened at home on May 16 against Rochester, they were in first place with an 8-3 record. The highlight of the first game was a miraculous onehanded catch by Clymer, which he topped off by doing a complete flip-flop. On Memorial Day Clymer provided the one bright spot in what the *Express* described as an "execrable game" by the Bisons, by snaring a long drive off the bat of McHale of Toronto and then crashing into the fence, just as in the Grey story. According to the *Express*, "It was the most thrilling out seen here this season." Clymer was applauded to the skies when he came immediately to the bat (as so often happens after a spectacular fielding play), and he responded by slashing a hit to left. Not to be outdone by Clymer and Gilboy, Reddie Grey, on June 26 in a game at Rochester, raced to right center to make a onehanded catch of a sinking liner hit by Henry Lynch. His momentum was so great that he turned head over heels after he made the catch.

And so it went all season, with visiting players and managers marveling at the play of the three redheads.

And they were far from slouches at the bat. Gilboy, while not a long-ball hitter (one triple and two home runs for the year), was a gem of consistency. He hit safely in twenty-eight of the first thirty games and then

after a couple of blanks proceeded to hit in fourteen straight games. For the season he totaled 201 hits (second only to Brouthers' 225), scored 110 runs, hit 44 doubles, stole 26 bases and batted .350. Reddie Grey, called by the *Express* writer "the perambulating suggestion of the aurora borealis," played every inning of the Bisons' 134 games, batting .309, with 167 hits, 29 doubles, 13 triples and 2 home runs. In a game against Scranton in which he was the hitting star, he was, in the quaint practice of that day, presented with a bouquet of flowers as he came to the plate. He responded by doubling to left. Clymer, the most brilliant of the three



Larry Gilboy

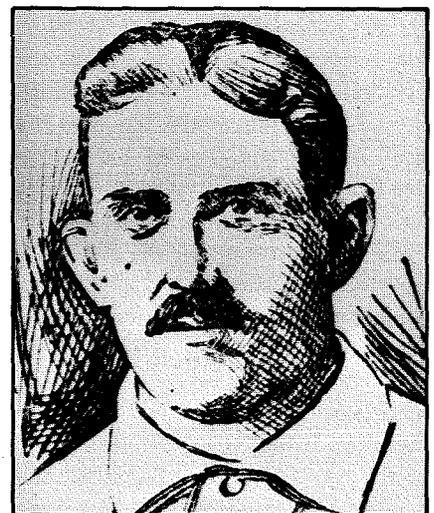
in the field, was the weakest with the stick. He batted just .279 on 154 hits, but his extra-base totals were strong—32 doubles, 5 triples and 8 home runs. Five of his homers came in a twelve-day period beginning on August 12 and caused the *Express* writer to inquire: "We wonder what oculist Clymer has seen?" Clymer's fielding average was phenomenal for those days—.969 with just 14 errors. As for the others, Grey fielded .915 and Gilboy .913.

Spurred by the redheads, the Bisons were in the pennant race most of the year, holding first place as late as August 14. A late August slump, however, saw them drop to third by the end of the month. This was where

they finished, a disappointing ten games behind first-place Syracuse and four games behind Toronto. As the team began to fade, so did the early-season euphoria. After a loss to Toronto, the *Express* said, "There are players goldbricking and the fans know who they are." And then the next day, after another loss: "The infield played like a sieve. Could some players be playing for their releases?" First baseman and captain Jim Fields was abused so severely from the stands after making an error that he asked Manager Rowe for his release, which was not granted. In September, after three straight losses to Springfield, the *Express* writer, warming to the task, wrote: "The Eastern League is a beanbag league, just where the Bisons belong. They are playing the type of baseball that made Denmark odiferous in the days of Hamlet."

The 1897 season, which had started on such an optimistic note, came to a merciful end on September 22 with gloom and pessimism pervading the atmosphere. Owner Jim Franklin complained that he was losing money ("This has been no Klondike for me"), the press was vitriolic, the fans were disgruntled, the Eastern League was rocky, and the Western League of Ban Johnson was casting covetous eyes on Buffalo. (Actually, Buffalo did join the Western League in 1899.)

But spring has been known to wash



Billy Clymer

away the depressions of falls and winters, and so it was in Buffalo as the 1898 baseball season approached. But what of the fabled redheaded outfielder of 1897? Surprisingly, it was destined for a one-year stand. Clymer, who had been with the Bisons since 1894, was the first to go, being shipped to Rochester on March 11. Five days later the *Express* announced: "A Chromatic Deal—Grey for White." In an even exchange of outfielders, Reddie Grey had been sent to Toronto for Jack White. Only Gilboy remained. Not only was he coming back, but he was to get a raise, as well. Word from his home in Newcastle, Pa., was that "he had spent the winter as one of the leaders of the gay [old connotation] society." When he arrived in Buffalo in early April, the *Courier* noted that "the most prominent thing on Main Street was Gilboy's summer dawn hair, topped with a white hat."

Billy Clymer remained in the game for many years as a player and manager, returning to Buffalo in 1901, 1913, 1914, and from 1926 to 1930. This writer recalls him clearly, as he managed the 1927 Bisons to a pennant—strutting, chest out, argumentative, flamboyant, just as Reddy Clammer had been in the Zane Grey story. Clymer's managerial record is remarkable. He managed twenty-three complete seasons and parts of six others, all in the minors, compiling 2122 wins and 1762 losses for a percentage of .546. He won seven pennants and had an equal number of second-place finishes. Counting only the complete seasons, his record shows just three second-division finishes. He died in Philadelphia, December 26, 1936, at the age of 63. The Macmillan *Encyclopedia* shows he played just three major league games, those with Philadelphia of the American Association in 1891.

Reddie Grey played in the Eastern League with good success until 1903, performing for Toronto, Rochester, Worcester, and Montreal. With Rochester in 1901, he led the league in

home runs with 12. In *The History of the International League: Part 3*, author David F. Chrisman picked him as the league's most valuable player for that year. According to the Macmillan *Encyclopedia*, Grey never played in the major leagues. This is disputed by SABR member Al Kermisch, who maintains that Grey played a game for Pittsburgh on May 28, 1903, but was confused with another Grey and therefore has not been listed as a major league player. Once out of baseball, he followed his father and brother into dentistry, but eventually gave it up to become his brother's secretary, adviser, and companion on his world travels. A strong fraternal relationship existed between Romer and Zane throughout their lives. Zane never forgot that it was R.C., along with his father, who helped him financially when he was setting up his dental practice in New York and that it was R.C. who gave him encouragement and monetary assistance when he was struggling to establish himself as a writer. Zane showed his esteem for his younger brother by naming his first son Romer. R.C. died in 1934 at age 59, one year before Zane too passed on.

Little is known about the third member of the redheaded triumvirate, Lawrence Joseph Gilboy. He lasted with the Bisons only until May 27, 1898, when he was released outright because, in the words of owner Franklin, "He was worse than useless when he got on the lines." He signed with Syracuse, played only a few days, was released, played for Utica and Palmyra of the New York State League and for Youngstown of the Interstate. There is no record that he played after 1898. It was a strange and abrupt ending to a career that had started so brilliantly. There was a note in the *Express* that he was entering Niagara University to study medicine. The school cannot find that he ever enrolled.

Such is the story of three minor league outfielders who would have long since been forgotten, were it not for the color of their hair.

### Base Ball.

*Some disconsolate base ballist has written the following parody on Longfellow's "Excelsior":*

The noon-day sun was pouring down  
Upon a meadow sere and brown,  
Where stood a youth, with bat on high,  
Loud to his comrades, rang the cry,  
"Base ball!"

He hopes to win himself a name,  
By playing soon "a great match game,"  
For him 'twill be the greatest fun,  
To hear the words, "Live Oaks have won,"  
"Base ball!"

His bow was bumped, his eye was black;  
His coat was torn from off his back;  
But still like battered bugle, rung,  
The accents of that swollen tongue,  
"Base ball!"

Around the field he saw the light,  
Of friendly faces beaming bright.  
Just by his head a ball has flown,  
And from his lips escapes a groan,  
"Base ball!"

"Now stop this game," the old man said,  
"The second-base has smashed his head.  
"The pitcher, too, has sprained his wrist,  
"The umpire's brain is in a mist,  
"Base ball!"

"Oh! drop that bat," the maiden said,  
"And make a long 'home-run' instead,"  
A hot ball hit him in the eye,  
But still he answered, with a sigh,  
"Base ball!"

"Beware! you'll soon be out on foul!"  
This was the fielder's awful howl;  
But still there echoed in his ear,  
In that deep voice, so thick and queer,  
"Base ball!"

"Used up," he sinks upon the ground,  
While pitying comrades gather round,  
And in the awful throes of death,  
He murmurs with his latest breath,  
"Base ball!"

There on the cold earth, drear and grey,  
To perfect jelly smashed, he lay;  
While o'er the autumn fields afar,  
Was heard the victor's loud huzza,  
"Base ball!"

—Anonymous, 1868

## THE WRITER'S GAME

# American Authors and the National Pastime

RALPH S. GRABER

**I**N 1938, SEVEN MONTHS before his death, Thomas Wolfe, in a letter to sportswriter Arthur Mann, wrote, "I think I may have told you that one reason I have always loved baseball so much is that it has been not merely 'the great national game,' but really a part of the whole weather of our lives, of the thing that is our own, of the whole fabric, the million memories of America."

In 1968, Marianne Moore, who sang the praises of the Brooklyn Dodgers in a poem, stated, "Baseball is simply too much a part of American life to be ignored." A resident of Brooklyn for over thirty years prior to her death in 1972, Miss Moore once threw out the first ball on opening day and followed the sport closely.

Wolfe and Moore are only two of the many American writers from Walt Whitman to Philip Roth who have fallen in love with the national pastime and have had some relationship with the game at various levels.

In the nineteenth century, Mark Twain and Gilbert Patten, two greatly dissimilar authors, had vastly different relationships to the national game. Twain followed the sport, particularly while living in Hartford, which briefly had a team in the

National League, and was a friend of the Honorable Morgan G. Bulkeley, a prominent politician who was president of the Hartford Club and also the first president of the League.

Twain wrote only one fictional account of the sport, in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, where he humorously described a game played by knights in armor. However, a speech he delivered at a baseball dinner feting the promoter Albert G. Spalding and the Chicago National League and All-American baseball teams after their around-the-world tour, 1888-89, is more significant in showing Twain's perception of the sport. Held at the elegant Delmonico's on April 8, 1889, the banquet attracted several hundred notables, among them Theodore Roosevelt, with the speakers seated in positions corresponding to those of a baseball team. Twain, the shortstop, was introduced as a native of the Sandwich Islands, and went on to show the effect of baseball on the peaceful islands. He described baseball as "... the very symbol, the outward and visible expression of the drive and push and rush and struggle of the raging, tearing, booming nineteenth century!" He closed with "I

drink long life to the boys who plowed a new equator round the globe stealing bases on their bellies!"

### FRANK MERRIWELL AND THE REDHEADED OUTFIELD

Gilbert Patten's lifelong interest in baseball involved him deeply in the game. In 1890 and 1891 he managed the Camden, Maine, team in the Knox County League. Among his players were Bill Carrigan, who later starred for the Red Sox, and Mike Powers, who played for the Athletics. Writing under the pseudonym Burt L. Standish, he used his knowledge of the sport in lengthy game accounts in the Frank Merriwell stories and the "Big League Series," featuring Lefty Locke. Under his own name he wrote the "College Life Series," somewhat more sophisticated stories about Roger Boltwood of Yale. No doubt Patten related the baseball triumphs of the heroes to compensate for his own early frustrations on the diamond, for although he loved the game, he quickly realized that he lacked the ability to be a good player.

Another nineteenth century author, Stephen Crane, best known for his novel *The Red Badge of Courage*, distinguished himself as a star catcher at Hudson River Institute, where he prepared for college. The school magazine, *Vidette*, reported that "Crane, catcher, was tendered the office of captain," though for some reason he declined.

Extremely thin, Crane switched to shortstop, a position for which he was better suited, when he played baseball at Lafayette College in the fall of 1890. In January, 1891, he transferred to Syracuse University. In a letter (January 2, 1896) to John Northern Hilliard, editor of a Rochester newspaper, Crane wrote, "As for myself, I went to Lafayette College but did not graduate. I found mining

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RALPH S. GRABER, Ph.D., is Professor of English at Muhlenberg College; in 1951 he edited *The Baseball Reader*.

engineering not at all to my taste. I preferred base-ball. Later I attended Syracuse University where I attempted to study literature but found base-ball again much more to my taste." As a freshman, Crane was a star and was elected captain of the team.

After his mother's death, Crane left college, and his career on the diamond ended. Although he wrote a great deal during his brief life (he died five months before his twenty-ninth birthday), Crane never wrote any baseball fiction. However, as Roy Male noted in an introduction of Crane's works, "he [Crane] found in athletics a civilized ferocity and the ideal of masculine solidarity," themes he developed in his novels and short stories.

Zane Grey, who played semipro, college, and minor league baseball in the 1890s, loved both baseball and fishing. Grey's pitching ability for semipro teams around his home town in Ohio attracted the attention of a scout from the University of Pennsylvania, who offered him a scholarship.

At Penn, Grey, who majored in dentistry, switched to the outfield because in 1893 the distance from the mound to home plate was increased to 60 feet, six inches, and he could not get his curve to function at that distance. The story that Grey attracted the attention of the Penn baseball coach by holding off a gang of sophomores by hurling potatoes at them is only partly true. The episode did occur, but the previous fall Grey had already played impressively for Penn in a game against a strong semipro team.

Grey, who played left field, was outstanding defensively and at the plate. He once made a catch that helped the Penn Quakers beat the Giants at the Polo Grounds, and in his senior year hit a homer with a man on second and two out in the ninth to beat the University of Virginia.

Grey's minor league career spanned five years, 1895-99 (see the article by Joseph M. Overfield, "Zane Grey's

Redheaded Outfield," also in this issue, for details) and was undistinguished. However, Grey's younger brother, R. C. ("Reddy") Grey, played for the pennant-winning 1901 Rochester Broncos of the Eastern League, the strongest of the minor leagues. That year "Reddy" smashed twelve homers in an era when the long ball was virtually nonexistent. Zane Grey was later to draw on his and Reddy's baseball experiences to write two partly autobiographical juvenile novels, *The Young Pitcher* and *The Shortstop*, and the more sophisticated *The Redheaded Outfield and Other Baseball Stories*.

After Grey graduated from Penn in 1896 with a degree in dentistry, he opened an office in Manhattan on the West Side. He disliked the city, however, and got away whenever possible to fish in the Delaware and play baseball for the strong Orange Athletic Club. After he turned to writing Western novels, he became obsessed by fishing and became one of the finest fishermen in the world. Nevertheless, his memories of playing baseball remained, and in *The Lone Star Ranger* he named one of the villains Chess Alloway after Chase Alloway, a professional player he had known in Ohio.

### THE BIG BOYS

In the next generation far better authors than Grey, though not skilled athletes, treasured their memories of boyhood ballgames and associations with skilled professional players. Thomas Wolfe, Ernest Hemingway, and James T. Farrell as well as sportswriters such as Ring Lardner, Damon Runyon, Heywood Brown, and Paul Gallico, who all turned to fiction, recorded their impressions of the national pastime.

During the 1915 and 1916 seasons particularly, Wolfe spent his afternoons at Oates Park, the home of the Asheville Tourists of the North Carolina State League. Located about a mile south of Wolfe's boyhood home, the park seated about 1,200. Jack

Corbett, who managed the Asheville Tourists in 1915 and 1916 and had a long career in baseball, noted that Wolfe served as his batboy until the game began. Then after the future novelist had shagged a few flies during batting practice, he would disappear into the stands to watch the game. Wolfe later depicted Corbett as Nebraska Crane in *The Web and the Rock* and *You Can't Go Home Again*. It is also quite likely that on August 30, 1916, Wolfe witnessed the shortest professional game on record, a 30-minute, nine-inning game between the Tourists and Winston-Salem.

Following his success as a novelist, Wolfe saw about a half-dozen games a year, and bought the newspaper to keep up with the Yankees. On January 30, 1938, when he attended the Baseball Writers Association of America dinner at the Commodore Hotel in New York as a guest of Arthur Mann, he sat rapt contemplating Ruth, Gehrig, Foxx, Honus Wagner, and other surrounding greats. A few weeks after the dinner, Wolfe wrote Mann:

... in the memory of almost every one of us, is there anything that can evoke spring—the first fine days of April—better than the sound of the ball smacking into the pocket of the big mitt, the sound of the bat as it hits the horse hide; for me, at any rate, and I am being literal and not rhetorical—almost everything I know about spring is in it—the first leaf, the jonquil, the maple tree, the smell of grass upon your hands and knees, the coming into flower of April. And is there anything than can tell more about an American summer than, say, the smell of the wooden bleachers in a small town baseball park, that resinous, sultry, and exciting smell of old dry wood.

For Hemingway, other sports—hunting, fishing, and boxing—shared his attention with baseball. However, his relationship with the Brooklyn Dodgers in spring training (1941 and 1942), particularly with relief pitcher Hugh Casey, provides a valuable insight into the author's relationship with athletes. Dodger pitcher Kirby Higbe's *The High Hard One* (New York, 1978), written in collaboration

with Martin Quigley, relates Hemingway's drinking, gambling, and dove shooting with twelve Dodgers during spring training in Cuba. The twelve Dodgers included most of the stars of the team, among them Pee Wee Reese, Pete Reiser, Whitlow Wyatt, Billy Herman, Mickey Owen, and relief pitcher Hugh Casey, Hemingway's favorite, the player for whom the novelist had the greatest respect as both an athlete and a human being.

Higbe relates how every time the Dodgers would visit Hemingway's house, Casey and Hemingway would put on boxing gloves and batter each other in the living room. Once Ernest's wife broke up the battling when the fighters had broken two fine chairs and a sofa. After one of the rounds with the gloves, Higbe states:

Ernest was telling about some of his experiences and his writings and Case sat looking at Ernest like a little boy looking at his hero, his eyes taking in everything about him. Then Case started telling about how he pitched different ballplayers, how he would knock them down and dare them to get up. Ernest drank it all in, the same way Case had.

We left around 1 a.m. I will always remember old Ernest and Case walking arm in arm to the door, shaking hands with those big strong hands, saying so long, see you soon, maybe in New York or on the road somewhere.

In 1952, Casey, despondent over marital difficulties and a paternity suit, killed himself with a 16-gauge shotgun. Hemingway took his own life nine years later. One wonders if Hemingway thought of his Dodger favorite as he prepared to commit suicide. In any event, Higbe's lively, revealing account of Hemingway's relationship with the Dodgers is of interest both to the scholar and the baseball fan.

James T. Farrell's love affair with the national pastime took a far different form. As a boy from Chicago's South Side he dreamed of becoming a star for his beloved White Sox. Baseball figures prominently in Farrell's novels, and his short story "They Ain't the Men They Used to Be" is based on

an elderly fan's visit to Yankee Stadium. Among the best passages in the novels are an account of Ed Walsh pitching a no-hit game, a feat Farrell witnessed in 1911, and the experiences of Danny O'Neill (really Farrell himself) on the sandlots and high school baseball team.

But Farrell could not realize his dream. Like Danny O'Neill, he realized that he did not have the skills, nerve, and confidence to make good at the game. Instead he turned to writing, and in his *My Baseball Diary* (1957) nostalgically and sentimentally related his memories of the game, striking a chord with frustrated ballplayers all across America.

### OUT OF THE PRESS BOX

The sportswriters who turned to fiction as an outgrowth of their journalism had an unromanticized view of the game and the athletes, whom they could observe closely. Damon Runyon, who also loved boxing and horse racing, managed a semipro baseball team in 1907, and while writing for the *Rocky Mountain News* in Denver accepted the presidency of the Colorado State League. The old ballpark in Pueblo, Colorado, used by the team in the Class A Western Association, was named Runyon Field for the writer who covered the games for the Pueblo newspaper. Torn down in the spring of 1959 after the league had folded, the park was one of the few named for a writer. Runyon, whose short stories in *Broadway* brought him wide acclaim, developed an interest in fiction as a provider of plots for baseball stories by Charles Van Loan, a fellow newspaperman. He also wrote "Diamond Ditties," poems inspired by the game, including one on Babe Ruth (1920), one of the first tributes to the man who was to revolutionize the game; one to Ty Cobb (1925), and others realistically describing the game with frequent allusions to the players Runyon observed on the diamond.

Although Runyon's poems and short stories are free of false sen-

timent, they do not show the ballplayers as greedy, stupid, alcoholic, or petty as Ring Lardner's do. Lardner, born a cripple, managed to play high school baseball with a metal brace on his leg, and continued his interest in the game as managing editor of *The Sporting News*, sports editor of the *Boston American*, and writer assigned to cover the Cubs and White Sox for six years for the *Chicago Tribune*. While traveling with the players on Pullman cars and playing cards with them, he learned of their behavior, thoughts, and dreams, and heard their speech, which he reproduced in superb dialect in his baseball novels and short stories.

In 1914, with the first installment of Lardner's "A Busher's Letters Home" (the series was collected and expanded in *You Know Me Al*), a new era of sports fiction was born. Unromanticized, *You Know Me Al* (and its sequels) and short stories such as "Alibi Ike," "Hurry Kane," and "My Roomie" depict with detachment the foibles, quirks, egotism, and loutishness of most of the ballplayers. And most of their wives and girlfriends are even worse—savage, selfish, and predatory. Bitter, almost misanthropic, Lardner stripped away the glamor from the athlete and the game and began a new era in sports fiction that produced works of art and not merely entertainments for juveniles.

Although Heywood Broun's baseball fiction is realistic, its satire is light and, as in the novel *The Sun Field*, mixed with admiration for the object of the satire. Broun, a baseball fan as a boy, became even more attracted to the national pastime as a student at Harvard, where he cut classes in the spring of 1908 to watch the Red Sox, particularly their rookie star, Tris Speaker. In his witty "From Spargo to Carver to Speaker," Broun humorously attributes his becoming a Marxist to his cutting the lectures of Professor Carver, an economic conservative, who had invited radical theorists as guest lecturers during the fall and winter. But Broun never did

attend Carver's spring lectures, intended to have capitalism knock socialism out of the box, because he watched the Red Sox instead.

A sportswriter for several New York newspapers after his graduation, Broun retained his interest in baseball when he became one of the best-known columnists in the twenties and thirties. He found Babe Ruth the most interesting of the athletes, and gave the main character in *The Sun Field* some of the Bambino's traits. In addition to writing short stories about the game, Broun used frequent figures of speech from baseball in his columns.

Gallico, a sportswriter, editor, and columnist, like Broun stopped cover-

#### EVEN TODAY

Many contemporary writers—John Updike, J. D. Salinger, Mark Harris, Irwin Shaw, Robert Coover, Bernard Malamud, William Kinsella, Richard Hugo, Philip Roth, and William Kennedy, to mention a few—have continued the long love affair with baseball, played and followed the game, and written about it in essays, poems, and novels.

The infatuation has taken many forms. Kinsella made Salinger, a recluse and baseball fanatic, a central character in a superb novel of fantasy, *Shoeless Joe*, which features other real persons, both dead and alive, in the mystical plot. Shaw, as a boy in Brooklyn, watched the big

poems about the game and found the values baseball had given him.

Perhaps the contemporary author who has most effectively told of his boyhood infatuation with baseball is Philip Roth. Although most readers know from his *The Great American Novel*, passages in *Portnoy's Complaint*, and references to the game in other works that Roth has a great knowledge of the game, his "My Baseball Years" from *Reading Myself and Others* (1975) best describes his experiences. As a boy he put in a forty-hour week during the snowless months playing softball, hardball, and stickball pick-up games. He could never make the high school team, though one year he survived till the final cut. He also attended many Newark Bears games at Ruppert Stadium and followed the Dodgers.

In describing the effect of the sport, Roth stated perceptively and eloquently its influence on all American boys, not just on authors. He noted that he loved baseball "... not simply for the fun of playing it (fun was secondary, really), but for the mythic and aesthetic dimension it gave to an American boy's life..." He went on to say that his "love affair" with literature began in that infatuation with the game; that "baseball—with its lore and legends, its cultural power, its seasonal associations, its native authenticity, its simple rules and transparent strategies, its longueurs and thrills, its spaciousness, its suspensefulness, its heroics, its nuances, its lingo, its 'characters,' its peculiarly hypnotic tedium, its mythic transformation of the immediate—was the literature of my boyhood."

Roth and the many other American authors who have made their experiences with the national pastime part of our permanent literature really speak for all Americans in describing a game so grand and beautiful. How could they avoid being influenced by and reflecting a game that Thomas Wolfe called "the thing that is our own, of the whole fabric, the million memories of America"?



Baseball writers at the Polo Grounds, Runyon third from left

ing the New York ball teams, but his contact with the players and game left an indelible impression on his future work, both fiction and non-fiction. The chapter "Inside the Inside" from his *Farewell to Sport* (1938) remains one of the best analyses of the reasons for baseball's being a fascinating game. And as he had on Broun, Babe Ruth made a great impression on Gallico. In "His Majesty the King," a superb character study of Ruth, and the short story "Saint Bambino," Gallico, perhaps more than any other author, made Ruth a legendary character, a mythic hero. Like many other Americans, Gallico could not say farewell to the national pastime, and allusions to the game recur in his popular fiction.

leaguers from the bleachers at Ebbets Field and the Polo Grounds, played the game, and noted in "Baseball: the Beginning" that he, like so many, dreamed of becoming a major-league star.

The late Richard Hugo, one of the best contemporary poets, as a boy had the same obsession with baseball as the other authors and more ability as a player than most of them. He played high school, American Legion, and semipro baseball, and in 1946 made the University of Washington team, only to be cut when he was caught playing intramural softball. He then said goodbye to dreams of being another Joe DiMaggio and turned to softball. Years later, he gained the detachment to write

# The Betts and the Brightest

RAY SCHMIDT

**M**OST of you have seen the television program *In Search Of*, in which “a team of trained scientists and researchers seek out unanswered myths and mysteries.” A few years ago, Bill Haber and Cliff Kachline of the Society for American Baseball Research engaged in a search that had as many pitfalls and dead ends as any ever featured on that show.

SABR has among its membership about 300 dedicated and serious baseball researchers (something less than 5 percent of its total membership), with a large and growing list of backlogged projects. The research undertaken ranges from statistics to historical revisionism to biographical data.

SABR members interested in research choose their own areas of interest. This is, after all, a hobby done for the love of the game. One of the most interesting and accessible areas is biographical research: keeping track of the locations of living former major leaguers and digging up correct data on deceased major leaguers. A prime example of this type of research and its many trials and tribulations is Haber and Kachline’s eight-year quest for the truth about a pitcher or pitchers named Betts.

In early 1971 some SABR members discovered that various baseball encyclopedias showed conflicting information about Betts. One encyclopedia showed Harold Betts as having appeared in one game in 1903 for the Cardinals, and one game in 1913 for the Reds, while another reference work listed Harold Betts in 1903 but showed a second player, Fred Betts, for the game in 1913.

Here’s the background: On September 22, 1903, the St. Louis Cardinals pitched Harry Betts against Boston in front of a crowd of 1,200 people. The Cards were in last place and going nowhere, so there was little to be lost by trying out what the local papers referred to as a “college pitcher” and “local amateur.”

Boston romped 10-1. Betts went all the way, giving up 11 hits, striking out two, walking five and hitting two batters. One of the St. Louis papers headlined the game account with “Betts Hired, Tried and Fired In Quickest Time On Record.”

Almost ten years later, on May 13, 1913, the Cincinnati Reds used in relief “Betts, a semiprofessional from Cincinnati” to finish up the last 3½ innings of their third straight loss to Brooklyn. He struck out nobody and allowed a run on one hit, three walks

and a hit batsman. On May 22, the Reds sent Fred Betts to Baltimore of the International League. *The Sporting News* noted that “Betts demurred, declaring that selling typewriters in Cincinnati was preferable to pitching ball in Baltimore.”

He must have reconsidered, because he appeared in relief for Baltimore on May 27 in a 9-2 loss to Newark. He was then sent to Terre Haute for the balance of the season, after which his trail peters out.

So Haber and Kachline had either one or two players, no record of his or their whereabouts, and no idea of what, if there was only one Betts, he had been doing during the yawning gap between his two major league appearances. A perfect challenge for dedicated researchers.

They began by compiling all available playing records on major leaguers named Betts. To do so, they used the standard primary sources: *The Sporting News*; *Sporting Life* (a competing tabloid published from 1883 to 1917); the National Association Record Cards, which contain club affiliation records, mostly covering minor leaguers during the period 1912-1940; the Garry Herrmann card file, which lists players’ team affiliations for both major leagues from 1902 to 1920, and the Reach and Spalding *Baseball Guides*.

Kachline and Haber came up with the names of four Bettses who were active in baseball between 1899 and 1917; Harold, Fred, George, and Charles. They were able to eliminate two of these right away. The name George had only been mentioned in a May 1913 issue of *Sporting Life*, and the player being discussed was clearly the Reds pitcher who was usually referred to as Fred Betts. Some of Charles’ playing data had been accidentally entered onto the Herrmann cards for Fred Betts. But Charles Betts had been a Texas League catcher-outfielder from 1911 to 1917 and he

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RAY SCHMIDT is a systems manager in Lockport, Ill.; another of his arcane interests is pitcher Harry Kane.

was ruled out since he had spent the 1913 season at Beaumont.

The researchers were back to Harold and Fred Betts. The records showed that a Fred Betts played minor league ball as early as 1889, and so would have been at least forty years old by 1913.

Since the game accounts of the 1903 St. Louis Harold Betts refer to him as a college pitcher, he could hardly be the same man who started his career in 1889. Haber and Kachline had felt from the beginning that the 1903 Betts was the same man as the 1913 player, but they had no evidence, and even leaving the 1889 minor leaguer out of it, they were still working with two names: Fred and Harold.

An article from the Cincinnati *Enquirer* of May 10, 1913 referred to the Reds pitcher, Fred Betts, as an amateur ballplayer who had been working as a typewriter salesman. A check of the Cincinnati City Directory only added to the confusion. In 1913 there was a Fred Betts and a Harold Betts living in the city and both were listed as salesmen. Later Bill Haber would identify this constant appearance of the two first names as the most confusing part of the puzzle.

Experienced researchers in any field will tell you that among the most important attributes a good researcher must have are patience, resourcefulness, and dedication. The period to come certainly tested the dedication of Kachline and Haber.

By March 1972 Kachline was working on the search from the St. Louis end by writing to every Betts listed in the St. Louis phone book, in hopes of locating a relative. Haber continued the chase from the Cincinnati end by working with the Public Library and the Division of Vital Records. Other SABR members had also been enlisted to check newspaper game accounts in some of the minor league towns Betts had allegedly played in. Nonetheless, they could find no new information to answer any of their questions. All trails led nowhere for the next three years.

Finally, in November 1975 Haber received the results of a search of St. Louis city directories by the Missouri Historical Society which indicated that until 1937 a Fred Betts, who worked as a watchman, had lived in St. Louis. On the recommendation of the Historical Society, which suggested that Betts might have disappeared from the directory because he had died, Haber wrote the Missouri Bureau of Vital Records for a copy of the death certificate for Fred Betts in either 1937 or 1938.

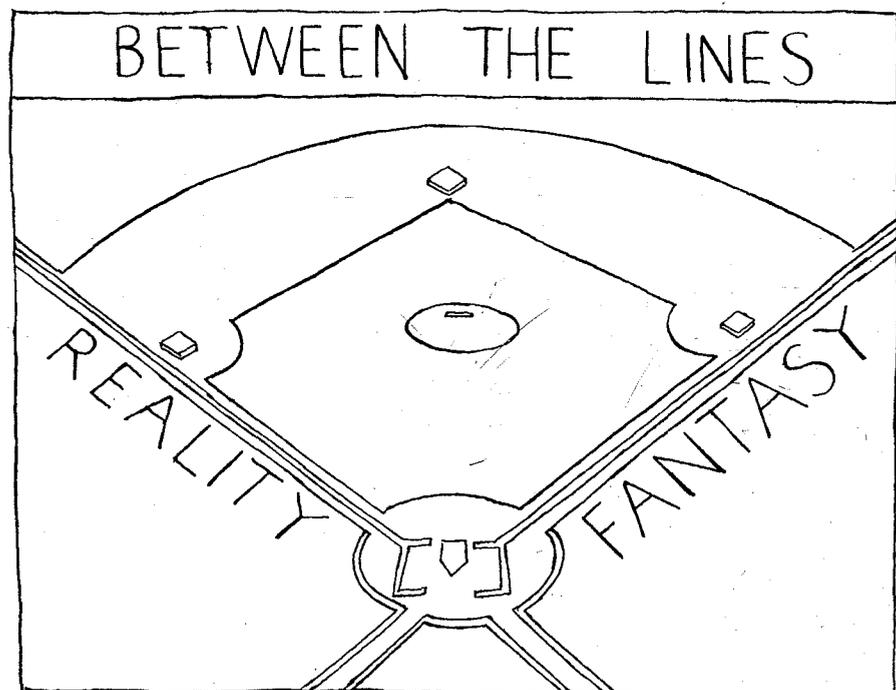
To his great satisfaction, he received back a copy of a Certificate of Death for Fred Betts of St. Louis, who had been born in September 1868. If this Fred Betts was the pitcher for the 1913 Reds, he would have been 45 years old at the time of his appearance. From the certificate, Haber learned the name and address of the funeral home and through it located two surviving relatives of Fred Betts. One of the relatives told him that Fred Betts had been a *minor* league ballplayer and an umpire until about 1927.

Haber believed that this Fred Betts was the minor league outfielder whose career stretched back to 1889 at places like Portland, Wheeling, and

Wilkes-Barre. Either a second Fred Betts had pitched for the Reds in 1913, or, as he and Kachline thought, the Harold Betts who had pitched for the Cardinals had been called Fred for some reason when he made his only other major league appearance. But how to prove either possibility?

According to the records, one of the minor league outposts a player named Betts had passed through had been Yazoo City, Mississippi of the Cotton States League in 1910-1912. Using this lead, Kachline placed a letter in the Yazoo City *Herald* asking any oldtimer who might recall anything of Betts to contact him. Much to his surprise he received a letter in February 1976 from a man who had been the team batboy during those years and who recalled Betts very well! He identified him as Harold Betts, who had come to Yazoo City from New Orleans. This seemed to confirm the theory of a single Betts, but the former batboy did not know if the Yazoo Betts had ever made the big leagues. Proof continued to elude the researchers.

There was no real progress for another two years. Then in mid-1978 came the break that the researchers had needed for nearly seven years. An



Stuart Leeds ©1984

## Hal Betts Is Not Alone

Here is a partial list of other big leaguers who had only two seasons in the big time with a minimum of nine years between those seasons:

Tom Pratt	1871 and 1884
James Tyng	1879 and 1888
John McFetridge	1890 and 1903
Ken Penner	1916 and 1929
Frank Willson	1918 and 1927
John W. Jones	1923 and 1932
Louis Polli	1932 and 1944
Albert O. Wright	1935 and 1944
Ralph Buxton	1938 and 1949
Albert Epperly	1938 and 1950
James Baumer	1949 and 1961

older member of SABR recalled reading a clipping in one of the sports tabloids while he was doing some research on another player from the early part of the century. It concerned the marriage of a minor league player named Betts to a girl in Texas. On the chance that Betts might eventually have returned to Texas if his wife was from there, Haber wrote to the Texas Office of Vital Records and requested a search for a Death Certificate for a Harold Betts. The document returned was for an H. M. Betts of San Antonio and was dated May 22, 1946. The funeral home was listed and it produced the name and address of Richard T. Betts, a son who lived in San Antonio. A letter was dispatched and the researchers waited impatiently for the reply.

At last, a letter dated November 29, 1978 arrived from Mrs. Marian Betts, daughter-in-law of Harold Matthew Betts. It settled the mystery and brought the long search to an end. The letter included the exact text from an old Cincinnati newspaper along with other biographical information (unfortunately, the name and date of the Cincinnati paper which the article appeared in had been torn off). Mrs. Betts also said that she had a newspaper photo of her father-in-law, Harold Betts, *with the name Fred Betts underneath it.*

The article provided the answers:

The latest acquisition to the pitching staff of the Reds is shown in the picture you are looking at. He is Fred Betts, city salesman for a typewriter company; or rather he was until Thursday when he walked into Herrmann's office, signed a contract, and at noon left for New York City to join the team . . . he has had plenty of experience in minor leagues . . . He was with the Cardinals in 1903, but was sold to Binghamton, N.Y. because he lacked control.

The rest of the article went on to outline some of his experience in minor league and independent league ball including a fine 20-8 record one season at Richmond, Indiana, which featured a no-hitter against Dayton. Other materials provided showed he had entered high school in St. Louis in 1897, had resided with his parents from 1900 to 1904 while he attended Christian Brothers College, and that after leaving baseball he had worked in jobs in St. Louis, Little Rock and Memphis. Then he moved to San Antonio, where he worked as a collector for the *San Antonio Express*.

Mrs. Betts felt that Harold might have taken the name Fred from a family member named George Frederick Betts, who had died in 1892, possibly because of a difference of opinion in the family over Harold's being a baseball player; he had been a college man. It could also have been one of those common baseball renamings. An oldtimer might have remembered minor leaguer Fred Betts, and simply bestowed the name on an uncomplaining Harold.

The search ended, the record had been clarified. The major league career of Harold M. Betts had consisted of two games, one in 1903 and one in 1913. There was no major leaguer named Fred Betts.

Does it really matter? To baseball statisticians and historians it does indeed. If you keep records, after all, you want them to be accurate, and every player who has made it to the big leagues deserves to be recognized. Besides, data and statistics add to all fans' pleasure and are vital to many people's understanding and enjoy-

ment of the game. Baseball's great tapestry, encompassing both past and present, is made even more beautiful as all its threads—even the most minute—are pulled into place.

## Biographical Research

THE BETTS CASE was not the most lengthy or difficult one that SABR researchers have encountered. Bill Haber spent fourteen years tracking the whereabouts of one Louis (Bull) Durham who was a major leaguer from 1904-1909, but who must have been a very private man. Even his descendants didn't know that he had played big league ball until nearly fourteen years after he died in 1960.

On the other end of the spectrum are the easy searches, where luck takes a hand early. Haber came across the death notice of Herman Hehl, who played for Brooklyn in 1918, while doing research on another player. Just recently, Jerry Malloy found an obituary for Frank Grant, who was probably the best black player of the nineteenth century, while casually flipping through an old copy of *New York Age*.

It's often very difficult to trace players after they retire. The press stops covering them, and they move around the country. In many cases, the surviving relatives of former players are hard to find, and they often know surprisingly little about their father's or uncle's playing career. Sometimes, as with Durham, they don't even know that he had such a career. It is, as Haber and Kachline have demonstrated, a very time-consuming hobby. But imagine the satisfaction in knowing that you've contributed significant information to baseball's records.

As of this writing, there are still 99 major leaguers with records after 1901 whose whereabouts are not known. Of these there are leads on only 20. Perhaps the least obscure "missing" ballplayer is Phil Cooney, who played in one game in 1905 for the New York Highlanders, was a prominent minor league player, and in 1967 was voted into the Paterson, New Jersey Sports Hall of Fame.

## MEMORIES

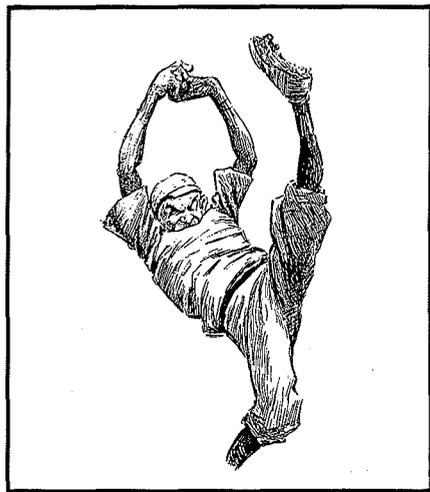
# No Knuckles About It

BARRY GIFFORD

**T**HERE WAS A MAN on our block named Rooney Sullivan who would often come walking down the street while the kids would be playing ball in front of my house or Johnny McLaughlin's house. He would always stop and ask if he'd ever shown us how he used to throw the knuckleball back when he pitched for Kankakee in 1930.

"Plenty of times, Rooney," Billy Cunningham would say. "No knuckles about it, right?" Tommy Ryan would say. "No knuckles about it, right!" Rooney Sullivan would say. "Give it here and I'll show you." One of us would reluctantly toss Rooney the ball and we'd step up so he could demonstrate for the fortieth or fiftieth time how he held the ball by his fingertips only, no knuckles about it.

"Don't know how it ever got the name knuckler," Rooney'd say. "I call mine The Rooneyball." Then he'd tell one of us—usually Billy because he had the catcher's glove, the old fat-heeled kind that didn't bend unless somebody stepped on it, a big black mitt that Billy's dad had handed down to him from *his* days at Kankakee or Rock Island or some place—to get sixty feet away so



Rooney could see if he could "still make it wrinkle."

Billy would pace off twelve squares of sidewalk, each square being approximately five feet long, the length of one nine year old boy stretched head to toe, squat down and stick his big black glove out in front of his face. With his right hand he'd cover his crotch in case the pitch got away and short-hopped off the cement where he couldn't block it with the mitt. The knuckleball was unpredictable; not even Rooney could tell what would happen to it once he let it go.

"It's the air makes it hop," Rooney

claimed. His leather jacket creaked as he bent, wound up, rotated his right arm like nobody'd done since Chief Bender, crossed his runny grey eyes and released the ball from the tips of his fingers. We watched as it sailed straight up at first then sort of floated on an invisible wave before plunging the last ten feet like a balloon that had been pierced by a dart.

Billy always went down on his knees, the back of his right hand stiffened over his crotch, and stuck out his gloved hand at the slowly whirling Rooneyball. Just before it got to Billy's mitt the ball would give out entirely and sink rapidly, inducing Billy to lean forward in order to catch it—only he couldn't because at the last instant it would make a final, sneaky hop before bouncing surprisingly hard off Billy's unprotected chest.

"Just like I told you," Rooney Sullivan would exclaim. "All it takes is plain old air."

Billy would come up with the ball in his upturned glove, his right hand rubbing the spot on his chest where the pitch had hit. "You all right, son?" Rooney would ask, and Billy would nod. "Tough kid," Rooney'd say. "I'd like to stay out with you fellas all day, but I got responsibilities." Rooney would muss up Billy's hair with the hand that held the secret to The Rooneyball and walk away whistling "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" or "My Wild Irish Rose." Rooney was about forty-five or fifty years old and lived with his mother in a bungalow at the corner. He worked nights for Wanzer Dairy, washing out returned milk bottles.

Tommy Ryan would grab the ball out of Billy's mitt and hold it by the tips of his fingers like Rooney Sullivan did, and Billy would go sit on the stoop in front of the closest house and rub his chest. "No way," Tommy would say, considering the prospect of his ever duplicating Rooney's feat. "There must be something he's not telling us."

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BARRY GIFFORD of Berkeley, Ca., wrote  
The Neighborhood of Baseball.

*Longshots perhaps, but with imposing track records.*

# For The Hall of Fame: Twelve Good Men

BOB CARROLL

**B**ACK IN THE DAYS when I could claim my local race track as a dependent, I always played longshots. Understand, a longshot wasn't a horse that just *might* finish ahead of the field—a good longshot was a splendid steed that was *bound* to win, despite having been overlooked by handicappers with less insight than I. The satisfaction of watching a correctly tabbed longshot cross the wire first was infinitely preferable to that of winning with the mob. The money wasn't bad either. At least, it wouldn't have been bad had any of my choices done what they were supposed to do.

I still think my reasoning was sound, although the horses never quite got the hang of it. I know they tried. In fact, many of them paused to think it over just before the homestretch. If there was a flaw in my system, it was that I had to make my bets *before* they ran the races.

All of which brings me to baseball's Hall of Fame. In effect, we can place our bets on the candidates for enshrinement after the races are in the record book. We can wait until a guy has thrown his last pitch or swung at it before we say: "That man belongs in Cooperstown!" If baseball chose its Hall of Fame candidates the silly way race tracks rank their horses, we'd have to start casting plaques when a kid was still in AAA.

We can do a whole lot better picking baseballers than bangtails. Not only are most baseball players smarter than horses, but we can know much more about them. We can ask them questions and some of them will answer. More important, we can measure their performances in a greater variety of ways, under a wider diversity of circumstances, and on a larger number of occasions. Horses

only run; ballplayers run, hit, throw, and field. And horses don't have a 162-race season.

Of course, ways of measuring player performance are older than my blue serge suit. Anyone who can't figure a batting average or an earned run average (and quote a whole passel, too) is unlikely to be reading these words.

We all grew up with the same magic numbers: .406, 60, 56, 25 (the used-to-be price of *The Sporting News*), and all the rest. I still remember an old telephone number with 5442 as the final digits because Ralph Kiner hit 40 and then 54 home runs in 1948 and 1949. I just put them in reverse order and add the number of seasons. I've forgotten whose number it was.

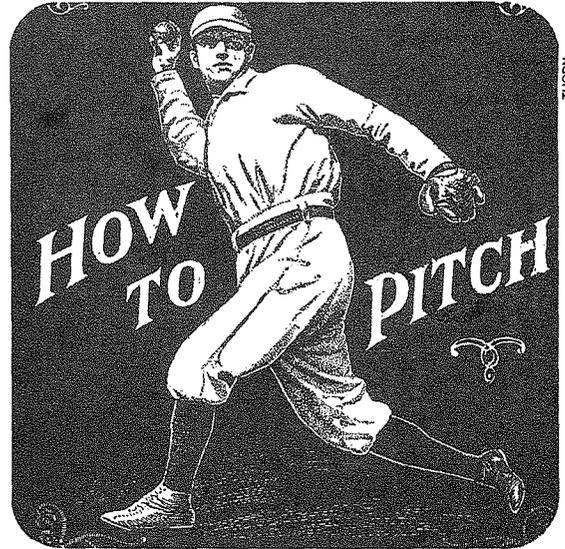
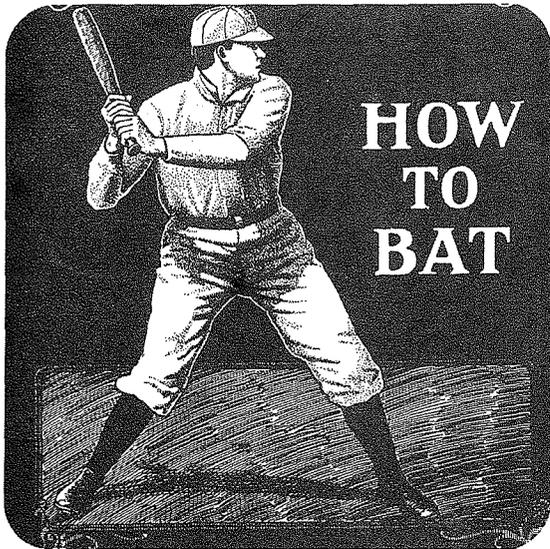
With the advent of Bill James in his *Abstracts*, Pete Palmer and his Linear Weights System, and the rest of the hardworking sabermetricians, we have X-number of fascinating new measuring tools. And fascinating new measurements.

Let me define my terms, as Noah Webster once remarked. When I call a Hall-of-Fame longshot, I don't mean Smead Jolley or Mario Mendoza. I'm pointing to someone who deserves to be in Cooperstown before the next elephant gestates and—in the best of all possible worlds—would already be residing there had he but caught the fancy of a coterie of opinion-makers.

On these pages, I'll present my top twelve HOF longshots. Why twelve? Not because I prefer keeping my shoes on while I count, but because twelve is a traditional and

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*BOB CARROLL, artist, writer, actor, and teacher, was represented in the premier issue of TNP in 1982.*



even mystical number, i.e., twelve apostles, twelve good men and true, twelve chairs, and the Dirty Dozen. With twelve longshots, we get the cream.

Although all my longshots are eligible for the Hall right now, none of them has been the recent recipient of heavy fanfares. Such present favorite non-enshrinees as Billy Williams and Nellie Fox are off my list because they've been plentifully trumpeted for election of late.

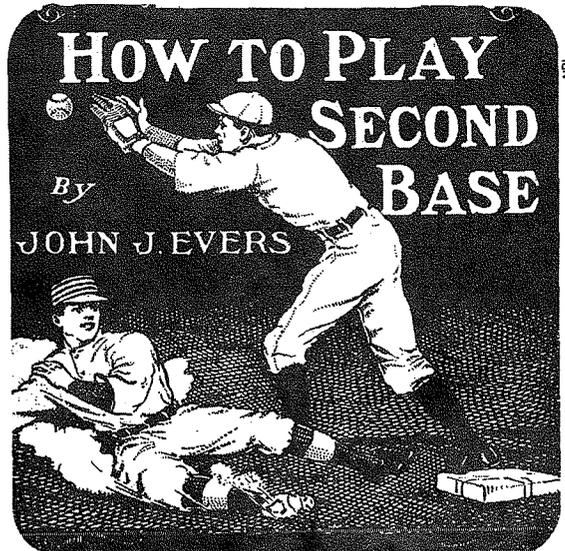
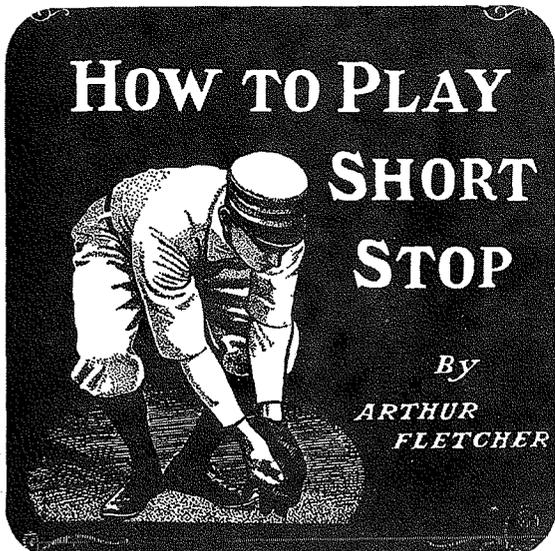
I'm not including Harry Stovey either. His candidacy has been presented so vehemently and convincingly by some SABR members he has to rate at even money.

However, now that I've brought old Harry up, I might as well throw in a little sidebar about Hall of Fame deliberations. Every year the time frame viewed by the Committee on Baseball Veterans expands. New veterans become eligible while those once passed over are reconsidered. The job is expanding like a runaway balloon.

It seems to me they should set a cut-off year—one that falls within the area of experience for most of the committee members—and say, "That's it! No one who retired before this year will be considered again." As a cut-off year, 1920 comes readily to mind, but I'm not locked into it; I just want to eliminate some of the clutter. If they'd like to hold one last giant election to take care of all the eligibles who retired before their chosen date, that would be all right with me.

As a matter of fact, four of my longshots are pre-1920 eligibles, and I'd hate to see them scratched. Nevertheless, something should be done to make the work of the Veterans Committee—an awesome and thankless task at best—at least theoretically possible.

But enough of improving the system! It's time to get on with my duty—presenting a dozen deserving longshots for the Hall.





**R**UGGED INDIVIDUALISM is more admired at a distance than up close and personal. Had Dick Allen played fifty years ago, he might be lauded today as a shining example of American independence. Instead, his moodiness, self-absorption, and free-and-easy approach to baseball make him anathema to many. His plaque in Cooperstown will diplomatically avoid his personality quirks. Besides, there's more to say about his play than about his playing around.

From the time he won Rookie of the Year honors with the Phillies in 1964 through the mid-'70s, he was a slugger to make pitchers cringe. Six times he topped 30 homers in a season. His RBI totals looked like I.Q. scores for the smart class even though his teammates seldom clogged the bases in front of him. He was figuratively, and all too often literally, a one-man gang.

That was never more clear than in 1972 when his bat hoisted a very ordinary White Sox club into the thick of a pennant race. They gave him the MVP Award that year because there wasn't anything higher.

In the field, Allen was never a surgeon but hardly a butcher. He started at third with the Phils and ended up at first with the A's. In between, he played some second, outfield, and even shortstop.

He was special because of his bat. In an era of low batting averages, he finished with a fine .292. More important, his 351 home runs, 1,119 RBIs, and 1,099 runs scored have him up with the big kids who played longer.

In Palmer's Linear Weights System, Allen ranks 40th in overall player wins, just ahead of Bob Johnson, about whom more later. The next eight *below* these two are already in the Hall of Fame.

# Richie ASHBURN



**T**HEY SAID Richie Ashburn would have been the perfect player if he'd had home run power or a good arm. He never did do much for homers, averaging fewer than two a season, but ask Cal Abrams about his arm. In the ninth inning of the final game of the 1950 season—with the pennant on the line—Ashburn gunned down Abrams at the plate to preserve a tie. The Phillies won the flag in the tenth.

Abrams was in good company. Ashburn led N.L. outfielders in assists three times and averaged better than ten a season for his fifteen-year career.

Besides catching baserunners he caught basehits, or rather potential basehits. No modern centerfielder who played in more than 2,000 games ever went and got 'em like Richie. Palmer's LWTS ranks him 16th in defensive wins, ahead of all outfielders except Speaker and Carey.

He led N.L. flychasers in chances per game every year from 1948 through '58 save '55 when he finished second by point-one. His career chances-per-game average of 3 is well ahead of his more celebrated and tuneful contemporaries Willie, Mickey, and the Duke. Put it this way: Over a 162-game season, Ashburn would catch about 50 balls that Mays wouldn't get to. That's a lot of basehits obliterated.

If we could add those hits to Richie's offense, he'd go off the scale. Not that he had to hide his head when it was bat time. He led the N.L. in hitting twice and finished with a career .308. His ability to draw walks—he led four times in free passes—pushed his career on base average to nearly .400, marking him as one of the best lead-off men since Adam.

Had he hit home runs, he'd have been Roy Hobbs.

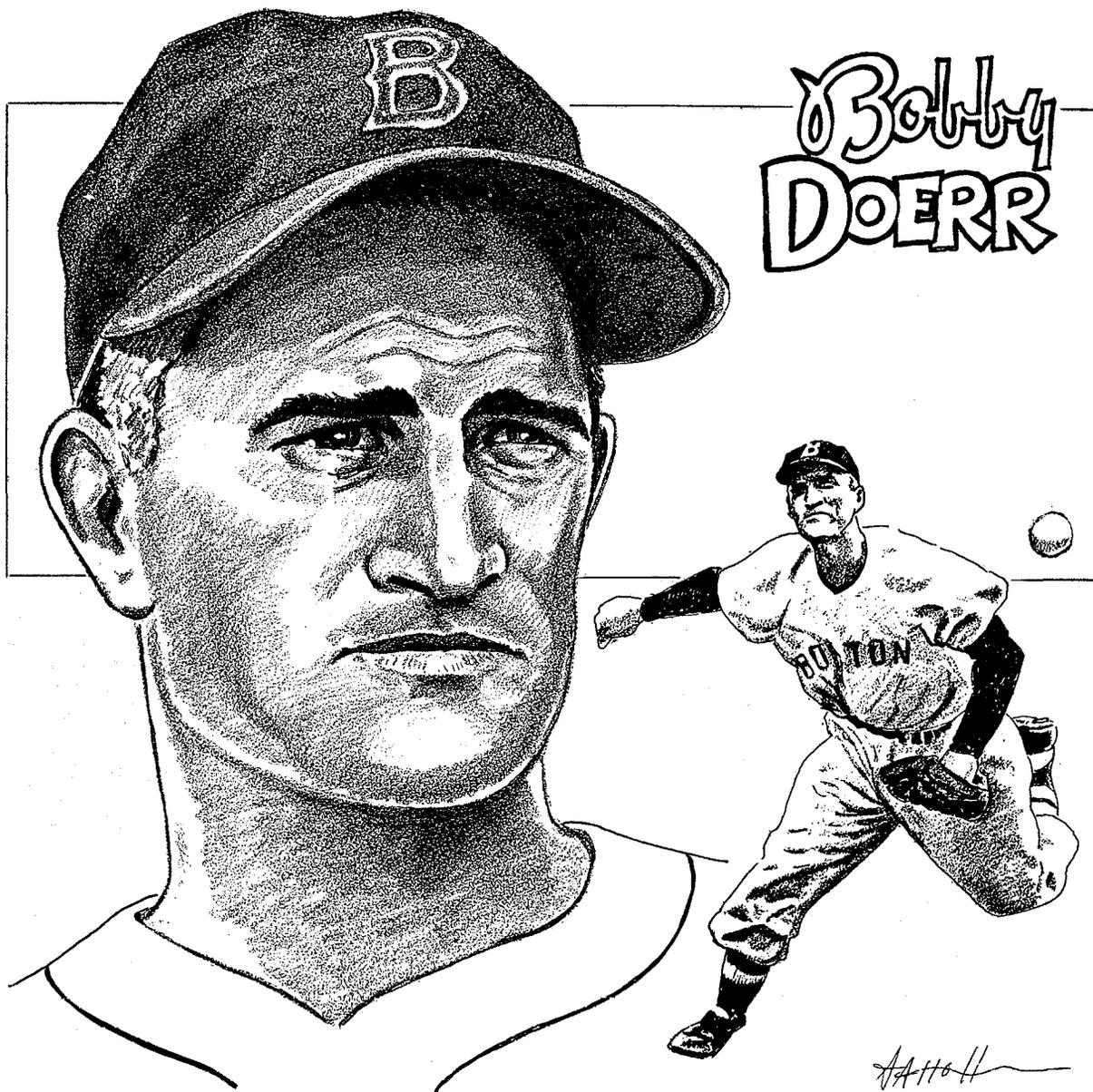


**F**OR A COUPLE of months in 1978, everyone in baseball was saying, "Who's Bill Dahlen?" The occasion for all the head scratching was Pete Rose's consecutive-game hitting streak. As Pete's total mounted, it was noted he was near to tying Dahlen's streak of 42 set in 1894. Once that landmark was passed, all eyes focused on Willie Keeler's 44 in '97, and Dahlen was dimly remembered as a slugger from the misty past.

That impression was wrong. Dahlen could hit all right. Although his most common batting average was in the .260's, he put together a couple of marks a hundred points higher early in his career. Over his twenty-two years in the Bigs he scored 1,589 runs and batted in 1,223, even leading in ribbies in 1904. He also stole 547 bases.

But, if Bad Bill is to be remembered correctly, it should be as a grounder-gobbling shortstop on four National League pennant winners between 1899 and 1905. Today, a shortstop who can hit is a bonus, but one who can't field is a DH. Fielding was even more important in Dahlen's day. The ball was deader than Caesar on March 16, and the surest route to first base was to smash that pill into the dirt. A premium was on an infielder's ability to grab and throw. Dahlen was top drawer all the way.

His figures are impressive. Among shortstops of all eras, he's 1-2 in career putouts, assists, and total chances. His 6.3 chances per game ranks him third—ahead of Honus Wagner.



**T**HE BOSTON *Globe* didn't stop their presses whenever Bobby Doerr made an error, but they probably got more stories about men biting dogs. Lots of players have gone three months without making an error—November, December, and January—but Bobby did it at the height of one of the American League's hottest pennant races. From June 24 to September 19, 1948, he handled 414 chances flawlessly.

In six different seasons, he led A.L. second basemen in fielding, and his putout, assist, and double play totals were always at or near the top.

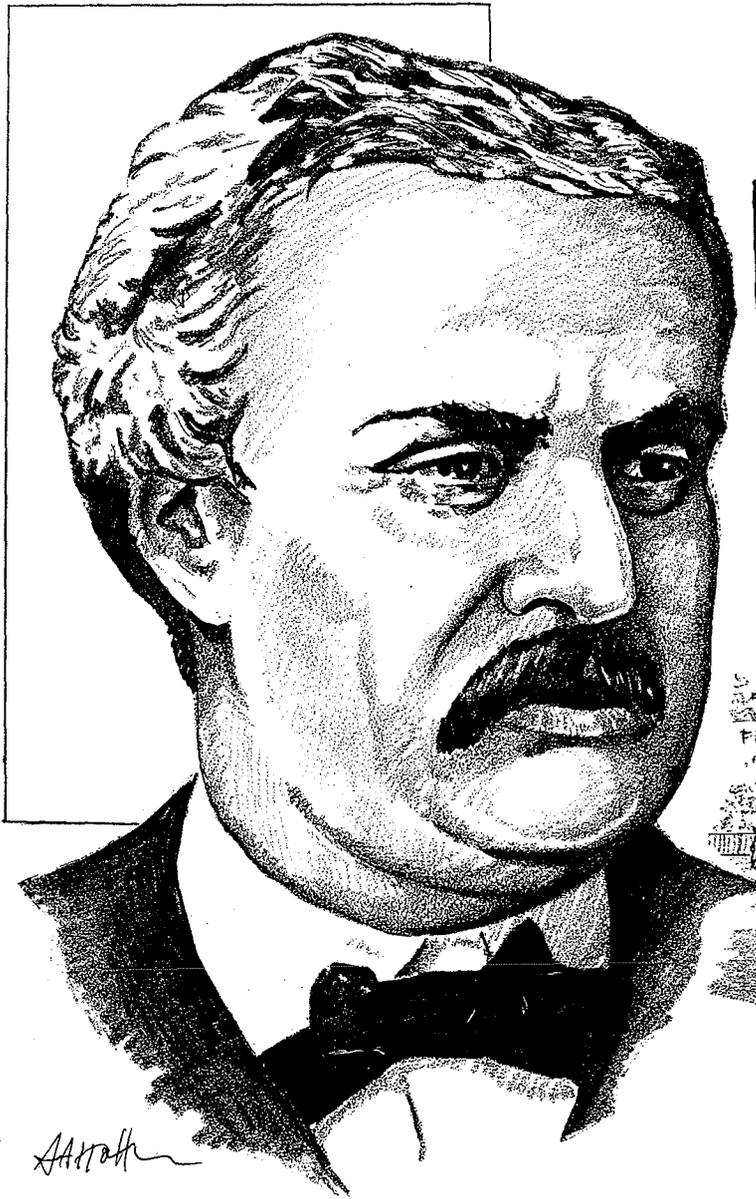
However, any resemblance to the "good field, no hit" stereotype ceased when Doerr picked up the lumber. He packed his .288 lifetime batting average with 223 home runs and 1,247 ribbies.

Bobby was an integral part of the murderous Red Sox lineup of the late 1940s—one that featured Dom DiMaggio, Johnny Pesky, Junior Stephens, and Ted Williams. Perhaps the big bats that surrounded him kept Doerr from getting his full due. A single pearl seems less radiant in a necklace than alone on a satin pillow. Worse, the Red Sox necklace looked like a choker when Boston was nosed out of several A.L. pennants. All those frustrating second-places clouded Doerr's luster in some minds.

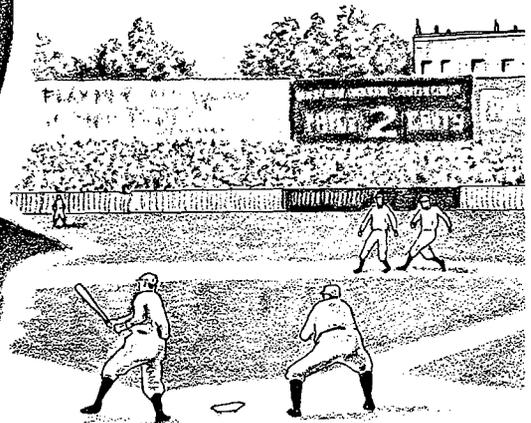
Needless to say, none of those minds belonged to the trembling pitchers who had to face him or the frustrated batters who tried to chop one past him.

Bobby ranks 26th overall in Palmer's LWTS. How many players with Hall of Fame eligibility rank higher?

None.



# William HULBERT



**W**HEN WILLIAM HULBERT died in 1882, the National League passed a resolution "that to him alone is due the credit of having founded the National League, and to his able leadership, sound judgment, and impartial management is the success of the league chiefly due." That's a lot to lay at any man's door. Still, it's true; without Hulbert, there wouldn't have been a National League, and we can all shudder at what might have been in its place.

For those who don't know the story, back in 1875 baseball had a sort of league called the National Association. It had a reputation that would embarrass the town harlot. Hard-drinking players were loaded on the field more often than the bases, gamblers knew tomorrow's standing this morning, and the whole mess was about as disciplined as the theater crowd when the Bijou burned down.

In stepped Hulbert, a part owner of the Chicago team, to outline for the western teams a new league brim full of integrity. Then he went to the wicked East and sold his idea to the clubs there. To make it more palatable, he let easterner Morgan Bulkeley act as figurehead president.

The clean league struggled through 1876. The public was wary. New York and Philadelphia saved money by skipping their final western tour. Bulkeley didn't even bother making the December league meeting. Pretense was put aside; Hulbert became prexy and immediately expelled the eastern spoilsports.

He'd cowed the clubs. The next year, he sent a resounding message to the players by barring for life four Louisville players who'd been fixing games. That kind of tough leadership during his remaining years proved to the public that baseball belonged up there with Mom and apple pie. The sport was on its way!



**C**ONSISTENCY MAY be the hobgoblin of little minds, but it can also make certain ballplayers nigh unto invisible. Indian Bob Johnson never had one of those super seasons that make everyone sit up and whistle. While phenoms came, collected their MVP trophies, and faded, he just kept plodding along hitting .300, with a couple dozen homers and a hundred ribbies year after year. From 1933 through 1945, he ticked off those seasons like a guy punching a time clock. Ho-hum, another April. Time to start hitting.

Maybe someone might have noticed him had he played on a pennant winner or two. Johnson was stuck for most of his career with Connie Mack's Depression A's, a club that treated last place like swallows treat Capistrano. He hit with power and consistency, ran, threw, and fielded

like a star, but his light was hidden under a bushel of Philadelphia losses.

Nevertheless, as though writ in that trick ink kids used to scrawl messages with, Johnson's name suddenly pops into full visibility when those career-total lists are examined: 2,051 hits, 1,239 runs, 1,283 RBIs, and a solid .296 BA.

He's exactly the kind of player sabermetrics benefits—an overlooked star whose accomplishments become manifest under the microscope of detailed analysis. The Ruths, Cobbs, Aarons, and Musials need a sabermetric imprimatur like Cosell needs a thesaurus. But did you know that Palmer's LWTS ranks Indian Bob as the 41st best player ever? Of course, Palmer doesn't factor in the hype.



**S**OME HEROES have feet of clay; Ernie Lombardi had feet of lead. He was the slowest great player in any sport except chess. Fortunately, flat-out sprinting isn't in the job description for catchers, and all the things a maskman is supposed to do Ernie did better than most.

He was the rock the Cincinnati pennant winners of '39 and '40 were built on. A quiet strong man with enormous hands, he nursed his pitchers, intimidated baserunners, delivered key hits. His contemporaries Dickey, Cochrane, Hartnett, and Ferrell are already ensconced in Cooperstown; big Ernie ranked with them, and sometimes he came out ahead.

In 1938, he was named N.L. Most Valuable Player when he became only the second catcher ever to win a batting title. Then, to prove it was no fluke, he took another

batting crown in 1942. The list of catchers who've won batting championships since is as long as the list of battleships berthed in Kansas.

Even though he had to bounce the ball off the scoreboard to get a leg hit, Lombardi finished his seventeen-season career with a .306 batting average. Infielders, knowing they could throw him out on anything they could reach, played back an extra twenty to thirty feet. Nevertheless, he generated such power with his peculiar interlocked-finger grip that his cannon shots still got through.

He had the kind of power that breaks seats in the upper deck, but he specialized in line drives rather than moon shots, so his home run totals were only in the teens. But, had he possessed the blazing speed of a tortoise, he'd have hit .400.



**Y**OU HAVE TO start with THE home run. When Bill Mazeroski smacked Ralph Terry's pitch over the Forbes Field wall in the ninth inning of the seventh game to win the 1960 World Series, he carved an ironic monument for himself. Remembering Maz for his hitting is like remembering Dolly Parton for her elbows.

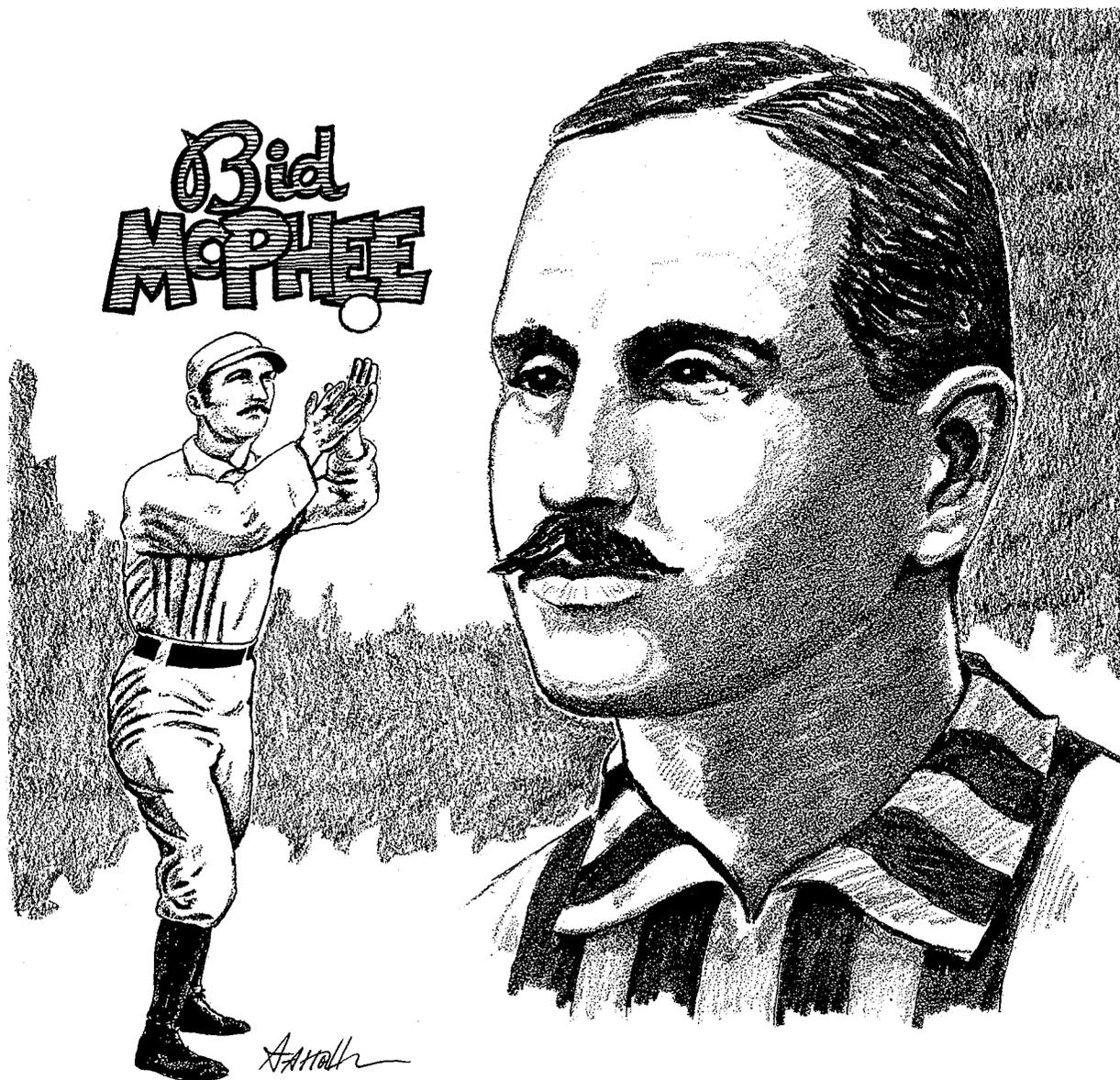
Not that he was a cipher. His respectable .260 for seventeen years with the Pirates kept rallies alive, and he had a penchant for clutch hits, twice topping 80 RBIs in a season. Six times he managed double figures in homers. Still, a whole team of Mazeroskis would score fewer runs than a roster of Joe Morgans.

Maz purchased his ticket to Cooperstown with defense. He was simply the best second baseman who ever put glue in his glove, coupling the hands of a magician with the range of a Magellan. Five times he led his league in put-

outs, nine times in assists, eight times in total chances. His .983 lifetime fielding average is barely a bad hop under the record.

He was the da Vinci of the double play. Other second sackers caught the shortstop's toss and then threw; with Maz, the ball seemed to ricochet at lightning speed to first, earning him the nickname "No Hands." He set the major league record for twin kills in a season (161), years leading (8), and in a career (1,706). If we named baseball situations like diseases, we'd call double plays "Mazeroskis."

In LWTS, Maz ranks first in lifetime defensive wins. Of the top seventy-five seasons by a defensive player, Maz has six! Think of it this way: put Mazeroski on the same team with ANY second baseman in history, and the other guy gets to play left field.



**S**ABERMETRICIAN BILL JAMES lists as one of his criteria for Hall of Fame selection: “Was he (in any given season) the best player in baseball at his position?” By that standard, John “Bid” McPhee qualifies for Cooperstown ad nauseam. In just about every one of his eighteen years before 1900, he ranked as the best second baseman around.

Cincinnati turned down all bids for Bid and kept him in town for his full career, with teams in both the American Association and the National League. They knew they had a timely hitter with a sting in his bat. His 188 career triples would translate into a hefty heap of homers in a more modern era. All told, he batted in 1,067 runs and scored a bountiful 1,678.

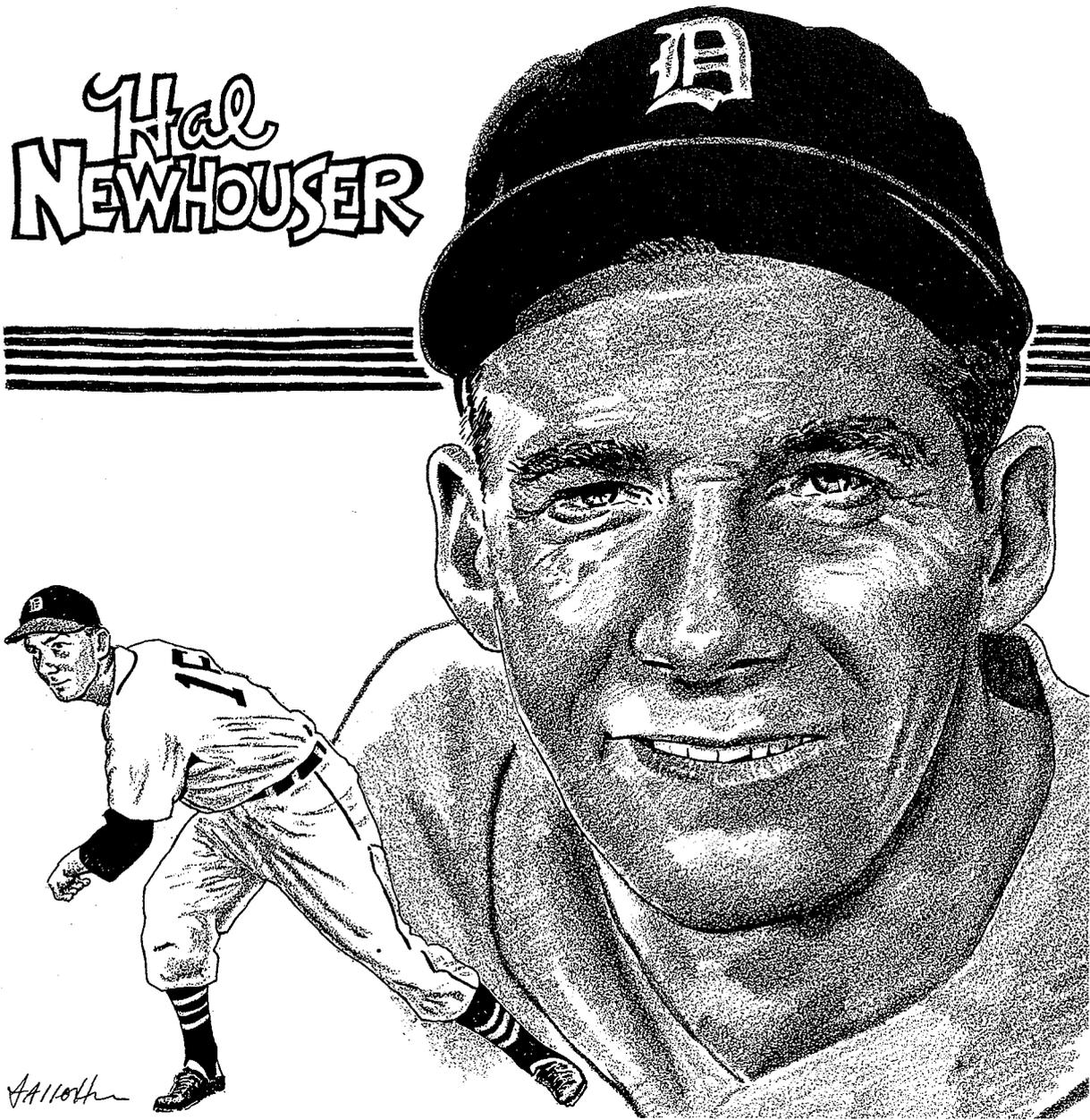
But he was at his best when the other guys went to bat.

From 1882 through 1896 he led his league’s second basemen in putouts eight times, assists six times, double plays eleven times, total chances per game six times, and fielding average nine times. In every one of those years, he led in at least one category and usually in several—but he never led in errors.

And remember, he piled up a record that would turn a modern green without wearing a glove. Only in his final three years, long after the glove became standard equipment, did he deign to cover his left hand with leather.

In 2,125 games, Bid accepted 14,241 chances, and that comes to a greedy 6.7 per game. To put it another way, in the average Cincinnati game, he accounted for about one-fourth of their opponents’ outs. The only one involved in more outs was the scorekeeper.

# Hal NEWHOUSER



**L**IKE GENERAL PATTON, Hal Newhouser peaked during World War II. But conventional baseball wisdom holds as an article of faith that diamond doings during The Big One don't count. In memory, major league rosters were peopled by one-armed geriatrics or pimply adolescents. If the Browns could win a pennant, *real* ballplayers would have won the Nobel Prize!

No one has yet suggested they take away Lou Boudreau's 1944 batting title, but Newhouser's brilliant 1944-45 record is always regarded as proof that the competition was strictly Little League. In case you've forgotten, Prince Hal lefthanded his way to a 29-9 mark in '44 and backed that with 25-9, an ERA title, and a pair of World Series wins in '45. In both seasons, he carted off the American League MVP Award.

Ah, but those were the War Years! Forget that Hal's record would look good against even the girls from Sister

Theresa's. Forget that a jeroboom of evidence exists that the quality of wartime play was better than the jokesters want to remember. Forget that no other pitcher ever bookended MVP trophies. What did he do when the big boys came home?

Well, in 1946 he "slumped" to 26-9 with a 1.94 ERA. For the five years after the war, he averaged 19.6 wins.

The man Ted Williams called one of the three toughest pitchers he ever faced was always a pretty good thrower. Back in 1940, at the ripe old age of nineteen, he put nine victories in the till for the pennant-winning Tigers. But, like a lot of lefties, he took a while to discover they only call strikes if the ball is over the plate. When he learned the knack in 1944, he blossomed into unbelievable.

Although a sore arm ended his career prematurely, his record—not even counting the War Years—makes him the best lefty of his decade.



# Dickey PEARCE



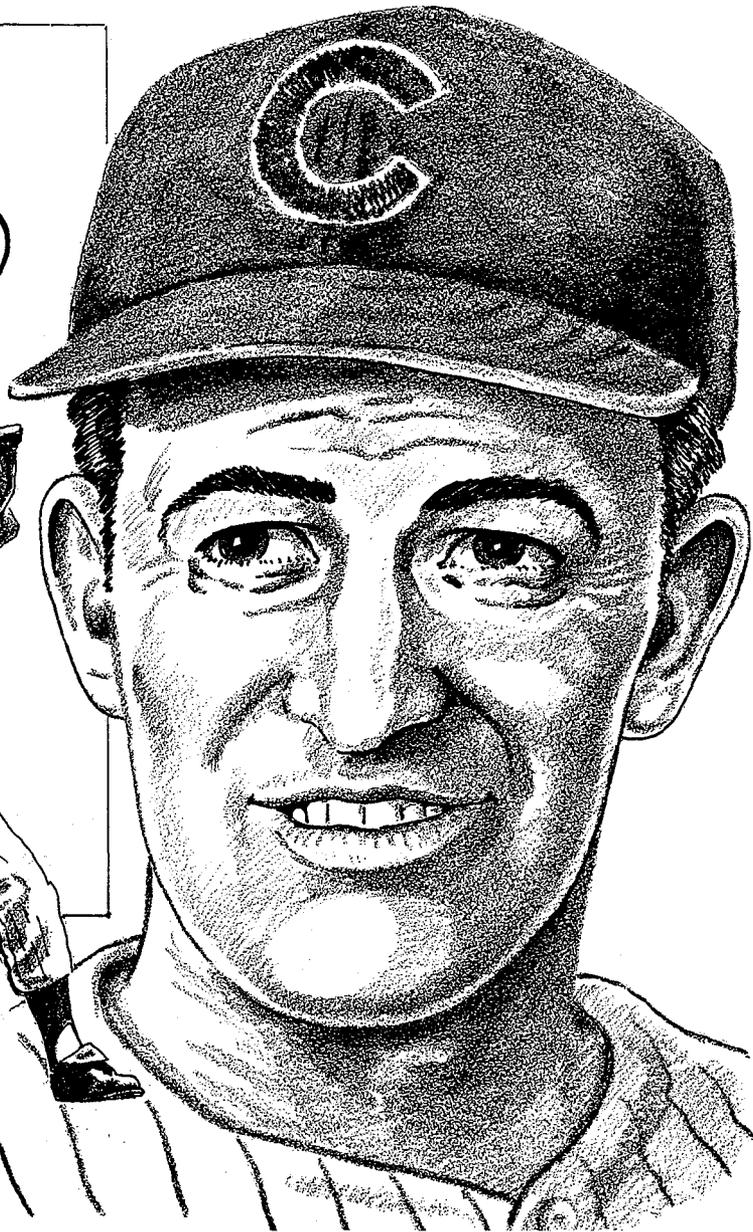
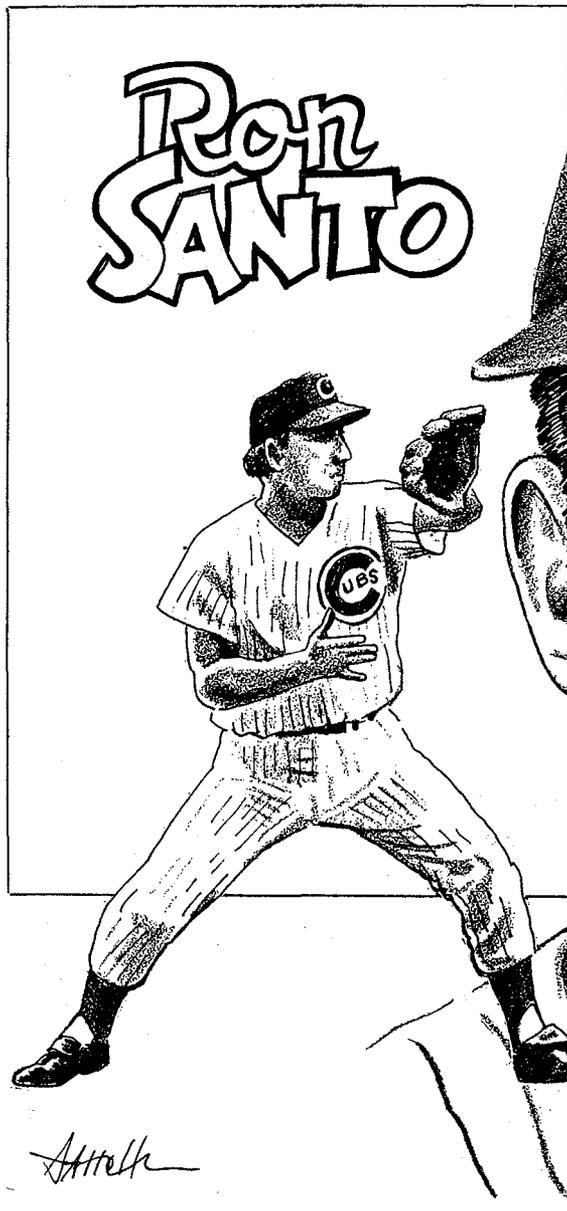
**T**HEY'RE ALWAYS putting up statues of people who did things first. Somebody ought to carve a couple of life-size, 5'3" replicas of Dickey Pearce.

The first should show him bunting. Dickey invented that little maneuver back in the days when they still spelled the name of the game with a space between base and ball. The rule then said the ball only had to land once in fair territory. He mastered the art of plopping the pellet down 'twixt the lines and then having it skitter off to God-knows-where. Reportedly, he collected numerous doubles while fielders retrieved the ball from under spectators' wagons.

When the National League was founded, Pearce was forty years old and had been one of base ball's few "name" stars for more than half his life, mostly with the famous Brooklyn Atlantics. The bunts were a nice touch, but what made Pearce an 1860s superstar was his fielding.

His second statue should show him shortstopping a grounder. He was, as a matter of fact, the first to play what we would consider the shortstop position. Until Pearce came along in 1856, the "shortstop" was a fourth outfielder whose job was to catch flares (or whatever they called them in those days) and to take short throws from the deep outfielders and relay them to the infield. (The early ball was so light that no one could throw it more than 200 feet or so.) Dickey noticed that many more basehits were bouncing safely between second and third than were pop flies coming into his grasp in the outfield. Accordingly, he moved himself into the breach.

He probably got a few quizzical looks, but he got a lot more groundouts. Pretty soon, every shortstop followed his example. Nevertheless, during his long career—spanning the amateur, early professional, and league eras—no one did it better than the original short stopper.



**M**ANY GOOD THINGS come in threes: Faith, Hope & Charity; 'Reading, 'Riting & 'Rith-metic; Curly, Larry & Moe. But, for Ron Santo, being one of a terrific trio has thus far hexed his Hall of Fame chances. Not only was he the third wrecker in the Cub crew of Banks, Williams & Santo, but he was also one of the troika of great third basemen during the 1960s: Robinson, Ken Boyer & you-know-who. Some people seem to confuse the third slot with second-rate.

Because Robinson has already gone to Cooperstown, a few comparisons may be enlightening. Robinson played longer and won more Gold Gloves, but Ron played 2,243 games and picked up five Gold Gloves—despite having to compete with both Ken and Clete Boyer for the trinket.

Let's do some comparative math, using Bill James' idea of dividing games played by 162 and then dividing the result into career totals to get an "average" season.

	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BA
Robinson	595	69	159	27	4	15	76	.267
Santo	590	82	163	26	5	25	96	.277

It doesn't take a genius to figure out that a team with Santo at third base would score more runs than the same team with Robinson at third. It would take an awful lot of third base defense—Robinson's strongest suit—to make up the difference. But remember, Santo was no slouch with the leather himself.

There are other factors to consider, of course. Some favor Robinson; some favor Santo. The point is, when all the evidence is added up, they run a photo-finish.

They'll never convince me Robinson doesn't belong in the Hall of Fame. I just say Santo should be there with him—along with my other longshots.

A memoir by the Negro League star of the 1920s.

# Willie Powell: An American Giant

DICK CLARK and JOHN B. HOLWAY



Willie Powell

**W**• ERNEST "WILLIE" POWELL is the last surviving member of the great Chicago American Giants team that reigned as black baseball champions, 1926-27.

Founded by the great Rube Foster in 1911, the American Giants were probably the strongest team in Chicago in the 1920s, when the Cubs and White Sox were rebuilding—and many would like to have seen them tangle with the white champs those years, the Yankees, Cardinals, and Pirates.

Though only 5'8" and weighing less than 150 pounds, Powell was the Giants' money pitcher. He drew the pitching assignment in twelve postseason games—playoffs and World Series—and won ten of them.

"He had a fastball that had a real hop on it," said his manager, Dave Malarcher, "and one of those fade-away curves that would come up like a fastball and would just flutter away. Great."

Third baseman Alec Radcliff agreed. "He had a good change of pace curveball and a sneaky fastball that would take off, and he would mix it up on them. If that guy didn't get shot—his father-in-law shot him over the eye but he came back. It was amazing how he came back. He was still a masterful pitcher for about two more years. I think it was in 19 and 32 or 'three, he won 21 games and lost two. And they weren't by big scores. He was a wonderful pitcher."

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DICK CLARK is the current chairman of SABR's Negro League research committee; JOHN HOLWAY was his longtime predecessor. The two are also represented in this year's BRJ.

*Powell retired to Three Rivers, Michigan, where he built a house literally with his own hands. Four years ago a circulatory problem caused the amputation of both legs, and a stroke left him without the use of his left arm.*

*Now 86, Powell, with his wife Virginia, received us in his hospital room to relive the glory years of the 1920s. Mrs. Powell's comments are in italics.*

Tommy Bridges [of the Detroit Tigers] was the best pitcher I ever saw. We had the best curveballs in either league. I pitched against him in the White Sox park, and we used to compare with each other. I forget the score, but it wasn't a big score, you can bet on that.

That was my main pitch, my curveball. I had a good one too, if I do have to say so myself. I could put a bucket at home plate and drop my drop ball in it.

I pitched against Babe Ruth in 1927. He hit a line drive off me, it bounced off the wall so hard, the second baseman almost had a play on him at first base. Ruth hit one more single off me—he got two hits. He hit one almost knocked Newt Allen out at second. Good thing it wasn't hit straight at him, because he like to killed him. Ruth was a terrific hitter if you throw them low. He wasn't so hot on a ball up around his letters, but every time you throw it low, look out. He could take you out with the low ball.

He had Lou Gehrig on his team, and Gehrig could hit everything you throw, pretty near. He got one hit. Tony Lazzeri of the Yankees was at second, Mickey Cochrane of the Athletics catching. He loaded up on us, but that didn't help them none; we loaded up on them too. I pitched all the way. We won it, I think it was 7-4.

*He used to say, "I can strike that sucker out." He believed it too.*

When I walked out on that mound, I felt like I was a lion and you were a titmouse.

It was pretty rough—to know what you could do but didn't get a chance. We didn't talk about it too much, but we couldn't help but think about it. When we played them big leaguers, we could beat them.

One year Detroit stacked up with anybody and played us eleven games and won one.

In 1928 we played Smead Jolley and Johnny Mostil of the White Sox over in the American Giants park. Lefty Sullivan, used to pitch for the White Sox, was pitching. Had 16-20,000 people out there. The park couldn't hold them all; they were standing everywhere—black and white.

*They just laid bunts down against Sullivan. That's how they beat him—2-1 or something like that.*

In 1932 we played Leo Durocher's All Stars in Cincinnati and Cleveland. I shut them out 3-0. Beat Jim Weaver of the Cubs—I didn't see how he was such a good pitcher.

We got along fine with the big leaguers. The ballplayers got along fine at all times. The Cubs used to come over

quite a bit to talk to us at Tony's Book Store on 35th Street. The White Sox too. When the Yankees come to town, they used to come there and meet with us. Every guy we played against, I liked to get tips from. I wanted to learn.

The owners didn't think the fans would like integration. I know the Cubs were like that. They were very uppity. The White Sox didn't mind us playing in their park. The Cubs didn't want us.

Satchel Paige? Sure I beat him—name me somebody I didn't beat. I don't know of anyone we played that I didn't beat. We went to Birmingham in 1927, and the first day I got off the train, he pitched against me. He didn't know how to field a bunt, and that's how you beat him. You bunt and run, bunt and run, bunt and run.

Satchel was the fastest that's ever been in baseball. He was faster than Bob Feller, he was faster than Lefty Grove. But until he learned a curveball, he was just a thrower. You know, you can't keep throwing that ball by people. I used to tell him that all the time. I says, "Satchel, you better learn how to throw a curve."

"Man, nobody can hit my fastball."

I said, "You're right there. But they *will* learn how to hit it, because that's all they're looking for, and they will hit you." I took him aside—I called him my "bull" all the time—showed him how to grip it and how to spin it and let it go. Finally he learned him a good curveball, and next thing you know he was with the Cleveland Indians.

But the best black pitcher was Dave Brown (of the American Giants). He had one of the best curveballs you want to look at and a good drop ball. After Brown left, Bullet Joe Rogan of Kansas City was the king of the colored pitchers. I played on the same club with Satchel in 1928; we barnstormed in Memphis, Birmingham, Kansas City, St. Louis. I'd still take Rogan over Satchel.

I was born in Utaw, Alabama, about ninty miles south of Birmingham, October 30, 1903. Larry Brown [who later caught for the Chicago American Giants] was our paper boy in Pratt City. We used to fight each other every day. He learned how to throw, throwing rocks at me. Pratt City had a good team. We used to beat all those little cities around there. We were the best; we could beat anybody.

*You were chesty.*

We were it, Mrs. Powell. We were the best thing out there.

I moved to Chicago in 1913. The American Giants were playing then out at 39th and Wentworth. I took me a knife and cut me a hole out in the fence back there with my name on it. When I came out there, I'd tell the other kids: "Let's move, fellows."

I saw Smokey Joe Williams pitch through that knothole. I remember he'd raise his foot way up.

Rube Foster was the American Giants pitcher. Rube had a way to grip that ball, throw underhand, and hum it! Rube was a trick pitcher: He'd always try to trick you into doing something wrong. If you were a big enough fool to

listen to him, he'd have you looking at something else and strike you out.

I played with the [semi-pro] Illinois Giants, I think it was '21.

The first time I rode the Pullman with a ballclub was with Joe Green of the Chicago Giants in 1922. He gave me \$25 to pitch a twilight game, said, "I'm going to take you to Cleveland with me." [The Cleveland Tate Stars were members of the Negro National League, the major league of black baseball.] Cleveland beat me 5-4, ten innings. Candy Jim Taylor kicked the ball out of the catcher's hands, scored, and that beat me. My curve ball was working that day.

I stayed with Joe Green a year. We played in Wisconsin and up in Canada mostly.

One time out in the country there was a barn out in the field and people sitting in the door of the barn. Joe Green stopped the game and told 'em to move the people out of there, he didn't want to hurt anybody. Then he hit the ball right straight into that door! Nobody thought he could hit the ball that far. I like to fell out. He was always pulling some stunt like that.

#### *We were married in 1923.*

Then I pitched for a semipro team in Evanston under Dick Lee; Lee was from the old Chicago Leland Giants, with Bobby Winston. It was \$15 a game.

Leroy Grant [first baseman for the Chicago American Giants] called me one day. He had told Rube about me; I think he got \$25 for it. He came back and told me Rube wanted to see me. I didn't want to go, but my father was an American Giants fan; that's who he wanted me to play with.

Rube said to take me in the clubhouse and get me a uniform: "I want to see how you warm up." Rube called everybody darling. He said, "Darling, I'm going to give you a contract if you'll listen, but you got to listen. You watch me." Then he said: "You're pitching."

I pitched against Kansas City [Negro National League champions that year] six innings and didn't give up nothing.

Rube called me over to the bench and said, "I want you to do what I say do." After every pitch he'd give me a sign what to throw. He told me who to throw a curveball to and who to throw a fastball to. Kansas City whipped my ass off in the seventh inning! After every pitch he'd give me a sign what to throw. And they hit it. He made me throw just what they wanted to hit. And I threw it too, I tried. They beat me 10-4.

After the game he called me over to the side, said, "You'll do." I got hit to death, but he said, "You know how to take orders." He didn't really want me to beat them. He said, "You know, if I'd left you alone, you'd have beat the great Kansas City Monarchs, then I'd never have been able to tell you nothing." You know, Rube had a whole lot of points. Later years I found out he was right.

If you didn't listen to Rube, you didn't play. Whatever Rube said you were to do, you do it, or try to do it anyway. You got to make a great effort, 'cause if you didn't, you were in trouble. In Kansas City one day he told Gisentaner to bunt. Gisentaner couldn't bunt, so he took a big swing and hit the ball out of the park. Cost him \$50.

Rube Foster got gassed [in a hotel room] in Indianapolis. Then he was downtown in Chicago one night and backed his car out and knocked a woman down. He was sick then. Pretty soon he went out completely. He was trying to do too much, he was trying to do everything, trying to keep the league together, trying to take care of all the teams. [Foster was committed to the insane asylum at Kankakee in 1926.] The governor tried to get him out, but he couldn't get Rube's wife to sign him out. Bingo DeMoss and some of the guys from the Giants used to go down there to the hospital and get him out for a day and let him drive his car, an Apperson Jackrabbit.

The first day, me and Torriente had a little run-in. [Cristobal Torriente was the star Cuban centerfielder for the American Giants.] He and Padrone [a Cuban pitcher] didn't want me on that team for nothing. I didn't know how to do anything right to suit them. They were talking about beating me up because I was so little. John Beckwith was with the Giants then; that was their number-one slugger. Beckwith just came into the clubhouse and he says, "Now look—all you little guys can try him if you want to, and if you get away with it, all right. But don't none of you big guys fool with him. If you fool with him, you got to fool with me." That quieted them down.

*You were twenty-two; they thought you were seventeen. A ticket man figured I had to be that young too. I was calling him Jack. He said, "You should call me 'Mr. Jack.'"*

They started calling me "Piggy," said I was the young, tender guy. They didn't know how tough I was. They found out though.

Later Bingo DeMoss [the Giant captain] told me I had to win the third-place money for the team. He told me if I lose the game, the American Giants don't get a cut of the World Series money; if I win, they get a cut. I won, and I think we got \$107 apiece. [Powell actually won two games in the playoff that autumn.]

The ballclub went to my side then; they thought I was a good ballplayer after that. Torriente, Jelly Gardner, all those guys went with me, because they thought I had the guts to pitch.

*Jelly Gardner started calling him "Hoggy Baby," said he'd grown up.*

We got \$200 a month. But that wasn't anything, \$200. Rube used to let Dick Lee borrow me two Sundays out of every month to pitch for the Progressives. Made \$15-25 a game.

The American Giants had Pullmans everywhere we traveled, had our own private cars. We played April

through September. September was about it—a few exhibition games in October. We played against Tris Speaker in 1925. Judge Landis made them cut it out.

Jim Brown, my catcher, was one of the best. Didn't forget a hitter. If you could hit something, Jim Brown knew about it; he wouldn't ask no pitcher to throw something a guy could hit. He used to curse me out a whole lot of times. I'd throw something, didn't get it where I wanted it, the guy would hit it. Jim Brown could cuss. Me and him got along though. It got so he schooled me quite a bit.

Jim Brown, now he used to play baseball for the fans. People would go out to see Jim Brown argue with the umpires. If he didn't argue, I could hear people on the street talking about it: "Man, I didn't enjoy that game; Jim Brown didn't even act up." Half the time he just made like he was arguing. He and the umpires talked it over before the game. He would jump off the bench and rush out to the umpire, but he be asking, "Where you goin' tonight? Come on out to 55th Street," things like that.

Later Pythian Russ replaced Brown, and I'd take Pythian Russ over all of them. He wasn't so much a better receiver, but he could remember the batters so good. That

helps a pitcher out a whole lot, because a pitcher out there by himself on the mound is like a man in a desert without water. If a man comes up he ain't faced before, you're in trouble, because he might break your ball game up with one pitch.

*I've seen Russ catch the ball before the batter could hit it.*

He sat there snatching balls. I used to love that. And you could depend on him as a hitter.

The infield makes a good pitcher out of you. I loved the infield I had. They loved me, the way they played behind me.

For third base, Dave Malarcher, he's my man. I ain't seen any third baseman better than Dave Malarcher yet.

Charlie Williams at shortstop didn't look like he could move like he did, 'cause, oh man, he stayed fat all the time. We kept a rubber shirt on him. But he could move around.

Bingo DeMoss at second—that guy could pick up a ball and throw it behind him as good as he could throw it straight ahead.

Old Steel Arm Davis played first base. He was the savior of our ballclub a lot of times, oh yeah. In his younger days

Chicago American Giants, 1927





Josh Gibson

he was quite a pitcher; that's why they called him "Steel Arm," because he could throw so hard.

Jelly Gardner in the outfield could throw—boy, he could throw! And he was proud of his arm. Jelly Gardner and Jimmy Lyons were Rube's bunt-and-run men. Rube Foster was smart: If he can't hit your pitcher, he knew what to do. Jimmy Lyons told me he didn't know what it was like to get up to bat and take his full swing, 'cause Rube always had him push it here, lay it down there.

If you were a fast man, you had a chance with Rube; he was going to make you run. Lyons was the fastest. I think Lyons was faster than Cool Papa Bell—and Bell could go around the bases so fast, give you pneumonia.

Tom Williams of the Giants taught me quite a bit about pitching. And Bullet Rogan started teaching me the screwball when we first met, before the first game that I pitched, against Kansas City. All the Kansas City hitters—Newt Allen, Newt Joseph, Frank Duncan—they all got mad with him. But Rogan was a gentleman. He'd always try to help a youngster. Most oldtimers didn't want you in there.

Now I had a good curveball and a good screwball. Keep one outside and the other right up close on them. They'd hit it on the hands, couldn't do too much with it. That's the main thing: Keep it where they can't get any power to it.

When I wanted my curveball to break away from you, I used sidearm. I could make it go down and out on the corner. Once they started chasing them, I got them, son.

And I could use a cut ball too. Oh man, get me a cut

ball, I could use it! Make it go in and up. You hold the cut side the way you want it to go, so the wind can get at it. A little scratch will do; doesn't have to be a big cut. I had a good curveball anyhow. A cut ball moves so fast; it breaks real sharp, real quick. That's why you don't have a chance to move out of the way so good. Carl Mays of the Yankees killed Ray Chapman with one in 1920.

*Whenever the Kansas City Monarchs and Chicago were going to tangle up, the park would be just packed in.*

They broke the gates down one time. The old White Sox park. They had benches around the outfield—too many people in the stands.

Bill Drake of the Monarchs wanted to make like he was wild all the time. In practice he'd get a couple balls and throw over the catcher's head and up against the stand. He liked to holler, "Look out!" He had good control, but he liked to throw over a hitter's head for the fun of it. That was his idea of getting you scared of him. He was a big guy; he could throw hard too.

They wanted me to pitch against Kansas City, because if Bill Drake dusted off my players, I'm going to dust off theirs. Then our boys don't have to duck so much. [Teammate] Willie Foster wouldn't dust anybody off. I would.

I had a friend went broke betting on Kansas City. I used to tell him all the time: "Man, you better save your money, you going to need it." I beat them most times I pitched against them. Then he'd get mad at me.

[Powell won two and lost one in the 1926 playoff against the Monarchs for the right to meet Atlantic City in the World Series. But the Giants still had to sweep the final doubleheader to win.]

*Kansas City had their bags all packed ready to go.*

In the first game, Willie Foster beat Rogan 1-0. I was supposed to pitch the second game, but Foster told me, "I'll go in and go as hard as I can as long as I can. You be ready to pick me up." I said, "Go ahead, I know you can take them." And he did.

In the world series, Atlantic City had Luther Farrell, an emery ball pitcher, a spitball pitcher, used to pitch for Gilkerson's Union Giants in Illinois. He hit Nat Rogers [Chicago outfielder] in the mouth with his emery ball, split his lip. Dave Malarcher taped the lip up and he went right on playing. Every time he come to bat, a line drive.

[Powell started the second game.]

I couldn't even pitch a strike. Everything I threw was a ball. I never heard the umpire say strike. So Dave Malarcher took me out and put in Rube Currie. They called Currie "The Black Snake." He was kinda old and couldn't throw so hard then, but when he was young, Rube could throw hard as anybody you want to know. Rube Currie always knew what their weakness was: "You know what their weakness is? A fastball between the eyes." He had a curveball, a big one too, and it broke slow. He threw the

curveball away from the plate and it would break over. Anyway, Rube Currie came in and threw nine balls and three men were out.

My second game I could have been better. Red Grier beat me 6-4. I lost my cool. Baby, you lose your head, and that's it. I wanted to let the man know I could throw a good curve and throw it for strikes. I'd come back and throw them fastballs, someone hit the fence with it, and that didn't please me a bit. It didn't please my ballplayers, and it didn't please my manager. Only somebody pleased was Atlantic City, 'cause those fans were sure riding me. A guy went up and down the street that night with a megaphone telling what the score was.

[Powell won his next game 13-0 over Atlantic City's ace, "Rats" Henderson, to tie the series at four games apiece. Foster won the deciding game 1-0.]

That winter I played in Cuba and we won the championship too. Oscar Charleston was my roommate. He used to wake me up throwing water on me.

I batted .412 in Cuba. I was a pretty good hitter.

*He thought he was.*

I was. I was. I used to pinch hit. Why not? I could get on base. I didn't hit the ball far, but I could hit it where I wanted to hit it a lot of times. If you hit between the infielders, you got something.

When you hit a home run in Cuba you got a case of beer. If I got that case of beer, Judy Johnson would come over to the house and drink it up with me. He put me out at third base one time when I was trying for a home run. He said, "I forgot about that case of beer."

I used to pride myself in running too. I thought I could move out a little bit, which I could.

One time in St. Louis, I was stuck on third with nobody out and I've got to stay there until the ball goes through the infield. When Willie Wells started a double play, I started to take off for home. Mitch Murray was catching and he caught me about a yard from home plate. He dived on me and skinned me from my ankles to my ears, and that was my buddy too. He stopped me from scoring and they had a triple play. And I was streaking too, baby.

*When they played the American Giants park, the park would be all mixed, both black and white. But when they were away from home, the colored would hardly ever follow. When they would go on the road, maybe there would be only about 10-15 colored folks in the stands, that be mostly wives that would go with them. Evanston was mostly white. A few blacks, wouldn't be many, would come out to the games. But he didn't care nothing about them booing or saying anything. It didn't bother him, not at all.*

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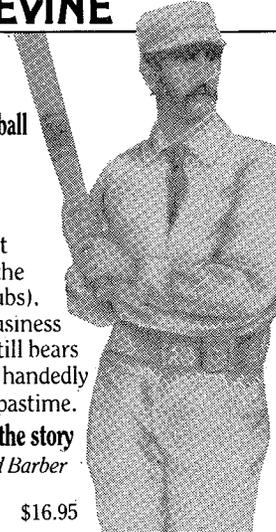
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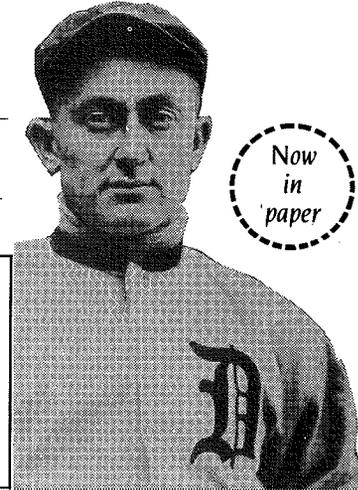
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I liked it, I liked it. Willie Foster was scared, and he'd tell you in a minute he was scared. Something would happen and he would cry, he wanted to go underground. He didn't like the crowds. I loved it, I loved it.

When I started pitching, the kids didn't have to use a knothole. I'd go to the back gate and let them in. They would come in and scatter. Some of them knew they were going to get caught and put out, but once they scattered, you know, you can't catch them all.

When I got ready to leave after the game, I'd fill my pockets with balls, and every kid out there, I would throw him a ball. I gave away more balls. I met a whole lot of them kids later as young men, and they told me they remembered me.

[In the 1928 playoffs Powell came on in the first game to beat the St. Louis Stars' ace, Ted Trent, 3-0, on a three-hitter, although the Stars finally won the series in nine games. The following year, 1929, he was out most of



*The oddest couple—Cap Anson & Rube Foster*

the season with a sore arm and ended up pitching with his old club, Evanston, for \$15 a game.]

I had some good years afterwards, but you know, a doctor didn't do nothing for my arm. I did that myself. I started working on it different ways. Throwing sidearm, my arm would have stayed that way, so I quit throwing sidearm altogether and started throwing overhand.

I went to the Detroit Stars in 1930. Bingo DeMoss was manager.

*We like to starved to death over there in Detroit.*

The Stars went broke—they were broke to start with. They never did pay off. Watson was one of our owners. You go down in the morning and catch him. He'd walk by and reach his hand in his pocket, and whatever he came up with, he'd give you. He came out with a five, he'd give you a five. And he ain't going to stop walking, and he ain't going to talk to you. We'd stand on the corner and chew tobacco and spit. We couldn't get back home. Jelly Gardner had to get us back home; he knew someone he could borrow some money from.

[Powell returned to the American Giants in 1933.]

In '33 I had one of the best years of my life in baseball—well, all my years were good years, but I had a better team with me in '33. Our home grounds was Indianapolis. They turned our [Chicago] park into a dog track.

*Our daughter was three years old. Bill "Bojangles" Robinson was out to the ball game one day, and was whistling and tapdancing, and my daughter would say, "Do it again." She just kept saying, "Do it again."*

Bojangles was a good guy to get along with. He could run backwards faster than anyone on our team could run forwards. Yeah, he could.

The Pittsburgh Crawfords had the hardest hitting team in the league. Josh Gibson hit a home run off me through that tin fence in Greenlee Field in Pittsburgh. And it was a bad pitch. I knew what I was doing—or thought I knew. You couldn't pitch outside to him too much—a curveball outside, Josh would kill it. And don't throw it inside, or he'll kill the third baseman. If you kept it low on Josh, you'd get away with it quite a bit. This time I wanted him to hit to right field. He was fooled on a good curveball, fell across the plate and hit that ball through the tin fence. I didn't believe anyone could reach out that far and hit it that far. Boy, he talked about that ball all the time we got together.

And I was having a good year too. That's the year I beat the Crawfords a doubleheader, gave up two hits.

[In the playoff that year, against New Orleans, Powell won the first game 6-1, then lost the fourth 5-4.]

Red Parnell beat me. I came in to relieve, and he hit a fly ball and beat me. A man on first, no out, I knew he was supposed to bunt the ball. Like a fool, I threw him one up high. He hit a fly ball, and Turkey Stearnes [in center field] didn't move up in time to get it and that beat me. I didn't get bawled out for the pitch though. Dave Malarcher told me, "You pitched the right pitch. I would have done the same thing."

The next year they were going to trade me to Cleveland for a new team they were building. But it was too late in the game for me, and we didn't make any money then. I was working for the city, but I lost that job because of going to Indianapolis. No money, no nothing.

Dave Malarcher didn't believe me when I told him I wasn't going to play any more. They came by my house, wanted me in New York, brought me some money. I told them I wasn't going anywhere. So Dave Malarcher got Ted Trent to pitch instead, and Trent got left in New York.

I got me a job doing tannery work, buffing. I stayed on that job thirty years and learned to buff leather real good. I was doing piecework: If I made it, I made it; if I didn't, it was my fault. Some jobs have the money, and some jobs just have nothing.

*Well, they just about paid you nothing.*

Got a pension of \$25 a month after thirty years. Can't go nowhere on that; can't cross the street.

He built champions, managed them, and bequeathed them.

# Frank Selee, Dynasty Builder

A. D. SUEHSDORF



**I**N THE TEN YEARS from 1891 to 1900, only two National League managers won pennants: Ned Hanlon and Frank Gibson Selee. Hanlon is well remembered for leading the flamboyant, intimidating Baltimore Orioles to three flags (1894-96) and Brooklyn's Superbas, bolstered by six Oriole transfers, to two (1899-1900). Modest, retiring Frank Selee—*See-lee*, like the mattress—scored his five with the intelligent Boston Beaneaters and is virtually forgotten.

Consider what baseball's amnesia has obscured: Selee's winning percentage of .598—achieved in twelve years at

Boston and three and a half with the Chicago Cubs—is the fourth highest in managerial history. Twelve of his players are in the Hall of Fame, and five or six others have Cooperstown credentials. His 1892 and 1898 Beaneater teams were the first to win more than 100 games in one National League season. His 1894 powerhouse, although finishing third, still holds the single-season record of 1,222 runs scored, and was the only club between 1884 and 1920 to hit more than 100 home runs (103) in a season.

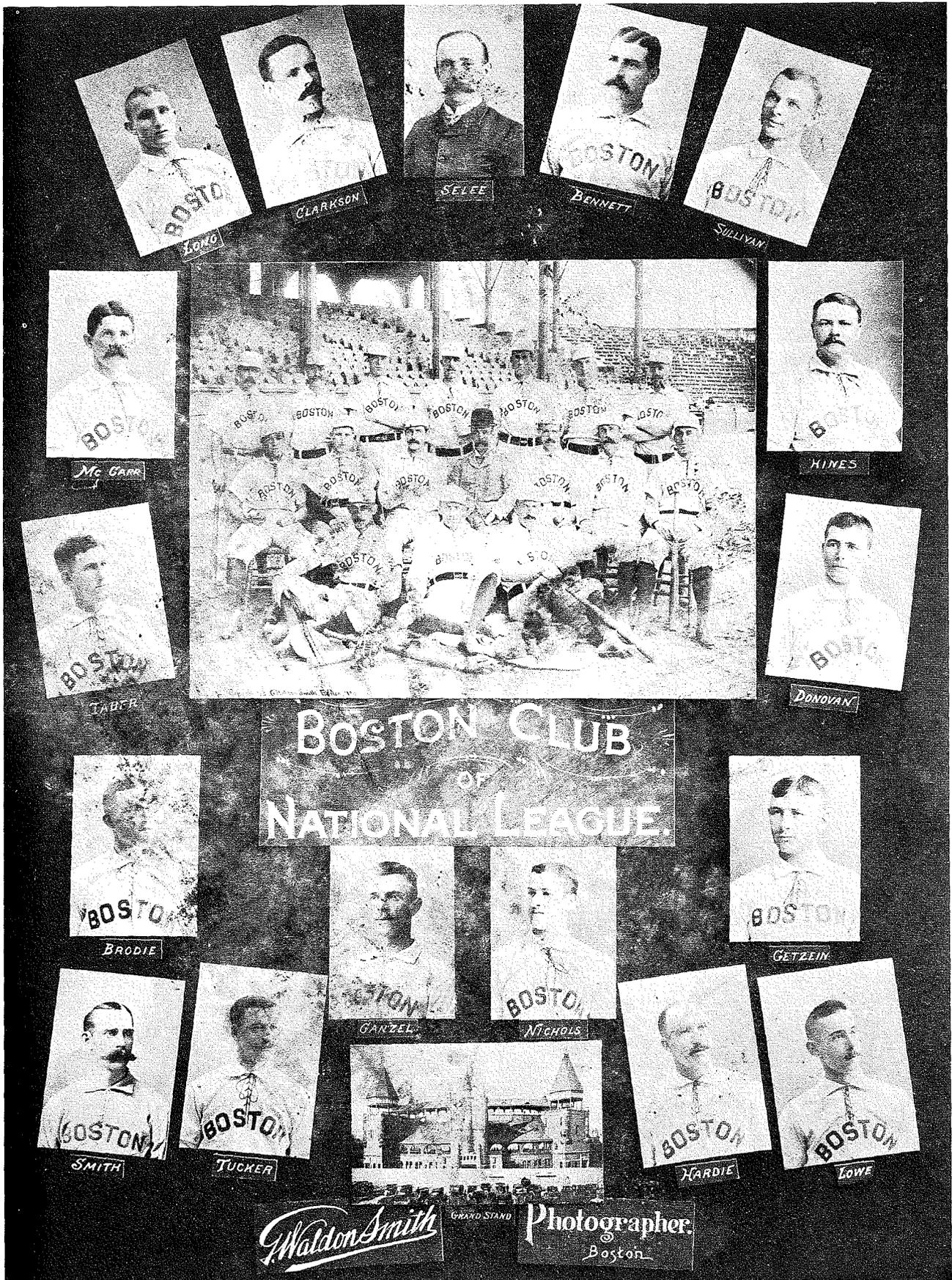
Actually, the Beaneaters were better known for finesse than muscle. Selee's particular talents as a manager were, first, a brilliant sense of players' potentials and, second, a masterful insight into baseball's strategic possibilities.

It was said of him that he could "tell a ballplayer in his street clothes." Yet this sixth sense was more than a judgment of athletic skill: It was an uncanny ability to divine the position best suited to the man. Although Arthur Soden, the autocratic boss of the Beaneaters, reputedly thwarted many of Selee's deals, Frank repeatedly succeeded in acquiring promising minor leaguers and unappreciated National Leaguers, as well as in positional shifts.

This acumen was reflected on the field, where the Beaneaters were known and admired for playing "inside baseball," for "outthinking" the opposition, for being the "most perfectly drilled scientific team" of its day. While Boston's stolen-base statistics are unimpressive, Selee was an early advocate of overall team speed as an offensive

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A.D. SUEHSDORF, an ostensibly retired writer from Sonoma, Ca., authored *The Great American Baseball Scrapbook*.



The Boston National League team of 1890—Selee's major league baptism

and defensive weapon. He is credited with developing—through Fred Tenney and Herman Long—the 3-6-3 double play, and he encouraged “headwork and signals” on the field to shift players according to the pitch and to coordinate base coverages. John Montgomery Ward, one of the game’s standard-bearers and pundits, praised the Beaneaters extravagantly in Spalding’s 1894 *Guide* for their clever and effective use of the run-and-hit play: The runner’s bluff to see who covers second, his signal as to the pitch he will run on, and a punched hit into the hole left by the covering infielder. “I have made a study of the play of this team,” Ward wrote, “and I find that they have won many games by scoring nearly twice as many runs as they made hits.”

“The success of the Boston team,” *Sporting Life* explained in 1893, “is due, more than any other thing, to . . . a manager who is a thorough base ball general . . . who knows what should be done and how to do it, and is able to impress his advice upon the men under his control.”

Given the evolution of playing and scoring rules since Selee’s time, plus the changing fashions in press reporting, it is difficult to interpret such accolades in contemporary terms. What is readily apparent, and what establishes Selee’s place among baseball’s great managers, is his architectural brilliance in fashioning the 1890-1901 Beaneaters and 1902-05 Cubs.

Selee was born in 1859, the son of a Methodist-Episcopal clergyman, and raised in Melrose, Massachusetts, where he was a member of the town’s Alpha baseball club. In 1884 he left a job with the Waltham Watch Co. to organize an entry in the Massachusetts State Baseball Association. “I was without any practical experience as a manager or player,” he wrote in a retrospective article many years later. But he raised \$1,000 to provide a playing field with fence and grandstand, appeared in a few box scores as center fielder, and quickly asserted his natural talent for managing.

The Waltham team was short lived. Manager Selee and some of his players joined the league’s Lawrence franchise to finish out the season.

In 1885, with the league reorganized as the Eastern New England Baseball Association, he managed Haverhill to second place, but in mid-1886 he was released.

What he called “my real start in baseball” came in 1887, when he won his first pennant as manager of the Oshkosh (Wisconsin) team of the Northwestern League. Trailing league-leading Milwaukee by fourteen games on July 4, Oshkosh stormed back to win the pennant on the final day of the season, led by outfielders Dummy Hoy and Tommy McCarthy and pitcher Tom Lovett, future big-league stars. The following year, with the league renamed the Western Association (on its way to becoming Ban Johnson’s American League), Selee shifted to Omaha and, after a fourth-place finish, won another pennant in 1889.

He came to Boston from Omaha, bringing with him his star pitcher, Charles “Kid” Nichols, eventually a 360-game

winner. He also persuaded Boston to part with \$700 for a promising Western League second baseman, Bobby “Link” Lowe, of Milwaukee.

Selee started with a Beaneater team riddled by ten defections to the new Boston entry in the Players League. The entire infield and outfield were gone, including the redoubtable Dan Brouthers and King Kelly, and three pitchers—two of no account, but the other, Old Hoss Radbourn.

The splendid John Clarkson and his batterymate, the veteran Charlie Bennett, stayed loyal. Scrambling, Selee went to the American Association for three infielders. From Baltimore he got Tommy Tucker, notable for playing first base with a fingerless mitt, and journeyman third sacker Chippy McGarr; from Kansas City for a then-whopping \$6,300 he got “Germany” Long, one of the preeminent players of the century, who would be a fixture at shortstop for twelve years. At second he used utility man Pop Smith rather than Bobby Lowe, whose time would come. From other National League clubs he picked up pitcher Charlie Getzien, onetime Detroit whiz; Marty Sullivan, an Indianapolis outfielder; and partway into the season the veteran outfielder Paul Hines, from Pittsburgh. One of his better bargains was Steve Brodie, from Hamilton, Ontario (International League), who became the regular right fielder.

Over the season the Beaneaters made a respectable fight of it, holding second place as late as August. A September slump, however, dropped them to fifth with a 76-57 record. Embarrassingly, the Players League pennant was won by the Boston defectors.

In 1891 the Players League had collapsed and better players were available. Two of the prodigals, second baseman Joe Quinn and third baseman Billy Nash, returned. With Tucker and Long they gave the Beaneaters a first-class infield. King Kelly, a shadow of his former self, returned to catch a final twenty-four games for Boston; Bennett was beginning to fade, too, particularly at the plate. Thereafter, Selee was always on the lookout for competent catchers. Bobby Lowe broke into the lineup as left fielder, Steve Brodie moved to center, and Harry Stovey, a hard-hitting star in the American Association, became the right fielder when his old A.A. team, Philadelphia, failed to reserve him after the Brotherhood disbanded.

A Cambridge lad, Joe Kelley, played twelve games in the outfield and batted .244 before being passed along to Pittsburgh in the deal that brought righthander Harry Staley to Boston to replace the worn-out Getzien. These were the first games in a seventeen-year career that would lead young Joe to the Hall of Fame (principally by way of the legendary Orioles), but there is no evidence that Selee misjudged Kelley’s talent; at the time he needed another pitcher more than he needed an undeveloped outfielder. Staley, despite a reputation for “lushing,” won 20 games. These, plus Clarkson’s 33, Nichols’ 30, and Getzien’s 4,

were enough to win a first National League pennant for Frank Selee by 3½ games over Chicago.

Kelley is one example among many of how Selee cast his net outward from the Hub. In a day of rather more haphazard scouting (although of more geographically concentrated player pools), he was acutely aware of promising players throughout New England. Of the 118 men who played for him in Boston, nearly 30 percent were from Massachusetts, and 38 percent were from New England.

Between seasons the ten-year-old American Association expired and four of its teams were absorbed into the National League. Selee was home in Melrose, attending Elks meetings and running a haberdashery with Sid Farrar, the former Phillie first baseman and father of the glorious Geraldine. But he never lost sight of baseball opportunities, and in the reshuffling of players for 1892 Selee drew three aces. From the Boston Reds, Association successors to the Players League team, he plucked outfielder Hugh Duffy. From St. Louis he got pitcher Happy Jack Stivetts and outfielder Tommy McCarthy whom Selee had piloted at Oshkosh. Duffy and McCarthy, close personal friends, quickly became known as "the Heavenly Twins" for their superlative play afield and at bat, while Happy Jack won 132 games in the next six years, including the first no-hitter ever thrown by a Boston pitcher.

Lowe complemented the Twins in the outfield. Brodie and Stovey were released. The infield was unchanged. Stivetts won 35 games, a nice bit of timing inasmuch as a sore arm had brought John Clarkson's distinguished Boston career to an end (he held on for another season and a half with Cleveland). In the National League's one and only split season, the Beaneaters won 102 games—the most ever to that time—and took the pennant by eight and a half games over Cleveland.

In 1893 the Beaneaters marched to their third straight pennant. The major change in the team was the evolution of Bobby Lowe into an infielder. Joe Quinn was traded to St. Louis for Cliff Carroll, who took Lowe's outfield spot so that Bobby could replace Quinn.

The glory years for the Orioles now intervened. The Beaneaters, with largely the same personnel that had won so handily in '93, faltered and sank to third, to fifth (tie), and to fourth. It was hard to say what went wrong. In 1894 Hugh Duffy led the league in average (the incredible .438), homers (18), and RBI's (145). Lowe became the first major-leaguer to hit four home runs in one game. Five regulars had more than 100 runs batted in. Kid Nichols won 32 games—the fourth of seven straight 30-or-over years. And Boston broke in a rookie lefthanded catcher named Fred Tenney, whose glory lay ahead. Yet not only Baltimore, but the Giants, finished ahead of Boston.

By 1897 the Beaneaters were back on top of the heap with a .705 winning percentage, highest in their history, and in 1898, with their second 100-victory season, they

won the fifth pennant for Frank Selee in a span of eight years. It is instructive to compare the lineups of 1893 and 1897 to see how the manager restored the team's viability:

<b>1893</b>		<b>1897</b>
Tommy Tucker	1b	Fred Tenney
Bobby Lowe	2b	Bobby Lowe
Billy Nash	3b	Jimmy Collins
Herman Long	ss	Herman Long
Cliff Carroll	rf	Chick Stahl
Hugh Duffy	cf	Billy Hamilton
Tommy McCarthy	lf	Hugh Duffy
Charlie Bennett	c	Marty Bergen
Charlie Ganzel	c/ut	Charlie Ganzel
Kid Nichols	p	Kid Nichols
Jack Stivetts	p	Jack Stivetts
Harry Staley	p	Fred Klobedanz
Hank Gastright	p	Ted Lewis

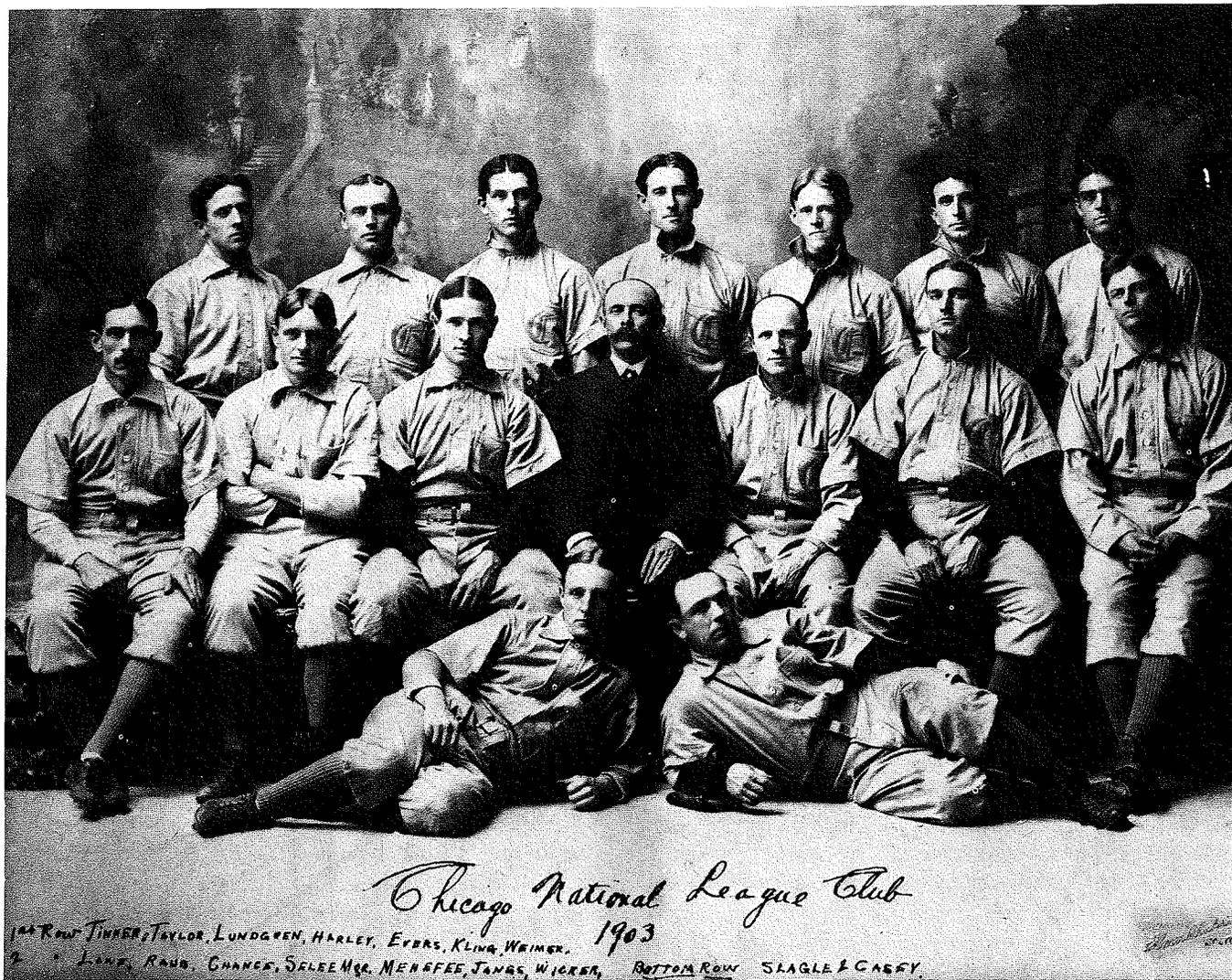
Carroll was first to go. In 1894 he was replaced by Jimmy Bannon, an Amesbury boy nicknamed "Foxy Grandpa," who was a bleacher favorite after his purchase from St. Louis. McCarthy went next. Thirty-one in 1895 and coming to the end of his lovely career, he was injured late in the season and replaced by Tenney. Jimmy Collins, acquired from Buffalo (Eastern League) as an outfielder, played a few games on Bannon's turf, played them badly, and was virtually hooted off the team by the foxy one's partisans. Selee loaned Collins (a common practice then) to Louisville, a constant tailender since its entry from the American Association. There, in the obscurity of twelfth place, the future Hall of Famer learned to be a third baseman.

This was not lost on Frank Selee. Before the 1896 season began, he had traded Boston's long-time favorite Billy Nash to Philadelphia for Sliding Billy Hamilton and recalled Collins to Boston. He dealt McCarthy to Brooklyn, perhaps with a pang, but Tommy was heavenly no longer. And for \$1,000 and a utility infielder of minimal skills he lifted Marty Bergen from Kansas City—the catcher he had been looking for since the loss of Bennett.

Nash had been team captain, a role of some authority, since returning from his Players League sabbatical, but he was past thirty, Collins was a fair bet to hold down third, and Sliding Billy, though thirty himself, had both the power and speed to more than make up for McCarthy's departure.

As the season progressed, Selee also collected two fine pitchers: Ted Lewis, a righthander, as he graduated from Williams College, and Fred Klobedanz, a lefty from Fall River who had whetted Selee's appetite by holding Boston to five hits in a spring exhibition. Both would have short careers, but both would be substantial winners in the pennant years.

Finally, Selee resolved Tenney's role. Since signing on in 1894 he had been tried at catcher, but his throwing was erratic, and lefthanders were going out of style. Otherwise, he was an outfielder. Early in 1897, however, after three straight losses to Baltimore, Selee suddenly benched



*The Chicago Cubs of 1903, featuring Tinker, Evers, and Chance*

Tommy Tucker and pulled Tenney out of right field to play first. It was another marvelous, intuitive Selee move. Tenney was a natural: agile, graceful, surehanded. He played wide and deep, he stretched arms and legs to meet the throw and gain an inch on the runner, a novelty at the time that soon became the custom. The infield of Tenney, Lowe, Long, and Collins, although it played together only four years, was judged the nineteenth century's best by all who saw it.

Icing on the cake was Chick Stahl, a first-rate outfielder and career .300 hitter, who was drafted from Buffalo in 1896 and available to take the spot vacated by Tenney.

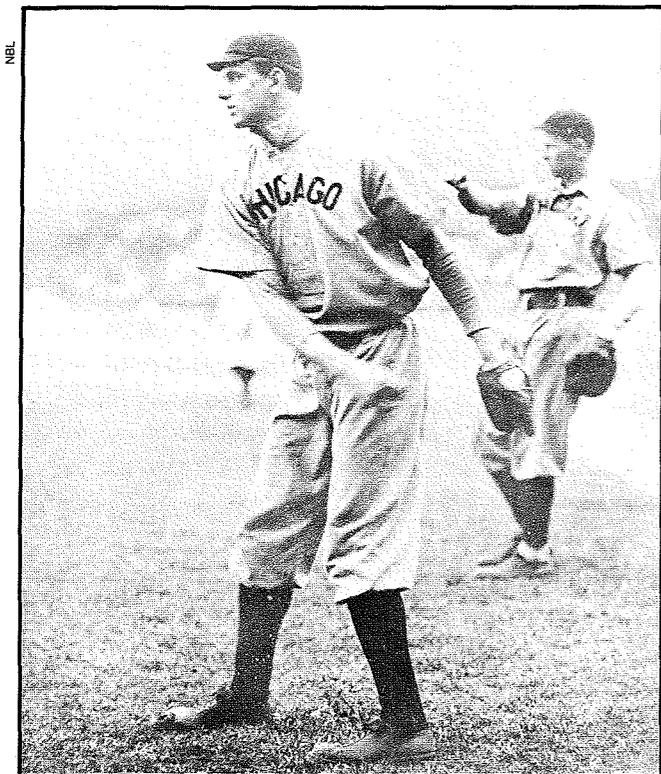
Let it not be said that Selee was infallible. Two of his misjudgments, both committed in 1896, were whoppers. Ed Barrow recalled, half a century after the fact, that Selee had said he "wouldn't give a dime for Wagner." And the authoritative Fred Lieb reminisced that Selee had visited Fall River to inspect the young Nap Lajoie and was not sufficiently impressed by his .429 BA to make a bid.

Anyone who didn't want Wagner for his hitting alone would have some explaining to do. For even in 1896, his

second season in organized baseball, rumors had spread that Honus was a terror. One after another, National League managers bringing their teams in to New York to play the Giants found time to cross the river and watch Wagner perform for Barrow's Paterson club of the Atlantic League.

Cousin Ed did not explain what determined Selee to spend his dime elsewhere. An off-duty pitcher scouting for the Phils reported Honus as too awkward to play major-league ball, and his ungainliness may indeed have been seen as a flaw. It is also fact that Wagner did not play the majority of his games at short until 1903. Before then he was a novice at every position. Even so, there was no missing that bat.

As for Lajoie, the story of his rejection has several versions, only one of which involves Selee. The others have a pitcher who was impressively battered by Lajoie urging Boston to grab him and being ignored. In fact, a number of scouts inexplicably ignored Nap in spite of his terrific hitting, so that the Phils, trading for a nothing outfielder, got him as a throw-in. As for Selee, with stars of the



Ed Reulbach

caliber of Tenney, Lowe, Hamilton, and Duffy at all the positions Lajoie played, he can perhaps be forgiven for taking Fred Klobedanz instead.

Selee's final maneuver for Boston came in 1898, when, for another \$1,000 and another utility infielder, he acquired from Syracuse (Eastern League) a remarkable righthander, Vic Willis, the Delaware Peach. In eight of his thirteen seasons the Peach had 20 or more victories and a career total of 248. As usual, it was a timely deal, Willis's 24 wins coming as Happy Jack Stivetts reached the end of the trail.

Thereafter, Ned Hanlon, now in Brooklyn, took the 1899 and 1900 pennants, and Fred Clarke earned his first with Pittsburgh in 1901. Boston slid to second, to fourth, and finally to fifth with a .500 record.

Selee was cast adrift after twelve years, 1,004 victories, and a .607 winning percentage. Clark Griffith, by then manager of the Chicago White Sox, said, "That is a big mistake. Selee is one of the few great managers in the business." He was promptly hired by the Chicago Cubs, who had not won a pennant since 1886 and had achieved the first division only four times in the dozen years Selee was at Boston. In 1901 they rested in sixth place, 37 games out.

For Selee it was the Boston experience of 1890 all over again. Of the twenty-five players on the 1901 Cub squad, only eight survived to start the 1902 season, and three of those were soon gone. One of these, a utility infielder—Selee's favorite trade bait—went to Boston for the distinguished veteran Bobby Lowe. A few were sold for cash.

Most were simply released. Five jumped to the American League, all of them considerable players, especially the two snared by Connie Mack: outfielder Topsy Hartsel and pitcher Rube Waddell.

These actions left Selee with: two regulars, Frank Chance in right field and Johnny Kling behind the plate; two pitchers, Jack Taylor, the team's best, and so-so Jocko Menefee; and a rookie infielder, Germany Schaefer.

Where to start? Selee had left Boston with Jimmy Slagle in tow. The Beaneaters had acquired him from the Phils in 1901, his rookie year, and it is possible that despite 66 games in the Boston outfield management did not realize how good he was. He would grace the Chicago garden through 1908.

Frank Chance, who had been catching and outfielding for the Cubs since 1898, looked more like a first baseman to Selee, and turned out to be one. Like Tenney, he fit beautifully. By July Bobby Lowe was at second. Schaefer was stationed at third. Another rookie, Joe Tinker, drafted from Portland of the Northwest League during the winter, was transformed from third baseman to shortstop.

Late in the season there was an historic coming together. Bobby Lowe was hurt and Selee asked an eastern scout to grab an emergency replacement. The choice was a scrawny, lantern-jawed, ill-natured, hard-playing runt from Troy (N.Y. State League) named John Evers. He joined the club after Labor Day, presumably a shortstop, but Selee had a shortstop and needed Evers at second. On September 15 was executed the first Tinker to Evers to Chance double play.

For the outfield, Davy Jones—also known as "Kangaroo"—was bought from the St. Louis Americans; later on he would form a threesome with Ty Cobb and Sam Crawford at Detroit. John Dobbs, a stopgap, was purchased from Cincinnati.

Kling, already on deck, was an excellent catcher. Henceforth he would be catching more than 100 games a season.

Pitching was a problem. Selee got 22 wins from ace Jack Taylor and 12 from Menefee. Nine other pitchers came and went. One discovery worth keeping was Carl Lundgren, fresh from the University of Illinois. All told, thirty-eight men wore the Cub uniform in 1902. At the end of the season Chicago (68-69) had advanced one notch to fifth place.

In 1903 there were only two changes in the day-to-day lineup. Schaefer, who had hit .196, was released and Dobbs was sold to Brooklyn. A pair of Detroiters took their places: "Doc" Casey, third base, and Dick Harley, right field. In a year Harley would be gone, but Casey would hold his position for the rest of Selee's term in Chicago.

The pitching was much improved. Taylor won 21, Lundgren 10, Menefee 8, and two Selee surprises, Jake Weimer and Bob Wicker, won 21 and 19. "Tornado Jake" was a twenty-nine-year-old rookie from Kansas City in the Western League. Wicker came from the Cardinals in an

even trade for pitcher Bob Rhoads. In three seasons he would win 49 games for the Cubs. (Rhoads did little for the Cards, but eventually became a winner for Cleveland.)

(Interestingly, within a few years Weimer and Wicker were involved in trades with Cincinnati which provided the final building blocks for Chicago's soon-to-be champions. Shortly before the 1906 season, Weimer and third baseman Hans Lobert were exchanged for Harry Steinfeldt, the hot-corner man who solidified the Tinker-Evers-Chance infield. In June, Wicker and \$2,000 were traded for the excellent Orvie Overall.)

As for 1903, the Cubs (82-56) leaped to third place. In December of that year Selee engineered perhaps the finest deal of his career: Jack Taylor and Larry McLean, a catcher who had played just one game for Chicago, were dispatched to St. Louis for the nonpareil Mordecai Peter Centennial Brown, the three-fingered one, and Jack O'Neill, a backup catcher of rather less talent than his young brother Steve. Actually, it took two years to prove what a steal it was. Steady Jack won 35 for the Cards, while Brown was scoring 33 for the Cubs. Thereafter, of course, Mordecai had six consecutive seasons of 20 or more victories as one of the superb righthanders ever.

Jack McCarthy, a Massachusetts boy, continued the game of Rotating Third Outfielder, replacing Harley. And Artie Hofman, lively "Circus Solly," who could play all infield and outfield positions, came aboard through a simple cash deal with Pittsburgh. Finally, near season's end, the Syracuse Stars were persuaded to part with their fleet outfielder, Wildfire Schulte.

All this talent combined to win 93 games (and lose 60) in 1904 and edged the Cubs into second place, though still 13 games behind the high-flying Giants.

In 1905 Selee made his final contribution to the future welfare of the Cubs, acquiring a strong-armed college-boy pitcher named Ed Reulbach. A star at Notre Dame, Big Ed also played summer ball under assumed names. At Sedalia, Missouri in 1901-03 he was "Lawson." Pitching for Montpelier, Vermont in 1904 he was "Sheldon." At times, scouts may have been excited to think there were three pitchers of Reulbach's caliber waiting to be signed!

In the 1905 outfield, Billy Maloney took Davy Jones's spot—as McCarthy had taken Harley's and Harley had taken Dobbs's. During the winter Maloney, McCarthy, "Doc" Casey, a pitcher, and \$2,000 were shuffled off to Brooklyn for the long-sought perfect third outfielder: Jimmy Sheppard.

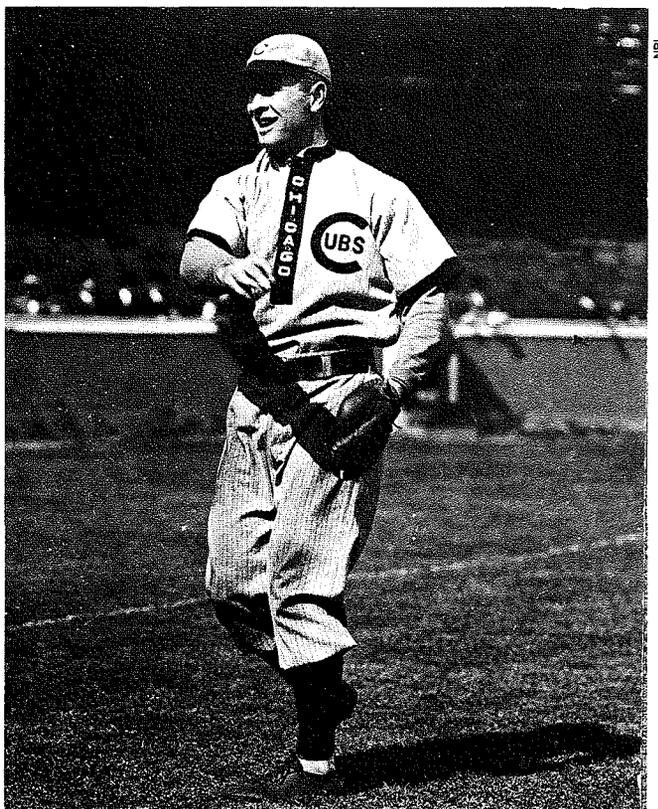
Selee was not there to pull it off. Never robust and frequently ailing, he was found in July to be gravely ill with tuberculosis. The Cubs had won 52 and lost 38 when he turned them over to Husk Chance and migrated to Denver, hoping there would be healing magic in the Rocky Mountains. He died there in July, 1909, aged fifty, and his passing was mourned by the baseball world.

Not everyone was prepared to credit his accomplishments, and, to be sure, Frank Selee had help. All teams are

the achievement of many people. But for every player, newsman, or scout who had a bone to pick, there were many more who acknowledged his skills and counted themselves lucky that they had known him or played for him. His teams had won 1,299 games while losing 872. Eight of his Beaneaters are in the Hall of Fame. Duffy, Tommy McCarthy, Nichols, Hamilton, and Collins truly felt his influence. Clarkson and King Kelly were finishing careers earned without him, and Joe Kelley won his spurs elsewhere. Yet it can also be argued that Tenney, Lowe, Long, and Willis, who are not in the Hall, should be, and that Reulbach and Schulte should join Tinker, Evers, Chance, and Brown in the Chicago contingent.

After a third-place finish in 1905, the team Selee handed to Chance went 116-36 in 1906 to set a record never since approached. The Cubs also won pennants in 1907, 1908, and 1910 and were second in 1909. Their 570 victories against 258 defeats in that period gave them a phenomenal percentage of .688. It is impossible to know whether Frank Selee would have compiled the same record. All that can be said is that of the thirteen key players of 1905, eight still were regulars in 1910. The principal additions—Steinfeldt, Sheppard, Overall, and Jack Pfeister—arrived in 1906. Otherwise it was pretty much Selee's bunch that built up Frank Chance as The Peerless Leader and took him to the Hall of Fame (in three years of managing in other big-league towns, Chance finished last once and seventh twice). Frank Selee has been forgotten, but his record is there for all to see. You could look it up.

Frank Chance



*A rediscovered interview, taped in 1964 for "The Glory of Their Times."*

# George McBride: "I Took Honus Wagner's Job"

LAWRENCE S. RITTER

**T**HE WAY I STARTED in the American League? See, that was kind of peculiar—couldn't happen that way today. I was raised in Milwaukee but in 1901 I went out to South Dakota to play some ball. Our season closed out there a little early, so I came back home. A fellow named Wid Conroy had been playing shortstop for the Milwaukee club in the American League, but he sprained his ankle a day or two before I got home. Well, when the newspaper people found out that I was back from South Dakota, they called up and said bring your glove and shoes and your underwear to the ballpark . . . might be a chance for you to play today!

Well, I went out there and sat in the bleachers right behind first base and Hughie Duffy, the manager, he called me in and said, you're going to play today . . . shortstop. Well, I guess the rules were different in those days, cause I wasn't on the roster, and I didn't even have a contract. I was a third baseman, but they played me that day at shortstop. Then, of course, I signed up and played a game or two more till the end of the season.

In 1951, we had a fiftieth anniversary party for the American League, over in Boston. All the charter members of the American League got an invitation. Twenty-nine players came to the affair. Now, I guess all but ten of them are dead. Connie Mack, Cy Young, Hughie Duffy, fellows like that, all gone. The Milwaukee club was transferred to St. Louis for 1902 and the next move of a big league club was when the Braves came in '53! Course the old Milwaukee club wasn't the Braves, but the Brewers.

After 1901 I went back to the minors for a few years. Made the rounds a little bit: Milwaukee in the American Association, Kansas City, St. Joe, and then in 1905 the Pirates bought me. I'd shifted to shortstop by then.

Took Honus Wagner's job . . . at least that's why I went up. But they played me as a utility man till they traded me to St. Louis—the Nationals—and then I went back down to Kansas City.

Now, there's a funny parallel between me and Joe Cronin. I was with Pittsburgh and went to Kansas City. About twenty years later, Joe was with Pittsburgh and went to Kansas City. I went from Kansas City to Washington and he went from Kansas City to Washington. That's where the parallel ends. He was supposed to be a bad fielding shortstop, but he looked like a promising hitter. A scout had been looking at Cronin for Clark Griffith and finally got to talking to Joe and signed him up. Well, he telephoned Griff and tells him he signed Cronin. "What?" he says. "That sieve? That fellow can't field. He isn't even hitting too well." But Joe went back up there, married Griff's daughter, hit real well, and Griff sold him to Tom Yawkey for, supposed to be, \$250,000!

Now, I never improved my hitting too much. But I could field all right, I guess. I played the players differently according to the pitch and the speed. I could play way back at short, you know. Always had a good arm.

Walter Johnson came to the Senators in the fall of '07 and I came in the fall of '08. They were rough on some rookies, but I never had any trouble. But, see, I'd come up and been down and got my bumps and been around, so I sure wasn't cocky-like. Cobb had a lot of trouble. He fought them back, though. If you come up cocky-like, why they'd get on you all right. But I know that when I come up to that Washington club, I was well-received and for the

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LAWRENCE S. RITTER wrote *The Glory of Their Times*, published in 1966 and reissued in expanded form this year.

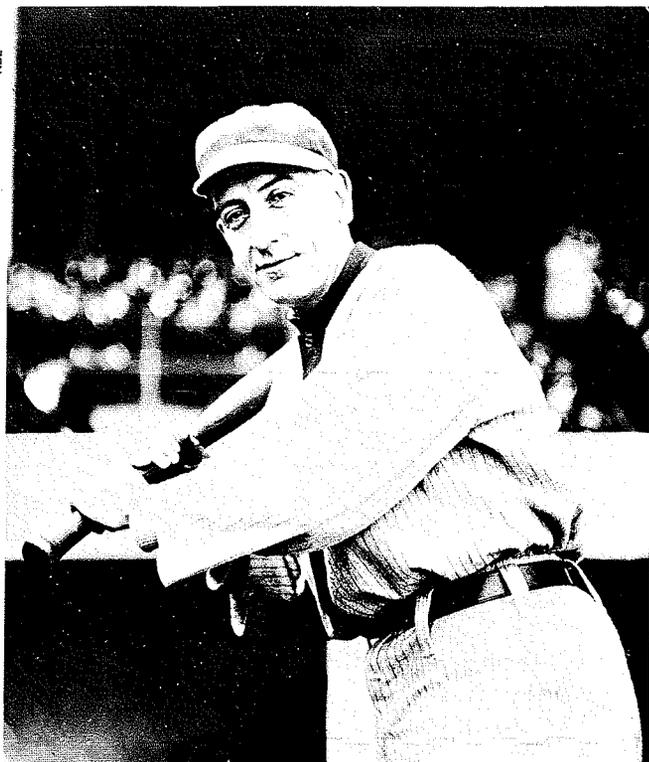
twelve or fourteen years Walter and I were there, why we'd always receive the rookies and try to help them out.

Yep, during Walter Johnson's greatest years I played shortstop behind him. I think he was the greatest pitcher I ever saw. And he was just as nice a man as he was a pitcher. Never heard him swear. When he got mad, maybe he'd say, "Gracious sakes alive!" That was when he was really high and really cussing! But it's true that he didn't like to hit anybody. He didn't like them to hang over the bag like Cobb did and Frank Robinson does. Saw him pitch those four games in three days, over at the old Highlanders, in 1908. Pitched three shutouts in three playing days. 'Course there was a Sunday in between, but still, that's something. Twelve hits in the three games. Just a kid, too.

His curveball was never too much, you know. There was a period of about two years where Gabby Street wouldn't ever call for that curve. He learned to throw a changeup, but he threw almost all fastballs. Amazing, too, for such a young fellow to come right to the big leagues with the control that he had. Had it from the beginning. I managed him one year, you know. He was a great big boy. If they were all like Walter Johnson, a manager wouldn't have any trouble at all.

In 1912, Jake Stahl was manager of the Red Sox, and Griff was our manager at Washington. Well, they tried to create a little excitement. Smokey Joe Wood was going for his sixteenth in a row and Johnson had already gotten sixteen in a row and his streak was ended. Stahl and Griff fixed it so they would pitch against each other up in

George McBride—"I could field all right"



Ty Cobb—"a ballplayer's ballplayer"

Boston. Wood beat Johnson one to nothing. Very highly publicized. Crowd was right up to the baselines. Had mounted police to come in and keep them back as far as they could. Hits were few. I remember because I got a two-base hit which was considered something. Yep. They beat Johnson one to nothing. In those days, you know, to fill up a park like that was something. Yes, very highly publicized.

Eddie Ainsmith and Gabby Street and John Henry, who was a graduate of Amherst, were the catchers on that team when I came up. Germany Schaefer and Nick Altrock were there. Nick was still pitching. I played with him in the Association in 1902, that was when he was just starting. Went up to the Red Sox and then to the White Sox. A character. He was a great fielding pitcher.

Clyde Milan was on the team too. He and Cobb were great friends. Both come from the South. Milan had a nickname: Zeb. Cobb'd say, Zeb I'm going to beat that record [the single-year stolen base record of 88, which Milan had set in 1912]. And he did, too: he got 96 in 1915. Milan was a great player, one of the best center fielders I ever saw. I remember once we played an exhibition game. The outfield was Cobb, Speaker, and Milan, three center fielders.

Joe Judge came up later and was a very underrated ballplayer. He was a little man. Always hit .300, and he was fast, a good fielder.

We had Chick Gandil for several years. Tough. But I always found him a pretty good sort of chap. See, Felsch and Jackson were . . . were victims of circumstance. But



Honus Wagner—“awkward, but he had everything”

Gandil . . . 'Course it broke Cicotte's heart. Very sad happening.

Yep, I played during the years when Cobb was in his prime, and I was a shortstop. But I never had any trouble with Cobb and those spikes of his. Got it in the glove and threw it down to the base. That's all. Went over to Detroit with him as a coach for a few years after I got through playing with Washington. Some say as he was a dirty ballplayer, but I say he was a good hard ballplayer. There are some players who didn't like him, but you know he was a ballplayer's ballplayer. He hustled out there. I think he was as fast as anybody, from home to home. I mean, all the way around. Good strong arm. Baserunner . . . oh, boy. He'd steal on those pitchers.

'Course I played with Honus Wagner, too. He was a great ballplayer. Awkward, but he had everything. Good legs, big hands. Cobb was a different type. Cobb was a harder ballplayer than Wagner. I think Cobb was the best I ever saw, really. 'Course Ruth was another type. He was a great pitcher. I hit against him, and he was a great

pitcher. Great *ballplayer*. When he first come up, he was just a great big boy. They soon saw that if they could put him in there every day he'd be a wonder.

Hal Chase was one of the few first basemen that played the deep first base. He would play away and still be able to get back to the base. He'd catch that ball on the run and, oh, you saw a lot of one-hand playing. 'Course now, that's all they do, that one-handing. But Chase played first base with a little tiny glove. Bigger than what we wore, but tiny. Sisler was another great first baseman. Saw him play third base one day. Last day of the season, last two innings, he went over and played third base. Lefthanded!

Joe Cantillon was my first manager. He was a real character. Was an umpire, you know. Managers left you alone much more than they do now. Now it's 2-0 and 3-1 and you're told what to do with the bat! Those days, they didn't do that at all. Sometimes now it's 3-1 and I see them busting away with a man in scoring position! 'Course in those days, you played for one or two runs more than you do now. We had the spitball and the emery ball. Stole

more bases in those days. Relied on stolen bases. And we weren't told when to steal—had to make our own strategy, so to speak. 'Course there's things they do now that we couldn't do. I can't really say that we thought more or that we were better. I think you have more good ballplayers now. Got more ballplayers altogether.

Cobb, when he was a manager, he had a theory of his own for everything. Knew as much baseball as anyone, but it's an exception when a great ballplayer makes a great manager too. I didn't like managing too much. I sort of eased into it. See, I was captain of that team down there in Washington for twelve years! In 1920, I was Griff's coach and utility man. Played 8 or 10 games. Griff went scouting, you know, and I managed the team the last month or two in '20. Had to go in there and play a few times, too. [The next year, Griffith stepped aside and McBride managed the Senators to a fourth place finish.]

In those days baseball wasn't considered as respectable as it is now, but it was the aim of all the youngsters to go to the big league. 'Course, salary didn't mean a thing. I got \$150 a month as a rookie, not bad money for those days. Oh, you got the same money you'd get today, all right, just not as much of it! You know, even if you were a rough or tough character in those days, to play in the big leagues was an education for you. You'd meet nice people, travel all over. Always did stay at the best hotels and travel in the best way, too. It was an education.

I was pretty fortunate. My investments in the stock market have taken care of me pretty well. Never did any more baseball after 1929. I'll be 84 in November [1964].

I have no regrets in baseball. The fall of the year came, and you were glad to get home, but when spring rolled around, why you were glad to get out and start all over again.

### The 1901 Sioux Falls Canaries

SIoux FALLS, South Dakota in 1901 was a booming frontier trading town. Buffalo Bill used the grounds on its eastern edge to rehearse and organize his Wild West Show. In town, an entertainment district had sprung up to cater to the needs of a colony of transient out-of-staters attracted to Sioux Falls by liberal and well-publicized divorce laws.

The people of Sioux Falls also supported an all-salaried independent baseball team, the Canaries. The 1901 team included third baseman George McBride and another future major leaguer, third baseman and outfielder George Disch. They both had decent seasons:

	BA	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	SB
Disch	.311	24	106	32	33	6	1	3	11
McBride	.282	21	84	19	25	5	3	0	7

The Canaries were part of the loosely organized South Dakota circuit, which also included the towns of Flaudreau, Madison, Mitchell, and Aberdeen. The league had no set schedule and no means for determining a champion, a situation the Sioux Falls *Daily Press* noted with regret. There were other problems. The *Daily Press* noted this complaint from a Madison fan:

"The present South Dakota circuit will never be a

success until Sioux Falls, and possibly one other club, stops the boyish practice of hiring away players from the other clubs."

On July 23, 1901, the Mitchell and Madison teams folded. Sioux Falls adapted to the situation by going on long road trips into Minnesota and Iowa. They played the St. Paul Marquettes; a Waseca, Minnesota team that included a black ballplayer, and teams as far east as Ft. Dodge, Iowa.

The Canaries' season began May 30 and ended on September 6. The team's record was 46 wins and 29 losses. The *Daily Press* noted that this was the best record in the vicinity, and the sporting writer declared the Canaries the unofficial champs. A tournament featuring the best teams from the region was suggested. Several sites were mentioned, and one of the teams planned on hiring a pitcher and catcher from the Union Giants, a black team from the Chicago area. But financial backing failed to materialize, and the tourney did not take place. As a result, George McBride went home to Milwaukee in early September, in time to be spotted in the stands by short-handed manager Hugh Duffy and make three appearances for the Brewers in the inaugural season of American League play.

—DAVID KEMP



The '01 Canaries, McBride in middle, fourth from left

*The road to Berlin, a half century ago.*

# Olympic Baseball 1936: Was es Das?

M.E. TRAVAGLINI

**O**N A BRIGHT OCTOBER DAY in 1983, some 120 young men scurried about a damp field at Washington, D.C.'s Georgetown University. Each had visions of a spot on the American baseball team that would compete with the best that six other baseball-playing nations had to offer in the next year's Summer Olympic Games. As these hopefuls tried their mightiest to impress the area's college coaches who doubled as Olympic overseers, they paid scant attention to a couple of senior figures standing among and yet somehow apart from the other thirty or so spectators. Looking for all the world like proud grandparents waiting to be asked which players were theirs, Herm Goldberg and Hubert "Bill" Shaw quietly exchanged observations and evaluations of the talent on display, their comments punctuated by long stretches of silence. They could not help but reflect upon another day, another Olympic baseball tryout, hardly more than forty miles but nearly five decades removed from this one.

It was in 1936, in Baltimore, when Herm, Bill and Olympic baseball were all young, that amateur players from all around the country convened to make a day such as this one, in the Fall of 1983, possible.

\* \* \* \*

"Amateur baseball stars from all sections of the country are invading Baltimore for the final tests for the teams which will invade Berlin to give exhibitions during the Olympic Games," the Baltimore *Sun* informed its readers.

The date was July 1, 1936, baseball was going Olympic and—for the first time—baseball people were running the show. This time baseball players—not high-jumpers and sprinters—would be presenting the strongest case yet

for including their game on the regular Olympic program. It was an important distinction. Baseball had been exhibited at earlier Olympiads, in 1904, 1912, and 1928. In each such instance, however, the players were members of the larger track and field delegation—they were first and foremost track and field men, who'd arranged to demonstrate baseball, too. So this was no scheduled sideshow as in past Olympiads. This time baseball was planned.

Oh, how it had been planned. Since at least 1928, when his fifteen-year major-league playing career ended at the age of thirty-five, Leslie Mann had schemed and struggled to make baseball as much a part of the Olympics as high-jumping and sprinting. Just getting as far as Baltimore—having tryouts—was a major accomplishment. It was still a very long way between Baltimore and Berlin, but then Mann had already come a very long way. And it had been uphill. The taciturn, teetotaling Mann had played Sisyphus to the Olympic baseball boulder, laboring mightily to put it over the top and onto the field as a demonstration program in 1932's Los Angeles Olympiad. Ultimately he lost out in the quest for one of the limited number of demonstration spots to football and lacrosse. Nice sports, football and lacrosse, but in 1932 they were nowhere near as much a part of the American ethos as *The National Pastime*.

So it was back to the beginning. With support and encouragement from Louisville Slugger baseball bat manufacturer Frank Bradsby and others who embraced his vision, Mann immediately set about politicking for a

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*M.E. TRAVAGLINI works for the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C.; this is his first TNP appearance.*

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ticipate in State Trials this fall, as there will be no State Trials conducted in 1936. This ONE registration will carry team through Regional and Final Championships, so register with your State Olympic Commissioner NOW.

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339 Old Federal Building

Miami, Florida

spot on the 1936 program, gaining the endorsement of the American Olympic Committee for the baseball governing body he'd created, the fledgling U.S.A. Baseball Congress (later the American Baseball Congress), and explaining his already far-flung network of baseball contacts, in the U.S. and overseas.

His diligence paid off in November 1934, when Dr. Carl Diem of the German Olympic organizing committee officially invited the American Olympic Committee to send a baseball team that would take part in a demonstration contest. The opponent? Japan, which was said to have issued a "challenge" to the U.S. through the German organizers. Les Mann had probably arranged the challenge, for there was a telling kicker: The Americans were also invited to send an amateur team to the Orient sometime in 1935 for a series of contests with various Nippon nines. It would be a kind of Olympic warmup—good for the players, but better for the organizers. It would be a snap to arrange financial backing for a tour that was bound to produce publicity and reflective glory for sponsors who then could be kept on the hook through the 1936 Olympics (and perhaps beyond).

That support would be critical. Money to sustain a demonstration wouldn't be forthcoming from the AOC, not when the regular delegation's financing was going so poorly. So Mann had gone a-hustling, and it showed.

Hillerich and Bradsby were already in the fold, and now a certain cereal-maker might come forward if that Japan-bound team were named for its "Breakfast of Champions." Ergo, the 1935 "Wheaties All-Stars." But it was the backing (if not the imprimatur) of major league baseball that Mann coveted, so it was to the lords and masters of the American and National Leagues that he made his

most fervent pitch just before their winter meeting. From a practical standpoint, Mann's timing was good. His "Wheaties All-Stars" were fresh back from their successful Japan tour. From a tactical standpoint, however, he couldn't have picked a less propitious moment. The movement to boycott the German Games was gaining strength. Support for such a boycott had led a Rasputin-like existence, gaining life and conditional AAU endorsement one moment, losing it the next as athletic officials and fundraisers of all stripes were whipsawed by public opinion and political maneuvering. Charges of anti-Semitism in the Third Reich would be alleged and then refuted by men who plainly lied in order to preserve the "sanctity" of the Olympic Movement. (For a fascinating account of the 1936 Olympic boycott campaign, see Richard Mandell's *The Nazi Olympics*.) If there are any universal characteristics of owners of sports teams, one surely must be a horror of controversy and its potential for slowing the turnstiles.

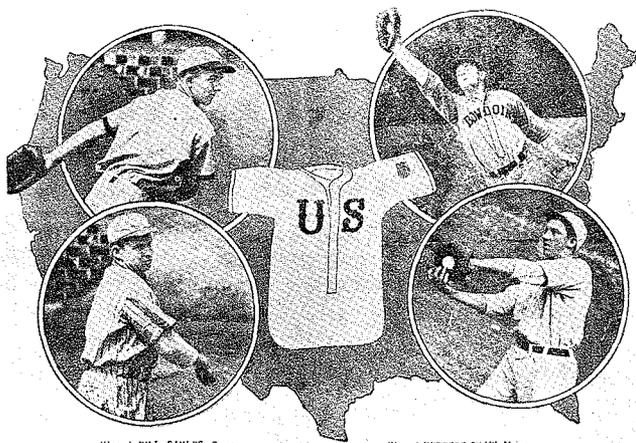
Connie Mack denied it, but in turning down Mann's request for \$20,000 to send an amateur team to the Olympics, the owners clearly wanted to put some distance between *their* brand of athletic endeavor and the highly charged, politicized creature the Olympics had become. Another reason for the owners' action may have been that

*Les Mann*



## Here From Four Corners Of Nation To Seek Olympic Places

SAYLES



(Upper) BILL SAYLES, Oregon.  
(Lower) FRED HERINGER, California.  
These young amateur ball players are here competing for places on the United States Olympic team. The shirt is the official one adopted for the uniform of the team that will play in Berlin.

they simply didn't like Mann, whom they viewed as a maverick. In 1914 Mann, an outfielder for the Miracle Braves, had jumped to the upstart Federal League. His involvement in the abortive players' strike during the 1918 World Series did little to endear him to management, either. Mann also liked being at the center of attention. Even today, he's remembered by the U.S. Olympic Committee's Bob Paul as one whose ego needed no boosting. "He was a hot dog," says Paul. "With the mustard."

Mann had committed the cardinal sin of letting his ambition show. He must have seen in amateur baseball the opportunity to gain a position of power with Organized Baseball. How? "It is no secret that stirring up interest in baseball for amateurs is one way of digging up a lot of prospective professional players later on," wrote *The Sporting News*' John Connolly at the time of the Olympic invitation. So like the whimsical Golden Rule ("He Who Has the Gold, Rules"), he who digs up the most players gains the most stature. Mann knew where the best amateurs were. He had his Miami Baseball School, one of the first of its kind. And now he was preparing a spot for himself atop the supply of amateur baseball talent.

The major league owners' vote was a bitter setback, but the vision still lived. The resolute Mann would tinker with his original plans for assembling his Olympic baseball contingent, plugging in hustle and resourcefulness where the dollars couldn't cover. And if the passage to Baltimore and Berlin was proving more roundabout than he wished, he was definitely getting there.

### THE BOYS OF BALTIMORE, AND MORE

And so was Bill Sayles, though his route to Baltimore was more circuitous than that of any other player trying out. The University of Oregon's righthander was a big, raw-boned speedballer whose promise had attracted several pro offers that until now, on the eve of the trials, he'd decided to pass up. Until, that is, his Olympic expense money literally dissolved.

"I read in the paper where they were gonna have a tryout in Baltimore," remembers Sayles, who is recently retired from scouting in the Cardinal organization.

So I got my college coach and a couple other college coaches up north to write the newspapers and nominate me. I had written to Les Mann and he said it would cost me \$500 if I went to Europe with the team and I'd have to pay my way to Baltimore, plus my hotel and meals and everything. I got this sportswriter on the local paper here in Portland to put out an appeal, in his column, to the semipro fans—I'd played quite a bit in Portland as a semipro—and he called me one day to say he had \$400 or \$500 that had already been turned in. So I went down to his office to get it and it's all in checks. Now, this was a Friday, so I brought it home to keep until the banks opened on Monday. So I put them in one of the vases my mother kept in the house. She must've had dozens of them, all empty. Well, wouldn't you know, but she cut some flowers, put 'em in the same vase and poured water in it. Just ruined all those checks.

So I called Earl Sheeley, the Red Sox' Pacific Coast scout. I'd been offered a contract with them and a signing bonus—\$4,000. At the time, it was the highest they'd ever offered. Well, I told him I was in a fix and so he came on up. Old Avery Brundage will probably turn over in his grave, but we signed the contract and I got the money to go back East to the Olympic tryouts.

But the Red Sox wanted me to join them right away and I did. I went straight to Cleveland and for two weeks I traveled with the big boys, working out and pitching batting practice. As soon as the game would start, they'd give me a ticket and I'd get dressed and go up and sit in the stands.

So after two weeks, I went on to Baltimore for the tryouts. Did Les Mann know? Heck, no. I didn't tell anybody and the Red Sox certainly didn't want anyone to know it either, because I was going to college on a scholarship and I was going back to school after the Olympics.

Fourteen Olympians would emerge out of these Baltimore tryouts. Most were collegians, like their 1984 counterparts. They were: Stanford's Fred Heringer, Gordon Mallatratt, and Dick Hanna; the University of Oregon's Sayles; USC's Tom Downey; Hubert "Bill" Shaw of Bowdoin College; Clarence Keegan, University of Maine; Ron Hibbard, Western State Teacher's College; Coe's Grover Galvin; Paul Amen, University of Nebraska; Emmett "Tex" Fore of the University of Texas; and Herman Goldberg, Brooklyn College. Dow Wilson and Les McNeece, two Floridians, were not collegians.

A few of the 1936 candidates already knew Les Mann. Dow Wilson and Herm Goldberg had been to the Miami Baseball School Mann operated with former big-league player and manager Max Carey. So had Les McNeece. He had also been one of the "Wheaties All-Stars," the team Mann brought to Japan in '35, along with fellow Olympians Heringer, Hibbard and Fore. McNeece, one of thirteen surviving members of the 1936 Olympic team, chuckles at the memory of his becoming part of that trip:

The way I got on that Japan tour was like this. Mann and Max [Carey] were looking for ballplayers. And they wanted to have no more than one per state. So they came up to Ft. Lauderdale on two different occasions to watch me play and they told the people who were running the team there they'd like to take me to Japan. In other words, I was sure to go. But how they were

supposed to work this, see, you were supposed to get votes. And a vote was a top from a box of Wheaties. That's why we were called the "Wheaties All-Stars." If I got just one vote, they said, I'd go. Well, it so happened that there'd been a recent hurricane down in the Keys that wiped things out. So the people in Ft. Lauderdale and around the area bought Wheaties by the case, took the tops off, gave 'em to me for votes and sent the Wheaties down to the Keys to the people who didn't have anything to eat. I don't know how many they sent, but it turns out I was the second highest, after a guy from Cleveland. And he worked for General Mills.

The remainder of the Olympians had been recommended or referred by one or more of Mann's vast network of baseball contacts, a few of whom were on hand in Baltimore. On the selection committee, for instance, there were Judson Hyames, who'd coached Ron Hibbard at Western State Teachers' College (now Western Michigan University) and Linn Wells, Shaw's coach at Bowdoin. The laconic, severe-looking Harry Wolter, a former major leaguer who coached the three Stanford boys at the trials—Heringer, Mallatratt, and Hanna—served as Mann's field general. If the administrative and promotional end of the baseball excursion was Mann's, the activity on the field was Wolter's.

After three exhibition contests against local "all-star" teams, the Baltimore tryout sessions broke up. The fourteen selected for the team traveled to New York, where they were joined by another five ballplayers who were affiliated with Philadelphia's Penn Athletic Club: pitchers Charlie Simons and Carson Thompson; shortstop Rolf "Swede" Carlsten; third baseman Earnest Eddowes; and right fielder Curt Myers. All were older than the Boys of Baltimore, some considerably. Myers, for example, had graduated from the Naval Academy in 1927, where he'd pitched and captained the Navy nine. Now a commissioned officer stationed at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, he, like the others, was drawn to the Penn Athletic Club by the opportunity to continue playing baseball now that his collegiate experience was behind him. They were a more than welcome addition to the Olympic baseball contingent, especially since the Berlin game itself shaped up as an intrasquad affair since the Japanese would not be sending a team after all. The twentieth player—the last but one—to join the expedition was Henry Wagnon, a catcher from the University of Georgia recommended by the Ogelthorpe College coach, someone whose judgment Mann respected.

Now in New York, staying at the Hotel Lincoln, the baseballers were beginning to get a taste of Olympic excitement. Mingling with the likes of celebrities Joe E. Brown and Jack Dempsey will do that to most folks. At least one of the baseball players, however, was getting a closer look at Olympic excitement—the controversial side—than he would have liked.

Herman Goldberg was then a Brooklyn College outfielder and catcher with a yearning to play the latter position in the majors. If the ability wasn't quite there, he

was nonetheless "the kind of guy you'd like to have on your club," according to Bill Sayles. Now an education administrator living near the nation's capital, this soft-spoken gentleman of modest height if not weight was also one of only five Jewish athletes in the entire American delegation, and the only one on the baseball team. For that, he would be subjected to the pressures of those who would mount an eleventh hour campaign bent on keeping the U.S. out of the Olympic Games. At the hotel he received calls "from a newsman who kept questioning me on why I would go to Berlin" in the face of the boycott movement.

He said he was asking my support along with the other Jewish athletes on the team to form a committee to go to Avery Brundage and add our voices to those who wished the Games boycotted. This newsman who contacted me, [Bernard] Postal, was with something called the Seven Arts Feature Syndicate. He kept up a barrage of telephone calls to my room and notes in my hotel mailbox and telegrams. Whether he contacted the other Jewish athletes or not, I don't know. Perhaps I just wasn't interested in spreading the word that I'd been contacted, but I did talk to Leslie Mann to tell him that I was being harassed and he told me he'd look into it.

The team moved on to Berlin and the Olympic Village, but not beyond Postal's reach, as Goldberg soon discovered.

# Olympic Baseball Trials



## RUTH BABE

Calls the  
American Boy  
to Represent  
His Country

in its

## NATIONAL GAME

LES MANN and BABE RUTH  
snapped at a recent meeting to discuss plans for trip to Berlin

OLYMPIC  
Baseball Committee

BABE RUTH  
Commander in Chief

JUDGE FREDERICK L. HOFFMAN—  
Chairman, Cincinnati, Ohio  
LESLIE MANN—Secretary and Treasurer,  
Miami, Florida  
DR. EDGAR FAIVEL, Wesleyan University,  
Connecticut  
DAN CRAIG, New York City, N. Y.  
FRANK ANDERSON, Oglethorpe University,  
Georgia  
BOY CRAFFT, Springfield, Massachusetts  
J. B. HAPPESETT, Houston, Texas  
GEORGE LAYO, Penn. Athletic Club,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
HARRY WOLTER, Stanford University,  
Palo Alto, California  
O. G. EFFLEY, Indianapolis, Indiana  
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ISA THOMAS, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
CHARLES WERGO, Baltimore, Maryland  
JACK COPPEL, Fuglian University, New  
York City, N. Y.  
W. CLEMSON, University of Florida,  
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MORLEY JENNINGS, Baylor University,  
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**Greatest Goal ever Won by the American Boy in Baseball—Limited Time to Register—Rush Applications—EVERY NON-PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL PLAYER IN THE UNITED STATES IS ELIGIBLE—Probable Location for Trials**

**Palo Alto, Cal. - - Des Moines, Ia. - - Baltimore, Md.**  
**June 20-30      June 20-30      July 1-12**

Sailing Date July 15th

United States vs France, Olympic Stadium, Berlin, Germany, August 12th  
Patriotism should stimulate Chambers of Commerce, Civic Clubs, Athletic Clubs, and Associations to back their sons to these Olympic Trials.

Application Blank for Olympic Baseball Trials

MAIL TODAY.      Date .....

This application registers player for Olympic Baseball Entry Blank, which will be mailed to player upon receipt of this application. It is understood that the Entry Fee is \$20.00 and will be sent with the returned Entry Blank promptly upon receipt. All entry fees will only be returned to player. Full details relative to the Olympic and Olympic Trials should be obtained from the U.S. Olympic Committee, 100 American Century Building, New York City, N. Y.

Name .....

Address .....

City or Town .....

City of Birth .....

OLYMPIC BASEBALL COMMITTEE

MIAMI, FLORIDA

He wrote me at least twice when I was at the Olympic Village and suggested that I take good notes and that I follow up all kinds of events that might indicate anti-Semitic actions and report them to him. I decided on my own, without discussing it with anyone else, not to answer those letters.

## BERLIN BOUND

With the young Olympic baseball team, its managers, two umpires, and publicist aboard and settled in among the other 470 or so American athletes and officials (the athletes in third-class accommodations), the SS Manhattan embarked on Wednesday, July 15, shortly past noon, for its first port of call, LeHavre, France. The athletes were quarantined to ship upon docking—although four of the baseball players skipped ship—and then it was on to Hamburg and, finally, the Olympic Village and Berlin.

The baseball team found their accommodations in the Olympic Village much to their liking—understandably so. With perhaps the foremost authority on sports and sports history of this or any modern generation, Dr. Carl Diem, in charge of the Germans' Olympic preparations, no detail was too small, no expense was too great, and no effort was too demanding to achieve what from an organizational standpoint is arguably the greatest Olympiad in history. His Olympic Village was proof enough. Diem's plans had central meeting halls and dining facilities amidst clusters of houses, each named for a German city, depending upon which had helped finance its construction. (The baseball

*Berlin batting practice: Galvin at bat, Wagnon catching.*



team was quartered in Brandenburg Haus, and above the players' beds were photographs of scenes in and around their "host" city.) The houses held a couple of dozen men each, in double rooms. Lakes and birch groves contributed to the bucolic nature of the compound.

"That Olympic Village looked like a fairyland," Tex Fore recalls, "with these white stucco buildings and red tile roofs. And aspen trees, poplar trees that were in the area. They had fancy cafeterias and dining rooms with food from whichever country you were from. I tell you, it was ideal, just a beautiful, beautiful spot. But it was obvious that the entire thing was there for some other purpose. They were in such a military state of affairs. There were military groups passing us all the time, training, what have you. The [village] served the Olympics, but I thought even then that there was some ulterior motive and that it was being built for the German army."

"An event that bothered me," Herm Goldberg remembers, "was when I discovered that there was a back stairs to a basement quarters in Brandenburg Haus. It had a chain across. I opened the door anyway and with one of my teammates went down the stairs to a very, very large basement. There wasn't a thing in it, but there were overhead garage doors there of a size so mammoth I'd never seen anything like them. Later I found out that the village, all the big buildings, all the mess quarters and everything else, was to be combined into what you might call the West Point of Germany. They were to train officers there for the War. And those big garage doors, they could open to let out tanks, the Panzer Corps, up the driveways to the fields where they could practice maneuvers.

"The full impact of that didn't hit me until a later time. But I had been observed and I was scolded by the man and the woman who were the *hausfrau* and *hausmann*—the two resident German citizens who were in charge of our dormitory—and I was told never to go down there again."

It was at the Olympic Village that the twenty-first and last player selected for the baseball team caught up with his group. Norman "Ike" Livermore was then a six-foot-five catcher who'd played for Harry Wolter at Stanford until graduating in 1933. Ike had kept up with his coach and when Wolter learned he was going to Europe in '36 anyway, he asked his former varsity captain to stop by the Olympic Village and play some ball. And so he did. "I just showed up at the Olympic Village," says Livermore, now in his seventies. "I brought my spikes and my mitt, as I recall, and then Harry furnished the rest of the uniform. And then I worked out with the team, of course, for a week or ten days. Then I played in the game and that was it. No, I'd never even met Les Mann before I got there," he laughs, "but he knew I was coming."

## GAME TIME

"That group," former *Washington Post* sports columnist Shirley Povich said not long ago of the 1936 Olympic



*The baseball team outside the Olympic Village residence*

baseball team, “has got to be the most obscure group of athletes imaginable.” Even then, sportswriters “weren’t very much aware of the baseball effort. No one was. Why? Because they didn’t have anybody to beat. There was no Russia to beat, no Germany. I mean, who were they going to *beat*?” The players had known since Baltimore that theirs would be an intrasquad game; it didn’t bother them. They and Mann were more concerned about how they’d be received by their audience, for if the Germans knew what they were getting when they made space for baseball in their Olympiad, it didn’t show.

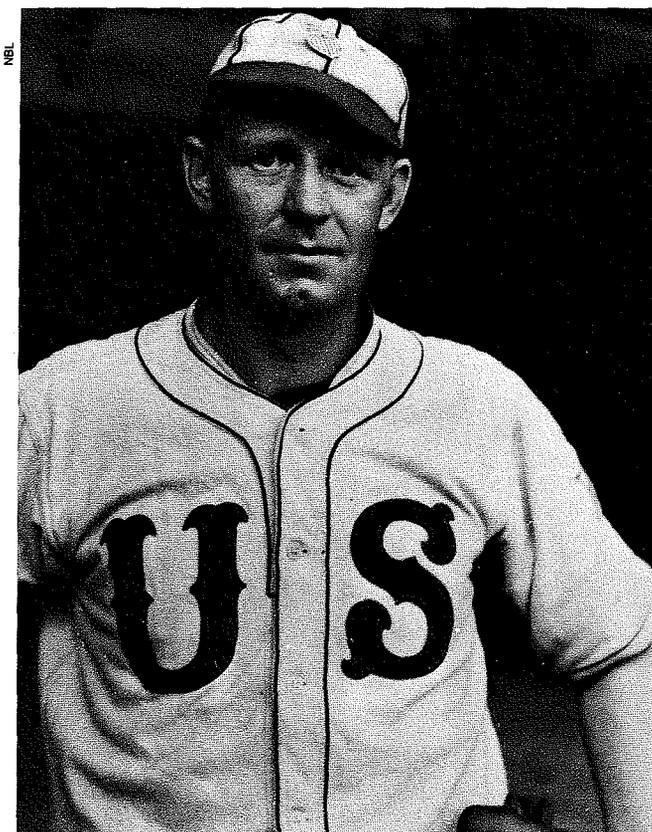
The *Guide Book to the Celebration of the XIth Olympiad* footnoted its baseball preview with the exciting news that “The probable participation of a band from California will give an especially festive air to this event. The band will parade in the Stadium before the beginning of the game and during the interval, as is customary in America.” No detail was too small for Dr. Carl Diem’s attention during the course of the exhaustive study he’d conducted—first-hand—of the preceding Olympiad in Los Angeles. He had just figured that American games had marching bands, like the one he’d seen during an exhibition of that other object of our sporting affections, football.

But the Germans’ baseball naïveté wasn’t limited to

what marches go best with a pitching change. There was about a lifetime of schooling to do before the game to produce the kind of enthusiasm Mann calculated would sell the International Olympic Committee on the idea of putting The National Pastime on the Olympic program in 1940. So in typical American can-do fashion, he and his tag-along publicist buddy, Miami *Herald* sports editor Dinty Dennis, swung into action.

Clinics were conducted in the weeks leading up to Game Day involving various German sports organizations. “There was a series in a local newspaper that I remember,” says Herman Goldberg. “It was in German, and the headline read ‘Baseball: Was es Das?’ Then the story went on to explain how difficult it would be to understand baseball, so they were publishing a week-long series on how to watch a baseball game. I remember their giving the names of the positions, in German of course. Left field, for instance, translated *linkausen*, meaning ‘way out in the left side.’ Center field was *mittelausen* and right was *rechtausen*. A pitcher was *der werfen* (the ‘thrower-in’) and a catcher was a *fangen*. They couldn’t come up with a word for our shortstop position, though, so it remained *shortstop*.”

A tough one, shortstop. Tough to describe his duties, anyway. But the best German minds went to work and



Carson Thompson

decided he was the one player “with the right to assume any position within the playing field.” So what if they made him sound like a Kama Sutra League All-Star?

Other little tidbits: The diamond was called a *rhombus*, the bases in translation turned out to be “points of refuge,” and first-, second- and third-sackers were called, respectively, *einmal*, *sweimal* and *dreimal*, which translate as “first-time,” “second-time,” and “third-time.”

And so, the public was primed for baseball’s 1936 Olympic audition.

### SALUTE DISPUTE

It was August 12. The players dressed that Wednesday, Game Day, at Brandenburg Haus No. 91, their dormitory in the men-only Olympic Village. The overall American squad had been divided into two teams, who for the purposes of this exhibition would go by the ambitious monikers, “U.S.A. Olympics” and “World’s Champions,” or *Weltmeisters*. Both teams were attired in the same natty, cream-colored flannel uniforms highlighted by big, bright red U.S. letters on the front and numerals on the back of the shirts, which along with the pants were accented by blue piping, and either blue or red stockings.

Finished dressing, the entourage boarded buses for the eleven-mile ride to the main stadium at *Reichssportfeld*, traveling—as always—past uniformed personnel, soldiers perhaps, standing at regular intervals along the

roadside. Turning into the sports complex, it was clear that Mann and Dennis had succeeded in mustering an audience of truly Olympian proportions, an audience abuzz—if somewhat unsure—about what they were to see.

Much of the publicity surrounding that game stems from the size of the crowd it attracted. Some accounts put the figure at 125,000 (also the figure Les Mann used in his report to the U.S. Olympic Committee). Some reported a somewhat smaller crowd of 90,000. In either case, it’s still the largest ever to witness a baseball game, except perhaps for the 1959 World Series games played at the L.A. Coliseum. (Capacity for the stadium was officially listed at 100,000.)

Why the crowd was so large is anybody’s guess. It was rumored that Hitler had ordered the German people to pack the stadium, that it was a matter of national pride. But there’s no doubt that German curiosity about all things Olympic—including baseball—contributed to the turnout. “Yeah, it was a sellout,” mused Tex Fore. “But they might’ve had a sellout for an Olympic rooster fight.”

As 7 p.m. approached, the appointed hour for the baseball game to begin, the stadium lights went to black for dramatic effect. The players on the two teams—huddling in runways at opposite ends of the stadium—felt a jolt of nervous energy as two spotlights came on, tracking them as team introductions were made at the center of the infield portion of the oval, where a baseball diamond of sorts had been laid out. “You know, for me that was the most exciting part of the contest,” Grover Galvin recalls. “We came trotting out onto the field—maybe five, ten yards apart—from both ends. They’d turned out all the lights except for those two spotlights, and since I was the shortest on my team (the U.S.A. Olympics), I was the first one out and I’ll tell you, that was quite a thrill. There was a *lot* of clapping.”

After a military band’s rendition of the American national anthem—the Organizing Committee had overcome their original confusion about marching bands—the two teams, as one, offered their hosts and the assembled the Olympic salute. At least, that’s what they believed.

American Olympic officials had been concerned about how the delegation might wave to the crowd—during opening ceremonies and at special events, such as the one about to unfold—without appearing to be saluting *der Führer*. Avery Brundage suggested “something typically American, such as doffing hats and placing them over the heart,” and that was that. When translated into practical terms, however, the American wave became a kind of right-handed frisbee toss—with the dress uniform straw boater in place of a frisbee—frozen for a moment at what would be the point of release before drawing the hat back and to rest over the heart. The hats, the reasoning went, guaranteed that the gesture wouldn’t be mistaken for a Nazi salute.



ber that [it] was anchored back of third base," says Ike Livermore, who batted sixth for the "home" team, "and I got a couple of hits and was knocked in. But once when I tried to come home, I tripped on those anchor ropes and fell right on my can."

"No, there was no mound," says Fred Heringer, starting pitcher for the U.S.A. Olympics. The pitchers worked from a rubber, but without a mound, a somewhat disconcerting condition that Bill Sayles, a hurler with a reputation for wildness, hardly needed. And the batters hardly wanted. "He had the speed of a Bob Feller or Nolan Ryan," Tex Fore now says of Sayles, "only he was like that goofy cat, Ryne Duren. You didn't know whether he was gonna throw it in front of you or behind you." Bad news for the U.S.A. Olympics—Sayles was starting for the World's Champions.

Grover Galvin, 5-8 and 160 pounds, led off for the Olympics, batting left handed. "I was the lead-off batter, right. But in the first inning, why it was so dark you couldn't even see the ball." Dick Hanna remembers,

I played in right field that night and the lights were so poor that from the playing surface, any ball hit above 50 feet became invisible. One time, I heard the crack of the bat and by the way the infield was looking, I knew the ball was heading my direction, but it had disappeared in the dark. So I stood absolutely still, not knowing which way to go and all of a sudden, the ball appeared out of the black. I moved my glove no more than an inch and the ball just plopped in. I was glad that was the only one that came my way.

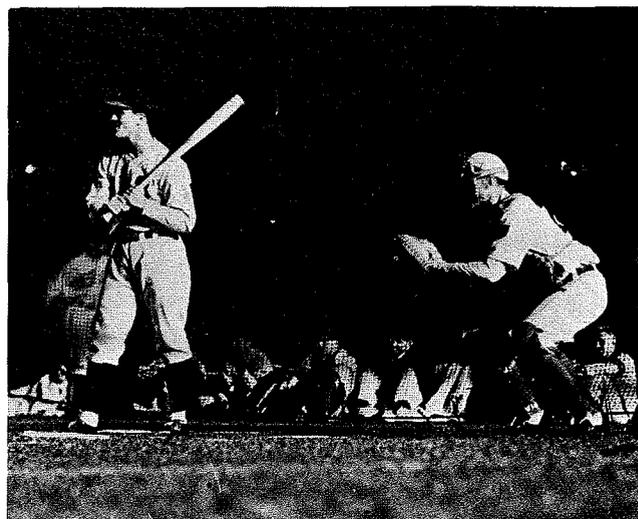
Heringer says, "We pitchers were told that if we ever opened up, they'd pull us out of the game. But we did the best we could with half-speed curves."

So with a couple of trips to where the mound ought to have been, the word was delivered: Slow it down. "I remember Harry Wolter walked out to talk to Fred Heringer," says Gordy Mallatratt. "He was throwing little peas at the plate and Harry said 'You gotta let 'em hit it, Fred. Don't throw too hard.'"

In a soft, lyrical drawl that makes "first" sound something like "foist," Georgia native Henry Wagon, catching Fred Heringer and batting eighth for the "visitors" that night, remembers being robbed of a home run. "Trouble was, I hit the ball to left field, where there was no fence, really, just the stands beyond the track. And it was way out there, but some fan hopped down from the stands and threw it back into the field of play and I got held to a triple. He was just trying to be helpful, I guess."

### CROWD RESPONSE

Tiny Parker, the ump behind the plate, soon became a focal point for the spectators and a real crowd pleaser. "He put on quite a show," Galvin remembers. "He'd make a lot of noise when he called a strike or ball." Newspaper accounts said the Germans liked the way Parker yelled "bawl one, bawl two" in his booming voice, earning him a



The only game photo, Shaw batting, Livermore catching

great laugh each time. Joe Williams, writing in the *New York World Telegram*, said that "To the Germans, the most amusing performer on the field was the umpire in back of the plate—not only amusing but the most popular. To begin with, they enjoyed his brisk actions, and for some reason, they detected a note of broad comedy in his booming voice. What made him their close personal friend was the gesture he used in calling runners safe. This resembled the Nazi salute so closely they must have assumed he was in full sympathy with the Nazi doctrine."

The reaction of the crowd left the players with the distinct impression that baseball had a ways to go before Germans would take to it as Americans did. "If anyone popped up to the infield and ran like crazy to get to first base, the crowd went mad," Bill Shaw explains. "Here's somebody running down to first base and the crowd's cheering—and it's a pop-up! But belt one out beyond second and go for extra bases and there's no reaction at all."

Which was precisely the way the crowd behaved when the lefthand-hitting Shaw, batting third, managed an inside-the-park home run in the first inning, giving the U.S.A. Olympics the early lead, 2-0. "It was hit it and run," he remembers. "Nothing was hit out of the park."

Two runs later and the Olympics had come within one run of the World's Champions going into the seventh inning, which, it was announced to cheers, would be the last. Apparently the Olympic baseball brain trust—Mann and Wolter—had noticed that the audience was quickly thinning and those who remained were becoming less attentive with every pitch. Not even Tiny Parker's antics were going over now.

Another run in the visitors' half of the seventh tied things at 5 apiece. Which set the stage for Les McNeece to make Olympic history. "My mother and Dad were at home, listening to the radio that evening, and they heard on the news that a home run had been hit to win the game. And of course they hoped it was me that hit it." And

of course, it was. The winners: the World Champions, 6-5 on the strength of 9 hits. The losers, the Olympics, racked up 11 hits in the process of scoring 5 runs, but were charged with 6 errors to the Champs' none. The winning pitcher: Bill Sayles. Losing pitcher: Fred Heringer. Carson Thompson and Charlie Simons mopped up for Sayles and Heringer, respectively.

After McNeece's game-winner and a few hearty huzzahs on the sidelines in the interest of good sportsmanship, Dr. Diem took over. Earlier, he'd descended from the box where he and the delegates to the International Olympic Committee had been observing the contest to congratulate the players and their coaches. Now, he summoned them to the area around second base, where a microphone had been brought out. Speaking to the assembled, he told them what all had hoped for: "I have come officially to advise you that this has been the finest demonstration of any sport that any nation has ever put on at any Olympic Games. We congratulate you and, speaking for my people, you have made over 100,000 friends here tonight, and as they go home, America's baseball players' praises will be sung by all."

#### PRIDE AND PRESS REACTION

First, however, another round of the American anthem was sung. As the brass band struck up a number starting off the postgame concert, the troupe made their way to the exits and homeward to Brandenburg Haus in the Olympic Village. Paul Amen, who scored the World Champs' fourth run to knot the score during their three-run sixth, wrote in his diary that it had been "a great demonstration." Excited and happy, he and his fellow baseballers kept up the chatter until retiring around 2:30 a.m.

While they slept, the American newsmen covering the exhibition were delivering a less enthusiastic interpretation of events in the stories they wired stateside. Accounts filed by Paul Gallico and Henry McLemore had a particularly mocking tone, the latter writing: "If one of the chief purposes of the Olympics is to create better understanding among nations, then America would have been wise to have done everything in its power to prevent the exhibition baseball game . . ." The *New York Times* story noted that "There is reason to believe that Germany has been made immune to baseball . . ." Joe Williams wrote that Les Mann "admitted he was a bit hurt when the people cheered high fouls in back of the plate and surrendered to violent fits of laughter when a grounder rolled through a shortstop's underpinnings. 'We underrated the Germans' sense of humor,' grumbled Mr. Mann. 'What we should have done was bring the Brooklyns.'"

Lynn Doyle, writing in the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, was more circumspect: "The Germans can't make heads or tails out of a game of baseball. That's easily explained. There are two sides to every baseball story."

Another Philadelphia writer, noting the early departure of many of the spectators, reportedly said it made him homesick, reminding him of Shibe Park.

But Williams also wrote "This is not to say the game lacked any of its intrinsic charm and vigor. It simply was that the people didn't know what it was all about."

"Even under the poor lights and poor circumstances, we still got the opportunity to show people what baseball is all about," Fred Heringer says now. And enough had been shown to convince the IOC to put baseball on the Olympic program in 1940. That Olympiad would be held in Japan, it had already been announced, and in the process of organizing an international governing body, the International Baseball Federation, Mann signed up enough nations—sixteen plus Hawaii—to permit a full-fledged baseball tournament. *The Sporting News* editorialized:

From a superficial standpoint, baseball's introduction as an Olympic sport might be regarded as disappointing. However, from a broader aspect, the event represents definite gains for the game. The pioneer in any line of activity . . . often encounters difficulty, apathy and even ridicule. Such has been the lot of Leslie Mann . . . who in the face of many obstacles, has persevered in his idea that baseball can be made an Olympic and international sport. To Mann, and to those who helped him carry out his initial venture at Berlin, all credit is due for a definite step forward in behalf of the game.

There was no question in Bill Shaw's mind about the significance of that game and the resultant IOC action. Not long before his death at age sixty-nine he said, "We understood why we were there. We were representing the United States and our national sport. Without the events that interfered with the 1940 Olympics, baseball would now be as much a part of the regular Olympic program as soccer is. Yes, we were baseball ambassadors."

#### POSTSCRIPT

On Tuesday, July 31, 1984, six of the 1936 baseball Olympians met for a reception in the Los Angeles Dodgers' stadium club. The reunion marked the forty-eighth anniversary of the "first" Olympic baseball game. Dick Hann, "Tex" Fore, Tom Downey, Gordy Mallatratt, Herm Goldberg, and Paul Amen were present. Bill Shaw, who because of surgery was forced to cancel his plans to attend, phoned instead for a conversation with his teammates. Two nights later, the Los Angeles Angels played host to another gathering, introducing the honored guests via the stadium scoreboard during their game with the Twins. "The crowd responded warmly," writes Paul Amen. "We have agreed to get together for our 100th anniversary in 2036."

On Tuesday, August 7, the United States lost in the championship game of the Olympic baseball tournament to the Japanese team.

Les Mann's vision lives.

*Phenoms, flashes, comets, and graybeards touched by grace.*

# The Unlikely Heroes of 1970

DON ZMINDA

**E**VERY BASEBALL SEASON is unique. Close pennant races, outstanding individual performances, and weird happenings like the "pine tar" incident of 1983 all serve to give the game its special flavor. To its loyal fans the game is always new, always full of surprises.

Looking back, the season of 1970 seems to have been a fairly conventional one. The four divisional champions, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and Minnesota, were among the strongest of the period. Only the National League East produced a good pennant race, with the Pirates beating out the Cubs by five games. The Reds and Orioles each swept its Championship Series in three straight games, and then Baltimore crushed Cincinnati in a five game series remembered for the outstanding third base play of Brooks Robinson. On an individual level, there were some excellent performances, notably by league MVPs Johnny Bench and Boog Powell, but no real all-out assaults on the record books. Except for a torrid batting race in which Alex Johnson took the American League title by less than a point over Carl Yastrzemski, one might conclude that 1970 was hardly memorable.

Below the surface, however, something happened in 1970 that is truly strange. A number of players, most of them veterans who had been around long enough to show their limitations, became "overnight sensations," hitting as they never had before nor would ever after. One might say that 1970 was the "year of the unlikely hero." A look at these players and their achievements reveals a fascinating chapter in the game's history.

**Luis Aparicio** Our first player seems a curious choice, especially in view of his 1984 election to the Hall of Fame. Certainly Luis deserved that honor as one of the

best fielding shortstops ever. In addition, he did much to revive the art of base stealing, winning a total of nine theft crowns. As a hitter, though, Aparicio was respectable and nothing more. Only once in the course of an eighteen year career did his batting average rise above .280. The one exception was 1970.

At the time there was no reason to expect Luis ever to hit .300. In his second tour of duty with the White Sox, Aparicio was thirty-six and beginning to show signs of slowing down in the field and on the bases; his stolen base total in 1970, 8, marked the first time he had ever swiped less than 17. With the bat, he had been up and down during the four previous campaigns, batting .276, .233, .254, and .280. If the aging process wasn't enough of a handicap, playing for the 1970 White Sox must have hampered him even more. The Sox finished last behind two second-year expansion clubs, losing a team-record 106 games.

All that considered, Aparicio's performance in 1970 is truly remarkable. He hit solidly all season long, finishing at .313, the fourth highest average in the American League. That was a career best by a whopping 33 points, and was 51 points over his lifetime average. He banged out 173 hits, a total which he had surpassed only in 1966, when he'd had over 100 more at bats. Aparicio also showed surprising power, knocking out 29 doubles for a personal high.

Based on those totals, it appeared that Aparicio might have discovered some batting secrets late in his baseball

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*DON ZMINDA of Evanston, Ill., has entertained several SABR gatherings with his diagnoses of the Cubs' malaise.*

career. The Boston Red Sox apparently thought so, making a trade for Luis after the season was over. But though he was now playing for a much better team in a hitters' ballpark, Aparicio's average tumbled 81 points to .232. His slugging percentage dropped by 101 points to an anemic .303. Aparicio retired after two more seasons in which he batted .257 and .271. His 1970 batting glory never returned.

**Bert Campaneris** If Aparicio's statistics in '70 were baffling, those of this other longtime American League shortstop were even more so. Campaneris has had a career strangely similar to Aparicio's. Both were Latin-born—Luis in Venezuela, Bert in Cuba; both had long careers at shortstop—Luis, eighteen seasons, Bert one more; Luis led the league in stolen bases nine times, Bert six. Moreover, Aparicio's career batting average was .262, his slugging average .343; Campaneris' figures were .259 and .342. Aparicio hit 83 lifetime home runs, Campaneris 79.

And both did unlikely things with the bat in 1970. For Little Looie it was his only year as a .300 hitter; for Campy, his only season as a slugger. Curiously, Campaneris had tied a record when he hit his first major league pitch for a home run; he homered later in the same game to tie another rookie mark. But after that he became a singles hitter, totaling only 24 homers during his first six seasons, with a high of 6 in 1965. But then came 1970. He belted 22 circuit clouts, the third highest total on an Oakland team that included such sluggers as Reggie Jackson, Sal Bando, Rick Monday, Don Mincher, and Joe Rudi (Jackson only managed 23). Campy's slugging percentage of .448—87 points higher than his previous best—also put him among the club leaders. In addition he drove in 64 runs despite batting leadoff; his previous high had been 42.

But before he could give many testimonials of his new-found strength, Campaneris returned to his previous form. His 1971 totals—5 homers, 47 RBIs, a .323 slugging average—set the tone for the rest of his career. Never again would he homer more than eight times in a season (in fact, it took him almost five full seasons to hit his *next* 22 homers) or drive in more than 52 runs. For Bert, it was a case of once a singles hitter, always a singles hitter—except once.

**Jim Hickman** Over in the National League, probably the biggest puzzler was Jim Hickman. Unlike Aparicio and Campaneris, who were legitimate stars, Hickman could be best described as a journeyman. A decent outfielder and first baseman with some home run power, Hickman was thirty-three in 1970 and had pretty much settled into a platoon role with the Cubs. In his eight seasons since breaking in with the original Mets in 1962, Hickman had never hit more than 21 home runs or driven in more than 57 runs. He hadn't batted higher than .238 since 1964, when he'd had his best average, .257. Although he had shown good power in the Cubs' heartbreak year of 1969—blasting 21 homers in only 338 at bats—

that had been accompanied by a .237 batting average. There was little reason to suspect that Jim Hickman was about to become a National League All Star.

But that was precisely what happened. Given a regular job at last—he split his 149 games between the outfield and first base—Hickman was a yearlong terror. His .315 batting average, a career best by 58 points, tied him for tenth in the National League. His 32 homers were also good for tenth. He was sixth in RBIs with 115. His slugging average was a mighty .582. He scored 102 runs, nearly doubling his previous best of 54. He also drew 93 walks, 46 more than ever before. And he topped it all off by driving in the winning run in the All Star Game. Playing in cozy Wrigley Field, it seemed possible that Hickman might remain a star. But Hickman never approached his 1970 totals. He quickly returned to his role as a useful platoon player, hitting 19 homers in 1971 and 17 in 1972. Those were good numbers, and his .256 and .272 batting averages were respectable, but Hickman's days as an All Star were over.

**Dick Dietz** This San Francisco Giant catcher was almost as unlikely a candidate for stardom as Hickman. Up until 1970, Dietz's main claim to fame had come in 1968, when he was unwittingly thrust into a controversy involving one of baseball's most cherished records, Walter Johnson's 56 consecutive scoreless innings pitched. Battering with the bases loaded against the Dodgers' Don Drysdale, whose scoreless inning streak had reached 54, Dietz was hit by a pitch, apparently forcing in the run that ended Drysdale's bid. But plate umpire Harry Wendelstedt invoked a seldom-called rule, saying that Dietz had made no effort to avoid the pitch, and called it a ball instead of a hit batsman. Given another chance, Drysdale retired Dietz, escaped the inning unscathed, and went on to break Johnson's record.

Other than that, though, Dietz had remained fairly anonymous. In four seasons he had never played regularly and had hit over .230 only once. His top marks in batting average and RBIs had come in 1968, when he batted .272 and drove in 38 runs; his best homer year had been 1969, when he hit 11. But then came 1970, and like Hickman, Dietz turned into an overnight All Star. Reaching personal highs in every major offensive category except stolen bases, he batted .300 with 22 home runs, 107 RBIs, a .515 slugging average, and 109 walks. Only twenty-nine, he appeared ready to justify the faith the Giants had shown when they gave him a reported \$90,000 bonus in 1960. But as with Hickman, his 1970 season was a once-in-a-lifetime thing. In 1971 his batting average tumbled 48 points to .252, though he still managed to show some power with 19 homers and 72 RBIs. In the spring of 1972, the Giants sold him to Los Angeles, where he broke his hand and batted only .161 in 27 games. Sold again in 1973, this time to the Braves, Dietz got his average back up to .295 in 139 at bats, but that wasn't enough to avoid an unconditional release the next spring.

**Clarence Gaston** Like Dietz, San Diego Padre outfielder Clarence Gaston was given his first fulltime major league job in 1970; like Dietz, his performance gave every indication that he was a star on the rise. Picked by the Padres in their original expansion draft, Gaston had batted only .230 with 2 homers and 28 RBIs in San Diego's maiden season of 1969. But in 1970 he put it all together. His average jumped 88 points to .318, the sixth best in the league. His 29 home runs were more than such sluggers as Willie Mays, Jim Wynn, and Ron Santo could produce. He drove home 93 runs and scored 92. At twenty-six, he was being touted by the Padres as the National League's best young player.

NBL (41)



Dick

Dietz

But as with the others, 1971 brought Gaston a heavy dose of reality. His average plummeted 90 points to .228; his homers and RBIs fell to 17 and 61. In 1972 he brought his average back up to .269, but with only 7 homers and 44 RBIs. After one more disappointing year he became a part time player and pinch hitter, a job which he performed splendidly. Retiring after the 1978 season with a .256 career mark for eleven campaigns, Gaston had reached personal bests in every single offensive category during his one great season.

**Wes Parker** The Los Angeles Dodgers were the only team to contribute two players to the list of unlikely heroes. One was a veteran who appeared to have finally found the secret of success, the other a youngster apparently headed for an outstanding career. The veteran, thirty-one-year-old Wes Parker, had been with the team since 1964. Known mostly for his nifty glove work around first base, Parker was handsome and articulate, qualities he would parlay into a television career after his retirement. In six previous seasons he had been a steady, unspectacular performer, with career highs of 68 RBIs and a .278 average, both achieved in 1969. But in 1970 he was spectacular. Topping his best previous average by 41 points, Parker batted .319, fifth best in the National League. Despite hitting only 10 homers, he drove in 111 runs. His 47 doubles led the league.

Parker attributed his surge to psychocybernetics, a theory that involved forming a clear mental picture of success and then letting the subconscious work toward achieving it. The picture must have gotten a little cloudy after 1970. After chalking up averages of .274 and .279 with 62 and 59 RBIs in '71 and '72, Parker abruptly retired to pursue show business. He was a .267 lifetime hitter.

**Billy Grabarkewitz** For Parker's teammate Billy Grabarkewitz, 1970 was essentially his whole career. Only

twenty-four at the time, Grabarkewitz had led three minor leagues in walks and two in runs scored and stolen bases, but a fractured leg suffered in 1968 had slowed his progress. Finally making the Dodgers in 1969, he had managed only 6 hits in 65 at bats for an .092 average. But the next year he burst upon the major league scene in a big way. Playing three infield positions but mostly at third, Billy G. made the All Star team. He batted a solid .289 with 17 homers, 84 RBIs, 92 runs scored, 95 walks and 19 stolen bases. With two young third basemen named Steve Garvey and Ron Cey in their minor league system, the Dodgers must have envisioned the versatile Grabarkewitz as the logical successor to Maury Wills at shortstop.

But injuries soon derailed his career. In 1971 he hurt his arm, appearing in only 44 games and batting .225. The next year it was a shoulder injury which limited him to 53 games and a .167 average. Billy lasted three more years as a utilityman for several teams, never batting higher than .226 for a full season. His lifetime average of .236 gives no hint of what might have been. (Oddly enough, Grabarkewitz's misfortunes helped set up the Dodger infield of



Clarence

Gaston

the future. When Billy was hurt in 1971, the Dodgers gave his third base job to Garvey. Then when Billy couldn't take over shortstop from Wills or second base from Jim LeFebvre, L.A. converted centerfielder Bill Russell into a shortstop and, after trying Bobby Valentine and Lee Lacy at second, finally settled on Davey Lopes. As a final touch of irony, when Parker retired they moved Garvey to first and put Ron Cey at third.)

**Ray Fosse** Our final highlighted player also had a might-have-been career. After a brief apprenticeship spread over three seasons, Fosse was handed the Cleveland Indians' catching job in 1970 at the age of twenty-three. He was on his way to an outstanding year—a .307 average with 18 homers and 61 RBIs, plus a Gold Glove for his defensive work—when his career was greatly affected by a play involving two of the other "unlikelies." In the twelfth inning of the All Star Game at Cincinnati's Riverfront Stadium, Fosse was behind the plate for the American League when Pete Rose hit a two-out single. Rose took second on a single by Grabarkewitz, and then headed for home when Hickman rapped a hit to center. When Fosse attempted to block the plate, Rose crashed into the 215-pound catcher's left shoulder, bowling Fosse over and scoring the winning run. Both players were shaken, but especially Fosse. Although Ray did not go on the disabled list, many felt that he never fully recovered from the injury. Perhaps it was that, perhaps it was yet another

## THE UNLIKELY HEROES OF 1970

	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	R	RBI	BB	SO	SB	BA	SA	LBA**
Luis Aparicio	146	552	173	*29	3	5	86	43	53	34	8	*.313	*.404	.262
Bert Campaneris	147	603	168	38	4	*22	*97	*64	36	73	42	.279	*.448	.260
Jim Hickman	*149	*514	*162	*33	4	*32	*102	*115	*93	*99	0	*.315	*.582	.252
Dick Dietz	*148	*493	*148	*36	*2	*22	*82	*107	*109	*106	0	*.300	*.515	.261
Clarence Gaston	*146	*584	*186	*26	*9	*29	*92	*93	*41	*142	*4	*.318	*.543	.256
Wes Parker	*161	*614	*196	*47	4	10	*84	*111	*79	70	8	*.319	*.458	.267
Billy Grabarkewitz	*156	*529	*153	*20	*8	*17	*92	*84	*95	*149	*19	*.289	*.454	.236
Ray Fosse	120	450	*138	17	1	*18	*62	61	39	55	1	*.307	*.469	.256
Tony Taylor	124	439	132	26	9	*9	74	*55	50	65	9	.301	.462	.261
Denis Menke	*154	*562	*171	26	*6	13	*82	*92	82	80	*6	*.304	.441	.250
Merv Rettenmund	106	338	109	17	2	*18	60	58	38	59	13	*.322	*.544	.271
Bernie Carbo	*125	*365	*113	19	*3	*21	54	*63	*94	77	*10	*.310	*.551	.264

\*Indicates Personal Career High

\*\*Lifetime Batting Average

example of a player performing over his head. Whatever the case, Fosse never approached his 1970 stats again. His next best home run season was 12 in 1971, and he only batted higher than .276 once more in his twelve-year



Wes

Parker

career. Fosse's career average of .256 gives little indication of the promise he showed in 1970.

**A few more** Four other players had seasons in '70 which, while more in character than the previous eight, were certainly unusual. Philadelphia Phillie infielder Tony Taylor, in the thirteenth year of a career in which he'd never batted higher than .284, hit .301 and had a slugging percentage of .462, a career best by 69 points. Houston Astro infielder Denis Menke, who had batted higher than .269 only once in eight previous seasons, hit .304, with 92 RBIs. Menke played four more years, batting .246, .233, .191 and .103. Baltimore Oriole outfielder Merv Rettenmund batted .322 with 18 homers in only 338 at bats. The next year he hit .318 with 11 homers, then hit over .269 only once in nine subsequent seasons, with a top home run total of nine. And Cincinnati Red outfielder Bernie Carbo, Rookie of the Year in the NL after hitting .310 with 21 homers, 63 RBIs, and 94 walks, played twelve more seasons without equaling any of those totals.

Is there an explanation for all this? I can find only a partial one. Except for Aparicio and Campaneris, all the really dramatic jumps took place in the National League. It was quite a good offensive year in the NL, with scoring higher than in any season between 1962 and 1985. While the league batting average wasn't especially high (.258), the number of walks issued was the highest per game (7.1) since 1954. This was probably due both to the narrowing of the strike zone following the '68 season and to the addition of younger (and presumably wilder) pitchers when the leagues expanded in 1969. Some of the players who had the biggest surges in 1970, notably Dietz,



Ray

Fosse

Grabarkewitz, and Hickman, were patient hitters. Perhaps the smaller strike zone allowed them to get ahead on the count and then tee off on fat pitches. Interestingly, the level of walks in the NL dropped by almost one per game in 1971, indicating that the strike zone may have been relaxed a little; perhaps that cost these players the edge they'd gained in '70. Of course, that doesn't explain the success of free swingers like Gaston and Campaneris.

More likely there is no real explanation. Maybe it was just one of those years, another of baseball's many mysteries.

# Neck and Neck in the Stretch: The Great Race of 1935

BILL FELBER

**J**UST WATCH US NOW that we are back to home cookin'." Dizzy Dean—and all the St. Louis Cardinals—had reason to boast on that Labor Day in 1935. They were, after all, the Gashouse Gang, kings of baseball by dint of their 1934 World Series victory over Detroit, and well on their way to defending that honor. They had the loquacious Dizzy, already a 22-game winner, along with his less boisterous brother Paul, holder of 15 victories. Comprising the everyday lineup were characters as capable as they were colorful: men like Frank Frisch, Ducky Medwick, Ripper Collins, Leo Durocher, and Pepper Martin.

On this holiday marking the traditional start of the pennant race's home stretch, the world champions detrained from a long eastern tour with even greater cause for optimism. They had just won twenty-two of twenty-nine August contests, surging into first place despite playing virtually the entire month on foreign fields. They held a full-game lead over the second-place Giants; the third-place Cubs trailed by one and one-half games, but by four in the much-studied loss column. And the Cardinals were coming home to play *all* of their remaining thirty games at muggy Sportsman's Park, where they had already compiled a record of 34-13. (In today's air age, it would be unthinkable for any team to enjoy such a year-end scheduling edge, but in 1935 train travel and Depression-era economics dictated fewer excursions and thus longer home stands.)

True to expectation, the Gashouse Gang did storm through September, winning nineteen of the concluding thirty games, a pace which—coupled with the Giants'

fade—by all logic ought to have ensured the pennant. But it didn't. All it did was help create the most furious month-long dash for glory in major league history.

Only the true believers among Chicago Cub fans clung to hope that same Labor Day. Attendance at Wrigley Field had been disappointing all summer—only about a half million fans had come through the turnstiles in the season's first five months. The team had no pizzazz—it was a patchwork aggregation seeming alternately too old or too young.

Manager Charley Grimm, judging himself too old to continue at first base that spring, had turned the job over to Phil Cavaretta, which seemed a touch extreme since at the time Cavaretta was less than a year out of the city's Lane Technical High School. Stanley Hack, the twenty-five-year-old third baseman, held the job he had won in 1934 only because twenty-three-year-old rookie Augie Galan proved a miserable failure in the infield. Galan was banished to left where, it was hoped, his defensive lapses could more easily be tolerated and the obvious potential of his bat exploited. Another newcomer, twenty-four-year-old Frank Demaree, patrolled right.

Pitcher Bill Lee, twenty-five, had been a pleasant surprise, winning 16 games following an indifferent 13-14 rookie year in 1934. That was fortunate, since the team's expected ace, Lonnie Warneke, had won only 13 of his first 26 decisions.

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*BILL FELBER is news editor of the Manhattan Mercury (Kan.) and a valued associate editor of The National Pastime.*

Where the Cubs were not fresh-faced, decrepitude threatened. Charley Root, third member of Grimm's four-man starting rotation, at age thirty-six had won only four of eleven decisions the previous season. Catcher Gabby Hartnett was thirty-four, and one-time star Fred Lindstrom, although only thirty, was suspect following an injury-marred 1931 and three successive subpar seasons with the Giants and Pirates. Chicago obtained him from Pittsburgh in November of 1934 along with Larry French, the team's fourth starter.

So the Cubs possessed a dubious pennant pedigree, particularly when viewed against so swaggering a champion as the Cardinals. Yet from Labor Day until the end of the season those two clubs day by day laid waste to the rest of the National League in what might have been the greatest sustained pennant race in history.

**September 2 (Labor Day)** The Cardinals open their thirty-game home stand by sweeping a doubleheader with the Pirates. Paul takes the first game (his 16th victory) 4-3, then Dizzy wins his 23rd, 4-1. Together the brothers have nearly half the team's 79 victories. The Cubs, also returning from an eastern swing, stop off in Cincinnati long enough to split with the Reds. The defeat drops them two and one half games out of first.

**September 4** Following an off-day, the Cubs open their own long home stand by whipping the Phillies 8-2 on French's pitching and Galan's two home runs, one of them a grand slam. But in St. Louis, a four-run eighth coupled with Dizzy's ninth inning save of Bill Walker brings a 6-3 Cardinal victory over the Braves.

**September 5** Demaree's eleventh inning single gives Root a 3-2 decision over the Phils. In St. Louis, rookie outfielder Terry Moore slams six hits and the Cards get 19 in a 15-3 pasting of the Braves.

**September 6** Frisch's triple keys a three-run eighth inning and a 6-4 victory for Dizzy over Boston. Warneke pitches Chicago to a 3-2, ten-inning trimming of the Phillies in a game won when Galan, who had tied the game with an eighth inning triple, homers.

**September 7** In Chicago, Lee shuts out Philadelphia 4-0 on six hits, moving the Cubs into second place past the Giants. In St. Louis, Paul beats the Braves 8-5, as Frisch and Medwick each contribute three hits.

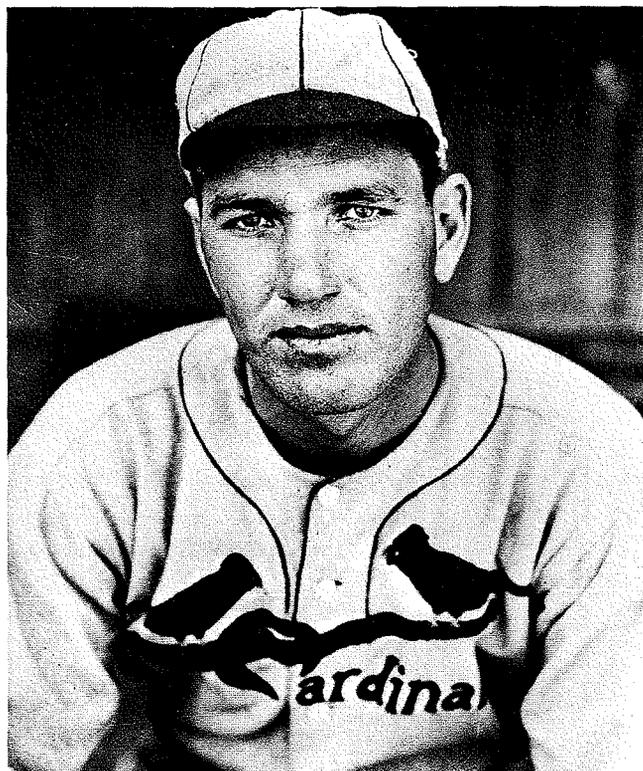
**September 8** As rain washes out the Cubs-Boston game in Chicago, the Cardinals extend their winning streak to seven by crushing Philadelphia 11-0 in the first game of a doubleheader, Dizzy pitching a four-hitter. The streak is snapped in the nightcap when, with 23,000 looking on, the Phils defeat Ed Heusser 4-2 despite being out-hit 13-4.

**September 9** Behind Tex Carleton and French, the Cubs sweep Boston 2-1 and 5-1. While that is happening, the Phillies nose out Phil Collins and the Cards 4-3, shrinking the St. Louis lead to a single game.

Over the next week, the Cards win four and lose three,

the losses coming in succession at the hands of the Giants. Incredibly, the Cubs win all seven of their games, extending their streak to thirteen, and nudge into first place. The Deans are becoming tired, as one or the other has now appeared in twelve of the last fifteen games. And on September 16, Terry Moore is sidelined with a fractured foot. The Cards, not so cocky now, look to the Giants for help.

**September 17** French's fourth victory of the streak, which climbs to 14, delights over 30,000 Cub fans. The Giants have now fallen in their first two contests in the Windy City. In St. Louis, the Cardinals defeat the Dodgers 4-2 behind Jess Haines in the first game of a doubleheader, Paul saving it. But they lose the second 8-7 when Dizzy



*Dizzy Dean*

allows three runs in relief. St. Louis trails by two and a half games.

**September 18** Thirty-three thousand besiege Wrigley to see if the Cubs can make it fifteen straight. They do, creaming the Giants 15-3 on a 20-hit barrage, scoring eight times in the fourth inning alone. Billy Herman nets four hits, Demaree and Lindstrom three each, and every Cub starter except winning pitcher Root contributes at least one RBI. The Cardinals beat Brooklyn 6-3, Paul saving for Hallahan.

**September 19** A fourth straight licking by Chicago, this one 6-1 at the hands of Lee in front of 30,000, moves demoralized New York manager Bill Terry to assure reporters, "The Cubs will win . . . they are playing way over their heads." St. Louis again beats Brooklyn, this time

9-1, Dizzy taking his 27th thanks to three hits each by Frisch and Charley Gelbert. Even the sixteen-game Cub winning streak fails to stifle the glib Dizzy. "All that's worryin' me now is how to pitch to Greenberg," he remarks.

**September 21** After a day of idleness for both teams, the Cubs win again and the Cardinals lose. Cincinnati routs Paul in the seventh inning and rallies against the St. Louis bullpen in the ninth to win 9-7. In Chicago, 39,000 hold their breath as the streak wavers against Pittsburgh. Little Roy Henshaw, a second-line lefthander, takes a 4-3 lead into the bottom of the ninth, then loads the bases



Gabby Hartnett

with two out. Enter Warneke to retire pinch-hitter Red Lucas for the final out and seventeenth victory in succession. Says Hartnett, "I'll bet those Cardinals go daffy every time they see another victory."

**September 22** French posts his fifth victory of the month, a 2-0 decision over the Pirates, while the Cardinals whip the Reds 14-4 and 3-1 behind Mike Ryba and Dizzy to move back within three games of first.

**September 23-24** With the Cubs idle, Heusser loses 12-0 to Pittsburgh, then Hallahan beats the Pirates 11-2.

It had been a remarkable three weeks, the two contenders winning 36 of 45 games, an astonishing 80 percent pace. Galan, despite the handicap of batting leadoff, had driven in 20 runs—better than one per

game. French's five victories came on a 1.40 earned run average. (He had won only 12 times with a 3.31 ERA until September.) Warneke (15-13, 3.36 before Labor Day) had gone 4-0 and 1.61. Lee (15-6, 3.22 before the holiday), was 4-0 with a 1.75 ERA. Cub pitchers had given Grimm 17 complete games, 16 of them during the winning streak, and only once in that stretch had they allowed an opponent more than three runs.

Not that the Cardinals had wilted. Their renowned offense, triggered by Frisch and Medwick, had outscored opponents 157-100 during the same span. But on the mound, the Deans had been virtually the entire story. One or the other of the brothers had appeared in all but five of the final twenty-five contests: Dizzy won six times against three defeats, with two saves; Paul took four victories and two saves with no losses. More importantly to Cardinal fans, although the frantic Chicago rally had given the Cubs a three-game lead in the standings, the pennant was not yet decided. There remained a five-game series between the contenders scheduled for Sportsman's Park the final Wednesday through Sunday. If the Cardinals could sweep—and they had won 51 of 72 at home, 12 of 17 all year from the Cubs—they would retain their title. With four victories, St. Louis could force the first playoff in National League history.

### September 25

The question in St. Louis was how Frisch would get through five games with what amounted to a two-man pitching staff. "When Frisch gets past the two Deans," one columnist penned, "Frankie experiences the sensation of stepping out an 18th story window and turning left." Frisch already had announced that Paul would work the first game, to be followed by Dizzy. Although the manager didn't say so, there seemed little doubt that if the Cardinals remained in the running, each could expect to start *at least* once more that week.

Even given the frazzled state of the moundsmen, St. Louisans evinced stubborn optimism. A crowd began to assemble at the gates as early as 7:30 a.m., two and one-half hours before entry was permitted. They could take heart in the comparative records of the rival pitchers: Paul was 5-1 against the Cubs that season; Warneke, his opponent, had lost four straight to the St. Louis Cardinals since June 1.

By game time, nearly 20,000 were on hand. Paul had gained renown as one of the league's top strikeout artists—he trailed only his brother and Hubbell in that category—and he quickly set about polishing his reputation, thrilling the home fans in the very first inning by fanning Galan, Herman, and Hartnett.

Demaree, leading off in the visitors' second, also went down on strikes. That brought up Cavaretta. Paul's first

delivery breezed by the youngster for another strike. The second, Cavaretta sent clattering to the roof of the single-deck pavilion in right.

Unfazed, Paul returned to the business of dispatching the Cubs. He got Hack on a bouncer to Durocher at short, and made shortstop Billy Jurgens his fifth strikeout victim of the opening two innings.

It was a strikingly dominant debut, and the home run seemed only a freak flaw measured against the totality of Paul's mastery. But as the game wore on it loomed larger. For his part, Warneke retired Cardinal hitters virtually as fast as they came to the plate, getting them in order in the first three innings and fanning Martin to open the fourth. Finally Lynn King, who had been called up following Moore's injury, lined a single to center, but as quickly he was doubled off first after Galan raced in to nab Frisch's sinking liner in short left.

Not until the top of the eighth did Paul find himself in serious trouble. With one out, Warneke's grounder evaded Durocher for an infield hit. Galan flied to King in center, but Herman dropped a line drive squarely on the left field foul line, his 56th double of the year. Warneke held at third. With two men in scoring position, Dean worked to a full count on Lindstrom, then retired him on an infield chopper.

Medwick, batting .350, opened the home half of the eighth with an easy grounder to Hack, the twelfth straight batter retired by Warneke since King's single. Collins smacked a sinking liner into left that Galan should have let fall for a single, but he gambled on a shoestring catch and failed, the ball rolling past him to the wall. Ripper took second with the gratis double, then carried the tying run to third on an infield out. For a fleeting instant, Durocher raised Cardinal hopes by cracking a drive toward deep left. When hit, the ball appeared a possible game-winning home run, or at the very least a tying extra base hit. But Galan scurried to the barrier and snared the ball for the third out, at the same instant colliding with the wall.

The play took all the remaining fight out of the home team that day, and Warneke dispatched them without incident in the ninth. He had allowed just two hits, walked none, and faced just twenty-eight batters in the 1-0 victory, his seventh in succession and twentieth of the year. The whole exercise had required only 88 pitches.

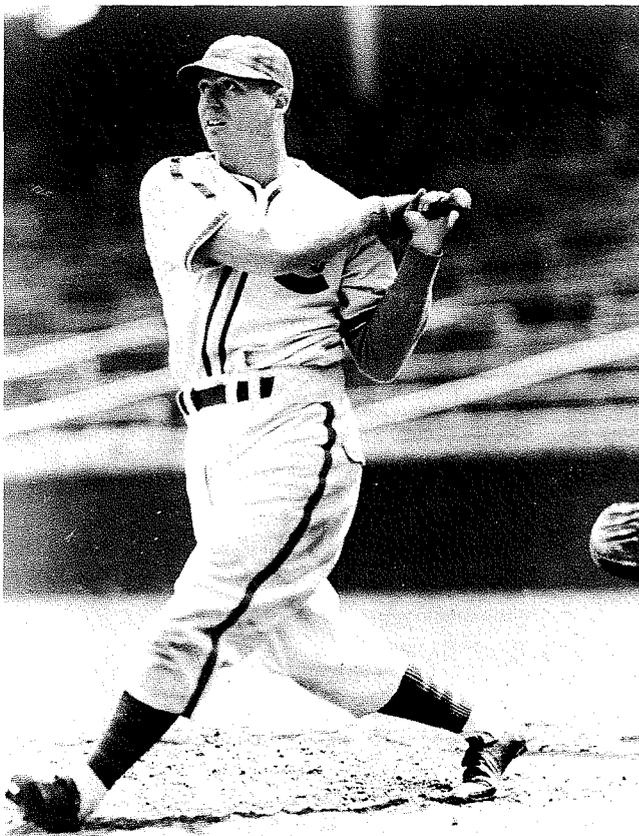
Even the usually dauntless Dizzy, having now witnessed first-hand the relentless Cubs, was properly impressed. "Say," he asked, "what you gonna do with a team that don't get beat?" Frisch, too, was deferential. "Only a superhuman effort will beat them," he said.

### September 26

The only opponent capable of beating the Cubs over the past three weeks—the weather—vanquished them this day. A steady rain pelted St. Louis and forced the Cardi-

nals to announce cancellation of the game shortly before 1 p.m. Team owner Sam Breadon stipulated that the contest would be made up as part of a doubleheader the following afternoon.

That suited the Chicagoans, at that point just one victory removed from the pennant and from the franchise's all-time winning streak of twenty-one games, established way back in 1880. Grimm nominated Lee, like Warneke bidding for his twentieth victory, and the veteran Root to pitch the following day, and he flatly predicted a clinching victory. Responding to suggestions the day off would benefit the ragged St. Louis pitching staff, he



*Billy Herman*

said, "Maybe this rain is a break for them, but I figure it's a bigger one for us. It's a tough job winning a doubleheader, even from an eighth place team, so why should we worry?"

### September 27

In a matchup between the league's top percentage pitcher (Lee, .760) and the biggest winner (Dean, 28 victories), the Cubs stumbled defensively through the first inning. Herman dropped Martin's leadoff grounder, King walked, and when Frisch bunted neither Lee nor Hack moved to the ball, allowing it to roll dead for an infield hit. Medwick tapped to Hack, who fumbled the ball and then

threw wildly to the plate, allowing Martin to score. One out later catcher Bill DeLancey singled across a second unearned run.

Chicago netted three hits off Dean in the opening two innings, but the great pitcher got off the ropes each time. But Dizzy possessed no such escapist magic in the third. With one out, Galan doubled to right and Herman singled him home. When Medwick stumbled in mud from the previous day's rain trying to field the ball, Herman took second. The slip proved costly seconds later as Lindstrom punched the third straight hit, tying the game.

Chicago took the lead in the fourth. Hack rammed a one-out double into the left-field corner, and after retiring the dangerous Jorges, Dean had only to dispose of Lee to avoid further danger. But the opposing pitcher slapped a bouncer through the middle that caromed off Dean's bare hand into center, and Hack scored. The Cubs were not to be overtaken.

In the eighth, an infield hit by Martin and a stolen base gave promise of a Cardinal comeback, but the threat died, and the Redbirds went down meekly in the ninth. Lee had defeated them 6-2 for the team's twentieth straight win and, more important, the pennant clincher. Freddie Lindstrom had led the 15-hit attack with four, and Hack and Galan had contributed three apiece.

#### Aftermath

Freed of concern for the race's outcome, the Cubs went ahead and won their twenty-first in succession that same afternoon, Root taking a 5-3 victory. This time they did it with three game-tying runs in the seventh inning, followed by two more in the ninth. The next day, Medwick's eleventh-inning home run gave St. Louis a 7-5 decision to snap the skein.

Chicago could not continue its momentum in the following week's World Series against the Tigers. Warneke did pitch a 3-0 shutout in Game One, but Root, Lee, and Carleton fell in quick succession. Warneke's fifth-game win kept Chicago hopes alive, and French took a 3-3 tie into the ninth inning of the sixth game at Detroit. Hack opened that ninth inning with a triple, but the Cubs could not score him, and when Detroit did score in the bottom of the ninth the Tigers were world champions.

The Cubs fell to second place behind the Giants in both 1936 and 1937, but returned to the championship position via a dramatic late-season sweep of the Pirates in 1938. The Cardinals continued as contenders, but injuries to both Deans ruined their pennant aspirations. Paul, plagued by nagging arm problems, won only 12 more times in a checkered career that lasted in fits through 1943. Dizzy added 24 more victories in 1936, but a mid-season injury in 1937 sapped his fast one. Released to rival Chicago in 1938 and apparently washed up, Jay Hanna Dean enjoyed a last hurrah in the Cubs' 1938 pennant drive.

## VAN LINGLE MUNGO

b. June 8, 1911, Pageland, S.C.  
d. Feb. 12, 1985, Pageland, S.C.

W	120
L	115
ERA	3.47



Honor now, Van Lingle Mungo  
Pound the plate and hoist a fungo  
Flaming fastball, fiery nature  
Famous for his nomenclature  
Hero of that long ago  
When players played for keeps, not dough  
Lived it up, day/nocturnal  
Never read the *Wall Street Journal*  
Skippers in those stormy times  
Included Carey, Stengel, Grimes  
But Van so needed elbow room  
It's hard to say who managed whom.  
He railed at teammates, cursed the Gods  
Who saddled him with fearful odds.  
Now, standing on the pitcher's mound  
Van draws a breath and looks around  
No doubt, a trembling of the knees  
To know his fate depends on these:

Fresco Thompson, Whitey Ock  
Buster Mills and Lonnie Frey  
Jimmy Jordan, Lindsay Brown  
Packy Rogers—wanna cry?  
Vincent Sherlock, Ernie Koy  
Paul Chervinko, Frankie Skaff  
Danny Taylor, Sid Gautreaux  
(Dry your eyes, it's worth a laugh)

And among the others chosen  
For his teammates, Goody Rosen  
Curly Onis, Gordon Slade

Small wonder that he oft displayed  
The passion of a man betrayed.

—it's over, Van; rest easy.

PAUL L. PARKER

*"Unparalleled in all of baseball history."*

# J. Lee Richmond's Remarkable 1879 Season

JOHN RICHMOND HUSMAN

**J.** LEE RICHMOND played four full seasons and parts of two others in baseball's major leagues. Not a long career. Today, more than 100 years later, a check of his statistical record reveals little that would seem to be worthy of recognition. The record does not, however, tell of the spirit he brought to the game and how he changed it. Nor does this record show that he was the first to accomplish the rarest of all single game pitching feats: a perfect game.

Richmond burst upon the baseball world in 1879, leading Brown University to the college championship early in that season. He then revived the struggling Worcester, Massachusetts entry in the National Baseball Association so successfully that they were admitted to the National League in 1880. Along the way he played for several teams, as both an amateur and a professional. He ended the season as he began it, playing as an amateur at his alma mater during the fall season. His composite record for the 1879 season may be unparalleled in all of baseball history: a lofty claim, but lending credence are his season total of 47 pitching wins and his official number two ranking among the hitters in the National Baseball Association with a batting average of .368.

Richmond had paid his dues, playing at Oberlin College in his home state of Ohio, for the Rhode Islands of Providence, and two full years at Brown before embarking on this remarkable season. His career in baseball had been lackluster to this point, but the experience he had attained would be the basis for the total baseball player that was about to emerge. Added to this experience was a variety of lefthanded curve pitches that he had developed and per-

fectured during the 1878-79 winter in Brown's gymnasium. In addition, Richmond was named captain of his university's nine.

The attainment of college baseball's championship would be the crown on a successful season for most, but it was only the beginning for Richmond. Even before the college season was completed, manager Frank Bancroft of the Worcesters attempted, on more than one occasion, to lure Richmond to his professional team. He sent the young pitcher a barrage of telegrams asking for his services.

## PROFESSIONAL DEBUT

Walter F. Angell, Richmond's classmate and lifelong friend, wrote years later of how Richmond came to play his first game for Worcester. The occasion was an exhibition game with the Chicago White Stockings on June 2.

Richmond received a telegram from F.C. Bancroft, then the manager of the Worcesters, asking him to come to Worcester to pitch the game. The telegram is before me as I dictate this letter. I happened to be with Richmond when he opened it, and he handed it to me with the comment that of course he could not go, but his college catcher Winslow came along and persuaded him to take chances and change his mind, Winslow agreeing to go along with him and play as catcher.

Richmond and Winslow had each been offered \$10 plus expenses to play the game. Richmond resisted jeop-

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*JOHN RICHMOND HUSMAN of Sylvania, Ohio, may be less than impartial; J. Lee Richmond was his great-grandfather.*

ardizing his standing at Brown and his reputation on the mound. Chicago was one of the country's greatest teams, and was hot, having just beaten Boston three in a row. But in the end the arguments of his friend Winslow prevailed. It seems that Winslow was in need of a new pair of trousers, and thus was launched J. Lee Richmond's professional baseball career!

Anson brought his team to Worcester on June 2 as the leaders of the National League. The Chicagos left Worcester having been shut out 11-0 without having made a single base hit. Richmond had thrown a no-hitter in his first game as a professional! Only three others—Bumpus Jones, Ted Breitenstein and Bobo Holloman—have done the same in their first start against a major league nine. This was the first of three exceptional pitching performances he would complete within a nine-day period.

Arthur A. Irwin also made his professional debut that day playing third base for Worcester. He went on to play thirteen major league campaigns and to manage eight

more. Some twenty years later he recounted the story of that historic game:

I signed a Worcester contract on June 2, 1879, coming to Worcester from my home in Boston, where I had been playing on amateur teams. Although I afterward played shortstop I was sent in to cover third base in that first game. Lee Richmond, the greatest left-handed pitcher this country has ever seen, did the pitching for us, and the game that followed became famous the country over. We had as opponents the Chicago club, and we shut them out by the score of 11-0. Richmond pitched the greatest ball that day I have ever seen in all of my experience. The first Chicago man up reached first on a base on balls, and he was the only one of Anson's men to see first base during the entire nine innings [*author's note*: actually seven innings were played]. Before the game was over the Chicago players were betting cigars against dollars that they would hit the ball, not that they would hit safely, but only hit it.

Richmond had marvelous support by his teammates, not an error being committed—a highly unusual occurrence in that era. His domination was so complete that in addition to eight strikeouts in the seven-inning game not a single ball was hit out of the infield.

Both teams wished immediately to get Richmond's signature on a contract. Worcester was successful, and some twenty-five years later Bancroft recalled how he had accomplished the signing.

We had struck one of those ruts that comes to every team every once in so often and had lost 18 straight games. The directors were for firing me and getting a new manager. But the stockholders stepped into the breach and saved my life by giving me 30 days in which to either "make good" or lose my job. The next day we were scheduled to play an exhibition with "Pop" Anson's White Stockings. I had heard of a young fellow with the beautiful name of J. Lee Richmond, with the accent on the Lee, who was doing good work for the Brown University team. I ran down to Providence that night and got the boy to come up to pitch the game against the Chicagos. J. Lee was a slightly built chap, who weighed not much over 135 pounds, and certainly didn't look the part of a pitcher.

I also got Arthur Irwin—the famous Arthur Irwin—then but a boy playing on the lots around Boston, to come down and go in at short for me [*author's note*: Irwin actually played third base]. When I told the fans what I had done they gave me the laugh.

"What, come out and see those kids play the famous White Stockings?" was their chanted response to my invitation for their money. "Not on your life."

Those who refused to come out missed one of the prettiest games that was ever played on any diamond. J. Lee Richmond shut out Anson and his heavy hitters without a hit. Anson asked me if I had signed Richmond, and I—for once in my life—told a lie. But I "coppered" my fabrication in what I think was a clever fashion. The dressing room for the players was under the grandstand, and it wasn't much shucks. So I hired a carriage, and when the game was over got young Richmond by the arm and whispered in his ear:

"Now Mr. Richmond—I used the Mr. because I wished to be diplomatic—there isn't much of a place for you to dress down here, so I've taken the liberty of putting your street clothes in a hack. If you would like I'll drive you down to a hotel, where I have reserved a room and a bath for you. You can dress there."

He fell into the trap and I hustled him off to the tavern. There I

**Worcester vs. Chicago**  
June 2, 1879  
Worcester, Massachusetts

Worcester							
	AB	R	H	TB	PO	A	E
Brady, 2b	5	2	4	6	1	2	0
Knight, rf	5	1	1	1	0	0	0
Bennett, 1b	2	2	1	3	12	0	0
Sullivan, cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bushong, lf	4	1	2	3	0	0	0
Richmond, p	2	1	1	3	0	8	0
Winslow, c	3	1	2	3	6	2	0
Irwin, 3b	3	2	1	1	1	2	0
Nichols, ss	3	1	0	0	1	4	0
Totals	31	11	12	20	21	18	0
Chicago							
	AB	R	H	TB	PO	A	E
Dalrymple, lf	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gore, cf	3	0	0	0	2	0	1
Anson, 1b	3	0	0	0	6	0	0
Shaffer, rf	3	0	0	0	2	0	0
Peters, ss	2	0	0	0	1	2	2
Quest, 2b	2	0	0	0	0	1	2
Hankinson, p	2	0	0	0	0	6	3
Williamson, 3b	2	0	0	0	4	1	0
Harbidge, c	2	0	0	0	6	0	3
Totals	21	0	0	0	21	10	11
Worcester	3	0	1	3	4	0	-11
Chicago	0	0	0	0	0	0	-0

Runs earned, Worcesters 5; three base hits, Brady, Bennett, Richmond; two base hits, Winslow, Bushong; 1st on errors, Worcesters 1, Chicagos 0; 1st on balls, Worcesters 5, Chicagos 1; left on bases, Worcesters 5, Chicagos 1; struck out, Dalrymple, Gore 3, Shaffer 3, Harbidge, Knight, Sullivan, Nichols 2; balls called on, Richmond 56, Hankinson 111; strikes called off, Richmond 14, Hankinson 12; strikes missed off, Richmond 23, Hankinson 23; fouls struck off, Richmond 11, Hankinson 21; double play, Williamson; time of game, 2 hours 10 minutes; umpire, Wm. McLean of Philadelphia.

had no trouble signing him to a contract which called for \$100 a month. He was the goods too.

Irwin recalled that Chicago wanted to sign Richmond as well:

Old man Anson was as much struck with Richmond's playing as President Pratt (of Worcester), and when the young pitcher reached Union Station he found Captain Anson there in uniform. Anson had hustled from the grounds, without stopping to change his uniform, in the hopes of getting Richmond to sign with Chicago before Worcester could have a chance to sign him. Anson's ruse did not work, however, and Richmond remained with Worcester.

## BACK TO COLLEGE

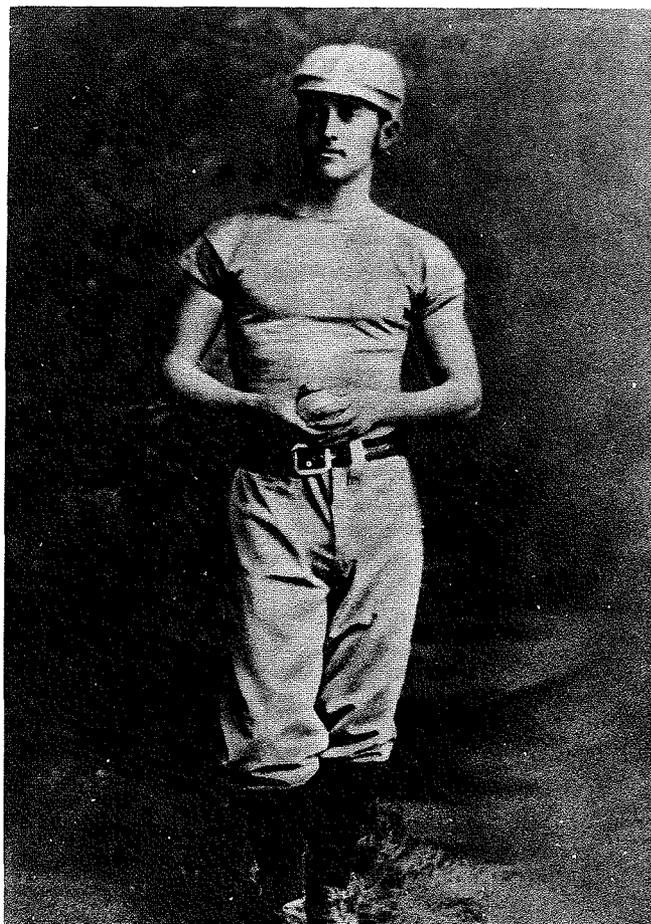
Richmond's second major win of this fantastic nine day period was the College Championship contest played at Providence on June 9, 1879. Brown beat Yale 3-2 that day with Richmond hurling as he always did for the Bruins. This was the second meeting of the season between these rivals, Yale having won the first contest 2-0 on Richmond's throwing error. This, then, was a "must win" game for the Brunonians.

Brown lost the toss and was sent to bat first, leaving Yale with the advantage of batting last on Brown's home field. Both teams scored a run in the first inning. Brown scored one more in the sixth and what proved to be the deciding run in the seventh. Richmond himself doubled and scored on two consecutive errors. He then held on for the win. Yale scored again in the eighth on a wild pitch but the tying run was cut down at the plate by second baseman Ladd on a ground ball with only one out.

Richmond "took to the points" to pitch the bottom of the ninth inning leading 3-2 with the College Championship hanging on his ability to retire the side. Yale's leadoff hitter, first sacker Hopkins, singled and moved to second as Richmond threw out Camp. Clark, the Yale center fielder, flied out to White at first. However, Smith was safe on Waterman's throwing error and Hopkins moved to third. Smith then stole second and the game, which had looked to be in hand before Waterman's error, was now very much in doubt. Runners at second and third, two out, bottom of the ninth, one-run game—a classic finish for a championship contest and season. To add further to the drama, Richmond got wild. He ran the count to eight balls and one strike (nine balls then constituting a walk) to Ripley. Reaching back for something extra, he got two more strikes to strike out Ripley and end it—a storybook finish that is recalled at Brown University to this day. Richmond himself is remembered as the first of Brown's athletes to be inducted into her Hall of Fame.

The game remained vivid in Richmond's memory as he wrote about it in *Memories of Brown* years later.

This final game with Yale that gave possession of the championship was the most exciting game I ever saw. When Yale went



J. Lee Richmond, with Brown U., 1879

to bat in the ninth inning, the score stood 3-2 against them. By the time two men were out they had the bases full. [author's note: actually there were runners at second and third]. The game literally turned on one ball pitched, for the next batter waited till he had two strikes and eight balls. The grandstand was as still as death. Numbers of fellows had gone behind the grandstand unable to watch the game. When the last ball was struck and caught by the catcher—well—I can't tell you my feelings. I remember having Professor Lincoln shake my hand, and wondering if the other fellows found it as uncomfortable to be hoisted up on shoulders as I did.

## FAME

Just two days later, Richmond pitched his third gem in this fantastic nine day stretch. On June 11, 1879 he faced the Nationals of Washington, D.C. at the Driving Park, Worcester. The Nationals were leading the National Baseball Association at the time. It was Richmond's first professional championship contest (one that counted in league standings). He bested the league frontrunners 4-1, with a neat two-hitter. Richmond had pitched only two games for Worcester, but he had arrived. His presence would provide the spark that would see Worcester roll through the remainder of the season.

The local press was much impressed. From the *Worcester Gazette*:

The ball game at the Driving Park, yesterday afternoon, was the neatest game of the day, and the spectators, nearly 1000 in number, cheered themselves hoarse over the numerous fine features of the contest. . . . Richmond's wonderful work against the Chicagos, last week, had raised high hopes, and his pitching yesterday was all that could have been expected, only two safe hits being made off his puzzling delivery.

And now, as pitcher for the Worcester club his every effort would be noted by the national press. The game account as it appeared in the *New York Clipper*:

Richmond's wonderful pitching enabled the Worcesters to defeat the Nationals at Worcester on June 11 in the presence of over 1200 people. The Nationals could not get the hang of Richmond's left-handed delivery and made but two single basers off him in the entire nine innings. The Worcesters batted very well, Bennett taking a decided lead in that respect. The game was one of the most exciting ever played at Worcester, and the home nine's victory was a most credible one.

So ended Richmond's "fantastic nine days." He had won

Worcester vs. Springfield										
July 28, 1879										
Worcester, Massachusetts										
Worcester										
	AB	R	H	TB	PO	A	E			
Wood, lf	6	2	4	7	0	0	0			
Knight, rf	6	2	1	1	4	0	0			
Bennett, cf	5	1	1	2	0	0	0			
Whitney, 3b	5	0	2	4	2	0	0			
Brady, 2b	5	0	0	0	1	4	1			
Sullivan, 1b	5	0	0	0	11	1	0			
Irwin, ss	5	2	3	5	1	4	1			
Bushong, c	5	3	2	2	8	1	2			
Richmond, p	5	4	4	6	0	5	1			
Totals	47	14	17	27	27	16	5			
Springfield										
	AB	R	H	TB	PO	A	E			
Cassidy, 1b	4	0	0	0	9	0	2			
Pike, cf & p	4	0	0	0	3	4	1			
Smith, 3b	4	0	0	0	2	3	0			
O'Leary, lf	1	0	0	0	2	1	1			
Battin, 2b	3	0	0	0	2	3	2			
Mack, ss	3	0	0	0	2	3	1			
Goldsmith, p & cf	3	0	0	0	3	1	1			
Corcoran, rf	3	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Powers, c	2	0	0	0	4	3	5			
Totals	27	0	0	0	27	18	13			
Worcester	2	4	2	0	0	1	2	0	3	-14
Springfield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-0

Runs earned, Worcesters 4; two base hits, Wood 3, Bennett, Whitney 2, Irwin 2, Richmond 2; sacrifice hits, Wood, Knight, Brady, Richmond; struck out, Knight, Bennett 2, Pike 2, O'Leary; balls called, on Richmond 90, on Goldsmith 28, on Pike 98; strikes called, on Richmond 22, on Goldsmith 6, on Pike 20; bases on balls, O'Leary 2, Powers, Bennett, Whitney; wild pitches, Richmond 1, Pike 1, Goldsmith 1; passed balls, Bushong 2, Powers 5; double play, Irwin, Sullivan and Whitney; left on bases, Worcesters 7, Springfields 3; time of game, 3 hours; umpire, Otis Tilden of Brockton.

the College Championship with his Brown University team, pitched a no-hitter against the National League leader, and beaten the National Association leader with a two-hitter. He was on his way to a remarkable season that would be marked by fine composite totals and the instant reversal of form by the Worcester club. He was a control pitcher, giving up few walks and striking out more batters than did most pitchers of his time. His defenses recorded unusually high numbers of ground outs. He also helped his cause with the bat, and he took his turn in the heart of the order. On July 28, he no-hit Springfield while knocking out four hits himself—including two doubles—and scoring four runs.

In championship contests through the rest of the 1879 season, Richmond was 18-10 with a league leading earned run average of 1.06. He batted .368 and had a slugging average of .569, leading his team in both categories.

However, there was still much baseball to play. Worcester was scheduled for a slate of exhibition games that would last until mid-October. Featured were contests with the strongest teams of the National League.

Richmond melded participation in these games with attending classes during Brown's fall term. He played for Worcester in especially prestigious games, the schedule and the game site being the determining factors in whether he would appear. This regimen of pursuing his education and furthering his ballplaying career would continue through 1883, when he would receive his medical degree and play his last full season for the Providence Grays.

The highlights of this postseason exhibition schedule were those contests with Providence, Boston, and Chicago of the National League. Providence would take the pennant by five games over Boston. Chicago, after a fast start, would finish fourth, one-half game behind third place Buffalo.

Worcester knocked off Boston 4-3 at Worcester on September 11 to set the stage for a very successful exhibition series. The next league team into Worcester was Chicago, on September 18, for a rematch of Richmond's first professional encounter in June. The White Stockings did not fare much better this trip. Richmond shut them out on four singles.

Mingled among these games with the teams of the "Big League" were almost daily games with other teams, many from the National Baseball Association. Albany, their league's champion, came to Worcester on September 25. The occasion was the first of a five game series arranged for the championship of their respective cities. Richmond sent them packing 10-3, recording the then unheard of total of fifteen strikeouts.

### BIG LEAGUER

Richmond capped off a season of firsts and debuts by playing in his first major league game on September 27.

Manager Harry Wright of Boston secured Richmond to hurl against Providence in his team's final league game. The regular Boston pitcher was ill and the change pitcher was also unavailable for this wrap-up game with Providence, which had already clinched the flag. Pitching for Providence was John Montgomery Ward, who had recorded a league high 47 wins in leading the Grays to the pennant.

After a shaky first inning by Richmond and his defense, he pitched a solid 12-6 win, allowing but a single base hit over the last eight innings. He recorded a league record five consecutive strikeouts in his debut in the senior circuit. The *New York Clipper* felt that the Bostons were a better team with Richmond on the mound:

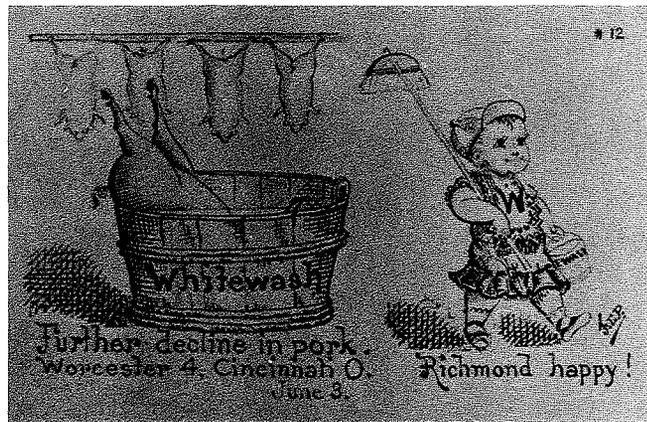
The Bostons, strengthened by Richmond, the famous left-handed pitcher of the Worcesters, defeated the Providence nine on Sept. 27 at Boston, Mass. The contest was a remarkable one, the visitors being badly beaten, although they started off with a lead of 5 to 0. Singles by Wright and Start and Gross' three baser earned two runs for Providence, and they made three more runs on errors in the first inning. Richmond then settled down to his work, and the visitors in the next eight innings made but one base hit on him, and that a lucky one to short right field, and scored but one more run, the result of errors by Burdock and Snyder. Eleven of the visitors struck out, five in succession, and we are safe in saying that the chief credit of the victory belongs to Richmond.

Richmond and Worcester went on to split four more games with Boston and Providence. The final game was something of a homecoming for Richmond as Worcester visited Providence, the home of Brown University. J. Lee Richmond prevailed again, 3-2, on October 7 in what was both a home and road game for him. This win made him 7-2 against National League clubs for the season, a prodigious record.

Richmond was a busy man. Keeping up with both his studies and his Worcesters was too much for him on one occasion. He mistakenly took the train from Providence to New Haven rather than Worcester for a game with Providence. Failure to meet his team cost him yet another crack at the Grays.

Richmond then rejoined the Brown U. nine for their fall season. Their first scheduled game was with his own Worcester club. Rain interfered, however, and the game was not played. This must have been a great disappointment to Richmond and to the many fans who came to witness another interesting matchup. Brown played four more games, ending their season on October 22. Richmond ended his season as he began it, playing as an amateur. And what a lot of baseball he had played in between!

Richmond's 1879 exploits paid rich dividends for both him and the Worcester team the next season. Because of Worcester's resurgence under his leadership the team was admitted to the National League for the 1880 season. The league fathers were so much in favor of admitting the



From the exceedingly rare cartoon volume ...

Worcesters that qualifying rules concerning the population of candidate cities were "modified" to allow the Brown Stockings entry. As what may have been sports' first "franchise player," J. Lee Richmond was paid a then record \$2000 salary for his services for the 1880 season. In my view, the admittance of this team from a tiny New England town to the National League was Richmond's greatest baseball achievement.

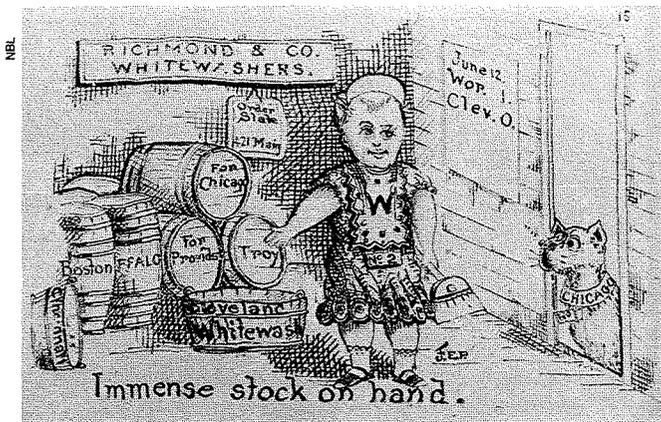
### PERFECT GAME

The 1880 season was the scene of what others consider as Richmond's greatest accomplishment on the field, his perfect game against Cleveland at Worcester on June 12, 1880. The perfect game is the milestone event of Richmond's baseball career, the game that sets him apart from all other pitchers. He was the first of only ten, from the purist's point of view (discounting the efforts of Ernie Shore and Harvey Haddix), to pitch a perfect game in the entire 110 year history of major league baseball.

The story of the perfect game is an amazing one. Taken in context with other events that surrounded it, the feat becomes even more formidable. On the Thursday before this Saturday contest, Richmond had shut out the Cleveland team 5-0, also at Worcester. He was in the midst of a streak of at least 42 consecutive innings during which he

... Ups and Downs of the Worcester Baseball Club, 1880 ...





... Frank E. Pollard, illustrator

would not allow an earned run. In addition, the perfect game would be his third shutout within nine days. He returned to Brown for graduation festivities and parties, passing up Worcester's Friday exhibition game with the Yale nine.

Graduation events included a class baseball game played at 4:50 on Saturday morning. Richmond had been up all night following the class supper at Music Hall. He took part in the ballgame and went to bed at 6:30 a.m. He rose in time to catch the 11:30 a.m. train to Worcester to pitch in the afternoon contest against Cleveland. The train on which he rode was delayed and he was forced to go to the field without his dinner. One would not think that proper preparation for a ballgame would include foregoing sleep and food and playing another game earlier in the day.

This train ride has become almost legendary. As the story goes, Frank Bancroft had hired a special train to stand by and rush Richmond to Worcester upon completion of Brown's graduation ceremonies. The story continues with Richmond proceeding to pitch his perfect game. Great story, but not true. Richmond's graduation day was four days later, on June 16. On that day Bancroft did, in fact, have a special train waiting. Richmond took this train to Worcester and was beaten by Chicago 7-6 in ten innings.

The Worcester team of 1880 was very young, the players averaging twenty-three years of age. The team included several rookies, playing the team's initial season in the National League. They were enjoying some success, with a 14-9 record early in the season. This series with Cleveland may have offered an extra incentive for Richmond: Cleveland was essentially his hometown team and this was the first time he had ever faced them.

Richmond and big Jim McCormick locked up in a super duel. Richmond himself got the first hit of the game in the fourth, but was erased on a double play. Worcester would get but two more hits the entire day, both by shortstop Art Irwin. The only run of the day scored in the fifth on a double error by Cleveland second sacker Fred "Sure-Shot" Dunlap.

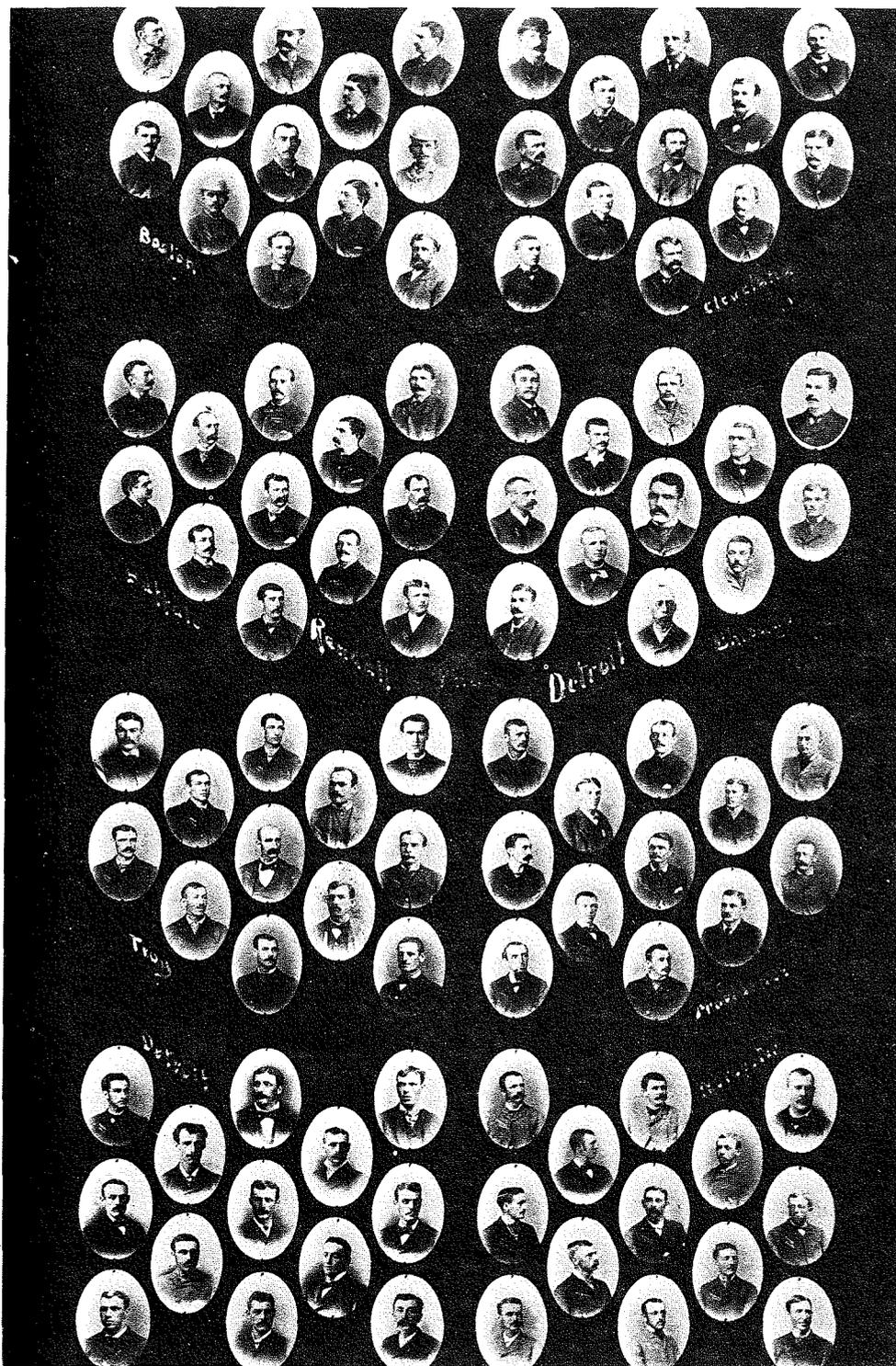
Like so many games that became classic, the game featured a game saving play. In this case the "saver" may have been the first of its kind. In the fifth inning Cleveland's Bill Phillips hit a ball through the right side for an apparent basehit. Lon Knight, captain, right fielder, and old man of the team at twenty-six, charged, scooped up the ball, and fired to first. Umpire Foghorn Bradley called the runner out, the no-hitter being preserved. This seems to have been a turning point in the game. Richmond had not struck out a batter. He took complete command, striking out five the rest of the way. His domination was so complete that only three balls were hit out of the infield all day.

An effort was made by Mother Nature to disturb Richmond's concentration and perhaps halt the string of batters being set down in order. A cloudburst halted the game in the eighth inning for seven minutes. Undaunted, Richmond returned to the box and, using a heap of sawdust to dry the ball, completed the game.

Richmond always kept his achievement in perspective. He once remarked in a newspaper interview that catcher Charlie "Bennett and the boys behind me gave me perfect support." On another occasion he said, "I couldn't have pitched it if the fielders had not been so expert in handling the ball." Richmond knew that an errorless game played by barehanded fielders was a rare achievement in itself.

Just five days later John Ward of the Grays turned in a second perfect effort against Buffalo in Providence. Two perfect games within a five day period defies all odds. Ward had equaled Richmond's standard of perfection, a level of play that was not even thought of as being attainable only a week before. The third perfect game did not occur until May 5, 1904, when the legendary Cy Young threw one for Boston (AL). Young's effort kept the perfect game as an exclusive New England institution. The third perfect game in the National League did not occur for eighty-four years, when Jim Bunning turned the trick in 1964.

During his remarkable 1879 season, J. Lee Richmond established himself as one of the game's fine all round players and foremost pitchers. He did this at a time when baseball was undergoing rapid evolutionary change. He was a major contributor to changes in pitching strategies and philosophies. He was not the first breaking ball pitcher. Nor was he the first lefthander ("heartside heaver") to hurl in the National League. He was, however, the first to combine these two then unusual attributes. The results were devastating, especially on a hitter's first encounter with his unique delivery and pitch. Richmond employed a change of pace and a sharply breaking curve, which broke down rather than out as did the curves of other pitchers. Slight of stature at 140 pounds, he did not overpower hitters. He studied hitters and kept a book on them. His allies were cunning, deception, and strategy. His remarkable 1879 season set off a search for lefthanded pitching talent that continues to this day.



### THE NINES OF 1881

This unique photo of nearly all the National League players of 1881 came to light in a crumbling album from the estate of one-time Boston player and manager John Morrill. In its original form, the print was only 2-1/4 x 3-1/2 inches! The carte de visite bore no identifications. The following ascriptions are those of the editor, who welcomes any corrections or additions. Each team is portrayed in five horizontal rows; the i.d.'s run from left to right.

**BOSTON:** 1, Crowley, Burdock, Morrill; 2, Barnes, Bond; 3, Snyder, J. Whitney, Sutton; 4, Hornung, J. Richmond; 5, Deasley, H. Wright (mgr.)

**CLEVELAND:** 1, Purcell, Dunlap, Glasscock; 2, Nolan, Phillips; 3, Remsen, Bradley, Clapp; 4, Doscher, Shaffer; 5, McGeary, J. McCormick.

**BUFFALO:** 1, Lynch, Richardson, Foley; 2, White, Sullivan; 3, Galvin, O'Rourke, Peters; 4, Force, Brouthers; 5, Rowe, Morrissey.

**CHICAGO:** 1, Nichol, Flint, Burns; 2, Kelly, Dalrymple; 3, Quest, Gore, Corcoran; 4, Anson, Williamson; 5, Goldsmith, Piercy.

**TROY:** 1, Holbert, Keefe, Cassidy; 2, Welch, Hankinson; 3, Gillespie, Ferguson, Caskins; 4, Ewing, Evans; 5, Connor, Earl (owner).

**PROVIDENCE:** 1, L. Brown, York, Start; 2, Ward, Gilligan; 3, Mathews, Hines, Farrell; 4, Denny, Radbourn; 5, Morrow (mgr.), Gross.

**DETROIT:** 1, Stearns, Derby, Weidman; 2, Powell Gerhardt; 3, Houck, Knight, Wood; 4, A. Whitney, Hanlon; 5, Trott, Bennett, Bancroft (mgr.).

**WORCESTER:** 1, Dorgan, H. McCormick, Reilley; 2, Hotaling, Irwin; 3, Stovey, Creamer, Corey; 4, Carpenter, Bushong; 5, Nelson, Lee Richmond, Dickerson.

# Black Bluejackets

JERRY MALLOY

*It is always wrong to consider that something which begins in a small way cannot rapidly become important.*

*Plutarch*

**O**N JUNE 5, 1942, Doreston Luke Carmen, Jr., became the thin end of a very large wedge. That was the day the nineteen-year-old native of Galveston, Texas became the first black recruit at Great Lakes Naval Training Station in Illinois. Having been jettisoned from the United States Navy during the interwar years, blacks were being allowed back into the armed forces' most exclusive white man's club.

The large scale reentry of blacks into the Navy would have far-reaching and often unforeseen consequences, not only for the Navy, but for American society as a whole. The United States' entry into World War II suddenly made the armed forces the largest employer of blacks in the country, by far. Historian Morris J. MacGregor points out that in altering race relations ". . . the armed forces could command where others could only persuade." And command they did, to the extent that black participation in the military during World War II became the origin of the modern civil rights movement in the nation.

In baseball, as well, World War II furnished a peek into the future. The rigid barriers of segregation gradually broke down on the fields of play as well as on the fields of war. Conflict over racial policy in the military services foretold the coming of the civil rights movement, and blacks on military service teams were unheralded and unwitting precursors of what Jules Tygiel has termed

"baseball's great experiment": the breaching of the color line.

One such group of ballplayers came together to form a team at Great Lakes in 1944. The Great Lakes white team, the Bluejackets, under the direction of Mickey Cochrane, was well publicized and highly regarded. Some called it "the seventeenth major league team." This is an account of another team from Great Lakes, the all-black team created in 1944—the Great Lakes Negro Varsity, as they were called. In their own way, these "Black Bluejackets" helped clear the path for Jackie Robinson.

## THE NEGRO AND THE NAVY

By the end of World War II, the Navy had adopted the most progressive racial policies of any of the military services. But three and a half years earlier, when the United States entered the war, it was the most blatantly racist. Blacks had served with distinction on mixed crews in every war since the Revolution, but during the course of WW I, the "War to Make the World Safe for Democracy," they were relegated to the menial chores of the Messman's (or Steward's) Branch. During the 1920s the black man virtually disappeared from the Navy, as Filipinos and Guamanians served as "seagoing bellhops." In 1932, with the independence of the Philippines approaching, the Navy once again began to recruit blacks, but only as

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JERRY MALLOY of Mundelein, Ill., wrote "Out at Home" for the 1983 TNP; for this article he wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mrs. Donna Berry, widow of Al Pesek.

"chambermaids of the Navy," in the Messman's Branch.

Escalating manpower requirements after Pearl Harbor changed this. Civil rights groups mounted a "Double-V Campaign" to defeat racism at home as well as facism abroad. The Army pressured the Navy to assist in assimilating blacks into the armed forces. Franklin Roosevelt, prompted by a combination of idealism and political considerations, also played a key role in forcing the Navy to open its ranks to blacks. The Navy's initial efforts to modify its racial policies often failed because the decision to do so was thrust upon it by outsiders. Consider:

- Not only were there no blacks at Annapolis (in fact, the Navy had no black officers until 1944), the Midshipmen refused to allow a Negro from Harvard University to participate in a lacrosse game.
- In July 1941 a Navy commission determined that Negro "characteristics" made blacks suitable only for messman's duty. Six months later, the Commandant of the Marine Corps viewed the inclusion of blacks in the Navy as "absolutely tragic" and said that since the Negro could serve in the Army, his desire to enter the Navy was an attempt "to break into a club that doesn't want him."
- Throughout the war, the Navy, as well as the other armed services, segregated blood banks, despite the utter lack of scientific evidence to support such a policy. Not lost upon the black press was the fact that Dr. Charles Drew, a pioneer in the development of plasma transfer techniques and the director of the first Red Cross blood bank, was a Negro.
- Black recruits eventually stationed at Great Lakes were required to spend Sunday evenings singing spirituals in an ill-considered attempt to foster black pride. Many blacks, especially those from the North, found this practice repellent and demeaning.

It is little wonder that Dennis D. Nelson, one of the first thirteen blacks to become Navy officers in 1944, recalled that "Recruits who felt they had been treated as sub-citizens found it likely they would be classified as sub-sailors as well." Another one of the first black ensigns, James Hair, remembers a very hostile atmosphere at Great Lakes, as though the attitude was that "These niggers coming in is gonna change the Navy."

The rigid segregation that the Navy imposed in training, housing, and—as we shall see—sports gave many blacks a dose of government sanctioned discrimination that they had never experienced before. The situation of Larry Doby typified that of many Negro recruits. Doby, who had been a popular star athlete at an integrated high school in Paterson, New Jersey, looked back upon his plunge into racism in the Navy:

... I enlisted and wore a U.S. sailor's uniform at Great Lakes

Naval Training Station. For the first time I was conscious of discrimination and segregation as never before. It was a shock. If you've never been exposed to it from the outside and it suddenly hits you, you can't take it. I didn't crack up; I just went into my shell. . . . I thought: "This is a crying shame when I'm here to protect my country." But I couldn't do anything about it—I was under Navy rules and regulations and had to abide by them or face the consequences.

### MICKY COCHRANE'S BLUEJACKETS

In the spring of 1945 Chicago *Sun* columnist James S. Kearns wrote that "the most successful producer of winning sports teams in America the last three years [has been the] U.S. Naval Training Center at Great Lakes." The following charts helps explain how he came to this conclusion:

GREAT LAKES SPORTS TEAMS 1942 to Spring 1945					
	No. of Seasons	W-L	Pct.	Home Games	Att.
Basketball	4	130-16-0	.890	58	120,000
Football	3	27- 2-2	.931	14*	305,000
Baseball	3	163-26-1	.862	57	680,000
Totals	10	320-49-3	.867	129	1,105,000

\*No home football field in 1942

In these three baseball seasons, the team was managed by Mickey Cochrane; in 1945 Bob Feller and Pinky Higgins managed it. Kit Crissey, in *Athletes Away*, has written that "The Navy scored a tremendous public relations coup when it recruited . . . Mickey Cochrane. . . . Many professional players specifically chose the Navy and Great Lakes so they could play for him, and thus he was able to field outstanding teams in 1942, 1943 and 1944." During these three seasons, Cochrane managed thirty-nine men who played in the major leagues before, during, or after the war.

One such major leaguer was Chet Hajduk, whose career consisted of a lone, and unsuccessful, pinch-hitting appearance for the White Sox in 1941. But Cochrane also managed two players who later would join him in the Hall of Fame: Billy Herman and Johnny Mize. Twenty-nine of these Great Lakes Bluejackets played in the major leagues for at least five years; and eighteen of them played in at least eight big league seasons: Frankie Baumholtz, Tom Ferrick, Joe Grace, Billy Herman, Si Johnson, Bob Klinger, Johnny Lucadello, Johnny McCarthy, Barney McCosky, Johnny Mize, Don Padgett, Eddie Pellagrini, Frankie Pytlak, Johnny Rigney, Schoolboy Rowe, Johnny Schmitz, Virgil Trucks, and Gene Woodling. (The 1945 team, which went 25-6, included ten players with major league careers, among them: Bob Feller, Pinky Higgins, Denny Galehouse, Johnny Gorsica, Walker Cooper, Johnny Groth, and Ken Keltner.)

The 1942 team, with an overall record of 63-14, was the

only one of Cochrane's Bluejacket squads to have a losing record (4-6) against major league competition. The following year, the sailors won seven of thirteen games against big league teams. However, this 1943 team, which compiled a 52-10-1 record, was 0-1 against the Negro Leagues. In the only game ever played during World War II between the Bluejackets and an all-black team, Ted "Double Duty" Radcliffe's Chicago American Giants defeated the Navy team, 7-3. With Lt. Bob Elson announcing the game, the American Giants battered Tom Ferrick and Vern Olsen for seven runs on 17 hits through seven innings. Johnny Schmitz finished up, allowing no runs on two hits in the final two innings. Ralph Wyatt, Lloyd

Lakes, largely due to an excellent pitching staff. Virgil Trucks went 10-0, en route to a Navy career pitching record of 28-1. His 0.88 ERA was slightly better than Bob Klingler's 0.93, but a bit behind Si Johnson's 0.73. Jim Trexler, the only member of the team who never played in the major leagues, went 14-1. The other pitchers were Lynwood "Schoolboy" Rowe and Bill Brandt. Every position player had been, or would become, a major leaguer, and none hit below .340. The lineup consisted of: Johnny McCarthy (1B), Billy Herman (2B), Albie Glossop (SS), Merrill "Pinky" May (3B), "Schoolboy" Rowe and Mizell "Whitey" Platt (platooning in LF), Gene Woodling (CF), Dick West (RF, a catcher in the majors), and Walter Millies (C). Infielder Roy Hartsfield was the only utility player on the Great Lakes squad.

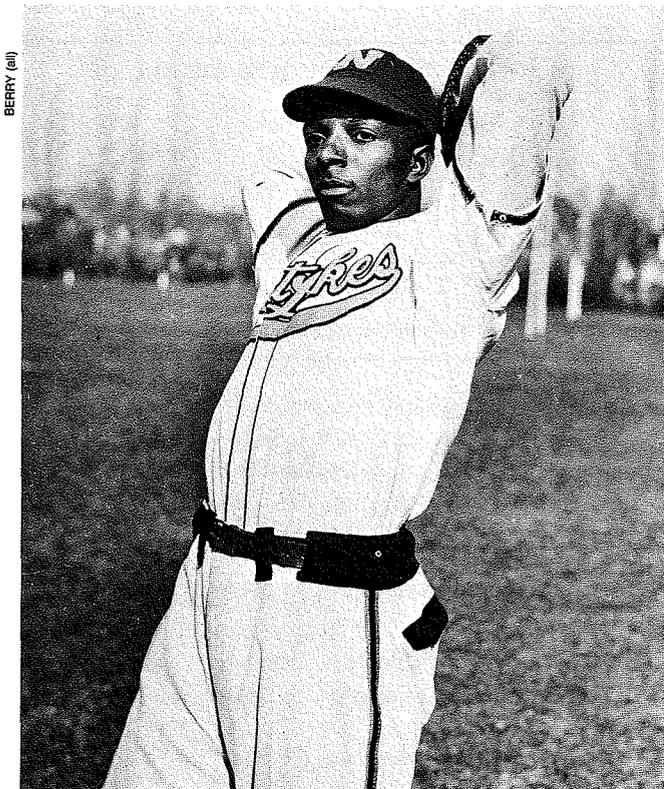
They won their first 23 games of the season before losing, on July 5, to a Ford Motor Company team in Dearborn, Michigan. (The Ford team was managed by Rabbit Maranville, who had played for the Navy's Atlantic Fleet team during World War I.) After this defeat, later avenged, they ran off a sixteen-game winning streak, before losing to the Brooklyn Dodgers on August 8. They ended the season with nine straight victories. Against major league teams, they beat the Phillies, Red Sox, Browns, Cubs, White Sox, Giants, and Indians, while losing to the Dodgers. Their overall record was a stunning 48-2.

Trucks thought this team could have won the pennant in either major league. Skipper Mickey Cochrane gave the base newspaper, the *Great Lakes Bulletin*, the following midseason assessment: "We've got a good team. Give me one more outfielder, and an extra infielder and we'd tackle them all—in the American or National League."

### THE BLACK BLUEJACKETS

By the autumn of 1943 enough blacks had entered Great Lakes for the Navy to begin a black sports program. The first all-Negro team to represent the base was a basketball team in the 1943-44 season. Coached by Stanford's All-American Forrest Anderson, this squad won nineteen of twenty-two games, outscoring its opponents by an average score of 56-36. Four members of this team, Jim Brown, Larry Doby, Art Grant, and Charley Harmon, later played on the 1944 baseball team.

Many of Doby's teammates felt that he was better at basketball (and football) than he was at baseball. Later in the war, in the Pacific, Mickey Vernon first noticed Doby's great athletic ability—on a basketball court, not a baseball diamond. Harmon, whose favorite sport was basketball despite his future career in the National League, had played on the University of Toledo team that made it to the NIT final game against St. John's University in 1943. Jim Brown's later career as basketball coach at DuSable High School in Chicago bespeaks his knowledge of the game. A powerhouse through the 1950s and 1960s, during



John Wright

Davenport, and player-manager Ted Radcliffe had three hits apiece for the Giants. Pitcher Gentry Jessup went the distance, despite surrendering a dozen hits and seven walks. Three double plays helped hold the Bluejackets to three runs. Radcliffe recalls that it was only the speed of his star center fielder, Davenport, that held Johnny Mize to a double and a triple for two of his four hits. Had the ballpark been enclosed, Mize would have had at least two home runs, but Davenport was able to chase these clouts down in time to prevent Mize from scoring. The *Chicago Defender* wrote that the 10,000 fans in attendance were "startled" by the outcome. Perhaps the Navy was, too. "They wouldn't let us come back again," says Radcliffe.

The 1944 team was the best ever assembled at Great

Brown's tenure, his 1953 DuSable Panthers became the first all-black team with a black coach to play for the Illinois state high school basketball championship. So it is small wonder that the Great Lakes Negro basketball team got the base sports program off to such a successful start. DePaul University basketball coach Ray Meyer recalls the Great Lakes black team working out at DePaul. Several members of the team inquired about enrolling at the school to play basketball. Meyer had to regretfully decline the offer, since "nobody was playing black players" in those days, and he would not have been able to put together a schedule. "With three or four of them joining big George Mikan, we would have had a team nobody could have touched," recalls Meyer.



Herb Bracken

Before the 1944 baseball season began, the Navy took a new tack in addressing the problem of race relations. Focusing on the importance of white officers directly in command of Negro sailors, the Navy sought to identify the more mature non-commissioned officers with experience in integrated situations. These NCOs, many of whom had been in charge of physical training and drill instruction, were commissioned as officers and assigned to black units. The Navy adopted a new official policy which rejected all "theories of racial differences in inborn ability." To help educate these newly commissioned ensigns, the Navy published, in February 1944, an important booklet entitled *Guide to the Command of Negro Naval Personnel*. A full decade before the United States Supreme Court's historic *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the

Navy explicitly renounced segregation and Jim Crow social arrangements:

The idea of compulsory racial segregation is disliked by almost all Negroes, and literally hated by many. This antagonism is in part a result of the lesson taught the Negro by experience that in spite of the legal formula of "separate but equal" facilities, the facilities open to him under segregation are in fact usually inferior as to location or quality to those available to others.

One of the new officers promoted from the ranks was Elmer J. ("Al") Pesek, who was commissioned on April 10, 1944. His assignment was to manage Great Lakes' first all-black baseball team, the Negro Varsity of 1944. It is unlikely that Pesek had heard of any of the players he would be managing, but he soon discovered a promising pool of talent. Some had starred in the Negro Leagues, and others would make their mark in Organized Baseball after the war.

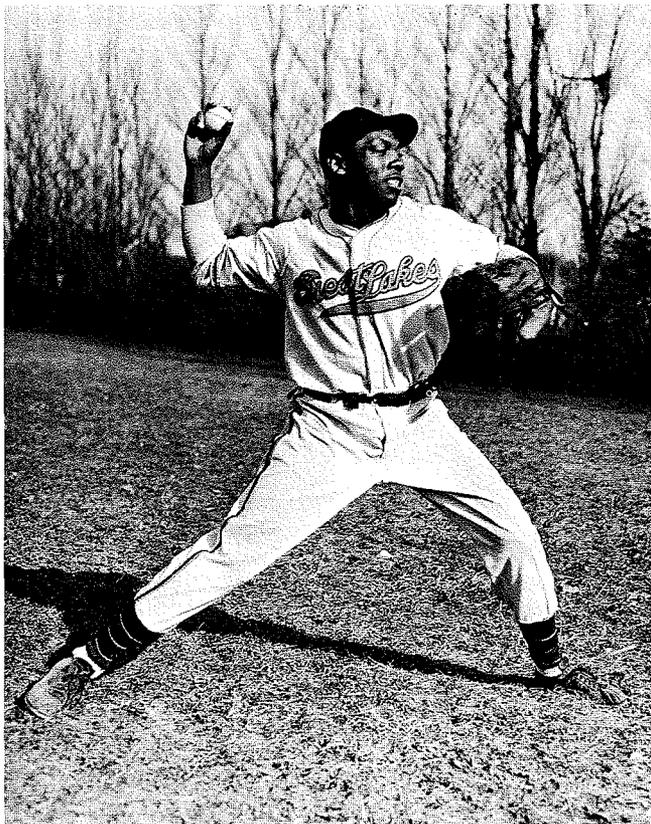
A Navy manual published at the beginning of the season listed the players and their prior baseball affiliations (ages are shown where available):

PITCHERS	AGE	PRIOR AFFILIATION
John Wright	27	Homestead Grays
Herb Bracken	29	St. Louis Giants
Luis Pillot	26	Cuban All-Stars
CATCHERS		
Wyatt Turner		Pittsburgh Crawfords
Leroy Clayton		Chicago Brown Bombers
INFIELDERS		
Larry Doby	20	Newark Eagles
Andy Watts	21	Glen Rogers (W.Va.) Red Sox
Arthur Grant		Cleveland Buckeyes
Charles Harmon	18	University of Toledo
Stephen Summerow	18	Cleveland Buckeyes
Alvin Paschal	19	Columbus (Ohio) Buckeyes
Jim Brown	24	Birmingham Black Barons
Earl Richardson		Newark Eagles
OUTFIELDERS		
Leroy Coates	35	Homestead Grays
William Randall	28	Homestead Grays
Howard Gay		Cincinnati Ethiopian Clowns
Isaiah White		Baltimore Bees
William Campbell	22	New Kensington (Pa.) Elks

The New Kensington Elks may not have been much of a team. But the Birmingham Black Barons, Cleveland Buckeyes, Homestead Grays, Newark Eagles, and Pittsburgh Crawfords were established members of the Negro Leagues. The future major league careers of Doby and Harmon vouch for their abilities. Brown, Campbell, Coates, Randall, and Watts all proved to be capable hitters. Herb Bracken would lead the pitching staff with a 13-1 record. And Ensign Pesek knew he had a great pitcher when he told the *Great Lakes Bulletin* prior to the season that his biggest problem would be finding a catcher able to handle the formidable stuff of John Richardson Wright.

At 5'11" and 168 pounds, Wright pitched for Navy ball-

clubs throughout World War II. After the war, he became the second black player—after Jackie Robinson—to be signed by Branch Rickey to a Dodger contract. Before the war, he had been an outstanding pitcher for one of the most famous teams in the history of the Negro Leagues: the Homestead Grays. His teammates there included future Hall of Famers Josh Gibson, Cool Papa Bell, and Buck Leonard. In 1943 his record was 30-5, and he started four games in the Negro League World Series, twice shutting out the Birmingham Black Barons on the way to a 4-3 series triumph. He also pitched in the Negro League All-Star game that year, before a record crowd of 51,723 in Chicago's Comiskey Park. While players such as Rich-



Jim Brown

ardson, Doby, and Harmon were just beginning their careers while at Great Lakes, John Wright, to those familiar with the Negro Leagues, had already arrived.

### THE SEASON

The Negro Varsity joined five other teams from various military bases and technical schools in the Chicago area to form the Midwest Servicemen's League (MSL). A double round-robin was scheduled, with the teams playing other, nonconference games against semipro, industrial, and independent clubs. After the first round of games in the MSL, an all-star team of league members would play against Mickey Cochrane's Bluejackets on June 17. Seven of Pesek's black players eventually would be selected to play

in this game. However, at no time did the full Great Lakes Negro Varsity play the white Bluejackets. The closest the two teams came to meeting each other came in the last week of April, when rain canceled a scheduled six-inning practice game.

After a practice game in which the Negro Varsity barely defeated Waukegan (Illinois) High School, 1-0, John Wright got the team off to a propitious start, hurling a three-hitter in a 3-2 win over Chanute Field in downstate Rantoul, Illinois. After two more victories, the team lost three straight games to even its record at 3-3. One of these losses was to the Cincinnati-Indianapolis Clowns of the Negro American League. Wright pitched one of his worst games of the season in the 7-5 loss, yielding 11 hits and seven walks. After another three-game winning streak, the team missed a chance to defeat the Douglass Aircraft nine on June 6 when, as the base newspaper informed its readers, the game "was postponed because of the Invasion."

On June 14 Ensign Pesek sent John Wright to the mound against Ft. Custer in Battle Creek, Michigan. In a tough loss, Wright drove in both Great Lakes runs with a home run as the team lost, 3-2. Wright gave up only four hits, but Ft. Custer benefited from five Great Lakes errors plus some questionable umpiring. "With the bases full in the ninth inning," according to the *Great Lakes Bulletin*, "John Wright hit a pop fly to Peanuts Lowry, former Chicago Cub. The umpire refused to call it an infield fly. Lowry trapped the ball, forced Charles Harmon at home and then William Campbell was doubled." All three of Ft. Custer's runs came in the sixth inning, two of them unearned due to a throwing error by Wright. This loss dropped the black Bluejackets' record to 6-4.

Herb Bracken, Jim Brown, Leroy Clayton, Larry Doby, Charley Harmon, William "Sonny" Randall, and Wright were chosen to represent the Great Lakes Negro Varsity on the MSL's all-star team that played the white Bluejackets three days later. Tall, slender righthander "Doc" Bracken took the mound that day to face a ballclub that had mowed down every opponent in its path to that point. In a game that the soft-spoken St. Louis native modestly recalls today as "one of the better games I pitched that year," Bracken hurled a brilliant one-hitter, but lost the game, 3-0. The lone hit was a second-inning double by Johnny McCarthy, who then took third on what was ruled a passed ball. Bracken says he tried to sneak a quick-pitch by the hitter, but crossed up catcher Leroy Clayton instead. McCarthy later scored on a double-play grounder by Dick West. Bob Klinger pitched for Cochrane's team and held the all-stars to four hits. But the story of the game was Bracken. Years later Larry Doby would recall this game as proof of how the Navy's policies of segregation unfairly deprived blacks of the chance to represent the base in sports. Several members of the team recall trying to play especially well in this game, not because they were playing against white major leaguers, but because they

were playing against a good team. Like athletes everywhere, they bore down whenever they faced a good opponent.

On July 8 Wright pitched a seven-inning no-hitter against the Naval Aviation School at 87th and Anthony in Chicago. He struck out ten, walked two, and drove in three runs in the 14-1 shellacking.

On July 12, the sailors avenged their earlier loss to Ft. Custer (and Peanuts Lowry) with a 1-0 victory at Constitution Field, scoring the game's only run with two out in the ninth inning. After three more wins, the team traveled to Rantoul, Illinois, and beat Chanute Field, 5-2. "Trailing 2-0 with two out in the sixth," reported the *Great Lakes Bulletin*, "the Negro nine went ahead with four successive home runs by Larry Doby, Charley Harmon, Bill Randall, and Jim Brown. Brown squeezed Harmon home for the fifth run in the ninth."

After an easy win at Urbana against the University of Illinois Signal School, the black Bluejackets clinched the MSL title by defeating Glenview NAS, 6-2, before 10,000 spectators at Great Lakes' Constitution Field. Bracken yielded six hits as he won his seventh game of the season. Larry Doby hit a home run, and Andy Watts hit a double and two singles, as the team improved its record to 20-7.

The Negro Varsity won eight of its last ten games to finish the season with a record of 32-10. They played one game in front of 25,000 fans in Cleveland's Municipal Stadium. After splitting two games against the Colored Athletics in Grand Rapids, Michigan, they defeated the Negro Leagues' Chicago American Giants, 5-2, in East Chicago, Indiana.

Other games that Pesek's black Bluejackets played in 1944 are lost from the historical record. Bracken and Watts recall the House of David as being the best team they faced that year, even better than Cochrane's. Jim Brown says that they also played a barnstorming team that included Satchel Paige and Dizzy Dean. None of these games—and who knows how many others?—was reported by the press.

The *Great Lakes Bulletin* did not print the season statistics for the Negro Varsity, as it did for the white Bluejackets. It did point out that Wright's final record was 16-4, and that Bracken led the staff with a 13-1 record. While stationed at Pearl Harbor, Bracken received a handsome trophy from the Navy for his 1944 accomplishments. Charley Harmon was the team's leading hitter. The Navy presented the MSL championship team members with rings. After the war, when Andy Watts showed his Cleveland Buckeyes teammate, Sam Jethroe, the Navy ring, Jethroe said it was better than the one he received for being a member of the Buckeye team that won the Negro World Series in 1945.

The winds of war dispersed the Great Lakes Negro Varsity baseball team for good shortly after the season ended. Some players never left the United States, while others were sent to the Pacific. Several players played on

integrated teams later in their Navy careers. Bracken, for example, was one of two blacks on a team in Pearl Harbor. Watts played on an all-black team in an otherwise white league on Guam, where he hit .519 while playing against major league veterans Pee Wee Reese, Hal White, Johnny Rigney, and Mace Brown. (One of Watts' teammates on Guam was Charley Harmon's brother, William.)

During the long decades of segregated baseball, there always remained a slender thread of contact between the races on the diamond with exhibition and training games. The military service teams during World War II continued this legacy and expanded upon it. Many major league players played with or against blacks for the first time during their military careers. By no means was integrated baseball limited to the Navy. In 1945 the Army organized a well-publicized tournament of teams representing the European and Mediterranean Theaters of Operation.



*Sonny Randall, Leroy Coates, and Isaiah White*

Upwards of 50,000 GI's watched such Negro League stars as Willard Brown, Leon Day, and Joe Greene participate in the championship finals in Nuremberg.

## EPILOGUE

On February 27, 1946, the Navy issued the following order:

Effective immediately, all restrictions governing the types of assignments for which Negro naval personnel are eligible are hereby lifted. Henceforth, they shall be eligible for all types of assignments in all ratings in all activities and all ships of the Naval Service. . . . In the utilization of housing, messing and other facilities, no special or unusual provisions will be made for the accommodation of Negroes.

Nineteen days later, Jackie Robinson walked to the plate in Jersey City, New Jersey, for his first at-bat as a member of the Montreal Royals.

# ACROSTIC PUZZLE

JEFFREY NEUMAN

1O	2A		3T	4W	5C	6G	7L		8R	9P	10C	11U	12W		13D	14T	15H		16W	17B	18N	19I	20H		21C	22O
23A	24J	25L	26V	27E		28P	29A	30E	31K		32I		33P	34N	35C	36W	37D	38A	39T	40J	41E	42M	43O	44L		45S
46B	47G	48W	49R	50Q		51P	52L	53J	54V	55A	56M	57N	58S	59D		60M	61F	62E		63T	64J	65W	66B	67D	68Q	69O
70I	71M	72U		73F	74M		75L	76K	77W		78B	79M	80W	81S	82E	83U	84I		85T	86P	87Q	88E		89V	90D	91I
92J	93U	94B	95M	96T	97S		98U	99S	100C	101R	102P	103M	104A	105H		106N	107B		108O	109S	110N	111L	112J	113D		114B
115W	116A		117O	118W	119U	120A		121D	122W	123R	124L	125T		126U	127R	128H		129H	130J	131B	132Q	133V	134N	135S		136Q
137P	138D	139L	140C	141N	142I	143F	144S	145A	146K	147R		148L	149P		150R	151S	152P	153H	154I		155B	156K	157W	158U	159H	160O
161N	162Q	163E	164L		165P	166B	167M	168W	169Q	170G		171P	172A	173H	174O	175T	176D	177U	178E	179V	180L	181W				

Fill in the words defined below, one letter over each number. Then transfer each letter to the box which is numbered correspondingly in the acrostic diagram. Black boxes indicate word endings; note that words may spill over at the right, from one line to the next. When completed, the diagram will yield a quotation from a celebrated baseball book; its author and title will be revealed by reading the first letters of the guessed words below.

Answer on page 88.

## CLUES

- A. One Hardy foe in a Broadway musical
- B. "Out\_\_\_\_\_"; Plimpton book (3 words)
- C. Un-nervous Fox
- D. FDR lit the first one at Crosley (2 words)
- E. Like the '20 Red Sox and the '35 Yanks?
- F. Unit of resistance
- G. Forgettable Gus or memorable Hodges
- H. Cadore's Brave opponent for 26 frames
- I. He played in Boston and Cleveland; it's in play in Houston and Seattle
- J. Like the emery ball
- K. "In the cauldron boil and bake/Eye of \_\_\_\_\_ and toe of frog..."
- L. Ill-timed
- M. Ancient Egyptian queen, wife of Pharaoh Amenhotep IV
- N. Strenuous; energetic
- O. Adjective for advances or fractions
- P. All-time triples king (2 words)
- Q. Attainable (2 words)
- R. Problem for brewers, and not just the infielders (2 words)
- S. High-tailed it, usually on an infield hit (2 words)
- T. "\_\_\_\_\_ Out"; Asinof book (2 words)
- U. Full of holes; decayed (hyph.)
- V. Strange
- W. Starter for every game, except twin-bill nightcaps (2 words)

- A. \_\_\_\_\_  
104 23 38 145 116 55 2 120 29 172
- B. \_\_\_\_\_  
46 107 114 94 78 155 66 131 166 17
- C. \_\_\_\_\_  
100 5 3 21 35 10 140
- D. \_\_\_\_\_  
59 37 67 138 13 176 121 90 113
- E. \_\_\_\_\_  
30 82 178 88 41 62 163 27
- F. \_\_\_\_\_  
73 61 143
- G. \_\_\_\_\_  
170 6 47
- H. \_\_\_\_\_  
20 128 105 153 129 173 15 159
- I. \_\_\_\_\_  
84 91 70 32 154 142 19
- J. \_\_\_\_\_  
130 92 112 53 24 64 40
- K. \_\_\_\_\_  
156 31 76 146
- L. \_\_\_\_\_  
139 44 148 52 111 180 7 75 25 124 164
- M. \_\_\_\_\_  
71 103 74 79 167 56 95 60 42
- N. \_\_\_\_\_  
141 57 18 110 161 106 34 134
- O. \_\_\_\_\_  
1 69 160 117 43 108 22 174
- P. \_\_\_\_\_  
171 86 33 137 102 152 28 149 51 9 165
- Q. \_\_\_\_\_  
162 169 50 68 136 87 132
- R. \_\_\_\_\_  
150 49 101 127 123 8 147
- S. \_\_\_\_\_  
151 144 81 97 109 45 58 99 135
- T. \_\_\_\_\_  
85 39 125 14 3 63 175 96
- U. \_\_\_\_\_  
11 93 72 98 158 177 126 83 119
- V. \_\_\_\_\_  
133 26 54 179 89
- W. \_\_\_\_\_  
181 80 157 168 77 16 115 48 118 65 36 4 12 122

JEFFREY NEUMAN is an editor at Macmillan, where he edits, among other things, The Baseball Encyclopedia.



The Last Boat

By HAL COFFMAN

No. 17039

**75 Cents***Holder of this Program is invited to sit in Grand Tier OR Lower Stand Seats*

## TITANIC RELIEF FUND Exhibition Baseball Game

This exhibition game between the Giants and the Yankees is given for the purpose of aiding the widows and orphans who survive the wreck of the White Star Steamship "Titanic," in which about 1,600 women, children and men lost their lives. The proceeds will be used through the New York American Titanic Relief Fund.

The game is through the courtesy of Mr. John T. Brush, president of the New York National League team; Mr. Frank Farrell, president of the New York American League team, and Messrs. John J. McGraw and Harry Wolverton, and all of the players and others concerned in the game. To all of them the New York American wishes publicly to acknowledge its sincere thanks in behalf of those who will be benefited.

### NEW YORK POLO GROUNDS

GAME CALLED AT 3 P. M.

### Sunday Afternoon, April 21, 1912

The McGraw-Hill Printing Co., 330-342 William Street, N. Y.

*This year marked the discovery on the ocean floor of the wreck of the Titanic, which in the early morning hours of April 15, 1912 had struck an iceberg and sunk, taking with her 1,517 lives. Only days after news of the tragedy reached these shores, baseball responded. Here, from the collection of Barry Halper, is Program No. 17039 from the now-forgotten benefit game played at the Polo Grounds between the Yankees and the Giants.*

## MEN IN BLUE

# “Umpire: Klem”— A Season in the NYSL

FRANK KEETZ

**B**ILL KLEM, probably the most famous umpire in baseball history, umpired in the National League for thirty-six years. Starting in 1905, after a full season in the American Association, he umpired in more than 5,000 major league games in addition to two All-Star Games and eighteen World Series. More important, Klem demanded respect for all umpires. He would not be bullied. During his career, umpires gradually became respected professionals with private dressing rooms, not objects of ridicule who dressed in the groundskeeper's shed. The respect did not come easily or quickly. There were legendary struggles with such men as John McGraw. But before Klem mastered the abusive managers and players in the National League, he originally had to earn his spurs in the New York State League of 1903, where he struggled through his first complete season as a minor league umpire.

### THE VILLAIN

Future Hall of Fame member William J. Klem spent only that one season in the New York State League.

Klem, from Rochester, was a twenty-nine-year-old umpire who had had part of a year's professional experience in the lower classification Connecticut State League during 1902. Umpiring in professional baseball at the turn of the century was a most precarious occupation. Major league umpire "Silk" O'Loughlin was quoted in September of 1903 as saying that "the public looks at the umpire in the same way that the gallery gods do the villain in a cheap play. This accounts for the laughter that always comes when the umpires get clipped by a foul ball or otherwise injured." *Sporting Life* constantly reported "rowdiness" and "a wave of disorder" in the major leagues—especially the National. The minor leagues may have been worse. Umpire Keefe was "assaulted" in the Southern League. There was a riot in Newark (Eastern League) where police had to take Umpire Kelly to the precinct station for safety. St. Paul manager Bill Clymer suffered a broken jaw during an argument when outfielder Fred Odvell "hurled a ball with all his force at Umpire Foreman" and missed.

The six-year-old New York State League, where an umpire always had

to officiate a game by himself, had an equally horrendous history of what President John Farrell called "the umpire problem." More than 100 umpires had come and gone during those six years! It was in this atmosphere that the *Sporting News* listed a "W. J. Flem" as one of the New York State League's four umpires for 1903. On April 27, the *Schenectady Evening Star* reported "Umpire: Mr. Klim" after a preseason game. It was "Mr. W. J. Klem" on the following day. Regular season opening day ceremonies occurred on a cold windy May 10; the box score of the Albany at Ilion game simply printed "Umpire: Klem."

### DANNY COOGAN

Three weeks later, the traditional Memorial Day doubleheaders were scheduled. Klem was assigned the Johnstown-Schenectady games. The League had a "pairing" arrangement whereby all holiday doubleheaders were split, one game in each of the towns. The morning game was scheduled at Johnstown, after which the players, umpire, and some fans would ride the train to Schenectady (a distance of 25 miles) for the afternoon contest. This way, each town had a chance to draw a large holiday crowd. Last place Johnstown won in the morning, 8-1, while Schenectady won after noon, 4-3, on local hero Fred "Dependable" Betts' home run. (ED. NOTE: See the article on the "Betts Case" by Ray Schmidt, also in this issue.) During the afternoon game, Klem had a run-in with a small Schenectady catcher named Danny Coogan. Coogan was fined \$10 on the spot for his comments to Klem and then put out of the game after he "punched Klem's breast protector, slapped his mask and knocked it off." Klem called for the policeman to escort Coogan off the field. The policeman was afraid of the "vast crowd" and did not comply. The Schenectady

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FRANK KEETZ has written monographs on baseball in Schenectady.

*Evening Star* condemned Coogan's "rowdiness"—a somewhat amazing denouncement for a newspaper of that era. *The Gazette* reported that "the little catcher would like to state that he lost his temper. He did not strike the umpire but he got so excited that he took hold of the arbiter's mask and for having done it Coogan feels very sore." Coogan's sorrow was short lived, for two days later he had another dispute with Klem. He was fined \$5 and then put out of the game. Coogan continued his abuse from the grandstand and proceeded to throw Klem's civilian clothes (in a groundskeeper's shed) onto the field. This time the local police complied with Umpire Klem's request and escorted Coogan out of the park. Coogan temporarily refused to pay the fine, which Klem had to collect himself. A local paper said, Coogan is a "good catcher but loses his head too often."

President Farrell said "umpire baiting" (which boosted attendance)

must stop. However, an Albany paper said Farrell "has dug up some 'beauts' who pose as umpires." Two days later a Schenectady paper praised the new league policy of umpires fining players on the spot for abusive language toward umpires. It also praised Klem for trying to carry out the regulation and said "talk is not cheap on the ball grounds this year."

**"UMPIRE MOBBED"**

Within a week, "Troy Defeated, Umpire Mobbed" headlines appeared in the press. "Umpire Klem was mobbed at the conclusion of the game for his act in removing Jack Rafter [Troy catcher] from the contest. Rafter had baited the umpire. Police and Troy players saved Klem from a bad mob beating. One mob member struck Klem on the jaw." A published crowd of 1,100 had witnessed the game. A League player, James Fairbank, later said, "Bill Klem, I remember very well. He was

the most efficient, capable and honest umpire I ever knew. He was absolutely fearless. I saw him in Troy, when he had to swing a club to keep the mob of disgruntled fans away from him until the police came to rescue him after a game that Troy had lost."

Troy papers verify the above accounts of that June 9 ballgame at the Laureate Grounds on Glen Avenue in North Troy. Utica defeated Troy 9-1 before Troy's then largest weekday crowd. There had been arguments in the second inning over strikes and balls. When catcher Rafter renewed the arguments near the end of the game, Klem gave him the heave-ho. Soon the crowd became unruly. As the game ended, Klem walked to the park gate but was "rushed upon by the crowd of almost one thousand persons. The policemen, led by Sgt. Goerold, had to club their way through that crowd." One fan "dealt him [Klem] a blow on the side of the face." "Police finally got him to the

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ticket office and a guard was established about the building."

The crowd lingered outside the field. Threats to kill the umpire were hurled left and right. The mob became more disorderly and police drove them away. After ten minutes delay, Klem left the grounds followed by police guard. "Hit him!" "Kick him!" "Break his jaw!" howled the crowd as Klem boarded the southbound trolley on River Street. "When the trolley started, men and boys hung on both sides of the car and hundreds chased the trolley throwing stones and tin cans at Klem." A short distance away at Bond Street, fans on the car brought the trolley to a halt by disengaging the wire. The crowd again surrounded the trolley but were held at bay by police. Klem eventually reached his hotel in downtown Troy. The *Troy Times* told of the "unfortunate umpire" and said "Mr. Klem seemed quite composed and walked to the office without looking to either side." He dismissed the mob scene the following day saying it was "not too bad—mostly boys!"

Nearly a half century later, in a 1951 *Collier's* article, Klem said, "I never thought eyesight was the most important thing in umpiring. The most important things are guts, honesty, common sense, a desire for fair play and an understanding of human nature."

### GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

Courage. Yes, it was a needed attribute in an umpire. On June 26, the *Binghamton Leader*, after describing Binghamton's 5-1 victory at Syracuse, reported "Umpire Klem's decisions were much questioned and he narrowly escaped mobbing at the hands of angry [Syracuse] fans." For ten days, there was only one mention of Klem. "Utica is sore all over on Umpire Klem." Little mention was probably good news. Whether right or wrong, most observers still think of umpires only when there appears to be a mistake.

The "umpire problem" worsened



THE UMPIRE—AS HE WAS

for Farrell when Fred Popkay, a "popular" umpire and former minor league player, decided to stop umpiring and play first base for the Binghamton team! Popkay gave his required two days' notice. The *Evening Star* accurately reported that "Mr. Farrell will not be happy by the change probably as it will deprive him of a good umpire and good umpires are more scarce than good players. He has two good men in Pfenninger and Popkay, and the other two (Klem and Riley) are only indifferently good or very bad as they happened to feel." After 21 games and a batting average of .153, Popkay decided to go back to umpiring again. Just as Popkay returned to the League umpiring staff, an even greater crisis arose for Klem.

Utica was playing at Binghamton on July 6. There was a disputed decision at first base. Klem had called a Utica player, who had allegedly run out of the basepath, safe at first. The Binghamton catcher, Joe Evers, argued violently and Klem put him out of the game. Evers continued to argue. The League rule gave the player ten minutes to exit on penalty of game forfeiture. Depending on the source, Evers continued to argue for seven (or thirteen) minutes. Klem ordered the one and only policeman to remove the belligerent player. The policeman refused. "How the crowd yelled, hissed, hooted and yelled,

'Mob him! Mob him!,' reported the *Binghamton Evening Herald*. Finally, Evers left the field.

Klem stayed in Binghamton to umpire more games. Trouble was brewing. One paper called Klem "a clown" on July 8 as the other paper reported "while it is always the privilege of the losing team to say it was the fault of the umpire, there can be no doubt that the work of Mr. Klem is the worst ever seen here, and there have been some bad ones." The next day, one paper called Klem "just rotten" while another paper said, "Klem was just as rank as ever and was responsible for two of the three runs Albany scored in the first inning." A local character, "Johnny Boo," became so excited at one stage of the game that he invaded the field and, poking the umpire with his stick, asked him if he really knew anything about the game. A Binghamton player sent "Johnny Boo" back to the bleachers "amidst the applause from the grandstands."

### "KLEM CANNOT UMPIRE HERE"

Events worsened the following day. With Binghamton leading Albany 3-0, Klem "made another of his poor decisions" and put their third baseman, Jimmy Callopy, out of the game after a close play at third. "The umpire was looking for a chance to get back at the Binghamton team." Then, with the bases loaded, Callopy's replacement dropped a pop foul ball. The batter proceeded to hit a long fly to the right fielder, who dropped it as three Albany runs scored to tie the game. The home team finally lost in extra innings and was furious at the umpire. The stage was set now for a climactic confrontation.

On the following day, Binghamton management refused to allow Klem to enter the ballpark. The *Binghamton Republican* headlined "President [Hollis M.] Gitchell Bars Umpire Klem; Wires Farrell That He Can Not Officiate Here To-day." The same paper commented:

Umpire Klem is no more. That is he is no more in the New York State League. Klem certainly has done some very poor work here, both this week and when he was here earlier in the season. He does not seem to have the ability to tell whether a ball is over the base or not, or whether, in the case of a close decision, the runner is safe or out.

Gitchell's telegram to League President Farrell said, "Klem cannot umpire here to-morrow. Killing the game. Please advise me immediately." Farrell backed his umpire when he wired back, "No answer necessary." Nevertheless, a determined Gitchell refused to allow Klem to enter the ballpark; a policeman barred him at the gate. The two teams agreed upon a local umpire, signed a paper authorizing the illegal change and were about to start play when, "finding that he could neither beg nor buy his way within the gate," Klem "looked in as far as he could see and yelled: 'I forfeit the game to Troy.'"

Another paper noted Klem's tenacity as he stood alone among the taunting crowd outside Suburban Park:

But there are some things about this fellow that one never can forget, it must be admitted. Yesterday, he hung around the gate. When the game started, he tried to force his way in. The gate closed in his face. Policeman Hunt threatened to smash his face. Klem (told of his fistic past and) offered to fight him.

At this point, the really crucial decisions had to be made by League President Farrell. Klem did not umpire on Saturday, the day following the lockout, being replaced by Popkay. He did, however, handle a Sunday game in Schenectady without incident. Farrell sent a wire to Klem just before a game at Iliion "to lay off for awhile," stating that Popkay would officiate the series. No reason was given. Klem threatened to resign at once if he was not reinstated. The *Syracuse Journal*, quoting the *Binghamton Evening Herald*, said Klem "certainly isn't wanted in Syracuse and there will be trouble if he is as-



THE UMPIRE—AS HE IS

signed to this city." What transpired between Klem and Farrell is not known, but Klem missed two more games. On Tuesday, he was back umpiring in Iliion as the locals lost to Troy 5-1. Klem moved on to Troy to work the following two days. He umpired every day until the season ended on September 20. Whether by design or not, he was never assigned to Binghamton although he did have a number of Binghamton away games.

#### SEPTEMBER 21

There were no more reported crises for Klem during the rest of the season. Still, the Binghamton press never let up. When talking of poor umpiring by Pfenninger, it declared, "Many of his decisions yesterday were worse than those of Klem." Yet not all Klem's press clippings were derogatory: One paper reported on the day after his reinstatement, "Klem umpired splendidly." An August 13 paper mentioned that Klem had put Frank Delehanty of Syracuse out of the game for "an insulting remark." A few days later, visiting umpire Klem donated two dollars (a not insignificant amount in those days) to the Gus Zeimer Fund for the Schenectady shortstop who had recently broken a leg. A month later, it was reported that Klem fined the same Joe Evers five dollars "for back talk." Perhaps the most important newspaper mention of

Klem's 1903 season appeared on September 21, reporting the final game of the season. Hidden in small print in a box score, it simply said, "Umpire: Klem."

He had lasted the entire season, a feat that few umpires accomplished. The rowdy, foul-mouthed fans and players could not break his resolve. Klem had outlasted the toughs of Troy, Danny Coogan of Schenectady, the incendiary sportswriters in towns like Binghamton and Syracuse, the vicious club owners of the Binghamtons. The season honed his mental tenacity and tested his courage while he mastered the style that was one day to take him to the Hall of Fame.

#### WHY WOULD ANYONE UMPIRE?

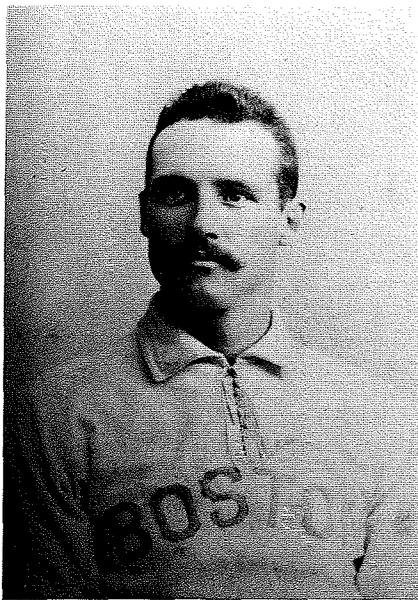
One possible answer is money. The New York State League umpires received \$7 per game during the 1903 season. During a month of, say, 25 games, that amounts to \$175. The NYSL teams had a salary limit of \$1,200 per month for a squad of twelve players. (The official team salary limit can be used only as a guide, since all contemporary records indicate that few teams abided by the figure; *The Sporting News* reported that "salary limits are made to be broken.") The legal salary limit would average out to \$100 per month per player. Some veteran minor league players surely made more while some youngsters made less. In short, the umpires' income compared very favorably with that of Class B players.

While umpires' seasonal income compared favorably to players' seasonal income, *both* compared favorably with that of the average worker in Schenectady (or the nation). After a month-long strike in 1903, plumbers in Schenectady settled for \$3.50 for a nine hour day's work. Most city school teachers received a starting salary of \$700 per year with a \$100 increment the second year. City firemen's wages had been raised to \$55 per month in 1902. City laborers received 25¢ per hour for a ten-hour work day. In 1902, General Electric's 10,200 workers averaged \$13.75 per week while American Locomotive's 4,000 workers averaged about \$12.50 per week, and neither plant offered a cushy forty hour work week. Unionized painters, tin-smiths, and carpenters did little better than the G.E. or Alco workers. So, baseball umpires might have to put up with abuse, but there were consolations.—F.K.

19TH CENTURY

# “Grandpa” Was Harry Stovey

LEW LIPSET



Harry Stovey

**T**HOUSANDS OF ARROWHEADS filled two cabinets in the front sitting room of Warren Goff's home in Somerset, Massachusetts. Mr. Goff is the perennial collector. Anything that crossed his path, he saved. A house, a barn, and a garage are filled with the oddest assortment of memorabilia you can imagine. The memories they keep

alive for Mr. Goff and his wife, Evelyn, take up no room at all.

Warren Goff is 69 years old and he's lived in Somerset all his life. "As a matter of fact," he said, "I was born in the sitting room where the arrowheads are." Somerset is a small town, north of Fall River and east of Providence. He worked all his life at the Montaup Electric Co., the town power plant, as a Stationary Engineer. His home is behind a Masonic Temple on approximately a half acre of property. Many of the smaller items he saved are in the house: some fine china, glassware, and pottery neatly arranged off the kitchen; dog tags, bottle caps, and bottle cap openers; the arrowheads; and "Grandpa's photos."

"Grandpa" was Harry Stovey, who was perhaps the best baseball player not to be elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame. In late 1983, a poll of SABR's nineteenth century research committee, numbering about forty-five, voted Stovey and Pete Browning as the two players of that era most deserving to be in the Hall (excluding those, of course, who are already enshrined).

"He gave me these in 1935," said Goff, holding some photos. "I was dating his granddaughter, Beatrice, and even though we broke up, Harry and I remained friends." Obviously, Harry Stovey was not Mr. Goff's grandfather, but the reference shows the closeness they had. Upon retiring from baseball Stovey had chosen to live in Fall River. The photos showed Stovey's teammates on the Athletic team of Philadelphia and the nearby Boston Club.

There were thirty photos, all in remarkable condition, in the standard nineteenth century cabinet-card style. Eight depicted Stovey's teammates on the 1888 Athletic Club and were produced by the Philadelphia studio of Gilbert & Bacon; twelve were done by the renowned Boston photographer G. Waldon Smith. Each showed a striking portrait in uniform of a player on Boston's 1890 Player's League team, of which Stovey was a member. Finally there were ten photos of the 1887 Athletics that were made for the Philadelphia tobacconist Charles Gross for his "Kalamazoo Bat" product. Though not as attractive, these cards were the rarest of the group and collectors refer to them as "Kalamazoo Bat Cabinets."

Goff had studied the Gross cabinets and made an interesting observation. One of the photos corresponded to a smaller Kalamazoo Bat showing Louis Bierbauer tagging a sliding player named Gallagher. There was no such player in all the baseball record books. Mr. Goff used a magnifying glass to notice that Gallagher's uniform bore the name "DEFIANCE." He had read that the Defiance team from the Philadelphia area was Stovey's first organized club in 1876. Further, he speculated that Defiance was still in existence in 1887 and the shadowy Gallagher was probably a player from that club who somehow managed to get in one of the pictures.

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LEW LIPSET, a prolific writer on baseball memorabilia, is author of *The Encyclopedia of Baseball Cards*.

Goff also made an observation regarding another Kalamazoo Bat Cabinet showing Stovey batting and Jocko Milligan catching. At least that was the inscription on the bottom of the corresponding smaller Kalamazoo Bat card. Indeed, it was difficult to doubt it because the players' backs were to the camera. "Look here . . ." Goff pointed out. "See this other picture of Milligan tagging Larkin. Note the white uniform. The player with Stovey is wearing a dark uniform. And look at how a sweater is lying on the ground behind Larkin. It's Larkin's sweater and the player with Stovey is wearing a sweater and that player must be Henry Larkin." And so it was. Harry Stovey became a prominent member of the New Bedford Police Department when he retired and he taught Warren Goff well, because he was evidently quite a detective.

Goff recalled that Stovey was not the family name. It was Stow. "Harry's mother was very strict and playing ball was frowned upon in Philadelphia in the 1870s where he grew up." He went on, "But Harry, being a typical boy and being a superlative ballplayer, went out anyway, and in order to play, changed his name to Stovey." He indicated that the name Stow was a famous one in Philadelphia and that if you looked at the Liberty Bell, you would see that the monument was recast by "Pass and Stow."

Goff had three other baseball items "Grandpa" had given him. One was a traveling bag that was used by Stovey, inside of which was a long leather bat bag. The name J. McGeachy was written on the bag. Goff noted that Jack McGeachy was Stovey's teammate for part of one season in 1891. "Possibly the bat bag was not Grandpa's; I don't know why McGeachy's name is on there." The other two items related to the 1883 champion Athletics. One was a 20" x 24" print that silverfish had partially eaten away. The print showed a ballfield with the Athletic players, clearly identifiable including Stovey at first base. There

was an inset showing portraits of the entire team.

Finally, and perhaps most intriguing, was a crosscut handsaw. "If you look closely you'll see it's inscribed and there's a picture of Grandpa engraved right on the saw," said Mr. Goff. Though it showed wear from use, the inscription could still be read: "For excellence and quality this saw cannot be surpassed." The picture was obviously that of Stovey. Stovey had told Goff that each member of the Athletics received such a saw with his own picture on it. The Stovey saw is the first one uncovered and must be assumed to be the only

sliding he had to do. He was the first player to wear pads." Aside from his home runs Stovey was well known for his baserunning, leading the league in stolen bases three times, in 1886, 1887, and 1888 (according to contemporary records; the Macmillan *Encyclopedia's* revisionist figures give the crowns to others).

One of Stovey's favorite stories concerned training games in New Jersey. Goff recalled that Stovey said "the mosquitoes in New Jersey were as big as airplanes." All of Stovey's teammates marveled how the pesky gnats never seemed to bother Stovey. He explained: "I'd put newspapers in my



Bierbauer and "Gallagher"

one to have survived the 100 year period.

Goff reflected on his old friend. "He was a gentleman. Never had a harsh word for anyone. We used to follow the Red Sox together, and he hated it when they played the Athletics because he was fond of them too. I used to tease him about the ten home runs he led the league with in 1883, about how few that was, and he would say, 'Don't forget we played with a soft ball. If we used the ball they use today I'd have hit a hundred home runs.' And I don't doubt it."

Goff recollected that Stovey had a great deal of trouble with his hips in the 1930s. "He blamed it on all the

socks, because that was the most vulnerable area, and they couldn't bite through." So if you see any old photos where the shins seem unusually large, you'll know why.

"Grandpa's memorabilia" were obviously not the only items Warren Goff was proud of. There was the Model T Ford in the garage, surrounded by dozens of license plates, rulers, spears, wash basins, tools, hunting rifles, lanterns, pots, bottles, and door hinges. They say one man's junk is another man's gold and Goff's collection is certainly proof of that. And one part of it keeps alive the memory of an old friend and a baseball legend.

# PS

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Matthew Rifkin, who lives in Tokyo, wrote a long letter criticizing Merritt Clifton's article *Where the Twain Shall Meet*. (Spring 1985) Some of Rifkin's comments were on matters editorial. He noticed, as did many readers, that we flipped the negative of the Sadaharu Oh photo that opened the article, making him look like a right-handed batter. He also picked up several errors that Clifton had already corrected as the result of a peer review before a second, and final, version of the article was printed as a chapbook entitled "Japanese Baseball Makes the Major Leagues" (*Samisdat*, volume C, #1) in association with the scholarly journal *Japan & America*.

The editors reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

*Rifkin's letter:*

... I have discussed your article with several Japanese baseball experts, and I will try to point out your mistakes ...

—"Thus far no American major league team has ever lost an exhibition series to Japanese professionals." ... the San Francisco Giants ... came to Japan in March 1970 ... and went 3-6.

—Babe Ruth made only one trip to Japan, not "several." Lou Gehrig made two trips, in 1931 and 1934.

—Leo Kiely, a Boston Red Sox was supposed to be the first ex-major leaguer to play in Japan, not Phil Paine. Kiely played on weekends while in the service stationed in Japan.

—Sadaharu Oh is not Korean born ... Perhaps you confuse him with Isao Harimoto, who is ... third on the all time home run list with 504.

To discuss some of your other claims:

Yes, the Japanese Olympic victory was big news, and perhaps it has quieted the "ban the Americans" campaign for a while, but saying that the Japanese "proved themselves equal if not superior" is a bit much. For one thing, many of America's best baseball players are drafted out of high school, sign a pro contract, and therefore were not eligible to play in the Olympics (Dwight Gooden for one). Cuba wasn't in Los Angeles, and they were expected to take the gold. I think the biggest point ... [is] that the Japanese peak out after college, in terms of development. It has to do with training, such as following a coach's advice to the letter because he is the coach ... the Japanese gold in LA is not as big a thing as you make it.

This bit about "lifetime" employment is often confused by Americans. No, not all the people in Japan are under that system, and certainly not baseball players. Yes, there are fewer trades, but a retired ballplayer does not get a job with the parent company. He may become a scout for the team, or get a job in the front office, but he is not associated with the main company ...

I would very much like to see proof that the U.S. State Department has "prevented American teams from raiding Japanese talent." That's quite a statement to make; back it up.

You say that after Oh passed Aaron in home runs, "Americans won multiple titles." So far *no* American has won the home run title in the Central League, which Oh played in. However, since 1974 Americans have won the Pacific title eight times ... I disagree that Japanese players and fans "can better accept" American winning titles. Last year when Greg "Boomer" Wells (Hankyu Braves) was shooting to become the first American to win the Triple Crown Hiromatsu Ochiai (Lotte) told the press that Wells was getting too far ahead and that he would undertake the task of catching Wells. And pitchers from other teams began "grooving" pitched to Ochiai ... Sorry, but Japan still does not like it when Americans do too well.

*Clifton responds:*

... None of the corrections [made during the peer review mentioned in the Editor's Note above] ... and none of your arguments have any significant impact upon my conclusions.

—Considering that the Giants played mostly AAA players after the first three innings on their March 1970 tour of Japan, and that none of their regulars were in shape yet, I doubt that their 3-6 record could really be considered a major league defeat.

—Babe Ruth may have made only one trip to Japan as an active player, but he did make several during his life.

—Both Phil Paine and Leo Kiely pitched in Japan while on leave from the U.S. military during 1953. I understand Paine went into a game first. Maybe Kiely did. Can you cite actual dates of first appearance?

—Yes, I confused Oh's background with Harimoto's.

True, Dwight Gooden didn't pitch for the U.S. Olympic team, having turned pro out of high school, and true, his presence might have made quite a bit of difference—but the Dwight Goodens, Wally Bunkers, Al Kalines and Tony Conigliaros who make good while still in their teens are so rare as to come, on average,

about once per U.S. major league per decade. I don't buy your argument at all ...

Re the U.S. State Department position on imports of baseball players—Japanese and those of other nationalities—just stop by your nearest U.S. Immigration office and ask the person on duty to look it up. It's all in the handbooks, including foreign player quotas ...

I didn't say Japanese fans like American players to win home run titles; I said they accept it better now that Oh has surpassed Aaron in career homers. Although Americans have hit homers in Japan for over thirty years now, six of the eight American-won home run titles have come since Oh passed Aaron.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** What follows is an exchange between Jerry Lansche of St. Louis and John McCormack, who wrote "Let's Go Back to Eight Team Leagues" for the Spring 1985 issue of TNP.

*Lansche's letter:*

I would like to respond to your article, if I may, and point out a few things you may have missed.

First of all, tradition *does* warrant keeping the two leagues. The 162-game schedule, designated hitter, relocating of teams, and the LCS are far less historically damaging to the fabric of baseball than an expansion of six teams and two leagues. In fact, one of the worst things to happen to baseball in all these years has been expansion. Expansion dilutes talent. It has always been so and will always be so. Go looking for expansion teams in the LCS or in the World Series. I'll give you a nickel for every one you can find, and you can go buy a cup of coffee somewhere. To expand the game by six teams is bad enough; to expand the game by two leagues makes the head reel.

Your expansion is extremely uneven: no new teams in the Midwest League; one new team in the Northeast; two new teams in the Western; and three new teams in the Southern League. And what about Louisville, one of the most successful minor league cities in history? Where was their name mentioned? Washington can no longer support a major-league baseball team. And Vancouver? Vancouver? I can just see some far-away future manager saying, "Vancouver? Are they still in the league?" It makes me want to cry.

One of my biggest arguments with your idea is that you say with four leagues and no gimmicks to decide the winners, you'd have bona fide teams in the playoffs, just as there are now. What makes you think

that a .509 Northeast League winner can't beat a .609 Midwest League winner? Sure the 1969 Mets won—they were the best team that year. The only year, in fact, that there is some doubt about whether the best team won or not, is 1919. And how mediocre (overall) is a league of eight teams which contains three expansion teams? A team with a winning percentage of .630 in the (weak) Southern League might not be half the team as that of the Old Orioles with, say, a .530 percentage in the (strong) Northeast League. Unless, of course, you think Danny Cox (9-2, .818 at this writing) is a better pitcher than Dwight Gooden (10-3, .769).

Your obliteration of traditional rivalries is a shame, no doubt about it. But you're probably right: new rivalries would spring up among leagues. And I can imagine that New York and Chicago fans would be delirious at the prospect of seeing their favorite teams play their cross-town rivals.

Travel advantages in your plan are, of course, obvious. Unfortunately, a lot of fans would probably just be seeing well-rested inferior teams playing each other.

You say that with only seven other teams in each league to consider, we would know all the players in the league again. There are only five other teams in our division, and I don't even know all of their players! And I consider myself a pretty knowledgeable baseball fan. How could I possibly know all the players on seven other teams? Anyway, there are two reasons the average baseball fan can't recite the starting eight of all the teams in his league; expansion and free-agency. Your plan would increase both, making it more difficult, not easier, to know all the players in any given league.

... Under your plan, I'll never get to see an Eddie Murray or Rickey Henderson (or even a Steve Garvey, and he's in our league!) play ball again. That's crummy. . . .

Finally, your suggestion of three All-Star games is, quite simply, the silliest thing I've ever heard of. It makes Charlie Finley's idea of orange baseballs look positively sane by comparison. . . . The idea of two games wouldn't fly [in 1959-62]; why would the idea of three games fly today?

No, Mr. McCormack, I'm afraid your ideas would tear at the very fabric of organized baseball, creating less fan interest rather than more, less knowledgeable fans than more. We take our baseball a little more seriously in the rest of the nation than you all do in Texas. For one thing, we don't think baseball is something which should be air-conditioned. One word of advice: Don't go to Wrigley or Fenway during a day game and try to sell

your ideas—I'm afraid they'd tear you apart limb-by-limb. What you've suggested here is little more than baseball heresy.

Seriously, even though I didn't agree with any of it, I enjoyed your article.

*McCormack replies:*

While I welcome your comments, I must disagree with most of them.

If the idea of a six team expansion nauseates you, your quarrel is not with me. It's with organized baseball which is reportedly moving (with the players' agreement) toward that goal. But, are expansion teams all that bad (the Texas Rangers excepted)? Don't make rash bets re their being in LCS and World Series play. Twelve times an expansion team played in an LCS and five of those went on to the World Series. With competent management an expansion team can succeed.

Ideally six new teams would be doled out equally among the regional leagues I propose. Or, 1-½ to each, a manifest impossibility. So, really only the Southern League would be overloaded. That is due to baseball not having given teams to southeast cities which could support them. In suggesting possible sites I have stayed generally with old Southern League cities. You are correct. Louisville has done very well recently. But, that was not always the case. Check with the Red Sox. And, Louisville had historically been a midwest city (in the old American Association). Its future would be in the Midwest League as a replacement site for, say, Cleveland or Pittsburgh.

You're also correct when you state that a .509 Northeast team could beat a .609 Southern team. The Northeast League could be much stronger. However, this proposition has confused you re the 1973 Mets. You state "they were the best team that year." (You wrote 1969 but only 1973 makes sense.) In 1973 the Mets were the best team (of a very bad lot) in the *NL East*. They were only *fourth* best in the *National League* (and only .003 points ahead of another western team, Houston). Which is why interdivision play can make a joke of the World Series.

I would submit that if your team were in an eight team league, you would be better acquainted with the players on the other seven than you now are with the other five teams in the *NL East*. Interdivisional play lessens overall interest because much of the time games are played against opponents that are not in "your" pennant race. If you saw seven teams regularly rather than five occasionally, you would know their players. Or, so I would think. You are also correct when you say you would not see the players in

the other leagues. But, baseball has always been that way (fortunately).

In view of the farce it has become, I would cancel the All-Star game. When you sneer at three All-Star games as I have proposed, you ignore my premise, viz, that each league would be trying its utmost to (a) win and (b) humiliate its opponent. And, would gloat when it won. That's the way it once was. Under those conditions All-Star games are great.

You are correct. Baseball should not be air conditioned. Houston with its miserable Gulf Coast climate and Seattle's rain justify those stadiums to some extent. But, it's a crime that Twin fans are unable to enjoy that area's great summer weather when they watch a ball game. Your indictment of Texas in this respect is incorrect. Here in Dallas-Fort Worth we have the best kept secret in baseball, Arlington Stadium. It's not one of those new, sterile bullring-like structures with artificial turf that many unfortunate fans now have to endure. Ours is a tremendous place in which to see a game. No obstructed seats, the stands close to the field a la Wrigley, Fenway, Comiskey, et al. Plus real grass (All we lack is a team.) Texas isn't all bad.

You wonder how I feel my thoughts would play in Wrigley or Fenway. I suspect very well. As to Wrigley let me quote that expert on public opinion, Jerry Lansche, "... Chicago fans would be delirious at the prospect of seeing their favorite team play their cross-town rival." I doubt I would be tarred and feathered in Boston if I offered to give them the Mets and Phillies in exchange for the Rangers and Mariners (or even "established" teams like the Indians and Twins).

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Gary Higgenbotham, of North Biloxi, Mississippi, took a point of view diametrically opposed to Lansche's.

*Higgenbotham's letter:*

The only problem I can see with the eight team leagues would be the long line of last place clubs these leagues have tended to generate over the years. The Washington Senators, St. Louis Browns, Philadelphia Athletics and Boston Braves all come to mind along with the Little Rock Travelers of the old Southern Association that I am most familiar with. While I think your idea of the eight team leagues would be the best way to break up the old American/National alignments initially should the powers that be be inclined to go along with such an idea, I would like to propose to you perhaps an even more radical idea: 36 major league teams in six major league divisions.

*Eastern*

New York  
New York  
Boston  
Baltimore  
Montreal  
Philadelphia

*Great Lakes*

Cincinnati  
Pittsburgh  
Cleveland  
Detroit  
Buffalo  
Toronto

*Midwest*

Chicago  
Chicago  
Milwaukee  
Minnesota  
Indianapolis  
Columbus, O.

*Southern*

Atlanta  
New Orleans  
Tampa Bay  
Miami  
Memphis  
Birmingham

*Pacific Coast*

Los Angeles  
California  
San Diego  
San Francisco Bay  
Seattle  
Vancouver

*Western*

Texas  
Houston  
St. Louis  
Kansas City  
Denver  
Phoenix

*Replacement/Future Expansion*

Louisville  
Honolulu

**ANSWER FOR P. 78**

"In their prime the Negro Leagues were a multimillion-dollar operation. The management of two leagues, each employing hundreds of people, may rank among the highest achievements of black enterprise during segregation." DONN ROGOSIN, *Invisible Men*.

Northern New Jersey (The Meadowlands)  
Nashville  
Portland, Ore.  
Orlando  
Washington, D.C.

To my way of thinking six team leagues are more competitive and the climb up to the top for the lower rung teams is not quite the difficult task for such a team in a six club league as compared to the eight team league. There seems to be something about the eight team league that develops a losing attitude in a lower rung team that makes it almost impossible to break out of once it becomes established.

... In my concept most areas that are now major league baseball markets or will become ones in the next 30 years would be provided for gradually by the expansion and modification of your proposed four leagues of eight. ...

The National Football League many years ago learned the value of small div-

isions and the effect it has on fan support. ...

Another thing my plan would do is bring the game to every part of the country and bring the sport to every major city where everyone could see the game ... If you ever wonder why professional football is so popular throughout the country compare the cities it is now located in with those in major league baseball. How can a sport that calls itself the national pastime really be so when such cities (and NFL cities at that) as New Orleans; Washington, D.C.; Tampa Bay; Denver and on and on and on do not have the game at the major league level?

Of course with the revolution in current league alignments would have to come such things as revenue sharing ... drug testing ... salary caps of some kind, and centralized minor league player development (as proposed by Leonard Koppett in *The Sporting News*, June 24, 1985).

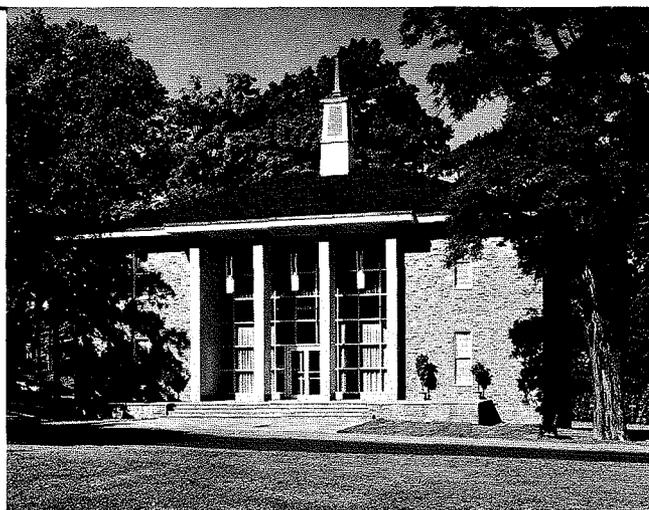


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