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Editor's Note

Pots & Pans and Bats & Balls

by John Thorn

This essay is modified only slightly from the keynote speech delivered at the 12th Annual Seymour Medal Conference, in Cleveland, April 27–29, 2007. The presentation theme of the conference was "How Did We Come to Understand the History of the Game?" The author took brief note of that theme and then shifted his gaze from the rear-view mirror to the road ahead.

Before entering upon my remarks, I would like to thank The Society for American Baseball Research for hosting this conference, the Cleveland Indians for sponsoring it, this year's five Seymour Medal nominees for making it necessary (Yogi, can ya hear me?), and Dorothy Seymour Mills and her late husband, Dr. Harold Seymour, for inspiring it; their example encouraged so many of us to hunt for gold in baseball's attic. Even those who may only have found brass came away with a better understanding of our game and, just maybe, the nation whose pastime it is.

Geoffrey C. Ward, with whom I worked happily on Ken Burns's 1994 documentary *Baseball,* said recently,

> Working on the film and book taught me [that]… while most Americans care too little about their history, the baseball community is different. The real meaning of all those apparently impenetrable stats is that the past matters. Without them no player would know where he stood, no fan could measure his or her heroes against those who have gone before. That fact alone should endear the game to any historian.

That it had not, until Dr. Seymour's 1956 dissertation at Cornell,[1] is a fact that may seem puzzling to attendees of this conference. Because the academy still looks askance at baseball history as a merely descriptive exercise, despite a proliferation of theses and credit courses related to the game, we have an opportunity at this conference to ask the worthwhile question that forms our presentation theme: "How did we come to understand baseball history?"

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This formulation is parallel but not identical with other questions that will concern us this afternoon: "What is baseball history good for?" "How has baseball history been practiced? And "How might it be better going forward?"

As to the first—"What is baseball history good for?"—some in the audience might reply with umbrage that history, like art, is for its own sake and must serve neither master nor cause; that while it offers tools for discovery, it is itself imperiled when held up to a standard of utility. This is a position with which I will agree…and disagree…if I may be permitted to make a perhaps old-fashioned distinction between History and The Past, the former being rooted in what happened, the latter in what some annalist thought might be useful to the game or even to the nation. So much of what today passes muster as history was created as propaganda or simple cheerleading, from the fibs of Henry Chadwick and Albert Spalding,[2] to the pinning of Jim Creighton's death on cricket rather than baseball, to the heart-rending tale of the Babe and little Johnny Sylvester. This is the sort of history that Henry Ford described in 1916 as bunk. What he actually said was even more incendiary: "History is more or less bunk. It's tradition. We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present, and the only history that is worth a tinker's damn is the history that we make today."[3] George Santayana, take that!

Another description of The Past might be "what binds and sustains," or mythology. History is what we at this gathering practice, but what we meet, out in the world, sometimes with astonishing rapidity, is this notion of The Past, in the form of that word heavy with nothing but trouble: heritage. At its best, acknowledging a common heritage allows us to form communities and maintain vital traditions, Henry Ford notwithstanding. At its worst, it abuses real history for chauvinistic gain. In a personal example, within hours of the May 2004 press conference in which I revealed that baseball was played by that name in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in 1791, well-meaning but benighted locals were celebrating their city's usurpation of Cooperstown as the game's Garden of Eden.[4] As David Lowenthal notes in *Possessed by the Past,* history

> differs from heritage not, as people generally supposed, in telling the truth, but in trying to do so despite being aware that truth is a chameleon and its chroniclers fallible beings. The most crucial distinction is that truth in heritage commits us to some present creed [or need]; truth in history is a flawed effort to understand the past on its own terms."[5]

In the hands of nearly all its practitioners today, baseball history is a moated activity, in which "what happened" is all that matters. Only occasionally will the drawbridge drop down to connect with not only "what it might be good for" but also with what it might mean in some larger analytical or social context. Finding Walter Johnson's missing strikeout from 1913; revoking Roger Maris's bogus RBI in 1961; getting Ty Cobb's hit totals and batting average right once and for all—these are not means to an end but ends in themselves. I attest to having spent many years in such pursuits: getting things right simply because with effort one could, and because "cleaning up" seemed morally superior to "going along," accepting what was wrong. Besides, it was fun to debunk the notion, held for generations, that the pitching distance had retreated ten and a half feet in 1893 when it had only moved back five. Or to deny that the width of home plate had been expanded from 12 inches to 17 inches when it became a pentagonal shape, or to affirm neither Abner Doubleday nor Alexander Cartwright had much if anything to do with inventing baseball. It was pleasant to accumulate and sort baseball facts, like some dotty lepidopterist, and it was sometimes useful to others if we published our research, no matter how trivial and disconnected it might be from larger themes in American life, from analysis, from interpretation.

Historian Kenneth Stampp, author of *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (1956), once said of a colleague in an interview:

> Carl [Bridenbaugh] was very sensitive about his brand of social history. It was rather old-fashioned social history. Somebody once called it pots-and-pans social history. He probably felt that emerging American intellectual history was in some way a negative commentary on his kind of history.[6]

By "pots and pans" Stampp explained, he meant

> the kind of social history where you talk about things like baseball and recreation—it was not analytical social history.…It was descriptive… and I suppose some people thought that Bridenbaugh's history was rather old-fashioned, some mod social historians. Every generation has [its new approach].[7]

Myth and mythmaking are far more useful to the public understanding than mere findings of fact. And from the perspective of the historian of ideas and attitudes, what a man believes to be true, or purports to be true (including willful lies) may reveal more about himself and his era than the truth itself. So in trying get the facts straight about what really happened in baseball (Cartwright, Doubleday, or who?) or to slow the rush to judgment (Pittsfield), baseball's historians may feel that they are bailing against the tide with a teacup. Who cares about their pursuit of truth? Give us a simple story, the people cry.

However the history of baseball begins, the history of baseball history begins for most of us with Henry Chadwick. He recalled his first experience of playing baseball as taking some hard hits in the ribs in 1848[8]—if true, his remark reveals that the Knickerbocker rules did not sweep aside all that had gone before—and he dated to 1856 his realization that this game might become to America what cricket was to England. Today most of us think of Father Chadwick cavorting at the Elysian Fields with the Knickerbockers, pausing only to invent the scoring system and the box score or to cluck about the pernicious influence of gamblers and rotters. But, as Will Rankin would point out in the first years of the next century, Chadwick had for decades, while elevating the game to the status of national metaphor, elevated himself as well, campaigning on a platform of le jeu c'est moi. He was not baseball's first reporter—that distinction goes to the little-known William H. Bray, like Chadwick an Englishman who covered baseball and cricket for the *Clipper* from early 1854 to May 1858 (Chadwick succeeded him on both beats and never threw him a nod afterward). Isolated game accounts had been penned in 1853 by William Cauldwell of the *Mercury* and Frank Queen of the *Clipper*, who with William Trotter Porter of *Spirit of the Times* may be said to have been baseball's pioneer promoters. Credit for the shorthand scoring system belongs not to Chadwick but to Michael J. Kelly of the *Herald.* The box score—beyond the recording of outs and runs—may be his invention as well, but cricket had supplied the model.

Chadwick had the good fortune to team up with Irwin P. Beadle and his Dime publication series, penning the *Base-Ball Guide* for 1860 on up to 1881. He

also had the good fortune to outlive his contemporary sporting scribes. Today we call him a historian—along with Charles Peverelly, Jacob Morse, Al Spink, Francis Richter, and Tim Murnane—but in his own day he and they were journalists, sometimes given to gauzy reminiscences or club-supplied copy when deadlines neared and space yawned. These writers possess the advantage of having been witnesses to events that interest us today, but that ought not to accord their writing blanket credence. As Dixon Wecter wrote some 50 years ago:

> A readable historian of his own times will be accepted as the foremost witness par excellence, generation after generation. But by way of compensation, the historian who arrives on the scene long afterwards enjoys advantages too. Though a million details, important and unimportant, will be lost for lack of recording or proper preservation, the disclosure of diaries and secret archives, the fitting together of broken pieces from the mosaic, the settling of controversial dust and cooling of old feuds, and the broad perspective down the avenues of time, all make it possible for him to know an era in its grand design better than most men who lived through it.[10]

Baseball's tradition of mixing—and confusing—contemporary journalism with ex post facto history continued into the mid-20th century, with working-press types from Fred Lieb and Frank Menke to Tom Meany and Lee Allen working both sides of the street. In recent years we have labeled some outstanding baseball journalists and statisticians as historians—I won't mention names so as not to give offense—but then again the term "baseball historian" is an odd one, a diminutive on the order of Billy Joel's "real-estate novelist." Even those who have made great contributions to the appreciation of baseball's history—I think of Larry Ritter and Donald Honig—are not themselves historians of the game in its entirety, as Jules Tygiel or Charles Alexander or David Voigt or Ben Rader are. And then there are the "boutique baseball historians"—Milwaukee Brewers historian, Ty Cobb historian, and so on—who are what used to be called experts, or worse.

At the dawn of the last century, baseball's origins were already too old to be remembered, so stories were devised to rationalize what was otherwise baffling. Baseball history then was in the hands of folklorists, not historians. Members of the Mills Commission, lacking the mundane primary documents that typically aid historians of everyday life in the reconstruction of events and the tenor of the times, looked to octogenarian reminiscences of events witnessed long ago if at all; the most celebrated of these implanted memories was, of course, that of Abner Graves. Thus was the history of baseball supplied with a starting point, a crucial requirement for being viewed seriously. (A similar sense of necessity led to the creation of baseball's statistical record and its rapid and vertiginous climb to its current ascendancy.)

A century later we find ourselves still in the realm of eyewitnesses, as history is a term now accorded to events very recently transpired, and today's scribes may accord more importance to documents. Baseball's historians have largely—and thankfully—been unmoved by post-structuralist, post-Marxist, and post-Freudian siren songs, content to stay in the kitchen with the pots and pans of descriptive history, oblivious to the catcalls of political and intellectual historians. The respectable cousin of pots 'n' pans, the "bottom up" (i.e., not "top down") approach to history, based its claim to legitimacy, and in some measure hipness, on quantification and purported social relevance. Baseball-player studies certainly could be described as coming up from the bottom, but the continued emphasis was on story—what happened—and biography—by whom. There is some evidence of late, however, that baseball history may finally run aground in this generation's perfect storm of race, class, and gender, so perilous to frail, tentative, hopeful insight. Styles blow through the corridors of history no less than on Seventh Avenue; if we can wait it out, this too shall pass.

Where the American Studies movement has long provided a big tent to those who sought to describe American life as it was lived by those outside the political, military, and intellectual elites, it has also come under fire from the academy for its perceived lack of social relevance and scholarly rigor, if not outright triviality (I exclude statistically based studies, which get a pass on the rigor test but not when it comes to relevance). As Daniel Boorstin and Russel Nye, household gods of mine, demonstrated forty and fifty years ago,[11] a fella could learn a thing or two about America through its media, its advertising, and its patterns of consumption. The perspectives of Larry Ritter and Dr. Seymour were similarly revelations to many of us in this room. And in other approaches to the game, in the 1970s Roger Angell, Bob Creamer, Roger Kahn, and Jim Bouton proved that baseball is the Trojan horse by which we come to understand ourselves. Knock on the door and say, "I've got history

for you," and that door does not budge. Offer baseball and the door swings open wide; once inside, a little history and useful knowledge may be imparted.

Baseball history is not so different from other forms, in the end. Solid research and command of the evidence underlie all of it. Dixon Wecter, not yet a household god but new in my experience and highly congenial in his approach—wrote:

> "Industry minus art, accumulation lacking charm, data without digestion—such shortcomings explain this popular allergy against American history as written… . The re-creation of a dominant personality, or daily life of an era, or the power generated by its ideas, calls for exact knowledge fired by historical imagination… . If the author's saturation in his subject is so real that he develops affections and dislikes, his writing is sure to be more warm and vigorous than if he strikes the attitude of a biologist dissecting a frog.[12]

My friend and protoball pioneer Larry McCray, with his taxonomic bent, likes to say that he is a tree person and I am a forest person, and sometimes we just cannot see the other, cannot grasp one another's perspective. Wecter clearly believes that a first-rate historian must be a forest person—it is the leap of imagination that makes him a big leaguer—but he has to have a lot of little tree in him too (echoing another catcher there, Roy Campanella).

It seems to me that what is lacking in baseball history is its last five letters. Even more than in general American historical writing, because it is the toy shop of history departments (the baseball beat at a newspaper used to be called the toy department), baseball must be pushed by event, driven by character, and have a freight-train narrative drive. As with a novel, there must be a truth of fact and a truth of feeling, illuminated by sensibility. In short, we may not, in the name of accuracy, neglect the speculative and aesthetic possibilities in baseball history. Issue-driven baseball history is simply baseball history unread.

Rather than depersonalize the writing of history, we should fess up to its intrinsically subjective element—the historian—and make way for passion, for intimations of sentiment if not sentimentality—itself a lesser crime, it seems me now, than before the current age of irony. Tell us what it felt like to be alive then, in that distant age. Insert yourself and your tale of the hunt into the story.

There may be no "I" in "team"—nor in "research," nor in "SABR"—but there is one in "history"…and there ought to be one in the writing of it.

References

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2. For more on this, see "Four Fathers of Baseball," a speech the author delivered at the Smithsonian Institution on July 14, 2005, at http://thornpricks.blogspot.com/2005/07/four-fathers-of-baseball.html.
3. Interview in *Chicago Tribune,* May 25, 1916
4. For more on this subject, see the author's "1791 and All That: Baseball and the Berkshires" in *BASE Ball: A Journal of the Early Game,* Vol. I, No. 1, Spring 2007, pp. 119-126.
5. Lowenthal, David. *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History.* New York: Free Press, 1996, 119.
6. "Historian of Slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction, University of California, Berkeley, 1946-1983: Kenneth M. Stampp," with an Introduction by John G. Sproat. Interviews conducted by Ann Lage in 1996, p. 162. http://content.cdlib.org/xtf/view?docId=kt258001zq&doc.view=frames&chunk.id=d0e7572&toc.id=d0e7119&brand=oac
7. Ibid, p. 163.
8. From Henry Chadwick, *The Game of Base Ball* (New York: Munro, 1868), pp. 9-10: "About twenty odd years ago [i.e., 1848] I used to frequently visit Hoboken with base ball parties, and, on these occasions, formed one of the contesting sides; and I remember getting some hard hits in the ribs, occasionally, from an accurately thrown ball. Some years afterwards the rule of throwing the ball at the player was superseded by that requiring it to be thrown to the base player, and this was the first step towards our now National game."
9. Rankled by Rankin's challenges to his recollection and veracity in several *Sporting News* articles in 1904-5, Chadwick wrote to his friend "Joe" (Vila?) in April 1907: "Reference will show you that I knew of base ball in the sixties when—according to 'mine enemy'—I knew nothing about any game but cricket. Although in November 1848 I played as short stop in a field adjoining the old Knickerbocker grounds at Hoboken." Per photocopy in the Giamatti Center "Origins" file.
10. Wecter, Dixon. "History and How to Write It," *American Heritage,* Vol. 8, Issue 5, Aug. 1957, p. 87.
11. Among many notable works, I take pains to cite Daniel Boorstin's *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (originally published by Athenaeum Press in 1962 as *The Image or What Happened to the American Dream*) and Nye's *The Unembarrassed Muse: The Popular Arts in America* (New York Dial Press, 1970).
12. Wecter, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

The Summer of '14: Almost a Miracle

The Cardinals' First Great Pennant Race

by Steve Steinberg

"St. Louis is one of the greatest baseball towns in the country. It has probably turned out more professional baseball players than any other city… . The youngsters of St. Louis know more about big league baseball than the adult fans of the average city."

– Damon Runyon

August 26, 1914, was an improbable day in a turbulent season in a city that had not experienced a pennant since 1888. The St. Louis Cardinals had surged toward the top of the National League and were playing for first place today. Twenty-seven thousand fans had streamed into Robison Field, a ballpark with a seating capacity of not much more than 20,000. Thousands crammed into the aisles, and thousands more spilled onto the field, roped off in the outfield and even behind home plate.

The world seemed askew, providing an eerie backdrop for the national pastime. Europe was sinking into war, as the flames of conflict in the Balkans were engulfing the continent. In Rome, another group of cardinals had gathered, to select a new leader after the death of Pope Pius X a few days earlier. National League baseball was turned upside-down, with the perennially weak Cardinals of St. Louis and Braves of Boston challenging the New York Giants, winners of the past three National League pennants. The thrilling pennant race provided fans with relief from the bleak and unsettling news coming across the ocean.

"Woman's presence at the games will have a civilizing effect."

– St. Louis Post-Dispatch,
April 9, 1911

Helene Britton was the first female owner of a major league sports team in America. The Cardinals had been owned by her father and uncle, Frank and Stanley Robison. Frank died in 1908, and her uncle—who never married—passed away in the spring of 1911. Her father had no sons, and thus did a woman enter that exclusive male bastion called organized ball. What's more, she was later described as a "militant suffragette." She brought an exciting new element into owners' meetings, and not simply with her colorful attire. The press soon dubbed the attractive 32-year-old mother of two, "Lady Bee."

Helene Britton was no stranger to baseball; she grew up in a baseball family. As a youngster, she played ball, learned to keep score, and even served as a mascot for the Cleveland Spiders, another team that her father and uncle owned.

Starting that spring of 1911, the new owner of the Cardinals built up Ladies' Day before it was popular. She made a ban on booze at the ballpark permanent. She also experienced something her father and uncle had not known for more than a decade: a season that was a box office and financial success. The Cardinals flirted with first place for three months before fading to fifth. Attendance rose to 447,000 that year, more than 120,000 over the previous year and by far the most the team ever drew to that point.

HER SIGNATURE MOVE

The Cardinals returned to their losing ways in 1912, finishing in sixth place with a 63-90 record. Shortly after the season's end, Lady Bee exercised the ultimate prerogative of ownership when she fired the team's colorful and temperamental manager, Roger Bresnahan. He had difficulty accepting a female boss from the start and didn't take kindly to her baseball suggestions, which increased as the losses piled up. At the same time, the all-too-familiar financial pressures returned to the Cardinals. Attendance plummeted almost 50% from 1911, and Britton had large legal bills from settling her uncle's estate.

Lady Bee made the surprise choice of Cardinals second baseman Miller Huggins as the team's new skipper. Perhaps it was not a total surprise, since she had vetoed a trade Bresnahan had put together earlier that year, one that would have sent Huggins to Cincinnati.

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The disappointing 1912 season was followed by a disastrous one in 1913 (51-99). Huggins' first season as a manager was almost his last. Rumors swirled about his imminent firing or resignation. The losses led to the almost inevitable dissension that simmers during a disappointing campaign. Somehow Huggins hung in there, and the Brittons (Helene and her husband, Schuyler) stuck with him.

HIS SIGNATURE MOVE

"I simply had to set my house in order, so as to get real cooperation. The change in the spirit and morale of the team was immediately noticeable."

– Miller Huggins,
syndicated column,
February 27, 1924

Miller Huggins was talking about his first big trade as manager, a multi-player deal that sent the Cardinals' one bona fide star, first baseman Ed Konetchy, to Pittsburgh in December 1913. Most baseball observers felt that the Pirates had gotten the better of the deal. For the Cards' skipper, it was a trade that had to be made—to establish himself as the team's leader and to rid the squad of an imposing center of unrest. The unhappy Konetchy increasingly had felt that he, not Huggins, should be the skipper.

THE OTHER 1914 WAR

"The Feds are welcomed in St. Louis because the fans have grown tired of tail-end baseball."

– Sid Keener,
St. Louis Times,
March 31, 1914

Baseball in 1914 dawned with three teams in St. Louis: the Cardinals, the American League's Browns, and the Terriers of the upstart Federal League. For the first time since the rise of the American League in 1901-1902, players had an alternative to playing for the team that controlled them for their entire career, under what was known as the "reserve clause." The Federal League was actively raiding the established leagues for players, and salaries skyrocketed.

To make the Terriers more appealing to St. Louis fans, their cantankerous owner, Phil Ball, appointed legendary Chicago Cubs' pitcher Mordecai "Three Finger" Brown as their player-manager. Ironically, Brown had been a St. Louis Cardinal in his rookie 1903 season. The Cards then traded him away. Brown went on to greatness, anchoring the pitching staff of the great Chicago Cubs of 1906 to 1910.

This was a grand time to be a ballplayer or a fan. Both had choices. Yet it was a devastating time to be an owner of an established club like the Cardinals. They began losing personnel and money. Sid Keener estimated season-to-date attendance figures in the May 9 *St. Louis Times:*

SOURCE

Ed Konetchy

Cardinals	24,200 fans in 11 games
Browns	37,800 fans in 12 games
Terriers	55,900 fans in 16 games
	(inc. about 20,000 on opening day)

Keener noted that, if anything, he was erring on the high side. With the big salaries and low gate receipts, he concluded, "There's a crash coming surely."

Steal players, the Feds [the new league] did. The war hit home when two of the Cards' starting outfielders, "Rebel" Oakes and Steve Evans, jumped to the new league for significantly higher salaries than they had before. The Cards' third starting outfielder, Lee Magee, was tempted by a huge Federal League contract, but stayed put, at least for now. "I'm ready to play my entire career with the Cardinals…I'm a man of my word," he told the *St. Louis Times* on March 23. (Magee did jump to the Feds the following year and was later banned from organized baseball for betting against his team and "fixing" games. The man who was once called "the coming Ty Cobb of the National League" never realized that potential.)

MORE LOSING WAYS

The St. Louis Browns had made serious runs at the American League pennant in 1902 and 1908, yet they too had many losing seasons. In the past five years (1909-1913), they had never finished higher than seventh place, averaging 100 losses a year. They had a new manager, the creative and college-bred Branch Rickey. Browns owner Robert Hedges had hired Rickey, the former University of Michigan baseball coach, as a scout and executive. Rickey was to help set up a farm system of minor league teams. When Browns manager George Stovall spat tobacco juice on an umpire during a 1913 dispute, he was relieved of his job, and Rickey took over as manager late that season. When war with the Federal League broke out, plans for the farm system were shelved.

AN INAUSPICIOUS START

The Cardinals had experienced 12 years of futility, posting only one winning season (75-74 in 1911) and finishing an average of more than 40 games out of first place. They had not recovered from the 1902 birth of the AL's Browns, who had stocked their team by signing almost all of the Cards' top players in 1901.

The Cards picked up in 1914 where they left off in 1913, losing 12 of their first 19 games. Local papers were full of stories that pitching great Christy Mathewson (Matty) would soon take over as manager of the Cardinals. All Miller Huggins could do was ignore the stories. All he could do was his job.

George Stallings

SOURCE

In early May, Huggins also had to deal with stories of a row with his top pitcher, Slim Sallee. He had won 50 games for the team since 1911. The slender, fun-loving southpaw, in his seventh year with St. Louis, had an up-and-down relationship with Huggins. In 1913, he won almost 40% of the Cards' victories (19 of 51). In May 1914, the team gave him a $500 raise to cure his unhappiness.

And then…the Cardinals started winning. Huggins had spoken of "the perfection of teamwork" that he needed on a team with no stars. On May 19, the team reached .500 (15-15). They had a pitching triumvirate that was chalking up wins and turning heads.

First, there was Slim Sallee. After he hurled a shutout in late June, the *Post-Dispatch* was moved to write, "To watch Sallee when he's right and ambitious is to see perfection in pitching." Then there was young spitballer Bill Doak, who had entered the season with only two career wins. When he beat Grover Alexander and the Phillies on May 16, 1-0, the quiet hurler was quickly gaining recognition. He would complete a spectacular first full season, with a league-leading 1.72 earned run average and two wins over Mathewson. The third member of that rotation was Pol Perritt. Huggins had spent countless hours working with "Polly," as he called one of his favorites.

The team would hardly miss pitcher Bob Harmon, who had earned 68 victories for the Cardinals from 1909 to 1913. He too went to Pittsburgh in the Konetchy deal. In the short span of one week at the end of June, the Cardinals hurled three shutouts, two by Doak and the 1-0 gem by Sallee over Harmon.

1914 Pitching Totals for the Top Three Cardinal Pitchers

	Slim Sallee	Bill Doak	Pol Perritt
Age *(at start of season)*	29	23	21
Record	18-17	19-6	16-13
Innings Pitched	282⅓	256	286
Earned Run Average	2.10	1.72	2.36
Team Earned Run Average	2.38		
League Earned Run Average	2.78		

It was his position players whom Huggins had to juggle and where he really had to scramble. All season long, he explored combinations, switched men around, and nurtured talent. Besides the loss of two outfielders to the Feds, shortstop Arnold Hauser was gone, victim of a nervous breakdown. And if Doak and Perritt weren't household names, what about Miller and Wilson?

> *"Jack Miller is the most valuable player in the National League today. He isn't spectacular. But he's a fighter; he's hustling every inning of the game…He doesn't crave the spotlight… just wants to win."*
>
> – Sid Keener,
> *St. Louis Times*
> August 1, 1914

SOURCE

Chief Wilson

The key man on the "no-name" Cardinals was an infielder by the name of John "Dots" Miller. He came to St. Louis in the Konetchy trade with Pittsburgh, where he was the double-play partner of the great Honus Wagner. Miller quickly became the anchor of the Cards' infield and leader of the team, splitting his time between first base (91 games) and shortstop (60 games).

"Jack is as modest as a schoolgirl," wrote *The Sporting News* on August 13, "…without ambition other than to win games." Miller Huggins recognized Miller's value when he made Dots the centerpiece of the trade. Three months into the season, on July 18, the Cards skipper pointedly told the *St. Louis Times,* "I wouldn't trade Jack Miller for any player in baseball today." He would hit .290 for St. Louis that year. The only other regulars to hit above .265 were catcher Ivey Wingo, at .300, and outfielder Lee Magee, at .284.

"THE CHIEF" OF TRIPLES

Owen Wilson was another player who came to St. Louis in the big trade. Known as "the Chief," he helped plug the holes in the outfield. Best known for hitting 36 triples in 1912 (still by far the all-time single-season record), in 1914 he appeared in 154 games, hit 259, and covered a lot of ground in the field. Both Miller and Wilson knew something about winning. They were members of the 1909 World Champion Pittsburgh Pirates.

Manager Huggins had another steady infielder he could count on. The 36-year-old veteran would lead the league in walks for the fourth time and steal 32 bases in 1914. His name? Miller Huggins.

The Cardinals also had two talented young catchers. One was 23-year-old Ivey Wingo, in his third full season with the team. The other was a 20-year-old who led National League backstops in fielding percentage in his first full season, Frank "Pancho" Snyder. Another young National League catcher, Hank Severeid, would soon join the St. Louis Browns. All three would have long careers, and remarkably, each would catch more than 1,200 big-league games (1,233, 1,247, and 1,225 games, respectively; ages at the start of the 1914 season).

In early July, the Cardinals beat the powerful New York Giants three straight times, highlighted by Doak's win over Matty and a Perritt shutout. The New Yorkers, National League champions the last three years (by an average margin of 10 games), saw their lead over the Chicago Cubs sliced to just 2½ games. The Cardinals were in heady territory, third place, and only four games out.

The Boston Braves were dead last with a 30-41 mark, an improvement over their July 4 record of 26- 40. A few days later, after they twice beat St. Louis, Braves secretary Herman Nickerson made a puzzling statement to the *Post-Dispatch.* "We do not consider ourselves extremely out of the pennant hunt," he said. On July 30, the Cardinals came to Boston. In a thrilling series, the Braves swept St. Louis four straight times, by the scores of 2-1, 2-0, 4-3, and 1-0. Much of the series was played in a steady rain, and the Cardinals lost twice in the ninth inning and once in the 10th. The Braves had moved above .500 (46-45) and were for real. They had gone 20-5 since July 4.

Still the Cardinals persisted. Despite a rash of injuries, they split a four-game set in New York's Polo Grounds. On August 10, the Giants' arrogant manager, John McGraw, proclaimed, "I have no doubt but that my club will win the pennant. I never had any particular fear of the Cardinals."

The next day Bill Doak once again bested Christy Mathewson. The Braves kept winning. Through August 17 won 30 of their last 36 games, and Sid Keener wrote of their manager, "George Stallings is such a phenomenal leader because he gets every ounce of playing ability out of each man." (*St. Louis Times,* August 18, 1914.)

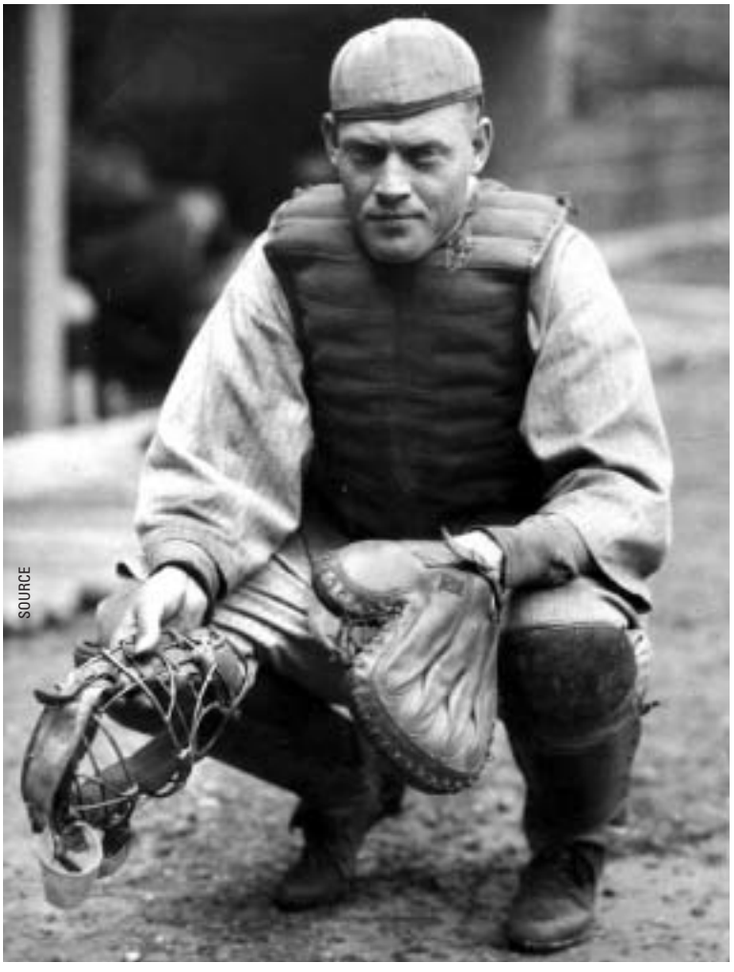
Then, while the Giants were losing eight of nine games, St. Louis won seven of eight. When the Giants came to St. Louis on August 24, the Cardinals (as well as the Braves, who were due in St. Louis in a few days) had momentum in a crowded four-team pennant race. The showdown was at hand.

Just a few days earlier, the Federal League's St. Louis Terriers were in the news with a major change. They had been floundering all year and, with the team mired in seventh place, Phil Ball replaced Mordecai Brown as manager with another legend, Fielder Jones. Jones had been the skipper of the "Hitless Wonders," the 1906 World Champion Chicago White Sox. Jones had been away from managing for a few years and was lured back by a big challenge and even bigger contract (reported as $30,000 for three years). The *Globe-Democrat* had written of Brown, "He is too much of a good fellow to be a strict disciplinarian." *Baseball Magazine* once described Jones as "cool, calm, calculating, mercilessly sarcastic." Change indeed.

For two days heavy rains postponed the games, and that Cardinal momentum was slowed. New York's weary pitching staff got some much needed rest. Finally, on August 26, the weather broke, and the Cards and Giants would play a doubleheader. That Wednesday morning, the standings of the top four National League teams looked like this:

	W-L Record	Winning Pct.	Games Behind
New York Giants	59-48	.551	–
Boston Braves	60-49	.550	–
St. Louis Cardinals	62-53	.539	1
Chicago Cubs	59-54	.522	3

United Railways was unprepared for the crowds. Streetcars were filled beyond capacity, and people waited for hours. Some gave up and returned home, while many walked to the ballpark. Two thousand automobiles ringed Robison Field. There had been talk of moving the game to the Browns' Sportsman's Park, but Lady Bee quashed that idea: "The bleacher boys have always been our friends, and we cannot go back on 'em now. Robison Field has the largest bleacher capacity of any ball yard in the business." (*The Republic*, St. Louis, August 27, 1914.)



Wingo

St. Louis had not seen a baseball crowd like this since a 1909 Spring Series game (Cards vs. Browns) and an early September 1908 game, when Wild Bill Donovan and the Tigers beat Rube Waddell and the Browns. The Browns had crept to within a half game of the Tigers and first place the day before.

Today Spittin' Bill Doak took to the mound for the Cardinals, against Rube Marquard, who had 73 wins for the Giants the past three seasons. Miller Huggins led off the game with a walk and scored all the way from second base on a wild pitch. The ball rolled into the overflow crowd standing behind home plate. Under the ground rules for the game, Huggins was able to take the extra base. That run was all the Cards could get and would need, as they held on for the 1-0 victory.

Game two was a showdown between control artist Sallee and the mighty Mathewson. The fans swarmed onto the field during the warm-ups, and Matty had to throw over the children on the diamond. Early in the game, an enormous roar went up when an announcement was made: the Chicago Cubs had just beaten the Boston Braves, also by the score of 1-0.

The Cardinals were now in a virtual three-way tie for first place. The standings at that point in time:

	W-L Record	Winning Pct.	Games Behind
New York Giants	59-49	.546	–
Boston Braves	60-50	.545	–
St. Louis Cardinals	63-53	.543	–
Chicago Cubs	60-54	.526	2

What seemed like a dream in pre-season and unthinkable in early May was now a real possibility: a pennant for St. Louis.

The Giants, losers of nine of their last 10 games, were reeling. Their great pitcher Christy Mathewson then responded with one of his greatest games, a two-hit shutout in which he averaged seven pitches per inning. The Giants broke open a tight game with two runs in the eighth and went on to beat St. Louis, 4-0. The *Republic* gushed the next day, comparing Matty's performance to "exquisite chiseling or priceless oil on canvass." Offering a different perspective, the *New York Times* noted that Giants manager John McGraw "read the riot act to his faltering men" after game one of the doubleheader.

The very next day, August 27, the Cardinals opened a four-game series with the onrushing Braves. The wet weather returned to St. Louis, and the late innings of the first game were played in a downpour. The Cards pulled out a dramatic win in the 10th inning, to pull ahead of the Braves and within one game of the Giants.

On August 29, St. Louis dropped a doubleheader to Boston, 4-0 and 6-4. The Cardinals let the second game slip away, leading 4-2 after seven innings. What hurt almost as much as the loss was that the Braves won that game with three, seldom-used pitchers—Otto Hess, Dick Crutcher, and Paul Strand. Once again the Braves seemed to have the Cards' number, having now beaten the Cardinals 12 of 18 times.

That was the beginning of seven straight losses for the Cardinals. On Friday, September 4, they were six games out of first place and no longer a factor in the pennant race. The team from Boston, which was becoming known as the Miracle Braves, simply blew past their competition. They won the National League pennant by 10½ games over the stunned New York Giants. St. Louis was just another 2½ games back, in third place. The Braves went on to a shocking four-game sweep of the heavily favored Philadelphia Athletics in the World Series.

There was no pennant in St. Louis in 1914, yet the underdog Cardinals had caught the fancy of the baseball world, rising from their last-place National Legue finish in 1913. Most of all, they had captured the heart of St. Louis, bringing thrills to a city hungry for a winner. Miller Huggins and his team, with a limited budget and no big stars, had led that "perfection of teamwork" to remarkable heights. ■

A Statistical Look at the Men in Blue

by David Vincent

Baseball fans love statistics. For more than a century, folks have talked about baseball numbers of all sorts around the water cooler and the hot stove, in the box seats and the bleachers, and, more recently, on call-in radio shows and the Internet. Batter numbers, pitcher numbers, and manager numbers have provoked discussions and arguments. Through all these years, however, one group of people on the field has escaped this scrutiny: umpires. This omission is primarily because umpire statistics have not been available—until now. Recently, umpire assignments in all games since the start of the National League in 1876 have been compiled by a small group of SABR and Retrosheet researchers.[1]

In this article we will examine the progression of the career and single-season games worked records. We will talk about some of the prominent umpires through major league history and how they fit into the sweep of history related to arbiters. Other aspects of the umpire world, including vacation substitutes and the size of crews, will be examined. All numbers quoted are valid through October 2, 2007. Let's get started!

In the National Association, umpire assignments were haphazard at best. The home team chose the arbiter from a list submitted by the visiting squad. However, many times the selected official was merely someone in the crowd for that day's ball game. Many NA umpires worked only one game in their careers. The situation gradually improved once the National League was formed. All career and single-season numbers in this article will ignore the National Association.

William H. "Billy" McLean, a veteran National Association umpire, worked the first game in National League history on April 22, 1876, between the Boston Red Caps and the Athletics at Philadelphia's Jefferson Street Grounds. McLean would umpire 345 contests in the National League and American Association through August 22, 1890. Charles Daniels worked the most games in the initial season of the senior circuit with 45. However, McLean claimed the career record for most games umpired in the majors in 1878, lost it to George H. "Foghorn" Bradley three years later and reclaimed it in 1884. Table 1 shows the progression of the career record for games umpired. A number of other men held the record in the 19th century until Thomas J. "Tom" Lynch, who made his debut on April 20, 1888, became the first arbiter to work 1,000 games on September 7, 1896, in the first game of a doubleheader at Worcester. After Lynch retired as an umpire, he worked in the National League office for a time and was the league president from 1910 through 1913. John Heydler, who umpired 83 games in the 1890s, also served as NL president.

Bruce Froemming

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Robert D. "Bob" Emslie, an American Association player in the 1880s, began umpiring in the Association in 1890. He started the 1891 season in the Western Association, but after the league disbanded, he joined the National League staff, working his first game there on August 19, 1891. Emslie passed Lynch's career record in 1900 and became the first arbiter to work 2,000 games on July 11, 1905, when he worked the first game of a series between the Chicago Cubs and the New York Giants at the Polo Grounds. Emslie reached the 3,000 games umpired mark on July 1, 1913, and then worked his 4,000th game on July 14, 1920. Both milestone games were played in Chicago. After

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the 1922 season, the native of Guelph, Ontario, was named the chief of the National League umpiring staff. In 1923 and 1924, Emslie worked a few games, bringing his career total to 4,228. Bob Emslie held the career record for 27 years until passed by an Englishman who never played baseball.

Thomas H. "Tommy" Connolly, who was born in Manchester, England, on December 31, 1870, moved with his family to Natick, Massachusetts, while still a young man. National League umpire Timothy C. "Tim" Hurst helped Connolly secure his first professional umpiring job in the New England League in 1894, and after four years in that circuit, the National League hired Connolly in 1898. He worked over 300 games in the senior circuit through mid-May 1900 but was out most of the rest of the season. Connolly was hired by the American League for its first season and worked the first game in league history, played in Chicago on April 24, 1901. Connolly worked 4,451 games in the American League by the time he retired after a game on July 31, 1932, the only game he umpired that season. He still holds the American League record for most years (32) and games umpired. Connolly passed Emslie's major league career record on May 31, 1927, and finished with a major league total of 4,768 games when he retired. Connolly served as the American League's umpire in chief from 1931 through 1953.

Rochester native William J. "Bill" Klem umpired his first National League game on April 14, 1905, on Opening Day in Cincinnati after three years in the minor leagues. "The Old Arbitrator" worked steadily until he retired after the 1940 season, rarely missing a game. In 1941, as the newly named chief of National League umpires, he worked 11 games on the base paths while the league experimented with a four-man crew. He finished with 5,368 games umpired in 37 seasons, both career records, and his game total is unlikely to be topped due to the way umpires are assigned in the 21st century. Klem remained the league's umpire supervisor until his death in 1951. He and Tommy Connolly were elected to the Hall of Fame in 1953 as the first umpires so named.

The single-season record for most games umpired gradually increased from Charles Daniels' 45 in 1876 but now has remained the same since 1962. Many of the same names held the season record as the career record in the first few years of the National League, as shown in Table 2. Stewart Decker was the first arbiter to work 100 games in one season when he umpired 102 contests in the 1883 National League. He worked back-to-back 100-game seasons with 111 in 1884 but saw his record fall to Bill McLean, who umpired 118 games in 1884. In just a few years, umpires pushed the record past a few milestones. John O. "Kick" Kelly was the first to top 130 games in a season with 134 in 1886 and Bob Emslie worked 148 in 1892. Both Ed Swartwood and James McDonald umpired 156 games in 1898 and Hank O'Day was the first to work a 160-game season when he umpired 161 contests in 1899.

Henry F. "Hank" O'Day, who played in the majors from 1884 through 1890, worked as a substitute arbiter seven times before he retired as an active player. Players frequently were employed as umpires when the assigned umpires were not available due to travel problems, illness or other issues. O'Day started working as a regular National League umpire in 1897 after two years in the Western League. He umpired in the senior circuit through the 1927 season with two years out to work another job. In 1912, O'Day managed the Cincinnati Reds and then returned to umpiring the following season. In 1914, he again took a managing job, this time with the Cubs in his native Chicago. At the start of the 1915 season, O'Day was out of baseball, but the National League rehired him during the season and he resumed umpiring on August 8 in Chicago. After umpiring his last game on October 2, 1927, O'Day finished with 3,986 major league contests. He then acted as an umpire scout for the National League through 1930.

One other longtime umpire also played and managed in the major leagues. George J. Moriarty played briefly in the National League for the Chicago Cubs in 1903 and 1904. He then played in the American League from 1906 through 1916. He became an umpire in the American League in 1917 and worked through the 1940 season except for 1927-28, when he managed the Tigers. Moriarty umpired 3,047 American League games in his career. No other person who played and managed in the majors umpired 1,000 major league games.

The single-season record inched up over the next 50 years until American League umpire Joe Paparella worked 169 games during the 154-game 1950 season. Paparella worked 31 doubleheaders that year, including five instances of double dips on consecutive days. For three days starting on September 25, Paparella worked doubleheaders as the season wound down. His partners also worked hard that season, with Cal Hubbard umpiring 167 games and Eddie Rommel umpiring 165. The 41-year-old Paparella was in his fifth season in the junior circuit and worked a more reasonable schedule before and after that incredible 1950 season. However, in 1962, Paparella broke his

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Joe Paparella

own season record by working an absurd total of 176 games. He umpired in 30 doubleheaders that summer, although none came on back-to-back days during the 162-game season. Two of Paparella's partners worked record-breaking totals that year, as Hank Soar umpired 175 and John Rice 174 contests.

Three times since 1962 a crew has approached the number of games worked by the 1962 umpires. In 1969, Nestor Chylak, Jerry Neudecker, and Jake O'Donnell each umpired 170 games. Two years later, Russ Goetz worked 173 contests, while Neudecker and Dave Phillips each umpired 172 games. In 1975, Goetz, Bill Deegan, and George Maloney all worked 171 games. All these umpires worked for the American League. Only two National League arbiters have ever umpired 170 games in one season: Dusty Boggess and Stan Landes in 1962, who both worked exactly 170 contests.

After the 1999 labor problems between the umpires and Major League Baseball, MLB united the two league umpire staffs into one. Records for years of service and games umpired for each league through 1999 are listed in Tables 3 through 6. It is interesting to note that Bruce Froemming's 29 years in the National League (1971-99) rank sixth all-time, but that is not his entire career, since he continued to work on the combined major league staff in 2000. Larry Barnett would have tied Tommy Connolly for most years worked in the American League were it not for the unification of the umpires in 2000. Joe Brinkman recorded seven years and Dave Phillips two years as part of the major league staff in the 21st century in addition to their time in the American League.

For major league service time (all leagues combined), Bill Klem and Bruce Froemming top the list. Table 7 shows most years in the majors as an umpire, while Table 8 shows total career games. Through 2007, Klem and Froemming are tied with 37 years apiece umpiring in the big leagues, and they are also the only arbiters with at least 5,000 games worked in the majors. There are 17 men who have umpired at least 4,000 contests and 74 with 3,000 games worked.

Under the new contract between Major League Baseball and the umpires put in place after 1999, staff umpires now get four weeks' vacation during the season. Three of these weeks are as a crew, while the fourth week is an individual vacation. The result of this is that Major League Baseball selects about 20 minor league umpires who fill in for staff arbiters who are on vacation, ill, or otherwise not available to work a game. In 2007, there are 17 four-man crews, which allows two crews to be off each week and still have the required number of crews to work all big league games.[2] It is common for a crew to be working with one member of the crew absent and replaced by a minor league arbiter.

Another negotiated point in the contract is that the plate umpire in one game of a doubleheader usually only works that one game. A minor league umpire is assigned to the crew for the day and works first base in the first game and third base in the second, in both cases replacing the plate umpire from the other contest.

Since 2000, staff umpires work approximately 135 games in a season. Minor league umpires work a wide range of game totals while filling in for the absent arbiter. Some have worked a rather high total in some seasons. Dan Iassogna, now a member of the staff, umpired in 159 games during the 2000 season and 150 the next year. Lance Barksdale, also now a staff umpire, worked 156 games in 2001 and 151 the following year. Mike Vanvleet and Jim Wolf also worked at least 150 games in one season since 2000. Chris Guccione, who made his big league debut on April 15, 2000, has worked more than 150 in two seasons and at least 125 in six seasons. Guccione has umpired 992 major league games since his debut without being a member of the major league staff, more than any other minor league umpire.

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George Hildebrand

Many former players have become umpires through the years. Of these arbiters, 14 worked at least 2,000 games in the majors. Leading the list (shown in Table 9) is Bob Emslie, who held the career games umpired record for 27 years. Bill Dinneen umpired more games than any other player who umpired his first game as an active player. Dinneen holds the distinction of having thrown a no-hitter while pitching and then calling one from behind the plate as an umpire. Tom Gorman, father of umpire Brian Gorman, worked 3,800 games as a big league umpire and was the last former player to umpire in the National League on September 4, 1977. However, the real king of players who umpired is John B. "Jocko" Conlan. Jocko worked two American League games while still a player with the Chicago White Sox in 1935. He became a National League arbiter in 1941 and worked through 1965 for a major league total of 3,613 games. He was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1974 for meritorious service as an umpire. Other notable players who turned to umpiring later in life include Ralph A. "Babe" Pinelli, who was the plate umpire for Don Larsen's perfect game in the 1956 World Series, Pinelli's last game as an umpire. The last player-turned-umpire to work a major league game was William G. "Bill" Kunkel, whose son, Jeff, played in the majors. Kunkel umpired his last game on August 28, 1984.

Twenty-eight Hall of Famers have umpired at least one game in the big leagues. Some of the notables on the list include Cy Young, Chuck Klein, Frank Chance, and Willie Keeler. Table 10 contains the complete list.

The number of umpires working a game has increased through the years. For most of the 19th century, one person umpired each game. The Players League in 1890 employed two umpires for each game during its one season of existence. The National League used a two-man crew in 1898 and 1899 but reverted back to the single arbiter system in 1900. Both the National and American Leagues used two-man crews starting in 1909 and gradually moved to three-man crews in the mid-1920s, with some exceptions for more experienced umpires, who continued to work with just one partner. The integration to three-umpire crews was completed by the early 1930s. The four-umpire crew gradually became the norm in the early 1950s. The Senior Circuit used a five-man crew for at least part of the 1957, 1961 and 1968 seasons. In 1957, Ed Sudol made his debut on June 29 and worked as the fifth umpire for much of August and September. In both 1961 and 1968, the league prepared for the expansion that took place in 1962 and 1969 by training an extra arbiter.

As we move into the future, it is exciting to have statistics for games umpired. This data can be the start of many studies on umpiring and umpires. ■

Notes

1. There are eight games during the 1979 umpire strike for which we do not know the names of the substitute arbiters. Assignments for the National Association are only partially compiled. Statistics and game logs for all umpires are available at www.retrosheet.org.
2. Since there are 30 major league teams, there can be no more than 15 sites with games on any given day.

Tables (NOTE: ALL NUMBERS ARE VALID THROUGH 05/31/2007)

TABLE 1. Progression of the Career Games Umpired Record

Gms	Umpire	Year	Gms	Umpire	Year	Gms	Umpire	Year
45	Charles Daniels	1876	1,322	Tom Lynch	1899	3,778	Bob Emslie	1918
62	Billy McLean	1878	1,381	Bob Emslie	1900	3,917	Bob Emslie	1919
110	Billy McLean	1879	1,509	Bob Emslie	1901	4,073	Bob Emslie	1920
144	Billy McLean	1880	1,653	Bob Emslie	1902	4,180	Bob Emslie	1921
161	Foghorn Bradley	1881	1,784	Bob Emslie	1903	4,218	Bob Emslie	1922
229	Foghorn Bradley	1882	1,926	Bob Emslie	1904	4,224	Bob Emslie	1923
266	Foghorn Bradley	1883	2,073	Bob Emslie	1905	4,228	Bob Emslie	1924
317	Billy McLean	1884	2,210	Bob Emslie	1906	4,337	Tommy Connolly	1927
359	Kick Kelly	1885	2,351	Bob Emslie	1907	4,489	Tommy Connolly	1928
493	Kick Kelly	1886	2,507	Bob Emslie	1908	4,568	Tommy Connolly	1929
495	Kick Kelly	1887	2,653	Bob Emslie	1909	4,715	Tommy Connolly	1930
587	Kick Kelly	1888	2,798	Bob Emslie	1910	4,767	Tommy Connolly	1931
650	Bob Ferguson	1890	2,901	Bob Emslie	1911	4,768	Tommy Connolly	1932
786	Bob Ferguson	1891	2,949	Bob Emslie	1912	4,803	Bill Klem	1936
838	John Gaffney	1893	3,080	Bob Emslie	1913	4,958	Bill Klem	1937
952	Jack McQuaid	1894	3,229	Bob Emslie	1914	5,110	Bill Klem	1938
1,017	Tom Lynch	1896	3,374	Bob Emslie	1915	5,221	Bill Klem	1939
1,130	Tom Lynch	1897	3,530	Bob Emslie	1916	5,357	Bill Klem	1940
1,251	Tom Lynch	1898	3,651	Bob Emslie	1917	5,368	Bill Klem	1941

TABLE 2. Progression of the Season Games Umpired Record

Gms	Umpire	Year	Gms	Umpire	Year	Gms	Umpire	Year
45	Charles Daniels	1876	138	Jack McQuaid	1890	164	George Hildebrand	1914
52	Billy McLean	1878	148	Bob Emslie	1892	166	Bill Brennan	1915
79	Foghorn Bradley	1880	156	Ed Swartwood	1898	167	Cy Pfirman	1933
79	Herm Doscher	1881	xx	James McDonald		168	Art Passarella	1947
102	Stewart Decker	1883	161	Hank O'Day	1899	169	Joe Paparella	1950
118	Billy McLean	1884	162	Charles King	1904	176	Joe Paparella	1962
134	Kick Kelly	1886	163	Billy Evans	1909			
136	Bob Ferguson	1888	164	Hank O'Day	1910			

TABLE 3. Most Years Umpired, National League

Yrs	Umpire
37	Bill Klem
34	Bob Emslie
33	Hank O'Day
33	Harry Wendelstedt
31	Doug Harvey
29	Bruce Froemming
29	Cy Rigler
28	Al Barlick
28	Frank Pulli
28	Lee Weyer

TABLE 4. Most Years Umpired, American League

Yrs	Umpire
32	Tommy Connolly
31	Larry Barnett
30	Don Denkinger
30	Bill Dinneen
30	Larry McCoy
30	Bill McGowan
29	Jim Evans
29	Dave Phillips
28	Joe Brinkman
28	Hank Soar

TABLE 5. Most Games Umpired, National League

Gms	Umpire
5,368	Bill Klem
4,670	Doug Harvey
4,497	Harry Wendelstedt
4,227	Al Barlick
4,144	Cy Rigler
4,103	Bruce Froemming
4,091	Bob Emslie
3,983	Hank O'Day
3,824	Lee Weyer
3,800	Tom Gorman

TABLE 6. Most Games Umpired, American League

Gms	Umpire
4,451	Tommy Connolly
4,424	Bill McGowan
4,290	Larry Barnett
4,218	Bill Dinneen
4,121	Bill Summers
4,023	Larry McCoy
3,896	Jim Evans
3,857	Dave Phillips
3,856	Nestor Chylak
3,823	Don Denkinger

TABLE 7. Most Years Umpired, Major Leagues

Yrs	Umpire
37	Bruce Froemming*
37	Bill Klem
35	Joe Brinkman
35	Tommy Connolly
35	Bob Emslie
35	Hank O'Day
33	Ed Montague*
33	Harry Wendelstedt
32	Larry Barnett
32	Jerry Crawford*

** active in 2007*

TABLE 8. Most Games Umpired, Major Leagues

Gms	Umpire
5,368	Bill Klem
5,073	Bruce Froemming *
4,768	Tommy Connolly
4,670	Doug Harvey
4,505	Joe Brinkman
4,497	Harry Wendelstedt
4,424	Bill McGowan
4,292	Larry Barnett
4,228	Bob Emslie
4,227	Al Barlick

** active in 2007*

TABLE 9. Players Who Umpired More Than 2000 Games

Player/Umpire	Gms
Bob Emslie	4,228
Bill Dinneen	4,218
Hank O'Day	3,986
Tom Gorman	3,800
Jocko Conlan	3,613
Babe Pinelli	3,398
Eddie Rommel	3,365
George Hildebrand	3,331
Charlie Moran	3,183
Charlie Berry	3,080
George Moriarty	3,047
Frank Secory	2,973
Ken Burkhart	2,694
Bill Kunkel	2,227

TABLE 10. Hall of Famers Who Umpired

Player/Umpire	Gms	Player/Umpire	Gms
Jake Beckley	1	Chuck Klein	1
Chief Bender	1	Christy Mathewson	3
Frank Chance	1	Tommy McCarthy	2
John Clarkson	4	Joe McGinnity	1
Charlie Comiskey	1	Kid Nichols	3
Jocko Conlan	3,613	Jim O'Rourke	30
Buck Ewing	2	Wilbert Robinson	1
Pud Galvin	40	Bobby Wallace	112
Clark Griffith	5	Ed Walsh	87
Ned Hanlon	1	Monte Ward	1
Hughie Jennings	3	Mickey Welch	7
Tim Keefe	243	Vic Willis	1
Willie Keeler	1	Harry Wright	3
King Kelly	7	Cy Young	4

The Traffic Directors

by Dan Fox and Neal Williams

"The main quality a great third base coach must have is a fast runner."

– Rocky Bridges
California Angels coach

"It's frustrating. Your job is not to get in the way of a rally."

– Rich Donnelly
Dodgers third base coach
after game One of the 2006 NLDS

Most readers will remember what was perhaps the strangest play of the 2006 post-season and for Dodger fans that memory is not a happy one. With runners on first and second and nobody out in the top of the second inning, Dodgers rookie Russell Martin took an inside-out cut at a 2-1 fastball from the Mets' John Maine and drove it deep to right field. Jeff Kent, the runner on second, apparently didn't see the ball immediately and got an extremely poor jump while J. D. Drew at first base read that the ball was over the head of right fielder Shawn Green and began motoring for second. With Kent finally under way and Drew close on his heels, Green played the ball perfectly off the wall on one hop, relayed to Jose Valentin, who threw a one-hopper to Paul Lo Duca just in time to nip a diving Kent at the plate. In the meantime Drew had not slowed at all, and upon turning around a surprised Lo Duca was able to put down the tag as Drew also attempted a headfirst slide. The result was a double play which proved huge in a 6-5 Mets win.

After the game Dodgers third base coach Rich Donnelly noted that he didn't want to send Kent but saw that with Drew close behind, he'd likely end up with two runners on third and at that point he was hoping for a botched throw. And for some reason, perhaps their proximity or his attention focused on the lead runner, Donnelly did not or was unable to give the stop sign to Drew.

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Of course, most third base coaches most of the time aren't put in such a difficult position by their runners. Instead, in addition to their job relaying signs to the batter, they are concerned with waving around one runner at a time. The question then from an analyst's viewpoint is twofold. First, is the job of directing traffic on the bases quantifiable? In other words, can we create a metric that measures the success and failure of this component in a reasonable way? And second, if it is measurable, can some coaches be said to be more skilled at this half of their job than their peers? In this essay we'll take a crack at answering both questions.

QUANTIFYING THE WAVE

In the summer of 2006, in a series of six articles published on the Baseball Prospectus website one of us (Dan Fox) endeavored to more formally quantify base running by developing a series of metrics measured in terms of runs. Those metrics are:

Equivalent Ground Advancement Runs (EqGAR). Measures the contribution of base runners above and beyond what would be expected in opportunities they have for advancing on outs made on the ground. For example, advancing from second to third on a groundout to shortstop or getting gunned down at home on a grounder to second.

Equivalent Air Advancement Runs (EqAAR). Measures the contribution of base runners above and beyond what would be expected in opportunities they have for advancing on fly-ball and line-drive outs. For example, scoring on sacrifice flies or advancing from first to second on a fly ball to left field. This metric is park adjusted.

Equivalent Stolen Base Runs (EqSBR). Measure the contribution of base runners in their stolen base attempts and pickoffs.

Equivalent Hit Advancement Runs (EqHAR). Measures the contribution of base runners above and beyond what would be expected in opportunities they have for advancing on singles and doubles. For example, moving from first to third on a single to left field or scoring from first on a double. This metric is park adjusted.

When totaled, these give us a fairly complete picture of the contribution made by a player on the bases beyond what would have been expected given

their opportunities. And therein lies the rub. The methodology that underlies these metrics isn't a simple totaling of the number of bases gained in these situations, but rather an application of changes in the expected number of runs across several axes including the base/out situation (the Run Expectancy matrix), handedness of the batter, and the position of the fielder who fielded the ball.

By calculating how often runners typically advance in a whole host of scenarios (for example, with a runner on second and nobody out, a runner will advance from second to third 43% of the time when the ball is fielded by the shortstop, but 97% of the time when handled by the second baseman) and translating those percentages to runs using the Run Expectancy matrix, we can credit or debit a runner for each and every opportunity they have on the bases.

Totaling the credit assigned to each opportunity (and not crediting the runner for advancing the minimum number of bases) for players allows us to assign a number of theoretical runs above and beyond what a typical player would have contributed given the same opportunities. Yes, theoretical since these metrics, being based on models like the RE matrix, don't actually measure the precise number of runs contributed by a runner, but rather can be thought of as an accounting of the decisions made by runners and coaches that put their teams in more or less advantageous situations throughout the course of a season. That accounting is performed in terms of runs. As mentioned above, we then adjust for park effects where necessary. For example, the spacious Coors Field outfield allows for easier advancement than the smaller Fenway Park.

Already many of you can see where this is going. EqHAR, by measuring runner advancement on hits, may be an appropriate methodology to apply to third base coaches, since it measures an aspect of the game in which third base coaches are directly involved. Looking more closely, EqHAR is composed of three basic scenarios:

- Runner on first, second not occupied, and the batter singles
- Runner on first, second not occupied, and the batter double.
- Runner on second, third not occupied, and the batter singles

A third base coach may be active in each of these scenarios, but as will be obvious, it typically depends on where the ball is hit. When a batter singles or doubles with a runner on first base, the runner typically makes his own decision about whether to advance if the ball is hit to left field or within his field of view in center field. On the other hand, he'll usually pick up his third base coach if the ball lands in right field. Likewise, when on second base a ball hit to the outfield typically results in the runner taking matters into his own hands only if the ball is hit to left, but relying on the coach if the ball is hit to center or right. By using these general rules as a guide, the analysis can be restricted in this sense to plays that fall only into these categories but also include scenarios when multiple base runners are on base.

- Runner on first and the batter singles and the ball is fielded by the right fielder. Other bases may be occupied.
- Runner on first and the batter doubles and the ball is fielded by the right fielder. Other bases may be occupied.
- Runner on second and the batter singles and the ball is fielded by the center or right fielder. Other bases may be occupied.

One might argue that these categories are either too restrictive or not restrictive enough, and we have sympathy with both arguments.

For example, with the runner on first on a single fielded by the center fielder, there are certainly occasions when the runner picks up the coach. Conversely, with a runner on second and the batter singling to left, there are definitely times when the runner knows the ball will be difficult to handle or is running with the pitch and so heads home without consulting the coach. This analysis will not include those events. And these events of course do not include runners attempting to advance on ground-ball and fly-ball outs, nor does it include runners attempting to stretch doubles into triples or triples into inside the park home runs. The thought was to error on the side of caution and include only those events where it seems the third base coach would be most likely to have influence.

Further, these scenarios will include times when runners run right through the stop sign given by their frantic coach only to get thrown out. Through no fault of his own, the coach will be still be debited for plays like these.

Surely this is far from a perfect system, but given the granularity of the play-by-play data available and absent video inspection of each play, this seems like a reasonable approach for a first pass at creating this kind of metric.

The primary advantage to using the methodology described above as opposed to simply counting the number of runners that were thrown out on each coach's watch is that this system also gives appropriate credit when a runner advances successfully. The system also takes into consideration how difficult the advancement event was and gives more credit when

a runner takes a base in a higher reward situation. While keeping runners from getting thrown out is clearly a major component of the job, knowing when to take risks based on the game situation is a secondary component and one that this metric captures.

Given the above caveats, we ran the EqHAR framework for third base coaches for 2006 with the following results.

TABLE 1. Third Base Coaches 2006 Ordered by Rate

Team	Name	Opp	OA	EqHAR	Rate
ANA	Dino Ebel	238	3	10.3	1.19
PHI	Bill Dancy	262	5	7.8	1.15
HOU	Doug Mansolino	214	1	5.6	1.11
TBA	Tom Foley	163	1	5.3	1.15
DET	Gene Lamont	240	5	5.0	1.10
FLO	Bobby Meacham	199	4	2.3	1.05
NYN	Manny Acta	228	3	2.3	1.05
KCA	Luis Silverio	237	4	2.0	1.04
WAS	Tony Beasley	239	6	1.5	1.03
COL	Mike Gallego	247	3	1.5	1.03
ARI	Carlos Tosca	275	6	0.5	1.01
MIN	Scott Ullger	222	3	0.5	1.01
BAL	Tom Trebelhorn	296	3	0.3	1.01
MIL	Dale Sveum	214	5	0.3	1.01
SDN	Glenn Hoffman	231	4	-0.2	1.00
TOR	Brian Butterfield	237	6	-0.4	0.99
CLE	Jeff Datz	274	5	-0.7	0.99
CIN	Mark Berry	217	5	-0.8	0.98
SLN	Jose Oquendo	230	5	-1.1	0.98
PIT	Jeff Cox	230	3	-1.2	0.98
SEA	Carlos Garcia	226	6	-1.5	0.97
SFN	Gene Glynn	220	3	-2.2	0.95
TEX	Steve Smith	234	5	-2.5	0.95
CHN	Chris Speier	199	6	-2.9	0.94
ATL	Fredi Gonzalez	231	6	-3.3	0.94
NYA	Larry Bowa	289	5	-4.1	0.93
OAK	Ron Washington	245	7	-4.9	0.89
LAN	Rich Donnelly	260	9	-6.0	0.90
BOS	DeMarlo Hale	248	5	-7.6	0.86
CHA	Joey Cora	234	9	-7.7	0.86

This table includes the number of hit advancement opportunities (Opp), the number of times runners were thrown out advancing (OA), the EqHAR for those opportunities, and a Rate statistic that is the ratio of EqHAR to the expected number of advancement runs given both the quantity and the quality of opportunities along the axes mentioned above. This is important, since you'll notice that while Baltimore and Tom Trebelhorn had 296 opportunities, Tom Foley in Tampa Bay had just 163, and all other things being equal, more opportunities means a higher EqHAR.

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES

Bill Dancy

It should be noted that the coach was assigned all plays for the 2006 season for his team since there is no easily accessible record of when a third base coach was not on the field for his team. For example, although Chris Speier took a several-day leave of absence beginning July 20 after being arrested for DUI earlier that week, the opportunities during that time are credited to Speier. Through this analysis the coaches were assigned opportunities based on their team's media guides for the respective seasons.

So under this measure Dino Ebel of the Angels played a part in helping his runners to the tune of just over 10 additional theoretical runs (the second highest of any single season from 2000 through 2006) while Joey Cora was complicit in costing the White Sox the equivalent of almost eight runs. Intuitively, this range seems to be within the bounds of believability. Newly minted managers Ron Washington (-4.9) and Fredi Gonzalez (-3.3) don't come out very well, although Manny Acta (+2.3) does.

But is this really a fair gauge of a third base coach's influence? Keep in mind that failing to advance as frequently as the average runner in various situations, as well as getting thrown out, will both depress EqHAR, with the latter being much more costly than the former. Even so, it could be the case that Cora was saddled with extremely slow runners who didn't advance as often as they should or runners who don't take direction very

DETROIT TIGERS

Lamont

TABLE 2. Third Base Coaches in 2006 Ordered by Ratio

Team	Coach/Non-Coach Name	Opp	Rate	Opp	OA	EqHAR	Rate	Ratio
TBA	Tom Foley	163	1.15	313	12	-6.6	0.80	1.44
PHI	Bill Dancy	262	1.15	329	5	-1.2	0.96	1.20
BAL	Tom Trebelhorn	296	1.01	400	8	-6.1	0.84	1.20
SFN	Gene Glynn	220	0.95	346	6	-4.7	0.84	1.13
CLE	Jeff Datz	274	0.99	400	7	-3.4	0.91	1.09
SDN	Glenn Hoffman	231	1.00	348	7	-3.2	0.91	1.09
TOR	Brian Butterfield	237	0.99	387	9	-2.9	0.92	1.08
NYN	Manny Acta	228	1.05	293	4	-0.6	0.98	1.07
MIL	Dale Sveum	214	1.01	329	11	-1.7	0.95	1.06
ANA	Dino Ebel	238	1.19	373	9	5.2	1.13	1.06
CHA	Joey Cora	234	0.86	404	9	-7.5	0.81	1.05
COL	Mike Gallego	247	1.03	359	12	-0.8	0.98	1.05
OAK	Ron Washington	245	0.89	372	10	-6.0	0.85	1.04
WAS	Tony Beasley	239	1.03	314	9	-0.3	0.99	1.04
KCA	Luis Silverio	237	1.04	400	13	0.7	1.02	1.02
BOS	DeMarlo Hale	248	0.86	424	8	-7.6	0.85	1.01
SEA	Carlos Garcia	226	0.97	377	13	-0.2	1.00	0.97
SLN	Jose Oquendo	230	0.98	375	9	1.0	1.03	0.95
ARI	Carlos Tosca	275	1.01	332	5	2.0	1.07	0.95
DET	Gene Lamont	240	1.10	362	3	5.5	1.16	0.95
NYA	Larry Bowa	289	0.93	410	3	-0.2	1.00	0.94
PIT	Jeff Cox	230	0.98	399	2	1.8	1.04	0.93
LAN	Rich Donnelly	260	0.90	370	10	-1.0	0.97	0.92
CIN	Mark Berry	217	0.98	315	4	2.4	1.08	0.91
HOU	Doug Mansolino	214	1.11	344	1	7.6	1.23	0.91
TEX	Steve Smith	234	0.95	410	9	2.5	1.06	0.90
ATL	Fredi Gonzalez	231	0.94	362	6	2.5	1.06	0.89
MIN	Scott Ullger	222	1.01	452	8	6.6	1.14	0.88
FLO	Bobby Meacham	199	1.05	359	5	8.3	1.24	0.84
CHN	Chris Speier	199	0.94	350	3	7.2	1.22	0.77

well and run through his signs or even who simply don't hustle. And Ebel may be blessed with a Chone Figgins, who regularly scoots home on singles and doubles and never gets caught (Figgins was not thrown out in 56 opportunities and recorded the highest individual EqHAR at 4.93 in 2006).

Because this metric depends on the players a coach has to work with, an additional step is warranted that acknowledges that dependency. This step involves comparing the opportunities that coaches can be said to have some control over with ones that they do not. If a team is populated with poor base runners who have trouble advancing or regularly get thrown out in situations where the coach is a spectator, one might argue that those opportunities should serve as the baseline with which we judge the coach. Table 2 shows the results of this recalculation by including these "non-coach" opportunities. Table 2 includes a final column that is the ratio of the Rate for opportunities the coach has influence over to the Rate for the opportunities for which they do not.

Under this second measure Cora moves from 30th to 11th by virtue of his team racking up a very poor EqHAR of -7.5 and rate of 0.81 in opportunities that Cora had little or no influence over. When comparing the 0.81 rate in his coach-influenced opportunities to 0.86, Cora comes out at 1.05, thereby slightly outperforming his team.

In Table 2, Washington and Gonzalez both look a little better while Speier and Florida's Bobby Meacham fall by virtue of their respective teams performing quite well in non-coach opportunities, at 1.24 for the Marlins and 1.22 for the Cubs. And what of the Angel's Ebel, who came out on top in Table 1? He slides to 10th since the Angels recorded a very respectable 1.13 rate in non-coach opportunities, while Tom Foley of the Devil Rays takes the top spot since his team performed so poorly in other opportunities (-6.6, 0.80) and so well when he was likely involved (5.3, 1.15).

This metric can be expanded to encompass multiple seasons and therefore a larger view. Table 3 shows these metrics for each of the 74 third base coaches

TABLE 3. All Third Base Coaches 2000-2006

Name	Opp	OA	EqHAR	Rate	Opp	OA	EqHAR	Rate	Ratio
Billy Hatcher	387	6	5.1	1.06	573	21	-12.3	0.78	1.35
Bill Dancy	527	15	3.4	1.04	737	17	-11.3	0.84	1.23
Michael Cubbage	494	12	4.7	1.05	706	15	-11.1	0.85	1.23
Lance Parrish	189	5	0.9	1.02	243	8	-3.7	0.84	1.22
Cookie Rojas	221	5	-0.2	1.00	268	9	-4.6	0.83	1.20
Terry Bevington	439	12	-3.4	0.96	544	11	-9.2	0.82	1.17
Bobby Floyd	173	5	-2.7	0.93	316	8	-6.0	0.81	1.15
Jack Lind	211	2	4.7	1.10	273	10	-0.9	0.96	1.14
Tom Foley	1056	20	14.0	1.07	1609	43	-8.5	0.95	1.13
Dave Myers	986	16	7.7	1.04	1463	35	-10.7	0.92	1.12
Al Pedrique	223	2	5.3	1.11	308	4	-0.3	0.99	1.12
Juan Samuel	626	11	7.3	1.05	976	23	-3.9	0.95	1.11
Wendell Kim	624	20	-14.7	0.88	980	34	-19.5	0.80	1.10
Jeff Datz	274	5	-0.7	0.99	400	7	-3.4	0.91	1.09
John Russell	672	19	-1.5	0.99	1096	24	-10.0	0.91	1.09
Mike Cubbage	244	7	-1.3	0.97	310	8	-2.8	0.91	1.08
Jim Riggleman	270	7	-2.0	0.96	308	11	-3.5	0.90	1.07
Tom Trebelhorn	1323	32	6.6	1.03	2101	51	-5.9	0.97	1.06
Gene Lamont	1103	28	1.8	1.01	1730	49	-9.2	0.95	1.06
Eddie Rodriguez	475	11	-5.9	0.94	614	16	-6.7	0.89	1.06
Dino Ebel	238	3	10.3	1.19	373	9	5.2	1.13	1.06
Joey Cora	234	9	-7.7	0.86	404	9	-7.5	0.81	1.05
Joel Skinner	1087	27	15.5	1.07	1650	41	2.6	1.01	1.05
Ozzie Guillen	345	10	1.3	1.01	632	19	-2.1	0.97	1.05
John Vukovich	1130	33	-7.4	0.97	1491	41	-11.4	0.93	1.04
Tony Beasley	239	6	1.5	1.03	314	9	-0.3	0.99	1.04
Brian Butterfield	1195	24	6.1	1.03	1827	45	-1.9	0.99	1.04
Tim Flannery	683	18	6.5	1.05	710	20	0.7	1.01	1.04
Manny Acta	1032	17	15.3	1.07	1495	37	4.3	1.03	1.04

(table continued on next page)

Name	Opp	OA	EqHAR	Rate	Opp	OA	EqHAR	Rate	Ratio
Ron Oester	407	11	-1.0	0.99	571	20	-2.4	0.96	1.03
Willie Randolph	976	20	7.4	1.04	1189	33	1.2	1.01	1.03
Ron Washington	1730	45	2.0	1.00	2272	40	-5.0	0.97	1.03
Carlos Tosca	712	13	0.6	1.00	969	17	-1.2	0.99	1.02
Dale Sveum	789	18	-20.9	0.87	1201	26	-18.6	0.85	1.01
Gene Glynn	1594	40	-20.0	0.94	2198	40	-15.1	0.93	1.01
Gary Pettis	379	14	-3.1	0.96	509	14	-2.5	0.95	1.01
DeMarlo Hale	248	5	-7.6	0.86	424	8	-7.6	0.85	1.01
Sonny Jackson	601	20	-16.6	0.86	896	24	-11.8	0.86	1.00
Al Newman	889	24	1.5	1.01	1384	28	1.1	1.01	1.00
Bryan Little	264	4	7.5	1.14	298	5	4.6	1.14	1.00
Luis Silverio	449	9	5.7	1.06	787	19	4.6	1.06	1.00
Mike Gallego	488	8	1.3	1.01	728	19	1.5	1.02	0.99
Dave Huppert	240	4	-0.7	0.99	318	7	-0.2	1.00	0.99
Pete MacKanin	201	5	0.4	1.01	228	8	0.5	1.02	0.99
Steve Smith	1082	21	1.7	1.01	1697	34	6.0	1.03	0.98
Doug Mansolino	867	18	7.6	1.05	1260	20	9.6	1.07	0.97
Jose Oquendo	1616	33	25.9	1.08	2267	49	23.1	1.11	0.97
Carlos Garcia	226	6	-1.5	0.97	377	13	-0.2	1.00	0.97
Tim Raines	204	9	2.9	1.06	335	7	3.2	1.10	0.97
Rob Picciolo	704	11	3.9	1.03	1163	24	6.7	1.07	0.97
Jerry Narron	494	8	7.7	1.06	611	12	6.5	1.10	0.97
Glenn Hoffman	1541	42	-13.5	0.95	2019	47	-2.8	0.99	0.96
Sandy Alomar	487	11	11.7	1.11	683	15	12.6	1.16	0.96
Fredi Gonzalez	1249	25	3.7	1.02	2005	32	14.0	1.06	0.95
Rich Donnelly	1594	48	-4.8	0.99	2176	52	7.4	1.04	0.95
Gary Allenson	366	18	-12.7	0.81	510	19	-8.0	0.85	0.95
Rafael Santana	408	8	0.7	1.01	717	12	6.0	1.08	0.94
Tim Foli	387	13	-1.2	0.99	502	15	2.9	1.05	0.94
Ned Yost	590	21	-8.4	0.93	797	24	0.0	1.00	0.93
Jeff Cox	847	23	-10.1	0.94	1384	22	1.2	1.01	0.93
Ron Roenicke	1538	40	2.9	1.01	1977	34	18.2	1.10	0.92
Ron Gardenhire	511	16	-0.4	1.00	479	13	4.3	1.09	0.92
John Mizerock	478	10	-1.0	0.99	790	13	6.4	1.08	0.91
Jeff Newman	207	4	2.7	1.07	359	3	6.1	1.17	0.91
Trent Jewett	354	10	2.5	1.04	454	10	6.2	1.14	0.91
Larry Bowa	495	10	-8.6	0.91	699	9	2.1	1.03	0.89
Mark Berry	684	18	-10.9	0.92	911	17	3.1	1.03	0.89
Scott Ullger	222	3	0.5	1.01	452	8	6.6	1.14	0.88
Rich Dauer	710	20	0.2	1.00	861	16	12.7	1.15	0.87
Matt Galante	592	19	-8.8	0.93	853	26	7.3	1.08	0.87
Luis Sojo	558	16	-6.3	0.94	718	12	5.8	1.09	0.86
John Stearns	206	10	-7.0	0.85	253	10	-0.4	0.98	0.86
Bobby Meacham	199	4	2.3	1.05	359	5	8.3	1.24	0.84
Chris Speier	860	22	-4.7	0.98	1158	15	24.0	1.22	0.80
Sam Perlozzo	254	5	-4.0	0.92	275	3	6.3	1.22	0.75

employed from the beginning of the 2000 season through 2006.

Here Billy Hatcher takes the top spot through his work as the Devil Rays third base coach in 2000-2001. Although his rate statistics for the two seasons (1.01, 1.10) were certainly above average, his team in non-coach opportunities registered rates of just 0.75 and 0.82. Speier, as the third base coach for the Brewers in 2000, Diamondbacks in 2001, and the Cubs in 2005-2006 had 22 runners nabbed in 860 opportunities for an EqHAR of -4.7 and rate of 0.98, while otherwise his team was thrown out 15 times and had a rate of 1.22, pushing him to the bottom of the list.

From an absolute perspective Dave Sveum registered the lowest EqHAR at -20.9 during his time with the Red Sox in 2004-2005 and Brewers in 2006, while Gary Allenson with Milwaukee in 2001-2002 had the lowest absolute rate at 0.81. In both cases, however, the poor performance of their teams buoyed their ratings. Cardinals third base coach Jose Oquendo had the highest absolute EqHAR of 25.9 in his seven years with Tony LaRussa, while Ebel recorded the highest rate at 1.19 in his single season with the Angels. These absolute numbers indicate that over the course of seven seasons the range in terms of EqHAR is around 55 runs.

In answer to the first of the questions posed above, the act of waving runners around is quantifiable, albeit imperfectly, with the limitations already discussed. The quantification in the above analysis passes the test of reasonableness and takes the following form. Third base coaches in the absolute sense seem at most to be able to contribute to just over one additional win or one loss (Sveum with the 2005 Red Sox recorded an EqHAR of -12.6 and Jerry Narron with the Rangers in 2000 was at +10.9) in the course of a season, over what would be expected. Over the course of seven seasons that contribution grows to around two and half wins, indicating there is a large degree of variability in play. However, judging a coach by that absolute metric is not necessarily equitable since it doesn't take into consideration the personnel the coach is working with. To correct for this, a ratio that uses a baseline can be calculated, and when that ratio is converted to runs, the range becomes -1.5 to +1.5 wins per season and -3 to +3 wins over the course of seven seasons.

PERSISTING THE WAVE

While we've answered the first question in the affirmative, does the difference we see between third base coaches in a single season indicate that there is a disparity in skill between these coaches?

The standard way performance analysts have approached a question like this is to run year-to-year comparisons in an effort to see if the effect being measured persists. As it turns out, roughly two-thirds of third base coaches remain in the role the following season, with a high of 24 being retained during the winter 2003-2004. Using the ratio calculated in the previous section, a correlation coefficient (denoted as r where a value of -1 indicates a perfectly negative linear correlation and a value of 1 indicates a perfectly linear one) can be calculated for each pair of seasons as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4. Year to Year Correlations in Ratio for Third Base Coaches

Year Par	Coaches	r
2000-2001	19	0.25
2001-2002	20	-0.16
2002-2003	21	-0.10
2003-2004	24	-0.09
2004-2005	21	-0.02
2005-2006	19	0.31

From an overall perspective those 124 pairs can be graphed as shown in Figure 1.

As you can see from the graph in Figure 1, the data doesn't trend in any direction and in fact the correlation coefficient across all pairs of years is just .04. A value so close to zero is evidence that there is in fact

Ratios for Third Base Coaches in Consecutive Years (2000–2006)

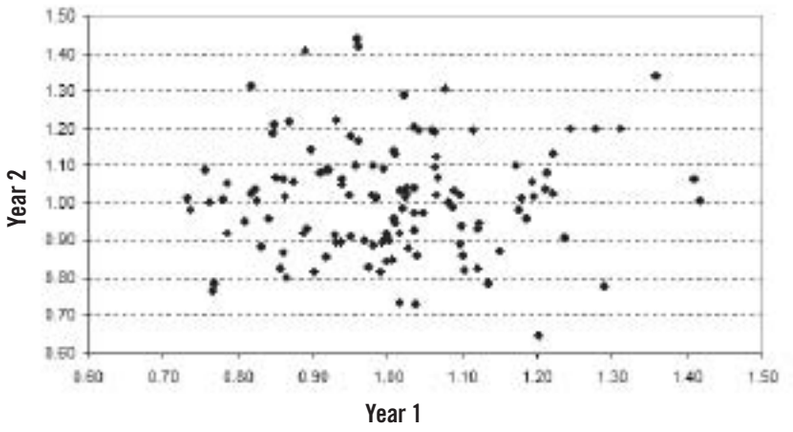

FIGURE 1.

no correlation. In other words, knowing a third base coach's ratio in one season gives you no information about what his ratio will be in the next. Further, the data is almost perfectly normally distributed, which is additional evidence that there is little or no skill component evident in the data. This can then be interpreted as meaning that there is no discernable third base coaching skill that carries over from year to year and that therefore the answer to our second question is no.

There may be several reasons for this negative result. Reminiscent of the ongoing debate over clutch hitting, the skill this metric is trying to measure may be much more subtle than the metric can deliver. Instead of a coach being "responsible" for up to +1.5 wins per season, his actual contribution to those wins may be a fractional part of that value and hence the variability component in the numbers we use for correlation swamps the skill component to a large degree. So there may indeed be a skill involved in waving runners around, but that skill is for all intents and purposes unimportant in the big scheme of things. The obvious dependence on his personnel would seem to support this.

Additionally, perhaps the metric is poorly designed and may not capture the skill at all though it exists. It could even be the case that there really is no skill involved in holding and sending runners (or if you prefer, there is no skill difference between coaches at the major league level) and the differential results we see can be chalked up to a combination of personnel (try as we might to disentangle it or due to turnover of the roster) and simple luck driven by anything and everything from the opponents' defense to the weather.

Our quest for knowledge about the game is just as often informed by studies that show no effect as those that confirm our intuition. As for the influence of third base coaches in determining when to send and when to hold runners, the most we can say from this study (assuming our metric is relevant) is that if there is a skill involved, it is hard to measure, and although the judgment exercised on the field can often make the difference in individual plays, it doesn't manifest itself in the larger scale of seasons. ■

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How Much Is a Top Prospect Worth?

by Victor Wang

With salaries for major league free agents skyrocketing, teams are more reluctant than ever to trade their top prospects. These prospects are valuable because if they reach their upside, a major league team has a star caliber player under their control for six full seasons while paying that player much less than what he would earn on the open market. Teams are even reluctant to trade these types of prospects for established major league stars, who may provide more certainty but cost more and may soon be free agents. I was curious to see whether teams were making the right choice by holding on to these prospects. In essence, I wanted to determine what type of value a team could get back from a top prospect during the first six years the team had that prospect under its control.

To determine who the top prospects were, I took *Baseball America*'s Top 100 prospect lists in 1990-1999. From that list I chose the top 10 prospects from each year and separated them into hitters and pitchers. Some prospects were on the list several times, but I only included them to the list once. After that, I determined the WARP (wins above replacement player) that they accumulated during their first six full seasons before free agency. WARP is a statistic created by Clay Davenport of Baseball Prospectus. As defined on their website, WARP is "the number of wins this player contributed, above what a replacement level hitter, fielder, and pitcher would have done, with adjustments only for within the season."

While some may not agree with the baseline WARP uses, it is widely accessible for past players. From there I determined what the average WARP of the group of hitters and pitchers was and then broke the prospects into four subgroups. These four subgroups are bust, contributor (a back of the rotation starter or middle reliever for pitchers), everyday player (a middle of the rotation starter for pitchers), and star (an ace for pitchers). A bust was defined as a player who had 12 WARP or less (2 or less WARP per year). A contributor was defined as a player who had between 12 and 24 WARP (2 to 4 WARP per year). An everyday player was defined as a player who had between 24 and 36 WARP (4 to 6 WARP per year). A star was defined as a player who had 36 or more WARP per year (6 WARP or more per year).

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RESULTS

Note: The full list of players included in this study and their value accumulated are included at the end of the paper.

Hitters Ranked as a Top 10 Prospect

Bust	Contributor	Everyday	Star	Total Players	Avg WARP
10	14	16	8	48	23.72
20.8%	29.17%	33.33%	16.67%	100%	

Pitchers Ranked as a Top 10 Prospect

Bust	Contributor	Everyday	Star	Total Players	Avg WARP
14	8	3	1	26	12.91
53.8%	30.77%	11.50%	3.8%	100%	

These results show that teams have been getting a pretty decent return on hitting prospects. On average, the hitting prospects have given about 24 WARP, or the results of an everyday player. When that player can be controlled for a very cheap price, it gives great value to the team given the current open market. However, when we take a closer look, the chances of a team getting an everyday player is one out of three. They also have a higher chance of having their prospect become a bust than of getting a star player in return. A bust happens for one out of every five prospects while a team gets a star player in return for one out of every six hitting prospects. For every Vladimir Guerrero, there are even more Eric Anthonys.

While hitting prospects give at least a decent return, top pitching prospects have given a terrible return. Out of the 26 different pitchers to rate as a top 10 prospect, only one (Pedro Martinez) gave a star return in the first six years. Also, a team only gets a solid starting pitcher for about one out of every 10 pitching prospects. Maybe even worse, over half of the pitching prospects became busts. Given the high rate of failed pitching prospects, it could definitely be

worth giving a top pitching prospect for an established player, even with the high price that pitchers cost on the open market.

Considering that evaluating prospects is a subjective process, I went further down the top 100 prospects list to see if I could find similar results. This time I examined prospects rated between 11th and 25th. I also noted if that prospect was later rated in the top 10. I also examined the same group of prospects without the ones that were later rated in the top 10.

Hitting Prospects Rated Between 11-25 (Including Prospects Later Rated in Top 10)

Bust	Cont	Everyday	Star	Total Players	Avg WARP	Later Rated in Top 10
22	23	13	12	70	19.27	19
31.4%	32.9%	18.6%	17.1%	100%		

Hitting Prospects Rated Between 11-25 (Not Including Prospects Later Rated in Top 10)

Bust	Cont	Everyday	Star	Total	Avg WARP
17	17	10	7	51	18.02
33.33%	33.33%	19.6%	13.7%	100%	

Pitching Prospects Rated Between 11-25 (Including Prospects Later Rated in Top 10)

Bust	Cont	Everyday	Star	Total	Avg WARP
36	14	7	2	59	11.06
61%	23.7%	11.9%	3.4%	100%	

Pitching Prospects Rated Between 11-25 (Not Including Prospects Later Rated in Top 10)

Bust	Cont	Everyday	Star	Total	Avg WARP
28	11	6	2	47	11.19
59.6%	23.4%	12.8%	4.3%	100%	

Hitting prospects appear to have been properly evaluated. When prospects that were later rated in the top 10 are removed, the percentage of prospects that become busts increase for the lower rated group while the other three groups decrease. Interestingly, these same results do not occur for the pitching prospects. The inclusion of pitching prospects that were later rated in the top 10 actually decreases the overall production of the 11-25 pitching prospects. They also decrease the chances of producing an ace or middle of the rotation pitcher. However, the average WARP of the group still remains lower than the WARP of just the top 10 pitching prospects.

While we have now found the value top prospects give their teams, we have not yet factored in the lower compensation these players receive in their first six years. To see how much money these top prospects save their teams, we need to determine how much value a top prospect gives to its team and for how much money. Then we must determine how much it would cost to purchase that same value in free agency. The last part is the easiest part. In *Baseball Prospectus 2006*, it was determined that in the 2005 and 2006 off-season, one additional WARP cost a team $1.525 million. Salary data from 1989-2007 shows that the average salary inflation has been 10.87%. When we factor in that inflation, on average, one additional WARP will cost a team $1.69 million in the 2007 off-season.

We have also found the value that top prospects give to their teams, so all we have to do now is determine how much it cost the teams. The new MLB labor agreement states that the minimum salary in 2007 will be $380,000, in 2008 it will be $390,000, and in 2009 it will be $400,000. The sum of these three salaries will determine how much a six-year player first starting in the major leagues in 2007 will make in his first three years, assuming a team renews that player's contract each year. The tricky part now is to find how much a player makes in years four through six. To do this I looked at every fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-year player in the major leagues and found their salary. All salary figures were used from Cot's Baseball Contracts. I found that the average fourth-year salary was $2.13 million, fifth-year salary was $3 million, and sixth-year salary was $3.9 million. I then found the WARP of each fourth–sixth-year player and divided their salary by their WARP. The $/WARP for a fourth-year player was $.64 million/WARP, for a fifth-year player it was $.83 million/WARP, and for a sixth-year player it was $1.29 million/WARP. Remember, it cost $1.525 million for every additional WARP in the free agent market. To find the average savings of each group, we can take the expected WARP of each group and multiply that by the cost of purchasing that WARP in the free agent market for the prospect's first six years, adjusting the FA$/WARP cost for inflation. We also know how much the prospect will cost in his first three years, and we can also find how much he will cost in his fourth-sixth years by multiplying the arbitration$/WARP by the prospect's expected WARP. We can then subtract the cost of purchasing the prospect's WARP in the free agent market by the prospect's expected cost in his first six years to determine the expected savings. Expected savings were then converted to net present value. Note that this assumes that there is steady inflation throughout baseball. This also assumes that each WARP is purchased at a fairly priced value. This also assumes that what a team pur-

Savings for Top 10 Hitters

	Bust	Contributor	Everyday	Star
WARP (over 6 years)	6.54	18	29.63	43.35
Chance of Occurring	20.80%	29.17%	33.33%	16.67%
Savings/Year (in millions)	1.27	3.83	6.43	9.50
Weighted Savings/Year	0.14	0.60	1.15	0.94
Total Savings/Year	5.11			
FA WARP/Year	3.02			
Total Break-even WARP	41.84			

chases in WARP is what it gets. The following table below shows the expected savings of a top 10 hitting prospect.

Here is how to read the above table. The first row shows the average WARP each subcategory produces over six years. The next row shows the chances a prospect from each subcategory is produced. The following row shows how much a team saves in millions of dollars per year if they produce a player in that subcategory. I then multiplied the savings of the subcategory by the chance of the subcategory occurring to determine a weighted savings. I summed the weighted savings to produce an average total savings per year. After that, I divided the savings by 1.69 to see how much WARP/year a team could purchase with the total savings produced. I then multiplied the savings WARP/year by the six years a team is able to control a prospect and added the average WARP of the group to come up with a total break-even WARP. The total break-even WARP is what a team can expect to gain in WARP from a prospect's average performance plus the additional WARP that the team could buy with the money they save from keeping the prospect. Therefore, the total break-even WARP is what a team needs to receive in return and gain in production within six years for a trade to be beneficial, assuming that the WARP received is fairly priced. Anything above the break-even WARP is beneficial toward the team trading the prospect while anything below the break-even WARP is beneficial towards the team acquiring the prospect. It makes more sense to use the total break-even WARP as the breakeven figure since prospect for prospect trades rarely happen. Here are the tables for the other three categories:

Savings for Top 10 Pitchers

	Bust	Contributor	Everyday	Star
WARP (over 6 years)	3.6	19.24	29.67	42.4
Chance of Occurring	53.80%	30.77%	11.50%	3.80%
Savings/Year (in millions)	0.61	4.11	6.45	9.29
Weighted Savings/Year	0.33	1.26	0.74	0.35
Total Savings/Year	2.69			
FA WARP/Year	1.59			
Total Break-even WARP	22.45			

Savings for 11-25 Hitters (Does not include hitters who later rank in top 10)

	Bust	Contributor	Everyday	Star
WARP (over 6 years)	1.58	16.85	30.74	42.59
Chance of Occurring	33.33%	33.33%	19.60%	13.70%
Savings/Year (in millions)	0.15	3.58	6.68	9.33
Weighted Savings/Year	0.50	1.19	1.31	1.28
Total Savings/Year	3.83			
FA WARP/Year	2.27			
Total Break-even WARP	31.64			

Savings for 11-25 Pitchers (Does not include pitchers who later rank in top 10)

	Bust	Contributor	Everyday	Star
WARP (over 6 years)	2.5	16.77	30.32	44.8
Chance of Occurring	59.60%	23.40%	12.80%	4.30%
Savings/Year (in millions)	0.37	3.56	6.58	9.83
Weighted Savings/Year	0.22	0.83	0.84	0.42
Total Savings/Year	2.32			
FA WARP/Year	1.37			
Total Break-even WARP	19.41			

CONCLUSION

From these tables we can see that hitting prospects have a big edge in value compared to pitching prospects. In fact, the 11-25 hitting prospects have 40% more value that the top 10 pitching prospects. Top 10 hitting prospects easily provide the most value of any group. The value is high enough that it is unlikely a team could receive enough in return to trade a top hitting prospect. It also may seem that the pitching prospect break-even figures are rather low, especially when compared to the hitting prospects. However, they do show that it is wrong to trade away a top pitching prospect for a one-year or less rental, as it would be nearly impossible for one player to provide the value required in one year or less. Also, remember that these break-even numbers do not factor in if teams are "one player away" from making the playoffs. It may be beneficial for a team to deal away a top prospect if the player it receives in return is the difference between making the playoffs and sitting at home in October. A playoff appearance can be very valuable to a team in the additional revenue it produces, especially considering that anything can happen once a team makes the playoffs. As the saying goes, flags fly forever.

It appears that teams are making the right decision by hanging on to top hitting prospects. Trading a top hitting prospect demands a lot in return in order to ensure fair value in a trade. It also appears that teams are usually doing the right thing by not trading away top pitching prospects for a short-term acquisition. There could be value to be made if a team can acquire a more certain asset that it can control for over one year for a top pitching prospect, especially given the fact that even top pitching prospects are a bust over half the time. For example, if a team can acquire a player in his arbitration years, they would need less WARP in return since a player in arbitration makes less than he would on the open market. In the end, though, it looks like teams are making the right decision when it comes to holding on to top prospects. ■

Hitting Prospects Rated as Top 10 Prospects (*Note: Position is what the player was listed as on the top 100 prospect list.)*

Name	Position	WARP	Name	Position	WARP
J Olerud	1B	34.2	R Rivera	OF	11.7
J Gonzalez	OF	31.3	D Jeter	SS	35.3
S Alomar	C	22.1	B Hunter	OF	12.3
T Zeile	C	25.1	S Green	OF	24.4
E Anthony	OF	5.1	C Johnson	C	26
G Vaughn	OF	19.6	J Damon	OF	27.1
J Offerman	SS	16	B Grieve	OF	20.1
A Cedeno	SS	6.4	A Jones	OF	48
R Klesko	1B	19.6	D Erstad	OF	31.7
I Rodriguez	C	39.7	K Garcia	OF	1.9
R Sanders	OF	33.6	V Guerrero	OF	45.5
M Lewis	SS	7.1	B Davis	C	10.2
M Vaughn	1B	28.3	T Lee	1B	22.5
C Jones	SS	40.2	M Tejada	SS	26.7
R Clayton	SS	22.1	T Walker	3B	17.7
W Cordero	SS	14.5	N Garciaparra	SS	41.8
C Floyd	OF	13.5	P Konerko	1B	23
C Delgado	C	30.4	A Beltre	3B	28.7
T Salmon	OF	39.5	A Ramirez	3B	15.1
J Hammonds	OF	14	J Drew	OF	32.9
A Gonzalez	SS	9.1	E Chavez	3B	32.5
A Rodriguez	SS	46	M Barret	C	11.5
M Ramirez	OF	46.1	P Ozuna	SS	1.3
R White	OF	25.9	R Mateo	OF	1.1

Pitching Prospects Rated as Top 10 Prospects

Name	Position	WARP	Name	Position	WARP
S Avery	LHP	27.1	J Silva	RHP	5.8
B McDonald	RHP	27.1	P Wilson	RHP	0
K Jones	RHP	0	A Benes	RHP	6.1
Van Poppel	RHP	4.4	L Hernandez	RHP	19.8
R Salkeld	RHP	2.1	K Wood	RHP	34.8
A Rhodes	LHP	12.8	M White	RHP	-1.1
B Taylor	LHP	0	K Benson	RHP	21
F Rodriguez	RHP	9.9	C Pavano	RHP	21.4
P Martinez	RHP	42.4	R Ankiel	LHP	5.9
J Bere	RHP	10.3	B Chen	LHP	7
A Watson	LHP	12.1	B Penny	RHP	20.3
T Hill	LHP	0	R Anderson	LHP	0
J Baldwin	RHP	23.4	M Clement	RHP	23.1

Hitting Prospects Rated Between 11-25 (*Note: Y indicates a player was later rated in the top 10. N indicates a player was not rated any higher.)*

Name	POS	WARP	Rated in Top 10	Name	POS	WARP	Rated in Top 10
D DeShields	2B	32.2	N	D Lee	1B	29.8	N
R Ventura	3B	39.1	N	T Helton	1B	49.8	N
M Grissom	OF	35.3	N	C Hermansen	SS	-1.4	N
R Lankford	OF	37.6	N	J Guillen	OF	12.3	N
T Griffin	3B	0	N	M Kotsay	OF	29.5	N
W Chamberlain	OF	7.5	N	B Fullmer	1B	13.5	N
B Williams	OF	34.8	N	J Encarnacion	OF	17.4	N
T Costo	1B	0.2	N	S Casey	1B	20.6	N
T Martinez	1B	17.6	N	D McDonald	OF	-0.4	N
J McNeely	OF	0.1	N	A Escobar	OF	3.5	N
E Zosky	SS	-0.4	N	L Berkman	OF	44.8	N
M Whiten	OF	17.1	N	C Beltran	OF	37.1	N
D Bell	OF	19.7	N	C Patterson	OF	14.1	N
M Newfield	OF	1	N	N Johnson	1B	23.3	N
T Hundley	C	17.5	N	P Burrell	1B	29.4	N
M Kelly	OF	3.3	N	D Stenson	OF	0.6	N
R Mondesi	OF	39.6	N	M Lewis	SS	7.1	Y
D McCarty	OF	0.1	N	W Cordero	SS	14.5	Y
D Young	3B	17.7	N	J Damon	OF	27.1	Y
R McDavid	OF	-0.2	N	R Clayton	SS	22.1	Y
J Hammonds	OF	14	N	R White	OF	25.9	Y
J Lopez	C	30.6	N	R Sanders	OF	33.6	Y
B Gil	SS	1.9	N	M Ramirez	OF	46.1	Y
W Greene	3B	12.8	N	R Klesko	1B	19.6	Y
T Nixon	OF	24.6	N	D Jeter	SS	35.3	Y
P Nevin	3B	25.7	N	C Johnson	C	26	Y
M Tucker	2B	17	N	A Jones	OF	48	Y
T Hollandsworth	OF	12.6	N	N Garciaparra	SS	41.8	Y
R Ordonez	SS	10.5	N	T Walker	3B	17.7	Y
J Booty	3B	0.1	N	P Konerko	1B	23	Y
D Gibson	OF	0.4	N	B Grieve	OF	20.1	Y
R Hidalgo	OF	35.5	N	K Garcia	OF	1.9	Y
J Payton	OF	20.1	N	R Mateo	OF	1.1	Y
J Cruz	OF	19.2	N	A Gonzalez	SS	9.1	Y
S Rolen	3B	50.1	N	B Davis	C	10.2	Y

Pitching Prospects Rated Between 11-25

Name	POS	WARP	RH?
D Kile	RHP	13.9	N
W Banks	RHP	5.9	N
M Harvey	RHP	0	N
M Stanton	LHP	9.2	N
P Combs	LHP	4.1	N
R Valdez	RHP	-0.4	N
N Elvira	LHP	0	N
R Garces	RHP	3.7	N
M Mussina	RHP	49.4	N
R Corneilius	RHP	2.7	N
K Miller	RHP	-0.9	N
M Wholers	RHP	21.3	N
L Dickson	LHP	-0.2	N
B Williams	RHP	2.2	N
P Mahomes	RHP	5.1	N
T Alvarez	RHP	0.2	N
B Pennington	LHP	0.3	N
D Nied	RHP	5.7	N
D Dreifort	RHP	17.5	N
S Karsay	RHP	19.1	N
C Park	RHP	32.6	N
J Granger	LHP	0	N
B Pulsipher	LHP	4	N
S Torres	RHP	2.6	N
A Benitez	RHP	30.2	N
A Osuna	RHP	14.6	N
B Wagner	LHP	28.9	N
D Hermanson	RHP	21.3	N
D Million	LHP	0	N
S Ruffcorn	RHP	-1.7	N
J Schmidt	RHP	14.9	N
M Drews	RHP	0	N
B Colon	RHP	40.2	N
R Coppinger	RHP	5.6	N
J Pittsley	RHP	1.6	N
J D'Amico	RHP	12.5	N
J Wright	RHP	14.7	N
R Halladay	RHP	32	N
M Morris	RHP	30.6	N
B Rose	RHP	4.3	N
M Anderson	RHP	6	N
E Milton	LHP	27.6	N
J Patterson	RHP	8.8	N
M Riley	LHP	1	N
A Burnett	RHP	21.3	N
B Looper	RHP	13.4	N
R Bradley	RHP	0.2	N
R Salkeld	RHP	2.1	Y
T Hill	LHP	0	Y
F Rodriguez	RHP	9.9	Y
B Taylor	LHP	0	Y
A Benes	RHP	6.1	Y
P Wilson	RHP	0	Y
J Baldwin	RHP	23.4	Y
K Wood	RHP	34.8	Y
C Pavano	RHP	21.4	Y
M Clement	RHP	23.1	Y
R Ankiel	LHP	5.9	Y
R Anderson	LHP	0	Y

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Can You Hear the Noise?

The 1909 St. Paul Gophers

by Todd Peterson

Like the 1987 world champion Minnesota Twins, the 1909 St. Paul Gophers featured a home-grown first baseman, a hard-nosed leader nicknamed "Rat," and an outstanding center fielder from Chicago. Unlike the Twins, the Gophers were cruelly prevented from playing major league baseball because of the prevailing apartheid of the time. In the face of almost overwhelming racism, the club managed to win nearly 450 ball games during their five-year existence, while spreading the gospel of blackball throughout the upper Midwest. This is the story of that five-year period and the saga of their 1909 season, when the St. Paul Gophers became one of the greatest teams Minnesota has ever seen.

The Gophers were formed in early 1907 by saloon owner Phil "Daddy" Reid, and his partner and childhood friend, John J. Hirschfield. A heavyset and confident-looking man, often pictured wearing a three-piece suit and a bowler hat, Reid was "one of the most influential and wealthy Negroes of the northwest," renowned for being "of a cheerful disposition, always willing to do an act of kindness."[1]

The pair enlisted Walter Ball, a product of the St. Paul sandlots and an outstanding blackball pitcher of the time, to organize and run the club. Ball drew most of the team's original roster from Chicago, securing many players who had been released when Rube Foster took control of the Leland Giants. Ball himself rejoined the Giants in mid May, and the future for "both the managers and players, looked very shady" indeed. However, thanks to traveling secretary Irving Williams' acumen in scheduling games and garnering publicity, and Reid's "determination to succeed at all costs," the Gophers were soon competing against the best town teams and semi-pro clubs in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and the Dakotas, winning a reported 92 games, with only 15 losses and 2 ties—a remarkable .853 percentage.[2]

Led by pitchers Clarence "Dude" Lytle, Johnny Davis, and slugging catcher Jesse Schaeffer, the Gophers won 36 straight games at one point and in mid-September defeated the St. Paul Saints of the American Association two games to one, with one tie, to capture the "colored championship of the state." Reid imported his good friend Rube Foster from Chicago to pitch the deciding game and the burly Texan, looking "as big as a fully matured hippopotamus," allowed only five hits and struck out 10 Saint batters as the Gophers prevailed, 5-3. The season also proved to be a success financially, and as the *St. Paul Dispatch* rhapsodized, "The Gophers have been a great advertisement to the city of St. Paul this season."[3]

Before the beginning of the 1908 campaign, Reid jettisoned a few of the previous year's aging veterans and added a trio of great players to the team, second baseman Felix Wallace, pitcher "Big" Bill Gatewood, and catcher George "Rat" Johnson. Although hampered by injuries that reduced the team to a two-man rotation of Lytle and Gatewood for much of the year, the Gophers won over 95 games against only 28 losses and a tie.

Rube Foster returned to the Twin Cities to help out the Gophers during the last week of August and threw a 5-0 no-hitter against the Hibbing Colts, a tough squad from Minnesota's Iron Range, composed entirely of ex-professional players.[4]

In September, the team dropped a barnstorming series to the Saints, but the Gophers' main focus that summer was a turf war with a new black ball club in the Twin Cities, the Minneapolis Keystones, run by flamboyant bar owner Edward "Kidd" Mitchell. The Keystones were a more rambunctious lot than the Gophers, and they slugged, fought, and argued their way to a reported 88-19-2 record, led by second baseman Topeka Jack Johnson, slugging third baseman William Binga, and hometown hero Bobby Marshall at first. After much posturing and haggling, the two squads agreed to meet in a five-game showdown series for a $500 side bet, stretched over late August and

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September. The Keystones, behind their ace, Charles "Slick" Jackson, won two out of the three first contests, but the Gophers rebounded to take the last two games and the series, with Lytle besting Jackson 6-0 in the finale at Nicollet Park in Minneapolis.[5]

Johnson

For the season of 1909, Reid and Williams were intent on fielding their best team yet, and before the season started Reid embarked with the Leland Giants on their spring training trip throughout the South, searching for players for his club. The Gophers, "composed of the fastest ["fast" meaning excellent in the parlance of the day] colored players in America," returned four players from their 1908 roster. The backstop was 13-year blackball vet George "Rat" (short for Rastus) Johnson, whom Hall of Fame Cubs manager Frank Chance once described as the greatest catcher in America. The 33-year-old native of Bellaire, Ohio, was a deadly clutch hitter and a heady receiver whose pegs down to second were "as regular as clockwork." The "Rat," or "Chappie" as he later became known, led the Renville All Stars to the Minnesota state championship in 1905 and spent several spring trainings around this time tutoring young pitchers for the St. Paul Saints and the Boston Nationals.[6]

Twenty-five-year-old Felix Wallace had no superior as a second baseman. The Gophers captain was a great hitter, crafty base runner, and "one of the brainiest and clever infielders ever produced in the Negro ranks." Possessing tremendous range, Wallace would make most of his throws to first with a quick short-arm motion while standing in almost any position. Utility man William McMurray, a graduate of the St. Louis sandlots, was a versatile, hardworking player with an ability to lead. He was also a jovial sort, known for joshing with fans "and being ever ready with repartee."[7]

Thirty-four-year-old Sherman Barton was a hard-hitting center fielder from Illinois with a cannon for an arm. The *Indianapolis Freeman* once noted, "When it comes to fielding and retiring runners, Bucky Barton of the St. Paul Gophers ranks with the big leaguers. They all fear him."[8]

The new position players included diminutive yet sure-hitting shortstop Arthur McDougall, a former teammate of Wallace's from the Paducah (Kentucky) Nationals, who possessed "an arm like a mule's hind leg." The incoming left fielder was Eugene "Gabbie" Milliner, perhaps the fastest man in all of baseball, renowned for his slicing line drives just inside the third base bag.[9]

The competition between the Gophers and Keystones had intensified during the off-season with quite a bit of player movement between the two teams. Left fielder Willis Jones, shortstop Frank Davis, and first baseman Haywood "Kissing Bug" Rose of the 1908 Gophers ventured east across the river to join the Mill City club, while the Keystone corner infielders, third baseman Bill Binga and first sacker Bobby Marshall, hooked up with Reid's outfit.[10]

Binga, a seasoned vet of nearly 20 blackball campaigns, was truly a professional hitter and was racking up multiple-hit games well into his 40s. In the field he was limited in range, but he never forgot an opposing batter, or how and where he liked to hit. Although born in Milwaukee, Bobby Marshall grew up in the Twin Cities, and won seven letters for football, baseball, and track at the University of Minnesota from 1903 to 1907. His gridiron accomplishments were so spectacular that he was named to the College Football Hall of Fame in 1971. Marshall, who briefly tried out with the Gophers in 1907, before sticking with the Keystones in 1908, would spend the next 20 years playing professional baseball and football. He was a good base stealer, with some pop in his bat, and a long reach at first. Vic Turosky, who played professional football against Marshall in Wisconsin, recalled a play where the 6-foot-1, 180-pounder, picked him up by an ankle, flung him into the air, and slammed him on his head. Turosky marveled, "That's when I knew what real power was."[11]

The all-new pitching staff consisted of Julius London, "the three fingered wonder," formerly of the Texas League, Archie Pate; a young spit-baller out of

Chicago; and Richard Garrison, who despite being only about five feet high, had "speed and curves to burn." The Gophers had crisscrossed the Midwest in 1908, journeying over 5,000 miles by train, and they would repeat this trick in 1909. Due to some inconsistent pitching, the Gophers got off to a slow start, including a sweep at the hands of the Lacrosse team of the Wisconsin-Minnesota league to start the season. A Hibbing newspaper noted after the Gophers barely won an early season series from the Colts that "the Gophers are much weakened in the box this year."[12]

The club suffered another setback in mid-May when Rat Johnson jumped the club to manage the Long Prairie team of central Minnesota. Things brightened considerably soon after with the arrival of a brother combination from Birmingham, Alabama, signed by Reid during his Southern excursion. Twenty-four-year-old Jim Taylor took over at third base while his older sibling Johnny inherited the struggling Pate's turn in the rotation and won his first 14 decisions, sparking the club to a 30-7-1 mark during their five-week sojourn through the Dakotas, Wisconsin, and northern Minnesota.[13]

The second eldest of four legendary baseball-playing brothers, clean-living, hardworking, John Boyce Taylor was given the sobriquet "Steel Arm" in 1898 by a white reporter from the *Charlotte Observer*, who witnessed his blazing fastball mow down the Shaw University nine. Possessing a good assortment of curves to complement his heater, Taylor averaged between 30 and 40 starts a season during his six-year tenure with the Birmingham Giants, while losing fewer than 40 games in that span. During a 1908 game in San Antonio, with the bases loaded and nobody out in the bottom of the ninth, Steel Arm Johnny struck out the side to win a 1-0 duel against Cyclone Joe Williams.[14]

Jim Taylor carried a big bat, both literally and statistically, hitting no lower than .290, with a high of .340 in 1907, during five seasons with the Birmingham Giants. His fielding average at third base was "exceptionally high," and on the base paths he was "inclined to create the impression of dogginess, but he is quicker than chain lightning in a pinch."[15]

After a few rocky outings in June, Garrison was sent packing in favor of 28-year-old Kentuckian Johnny Davis, who had won over 25 games for the Gophers in 1907. The slightly built, bespectacled Davis was a "clever cross fire artist" known for possessing a "very tantalizing slow curve and fine control of a change of pace delivery." While pitching for the Gophers in July 1907, Davis had no-hit Lacrosse of the Wisconsin League, 2-0, and that fall while pitching for the Philadelphia Giants in Cuba, he won seven games while posting a 0.68 ERA.[16]

In late June it was announced that the Gophers and the Leland Giants would play a five-game series in St. Paul for "the world's championship," and that Daddy Reid "has already placed a large sized roll of coin on the outcome of the series." During the previous three years the Lelands had crushed every team they had played, whether they be white, black, semi-pro, or from organized ball, including the Minneapolis Millers of the American Association, who dropped four out of five games to the Giants in September 1908. The eventual champs of the Chicago City League boasted an outstanding pitching staff of former Gophers Walter Ball, Bill Gatewood, and southpaw Charles "Pat" Dougherty, who had been poached from the West Baden (IN) Sprudels when Foster broke his leg against the Cuban Stars in mid-July. Ball would post a record of 12-1 in the city league that year, and the trio would dominate blackball for most of the next decade.[17]

Hall of Fame center fielder Preston "Pete" Hill anchored the Leland's powerful lineup by hitting .311, with 15 doubles and 21 runs scored in 37 city league games that summer. Lending Hill a hand was first baseman Harry "Mike" Moore, who roughed up city league pitching by hitting .341, and Charles "Joe" Green, who responded with a .316 average after regular left fielder Bobby Winston fractured his ankle.[18]

The Gophers were also playing shorthanded. On the day before the Leland series was to begin, Arthur McDougall, hitting well over .300 at the time, was struck by a pitch during an 8-4 victory over the Keystones, knocking him out of the lineup for the rest of the year. Jim Taylor replaced McDougall at short, Binga returned to third, McMurray moved out to right field, and "Rat" Johnson came back from Long Prairie to temporarily help the Gophers out behind the plate.[19]

The series, specially scheduled to coincide with the national Black Elks convention being held in St. Paul, was played at the Saintly city's Downtown Park. The "pillbox," as the stadium was commonly known, was a wooden structure confined to a small city block. A high fence, topped by a 20-foot wire screen, surrounded the place and the grandstand and bleachers were located less than seven yards from the field of play. The park had virtually no foul territory, and the outfield dimensions were so small, 280 feet down the left-field line, and no more than 210 feet to right, that foul pops and triples were almost unheard of. Right fielders played

SOURCE

McMurray

only a few feet behind the second baseman, with their backs against the fence. Balls hit over the right and left field fences were ground-rule doubles, and only pitches knocked over a limited area in center field were counted as home runs.[20]

"A thousand or more colored fans and a good sprinkling of white ones" crammed into the tiny ballpark on Monday afternoon July 26, to watch Julius London oppose Bill Gatewood in the lid lifter. The afternoon crowd was treated to a three-hour donnybrook featuring several shifts in momentum as the hometown club pounded out 22 hits while the Giants came up with 14 safeties of their own. Jim Taylor paced the Gopher attack with four singles and a double, and McMurray, Barton, and Binga chipped in with three hits apiece. For the Lelands, right fielder Andrew "Jap" Payne doubled once, singled twice, stole two bases, and scored three times, while shortstop George Wright smashed two doubles, and Joe Green added three more hits to the cause.[21]

The Gophers jumped out to a quick 1-0 lead in the first before the Giants exploded for four runs in the fourth and added single runs in the fifth, sixth, and seventh, driving London from the hill in favor of Johnny Taylor. The Gophers, in turn, knocked out Gatewood with a three-run fourth inning and two runs each in the sixth and seventh frames before Walter Ball came on to stop the bleeding.[22]

Trailing 8-7, the Lelands came up with the equalizer in the top of the ninth and pushed another run across in the 11th for a 9-8 lead. It looked like another famous Giant victory, especially when Eugene Milliner grounded out to second to start the Gopher half of the 11th. However, in lightning succession, Binga singled, Johnson doubled, and Bobby Marshall drove the first pitch Ball threw his way over the cigar sign just to the left of the center field home run pole and into the lots across the street. And the crowd, according to the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, went wild:

> Can you hear the noise? It was thick and heavy and was plentifully interspersed with cries of "Hel-lup! Hel-lup! Hel-lup!" not by the losers but by the winners to show how badly their vanquished foes felt about it.[23]

Both clubs adjusted their lineups before the start of the second game on Tuesday.

The 40-year-old Binga, not the most nimble of third basemen, switched places with McMurray in right, while the Lelands replaced catcher Pete Booker, who had gone hitless in the opener, with Sam Strothers, who collected two hits before giving way to Booker midway through the contest. In contrast to the opener, neither team scored a run during the first six innings as Johnny Davis and the Giants' lefty Pat Dougherty dueled before a good-sized crowd of 1,500. Davis was aided by some fine glove work by Felix Wallace, who recorded six putouts and five assists without error, and by three assists by the Gopher outfield. Dougherty was more dominant, striking out nine batters during a performance that "was as fine an exhibition of twirling as is seen, even in the big leagues."[24]

In the top of the seventh, Davis faltered and the Lelands scored three times, thanks in part to errors by Davis and Bobby Marshall. The Giants pushed their advantage with three more runs in the eighth and finished their 13-hit onslaught with two more runs in the ninth. Andrew Payne was once again the catalyst for the Lelands with three hits, including another double. After a relatively quiet game one, Pete Hill collected a single, double, and stole a base while scoring two runs. The Gophers broke up Dougherty's shutout in the bottom of the ninth, when Jim Taylor scored on the back end of a double steal, but it was too little, and much too late to prevent the Giants' 8-1 victory.[25]

The temperature prior to the start of the following afternoon's game was a steamy eighty-five degrees, which didn't prevent 800 fans from turning out to witness the matchup of Johnny Taylor and Walter Ball, the pitchers of record from game one. The home team staked Steel Arm Johnny to an early lead when

Captain Wallace doubled to lead off the bottom of the first, stole third, and scored on Sherman Barton's two out single. Ball settled down after that and allowed only three more hits while striking out five Gopher batters over the next seven innings.[26]

Taylor was even better through the first eight frames, protecting his 1-0 lead by scattering four hits and striking out six batters with his unorthodox delivery. According to the *Pioneer Press,* the 29-year-old native son of Anderson, South Carolina,

> Would throw arms and legs about in bewildering fashion, suddenly knot up like a porcupine, and then just as suddenly his left foot would dangle and shake in the air at the astounded batter as the ball flew past him.[27]

As usual, the Gophers provided great support behind him. In the fifth inning, Milliner made a running catch of a Leland fly ball up against the left-field fence and his momentum carried him into the boards "with a thud that was heard in the grandstand." As the left fielder lay stunned, an "enthusiastic youngster" raced onto the field and relieved him with a glass of cold water. An inning later, Jim Taylor made a sensational backhanded grab of a line drive at short, picking it off "within a foot from the ground while going at full speed."[28]

The intense heat got to Rat Johnson in the fifth inning, and he was carried from the field suffering from sunstroke. He was reportedly quite ill, but was able to continue. Meanwhile, the Lelands resorted to a bit of subterfuge in the top of the eighth, when Ball was pinch-hit for by Gatewood, but illegally returned to pitch the bottom of the inning anyway.[29]

In the ninth, Taylor's toe and arm finally tired, and he gave up successive singles to Hill, second baseman Nate Harris, and Payne. The fatigued pitcher recovered to get Booker, but then third sacker Dangerfield Talbert singled, and Wright slammed a two-out homer. During the onslaught "Taylor just stood in the box and blinked his eyes as if he was waiting for the rain to blow over." Five runs crossed the plate, although according to one Gopher, if Taylor had stuck to his "toe stunt" the Giants rally would never have happened. The Lelands sent Dougherty in to pitch the bottom of the ninth, and he struck out two more batters while preserving their 5-1 win.[30]

Down two games to one, the Gophers were forced to revamp their line up once again when Rat Johnson left to fulfill his commitment with the Long Prairie team. Ironically, Johnson would leave Long Prairie in early August to finish the season with Leland's Giants. Once again McMurray replaced Johnson behind the plate while Wallace moved to shortstop and James Taylor shifted over to third. James Smith, a friend of Walter Ball's and a captain of the Gophers during their inaugural season of 1907, was enlisted to play second for the remainder of the series.[31]

The starters for the crucial fourth game on Thursday were a repeat of the opener, with London opposing Gatewood. Umpiring the game, as he had throughout the series, was Andrew Thompson of St. Paul, who had a history with Big Bill. A year earlier Gatewood had nearly precipitated a race riot in the nearby river town of Stillwater when he hurled his glove into "Honest Andy's" face while arguing balls and strikes. Hundreds of spectators angrily rushed the field, but Thompson, a number of civic leaders, and two policemen armed with clubs restored order, while the "big bully" Gatewood was hustled off the grounds.[32]

There is no evidence that Thompson held a grudge, but the Gophers got off to another good start against their former teammate, collecting their only three hits of the game in the first inning. After Wallace led off the bottom of the frame with a single to left field, Gatewood retired Jim Taylor, but then McMurray launched a double to deep center and one out later Milliner smoked a drive to the same spot for a 2-0 Gopher lead. The speedy left fielder stretched his hit into a rare Downtown Park triple, but Binga couldn't bring him home. The home club scored two more in the third without the benefit of a base hit. Wallace and Taylor opened the inning by reaching on errors, and both later scored on a wild pitch. Trailing 4-0, Gatewood proceeded to knuckle down and he did not permit the Gophers another base runner.[33]

Pete Hill walked in the fourth inning and scored the Lelands' first run of the game, propelled by a single by Nate Harris and a Gopher error. Hill drew another walk in the sixth and scored on a double by Harris that cut the Gopher lead in half, to 4-2. London pitched into the seventh, when it appeared "that the Lelands were finding him," and Johnny Davis came on to finish the inning with no further damage done. The ever-dangerous Hill scored his third run of the game in the eighth, thanks to the third Gopher error of the afternoon, combined with another single by Harris and a fly ball by Payne.[34]

During the previous three games, the Giants had scored eight runs in the ninth inning, but Davis, looking to reverse the trend, got Talbert to fly out to start the final frame. Milliner couldn't hang on to Moore's long fly, however, and Jim Taylor mishandled Wright's

SOURCE

Barton

grounder, moving the tying run into scoring position and the go-ahead run at first with only one out. But Johnny Davis could pitch in the pinches. He struck out Joe Green before inducing Gatewood to ground out to Wallace at short, saving the 4-3 triumph, and pulling the Gophers even in the series.[35]

In the finale on Friday, the Lelands started Pat Dougherty, while for the local nine Steel Arm Johnny, true to his name, took to the mound on only one day's rest. Although he was not as dominant as had been in the early going on Wednesday, Taylor kept the Giants at bay for most of the contest, no thanks to his support. In the third inning, the usually dependable Wallace booted Joe Green's grounder, and Pete Hill doubled, which coupled with an error by Jim Taylor brought the first run of the game home. The Lelands added an insurance run in the eighth when Jap Payne singled, stole second, and scored on Moore's clutch two-out single.[36]

The Gophers could do little with Dougherty, who while striking out seven during the first seven innings "had the local sluggers tied in all sorts of knots." Wallace walked to lead off the fourth and James Smith coaxed a free pass in the sixth, but neither runner advanced past second. When Milliner came to bat to lead off the bottom of the eighth, the Gophers were two runs down and hadn't hit safely in 14 innings, stretching all the way back to the first inning the day before.[37]

Years later Rube Foster would tell his players that they only needed to get one base hit during a ball game, but that it had to come at the right time. Perhaps he was thinking back to what now occurred at the Downtown Park. Milliner lashed a Dougherty pitch into deep center and raced around the bases for another improbable triple. Binga was up next and the reliable one delivered a base hit that cut the Giant lead to 2-1. Marshall came up with a chance to repeat his game one heroics, and he managed to loft a fly to the outfield, but this time it stayed in the park, where it was caught for the first out of the inning.[38]

Johnny Davis, said to be able to "break up any game, at any time, with his big stick" pinch-hit for Smith and promptly singled, and both he and Binga moved into scoring position after some sloppy fielding by the Lelands. Walter Ball was brought in to face John Taylor, but Steel Arm Johnny, not a good stick, nevertheless "hit the ball for another bingle" and Binga and Davis both scored. Wallace and Jim Taylor both flew out to end the inning, but it didn't matter. Incredibly, the Gophers had scored three runs off two of the best pitchers of the era, with the two crucial blows being struck by pitchers.[39]

The Giants in the ninth "tried every trick known to black or white players," including switching runners, batting out of turn, and intimidating the umpire. Gatewood pinch-hit for Green, singled, and stole second, but Taylor retired Dougherty, batting illegally for Ball, Pete Hill, and Harris to wrap up the Gophers' championship. The Gophers had hit safely in only two innings of the last two games of the series and managed to win both of them.[40]

Leland and Foster took the loss about as well as could be expected, claiming that the five games were only "exhibition contests." Foster ungraciously wrote, "No man who ever saw the Gophers play would think of classing them world's colored champions, or would think the playing ability of the other teams was very weak." He went on to snipe that "no doubt they need the advertising." The pair also complained that the absence of Winston and Foster greatly affected the outcome of the series. James Smith countered that the Lelands had won the city league with the same lineup that faced the Gophers, that when Smith filled in for Arthur McDougall he was out of practice and that

> I fielded all right, but did not hit, which McDougall would have done; therefore the Gophers were the team that was weak, and deserve all the credit they can get for being game and having the staying qualities.[41]

It would also seem that the frequency with which the Giants relieved their starters and their shenanigans in the late stages of games three and five belie their claims that they considered the contests merely exhibitions. The Gophers had the last word on the subject when they shut the Lelands out, 2-0, on August 24 in the black coal mining community of Buxton, Iowa.[42]

Following the Leland series, a banged-up Gopher squad beat the Keystones, 8-3, to sweep the city series, as the remarkable Wallace filled in admirably at pitcher and catcher after starting the game at third. The club proceeded to drop two games to Jimmy Callahan's Logan Squares of the Chicago League before huge crowds in Fennimore, Wisconsin, before Jesse Schaeffer, the star of the 1907 squad, returned to play second base and the squad proceeded to go 28-4 on a tour of Iowa and southern Minnesota. On September 26 Johnny Taylor won his 37th game of the season (28th with the Gophers) by beating a minor league all-star team, 5-2, giving the St. Paul nine a reported final tally of 88 wins out of 116 games played.[43]

All fall and winter the owners of other teams such as the Brooklyn Royal Giants and Kansas City Giants also made title claims in the country's leading black newspaper, the *Indianapolis Freeman,* but the fact remained that the Gophers beat the Lelands before anyone else did, and that they posted a .846 winning percentage against other black squads that year. Unfortunately for Daddy Reid, the most persuasive argument for the Gophers' preeminence came from Frank Leland himself when he signed Felix Wallace, Bobby Marshall, and the Taylor brothers away from the Gophers in November, prompting Reid to dissolve his club.[44]

In an odd twist, James Smith, perhaps with the knowledge that Reid was going to pack it in, led a pick-up Gopher squad, that included Walter Ball and a few Keystones, for a couple of games in Chicago that October, while Wallace and Marshall were in the Lelands lineup for their epic showdown with the Chicago Cubs. Marshall committed two errors and was pulled during the first game of the series, but Wallace collected three hits, including two off Three Fingered Brown as the Cubs took three hotly contested games from the Giants.[45]

In the spring of 1910, leaders in the Twin City black community convinced Reid to reform the Gophers despite the defection of most of the 1909 club to other teams. Bobby Marshall and Jim Taylor rejoined the club in early June, and along with Indiana spitballer Louis "Dicta" Johnson, and a battery from Pittsburgh by way of the Buxton (IA) Wonders, "Lefty" Pangburn and catcher Mule Armstrong, the team went on to win a reported 104 games out of 131 tries.[46]

Wallace

SOURCE

In late July, Frank Leland's Chicago Giants led by Steel Arm Johnny Taylor and two other former Gophers, "Rat" Johnson and Felix Wallace, returned to St. Paul looking to avenge their 1909 defeat. The Gophers and Louis Johnson nipped Steel Arm Johnny and his mates, 4-3, in the series opener before a Lexington Park crowd of 4,000, when Jim Taylor stole second with one out in the 10th inning and scored the winning run off two subsequent Leland throwing errors. The Giants, behind the pitching of Taylor, Walter Ball, and a 24-year-old Cyclone Joe Williams, easily captured the next four games, however, and swept another three-game set from the Gophers in early September in Preston, Minnesota.[47]

During the Giant series in July, Phil Reid married famed actress and singer Belle Davis, and left for a honeymoon in Europe, leaving the club in the hands of road secretary Irving Williams. The squad slumped badly after Reid's departure, and most of the club, save for Johnny Davis and Bobby Marshall, jumped the financially sinking ship in mid-September. The team rebounded in early October, aided by the return of Eugene Milliner and a few Keystones including Hurley McNair, to finish the season on a high note by beating the scrappy semi-pro North St. Paul Thoens, 3-1, thanks to a 10-inning no-hit effort by Charles Jackson.[48]

The following spring, Bobby Marshall, with the financial backing of tavern owner Grover Shull and Saints magnate George Lennon, reorganized the team as the Twin City Gophers. Marshall's squad, a mixture of well-traveled vets such as Binga, Johnny Davis, and center fielder/pitcher Bert Jones and promising youngsters such as Dicta Johnson and shortstop William Selden, won about as much as they lost, mostly while barnstorming through the Dakotas.[49]

Dude Lytle, Pangburn, and Armstrong gave the club a little boost when they rejoined the team in late June, and the Gophers managed to beat the fading Leland Giants in Chicago, but the season was pretty much a disaster on the field and at the gate. Bobby Marshall either quit or was forced out in early August, and the team, called the St. Paul Gophers once again, left Minnesota later that month for a series in Kansas City and St. Louis before calling it a day.[50]

The 1911 season also proved to be the last campaign for Kidd Mitchell's Keystones, who had spent most of their final two years of existence playing south of Minnesota, including a stint in the 1910 Texas Negro League, representing San Antonio. In the end, the decline of the Gophers' and Keystones' play, combined with the high cost of travel and the lack of a substantial black fan base in the Twin Cities, led to their demise. Over the next 35 years there were a few half-baked attempts to revive the Gophers or to trade on their good name, but when Daddy Reid died in St. Paul of heart failure in October 1912, big-time black baseball in Minnesota was laid to rest with him.[51]

In October 1987 the Minnesota Twins, behind locally born and raised slugger Kent Hrbek, third baseman Gary "The Rat" Gaetti, and Hall of Fame center fielder Kirby Puckett would also win a championship before a raucous home field crowd. Over 75 years earlier, however, the St. Paul Gophers had brought it home first. ■

1909 St. Paul Gophers

Reported record: 88 wins out of 106 games played (85-19-2, .839), 103 Dates and 103 games accounted for (73-27-3, .713).
Italics indicate a home game. If more than one pitcher was used, the winner, if known, is indicated in **bold type**.
[ml] denotes minor league team. All games played in Minnesota unless otherwise noted.

MAY	8	Lacrosse (WI)[ml]	L 3-8 (Garrison)
	9	Lacrosse (WI) [ml]	L 2-4 (London)
	10	Lacrosse (WI) [ml]	L 9-10 (Pate)
	17	Kenyon	W 6-0 (London)
		Kenyon	W reported; no result found
		Kenyon	W reported; no result found
	20	Hibbing	L 2-11 (**Pate**/London)
	21	Hibbing	W 5-4, 10 innings (Garrison)
	22	Hibbing	W 17-2 (Pate)
	23	Hibbing	L 6-16 (London)
	24	Hibbing	W 8-2 (Garrison)
	25	Moose Lake	W12-10
	27	*H.P.Conrads at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W11-0 (London)
	28	H.P.Conrads at the Downtown Park, St. Paul	W
	30	Faribault	L 8-9 (Pate)
	31	Faribault	T 3-3 (London)
JUNE	3	New Richland	W 1-0 (London)
		H.P.Conrads at the Downtown Park, St. Paul	L 2-4 (Pate)
		H.P.Conrads at Premo Park, St. Paul	W 11-8 (London)
	8	Waterville	W 9-2
	10	Sherburn	W 9-0
	11	*Hibbing at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W 9-8
	12	*Hibbing at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W 5-4, 11 innings (Garrison)
	13	Renville	W 8-1 (London)
	14	Renville	W 9-1 (Taylor)
	15	Redwood Falls	W 5-4 (Garrison)
	16	Redwood Falls	W 13-0 (London)
	18	Hankinson (ND)	L 2-4 (Garrison)
	19	Groton (SD) at Cogswell (ND)	W 4-2
	20	Fargo (ND)	W 3-0 (London)

	21	Hope (ND)	W 11-1 (Garrison)
		Hope (ND)	W 6-3 (Taylor)
	22	Alexandria	T 1-1 (London)
		Alexandria	L 1-2 (Garrison)
	23	Alexandria	W 7-2 (Taylor)
	24	Sauk Center	W 8-1
	25	Long Prairie	L 0-4 (**Garrison**/ Taylor)
	26	Long Prairie	W 7-0 (London)
	27	Bemidji	W 16-1 (Taylor)
	28	Bemidji	W 10-5 (Garrison)
	29	Grand Rapids	W 6-3 (London)
	30	Grand Rapids	W 6-3, 6 innings (Garrison)
JULY	1	Hibbing	W 5-3 (Taylor)
	2	Hibbing	L 2-3 (London)
		Hibbing	L 4-8 (Garrison)
		Hibbing	W 5-1 (Taylor)
		Hibbing	L 2-3
		Hibbing	L 0-8
		Hibbing at Eveleth	W 8-1 (Wallace)
	7	Eveleth	W 17-10, 11 innings
		(Garrison/**Taylor**)	
	9	Hayward (WI)	W 11-8 (London)
	10	Ashland (WI)	W 8-4 (Garrison)
	11	Ashland (WI)	W 9-0, 5 innings (Taylor)
	13	Bessemer (MI)	W 11-3
		Bessemer (MI)	W 3-2, 10 innings
	14	Rhinelander (WI)	W 5-2, 5 innings (McMurray)
	15	Barron (WI)	W 14-5
	16	Cumberland (WI)	W 10-0
	17	Mankato	W 7-1 (Davis)
	18	Mankato	L 1-3
	20	Alexandria	W 6-5 (**London**/Davis)
	21	Alexandria	W 10-2 (Taylor)
	22	Alexandria	L 0-1 (Davis)
	24	*Minneapolis Keystones at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W 5-2 (Davis)
	25	Minneapolis Keystones at Nicollet Park, Minneapolis	W 8-4 (Taylor)
	26	*Leland Giants at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W10-9, 11innings (London/**Taylor**)
	27	*Leland Giants at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	L 1-8 (Davis)
	28	*Leland Giants at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	L 1-5 (Taylor)
	29	*Leland Giants at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W 4-3 (**London**/Davis)
	30	*Leland Giants at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W 3-2 (Taylor)
	31	Lindstrom	W 18-1 (London)
AUG	1	*Minneapolis Keystones at Lexington Park, St. Paul*	W 8-3 (Davis/Wallace/**London**)
	8	Hartland	W 11-2 (Davis)
		Houston	W 8-4
		New Albin (IA)	L 2-3
	11	Logan Squares at Fennimore (WI)	L 1-6 (Taylor)
	12	Logan Squares at Fennimore (WI)	L 1-4 (Davis)
	13	Oelwein (IA)	W 14-0 (London)
	14	Oelwein (IA)	W 3-0 (London)
	15	Manchester (IA)	W 8-3 (Davis)
	19	Eldora (IA)	L 1-2
	20	Buxton (IA) Wonders	W 5-0 (Taylor)
	21	Buxton (IA) Wonders	W 13-2 (London)
	22	Buxton (IA) Wonders	W 4-2, 10 innings (Davis)
	23	Hiteman (IA)	L
	24	Leland Giants at Buxton (IA)	W 2-0

(table continued on next page)

	29	Dysart (IA)	W 9-1 (London)
	30	Charles City (IA)	L 5-6 (Davis)
	31	Clear Lake (IA) at Mason City (IA)	W 9-0 (Taylor)
SEPT	2	Minneapolis Keystones at Preston	Postponed
	3	Harmony at Preston	W 3-2 (Davis/**London)**
	4	Charles City (IA)	W 3-0 (Taylor)
	5	Charles City (IA) at Lawler (IA)	W 6-1 (London)
	10	Winnebago	W 5-0
	11	Sherburn	W 3-2 (London)
	12	Sherburn	W 3-0, 10 innings (Davis)
	13	Sherburn at Jackson	W
	14	Sherburn at Fairmont	Postponed
	18	Shakopee	W 14-0
	19	H.P.Conrads at West Side Park, St. Paul	W6-5 (Taylor/**Davis**)
	20	*Minneapolis Keystones at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	W 9-1 (Taylor)
	21	*Minneapolis Keystones at the Downtown Park, St. Paul*	Postponed
	22	Redwood Falls	L 2-7
	23	Redwood Falls	W 8-0, 5 innings
	24	Redwood Falls	L 4-5
	25	Young America	W 5-1 (Davis)
	26	*All-Stars at Lexington Park, St. Paul*	W 5-2 (Taylor)
OCT	3	Artesians at Chicago (IL)	T 6-6 (Pangburn)
	10	Elgin (IL)	L 7-15 (Ball)

1909 St. Paul Gophers Batting and Fielding Statistics

Player/Position	G	AB	H	D	T	HR	BA	R	SB	SF	PO	A	E	FA
Felix Wallace **2B/**C/SS/3B/P	36	161	44	6	2	1	.273	19	4	2	86	79	9	.948
William Binga **RF**/3B	37	154	45	3	2	0	.292	19	5	2	42	32	11	.870
Sherman Barton **CF**	37	154	44	15	2	2	.285	18	1	5	64	8	1	.986
Eugene Milliner **LF**/RF	36	152	51	7	6	2	.335	21	2	2	44	9	6	.898
Will McMurray **C/**LF/3B/P	36	144	31	5	0	3	.215	20	0	3	127	31	9	.946
Bobby Marshall **1B**	36	141	36	7	2	2	.255	17	6	5	375	16	11	.972
Arthur McDougall **SS**	25	102	35	8	0	1	.343	13	1	2	26	61	16	.844
Jim Taylor **3B**/SS	22	99	25	3	4	0	.252	8	1	3	31	42	12	.858
Julius London **P/**RF	17	54	10	1	0	0	.185	5	2	0	5	26	3	.911
George Johnson **C**	11	45	11	2	0	1	.244	9	1	1	43	14	2	.964
John Taylor **P**/RF	11	34	7	1	1	0	.206	3	0	1	25	5	2	.934
John Davis **P**/RF/2B/LF	11	31	5	1	0	0	.161	3	2	1	12	26	2	.950
Dick Garrison **P**/RF	9	24	5	0	0	0	.208	2	1	1	3	16	1	.800
Archie Pate **P/**RF	6	24	5	1	1	0	.208	2	2	0	7	8	0	.1000
James Smith **2B/**SS	4	14	3	1	1	0	.214	1	0	0	4	8	2	.857
Eugene Barton **LF**	2	9	1	0	0	0	.111	0	-	-	6	0	0	.1000
George Hopkins **RF**	2	9	1	0	0	0	.111	1	-	-	0	0	0	.000
Jackson **3B**	2	9	1	0	0	1	.111	1	-	-	3	8	0	.1000
Haywood Rose **1B**	2	9	1	0	0	0	.111	1	-	-	22	0	1	.956
Sloan **CF**	2	9	1	0	0	0	.111	1	-	-	2	0	0	.1000
Dave Wyatt **2B**	2	9	4	1	1	0	.444	3	-	-	1	4	3	.625
Jesse Schaeffer **2B**/SS	2	7	1	0	0	0	.142	1	2	0	0	8	3	.727
C. Smith **C**	2	6	1	0	0	0	.166	1	-	-	8	0	1	.888
Lefty Pangburn **P**	1	5	1	0	0	0	.200	1	-	-	3	2	0	.1000
Walter Ball **P**	1	4	1	1	0	0	.250	1	-	-	0	0	0	.000
Mule Armstrong **C**	1	3	1	0	0	0	.333	1	-	-	4	2	0	.1000

Passed Balls: McMurray 2; Johnson 2.

Dominant position is in **bold type**. Runs and stolen bases were not always included in box scores. A small percentage of at bat totals were estimated, based on known at bat totals for that player. (G=Games; AB=At Bats; H=Hits; D=Double; T=Triple; HR=Home Runs; BA=Batting Average; R=Runs; SB=Stolen Bases; SF=Sacrifices; PO=Put Outs; A=Assists E=Errors; FA=Fielding Average.)

1909 St. Paul Gophers Pitching Statistics

Pitcher	G	GS	CG	IP	W	L	H	R	RPG	SO	BB	HBP	SH
Julius London	28	25	21	212	21	3	108	61	2.59	48	18	0	8
John Taylor	22	19	18	177	18	2	97	36	1.83	93	23	3	5
John Davis	18	15	13	141	10	4	70	37	2.36	56	10	0	2
Dick Garrison	14	14	11	112	8	5	93	60	4.82	33	16	4	0
Archie Pate	5	5	4	35	1	4	43	25	6.43	7	10	0	0
Felix Wallace	2	1	1	11	1	0	5	1	0.82	-	-	-	0
Lefty Pangburn	1	1	1	10	0	0	8	5	4.50	7	0	-	0
Walter Ball	1	1	0	7	0	1	17	15	19.22	1	3	-	0
Will McMurray	1	1	0	5	1	0	-	2	3.60	-	-	-	0

The hit, strikeout, and bases on balls totals are based on 176 innings pitched by London; 150 innings pitched by Taylor; 115 innings pitched by Davis; and 103 innings pitched by Garrison. Wild pitches: Davis 2. (G=Games; GS=Games Started; CG=Complete Games; IP=Innings Pitched; W=Wins; L=Losses; H=Hits; R=Runs; RPG=Runs Per Game; SO=Strikeouts; BB=Bases on Balls; HBP=Hit By Pitch; SH=Shutouts)

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More on Streaks

by Trent McCotter

You probably didn't hear about it, but in 2007 Derek Jeter came within two games of tying Joe DiMaggio's record 56-game hitting streak. How did he do it? From August 20, 2006, through May 3, 2007 (second game), Jeter played in 56 games and went hitless in only two of them. Those two hitless games (on September 17, 2006 (second game) and April 7, 2007) kept Jeter from a multi-season 56-game hitting streak, which would have tied the record.

What makes Jeter's accomplishment even more fantastic is that he was only the second player since 1900 to have two or fewer hitless games out of any 56 game stretch. Joe DiMaggio was the other, of course, when he had zero hitless games in that famous 56-game stretch in 1941.

In *Baseball Research Journal,* 35, I wrote an article about players who were within a few hitless games of putting their name at the top of the hitting streak podium. And Jeter isn't the only player who added his name in 2007 to the list of players who had just three or fewer hitless games out of 56. Ichiro Suzuki, long believed to be the active player with the best chance of beating DiMaggio's record, had a hit in 53-out-of-56 games from May 7 through July 5.

Besides those two active players, my continued research into the subject yielded two more historical players who went hitless in just three out of 56 games. The first new addition to the list is Sam Rice, who had a hit in 53-out-of-56 over 1929 and 1930. The other player, who is a bit of a surprise, is Doc Cramer, who also took the collar just three times out of a 56-game stretch over 1932 and 1933.

Considering how many players have come within just a handful of games from matching DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak, it may just be a matter of time before it is seriously challenged, although players in Doc Cramer's era didn't have quite the media pressure that a player chasing DiMaggio today would have. ■

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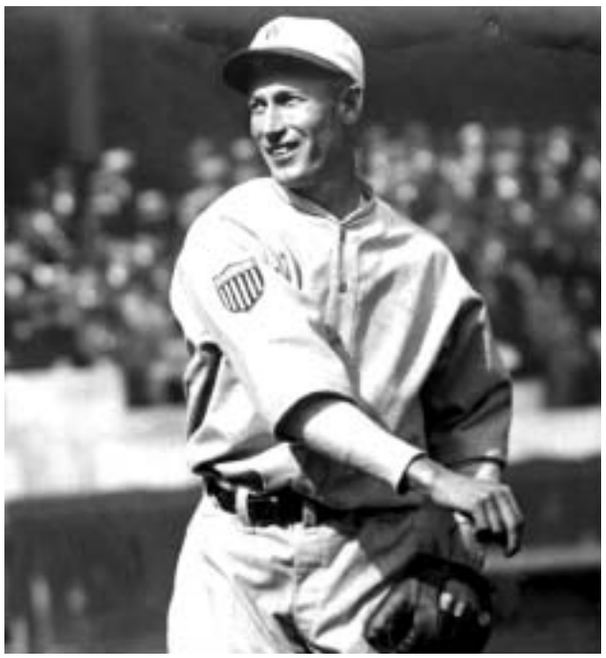
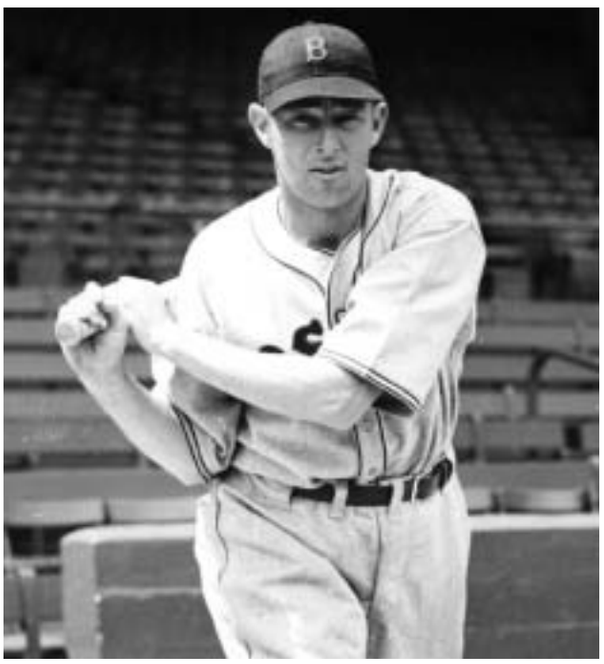


SOURCE

Sam Rice



SOURCE

Doc Cramer

Players with One Hitless Game Keeping Them from a Hitting Streak of 56+ Games

Player	Team	LG	Year	Dates	Total Games	Hitless Games	Hitting Streaks	Hitless Date
Bill Dahlen	CHI	NL	1894	6/20-9/9	71G	1G	42G->28G	8/7/06

Players with Two Hitless Games Keeping Them from a Hitting Streak of 56+ Games

Player	Team	LG	Year	Dates	Total Games	Hitless Games	Hitting Streaks	Hitless Date
Sam Thompson	PHI	NL	1895/1896	8/22-5/19	56G	2G	22G->21G->11G	9/17 & 5/5
Gene DeMontreville	WAS	NL	1896/1897	9/7(G2)-5/17	64G	2G	11G->15G->36G	8/19(G2) & 9/7(G2)
Willie Keeler	BAL	NL	1896/1897	9/26-7/13	61G	2G	45G->5G->9G	6/19 & 7/1
Willie Keeler	BAL	NL	1898	7/2-9/6(G1)	56G	2G	25G->4G->25G	7/30(G2) & 8/6
Ed Delahanty	PHI	NL	1899	6/5-8/18(G2)	63G	2G	18G->12G->31G	6/29 & 7/14
Derek Jeter	NYY	AL	2006/2007	8/20-5/3(G2)	61G	2G	25G->14G->20G	9/17(G2) & 4/7

Players with Three Hitless Games Keeping Them from a Hitting Streak of 56+ Games

Player	Team	LG	Year	Dates	Total Games	Hitless Games	Hitting Streaks	Hitless Date
Pete Browning	CLE	PL	1890	6/25-9/5	61G	3G	15G->15G->18G->10G	7/12 & 7/31 & 8/26
Willie Keeler	BRO/BAL	NL	1893/1894	8/24-7/4(G1)	57G	3G	25G->6G->18G->5G	5/23 & 6/5 & 6/27
Jesse Burkett	CLE	NL	1896	4/25-7/10(G2)	60G	3G	18G->1G->19G->19G	5/22 & 5/26 & 6/19
Ty Cobb	DET	AL	1911	4/23-7/2	61G	3G	11G->4G->3G->40G	5/4 & 5/10 & 5/14
Tris Speaker	BOS	AL	1912	5/22-7/19(G1)	58G	3G	3G->20G->30G->2G	5/25 & 6/16 & 7/17(G1)
George Sisler	STL	AL	1917	6/30(G2)-9/4	67G	3G	21G->13G->4G>26G	7/18 & 8/6 & 8/11(G1)
George Sisler	STL	AL	1922	7/4(G2)-9/17	60G	3G	7G->5G->4G->41G	7/11 & 7/20 & 7/26
Rogers Hornsby	STL	NL	1922	7/17-9/19	56G	3G	6G->12G->2G->33G	7/23 & 8/9(G1) & 8/12
Sam Rice	WAS	AL	1929/1930	9/23-6/14	57G	3G	4G->30G->17G->3G	9/29 & 5/18 & 6/11
Doc Cramer	PHI	AL	1932/1933	6/13-5/30	59G	3G	22G->4G->20G->10G	7/9(G1) & 7/12 & 4/18
Joe DiMaggio	NY	AL	1937	6/19-8/20	60G	3G	7G->22G->20G->8G	6/26 & 7/22 & 8/13
George Brett	KC	AL	1980	5/22-8/18	56G	3G	4G->10G->9G->30G	5/26 & 6/7 & 7/17
Benito Santiago	SD	NL	1987/1988	8/18-4/26	57G	3G	5G->34G->7G->8G	8/23 & 10/3 & 4/13
Johnny Damon	BOS	AL	2005	6/10-8/20	57G	3G	29G->5G->15G->5G	7/18 & 7/24 & 8/15
Ichiro Suzuki	SEA	AL	2007	5/7-7/5	56G	3G	25G->19G->9G	6/2 & 6/3 & 6/25

1899 National League Strikeouts

by Jonathan Frankel

This article details my research and summation of 1899 National League batter strikeouts. Batter strikeouts from this period are not documented and summarized in any common source by individual batters. The team totals of batter strikeouts do exist in season totals as well as in the era's box scores.

I was able to document individual batter strikeouts in 87 percent of the 1899 games. As a result, I feel comfortable in giving a basic projection of what the individual batter strikeout totals would be. The leaders on both the most and least sides as well as the entire 1899 National League roster are included in this research. The purpose of the research is to fill in the gaps in the baseball records as much as possible but also to give a good idea of which players were more or less "strikeout-prone."

WHY NO BATTER STRIKEOUTS IN 1899?

From 1897 through 1909, there are no individual batter strikeouts officially documented. The *Boston Globe* had been documenting individual strikeouts for some years prior to 1897, but discontinued this practice prior to the 1897 season. To give some perspective about strikeouts during this period, Table A shows the strikeouts per game by year from 1893 through 1903. This 10-year period is somewhat arbitrarily picked, but it covers the era leading up to the adoption of the foul strike rule by both leagues. It also starts with the changed pitching distance that we have today.

Table B covers the same period and lists the rules that impacted the nature of the strikeout. Of course, there are other rules dealing with the ball and the plate that affected the nature of the strikeout (e.g., 1900—the introduction of the five-sided plate), but these rules directly deal with the nature of the strikeout. This adds additional perspective about the nature of the strikeout. One key change was the foul strike rule of 1901, which was adopted by the American League in 1903. This altered the strategy of some players (e.g., Willie Keeler) and, as can be seen below, dramatically affected the leagues. Further research of individual batter strikeouts during these transitional years will tell the true individual impact of that rule change.

TABLE A. Strikeouts per Game per Team 1893-1903

1893	2.13
1894	2.09
1895	2.27
1896	2.23
1897	2.30
1898	2.31
1899	2.09
1900	2.37
1901	3.78 (NL), 2.49 (AL)
1902	3.47 (NL), 2.48 (AL)
1903	3.36 (NL), 3.79 (AL)

Source: Total Baseball, 7th Edition

TABLE B. Rule Changes Directly Impacting Strikeouts (1893-1903)

1894	The batter is charged with a strike for hitting a foul bunt.
1895	A strike is charged to a batter for a foul tip.
1901	The first two fouls are termed strikes (in the National League).
	The catcher is no longer allowed to catch two strikes on a bounce.
1903	The American League agrees that any foul ball not caught on the fly is a strike unless the batter has two strikes on him.

Source: Baseballlibrary.com

WHY 1899? WHY BATTER STRIKEOUTS?

This research actually started as an analysis of the lineups and substitutions that the 1899 Cleveland Spiders used during their fateful season. I became interested in the Spiders many years ago and started documenting their lineup and those of the other 11 National League teams, as well as various team pitching statistics. In the course of this research, I noticed in *Sporting Life* that for Philadelphia home games, the individual batter strikeouts were documented. This led me to further research this then undocumented stat (in this era). Of course, my research of 1899 opened me up to many other interesting happenings of the season—John McGraw's magical .391 season with 73 stolen

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bases and 140 walks, tragically interrupted by the sudden death of his first wife, Minnie, at age 22; Buck Freeman's 25 homers; the 27 triples of rookie Jimmy Williams; and other highlights.

RESEARCH

I asked fellow SABR members for sources where I might find batter strikeouts. One person directed me to the *New York Evening Telegram,* since it had play-by-play documented for most of the Giant and Brooklyn games of the era. This turned out to be a great source. I started researching other cities' local coverage through *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* and interlibrary loans of the other local newspapers' microfilms. In addition, through Greg Rhodes and Chris Eckes of the Reds Hall of Fame Museum, I was able to review a Cincinnati score book which contained about the first month's worth of Reds games.

From my initial lineup research, I already had the total number of batter strikeouts for each team in each game; I just needed to identify who made those strikeouts. I discovered that 11 of the 12 teams had documented individual batter strikeouts for at least their home games. Brooklyn, New York, Chicago, and St. Louis, to varying degrees, had away-game batter strikeouts as well. Cincinnati and Louisville had no local papers which identified individual batter strikeouts, though I was able to extract a few from the aforementioned Reds scorebook. With the exception of the *New York Evening Telegram* and the Reds score book, which had play-by-play coverage, I gathered the individual batter strikeouts from the box scores. I included all newspapers that had individual batter strikeouts documented for both the home and visiting teams.

In the *New York Evening Telegram,* being an evening paper, the game accounts were of that day's game(s). As a result, there were cases where the play-by-play of the second game was not complete. There are also instances where the first game does not have play-by-play at all. Incomplete play-by-play also occurred in games that were played in the West (St. Louis, Chicago, Louisville, and Cincinnati). Incomplete games are documented in Appendix A. Of note, the *Pittsburg Post* had an end-of-year summary of individual batter strikeouts.

As noted above, most teams had the home individual batter strikeouts, while a couple had road game batter strikeouts; however, two cities had no such information, Cincinnati and Louisville. The Louisville and Cincinnati home games account for the vast majority of the missing batter strikeout games. All missing

SOURCE

Jimmy Williams

(or "no batter strikeout") games are documented in Appendix B and account for 13% of all of the games played.

There were a few variances in the number of strikeouts documented in *Sporting Life* (as team totals) and the total number of individual strikeout totals. There were cases when back-to-back games between two teams varied by +1 in the first game and -1 in the second of the series—thus "correcting" each other. The number of variation occurrences only accounts for 6.3% of all documented games and are documented in Appendix C.

Regarding the discrepancy, a fair question is which should be considered more "accurate" as to what actually occurred, the summary team game total or the individual summation? In the case of this research and analysis, I deferred to the local coverage and individual strikeout totals. [Of course, there were multiple newspapers that may differ from the source I selected, but in many cases these papers were using the same summary source. However, in reading game summaries, I did find some strikeouts not documented in the detailed box scores.]

DATA SUMMARY APPROACH

Since only Chicago had complete home and away individual batter strikeouts, I was unable to get a complete picture of the totals. For the other teams I was able to piece together their home game coverage with

the other teams' home coverage to tabulate a great deal of the individual strikeouts. I then projected the batter strikeouts for each player, based on the number of games that I had individual batter strikeouts for (including partial game stats) over the total number of games played. Projections are based on documented batter strikeouts per game (not at-bat).

A potential additional step to getting "more accurate" numbers would be to assess each of the remaining missing 13 percent of the games' box scores and their listed team strikeout totals. I would then have to assign (ala integer programming) strikeouts to the team's players based on the most probable strikeout victims (based on their frequency from the documented games). This would get us closer, but is still not exact.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The controversial Ducky Holmes of the Baltimore Orioles (see Freedman vs. Holmes, 1898), who had 51 documented strikeouts in 123 of his 138 games (89.1%), led the NL with a projected total of 57. There is a four-way tie in second place between the veteran shortstop Monte Cross, of Philadelphia; youngster and stolen base champ, Jimmy Sheckard; the leading rookie of the year candidate and triples leader, Jimmy Williams of the Pittsburgh Pirates; and second-year player Danny Green of the Chicago Orphans, all with projected totals of 50. Cross had 45 strikeouts documented in 138 of his 154 games (89.6%), Sheckard had 46 strikeouts documented in 135 of his 147 games (91.8%), Williams had 46 strikeouts documented in 142 of his 153 games (92.8%), and Green had 50 strikeouts in his completely documented 117 games.

TABLE C. Most Projected Batter Strikeouts (Top 10, 100 + games)

Player	Total Actual BK's	Actual G	Total G	% of Actual G	BK/G	Proj BK
Ducky Holmes, Balt	51	123	138	89.13%	41.46%	57
Jimmy Sheckard, Balt	46	135	147	91.84%	34.07%	50
Danny Green, Chi	50	117	117	100.00%	42.74%	50
Jimmy Williams, Pitt	46	142	153	92.81%	32.39%	50
Monte Cross, Phil	45	138	154	89.61%	32.61%	50
Roy Thomas, Phil	42	134	150	89.33%	31.34%	47
Bill Carrick, NY	41	43	44	95.56%	95.35%	43
Dick Harley, Clev	34	121	142	85.21%	28.10%	40
Tom McCreery, Pitt	34	108	119	92.31%	31.48%	37
Candy LaChance, Balt	35	117	125	93.60%	29.91%	37

G = Games, **BK/G** =

At the other end, Willie Keeler showed that he lived up to his documented reputation of making contact by having only two documented strikeouts in 134 of his 140 games (95.7%)—with a projected total of two strikeouts. Lave Cross started the season with the Spiders and once he showed he was useful was moved over to Robison's parent club, the St. Louis Perfectos, had three documented strikeouts in 134 of his 141 games (95%), projecting out to only three strikeouts.

Keeler's two strikeouts occurred on April 17 (Brooklyn's second game of the season) at the hands of Boston's rookie sensation, Vic Willis (in his major league debut) and May 6 (Brooklyn's 19th game) against Boston's Kid Nichols. After that, he did not strike out again for the remainder of the season. By contrast, Cross's three strikeouts all occurred at the end of the season. His first strikeout occurred in the second game of a doubleheader on September 13 at the hands of Boston's rookie Harvey Bailey, making his seventh major league appearance. His second strikeout was on September 17 by (Bill Carrick or Willie Garoni), and his final punchout was on October 4 by Pittsburgh's Bill Hoffer.

Ironically, another player who had a reputation for getting on base and great bat control, rookie Roy Thomas, had a projected 47 strikeouts (42 documented, 134/150 games) to go with his 115 walks. Interestingly, three of the top seven in the "least" category were members of the Cleveland Spiders, with the aforementioned Cross, a partial fourth, and a fifth, in eighth place, "Schreck," playing 40% of his season with them.

TABLE D. Least Projected Batter Strikeouts (Top 10, 100 + games)

Player	Total Actual BK's	Actual G	Total G	% of Actual G	BK/G	Proj BK
Willie Keeler, Brook	2	134	140	95.71%	1.49%	2
Lave Cross, Clev/St.L	3	134	141	95.03%	2.24%	3
Tommy Dowd, Clev	7	127	147	86.39%	5.51%	8
Bill Lange, Chi	8	106	107	99.07%	7.55%	8
Joe Quinn, Clev	7	123	147	83.11%	5.69%	8
Deacon McGuire, Wash/Brk	9	94	105	92.16%	9.57%	10
Suter Sullivan, Clev	8	101	115	80.80%	7.92%	10
Chick Stahl, Bos	10	136	148	91.89%	7.35%	11
Harry Steinfeldt, Cin	7	72	108	66.06%	9.72%	11
Ossee Schreckengost, Cl./StL.	11	112	116	96.55%	9.82%	11
Fred Clarke, Lou	8	104	149	69.80%	7.69%	11

G = Games, **BK/G** =

Not surprisingly, all players with the highest percentage of strikeouts per game were pitchers, with the exception of Frank Scheibeck, a late-season infield addition to Washington. The Spiders are again well represented with three of the top five. The highest everyday player was Chicago's Danny Green with a percentage of 42.74.

TABLE E. Highest % of Strikeouts per Game (20+ documented games)

Player	Total Actual BK's	Actual G	BK/G
Charlie Knepper, Clev	23	23	100.00%
Bill Carrick, NY	41	43	95.35%
Crazy Schmit, Clev	19	21	90.48%
Harry Howell, Balt	20	26	76.92%
Frank Bates, StL/Clev	16	21	76.19%
Tully Sparks, Pitt	19	26	73.08%
Frank Scheibeck, Wash	17	26	65.38%
Gus Weyhing, Wash	25	39	64.10%
Ned Garvin, Chi	15	24	62.50%
Red Donahue, Phil	18	30	60.00%

G = Games, **BK/G** =

OTHER STRIKEOUTS STATS

Bill Carrick, a pitcher for New York, and Danny Green of Chicago had the most games with two or more strikeouts with 10. Ducky Holmes of Baltimore with nine and Jack Powell of the St. Louis Perfectos were right behind with nine and eight respectively. Bid McPhee should be given special mention with his six multi-strikeout games, since only 63% of his games are documented.

TABLE F. Most Times with Two or More Strikeouts

Player	G
Bill Carrick, NY	10
Danny Green, Chi	10
Ducky Holmes, Balt	9
Jack Powell, StL	8
Jimmy Williams, Pitt	8
Michael Donlin, StL	7
Jimmy Sheckard, Balt	7
Charlie Knepper, Clev	7
Monte Cross. Phil	6
Bid McPhee, Cin	6
Harry Howell, Balt	6
Gus Weyhing, Wash	6

G = Games

In game one of a doubleheader on September 14, Jimmy Williams, who would lead the league with 27 triples, had four strikeouts against Doc McJames of the Brooklyn Superbas, the most in the National League. There were 24 occurrences of games with three strikeouts, with Chicago's Danny Green and Washington's Roy Evans having two such games—Evans, on September 12 against Cincinnati's Jack Taylor,* and Heinie Peitz in Evans' first game of the season, and later, on October 3, against Brooklyn's Jay Hughes. Green's three-strikeout games were against Cleveland's Willie Sudhoff on May 8 and Pittsburgh's Sam Leever and Jesse Tannehill on May 15. Interestingly, 16 of the 25 three or more strikeout games occurred after Labor Day, with recently signed players from the minor leagues (these leagues had finished their schedules) such as Roy Evans (from Providence), Sam Crawford (from Grand Rapids), Rube Waddell (from Grand Rapids), and Pop Dillon (from Buffalo) having joined the circuit.

TABLE G. Most Strikeouts in Game, 1899

Player	Date	G #	Strikeouts
Jimmy Williams, Pitt	1899-09-14	1	4
Red Donahue, Phil	1899-05-01	3	
Danny Green, Chi	1899-05-08	3	
Frank Kitson, Balt	1899-05-13	3	
Danny Green, Chi	1899-05-15	3	
Gus Weyhing, Wash	1899-06-07	3	
Pete McBride, St.L	1899-08-02	1	3
Wilbert Robinson, Balt	1899-08-09	3	
Doc McJames, Brook	1899-08-15	3	
Crazy Schmit, Clev	1899-08-20	1	3
Hughie Jennings, Brook	1899-09-04	2	3
Jimmy Slagle, Wash	1899-09-04	1	3
Bert Cunningham, Lou	1899-09-09	2	3
Sam Crawford, Cin	1899-09-12	1	3
Roy Evans, Wash	1899-09-12	1	3
Harry Howell, Balt	1899-09-12	3	
Pop Foster, NY	1899-09-13	3	
Pop Dillon, Pitt	1899-09-15	3	
Rube Waddell, Lou	1899-09-15	3	
Jimmy Sheckard, Balt	1899-09-16	3	
Noodles Hahn, Cin	1899-09-21	3	
Sam Mertes, Chi	1899-09-26	1	3
Jack O'Brien, Wash	1899-09-27	3	
Nixey Callahan, Chi	1899-10-02	3	
Roy Evans, Wash	1899-10-03	1	3

G # = Game number

* This would be Brewery Jack Taylor's last game in the majors, as an injury sidelined him the rest of the season and he died during the off-season.

One last note of interest deals with Washington's slugger Buck Freeman. Freeman appears to have achieved the rare feat in 1899 of having more homers (25) than projected strikeouts (24), plus he also had more triples (25) too. He just missed having more stolen bases (21) as well. As Mel Allen might have said, "How about that!"

SUMMARY

With 87% of the 1899 National League games having individual batter strikeouts documented, I was able to get a very good vision of who the players were who were the most and least strikeout prone during the campaign. Though there was a little variance in documented totals and the individual counts as well as few partial games, I was able to get a good picture of the season. Totals into the other seasons, including 1898 and the pivotal 1901-03 seasons, remains for future research. ■

NOTE

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APPENDIX A. Partial Batter Strikeout Games (28 of 923 games - 3%)
Partial BK Games – *New York Evening Telegram*

Date	Team	H or A	Home	DSEQ	Note
04/22/1899	BLN	A	NY1	0	5 K's thru 6 inn. in local box, 7 in SL
05/13/1899	WSN	A	BRO	2	2 BK thru 5 in NYET; 3 in SL
05/20/1899	BRO	A	CIN	0	1 BK thru 7 in NYET; 2 in SL
05/27/1899	NY1	A	LS3	0	1 BK in NYET thru 6; 3 in SL
05/27/1899	LS3	H	LS3	0	1 BK thru 6 in NYET; 2 in SL
05/30/1899	CIN	A	NY1	2	1 BK in NYET thru 6; 5 in SL
06/03/1899	CL4	A	BRO	0	1 BK in NYET thru 5; 2 in SL
06/03/1899	LS3	A	NY1	0	7 BK thru 6 in NYET; 9 in SL
06/03/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	3 BK thru 6 in NYET; 4 in SL
07/15/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	0 BK thru 4 in NYET; 1 in SL
07/31/1899	CIN	H	CIN	0	2 BK in NYET thru 8; 3 in SL
07/31/1899	NY1	A	LS3	0	2 BK thru 5 in NYET; 6 in SL
08/07/1899	NY1	A	BRO	0	0 BK thru 8 in NYET; 1 in SL - batting order mixup by ny (NYET)
08/14/1899	LS3	A	BRO	0	1 BK thru 6 in NYET; 4 in SL
08/14/1899	CL4	A	NY1	0	2 BK in NYET thru 6; 3 in SL
08/14/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	2 BK thru 6 in NYET, 3 in SL - Parke Wilson - ump
08/15/1899	LS3	A	NY1	0	2 BK thru 6 in NYET; 3 in SL
08/15/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	2 BK thru 6 in NYET; 4 in SL
08/16/1899	CL4	A	BRO	0	3 BK in NYET thru 4; 4 in SL
08/16/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	3 BK thru 6 in NYET; 5 in SL
08/19/1899	PHI	A	NY1	0	1 BK in NYET thru 5; 3 in SL
08/19/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	1 BK thru 5 in NYET; 2 in SL
09/09/1899	BSN	A	BRO	0	2 BK thru 5 NYET; 5 SL; McJ 1 hitr (2 out, 9, Duffy)
09/09/1899	BLN	A	NY1	2	1 BK thru 5 (NYET); 3 in SL
09/16/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	2 BK thru 6 in NYET; 3 in SL
09/23/1899	WSN	A	BRO	0	2 BK thru 5 in NYET; 4 in SL
09/23/1899	BSN	A	NY1	0	4 in NYET thru 6; 6 in SL
09/23/1899	NY1	H	NY1	0	1 BK in NYET thru 6; 4 in SL

DSEQ = Game # for the day (0 – only game, 1 – game 1 of DH, 2 – game 2 of DH)
BK = Individual batter strikeouts in play-by-play
NYET = *New York Evening Telegram*
SL = *Sporting Life*

APPENDIX B. No Individual Batter Strikeout Games (123 of 923 games–13%)

Date	Visitor/Home	G #
04/15/1899	NY1@BLN	
04/16/1899	CL4@SLN	
04/20/1899	CL4@LS3	
04/20/1899	PIT@SLN	
04/21/1899	CL4@LS3	
04/21/1899	PIT@SLN	
04/22/1899	CL4@LS3	1
04/22/1899	CL4@LS3	2
04/25/1899	PIT@LS3	
04/26/1899	PIT@LS3	
04/27/1899	BSN@PHI	
05/13/1899	WSN@BRO	1
05/18/1899	BSN@LS3	
05/19/1899	BSN@LS3	
05/21/1899	BRO@CIN	
05/21/1899	CL4@LS3	
05/23/1899	WSN@CL4	
05/25/1899	BSN@CIN	
05/26/1899	BSN@CIN	
05/27/1899	BSN@CIN	
05/28/1899	BLN@CIN	
05/28/1899	NY1@LS3	
05/30/1899	WSN@PIT	1
05/30/1899	WSN@PIT	2
06/04/1899	LS3@NY1	
06/05/1899	PIT@PHI	
06/11/1899	LS3@CIN	1
06/11/1899	CL4@CIN	2
06/18/1899	BRO@CIN	
06/18/1899	BLN@LS3	
06/19/1899	PHI@CIN	
06/19/1899	BLN@LS3	
06/20/1899	PHI@CIN	
06/20/1899	BLN@LS3	
06/21/1899	PHI@CIN	
06/21/1899	BLN@LS3	
06/22/1899	PHI@CIN	
06/23/1899	BLN@CIN	
06/23/1899	WSN@LS3	
06/25/1899	BLN@CIN	1
06/25/1899	BLN@CIN	2
06/25/1899	WSN@LS3	2
06/26/1899	WSN@LS3	
06/28/1899	WSN@CIN	
06/28/1899	PHI@LS3	
06/29/1899	PHI@LS3	
06/30/1899	PHI@LS3	
07/01/1899	WSN@CIN	
07/01/1899	PHI@LS3	
07/02/1899	WSN@CIN	1
07/02/1899	WSN@CIN	2
07/03/1899	CL4@PIT	
07/04/1899	LS3@CIN	1
07/05/1899	CIN@LS3	
07/06/1899	CIN@LS3	
07/07/1899	CIN@LS3	
07/08/1899	CIN@LS3	
07/16/1899	SLN@NY1	
07/22/1899	BSN@CIN	
07/22/1899	BRO@LS3	
07/23/1899	BRO@LS3	
07/23/1899	WSN@CIN	2
07/24/1899	BSN@CIN	
07/26/1899	BSN@CIN	1
07/26/1899	BSN@CIN	2
07/27/1899	BSN@LS3	1
07/27/1899	BSN@LS3	2
07/28/1899	BSN@LS3	
07/30/1899	NY1@CIN	
07/30/1899	CL4@LS3	1
07/30/1899	CL4@LS3	2
08/02/1899	NY1@LS3	
08/12/1899	LS3@BRO	1
08/13/1899	LS3@NY1	
08/17/1899	CIN@NY1	1
08/19/1899	CL4@PIT	2
08/21/1899	PIT@CIN	
08/21/1899	PHI@NY1	1
08/22/1899	CL4@LS3	
08/22/1899	PIT@CIN	1
08/22/1899	PIT@CIN	2
08/23/1899	CL4@LS3	
08/23/1899	PIT@CIN	1
08/23/1899	PIT@CIN	2
08/24/1899	BLN@LS3	
08/26/1899	WSN@CIN	
08/26/1899	BLN@LS3	
08/27/1899	NY1@CIN	
08/27/1899	BLN@LS3	1
08/27/1899	BLN@LS3	2
08/28/1899	BLN@CIN	
08/28/1899	PHI@LS3	
08/29/1899	BLN@CIN	
08/29/1899	PHI@LS3	
08/30/1899	BLN@CIN	
08/30/1899	PHI@LS3	
08/31/1899	WSN@LS3	
09/01/1899	PHI@CIN	
09/01/1899	WSN@LS3	
09/02/1899	PHI@CIN	
09/02/1899	WSN@LS3	
09/03/1899	LS3@CIN	2
09/03/1899	CL4@CIN	2
09/04/1899	CL4@CIN	1
09/04/1899	CL4@CIN	2
09/04/1899	WSN@PHI	1
09/05/1899	CL4@CIN	1
09/05/1899	CL4@CIN	2
09/10/1899	CL4@CIN	1
09/12/1899	CHN@NY1	1
09/15/1899	CL4@WSN	
09/18/1899	CIN@BLN	
09/22/1899	PIT@NY1	1
09/28/1899	WSN@BSN	
09/30/1899	CIN@PIT	
10/05/1899	LS3@CIN	
10/06/1899	LS3@CIN	
10/07/1899	LS3@CIN	
10/12/1899	CL4@CIN	
10/14/1899	CL4@CIN	
10/14/1899	LS3@PIT	
10/15/1899	CL4@CIN	1
10/15/1899	CL4@CIN	2

G # = Game number

APPENDIX C. Batter Strikeout Discrepencies (100 of 1588 team occurrences – 6.3%)

Date	Team	H/A	Home	G	Note
04/19/1899	PIT	A	CIN		7 in CCT; 6 in reds scorebook
04/21/1899	SLN	H	SLN		2 BK in stlgd descr; 4 in gd box
04/26/1899	PHI	H	PHI		4 BK in PI; 5 in SL
04/28/1899	PHI	H	PHI		1 BK in PI; 2 in SL
04/29/1899	NY1	H	NY1		1 BK in PI; 3 in SL
04/29/1899	PIT	H	PIT		2 BK in SLgd; 3 in SL
04/29/1899	BRO	A	WSN		3 BK in WP; 2 in SL
05/01/1899	LS3	A	CL4	1	2 BK in cpl; 3 in SL
05/01/1899	LS3	A	CL4	2	5 BK in cpl; 4 in SL
05/03/1899	LS3	A	PIT		3 BK in PP; 4 in SL
05/04/1899	PHI	A	BLN		4 BK in BS; 3 in SL
05/05/1899	PHI	A	BLN		1 BK in BS; 0 in SL
05/05/1899	BSN	H	BSN		5 BK in NYET; 6 SL
05/05/1899	CL4	H	CL4		3 BK in CT; 2 in SL
05/08/1899	LS3	A	PIT		2 BK in PP; 1 in SL
05/13/1899	BRO	H	BRO	1	2 BK in WP; 3 in SL
05/23/1899	PHI	A	CHN		4 BK in CT; 3 in SL
05/24/1899	CL4	H	CL4		2 BK in CPD; 3 in SL
05/26/1899	CL4	H	CL4		4 BK in CPD; 3 in SL
05/28/1899	BLN	A	CIN		no BK info, 2 in SL
05/29/1899	PHI	H	PHI		5 BK in PI; 4 in SL
05/30/1899	LS3	A	BRO	2	1 BK in BE descript; 2 in SL
06/01/1899	NY1	H	NY1		0 BK in NYET; 1 in SL
06/06/1899	LS3	A	BSN		1 BK in BG, 2 in SL
06/15/1899	CL4	H	CL4		3 BK in CPD; 2 in SL
06/16/1899	BLN	A	WSN		2 BK in WP; 3 in SL
06/23/1899	NY1	A	CL4		1 BK in NYET; 3 in SL
06/23/1899	PHI	A	SLN		0 BK in STPD; 1 in SL
06/26/1899	CHN	H	CHN		2 BK in CT; 1 in SL
06/28/1899	BRO	A	PIT		2 BK in NYET; 1 in SL
06/29/1899	NY1	A	CHN		3 BK in NYET & CT; 6 in SL
06/29/1899	BRO	A	PIT		3 BK in NYET; 4 in SL
07/01/1899	CHN	H	CHN		3 BK in CT; 2 in SL
07/01/1899	BRO	A	PIT		2 BK in 6 inn, NYET; 4 in SL; chk PPrs?
07/04/1899	BSN	A	BLN	2	4 BK in BSUN; 3 in SL
07/04/1899	CL4	A	PIT	2	2 BK in PP; 1 in SL
07/08/1899	CL4	A	SLN	1	5 BK in stlpd; 6 in SL
07/14/1899	BSN	H	BSN		2 BK in BG; 4 in SL
07/14/1899	PHI	H	PHI		3 BK in PI; 2 in SL
07/15/1899	PIT	A	BSN		4 BK in BG; 5 in SL
07/15/1899	BLN	H	BLN	2	1 BK in SL; 0 k in BSUN
07/18/1899	BSN	H	BSN		2 BK in BG; 3 in SL
07/18/1899	CL4	A	WSN	1	1 BK in WP; 2 in SL
07/19/1899	BSN	H	BSN		0 BK in BG; 1 in SL
07/21/1899	CL4	A	WSN	2	1 BK in WP; 2 in SL
07/21/1899	WSN	H	WSN	2	1 BK in WP; 2 in SL
08/07/1899	BSN	H	BSN		5 BK in BG; 3 in SL
08/08/1899	LS3	A	NY1		3 BK in NYET; 4 in SL
08/09/1899	BRO	H	BRO		2 BK in NYET (partial); 3 in SL
08/10/1899	CHN	A	WSN		2 BK in CT; 1 in SL
08/12/1899	BRO	H	BRO	2	0 BK in NYET (partial 7); 1 in SL
08/15/1899	WSN	H	WSN		5 BK in WP; 6 in SL
08/17/1899	PIT	A	WSN		2 BK in WP; 1 in SL
08/17/1899	LS3	A	BSN	1	4 BK in BG; 2 in SL
08/18/1899	PIT	A	WSN		3 BK in WP; 2 in SL
08/18/1899	BLN	H	BLN	2	6 BK in CTRIB; 3 in SL
08/18/1899	LS3	A	BSN	1	3 BK in BG; 2 in SL
08/19/1899	BLN	H	BLN		2 BK in BSUN; 5 in SL
08/20/1899	CL4	A	CHN	A	4 BK in CT; 3 in SL
08/24/1899	PIT	H	PIT		0 BK in PP & BG; 3 in SL
08/25/1899	NY1	A	CL4		3 BK in NYET (identifiable); 4 in SL
08/26/1899	CHN	H	CHN		5 BK in CT; 4 in SL
08/27/1899	BRO	A	CHN		2 BK in CT; 1 in SL
08/29/1899	WSN	A	SLN		4 BK in stlgd; 3 in SL
08/30/1899	CL4	H	CL4		4 BK in CPD; 1 in SL
09/01/1899	CL4	A	BRO	2	3 BK in NYET; 2 in SL
09/02/1899	CHN	H	CHN		3 BK in CT; 4 in SL
09/04/1899	BRO	A	NY1	2	10 BK in NYET; 9 in SL
09/05/1899	BRO	H	BRO		3 BK in NYET; 4 in SL; 7 inn-darkness
09/08/1899	SLN	H	SLN		1 BK in stlgd; 0 in SL
09/09/1899	SLN	H	SLN		4 BK in stlgd; 5 in SL
09/13/1899	CIN	A	WSN	1	2 BK in WP; 3 in SL
09/13/1899	CIN	A	WSN	2	2 BK in WP; 1 in SL
09/14/1899	PIT	A	BRO	1	7 BK in NYET; 8 in BE & SL
09/14/1899	BRO	H	BRO	2	4 BK in NYET; 3 in SL
09/15/1899	BLN	H	BLN		3 BK in BSUN; 4 in SL
09/15/1899	BRO	H	BRO		3 BK in NYET; 5 in SL
09/16/1899	BSN	H	BSN		5 BK in BG; 4 SL
09/16/1899	CHN	A	BRO		3 BK in CT; 4 in SL
09/18/1899	PIT	A	BSN	2	3 BK in BG; 4 in SL
09/18/1899	CL4	A	WSN	1	2 BK in WP; 3 in SL
09/19/1899	PIT	A	BSN		4 BK in BG; 5 in SL
09/20/1899	LS3	A	WSN	1	5 BK in WP; 6 in SL
09/21/1899	BLN	H	BLN	2	3 BK in BSUN; 4 in SL
09/24/1899	CHN	A	CIN	2	2 BK in CT; 3 in SL
09/28/1899	WSN	A	BSN		no BK in BG; 4 in SL
09/30/1899	BSN	H	BSN		6 BK in BG; 7 in SL
09/30/1899	CHN	H	CHN		2 BK in CT; 1 in SL
10/03/1899	BLN	H	BLN		2 BK in BS; 4 in SL
10/03/1899	CHN	H	CHN		2 BK in CT; 5 in SL
10/04/1899	LS3	A	CHN		4 BK in CT; 5 in SL
10/05/1899	BSN	H	BSN		6 BK in BG; 7 in SL
10/08/1899	CIN	A	SLN	2	0 BK in STPD; 2 in SL
10/08/1899	CHN	H	CHN	A	6 BK in CT; 5 in SL
10/08/1899	CHN	H	CHN	B	4 BK in CT; 3 in SL
10/09/1899	CIN	A	SLN	2	6 BK in STPD; 2 in SL
10/10/1899	BLN	H	BLN		6 inn game; 1 BK in BS; 0 in SL
10/11/1899	BRO	A	NY1		0 BK in NYET; 1 in SL
10/11/1899	NY1	H	NY1		2 BK in NYET; 1 in SL
10/12/1899	NY1	A	WSN	1	1 BK in NYET; 2 in SL

BK = Individual batter strikeouts
NYET = New York Evening Telegram
BG = Boston Globe
STPD = St. Louis Post Dispatch
CT, CTRIB = Chicago Tribune
BSUN, BS = Baltimore Sun
WP = Washington Post
CPD = Cleveland Plain Dealer
PI = Philadelphia Inquirer
PP = Pittsburg Press/Post
BE = Brooklyn Eagle
CCT = Cincinnati Commercial Tribune

The Effects of Integration, 1947-1986

by Mark Armour

This year marks the 60th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's first major league season, bringing an end to a 60-year ban on black players in the major leagues. The story of Robinson and the brave men who followed his lead and helped change the game has been told often and well over the succeeding years. The story tends to focus on the moral and ethical implications of the game's integration, the righting of baseball's great wrong, as well as on the troubles endured by the heroic men who led the way.

The study presented here begins with 1947, but it concerns itself not with social justice or heroism, but with the effect of integration on the playing field. Jackie Robinson improved baseball ethically and morally, which is plenty, but he also made it better because he was a great player, and his playing time came at the expense of someone who was a lesser player. Robinson opened the doors for a vast new source of baseball talent, and that talent could not help but dramatically improve the game.

I began following baseball a generation after Robinson, in the late 1960s. The baseball I grew up with was well-integrated, as far as I knew. In fact, many of the best players seemed to be black men, people who would not have been able to play 25 years earlier. Commentators of the time, and the occasional outspoken player, would whisper that it remained difficult for a black man to make a team if he was not a star—for example, few teams carried black utility infielders. After mulling this over for 40 years, I finally decided to try to determine if this was true.

The first, and ultimately most difficult, step in this study was to determine which players were "black" and which were not. The so-called "color line" was never acknowledged, let alone defined. For other purposes, one might be interested in differentiating between African American players and dark-skinned Latinos, and in today's culture we would consider certain players "bi-racial." For my purpose, such distinctions are unnecessary. I only needed to determine which players would not have been able to play during the days when black players were prohibited from playing. For almost all players the determination is straightforward. Lou Brock is black, Al Kaline is not black, etc. For the players I could not recall or never knew, I had to scout down pictures or baseball cards, or solicit the help of other SABR members. To summarize, when I refer to "black" players in this study, I am using the term generically to include any player who would have been prohibited from playing major league baseball before 1947.

I do not claim that this is an exact science, but the types of questions I am trying to answer here would not be affected by the misidentification of a few players. Ultimately, I made a determination for every player who played in this 40-year period, a total of 5,490. According to my findings, there were 933 black players in this period, beginning with Jackie Robinson in 1947 and ending with Ruben Rodriguez, who caught two games for the Pirates in September 1986. Putting all of these players in a database, I can answer any number of questions. I present a few of these here.

HOW QUICK WAS THE PACE OF INTEGRATION?

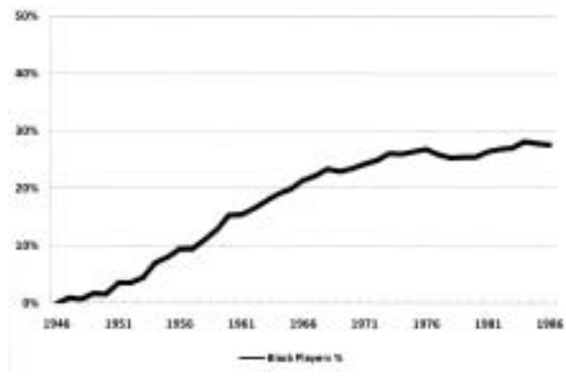

FIGURE 1

The graph in Figure 1 shows the percentage of major league players in a given season who were black. The number increased slowly at first, but accelerated in the mid-1950s and was still growing at the end of this 40-year period. Black players first

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accounted for 10% of rosters in 1958, reached 20% in 1965, and 28% in 1986. Recent studies suggest the number is over 30% today (to reiterate, I am including dark-skinned Latinos as well as African American players).

This is part of what I wanted to know, but this graph gives all players—Willie Mays and Julio Gotay—equal weight. I next needed to separate the quality from the quantity.

HOW INTEGRATED WERE THE ALL-STAR TEAMS?

FIGURE 2

In Figure 2, the solid line again shows the percentage of blacks on major league rosters, while the new line shows the percentage of blacks on the two mid-season All-Star teams. This graph clearly shows that there were more black players on All-Star teams than one would expect if All-Stars were randomly distributed. In 1965, for example, while 20% of all players were black, they accounted for 38% of the All-Stars. Based on the overall percentage of black players in the majors, one might have expected roughly 11 of the 53 players on the All-Star teams to be black; in fact, there were 20. As the graph highlights, this discrepancy was quite common during the era under study.

All-Star teams are not a precise representation of the best players, of course. Besides the human biases that go into the selections, the All-Star rosters require a player from each team and a balancing of positions. What we really want to know is: who were the real star players in baseball, and who were providing the most value?

HOW MANY OF THE "REAL" STAR PLAYERS WERE BLACK?

Win Shares, a system invented by Bill James that allocates team wins to individual players, lends itself well to studying large pools of players. One can always argue about some of the individual components of the highly complex formula, but when aggregating 5,500 players over 40 seasons one would expect any imbalances to average themselves out. As a point of reference, James suggests that a player who earns 20 Win Shares had a star-quality season. Again, one can find examples of 19 Win Share seasons which are worse than 22 Win Share seasons, but over tens of thousands of player-seasons, these anomalies are of little importance. It turns out that the number of 20 Win Share seasons in a league is similar to the size of All-Star rosters—20 or 25 per league or so in the 1950s, and about 35 today with the larger league sizes.

When contrasted with Figure 2, Figure 3 shows that the "real" star players were even more likely to be

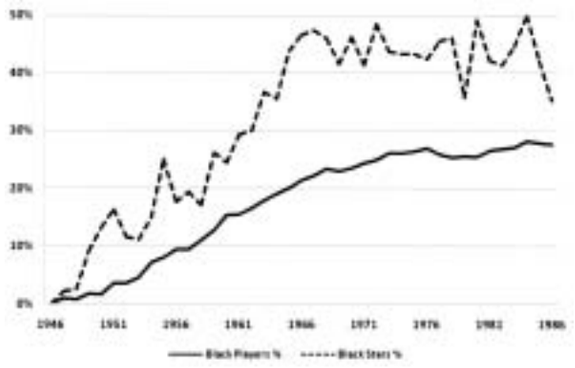

FIGURE 3

black than the All-Star teams. Returning to 1965, black players made up 20% of team rosters, and fully 44% of the "star" players in baseball. This is not an anomalous season—these results are repeated to some extent for almost every season for 20 years.

From another perspective this discrepancy is even starker. In 1965, 6.4% of white major leaguers (36 out of 562) were star players, while 20% of black players (28 of 140) were stars, a percentage three times as large.

WHAT WAS THE TOTAL CONTRIBUTION OF BLACK PLAYERS?

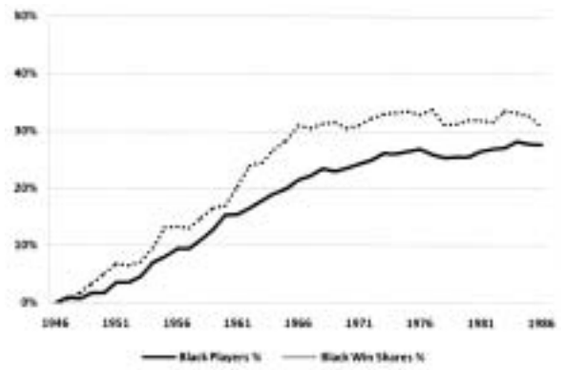

FIGURE 4

A more thorough way to examine the contributions of black players is to figure how much value the entire group was providing. To examine this question, I summed the Win Shares accumulated by every black

player, and calculated the percentage of total Win Shares these men accounted for.

Figure 4 confirms the evidence of the previous two graphs: the black players were consistently doing more than their share of the work. The solid line again is the percentage of black players in the major leagues, while the dotted line represents the value they were producing. In 1965, when black players made up 20% of major league players, they accounted for 28% of the value, a huge difference when considering the size of the pool.

As an aside, it is ironic that many people consider baseball post-1960 as diluted by expansion, even as this great talent source was finally being mined. If 28% of the talent in the league was not allowed to play a generation before, how likely is it that the game was of lesser quality? Baseball in the 1960s had 25% more teams (20 versus 16), but the addition of black players easily accounts for that increase, even as blacks likely remained underrepresented.

As I pushed this study further out, I expected the two lines in Figure 4 to converge. In fact, although they got closer, there remained a significant gap in 1986, strongly suggesting that lesser skilled black players still had a tougher time getting work. It would be interesting to see how this trend has evolved over the past 20 years.

HOW LARGE WAS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO LEAGUES?

Let's first take a closer look at the American League.

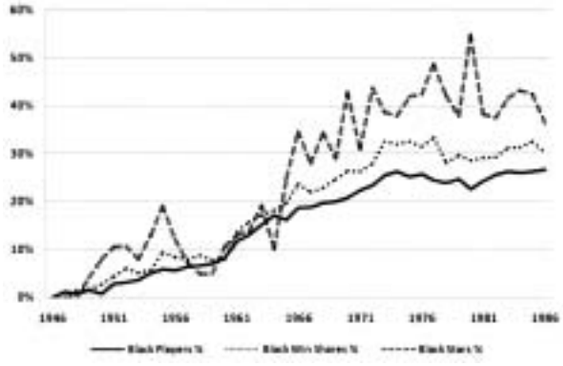

FIGURE 5

Figure 5 shows the percentage of American League players who were black (solid line), the percentage of star players who were black (dashed line), and the overall value of the black players. The American League integrated slowly, and other than for a few years in the mid-1950s, the black players in the league were performing about as one would expect from their share of the rosters through the mid-1960s. During the late 1960s, however, as the American League became more fully integrated, black stars began to make up a larger percentage of the talent base than suggested by their numbers alone.

In the National League, the story is much more dramatic, as shown in Figure 6.

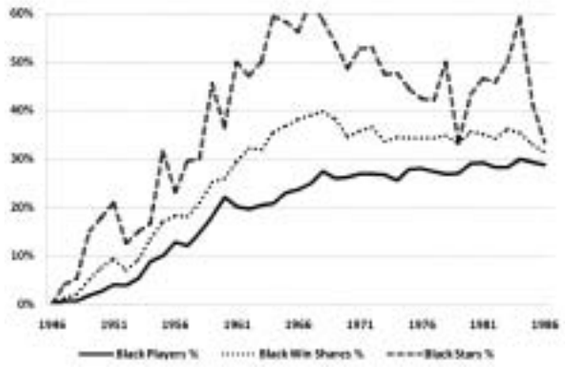

FIGURE 6

By the early 1960s, half of the stars in the league were black, and the number was over 60% by 1967. The dramatic effect of the star players illustrated in Figure 3 is nearly completely fueled by the National League; the American League did not begin to field many black stars until the late 1960s.

Finally, one can just plot the difference in the value of the black player in the two leagues.

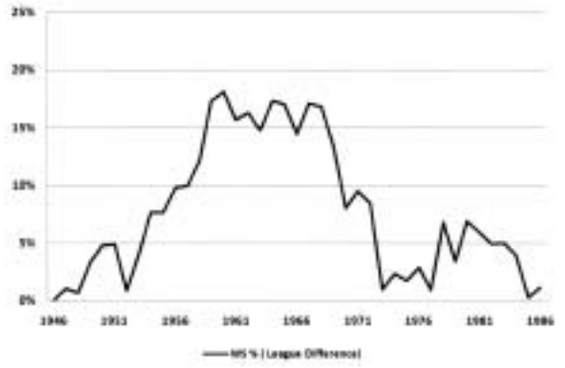

FIGURE 7

In Figure 7 we do not plot lines for the two leagues, but just look at the difference in the value of each league's black players, subtracting the American League share from the National League share. The National League had a small advantage in the early years of integration, but their edge grew rapidly in the late 1950s and remained strong into the early 1970s. This graph highlights the National League's superior ability to not only find black players but to find the best black players. In the National League they accounted for roughly 30% of the league's player value by 1961, more than 15 percentage points ahead of that

achieved in the less integrated junior circuit—a gap that persisted for the next decade. To put this more concretely, the difference in the two leagues was about 40 Win Shares per team, which is a peak-level Willie Mays season.

Why did the leagues take different paths in this area? Perhaps it is as simple as teams imitating the best clubs in their league. In the National League, the Dodgers provided a model of excellence for the other teams to follow, and first the Giants and Braves and later the Cardinals brought in black players and became consistently competitive. In the American League, the Yankees won every year with very little help from black players.

HOW ABOUT THE TOP-FLIGHT STARS, THE FUTURE HALL OF FAMERS?

I will conclude with a look at the career superstars, the future Hall of Famers. Rather than using percentages, I focused on the number of these players who were performing in each league. For the purposes of this chart, I have not included Satchel Paige or Willard Brown, deserving Hall of Famers inducted for their great careers outside the major leagues.

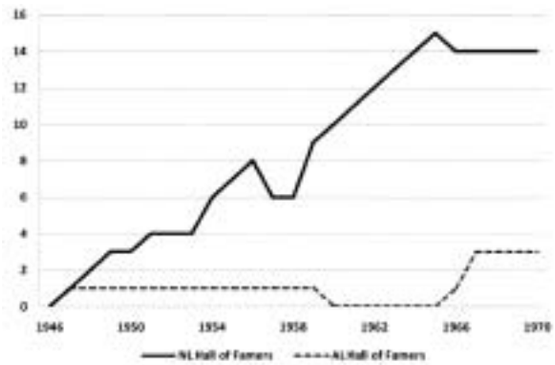

FIGURE 8

In 1947, each league had a single future Hall of Famer—Jackie Robinson and Larry Doby. Doby remained the sole American Leaguer until his retirement in 1959—at which point there were no black Hall of Famers in the American League for six years.

Meanwhile, the National League added a new Hall of Famer nearly every season until 1965, when their gap on the Americans was 15-0. In 1966, Frank Robinson was traded to the Orioles, reducing the gap to 14-1, and, perhaps not surprisingly, he was immediately the best player in the American League, winning the Triple Crown.

It should be noted that the players represented on this chart were all top-flight stars. The Veterans Committee, the so-called "back door" into the Hall of Fame, has inducted only two black players—Larry Doby and Orlando Cepeda—along with several white players from this period. Furthermore, if one removed the contributions of the 15 National League Hall of Famers from 1965, the remaining black players in the National League still accumulated more Win Shares than their American League counterparts. The National League dominance extends past the superstars.

WHAT CAN ONE CONCLUDE ABOUT THE TALENT IN THE TWO LEAGUES?

Win Shares is inadequate to definitively answer a question like this. If you add up the Win Shares of the players in the two leagues, they will be exactly equal, because Win Shares begins with the assumption that the two leagues are the same—Win Shares is a parsing out of credit for all of the wins a team achieves. Since each league has the same number of wins, they will also have the same number of Win Shares. To the point, in order for the leagues to be of comparable strength in the 1960s, the white American Leaguers would have to have been significantly better than the white National Leaguers.

COULD THIS BE TRUE?

Returning to 1965 again, who were the best players, of any color, in the American League? According to Win Shares, the best players were Tony Oliva, Zoilo Versalles (who won the league's MVP award), and Don Buford, three fine black players. Going down the list, the best American League white players that year were Rocky Colavito, Brooks Robinson, Curt Blefary, and Jimmy Hall. How much better could they really have been than Sandy Koufax, Don Drysdale, Pete Rose, Jim Bunning, and Ron Santo, each of whom had excellent seasons that year in the National League?

Admittedly, this is not proof. But I suggest we should all take with a grain of salt comparisons of, for example, Willie Mays and Mickey Mantle, which do not include a huge adjustment for the quality of the two leagues. According to Win Shares, Mickey Mantle deserved his third MVP award in 1962, beating out Norm Siebern and Floyd Robinson. Meanwhile, Willie Mays competed with a large crop of superstars to win just two MVPs. He might have won every year had he changed leagues.

HOW MUCH DID THE BLACK PLAYERS IMPROVE THE GAME?

One argument often used in making the case to induct players from the Negro Leagues into the Hall of Fame is that there were just as many great black players playing before 1947 as there were afterward. This argument, while not without holes, is a compelling one. There were players like Willie Mays and Frank Robinson playing in the 1930s, the theory goes, and

they should be honored just as their successors were.

A parallel argument is to consider the game of the 1960s without its great black players. The baseball of the 1930s, I propose, was comparable to the baseball of the 1960s if all of the black players were somehow removed from the game. Had segregation continued for another generation, players like Harmon Killebrew, Ron Santo, and Norm Cash would have been the superstars and we would not have known that there were better players who were prevented from playing. Mays and Aaron and Clemente, those wonderful players who remade the game, would have remained in the shadows, and we would be wondering today whether they really could have competed in the great major leagues.

What would baseball have been like in 1965 without Willie Mays and the 27 other black stars? It would have been immeasurably worse. It would have been, I suggest, comparable to the baseball played in 1946.

SOURCES

The main data I relied on for this study was gathered by hand, poring over baseball cards and hundreds of pictures found on the Internet. Many SABR members helped me in determining the "race" of the 5,490 players, but I want to especially mention three. Rick Swaine and Steve Treder have each been working on research that overlaps what I present here, and were generous with their findings, and Bill Hickman found pictures of many of the most obscure players that had eluded me from this period. Once I had the black players identified, Dan Levitt provided me year-by-year Win Shares totals for each of my players, and (as usual) helped me think through many of the ideas contained in this paper. Bill James's *Win Shares* (Stats Publishing, 2002) was also necessary, of course. ■

The Empire Strikes Out

Collusion in Baseball in the 1980s

by Steve Beitler

After a 1985 season in which he hit 29 home runs and drove in 97 runs, Detroit Tigers outfielder Kirk Gibson was the top position player of that winter's free-agent class. So when he accepted an invitation to go bird hunting with people from the Kansas City Royals, he believed the outing would be a fun start to a process that would yield contract offers better than Detroit's of $1.2 million per year for three years.[1]

While Gibson was tromping through the woods, his agent checked in with Royals general manager John Scheurholtz. What the agent heard stunned him. "Yes, Kirk Gibson is a fine ballplayer, but I really don't think we have any interest," Scheurholtz said. The agent got a similar response from every team he contacted.[2]

Gibson's teammate, catcher Lance Parrish, was encountering a variation on the same theme. His agent, Tom Reich, felt he was making progress in ongoing talks with Bill Lajoie, the Tigers GM, about a long-term deal. But in late October, Lajoie's stance changed. "I don't know quite how to tell you this," he said, "but we have reviewed this and decided that the best we can offer is a two-year contract and not at the kind of money we have been talking about."

"Where did that bull come from?" Reich asked.

"We had some meetings and decided that these are the economics," said Lajoie. "This is the best we can do."

Soon after this exchange Reich called Parrish. "Something's up," he said.[3]

What was up was the start of baseball's collusion era, which began in that winter of 1985-86 and continued in earnest through the next two off-seasons. It was an attempt by baseball owners to slow a dramatic rise in player salaries and to ratchet down their teams' liabilities for long-term contracts that were not panning out. Collusion affected hundreds of players and at least three pennant races. Marvin Miller, longtime leader of the players union, believes it is the greatest scandal in baseball history because of its wider impact than the 1919 Black Sox affair.[4]

Collusion proved costly to the owners. They lost in three consecutive rulings after the players union filed grievances and arbitrators reviewed extensive evidence and testimony. The owners eventually paid the players $280 million that the arbitrators said players had lost. Miller has pointed out that this large amount didn't include a penny in penalties.[5] Collusion in baseball took place at a time when management in many different American business sectors was trying to reduce the power of organized labor in the name of competitiveness and economic rationality. In 1981, newly elected President Reagan had set the tone for this stance when he fired the striking members of the Air Traffic Controllers Union, who were federal employees and barred by law from striking.

Baseball didn't need a cue from the White House; the roots of the 1980s collusion among the owners ran deep. An enduring form had been the "gentlemen's agreement" that kept African Americans out of the game until 1947. In the spring of 1966, standout Dodger pitchers Don Drysdale and Sandy Koufax had announced that they would negotiate in tandem for their new contracts. They sought three-year deals that would pay them each $166,000 per season. Drysdale and Koufax eventually signed for a lot less, but the sight of premier players working together—with an agent, no less—terrified the owners.[6]

The Drysdale-Koufax negotiations led the owners in 1977 to propose a ban on collusion among players as part of the basic labor-management agreement. The players readily agreed, as long as the idea would work both ways, which the owners had no problem with, either. Years later, Miller said, "I was only going to give in if it was a two-way street. They yielded instantly. It wasn't a big deal."[7]

What was more problematic was the issue of compensation for free agents. This question had dominated negotiations on the 1980 basic agreement. As part of that agreement, the owners and players established a joint study committee charged with finding a workable solution to compensation. The agreement stipulated that if such a solution wasn't found within a year, the owners would be able to impose their com-

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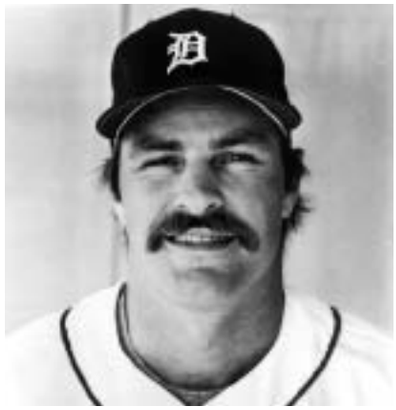


Gibson

pensation plan—and the players would be able to strike. Following some wrangling in the courts in the wake of a predictable failure to achieve a solution on compensation for free agents, the players walked out on June 12, 1981. The strike lasted 50 days and canceled 713 games.[8]

After the strike, player salaries continued to climb, growing by 47 percent in the two years that followed. Between 1980 and 1984, the average salary in the major leagues more than doubled to $326,000. Between 1981 and 1984, owners agreed to more than 200 multi-year contracts to players with less than six years of big-league experience.[9]

It was against this backdrop that Commissioner Peter Ueberroth met with the owners in St. Louis on October 22, 1985. On the agenda was a report from Lee McPhail, who headed up labor relations for the owners. McPhail's report showed that teams owed between $40 and $50 million under guaranteed contracts to players who were no longer in the league. His data also showed a positive correlation between players with long-term deals and time spent on the disabled list or performance below expectations.[10]

McPhail's research seemed to support Ueberroth's practice of berating the owners for what he believed was irrational spending. He had previously called them "dumb" and "stupid" and said that agents and the union were not causing their problems. "Look in the mirror and go out and spend big if you want, but don't go out there whining that someone made you do it," he said. Ueberroth's derision, coming from a man widely hailed as an economic wizard who had made the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles a financial success, evoked the kinds of responses more typically seen at a religious revival. "Some [owners] stood up to confess their past stupidity; some took the pledge to abstain from free agents."[11]

The conversation between Tom Reich and Bill Lajoie on Lance Parrish's contract took place the day after this meeting, and baseball's collusion era had begun. The off-season of 1985-86 was the first of three in which a similar pattern unfolded. The free-agent market was slow; the players union filed a grievance (February 1986, February 1987, and January 1988); and after poring through massive testimony and supporting documentation, arbitrators Thomas Roberts and George Nicolau found for the players each time. They delivered their decisions in September 1987, August 1988, and July 1990 in cases that became known as Collusion I, II, and III respectively. All told, the three cases generated 71 days of hearings, 618 exhibits, and 14,028 transcript pages.

What the arbitrators uncovered in this mountain of evidence was a larger pattern that began to emerge with the lack of interest in signing Kirk Gibson and Lance Parrish. In the 1985-1986 off-season 29 of 33 free agents stayed with their original teams; in the previous year, 20 out of 46 free agents had stayed. A brief filed on March 22, 1988, by the players union cited numerous incidents that they believed violated the no-collusion clause. At a meeting on February 26, 1987, Commissioner Ueberroth asked for and received updates from teams on their player negotiations. Minnesota Twins general manager Andy McPhail had testified that he called his counterpart with the Orioles, Hank Peters, to discuss how much Peters thought pitcher Ron Guidry was worth. The White Sox co-owner, Jerry Reinsdorf, sent to Ueberroth and to the Tigers copies of his correspondence with pitcher Jack Morris's agent. The Red Sox sent a note to all other teams on January 9, 1987, in which they said that they intended to try to resign catcher Rich Gedman when the rules permitted them to renew negotiations with him on the following May 1.[12]

But it would have been hard to believe that the owners would even consider concerted action based on their public statements after the players filed their first grievance in February 1986. In an interview in *The Sporting News* on June 30, 1986, Yankees owner George Steinbrenner said, "I've been in business. I know what collusion is. … I have seen no collusion whatsoever." Commissioner Ueberroth seemed annoyed by even the mention of it. Speaking with *The Sporting News* for an article published January 5, 1987, Ueberroth said, "I still think each owner will do what he damned well pleases (in regard to contracts and free agents) and, when people finally see that, the collusion talk will stop."

It didn't stop, and on September 21, 1987, arbitrator Thomas Roberts delivered his decision on Collusion I. In finding for the players, Roberts noted that not a

single team had pursued free agents in 1985 unless their 1985 teams had relinquished their interest in those players. He decided that this "in itself constitutes a strong indication of concerted action." Asked for his reaction to Roberts' decision, pitcher Jack Morris, a member of the 1986 free-agent class, told the *Detroit News,*

> Hey, it's foolish for a guy making $1.85 million to look for sympathy, and I'm not doing that. My salary is not the issue here. The issue is that the owners were found guilty of collusion. … I know that George Steinbrenner wanted to hire me. … He finally had to say, 'Sorry, buddy, I can't do it.' Steinbrenner said no one told him what to do. In fact, he swore on his mother's name about it.[13]

Decisions by arbitrator George Nicolau in Collusion II and III followed a similar pattern. On August 31, 1988, Nicolau's ruling on Collusion II stated:

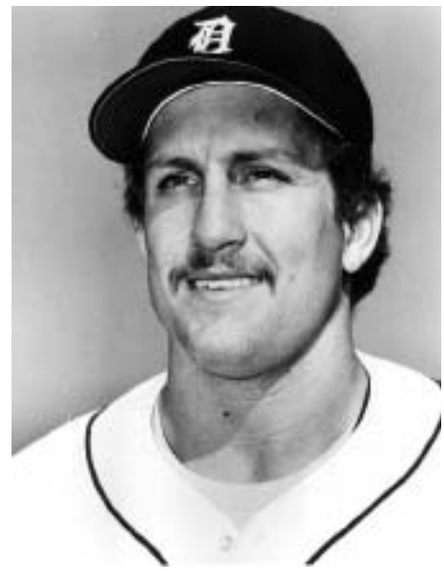
> The evidence as a whole convincingly establishes that everyone knew there was to be no bidding before January 8 for free agents coveted by their former clubs. … The abrupt cessation of activity in 1985 and the repetition of that pattern, with only minor post-January 8 deviations in 1986, cannot be attributed to the free play of market forces. …"[14]

After further decisions on the damages to be paid, the players and owners reached a settlement. On October 26, 1990, the owners agreed to pay $280 million dollars, or $10.77 million per team, to cover damages that had been awarded as well as damages to be determined and interest.[15] The final distribution to players was not completed until 2005.[16]

Baseball's collusion era is fraught with ironies. During the same years that the owners were working to keep salaries and free-agent movement down, attendance, revenue, and profits in the game soared. Total revenue increased from about $700 million in 1985 to $1 billion in 1988. In addition, collusion did little to address the game's structural issues, such as the disparity in revenue across the major leagues. Finally, it helped seed the ground for the dispute that led to the spring training lockout in 1990.[17]

But collusion may not have breathed its last nearly 20 years ago. As part of the basic agreement reached in the fall of 2006, the owners made a lump-sum payment of $12 million dollars, to be taken from the nearly $70 million dollars in luxury-tax funds then held in reserve by baseball, to settle planned claims of collusive activity following the 2002 and 2003 seasons.[18] The settlement addressed approximately 40 claims and pending grievances.[19] Déjà vu all over again? ■

Parrish



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Notes

1. David A. Kaplan, "Baseball Braces for Free-Agency Ruling," *National Law Journal,* June 1, 1987; John Helyar, "Playing Ball – How Peter Ueberroth Led the Major Leagues in the 'Collusion Era,'" *Wall Street Journal,* May 20, 1991.
2. Helyar, *Wall Street Journal,* May 20, 1991.
3. Ibid.
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The Evolution of Japanese Baseball Strategy

by Robert K. Fitts

When Animal, sometimes known as Brad Lesley, decided to go to Japan in 1986, he was apprehensive. "I don't speak the language. I don't know the food," he thought. "Thank God baseball is baseball." After two months, he concluded, "The food is great, the people are wonderful. It's the baseball that's ass backwards!"

Many writers have focused on the cultural differences between Japanese and American baseball. The most notable is Robert Whiting, author of *You Gotta Have Wa and the Meaning of Ichiro,* among other works. But ever since I played on a Japanese company team 10 years ago, I've been fascinated by how the game is played differently between the lines, and how these strategies and tactics have changed through time. While I was writing *Remembering Japanese Baseball: An Oral History of the Game,* I questioned players about the topic. There are many differences between how American and Japanese professionals play the game, but here I will focus on just a few.

"Obviously," Hirofumi Naito, a Yomiuri Giant infielder from 1948-58, comments,

> one of the differences between the major leagues and Japan is the difference in power, but spiritually, in America the first words that come to a player's mind are "Go! Go!" but in Japan they are "Wait. Wait." The American game is much more aggressive. In America, batters try to hit the first ball pitched to them. Traditionally, the Japanese way of playing is to make the pitcher throw as many balls as possible to tire him out. So you don't swing at the first ball. In the Japanese game, you are always just waiting and waiting.

In the late 1940s and early '50s, "we [played in] a uniquely Japanese way. It was rather an easy way of going about the sport. There wasn't much fighting spirit."

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Wally Yonamine, the first American to play professionally in Japan after World War II, elaborates:

> When I first came to Japan in 1951, it was a really slow game. They didn't know about aggressive baseball. When they hit a ground ball to the infield, they just jogged, and sometimes even walked, to first base. And they didn't break up double plays.

That changed once Yonamine joined the Yomiuri Giants. Yonamine had played halfback for the San Francisco 49ers and minor league baseball for the Salt Lake City Bees. He adopted his football skills to baseball and played aggressively, stealing bases, sliding hard, and knocking down opponents. The Japanese were aghast at Yonamine's aggressiveness. Opposing fans hurled insults and rocks at him, but there was no denying his success on the field. He quickly became one of the most dominant players in the league. Before Wally joined the team, the Giants had won 32 of their 55 games, for a .582 winning percentage. The team's offense scored an average of 5.1 runs per game. With the Hawaiian, the offense jumped to 7.2 runs per game and Yomiuri won 47 of their remaining 59 games: a .797 winning percentage. Five of the Giants' 11 losses came after they had clinched the pennant, suggesting that the Giants at full strength were even better than this extraordinary record.

Japanese players were unwilling, or perhaps culturally unable, to mimic Yonamine's aggressive style, but to combat the Hawaiian, opposing clubs worked on their previously lax defense, improved their sliding, and hired their own foreigners. The following season, 12 other Americans joined Japanese teams. Although Yonamine changed many aspects of the game, the Japanese continued to play their brand of passive baseball.

Glenn Mickens, who came to Japan eight years after Yonamine, noted:

> The way they played the game was different. They didn't play to win. There was no hustle. The most frustrating thing was watching those guys go into second base without sliding. If you

Nankei Hawks

had runners on first and third with one out, and a ground ball was hit in the hole, you would expect the runner on first to slide and take the second baseman out. That would score runs for you. But no! The Japanese would run out of the base path and let him complete the double play. That was the Japanese style. It was ingrained into them. It used to just frost me!

In the mid-1960s, Daryl Spencer of the Hankyu Braves observed the same phenomenon. Frustrated, Spencer was planning to leave Japan after the 1966 season, but several rookies with a new attitude joined the team. They played hard and energized the squad. Spencer stayed, and in the next six seasons the Braves won five pennants. Although Japanese players did become more aggressive, they were still loath to take risks for fear of making mistakes. Brad Lesley noted that even in the late 1980s, "outfielders would take balls in the gaps on the hop, rather than risk looking ridiculous if the ball got by them while they were trying to make a great play."

Eric Hillman, who pitched in Japan from 1995-97, exclaimed:

They never went first to third! Even Ichiro, who flies, wouldn't go first to third on a single. It all came down to losing face. If the third base coach waved him on and he got thrown out, it would be the coach's fault. There was a lot of what I call, "Cover your ass" coaching. Nobody was willing to take a chance.

MANAGERS

Like the players, Japanese managers also played a conservative, slow game. A fundamental difference between major league and Japanese managers is their approach to scoring. Major league managers tend to look for big innings, while the Japanese play for one run at a time. "Japanese baseball was like a chess match," Eric Hillman continued.

They played for one run every inning. It didn't matter if it was the first inning or the ninth inning. It didn't matter if you were up by six runs or down by six runs. If that leadoff guy got on base, they bunted him over.

Ralph Bryant, the 1989 Pacific League MVP, explains:

You have a lot of guys who can hit the ball out of the park in the States, but in Japan there aren't as many, so they just play fundamental baseball. Get him on, bunt him over, and get a hit to bring him in.

As foreigners who played in the 1970s all mentioned the Japanese tendency to sacrifice, I assumed that the practice stemmed from the passive game played in the '40s, and as time progressed Japanese managers would bunt less. I was wrong. Since 1951, Central League games have averaged more than a sacrifice bunt per game (See Figure 1). Until 1983, the average remained under 1.5, but since then it has stayed above 1.5 for all but one season. During the 1988-89 seasons, the average rose to two sacrifice bunts per game. By comparison, since 1950 National League games contain less than one sacrifice bunt.

Just to make sure that the sacrifices were not primarily made by pitchers, I also examined the stats for the Pacific League, which adopted the designated

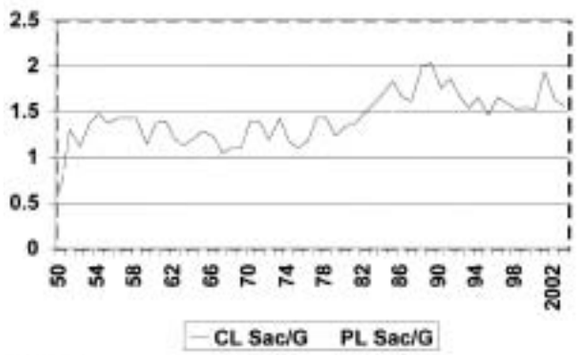

FIGURE 1

hitter in 1975. Prior to then Pacific League teams sacrificed with roughly the same frequency as Central League teams. For several years after employing the DH, the frequency of sacrifice bunts went down. But by 1983 the average number of sacrifice bunts per game in the Pacific League began to approach the average in the Central League. More surprisingly, from 1990 to 1992 and from 1995 to 2000, Pacific League teams, still using the DH, actually sacrificed more often than Central League clubs.

Asked to explain the number of sacrifices, Masaaki Mori, the foremost advocate of the sacrifice bunt, commented,

> A manager uses whatever strategy is appropriate for his team. If there are no big hitters in your lineup, then the priority is to get runners to the next base. When you are facing a really good pitcher, you have only a few opportunities from the first to ninth inning to score. So to let an opportunity pass by, just because it appears early on, is really stupid. Once you get a runner on base, if you move him to second, that puts more pressure on the opposing team. And if you get him to third base, that's even more pressure. That's how we mentally attack the pitcher.

But Eric Hillman noted:

> [All that sacrificing] was such a relief for a pitcher, because unless some guy hits a double and you walk the next guy, you rarely have to face first and second with nobody out. And if you ever did, you knew that they were going to bunt then!

With managers playing for one run at a time, Japanese games tend to be low-scoring. Not surprisingly, Japanese managers rarely concede a run. Ralph Bryant noted:

> In Japan, they don't want to give up any runs, so if a guy gets on third base, they'll bring in the infield regardless of whether it's in the first inning or the ninth inning. You don't get a lot of ground ball RBIs over there. But in the States, if a guy gets on third base early in the game, they'll put the infield back and concede the run.

Although Japanese managers play for one run at a time, they have generally ignored the hit-and-run until very recently. Dick Kashiwaeda remembers:

> When we went to Santa Maria, California, for spring training in 1953, the Yomiuri Giants saw how major leaguers executed the hit and run for the first time. Nobody did that in Japan. So we adopted it because our lineup started with Wally Yonamine and up to the seventh batter everybody could run well. I think we did it better than some of the major league teams, because we had guys who could hit behind runners, and the major leaguers had lots of guys just going for the fences. In 1953, we finished 16 games ahead of the second-place team and it was all on the basis of the hit-and-run. We were making the opposing teams crazy! But we didn't continue it in 1954 because [our manager's] new philosophy was that the Giants needed to hit to win.

Osamu Mihara

That year was also the only season the Giants failed to win the pennant during the nine-year stretch in 1951-59.

In the subsequent decades, few Japanese managers adopted the hit-and-run. Glenn Mickens claims that he never saw one during the 1960s. Ten years later, both Jim Lefebvre and Leron Lee state that Japanese managers were using it, but by the mid-80s it was once again rare. Eric Hillman notes that in the mid-90s, only Bobby Valentine regularly employed the tactic.

Most foreigners also agree that the Japanese did not steal much. Glenn Mickens remembered:

> Before I went to Japan, people told me that the Japanese were little ping hitters and they could all fly. Well, that wasn't true. The average club in the States, I don't care what level A, AA, or AAA, could generally outrun most of the clubs over there.

Jim Lefebvre claimed, "They don't steal a lot, because they don't have great speed. Everybody has a perception that they play a real fast game. It's not." But statistics contradict these players' statements.

In the early 1950s, Central League games averaged almost three attempted steals per game, with runners

succeeding about 70 percent of the time (see Figure 2). In 1950, Japanese baseball expanded from eight to 15

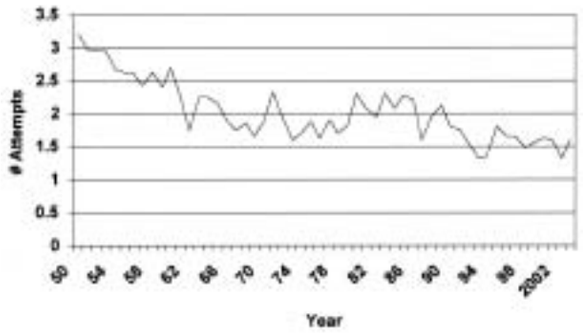

FIGURE 2

teams, and the overall quality of play dropped. Americans playing in Japan commented on the poor quality of the catchers' arms and the inability of pitchers to hold runners, which probably accounts for both the number of attempts and the high rate of success.

Dick Kashiwaeda recalls:

> A typical Japanese catcher used to receive the ball from the pitcher, take two steps forward, then crank his arm, and throw it back to the mound. The catcher's mind was only on the pitcher. Sometimes on that pump, Wally Yonamine would steal second base. You would see Wally sliding into second base and the pitcher was just getting the ball!

In 1952, the Giants signed a Hawaiian Nisei named Jyun Hirota, who brought the American style of catching to Japan. He had a strong arm and returned the ball to the pitcher while still in his crouch. Soon Japanese catchers began mimicking Hirota, and the mechanics of Japanese catching changed. The average number of stolen base attempts in the Central League dropped from nearly 3.0 per game in 1952 and 1953 to 2.6 per game after Hirota's second season in Japan.

As catchers became more proficient at throwing out runners, the numbers of attempts, not surprisingly, decreased. By the late 1950s, Central League games averaged 2.5 attempts per game, and the average dropped to approximately 1.5 attempts by the mid '60s. The numbers of attempts per game rose to two during the 1980s and gradually fell to an all-time low 1.32 in 2002.

As the number of stolen base attempts declined, the numbers of sacrifice bunts increased. In 1987, sacrifices outnumbered stolen base attempts for the first time and have done so in 10 of the past 17 seasons. Thus, in recent years it does seem that Japanese managers prefer the conservative sacrifice over the riskier steal.

For context, I compared the number of stolen base attempts per game from the Central League to the National League. I was shocked (see Figure 3). Between 1950 and 1965, the Japanese averaged between two and three attempts per game whereas National League games averaged about one attempt per game. The two leagues made about the same number of attempts per game during the early '70s, before the National League surged ahead in 1976. During the past five years, both Central and National Leaguers averaged between 1.5 to 2 attempts per game. So in

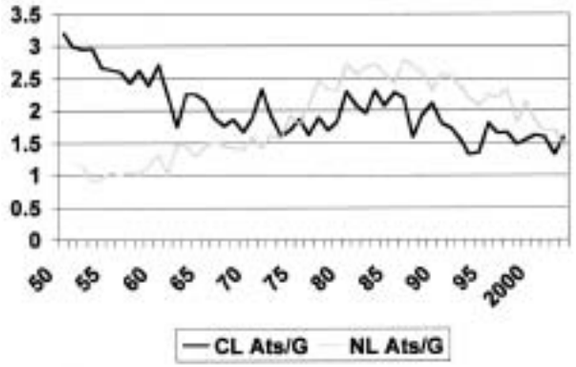

FIGURE 3

contrast to the belief that Japanese don't run much, from 1950 to 1972, Central League teams attempted to steal more than National League teams, and have been attempting a similar amount of steals in the past few years.

Don Blasingame, who played, coached, and managed in Japan, for 15 years remembers:

> The Japanese style of managing was a little different. Japanese managers did a lot of things because of their *kimochi,* or gut feeling, whereas Americans are more likely to play percentages. So they did some surprising things that to an American would be not very logical. For example, when I was managing against the Chunichi Dragons, their catcher, Tatsuhiko Kimata, just wore us out. He was their third-place hitter and we couldn't get him out! Once in the first inning, they got their first two men on base and then they had Kimata bunting! Of course, an American manager wouldn't do that. He fouled the first pitch off, and I was thinking, "Jeez, get the bunt down! Get the bunt down!" because

> I didn't want him to swing the bat. So sure enough, he didn't get it down, so he had to swing away. And he hit a double!

Not playing the percentages particularly bothered Daryl Spencer.

> The Japanese knew nothing about percentage baseball. It was so frustrating. In 1964 we finished second to the Nankai Hawks by 2½ games. Four times during the season, the opposition had runners on second and third with the eighth-place hitter up, but instead of walking him and facing the pitcher, we pitched to him. Three of the four times, he beat us. So there were the 2½ games that we lost! They knew nothing about pitching around certain hitters. Most of the teams had only one or two really good hitters. Yet we would consistently let those guys beat us. I would have walked those tough hitters to get to the others.

Sometimes, however, a manager's *kimochi* was stronger than the percentages. Carlton Hanta, a Nisei who played and coached in Japan in 1959-73, claimed the Nankai Hawks Hall of Fame manager Kazuto Tsuruoka had a sixth sense.

> When I was a defensive coach for him, we'd be sitting in the dugout and he'd be picking his nose and all of a sudden he would say, "Carl, move the third baseman to his left." So I would yell and move him to the left, and by God, the batter would hit the ball right there. He managed with his feelings and hunches. He never went with the percentage. I distinctly remember one time; the opposing team had a left-handed pitcher and Tsuruoka called time, took out his right-handed hitter, and brought in a left-handed pinch hitter. Joe Stanka looked at me and said, "Boy, this damn old man is something else!" You never do that in American baseball. And lo and behold, this guy comes in and gets a single over shortstop and we won the ballgame. This shut Stanka and me up forever!

Legendary manager Osamu Mihara, who won six pennants during a 25-year career, did play percentage baseball, but with his own unique logic. Many considered him brilliant and called his strategy "Mihara magic," but others just considered him downright crazy. Gene Bacque recalls a typical Mihara move:

> If you went 3-for-3and you came up in a key situation, Mihara-san would take you out. He figured you had your three hits, so the odds were that you were not going to get another one!

During the 1970s, Don Blasingame noticed that Japanese managers began relying more on the percentages. By the time Leron Lee came to Japan in 1977, scouts charted opposing pitchers and presented their findings in long pre-game meetings. Soon Japanese managers became masters of the scientific aspects of the game. Jack Howell remembers that during the 1990s:

> They had a lot of charts on how to play and pitch to guys, and we spent a lot of time in meetings learning the opposing pitchers. That was the big thing about Japanese baseball. There were a lot of strategies, a lot of note taking, and a much more sophisticated game plan on how to defend against your opponent.

Perhaps the most important difference between the major and Japanese leagues from the late '40s to early '70s was how managers used pitchers. Fibber Hirayama, a Hiroshima Carp outfielder in the 1950s, remembers, "Our club didn't have a rotation. None. Whoever looked good in practice pitched. [So the pitchers] threw every day." Gene Bacque adds that even teams with a basic rotation would change the starter at the last second. "If you were warming up on the mound, and you didn't look good, they might change you before the game even started!"

Each team had an ace who was expected to carry the club. Nearly all of the players I interviewed agreed that most aces were major league quality pitchers. Long before Hideo Nomo came to the majors, Masaichi Kaneda, Kazuhisa Inao, Tadashi Suguira, and others had the potential to be household names in the United States. Glenn Mickens comments:

> The ace pitchers would just throw and throw. The other guys on the staff were just fillers. It was an honor to be the ace, [so] he was never going to say that he wouldn't pitch. An ace would pitch nine innings, and the next day if his team had a small lead, he would come out of the bullpen. Most got sore arms prematurely because they were overused.

Gene Martin of the Chunichi Dragons remembers a doubleheader against the Giants during the tight 1974 pennant race:

SOURCE

Wally Yonamine

> Tsuneo Horiuchi pitched the first game and beat us, 2-1. We couldn't guess who was pitching the second game. We were going, "Maybe this guy, maybe that guy." Well, I'll be darned if Horiuchi didn't come out and start the second game as well! He never pitched well after that. I mean, never again.

Martin's memory failed him slightly. Horiuchi actually had started the previous night prior to starting the first game of the doubleheader, but Martin is right about the effect on the hurler's arm. 1974 was Horiuchi's last good year. After being one of the league's most dominant pitchers for nine seasons, Horiuchi lost 18 games in 1975, and his ERA remained above 3.50 for the next nine seasons.

Gordy Windhorn added that managers sometimes overused aces to avoid criticism:

> Once they got their ace pitcher in there, managers would hang with them a long time, thinking that they could lose with them and not lose face. If they brought some rookie in there and he lost the ball game, that would make them look bad.

In important games managers sometimes used several starters. For example, on May 19, 1951, the Giants played the second-place Dragons. Future Hall of Famer Hiroshi Nakao started the game, but trailing 4-2, was removed in the sixth inning. His replacement was Hideo Fujimoto, another future Hall of Famer and starter. An inning later, the Giants tied the score and Fujimoto was lifted for Takumi Otomo, another starter. Otomo quickly gave up two runs, so the frustrated Giants manager brought in Takehiko Bessho, the ace, to stop the rally and finish the game, even through he had pitched a complete game just two days before. In the eventual loss, the Giants manager had used four of his five starting pitchers, and there were still four months left in the season.

To better understand the history of the ace, I graphed the league leaders in innings pitched through time. As you can see, the heyday of the ace fell between 1955 and 1961, when the league leaders threw around 400 innings per season. That was the era when Kazuhisa Inao had six decisions in the 1958 Japan Series and Tadashi Sugiura won all four games of the '59 series. Yomiuri Giants ace Motoshi Fujita remembered, "I just couldn't say no to [my manager]. "I would return from the ballpark so exhausted that I would occasionally collapse just inside my doorway." The workload destroyed Fujita's arm after just seven seasons, forcing him into an early retirement.

In the mid-1960s, managers began to rely on several starters rather than just the ace. Sadao Kondo, the pitching coach for the Chunichi Dragons, was the first to break away from overusing the ace. In 1960 and '61, Kondo and his manager relied almost exclusively on their ace, Hiroshi Gondo. Gondo pitched 429 innings in '61, nearly twice the amount of their number two starter, and 362 innings in '62. By 1963, he was barely

SOURCE

Caption

effective, but still threw 220 innings. His career was over the following year.

Realizing that overuse had destroyed Gondo's career and Chunichi's top pitcher, Kondo decided to revamp his pitching staff in 1964. He converted one of his top starters, Eiji Bando, into a stopper. The term stopper is rarely used today, but it denoted a top relief ace. Unlike today's closers, who pitch for an inning, stoppers were expected to pitch two to three innings, and sometimes would start important games. Kondo also set up a four-man rotation and used Bando to help out his starters who ran into trouble. Other teams soon followed suit, but many teams did not rely on a true rotation until the mid-1970s.

Figure 4 shows a noticeable drop in the number of innings pitched by the league's best pitchers in the mid-to-late 1960s—first in the Central League and then in the Pacific. The numbers continue to decline through time as the Japanese switched to true rotations, first with four starters, then with five, and now

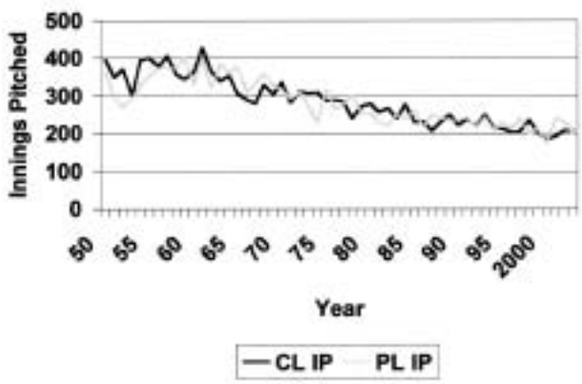

FIGURE 4

with six; and added stronger relief corps. Currently, most Japanese pitching staffs follow the major league pattern of a steady rotation, long relievers, setup men, and closers.

For context, I have compared the Japanese leaders in Innings Pitched with those from the National League (Figure 5). Japanese seasons are shorter than major league seasons, so I converted the National League statistics to make them comparable to the number of games played in Japan by multiplying the number of innings pitched by the ratio of games played in each league. As you can see, up until recently Japanese star pitchers threw more innings than their major league counterparts. The gap was greatest during the 1950s and early 1960s, when the Japanese ace reigned supreme, and has gradually closed until there is no significant difference today.

Although the Japanese game has historically been very different from major league ball, they became more similar in the past decade. Over a dozen Japanese now play in the major leagues, three Americans

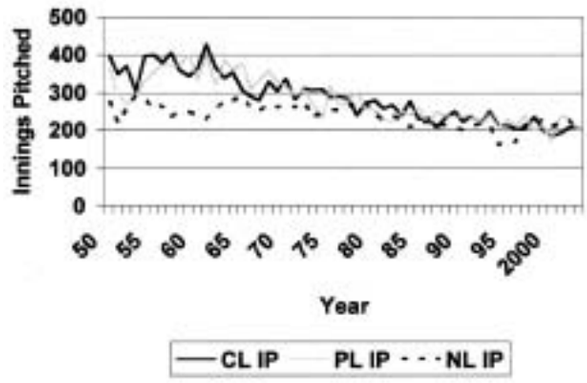

FIGURE 5

manage in Japan, and Major League Baseball is broadcast every day on Japanese television. Many Japanese fans enjoy the more aggressive style played in the majors, forcing Japanese teams to change their tactics to keep their fans.

But the Japanese are not trying to mimic Major League Baseball. Nor should they. Japanese baseball has its own strengths, notably superbly conditioned athletes and a mastery of baseball techniques that is rarely seen in the major leagues. They will continue to develop their own style, and maintain their rich baseball heritage. As former Yomiuri Giants player and executive Tadashi Iwamoto told me, "*Yakyu* is very different from American baseball. *Yakyu* matches the Japanese personality—the psyche of the Japanese—so *Yakyu* will always be vibrant." ■

Baseball and Briar

by Bruce Harris

Psychologists have long known that perceptions impact the way humans interact with each other. Stereotypical beliefs are attempts to organize the world and classify individuals into neat, predictable groups. For example, there is a tendency to generalize college professors as liberals and construction workers as conservatives. Of course, these far- sweeping generalizations may or may not be true. Pipe smokers similarly tend to elicit strong perceptions and generalizations. In his 1962 book, *Weber's Guide to Pipes and Pipe Smokers,* Carl Weber describes the typical pipe smoker:

> We are all aware that the pipe smoker belongs to a breed apart from other men. His pleasures are contemplation and relaxation; he does not rush, he is not nervous. His joys are the casual and meditative ones, those of the fireside, the easy chair, and the good book. The pipe stands as a symbol of this type of man, easily recognized by his even frame of mind, his unhurried approach to life's problems.[1]

George Cushman, editor of *Pipe Lovers* magazine, wrote:

The observation is often made that pipe smokers are all of a certain temperament, that not just any man can be a pipe smoker…most of them are solid, steady, rather easy going people who have more than the average amount of patience.[2]

Does pipe smoking relate to baseball? "Solid, steady, easy going"—those might be true in some cases, but the images of Pete Rose, Ty Cobb, Billy Martin, Earl Weaver, or Roberto Clemente don't conjure up those adjectives.

"I don't want pipe smokers on my club," quipped Joe McCarthy, the great Yankees manager.[3] Marse Joe had an aversion to pipe smoking ballplayers. He believed pipe smokers were too complacent and self-satisfied. When asked by a reporter prior to the 1937 All-Star Game if he planned to mirror National League manager Bill Terry's strategy, McCarthy snapped, "Let that pipe-smoker manage his team, and I'll manage mine."[4] Stories about McCarthy and pipes abound. Lefty Gomez, a cigar and pipe smoker himself, recalled one about Yankees third baseman Red Rolfe. Red smoked a straight-stemmed pipe:

> Joe had a fixation about guys smoking pipes. I roomed with Red Rolfe and Red loved his pipe. But he couldn't smoke it in the lobby. McCarthy thought it had something to do with making a man complacent. It was the funniest thing in the world to see Rolfe sneaking a quick pipe in his room with me standing guard at his door.[5]

Although McCarthy later claimed that his negative comments about pipe smokers were said in jest ("I don't care if a guy smokes a pipe, just as long as he plays up to his ability"),[6] the press had a field day with him. Joe had to "look the other way" in some instances. Reporter Bob Broeg observed:

> [Lou] Gehrig…whose pipe smoking Joe McCarthy tolerated because Mac was a smart manager who knew how to lead men, but also how and when to leave them alone when they buttered his bread.[7]

Pipe-smoking shortstop and former Philadelphia Phillies manager Art Fletcher served as a Yankees coach under Joe McCarthy. When asked by a writer to pose for a picture with his pipe, Fletcher refused, and explained to the reporter, "Not me…Don't you realize by now that McCarthy doesn't like a pipe smoker? [He] thinks a fellow is too self-satisfied [or] too complacent if he smokes a pipe." Fletcher continued:

> I shall never forget the time Joe caught Johnny Schulte (another Yankees coach) with a pipe. He laid him out—in a nice way, of course. And there was the time Lou Gehrig and other fellows brought out their briars. Joe couldn't stand it because he thought the fellows looked too self-satisfied, or something.[8]

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Dixie Walker started in the majors playing for McCarthy's Yankees, and was 33 years old before he touched tobacco in any form. Shortly after taking up the pipe, while wearing the uniform of the Brooklyn Dodgers, Walker went on a 72 for 169 (.426 average) batting tear. Walker delivered a shot aimed at McCarthy when he said, "I don't know whether I am a ball player or not, but I'm contented."[9]

Eddie "The Brat" Stanky, a pipe smoker and the antithesis of complacency, who owned and smoked at least a dozen pipes, defended the practice. "Oh, a pipe smoke is a source of great solace and relaxation. It caresses you in victory, and it expands your thinking processes in defeat. I am afraid that McCarthy had the pipe all wrong."[10] Still, McCarthy's influence was strong. When Chicago White Sox shortstop Chico Carrasquel began smoking a pipe in 1955, manager Marty Marion worried, "I hope it isn't a sign of contentment."[11]

A manager on the opposite end of the McCarthy spectrum was St. Louis Cardinals (1929-1933) and St. Louis Browns (1938) skipper Gabby Street. The former catcher, who played for five different teams during an eight-year major league career, was not only a great smoker of pipes, but he also had a collection of 70 pipes, which he displayed and proudly showed off visitors in his home.

> There are big pipes and little pipes, odd-shaped pipes, straight and curved stems, engraved pipes, ancient pipes and pipes with the newest inventions and the latest fads, pipes that college boys are supposed to smoke and the kind on which grandpa likes to puff while wearing his soft slippers and reclining in his easy chair. The pipes are gifts. Some are inscribed and others carry symbols on the bowl. One is a long-grooved creation more than a foot in length, once owned by a lieutenant in General Custer's troops—an officer who left the service just three days before the fatal massacre—and the pipe wound up in Gabby's possession instead of Chief Sitting Bull's. There is a bit of history or sentiment attached to each pipe in this collection and none will be smoked. Gabby has enough of the other kind to puff on for a lifetime.[12]

Two pipe-smoking infielders who played for Street's 1938 St. Louis Browns were George McQuinn and Don Heffner. McQuinn began his career in the Yankees organization. But two things were against him. First, he was a first baseman during the early 1930s, a time in which Lou Gehrig pretty much took care of business at first base in the Bronx. Second, McQuinn was a pipe smoker, and he knew McCarthy wanted no part of pipe smokers. McQuinn was a kindly and good-natured soul who enjoyed the outdoors and a simple life. He was also very devoted to his pipe. *The Sporting News* reported:

> [McQuinn] smokes an occasional cigar only to give the limited number of pipes a fellow can carry with him a chance to cool off and dry. If George had to choose between the first base job with the Yankees and his pipes, we honestly believe he would take the briar.[13]

This may be stretching things, but the point is clear. McQuinn was not a good fit for the Yankees or McCarthy. He went on to hit .276 for four different clubs with 135 home runs in a career that spanned 12 years. Interestingly, he finished his career with the New York Yankees in 1947 and 1948, but by then Bucky Harris had replaced McCarthy as Yankees' manager.

Another pipe smoker who was traded from the Yankees to the Browns was Don Heffner. Much more competitive than McQuinn, Heffner's major league career lasted 11 years. Unlike McQuinn, Heffner played for McCarthy's Yankees (1934-1937), as well as Street's 1938 St. Louis Browns team. Heffner never had a real shot with Joe McCarthy. Besides being a pipe smoker, Heffner had to compete with the likes of Tony Lazzeri. He appeared in only 161 games during his four-year stint. In 1938, playing for Street, Heffner appeared in 141 games.

In addition to Gabby Street, two other major leaguers smoked and collected pipes. Like many ballplayers, Hank Sauer enjoyed golf. But his hobby was pipe collecting. He kept one pipe in the clubhouse and he smoked every day before he put on his uniform.[14] Former MVP and HOF great Joe "Ducky" Medwick was a huge fan of the pipe. He purchased many fine pipes from Henry Jost and Son, who owned and operated a tobacco store on Sixth Street in St. Louis. Players, if nothing else, are superstitious. Medwick recalled:

> It's a funny thing. But one day I came in here [Jost's shop] and bought a pipe. That afternoon I hit a home run and, in fact, had a swell day all around. And after that, I noticed that every time I came back and bought a pipe, I'd have a wonderful day. Boy, the pipes that batting average cost me![15]

Tobacconist Henry Jost said of Medwick, "One day after he hit one of those home runs, he came in and bought nine pipes for those other Cardinals." To which Medwick replied:

> Don't get the idea that I am keeping the whole team in pipes….Quite a few of the Cardinals, including manager Frankie Frisch, are pipe smokers and I've bought a lot of 'em in here. Bob Weiland, the pitcher, is a great pipe fancier, but he goes in for antiques and that sort of thing. Fans, knowing my interest in pipes, sometimes send me antiques, but I'm not interested in 'em. I want pipes I can smoke.[16]

If one is to believe pipe tobacco advertisements, the clown prince of baseball, Al Schacht, was a long-time pipe smoker. Al is better known for his clowning antics in the third base coaching box than for his three-year major league pitching career with the Washington Senators. He mimicked third base coaches and entertained players and fans alike as he danced his way through exaggerated, imaginary bunt and hit-and-run signs.

Schacht may have not been the only one sending unique and unusual signals to batters. While managing in the Negro Leagues, Hall of Famer Rube Foster reportedly used his pipe in a number of different ways to communicate signs and signals to his players, and on occasion, as a weapon. Several different versions of Foster and his pipe permeate baseball lore. He may have smoked a meerschaum pipe,[17] but whatever the material, Foster was an inveterate pipe smoker. Some claim he gave his players steal and bunt signs by altering the way he blew smoke from his pipe.[18] Others say the smoke signals were decoys, and that Foster communicated the signals by holding his pipe at different angles,[19] or by removing it from his mouth.[20] He was also known to use his pipe as a means of discipline:

> Foster brooked no disobedience to his orders. Earl M. Foster, Rube's son, remembers one time Jelly Gardner was sent up to bunt and he tripled. He came back and sat down on the bench. The old man took the pipe that he smoked—he always had it—and he popped him right across the head. And he fined him and told him, as long as I'm paying you, you'll do as I tell you to do.[21]

Cigarettes were not tolerated by Rube Foster. A player could not even hold one in his hand while sitting on the bench. However, pipes and cigars were

permitted. It is difficult to separate fact from fiction, and perhaps we will never know the entire truth. No matter. The image of the great Rube Foster puffing smoke signals from a pipe, whether it is made of the aforementioned meerschaum or a badly chewed corn cob in the corner of the dugout, is an image to cherish forever. And, wherever the truth lies, Rube Foster deserves his place in the Baseball Hall of Fame and, if all is fair in the world, a spot in the Pipe Smoker's Hall of Fame.[23]

A number of players, managers, team owners, and umpires enjoyed the pleasures of the pipe. Sparky Anderson frequently addressed reporters before and after games while puffing on his pipe. The cantankerous Billy Martin, not known for his patience, smoked a pipe. In fact, he starred in a number of television commercials and magazine ads extolling the virtues of Captain Black pipe tobacco. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Ted Williams, during his Washington Senators managerial days, took a page out of Joe McCarthy's book. Williams had an aversion to pipe smokers and their "I've got it made" disposition. Fortunately for pipe-smoking pitcher Joe Coleman, he was traded from the Senators to the pipe-friendly Detroit Tigers under Billy Martin in 1970, where he proceeded to win 20 games.

Great pitchers such as Christy Mathewson and Cy Young were pipe smokers, as was fellow Hall of Famer Nap Lajoie. Young owned a number of pipes,

including a heavy one and a stubby one. He often received pipes for birthday gifts, and on his 80th birthday celebration, he received a lifetime supply of Granger Rough Cut tobacco, his favorite brand. The Brooklyn Dodgers' Clyde Sukeforth was an inveterate pipe smoker and an expert on pipe tobacco. He was able to identify any brand of fine-cut tobacco after only one puff. And Dodgers team captain Pee Wee Reese was often seen, "…after a game in Ebbets Field…sitting before his locker, placidly puffing on his old briar pipe, with a group of Dodgers around him."[24]

No fewer than 14 of the 1936 Pittsburgh Pirates team, among them Big Poison Paul and Little Poison Lloyd Waner, smoked pipes. The great Al Simmons took up pipe smoking. Perhaps he was subtly persuaded; his prospective father-in-law ran a wholesale tobacco business. Pitcher Ray Moore was a tobacco farmer in Maryland in the off-season. Moore was a pipe smoker, and may have influenced his 1960 Washington Senators teammates, nearly all of whom took to pipe smoking. Cubs owner William Wrigley had more than chewing gum in his mouth. He also had a pipe protruding from his lips. Bill Benswanger, who owned the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1932-46, was rarely, if ever seen without his pipe. If the late Cleveland Indians general manager Phil Seghi held his pipe in his left hand, that meant "somebody's going." A trade was imminent, recalled Oakland's Sal Bando.[25]

The legendary Babe Ruth was known for his off-the-field antics as well as his prowess on the field. After one of his all-night affairs, Ed Barrow caught Ruth in bed, under the covers, smoking a pipe at 6:00 A.M. When questioned by Barrow about the pipe, the Babe replied, "It's very relaxing."[26]

Among the thousands of pre-smoked churchwarden style clay pipes on display at Keens Steakhouse in New York City is pipe number 19499, formerly owned by Babe Ruth.

Who can forget pitcher turned author Jim Brosnan? The Professor was an intellectual who, off the field, wore a blazer and incessantly smoked a pipe. Eddie Grant, who played third base during 1905-15, was known for his Ivy League diplomas. Nicknamed "Harvard Eddie," he could generally be found smoking a pipe and reading a book. Sadly, he is best remembered not for his appearance in the 1913 World Series, but as the most prominent major leaguer killed in combat in World War I.[27]

In the 1980 World Series, millions of people watched the Philadelphia Phillies defeat the Kansas City Royals in six games. These same fans took note of U. L. Washington and his ever-present toothpick. U. L.'s toothpicks raised a few eyebrows. Is it safe? What if he swallows it or stabs another player with it? Red Hoffman, columnist for the Lynn, Massachusetts, *Daily Evening Item,* posed the question: "Is a protruding toothpick legal?" He was told there were no rules about it, and therefore it was legal. What about lollipops or pipes? wondered Hoffman. Could a player come to bat with a pipe hanging from his lips? The answer came from Bob Grim, staff assistant to American League president Lee MacPhail. "It would be the umpire's judgment," was the response.[28] Keep watching, fans. You may see your favorite player grab two very different pieces of lumber before emerging from the dugout and strolling to home plate. With white ash in hand, and a fine old briar protruding from his mouth, the batter sets. Here comes the pitch. ■

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank SABR member Peter Richardson for his assistance and help researching Rube Foster.

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CONFIRMED PIPE SMOKERS

	First Year	Last Year	Mgr Years	HOF
Frank Foreman	1884	1902		
Uncle Wilbert Robinson	1886	1902	1902; 1914-1931	y
Amos Rusie	1889	1901		y
Cy Young	1890	1911	1907	y
Nap Lajoie	1896	1916	1905-1909	y
Christy Mathewson	1900	1916	1916-1918	y
Johnny Evers	1902	1929	1913; 1921; 1924	y
Rube Foster	1902	1917	1910-1926	y
Charles Gabby Street	1904	1931	1929-1933; 1938	
Miller Huggins	1904	1916	1913-1929	y
Moose McCormick	1904	1913		
Eddie Grant	1905	1915		
Ty Cobb	1905	1928	1921-1926	y
Charlie Graham	1906	1906		
Bill McKechnie	1907	1920	1915; 1922-1926; 1928-1946	y
Nap Rucker	1907	1916		
Art Fletcher	1909	1922	1923-1926; 1929	
Jack Onslow	1912	1917	1949-1950	
Babe Ruth	1914	1932		y
Harold Muddy Ruel	1915	1934	1947	
Dazzy Vance	1915	1935		
Burleigh Grimes	1916	1934		y
Bill Piercy	1917	1926		
Jimmy Dykes	1918	1939	1934-1946; 1951-1954; 1958-1961	
Wally Kimmick	1919	1926		
Frankie Frisch	1919	1937	1933-1938; 1940-1946; 1949-1951	y
Al Schacht	1919	1921		
Zack Taylor	1920	1935	1946; 1948-1951	
Ossie Bluege	1922	1939	1943-1947	
Lou Gehrig	1923	1939		y
Bill Terry	1923	1936	1932-1941	y
Johnny Schulte	1923	1932		
Al Simmons	1924	1944		y
Earle Combs	1924	1935		y
Jimmie Foxx	1925	1945		y
Lefty Grove	1925	1941		y
Bill Rogell	1925	1940		
Paul Waner	1926	1945		y
Clyde Sukeforth	1926	1945	1947	
Tony Lazzeri	1926	1939		y
Lloyd Waner	1927	1945		y
Pepper Martin	1928	1944		
Bob Weiland	1928	1940		
Ben Chapman	1930	1946	1945-1948	
Red Rolfe	1931	1942	1949-1952	
Dixie Walker	1931	1949		
Stan Hack	1932	1947	1954-1956; 1958	
Monte Pearson	1932	1941		
Johnny Allen	1932	1944		
Joe Medwick	1932	1948		y
Don Brennan	1933	1937		
Don Heffner	1934	1944	1966	
Harry Gumbert	1935	1950		
Walt Alston	1936	1936	1954-1976	y
George McQuinn	1936	1948		
Al Milnar	1936	1946		
Al Epperly	1938	1950		
Charlie Keller	1939	1952		
Phil Masi	1939	1952		
Pee Wee Reese	1940	1958		y
Dave Philley	1941	1962		
Hank Sauer	1941	1959		
Johnny Schmitz	1941	1956		
Billy Hitchcock	1942	1953	1960; 1962-1963; 1966-1967	
Johnny Sain	1942	1955		
Eddie Stanky	1943	1953	1952-1955; 1966-1968; 1977	
Jim Wilson	1945	1958		
Bobby Thomson	1946	1960		
Ferrell Anderson	1946	1953		
Dale Mitchell	1946	1956		
Billy Martin	1950	1961	1969; 1971-1983; 1985; 1988	
Chico Carrasquel	1950	1959		
Joe Adcock	1950	1966	1967	
Jackie Jensen	1950	1961		
Gil McDougald	1951	1960		
Ray Moore	1952	1963		
Jim Brosnan	1954	1963		
Frank Howard	1958	1973	1981; 1983	
Charley Smith	1960	1969		
Willie Horton	1963	1980		
Joe Coleman	1965	1979		
Phil Seghi	gen mgr			
William Benswanger	owner			
William Wrigley	owner			
Bill Klem	umpire			
George Magerkurth	umpire			
Harry Geisel	umpire			
Sparky Anderson	gen mgr		1970-1992	

Surprising Johnny Sain

by Jan Finkel

Most fans with a sense of history know a fair bit about Johnny Sain. Of course, they know all about the doggerel that goes something like "Spahn and Sain and pray for rain." They know, too, that he won 20 or more games four times in his war-shortened career, and that he won one of the most dramatic World Series pitching duels, beating Bob Feller, 1-0, in the opener of the 1948 classic. And they know that he was one of a small handful of the finest pitching coaches of all time, turning good pitchers into great ones and fair ones into good ones, and cranking out 20-game winners like so many widgets. Maybe they even know that he trained fighter pilots during World War II. But what they don't know is that he holds a surprising and unique record.

Sain was a rare commodity, a pitcher who could hit, whose forté was making contact with the ball. So good was Sain that he struck out a mere 20 times in 774 regular season at-bats. That's the fewest strikeouts for any hitter—position player or pitcher—with a comparable number of at-bats since batters' strikeouts were first recorded in 1910 in the National League and 1913 in the American League. Moreover, he didn't hurt his club by being so obsessed with not striking out that he hit into a double play; he hit into only 25 of the rally killers. He also drew 24 walks, not a huge number, but how many pitchers can claim that they walked more than they struck out? Finally, Sain was a productive hitter, leading his fellow pitchers in RBIs five times (1946-1948, 1950, and 1952) and leading the National League in sacrifices in 1948 with 16. Along the same lines, his 101 RBIs puts him in a relatively small group of pitchers who drove in 100 runs in their careers. Indeed, his having done so in 774 at-bats places Sain between Earl Wilson (740) and Jim Tobin (796) as the only pitchers to reach the century mark in fewer than 800 at-bats.

Making Sain's achievement all the more unusual is that the few writers who have mentioned his hitting have done so in what amounts to a throwaway line. Brent Kelley writes: "He batted .245 for his career, and in 854 total plate appearances (774 at-bats, 24 bases on balls, and 56 sacrifices) he struck out only 20 times." Mike and Neil Shalin don't do any better: "He…struck out only twenty times in a career of 774 official at bats."

Each of Sain's strikeouts—21, including one in the 1953 World Series—merits a special look.

The first came on April 29, 1942, five days after Sain's major league debut. Jesse Flores of the Cubs did the honors in Wrigley Field. It wasn't a total loss for Sain, though, as he came on in relief of starter Al Javery, pitched the last 4⅓ innings and picked up his first win, 8-3. Although it was Sain's only strikeout of the year, he didn't look like much of a hitter, managing only two hits and a walk in 30 plate appearances for an anemic .074 average.

The 1943-1945 seasons found Sain in the Navy, training fighter pilots and developing the mental acuity that would make him a first-rate major league pitcher.

Four years older in 1946, Sain had his first big season, going 20-14 with a career-best 2.21 ERA and almost achieving a pitcher's dream of winning 20 games and hitting .300. He barely missed, going 28-for-94 with two doubles and a triple for a .298 average and leading National League pitchers with 17 RBIs. However, Sain did manage an unusual feat, as he went the entire season without striking out. Only three National Leaguers with 90 or more at-bats have accomplished this since 1910, when the league began to keep track of hitters' strikeouts. (No American Leaguers have achieved it since 1913.) Only Lloyd Waner in 1941 and Bill Rariden in 1920 with 219 and 101 at-bats, respectively, made more trips to the plate. They didn't hit as well as Sain, though, Waner finishing at .292 and Rariden managing a .248 mark. The irony is that Sain, who had told interviewers that he wanted to go a whole season without striking out, apparently forgot that he did so in 1946.

Sain attained the pitcher's dream in 1947 with a 21-12 mark accompanied by a 3.52 ERA and a .346 average. *The Chicago Tribune* on March 23, 1948, recognized Sain's achievement with a note headed "Pitchers Who Can Hurl—And Hit—Are Scarce!" and

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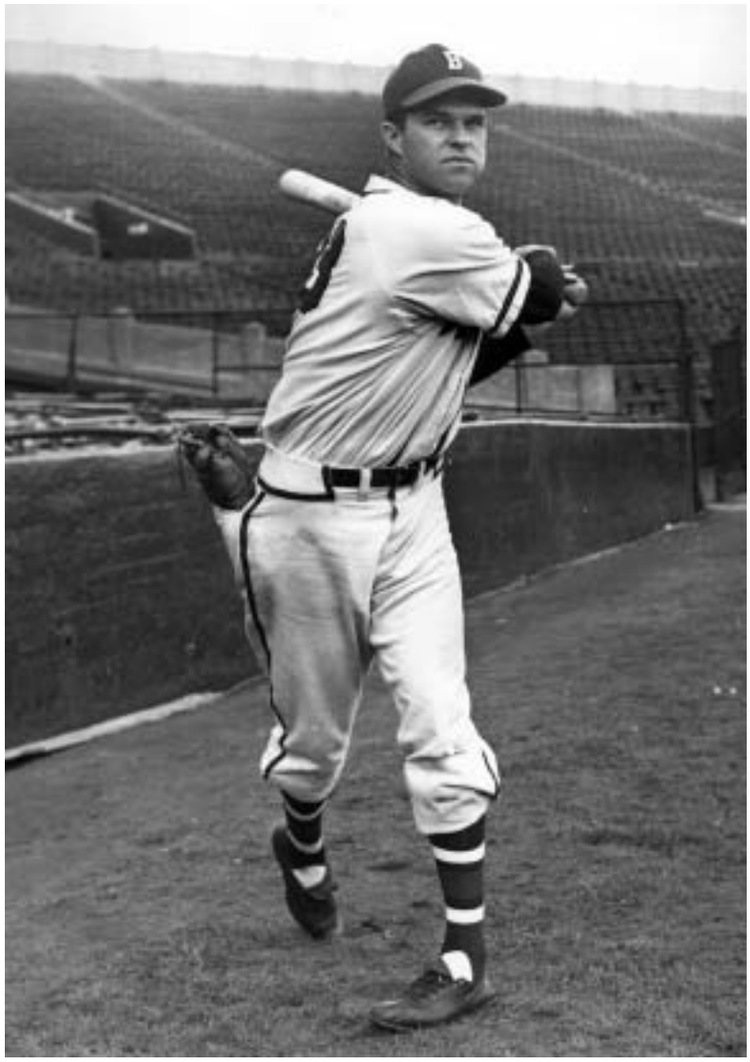
SOURCE



Johnny Sain

pointed out that he was the first National league pitcher to do so since the Cardinals' Curt Davis had won 22 games and hit .301 in 1939. Bucky Walters won 27 that year and hit .325. He showed some power with a career-high seven doubles and a .411 slugging percentage. He had his best year driving in runs, topping all National League pitchers with 18. In the midst of this fine hitting Sain struck out once, falling in Ebbets Field on June 26 to lefty Joe Hatten. He wasn't involved in the decision in the 8-6 Boston loss. Sain singled in the game, however, beginning a 14-game hitting streak. The streak had a slight hiccup in Sain's next start, against the Giants on July 1, when he didn't come to bat for the worst of all possible reasons. He lasted one-third of an inning as the Giants scored eight runs on the way to a 15-3 victory that was halted by rain after seven innings. Over the 14 games, Sain went 21-for-41, a .512 clip punctuated by five doubles, seven runs scored, and six RBIs. He kept the streak alive on July 20 with a pinch-hit single in the seventh for Clyde Shoun in a 9-1 loss to the Pirates. Murry Dickson of the Cardinals ended Sain's streak on August 24 as St. Louis punched out Sain and the Braves, 9-5.

The 1948 season was the high point of Sain's career. The top right hander in the National League, he led the Braves to the pennant with 24 wins against 15 losses and a 2.60 ERA, including a stretch of nine complete games and a 7-2 mark over a 29-day period. Sain ended the strikeout drama early, going down on Opening Day (April 20) in Philadelphia to Dutch Leonard. The strikeout was emblematic of the game, as Leonard cruised to a 3-1 complete-game win. He went down twice more in 1948, neither occasion hurting him. Gerry Staley of the Cardinals nailed him in St. Louis on August 24, but Sain got a pair of hits (driving in a run with a double) in his 9-3 complete-game win. The same thing happened at home against the Cubs on September 14, when he fell prey to southpaw Cliff Chambers. Sain had two hits, one a triple, as he pitched a complete game, winning his 20th game, 10-3. His triple came in the second inning with two out and started the scoring, driving in two runs against starter Hank Borowy. The Braves continued the onslaught, scoring six more runs against the right hander. Helping his cause further, Sain led the league with 16 sacrifice outs.

Weary from his efforts of the last year, Sain had a miserable season in 1949, winning but 10 games while losing 17. It wasn't a case of bad luck, either, as he posted a horrendous 4.81 ERA. Even his hitting tailed off, as his average dropped to .206, his lowest since his rookie year. He remained a tough strikeout, though, failing to make contact just twice and not doing so until September 5 in Ebbets Field. Pinch-hitting for Warren Spahn in the ninth inning of a 7-2 loss, he fell to lefty Paul Minner. Then on September 22, in one of the few hard-luck games he had that year, Sain struck out facing the Pirates' Murry Dickson in Forbes Field. Sain and Dickson pitched complete games with Dickson taking the 1-0 decision.

The Man of a Thousand Curves, as Sain was known, rebounded in 1950 to go 20-13 despite a higher than

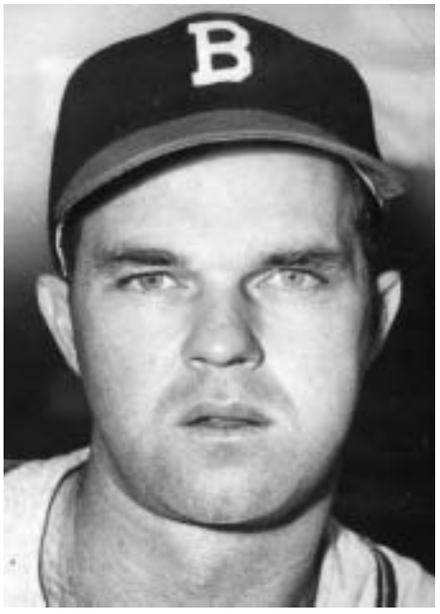
average ERA of 3.94. His hitting didn't improve as he matched his 1949 average of .206. Nevertheless, he led National League pitchers with 15 RBIs, walked a career-best six times, and hit his first major league home run. The big fly came on September 23 in Boston, a bases-empty shot in the bottom of the eighth against the Giants' Larry Jansen. The homer tied the game at three, but Sain lost in the 10th when Sam Jethroe lost Don Mueller's fly in the sun. Mueller landed at third with a triple, and Hank Thompson followed with a single for the 4-3 Giants win. On the other hand, none of Sain's three strikeouts hurt him. Howie Pollett took him down in St. Louis on May 7 on his way to pitching a 15-0 laugher. Cubs southpaw Johnny Schmitz struck him out in Boston on August 6, but Sain still won, 5-2, with both men going the distance. Finally, he struck out against Frank Smith in Cincinnati on August 29, but helped himself by driving in a run in a 4-0 shutout.

Sain seemed to be in decline in 1951. He managed only a 5-13 slate and 4.21 ERA with the Braves. He raised his average to a less-than-robust .212 and hit his second home run. The victim was Pirate left hander Bill Werle, as Sain teed off in Forbes Field on June 12 with a solo blast in the sixth inning of a 13-3 win. Still, he struck out only three times. The first came against Bubba Church in Philadelphia on April 22. Sain drove in a run in the game but lost 6-5 in the ninth when Willie Jones singled with the bases loaded. Sain and Church pitched complete games. Pirate lefty Paul LaPalme struck him out in Boston on June 5, as his teammates rocked Braves pitchers for 21 hits while winning, 8-0. And he went down at home to Cincinnati's Howie Fox, not figuring in the decision in a 6-5 Braves win on August 25.

Sain's tenure in Boston came to a sudden end four days later as the Braves traded him to the Yankees for a young Lew Burdette and $50,000. The cash helped the Braves in the short run, and Burdette helped over the long haul, coming back to haunt the Yankees in the 1957 World Series. The deal didn't look good for New York, as Sain went 2-1 with a 4.14 ERA, but he would pay dividends over the next three years. Nobody in the new league managed to strike him out in 14 trips to the plate.

Showing his value and versatility, Sain went 11-6 with a 3.46 ERA as a spot starter and frequent reliever for the powerful Yankees, who were on their way to their fourth straight World Series triumph. He completed half of his 16 starts, finished 15 games, and saved seven. He raised his average to a respectable .268 and notched his third home run, but he struck

Johnny Sain



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out a career-high five times! He got the homer before striking out, victimizing Boston left hander Bill Wight with one on in the bottom of the third inning on May 9, helping the Yankees to a 7-4 win. His first strikeout came on June 25 in St. Louis against the Browns' Satchel Paige when he pinch-hit for Bobby Hogue in a 10-9 loss. On July 22 he relieved Vic Raschi in a 7-3 win in Cleveland but couldn't manage anything against southpaw Lou Brissie. September was not a good month for Sain the hitter. Relieving Ewell Blackwell in the second game of a doubleheader on the 2nd, he struck out for the first time in Yankee Stadium against Sid Hudson. The Yankees didn't need Sain's bat as they swept the Red Sox, 5-0 and 4-0. A week later, on the 9th, he struck out in St. Louis against lefty Dick Littlefield. Sain got a hit and drove in a run in his other time at bat, but it was to no avail as the Yankees lost, 5-4, when Ray Scarborough hit Clint Courtney with the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth. And in Philadelphia on the 28th he fell to Carl Scheib while pinch-hitting for Bill Miller in the seventh inning of a 9-4 loss. The strikeouts nothwithstanding, Sain led American League pitchers with 14 RBIs.

The Yankees took an unprecedented fifth consecutive World Series in 1953, and Sain was there to help them, going 14-7 with a fine 3.00 ERA. He started 19 games and completed 10 of them, and finished 19 games while saving nine. He struck out twice—once in the regular season and once in the World Series. The Indians' Bob Lemon struck him out in Cleveland on July 21 on his way to winning a complete game, 8-3. Sain got a hit off the Indians ace, but it wasn't

enough. In game one of the Series at Yankee Stadium, he relieved Allie Reynolds in the sixth against the Dodgers. Clem Labine got him on a called third strike in the seventh, but Sain doubled in a pair of runs in the eighth, helping to ice a 9-5 win.

Remaining powerful in 1954, the Yankees roared to 103 wins, their best total under Casey Stengel. Ironically, they came in eight games behind the Indians, who won a then-American League record 111 games. Once again Sain was a major contributor. No longer a starter, he appeared in 45 games, finishing 39 and saving a league-best 22, everything adding up to a 6-6 mark and 3.16 ERA. His .353 average didn't hurt either. Mopping up in a 7-4 win over the Athletics at Yankee Stadium on May 9, he struck out for the final time in his career, against Art Ditmar.

Following the 1954 season, the Athletics moved to Kansas City. Sain appeared in three games for New York in 1955, pitching ineffectively with a 6.75 ERA. On May 11, in what must have been a humiliating exchange, the Yankees traded Sain and future Hall of Famer Enos Slaughter to Kansas City for Sonny Dixon and cash. Appearing in 25 games for the A's, Sain went 2-5 while surrendering 5.44 earned runs per game. Kansas City released him on July 23. In his brief stopover in Kansas City, Sain came to bat eight times with no hits and no strikeouts. Surprisingly, pitchers Lou Sleater (13 ABs), Bob Davis (10 ABs), and Sain are the only players who never struck out in a Kansas City Athletics uniform.

Sain's final batting numbers reveal several noteworthy items. He never struck out twice in one game; no pitcher ever struck him out twice. For a right-handed batter, though, he seems to have struck out more often against southpaws than one might expect. In addition, the list contains two Hall of Famers (Paige and Lemon), a handful of good pitchers in Leonard, Staley, Dickson, Pollett, Schmitz, Brissie, Labine, and Hudson. The rest were pretty much journeymen, although Chambers and Ditmar each had a couple of solid seasons and Chambers threw a no-hitter in 1951. Finally, listed at 6-foot-2 and between 185 and 200 pounds, Sain was a large man for his time, so his 28 doubles, four triples, and three home runs don't show much power to go with his decent .245 average. On the other hand, he homered in Braves Field, Forbes Field, and Yankee Stadium, ballparks that were anything but friendly to right-handed hitters. Still, those 20 strikeouts stand out, giving Sain a record not likely to be broken.

As The Man of a Thousand Curves, Johnny Sain obviously had a lot of surprises for hitters. Not so obviously, with a bat in his hands, the man had a few surprises for pitchers. ■

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Gabriel Schechter, research associate at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York, kindly provided me with copies of Sain's daily sheets, an indispensable gift.

Membership in the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) gave me access to *ProQuest,* enabling me to examine the *New York Times, Chicago Tribune,* and *Los Angeles Times* for box scores and game reports.

Paper of Record (www.paperofrecord.com) afforded me similar entry to *The Sporting News* and its box scores and game reports.

Also invaluable were *Retrosheet* (www.retrosheet.org) for game data and statistics, and *The Baseball Index* (TBI) (www.baseballindex.org) for source material.

An Analysis of the Gyroball

by Alan Nathan and Dave Baldwin

Baseball has been around for over 150 years, and during that time many thousands of pitchers, hoping to find the unhittable pitch, have experimented with grip, delivery, and release of the ball. Consequently, rarely is there anything new under the sun in the modern game. When a potentially new pitch comes along, therefore, it can generate a great deal of uncritical excitement and media attention. Such was the case with a recent, highly touted "innovation" called the "gyroball."

The gyroball was the brainchild of Kazushi Tezuka, a Japanese pitching coach, and Ryutaro Himeno, a Japanese computer scientist who determined the properties of the pitch through elaborate simulations. Their book (in Japanese only), *Makyuu no Shoutai* (Roughly translated as *The Secret of the Demon Miracle Pitch*), published in 2001, first described the spin and behavior of the gyroball, as well as the mechanics used in delivering the pitch.[1]

The gyroball story seemed to grow as information was translated from Japanese to English. During 2006 articles extolling the near-magical qualities of the gyroball appeared in many publications and on many websites (see Bibliography for examples), although these properties were not claimed by Tezuka and Himeno. An article in *Esquire* magazine described the so-called demon pitch as "the first entirely new baseball pitch to emerge since the split-fingered fastball in the 1970s."[2]

In the United States, the gyroball became a media goldmine when word spread that Daisuke Matsuzaka, an outstanding Japanese pitcher, threw this pitch—maybe—or at least was considering throwing it. As Matsuzaka negotiated a contract with the Boston Red Sox, the gyroball became one of baseball's hottest topics.

In this paper, we describe and evaluate the physics and psychology of the gyroball. Along the way, we will point out some of the many unwarranted assumptions and claims that have been made for this pitch.

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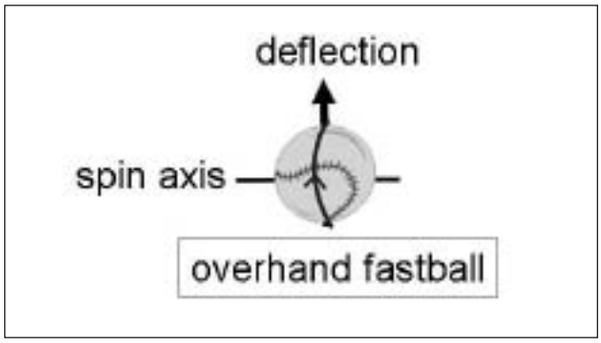
THE MECHANICS OF THE GYROBALL

The trajectory of a pitch in flight is governed by the gravitational force, drag force, and the Magnus force on a spinning ball. Gravity makes the ball drop by three to four feet—the slower the pitch, the longer gravity acts and the greater the drop. The drag force results from air resistance to the movement of the ball. It acts to slow the pitch. The Magnus force deflects the ball, the direction and magnitude of the deflection depending on the spin rate, the speed of the pitch, and the orientation of the spin axis. This force causes the ball to break in the direction that the leading hemisphere (face) of the ball is turning. The Magnus force is largest when the spin axis and trajectory are at 90° to each other and is exactly zero when they are perfectly aligned.

On all conventional pitches (except a perfectly non-spinning knuckleball) the spin passes over some portion of the ball's face. For example, the backspin of an overhand fastball has a spin axis that is perpendicular to the pitch's trajectory. This 90° axis angle produces the maximum lift, a force that partially counteracts the gravitational force (Figure 1). Therefore, with strong lift and a short flight time, the fastball



SOURCE

FIGURE 1

won't drop nearly as much as an overhand curveball, which is slower and has a downward Magnus force (Figure 2). The slider has a diagonal spin over the face; consequently, the pitch has a side break component and a downward break component (Figure 3).

The defining feature of the gyroball is the unusual angle of the ball's spin axis. The gyroball's spin axis is collinear with the trajectory of the pitch; thus, the spin is perpendicular to the ball's path. The face of the ball

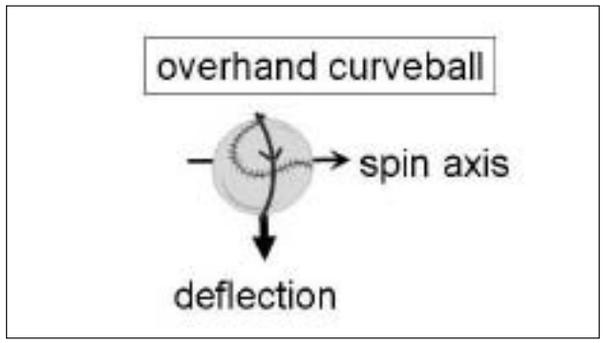


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FIGURE 2

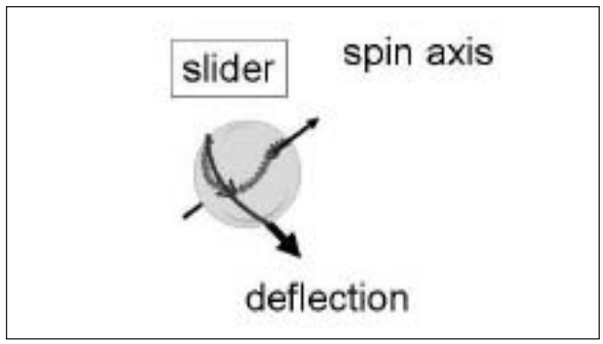
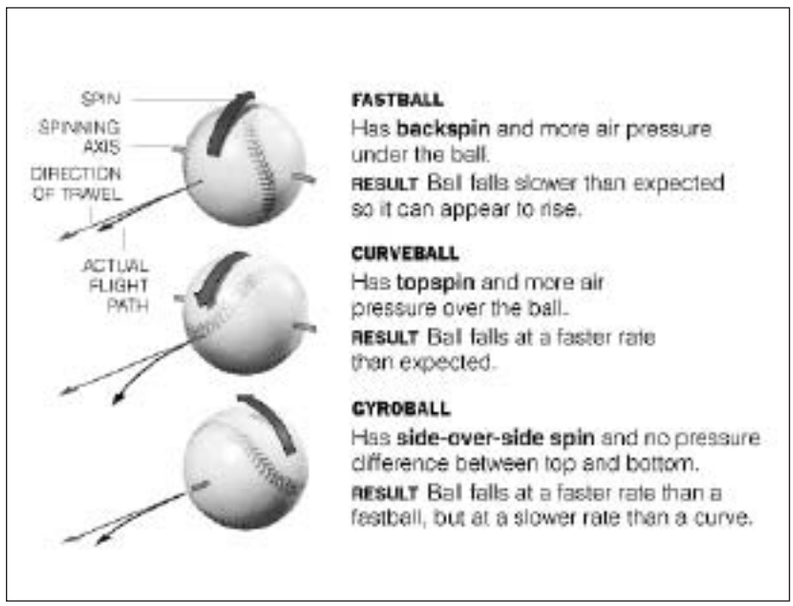


FIGURE 3

is spinning around a spin axis pole, which is located in the center of the face. The spin of the gyroball does not pass over any portion of the ball's face. Since the Magnus force depends on the angle between the spin axis and the trajectory, and this angle is zero in the gyroball, the net Magnus force on the ball is zero. The only forces acting on the gyroball are gravity and drag. Figure 4 compares the spin and behavior of the fastball, curveball, and gyroball, as illustrated in a *New York Times* article.[3]

As there is no Magnus force acting on the gyroball, the exaggerated break reported in a number of publications is false. *Esquire* contributed to the unsubstantiated claims by saying the pitch "breaks as much as three feet before entering the strike zone." On *CBS News* sportswriter Will Carroll says, "It takes a hard left turn."[4] *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported, "To the right-handed batter the ball appears to be coming right at them like a hanging curveball, then takes a drastic dive across the plate." The article mentions, however, that the gyroball "could be baseball's next big pitch. Or it could be a myth."[5] *Popular Mechanics* described Himeno's simulated gyroball: "whirling clockwise as it flew forward, the virtual ball curved as abruptly as its closest relative, the slider, but without sinking." This article, too, admitted the pitch could be "a complete and total sham."[6]

The gyroball requires a delivery that is different from that of other pitches. The pitcher must create the desired spin axis by establishing the ball's equator with appropriate finger pressure upon release. As Tezuka describes the delivery, the arm angle is low—no higher than sidearm. Those few pitchers who are reported to be throwing the pitch in Japan are all sidearmers or submariners. Unlike the supine hand orientation used on the delivery of a curve, though, the hand is pronated as the ball is released. The ball rolls off the thumb side of the tips of the index and second fingers. The thumb is pointing downward on the followthrough. The pronation of the hand is claimed to be unlikely to damage the pitcher's elbow.



SOURCE

FIGURE 4

WHY WOULD THE GYROBALL BE EFFECTIVE?

The gyroball might fool the hitter in at least four ways. First, the gyroball has no Magnus force to lift it against gravity (as does a fastball) or to augment the pull of gravity (as does a curveball). The batter who is looking for a fastball will see a pitch that drops about fifteen inches more than the fastball would. The batter will tend to swing too high on such a pitch. The gyroball drops much less than a curveball, so if the batter is looking for a curve, he will swing under the pitch.

Second, the release of the gyroball directs much of the force of the fingers into creating the unusual spin rather

than imparting forward velocity to the pitch. As this reduces the forward velocity without slowing the arm's motion, the gyroball can be effective as a changeup. The unexpected slower speed of the gyroball will cause the batter to underestimate the drop and overestimate the final height of the pitch. As a result, the batter will tend to swing too high.

Third, ballplayers are accustomed to seeing the spin coming across some part of the face of a ball in flight. This is the case for any ball, thrown or batted, that the player catches, and it is the case for any pitch the player tries to hit (except the gyroball). Seeing that aspect of the gyroball might be an experience unusual enough to confuse the batter. Perhaps the batter needs new skills to judge the speed of a ball that is spinning perpendicular to the trajectory.

Fourth, the batter who is looking for a slider might mistake the appearance of the gyroball's face for that of the slider. A slider thrown off a four-seam fastball grip displays a red dot (at the location of the axis pole) in the upper right quadrant of the face (from a right-handed pitcher—upper left quadrant from a lefty).[7] The dot appears in the center of the face on the gyroball, but this is close enough to the slider's dot that a batter might find it difficult distinguishing between the pitches. The gyroball could be an effective pitch against a batter who has been set up for it with a slider.

Occasionally, some pitchers accidentally tilt the axis of an intended slider so that the axis pole is centered in the face. This pitch is called a back-up slider because the catcher, anticipating that the pitch will break, must "back up" his glove in order to catch it. It can confuse both catcher and batter, but it isn't thrown deliberately, so batters can't be set up for it. The back-up slider has the same spin characteristics as a gyroball.

DOES DAISUKE MATSUZAKA THROW A GYROBALL?

Does he or doesn't he? This question was discussed at great length in the media in the early weeks of the 2007 season. Matsuzaka himself has been rather coy about it. When asked whether he throws the gyroball he replied, "I have done it in a game, but not too much. Sometimes accidentally."[8] Rather than listen to what people are saying, let's see if we can bring science to bear on the subject.

Our principal tool will be the PITCHf/x pitch-tracking system,[9] which allows us to investigate in great detail each pitch thrown in every game in which the system is operating. In Figure 5 we plot each recorded pitch thrown by Matsuzaka during the first half of the 2007 season, 790 pitches in all. The figure is a scatterplot showing the vertical break versus the

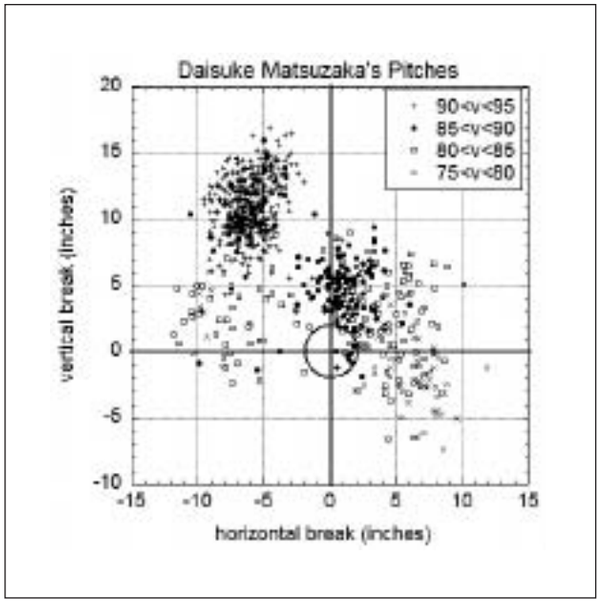


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FIGURE 5

horizontal break, where "break" is defined to be the deviation from the trajectory due to the Magnus force. The pitches are plotted from the catcher's view. The plot is symbol-coded by different speeds. According to our understanding of the Magnus force, a gyroball should appear near the point of zero deflection; i.e., neither a horizontal nor a vertical break is expected.

In the scatterplot we can see three distinct "clumps" of points. The pitches in the upper left cluster have speeds in the range of 90 to 95 mph. These pitches moved up and in toward a right-handed batter, as expected of a fastball thrown by a right-handed pitcher (Matsuzaka is right-handed). Therefore, this cluster represents fastballs. Directly below the fastball cluster are a number of pitches scattered above and below the zero vertical deflection line. These are probably changeups thrown off the fastball. Most of them are in the 80 to 85 mph range.

We find a second cluster of pitches a little above the zero vertical deflection line and centered to the right of the zero horizontal deflection line. Most of these pitches are in the 85 to 90 mph range. These are the characteristics we would expect of sliders. A much smaller, sparser cluster occurs below the zero vertical deflection line and with a horizontal break between four and eight inches. Here the Magnus force is augmenting gravity. The speeds of these pitches fall in the 75 to 80 mph range. These pitches are conventional curveballs, a pitch that Matsuzaka doesn't throw often, apparently.

The gyroball has no Magnus force acting on it; therefore, there would be no vertical or horizontal

PHOEBE SEXTON

Daisuke Matsuzaka

break. The scatterplot shows only a few pitches close to the zero deflection point (in Figure 5 the circle illustrates a two inch radius). We conclude from this plot that very few, if any, gyroballs have been thrown by Matsuzaka in the first 790 pitches he has thrown in 2007.

SUMMARY

The gyroball is not the miracle pitch that the media has hyped it to be, but it could be an effective pitch if used with discretion. Because the gyroball's spin is perpendicular to the pitch's trajectory, no Magnus force would act on the ball. Therefore, the pitch will have no spin-induced deflection. Using the PITCHf/x pitch-tracking system, we examined the behavior of Daisuke Matsuzaka's pitches to determine whether he actually threw the gyroball during the first half of the 2007 season. We conclude he likely did not. ■

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Pitching Behind the Color Line

Baseball, Advertising, and Race

by Roberta Newman

Individually and collectively, baseball and advertising may be said to hold a mirror up to America. The image in the glass, however, is not always pretty. For the first century of its history, with very few early exceptions, "American" as defined by Organized Baseball, did not extend to those of African descent. As has been well documented, the emergence of black baseball as a response to the professional game's color line certainly serves as a reflection of racial attitudes in America from the late 19th to the mid-20th century. But what of advertising? Does baseball-related advertising during this period say something larger about perceptions of race in America? One approach to answering this complicated question, really a set of questions, is to look at the print media, where there is no dearth of advertising related to black baseball and, therefore, necessarily related to racial perceptions, be they direct or inferred.

Well before the Great Migration of the early 20th century served as a catalyst for the formation of significant African American communities in Northern cities, giving rise to a lively black press, ads for games played by "colored" teams appeared in the mainstream dailies. Contests featuring the Cuban Giants, for example, were advertised in the *New York Times* as early as 1886. In plain, straight-forward language, one such ad reads, "BASEBALL. POLO GROUNDS TO-DAY. Colored Championship match. CUBAN GIANTS VS. GORHAMS, Game 4 P.M. Admission, 25 cents."[1]

According to Sol White, black baseball's first historian and its first hagiographer, "the 'Cuban Giants' were heralded everywhere as marvels of the base ball world. They were not looked upon by the public as freaks, but they were classed as men of talent."[2]

White's statement is belied, however subtly, by this ad's placement in the newspaper. Appearing in small type at the bottom of a column of advertising under the heading "Amusements," it is the sole baseball announcement among ads for "Imre Kiralfy's latest, greatest, and supreme triumph, NERO; OR THE FALL OF ROME," complete with 2,000 performers and a Terpsichorean corps of 1,000 on the very largest stage of all time, and "Pain's '1666' GREAT FIRE OF LONDON," reenacted at Manhattan Beach on Coney Island. An ad in the same column for "THE BIGGEST SHOW ON EARTH! America's Most Mighty Exhibition. BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST," is even more telling.[3] Capitalizing on the popular taste for reenactments evident here, Buffalo Bill's Wild West show featured an Indian attack on the Deadwood Stage and a tableau vivant of Custer's Last Stand, among other wonders.[4]

The "Colored Championship" match between the Cuban Giants and the Gorhams, taken in the context of its companions in the Amusements column, most particularly the Wild West show, may be seen in quite a different light. Just as Cody's spectacular offered New Yorkers a glimpse into the exotic world of cowboys and indians, essentially creating the popular American notion of the West, the Cuban Giants' appearance at the Polo Grounds presented spectators with the exotic spectacle of ballplayers of color engaged in an actual championship game. In fact, close scrutiny of the ad suggests that, contrary to White's assertion, embedded in the name "Cuban Giants," is the prospect of a freak show of sorts.

As if to offer an explanation, quoting a mention of the team in *The Sporting Life,* a writer for the *New York Sun* noted that the Cuban Giants were, in fact, "neither Giants nor Cubans, but thick-set and brawny colored men."[5] Certainly, baseball enthusiasts, of whom there was no shortage in New York, would have recognized the name Giants as referring to the regular tenants of the Polo Grounds, and the Cuban Giants as an African American club of some merit. This ad, however, appears neither on a sports page nor in the nascent sporting press. Baseball enthusiasts—cranks—are not its primary target. Proximity to the ad for Buffalo Bill Cody's enterprise, not to mention those for the spectacles of Nero's fiddling and London's conflagration, seems to suggest that, for at least some of the *Times*' overwhelmingly Caucasian readers, the Cuban Giants were, at best, exotic curiosities—thick set, brawny colored men. At worst, they were freaks.

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SOURCE

Page Fence Giants

One of the earliest forms of printed advertising is the trade card. Generally associated with tobacco and candy, baseball trade cards were also distributed as souvenirs to commemorate specific events. While trade cards featuring African American players and teams, produced prior to the desegregation of the major leagues, were certainly uncommon, they were not completely unknown. A rare example of such a card features the 1897 Fence Page Giants, an African American club formed by two players who, contrary to convention, had played in Organized Baseball with otherwise white or integrated teams, Bud Fowler and Grant "Home Run" Johnson, in conjunction with two white businessmen, to advertise the Page Woven Wire Fence Company of rural Adrian, Michigan, and Monarch Bicycles. The Page Fence Company, notes Jerry Malloy,

> was not unfamiliar with inventive promotional techniques. As a permanent demonstration of the capacity of its product to contain livestock, the company maintained a park in town stocked with various animals corralled by its woven wire fencing. This menagerie was transported by rail to nearby country and state fairs with Page Fence cages, thus displaying the strength and versatility of the company's line of goods.[6]

The team, dressed in their natty black uniforms emblazoned in large white letters with the words "Page Fence Giants," are pictured on the front of the card, along with their white manager, identified as A. S. Parsons. Printed on the reverse side is an ad for the company, reading, "Play Ball! Play Ball! Make Fence!!! Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might." Clearly, the language of the trade card, which would have been distributed to fans lured to games by the appearance of the luxurious private railway carriage in which the team traveled, as well as by the players themselves, who, after disembarking, paraded through town on their Monarch bicycles,[7] equates ball playing with building fences.

According to Sol White, the notion that the team should be transported from town to town by a private train bearing the name Page Fence, affording the players the certainty of comfortable lodging in Jim Crow America, was the brainchild of Johnson and Fowler.[8] As such, it served as a sort of protective enclosure for the players on the road. At the same time, it also served to keep them at a safe distance from the white people for whom they played, functioning as their own Page Fence. In this regard it bears a fairly close, though perhaps uncomfortable, resemblance to the fence separating the company's traveling menagerie that traveled the same roads to the same towns as the team separated from fairgoers. Coupled with the private railway carriage, this trade card, and the very promotional nature of the team itself seem to suggest to white spectators that colored ballplayers, while entertaining to watch, are best kept at a comfortable distance, separated from spectators by a sturdy fence, be it real or implied.

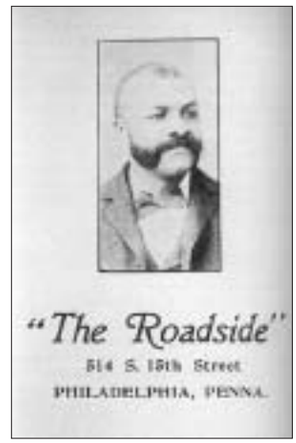
With his *Official Guide: The History of Colored Base Ball,* Sol White did more than provide a window into a past populated by teams like the Page Fence and Cuban Giants; he also provided 14 pages of baseball-related advertising. The *Guide*'s ad copy differs substantially from newspaper advertising for the Cuban Giants and Page Fence's promotional baseball machine, both of which targeted predominantly Caucasian consumers. That White's *Guide*, originally published in 1907 on the cusp of the Great Migration, is aimed at African Americans is borne out in its advertising. Some businesses, like John W. Connor's Royal Cafe and Palm Gardens in Brooklyn, make it clear in their ads that they are black-owned. The Royal Café ad does so by specifying that the establishment serves as headquarters for the Royal Giants, owned and managed, not so coincidentally, by John W. Connor. On the facing page, Connor is pictured as a dignified, middle-aged African American with an avuncular smile.[9] Even more direct is an ad for "The Roadside," whose bewhiskered African American proprietor is pictured prominently, illustrating the minimalist copy, limited to the name and address of the

establishment almost as if to say, "the only other thing you need to know about the Roadside is that it is black-owned."[10]

A full-page ad for the *Philadelphia Tribune,* billed as "Our Only Colored Daily Paper," also features a photograph of an African American man, city editor, G. Grant Williams. Not only does this ad target potential African American readers, using the pronoun "our" to denote a connection between the publisher, the editorial staff, and black baseball fans perusing White's *Guide,* but also other businesses. With a small line of type at the bottom of the page, the *Tribune* lays claim to the role of "the best Medium for advertising when you want to reach the people."[11] And who are the people? They are members of the same community at which White's *Guide* is aimed, baseball fans of color.

But not all the advertising in White's *Guide* pitches black-owned businesses. One large ad sings the praises of promoters Schlichter and Strong, booking agents for the Philadelphia Giants, who call their outfit "the premier attraction among colored teams" whose "presence is eagerly looked for in all sections of the country."[12] That H. Walter Schlichter should advertise in White's book is hardly a surprise, given that he is billed on the title page as the original editor. Nor is the presence of Nat Strong's name unusual. Strong, a promoter based in New York, controlled booking in the majority of the area's semi-professional baseball venues. In order to play lucrative Sunday games in the better semi-pro parks, it was necessary to deal with white booking agents like Strong.[13] Even though some teams, like the Royal Giants, may have been black-owned, this ad is a reminder that African American baseball was still subject to white control, a factor which would provoke conflict and controversy at various times in its history.

The advertising in White's *Guide*, even Schlichter and Strong's ad promoting black baseball, exhibit a certain race pride, a pride that would continue to grow in African American communities in Northern cities fueled by the Great Migration. But to suggest that these ads signal a momentous advance for African Americans would be a gross overstatement. The status of African Americans, even the sophisticated Northern readers of the *Philadelphia Tribune,* as second-class citizens with limited possibilities, is indicated, however indirectly, in two other ads in White's *Guide.* The "Headquarters for North Philadelphia Sports," the Chauffeur's Rest claims to be home to first-class pool parlors as well.[14] While the ad suggests that its patrons are the upper crust of the sporting life—that



Caption

SOURCE

is, boxing men, vaudevillians, gamblers, even pimps, and, presumably, sporting women[15]—the name says something else, that its high-class clientele are, in fact, tired chauffeurs.

Washington's Manufactory, a dry goods emporium, advertises for sale its "High-grade Stationery, Finest Perfumes, and all kinds of Toilet Articles," but judging by its prominent place in the ad and its type size, first and foremost among the products available at Washington's Manufactory appear to be "Waiters Supplies."[16] Like the patrons of the Chauffeur's Rest, Washington's Manufactory's target consumers are service workers, not business executives. The first-class sports that use high-grade stationery and the finest perfumes are, in reality, drivers and waiters.

As the ad in White's *Guide* rightfully claims, the *Philadelphia Tribune* was an excellent medium to reach "the people," especially the people who were African American residents of large cities such as its home, Philadelphia, as well as Pittsburgh, Chicago, New York, and Baltimore. Between 1900 and 1925, the percentage of the population identified as black in these cities increased as much as four-fold,[17] leading to the proliferation of a whole series of race institutions, among them businesses like the saloons, hotels, and retail shops that advertised in White's *Guide,* fraternal organizations, record labels, and, most notably, a lively black press, intended specifically for consumption by African Americans.[18] By this time the *Tribune,* which commenced publication in 1884, was a major voice in the political, social, and economic life of African American Philadelphia.[19] Along with the *Tribune,* weekly papers such as New York's *Amsterdam News and Age,* the *Chicago Defender,* the *Pittsburgh Courier,* and the *Baltimore Afro-American* became mainstays of their communities. The rapidly expanding African American urban population also led to the growth of black baseball aimed, specifically,

at a black audience. According to Lawrence Hogan:

> Prior to this time, black baseball clubs played for essentially a white clientele. The rise of black enclaves in the North, however, was too important for black ball to ignore. A new generation of both black and white entrepreneurs would attempt to tap into this growing market."[20]

But how, exactly, were they to do so? In addition to the most consistently cost-effective and reliable method of marketing, word of mouth, spreading information by means of an informal network of neighborhood institutions like barbershops, beauty parlors, and social clubs,[21] as well as displaying game placards in store windows, on taxicabs, and streetcars,[22] black baseball's entrepreneurs relied upon the weeklies. Since African American ball clubs depended upon gate receipts for revenue,[23] publicity in the weeklies was an absolute necessity.

Ed Bolden's Hilldale Club, one of the very few African American teams to control its own diamond, Hilldale Park in Darby, Pennsylvania, advertised regularly in the *Tribune.* According to the team's ledgers, the Hilldales routinely budgeted between six and nine dollars monthly during the season to promote their games in the *Tribune* in the early 1920s. Although this seems like a paltry sum to dedicate to newspaper advertising, it represented a significant investment for a team that operated in the red during this period.[24] In order to ensure that Philadelphia residents would be able to find their way to Darby, a mill town close to the city, long home to a considerable African American population, many of the team's newspaper ads include specific directions to the park, via the "No. 13 Car on Walnut Street."[25]

The relationship between the black press and the teams was reciprocal. Teams depended upon advertising on the sports pages, as well as promotion by the editorial staff, to ensure attendance, and the papers depended on teams to provide content. Directly below a series of ads for the Hilldale Club, an announcement in the *Tribune* reads "Feature your Own Ball Game—Send Snappy Accounts to the *Tribune* as soon as the game is over.—We Boost Clean Sports."[26] As was true of the black weeklies in general, the *Tribune* could not afford beat reporters to cover local African American teams as the mainstream press could. This made it necessary for teams to provide their own coverage. Such coverage, however snappy, was often unreliable at best. But no matter how snappy an account may have been, the *Tribune*'s ad copy makes it clear that news of games tainted by gambling or other unsavory activities were not acceptable. Only "clean" games were deserving of the *Tribune*'s support. By virtue of its proximity to Hilldale ads, this notice serves yet another purpose. However indirectly, it tells readers that Bolden's team is nothing if not on the up-and-up. The connection between the *Tribune,* the Hilldale Club, and good sportsmanship was further reinforced by the relatively huge sign atop Hilldale Park's scoreboard, the only ad in the park, urging fans to "Read the *Philadelphia Tribune.*"[27]

With the rapid increase in urban America's black population came an increased demand for housing. In Baltimore, for example, this led to the expansion of the city itself, including the annexation of formerly rural areas like Catonsville, home to a small African American community.[28] With expansion came real estate development. And with real estate development came its natural by-product, advertising. A large ad in the *Afro American* of October 29, 1920, announces the opening of a "New Colored Development, Sale of Choice Lots, McDonough Heights, Catonsville." "Ideally situated on high, healthy ground," reads the pitch, offering prospective purchasers the opportunity to own beautiful lots, starting at 98 dollars each, which could be financed with the "Easiest of Easy Terms." But this offer to own a prospective piece of the American Dream was not enough to lure Baltimore's black residents to fairly remote Catonsville, only a streetcar ride away. No, for that a "special attraction Sunday," and the chance to watch Piedmont Tigers take on the Catonsville Social Giants in a game of baseball, would be necessary.[29] That developers of a "colored" subdivision would advertise in the pages of the *Afro American,* using a game between blackball clubs as bait, certainly points to the growth of a vibrant community, a community to which baseball was clearly important during this period. But it also points directly to the harsh realities of African American life in Baltimore circa 1920. There was strict segregation on the playing fields and strict segregation in the housing market.

Game announcements and other baseball-related advertising regularly appeared in the many of black weeklies throughout the 1920s, despite the fact that attendance at the games themselves declined toward the end of the decade, a casualty of worsening economic conditions.[30] And baseball was not alone. Even before the crash of 1929, black-owned businesses, a source of race pride and, more important, income, failed at an unusually high rate.[31] The last to be hired, black

workers were the first fired. By 1932 the black urban unemployment rate stood at close to 50%. Nearly half of all African American families in Northern cities were on relief rolls by 1935.[32] Once again the economic profile of black communities was reflected by the advertising related to baseball in the black weeklies.

Alongside pitches for hair straighteners, pomades, and patent medicines claiming to alleviate "male problems" on the sports pages were ads for publications like *Aunt Sally's Policy Player's Dream Book, Stella's Lucky Dream Book,* and *Number Hit Forecast and Guide,* asking black baseball fans, "Want to change your luck? Release your Lucky Number at glance."[32] Specifically, each of the publications claimed to guarantee success in playing policy or the numbers, a popular form of gambling in urban America during the Depression, especially black urban America. According to Paul Oliver:

> Black superstition was the subject of lucrative exploitation of charms and philters, and cheap pseudo-religious votive ornaments and accessories alike, but it was in the systematic organization of the Numbers Racket that the most relentless and deliberate exploitation took place. The policy racketeers published "Dream Books" which gave lists of numbers which were supposed to have a mystic connection with aspects of human experience, with objects natural and man-made, and with every conceivable circumstance that might occur in dreams.[34]

Among the dream symbols to which numbers were attached, several were, in fact, related to baseball.

Numbers lotteries gave impoverished African Americans—in this case, readers of baseball news in the black weeklies—a chance to achieve social mobility, no matter how slim. With as paltry a bet as a single penny, numbers players, who had little opportunity for economic or social advancement, due in large part to race, could hope for a payoff as high as 500-1. And pay off the numbers did, particularly for the bankers who controlled the rackets. While in Harlem the numbers were controlled by Dutch Schultz during the 1930s,[35] elsewhere numbers bankers were, in fact, race men, like Abe Manley, Alex Pompez, and, most notably Pittsburgh policy kingpin, Gus Greenlee, Negro League owners all. "Black underworld figures," writes Neil Lanctot, "long a part of the industry and seemingly impervious to Depression conditions, would provide a necessary influx of capital into the moribund enterprise" of black baseball.[36]


Piney Woods School Offers Youth Unusual Opportunity

Caption

SOURCE

As the nation's economy improved in the late 1930s, so too did the economic circumstances of black baseball's primary fans, urban African Americans, though more slowly than that of their white counterparts. This improvement is reflected in baseball-related advertising, particularly in the black press. A series of ads, for example, appeared in the *Chicago Defender,* distinguishable from the paper's editorial content only by the fine print at the top reading "advertisement," with the headline "Piney Woods School Offers Youth Unusual Opportunities." "A school that is famous for its extra curricular activities," the ad touts Piney Woods' black baseball pedigree in this way:

> Followers of the Kansas City Monarchs like to see Ivy Barnes pitch who is sometimes called a carbon copy of Satchell (sic) Paige. This year, the Homestead Grays will present to the baseball loving public three Piney Woods boys, Leroy Bass, catching; Buddy Thompson, pitching; and Luke Easterling, third base. All of those boys received training with the Piney Woods Giant Collegians who have bested some of the fastest semi-professional teams in the country, including the famous "House of David."[37]

The Piney Woods Country Life School in Mississippi's Black Belt, here offering young Chicago boys with a talent for baseball the opportunity to secure scholarships, was founded in 1909 by Lawrence C. Jones, known to his students as Professor Ed or Uncle Ed, who began his career in education teaching sharecroppers to read in a sheep shed. According to an article published in McClure's in 1922,

> at Piney Woods they learn things like these: plowing, horse shoeing, washing and ironing, sewing, cooking, basket making, carpentry; they are working with the white people and never against them.[38]

Baseball was also a major part of their curriculum, though more so in 1940 than in 1922.

To a great extent, this ad does more than try to attract prospective ball-playing boys to a traditional black boarding school, it uses baseball in an attempt to reverse the trend of the Great Migration, to save poor young black children from the squalor of the city by offering them an education in country life. The ad promotes the school as a sure path to the Negro Leagues, one followed by Thompson, Bass, and Easterling, but in reality, what it offers is an education in manual labor and working for white people, never against them. The ad for the Piney Woods School sends two separate messages. On one hand, it banks on race pride associated with star Negro League players to attract students. On the other, it seems to refer back to the accommodationist attitudes of Booker T. Washington, who in 1895 told African Americans to "cast down your buckets where you are," in the segregated South.[39] In this way, it expresses a conflicted attitude about race that is reflected in baseball-related advertising in general.

As America moved closer to war, more and more African Americans were attracted to urban areas by the prospect of employment in the defense industries. Increased employment meant increased disposable income, which also meant increased attendance at games and increased purchasing power. But not all baseball-related advertising during this period pitched games or products. Some baseball-related ads spoke to a more important purpose. With a drawing of a beefy ballplayer of indeterminate race and the headline, "What is SWOC's Batting Average?" the Steel Workers Organizing Committee urged readers to vote for the SWOC in the labor board election of September 25, 1941, in a nearly full-page ad on the "Afro Sports" page of the *Baltimore Afro American*. It reads:

> This is baseball season and everybody thinks in terms of batting averages. If you know a man's batting average you can tell he's a big-leaguer. If you know a team's batting average, you can tell whether that team is going places. So it's a fair question to ask the SWOC: What is your batting average.[40]

SOURCE

Caption

It goes on to give a series of reasons to vote the union in, each ending with the tag line, "Not a bad batting average is it?" in bold print.

Why does the SWOC use baseball language and images to promote its cause, the unionization of Bethlehem Steel's Sparrow's Point plant? After an extremely contentious three-year battle to unionize the plant, at which many African Americans were employed, the SWOC, an affiliate of the CIO, forced an election. Perhaps in order to fight charges that unionization was anti-American, the SWOC chose that most American of images, the baseball player in mid-stride. It is no wonder that the player bears some resemblance to Lou Gehrig, who, though no longer the Iron Horse, had come to represent not only resilience but grace under pressure.

In a very pointed way, this ad differs substantially from the majority of baseball-related advertising in the black weeklies. While the race of the player is indeterminate, the language of the ad is not. The ad claims that if you know a player's batting average, you can tell if he's a big leaguer. Quite apart from the spotty statistical reporting for which black weeklies were known, there is one thing that readers of the *Afro American* knew for sure in 1942, that the players on teams they followed were not big leaguers, no matter how gaudy their batting averages.

Rare for an ad in a black weekly in 1941, this one makes no attempt to pitch its point directly to African Americans. Instead, it tries to reach the black readership with the same ad used to appeal to white steel workers. Although the language seems insensitive, given baseball's color line, it is, in its own way, quite the opposite. By refusing to change its language to speak specifically to one segment of its demographic, it indirectly points toward an emerging move toward equality within the union, if not within baseball or society as a whole. Editorial support of SWOC by the *Afro American* as well as the fact that it was voted in overwhelmingly by workers, African American and Caucasian alike, supports this notion.

Beginning in the 1920s, a mainstay of print advertising in the mainstream media was the celebrity product endorsement. And often the celebrities in question were baseball players. This practice proliferated in the 1940s, but not in the black weeklies. Certainly Negro League baseball, then in its heyday, had its fair share of star power. But for all the Josh Gibsons, Cool Papa Bells, and Satchel Paiges, product endorsements were virtually nonexistent. Paige and Gibson, when mentioned in a game ad, might guarantee a good gate, but they were not paid to sell Camel cigarettes or Gillette razor blades to African American consumers. As popular as these exceptionally talented players were, they could not hold a candle to the iconic black athlete of this period, boxer Joe Louis. Endorsing everything from hair pomade to local tailor shops across America, he stands out as the lone African American product endorser of note during the late '30s and '40s. Even before his knockout of Max Schmeling at Yankee Stadium on June 22, 1938, made him a champion to Americans, regardless of race, Louis was featured prominently in ads in the black press. So popular was he that he inspired the naming of the Brown Bomber Baking Company of New York City, by their own account, "The World's Largest Negro Baking Company," whose ad was illustrated with a drawing, in monumental style, of a strong black pugilist pummeling a white boxer. Brown Bomber Bakery, pitching its product with the slogan "11 cents spent for Brown Bomber gives you double value… a loaf of tempting delicious bread plus part payment of some Negro's salary,"[41] did not rely entirely on the sweet science to promote their "soft bread." One of the company's most notable marketing ploys was its sponsorship of a semi-professional team, the eponymous Brown Bombers. In a way, the bakery took a page from Page Fences, using a baseball team as a living promotional tool. But while Page Fences sold enclosures, Brown Bombers sold race pride.

Oddly, bread, not hair pomade, dream books, or beer, was the one of the first beneficiaries of an endorsement by an African American ballplayer in the 1940s. Though his testimonial takes a position subordinate to a large endorsement by a bathing beauty who has clearly availed herself of one of the many skin-lightening products advertised throughout the black weeklies, praise is heaped upon Bond Bread by a proud-looking player in pinstripes, wearing the well-known interlocking NY of the lily-white New York Yankees, identified as "Walter Wright, famous 'Brick Top' of the Black Yankees." It reads, "With rationing cutting down on the muscle builders we used to get in meat, I'm mighty glad to get Bond's extra protein." Bond bakery, unlike Brown Bomber, was not black-owned. It did, however, advertise regularly in the *New York Amsterdam News.* While Bond routinely relied on the image of a happy African American homemaker to sell its products to New York's black population here, the bakery capitalizes on the community's enthusiasm for baseball. Unlike so many of the other baseball-related ads, however, Bond Bread did not advertise on the sports page. This ad appeared in the retail advertising section, where products were pitched almost exclusively to women. In this regard, Bond seemed to realize that African American women were a largely untapped market of baseball fans, and one that often controlled its family's purse strings.

The dearth of product endorsements by African American baseball players in the pages of the black weeklies did not last into the 1940s. Seemingly from the very moment Jackie Robinson stepped across the major league color line, his name and image seem to appear on virtually every page. "For a treat instead of a treatment…I recommend Old Gold Cigarettes," reads a testimonial ad by Robinson, a non-smoker, for the Brooklyn Dodgers' radio sponsor, not just in the *Amsterdam News* and the *New York Age,* but also in black weeklies across the country. Where ads for Tuxedo Club Pomade, "the Pomade of Champions," had once featured the profile of a black pugilist, now it sported a baseball player. And Jackie Robinson sold Bond Bread to New York City's women, too. Appearing in the *Amsterdam News* in August 1947, one Bond ad relies on one of the oldest tricks in the advertising book, hearkening back to the days of the Page Fence Giants. Depicting a trade card with an image of the Dodger, the ad reads, "Your grocer will give you a pocket-size reproduction of this Jackie Robinson photograph, free for the asking."[42] The ad also features a

little cartoon baker, decidedly Caucasian, saying "Take It From Jackie Folks, Homogenized Bond Bread is Really Something: It Stays Fresh Days Longer, Too!"

Jackie Robinson's emergence as a major product endorser, coinciding with his emergence as a major leaguer, heralded a change in the connection between baseball, advertising, and race. What was once an extremely limited practice, using images of black baseball players to sell consumer goods, appealing to a marginalized demographic, became far more widespread, appealing to a much larger segment of the American buying public. In many ways, Robinson would lead the way to changes in the way in which African Americans were perceived in the media as much through his role as pitchman as through his role as ballplayer. As other players followed Robinson from the Negro Leagues to the majors, they also followed him into the ranks of major product endorsers, often for national advertisers like Beechnut Gum, Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer, and a variety of tobacco products, in both the black weeklies and the mainstream media. Televised baseball, emerging, along with Robinson, as a force in 1947, contributed to the process, acclimating American consumers to the vision of baseball in black and white. Advertisers, while hardly color-blind, increasingly recognized the power of testimonials by black ballplayers to sell their products to a broader spectrum of potential purchasers.

The desegregation of major league baseball sounded the death knell for the organized Negro Leagues, as well as barnstorming and semi-professional African American baseball. But black baseball's demise, and with it the demise of related advertising, was far from sudden. As the official souvenir program of the 1949 East-West Baseball Classic illustrates, Negro League baseball at its best was still popular enough to attract significant advertising dollars. With ads on virtually every page, the souvenir program attracted national advertisers like Coca-Cola, Pepsi, and Oscar Meyer, selling products associated with baseball, no matter what the race of the players and, more important, the fans might be. Longtime advertisers in the black weeklies, it is hardly surprising to see their ads in the program.

More thoroughly represented than national advertisers, however, are local, primarily black-owned Chicago-land businesses, courting African American consumers. Funeral homes, pharmacies, saloons, and segregated hotels make up the bulk of the program's advertising copy. In this respect, the ads in the souvenir program resemble those published in Sol White's *Guide,* half a century earlier. With the slogan, "For a


THE NO. 1 BAR IN BROOKLYN

SILVER RAIL BAR & GRILL

1200 Fulton St. STerling 3-8804

Presents

"A Jackie Robinson Gift Party"

Thursday Nite, September 4, 1947

(JACKIE WILL NOT APPEAR IN PERSON)

(A Part of Proceeds for a Splendid Gift)

Watch Our Show Window For "Jackie's Gift"

Buster Walker, Mgr. — Willie Davis, Jack Shepard, Cliff Shepard, (Nights) — Day Bartender: Harry "Slicks" Henry — Milton "Chef" Miller now in our Kitchen. Best foods in town.

SOURCE

Caption

Winning Personality," for example, an ad for the Payne School of Modeling and Charm features a photograph of an elegant African American woman, clearly a product of the South Side school's instruction in "Fashion Modeling, Photographic Modeling, Wardrobe Assembling, Body and Figure Control, Self Assurance, Corrective Make-up, and Hair Styling."[43] But unlike the tired chauffeurs and newly supplied waiters targeted by the advertising in White's *Guide,* this ad is aimed at women. The women it targets, moreover, are not aiming for jobs which are functionally equivalent to those held by the original consumers of White's *Guide,* maids, waitresses, and the like. Nor are they housewives, looking for the extra protein in Bond Bread. Rather, they are younger women considering careers in modeling, or those presumably looking to improve their prospects, seeking professional employment or simply in search of suitable young men.

Connecting athletics with ad copy, several of the ads in the program are visually and textually tied together with a theme, "From sports to business." The enduring popularity of Joe Louis is apparent in a full-page ad for the Chicago School of Automotive Trades, Inc., with the slogan, "From the Boxing Ring to Business." Ostensibly a profile of the heavyweight, entitled "The Influence of Sports on the Life of Joe Louis," penned by sportswriter Wendell Smith, the copy reads, "He soared from the poverty-stricken cotton fields of Alabama to the heavyweight championship, like a shooting star zips across the azure skies."[44] Following a brief, though no less hyperbolic, synopsis of the Brown Bomber's career, the profile tells consumers that since his retirement, "he has devoted all his time to his various enterprises and businesses. He

is president of the Chicago School of Automotive Trades." As the producers of Brown Bomber bread knew in the 1940s, Louis's endorsement branded their product with the image of African American strength and resilience. Like Louis, the ad implies, students at the Chicago School of Automotive Trade might also ascend like a shooting star across the azure skies of success and financial security. Although its target consumer differs from that of Payne's school by gender, its message is not entirely different. In its own way, each of these ads seems to suggest that entry into the middle class, even into the elite, is hardly out of reach. Like Joe Louis and the beautiful woman gracing the Payne's ad, a little hard work and proper training may be only a phone call away for the predominantly African American fans at the East-West game. And unlike the ads in White's *Guide,* these speak to a rising sense of African American empowerment in a still largely segregated society, rather than representing the segregated status quo.

African American empowerment is also the unspoken message in an ad for John B. Knighten Jr. and Co., a South Side, Chicago, real estate company. It features an illustration of the nearly perfect nuclear family, consisting of a pipe-smoking father, a well-coiffed mother, perhaps a graduate of Payne's school, and a little girl in pigtails, dreaming, via a balloon, of their slice of the American pie, in the form of what appears to be a spacious home, surrounded by ample open space. Outside the dream balloon, there is a nest resting on a branch, complete with chirping baby birds. The ad reads "Birds Have Nests! Do You Have a Home?" The only thing that distinguishes this ad from similar real estate advertising which might have been placed in the mainstream press, or in souvenir programs from a major league game, is the fact that the skin of the family in the illustration is shaded with crude lines. Its message seems to be, "You, too, African American baseball fan, can participate in the American Dream of Home Ownership."[45] With the appropriate training from the Chicago School of Automotive Trade and Payne's, the final step toward the post World-War II American ideal is a visit to John B. Knighten Jr. and Co.

While, as the relatively large number of advertisers in the 1949 East-West game program suggests, African American baseball was still a going concern two years after Jackie Robinson made his debut in Brooklyn, that was not the case only a few years later. The 1952 East-West Game, for example, drew only 14,122 fans, as opposed to 46,871 nine years earlier.[46] In a sense, black baseball ended as it began, not with organized leagues but with barnstorming teams owned by enterprising white promoters, traveling to small towns, often in the upper Midwest, playing in front of predominantly Caucasian audiences. Harkening back to the first professional African American baseball team, the latter-day Cuban Giants, owned and promoted by former Kansas City Monarchs owner Thomas Young Baird, were one such team. But the 1950s Cuban Giants, unlike their 19th-century namesake, were, in fact, Cuban. Touring towns like Aurora, Illinois, Dubuque, Iowa, and Yankton, Nebraska, in the early 1950s, appearances by the Cuban Giants were touted in "advertorials," promotional speech masquerading as editorial content. Long a mainstay of African American baseball reporting, Baird raised the black baseball advertorial to a high art, going as far as to pay at least one sports journalist in Texas, under the table, in order to promote an appearance by one of his teams.[47] In the St. Joseph *Michigan Herald Press* on June 4, 1952, for example, on the same page as a one-inch-high ad, stretching across all seven columns on the bottom of the page, is an advertorial with the headline "Baseball Blends With Dancing At Ausco Park." It reads,

> President Ty Baird of the visitors has signed up three entertainers, two musicians who play an instrument called a 'bongoe' (sic) and a dancing comedian named Peter Sel who reportedly will imitate a waltzing penguin.[48]

Taking a page from his occasional business partner, Syd Pollack, the baseball impresario responsible for keeping alive the Indianapolis Clowns, Baird insisted that good baseball was simply not enough to put fans in the seats. Competing with the same increasingly popular medium that brought Jackie Robinson into American homes, television, a crisply played, interracial, multi-ethnic ball game was not enough. Much like the fans of the previous century, who were faced with the choice of whether to spend their precious entertainment dollars and leisure time on Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, Nero's fiddling, or exotic black baseball, residents of St. Joseph were lured to Edgewater Park in its "twin city," Benton Harbor, to see the Cuban Giants take on the team fronted by Ausco Products, Inc., a major area brake manufacturer.[49] Fans were attracted not just with the promise of the slugging prowess of "Havana's Babe Ruth," 'Bambino' Berrera,[50] but with penguin imitators, accompanied on that most exotic of instruments, not heretofore seen in person in the upper Midwest, the bongo. For the well-heeled readers of the *Herald-Press,* African Americans calling themselves Cuban would no longer be acceptable. For

an audience increasingly familiar with "real" Cubans like Desi Arnaz's alter ego, Ricky Ricardo, who made his first appearance on their television screens in 1951, only authentic Cubans would do. Despite the desegregation of the major leagues and the increasing visibility of African American baseball players in advertising, racial and, in this case, ethnic stereotyping still served as popular entertainment and promotional fodder.

Although large sections of the country, South and North alike, resisted desegregation, both formal and informal, the blurring of the color line by African American baseball players did herald changes, pitifully slow, but changes nonetheless, in the way in which race was perceived in America. The legacy of Page Fence Giants, The Chauffeur's Rest, the SWOC, and Payne's School of Modeling and Charm is on display in advertising today, be it in print, on television, or online. One of baseball's ubiquitous pitchmen, Derek Jeter, may be seen as the new image of the "all-American boy," one formerly held by the likes of the blond-haired Mickey Mantle. Most tellingly, Jeter defines himself as neither black nor white but both. This self-definition, as much an example of the social construction of reality as Effa Manley's self-definition as black, speaks volumes about perceptions of race in America. Though, as reviled slugger with precious few endorsement opportunities, Barry Bonds, notes, race prejudice is still very much a part of American culture, its presence in advertising is conspicuous by its absence. Today, manager Willie Randolph sells Subway sandwiches in a New York Mets uniform, not Page Fences. ■

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Faux Real

Dog and Badger Fighting During Spring Training in the Deadball Era

by Margaret Gripshover

The "sport" of dog fighting captured many headlines in 2007 with the conviction of Michael Vick, the Atlanta Falcons star quarterback who admitted to participating in the inhumane and illegal business of pit bull fighting as well as the execution of underperforming dogs. No major league baseball player has ever been similarly implicated in criminal dog fighting activity, but dog fighting and baseball do have a shared history during spring training in the Deadball Era. The type of animal fighting in the early 20th century was not necessarily the traditional dog vs. dog fight, but rather, a dog doing battle with a badger. And, more often than not, the "badger" fighting the dog was not a real badger at all, but rather, a prop used to perpetrate an elaborate practical joke.

The perception of animals as sentient creatures was not as well-accepted 100 years ago as it is today. In the late 19th and early 20th century it was not uncommon for baseball news and dog fighting reports to be included on the same sports page. In 1894, for example, the *National Police Gazette* enthusiastically recounted the 22-minute fight between two pit bulls in Brooklyn, as well as the results of a fight involving a bear and two dogs.[1]

> The bear being muzzled and chained, fought at a disadvantage, as he could only use his forepaws, and with these he mauled the dogs pretty lively, but the latter finally got in their work and tore the bear badly. The bet ($200) was decided in favor of the dogs.[2]

In 1883, a dog fight near Buffalo, New York, not only made the news, but the scene included some "150 Buffalo sports writers [who] witnessed the battle, which was for $2,000 a side."[3] Not all in the sports community were supportive of the blood sport. In 1886, *The Sporting News* reported a large badger had been obtained for the purposes of a fight with a dog around Christmastime and urged the locals vehemently to discourage this "repulsive exhibition."[4]

In the Deadball Era, reporters traveling with teams during spring training often documented the teams' leisure activities, which, at times, included players observing or participating in various forms of dog fighting. While dog fighting was popular in rural and urban as well as northern and southern venues, the South was the epicenter for a particular type of animal fight—dog and badger fighting.

Not all dog and badger fights were what they purported to be. Some fights were authentic and involved a live dog and a live badger while others were hoaxes. For a real fight, the badger (often a trained animal) was kept in a barrel and yanked out of its friendly confines by a rope or chain held by the fight "referee." The referee was chosen by the crowd as the person who had the least financial interest in the outcome, i.e., the one who would most honestly decide the outcome of the match. After the badger was extricated from the barrel, it was then forced to do battle with the dog until a winner was declared, sometimes posthumously.

Most dog and badger fights, however, did not involve a live badger, but rather were more likely to be of the hoax variety. For such a fight, an unsuspecting dupe was nominated as the referee and led to believe that he was about to yank a live, snarling badger out of a barrel, when in fact, at the other end of the rope, was not a vicious badger, but a harmless chamber pot, much to the amusement of the crowd, all of whom were in on the joke. Staged fights between a dog and a "badger" were more akin to the proverbial snipe hunt than to blood sport. And, as with snipe hunting, when faux dog and badger fights were covered by the press, newspaper reports of such entertainments rarely exposed the details of the hoax so as not to spoil the fun for future practical jokers.[5]

Sometimes it is difficult to determine the authenticity of a dog and badger fight based solely on newspaper accounts, but in San Antonio, Texas, real dog and badger fights were routinely covered by the press. San Antonio was home to an authentic dog and

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badger fighting club, whose rule book included such detailed regulations as to how much, or how little, you could sharpen your badger's claws.[6] Gambling was the main feature of these matches, and at times the violence between the animals was almost as fierce as the rivalries between bettors. At least one group of baseball executives during the Deadball Era experienced a real dog and badger fight in San Antonio. In 1911, an annual meeting of baseball magnates and officials from both major and minor leagues was held in San Antonio, and the participants were "treated" to a beefsteak dinner and an authentic dog and badger fight.

"Following the dinner the crowd adjourned to a roped off arena in which the badger fight was to be held. The participants, a snarling, clawing badger and a large bull dog were exhibited. Both had their backers and there was considerable discussion as to which would have the better of the argument."[7]

The newspaper account of the spectacle made no mention of revulsion or moral outrage by the baseball men, leaving the reader with the impression that it was perfectly acceptable to top off a fine meal with a badger getting its just desserts.

The Chicago Cubs' spring training camp at West Baden, Indiana, was another frequent setting for dog and badger fights, mostly hoaxes—and human boxing matches for that matter—which was part of the resort's appeal to gamblers. In March 1911, then rookie pitcher Fred Toney was designated as the referee in a badger fight at West Baden, where Frank Chance had his team getting into shape for the new season. Toney's physical stature as a rookie was so impressive that it was said that "the only sweater coat that would fit him was the one used last year by Orvie Overall."[8] Perhaps Fred's impressive physique appealed to those looking for a fair and forceful badger puller. "Big Toney, the pitching recruit, was the unanimous choice for referee of the weekly dog and badger fight here tonight, and the crowd was all satisfied over the result."[9] Toney later gained notoriety on the slab as a member of the Cincinnati Reds for the famous twin nine-inning no-hitter along with pitcher Jim "Hippo" Vaughn of the Cubs, on May 2, 1917.[10]

The Cubs were not the only Chicago team that fancied the entertainment of dog and badger fights. The Chicago Federals, while in spring training in Shreveport, Louisiana, in March 1914, were involved in at least one such event. The badger fight was held the night after the Chifeds defeated the Centenary College nines, 14-0, summed up in this line from the *Tribune*'s coverage of the game, "The name of the college pitcher was Battle, but he didn't live up to it."[11] Rookie Harry Swan was selected for the honors of "pulling the chain" to release the badger from the barrel.

"Harry Swan, one of our most aspiring young pitchers, was chosen tonight to decide a combat between a dog and a badger. Much money was wagered, and Swan's decision was pleasing to all."[12]

Hoax "fights" between a dog and a "badger" were common forms of amusement in the early 20th century, and a popular diversion during spring training. One memorable hoax fight took place in March 1908, at West Baden Springs. This was a classic setup, calling upon the unsuspecting Cubs' rookie pitcher Martin Walsh. Manager Frank Chance invited him to join the Cubs camp at the suggestion of Martin's brother (and future Hall of Fame pitcher), "Big Ed" Walsh.[13] Unfortunately for Martin, he lacked his brother's slithering spitball and never made a major league roster, but at least for one night he was star of the show.

> That gay boy got in on the badger vs. bull dog fight tonight and fell as do all referees. All day long the gang worked on Martin and had him ripe for the adventure. He wanted to bet on the dog and said if the badger won he would send to Wilkesbarre [sic] for his own bull pup. According to Martin, the pup had a mouth like a hand bag. When he goes out for a fight he just picks up the other dog, carries the villain home, and devours him at leisure. After the battle tonight Martin decided to leave his eat-em-alive dog at home.[14]

The Cubs veterans continued the "badger fight" tradition throughout the Deadball Era. In February 1917, while on their way to Pasadena, the Chicago Cubs made a stop in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where they were invited to the local Elks Club where, "a dog and badger fight was staged."[15]

In February 1910, the New York Giants engaged in spring training at Marlin Springs, Texas, where a dog and "badger" fight was staged as a practical joke at the expense of an unsuspecting greenhorn. The rube for this battle was the rookie outfielder Ernest Lush, younger brother of Billy Lush. Billy recommended his brother to John McGraw and thought the "star football and baseball player at Villanova," with semi-pro experience with a Bridgeport, Connecticut, team, had major league potential.[16] McGraw had big plans for Ernie and claimed, "I think I can make a great bunter out of that fellow—he has all the characteristics that made Billy Lush, his brother, a fine player."[17]

Ernie Lush and some of his Giants teammates arrived at Marlin Springs via New Orleans on the steamer *Proteus*.[18] Lush and the rookies were accompanied by Fred Merkle, and among those giving the boys a bon voyage were veteran pitcher Christy Mathewson and John McGraw.[19]

Billy Lush

Entertainment options were severely limited in Marlin Springs. Ernie Lush and fellow Giant Chief Meyers and others entertained the locals with their singing talents at the Marlin Springs Opera House on March 16, 1910.[20] Christy Mathewson found his own fun by slipping off to go duck hunting.[21] One form of recreation that Lush certainly wasn't prepared for was the dog and "badger" fight that was staged for the team's amusement on February 18, before the work of spring training was to begin the following day.

> To-night the players are arranged for a big badger fight with a bird dog. Unless the reader knows how the badger fight game is worked he will not be able to sympathize with the young recruits from the East, who are ready for what they think will be keen sport. Daly and Lush have volunteered to hold the imaginary badger, while Zacher declares he is not afraid to sit on the barrel. As the reader perhaps knows, the badger is not always on the other end of the string.[22]

Unfortunately for Ernie Lush, the illusion of the "badger fight" would prove to be a metaphor for his ill-fated career. Ten days after his badger fight initiation, while attempting to steal second base, he tripped on a rock in the base path and severely twisted his ankle.[23] In an exhibition game on March 26 between the Giants and a semi-pro team from Dallas, he was the only New York player to go hitless in the 14-3 romp over the locals and, on top of his poor performance at the plate, committed an error at shortstop.[24] Lush's career was over almost soon as he pulled the rope on the "badger." He was cut from the Giants, the same day as veteran first baseman Fred Tenney.

Lush's fellow badger fighters did not fare well in their major league careers either. In May 1910, Elmer Zacher (who sat on the barrel), was sold to the St. Louis Cardinals and played a total of 48 games in the majors. George "Pecks" Daly, who pulled the "badger" rope with Lush, had pitched the previous season with the Giants, then failed to make the 1910 squad.

Thankfully, few dog and badger fights staged during spring training camps were of the authentic variety. Hoax fights were the more common form, a popular practical joke executed at the expense of the uninitiated. Certainly being chosen to referee a dog and badger fight, authentic or hoax, was a rite of passage for rookie ballplayers. For many, the hoax may have turned out to be a coincidental jinx, given that few of the referees went on to successful careers in baseball. It seems, for most, the joke was truly on them. ■

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22. "Young Giants at Marlin," *New York Times,* February 19, 1910, S1.
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How Old Is That Guy, Anyway?

by Walter Dunn Tucker

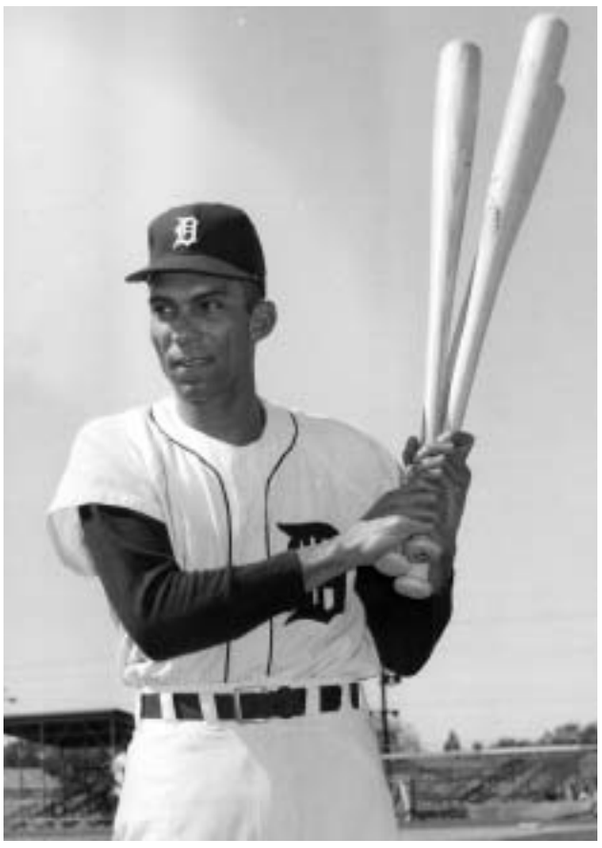
Recently a friend recalled the first major league game that he ever saw, in which Joe Grace of the St. Louis Browns hit a home run off Dutch Leonard of the Washington Senators in Griffith Stadium. I saw my first major league game there, too, in 1947. Grace, playing outfield for the Senators that day, caught a long fly ball hit by Joe DiMaggio near the left-field bleacher wall, 405 feet from home plate. In my mind's eye I can still see Joe D on the way to second base, kicking the infield dirt, when he realized that Grace had hauled in his mighty smash.

Wanting to know more about Joe Grace, particularly how long he played, I went to two of my reference books, the *ESPN 2007 Baseball Encyclopedia* and the 1947 edition of *Who's Who in Baseball.* The former listed his date of birth as January 5, 1914. *Who's Who,* published when Grace was still an active player, showed his year of birth as 1915.

This led me to thinking about other ballplayers who showed age discrepancies in record books published during their playing days and in modern baseball reference books. The table that follows lists birth dates from playing days found either in the *Sporting News Baseball Register* (indicated by R) or *Who's Who in Baseball* (indicated by W) and compares those dates with those listed in the *2007 ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia.* Players listed in the table are from the 1930s through the 1950s with age discrepancies of two to seven years. I focused on those seasons because those were my "growing up" years when I could concentrate on baseball without having to focus on a career. There are so many one-year discrepancies that it might take this entire journal to include them. There may well be other major leaguers who should be included.

The undisputed champion of age discrepancies with seven years is Bill Morrell, who pitched for the Washington Senators in 1926 and the New York Giants in 1930 and 1931. In case you're wondering how I knew about a player whose last big league season was the year of my birth (during game three of the World Series, won by the Cardinals over the A's, 5-2), the answer is I didn't. Morrell's name and information about him came from Dick Thornton via Jim Charlton. Not having a *Who's Who* or a *Baseball Register* for those years, I used his date of birth shown in the 1969 *Baseball Encyclopedia,* published by the MacMillan Company.

After Morrell, the biggest discrepancy was six years, achieved by Bingo Binks, Bob Boyd, Luke Easter, and Bob Thurman. Easter's age difference first came to my attention a few years ago when a sports page article gave his age as older than what I remembered from my record books published during his major league playing days. The 1950 *Baseball Register*



DETROIT TIGERS

Bill Bruton

AUTHOR BIO xxx xxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxx xxxxx.

SOURCE

Tommy Henrich

showed a birth year of 1921; ESPN shows 1915! Easter was remarkable. In four consecutive seasons after leaving the major leagues, 1955 through 1958, he hit 143 home runs and drove in 545 runs. He hit over .300 two of those years and had a batting average of .294. He celebrated his 40th birthday in the first of those successful seasons and would have turned 49 in his 1964 season with the Rochester Red Wings. In his 11 minor league seasons after leaving the big show, Easter slugged 238 home runs.

If the ages listed in contemporary record books were correct, three major leaguers would have been playing in the minor leagues at very tender ages. Dick Siebert, one of the top five American League batters in 1941, played a few games in 1929 for Waynesboro of the Blue Ridge League at the alleged age of 15. Omar "Turk" Lown celebrated his purported 16th birthday May 30, 1942, a year in which he went 18-8 for Valdosta of the Georgia-Florida League. In a telephone interview Lown said he couldn't recall any age discrepancy. His 1926 birth year, shown in the 1952 *Baseball Register,* was changed to 1924 in the 1953 *Register.* Jack Merson, according to contemporary record books, was 16 on January 17, 1940. He played 12 games at second base for Newport of the Appalachian League that year. By *ESPN Encyclopedia* records, each of these players was really two years older than their playing-day record books indicated.

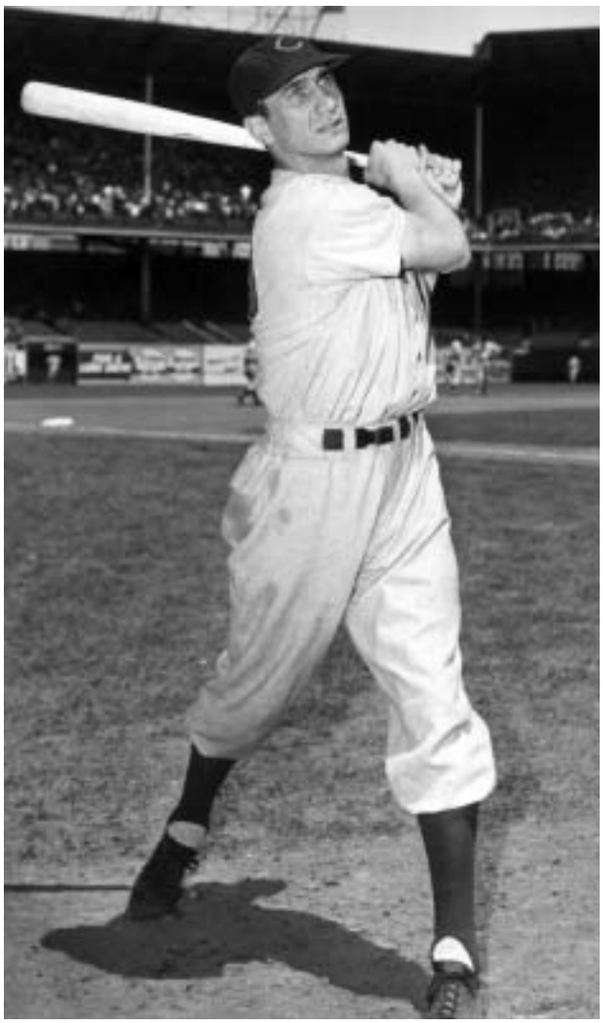
There must have been a post-World War II tradition for Braves center fielders to understate their ages. Both Sam Jethroe (Boston 1950-1952) and Bill Bruton (Milwaukee 1953-1960) were four years older than the record books of their playing days indicated.

Most players showed the same month and day of the month, changing only the year of birth. Several, however, showed different days and months. Not surprisingly, one of these was Satchel Paige, whose birth date was listed in the 1952 *Baseball Register* as September 22, 1908. *The Sporting News Hall of Fame Fact Book,* published in 1982, shows July 6, 1905. The *2007 ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia* lists July 6, 1906, which is what was used in the accompanying table. Satch once asked, "How old would you be if you didn't know how old you were?" His irrelevant age permitted him to win 10 games or more for Miami of the International League in three consecutive seasons, 1956-58, when he would have been at least 50 years old. He and Luke Easter would have been the ancient mariners facing each other in those International League seasons.

Bill Bruton of the Braves and Bobby Avila were other day and month changers. Bruton's playing-career birth date was December 22, 1929; ESPN shows November 9, 1925. Avila's career date was June 7, 1926. ESPN's date is April 2, 1924. Hector Lopez's dates were July 8, 1932, and July 9, 1929.

The playing-days' age understatements may have been caused by the players wanting front offices of major league teams to think that they were younger than they really were. In a telephone interview, George Zuverink said that a scout suggested to him that he shave a couple of years off his age. Zuverink began his pro baseball career in 1946, a year of intense competition for pro positions, with hundreds of players coming out of the armed forces and returning to the game. The 1945 edition of *Who's Who* showed the cumulative career major league statistics for 121 players whose year-by-year records had been shown

SOURCE



Hank Sauer

in either the 1943 or 1944 editions. Eighteen of those listed came back for part of the 1945 season. These were just about offset by 21 players who played in 1944 and went into the service for the 1945 season. There were 42 minor leagues in 1946.

A particularly interesting situation involves brothers Ed and Hank Sauer. Hank's age was understated by two years, with 1919 as his birth year during playing days, possibly making him Ed's younger brother. Hank is shown, correctly, as born in 1917 in ESPN. Ed never played enough games to be included in *Who's Who,* so it was difficult to check. Ed Hartig reports that the 1944 and 1945 "Cub News" listings of Ed Sauer's age imply a birth year of 1920, while *ESPN* shows his year of birth as 1919. One has to wonder what the Sauer parents thought of this at the time their boys were big leaguers.

Once playing days were over, it was beneficial on two occasions for real ages to come to light. The first would be eligibility for the major league players' pension plan, which was adopted in 1947. The second occasion would be eligibility for Social Security at age 62 or 65.

In a class by himself is Orestes "Minnie" Minoso, whose age was overstated by three years during his playing days and thus rates a special place in the table. ■

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Jim Charlton, Bill Carle, Steve Gietschier, Ed Hartig, Norman MacLean, Pete Palmer, and Dick Thornton for their invaluable contributions and suggestions. They have made this a more accurate and, hopefully, a better article. Dick's information was earth-shattering, enabling Bill Morrell to knock Binks, Boyd, Easter, and Thurman off their pedestal as age discrepancy champions.

Doing the research, recalling many familiar names, talking to a couple of former players, and exchanging e-mails with the men mentioned in the previous paragraph have been brought me much pleasure.

Major League Players With Understated Ages During Their Playing Days

	DOB Career		DOB ESPN	1st yr Minors	1st yr MLB	Last yr MLB
Sandy Amoros	1/30/32		1/30/30	1952	1955	1960
John Anderson	11/23/32	R	11/23/29	1952	1958	1962
John Andre	1/3/26	R	1/3/23	1946	1955	1955
Luke Appling	4/2/09	R	4/2/07	1930	1930	1950
Morris Arnovich	11/16/14	R	11/16/10	1933	1936	1946
Bobby Avila	6/7/26	R	4/2/24	1948	1949	1959
Floyd Baker	10/10/18	R	10/10/16	1938	1943	1955
Jack Barrett	12/18/17	W	12/18/15	1937	1942	1946
Boom Boom Beck	10/16/06	R	10/16/04	1925	1924	1945
Joe Beggs	11/4/14	W	11/4/10	1934	1938	1948
Al Benton	3/18/13	R	3/18/11	1931	1934	1952
Bingo Binks	7/11/20	W	7/11/14	1936	1944	1948
Hank Borowy	5/12/18	W	5/12/16	1939	1942	1951
Bob Bowman	10/3/14	R	10/3/10	1934	1939	1942
Bob Boyd	10/1/25	R	10/1/19	1950	1951	1961
Johnny Broaca	10/3/11	R	10/3/09	1933	1934	1939
Jimmy Brown	4/25/12	R	4/25/10	1933	1937	1946
Earle Brucker	5/6/04	R	5/6/01	1924	1937	1943
Bill Bruton	12/22/29	R	11/9/25	1950	1953	1964
Moe Burtschy	4/18/24	R	4/18/22	1941	1950	1956
Francisco Campos	5/11/26	R	5/11/24	1944	1951	1953
Scoops Carey	10/11/09	R	10/11/06	1930	1935	1946
George Caster	8/4/09	R	8/4/07	1929	1934	1946
Spud Chandler	9/12/09	R	9/12/07	1932	1937	1947
Gil Coan	5/18/24	R	5/18/22	1944	1946	1956
Slick Coffman	12/11/13	R	12/11/10	1934	1937	1940
Pete Coscarart	6/16/16	R	6/16/13	1934	1938	1946
George Crowe	3/22/23	R	3/22/21	1949	1952	1961
Curt Davis	9/7/06	R	9/7/03	1928	1934	1946
Johnny Dickshot	1/24/12	R	1/24/10	1930	1936	1945
Atley Donald	9/19/12	R	8/19/10	1934	1938	1945
Monk Dubiel	2/12/20	R	2/12/18	1941	1944	1952
Luke Easter	8/4/21	R	8/4/15	1949	1949	1954
Red Embree	8/30/19	W	8/30/17	1939	1941	1949
Paul Erickson	12/14/17	W	12/14/15	1937	1941	1948
Dick Errickson	3/5/14	R	3/5/12	1937	1938	1942
Van Fletcher	8/6/28	R	8/6/24	1949	1955	1955
Jesse Flores	11/2/16	W	11/2/14	1938	1942	1950
Lonny Frey	8/23/12	R	8/23/10	1932	1933	1948
Mike Goliat	11/5/25	R	11/5/21	1947	1949	1952
Lefty Gomez	11/26/10	R	11/26/08	1928	1930	1943
Mickey Grasso	5/10/22	R	5/10/20	1941	1946	1955
Harry Gumbert	11/5/12	R	11/5/09	1930	1935	1950
Luke Hamlin	7/3/06	R	7/3/04	1928	1933	1944
Lee Handley	7/31/15	R	7/31/13	1935	1936	1947
Joe Hatten	11/17/18	W	11/7/16	1938	1946	1952
Ed Head	1/25/20	W	1/25/18	1939	1940	1946
Jim Hearn	4/11/23	R	4/11/21	1942	1947	1959
Tommy Henrich	2/20/16	R	2/20/13	1934	1937	1950
Joe Heving	9/2/04	R	9/2/00	1923	1930	1945
Billy Hitchcock	7/31/18	R	7/31/16	1939	1942	1953
Al Hollingsworth	2/25/10	R	2/25/08	1928	1935	1946
Johnny Hudson	6/30/14	R	6/30/12	1934	1936	1945
Sid Hudson	1/3/18	W	1/3/15	1938	1940	1954
Sam Jethroe	1/20/22	R	1/20/18	1948	1950	1954
Indian Bob Johnson	11/26/08	R	11/26/05	1929	1933	1945
Oscar Judd	2/14/10	W	2/14/08	1934	1941	1948
Vern Kennedy	3/20/09	R	3/20/07	1930	1934	1945
Bob Klinger	6/4/10	R	6/4/08	1929	1938	1947
Ernie Koy	9/17/12	R	9/17/09	1933	1938	1942
Mike Kreevich	6/10/10	R	6/10/08	1930	1931	1945
Red Kress	1/2/07	R	1/2/05	1927	1927	1946
Lou Kretlow	6/7/23	R	6/7/21	1946	1946	1956
Chet Laabs	4/30/14	R	4/30/12	1935	1937	1947
Cookie Lavagetto	12/1/14	R	12/1/12	1933	1934	1947
Bob Lillis	6/2/32	R	6/2/30	1951	1958	1967
Hector Lopez	7/8/32	R	7/9/29	1951	1955	1966
Turk Lown	5/30/26	R	5/30/24	1942	1951	1962
Duke Maas	1/31/31	R	1/31/29	1949	1955	1961
Phil Marchildon	10/25/15	W	10/25/13	1939	1940	1950
Connie Marrero	5/1/15	R	8/11/11	1947	1950	1954
Eddie Mayo	4/15/13	W	4/15/10	1932	1936	1948
Johnny McCarthy	1/7/13	R	1/7/10	1934	1934	1948
Frank McCormick	6/9/13	R	6/9/11	1934	1934	1948
Bill McGee	11/16/12	R	11/16/09	1933	1935	1942
Ed McGhee	9/29/26	R	9/29/24	1948	1950	1955
Roman Mejias	8/9/32	R	8/9/30	1953	1955	1964
Jack Merson	1/17/24	R	1/17/22	1940	1951	1953
Dee Miles	2/15/12	R	2/15/09	1934	1935	1943
Wally Millies	10/18/10	R	10/18/06	1927	1934	1941
Whitey Moore	6/10/14	R	6/10/12	1934	1936	1942
Julio Moreno	1/18/23	R	1/28/21	1947	1950	1953
Bill Morrell	4/9/00	M	4/9/1893	1924	1926	1931
Ray Murray	10/12/19	R	10/12/17	1940	1948	1954
Lynn Nelson	2/24/07	R	2/24/05	1926	1930	1940
Bobo Newsom	8/11/09	R	8/11/07	1928	1929	1953
Ray Noble	3/15/22	R	3/15/19	1949	1951	1953
Danny O'Connell	1/21/29	R	1/21/27	1946	1950	1962
Bob Oldis	1/5/30	R	1/5/28	1949	1953	1963
Roberto Ortiz	6/30/17	R	6/30/15	1939	1941	1950
Johnny Ostrowski	10/17/20	R	10/17/17	1939	1943	1950
Joe Ostrowski	8/15/20	R	11/15/16	1941	1948	1952
Don Padgett	12/5/13	R	12/5/11	1935	1937	1948
Satchel Paige	9/22/08	R	7/7/06	1956	1948	1965*
Claude Passeau	4/9/11	R	4/9/09	1932	1935	1947
Johnny Peacock	1/10/12	R	1/10/10	1933	1937	1945
Bubba Phillips	2/24/30	R	2/24/28	1948	1955	1964
Dave Pope	6/17/25	R	6/17/21	1950	1952	1956
Bill Posedel	8/2/09	R	8/2/06	1929	1938	1946
Vic Power	11/1/31	R	11/1/27	1950	1954	1965
Rip Radcliff	1/19/08	R	1/19/06	1928	1934	1943
Bob Ramazzotti	1/16/19	R	1/16/17	1940	1946	1953
Willard Ramsdell	4/4/18	R	4/4/16	1938	1947	1952
Bill Renna	10/14/26	R	10/14/24	1949	1953	1959
Allie Reynolds	2/10/19	R	2/10/17	1939	1942	1954
Elmer Riddle	7/31/17	W	7/31/14	1936	1939	1949
Preacher Roe	2/26/18	W	2/26/15	1939	1938	1954
Tony Roig	12/23/29	R	12/23/27	1948	1953	1956

(table continued on next page)

Major League Players With Understated Ages During Their Playing Days ***(continued from previous page)***

	DOB Career	DOB ESPN	1st yr Minors	1st yr MLB	Last yr MLB
Larry Rosenthal	5/21/12 R	5/21/10	1933	1936	1945
Schoolboy Rowe	1/11/12 R	1/11/10	1932	1933	1949
Tom Saffell	7/6/23 R	7/6/21	1943	1951	1955
Hank Sauer	3/17/19 R	3/17/17	1937	1941	1959
Art Schallock	4/25/26 R	4/25/24	1947	1951	1955
Hank Schenz	4/11/22 R	4/11/19	1939	1946	1951
Rip Sewell	5/11/09 R	5/11/07	1931	1932	1949
Frank Shea	10/2/22 R	10/2/20	1940	1947	1955
Bud Sheely	11/26/22 R	11/26/20	1941	1951	1953
Clyde Shoun	3/20/15 R	3/20/12	1935	1935	1949
Dick Siebert	2/19/14 R	2/19/12	1929	1932	1945
Elmer Singleton	6/26/20 R	6/26/18	1940	1945	1959
Moose Solters	3/22/08 R	3/22/06	1927	1934	1943
Steve Sundra	3/27/13 R	3/27/10	1932	1936	1946
George Susce	8/13/10 R	8/13/07	1930	1929	1944
Ben Taylor	9/30/27 R	9/30/24	1945	1951	1953
Birdie Tebbetts	11/10/14 R	11/10/12	1934	1936	1952
Johnny Temple	8/8/29 R	8/8/27	1948	1952	1964
Bud Thomas	9/9/12 R	9/9/10	1932	1932	1941
Jocko Thompson	1/27/20 R	1/17/17	1940	1948	1951
Bob Thurman	5/14/23 R	5/14/17	1949	1955	1959
Virgil Trucks	4/26/19 W	4/26/17	1938	1941	1958
Jim Turner	8/6/06 R	8/6/03	1923	1937	1945
Emil Verban	8/27/17 W	8/27/15	1936	1944	1950
Charlie Wagner	12/3/16 W	12/3/12	1935	1938	1946
Harry Walker	10/22/18 W	10/22/16	1937	1940	1955
Skeeter Webb	11/4/11 R	11/4/09	1932	1932	1948
Roger Wolff	4/10/13 W	4/10/11	1930	1941	1947
Charlie Workman	1/6/17 W	1/6/15	1937	1938	1946
Taft Wright	8/6/13 W	8/10/11	1933	1938	1949
Sam Zoldak	12/8/22 W	12/8/18	1938	1944	1952
Bill Zuber	3/26/15 R	3/26/13	1932	1936	1947
George Zuverink	8/20/26 R	8/20/24	1946	1951	1959

* Paige appeared in one game for the Kansas City Athletics in 1965.
His last "real" year in the majors was 1953 with the St. Louis Browns.

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Minnie Minoso

Major League Player With Overstated Age During His Playing Days

	DOB Career	DOB ESPN	1st yr Minors	1st yr MLB	Last yr MLB
Minnie Minoso	11/29/22 R	11/29/25	1948	1949	1980**

** Minoso appeared in three games in 1976 and two games in 1980.
His last "real" major league season was 1964 with the Chicago White Sox.

R=Baseball Register Baseball
W=Who's Who in Baseball Encyclopedia
M=MacMillan Baseball Encyclopedia

A Manifesto for Defensive Baseball Statistics

by Dr. Jon Bruschke

Current defensive statistics are far less meaningful than batting or fielding statistics, mostly because the correct information is not collected. Statistics that do exist tend either to be not revealing or incredibly complex. I propose the collection of a single new piece of information that I think might change popular understandings of defense and allow complex analyses. By simply assessing the difficulty of the play, it should be possible to measure Hit Saving Plays and Difficult Plays Not Made. Sample data are presented for the first 21 games of the 2004 Anaheim Angels season.

Defense makes a profound difference in the outcome of baseball games but is usually not reflected in official statistics. Consider the Angel-Mariner game on July 7, 2005. With the Mariners leading 4-0 in the second inning, and two outs and two runners on, Richie Sexson hit a chopper to the hole. Dallas McPherson hesitated, had the ball glance off his glove, and watched it fall behind him on a play the official scorer ruled a hit. The next batter cleared the bases with a double to make the score an out-of-reach 7-0. The starter, Bartolo Colon, then blanked the Mariners for the next four innings, allowing no more runs and only one hit. The play was absolutely decisive. Had McPherson made the play, Colon would have been out of the inning and a potent Angel offense might have started chipping at the four-run deficit. The turning point in the game was a difficult play that was not made, and the sportswriter covering the game dedicated more than half his column to McPherson's unmade play. The make-ability of the play was also not lost on Mike Scioscia, who commented: "If [McPherson] stays aggressive, I think he makes that play. It wasn't routine, but there might have been a little indecision that prevented Dallas from getting to the ball cleanly."[1] Despite the fact that Scioscia, the sportswriter, and everyone watching the game could tell it was the defensive play not made that turned the ball game, that event appeared nowhere in the box score. Colon was charged with seven runs despite the fact that at least three of them could have been prevented had McPherson caught the chopper. The scorer was not at fault because the ruling was perfectly consistent with the rulebook definition of a hit. What was missing was a statistical category to describe the play.

The McPherson play highlights a general problem with defensive statistics. The statistics that are in common use—chances, putouts, and errors—are so general that they tell us almost nothing about the value of defense, nor do they separate the better players and teams from the worse ones. The statistics that do have useful information are obtained through a system of such awkward analytical yoga that usually only we sabermetricians even try to comprehend them. The most basic information—how many hits were robbed by a fielder and how many tough balls they let go by—isn't collected.

The gap in usefulness between fielding statistics and those for hitting and pitching is so large that I believe that by collecting a few pieces of information about defense, we could massively alter our understanding of defense and its value. This knowledge, in turn, would change how we understand and evaluate pitching and hitting. This article is a call for better baseball defense research in three parts. First, it will review existing measures of defensive performance. Second, it will outline the scheme for recording two new statistics. Third, it will explore possible calculations than can be made on these new data and present some results I've collected. In the main, it will argue for the addition of two new defensive statistics that I believe have the most potential to rapidly increase the appreciation of defense.

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THE STATE OF CURRENT DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

As James Click sagely noted: "Statistics are only valuable if they are consistent and accurately reflect the action on the field."[2] A review reveals that our current measures of defense fall short of the mark. Tom Tippett has cut to the heart of the matter by identifying that the shortcomings come down to two basic issues: (1) we don't have a good count of the number of chances, and (2) we don't know whether the chances were routine,

normal, or challenging.[3] To briefly elaborate on point (1), "chances" are measured by assists plus putouts plus errors. They do not include balls that are ruled hits even though many of those "hits" presented fielders with "chances" to produce outs. What is not captured is the number of balls that get past Derek Jeter that Ozzie Smith would have turned into outs. As a result of these shortcomings there is a consensus that measures such as fielding percentage are of very little use in evaluating defensive performance.

The reaction by the baseball experts, by and large, has been to try to compensate for factor (1) with increasingly elaborate analyses, while efforts at correcting factor (2) by collecting information on the difficulty of the play have been lagging. The advanced statistics can be quite useful but are complex to calculate, difficult to understand, and often hard even to find. A related issue is the accessibility of the more sophisticated statistics, both in terms of ease of understanding and in ease of finding them. Although complexity is not a problem with a statistic per se, and the lack of wide publication is certainly not a knock against any author, there is much to learn from the principle of Occam's Razor (loosely paraphrased, "The simplest solution is usually the best one"). To state the point quickly, useful but complex statistics do not replace the need for intuitive and parsimonious ones. Complicated figures that are hard to understand and difficult to get your hands on are unlikely to enter the popular baseball vernacular and change the thinking of casual fans, cutting-edge analysts, managers, announcers, and players.

Adam Kennedy

Existing defensive measures follow two basic approaches, one which estimates range based on putout and assist data, and one which measures range more directly by dividing the field into zones.

In the first category, the Range Factor was an early attempt to deal with the problem of a slow fielder committing fewer errors than a better defender who got to more balls and hence had more chances to drop them. Essentially, the formula divided chances by games. The statistic was obviously limited by using games rather than defensive innings as the denominator[4] and failed to account for other factors. Adjusted Range Factors were Tom Tippett's solution and corrected many of these shortcomings by counting the balls in play at the position while the player was on the field, removing chances insignificant to defensive range (like taking a throw at first), tracking the hitting side of the batter, and adjusting for the ground-ball percentage of a pitching staff.[5] It should be further noted that the information is proprietary, difficult to access, and complex to compute. For example, when Tippett was explaining what the formula revealed about Jose Vidro, he had to comment "we can't finish our assessment of his play without using more advanced methods,"[6] and presumably only Tippett has the complete formula.

More advanced efforts that extend the same basic logic include John Thorn and Pete Palmer's Fielding Runs and Bill James' Fielding Runs and Defensive Win Shares. Each have sparked their own disputes (Fielding Run formulas have been in dispute[7] and compared unfavorably to Defensive Wins;[8] both Defensive Wins and Win Shares have been criticized for their complexity[9, 10] and Win Shares in particular have sparked much debate[11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16]). The advanced systems improve over the Range Factors, but, as Tippett notes, they still make "educated guesses at how many opportunities each fielder had to make plays. It goes without saying that it's possible to do better when we have access to play-by-play data that records the location of every batted ball."[17]

To correct for the basic problem of guessing how many balls landed near a fielder based on the number

of chances, a second approach has incorporated the use of "zones." Independent, non-official scorers mark the area of the field on which each ball lands; Stats, Inc. uses 22 zones.[18] The Zone Rating simply divides the outs by the number of balls hit into a fielder's zone. As early as 1994, Milt Pappas was already declaring it an "inadequate measure of fielding aptitude"[19] and that it needed to be adjusted for the average performance by a major leaguer and the "Adjusted Run Value (ARV)." The ARV, in turn, is the likelihood that an unfielded ball will produce a run, the figures for which were taken from Pete Palmer's statistical glossary in *Total Baseball.*

David Pinto noticed two problems with the Stats, Inc. Zone Ratings, namely, that they treat all balls hit in the zone equally, and that how far a ball travels (and hence which zone it ends up in) depends on whether a fielder stops it.[20] Pinto responded with a probabilistic model for Adjusted Zone Ratings that accounted for the zone into which the ball was hit, how hard it was hit, and whether it was a grounder, line drive, or fly ball. Pinto then calculated the average number of outs for a ball of a given type (say, a grounder to third base) and assessed whether a given team or player produced more or fewer outs than average. Pinto's ratings have never been fully published, involve a number of complex calculations, and it is unclear how many additional adjustments (for ballpark effects, pitcher handedness, etc.) are required or are being added. Pinto at some point hints that adjustments are coming and at others favorably compares his system to Ultimate Zone Ratings because they do not require complex adjustments.

The Ultimate Zone Ratings (UZR) by Mitchel Lichtman[21] are the state of the art in complex fielding analysis based on zones. The analysis is dizzying: Fielding zones are divided into sub-zones for a total of 78 possible areas and weight a player's performance against the league average and for the probability of a run produced by defensive failure as suggested by Pappas. In addition, UZRs incorporate up-to-date empirical weightings for the run value of a hit in a given zone based on data from the current season rather than relying on the *Total Baseball* formula. The resulting ratings are then adjusted for ballpark factors, runner/out combinations, handedness of the batter, ground ball-to-fly ball ratios of pitchers, and the speed of the batted ball. It almost goes without saying that the UZRs are very complex and not well published.

A limitation of extant zone schemes is that they do not account for the original positioning of a player. A third baseman hugging the line in a late-inning situation will have an easier time with a grounder hit over third than a fielder playing even with the infield grass expecting a bunt and fielding the same ball. Or imagine Barry Bonds coming to bat, the defense shifting, and the third baseman fielding a routine ground ball just to the third-base side of the second-base bag from where the shortstop would usually stand. In the zone system this would appear to be an incredible feat; compared to the league average, a third baseman making a play in the shortstop zone around second-base would appear to be the fastest defensive player in history. In reality, the play would be much easier than fielding a screaming grounder inside the third-base bag from a standard third-base position.

Whether or not good positioning should be counted as part of good defensive performance is a point that has been debated by baseball statisticians. The UZRs, and the progeny of Zone Rating measures in general, quietly assume positioning doesn't matter so long as the out is recorded. This is not a fault with a UZR approach in general, but it does demonstrate that like their chance-based predecessors, the UZRs are an attempt to estimate the number of difficult plays a defender makes rather than measure them directly. Once again Tippett has hit the mark: an estimate will never be as useful (and can quickly become less intuitive) than a direct measure.

This discussion centralizes to two central points. First, current fielding research tends toward advanced schemes that due to their complexity will have a hard time capturing the common baseball imagination. It is worth asking, and several have already asked, whether the gain in understanding is worth the explosion of complexity. Second, all of these advanced systems for analyzing data would benefit greatly from the collection of good data in the first place.

Perhaps due to these patterns, there is a vast confusion about the importance of defense. I can still remember Joe Garagiola Sr. chortling every Saturday during the Game of the Week, "Shake a tree and ten gloves will fall out of it. Give me a guy who can hit!" Some analyses support the Garagiola opinion and hold that defense makes no difference at all.[22] Others place a greater but still limited value on defense, such as Jarvis's work that estimates that 10% of all runs, and not just unearned runs, can be accounted for by errors.[23] At the other extreme, Voros McCracken's recent work has done much to show that once a ball is put in play, the quality of fielders dominates the outcome and the value of the pitcher all but evaporates.[24] Similarly, Dick Cramer claims that fielding is far more important than pitching and has produced

four studies to prove it.[25] Sitting squarely in the middle are two analyses that have tested McCracken's proposition and concluded that pitching does matter, but less than is popularly supposed.[26] To beat a dead horse, much of this confusion can be traced back to the lack of good data on the difficulty of the play (Tippett's second limitation of current statistics), resulting in the need to estimate rather than directly measure how many hits a good defender is taking away. Cramer, for example, used a "Hits Prevented" measure, but had to estimate the figure based on league data and could only compute it for teams, not individuals.

TWO NEW STATISTICS

The preliminaries. A solution to complexity, of course, is to start with something simple: Collect data on the number of defensive plays that rob hits. The hit-saving play is already widely recognized. It shows up on the ESPN Top 10 Plays each night and in the "web gem" sequence. It is recognized every time an announcer screams, "call the FBI, Brooks Robinson robbed another hit!" It is recognized by GMs and managers who build contenders with good defense up the middle. It is simply not counted in official statistics.

The counterpart to the hit-saving play, the difficult play that is not an error but is possible to make, is also recognized by baseball people. Consider this *Los Angeles Times* account of a Dodger game: "Speedy Willy Taveras hit a chopper that Choi bobbled before tossing to Brazoban, who didn't get to the bag in time. It was ruled a hit, although Tracy said the out could have been recorded had Choi fielded the ball cleanly."[27] Scioscia recognized the same feature of McPherson's play; it was correctly ruled a hit but was a play that was possible to make.

It is time to make our statistical sheets match what baseball people already recognize. The job of good statisticians is to create quantitative categories that match the action on the field, as Click has suggested, and to create a set of rules that allows scorers to put that field action into the correct categories.

Before offering my solution, I should discuss why the current measures don't capture the concept and how positioning should fit into the assessment of defensive play.

To begin with, why don't the current Stats, Inc. measurements account for the difficulty of play? They include both the type of hit (grounder, line drive, or fly) and how hard it was hit (soft, medium, or hard); why isn't that enough information? First, as Pinto has pointed out, the zone that the ball lands in depends on whether or not a fielder has caught it. A line drive snagged by an infielder gets counted in the infield zone, while the same ball a less adept (or simply shorter) fielder didn't get to that hits the gap is considered an outfield hit. Second, not all hard-hit balls are difficult. A hard-hit line drive that goes right to a third baseman is a much easier play than, say, a swinging-bunt grounder with a fast runner. Third, not all balls hit right at a defender (and hence within their zone) are equally difficult; some are screaming one-hop line drives, some are dribblers you have to bare-hand to have any chance on, and some are routine three-hoppers.

How should positioning be considered? Tippett has taken other systems to task for giving undue credit to players with soft hands who cover no ground; zone ratings, in contrast, assume that if you can produce the out, you should get credit and that good positioning is part of good defense. In my view, the debate may conflate what are separate issues. There are two ways to get a hitter out. You can either position yourself so that he'll hit the ball at you, or you can make a great play from a more distant starting position. A poorly positioned player who can make a play despite his positioning is still more valuable than a poorly positioned player who cannot make the same play on the same ball. Ideally, of course, you'd want a player to be properly positioned and also be able to make plays at the edge of his range. It is equally obvious to state that no matter how well a player is positioned overall, there will be some balls hit just outside of his range. What we need are measures that can count how many times a defender can convert a ball hit right at him to an out, and others to count how well a player handles balls hit just to the edge of his range. The entire positioning-versus-range-versus-hands debate is simply a function of the failure of current measures to assess each skill separately.

The new categories. The additions proposed here divide all balls in play into two categories: Those that produce outs and those that result in a batter reaching base safely. Presently, all outs are treated equally; the proposed system would divide outs into those that are routine and those that had they not been fielded would have been ruled a hit rather than an error. The latter are "Hit Saving Plays" (HSP). Balls that result in hitters reaching base safely are currently counted as either hits or errors. The proposed system would further divide hits into "clean hits" (those which presented no opportunity for a defender to make a play) and "Diffficult Plays Not Made" (DNM); balls that required greater than "ordinary effort" (to use the

language of the current rule) but that presented the defender with an opportunity to produce an out. Generally, a DNM requires that a defender leave his feet in a dive or a lunge and either touches the ball or have it pass through their wingspan. Balls outside a player's range (wingspan) are clean hits. DNMs do not replace the category of "hits," but some hits will be ruled DNMs. Similarly, HSPs do not replace the category of "outs," but some outs may be scored as HSPs. HSP and DNM designations are only made on the initial stop of a ball in play and are not given to subsequent catches or throws. (Full details of the scoring system, the complete dataset presented below, and proposed wording changes to the rulebook are available at commfaculty.fullerton.edu/jbruschke/baseball.htm).

There are many ready advantages to this proposed system. Most fundamentally, it will allow comparisons of how often a player produces outs on difficult plays. Instead of estimating the number of difficult chances with a series of adjustments, the number of opportunities for making a difficult play is simply counted. Dividing the number of hit-saving plays by the total number of difficult plays (HSP+DNM) will give a percentage measure of how often a player can turn a difficult play into an out. Separately assessing routine and difficult plays will also allow a way to identify the players who are able to make difficult plays but often botch routine ones, the vexing case that constantly frustrates current defensive measurement.

The system makes it possible to identify what portion of a hitting or pitching feat can be accounted for by defense. It can identify hard-luck batters who hit the ball the hard but have their hits robbed by good defense. It can identify good-luck batters as those who benefit from defense that can't turn difficult plays into outs. Pitchers saved by good defensive plays can be identified, as can pitchers who don't enjoy the defense turning good plays behind them.

Finally and importantly, the hit-saving-play can be easily integrated into both the popular understanding of the game and advanced statistics. Announcers and fans can grasp and appreciate phrases like "he's taken away more hits than any other shortstop in the league this year," or "he turns a higher percentage of tough plays into outs than any other second baseman." Advanced sabermetricians can use the new data for their powerful analyses and recalculate ERAs and batting averages based on the number of difficult plays turned to outs over league averages. Instead of estimating the number of runs a play might save with an aggregate number, calculations could simply count the number of times a defensive play saved a hit with, for example, a runner in scoring position. Instead of tortuous calculations to figure out how many Fielding Runs a shortstop is worth, you can simply count the number of runs he saved by taking away what otherwise would have been ruled hits with runners in scoring position.

A concluding point is that it is important to measure range and catching ability separately. Simply put, a good defender needs both good speed and good hands. There's no point in being able to catch well if you can't get to the ball you're supposed to catch, and no point in getting to the ball if you can't catch it. The best fielders do both well, the worst fielders do neither well, and those good at one but not the other fall in the middle. So long as we have good ways to assess each capability separately, there's no reason to assume that one is more important than the other. Instead, we should collect separate information on each skill.

The system presented above is *not* intended as a measure of range, but instead is a measure of how well a player handles difficult chances within their range. In other words, some players will have more range than others, but within each player's range—however wide or narrow it might be—that player will encounter balls that will be more difficult to handle due to bad hops, how hard they are hit, and how close to the edge of a player's range they are. The HSP/DNM scheme is designed to measure how often a player can convert difficult chances into outs.

HOW DO YOU KNOW ONE WHEN YOU SEE ONE?

Isn't the notion of a "difficult play" too subjective? Don't good defenders make difficult plays look easy, and aren't there bad defenders who make easy plays look hard? Aren't there some guys who dive after every ball, including those that they have no chance of reaching? These are valid questions, and there are good answers to them. Repeating the mantra "It's still better than just counting errors" will cut to the core of most of it.

It is a fact that human judgment is already coded into the definition of an error, which requires the scorer to assess "ordinary effort" (rule 10.13 note 2 and 10.14.b), "slow handling of the ball," (rule 10.13 note 1), what is a "good throw" (rule 10.13.d.1 and 10.14.b), or an "occasion for the throw" (rule 10.13.e). Note that for the HSP, the scorer would ask themselves "Had he not made that play, would I have called it a hit?" This exerts no more subjective judgment than the existing error (and hit) rulings. To score a DNM, the scorer would first have ruled a hit rather than an error, and would then simply ask, "Although that was not an error, was it

possible for an outstanding defender to convert the ball to an out?" This decision, while somewhat subjective, is not a reach far beyond the current "ordinary effort" judgment about a hit or error. As will be demonstrated below, it can be made reliably.

What about the defender who can make a tough play look easy, or through good positioning and anticipation get squarely in front of more balls than other players? Consider four things. First, if it is possible to know that there are players who make difficult plays look easy, that is presumably because it is possible to know what a difficult play is in the first place. If so, it should be possible to put on paper what features of the play made it difficult, and those elements could simply be added to this system to make it more reliable. Second, at present, all these players have to show for their effort is a higher error total if they get to more balls than other players but miss them at the same rate. The proposed system would at least allow them to show hit-saving plays as an offset. Third, the HSP/DMN categories are not designed to measure range, and presumably these players would be highly ranked on other measures of range. Again, if range and catching ability are measured separately, we can identify players with good range, those with good hands, those with both, and those with neither. Fourth, even in the HSP/DNM system, a player who showed the same number of outs in a zone with fewer HSPs could at least make the claim that they were doing a better job of being where the ball was and hence diving around less. In other words, this system could quantify the existence of the player with good anticipation, something only supposed at present.

What about players who make easy plays look difficult? I should say that I am not at all convinced that there are such players, at least not at the major league level. The level of competition is such that if you are doing things that make your routine tasks more difficult, it is unlikely that you'll stick around for long. But, once again, the HSP/DNM scheme would be no worse than simply counting errors, since the players making easy plays look tough should be fooling scorers into handing them fewer errors by virtue of making routine plays appear to require greater than "ordinary effort." And the system would perfectly identify players who dive after balls they have no chance at; they would have a huge number of DNM plays and very few HSP plays.

It is also worth noting that another type of player—the one who makes spectacular plays but also blows a large number of routine ones—is invisible with current statistics but easily revealed if HSPs and DNMs are counted.

A final point, and perhaps the most important one, is that simply because judgments are subjective does not mean that they cannot be made reliably. When to remove a pitcher, for example, is a subjective decision, but good managers make the decision better and more reliably than bad ones do. Other decisions, like whether someone is attractive or whether a food tastes good, are also subjective but made all the time and with a high degree of reliability. In fact, almost all social science textbooks discussing quantitative research methods have chapters on how to measure whether a subjective judgment is made reliably. For example, my area of professional expertise is pretrial publicity, and we often need to determine whether a news story is pro-defense, pro-prosecution, or neutral.

The procedure generally involves writing down a set of coding rules, training coders (or "scorers") to use the system, having several of them independently code the same thing (such as a news story), and counting how often the coders put the same item in the same category. There are three criteria typically used to assess reliability: (a) whether coders agree more often than chance levels, called "statistical significance," (b) the raw percentages of agreement, and (c) the score on a statistic called Cohen's Kappa, where scores range between -1 and +1 and scores of .41-.60 are "moderate," .61-.80 are "substantial," and scores of .81-1.00 are "almost perfect."[28]

To measure the reliability of this system, I gave the coding rules discussed above to a group of people with a general knowledge of baseball who knew how to score a game but were not professional scorers. These coders watched a random selection of games during the 2005 season, either by watching a nationally televised game in different cities and sending me their codes or by watching the same game in person. If they watched the same game in person, efforts were made to ensure that each coder scored the play independently without consulting other coders. To avoid missing data, often more than two coders were assigned to score the same game. When more than two sets of scores were available for one game, two sets of codes were randomly selected and the others were discarded to avoid weighting some games more heavily than others. Some games were recorded and went into extra innings and thus, in a very few cases, the coders who taped the game did not have all extra innings available to watch. When this occurred, only data for the first nine innings were included. Small alterations to the coding rules were made during the life of the project; this, of course, tends to depress agreement rates since games scored early on had

slightly lower reliability than those scored later.

Overall, 501 plays were coded and the agreement rate was 95.8%, that is, the two coders assigned the same code to the same play 480 times out of 501. The odds of this occurring by random chance were less than one in a thousand, making the pattern statistically significant. The overall Kappa score was .92, well within the "almost perfect" range. Considering only the base hits, 115 times the coders agreed the play was a clean hit, 27 times they agreed on a DNM code, and 5 times they disagreed. Considering only base hits and only the plays where at least one coder assigned a DNM code to the play, the agreement rate was 84.4% (27 of 32) with a Kappa of .89. Considering only outs, 304 times coders agreed the play was a routine out, 34 times they agreed on an HSP code, and there were 16 disagreements. Considering only the outs and only the plays where at least one coder scored the play an HSP, there were 34 agreements in 50 plays for an agreement rate of 68% and a Kappa score of .78.

These data show a reliable coding system on all three criteria with high agreement percentages, statistical significance, and high Kappa scores. Anecdotally, it is worth noting that of the 165 plays scored by four coders (two of which were discarded in the analysis reported above), all four coders agreed 94.5% of the time, three of four coders agreed 3.6% of the time, and there was a two-to-two split only 1.8% of the time. The overall percentage of difficult plays (HSP or DNM) in the reliability dataset was 16.3%, which matched very closely the rate of 17.75% in the final dataset (reported below).

Finally, it bears repeating that knowledgeable baseball people, Mike Scioscia and Jim Tracy among them, already recognize that there are plays that rob hits and plays that are not errors but could be made. If the present set of coding rules does not clearly identify these categories, the best course will be to come up with rules that do define them rather than to continue as if they don't exist.

SOME DATA

Using the system described above, I scored the first 21 games of the 2004 season for the Anaheim Angels. Table 1 shows the results for all infielders with seven chances or more. "Ground ball stops" include all ground balls the fielder turned into outs and include all HSPs (ground balls not converted to outs are scored either as errors or difficult plays not made). "Total chances" includes all ground-ball stops, difficult plays not made, fly-ball putouts, and errors. It differs from traditional chances in that it includes difficult plays that were not made but does not include assists on double-play balls. As such it represents the number of opportunities to produce an out when fielding a batted ball. Of course, it would be possible to add in assists on double plays, in which case the "chances" figure would represent every chance the fielder had to produce an out or commit an error.

The case of Adam Kennedy is especially telling. Looking only at the traditional error total, he is the worst on the list with 4 errors in 44 grounders and 22 fly balls. David Eckstein made only one error over the same span, and thus viewed through traditional measures, Eckstein was a much more productive defensive player than Kennedy. Using the HSP and DNM figures, however, it is possible to tell that Kennedy also robbed 10 hits during his 79 total chances, more than double that of any other fielder. He is revealed as a player who muffed some routine balls he should have turned into outs but also robbed a number of hits to compensate. In addition, Kennedy's ratio of DNM to HSP is .53 and the overall ratio on the table is .47 (42 DNMs and 31 HSPs), and thus Kennedy's mark is better than the average. Eckstein only turned 1 of 7 difficult chances into outs. In short, viewed through traditional statistics Kennedy was a four-fold dropoff from Eckstein on defense, but viewing HSPs and DNMs reveals much that is otherwise unknown about the player's defensive performances and shows that Kennedy, relative to Eckstein, was a greater defensive asset. Those familiar with Eckstein's performance in Anaheim will readily agree this is an accurate assessment; Eckstein was a gamer who gave all he had, but he could only rarely turn a borderline chance into an out. Kennedy could dominate a game on defense.

It is also interesting to note that reputed defensive stars Bret Boone and Eric Chavez had poor ratios, although neither had many chances. Remember that these figures only show performance in a few games and not an entire season; showing batting or pitching statistics over the same short span might also produce results that are counter to reputation. What this system does provide is a more objective way to evaluate a player's performance in a series. While current batting statistics allow conclusions like "He's a great hitter, but the Angels sure had his number this series," the proposed system would allow conclusions like "He's a Gold Glover, but he didn't do much on defense over the last six games." In fact, Gold Gloves are given largely on reputation, and perhaps even on the basis of hitting, in part because defensive statistics cannot at present reveal in a generally understood way who had a better defensive season. The scheme proposed

here provides a more objective way to evaluate defensive performance over the short or long term.

TABLE 1. Infield Results

Pos.		GBS	HSP	DNM	E	FBPO	TC	Ratio
4	Kennedy, Adam	44	10	9	4	22	79	0.53
6	Eckstein, David	32	1	6	1	11	50	0.14
3	Erstad, Darin	25	4	3	0	11	39	0.57
5	Glaus, Troy	20	4	2	2	7	31	0.67
4	Soriano, Alfonso	14	4	4	0	5	23	0.50
6	Aurilia, Rich	14	2	2	1	7	24	0.50
4	Boone, Bret	6	0	4	0	6	16	0.00
5	Bloomquist, Willie	6	2	4	0	4	14	0.33
6	Young, Michael	21	1	1	2	5	29	0.50
5	Chavez, Eric	6	1	3	2	2	13	0.25
3	Olerud, John	7	1	1	0	5	13	0.50
5	Blalock, Hank	15	1	3	1	2	21	0.25

GBS=Ground ball stops, HSP=Hit saving play, DNM=Difficult play not made, E=Error, FBPO=fly ball put out, TC=total chances (GBS+DNM+E+FBPO), Ratio=HSP/(HSP+DNM)

TABLE 2. Outfielder Data

	HSP	DNM	E	FBPO	TC	Asst	Ratio	HSP:TC
Guillen, Jose	2	3	0	34	37	1	0.40	5.41
Anderson , Garret	1	2	1	32	35	0	0.33	2.86
Guerrero, Vladimir	1	1	1	27	29	1	0.50	3.45
Winn, Randy	0	1	0	19	20	0	0.00	0.00
Figgins, Chone	1	0	1	18	19	0	1.00	5.26
Suzuki, Ichiro	1	2	0	17	19	1	0.33	5.26
Nix, Laynce	2	0	0	15	15	0	1.00	13.33
Kotsay, Mark	0	1	0	13	14	0	0.00	0.00
Dye, Jermaine	1	1	0	13	14	0	0.50	7.14
Mench, Kevin	0	1	0	13	14	0	0.00	0.00
Salmon, Tim	0	1	0	12	13	1	0.00	0.00
Ibanez, Raul	1	1	0	11	12	1	0.50	8.33
Byrnes, Eric	0	1	0	17	18	1	0.00	0.00

DNM=Difficult play not made, E=Error, FBPO=fly ball put out, TC=total chances (GBS+DNM+E+FBP), Asst=Assists, Ratio=HSP/(HSP+DNM), Range=HSP+DNM/TC

Outfielder data are reported in Table 2. Since outfielders generally do not turn ground balls into outs, chances are fly-ball putouts plus DNM plus errors. Because no outfielder had more than 5 HSP+DNM, the ratios are not especially meaningful, but dividing HSP by TC and multiplying by 100 gives a HSP:TC ratio that represents the number of hits saved by the outfielder over 100 chances. Laynce Nix is the leader by a wide margin; 2 of his 15 chances were instances of stolen hits. Ibanez and Dye had good performances, while defensive superstar Ichiro Suzuki showed his range by getting to 3 difficult balls in 19 chances but was only able to convert 1 of 3 into outs. It goes without saying that this system represents an improvement over fielding percentage; the error totals tell almost nothing about the quality of defensive play and the HSP and DNM figures provide much richer information about what a player did with the balls hit to him.

The discussion thus far has focused on simple calculations or at least calculations with easy interpretations (e.g., "Nix robs 13 hits for every 100 balls he can make a play on," or "6 percent of the balls Byrnes gets to are difficult to field"). It is possible to make more advanced calculations. An Adjusted Fielding Percentage can be calculated by summing ground-ball stops, assists on ground balls, unassisted putouts, assisted ground-ball putouts, assists on unforced base-running plays, and difficult plays (every opportunity a player has to make an error or fail to make a difficult play), subtracting errors and DNMs, and dividing by the revised total chances, which are obtained by summing ground-ball stops, assisted putouts, unassisted putouts, fly-ball putouts, and assists. The resulting figure represents the net number of good versus bad plays relative to total plays. An exact balance will produce a score of 1.0, more HSPs than errors or DNMs will produce a number above 1.0, and more errors and DNMs than HSPs will produce a number below 1.0. Similarly, an Infielder Rating can be obtained by dividing ground-ball stops plus HSPs minus errors by ground-ball stops plus errors. The resulting figure can be interpreted the same way as an Adjusted Fielding Percentage with an emphasis on infielder duties. Finally, an Outfielder Rating interpreted the same way can be obtained by summing assists, difficult plays, and putouts, subtracting errors, and dividing by putouts plus errors. The top 10 players in these categories are listed in Table 3. All calculations could be divided by league averages or incorporate other adjustments. The point is simply to show that the additional data obtained by counting DNMs and HSPs can be integrated into more advanced calculations or used by those who wish to give a single-number evaluation of defense.

TABLE 3.

Adjusted Fielding Percentage		Infielder Rating		Outfielder Rating	
Scutaro	1.21	Scutaro	1.60	Ibanez	1.18
Nix	1.13	Reese	1.50	McMillon	1.14
Ibanez	1.09	Bloomquist	1.33	Nix	1.13
Hatteberg	1.02	Soriano	1.29	Kotsay	1.13
Erstad	1.01	Hatteberg	1.20	Suzuki	1.12
Guillen	1.00	Teixiera	1.17	Guillen	1.09
Glaus	1.00	Erstad	1.16	Dye	1.08
Guerrero	1.00	Olerud	1.14	Salmon	1.08
Aurilia	1.00	Kennedy	1.04	Guerrero	1.00
Soriano	1.00	Aurilia	1.00	Winn	1.00

Another calculation the DNM and HSP data make possible is the ability to track runs and outs to defensive plays. If an inning is reconstructed without DNMs, it is possible to identify "preventable runs," that is, runs that could have been prevented had the defense converted difficult plays into outs. This is the same method used to calculate unearned runs where the scorer reconstructs the inning without any errors. The hardest-luck pitcher was Rafael Soriano, who averaged 20.25 Preventable Runs per nine innings. Chan Ho Park had the highest figure for pitchers with nine innings or more at 6.17. It is of course possible to calculate an ERA subtracting preventable runs, which would be the ERA a pitcher would have if every defender turned every difficult play into an out.

A "saved run" is a run prevented by above-average defense and occurs when (a) a runner is on third and a HSP occurs, (b) a runner is on second and a HSP occurs with two outs, (c) a batter is retired on an HSP and a subsequent runner scores or advances to third, or (d) a catch prevents a home run, in which case the batter and all runners on base are counted as saved runs. This scheme probably underestimates the number of saved runs, but every saved run counted is a run definitively prevented by a HSP. Rule (a) assumes that a run has been saved by the HSP even if the runner subsequently scores. The logic is that the defender saved the run for the time being and isn't responsible if subsequent action allows the runner to score. The greatest beneficiary of good defense was Pedro Martinez, who enjoyed 3.6 saved runs per nine innings. For players with at least nine innings the leader was Ben Weber with 1.5 saved runs per nine innings. It is possible to calculate an ERA adding back in saved runs. Finally, it is possible to calculate an "adjusted ERA" that subtracts from earned run totals Preventable Runs and adds back Saved Runs. In my data sample the most extreme case of a pitcher's ERA changing (with at least nine innings) was Kenny Rogers, whose ERA of 6.97 adjusted to 1.74. The average change for pitchers in the group was 1.42 runs.

Finally, these new data allow an overall assessment of the value of defense. Of the 1,110 outs in the sample, 6.22% (n=69) were recorded on difficult plays and 24.5% (n=272) were on strikeouts. There were 97 DNMs that resulted in an official scoring of "hit." Subtracting the strikeouts from the total outs and adding in the 97 balls that defenders made plays on that were scored as hits totals 935 balls put in play that resulted in, or could have resulted in, outs. Of those, 17.75% were above-average difficulty (n=166; 69 HSPs and 97 DNMs). Overall, 87.21% were recorded on routine plays or strikeouts, and the balance were recorded by HSPs, double plays, and base-running outs. In other words, roughly 18% of the time on balls in play, and roughly 13% of the time overall, what makes a difference in the outcome of a play is the defender's ability to turn a difficult play into an out.

Of the 235 runs in the sample, 59 (25.11%) were preventable and there were 21 saved runs. Adding the saved runs to the total (n=256) and dividing the saved and preventable runs (n=80) by the new total means that 31% of all scoring can be accounted for by defensive performance on non-routine plays. To repeat, 25% of the actual runs scored, and 31% of the runs scored or prevented, can be accounted for by defense on non-routine plays. These figures and those in the prior paragraph represent the amount of the game that is not accounted for at all by simply counting assists, putouts, and errors. Notice how closely these figures are to one divided by three—the third of the game missing from current statistics.

I will emphasize that the data presented above are not intended to validate the proposed scoring system, but instead are designed to demonstrate what sorts of things this system can reveal. I hope the system offers a deeper intuitive understanding of defense for the casual fan and provides the advanced analyst with new data to use. The next step is to collect a much larger set of data over a full season and correlate the new measures with bottom-line statistics such as run totals and wins.

CONCLUSION

This is the first step of a larger project to deepen the scope of defensive statistics. I will not belabor the point that defensive statistics lag behind pitching and hitting measures (much), but I will say that counting all putouts as equal is roughly like grouping all singles, doubles, triples, and home runs under the generic category of "hits." I believe that the swiftest advance in understanding defense can be had by adding the HSP and DNM categories, but there is much more that can be done and there are limitations to this scheme that I hope future efforts can address. One is to incorporate arm strength into the scheme; another is to refine the ways that a "difficult play" is defined; still another is to unify measures of range, hands, and arm strength. The entire project is detailed on the website cited earlier.

I believe that this first step has been a fruitful one. As the case of Adam Kennedy demonstrates, knowing how many hits a player saved can radically change assessments of their defensive value. Knowing how

many hits are saved in a given amount of time (like every 100 balls fielded) gives important new information about outfielders. Counting preventable and saved runs, in addition to those earned and unearned, opens new possibilities for knowing how games are won and lost. The portion of runs accounted for by defense in this preliminary analysis (roughly a third) hints that broader analyses will be quite illuminating. Adjusting batting averages and ERAs for preventable and saved runs offers the potential to assess how much of those performances can be accounted for by defensive play.

In summary, I think this system offers improvements in three areas. (1) It is more intuitive and usually less complex than what we have now. The value of any measure is the way it balances information content against complexity; the best measures contain a lot of information and are easy to understand. As of this writing, there is a gaping hole between error counts and UZRs. It is my belief that the measures suggested here contain a lot of information without getting too complicated. (2) The subjectivity of the measures presented here has been evaluated, and using appropriate professional standards it has been shown that the measures can be reliably applied by different coders to reach the same decisions. Few other approaches have presented similar results. (3) The measures suggested here tend to be direct assessments and, in Click's words, to "reflect the action on the field" by direct observation rather than estimation.

But improvements are rarely conclusive, and other schemes have their own strengths not captured here. Hopefully, a collective overhaul of how defense is measured will soon produce significant advances in how we think about this crucial but largely un-measured part of the game. ■

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Finessing the Standard Player Contract

by Michael J. Haupert

During the 1998-99 off-season free agent Kevin Brown signed what was at the time the most lucrative contract in baseball history. It guaranteed him just over $106 million for seven years with the opportunity to earn another $8.4 million through bonus clauses. Brown's contract drew intense interest because of its largesse and the seeming over-indulgence provided by its bonus clauses. My interest in Brown's contract is not his brief record-setting salary, but rather the incentive and bonus clauses included in the contract.

THE KEVIN BROWN CONTRACT

Brown was the class of the 1998-99 free agent market. He was coming off three consecutive All-Star seasons, bolstered by his 1998 TSN pitcher of the year award and top three finishes in the Cy Young balloting in 1996 and 1998. As a result, he commanded not only top dollar, but significant bargaining leverage for the little "extras" that make headlines in the press and establish a reputation for player agents. Besides the opportunity to increase his salary by eight percent through bonuses, Brown also had clauses in his contract which guaranteed him a suite on the road, eight premium season tickets at Dodger Stadium, and use of a private jet (including ground transportation) 12 times during the season to his home or selected road games, plus all post-season games (of which there were none until he was wearing a Yankee cap in 2004). These latter items were valued at $1.8 million over the life of the contract.

Among the bonus clauses were $250,000 for winning the Cy Young award (and decreasing amounts for finishing second through fifth in the voting), $250,000 for winning the MVP (with decreasing amounts for finishing second through tenth), $100,000 for being voted to the All-Star team, six-figure bonuses for winning the MVP for any post-season series, and $100,000 each for a Gold Glove or Silver Slugger award. As a matter of record, Brown went on to earn only $200,000 of the potential award bonuses.

Brown's contract was certainly not unusual in its inclusion of bonus and incentive clauses. During the 2000 season three-quarters of all MLB contracts included bonus clauses. While Brown's clauses were numerous, they were not unique. Tom Goodwin, for example, had a clause allowing him four first-class round-trip air tickets for each member of his family from Dallas to Denver. Jim Edmonds was allowed to request a trade if the Cardinals' payroll was not among the top15 in the league in 2003 (they were eighth and he's still a Cardinal). In addition to his $6,000,000 salary in 2000, Mark McGwire earned $1 for each paid admission over 2.8 million (the Cards drew a then team record 3,336,493) and $25,000 for being selected to the All-Star team. He also collected $4,000 per month for a housing allowance, was provided the use of a "luxury class" automobile, 20 first-class airline tickets, the use of a private jet three times during the season, and a suite when on the road. Not bad for a guy who only appeared in 89 games.

BONUS CLAUSES

Bonus clauses can be divided into four general categories: awards, performance, signing, and contract status. The award clauses cover every conceivable award (Rookie of the Year, Comeback Player of the Year, MVP, Cy Young, All-Star, and Gold Glove, to name a few). Performance clauses center on appearances, such as games played or innings pitched, and not on specific achievements—though this was not always the case. Signing bonuses are self-explanatory and contract status clauses include the likes of no-trade, limited trade, and buyout provisions. Miscellaneous clauses also pop up, such as the air transportation and private suite clauses mentioned earlier.

I use a sample of American League player contracts to look at the evolution of bonus clauses in the first half of the 20th century. The years 1914, 1924, 1934, and 1944 were chosen for this analysis. The sample includes contracts for 69 percent of the players who appeared in the American League during those four years, ranging from 47 percent for 1914 to 85 percent for 1934. During those years bonus and incentive

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clauses were rare, but becoming more common. Only two percent of players received bonus clauses in 1914 (though a total of 29 percent had some kind of contract amendment—most of these were simply the elimination of the 10-day clause—more on this later), less than four percent in 1924, and just over 11 percent in 1934 and 1944. An overview of these bonus clauses can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Contract Clauses for Selected Years, 1914-44

	1914	1924	1934	1944	Total
Contracts in sample	138	217	223	188	766
Contracts with bonus clause	3	7	22	22	54
Contracts with other clause	37	4	4	1	46
Bonus Clause by Type					
Attendance	-	-	4	14	18
Player performance	1	3	5	1	10
Signing	-	1	1	1	3
Year-end roster retention	-	1	5	2	8
Good effort	1	1	5	4	11
Team finish	1	-	1	-	2
Team profitability	-	1	1	-	2

These early bonus clauses focused primarily on specific player achievement, team achievement, and roster bonuses (including signing bonuses). In the four-year sample, only 54 of the 766 contracts (seven percent) had a bonus clause. An additional six percent had a non-pecuniary clause, mostly the elimination of the 10-day clause. Most bonuses were based on team-related accomplishments—either attendance, team finish, or team profitability. The second-most common type of bonus was "good behavior."

The bonus clause the Red Sox inserted in Carl Reynolds's 1934 contract is typical of a "good behavior" clause. The Sox promised Reynolds $500 if his performance was "worthy" of a bonus. There were two obvious complications with this bonus clause. The first was the absence of any definition of "worthy," and the second was the party who determined such a clause—the manager. It certainly set up a potential conflict of interest, but at the same time gave Reynolds the incentive to please his manager that year, as the bonus was worth six percent of his salary.

Team profitability is another example of a one-sided bonus clause. The bottom line for a team is to make money. The surest way to accomplish this is to win ball games. Therefore a clause which relates player pay to team performance seems reasonable. This was accomplished in one of three ways: bonus clauses based on team wins, attendance (the majority of a team's revenue in the pre-radio and television days), and team profits. The first two are easy for the player to monitor; the latter is as amorphous as the "good behavior" clause and rife with the potential for abuse because the self-interested owner had complete control over information about team finances.

Attendance bonuses first appear in 1934 and seem, on their face, to be unrealistic. For example, in the Depression year of 1934 the White Sox were promising an attendance bonus to four players if the team drew 450,000 fans—a level they had not reached since drawing 494,152 in 1928. This was not a huge leap from the 397,789 they had drawn the previous season, but seemed improbable given the financial situation in the country at the time. In fact, Sox attendance fell by more than 40 percent to 236,559, a long way from having to pay the combined $4,500 in bonuses to Muddy Ruel (.211 with 7 RBIs in 22 games), Mule Haas

SOURCE

Herb Pennock

(.268, 2 HRs, 22 RBIs), Milt Gaston (6-19, 5.85), and Evar Swanson (.298, 10 SB, 71 runs). Not that their performances helped the last-place team attract many fans. Attendance clauses were more common during the war year of 1944, when they accounted for two-thirds of all bonus clauses (see Table 2).

TABLE 2. Attendance Bonus Clause Conditions

Year	Team	Condition	Bonus Amnt	Number Contracts	Actual Attend	Previous Yr. Attend
1934	Chicago	450,000	1000	3	236,559	397,789
1934	Chicago	450,000	1500	1	236,559	397,789
1944	Chicago	450,000	$500	2	563,539	508,962
1944	Chicago	500,000	$500	5		
			$1000	2	563,539	508,962
1944	Chicago	550,000	$1000	1	563,539	508,962
1944	Cleveland	525,000	$500	1	475,272	438,894

The White Sox were the source of 10 such clauses, and the Indians had one attendance clause contract. A more comprehensive view of White Sox attendance and performance history can be found in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Chicago White Sox Attendance and Performance, 1930-1944

Year	Attendance	Wins	Finish
1930	406,123	62	7
1931	403,550	56	8
1932	233,198	49	7
1933	397,789	67	6
1934	236,559	53	8
1935	470,281	74	5
1936	440,810	81	3
1937	589,245	86	3
1938	338,278	65	6
1939	594,104	85	4
1940	660,336	82	4
1941	677,077	77	3
1942	425,734	66	6
1943	508,962	82	4
1944	563,539	71	7

WHY BONUS CLAUSES EXIST

So who is deemed worthy of a bonus clause anyway, and why do they exist? In the modern era of competitive sports labor markets, the presence of a bonus condition in the player contract is simply part of the negotiation process. The greater the demand for a particular player, the greater his ability to negotiate bonus clauses (actually, the greater his agent's ability to negotiate bonus clauses). The numerous and often complicated bonus clauses in modern contracts serve a number of purposes. First, they are a way for an agent to reap additional funds for a player at a low risk-adjusted cost to the team. This serves to increase the potential value of the player's contract (and hence the agent's commission) and enhance the agent's reputation (which is important for garnering future clients) as a sharp and shrewd negotiator. At the same time, such bonuses are often a cheap way for both sides to save face during negotiations. But why negotiate a bonus clause when you can simply opt for the guaranteed salary?

Jim Edmonds

SOURCE

The salary is, of course, a payment for the performance of the player. But salaries are determined in advance of the actual performance, so that the team is not paying for what is actually being produced, but rather is buying an expected level of production predicted from past performance. Bonus clauses are one way of reducing the downside risk to the team that they will pay for under-performance. If an MVP performance is what the team expects to buy, then an MVP bonus clause will be paid only if the player wins the award. Of course, this means the risk of under-performance is now borne by the player, but since bonus amounts are only a small percentage of the base salary of the best players, the money at risk is not too great. But the presence of the clause allows for the player to cash in on an unexpectedly great season.

The real question is not why bonus clauses exist today, but why and how they prevailed before free agency, in the era of monopsonistic (one employer, many employees) labor markets. After all, if Lu Blue didn't sign with Detroit in 1924, just what was he going to do? His alternative to his $10,000 salary was not very promising. The average non-agricultural wage in the U.S. in 1924 was less than $1,500. Yet Blue, on top of a salary that paid him more than six times the

PHOTO FILE

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average U.S. wage, had a bonus clause in his contract that promised him an additional $1,000 if he appeared in 140 games and hit .330. So why would the Tigers find it necessary to include this bonus in his contract?

The standard reason to offer such bonus clauses would be to provide players with the proper incentive to work hard. In the case of Lu, his average had dropped to .284 in 1923 after two consecutive seasons above .300 and his games played decreased for the second consecutive season from 153 in his rookie season of 1921 to 145 in 1922 to 129 in 1923. It is likely that the Tigers included the bonus to spur Blue to put forth just a bit more effort in an attempt to regain his batting prowess. If that was the strategy, it had mixed results. He did not meet either of his bonus conditions in 1924, appearing in only 108 games, but his average improved to .311.

There is a good reason to use bonuses in an effort to give players an incentive to give maximum effort. It is hard for a team to monitor and enforce effort. It is not always clear when a player is dogging it just a bit, actually fatigued during the dog days of August, or playing through a nagging injury. So how to entice a player to monitor himself and deliver his best effort at all times? Give him the incentive via a performance bonus. After all, who better to make sure he is giving his best effort than the player himself? It is more likely that a player will put forth that extra effort when he has money on the line.

This problem is known as moral hazard—that is, after a contract has been signed, one party changes his behavior to the detriment of the other. After signing a contract, a player may be able to reduce his effort a bit, coasting at times, not quite putting out 100 percent. This may be due to fatigue, laziness, or rational energy conservation. After all, if my team trails 12-0 in the ninth inning, is it really necessary for me to dive for that sinking liner? What will I gain if in doing so I injure myself? And pacing oneself for a long season also seems reasonable. I don't need to leg out that double if the outcome of the game seems certain. I can save myself for later. For the same reason, I may beg out of an occasional game to rest myself. In all of these cases I am not giving my best effort, though that is what fans are paying to see and the owner is paying to hire.

WHO GETS A BONUS CLAUSE

The ability to negotiate bonus clauses is a function of the market demand for a player, which is why bonus clauses are much more common for players who are arbitration or free-agent eligible than for players early in their career. Modern-day players have more and better bonus clauses than their pre-free agency brethren because of their increased bargaining leverage. The old-timers didn't have the bargaining leverage to get private suites on road trips. In fact, they usually had their first paycheck of the season docked to cover a deposit on their uniform (imagine how that would play out today). The worst news a player could

get from the front office was that his uniform deposit was being returned because it was accompanied by a one-way ticket out of town.

If bargaining leverage is a key to determining bonuses, the natural expectation is that the best players would get bonus clauses. However, it isn't quite that straightforward. First of all, defining "best" is not easy. I will take the coward's way out of this one and define the best players as those that earned the highest salary. While teams had complete control over the players and could dictate their wages, it seems reasonable that when they did pay high wages, they would pay those high wages to the best players. Table 4 lists the top five player salaries by year. For the first three years of the sample, this list certainly looks like what we would expect. The top salaries are paid to some of the best players in the history of the game, most of them now in the Hall of Fame. Due to the defection of large numbers of top players into the armed services in 1944, not as many familiar names make the list. However, "best" is a relative term, so I will go with this as the list of players the owners deemed the best.

TABLE 4. Top Player Salaries by Year

1914	
Frank Chance	$20,000
Tris Speaker	$15,000
Ty Cobb	$15,000
Eddie Collins	$11,500
Nap Lajoie	$9,000
1924	
Babe Ruth	$52,000
Ty Cobb	$40,000
Tris Speaker	$30,000
Urban Shocker	$15,000
Eddie Collins	$15,000
Harry Heilmann	$15,000
1934	
Herb Pennock	$55,000
Lefty Grove	$45,000
Babe Ruth	$35,000
Al Simmons	$25,000
Lou Gehrig	$23,000
1944	
Joe Cronin	$27,000
Spud Chandler	$19,000
Ernie Bonham	$17,500
Frank Crosetti	$15,000
Hank Borowy	$15,000
Bobo Newsom	$15,000
Rollie Hemsley	$15,000
Steve O'Neill (mgr)	$15,000

As would be expected, the better players tended to get bonuses. The average salary (not including the value of the bonus) for a contract containing a bonus clause is greater than the average salary in general in each year of the sample. The average player contract for the sample paid $4,184 and the average salary for a contract with a bonus clause was $6,014. The details for each year can be found in Table 5.

TABLE 5. Nominal Value of Contracts for Selected Years, 1914-44

	Avg salary all contracts	Avg salary contract with bonus clause	Difference	Bonus clause salary as % of overall salary
1914	$3431	$3714	$283	108%
1924	$5116	$8245	$3,129	161%
1934	$5368	$6342	$974	118%
1944	$6700	$7033	$333	105%
Total sample	**$4184**	**$6014**	**$1,830**	**144%**

While players with bonus clauses on average earn more than others, the player earning the highest salary each year never had a bonus clause in his contract. This could signify that the very best players were paid purely on salary because the owners did not feel they needed to provide any additional incentive for their performance. This would certainly be consistent with the profile of the stereotypical driven superstar who puts forth maximum effort on every occasion. In this case the player and owner are more likely to negotiate purely on salary and not dicker over bonus clauses.

In 1914, the highest-paid player to have a bonus clause was Eddie Collins at $11,500. However, Collins's bonus clause was non-pecuniary. It was one of the 37 contracts that year that had the 10-day clause eliminated. The highest salaried player who had a financial bonus clause was Bill Carrigan ($8,000 salary) who earned a $2000 bonus as a result of the Red Sox finishing in second place. His contract was the sixth highest in the league. His total earnings that year moved him past Nap Lajoie at $9,000 into fifth place. In 1924, only Babe Ruth ($52,000) and Ty Cobb ($40,000) earned more than Tris Speaker ($30,000). Speaker was the only one of the three who had a bonus clause, which promised to pay him $1,000 if the Indians made at least $100,000 in profit. The contract specifically noted that the accounting firm Ernst and Ernst of Cleveland would determine if this profit level was earned.

In 1934, Babe Ruth was the highest-paid player with a bonus clause. That year he was the third-highest paid player in the league at $35,000, trailing two Red Sox stars, Herb Pennock ($55,000) and Lefty Grove ($45,000). Ruth was paid 25 percent of the net receipts of all exhibition games in which he played during the

SOURCE

Goose Goslin

season, collecting $1697. The reason for this clause is obvious. Even as a fading slugger, Ruth was the biggest draw on the Yankees, and in order to get him to play exhibition games, the Yankees felt it was worth a quarter of the gate.

In 1944, Hal Trosky was the highest-paid player with a bonus clause, earning $12,500. This salary placed him 15th in the league for the season. He earned his $1,000 bonus when White Sox attendance exceeded 550,000.

EARNING THE BONUS

Just because a bonus clause appeared in a contract does not mean that it was actually paid. For example, player-performance clauses were paid only on two of 10 occasions (see Table 6). In 1934, George Earnshaw was paid $7,500 in salary and earned an additional $2,000 by winning 14 games. That's a hefty 27 percent salary increase for his performance. That same year the Red Sox paid a $500 bonus to Dick Porter for meeting his performance condition of appearing in 80 games. Actually, the Indians inserted the clause into the contract, but Porter played only 13 games for the Tribe before moving on to the Red Sox, for whom he batted .302 in 80 games, padding his salary by nine percent.

TABLE 6. Performance Clause Conditions

Year	Player	Team	Condition	Amount	Actual performance
1914	Fred Blanding	CL	20 wins & .600 win %	$500	4 wins .308 win %
1924	Lu Blue	DT	140 G & .330 BA	$1000	108 G .311 BA
1924	Charles Robertson	CH	20 wins	$500	4 wins
1924	Allan Russell	WA	Work on par with 1923 (181.3 IP, 10-7, 3.03)	$1000	82.3 IP 5-1 4.37
1934	Lloyd Brown	CL	Ea win over 12	$500	5 wins
1934	Alvin Crowder	WA	Ea win over 18	$500	9 wins
1934	George Earnshaw	CH	Ea win over 10	$500	14 wins
1934	Carl Fischer	DT	17 wins	$1000	6 wins
1934	Dick Porter	CL	80 games	$500	93 G
1944	Charlie Metro	PH	75 games	$1000	62 G

There is no way to determine if any of the team-profit or good-performance clauses were actually paid without access to team financial records. To date I have located financial records only for the Yankees and the Phillies. Individual salary data for the Phillies is not available, and the Yankees did not offer any profit or good-performance bonuses during the sample period.

No attendance clauses were paid in 1934, but in 1944 the White Sox paid $12,000 in bonuses to 10 players when they drew 563,539 fans to Comiskey Park. Two of the players earned bonuses for attendance levels beginning at 450,000, seven at 500,000 and one at 550,000. Myril Hoag was the biggest winner, increasing his $7,000 salary by $2,000 due to attendance bonuses. The Sox had drawn 508,962 in 1943, so unlike the Depression-year attendance bonus levels, these were not unrealistic, though with World War II raging on two fronts, continued increases in attendance certainly could not be taken for granted. The Indians did not have to pay their one clause, drawing just over 475,000, far short of the 525,000 bonus threshold.

Both of the team-finish clauses were earned. In 1914, player-manager Bill Carrigan of Boston was promised $2,000 on top of his $8,000 salary if he "helped the team finish first, second or third." Boston finished in second, 8½ games behind the A's. It is not

clear how much Carrigan really helped the team. In 82 games he batted only .253, though he did lead American League catchers with a .984 fielding average. Since the Sox finished in second, I will presume that his bonus was paid.

The other team-finish bonus clause was promised to Goose Goslin by the Tigers in 1934. He was paid $1,000 on top of his $9,000 salary if the Tigers finished first or second. They won the pennant that year.

When considering only the bonus clauses whose outcome I can determine (performance, attendance, team finish, and signing bonus clauses), 16 out of 33, or 48 percent, were paid out. Both were paid in 1914, one of four in 1924, three of 11 in 1934, and in 1944, 11 of 13 bonuses were earned. That year three of the attendance clauses were for coaches of unidentified teams, so I did not include them in this analysis.

OTHER BONUS CLAUSES

Out of the 46 contracts categorized as "other," 35 exempted the player from the 10-day clause included in the standard player contract. The infamous 10-day clause allowed a team to void a contract with a 10-day advance notice. In essence, it meant the team could get out of any contract with a mere 10-day's severance pay and the cost of a train ticket out of town for the player. The elimination of this clause converted the contract to a one-year guarantee. In other words, the team now was obligated to pay the contract for the remainder of the year. Of course, thanks to the reserve clause, they still had the option to renew the contract for the next season if they wished.

No contracts included clauses with exotic conditions like airfare or private suites, but there were still some interesting conditions included in this sample. In 1914 the Red Sox promised Les Nunamacher $300 if he was released, a highly unusual concession for a team to make. They paid the money when he was released and ultimately claimed by the Yankees. More common was a clause like the one the Red Sox gave Dutch Leonard that year. The team promised to cover his round-trip train fare from his Fresno, California, home. In 1924 the White Sox paid for two round-trip tickets between home and Chicago for each of two players. The Yankees went one better in 1934 by picking up the cost of a round-trip ticket for Mrs. Lazzeri. In 1944, Mike Kreevich and the Browns signed a contract containing a clause that would make Kreevich a free agent at the end of the season if they could not agree on a salary for 1945. They ultimately agreed upon a salary of $11,000 for the 1945 season, his last in the majors. This was a handsome $3,000 raise for Kreevich as a reward for his .301 average over 105 games.

CONCLUSION

While bonus payments were not common in the first half century of modern MLB, they were lucrative relative to salary when they were paid. The average bonus contract went to above-average players, but less than half of those bonuses were actually earned. In modern contracts, bonus clauses are more frequent and are awarded to more players. However, in the few examples I have cited, they don't tend to be earned any more frequently than they were in the past, and they are a smaller percentage of total salary. ■

Stolen Victories

Daring Dashes That Send the Fans Home Happy

by Jan Larson

The slugger stands at the plate in the bottom of the ninth, the score tied. The crowd rises in anticipation. The windup. The pitch and… there it goes! We've all see them. Game-ending or "walk-off" home runs are shown on *SportsCenter* almost every night and many fans consider them to be among the most exciting plays in baseball. Of course, there are other ways to "walk off" the field. Some readers may recall Pirate pitcher Bob Moose's walk-off wild pitch that scored George Foster to give the Reds the 1972 National League pennant, the walk-off walk by Andruw Jones off the Mets' Kenny Rogers that won the deciding game of the 1999 NLCS for the Braves, and the unforgettable walk-off error by the Red Sox's Bill Buckner in game six of the 1986 World Series.

Of all the ways a game-ending run may score, perhaps the most unexpected is by the steal of home. An adventuresome base runner using the element of surprise can win a game in a sudden and dramatic fashion. Chances are that you have not witnessed a major league walk-off steal. There have been only three in the past 31 seasons.

This author was fortunate enough to be in the stands at Royals Stadium (as it was then known) in Kansas City on August 17, 1976, as Hall of Famer George Brett broke from third as Indians reliever Dave LaRoche wound up in the 10th inning of a 3-3 game. Brett was two-thirds of the way to the plate before LaRoche noticed him and easily slid in under the pitch to score the winning run.[1]

Since 1901, there have been 35 game-ending steals of home in the major leagues, but only eight in the post-1960 expansion era. The busiest decade was the 1930s with seven. There was just a single game-ending steal in the 1980s, one more in the 1990s and none so far in the 21st century.

A few of the game-winning steals were executed by established base stealers. Rod Carew, Marquis Grissom, and Willie Davis all turned the trick, although Ty Cobb, the all-time leader in steals of home with 54,

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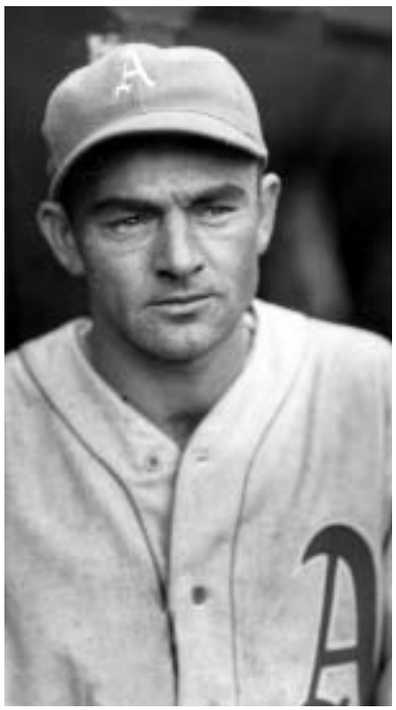

Wally Moses

SOURCE

Rickey Henderson, the all-time stolen base leader (1,406 total steals but just four steals of home) and Jackie Robinson (19 steals of home), never accomplished the feat.

Three years removed from the 1969 season in which he stole home seven times (though none were game winners), Carew surprised the Indians with a 10th inning game-winning steal against reliever Ed Farmer on September 1, 1972.[2] Carew finished his Hall of Fame career with 17 steals of home, the most for any player with a walk-off steal.

Grissom, then with the Indians, was on third with one out in the 12th inning of a 1-1 game in game three of the 1997 ALCS against the Orioles. With Omar Vizquel at the plate, the Indians attempted to squeeze home the winning run. Randy Myers' pitch was in the dirt and scooted past catcher Lenny Webster as Grissom scored.[3] The play was originally scored as a passed ball, and fans left Jacobs Field not knowing that they had witnessed something much more historic. The following day, citing rule 10.08(a), the official scorer changed the play and credited Grissom with a game-ending steal.[4]

Of the 35 walk-off steals of home, 22 have occurred in extra innings. This may suggest that once a game goes into extra frames, it would be more likely that an intrepid base runner would attempt to win the game, but considering that walk-off steals can only happen in the ninth or later innings, the fact that 37% of them have occurred in the ninth inning suggests that the inning in which a courageous runner takes matters into his own hands is really not a factor.

Inning	# of Walk-off Steals
9	13
10	8
11	1
12	5
13	0
14	5
15	2
16	1

Former Dodger Willie Davis holds the record for the latest game-winning steal of home, having used his legs to end a 16-inning game against the Phillies on September 19, 1964. In the 14th inning, Phillies outfielder Johnny Callison was caught stealing home when shortstop Bobby Wine failed to get the ball down on an attempted squeeze play, setting the stage for Davis to win the game two innings later. Davis reached on a two-out single, stole second, and advanced to third on a wild pitch, then raced home with the winner.[5]

That a player like Carew, with a history of stealing bases and stealing home, would pull off a game-winning steal is not terribly surprising, but there have been a few game enders that were surprising even to the players that completed them. Six players that won a game by stealing home finished that season with fewer than five stolen bases. Two players that accomplished the feat finished their careers with fewer than five stolen bases.

Huck Geary played in just 55 major league games for the Pirates in 1942 and 1943, finishing with a career average of .160 and three stolen bases. In the 14th inning of a game against the Boston Braves on June 1, 1943, Geary was on third with the bases loaded and one out when he raced for the plate and scored under the tag of catcher Hugh Poland, giving Pittsburgh a 5-4 decision.

Glenn Brummer played for the Cardinals and Rangers in 1981-85, never appearing in more than 49 games in any season. Brummer, never mistaken for some of the speedsters on the St. Louis clubs of that era, stole just two bases during the 1982 season, finishing his career with four. Brummer entered the August 22, 1982, game against the Giants as a pinch-runner in the eighth inning and remained in the game to catch. After striking out in the 10th, Brummer singled to left in the 12th for his first hit since July 16. He advanced to second on a single and to third on an infield hit. With two out and a 1-2 count on David Green, Brummer, noticing that Giants lefty pitcher Gary Lavelle was not paying attention to him, broke for the plate and slid under the tag of catcher Milt May, giving the Cardinals a 5-4 victory. The Giants argued that home plate umpire Dave Pallone had not called the pitch. Had it been a strike, the inning would have been over and the run would not have counted. Pallone indicated that he had, in fact, called the pitch a ball and thus the game was over. Brummer, apparently as surprised as anyone, remarked, "No one would have ever thought I would steal home in the major leagues, including me, especially to win a ball game."[6]

Seven Hall of Famers have pulled off game-ending steals. In addition to the aforementioned Brett and Carew, Frank Chance of the Cubs, Tony Lazzeri of the Yankees, Al Lopez, of the Dodgers and Eddie Murray of the Orioles all took matters into their own hands to bring a game to conclusion. The seventh Hall of Famer isn't enshrined in Cooperstown with the others. Instead, Jim Thorpe's plaque is mounted in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio.

Thorpe played parts of six seasons with the New York Giants, Boston Braves, and Cincinnati Reds between 1913-19, appearing in just 289 games with a lifetime batting average of .252. Thorpe stole only 29 bases in his career, but the one on June 5, 1918, was the most memorable. With runners on first and third and two out, teammate Jose Rodriguez broke for second as Thorpe delayed a break for home. As Joe Wilhoit swung at and missed Pirate pitcher Wilbur Cooper's first offering, Thorpe made his move. Catcher Walter Schmidt, bluffing a throw to second, fired the ball to Cooper, who inexplicably threw behind Thorpe to third baseman Bill McKechnie. McKechnie's hurried throw home was in the dirt as Thorpe scored the game winner.[7]

With over 169,000 regular and post-season games played since 1901 and only 35 game-ending steals, it would seem unlikely that any player or pitcher would be involved in more than one. Wally Moses played 17 seasons for the Athletics, White Sox, and Red Sox, stealing a total of 174 bases, although he only stole six in 1940. On August 20 of that year, Moses beat the White Sox when he took advantage of a slow windup

SOURCE

Caption

by Sox pitcher Thornton "Lefty" Lee to slide in with the winner in the 10th inning.[8] Demonstrating that practice makes perfect, Moses became the only player in major league history to execute a second game-ending steal of home when he won a 14-inning game for the White Sox against Boston on July 7, 1943. Moses's steal was so unexpected that Irving Vaughan's game account in the *Chicago Tribune* stated that Moses was nearly in his slide before Red Sox pitcher Mace Brown had released the pitch.[9]

While Moses "perfected" the art of the walk-off steal, a pitcher whose career is most remembered for giving up a World Series home run is the only hurler to be on the mound for not one but two game-ending steals of home. Charlie Root spent 16 of his 17 major league seasons pitching for the Chicago Cubs and is most noted for giving up Babe Ruth's legendary "called shot" in the 1932 World Series. Root entered the July 2, 1933, game against the Dodgers in the ninth inning in relief of starter Lon Warneke, attempting to preserve a 3-2 lead. After Brooklyn tied the game on a single by Ralph Boyle, Al Lopez clinched a doubleheader sweep for the Dodgers with a two-out theft under the tag of Cub catcher Gabby Hartnett.[10]

Root faced a similar situation six seasons later. On June 1, 1939, again against Brooklyn at Ebbets Field, Root entered the game in the eighth and held the Dodgers hitless until Gene Moore tripled with one out in the 14th inning. After two intentional walks, Root faced shortstop Leo Durocher. With the squeeze on, Durocher failed to make contact with Root's offering but catcher Bob Garbark couldn't hold the ball and by the time he recovered, Moore had scored the winning run.[11] That game also featured a triple play, executed by the Dodgers in the 12th inning. Remarkably this was not the only game that featured both a walk-off steal and a triple play.

Pat McNulty, who spent five seasons with the Indians, had a game to remember on June 11, 1924. With McNulty on second and Charlie Jamieson on first in the fourth inning, Tris Speaker lined to Red Sox first baseman Howie Shanks, who stepped on the bag to double Jamieson, then threw to shortstop Dud Lee, doubling McNulty and completing the triple play. McNulty's fortunes took a turn for the better when he tallied the winning run with a two-out steal of home in the 11th giving the Indians a 3-2 victory.[12]

Perhaps the most startling game-ending steal of home was by the Cleveland Indians' Vic Power on August 14, 1958. Power played 12 seasons for four clubs and in 1958 split time between the Indians and Kansas City Athletics. Power was not a serious threat on the base paths, stealing just 45 bases while being caught 35 times during his career. He stole just two bases for the Indians in 1958. What made Power's feat so remarkable was that those two stolen bases both occurred in the same game, and they were both steals of home! Power stole home in the eighth inning to give the Indians a 9-7 lead over the Tigers, and after Detroit tied the game in the ninth, Power won the game for the Tribe with a two-out steal in the 10th off Frank Lary. Power remains the only player since 1927 to steal home twice in the same game.[13]

No one can deny that the game has changed in recent decades. Unlike the years prior to the 1980s, starting pitchers now rarely pitch into the ninth inning (or later) when fatigue may result in a loss of concentration on base runners. Starters often do not pitch from the windup with runners on third, as in years past, and most relievers regularly pitch from the stretch position regardless of runners on base. Coupled with players making multimillion-dollar salaries unwilling to risk a three-way collision with ball and bat at home plate and so many managers managing "by the book," the chances of the average fan seeing any straight steals of home, never mind a game ender, simply aren't as great as in years past. Considering that the last game-ending straight steal of home occurred 25 years ago, it is possible that arguably the most exciting play in baseball history may have gone the way of the dinosaur. ■

The Complete List of Game-ending Steals of Home

Harry Arndt	St. Louis Cardinals 2, Pittsburgh Pirates 1	September 12, 1905
Frank Chance	Chicago Cubs 1, Cincinnati Reds 0	April 28, 1906
Eddie Grant	Philadelphia Phillies, 7, St. Louis Cardinals 6 (14), (2nd game)	July 15, 1909
Bobby Byrne	Pittsburgh Pirates 4, Brooklyn Superbas 3 (12)	August 25, 1910
Wilbur Good	Chicago Cubs 5, Pittsburgh Pirates 4 (10)	April 15, 1913
Heinie Zimmerman	Chicago Cubs 14, St. Louis Cardinals 13	June 24, 1915
Mike Gonzalez	St. Louis Cardinals 5, Philadelphia Phillies 4 (15)	June 11, 1917
Merlin Kopp	Philadelphia Athletics 5, Detroit Tigers 4 (14)	May 20, 1918
Jim Thorpe	New York Giants 4, Pittsburgh Pirates 3	June 5, 1918
Pat McNulty	Cleveland Indians 3, Boston Red Sox 2 (11)	June 14, 1924
Clifton Heathcote	Chicago Cubs 3, Philadelphia Phillies 2	July 17, 1924
Ossie Bluege	Washington Senators 8, St. Louis Browns 7	June 4, 1929
Oscar Melillo	St. Louis Browns 3, Chicago White Sox 2	May 31, 1930
Danny Taylor	Chicago Cubs 3, New York Giants 2	August 24, 1930
Tony Lazzeri	New York Yankees 2, Detroit Tigers 1 (12) (1G)	September 13, 1931
Al Lopez	Brooklyn Dodgers 4, Chicago Cubs 3 (2G)	July 2, 1933
Zeke Bonura	Chicago White Sox 9, New York Yankees 8 (15) (1G)	August 26, 1935
Bill Werber	Philadelphia Athletics 7, Washington Senators 6	April 29, 1938
Gene Moore	Brooklyn Dodgers 3, Chicago Cubs 2 (14)	June 1, 1939
Wally Moses	Philadelphia Athletics 4, Chicago White Sox 3 (10) (2G)	August 20, 1940
Jeff Heath	Cleveland Indians 9, St. Louis Browns 8 (1G)	July 4, 1941
Huck Geary	Pittsburgh Pirates 5, Boston Braves 4 (14)	June 1, 1943
Wally Moses	Chicago White Sox 3, Boston Red Sox 2 (14)	July 7, 1943
Dee Fondy	Chicago Cubs 7, Cincinnati Redlegs 6	September 6, 1953
Earl Torgeson	Detroit Tigers 6, New York Yankees 5 (10)	July 17, 1955
Jim Gilliam	Brooklyn Dodgers 2, St. Louis Cardinals 1 (10)	June 14, 1957
Vic Power	Cleveland Indians 10, Detroit Tigers 9 (10)	August 14, 1958
Ed Charles	Kansas City Athletics 4, Minnesota Twins 3	August 8, 1962
Willie Davis	Los Angeles Dodgers 4, Philadelphia Phillies 3 (16)	September 19, 1964
Tommie Agee	New York Mets 2, Los Angeles Dodgers 1 (10)	July 24, 1970
Rod Carew	Minnesota Twins 5, Cleveland Indians 4 (10)	September 1, 1972
George Brett	Kansas City Royals 4, Cleveland Indians 3 (10)	August 17, 1976
Eddie Murray	Baltimore Orioles 2, Chicago White Sox 1 (12)	August 15, 1979
Glenn Brummer	St. Louis Cardinals 5, San Francisco Giants 4 (12)	August 22, 1982
Marquis Grissom	Cleveland Indians 2, Baltimore Orioles 1 (12)	October 11, 1997 (ALCS)

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Media Guides

by Douglas B. Lyons

For the past two years I have pored over approximately 2,000 media guides, from the 1960s through 2007, to find material for this article. In addition to learning about players' off-season jobs, marital status, children, fathers, brothers, hobbies, and other oddities, I found out a great deal about media guides themselves. Let others devour reams of statistics to find out which batter had the highest on-base percentage in night games against lefties on the road in the eighth inning. What was most intriguing to me was something like the entry for Bob Knepper, who lists 10 hobbies: "grand opera, coin collecting, reading, fishing, hunting, swimming, hiking, photography, golf, and playing musical instruments." *When did he have time to play ball?*

The answer to that question lies in the media guides. It seems like 99.9% of the current players list some combination of fishing, hunting, and golf—frequently, all three. Bowling was frequently listed as a favorite hobby in older media guides. There are any number of ways that fishing can be listed as a hobby:

"Enjoys fishing."

"Is an avid fisherman."

"Lists fishing as his hobby."

"Likes to fish in his leisure time."

"Considered an expert fisherman."

With the exception of the Cincinnati Reds, who used a 4¼" x 7" format in the mid 1980s, the 8½" x 4⅛" format was standard for many years, even after the guides went from three staples down the middle to a glued spine as they expanded so the guide could easily fit in a man's jacket or pants pocket, or in a standard #10 envelope.

For years media guides did not include any price on the cover, as they were intended to be given by the team to sportswriters ("media"). Hence the name. But their popularity grew, and starting in the 1970s teams realized that the public had an insatiable thirst for information—historical, statistical, and personal—about ballplayers. [Imagine!] So teams started selling the media guides to the general public as well as distributing them to the press.

There has been no universal acceptance of the title "Media Guide." The 2001 Tampa Bay Devil Rays guide, for example, is called "Information Guide" and is one of the best. It is 6" x 9" and not written in the clipped three dot style of smaller ones ("…enjoys fishing…married…three children…uncle played for White Sox").

STUFF YOU JUST WON'T SEE IN TODAY'S MEDIA GUIDES

Readers of media guides will discover all sorts of oddities in addition to a player's career games, batting streaks, or pitching highlights. The 1979 Boston Red Sox guide and the 1979 Cubs guide list ballplayers' hair and eye color. Four Red Sox had green eyes. Some of the personal entries suggest all sorts of conversational topics.

Phil Roof met his wife "while hauling hay for neighbour…" "influenced to play baseball through listening to voice of Harry Caray broadcast St. Louis Cardinals games." *– 1977 Blue Jays*

"**Toby [Harrah]** got off to an exhilarating start in spring training last year when cute wife Pam presented him with young Toby." *– 1975 Rangers*

Kurt Bevacqua: "In fall of 1975, in a nationally televised contest by NBC, won the major league bubble-gum blowing championship with a best mark of 18½ inches!" *– 1977 Seattle Mariners*

Bob Miller is considered "expert in art of tobacco chewing." *– 1978 Blue Jays*

Rick Langford "is an only child." *– 1981 A's*

Steve McCatty "…lists Art Fowler as his boyhood idol." *– 1981 A's*

Sam Khalifa's "father, an Egyptian, works as a chemist and is also a scholar in the Muslim religion; he taught former NFL receiver and now NBC sports commentator Ahmad Rashad (formerly Bobby Moore) the Muslim religion (Rashad is Sam's father's first name)." *– 1983 Pirates*

Tony Pena "…ranks with Frank Thomas as equipment man John Hallahan's (with the Pirates since 1941)

DOUGLAS B. LYONS, a public defender in New York City, is the co-author, with his brother Jeffrey, of *Out of Left Field, Curveballs and Screwballs,* and *Short Hops and Foul Tips.* He cowrote *Broadcast Rites and Sites: I Saw It on the Radio with the Boston Red Sox* with Joe Castiglione, the radio voice of the Boston Red Sox, and cowrote *From an Orphan to a King* with Eddie Feigner. On his own he wrote *Baseball: A Geek's Bible* (2007) as well as *American History: A Geek's Guide* (2007). He has been a SABR member since 1997.

all-time bat-breaking duo. Broke 14 on a seven-game trip last year." *– 1986 Pirates*

Marvell Wynne "enjoys the antics of comedian Eddie Murphy." *– 1986 Pirates*

Nelson Briles "…delighted an *ABC Monday Night Baseball* audience with his Paul Lynde routine." *– 1977 Texas Rangers*

Ron Darling was "a co-chairman of Governor Mario Cuomo's Youth Drug Prevention Campaign in New York State…Deborah Carthy-Deu, 1985 Miss Universe and Laura Martinez-Herring, 1985 Miss USA also serve on the committee." *– Year Team*

Steve Bowling: "In first game attended by wife Jean, was hit on head by first pitch." *– 1978 Blue Jays*

Ray Knight was "married during the off-season between the 1982 and 1983 campaigns to noted woman golfer Nancy Lopez." *– 1984 Astros*

Lawrence Gowell is a "Seventh Day Adventist, which prevents him from working from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday." *– 1974 Yankees*

Greg Mathews: "[E]njoys…board games (chess, backgammon, darts)". *– 1989 Cardinals*

Randy Miller: "…both of his parents are psychologists." *– 1978 Expos*

John Dopson: "…his father is a dentist." *– 1986 Expos*

5' 9" **Luis Gomez:** "One of the shortest players in the A.L." *– 1979 Blue Jays*

Jim Rooker: "Jim is a very sharp dresser thanks to his wife Betty, who makes all his clothes." *– 1977 Pirates*

Dave Pagan "…was raised on a farm in Snowden, Saskatchewan, a town so small his telephone number was '8.'" *– 1974 Yankees*

Manager **Roger Craig:** "…lives in Warner Springs, California in a log cabin he built with his son." *– 1991 Giants*

Gus Hoefling, strength and flexibility teacher with the Phillies in the late 1970s, had a master's degree in martial arts from the Chinese Martial Arts Association, in Canton, China. *– Year Team*

"An animal lover, [**Wilson Alvarez**] once considered becoming a veterinarian. He currently has three dogs and two cockatoos." *– 2001 Devil Rays*

Pat Kelly "…was acclaimed one of nine best dressers in Kansas City." *– 1975 White Sox*

"**[Dale] Murphy** was called to serve on a Federal court jury in mid-October last year and befitting his clean-cut image, the case assigned to him involved the ownership rights to the marketing campaign of Cabbage Patch Dolls." *– 1986 Braves*

Bruce Dal Canton's "father was killed four years ago in a coalmining accident outside of California, Pensylvania." *– 1969 Pirates*

According to Freddy Berowski, a researcher at the National Baseball Hall of Fame, the earliest "media guide" in the Hall's collection is the Detroit Tigers' publication of 1925. It is not much more than a roster sheet. But as baseball grew more popular, and as baseball writers (and later broadcasters and electronic reporters) grew hungrier for information, media guides got larger. Many included the team's history and the history of the team's stadiums. Owners, team executives, front office staff, and scouts were later included. Today, most teams also include photographs and brief biographies of non-roster spring training invitees and "behind the scenes" staff, such as team physicians and the non-uniformed staff (ticket manager, stadium manager, organist, public address announcer, etc.).

No media guide is considered complete today without photos and brief biographies of all of the team's broadcasters—television, cable, radio, and foreign language. Some even mention the television and radio producers and engineers, many of whom have been with the teams for years. Most provide a complete list of all the affiliated stations that carry the team's games.

Virtually all media guides today also include team records, as well as information (such as mailing address, fax and phone numbers, and managers) on the other teams in the league, plus similar information for interleague opponents in the other league.

There is also usually a section on former team members in the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, and on those enshrined in the team's own hall of fame, e.g., Red Sox, Reds, Mets, Orioles, Cardinals, Angels. The Phillies list players from both the Phillies and the Athletics in the Philadelphia Hall of Fame section; Rube Waddell and Wally Moses are shoulder to shoulder with Granny Hamner and Cy Williams.

But the heart of all media guides is the player profiles. Over the years, in addition to a player's statistics, more and more pages have been devoted to such personal items as birth date and birthplace; relatives in professional baseball or other sports (for example, "Joe's brother is a quarterback for the Miami Dolphins; his sister plays for the Liberty in the WNBA. His uncle Murray played 1940-41 in the Yankees organization."]

SOURCE

Marital status: Single or wife's name and wedding date. (Some give first name as well as birth name. Some of the older guides say "Joe married the former Jane Smythe.") Children's names, ages or birth dates, and whether they are twins or occasionally triplets, quadruplets, or even quintuplets. The Yankees dropped marital information for some time after the Fritz Peterson-Mike Kekich wife-swapping scandal of 1973.

Most of the player profiles list the name of the high school the player attended, although some of them try to pump it up a bit by calling every high school a "prep" school. ("Rick prepped at Elk Valley High School.") If he did not play baseball in high school (e.g., David Cone, Mike Hargrove, Claudell Washington), that is noted. The other sports played are usually noted. They are almost always basketball, football, and track and field. Occasionally volleyball, soccer, hockey, tennis, and wrestling are listed.

Many major leaguers went to junior colleges to maximize playing time, as freshmen do not get to play much on four-year college baseball teams. Some later transfer to four-year colleges or universities. A number of media guides make the distinction, as society page editors do, between attending a college and being graduated from college (or, more modernly, graduating from college). Degrees earned (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, masters', and even an occasional Ph.D. and majors are listed.

Some features are found in virtually all modern media guides. Because player profiles vary significantly in length, from rookie to veteran, many of these common features are scattered throughout the guide, wherever space allows. Such common features include "The last time it happened" (e.g., last no-hitter by the team, and against the team), "How to figure" (ERA, batting average), definition of a "save," members of the team who have hit for the cycle, members of the team who have won such awards as Rookie of the Year, Cy Young, and Most Valuable Player, Gold Glove, Silver Slugger, and winners of individual team awards.

A number of the early guides used to list players' ethnicity, and only if the players chose to do so. For example, the 1973 Orioles guides notes that Andy Etchebarren is of "French-Basque descent" According to the 1985 Phillies media guide, John Wockenfuss's "ancestry is three-fourths German, one-quarter Indian." The Orioles 1979 guide tells us that Ray Miller is of "German-Norwegian descent," while Doug DeCinces is of "French-Italian descent." John Flinn? He's of "Danish and Irish descent." Dave Ford's ethnicity: "Polish-Slovakian."

The media guides of the Montreal Expos were in English and French. Recent Expos guides also indicated which bats—brand and finish—the players used, and which pitches each pitcher featured, e.g., fastball, curveball, knuckleball.

Some older guides gave team statistics and records first, but didn't start the manager, coach, and player profiles until halfway through the guide. See, for example, the 1989 Twins guide, where the manager and the team are not featured until page 54.

While many teams cite the charitable efforts made by players, the Giants include a special section, "A Giant in the community." Other teams cite dubious "accomplishment" facts that, upon even momentary reflection, are not real accomplishments:

Bill Almon and his wife "participated in the AAA/Pirates 'Come-Along' Caribbean Cruise on the

Queen Elizabeth II last November, sailing from New York to St. Kitts, Barbados, Guadeloupe and St. Thomas." *1986 Pirates. Wow! What a guy!*

WHAT TO PUT ON THE COVER?

1. If the team won the World Series the previous year, that's an easy question to answer: a picture of the trophy or of a world champion ring, or of the team celebrating.

2. If the team won the league pennant, or a divisional title, a picture of the team celebrating, the trophy, or a pennant.

What if the team was dreadful? Well, you can always use a picture (photograph or sketch) of the manager or of one or two stars, especially if a player won a major award.

If this year marks a special anniversary for the team, either as a franchise, or, say, the Twins' 40 years in Minnesota (2000), that would make a nice cover motif, too.

The cover may also include a picture of a retired player who is to be enshrined at Cooperstown. The Royals featured a tuxedo-clad George Brett on the cover of their 1999 media guide.

Among my favorite covers is the 1984 Twins media guide. The cover shows four Twins shirts hanging in lockers, with the uniform numbers 1, 9, 8, 4. The 1991 Giants "Information Guide" cover is almost all black, with an embossed baseball. The Los Angeles Dodgers 1990 media guide cover shows a collection of team pins. The 1982 Pirates cover just shows one of their unique (at least at that time) painter's hats. Late owner August Busch appeared on the cover of the Cardinals' 1990 book.

For many years almost every media guide has included a two-page spread, typically in the very center of the book, or sometimes as a cardboard fold-out, showing the entire roster, organized by position, bat/throw, birthplace, birth date, last year's club, and career stats.

Pronunciation tips are also a feature of most media guides, with many names transliterated. A few writers are more creative. The 1982 Cardinals guide, for example, tells us that Tommy Herr "pronounces his last name like the opposite of him."

Other features include the team's spring training schedule and stadium, a history of the various spring training sites used by the club, a history of the club's name and nicknames, perhaps a box containing some of the best nicknames in team history, a box showing month by month players' birthdays, a chart showing which players are from which states or countries, and how each player was acquired, frequently including the name of the scout who signed him.

Stadium oddities are a frequent filler (such as the airline seats, available at Tropicana Field in Miami, (Devil Rays 2001 guide, p. 27). Other information includes TV/radio broadcast schedule, affiliated stations, ground rules, stadium firsts, All-Stars, Gold Glove winners, Hall of Famers, MVPs, Rookie of the Year winners, Cy Young Award winners, spring training schedule and stadium. All-time alphabetical lists. Retired numbers. Opponents. Birthdays. Non-roster invitees. Nationalities, minor league managers and coaches. Scouts. Medical staff. The team in post-season. Largest and smallest crowds in team history—home and road. Longest and shortest games. Streaks. Longest service with the team. A day-by-day account of the previous season. Big innings.

Many major league teams refuse to show newly acquired players wearing uniforms or hats from their old teams: everybody pictured in the media guide must wear the new team's hat, and, if possible jersey.

But media guides are frequently put together just before Opening Day, and the team does not always have time to formally photograph their new acquisition in his new uniform. What to do? Use an older photo of the player wearing some other team's hat, and just doctor the photograph by superimposing a stock photo of the new team's hat.

Yes, media guides are printed in early spring, when rosters may be hastily assembled. Yes, some players listed have not yet played in the majors. Some names are added to the media guides at the last minute, after a promising prospect is told that he has made the team, or somebody is acquired by a last-minute trade. Nevertheless, a special award should be given to Luis Peña. Virtually every entry for a player will list his high school, the sports he played there, any college or junior college he attended, whether he played Little League, Pony League, Dixie League, Babe Ruth League, American Legion ball, etc. Also usually listed are his wife's name, kids' names, relatives who were athletes, etc.

But Pena's "PERSONAL/MISCELLANEOUS" listing in the 2005 Milwaukee Brewers' media guide is the shortest on record. Just one word: "Single."

With the advent of the World Wide Web, much of the information contained in printed media guides can now be obtained instantly online from official team websites. Advantage? A player acquired mid-season can be added to the team's roster and statistics can be updated virtually in real time. Disadvantage? It's just not as much fun. ■

Early Wrigley Field (Weeghman Park) 1914–23

by Ron Selter

Today Wrigley Field is the second oldest major league ballpark. When it began, it was known as Weeghman Park and was the new home park of the Chicago franchise of the upstart Federal League. The park was built in less than two months before the 1914 season, and was named for the owner of the Chicago Federal League team, Charles H. Weeghman. The Federal League had operated in the prior season as a minor league with a franchise in Chicago. In 1913, the then minor league Chicago Federal League team's home games had been played on the DePaul University athletic field. The site of Weeghman Park was in a north-side Chicago residential area not far from Lake Michigan, and was formerly a mostly vacant lot at the intersection of Clark and Addison. This property was owned by E. M. Cantillion, Joe Cantillion, and Edmund Archambault, the principal stockholders of the American Association of Minneapolis Millers[1]. These gentlemen, despite pressure from Organized Baseball, leased the property for the outlaw Federal League's use. The lease was signed in January 1914, and Charles Weeghman directed work on the ballpark to begin, which it did on March 4, 1914.

Opening Day was scheduled for April 23, less than two months away. The original ballpark site property was a rectangle bordered on all sides by city streets (on the south Addison Avenue, and on the east Sheffield Avenue, Waveland Avenue on the north, and Seminary Avenue/Clark Street on the west). The southwest corner of the parcel was at the intersection of Clark and Addison. Clark Street ran northwest-southeast. Seminary Avenue ran north-south and terminated very near the intersection of Clark and Addison. Theblock of Seminary Avenue between Addison and Waveland no longer exists.

The original ballpark did not utilize all the property. On the northern portion several large residential buildings were located on the south side of Waveland Avenue and abutted the ballpark's Opening Day 1914 northern boundary. These buildings supplied a substantial rental income and were left intact in the park's original construction. Along the park's western boundary there was a nearly 60-foot strip of land (facing Seminary Avenue and Clark Street) that was also not part of the ballpark. The plan was to use this strip for commercial purposes—a kind of ballpark shopping area.

The ballpark's actual dimensions were: east-west along Waveland Avenue estimated to be about 515 feet, and the north-south dimension along Sheffield Avenue estimated to be about 525 feet. The original ballpark site amounted to about 5.9 acres in size. This was likely about the same size as the then typical major league ballpark used in the Deadball Era (1901–19). The size of the entire property leased by the Chicago Federal League team was some 7.4 acres.

On Opening Day, April 23, 1914, for the Chi-Feds, (as they were called in the press), the park consisted of (1) a single-deck covered steel-and-concrete grandstand that ran from beyond first base to beyond third base, (2) two pavilions (actually uncovered seating at this point in time) down the left field and right field lines, and, (3) the only seating in fair territory, a section of wooden bleachers in the right center-center field area. The seating capacity was variously estimated as 14,000 to 20,000. The orientation of the field was conventional (home plate in the southwest portion of the field), as were all of the American League and National League parks in the second decade of the 20th century. Thus the left field foul line ran north-south, and the right field foul line ran east-west and was parallel to Addison Avenue. The single-deck grandstand and pavilions angled towards the left field and right field foul lines, which meant the first base stands diverged from Addison Avenue as the stands neared the right field fence.[2] My estimates, of the 1914 Opening Day dimensions, (see below for basis of estimate) were LF 302, CF 376, left of dead CF 406, RF 298 and home plate to the backstop 62 feet. A substantial brick wall enclosed most of the outfield, with a short fence topped by a low screen in front of the bleachers in right-center field. A large scoreboard, an estimated 30 feet high and 40 feet wide, stood in left

RON SELTER, xxxxx xxxxxxxx

field. The configuration detailed above lasted for all of three games (April 23-26).

The layout of the playing field meant the left field distance (at the foul pole) was only 302 feet. In the three games played in this configuration, nine home runs were hit. First of all, nine home runs in three games was unheard of in the Deadball Era. In addition, atypical of the Deadball Era, all nine were Over-the-Fence (OTF) home runs, and eight of the nine were over the short left field fence. Newspaper accounts spoke of these left field home runs as "cheap shots." Weeghman admitted that the left field distance was too short, and took immediate steps to correct the problem. An additional strip of land, already part of the lease, was added to the northern part of the park (moving the northern boundary toward but not all the way to Waveland Avenue.). This required the demolition of at least one back porch that had been attached to one of the houses on Waveland Avenue. This additional property allowed the left field distance to be increased 25 feet to 327 while left center was increased by nearly 50 feet to about 390.[3] The new and expanded left field dimensions, along with a new LF-CF fence, were in place when the Chi-Feds next played on April 28. The large scoreboard located in left field was moved to left-center three days later. What was of interest was that the even shorter right field distance (estimated at 298 feet) attracted no discussion. As Sheffield Avenue was the eastern boundary of the park, there was no way to increase the right field distance unless the brand-new grandstand and third base pavilion were to be somehow lifted up and moved to the west. The bleachers in RC-CF reduced even farther the in-play area of right center and center field. The estimated right center distance (at 30 degrees) was a mere 307 feet.

Before the 1915 season the park was again expanded. The residential buildings on the north edge of the park were torn down and the occupants relocated (hopefully in the reverse sequence). The ballpark's northern boundary now extended all the way to Waveland Avenue. The purpose of this additional northern expansion was to permit the replacement of the RC-CF bleacher with a new and larger set of bleachers that were built behind the new LF-CF fence. This also required the second relocation of the scoreboard, this time from left center to center field. The new bleachers ran from the left field foul pole to the left edge of the scoreboard, which was now in center field. The center field scoreboard was at a diagonal to the LF-CF bleachers and faced home plate. The left edge of the scoreboard joined the back of the right edge of the LF-CF bleachers, and was entirely behind the RF-CF fence, and thus was completely out of play. The new LF bleachers provided a net increase in capacity of several hundred seats. The removal of the RC-CF bleacher also increased the area of fair territory in RC and CF as the estimated RC distance (again at 30 degrees) went from 307 to 344. The park now had an overall north-south dimension estimated to be about 565 feet while the east-west distance along Addison Avenue remained unchanged (estimated at 515 feet). The total park size was now about 6.7 acres.

The next change in the ballpark's configuration occurred in 1916, and was a midseason installation of an in-play screen on top of the RF wall in response to the—for-the-times—large number of home runs to RF and RC. The screen, 10 feet in height, ran from the RF foul pole nearly to the right edge of the CF scoreboard and raised the RF (as it was called in the newspaper accounts of the day) barrier to an estimated height of 22 feet.[4] This was the last change to the configuration of the park until the 1922-23 off-season, except for a name change. After the 1915 season, Charles Weeghman acquired the Cubs NL franchise as part of the agreement shutting down the Federal League. After selling out to William Wrigley, the park's name was changed to Cubs Park starting with the 1919 season.

The park underwent a major expansion and reconfiguration in the 1922-23 off-season. The Cubs employed the park's original architect, Zachary Davis, to design and direct a massive rebuilding effort.[5] The most significant change was effected by jacking up and placing on rollers the 3B portion of the grandstand and the 3B pavilion, and moving them 60 feet both to the west and north.[6] The grandstand section near home plate was moved 69 feet to the west. Many of the remaining sections of the grandstand were rebuilt and new sections added on the south and west sides behind the relocated home plate. This moving of part of the grandstand meant the western boundary of the park was now Seminary Avenue. and Clark Street.[7] The southwest corner of the ballpark was now at the intersection of Addison and Clark. The remodeling plan called for an increase in the home plate-to-RF fence distance of 61 feet (from 300 to 361).[8] However, this move did not increase the RF dimensions by 61 feet, because new RF bleachers were built in front of the preexisting RF fence. The playing field was lowered by four feet, and the field was also reoriented by moving home plate about 60 feet to the west and the foul lines were rotated about four degrees to the left. When the remodel was complete, seating capacity was now about 30,000. The new

dimensions became LF 325, CF 447, and RF 318.

The park's configuration had been changed twice (early in 1914 and again in midseason 1916) to curb home runs. What does the data on home runs say about Weeghman Park? Unlike the situation in other Deadball Era parks, at Weeghman Park Inside-the-Park Home Runs (IPHRs) were not common. In the 1914-19 time period, IPHRs accounted for a mere 6.2% of the home runs hit at Weeghman Park, while Bounce home runs amounted to an additional 7.2%.[9] In the same six-year time period, at all major league parks, IPHRs accounted for 24.6% of total home runs, while Bounce home runs were 2.3% of the total.[10] No great importance should be attached to the larger than average proportion of Bounce home runs at Weeghman Park. Unlike at other parks, such as Philadelphia's Baker Bowl, where Bounce home runs simply bounced into the outfield bleachers, at Weeghman, Bounce home runs were typically flukes. Examples: (1) Felix Chouinard of the Pittsburgh FL team hit a home run on June 16, 1914, that bounced through the picket fence in RF, (2) Fred Merkle of the Braves was credited with a home run on July 2, 191,7 when the Cubs outfielder thoughtfully kicked the ball through the picket fence in LF. (3) My favorite—and a real example of home park advantage—Max Flack of the Cubs (on June 8, 1919) drove a ball to right that hit the top of the RF wall and bounced under the RF screen that had been erected three seasons earlier to reduce home runs.

In 1914, Weeghman Park was a good park for home runs. In that season home runs at Weeghman Park amounted to 138% of the FL average per park. That season at Weeghman Park there were 51 home runs, of which zero were IPHRs and only one was a Bounce home run. The distribution of the OTF home runs in the 1914 season is shown below:

1914 OTF Home Run Distribution (Excludes Bounce Home Runs)

Category	Total	LF	CF	RF	UNK
Season	50	10*	0	36**	4
Apr 24-26	9	8	0	1	0
May-Sep***	41	2	0	35	4

* Includes 8 home runs hit in three games when LF =302
** Includes 19 home runs into or over the RC field bleachers
*** All home games starting 28 April (74) with LF=327

Recall that the LF distance was increased to 327 and LC to about 390 after only three games, and that LC had the 30-foot-high scoreboard as an additional deterrent to LF OTF home runs. RF by contrast had no distance greater than 307 with a 12-foot wall in RF and a seven-eight-foot-high screen in front of the RC bleachers. As a result the distribution of OTF home runs was sharply skewed towards RF. The zero home runs to CF is likely due to the reporting conventions of the day. The bleachers, actually located in RC-CF, were usually referred to as the "RF bleachers" and the wall from the RF foul pole to the junction with the LF-CF wall was referred to as "the RF wall." Thus a home run over the right-side portion of the CF area would usually be reported as a home run to RF or to RC. In the 1915 season with the RC bleachers having been removed, total home runs at Weeghman Park dropped (51 to 31), but the relative distribution of OTF home runs was similar to 1914.

1915 OTF Home Run Distribution (Excludes Bounce Home Runs)

Category	Total	LF	CF	RF	UNK
Season	28	3*	0	22*	3

* Zero Home runs reported to LC or RC

The number and distribution of home runs at Weeghman Park were greatly affected by the addition of the screen atop the RF wall in midseason 1916. In the first half of the 1916 season there were a total of 37 home runs in 39 games—a rate (0.95 per game) greater than the major league average (0.80/game) in the Lively Ball Era 1920s. Nor was the total number of home runs in early 1916 substantially influenced by IPHRs. There were only three IPHRs in the first half of the season and no Bounce home runs. Why so many OTF home runs? The distribution of OTF home runs provides a clue. RF (at the foul pole) was an estimated distance of only 298 feet. Until July 1916, the wall was an estimated 12 feet in height. When the screen was added the total height of the RF barrier became 22 feet. In the second half of the 1916 season (40 games) with the RF screen in place, there were far fewer (only 18) OTF home runs hit at Weeghman Park, of which three were Bounce home runs. The distribution of Weeghman Park OTF home runs in 1916 is shown below:

1916 OTF Home Run Distribution (Excludes Bounce Home Runs)

Category	Total	LF	CF	RF	UNK
First Half	34	6*	1	26*	1
Second Half	15	7**	0	8**	0

* Zero Home runs reported to LC, and two to RC; Cubs 16, opponents 10
** Zero Home runs reported to LC or RC; Cubs 5, opponents 3

From the above data the OTF home runs to RF dropped from 25 to eight after the addition of the 10-foot screen to the RF-RC wall. Since OTF home runs to LF and CF were unchanged (seven in both the

first and second half of the season), the 10 foot increase in fence height appears to be the principal cause of the decline in OTF home runs. Other factors may have contributed to the drop in OTF home runs to RF/RC. One which could be measured is the change in opportunities for the Cubs' home run hitters. Of the 16 OTF home runs to RF in the first half, 14 were by left-handed batters. If each of the Cubs' batters (those who hit home runs that season) had hit home runs in the second half of the season at the same rate (home runs per at-bat) as in the first half, the expected number of home runs would have been 9.9. In addition, the Cubs left-handed home run hitters in the second half of the season suffered from a 20% decline in batting average. Adjusting for the 38% fewer opportunities for left-handed batters (measured by at-bats) and a 20% lower batting average in the second half for the Cubs' home run hitters, the expected (assuming other factors equal) Cubs' OTF home runs to RF were eight compared to the five actually hit. The visitors' output of OTF home runs to RF in the second half dropped from nine to three. In total the expected number of home runs (OTF to RF) in the second half was 17, and the actual total was eight. From this one can conclude the addition of the screen a mere 10 feet in height reduced RF home runs by more than 50%.

THE BASIS OF THE ESTIMATED CONFIGURATIONS AND DIMENSIONS

The 1914 listed dimensions: LF: 345, 310, 327; CF: 440, RF 356, 345 were taken from *Green Cathedrals*.[11] These varying dimensions for LF and RF deserve further scrutiny. The source of the LF 310 and RF 345 dimensions was found in a pre-season story in the *Chicago Tribune*.[12] The actual distances in the story were "home plate-LF 310 yards, and home plate-RF 345 yards." The fact that the dimensions were expressed as yards and not feet makes one skeptical. In addition the newspaper story was written while the ballpark was still under construction and the playing field was not yet laid out.[13] Shortly after Opening Day the team's management decided to move back the LF-CF fence. The LF dimension was increased by a reported 25 feet from 302 to 327.[14] This same newspaper story stated, "Towards LC is now 35 feet more and in LC is nearly 50 feet more."[15] The increased LF-LC dimensions meant that the LF fence now ran at more than 90 degrees to the LF foul line. The land added to the ballpark was an odd-shaped area with increasing depth toward CF. This odd shape resulted from the need to effect the changed configuration quickly. This meant the residential buildings on Waveland Avenue could not be torn down until after the 1914 season. This alignment of the LF fence existed only from April 28 until the end of the 1914 season. A new relocated LF fence for the 1915 season was built which was at 90 degrees to the foul line. This change was to permit the construction of a reported set of rectangular bleachers in LF before the 1915 season. Numerous photos of the 1915-22 LF bleachers show them to have been rectangular in shape.[16]

The listed dimensions in *Green Cathedrals* for RF are 356 (April 1914), 345 (June 1914), 321 (1915), 298/299 (1921-22), and 318 (1923).[17] These variations are most interesting. As the RF wall was along Sheffield Avenue and could not be moved farther from home plate, the only way to change the RF distance was to move home plate. The RF dimensions for 1921-23 are internally consistent. Between the 1922 and 1923 seasons the club, now owned by William Wrigley, had the park substantially altered. The principal change was effected by jacking up and placing on rollers the grandstand and 3B pavilion and moving them 60 feet to the west.[18] This movement of the stands and home plate allowed the construction of RF-CF bleachers and at the same time an increase in the RF foul line distance from 298/299 to 318. At this same time the playing field was reoriented by about four degrees to the left such that the LF foul line now hit the LF fence at 86 degrees while the RF foul line now hit the RF fence at 94 degrees. The 1923 ballpark revisions included a new set of RF bleachers. These new bleachers were estimated to be about 42 feet in depth. The home plate to RF distance, if at 90 degrees to the fence as in prior years, would have been 317 feet. As the 1922 RF distance was 299 and the stands and home plate were moved 60 feet away from RF, the resulting 1923 RF distance, if at 90 degrees to the fence, should have been 317 (299+60-42). The actual RF distance was 318 with the fence at 94 degrees to the RF foul line. This evidence shows that RF was always 298/299 from 1914 through 1922. Home run data for 1915-1919, when LF was 327, and RF by my estimate was 298, show 108 OTF home runs (excluding Bounce and other home runs for which the distribution by field is unknown) with LF/LC: 33, CF: 2, and RF/RC: 73. Clearly, if nearly 70 percent of the OTF home runs were to RF and RC, then the RF distance must have been noticeably less than the LF distance.

The following tables show the dimensions, fence heights, and average outfield distances for each configuration of Weeghman Park (1914-15) and Cubs Park (1919-23).

Dimensions: All Estimated (Except for 1923)

Time Period	LF	CF	RF	Backstop
April 1914 (a)	302	376*	298	62
May-Sep 1914	327	376**	298	62
1915-1922	327	425**	298	62
1923	325	420***	318	62

(a) Three home games; April 23-26
* Left of dead center was 406
** Left of dead center was 455
*** Right of dead center was 447

Average OF Distances

Time Period	LF	CF	RF
April 1914	318	357	307
May-Sep 1914	351	373	307
1915-1922	344	396	314
1923	334	395	345

Fence Heights
(All Estimated From Photos and Contemporary Accounts

Time Period	LF	CF	RF
April 1914	12-30	8-12	7-12
May-Sep 1914	12-30	8-12	7-12
1915-Jun 1916	8	8-12	12
Jul 1916-1922	8	8-12	22
1923	8	8-12	8-12

SUMMARY

Wrigley Field in the 1914-22 time period was somewhat smaller than the average major league park. Home runs were noticeably above average for National League parks with a far lower percentage of IPHRs than was typical in the Deadball Era. The 1922-23 expansion increased capacity to about 20,000; and later the 1926-28 expansion, that extended the double-deck grandstand to both foul poles, increased seating capacity to about 38,000. ■

Notes

1. *St. Louis Post Dispatch,* January 26, 1914
2. "Baseball in Chicago," special issue of the *Chicago Tribune* Sunday magazine, May 23, 2004.
3. *Chicago Tribune*, April 28, 1914.
4. *Chicago Tribune,* July 8, 1916.
5. William Hartel, *A Day at the Park: In Celebration of Wrigley Field,* Coal Valley IL: Quality Sports Publications, 1995.
6. Ibid.
7. *Chicago Tribune,* Dec. 20, 1922.
8. Ibid.
9. Lowry, Phil. *Green Cathedrals*–rev.Boston: Addison-Wesley/SABR, 1992.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Library of Congress, Photos ID s060168, s060191.
13. Ibid.
14. "Baseball in Chicago."
15. *Chicago Tribune,* April 28, 1914.
16. *Chicago Tribune,* April 4, 1914.
17. *Chicago Tribune,* December 20, 1922.
18. Hartel, *A Day at the Park.*

10. *SABR HR Log* from David Vincent. no footnote in text?