

# Outside the Lines

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SABR Business of Baseball Committee Newsletter

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## Chairman's Letter

**See you in Scottsdale.** Make plans to attend SABR's 29th annual convention, June 24-27, at the Radisson Resort in sunny Scottsdale, Arizona. And try to get there early: the Business of Baseball Committee's annual meeting will be held Thursday afternoon, June 24, from 3:00-4:00 p.m. We're scheduled opposite Baseball Records and just before Ballparks and Retrosheet.)

Last issue's discussion of the large market/small market issue ran so long that I've got six months of news updates to present...so on with the show!

## MLB News

**Luxury tax bills paid.** After posting a 79-83 record with the majors' highest payroll, the Baltimore Orioles were hit with a \$3,138,621 luxury tax bill for the 1998 season. Other taxpayers included the Red Sox (\$2,184,734), Yankees (\$684,390), Braves (\$495,625) and Dodgers (\$49,593). The tax threshold, originally expected to reach \$55 million in 1998, actually leaped to \$70,501,185, including \$5,576,415 per team in benefits. This figure represents the midpoint between the fifth- and sixth-highest payrolls. The luxury tax rate falls from 35% to 34% in 1999, then disappears entirely in 2000.

**Owners go 9-2 in arbitration.** Derek Jeter and Mariano Rivera of the Yankees were the only players to win their arbitration hearings, although 51 of the 62 cases settled before a ruling.

**New economic study committee appointed.** Days after the Dodgers signed Kevin Brown to a seven-year, \$105 million contract, Commissioner Selig created a new "Blue Ribbon Task Force on Baseball Economics." Its members include former Senate majority leader George Mitchell, former Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker, columnist George Will, Yale president Richard Levin (who, as a consultant to the owners, developed their 1989 salary cap proposal), Selig and 13 other owners and their representatives -- but, ominously, no one from the MLBPA.

**Ads on uniforms?** MLB is reportedly considering the sale of ads on player uniforms. The proposed ads would be small, 1" to 1-1/2" patches, positioned for maximum TV exposure.

**MLB-ESPN dispute heads to court.** With five years left on a contract calling for it to televise baseball on Sunday nights, ESPN won the rights to telecast the NFL on Sunday nights throughout the regular season. The two contracts created a conflict on Sunday nights in September, which ESPN sought to resolve by shifting its Sunday night baseball telecasts to sister network ESPN2. MLB refused. The impasse ended Sunday night baseball a month early in 1998, costing fans around the country a chance to see the game in which Cal Ripken's consecutive-game streak ended.

Early in May, MLB notified ESPN that it was terminating ESPN's regular-season baseball contract after the 1999 season. ESPN sued to invalidate the purported termination. ESPN says the contract allows it to pre-empt up to 10 regular season games for "events of significant interest"; MLB counters that this provision was intended to give ESPN scheduling flexibility for unexpected events, not to let it pre-empt baseball whenever it had the chance to air higher-rated programming. MLB has rejected all compromises proposed by ESPN; its apparent overreaction leads one to suspect that it believes it can strike a better deal with Fox Sports.

**MLB's chief operating officer embarrassed by side deal with Clemens.** In the course of pressuring the Blue Jays to trade him, Roger Clemens revealed that when he signed with Toronto, he and Jays president Paul Beeston entered into a secret side agreement giving Clemens the right to demand a trade. Two problems: MLB has long considered such side agreements unenforceable, and Beeston, the man who made the agreement, is now MLB's #2 man behind Bud Selig. Beeston was fined a reported \$5,000.

**Forbes picks up where *Financial World* left off.** The December 14, 1998 issue of *Forbes* contained the magazine's first-ever valuations of professional sports teams. To no one's surprise, the Yankees topped the list for MLB, with an estimated value of \$362 million based on 1997 revenues. The Orioles (\$323 million) and Indians (\$322 million) followed, with the Twins (\$94 million) and Expos (\$87 million) at the other end of the scale. However, *Forbes* did not consider the Yankees MLB's most profitable club in 1997: their estimated earnings of \$21.4 million were topped by the Colorado Rockies' \$38.3 million. Some of *Forbes*' estimates appear dubious – notably that the Dodgers earned only \$900,000 in 1997, and that the world champion Marlins lost \$5.5 million. The magazine also estimated the debt-to-equity ratios of every club, with the Rangers (79%), Giants (89%), Brewers (97%) and Tigers (an incredible 106%) the most highly leveraged.

*Forbes* published 1998 valuations in its May 31, 1999 issue. Once again the Yankees led the field; their record-breaking season helped boost their value 36%, to \$491 million. The value of the average non-expansion team rose 11% in 1998, with 22 of the 28 teams worth more than the year before. Exceptions were the Mariners, White Sox, Marlins, Royals, Twins and Expos. The Yankees were also MLB's most profitable club, earning \$23 million even after their revenue-sharing payments. *Forbes* estimated that 14 teams lost money – but since their list of losers includes the Dodgers, Cubs, Red Sox, Mets and Angels, it should be taken with a large grain of salt.

*Forbes*' valuations were accompanied by a diatribe against revenue sharing which opened, "Planned economies sound great in theory but don't work very well in practice," and went on to decry "more revenue socialism." *Forbes* didn't explain how the owners' decision to change the formula for dividing the revenue from their jointly produced product qualified as a "planned economy" or "revenue socialism."

**Minnesota antitrust investigation quashed.** On April 29, the Minnesota Supreme Court held unanimously that MLB's antitrust exemption barred the State of Minnesota from investigating MLB in connection with charges that the owners conspired to force local governments to build new stadia by threatening to move clubs if they don't.

**2000 All-Star Game shifted from Florida to Atlanta.** Citing concerns over the stability of the Marlins, MLB has moved the 2000 All-Star Game from Miami's Pro Player Stadium to Atlanta's Turner Field. John Henry, the Marlins' new owner, wasn't happy, calling the decision "outrageous... shocking... disappointing." MLB hinted that Florida would be considered again if it built a new, baseball-only stadium.

**MLB plans central control of umpires.** When the umpires' current labor contract expires after the 1999 season, Sandy Alderson, MLB's executive vice president of baseball operations, will assume control of both leagues' umpiring crews, with an eye toward standardizing umpiring styles and eventually merging the staffs into a common pool.

### Around the Majors

**Boston.** The Red Sox propose to replace Fenway Park with a new facility on an adjacent plot of land. The new park would be constructed with Fenway's distinctive dimensions. The club estimates the cost of a new park at \$350 million, plus \$130 million for land acquisition and site preparation. The Sox say they're willing to build the park if the government picks up the acquisition and preparation costs -- but the club, which is still owned by the late Jean Yawkey's JRY Corporation, has essentially no cash reserves to finance its contribution to a new park. Meanwhile, the Save Fenway Park! Preservation group announced its own design for a renovated Fenway. Its plan would add 10,000 seats, plus luxury boxes, club seats, and parking, to the existing site.

**Cincinnati.** Marge Schott's suspension, which was due to expire on December 31, was extended three months by mutual consent. During this period she agreed to sell her general partner's share, and all but one of her limited partnership shares, of the Reds for \$67 million to three current limited partners, Carl Lindner, George Strike and William Reik. Lindner will assume control of the club as soon as the sale is approved. The Reds also signed a 30-year lease for their new 45,000-seat park, scheduled to open in 2003.

**Cleveland.** Owner Richard Jacobs stunned the community by putting the Indians up for sale. The 73-year-old Jacobs says he wants to choose the next owner before any health problems which may arise limit his ability to do so, and will sell the club only to an owner committed to maintaining the club's newfound quality.

**Detroit.** The Tigers sold naming rights to their new home for \$66 million over 30 years. Tiger Stadium's replacement will be known as Comerica Park, honoring a local financial-services company.

**Florida.** MLB unanimously approved commodities trader John Henry's purchase of the Marlins from

Wayne Huizenga for \$150 million. In other news, WQAM, the Marlins' flagship radio station, has sued the club, claiming that the breakup of the Marlins reduced the value of its rights.

**Houston.** The Enron Corporation will pay more than \$100 million over thirty years for naming rights to the Astros' new park, which will be called Enron Field. All of this money goes to the Astros, whose lease allows them to keep all revenues from the park in return for payments of \$7.1 million/year to the Harris County-Houston Sports Authority, which is building the retractable-roofed stadium.

**Kansas City.** The foundation which has controlled the Royals since Ewing Kauffman's death has agreed to sell the club for \$75 million to a group headed by attorney Miles Prentice. However, MLB may ask Prentice to restructure his group. Prentice assembled a syndicate of 40-50 investors to meet the foundation's demand that half of his money be raised locally, but some owners consider such large groups unwieldy and inherently unstable.

**Los Angeles.** The Dodgers have rejected a proposed \$200 million overhaul of Dodger Stadium, but plan a less comprehensive overhaul which will add up to 30 more boxes, additional premium seats and a new press box. Construction is expected to begin after the 1999 season. Meanwhile, an offer from Arizona interests to build the Dodgers a new spring-training complex has started a bidding war with Vero Beach, Florida, where the Dodgers have trained for half a century.

**Montreal.** With Wayne Huizenga gone and Marge Schott going, the Least Valuable Owner award now belongs to Claude Brochu of the Expos. Several prospective investors have backed away from the troubled club because Brochu, who owns only a small piece of the club, refuses to relinquish operating control. George Steinbrenner also weighed in against Brochu, noting that the Expos' 1998 payroll of \$8.3 million was almost \$5 million less than the club received from revenue sharing. "The purpose of that was to assist them to build their team so they could become more competitive with the rest of baseball. They're not doing that. They're not signing players. They're putting it in their pocket, and that's got to be stopped. That's wrong."

**New York Yankees.** In a startling development, George Steinbrenner has merged the Yankees' business operations with those of the NBA's New Jersey Nets. Nets owners paid more than \$200 million to become equal partners in the new "YankeeNets" holding company. With the Yankees' huge cable contract expiring after next season, the deal gives the combined franchises more leverage in upcoming negotiations.

**Oakland.** Owners Steve Schott and Ken Hoffman have found two groups willing to meet their asking price of \$120 million for the Athletics. Local government officials favor a group headed by Hall of Famer Joe Morgan and former Athletics executive Andy Dolich, backed by grocery store magnate Bob Piccinini. MLB, however, is believed to prefer the rival group, led by San Mateo lawyer Michael Lazarus and including Bob Watson and Steve Stone. The Athletics have also extended their lease at the Coliseum for three more seasons, through 2004.

**Philadelphia.** As part of the same bond issue which will partially finance the Pirates' new stadium, Pennsylvania will pay about \$80 million toward a new park for the Phillies. Unlike their cross-state rivals, the Phillies don't have a site, a stadium design or additional financing in place, but they're doubtless counting the days until they can leave the hideous Veterans Stadium.

**Pittsburgh.** The final piece of financing for the Pirates' new park fell into place when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania approved an \$80 million contribution. The Pirates' new PNC Park, scheduled to open in time for the 2001 season, will be built next to Three Rivers Stadium.

**Seattle.** As they prepare to move to their new home in midseason, the Mariners have learned that the move may cost them \$100 million -- the current estimate for overruns at Safeco Field, which is now expected to cost at least \$517 million. The Mariners also claim to have lost \$2 million in 1998, following losses of \$4 million in 1997, \$13.2 million in 1996, \$20.2 million in 1995, \$15 million in 1994 and \$16.9 million in 1993. The 1998 figure includes \$9.3 million in revenue from expansion fees.

**Toronto.** The Blue Jays have signed a new 10-year lease at SkyDome. After SkyDome Corp. filed for bankruptcy late last year, the stadium was sold to SportsCo for \$80 million (Canadian) -- roughly 13% of its construction cost

## Looking Back

**100 years ago:** Syndicate ball comes to the National League. In February 1899, the owners of the Brooklyn and Baltimore franchises consolidate their operations. Each ownership group receives half of the new two-club entity, which assigns most of the best players from both rosters to Brooklyn in hopes of attracting more fans in the larger market. Two months later the Robison brothers, who already own Cleveland, add St. Louis to their holdings and assign *all* their best players to St. Louis. The hapless Cleveland Spiders finish 20-134.

After the season the NL hopes to contract from twelve teams to eight by eliminating Baltimore, Cleveland, Louisville and Washington, but its plans are complicated by the emergence of a rival league. A new American Association is organized in September, with backers including Chris Von Der Ahe and Al Spink in St. Louis, and Cap Anson in Chicago. John McGraw suggests he may join the new AA if the National League withdraws from Baltimore. Meanwhile Ban Johnson's Western League changes its name to the American League and announces plans to put a team in Chicago for the 1900 season.

**75 years ago:** With the International League and two lower minors still refusing to subject their players to a draft, the 1924 *Reach Guide* reports that the majors have agreed "that there should be no more \$100,000 minor recruits in major league ball, and that \$25,000 should be the highest purchase price for any minor league star." While the Guide scolds that this measure "will teach the draft-exemption leagues that they cannot profit by draft-exemption through the sale of players, illegally restrained in the first place, at enormous figures," it never asks why major league clubs should be allowed to profit by selling players bound by the same restraints.

**50 years ago.** In February 1949, the Second Circuit reinstates the antitrust suit brought by Danny Gardella, who had been banned from Organized Baseball after signing with the Mexican League. The *Gardella* decision prompts a renewed debate over the reserve clause. Ty Cobb favors limited of free agency to protect the interests of great players stuck on bad teams. Branch Rickey tells an audience in Baltimore that the reserve clause "is opposed by persons of avowed Communist tendencies," and that "persons opposing the reserve clause deeply resent the continuance of our national pastime." Despite his own experience as part of a Yankee dynasty built around players purchased from the Red Sox, Bob Meusel contends, "If it weren't for the reserve clause there wouldn't be any baseball. The rich clubs would get all the good players, and the competition would be so lopsided the fan just wouldn't pay to see a game." Gardella's suit settles before the Supreme Court can rule.

Late in the year Commissioner Chandler revises Organized Baseball's broadcasting rules in response to objections from the Department of Justice. The new rules infuriate minor-league teams, which are no longer allowed to (1) veto broadcasts of major-league games in their territory, except during the hours when such broadcasts would actually conflict with their own games; (2) sell exclusive rights to broadcast major-league games into their territory; or (3) prevent any other team within a 50-mile radius from broadcasting its games into their territory.

**25 years ago.** The first season of salary arbitration prompts an article by Jerome Holtzman in the March 16, 1974 *Sporting News* under the headline, "Arbitration a Success, Players and Owners Agree." The owners won 16 of the 29 hearings, prompting their labor negotiator John Gaherin to remark: "The owners have been pilloried in the press as people who took advantage of the players. But the results of the arbitration clearly show this isn't true. We are pleased – not that we won, because we don't view this in the context of adversary proceedings – but because it showed the arbitration system worked. The important thing is that the procedure set the test and resulted in reasonable settlements."

After the season Catfish Hunter becomes the first modern free agent. After Oakland owner Charles O. Finley refused to pay \$50,000 of deferred compensation called for in Hunter's contract to the company holding his annuity, Hunter filed a grievance. Citing a clause in the standard player contract which allowed a player to declare himself a free agent if the club defaulted on any obligation and failed to cure the default within 10 days after receiving notice, Arbitrator Peter Seitz declared Hunter a free agent. After a frenzied bidding war, Hunter, who had earned \$100,000 with Oakland in 1974, signed a five-year deal with the Yankees for a reported \$3.2 million plus extras.

### The View from Japan, by Yoshihiro Koda

The opening game for 1999 between Yomiuri Giants and Hanshin Tigers was held at Tokyo Dome on April 2nd. The game was scheduled to start at 6:00 p.m. At that time, a cute woman in white wedding dress emerged from the Giants' dugout. Did she lose her way? Or would her wedding ceremony be held there and then?

No, she was a popular actress, there to throw out the first pitch of the 1999 season. In Japan, first-pitch honors usually go to entertainers. Sometimes they appear in strange costumes -- in addition to this year's actress-in-wedding-dress, a few years ago another actress performed her duties in Samurai garb. The costume came from her current film, and her appearance was designed to promote the film. Increasingly the first pitch of a baseball game is viewed as a prime opportunity to promote movies or TV programs.

As long as I have known, the North American leagues give this role to honored citizens, especially former players. I have heard that Joe DiMaggio was looking forward to throwing out the first pitch at the Yankees' home opener. The Yankees' Japanese counterparts, the Yomiuri Giants, are Japan's winningest club and have numerous Hall of Famers of their own. One all-time Giant great is Motoshi Fujita, the club's ace pitcher 40 years ago, who went on to lead the team to two Central League titles and two Japan Series championships during his seven years as field manager. I wonder why the Giants didn't invite him. Instead of allowing an actress to promote herself and her movie, they could have honored a team hero and allowed the fans to applaud him.

I feel that American clubs are more eager to honor baseball's own greats. I believe Japanese clubs should learn to do the same.

### Book Review: David Pietrusza, Judge and Jury, by Ron Kaplan

*Judge and Jury: The Life and Times of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis*, by David Pietrusza (South Bend: Diamond Communications. 564 pages. \$34.95)

Some say that this scowling, white-haired jurist was the scourge of wrongdoers irrespective of rank or power. Some say he was a fraud. And some say he saved baseball when it seemed like the character of the national pastime would be forever sullied by gamblers.

Whatever your opinion, there is a good chance it will be justified in David Pietrusza's definitive biography of Kenesaw Mountain Landis.

Pietrusza writes that Landis was a folk hero while serving on the bench (although legal minds might consider him more showman than capable judge). His legendary decision in the Standard Oil case is at once a grandstand play and a supportive hand on the shoulder of the little man. Of course, all the free publicity he received from his cases was an invaluable bonus.

Some might think the Black Sox scandal was the first case of gambling in baseball. It was not, merely the most highly-profiled. Betting had been going on for years, and with increasing player involvement the owners were determined to put an end to it. Since the internal squabbling among the executives precluded them from handling matters on their own, they looked for someone who could grab the sport by its virtual lapels and shake some sense into it, to make baseball safe and square. In short, they needed a new sheriff. Their choice was not surprising. Landis was well-known and considered incorruptible.

The first commissioner not only punished the Black Sox but others as well, for such crimes as gambling and jumping to the Mexican League. Not even the mighty Babe Ruth was immune from his wrath. "Who does that big ape think he is?" fumed Landis as he suspended the Yankee slugger for violating the barnstorming regulations which prohibited members of pennant winners from participating in off-season exhibition games.

Landis' hatred of gambling is well-documented, as was his love for the national pastime:

"[Baseball] is remarkable for the hold it has on the people, and equally remarkable for its cleanness. You know what happened to horse racing. Gambling killed it. Boxing, wrestling and almost all games of professional sports have unpleasant features connected with them. . . It is a compliment to the nation to love such a clean and thoroughly wholesome sport [as baseball]."

While Landis may have indeed cleaned up the game to an extent, he was nonetheless backward in other areas. Although he denied having anything (official) to do with it, many believe he was four-square behind the

famous gentlemen's agreement to keep blacks off major league fields. Yet, according to the author, the Judge was not the czar he has always been portrayed:

"For all his power and all his bluff, Landis did not always get his way. . . .

Repeatedly, he found himself on the losing end of arguments regarding the shape of the minors, and he had no use for night baseball.' . . . [Y]ou can write it down. Not in my lifetime . . . will you ever see a baseball game played at night in the majors.' "

Pietrusza's opus depicts Landis mainly in terms of his professional life. On the personal side he is shown to be a loving family man, especially proud of his son Reed, a World War I flying ace. He was also blessed with a proud lineage which undoubtedly prodded him to become the dynamo he was. Think of Landis what you will, but who knows how baseball would have turned out if not for this defender of the diamond.

### *The Farm Report: The Business of the Minor Leagues*, compiled by **Anthony Salazar**

**Minor Leaguers Aid Charity.** The Southern League (AA), has joined forces with Food for Hungry, an international agency committed to relief efforts. The two groups have established a program called, "Dollars Against Devastation," designed to benefit refugees of the war-torn Kosovo region. The program, in which collection boxes were set up at Southern League games, ran from April 16 through May 2. During this three week period, an anticipated 200,000 fans may have passed through stadium turnstiles, perhaps contributing a dollar each.

The Southern Oregon Timberjacks (Northwest League - A) have teamed up with the Southern Oregon chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation this season. The team, based in Medford, Oregon, joins forces with the group that provides 'wishes' to terminally ill children. The Timberjacks are an Oakland Athletics' affiliate.

The Little Leaguers of Harrisburg, PA were the beneficiaries of the local team, Harrisburg Senators (Eastern League -AA), which raised \$9,000 at an annual golf tournament. Over one hundred golfers played for the little sluggers. The event has raised more than \$45,000 for various charities in its seven years of existence.

**Merchandising the Minors.** Star Struck, Inc., distributors of team apparel, has signed on with the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues to become the "Official Catalog of the Minor Leagues."

The Catalog will be distributed in more than 120 Minor League Baseball stadiums throughout the next three seasons (1999-2001). The Star Struck catalog incorporates mascot photos from various Minor League Baseball

teams, features merchandise from all 160 NA teams and their parent clubs in Major League Baseball. Merchandise includes caps, jerseys, T-shirts, baseballs and collectibles. Official NA caps, polo shirts and T-shirts are also available. Check out <http://www.starstruck.com> to order.

**Business Notes from the Independents** The Western Baseball League will add a team from Yuma, Arizona for the 2000 season. A Yuma group previously failed to attract a California League team; the city also briefly fielded a representative in the defunct Golden State League. The Yuma team will enter the six-team league by May 2000, though the league expects to expand to 12 teams by the 2001 season. The Yuma franchise will play its home games in Desert Sun Stadium, with a 90-game schedule running from late May to early September. The team will be owned by Pete Dunn, a Phoenix businessman and lawyer who is a former member of the Arizona Legislature. Dunn, who is majority owner of Western Pacific Storage Systems, was also the Republican nominee for the U.S. Senate in 1982.

**Still in the West.** Shortly after the Reno Chuckars were sold to a Sacramento advertising executive, the team conducted a naming contest. Its owners, the Reno Professional Baseball Club, selected the RENO BLACKJACKS as the new name for the club, which fits in nicely with the city main attraction. The team was purchased for an undisclosed price. The ownership team will also include assistant general manager Terry Donovan and team manager Charley Kerfeld, a former pitcher with the Houston Astros.

**Speaking of Team Sales.** The Everett AquaSox recently underwent a change of ownership. The team's former owners, Bob and Margaret Bavasi, first purchased the then-Walla Walla Giants in 1984, and brought the club to Everett. They had been affiliated with the San Francisco Giants until they signed on with the Seattle Mariners several years ago. The new owner, Mark Sperandio, also inherits a new stadium, completed in 1998.

**More on Stadium Plans in the Minors.** The Knoxville Smokies will be moving down the road to Sevierville, TN (pop. 7,718). The tiny town broke ground for a new \$19 million, 6,000-seat stadium recently, which is scheduled to be completed next spring. The Double A franchise of the Toronto Blue Jays had been

facing the same kind of situation that many major league teams face: an aging stadium; apathetic politicians, and a community unable to finance a professional team. Financing will come from a variety of sources. Team owner Don Beaver will contribute \$3 million, and \$5 million will come from Sevier County, home of Dolly Parton and theme park, Dollywood. The remaining \$11 million may be financed by the city of Sevierville.

As minor league baseball becomes more popular, communities are more eager to place a team in their cities. Minor league attendance has risen consistently since the Major League Baseball strike of 1994, climbing from 34.7 million fans in 1997 to 35.4 million fans in 1998. Conversely, as more fans attend games, minor league owners want to build bigger and better ballparks, creating a source of inexpensive family entertainment. Many of the 34 minor league parks that have been built within the past five years have utilized public funds. Louisville, KY floated \$23.3 million in public bonds to secure a 11,000-seat ballpark, costing almost \$29 million, while its Triple-A colleague in Memphis, TN negotiated with Shelby County to contribute \$8.5 million for infrastructure improvements for the 14,320-seat, \$46.5-million AutoZone Park, set to open in 2000. Another Triple-A area playing the stadium game is the city and Sacramento County will split \$40 million in bonds to finance a 10,000-seat stadium for a team, re-locating from Vancouver, B.C. next year.

### Interesting Promotions

<i>Team</i>	<i>League</i>	<i>Promotion</i>
Nashua Pride	(Atlantic-Ind.)	Monkey Boy Cups
Fargo RedHawks	(Northern-Ind.)	Crazy George Night
Cook County Cheetahs	(Frontier-Ind.)	All-American Girls Tribute
St. Paul Saints	(Northern-Ind.)	The Gong Show
Sioux City Explorers	(Northern-Ind.)	Bingo Night
Zion Pioneerzz	(Western-Ind.)	Professional Midget Wrestling
Auburn Doubledays	(NY/Penn-A)	Viva Las Vegas/70s Night

Meanwhile, the "Famous Chicken" will be visiting almost every minor league park in the country this summer!

### Proposed New Revenue Sharing Formula

New Committee member **Harry Swanson** has proposed a new revenue sharing formula for Major League Baseball. Swanson's formula would require low-payroll teams to raise their payroll to at least 60% of the average of the top 10 highest payrolls; would require low-revenue teams to spend at least 60% of their gross revenues, and 100% of their revenue-sharing money, on team payrolls, and would institute independent auditing to be sure these targets were met.

The revenue sharing would be funded by a tax on the 10 highest-payroll clubs. To raise the amount required by the revenue-sharing formula, each of these clubs would be taxed in proportion to the amount by which their payroll exceeded the average of the middle 10 teams. If Swanson's plan had been in place for the 1998 season, these clubs would have paid a total of \$104,966,000. Baltimore would have paid the most, \$16,480,000, while the Mets paid the least, \$5,878,000.

### Document of the Month

This issue features a March 3, 1908 letter from NL president Harry Pulliam to all club presidents, protesting the deplorable conditions faced by umpires.

"Gentlemen:

"You will remember that at the Annual Meeting of the National League held in December, I requested that a resolution be passed making it mandatory for all clubs to provide adequate dressing-room facilities for the umpires just as they are required to do for the visiting players. The resolution in question was kicked to death. However, it was understood that the various league clubs would voluntarily provide dressing room facilities requested by me. This letter is simply a reminder.

"While I realize that the ball players and most of the fans and club owners look upon the umpire as a necessary evil, still I wish to call your attention to the fact, as his employer, that he is simply a human being. Last year, through inadequate dressing room facilities, and I mean by that heating and hot and cold water, O'Day, Emslie, Carpenter, Johnstone and Klem all suffered from severe colds and I thought at one time that

the colds would develop into pneumonia. Some of these men could not work and when they did work their voices were so hoarse that their services were unsatisfactory to the public. The only man exempt from common ills was Mr. Rigler who, being an iron man defies the ordinary conventionalities of life.

"At Mr. O'Day's urjent [sic] request, I visited one of the dressing rooms for the use of our umpires and I found, as he had told me, that his underwear and clothes were wet as rags from the dampness of the room after one night's exposure. I know very well that the umpires do not have to use the dressing rooms set apart for them, because it is only out of courtesy on your part that they have them and if they do not like it they can 'lump' it, and instead of dressing at the grounds they can leave the grounds wringing wet with perspiration and ride on open street cars to their hotels.

"As a business proposition, however, I think you should provide proper dressing room facilities for the umpires because, if they are incapacitated from duty it is necessary for me to supply a substitute at the expense of the National League."

### New Members

Ronald Cox, 126 NE 108 St., Miami Shores, FL 33161, rcox204715@aol.com

Jim Foreman, 1024 Crown Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505

Tom Goldstein, Elysian Fields Quarterly, 2034 Marshall Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104, efq@citilink.com

Rick Liebling, 493 13th St., Apt. 1, Brooklyn, NY 11215, RDLNYC@aol.com

Harry Swanson, 275 Springdale Drive, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779, HS34578@aol.com

### New Addresses

Claudia Perry, 108 Mercer St., #1, Jersey City, NJ 07302-3511, rockdog59@aol.com