



# Outside the Lines

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## Financial Archives of the AAGPBL

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In 1943, with America at war and men subject to the military draft, the rosters of professional baseball teams were rapidly being depleted. Philip K. Wrigley, owner of the Chicago Cubs, feared the day might come when there would not be enough men left to populate the rosters of Major League Baseball teams. To prepare for such an event he began to formulate a plan to run a professional women's league.

As it turned out, that day never arrived, but the league began play none-the-less. In 1943 the All-American Girls Softball League debuted. It underwent several name changes, but survived for more than a decade, fielding teams in four to ten cities each year. The league faded out of existence after the 1954 season and was largely forgotten until it was immortalized in the 1992 film *A League of their Own*. Since that time the league has been the subject of numerous books, scholarly articles and an exhibit at the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

The league survived for a decade through the ardent support of fans in primarily mid-sized Midwestern cities. The only cities large enough to host an MLB franchise were Chicago, Milwaukee, and Minneapolis. Each was the site of an AAGPBL team for only one season, and only Chicago hosted teams in both leagues simultaneously. Other cities that hosted AAGPBL franchises at one time or another included Battle Creek, Fort Wayne, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Kenosha, Muskegon, Peoria, Racine, Rockford, Springfield, and South Bend.

To date the research on the AAGPBL has focused on the social and on-field history of the league (the seminal work in this area is by Merrie Fidler), including

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## Were the Boston Braves of the Teens and Twenties Really Controlled by Tammany Hall and the New York Giants?

By Fr. Gerald Beirne

“Shocking! I am shocked that there is gambling in this place!” One of the most quoted and parodied lines from one of Hollywood’s all-time greatest movies. However the baseball world truly was “Shocked!” two years running when the National League’s greatest star and premier player, Rogers Hornsby, was traded to the New York Giants only three months after leading the St. Louis Cardinals to their very first pennant in 1926 and subsequent World Series championship and then traded again the very next season to the Boston Braves.

How could the premier player of the league be dismissed from the first division Giants to the seventh place and going nowhere Braves for two young but marginal players? Was it a gift? Or a dumping? Or a McGraw mistake? Was this a ridding ourselves of a personality problem?

The Hornsby deal and the Art Nehf trade lead to the topic of this presentation – “Were the Boston Braves

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## Salaries as a Meritocracy

By Mark Hejduk

In July of 2007, the Cleveland Indians signed “slumping” Travis Hafner to a four-year, \$57 million contract. Seems like a minor note, especially since the 2007 Indians were a fantastic playoff team. However this was the beginning of the end for the Indians’ run of excellence that began late 2004. The Indians, a small market club who could never top a \$100 million payroll, committed approximately \$15 million a year to a DH, entering his 30s, with a history of elbow problems, who was hitting .261 at the time of the extension.

Although Hafner has not been a complete disaster for the Indians, one would think that money might have been better spent on other players on that team, such as C.C. Sabathia, Cliff Lee or Victor Martinez. Having been infuriated by this deal, my anger led me through a long series of studying every roster, dating back to 2000, to find where value lies in MLB rosters. The ideal strategy would be to construct the best team possible for the least amount of money, taking advantage of the draft, amateur scouting and trading for youth (unless you are Brian Cashman and enjoy watching money go up in flames like the Joker in *The Dark Knight*).

Using that logic, I have used various, easily understood, statistical means to determine which players provided the most “value” to their rosters, where “value” is defined as contributions to their team (measured by Wins Above Replacement) plus a player’s financial value at their own position. Using this I was able to find three indicators:

- The players that provide the most “value” to their roster’s structure.
- The General Managers that have gotten the most value for their money.
- The amount players should be played, given their position and production, if the league were a complete meritocracy.

### Other Methods

Many others have also undertaken similar projects to better address how much players should be paid.

There can never be a correct answer to this question, due to an overwhelming amount of factors, opinions and variables, so I submit my method simply as a piece of the puzzle. To compare, below is a small synopsis of how three researchers have addressed the subject. Important note, each three methods is great, and these summaries are only the tip of the iceberg as to their insight.

### *Dave Cameron, FanGraphs*

Dave Cameron figured out that each team, at the very least, would win 48 games per season and, at the very least, would spend \$12 million on its roster. Factoring out those specifics, Cameron figured that the teams combined are spending roughly \$2.31 billion to acquire as many of the 1,000 marginal wins available per season. So, in 2008, the cost of each of these marginal wins was \$2.31 million.

Cameron then factored in markets for team-controlled players, including their win totals, to emphasize the value for a rate of a win on the free agent market. Then, analyzing the 2008 free agent market, where \$396 million was paid to 90 free agents, and calculating for a few other factors, such as aging, Cameron determined that in 2008, the going rate for a win was \$4.5 million.

This method is ruled by tremendous logic and mathematics, however I cannot agree with its practicality for all players. For a three-win player in his first year of arbitration eligibility, it would be foolish to demand a contract near \$15 million in 2011. It would also be insane for Zach Greinke to think he earned \$42.4 million in 2009, when the highest paid pitcher that year was Johan Santana, earning close to \$19 million.

Dave Cameron’s work is fantastic, and if FanGraphs.com is not a daily stop for you, then you are doing yourself a disservice. However, Zach Greinke will never make over \$40 million a year. So, this can’t work by itself.

### *J.C. Bradbury, The Baseball Economist*

J.C. Bradbury’s “The Baseball Economist,” is a must read. Bradbury ties winning, measured by runs added above league average, to team’s revenue. This would

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summaries of the annual performance of individual players and their teams (see Madden). Biographies of several of the players and managers have added a personal touch to the research. The two most comprehensive examples of the latter are encyclopedias by Heaphy and Anthony, and another by Madden.

Despite the quantity and quality of this previous work, there is a void in our knowledge of the AAGPBL. What is missing is a focus on the aspect of the league that made it both unique and noteworthy: all of the women were professional ballplayers. They were salaried players, employed by teams that charged admission and attempted to turn a profit. This aspect of the league remains under-researched. It need not remain that way however, since financial archives of the league are readily available for researchers to examine.

For scholars interested in the business side of professional baseball, the Joyce Sports Research Collection at the University of Notre Dame provides an abundance of resources. The Joyce Collection has a substantial holding of archival material related to the AAGPBL. The collection also includes material on other professional sports, including basketball, hockey, wrestling, boxing and football, as well as other baseball documents. The collection is vast, but the focus of this essay will be exclusively on the AAGPBL records.

The records are contained in nine neatly organized volumes that include everything from press releases and photos to payroll and financial records for teams and the league office. Each volume is organized by year and is handily stored in binders. These archives are readily available to researchers during regular library hours. Questions concerning the materials and their access should be directed to the curator of the Joyce Sports Research Collection, Dr. George Rugg ([grugg@nd.edu](mailto:grugg@nd.edu); phone 574-631-6506).

Some league archives also reside in the South Bend Center for History in South Bend, IN, and the All-American Girls Baseball League collection at the Grand Rapids, MI Public Museum. The primary materials in these two collections are physical objects and programs, yearbooks and scorecards. A few letters

detailing business dealings between players and teams, contracts, newspaper clippings, photographs, and schedules are included. While there are a few items of interest to business historians in these collections, the bulk of the material of interest is held in the Joyce Collection.

South Bend was one of the four original cities to field a team in the AAGPBL. The Blue Sox remained in South Bend for the entire run of the league's twelve year existence. Along with Rockford, they were the only two teams to remain in the league for its duration. The bulk of the known archival material is located here because the original source of it was Harold T. Dailey, the former president of the South Bend Blue Sox, who kept and organized the league records. Though he was only team president for three years, the materials in his binders cover the entire history of the league, from 1943-54. While the material covers the entire league, the emphasis is on the South Bend franchise. This is particularly true with regard to the financial information, which is available for all franchises, but exists in much greater detail for South Bend.

The range of materials is vast. The Dailey notebooks include not only financial data, but minutes of league meetings, correspondence, photos, season summaries, miscellaneous contracts, schedules, season statistics, attendance records, and summaries of playoff and all star games. The coverage varies a bit by year, but for the most part is thorough. Table 1 indicates the topical coverage of the notebooks by volume and Table 2 includes a checklist of the items covered by year.

There are detailed financial statements for the South Bend franchise from 1943-53, with both actual and estimated amounts for a long list of revenues and expenses. There are more than 60 items listed in the expense column alone, ranging from salaries and radio ads to laundry and prizes for players. Revenues include breakdowns by type of ticket sold and parking and concession income, among others.

League office finances are also available for the years 1944-50. Expenses include salaries for umpires, official scorers, league officers, scouting expenses, insurance, and exhibition game expenses. Attendance data and ticket prices by seating area are included among

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Table 1: Topical Coverage of AAGPBL materials in Joyce Collection by volume number

Topic	Volume number								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
all star rosters	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
all time league rosters				x					
contract for exhibition game			x						
final standings					x	x	x	x	
game results		x	x		x	x	x	x	
individual player performance statistics	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
league directory 1954								x	
league manual	x								
league rules					x				
letters			x		x	x	x	x	
list of donors	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
list of officers	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
minutes of board meetings 1944									x
minutes of board meetings 1945									x
minutes of board meetings 1946									x
minutes of board meetings 1947									x
minutes of board meetings 1948									x
minutes of board meetings 1949									x
minutes of board meetings 1950			x						x
minutes of board meetings 1951									x
minutes of board meetings 1952									x
minutes of board meetings 1953									x
minutes of board meetings 1954									x
notes on operation of a ballclub			x						
overview of first All Star game							x		
photos	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
playoff statistics including attendance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
press releases					x	x	x	x	
questionnaires			x						
rules and regulations of league 1943-46									x
rules, bylaws, and constitution 1951									x
scrapbook of newspaper clippings					x				
season attendance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
season schedules	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
selected box and/or line scores	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
1943 season summary (incl financial data)	x								
1944 season summary (incl financial data)	x								
1945 season summary (incl financial data)	x								
1946 season summary (incl financial data)	x								
1947 season summary (incl financial data)		x							
1948 season summary (incl financial data)		x							
1949 season summary (incl financial data)		x							
1950 season summary (incl financial data)			x	x					
1951 season summary (incl financial data)					x	x			
1952 season summary (incl financial data)							x		
1953 season summary (incl financial data)								x	
1954 season summary (incl financial data)								x	
uniform measurements			x						
written season summaries	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

Table 2: Topical coverage of AAGBPL materials in Joyce Collection by year

Topic	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
all star rosters	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
all time league rosters								x				
contract for exhibition game								x				
final standings									x	x		x
game results					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
individual player performance statistics	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
league directory												x
league rules, regulations, bylaws, constitution	x	x	x	x					x			
letters								x	x	x		x
list of donors	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
list of officers	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
minutes of board meetings		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
newspaper clippings									x			
photos	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
playoff statistics including attendance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
press releases									x	x		x
questionnaires								x				
season attendance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
season financial data	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
season schedules	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
selected box and/or line scores of individual games	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
uniform measurements		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
written season summary	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

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the revenue data.

The depth of coverage provides virtually limitless possibilities for the business researcher. The availability of these records allows for some basic research on the financial viability of the league and its franchises, and an analysis of the demand for AABPBL games using the ticket and attendance information. Salary information allows for marginal revenue product and labor studies. Delving into the minutes and league constitution will allow us to better understand how the league came into being, what alternatives were discussed, the problems the league faced, and how decisions were made as to the distribution of talent in the league, the setting of prices for tickets and franchises, and the operation of the league office itself.

Attendance figures and ticket prices will allow for studies of the demand for the game. Did the same factors that determined the demand for MLB games (population, winning percentage, pennant race) also affect attendance at AAGPBL games? Were there superstar effects in the league? The league featured some outstanding pitching performances. Did these pitchers tend to draw crowds? Were there some franchises that drew better than others? Attendance is broken down by team for regular season and playoff and for some teams by child

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AAGPBL (Continued from page 5)

and adult admissions, providing for the possibility of further refinements of demand studies.

How were players compensated? This is the area of research that first got me interested in the league's finances. How were they paid relative to MLB players? Were the women compensated for their performances, or paid a scale salary? How did their compensation compare to the revenue generated for the league? And how did that compare to MLB players? How female ballplayers compensated relative to their male counterparts and how did this compare to women and men in the general workforce?

The data can also be used in combination with other extant financial data sets to do comparative work. There are financial archives of Negro League baseball teams and MLB teams. In fact, the Joyce Collection has a volume of financial data for the Birmingham Barons. The Hall of Fame has Yankee ledgers, about which much has been written, and MLB financial records can be found in the Cellar documents on the Senate monopoly hearings of the 1950s. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

As I am a rookie in the arena of AAGPBL research, I am certainly not claiming this to be the extent of all the material available. It is, however, a valuable and underutilized resource that is deserving of further attention. I look forward to spending more time in these archives, and would appreciate the help of anyone who knows of the existence of other financial archives covering this, or any other, baseball league.

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Madden, W.C., *The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League Record Book*, Jefferson, NC:

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Madden, W.C., *The women of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League: a biographical dictionary*, Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1997

#### Collections

All-American Girls Baseball League Collection, Grand Rapids, MI Public Museum, [http://www.grmuseum.org/collections/archival\\_collections](http://www.grmuseum.org/collections/archival_collections)

Joyce Sports Research Collection, University of Notre Dame, <http://www.library.nd.edu/rarebooks/collections/sports/>

*Women Who Played Hard Ball: The Real "League of Their Own,"* Center for History, South Bend, IN, <http://centerforhistory.org/learn-history/all-american-girls-professional-baseball>

*Braves and Tammany Hall (Continued from page 1)*

of the teens and 20's really controlled and thereby a pawn of the New York Giants and Tammany Hall?" Or was it just a 'cozy relationship' in which one side fared much better than the other for a long period of time until the other side wised up?

We saw multiple trades favoring one side over the other in 1950s and 60s with the Yankees and Kansas City, with the Red Sox and the Browns in the 1940s to name two. For sure there was a convenient geographic tie between Boston and New York, and there were many connections on the corporate level and numerous trades between these two teams. In those days before minor league affiliates and the trading deadline rule which came in 1923 trading deadlines, these two clubs seemed to 'help each other out' as it were. At least the Braves helped the Giants.

First, let us look at the principal people involved in this 'unholy trinity' of the Braves, Giants and Tammany Hall:

1. The erstwhile and formidable John Joseph McGraw, hands on and undisputed leader of the Gothamites. The determined Hibernian was friends with many of the politically established Manhattanties;
2. James Gaffney was part of a New York based syndicate that purchased the Boston National League franchise in 1912. Gaffney had risen from the ranks New York of foot patrolman to brother-in-law of Charles Murphy, leader of Tammany Hall to millionaire construction magnate to principal owner of the Bostons;
3. Tammany Hall was an old-time New York backroom political machine traceable back to the late 1700's. During the Revolutionary War, a Society of St. Tammany was



formed by antiroyalists as a reply to monarchist societies named after St. George, the patron saint of mother England. Under the utterly corrupt leadership of Boss Tweed, who paid Mutual players \$100 a game to throw the contest back in 1865, it became the machine that ran the Democratic Party in the nation's largest city. Tammany took special interest in currying favor with the hundreds of thousands of

immigrants, especially the Irish and later Italians by finding jobs, getting relief and food baskets for the needy, and thereby winning the lifetime votes and undying allegiance of an entire family. Eventually, sons of the Irish immigrants took over and ran Tammany themselves, thereby having access to plenty of power and money. Actually, these *nouveau riche Hibernians* simply echoed what the big money people, a.k.a. "robber barons" (Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Morgan and the great life insurance companies) had been doing routinely — using power, pressure and prestige to become profitable.

The Boston National league club was an up and down story. After a spectacular last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in which the then-called Beaneaters, Red Caps or Red Stockings finishing first eight of those 25 years. However the turn of the century also turned the franchise from champs to chumps. The newly-arrived American League team immediately proved more popular and successful. Indifferent owners, like the Dovey brothers and then William Russell, and the inability to replace fading veterans with capable younger players led to declining fortunes. The 1905 team had four twenty-game losers. Over the 1910-11 seasons, pitcher Cliff Curtis managed to lose twenty-three straight games. The feckless Bostons managed to average 100 losses a year from 1905 through 1912.



Ned Hanlon tried to buy the team and move the the franchise to Baltimore. Instead two prominent and prosperous New Yorkers bought the club for \$187,000 in December 1911. John Montgomery Ward was a baseball man, his angel, James Gaffney, was not.

"Who was Gaffney?" everyone asked. Harold Kaese wrote that he was the New York foot patrolman who turned to Tammany politics and contracting to become a millionaire several times over. He was Tammany's Man of Mystery, a big, red-faced, healthy looking specimen, modest, quiet and retiring. Even while owner of the Braves, he was the subject of an inquiry into the awarding of lucrative construction contracts in New York.

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*Braves and Tammany Hall (Continued from page 7)*

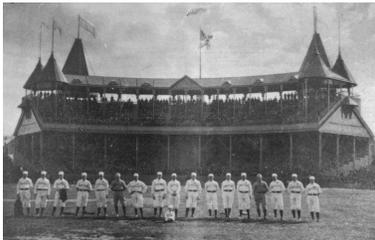
Gaffney renamed his team, the Braves, the same nickname coincidentally as Tammany Hall with the same Indian head in resplendent head dress logo.

Three days after Christmas of 1914 Gaffney and two New York-based directors arrived in Boston. They went to team headquarters on Paddock Street to review plans by Osborne Company of Cleveland for the new ballpark. The new park would seat 40,282, larger than the Polo Grounds, but modeled after Navin Field. Speculation said that the new Boston manager would be Fred



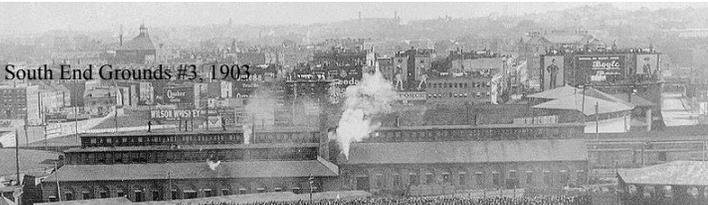
Fred Tenney, 1906, SDN-051369, Chicago Daily News negatives collection, Chicago History Museum.

Tenney, described by J. M. Ward as “a grand ballplayer and a brainy director.” Others thought Ned Hanlon would get the sachem’s job.



South End Grounds #2, 1888

The team’s home field, called the South End Grounds and the second ballpark on that site, had burned to the ground and its replacement was in deplorable condition. Gaffney bought the Alston Golf Club on the western side of Back Bay and



South End Grounds #3, 1903

announced that he would build the grandest ballpark in America on the site. And in 1915 he did. Holding 40,000 fans, Braves Field proudly dwarfed every other park until Yankee Stadium was erected in 1923. Under Gaffney’s leadership, the famous Miracle Braves rallied from a “deader than a deer on a fender” last place to sweep to the flag and then clean house on the mighty Athletics.

Only two years after the Miracle Braves, Gaffney sold his share in the team to the famous Harvard football coach, Percy Haughton. But the cozy Boston – New

York businessman’s relationship quietly persisted, through some of the team’s New York based directors. Gaffney’s connections were Robert Davis, Frederick Killeen and attorney John Toole, all of New York.

Barney Dreyfuss and Clark Griffith were two of the owners who sought a trading deadline as “it will open the door for discontented players to seek a change of atmosphere. And if the magnates feel this way, imagine how the players must feel.” Carl Mays was one such ingrate.

There were many, many trades between these two teams, sometimes two or three a year, including several “Double Arounds,” men who later returned to their original club in another trade. Sort of a Lend Lease before farm systems became so common. The Giants conveniently retrieved short-stop Al Bridwell from Braves to abet a pennant drive. And it seemed a common assumption among scribes and fans that one team (the Braves) were in the pocket of the other (the Giant).



In August 1919, John McGraw’s Giants, thirsty for another pennant (and possible World Series defeat!) needed another pitcher badly, preferably a left hander. At that time, Art Nehf was the chief sachem of the Braves wigwam. Nehf was sort of the Bobby Shantz of his day. He was coming off a mere 15-15 record (28% of his team’s wins), but a sparkling 2.69 ERA with 28 complete games in 284 innings made him a most tempting target for the ambitious Giants. Although Herr Nehf went 9-2 for McGraw, it was not enough to catch the Reds. But this type of questionable mid-season deal and the subsequent outcries of unfairness and unsportsmanlike, both in the press and among the fans, led to the trading deadline rule being put in shortly after.

If Messrs McGraw and Fuchs were seemingly amazed by the hullabaloo, McGraw claimed that he had offered Hornsby to the Reds for Hughie Critz and Bubbles Hargrave, to the Robins for Dazzy Vance and was turned down with a flat “No”. McGraw said the trade was done “for the best interest of the Giants.” Fuchs asserted strongly that there was “No syndicate baseball, that we have been after Hornsby for some

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time, and that not a single New Yorker has any money in the Braves!” Despite all these protestations, the sports writers and John Q. Public sure were greatly shocked. The New York Evening World interviewed the “Man on the Street”, here are a few responses.

Distinguished reporters questioned the deal. John Kieran wrote in the *New York Times*, “Was it a trade or a gift? As far as the Braves are concerned, there is a Santa Claus. In some cynical quarters the trade is viewed as a shifting of assets – from one ledger to another in the same corporation!” Kieran however believed Judge Fuchs’ repeated denials of such shenanigans. “If Hornsby were thrown into one side of a basket scale, and Welch and Hogan in the other, the latter two would go skyward in the longest stop of this remarkable era of aviation.”

McGraw needed pitching to catch the pennant and World Series bound Reds, so – the crucial, critical question of the day – did he simply “steal Nehf away for practically nothing” or was it a fair and decent deal? Was it a New York Yankees getting Roger Maris (with Joe DeMaestri and Kent Hadley) for Hank Bauer, Don Larsen, Norm Siebern and Marv Throneberry? Or the Red Sox getting Vern Stephens, Ellis Kinder and JCK Kramer for warm bodies and lots of wampum.. Actually, the Braves received \$55,000 and four major leaguers (Red Causey, Johnny Jones, Mickey O’Neil and Joe Oeschger) no Palookas or wash outs.

Nehf went 9-2 with a 1.50 ERA through August and into September, helping the Giants immensely that year and the next several years, compiling a record of 107-60 with New York.

If Art Nehf was the Bobby Shantz of his day, Rogers Hornsby was more like the A-Rod of the twenties – feared slugging middle infielder, moving from team to team for less than believable reasons, off-field headlines for improprieties and, arguably, the best player in his league. McGraw had huge confidence in his own ability to control, inspire and otherwise get the best out of any player, but difficulties with the fiery Fordham Flash, Frankie Frisch led to the seismic swap of Frisch for Hornsby in 1926. This only three months after Hornsby had led the Cardinals to their first pennant ever, capped by a sensational World Series win over the Yankees.

Sam Breadon had had enough of Hornsby’s meddling, abrasive ways. One of the bridges Hornsby likely burned was the one between himself and owner Stoneham and Secretary Jim Tierney. Rumors persisted that the Giants actually paid Hornsby’s 1928 salary of \$40,600 to the Braves.

Third-baseman Freddie Lindstrom confided that Hornsby “(a) boss around Giant players (b) to have some of them traded (c) wanted to become Giants’ manager and (d) he wrecked all semblance of harmony on the team.” “Hornsby wanted no one on the team but men he could dominate. Yes, that trade is a great thing for the New York ball club.” Dale Carnegie Hornsby was not. Harold Kaese in *The Boston Braves, 1871- 1953* says “It was always a question of which talked louder and more often, Rogers Hornsby’s bat or his tongue.”

Just two days after signing Rogers to a two year contract, the Braves traded Hornsby to the Braves for Shanty Hogan and Jimmy Welsh. Giants management claimed “It was for the good of the Giants!”

McGraw claimed that he had offered Hornsby to the Reds for 2B Hughie Critz and Bubbles Hargrave; to the Dodgers for Dazzy Vance. “We tried to trade Hornsby to other clubs with no result, so we opened negotiations with the Boston club.” McGraw also said that he was trading Hornsby “for the best interests of the team,” whatever that means.

Really, no one wanted him – so, how about the hapless Bostons, haven’t they been a convenient ‘dumping ground’ for us before? Don’t we make as many as two or three trades with them every year anyway? Don’t we have a comfortable working arrangement with them? With their sparkling 60-94, seventh place record of 1927, they can always use a heavy hitting second baseman to improve on Doc Gautreau’s .246, no home runs and 20 RBIs (in only 246 at bats).

Hornsby went .387-21-94 in 1928 for the Braves who reliably clung to their customary place in the standings, seventh. Only the determined Phillies were lower. The ‘other’ players were not bad – the 6’1”, 240 pound second year man Shanty Hogan clouted an admirable .333-10-71. An excellent target behind the plate, at one point he caught 120 consecutive errorless games. The Giants ‘borrowed’ OF Jimmy Welsh for

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only 160 games before sending him back to Boston.

Besides leading the league in batting, Hornsby managed the Braves to a .325 record. Of course, Rogers was gone to the Cubs the very next season, traded for \$100,000, a second baseman and three unproven pitchers. Some of that money went for the purchase of Wally Berger. This trade was supposedly engineered by Hornsby himself. And Judge Fuchs announced that he himself would manage the team in 1929.

Was this another Tammany inspired deal of convenience? “Here is the story. Don’t bother me with no details.” John Drebing in *The New York Times* described the explanations of the principals. *The Evening World* called it ‘Syndicated Baseball’.

*The Evening World* polled “The Man in the Street” for these words of wisdom – “Craziest deal ever made,” Irving Targrove, NYC; “It looks funny to me,” L. West, Brooklyn; “Hornsby was bought to outshine Ruth.” “I think baseball is a fake, and that McGraw and Stoneham own Boston,” Max Glassman, Brooklyn; “The Giants must have an interest in the Braves, otherwise how could they let a man like Hornsby go.” A.F. Gruenberger, Brooklyn; “Giant plans are to bolster the weak Braves. They are practically the sole owners of the Boston club.” Charles Gesner, Brooklyn; “Deal appears queer,” Thomas Brady, Hudson Heights; “Just another way of building up the Boston team...” “Giants have an interest in the Braves.” In sum, the fans were shocked!

Judge Emil Fuchs, owner of the Braves stated, “I promised the Boston baseball public that it would never dispose of a player of ability for money consideration, because the citizens of Boston resented their major league ball clubs being used as a farm for the larger and more prosperous cities, who had the benefit of Sunday baseball ... and could afford to purchase whatever they deemed necessary to build and continue a championship ball club.” The beleaguered judge implied that the Giants initiated the deal as they were after Hogan and Welch also protested vigorously any accusations that the two teams were connected in any way, shape or form. Boston newspapers showed a picture of Rogers “... donning the Tribal war paint... swinging at the apple.”

Fuchs claimed that the Braves sought the Rajah from

the Giants and that Landis knew it was to happen. Fuchs then signed Hornsby for \$40,000 a year for three years plus an extra \$600 to serve as team captain. Others say that Stoneham insisted the former Cardinal go because of his antagonism toward the Giant owner and also club secretary Tierney.

Hornsby himself claimed to be “flabbergasted.” He apparently got along with McGraw. However, A cloud hung over Hornsby from a \$92,000 gambling debt he did or did not owe a Cincinnati gambler named Frank Moore. A jury voted in favor of Hornsby as bets were illegal to begin with.

The *Boston Post* wrote – “The statement issued by Charles Stoneham, president of the Giants was taken with several grains of salt by the assembled experts.... While innocent bystanders were still a trifle groggy from the SHOCK of the deal, ... the experts probed behind the scene for the “real reason” for what seemed on the surface like the most one-sided deal in recent years.”

Newspapers recalled the long succession of deals between the two clubs over a period of years as well as the fact that Judge Emil Fuchs, owner of the Braves, is a resident of New York.

“Hornsby’s head was demanded by the gamblers and Stoneham was in full sympathy.... McGraw was forced to join Stoneham in putting the knife into Hornsby. That is the reason for the Hornsby trade. No one in the New York sporting world can offend the gamblers and get away with it.” *Boston Post / Globe*.

So I leave it to you, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the prosecution and the defense rest their cases. How do you vote? Collusion and Control or Coincidence?

This article was originally presented at SABR 40 in Atlanta. Gerald Beirne is a retired Rhode Island priest and an active member of the Boston Braves Historical Society.



*Salaries as a Meritocracy (Continued from page 2)*

be the optimal approach in a free market, for GMs to start basing contract offers.

Using numbers from 2005, Bradbury estimated that a league average team, which wins 81 games, would earn approximately \$109 million in revenue. Then Bradbury figured out each player's runs added to a team and projected them out, as if they took 100% of their team's at-bats, to see how that player would compare to the league average in runs. Dividing pitching and hitting evenly, he then calculated how many more runs above or below average a player has contributed, multiplied that value by the percentage of plate appearances the player took for his team. For this data, 7.5 runs (above league average) were worth approximately \$1 million.

Using this method for data in 2005, we see that the marginal revenue added by Albert Pujols in 2005 was \$17.53 million, which would be a much fairer compensation than the \$11 million he received that season.

Bradbury's method even factors in playing time, which properly adjusts for platoon players and utility men. This is a perfect way to measure how much revenue players can generate for franchises, and should serve as a great tool for team presidents.

### ***Vince Gennaro, Diamond Dollars***

Gennaro has a similar mindset as Bradbury. He correlates a player's value to team revenue, using the Wins Above Replacement Player metric.

Gennaro's book focuses very much on the financial value of each revenue stream, and how each is affected by wins. He also factors in the impact for each market. The example he uses is 2005 Vladimir Guerrero adding 8.2 wins to his Angels team, which then added an additional \$9.9 million in revenue. Then, those eight wins added gave the Angels a 68% better chance of making the playoffs and World Series, which generated an additional \$7 million in revenue, specifically for the Angels, estimating Guerrero's total value for the year at \$17.143 million.

Diamond Dollars is incredibly well detailed for each individual market and scenario. This method, like

Bradbury's method of estimating a player's worth, would be a great value again to team presidents.

### **Player-minded Approach**

Each of these methods focuses on how many dollars a player adds for his franchise. To say that someone is worth "X" amount of dollars to the Yankees, given several factors, is fine in determining value in revenue when arguing on behalf of the business. However, Hanley Ramirez should not have to care about how much money he generates in revenue for the lowly Florida Marlins when he has been consistently outperforming Miguel Tejada, yet earns a fraction of that player's salary.

This is why I submit my study as a puzzle piece. Cameron determined salary based on the free agent market; Bradbury determined revenue based on marginal revenue produced; and Gennaro determined how much revenue a player is worth based on various, team specific, revenue streams. So, I want to add to the discussion the player's perspective of how much he is worth relative to his potential replacements.

I would imagine the following to be valuable for agents of underpaid players, and teams dealing with players with unrealistic free agent demands.

### **Methodology**

I wanted to consider how much a player produces and how much he is paid relative to his peers to determine his overall value. So I analyzed each market to include each player for each position for each year, dating back to 2000. Production is measured by [Baseball Projection.com](#)'s Wins Above Replacement (WAR), as presented at [baseball-reference.com](#). Baseball-Reference is also the source for all salary data. For players with missing salary data, they were assigned a salary similar to other values that they have received, or in the case of young players with missing data, they were assigned a generic value of \$350,000 to keep things consistent.

The markets are comprised of players who registered over 100 at-bats in the given season, or over 26.0 innings pitched. This was designed to exclude small sample sizes or misleading data. The WAR metric is

*(Continued on page 12)*

*Salaries as a Meritocracy (Continued from page 11)*

used because a team's WAR total correlates with winning percentage, with an  $r^2$  coefficient of .77. This makes even more sense when you consider factoring in managing, injuries, situational leverage and luck into the big picture.

### **Statistics**

I wanted to create a system where players were divided into tiers, and the easiest way for me to do that was to use standard deviations for both payroll and production. Simply put, I found the positional averages and standard deviations for WAR and salary for each position. I then added each player's two z-scores to find a Team-Value Score ("TVS") which determines which player, and his contract, put his team in the best situation to win each season.

### **Team-Value Score**

The best TVS season of the last decade was 2003 Marcus Giles' 4.276. In 2003, Giles earned \$316,500, while producing 8.2 WAR. The average salary that year for a qualifying second baseman was \$1.5 million, and the average WAR was 1. The standard deviations were \$1.9 million, and 2 WAR. So, Giles had a contract that was .629 standard deviations below average (friendly to teams), and had a WAR value of 3.646 standard deviations above average. A few notes on scores:

- Anything below -3 is atrocious, and the player should be buying cars for his rookie teammates. (E.g. 2008 Barry Zito)
- -1 to -3 is still bad. The player was most likely well overpaid, and did not produce at a rate relative to his contract. (E.g. Derek Jeter)
- -1 to +1 is fine. In a perfect system, everyone would produce in this range. Imagine a 2009 first baseman producing 5 wins. A fair salary then would have been near \$11 million.
- +1 to +3 is definitely an underpaid player.
- Anything over 3 is rarified territory (e.g. Albert Pujols, Hanley Ramirez or Joe Mauer, while earning less than \$1 million).

### **Logic**

High TVS scores for individual players are great for the team overall, as they represent someone outperforming their contract, thus freeing up money to spend on wins in other markets. These players allow small market teams to compete. Consider if the Oakland Athletics have a fixed budget of \$60 million. Every player they pay less than \$1 million, who performs above average, allows the team to spend money on free agents who can add wins.

The salaries for what players should be paid are based off the mindset that if \$100 million is spent on a group of 50 players, they should be paid according to production. So, "earned" salaries are a redistribution from the pool of money allocated to the position, and reflect who should have been paid the most.

### **Meritocracy and Salaries**

With each market's salary and production totals accounted for, I was able to consider how much money a player should earn based on production. Consider the 2009 crop of right fielders. This group, consisting of 51 players that played the majority of their innings in right field, earned \$176.5 million, while producing 59.8 wins for their teams. The top earner of the group was Magglio Ordonez, who made nearly \$19 million, yet produced .4 WAR ("wins") for a TVS of -3.741. Ordonez's contract and production was toxic to the Tigers, who missed the playoffs by one game in 2009. Given that information, would the Tigers have made the playoffs with a league average right fielder (e.g. Gabe Gross), and an extra \$16 million to spend elsewhere? Answer: Yes, making the Ordonez's 2009 contract awful.

In a system that rewards production, Ordonez's .4 wins, would not have earned him \$19 million, but would have earned him \$1.7 million. This figured is derived by taking the average salary for a right fielder (i.e. \$3.46 million) then adding the financial value of the player's standard deviation (i.e. Ordonez would be in the first tier below average for right fielders). The standard deviation for right fielders was \$4.6 million. Ordonez's production was -.38 below the average

*(Continued on page 13)*

Salaries as a Meritocracy (Continued from page 12)

right fielder. So the equation for his salary is:

$$\text{Ordonez} = \$3.46 \text{ million} + (-.38)(\$4.6 \text{ million})$$

$$\text{Ordonez} = \$3.46 \text{ million} - \$1.75 \text{ million}$$

$$\text{Ordonez} = \$1.7 \text{ million}$$

The best right fielder in 2009 was Shin-Soo Choo, both in terms of WAR and TVS. Choo produced 6.2 wins, which was 2.5 standard deviations above average, yet was paid \$.4 million for being the best player at his position. His salary was .658 standard deviations below average, giving him a TVS of 3.145, making his salary and production completely invaluable to the Indians, who try to succeed annually with a total payroll well below \$70 million. Had Choo been paid relative to his production, he would have earned \$15 million, which seems significantly fairer given his production. Lucky for Choo, he is arbitration eligible

after the 2010 season, and his agent is Scott Boras. So there's that.



**Most "Valuable" Players**

Using "value" to define which players outperformed their contract the most – using Total Value Score – we can see which players had been the most valuable player at each position in 2009. Also, we can use an equation derived from the correlation of WAR and winning percentage to see how many games they would have won. The results are below.

Conversely, we can see (in the table on the next page) which contracts were the most burdensome:

*(Continued on page 14)*

2009	A's	Kurt Suzuki	C	\$410,000	3
2009	Padres	Adrian Gonzalez	1B	\$3,125,000	7
2009	Rays	Ben Zobrist	2B	\$415,900	7.1
2009	Rays	Evan Longoria	3B	\$550,000	6.6
2009	Rockies	Troy Tulowitzki	SS	\$1,000,000	6.8
2009	Brewers	Ryan Braun	LF	\$1,032,500	6.2
2009	Dodgers	Matt Kemp	CF	\$467,000	5.8
2009	Indians	Shin-Soo Choo	RF	\$420,300	6.2
2009	Twins	Jason Kubel	DH	\$2,750,000	3.4
2009	Royals	Zack Greinke	SP	\$3,750,000	9
2009	White Sox	Matt Thornton	RP	\$1,325,000	2.7
2009	A's	Andrew Bailey	CL	\$400,000	3.9

**Totals:** \$15,645,700 67.7

**Projected Wins:** 120

\* The minimum number of starts to be considered a starter is 10.



Salaries as a Meritocracy (Continued from page 13)

**General Manager Rankings**



Since we have value scores for each contract, we can use the sum of each team to determine how much value each general manager received from his teams. Rephrased: we know which GMs exploit their players the best. However, being budget conscious is only part of their jobs, as winning needs to be considered as well.

that more credibility is given to consistent performances. The rankings reflect the ten seasons from 2000 through 2009.

The biggest flaw in these rankings is that each team weighs budgeting and winning differently, and certainly not evenly. This is why Brian Cashman is near the bottom, since he can give away contracts that do not return fair value, yet the Yankees still can afford to win every year. However, if I were a Yankee fan, I would feel much more comfortable with Walt Jocketty as my GM than Cashman.

To figure the rankings, I have taken the average TVS for each GM's teams and added it with his average winning percentage. I then used the same math for the GMs that I used for the players, by finding the averages, standard deviations and adding the z-scores of winning percentage and TVS. I then weighted that value by how many years in charge the GM was, so

Flaws aside, six of the top ten GMs ranked have won a World Series, leading me to believe that this is a fair judge of performance.

(Continued on page 17)

Year	Team	Player Name	Position	Salary	WAR
2009	A's	Kurt Suzuki	C	\$410,000	3
2009	Padres	Adrian Gonzalez	1B	\$3,125,000	7
2009	Rays	Ben Zobrist	2B	\$415,900	7.1
2009	Rays	Evan Longoria	3B	\$550,000	6.6
2009	Rockies	Troy Tulowitzki	SS	\$1,000,000	6.8
2009	Brewers	Ryan Braun	LF	\$1,032,500	6.2
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2009	A's	Andrew Bailey	CL	\$400,000	3.9

**Totals:**     \$15,645,700     67.7  
**Projected Wins:**     120



	Name	Franchise	Sea- sons	AVE-TV	Win %	Z-AveTV	Z-Win	wZ-Sum
	Name	Franchise	Seasons	AVE-TV	Win %	Z-AveTV	Z-Win	wZ-Sum
1	Billy Beane	A's	10	12.28	0.547	1.65	0.85	25.24
2	Terry Ryan	Twins	8	10.15	0.527	1.37	0.49	14.91
3	Bill Stoneman	Angels	8	5.07	0.539	0.68	0.71	11.26
4	Pat Gillick	Phillies	7	-1.20	0.580	-0.16	1.44	9.08
5	JP Ricciardi	Blue Jays	8	7.96	0.496	1.07	-0.08	7.98
6	Mark Shapiro	Indians	8	8.22	0.490	1.11	-0.19	7.37
7	Theo Epstein	Red Sox	7	-3.79	0.582	-0.51	1.49	6.94
8	John Schuerholz	Braves	8	-2.65	0.562	-0.36	1.13	6.30
9	Kenny Williams	White Sox	9	1.83	0.524	0.25	0.43	6.17
10	Walt Jocketty	Cardinals	10	-2.79	0.547	-0.38	0.85	4.81
11	Michael Hill	Marlins	2	13.17	0.529	1.77	0.53	4.64
12	Bill Smith	Twins	2	12.64	0.532	1.70	0.58	4.60
13	Ron Schueler	White Sox	1	20.38	0.576	2.75	1.38	4.15
14	Andrew Friedman	Rays	4	11.06	0.473	1.49	-0.49	4.01
15	Tony Reagins	Angels	2	0.23	0.602	0.03	1.86	3.83
16	Larry Beinfest	Marlins	6	4.59	0.500	0.62	0.01	3.76
17	Jon Daniels	Rangers	4	6.69	0.495	0.90	-0.08	3.28
18	John Mozeliak	Cardinals	2	3.53	0.541	0.48	0.75	2.47
19	Gerry Hunsicker	Astros	5	0.11	0.525	0.01	0.46	2.40
20	Ned Colletti	Dodgers	4	-0.59	0.535	-0.08	0.63	2.24
21	Brian Sabean	Giants	10	-2.07	0.527	-0.28	0.49	2.16
22	Josh Byrnes	Diamondbacks	4	4.30	0.489	0.58	-0.19	1.55
23	Herk Robinson	Royals	1	11.07	0.475	1.49	-0.45	1.04
24	Ruben Amaro Jr.	Phillies	1	-8.25	0.576	-1.11	1.39	0.28
25	John Hart	Indians	6	-0.63	0.505	-0.08	0.10	0.08
26	Kevin Malone	Dodgers	1	-5.20	0.531	-0.70	0.56	-0.14
27	Dan Duquette	Red Sox	3	-5.42	0.536	-0.73	0.65	-0.22
28	Gord Ash	Blue Jays	2	-1.47	0.503	-0.20	0.06	-0.28
29	Dan Evans	Dodgers	2	-8.34	0.546	-1.12	0.84	-0.56
30	Frank Wren	Braves	2	-0.60	0.488	-0.08	-0.22	-0.62
31	Wayne Krivsky	Reds	2	1.49	0.469	0.20	-0.56	-0.73
32	Cam Bonifay	Pirates	1	4.52	0.426	0.61	-1.35	-0.75
33	Dave Wallace	Dodgers	1	-13.02	0.531	-1.75	0.56	-1.19
34	Kevin Towers	Padres	10	2.72	0.473	0.37	-0.50	-1.33
35	Jack Zduriencik	Mariners	1	-14.94	0.525	-2.01	0.45	-1.57
36	Dan O'Brien, Jr.	Reds	2	-2.62	0.460	-0.35	-0.73	-2.18
37	Paul DePodesta	Dodgers	2	-8.54	0.502	-1.15	0.04	-2.23
38	Tim Purpura	Astros	3	-5.66	0.501	-0.76	0.01	-2.26
39	Randy Smith	Tigers	2	-2.50	0.448	-0.34	-0.95	-2.60
40	Neil Huntington	Pirates	2	3.79	0.399	0.51	-1.83	-2.67
41	Dan O'Dowd	Rockies	10	1.47	0.474	0.20	-0.47	-2.77
42	Ed Lynch	Cubs	1	-7.78	0.40	-1.05	-1.79	-2.83
43	Omar Minaya	Mets	8	-4.08	0.509	-0.55	0.17	-3.05
44	Jim Duquette	Mets	1	-14.19	0.438	-1.91	-1.12	-3.05
45	Jim Beattie	Nationals	2	-1.26	0.417	-0.17	-1.51	-3.40
46	Mike Rizzo	Nationals	1	-7.48	0.364	-1.01	-2.47	-3.51
47	Dean Taylor	Brewers	3	4.11	0.405	0.55	-1.72	-3.55
48	Andy MacPhail	Orioles	3	-3.20	0.44	-0.43	-1.02	-4.35
49	Joe Garagiola, Jr.	Diamondbacks	6	-5.43	0.500	-0.73	0.01	-4.36

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51	Jim Hendry	Cubs	7	-7.66	0.515	-1.03	0.28	-5.30
52	Mike Flanagan	Orioles	5	-0.83	0.450	-0.11	-0.96	-5.36
53	Ed Wade	Astros	8	-5.51	0.503	-0.74	0.06	-5.50
54	Syd Thrift	Orioles	3	-3.35	0.421	-0.45	-1.44	-5.74
55	Dayton Moore	Royals	4	-0.52	0.418	-0.07	-1.49	-6.29
56	Jim Bowden	Reds	8	0.75	0.449	0.10	-0.92	-6.63
57	Allard Baird	Royals	5	3.43	0.400	0.46	-1.82	-6.86
58	Dave Dombrowski	Tigers	10	0.78	0.457	0.11	-0.79	-6.91
59	Brian Cashman	Yankees	10	-17.99	0.595	-2.42	1.72	-6.95
60	Bill Bavasi	Mariners	5	-3.80	0.443	-0.51	-1.03	-7.78
61	Steve Phillips	Mets	4	-15.12	0.490	-2.04	-0.17	-8.89
62	Chuck LaMar	Rays	6	2.70	0.398	0.36	-1.85	-9.00
63	Dave Littlefield	Pirates	7	-0.27	0.427	-0.04	-1.33	-9.67
	Active	LDS						
	Not an Active GM	LCS	Average:	0.00	0.500			
		WS	STD:	7.42	0.06			
		WS-Win						

Salaries as a Meritocracy (Continued from page 14)

### Salary Structure

One of the most shocking realizations from this study is how underappreciated the majority of players in Major League Baseball have been. Consider the case of Marcus Giles, a player who had earned \$10 million total, yet added 16.7 wins over his career. He had his best performances in team controlled years, and never could earn fair value for his contributions. Meanwhile Carlos Silva has earned over \$43 million so far in his career for contributing 7.1 total wins. However, Silva became a free agent in a barren pitching market after a good (but not great) season.

Cases like Marcus Giles are not uncommon, where players face injury or diminished ability before they can cash in on their previous results, while players like Carlos Silva, Carlos Zambrano or Carlos Lee are able to sign big contracts right before they start showing diminishing returns. From 2000 through 2009, 50% of all money spent (for players qualifying for the study) went to 6% of the players.

There is no easy solution to fixing the balance in salaries for teams or players. However, if I have learned anything from this, it is that the salary given to some of the best contributors is not nearly enough, and the money given to free agents is far too much. Since wins

do not correlate with salaries at all, then it is not fair for salary to correlate with service time. Hopefully men smarter than me can figure out a way to do justice for the players like Shin-Soo Choo or Marcus Giles.

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### **From the Editor**

This issue of *Outside the Lines*, the newsletter of SABR's Business of Baseball Committee, is one of two that you will receive in the next few days. In this issue Mike Hauptert describes the financial archives of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, an introduction to a larger study he has undertaken of the economics of the AAGPBL. Fr. Gerald Beirne explores the unsavory relationships among Tammany Hall and the New York and Boston National League teams. Finally, Mark Hejduk takes another crack at valuing ballplayers and GM's.

John Ruoff  
Co-Chair Business of Baseball Committee  
Editor, *Outside the Lines*



## Business of Baseball Committee

The Business of Baseball Committee co-chairs are Steve Weingarden ([steveweingarden@gmail.com](mailto:steveweingarden@gmail.com)) and John Ruoff ([jruoff@bellsouth.net](mailto:jruoff@bellsouth.net)). Ruoff edits *Outside The Lines*.

The committee's website is at <http://www.businessofbaseball.com>. You should stay in touch with the site as we improve the look and add content.

The Committee's discussion group, BusinessofBaseball, is on YahooGroups. If you are a member of the Committee and want to join, go to <http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/BusinessofBaseball/> or send an e-mail to [Business of Baseball-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:BusinessofBaseball-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

***Thank You to our authors***

*Mike Hauptert, Mark Hejduk and Fr. Gerald Beirne*

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