

THE

Baseball 14 Research

JOURNAL

COMPARISONS BETWEEN athletes of today and those of yesteryear are inevitable. In many respects baseball lends itself to such assessments to a greater degree than any sport. This is so for at least two reasons: 1-The nature of the game remains essentially the same now as when it first was played, and 2-Statistical documentation of player achievements spans more than a century, thus providing a solid data base.

As Pete Rose approached — and then broke — the hallowed record for career hits held by Ty Cobb, another flood of comparisons began taking shape. Pete was quick to say he didn't feel he was a greater player than Cobb had been, but added merely that he had produced more hits.

The two men had much in common, of course. Both were always known as fierce competitors. Each spent most of his career with one club and eventually managed that team. And in a touch of irony, Cobb was in his eighty-fifth year when he passed away in 1961, and it was in '85 — or 24 years later — that Pete shattered the record Ty had compiled over a career that spanned 24 years.

While Rose was producing a new chapter for baseball's colorful history, various aspects of the game's glorious past were being resurrected and reviewed by the media for the public's pleasure. This pointed up anew the degree to which the present is linked with the past.

It is this nostalgic blending of the past with the present that enriches baseball literature and that also forms a strong bond between members of the Society for American Baseball Research. Many members have discovered that, besides being enlightening, the research of baseball history is a most rewarding form of entertainment.

On succeeding pages readers will find several articles by SABR members that tie in with the Cobb and Rose accomplishments. Other articles deal with a wide variety of baseball topics, most of them with a nostalgic twist.

The Cobb and Rose drawings contained on the cover were prepared by Richard A. Leva, who is an associate professor of psychology at the Fredonia branch of the State University of New York and enjoys dabbling in art.

Another feature of this fourteenth annual edition of the *Baseball Research Journal* is its distinctive appearance. Publications director John Thorn deserves the credit for developing the *Journal's* new look.

Fourteenth Annual Historical and Statistical Review of the Society for American Baseball Research

Cobb, Jackson and Applied Psychology, <i>David Shoebottom</i>	2
Protested Games Muddle Records, <i>Raymond J. Gonzalez</i>	5
Honest John Kelly, <i>James D. Smith III</i>	7
Milwaukee's Early Teams, <i>Ed Coen</i>	10
Pitching Triple Crown, <i>Martin C. Babicz</i>	13
Researcher's Notebook, <i>Al Kermisch</i>	15
Alabama Pitts, <i>Joseph M. Overfield</i>	19
Dickshot's Hitting Streak, <i>Willie Runquist</i>	23
A Conversation with Bill James, <i>Jay Feldman</i>	26
Tim McNamara, <i>Jim Murphy</i>	30
Change of Allegiance, <i>Henry L. Freund, Jr.</i>	33
Stars Put Syracuse on Map, <i>Lloyd Johnson</i>	35
Counting Stats, New Stats, <i>Bobby Fong</i>	37
Ruth's 1920 Record Best Ever, <i>Larry Thompson</i>	41
Lifetime 1,000 Hitters, <i>Charles W. Bevis</i>	44
Thank God for Nuts, <i>David Q. Voigt</i>	46
Players Today Better than Oldtimers, <i>Bill Deane</i>	52
Rating the Base Stealers, <i>Jim Weigand</i>	55
Sweeney's 19 Strikeouts, <i>Frederick Ivor-Campbell</i>	57
Wheat in the Chaff, <i>Phil Bergen</i>	61
1921 Negro League, <i>Dick Clark and John B. Holway</i>	63
Life in the Minors Exciting, <i>Carol Palmer</i>	71
Big Jim Weaver, <i>James A. Riley</i>	74
Teammates Who Rated 1-2 in RBIs, <i>Wayne Stewart</i>	78
Germany Schaefer, <i>Jack Kavanagh</i>	80
1874 Baseball Tour of England, <i>Neil Stout</i>	83
The World According to SABR, <i>Jay Feldman</i>	86
Origin of Alphonse and Gaston	88

Editor: Clifford Kachline

Associate Editors: Barbara Flanagan, Leonard Levin, Elizabeth McGrail, Richard Puff

PICTURE SOURCES (credits accompany photos): NBL, National Baseball Library, Albuquerque Dukes, Joseph M. Overfield, John Thorn.

BASEBALL RESEARCH JOURNAL (ISSN 0734-6891, ISBN 0-910137-20-X). Published by Society for American Baseball Research, Inc., P.O. Box 1010, Cooperstown, NY 13326. Postage paid at Manhattan, KS. Copyright © 1985 Society for American Baseball Research, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

Printed by Ag Press, Manhattan, KS.



Ty Cobb, Joe Jackson and Applied Psychology

DAVID SHOEBOTHAM

(Statistical research by Craig Carter)

The Georgia Peach's version of how he tricked his rival to win the 1911 A.L. batting title isn't supported by the facts.

With the 1911 season about finished, Shoeless Joe Jackson of Cleveland topped me nine points in the averages . . . Jackson was . . . a friendly, simple, and gullible sort of fellow. On the field, he never failed to greet me with a "Hiyuh, brother Ty!"

So now we were in Cleveland for a season-closing six-game series, and before the first game I waited in the clubhouse until Jackson had taken his batting practice. . . . Ambling over, Joe gave me a grip and said, "How's it goin', brother Ty? How you been?"

I stared coldly at a point six inches over his head. Joe waited for an answer. The grin slowly faded from his face to be replaced by puzzlement.

"Gosh, Ty, what's the matter with you?"

I turned and walked away. Jackson followed, still trying to learn why I'd ignored him.

"Get away from me!" I snarled.

Every inning afterward I arranged to pass close by him, each time giving him the deep freeze. For a while, Joe kept asking, "What's wrong, Ty?" I never answered him. Finally, he quit speaking and just looked at me with hurt in his eyes.

My mind was centered on just one thing: getting all the base hits I could muster. Joe Jackson's mind was on many other things. . . . We Tigers were leaving town, but I had to keep my psychological ploy going to keep Jackson upset the rest of the way.

So, after the last man was out, I walked up, gave him a broad smile and yodeled, "Why, hello, Joe — how's your good health?" I slapped his back and complimented him on his fine season's work.

Joe's mouth was open when I left.

Final standings: Cobb .420 batting mark, Jackson, .408.

It helps if you help them beat themselves.

From *My Life in Baseball: The True Record*,
by Ty Cobb with Al Stumpf

TY COBB PSYCHING OUT JOE JACKSON to win the 1911 American League batting championship is one of baseball's most memorable anecdotes. There are many versions of the story, varying in details, but all agree on the basic plot. There's only one problem with the story: It never happened.

A glance at *Figure 1* on the 1911 batting race shows why. The day-by-day records of that season reveal that

Cobb passed Jackson on May 7 and never again fell behind. From May 15 to July 2 Cobb hit .482 while putting together a 40-game hitting streak — an American League record at the time — and raising his average to .447. At the same time Jackson was hitting a very respectable .378, which nevertheless left him 69 points behind.

Jackson picked up his pace in July, running up a 28-game streak between July 11 and August 12. Jackson's average climbed over .400 on August 8, and the gap narrowed to 22 points. By August 25 Jackson was only nine points behind Cobb, but he never came any closer.

To salvage the legend, one could assume that rather than having come from behind Cobb used his psychological ploy to derail the onrushing Jackson and preserve his narrow lead in the batting race. But even this interpretation doesn't stand up. Detroit and Cleveland played their last three games against each other on October 2 and 4 in Cleveland. Going into this series Cobb had a 15-point lead in the batting race (.422 to .407). The possibility of Jackson overtaking Cobb's lead at that late date could not have been very great, and Cobb had no need to apply psychological pressure.

The only other time Cobb and Jackson met during the last three months of 1911 was for a single exciting game in Detroit on September 10, the kind of game that produced the Cobb legend. The Georgia Peach singled in the first inning but was stranded after stealing second and third. Cleveland scored the game's first run in the seventh when Nap Lajoie doubled home Jackson. Detroit tied it with two away in the eighth; Cobb beat out an infield hit, continued to second when the late throw to first base was high and streaked for third when the pitcher, after retrieving the ball, threw to second. When the Cleveland second baseman threw wildly to third, Cobb tore home and slid around the catcher, scoring on his own infield hit. Cobb beat out another infield hit in the thirteenth inning and was on second base, with the bases loaded, when Detroit scored the winning run on an error.

At that point Cobb's lead over Jackson was 14 points (.420 to .406). With one month remaining in the season the possibility that Jackson might overtake Cobb was considerably better than it would be on October 2. However, if Cobb snubbed Jackson on September 10, it certainly didn't work. From then to the end of the season Cobb hit .422, hardly the pace of a psyched-up demon. Over the same period Jackson hit .420, hardly the dramatic decline of a befuddled bumpkin.

So the whole story could be a myth, a tale fashioned out of Cobb's megalomania to embroider his already larger-than-life legend.

Or is it?

After all, 1911 wasn't the only year that Jackson finished close behind Cobb in the batting race. They also were 1-2 in 1912 and 1913. Maybe one of those years provides support for the story.

BUT AS SHOWN IN Figure 2, the 1912 season looks no more promising as support for the legend than 1911. Jackson started slowly, but in June he hit a blistering .529, raising his average from .308 to .404. As hot as Jackson was in June, Cobb was even hotter in July. He hit .535 for the month, passed the slumping Jackson on July 10 and kept the lead for the remainder of the season.

As part of his July binge, Cobb challenged his own year-old record by compiling a 34-game hitting streak, which was snapped when he went 0-for-4 against Walter Johnson on July 22. That was the only game between June 16 and August 7 in which Cobb didn't get a hit, and thus he barely missed a 50-game streak, which could have made life a little more difficult for Joe DiMaggio 29 years later.

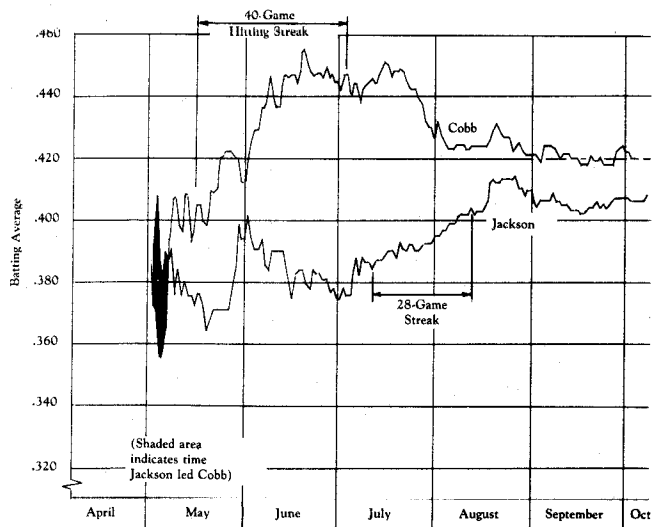
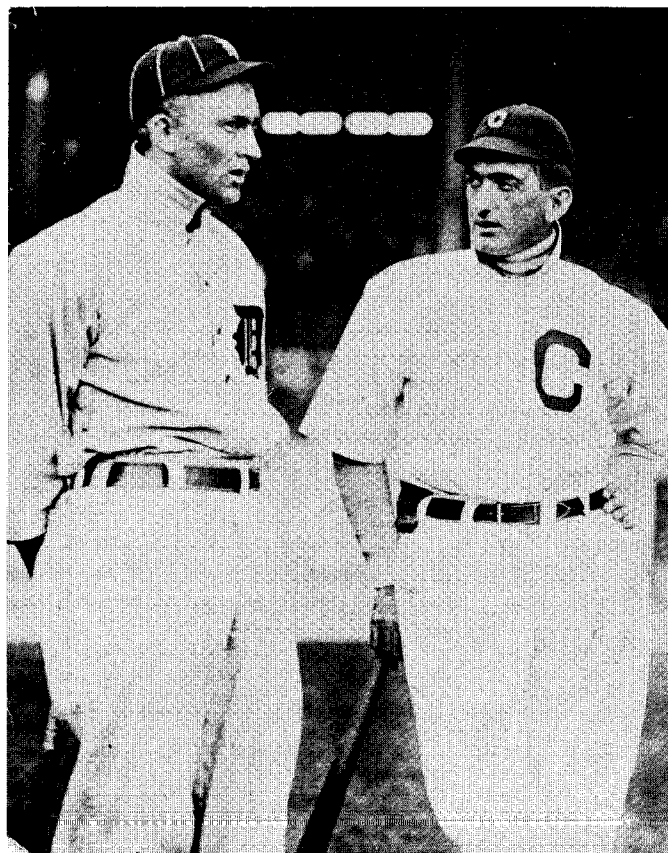


Figure 1. The 1911 Batting Race



Ty Cobb (left) and Joe Jackson

The next-to-last Detroit-Cleveland series of 1912 was played on July 1-2-3. Starting with that series, Cobb went on his July tear and Jackson fell into a slump. While at first glance this period might appear to have been the setting of Cobb's legendary trick, it seems to be much too early in the season to be a realistic candidate. Even if Cobb had had the idea that early, it seems reasonable that he would have saved it for a more propitious occasion. The only other time that 1912 might have been an appropriate setting for Cobb's ploy was during the Detroit-Cleveland series of September 24 (in Detroit) and September 26-29 (in Cleveland). But Cobb went into that series with a 21-point lead, and again it was clearly too late for Jackson to challenge him. So the 1912 records do not support Cobb's story.

A look at 1913, however, provides an entirely different — and more promising — picture. In fact, 1913 fulfills all of the important conditions of Cobb's story except the specific reference to 1911.

Figure 3 reveals that both Cobb and Jackson started the '13 season with hot bats. Jackson even had another of those .500 months, hitting .505 in May. Cobb missed the first few weeks of the season because he was holding out, but once he was back in the Tiger lineup he made opposing pitchers wish he had never settled. As June opened Cobb was batting .452 and Jackson .450.

Both hitters gradually declined from those early peaks. But Jackson was the batting leader all through the summer. Except for August 23 and 30 Jackson led every day from June 5 through September 8 — or 94 of 96 days. This prolonged period in which he was overshadowed by his principal batting rival must have been infinitely irritating to Cobb, who by this time had come to regard the batting championship as something of a personal possession. It must have been particularly galling to Cobb that, with Jackson's average slipping, he was missing good opportunities to take the lead. As the Tigers pulled into Cleveland for the start of a four-game series on September 4, it can be assumed that a brooding Cobb, still trailing Jackson by seven points, was prepared to take extreme measures to change the situation.

AND CHANGE IT DID. Cobb did not hit particularly well during the Cleveland series (which shifted to Detroit on September 6), but he hit a furious .450 the remainder of the way to raise his average from .381 to .390. On the other hand Jackson skidded into a miserable

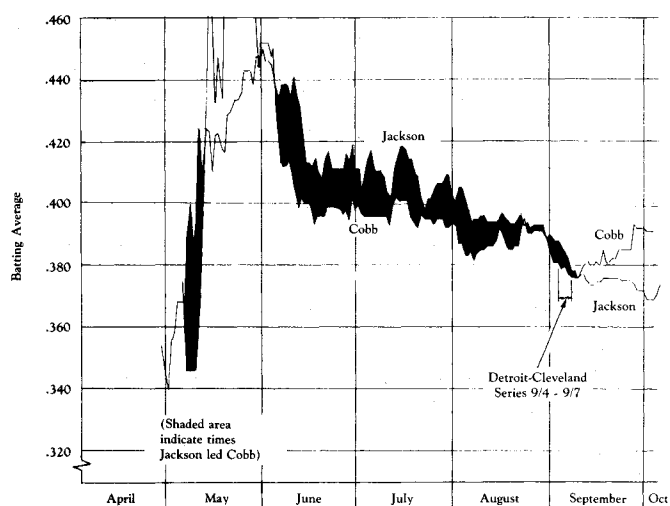


Figure 3. The 1913 Batting Race

slump. From September 4 to October 1 he hit only .256 (compared to .365 during the previous month) as his average slipped from .388 to .369. During and just after the Detroit series he was at his worst, hitting only .194 over a ten-game stretch. Jackson no doubt gained some satisfaction by going 5-for-6 in his final two games (October 4-5) and raising his season mark to .373, but by then the batting championship had been irretrievably lost.

But the question remains: Did Ty Cobb really snub Joe Jackson and thereby win a batting championship? The answer to that question must not only consider the facts, but must also take into account that establishing a cause-and-effect relationship in this kind of a situation is difficult if not impossible. There might have been, after all, other reasons for Cobb's late surge and Jackson's late slump in 1913. What can be said, however, is that if Cobb did snub Jackson, he did it not in 1911 but during that four-game series in early September 1913, and that the results appear to have been as effective as he claimed.

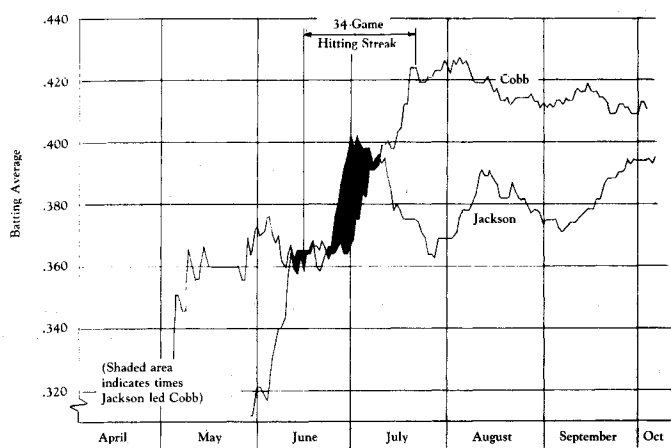
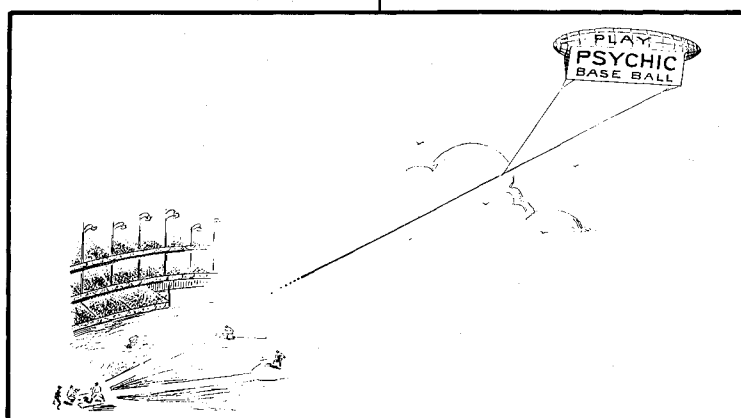


Figure 2. The 1912 Batting Race



Protested Games Cause of Muddled Records

RAYMOND J. GONZALEZ

Statistics of a disputed 1932 Yankees-Tigers contest haven't been completely rectified. Two other Yankee games also figure in discrepancies.

THE POSITION OF league president is a sinecure. All he has to do is preside over league meetings, make some public appearances, approve player contracts, handle other routine duties and attend games. Nothing to it. At least that is what many fans doubtless believe.

But what about protests of games? They can present extremely sticky situations, especially when they involve a powerful organization such as the New York Yankees. Just ask Lee MacPhail. The famous George Brett pine-tar incident will forever remain vividly etched in his memory.

An earlier American League president, William Harridge, was called upon to rule on three protested games involving the Yankees. In two instances he sided with the opposing team. One can imagine the reactions of the New York club's management. On the other occasion he ruled in the Yankees' favor. All three protests, especially the first, resulted in unusual ramifications affecting baseball's records. Some publications still count the three games as ties and credit the Yankees with having played 85 tie games in their 83-year history when they actually have had only 82.

The first of the three protested games led by far to the most confusion among the sport's record-keepers. Even today the achievement of one Hall of Famer is listed incorrectly because of a mixup dating back to that contest.

The disputed game took place in Detroit on August 1, 1932. The Yankees that season were en route to their first of eight pennants under manager Joe McCarthy. Earl Whitehill started on the mound for the Tigers against Danny MacFayden. Although Tony Lazzeri had batted No. 5 and Ben Chapman sixth for some time, the Yankees' official lineup this day had them reversed. Nevertheless in the second inning Lazzeri went to the plate as New York's fifth batter and, suspecting something was amiss, asked umpire Dick Nallin whose turn it was. Told

the lineup card showed Chapman should be up, Lazzeri claimed a mistake had been made, and McCarthy was summoned from the dugout. He explained he had erred in filling out the lineup card and asked Nallin to permit him to switch the two names. The umpire consented.

When Lazzeri proceeded to single, Detroit manager Bucky Harris rushed onto the field. He contended Lazzeri should be out for batting out of turn. Nallin disagreed, holding that a change could be made in the batting order if it was followed throughout the game. Harris then announced he was playing the contest under protest. When the Yankees went on to win, 6-3, the protest wound up on Harridge's desk.

Several weeks later the A.L. president ruled in favor of Detroit, pointing out that Nallin had no right to approve a change in the official lineup. Harridge ordered the game played over in its entirety. The replay, set up as part of a September 8 doubleheader, ended in a 7-7 tie because of darkness, but Detroit posted a 4-1 victory when the game was played over the next day.

Record-keepers at the Howe News Bureau, the league's official statistician at the time, entered all of the figures from the August 1 protested game on the individual player sheets. So far so good. But in tallying up the players' statistics at the end of the season the Howe statisticians did not credit any of the the 23 players who participated in the contest with a game played although they did count their at-bats, hits, innings pitched, etc., from the game, including a victory for MacFayden and a defeat for Whitehill. The team records were handled in similar fashion.

As a consequence, the official 1932 American League averages issued by Howe and published in the Baseball Guides show Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig with 132 and 155 games played, respectively, when in reality they appeared in 133 and 156 contests. It wasn't until four years later — during the winter of 1936-37 — that this nonsensical situation was rectified, at least in part, by crediting Ruth,

Gehrig and several others with an additional game.

Ironically, compilers of the initial edition of *The Baseball Encyclopedia* became caught in the same trap. In looking over the Guides or the official player sheets, they picked up the original incorrect game totals. The upshot was that the first (1969) issue of the publication showed Gehrig, for instance, with 155 games in 1932 and a career total of 2,163 — rather than 2,164. This in effect also trimmed The Iron Horse's consecutive-game streak of 2,130 by one. Fortunately, the games totals of Ruth, Gehrig, Charlie Gehringer, Gee Walker and the three pitchers — MacFayden, Whitehill and Whit Wyatt — were corrected before the second edition of *The Baseball Encyclopedia* appeared, but the most recent edition still has the wrong games totals for the 16 other players.

The confusion arising from the August 1, 1932 protested game also is reflected in another way in some current record books. Because of the mixup they give an erroneous figure for a notable accomplishment. Gehringer, one of two players to own a pair of streaks of 500 or more consecutive games, is shown with skeins of 511 and 504 contests. Actually the latter streak covered 505 contests, counting the protested game. The iron-man skein began June 25, 1932 and extended through August 11, 1935.

THE NEXT PROTESTED Yankee game occurred on August 6, 1937. It was played in Yankee Stadium with Cleveland providing the opposition. Bob Feller went into the bottom of the ninth inning with a 5-2 lead, but New York rallied to knot the score. In the tenth Hal Trosky, tagged reliever Johnny Murphy for a homer to give the Indians a 6-5 edge.

Myril Hoag led off the New York tenth with a single. After Arndt Jorgens was sent up to pinch-hit for Murphy, Cleveland manager Steve O'Neill pulled Feller in favor of Joe Heving. Jack Saltzgaver then replaced Jorgens as the Yankee hitter. After failing twice to sacrifice, Saltzgaver singled sharply to right field, moving Hoag to second base. Frank Crosetti followed with a sacrifice to advance both runners. Red Rolfe, next up, was called out on a controversial third strike for the second out.

The Yankees' hopes now rested with Joe DiMaggio, who was 0-for-2 with three walks. He ran the count to 3-2 against Heving before lining a drive toward third baseman Odell Hale. The sharply hit ball caromed off his glove and sailed down the line, rolling into foul territory in left field for an apparent game-winning two-run double.

However, plate umpire Charlie Johnston signaled foul ball. This brought McCarthy racing from the dugout. After arguing briefly, the Yankee manager induced Johnston to consult with third base umpire George Moriarty.

Informed by Moriarty that the ball had struck Hale's glove — a fact the plate umpire apparently had not seen because the batter blocked his vision — and that the Cleveland third baseman was three feet in fair territory at the time, Johnston reversed himself and ruled the DiMaggio drive a fair ball, giving New York a 7-6 victory.

Now it was O'Neill's turn to storm at the umpires. He charged that Johnston's original call and gestures indicating the ball was foul caused left fielder Moose Solters to slow his pursuit and thereby deprived the Indians of a possible chance to cut down the winning run at the plate. When his argument proved fruitless, the Cleveland skipper filed an official protest with the league office. Harridge subsequently upheld the claim and ordered the game replayed on September 15 as part of a doubleheader.

The Yankees themselves did the protesting in the last of the three disputed games — and emerged victorious. Following four successive world championships, the Bronx Bombers found themselves struggling in June of 1940. When they took the field at Comiskey Park on June 20, they were in the throes of a losing streak which reached five that day, with three of the defeats coming in Chicago. Tempers among the Yankees personnel understandably were getting shorter and shorter.

Monte Pearson opened on the mound for New York that afternoon against Johnny Rigney. The pair hooked up in a brilliant duel. In the second inning Bill Dickey lofted a long foul fly to left field. Moose Solters, a central figure in the earlier protested contest, raced over and gloved the ball. As he grabbed it, his cap fell off, and in reaching for the headgear he dropped the ball, but umpire John Quinn ruled he had made a legal catch. McCarthy came steaming onto the field to dispute the call but to no avail. He subsequently protested the game.

Meantime, with Rigney tossing a five-hitter and extending the Yankees' runless streak to 20 innings, the game remained scoreless going into the bottom of the eleventh. Pearson, who had permitted nine hits up to that point, saw Mike Tresh lead off the eleventh with a single. After Rigney sacrificed, Bob Kennedy singled Tresh across for Chicago's second successive 1-0 victory.

Unfortunately for the White Sox, league president Harridge ruled in favor of the Yankees' protest. He held that Quinn's contention that Solters dropped the ball in the act of throwing was not supported by the three other umpires. Although no pitcher was given a victory or defeat in the 1937 Yankee-Cleveland protested game, Rigney was credited with a win and Pearson tagged with a loss in the 1940 game. As a result that year's averages listed Rigney with a 15-18 record and Pearson with 7-6. It wasn't until several years later that record books corrected their records to 14-18 and 7-5, respectively.

Honest John Kelly — He Was One of a Kind

JAMES D. SMITH III

After a brief trial as a player, he was an outstanding umpire in the 1880s, then managed Louisville for one season before becoming a renowned boxing referee and gambler.

“HONEST JOHN” KELLY would have liked it that way. His passing in 1926 was front-page news in the *New York Times* and *Herald Tribune*. A solemn mass was said at St. Fidelis Church in College Point, Queens, and he was buried at Mt. St. Mary’s cemetery. He was placed in the family crypt of his long-time friend Michael Sheedy, in whose home he breathed his last. Those he left behind could still envision the five-story brownstone on West 44th Street, just off Broadway where Honest John made his stand as the last of New York’s big gaming-house proprietors. A few could remember him in the city’s meaner streets, where he began the pursuit of his boyhood dream of playing baseball.

John O. Kelly was born in New York City on (most likely) October 31, 1856 to Michael and Sarah O’Donnell Kelly, Irish immigrants. Little is known of his younger years. Clear, however, are his early athletic prowess and intense desire to better his lot. He played sandlot ball with the New York Eagles in 1871-73 and moved over to the Flyaways in 1874-75. He was in poor health for part of the latter season, but forged a lasting friendship with young Charley Murphy, who would later use his political clout to Kelly’s advantage.

In 1876 Kelly was recruited by an upstate team, the Binghamton Crickets. A sturdy six-footer, he became a regular behind the plate, catching Will White that season. The following two seasons he played for the Manchester (N.H.) club in the newly-formed International Association. In May 1878 Kelly demonstrated his verbal skills as well as his catching talents. Becoming too outspoken in a 2-0 loss to Harvard College, he was fined \$5 by umpire Gideon White for “bullying” him and using “profane and abusive language.” He soon became known as “Kick Kelly” around the league and began to attract attention.

By 1879 Kelly was in the National League, appearing in 16 games as a reserve for the Syracuse and Troy teams. His weakness as a hitter, long a difficulty, became glaringly

apparent when he batted a mere .155. Moreover, despite his robust appearance, he was injury prone. Turns at first base did not seem to help. There emerged one shining option: Commanding in appearance, dignified in countenance, fearless in manner, seasoned by play and resonant in voice, Kelly became a career umpire at age 23 in 1880.

Over the next decade Kelly gained recognition, along with Tom Lynch and John Gaffney, as one of the great umpires of the era. He was known initially as “Diamond John” and later as “Honest John.” The records indicate that he began filling in as a National League umpire in 1880 and started work in the American Association in its initial 1882 campaign. It was in the latter circuit that he gained his greatest prominence.

In an 1882 National League game Kelly appeared at the park in Providence nattily attired in pantaloons, a vivid blue shirt and large suspenders — and was ordered off the field. The Association, however, was a bit more open. In 1883 a Philadelphia crowd gave Kelly, who in keeping with custom was the solitary umpire, an ovation when he ordered a “crank” (fan) to be hauled off by the police for loudly protesting the arbiter’s calls. In June of that year an attack on his skills by St. Louis owner Chris von der Ahe, who hired a train to bring in Charlie Daniels as replacement for the next game, only added to Kelly’s renown.

His reputation was borne out during the wild 1884 season. John Kelly was a regular umpire in both the National League and the rival American Association. Notwithstanding possible confusion with James D. Kelley and Philadelphia’s Joseph Kelley, both free-lance umps, there is evidence that Honest John called games in the ill-fated Union Association as well. When von der Ahe’s American Association Browns and Henry Lucas’ Union Association Maroons agreed to a seven-game series for the championship of St. Louis, the one umpire they wanted was Kelly. By season’s end his health was broken. An October post-game fight started and won by tough Dude Esterbrook of the Mets, who received a black eye, had not

helped. But Kelly had become a celebrity, and he savored it.

In 1885, following another year of working in both the National League and American Association, Kelly was selected to umpire the "world championship series" between Chicago and St. Louis. He was accorded the same honor the following season when, in addition to the usual single-umpire system, a two-game experiment was conducted with a pair of umpires plus a referee — Kelly — for appeals. He had reached the top, and it was time for less trouble, better pay and a new challenge: In 1887 John Kelly became, at age 30 and for just one season, a major league manager.

THE LOUISVILLE ECLIPSE of the American Association presented precisely the challenge that Kelly was seeking. Under easy-going Jim Hart, a team that included Pete Browning, Guy Hecker and Toad Ramsey had become a consistent loser. Drunkenness was rampant, but throughout the season newspaper accounts chronicled the discipline and aggressiveness of "Smiling John" Kelly, who whipped the Louisville boys into shape.

Kelly introduced the "Hurrah" plan with players sprinting to and from position even at practice. Less successfully he had pitchers handle a two-pound iron ball for 30 minutes in practice to develop their strength, speed and control (but not their curve, he admitted). He actively coached with signs from the players' bench and advocated a rules change to allow managers to coach their men in the field, thus eliminating the edge enjoyed by player-managers such as Charlie Comiskey.

When his men needed an inspiration, the still-fit Kelly donned a uniform and practiced with the team, assuming a player-manager posture. He gave the appearance of a "handsome young giant whose habits were as a lady's." His mother, however, was averse to his playing real baseball and his wife of six years warned that he would have his fingers broken or "be clubbed to death by the umpire." His early press opened: "John Kelly was one of the most successful umpires that ever stood up behind the catcher and from the way he is starting in the season with his club he will be as great a manager as he was an umpire." By August, club president Zach Phelps proclaimed Kelly the best manager Louisville ever had. Perhaps that was the kiss of death.

After leading the Eclipse to a strong 76-60 showing in 1887, Kelly was gone the next spring. His determination to have "a championship club here [Louisville] next year if hustling and hard work can do it" was countered by management charges that he was unjustly severe. He was replaced by Jack Kerins, the player who, called in from the left-field clubhouse on a steamy July afternoon in '87,

had put down his dime novel and absent-mindedly jogged toward the bench in his underwear before "Chicken" Wolf got his attention. Under Kerins and owner Mordecai Davidson, Louisville had a 48-87 record in 1888.

Kelly made a triumphant return to umpiring in 1888. On his first appearance at the Polo Grounds admirers presented him with a diamond badge and a bouquet of flowers. Despite the warm welcomes Kelly was bitter. Never a totally straight arrow, he began to drink more, notably with the alcoholic Mike "King" Kelly. The "two Kels" discussed starting an establishment at Sixth Avenue and 31st Street in New York City, but it never materialized. John had umpired in his third World Series in 1887 — after managing Louisville during the regular season — and now was asked to serve in his fourth in 1888 under the double-umpire system he had advocated years earlier.

By the 1889 season Kelly's attention was wandering, and the World Series assignments went to Gaffney and Lynch, with Bob Ferguson as an alternate. The Players League was successful in securing Kelly for a time in 1890, but he refused an invitation to umpire in the American Association the following season. His decade as one of baseball's best and most celebrated umpires was over.

Increasingly Kelly was broadening his interests as a sportsman and entrepreneur. In March 1890 he was high bidder for exclusive refreshment rights at the Louisville ballpark. By June the *Boston Globe* noted that the ex-umpire won \$1,000 on the horses. He returned to baseball as manager of Mobile of the Southern League in 1892, and that stint served as a springboard for an October baseball trip to Havana.

His renown opened social doors in New York City, where he became a regular at Koster & Bial's Music Hall on 23rd Street near Sixth Avenue, a theater frequented by young Jacob Ruppert, gambling-house king Richard Cantfield, racehorse owners Frank and Phil Dwyer, Diamond Jim Brady and others — all free spenders and sportsmen. Kelly soon was ready for the challenge that placed him in the spotlight of the boxing ring.

During the 1890s Honest John refereed three championship title fights. The first featured "Gentleman Jim" Corbett's disputed third-round kayo of Englishman Charley Mitchell at the Duval Athletic Club in Jacksonville, Fla., on January 24, 1894. Two years later — on October 27, 1896 — Kelly was in the ring when lightweight Kid Lavigne won a TKO in the twenty-fourth round over Jack Everhardt at the Bohemian Sporting Club in New York City. And he was the third man in as Frank Erme took the lightweight crown from Lavigne at the Hawthorne Athletic Club in Buffalo on July 3, 1899.

The *National Police Gazette* of June 8, 1907 listed Kelly and baseball umpire-boxing referee Tim Hurst among the

great fight referees. But Kelly was not one of the really great ones, many say, because of his bad fortune with the Corbett-Mitchell battle and, more memorably, the ninth-round Corbett-Tom Sharkey fiasco of November 22, 1898 at the Lenox Athletic Club in New York City. Kelly awarded that decision to Sharkey when Corbett's second entered the ring, and he called all bets off. This led to speculation that Kelly himself had bet on the fight, something which would be unacceptable, of course, for a referee but which underlined a significant fact: By the turn of the century, Honest John Kelly's main interest in life was gambling. After the Corbett-Sharkey bout, he worked few important fights.

In the late 1890s Kelly embarked on his career as a gambler in New York City. He opened a house at 141 West 41st Street and conducted business there for years in the face of growing police opposition and numerous raids. A disastrous flier on Wall Street as a broker in 1901 left him bankrupt (25 cents on the dollar), but he battled back on the strength of his skill and reputation. It was a happy circumstance also that his old baseball buddy, Charley Murphy, was boss of Tammany Hall from 1903 to 1924. By 1915 Kelly's original house was dismantled, although it was kept as a residence for some time after the opening of his town house at 156 West 44th Street.

Honest John Kelly's 44th Street mansion was the last of the big New York gaming houses. As inheritor of Canfield's mantle, he catered to the "old-time gambler, the man-about-town who was wealthy enough to stake a grand" on a roll evening after evening. For his customers' pleasure Kelly maintained an elaborate music room in his mansion and became a confirmed "first-nighter." The surroundings were plush and pretentious. In his later years, however, Kelly witnessed a transition in big-city gamblers from the affluent "sport" to the wage-earning "victim." The wheel with a brake and the rigged fare box were becoming standard equipment in gambling dens.

THROUGH IT ALL, the old umpire maintained his reputation for fairness, nerve and forceful handling of difficult situations. When asked where he got his nickname, he once responded: "That goes back to the days when I was a ballplayer, before I got into the gambling game, because it was the most exciting one I could find. . . . It was 1888, and while I was umpiring the final Boston-Providence series, on which a pennant depended, a hint was slipped to me that it would be worth \$10,000 to shade decisions for Boston — and I told the middleman he'd need a new set of teeth if he talked any more on that line. Nick Young, president of the league, heard about it and gave me the nickname 'Honest John,' which stuck because I kept on living up to it. No man can ever say he

was given anything but a square deal in one of my houses."

The preceding quotation, which appeared in Kelly's obituary, cannot be correct in detail. The moral of the story, however, is unmistakable and Kelly's public image in the early 1900s remained untarnished. A wide variety of news accounts chronicle the career of one whose nickname, according to the January 20, 1922 *New York Times*, "carried no satirical significance and whose word has been compared to national banks." This was in contrast to the **other** "Honest John" Kelly, an early successor to "Boss" Tweed.

Without a doubt his connection with Charley Murphy helped Kelly back on his feet after bankruptcy. Yet many saw repeated police raids and splintered good deeds as evidence of his principled refusal to buy or otherwise arrange police protection for an "honest house."

When Commissioner Enright took office in New York City, he instituted a 24-hour stakeout of Honest John's mansion which lasted for four years (eventually the man in blue stationed at the door became a tourist attraction)! Finally, in January 1922 Kelly quit his famous townhouse adjacent to the old Hotel Claridge and sublet his space to the Active Republican Club, which was political in season but mainly social (the club was raided in December 1922, with Honest John hailed in as well). Kelly's main focus in recent years had been real estate, with resort interests in the Bahamas — "Bimini would be a great place to invest in if prohibition were ever enforced in this country" — combined with stock and other speculations in the States. His love of the racetrack, fueled during his Louisville days, was lifelong. So was his love of a good fight, whether as a bookmaker or a participant in an amateur scuffle (he knocked out an antagonistic John McGraw in 1908). By 1922 Honest John's townhouse had become not so much a public establishment as a landmark gathering place for old friends and insiders to ante into a small game of poker.

In the autumn of 1925 Kelly contracted pneumonia. After a period at Fifth Avenue Hospital, he was moved to the home of his old friend Michael Sheedy on North Drive in Malba, Queens. He resided there until his death on March 27, 1926. He was surrounded by his only child, daughter Sadie, and his ex-wife who, for years prior to their divorce in 1919, had found him a most difficult man to live with. However, with a sporting career touching six decades, Honest John Kelly "had a host of friends in and out of the sporting fraternity and was respected as a man by many citizens who thought only evil of professional gamblers as a class." In a city not easily impressed — on the diamond, in the ring and at the tables — Honest John Kelly had long ago mastered the art of standing out in the crowd.

Early Big Time Teams Left Milwaukee Bitter

ED COEN

The city was a member of three different major leagues in the nineteenth century — for one season or less each time — and then the American League dropped the Brewtown after the 1901 season.

MOST FANS KNOW THE history of the Milwaukee Braves and the present Milwaukee Brewers. In this article the four other Milwaukee major league teams — the 1878 National League Grays, the 1884 Union Association Grays, the 1891 American Association Brewers and the 1901 American League Brewers — will be examined.

The National League operated with only six teams in 1878. One of them was a brand new Milwaukee club. Milwaukeeans believed in the spring that their new team would be among the leaders.

The season opened in Cincinnati on May 1. In the first-ever major league contest by a Milwaukee team, the Grays, so-called because of their gray uniforms, dropped a 6-4 decision to the Cincinnati Reds. The starting lineup was: Johnny Peters, 2b; Bill Holbert, rf; Charlie Bennett, c; Abner Dalrymple, lf; George Creamer, cf; Billy Redmond, ss; Will Foley, 3b; Jake Goodman, 1b; Sam Weaver, p.

Jack Chapman was the manager. Of the Milwaukee starters Dalrymple, who played with the great Chicago White Stocking teams of the 1880s, and Bennett, who caught 15 years, mostly with Detroit and Boston, went on to the greatest prominence. (Incidentally, an earlier park located on the site now occupied by Tiger Stadium was named after Bennett for a few years.) The Grays won their first game on May 9, a 2-1 one-hitter by Sam Weaver at Indianapolis.

The Grays played the initial major league game in Milwaukee on May 14 in Athletic Park at 10th and Clyborn Streets in downtown Milwaukee. The park held 4,000 fans, 500 of whom could sit in the grandstand. They won their first two home games, 8-5 and 12-8, over the first-place Cincinnati Reds.

This, however, proved to be the high point of the season because the Grays began to show that they weren't as good as everyone thought they were. The fans' optimism vanished the following week when, after a 6-5 loss

to the Indianapolis Hoosiers, a *Milwaukee Sentinel* writer wrote: "The heaviest-hitting nine in the country (see enthusiastic *Milwaukee Sentinel* last week) got into 'The Only Nolan' [Indianapolis' ace pitcher] yesterday for two sickly little base hits." Then to compound things both catchers, Bill Holbert and Charlie Bennett, were injured. Players who lacked the experience and the skills were forced to go behind the plate.

On July 2 there was good news on two fronts. W.P. Rodgers agreed to buy the financially troubled club, ending speculation that the Grays might not finish the season. Also, Charlie Bennett finally recovered and was ready to catch. All seemed well and optimism returned, but hopes were again quickly dashed. The Grays dropped their next 11 games to complete a 15-game losing streak before beating Providence twice in succession on July 26-27. By the middle of July they were playing so poorly that the *Sentinel*, which had previously printed box scores and stories about each game, stopped covering most of the games and only the final scores appeared.

On August 31 the players refused to take the field to play Indianapolis because they had not been paid. After a delay, they finally agreed to play, but lost, 9-0. They eventually were paid and finished out the season. The Grays wound up in last place with a 15-45 record, 26 games behind the pennant-winning Boston Red Stockings. The debut of major league baseball in Milwaukee was hardly encouraging, and in 1879 the Grays became a minor league team.

The year 1884 was one of the most turbulent in the history of baseball, mostly due to the Union Association, which Henry Lucas formed and which lasted only that one season. Except for two weeks in August when there were seven teams, the Union Association operated with eight franchises, but Lucas had to continually recruit new teams to replace those that disbanded.

This explains how a team could play only 12 games as the 1884 Milwaukee Grays did. Actually, they started the

season in the Northwest League, a minor circuit made up of cities in the upper Midwest. (For more information on the Northwest League of 1884, see Stew Thornley's article, "The St. Paul Unions, Minnesota's First Fling in the Majors," in the 1980 *Baseball Research Journal*.)

When the league collapsed on September 7, two teams, Milwaukee and St. Paul, survived. Meanwhile, Lucas had some problems of his own. The UA team in Wilmington, Del., had only won two of its 18 games and was struggling financially. Seeking to increase the credibility of his new league and looking ahead to 1885, he decided to search for a more competitive team in a larger city. Milwaukee and St. Paul were both good candidates.

Manager Tom Loftus went to St. Louis on September 9 to strike a deal with Lucas. They decided that when Wilmington disbanded, Milwaukee would come in as a replacement. Six days later Wilmington was out and Milwaukee was in. (St. Paul also joined the UA around this time, replacing the ailing Pittsburgh club.) The Grays were scheduled to play 16 games, all at home, and were to start on September 27.

In their first UA game, in front of 1,500 fans, the Grays showed they were worthy of major league status, shutting out the Washington Nationals, 3-0. The Milwaukee lineup that day was: Tom Sexton, ss; Eddie Hogan, rf; Steve Behel, lf; Tom Griffin, 1b; Al Myers, 2b; Tom Morrissey, 3b; Cal Broughton, cf; Henry Porter, p; George Bignal, c.

Of the 12 players who played for Milwaukee in the UA, the only ones who distinguished themselves later on were Porter, who pitched a no-hitter in 1888; Lady Baldwin, another pitcher who won 47 games for Detroit in 1886, and Myers, who played regularly at second base for several National League clubs until 1891.

ED CUSHMAN PUT HIS name in the record books the very next day when he no-hit the Nationals, 5-0. "We'll catch fits when we get back to Washington," said Washington manager Mike Scanlon. "They have no idea what a strong club you have here." Milwaukee won the series, three games to one.

The next week the Boston Beaneaters came to town and split four games with the Grays. Cushman pitched a 2-0 shutout on October 4, and the following day a very respectable crowd (2,500) showed up and saw Boston win, 3-1. Then Baltimore came in and the Grays beat them three times out of four. The final series against St. Paul was canceled and thus a 5-2 win in Baltimore on October 12 turned out to be the Grays' last game.

Milwaukee's final record was 8-4. All 12 games were played in Wright Street Grounds on the north side.

The Grays were optimistically looking forward to 1885.

This optimism proved to be misplaced, however, when Lucas' champion St. Louis Maroons, one of the few teams to make money, abandoned the UA to enter the National League and the other UA teams folded. Milwaukee returned to the minors once again, joining the Western League, and stayed there until 1891.

Because of a dispute over the assignment of players from the defunct Players League, the American Association was at war with the National League in 1891. The AA was no longer the league it had been. Between 1887 and 1890 four AA teams had left to join the National League. The Cincinnati AA club, founded by Mike "King" Kelly in 1891 to replace the Reds, who had joined the NL one year earlier, was struggling. Cincinnati, one of the smallest cities in the major leagues, could not support two teams.

Meanwhile, back in Milwaukee a team called the Brewers and led by Charlie Cushman was in first place in the Western League. The Western League was also having financial problems. On August 10 the Brewers were contacted by the AA and asked to join. Five days later as Milwaukee, with a 59-35 record, was leading the Sioux City Indians, 4-1, in the bottom of the seventh inning, the following took place as reported by the *Sentinel*:

Manager Cushman, who had just had a secret press conference with (club) president Gilette, stepped forth and announced that he would forfeit the game to Sioux City and that the Milwaukeees had been formally elected into the American Association. No sooner had this announcement been made than the players filed into the dressing room while the spectators left the grounds, making no unusual demonstration.

The Cincinnati franchise was officially transferred to Milwaukee on August 17 and the Brewers' AA schedule was announced, starting with a game against the St. Louis Browns the very next day. After paying \$12,000 for the franchise, the Brewers opened in St. Louis on August 18 with the following lineup: Eddie Burke, cf; Bob Pettit, 2b; Howard Earl, rf; Abner Dalrymple, lf; Jimmy Canavan, ss; Jack Carney, 1b; John Grim, c; Gus Alberts, 3b; George Davies, p.

The Brewers beat the second-place Browns, 7-2. "St. Louis was amazed," according to the *Sentinel*. The majority of the players came from the Milwaukee Western League club with a few players, including Canavan and Carney, being inherited from Cincinnati. Also inherited from Cincinnati was a 43-57 record. Several of the Brewers' players went on to play regularly through the 1890s. The best were Frank Dwyer, who pitched for several years with Cincinnati and posted a career total of 176 victories, and Frank Killen, who had his best year in 1896 with Pittsburgh when he was 29-15. Abner Dalrymple finished

a stellar career in the same city in which he started it.

After the opening win, the Brewers declined during the remainder of August and the early part of September. On August 28 the management announced that it needed \$12,000 to stay in business. Milwaukee businessmen, especially brewers, came to the rescue, recognizing the publicity a major league team called the Brewers would give to the city and its No. 1 industry. The Brewers came home on September 7 from their first trip with a 5-10 record as the Brewers and 48-67 overall.

BUT WHAT A DIFFERENCE the home field made. On September 10, the Brewers played their first major league game in Milwaukee against the last-place Washington Nationals. Their home was Athletic Park on 8th and Chambers Streets. The park was later renamed Borchert Field and served as the home of the Milwaukee American Association team from 1902 to 1952. "The event," according to the *Sentinel*, "was an important one in Milwaukee baseball history as it marks . . . the exclusion of minor league baseball for the major league article." On the field it was also a unique game, the Brewers winning, 30-3. Seven different players had at least three hits for a total of 24 hits. The Nationals' pitchers gave up 13 walks and hit three batters.

Milwaukee went on to win 16 of its final 21 games, all at home. Killen had the best individual record among Milwaukee pitchers with a 7-4 record. Offensively, short-stop George Shoch hit .315 and Dalrymple closed out his career with a .311 batting average.

Things looked bright on October 4 when the Brewers beat Columbus, 8-4, to finish the season. The club's final record was 64-72, good for fifth place, but as the Milwaukee Brewers they were 21-15, including 16-5 at Athletic Park. However, when peace talks between the American Association and the National League were completed the following winter, Milwaukee was once again left out in the cold.

Milwaukee resumed fielding a minor league team, joining the Western League in 1892. In 1900 the circuit was renamed the American League, and the following year league president Ban Johnson fulfilled a longtime dream by making the circuit a major league.

The Brewers had been a strong club in 1900, finishing second under manager Connie Mack. Unfortunately, when the league was upgraded to major league status the following year, the Brewers were left behind by the more free-spending clubs, which had raided the National League for talent. Only five Brewer players had played in the majors in 1900.

When the season opened on April 25, the Brewers were hailed as a team with a strong pitching staff and speedy

baserunners. The Brewers started well, leading 13-4 after eight innings. Shades of things to come developed when the Detroit Tigers rallied for ten runs to win, 14-13. Here is Milwaukee's opening-day lineup: Irv Waldron, rf; Billy Gilbert, 2b; Bill Hallman, lf; John Anderson, 1b; Wid Conroy, ss; Hugh Duffy, cf; Jimmy Burke, 3b; Tom Leahy, c; Pink Hawley, p.

Of these Hawley and Duffy were the best known. Hawley had been a dependable pitcher for nine years with several National League clubs and, along with pitcher Ned Garvin, was considered the Brewers' most important acquisition from the NL. Hawley, however, suffered from an illness at mid-season and never played in the major leagues again. Duffy, 34 at the time, was the manager. He was at the tailend of a brilliant career during which he compiled a .328 lifetime batting average.

The Brewers continued to lose games in the late innings. They led at one point in each of their first five games, but lost all of them. Their first game in Milwaukee came on May 1 when they lost, 11-3, to the Chicago White Stockings at Milwaukee Baseball Park on 16th and Lloyd Streets. Following another 11-3 defeat, a disappointed *Sentinel* writer wrote: "Milwaukee's ball players put up the worst game ever witnessed in this city yesterday against the Chicagos and during the first three innings made errors so ludicrous in character and without limit that the spectators became hilarious and treated the game as a joke."

Things only got worse as the team was 7-18 during June and 11-18 in August, a month in which all but five games were at home. After a 4-13 trip, manager Duffy blasted the ownership for not being willing to spend money for some good players and said the present team could not compete.

On September 28 the Brewers lost to Boston, 10-9, to end the season at 48-89. "Baseball at an end here," said the September 30 *Sentinel*. "The American League season finish is not regretted in Milwaukee." The fans might have regretted it, however, if they had known that soon afterward the Brewers would be transferred to St. Louis and that Milwaukee would not have a major league team for the next 52 years.

These four early Milwaukee teams compiled a combined 92-153 record for a .376 percentage. More than half of these games were played by the 1901 team. Ironically, 92 was the exact total won by the 1953 Braves, Milwaukee's next major league entry. Two last-place teams and two that didn't even play a full season were hardly an impressive beginning. In spite of its humble beginnings Milwaukee, like a self-made millionaire from the wrong side of the tracks, eventually managed to become a very successful baseball city.

Pitching Triple Crown Sign of Real Good'un

MARTIN C. BABICZ

When Dwight Gooden led the N.L. in victories, strikeouts and ERA in 1985, it was the 28th time a pitcher gained three-way hill honors. Grover Alexander turned the trick four times.

MUCH ATTENTION IS GIVEN TO batters who win their league's triple crown. These are players whose dominance is such that they lead their league in three important statistical categories: home runs, batting average and runs batted in. While those who achieve this rare distinction receive much acclaim, little notice generally is given to their counterparts, triple-crown pitchers.

A triple-crown pitcher is one who paces his league in victories, earned-run average and strikeouts. Since 1876, American and National League pitchers have achieved this distinction 28 times.

The first pitcher to lead in all three categories was Tommy Bond. He accomplished the feat in 1877, the National League's second season, while helping the Boston Red Stockings win the pennant. Bond had a record of 40 victories and 17 losses. He also paced the league with 170 strikeouts and a 2.11 ERA.

Dwight Gooden of the 1985 New York Mets is the most recent pitcher to capture the hurling triple crown. He won 24 games while losing just four, chalked up 268 strikeouts and had an ERA of 1.53.

Between Bond and Gooden, a slew of pitching greats, including Hoss Radbourne, Cy Young, Christy Mathewson, Grover Cleveland Alexander, Walter Johnson and Sandy Koufax, accomplished the feat.

Perhaps the most amazing triple-crown performance was that of Steve Carlton for the 1972 Philadelphia Phillies. The Phillies won just 59 games and finished last that season. Of the 59 Carlton won 27. He struck out 310 batters and had an ERA of 1.98.

National League pitchers are more likely to win the triple crown than American Leaguers. Not only has this distinction been achieved more often in the National League than in the American League (18 compared with 10), but it also has been 40 years since the junior circuit last boasted a triple-crown pitcher. He was Hal New-



Lefty Grove

houser of the pennant-winning 1945 Detroit Tigers. The disparity in the number of triple-crown pitchers in the two leagues is too great to be explained simply by the National League's 25-year edge in longevity.

Although National League pitchers enjoy a sizable edge in triple crowns over their American League counterparts, the ratio of triple-crown pitchers to near-triple-crown winners is almost equal in the two leagues. Only about one-fourth of the pitchers who lead their league in two of the categories are able to do so in all three. Of the near-triple-crown winners, approximately 50 percent fail to lead their league in ERA, while about

Forgotten Facts Fill Researcher's Notebook

AL KERMISCH

George Tebeau and Joe Cronin accomplished batting feats that belong in the record books. Babe Ruth's barehanded catch and the appearance of a bathrobed outfielder are recounted.

GEORGE TEBEAU HOMERED IN FIRST AT-BAT

IN THE 1978 *Baseball Research Journal* I pointed out that Mike Griffin had hit a home run in his first time at bat in the majors. He accomplished the feat for Baltimore in the first inning of the opening game of the American Association season in Baltimore on April 16, 1887. That was 11 years before pitcher Bill Duggleby homered with the bases full in his first at-bat for Philadelphia in the National League. Duggleby long had been listed in the record books as the first player to sock a home run in his initial at-bat in the majors.

Recently I discovered that Griffin will have to share the honor with George "White Wings" Tebeau, who did the same thing for Cincinnati of the same league on the same day in the opener against Cleveland at Cincinnati. And like Griffin, Tebeau delivered his homer in the first inning. With Long John Reilly on third base and Hick Carpenter on second, Tebeau smacked a terrific drive to left-center, the ball rolling to the picket fence, and turned third on his way home before the ball was picked up. The home run came off the delivery of George Pechiney, Cleveland righthander. The Reds scored five runs in the opening inning and coasted to an easy 16-6 victory behind the pitching of Tony Mullane.

BALTIMORE AND TORONTO OLD RIVALS

The emergence of the Toronto Blue Jays as one of the powers in the East Division of the American League sets up a natural rivalry with the Baltimore Orioles. Baltimore and Toronto were long-time rivals in the International League. During a ten-year period — 1917 through 1926 — either Toronto or Baltimore won the International League pennant. The Maple Leafs were winners in 1917 and 1918, the Orioles then won a record seven straight flags, and Toronto finally dethroned them in 1926.

In 1917, 42-year-old Larry Lajoie piloted the Leafs to the pennant while also leading the league in batting with

a .380 average. In 1918 Toronto, under Dan Howley, won a close race, nosing out Binghamton by a few percentage points. Ironically, Baltimore enabled Toronto to win by taking the second half of a doubleheader from Binghamton in the final game of the season at Baltimore. A victory would have given Binghamton the flag by one percentage point, but Jack Dunn's sensational rookie southpaw, Ralph Worrell, beat them, 2-1, for his twenty-fifth win. The 20-year-old Worrell, who won more games than any other pitcher in Organized Baseball that year, seemed destined to take his place with the other great youngsters developed by Dunn, but fate intervened. Worrell entered the service soon after the season ended and died of influenza in an Army camp several months later.

Howley was again at the helm when Toronto broke the Orioles' seven-year streak in 1926. Although the Birds won 101 games, the eighth year in a row they notched 100 or more victories, it wasn't enough because the Maple Leafs finished on top with 109 victories. One future Hall of Famer was in the Toronto cast that year — a young southpaw named Carl Hubbell. Carl was 7-7 for the season but was not much help in head-to-head competition with Baltimore. He appeared in five games against the Orioles and was 0-2. Toronto went on to capture the Junior World Series by winning five straight games from Louisville's American Association champions. The Maple Leafs received such great pitching from Jesse Doyle, Owen Carroll, Walter Stewart, Vic Sorrell and Clarence Fisher that Hubbell did not make an appearance in the series.

CRONIN HAD 15 HITS IN 4-GAME SPREE

In 1933, 26-year-old Joe Cronin led the Washington Senators to the American League pennant in his first year as manager. His managing had no adverse effect on his work in the field. He hit .309, drove in 118 runs and led the league in doubles with 45. He also had a total of 15 hits

in four consecutive games, but for some reason his name does not appear in the record book, which lists Buddy Lewis of the 1937 Senators and Walt Dropo of the 1952 Boston Red Sox as co-holders of the American League record of 15. Here is a compilation of Cronin's four-game spree in 1933:

		AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI
At St. Louis	— Sun., June 18*	3	1	2	0	0	0	0
At St. Louis	— Mon., June 19	6	2	5	2	0	1	5
At Chicago	— Wed., June 21	5	2	4	3	0	0	1
At Chicago	— Thurs., June 22	4	2	4	0	0	0	2
	Totals	18	7	15	5	0	1	8

* Second game of doubleheader.

BROOKS COULD HAVE DEMANDED RECOUNT

Cal Ripken, Jr., broke Brooks Robinson's Baltimore club record for consecutive games this year but not as officially announced at 464 games on May 4, 1985. Ripken didn't actually top Robinson's mark until May 27, 1985, when he played in his 484th major league game at California.

The confusion over Robinson's streak centers on the Hall of Famer's skein of 463 consecutive games at third base, which ended at Washington on August 10, 1963, when he was benched by manager Bill Hitchcock for poor hitting. However, Robinson entered the game as a pinch-hitter for pitcher Stu Miller in the eighth inning and grounded out as the Senators beat the Orioles, 6-5, in a game in which Boog Powell hit three home runs in a losing cause.

Brooks was back at his familiar third base post the next day and played another 20 games before he sat out an entire game in the second contest of a doubleheader at Boston on September 2, 1963 — the Orioles' only game in 1963 in which his name did not appear in the box score.

HECKER'S 7 RUNS IN GAME STILL SUPREME

It has been almost 100 years since Guy Hecker scored seven runs in one game for Louisville of the American Association. That record has withstood the assault of many great hitters over the years. Hecker was primarily a pitcher, but because he was a good hitter he often played first base or the outfield.

Hecker was a pitcher the day he set the record in the afternoon half of a Sunday twin-bill in Louisville against Baltimore on August 15, 1886. Dick Conway pitched for Baltimore and his brother William caught him, but the Colonels jumped all over Dick and won easily, 22-5. Hecker had six hits in seven times at bat, including three home runs and seven runs scored. Each of his home runs was of the inside-the-park variety. Besides his record of seven runs scored, his six hits in a game are also the record

for a pitcher. He also was the first major league pitcher to hit three home runs in a game, and he was the only player to hit three home runs in one contest in the 10-year history of the American Association.

PUP LED TO BABE'S BAREHAND CATCH

On Monday, August 20, 1923, a fine weekday crowd showed up at Comiskey Park, Chicago, to see Babe Ruth and the Yankees in action. It was no contest as the Yanks thumped the White Sox, 16-5.

With the game out of reach the Babe did his best to entertain the fans. In the ninth inning a pup wandered out to left field, Ruth's domain that day, and the Babe rose to the occasion. He got down on all fours to follow the dog around and then threw his glove at the animal. The pup grabbed the glove and took off with it. At the same time Paul Castner, a White Sox rookie pitcher out of Notre Dame, hit a fly ball to left field, and the Babe nonchalantly caught the ball barehanded.

Paul Gallico covered the game for the *New York Daily News* and, after describing Ruth's barehanded catch, ended his story thusly: "Four strong men were assisted from the park with hysterics."

JOHNSON'S STREAK OVERLOOKED

Fernando Valenzuela opened the 1985 season for the Los Angeles Dodgers by pitching 41 1/3 innings before giving up an earned run. This feat was announced as a major league record. But somehow the performance of Walter Johnson of the Washington Senators in 1913 has been overlooked.

Johnson began the 1913 season with 57 consecutive innings without yielding an earned run. That was the year Johnson set the major league record of 56 consecutive scoreless innings, which was broken by Don Drysdale of the Dodgers, who topped it with 58 in 1968.

Johnson launched the 1913 season with a 2-1 victory over Frank Chance's New York Yankees in the Presidential opener at Washington. The Yanks scored their lone run in the first inning and it was unearned. Bert Daniels opened the game by getting hit by a pitched ball and stole second base. Harry Wolter hit a slow hopper between first and second which first baseman Chick Gandil reached but fumbled for an error. Shortstop George McBride recovered the ball, but his throw to the plate was high and Daniels scored. Johnson then fanned both Roy Hartzell and Birdie Cree, and Hal Chase grounded out, McBride to Gandil.

Johnson followed with 56 consecutive innings before giving up a run at St. Louis on May 14. With a 6-0 lead, Johnson was touched for a run in the fourth inning when Gus Williams doubled and scored on a single by Del Pratt.

Walter then retired the next eight batters in order. With a 9-1 advantage he turned the pitching chores over to Joe Boehling as the Nats won, 10-5.

A BATHROBED FRIEND IN THE OUTFIELD

One of baseball's most amusing tales concerns the day that Detroit's Germany Schaefer played a few innings with a raincoat over his uniform. It happened in an American League game at Cleveland on July 3, 1906. The Naps beat the Tigers, 5-0, in a contest curtailed by rain in the sixth inning.

Another hilarious event involving an unusual uniform took place nine years earlier when a player took the field with a gray bathrobe wrapped over his street clothes and the only part of a baseball uniform he wore was a cap. It occurred in a National League game played in New York on August 30, 1897. Despite the fact the game was called in the bottom of the ninth inning because of darkness and reverted to the eighth inning with Chicago winning, 7-5, Cap Anson, the veteran Chicago leader, provided the 4,000 spectators with all kinds of antics before the contest was called.

It all started when Anson wanted umpire Bob Emslie to call the game after eight innings because he did not think they could finish another full inning. Emslie refused to go along with this. When Emslie called a strike on Anson while at bat in the ninth inning, Cap objected so violently that Emslie ejected him. Anson refused to allow anyone to bat for him and Emslie then declared one man out. Chicago went on to score three runs to take a 10-5 lead.

Emslie then ordered the Chicago team to hurry to the field. George Decker came in from left field to take Anson's place at first base. There still was no left fielder on the field, and the crowd waited to see who would play that position because Anson had sent all of his substitutes to the clubhouse in the eighth inning.

Suddenly a figure appeared from the Chicago dressing room; he was attired in a trailing bathrobe of light gray material, buttoned all the way down the front. All eyes were on him as he headed for left field. It was Dan Friend, the lefthanded pitcher, who had been at the grandstand entrance watching the turnstiles. He did not have a chance to change clothes when he was called into the game, and a cap was the only part of the uniform that he wore.

Now it was time for Scrapy Joyce, the manager of the Giants, to squawk. He reminded Emslie that the rules specifically stated that no one but uniformed players could take part in a game and that the game should be forfeited. The umpire ordered the New Yorks to play ball, and Walter Wilmot batted for Cy Seymour and flied out.

George Van Haltren struck out for the second out. With his club down to its final out, Joyce again rushed out to start another argument with the umpire. He once more argued that Friend had no uniform under his bathrobe and that the game should be forfeited.

"What is a uniform?" asked the umpire. "How do I decide that Friend has no uniform on? Do you want me to search him?" continued the umpire. "Go out and look," demanded Scrapy. At that point Emslie again took out his watch and was surprised to find that it was 20 minutes to seven o'clock. He looked at the rapidly-increasing darkness and called the game, with the score reverting back to 7-5.

KEYSTONE KOP DREAMED OF O.B. CAREER

Many decades have passed since the famous Keystone Kops of the silent movie era were in their glory, but on television the antics of these zany comedians can be seen from time to time. And the most visible of all is the leader of the group — Ford Sterling.

Sterling began his career in the circus and spent his early years on the stage as a comedian. He devoted a great deal of his spare time to playing baseball and was part of a group headed by Johnny Ray, another comedian whose passion was baseball and who sponsored a team of ball-playing actors.

Sterling, an infielder, had dreams of becoming a professional ball player. He received a tryout with McKeesport of the Ohio-Pennsylvania League in 1908 but was released before the season opened. In 1910 Sterling once more tried to break into pro ball. He was signed by Duluth of the Northern League but again was released just before the regular season began. Sterling wound up in California and got a job in the fledging movie business. Before long he was drawing what at the time was an unheard-of salary of \$1,200 a month as the first American comedy star in the movies.

WHO WAS PITCHER TOM SEYMOUR?

On September 23, 1882, in an American Association game at Pittsburgh, the home club started a local pitcher who was shown in the box score as "Seymour." He proceeded to absorb a 13-3 drubbing in the only game he would ever play in the majors. He is listed in *The Baseball Encyclopedia* as "Thomas Seymour, born 1858 in Pittsburgh, Pa., and died in Boise, Idaho, on February 17, 1916."

Just who the Thomas Seymour who died in Boise in 1916 was is debatable because there is strong evidence that he was not the man who pitched the one game for the Pittsburgh club in 1882. The following article from the *Pittsburgh Post* of August 2, 1897, indicates that the player



NBL

Pitcher Bert Shepard (left), who lost part of his right leg while flying a mission during World War II, adjusts the straps on his artificial limb as Washington manager Ossie Bluege looks on.

in question was really a chap named Jake Semer, who died on August 1, 1897:

"Jacob Semer, better known as Jake Seymour, died in Allegheny yesterday of Bright's disease. He was in his 43rd year. Semer was one of the strongest local pitchers some 10 or 15 years back. He pitched for various top-notch local teams in the old days, but he did his best work for the old Bon Tons. In 1882, the Pittsburgh club, then belonging to the American Association, gave Semer a trial in the box. He pitched a championship game against Louisville in the last day of the season at old Exposition Park. The Louisvilles won by a score of 13 to 3. The game was played in the morning and in the afternoon Semer went to Sewickley and pitched for the team of that place. Semer's death is deeply regretted by all who knew him. He was one of the best bartenders in Allegheny. He also served on the police force and fire department."

SHEPARD WAS POPULAR MANAGER IN 1949

Forty years ago Bert Shepard made headlines when he pitched in a major league game for the Washington Senators despite the handicap of an artificial leg. In 1946 Shepard appeared in seven games for Chattanooga in the Class AA Southern League and won two and lost two. He then returned to Walter Reed Army Hospital for another series of operations. He was in and out of the hospital for the next two and one-half years.

In 1949, finally satisfied that he could play ball again,

Shepard signed as player-manager of the Waterbury club of the Class B Colonial League. On August 4, 1949, the fourth anniversary of his major league appearance, Shepard was dismissed by the Waterbury management because it no longer could afford his yearly salary of between \$4,000 and \$4,500. Bert was so popular with his players that they threatened to go on strike if he was not rehired. Faced with ouster from Organized Baseball if they refused to play, the players voted nine to six against going on strike, but they named three of their players — Joe Consoli, Hal Winters and Bill Szabo — as a committee to try to raise money for Shepard's salary.

The players raised enough money from contributions by local merchants and others to cover Shepard's salary, and in one week he was rehired. On August 11, the Timers celebrated Shepard's return with an 11-1 win over Poughkeepsie. Waterbury finished fourth with a record of 62-63. The club owners certainly got their money's worth out of Shepard. Besides managing, he appeared in 69 games as pitcher or first baseman. He hit a respectable .229, with 30 hits in 131 times at bat, including four doubles, four home runs, 21 RBIs and *five stolen bases*. He appeared in 20 games as a pitcher and posted a 5-6 record. He started nine games and went the distance on four occasions.

BATTER DECLARED OUT ON WALK

The three-foot rule came into major league baseball in 1882, and through the years there have been many heated arguments over this rule. But within the first month that the regulation went into effect in 1882, umpire James L. Hickey's interpretation left much to be desired and may have cost Cleveland a chance for a victory in a National League game at Buffalo on May 29, 1882. Believe it or not, umpire Hickey actually called John Richmond, Cleveland outfielder, out for going outside the three-foot line while going to first base on called balls! As it turned out the decision helped the home club defeat Cleveland, 9-8.

HANDLED 32 CHANCES WITHOUT ERROR

Gus Wisser, a diminutive infielder, never made it to the majors but played in the minors for many years in the early part of the century. He advanced as high as the American Association for a short spell in 1908.

Milwaukee sold Wisser to the Fond du Lac club of the Wisconsin State League, where on August 3, 1908, he turned in a performance to remember. Oshkosh defeated Fond du Lac, 4-3, in 23 innings at Fond du Lac. Wisser was nothing less than sensational in the field for the losers. He handled an unbelievable total of 32 chances — 13 putouts and 19 assists — without an error.

Product of Sing Sing Won Public's Support

JOSEPH M. OVERFIELD

Alabama Pitts became a cause célèbre when Albany signed him in 1935. The issue: should an ex-con be permitted to play pro ball?

THE YEAR 1935 was an eventful one in baseball. In the All-Star Game at Cleveland the American League won for the third time in succession. The Tigers defeated the Cubs in the World Series to give the American League its first title since 1932. On July 7 Bill Werber of the Boston Red Sox hit four doubles in a game and became the first in his league to accomplish this feat since 1901. Vernon Kennedy of the White Sox pitched a no-hit, no-run game against Cleveland on August 31. Frank Navin, long-time president of the Detroit Tigers, died on November 13, just a week after the passing of noted ballplayer-evangelist Billy Sunday.

Full details of all of these events are recounted in the 1936 *Reach Official Baseball Guide*, which states in its foreword: "All in all, the *Reach Official Guide* is a history of baseball during the year 1935. Nothing has been omitted. From the smallest Class D league to the majors, a most complete record of their activities has been compiled."

"Nothing has been omitted." Not quite true. Nowhere in the 325-page volume is there even a mention of the most important baseball story of the year — a gripping drama in which the protagonists were a 24-year-old convicted robber named Edwin (Alabama) Pitts; Lewis E. Lawes, the progressive warden of Sing Sing Prison at Ossining, N.Y.; Johnny Evers, old-time Chicago Cub second baseman and future Hall of Famer; Judge W. G. Bramham, the austere and imperious president of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, and Kenesaw M. Landis, Commissioner of Baseball.

The opening scene of the drama was played in New York City in 1930 when Pitts, a 19-year-old Navy dropout, entered a grocery store, pushed a pistol in the manager's face and took \$76.25 from the cash register. On any list of perfect crimes, the Pitts caper will be found close to the bottom. He and a 20-year-old companion who acted as a lookout were apprehended in short order and charged

with armed robbery. In the subsequent trial, Pitts was allowed to plead guilty to second-degree robbery and was sentenced to Sing Sing Prison for "not less than eight years nor more than 16 years." The trial judge, in passing sentence, noted the defendant's minority and the absence of previous convictions. (The trial record shows the police believed Pitts had been involved in at least five other similar crimes.)

At Sing Sing Pitts became not only a model prisoner but an athlete of legendary stature, starring in baseball, football, basketball and track. He soon came under the watchful eye of Warden Lawes, who, many years ahead of his time, emphasized the rehabilitation of prisoners rather than their punishment. A well-rounded athletic program, including outside games, was an integral part of his plan. Qualified coaches were put in charge of each sport. For example, the football coach was a former Notre Dame All-American, appropriately named John Law.

By 1935, having served "five years of good time," Pitts became eligible for parole. Word of his baseball prowess (he was batting .500 for the prison team) reached the ears of Evers, general manager of the Albany Senators of the International League. Evers, as did Lawes, believed in rehabilitation. Already on his roster was Lewis (Hack) Wilson, the former Cub slugger, who had troubles, too, albeit different from those of Pitts. On May 22, 1935, with Pitts still in prison, it was announced he had signed a \$200-a-month contract with the Albany team with the approval of Warden Lawes.

The road from Sing Sing to Albany was not to be smooth. First of all, president Charles H. Knapp of the International League refused to approve the contract, and his position was then backed by president Bramham of the National Association, who said the promulgation of Pitts' contract would be "against the best interests of the game."

Reaction to the Knapp and Bramham decisions was strongly pro-Pitts. When Pitts arrived in Albany after his

release on parole from Sing Sing on June 6, an estimated 100 people were at the railroad station to greet him. The next evening at Syracuse, where the Senators were playing a night game, Pitts was introduced at home plate and was greeted by wave after wave of applause while players on both teams wished him well. In a nice touch Pitts was introduced by Matthew L. Caden, a former Syracuse chief of police. After the game in talking to the press, Pitts observed, wryly, that this was the latest he had been up in quite some time.

GENERAL MANAGER EVERS was crushed by the failure of the contract to clear, saying, "I knew of no baseball regulation that would bar Pitts." He also said the Albany club would honor Pitts' contract even if he never played a game. Mrs. Erma Pitts Rudd, the player's mother, who had met him when he left Sing Sing, wrote an impassioned plea to Bramham, begging him to change his decision. A few days later, bowing to the intense pressure, Bramham agreed to submit the question to the Association's Executive Committee, composed of Warren C. Giles, president of the Rochester club; J. Alvin Gardner, president of the Texas and Dixie Leagues, and Dan W. Hill, president of the Piedmont League.



Alabama Pitts leaving Sing Sing Prison accompanied by his mother, Mrs. Erma Pitts Rudd

Meanwhile, job offers began to roll in. Ducky Holmes, owner and manager of the Dayton club of the Middle Atlantic League, said he would defy Bramham and give Pitts a job. Two National Football League clubs, the New York Giants and the Brooklyn Dodgers, said they would give him a chance. Messages of support came from many sources. Dizzy Dean and Pepper Martin of the St. Louis Cardinals sent telegrams to president Bramham in support of Pitts. Manager Jimmy Wilson of the Phillies said he would be happy to have Pitts on his team. Added Wilson: "He has paid his debt to society and should not have to pay interest on it until he dies." Billy Kelly, sports editor of the *Buffalo Courier-Express*, wrote in his column: "Not to give Pitts a chance is un-Christian, un-American and unsportsmanlike." Within days, Kelly received scores of letters and telephone calls, all condemning Bramham for barring Pitts. In a span of just a few days, Warden Lawes received 800 communications and only two were negative on Pitts.

On June 12, after a telephone vote, the Executive Committee, to the dismay and disappointment of the general public, backed Bramham's ruling. It did, however, leave the door open for an appeal to Commissioner Landis. The *New York Times*, which had been giving daily coverage to the Pitts story, not on its sports pages but in its news section, editorialized as follows on June 13: "The decision [by the Executive Committee] was unfortunate in every way. The Association president was wrong in his assumption that the public would resent his [Pitts'] inclusion in baseball. It is more likely to resent his exclusion."

Pitts was reported in tears when news of the verdict reached him. "It was the hardest blow of my life," he said. Evers took the news equally hard and vowed to approach his friend, Governor Herbert H. Lehman of New York, to seek a full pardon for Pitts. Evers said further he would quit baseball for good if Pitts was barred. Taking note of the opening left by the Executive Committee, Evers and Albany president Joe Cambria immediately implemented an appeal to Judge Landis.

In the interim, the Pitts case became more and more a cause célèbre. Max Berger, a merchant of Otisville, N.Y., became involved in a heated argument with a customer over the Pitts case and became so exercised that he suffered a fatal heart attack. Pitts received hundreds of supporting telegrams, including one from John Costello, the store manager he had victimized in the 1930 holdup. Hal Roach, the movie producer, wired Pitts offering him a job in his studio. Howard V. Millard, sports editor of the *Decatur (Ill.) Herald-Review*, wrote that at least two other minor league players with criminal records had had their contracts approved. Millard did not name them, but said

one had played with the Decatur club, of which he (Millard) was formerly president, and the other had played in the Three-I League and then with Albany, the same team that had signed Pitts.

UPON RETROSPECT AND WITH all due credit to the admirable stance taken by the vast majority of Americans in the Pitts case, there is a certain and pointed irony in the vast outpouring of support for Pitts, a convict who had paid his debt to society and was now trying to earn a place in professional baseball. This was 1935, and there was not a single black player in Organized Baseball and had not been one for many years. It seems fair to propound the question: What would have been the reaction in the press and by the public if Pitts had been black?

As was his wont, Judge Landis acted quickly. His decision, dated June 17, 1935, included a lengthy recital of the details of the 1930 crime, followed by generous words of praise for Bramham and the Executive Committee of the Association. ("The Commissioner is in entire accord with their actions.") Then, at the very end of his decision, he did a complete about-face, adding almost as an afterthought: "Since then [the decision of the Executive Committee], however, a new situation has arisen. Conditions have been created as the result of which there cannot be much doubt as to the destructive effect upon Pitts' efforts toward rehabilitation of not permitting him to enter baseball employment." And then, in almost an apology to Bramham and the Executive Committee, he added: "This was not contemplated by, nor is it due to, the ruling of the president and the Executive Committee." He then ruled the Pitts contract should be approved, with the sole restriction that he not be permitted to play in exhibition games.

The *New York Times* responded with a front page story headed:

LANDIS RULES PITTS MAY PLAY BALL,
UNPRECEDENTED RULING,
AN EX-CONVICT CAN MAKE A LIVING
WITHOUT STIGMA

In an editorial the next day, the *Times* called Landis' decision "a generous and sensible ruling."

Pitts, of course, was overjoyed. He straightway called Warden Lawes at Sing Sing. The warden was not there, but his wife took the message and immediately transmitted the news over the prison's P. A. system, bringing roars of approval from the inmates. Evers, who had comported himself in Hall of Fame style and who had played in the famous Merkle game of September 23, 1908 and in four World Series, said the Landis decision was "the greatest thrill of my life." Before the decision was announced Evers, along with Pitts and Warden Lawes, had appeared



Alabama Pitts in an Albany uniform

on the *Kate Smith Hour* on NBC. After the decision, he appeared again on the same network. Each time he was offered remuneration; each time he refused.

Rarely had a rookie made his baseball debut under greater pressure. Pitts made his at Albany on June 23 before a crowd of 7,752. He had two singles in five at-bats against two proven Double-A (now called Triple-A) pitchers, Fred Fussell and Joe Cascarella of Jersey City. He also handled four chances in center field flawlessly. His .400 start notwithstanding, it soon became apparent that Pitts was over his head in Double-A ball. His lack of success at the plate, however, in no way diminished his popularity around the league. In his first appearance at Buffalo on July 5, he was loudly cheered, and after the game he was besieged by hordes of admirers and autograph seekers. Pitts could run; there was no question of that. On July 25 the Albany club held a track meet before its game with Buffalo. Pitts won the base-circling contest in 14.4 seconds.

Unquestionably, Pitts' performance was hurt by a series of injuries. First came a shoulder bruise that kept him on the bench for a week. Then he suffered a severely

sprained finger in misplaying a fly ball. Late in August he was laid up by a spike injury that developed into blood poisoning. Manager Al Mamaux, as well as Evers and owner Cambria, stood by Pitts in spite of all his problems. Cambria was quoted in the August 8 issue of *The Sporting News*: "Next year Pitts will be a regular with Albany." At the time Pitts was batting .225 and was having difficulties in the field.

His final statistics for 1935 showed a batting average of .233 in 43 games, with only three extra-base hits, all doubles. Despite his speed, he stole only three bases. His fielding average of .911 (with eight errors) was the league's lowest among outfielders.

ONCE THE SEASON WAS OVER Pitts turned to other activities. His manager, Mamaux, a singer of some ability, planned a vaudeville tour with Pitts, but Warden Lawes, who was personally overseeing Pitts, wisely vetoed the idea. On September 9, however, with the approval of Lawes and the New York State Parole Board, Pitts signed a contract with Bert Bell of the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League. He was to be paid \$1,500 to play in four exhibition games and four league games.

Pitts, a backfield man who played both ways, as was customary in those days, was used sparingly by the Eagles. Late in the October 13 game against the Chicago Bears, the home fans began to chant, "We want Pitts! We want Pitts!" Coach Lud Wray of the Eagles finally put the ex-Sing Sing star into the game. On the very first play he stopped the Bears' Gene Ronzani, who had broken free and appeared headed for a touchdown. Later he caught a 20-yard pass from quarterback Eddie Storm. It was the Eagles' longest gain of the day in a 39-0 defeat. On October 22, with his quota of games completed (actually, he played in two exhibition games and two league games), he was released. "We like Pitts and want him to stay and we'll keep him if he will agree to accept a salary reasonable for a man with his experience and ability," said prexy Bell. Pitts chose not to accept the cut in pay and left for his home town, Opelika, Ala., to visit family and friends. He then returned to Ossining to confer on future plans with Warden Lawes, whom he described as "my stand-pat friend."

When he reported to the Albany training camp in the spring of 1936, Pitts announced he was giving up football to devote full time to baseball. He also told reporters he had earned \$5,000 from both sports in 1935, which was not a bad stipend for those mid-Depression days. On April 10 manager Mamaux (Pitts' strong supporter, Evers, was no longer with the club) decided Pitts needed more experience and farmed him to York of the New York

Pennsylvania League, a club also owned by Cambria. He played in just 41 games for the Class A club, batting .224, with six doubles and two home runs. His fielding improved to .962.

In 1937 he caught on with Winston-Salem of the Piedmont League, where he raised his batting average to .278, but in only 23 games. He was out of Organized Baseball in 1938 and 1939, but gave it a final try in 1940 at Hickory, N.C., of the Class D Tarheel League. He was released on August 1, even though he was batting .302 and had hit 14 doubles. By now he was living in Valdese, N.C., a milling town about halfway between Asheville and Hickory. Here he had secured a job in a knitting mill, and married a co-worker (there had been an earlier marriage that failed). He played semi-pro baseball, dabbled in football and basketball, and coached the high school baseball team.

On June 6, 1941 (six years exactly from the day he had been released from Sing Sing), he was, tragically, back in the news. The headlines in the *New York Times* aptly capsulized the short and ill-starred life story of Pitts:

STABBING FATAL TO ALABAMA PITTS,
SING SING'S GREATEST ATHLETE,
LAWES LED CRUSADE TO GIVE HIS
REHABILITATION A CHANCE;
WAS FAILURE AS A HITTER

The tragedy occurred in Pitts' adopted home town of Valdese, just a few miles up the road from Hickory, where he had last played professionally. On the evening of the 6th, he had gone to a combination filling station-tavern. He tried to cut in on a dancing couple; whereupon the male partner, one Newland LeFevres of Morganton, took offense, pulled a knife and severed one of Pitts' shoulder arteries. He lived to the next day and was able to give the police a statement.

Such was the sad denouement to the drama that had begun in a New York City grocery store 11 years before. Pitts never made it in baseball or in life, but thanks to him and to Warden Lewis E. Lawes, Johnny Evers and Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, a trail was blazed that opened the way for others who had been convicted of crimes to play in Organized Baseball.

POSTSCRIPT

Newland LeFevres was tried and convicted of murder, but he was to serve only a few months before gaining an unconditional pardon from Governor Broughton of North Carolina. A review of the trial transcript, which showed that Pitts had been drinking heavily, that he had seized the girl forcibly and had raised his fist toward LeFevres, convinced the governor that there had been a miscarriage of justice.

Dickshot Swat Streak Had Hollywood Script

WILLIE RUNQUIST

The Stars' veteran outfielder dodged the bullet half a dozen times in compiling his 33-game skein to open the 1943 PCL season. During the remarkable rampage he batted .457.

JOHNNY DICKSHOT, a 33-year-old journeyman outfielder for the Hollywood Stars, began the 1943 Pacific Coast League season by hitting safely in the first 33 games. It was wartime, and everyone wearing a baseball uniform seemed to be over 30 or under 20. Why was this such a remarkable streak? Hitting skeins of 30 or more games are unusual enough to be noted under any circumstances, but the hope of matching the record of the redoubtable Joe DiMaggio, who still holds the Pacific Coast League record at an incredible 61 games, was never seriously considered. Perhaps it was the drama, for Dickshot must have dodged the bullet at least half a dozen times in his final at-bat or in extra innings to keep the streak going. Or perhaps it was the fact that the Stars were the poor country cousins in southern California at the time, always playing second fiddle to the consistently powerful Los Angeles Angels.

Hollywood began the 1943 season in a state of turmoil. Charlie Root was winding down his career and at age 44 was named playing-manager of the Stars only six weeks before the start of the season. Root was to play a unique role in maintaining Dickshot's streak, but bizarrely as a hitter rather than as a pitcher. The war had truly decimated the Stars' ranks, and Dickshot, who had played for the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1936-38, was virtually the only regular to return from a 1942 team that had staggered home in seventh place. With the help of some late-season acquisitions, the Stars managed a respectable fifth-place finish in 1943, but it was a motley assortment of overage veterans and unknown rookies that supported Dickshot through his streak.

The Stars had other problems. The crosstown Angels, supported by the Chicago Cubs, had always been among the league's front-runners and had again put together a powerful team — one that eventually would make a shambles of the pennant race by closing the season 21 games in front.

The Pacific Coast League customarily played week-long, seven-game series, starting on Tuesday and ending

with a doubleheader on Sunday. Monday was a travel day. Because of the war, all games were played in the afternoon. The Dickshot streak involved five series, two of them against the Angels — a fact that added immensely to fan interest. While the Stars opened the season with an eight-game set in San Francisco, by the time Big John got moving all of the games were played either at home or across town in the Angels' park. The Angels were creating an excitement of their own by winning 18 consecutive games while on the road and then the first two games to start the home series. It was indeed an exciting time for the fans of the Los Angeles area, and it was hard to determine which received more play from the newspapers, the Angels' 20-game winning streak or Dickshot's hitting.

Dickshot's streak began on April 18, the latest opening day in PCL history in concession to the war. The Stars lost to the San Francisco Seals in Seals Stadium, 7-5, with Dickshot getting a single in four trips. During the next seven games he pounded out 15 hits. Even though he and several other players were hitting rather well at this point, the media seemed more interested in the fact that the wartime ball was "dead" as compared to the baseballs used in previous seasons.

The Stars returned to Gilmore Field on April 27 to start a 21-game homestand against the Angels and, incidentally, launch the latter's record-breaking win streak. The Angels won five in a row before the second game of the Sunday doubleheader was called in the fifth inning with the score tied 1-all. Dickshot hit safely in every game, with 14 hits overall, and closed the second week of the season with a .492 average. He managed to sock a home run in his last at-bat in the fourth inning of the shortened tie game to maintain the streak. Johnny had now hit safely in 15 consecutive games, but there had not been a single mention of this in the local news accounts!

San Diego and Sacramento came to Gilmore Field for the next two series. Neither club was very strong. The Padres finished the season in seventh place, 40 games off

the pace, while the Solons, possibly the weakest team in Pacific Coast League history, were dead last, 47 games behind league-leading Los Angeles.

DICKSHOT BEGAN THE third week inauspiciously. He did get one hit in four at-bats in the first game, but with the score tied and the potential winning run on base in the ninth inning, he popped up. The Stars won anyway, thanks to a triple by 40-year-old Babe Herman.

The next three games were typical Dickshot performances. He had seven hits in 13 times at bat, including two doubles. The newspapers finally began to pay attention to the streak, but it had taken 17 games to get even one line of comment. The weekend games involved some heroics. Coming to bat in the tenth inning of the Saturday game with a runner on base, Johnny had grounded out twice and had been intentionally walked twice. His single moved the runner to third, and eventually the run scored to give the Stars a 3-2 victory. The Stars handily won the first game of the Sunday doubleheader, 11-4, as Dickshot went 2-for-3 and batted in three runs. The Padres were leading the nightcap, 12-2, going into the ninth inning behind the fireballing Frank Dasso. It seemed unlikely that Dickshot would even get to the plate, but with two out Butch Moran and Harry Clements singled to give Johnny another chance. He drove the ball hard back to the mound, handcuffing Dasso, who was unable even to make a play at first. The Stars lost, but Dickshot's streak was still alive and was now headline sports news.

The first five games of the Sacramento series were relatively uneventful. Johnny was limited to eight singles in 19 at-bats, but he always hit safely early. By now the newspapers had two other streaks competing for their attention. Going into the weekend games, the Angels had quietly achieved an overall record of 20 wins and three losses and had won 15 in a row. Moreover, on Friday, Harry Clements, a rookie third baseman up from the Class C California League, hit safely in his eighteenth straight game for the Stars. Until now, the local papers had not even mentioned either feat. Dickshot's streak had reached 25 games and was overshadowing most of the sports news in town. Both players hit safely on Saturday. Dickshot singled in the first inning for his only hit in five appearances.

The first game of the Sunday doubleheader provided the most dramatic moment of the entire streak. The score was 1-1 when the Stars came to bat in the tenth inning. John Pintar, who was to lose 27 games that season, was on the mound for the Solons and had collared Dickshot in four appearances. Johnny was due to be the sixth man up. Rookie catcher Roy Younkers struck out to lead off the

inning, but ageless Charlie Root, who had only ten hits all season, tripled. According to most observers, Root should have been called out at third base, but umpire Wally Hood disagreed. Charlie took himself out for a pinch-runner and sent Babe Herman in as a pinch-hitter. With Herman, reliable Butch Moran and the hot-hitting Clements due to the plate, it seemed unlikely that Dickshot would even get another chance. But the Solons wisely walked both Herman and Moran intentionally. Virtually all Clements had to do to end the game was make contact or draw a walk. Clements, who had already hit safely to extend his streak to 20 games, uncharacteristically struck out. The 8,000 fans cheered as if the Stars had just won the World Series. Dickshot again took advantage of the situation that fate had provided. After two balls, a foul and a called strike, he enhanced the drama by fouling off four successive pitches before slashing a single to center field to score the winning run. Ironically, it was Dickshot's error in the third inning that set up the tie in the first place. And what a series of unlikely events conspired to give him his chance. Root was never much of a hitter. Hood was considered a top-notch umpire. Pintar averaged a mere 2.5 strikeouts a game, and Clements averaged only one strikeout every 18.5 plate appearances.

The second game proved to be a problem only for Clements. His streak ended at 20 games, while Dickshot went 2-for-3. The Stars were to hit the road, at least as far as Wrigley Field. Dickshot was leading the league with a .456 average but now had to face an Angel pitching staff that had not been beaten in more than two weeks.

The Angel series began on Wednesday with a doubleheader. After two great fielding plays by Angel right fielder Andy Pafko and first baseman Wimpy Quinn had robbed him of hits earlier in the game, Dickshot singled in the eighth inning of the first game. In the second game he singled in the fifth inning. The Angels won both contests to extend their winning streak to 20 games, a Pacific Coast League record which still stands. On Thursday, Roy Joiner, 36-year-old Star southpaw, bested the Angels, 4-2, to end their winning streak, and Dickshot had three hits. Friday was a bit more dramatic. The Stars lost, 8-4, but Dickshot socked two home runs in his last two at-bats. His streak had now reached 33 games, and the stage was set for Saturday's dramatic conclusion.

Garman (Pete) Mallory was on the mound for the Angels and recorded a relatively easy 6-0 shutout. The score was, of course, secondary for most of the 3,500 fans. In the first inning Dickshot grounded out to second baseman Roy Hughes. Johnny's second trip to the plate provided most of the excitement. Never known for his speed, he crossed up everyone by pushing a bunt down the

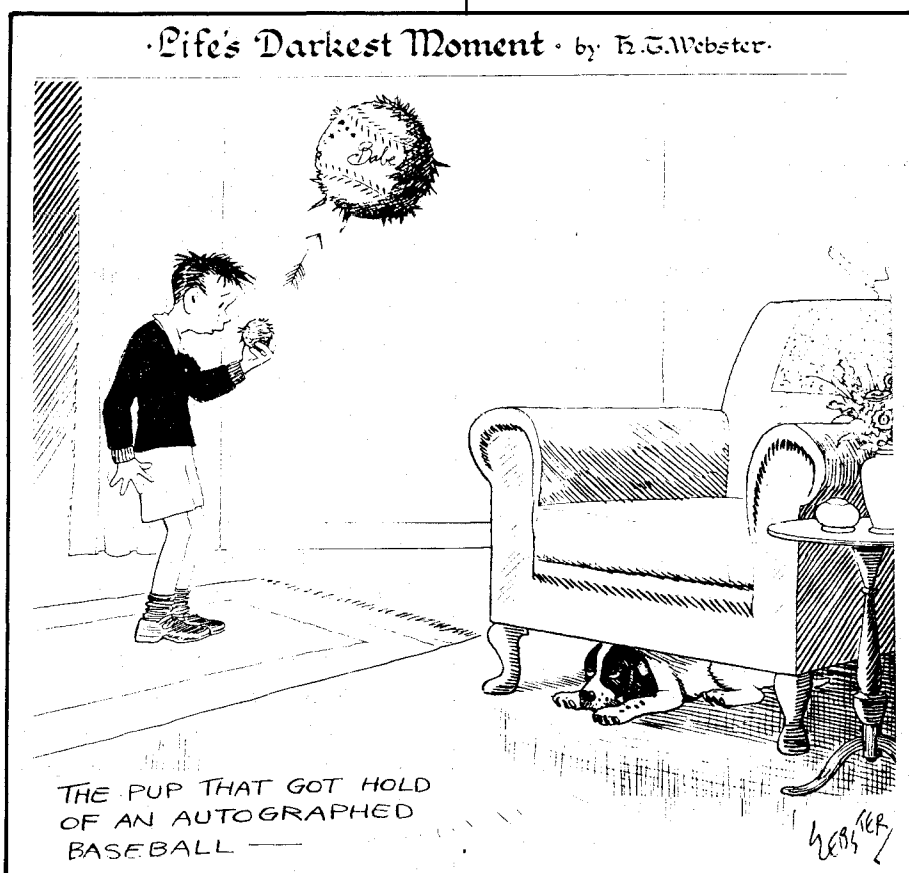
third base line. Charlie English, playing the corner for the Angels, did not have a chance. Mallory made a desperate play on the ball and threw a "Hail Mary" to first baseman Wimpy Quinn. The throw was in the dirt, but the sharp-fielding Quinn dug it out. Again it was umpire Wally Hood who was faced with a decision that could be critical to the streak. Everyone in the park thought Dickshot had beaten the throw. Everyone, that is, except Hood, who after some hesitation gave the "out" sign. Oh, for instant replay! Newspaper photographers had alertly snapped pictures of the fateful instant, but when they appeared in the next day's editions, they were inconclusive. Quinn, however, insisted the call had been correct. No matter. The luck that had prolonged the streak in several "last at-bats" finally deserted Dickshot. In the sixth inning he lifted a lazy fly to John Ostrowski in center field, and in the ninth inning he grounded weakly to Hughes and sat glumly in a corner of the dugout as the Stars played out the inning and the game.

In the Sunday doubleheader that followed, Johnny hit safely in both games, including a home run to win the second contest. The Stars then journeyed to San Diego, where he hit safely in the first two games before finally

being shut out again in three trips in a twilight game on May 27.

During the streak Dickshot batted .457 with 59 hits in 129 at-bats, including seven doubles and three home runs. He also scored 31 runs and batted in 22. After his streak, Dickshot returned to more normal levels. He batted .321 over the remainder of the campaign, but his early-season performance boosted his overall average to .352. He finished a close second in the batting race to Andy Pafko, then an Angel rookie. He also scored 100 runs and batted in 99.

JOHN'S PERFORMANCE earned him another chance in the majors, this time with the Chicago White Sox, where he spent the remainder of the war years. As a part-time outfielder and pinch-hitter he batted .253 in 62 games in 1944 and .302 in 130 games in 1945, leaving him with a lifetime .276 big league average. At the end of the war he was returned to Hollywood but batted only .214 in 20 games at the start of the 1946 season; at the end of April he was sent to Milwaukee of the American Association. It was the last the Pacific Coast League was to see of Johnny Dickshot.



A Conversation with Bill James

JAY FELDMAN

Famed sabermetrician says he's "not trying to convince anybody. . . . I'm just showing what my research reveals." He predicts an increase in platooning. Why? Read on.

OVER THE PAST DECADE Bill James' revolutionary approach to statistical analysis of baseball has fundamentally changed the way many people evaluate the game. James' articulate and opinionated presentation of his work, published in his popular, annual *Baseball Abstract*, has provoked sharp controversy throughout the baseball community — fans, players, management and writers alike have been drawn into the debate, as his frequently iconoclastic theories, invariably supported by meticulous research, have acted as gadflies to the sacred cows of baseball's traditional statistics. In the 1985 *Baseball Abstract*, for example, James attacks the myth that a player's minor league statistics are not accurate predictors of his major league performance, suggesting first why such a myth has been perpetrated and then providing a method for projecting the major-league equivalencies of minor league statistics.

As a long-time member of the Society for American Baseball Research, James is responsible for coining the terms "sabermetrics" (to describe the new approach to statistical analysis) and "sabermetrician" (one who practices that approach). At the 1985 SABR convention in Oakland I had the opportunity to talk with Bill. The two things that impressed me most about him were the scope of his mind and his accessibility — success has not spoiled Bill James. Here's how our conversation went:

Jay Feldman: How would you characterize the effect of your work, in particular, and SABR, in general, on the way we look at baseball?

Bill James: A lot of the discussions we're having now about baseball have been going around in circles — the same discussions generation after generation. SABR has done a lot to help those discussions move forward.

JF: What areas in particular are you talking about?

James: People have been inventing ways to evaluate hitters for a long, long time. Each generation of analysts invents ways to measure offensive productivity. And the next generation invents ways that are no better than

those of the last generation, so you're not really gaining anything. The argument you hear over and over about whether defensive statistics mean anything is an argument that was discussed in a book about baseball published in 1916 — basically the same argument. Well, through SABR, those arguments have been able to step forward a little bit. And there is a group of people who have a common assumption and who've reached a certain point in the discussion, and are ready to go on. Of course, there's still an enormous group of people who are not ready to follow.

JF: Can you characterize that agreement?

James: It's issue-specific. But there is certainly an agreement that the essential elements of an offense are on-base percentage and slugging percentage — that is, getting people on base and advancing baserunners. Most every serious analyst of the offensive game would agree with that. They're certainly in agreement that fielding statistics are meaningful and that a high total of putouts does indicate range afield. Now we're ready to face the next questions: What illusions are these statistics subject to — because every statistic is subject to illusions — and how do we get rid of them? We need to make adjustments for those illusions.

JF: How are you going to identify the illusions?

James: Research. Developing better information. There's a man who sent me a letter just recently showing that there's a very significant relationship between the number of innings pitched by the lefthanders on a staff and the number of balls fielded by the third baseman. The more lefthanded innings you have, the more balls are going to be fielded by the third baseman. I wasn't aware of that. And because there are people in communication with each other, it's possible to take that information and build in an adjustment, and move forward.

JF: Moving forward upsets some people. I'm sure you've found that.

James: Yes, but an assumption of all fields of knowledge

is that the search for truth is not a popularity contest. I just apply the same assumption to baseball. The search for truth is a matter of finding the evidence and understanding it. People assume that only the players and managers know the answers to certain questions. Writers go to them to find the answers. But if a statement is true, it's true — whether the person making the statement is an amateur or a professional doesn't matter. In a college physics class, a sophomore can argue with Einstein. That's an accepted principle. Who you are doesn't have a thing to do with the validity of what you're saying.

JF: What you're talking about here, essentially, is an objective truth.

James: Yes. But for me to start out by trying to convince baseball people that what I'm saying is true would be like Galileo's starting out by trying to convince the Catholic Church that the earth goes around the sun. That's putting yourself in a subservient role — "I'm here to convince you." I'm not trying to convince Tommy Lasorda. I'm not trying to convince anybody. I'm just showing what my research reveals. "Look, here are the facts; this is what they mean." Anybody who wants to believe it, I'm happy. But I don't have to convince any one individual, which is a lot more relaxing for me. I don't care who believes me. I'm very happy when anybody believes me and very accepting when anybody doesn't. Because I could be wrong about a whole lot of things. A lot of people don't believe me for what I'm sure are very good reasons.

JF: Why do you think there's so much resistance to some of the things you're saying?

James: I don't know. You're asking me a question that has nothing to do with me.

JF: But we talked about identifying objective truths about certain aspects of baseball. If it's correct that those are indeed objective truths, their validity should be easily demonstrable.

James: Right. There are a lot of reasons why an objectively established truth doesn't gain acceptance faster than it does. But things aren't any different in baseball than they are in anything else. I mean, it was fairly conclusively demonstrated quite a few centuries ago that the earth is not flat, and yet there's still a Flat Earth Society. So, it takes a long, long time for knowledge to work its way through a society, through a culture.

JF: What I think you're doing here is threatening the status quo, just as Galileo did, to use your earlier example.

James: Yeah, in somewhat the same way. But you see, we are people who believe in evidence. But you mustn't underestimate the other kind of people. New knowledge is fragile and dangerous, and I think you could find that people who adopt new knowledge too quickly sometimes get undercut because sometimes the first thing that's

learned is only half the subject, and the other half turns up to bite. There's a great security in the way things have always been done and you have to develop a pretty strong case before you get to the point at which people are willing to give up the security and reach for the potential of new knowledge. I don't think that's unnatural. I think it would be unreasonable to expect baseball people to be any different from anyone else in that respect. There's another very good reason why new information is always so slow to be adopted — everybody's mind works differently. I think in graphs — always have. And translate it into words. But you can't expect a major league manager to think in graphs because it ain't his job. When my wife and I go to baseball games, we remember totally different things about them. My wife is an artist, and she remembers the colors of the night and where we were sitting and who we were sitting with. And I'll remember what the score was and how the runs were scored and who was playing. And often something will come up, and we'll be talking about a game played four or five years ago, and I'll remember a whole bunch of things, and she'll remember a whole bunch of things, but we won't be able to tell for sure whether it's the same game. Totally different impressions.

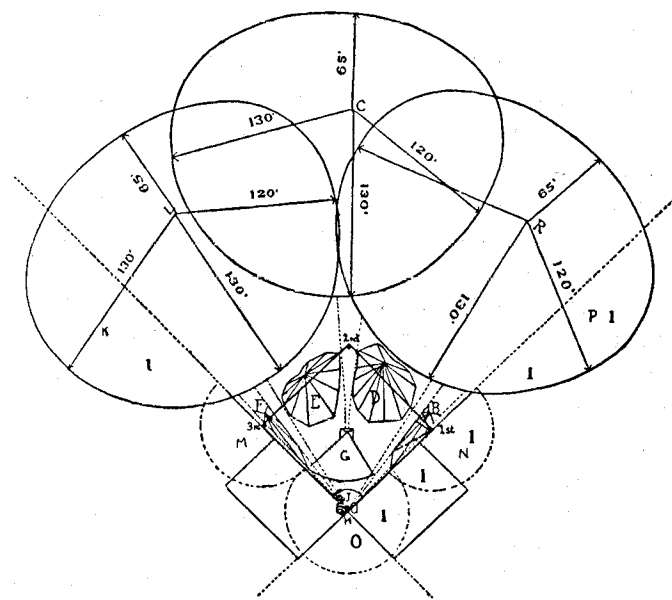


Diagram showing territory covered by fielders. The object of this diagram is to show the relative speed of players in various directions. The outfielders' ground covered is calculated on the speed of the men being 50 yards in six seconds and the ball being in the air three seconds. The infielder's ground is calculated on the same speed per man, fielding balls hit at a velocity of 100 feet in one and a half seconds. Note that an outfielder can run 130 feet to his right but only 120 feet to his left in the same time, as he starts quicker to the right.

- B—First baseman's territory.
- D—Second baseman's territory.
- E—Short stop's range.
- F—Thrd baseman's territory.
- J—Catcher's ground on bunts.
- G—Pitcher's territory on bunts and sharp grounders.
- K, M, N, O, P—Foul territory covered on three-second fouls.
- L, C, R—Outfielders' territory.

But the question is: Is it a unique characteristic of baseball that it can be enjoyed in so many different ways, or is it simply that baseball, being nothing, having, in essence, no significance, meaning nothing, can be made into anything? If it's simply the latter, which is also true of so many other games, why don't those other games develop the diversity of charms that baseball has?

JF: Where do you feel your work is going? Do you see a direction right now?

James: I probably see less of a direction now than I have at any time in the last several years. It's very hard to avoid being drawn into a cycle in which you say that in order to answer these questions we have to have better evidence, and then once you get that evidence, being swamped by the small issues. Where I am right now is trying to avoid being drawn into the small issues and trying to re-focus my work on larger issues. Statistical analysis needs not to focus on tiny little issues, but to back away and focus on the larger issues.

JF: What are some of the larger issues?

James: The biggest is probably personnel decisions — trading strategies, how players are affected by different parks, in what respects a team needs improvement. Another large issue would be how to change a park to benefit a team.

JF: You seem to me to be a shy person who is faintly embarrassed by the notoriety that's come from your work — that you're not especially comfortable being a celebrity or a spokesman.

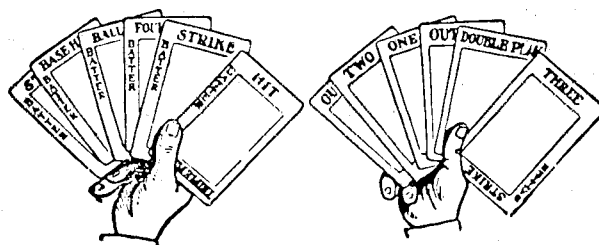
James: Yeah. The work I've done, there's no logical reason why it should attract the reaction it does — pro or con. It's completely accidental — out of the blue. I never expected it, and I never intended it. I thought I would reach a few hundred people who were interested in the same subject. And whenever I get outside of the field of a few hundred people, I don't really know how to deal with all the rest of it. But I do the best I can.

JF: There's a good reason why people are interested in your work. You go beyond obvious issues like how right-handers hit against lefties and that sort of thing — what we might call the smaller issues — to focus on the implications of some of that information on the game. You remind me in a sense of Stephen Jay Gould, a paleontologist. He wrote a fascinating article on the disappearance of the .400 hitter. His theory is that it has nothing to do with whether the ballplayers are better or worse than they were 50 years ago. What it has to do with is that when systems first start, they're very diverse, and as they stabilize they become less and less diverse, and the outer edges disappear. The mean batting average now is the same as it was in 1890 and 1930, but the outer extremes have disappeared.

James: That's right. Because of internal competition. If one person does something and it works, everybody else does it. This is true both offensively and defensively. And it draws everyone inevitably closer and closer together. In each generation of players the extremes stand out less than they did in the previous generation. What happens is we learn to distinguish between the players on the basis of smaller and smaller imperfections.

JF: That would explain why the platoon system has become so popular.

James: We've been able to recognize distinctions that are so subtle that a generation ago we never would have been able to see them at all because it is inevitable that the spectrum of abilities narrows over time. This would imply, for example, that platooning will continue to increase because as the spectrum of abilities narrows, the systematic difference within each player becomes relatively larger to the spectrum. Platooning, after all, is



If you play the batter end hold the cards as above.

The opposing player holds the opposite end of the cards up as above.

HOW TO HOLD THE CARDS.

useful only in a situation in which you have two players of essentially equal ability. In other words, the systematic difference in each of them is larger than the difference between them. You do not platoon essentially unequal players — you use the best you have. As the spectrum of abilities narrows, you are drawn into having more and more circumstances in which the best you have is essentially two equal players. Each of them has a platoon differential — the difference between what he hits against righties and lefties. If the difference between the two players is larger than the platoon differential for each individual, there's no reason to platoon. Now, as a system narrows and the abilities of all the players within the system come to resemble each other more and more, inevitably you're going to have more cases in which the split within the player's own record is larger than the split between the two players' records. To put it in numbers: If you have a league in which some people hit .400 and some

hit .200, then a 30-point platoon differential doesn't mean very much. But in a league in which almost everybody hits between .230 and .280, then the 30-point platoon differential means all the world. Assuming that the system will continue to narrow, then the platoon differential will continue to grow larger relative to the parameters of the spectrum. So therefore, there has to be more and more platooning over time. I've never realized that before.

JF: If you were Commissioner of Baseball, what changes would you make in the game?

James: The first thing I would do is enforce respect for the umpires. That shouldn't be hard to do. Give the umpires the power to charge a ball or a strike against a team if a player or manager acts disrespectful or obnoxious.

JF: What else?

James: There are some rules that could be adopted to no evil effect. For example, there is no logical reason why the pitcher is allowed only four bad pitches in getting a batter out, but is allowed to make an unlimited number of pointless throws to first base. As far as I'm concerned, not limiting the number of throws to first base was simply an oversight in the early days of the rules. And I don't see any reason why they don't say that you can only throw to first base three times, and if you do it more than that, the guy goes to second. This would speed up the games considerably, and it would also work to the advantage of the running game, which is very exciting.

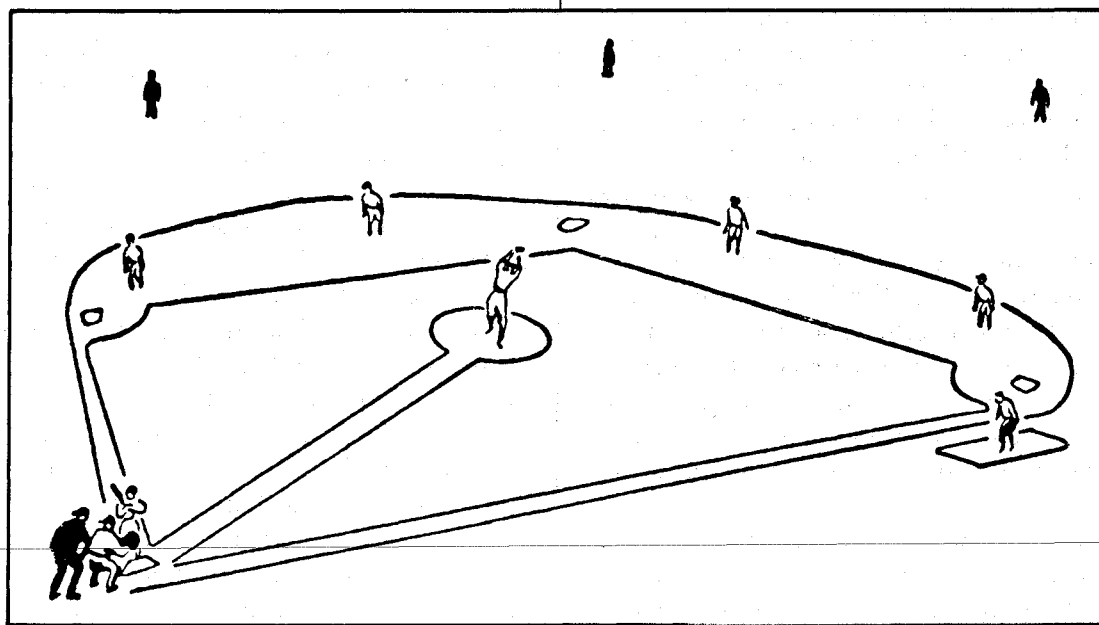
JF: Any other changes?

James: I would consider the legalization of corked bats. I've never thought there were very good reasons for

prohibiting them. Except that there is a natural tendency to prohibit anything that helps the hitter.

JF: SABR has been characterized in the media as a bunch of people sitting up nights poring over statistics, and there are some who do that, I'm sure. Maybe yourself included. But SABR is so much more than that, and I'd like to see the image change. Members are interested in all aspects of baseball, from the historical to the socio-economic to the literary. Everybody in SABR has a little — or a big — piece of baseball that he or she cares passionately about. To me, statistics are interesting and valid, but they don't get to the heart of the way the game is played on the field. And I hate to see SABR characterized as strictly a statistics-oriented organization.

James: One of my largest mistakes was coining the word "sabermetrics." I would never have invented that word if I had realized how successful I was going to be. I'm quite serious about that. If I had known that what I was doing would catch on to such an extent, I would have named it something else entirely. I never intended to help characterize SABR as a bunch of numbers freaks, but I am partially responsible for that image, and I regret it. Every time SABR is brought up in an interview, I try to point out that SABR is a diverse organization, but maybe I need to invent a way to say it more effectively, because it seems to roll off like water off a duck's back. But there are a lot of talented people who belong to SABR, and one has to assume that it's a short-term thing. Maybe there's a two or three-year period in which I and others like me become very visible, but I think there will be other periods in which people with other interests become equally visible. And then the image of SABR will change.



Shattered Dreams, Pleasant Memories

JIM MURPHY

SABR member Tim McNamara went from Fordham to the majors and posted a 2.42 ERA in his 1922 debut. In the minors he pitched for Casey Stengel, but arm problems cut short his career.

TIM McNAMARA CLOSED OUT his four-year collegiate pitching career at Fordham University in 1922 and within hours was wearing a Boston Braves uniform. He seemed a fair bet to become one of the few players who never spent a day in the minor leagues. It didn't work out that way.

There were a few shining moments in Boston, especially in his baptismal season. He posted an impressive 2.42 ERA as a rookie while winning three of seven decisions for a last-place team. In 1923 McNamara was a disappointing 3-13 as the Braves again lost 100 games, but he rebounded to 8-12 for another cellar team in 1924. Traded to the New York Giants, he was shelled in his one and only relief effort before being shipped to the minor leagues. Tim's baseball dream finally ended in 1930, and he returned to the real world.

Baseball has been Tim's overriding interest since his childhood days in Millville, Mass., where he and Leo (Gabby) Hartnett formed the battery for the Bluejay team and later for the Millville town team. Because Tim's Blackstone High School did not field a team, he pitched for the amateur Sacred Hearts of Woonsocket, R.I. He collected baseball cards and saved news stories about the game and the players. He learned early that baseballs often take funny hops and that the game posed perils and uncertainties for anyone who tried to make a living playing it.

Tim finished his college degree before venturing into pro baseball even though his Fordham classmate and varsity shortstop, Frankie Frisch, signed with the Giants after their freshman year. After he became a professional, Tim learned the insurance business during the off-season, and he has continued to be active in business ever since. He still maintains an office in his Buick agency in Woonsocket.

Tim McNamara has had a good life after baseball. Marking his eighty-seventh birthday last November, Tim has enjoyed good health and has been happy in his life of relative leisure. He and Helen, his wife of 55 years, had

four children (one of whom was killed in an automobile accident in 1958), 13 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. His lifelong interest in baseball is undiminished (he is a SABR member), and he savors the memories of his professional days.

McNamara reminisces about his career:

"The most I ever made in a season in baseball was \$4,500," Tim said. "And that was in Toledo, not in the big leagues. Today's salaries seem very high, but I still feel the players' union is a good thing.

"I'm grateful I had this chance to play professionally. It didn't turn out as well as it might have, but there must be millions who would like to be professional players, and only a handful make it. I'm grateful I did.

"That first day you put on a big league uniform — you never forget the feeling. I pitched batting practice my first day and almost hit Al Nixon, an outfielder. He had to hit the dirt. I was nervous out there. I wondered what Nixon would do. He got up, stepped back into the box and yelled, 'That's okay. Don't worry about it. Throw another one right in here.'

"Those first two months were really something. My feet never touched the ground once. Remember, it was only a short time since I had been clipping stories about these players. Now I was in a dugout, in hotels and riding on trains with them. The first inning I ever pitched in the majors was in relief against Brooklyn. It was like a dream.

"In my first full season (1923) we played some exhibitions with Washington. Walter Johnson had always been my hero, and one day I saw him playing cards in the hotel. I just sat and gazed at him. I remember batting against him once. I think he threw four pitches and three were called strikes. In spring training in 1923 I pitched against Babe Ruth and was lucky to escape with my left ear. I can still hear that line drive.

"I'll never forget one particular game in my rookie year. I was due to pitch the first game of a doubleheader at the Polo Grounds. During the Giants' batting practice Billy Southworth sat on the top step of the dugout with me and,

as each player hit, told me the best way to pitch to him. I never forgot his kindness. I shut the Giants out that day, 3-0. After the final out I went into the dugout, got my sweater, and as I started walking to the clubhouse in center field, the crowd began clapping for me. The clapping still continued when I was deep in the outfield. By then Ray Powell, one of our outfielders, was walking beside me.

"'McNamara, you pitching son of a gun!' he said to me, all smiles. He was complimenting me for the shutout. Remember, these Giants were the world champions from the year before, and they had just clinched the pennant again — Frisch, Groh, Kelly, Irish Meusel, Young. Some of the crowd knew me from Fordham. That shutout and that hand the crowd gave me — that day and the day I first put on a big league uniform are, I'd say, my two top thrills."

Tim's shutout of the Giants occurred on October 1, the final day of the 1922 season. But Powell may have been thinking of more than that day's game in extending his salty greeting. On September 22 Tim had beaten Cincinnati, 7-2, at Braves Field on a six-hitter, losing a shutout when the Reds scored twice in the ninth. Then on September 27, also in Boston, Tim blanked Brooklyn, 7-0, on a seven-hitter. The Polo Grounds masterpiece meant McNamara had held his opponents scoreless in 26 of his last 27 innings. Southworth helped Tim during that Giant game as well as before it. Billy hit a two-run homer in the first inning.

"Something I remember about that 7-2 Cincy game," Tim offered. "I walked up to the plate — seventh or eighth inning, I'd say — and Bubbles Hargrave was catching. 'Mac,' he said to me, 'you're going to have a great career.' I thought that was awful nice of him. I never forgot it."

McNamara has rich baseball memories and friendships, although many of his baseball friends are gone now. There was boyhood friend and batterymate Gabby Hartnett, to whom he was close until Hartnett's death in 1972, and there was Frankie Frisch from Fordham, who lived in nearby Westerly, R.I. Frisch died in 1973.

"In 1922," Tim recalled, "the Giants had swept the Yankees in the World Series, and Frankie had had a great Series. Our Millville town team was playing a series with our bitter rivals, Sacred Heart of Woonsocket. I asked Frank if he'd play for us, and he agreed. He led off and hit the first ball over the scoreboard for a homer. Gabby caught for us. That was after Gabby's first year with the Cubs. We won, 3-0." The Millville pitcher was Tim McNamara of the Braves. He fanned 11.

McNamara remembers Casey Stengel well. Tim and Casey first met in 1924 when Stengel was traded to

Boston, and they met again in 1926 when Stengel was managing Toledo.

"When the Giants farmed me to Toledo, I told them I wouldn't go," Tim remembered. "Casey called me. 'What's this I hear you don't want to come out?' he asked. I told him I could see no future in it. Finally, I agreed to join the team. At first, I pitched terribly, but Casey stuck by me. Then I won nine out of 10; I had a fair year."

In 1927 McNamara stayed out of pro ball. He played for textile-mill owner Walter Schuster's East Douglas team in the Blackstone Valley League in central Massachusetts.

"Mr. Schuster paid me \$100 a week, whether I pitched or not," Tim said. "The league played only a couple of games a week. Of course, I was working in insurance, too. I made more money than I would have in Toledo. Wes Ferrell was on that East Douglas team."

STENDEL WROTE TO TIM again and pleaded with him to rejoin Toledo for the 1928 season. Tim agreed but for the first time his arm began troubling him. "I had lost my fast ball," he said. "I just couldn't throw hard any more. In retrospect, I think my big mistake was laying off that year. I think I lost momentum. I had had a decent year in Toledo, but the insurance business was on my mind.

"I had a terrible year in 1928. If the manager had been anybody except Casey, I think I would have been released."

McNamara loved Stengel like a brother, and he treasures his memories of the years they were together.

"Stengelese was no put-on with Casey," Tim commented. "He'd argue with the umpires in Toledo, but he'd know when to stop. The umps liked him. By the time Casey stopped arguing, they were baffled about just what he had said.

"I was not a hitter. One day I took three quick strikes and didn't move the bat. When I returned to the dugout, he came up to me.

"'McNamara, I'm going to send you to the hospital tomorrow morning,' Casey said. 'Hospital? Why?' I asked.

"'I'm going to have that bat sawed off your shoulder,' Stengel replied.

"I wasn't a good runner either," Tim went on. "One day I hit a ground ball. There was a man on first. It was an easy double play. I was out by a mile at first. Casey was waiting for me in the dugout.

"'McNamara, you know what's wrong with you? You run too long in one place,' he said.

"All Casey thought of was baseball — on trains, on buses, in dugouts, in hotels. One time, in a hotel lobby, he had four or five rookies around him and was explaining

base-stealing — how to slide to the right or left. He pointed to this big pillar. 'That's the base,' he said. Then he'd run 20 feet or so and fall on the floor and touch the pillar with his right foot. It was a sight to see."

IN LATER YEARS TIM would go to some Braves or Red Sox games. One day in the early 1950s he went to Fenway when the Yankees were there and was chatting with Casey near the dugout. Casey beckoned to four of his players who had just come onto the field — Mickey Mantle, Gil McDougald, Elston Howard and Jerry Coleman — and they came over.

"I want you to meet Cy Young,' Casey said to the players. I went along with the gag and shook hands with them," Tim remembered. "We small-talked for a minute or so. Then the four walked off, and Casey and I resumed chatting. It was typical Stengel. So far as I know, the players thought they had just met Cy Young."

In 1975 when Tim and a lifelong Millville friend, Jim Fitzgerald, were touring California, they read that Stengel was in a hospital in Glendale. They altered their planned route and headed to Glendale.

"Casey was terribly sick," Tim recounted. "They let Jim and me in to see him. He recognized me, but that was all. We stayed about a half hour. It was a sad experience." A week later Casey died.

Tim opened the 1929 season with Toledo but was sent to Nashville, where he pitched effectively despite being bothered by the heat. Nonetheless, toward season's end he was released.

Back in Woonsocket, he bumped into Bill Summers, then umpiring in the Eastern League and a few years away from his debut in the American League. "Can you still pitch?" Summers asked when Tim told him of the Nashville pink slip. Tim's response was: "I think so."

Through manager Bill McCorry, Summers arranged for Tim to pitch batting practice when the Albany team visited Providence. McCorry liked what he saw and Tim signed on and helped Albany win the Eastern League pennant. His teammates included Johnny "Grandma" Murphy and Bill Werber.

In March of 1930 Tim married Helen Collins of Millville. She had played first base for a boys-girls team that Tim coached in the evening when he returned to Millville after the Braves' home games in Boston. Helen was called "Stuffy" after Braves' first sacker Stuffy McInnis. Her teammates included several of Gabby Hartnett's brothers and sisters.

That spring Tim trained with Albany in Durham, N.C., and spent the entire season with the club. Then he began to take stock: He was two months away from his thirty-second birthday, he was in the Eastern League, and

he had made progress in the insurance business. He decided to quit baseball and go into insurance full time. He pitched in semi-pro ball around Boston for a few years and tossed batting practice for the Braves and Red Sox occasionally during home stands.

Does McNamara have any theories as to why the gap between his apparent potential and his actual performance was so large?

"Put it this way," he replied, "I wish I had the advantage of help from pitching coaches such as all teams have today. Coaches in my day were just washed-up players. They seldom took you aside to point out your errors or to make suggestions. I thought of this the day Mike Roarke (St. Louis Cards' pitching coach) addressed the SABR regional meeting (in Warwick, R.I., in January 1985).

"Maybe some of the fault was my own nature. I'm not an aggressive person. Baseball was always a game to me. I was satisfied just to be in the big leagues. I probably wasn't eager enough to learn more about the art of pitching. I'd work harder if I had it to do all over again. I'd try to master the fine points of pitching.

"One day Walton Cruise, an outfielder with the Braves, said to me, 'Mac, I got the perfect nickname for you, Armadillo. You just curl up into that shell of yours, and you don't worry much about what the rest of the world is doing.' Maybe I was a bit of an armadillo."

McNamara smiles when he reads of today's signing bonuses. "I got \$500, and the scout who signed me took \$250 of it," he recalled. But he feels the players had more fun in his day than they do now.

"We were in Pittsburgh one day in '26 — I was with the Giants," he said. "Rain had delayed the start of the game. Back in spring training we had formed a barbershop quartet. Billy Southworth was second tenor and Bill Terry was baritone. Jack Bentley was the bass and I was the lead singer — carried the tune. We'd sing in clubhouses, on trains, wherever. This day while we were waiting for the rain to stop, the four of us started singing. We were sitting around in the dugout, doing nothing. We finished a song and suddenly there's a lot of applause in the stands. We hadn't realized they could hear us. So we kept singing for another 20 or 30 minutes — 'I've Been Working on the Railroad,' 'Let Me Call You Sweetheart,' 'Moonlight Bay' and other popular numbers. The crowd enjoyed it. It was fun."

Tim now ranks as one of the game's living patriarchs. The record lists him as Timothy Augustine McNamara and gives his major league record as 14-29. But his record in the real world is incomparably more impressive. "I'm grateful to God for a long and wonderful life. And I wouldn't trade these nine years in pro ball for anything," he summarized.

Change of Allegiance Inspired by New Hero

HENRY L. FREUND, JR.

Saddened by the trade of Enos Slaughter, a young Cardinal fan quickly received a big lift.

ENOS SLAUGHTER SAT SLUMPED, clad in his undershirt, his bald head resting in his hands, tears streaming down his face. The front-page headline above his photograph roared that the Cardinals had traded Slaughter to the Yankees!

I stood outside, stunned, quickly scanning the article. "It's a hell of a way to treat a guy," Slaughter said. "I've given my life to this organization, and they let you go when they think you're getting old."

Rolling the newspaper into my hand, I ran back to the house and scampered up the stairs, bursting into the bathroom where my dad had just finished shaving.

"They traded Slaughter! They traded Slaughter!" I cried. Surprised and not immediately comprehending the cause of such frantic behavior so early in the morning, my dad looked perplexed for a few seconds, then he bent over and gave me a hug. That familiar, fatherly smell of talcum powder soothed me a little.

"We're still going, aren't we, Dad?"

"You bet, pal."

It was Monday, April 12, 1954. I was ten years old. The Cardinals started their season against the Cubs the next afternoon, and my dad had promised to take me out of school so we could go to the game together. It was the most important and exciting event in my life.

For weeks I had been dreaming about that day, devouring every trivial fact and article as the Cardinals finished spring training. I wanted to impress my dad how seriously I was taking this game, as if I were hoping to be recognized as the very best fan my team ever had, or at least as the most enthusiastic Cardinal ten-year-old of 1954. I probably was.

It wasn't my first major league game. I have a flickering recollection of my dad telling me to remember that I saw the great Satchel Paige pitch for the Browns. We did go to some St. Louis Browns' games before they moved to Baltimore, but all I can recall is peanuts, Crackerjacks, popcorn, ice cream, hot dogs and soft drinks. Although I

have often pretended to remember more, the most lasting memories were the stomach aches.

But 1954 was different. Perhaps it was the excitement of anticipating opening day, or getting to leave school early, or the drama of the Slaughter trade. Or perhaps I was just getting older.

The *Post-Dispatch* that Monday evening and the next morning's *Globe-Democrat* were filled with articles and letters about the Cardinals, the Slaughter trade and Wally Moon, the rookie outfielder who was so promising that the Cardinals decided to trade Slaughter to make room for him.

Slaughter was almost 38; he had been with the Cardinals for his entire career. His hustle and enthusiasm were a trademark of older, more successful Cardinal teams. The Anheuser-Busch brewery had bought the Cardinals in 1953. The Slaughter trade shocked and angered loyal Cardinal fans, who immediately talked of boycotting the Busch product, blasting the trade with such puns as "I may not be smart, Budweiser than Mr. Busch," and calling the deal "a Busch move."

The morning of the game I went to school with my baseball glove and Cardinal cap. I experienced even more difficulty than usual trying to sit still, but finally 11:15 came, and I rushed outside into my dad's car.

We went to the park early, an excuse to eat lunch there. We talked about the Slaughter trade and Wally Moon. Dad joked that it was the first time I was more interested in the game than the food. How could the Cardinals trade Slaughter after all those great years? Wasn't he as important to the team as Stan Musial? As Red Schoendienst? I didn't understand. Was Moon any good? He must be terrific if they traded Slaughter so he could play! Lots of rookies look great in spring training, my dad cautioned, but they can't cut the mustard when the season starts. Moon would be under lots of pressure, that was for sure.

Finally, the Cardinals took the field. Moon ran out to



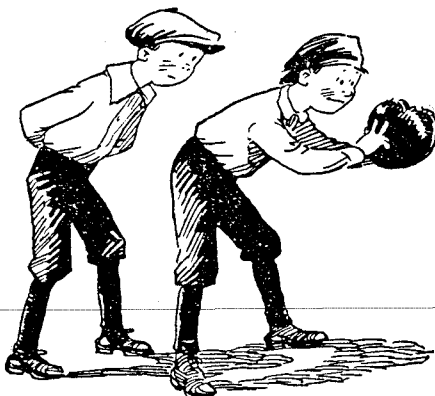
center. I laid my cap and glove behind me on the seat, then stood watching him through my dad's binoculars all during the National Anthem. Moon wore uniform number 20, and he looked tall and athletic. With his cap off, I could see his face. His eyebrows were incredible! They were so bushy. It was almost like one long eyebrow all the way across his forehead. I had never seen anything like it.

The Cubs didn't score in their half of the first inning, and then the Cardinals came to bat. There was one out when Moon, batting second in the order, was announced over the P.A. system. Fans still bitter about the Slaughter trade greeted Moon with a chorus of boos.

HE STRODE TO the plate, planted himself in the batter's box, tapped his spikes with his bat. I studied him carefully. He was a lefthanded hitter; I was a righty. He waved his bat from behind his shoulders to the middle of the plate several times, a restrained, imaginary swing.

It all happened so fast; I don't remember whether Moon swung at the first pitch or the fifth. But I will never forget the solid crack of the bat against the ball, the entire crowd rising in unison, all eyes looking to right field, where the ball soared over the screen, out of the park and onto Grand Avenue.

In that instant, my heart stopped still; I was breathless. I stood on my seat, straining to see over all the cheering



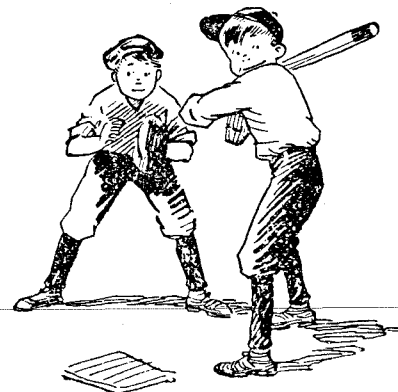
adults. Wally Moon circled the bases and was mobbed by his teammates. He had hit a home run in his first time at bat in the major leagues! My dad was thumping me on the back; I was bouncing on the seat, pounding my fist into my glove and screaming, "Attaboy, Wally! Way to go, Wally."

A home run his first time at bat!

For the remainder of the season I shadowed Wally Moon's daily progress faithfully, at the ball park, on the radio and in the box scores. He finished at .304 with 76 RBIs. When he was voted the National League Rookie of the Year, I had a secret sense of personal achievement. (He outpolled a young Milwaukee Brave outfielder named Henry Aaron.) Wally Moon had captured my heart.

After four consistently good seasons, Moon suffered an injury and an off-year in 1958. That December the Cardinal management dispatched him to the Dodgers for Gino Cimoli. I was shocked, but my loyalty to Moon never wavered. Wally developed a unique "inside-out" swing and punched numerous home runs to the opposite field, over the 40-foot screen at the Los Angeles Coliseum. "Moon Shots," they were called. Wally hit .302 that year, and the Dodgers won the World Series. Somewhere, I felt avenged.

It happens every spring. I drift back to a boyhood memory, an April afternoon in 1954, when I began to understand the meaning of allegiance.



Stars Put Syracuse on 1876 Diamond Map

LLOYD JOHNSON

Harry McCormick notched 16 consecutive victories, beating several N.L. teams. After repeated invitations, the Salt City joined the league in 1879, but lasted just one season.

THREE YEARS BEFORE Alexander Cartwright drew up the first baseball rules in 1845, the Syracuse Common Council passed an ordinance that prohibited ball playing on Clinton and Hanover Squares. Fifteen years later the Syracuse Base Ball Club came into being. Its organizers included two grandsons of Syracuse founding father and postman John Wilkinson.

Following the Civil War, the Central City BBC represented Syracuse. Opponents included Auburn, Buffalo, Rochester and Utica. Central City's winning of the gold baseball in 1867 — emblematic of the best team — set Syracuse aglow with sports enthusiasm.

The next year an estimated 7,000 cranks crowded into Central City's grounds — on the White tract off Onondaga Street — to watch the legendary Brooklyn Atlantics battle the home team. More than a decade passed before there was another baseball gathering as large as that one. It was 1876 before the city of Syracuse appeared on the better teams' schedules.

By the time Syracuse baseball re-emerged, the sport had changed from an amateur game to a professional sport. Chicago, St. Louis, Philadelphia, New York, Boston and several smaller cities had formed a professional league — the National Association — that was dying because the Boston team was too dominant. A group of local businessmen decided to enter Syracuse into the competition. They felt that Syracuse, known as the Salt City because of its salt mining industry, should be in the same league as America's best in the marketplace and on the diamond.

The hopeful committee of baseball-minded young men met in 1875 and borrowed a marketing idea from Cincinnati. In 1869 George B. Ellard had assembled the first wholly professional nine. This squad carried the name Cincinnati Red Stockings from coast to coast in one of the most successful advertising campaigns of all time. The committee felt a professional team of "Stars" could do the same for Syracuse.

The Star Base Ball Club had existed since 1868, and

many Syracusans had witnessed its steady climb to glory. John J. Dunn and William Hart of the committee were still members of the club. The Stars had won the hearts and filled the pockets of Syracusans — betting was still prominent in the 1870s — by defeating the Watsons of Weedsport on August 26, 1873. When the time came to choose a nine to represent Syracuse, the committee members had Stars in their eyes.

The committee organized a closed stock company in November of 1875. Each member contributed heavily to the enterprise.

Charles J. Rae, stenographer and bookkeeper, was named president of the committee. His brother was treasurer for the city of Syracuse in 1877.

John J. Dunn, bartender and one of the founders of the Star Base Ball Club in 1868, was an active player and still pitched occasionally in 1875.

William J. Hart, superintendent of the Geddes Street Car Line, was an investor who undertook the expense of grading and leveling the Lakeside Park ball field. His street car line made professional baseball feasible by providing transportation to the games.

Frank A. Marsh, night editor and reporter for the *Syracuse Standard*, was a charter member of the Syracuse BBC in 1857-58 as well as past president of the Central City BBC.

George Campbell, clerk and baseballist, was in much demand as an umpire because of his ability to keep up with the everchanging rules of the game. His right field play in 1867 had enabled Central City to capture the gold ball. His greatest service to the Star BBC was signing Jack Farrell to a contract.

George A. Cool, canal grocer and meat marketer, caught for the Syracuse BBC in the 1860s. He had served as a director of the Central City club.

Warren Ross, shopkeeper, ran a tobacco business in partnership with Charles Tallman, the 8th Ward commissioner. Ross later opened a liquor store.

George S. Hier, a tobacconist in partnership with his

father, lived on ritzy James Street and had connections with those in the upper level of Syracuse society. His father was the city major in 1875.

George H. Perry, a clerk and agent for Kenyon, Potter & Co., had been a director of the Central City BBC. His job with the wholesale pharmaceutical concern brought him into contact with many of the city's business leaders.

Phillip S. Ryder, photographer, was a baseball crank who aided the Stars with publicity services and money. He served as president of the Star BBC in 1877. Ryder's scrapbook on Syracuse baseball, a source of valuable information on the game, is housed in the Onondaga Historical Society.

John B. Sherlock, the youngest member of the committee at 21 years of age, was a bookkeeper.

J. Francis Draime, collector, was a newcomer to the Salt City. He was the last of the committee to die, and his obituary contained information about this baseball group.

Hart undertook the tremendous task of building a ball park. First, he chose the site — a swampy area located north of Marsh Road. It was bordered by the New York Central tracks and Onondaga Lake. He secured city permission to extend his Fayette Street Car Line tracks past Geddes Street to the park site. He had the land drained, built the grandstand, laid tracks and then awaited the opening pitch of the season.

George W. Brackett, manager of the Live Oak Base Ball Club of Lynn, Mass., was hired to lead the Stars. In the 1870s the manager had the same duties as today's general manager, while the captain filled a role similar to that of the modern field manager.

Brackett retained John Dunn and Harry McCormick of the amateur Stars. He raided his old Live Oak team for George Adams, Flash Crosscup, Mike Dorgan, John Madden and Ed McGlynn. He had a good start for the team, and more importantly he had a battery.

That winter pitcher McCormick and catcher Dorgan roomed together in a loft on lower James Street. There they practiced Mac's new pitch — the curveball. With the aid of a fishline strung breast high, Harry dropped strikes past imaginary batsmen during the bleak months of a Syracuse winter. This pitcher-catcher combination won the *New York Clipper* prizes as the best at their positions in 1878. They continued to live in Syracuse. Dorgan married a local girl and Mac served as his best man.

IF HARRY AND MIKE formed the heart of the Star team, the brain consisted of Brackett, Dunn and Campbell. This trio scoured the East for rising stars or soured veterans. Alex McKinnon was picked up from a Boston amateur team. Jack Farrell, a player on a Princeton, N.J., amateur squad, was signed for \$25 a month.

Mike Mansell, eager for a shot at pro ball, left his two ball-playing brothers in Auburn and headed for Syracuse. Relief pitcher Charles Purroy came from the New York City baseball campaigns. Dunn persuaded Syracuse native and former National Association shortstop Will Geer to join the Stars. The city had a park and a team, and Syracuse waited expectantly.

The Stars streaked across the big league scene. They fashioned a 30-6 record between their early-season Eastern trip and the September invasion of the National League clubs.

Only one of the six losses was charged to McCormick. Purroy lost to Ithaca and Binghamton. Farrell fell at Ithaca. Madden was beaten by Lowell. The team got into fisticuffs and forfeited to Ilion. When Mac lost to the Chelsea Club of Brooklyn on August 25, it had been almost three months since his last setback. The Star hurler had won 16 straight and recorded five shutouts.

Pitcher and team reached their peak in September as the National League nines invaded. Mac's curveball beat Boston and shut out the St. Louis Browns, the St. Louis Reds, Hartford and the Chicago White Stockings. This homestand of late 1876, played before crowds of three and four thousand fans, made the reputation of a backwater nine who were so good they were called "Stars."

By August the committee found the Stars were so successful that stock in the club could be sold to the public. A total of \$3,000 was raised by selling 120 shares of stock at \$25 per share.

The popularity of baseball at Lakeside Park knew no bounds. Franklyn H. Chase in *Syracuse and Its Environs* wrote that the railway cars were "so crowded during the baseball rush hours that the passenger weights upon the platforms teetered the cars off the tracks. Passengers gleefully lifted the cars back on again."

The passage of time has dimmed the brightness of the Star legacy. Hall of Famer Al Spalding stated that the Stars were a very tough semi-pro outfit. Francis Richter, editor of *Sporting Life*, wrote in Mike Dorgan's obituary:

Dorgan was an old-time baseball player and was a crack player on the Syracuse Stars in the '70s. . . . He played with various clubs but did not achieve national reputation until 1876, when he was a member of the famous Syracuse Stars, which won nearly every game played, including games with such National League clubs as the Chicagos and Bostons.

The Stars fell to earth as rapidly as they ascended, but they were not without glory. After repeated invitations, Syracuse joined the National League in 1879. That season Harry McCormick became the first pitcher in League history to win a 1-0 game with his own home run. At the end of their initial League season, the Stars disbanded and the players scattered in every direction.

Counting Stats, New Stats: An Assessment

BOBBY FONG

Like traditional yardsticks of victories, home runs, RBIs, new evaluation methods show flaws. Players who capitalize on situations often fail to gain proper credit.

FOR MOST BASEBALL FANS, appreciation of the game has been tied to such "counting statistics" as the number of victories, strikeouts, hits, home runs or RBIs that a player has accumulated. Over the years there has developed a set of threshold levels, traditional norms for noteworthy seasons and careers, by which we evaluate and appreciate the accomplishments of stars past and present: Ferguson Jenkins won 20 games or more seven times . . . Tom Seaver struck out 200 or more batters nine years in a row . . . Pete Rose had ten 200-hit seasons . . . Mike Schmidt has averaged 38 homers and 101 RBIs a year for the past decade. Certain numbers — 3,000 hits, 500 home runs, 300 wins — have become milestones that all but insure a player's election to the Hall of Fame.

Nonetheless, such cumulative totals have been criticized in recent years as being deceptive. Many of these stats are "situation dependent." RBI totals depend on the ability of teammates batting ahead of the hitter to get on base as well as on his own efforts to drive runners in. Runs scored depend on those batting behind the runner to knock him home as well as on his own talents at getting on and around the bases. A pitcher's wins depend on his offensive and defensive support as well as on his own arm, head and heart. One can pitch badly and win; one can pitch brilliantly and lose: Harvey Haddix being the archetype. Home-run totals are affected by the characteristics of different parks: Would Mel Ott have walloped 500 homers if he had played his 22 years in the Astrodome instead of the Polo Grounds?

Other "counters" are misleading or incomplete measurements of player performance. A great strikeout pitcher, say Nolan Ryan, may not be the better pitcher, as compared to Jim Palmer, who never struck out 200 batters in a season but won 20 games eight times. Or take Joe Morgan, who never had a 200-hit season. Many would

still argue that Morgan, with his speed, power and 1,865 bases on balls, was a more complete, more valuable offensive player than his teammate Rose. The sabermetrics revolution has made this truth indubitable: A "counting stat" at best indicates a threshold of achievement; it cannot be an absolute measure of excellence among players. Roger Maris and Henry Aaron have exceeded Babe Ruth's seasonal and career home-run totals, but that doesn't necessarily make them more proficient sluggers than the Babe. Rose has surpassed Ty Cobb's record for career hits, but that achievement doesn't indicate that Pete was a better hitter than Cobb.

Two of the sabermetricians who have spoken most eloquently on the inadequacy of "counting stats," Bill James and Pete Palmer, have sought to develop alternative measures that would minimize situation dependency while comprehensively assessing player performance. Their common aim is to isolate a player's contribution and express it in terms of runs or wins. The cornerstone of Bill's work is his Runs Created formula, the basic version of which is:

$$\text{Runs} = \frac{(\text{Hits} + \text{Walks}) \times \text{Total Bases}}{\text{At Bats} + \text{Walks}}$$

Runs Created is validated by the high correlation between runs predicted by the formula and actual runs scored by a league in a given year. Similarly, Pete has demonstrated a high correlation between runs actually scored and runs predicted by this basic version of his Linear Weights formula for batting performance:

$$\text{Runs} = (.46) 1B + (.80) 2B + (1.02) 3B + (1.40) HR + (.33) (BB + HBP) - (.25) (AB - H)$$

The weights for each event in the formula were derived by computer simulation of all major league games played since 1901. Each weight represents the run value of the given event in terms of **net runs produced above average**. In other words, the run total derived for a given player is



the number of runs he accounted for **beyond what an average player might have contributed.**

Philosophically, Runs Created and Linear Weights have the virtue of measuring the productivity of a batter by what he does at the plate. Situation dependency is minimized — though not eliminated completely. For example, intentional walks and being hit by a pitch are out of the batter's hands. Another situation has been reported by Craig Wright and publicized through Bill's 1984 *Baseball Abstract*: that players generally get more hits and fewer walks with runners on first than with the bases empty because the pitcher does not want to risk the walk that would put the runner in scoring position. Such qualifications aside, however, Bill's and Pete's basic formulae do attempt to focus on a player's individual offensive contribution apart from the situational context.

A SECOND VIRTUE of the statistics derived from these equations is that they permit comparison of disparate types of run producers. Home runs are not a good basis of discussing the skills of Ty Cobb. RBIs are not a meaningful way of assessing Wee Willie Keeler's career, nor batting average Harmon Killebrew's. Runs Created and Linear Weights are, in this sense, omnibus stats, allowing us to put all batters on the same continuum because productivity is measured not by one, but by a multitude of batting events contained in the equations.

For all their advantages, however, these "New Statistics" also have limitations. Most notably, the "runs" derived from such formulae do not represent runs actually scored on the field of play, but **runs that should have resulted given the various batting events that make up each equation.** Now granted the correlation, as noted earlier, between runs predicted and runs scored is quite high when the formulae are applied to large bodies of data: e.g., league runs in a given year, or all major league games from 1901. But what happens when the formulae are applied to a smaller data base? The degree of accuracy drops. Bill, for one, readily admits that his basic Runs Created formula doesn't work well in all cases for predicting runs that an individual team should score in a season.

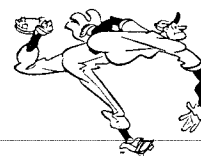
As a consequence, he has developed more complex versions of the formula that take more events into consideration. In the 1984 *Abstract*, the technical version of the formula included variables for stolen bases, caught

stealing, grounded into double plays, sacrifice hits, sacrifice flies and hit by pitcher. Note, however, that each of the new variables is situation-dependent. Attempting to steal a base is an elective situation not entirely under a runner's control. Rickey Henderson can't steal second if the bag is already occupied by another runner; and perhaps he ought not steal second if his team is behind by four runs with Dave Winfield at bat: Opening first would allow the pitcher to intentionally walk Winfield and face a less dangerous batter. Sacrifice hits, sacrifice flies and grounding into double plays depend on the presence of a runner at the appropriate base. Hit by pitcher we've already discussed. These particulars aside, one point seems clear: **In order to make a formula more accurate as the data base gets smaller, situation-dependent variables must be reintroduced into the equation.**

Why is this necessary? Because in baseball **producing a run, except in the case of a run scored by a player hitting a home run, is always situation-dependent:** Except in the case of a run scored by a homer, it always takes the cooperative efforts of at least two players to manufacture a run. Some examples:

1. Smith doubles; Jones singles him home. Two players manufacture the run.
2. Smith reaches first on an error; Jones singles, Smith going to third; Doe grounds out, Smith scoring and Jones going to second. Three players manufacture the run.
3. Smith gets hit by pitch; Jones sacrifices Smith to second; Doe hits a ground ball and reaches first when the pitcher boots it for an error, Smith going to third; Everyman grounds out, Smith scoring. Four players manufacture the run. Moreover, each batting event in this example was situation-dependent, in particular Everyman's RBI. The sacrifice bunt was the closest thing to an exhibition of batting skill.
4. Smith hits a homer with the bases empty. One player manufactures the run. This is the exception to the rule stated above.
5. Smith singles; Jones homers. Two players manufacture the first run; one player manufactures the second.
6. Smith singles; Jones doubles, Smith going to third; Doe grounds out to end the inning. No run manufactured, despite Smith's and Jones' efforts, because Doe did not succeed. No run despite two hits.

When "New Statistics" like Runs Created and Linear Weights are applied to a large body of data, the situation-dependent effects tend to cancel each other out. But as





the data base gets smaller, situation-dependent effects make themselves felt again.

IF THE PRIMARY purpose of baseball offense — to score runs — is on the whole a cooperative and thus situation-dependent venture, not simply an individual affair, then efforts to minimize situation dependency and to isolate the individual batter can be said to distort the perception of the game as it is really played. To be fair, however, such distortion is no less true of “counting stats” as well. For example, in the aforementioned example 2, Smith gets credit for a run scored, Doe gets credit for an RBI, but Jones gets no credit for his part in manufacturing the run even though he got the only real hit. The run scored and RBI credits fail to tell the whole story. Both the fascination and bane of baseball statistics in general is that they allow us the illusion of focusing on individual achievement, but only by crediting individual players for runs or wins that are actually produced by the efforts of a number of teammates. Neither traditional nor “New” statistics are exempt from this flattening of perspective.

A formula that would perfectly correlate individual offensive contributions to runs would have to have variables for all events, situation-dependent or not. However, since an aim of the “New Statistics” is to minimize situation dependency, such a formula would run counter to their avowed purpose. In this sense, technical versions of Bill’s or Pete’s basic formulae that reintroduce situation-dependent variables actually compromise their original intent. It is understandable why such technical versions are desirable: They are more accurate to the individual team level. But philosophically, then, why not attempt to introduce variables to make the formulae accurate for individual players rather than claiming that a league’s or a team’s runs ought to be reallocated (re-credited) among players on the basis of “situation-free” equations? If a statistical “well” is to be polluted with situation dependencies, why not go all the way? But if the aim is to minimize situation dependencies, then the basic formulae remain the most philosophically desirable. For this reason, I find myself still most taken with Bill’s basic Runs Created formula. It is elegant: It logically minimizes situation-dependent variables while at the same time it refrains from assigning weights to various offensive events. The problem with weighting events, characteristic of even Pete’s basic formula, is that it has in-

evitably led to recurrent adjustment of the weights, which are themselves only averages of the run-scoring potential of each event over time. And that suggests that the weights themselves are tinged with situation dependency.

Rightly understood, Runs Created and Linear Weights have a perfectly legitimate and even valuable function when applied to an individual player’s record. Each presents an idealized assessment of what a player **should have contributed in runs or wins if his batting line were the only relevant consideration**. Some players, as would be expected, come off looking as good as they should: Ruth, Williams, Schmidt. Other players — and this is the most interesting aspect of any statistic for me — come off looking better than one would expect: Pete and Bill have persuasively argued in their work that Jose Cruz is a far better player than traditional stats indicate, and that Dave Winfield, already notable by traditional norms, is really quite awesome. And naturally some players do suffer in the computations: Pete’s Linear Weights, for example, really hammer on Hack Wilson and Jake Beckley.

Now there’s nothing wrong with having a player place low on a statistical list. Note, again, Cobb in homers, Keeler in RBIs and Killebrew in batting average. The problem is that as Runs Created and Linear Weights are omnibus stats there’s a tendency to treat them also as absolute measures of player prowess, the last and only word on how good a player was. Since Pete Palmer has factored “everything” into his Linear Weights formula and by that formula Jake Beckley doesn’t rate even in the top 300 batters in career runs contributed above the average, it would appear that it was only by some fluke that he managed to accumulate 1,600 runs scored and 1,575 RBIs. Or as Pete himself has remarked concerning Hack Wilson’s 191-RBI season and Hank Greenberg’s 183-RBI season:

It is hard to believe that Hack Wilson and Hank Greenberg, the top two RBI performers of all time on a seasonal basis, did not have even one top-hundred season in [Linear Weights] between them, yet it is true; their RBI totals were “sports,” produced as much by circumstance as by superman efforts.

The Hidden Game of Baseball, p. 225

But is this the only way to look at the numbers? Pete’s formula suggests that given the average weight of the batting events measured, Wilson, Greenberg and Beckley



were far less productive than other hitters. He concludes that the exceptional "counter" totals they compiled were due to favorable circumstances (that is, situation dependencies) rather than skill. But one can also conclude that these three players were **more** skillful than others because they tended to produce runs **at rates above the averages** assigned by Pete to the batting events he measured. To put it another way, if run production on the whole is situation-dependent for particular seasons or over a career, these players seemed more adept than others at taking advantage of such situations and converting them into runs.

"Counting stats" like runs scored and RBIs, both season and career totals, may be important as cross-checks against the results derived by formulae like Runs Created and Linear Weights. As is noted earlier, the "New Statistics" generate "runs" not as they are actually scored on the field of play, but as they should have resulted given the various batting events that make up each equation. The formulae, striving to minimize situation dependency, tend to favor those players with large numbers of extra-base hits, walks, total bases and, in particular, home runs, because that is the least situation-dependent batting event of all in terms of producing runs. By contrast, "counting stats" are quite situation-dependent, about as much as the act of actually scoring a run on the field. At the same time, they have the virtue of recording a run produced whether it was "earned" by a home run or "lucked into" by a hit batter, sacrifice, error and ground out. "Counting stats" also don't consider if a batter's singles score more runners than the league average. A run is a run is a run, not a function of variables in an equation.

Players like Beckley, Wilson and Greenberg come off better in these "counting stats" because their efforts don't conform well to the "New Statistics" formulae. But that's a limitation in the formulae, not in these men. We shouldn't dismiss their achievements as "sports." We need to find other statistical measures that give their contributions due honor.

IN BASEBALL, AND LIFE itself, there are a select few whose talents can bend fortune to their favor. There are numerous others inferior in talent but fortunate enough to take advantage of favorable circumstance. We have both the Washingtons and the Grants, the Ruths and the Marises. Many "counting" records have been produced by men who might not come off well in equations that stress overall skills in a season or career. Roger Maris was surely not as complete a hitter as Ruth or Mickey Mantle, but he "put it together" and took advantage of the situation in 1961 to hit 61 homers. Hack Wilson was not the hitter that Ruth or Gehrig or Foxx or

Simmons were, but in 1930, when the rabbit ball turned into a kangaroo, when each of these other men was also reaping the benefits, it was Wilson who drove in 191 runs. These hard numbers deserve to be recognized as genuine achievement thresholds without attempts to "asterisk" them, as fans old and new have sometimes threatened to do.

Let me summarize this discussion by drawing some conclusions:

(1) All statistics are shadows, perceived from different angles, of the real game. No one stat can be an absolute measure of player achievement because all are abstractions of different aspects of what happens on the field. As thoughtful fans, we need to be aware of both the promise and limits that each statistical approach has and not ask it to do what it cannot.

(2) Traditional "counting stats" are highly situation-dependent and/or one-dimensional in their focus. They are ill-suited, without analysis and qualification, to be measures of comparative player excellence. More does not necessarily mean superior. At the same time, these stats do reflect the high situation dependency of the game itself, and they capture the sometimes-unexpected thresholds of player achievement without methodological preconceptions that would relegate certain feats to the "freak chance bin."

(3) The "New Statistics" legitimately seek to minimize situation dependency in assessing player performance through a number of omnibus stats that allow us to compare disparate types of players along the same continuum. At the same time, these stats are no more absolute in their assessments than any others can be. Indeed, by making runs a function only of individual skills, eliminating chance, error, opportunism and cooperation from consideration, they are further removed, although not necessarily less accurate for being so, from the game as played than "counter stats," polluted as the latter are by situation dependency.

I have written as an enthusiast both of "counting stats" and the "New Statistics," although I realize that parts of this discussion might be construed as a deflating of the "New Statistics" and a reassertion of "counters." If so, it's only because the balance in recent years has tilted too much in favor of over-ambitious claims for the new and unwarranted dismissal of the old. Bill James and Pete Palmer have taught me to look at baseball with new eyes, and the insights I've gained on the game from them I'll not relinquish. At the same time, the traditional statistics still remain quite serviceable for many purposes. One of my favorites, Runs Produced, has been disparaged of late and deserves its day in court. But that's another discussion.

Let's Hear It Again — Ruth's 1920 Best Ever

LARRY THOMPSON

Simplified method of rating top one-season hitting performances shows Babe's first year with Yankees at the head of the pack; new formula permits comparisons between stars of various eras.

ONE OF THE MOST enduring and interesting of baseball controversies is a comparison of hitters playing in different eras. How do Babe Ruth's 60 home runs in 1927 compare with Ty Cobb's .420 batting average in 1911? Did Ted Williams and Honus Wagner in their best years equal Ruth and Cobb? How do the moderns — Rod Carew, George Brett and Mike Schmidt — compare with the great hitters of the past?

To compare hitters from different eras (or even different years in the same era) two measurements are required. First, we need a number that expresses the total offensive performance of a player in a given year. All the conventional statistics — batting average, home runs, runs batted in, slugging average — are deficient in expressing overall hitting performance. Second, once we find a measurement of total offensive performance, we must find a way of comparing the different conditions facing a hitter in, for example, 1911 and 1927.

The first question is the more difficult, and over the years baseball experts have developed a number of measurement schemes designed to compare the value of an apple (i.e., a home run) with the value of an orange (a stolen base). To date, the best resolution of the apples and oranges problem is John Thorn and Pete Palmer's complex study in their book, *The Hidden Game of Baseball* (Doubleday, 1984). Aided by a computer simulation of every game since 1901, Thorn and Palmer developed a formula called Linear Weights (LWTS) that assigns a numerical value to each offensive event as follows:

1B — .46; 2B — .80; 3B — 1.02; HR — 1.40; BB and HBP — .33; SB — .30; CS — -.60.

The sum of a hitter's performance using the LWTS formula, which is presented here only in part, is runs. An average single in an average game results in .46 runs, an average double results in .80 runs, etc. The best hitter produces more runs in a career or a season than his competition.

The LWTS formula, if we accept its validity, opens up

endless possibilities for tinkering. A minor difficulty is that the end result of an LWTS calculation is not recognizable to a baseball fan as a "statistic." It will be a long time before the public becomes aware that an LWTS of 80 runs above average in a single season is exceptional. A second minor difficulty is that the LWTS formula uses statistics (caught stealing and hit by pitch) that are not available to the average fan. To become universally computable, the LWTS formula requires some simplification, hopefully without doing violence to the elegant original.

A third and more serious difficulty for single-season comparisons is that LWTS measures runs, but runs are a function of plate appearances. All other things being equal, a batter with 700 plate appearances will cause more runs than another batter with 600 plate appearances. Hitters of the last two decades, aided by a 162-game schedule, have a four percent advantage over their predecessors who played 154 games per year. Likewise hitters who compile impressive statistics in a single season but, for one reason or another, fail to accumulate a large number of plate appearances are less likely to achieve a high LWTS rating. Brett's injury-ridden 1980 season (507 ABs and BBs), Williams' 1957 season (539 ABs and BBs) and Schmidt's strike-shortened 1981 season are examples. Finally, in "Guns of August" heavy-hitting years, a player will have more plate appearances than his counterpart in years of hitting feebleness. In 1927 Ruth accumulated 678 plate appearances (ABs and BBs) in 151 games; in 1908 Wagner totaled 622 plate appearances — or 56 fewer — in 151 games. In other words the Babe had nine percent more opportunities to produce runs in the same number of games played.

Summing up, LWTS measures total batting **output**. For single-season comparisons it would seem preferable to measure batting **efficiency**, the measure of success per plate appearance. The LWTS formula can be adapted to serve this purpose.

Let's first make a cosmetic change in the LWTS form-

ula to convert values for offensive events into a more recognizable number and to eliminate from the formula the relatively-insignificant statistics for HBP and CS. The revised values are:

1B — 1.0; 2B — 1.7; 3B — 2.2; HR — 3.0; BB — .7; SB — .3.

We have changed the value of each offensive event but not the relationships among those values. In the LWTS formula a double equaled 1.7 singles (.80 ÷ .46 = 1.696), a triple equaled 2.2 singles, etc. However, the .3 value of a stolen base requires some explanation. In the LWTS formula a net value (SB minus CS) for stolen bases of the equivalent of .3 would require a success ratio of 80 percent. Consequently, a value of .3 for a stolen base may undervalue the stolen base on a few occasions (Max Carey's 51 successful steals in 53 attempts in 1922) and overvalue it on many others. Still, a .3 value for a stolen base is a reasonably comfortable figure. A large number of stolen bases — even if the success ratio is less than 80 percent — implies that the player will also take an extra base now and then on a teammate's hit and thereby contribute in a statistically unmeasurable way to his own offensive importance. The stolen base is also relatively unimportant in total offensive performance and a slight misjudgment of its value has only a minor impact.

Now we can unveil our revised LWTS formula:

$$\frac{1B (1.0) + 2B (1.7) + 3B (2.2) + HR (3.0) + BB (.7) + SB (.3)}{AB + BB}$$

The result of this lengthy but simple calculation is a measure of batting efficiency most closely akin to the slugging average. However, slugging average overvalues extra-base hits (2.0 for a 2B compared with a "real" value of only 1.7, etc.) and does not take into account walks and stolen bases, both undeniably of value. Because every statistic needs a name we'll call the figure obtained from our revised formula a Real Slugging Average (RSA).

Now we'll compute the RSA for a real player in a real year — Honus Wagner in his great 1908 season with the Pittsburgh Pirates. His statistics that year read as follows:

G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	BB	SB	BA	SA
151	568	201	39	19	10	54	53	.354	.542

Not a bad set of numbers. If Wagner were playing in the 1980s, his 1908 season would make him a strong contender — possibly a shoo-in — for MVP honors. Converting these totals into RSA, we get a .5222 figure for Wagner. To simplify things we'll move the decimal point three spaces to the right and call Wagner's 1908 RSA 522.2.

For comparative purposes let's look at Ruth's record for 1927 — the year he hit 60 home runs:

G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	BB	SB	BA	SA
151	540	192	29	8	60	138	7	.356	.772

Using the revised formula, we find that the Babe had a 649.9 RSA that year. Thus his 1927 performance seems clearly superior to Wagner's 1908 season. Ruth hit 60 home runs, Wagner only 10; Ruth exceeded Wagner in batting average, slugging average and bases on balls. But wait a minute. **Everybody** hit more home runs in 1927 than in 1908. The American League's batting average in 1927 was .285 and its slugging average .399. In 1908 the National League batted only .239 and the slugging average was an anemic .306. A direct comparison of Ruth's and Wagner's RSAs would only be valid if they played in the same league in the same year. They didn't, and conditions changed mightily between 1908 and 1927. To compare Ruth and Wagner we need a method to equate their RSAs.

BASEBALL EXPERTS HAVE suggested a number of ways to make the cross-era and cross-league comparisons of different players. The solution offered here is simple though laborious. We compare Wagner's 1908 RSA with the RSA of the National League that season and Ruth's with the RSA of the American League in 1927. Then we can determine which was better (expressed in percentage terms) compared with the average hitting accomplishment in his league. The formula is: A player's RSA divided by the league RSA equals the player's relative performance.

To calculate league RSA we need the number of AB, H, 2B, 3B, HR, RBI and SB in a given year. *The Baseball Encyclopedia* does not list total league at-bats and hits, but *The Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball* does. Calculating league RSA in the same way as individual RSA produces a 323.8 RSA for the National League in 1908 and a 396.1 figure for the American League in 1927.

Applying the formula for determining a player's relative hitting performance, we find that Wagner winds up with 161.3 and Ruth with 164.1. In other words, Ruth was 64.1 percent better than the average American League hitter in 1927 and Wagner was 61.3 percent better than the average National League hitter of 1908. Ruth's offensive performance exceeded that of Wagner, but the application of a relative comparison substantially reduced the difference between the two. Wagner's 1908 batting record was almost as good as Ruth's in 1927. (It could, of course, be argued that Wagner's defensive contribution at shortstop more than made up the hitting difference between the two and that Wagner was the more valuable player. But that's another study.)

The outstanding single-season hitting performances listed in the accompanying table were calculated in the

Best Hitting Seasons Since 1900

Player-Year	Player's RSA	League RSA	Relative Performance	Player-Year	Player's RSA	League RSA	Relative Performance
1. Babe Ruth — 1920	699.3	385.9	181.2	31. Jimmie Foxx — 1933	604.6	386.1	156.6
2. Babe Ruth — 1921	698.7	401.5	174.0	32. Ted Williams — 1947	575.7	367.7	156.6
3. Babe Ruth — 1923	662.1	388.2	170.6	33. Ty Cobb — 1912	567.1	363.5	156.0
4. Ted Williams — 1957	636.5	376.1	169.2	34. Mike Schmidt — 1981	572.4	367.7	156.0
5. Ted Williams — 1941	645.3	386.0	167.2	35. Nap Lajoie — 1901	580.4	373.8	155.3
6. Ty Cobb — 1910	553.4	332.7	166.3	36. Lou Gehrig — 1934	613.7	395.8	155.1
7. Babe Ruth — 1927	649.9	396.1	164.1	37. Babe Ruth — 1928	606.0	391.1	154.9
8. Babe Ruth — 1926	640.2	390.7	163.9	38. Babe Ruth — 1930	630.9	407.4	154.9
9. Lou Gehrig — 1927	648.3	396.1	163.7	39. Joe Morgan — 1976	562.8	364.2	154.5
10. Ty Cobb — 1911	600.6	370.3	162.2	40. Mickey Mantle — 1961	595.6	385.7	154.4
11. Ty Cobb — 1917	549.5	338.8	162.2	41. Frank Robinson — 1966	557.3	361.0	154.4
12. Babe Ruth — 1924	640.5	395.6	161.9	42. Honus Wagner — 1904	516.9	336.4	153.7
13. Ted Williams — 1946	592.1	365.8	161.9	43. Ty Cobb — 1915	532.6	346.7	153.6
14. Rogers Hornsby — 1925	649.6	401.7	161.7	44. Norm Cash — 1961	592.0	385.7	153.5
15. Rogers Hornsby — 1924	620.3	384.2	161.5	45. Lou Gehrig — 1930	624.8	407.4	153.4
16. Ted Williams — 1942	585.0	362.5	161.4	46. Willie Mays — 1965	560.3	365.8	153.2
17. Honus Wagner — 1908	522.2	323.8	161.3	47. Chuck Klein — 1933	546.7	357.1	153.1
18. Mickey Mantle — 1957	604.5	376.1	160.7	48. Ty Cobb — 1913	541.2	353.8	153.0
19. Stan Musial — 1948	607.5	378.8	160.4	49. George Brett — 1980*	595.7	390.6	152.5
20. Jimmie Foxx — 1932	634.8	396.5	160.1	50. Tris Speaker — 1912	553.6	363.5	152.3
21. Rogers Hornsby — 1922	630.2	395.9	159.2	51. Joe Jackson — 1911	562.7	370.3	152.0
22. Nap Lajoie — 1904	518.1	326.8	158.5	52. Nap Lajoie — 1910	505.2	332.7	151.8
23. Carl Yastrzemski — 1967	552.5	349.2	158.2	53. Ted Williams — 1949	584.1	385.5	151.5
24. Babe Ruth — 1919	577.9	365.4	158.2	54. Cy Seymour — 1905	522.5	344.9	151.5
25. Ty Cobb — 1909	524.2	331.7	158.0	55. Ted Williams — 1954	561.4	373.2	150.4
26. Richie Allen — 1972	546.4	346.0	157.9	56. Joe Jackson — 1912	546.8	363.5	150.4
27. Hank Aaron — 1971	574.2	363.6	157.9	57. Jimmie Foxx — 1939	602.9	401.4	150.2
28. Babe Ruth — 1931	616.3	390.5	157.8				
29. Willie McCovey — 1969	575.7	366.0	157.3				
30. Mickey Mantle — 1956	612.1	389.2	157.3				

* Except for the designated-hitter rule in the American League, Brett's 1980 season would rank higher on the list — perhaps about twenty-fifth.

same manner as the aforementioned examples. All of the hitters compiled seasons at least 50 percent better than average — or in other words accomplished more in two plate appearances than the average hitter accomplished in three plate appearances.

Thorn and Palmer calculated a list of best single-season hitting performances using their LWTS formula. The question arises whether my refinement of their work is necessary. Obviously, I would not have repeated their efforts unless I considered my adjustments of their benchmark study to be significant. Why? (1) Calculating single-season performances using my formula is easier and within the capability of the average person with easily available references. (2) My list has better balance. Thorn and Palmer's results highlight players in the heavy-hitting 1920s and 1930s. My list includes more hitters from both the dead-ball and modern eras. (3) Thorn and Palmer omit stolen bases from their calculation of single-season performances because of the unavailability of caught

stealing statistics for all years. My approximation of stolen-base value may be misleading in a few instances, but it seems logical that a good runner such as Cobb deserves credit for base stealing in comparison to a "thunder-foot" like Ted Williams, who stole only 24 bases in his entire career. (4) Thorn and Palmer apply a "park adjustment factor" to hitters. This is a complex calculation and I remain to be convinced that its application to individuals always produces good results. And (5) in Wagner's day about 30 percent of total "offense" consisted of unearned runs; in recent times only 10 percent of all runs are unearned. In calculating a player's run production superiority above the average hitter, does the LWTS formula account for a differing ratio of earned to unearned runs? I'm not sure.

So, qualifications aside, the list of players accomplishing the best hitting seasons since 1900, based on my formula, is presented for the consideration of readers of this publication.

Their Lifetime Batting Averages Higher than Cobb's!

CHARLES W. BEVIS

Pitchers dominate list of players owning perfect career batting averages. John Paciorek's 3-for-3 with Houston Colt .45s in 1963 ranks as best showing among 1,000 group.

PERFECTION IS DIFFICULT to achieve in major league baseball as it is in all professional sports. It is a rare occasion when a pitcher retires all 27 batters in succession. Hits in a dozen consecutive at-bats represent the best streak that any batter has been able to accomplish. And with the exception of Steve Garvey in 1984 plus a handful of outfielders, no fielder appearing in 120 or more games at one position has gone through an entire season without committing an error.

How about perfection over a career? Although seemingly impossible, numerous players have achieved lifetime batting perfection in their major league careers. A check of the records shows that 60 players boast 1,000 major league career averages. The average length of their big league careers was quite short, as you might expect, although the present-day emphasis on relief specialists and the designated hitter rule employed by the American League have enabled a number of pitchers to accomplish the feat because they rarely had an opportunity to make a plate appearance.

As the accompanying list indicates, 65 percent of the players with a 1,000 lifetime batting average are pitchers. Unfortunately for many of these pitchers, their earned-run averages were directly proportional to their batting averages — high! Most lasted only a few innings in the majors, which explains why they were able to sustain their perfect batting averages.

Earl Mossor, who pitched for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1951, is a good example. Brooklyn's pitching troubles that year weren't confined to Ralph Branca's yielding a home run to Bobby Thomson in the ninth inning of the final National League playoff game. Manager Chuck Dressen added rookie Mossor to the roster at the beginning of the season in an attempt to bolster his pitching staff. Mossor relieved in three games, but lasted only one and two-thirds innings and finished with a career 32.40 earned-run average.

In his third and final appearance on May 16, Mossor

relieved Carl Erskine in the first inning of a game at Wrigley Field against the Cubs. After finally retiring the side, Mossor went to bat in the top of the second inning and rapped a single. He didn't make it through the bottom of the second because the Cubs scored four more runs, and Mossor was on his way back to St. Paul of the American Association. But he finished with a career 1,000 batting average.

Only 21 non-pitchers have compiled a 1,000 lifetime batting average, just five since World War II. The last to accomplish the feat was Robert "Roe" Skidmore in a September pinch-hitting appearance with the Cubs in 1970. Manager Leo Durocher sent Skidmore up to bat for pitcher Joe Decker in the bottom of the seventh inning against the Cardinals at Wrigley Field, and the rookie responded with a single in his only major league plate appearance.

The most prolific performance of any 1,000 hitter was delivered in 1963 by John Paciorek, older brother of current-day outfielder-first baseman Tom Paciorek. Called up from Modesto of the Class A California League, 18-year-old John was inserted into the season-ending, mostly-rookie Houston Colt .45 lineup. He played right field and was listed seventh in the batting order. In five plate appearances Paciorek collected three singles and two walks, scored four runs and batted in three in a 13-3 rout of the expansion-rival New York Mets.

Although Paciorek's feat led to the appearance of his picture in *The Sporting News*, it did little for Houston, which finished the 1963 season in next-to-last place. A chronic back ailment which eventually necessitated spinal fusion hampered Paciorek throughout his baseball career and led to his release in June 1968.

Another promising young 1963 rookie also became a lifetime 1,000 hitter and lent some support to a pennant winner. Roy Gleason was a 20-year-old outfielder with the Dodgers' Salem farm team in the Class A Northwest League in 1963. He was added to the major league roster

for the September pennant drive. Two days before the season ended, with Los Angeles already having wrapped up the pennant, Gleason doubled off Philadelphia left-hander Dennis Bennett in his only plate appearance.

More importantly, Gleason served as manager Walter Alston's ace pinch-runner that September, scoring three runs while substituting for slow-footed first baseman Bill Skowron on the basepaths. Gleason's most dramatic contribution came when he scored the tying run in the tenth inning of an early September game against Houston which the Dodgers eventually won, 4-3.

Paciorek and Gleason were both raw talent in 1963; they had been tested only in Class A baseball. Neither ever played another game in the major leagues. But each had something to savor — a 1.000 lifetime batting average!

Players with perfect lifetime batting averages in the major leagues:

Non-Pitchers

3-for-3: John Paciorek, 1963 Houston NL.

2-for-2: Mike Hopkins, 1902 Pittsburgh NL; Steve Biras, 1944 Cleveland AL.

1-for-1: Sparrow McCaffrey, 1889 Columbus AA; Bill Burns, 1902 Baltimore AL; George Yantz, 1912 Chicago NL; Doc Bass, 1918 Boston NL; Ty Pickup, 1918 Philadelphia NL; Bob Watson, 1920 Washington AL; Red Lutz, 1922 Cincinnati NL; John Mohardt, 1922 Detroit AL; Jack Gallagher, 1923 Cleveland AL; Tige Stone, 1923 St. Louis NL; Heinie Odom, 1925 New York AL; Al Wright, 1933 Boston NL; Curly Onis, 1935 Brooklyn NL; Bill Peterman, 1942 Philadelphia NL; Steve Kuczek,

1949 Boston NL; Charlie Lindstrom, 1958 Chicago AL; Roy Gleason, 1963 Los Angeles NL; Roe Skidmore, 1970 Chicago NL.

Pitchers

2-for-2: Frank O'Connor, 1893 Philadelphia NL; Doc Tonkin, 1907 Washington AL; Hal Deviney, 1920 Boston AL; Fred Schemanske, 1923 Washington AL; Chet Kehn, 1942 Brooklyn NL.

1-for-1: Tom Lipp, 1897 Philadelphia NL; Hub Knolls, 1906 Brooklyn NL; John Kull, 1909 Philadelphia AL; Chuck Tompkins, 1912 Cincinnati NL; Bob Ingersoll, 1914 Cincinnati NL; Bill Meehan, 1915 Philadelphia AL; Pete Sims, 1915 St. Louis AL; Uel Eubanks, 1922 Chicago NL; George Abrams, 1923 Cincinnati NL; Johnson Fry, 1923 Cleveland AL; Pete Rambo, 1926 Philadelphia NL; Buzz Wetzel, 1927 Philadelphia AL; Jim Holloway, 1929 Philadelphia NL; Abe White, 1937 St. Louis NL; Tom Lanning, 1938 Philadelphia NL; Charley Suche, 1938 Cleveland AL; Claude Crocker, 1944 Brooklyn NL; Bud Swartz, 1947 St. Louis AL; Ramon Garcia, 1948 Washington AL; Lou Grasmick, 1948 Philadelphia NL; Earl Mossor, 1951 Brooklyn NL; Rupe Toppin, 1962 Kansas City AL; Dave Gray, 1964 Boston AL; Larry Loughlin, 1967 Philadelphia NL; Don Eddy, 1971 Chicago AL; Steve Lawson, 1972 Texas AL; Larry Gowell, 1972 New York AL; Dave Sells, 1975 Los Angeles NL; Mike Dupree, 1976 San Diego NL; Scott Munninghoff, 1980 Philadelphia NL; Mike Rowland, 1981 San Francisco NL; Ray Searage, 1981 New York NL; Steve Shirley, 1982 Los Angeles NL; Dave Van Ohlen, 1984 St. Louis NL.



Thank God for Nuts! They Flavor the Game

DAVID Q. VOIGT

Nonconformists like Mark Fidrych, Sparky Lyle, Jim Piersall, Art Shires and Charley Finley contributed to the sport's lore. The media and the fans also have produced some weirdos.

AMERICA'S ENDURING flirtation with major league baseball still challenges students of national character to try to explain the phenomenon. After all, a typical game offers as little as ten minutes of action during its two-and-one-half-hour course. Obviously other factors must invigorate the spectacle. Not the least of these are the antics of the ubiquitous nuts who are counted among the few constants in the known universe. Indeed, baseball is fortunate to be surfeited with perennial crops of nuts who sprout in all the game's constituencies. By their antics they enrich the game and contribute mightily to the dynamic flow of American humor.

Like the populace that wallows in it, American humor resembles a crazy quilt of diversity which shows little signs of merging into a singular form. Ever mixing and growing, the flood of American humor gains strength from media revolutions which have augmented spoken discourse with publications and broadcasts, thus lending credence to the late Marshall McLuhan's punning observation that the medium provides the massage!

And ever roiling in the flood of American humor is a whirlpool of nutty behavior. Indeed, nuts are almost as old as American society. Until 1800, according to Eric Partridge's *Dictionary of American Slang*, the word "nuts" designated commendable zealous behavior on the part of targeted individuals. But by 1858 the term had come to denote wrongheaded behavior. And so with other shadings the same meaning applies.

Major league baseball's strength owes to its plentiful nuts. This was a point well grasped by the late baseball historian Lee Allen, whose loving recollections of the game's nutty characters included the benediction, "Thank God for Nuts."

Baseball's history is dotted with memorable nutty episodes that have found their place in the humorous folklore of America. What aficionado has not heard of the

Cleveland Wanderers of 1899, losers of 134 games? Or of the 239 errors committed by the 1930 Phillies? Or bonehead Fred Merkle's failure to touch second base that contributed to the Giants' narrow defeat in the 1908 pennant race? Or Babe Ruth's still-debated called-shot homer in the 1932 World Series? Or the miracle Giant victory of 1951, an event that triggered joyous rioting at the Polo Grounds with one loving couple shucking off taboos and copulating in one of the box seats! And in 1983 the Yankees-Royals "Pine Tar" incident unleashed emotions that spilled into a New York appellate court, threatened counteraction from organized umpires and saddled the Yankee owner with a hefty fine for importunate remarks.

In its time each such incident seemed portentous and calamitous, but soon each was perceived as but another of the "silly season" episodes that dot baseball history. As such they become humorous sagas to be told and retold before gatherings of fans.

While designated nuts crop up among the game's heroes and villains, their natural habitat is in the ranks of the fools. As engagingly analyzed by sociologist Orrin E. Klapp, the fool is institutionalized in all major cultures, serving such useful functions as sublimating aggression, releasing tensions, maintaining social control and binding people into communities of laughter. In our highly diverse American society, Klapp dredged up at least 25 subtypes of fools which he lumped into five major categories. These categories are incompetents or ludicrous role failures (like baseball's bonehead Merkle), discounting types who serve to deflate authoritarians (like notorious umpire baiters), nonconformist types (like Alex Johnson refusing to run out ground balls), overconformers (like Ted Williams, who busted more than one hotel room mirror while practicing his swing), and comic butts or jesters (like Tug McGraw, who parried a prying reporter's question to how he spent his salary by

quipping, "Ninety percent I spend on broads and Irish whiskey; the other ten percent I probably waste!")

Klapp's categories make a handy road map for chasing down and sampling baseball's nutty characters. While time and space limits insure notable omissions, the following "kook's tour" can provide a panoramic view of baseball nuts that could inspire more extensive foraging.

1. The Main Grove — the Player Nuts

In numbers and notoriety, nuts from the ranks of major league players lead all other constituencies of baseball. Among players branded as ludicrous role failures none tops the opprobrium heaped on "bonehead" Fred Merkle for failing to touch second base in a crucial 1908 game. But Merkle's all-round first base play was never questioned, which was not the case with latter-day first sackers like Zeke Bonura and Dick "Dr. Strangeglove" Stuart, who rank high in the annals of stone-fingered ineptitude. Recently another, "Marvelous Marv" Throneberry, cashed in on his dubious reputation with a lucrative pact for doing commercials for a beer company; Marv joined other ex-athletes turned barfly touts, including catcher Bob Uecker, who transcended a six-season .200 batting average.

Of course, any player is fated to perform ludicrously somewhere along the line. Indeed, awesome virtuosos like Warren Spahn and Joe DiMaggio had off-moments at the bargaining tables. Spahn once opted for a straight salary of \$25,000 over a club offer of ten cents for each paying fan; that blunder cost him an estimated pay of \$182,000 for 1953! A similar choice once cost DiMaggio an estimated \$50,000 in extra pay.

In what was truly a far-out, ludicrous performance Braves' pitcher Pascual Perez was dubbed "Wrong Way Pascual" in 1982. Slated to pitch at Atlanta Stadium, this Dominican rookie got lost on Atlanta's freeway system and circled the city three times before running out of gas. Yet Pascual's "lost patrol" performance was credited with jollying the slumping Braves out of a losing streak as the much-kidded Pascual, wearing "I-285" on his warmup jacket, later won four games in the team's stretch drive to a divisional championship.

A second Klapp category, that of discounting types, features the kind of nuts who grow in a society where sham, braggadocio, phony behavior and false fronting abound. In his time "King" Kelly was a notorious braggart as in our time was Reggie ("I'm the straw that stirs the drink!") Jackson. However, both managed to match big mouths with big deeds. This was less true of Art Shires, the self-styled "Arthur the Great" who joined the 1928 White Sox saying: "So this is the great American League . . . I'll hit .400." For a time the posturing Shires did well

enough, but he never played a full season. Even in his fourth and final season he brashly sent a telegram of acceptance to the Boston Braves which he signed, "Your latest sensation." Alas, in 82 games he hit .238.

Such effrontery was exceeded by Ken "Hawk" Harrelson, an overrated slugger of the 1960s and now a vice-president of the White Sox, who gained notoriety as a buckler of baseball's conservative dress code by affecting long hair, batting gloves, sweatbands and flamboyant dress. Although denounced as a fop, Harrelson saw his reputation grow when he defied A's owner Charley Finley, who cut him loose. To Finley's discomfiture Harrelson sold his dubious services to the Red Sox in 1968 for a \$75,000 bonus.

IF PLAYER POSEURS like these are themselves deflatable, Babe Ruth's ability to puncture the stuffed shirts of bigwigs had fans laughing with him rather than at him. On meeting Field Marshal Ferdinand Foch at Yankee Stadium, Ruth blithely quipped, "Hiya, Gen, I heard you were in the war!" On another occasion, on meeting President Calvin Coolidge at the Stadium he commented, "Hot as Hell, ain't it, Pres?" While such examples of *lèse majesté* are Olympian, Pete Rose's flip response to the congratulatory phone call from President Jimmy Carter at the close of the 1980 World Series is worthy of the genre. But anyone out to top Ruth in the debunking department would have to go **all** the way; indeed, Ruth helped to debunk his own funeral. Surely he'd have loved this exchange between his pall-bearing buddies Joe Dugan and Waite Hoyt. While serving at the funeral on the steamy day in 1948, Hoyt allowed that he could use a beer. "So could the Babe," quipped Dugan.

As a transgressor of societal norms, Ruth was a giant; his hearty appetite for wenching and carousing evokes astonishing gasps even in this hedonistic and revelatory age. In Ruth's time bowdlerizing reporters tidied up mention of many of his excesses, but enough seeped through to astonish even now.

If freer attitudes towards sex now lighten the onus placed on taboo violators, autobiographical revelations from the pens of players like Jim Bouton, Bo Belinsky, Kirby Higbe and Joe Pepitone still scandalized; thus, for tattle-taling such muckrackers were shunned. Proof may be seen by the stormy reception that greeted Bouton's blockbusting *Ball Four*. To this day Bouton is *persona non grata* at Yankee old-timer games, but his celebrity status dates from the book's appearance.

The sorriest of all player deviants would probably be the accused game-fixers. In this shady enterprise the eight damned Black Sox stand alone, but baseball history is pock-marked with names of others like Jim Devlin, um-

pire Dick Higham, Hal Chase and more recently Denny McLain and drug abusers.

The most memorable of nutty nonconformists may be those players who under game pressures express their frustration creatively. Thus, when outfielder Frenchy Bordagaray concluded an argument with an ump by spitting in the official's eye, he was fined \$500 and suspended. As Frenchy ruefully lamented, "The penalty is a little more than I expectated." But that spitter was outgobbed by Ted Williams, who on multiple occasions spat in the direction of heckling fans or the Fenway Park pressbox. In retaliation Boston writers hung the label of "The Splendid Spitter" on Ted.

IN A CAREER-LONG FEUD with his critics, Williams refused to doff his cap when applauded and at times vented frustrations by signaling hecklers with obscene finger gestures. Once, he angrily flung his bat into the stands and it happened to hit owner Tom Yawkey's housekeeper. For that and other outbursts Ted was targeted as a towering nonconformist.

A pole apart from such nonconformists are the overconformers. In this category Ty Cobb loomed large. His mania to be best fueled both his greatness and his pathetic alienation. On and off the field he was driven; once, upon returning to his hotel room and finding that his roommate had beaten him to the bathtub, he flew into a rage. Later he explained, "Don't you see, I have to be first in everything." Nor did he mellow much when his career ended.

It would seem that hard-driving players risk being branded special sorts of nuts. Thus, Pete Rose's "Charley Hustle" exertions evoke admiration and jeers. To an extent so does Steve Carlton's stoical training which included stuffing his left arm in a vat of rice, sometimes choosing his own catcher, stuffing his ears with cotton when pitching and refusing to communicate with the media. And nonconformists come in varied sorts. Rogers Hornsby eschewed movies lest they damage his batting eye, but steadfastly insisted on frequenting race tracks in defiance of Commissioner Landis' edict.

But some overconformers manage to enthrall fans. One, pitcher Mark Fidrych, became America's beloved "bird" (named after "Sesame Street's" Big Bird). In 1976 Fidrych's antics of talking to the ball, tidying up the mound and darting about thanking teammates after each win charmed fans. When interviewed at the end of his great season, Fidrych gushed, "I'm just loving it . . . what a dream!" Of his charisma his manager said, "Babe Ruth didn't cause this much excitement in his brightest day." Although that is debatable, Fidrych's appeal stemmed from an artful blending of over- and non-conformity. Thus, on meeting President Gerald Ford, he requested

that worthy to get his son to fix him up with a date.

Perhaps one of the keys to becoming a player hero is to avoid being branded as a singular kind of nut. If true, then for sheer variety the category of tricksters, jesters and comics stands alone.

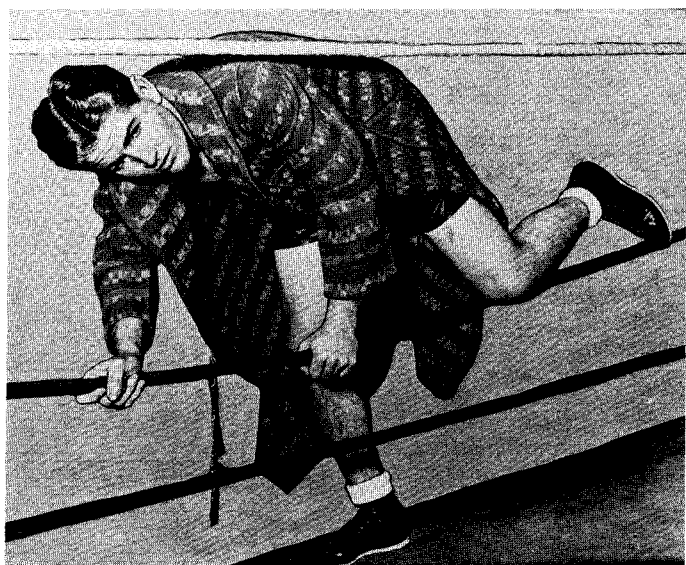
Today jesters and comic butts seem to get lumped together as "flakes," but baseball's broad historical landscape is dotted with unique zanies. Thus, who can forget Germany Schaefer, a turn-of-the-century speedster, stealing second base and then stealing first and being credited with another steal? His ploy had legislators speedily passing a rule forbidding such retreats. Or how about Gabby Street amazing a 1908 crowd by catching a ball which fell 555 feet from the Washington Monument? Ironically, Hank Helf of the 1940 Cleveland Indians caught one dropped from 700 feet and earlier on another Indian, Joe Sprinz, suffered a fracture of the jaw trying to catch an 800-foot drop — but only Street's feat is remembered. Or Lefty Gomez in a bases-loaded situation fielding a ball and tossing it to second baseman Tony Lazzeri, who had no play? Asked why, "Goofy" Gomez replied that he had been reading in the papers about what a smart player Lazzeri was!

At any time practical jokers infest clubhouses, dugouts and bullpens. Among the more notorious was reliever Moe Drabowsky, who used the bullpen phone to order pizzas and sometimes to falsely alert enemy relievers to get warmed up. In the Cardinal clubhouse Walker Cooper once managed to tie a mate's sweatshirt into 25 knots and Del Rice was the master at nailing shoes to floors. Elsewhere, there was Sparky Lyle imprinting his buttocks on the icing of a birthday cake, and Doug Rader picking his nose and planting the detritus on a nearby bare arm.

That such antics now are recorded in newspapers and magazines testifies to changing norms in American society. But if present standards admit grosser forms of behavior, the same standards appear less tolerant towards rule breakers or hecklers. Indeed, some observers have noted a recent decline in bench jockeying, which they blame on the player union movement; supposedly, brotherhood has added an environment of "legislated courtesy."

Because ballplayers always have lived highly pressurized lives, it is not surprising that some display symptoms of mental illness; indeed, it is a tribute to human resilience that so many adapt to the major league pressure cooker. But woebetide one who displays symptoms of mental illness, as our civilization is not that far removed from the days when inmates of Bedlam were objects of public gawking and ridicule.

Thus, the suicides of players like Marty Bergen, Chick Stahl and Willard Hershberger loom darkly in baseball



Art Shires entering the ring

history and are still topics of gossip. To a lesser extent gossip and ridicule are still heaped on players with known or suspected symptoms of mental illness. In the case of outfielder Jimmy Piersall such antics as running the bases backwards and climbing backstops were ridiculed and fans and enemy dugouts labeled him "nutsy"; later when his condition became known, his ordeal was received with mixed bad taste and understanding in a book and a movie. Today the stigmatized Piersall is still viewed as a head case; his recent dismissal from an announcer's job dredged up past examples of his quirky behavior.

Other players with milder symptoms played under the same shadows. Included are pitchers like Steve Blass, whose inability to find the plate ended his career; Steve Dalkowski, whose awesome promise as a fireballer ended in the minors for similar reasons, and Kevin Saucier, who had a fear of hitting batters that made him fearful of going to the park and forced his recent retirement at age 27.

Undoubtedly there are others who conceal their symptoms. For this, blame the societal taboo on mental illness which has many Americans so fearful of exposure that they refuse to draw on medical policies to pay for symptom treatment. And even if ballclubs now provide paid therapy, the strains of exposure still pose formidable obstacles.

On the whole the brighter side eclipses the seamy side in the world of nutty behavior. Indeed, the word nut is such a generalized catchword that nearly everyone has been on its receiving end at some time. Mostly the term evokes laughter and therein it is a source of strength for baseball. Moreover, players are by no means the only designated nuts as the game's other constituencies provide enough cases to deflect attention toward fans, owners, umps, media people and other auxiliaries of major league baseball.

2. The Peripheral Groves

1. *Shaking the Managerial Tree*

Any fan out to gather nuts in May will find good pickings among baseball's managers. In the early years bluff Cap Anson was targeted by fans because of his size and his aggressive, umpire-baiting style. As Anson grew older fans dubbed him "Unk," "Pappy" and "Grandpa" among other hoary terms. In retaliation, Anson once donned a long white beard and wore it during a game, performing well despite the prop and accompanying jeers. Yet fans never ceased ragging the big man, and his passing from the baseball scene left a lonesome gap.

Early in this century a new target, burdened with an even greater Napoleonic complex, appeared in the person of John McGraw. Like Anson, McGraw was targeted by fans everywhere. Some of McGraw's shrewd ploys, like the time he pinched one of his players to authenticate a hit-by-pitch claim, had fans screaming "Muggsy," an epithet he despised. When he loudly berated his 1916 team for quitting, home fans joined the chorus. So did his one-time buddy, then the victorious Dodger manager Wilbert Robinson.

By then Robinson's own nutty credentials were well established. His excess poundage had writers and fans calling him the "Round Robin" and chortling over his earlier attempt to catch a ball dropped from an airplane. Circling under the missile, the roly-poly ex-catcher got the heel of his glove on the missile, which deflected it into his chest. The blow felled him, and as he beheld his spattered chest, Robinson screamed, "I'm dead! I'm covered with blood!" But then, to his chagrin, he learned that the "ball" was really a burst grapefruit!

SIMILAR CHARGES of nutty incompetence dogged Casey Stengel for years — charges Stengel deflected by playing the role of comic jester. One of his more famous capers had him tipping his cap toward fans and releasing a captive bird. Later, as a winning Yankee manager and as a horrendous loser with the 1962 Mets, his mastery of confusing rhetoric charmed fans, even if they knew they were being conned. "We're a fraud," Stengel admitted after a defeat, adding, "The attendance got trimmed again."

Fans responded to nutty jester types like Stengel and his successor Yogi Berra. As a player Berra was already a celebrated malaprop, one who when roused out of bed by a phone call responded to the apologetic caller by saying, "That's okay. I had to get up to answer the phone anyhow." In actuality, Berra is not a very funny character, but like the Hollywood starlet he, too, was made to fit the part.

Of course, it's tough being a manager. Whatever one's

style the manager is a sure bet to be blamed for losses and targeted as some kind of nut. Knowing this, one can imagine ordinary managers thanking the gods that a towering nut like Billy Martin is (or was) around to take up much of the flak. His antics like feuding with players, sometimes punching them out, or kicking dust over umps are too well known to dredge up here.

2. The Owners

Unlike dumped-on managers, baseball owners are better shielded from accusing critics. Still baseball history is dotted with owner nuts. Indeed, in the judgment of financiers, being a baseball owner is being a foolish investor; that so many opt to do so suggests that they are really seeking self-aggrandizement.

The list of nutty owners of baseball history is long. One could begin with Chris von der Ahe, the legendary owner of the St. Louis Browns who became the comic butt of so many funny Dutchman stories in the 1880s and '90s.

Echoes of von der Ahe's style characterized modern owners like Bill Veeck and Charley Finley. As a promoter Veeck's ability to charm fans was proved during four separate stints as a club owner. One of these included a hopeless stint with the St. Louis Browns which saw Veeck cut a legendary caper by signing and sending to bat midget (43" tall) Eddie Gaedel, armed with toy bat and wearing uniform No. 1/8. Such stunts, mingled with a solid knowledge of baseball, endeared the pixie-like Veeck to fans and cast him as a lovable folk character.

Not so with Charles Oscar Finley, whose erratic behavior cast him as a petulant nut. Although brilliantly successful at times, Finley lacked Veeck's comic genius touch. Such Finleyesque ploys as bribing his men to wear beards and mustaches, decking them in garishly-colored uniforms, plumping for orange-colored bases and balls, designating a mule as the team totem and coining corny nicknames were laboriously contrived; often as not they had fans laughing at the owner rather than with him.

Erratic behavior also characterizes incumbent owners Ted Turner and George Steinbrenner. Turner's nutty qualifications stem from his jousts with former Commissioner Bowie Kuhn, who fined Turner for tampering with other team's players and who sternly ended the Atlanta owner's quixotic attempt to function as field manager. And a Turner decision to evict the team totem, Chief Noc-A-Homa, from his wigwam in order to add more seats in 1982 and again in 1983 was followed each year by a serious losing streak. That caper cast Turner as the nut who brought down Noc-A-Homa's curse!

Happily for Turner, whose prowess as a yachtsman was redeeming, there was also the mighty presence of Steinbrenner to overshadow his foibles as a baseball owner.



"I would like to have the playing field entirely surrounded by a bunch of excitable, wild 'nuts.'"

The Yankee boss has won his spurs as the terrible-tempered Mr. Bang among owners by virtue of his frenzied spending at player auctions and his penchant for meddling in team affairs, for firing underlings (including a secretary for getting a wrong kind of sandwich), and for dueling with officials. Indeed, a decade of this stormy petrel finally caused a *New York Times* scribe to explode with this advice: "Go away, please, and take your favorite manager with you."

AMONG OWNERS vilified as meddling nuts Steinbrenner stands tall in baseball history, but at times nearly every owner has been targeted. Thus, reclusive Phil Wrigley's stubborn refusal to light up Wrigley Field, his team's woeful performance since 1945 and such abortive innovations as replacing the manager with a system of rotating coaches helped to certify this late owner. And the roll call of situational nuts among owners included cash-poor types like Gerry Nugent of the Phillies, who ran the club as a parasite team; Judge Emil Fuchs, whose pinchpenny practices at Boston extended to his personally chasing foul balls hit into the stands; Clark Griffith of the Senators, who once sold son-in-law Joe Cronin to make money, and Cal Griffith, whose racist statements and his inability to match his big spending colleagues cast him as a forlorn nut.

3. The Umpires

If being a clubowner facilitates one's nutty reputation, consider the lot of an umpire. From the moment these officials take the field to choruses of ritualized boos their competence is called into question. And once at work hardly a game is played without someone challenging their mental togetherness. Among the plenteous examples, umpire Red Jones used to bristle at being called

"Meat"; to his surprise he was targeted by orchestrated jeers from the White Sox bench which sounded, "We can't call you 'Meat' today!" And the refrain quickly followed, "Because it's Friday!" Then there was Beans Reardon, who was asked by a catcher how he managed to get his square head into a round mask, and plate ump Bill McGowan asking Nick Altrock what happened to the woman who was being carried from the stands on a stretcher and getting in reply, "You called one right and she fainted."

As baseball's manufactured villains, umps have long been cast as comic butts. But occasionally they fight back, as when one visited the hospitalized Leo Durocher; asked why he came by that notorious umpire baiter, the ump replied, "I came to see if you were dying."

4. *The Media*

That so many yarns become part of baseball's folklore owes to the game's vital media constituency. While free publicity has always been a powerful support for baseball, media men have also titillated fans with exposés of baseball's madcap sides.

As myth-makers generations of sportswriters coined and tagged players with nicknames like "The Little Napoleon," "The Duke of Tralee," "The Colossus of Clout" and "The Georgia Peach." And always there were snide labels like "The Splendid Spitter" which could tag players as nuts. Routinely the daily copy of sportswriters bristled with colorful comments that collectively and individually identified nuts.

Among the great sportswriters' sallies the late Red Smith's are treasured by his fans. Because Smith believed that a writer's tongue should ever repose in its natural habitat, the left cheek, he never failed his readers. As a nut designator Smith could call Bowie Kuhn "the greatest commissioner since Spike Eckert" and with barbed sarcasm could pronounce the "free agent system . . . the greatest thing to happen to baseball since Candy Cummings invented the curve."

Alas, it would take volumes to exhaust the witticisms and witlessisms of the media people. And along the way one would bump into deliriously nutty statisticians, dubbed "figure filberts" by one quipster. The original might have been Ernie Lanigan, a notorious flake who daily amazed historian Lee Allen by routinely ordering a breakfast of ham and eggs with a shot of whiskey. Usually he left the ham and eggs.

5. *The Fans*

Finally, any review of baseball's nutty characters must include the fans, that wellspring from which all other constituencies of the game arise. Like the term *kranks*

AN ALL-NUT TEAM FROM MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

Pitchers — Bugs Raymond, Pascual Perez, Bo Belinsky, Lefty Gomez, Dizzy and Daffy Dean, and relievers Al Hrabosky and Moe Drabowsky.

Catchers — Yogi Berra, Clyde Kluttz and Earl Battey.

Infielders — Fred Merkle, Dick Stuart, Ed Bouchee, 1b; Billy Martin, 2b; Garry Templeton, ss, and Germany Schaefer, 3b.

Outfielders — Jim Piersall, Frenchy Bordagaray, Dizzy Nutter, Leon "Daddywags" Wagner, Babe Herman and Peanuts Lowrey.

Owners — Bill Veeck, Charley Finley, Chris von der Ahe, George Steinbrenner and Judge Emil Fuchs (consortium).

Manager — Casey Stengel.

Groundskeeper — Maury Wills.

Commissioner — Spike Eckert.

Chief Scout — Leon (John Dillinger) Hamilton.

Team Talisman — Charles "Victory" Faust.

which it replaced, the word fans is synonymous with nuts. Ubiquitous fans crop up as collectivities and as individuals. Collectivities include the ballpark crowds, the newspaper fans, radio and TV fans, and the collectors and fetish freaks. Among the latter sort, some now shell out money to players for autographs and one of the collector freaks recently paid \$25,000 for a 1910 Honus Wagner card.

AS FOR THE BALLPARK fans, their ranks have always shown madcap tendencies. The victorious pennant celebrations of fans have often been riotous; victory-sated fans tear up playing fields and sometimes trash cities as happened during the Big Buc Binge of 1970 and the Tigers' 1984 victory. Other notorious riots of recent vintage included the Cleveland Beer Riot of 1974 and Chicago's Disco Riot of 1979.

But in the annals of nutty ballpark fans it is the individual characters who stand out. Still remembered fondly in Brooklyn is Hilda Chester and her jangling cowbell and barbaric yawp; on one occasion she dispatched a note to manager Durocher telling him to pull his starting pitcher, and Durocher, thinking the note came from his boss, actually did. Another notorious individual was the curvaceous stripper, Morganna the Wild One, who on several occasions sallied onto the field at Cincinnati and confronted on-deck batters with her resistless demand of "Kiss me."

Certainly baseball's penchant for inspiring tomfoolery and laughter goes far to explain the game's mythic hold on the American populace. This is a point that major league promoters ought never to forget. When cursing hefty salaries or thanking the god Mammon for hefty TV contracts, such worthies should take time to breathe another prayer, "Thank God For Nuts."

Heresy! Players Today Better than Oldtimers

BILL DEANE

The rise in population and integration have more than offset expansion of the major leagues. As a result, the level of diamond talent is at its highest point in the twentieth century.

COMPARISONS BETWEEN oldtime baseball players and modern performers are inevitable: Ty Cobb vs. Pete Rose . . . Babe Ruth vs. Hank Aaron . . . Walter Johnson vs. Nolan Ryan. And, in most cases, the supporters of the oldtimers have the edge when it comes to raw statistics: Nobody in our lifetime will ever bat .367 lifetime, as did Cobb, or win 511 games, as did Cy Young.

There is no question that, overall, modern athletes are superior to their predecessors. Athletes today are bigger, stronger and faster. If Johnny Weismuller, on his finest day in the 100-meter freestyle race, had swum through a timewarp into the 1972 Olympics, he would have found himself eight seconds behind Mark Spitz. Jesse Owens would not come within two feet of the longest jump by modern star Carl Lewis. Glenn Cunningham would finish a couple of hundred yards behind Sebastian Coe in the mile run. In this century, most record times and distances have been improved by 15 to 25 percent, and several by much more.

Why, then, is baseball the one major sport in which measurable numerical records have endured for many decades? This, I hope to prove, is *not* because today's players are inferior; it is because the game is so different and the level of competition today is so much higher.

Advocates of the modern player list a number of factors that have made the game more difficult, particularly for hitters: Night baseball, relief specialists, the slider, bigger gloves, increased media pressure, cross-country travel and jet lag.

Supporters of the oldtimer often cite expansion as a reason for the watering down of talent in the big leagues. "By sheer numbers," wrote one, "one-third of today's (players) wouldn't be in the major leagues if it weren't for expansion . . ."

And that's where we have them. A statement like that fails to consider the impact of the United States popula-

tion — which has tripled in this century — on baseball's level of competition.

The accompanying graph introduces the "Level of Competition Index" (LCI), which indicates the relative degree of difficulty of a man making it to the major leagues at a given time and, simultaneously, reflects the depth of talent in the majors.

LCI is arrived at by dividing the number of major league baseball players at a given time by the number of pro baseball candidates (in millions) at the same time. The number of players is defined as the number of major-league-level teams in existence (according to *The Baseball Encyclopedia*, Macmillan) times 25, the current standard roster size. (Yes, rosters were smaller in the 1800s and early 1900s.) Pro baseball candidates, for the purpose of this computation, are defined as "United States males aged 20-39 years," for which the data have been supplied by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Since the census is taken only every ten years, population estimates for the intervening years had to be made based on each particular decade's rate of growth.

Therefore, an LCI of 25.0 means that there were 25 major league players per one million "candidates." The *lower* the LCI, the *higher* the level of talent.

Since 1876, the advent of what is usually recognized as major league baseball, the highest LCI ever recorded occurred a century ago. The addition of four teams to the existing American Association in 1884, plus the single-year existence of the eight-team Union Association, gave the big leagues 28 teams and brought the LCI to a whopping 78.9. The lowest LCI ever was the 16.0 mark of 1900, one year before the American League claimed major league status.

With the inception of the current two-league format in 1901 — the beginning of the "modern era" — the LCI stood at 31.2. That number shrank slowly but steadily for half a century, dropping to 25.1 in 1910, 23.1 in 1920,

Table 1
**UNITED STATES MALES AGED 20-39 YEARS,
 1870-1980**

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Year	Total	Year	Total
1870	5,804,616	1930	19,535,426
1880	7,935,892	1940	21,071,933
1890	10,279,912	1950	22,855,322
1900	12,466,309	1960	22,531,151
1910	15,927,583	1970	25,547,049
1920	17,333,099	1980	35,906,643

20.5 in 1930, 19.0 in 1940 and 17.5 in 1950, before levelling off to 17.8 in 1960. (While overall population had grown 18.5 percent in the 1950s, the 20-39 age group actually decreased in number due to the low birthrate of the Depression years.)

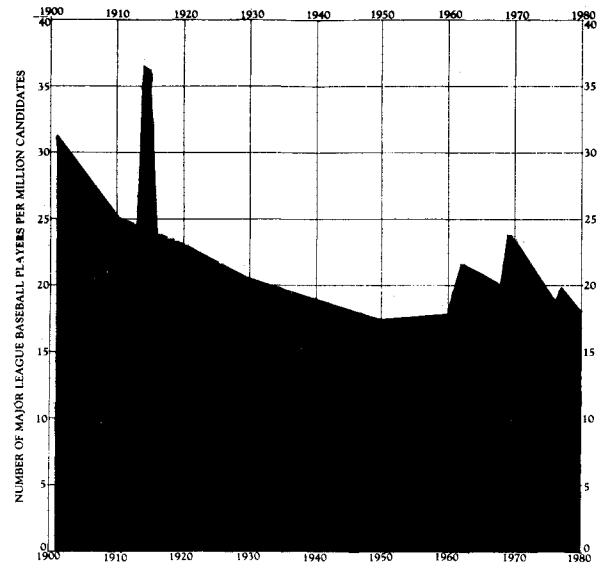
THE 1960s SAW THE formation of eight new teams — the Los Angeles Angels and the new Washington Senators in 1961 (the old Senators had moved to Minnesota and become the Twins); the Houston Colt .45s and New York Mets in 1962, and the Kansas City Royals, Seattle Pilots, Montreal Expos and San Diego Padres in 1969. (The Colt .45s became the Astros in 1965, the Pilots became the Milwaukee Brewers in 1970 and the Senators became the Texas Rangers in 1972.) With this 50 percent expansion of the big leagues, while the talent pool increased by only 13.4 percent during the decade, the LCI jumped to 23.8, the highest since World War I.

The maturing of the “baby boom” generation, however, swiftly reversed that effect over the next decade. The male 20-39 age group grew by an astonishing 40.6 percent during the 1970s, while the number of major leaguers — with the addition of the Seattle Mariners and

Toronto Blue Jays in 1977 — increased only 8.3 percent. This set of circumstances brought the LCI back down to 18.1 by 1980, or about the same as the immediate pre-expansion levels. And with the continuing population growth since the last census, it is altogether probable that the LCI is right now at the lowest point since 1900 — which means that the level of talent in the big leagues today is the highest of this century.

This, of course, takes into account only factors of population and expansion. There are other bases to touch.

As many people have pointed out, baseball was, for many years, virtually the only sport in which a talented athlete could hope to perform for financial gain. There are at least two counters to that contention.



Level of Competition Index (LCI)

Table 2
**NUMBER OF MAJOR LEAGUE
 BASEBALL TEAMS, 1876-1984**

Year	Teams	Year	Teams
1876	8	1892-99	12
1877-78	6	1900	8
1879-81	8	1901-13	16
1882	14	1914-15	24
1883	16	1916-60	16
1884	28	1961	18
1885-89	16	1962-68	20
1890	24	1969-76	24
1891	16	1977-85	26

First, only a select few players really made a decent living playing ball in those days; there were no dreams of multi-million contracts. For example, a star sandlot player of the 1930s (my father) told me he had to refuse a minor league contract offer because he could not live on \$20 a month. The point is, many good athletes couldn't afford to consider a pro sports career, baseball or otherwise.

Second, probably most of the potential baseball players who have opted for other pro sports are either basketball players or skill position football players — and the vast majority of those athletes would not have been allowed to play baseball between 1887 and 1947 because they are black. This leads us to the integration factor.

We have already established that, based on population data alone (“sheer numbers”), the number of major

leaguers per million candidates has dropped from 31 in 1901 to 18 in 1980. But were those 31 of '01 the best baseball players in existence? No, they were the best *white* players. Meanwhile, of the 18 in 1980, perhaps 12 are white.

So, considering the integration factor on top of the population factor, we can say that only about two-fifths of the 1901 players would be good enough to make it to the big leagues today. (And with the much-improved overall caliber of the modern athlete, that fraction would be much smaller.) In a normal distribution (bell) curve of baseball ability, the line separating non-players and minor leaguers from major leaguers is moving farther and farther to the right.

What this tells us is that, by today's standards, Cy Young, Walter Johnson, Christy Mathewson, et al, were hurling against lineups of mostly minor-league-level hitters and Ty Cobb, Honus Wagner, Rogers Hornsby and company were batting against mostly minor-league-level pitchers. These Hall of Famers would have excelled in any era, but their individual statistics were embellished by the low levels of talent of the rank and file players of their times.

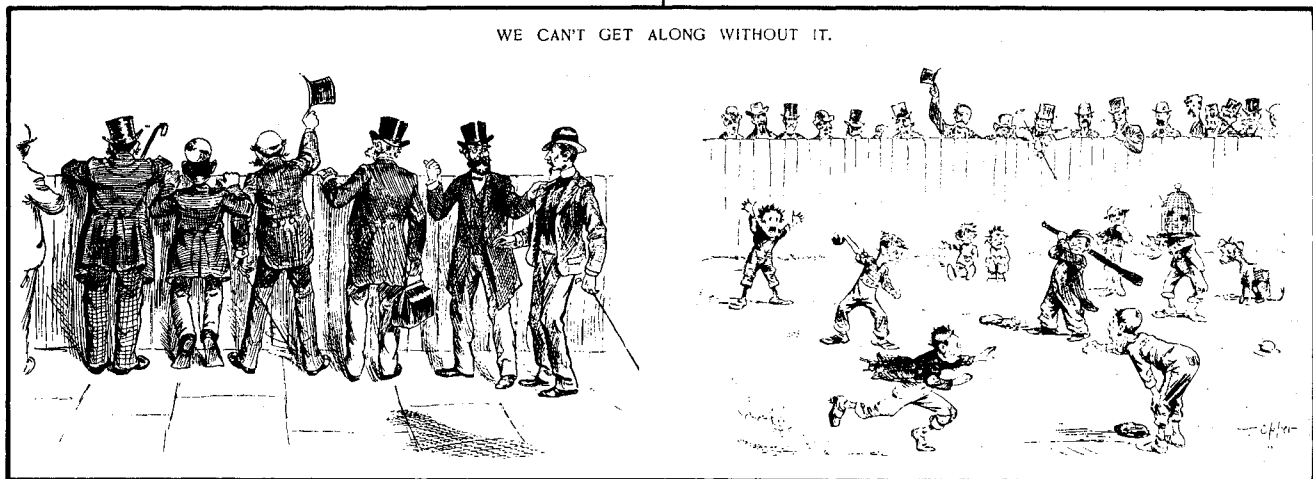
This leaves us only to speculate: What kind of numbers could have been put on the board by the likes of Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Rod Carew, Pete Rose, Steve Carlton and Tom Seaver had they played under similar conditions as these oldtime heroes?

It boggles the mind.

Bill Deane's thesis is unpalatable to many baseball traditionalists, but alas the logic is inescapable. When I first suggested — in an article in *The Sporting News* in September 1977 marking the fiftieth anniversary of Babe Ruth's 60 homers ("Maybe Babe, Not Rog, Should Have An Asterisk!") — that the population factor has been unfairly protecting the records of the old-timers, the mail poured in. One letter began, "You commie pinko!" and continued in that vein for eight single-spaced typewritten pages. But when I repeated the theme at the annual SABR convention in Providence in 1984, the audience reaction was subdued and thoughtful. (Fellow SABR member Dick Cramer reached a similar conclusion by an entirely different statistical route as explained in his article "Average Batting Skill Through Major League History" in the 1980 *Baseball Research Journal*.)

It would seem the time has at last come when reflective, analytical historians and SABRmetricians can accept what only eight short years ago was unacceptable. I would go a step further: In view of the facts that (a) today's best female athletes have been able to equal the best records compiled in many sports by the best male athletes of 60 years ago and (b) today's best females are not good enough to play major league baseball, ergo the conclusion is stubbornly clear: The best male athletes of the 1920s, including Babe Ruth, just possibly might not fare very well in big league baseball today. Sorry, Gramps, but we gotta tell it like it is.

John B. Holway



New System Devised to Rank Base Thiefs

JIM WEIGAND

Maury Wills' +78.95 SBR (Stolen Base Rating) in 1962 easily heads the list, with Rickey Henderson next. Lou Brock and Joe Morgan hold the top spots in the cumulative SBR totals.

INTEREST IN THE ART OF BASE stealing took quantum leaps in the 1960s because of Luis Aparicio and Maury Wills. Lou Brock's accomplishments focused even more attention on diamond thievery in the 1970s, and in the 1980s Rickey Henderson, Tim Lincecum and, more recently, Vince Coleman further stimulated appreciation of the running game.

The record-breaking theft totals compiled by Wills, then Brock and later Henderson captivated both the fans and the media to only a slightly lesser degree than did the assaults of first Roger Maris and later Hank Aaron on Babe Ruth's hallowed home-run marks and Pete Rose's dethronement of Ty Cobb in 1985 as the career hit leader.

As in the Maris, Aaron and Rose situations, base stealers also are usually rated only on total output — or what might be termed “the prolific.” The other yardstick sometimes used in measuring theft artists is stolen base percentage — or “the efficient.”

A method that combines “the prolific” with “the efficient” — and determines “the proficient” — would seem to be a more appropriate way to judge base stealers. This “Stolen Base Rating” reflects the number of thefts above (or below) the league average that are achieved by a player. The formula for “Stolen Base Rating” (SBR) is as follows:

$$SBR = \text{player's SB} - \left(\text{player's CS} \times \frac{\text{league SB}}{\text{league CS}} \right)$$

Here are examples of how SBR works: Suppose Johnny Jones is caught stealing 13 times while the league average is two steals out of every three attempts. Jones would have to swipe 26 bases to equal the league rate. If he had 40 thefts, his SBR would be +14.00, whereas if he had just 12 steals, his SBR would be -14.00.

It should be noted that SBR penalizes players who steal often but with poor success as well as those who are quite successful but steal seldom. At the same time the method permits fair comparisons between players with widely-divergent theft totals. For instance, the Johnny Jones at

TABLE 1
Yearly Stolen Base Rating Leaders

American League			National League		
Year - Player	SB-CS	SBR	Year - Player	SB-CS	SBR
1951 - Minoso	31-10	17.72	1951 - Jethroe	35- 5	27.27
1952 - Jensen	18- 6	10.92	1952 - Reese	30- 5	23.61
1953 - Jensen	18- 8	9.36	1953 - Reese	22- 6	12.59
1954 - Busby	17- 2	14.51	1954 - Bruton	34-13	15.75
1955 - Torgeson	9- 0	9.00	1955 - Mays	24- 4	18.78
1956 - Aparicio	21- 4	15.50	1956 - Mays	40-10	24.67
1957 - Aparicio	28- 8	18.32	1957 - Temple	19- 5	11.15
1958 - Aparicio	29- 6	21.44	1958 - Mays	31- 6	21.14
1959 - Aparicio	56-13	33.10	1959 - Mays	27- 4	20.52
1960 - Aparicio	51- 8	36.57	1960 - Wills	50-12	30.79
1961 - Aparicio	53-13	28.84	1961 - Robinson	22- 3	17.13
1962 - Wood	24- 3	18.25	1962 - Wills	104-13	78.95
1963 - Aparicio	40- 6	27.73	1963 - Aaron	31- 5	24.06
1964 - Aparicio	57-17	26.40	1964 - Wills	53-17	27.20
1965 - Versalles	27- 5	17.14	1965 - Wills	94-31	40.17
1966 - Campaneris	52-10	35.38	1966 - Brock	74-18	47.15
1967 - Campaneris	55-16	31.89	1967 - Brock	52-18	25.42
1968 - Campaneris	62-22	24.12	1968 - Brock	62-12	43.63
1969 - Campaneris	62- 8	47.50	1969 - Bonds	45- 4	39.04
1970 - Otis	33- 2	29.93	1970 - Bonds	48-10	27.75
1971 - Otis	52- 8	39.35	1971 - Brock	64-19	29.24
1972 - Campaneris	52-14	29.84	1972 - Bonds	44- 6	33.89
1973 - Harper	54-14	31.59	1973 - Morgan	67-15	40.48
1974 - Jackson	25- 5	16.86	1974 - Brock	118-33	51.79
1975 - Rivers	70-14	46.73	1975 - Lopes	77-12	51.71
1976 - Campaneris	54-12	30.61	1976 - Lopes	63-10	42.85
1977 - Page	42- 5	34.19	1977 - Taveras	70-18	36.80
1978 - Julio Cruz	59-10	42.51	1978 - Lopes	45- 4	36.54
1979 - Wilson	83-12	61.38	1979 - Moreno	77-21	36.31
1980 - Wilson	79-10	60.23	1980 - LeFlore	97-19	55.15
1981 - Julio Cruz	43- 8	29.89	1981 - Raines	71-11	48.55
1982 - Henderson	130-42	56.35	1982 - Raines	78-16	43.31
1983 - Henderson	108-19	68.96	1983 - Raines	90-14	61.26
1984 - Wilson	47- 5	38.17	1984 - Raines	75-10	52.65
1985 - Henderson	80-10	59.48	1985 - Coleman	110-25	52.88

40-13 in the previous example and the equally fictitious Sammy Smith at 18-2 would have identical SBRs of +14.00 in a league with an average of two successes in each three attempts.

In 1980 when Rickey Henderson captured his first base-stealing title with 100 thefts, the proficient Willie Wilson (79-10, +60.23) beat out both the prolific Hen-

derson (100-26, +51.19) and the efficient Toby Harrah (17-2, +13.25).

Over the past 35 years — or since the National League began compiling CS statistics in 1951 — the best SBR was that produced by Maury Wills in 1962. His amazing 104 steals in 117 attempts gave him a +78.95 SBR rating, which has withstood all threats.

It is hard to imagine that anyone will surpass Wills' fantastic 1962 SBR record. The player who has come closest was Henderson in 1983 when his 108 thefts in 127 attempts gave him a +68.96 rating. Henderson, in fact, has posted three of the seven top SBRs, finishing with +59.48 in 1985 and +56.35 in 1982. Willie Wilson had

TABLE 3
Top Ten SBR Rankings

Player	Yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pts.
Lou Brock	13	5	4	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	— 111
Luis Aparicio	14	8	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	— 109
Bert Campaneris	12	6	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	— 97
Joe Morgan	13	1	4	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	— 96
Maury Wills	9	4	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	— 75
Willie Mays	9	4	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	— 72
Tommy Harper	11	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	— 71
Dave Lopes	9	3	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	— 66
Willie Wilson	8	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	— 62
Vada Pinson	9	0	3	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	— 61
Mickey Mantle	9	0	1	3	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	— 56
Rickey Henderson	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	— 56

the leaders in the latter compilation because of the increased emphasis in recent years on the running game. SBRs that led the league in the 1950s would be hard pressed to make the Top Ten 30 years later.

Irrespective of the era, the dominant base stealers can be determined by considering only those who rank among the Top Ten in SBR each year in their respective leagues. This ranking (*Table 3*), in which ten points were awarded for a first-place finish, nine for a second, etc., emphasizes that Aparicio and Brock were the most dominant base stealers of the past 35 years, but Mickey Mantle's appearance on the list may be a surprise to all but the zealots. Rickey Henderson, with 56 points in seven years, should move up quickly on this list.

On the other side of the coin are those with bad SBRs as revealed in *Table 4*. This group consists of poor base stealers, not necessarily poor base runners. Some players couldn't run and thus seldom tried to steal; examples include Gus Triandos, whose SB-CS figures were 1-0 for 1,206 games; Bob Tillman, 1-0 in 775 games, and Al Ferrara, 0-1 in 574 games. But poor base stealers make frequent efforts to swipe a base and have a success ratio well below the league average. What do you suppose Pete Rose, the manager, would do with Pete Rose, the player, if he studied *Table 4*?

TABLE 4
Rear Guard Among Base Stealers

Player	Years	SB	CS	SBA	SB%	SBR
Jerry Morales	1969-83	37	57	94	39.36	-74.06
Duane Kuiper	1974-85	52	71	123	42.28	-73.06
Pete Rose	1963-85	195	149	344	56.69	-72.12
Buddy Bell	1972-85	48	69	117	41.03	-71.18
Chet Lemon	1975-85	51	66	117	43.59	-66.95
Rick Monday	1966-84	98	91	189	51.85	-64.61
Bob Bailey	1962-78	85	83	168	50.60	-56.05
Alfredo Griffin	1976-85	102	85	187	54.55	-55.15
Dave Parker	1973-85	113	93	232	59.91	-54.01
Bob Boone	1972-85	31	43	74	41.89	-53.99
Manny Trillo	1973-85	54	52	106	50.94	-53.24
Denis Menke	1962-74	34	54	88	38.64	-52.07
Greg Gross	1973-85	38	44	82	46.34	-51.09
Jay Johnstone	1966-85	50	54	104	48.08	-50.86
Chris Speier	1971-85	33	42	75	44.00	-50.26

TABLE 2
Cumulative SBR Totals

Player	Years	SB	CS	SBA	SB%	SBR
Lou Brock	1961-79	938	307	1245	75.34	393.84
Joe Morgan	1963-84	689	162	851	80.96	390.10
Dave Lopes	1972-85	530	105	635	83.46	323.92
Bert Campaneris	1964-83	649	199	848	76.53	311.38
Rickey Henderson	1979-85	573	148	721	79.47	303.30
Willie Wilson	1976-85	436	81	517	84.33	288.94
Luis Aparicio	1956-73	506	136	642	78.82	273.10
Tim Raines	1979-85	391	60	451	86.70	262.21
Maury Wills	1959-72	586	208	794	73.80	249.84
Tommy Harper	1962-76	408	116	524	77.86	218.75
Ron LeFlore	1974-82	455	142	597	76.21	202.41
Julio Cruz	1977-85	336	76	412	81.55	199.35
Cesar Cedeno	1970-85	549	178	727	75.52	197.06
Amos Otis	1967-84	341	93	434	78.57	186.55
Willie Davis	1960-79	398	131	529	75.24	178.39
Willie Mays	1951-73	338	103	441	76.64	176.07
Fred Patek	1968-81	385	131	516	74.61	166.06
Bobby Bonds	1968-81	461	169	630	73.17	160.62
Omar Moreno	1975-85	470	166	636	73.90	129.20
Miguel Dtlone	1974-85	267	78	345	77.39	124.96
Hank Aaron	1954-76	240	73	313	76.68	123.65
Ozzie Smith	1978-85	272	73	345	78.84	116.40
Mickey Rivers	1970-84	267	90	357	74.79	113.07
Vada Pinson	1958-75	305	122	427	71.43	110.89
Larry Bowa	1970-85	318	105	423	75.18	110.01
Dave Collins	1975-85	342	123	465	73.55	104.27

both the third and fifth best SBRs with +61.38 in 1979 and +60.23 in 1980.

Aparicio, who led the American League in stolen bases each of his first nine years in the majors, also paced the A.L. in SBR in eight of those seasons. He missed only in 1962 when Detroit's Jake Wood swiped 24 bases in 27 tries to finish No. 1. Bert Campaneris topped the American League in SBR six times. In the National League Brock had the best SBR on five occasions, while Wills, Willie Mays and Tim Raines each finished on top four times.

Accompanying *Table 1* shows the yearly leaders in SBR since 1951, while *Table 2* represents the sum of each player's yearly SBR. Few pre-1960 players place among

Sweeney's Whiff Feat of 1884 Rates No. 1

FREDERICK IVOR-CAMPBELL

Providence hurler, only 21, fanned 19 in 2-1 victory over Boston champions. Old rules may have cost him another strikeout or two. Four years later his big league career was over.

THE AIR WAS ELECTRIC at Boston's South End Grounds the hot Saturday afternoon of June 7, 1884. For weeks supporters of the Providence Grays and the 1883 National League champion Boston Red Stockings had debated which team was better. This day they hoped to find out.

The arriving crowd stretched half a mile beyond the grounds. Inside, where a band played and 35 of Boston's finest kept order, rope barriers were erected to keep the overflow off the playing field. Some 200 spectators had made the trip from Providence, and as the Grays came onto the field to warm up they were greeted (as one newspaper put it) with "three cheers and a tiger." But most of the "immense throng" of 7,400 supported Boston, and when the champions made their appearance a few minutes later "the noise was deafening."

This was the first game in Boston — and only the second of the season — between the two clubs, reason enough to draw a big crowd to a game between traditional rivals. But there were other reasons for the size of the crowd, which was greater by 2,000 than that which had attended the first Grays-Reds game in Boston the year before. First of all, the teams were in a virtual tie for first place. Boston had a slight lead in winning percentage, but if the Grays won this game they would move into the lead. Secondly, their initial meeting in Providence the previous day had shown just how evenly matched the two teams were. In what was to be the league's longest game that season, Providence pitcher Charlie Radbourne (who would later gain the nickname "Old Hoss") and Boston's "Jumbo" Jim Whitney dueled 16 innings before darkness ended the game with the score 1-1.

That memorable contest set the stage for a game which would prove even more memorable — a game the *Providence Telegram* called "one of the most perfect ever played." For in this game 21-year-old Charlie Sweeney, the Grays' pitcher, would strike out 19 Boston batsmen for a record in a nine-inning major league game which, though since tied, has not been surpassed. As the *Boston*

Globe observed the next day: "Sweeney gave the most remarkable exhibition of pitching ever witnessed in Boston. . . . Outs and ins, drops and rises seemed to be all the same to Sweeney. He could give them all and pitched some of the most deceptive curves imaginable."

The game, scheduled to begin at 3:30, was delayed a few minutes while workmen removed the rope barrier they had set up earlier after spectators complained that the ropes would hinder the Boston fielders. Charlie Buffinton had been expected to pitch for Boston, but because he was nursing a sore shoulder Whitney was again put "in the points," despite his 16 innings the day before. Betting was heavy, with Boston a 6-10 favorite.

At 3:40 the game began. Providence was first to bat, and it soon became clear that Whitney was equal to his task. Paul Hines, the Grays' center fielder, led off with a single to short left field but was caught stealing for the first out, and second baseman Jack Farrell grounded out to his Boston counterpart. Radbourne, who was playing first base in place of ailing Joe Start, singled and went to second on a passed ball before Whitney struck out pitcher Sweeney (a .298 hitter that year for the Grays) for the third out — and the first of the game's 29 strikeouts.

Sweeney dispatched the first man he faced, left fielder Joe Hornung, on three pitches, all strikes. Third baseman Ezra Sutton flied out, but Sweeney ended the inning by striking out second baseman Jack Burdock on four pitches.

Whitney retaliated in the second inning by striking out the side: shortstop Arthur Irwin, third baseman Jerry Denny and left fielder Cliff Carroll. Not to be outdone, Sweeney in his half of the inning fanned Whitney, manager-first baseman John Morrill and center fielder Jack Manning. By the end of the second inning Whitney had struck out four and Sweeney five; both had fanned the last four men they had faced.

Whitney continued his streak into the third inning, whiffing the first two batsmen, catcher Vincent "Sandy" Nava and right fielder Paul Radford. But the streak ended



when Paul Hines, at bat for the second time, flied to left for the third out.

Whitney's string of consecutive strikeouts thus ended at six. Yet it was a longer string than Sweeney would achieve, because the first man to face him in the third, right fielder Bill Crowley, doubled to right. Sweeney then bore down, and, succumbing to his "deceptive curves," the next three batsmen — catcher Mike Hines, shortstop Sam Wise and Hornung (up for the second time) — "gracefully struck out" on a total of ten pitched balls.

Whitney opened the fourth inning by striking out Farrell, but struck out no more until the eighth while permitting Providence three hits (all singles) and two unearned runs.

Providence scored first in the fifth inning on singles by the first two batters, Irwin and Denny, and — with Irwin on third — a muff by center fielder Manning of Carroll's "easy fly." A rally seemed to be brewing, with one run in, two runners on base and no one out. But Manning, who had just dropped an easy fly, redeemed himself on the next play with a fine running catch of Nava's pop fly to short right-center to begin a triple play. Manning threw to first, catching Carroll off base for the second out, and first baseman Morrill threw to third to catch Denny, who had tried to advance after Manning's catch.

"THIS TRIPLE PLAY," said the *Boston Herald*, "was the feature of the game, and for a few moments the enthusiasm of the spectators rivalled that said to have greeted [James G.] Blaine's nomination [for President, on the Republican ticket] at the recent Chicago convention." Even the Providence writers appreciated the play, describing it as "brilliant" and "very pretty." But, like Blaine's nomination, the triple play was but a winning skirmish in a losing battle.

The Grays scored again in the next inning, capitalizing on a single and two Boston errors after two were out. Farrell singled and went to second on a wild throw by catcher Mike Hines (perhaps an attempt to pick Farrell off first — the newspaper accounts aren't clear). Radbourne then hit a "hot grounder" to shortstop Wise, who let it go through him, enabling Farrell to score from second. (Most of the papers scored this an error on Wise, but one

Providence paper gave Radbourne a single. In either case, the run was unearned because of the error that permitted Farrell to go to second.) Sweeney fouled out to retire the side, but the damage had been done. Boston would come back with one unearned run in the seventh, but that would be the last run scored in the game.

Sweeney, meanwhile, continued to build his strikeout total. He fanned Burdock for the second time in the fourth inning, Crowley for the first time and Mike Hines for the second time in the fifth. He added three whiffs in the sixth: Wise for the second time and Hornung and Burdock for the third time each. In this inning Sutton reached first on a fumble by first baseman Radbourne — a fortuitous error for Sweeney's strikeout total because it provided him an additional batsman to strike out.

In the seventh inning Sweeney gave up his only run on a questionable base on balls, a single, a disputed stolen base and an infield error — all before the first out was recorded. Whitney, who led off the inning, was beneficiary of the two questionable calls. First he was walked, although the Providence writers claimed he should have been called out on strikes. He reached second on Morrill's single to center, was called safe at third by umpire John S. Burns on a stolen base which the *Providence Journal* insisted was a clear out, and scored when Manning "shot a wicked ball" to second baseman Farrell, who couldn't handle it. Some of the Providence writers labeled it an "excusable fumble," but a Boston writer was more precise: The grounder, he wrote, "ran up Farrell's arms, over his head and into the field." Excusable or not, it gave Sweeney another extra chance for a strikeout.

Boston's situation was now identical to that of Providence in the fifth inning: one run in, runners on first and second, none out. But Boston was no more able to seize the opportunity than Providence had been. Sweeney had no triple play to rescue him, but he did just fine with his own pitching. First he induced Crowley to pop up to Radbourne at first. Then he got Mike Hines on a foul tip. Finally he made Wise his fifteenth strikeout victim — and the third Boston batsman to strike out three times.

The rules of the day concerning foul balls deprived Sweeney of at least the opportunity to strike out even more than he did. When Mike Hines (and, before him, Morrill in the fourth inning) went out on foul tips, no strikeout was recorded, only a foul out. Every foul ball hit by an intentional swing, and caught (including a foul tip), was an out. (A foul ball hit unintentionally — while backing away from a pitch, for example — was simply a dead ball and was recorded as a ball if it was outside the strike zone.) There was no connection whatever between foul balls and strikes. For example, a batter could foul off the first two pitches, then swing at and miss the next pitch

— for strike one. Conversely, if he should tip even the first pitch into the catcher's hands, he was out. A strike was either a pitch not swung at but over the plate at the proper height or a pitch swung at and missed completely.

Today Hines' and Morrill's foul tip outs would be simply strikes if the foul tips came before the third strike or strikeouts on the third strike. So by today's rules, Sweeney might have recorded one or two more strikeouts, or at least would have had further opportunity to strike out these two batters, depending on which stage in the count the foul tips occurred.

BE THAT AS IT MAY, Sweeney in innings five through seven struck out six to Whitney's none and reached the eighth inning with an insurmountable lead in the strikeout duel. Nevertheless, in the eighth Whitney regained his earlier form and struck out two, Nava and Radford, both for the second time.

In the bottom of the eighth, with one out, Sutton gave Boston hope by doubling to right, thus remaining the only



Red Stocking to avoid striking out against Sweeney. But once again Sweeney bore down and struck out Burdock for the fourth time in his four trips to bat. When Nava dropped the third strike and had to throw Burdock out at first, Sutton increased Boston's hope by taking third. Of the previous Boston baserunners, only Whitney had advanced that far, and he had gone on to score. This time Whitney, who followed Burdock, quenched the scoring threat by popping up to Nava to end the inning.

In the ninth Whitney recorded his tenth and final strikeout at Radbourne's expense for the second out. Sweeney followed with a single, but he was retired — for the fourth time becoming his side's final out — when he tried to steal second.

Sweeney returned to the points for the last of the ninth with 16 strikeouts and a one-run lead. Morrill, Manning and Crowley had each struck out only once, but they increased their totals to two as they "did some heavy wind pounding and became easy victims to Sweeney's magnificent pitching." For the fourth time in the game Sweeney gained all three outs on strikes, and for the second time he did it facing only three batsmen.

"Nineteen men struck out," crowed the *Providence Journal*, "a record which will not be broken in many a day." And so it has not, in more than 100 years. Indeed, in the first 85 years after Sweeney set the record, it was tied only once — curiously enough just one month to the day after Sweeney established it — by Hugh "One Arm" Daily of Chicago in the short-lived Union Association. (Daily missed breaking the record when his catcher missed a third strike and the batsman reached first on what would have been the twentieth strikeout. Today a pitcher would be credited with a strikeout on such a play.) Daily's achievement reportedly prompted Radbourne to tell Sweeney (whom he seems to have regarded as a rival), "What you did, any pitcher with one arm can do."

Not so, however. After Daily, no major league pitcher recorded 19 strikeouts in nine innings until Steve Carlton did it in 1969. Since then, Tom Seaver (1970) and Nolan Ryan (1974) have joined Carlton and Daily in tying Sweeney's record. But no one has surpassed it.

The momentousness of Sweeney's achievement was immediately apparent to the spectators at the South End

Providence	AB	R	H	TB	PO	A	E
P. Hines, cf	4	0	1	1	1	0	0
Farrell, 2b	4	1	1	1	0	0	1
Radbourne, 1b	4	0	1	1	5	0	1
Sweeney, p	4	0	1	1	1	19	1
Irwin, ss	3	1	1	1	0	1	0
Denny, 3b	3	0	1	1	0	1	0
Carroll, lf	3	0	0	0	1	0	1
Nava, c	3	0	0	0	19	3	1
Radford, rf	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	31	2	6	6	27	24	5

Boston	AB	R	H	TB	PO	A	E
Hornung, lf	4	0	0	0	2	0	0
Sutton, 3b	4	0	1	2	1	2	0
Burdock, 2b	4	0	0	0	2	2	0
Whitney, p	3	1	1	1	0	11	0
Morrill, 1b	4	0	1	1	11	1	0
Manning, cf	4	0	0	0	1	1	1
Crowley, rf	4	0	1	2	2	0	0
M. Hines, c	3	0	0	0	7	6	2
Wise, ss	3	0	0	0	1	1	1
Totals	33	1	4	6	27	24	4

Providence	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	— 2
Boston	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	— 1

Earned runs — 0. Doubles — Sutton, Crowley. First base on balls — Whitney. First base on errors — Providence 2, Boston 3. Struck out — by Sweeney 19, by Whitney 10. Triple play — Manning, Morrill, Sutton. Passed ball — M. Hines. Fumbles — Wise, Farrell, Radbourne, Carroll. Muffed fly — Manning. Wild throw — M. Hines. Left on base — Providence 2, Boston 6. Attendance — 7,387. Time — 1:35. Umpire — Burns.

Grounds. Although there was little cheering — Sweeney had, after all, pitched Boston out of first place and impoverished the Boston bettors — “the spectators, though they felt the defeat keenly, gave Sweeney a pleasant reception as he went to the dressing-room, and more than a hundred persons grasped his hand.”

The achievement of Nava, Sweeney’s batterymate, also deserves mention. “Little Nava” caught two foul tips and put out 16 of the 19 strikeout victims himself (he threw the others out at first) — no mean feat in a day when the pitcher threw from several feet closer than today and the catcher wore thin leather mitts that gave a little protection to his palms, but left his fingers bare.

In Providence joy abounded. When the Grays returned home that evening, they were met at the train station by a thousand cheering supporters and a hastily but effectively arranged celebration. Barouches, flares, police and a 15-piece brass band waited to parade the team through downtown streets (to the tune “Marching Through Georgia”) to a banquet at the City Hotel.

Carried from the train to his carriage on the shoulders of admirers, Sweeney was king for the moment. But

within a week, with his team scoring only one run for him, he had followed up his triumph with three losses to Boston. And within seven weeks he was gone from Providence altogether — expelled from the team and the league for walking off the field in the middle of a game. Headlines that once cheered “Hip, Hip, Hurrah!” and “Superb Sweeney” now read: “His Disgraceful Conduct Promptly Punished” and “Sweeney’s Shame.”

Sweeney signed immediately with St. Louis of the Union Association, where his splendid pitching helped the club win the Association championship. But 1884 was his one big year. He never afterward pitched as effectively, and before he had reached age 25 his major league career was over.

At 31 he was imprisoned for killing a man in a San Francisco saloon. Released after serving only part of his ten-year sentence, he contracted tuberculosis and died April 4, 1902, nine days short of his thirty-ninth birthday.

(Research for this article was funded by a Faculty Research Grant from the Alumni Association of The King’s College, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.)



— THE ELEVENTH INNING

Hall of Famers Often Are Like Wheat in Chaff

PHIL BERGEN

Many of the game's greats spent several years with last-place teams. Despite the presence of Lyons, Faber, Hooper, Schalk and Eddie Collins, the 1924 White Sox finished in the cellar.

LESS THAN TWO PERCENT of the thousands of players, managers, umpires and administrators who reached the majors have been voted into the Hall of Fame. These men surely were the best at their profession, far more skilled and talented than the majority.

It would stand to reason, therefore, that these individuals should have found additional success on their teams as well. After all, the best teams presumably have the best players. This is not always the case, however. Baseball history is fraught with "miracle teams" whose success was greater than the sum of their parts — teams like the 1914 Braves, 1950 Phillies, 1967 Red Sox and 1969 Mets.

The reverse also is often true. At times good players find themselves stuck with poor teams. Future Hall of Famers playing on tailenders is a relatively common happenstance. Many of the sport's greatest performers spent summers with clubs that finished 40 or 50 games behind the pennant winner.

The most common factor in such situations is age. Youngsters on their way up and veterans playing out the string often have found themselves with teams other than the one with which they achieved fame. For example, George Kell's second full season in the majors in 1945 saw him playing for the last-place Philadelphia A's (52-98 won-lost record and 34½ GB). He hit .272 and had 56 RBIs, respectable figures for the A's but hardly Hall of Fame statistics. The following year he was traded to Detroit, where he enjoyed his most productive seasons.

At age 20 Rogers Hornsby spent his first full season with the cellar-dwelling 1916 Cardinals (60-93, 33½ GB) and starred with a .313 average. His mounting success coincided with the rise of the Cards to the top.

Catfish Hunter broke in at 19 with the tailend 1965 Kansas City A's (59-103, 43 GB), posting a so-so 8-8 record and 4.26 ERA. Two years later with another last-place Kansas City team (62-99, 29½ GB) he was 13-17, but subsequently Hunter and the A's — by then

transplanted to Oakland — experienced the type of success usually associated with Hall of Famers. Hunter became eligible for Hall of Fame consideration in 1985.

At the other end of the scale, the over-35 Hall of Famer with a basement team is understandable. Sometimes it is the only place where diminishing skills and a famous name can survive. In other instances a failing team's need for an attendance boost or a trade to keep a veteran in the majors was responsible for a long-time star winding up with a cellar club.

Indeed it has been hard for some to say goodbye gracefully. Greats who closed out their careers on last-place finishers and saw their lifetime averages slip include Nap Lajoie, who hit a mere .246 for the 1916 Philadelphia A's (36-117 and 54½ GB); Duke Snider, who was .243 with the 1963 Mets (51-111 and 48 GB), and Willie Keeler, who batted .263 for the 1908 New York Highlanders (51-103 and 39½ GB).

Occasionally veterans have found a new life on a last-place team. George Sisler at 36 hit .326 for the 1929 Boston Braves (56-98 and 43 GB), while 41-year-old Luke Appling batted .314 with the 1948 White Sox (51-101 and 44½ GB). Of course, even today at 78 Appling probably could hit .300!

Others winding down with a whimper on tailenders were Honus Wagner, a mere .265 hitter with the 1917 Pirates (51-103, 47 GB); Warren Spahn, who had a 4-12 record and 4.36 ERA for the 1965 Mets (50-112, 47 GB), and Lloyd Waner, .261 with just ten RBIs in 101 games for the 1942 Phillies (42-109, 62½ GB).

Ironically, three Hall of Fame selections of recent years that drew criticism — Travis Jackson, Fred Lindstrom and Hack Wilson — all escaped last place during their careers. By contrast, several names not usually associated with looking up from the bottom of the pile indeed were members of cellar-dwelling teams — Babe Ruth (1935 Braves), Christy Mathewson (1902 and 1915 Giants) and Mickey Mantle (1966 Yankees).

Several Hall of Famers contributed long and valiant

service to bad teams. Ted Lyons, Chuck Klein, Red Ruffing, Ralph Kiner, Ernie Banks, Robin Roberts and Harmon Killebrew all put in three or more years with last-place clubs. Ruffing deserves special mention as a Hall of Famer who paid his dues with the pitiful Red Sox of the 1920s before being rescued from oblivion by the Yankees. No other pitcher was able to overcome records of 9-18, 6-15, 5-13, 10-25 and 9-22 to make the Hall. Ruffing certainly is a prime example of a player whose career record was influenced by his team.

If one believes in the "great man" theory of baseball success, it may come as a surprise to learn that several teams with more than one Hall of Famer in the lineup were not able to overcome problems elsewhere. The 1917 Pirates with Honus Wagner, Max Carey and Burleigh Grimes were 51-103, 47 GB; the 1925 Cubs with Rabbit Maranville, Gabby Hartnett and Grover Alexander were 68-86, 27½ GB, and the 1934 White Sox with Luke Appling, Al Simmons and Ted Lyons finished 53-99, 47 GB — all sinking into the cellar without a trace.

An earlier White Sox team was even more unusual in this regard. Despite having Eddie Collins with his .349 batting average, 86 RBIs and 42 stolen bases and Harry Hooper (.328 and 62 RBIs) in the regular lineup, Ray Schalk on the bench and Ted Lyons and Red Faber in the pitching rotation, the 1924 Chicago team plummeted to last place with a 66-87 record.

While the 1924 White Sox may have deserved a better fate, a number of Hall of Famers have enjoyed spectacular seasons only to experience the tough luck of being a diamond in a coal pile. For instance, it seems inconceivable that the following accomplishments could have been generated with last-place teams: Chuck Klein with a .386 average, 40 homers and 170 RBIs for the awesomely powerful but tailend 1930 Phillies; Al Simmons, .344, 18 homers and 104 RBIs for the 1934 White Sox; Ralph Kiner, .313, 51 homers and 127 ribbies with the 1947 Pirates, and Ernie Banks, .285, 43 homers and 102 RBIs for the 1957 Cubs.

COMPILING BOXCAR batting statistics for a last-place team, while hardly easy, is not as impressive as pitchers who chalk up respectable records for cellar dwellers. Last-place teams obviously are going to lose a lot of games, and a good pitcher can only hope to win his share to keep his record looking decent.

Ned Garver's 20 victories for the 1952 St. Louis Browns was basically a fluke. He never came close to the 20-win mark again, either with a bad team or the mediocre ones for which he pitched, and obviously didn't rate Hall of Fame consideration.

Steve Carlton's 1972 season of 27-10 with a 1.98 ERA

for a last-place Phillies team that finished 59-97, 37½ GB is a feat that is unlikely to be matched. Arguably it is the greatest season any pitcher has had in modern times and the only one in which a pitcher has been able to overcome the ineptness of his teammates and inspire them to play winning baseball.

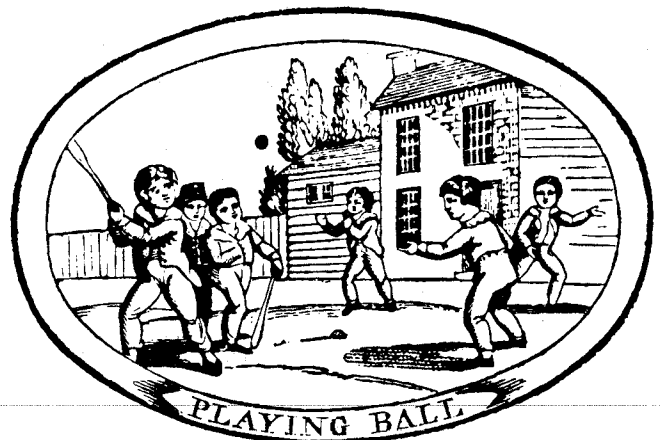
Nolan Ryan's 1974 season of 22-16 with a 2.89 ERA for the tailend Angels (68-94, 22 GB) also could qualify as cream rising to the top. Phil Niekro likewise had some impressive figures with the last-place Braves. Carlton, of course, is by far the best bet of the trio to make it to the Hall of Fame.

There are several others still active who were saddled with a stretch on last-place teams and rate as potential future Hall of Fame candidates. Relievers Goose Gossage (1976 White Sox) and Bruce Sutter (1980 Cubs), sluggers Willie McCovey (1974 Padres) and Gary Carter (1976 Expos) and then-rookies Reggie Jackson (1967 A's) and Mike Schmidt (1972 Phillies) all performed for teams that ranked as the worst in their league.

Several who were selected to the Hall of Fame for their managing ability also spent time at the bottom of the standings. Connie Mack's 17 seasons of last-place teams will probably always stand as a record. Casey Stengel was able to doubletalk his way through the Mets' early basement years, and Miller Huggins was in charge of two Cardinal teams which brought up the rear of the pack.

Other Hall of Famers who achieved fame as players but later managed last-place teams were Christy Mathewson (1916 Reds), Mel Ott (1946 Giants) and Ted Williams (1972 Rangers). It brings to mind the old baseball adage that journeymen players often make the best managers.

What it all boils down to is that great players and gifted managers frequently must endure the frustration of the cellar because baseball is a team game.



Charleston No. 1 Star of 1921 Negro League

DICK CLARK and JOHN B. HOLWAY

Traded to St. Louis in the spring, he proceeded to hit .434 and lead the loop in batting, homers, triples and stolen bases. SABR researchers have compiled stats for the entire season.

OSCAR CHARLESTON was known as "the black Ty Cobb." Both men sprayed line drives to all fields and played a savage running game on the bases. But Charleston hit with power, which Cobb did not, and in the field he ran circles around the more famous Georgian. He was considered in a class with Tris Speaker in center field.

By common agreement among black old-timers, Charleston was the greatest all-around player in the annals of the Negro leagues. His modern counterpart would be Willie Mays, who played with a similar panache.

In 1921 Charleston had a year that not even Cobb, the Georgia Peach, could match. Oscar hit .434 in 60 games against the top black teams and led the Negro National League in batting, home runs, triples and stolen bases.

These figures are the result of hundreds of hours of research by dedicated SABR members and others who pored over miles of microfilm of both black and white newspapers in seven cities. It is part of an ongoing project to compile the most complete statistics possible for the Negro National League for the 1920-1929 period. Future projects will seek to cover the Eastern Colored League for the same decade, then move on to the Negro League data for the 1930s and 1940s. We feel confident that we have found every box score that still exists for the year 1921, although unfortunately many were apparently not published and presumably will never be found.

As compiled by project editor Dick Clark, here are the highlights of that year:

It was the second season of the new league, which was founded in the winter of 1919-20 by Rube Foster of the Chicago American Giants, J. L. Wilkinson of the Kansas City Monarchs and owners of other midwestern black clubs. Foster's American Giants won the first pennant in 1920 with ease.

As the clubs took spring training for the new season,

one key sale was announced. The Indianapolis ABC's (named for the American Brewing Company, which owned them) sold their star outfielder, Charleston, to the St. Louis Giants. Charleston started fast for his new club, smashing two home runs and four singles in one game against the Chicago Giants (not the American Giants).

His feat was almost matched in the same game by Giants' rookie John Beckwith, who hit a home run, triple and two singles in five at-bats. Beckwith, a moody man but a formidable slugger, would go on to become one of the four or five top home-run hitters of Negro League history. His name would be mentioned along with those of Josh Gibson, Mule Suttles, Turkey Stearnes and Wil-lard Brown.

Nine days after his duel with Charleston, Beckwith arrived in Cincinnati's Redland Field for a game against the Cuban Stars. Beck smashed a drive over the left field wall just a few feet from the large clock. It was the first ball ever hit over the new barrier. Fans showered the promising youngster with coins and dollar bills as he crossed home plate.

St. Louis hitters terrorized the league that year largely because of the strange dimensions of the club's home field, which was built beside the trolley car barn. The barn cut across left field, leaving a short fence at the foul line. The fence quickly dropped back to a deep center field. Righthanded hitters had a great time aiming at the barn. Although Charleston was a lefty, he hit to all fields, and there is no way of knowing how much the short left field fence helped him.

Foster's American Giants moved to the head of the league again, using Rube's usual style of bunt-and-run offense combined with the finest pitching in the league. They finished last in league batting, with only one legitimate slugger, the Cuban Cristobal Torriente, who hit .330 that year and is usually included on most authorities' all-time all-black team along with Charleston. Bingo

DeMoss, perhaps the best black second baseman ever; Dave Malarcher, Jimmy Lyons and Jelly Gardner represented the Rube Foster style, getting on base any way they could, bunting, hitting and running, and waiting for Torriente to knock them in. Lyons was a veteran of Rube's earlier Chicago Leland Giants. He had served in the U.S. Army in France in World War I, playing against Ty Cobb's brother. In July Lyons fell 25 feet down an elevator shaft, but he was back on the field four days later. The accident didn't affect his hitting; he ended up batting .388 for the year.

Besides their speed, the American Giants were first in pitching effectiveness. Tom Williams had a record of 10-5. Dave Brown, the ex-convict whom some consider the best black lefty of all time, compiled a 10-3 record. One of his victories was a one-hitter against the hard-hitting Monarchs. (Brown would later kill a man in a barroom fight, flee to the West and drop out of sight forever.)

Foster, one of the shrewdest men even to direct a baseball team, gave signals from the bench with his meerschaum pipe and used his team's speed and pitching to outplay the hard-hitting clubs. Yet oddly, in spite of their reputation, the American Giants stole few bases if the box scores are to be believed. Chicago relied on speed, but apparently Foster capitalized on it by taking the extra base on batted balls.

For example, in a game against Indianapolis in June the Giants were down, 18-0, so Foster threw away all the books. He ordered his "rabbits" to lay down 11 bunts, including six squeeze plays in a row. Torriente blasted a grand-slam and catcher George Dixon hit another as the Giants scored nine runs in the eighth and nine more in the ninth to gain an 18-18 tie!

League teams played six games a week Saturday through Wednesday, including Sunday and holiday doubleheaders, from May through August. Some clubs played more games than others. The Chicago Giants, the weakest club in the league, played only 38 league contests, according to our count (which differs somewhat from the officially published standings), and spent most of their time barnstorming against white semi-pro teams. By contrast, the Kansas City Monarchs played 77 league games.

As the July heat descended on the Midwest, the American Giants clung to a slim lead over the hard-hitting Monarchs. Kansas City was led by pitcher Bullet Joe Rogan, the little ex-soldier who had been discovered by Casey Stengel while playing on a black infantry team in Arizona two years earlier. Little Joe was already more than 30 years old but still one of the all-time stars of blackball history. Most Monarch veterans who saw him insist he

was a better pitcher than Satchel Paige, the man who succeeded him as ace of the Monarch staff. Rogan posted a 14-7 record in 1921 and completed all 20 games he started.

Rogan was also a great hitter, though his average that year was only .266. He showed his power in one game, blasting a home run, triple and double in four at-bats against the Cubans.

There was only one no-hitter that summer. It was turned in by Big Bill Gatewood of third-place St. Louis. Six years later Bill would manage the Birmingham Black Barons when a skinny rookie named Satchel Paige joined the club. Satch credited Gatewood with teaching him the "hesitation pitch," which became one of Paige's best-known trademarks.

Another St. Louis hurler that year, Bill "Plunk" Drake, always claimed that Satch had learned the "hesitation pitch" from him. Drake had a magnificent season in 1921. St. Louis finished with 40 victories, and Drake was credited with 18 of them to lead the league. That is equal to at least 30 wins in the major leagues' present 162-game schedule.

The Detroit Stars finished fourth, led by outfielder-manager Pete Hill and catcher Bruce Petway. Hill was a veteran of the great Philadelphia X-Giants team of 1906, which also boasted: Foster, Charlie "Chief Tokahoma" Grant, who had tried to join John McGraw's Baltimore Orioles in 1902 as an Indian, and young John Henry Lloyd. The X-Giants challenged the winner of the 1906 Cubs-White Sox World Series to a series to determine the championship of the United States. The challenge was never accepted.

THOUGH FEW PERSONS are still living who personally saw Hill play and none who saw him in his prime, many who did see him put him on their all-time all-black outfield alongside Charleston and Torriente. In 1921 Hill could still hit; his .373 average was one of the best in the league. Petway was considered one of the two best black catchers of all time by those who saw him play. In November 1910 he faced Cobb in Havana and threw Ty out on attempted steals three straight times. On the third try Ty saw that the throw had him beat and merely turned and ran back into the dugout. Petway, usually a banjo hitter, also out-hit Ty, .412 to .369, and Cobb stomped off the field vowing never to play against blacks again.

Unfortunately, injuries to Hill and to slugging first baseman Edgar Wesley hurt the Detroiters and they failed to mount a challenge for the pennant.

The ABC's, who had sold their top player, Charleston, finished fifth, although they had a great future star in

catcher Raleigh "Biz" Mackey, up from Texas. The switch-hitting Mackey hit .289 that year and his seven home runs were third highest in the league. He would develop eventually into the man considered — at least by all who didn't see Petway — as the best catcher in black baseball annals. Later Josh Gibson outhit him, but black vets would have put Josh in the outfield in order to have Mackey behind the plate. After Mackey moved to Philadelphia, he was often compared to Mickey Cochrane.

In 1938 Mackey took a youngster named Roy Campanella and taught him all of his secrets. Later Charleston urged Branch Rickey to sign Campy to a Brooklyn Dodger contract. The ABC first baseman was Ben Taylor, and again a generational debate rages as to whether he or his latter-day pupil, Buck Leonard, was the finest black first baseman of all time. Taylor's 1921 batting average, .415, was third best in the league.

On August 21 Indianapolis pitching ace Harry Kenyon hooked up in a 17-inning duel with LeBlanc of the Cubans. Both went the distance, and Kenyon won, 6-5.

The Cubans finished sixth in the league. As usual they had some fine players but were handicapped by a weak bench. Most black clubs carried 16 men; the Cubans had only 14. Pitchers got no relief and indeed often played the outfield between starts. LeBlanc started and finished all 18 games for which records could be found and ended with a 13-7 mark. Outfielder Bernardo Baró hit .347. Several years later he teamed with Martin Dihigo and Pablo Mesa to form one of the greatest defensive outfielders of all time.

In 1921 Baró played next to Ramon Herrera, who hit .218. Four years later Herrera would be playing in the American League with the Boston Red Sox, where he batted .385.

Another veteran of the 1906 X-Giants, John Henry "Pop" Lloyd, had been installed by Foster as manager of the Columbus Buckeyes. Next to the Chicago Giants, the Buckeyes were the weakest team in the league, but Lloyd, then 35 years old, had a great season. He went four-for-four in one game against the Cubans and ended up hitting .337. He also finished third in stolen bases behind youngsters Charleston and Torriente.

The last-place Chicago Giants had only one noteworthy performer, Beckwith. The next year both the

Giants and the Buckeyes dropped out of the league.

Several clubs played non-league series against the best black clubs in the still-unorganized East, teams such as the Philadelphia Hilldales and the Bacharach Giants of Atlantic City. (Two totals are shown in our final individual statistics, one for league games only and the other including exhibition games against the eastern clubs.)

These exhibition games are a bonanza for historians because the only records that are available for the great stars in the East, such as shortstop Dick Lundy, third baseman Oliver Marcelle and pitcher Cannonball Dick Redding, are for games played against the western teams. Lundy hit .484 in 17 contests, Marcelle hit .303 in 28 games and Redding had a won-lost record of 7-9.

The eastern teams would form their own league in 1923, raiding Foster's circuit of many of its stars, including Charleston, Dave Brown, Mackey and Lloyd.

Meanwhile, a black minor league, the Negro Southern League, played its first season in 1921. The Montgomery Gray Sox won the pennant, led by willowy Norman "Turkey" Stearnes, who soon moved up to the Detroit Stars and became one of the great sluggers of black history.

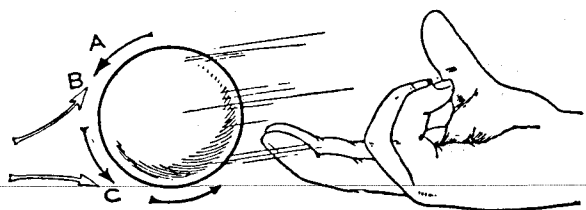
AS THE NNL season headed down the stretch early in September, the American Giants still clung to a half-game lead over the Monarchs with six games left between the two leaders. They split the six contests, and Foster's men went on to win the championship again.

Rube took his team east by private Pullman to the scene of his great exploits with the X-Giants almost 20 years earlier. Against the Hilldales and future Hall of Famer Judy Johnson, Lyons singled, stole second, third and home. In all, the Giants stole nine bases, Torriente slugged a homer, and Chicago won the game, 5-2. Tom Shibe, the owner of the park, shook his head. "Now, Mr. Foster," he marvelled, "how do you make them **move** so on the bases?"

Chicago lost the next three games, then played the Bacharach and split eight decisions with them.

Meanwhile, Charleston and the St. Louis Giants were playing the Cardinals, who won the first game in Sportsman's Park, 5-4 in 11 innings. The next day Oscar hit a home run to help beat Jesse Haines, 6-2. The Cards won the last three games.

Next Charleston traveled to Indianapolis to play a white all-star squad. He went two-for-four against Brooklyn's Jess Petty, including a ninth-inning home run that tied the game as the St. Louis Giants went on to win, 8-3. In six games against white big league pitching that fall Charleston got nine hits in 27 at-bats with two home runs to climax a great season.



THE BASEBALL RESEARCH JOURNAL

1921 NEGRO NATIONAL LEAGUE

Club	W	L	Pct.	GB	R/G	OR/G
Chicago American Giants ..	42	22	.656	—	4.68	3.92
Kansas City Monarchs	46	31	.597	2½	5.36	4.45
St. Louis Giants	40	28	.588	4	6.55	5.13
Detroit Stars	32	32	.500	10	4.35	4.55
Indianapolis ABC's	35	38	.479	11½	4.76	4.95
Cincinnati Cubans	29	37	.439	14	3.97	4.48
Columbus Buckeyes	25	37	.403	16	4.06	5.27
Chicago Giants	7	31	.184	22	4.08	6.18

*Bacharach Giants

17	15	.531	—	5.74	4.50
----	----	------	---	------	------

*Not a member of league; record vs. NNL clubs.



BATTING LEADERS

LEAGUE GAMES		ALL GAMES	
Batting Average		Batting Average	
Charleston, St. Louis	.446	Blackwell, St. Louis	.448
Blackwell, St. Louis	.418	Charleston, St. Louis	.434
Taylor, Indianapolis	.415	Taylor, Indianapolis	.421
Beckwith, Chi. Giants	.398	Beckwith, Chi. Giants	.398

Hits		Hits	
Taylor, Indianapolis	86	Taylor, Indianapolis	106
Charleston, St. Louis	79	Blackwell, St. Louis	99
Blackwell, St. Louis	76	Charleston, St. Louis	92
Carr, Kansas City	65	Lloyd, Columbus	83
Lloyd, Columbus	65		

Doubles		Doubles	
Blackwell, St. Louis	13	Taylor, Indianapolis	19
Riggins, Detroit	11	Lloyd, Columbus	17
Lloyd, Columbus	11	Blackwell, St. Louis	16
Hudspeth, Columbus	11	Riggins, Detroit	16
Taylor, Indianapolis	11		

Triples		Triples	
Charleston, St. Louis	10	Charleston, St. Louis	11
Torriente, Ch. American	9	Torriente, Ch. American	10
Thomas, Columbus	9	Thomas, Columbus	9

Home Runs		Home Runs	
Charleston, St. Louis	14	Charleston, St. Louis	15
Blackwell, St. Louis	9	Mackey, Indianapolis	11
Mackey, Indianapolis	7	Blackwell, St. Louis	10
Carr, Kansas City	7		

Total Bases		Total Bases	
Charleston, St. Louis	137	Charleston, St. Louis	173
Blackwell, St. Louis	128	Blackwell, St. Louis	161
Taylor, Indianapolis	117	Taylor, Indianapolis	149

Slugging Average		Slugging Average	
Charleston, St. Louis	.774	Charleston, St. Louis	.816
Blackwell, St. Louis	.703	Blackwell, St. Louis	.729
Taylor, Indianapolis	.565	Beckwith, Chi. Giants	.611
		Taylor, Indianapolis	.591

Stolen Bases		Stolen Bases	
Charleston, St. Louis	28	Charleston, St. Louis	34
Hewitt, St. Louis	23	Hewitt, St. Louis	32
Blackwell, St. Louis	20	Lyons, Chi. American	28
Lyons, Chi. American	18	Blackwell, St. Louis	27

CLUB BATTING

Club	% of Boxes	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
Chicago American Giants ..	79	40	18	15	89	.237
Kansas City Monarchs	71	60	30	25	68	.246
St. Louis Giants	77	74	32	28	107	.286
Detroit Stars	65	57	22	19	28	.272
Indianapolis ABC's	76	44	47	14	66	.273
Cincinnati Cubans	48	34	15	5	40	.242
Columbus Buckeyes	73	50	26	10	55	.250
Chicago Giants	78	16	11	5	10	.252

*Bacharach Giants

—	36	19	10	27	.275
---	----	----	----	----	------

CLUB PITCHING

Club	CG	ShO	Sv	BB	SO	OR/G
Chicago American Giants .	46	12	1	140	212	3.92
Kansas City Monarchs.	52	3	2	127	211	4.45
St. Louis Giants.....	44	6	1	149	250	5.13
Detroit Stars.....	41	3	5	83	192	4.55
Indianapolis ABC's	46	7	5	122	179	4.95
Cincinnati Cubans	44	3	2	69	111	4.48
Columbus Buckeyes.....	42	3	2	141	174	5.27
Chicago Giants	25	0	0	50	59	6.18

*Bacharach Giants

24	3	1	67	78	4.50
----	---	---	----	----	------

PITCHING LEADERS

LEAGUE GAMES		ALL GAMES	
Winning Percentage		Winning Percentage	
Brown, Chi. American	.769	Brown, Chi. American	.786
Oldham, St. Louis	.750	Oldham, St. Louis	.786
Crawford, Kansas City	.727	Crawford, Kansas City	.727

Victories		Victories	
Drake, St. Louis	18	Drake, St. Louis	20
Rogan, Kansas City	14	Rogan, Kansas City	14
LeBlanc, Cincinnati	13	Jeffries, Indianapolis	14

Games		Games	
Jeffries, Indianapolis	32	Jeffries, Indianapolis	41
Drake, St. Louis	28	Drake, St. Louis	33
Holland, Detroit	26	Holland, Detroit	29

Complete Games		Complete Games	
Rogan, Kansas City	20	Drake, St. Louis	22
Drake, St. Louis	20	Rogan, Kansas City	20
LeBlanc, Cincinnati	18	Jeffries, Indianapolis	20

Innings		Innings	
Drake, St. Louis	205.1	Drake, St. Louis	231.1
LeBlanc, Cincinnati	174.2	Jeffries, Indianapolis	216.1
Jeffries, Indianapolis	173.2	Roberts, Columbus	180.1

Runs Per Game		Runs Per Game	
Brown, Chi. American	2.67	Brown, Chi. American	2.47
Rogan, Kansas City	2.72	Rogan, Kansas City	2.72
T. Williams, Chi. Amer.	2.99	Redding, Bacharach	2.96

Strikeouts		Strikeouts	
Drake, St. Louis	105	Drake, St. Louis	123
Holland, Detroit	78	Brown, Chi. American	87
Brown, Chi. American	72	Holland, Detroit	86

Shutouts		Shutouts	
Brown, Chi. American	5	Brown, Chi. American	5
Jeffries, Indianapolis	4	Jeffries, Indianapolis	4

THE BASEBALL RESEARCH JOURNAL

CHICAGO AMERICAN GIANTS

League (42-22-2)								All Games (46-26-3)									
G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.	Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
51	171	40	7	2	2	2	.234	1B	Leroy Grant	57	189	45	7	2	2	2	.238
52	192	47	6	0	1	12	.245	2B	Bingo DeMoss	59	214	55	9	2	1	14	.257
52	166	29	4	3	0	11	.175	SS	Bobby Williams	59	188	33	5	4	0	15	.176
51	187	44	5	1	0	9	.235	3B	Dave Malarcher	57	206	46	5	1	0	11	.223
47	146	35	3	0	0	11	.240	RF	Jelly Gardner	52	165	37	3	0	0	11	.224
57	179	59	5	9	5	17	.330	CF	Cristobal Torriente	64	199	66	5	10	7	18	.332
51	170	49	2	2	4	18	.288	LF	Jimmy Lyons	58	190	55	2	3	4	28	.289
29	81	18	3	0	2	2	.222	C	George Dixon	35	95	19	3	0	2	3	.200
34	104	30	3	1	1	5	.288	UT	Jim Brown	36	106	30	3	1	1	5	.283
14	39	6	0	0	0	1	.154	OF	John Reese	17	45	8	1	0	0	1	.178
9	19	3	0	0	0	0	.158	C	Poindexter Williams	9	19	3	0	0	0	0	.158

PITCHING

G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG	Player	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG
24	123.2	15	12	3	0	11	5	2.99	Tom Williams	28	141.2	17	14	3	0	12	7	3.43
18	117.2	13	11	5	1	10	3	2.67	Dave Brown	21	138.2	15	12	5	2	11	3	2.47
18	98.1	14	8	1	0	7	6	5.05	Tom Johnson	20	102.1	15	8	1	0	7	7	5.01
11	81.0	9	8	2	0	7	3	3.44	Jack Marshall	11	81.0	9	8	2	0	7	3	3.44
8	50.2	7	4	1	0	2	2	4.97	Otis Starks	8	50.2	7	4	1	0	2	2	4.97
6	22.2	3	2	0	0	3	1	5.95	Cristobal Torriente	7	27.2	4	2	0	0	4	1	5.52

Note — In pitching statistics RPG represents runs per nine innings.



1921 Negro National League



ST. LOUIS GIANTS

League (40-28-1)								All Games (53-30-1)									
G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.	Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
46	159	35	10	5	0	9	.220	1B	Tully McAdoo	55	191	42	10	5	0	9	.220
50	163	30	1	2	0	0	.184	2B	Eddie Holtz	61	204	40	1	2	0	1	.196
50	188	45	6	1	1	23	.239	SS	Joe Hewitt	61	229	57	6	1	1	32	.249
43	131	29	5	1	0	4	.221	3B	Sam Mongin	49	158	35	6	1	0	5	.222
51	182	76	13	6	9	20	.418	RF	Charles Blackwell	62	221	99	16	8	10	27	.448
50	177	79	10	10	14	28	.446	CF	Oscar Charleston	60	212	92	14	11	15	34	.434
47	169	52	10	4	2	15	.308	LF	C. A. Dudley	59	207	69	11	5	3	20	.333
33	117	37	10	2	1	1	.316	C	Dan Kennard	37	129	45	10	2	1	1	.349
28	77	22	2	0	1	3	.286	C-OF	Sam Bennett	36	107	34	4	0	1	5	.318
27	68	21	3	0	0	5	.309	OF-1B	Charles Brooks	33	85	26	4	0	0	7	.306
5	18	3	0	0	0	0	.167	3B	George Scales	10	35	7	2	0	0	1	.200

PITCHING

G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG	Player	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG
28	205.1	22	20	2	0	18	10	3.95	Bill Drake	33	231.1	26	22	2	0	20	10	3.77
22	119.1	16	11	2	0	9	7	4.30	John Finner	25	125.1	16	11	2	0	11	7	4.38
16	104.1	12	6	2	0	9	3	3.97	Jimmy Oldham	18	122.1	14	8	2	0	11	3	3.68
7	45.0	6	2	0	0	2	2	8.00	— Fields	10	58.0	7	3	0	0	3	3	7.61
4	22.0	2	2	0	1	1	2	11.48	George Meyers	4	22.0	2	2	0	1	1	2	11.48
3	18.0	2	2	0	0	1	1	5.50	Otis Starks	5	36.0	4	4	0	0	2	2	6.25

THE BASEBALL RESEARCH JOURNAL

DETROIT STARS

League (32-32-1)								All Games (37-36-1)									
G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.	Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
26	90	30	6	0	5	3	.333	1B	Edgar Wesley	33	116	39	7	0	7	3	.336
43	154	43	8	4	1	7	.279	2B	Frank Warfield	50	180	49	8	4	2	8	.272
41	161	49	11	1	1	3	.304	SS	Orville Riggins	48	189	63	16	2	1	4	.333
35	126	35	4	5	3	0	.278	3B	Johnson Hill	42	153	42	5	5	4	0	.275
26	76	14	2	0	0	6	.184	RF	C. Hill	30	91	18	3	0	0	6	.198
34	118	44	5	3	3	0	.373	CF	Pete Hill	40	134	52	5	5	3	3	.388
16	69	9	1	0	0	0	.130	LF	Andrew Reed	19	80	10	1	0	0	0	.125
34	111	34	5	2	0	9	.306	C	Bruce Petway	40	131	42	5	2	2	9	.321
22	72	17	2	1	2	0	.236	2B	Carl Perry	22	72	17	2	1	2	0	.236
18	45	11	1	0	1	0	.244	C	Speck Webster	20	49	12	1	0	1	0	.245
16	24	9	2	0	1	0	.375	P-PH	Bill Gatewood	20	27	12	3	0	1	0	.444
14	30	8	2	1	0	0	.267	P-OF	William Force	18	42	10	2	1	0	0	.238
14	56	15	1	0	0	0	.268	OF	— Wingfield	14	56	15	1	0	0	0	.286
11	33	8	3	2	2	0	.242	OF	— Long	12	37	11	5	2	3	0	.297

PITCHING

G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG	
26	157.1	17	17	1	4	10	10	4.12	Bill Holland	29	173.1	19	18	1	4	12	11	4.05
22	124.0	16	9	0	1	10	6	4.35	William Force	27	148.0	19	11	0	1	13	6	4.62
19	97.0	13	7	1	0	5	6	4.17	Andy Cooper	23	117.0	16	9	1	0	5	8	4.46
18	113.0	13	7	1	0	6	9	5.02	Bill Gatewood	19	115.0	17	7	1	0	6	9	5.09



1921 Negro National League



INDIANAPOLIS ABC'S

League (35-38-2)								All Games (50-52-4)									
G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.	Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
60	207	86	11	6	4	8	.415	1B	Ben Taylor	73	252	106	19	6	4	14	.421
52	166	40	5	6	0	6	.241	2B	Connie Day	61	199	47	7	6	0	6	.236
41	160	35	4	7	1	10	.219	SS	Morten Clark	54	197	42	5	7	1	11	.213
50	167	38	2	2	0	12	.228	3B	Namon Washington	59	198	44	2	2	0	12	.222
56	201	59	3	4	2	4	.294	RF	Crush Holloway	66	233	67	3	4	3	4	.288
27	76	26	3	0	0	1	.342	CF	Ralph Jefferson	30	89	30	3	0	0	1	.337
46	155	43	6	7	0	4	.277	LF	Harry Kenyon	55	186	51	8	7	0	5	.274
55	188	55	6	8	7	4	.293	C	Biz Mackey	63	211	61	8	8	11	4	.289
26	79	18	0	3	0	0	.228	C	Russell Powell	32	98	21	1	3	0	0	.214
23	80	22	3	2	0	8	.275	INF	Gerard Williams	26	90	27	4	2	0	9	.300
20	72	19	0	0	0	5	.264	OF	William Woods	27	95	24	0	0	0	6	.253
12	26	7	0	0	0	1	.269	OF	George Bennett	12	26	7	0	0	0	1	.269

PITCHING

G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG	
32	173.2	20	17	4	4	11	9	3.06	Jim Jeffries	41	216.1	27	20	4	4	14	11	3.50
17	105.1	16	8	2	0	8	6	3.33	Dicta Johnson	26	173.0	23	13	2	0	13	10	3.59
14	118.0	13	10	1	0	5	8	4.05	Harry Kenyon	21	162.2	19	15	1	0	6	12	4.87
12	36.2	5	1	0	0	2	3	5.88	— Latimer	14	44.0	6	1	0	0	2	3	6.34
10	30.2	5	2	0	0	2	2	8.80	Bob McClure	11	39.2	6	3	0	0	3	2	7.03
6	30.0	5	3	0	0	2	3	3.30	— Mahoney	11	67.0	9	7	2	0	5	4	3.36
6	28.0	4	3	0	0	4	0	2.89	— Stevens	7	28.0	4	3	0	1	4	0	2.89
5	24.1	4	0	0	0	1	3	10.74	Morris Williams	6	26.0	4	0	0	0	1	3	11.76
	None								Dizzy Dismukes	5	31.0	4	3	0	0	1	2	1.45

The Negro League research project is an on-going labor of love that began around 1975 and has involved many fans, both in and out of SABR, who have given of their time, money and energy.

Batting and pitching statistics occasionally were printed in the black press, but on inspection they turned out to be suspect. As a result, the SABR Negro Leagues Committee plans to recompile the data for every season, both those with and without published stats.

Negro League research carries problems not faced by other researchers. The records are scattered among many newspapers, both black and white. Rarely did papers name winning and losing pitchers; these have had to be supplied by researchers using their best guesstimates. Some papers ran box scores without ABs; these had to be estimated. Others did not include extra-base hits; when possible, these data were obtained from the game accounts. Sometimes all that is available is a line score, and, of course, for some games not even this was shown. Still, enough box scores have been found to begin to build a portrait in numbers of the great men of the black leagues.

Despite its frustrations, the project carries rewards perhaps not found in other research. This is the last frontier of baseball exploration, a virgin continent of history and heroes as rich as that of the better-known and already well-traveled land of white baseball history.

Among those who have contributed to the project are Terry Baxter, John Bourg and family, C. Baylor Butler, Dick Clark, Harry Conwell, Dick Cramer, Deborah Crawford, Paul Doherty, Garrett Finney, Troy Greene, Richard Hall, John B. Holway, John Holway Jr., Merl Kleinknecht, Jerry Malloy, Joe McGillen, Bill Plott, Susan Scheller, Mike Stahl and Charles Zarelli.

The project editors would like to hear from others interested in helping to finish the exciting task.



1921 Negro National League



KANSAS CITY MONARCHS

League (46-31-0 — Played no non-league games)

Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
1B	George Carr	54	192	65	10	4	7	11	.339
2B	Bob Fagan	41	143	30	7	0	1	1	.210
SS	Dobie Moore	36	125	33	7	4	6	4	.264
3B	Bartolo Portuando	46	173	45	3	3	0	8	.260
RF	Bullet Rogan	45	137	36	7	2	3	13	.263
CF	John Donaldson	52	190	43	5	4	0	4	.226
LF	Hurley McNair	53	196	60	9	8	5	5	.306
C	Frank Duncan	30	85	20	1	0	0	4	.235
UTL	___ Blatner	35	119	22	3	1	1	5	.185
UTL	Jose Mendez	23	67	19	3	0	2	9	.284
C-OF	Hooks Foreman	21	57	7	0	2	0	1	.123
P-OF	Rube Currie	17	49	9	3	1	0	0	.184
Pitching	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG
Rube Currie	24	140.1	16	14	0	0	12	10	4.43
Bullet Rogan	21	172.1	20	20	3	0	14	7	2.72
Sam Crawford	18	109.0	15	10	0	0	8	3	4.62
S. Foreman	13	48.0	9	3	0	1	4	5	5.07
Cliff Bell	13	38.2	7	2	0	0	4	3	5.12
John Donaldson	6	24.2	1	0	0	1	1	0	3.28

CINCINNATI CUBANS

League (29-37-1)

All Games (32-39-1)

Because of low percentage of box scores found, all averages are considered as league totals.

Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
1B	Monk Pareda	34	122	20	4	0	0	2	.164
2B	Ramon Herrera	33	133	29	2	1	1	2	.218
SS	Herman Rios	33	125	30	1	3	0	6	.240
3B	Hooks Jimenez	32	119	35	6	1	0	4	.294
RF	Juan Guerra	27	91	25	3	1	0	8	.275
CF	Bernardo Baro	32	121	42	6	4	3	13	.347
LF	Valentin Dreke	33	134	38	4	3	0	3	.284
C	Eufemio Abreu	31	108	13	1	2	0	0	.120
P-OF	___ LeBlanc	20	54	16	4	0	0	2	.296
1B-P	Lucas Boada	14	35	7	0	0	0	0	.200
OF-P	___ Suarez	12	28	8	0	0	1	0	.286
Pitching	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG
___ LeBlanc	22	174.2	18	18	1	1	13	7	3.40
___ Suarez	15	101.1	14	12	1	0	5	9	6.04
Lucas Boada	14	88.1	12	8	1	1	5	5	3.47
___ Manella	10	58.1	9	5	0	0	2	6	4.48

THE BASEBALL RESEARCH JOURNAL

COLUMBUS BUCKEYES

League (25-37-1)								All Games (30-42-1)									
G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.	Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
44	174	48	11	1	2	2	.276	1B	Robert Hudspeth	53	214	61	12	2	4	2	.285
46	181	50	5	9	4	5	.276	2B	Clint Thomas	56	220	62	7	9	5	7	.282
53	203	65	11	3	1	16	.320	SS	John Henry Lloyd	63	246	83	17	3	1	17	.337
24	78	14	1	1	0	4	.179	3B	Eddie Dewitt	28	92	16	2	1	0	4	.174
28	117	31	3	0	0	9	.265	RF	William Woods	32	136	36	3	1	0	11	.265
31	110	34	4	1	1	1	.309	CF	___ Alexander	35	128	37	4	2	1	1	.289
33	130	37	1	2	0	8	.285	RF	___ Brown	37	147	39	2	3	0	9	.265
36	116	21	6	2	0	1	.181	C	Mac Eggleston	40	131	25	7	2	0	1	.191
27	81	15	1	1	0	3	.185	UT-P	I. S. Lane	34	109	18	1	1	0	3	.165
19	61	16	1	1	1	0	.262	P-OF	George Britt	22	71	18	1	1	1	0	.254
13	54	12	1	2	0	1	.222	OF	Clarence Smith	19	80	20	2	2	0	1	.250
12	23	4	0	0	1	0	.174	C	William Ewing	15	34	9	1	2	1	0	.265
10	44	6	1	0	0	0	.136	OF	Connie Wesley	16	71	11	1	0	0	0	.155
9	36	6	3	0	0	0	.167	3B	Sol Davis	12	49	8	3	0	0	0	.163
6	20	4	0	1	0	0	.250	C	Charles O'Neill	10	38	9	1	1	0	1	.237

PITCHING

G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG	Pos.	Player	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG
24	159.1	18	17	0	1	6	12	4.97		Roy Roberts	28	180.1	21	19	0	1	7	15	5.04
16	102.0	14	10	0	0	6	9	5.56		George Britt	18	120.0	16	12	0	0	8	9	5.70
13	71.0	11	6	1	0	4	6	5.96		Charles Wilson	15	88.0	13	8	1	0	5	7	5.52
6	36.2	4	2	0	0	4	1	2.94		Lewis Hampton	7	44.2	5	3	0	0	4	2	3.02
5	35.2	4	3	0	0	0	3	4.03		Willie Gisentaner	7	44.2	6	4	0	0	1	3	3.62
5	25.1	3	1	0	1	1	1	2.49		I. S. Lane	5	25.1	3	1	0	1	1	1	2.49
3	29.0	3	3	2	0	3	0	0.62		Ed "Huck" Rile	3	29.0	3	3	2	0	3	0	0.62



1921 Negro National League



CHICAGO GIANTS

League (7-31-2 — Played no non-league games)

Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
1B	Harry Jeffries	20	70	17	1	1	0	2	.243
2B	Harry Bauchman	16	61	16	2	2	0	1	.262
SS	John Beckwith	34	113	45	4	4	4	0	.398
3B	William Green	19	72	13	2	2	0	0	.181
RF	Otto Ray	11	44	14	1	2	0	0	.318
CF	Hawk Hawkins	12	46	10	2	0	0	0	.217
LF	Thurman Jennings	15	57	17	2	0	0	4	.298
C	Frank Duncan	8	27	4	0	0	0	0	.148
P-OF	___ Luther	13	38	10	0	0	0	1	.263
1B	___ Byrd	12	31	6	0	0	1	1	.194

Pitching	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG
John Taylor	16	108.0	14	13	0	0	4	11	4.92
___ Luther	14	73.0	10	6	0	0	3	6	7.03
___ Henderson	5	33.0	4	3	0	0	0	4	5.45
Percy Miller	5	18.0	3	2	0	0	0	4	5.00
Walter Ball	5	23.1	2	1	0	0	0	3	5.41

BACHARACH GIANTS

(Games against NNL teams — 17-15-2)

Pos.	Player	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	SB	Pct.
1B	William Pettus	28	105	23	5	0	2	1	.219
2B	Bill Handy	22	77	18	6	2	2	0	.234
SS	Dick Lundy	17	62	30	3	4	2	3	.484
3B	Oliver Marcelle	28	109	33	3	1	0	5	.303
RF	Country Brown	28	107	29	6	2	1	1	.271
CF	Jess Barbour	26	107	30	4	4	0	3	.280
LF	George Shively	25	94	30	2	1	0	8	.319
C	Julio Rojo	22	76	17	3	1	2	5	.224
OF	___ Graham	11	29	9	1	2	0	0	.310
C	Yank Deas	10	31	6	1	0	0	0	.194

Pitching	G	IP	GS	CG	ShO	Sv	W	L	RPG
Dick Redding	17	121.2	12	12	2	1	7	9	2.96
St'bean Williams	6	27.2	5	2	0	0	2	2	6.49
Harold Treadwell	6	24.2	5	2	0	0	2	0	5.11
Red Ryan	4	35.0	4	4	0	0	2	2	4.11
Nip Winters	3	22.0	3	3	1	0	2	0	2.05

Life in the Minors Often Tinged with Excitement

CAROL PALMER

Albuquerque fans recall the thrills provided by the opening of the city's new park in 1969. Despite including five future major leaguers, their team finished in the cellar.

A LAST-PLACE FINISH usually means the season was a dismal one, but for Albuquerque, N.M., the year 1969 was especially significant in many ways even though the Albuquerque Dodgers wound up at the bottom of their division in the Texas League.

The year marked the opening of a sparkling new ball park — Albuquerque Sports Stadium. By season's end the city's fans, many lured by the attractiveness of the new park, had established an all-time attendance record. In addition, Albuquerque rooters were treated that year to the presence of several personalities who were on their way to major league careers.

Del Crandall, a veteran of 19 seasons as a big league catcher, received his baptism as manager with the 1969 Albuquerque team. Among the developing talents showcased by that club were Steve Garvey, Bill Buckner, Geoff Zahn, Charlie Hough and Tim Johnson.

Crandall's counterpart in the front office, general manager Charlie Blaney, began a six-year success story in Albuquerque that season, bringing a creative approach to promotional techniques that earned him the Minor League Executive of the Year award from *The Sporting News*. And no account of the season would be complete without a look at Steve Sogge, the acclaimed University of Southern California quarterback who broke into professional baseball as a catcher with Albuquerque in '69. His aggressive play and outgoing personality prompted the fans to vote him the club's most popular player.

Even before the season began Albuquerque fans were buzzing with anticipation over the new \$1.4-million Albuquerque Sports Stadium. It was built for two reasons: First, old Tingley Field near downtown Albuquerque, home of the city's professional baseball teams since it opened in 1932, was antiquated and sorely in need of repair. Second, city officials funded the new structure in hopes of attracting a Triple-A franchise. Albuquerque had moved up to Class AA in 1962, but it wasn't until

1972 that the parent Los Angeles Dodgers decided to shift their Triple-A base from Spokane, Wash., to the New Mexico city.

The beauty and spaciousness of the new 10,510-seat stadium brought praise as well as increased attendance. Albuquerque fans set an attendance record of 176,671 in 1969, a mark that topped the previous season by more than 75,000 and was the highest total posted in Albuquerque up to that time.

The park also elicited praise from visiting teams. A preseason major league exhibition between the San Francisco Giants and Cleveland Indians on March 31 was the first official professional game played there. Willie Mays, who went 0-for-3 in the contest, commented: "It's the greatest minor league park I've ever played in." Clyde King, then managing the Giants, added: "It's really a good major league park on a smaller scale."

The Albuquerque facility was hailed as an example of architectural artistry. Set against a backdrop of mountains and sky, the stadium exudes a personality of its own — a serenity that complements the unhurried progression of a baseball game. In the late afternoons the setting sun turns the mountains a watered crimson, and as night approaches the sky becomes dotted with twinkling stars.

Linda Sogge, wife of Steve Sogge, recalled recently that the scenery at the park added a new dimension to the games. "I never got over the skies," she said, recalling their kaleidoscope of colors. "The skies changed every night."

The stadium holds the distinction of being the first "drive-in" ball park in the nation, with cars allowed to park on a bluff overlooking left-center field. Dodger scores and home runs were greeted then, as they are now, by a cacaphony of honking horns from the automobiles on the hill.

The horns had plenty of reason to sound off that first season when the frequency of home runs disproved one of

the predictions about the new park. Jim Barfield, an infielder on the 1969 team, had deemed the park a "pitcher's park," adding "there won't be any cheapies hit out of here."

Barfield's reference to "cheapies" seems especially ironic today because "cheap" is exactly what national baseball sportscasters infer when they attribute the so-called inflated batting averages of the present AAA Albuquerque Dukes to the high altitude and "thin air" of Albuquerque.

Garvey, who played third base for the 1969 team, credited much of his batting success to the new stadium's dimensions and superior lighting. Ending the season with a .373 batting average, he said 1969 "was a very good season for me; everything fell into place. The Albuquerque stadium was excellent for hitting."

Despite the psychological advantages of a new park, rejuvenated fans and even the unproven "thin air" theory which wasn't voiced until years later, the Dodgers had a mediocre year in '69.

The season began optimistically enough when Zahn, a Michigan school teacher in the off-season, pitched Albuquerque to a 7-4 victory in its opening game in El Paso. Hough, who compiled a 10-9 record, was the winning pitcher in Albuquerque's home opener. He was penciled in at the last minute when the scheduled starter, Hank Williams, developed arm trouble while warming up.

BY APRIL 28 the Dodgers were in first place in the Texas League Western Division. Infielder Bob Cummings was compiling a hitting streak that extended back to the season opener. On May 22 against Arkansas he hit safely in his twenty-second game, breaking the Texas League record for a streak set from opening day that was previously held by El Paso's Moose Stubing.

Despite the fervor created by Cummings' run for the record, the Dodgers had dropped three straight games and were losing their grip on the divisional lead. A total of 16 errors in five games pointed to obvious fielding deficiencies, but the Dodgers continued to hit well.

By June 14 the team had lost 14 of its last 18 games and was in last place. Although the Dodgers showed spurts of resurgence, the team was unable to climb out of the cellar and ended the season with a 67-69 record.

These statistics reflect a disappointing season, but they belie the importance of that year to the participants, many of whom were just beginning to sharpen skills that would propel them to the majors. Besides Garvey, Buckner, Zahn and Hough, three other players who are still performing in the major leagues — Ron Cey, Doyle Alexander and Steve Yeager — spent limited time on Albuquerque's roster in 1969.

And one player who never made it to the big leagues capped an incredible year with his stint on the Albuquerque team. As quarterback for the USC Trojans, Steve Sogge had teamed with O.J. Simpson in the January 1969 Rose Bowl — Steve's third consecutive Rose Bowl appearance.

Sogge's achievements on the baseball field and his cheerful personality endeared him to Albuquerque fans. His solid performance as Dodger catcher led to his selection to the Texas League All-Star Team.

"It was my first year in baseball; I went right to the AA level, and it was quite an experience," remembered Sogge, who is now a representative for an Oregon firm. "Playing in Albuquerque was really nice; as a town, Albuquerque is up at the top."

Reflecting on his teammates, Sogge recalled an incident when manager Crandall went to the mound to pull pitcher Larry Hutton, who adamantly refused to come out. "I'm not going to give you the ball," Hutton told the manager.

"I wasn't going to get mad," commented Crandall in recounting the episode. "I already had one mad guy out there, so it wouldn't do me any good to get angry. I quietly explained that the other pitcher was already on his way in from the bullpen and it was going to get pretty crowded out there if some of us didn't start moving. Finally I convinced him that if he wouldn't give the ball to me, maybe he would give it to the incoming pitcher. He did."

Two pitchers Sogge remembers with special fondness are Zahn and Hough. "In 1969 Geoff had no overpowering fastball, but he had a good breaking ball, excellent control and was quite a competitor," Sogge said. Hough was another story. "I threw the ball harder back to him than he did to me," Steve related. "Charlie developed his knuckleball the next year in AAA at Spokane. It was his key to staying in the majors and has served him well."

Sogge spent two more seasons in the minors — with Spokane in 1970 and Tucson in 1971 — and then accepted a football coaching position at the University of Oregon. He remained there for five years, coaching offensive backs his first year and defensive backs the next four. Subsequently he made use of the business degree he earned at USC to enter business.

Perhaps the single most important factor in developing the young talent on that 1969 Albuquerque team was the guidance offered by Crandall. The mild-mannered skipper took a serious, no-frills, fundamental approach to the game and motivated his young charges.

Crandall made a lasting impression on Garvey, who moved up to Albuquerque from Ogden of the Pioneer League on June 7. Steve finished with 14 home runs and

85 RBIs and then topped off a memorable year by joining the parent Los Angeles Dodgers for the final days of the major league season.

"Del Crandall was and is the essence of what a manager should be in the 1980s," Garvey commented recently. "He blended a warm personality with knowledge of baseball so that you had both a personal and professional respect for him. His single most important virtue was positive reinforcement. In good times and bad, he was always positive and supportive, and this allowed a player to turn to Del for advice and the needed support that we all look for."

Crandall was equally impressed with Garvey. In a 1978 newspaper interview Crandall named Steve as the greatest player he had managed in the minor leagues.

Crandall also had a special relationship with Sogge,



ALBUQUERQUE DUKES

Albuquerque Sports Stadium with cars of "drive-in" fans parked on the bluff beyond the outfield fence

who in a recent interview mentioned that his season-long rapport with Crandall was one of his outstanding memories of the season.

"Here was a man I'd idolized for years," said Sogge, "and I was getting a chance to play for him. He was a catcher and I was a catcher, and he kept hammering into me what was important and the strategies of the game. Del had tremendous insight into the techniques of catching, and he taught me how to handle the pitchers, looking for their mistakes and pointing them out."

Winning became the hallmark of Crandall's minor league managerial career. His 1970 Albuquerque Dodgers captured the Texas League crown, and later he produced a dynasty of sorts during his six seasons with the Albuquerque Dukes. Between 1978 and 1982, his Dukes made the playoffs each year and won four Pacific Coast League championships.

A key to Crandall's success in the minor leagues was his

honest, direct approach with his players. "I have an open door to their problems," he said. "If a player asks why (you make a certain decision), you should have a reason."

Although Crandall is normally unflappable, his first ejection from a game as a manager occurred during the 1969 season when he became uncharacteristically unglued in front of a Beer Nite crowd on August 28. After arguing a questionable call at first base late in the game, Crandall was given the thumb by an umpire. Storming back to the dugout, Del littered the field with ice, bats, helmets and towels.

"It was totally out of character for Del," chuckled Sogge, who recalled that he stood by with stunned teammates watching Crandall. "I remember towels and things coming out of the dugout and remember thinking it was good that Del could let off steam that way, because he was always like a concrete statue that never wavered."

In Sogge's opinion Crandall has never received the acclaim due him as a sculptor of baseball talent. "The game of baseball rewards flamboyancy," Sogge said, "rather than those who are steady and solid in baseball knowledge such as Del. It is easier for someone who is a popular personality to move up in baseball's ranks."

ADVANCEMENT TO baseball's higher levels is not reserved solely for field managers and players. Crandall's colleague in the Albuquerque front office in 1969, Charlie Blaney, was beginning his climb up the baseball ladder. He is now general manager of Dodgertown, the Los Angeles club's training facility in Vero Beach, Fla.

Blaney was praised by *The Sporting News* for one of the most original celebrations during the centennial of professional baseball in '69. The Albuquerque players donned replicas of old baseball uniforms and fake mustaches to play Shreveport on Centennial Nite, June 12. Although the Dodgers lost, the night was a success despite one non-fielding error: the Dodgers' uniform outfitters had stamped "1859" rather than "1869" on the uniforms.

While Crandall and Blaney were honing their respective skills and the manager was chiseling major league players out of raw talent, the athletes were developing friendships that might carry over into the big leagues or might end abruptly as the players moved into other professions. Summing up his short baseball career, Sogge said with a tinge of regret: "You meet these guys (minor league teammates) and never see them again. It's kind of sad that you can't keep up with them." His wistful reflection is a sentiment shared by many who cast their dreams into baseball's nomadic wanderlust, where friendships seldom sustain themselves once the players leave the game. Nowhere is this more evident than in the minor leagues.

Unlucky Hurler Missed Three Flags by a Year

JAMES A. RILEY

Big Jim Weaver, one of the majors' tallest pitchers at 6'7", was dropped by the Yankees, Cubs and Reds just before pennant seasons.

JIM WEAVER was one of the biggest men ever to toe the pitching rubber in the major leagues. The righthander stood just a deep breath under six feet, seven inches and weighed 235 pounds. In a career that spanned the Depression years of the 1930s he never experienced a losing season in his eight years in the Big Time, fashioning a lifetime 57-36 record.

In December of 1981, in what was to be the last interview that he would grant, it was my pleasure to talk to Jim at his home in Lakeland, Fla. Looking back over nearly eight decades, he shared his memories.

"I was born November 25, 1903," he began. "Born and raised on a farm about six miles south of Fulton, down in Tennessee. Fulton sits on the Kentucky-Tennessee state line, which runs right through the middle of town.

"I was on the Tennessee side of the border," Jim laughed. "I grew up in that area. There's a school in South Fulton which is in Tennessee and a school in North Fulton which is in Kentucky. I went to South Fulton. It was a small high school and I played what sports we had. I played football and basketball, but I liked baseball the best.

"Later I went to Western Kentucky State University in Bowling Green, Ky., on a dual scholarship. I was on a football and baseball contract. In the spring we would play a lot of those college teams from up north that took southern trips, and they'd come down and play on a Friday and a Saturday. Well, I would pitch on a Friday a lot of times, and I'd play first base on Saturday and if a pitcher got in trouble I would relieve him."

Jim was only 19 when he got started in professional baseball. Breaking in with his home-town Fulton team in the Kitty League in 1923, he did well enough that the Kansas City Blues of the American Association bought him in August. He was assigned to Bartlesville the next spring, but then dropped out of Organized Baseball to return to school.

During the summers he played for a company-spon-

sored team in the asphalt mining town of Kyrock, Ky., "way back up in the hills." He was given a job there and on days when he wasn't playing ball he had to work to earn the \$4 per day that he was paid. His brother Bob, who played in the minors briefly, was his catcher.

In April 1927 Jim was married. Later that year he signed with Chattanooga of the Southern Association. "I guess it was about March of 1928 that the Washington Senators bought my contract," he said, "and I went up with them for a short time. I had kind of a hard time getting started. The Senators farmed me out the next year to Birmingham. I didn't stick with Birmingham, and they sent me to New Haven in the Eastern League. I don't remember what the record was, but I had a pretty good year there. [He was 14-5 while working in 32 games.] That fall Washington traded me to Baltimore for an outfielder named Lopez, and then the next year, 1930, I had a great season with Baltimore. I won 19 and lost nine or ten, something like that. [Actually his record was 19-11.]

"Then the next year the Yankees bought me from Baltimore, and I stayed most of 1931 with the Yankees."

As a 27-year-old rookie with the Yankees, Jim filled in when and where he was needed, winning two of his three decisions. "I didn't do a lot of pitching that year," he recalled. "I was just a rookie, and they had Pennock, Ruffing, Gomez, George Pipgras, and oh, what a team! Ruth and Gehrig, great guys both of them. They didn't come any finer. And Lazzeri, Combs, Dickey, Chapman, Sewell. We were in the pennant race up until near the

Editor's note: Most record books show Jim Weaver was born in Fulton, Ky. Years ago in filling out questionnaires, Jim himself wrote "Fulton, Ky.," in the space reserved for place of birth. However, his son Ray possesses a document from the U.S. Department of Commerce which lists Jim's birthplace as Obion County, Tenn., which happens to be the county in which the Tennessee portion of the city of Fulton is located.

end of the season. The A's were a powerhouse at that time. I pitched against most all of the teams, relieving, and in and out."

The Yankees won the pennant the following year, 1932, the first pennant that Jim missed by a single season. He still recalled the circumstances and aftermath.

"They sent me over to Newark in the International League," he explained. "I stayed there two years, 1932 and 1933. I don't exactly know why they sent me there, frankly. I thought I performed better than that."

With Newark Weaver racked up a 15-6 record in 1932. The following season, working 268 innings in 49 games, he won 25 games while losing 11.

"At the end of 1933 they [the parent Yankees] sold me to the St. Louis Browns," Jim continued. "The Browns later returned me to Newark, and then the Chicago Cubs took me and that's when I got started. It all happened within a few hours."

Newspaper accounts reveal the Yankees and Browns agreed on a \$15,000 purchase price for Weaver, with the Browns shelling out \$2,500 for an option. However, in mid-May of 1934, the financially strapped St. Louis club returned Weaver to Newark, and the Cubs immediately paid the \$12,500 still due to acquire him.

This time he was in the majors to stay. One game that year stuck in his memory. "When I first joined the Cubs in 1934, there was one outstanding game that I pitched," he remembered, "I beat the St. Louis Cardinals, 1-0, in St. Louis. I don't remember how many hits I gave up, but it was the first time they had been shut out in a long time. They had an outstanding ball club. I was always kind of proud of that one."

The big righthander had reason to be proud. The game was played on Thursday, June 7, in St. Louis. The newspapers headlined "Cubs Blank Cards as Weaver Stars," with the accompanying game description reading:

Big Jim Weaver, recently picked up by the Cubs when the Browns turned him back to Newark, pitched shutout ball today as Chicago won the series final from the Cardinals, 1-0, and made it two out of three for the series.

Weaver had the situation under control throughout, none of the seven hits he gave being good enough for more than one base. He fanned eight.

Jim was playing for his favorite manager, Charlie Grimm, and that day had good support from the cast of regulars. In addition to player-manager Grimm, the Cubs' lineup sparkled with names like Gabby Hartnett, Kiki Cuyler, Chuck Klein, Stan Hack, Billy Herman and Babe Herman.

Discussing his 1934 Cub teammates, Weaver said: "Gabby [Hartnett] was a great handler of pitchers. I wouldn't want to compare him and Dickey. I don't think I

would want to make a choice between the two.

"Cuyler was a perfectionist. He was a stylist. Everything he did had a style to it, even his running. He was real fast.

"Chuck [Klein] was a good ball player, but he wasn't fast. If he'd had a little more speed, he'd have been great. He was a good hitter, a power hitter.

"Hack didn't have much power, but he was a good ball player."

Of the two Hermans, Jim regarded Billy as a good player and said Babe was not as bad an outfielder as others said he was. "He was awkward and stumbled around a lot, but Babe made some pretty good catches," Weaver commented. "I don't think he was the worst in the world. As a matter of fact, I don't think he was as bad as they'd write him up. He was a good hitter."

THE CUBS FINISHED a strong third behind the Cards and Giants, but with Lon Warneke, Bill Lee, Charlie Root and some fine pitching depth returning it was time for Jim to move on despite his 11-9 record. In November he was traded to the Pirates along with Guy Bush and Babe Herman in exchange for Larry French and Fred Lindstrom. Ironically, the Cubs went on to win the 1935 pennant, making it the second flag that Jim missed by a single season.

With Pittsburgh he was 14-8 in both 1935 and '36 for his two best years in the majors. "I would argue on that," Weaver said in retrospect. "I think the records are a couple of games short because I've always been under the impression, even at the time that I quit, that it was 16 and 8. I thought I had 16 wins two years in a row, but maybe they're taking a little off for interest," he added with a laugh.

Jim's teammates on the Pirates included several all-time greats. In 1935 Arky Vaughan led the league with a .385 batting average. Jim remembered the man as well as the ball player: "Arky Vaughan was an all-around nice fellow. A real quiet man, he was soft spoken and a great family man. When we were at home, he spent most of his time with his wife and little girl. I liked him very much and he was the kind you like to be friends with. He was one of my favorite ball players in the league at that time. Arky was a good hitter and I don't think there was any better fielder than he was."

Vaughan's batting championship was sandwiched between two titles won by teammate Paul Waner, who led the league in 1934 and 1936 with averages of .362 and .373, respectively. Paul and his younger brother, Lloyd, were dubbed "Big Poison" and "Little Poison" by the media. "I knew the Waners pretty well," Jim reflected. "They were in a class to themselves.

"I guess a relief pitcher named Mace Brown was the best friend I had. He's a country boy from Iowa and he's just as plain as an old shoe, just an all-around good guy. He and I roomed together for three years at Pittsburgh. Mace had a good overhand curve. He's a guy you could sit in your room with at night and just talk about anything and everything in general. He was pretty well educated and a very plain type person. That was during the Depression. You won't believe it, but my top salary was \$8,500. I believe it was in 1935, '36 and '37 that I made that."

To supplement his baseball income Jim would occasionally barnstorm at the end of the regular season. "A fellow named Ray Doane used to get up barnstorming trips for a couple weeks after the season," Weaver recalled. "But nothing to speak of, nothing of any consequence. We didn't make much money.

"Frisch, Durocher and Mize were some of the players that I barnstormed with. Mize was a very good hitter. We barnstormed together a lot. We went out through the Midwest and played town teams. We very seldom played against black teams. Well, I pitched a few games in Cincinnati when I got back home since my home town, Covington, Ky., was just across the river from Cincinnati. There was a fellow named Jimmy Shevlin who brought in those top colored teams. We played against the Homestead Grays a couple of times.

"I remember Josh Gibson. He was a good hitter. I barnstormed against teams that Satchel Paige was on. He could really throw that ball. I remember one of the best shortstops I ever saw in my life was with the Kansas City Monarchs. They were in that Negro League and they had a guy who was a great fielder. There wasn't much thought given about it [playing blacks]. It was just accepted the way it was and there was no outward display of any kind. As a matter of fact, I don't remember anything hardly ever being said about it because at that time there was nothing thought of it. Sure, we played our best in the exhibitions. I think every ball player does. If you're a pitcher, you're trying to get as many men out as you can. Every man that walks up to that plate, you try to get him out and every hitter tries to get hits.

"I was a fastball pitcher. I didn't have a good curve, but I don't know why. I worked on it a lot, but I never was able to develop a good curve. I couldn't coordinate the snap of the wrist that it took to put the right kind of a spin on the ball to have a good curve ball and still have the speed. I just wasn't able to do it for some reason. I had pretty good control. Bases on balls never hurt me that much.

"In order to win, you've got to have a breaking ball to go with a fastball. And I developed a forkball which acted like a dry spitball. It would go in there and half float and half spin and get up there and take a dip down. I ran on

the thing by accident, and after I saw it, I tried it one day and it worked pretty good. I kept after it and it turned out and so I just used that then for my breaking ball, and I used my curve ball for a change of pace. I guess I was the first or second to use the forkball in the major leagues to any extent.

"I went from the Pirates to the Browns [early in 1938]. I don't remember exactly how that happened. I was with the Browns a couple of times. Just short stays. And, of course, St. Louis was pretty short on money back in those days. I wasn't getting any of it. You know how losing ball clubs 'juggle around.' "

Jim went from the Browns to the Reds early in the 1938 season. His catcher there was Ernie Lombardi. "Lom did all right," he remembered. "He was a little awkward to be as big as he was, and I guess you'd say clumsy. He would have hit .400 if he had speed."

WHILE WITH THE Reds that year, Jim witnessed baseball history being made. The recollection remained vivid: "I saw Vander Meer pitch his two no-hit games. There were a couple of fantastic defensive plays made for him. They weren't circus catches or anything like that, but they played good ball behind him. I think he'll admit that."

Jim returned to the Reds the following spring but pitched only three innings in the regular season. "I thought I was pitching good relief ball with the Reds at the time," he explained. "As a matter of fact, Bill McKechnie told a Boston writer that he had two of the best relief pitchers in the National League in Jim Weaver and Peaches Davis. But in about three days we were both gone."

The Reds won the pennant that year and the next as well, marking the third time that Weaver missed out on a pennant by a single season. But Jim wasn't bothered by another near miss. Forty years later he dismissed the idea, saying: "Hell, I missed three pennants by one year. So I got used to it."

Meanwhile, Jim returned to the minors. He pitched for Louisville in the American Association in 1940 and 1941, but didn't pitch any more after World War II started.

For a number of years after retiring from the game, Weaver was athletic director and baseball coach at the Kentucky State Reformatory in LaGrange. Later he worked as a probation officer for the Kentucky Department of Correction for 15 years. He enjoyed rehabilitation work with young boys.

Jim and his wife, Ruth, reared three sons, Kenneth, Ray and Lloyd. Each became successful in his chosen field. With the children grown and on their own, the

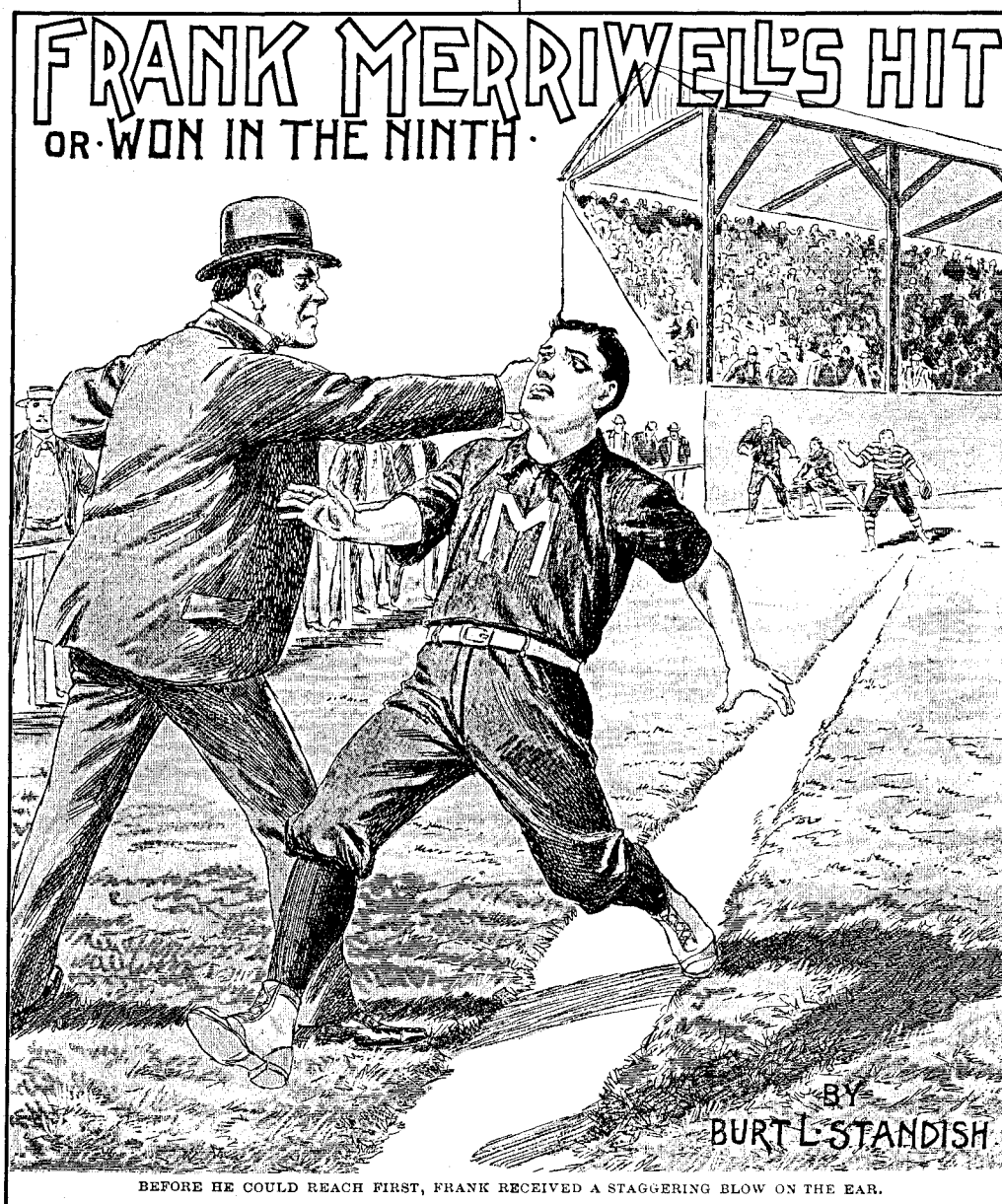
Weavers moved to Florida in 1977. He didn't like the Sunshine State as much as the mountains back home, but explained his decision to move thus: "We visited down here one Christmas and we liked it, so when my wife and I retired we moved here for various reasons. I'm not very smart, but I'm smart enough to know I could never take that snow and ice."

After retiring, Jim lost contact with the sport he played so well. "I don't keep up with baseball any more," he said. "As a matter of fact, I'm not really interested in it. I think that baseball in general has become ridiculous. The high salaries are one of the things that I'm talking about; they're absolutely ridiculous. We went through the rough days. It was rough during the Depression. I missed the pension fund by two or three years, I think. I was told that

when they tried to grandfather us older fellows in on a percentage basis that it was killed."

In his advanced age Jim suffered from an assortment of ailments, including hydrocephalus (an accumulation of fluid on the brain which sometimes causes lapses in memory), arthritis, bleeding ulcers and a fractured vertebra. On December 12, 1983, shortly past his eightieth birthday, the gentle giant found peace from his pain. The official cause of death was recorded as emphysema and a heart attack.

Jim Weaver was a proud man with an independence characteristic of people from the geographic region of his roots. He asked nothing from anyone. He lived a full and productive life and voiced no regrets. Our National Pastime needs to remember players like Jim Weaver.



Rare Pair: Teammates Who Rate 1-2 in RBIs

WAYNE STEWART

Since 1900 there have been 28 occasions when players of the same team dominated run-producing honors. The Tigers' Cobb-Crawford duo did it four years in a row.

THE NEW YORK YANKEES boasted the majors' most productive RBI duo in 1985. Don Mattingly led both leagues with 145 runs batted in, and Dave Winfield ranked third in the American League with 114. Only Baltimore's Eddie Murray, with 124, prevented the Yankee pair from joining an exclusive list of teammates who finished one-two in the battle for their league's RBI crown.

Since 1900 there have been 28 one-two finishes for run-producing honors by players wearing the same team's uniform. The most recent was in 1984 when Tony Armas and Jim Rice provided the Boston Red Sox with an awesome twosome.

Ty Cobb was the most prolific contributor to the list of productive teammates. From 1908 through 1911 Cobb and fellow Detroit Tiger star Sam Crawford paired to sweep the Nos. 1 and 2 spots on the RBI rankings. Runs batted in, of course, did not become part of the official statistics until 1920, but the earlier RBI data were compiled many years ago by Ernie Lanigan and more recently by the compilers of *The Baseball Encyclopedia*.

In addition to the record four consecutive RBI monopolies, Cobb and Crawford joined with Bobby Veach in 1915 for a rare one-two-three domination of RBI honors.

In all, Cobb figured in six one-two finishes for the RBI crown by teammates. His closest challenger in this realm was Babe Ruth — four times. In 1926 Ruth accomplished the feat with Tony Lazzeri; in 1927 the Babe did it with Lou Gehrig; in 1928 with Gehrig and Bob Meusel for another rare one-two-three finish, and in 1931 Ruth did it again with Gehrig.

In fact, in 1927, 1928 and 1931 Ruth and Gehrig combined as the top two producers in both homers and RBIs! Only one other time in the history of the game has this occurred: In 1949, when Ted Williams and Vern Stephens of the Boston Red Sox took those honors.

Both leagues almost had teammates wind up one-two in the RBI race in 1902. The top duo in the National League

was Pittsburgh's Honus Wagner and Tommy Leach with 91 and 85, respectively. In the American League Boston's Buck Freeman (121) set the RBI pace, while Charles "Piano Legs" Hickman, who was traded by Boston to Cleveland six weeks after the season began, finished second with 110.

Even more amazing was the 1932 season, which featured a one-two sweep by the Philadelphia teams. The Phillies actually had a one-two-three domination (achieved earlier by the 1915 Tigers and 1928 Yankees as mentioned). The Phils' trio was Don Hurst (143), Chuck Klein (137) and Pinky Whitney (124). The Athletics' RBI kings were Jimmie Foxx (169) and Al Simmons (151).

Earlier Philadelphia experienced back-to-back seasons (1913 and 1914) with the top twosome in runs batted in. In 1913 it was Frank Baker (126) and Stuffie McInnis (90) of the A's, and one year later the RBI "partners" for the Phillies were Sherry Magee (103) and Gavy Cravath (100).

The Boston Red Sox boasted the top two RBI producers in both 1949 and 1950. Ironically, their fearsome twosome tied for the No. 1 spot both seasons. In 1949 Ted Williams and Vern Stephens shared honors with 159 RBIs, while the following year saw Stephens and Walt Dropo finish in a deadlock with 144 RBIs. The odds against such a coincidence are staggering.

The most productive duo ever was the Ruth-Gehrig tandem. In 1931 they combined for a record 347 runs driven in, including Gehrig's American League high of 184, which ranks second only in the record book to Hack Wilson's 191 RBIs for the 1930 Chicago Cubs. Furthermore, the second best teammate total of 339 RBIs also belongs to The Bambino and The Iron Horse in 1927 during the high-flying days of the Murderers' Row team.

It seems doubtful that the record of 347 RBIs by teammates will soon tumble. When Armas and Rice took the top two slots in the American League RBI parade in 1984, they managed only 245 runs batted in.

Teammates Who Were 1-2 in RBI Race

Year — Team	Players	RBI's	Year — Team	Players	RBI's
1900-Philadelphia N.L.	Elmer Flick Ed Delahanty	110 109	1928-New York A.L.	Lou Gehrig Babe Ruth Bob Meusel	*142 *142 113
1902-Pittsburgh N.L.	Honus Wagner Tommy Leach	91 85	1931-New York A.L.	Lou Gehrig Babe Ruth	184 163
1904-New York N.L.	Bill Dahlen Sam Mertes	80 *78	1932-Philadelphia N.L.	Don Hurst Chuck Klein Pinky Whitney	143 137 124
1905-Philadelphia A.L.	Harry Davis Lave Cross	83 77	1932-Philadelphia A.L.	Jimmie Foxx Al Simmons	169 *151
1908-Detroit A.L.	Ty Cobb Sam Crawford	101 80	1940-Detroit A.L.	Hank Greenberg Rudy York	150 134
1909-Detroit A.L.	Ty Cobb Sam Crawford	115 97	1949-Boston A.L.	Ted Williams Vern Stephens	*159 *159
1910-Detroit A.L.	Sam Crawford Ty Cobb	120 88	1950-Boston A.L.	Walt Dropo Vern Stephens	*144 *144
1911-Detroit A.L.	Ty Cobb Sam Crawford	144 *115	1952-Cleveland A.L.	Al Rosen Larry Doby	105 *104
1913-Philadelphia A.L.	Frank Baker Stuffey McInnis	126 *90	1960-Milwaukee N.L.	Hank Aaron Eddie Mathews	126 124
1914-Philadelphia N.L.	Sherry Magee Gavvy Cravath	103 100	1965-Cincinnati N.L.	Deron Johnson Frank Robinson	130 113
1915-Detroit A.L.	Sam Crawford Bobby Veach Ty Cobb	*112 *112 99	1970-Cincinnati N.L.	Johnny Bench Tony Perez	148 *129
1917-Detroit A.L.	Bobby Veach Ty Cobb	103 *102	1976-Cincinnati N.L.	George Foster Joe Morgan	121 111
1926-New York A.L.	Babe Ruth Tony Lazzeri	155 *114	1980-Milwaukee A.L.	Cecil Cooper Ben Oglivie	122 *118
1927-New York A.L.	Lou Gehrig Babe Ruth	175 164	1984-Boston A.L.	Tony Armas Jim Rice	123 122

*Tied for position.

THE NATIONAL BASEBALL LIBRARY

Founded in 1939, the NBL has a unique mission—to collect, organize, and preserve baseball's documentary heritage. The NBL serves all who are interested in baseball history and dedicated to our national pastime.

Research Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. throughout the year except national holidays.

Reference services: If you cannot travel to Cooperstown to visit the NBL in person, please call (607) 547-9988 or write to the address below.



The National Baseball Library, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, Inc., Cooperstown, New York.

The NBL provides photocopy service, photographic reproductions, and research assistance. Fee schedules and detailed information about library services and a summary of NBL collections can be obtained by writing to:

Thomas R. Heitz, Librarian
National Baseball Library
National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, Inc.
Main Street
Cooperstown, New York 13326

Germany Schaefer: There Was Method to His Madness

JACK KAVANAGH

A consummate showman, he caused a change in baseball's rules by stealing first base. For years he and Nick Altrock teamed as comics and coaches.

MANY YOUNG FANS LEARNED for the first time in 1985 that the Detroit Tigers once had a superstar named Ty Cobb. His name and achievements were resurrected by the media because of Pete Rose's successful challenge of the all-time base-hit record set by the former Tiger great in a career that spanned the 1905-1928 seasons.

Everyone who played or followed the sport during that period held Cobb in awe. His lifetime .367 average and 12 American League batting titles still seem unbelievable. But while Ty was admired as a player, no one loved him. It was his Detroit teammate, Herman "Germany" Schaefer, who was adored by the fans.

Schaefer, only an average player, was the most beloved performer of his time. From 1905, when he and Cobb came to the Tigers together, until he died in 1919, he clowning his way into the hearts of baseball fans in Detroit and everywhere he went as a player and later as a coach.

Schaefer's place in baseball memory rests on being the answer to the trivia question: "What player stole first base?"

It is unfair to Schaefer that this event, which caused the rules to be rewritten to prohibit running the bases in reverse order, is regarded as a prank, the act of a buffoon. In reality, like all of Schaefer's eccentricities, it had a practical basis.

Detroit and Cleveland were tied at the end of nine innings. Schaefer was on first base and outfielder Davy Jones, a good base stealer, was on third. Schaefer signaled Jones to pull a double steal and took off for second base. Jones held at third when the catcher refused to throw the ball.

Undaunted, Schaefer hollered, "Let's do it again," and on the next pitch raced back to first base. The ballpark was in an uproar when, on the following pitch, Schaefer again took off for second base. Cleveland catcher Nig Clarke threw the ball away and Jones scored the winning run from third base.

Behind Schaefer's antics was the baseball-smart aware-

ness that the Cleveland catcher had a bad arm and, if he could be lured into throwing to keep Schaefer from stealing, the winning run could score from third.

Another tale about Schaefer's career reveals the way in which he once protested the continuation of play because it was raining. On that occasion he sauntered to the plate wearing hip boots and a rain slicker, carrying an umbrella in one hand and a bat in the other.

Again there was no madness in Schaefer's method. Detroit was far behind, and if the fifth inning wasn't completed, the game would be canceled. The Tigers had been dawdling, and umpire Silk O'Loughlin, a doughty martinet, was determined they'd not stall until the game had to be stopped and the Tigers saved from defeat.

When the cherubic Schaefer assumed his place in the batter's box, the umpire ordered Germany to take off his costume. Schaefer demanded to know what rule said he couldn't wear boots and a raincoat and hold an umbrella over his head. He offered the umbrella to O'Loughlin, who insisted Schaefer dispose of it.

Deliberately, Schaefer folded the umbrella and carried it back to the bench. Then he returned to the batter's box and, sitting on home plate, slowly removed each hip boot. By the time Germany had completed his wardrobe change the drizzle had given way to a downpour and the game, to the obvious delight of Detroit fans, had to be called.

Schaefer was an infielder on Detroit's first three American League championship teams of 1907-08-09. He divided his appearances among three infield positions until traded to the Washington Senators late in the 1909 season.

While still with Detroit, Schaefer, who managed a career batting average of only .257 in 15 major league seasons, actually had the audacity to boast on one occasion that he would hit a home run. This was, of course, the dead-ball era when homers were rare.

Unlike Babe Ruth, whose 1932 "called-shot" World Series homer will forever be disputed, Germany left no

doubt in anyone's mind that he intended to hit a home run.

The Tigers were playing in his hometown, Chicago, and losing by two runs in the ninth inning. Although Schaefer was sitting out the game with a sore thumb, the fans had been riding him all day. Finally, after two were out, two Tiger batters reached base and Schaefer was sent up to pinch-hit. The catcalls were deafening. The weak-hitting utility infielder faced Doc White, ace White Sox pitcher.

Schaefer approached the plate like a genial alderman about to make a campaign speech. He doffed his cap and bowed in all directions. "Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "permit me to introduce myself, Herman Schaefer, the premier batsman of the world. No pitcher can throw the ball hard enough to throw it past me. I will now hit a home run to demonstrate my marvelous skill."

On the mound White raged at Germany's effrontery. As soon as Schaefer had dug in at the plate, he blazed his fastball right down the middle of the plate. That's exactly where Germany had guessed he could goad the pitcher into delivering the pitch, and swinging from the heels he drove the ball over the fence, one of the longest drives ever seen at Chicago's old South Side Park.

A consummate showman, Germany cantered toward first base and then dove head first into the bag. He dusted himself off and set out for second base, where he again plunged in a cloud of dust. He repeated his head-first slide into third base and, taking off for home plate, made his arrival there with a flashy hook slide. He got up, dusted himself off, bowed in all directions and announced: "Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. That concludes today's demonstration of superior batting!" It was the only home run he hit that entire year. Altogether he socked only nine in his 15 years in the majors.

A BASEBALL DIAMOND was Schaefer's theater, and there was a purpose for every scenario. However, off the field he was perhaps even funnier. The life of a professional ball player early in the century entailed long hours of boredom that served as a challenge to Germany's inventiveness. One of his favorite stunts was to stand on the rear steps of the omnibus that took the Detroit team to the ball park. As the vehicle made its way along city streets the players would be recognized and fans would call out to them. Cobb might sit inside in surly silence, but Schaefer was in his element shouting back and forth.

A favorite gambit was to watch for a mother pushing a perambulator. Germany would lean out for a peek into the baby carriage and ask, solicitously, "Is it a boy or girl?" Flattered by the attention, the mother would soon be holding the baby up to be admired by Schaefer, who as the

bus drew away would continue to ask questions, each more personal than the last. The routine ended with the mother screaming replies to Schaefer, now a block away, about her pregnancy, her husband's bedroom manners and whatever else the impish Schaefer could cajole from her.

Schaefer's partner in many off-field activities was Tiger shortstop Charley O'Leary. They were so popular as impromptu comics that they spent several winters touring in vaudeville, although they were no rivals for Webber and Fields. Their act was the inspiration many years later for an MGM musical titled "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" starring Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra.

Eventually Schaefer gravitated to the coaching lines, where his fame became firmly established. Clark Griffith, one of baseball's canniest managers, teamed Germany with former pitcher Nick Altrock to perform as comic coaches with the Washington Senators. The duo developed pantomime acts performed in a broad comic style that suited the times. They used oversized gloves and bats and exaggerated mimicry. Germany was particularly gifted at imitating the movements of other players and burlesquing the routines of umpires, who were the natural foils of his acts.

While the fans might have regarded everything Germany and Altrock did as sheer comic relief when games were dull, the pair would not have been tolerated on the field had they not been, first, solid baseball tacticians and strategists and master psychologists.

Germany was no simple clown. He was out there on the coaching lines for good reasons. He explained this in an interview in 1912 when he was a part-time player and full-time clown for the Senators.

"Comedy alone will not serve on the coaching lines," he said. "The real stuff must be worked in. Humorous coaching is valuable for two reasons: It keeps our fellows relaxed and it sometimes distracts the opposing players.

"The main thing, however, is to refrain from personalities. I never say anything sarcastic to either the fans or players."

In a syndicated newspaper column he wrote in 1916, Schaefer showed a sound grasp of basic psychology.

"I was coaching at third base and kept telling our batters that I could go up there, take two strikes and then make a hit, trying to give our players the impression the other team's pitcher didn't have anything on the ball," he wrote.

"Finally I was sent in as a pinch-hitter. I knew that I was in for it if I didn't make good. I also figured we were beaten unless our batters could be made to believe they could bat the ball out of the lot every time they stepped to the plate. To bring about this psychological effect I

realized I would have to make good my claim that I could take two strikes and still make a hit. It was worth the chance. I let the pitcher get two strikes on me before I swung at a pitch. When I did I was lucky enough to get a two-base hit, and right after that we knocked the pitcher out of the box and won the game."

Schaefer clowned in the coaching box, but he was respected by the men who were most serious about the game of baseball. Ed Barrow, the general manager who built the New York Yankees after he had converted Babe Ruth from a pitcher to an outfielder, called Schaefer "one of the funniest fellows who ever was in baseball."

John McGraw, manager of the New York Giants, described Schaefer as "one of the most delightful and whimsical of personalities." He got to know Germany well during an around-the-world tour following the 1913 season.

McGRAW, WHOSE GIANTS had won the National League pennant, invited the Chicago White Sox to accompany his team to the Orient and play in Europe and England as they circled the globe. Most of the Giants made the trip, but the White Sox had to fill out their squad with players recruited from other teams. Detroit's Wahoo Sam Crawford and Boston's Tris Speaker joined the outfielders, and Schaefer was recruited to play second base and perform his antics. Foreign spectators might not understand a hit-and-run play, but the art of the mime is universal.

The Washington Senators dropped Schaefer in 1914 to make room for a rookie pitcher. Germany's playing skills, never first class unless inspired by some need of the moment, had faded, and coaches were an expense most teams could not afford.

He then found a place in the outlaw Federal League. He was a utility player-comic with Newark in 1915 but was jobless when the league collapsed. Germany subsequently caught on with the New York Yankees and was a metro-

politan favorite for several seasons. He was with Cleveland in 1918, but when the season was shortened because of World War I, he was again cut from the payroll.

The relationship he had developed with McGraw, the most influential man in baseball during the early decades of this century, now proved valuable to Schaefer. McGraw took Germany to spring training with the Giants in 1919. He kept him with the team to enliven the exhibition games and keep the players entertained during off-field hours. But Schaefer could no longer fill in as a substitute player. He was in deteriorating health.

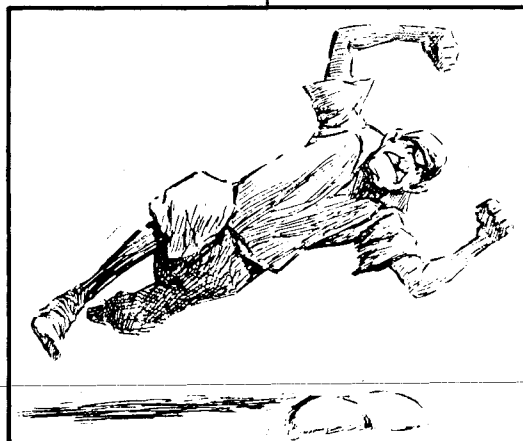
McGraw kept the beloved player, now 41, on the payroll and sent him to scout players for the Giants when he was able to travel. It was on a scouting trip, headed for Canada, that Schaefer met his end.

Baseball records show that Schaefer's death occurred at Saranac Lake, N.Y., on May 16, 1919. They also show that Christy Mathewson, the great Giants pitcher, died at Saranac Lake, and it is well known that he succumbed to tuberculosis. Larry Doyle, Giants' captain in those years, also died in a Saranac Lake sanatorium many years later. The dry Adirondack site was a last resort for the consumptive.

Many historians consequently have assumed that tuberculosis also claimed Schaefer. Not so. He was stricken with a massive heart attack aboard a railroad train as it stopped at the Saranac Lake depot, and he died instantly. The train was delayed until a local doctor could be found to fill out the death certificate.

Schaefer's body was shipped to Chicago, where he had lived with a sister between seasons. He had remained a bachelor all his life.

Would today's multi-million-dollar baseball business tolerate a Germany Schaefer? It seems doubtful. But almost certainly his antics on the coaching lines were every bit as entertaining to the fans as is the manufactured humor of the mascots now employed by many major league teams.



1874 Baseball Tour Not Cricket to British

NEIL STOUT

Spalding, then 23, led the Boston and Philadelphia teams on a trip to England to demonstrate our National Pastime. Britain's press and fans were cool to the sport.

ALBERT GOODWILL SPALDING, ace pitcher for the champion Boston Red Stockings, wanted to see England. He knew that England had been sending cricket teams on American exhibition tours for years. In 1874 it seemed to Spalding that it was time for America to return the compliment with a baseball tour of England.

The 23-year-old Spalding soon obtained support from baseball's two most important leaders, Harry Wright and Henry Chadwick, both of whom had been born in England and had come to America as children. Wright, the son of a famous English cricketer, had been hired as a professional by the Union Cricket Club of Cincinnati in 1866. Three years later he was the organizer, captain, center fielder, relief pitcher and manager of the Cincinnati Red Stockings, the first openly all-professional baseball team. In 1871 Wright, taking with him his star players and even the club nickname, moved to Boston in the new National Association of Professional Base Ball Players. Chadwick, America's first important sportswriter, is known as the "Father of Baseball" and the inventor of the scoring system. Like Wright, Chadwick sought to bring to baseball the respectability that cricket enjoyed in England.

While Wright and Chadwick were convincing the Boston and Philadelphia clubs that a British tour was feasible, Spalding sailed to England equipped with letters of introduction to the august Marylebone Cricket Club. (Americans know that the U.S. Constitution was written in 1787 and ratified in 1788; the English sporting community finds greater significance in those dates because they cover the founding of the Marylebone Cricket Club and its promulgation of the Rules of Cricket. The M.C.C. remained the supreme arbiter of cricket for 182 years.)

Spalding was a good pitcher and a great salesman, as the sporting goods empire he later built attests. The young man pleaded earnestly for a chance to show off baseball. As he later recalled, "I think, in my ardor to win out, I

made mention of the fact we had some cricketers among our players and might be able to do something in the national games of both countries." That turned the tide, particularly when the M.C.C. learned that two players were sons of "Sam Wright of Notts.," a famous cricketer who had gone to America nearly 40 years earlier. Spalding blithely accepted invitations for cricket matches with the best clubs in Britain.

American journals such as *Harper's Weekly* and the *New York Forest and Stream* applauded Spalding's "international mission," claiming that the American visit was "fast becoming the talk of every cricket city and town in the kingdom," and that 10,000 spectators were expected at the August 3 game with the Marylebone Cricket Club. They did not say that what the English spectators really wanted to see was American cricket, not baseball exhibitions. Harry Wright, however, knew that he, his brothers George and Sam and Philadelphia's Dick McBride were the only legitimate cricketers on the tour and that some of his men had never even seen the game. What's more, the first match was against the redoubtable M.C.C. itself!

Nevertheless, preparations went ahead, including the rescheduling of the whole National Association baseball season so that Boston and Philadelphia could be gone from mid-July to mid-September. In England the leading sporting journal, *The Field*, prepared the public for "The Coming Base-Ball Players," noting on July 11 that "a skillful pitcher like Cummings of Chicago or Spalding of the Bostons may count on remuneration equal to that of an agile *danseuse* or an operatic star."

On June 25, two days before the steamer Ohio landed the American baseballers at Liverpool, *The Field*, over the byline of "Cosmo," ran a fulsome column on the glories of baseball. "Base Ball is a scientific game, more difficult than many . . . can possibly imagine. . . . In the cricket field there is sometimes a wearisome monotony that is utterly unknown in Base Ball. . . . To see it played by

experts will astonish those who only know it by written descriptions, for it is a fast game, full of change and excitement."

Albert Spalding liked that description so well that he quoted most of it in his 1911 book, *America's National Game*, as an example of the great impact the tour had had on the British public. However, since it was written while the baseball teams were still on the high seas and contained a reference to Chadwick's brainchild, the "right short fielder," it seems likely that the author was Chadwick himself rather than some awestruck British observer.

After playing baseball games in Liverpool and Manchester, the American clubs faced their big test: On August 3 they were scheduled to play cricket against an eleven from the Marylebone Cricket Club on the grounds of Lord's in London. Harry Wright had managed to have one practice session in Liverpool — doubtless the first time most of his team had ever played cricket. Charles W. Allcock, a leading cricket writer for the London press, attended the practice. He was aghast at the spectacle. He had informed his public that the Americans were first-class cricketers, promising matches equal to the well-remembered 1868 tour by the Australian All Blacks. What Allcock saw in Liverpool certainly wasn't cricket. "Why, Spalding," he remonstrated, "your men don't know the rudiments of the game." Spalding brashly replied that "we are not much in practice, but we are great in matches." Fortunately for the visitors, Spalding had already talked his English hosts into allowing the Americans to field 18 men against the standard 11 for the English clubs. The equivalent in modern baseball would be the New York Yankees playing a good college team that had 14 fielders and five outs per inning.

THE M.C.C. BATTED first. Spalding later remarked that "we had so many men in the field that it seemed impossible that any balls could get away," yet the British batsmen, against competent bowling by the experienced cricketers Harry Wright and Dick McBride, managed to score 105 runs in their innings.

Following the traditional break for lunch, the *Times* of London reported, "the two leading base ball clubs in America gave an exposition of their game. The play, however, was somewhat disappointing, . . . as the Philadelphia Athletics threw many chances away by bad fielding." Boston "took most judicious advantage" of the Athletics' lapses for a 24-7 victory. When the baseball game ended at 5:45, cricket resumed with the M.C.C. still at bat. "Doubtless the exertions of the Americans at base ball caused their fielding, which had hitherto been first-class, to decline, and consequently runs came quickly."

Things did not look hopeful for the Americans when play resumed in the rain the next day. Wright and McBride were bowled out almost at once. Then Spalding took his turn. He knew, because Wright had carefully instructed him, that the object of the cricket batsman is to defend his wicket by steering the ball away from it and to swing away only at balls that are off target. Spalding, however, made confident by the broad, paddle-shaped cricket bat with which "it just seemed impossible to miss," took a full cut at everything. He hit the first three deliveries for the cricket equivalent of homers, and before he was bowled out he had scored 23 runs. The remainder of the team, adopting Spalding's technique, "gained confidence and batted the ball all over the south of England." The Americans completed their innings with 107 runs — a feat that sounds very impressive until one remembers that they had seven more chances at bat than the Englishmen. Rain halted further play with neither side being able to take its second innings. Thus the match is officially recorded as a draw, with the *Times* noting that "the batting of the visitors was characterized by great vigor." The *Times*, however, thought the visitors' batting form — except for that of cricketer George Wright — seemed crude. Swinging at every ball, and especially those right on target (the American strike zone), instead of blocking, was simply not cricket.

On the other hand, the Americans had scored a lot of runs and their fielding had impressed everyone. Suddenly the 18-to-11 advantage began to look more formidable. Consequently, the other cricket clubs on the schedule became wary; no one wanted to be humiliated by the crude but effective visitors.

On August 7 the Americans took the field against Prince's Club and Grounds, which, although boasting a membership of 1,500, was hard put to find 11 batsmen to go against the "Eighteen of America." The match was supposed to start at noon but began an hour late, then was "suspended at 1:45 for luncheon, in order to complete the team." When play finally resumed at 3:00, the spectators were so disgusted that they shouted for baseball. "It may be at once stated," fumed *The Field*, "that Thursday's cricket was a mere farce." Among those pressed into service to bat against Wright and McBride were "three non-commissioned officers of the Household Brigade," and "at the fall of the seventh wicket Newton, who had hitherto been umpiring, was called upon to play." The Prince's side was out by 3:45 after scoring a pitiful 21 runs. Then the American teams played another baseball exhibition game (which the *Times* noted was much better than the previous game at Lord's) with the Bostons winning, 14-11. "There was good company, but very little excitement prevailed," the *Times* declared.

On Friday the American Eighteen had their chance, with Spalding batting first. This time his bizarre technique did not work; he was bowled out with no runs, as was Cap Anson. But the other Americans put together 110 runs, 22 of them by Harry Wright, who, in the opinion of *The Field*, "showed the best cricket." Prince's second inning "was about on a par with the first. . . . The Match (?) finished at half-past four in favour of the Americans by an inning and 50 runs." (In baseball terms, the Americans had won something on the order of a 12-0 lougher called after five innings.) The baseball game that followed aroused little interest, as it was played by "an admixture of Boston Athletics and Prince's Club."

The Field had seen enough. On August 8 it printed a long story on "Base-Ball in England." It noted that "the verdict of the spectators is almost universally against it as a competitor with our national game; and in our own individual judgment, it has so many inherent defects that it has not the slightest pretensions to be considered



The disease germs of baseball and cricket, magnified.

superior to, even if it is equal with, our own juvenile amusement 'rounders,' on the basis of which it has been modelled." Among baseball's shortcomings was the fact that the umpire had to make a decision on every play, rather than being "called in only in exceptional cases," and was seldom in good position to call outs at first base. "In addition to this fatal defect, the attitude of the striker is inelegant," too many balls were hit in the air and the pitcher tried to fool the batsman. "With these strong opinions on the subject," concluded *The Field*, "we certainly shall not continue to report the game. . . . In introducing it to [our readers'] notice on the 11th of July, we unintentionally gave our Transatlantic cousins more credit than experience has shown they deserve; but we do not regret this, because it has tended to give the game the 'fair field' which was all they asked for." With that, England's leading sporting journal washed its hands of baseball — and the American efforts at cricket as well. Although the visitors played a total of 14 exhibition baseball games and were undefeated (with three draws) in

seven cricket matches, this went unreported in *The Field*.

The *Times* of London did not hold on much longer than *The Field*. On August 10 it briefly reported a cricket match that was suspended with Richmond leading the Americans, 108-45, and noted that the following baseball game had a good turnout "but interest fell off in late innings." The final notice the *Times* paid to baseball came on August 13 in the form of a letter to the editor signed "Grandmother." "Sir, some American athletes are trying to introduce their game of baseball, as if it were a novelty; whereas the fact is that it is an ancient English game, long ago discarded in favour of cricket." "Grandmother" supported this view by quoting a letter written by Lady Hervey in 1748 describing the family of Frederick, Prince of Wales (whose eldest son, the future King George III, would have been about ten at the time), as "diverting themselves with base-ball, a play all who are or have been schoolboys are well acquainted with."

SPALDING, IN HIS 1911 account of the tour, did not mention "Grandmother's" claim nor indeed any other unfavorable notice of the game in the British press. Nevertheless, the English rejection of America's national game certainly festered in Spalding's breast. This, as much as anything, may explain why he went to such lengths to deny any English precedents for baseball and to foster the myth — discredited today by everyone except Organized Baseball — that the game was invented in 1839 by Abner Doubleday.

On the English side, the main concern seems to have been that baseball's crude batting style would contaminate their own national game. While today some Englishmen do play baseball, the sport is about as popular as cricket is in the United States.

If the 1874 tour had little effect in Britain, however, it had significant consequences for American baseball. Although the American press made the tour sound like a triumphal march, the English crowds had been disappointing; even the first match with the M.C.C. drew fewer than 4,000 spectators, and the enterprise ended more than \$3,000 in the red, necessitating salary cuts for both Red Stockings and Athletics. In addition, the absence of the best teams for two months hurt the gate in the United States. The National Association of Professional Base Ball Players never recovered. Spalding believed that the problem lay in "the irrepressible conflict between Capital and Labor," so Spalding jumped not only from Boston to Chicago but from labor to capital. In 1876 he helped to organize the National League and a few years later to create capital's foremost means of controlling labor, the reserve clause. In spite of free agency, the effects of the regulation are still with us.

The World According to SABR

JAY FELDMAN

The author finds the Society's 1985 convention — the first he has attended — to be an enjoyable, eye-opening experience.

sa · ber · i · a · sis (sā'ber i'ə sis) n. an extreme and advanced manifestation of baseball fever, characterized by a passionate and irrational caring for the summer game: from SABR, acronym for the Society for American Baseball Research.

ORDINARILY, I MAKE IT a point to avoid gatherings of enthusiasts. Zealots of any kind make me uncomfortable, and I find groups of them tend to be tedious and cliquish.

Nevertheless, when I learned last spring that the 1985 national SABR convention would be held July 12-14 at Oakland's Hyatt Regency Hotel, how could I resist? As a baseball writer, lifelong fan and two-year SABR member, I immediately recognized the good fortune of having the convention dropped into my backyard, and I took less than a split-second in deciding to attend. (Besides, at age 42, I'd never been to a convention, and I figured this was my big chance.)

SABR is an organization of baseball junkies, founded in Cooperstown, N.Y., in 1971 and now grown to about 6,000 members. One of its best-known member is Bill James, whose statistical analyses, published in his annual *Baseball Abstract*, have revolutionized the way many people evaluate the sport. James is also responsible for coining the terms "sabermetrics" (to describe the new approach to statistical analysis) and "sabermetrician" (one who practices that approach).

Largely because of James' articulate and convincing presentation of his work, SABR's public image is that it is a cult of lunatic-fringe stat freaks. In reality, the sabermetricians are simply the most media-visible group in the Society. Interests of individual SABR members encompass all aspects of the national pastime, from the historical to the socio-economic to the literary. I, for example, have very little interest in statistics — my love affair with baseball has to do with the grace and courage, the adventure and mystery of the game. To me, statistics are interesting and valid, but they don't get to the heart of the way baseball is played on the field.

Still, I must admit that, never having been to a SABR convention or even met any other SABR members face-to-face, I was mildly apprehensive about spending a weekend in such fanatical company.

A week before the big event, though, my anxiety is alleviated when convention chairman Gene Sunnen calls to tell me that my proposed presentation — "Is There Life After the Brooklyn Dodgers?" (Answer: "If you can call this living") — has been selected to climax the opening session on Friday afternoon. I'm honored, of course, but it's what he tells me next that really gives me a lift: The day before the convention begins, he and another guy are going to run an 18-mile course to visit the sites of the nine ballparks that have existed in the Bay Area, starting at Candlestick Park and winding up at the Oakland Coliseum, where, wearing Lefty O'Doul's Oakland Oaks jersey, Sunnen will take a victory lap before the A's-Milwaukee Brewers game. "Now get this," he says with mischievous delight. "We're thinking of having a flaming bat, like the Olympic torch, when we enter the Coliseum. Is that sick, Jay?" Now here's a guy I can relate to, and I find myself looking forward to the convention with renewed eagerness. (It was finally decided that torching the bat would be not only wasteful but sacrilegious, and that Sunnen should simply hold the bat aloft.)

The Hyatt Regency is a first-class hotel, and I'm a country mouse. I feel vaguely out of my league as, Brooklyn Dodgers cap on my head, I go about the business of checking in and registering for the convention. Can everyone here tell that I'm an imposter, that I'm not really a grown-up at a convention? Suddenly I realize that nobody else here is a grown-up either — these are baseball fans! I breathe easier. I also realize that my last-minute inspiration to bring along my baseball mitt was quixotic — looking around at my colleagues, I could as well be attending a MENSA convention.

I head up to my room and, opening the door, the first thing I see is a New York Yankees cap. They have me

sharing a room with a Yankee fan! That's like Noah pairing up a cobra and a mongoose to share a stall on the ark. In Brooklyn we used to say, "How could anyone root for the Yankees? It's like rooting for U.S. Steel." Actually, aside from his misguided allegiance, roommate Damian Begley turns out to be a great guy, and we get along fine.

EARLY IN THE DAY I'm introduced to Austin Murphy, who's covering the convention for *Sports Illustrated*. As we listen to a presentation of statistical minutiae, Murphy whispers to me, "Should we be taking this seriously or joking about it?"

"I think a little of both," I answer. Like myself, Murphy approaches the convention with a healthy balance of interest and irreverence, and we wind up hanging out together quite a bit.

For me, the highlight of the first day is a presentation by Eric Naftaly entitled "Babe Ruth as Mythological Hero." Using Lord Raglan's erudite, classical study, *The Hero of Tradition*, Naftaly measures The Bambino against 22 criteria for heroism, awarding a point for each one. At the end, in the fashion of a true baseball nut, he presents a chart of rankings, with Oedipus, Theseus, Moses and Jesus at the top with 20 points apiece, and Babe Ruth tied with Zeus with 15 points each, one point behind King Arthur and two ahead of Robin Hood.

Following Friday evening's player panel, there is the "Introduction of Baseball Authors and Inventors." This event is an open-microphone forum during which anyone who has written a book about baseball or has a baseball-related invention can talk for three minutes about his or her work. Is this a great country, or what? Perhaps two dozen individuals seize the moment, parading before us — with accompanying impassioned presentations — such esoteric paraphernalia as an improved scoreboard, a new table-top game called "Baseball Challenge" ("It's the only table-top game that uses a playing field!"), a Chicago Cubs newsletter ("We use a lot of cartoons in it — we strongly feel that baseball needs to get back to the use of cartoons again!") and a new computer game called "Pennant Race Baseball," which can play a nine-inning game in ten minutes and a full 162-game, 26-team schedule in 14 hours ("I leave it on when I go to bed at night and check out the results first thing in the morning!"). I think of the Spanish phrase, "*Cada loco con su tema*," as each author and inventor in this open forum is not only attentively listened to, but politely applauded.

But then, sitting there, I am suddenly struck by the sincerity of it all, and I realize what SABR and this convention are all about — **caring!** Every one of the 300 people here has a piece of baseball that he or she cares

passionately about and wants to share, and together we are more than the sum of our parts.

From this point on, my stance shifts, and the convention takes on a new quality for me. I still don't have much interest in statistics, but I have new-found respect for those who do. What counts now is the caring. William Saroyan said it in "Homage to Baseball," published in *Sports Illustrated* in 1956: "Baseball is caring. Player and fan alike must care, or there is no game. The caring is whole and constant, whether justified or hopeless, tender or angry, ribald or reverent. From the first pitch to the last out the caring continues. . . . It is good to care — in any dimension. . . ."

And, too, I realize, that's why I'm here.

In the next two days, I find evidence of caring everywhere:

George Land, who teaches a course in baseball history at Irvington (Calif.) High School: "I believe there is a place for baseball history in the high school curriculum."

Eminent sports author Leonard Koppett: "SABR keeps caring alive."

Bill James: "Statistical analysis needs not to focus on tiny little questions, but to back away and focus on the larger issues."

Oakland A's president Roy Eisenhardt, the featured speaker at Saturday night's banquet: "I care that my children grow up learning the same game my father taught me when I was a boy."

But without question the most moving display of caring happens at the ballpark on Sunday. Denis Telgemeier approaches me before the A's-Brewers game with a look of concern and mentions that Gil Gillard is sitting alone at the top of our section. Gil is a gentle, soft-spoken man in his fifties who's been confined to a wheelchair since contracting polio during World War II. (People in wheelchairs customarily sit at the top of the lower level at the Oakland Coliseum.) As the coordinating committee member in charge of registration, Gil has put in untold hours of work on the convention. He's also the type of person who would never complain about sitting alone.

"We have to bring him down," says Denis. "You can't forget about people." And so, after clearing it with the Coliseum security, Denis recruits four strong men to carry Gil down so he can sit with the rest of us.

After the game we linger in small groups, reluctant to relinquish the sense of shared communion. Finally, I say my goodbyes.

Driving home, I think of the beatific look on Gil Gillard's face as he was carried down the steps in royal fashion by his comrades. Feeling wells up in me, and before I know it, tears are rolling down my cheeks.

It is good to care — in any dimension.

