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The Society for American Baseball Research

History

The Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) was founded on August 10, 1971, by L. Robert "Bob" Davids and fifteen other baseball researchers at Cooperstown, New York, and now boasts more than 6,700 members worldwide. The Society's objectives are

- to foster the study of baseball as a significant American institution,
- to establish an accurate historical account of baseball through the years,
- to facilitate the dissemination of baseball research information,
- to stimulate the best interest of baseball as our national pastime, and
- to cooperate in safeguarding proprietary interests of individual research efforts of members of the Society.

Baseball Research Journal

The Society published its first annual ***Baseball Research Journal*** in January 1972. The present volume is the twenty-eighth. Most of the previous volumes are still available for purchase (see inside back cover). The editorial policy is to publish a cross section of research articles by our members which reflect their interest in history, biography, statistics and other aspects of baseball not previously published.

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Cy Seymour

Only Babe Ruth was more versatile

Bill Kirwin

Imagine if a young major league pitcher, like Andy Pettitte of the Yankees, decided, for whatever reason, to become an outfielder in the year 2001. And imagine if he hit over .300 for the next five years, culminating in 2005 by winning the league batting crown. And imagine if, upon his retirement in 2010, he had accumulated more than 1,700 hits and generated a lifetime batting average of over .300 to go along with his sixty plus pitching victories. Imagine all the articles that would be written at the close of the first decade of the twenty-first century calling for Pettitte to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

There was such a player, born a century earlier than Pettitte. He collected 1,723 hits and became a lifetime .303 hitter after he won 61 games as a major league pitcher. His name was James Bentley "Cy" Seymour, and he is perhaps the game's greatest forgotten name. Seymour won 25 games and led the league in strikeouts in 1898; seven seasons later, in 1905, he won the National League batting crown with a .377 average. Only one player in the history of the game—Babe Ruth—has more pitching victories and more hits than Seymour. The second most versatile player to ever play the game is almost totally unknown!

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Of the approximately 14,000 players[1] who have made it to the major leagues since 1893, only a tiny number have enjoyed success both on the pitcher's mound and in the batter's box. A few well-known players, like Sam Rice, Stan Musial, and George Sisler, began their careers as pitchers but became better known as hitters. Others, like Mike Marshall and Bob Lemon, switched from the field to the mound.

Only a handful, however, enjoyed success as both hitters and pitchers. Smoky Joe Wood's blazing fastball enabled him to win 116 games before he blew his arm out. In 1918 he switched to the outfield, and he retired with 553 hits and a respectable .283 batting average. Rube Bressler began his career in 1914 as a pitcher, compiling a 26-32 record with Philadelphia and the Reds. Then he became a full-time outfielder, principally for Cincinnati and Brooklyn. Between 1921 and 1932 he collected 1,090 hits and produced a lifetime .301 batting average. Hal Jeffcoat, on the other hand, played the first six years of his career as an outfielder with the Cubs, and the last six as a pitcher with the Cubs and the Reds. He was 39-37 in 245 games as a pitcher, and accumulated 487 hits for a lifetime batting average of .248.

Since 1893, when the pitching rubber was moved back to sixty feet six inches, only two major leaguers have pitched in 100 games and collected 1,500 hits.[2] Ruth (1914-35) stroked 2,873 hits in his career and pitched in 163 games(94-46, 2.28 ERA). Seymour (1896-1913) got 1,723 hits and pitched in 140 games (61-56, 3.76 ERA).

Seymour's pitching career highlights include that 25-victory season with a league-leading 239 strikeouts in 1898, tops during the transition era of 1893-1900. In addition to his hitting crown in 1905, he led both leagues in hits (219) triples (21), RBIs (121) and slugging average (.559). He was second in home runs (8), one behind the leader,[3] and he led the National League in doubles (40). He also led the league and the majors in total bases (325), production (988), adjusted production (175), batter runs(64.7), and runs created (153).

Cy Seymour was a pitcher in the hitting era of the 1890s, and a hitter in a pitching era of the 1900s. Maybe this is why he is forgotten.[4]

"Balloonist" makes good—The twenty-four-year-old Seymour began his professional career as a pitcher for Springfield of the Eastern League in 1896. He had been playing semipro ball in Plattsburg, New York, for a reported $1,000 a month.[5] (His good fortune in Plattsburg, if true, undoubtedly delayed his arrival to pro ball.) His 8-1 record for Springfield earned him a shot with the New York Giants later that year. He won two games and lost four in eleven appearances.

In 1897, he was initially labelled a "balloonist" and an "aerialist" because he was prone to getting wild and excitable.[6] The New York *Times* cited him as "the youngster with a $10,000 arm and a $00.00 head."[7] But the lefthander gradually began to blossom as a major league pitcher.[8] The New York *Herald* wrote at the end of the season that "Cy is rapidly improving, occasionally he gets a slight nervous chill, but by talking to himself with words of cheer and taking good self advise he lets the wobble pass away."[9]

Seymour's pitching featured a fast ball, a sharp-breaking curve, a screwball, and a wildness (he led the league in walks from 1897 through 1899) that must have induced a certain amount of terror into the 530 league batters that he struck out over the same period. Veteran catcher Wilbert "Uncle Robbie" Robinson said he had never seen anyone pitch like Cy, who would first throw near the batters' eyes and then near their toes, causing them "to not know whether their head or feet were in most danger"[10]

He compiled an 18-14 record with a 3.37 ERA for the third-place Giants (83-48, 9.5 games behind Boston).[11] He led the league in strikeouts per game (4.83) and fewest hits allowed per game (8.23), and he struck out 149 batters, second only to Washington's James "Doc" McJames (156). Batters hit only .242 against him—best in the league. This helped to offset his league-leading 164 walks.

Seymour's 1897 record indicates that he was becoming a peer of teammate and future Hall of Fame member Amos Rusie. Of the twenty-one pitching categories listing the top five performers in *Total Baseball*, he ranks first in four and second in another. Rusie is first in one category (ERA, 2.54), second in nine, third in one and fourth in one. Future Hall of Famer Kid Nichols of Boston clearly led the league, being first in ten categories and in the top five in all but three.[12]

In 1898 Seymour improved his record to 25-19, dropping his ERA to 3.18 for the disgruntled seventh-place Giants.[13] He led the league in strikeouts with a total of 239, sixty-one ahead of McJames. He again led the league in strikeouts per game (6.03). He also began to take the field when he wasn't pitching, primarily as an outfielder. As with Ruth twenty-two years later, the reason had little to do with managerial insight and more with a combination of injuries and the batting ineptitude of the Giant outfielders.[14]

Seymour hit .276 in 297 plate appearances, giving rise to speculation that he might be converted to a full-time outfielder despite the admonition by Wm. F. H. Koelsch in *Sporting Life*: "The suggestion that Seymour be placed in the outfield permanently is more than a rank proposition. As long as Seymour has the speed he has now he is more valuable on the slab than anywhere else."[15] Indeed, the Giants' management was faced with a dilemma. His forty-five pitching appearances and his 356-1/3 innings were vital. Yet the Giants were an anemic hitting squad that was being carried by the pitching of Rusie (who was also a good hitter) and Seymour.

Seymour's 25 wins in 1898 were nearly one-third of the New York team's total. He threw four shutouts (Nichols had five), two one-hitters, one three-hitter, four four-hitters, and six five-hitters.[16] Compare this with another 25-game winner in 1898. Cy Young threw one shutout, two three-hitters and one five-hitter.[17] Some felt that he had supplanted Rusie as the ace of the Giants' pitching staff. The New York press said he had the best curve in the league, that "he could win with only five men behind him," and that he had as much speed as Rusie ever had.[18] He led the team in innings pitched, starts (43), and wins.[19] Naturally, he felt he could look forward to a handsome new contract for 1899. But Andrew Freedman stood in his way.

Freedman, a New York City subway financier and Tammany Hall politician, purchased the controlling interest in the Giants in 1895 for $54,000. He quickly antagonized just about everyone in baseball when he

attempted to run the team as if it were part of Tammany Hall. He banned sportswriters who were critical of the Giants from the Polo Grounds. When those same reporters purchased a ticket, Freedman had them removed from the park.[20] Freedman regarded his team as a plaything and firmly believed that uppity players must always be put in their place.

In 1897 Rusie held out for the entire season rather than accept a $200 deduction in his 1896 salary for allegedly not giving his best in the concluding games of the season. He agreed to sign for 1898 only after a group of owners got together and paid his legal and "other" costs. Such actions, coupled with a losing team, engendered universal hostility from the world of baseball toward the Giants owner.[21]

Transcendental Graphics

Cy Seymour

Freedman saw no reason to reward either Seymour (25-19, 3.18 ERA) or Rusie (20-11, 3.03 ERA) for their 1898 performances. Rusie choose to retire.[22] Seymour held out for the first month of the season before signing for a $500 raise to $2,000 on May 11.[23] Playing for a dispirited Giants team that was to win only sixty of 150 games, he was able to compile a 14-18 record with an ERA of 3.56. He finished second in the strikeout race with 142, three behind Noodles Hahn of Cincinnati. He led the league in strikeouts per game (4.76).

How good a pitcher?—His pitching career was, for all practical purposes, over. He made only thirteen pitching appearances in 1900. Historian and SABR member David Q. Voigt has written that "Seymour was converted to an outfielder because of his penchant for free passes."[24] It is true that Seymour walked 655 batters and fanned 584 in his career, a deplorable ratio by today's standards. But it wasn't so bad in Cy's day. Rusie, for instance, struck out 1,934 batters in his career and walked 1,704. Doc McJames, who nipped Seymour for the strikeout crown in 1897 and finished a distant second to Cy in 1898, walked 563 and struck out 593 in his six years in the majors. Even the premier pitcher of the day, Kid Nichols, walked 854 and struck out 1,062 between 1892 and 1900.[25]

At the same time, Seymour held opposing batters

to 67 points below the league average. Seymour's wildness was partially compensated by his superb ability to strike out batters and severely limit their hitting. It is likely that overwork, not wildness, ended his pitching career. He was, for three seasons, a member of that elite fraternity of outstanding pitchers.

Why, then, is his record unappreciated? Context. On the one hand, the lack of a foul strike rule kept league-leading strikeout totals lower than we are used to. On the other, walks weren't as damaging in an era when teams played for a single run as they are in our power-oriented time. A *Sporting Life* report of a 6 -2, four-hit victory serves as an example of how Cy's wildness may have been used for positive results when it stated: "Seymour was wild at times, [but] was effective at critical moments."[26] Hall of Famer Elmer Flick maintained that the best pitcher he ever batted against, when he was right, was Seymour, who "was practically unhittable. Cy had a wonderful control of his curve ball."[27]

All players are subject to the limitations of the conventional wisdom of their particular era. An excellent relief pitcher today, for example, would have been nobody in particular sixty years ago.

Leaving the mound—Cincinnati pitcher Ted Breitenstein warned Seymour not to continue using the indrop ball (screwball) because it would leave his arm "as dead as one of those mummies in the Art Museum."[28] Perhaps he injured his arm in spring training, 1900. At any rate, he found himself playing center field for the "second team" in an intra-squad contest a few days before the regular campaign began.[29] Two days before the opener, the New York *Times* indicated that "Manager Ewing will give particular attention to Seymour"[30] to decide if he would start it, since Rusie had failed to report.[31] However, Cy did not get his first start until the eighth day of the season, when he was shelled. He was lifted in the second inning after he gave up four runs, signaling that something was indeed wrong.

He started again in Chicago in the middle of May, but he couldn't find the plate and was shifted to center field after giving up ten runs in six innings. He collected two singles in the 10-8 loss. He started the next game, in St. Louis, in left field. He again hit safely twice, but also made two errors in a 13-5 defeat.[32] He then disappeared from the lineup except for a couple of mop-up appearances in which he was hit hard.[33] He won his first game of the season in early June, a 10-3 victory over St. Louis. Ironically, it was announced that very day that he was to be farmed out to Worcester, and that Chicago's Dick Cogan had been secured in a trade. Then, mysteriously, the *Times* reports that "Si [a frequent spelling in the press of the time] Seymour put in his appearance again at the Polo Grounds yesterday having been refused by the Worcester management as unfit. It is likely some deal will be fixed up for his retrading [*sic*] with Chicago."[34] He ended up in Chicago, playing briefly with Charlie Comiskey's then minor league AL entry. Suggestions were made that perhaps he would devote his time to playing the outfield, although one newspaper report blames "his prancing about in the gardens"(the outfield) as the primary reason for his lost pitching ability.[35] He even had time to pitch for the Scoharie Athletic Club against the Cuban X Giants on August 24.[36]

By the end of the season, Seymour was still on the Giants' reserve list as a pitcher, although Freedman was suspicious of his "habits" and demanded that manager Ewing discover exactly "what he is doing.[37] If there is not a change in him, and it is due to his habits, he will be laid off."[38]

This would not be the only time that Seymour's "habits" would be noted. There is little doubt that he was a drinker. We have at least one report of him being removed from a game because he was inebriated. It is known that he suffered from severe headaches.[39] Occasional reports of bizarre behavior find their way into the sporting pages, like the time he was mysteriously sent home from spring training in 1906 because it was simultaneously reported that, (a) he had a bad cold, (b) he needed to rest his tired muscles because the southern climate did not agree with him, and (c) he needed to attend his ill wife. Or the time he was coaching third base for the Orioles and tackled a runner who ran through his stop sign.

To McGraw and the bat—By 1901 Seymour was no longer a pitcher, but had jumped to John McGraw's American League Baltimore Orioles to play right field. In two days in 1898 Seymour had started for the Giants and pitched three games against McGraw's old National League Orioles. He lost the first game in the Polo Grounds and the first game of a doubleheader the next day in Baltimore, both 2-1. He finally beat the Orioles in the second game, 6-2. McGraw, years later, said that no player, not even Joe McGinnity, deserved the title "Iron Man" more than Cy Seymour.[40] Perhaps it was this determination that convinced McGraw that Cy could be made into a good fielder.

The first seasons of the new century saw Seymour emerge as a star, batting .303 with the Orioles in 1901

and then, following the infamous breakup of the Baltimore team in 1902, going to Cincinnati, where he became the regular centerfielder and hit .340 in 62 games. In the following years for the Reds, he hit .342, and .313, before leading the league with .377 in 1905.

He had to beat out the great Honus Wagner for the batting title, and the two met in a season ending doubleheader. A newspaper account of the time sounds not unlike modern stories about Sosa and McGwire: "10,000 were more interested in the batting achievements of Wagner and Seymour than the games ... cheer upon cheers greeted the mighty batsmen upon each appearance at the plate and mighty cheering greeted the sound of bat upon ball as mighty Cy drove out hit after hit. The boss slugger got 4 for 7 while Wagner could only get 2 for 7,"[41] allowing Cy to win the crown by .013 points.

He also led the league in hits, doubles, triples, total bases, RBIs, slugging average, and what we would now call Production, Batter Runs, and Runs Created. He was also a close second in home runs, runs produced and on-base percentage. This was a benchmark season. His average was the best in the National League, 1901-1919. (In the American League only Lajoie and Cobb topped it.)[42] His slugging average of .559 was the best until Heinie Zimmerman's .571 in 1913. His 121 RBIs weren't exceeded again until Sherry Magee drove in 123 in 1910. His 40 doubles were the most hit by a National League outfielder until Pat Duncan collected 44 in 1922.

The first decade of the twentieth century brought the simultaneous development of "scientific baseball"[43] and deadball baseball. The hit-and-run play was the hallmark of the era. A standard practice of the day was for batters to move to the front of the batter's box in an attempt to slap the ball before it began to curve. Seymour eschewed this common practice, staying back in the box[44] and waving his bat around,[45] stating that it allowed him to "get that much more time to be sure which infielder is going to cover second base. A large portion of my base hits were made in this way."[46] He also used a wide variety of bats, depending on the pitcher. Contrary to conventional wisdom, he used a light bat when facing a location pitcher and a heavier one when he was up against a fireballer.[47] Ned Hanlon, the Brooklyn manager, seemed to sense Cy's unorthodox approach, and said, " I look upon Seymour as the greatest straight ball player of the age, by that I mean he is absolutely all right if you let him play the game in his own way. But if you try to mix up any science on him you are likely to injure his effectiveness."[48]

In 1906 *The New York World* listed Cy, along with ten other notables, such as Christy Mathewson, Ed Walsh, Wagner, Nap Lajoie, and Roger Bresnahan as the best in baseball.[49] Even in 1909, when he became a part-time player, his .311 average left him atop all the reserve players in the league. Take a look at this comparision of offensive figures taken 1901-1908. Seymour is the only non-Hall of Famer listed.[50]

	AB	H	BA	2B	3B	HR	RBI
Wagner	4232	1478	.349	288	116	42	756
Seymour	4377	1361	.311	193	82	42	653
Crawford	4493	1391	.310	213	138	44	652
Flick	3811	1171	.307	186	121	26	485

From 1901 through 1908 (excluding 1902),[51] Seymour consistently ranked among the league's best offensive players. In twenty categories, he ranked no less than fifth 41 times of a possible 140 (29 percent).[52] Wagner dominated with 111 of the possible 140 (79 percent). Flick was 62 of 140 (44 percent).[53] In contrast, future Hall of Fame third baseman Jimmy Collins was to make the leader category only 19 times (13.5 percent).[54]

Cy Seymour wasn't Babe Ruth, but some comparisons are interesting.

- Each led his league in holding opponents to lowest batting average: Seymour 1897, .242; Ruth 1916, .201.
- Seymour won 25 games in 1898; Ruth won 24 in 1917 and 23 in 1916.
- Each had an 18-game-winning season: Seymour 1897; Ruth 1915.
- Seymour led league in strikeouts (1898); Ruth never did.
- Seymour led league in giving up walks three times; Ruth never did.
- Ruth placed within top five places of league leading pitcher categories 25 times 1915-17; Seymour placed 10 times from 1897-99. (Twelve major league teams, 1897-99; twenty-four, 1915; sixteen, 1916-17.)
- Each won one batting championship: Seymour 1905, .377; Ruth 1924, .378.
- Triple Crown eluded both by the slimmest of margins: Seymour in 1905 was one shy of home run title; Ruth in 1924 was second in RBI, eight behind Goose Goslin, and in 1926 was .006 behind Heine Manush for the batting title.
- Seymour stole 222 bases; Ruth 123.

- Ruth led league in RBIs six times; Seymour once.
- Ruth led league in home runs twelve times, but never led league in doubles, triples or hits; Seymour never led league in HRs but led once each in doubles, triples, and hits.
- Fielding Runs rating: Seymour +81; Ruth +5.

The end of the line—John McGraw is generally credited with the hiring of baseball's first full-time coach, Arlie Latham. A longtime friend and former Oriole teammate of McGraw, Latham owed his good fortune indirectly at least to Seymour, and, conversely, Arlie was to impact Cy's career.

In the days prior to the hiring of a full-time coach, players took to the coach's box. Seymour was coaching one day when Harry McCormick attempted to stretch a triple into a home run and ran through Cy's hold-up sign. This is when Cy tackled his own teammate. The surprised McCormick scrambled to his feet and was still able to score. When McGraw confronted Seymour about his bizarre behavior, Cy offered a feeble excuse about the sun being in his eyes. From that moment on, according to Christy Mathewson, McGraw realized the need for a full-time coach.[55]

Latham was, in the opinion of Fred Snodgrass, "probably the worst third-base coach who ever lived,"[56] and seemed to ingratiate himself with McGraw with a variety of practical jokes apparently designed in the now time-honored belief that such measures keep a bench loose. During spring training in 1909, Cy took exception to a Latham prank and beat him up, causing McGraw to suspend Seymour from the team for eight weeks.[57]

In his first game back, Seymour received a career-altering injury in the first inning. Chasing a long fly ball, he collided heavily with his right field teammate, Red Murray, and lay motionless for five minutes. He appeared to have recovered, and he resumed his position in center field. He caught a fly off the bat of the next Boston batter, but when he tried to throw the ball home (there was a runner on third) he collapsed. He had to be carried off the field.[58] The injury to his leg, according to Mathewson, curtailed his effectiveness for the remainder of his career.[59] Exactly two months after the injury he was able to play a few innings in left field in a game in Brooklyn,[60] but speedy Cy (he averaged 20 steals per year) was never the same player after the accident.

Why forgotten?—Aside from the daily newspaper accounts and the sporting trade papers, little has been written about Seymour.[61] A brief survey of the literature reveals that he was, according to Christy Mathewson, one of the best "batsmen" ever. Alas, he was also a wild pitcher, and there is a dubious claim that he was a poor fielder. This is largely the result of his losing a fly in the sun during the one-game playoff between the Giants and the Cubs in 1908. The misplay allowed three runners to score.

The myth was that Mathewson, just prior to pitching to Joe Tinker, had turned and motioned Seymour to play deeper[62] and that Seymour refused to move. Mathewson always denied this, saying that Cy "knew the Chicago batters as well as I did and how to play them"[63] Mathewson also admitted that day that he "never had less on the ball in my life," and that Cy would have caught the fly forty-nine times out of fifty.[64] In the clubhouse after the game Cy said to Matty: "I misjudged the ball. I'll take the blame for it." And abuse he took; sportswriters looking for an easy story took full advantage of his supposed refusal to take direction from the demigod Mathewson.

Seymour certainly was not a good fielding pitcher, committing 104 of his lifetime 252 errors on the mound. Yet it is hard to believe that John McGraw, his manager both in Baltimore and New York, would have put him in center field if he felt Seymour was a liability. In fact, in 1904 *Sporting Life* claimed that he "is as speedy and graceful as ever in centre field and covers a world of ground out there more than any other centre fielder in the National League."[65] Frank Selee, the Chicago manager called Seymour "a marvel and a pleasure to watch," and was amazed at his range and ability to backpedal.[66] In 1907 he made a spectacular diving barehanded catch that was widely reported to have been the best ever seen in New York City.

A comparison to some of his contemporaries indicates that he was a better than average center fielder. His *Total Baseball* Fielding Runs is +58. Compare that to Cobb's +55, Tommy Leach's +53, and Fred Clarke's +61. Then compare it to Elmer Flick's +24, "Circus"[67] Solly Hofman's +28, Dummy Hoy's +3, and Socks Seybold's +1, not to mention Ginger Beaumont's -26 or Mike Donlin's -31.

Of all the regular center fielders[68] playing in the National League in 1907 and 1908 only one, Roy Thomas, had a better lifetime rating, +71, than Seymour. Making an error at an inopportune time seems to have established Seymour as a poor fielder despite conclusive evidence to the contrary, a condition that Bill Buckner (+121) would undoubtedly understand.

Many have attempted the impossible task of com-

Cy Seymour: Top-Five League-Leading Categories

Pitching

1897

Fewest Hits per Game: 1st—8.23 (Rusie 8.77)

Strikeouts: 2nd—149 (McJames 156)

Strikeouts per Game: 1st—4.83 (McJames 4.34)

Opponent's Batting Average: 1st—.242 (Rusie .254)

1898

Strikeouts: 1st—239 (McJames 178)

Strikeout per Game: 1st—6.03 (Willis 4.63)

1899

Fewest Hits per Game: 4th—8.28 (Willis 7.28)

Strikeouts: 2nd—142 (Hahn 145)

Strikeouts per Game: 1st—4.76 (Hahn 4.22)

Opponents' Batting Average: 4th—.245 (Willis .222)

Offense

1901

Stolen Bases: 3rd—38 (Isbell 52)

1902*

*Combined Stats—72 Games Bal. (AL); 62 Cin. (NL)

RBIs: 78 (Sam Crawford had as many and placed 3rd in NL)

Home Runs: 5 (would have placed him tied for 2nd in NL)

1903

Batting Average: 5th—.342 (Wagner .355)

Hits: 2nd—191 (Beaumont 209)

Home Runs: 2nd—7 (tied with five others) (Sheckhard 9)

Triples: 4th—15 (tied with two others)(Wagner 19)

Total Bases: 2nd—267 (Beaumont 272)

1904

Batting average: 4th—.313 (Wagner .349)

Hits: 5th—166 (Beaumont 185)

Doubles: 4th—26 (Wagner 44)

Triples: 3rd—13 (Lumley 18)

Total Bases: 3rd—233 (Wagner 255)

Production: 3rd—.787 (Wagner .944)

Slugging Average: 4th—.439 (Wagner .520)

1905

Batting Average: 1st—.377 (Wagner .363)

Hits: 1st—219 (Donlin 216)

Doubles: 1st—40 (Titus 36)

Triples: 1st—21 (Mertes, Magee 17)

Home Runs: 2nd—8 (Odwell 9)

Total Bases: 1st—325 (Donlin 300)

RBIs: 1st—121 (Mertes 108)

Runs Produced: 2nd—208 (Wagner 209)

On-Base Percentage: 2nd—.429 (Chance .450)

Slugging Average: 1st—.559 (Wagner .505)

Production: 1st—988 (Wagner 932)

Adjusted Production: 1st—175 (Wagner 173)

Batter Runs: 1st—64.8 (Wagner 52.3)

Adjusted Batter Runs: 1st—50.8 (Donlin 49.3)

Runs Created: 1st—153 (Wagner 147)

Total Average: 3rd—1.102 (Chance 1.127)

Total Player Rating: 2nd—5.7 (Wagner 7.3)

1906

Hits: 3rd—165 (Steinfeldt 176)

Home Runs: 3rd—8 (Jordan 12)

RBIs: 3rd—80 (Steinfeldt, Nealon 83)

Runs Produced: 5th—142 (Wagner 172)

1907

Doubles: 3rd 25 (Wagner 38)

RBIs: 4th—75 (Magee 85)

Batting Average: 5th—.294 (Wagner .350)

Clutch Hitting Index: 2nd—130 (Abbaticchio 166)

1908

RBIs: 3rd—92 (Wagner 109)

Runs Produced: 4th—147 (Wagner 199)

Clutch Hitting Index: 1st—150 (McGann 133)

(Players in parentheses either led the league or were second to Seymour.)

piling lists of the best players ever. Some are the all-time versions which are usually laden with recent performers; others attempt to categorize them according to specific eras. Almost no one mentions Seymour. David Voigt does include Seymour along with Turkey Mike Donlin and Buck Freeman as players passed over for Hall of Fame consideration in the 1895-1900 era. During that particular era he was primarily a pitcher and for three of those years he ranked among the best in baseball. Yet he had the dubious privilege of pitching in an era when league batters were hitting at a rate of .282 (1897-99). Then, in turn, he batted in the Deadball Era (1900-1908) when batters for the entire National League averaged but .256. His peak batting career average was .054 above his league's average for the 1901-08 period, almost identical to that of Crawford (.052) and Flick (.058) His league leading .377 was .122 above the National League average in 1905. This differential would not be topped in the National League until Rogers Hornsby's stupendous mark of .424 in 1924 (.151 above league average).

Personality—It is difficult to assess Seymour's personality from the snippets of data available. Veteran catcher Duke Farrell relates an explosive emotional experience when Cy first started to pitch for the Giants. In Chicago the rookie pitcher was sailing along effectively until the eighth inning when he suddenly became very wild. He gave up nine runs and in the parlance of the day "ascended into the air." His cheeks turned red, he threw his hat off after a bad pitch, then threw his glove away after another. "Finally," Farrell states, "Cy was worked up to such a state that after making a pitch he would run to the plate and grab the ball out of my hands, hustle back and without waiting for my sign shoot it back ... Nine Chicago runners crossed the plate [before the inning was over] ... Seymour subsequently had many aerial flights, but nothing like his Chicago performance."[69] He was not only excitable and high strung, he dressed differently than his teammates and apparently was aloof. All characteristics that would give some fans, sportswriters and ballplayers the chance to jeer him at the first opportunity.

There is one well-reported incident of him being removed from a game because he was inebriated. A follow-up report suggested, however, that the incident was isolated and that he then played like "a whirlwind."[70] Another said: "J.Bentley Seymour by his good batting is more than making amends to the Reds management for his one jag."[71] In another incident the Cincinnati *Post* complained to the Reds owner, August Herrmann, that Seymour threatened a photographer from the *Post*.[72] Reports by Mrs. McGraw and Hans Lobert[73] indicate that Seymour was a hard-playing, hard-drinking player. One might therefore surmise he was subjected to alcoholic binges and leave it at that.

On the other hand, I think that he saw himself as different. In a world that was determined to be righthanded he was very much lefthanded. Conventional wisdom of the day often forced lefthanded school children to write with their right hands. Similarly baseball, at the time, could not see lefthand pitchers to be equal to righthanded ones. He was unorthodox; his pitching and his hitting were contrary to the norms of the day.

Seymour seemed sensitive about his name, and came in for a good deal of chiding because he insisted that he was related to the Duke of Somerset.[74] He apparently insisted upon being called J. Bentley or James Bentley rather than the nickname Cy (for Cyclone) that New York sportswriters gave him. He had at least three publicized altercations during his career—an offseason brawl with the ballplaying brothers Jesse and Lee Tannehill,[75] the Latham affair, and a punch-up with Cincinnati pitcher teammate Henry Thielman during an exhibition game in Indianapolis. Thielman, according to the report, "kidded" Seymour about his name.[76] On the other hand, he was apparently the person who applied the nickname "Tillie" to Arthur Shafer. Mrs. McGraw reports that in 1909, when her husband introduced the shy, good looking and young Shafer to the Giants in the Polo Grounds clubhouse, "Big Cy Seymour, an Oriole in word and deed, responded first with 'We're all damned glad to meet you Tillie!' Then came the chorus! 'Yes sir Tillie, glad to see you. Yes sir Tillie, glad to see you. Make yourself home, Tillie! Good Luck, Tillie ... Save Your Money Tillie ... Get the last bounce Tillie'"[77] Another report of the same incident has Seymour rushing over to Shafer and planting a kiss on Shafer's cheeks saying "Tillie, how are you?" Shafer hated the nickname, but it stuck with him.[78] Perhaps this incident, coupled with the Latham episode, paved the way for Seymour's departure to obscurity,[79] and may be one of the reasons that John McGraw never mentions Seymour in his book *My Thirty Years in Baseball*.

Yet while Seymour was playing for Baltimore of the Eastern League in 1911, an opponent, former major leaguer Bobby Vaughn, said that he still had the best batting eye of anyone in baseball. Certainly an exaggeration, but the thirty-nine-year-old did hit .296 that year, and one is left to speculate that McGraw and others may have chosen not to employ Cy because of his peculiar personality traits. Vaughn lavishly praised Cy, but then curiously adds: "Many think him a shirker but he is not ... Seymour is a conscientious ball player whatever else may be said."[80]

He was also plagued by headaches. In the winter of 1904-05 he sought nasal surgery in an effort to solve his problem.[81] Migraines? Occasionally he would exhibit strange behavior, like the morning that he decided to take on a lion at the Zoo. Mental Illness? Some reports later said he was drunk, which was probably so, but he would not have been the first person to use alcohol as a cover-up of other problems.

On the other hand, there are reports that Seymour was "as straight and clean as the Bank of England,"[82] and unlike some other players, he never took advantage of owner Garry Hermann's generosity. Hermann attended Seymour's wedding,[83] added $100 a month to Cy's $2,800 contract when he arrived from Baltimore, and arranged an off season "job" which according to a newspaper report required him to do

little more than walk the streets clad "in swell clothes."

Cy certainly seemed the dandy. Sprinkled throughout the Seymour scrapbooks that reside in the Hall of Fame Library in Cooperstown are accounts and pictures, some of them mocking, about Cy's sartorial splendor. Like many athletes, then and today, he often seemed to take himself too seriously. Be it his dress, or his insistence that he be referred to as J. Bentley[84] rather than Cy, or his reluctance to be photographed, he seemed very much the prima donna.

The 1906 sale of Seymour from the Reds to the Giants for $10,000 was one of the largest in baseball history.[85] After playing but one game for the Giants—in which he made a sensational catch—he demanded that he receive a portion of the $10,000 that he insisted Garry Herrmann, the Reds owner, had promised him if the sale was completed. Herrmann denied that a promise had been made. Cy threatened to go on strike. John McGraw was able to convince Seymour to reconsider, and Organized Baseball may have avoided a precedent similar to professional soccer, in which a player transferred from one club to another receives a percentage of the transfer fee.[86]

Seymour was not devoid of humor. Upon his first return to Cincinnati in a Giant uniform after the trade, he wore bright red false whiskers as a disguise that allowed him to receive front page headlines in The Cincinnati *Post*. Descending from the team carriage the bewhiskered Cy announced to the multitude "Cy Seymour I am pained to relate, ladies and gentlemen, is not coming to the park today. He is afraid that the Cincinnati fans will lynch him." When he grounded out his first time at bat he was jeered and cheered by the local fans.[87]

Typical of aging stars of the day, Cy played minor league ball in 1911 and 1912, for Baltimore and Newark. A newspaper report of his release in Baltimore stated that "although he played good ball his habits were such that it was decided that he would no longer play on the team."[88] Apparently able to correct himself, he was to make it, briefly and unsuccessfully, back to the majors with the Boston Braves in 1913.

The only remaining correspondence[89] written by Seymour are two job enquiries made to Herrmann regarding managerial positions in 1913 or thereabouts. A letter written on November 28, 1913, gives some insight into the character of the man. He saw himself as a loner, but capable of making managerial decisions without being influenced by the press or hangers-on. His letter also suggests that he may have been regarded as an odd character, because he told Hermann: "I may seem funny to you the way you know me. I am different on the inside than on the out & I know if I had half a chance I will make good. I am not much of a talker & [don't] go around talking about myself."[90] On the other hand, his letter suggests that Herrmann be wary of baseball writers' opinions, and is bold enough to say: "I am going to give you a tip now and always remember it. It takes [two] to run a ball club. The manager and yourself."[91] What Herrmann thought of the tip we cannot be certain, except that Cy did not get the job and found himself, at age forty-one, effectively out of Organized Baseball.

Seymour apparently contracted tuberculosis while working in the shipyards of New York during the First World War. He died in New York City on September 20, 1919. His death was overshadowed by the talk of the World Series involving Cincinnati and the now-infamous Black Sox. One obituary claimed that he worked on the docks because he was unfit for military service.[92] Yet he was able to play thirteen games for Newark in the International League during the 1918 season, when he was forty-six years old. It might be assumed that he was an alcoholic; he was also rumored to have been penniless.[93]

Sporting Life said of Seymour "that he was one of the most brilliant though erratic pitchers the game ever produced."[94] Christy Mathewson said that he "was a mighty batsman ... one of the best ever."[95] John McGraw thought he deserved the title of "Ironman." Former slick-fielding second baseman turned sportswriter Sam Crane wrote in the New York *Journal* that Seymour "proved himself to be one of the best outfielders in every department" and that Cy "put to rest the notion that pitchers could not hit well."[96] Now he is all but forgotten—the victim of being a pitcher in a hitters' era and a hitter in the Deadball Era. His burial was a simple one: his boyhood chums acted as pallbearers, and although a large throng attended the service, no one from Organized Baseball did.[97] A search of the rural cemetery in his home town of Albany, New York, serves as a final irony. He is buried in the family plot, but no stone marks the accomplishments of the second most versatile player that the game has ever known.[98]

Sources:

Al Demaree, "Tough Customers," *Collier's*, May 14, 1927.

Bob Hertzel, "Baseball's Hall of Blunders," *Baseball Digest*, Jan., 1973.

Christy Mathewson, "'Outguessing' the Batter," *Pearson's Magazine (American Edition)*, May 1911.

Christy Mathewson. *Pitching In A Pinch: Baseball From the Inside*. University of Nebraska Press, 1994.

Bob Rothgeber, "When Hitting Became a Science: Cy Seymour," *Cincinnati Reds Scrapbook*. Virginia Beach, Va.: JCP, 1982.

Notes:

1. Thanks to Tom Ruane for this information. He reports that 13,561 have played ball from 1893 until through the 1998 season.

2. David Nemec, *Great Baseball, Feats, Facts & Firsts* (New York: Signet Sports, 1989) p.331.

3. See *Total Baseball*, 3rd Ed., John Thorn and Pete Palmer, eds. (New York: HarperCollins, 1993) pp. 1932-33.

4. Prior to 1893 Al Spalding (252 wins and 613 hits), Hoss Radbourne (309 wins and 585 hits) Scott Stratton (97 wins and 379 hits) posted significant pitching and hitting records, yet none of them had two distinctive careers. Only the great John Montgomery Ward (164 wins and 2,105 hits) was able to challenge the accomplishments of Ruth and Seymour. And although Ward played until 1894, he was an infielder for the last ten years of his playing career. Thanks to Larry Gerlach for pointing this out to me.

5. See the Albany (N.Y.) *Times-Union*, Sep. 21, 1919. An unusually large salary considering that he only made $2000 playing for the Giants in 1899! The report indicates that the Northern New York League was supported by millionaire sportsman, Harry Payne Whitney. Prior to playing in the NNYL he played for the Ridgeway team in his hometown of Albany, N.Y.

6. Seymour Scrap Book, 1896. These eight volumes, which are housed at the Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, N.Y., contain comprehensive press clippings of Cy's career apparently compiled by his mother or father, arranged in a fastidious chronological order that is only marred by the fact that the names and dates of publications of the clippings have been eliminated by the compiler. My guess is that his father, Theodore, was the compiler. Correspondence from a Baltimore publisher is addressed to him. Thus, future reference to the scrapbooks shall read as, e.g., SSB 1897, except when the exact date or name of the publication is known.

7. New York *Times*, Sep. 5, 1897.

8. The New York *Times* report does not jibe with Amos Rusie's view. Rusie took Seymour under his wing in Cy's rookie season and reported that Seymour was "a willing youngster and a good pupil," See Amos Rusie file, HOF, "Fireball Rusie... Tells How He Held Out..."

9. New York *Herald* Sep. 19, 1897.

10. "Cy Seymour's Pitching Arm," SSB July 27, 1898. Sam Crane, among others seemed to think his small hands was an important factor causing his wildness.

11. *Total Baseball* has him at 18-14 while Bill Weiss's stats have him at 20-14. Personal correspondence Weiss to Kirwin, Nov., 1998.

12. See p. 1920 of *Total Baseball*, 3rd Ed.

13. Again, Weiss has him at 25-17.

14. Boston Manager Ed Barrow once said: "I would be the laughing stock of the league if I took the best pitcher in the league (Ruth) and put him in the outfield," See Jonathan Fraser Light, *The Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1997), p.579.

15. *The Sporting Life*, Oct. 15, 1898.

16. A typical 1898 victory saw Cy throw a four-hitter and collect two hits and score one run himself in a 6-2 win over Cleveland on May 30th, striking out seven and issuing as many walks.

17. Nichols had five shutouts, one three-hitter, one four-hitter and six five-hitters.

18. HOF SB 1898.

19. He also again led the league in walks with 213.

20. James D. Hardy, Jr., *The New York Giants Baseball Club, The Growth of a Team and A Sport, 1870-1900*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1996), pp. 157—161.

21. Seymour himself experienced Freedman's parsimony when as a rookie he was fined $10 for leaving a ticket booth that he was occasionally required to man in order that he might watch his teammates play!

22. He did return to MLB in 1901 to pitch in three games for Cincinnati. In exchange for Rusie, Cincinnati sent the Giants an obscure young pitcher—Christy Mathewson.

23. New York *Times*, May 12, 1899. It is of note that Freedman said a year earlier he would not trade Seymour for $10,000.

24. David Quentin Voigt, *The League That Failed*, (Lanham, Md:Scarecrow Press, 1998), p. 123.

25. Cy Young, of course, was a notable exception: although his won-loss record (72-48 vs.57-51) was not radically different from Seymour's during the 1897-99 seasons, Young walked only 134 batters during the three years in question, seventy-nine fewer than Cy during the 1898 campaign alone! On the other hand, Young, who had won the strikeout crown in 1896, only managed to strike out 300 batters from 1897-99 while Seymour struck out 534 in the same period.

26. *Sporting Life* , Jun. 4, 1898.

27. HOF SB 1902. Flick added, "I have asked many baseball players who batted against him the days past, and they all agreed that he was the star of them all when in condition."

28. HOF SB 1898.

29. New York *Times*, Apr. 8, 1900.

30. New York *Times*, Apr. 17, 1900.

31. New York *Times*, Apr. 19, 1900.

32. See New York *Times*, May 16 & 18, 1900.

33. New York *Times*, May 19 & 29, 1900.

34. New York *Times*, Jun. 12, 1900; see also June 8, 1900.

35. HOF SB 1900.

36. Ibid.

37. Historian Bob Hoie hypothesizes that Seymour probably injured his arm or attempted to take something off his pitches to improve his control and that the Giants merely suspended him because of his arm problems. Personal correspondence, Hoie to Kirwin, Dec. 28, 1998. Also, David Voigt in personal correspondence reflects a changed opinion regarding the pitching demise of Seymour, now believing that it probably had more to do with his arm problems than wildness. Personal correspondence, Voigt to Kirwin, undated, 1998.

38. Andrew Freedman to William Ewing, May 21, 1900; see James Bentley, "Cy" Seymour file, HOF, Cooperstown, N.Y.

39. *Sporting Life*, " The disappearance of 'Cy'," Mar. 11, 1905.

40. See HOF Seymour file clipping "Cy Seymour's Iron Man." See also New

York *Times*, Oct. 13, 1898; McGraw thought the games were in 1896 or '97 and that the 2nd game of the doubleheader was a shutout. In 1897 Seymour pitched both games of a doubleheader win against Louisville.

41. SSB 1905.

42. Lajoie hit .426 in 1901 and .384 in 1910. Cobb equalled Seymour's .377 in 1909 and batted .383 in 1910.

43. The uses of the bunt, hit-and-run, Baltimore chop, and cutoff man were developed by Baltimore manager Ned Hanlon.

44. Bob Rothgeber, "When Hitting Became A Science," *Cincinnati Reds Scrapbook* (Virginia Beach, Va.: JCP, 1982), p. 36.

45. *Sporting Life*, Jan. 6, 1906.

46. Rothgeber, "When Hitting Became A Science."

47. Ibid.

48. HOF SB 1905.

49. New York *World* Sep. 22, 1906. The other five were Art Devlin, Giants; George Stone, St. Louis Americans; Johnny Kling, Chicago Nationals; Hal Chase, New York Highlanders; and Rube Waddell, A's.

50. Almost as an afterthought, Seymour was added to the Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame in 1998. Most of the media attention of that day focussed on Tony Perez who was also inducted.

51. During the 1902 season he ranked high in both RBIs and HRs in the combined league totals. See Top-Five Leading Categories.

52. If one wanted to stretch the case, the claim could be made that Seymour had the fourth highest *number* of home runs in 1904. The number is correct; however six players had more home runs that he did. A similar case could be argued for 1906 triples. I choose the more rigid interpretation of including only the top five players wherever possible.

53. Since 1907 was Flick's last year as a regular player, the 1900 season, his second best in category leadership (14) was used for comparison purposes. In 1902 his name does not appear in any of the categories. In the 1901-1907 seasons Flick's category percentage dropped to 34 percent.

54. 1897-1904, excluding the 1902 season when he only played in 108 games.

55. Christy Mathewson, *Pitching in a Pinch*, (Lincoln, Neb.: Boson Books, reprint 1988), pp 120-21.

56. Charles C. Alexander, *John McGraw*, (Lincoln, Neb.: Bison Books, reprint 1988), p.143.

57. New York *Times*, Apr. 27, 1909.

58. 54 ibid.

59. Mathewson, *Pitching in a Pinch*, pp. 135-36.

60. New York *Times*, Jun. 26, 1909.

61. Even that his sale of 1906 from the Reds to the Giants for $10,000 (some reports claim it was $12,000) was one of the largest in baseball history up until that time has been ignored.

62. See Rube Marquard, *The Life and Legend of a Baseball Hall of Famer*. (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland,1998), p. 51.

63. Mathewson, *Pitching in a Pinch*, p. 186.

64. Ibid., pp. 186-88.

65. *Sporting Life*, "National League News," June 18, 1904.

66. Seymour HOF SB 1902.

67. Arthur Frederick Hofman was well known for his circus catches and was named after a comic strip character. See James A. Skipper, *Baseball Nicknames*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1992), p. 127.

68. See *Total Baseball*, 3rd Ed., pp. 2,327-30. Does not include players who did not play at least 300 games in the outfield.

69. SSB 1903 "Seymour's Airship."

70. *Sporting Life* , Aug. 15, 1903. Another report, probably in a Cincinnati newspaper, said that he had called in claiming he was sick when in fact he was drunk, requiring him to miss several games. The record indicates that he played in 135 of the 141 games the Reds played that year.

71. *Sporting Life*, Aug. 29, 1903.

72. Ray Long to August Hermann, Seymour HOF file, January 31, 1906.

73. Lawrence Ritter, *The Glory of Their Times: The Story of the Early Days of Baseball—Told by the Men Who Played It*, (New York: Vintage, 1985), p.192.

74. "Seymour the Straight," Seymour HOF file, Nov. 17, 1906.

75. Reported, apparently, in the Albany *Times Union* in 1903, citing a Cincinnati dispatch stating that Seymour walked away unmarked from a battle with the two Tannehill brothers. They in turn both required hospital assistance. See Hof SB 1903.

76. *Sporting Life*, Oct. 11, 1902.

77. Mrs. John J. McGraw and Arthur Mann, *The Real McGraw*, (New York: David McKay, 1951), p. 227. Thanks to Darryl Brock for this source.

78. James K. Skipper, Jr, *Baseball Nicknames: A Dictionary of Origins and Meanings*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1992), p. 252.

79. Ironically Fred Snodgrass, who was to soon replace Cy as the Giants regular centerfielder, was also introduced that day.

80. See HOF Seymour file, "Bobby Vaughn Talks of Cy's Batting Eye."

81. See "The Disappearance of Cy," *Sporting Life*, Mar. 11, 1905.

82. "Seymour the Straight," Seymour HOF file, Nov. 17, 1906.

83. *Sporting Life*, Dec. 27, 1902.

84. He picked up the name Cy when he first arrived in New York. The name referring to his pitching style derived from the word "cyclone," and was a rather common sobriquet applied to pitchers of the day. He may have wanted to put his pitching days behind when he resisted being called Cy, yet on the other hand it may have been simply to clarify the fact that he was not a Jew. A letter to the New York *Globe* asks "is Seymour a Hebrew or an Irishman?" and receives the following answer, "He is an American of English descent."

85. Some reports indicated that it was $12,000.

86. Seymour certainly seemed to be not unaware of the upcoming sale, openly saying to the press, "Tell 'em I'm going away." Whether by design or preoccupation, his indifferent play prior was reflected in his .257 batting average.

87. SSB 1906, Cincinnati *Post* Aug. 25, 1906.

88. SSB 1908. This scrap book contains several items after 1908.

89. See "Cy Seymour in Disgrace," SSB 1903.

90. Seymour to Hermann, HOF File, Nov. 28, 1913.

91. Ibid.

92. New York *Times*, Sep., 22, 1919.

93. Rothgeber, "When Hitting Became a Science" p.37.

94. *Sporting Life*, Jun. 17, 1905.

95. See "'Outguessing' the Batter," Christy Mathewson, *Pearsons Magazine*, May 1911.

96. HOF SB 1902.

97. Albany *Times-Union*, Sep. 23, 1919.

98. Albany Rural Cemetery visit, Jun. 5, 1999. Thanks to John Buszta for his help.

Chronicling Gibby's Glory

Bob Gibson's amazing 1968

Dixie Tourangeau

For baseball fans, three things stand out from the 1968 season: Detroit's comeback victory in the World Series, Denny McLain's 31-6 record, and Bob Gibson's incredible pitching journey through 34 National League starts that generated his famed 1.12 ERA. It's Gibson's performance that most amazes fans today. Except for a wild pitch and a "just fair" double, it could have been even more spectacular than it was.

Plenty of other diamond events occured in 1968, but world happenings and especially major domestic traumas seemed to subdue interest in the season while it was being played out. Even three decades later old baseball minds remain a little cloudy on many particulars. The Year of the Pitcher was cloaked in war, political upheaval, assassinations, and riots. Its baseball milestones are recalled easily only by those who focused on a certain team or player during the social turmoil. Don Drysdale eclipsed icon Walter Johnson's scoreless inning record between the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. In fact, his two starts to approach and then break the record perfectly skirted the RFK tragedy. Don hurled his sixth shutout in Los Angeles just hours before the June 5 (after) midnight shooting and broke Johnson's record just hours after the Arlington Cemetery burial on June 8. Kennedy was said to have mentioned Drysdale's feat in his speech after winning the California primary.

Giant rookie Bobby Bonds' first hit was a grand slam. Earl Weaver took over the Orioles. Mickey Mantle took his last bows, as did Elston Howard with Boston. Frank Howard, who had Triple Crown numbers in mid-June, hit a record ten mammoth clouts in a week and Gaylord Perry and Ray Washburn threw back-to-back no-hitters at the 'Stick. Boston's 1967 Triple Crowner Carl Yastrzemski, hitting just .280 after June 10, rallied in September to make .301, the lowest batting title finish ever. Runner-up Danny Cater rallied for a .290 mark. Neither league had much of a pennant race, although the Cardinal-Tiger Series did make up for a lack of June to September drama.

Gibson's dominance has been discussed before by SABR writers, but only as it measured up to other super pitching achievements of this century. Here I chart Gibby's start-after-start excellence, bringing back all the names and circumstances you may have missed in the original go-around.

Season opens badly—St. Louis began the year as defending World Champs thanks to Gibson's three wins over Boston in the '67 Series. At thirty-two, he opened his eighth full season, the last five of which totaled 91 wins and 52 losses. On April 10 Atlanta's Braves were at St. Louis a day after the scheduled date because of Dr. King's burial. After three days of riots, troops patrolled outside DC Stadium, Tiger Stadium, and Baltimore's Memorial Stadium, but things were a

Some details of this story could not have been disclosed without the amazing resources provided by Mr. Home Run Dave Vincent, Mr. Retrosheet Dave Smith and senior researcher Scot Mondore of the National Baseball Library.

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bit calmer a few blocks west of the Mississippi.

Gibson left in the eighth inning down 1-0 to Pat Jarvis, who soon lost to Washburn, 2-1, in the ninth. The run Gibson gave up was unearned. Five days later in Atlanta, Jarvis lost to reliever Joe Hoerner, 4-3, as Gibby exited after seven frames, down 3-1 on a Hank Aaron home run. Back in St. Louis, Ferguson Jenkins hurled a 5-1 win for the cellar-dwelling Cubs, beating Gibson thanks mainly to Billy Williams (double, homer, three RBIs). After beating Pittsburgh's Bob Veale, 2-1, on home runs by Orlando Cepeda and Tim McCarver, Gibson outlasted the home Astros, 3-1, in twelve innings on Julian Javier's triple (run, RBI). Another royal duel followed at Busch Stadium on May 6, as Tom Seaver lost to Gibby, 2-1 (Lou Brock triple, Cepeda single), in the eleventh inning.

A Little Quiz

While you read on, test yourself on these dozen names that were related to something special during 1968: Tom Phoebus, Luis Tiant, Hoyt Wilhelm, Johnny Bench, Oakland Coliseum, Ron Hansen, Don Wilson, Stan Bahnsen, Jim McAndrew, Catfish Hunter, Cesar Tovar and George Culver.

Gibson then lost four straight games, allowing a total of nine runs. One loss was to Phillie Woody Fryman, who singled and scored the winning run in the tenth inning (1-0) on a Bill White single. Another loss, 2-0, was to Drysdale, then about half way to breaking the scoreless inning record. Wes Parker's third-inning RBI double with two out was the only run off Gibson on that cold, wet night. Visiting Giant Gaylord Perry then beat him, 3-1, on late home runs by Dick Dietz and Willie Mays. Gibson was pitching much better than his 3-5 record indicated, and things were about to turn around for the St. Louis fireballer.

St. Louis had lost eleven of fourteen games until they arrived in New York to face the upstart Mets. They won a muddy June 2 doubleheader, with Gibson capturing the first game, 6-3, on two RBIs each from Mike Shannon, Dick Simpson (homer), and McCarver. The Cards nudged back into first and the Mets slipped to last, only seven games behind. Then came five straight shutouts, with Robert Kennedy's murder between the first and second. At the same time, Drysdale's run of six shutouts and 58 scoreless innings ended on Phillie Howie Bedell's only RBI of the year (a sacrifice fly).

Gibson's real dominance began at Houston's Astrodome on June 6, where he tossed a three-hitter and won, 4-0, behind Cepeda. Host Atlanta fell next, 6-0, on five hits. The Reds' Gary Nolan matched Bullet Bob for five innings before the fleet-footed Cards beat him, 2-0, (Cincy got four hits). Nemesis Chicago was next as Gibson beat Jenkins, 1- 0, on five hits. Poor Fergie gave up only four safeties, but lost as Chicago was sinking in its own scoreless quagmire of 46 innings. Bob's fifth whitewash beat Pittsburgh, 3-0, on four hits. He allowed an average of four hits and struck out an average of seven batters during the skein. His own consecutive scoreless inning streak then stood at 47.

Wild frustration—On July 1 came a Gibson-Drysdale showdown at Chavez Ravine before 54,107 fans. In his previous start, the Dodgers' Big D no-hit the home Giants into the seventh while posting his tenth victory. In the bottom of the first inning Len Gabrielson and Tom Haller (off Javier's glove) singled with two down. With Ron Fairly at bat, Gibson uncorked a wild pitch, which bounced off umpire Shag Crawford and away from substitute catcher Johnny Edwards. Gabrielson dashed home with what proved to be the Dodgers' only tally. Edwards later said the ball might have been wet from the outfield grass, and took some of the blame though he did ask the umpire to dry it. Fairly said it was one of the hardest thrown balls he had ever seen. Drysdale lasted into the seventh as the Cardinals won, 5-1, behind the bats of Curt Flood and Brock. Each hurler left with a 10-5 mark, but Gibson's goose egg run had ended at 47.

Here the "couldas and shouldas" begin, because Gibson shut the Dodgers out for the last eight innings, then blanked the Giants at Candlestick, 3-0. He beat Juan Marichal, who had the best NL record at 15-3. Edwards' first-inning blast won the game, almost a "makeup" for the previous game's miscue. Back home at Busch, Bob destroyed Houston, 8-1, allowing only a two-out, seventh-inning, RBI double to Denis Menke that was described as "fair by inches."

On July 17 in St. Louis, a heatwave induced thunderstorm washed out all the numbers of a 6-0 lead the Card ace held over the Giants and Mike McCormick. Gibson then shut out both the Mets and Phillies. Making his debut, rookie Jim McAndrew took the Met loss, 2-0, as both runs were driven home by Bobby Tolan (inside-the-park home run, double).

Chris Short took the 5-0 Phillie loss, as Edwards and Gibson himself starred at the dish. Bob had amassed eight shutouts in ten games, with just two solo runs scoring, each with two outs. Subtract those and he would have had compiled ten consecutive whitewashes and more than ninety blank innings. At Shea Stadium he posted another near-shutout, 7-1. This time an Ed Kranepool two-out double plated Ed Charles in the fourth. St. Louis was 26-21 when Gibson's roll began and 78-43 when he next failed to win (52-22). The National League race was over.

Facing Jenkins again, at Busch, Gibson (then 17-4) was proven human. Blowing a 3-0 lead against the club that hit him best in 1968, Gibson gave up another home run to "Sweet Billy" Williams and the tying home run to Al Spangler (his first of just two that year) on the first pitch of the ninth inning. Bob tossed eleven innings and gave up twelve hits, but avoided a decision. The Cards lost in the twelfth, 6-5. Through four innings of that game Gibson had allowed three runs in 105 innings—each after two were out.

In Atlanta Gibson continued his nasty mastery. He blanked the Braves and Phil Niekro, 1-0, then beat the Cubs at Wrigley, 3-1, losing a shutout to yet another two-out run, as Jim Hickman knocked home Spangler, who had doubled. Cepeda had two RBIs for the winners. Bob then paid back Phillie Fryman for that earlier loss, beating him, 2-0, while whiffing Richie Allen four times and Bill White thrice. Substitute outfielder Ron Davis, who had come over from Houston and rarely played for St. Louis, chose that night to carry a huge bat and knocked home both runs. More importantly, this was Gibson's 15th consecutive win, allowing hits only to reliever John Boozer and pinch hitter Johnny Callison.

On August 24 at Busch came Gibson's worst defeat of the season—in all respects. It was as frustrating as the wild pitch in Los Angeles, as he lost to Pittsburgh, 6-4, giving up more runs than he did in any other 1968 game, and blowing a four-run lead. Gibson was coasting along with a shutout until Willie Stargell's three-run shot in the seventh. It was the only three-run inning off Gibson all season and it began with an Orlando Cepeda error. The Card ace fanned his season high of 15, but a second error (Maxvill throw) after Stargell doubled in the ninth cost him two (unearned) runs and a sixteenth straight victory. Reliever Elroy Face, the fifth Pirate hurler, was the winner as Matty Alou chipped in a run and an RBI. Four days later in Pittsburgh, a somewhat miffed Gibson shut out the Bucs, 8-0, on Cepeda and Julian Javier home runs and his own two RBIs. He struck out fourteen while setting the Cardinal team record of eleven shutouts. In his next start in Cincinnati, Gibson dueled Gary Nolan for nine scoreless innings. Javier's solo clout in the tenth off Ted Abernathy gave Gibby a 1-0 win, his twentieth—and his twelfth "Chicago." It also could have been number eighteen in a row, except for Stargell's two clutch swings.

Gibson faced San Francisco's Bob Bolin next in St. Louis. Bolin would finish the season with the second best National League ERA at 1.99. West Coast Bob managed a 3-2 win on hits from Jack Hiatt and Jim Ray Hart. After beating Los Angeles, 5-4, Gibson took on Gaylord Perry at the 'Stick. As it turned out, the Giants were the only team to hold an edge on Gibby (three wins, one loss) during his extraordinary campaign, and Perry's 1-0 no-hitter was a case of Bob getting a dose of his own unhittable medicine. Ron Hunt's first-inning, one-out home run (only his second of the year, the other was off Cub Bill Hands) won the game. Gaylord was the only pitcher to best Gibson twice in 1968, allowing a total of two hits in two games—his best two performances. The next day Card Washburn no-hit the Bay hosts. Gibson ended the year first by losing at Los Angeles, 3-2, as Willie Crawford homered for a second time off him, then beating visiting Houston's Larry Dierker, 1-0, on a Curt Flood RBI. It was his thirteenth shutout and still ranks second in the twentieth century only to Grover Alexander's honored mark of sixteen in Deadball 1916. In his final ten starts of the year, Gibson averaged ten Ks per game. Nine times during the year he gave up a single run in nine innings. Six of those tallies came with two outs. Four players—Hunt, Dietz, Spangler and Charles—hit their only career homers off Gibson in 1968. Gibby walked Giant Dietz four times, the most of any batter he faced that year.

Inside numbers—As you can see in the following inning-by-inning run chart, Gibson had a rough seventh frame, allowing his most runs by far and six of the eleven homers he gave up. In first innings, he gave up three blasts and that infamous wild pitch that ruined the scoreless streak. He went twenty-seven straight games without allowing an earned run in the first inning. Though Marichal pitched more innings and won an National League-high 26 games, Gibson got all the votes for the Cy Young Award and beat out Pete Rose for MVP.

Partly prompting this flashback description was the 1999 performance of Boston's Pedro Martinez and his similar dominance over the American League. In

some ways Gibson's feat was more pronounced, in other ways not as much. Gibby pitched to pitchers while Martinez battled Designated Hitters; Pedro had more offense to deal with, but Gibson had more patient hitters and more quality mound foes. Bob completed many more games, while a closer usually came on for Martinez. Comparisons are many and most are futile. Both years are simply fantastic.

R/In.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Gibson	5	2	1	7	7	5	13	3	5	1	49
Martinez	7	5	7	14	7	9	1	4	2	0	56

	Age	W-L	GS	CG	ERA	Lg	Inn-Ks	Lg-Opp	bat
Gibson	32	22-9	34	28	1.12	2.99	304-268	.243	.186
Martinez	27	23-4	29	5	2.07	4.86	213-313	.275	.205

With the immense help of Retrosheet, I list below the statistics of batters who faced Gibson in 1968. Astro Rusty Staub had to face Gibby the most, but he did extremely well (7 for 20, .350). Cub Kessinger matched him for the most hits. Don's Wrigley mate Billy Williams did the most damage with two home runs and four RBIs, going 5 for 15. Following are lists of interesting special categories illustrating Gibson's 1968 mastery.

Greats versus Gibson 1968

Billy Williams	5 for 15	2 HRs
Willie McCovey	4 for 11	(RBI-HR leader)
Roberto Clemente	4 for 12	
Willie Stargell	3 for 12	HR
Ernie Banks	3 for 13	
Willie Mays	2 for 8	HR
Henry Aaron	1 for 15	HR
Pete Rose	0 for 8	(won bat title)
Johnny Bench	0 for 6	(top NL rookie)
Totals	**22 for 100**	

Best Hitters (at least seven ABs)

Jerry May	.444	4 for 9
Willie Crawford	.429	3 for 7 2 HRs
Ron Fairly	.417	5 for 12
Don Kessinger	.389	7 for 18
Felix Millan	.385	5 for 13
Ken Boswell	.375	3 for 8
John Callison	.375	3 for 8
Totals	**.400**	**30 for 75**

Worst Hitters: a team (at least nine ABs)

Norm Miller	rf	0 for 14	.237	3 K
Jerry Grote	c	0 for 13	.282	8 K
Johnny Briggs	1b	0 for 10	.254	2 K
Dick Allen	lf	0 for 9	.263	6 K
Hank Aaron	rf	1 for 15	.287	2 K HR
Ron Hunt	2b	1 for 15	.250	2 K HR
Donn Clendenon	1b	1 for 14	.257	6 K
Gene Alley	ss	1 for 13	.245	6 K
Tony Taylor	3b	1 for 11	.250	0
Cleon Jones	lf	1 for 11	.297	2 K
Total		**6 for 125**	**.262**	**37 K**
Opp. Pitchers		**6 for 78**		**41 K**

Cardinals behind Gibson (at least twelve games)

	G	AB	H	RBI-R	BA	1968
Johnny Edwards	15	45	17	6-3	.378	.239
Curt Flood	31	130	38	12-17	.292	.301
Lou Brock	34	143	39	8-16	.273	.279
Dal Maxvill	32	96	26	3-11	.271	.253
Julian Javier	31	114	26	13-13	.228	.260
Orlando Cepeda	33	123	26	15-11	.211	.248
Tim McCarver	28	96	19	9- 7	.198	.253
Roger Maris	17	63	12	7- 2	.190	.255
Bobby Tolan	18	55	10	4- 5	.182	.230
Mike Shannon	34	116	20	10- 9	.172	.266
Bob Gibson	34	94	16	6- 2	.170	
Totals	34	1075	249	93-96	.232	.249

Quiz Answers

Tom Phoebus of the Orioles pitched a 6 to 0 no-hitter against Boston.

Luis Tiant of the Indians dazzled AL batters with a Gibsonesque 1.60 ERA.

Hoyt Wilhelm of the White Sox broke Cy Young's appearance mark with his 907th.

Johnny Bench of the Reds (.275) took the NL Rookie of the Year award.

Oakland Coliseum hosted its first game for the new A's.

Ron Hansen of Washington made an unassisted triple play off Joe Azcue's liner.

Don Wilson of Houston fanned 18 Reds, winning 5 to 4.

Stan Bahnsen, 17–12 for Yankees, won the AL Rookie of the Year award.

Jim McAndrew, Met rookie, absorbed four straight shutout losses.

Catfish Hunter of Oakland pitched a perfect game over Twins, 3-0; all runs are his RBIs.

Cesar Tovar of the Twins played all nine positions in win over Oakland, 2 to 1.

George Culver of the Reds hurled no-hitter against Phillies, 6 to 1.

Charting Gibson's 1968 Journey to Pitching Record Book

Date	Opp.	W-L	In.	Ks	H	Opp. P.	Records*		Key Hitter
4/10	Atl	no d.	7	0	3	Jarvis	0-0	16-12	No one
4/15	at Atl	no d.	7	5	5	Jarvis	0-1	same	Javier
4/20	Chi	L	9	8	10	Jenkins	1-0	20-15	Flood
4/26	Pitts	W	9	5	7	Veale	0-2	13-14	McCarver
5/1	at Hous	W	12	7	7	Giusti	2-1	11-14	Javier
5/6	NY	W	11	11	3	Seaver	1-1	16-12	Cepeda
5/12	Hous	L	8	10	11	Dierker	2-5	12-15	Maris
5/17	at Phil	L	9**	5	7	Fryman	3-4	12-14	Javier
5/22	LA	L	8	6	1	Drysdale	3-3	14-12	Brock
5/28	SF	L	8	5	4	Perry	5-2	16-15	Maris
6/2	at NY	W	9	8	7	Jackson	0-2	3- 7	Shannon
6/6	at Hous	W	9	5	3	Wilson	3-7	13-16	Cepeda
6/11	at Atl	W	9	4	5	Kelley	1-4	2- 4	Flood
6/15	Cinc	W	9	13	4	Nolan	2-0	9- 4	Flood
6/20	Chi	W	9	6	5	Jenkins	6-7	20-15	Brock
6/26	Pitts	W	9	7	4	McBean	6-6	9-12	Cepeda
7/1	at LA	W	9	4	9	Drysdale	10-4	14-12	Javier
7/6	at SF	W	9	9	6	Marichal	15-3	26- 9	Edwards
7/12	Hous	W	9	8	3	Lemaster	8-7	10-15	Flood
7/17	SF	Rained out							
7/21	NY	W	9	13	7	McAndrew	0-1	4- 7	Tolan
7/25	Phil	W	9	6	5	Short	9-9	19-13	Edwards
7/30	at NY	W	9	8	5	Selma	8-7	9-10	Javier
8/4	Chi	no d.	11	10	12	Jenkins	12-10	20-15	Javier
8/9	at Atl	W	9	5	4	P.Niekro	10-8	14-12	Brock
8/14	at Chi	W	9	7	8	J.Niekro	12-6	14-10	Cepeda
8/19	at Phil	W	9	11	2	Fryman	11-11	12-14	R.Davis
8/24	Pitts	L	9	15	6	Moose	6- 8	8-12	Shannon
8/28	at Pitts	W	9	14	4	Veale	10-12	13-14	Cepeda
9/2	at Cinc	W	10	8	4	Nolan	6-2	9- 4	Javier
9/6	SF	L	8	7	9	Bolin	7- 4	10- 5	Flood
9/11	LA	W	9	6	11	Kekich	2- 9	2-10	Brock
9/17	at SF	L	8	10	4	G.Perry	14-14	16-15	no hits
9/22	at LA	L	8	11	7	Sutton	9-15	11-15	Gibson
9/27	Hous	W	9	11	6	Dierker	12-14	12-15	Javier

* Record before Gibson game and final record.

Game date	Inning scores by Gibson opposition										Comment
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
4-10	0	1	0	0	0	0	0 removed				Error hurt
4-15	0	0	0	1	0	0	2 removed				Aaron HR
4-20	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0		B. Williams HR in 1st
4-26	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		Scored with 2 out
5-01	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	Wins in 12th
5-06	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		Wins in 11th
5-12	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0—			
5-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	Fryman, 2 outs
5-23	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1		First run with 2 out
5-28	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0 removed			Dietz, Mays HRs
6-02	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0		Charles HR
6-06	shutout #1										
6-11	shutout #2										
6-15	shutout #3										
6-20	shutout #4										
6-26	shutout #5										
7-01	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		Wild pitch ruins string
7-06	shutout #6										
7-12	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		Score with 2 outs
7-17	0	0	0	0 rained out							
7-21	shutout #7										
7-25	shutout #8										
7-30	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		Score with 2 outs
8-04	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1		Spangler HR in 9th
8-09	shutout #9										
8-14	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		Spangler 2 out D/run
8-19	shutout #10										
8-24	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2		Error, Stargell HR
8-28	shutout #11										
9-02	shutout #12										
9-06	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0		
9-11	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1		Crawford HR
9-17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0—			Hunt HR, no-hit
9-22	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1—			Crawford HR
9-27	shutout #13										

34 total games, 18 at home.

Gibson's final record was 22-9, in 34 games, 18 at home, with 305 innings, 268 strikeouts, and 198 hits. Seventeen of his mound opponents had winning records. Julian Javier was the Cards' hitting key hitter in eight of Gibson's games.

Series Vignettes

Connections: World Series, Junior World Series, and Dixie Series

Bob Bailey

The World Series is the capstone of each baseball season. It ties up the annual package that was the pennant races, crowning an ultimate champion and providing fans with memories and associations that continue to live: the Called Shot, Al Gionfriddo, Bill Mazeroski.

The special events of the World Series have a parallel in the minor leagues. At the Triple A and Double A level, long-running postseason, interleague series were held for many years. The Junior World Series matched the best from the International League against the champ of the American Association fifty-seven times from 1904 to the present. (The series now operates as the Triple A World Series.) The Texas League and the Southern Association, met in a Double A version, the Dixie Series, thirty-eight times from 1920 to 1971. In the course of those series, plays similar to those of World Series lore occurred, some presaging the more famous event, some echoing them. This article will look at some of those events as they relate to the major league World Series.

The first series—All three longstanding series got their start the same way. Someone would propose a series, one of the leagues would object and two club owners would get together and hold a series anyway. The story of the Pittsburgh and Boston ownership arranging the 1903 series is well known. The event came about because one owner, Barney Dreyfuss of Pittsburgh, swam against the National League tide, and was willing to play an American League team.

A similar set of circumstances inaugurated the Dixie Series in 1920. The Texas League had been agitating for a series with the Southern Association for many years. But the TL was a "B" League and the Southern Association was classified as "A." The SA wanted no part of a possible embarrassment at the hands of a lower classified league. But Little Rock owner R.G. Allen was a promoter of the first rank and accepted the proposal of the Texas League and the Fort Worth Panthers to meet in 1920. The series was won by the Texans, drew well, and was a success in every sense. The SA was still adamant about not participating, but over the winter the Texas League was elevated to "A" status and the Dixie Series was on its way to twenty-three consecutive years of play, until World War II briefly interrupted things.

The Junior World Series started when Mike Kelley of the American Association champion St. Paul Saints set up a postseason exhibition series with the International League champion Buffalo Bisons. Such informal contests occurred four times through 1917, planting the seeds for the JWS to begin its regular appearance in 1920.

The first Mazeroski—Pirate second baseman Bill Mazeroski hit one of the most fabled home runs in baseball history when he ended the 1960 World Series with his tie-breaking drive off Ralph Terry in

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Game 7. Joe Carter duplicated the feat in 1993. But Mazeroski's wasn't the first.

In 1941 the Columbus Red Birds started a three-year run of Junior World Series championships. Leading the series three games to two, the American Association champs trailed the Montreal Royals, 8-4, in the bottom of the ninth. Van Lingle Mungo allowed two runs in the ninth before being relieved by nineteen-year-old Chet Kehn. With one out and two men on, Harry "The Hat" Walker worked the count to 2-1, then fouled off the next eight pitches. Kehn sent a curve toward Walker and Harry deposited it in the bleachers to win the game, 9-8. It is the only JWS that ended on a ninth-inning homer.

He spoke with Speaker—Boston Red Sox fans have precious few fond memories of the World Series. One, however, is the 1912 Fall Classic. The Red Sox knocked off the New York Giants in eight games thanks to a remarkable comeback in the bottom of the tenth of the finale. That was the inning of the "Snodgrass muff" and the spectacular, less well remembered catch Snodgrass made of Harry Hooper's subsequent drive. Of interest to us is what happened when Tris Speaker then came to bat. With men on first and third and one out, he lifted a routine foul fly off Christy Mathewson between home and first base. Mathewson ran toward the line calling for catcher Chief Meyers to take it, when clearly first baseman Fred Merkle had the best shot at the play. Meyers couldn't make the play and Speaker tied the game with a second-chance single. Two batters later, Larry Gardner sent a sacrifice fly to right to clinch the Red Sox victory.

A similar play occurred in the 1942 Dixie Series. In Game 3 Shreveport's Zeke Trent faced Birmingham's Paul Erickson. With the score tied, 1-1, Birmingham loaded the bases with two outs. Trent lifted a foul fly between home and first, but catcher Hank Helf and first baseman Jim Shilling allowed the catchable ball to fall between them. Taking his cue from Speaker, Trent lined a two-run single. The teams traded runs in the eighth and Trent made a game-saving catch deep in center field to preserve the win.

The first international series—In 1992, the baseball world made a big deal out of the World Series being contested on Canadian soil for the first time. The Junior World Series had an eighty-five-year head start. In 1907 the Toronto Maple Leafs represented the International League against Columbus of the American Association. Columbus won the series, 4-1. Toronto also lost the 1917 JWS to Indianapolis. In 1926 the Maple Leafs brought back the first Canadian championship when they swept the Louisville Colonels five straight in the best-of-nine series. The Junior World Series would later be played internationally in Montreal and Havana.

The unfinished series—In 1890 the baseball world was in turmoil. It was the year of the Brotherhood War, and three major leagues—the National League, the Players' League, and the American Association—taking the field. At the conclusion of the season the World Series between the NL and the AA was played as it had been since 1884. The PL was metaphorically left out in the cold, while the NL Brooklyn Bridegrooms and the AA Louisville Colonels got a real dose of the chills. The series opened in Louisville to cool, rainy weather. Four games were played in the Kentucky city. Brooklyn won a pair, Louisville won one, and one ended in a tie. As the teams headed for Brooklyn, the bad weather followed them east. Three games were played there, but there was snow falling on the field for two of them. The teams agreed to postpone the remaining games with the series tied, 3-3. These final games, planned for the next spring, never came off because the leagues were battling over the National Agreement.

In 1906 Buffalo and Columbus met in the Junior World Series. Rain in Buffalo disrupted the schedule and the teams shifted to Columbus. With Buffalo leading three games to two, Columbus refused to return to the shores of Lake Erie, claiming that the New York club had drawn poorly and that series receipts would be enhanced if everybody remained in Ohio. Buffalo took a contrary position. When Columbus would not budge, Buffalo went home. The dispute was never resolved and the 1906 JWS was never completed.

Steve and Mickey's passed balls—Perhaps the most famous passed ball in baseball history is Dodger Hugh Casey's two-out, two- strike, ninth-inning curve that got past Mickey Owen in Game 4 of the 1941 World Series. This allowed Yankee Tommy Henrich to reach first and eventually score the game-tying run just ahead of Joe DiMaggio's winning tally. In 1926 Toronto catcher Steve O'Neill almost had a similar experience. In the fourth inning of Game 2 against the Louisville Colonels, pitcher Ownie Carroll had two outs and Bruno Betzel at the plate. Betzel waved at strike three but O'Neill let the ball get past him and Betzel was safe at first. As the Yankees took ad-

vantage of the situation in 1941, Louisville did in 1926. Howie Shanks followed with a run-scoring double and player-manager Bill Meyer added an RBI single to make the score 2-0. Unfortunately for Louisville, in the ninth, Toronto's Billy Mullen singled home two unearned runs off pitcher Nick Cullop to tie the game. In the eleventh, Herman Layne singled across Cleo Carlyle to give the Canadians a 3-2 win and save O'Neill's reputation.

Babe and Reggie and...—Only two players have ever hit three home runs in a single World Series game. Babe Ruth did it twice, in 1926 and 1928. Reggie Jackson did it on three swings in 1977. But these were not the first times it happened in the post-season, or the last.

Clarence "Big Boy" Kraft of the Fort Worth Panthers smashed home runs in the first, third and fifth innings off Memphis pitcher Cy Warmoth in Game 5 of the 1924 Dixie Series. Kraft, a converted pitcher (like Ruth), was not much of a slugger (unlike Ruth) until the 1921 season. At age thirty-four he went on a power binge, hitting 31, 32, 32, and 55 home runs in consecutive seasons. His big season was 1924, when he set the Texas League record (since broken) with 55 home runs and the still-standing TL standard with 196 RBIs. It was a big finish for Big Boy, as he retired following the 1924 season to tend to his automobile business.

The Junior World Series never had a three-homer man until the renewal of the series as the Triple A World Series in 1998. New Orleans slugger Lance Berkman sealed his choice as series MVP when he turned the trick in the final game. A two-run shot in the third off Buffalo starter Travis Driscoll got the ball rolling. Homers in the fifth and ninth placed him among some rare company.

Three homers in a single game were stroked during one other interleague series—and it happened twice in the same year. In 1972, the Triple A leagues contested the Kodak World Baseball Classic in Honolulu. This one-time event matched the three Triple A playoff winners with a team of Caribbean All Stars and the host Hawaii team in a fourteen-game tournament. Tidewater's Dave Schneck clubbed three homers in a game against the Caribbean players, and Albuquerque's Tom Paciorek did the same thing to the Hawaii Islanders the next day.

1924 returns—The 1924 World Series had several memorable moments. The series ended when Earl McNeely's grounder found a stray pebble in the infield and bounded over third baseman Fred Lindstrom's head, allowing the series-clinching runs to score for Washington. Earlier in the inning Giants catcher Hank Gowdy stumbled over his mask and missed a pop foul off the bat of Muddy Ruel. Ruel used the second chance to double in advance of McNeely's fortunate grounder.

In the 1928 and 1988 JWS, similar plays occurred. In Game 4 of the 1928 series, Indianapolis entered the fourth inning of a scoreless tie and put runners at first and second with two outs. Rabbit Warstler then sent an innocent grounder toward second baseman Specs Toporcer of Rochester. Toporcer did his best Lindstom imitation as the ball took an unexpected hop over his head bringing one run home. Walter Holke followed with a two-run single and Indianapolis rode the three gift runs to a 5-1 victory.

The 1988 Indianapolis Indians provided some drama and a reprise of Hank Gowdy's gaffe, though without its dramatic results. In the ninth inning of Game 6, Indianapolis was one out away from a 3-1 win and the JWS championship. With two Rochester Red Wings on base, reliever Tom Waddell came in to pitch to Carl Nichols. On the first pitch Nichols lofted a lazy foul behind the plate. The ball was clearly in play and the home crowd began to pour onto the field. The organist began the victory march, but catcher Mark Bailey dropped the ball. After the field was clear, Waddell ran the count to 2-2, then took Bailey off the hook by blowing strike three past Nichols, allowing the organist to chime in again.

More akin to McNeely's adventure was the end of the 1949 Dixie Series. Tulsa's Walker Cress was on the mound against Nashville in the bottom of the tenth. Babe Barna doubled to open the inning, and Carl Sawatski, who was in the process of setting the Dixie Series slugging record, was intentionally passed. Cress hit Bob Borkowski with an 0-2 pitch to load the bases. Floyd Fogg then sent a routine grounder to shortstop Harry Donabelian. Harry charged the ball only to see it take a big hop over his shoulder as he reached for it. Barna easily crossed the plate with the series-ending run.

Ouch—In the 1960 World Series Tony Kubek probably wished he was Fred Lindstrom. Whereas Lindstrom saw Earl McNeely's grounder hop over his head, Kubek caught an odd hop of Bill Virdon's smash in the throat. That cost the Yankees a probable double play, and ended Kubek's season. Mazeroski's home run the next inning sent Pittsburgh to the top of the baseball world.

Game 3 of the 1990 JWS was tied, 4-4, in the twelfth inning when Harvey Pulliam of the Omaha Royals sent a scorcher to short that took a bad hop and caught Juan Bell in the eye. The Rochester shortstop had to leave the game, and like the Pirates, Omaha used the break to push over the winning run.

Roger Maris to the rescue—In Game 7 of the 1962 World Series Roger Maris made a marvelous play in right field at Candlestick Park. With the Yankees holding a precarious 1-0 lead entering the bottom of the ninth, Matty Alou was at first with two outs and Willie Mays at the plate. Mays lashed Ralph Terry's pitch deep into the right field corner. Maris raced over, quickly corralled the ball, and unleashed a bullet to the plate to hold Alou at third. Willie McCovey then drilled a liner right at Bobby Richardson to end the series.

Six seasons earlier Maris was a member of the Indianapolis Indians, playing right field against the Rochester Red Wings in the 1956 Junior World Series. Clinging to a 3-1 lead in the ninth, Indian starter John Gray loaded the bases with one out. Pinch-hitter Gary Geiger laced a single to right that scored one run. But Maris fired a laser shot home and caught pinch runner Ed Phillips at the plate, preventing the tying run from scoring. Bud Daley then relieved and retired Ron Plaza on a groundout to secure Game 1 for Indianapolis. Maris had a pretty good Game 2 also. He homered twice and drove in a JWS record seven runs as Indianapolis relentlessly continued its march to a series sweep of Rochester.

Five-hit games—In Game 1 of the 1982 World Series, Milwaukee's Paul Molitor collected five singles to become the first, and so far only, player to have a five-hit World Series game. He joined seven others who had accomplished the same feat in either the Junior World Series or the Dixie Series. The first was Indianapolis' Dutch Zwilling in 1917. The Indians' center fielder pounded out four singles and a double off Toronto's Tommie Thompson in Game 1. Indianapolis also claimed the second five-hit game in 1928, when Walter "Union Man" Holke got five singles off a trio of Rochester pitchers.

Next it was the boys from Dixie's turn. In 1931, Birmingham's Art Weis had a homer and two doubles to go with two singles as the Barons topped the Houston Buffaloes in Game 6, 14-10. It was the first game of that series in which the two teams combined for more than three runs. Three years later, New Orleans catcher Charlie "Greek" George poked a quintet of singles off Galveston's Jim Bivin and Harry Gumbert.

The 1938 Newark Bears still had a few good ballplayers left from the 1937 "Wonder Team." Among them was Jimmy Gleeson, a star in four JWS for three different teams, who beat up on his Yankee-farm cousins, the Kansas City Blues, for five hits including a home run in a Game 2 win. Unfortunately, he and Molitor are the only two players to see their teams lose the series in which they had their five-hit games.

The last Dixie Series five-hit game came from Houston's Eddie Knoblauch. The uncle of current Yankee second baseman Chuck Knoblauch had one double in his five-pack as Houston shut out Mobile, 7-0, in 1947.

The final occurrence before Molitor was in 1961. On their way to a sweep of Louisville, the Buffalo Bisons set a number of offensive records in an 18-8 thrashing of the Colonels in Game 1. Leadoff man Ted Savage went five-for-five with a double. Along with Savage's record tying effort the Bisons set single-game team records for most hits (23) and RBIs (17), and tied the mark for doubles (6) and home runs (4).

Maybe overtime pay is in order—In the 1991 World Series, Minnesota and Atlanta played three extra-inning games. It was the first time the Fall Classic presented a trio of overtime games. But the minor leagues beat them to that mark by sixty-three years. In 1929 Kansas City and Rochester staged three extra inning contests, including the finale in Game 9, which Kansas City won, 1-0, in the eleventh inning when Fred Nicholson's sacrifice fly scored George Gerken from third.

Would Ronald Reagan portray Ira Smith?—The 1931 Junior World Series contained a dramatic battle between pitcher and hitter in the late innings of a close game, similar to the face-off between St. Louis' Pete Alexander and New York's Tony Lazzeri in Game 7 of the 1926 World Series.

Entering the bottom of the ninth in Game 4 of the 1931 JWS, Rochester's starter, Ira Smith, carried a 2-1 lead. With two outs, St. Paul's Jo-Jo Morrissey pinch-hit for pitcher Huck Betts. Morrissey, looking to tie the game, lined Smith's first pitch deep into the left field seats, but, as with Lazzeri, the ball hooked foul at the last moment. On the next pitch Morrissey sent a fly into no-man's land down the right field line. But first baseman Jack Bentley hustled out to snag the fly and end the game. Rochester ultimately won the series five games to three.

Not quite perfect—Only Don Larsen has thrown a no-hitter in any of the series under consideration. Of course, he tossed a perfect game for the Yankees against the Dodgers in 1956. But all the series have seen multiple one-hitters.

The World Series has experienced four one-hitters. The first was by Ed Reulbach in 1906 for the Chicago Cubs against their cross-town rivals, the White Sox. It was thirty-nine years before Claude Passeau matched the feat for the Cubs against the Tigers in 1945. Only two years later, Yankee Bill Bevens missed a no-hitter when, with two out in the ninth, the Dodgers' Cookie Lavagetto beat him with Brooklyn's only hit, a double to right. The most recent World Series one-hitter came from Jim Lonborg of Boston in 1967 against St. Louis.

The Junior World Series has also seen four one-hitters. The first came in 1917 when Toronto's Al Gould dominated Indianapolis. Jimmy Zinn tossed a one-hitter for Kansas City versus Baltimore in 1923, and Paul Brown ended the 1961 JWS with a one-hit game against Louisville. Rob Gardner of Syracuse against Omaha authored the last one-hit gem in 1970.

To keep the pattern alive, the Dixie Series has also witnessed four one-hitters. The earliest was by Lute Roy for New Orleans against Dallas in 1926. George Washington Payne, a 348-game winner in the minors, did the same thing for Houston at the expense of Birmingham in 1931. While closing out an outstanding pitching career in 1939, Fred "Firpo" Marberry turned in a one-hit game for Fort Worth against Nashville. The last one-hitter came in the Dixie Association Playoffs in 1971. It was the only one-hitter involving two pitchers. Mark Wiley and Vic Albury of Charlotte combined to do the deed at Arkansas' expense.

The Texas League does have one interleague no-hitter to its credit. In 1959 the TL played the Mexican League in the Pan-American Series. In Game 5, Charlie Gorin clinched the series for the Austin Senators by tossing a no-hitter against the Mexico City Diablos Rojos (Red Devils). Only an error by third baseman Pepper Thomas in the fifth inning prevented a perfect game.

Was it a catch by Rice?—This might be the most tenuous parallel that I'm presenting, but it's one of my favorite stories. In Game 3 of the 1925 World Series, Sam Rice made a diving catch of Earl Smith's drive by leaping and toppling over the right-center field fence. Rice disappeared from view, but when he hopped out of the stands he had the ball. Umpire Cy Rigler called it a catch. The Pirates argued, but the out stood.

In the 1932 Junior World Series the Minneapolis Millers faced the Newark Bears. In Game 5 at Nicollet Park in Minneapolis, the score was 8-8 entering the top of the ninth. Miller pitcher Elam Van Gilder had two outs with runners at first and third and Johnny Neun at the plate. Neun sent a low line drive to left. Harry Rice (no relation to Sam) dived, rolled, and apparently caught the ball for the final out. Newark manager Al Mamaux took exception to the call and argued that Rice juggled the ball while rolling in the outfield grass and had scooped it up from the ground when his back was to the infield. Umpire Charley Johnston then conferred with his colleague Jack Carroll. Carroll said he wasn't sure. Johnston then reversed his call, declaring it a dropped ball. Of course, this brought Minneapolis manager Donie Bush to the field. Over the next forty minutes the decision was reversed five more times. Finally crew chief Bill Summers ended it all, declaring Neun safe. After a protest was lodged, Van Gilder faced Red Rolfe. Red hit a three-run homer. The appeal was denied and the 12-9 Newark victory stood.

Lombardi redux—The 1939 World Series is remembered for Ernie Lombardi's infamous "snooze." In the tenth inning of Game 4 Joe DiMaggio singled to right scoring Frank Crosetti. When Ival Goodman bobbled the ball Charlie Keller set sail for home. The throw and Keller reached Lombardi simultaneously and the force of the collision stunned the big catcher, who lay on the ground as DiMaggio came all the way around to score.

The following season, Louisville met Newark in the 1940 JWS. In Game 4, Louisville starter Bud Parmelee uncorked a record four wild pitches. This was nothing to be proud of, but it was less embarrassing than what befell him in the fourth inning. With two outs Parmelee walked Newark starter Hank Borowy. Tommy Holmes followed with a single, and Parmelee's third wild pitch of the game moved the runners to second and third. Wild pitch number four immediately followed, and Borowy scored. Parmelee was covering home as catcher Buddy Lewis retrieved the ball. Parmelee had his back to third when Lewis threw him the ball. As Parmelee stood sad-faced at home, Holmes slid in between his legs with an additional run and set Mr. Parmelee firmly on his rump. His response is not recorded.

They'll manage—Sparky Anderson is the only big league manager to pilot World Series champions in each league. He booted home the National League

Cincinnati Reds in 1975 and 1976 and turned the trick with the American League Detroit Tigers in 1984.

The Junior World Series and the Dixie Series have their answers to Sparky Anderson.

Kirby Farrell takes the honors as the only man to manage an American Association team and an International League squad to the JWS championship. He was at the helm of the 1956 Indianapolis Indians when they defeated Rochester, and he led the International League's 1961 Buffalo Bisons over the Louisville Colonels. Both were four-game sweeps.

The only manager to fill out lineup cards for Dixie Series champs from the Southern Association and the Texas League is Bert Niehoff. Niehoff is the only Southern Association manager to beat the dynasty of the 1920-1925 Fort Worth Panthers, when his Mobile Bears skinned the Cats in 1922. Bert also won for the SA in 1932 with Chattanooga, and completed his set with the 1935 Oklahoma City team of the Texas League.

Yankees versus Dodgers, 1953—This was the only time that the contestants of the Junior World Series represented the same teams that met in that season's World Series. The Yankees and Dodgers were appearing in what seemed to have become their annual meeting while their Triple A affiliates, the Kansas City Blues and Montreal Royals, faced off in the JWS. Led by pitchers Tom Lasorda, Ed Roebuck, and Hamp Coleman, and the potent bat of Rocky Nelson, the Royals bested the Bill Skowron-led Blues in five games. Montreal's parent club went down in six games.

Jackie Robinson, 1946—Jackie Robinson became the first black player to appear in a World Series game when he started Game 1 of the 1947 World Series at first base for Brooklyn. But the prior season, he became the first black player to appear in an Organized Baseball postseason series when he played second base for the Montreal Royals against the Louisville Colonels in the 1946 Junior World Series. Robinson was hooted incessantly during the opening games in Louisville. When the series moved north to Montreal the local fans sent catcalls and boos at every Colonel at-bat. Montreal won in six games.

Hero practice—Jim Leyritz got in a little practice at post-season heroics in the 1991 Junior World Series. In Game 5, Leyritz' Columbus Clippers were trailing the Denver Zephyrs, 4-3, in the bottom of the ninth. Dave Sax opened the inning with a double, and pinch-runner Jay Knoblauh was sacrificed to third. Leyritz lined a single to right to tie the game, just as he would tie Game 4 of the 1996 World Series between the Yanks and Braves with a three-run homer. Things worked out better in 1996, as the Yankees won the series. Leyritz' insertion into the 1991 Clippers lineup at first base sent first baseman Torey Lovullo to third base. In the eleventh inning, Lovullo's two-base error at third led to the Denver run that ended the 1991 JWS.

Win some, lose some—The list of pitchers who have won three games in the World Series, Junior World Series or Dixie Series is a short one. Even shorter is the list of three game losers.

The World Series has seen two such abysmal performances. In 1919, the subsequently disgraced Lefty Williams of Chicago grabbed three loses for the team destined to be remembered as the Black Sox. In 1981 the Yankees George Frazier matched Lefty's results, but not his intent, with three relief loses.

The only Junior World Series pitcher to drop a trio in a single series is a man considered by some to be the greatest pitcher in the history of the game. The Baltimore Orioles went to six straight Junior World Series between 1920 and 1925, winning three and losing three. In 1921, they faced the Louisville Colonels managed by Joe McCarthy. McCarthy's Colonels spanked the Orioles, winning the best-of-nine series in eight games. Along the way, they beat the renowned Lefty Grove three times, twice as a starter and once in relief. Grove turned in a 6.58 ERA for the series. Before you think Lefty was just a raw kid who had not yet refined his abilities, recall that he won 25 games that season for the Orioles. Lefty appeared in five Junior World Series and had what could charitably be called a mediocre record. He was 3-8 lifetime, with a 4.09 ERA. He does hold the JWS record for career strikeouts with 75, but he also has the walks record with 62.

The Dixie Series has produced two three-time losers. The first should receive special recognition: he did it in a four game series. Our hero is twenty-five-year-old Clyde Shoun of the Birmingham Barons. Shoun was the Game 1 starter against the Tulsa Oilers in the 1936 Dixie Series. He was Birmingham's hottest pitcher, having won three games in the Southern Association playoffs. But his magic deserted him this day. He lasted only an inning and two-thirds, giving up five runs on six hits, three walks and a wild pitch. Tulsa prevailed, 9-4. In Game 2 he relieved in

the tenth inning of a 4-4 tie. In the fourteenth, Shoun put runners at first and second with one out, then went into his full windup instead of pitching from the stretch. The runner at second set sail for third, and Shoun calmly threw him out. It was a nice play, but it was a balk, and the runner stayed at third. After Shoun simmered a bit on the mound, Bernie Cobb sent a two-run single to right and the Oilers held on for a 6-4 win. Shoun was spared any part of the Game 3 loss, but was tapped as the Game 4 starter. The game was 1-1 entering the bottom of the ninth. Clyde had surrendered only four hits, but got into trouble quickly. A walk, a single and an intentional walk loaded the bases. Facing Jack Mealy, Shoun entered immortality by plunking him on the arm with a pitch and watched as the series-ending run crossed the plate.

Poor soul number two is Walker Cress of the 1949 Tulsa Oilers. "Foots" Cress, a 6-foot-5 righthander, lost Game 3 of the Dixie Series. He didn't help himself, as he walked the first two batters, and his mates didn't help him when they absent-mindedly allowed a Nashville runner to stroll to third with a stolen base. (I do mean stroll. Nashville's Joe Damato was on second at the time and when Cress threw ball three to Babe Barna, Damato thought it was ball four and headed leisurely toward third. Catcher Dewey Williams didn't catch on to what was happening until he made a futile throw with Damato almost on the bag.) Another walk and an infield out scored one run. Then an infield error led to three more runs, and Cress retired before completing the first inning. The final score was 9-1. Cress came back three days later to start Game 5. This time he turned in a very good effort with a nine-hitter. But Carl Sawatski powered a two-run homer to produce a 3-2 Nashville win. Walker entered Game 7 with two outs in the eighth inning of a 4-4 tie. He retired the Vols without any damage in the ninth after loading the bases, and was back on the mound in the tenth. Barna opened with a double and Cress then walked Sawatski, who was on a power tear. With two strikes on Bob Borkowski, he hit him with a pitch to load the bases. Floyd Fogg then sent a ground single through a drawn-in infield to end the series and earn Walker Cress a spot next to Clyde Shoun.

Home run firsts—We've already covered the first players in each series to hit three home runs in a game. Now let's look at three more firsts in each series.

The first World Series grand slam belongs to Elmer Smith of the Cleveland Indians in 1920. This was followed in short order by the first Dixie Series grand slam by Bill Stellbauer of Fort Worth in Game 2 of the 1921 Dixie Series. Stellbauer's blast was also the first home run in Dixie Series history, barely beating out Clarence "Big Boy" Kraft who followed Stellbauer to the plate and hit a solo shot of his own. The first bases-loaded blast in the Junior World Series came from Baltimore's Wicky McAvoy in 1922.

The first pinch-hit homer in the JWS belongs to Buffalo's Fred Brainerd who accomplished the deed against Casey Stengel's Toledo Mudhens in 1927. Yogi Berra pumped out the first in the World Series in 1947. The Dixie Series had to wait until 1953, when Bob Bareford of Dallas sent one out of Nashville's Sulphur Dell Park.

To the Junior World Series goes the honors for the first pitcher to hit a home run in the postseason. Toronto's Jim McGinley did it in 1907. This was also the first home run in Junior World Series history. In 1920, Cleveland's Jim Bagby accomplished the feat in the World Series. The following year Paul Zahniser of Memphis took Fort Worth's Joe Pate long in the Dixie Series.

Only once in all the long history of the World Series, Junior World Series or Dixie Series has a player ever hit two home runs in an inning. Buffalo's Bob Sadowski did it in the 1961 JWS. It happened in the first inning of Game 1 off Louisville's Denny Lemaster and Chi-Chi Olivo.

Three for one—Bill Wambsganss turned in the only unassisted triple play in World Series history. It is also the only triple play of any kind in World Series history. The Dixie Series also has experienced a single triple play but the Junior World Series has had three—two in the same series.

The lone Dixie Series triple play occurred in Game 3 of the 1957 series. In the first inning, Dallas's Herbie Adams opened with an infield single. Alberto Baro put runners at first and second with a single to center. Then, with the runners in motion, Benny Valenzuela sent a line drive to Ev Joyner in medium center field. Joyner took the liner for the first out, threw to second baseman Frank DiPrima to force Adams, and the relay to Buck Riddle at first completed the triple play.

For real triple play action you have to check the Junior World Series. The first trifecta came in 1925. In the fifth inning of Game 6 between Louisville and Baltimore, the Orioles had one run in and men at first and second. Johnny Roser attempted a sacrifice but

sent a little popup to the pitcher's right. Colonels pitcher Ed Holley lunged at the ball and snared it in midair. He twisted his body as he was about to fall and doubled Fritz Maisel off second with his toss to Red Shannon. Shannon relayed the ball to Leo Cotter at first before Dick Porter could get back to the bag. It was a nice play. Too bad the Colonels lost, 5-3.

In 1936 both Buffalo and Milwaukee pulled one. In Game 2 Buffalo executed an especially unconventional version. In the first inning, Milwaukee put runners at first and third. Tedd Gullic then bounced to Dutch Meyers at third. Frenchy Uhalt, the runner at third, broke for home and was out in a rundown, third to catcher to shortstop. Shortstop Greg Mulleavy threw the ball to first baseman Elbie Fletcher, who was covering second with two Brewer runners on the bag. Fletcher tagged Ted Gullic who made a furtive attempt to return to first. As that occurred the other runner, Wimpy Wilburn, made a dash toward third. A short toss to Meyers completed the routine 5-2-6-3-5 triple play.

Three games later Milwaukee returned the favor. In the sixth inning of Game 5, Buffalo scored three runs to cut the Brewer lead to 8-3, and had runners at first and second. Buck Crouse sent a liner toward right that second baseman Eddie Hope snagged for the first out and quickly tossed to Wilburn at second. The relay to Rudy York at first completed the play. It also completed Buffalo's season, as it was the last Buffalo threat and the win secured the Junior World Series championship for the Brewers.

From the Sporting Life, November 21, 1903

Sacramento, November 8—George Hildebrand, the well-known baseball player, and his wife had a narrow escape from death by asphyxiation last evening. Mrs. Hildebrand went into the bathroom and turned on a gas heater to warm water for a bath, and by mistake allowed the gas to escape. Hildebrand heard his wife fall, went into the bathroom, and, thinking she had fainted, went to the landlady for smelling salts to revive her. He hurried back to the bathroom, and as his wife was disrobed, locked the door to prevent the other lodgers in the house from coming in. As he bent down to apply the smelling salts he was overcome by the gas and fell across his wife's body. An ax was procured and the door was chopped down and the couple rescued. Both are resting easily, and the physicians state they will recover.

—Dick Thompson

Hack Wilson in 1930

How to drive in 191 runs

Walt Wilson

Juan Gonzalez of the Texas Rangers had 101 runs batted in in his team's first eighty-seven games in 1998. For quite a while he appeared to have a good shot at Lou Gehrig's American League season record of 184 RBIs, or even Hack Wilson's major league mark. Gonzalez then ran into a post-All-Star game dry spell beginning on July 9, going nine consecutive games without an RBI and then missing games with an injury. He ended the season with 157 to lead the league.

Press coverage rarely mentions Gehrig's record, concentrating on Wilson's, set with the Cubs in 1930. The official stats had long given the fireplug power hitter a total of 190 runs batted in during that heavy-hitting season, until research by SABR members proved that the correct total is 191.

In the second game of a July 28, 1930, doubleheader at Wrigley Field vs. the Cincinnati Reds, Wilson singled in the third inning to score Kiki Cuyler, but somehow the official sheets covering Wilson's year failed to credit him with a run batted in in that game, giving it to Charlie Grimm instead.The incorrect total of 190 had stood for decades.

There was another game that year in which Wilson would have been credited with an RBI under today's scoring rules. In the second game of a doubleheader, again at Wrigley Field, this time vs. the Philadelphia Phillies, with Cuyler on third base and one out, Wilson hit a grounder to second baseman Fresco Thompson, who fumbled the ball for an error, Wilson reaching first safely, and Cuyler scoring. Cuyler had taken off for the plate when the ball was hit and scored easily. In 1931, a scoring rule was put into effect that allowed the official scorer to credit an RBI if in his judgment the baserunner would have scored, even if there were no error, but in 1930 no such rule was in effect. (Interestingly, the box score printed in the New York *Times* gives Wilson an RBI.)

What follows are four charts with information about Wilson's great season, including is a game-by-game survey of his 191 runs batted in.

Who Scored how often on Hack's RBIs:

Hack Wilson	56 (home runs)
Kiki Cuyler	53
Woody English	47
Footsie Blair	19
Cliff Heathcote	7
Rogers Hornsby	5
Les Bell	1
Sheriff Blake	1
Charlie Grimm	1
Danny Taylor	1
Total	**191**

Walt Wilson *is a former office manager who has been researching baseball for more than a quarter-century.*

RBIs by month:

Month	Home	Road	Total
April	7	4	11
May	27	6	33
June	17	12	29
July	8	23	31
August	48	5	53
September	9	25	34
Totals	**116**	**75**	**191**

RBIs by opponent

Month	Home	Road	Total
Boston	18	8	26
Brooklyn	12	15	27
Cincinnati	20	6	26
New York	15	11	26
Philadelphia	20	12	32
Pittsburgh	19	13	32
St. Louis	12	10	22
Totals	**116**	**75**	**191**

Hack Wilson's Game-by-Game RBI Production, 1930

Game #	Date	Opp.	At	Game RBIs	Total RBIs	Inn.	Description
1	4-15	StL	StL	1	1	3	Sac fly: Blair
7	4-21	Cin	Cin	3	4	1	3R HR: Blair/Cuyler
8	4-22	StL	Chi	3	7	7	3R HR: English/Cuyler
11	4-25	Cin	Chi	2	8	2	Solo HR
					9	12	IB: Cuyler
14	4-28	Pit	Chi	1	10	7	Sac fly: Heathcote
16	4-30	Pit	Chi	1	11	7	Solo HR
19	5-4	Phi	Chi	2	13	1	2B: Grimm/Hornsby
20	5-6	Brk	Chi	2	15	1	2R HR: English
21	5-7	Brk	Chi	4	16	5	IB: Heathcote
					19	6	2B: English/Heathcote/Cuyler
22	5-8	Brk	Chi	1	20	8	Solo HR
23	5-9	NY	Chi	2	21	1	2B: Heathcote
					22	3	IB: Cuyler
24	5-10	NY	Chi	3	24	1	2R HR: Cuyler
					25	8	Inf. IB: Cuyler
26	5-12	NY	Chi	1	26	7	Solo HR
27	5-13	Bos	Chi	3	29	3	3R HR: Heathcote/Cuyler
28	5-15	Bos	Chi	2	30	1	2B: Heathcote
					31	6	IB: Cuyler
30	5-18*	StL	StL	3	33	6	2R HR: Cuyler
					34	8	Solo HR
32	5-20	StL	StL	1	35	2	Solo HR
34	5-22	Pit	Pit	1	36	6	IB: Hornsby
36	5-24	Pit	Pit	1	37	8	2B: English
38	5-26	Cin	Chi	2	39	4	2R HR: Hornsby
39	5-28	Cin	Chi	2	41	1	3B: English/Hornsby
41	5-30[P]	StL	Chi	1	42	2	Solo HR
42	5-31	StL	Chi	2	43	8	Inf. out: Blair
					44	9	IB: English
43	6-1	Pit	Chi	5	45	3	2B: English
					48	4	3R HR: English/Cuyler
					49	7	Solo HR
44	6-3	Bos	Bos	1	50	8	Sac fly: English
45	6-4	Bos	Bos	1	51	1	2B: Cuyler
46	6-5	Bos	Bos	1	52	5	Solo HR
47	6-6	Brk	Brk	1	53	8	IB: English
48	6-7	Brk	Brk	2	55	3	2R HR: Cuyler
50	6-10	Phi	Phi	1	56	1	IB: Cuyler
52	6-12	Phi	Phi	2	58	6	2B: English/Cuyler
54	6-14	NY	NY	2	60	1	IB: Blair/English
56	6-16	NY	NY	1	61	1	2B: English
57	6-19	Bos	Chi	3	63	1	2R HR: Cuyler
					64	2	Inf. out: Blair
59	6-21*	Bos	Chi	2	66	5	2R HR: Blair
61	6-22	Bos	Chi	1	67	4	Solo HR
62	6-23	Phi	Chi	5	70	1	3R HR: English/Cuyler
					71	4	IB: Blair
					72	6	3B: Cuyler
63	6-24	Phi	Chi	1	73	3	2B: Cuyler
70	7-1	NY	Chi	1	74	1	Solo HR
71	7-2	NY	Chi	2	75	1	IB: English
					76	9	IB: D. Taylor
73	7-4[P]	Pit	Pit	1	77	9	Sac fly: English
74	7-5	Pit	Pit	3	78	3	IB: Cuyler
					79	4	IB: English
					80	6	IB: Cuyler
75	7-6*	Cin	Cin	1	81	6	Solo HR
76	7-6[†]	Cin	Cin	1	82	4	IB: English
83	7-16*	Brk	Brk	2	84	1	2B: Blair/Cuyler
86	7-18	Brk	Brk	1	85	2	Solo HR
87	7-19	Brk	Brk	2	87	6	2R HR: English
88	7-20	NY	NY	1	88	3	Solo HR
89	7-21	NY	NY	3	89	4	Solo HR
					91	6	2R HR: English
93	7-24	Phi	Phi	1	92	9	IB: Cuyler
94	7-25	Phi	Phi	1	93	8	IB: Cuyler
95	7-26	Phi	Phi	5	95	1	2R HR: Blair
					97	2	2R HR: Cuyler
					98	8	Solo HR
96	7-27	Cin	Cin	1	99	6	IB: Cuyler
97	7-28*	Cin	Chi	2	101	3	2B: English/Cuyler

98	7-28†	Cin	Chi	1	102	3	IB: Cuyler
99	7-29	Cin	Chi	2	104	6	2R HR: Cuyler
100	8-1	Pit	Chi	2	106	6	3B: Blair/Cuyler
101	8-2	Pit	Chi	1	107	9	Solo HR
102	8-3	Pit	Chi	2	109	5	2R HR: Cuyler
103	8-5	StL	StL	2	111	6	2R HR: Cuyler
105	8-7	StL	StL	3	112	4	IB: Cuyler
					113	5	Sac fly: English
					114	7	IB: Cuyler
107	8-10*	Bos	Chi	4	116	1	2R HR: English
					118	3	2R HR: Cuyler
108	8-10†	Bos	Chi	3	121	2	3R HR: Cuyler/English
111	8-13	Brk	Chi	2	122	4	Solo HR
					123	9	IB: English
112	8-14	Brk	Chi	2	125	1	IB: English/Cuyler
113	8-15	Brk	Chi	1	126	8	Sac fly: English
114	8-16*	Phi	Chi	3	128	3	2R HR: Cuyler
					129	9	IB: English
116	8-17	Phi	Chi	2	130	1	Inf. out: English
					131	6	IB: English
117	8-18	Phi	Chi	4	132	1	IB: English
					134	4	IB: English/Cuyler
					135	8	Solo HR
118	8-19*	Phi	Chi	1	136	7	Solo HR
120	8-20	Phi	Chi	2	137	6	Sac fly: Blair
					138	8	Sac fly: Cuyler
121	8-21	NY	Chi	2	140	7	IB: English/Cuyler
122	8-22	NY	Chi	1	141	1	IB: English
123	8-23	NY	Chi	3	142	6	Sac fly: Blair
					144	8	IB: English/Cuyler
125	8-26	Pit	Chi	4	145	4	Sac fly: English
					147	5	IB: Blake/Blair
					148	7	Solo HR
126	8-27	Pit	Chi	3	150	5	2B: Blair/English
					151	9	IB: Cuyler
129	8-30	StL	Chi	6	154	1	3R HR: Blair/Cuyler
					155	2	Sac fly: Cuyler
					157	4	2R HR: Cuyler
134	9-3	Pit	Pit	1	158	5	IB: Blair
135	9-4	Pit	Pit	1	159	3	IB: English
136	9-5	Pit	Pit	1	160	1	Inf. out: Bell
137	9-6	Pit	Pit	4	161	1	IB: Hornsby
					162	8	IB: English
					164	9	2R HR: Blair
141	9-11	Brk	Brk	1	165	7	Solo HR
142	9-12	Brk	Brk	6	168	2	3R HR: English/Cuyler
					169	4	2B: English
					171	6	2B: English/Cuyler
144	9-15*	Phi	Phi	1	172	5	IB: Heathcote
145	9-15†	Phi	Phi	1	173	6	Solo HR
147	9-17	NY	NY	4	175	1	2R HR: English
					177	3	2R HR: English
149	9-19	Bos	Bos	1	178	1	Inf. out: English
150	9-20	Bos	Bos	1	179	8	IB: Blair
152	9-22	Bos	Bos	3	181	1	2R HR: Cuyler
					182	9	IB: English
154	9-26	Cin	Chi	3	183	3	IB: Cuyler
					185	7	2R HR: Cuyler
155	9-27	Cin	Chi	4	187	4	2R HR: English
					189	6	2R HR: Cuyler
156	9-28	Cin	Chi	2	190	3	Walk: Blair
						8	IB: Cuyler

* First game of a doubleheader

† Second game of doubleheader

P Pinch hit

Interesting Facts

The 53 RBIs in August are still the major league record for one month. By the way, the July 27 game *was* played in Cincinnati, not in Chicago. A peculiarity in the schedule had the Cubs play that single game against the Reds at Cincinnati; then the teams went to Chicago for three games.

Rather surprisingly, the Cubs were shut out seven times in 1930. Wilson had 62 games without an RBI; his 191 came in 93 games.

Wilson missed one game. He sat out the August 29 game vs. St. Louis because of a pulled muscle in his back, suffered the previous day when he went 0 for 7 in an extra-inning game.

Longest string of games without an RBI: six (twice–June 25-30 and July 7-15).

Longest string of games with an RBI: 11 (July 24-August 5; this streak includes the July 28 second game with the missing RBI.)

Rogers Hornsby broke his leg on May 30.

Kiki Cuyler had 148 singles, 72 walks, 50 doubles and 17 triples. Woody English had 147 singles, 100 walks, 36 doubles and 17 triples. These two stars always batted before Wilson, giving him lots of opportunities.

Who Were the *Real* Sluggers?

Top offensive seasons, 1900-1999

Alan W. Heaton and Eugene E. Heaton, Jr.

When Mark McGwire handily surpassed Roger Maris's single-season home run record during his incredible 1998 season, it raised a good bit of discussion about where his stellar season ranked among the game's greatest individual performances. Indeed, rankings of this kind are frequent, as the *Baseball Research Journal* articles by Bill Szepanski, in 1996, and Joe D'Aniello, in 1999, show.

Here we present a different view, using our own previously documented offensive statistic—Total Production Average—and a new derivation of that statistic, Relative Total Production Average. We use total production average (TPA) to identify the league-leading American and National League offensive seasons for every season from 1900-1999,[1] and Relative Total Production Average (TPA+) to develop a list of the 100 best offensive seasons during that time.

We introduced TPA in our 1995 *Baseball Research Journal* article, and discussed it further in the 1997 and 1999 issues. Briefly, it is computed by summing the total number of bases resulting from the batter's hits; adding bases on balls, runs scored, and runs batted in (minus home runs, to avoid double-counting), and dividing this sum by number of at-bats plus bases on balls.[2] It represents an advance over the more widely used on-base plus slugging average (OB+SA) because OB+SA double-counts base hits and does not include runs scored or runs batted in. TPA takes into account the best aspects of on-base average, slugging average, and run production average and combines them into a single statistic that is easy to calculate and easy to interpret.

Our original paper examined career TPAs. For that paper, we painstakingly entered lifetime statistics from *Total Baseball* by hand into an Excel file. It would have been too laborious to calculate single season TPAs for thousands of offensive seasons. However, the online database created by Sean Lahman (http://baseball1.com/stats/) now makes it possible to perform such calculations with relative ease.[3] We used the Lahman database to help us calculate AL and NL TPA leaders for every season from 1900-1999, and to determine which were the 100 best seasons during that time, using relative total production average (TPA+).

To calculate single-season TPA leaders, we first downloaded the Lahman database into an Excel spreadsheet, then calculated each player's TPA. To qualify, players had to have 3.1 plate appearances per game that their teams played. We did not attempt to adjust the TPA data for home park fluctuations.

Table 1 presents the AL and NL single season TPA leaders for each season from 1900-1999.

Alan W. Heaton *is a consumer research manager at Merck & Co.*
Eugene E. Heaton, Jr. *is a retired market and opinion researcher. Father (Eugene) and son (Alan) have always shared a love of baseball—especially for the Baltimore Orioles—and earnestly hope for the resurgence of their once-proud franchise.*

Table 1: TPA leaders by season 1901-1999

Year	Lg	Name	Team	TPA
1900	N	Honus Wagner	PIT	.961
1901	N	Jimmy Sheckard	BRO	.918
1901	A	Nap Lajoie	PHI	1.109
1902	N	Honus Wagner	PIT	.837
1902	A	Ed Delahanty	WAS	.985
1903	N	Honus Wagner	PIT	.903
1903	A	Nap Lajoie	CLE	.886
1904	N	Honus Wagner	PIT	.878
1904	A	Nap Lajoie	CLE	.897
1905	N	Cy Seymour	CIN	.924
1905	A	Elmer Flick	CLE	.752
1906	N	Frank Chance	CHI	.818
1906	A	Harry Davis	PHI	.800
1907	N	Honus Wagner	PIT	.863
1907	A	Ty Cobb	DET	.824
1908	N	Honus Wagner	PIT	.902
1908	A	Ty Cobb	DET	.816
1909	N	Honus Wagner	PIT	.882
1909	A	Ty Cobb	DET	.899
1910	N	Sherry Magee	PHI	.953
1910	A	Ty Cobb	DET	.933
1911	N	Frank Schulte	CHI	.881
1911	A	Ty Cobb	DET	1.066
1912	N	Heinie Zimmerman	CHI	.901
1912	A	Frank Baker	PHI	.954
1913	N	Gavvy Cravath	PHI	.931
1913	A	Frank Baker	PHI	.896
1914	N	Sherry Magee	PHI	.861
1914	A	Eddie Collins	PHI	.867
1915	N	Gavvy Cravath	PHI	.875
1915	A	Ty Cobb	DET	.928
1916	N	Gavvy Cravath	PHI	.762
1916	A	Tris Speaker	CLE	.852
1917	N	Gavvy Cravath	PHI	.784
1917	A	Ty Cobb	DET	.923
1918	N	Edd Roush	CIN	.740
1918	A	Ty Cobb	DET	.870
1919	N	Heinie Groh	CIN	.766
1919	A	Babe Ruth	BOS	1.075
1920	N	Rogers Hornsby	STL	.878
1920	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.282
1921	N	Rogers Hornsby	STL	1.034
1921	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.301
1922	N	Rogers Hornsby	STL	1.113
1922	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.051
1923	N	Rogers Hornsby	STL	.994
1923	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.171
1924	N	Rogers Hornsby	STL	1.043
1924	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.119
1925	N	Rogers Hornsby	STL	1.194
1925	A	Ty Cobb	DET	1.042
1926	N	Hack Wilson	CHI	.901
1926	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.169
1927	N	Rogers Hornsby	NY	.995
1927	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.205
1928	N	Jim Bottomley	STL	1.022
1928	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.142
1929	N	Rogers Hornsby	CHI	1.106
1929	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.137
1930	N	Hack Wilson	CHI	1.172
1930	A	Al Simmons	PHI	1.201
1931	N	Chick Hafey	STL	.957
1931	A	Babe Ruth	NY	1.160
1932	N	Chuck Klein	PHI	1.030
1932	A	Jimmie Foxx	PHI	1.164
1933	N	Chuck Klein	PHI	.927
1933	A	Jimmie Foxx	PHI	1.105
1934	N	Mel Ott	NY	.972
1934	A	Lou Gehrig	NY	1.108
1935	N	Arky Vaughan	PIT	.987
1935	A	Hank Greenberg	DET	1.035
1936	N	Mel Ott	NY	1.003
1936	A	Lou Gehrig	NY	1.133
1937	N	Joe Medwick	STL	1.010
1937	A	Hank Greenberg	DET	1.119
1938	N	Mel Ott	NY	.963
1938	A	Jimmie Foxx	BOS	1.142
1939	N	Johnny Mize	STL	.959
1939	A	Jimmie Foxx	BOS	1.103
1940	N	Johnny Mize	STL	.991
1940	A	Hank Greenberg	DET	1.074
1941	N	Dolph Camilli	BRO	.910
1941	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.161
1942	N	Johnny Mize	NY	.870
1942	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.087
1943	N	Bill Nicholson	CHI	.866
1943	A	Rudy York	DET	.853
1944	N	Mel Ott	NY	.928
1944	A	Bob Johnson	BOS	.915
1945	N	Tommy Holmes	BOS	.922
1945	A	Roy Cullenbine	DET	.789
1946	N	Stan Musial	STL	.933
1946	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.084
1947	N	Johnny Mize	NY	.997
1947	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.020
1948	N	Stan Musial	STL	1.065
1948	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.047
1949	N	Ralph Kiner	PIT	1.002
1949	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.093

1950	N	Stan Musial	STL	.941
1950	A	Joe DiMaggio	NY	.977
1951	N	Ralph Kiner	PIT	.990
1951	A	Ted Williams	BOS	.954
1952	N	Stan Musial	STL	.864
1952	A	Larry Doby	CLE	.898
1953	N	Roy Campanella	BRO	1.003
1953	A	Al Rosen	CLE	.978
1954	N	Duke Snider	BRO	1.006
1954	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.023
1955	N	Duke Snider	BRO	1.031
1955	A	Mickey Mantle	NY	.971
1956	N	Duke Snider	BRO	.925
1956	A	Mickey Mantle	NY	1.082
1957	N	Hank Aaron	MIL	.940
1957	A	Ted Williams	BOS	1.059
1958	N	Ernie Banks	CHI	.945
1958	A	Mickey Mantle	NY	.954
1959	N	Hank Aaron	MIL	.957
1959	A	Jackie Jensen	BOS	.860
1960	N	Eddie Mathews	MIL	.920
1960	A	Roger Maris	NY	.933
1961	N	Frank Robinson	CIN	.987
1961	A	Mickey Mantle	NY	1.070
1962	N	Frank Robinson	CIN	1.003
1962	A	Mickey Mantle	NY	1.012
1963	N	Hank Aaron	MIL	.924
1963	A	Bobby Allison	MIN	.853
1964	N	Willie Mays	SF	.936
1964	A	Mickey Mantle	NY	.961
1965	N	Willie Mays	SF	.968
1965	A	Tony Oliva	MIN	.835
1966	N	Dick Allen	PHI	.981
1966	A	Frank Robinson	BAL	.979
1967	N	Dick Allen	PHI	.892
1967	A	Carl Yastrzemski	BOS	.955
1968	N	Willie McCovey	SF	.852
1968	A	Ken Harrelson	BOS	.826
1969	N	Willie McCovey	SF	1.021
1969	A	Reggie Jackson	OAK	.968
1970	N	Willie McCovey	SF	.989
1970	A	Carl Yastrzemski	BOS	.937
1971	N	Hank Aaron	ATL	1.004
1971	A	Bobby Murcer	NY	.873
1972	N	Billy Williams	CHI	.928
1972	A	Dick Allen	CHI	.942
1973	N	Willie Stargell	PIT	.993
1973	A	Reggie Jackson	OAK	.888
1974	N	Mike Schmidt	PHI	.896
1974	A	Dick Allen	CHI	.881
1975	N	Joe Morgan	CIN	.903
1975	A	Fred Lynn	BOS	.929
1976	N	Joe Morgan	CIN	.995
1976	A	Reggie Jackson	BAL	.819
1977	N	George Foster	CIN	.991
1977	A	Rod Carew	MIN	.926
1978	N	Dave Parker	PIT	.918
1978	A	Jim Rice	BOS	.922
1979	N	Dave Kingman	CHI	.927
1979	A	Fred Lynn	BOS	1.010
1980	N	Mike Schmidt	PHI	.954
1980	A	George Brett	KC	1.059
1981	N	Mike Schmidt	PHI	1.028
1981	A	Dwight Evans	BOS	.871
1982	N	Mike Schmidt	PHI	.882
1982	A	Robin Yount	MIL	.922
1983	N	Dale Murphy	ATL	.919
1983	A	George Brett	KC	.914
1984	N	Mike Schmidt	PHI	.868
1984	A	Dwight Evans	BOS	.860
1985	N	Pedro Guerrero	LA	.907
1985	A	George Brett	KC	.942
1986	N	Mike Schmidt	PHI	.889
1986	A	Don Mattingly	NY	.877
1987	N	Jack Clark	STL	.991
1987	A	Dwight Evans	BOS	.946
1988	N	Darryl Strawberry	NY	.866
1988	A	Jose Canseco	OAK	.911
1989	N	Kevin Mitchell	SF	.968
1989	A	Ruben Sierra	TEX	.854
1990	N	Barry Bonds	PIT	.933
1990	A	Cecil Fielder	DET	.926
1991	N	Barry Bonds	PIT	.900
1991	A	Danny Tartabull	KC	.909
1992	N	Barry Bonds	PIT	1.000
1992	A	Mark McGwire	OAK	.919
1993	N	Barry Bonds	SF	1.048
1993	A	Frank Thomas	CHI	.965
1994	N	Jeff Bagwell	HOU	1.174
1994	A	Frank Thomas	CHI	1.120
1995	N	Dante Bichette	COL	.950
1995	A	Albert Belle	CLE	1.045
1996	N	Barry Bonds	SF	1.015
1996	A	Mark McGwire	OAK	1.095
1997	N	Larry Walker	COL	1.101
1997	A	Ken Griffey, Jr.	SEA	1.001
1998	N	Mark McGwire	STL	1.121
1998	A	Albert Belle	CHI	1.009
1999	N	Larry Walker	COL	1.119
1999	A	Manny Ramirez	CLE	1.123

As you can see, the game's greatest stars make frequent appearances on the list of single season TPA leaders. Babe Ruth tops the list, with eleven league-leading seasons. Next are Ted Williams and Ty Cobb with nine apiece, followed by Rogers Hornsby (eight), Honus Wagner (seven), Mickey Mantle and Mike Schmidt (six), and Barry Bonds (five).

The highest TPA recorded from 1900-1999 was Ruth's 1.301 in 1921. This is the only TPA over 1.300, and one of only four over 1.200. But was it the greatest offensive season ever? And where does McGwire's record-breaking season rank? To answer these questions, we needed to create a new statistic that would let us compare offensive performance across different eras. Therefore, we developed the relative TPA, or TPA+.

The logic of the TPA+ is that each player's offensive performance must be compared with that of the other hitters in his league that season. This same logic is employed in *Total Baseball*'s relative measure of offensive production, PRO+ and of earned run average, ERA+.[4] To calculate TPA+, we used the Lahman database and Excel to calculate TPAs for each major league AL and NL season, 1900-1999. We simply summed up league totals for runs, singles, doubles, triples, home runs, runs batted in, bases on balls, and at-bats, then plugged the results into the TPA formula. We then divided each player's single season TPA by his league's TPA to come up with each player's relative TPA, or TPA+.

The two other recent *BRJ* papers that examined baseball's best offensive seasons both take interesting approaches. We naturally prefer ours, but there is something to learn from all three papers.

Szepanski examined how close players came to equalling each of eleven twentieth century single-season offensive records in a single season: runs scored, hits, doubles, triples, home runs, runs batted in, walks, batting average, on-base percentage, slugging average, and stolen bases. If the player equalled a record, he received a score of 100. If he got only halfway there, he received a score of 50, and so on. Thus, hypothetical total scores ranged from 0 to 1,100.

We see this as a "dream season" approach rather than as an index of overall offensive performance. We don't think that all eleven categories should be considered equal, and believe that some are overweighted because the range of scores a player could get depends on the category. A player certainly could not score half of Ted Williams's record OBP of .551 and still be in the majors. Most scores fall between 60 and 75 for this category. However, the same player could easily reach twenty-five percent of Rickey Henderson's stolen base record (thus earning a score of 25) and still be considered a base stealing threat. In other words, the range of scores in the stolen base category is likely to be much greater than for the OBP category. Finally, Szepanski's analysis is not relative—no one's performance is adjusted by his peers' performance.

D'Aniello's analysis does take relativity into account. In his paper, he focuses on four offensive statistics: runs, home runs, runs batted in, and batting average. Although his analysis is much more complicated than this, what it basically does is to compare each of these statistics with the league average for that season and assign players a relative score for each category. The four relative scores are then combined into an overall score. The analysis is unwieldy because these scores must undergo a series of adjustments before being combined into an overall score.

First, D'Aniello's analysis attempts to compensate for games missed by a player during the season by imputing how well his replacements would have done in his absence and adding those statistics to the player's total to create an index of the player's value to his team for a full season. While we agree that a player should be rewarded somehow for playing in all 162 games (rather than, say, 145 games), we also feel that if a player has made enough plate appearances to qualify for his league's batting title, then his season should "count" as being eligible for consideration as one of the greatest offensive seasons of all time. In addition, the notion of appending imputed statistics from his teammates to a player's own statistics seems somewhat counterintuitive and unnecessary to us.

D'Aniello also performs a logarithmic transformation on home runs in order to address one of the concerns that we had with Szepanski's paper—the notion of different available ranges for different categories. This is one of the difficulties involved in combining ratios, and, we believe, one of the things that makes the TPA+ appealing by comparison—the TPA+ is composed of a single overall ratio, and is easy to compute. Further, by considering only runs, home runs, runs batted in, and batting average, D'Aniello's analysis treats singles, doubles, and triples as equivalent, and does not address bases on balls, nor do his four categories deal with the double counting inherent in combining runs, home runs, and runs batted in.

That said, we now present the Top 100 Offensive Seasons from 1900-1999 ranked by TPA+. For purposes of comparison, we also show where our Top 100 seasons rank among Szepanski's and D'Aniello's, and

also among *Total Baseball's* PRO+ rankings (Shown in Table 2 as "Sz", "DA", and "TB", respectively).[5] As Table 2 shows, these are very impressive offensive seasons. Even Ken Williams's hundredth-ranked TPA+ was over 1.5 times the league average.

Table 2 – Top 100 single-season TPA+ : 1901-1999

#	Name	Yr	Tm	Lg	TPA	LgTPA	TPA+	BA	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	Sz	DA	TB
1	Babe Ruth	1920	NY	A	1.282	.670	1.914	.376	142	458	158	172	36	9	54	137	14	14	148	80	4	3	1
2	Babe Ruth	1921	NY	A	1.301	.703	1.850	.378	152	540	177	204	44	16	59	171	17	13	144	81	1	2	3
3	Ted Williams	1946	BOS	A	1.084	.618	1.754	.342	150	514	142	176	37	8	38	123	0	0	156	44		10	21
4	Ted Williams	1942	BOS	A	1.087	.622	1.748	.356	150	522	141	186	34	5	36	137	3	2	145	51		7	17
5	Babe Ruth	1919	BOS	A	1.075	.616	1.746	.322	130	432	103	139	34	12	29	114	7		101	58		18	9
6	Babe Ruth	1923	NY	A	1.171	.675	1.735	.393	152	522	151	205	45	13	41	131	17	21	170	93	3	14	2
7	Babe Ruth	1927	NY	A	1.205	.695	1.733	.356	151	540	158	192	29	8	60	164	7	6	138	89	6	4	5
8	Jeff Bagwell	1994	HOU	N	1.174	.678	1.731	.368	110	400	104	147	32	2	39	116	15	4	65	65		11	14
9	Ted Williams	1941	BOS	A	1.161	.672	1.729	.406	143	456	135	185	33	3	37	120	2	4	145	27		26	4
10	Lou Gehrig	1927	NY	A	1.202	.695	1.729	.373	155	584	149	218	52	18	47	175	10	8	109	84	2	6	8
11	Babe Ruth	1926	NY	A	1.169	.680	1.719	.372	152	495	139	184	30	5	47	146	11	9	144	76	18	15	6
12	Honus Wagner	1908	PIT	N	.902	.526	1.714	.354	151	568	100	201	39	19	10	109	53		54			5	32
13	Rogers Hornsby	1925	STL	N	1.194	.700	1.707	.403	138	504	133	203	41	10	39	143	5	3	83	39	25	37	26
14	Ty Cobb	1910	DET	A	.933	.548	1.702	.383	140	506	106	194	35	13	8	91	65		64			19	38
15	Mike Schmidt	1981	PHI	N	1.028	.607	1.693	.316	102	354	78	112	19	2	31	91	12	4	73	71		27	53
16	Ty Cobb	1909	DET	A	.899	.533	1.687	.377	156	573	116	216	33	10	9	107	76		48			1	64
17	Ty Cobb	1911	DET	A	1.066	.635	1.680	.420	146	591	147	248	47	24	8	127	83		44		10	9	59
18	Babe Ruth	1931	NY	A	1.160	.692	1.676	.373	145	534	149	199	31	3	46	163	5	4	128	51	22	13	10
19	Babe Ruth	1928	NY	A	1.142	.682	1.674	.323	154	536	163	173	29	8	54	142	4	5	135	87	24	20	23
20	Ted Williams	1957	BOS	A	1.059	.637	1.664	.388	132	420	96	163	28	1	38	87	0	1	119	43			7
21	Dick Allen	1972	CHI	A	.942	.566	1.664	.308	148	506	90	156	28	5	37	113	19	8	99	126		57	44
22	Willie McCovey	1969	SF	N	1.021	.615	1.660	.320	149	491	101	157	26	2	45	126	0	0	121	66		97	20
23	Hank Aaron	1971	ATL	N	1.004	.605	1.660	.327	139	495	95	162	22	3	47	118	1	1	71	58		75	67
24	Mark McGwire	1998	STL	N	1.121	.676	1.659	.299	155	509	130	152	21	0	70	147	1	0	162	155		70	
25	Nap Lajoie	1901	PHI	A	1.109	.669	1.658	.426	131	544	145	232	48	14	14	125	27		24			8	52
26	Jimmie Foxx	1932	PHI	A	1.164	.705	1.652	.364	154	585	151	213	33	9	58	169	3	7	116	96	8	16	36
27	Nap Lajoie	1904	CLE	A	.897	.543	1.650	.376	140	553	92	208	49	15	6	102	29		27			29	31
28	Barry Bonds	1992	PIT	N	1.000	.607	1.648	.311	140	473	109	147	36	5	34	103	39	8	127	69			29
29	Al Simmons	1930	PHI	A	1.201	.729	1.646	.381	138	554	152	211	41	16	36	165	9	2	39	34		34	
30	Carl Yastrzemski	1967	BOS	A	.955	.581	1.645	.326	161	579	112	189	31	4	44	121	10	8	91	69		28	73
31	Stan Musial	1948	STL	N	1.065	.649	1.641	.376	155	611	135	230	46	18	39	131	7		79	34	21	24	49
32	Ty Cobb	1917	DET	A	.923	.564	1.638	.383	152	588	107	225	44	24	6	102	55		61	34		22	25
33	Joe Morgan	1976	CIN	N	.995	.608	1.636	.320	141	472	113	151	30	5	27	111	60	9	114	41		98	
34	Willie Stargell	1971	PIT	N	.985	.605	1.629	.295	141	511	104	151	26	0	48	125	0	0	83	154		64	77
35	Mickey Mantle	1957	NY	A	1.035	.637	1.626	.365	144	474	121	173	28	6	34	94	16	3	146	75		95	11
36	Ted Williams	1949	BOS	A	1.093	.672	1.626	.343	155	566	150	194	39	3	43	159	1	1	162	48	19	17	
37	Lou Gehrig	1931	NY	A	1.125	.692	1.625	.341	155	619	163	211	31	15	46	184	17	12	117	56	7	12	42
38	Ted Williams	1947	BOS	A	1.020	.628	1.625	.343	156	528	125	181	40	9	32	114	0	1	162	47		56	41
39	Larry Walker	1997	COL	N	1.101	.678	1.623	.366	153	568	143	208	46	4	49	130	33	8	78	90		38	
40	Frank Robinson	1966	BAL	A	.979	.604	1.622	.316	155	576	122	182	34	2	49	122	8	5	87	90		36	39
41	Babe Ruth	1929	NY	A	1.137	.702	1.620	.345	135	499	121	172	26	6	46	154	5	3	72	60		48	43
42	Mickey Mantle	1961	NY	A	1.070	.662	1.618	.317	153	514	132	163	16	6	54	128	12	1	126	112		82	22
43	Jimmie Foxx	1933	PHI	A	1.105	.683	1.617	.356	149	573	125	204	37	9	48	163	2	2	96	93	30	30	40
44	Rogers Hornsby	1922	STL	N	1.113	.689	1.615	.401	154	623	141	250	46	14	42	152	17	12	65	50	9	21	24
45	Ted Williams	1954	BOS	A	1.023	.634	1.613	.345	117	386	93	133	23	1	29	89	0	0	136	32			60
46	Babe Ruth	1924	NY	A	1.119	.694	1.613	.378	153	529	143	200	39	7	46	121	9	13	142	81	14	43	13

#	Name	Yr	Tm	Lg	TPA	LgTPA	TPA+	BA	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	Sz	DA	TB
47	Babe Ruth	1930	NY	A	1.176	.729	1.612	.359	145	518	150	186	28	9	49	153	10	10	136	61	16	44	15
48	Honus Wagner	1907	PIT	N	.863	.536	1.609	.350	142	515	98	180	38	14	6	82	61		46			45	
49	Mickey Mantle	1956	NY	A	1.082	.673	1.608	.353	150	533	132	188	22	5	52	130	10	1	112	99		31	19
50	George Brett	1980	KC	A	1.059	.661	1.603	.390	117	449	87	175	33	9	24	118	15	6	58	22			37
51	Lou Gehrig	1930	NY	A	1.167	.729	1.600	.379	154	581	143	220	42	17	41	174	12	14	101	63	5	39	27
52	Honus Wagner	1909	PIT	N	.882	.552	1.598	.339	137	495	92	168	39	10	5	100	35		66			65	
53	Kevin Mitchell	1989	SF	N	.968	.607	1.596	.291	154	543	100	158	34	6	47	125	3	4	87	115			56
54	Lou Gehrig	1928	NY	A	1.085	.682	1.591	.374	154	562	139	210	47	13	27	142	4	11	95	69		46	48
55	Willie Stargell	1973	PIT	N	.993	.624	1.591	.299	148	522	106	156	43	3	44	119	0	0	80	129			76
56	Sherry Magee	1910	PHI	N	.953	.599	1.590	.331	154	519	110	172	39	17	6	123	49		94	36		93	
57	Barry Bonds	1993	SF	N	1.048	.659	1.590	.336	159	539	129	181	38	4	46	123	29	12	126	79			28
58	Rogers Hornsby	1924	STL	N	1.043	.657	1.588	.424	143	536	121	227	43	14	25	94	5	12	89	32		81	12
59	Lou Gehrig	1934	NY	A	1.108	.699	1.585	.363	154	579	128	210	40	6	49	165	9	5	109	31	20	40	18
60	Willie Mays	1965	SF	N	.968	.611	1.584	.317	157	558	118	177	21	3	52	112	9	4	76	71		78	
61	Dick Allen	1966	PHI	N	.981	.620	1.583	.317	141	524	112	166	25	10	40	110	10	6	68	136			
62	Cy Seymour	1905	CIN	N	.924	.584	1.582	.377	149	581	95	219	40	21	8	121	21		51			47	
63	Norm Cash	1961	DET	A	1.044	.662	1.578	.361	159	535	119	193	22	8	41	132	11	5	124	85		87	45
64	Ty Cobb	1915	DET	A	.928	.588	1.578	.369	156	563	144	208	31	13	3	99	96	38	118	43		32	
65	Larry Walker	1999	COL	N	1.119	.712	1.572	.379	127	438	108	166	26	4	37	115	11	4	57	52			
66	Jimmie Foxx	1938	BOS	A	1.142	.727	1.571	.349	149	565	139	197	33	9	50	175	5	4	119	76	17	52	
67	Chuck Klein	1932	PHI	N	1.030	.657	1.568	.348	154	650	152	226	50	15	38	137	20		60	49	26	35	
68	Babe Ruth	1932	NY	A	1.104	.705	1.567	.341	133	457	120	156	13	5	41	137	2	2	130	62			30
69	Reggie Jackson	1969	OAK	A	.968	.619	1.564	.275	152	549	123	151	36	3	47	118	13	5	114	142			68
70	Honus Wagner	1904	PIT	N	.878	.562	1.563	.349	132	490	97	171	44	14	4	75	53		59				
71	Rogers Hornsby	1921	STL	N	1.034	.662	1.562	.397	154	592	131	235	44	18	21	126	13	13	60	48		61	62
72	Johnny Mize	1940	STL	N	.991	.635	1.561	.314	155	579	111	182	31	13	43	137	7		82	49		92	
73	Jim Gentile	1961	BAL	A	1.033	.662	1.561	.302	148	486	96	147	25	2	46	141	1	1	96	106			72
74	Hank Greenberg	1937	DET	A	1.119	.718	1.559	.337	154	594	137	200	49	14	40	183	8	3	102	101	15	66	
75	Hank Aaron	1963	MIL	N	.924	.593	1.558	.319	161	631	121	201	29	4	44	130	31	5	78	94		33	
76	Ty Cobb	1908	DET	A	.816	.524	1.558	.324	150	581	88	188	36	20	4	108	39		34			58	
77	Joe Medwick	1937	STL	N	1.010	.649	1.558	.374	156	633	111	237	56	10	31	154	4		41	50		42	
78	Gavvy Cravath	1915	PHI	N	.875	.563	1.554	.285	150	522	89	149	31	7	24	115	11	9	86	77		49	
79	Ted Williams	1948	BOS	A	1.047	.674	1.553	.369	137	509	124	188	44	3	25	127	4	0	126	41		77	
80	Babe Ruth	1922	NY	A	1.051	.677	1.553	.315	110	406	94	128	24	8	35	99	2	5	84	80			
81	Jimmie Foxx	1939	BOS	A	1.103	.711	1.551	.360	124	467	130	168	31	10	35	105	4	3	89	72			
82	H. Killebrew	1967	MIN	A	.900	.581	1.550	.269	163	547	105	147	24	1	44	113	1	0	131	111			
83	Joe DiMaggio	1939	NY	A	1.101	.711	1.550	.381	120	462	108	176	32	6	30	126	3	0	52	20			
84	Hank Greenberg	1940	DET	A	1.074	.694	1.547	.340	148	573	129	195	50	8	41	150	6	3	93	75		80	
85	Joe DiMaggio	1941	NY	A	1.039	.672	1.547	.357	139	541	122	193	43	11	30	125	4	2	76	13		99	
86	Frank Robinson	1967	BAL	A	.898	.581	1.547	.311	129	479	83	149	23	7	30	94	2	3	71	84			75
87	Mickey Mantle	1962	NY	A	1.012	.654	1.547	.321	123	377	96	121	15	1	30	89	9	0	122	78			46
88	Mickey Mantle	1964	NY	A	.961	.621	1.546	.303	143	465	92	141	25	2	35	111	6	3	99	102			
89	Manny Ramirez	1999	CLE	A	1.123	.727	1.545	.333	147	522	131	174	34	3	44	165	2	4	96	131			
90	Frank Thomas	1994	CHI	A	1.120	.725	1.544	.353	113	399	106	141	34	1	38	101	2	3	109	61			16
91	Harry Heilmann	1923	DET	A	1.042	.675	1.544	.403	144	524	121	211	44	11	18	115	9	7	74	40			55
92	Hack Wilson	1930	CHI	N	1.172	.759	1.544	.356	155	585	146	208	35	6	56	191	3		105	84	11	60	
93	Ty Cobb	1918	DET	A	.870	.564	1.542	.382	111	421	83	161	19	14	3	64	34		41	21		86	50
94	Chuck Klein	1933	PHI	N	.927	.602	1.542	.368	152	606	101	223	44	7	28	120	15		56	36		54	
95	Duke Snider	1955	BRO	N	1.031	.669	1.541	.309	148	538	126	166	34	6	42	136	9	7	104	87			
96	Mike Schmidt	1980	PHI	N	.954	.619	1.541	.286	150	548	104	157	25	8	48	121	12	5	89	119			
97	Billy Williams	1972	CHI	N	.928	.602	1.540	.333	150	574	95	191	34	6	37	122	3	1	62	59			

#	Name	Yr	Tm	Lg	TPA	LgTPA	TPA+	BA	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	Sz	DA	TB
98	H. Killebrew	1969	MIN	A	.951	.619	1.537	.276	162	555	106	153	20	2	49	140	8	2	145	84			
99	Frank Robinson	1962	CIN	N	1.003	.653	1.536	.342	162	609	134	208	51	2	39	136	18	9	76	62			
100	Ken Williams	1922	STL	A	1.039	.677	1.536	.332	153	585	128	194	34	11	39	155	37	20	74	31			

According to our analysis, the single greatest offensive season of the 1900s was Babe Ruth's unbelievable 1920. His TPA+ of 1.914 was almost *twice* the league average. The Bambino's 1920 season was also ranked first by *Total Baseball*, third by D'Aniello, and fourth by Szepanski. That 1921 season mentioned above was a close second. McGwire in 1998? The 24th best season of the twentieth century.

The TPA+ provides a clear indication as to who were the most dominant hitters of the 1900s. Not surprisingly, Babe Ruth appears a whopping thirteen times in the Top 100 seasons, including five of the top seven. Showing how the greatest batting ability was concentrated among a very few players during the twentieth century, fifty of the Top 100 seasons were compiled by eight players: Ruth, Williams, Cobb, Gehrig, Mantle, Foxx, Hornsby, and Wagner. Twenty players appear on the list two or more times, totalling seventy-five of the Top 100 seasons. At the right is the list of the players with two or more seasons in the Top 100. Of the retired players on this list, all but Dick Allen are in the Hall of Fame. Of the two active players, Barry Bonds and Larry Walker look like good Hall of Fame candidates.

Players with two or more appearances on the TPA+ Top 100 list

Babe Ruth	13
Ted Williams	8
Ty Cobb	7
Lou Gehrig	5
Mickey Mantle	5
Jimmie Foxx	4
Rogers Hornsby	4
Honus Wagner	4
Frank Robinson	3
Hank Aaron	2
Dick Allen	2
Barry Bonds	2
Joe DiMaggio	2
Hank Greenberg	2
Harmon Killebrew	2
Chuck Klein	2
Nap Lajoie	2
Mike Schmidt	2
Willie Stargell	2
Larry Walker	2

The players with the best offensive seasons as measured by their TPA+ are also the best hitters of the twentieth century.

An interesting and significant outcome of this analysis is that the Top 100 seasons are fairly well spread across the 1900s, without any complicated adjustments to the data other than comparing one's TPA with his league peers. Here is the distribution of Top 100 scores by decade:

1900-1909	9
1910-1919	8
1920-1929	16
1930-1939	17
1940-1949	10
1950-1959	5
1960-1969	16
1970-1979	6
1980-1989	4
1990-1999	8

The TPA+ can also be used to answer less "noble" questions. For example, we have spent considerable time trying to determine the best offensive seasons of the century, but what about the *worst* offensive seasons of the century? The TPA and TPA+ can provide insight into this, too. The single worst TPA compiled during the 1900s was the .340 racked up by third baseman Bobby Byrne for the 1908 St. Louis Cardinals. His line, below, is truly awful, but is it the worst relative season of the 1900s? You have to take into account the context in which Byrne's statistics were compiled. In 1908 the TPA for the NL was an anemic .526, the second-lowest league TPA during the 1900s. The dubious honor for the worst relative offensive performance goes to shortstop Jim Levey and his 1933 season for the St. Louis Browns. While the rest of the AL was hitting to a relatively high .683 TPA, Levey compiled a TPA of .414 and a TPA+ of only .607. His line is shown with Byrne's at the top of the next page.

Of course, it is frequently the case that a player having a season this bad will never get the chance to rack up enough plate appearances to qualify for his league's batting title. The last-place 1933 Browns apparently did not have a better alternative than Levey, who played 138 games at shortstop in what was to be his final big league season.

The worst TPAs of the twentieth century? Bobby Byrne's 1908 was as low as they go, but Jim Levey in 1933 was worse relative to his league.

Name	Yr	Tm	Lg	TPA	LgTPA	TPA+	BA	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO
Bobby Byrne	1908	STL	N	.340	.526	.646	.191	127	439	27	84	7	1	0	14	16		23	
Jim Levey	1933	STL	A	.414	.683	.607	.195	141	529	43	103	10	4	2	36	4	6	26	68

In sum, the TPA+ allows for easy comparison of offensive seasons—good and bad—across eras. It is a useful tool in evaluating just where a given player's season fits into the history of the game. We have had a great deal of fun creating the TPA+ database and look forward to using it to answer all sorts of baseball questions. We hope that a hundred years from now, someone will take the time to perform our analysis using twenty-first century baseball statistics. Only time will tell how the Top 100 offensive seasons of the twentieth century will fare against those compiled in the twenty-first century.

Notes

1. The American League in 1901 is not considered to have been a major league.
2. Ideally, hit-by-pitches, sacrifice flies, and catcher's interference would be part of the TPA as well. There are several reasons why they are not included. First, they are not easily obtainable. Part of the goal of the TPA was to develop a statistic that was easy to compute given readily available statistics. Second, these statistics were not always kept. Finally, and most important, we analyzed over 5,000 offensive seasons including hit-by-pitches and sacrifice flies and found that their inclusion made very little difference—approximately .004—in one's TPA.
3. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Sean Lahman for creating the database and for allowing us to use it here. ("The Baseball Archive," Sean Lahman's "Baseball Database").
4. PRO+ is defined as on-base average plus slugging average divided by league on-base average plus slugging average, with an adjustment for home park. While we applaud the adjustment for league performance, we feel this measure has the same limitations as OB+SA.
5. This list was taken from *Total Baseball*, 5th edition, which presents the top 100 single season PRO+s through 1996. The numbers in Table 2 are slightly different from *Total Baseball*'s, because we removed pre-1900 seasons.

August Delight

Late 1929 fun in St. Louis

Roger A. Godin

There can be few more satisfying things in baseball, for players and fans alike, than defeating the New York Yankees. This was as true in the 1920s as it is today. In the case of the historically inept St. Louis Browns, it was even more so. The Browns' best-known dominance of New York occurred at the tail end of the 1944 season, when they swept a four-game series in St. Louis to win their only American League pennant.

Less known is a four-game sweep in August, 1929, when the Browns piled up a 22-2 composite score and shut out the defending world champions in three of the four games. The series effectively ended what remote chance the Yankees had of catching the Philadelphia A's and gave hope (eventually dashed) that St. Louis would garner its second third-place finish in a row.

By 1927 only four members of the Browns' great 1922 team remained: shortstop Wally Gerber, first baseman George Sisler, pitcher Elam Vangilder, and outfielder Ken Williams. Over the following offseason, owner Phil Ball and manager Dan Howley, who had brought the '27 team in seventh, overhauled the club. By the time it assembled in West Palm Beach, Florida, in February, 1928, only Gerber was still around—and he was gone by April 25. The new Browns had Lu Blue at first base, Otis Brannan at second, Red Kress at shortstop, Early McNeely in left, and Heinie Manush in right. Catcher Wally Schang, third baseman Frank O'Rourke, center fielder Fred Schulte, and Kress (only seven games in 1927) were holdovers. The pitching was upgraded with the acquisition of Sam Gray, Jack Ogden, and George Blaeholder.

The revamped team finished third at 82-72, nineteen games behind pennant winning New York. It was a remarkable turnaround from the prior year. Manush was second in AL hitting at .378, was first in hits with 241 and tied Lou Gehrig in doubles at 47. The pitching was superb. Holdover Alvin "General" Crowder finished at 21-5, for a league-leading winning percentage of .808. Gray was 20-12, Ogden 15-16, and Blaeholder 10-15. Attendance improved dramatically: 339,497 came out to Sportsman's Park, compared to 227,879 the year before. In 1929 Oscar Melillo took over at second, Frank McGowan moved into center, and Rip Collins joined the pitching staff.

By the time the Yankees arrived in St. Louis on August 22, they were fourteen games behind Philadelphia. The Browns were in fourth, percentage points behind Cleveland. New York seemed to have lost its magic, as manager Miller Huggins admitted to a Cleveland writer: "...I don't think the Yankees are going to catch the Athletics. I don't think these Yankees are going to win any more pennants, certainly not this one. They're getting older and they've become glutted with success."

Roger A. Godin *is team curator of the NHL's Minnesota Wild. He admits that hockey is his first love, followed by an affection for the St. Louis Browns. He is the author of* The 1922 St. Louis Browns: Best of the American League's Worst. *He lives in St. Paul, Minnesota.*

Still, the Yankees had taken twelve of fourteen games from St. Louis, and a sweep just might revive the pennant race. Howley sent Gray out to pitch the first game, and he responded with a brilliant seven-hit shutout. St. Louis scored two runs in the first inning, four in the third, knocking out starter Waite Hoyt, and added two more in the fifth and eighth. Schang was out, replaced by Clyde Manion. Schulte and Manush had been injured in an outfield collision the day before, so rookie Red Badgro took over in right, with Frank McGowan in center. Badgro, who would to on to a Hall of Fame career in pro football, responded by going four for five with three RBIs. The 10-0 victory produced fifteen hits as 3,500 watched. Huggins had dropped Gehrig and Lazzeri to sixth and seventh in his batting order, moving Bill Dickey up to the third spot. The move had no effect in this game or the two that followed.

Game 1 Thursday, August 22

New York	000000000	071
St. Louis	20402002x	10150

Hoyt, Pipgras (3), Nekola (9) and Dickey
Gray and Manion
WP Gray
LP Hoyt

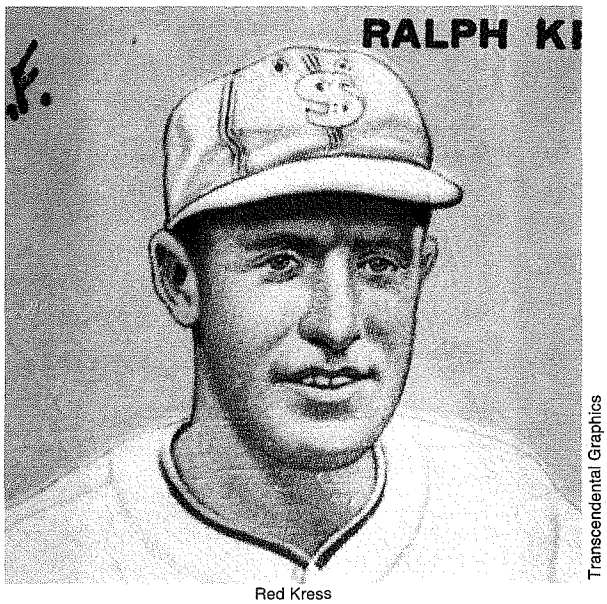
New York *Times* writer William Brandt said that "Missouri's traditional blistering sun was in mid-August form" and the Browns continued their own hot streak the next day before 2,500. This time they confined their activity to the fourth inning when they produced five runs. Except for this inning, Yankee starter Herb Pennock would pitch almost as fine a game as St. Louis hurler George Blaeholder. With two runs already in, Lu Blue clinched the game for the Browns when he doubled with the bases loaded. Blaeholder gave up only five hits, and the Browns won, 5-0.

Game 2 Friday, August 23

New York	000000000	051
St. Louis	00050000x	570

Pennock, Moore (8), and Dickey
Blaeholder and Manion
WP Blaeholder
LP Pennock

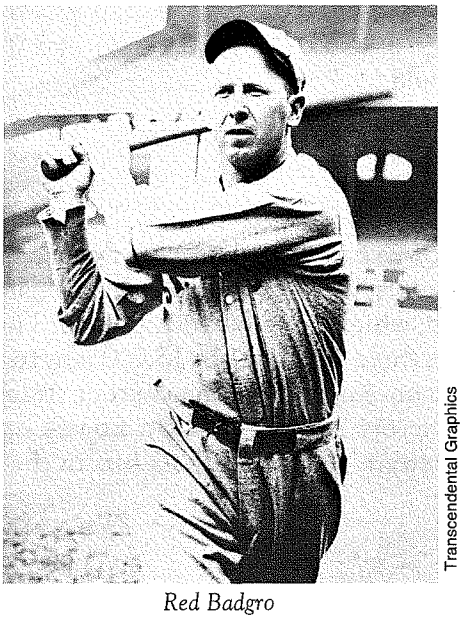
On August 24, Howley gave the ball to Al Crowder, and he proved even better than Gray and Blaeholder. Before 9,000 delighted fans the General gave New York only two hits, both by Gene



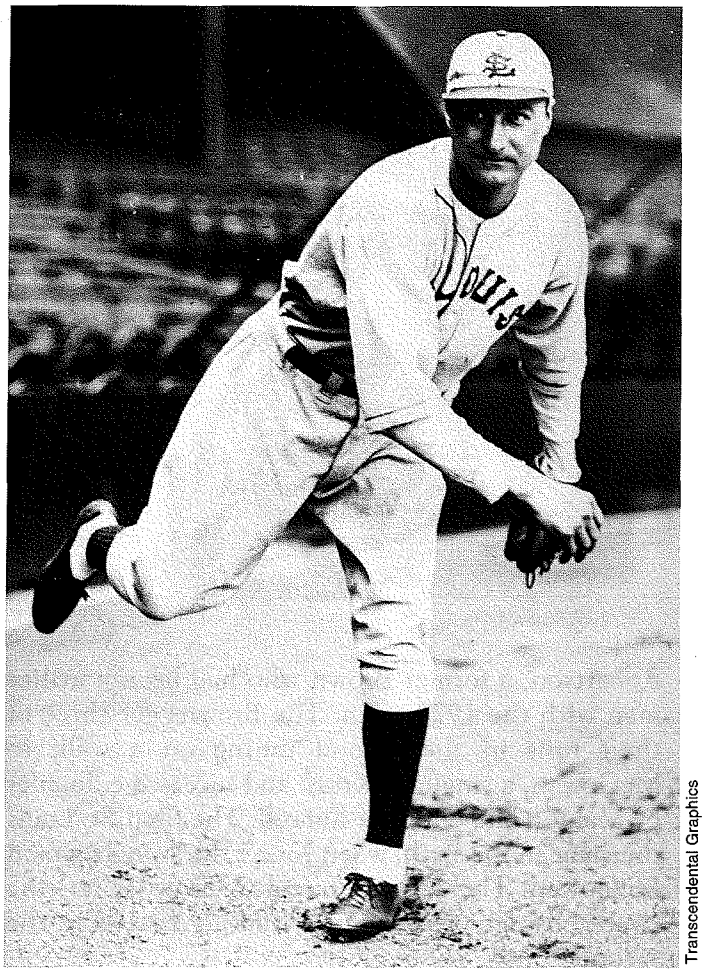
Red Kress

Robertson, a former Brown who had been a utility man with the 1922 team. The Browns got three of their runs in the second inning on a walk to McGowan, a single by Kress, and successive doubles by Manion and Crowder himself. The final St. Louis run came in the sixth, when Kress's third single scored McGowan. The 4-0 win featured Crowder retiring twenty straight batters after walking Lazzeri in the second inning.

St. Louis *Post Dispatch* writer James Gould could hardly conceal his delight when he led his story of this game: "Just what kind of meat the Browns have been feeding on that they have suddenly become so great is not known, but whatever it is, the diet is en-



Red Badgro



George Blaeholder

tirely successful.... Shutting out the Yankees three times in a row has been for years one of the things that just wasn't being done."

Game 3 Saturday, August 24

New York	000000000	020
St. Louis	030001100x	480

Sherid and Dickey
Crowder and Manion
WP Crowder
LP Sherid

The Browns had moved into third place with their second victory, and this win put them a game up on Cleveland, which had split with Boston. The success of the past three days brought 15,000 fans to the Sunday finale on August 25. The shutout streak ended, but the victory run did not. St. Louis's only lefty, Walter Stewart, gave up only six hits in the 3-2 win. Two of these were home runs by Ruth (who had gone one for ten in the set), his thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth of the season. Huggins had moved Gehrig and Lazzeri up a notch in the batting order, given Dickey the day off, and moved Ruth into the third slot.

The visitors finally ended their scoreless streak on Ruth's solo shot in the fourth, but the Browns tied it in the fifth. In the eighth, the home team went up, 3-1, when McGowan scored on O'Rourke's double and O'Rourke was singled in by Melillo. Ruth made it close in the ninth with his second poke over the right field fence onto Grand Avenue, but Stewart got the side out to hold on to the victory.

Game 4 Sunday, August 25

New York	000100001	261
St. Louis	000010002x	381

Wells, Moore (8) and Bengough
Stewart and Manion
WP Stewart
LP Wells
HR Ruth, 2

The Yankees limped home to New York with little hope of overtaking Philadelphia, but St. Louis couldn't hold third place. They finished in fourth at 79-73-2 despite improved individual performances from Blue, Melillo, Kress, and Schulte. Kress hit .305, Schulte .307. Manush "dropped off" to .355. Kress was the team leader with only nine home runs. (Blue and Manush had 14 and 13, respectively, in 1928.) The pitching continued strong as four hurlers won in double figures: Gray, 18-15; Crowder, 17-15; Blaeholder, 14-15; and Collins 11-6.

Huggins would die a month later, the stock market would crash a month after that, and the Browns would not see third place again until 1942. But for four days in August, 1929, life couldn't have been better in St. Louis.

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Dexter Park

"Brooklyn's" other ballpark

Jane and Douglas Jacobs

Today not too many people remember Dexter Park, but in the first half of the twentieth century it played host to many the top baseball stars of the majors and the Negro Leagues. Those who attended games there remember it with respect and affection. Some stoutly maintain that it was in Brooklyn, but it was actually right over the county line in Queens.

The early history of Dexter Park is obscure. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Union Course racetrack, established in 1821, occupied the area between Jamaica Avenue (then Jamaica Plank Road) and Atlantic Avenue. Its location just outside Brooklyn was not a coincidence. The racing business, associated as it usually is with gambling and other vices, was not considered a congenial neighbor in the City of Churches, but the state legislature was willing to allow and even encourage racing in Queens.

Despite its dubious reputation, the Union Course produced at least one hero, who was by all accounts a man of upstanding moral character. In 1857 Hiram Woodruff purchased a plot of almost ten acres between Cypress Hills Cemetery and Jamaica Avenue, east of Elderts Lane. In those days, popular pastimes for the upper classes were riding, sleighing, and sometimes racing on Jamaica Avenue. They and their horses required refreshment, and several roadhouses, including Woodruff's, provided for them.

In the 1880s Woodruff's hotel and the land around it became Dexter Park. By that time, Brooklynites had been entertained by such clubs as the Atlantics, Eckfords, and Excelsiors, and baseball was an exceedingly popular pastime. The earliest reference to the name Dexter Park, or to baseball being played there is on July 3, 1885. The *South Side Observer* reported:

> Dexter's on the plankroad and just east of the Kings county line is a complete resort for Sunday baseball players. The participants are a class who have been under the eye of the Kings County authorities for some time, but escaped arrest by stepping over into this county. Applause and yelling are the order of the afternoon, and intoxicants are sold.[1]

Dexter Park made news again in 1900 when neighbors complained of pigeon shooting that allegedly occurred daily and put residents in terror for their lives.[2] There is conflicting evidence as to whether a racetrack still existed on the site by then.

In 1901 the William Ulmer Brewery acquired Dexter Park, which became home to multiple sports and amusements. A 1909 newspaper advertisement boasted of a baseball field, bowling alleys, swings, a dancing pavilion, and a carrousel, in the "most conveniently located and most attractive picnic grounds in the greater city."[3] Conrad Hasenflug, the propri-

Douglas Jacobs *is a lifelong baseball fan born and raised in the Bronx, New York. He took* ***Jane****, who is from Charlottesville, Virginia, to her first professional game at Fenway Park in 1982. At the end of the top of the first, she asked Douglas if she had to sit through 17 more of these. Despite that inauspicious beginning, they were married later that year and remain happily so. They like to travel about the country visiting as many major and minor league parks as they can.*

etor, was a former state senator; managing all these amusements was a job for a man of consequence. Although Hasenflug was listed as the proprietor, the actual ownership remained with the brewery.

The Bushwicks—The baseball field was leased in 1905 by John W. Connors for his Brooklyn Royal Giants. Connors was one of the few black owners in the Negro Leagues. He founded the Brooklyn Royal Giants with the profits generated by his supper club, the Royal Café.

Semipro and black baseball gradually became more commercial and better organized. The teams were also starting to attract savvy and ambitious business people. Both types of ball lacked a cooperative infrastructure for scheduling, apportioning gate receipts, umpiring, and securing playing grounds. They were often forced to rely on promoters who, for a percentage of the gross receipts, would schedule games and arrange fees and guarantees. One such booking agent was Nathaniel Strong. A native New Yorker and City University of New York graduate, Strong began as a sporting goods salesman. He became a promoter and quickly realized the importance of controlling the more profitable venues. A 1910 decree by then governor, Charles Evans Hughes, forced most racetracks to close and made some large parks available for baseball. By the early twentieth century Strong controlled several semipro ballparks, including Brighton Oval.

While Strong was empire building, another enterprising gentleman, Max Rosner, was building a baseball team. Born in 1876 in Hungary, Max had come to America, married, and was becoming a successful businessman. In 1903 he saw some of his factory employees playing baseball and offered to back them by buying uniforms and equipment. This was commonplace enough; lots of churches and companies sponsored amateur and semipro teams. The first team disbanded in 1910, and in 1911 Max organized the Cypress Hills team and leased Dexter Park. The Cypress Hills team was less than a rousing success. A far more proficient team, the Ridgewoods, was making a name for itself at the Wallace Grounds.

In 1913 Rosner founded a new team, the Bushwicks, and in partnership with Nat Strong, purchased the Ridgewoods. The Ridgewoods finished out the 1913 season and were then subsumed by the Bushwicks, but the new team continued playing at the Wallace Grounds. Meanwhile, Strong, having been crossed by John Connors, took his revenge by gaining control of the Brooklyn Royal Giants. He made them a traveling team with no home grounds. This act, and his tight control of eastern semipro ball, made him hated and feared by black baseball men.

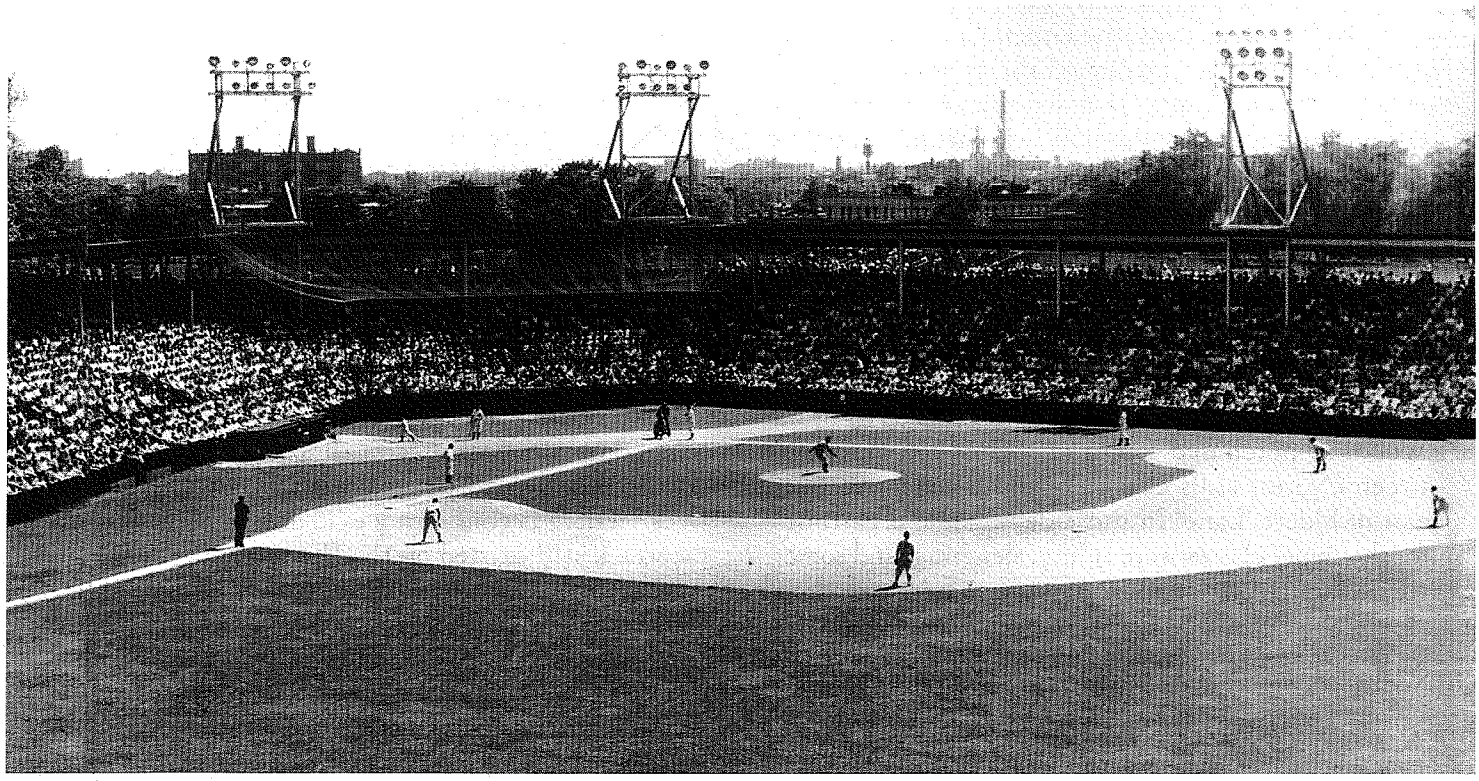

Photo courtesy of Robert Eisen and Dr. Bennet Rosner.

Dexter Park in an undated photo taken sometime after lights were installed in 1930.

Where Dexter Park Got Its Name

In the 1860s, Dexter was a very famous and popular athlete: a trotting horse. The son of the more famous Hambletonian, he was born in Orange County, New York, in 1858. He was a handsome seal brown with a white blaze and four white feet. After being trained by Hiram Woodruff, he set a record in Buffalo while racing a mile in 2:17-1/4. He was immensely popular with the masses of his time, and his exploits were frequently (though not always accurately) immortalized by Currier and Ives.

Immediately following his record run at Buffalo, he was purchased by New York *Ledger* publisher, Robert Bonner, for a reputed $33,000. Bonner disapproved of betting, but collected trotters and drove them himself. Like all the other characters associated with Dexter Park, Dexter himself was no shrinking violet. Turf historian John Hervey described his temperament as: "...So wild and fractious that even being gelded did not tame his spirit. All his life he was high tempered, imperious, and dominant in his ways as well in his private life as in his public performances."[12]

When the Ninth Avenue elevated train line was extended past his stable, Dexter was so displeased with the noise and sparks that Bonner was forced to move his residence and stables. It turned out to be a very profitable real estate investment. Dexter remained a favorite of Bonner and Woodruff and lived to the ripe and ornery old age of thirty.

Dexter's death, on April 21, 1888, did not quite end his escapades. One story relates that Dexter was buried at Dexter Park. One of the legends of Dexter Park is that a large incline in right field, referred to as "Horse Heaven," was the result of some equine interment.[13] Unlikely as this seems, it has been widely repeated and contains a grain of truth. According to a 1934 newspaper article, "Some years ago, workmen in Dexter Park dug up the jawbone of a horse and presented it to Charley Powell of the Queens Topographical Bureau."[14] If, today, you go to the Topographical Bureau, you can view a jawbone fragment and some teeth that are labeled, "Teeth of the Famous Horse 'Dexter' of Woodhaven." Despite numerous theories, no one knows when and where Dexter was buried. According to the Brooklyn *Eagle*, he was last seen stuffed and mounted in the Collins Museum, which once occupied the terminal of the Brooklyn and Jamaica Railroad.[15] The museum was long gone by the time the building was razed in 1914, and there is no report of what became of Dexter.

The following year, on April 18, Max was arrested at the Wallace Grounds for the heinous crime of charging admission to a baseball game on the Sabbath.[4] Blue laws had been a problem for semipro and black baseball since their inception. Since most men worked six days a week, the opportunities to play or watch baseball were limited. There was some "twilight" ball, but the most profitable and convenient day was Sunday. On the other hand, non-fans complained of rowdy drunken baseball hooligans overrunning the trolleys and their otherwise peaceful neighborhoods, spoiling their one day of rest.

Ironically, it was not playing baseball that was illegal, but charging admission. In one newspaper article the citizens of Ridgewood are reported to have explained that the prime offenders were not the enclosed parks where admission was charged. At these sites crowds were controlled. However, at the unenclosed parks drunken fans spilled riotously out onto the streets.[5] Max was found not guilty. Like other owners of the day, he skirted the issue by offering free admission and requiring the purchase of a scorecard, which coincidentally cost the same as admission.

The Wallace Grounds had a wooden grandstand, and on September 19, 1917, it burned. The Bushwicks were forced to finish the season as a traveling team. For the following season, Max folded the Cypress Hills team and leased Dexter Park for the Bushwicks. The First World War, although hard on professional baseball, was a boom time for semipro and black baseball. Corporations saw sponsoring teams as a good way to build morale and esprit de corps while discouraging union membership.

In the early 1920s, with the coming of prohibition, breweries found it prudent to divest themselves of their real estate holdings. In the fall of 1922, Rosner and Strong purchased Dexter Park and conveyed it to

Dexter Park, Inc., in which they were shareholders. They brought in new investors and replaced the wooden grandstand with a 6,000-seat, concrete and steel, single tier, covered grandstand. The capacity and quality of the park were unique in semipro ball.

The Bushwicks were one of the top teams, always in demand, and, as such, were an important cornerstone of Strong's control of black and semipro ball in the East. If Strong refused to do business with a team, it would lose one of its most profitable bookings. Black versus white games were popular with both black and white fans. Because black clubs were relatively few, those that existed were dependent on games with white semipro teams for much of their income. Many black clubs did not have dependable access to adequate home grounds, whereas the Bushwicks had an excellent field. The Bushwicks were also worthy—and profitable—competition.

Lights—Attendance was good and, in 1924, 2,000 more bleacher seats were added along the left field line. The Bushwicks attracted big crowds to their Sunday doubleheaders, but that was only one day a week. In the late 1920s, the minor leagues were experimenting with temporary lighting to attract fans on weeknight evenings. Max's son, Herman, had become an electrical engineer and was interested in lighting the park. Strong opposed the lighting project, but was overruled. Light towers were installed on the top of the grandstand, and the first night game was played on Wednesday, July 23, 1930. The lights at Dexter Park were the first permanent installation of a focused lighting system in the United States.[6] The first night game in the major leagues would not take place until 1935, and Ebbets Field did not enjoy night games until 1938.

The late 1930s and early '40s were the halcyon days of Dexter Park and the Bushwicks. They played on Wednesday and Friday nights, with a Sunday doubleheader. The claim in a 1931 advertisement of "Big League Baseball at Workingmen's Rates" was not an idle boast.[7] Max Rosner was a good judge of talent and was willing to pay for superior players. He attracted young players on the way up and major leaguers at the end of their careers. For example, Waite Hoyt, released by Brooklyn in May 1938, finished out the season as a Bushwick. George Earnshaw and Lefty Gomez also wound up their careers as Bushwicks. Even Max wasn't always a genius, though. In 1920 he gave a tryout to a young first baseman from Columbia, but didn't hire him because the Bushwicks already had a first baseman. Lou Gehrig had better luck in the majors.

Some of the Bushwicks were not just extraordinary ballplayers, but extraordinary people. Fred Price, second from left in the team picture, right, was a war hero who sacrificed his shot at the major leagues to serve his country. Having worked his way up the Giants farm system, Price was close to earning a major league berth when he enlisted in October, 1940. During more than five years of duty he received three battle stars and a Purple Heart. Hit by shrapnel in the right knee, he was hospitalized for two and a half months and unable to walk for two months. When his tour of duty was finally complete in January, 1946, Price had served longer than any other ballplayer during the Second World War. At age 28, he returned to the Giants for spring training in 1946. Although apparently not handicapped by his war injuries, he didn't make the major league team. He refused the Giants' offer to go to Triple A, and returned to New York where he signed on with the Bushwicks. After a short stint as a Bushwick first baseman, Price continued playing semipro ball with Cedarhurst, the Springfield Greys, the Union City Reds and finally the New York Equitable Life team. Price was a success in business, too, finishing his career at Equitable as employee benefits manager.[8]

Dexter Park was a profitable stop on the barnstorming circuit. Casey Stengel, Dizzy and Paul Dean, Jimmie Foxx, Joe DiMaggio, Hank Greenberg, and Pete Gray all made appearances there. Gehrig (his earlier rejection notwithstanding) and Babe Ruth appeared together three times. In 1934 the Bushwicks reportedly attracted a crowd of 20,000 for an exhibition game against the Bay Parkways, which featured New York Giant pitcher Carl Hubbell.[9]

Fans could take the Jamaica Avenue trolley or the elevated train to the Elderts Lane station. Once at the park, they could look forward, not only to good baseball, but to a variety of concessions: ice cream, Rheingold beer, Merkles hot dogs, Kist soda (orange, sarsaparilla or cream), and, of course, peanuts. Joe Prince called the game over the public address system. You could rent a leather seat cushion, and, just like today, displeasure with events on the field sometimes resulted in a shower of them.[10]

Decline—Some changes took place in the park grounds during this period. The carrousel, bowling alley, and dance hall disappeared. The area where the carrousel had been was given over to parking. The hotel became the Dexter Park Casino and later Frank Fischetti's restaurant.

Photo courtesy of Daniel Price.

The 1946 Bushwicks. Fred Price is second from left, top row. Max Rosner, the team's owner, is in the overcoat, bottom row.

Nothing good lasts forever. Semipro baseball and Dexter Park were no exceptions. The two events that conspired to undo them were the collapse of the Negro Leagues due to the integration of Organized Baseball, and the coming of television. By 1949 the Bushwicks were losing money.

Much as Max Rosner loved his Bushwicks, he saw the handwriting on the wall, and introduced stock car racing in 1951. The infield was moved in and the track passed around the outside of the baseball field. In the same year, the Bushwicks folded. Their last game was played in Ramsey, New Jersey, against the Silk Sox.[11]

Max Rosner died on Nov. 28, 1953, at the age of seventy-six. (Nat Strong had died in 1935.) Stock car racing continued through 1955, when the Dexter Park property was sold. In the following year, the stands were torn down and replaced by one- and two-family houses.

Today, if you visit the site of Dexter Park, you will find little reminder of how special a place it was. The Dexter Park Pharmacy is still doing business on Jamaica Avenue. A newly erected plaque marks the approximate spot of the old ballpark but it is in the parking lot of a supermarket. Residences line Dexter Court, but you have to wonder if the occupants know anything about the area they inhabit. You wonder if they even know that they are living on a street named after a fabled horse (see box on next page), that crowds of 5,000 rabid Bushwicks fans lived and died with their beloved team, that Babe Ruth and Josh Gibson added to their legends on the spot where they now live. In the end, Ebbets Field and Dexter Park suffered the same fate. When we last visited Dexter Court, nobody was outside playing ball.

Notes:

1. "Long Island," South Side *Observer*, July 3, 1885: 4.
2. "All Over the Borough," Newtown *Register*, Nov. 29, 1900: 5.
3. "New Lessee of Dexter Park," Brooklyn *Daily Eagle*, Mar. 14, 1909: 3-4.
4. "Ballplayers Were Arrested," Ridgewood *Times*, May 30, 1914: 2.
5. "The Objection to Ball-Playing at Ridgewood," Newtown *Register*, June 14, 1888: 5.
6. Robert Eisen, "Dexter Park and the Bushwicks," *Times Newsweekly* [Ridgewood, N.Y.], Sept. 19, 1991: 66.
7. "Congratulations Wm. F. Hofmann [advertisement]," Long Island *Daily Press*, Sept. 16, 1931: 54.
8. Leonard Cohen, "Sports Parade," *Post Home News* [New York], Feb. 13, 1946 : 45.
9. Ron Marzlock, "I Have Often Walked," Queens *Chronicle Magazine*, Nov. 4, 1993: 1.
10. Bennett Rosner, personal interview, Jan. 9, 2000.
11. Robert Eisen, "Dexter Park and the Bushwicks," *Times Newsweekly* [Ridgewood, N.Y.] , Sept. 26, 1991 : 67.
12. John Hervey, *The American Trotter* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1947), 457.
13. Philip J. Lowry, *Green Cathedrals: The Ultimate Celebration of All 271 Major League and Negro League Ballparks Past and Present* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1992), 202.
14. "'Dexter' Was Famed Horse," Long Island *Daily Press*, Nov. 11, 1934: 22.
15. "Razing Landmark on Atlantic Ave.," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 28, 1914: 6.

Pitch Counts

Hurlers now toss fewer innings but do just as much work

Daniel R. Levitt

In 1997 Roger Clemens and Pat Hentgen tied for the American League lead in innings pitched with 264; John Smoltz led the National League with 256. In 1919, three hurlers pitched over 300 innings, and the 1997 league leaders would not have finished in the top five in either league. Many reasons have been suggested over the years for this decrease in starting pitcher innings. They range from pitchers not throwing enough as youngsters to build arm strength, to the evolution of a more complex relief pitcher strategy.

With the availability of pitch count data in recent years, we can take a fresh perspective on pitcher use. These days, a pitcher's workload is assessed by how many pitches he actually threw, rather than the number of innings he pitched. This information can now be found in most newspaper boxscores. Unfortunately, because historical pitch count data is not available, comparisons with previous eras are difficult.

The 1920 *Spalding's Guide*, fortunately, contains pitch count data for all pitchers in the eight-game 1919 World Series. The analysis below compares this data with that from the seven-game 1997 World Series to examine the changes over time. Obviously, the 1919 World Series included games whose results are tainted. I hope and assume that any deliberate misdeeds did not materially affect the overall pitching style of the time. Pitching patterns may differ in the World Series as compared to the regular season, but I think that concern is mitigated by comparing Series to Series.

In Game 5 in 1919, Lefty Williams pitched eight innings, gave up four hits and two walks, struck out three and threw a total of 105 pitches. In Game 4 in 1997, Jarret Wright pitched six innings in which he surrendered five hits and five walks and struck out five; this performance also required 105 pitches. It's clear from the data that this is typical—pitchers today throw significantly more pitches per inning than their 1919 counterparts.

The summary pitching statistics for the two World Series read as follows:

Year	IP	H	BiP	BB	SO	Pitches	Strikes	Balls	BFP
1919	143.0	123	500	40	52	1876	1190	686	582
1997	127.2	140	424	76	99	2271	1335	936	585

Where BiP = Balls in Play, and BFP=Batters Faced by Pitcher

The above table indicates the increased number of pitches thrown per inning by modern hurlers. Despite throwing only ninety percent as many innings as their 1919 counterparts, pitchers in the 1997 World Series threw 114 percent as many pitches. As the table below indicates, the increase in pitches per inning from 13.1 in 1919 to 17.8 in 1997 is a function of both an increase in batters faced per inning and pitches thrown per batter. Note that all references to either 1919 or 1997 refer to World Series data only.

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Year	BFP/IP	P/BFP	P/IP
1919	4.1	3.2	13.1
1997	4.6	3.9	17.8

Mathematically, the pitches per inning equals the batters faced per inning multiplied by the pitches thrown per batter. As you can see, both have increased rather dramatically. The increase in pitches per batter can be at least partially explained by the increase in walks and strikeouts per batter.

Year	BB/BFP	SO/BFP	Tot/BFP
1919	6.9%	8.9%	15.8%
1997	13.0%	16.9%	29.9%

The total percentage of strikeouts and walks per batter faced nearly doubled from just over fifteen percent to nearly thirty percent. Given that plate appearances that end in a walk or strikeout typically require more pitches than those that end in a ball in play, it seems likely that much of the increase in pitches per batter can be accounted for by the increase in walks and strikeouts. Interestingly this change occurred without much of a change in the overall strike-to-ball ratio. In 1919 strikes accounted for sixty-three percent of the pitches; by 1997 this figure had only fallen to fifty-nine percent.

Walks, of course, can affect the number of pitches per inning in two ways. They don't just involve higher pitch counts per plate appearance; they also increase the number of batters per inning. In 1919, the two opponents combined for 163 hits and walks in 582 BFP, or .280 per batter faced. By 1997 this had increased to 216 hits plus walks in 585 BFP, or .369 per batter faced.

In 1997 pitchers tossed 1.36 times as many pitches per inning as their 1919 counterparts. A nine inning game in 1919 averaged 118 pitches while one in 1997 averaged 160. Of the pitchers who threw at least ten innings in the World Series, not one averaged more than 14.1 pitches per inning in 1919, while in 1997, not one pitcher averaged less than that. Assuming the number of pitches as the correct measure of pitcher workload, on average, a 300-inning season in 1919 would be the equivalent of 221 innings today. Using the available World Series pitch count data, pitchers today work just as hard as their Deadball Era brethren, they just do it in fewer innings.

1919 World Series

Name	Team	IP	H	BB	SO	#P	Strk	Ball	BFP	P/IP
Cicotte, Eddie	Ch	21.2	19	5	7	266	170	96	87	12.3
James, Bill	Ch	4.2	8	3	2	83	55	28	23	17.8
Kerr, Dickie	Ch	19.0	14	3	6	257	167	90	72	13.5
Lowdermilk, Grover	Ch	1.0	2	1	0	20	10	10	7	20.0
Mayer, Erskine	Ch	1.0	0	1	0	21	17	4	5	21.0
Wilkinson, Roy	Ch	7.1	9	4	3	102	65	37	34	13.9
Williams, Lefty	Ch	16.1	12	8	4	241	138	103	66	14.8
Subtotal	**Ch**	**71.0**	**64**	**25**	**22**	**990**	**622**	**368**	**294**	**13.9**
Eller, Hod	Ci	18.0	13	2	15	224	131	93	71	12.4
Fisher, Ray	Ci	7.2	7	2	2	89	58	31	29	11.6
Luque, Dolf	Ci	5.0	1	0	6	57	38	19	16	11.4
Reuther, Dutch	Ci	14.0	12	4	1	172	109	63	55	12.3
Ring, Jimmy	Ci	14.0	7	6	4	198	133	65	59	14.1
Sallee, Slim	Ci	13.1	19	1	2	146	99	47	58	11.0
Subtotal	**Ci**	**72.0**	**59**	**15**	**30**	**886**	**568**	**318**	**288**	**12.3**
Total		**143.0**	**123**	**40**	**52**	**1876**	**1190**	**686**	**582**	**13.1**

1997 World Series

Name	Team	IP	H	BB	SO	#P	Strk	Ball	BFP	P/IP
Anderson, Brian	Cl	3.2	2	0	2	54	39	15	13	14.8
Assenmacher, Paul	Cl	4.0	5	0	6	74	51	23	17	18.5
Hershiser, Orel	Cl	10.0	15	6	5	179	99	80	49	17.9
Jackson, Mike	Cl	4.2	5	3	4	79	45	34	22	16.9
Juden, Jeff	Cl	2.0	2	2	0	33	18	15	10	16.5
Mesa, Jose	Cl	5.0	10	1	5	92	57	35	26	18.4
Morman, Alvin	Cl	0.1	0	2	1	23	11	12	4	69.7
Nagy, Charles	Cl	7.0	8	5	5	117	70	47	33	16.7
Ogea, Chad	Cl	11.2	11	3	5	166	100	66	49	14.2
Plunk, Eric	Cl	3.0	3	4	3	57	29	28	15	19.0
Wright, Jarret	Cl	12.1	7	10	12	213	118	95	52	17.3
Subtotal	**Cl**	**63.2**	**68**	**36**	**48**	**1087**	**637**	**450**	**290**	**17.1**
Alfonseca, Antonio	Fl	6.1	6	1	5	90	62	28	25	14.2
Brown, Kevin	Fl	11.0	15	5	6	184	111	73	48	16.7
Cook, Dennis	Fl	3.2	1	1	5	55	36	19	13	15.0
Heredia, Felix	Fl	5.1	2	1	5	72	50	22	19	13.5
Hernandez, Livan	Fl	13.2	15	10	7	243	137	106	65	17.8
Leiter, Al	Fl	10.2	10	10	10	233	129	104	52	21.8
Nen, Robb	Fl	4.2	8	2	7	104	73	31	24	22.3
Powell, Jay	Fl	3.2	5	4	2	83	42	41	19	22.6
Saunders, Tony	Fl	2.0	7	3	2	68	33	35	16	34.0
Vosberg, Ed	Fl	3.0	3	3	2	52	25	27	14	17.3
Subtotal	**Fl**	**64.0**	**72**	**40**	**51**	**1184**	**698**	**486**	**295**	**18.5**
Total		**127.2**	**140**	**76**	**99**	**2271**	**1335**	**936**	**585**	**17.8**

Note on sources:

The 1997 pitch count data was derived from box scores available at the ESPN website. Pitch count data is also available from STATS Inc. through box scores at their America Online site, and box scores at the fastball.com website (and probably elsewhere as well). It should be noted that the STATS pitch count data differs very slightly on a couple of players from that posted at the ESPN site.

The Essence of the Game

Connections

Michael V. Miranda

He was building a coffin. Thirty-one years old, the third youngest of seven children born of immigrant parents, barely five feet five inches tall and very stockily built, he was using the wooden slats from old vegetable crates to prepare a proper resting place for the symbolic remains of the New York Giants, stealing some time from his bosses at the small Brooklyn grocery store in which he worked as the delivery man.

It was October 3, 1951. In the last inning of the last game of the playoff series made necessary because the Giants ended the season tied with the Dodgers for first place in the National League, the Dodgers had managed to build a 4-1 lead. The team that won today would face the New York Yankees in the World Series. But that was tomorrow's work. Today the Dodgers would beat the Giants and Dad would not be able to suppress his smile or his good-natured needling of Giant fans who had to walk past their heroes' coffin as it sat on the Bay Ridge sidewalk in front of the store in the very neighborhood in which Duke Snider, Pee Wee Reese, Carl Erskine, and Preacher Roe lived.

But after the Giants scored their second run of the game in the bottom of the ninth, Russ Hodges, the Giants announcer on WMCA, screamed, "There's a long drive...It's gonna be...I believe...The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant!...I don't believe it!...The Giants win the pennant!" Bobby Thomson's "shot heard 'round the world," a three-run homer, gave the Giants the National League pennant and stopped Dad in his tracks as he carried his work of heart up the cellar steps. He turned and flung the coffin down the stairs behind him where it crashed and waited to be discarded with the rest of the next day's trash. The Dodgers, "Dem Bums" as they were known by their long-suffering but faithful fans, had disappointed once again—and this time after having led the Giants in the standings by 13-1/2 games just weeks before.

Hours later, after work, Dad walked around the corner to his basement apartment, his wife and his son. The trip took him longer than usual, I am sure. His mood was heavy. One week past my third birthday, I was too young to understand any of this.

There are connections between fathers and sons. Despite differences in attitudes and values that may result in very different lives, there are always connections between fathers and sons. Sometimes they are embodied by something tangible, like a business, or a house, or a profession, the son benefiting from the father having preceded him down the road to success. But Dad didn't own the grocery store in which he worked seventy-two hours each week, he never owned his own home, and any possibility of a profession were dashed by his family's need for him to go to

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work instead of to the eleventh grade. For Dad and me, the connection was baseball.

A most vivid childhood memory is of Dad returning home from work at a little after 7 PM, eating alone because the rest of the family had eaten hours earlier, and eating fast. He would always be conscious of the weather and the amount of daylight remaining because his plan was to take me to the schoolyard across the street from our home to teach me how to catch and to throw and to hit. But maybe Dad's motivation was more than just a desire to have me develop my baseball skills—maybe he *needed* to do this. Maybe he knew that it was to be his legacy; he could leave me with the ability to appreciate and play the summer game. To Dad, if you were a ballplayer, you were *somebody*.

A stocky child who had to buy his clothes in the "Husky Department" at the Robert Hall store on 86th Street, I was not an athlete in those days. Among my problems was that I just couldn't seem to learn how to throw the baseball with an overhand motion. Dad's words of encouragement and instruction would quickly deteriorate to those of criticism and exasperation. His screams of "Overhand! *Over*hand!" were heard even in the most remote corners of the Edward B. Shallow Junior High School's yard. He embarrassed me—and maybe I persisted with my sidearm style of throwing just to punish him for that. But I'm sure that I remember a Topps baseball card of Luis Aparicio poised to throw sidearm, probably to complete a double play after having taken the underhand toss from Nellie Fox. And Luis was an all-star shortstop—just what Dad wanted for (and from?) me.

On some nights, we would go to the schoolyard to practice hitting. He'd pitch, I'd hit the ball as far as I could, he'd chase it, bring it back and pitch it again. Dad was in his forties by then, but each night we'd stop playing when it got too dark to see the baseball or when my arm became too sore to throw any more, whichever came first. We *never* stopped because Dad was tired.

He pressured me to play when I didn't enjoy it, when I didn't want to. There were many times during the summers of my ninth and tenth years that I wished for rain on Little League game nights. But I could never share these feelings with Dad. I don't know whether I feared his anger or his disappointment more, but I could never tell him that I didn't really want to play, that I felt I would never meet his standards.

But in four of the seven years that I played on organized teams as a youngster, my teams won championships. And thanks to Dad's efforts, my skills improved. In my last year, I was the league's all-star shortstop and I led my team in home runs and stolen bases despite missing nearly a fourth of the season with a dislocated elbow suffered in a collision during a close play at first base. Dad was never again as proud of me as he was during the summer just before my sixteenth birthday. I was a ballplayer.

I spent the Sundays of the following summer watching Dad's softball team play. He was the catcher, the position usually reserved for the team's slowest player, but Dad wasn't self-conscious about this because he was also the team's oldest player. When some of his teammates did not show up for games, I would be asked to fill in for them. This pleased each of us a great deal, but in no way was this a tribute to my playing ability—Dad was the only player old enough to have a son old enough to play.

It was a thrill to play alongside him and to watch his love for the game as he played it—always talking to his teammates and at his opponents, sliding hard to break up double plays, showing disgust with himself when he failed to come through in clutch situations. Doc, though, impressed me more. A real doctor, the only one that I had ever seen outside of a medical office, was the shortstop.

That September I started college. Academic requirements, the need to have a job to pay school expenses, and the fact that City College's baseball team practiced a long subway ride from the downtown location of my classes prevented baseball from fitting into my life. Dad never really accepted my choosing academics over baseball, but he never said so. By the time my formal education was completed, I had two graduate degrees to go along with my college diploma.

Now, as a psychologist, I am accustomed to having my sleep disturbed by telephone calls from patients in need. But one night at 3 AM my sleep was disturbed from within by my thoughts of baseball and Dad. It was the night after he began his last hospital stay, just a month past his sixty-ninth birthday.

We want our heroes to last forever. When professional ballplayers age, it's sad, but we have the opportunity to cheer them at old-timers' games and at other special occasions at which their enthusiasm and dedication to the game are recognized. It's sad, but we can recall their accomplishments and, while talking with other fans, we can even reminisce about specific game performances.

When Dad aged, it was just sad. Nothing else.

Family problems and circumstances had caused us to have less and less contact over the years, but say-

ing good-bye to him was much more difficult than I had expected it to be. I suppose I never realized how much he had given me and, through me, what he continues to give to my own son.

The Dodgers played the Yankees in the World Series seven times between 1941 and 1956, winning only once. The rivalry between these two teams from the same city was intense. Every Dodger fan was a "Yankee hater." Dad could truly be described in this way, but he called me "Mick," an obvious reference to Yankee superstar Mickey Mantle. Only Dad ever called me Mick—and he only called me Mick while we were on the ballfield.

And I signed the baseball that I placed in his coffin, "To Dad, With thanks and love, Mick."

The meeting on the pitcher's mound included the manager, a coach, the pitcher and catcher and each of the four infielders. It was the last inning of a playoff game with the bases loaded, nobody out and the team on the field holding a 6-4 lead. The batter waiting to hit was my ten-year-old son, Michael. It was June 8, 1991. As the manager of his team, I called Michael over to explain that our opponents were planning a strategy to try to keep us from scoring and that the meeting had nothing to do with him, personally. He needed these words of comfort.

Michael grew up with video games, karate classes, his own color TV set, cable television, ice skating lessons, swimming lessons, and the beach and the Atlantic Ocean a half block from his home. I grew up with a black-and-white set in the living room of my parents' apartment a half block from the elevated West End line in Brooklyn. Baseball has never meant as much to Michael as it did to me as a child. When I wasn't in school, I was playing baseball, softball, stickball, stoop ball, or catch-a-fly-you're-up with a handful of friends from the block. When there was no one around, I'd practice my skills by throwing a rubber ball against the wooden fence in the yard that Dad had built specifically for that purpose.

Michael's attachment to baseball was much looser than mine was. His commitment to developing his skills and his enjoyment of the game was much less intense. Although he got upset when he struck out, he was not interested in working to give the game his best effort. He had one hit—an infield single—all season. And when he went up to the plate with the infield drawn in to get the forceout at home in that playoff game, my last words to him were, "You can do it, Mikey. You can hit the ball *over* those guys."

First, there was a called strike. Then, on the second pitch, there was a loud "ping." (Aluminum bats just do not make the satisfying "crack" that the wooden bats of my youth made.) A line drive—over everybody and into left-center field—drove in three runs and gave us a 7-6 lead. Michael ended up standing on second base, absorbing the cheers and all of the excitement, his face gleaming, his head swiveling around to take it all in. For me, the entire scene occurred in slow motion and I saw everything—the flight of the ball, the baserunners speeding toward home plate, the first base coach waving Michael on to take the extra base—and my shining son.

Thanks again, Dad—from both of us.

Oddball

Wilmington *Every Evening*, September 10, 1884

Shafer [George "Orator" Shaffer] of the St. Louis [UA] team, is unwittingly the humorist of the diamond. He is as irritable as a teething child and the crowds find rich enjoyment in guying him.... [Second baseman Fred "Sure Shot"] Dunlap...encourages Shafer [sic] in his eccentricities which are quite as amusing as the club's play is excellent. Yesterday afternoon a batted ball came bouncing over the ground to the white-haired right fielder [evidently blond; he was only thirty-two] which he ran after but could not reach. At the failure Shafer began calling himself abusive names, swore at his shadow reflected on the turf and finally kicked at it. Not being able to punish the counterfeit presentment of himself standing up, he lay down and bringing his shadow directly under him shook his fist under its nose...repeating with much anger as he did so: 'Shaf will give you one in the nose if you don't play better ball.' All in all, Shafer is a circus in himself....

—A.D. Suehsdorf

Before the Babe

Gavy Cravath's home run dominance

Bill Swank

Most baseball fans know that Roger Maris, Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa, and Henry Aaron broke Babe Ruth's season and career home run records. But even the experts disagree on whose season and career home run records the Babe broke. Perhaps there is apathy because among the early home run hitter were flukes, fakes, and mostly forgotten or forgettable ballplayers.

During the National League's inaugural season of 1876, a total of 40 home runs were entered on the record books. The following year, that figure dropped to only 24 home runs for the entire league. This was an era of inside-the-park home runs. Hall of Famer Buck Ewing of the original New York Giants became the first player to reach double digits with ten circuit blows in 1883. That same season, another reputable hitter, Harry Stovey, playing for the Louisville Colonels in the rival American Association, slugged 14 round-trippers.

Then, suddenly, Ned Williamson blasted 27 home runs for the Chicago White Stockings in 1884. The previous year he had hit a pair of four-baggers and the following season, he would hit but three home runs. His record is tainted because before this record performance, balls hit over the 196-foot-distant right field fence at Chicago's Lake Front Park were ground rule doubles. The following year in their new West Side Park (also called the Congress Street Grounds) balls hit 216 feet over the fence were also called doubles.

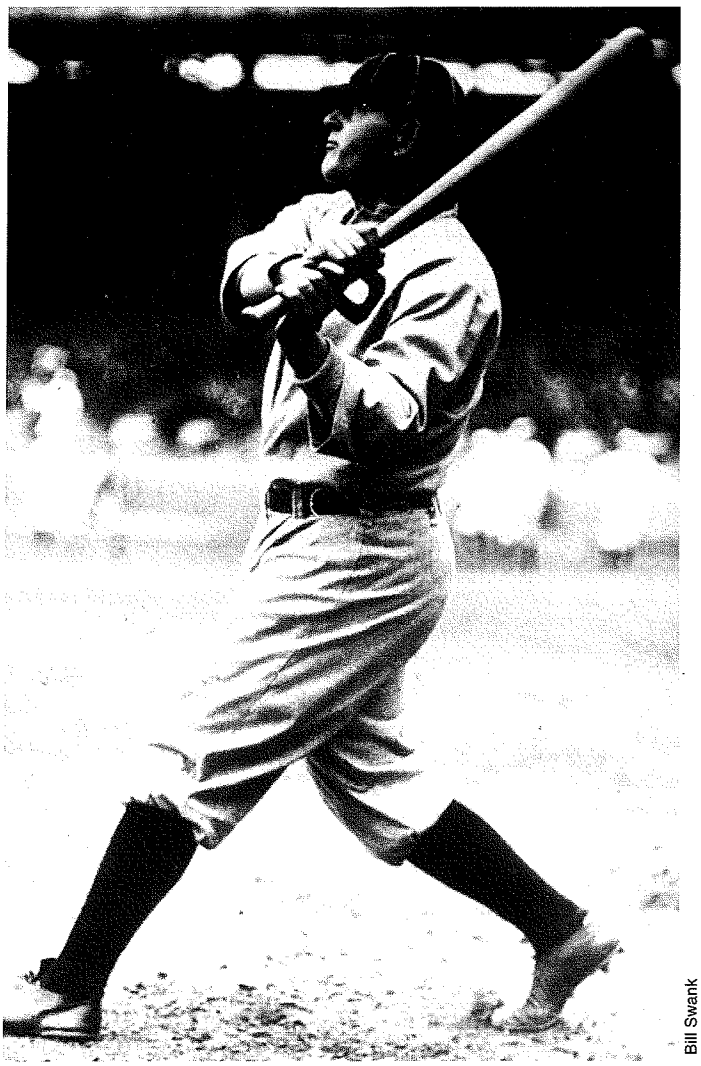
A major change in the game occurred in 1893 when the pitcher's position was moved from fifty feet to the present distance of 60 feet, 6 inches. But home run hitting did not increase perceptibly at the greater distance. It was not until 1899 that the highest "legitimate" home run total (25) for the nineteenth century was achieved by Washington's Buck Freeman.

Stovey became the first player to reach 100 career home runs. He finished with 120, 121, or 122 homers depending on the source. This figure was exceeded by Hall of Famer Roger Connor who, again depending on your source, hit between 132 and 138 home runs from 1880 through 1897.

When Ruth came along he changed everything, of course. But when the Babe first began thinking about hitting home runs in 1918, one man was already setting home run records which some experts thought could never be duplicated. Remarkably, Clifford "Gavy" Cravath was thirty-one years old when the Philadelphia Phillies acquired the powerful outfielder from the Minneapolis Millers in 1912. The preceding year, he had hit 29 home runs to lead the American Association. This was the highest season total that had yet been achieved in Organized Baseball during the twentieth century. (Cravath's nickname is a source of confusion. Although he signed it "Gavy," it is pronounced to rhyme with "savvy." Sportwriters of the time added the extra "v." I spell it here as he did.)

Four years earlier Cravath had been unable to break into the Boston Red Sox Hall of Fame outfield domi-

Bill Swank *is the author of* Echoes from Lane Field: A History of the San Diego Padres, 1936-1957. *A crusader for old ballplayers, he has campaigned for years to get San Diego's first major leaguer, Gavy Cravath, elected to the Hall of Fame.*



Bill Swank

Gavy Cravath

nated by Tris Speaker and Harry Hooper. When granted a second chance in the major leagues, he led or tied for the National League lead in home runs six times between 1913 and 1919. This feat alone was unprecedented in baseball history. With one more home run, his string would have covered seven consecutive years.

Cravath hammered 24 home runs during his signal season of 1915 when he and Grover Cleveland Alexander carried the lowly Phillies to their first ever World Series appearance. After Cravath drove in the deciding run in the Series opener against the Red Sox, Philadelphia lost each of the next four games by a single run. Ironically, out of respect for Cravath's righthanded power, Boston did not use in the Series a very promising young lefthander with a 18-8 record during the regular season. His name: Babe Ruth.

That season Cravath had as many or more home runs individually than twelve of the sixteen major league teams hit collectively. He produced more than 10 percent of all the home runs hit in the National League that year. At the time, these 24 home runs were acknowledged as the "modern" home run record.

Twice, in 1913 and 1915, Cravath led the National League in RBIs (128 and 115 respectively). His home run and RBI percentages were the highest of the Deadball Era. A ten-year career .287 hitter, he was the most feared slugger of his time.

Home run and RBI percentages of Deadball hitters

	HR %		RBI %
Gavy Cravath	3.01	Gavy Cravath	18.1
Tilly Walker	2.33	Ty Cobb	17.4
Buck Freeman	1.95	Frank Baker	16.7
Mike Tiernan	1.78	Sam Crawford	16.7
Fred Luderus	1.73	Sherwood Magee	16.2
Frank Baker	1.60	Honus Wagner	15.1
Hugh Duffy	1.49	Heinie Zimmerman	15.1
Charlie Hickman	1.48	Joe Jackson	15.1
Zach Wheat	1.45	Duffy Lewis	14.7
Jimmy Ryan	1.45	Tris Speaker	14.0

Source: *The Baseball Encyclopedia* and *The Sporting News*

Over the course of his eleven years in the big leagues, Gavy accumulated 119 career home runs. From 1912 through 1919, Cravath hit more home runs (116) than the entire Washington Senators team (115) hit during the same period.

Home Runs (1912 through 1919)

	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	TOTAL
Cravath	11	19	19	24	11	12	8	12	116
National League									
Phil.	43	73	62	58	42	38	25	42	383
Chicago	43	59	42	53	46	17	21	21	302
NY	47	31	30	24	42	39	13	40	266
Brooklyn	32	39	31	14	28	25	10	25	204
Boston	35	32	35	17	22	22	13	24	200
St. Louis	27	14	33	20	25	26	27	18	190
Pitts.	39	35	18	24	20	9	15	17	177
Cin.	21	27	16	15	14	26	15	20	154
American League									
NY	18	9	12	31	35	27	20	45	197
Phil.	22	33	29	16	19	17	22	35	193
Detroit	19	24	25	23	17	26	13	23	170
Boston	29	17	18	14	14	14	15	33	154
Chicago	17	23	19	25	17	19	9	25	154
St. Louis	19	18	17	19	13	15	5	31	137
Cleve.	10	16	10	20	16	14	9	25	120
Wash.	20	20	18	12	12	4	5	24	115

Source: *The Baseball Encyclopedia*

It is tough to evaluate players from different eras. The purpose of the following chart is to show the impact of the power hitters on their own eras and their relationship to one another. As outstanding as the individual numbers posted by Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa during the past few baseball seasons, with the current emphasis on the power game, their percentage of the total home runs hit by contemporaries during similar productive years is relatively low.

Not surprisingly, Babe Ruth was and remains the most dominant home run hitter of his or any era. Significantly, Gavy Cravath places a strong second on this impressive list of sluggers. The asterisk marks players for whom I eliminated seasons interrupted by military service, injuries, salary disputes, etc. I also eliminated some rookie partial seasons.

Player	Full Seasons	HRs	Total ML HRs	% of Total
Babe Ruth *	1918-34 (17)	699	16,977	4.12
Gavy Cravath	1912-19 (8)	116	3,116	3.72
Lou Gehrig	1925-38 (14)	492	17,391	2.83
Jimmie Foxx	1928-41 (14)	516	18,786	2.75
Buck Freeman	1898-06 (9)	81	2,978	2.72
Hank Greenberg *	1933-47 (9)	315	12,438	2.53
Mel Ott	1928-45 (18)	509	22,803	2.24
Cy Williams	1915-28 (14)	242	10,331	2.23
Socks Seybold	1901-07 (7)	51	2,323	2.20
Ralph Kiner	1946-55 (10)	369	17,913	2.06
Wildfire Schulte	1905-18 (14)	91	4,914	1.85
Honus Wagner	1898-1915 (18)	98	5,435	1.80
Ted Williams *	1939-58 (15)	468	27,347	1.71
Al Simmons	1925-38 (14)	290	17,391	1.67
Sam Crawford	1900-15 (16)	94	5,688	1.65
Home Run Baker *	1909-22 (12)	96	5,857	1.64
Harmon Killebrew	1959-72 (14)	530	37,245	1.42
Henry Aaron	1954-74 (21)	733	53,893	1.36
Willie Mays *	1951-71 (19)	642	47,471	1.35
Ernie Banks	1954-69 (16)	498	39,316	1.26
Mark McGwire*	1987-99 (11)	501	44,734	1.20
Sammy Sosa*	1990-00 (9)	364	40,621	.90

Source: *The Baseball Encyclopedia*

The following chart shows how all batters benefited during the "Live Ball Era." The entire National League, including pitchers, hit for a .303 average in 1930. Cravath's .287 lifetime batting average would have been only average for the 1920s, but he was almost thirty percentage points above the major league average during the 'teens. We recall the legendary hitters of the 1920s and 1930s, but forget that everyday players were also putting up impressive numbers. This is yet another example of the difficulty in comparing players from different eras.

Batting Averages Of The 20th Century

	NL	AL
1900-1909 *	.255	.253
1910-1919	.256	.255
1920-1929 **	.286	.286
1930-1939	.277	.280
1940-1949	.260	.260
1950-1959	.258	.259
1960-1969	.252	.245
1970-1979	.256	.257
1980-1989 ***	.254	.263
1990-1999	.261	.268

* American League statistics from 1901 through 1909

** "Live Ball Era" begins in 1920

*** Designated Hitter rule adopted in the American League

Sources: *The Baseball Encyclopedia, Total Baseball, The Sporting News*

Ruth broke Cravath's modern season record with his 25th home run on Labor Day of 1919. The Babe hit his 120th home run off Jim Bagby of Cleveland on June 20, 1921, to break Gavy's career record.

At cozy Baker Bowl, the Phillies home ballpark, it was only 280 feet down the line to the infamous forty-foot high right field wall. Cravath was a right-handed batter who had taught himself to go to right field to take advantage of a similar 279 foot foul line and thirty-foot fence at Nicollet Park in Minneapolis. While he was a Miller, manager Joe Cantillon threatened to fine him $50 if he hit any more homers over the right field barrier. Apparently Cravath had broken the same window of a Nicollet Avenue haberdashery three times during a single week.

Although the right side was not his power field, 92 of Gavy's home runs were hit in Baker Bowl. His play in Philadelphia with its inviting right field porch has often been used as an argument against Cravath's election into Baseball's Hall of Fame.

With each passing year, the accomplishments of Gavy Cravath and other pre-1920 players continue to fade. In 1994, the Hall of Fame's Veterans Committee was given the opportunity to select one individual a year from the nineteenth century for enshrinement in Cooperstown. It has choosen two managers (Ned Hanlon and Frank Selee), but only three players (Vic Willis, George Davis, and Bid McPhee). No selection was made in 1997. Perhaps, someday, a similar window will opened for Deadball players.

Until then, goodbye to the other early home run kings like Dandy Wood, Braggo Roth and Old True Blue Richardson. Where have you gone, Abner Dalrymple?

The 10,000 Careers of Nolan Ryan

A computer simulation clarifies his long career

Joe D'Aniello

The fans, by virtue of the all-century team, and sportswriters, by virtue of Hall of Fame voting, have spoken. Overall, the greatest pitcher in baseball history is Nolan Ryan. Experts might have chosen Cy Young or Walter Johnson, pointing to their 511 and 417 respective victories while Ryan won only 324, but, hey, what's a hundred or two victories between immortals? Lefty Grove? Forget it. He won only 300 games and was a grouch to boot. Christy Mathewson? Come on. The guy's been dead for seventy-five years.

It's true that Ryan possesses a remarkable baseball career. Foremost is his signature: strikeouts. His total of 5,714 exceeds Steve Carlton's runner-up 4,136 by an unprecedented percentage margin. Ryan had as many no-hitters—seven—as Sandy Koufax and Bob Feller combined. And Ryan's stingy 6.56 hits allowed per nine innings gives him top honors in that category, too.

The career totals are no less extraordinary: 324 victories (tied for twelfth with Don Sutton), 773 games started (second to Cy Young), 5,386 innings pitched (fifth), 61 shutouts (tied with Tom Seaver for seventh), a solid 3.19 ERA, and his twenty-seven seasons pitched (best) prove his durability. It's easy to see why he coasted into the Hall of Fame.

Side B—But just like that hit 45 RPM record, Ryan's career has a "B" side. If Ryan is the Mount Everest of strikeouts, then he's rusting with the Titanic when it comes to bases on balls. Again, Carlton is his closest pursuer, and again, Ryan obliterates him with more than 1-1/2 times as many walks—2,795 to 1,833. His 292 losses puts him in third place behind Cy Young and Jim Galvin, but to match Young's wins and losses, Ryan would have to average 27-3 for seven seasons. He has thirteen more losses than Johnson while posting ninety-three fewer victories. For Grove to match Ryan, he would have needed to average 4-25 for six seasons. Tom Seaver would need to go 13-87. If Carlton lost fifty consecutive decisions, he would still have a better W-L record than Ryan. Table 1, on the next page, shows the records of twentieth century 300-game winners normalized to a 162-game season for camparison.

Despite having the worst winning percentage of the group, Ryan finished second to Koufax (37,200 votes) in the All-Century Team voting. Ryan's 15,347 votes exceeded the combined totals of Young (7,748) and Bob Gibson (6,542), and failed by 136 votes of exceeding the combined totals of Spahn (5,922), Johnson (4,883) and Grove (4,668). With a puny 1,348 votes, Mathewson would have been the mop-up man in the bullpen.

Ryan's 491 Hall of Fame votes were the highest in history and his sizzling 98.79 percent voting percentage was virtually identical to Tom Seaver's record percentage (98.84) and higher than Steve Carlton's 95.8. Among contemporaries, Ryan is more in the Gaylord Perry-Phil Niekro-Don Sutton class than the Seaver-Carlton class. Perry would need a 10-27 record

Joe D'Aniello *just had his novel,* A Family Heirloom, *published. You can read a synopsis and first chapter at www.xlibris.com/AFamilyHeirloom.html.*

to catch Ryan, Niekro 6-18, and Sutton 0-36. When Perry, the first pitcher to win 300 games in nineteen years, struggled to reach the Hall of Fame after three years, his unsanitary mound habits were listed as the reason. Niekro, a fine baseball citizen, had an even more difficult time, entering in his fifth year of eligibility. Sutton, an alleged greaseballer (Perry admitted oiling up) also needed five tries to make the Hall.

Table 1

	162 G.		Lifetime				
Pitcher	W-L	GB	W-L	PCT	+7*	Cy Young†	Best‡
Lefty Grove	110-52	-	300-140	.680	11	(6)	31-4
Christy Mathewson	107-54	2.5	373-188	.665	12	(8)	37-11
G.C. Alexander	104-58	6	373-208	.642	11	(4)	33-12
Ed Plank	101-60	8.5	326-194	.627	12	(0)	26-6
Cy Young	99-61	10	511-316	.618	11	(3)	33-10
Tom Seaver	97-64	12.5	311-205	.603	8	3	25-7
Walter Johnson	97-65	13	417-279	.599	10	(7)	36-7
Warren Spahn	96-65	13.5	363-245	.597	11	(4), 1	23-7
Steve Carlton	93-69	17	329-244	.574	8	4	27-10
Don Sutton	90-71	19.5	324-256	.559	6	0	21-10
Early Wynn	89-73	21	300-244	.551	6	(0),1	23-11
Gaylord Perry	88-74	22	314-265	.542	5	2	24-16
Phil Niekro	87-75	23	318-274	.537	4	0	23-13
Nolan Ryan	85-77	25	324-292	.526	0	0	22-16

* The number of seasons with W-L record at least seven games over .500.

† The actual number of Cy Young awards is listed without parentheses. If the number is in parentheses, then *Total Baseball* voted these pitchers the award retroactively, one in each league from 1901-1955 plus an additional award to the best pitcher in the non-winning league from 1956-1966. Thus, Warren Spahn won one real Cy Young Award (1957) and four hypothetical ones (1949, 1953, 1958 and 1961). Only Spahn and Early Wynn spanned both eras.

‡ Either the pitcher's most victories or most games over .500.

The most remarkable part of Ryan's W-L record isn't just that it's mediocre, but that his mediocrity is mediocre. Not once in twenty-seven seasons did Ryan post a record at least seven games over .500. Perry, Niekro, and Sutton had some terrific seasons—21-8, 23-13, 24-16, 21-13, 21-6 for Perry (the third and fifth seasons earning him Cy Young awards), 23-13, 20-13, 17-4, 16-8 for Niekro, and 19-9, 18-10, 19-9, 21-10, 13-5, 17-9 for Sutton. Ryan never had *one* season like that. And Ryan wasn't posting just twenty or twenty-five decisions every season like most starting pitchers today. From 1972-1979, Ryan averaged 32 decisions per year, and had 35 or more in 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976 and 1977.

The Purpose—I set out to discover three things: First, the pitchers in baseball history with the most lifetime victories who failed to match Ryan's season high of six games over .500; second, the pitchers in baseball history with the fewest lifetime victories who exceeded Ryan's +6; third, how unlikely it is for a pitcher of Ryan's career W-L record and longevity to fail to exceed a +6 season.

Scanning *Total Baseball* answered the first two questions. Table 2 shows the top ten pitchers with the most career victories without having a season six games over .500.

Table 2

Pitcher	Seasons	W-L	Career Best†	Year
Stan Bahnsen	16	146-149	21-16	1972
Kevin Gross	15	142-158	11-8	1996
Woody Fryman	18	141-155	9-4	1982
Jim Clancy	15	140-167	15-11	1983,1987
Danny MacFayden	17	132-159	14-9	1938
Harry Howell	13	131-146	13-8	1899
Bob Rush	13	127-152	17-13	1952
Gary Bell	12	121-117	16-11	1959
Ken Raffensberger	15	119-154	17-13	1952
Pedro Ramos	15	117-160	12-10	1956

† If two seasons equally above .500, the season with most victories used.

These pitchers totaled 1,316 victories in 149 seasons without a +6 season. Table 3 lists ten pitchers with just 152 victories in 41 seasons each had a +7 season or better. Pitchers active in 1999 and 2000 are not included.

Table 3

Pitcher	Seasons	W-L	Career Best†	Year
Joe Pate	2	9-3	9-0	1926
Joe Klink	5	10-6	10-3	1991
Eddie Yuhas	2	12-2	12-2	1952
Bud Teachout	3	12-6	11-4	1930
Don Bessent	4	14-7	8-1	1955
Dick Hyde	6	17-14	10-3	1958
Charlie Kerfeld	4	18-9	11-2	1986
Dick Hughes	3	20-9	16-6	1967
Roy Thomas	8	20-11	7-0	1985
Mike Nagy	6	20-13	12-2	1969

† If two seasons equally above .500, the season with most victories used.

10,000 Nolans—My final question—what were the odds of a pitcher hurling for twenty-seven seasons with a won-lost record of 324-292, failing to have one

season where wins - losses >= 7?—required a computer. The computer model placed Ryan's 324 victories and 292 losses in a pool. Each season would draw from that pool the same number of decisions Ryan actually had during that season. Thus, every 1966 season of a simulated Nolan Ryan career had one decision. Each 1974 season had 38 decisions, and so on. Using the computer, I simulated 10,000 Nolan Ryan careers this way. The bottom line was that a 324-292 pitcher who played during twenty-seven seasons has a 99.19 percent chance of being seven or more games over .500 at least once. The average simulated career had 3.35 seasons of at least +7. Ryan had five simulated careers that failed to match his +6—he was +5 in each of them. Of the 10,000 career simulations, 288 showed a +7; 925, +8; 1,326, +9; 1,767, +10; 1,588, +11; 1,330, +12; 1,039, +13; 581, +14; 483, +15; 219, +16; 207, +17; 63, +18; 56, +19; 15, +20; 22, +21; one, +22, +24, +25 and +26; and 6, +23. The rough bell curve, left, illustrates these numbers.

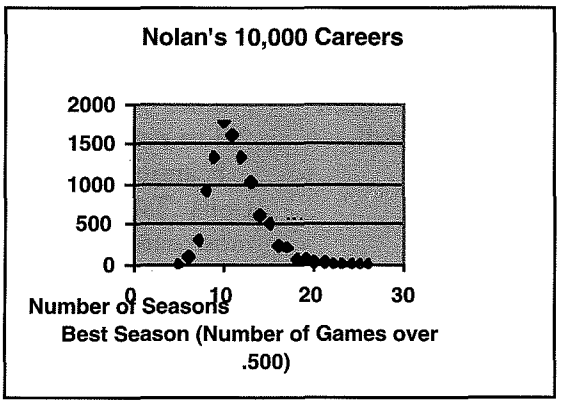


Table 4 shows Ryans actual career on the left and ten simulated careers, each divisible by 1,000, on the right.

Table 4

Yr/Career	Actual	1000	2000	3000	4000	5000	6000	7000	8000	9000	10,000
1966	0-1	1-0	0-1	0-1	0-1	0-1	0-1	0-1	1-0	0-1	1-0
1968	6-9	7-8	10-5	4-11	8-7	5-10	9-6	7-8	11-4	6-9	9-6
1969	6-3	4-5	4-5	5-4	7-2	7-2	5-4	6-3	6-3	2-7	4-5
1970	7-11	14-4	10-8	12-6	11-7	13-5	10-8	10-8	7-11	9-9	10-8
1971	10-14	14-10	9-15	15-9	11-13	12-12	12-12	14-10	10-14	13-11	12-12
1972	19-16	19-16	16-19	21-14	18-17	18-17	17-18	19-16	23-12	14-21	15-20
1973	21-16	22-15	19-18	18-19	17-20	18-19	18-19	18-19	22-15	26-11	18-19
1974	22-16	24-14	24-14	26-12	18-20	23-15	19-19	17-21	17-21	22-16	18-20
1975	14-12	9-17	13-13	18-8	16-10	18-8	13-13	11-15	14-12	17-9	13-13
1976	17-18	19-16	19-16	15-20	13-22	16-19	17-18	23-12	21-14	19-16	19-16
1977	19-16	21-14	17-18	22-13	21-14	18-17	20-15	16-19	21-14	19-16	17-18
1978	10-13	14-9	15-8	14-9	17-6	12-11	10-13	13-10	10-13	14-9	8-15
1979	16-14	19-11	12-18	11-19	15-15	19-11	16-14	11-19	9-21	20-10	15-15
1980	11-10	9-12	12-9	13-8	8-13	9-12	10-11	8-13	7-14	12-9	10-11
1981	11-5	10-6	10-6	8-8	9-7	6-10	13-3	11-5	7-9	7-9	9-7
1982	16-12	12-16	18-10	11-17	14-14	10-18	15-13	10-18	13-15	9-19	15-13
1983	14-9	6-17	13-10	12-11	18-5	12-11	7-16	15-8	12-11	12-11	14-9
1984	12-11	13-10	11-12	13-10	16-7	10-13	11-12	11-12	16-7	13-10	14-9
1985	10-12	8-14	17-5	15-7	6-16	12-10	14-8	13-9	10-12	11-11	13-9
1986	12-8	9-11	8-12	8-12	9-11	12-8	7-13	9-11	10-10	13-7	9-11
1987	8-16	11-13	14-10	11-13	15-9	12-12	14-10	13-11	15-9	10-14	15-9
1988	12-11	12-11	10-13	12-11	12-11	11-12	11-12	14-9	10-13	11-12	15-8
1989	16-10	14-12	16-10	11-15	13-13	15-11	16-10	16-10	20-6	15-11	17-9
1990	13-9	14-8	9-13	10-12	12-10	15-7	12-10	15-7	11-11	10-12	15-7
1991	12-6	9-9	6-12	8-10	11-7	9-9	14-4	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10
1992	5-9	6-8	7-7	7-7	7-7	6-8	6-8	10-4	4-10	9-5	6-8
1993	5-5	4-6	5-5	4-6	2-8	6-4	8-2	6-4	9-1	3-7	5-5
Total	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292	324-292

Excuses, Excuses—One excuse given for Ryan's unimpressive winning percentage is that he pitched for poor teams. This argument must be rejected. It is true that Ryan outpitched the teams on which he played, but it wasn't by much. His 12-13 composite from 1966-1969 (he didn't pitch in the majors in 1967) gave him a .480 winning percentage, while the Mets in those three years went 239-246 for .493. In 1970-1991, he won at a .526 rate, compared to his teams'.504. On average, Ryan was roughly 13-12 for a team that was 81-80. Even when he pitched for good teams, Ryan had records just a few games over .500.

The Wins Above Team (WAT) statistic, which compares a pitcher's W-L mark to that of his team also fails to support the Ryan-was-a-hard-luck-pitcher claim. *Total Baseball* lists the top 100 pitchers in WAT, and Ryan (along with Wynn and Sutton) doesn't make the top 100. Through 1996, Young was first, with a career WAT of 99.7. Babe Adams (194-140) and Allie Reynolds (182-107) tie for ninety-eighth place with 20.2. Russ Ford, with his short career (99-71), makes the list with 24.3. With a WAT of less than 20.2, Ryan is less than one win above his team per year. In contrast, Seaver and Koufax with respective WATs of 58.9 (sixth place) and 30.6 (fortieth place) respectively, average three wins above their teams per season.

Nolanmania—So why does Ryan get so much more adulation than Niekro, Perry, and Sutton, in whose class he belongs (I would rank him behind Perry, but ahead of Niekro and Sutton), and even more than Seaver, Carlton, and Jim Palmer, direct and far superior contemporaries? I think it may be that every time he pitched, fans and sportwriters anticipated something special. Even on a bad night, the fastball was explosive. On a good night, he could strike out double figures. On a great night, he might pitch a no-hitter. With Ryan, total domination was always a possibility. Total domination always excites us.

Still, it is strange that the public—and especially the writers—substituted the glitter of strikeouts and no-hitters for the gold of victories. When you get right down to it, Ryan's mediorce record is inexplicable: he was difficult to hit, had good ERAs, and didn't allow many homers (his top home runs allowed in a season was 20 in 1982). If you refer back to Table 1, you will see that with the exception of Ed Plank, every pitcher from Grove down to Carlton was considered, in his prime, the best pitcher in his league, if not in all of baseball. Ryan can't come close to making that claim. And just because he should have been the equal of Grove, Mathewson, Johnson, Seaver, et al. doesn't mean he was.

Sample computer-generated Nolan Ryan facts

1. In 1974 of career 3,676, Ryan had his best year of 270,000 seasons going 32-6. In total Ryan had six 30-victory seasons in his 10,000 careers. When I simulated Koufax's brief career 10,000 times, he had 240 thirty-victory seasons.

2. In 1973 of careers 982 and 6,836 Ryan had his worst seasons, going 8-29.

3. Ryan had four careers with six twenty-victory seasons. In real life, Ryan won twenty twice, slightly less than what the model predicted—2.25 per career.

4. Ryan had 346 careers (including career 10,000) in which he failed to achieve a twenty-victory season.

5. Ryan's best undefeated season was 18-0 in 1970 of career 1,799.

6. Nine times, Ryan had seasons in which he went 0-10 in 1993, his biggest skunk.

7. Sandy Koufax and Juan Marichal each had three twenty-five-victory seasons in their (real) careers. Ryan matched their individual totals twice in his 10,000 computerized careers (7,340 and 8,823).

8. In career 119 he had consecutive twenty-seven-victory seasons, going 27-10 in 1973 and 27-11 in 1974. This was the only time he had a career with two seasons of twenty-seven or more victories. (To make up for those marks he went 12-23 in 1977, 6-14 in 1986, and 6-16 in 1991).

9. On average, Ryan had a +20 W-L season every 200 careers.

—J.D.

Claimed Off the Waiver List

Hall of Fame castoffs

David G. Surdam

Most baseball fans pay scant attention to the waiver list, and, given the lackluster talent appearing on the list, perhaps this is an astute use of their time. However, nineteen future Hall of Fame players have been claimed from the waiver list. Of course, at the time, no one knew that most of these players were future Hall of Famers (many were claimed before the Hall of Fame was even a promoter's dream).

One of them, Leo Durocher, reached the Hall of Fame primarily on his managerial accomplishments. Three of them—Burleigh Grimes, George Kelly, and Enos Slaughter—were claimed on waivers twice during their careers, with Kelly being shuttled between the Giants and Pirates twice during 1917.

As the accompanying list demonstrates, most of these players were near the end of their careers. Jack Chesbro, Johnny Evers, Jimmie Foxx, Burleigh Grimes, Heinie Manush, Kid Nichols, Dazzy Vance, and Cy Young provided few benefits to the teams paying the waiver price for them. Although Evers' career technically ended in 1929, this is misleading. He played two games after his 1917 waiver year: one in 1922 and one in 1929. Jimmie Foxx hit only seven home runs after the 1942 season. Only the exigencies of World War II kept him in the major leagues.

While several other players were clearly on the decline, they had a couple of productive seasons left. The St. Louis Cardinals claimed Grover Alexander on waivers midway through the 1926 season. He won nine games for the Cardinals, as the team won the National League pennant. During the 1926 World Series, he provided a moment of drama by striking out Tony Lazzeri. He won twenty-one games in 1927 and won fifty-five games for the Cardinals before ending his career in 1930.

Enos Slaughter became a useful backup outfielder for the New York Yankees during the late 1950s, even hitting over .300 one season.

Waite Hoyt won fifteen games with Pittsburgh in 1934, after being claimed on waivers in 1932. In all, he won thirty-five games for the Pirates.

Max Carey played regularly for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1927, batting a mediocre .266.

Napoleon Lajoie started at second base for two seasons on his second tour with the Philadelphia Athletics, but he averaged just .264 during those two seasons (about .150 below his average with the Athletics during his first stint with the team). He was a regular primarily because Connie Mack had depleted the team after the 1914 World Series fiasco. Mack needed money during the war with the Federal League and had sold Eddie Collins, among others.

Rube Marquard had compiled three brilliant seasons (a combined 73-28 win-loss record) with John McGraw's Giants, 1911-1913, but floundered thereafter. The Dodgers claimed him off the waiver list during the 1915 season. He went 13-6 for the pennant-winning Dodgers in 1916 and 19-12 in 1917. While he started a game in the 1920 World Series, he lost more games than he won during the next three

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seasons—at least partly because of poor support. Marquard later pitched for Cincinnati and the Boston Braves. He won ninety-eight games after being claimed on waivers.

Rabbit Maranville was claimed on waivers by the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1925, just past the midpoint of his career. He didn't do well with the Dodgers, hitting just .235, but later returned to the Boston Braves and played regularly for several seasons. While he is in the Hall of Fame, it certainly wasn't for any hitting prowess. Even during the hit-happy 1920s, Maranville had trouble hitting over .280, and his election to the Hall of Fame remains a mystery to many.

The three remaining players are baseball's equivalent to finding wheat among the chaff. George Kelly had performed poorly for John McGraw's Giants between 1915 and 1917, so McGraw placed him on the waiver list. Pittsburgh claimed him, but he hit for less than half his weight for the Pirates. Pittsburgh placed him back on the waiver list, and McGraw re-acquired him. After missing the 1918 season due to military service, he returned to New York and blossomed into a productive power hitter. He hit over .300 for six consecutive seasons, while driving in over 100 runs in each season from 1921 through 1924.

Herb Pennock had shown occasional glimpses of talent with Connie Mack's Athletics. With Hall of Fame teammates Eddie Plank and Chief Bender, as well as talented youngsters Bob Shawkey and Joe Bush, Pennock was a second-line starter in 1914. He went 11-4 that season, but struggled to a 3-6 mark in 1915 prior to being placed on the waiver list. Mack's impatience with the young pitcher proved disastrous, as Pennock would win another 223 games with the Yankees and Boston Red Sox. He won 70 percent or more of his decisions in four seasons.

One of the last Hall of Fame players ever placed on the waiver list, Hoyt Wilhelm, was problematic. Catchers found his knuckleball difficult to handle, and despite some fine seasons as a relief pitcher for the New York Giants early in the 1950s, Wilhelm became a well-traveled pitcher. In 1958 Cleveland placed him on the waiver list. In fairness to Cleveland, Wilhelm's efforts in 1957 led to his worst earned run average (4.14) until the very end of his career. The Baltimore Orioles picked him up, and, unlike every other team he ever toiled for, attempted to use him consistently as a starting pitcher. He started over forty games with the Orioles, including a reasonably successful 1959 season in which he won fifteen games and led the league in earned run average. Despite a 1.94 earned run average in 1962, Baltimore included him in the Luis Aparicio trade. Eventually, Wilhelm appeared in 1,070 major league games, a record surpassed only by Dennis Eckersley and Jesse Orosco. Wilhelm achieved his exemplary 2.52 lifetime earned run average by being stingy with base hits, allowing just over seven per nine innings. For a knuckleball hurler, his 3.1 walks per nine innings was quite respectable. Surprisingly, he never led the league in games saved.

In the forty seasons since Enos Slaughter was claimed on waivers, no other Hall of Fame players have appeared on the list. This absence is due, in part perhaps, to the unknown Hall of Fame status of current players and players from the 1970s and 1980s. Still, the next time you peruse the "Player Transactions" list in the local paper, you might dream of your team unearthing a real diamond.

Hall Of Fame players claimed from the waiver list

Name	Year Claimed	Career Ended	Team Selling	Team Buying
Grover Alexander	1926	1930	CHI N	STL N
Max Carey	1926	1929	PIT N	BKN N
Jack Chesbro	1909	1909	NY A	BOS A
Leo Durocher	1930	1945	NY A	CIN N
Johnny Evers	1917	1929	BOS N	PHI N
Jimmie Foxx	1942	1945	BOS A	CHI N
Burleigh Grimes	1933	1934	CHI N	STL N
Burleigh Grimes	1934	1934	STL N	PIT N
Waite Hoyt	1932	1938	NY N	PIT N
George Kelly	1917	1932	PIT N	NY N
George Kelly	1917	1932	NY N	PIT N
Napoleon Lajoie	1915	1916	CLE A	PHI A
Heinie Manush	1938	1939	BKN N	PIT N
Rabbit Maranville	1925	1935	CHI N	BKN N
Rube Marquard	1915	1925	NY N	BKN N
Kid Nichols	1905	1906	STL N	PHI N
Herb Pennock	1915	1934	PHI A	BOS A
Enos Slaughter	1956	1959	KC A	NY A
Enos Slaughter	1959	1959	NY A	MIL N
Dazzy Vance	1934	1935	STL N	CIN N
Hoyt Wilhelm	1958	1972	CLE A	BAL A
Cy Young	1911	1911	CLE A	BOS N

Sources:

The Baseball Encyclopedia. New York: Macmillan, Ninth Edition, 1993.

The Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball 1999. Edited by David S. Neft, Richard M. Cohen, and Michael L. Neft. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1999.

Baseball Club Continuity

Keep your eyes on the ball

Mark Armour

For how many ballclubs did Willie Mays play? To answer this question, a casual fan would need a baseball encyclopedia like *Total Baseball* and some knowledge of club histories. In the "Player Register" of *Total Baseball*, Mays's entry indicates the club for which he played in a particular year with a "tag" (in 1951 he played for "NY-N" indicating the New York franchise of the National League). Reading Mays's complete entry, you can see that Mays moved from New York (NY-N) to San Francisco (SF-N) in 1958, and then back to New York (NY-N) in 1972. Missing are the facts that he did not really switch clubs in 1958—the Giants moved from New York to San Francisco—and that the New York club for which he played in 1972 was a different club (the Mets) than the one for which he played in the 1950s (the Giants).

Most readers of a baseball encyclopedia know the story of Willie Mays, but might not be so knowledgeable about the clubs of Bid McPhee or Deacon McGuire. Consider the baseball encyclopedia reader in the year 2100. Would he not read Tim Salmon's record and be apt to think that he moved from California (Cal-A) to Anaheim (Ana-A) in 1997? Would he not likely conclude that Jeff Cirillo left the Milwaukee AL club (Mil-A) in 1998 to move across town to join the Milwaukee NL club (Mil-N)?

Confusions about club continuity in the nineteenth century are more prevalent both because it was a long time ago and because there were more complicated issues involved. In fact, modern sources do not agree on some of the problems that this study addresses. Nonetheless, this article is an attempt to enumerate the club movements and league shifts and name changes that have occurred in all of major league history. Where sources disagree, I will try to explain the disagreement while selecting one side over the other.

The definition of a *club* is a tricky thing to get a handle on and is at the heart of some of the disagreements that arise about club continuity. In a recent issue of *Nineteenth Century Notes*, the newsletter of SABR's nineteenth century committee, Frederick Ivor-Campbell defines a *team* as "the players, managers, and coaches, the people who actually play the game," and a *club* as "the organization and the people who make it up: directors, administrators, staff, [and] players." This article deals mainly with the *club*, the organization itself,which is the entity that links the Brooklyn Dodgers and the Los Angeles Dodgers.

This study includes the six officially recognized major leagues and the National Association.

League	Years
National Association (NA)	1871-1875
National League (NL)	1876-
American Association (AA)	1882-1891
Union Association (UA)	1884
Players' League (PL)	1890
American League (AL)	1901-
Federal League (FL)	1914-1915

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The National Association had no central authority to control membership. A club paid the $10 entry fee and became a member in good standing. There was no limit to the number of clubs, nor were poor clubs kept from joining. If a club decided not to complete its schedule, it dropped out and its remaining games would not get played.

The National League was formed, in part, to end this chaos. In doing so it created the notion of a baseball "franchise," a legal right granted by the league to a club to field a team in a particular city. The league had the authority to control who its member clubs were and where they played. All future major leagues would operate in this manner.

Clubs that switched major leagues—When the Milwaukee Brewers moved to the National League in 1998, it had been 106 years since a club had switched leagues. In the nineteenth century, when there were leagues coming and going, switching was common. The Brewers' move is unique in that it is the only instance in which two healthy leagues cooperated in the switch.

Year	Club	From	To
1876	Boston Red Stockings	NA (Bos-n)	NL (Bos-N)
1876	New York Mutuals	NA (Mut-n)	NL (NY-N)
1876	Philadelphia Athletics	NA (Ath-n)	NL (Phi-N)
1876	Chicago White Stockings	NA (Chi-n)	NL (Chi-N)
1876	Hartford Dark Blues	NA (Har-n)	NL (Har-N)
1876	St. Louis Brown Stockings	NA (StL-n)	NL (StL-N)
1885	St. Louis Maroons	UA (StL-U)	NL (StL-N)
1887	Pittsburgh Alleghenies	AA (Pit-a)	NL (Pit-N)
1889	Cleveland Spiders	AA (Cle-a)	NL (Cle-N)
1890	Brooklyn Bridegrooms	AA (Bro-a)	NL (Bro-N)
1890	Cincinnati Red Stockings	AA (Cin-a)	NL (Cin-N)
1891	Boston Reds	PL (Bos-P)	AA (Bos-a)
1891	Philadelphia Athletics	PL (Phi-P)	AA (Phi-a)
1892	Baltimore Orioles	AA (Bal-a)	NL (Bal-N)
1892	Louisville Colonels	AA (Lou-a)	NL (Lou-N)
1892	St. Louis Browns	AA (StL-a)	NL (StL-N)
1892	Washington Nationals	AA (Was-a)	NL (Was-N)
1998	Milwaukee Brewers	AL (Mil-A)	NL (Mil-N)

Of the eight clubs that formed the National League from 1900 through 1961, only two actually began their major league play in the National League: Philadelphia and New York (now San Francisco) in 1883. The other six began play in other leagues. Boston (now Atlanta) and Chicago began play in the National Association. Pittsburgh, Brooklyn (now Los Angeles), Cincinnati, and St. Louis began play in the American Association.

There have been three different National League clubs in St. Louis. All three transferred from different leagues. The first club, a holdover from the NA, was a charter member of the NL but lasted only two years. The second St. Louis club in the National League had been the 1884 Union Association champions before being absorbed into the NL after the UA's demise. It moved to Indianapolis in 1887. The third club was a member of the AA for all ten years of its operation, moved to the NL in 1892, and plays in St. Louis today.

The Boston club that won the Players' League championship in 1890 moved to the American Association when the PL went under, won the AA championship in 1891, and was bought out during the merger of the AA and NL.

Clubs that switched cities—In the nineteenth century, a club that was having financial problems did not normally move to a different city. Usually, the club would fold and be replaced by a completely different organization, often one that had been playing in a minor league. There were two exceptions, and a few others that are open to interpretation.

Year	From	To
1884	Chicago Browns (CP-U)	Pittsburgh Keystones (CP-U)
1887	St. Louis Maroons (StL-N)	Indianapolis Hoosiers (Ind-N)
1902	Milwaukee Brewers (Mil-A)	St. Louis Browns (StL-A)
1903	Baltimore Orioles (Bal-A)	New York Highlanders (NY-A)
1915	Indianapolis Hoosiers (Ind-F)	Newark Peppers (New-F)
1953	Boston Braves (Bos-N)	Milwaukee Braves (Mil-N)
1954	St. Louis Browns (StL-A)	Baltimore Orioles (Bal-A)
1955	Philadelphia Athletics (Phi-A)	Kansas City Athletics (KC-A)
1958	Brooklyn Dodgers (Bro-N)	Los Angeles Dodgers (LA-N)
1958	New York Giants (NY-N)	San Francisco Giants (SF-N)
1961	Washington Senators AL (Was-A)	Minnesota Twins (Min-A)
1966	Milwaukee Braves (Mil-N)	Atlanta Braves (Atl-N)
1968	Kansas City Athletics (KC-A)	Oakland Athletics (Oak-A)
1970	Seattle Pilots (Sea-A)	Milwaukee Brewers (Mil-A)
1972	Washington Senators (Was-A)	Texas Rangers (Tex-A)

In 1877, the NL Hartford Dark Blues played their home games at Brooklyn's Union Grounds, which had been used in 1876 by the New York Mutuals, since expelled from the league. Despite playing all but a few home games in Brooklyn, the club continued to call itself "Hartford." Donald Dewey and Nicholas Acocella's *The Ball Clubs* refers to them as the Brooklyn Hartfords, but other contemporary and modern sources disagree with that designation. The 1878

Spalding's Guide refers to them as Hartford. *Total Baseball* uses the tag Har-N in both years. All other sources used for this study refer to them as Hartford.

After the 1882 season, the NL voted to drop both Troy and Worcester from the League in favor of New York and Philadelphia. In a recent *National Pastime* article, Ray Miller claims that the facts support the argument that the Troy club moved to New York. Marshall Wright's *Nineteenth Century Baseball* agrees. Noel Hynd's history of the New York Giants, *The Giants of the Polo Grounds*, is more persuasive. John Day, the owner of the new New York franchise had a roster to fill and he raided a few of the players from the defunct Troy club, including Roger Connor, Buck Ewing and Mickey Welch. Troy did not move to New York, nor was there any agreement that the New York club would get first crack at Troy players. The Troy club resigned from the league under pressure from league officials and was dissolved while New York was building its team.

The 1884 Chicago UA club moved to Pittsburgh in August. The team lasted eighteen more games before folding. *Total Baseball* uses the tag CP-U for this team. The move of the AL Baltimore club to New York in 1903 is open to interpretation. The Baltimore club had completely dissolved in the latter half of 1902 and was being run by the league. The franchise was shifted to New York, but the 1903 Highlanders bore no resemblance to the 1902 Orioles.

Indianapolis was the 1914 Federal League champion, and is thus the only pennant winner to move.

Two other clubs moved after finishing with better than .500 records. The 1957 Dodgers and the 1965 Braves were both winning teams. In fact, the Braves were a winning team all thirteen seasons they were in Milwaukee. The Athletics were a losing team all thirteen years they were in Kansas City.

Clubs that changed names without moving—For the past century, major league clubs have commonly been referred to as a city (or state) name accompanied by a nickname. In the nineteenth century, team names were not so consistent. For example, Ivor-Campbell's article on "Team Histories" in *Total Baseball* refers to the Pittsburgh club (of the AA and subsequently NL) as "the Allegheny Club" until 1891, when it finally became Pittsburgh. The annual *Reach's Guide* (the official guide of the AA) referred to the club as Allegheny as long as it was in that circuit. *Spalding's Guide* (the official guide of the NL) referred to it as Pittsburgh as soon as the club joined the National League in 1887. Most modern sources refer to the team as Pittsburgh, regardless of league.

There have been two occasions on which a club's name change has caused a new "tag" to be used in the encyclopedias, which could cause the casual researcher to conclude that there are two clubs when there is really only one. Coincidentally, both changes involve the same club.

Year	From	To
1965	Los Angeles Angels (LA-A)	California Angels (Cal-A)
1997	California Angels (Cal-A)	Anaheim Angels (Ana-A)

The Angels moved to Anaheim in 1966, one year after they became known as California and thirty-one years before they became known as Anaheim.

Same city, same league, consecutive years, different team—Sometimes a club has disbanded or left a city or league, and has been replaced by another club in the same city and league. A casual researcher could mistakenly conclude that the two clubs are the same. Here we will need to carefully draw on the distinctions between a team and a club.

Year	Club	Year	Club
1872	Washington Olympics (NA)	1873	Washington Blue Legs (NA)
1872	Washington Nationals (NA)	1873	Washington Blue Legs (NA)
1879	Cincinnati Red Stockings (NL)	1880	Cincinnati Red Stockings (NL)
1889	Brooklyn Gladiators (AA)	1890	Brooklyn Bridegrooms (AA)
1890	Cincinnati Red Stockings (NL)	1891	Cincinnati Red Stockings (NL)
1890	Philadelphia Athletics (AA)	1891	Philadelphia Athletics (AA)
1960	Washington Senators (AL)	1961	Washington Senators (AL)

One of the trickier club continuity conundrums of the NA era involves the various Washington clubs. There were two Washington clubs in 1872 (the Olympics and the Nationals) and one in 1873 (variously the Blue Legs, the Nationals, or the Washingtons). Ivor-Campbell's "Team Histories" chapter in *Total Baseball* considers the 1873 club a continuation of the 1872 Nationals. Other sources consider it a new club or a merger of the two 1872 clubs. *Total Baseball* (and other encyclopedias) uses a different tag (Was-n) for the 1873 club than for either 1872 club (Oly-n and Nat-n). The lax rules of entry in the NA make the problem a difficult one. The organizers of the 1873 club (without a reserve clause), started from scratch to assemble their team, and ended up with a couple of players from each of the 1872 teams, but mainly with new players.

The first NL Cincinnati franchise (1876-80) was represented by three different clubs. The first one

folded in June, 1877 and was replaced two weeks later by a new club that retained virtually all the same players and inherited the record of the previous club. It seems apparent that a contemporary baseball fan might not have bothered understanding the fact that the ownership of the club had changed. (After the season, the NL voted to void the results of the 1877 Cincinnati season. The 1878 *Spalding's Guide* does not list the Cincinnati club in its official records. All modern sources have readmitted Cincinnati to the record books). The new club folded after the 1879 season and was replaced by a third club that retained only three players. This new club, in fact, fielded a new team. (For an excellent summary of this franchise, see Ivor-Campbell's recent article in *Nineteenth Century Notes*.)

The 1889 Brooklyn AA club moved to the NL and was replaced in 1890 by a new Brooklyn AA team.

The 1890 Philadelphia club was disbanded in favor of the Philadelphia club that had played in the Players' League in 1890.

After the 1890 season, the Cincinnati NL club gained entrance into the Players' League, which soon dissolved. In the meantime, the NL had granted entrance to a new Cincinnati club. The erstwhile PL club first attempted to join the AA, but subsequently dissolved, which allowed the new NL club to sign up virtually all of its players. Nonetheless, a Cincinnati fan would likely have felt that he was rooting for the same team.

The 1960 Senators moved to Minnesota and were replaced with an expansion team.

Clubs that left the major leagues and returned—It is important to remember that clubs that entered the major leagues in the nineteenth century were not necessarily brand new—they may have been an existing club that played the previous year in a minor league. Similarly, a club that left the major leagues often played in the minor leagues the next year. Although these transitions are beyond the scope of this article, a related issue does concern us here. There have been a few occasions when a club left the major leagues and later returned.

Left	Club	Returned	League
1871	Chicago White Stockings (Chi-n)	1874	NA (Chi-n)
1884	Washington Nationals (Was-U)	1886	NL (Was-N)
1889	Baltimore Orioles (Bal-a)	1890	AA (Bal-a)

The White Stockings collapsed after the 1871 season when the great Chicago Fire destroyed their ballpark, their offices, their uniforms and several players' homes. They took two years off, then returned to the NA in 1874. They remain in Chicago today.

As with the 1872 and 1873 Washington clubs, there is confusion about the relationship between the 1873 and 1875 clubs. Ivor-Campbell's "Team Histories" chapter in *Total Baseball* considers the 1875 club a continuation of the 1873 Nationals. Other sources disagree, though it is probably an academic exercise due to the rules of entry in the NA.

After the collapse of the UA, the Nationals played in the Eastern League for one year before joining the NL in 1886.

The Orioles quit the American Association after the 1889 season after a dispute with AA authorities. They played in the Atlantic Association in 1890, but answered the call to return to the AA late in the year to replace the Brooklyn club.

Clubs that folded in midseason and were replaced—During the National Association era, clubs often failed to finish the season. Due to the nature of the league these clubs were never replaced, though on at least one occasion a club (1871 Brooklyn Eckfords) entered the league midyear to complete a disbanded club's schedule. These games did not count in the standings.

Since the NA era, there have been several occasions on which a club disbanded in midseason and was replaced by a new club, usually one already playing in another league. These clubs began playing without inherting their predecessors' won-loss record.

Year	Defunct club	New club	Prev. Lg.
1884	Wash. Statesmen (Was-a)	Richmond Virginians (Vir-a)	Eastern
1884	Altoona Mtn. Cities (Alt-U)	KC Cowboys (KC-a)	-none-
1884	Pittsburgh Keystones (CP-U)	Milw. Brewers (Mil-U)	NW
1884	Phil. Keystones (Phi-U)	Wilming. Quicksteps (Wil-U)	Eastern
1884	Wilming. Quicksteps (Wil-U)	St. Paul Apostles (StP-U)	NW
1890	Brooklyn Gladiators (Bro-a)	Baltimore Orioles (Bal-a)	Atl. Assn.
1891	Cinc. Kelly's Killers (Cin-a)	Milwaukee Brewers (Mil-a)	Western

Altoona was the smallest post-NA city in major league history (approximately 25,000) and played only twenty-five games (6-19). The club folded so early that the UA had no minor leagues to raid, so the Kansas City club was quickly formed.

The 1884 Milwaukee Brewers won the Eastern League, then moved over to finish out the UA season for Pittsburgh (which had moved from Chicago). The Brewers were probably one of the better teams in the league, finishing 8-4.

The St. Paul Apostles (2-6) never played a home game.

The short-lived Richmond AA entry in 1884 was the first major league club from the former Confederacy. The second was the Houston Colt 45's in 1962.

Clubs bought out by, or merged into, another existing club—Several times in major league history, a folding club has managed to sell out its assets, including some or all players, to another club before going under. In some of the following cases, sources differ about whether one club bought out the other's assets, or whether there was a true merger.

Year	Dissolving Club	Existing Club
1884	Cleveland Blues (Cle-N)	St. Louis Maroons (StL-N)
1884	Columbus Buckeyes (Col-a)	Pittsburgh Alleghenies (Pit-a)
1885	Providence Grays (Pro-N)	Boston Red Stockings (Bos-N)
1885	Buffalo Bisons (Buf-N)	Detroit Wolverines (Det-N)
1888	Detroit Wolverines (Det-N)	Cleveland Spiders (Cle-N)
1890	Philadelphia Athletics (Phi-a)	Philadelphia Quakers (Phi-P)
1890	Brooklyn Wonders (Bro-P)	Brooklyn Bridegrooms (Bro-N)
1890	Chicago Pirates (Chi-P)	Chicago White Stockings (Chi-N)
1890	New York Giants (NY-P)	New York Giants (NY-N)
1890	Pittsburgh Burghers (Pit-P)	Pittsburgh Alleghenies (Pit-N)
1899	Cleveland Spiders (Cle-N)	St. Louis Cardinals (StL-N)
1899	Baltimore Orioles (Bal-N)	Brooklyn Bridegrooms (Bro-N)
1899	Louisville Colonels (Lou-N)	Pittsburgh Pirates (Pit-N)
1915	St. Louis Terriers (StL-F)	St. Louis Cardinals (StL-N)
1915	Chicago Whales (Chi-F)	Chicago Cubs (Chi-N)

The owners of the Cleveland Blues sold out to the St. Louis Maroons, but most of the best Cleveland players jumped to Brooklyn's AA club before the deal could be consummated.

The two Philadelphia clubs merged after the 1890 season but the resulting club was made up mainly of players from the PL club even though the club ended up in the AA.

Four other PL clubs were amalgamated with their NL counterparts as part of the PL collapse.

The three 1899 "mergers" were a result of "syndicate" ownership, which had taken hold in the NL. In each of these cases, the clubs had been owned by the same entity, so when the NL contracted from twelve clubs to eight, it was just a question of transferring the best players from one club to another. For example, Louisville "traded" Honus Wagner, Fred Clarke, Tommy Leach, Rube Waddell, Deacon Phillippe, and others to Pittsburgh for a much less impressive package of players. A few weeks later, the NL bought out the Louisville franchise.

The 1915 mergers were part of the agreement that dissolved the Federal League.

Conclusions—In 1876, there was one major league that played in eight cities: New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Hartford. In 1900, there was one major league that played in a remarkably similar list of eight cities—Pittsburgh and Brooklyn had replaced Hartford and Louisville. In the intervening twenty-four years, there had been a vast turnover in the major leagues, with three leagues and dozens of clubs coming and going. The 1900 National League alignment lasted fifty-three years. The 1903 alignment of the new American League lasted almost as long. But based on the game's recent history, no sensible baseball fan in 1903 could have imagined that the two eight club leagues would remain intact and in the same cities for the next half-century.

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Frank "Home Run" Baker

Not just his nickname was interesting

Marty Payne

Frank Baker started in major league baseball as one of those raw country lads so endearing to sports writers of his era, and retired a gentleman farmer. Born on a farm just south of Trappe, Maryland, which had been in the family since before the Revolution, he began to play baseball with his brother Norman and the other children of the area before starring for the Trappe High School team. Until then, few saw him as anything more than another farmer's son.

Helen Berry went to school with Baker and once described the boy everybody in Trappe knew: "He came in late in the fall after the farm work was finished...A rather clumsy country boy...so dark he seemed almost sun-baked, with thick black lashes and dirty hands." But there was always, "the typical Baker grin, so good natured and sympathetic it was consoling...Frank was always the one to sharpen slate pencils, turn the jumping rope and climb the mulberry tree and throw down mulberries to the girls who couldn't climb; very quiet and easy going..."[1]

It was his brother Norman who everyone thought would make the big leagues. He had a blazing fast ball and a temperament to match. Norman got a tryout with Connie Mack's A's, but he hated the city, opting to play for local and Baltimore independent teams.

Frank followed in his older brother's footsteps, pitching for the high school team until he came of age. Preston Day, owner of a local sawmill, had connections with the local semipro circuit. He was brother to the father-in-law of future major leaguer, Buck Herzog, then a nineteen-year-old manager of the Ridgely Club. Day alerted Herzog to Baker's talents, and he was signed to a contract of $5 a week plus board. The young Trappe farm boy was recruited as a pitcher, but with Sam Frock and Si Nichols sharing those duties, he got little chance and had to settle for some action in the outfield. Early in the season the starting third baseman went down with an injury, so Herzog tried Baker there. The manager was so impressed with what he saw that he was left at that position for the rest of the year.

Baker would later be a part of the famous "$100,000 infield" for the A's with Jack Barry, Stuffy McInnis, and Eddie Collins, and now he found himself on its equivalent among local semipros. The Ridgely squad boasted of five future major league players. With Nichols at short, Herzog at second, Baker at third, Bill Kellogg at first, and Frock on the mound, this small-town team proved a worthy competitor for clubs from larger communities.[2]

Baker signed with the always solid Sparrows Point team of Baltimore in 1906 for $15 a week, but returned to the shore to play for Cambridge late in the season. He turned down an offer to play in the Texas League the following year and, after a five-game tryout with Jack Dunn and the Baltimore Orioles of the Eastern League, signed again with the independent Cambridge Club in May. This was one of Dunn's few

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Marty Payne *of St. Michaels, Maryland, says,* *"This was written for my nieces who, when playing in the Home Run Baker Little League, would often ask, 'Who was Home Run Baker?' Special thanks to Barry Sparks and Mark Millikin."*

misjudgments of talent. The Oriole manager thought, like many of Baker's old schoolmates, that he was nothing but a clumsy farm boy. The Cambridge Club sponsors spared no expense in their pursuit of players and their claim to the unofficial Maryland State Championship. Baker and his manager-catcher Leonard Bassett were the only starters from the May lineup to finish the season with the team.[3]

An offer by the Reading club lured Baker into Organized Baseball in 1908, where he came to the attention of Connie Mack and was purchased for $500. He was out of the major leagues only twice over the next fifteen years—both times at his own choice.

Baker's easygoing temperament and an aversion to tobacco, alcohol, and abusive language quickly endeared him to many fellow players and fans. A hero in the eyes of the people he grew up with, towns from Salisbury to Easton proclaimed him as their native son once he had established himself in the major leagues. Cambridge felt it had as much claim as anyone. While playing for the local independent team, he had met and fallen in love with Ottilie Tschantre, the daughter of a local jeweler. When his busy schedule permitted it, Baker was often seen going down to Kirby's Wharf where he would get into a skiff and row the two miles across the Choptank River from Trappe to Cambridge in order to visit his sweetheart. Ottilie soon moved with her family to Oakland, California, but once Baker had secured his position on the Athletics, he traveled to the West Coast and proposed.[4]

Baker led the American League in triples his rookie year with nineteen, and accepted the most chances at third base. Many agreed with Mack that he covered more ground at that position than anybody in the league. Seven times he would lead the junior circuit in putouts at his position, at one time owning the lifetime mark for the American League. No longer considered a clumsy farm boy, Baker gained a reputation as the best third baseman in the league.

But it was an era of cutthroat baseball, and Baker's reaction to the game's most cutthroat player earned him a reputation he found difficult to live down. In a 1909 game in Detroit, Ty Cobb went hard into third with a hook slide, cutting Baker on the arm as he applied a bare handed tag. A player was supposed to accept these tactics as part of the game and say nothing, but the press and the fans publicly vented their anger over the incident. Cobb received several death threats, and when the Tigers came to Shibe Park the stands were filled with policemen in anticipation of a riotous crowd. Nothing more came of it, but it did earn Baker a reputation as being "spike shy."[5]

The 1910 World Series brought the young player to the attention of baseball fans throughout the country. The A's were led by Jack Coombs' three victories over Chicago, while Baker's .409 average for the Series was bested only by teammate Eddie Collins.

But it was the 1911 Series that captured the imagination of fans, especially those from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and gave Baker his lasting reputation—and his famous nickname. It was Baker and the A's against Buck Herzog and the Giants. Baker was a native and Herzog had played ball on the peninsula, married a local girl and lived on a farm outside Ridgely. They had been teammates starting out, and many credited Buck with discovering Frank and moving him to third base. Both were in the prime of their careers, and had earned solid reputations in the national pastime. The Giants were a rough and tumble lot under the fiery leadership of John McGraw, and were well aware of Baker's reputation after the incident with Cobb.[6]

The 1911 World Series is a source of much baseball legend, but contemporary accounts show that the dramatics of the contest need little embellishment.

Many say the New Yorkers were ordered to take their spikes to the A's third baseman. Baker felt that Hughie Jennings, manager of the Tigers and a former teammate of McGraw's, was responsible for telling the Giants he could be intimidated—that going hard into the bag would "send me up in the air." Fred Snodgrass was the Giant who seemed to have the most opportunity. Although Snodgrass later denied he was after Baker, he did admit that many Giants sat on the bench sharpening their spikes in full view of the A's as they took the field for the first game. The Giant outfielder was the first to have a shot at the "spike shy" Baker and would later offer a fanciful description of the incidents to Lawrence Ritter.[7]

The first game of the Series matched the peerless Christy Mathewson and Chief Bender in a classic pitching duel. By the sixth inning Baker had already singled twice and scored the Athletics' only run. In the bottom of the inning Snodgrass was awarded first base after being hit by Bender for the second time. After being sacrificed to second, he took off for third when Merkle struck out on a pitch in the dirt. Catcher Ira Thomas threw a strike to Baker, who blocked the bag as he waited for the Giant runner. Snodgrass went in hard and his spikes dug into Baker's left arm. The umpire initially called the runner out, but changed his call when he saw the ball rolling on the ground. The trainer came out and patched up Baker's cuts so play could continue. The

Giants won the game, 2-1, but the tone had been set for the Series. Baker took his revenge at the plate.

It was the sixth inning of Game 2, with the score tied, 1-1, when Collins stole a signal and relayed it to Baker, who promptly sent the Rube Marquard delivery over the fence for a two-run homer and an Athletic victory. Christy Mathewson, in his ghosted, syndicated column, criticized Marquard for allowing the blow and implied he would have done better.

The next day, the A's Jack Coombs locked horns with Matty. The Giants were ahead, 1-0, with two out in the ninth inning, and the count stood at one and one to Baker. Mathewson blamed the umpire for what happened next. Brennan called the next delivery a ball. Mathewson strongly disagreed, but he was now in the hole and had to lay the ball near the plate. Baker hit the fat curve out of the park to tie the game.

In the bottom of the tenth, with one out, Snodgrass made it to second base. The ball got away from the catcher, and he broke for third to find Baker blocking the base with the ball in his glove. Snodgrass went into the bag hard, once again spiking Baker's left arm.

This time the third baseman held on to record the out. The A's won the game in the eleventh inning.

Baker had twice refused to be goaded into a fracas that might have cost his team his services. He returned to Philadelphia a "battle-scarred hero."

A reporter noticed that the odor from the dressing on Baker's wounds was "quite distinct," and the usually reserved Baker was riled up enough that when he was pressed he finally "blurted out," "Yes, Snodgrass spiked me intentionally. He acted like a swell-headed busher. You can use those very words too."

"It has always been my policy to keep quiet about such things, but I think a fellow like this Snodgrass should be shown up in the papers. Heretofore when I was hurt I simply said nothing and stood the pain, but Snodgrass acted very mean, I think."

"After he cut me he remarked, 'If you don't get out of the way I'll cut you down. I've got a new pair of shoes and spikes for you—yes, all of us have.'"

This time, Christy Mathewson defended his teammate. "[Baker] is awkward in covering the bag and sprawls all over it, blocking the runner out. A runner is entitled to the base line and any player knows when he tries to block a runner off he is likely to get spiked. Snodgrass was well within his rights when he slid into Baker yesterday and only did what nine out of every ten runners would have done under the same circumstances."[8]

The A's went on to win the Series, 4-2, with Baker leading his team with nine hits, five runs batted in, and a .375 average. Not only had he hit home runs on consecutive days, but one of them had come off Christy Mathewson with the game on the line. The national press dubbed him "Home Run" Baker. At least one fan, the Rev. E. Lansing Bennett, was inspired by the muse to record this event, and it shows the excitement generated by Baker's heroics in the Series. With apologies to the Reverend Bennett, only a portion of the poem is cited,

Then a silent youth named Baker
Came to bat and toed the plate.
His eagle eye was gleaming
And his batting pose was great.
But Matty—Perilous Matty—
Had predicted what he'd do
To this same Baker fella
For his weakness sure he knew.
There'd be no precipitation
Of a ball knocked from the yard,
For 'twas Matty that was pitching
Not that rattle brain Marquard.

So Matty—Perilous Matty—
Signaled Meyers and touched his hat
As he wound up for the fade-away
With Baker at the bat.
The ball poured straight across the pan,
And Matty's grin was wide.
The fade-away was working!
"Strike one!" the umpire cried.
"I'll sneak a swift one over now
And make it number two,"
Thought Matty as the horsehide
Toward the waiting Baker flew.
The rest is better left unsaid.
'Tis sad when I recall
That over near the Polo Grounds
They still hunt for that ball!
For Baker—Mighty Baker—,
With sure and deadly aim,
Had knocked another homer,
And the crowd had gone insane!

...And somewhere little glooms abide
While busy spielers hawk,
But they never speak of Baker's name
In little old New Yawk...[9]

Baker led his team again in the 1913 Series with nine hits, a home run off Marquard, and seven RBIs in a five-game defeat of the Giants. It seemed Mack's juggernaut would last forever, but it ended with the embarrassing loss to the Miracle Braves in 1914.

Mack decided to dismantle his team. He claimed his "$100,000 infield" was aging, but competition with the new Federal League also played an important role. The outlaw league lured star players away from Organized Baseball with lucrative contracts, while others used the threat as leverage in negotiations. Mack quickly threw in the towel when confronted with this new competition for players. In November he got rid of the heart of his pitching staff when he released Plank, Bender, and Coombs. A month later he sold Eddie Collins to the White Sox.[10]

Baker had led the American League in home runs for four consecutive years, and in RBIs twice. He further claimed to be in the second season of a three-year contract that allowed him to retire after the 1914 season if he chose to. Baker must have felt he was in prime position to better his financial prospects. But both Mack and Baker would characterize the subsequent salary dispute as a "retirement."

In December, 1914, the St. Louis Federals announced that Baker would soon be signed. Baker

flatly denied this rumor saying, "I haven't given a thought to the Federals and don't intend to. There has been no disagreement between Connie Mack and myself and I am signed up with the Athletics for next year. I have not boned Mack for an increase in salary. You may print all I said."[11]

Connie Mack shocked the baseball world two months later when he announced to a banquet of Philadelphia sports writers that Baker had retired. Baker put the Federal League matter to rest when he explained his decision to a local reporter. "Now, before the start, let me put you straight on this Federal League talk. They have nothing to do with my quitting the game. I have not the slightest intention of going with them. I am just as much in love with baseball as ever, and quite likely I will amuse myself around here this summer batting out a few with the boys.

"I've had it in mind all winter that it was much more comfortable down here on the farm than jaunting around the country. I am sick and tired of traveling, so I notified Connie that I would not play again...

"If the yearning for the big show ever gets too strong...Connie Mack is the first man I shall ask for a job...I don't need the money and I'm going to please my own fancy."

His manager confirmed these convictions, explaining that in recent years it had taken an annual visit to the farm to coax his reluctant star back to the baseball wars. He admitted that Baker signed his latest contract with the stipulation that he would be allowed to retire at the end of the season. "He does not have to play ball for a living any more, and says he has grown tired of traveling around the country"[12]

He may not have needed the money, but few saw Baker's retirement story as other than a bargaining tactic that would let him out of his contract. In March, Hughie Jennings referred to Baker as a "hold out." As opening day approached, most thought Baker would return to baseball, and he seemed to be leaving the door open when he said, "I don't know a thing more than I already told the press. So far as I am concerned, it looks like I'm going to be a farmer. But as I have said before, if a sufficiently large offer is made by the Athletics, I shall take it up and return to the diamond. Now, that's straight."[13]

Once the season began, the relationship between Mack and Baker began to deteriorate. In late April Mack declared he was through with Baker and wouldn't let him out of his contract for a million dollars. A month later Baker said he was yet willing to return to the Athletics if Mack would tear up his three-year contract, but his stubborn manager would not give in.

But Baker couldn't rid himself of the baseball bug as easily as he had thought. During the course of the summer he kept busy playing for the Upland, Pennsylvania, club in the Delaware County League, the Trappe town team, and the Easton Club of the independent Peninsula League. He also played for Atlantic City and for Accomac, Virginia, at the Pocomoke Fair. Local fans took this opportunity to pay tribute to their hero. Easton held a Home Run Baker Day before one of their games, presenting him with a fine silver service set in a ceremony at home plate. Other towns took the cue, and he was soon being feted up and down the peninsula. Baker would graciously agree to play for the local club after the ceremonies. Federalsburg, Berlin, and Crisfield were among the town teams for which he played.[14]

In February, 1916, his contract was dealt to the Yankees, and he reported to New York that spring.

Many thought that Mack dealt Baker to the last-place club as a way to punish him, while others thought Mack was doing Baker a favor, since the Yankees could afford his price. Some even believed the American League brokered the deal, hoping Baker would be a drawing card for the Yankees against the rival Giants. Whatever the reasons, the Yankees had been after Baker for a year, and Mack didn't deal his star third baseman until they raised their offer to $37,500. Early in the season, Baker severely injured his ribs chasing a foul ball into the stands, and he missed much of the year.

The game seems to have passed Baker during his year on the farm. The seasons with the Yankees were respectable, but his 52-ounce bat no longer carried the thunder it once had.

In February, 1920, news went out that the Baker home was in quarantine. His wife Ottilie and their daughter had scarlet fever. Representatives of the Yankees were in communication with their third baseman, and the rumor was that he would not play in the coming season. A few days later, Mrs. Baker passed away. Baker told a reporter through a cracked door at the still quarantined home, "The death of Mrs. Baker has killed all chances of my playing baseball again...Since the death of my wife I have lost interest in the game and feel I could not do justice to myself or the club if I entered the sport this year."[15]

Baker's mother moved in to care for the still sick child, and to help run the household. It appears that he genuinely felt that the children, the farm, and his

other business interests would keep him occupied. But in April he went with a friend on a trip to Chester, Pennsylvania, and before long, he was playing baseball again. He returned to the Upland Club for which he had played in 1915, but his family and farm were his priorities. In August he visited New York to "take in a few games" and he came home having agreed to play again for the Yankees in 1921.

He was assuming more of a utility and pinch-hitting role now, as he watched Babe Ruth redefine the home run. Baker played in two more World Series with the Yankees, in 1921 and 1922. In thirteen major league seasons, Baker appeared in six fall classics. Not bad for a clumsy country boy.

He hung up his spikes in 1922, and married Margaret Mitchell of Baltimore, by whom he would father two more children. He wanted to settle into a life of working the family's three farms and do a little duck hunting, but the Class D minor leagues had replaced independent baseball on the peninsula, and a call was sent out to Trappe.

Easton had gained entry into the Eastern Shore League for the '24 season, and Baker was asked to manage the club. He agreed, provided the Rev. Donaldson of Easton's Christ Church was named president. It was a lackluster season for the Easton Club, notable only for the introduction of another country boy to Organized Baseball. Dell Foxx, a contemporary and competitor of Baker's in the days of independent baseball on the peninsula, had come

Frank "Home Run" Baker's Playing Career

b. March 13, 1886, Trappe, Md.
d. June 28, 1963, Trappe, Md.

1905	Ridgely (Independent)
1906	Sparrows Point (Baltimore Ind.)
	Cambridge (Independent)
1907	Baltimore (Eastern League)
	Cambridge (Independent)
1908	Reading (Tri State League)
1908-14	Philadelphia (American League)
1915	Trappe (Independent)
	Upland (Independent Delaware County League)
	Easton Club (Independent Peninsula League)
	Accomac (Independent)
	Fredricksburg (Independent)
	Berlin (Independent)
	Crisfield (Independent)
1916-19	New York (American League)
1920	Upland (Ind. Delaware County League
1921-22	New York (American League)
1924	Easton (Eastern Shore League)

down from Sudlersville to tell him about his son. Baker knew raw talent when he saw it and he signed sixteen-year-old Jimmie Foxx as a catcher.

A player's talent, acquired skills, and feats on the diamond are worshipped by his fans, but a man crosses a discernable line from the heroic to the human when he assumes the responsibility of managing a baseball team. Baker returned to manage the Easton team in 1925, but not all were satisfied. Many thought the team should have done better the previous year, and the disappointing play continued. There was also dissatisfaction over the sale of Jimmie Foxx.

Baker had gone up to see his two former teams in a series during the 1924 season to tout his new phenom. He later said New York laughed at him when he portrayed Foxx as a righthanded Ruth. Mack seemed more receptive. Other major league scouts began to show up at Easton games, and Baker quickly steered his prospect to the Athletics for the purchase price of $2,000.

Foxx's account may shed some light on his manager's intentions. Jimmie recollected that Baker encouraged him to go with Connie Mack since he would get his chance with the Athletics sooner than he would with the Yankees. There may have been another motivation as well. When Mack was once again dismantling his team in the early 1930s, he asked Foxx which teams he would be interested in playing for. Foxx replied that he would go anywhere but New York, referring to that deep Death Valley in Yankee Stadium's left field.

Baker took the heat for looking out for the young player's future. Even a novice fan knew that the $2,000 paid to Foxx was a paltry sum for such a promising talent, and with the Easton Club doing poorly in the first half of the 1925 season, the "uptown managers" were grumbling. In July both Donaldson and Baker were sacked.[16]

Baker occasionally dabbled with playing or coaching other area teams but was soon out of local baseball altogether. He returned to farming, hunting, and raising a family. Up at 6 AM every morning to work the fields, he was more than a farmer in his community. He served several terms on the Trappe Town Board, acted as tax collector, was director of the State Bank of Trappe, and was active in the volunteer fire company. Baker was deeply respected in his community.

He never lost his love for baseball, and in later years was often seen at local Little League, Pony League, and Babe Ruth League games. These were particular favorites since he thought that the league activity promoted family unity, not like his day when boys simply ran off to a vacant field to play. Today, the Talbot County Little League is named for him.

Though he had all the respect and admiration he ever wanted at home, he was not recognized for his contributions to the game by entry into the Hall of Fame. It was now in the hands of the Veterans Committee, who met sporadically and did not appear interested.

In the early 1950's a friend, Sherwood Yates of Cambridge began to write letters—hundreds of them—to sportswriters throughout the country, and to nationally prominent citizens. Local newspapers, The Easton *Star-Democrat*, the *Daily Banner* of Cambridge, and the Salisbury *Times* picked up on it, and soon there was a national campaign in the works. As much as Baker deserved the honor, the communities themselves seemed to need it. The Veterans Committee belatedly selected Baker to the Hall in February 1955. In typical taciturn Eastern Shore fashion he remarked, "It's better to get a rosebud while you're alive than a whole bouquet after you're dead." Actually he was quite proud of the honor, as he was heard to say, "I'm walking with a light step today."[17]

After attending the Hall of Fame ceremonies in the fall of 1961 he suffered a stroke. The following spring, as he waited for the opening day ball game to come on the television, he confessed to a friend his true feelings for the game he twice forsook for principle and priorities, "Baseball is a great game. The older I get the nuttier I get about it."[18]

Notes:

1. Quoted from Preston Dickson, *Trappe: The Story of an Old-Fashioned Town* (Easton, Md., 1976), p. 100.

2. From an article on Buck Herzog and his rise to the major leagues, "Work and Win is Clever Motto of Charley Herzog," by C. Starr Matthews in the Baltimore *Sun*, March 12, 1911. Bill Kellogg was a veteran of the Baltimore semi pro circuits and the leading hitter of the Salisbury Club in 1902-03. He was a utility player for Buck Herzog and the Cincinnati Nationals in 1914. Si Nichols was a teammate of Herzog's at the University of Maryland and played six seasons in the major leagues. He started at shortstop for the Philadelphia Athletics in 1907. Sam Frock pitched

for the Boston and Pittsburgh National League clubs for four seasons and was with Pittsburgh for the 1909 World Series. Buck Herzog had a thirteen-year career with Boston, New York, Cincinnati and Chicago of the National League. He played in four World Series and managed Cincinnati 1914-16.

3. Baker's early career is presented in theEaston, Md., *Star-Democrat*, February 4, 1955. Other local sources include the Dorchester *Democrat-News*, May-September, 1907, and the Cambridge *Daily Banner*, May-June, 1907. See also Martin Appell and Burt Goldblatt: *Baseball's Best Hall of Fame Gallery* (McGraw Hill).

4. The story of Baker's courtship is told in Preston Dickson, *Trappe: The Story of an Old-Fashioned Town*.

5. In a letter to Taylor Spink of *The Sporting News* dated February 15, 1955, Ty Cobb explained that the charges against him were "unfair and untrue." He further asserted that Baker was not responsible for the acusations that led to the public outcry. The Sporting News Website.

6. In the opinion of Christy Mathewson, the personalities of the "stoic" Baker and the "high-strung" Herzog reflected those of their respective teams and the managers. John McGraw drove the Giants hard and called every play on the field, while Connie Mack let the Athletics play their own game. Mathewson felt that since most of the Giants were so dependent on their manager for direction, the self-reliant Philadelphia players were better suited to handling the pressures of a World Series. This was not a fault of McGraw's so much as a necessity, given the talent of the club.

He says of Baker prior to the first game, "It was ten o'clock, and 'Home Run' Baker, stretching to his feet, yawned abysmally and announced: 'I want my sleep.'" A half hour later Herzog would reply to a friend, "I'm not a bit sleepy. I could stay up all night." Mathewson went on to say, "This little incident shows the difference. The Athletics are a calm, stoical crew, while the Giants happen to be composed of a number of highly strung, nervous, almost temperamental players. And through the games that followed those who knew these things forecast the outcome. As day by day the tension tightened, the Giants cracked wider and wider, until in the last contest, as a result of the nervousness, they showed to total disadvantage." Mathewson made these comparisons in an article he wrote for *Everybody's Magazine*, October 1914, "Why we Lost Three World Championships," which was reviewed and summarized in the Easton *Star Democrat*, October 3, 1914.

7. What a local reporter referred to as "Baker's Iron Nerve" is recounted by Fred Snodgrass In Lawrence Ritter, *The Glory of Their Times*, (New York: Macmillan, 1966) pp. 103-106. Snodgrass's version of the spiking incident is far different from contemporary accounts. According to the Giant centerfielder, he was on second base in Game 1 watching Bender snap his curves in the dirt. When one got away from the catcher he broke for third. Baker waited in front of the base. He had no chance with a hook slide so he went straight at the bag. The collision knocked the ball from Baker's grasp, and when the play was over, Snodgrass's spikes had torn Baker's pants from knee to hip and he suffered a slight abrasion on the leg. A blanket had to be brought out to cover the third baseman so he could change his pants and play could continue.

According to Snodgrass, a similar situation arose a few days later.

This time Baker held the ball in the collision, but once again, his pants were torn and he suffered a mild abrasion. Snodgrass was much chagrined that the baseball public vilified him for what he claimed were unintentional incidents. Compare this version to what was reported at the time.

8. Quoted from the Baltimore *Sun*, October 19, 1911, as reported by C. Starr Mathews. Christy Mathewson's defense of Snodgrass, and his account of the home run are from his syndicated column from the New York *Herald* printed in the same issue of the *Sun*. Events of the first three games of the World Series are from the Baltimore *Sun*, October 15, 1911, Baltimore *Sun*, October 17, 1911, and Baltimore *Sun*, October 19, 1911. One of the other often repeated stories of the 1911 World Series is that Baker's home run off of Mathewson came with two strikes. One account even states that he barely fouled off strike three before the blast.

9. From an undated clipping from the Easton *Star-Democrat* in the Baseball File at the Talbot County (Maryland) Free Library.

10. See "Why the Athletics were Scrapped," *Literary Digest*, 51:74, July 24, 1915.

11. The St. Louis dispatch began, "J. Franklin Baker will leap from the Mackmen to the St. Louis Federals. He will take the jump sometime within the next two weeks." Phil Ball, manager of the St. Louis Federals went on to say, "We do not want a lawsuit over Baker. We don't want anymore lawsuits than necessary. I have reason to believe, however, that we can get Baker without the chance of being beaten afterward in court." Easton *Star-Democrat*, December 12, 1914.

12. Easton *Star-Democrat*, February 20, 1915.

13. In spite of St. Louis's contention, Baker consistently denied ever negotiating with the outlaws. He appeared to be perfectly willing to return to the Athletics, provided he received what he considered to be fair market value for his services. From a feature article on Baker and his family and life on the farm in the Easton *Star-Democrat*, April 10, 1915. However,C. Starr Matthews reported differently in the Baltimore *Sun*, December 30, 1915. According to the story, Baker met in Philadelphia with president Gilmore of the Federal League, and was handed a $10,000 check as an inducement to sign a $40,000 five-year contract guaranteed even if the league failed. Baker supposedly refused the check, preferring to play in the American League.

14. Baker's playing independent baseball was another source of controversy. When the Peninsula League met to form, the Salisbury and Cambridge clubs protested Easton's use of Baker. They proposed that he rotate his services between the four participants. Easton refused to take part in the scheme. As far as they were concerned, they could have a league with Baker playing for Easton, or have no league at all. Salisbury and Cambridge offered a compromise that Baker play at least five games a week, but late season statistics show he appeared in only nine of thirty games for the Easton Club. See the Easton *Star Democrat*, July 31, 1915, and September 11, 1915.

In April of 1915, E.M. Hackney, president of the Philadelphia Suburban League, tried to support Organized Baseball by protesting Baker playing for Upland, saying he was a contract jumper. When Baker was granted approval to play, President Rogers and three leagues resigned from the Interstate Association in protest. (Notes of Barry Sparks.)

15. Easton *Star-Democrat*, February 21, 1920.

16. The partnership of Donaldson and Baker was recounted by the Rev. Donaldson for the Easton *Star-Democrat*, March 25, 1955.

17. Easton *Star-Democrat*, February 4, 1955

18. Easton *Star-Democrat*, July 3, 1963.

See also:

"Home Run Baker's Rise," *Literary Digest*, 44:718, April 6, 1912.

"Explaining the Athletic's victory," *Literary Digest*, October 25, 1913.

Craig Carter, ed., *World Series Records* (St Louis: Sporting News, 1984).

Cooperstown: Where Baseball Legends Live (St. Louis: Sporting News).

The All-Century Team

Best season version

Ted Farmer

Most baseball enthusiasts were probably fairly satisfied with the All-Century Team selected last year. With a few notable exceptions (Foxx and Alexander come readily to mind), voters did a decent job.

But what if you were asked to select a team based upon the century's best season at each position? This sounds like it might be a more difficult task, fraught with endless arguments. Actually, though, I had realatively little trouble coming up with the offering that follows. (The second team was a different story, particularly since I restricted its members to players who did not appear on the first team. There have been too many great players to let one or two—specifically Ruth and Hornsby—hog spots on both squads.)

First Base, Jimmie Foxx, 1932—Foxx's 1932 season is almost as legendary as the Beast himself. This was the year that rainouts and recent changes in certain ballparks probably cost Jimmie the seasonal home run record. In addition to his awesome offensive numbers, he also led the league in fielding average (.994) at his position. Double X was inexplicably, inexcusably, left off MLB's All-Century Team, but he finds redemption here. (Asterisk indicates league leader.)

Ave.	SA	H	HR	HR%	R	RBI
.364	*.749	213	*58	*9.9	*151	*169

Second Base, Rogers Hornsby, 1922—Although he was the National League's greatest offensive force throughout the 1920s, he outdid himself in 1922. Had he led the league in triples, he would be the only player in history to finish first in batting average, slugging average, hits, doubles, triples, home run percentage, runs, and RBIs. No second baseman will ever have a better season. Ever.

BA	SA	H	2B	HR	HR%	R	RBI
*.401	*.722	*250	*46	*42	*6.7	*141	152

Shortshop, Alex Rodriquez, 1996—Rodriquez combined Wagner-type average with Banks-type power. Along with his league-leading .358 batting average, he set a record for shortshops in doubles (54) and extra-base hits (91). He also scored more runs than any shortshop in history, and his 379 total bases tied Banks' 379 in 1958 for best ever.

BA	SA	H	2B	R	RBI
*.358	.631	215	*54	*141	123

Third Base, Mike Schmidt, 1980—Leading the Phillies to their only World Series victory is almost enough to put the preeminent third sacker on this list. As was the case for his career, the power/fielding combination rates ahead of anyone else. An MVP, Gold Glove, and World Series winner in 1980.

BA	SA	HR	HR%	R	RBI
.286	*.624	*48	8.8	104	*121

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Left Field, Ted Williams, 1941—A batting average over .400, a slugging average over .700, and an on-base percentage of .551 make this an easy choice.

BA	SA	HR	HR%	R	RBI	BB
*.406	*.735	37	*8.1	*135	120	*145

Center Field, Ty Cobb, 1911—His inclusion may be bad for team chemistry and clubhouse morale, but in 1911 he led the league in batting average, slugging average, runs, RBIs, and stolen bases. It was an accomplishment that was never duplicated—except by himself in 1917.

BA	SA	H	2B	3B	R	RBI	SB
*.420	*.621	*248	*47	24	*147	*144	*83

Right Field, Babe Ruth, 1921—The player is obvious, the year, much more difficult. The game's all-time greatest player put up many of the all-time greatest seasons, but I'll take this one because of the runs and RBI totals.

BA	SA	H	HR	HR%	R	RBI	BB
.378	*.846	204	*59	*10.9	*177	*171	*144

Catcher, Roy Campanella, 1953—His runs total and higher batting average give him the edge over Bench's 1970 season.

BA	HR	R	RBI
.312	41	103	*142

Pitcher, LH, Sandy Koufax, 1965—With all due respect to the great seasons of Lefty Grove, Sandy's 1965 is simply superior. And the next best is probably his 1963. This season rates higher because of the strikeout record and the World Series ERA of 0.38.

W	L	PCT	ERA	CG	IP	SO
*26	8	.765	*2.04	*27	*335.2	*382

Pitcher, RH, Pedro Martinez, 1999—Adjusting for conditions is tricky business, but in the greatest age of hitting (particularly power hitting) ever, Martinez put up Deadball Era numbers. His strikeout-to-walks margin is scary, and he came within one walk of becoming the first pitcher to lead his league in most strikeouts per nine innings, fewest hits per nine innings, and fewest walks per nine innings.

W	L	PCT	SO	BB	ERA
*23	4	*.851	*313	37	*2.07

Relief Pitcher, Dennis Eckersley, 1990—Not only was the Eck nearly unhittable, but you could barely coax a walk out of him. His WHIP ratio equaled his ERA, a near-ludicrous 0.61. Two saves and a 0.00 ERA in the LCS edge out his 1992 effort, which was almost as dominant.

W	L	SV	ERA	WHIP	BB
4	2	48	0.61	0.61	4

Second Team All-Century

1B	Lou Gehrig, 1934
2B	Nap Lajoie, 1901
SS	Ernie Banks, 1958
3B	George Brett, 1980
LF	Hack Wilson, 1930
CF	Joe DiMaggio, 1941
RF	Chuck Klein, 1930
C	Johnny Bench, 1970
LHP	Lefty Grove, 1931
RHP	Walter Johnson, 1913
RP	Bobby Thigpen, 1990

...Just for fun
The All Warfare Team

C	Admiral Schlei		Colonel Ferson
1B	Tank Carr	SP	Bullet Joe Bush
2B	Sure Shot Dunlap		Sarge Bagby
SS	Buckshot Wright		General Crowder
3B	Battleship Gremminger		Cannonball Crane
OF	"Pistol" Pete Reiser	Bench	Allen Battle
OF	Jimmy "Toy Cannon" Wynn		Admiral Berry
OF	Pete "The Gladiator" Browning		Ray Blades
			Flame Thrower Fanok
			Hy Gunning
			Howitzer Moss
			Sailor Newkirk
			Shotgun Rogers
			War Sanders
		Mgr.	Burt Shotton
		Ann.	Old Commander Elson
		Owner	Colonel Ruppert

Individual Records by Decades

Wagner, Cobb, Williams, Ruth lead the way

Scott Nelson

Forget about your rookie sensations, your flashes in the pan, your sophomore jinxes! Great careers? Not here, please. This is about decades. Now that we've completed ten of them in baseball's modern era, it's interesting to take a look at individual records for each ten-year period.

Individual greatness is all about performance over time, so *some* longevity is vital, but a couple of super seasons aren't sufficient to make any of these lists. Likewise, a few mediocre summers shouldn't necessarily kill a chance to be a decade leader. And even those with relatively short careers have a chance here to make an honor list.

Career leaders are often rewarded by simple longevity, but here a good ten-year run can put a guy among the elite. Bob Elliott, for instance, had just six 100-RBI seasons in his fifteen years in the big leagues. His best season was 1947 with 113, and he never led his league. But in the '40s he topped the majors with 903 RBIs.

Guys like Elliott, Gus Suhr, and Ellis Kinder aren't anywhere near the Hall of Fame, but for one shining decade in baseball history they were the best around in some category. So just who were these stars, the best over a full decade?

The degree to which Honus Wagner dominated the twentieth century's first decade is seen in his top spot in no fewer than eight of ten batter categories. Same goes for Ty Cobb in the teens.

A fellow named Babe Ruth led in five categories in the '20s, and in fact set all-time decade records in four of them. Jimmie Foxx in the '30s, Ted Williams in the '40s, Hank Aaron in the '60s and Pete Rose in the '70s were each leaders in four categories. Rogers Hornsby in the 1920s and Roberto Clemente in the '60s were leaders in three.

Among pitchers, Walter Johnson in the teens, Hal Newhouser in the '40s and Jim Palmer in the '70s were "triple crown" winners.

Over all the years, though, only three performers were statistical leaders in more than one decade:

Williams, whose name appears six times over two decades despite missing about a third of the games while he was injured or in the military, was tops in batting and slugging averages in both the '40s and '50s. Stan Musial led in total bases in the '40s and '50s, to go along with two other appearances in the rundown. And Nolan Ryan led the majors in strikeouts in both the '70s and '80s.

Twenty-two decade leaders on the list are not found in the Hall of Fame, led by Pete Rose, of course, who was banned for gambling infractions.

Other inactive notables who've been decade leaders but aren't in the Hall include Willie Wilson, Dale Murphy, Maury Wills, Jack Morris, and John Tudor. Eddie Murray, the '80s leader in RBIs, will soon be eligible for election.

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Some who compiled top totals in a decade never led their league in a given year within the time frame. They include Mark Grace, still active, and Lou Boudreau in hits; Rose in total bases; Nellie Fox in triples; Tudor in ERA; Jeff Reardon in saves; and Bob Feller and Jim Palmer in winning percentage.

Sometimes ten also-ran performances will win the decade title.

Surprisingly, a quartet of major league career record holders never led the way for a decade in their specialty:

Hank Aaron, who owns one of the most notable marks, 755 home runs, hit 375 of them in the 1960s, but Harmon Killebrew slugged 393 in that period. Cy Young's 511 pitching victories lead the all-time career list by nearly 100, but just 232 of them came in the 1900-1909 period when Christy Mathewson won four more. (Young won 265 games in the 1890s, not covered in this study.) Ed Walsh owns the career ERA record of 1.82, but his 1.68 mark for the century's first ten years was second to Mordecai Brown's 1.63. And though Lee Smith holds the career saves record of 478, he had just 239 of them in the '90s, while John Wetteland posted 295. Smith had 358 saves in the ten years 1986-95, but that doesn't count here.

Ruth's remarkable roaring '20s produced not only five decade titles but all-time decade records in four categories: home runs (467—that's a 46.7 average for ten years!), runs scored (1,365), total bases (3,613), and slugging percentage (.740).

In addition, the '20s saw Hornsby generate the best decade ever for hits (2,085) and doubles (405). In the teens Walter Johnson recorded the best decade in this century for wins (265) and ERA (1.60).

Other all-time records for a decade: Cobb's amazing .387 batting average for the teens, Sam Crawford's 167 triples for the first ten-year period, Foxx's 1,403 RBIs in the '30s, Rickey Henderson's 838 stolen bases in the '80s, Lefty Grove's .724 winning pct. in the '30s, Ryan's 2,678 strikeouts in the '70s, and Wetteland's 295 saves in the '90s.

Interestingly, Hornsby is the only all-time decade record holder to spend all or most of his career in the National League.

Ranking decade leaders in the fifteen stat lists points to the '20s as tops, the '30s as runnerup and the '90s in third place. The '40s through '60s produced no all-time decade leaders.

Different season lengths appear to have had little effect on records over the decades. However, each team did play about fifty-three more games per decade in the '20s through '50s than in the first two decades. Seventy-two or so games per decade were added in the '60s and '70s, but strikes canceled about sixty games in each of the past two decades.

All these numbers, of course, reflect production over a specific ten-year period and ignore the claim that a decade runs, for instance, from 1991-2000. Any of the marks listed here might be exceeded within an indefinite ten-year window. But that's another story.

Leaders by the Decade
(All-Time Decade Leaders in Bold)

Batting Average (3,000 AB)

1900-09	Wagner	.351
1910-19	**Cobb**	**.387**
1920-29	Hornsby	.382
1930-39	Terry	.351
1940-49	Williams	.356
1950-59	Williams	.336
1960-69	Clemente	.328
1970-79	Carew	.343
1980-89	Boggs	.352
1990-99	Gwynn	.344

Hits

1900-09	Wagner	1,847
1910-19	Cobb	1,949
1920-29	**Hornsby**	**2,085**
1930-39	P. Waner	1,959
1940-49	Boudreau	1,578
1950-59	Ashburn	1,875
1960-69	Clemente	1,877
1970-79	Rose	2,045
1980-89	Yount	1,731
1990-99	Grace	1,754

Doubles

1900-09	Wagner	372
1910-19	Speaker	367
1920-29	**Hornsby**	**405**
1930-39	Gehringer	400
1940-49	Boudreau	339
1950-59	Musial	356
1960-69	Yastrzemski	318
1970-79	Rose	394
1980-89	Yount	337
1990-99	Grace	364

Triples

1900-09	**Crawford**	**167**

1910-19	Cobb	161
1920-29	Rice	133
1930-39	Suhr	114
	Averill	114
1940-49	Musial	108
1950-59	Fox	82
	Ashburn	82
1960-69	Clemente	99
1970-79	Carew	80
1980-89	W. Wilson	115
1990-99	L. Johnson	113

Home Runs

1900-09	H. Davis	67
1910-19	Cravath	116
1920-29	**Ruth**	**467**
1930-39	Foxx	415
1940-49	Williams	234
1950-59	Snider	326
1960-69	Killebrew	393
1970-79	Stargell	296
1980-89	Schmidt	313
1990-99	McGwire	405

Runs

1900-09	Wagner	1,014
1910-19	Cobb	1,050
1920-29	**Ruth**	**1,365**
1930-39	Gehrig	1,257
1940-49	Williams	951
1950-59	Mantle	994
1960-69	Aaron	1,091
1970-79	Rose	1,068
1980-89	Henderson	1,122
1990-99	Bonds	1,091

Runs Batted In

1900-09	Wagner	956
1910-19	Cobb	828
1920-29	Ruth	1,331
1930-39	**Foxx**	**1,403**
1940-49	Elliott	903
1950-59	Snider	1,031
1960-69	Aaron	1,107
1970-79	Bench	1,013
1980-89	Murray	996
1990-99	Belle	1,099

Total Bases

1900-09	Wagner	2,668
1910-19	Cobb	2,725
1920-29	**Ruth**	**3,613**
1930-39	Foxx	3,580
1940-49	Musial	2,388
1950-59	Musial	3,047
1960-69	Aaron	3,343
1970-79	Rose	2,804
1980-89	Murphy	2,796
1990-99	Griffey	3,125

Slugging Pct.

1900-09	Wagner	.508
1910-19	Cobb	.541
1920-29	**Ruth**	**.740**
1930-39	Foxx	.651
1940-49	Williams	.647
1950-59	Williams	.622
1960-69	Aaron	.565
1970-79	Stargell	.555
1980-89	Schmidt	.540
1990-99	McGwire	.615

Stolen Bases

1900-09	Wagner	487
1910-19	Cobb	576
1920-29	Carey	346
1930-39	Chapman	269
1940-49	Case	285
1950-59	Mays	179
1960-69	Wills	535
1970-79	Brock	551
1980-89	**Henderson**	**838**
1990-99	O. Nixon	478

Wins

1900-09	Mathewson	236-112
1910-19	**Johnson**	**265**-143
1920-29	Grimes	190-130
1930-39	Grove	199-76
1940-49	Newhouser	170-118
1950-59	Spahn	202-131
1960-69	Marichal	191-88
1970-79	Palmer	186-103
1980-89	Morris	162-119
1990-99	Maddux	176-88

Winning Pct. (1500 IP)

1900-09	Leever	.697 (166-72)
1910-19	Alexander	.675 (208-100)
1920-29	Mays	.636 (126-72)
1930-39	**Grove**	**.724** (199-76)
1940-49	M. Cooper	.626-114-68
	Feller	.626 (137-82)
1950-59	Ford	.708 (121-50)

1960-69	Koufax	.695 (137-60)
1970-79	Palmer	.644 (186-103)
1980-89	Tudor	.612 (104-66)
1990-99	P. Martinez	.682 (107-50)
Strikeouts		
1900-09	Waddell	2,251
1910-19	W. Johnson	2,219
1920-29	Vance	1,464
1930-39	Gomez	1,337
1940-49	Newhouser	1,579
1950-59	Wynn	1,544
1960-69	Gibson	2,071
1970-79	**Ryan**	**2,678**
1980-89	Ryan	2,167
1990-99	R. Johnson	2,538
Earned Run Average (1500 IP)		
1900-09	Brown	1.63
1910-19	**W. Johnson**	**1.60**
1920-29	Alexander	3.04
1930-39	Hubbell	2.71
1940-49	Newhouser	2.84
1950-59	Ford	2.66
1960-69	Koufax	2.36
1970-79	Palmer	2.58
1980-89	Tudor	3.13
1990-99	Maddux	2.54
Saves		
1900-09	J. McGinnity	22
1910-19	Sallee	32
1920-29	Marberry	75
1930-39	Murphy	54
1940-49	Page	63
1950-59	Kinder	96
1960-69	Wilhelm	152
1970-79	Fingers	209
1980-89	Reardon	264
1990-99	**Wetteland**	**295**

Two batters and two pitchers made an especially heavy impact on cumulative baseball statistics of the 1990s. Mark McGwire in home runs and slugging, Mark Grace in hits and doubles, Greg Maddux in wins and ERA and Randy Johnson in shutouts and strikeouts were tops in the decade just past.

McGwire had the third best decade in history with 405 circuit clouts, despite missing 400 games because of injuries and player strikes. (He hit just nine homers in both 1993 and 1994.)

Grace never led the National League in hits in the 90s but compiled 1,754 in ten years. In doubles, he edged Craig Biggio by two, 364-362.

Maddux beat teammate Tom Glavine 176-164 for the '90s victory title, and won the ERA crown (2.54) by a good margin over Pedro Martinez (2.83), who had the best win-loss percentage (.682) of the decade.

Johnson edged Roger Clemens in shutouts in shutouts, but had over 400 more strikeouts than runner-up Clemens.

Tony Gwynn, who batted .332 in the '80s, second to Wade Boggs' .352, easily led the '90s with a .344 mark. Barry Bonds and Lance Johnson were likewise big winners in runs scored (1,091) and triples (113), respectively, while McGwire had 23 more homers than Ken Griffey.

Griffey led in total bases with just five more than Rafael Palmeiro, and Albert Belle beat out Griffey in RBIs, 1,099-1,091.

Johnson's 2,538 strikeouts in the '90s is second only to Nolan Ryan's all-time decade mark of 2,678 in the '70s. Fourth best decade marks are claimed by Bonds (runs scored), Belle (RBIs), Griffey (total bases) and Maddux (ERA).

While Rickey Henderson set the all-time decade mark of 838 stolen bases in the '80s, he lost the '90s crown to Otis Nixon, 478-463. John Wetteland set a new all-time decade record for saves with 295, just a pair more than Dennis Eckersley, who retired after the 1998 season.

Griffey, just thirty-one years old, and Martinez, twenty-nine, appear to have the best chance to make marks in this decade. Belle, Bonds, Grace, Johnson, McGwire, Maddux and Wetteland are all in their mid-thirties. Gwynn is forty.

Henderson, nearly forty-two, is a story by himself. Not only did he set the standard for stolen bases in a decade in the 1980s, but he scored 1,122 runs, the most since Lou Gehrig in the '30s and the third highest ever. In the '90s he scored 932 times, just 33 short of making the top five for the period.

In the '90s rundown of the top five performers and ties, Bonds, Belle, Griffey and Palmeiro each appear in five of ten lists. Among starting pitchers, Johnson appears among the leaders in all five categories, Maddux and Clemens in four and Glavine in three.

Leaders in the 1990s

Batting Average
(3,600 AB)

Gwynn	.344
Piazza	.328
E. Martinez	.322
Thomas	.320
Walker	.313
Molitor	.313

Hits

Grace	1,754
Palmeiro	1,747
Biggio	1,728
Gwynn	1,713
Alomar	1,678

Doubles

Grace	364
Biggio	362
E. Martinez	358
Belle	344
Palmeiro	343

Triples

L. Johnson	113
Finley	83
DeShields	63
Offerman	62
Lofton	60

Home Runs

McGwire	405
Griffey	382
Bonds	361
Belle	351
J. Gonzalez	

Runs Scored

Bonds	1,091
Biggio	1,042
Griffey	1,002
Thomas	968
Palmeiro	965

Runs Batted In

Belle	1,099
Griffey	1,091
Bonds	1,076
Palmeiro	1,068
J. Gonzalez	1,068

Total Bases

Griffey	3.125
Palmeiro	3,120
Belle	2,949
Bonds	2,944
Thomas	2,804

Slugging Percentage
(3,600 AB)

McGwire	.615
Bonds	.602
Belle	.581
Griffey	.581
J. Gonzalez	.576
Ramirez	.576

Stolen Bases

O. Nixon	478
Henderson	463
Lofton	433
DeShields	393
Grissom	381

Wins

Maddux	176-88
Glavine	164-87
Clemens	152-89
Johnson	150-75
Brown	143-98
Brown	143-95

Percentage
(1,500 IP)

P. Martinez	.682-107-50
Mussina	.673-136-66
Johnson	.667-176-75
Maddux	.667-176-88
Glavine	.653-164-87

ERA
(1,350 IP)

Maddux	2.54
P. Martinez	2.83
Clemens	3.02
Johnson	3.14
Glavine	3.21
Cone	3.21

Shutouts

Johnson	25
Clemens	24
Maddux	23
R. Martinez	18
Cone	16
Brown	16
Erikson	16

Strikeouts

Johnson	2,538
Clemens	2,101
Cone	1,928
Smoltz	1,893
Finley	1,784

Saves

Wetteland	295
Eckersley	293
R. Myers	291
Montgomery	285
Aguilera	282

Turkey Mike Donlin

One of the twentieth century's first sports entertainment figures

Michael Betzold

Michael Joseph Donlin was born May 30, 1878, in Peoria, Illinois, the sixth child of railroad conductor John Donlin and his wife Maggie (Clayton) Donlin. He grew up in Erie, Pennsylvania.

When Mike was eight, his parents died in a bridge collapse. Young Mike had to hustle for a living and worked as a machinist. He was often in poor health, with a concave chest due to consumption. At age fifteen, he got a job as a candy seller on a California-bound train. He stayed in California, and the sun helped him grow stronger.

The speedy Donlin ran foot races when he first arrived in California. He played baseball for Los Angeles in 1897 and for the Santa Cruz Sandcrabs in 1898 and 1899. He was primarily a left-handed pitcher, but played some outfield.

University of Oregon coach Tom Kelly recalled pitching against Donlin a month after Admiral Dewey's victory at Manila Bay. Donlin's bat was painted red, white and blue, and he called it "Dewey." Kelly described him as "the typical wild Irish kid, imbued with natural baseball sense and confidence."

On the mound Donlin was strong but wild. In one game he fanned fifteen batters with his "big drop" and also homered and hit three triples.

Michael Betzold *is a Michigan-based freelance writer and the author, with Ethan Casey, of* Queen of the Diamonds: The Tiger Stadium Story. *This biography of Donlin is excerpted from the epilogue to Betzold's novel,* **Casey and the Bat**, *a "surrealistic feminist baseball revenge fantasy" about the first woman in the major leagues, in which Donlin appears as a character (see www.mbetzold.com).*

Even early in his career, Donlin was mindful of the value of publicity. With the Sandcrabs, he gave a photo of himself to San Francisco *Examiner* artist Hype Igoe, saying: "If you put a picture of me in the paper, I know I'll get a break. I know I'm going to be great."

"I am Mike Donlin"—In 1899 he pitched for Santa Cruz and hit .402 in twenty-nine games. A *Sporting News* correspondent sent clips about Donlin to editor Joe Flanner in St. Louis. Flanner underlined Donlin's stats and sent the clips to Cardinals manager/first baseman Oliver Wendell "Patsy" Tebeau. Tebeau acquired Donlin for "little more than train fare." Donlin learned he was going to the National League while he was locked up in a Santa Cruz jail for drunkenness.

Mike reported to League Park in St. Louis wearing a newspaper photo of himself clipped to his lapel. When the gatekeeper refused him entry, he proclaimed, "I am Mike Donlin," and pointed to the clipping.

In his first big league game, Donlin pitched in relief against Boston. Afterward, hearing Tebeau needed a shortstop, he volunteered. In his first game at short, he handled a dozen chances. He later recalled: "I was swelled on myself at shortstop that first day." The next day, in front of a big crowd, Donlin mishandled every chance and made several wild throws. He was moved to first base in the fifth inning and had trouble there, too.

After a few days Tebeau put Donlin in the outfield,

where he played most of his career despite erratic fielding. He batted .323 for the Cardinals in 1899 and .326 in 1900.

St. Louis teammate Ossee Schreckengost often fought with the temperamental Donlin, telling him once: "You are what I'd call a man with a $10,000 arm and a ten-cent head."

After the 1900 season Donlin jumped to Baltimore of the new American League. Baltimore's manager was the legendary "Little Napoleon," John McGraw, a brilliant tactician and a champion of intimidating, aggressive play. The scrappy Donlin was a perfect fit and the two soon became friends.

One day in Detroit, Baltimore pitcher Harry Howell was ejected for arguing a call, and Donlin responded by firing a ball at the umpire's back. On June 24, 1901, Donlin got six hits off Detroit's Roscoe Miller in six at-bats: two singles, two doubles and two triples.

Donlin's future seemed unlimited. But in March, 1902, he went on a drinking binge in Baltimore, urinated in public, and accosted two chorus girls. He was fined $250 and sentenced to six months in jail, and McGraw was forced to release him. (The Philadelphia *North American* carried a story on August 2 that the St. Louis Browns organization, and a few individual players, contributed $250 to support Donlins sister and mother while he was in jail.) Released a month early for good behavior, Donlin in August joined the Cincinnati Reds. The next year, he stayed out of trouble and almost won the batting crown, hitting .351 to Honus Wagner's .355. He also finished second in the league in runs (110) and triples (18), and third in slugging (.516).

Transcendental Graphics

Turkey Mike Donlin

To the Giants—The next spring, Donlin and some teammates were carousing in a bar during spring training in Augusta, Georgia. A customer irritated by Donlin's singing pulled a revolver on him, but manager Joe Kelley saved his life by spiriting him away. That summer, Donlin was hitting .356 when he went on another bender in St. Louis. Kelley suspended him for thirty days, then traded him to the New York Giants, where McGraw had taken over.

McGraw was glad to have Donlin back. "He was a notorious drunk and a carouser, and he had a scar running from his left cheek down to his jaw from a knifing," noted baseball historian Mike Sowell, "but Donlin knew how to hit the ball." Donlin asked the New York sportswriters to "give me an even break," and promised: "If you treat me right, I'll be on the up and up." The press and the fans in New York immediately took a liking to him.

The fiery McGraw was molding the Giants into one of the best teams of the Deadball Era. They won the pennant in 1904 behind the great pitching of Christy Mathewson and Joe McGinnity. Donlin finished the year with a .329 average, second to Wagner again.

In 1905, Donlin enjoyed his greatest season, slashing pitches into the gaps, running the bases with reckless abandon, and arguing incessantly with umpires. As captain of the team and its sparkplug, he batted a career-high .356, third best in the league, led the league with 124 runs, and was second with 216 hits. The fans loved his combativeness. The Giants again won the pennant and Donlin hit .316 in New York's victory in the World Series.

McGraw tried to keep Donlin out of trouble. One writer noted that Donlin was a "great natural hitter but not serious about the game." His fielding was notoriously shoddy and he neglected physical condi-

tioning. He often was ejected from games by umpires. But he could hit as well as anyone in baseball. A powerfully built 5-foot-9 lefty, he rarely walked, was masterful at hitting curve balls, and had power to all fields. His .468 career slugging percentage compares favorably to more famous contemporary power hitters like Wagner (.466) and Sam Crawford (.452).

"He had color and swagger," noted his New York *Sun* obituary."He was rough, tough and profane but likeable. He wore his cap at a belligerent angle over one ear, had a plug of tobacco in his jaw. He was the most picturesque player of his time and the baseball idol of Manhattan. He was scrappy, fiery, the Babe Ruth of his time."

On the field he clowned and often chatted with fans. He was dubbed "Turkey" for his strutting walk and his red neck. He hated the nickname. But he had such a following that kids imitated his strut. Off the field he was a flamboyant playboy and partygoer, a dapper dresser who always had a quip and a handshake ready for anyone he met.

In February, 1906, Donlin was arrested after punching a train conductor who found him brandishing a gun. Some accounts swore the famous ballplayer had been "set up" by a swaggering jewelry salesman named Diamond Dick. Donlin was charged with assault.

Oh you Mabel's Mike!—That spring, rumors circulated that Donlin was about to marry actress Mabel Hite following a well-publicized courtship. Hite was a stunning Broadway musical comedy sensation. She claimed she became interested in baseball after reading a reporter's unique account of how Donlin was caught stealing home: "Donlin got tired of life and suicided at the plate."

Donlin arrived at the Giants' spring training camp by himself and told teammates: "Neither now nor at any time have I any intention of making a double steal up to the altar." He added: "What is matrimony? A fumble, an error." A few weeks later, on April 11, 1906, he stole up to the altar with Hite, and newspapers soon were reporting that marriage had tamed him, loosening his attachment to the bottle.

Early that season Donlin broke an ankle sliding, finishing his season after just thirty-four games. He would never regain his blazing speed.

In the spring of 1907 Donlin demanded the same $3,300 he had been paid in 1906, plus a $600 bonus if he stayed sober all year. Owner John Brush declined. Mike held out and eventually went on the vaudeville circuit with his wife, missing the entire season.

"At first they laughed at him," said one critic, but Turkey Mike stuck with it and "fought as hard as he did in baseball." Another critic said Donlin "never was the actor he thought he was or wanted to be." It wasn't for lack of confidence. Donlin claimed: "I can act. I'll break the hearts of all the gals in the country."

Donlin returned to the Giants for the 1908 season, and huge ovations greeted him at the home opener, with the bleacherites yelling "Oh you Mabel's Mike!" In the ninth, the Giants were down, 2-1, with two out and a man on second. Donlin worked the pitcher to a full count and homered into the right field bleachers to win the game. Thousands of fans mobbed the field, slapped him on his back as he rounded the bases, took his cap and ripped the buttons off his shirt.

The 1908 season was another great one for Donlin, who finished second in the National League in batting average (.334), hits (198), RBIs (106), total bases, and slugging percentage. After the season, he won the New York *Journal* trophy as New York's most popular player. John Barrymore, one of Donlin's best friends, performed Hamlet's soliloquy at a dinner in his honor.

Vaudeville success—Vincent Bryan wrote a one-act play called *Stealing Home* for Hite and Donlin. It opened at the Hammerstein Theatre in New York on October 26, 1908, to great acclaim. *Variety* raved: "Mike Donlin as a polite comedian is quite the most delightful vaudeville surprise you ever enjoyed." The New York *Globe* said Donlin's dancing "created a small pandemonium of uproar." For the next three winters the pair performed *Stealing Home* in front of sold-out houses from Boston to San Francisco.

"Hite was so good she could carry him," wrote one critic who was not so fond of Donlin's stage abilities. "Thereafter Donlin never lost the bug." He vowed never to return to baseball because he was making more money in vaudeville. One of the greatest players of his era missed two more seasons during his prime.

The couple pantomimed their vaudeville routine for a camera, lip-syncing to dialogue they had prerecorded. The film was released with phonograph records, and the early "talkie" became a popular curiosity at theaters nationwide.

Back to the game—By 1911, *Stealing Home* had finally run its course and other vaudeville ventures with Hite were floundering. Donlin returned to his baseball career. But his hiatus from the sport, com-

bined with his customary lack of conditioning, took a toll. He had more arguments than hits for the Giants. One day he poked his finger into the press box at the Polo Grounds and told New York *Times* reporter Harry Cross: "Don't you ever call me Turkey in your paper again!"

On August 1, 1911, Donlin was sold to the lowly Boston Braves. They put him in center field and he hit .315. But the Braves didn't need an aging star and his salary demands, so they traded him to Pittsburgh. He played seventy-seven games in right field for the Pirates in 1912 and hit .316, his tenth .300 average in eleven seasons.

That fall, Hite fell ill on a European trip. She was diagnosed with cancer. Reportedly, on her death bed she read her husband an account of Napoleon's return from Elba because "she wanted him to understand that if anything happened to her he was to quit vaudeville and go back to the game." She died in December, 1912.

That same month the Pirates put Donlin on waivers. Philadelphia claimed him, but Donlin announced his retirement. However, late in the summer of 1913, he tried a comeback, playing thirty-six games with minor league Jersey City. McGraw then named him to an all-star team that went on a postseason barnstorming tour through Europe, Asia and Africa. At a game in London attended by King Edward, British fans chanted "Mike from over there."

Based on Donlin's hitting on the tour, McGraw decided to give his old friend another chance. The New York *World* exclaimed, "the Apollo of the whackstick is back with the Giants." During his absence, Giants fans sometimes had sung this ditty:

If Donlin would only join the Giants
The fans would drink his health in pints

But Donlin managed only five hits in thirty-one at-bats and the club let him go. At thirty-six, he was washed up. One New York sportswriter hailed him as "one of the most picturesque, most written-about, most likeable athletes that ever cut his mark on the big circuit," and added, "there was never a better hitter."

Vaudeville and his love of the bottle likely cost Donlin a shot at Cooperstown. His .333 lifetime batting average could have earned him a spot in the Hall of Fame had he sustained it over a full career. But he played the equivalent of only seven full seasons.

In October, 1914, Donlin married Rita Ross, a member of the famous musical comedy team Ross & Fenton. Again, the marriage was childless. Donlin returned to vaudeville, pairing up with Giants teammate Marty McHale, but their act flopped.

In 1915 Donlin started his movie career, starring in a film about his own life called *Right Off the Bat*. In 1916 he managed a semipro team in New Jersey, and the next winter ran a baseball clinic and a boxing tournament in Cuba. In 1917 he managed the Memphis Chicks of the Southern League. At first he was popular with the fans, but they booed him when he put himself in to pitch and made a farce of the game. He quit the Chicks, or by some accounts was fired, in midseason. Later that year the War Department appointed Donlin to teach baseball to U.S. soldiers in France.

Hollywood—In 1918 Donlin returned to California as a scout for the Boston Braves. Immediately he got into Hollywood movies, helped by his friend John Barrymore. He appeared with the great actor in the 1918 film *Raffles*. The next year Donlin had a part in *The Right Way*.

Donlin had chronic money troubles and kept scraping for jobs in baseball and acting. His movie roles included parts in *Slide, Kelly, Slide* and *Fifth Avenue Models*.

In 1926 three films were released in which Donlin appeared. He played one of the Southern generals in Buster Keaton's classic *The General*. He appeared in *The Sea Beast*, a *Moby Dick* adaptation in which Barrymore played Ahab. And he had a part in the popular *Ella Cinders*.

Donlin was as well-liked in Hollywood as he had been in New York. He was always in demand to be an assistant director in baseball movies to give the films some authenticity. In 1927 actors and movie stars staged a minstrel show benefit to raise money to send Donlin to the Mayo Clinic for a major operation.

In 1929 Donlin had his first role in a talkie, playing a condemned convict in *Thunderbolt*. In 1931 he appeared in the boxing movie *The Iron Man*. His last role was in 1933's *Air Hostess*, which starred Ed Wynn. That spring, Donlin still wanted to get back into baseball, asking a friend if he could get a coaching job with the Giants.

A heart attack took Turkey Mike Donlin in his sleep on September 24, 1933. His funeral was attended by many ballplayers and movie stars, and the eulogy was delivered by Harry English, president of the National Vaudeville Association.

The Baseball Index

SABR effort, SABR tool

Ted Hathaway

Nearly all baseball research is drawn in some way from the printed word. Whether you're researching a player profile, statistical analysis, fan memoir, manager's biography, team history, or an economic study, you will almost inevitably end up referring to the written works of others. As a baseball researcher, you know that finding the information you need can be difficult and frustrating. The finding tools available to baseball researchers have been shallow and recent in their coverage. If you want something to help you navigate the ocean of baseball literature from before 1980, 1985, or even 1990, your options are limited, to say the least. *The Baseball Index* (formerly known as RBI) was created to address this deficiency.

What is The Baseball Index?—It is a SABR-owned index to baseball literature. An index, of course, is something that helps you find where something is located within a text or body of literature. Perhaps you use a computer product like *InfoTrac*[1] or *ProQuest*[2] to find magazine articles on a particular subject. Or, you may recall using the old *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. Whether paper-based or electronic, these indexes guide you to the information you need. *The Baseball Index* works much the same way, except that its focus is on baseball. The importance of such finding tools cannot be overstated. The difference is *knowing* where to find your information versus *guessing* where it *might* be. It is the difference between a few hours' work versus a few days or even weeks. Finding tools like indexes can give you certainty instead of serendipity.

How Does it Work?—*The Baseball Index* is the largest bibliographic baseball database available with over 150,000 records encompassing books, magazine articles, programs, pamphlets, films, recordings, songs, cartoons, and anything else that may be of interest to the baseball fan or researcher. When we index books or articles for *The Baseball Index*, we gather a variety of information that not only helps researchers locate the information they need, but also gives you an idea as to the content of each source:

- Author
- Title
- Statistical Content Type
- Photo or Illustration Content Type
- Named Persons (significant mention)
- Topics
- Publication/Publisher Name
- Publication Information (copyright date, issue date, volume number, issue number, size, indexes, bibliography, footnotes, and pagination)

Ted Hathaway *is the originator and principal director of* The Baseball Index. *A SABR member since 1988, he has contributed research presentations and articles on several baseball subjects. He has also been active in promoting and facilitating the Society's use of the Internet. He is the author of* The Senior Professional Baseball Association *(1992), the bibliography for* The Senior League Encyclopedia *(1998), and a co-author of SABR's research guide* How to Do Baseball Research. *He runs INFORM Research Services in Minneapolis.*

- Additional information for poems, songs, book reviews, etc.

You can look up information with *The Baseball Index* using any of these categories. For example:

- I need a list of all the articles you have by Roger Kahn. (You look this up under the "Author" category.)
- Who wrote the novel *The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant?* (Look it up under the "Title" category.)
- What is there on Jake Powell? (Look him up under the "Named Persons" category.)
- I'm looking for anything on the Black Sox Scandal. (look it up under the "Topics" category.)

You can also look up information in *The Baseball Index* by combining categories. For example:

- I need articles on Willie Mays that were published in "Jet" or "Ebony" magazine during 1954 and 1955. (Look up "Mays" in the "Named Persons" category combined with "Jet" and "Ebony" in the "Publications" category combined with "1954" and "1955.")

Some examples of records from *The Baseball Index*:

Author(s): **Klem, Bill; with William J. Slocum**
Title: **I Never Missed One in My Heart**
Statistics: **n**
Photos/Illustrations: **c:(1); bw:(1)**
Document Type: **Article**
Named Person(s): **Klem, Bill; O'Loughlin, Silk; Tighe, Jack; O'Rourke, Jim; McCreery, Tom; Clymer, Bill; Pulliam, Harry**
Topic(s): **Biographies; Umpires; Umpiring; Bad Calls; Anecdotes**
Publication Name: **Collier's**
Copyright Date: **1951**
Issue Date: **March 31**
Volume: **127**
Issue Number: **13**
Page(s) in Article: **30(6)**

Author(s): **n**
Title: **Jury Disagrees in Bush Case**
Statistics: **n**
Photos/Illustrations: **n**
Document Type: **Article**
Named Person(s): **Bush, Joe; Miller, Louis**
Topic(s): **Litigation; Trials; Death; Automobile Accidents**
Notes: **Bush is sued for killing man in auto accident; brief article**
Column or Series Name: **Late News Items**
Publication Name: **The Sporting News**
Copyright Date: **1916**
Issue Date: **June 15**
Volume: **62**
Issue Number: **15**
Page(s) in Article: **1(1)**

Author(s): **Lieb, Frederick G.**
Title: **The Boston Red Sox**
Copyright Date: **1947**
Statistics: **n**
Photos/Illustrations: **bw:(15)**
Document Type: **Hardbound Book**
Named Person(s): **Mack, Connie; Collins, Jimmy; Young, Cy; Criger, Lou; Stahl, Chick; Speaker, Tris; Wood, Joe; Ruth, Babe; Carrigan, Bill; Frazee, Harry; Taylor, John I.; Quinn, Bob; Yawkey, Tom; Somers, Charlie; McGreevey, Nuf Sed**
Topic(s): **Boston Red Sox; Fenway Park; Owners; Executives; Fans; Historical Knowledge; Huntington Avenue Baseball Grounds; Socks; Suicide; Popularity; World Series; 1901; 1903; 1912**
Publisher: **(New York): G.P. Putnam's Sons**
Size: **21,14.5**
Index: **n**
Bibliography: **n**
Pages in Book: **261**
Footnotes or Sourcenotes: **n**

How is it accessed?—Accessing *The Baseball Index* is not difficult. It is available through the *The Baseball Index Data Service*[3] to anyone. You need not know anything about computers, much less searching computer databases. Simply describe to us your research project and the kinds of information you need. We will use this information to search *The Baseball Index* for relevant source material, then get back to you with the total number of source references *The Baseball Index* lists on your topic, along with a fee schedule if you would like us to list them for you. This much of the service is entirely free.

Before sending in your request, think carefully about what you need. The better you can describe your topic, the more accurate we can be in finding the appropriate information. If you decide to purchase the list of source references you can chose to have them sent electronically via email, or mailed as a printout on paper. Paper is slightly more expensive and takes a few more days. Payment may be sent either directly to *The Baseball Index* address or to the SABR office.

Orders may also be charged through the SABR office. Your list of references will be sent to you promptly upon receipt of payment.

Baseball Index fees are a fraction of the cost of similar specialty database services, and SABR members enjoy a further substantial discount. We are not trying to turn a profit or fill SABR's coffers, even though we have collected over $6,500 in receipts. We charge a fee to demonstrate that researchers are willing to pay for this kind of information and also to limit the number of requests we have to process. *The Baseball Index* is a completely volunteer effort. No one in the project receives any compensation for his or her work. *The Baseball Index* is the exclusive property of SABR.

The complete *Baseball Index* database is also available for purchase as a data file for use on your own computer.[4] Using commonly available commercial software—such as Microsoft Access or Excel—you can readily search the database for sources on any baseball research topic.

In the Fall of 2000, SABR entered into an agreement with the IdeaLogical Company of New York to provide access to *The Baseball Index* through IdeaLogical's Baseball Online Library on CBS Sportsline (http://cbs.sportsline.com). This will provide free access to up to 100 source references. Researchers will be able to search using Topic, Named Person, or Author's Name. As we go to press, the web site is not yet up and running, but up-to-date information on developments may be found at: http://www.sabr.org/dataserv.shtml.

Finding your sources—Now that you have your list of sources, how do you find the sources themselves? *The Baseball Index* contains many cataloged materials that you may find it difficult to locate.

Your logical starting place is an area library—the larger, the better. An excellent guide to library holdings in the United States and Canada is OCLC's *WorldCat*.[5] This electronic resource is available through many libraries. On the state or regional level, there are many "union catalogs" which allow you to search hundreds or even thousands of library catalogs at once. In my state of Minnesota, for example, there is a catalog called *MNLink*[6] that encompasses the holdings of hundreds of public and academic libraries around the state.

Academic libraries, particularly those at large universities, often house excellent collections of books and periodicals. State historical societies are also fine sources for baseball publications. But even if you live far from large population centers, you can often order a publication through Interlibrary Loan (ILL) at your local library. It sometimes takes weeks for your request to be filled, but you can obtain many sources this way, often at low or no cost

If you can't get your materials through ILL, you might want to try a fee-based research service, which can locate your sources, photocopy, and send you the information you need. This approach can be expensive, but it may be worthwhile, expecially if you need only a few things.

Finally, if your local library finds the source you want at a library in another city but is unable to borrow it for you, you can travel to the source itself.

The Baseball Index depends on volunteers—*The Baseball Index* is an entirely volunteer effort. Dozens of individuals have contributed to building this huge database, but more needs to be done. There are many opportunities for working on *The Baseball Index*.

You might index a new book you've just finished reading, or the latest issue of a magazine you subscribe to. Perhaps you have a small collection of baseball books, or past issues of magazines. You may have ready access to a local library's baseball collection. Any and all of these may be good candidates for adding to *The Baseball Index*.

Indexing is not difficult or time-consuming, and we require no long-term commitments from our volunteers. *The Baseball Index* has already helped hundreds in their research. By helping to build *The Baseball Index*, you are working to facilitate and advance baseball research.

If you think you might like to work on *The Baseball Index*, please contact either project director:

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Notes:

1. http://www.galegroup.com
2. http://www.umi.com
3. http://www.sabr.org/dataserv.shtml
4. http://www.sabr.org/merchandise/rbi.shtml
5. http://www.oclc.org
6. http://www.mnlink.org

The Fifties

Fire away!

Paul L. Wysard

Baseball's 1950s are remembered by different people in different ways: stagnant, brilliant, racist, progressive—it all depends on the perspective of the fan. But one thing is certain and incontrovertible: baseball during the '50s became a contest of raw power.

Sixteen players have hit 500 or more career home runs. Seven of them played at least five full seasons in the '50s. An eighth man hit his first 73, and a ninth his first 25.

Of the twenty-six sluggers with seventeen or fewer at-bats per home run, seven (27 percent) logged at least six full campaigns in the '50s. Three more were active for one to four years.

The 1948 and 1949 seasons were harbingers of the coming explosion. Scoring numbers began to rise after the immediate postwar years. Five teams drove in more than 800 runs. Three players exceeded 150. None of those marks had been reached in the previous eight seasons.

It was the 1950 Boston Red Sox, though, with over 1,000 runs scored and almost 1,000 driven in, who set the power table at which almost all teams would dine for the next ten years. The three tables on the next page illustrate the surge.

There had been quantum leaps in offense earlier, most notably in 1930-32, when extra-base hits increased 8 percent, home runs 18 percent, and the home run percent of extra-base hits from 20 percent to 23 percent, but thereafter the homer growth rate was more moderate. Over the next ten years, through 1941, it was 10 percent.

After the initial leaps in the categories as the '50s began, performance—except in home runs— leveled off. The number of teams with 120 or more home runs in 1946-47 was four; in 1950-51, all sixteen reached that level. By 1953-54 total output rose to over 4,000 in the two-year period, the highest ever.

In 1946-49 one team hit more than 200 home runs in a season—the '47 Giants of Mize, Cooper, and company, with a record 221. Those Giants were also the only team to surpass 180 in that period. From 1950-60 fourteen teams finished a season with more than 180, three of which were over 200 and one of which (the '57 Braves) came up one shy at 199. The '56 Reds tied the '47 Giants record.

At the same time, "speed" numbers declined. Players went "station to station," waiting for the big hit. Managers and coaches took off the running signs. There were 1,587 triples in 1946-47. By 1957-58 there were only 1,320, a 16 percent decrease in a decade and a direct contrast to the 60 percent rise in homers over the same span. The Buddy Lewises, Phil Cavarettas, Dale Mitchells, Bob Dillingers, and Harry Walkers were phased out in favor of slow-moving sluggers like Hank Sauer, Gus Zernial, Ted Kluszewski, Joe Adcock, an Roy Sievers. Eventually, we began to see all those Hall of Famers in the 500 club: Mays, Mathews, Mantle, Aaron, Banks, and

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Table 1

Extra-Base Hits and Homeruns

Year	Total ExBH	% Increase	HR	% increase/HR	% HR/ExBH	Average HR/Team
1946-49	23,215	–	6,033	–	26%	94
1950-53	24,676	+6.3	7,412	+23%	30%	116
1955-58	25,260	+2.3	9,006	+21%	36%	140

Table 2

Runs Batted In

Year	Total RBI	Percent Increase	Teams under 500	Teams over 700	Teams over 800
1946-49	40,630	–	4	13	5
1950-53	42,000	+3.4	1	16	3
1955-58	40,500	(3.2)	2	9	0

Table 3

Number of Players with 30 or more Home Runs/Season

		Percent Increase
1946-49	20	
1950-53	30	+50
1955-58	39	+30 (+ 95 from 1946-49)

Frank Robinson. At the same time, Ted Williams, Ralph Kiner, and Johnny Mize continued their long power patterns, and Musial was ... well, Musial. But even he caught the long-ball fever: in his first seven years, in the '40s, he averaged 20 homers per season. In his first seven years in the '50s, his annual output rose to 30.

Base stealing also became less of a priority. In 1946-47, over 1,600 sacks were swiped. By 1953-54, steals had dropped to 1,363 (–15 percent). Just as we see so many from that decade high on the home run list, so also do we see few names in the speed categories. Of those who have hit 150 or more triples, only two, Musial and Clemente, played at all in the 1950s. Of the roughly three dozen players with more than 400 career stolen bases, only one, Luis Aparicio, was a '50s performer.

Even the mobile Dodgers put on the brakes. The Brooklyn pennant winners in 1947 and 1949 averaged 48 triples and 102 steals. The 1956 titleists hit 36 triples and stole 65 bases. Home runs? A jump from 117 to 180.

The only team to buck the power trend successfully was Chicago—the memorable "Go-Go" White Sox. Throughout the decade, they finished second or third in the American League, and finally made it to the top in 1959, becoming the only pennant-winning team of the '50s with more than 100 stolen bases. They were also the first club in eleven seasons to win a title with fewer than 100 homers and the first team in twenty-five seasons to be a champion with fewer than 100 homers and more than 100 stolen bases.

No position better illustrates the shift than that of catcher. In 1946-47 backstops hit 170 homers (Walker Cooper and Ernie Lombardi hit a third of them). In 1957-58, men behind the plate more than tripled their output to 520. Certainly, new spark plugs Berra and Campanella were big factors, but don't forget Lollar, Seminick, Crandall, Westrum, Lopata, Sammy White, and, a bit later, Bailey and Triandos. The typical catcher in 1946-47—scrappy defense, .240-.250, five homers, 40-45 RBIs—didn't have a job seven or eight years later.

SABR colleagues will not find much support in this corner for overuse of the Home Run/RBI Ratio. It is a suspect statistic in many ways, but it does provide some confirmation of the '50s style. In an attempt at levity in the midst of the Cold War nuclear arms race, wags in Congress and elsewhere talked about achieving a "Bigger Bang for a Buck." How did that apply to baseball? On the next page is a list of the HR/RBI ratios of the important, but *non*-Hall of Fame, 100-RBI men. Aside from the familiar Hall of Famers, there weren't any more 100-RBI people in 1946-49 except for four who logged a lot of service before and after 1950—Gil Hodges, Bobby Thomson, Carl Furillo, and Del Ennis—all fine run producers who exhibited the traits of both periods.

Like Evers and batting champions Dixie Walker and Mickey Vernon, the exciting Minoso was the kind of slash hitter who could drive in 100 runs with less than 20 homers. He was an oddity in his time.

Player	League	Years	Ratio	Player	League	Years	Ratio
Hoot Evers	AL	1946-9	8.77	Min Minoso	AL	1953-6	6.22
Bob Elliott	NL	1946-9	5.32	Walt Dropo	AL	1950-3	4.52
Sam Chapman	AL	1946-9	4.62	E. Robinson	AL	1950-3	4.26
V. Stephens	AL	1946-9	4.56	Jack Jensen	AL	1956-9	4.10
Sid Gordon	NL	1946-9	4.55	Gus Bell	NL	1953-6	4.10
Andy Pafko	NL	1946-9	4.43	Al Rosen	AL	1950-3	3.54
Tom Henrich	AL	1946-9	4.33	Joe Adcock	NL	1953-6	3.35
Ken Keltner	AL	1946-9	4.28	Gus Zernial	AL	1950-3	3.24
Wld Marshall	NL	1946-9	4.14	Hank Sauer	NL	1950-3	3.16
Wlkr Cooper	NL	1946-9	3.86	R. Colavito	AL	1956-9	2.89
Joe Gordon	AL	1946-9	3.75	Roy Sievers	AL	1956-9	2.82
Dixie Walker	NL(3)	1946-8	13.20	Kluszewski	NL	1953-6	2.74
W. Kurowski	NL(3)	1946-8	5.25	L. Easter	AL(3)	1950-2	3.56
W. Westlake	NL(3)	1947-9	4.14	D. Stuart	NL(3)	1958-60	3.20
Rudy York	AL(2)	1946-7	5.52	Bob Cerv	AL(3)	1958-60	3.20

The '50s gave us many more bombers, including Wally Post (3.0 ratio), Larry Doby (3.55), Jim Lemon (3.2), Vic Wertz (3.7), Frank Thomas (3.2), and Roger Maris (3.25). Finally, there was Dale Long (3.23). He never drove in 100 runs, but he set a record with eight home runs in eight consecutive games in 1956.

Not mentioned yet is the player who hit the most long balls in those days: Duke Snider, with 326 homers from 1950 through 1959, including five consecutive seasons at 40 or more. The man with the highest annual output over the most years was fellow Hall-of-Famer Mathews, who averaged 37 from 1952 through 1959, with four 40+ campaigns. Their ratios, however, match the '50s pattern, with Snider a little over, and Mathews slightly under, 3.0.

When Ted Williams hit his 521st home run in his last at-bat in 1960, the shot not only capped his career, but also closed out '50s-style baseball. The Yankees, in the next (Maris) year, hit it out 240 times, but expansion muddied comparisons. And the '60s soon turned to speed and defense, highlighted by the Dodger teams of the '60s, and the '68 season in which Bob Gibson, Denny McLain, and others held *all* teams under 700 RBIs.

Was '50s big-bang baseball a reflection of the society and the politics of the day? Almost every aspect of life was tied to power and size: Incredibly devastating bombs, hordes of people in military service, expanding corporations, huge automobiles, a vast highway system, increasingly potent aircraft, booming urban areas, and some sense of endless progress. Speculation can be shredded; supposition is safer. And so let us suppose that, yes, there was a connection.

Sometime soon, someone will analyze the "Home Run Derby" that was baseball in the '90s—not only the McGwire-Sosa races and the big 70, but also the growing number of folks who went deep 45, 50 times. It was the greatest long-ball era ever, but it had a pure and hardy ancestor over forty years before when the motto was: "Fire Away!"

Matty Pitches Only 67 Balls
Dayton *Herald*, April 24, 1913

New York, April 24—Manager McGraw today claimed a world's record for Christy Mathewson. Big Six pitched 67 balls in beating Philadelphia yesterday [3-1].

Had Mathewson struck out every man that faced him he could not have pitched less than 81 balls, but he put them where the batters had to hit, and only five fell safe.

Using but 67 pitched balls, Mathewson threw an average of a fraction over two balls to each man.

—Jack Carlson

The Truth About Pete Rose

Why you'd rather have Minnie Minoso on your team

Philip Siller

Pete Rose's reputation is built on two pillars: he has more hits than any player in history and he helped his teams immeasurably with his hustle. The first is a fact; the second is a complete misimpression. Rose was not much of a hitter and only an average offensive player. He didn't create runs, he didn't get on base much, and he was a liability on the base paths and in the field. Among players with 3,000 career hits—the standard for elite hitters—he doesn't measure up. Outside that group, he merely holds his own with leading, but not dominant players.

When Rose was driving for the number one spot, he attracted a lot of attention. After all, at that time only Ty Cobb had more than 3,800 hits and only Cobb and Henry Aaron had more than 3,650. Since Cobb was a legendary hitter, with the highest lifetime batting average in history (.366), passing Cobb represented great hitting to a lot of casual fans and content-hungry media types. But the truth is, Pete Rose is the second worst 3,000-hit man ever and, over all, a merely average offensive player.

A close study of Rose's career reveals that his specialty was *volume*. He collected games, at bats, and singles at an unprecedented rate. And he kept it up for twenty-four years. But, as many argued during his heyday, Pete Rose contributed very little to his teams' ability to win. The facts show that Pete Rose simply did not make his hits count. The most surprising outcome of this study is that Rose, known for scoring runs and racking up hit totals, was not exceptional in turning his hits into runs, either through scoring himself or through RBIs. To paraphrase Shakespeare, Rose provided a lot of sound and fury signifying very little.

3,000-Hit Players—To date, twenty-tso major league baseball players have amassed 3,000 career hits.[1] Seventeen of them played the bulk of their careers before 1920, which is the watershed for batting performance. Here is the list:[1]

Post-1920

Pete Rose
Henry Aaron
Stan Musial
Carl Yastrzemski
Paul Molitor
Willie Mays
Eddie Murray
George Brett
Paul Waner
Dave Winfield
Cal Ripken Jr.
Tony Gwynn
Rod Carew
Lou Brock
Wade Boggs
Al Kaline
Roberto Clemente

Pre-1920

Ty Cobb
Tris Speaker
Honus Wagner
Nap Lajoie
Eddie Collins

See Chart A for raw stats.

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Pete Rose was by far the greatest collector of hits in the history of the game, with 4,256. Among modern players, 485 hits separate him from Aaron, the number two man on the list. To find that big a gap behind Aaron, you have to go to number six on the list, Willie Mays, with 3,283.[3]

The best way to sum up Pete Rose's career is to acknowledge that he was the greatest singles hitter of all time. 75.54 percent of his hits were singles. That makes 3,215 singles and very little else. Among 3,000-hitters, only Tony Gwynn (78.74 percent) is worse, and only Rod Carew (78.74 percent) and Lou Brock (74.33 percent) are close to this miserable standard.[4] Yet all three had higher slugging percentages.

Rose's weak bat shows up, of course, in the slugging stats. He and Lou Brock share last place on the list of modern and old time 3,000-hit men, at .409 for Rose and .410 for Brock. Only Carew at .429 and Boggs at .443 are close. Molitor's SLG is .448 and Ripken's is .451. Everyone else is at or over .460.

Rose was also a weak RBI man: he and Boggs are the only 3,000-hit players with fewer RBIs than walks.[5] Among the moderns, he and Brock are lowest in RBI per hit (0.30). Even Carew and Boggs (10 percent) and Gwynn (20 percent) are better. Nine are over 0.50 and the other four are at or above 0.40. The RBI per game stats are even worse. Of the seventeen, Rose and Brock are below 0.37, five are over 0.60, six others are over 0.50 and four others above 0.40.

Big deal, Rose's devotees reply. So what if he didn't hit with power? He got on base a lot and helped his team in other ways. Well, let's see if that's true. In on base percentage Rose and Aaron are tied for ninth among 3,000-hit players at .377. Behind them are Brett, Molitor, Murray, Clemente, Winfield, Brock, and Ripken. All of them except Brock hit with significant power. Rose did not. For modern 3,000-hitters, Rose is in the bottom half in OBP. He was not exceptional among this group.

On batting average, he fares little better. At .303, he ranks tenth, in the bottom half, virtually tied with Aaron and Mays, and 10-20 points ahead of Brock, Murray, Winfield, Yastrzemski, and Ripken. Four of those seven were huge power hitters. The others, except for Brock, had good power. All the old-timers also out-hit Rose. He is eighth among modern 3,000-hit players in hits per game and runs per game, and in the lower half if the old-timers are included.

But, his devotees cry, he was Charlie Hustle! He made up for these weak offensive numbers in little, intangible ways, working hard in the field and on the base paths. Well, the numbers don't show this either. Using Thorn and Palmer's measurement for Fielding Runs[6] and Stolen Base Runs,[7] Rose does not look very good. In Fielding Runs, his rating is –71. Every other 3,000-hit playeris in positive territory, except Musial (–38), Molitor (–21), Brett (–17), and Carew (–2). This is an interesting stat, since it is the sluggers you would expect to contribute little in the field. Clemente's rating is +113, Mays' is +96, and Aaron and Kaline are at +70 and +69 respectively. Yastrzemski contributed as many runs to his team through his fielding as Rose *lost* for his teams in the field.

Charlie Hustle? The stolen base stats are even worse. At –30, Rose is dead last in Stolen Base Runs among modern 3,000-hitters. The next worst is Yaz at –19. Clemente, Musial and Kaline are close to zero, with sluggers like Aaron and Mays at +28 and +40, respectively. Of course, Brock is off the chart at +97.

Rose shows up particularly poorly on "combination" stats that attempt to capture a player's overall accomplishments. Thorn and Palmer have developed Total Player Rating, which is a seasonal measure and can be positive or negative. For careers, they total the annual TPR. Among 3,000-hitters, Rose is next-to-last at 24.7 for his career. (Brock is lowest at 12.7.) None of the others is close to Rose. Twelve players cluster from 39 to 50. Musial is at 70, Mays at 86, and Aaron at 90.[8] On an average basis, Rose's rating is abysmal: he averages 1.0/year, lowest except for Brock, while Molitor, Murray, Winfield, Brett, and Waner range from 1.65 to 1.95. Everyone else is over 2.0, with Aaron and Mays at 3.9 and Musial at 3.2.

Bill James uses Secondary Average (walks plus stolen bases plus extra bases, divided by at bats), a very powerful stat measuring the things a player does beyond his batting average.[9] For their careers, Mays, Aaron, Musial, Yaz, and Kaline are over .340. Rose is last at .232. Finally, although he ranks third in the group in Runs Produced (runs scored plus runs batted in minus home runs), he ranks last in runs produced per hit and per at-bat, and next-to-last (ahead of Brock) in runs produced per game.

Among 3,000-hit players, Rose's closest comparable is Brock. Carew and Waner, who might be considered lightweights among 3,000-hit players, dominate Rose in most categories, even those involving hits and runs, for which Rose became famous. See Chart B.

Rose among his peers—Despite his 4,000 hits, it is clear that Rose (together with Brock) is out of place in the company of career 3,000-hitters. Whether they

hit for average or for power or both, the offensive impact the others had on the game was in a different universe. Let's be fair, though. This group of seventeen players is tough competition. Rose deserves to be compared to other leading players generally.

Pete Rose holds some impressive places on the all-time lists: first in games, at-bats, and hits; second in doubles; fourth in runs scored; sixth in total bases; eighth in Runs Produced;[10] eleventh in walks and Runs Created;[11] seventeenth in extra-base hits; and sixty-fifth in RBIs.[12] But it must be noted that these are all purely volume related accomplishments, products of Rose's extraordinary longevity. He played for twenty-four years, racking up 3,562 games and 14,053 at-bats. These numbers are truly amazing, rivaled only by names such as Aaron, Yastrzemski, Cobb, Musial, Mays, and Brooks Robinson. To put this volume in perspective, consider that Rose had 26 percent more games and 38 percent more at-bats than the number eleven man on each list. The question this study addresses is: How much impact did he have while running up those numbers?

Sad to say, when you get to the impact stats, Rose does not stand out. He is not in the top 100 players all-time in RBI/game, batting average, on-base percentage, slugging percentage, stolen bases, or runs/game. Since scoring runs was one of Rose's main claims to fame, this last item is startling. He scored 0.6078 R/G, behind Mays, Molitor, Aaron, Musial, Waner, Boggs, and Brock among modern 3,000-hitters.[10] The men tied at 100 on the all-time list (Frankie Frisch, Kip Selbach, and Cub Striker) had 0.66. So does Tim Raines. Ron LeFlore had 0.67, Roy Thomas 0.69, Dom DiMaggio 0.69, and Tommy Henrich 0.70.[11]

Even more damning is the evidence of Rose's secondary average, an important impact stat. During his best years, 1966-81, Rose's secondary average trailed his team's, which implies that the average player on the team contributed more than Rose did in that area. Worse yet, for seven of those sixteen years, the secondary average for the entire league was better than his.[12] This is like saying that a supposedly great hitter for average batted less than his team average and less than the league average 45 percent of the time. Over the entire period, Rose was five percent worse than his teams as a whole and only seven percent better than the league as a whole. A seven percent gap is not outstanding: it's like batting .278 in your prime, when the league is batting .260.[13]

The runs/hit data yield similar results. Rose was no better than the rest of his team in runs/game for seven of the seventeen years. For the whole period, he outproduced his team average by only 2.7 percent.

The facts show that Rose neither scored nor batted in runs with any frequency, did not get on base exceptionally, seldom hit for extra bases, and was a liability in the field and on the base paths. Apart from doing these things for a very long time—and hitting a ton of singles—Pete Rose accomplished very little with his 4,256 hits and 3,215 singles. All he did was collect them; he did not make them count. He did not help his teams dramatically. In his time, he was a good player, not a great one, with the good fortune to play on teams that were prodigious run-producers. He certainly should not be considered one of the great players of the century. If you want a couple of terrific players compared to Rose, I give you Minnie Minoso and Tim Raines.

Minnie Minoso and Tim Raines—Chart C presents the career stats for Pete Rose and two good ballplayers who overlapped his career: Minnie Minoso and Tim Raines. As far as I know, no one is clamoring to put either of them on the All-Century Team. But both of them exceed Rose in game-by-game impact in every category.

Rose leads the group in batting average at .303, five points ahead of Minoso and eight ahead of Raines. In all the volume categories (total hits, runs, walks, RBI, doubles, etc., but not home runs), Rose is way ahead. One would expect this of a twenty-four-year man. But in all the impact stats, including those measured on a per-game or per-hit basis, he is way behind. He is last in home runs, slugging, OBP, RBI/hit, and RBI/game. Rose is also last in Stolen Base Runs and Fielding Runs. His Total Player Rating is the worst of the group and, most telling, he is last in average seasonal TPR, where he averaged .83 per year, while Minoso and Raines were 85 percent and 200 percent better, respectively. The *career* secondary averages for both men are higher than Rose's in his *best* year.

In runs scored, the area in which Rose is usually considered outstanding, he lags behind both Minoso and Raines in runs/game, although by less than ten percent, and in runs/hit by a whopping 14 percent and 20 percent, respectively. Even during his banner years[14]—Rose led the league in runs and doubles in 1974, 1975, and 1976, in hits in 1968, 1972, 1973, and 1976, and scored 120 runs in both 1969 and 1970—his runs/hit ratio was 0.518, which ranks significantly behind the ratios of Minoso and Raines.[15]

Both these players had careers that were better than Rose's best years. If you could have signed one of

these players and could guarantee that he could play out his entire career for you, Rose would have been the worst choice of the three.

Pete Rose's amazing accomplishment—Longevity and consistency. Until he made an embarrassment of himself by hanging on to stagger past Ty Cobb's all-time hits record,[16] Pete Rose churned out half a run per hit for over twenty years. His lifetime ratio is within *two percent* of the ratio for his best years. Now, half a run per hit is not that exceptional, but he did keep it up for a long time.

Rose's main (and, in my opinion, only) claim to fame is his 4,256 hits. Among modern players, he dominates the 3,000 hit club. But the peculiarity of Rose's career is that his single-minded pursuit of this goal did not generate collateral offensive contributions to his teams that were outstanding in any particular. The reason the 3,000 hit club is meaningful is that, historically speaking, only great offensive players reach that plateau. Once the plateau was established, however, it became an end in itself for Pete Rose, who put together 3,000 hits with less effect than anyone who preceded (or followed) him, with the possible exception of Lou Brock. Compared to these peers, Rose did not produce runs, did not hit for extra bases, did not get on base much, fielded badly, and didn't get that many hits per game. Essentially, he was carried by good teams, in relation to whom he was not a particularly outstanding player.

Oh, yes—he did run out bases on balls.

Notes:

1. Unless otherwise noted, all statistics have been taken from *Total Baseball (6th ed.)*, J. Thorn, P. Palmer, M. Gershman, and D. Pietrusza, Eds. (Total Sports, 1999). Up-to-date stats for Boggs, Gwynn, and Ripken are from the Major League Baseball official website (www.majorleaguebaseball.com/u/baseball/mlb/players).

2. The list does not include Ted Williams who had 2,654 hits in 19 seasons. Since he was averaging around 180 hits per season during the WWII years and somewhat less in the years he missed for the Korean War, he probably would have added 800 to that total and finished with around 3,500. Adding him to the list of 3,000-hit players would only strengthen the points made in this essay.

3. Mays is number 10 on the full list.

4. Eddie Collins's percentage is 79.76 percent. I am not a big fan of Collins, but it is easy to prefer him to Rose. His OBP was almost 50 points (12.5 percent) better than Rose's and he hit 30 points higher (10 percent). In the field, Collins was worth 40 runs more than the average player at his position; Rose cost his teams 60 runs. And so on and so forth.

5. OK, Carew had 1,018 walks and 1,015 RBI's. Rose had *20 percent* more walks than RBI's.)

6. Basically, how many runs a player saves his team in the field compared to an *average* player at the same position.

7. Again, the number of runs contributed by the player *beyond* what a league-average base stealer might have gained. I don't claim that Stolen Base Runs or Fielding Runs totally capture the intended effect. But I do believe they are meaningful data and are certainly useful for comparison among supposedly outstanding players.

8. For those interested, Ruth is at 105, Cobb at 90, Williams at 98, Lajoie at 85, Tris Speaker at 80, Mike Schmidt and Rogers Hornsby at 77, and Honus Wagner at 75. With Aaron and Mays, these players round out the top ten. All seventeen 3,000-hitters are in the all-time top 35 except for Brock and Rose, *neither of whom makes the top 100!*

9. "As it happens, the league Secondary Average in most seasons will be about the same as the league batting average— about .260. But individual totals will swing wildly, which is what makes it interesting." *Whatever Happened to the Hall of Fame?*, James, B. (Simon & Schuster, 1995), p.69.

10. *Total Baseball*, J. Thorn and P. Palmer, Eds. (Warner Books, 1989). The 1999 Edition does not contain this list. For the years 1961-76, Rose was eighth in runs/game, ahead of Kaline and Carew and behind Mays, Bonds, Aaron, F. Robinson, Dick Allen, Morgan, and Brock, in that order.

11. I do not put a lot of stock in the top 100 in this category. Old-timers dominate the list. But the great modern hitters for average and power are there. For careers ending before 1989, the list includes Gehrig (12), Ruth (14), Rolfe (31), DiMaggio (32), Williams (37), Gehringer (43), Foxx (44), Greenberg(46), Cobb(51), Mantle (72), Mays (79), Ott (84) and Bobby Bonds (85). (*Total Baseball*, Thorn, J. and Palmer, P., Eds. (Warner Books, 1989))

12. See Chart D.

13. Considering that the variation in secondary average across the league runs as high as 100 percent on the upside, these deviations must be taken as pretty trivial.

14. 1968-1979, the years Rose either scored 100 runs or had 200 hits.

15. Note, too, that Minoso started late: he was 27 years old for his first full year in the majors, and it is likely he exaggerated his youth to the official statisticians.

16. In his final three years, Rose batted .262 and slugged .314, with an OBP of .365. He scored 118 runs on 266 hits, to put him 66 hits past Cobb.

Chart A: 3,000-Hit Players

Code		Yrs	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	BA	OBP	SA	SB	CS	SBR	FRuns	TPR	TPR/Y	H/G	1B %	RBI/H	R/H	R/G	BB/G	RBI/G	SecAVG	R/AB
M	Rose	24	3,562	14,053	2,165	4,256	746	135	160	1,314	1,566	.303	.377	.409	198	149	-30	-71	20	0.83	1.19	0.76	0.31	0.51	0.61	0.44	0.37	0.23	0.15
M	Aaron	23	3,298	12,364	2,174	3,771	624	98	755	2,297	1,402	.305	.377	.555	240	73	28	70	90.1	3.92	1.14	0.61	0.61	0.58	0.66	0.43	0.70	0.38	0.18
M	Musial	22	3,026	10,972	1,949	3,630	725	177	475	1,951	1,599	.331	.418	.559	78	31	0	-38	70.1	3.19	1.20	0.62	0.54	0.54	0.64	0.53	0.64	0.38	0.18
M	Yastrzemski	23	3,308	11,988	1,816	3,419	646	59	452	1,844	1,845	.285	.382	.462	168	116	-19	56	46.1	2	1.03	0.66	0.54	0.53	0.55	0.56	0.56	0.35	0.15
M	Molitor	21	2,683	10,835	1,782	3,319	605	114	234	1,307	1,094	.306	.372	.448	504	131	73	-21	33.9	1.61	1.24	0.71	0.39	0.54	0.66	0.41	0.49	0.29	0.16
M	Mays	22	2,992	10,116	2,062	3,283	523	140	660	1,903	1,464	.302	.387	.557	338	103	40	96	86.2	3.92	1.10	0.60	0.58	0.63	0.69	0.49	0.64	0.45	0.20
M	Murray	21	3,026	11,336	1,627	3,255	560	35	504	1,917	1,333	.287	.363	.476	110	43	7	63	34.1	1.62	1.08	0.66	0.59	0.50	0.54	0.44	0.63	0.32	0.14
M	Brett	21	2,707	10,349	1,583	3,154	665	137	317	1,595	1,096	.305	.373	.487	201	97	2	-17	39	1.86	1.17	0.65	0.51	0.50	0.58	0.40	0.59	0.31	0.15
M	Waner	20	2,549	10,332	1,626	3,152	603	190	113	1,309	1,091	.333	.404	.473	104		0	43	38.9	1.95	1.24	0.71	0.42	0.52	0.64	0.43	0.51	0.24	0.16
M	Winfield	22	2,973	11,003	1,669	3,110	540	88	465	1,833	1,216	.283	.355	.475	223	96	9	34	38.6	1.75	1.05	0.65	0.59	0.54	0.56	0.41	0.62	0.32	0.15
M	Ripken Jr	20	2,873	11,074	1,604	3,070	587	44	417	1,627	1,103	.277	.343	.451	36	37	-11	23	39.9	2	1.07	0.66	0.53	0.52	0.56	0.38	0.57	0.28	0.14
M	Gwynn	19	2,333	9,180	1,361	3,067	522	84	133	1,104	771	.339	.389	.459	318	124	20	105	48.8	2.57	1.31	0.76	0.36	0.44	0.58	0.33	0.47	0.24	0.15.
M	Carew	19	2,469	9,459	1,424	3,053	445	112	92	1,015	1,018	.328	.395	.429	353	187	-6	-2	41	2.16	1.24	0.79	0.33	0.47	0.58	0.41	0.41	0.25	0.15
M	Brock	19	2,616	9,315	1,610	3,023	486	141	149	900	761	.293	.344	.410	938	307	97	32	12.7	0.67	1.16	0.74	0.30	0.53	0.62	0.29	0.34	0.31	0.17
M	Boggs	18	2,440	9,059	1,513	3,010	578	61	118	1,014	1,412	.328	.415	.443	24	35	-14	47	44.1	2.45	1.23	0.75	0.34	0.50	0.62	0.58	0.42	0.28	0.17
M	Kaline	22	2,834	9,454	1,622	3,007	498	75	399	1,583	1,277	.297	.379	.480	137	65	2	69	45.9	2.09	1.06	0.68	0.53	0.54	0.57	0.45	0.56	0.35	0.17
M	Clemente	18	2,433	9,454	1,416	3,000	440	166	240	1,305	621	.317	.362	.475	83	46	-3	113	39.6	2.2	1.23	0.72	0.44	0.47	0.58	0.26	0.54	0.23	0.15
OT	Cobb	24	3,034	11,434	2,245	4,190	724	294	118	1,933	1,249	.366	.432	.512	892		*	54	90.6	3.8	1.38	0.73	0.46	0.54	0.74	0.41	0.64	0.33	0.20
OT	Speaker T	22	2,789	10,207	1,881	3,514	793	223	117	1,528	1,381	.344	427	.500	433		*	177	79.9	3.6	1.26	0.68	0.43	0.54	0.67	0.50	0.55	0.33	0.18.
OT	Wagner	21	2,792	10,430	1,736	3,415	640	252	101	1,732	936	.327	.387	.466	722		*	63	75.6	3.6	1.22	0.71	0.51	0.51	0.62	0.34	0.62	0.30	0.17
OT/M	Collins E	25	2,826	9,948	1,819	3,310	437	186	47	1,299	1,499	.333	.424	.428	743		*	40	70.5	2.8	1.17	0.80	0.39	0.55	0.64	0.53	0.46	0.32	0.18
OT	Lajoie	21	2,480	9,589	1,502	3,242	657	163	83	1,599	516	.338	.376	.467	.381		*	300	85.2	4.1	1.31	0.72	0.49	0.46	0.61	0.21	0.64	0.22	0.16

Chart B: Rose vs. Carew vs. Brock vs. Waner

Code		Yrs	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	BA	OBP	SA	SB	CS	SBR	FRuns	TPR	TPR/Y	H/G	1B %	RBI/H	R/H	R/G	BB/G	RBI/G	SecAVG	R/AB
M	Rose	24	3,562	14,053	2,165	4,256	746	135	160	1,314	1,566	.303	.377	.409	198	149	-30	-71	20	0.83	1.19	0.76	0.31	0.51	0.61	0.44	0.37	0.23	0.15
M	Carew	19	2,469	9,459	1,424	3,053	445	112	92	1,015	1,018	.328	.395	.429	353	187	-6	-2	41	2.16	1.24	0.79	0.33	0.47	0.58	0.41	0.41	0.25	0.15
M	Brock	19	2,616	9,315	1,610	3,023	486	141	149	900	761	.293	.344	.410	938	307	97	32	12.7	0.67	1.16	0.74	0.30	0.53	0.62	0.29	0.34	0.31	0.17
M	Waner	20	2,549	10,332	1,626	3,152	603	190	113	1,309	1,091	.333	.404	.473	104		0	43	38.9	1.95	1.24	0.71	0.42	0.52	0.64	0.43	0.51	0.24	0.16
	Rose's rank:	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	3	4	3

Chart C: Rose, Minoso and Raines

Code		Yrs	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	BA	OBP	SA	SB	CS	SBR	FRuns	TPR	TPR/Y	H/G	1B %	RBI/H	R/H	R/G	BB/G	RBI/G	SecAVG	R/AB
M	Rose	24	3,562	14,053	2,165	4,256	746	135	160	1,314	1,566	.303	.377	.409	198	149	-30	-71	20	0.83	1.19	0.76	0.31	0.51	0.61	0.44	0.37	0.23	0.15
M	Minoso	17	1,835	6,579	1,136	1,963	336	83	186	1,023	814	.298	.391	.459	205	130	-16	62	26	1.53	1.07	0.69	0.52	0.58	0.62	0.44	0.56	0.32	0.17
M	Raines	21	2,353	8,694	1,548	2,532	419	112	168	964	1,290	.295	.385	.427	807	145	154	96	52.6	2.5	1.08	0.72	0.38	0.61	0.66	0.55	0.41	0.37	0.18
	Rose's rank:	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Chart D: Secondary Average 1966-81 — Rose vs. His Team vs. National League

Runs per Hit 1966-81 — Rose vs. His Team vs. National League

L = League, R = Rose, * = Rose's output was less than 1% greater than the team's

Year		AB	H	2B	3B	HR	BB	SB	R	R/H		SA		Rose Variation
1966	L	55,385	14,202	2,099	412	1,378	4,404	737	6,624	0.47	_	0.22	_	-4.89%
	Team	5,521	1,434	232	33	149	394	70	692	0.48	_	0.22	_	-4.34%
	R	654	205	38	5	16	37	4	97	0.47	_	0.21		
1967	L	55,026	13,698	2,133	427	1,102	4,672	694	6,218	0.45	_	0.21	_	21.82%
	Team	5,519	1,366	251	54	109	372	92	604	0.44	_	0.21	_	23.87%
	R	585	176	32	8	12	56	11	86	0.49		0.26		
1968	L	54,913	13,351	1,995	359	891	4,275	704	5,577	0.42	_	0.19	_	21.02%
	Team	5,767	1,573	281	36	106	379	59	690	0.44	_	0.19	_	18.79%
	R	626	210	42	6	10	56	3	94	0.45		0.23		
1969	L	65,751	16,461	2,455	471	1,470	6,397	817	7,890	0.48	_	0.23	_	38.23%
	Team	5,634	1,558	224	42	171	474	79	798	0.51	_	0.24	_	29.49%
	R	627	218	33	11	16	88	7	120	0.55		0.32		
1970	L	66,465	17,151	2,743	554	1,683	6,919	1,045	8,771	0.51	_	0.25	_	12.35%
	Team	5,540	1,498	253	45	191	547	115	775	0.52	_	0.29	_	0.08%
	R	649	205	37	9	15	73	12	120	0.59		0.29		
1971	L	65,903	16,590	2,505	457	1,379	6,059	900	7,601	0.46	_	0.22	_	11.35%
	Team	5,414	1,306	203	28	138	438	59	586	0.45	_	0.22	_	13.49%
	R	632	192	27	4	13	68	13	86	0.45	_	0.25		
1972	L	63,116	15,683	2,392	430	1,359	5,986	954	7,265	0.46	_	0.23	_	5.61%
	Team	5,421	1,317	214	44	124	606	140	707	0.54	_	0.26	_	-8.85%
	R	645	198	31	11	6	73	10	107	0.54	_	0.24		
1973	L	66,087	16,817	2,600	386	1,550	6,453	976	8,062	0.48	_	0.23	_	-10.68%
	Team	5,505	1,398	232	34	137	639	148	741	0.53	_	0.27	_	-23.26%
	R	680	230	36	8	5	65	10	115	0.50	_	0.21		
1974	L	66,212	16,907	2,642	447	1,280	6,828	1,254	8,070	0.48	_	0.23	_	15.62%
	Team	5,535	1,437	271	35	135	693	146	776	0.54	_	0.29	_	-5.73%
	R	652	185	45	7	3	106	2	110	0.59		0.27		
1975	L	66,102	17,002	2,781	458	1,233	6,730	1,176	8,014	0.47	_	0.23	_	7.67%
	Team	5,581	1,515	278	37	124	691	168	840	0.55	_	0.28	_	-12.13%
	R	662	210	47	4	7	89	-	112	0.53	_	0.25		
1976	L	65,814	16,778	2,652	499	1,113	6,263	1,364	7,739	0.46	_	0.22	_	21.21%
	Team	5,702	1,599	271	63	141	681	210	857	0.54	_	0.30	_	-10.30%
	R	665	215	42	6	10	86	9	130	0.60		0.27		
1977	L	66,700	17,465	3,033	526	1,631	6,487	1,555	8,556	0.49	_	0.26	_	-3.67%
	Team	5,524	1,513	269	42	181	600	170	802	0.53	_	0.30	_	-18.50%
	R	655	204	38	7	9	66	16	95	0.47	_	0.25		
1978	L	65,156	16,556	2,861	482	1,276	6,279	1,533	7,742	0.47	_	0.24	_	-1.59%
	Team	5,392	1,378	270	32	136	636	137	710	0.52	_	0.28	_	-16.86%
	R	655	198	51	3	7	62	13	103	0.52	_	0.23		
1979	L	66,088	17,229	2,886	518	1,427	6,188	1,486	8,186	0.48	_	0.24	_	17.32%
	Team	5,463	1,453	250	53	119	602	128	683	0.47	_	0.26	_	6.70%
	R	628	208	40	5	4	95	20	90	0.43	_	0.28		
1980	L	66,272	17,186	2,856	523	1,243	5,969	1,839	7,852	0.46	_	0.23	_	-18.08%
	Team	5,625	1,517	272	54	117	472	140	728	0.48	_	0.24	_	-20.07%
	R	655	185	42	1	1	66	12	95	0.51		0.19		
1981	L	43,654	11,141	1,881	354	719	4,107	1,108	5,035	0.45	_	0.23	_	-20.69%
	Team	3,665	1,002	165	25	69	372	103	491	0.49	_	0.25	_	-26.06%
	R	431	140	18	5	-	46	4	73	0.52		0.18		
Total:	**L**	**998,644**	**254,217**	**40,514**	**7303**	**20,734**	**94,016**	**18,142**	**119,202**	**0.47**	_	**0.23**	_	**6.80%**
	Team	**86,808**	**22,864**	**3,936**	**657**	**2,147**	**8,596**	**1,964**	**11,480**	**0.50**	_	**0.26**	_	**-4.25%**
	R	**10,101**	**3,179**	**599**	**100**	**134**	**1,132**	**146**	**1,633**	**0.51**		**0.25**		

Believe It Or Not

42 Strikeouts in 23 Innings

Greg Peterson

Robert L. Ripley, in his syndicated "Believe It Or Not" of September 5, 1931, informed the world of former big leaguer Hugh Bedient's feat of striking out 42 men in one game. But, this was not the first national recognition of this event. The Jamestown *Evening Journal* of Monday, July 27, 1908, ran the headline: "BROKE ALL RECORDS. BEDIENT OF FALCONER STRUCK OUT 42 MEN." The Corry *Journal* of Corry, Pennsylvania, stated, "CORRY AND FALCONER MAKE WORLD'S RECORD." The Buffalo *News* exclaimed, "STRUCK OUT 42 MEN IN ONE GAME. WESTERN NEW YORK PITCHER MAKES WORLD'S RECORD IN GAME." The wire services picked up these articles, offers started to pour in, and Hugh Bedient's life was forever changed.

In July, 1908, Hugh Bedient, a recently graduated high school star, spent his summer days playing semi-pro ball with the Falconer Independents. (Falconer is a suburb of Jamestown, New York, in the southwest corner of the State). The Independents played teams from nearby Jamestown and Chautauqua, New York, and Youngsville and Corry, Pennsylvania. In a game in mid-July, Bedient struck out seventeen men in a nine-inning game against Youngsville, winning, 7-3. However, all eyes were on the upcoming games with Corry, with whom Falconer had developed an intense interstate rivalry. The New York team won the first game, played at home, 2-1. The second game, played at Corry, was a fifteen-inning tie.

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The July 23 Jamestown *Evening Journal* stated: "A hair-raising game is expected to take place next Saturday when Falconer goes to Corry for the third game with the team of that place. A large number of Falconer fans will accompany the team." Falconer arrived on the afternoon train from Jamestown accompanied by over a hundred supporters. The Corry *Journal* of July 27 covered the event: "As was expected, the game drew a thousand people to the grounds, who, as the battle progressed, became a frenzied, excited mass of humanity."

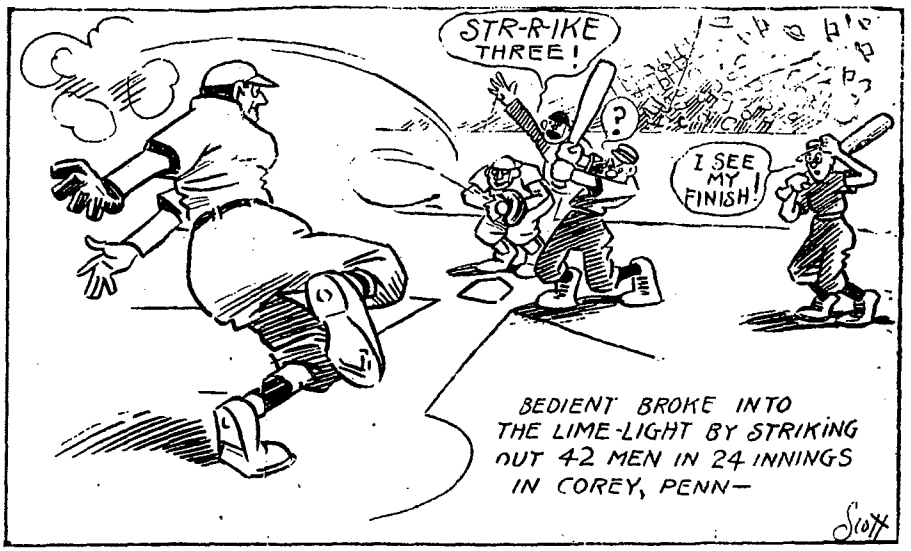
This wasn't just a ball game. It was also an economic adventure. "The Corry fans had some money to bet and backed the home boys believing that the visitors would be overcome. All bets offered were covered, although a few backed up, and a large amount of money changed hands on the game."

There was a great deal of confidence, and "rumor had it that the home team was loaded for the fray." Three outfielders—fine fielders and batsmen—had been secured from Erie, Pennsylvania, to play for the Corry team. In its game report, the *Journal* reported, "They were the former but could not hit. They claimed to never have faced such a pitcher as Bedient, which shows just what invincible ball the visiting twirler was pitching."

Corry scored first in the bottom of the seventh inning, with Falconer matching the run in the top of the eighth. Thereafter, Bedient limited Corry to only six hits during the twenty-three innings, struck out the astonishing 42, and, amazingly, allowed only a

single walk. His counterpart, Charles Bickford, struck out 16 men, allowed 13 hits and gave up two walks.

Both teams had opportunities to win in extra innings, but Falconer finally took the lead for good in the top of the twenty-third inning when the bases were loaded with two outs. A grounder was sent to the third baseman who, instead of throwing to first for the final out, threw wildly to home plate and two runs came in. Bedient, with adrenalin flowing, fanned all three batters in the bottom of the twenty-third. The line score showed Falconer: 3-9-5 and Corry: 1-6-6. Bedient struck out 42 of the sixty-nine men he faced.



A cartoon that appeared in the September 10, 1912, Boston Post, *near the end of Hugh Bedient's great season with the eventual world champion Red Sox.*

After the wire services picked up the story of Bedient, offers poured in—nineteen in all—from clubs from Maine to California. Ultimately, Hugh signed a professional contract and found his way to Boston in 1912. His 20-9 record made him a Sox favorite, and he performed heroically in the World Series against the New York Giants, beating the great Christy Mathewson, 2-1, in Game 5, and pitching Matty even for seven innings in the decisive Game 8, (one game ended in a tie) in a ten-inning game won by the Red Sox.

Bedient jumped from Boston to Buffalo in the Federal League in 1915. His major league record was 59-53, with 420 strikeouts, 236 walks and a 3.08 ERA. After the Federal League collapsed, he played in Toledo in 1917, where he developed a sore arm. He came back to Jamestown to rest and to register for the draft. Both Connie Mack and Miller Huggins sught his services, and he tried out for the Yankees in 1919. But his arm troubles kept him our of the majors. He played again for Toledo in 1921, 1922, and 1923. He went to Portland, Oregon, in 1924. He ended his professional career in 1925 with Atlanta of the Southern Association. The end came on an unusual note. He had a 2-0 record on Decoration Day when he took the mound against the Memphis Chicks. Irked by an umpire's decision, Memphis fans showered the field with pop bottles, cushions, fruit, and programs. The game was forfeited to Atlanta and Bedient's professional career closed on a three-game winning streak. According to the Jamestown *Journal*, "He returned home to Falconer during the summer in answer to an exceptionally good offer from local interests that were striving to build a top semipro team."

Bediant himself later said, "It looked more like security—guarantees of a job and all—than anything Triple-A ball could offer."

Bedient played semipro ball with the Jamestown Spiders. He and former Washington Senators pitcher "Swat" Erickson faced various barnstorming teams, including Babe Ruth's All-Stars, the Homestead Grays, the Pittsburgh Crawfords, the House of David, and various touring major league teams. When his pitching days were over, he worked for various local manufacturers and owned a garage. Upon retirement, Hugh could be seen attending local ball games and encouraging his grandson. Hugh Bedient died on July 21, 1965.

Frank Hyde, sports editor of the Jamestown *Post Journal* for over forty years, tried to discover if there had ever been a comparable strikeout feat. In 1951, he wrote a letter to George Trautman, the president of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, inquiring whether this was a world record. Trautman wrote back as follows: "Thank you for calling my attention to the 42 strikeouts of Hugh Bedient in 1908. As far as all records available show, this is a world record for any type of baseball." To check the amateur ranks, Hyde inquired of the National Baseball Congress, which listed a 36-strikeout caper by a pitcher during a twenty-inning state tournament game in Oklahoma. He concluded that Hugh Bedient's 42 whiffs was indeed a record.

Player Movement Throughout Baseball History

How has it changed?

Brian Flaspohler

I've often heard baseball announcers, former players and coaches, and knowledgeable fans complain that players don't stay with the same team the way they did in the old days. My feeling is that players have always switched teams a lot. This paper is an analytical look at player movement among teams from the beginning of the National Association in 1871 through 1999.

I defined a team switch as any time a player plays for two different major league teams (obviously!). I used the team history section in the fifth edition of *Total Baseball* to determine exactly what a team switch was. Any team that switched a city or a league, but was the same franchise (such as the Brooklyn Dodgers moving to Los Angeles or the Milwaukee Braves moving to Atlanta) is not considered a switch. In a well-known twentieth century instance, the city and league remain the same but the franchise is different (Washington Senators, 1960 and 1961—three players played for both teams, and each was credited with a team switch.) A midseason switch is counted when a player accumulated statistics for different major league teams during the same year.

For every player who has ever appeared in what I consider a major league game (National and American Leagues, National Association, American Association, Players' League, Union Association, and Federal League), I compiled the player's debut year, the total number of seasons played, the number of times the player switched teams, the number of times the player switched teams in midseason, and the final year the player appeared in a major league game. For example, a player's "switch history" would look like this: Jim Kaat, 1959, 25, 4, 3, 1983. Translated, this means that Jim Kaat debuted in 1959, appeared in twenty-five major league seasons, switched teams four times (Washington, 1960 to Minnesota, 1961 is not counted as a switch), three times during a season, and played his final game in 1983.

Categorization—I divided the 15,215 players who played major league baseball during the span I studied into four eras of baseball history: Nineteenth Century (1871-1902, 2,263 players), Golden Age (1903-1960, 6,820 players), Expansion (1961-1974, 1,786 players), and Free Agency (1975-1999, 4,346 players). I put players whose careers crossed eras into the era in which they played most. If they played the same number of years in each era, I put them in the more recent era.

I also categorized players by career length. The divisions: One Shots (one-year career, 4,571 players); Short Timers (two- to four-year careers, 4,812 players); Journeymen (five-to nine-year careers, 3,312 players); and Stars (ten-year careers or longer, 2,520 players). I also developed a subset of Stars, Superstars (fifteen-year careers or longer, 747 players). Obvi-

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ously not every ten-year player is a true star, but career length correlates reasonably well with ability.

Table 1 is the summary of the compiled data. It shows the number of players by era and by career length sorted by the number of team switches during the players' careers. As you can see, one player switched teams sixteen times during his major league career. No one else is close to this guy's record. Keep reading to discover the name of this guy who perpetually had his bags packed.

Team switches through history—Historic averages of years played per team switch are shown in the top third of Table 2. Columns represent average career length; years played per switch; years played per midseason switch; average numbers of switches; and midseason switches per player. The numbers in parentheses represent the total number of players used to calculate the averages in that category. To explain the data: the average player who has appeared in the major leagues has a career length of 4.8 years and switched teams every 3.8 years.

Nineteenth Century players were the most mobile by far. Teams and leagues were moving into and out of existence, enticing or forcing players to move around. The average career was short and players switched teams about every 2.4 years.

The data supports the nostalgic idea that Golden Age players switched teams less frequently than modern players, but the difference isn't that dramatic. An average player during the Golden Age switched teams every 4.4 playing years, while the average player in the Expansion era switched every 3.8 years and the average Free Agency era player switched every 3.8 years—only thirteen percent more frequently than during the Golden Age. Also, during the last quarter century, the average player made midseason switches less frequently then in any other era. Modern teams don't move players during the season as often as those Golden Age teams did.

What about those ten-year Stars? Baseball fans reminiscing about their favorite teams never seem to remember these players leaving their favorite team. The data doesn't support this. The middle third of Table 2 shows Stars switched teams about five percent less frequently (4.0 years vs. 3.8 years) than the complete set of major leaguers.

The bottom third of Table 2 presents the numbers for Superstars (15+ year career players). Superstars continue the trend of less frequent team switching (nineteen percent less frequent than average), but even in the Golden Age, the average Superstar switched teams more than three times during his seventeen-year career.

I hear you argue, "Maybe the players who crossed eras are skewing the data. Those Golden Age players who spent some time in the Nineteenth Century and others who spent time in the expansion era, are making the Golden Age years per switch go down." To eliminate this bias I threw out all players whose careers crossed eras (such as a player whose career went from 1899-1910) and present the data in Table 3. Average career length is shorter because players with longer careers are more likely to play in two eras. Nineteenth Century players show even more mobility and Golden Age players show less. Removing the bias pushes the Golden Age Stars to 4.8 years per switch and the Golden Age Superstars to 5.6 years per switch, while Free Agency Stars and Superstars are at 3.7 and 3.9 years/switch.

How many more players stayed with a single team during their whole career during the Golden Age then in other eras? I present data in Table 4. The top half of the table shows the raw numbers of players in each category, while the bottom half shows the percentage of players in the category. Only 1.4 percent of Nineteenth Century Stars stayed with one team for a full career, while 8.2 percent of Golden Age Stars, 7.3 percent of Expansion Stars and 6.5 percent of Free Agency Stars stayed with their teams. In other words, for every hundred Stars, about two fewer stayed with the same teams for a whole career in the modern era than in the Golden Age. One-team players have always been rare—on average, only seven of every 100 Stars stayed with one team during their entire career.

Individual Kings of Switching Teams—Who is that perpetual packer, that moving madman who switched teams sixteen times in a twenty-year playing career? You might think it was a player driven by modern free agency, but the king of player movement played in the Golden Age, the era when team switches were lowest. Table 5 shows all fifteen players who switched teams ten or more times during their careers. And there's your answer: Bobo Newsom! He is the Travelin' Man. His twenty year pitching career followed this tortured path (* denotes midseason switch): '29 Dodgers, '32 Cubs, '34 Browns, '35 Senators*, '37 Red Sox*, '38 Browns, '39 Tigers*, '42 Senators, '42 Dodgers*, '43 Browns*, '43 Senators*, '44 Athletics, '46 Senators*, '47 Yankees*, '48 Giants, '52 Senators, '52 Athletics*. Poor Bobo; he had five different stints with the Washington Senators and three with the St. Louis Browns. His longest

length of time with any club was 2-1/2 years with the Athletics (1944-46).

Of the remaining players on the list, nine of them are Nineteenth Century, two are Expansion era, and three are Free Agency era. Only one active player appears on the list—Mike Morgan. He added to his career team switches by moving from the Texas Rangers to the Arizona diamondbacks in 2000 and he is currently tied for third all time. If he can hang on a few more years (with a couple of different teams), he's got a shot at being the second most mobile player of all time!

There are some current players who have a real shot at getting the ten switches needed to break into this elite group (Player/Career Years/Switches): Mark Whiten/10/9, Terry Mulholland/14/9, Gregg Olson/13/9, Mike Maddux/15/9, Willie Blair/11/8, Dennis Cook/13/8, Doug Jones/16/8, Geronimo Berroa/11/7, Chuck McElroy/12/8, Charlie Hayes/13/8, and Roberto Kelly/14/8.

Method—I used Sean Lahman's baseball database files (which are available on the Internet at *www.baseball1.com*) as the source of my data. I ran scripts written in Perl (a shareware scripting language) to search the database files and sort and extract the data I was interested in. Then I used Excel to further sort the information and perform all the calculations.

The Perl logic used to count switches may fail when a player switches teams during midseason. The logic fails because the database information does not list a player's career in order of teams played for (and I didn't have the time to go back and correct the 77,000 record hitters database and the 32,000 record pitchers database!). A purely fictional example that confuses my Perl logic:

John Smith
1978 New York 500 AB
1979 St. Louis 125 AB
1979 New York 130 AB
1980 St. Louis 550 AB

This player made three switches including one midseason switch. However, in the database, the player lines may look like this:

John Smith
1978 New York 500 AB
1979 New York 130 AB
1979 St. Louis 125 AB
1980 St. Louis 550 AB

The logic would count this as one switch and one midseason switch. Another error is possible when a player switches teams midseason two years in a row. Depending on how the player's statistic lines are listed, the logic may over- or undercount the total number of switches. I checked over 200 players who were most likely to have this kind of switch counting problem (players with multiple midseason switches) and found that undercounting and overcounting evens out, leading me to believe the data is accurate.

Table 1
Players and Number of Switches

	Career Length				Era Played In			
	All	1 Yr	2-4 Yrs	5-9 Yrs	10+ Yrs	1871-1902	1903-60	1961-74	1975-98
Total Players	15,215	4,571	4,812	3,312	2,520	2,263	6,820	1,786	4,346
No Switches	7,165	4,427	2,213	354	171	1,075	3,640	662	1,788
One Switch	3,101	138	1,835	826	302	435	1,362	373	931
Two Switches	1,982	6	570	958	448	244	852	264	622
Three Switches	1,260	0	149	603	508	159	478	198	425
Four Switches	747	0	37	301	409	126	243	129	249
Five Switches	496	0	8	161	327	100	136	83	177
Six Switches	259	0	0	83	176	68	73	43	75
Seven Switches	113	0	0	20	93	23	22	19	49
Eight Switches	47	0	0	1	46	14	10	8	15
Nine Switches	30	0	0	4	26	11	3	5	11
Ten Switches	9	0	0	1	8	5	0	1	3
Eleven Switches	3	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0
Twelve Switches	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Thirteen Switches	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Sixteen Switches	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0

Table 2

All Players Average Switches and Midseason Switches

All Players (15,215)	Avg Car.	Yrs/Sw	Yrs/MS	Avg Sw	Avg MS
1871-1902 (2,263)	3.5	4.4	9.7	1.4	0.4
1903-1960 (6,820)	4.4	3.8	13.5	1.0	0.3
1961-1974 (1,786)	6.2	3.8	12.0	1.7	0.5
1975-1998 (4,127)	5.6	3.8	15.3	1.5	0.4
Historical Average	4.8	3.8	13.2	1.3	0.4
Players 10+ Yrs. (2,520)					
1871-1902 (221)	13.4	2.8	14.1	4.8	1.0
1903-1960 (982)	13.3	4.6	12.6	2.9	1.1
1961-1974 (439)	13.5	4.0	11.3	3.4	1.2
1975-1998 (829)	13.3	3.8	13.7	3.5	1.0
Historical Average	13.3	4.0	12.8	3.4	1.0
Players 15+ Yrs. (747)					
1871-1902 (65)	17.6	3.4	17.1	5.2	1.0
1903-1960 (289)	17.2	5.5	15.5	3.2	1.1
1961-1974 (143)	17.3	4.7	13.2	3.7	1.3
1975-1998 (239)	17.3	4.3	16.0	4.0	1.1
Historical Average	**17.3**	**4.6**	**15.3**	**3.7**	**1.1**

Table 3

Within Era Average Switches and Midseason Switches

All Players (13,540)	Avg Car.	Yrs/Sw	Yrs/MS	Avg Sw	Avg MS
1871-1902 (2,139)	3.1	2.4	9.4	1.3	0.3
1903-1960 (6,358)	4.1	4.6	14.3	0.9	0.3
1961-1974 (1,162)	3.9	4.0	13.5	1.0	0.3
1975-1999 (3,881)	4.9	3.8	15.4	1.3	0.3
Historical Average	4.1	3.8	13.7	1.1	0.3
Players 10+ Yrs. (1,607)					
1871-1902 (159)	12.5	2.6	13.8	4.9	0.9
1903-1960 (762)	13.2	4.8	13.1	2.7	1.0
1961-1974 (93)	11.2	4.3	13.2	2.6	0.8
1975-1999 (593)	12.5	3.7	13.7	3.4	0.9
Historical Average	12.8	4.0	13.2	3.2	1.0
Players 15+ Yrs. (345)					
1871-1902 (28)	17.0	3.1	19.0	5.5	0.9
1903-1960 (212)	17.2	5.6	15.7	3.1	1.1
1961-1974 (2)	15.0	4.3	10.0	3.5	1.5
1975-1999 (103)	16.7	3.9	14.9	4.3	1.1
Historical Average	**17.0**	**4.7**	**15.7**	**3.6**	**1.1**

Table 4

Players & Switches (Raw Totals & Percentages)

Players 10+ Yrs.	0 Sw	1-3 Sw	4-6 Sw	7+ Sw
1871-1902 (221)	3	61	116	41
1903-1960 (982)	81	575	294	32
1961-1974 (439)	32	208	167	32
1975-1999 (878)	55	414	335	74
Totals	**171**	**1,258**	**912**	**179**
Players 10+ Yrs.	**0 Sw**	**1-3 Sw**	**4-6 Sw**	**7+ Sw**
1871-1902 (221)	1.4%	27.6%	52.5%	18.6%
1903-1960 (982)	8.2%	58.6%	29.9%	3.3%
1961-1974 (439)	7.3%	47.4%	38.2%	7.3%
1975-1998 (829)	6.3%	47.2%	37.2%	8.4%
Historical Average	**6.8%**	**49.9%**	**36.2%**	**7.1%**

Table 5

Ten+ Switch Players

Name	Debut	Seasons	Swtchs	Mid Sw	Final Year
Bobo Newsom	1929	20	16	9	1953
Deacon McGuire	1884	26	13	5	1912
Bob Miller	1957	17	12	6	1974
Mike Morgan	1978	20	12	3	1999
Jack Doyle	1889	17	11	4	1905
Joe Gerhardt	1873	15	11	2	1891
Joe Quinn	1884	17	10	3	1901
Gus Weyhing	1887	14	10	4	1901
Jim Donnell	1884	11	10	2	1898
Frank Foreman	1884	11	10	4	1902
Phenomenal Smith	1884	8	10	5	1891
Tommy Davis	1959	18	10	5	1976
Jamie Quirk	1975	18	10	3	1992
Willie Montanez	1966	14	10	6	1982
Dan Schatzeder	1977	15	10	5	1991

New "Production"

Simplify, simplify

Mark Kanter

Production," (PRO), usually expressed as on-base percentage (OBP) plus Slugging Average (SA) has caught on as a common measurement of offensive capability since it was published in John Thorn and Pete Palmer's *Total Baseball* in 1989. On-base percentage measures the percentage of times a batter reaches bases *per plate appearance* (PA). Slugging measures the number of bases a batter realizes *per at-bat* (AB).

When they are expressed as decimals, these numbers can be added up. Mathematically, though, there's a problem. The denominators of these two expressions are different, and, as you recall from middle school math, fractions with different denominators cannot be added together.

To truly add these numbers, both plate appearances and at-bats must be in the denominator of both fractions. So the formula for OBP must be multiplied by at-bats and the formula for SA must be multiplied by plate appearances. Follow the steps in Table 1 on the following page.

You can see that PRO, in its expanded form, is a difficult equation to understand.

We need a more easily understood equation. I suggest the one at the top of the next column, which I call "new production" (NewProd).

$$\text{NewProd} = \frac{W + HBP + CI + S + 2D + 3T + 4HR}{\text{Plate Appearances}}$$

$$=$$

$$\text{NewProd} = \frac{W + HBP + CI + S + 2D + 3T + 4HR}{AB + W + HBP + Sac + CI}$$

This equation encompasses the essential components of on-base production—walks, hit-by-pitches, catcher's interference (CI), and hits of each type—in the numerator. The denominator is plate appearances, so the equation measures simply the number of bases a batter gets per plate appearance. Four is the highest possible result. The great benefits of this equation are that it is easy to understand—no drastic manipulation of denominators—and it follows mathematical rules.

Table 2 illustrates the top twenty-five players in terms of NewProd given at least 502 plate appearances. The 1999 correlation with PRO is 0.98. You can also determine the percentage of NewProd emanating from on-base percentage (OBP) and slugging (SA). Sammy Sosa had the highest percentage of NewProd emanating from SA—95 percent. Bob Abreu had the highest percentage emanating from OBP—72 percent. Mark McGwire had the highest NewProd number. These results are consistent with our perceptions of these players. Sosa does not have a high OBP but has a high SA. Abreu does not hit a lot of home runs but does have a high OBP. None of

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Table 1. Reconciling OBP and SLG denominators

$$\text{OBP} = \frac{\text{Hits (H)} + \text{Walks (W)} + \text{Hit-By-Pitch (HBP)}}{\text{Plate Appearances (PA)}}$$

$$\text{PA} = \text{At-Bats (AB)} + \text{Walks (W)} + \text{Hit-By-Pitch (HBP)} + \text{Sacrifices (Sac)}$$

$$\text{OBP} = \frac{\text{Hits (H)} + \text{Walks (W)} + \text{Hit-By-Pitch (HBP)}}{\text{At Bats (AB)} + \text{Walks (W)} + \text{Hit-By-Pitch (HBP)} + \text{Sacrifices (Sac)}}$$

$$\text{SA} = \frac{\text{Singles (S)} + 2*\text{Doubles (2D)} + 3*\text{Triples (3T)} + 4*\text{Home Runs (4HR)}}{\text{At-Bats (AB)}}$$

The only way to reconcile the fractions is to do the following:

$$\frac{\text{Hits (H)} + \text{Walks (W)} + \text{Hit-By-Pitch (HBP)}}{\text{At-Bats (AB)} + \text{Walks (W)} + \text{Hit-By-Pitch (HBP)} + \text{Sacrifices (Sac)}} + \frac{\text{Singles (S)} + 2*\text{Doubles (2D)} + 3*\text{Triples (3T)} + 4*\text{Home Runs (4HR)}}{\text{At-Bats (AB)}} =$$

$$\text{PRO} = \frac{\text{AB}*(\text{H} + \text{W} + \text{HBP}) + (\text{AB} + \text{W} + \text{HBP} + \text{Sac})*(\text{S} + 2\text{D} + 3\text{T} + 4\text{HR})}{\text{AB}*(\text{AB} + \text{W} + \text{HBP} + \text{Sac})}$$

$$\text{PRO} = \frac{\text{AB}*\text{H} + \text{AB}*\text{W} + \text{AB}*\text{HBP} + \text{AB}*\text{S} + \text{AB}*2\text{D} + \text{AB}*3\text{T} + \text{AB}*4\text{HR} + \text{W}*\text{S} + \text{W}*2\text{D} + \text{W}*3\text{T} + \text{W}*4\text{HR})}{\text{AB}*(\text{AB} + \text{W} + \text{HBP} + \text{Sac})} + \frac{\text{HBP}*\text{S} + \text{HBP}*2\text{D} + \text{HBP}*3\text{T} + \text{HBP}*4\text{HR} + \text{Sac}*\text{S} + \text{Sac}*2\text{D} + \text{Sac}*3\text{T} + \text{Sac}*\text{HR})}{\text{AB}*(\text{AB} + \text{W} + \text{HBP} + \text{Sac})}$$

$$\text{PRO} = \frac{\text{H} + \text{W} + \text{HBP} + \text{S} + 2\text{D} + 3\text{T} + 4\text{HR}}{\text{AB} + \text{W} + \text{HBP} + \text{Sac}} + \frac{\text{W}*\text{S} + \text{W}*2\text{D} + \text{W}*3\text{T} + \text{W}*4\text{HR} + \text{HBP}*\text{S} + \text{HBP}*2\text{D} + \text{HBP}*3\text{T} + \text{HBP}*4\text{HR} + \text{Sac}*\text{S} + \text{Sac}*2\text{D} + \text{Sac}*3\text{T} + \text{Sac}*\text{HR}}{\text{AB}*(\text{AB} + \text{W} + \text{HBP} + \text{Sac})}$$

us will be surprised to learn that McGwire accounted for 0.753 bases for every plate appearance.

I expect and welcome challenges to NewProd. I acknowledge the high correlation between runs created and PRO, when we evaluate team offensive production. The correlation declines for individual players, though. Combining this with PRO's violation of mathematical precepts, I think it makes more sense to use NewProd as an index of individual offensive performance.

Table 2. Ranking of top 25 players of 1999, NewProd

Player	Tm	Pos	G	PA	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	BB	HBP	SF	SH	OBP	SA	PRO	NewProd	% PRO	% OBP	% SA
M. McGwire	STL	1B	153	661	521	145	21	1	65	133	2	5	0	0.424	0.697	1.120	0.753	0.67	0.56	0.92
L. Walker	COL	OF	127	513	438	166	26	4	37	57	12	6	0	0.458	0.710	1.168	0.741	0.63	0.62	0.96
M. Ramirez	CLE	OF	147	639	522	174	34	3	44	96	12	9	0	0.441	0.663	1.104	0.710	0.64	0.62	0.93
C. Jones	ATL	3B	157	701	567	181	41	1	45	126	2	6	0	0.441	0.633	1.074	0.695	0.65	0.63	0.91
R. Palmeiro	TEX	1B	158	674	565	183	30	1	47	97	3	9	0	0.420	0.630	1.050	0.677	0.64	0.62	0.93
J. Bagwell	HOU	1B	162	728	562	171	35	0	42	149	10	7	0	0.453	0.591	1.044	0.674	0.65	0.67	0.88
S. Sosa	CUB	OF	162	712	625	180	24	2	63	78	3	6	0	0.367	0.635	1.002	0.671	0.67	0.55	0.95
B. Giles	PIT	OF	141	627	521	164	33	3	39	95	3	8	0	0.418	0.614	1.032	0.667	0.65	0.63	0.92
N. Grcprra	BOS	SS	135	595	532	190	42	4	27	51	8	4	0	0.418	0.603	1.022	0.639	0.62	0.66	0.94
J. Jaha	OAK	1B	142	570	457	126	23	0	35	101	9	3	0	0.414	0.556	0.970	0.639	0.66	0.65	0.87
J. Burnitz	MIL	OF	130	580	467	126	33	2	33	91	16	6	0	0.402	0.561	0.963	0.636	0.66	0.63	0.88
V. Guerrero	MON	OF	160	674	610	193	37	5	42	55	7	2	0	0.378	0.600	0.978	0.635	0.65	0.60	0.94
K. Griffey	SEA	OF	160	706	606	173	26	3	48	91	7	2	0	0.384	0.576	0.960	0.633	0.66	0.61	0.91
J. Thome	CLE	1B	146	629	494	137	27	2	33	127	4	4	0	0.426	0.540	0.967	0.633	0.65	0.67	0.85
T. Helton	DEN	1B	159	656	578	185	39	5	35	68	6	4	0	0.395	0.587	0.981	0.630	0.64	0.63	0.93
S. Green	TOR	OF	153	696	614	190	45	0	42	66	11	5	0	0.384	0.588	0.972	0.629	0.65	0.61	0.93
C. Delgado	TOR	1B	152	680	573	156	39	0	44	86	14	7	0	0.376	0.571	0.947	0.628	0.66	0.60	0.91
E. Martinez	SEA	3B	142	608	502	169	35	1	24	97	6	3	0	0.447	0.554	1.001	0.627	0.63	0.71	0.88
J. Gonzalez	TEX	OF	144	628	562	183	36	1	39	51	3	12	0	0.377	0.601	0.979	0.624	0.64	0.60	0.96
B. Abreu	PHI	OF	152	662	546	183	35	11	20	109	3	4	0	0.446	0.549	0.995	0.622	0.63	0.72	0.88
A. Rodriguez	SEA	SS	129	571	502	143	25	0	42	56	5	8	1	0.357	0.586	0.943	0.622	0.66	0.57	0.94
J. Giambi	OAK	1B	158	695	575	181	36	1	33	105	7	8	0	0.422	0.553	0.975	0.619	0.63	0.68	0.89
F. Tatis	STL	3B	149	639	537	160	31	2	34	82	16	4	0	0.404	0.553	0.957	0.618	0.65	0.65	0.89
C. Everett	HOU	OF	123	533	464	151	33	3	25	50	11	8	2	0.398	0.571	0.969	0.612	0.63	0.65	0.93
J. Canseco	TB	DH	113	502	430	120	18	1	34	58	7	7	0	0.369	0.563	0.931	0.612	0.66	0.60	0.92

The Balance of Power in Baseball

Has anything changed?

Stuart Shapiro

Recent years have seen owners of small-market franchises and many fans alike lament the domination of the sport by franchises with money. While there is no denying the easily observable fact that the greater a team's payroll, the greater its chance of playing in the postseason, the fact is that this domination of baseball by a relatively few teams is not a new phenomenon.

Concentration of power vs. random distribution— Since the 1994-95 work stoppage, concern about the dominance of big market teams has increased. Five seasons have elapsed since the ignominy of a cancelled World Series. In these five seasons, 1995-1999, eighteen of the thirty franchises have qualified for the postseason, eleven have played in a League Championship Series, and five have played in the World Series. By themselves, these numbers tell us little. What should they be compared to? How many teams should we expect to play at each of these levels in a given five-season period?

One way of answering these questions is by asking another question. If reaching the postseason were truly random, how many different teams would play in the postseason? A simple model of a random distribution can be constructed. Results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Baseball with Models

	1995-99	Random	Dependent
Postseason	18	23.4	22.1
LCS	11	15.3	14.7
World Series	5	8.7	8.5

As you can see, if success is randomly distributed among teams, twenty-three would have made the postseason, fifteen would have made the LCS, and roughly nine would have made the World Series. The difference between the random model and reality becomes greater at the higher levels of postseason accomplishment. This may lead us to believe that there has indeed been a concentration of power in baseball, and that the concentration is significant.

In reality, a comparison with a random model is not fair. Teams that make the playoffs one year have a greater chance of making them the following year because, unless they are owned by Wayne Huizenga, they keep many of their players. Table 1 also shows the result of what I call a "dependent model." This model assumes that a team that has made the postseason the previous year has a 50 percent greater chance of making it the following year than a team that did not make the playoffs.

Even this model, however, indicates a significant level of concentration of power in baseball. The dependent model predicts twenty-two teams making the postseason, nearly fifteen making the LCS, and between eight and nine making the World Series. Compared to these values, baseball power has been

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considerably concentrated over the past few years. The small-market owners appear to have a case.

Comparison with other sports—Comparing with predictions from a model is one thing. Comparing with actual data is another. After seeing the results described above, I decided it would be interesting to compare baseball with the concentration of success in other sports. Table 2 summarizes the number of teams to make the rounds of eight, four, and two in each of the four major North American team sports over the 1995-99 seasons.

Table 2. Comparison of Baseball with Other Sports.

	Baseball	Football	Basketball	Hockey
Round of 8	18	21	15	17
Round of 4	11	13	11	10
Final	5	8	6	8

The major sports fall into two categories. Baseball and basketball have had considerable concentration of success over the past five years. In football and hockey, success has been spread around much more. Maybe football and hockey teams are on a more even footing because these sports have harder salary caps than baseball and basketball. Or maybe it's just the dominance of Michael Jordan in basketball and the very well run Braves and Yankees franchises in baseball.

Comparison with baseball history—How does the concentration of power over the past five years in baseball compare with history? Comparisons with history are difficult. We would expect dominance by one or few teams to be less likely now than it was in the past, when there were fewer teams competing. Furthermore, the modern playoff system puts more teams into the postseason now and muddies the water a bit.

Since 1995 was the first year that eight teams were allowed into baseball's postseason, I limited my comparisons to include only the the LCS and the World Series. For the LCS, I looked at every five-year period between 1969 and 1999 to determine the average number of teams reaching baseball's final four over any five-year period. Over this thirty-year period, an average of twelve teams have reached the League Championship Series every five years. The total for 1995-99 is therefore only one below average, and well within statistical variation.

The greatest period of LCS parity was 1980-1984, when seventeen teams reached the postseason. The fewest number of teams to reach the LCS over a five-year period was nine, occurring a number of times in the early–mid seventies. Divisions dominated by the Reds, A's, Orioles, and Pirates gave the fans of comparatively few teams a chance to enjoy postseason baseball.

Looking at the World Series, we see that since 1903, an average of 6.2 teams have participated in the Fall Classic over any five-year period. The participation of five teams over the past five years is lower than average but well within statistical variation.

The greatest number of teams playing in the World Series over a five-year period is nine, both 1944-48 and throughout most of the 1980s (that same era of parity we noticed earlier). The fewest was four, which occurred six times, most frequently during the domination of baseball by New York (Yankees, Giants, and Dodgers) in the 1950s.

Conclusion—A concentration of power does exist in major league baseball, particularly when the sport is compared with football or hockey. On the other hand, this concentration is not significantly different from that experienced throughout the twentieth century. Baseball has always been a sport of dynasties and dominant teams.

Mark McGwire's 162 Bases on Balls

More than one record in 1998

John F. Jarvis

In addition to setting the major league single season record with his seventy home runs in 1998, Mark McGwire set a National League record with 162 bases on balls. This tied him with Ted Williams, who did it twice (1947, 1949), for second on the major league single season list behind Babe Ruth's 170 in 1923. In each of these four seasons, the leader in walks was also the season home run leader.

Twenty-eight of McGwire's bases on balls were intentional (IBB). In this category he was one behind the 1998 major league leader, Barry Bonds. Bases on balls that aren't official "intentionals" will be referred to as unintentional bases on balls (UBB) in this article.

Besides IBBs, there is the much commented on practice of pitching around a strong hitter. That is, the pitcher doesn't officially give an IBB but doesn't give the hitter any legitimately good pitches either. There is no serious attempt to get the hitter out and a UBB usually occurs. How many of his UBBs are pitching-around BBs?

Being hit by a pitch (HP) can be considered to be a very intentional base on balls. McGwire was hit an unremarkable six times during the 1998 season. Jason Kendall, the season leader in the HP category was hit 31 times.

McGwire's 70 home runs came in just 509 at bats, a rate of one homer every 7.3 at bats. Obviously, McGwires 162 walks cost him a lot of at bats. While UBBs are an inevitable part of the game, the intentional variety *purposely* prevents hitting. A measure of opportunities for hitting lost through "intentional" passes can be estimated by adding the fraction of his 134 unintentional UBBs that represent pitching around to his 28 IBBs. Of course, this requires identifying pitching-around UBBs.

According to TV play-by-play announcers, an IBB is usually indicated (managers don't seem to do this as often as the game announcers suggest they should) any time there is a runner on second and none on first. In actuality the IBB tactic is employed in a somewhat more subtle manner than this. IBBs given outside of well-defined tactical situations could be called gift BBs. Another question that arises is how many of McGwire's official IBBs came in situations where tactics wouldn't suggest one?

If managers use the IBB in a consistent way and if there are not an excessive number of pitching-around BBs, various statistical pattern recognition methods can be used to create a classifier that labels each situation as matching an IBB tactical situation or not. The actual event is known and is not subject to being changed. Only the situation in which it occurs, the context for the event, is being classified. The particular statistical tool that seems most appropriate for this task is the neural net (*Neural Networks*, Laurene Fausett, Prentice Hall, 1994). While the term neural network suggests artificial intelligence or other exotic techniques, it is a well-defined statistical procedure that uses standard numerical computations.

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Creating a neural net requires determining a list of events—UBBs and IBBs—and the game situation—event context—in which they occur. This list becomes the input to the neural net training procedure. The training procedure adjusts its internal numerical coefficients to minimize the mismatches between its output and the actual events recorded in their contexts.

Using the Retrosheet, Total Sports and Gary Gillette/Pete Palmer play-by-play accounts for 1979-1999, I tabulated all UBB (266,062), IBB (26,557) and HP (20,051) events and their contexts. I noted: inning, outs, runners on base, relative score, player receiving the pass and player following the pass. Relative score is the difference between the offensive team and defensive team runs at the time of the event. Batting ability is given by a recent at bats slugging average.

I formed neural net training sets by taking all recorded IBBs and a similar number of UBBs chosen at random from all the available events. I did not use HPs in the training process. Once the neural net has been trained, it can be used to classify the context in which a particular event occurred.

For those technically inclined, the neural net used is a standard two layer perceptron back propagation trained net with one layer of hidden units. Eight input units are used (corresponding to each parameter in the recorded context where each base is presented separately) and nine hidden units are used. A hidden unit is a weighted sum over the input unit values plus a constant. The result of the hidden unit sum is passed through an activation function to generate its output. The activation function in this case is sigmoidal, having asymptotic values of +1 and -1 and a slope of 1.0 at x=0. The output unit is a sum of a constant term and the weighted outputs of the hidden units. Subjecting the output unit sum to the same activation function completes the neural net calculation. This neural net requires ten times the computation of evaluating a linear regression equation for the same number of input parameters in addition to the activation function evaluations. An iterative training procedure determines the coefficients in the neural net by minimizing the sum of the squared error between the output and given value for all the events in the training set. This neural net contains 91 coefficients which, unlike a linear regression formula, do not have an interpretation in terms of the input parameters.

When presented with a particular game context, the trained neural net generates a number between +1, most IBB, like and -1 which is most BB, like. I set the decision point in declaring a particular context UBB or IBB midway between the average of the neural net output values for the training set IBB event contexts and the average of the UBB event neural net outputs. Repeating the training using other randomly chosen groups of BBs produces essentially the same results. Splitting the data by league or decade ('80s and '90s) also produces equivalent results.

We can assess the relative importance of each parameter in the event context for determining if an IBB should be offered can be assessed by training eight additional neural nets, each with one of the eight input parameters not used. We rank the importance of each data item by how much the accuracy of the neural net is degraded by its absence. Using this procedure, the ranking of the data items from most to least important is: a runner on second, a runner on third, a runner on first, the relative score, the inning, the number of outs in the inning, the slugging average of the batter following the event, and, finally, the slugging average of the batter receiving the IBB. This ordering is largely confirmed by correlation coefficients calculated from the same data (Table 1). The relative unimportance of hitting prowess is surprising. Still, there is some vindication in this for my single-minded announcer.

Linear regression can be used in a way equivalent to the neural net to classify UBB/IBB situations. A linear regression done on the same data yields the results given in Table 1. Also included in Table 1 are the correlation coefficients between the input parameters and the UBB/IBB values. In the regression, bases have the value 1 if a runner is present, and 0 otherwise. Innings are in the range 1–10, with all extra innings given the value 10. Outs have the values 0, 1, and 2. The remaining three parameters are defined as for the neural net.

Table 2 compares the classification results of the neural net and linear regression on all the 1979-1999 data. The neural net reduces misclassifications by thirty-eight percent compared to the linear-regression-based classifier.

Players in Table 3 were selected because they were season leaders in BB, IBB, HP, or HRs and are ordered by total BBs. McGwire, of course, was the HR and BB season leader. Jason Kendall was the 1998 leader in HPs with 31. Andres Galarraga was tied for second in HP. Sammy Sosa was second in season home runs. Barry Bonds, Ricky Henderson and Frank Thomas were second, third and fourth in BBs. Bonds was the major league leader in IBBs with McGwire second in

this category. Ken Griffey, Jr. was third in home runs. The last line presents the totals for the eight players. For the entire 1998 season, the neural net classifier correctly labels almost ninety percent of UBBs and ninety-four percent of IBBs. About eighty-seven percent of HP events occur in UBB situations, not greatly different than the fraction of UBBs classified as UBBs by the neural net.

The practice of pitching around a batter can be identified with UBB situations classified as IBB. Comparing the totals suggests that this occurred slightly less often for the selected players. McGwire clearly didn't receive a disproportionate number of pitching-around UBBs. Ricky Henderson, who didn't get any free passes either, had a slightly higher fraction of UBBs that came in IBB situations. Opposing teams will pitch carefully to Henderson, but they really don't want him on the bases.

Table 1. Linear Regression Coefficients and Correlation Results

Parameter	Weight	r2
constant	-1.0129	
runner on first	-0.4261	0.104
runner on second	0.7205	0.394
runner on third	0.5180	0.182
inning	0.0608	0.098
outs	0.1234	0.090
relative score	0.0362	0.085
gets BB	0.2792	0.009
after BB	-0.3226	0.012

Table 2. Classification of all 1979-1999 UBBs, IBBs and HPs by a Neural Net (NN) and by Linear Regression (LR)

	BB as			IBB as			BB+IBB			HP as		
	BB	IBB	frac	IBB	BB	frac	correct	incor	frac	BB	IBB	frac
NN	240646	25416	0.904	25421	1136	0.957	266067	26552	0.909	18168	1883	0.906
LR	218503	47559	0.821	25367	1190	0.955	243870	48749	0.833	16589	3462	0.827

Table 3. Neural Net Classifications for the 1998 Season and Selected Players

	UBB as			IBB as		UBB+IBB			HP as			
	UBB	IBB	frac	IBB	UBB	frac	correct	incor	frac	UBB	IBB	frac
all 1998	13760	1610	0.895	1003	63	0.941	14763	1673	0.898	1386	200	0.874
Kendall	43	5	0.896	3	0	1.000	46	5	0.902	29	2	0.935
Galarraga	50	2	0.962	10	1	0.909	60	3	0.952	24	1	0.960
Sosa	57	2	0.966	13	1	0.929	70	3	0.959	1	0	1.000
Griffey	58	7	0.892	10	1	0.909	68	8	0.895	7	0	1.000
Thomas	99	9	0.917	2	0	1.000	101	9	0.918	5	1	0.833
Henderson	101	17	0.856	0	0		101	17	0.856	5	0	1.000
Bonds	96	5	0.950	24	5	0.828	120	10	0.923	7	1	0.875
McGwire	127	7	0.948	20	8	0.714	147	15	0.907	5	1	0.833
Totals	**631**	**54**	**0.921**	**82**	**16**	**0.837**	**713**	**70**	**0.911**	**83**	**6**	**0.933**

IBBs classified as coming in UBB situations are in the category of gift IBBs. Except for Bonds and McGwire, the selected batters as a group receive these passes at about the same rate as the league as a whole. Bonds, who received a very rare IBB with the bases loaded, and especially McGwire, are clearly in a different category, receiving many more of these gift IBBs than the season average.

The HPs received by the selected hitters classify as BBs at a slightly higher, but not statistically significant, rate than the season average. The league leaders in BBs, IBBs and home runs are not among the season leaders in HPs. There is no evidence from this small selection of players that HPs were used instead of IBBs or that they were specifically directed at the home run leaders.

The excellent agreement achieved by the neural net in classifying BB and IBB situations confirms that the IBB is given only in well-defined tactical situations, and justifies the original assumption made in the training of the neural net. The low incidence of pitching-around BBs and gift IBBs suggests that McGwire's high BB total is more a function of his discrimination at the plate than opposing managerial intent.

Table 4 below lists McGwire's 162 total BBs and six HPs ordered by the neural net classification value for each event, from most IBB-like to least IBB-like. Any event context with a neural net value greater than -0.10 is labeled IBB, in column NN. The event context parameters are part of the table providing examples of the classification power of the neural net. The table also shows there is a significant separation in the two categories. Other columns in Table 4 are OPP, the opposing team; EVT, the recorded event; Bas, runners on base; OT, number of outs in the inning; IN, the inning (with all extra innings given the value 10); DS, the difference in score between the offense and defense; and F, the index of the player following McGwire in the batting order given at the beginning of Table 4. In the player listing, Aft is the number of times he came to the plate after a McGwire UBB/IBB/HP.

Tabulating McGwire's total BB by quarters of the season (as equally as 162 can be divided by 4) yields the following: 48, 34, 50, and 30. There is no suggestion in this that he was subject to special treatment during the later, most publicized, part of the home run record chase.

McGwire did not receive a disproportionate number of pitching-around BBs, estimated as seven by the neural net. His 28 IBBs, which is one less than the season high, include eight that came in situations where the IBB is not normally given. His HP total is comparatively low. He appears to have been given the respect all power hitters command, but there is no evidence that opponents tried to hinder him during the home run chase.

Combining McGwire's IBBs and pitching-around BBs, those in contexts labeled IBB by the neural net, yields thirty-five events. If he had been allowed to hit, twenty-eight of these events—35 x 509/(509+162–35)—could have been expected to result in ABs. At the rate he hit HRs during 1998, this would have resulted in three or four more homers.

Baseball has a rich and interesting statistical heritage. The most detailed of these statistical records are the sets of complete season play-by-play files. Using the play-by-play accounts and a powerful statistical technique, neural networks, I have shown how a subtle managerial tactic can be replicated. The resulting UBB/IBB classifier has been used to answer questions concerning the complex interaction of hitting and pitching during the exciting home run record-setting season of 1998.

Table 4. Mark McGwire's BBs and HPs in 1998

#	Opp	Date	EVT	Rating	NN	BAS	OT	IN	DS	F
1.	SFN	6/07	IW	0.849	IW	-23	1	9	-1	1
2.	SFN	5/24	IW	0.764	IW	-2-	1	9	0	2
3.	CHN	5/02	IW	0.752	IW	-2-	1	9	0	2
4.	NYN	8/12	IW	0.677	IW	-2-	1	10	0	2
5.	LAN	4/02	IW	0.632	IW	-2-	2	8	2	2
6.	ARI	4/14	IW	0.629	IW	—3	2	7	0	2
7.	CHN	9/08	IW	0.602	IW	-2-	2	6	0	2
8.	CHN	8/07	W	0.576	IW	-23	1	6	5	3
9.	MON	9/27	W	0.541	IW	-2-	2	5	0	1
10.	SFN	6/06	HP	0.498	IW	-2-	1	6	2	2
11.	ARI	6/13	IW	0.484	IW	-2-	2	5	2	1
12.	SFN	6/05	IW	0.456	IW	—3	2	5	-1	1
13.	CHN	8/08	IW	0.448	IW	1-3	0	10	0	2
14.	PIT	8/23	W	0.446	IW	-2-	2	6	-1	2
15.	SFN	5/24	IW	0.436	IW	-2-	1	5	0	2
16.	CHN	8/08	IW	0.428	IW	-2-	1	7	1	2
17.	HOU	7/12	IW	0.407	IW	-2-	2	4	2	1
18.	CHN	5/02	IW	0.395	IW	-2-	2	4	3	2
19.	MIL	5/11	W	0.375	IW	-2-	2	7	4	1
20.	SFN	7/23	IW	0.358	IW	-2-	1	7	2	2

#	Opp	Date	EVT	Rating	NN	BAS	OT	IN	DS	F
21.	HOU	7/11	IW	0.316	IW	-2-	0	9	0	1
22.	SFN	6/06	IW	0.311	IW	—3	1	5	-1	2
23.	CIN	7/03	IW	0.279	IW	-2-	2	3	1	1
24.	PHI	4/17	W	0.227	IW	-23	0	3	-1	3
25.	SFN	6/06	IW	0.187	IW	-2-	1	3	0	2
26.	HOU	7/10	IW	0.151	IW	-2-	0	8	0	1
27.	CHN	5/03	W	0.146	IW	-2-	2	3	-1	2
28.	HOU	7/09	W	0.041	IW	—3	2	3	1	1
29.	CHA	6/10	W	-0.140	W	-2-	0	5	4	1
30.	COL	7/25	W	-0.160	W	—3	1	7	-1	2
31.	KCA	7/02	W	-0.214	W	-23	0	1	0	1
32.	SFN	5/23	W	-0.219	W	—3	1	2	1	2
33.	MIL	9/20	W	-0.220	W	1-3	0	9	3	1
34.	SFN	4/13	W	-0.276	W	-2-	2	3	-1	2
35.	ARI	6/20	W	-0.342	W	-2-	1	3	0	1
36.	MON	9/25	W	-0.380	W	-23	0	1	0	2
37.	SFN	5/24	IW	-0.390	W	—	2	10	0	2
38.	LAN	7/19	W	-0.473	W	1-3	2	5	-1	1
39.	CHN	5/01	W	-0.481	W	-2-	2	7	-2	2
40.	ATL	8/28	W	-0.491	W	-2-	1	1	0	2
41.	CHN	5/03	W	-0.492	W	-2-	1	1	0	2
42.	CHN	8/19	W	-0.520	W	-23	2	6	-3	2
43.	CHA	6/10	IW	-0.528	W	—	2	10	0	1
44.	LAN	4/02	W	-0.548	W	-2-	1	1	0	2
45.	CHN	8/09	W	-0.558	W	-2-	2	3	-1	2
46.	PHI	4/26	W	-0.582	W	-2-	2	5	-2	2
47.	CIN	7/15	IW	-0.601	W	1—	2	9	0	2
48.	SDN	7/20	W	-0.697	W	123	2	8	5	1
49.	HOU	9/23	W	-0.698	W	—	1	1	-2	1
50.	SFN	6/06	IW	-0.715	W	—	1	10	0	2
51.	CIN	7/04	IW	-0.719	W	—	2	9	0	1
52.	COL	4/08	W	-0.724	W	1—	0	1	1	2
53.	SFN	7/23	W	-0.732	W	123	1	8	5	2
54.	MON	4/21	W	-0.737	W	—	2	9	2	1
55.	SFN	5/22	W	-0.737	W	—	1	10	0	1
56.	SFN	4/10	W	-0.752	W	-2-	1	1	0	2
57.	LAN	7/17	W	-0.757	W	1—	2	6	1	1
58.	CHN	5/01	W	-0.766	W	—	0	4	-3	2
59.	CIN	7/13	IW	-0.767	W	—	1	10	0	4
60.	PIT	5/05	W	-0.769	W	—	0	6	-3	2
61.	PIT	9/15	W	-0.770	W	123	0	8	2	2
62.	PIT	8/22	W	-0.771	W	—	2	3	-3	2
63.	COL	5/25	W	-0.775	W	1—	1	8	-5	2
64.	CIN	9/06	W	-0.777	W	—	0	4	-1	2
65.	PHI	4/25	W	-0.777	W	—	1	4	-2	1
66.	CIN	7/03	HP	-0.796	W	—	1	6	-5	1
67.	FLO	8/31	W	-0.796	W	—	0	3	2	1
68.	MIL	5/11	W	-0.797	W	-2-	1	1	0	1
69.	ATL	7/31	IW	-0.805	W	-2-	1	1	0	2
70.	CIN	7/03	W	-0.806	W	-2-	1	8	-4	1
71.	FLO	9/02	W	-0.806	W	—	0	5	5	1
72.	CIN	9/10	W	-0.806	W	—	0	6	1	1
73.	PHI	4/17	W	-0.807	W	—	2	1	-1	2
74.	HOU	6/16	W	-0.809	W	—	0	3	0	1
75.	PIT	8/15	W	-0.810	W	12-	2	6	-1	1
76.	CHN	8/19	W	-0.812	W	—	1	5	-2	2
77.	LAN	7/19	W	-0.813	W	—	1	9	0	1
78.	HOU	6/18	W	-0.813	W	—	0	3	2	1
79.	COL	4/07	W	-0.814	W	—	0	4	0	2
80.	COL	5/28	W	-0.814	W	—	0	6	1	2
81.	NYN	5/08	W	-0.815	W	—	2	1	0	2
82.	FLO	8/31	W	-0.818	W	—	1	9	2	1
83.	PIT	8/14	HP	-0.819	W	—	1	3	-1	2
84.	CIN	7/13	W	-0.819	W	—	0	8	2	1
85.	CHN	5/01	W	-0.821	W	—	2	5	-2	2
86.	CIN	7/05	W	-0.821	W	—	0	8	-5	1
87.	ARI	6/21	HP	-0.822	W	1—	2	5	1	1
88.	PIT	5/06	W	-0.824	W	—	1	4	0	2
89.	HOU	9/23	W	-0.825	W	—	0	3	-5	1
90.	FLO	5/16	W	-0.829	W	1—	2	5	1	1
91.	FLO	9/02	W	-0.829	W	—	0	4	1	1
92.	CHN	8/08	W	-0.831	W	—	0	6	-1	2
93.	SDN	5/30	W	-0.831	W	1—	1	3	1	2
94.	NYN	8/12	W	-0.831	W	1—	1	10	0	2
95.	COL	4/07	W	-0.831	W	—	2	8	3	2
96.	MIL	7/28	W	-0.832	W	—	1	6	-2	1
97.	CIN	9/10	W	-0.833	W	—	1	5	-1	1
98.	ATL	8/30	W	-0.833	W	1—	1	1	0	2
99.	CHN	5/02	W	-0.834	W	—	0	7	0	2
100.	COL	5/27	W	-0.834	W	—	0	8	2	2
101.	MIL	8/04	W	-0.835	W	—	0	6	1	5
102.	MIL	9/18	W	-0.835	W	—	2	1	0	1
103.	PIT	5/06	W	-0.836	W	—	2	1	0	2
104.	MIL	7/30	W	-0.837	W	—	0	3	3	1
105.	LAN	7/17	W	-0.838	W	—	0	4	1	1
106.	MON	4/29	W	-0.840	W	—	0	8	2	2
107.	CIN	9/04	W	-0.840	W	12-	1	5	1	2
108.	HOU	6/16	W	-0.840	W	1—	1	1	0	1
109.	CHN	8/08	W	-0.842	W	—	1	9	0	2
110.	ARI	6/14	W	-0.843	W	—	1	6	1	1
111.	HOU	9/12	W	-0.843	W	—	0	3	1	1
112.	SDN	4/04	W	-0.843	W	—	0	3	1	2
113.	PIT	9/16	W	-0.844	W	—	2	1	0	1
114.	ARI	6/13	W	-0.844	W	—	0	8	-1	1
115.	ATL	8/28	W	-0.845	W	1—	2	5	2	2
116.	KCA	7/02	W	-0.845	W	12-	0	8	1	1
117.	SFN	7/23	W	-0.851	W	—	0	6	0	2
118.	FLO	5/15	W	-0.852	W	—	0	7	-2	1
119.	FLO	5/15	W	-0.853	W	—	1	5	-4	1
120.	CHN	9/08	W	-0.855	W	—	2	8	3	2
121.	NYN	8/20	W	-0.856	W	—	2	5	1	2
122.	SDN	4/03	W	-0.860	W	—3	1	3	-5	5

1.26

#	Opp	Date	EVT	Rating	NN	BAS	OT	IN	DS	F
123.	HOU	6/18	W	-0.862	W	—	0	7	3	1
124.	CHN	5/02	W	-0.863	W	—	2	1	0	2
125.	COL	7/25	W	-0.863	W	—	2	1	0	2
126.	MON	4/27	W	-0.863	W	—	2	3	1	2
127.	PIT	8/15	W	-0.865	W	—	2	1	0	1
128.	PHI	4/18	W	-0.866	W	—	1	7	2	1
129.	PIT	8/14	W	-0.866	W	1—	2	4	3	2
130.	PIT	9/15	W	-0.866	W	—	0	7	2	2
131.	SFN	4/11	W	-0.868	W	123	1	7	1	2
132.	SDN	5/29	W	-0.868	W	—	2	1	0	2
133.	NYN	8/21	W	-0.868	W	—	2	1	0	2
134.	CIN	7/13	W	-0.869	W	—	1	5	3	1
135.	FLO	5/17	W	-0.869	W	—	2	1	-1	1
136.	COL	5/28	W	-0.869	W	—	2	1	0	2
137.	ARI	6/21	W	-0.869	W	—	2	1	0	1
138.	ARI	4/14	W	-0.869	W	1—	1	1	0	2
139.	FLO	5/15	W	-0.870	W	—	2	3	-5	1
140.	CIN	7/04	W	-0.871	W	1—	1	7	0	1
141.	COL	4/08	W	-0.871	W	12-	2	2	0	2
142.	PHI	4/19	W	-0.873	W	—	2	7	3	1
143.	CIN	7/15	IW	-0.874	W	—	2	5	2	2
144.	CIN	7/04	W	-0.875	W	—	2	3	1	1
145.	ARI	6/20	HP	-0.876	W	1—	1	1	0	1
146.	CHN	8/09	W	-0.878	W	—	1	5	0	2
147.	PHI	4/17	W	-0.879	W	—	1	6	3	3
148.	SFN	6/07	W	-0.879	W	1—	2	2	4	1
149.	MIL	9/19	HP	-0.880	W	—	1	1	1	2
150.	LAN	7/18	W	-0.880	W	1—	2	6	3	1
151.	KCA	7/01	W	-0.881	W	1—	1	1	-3	1
152.	COL	4/09	W	-0.882	W	—	2	1	0	2
153.	PIT	8/15	W	-0.882	W	1—	1	5	0	1
154.	SDN	4/05	W	-0.883	W	12-	0	5	0	2
155.	PIT	8/23	W	-0.884	W	1—	2	3	-3	2
156.	LAN	4/02	W	-0.886	W	—	1	3	1	2
157.	SFN	5/22	W	-0.891	W	—	2	1	0	1
158.	MIN	6/27	W	-0.895	W	1—	0	6	0	1
159.	SDN	7/21	W	-0.898	W	—	2	1	0	2
160.	FLO	8/25	W	-0.901	W	123	2	4	1	2
161.	PIT	8/14	W	-0.903	W	—	1	6	5	2
162.	FLO	5/17	W	-0.906	W	—	1	6	5	1
163.	MON	9/24	W	-0.921	W	1—	1	1	-2	2
164.	DET	6/23	W	-0.922	W	1—	0	6	-1	1
165.	PIT	8/14	W	-0.925	W	1—	1	1	-2	2
166.	MIL	8/04	W	-0.930	W	1-3	0	1	0	5
167.	MON	4/29	W	-0.957	W	123	2	4	-4	2
168.	NYN	8/10	W	-0.985	W	-2-	0	1	-1	1

No one bats .334 in April

Ever wonder why none of the leading batters during the first month of the season has an average between .330 and .337, other than a .333 hitter?

Hitting .333 is easy—just one hit in three at-bats—and there are many hit and at-bat multiples that will produce that average. But you need at least 100 at-bats to produce a .331, .332, .334, .335, or .336 batting average.

If a team plays thirty games in its first month of play, and a hitter gets major league baseball's title standard 3.1 at-bats per game, that produces only 93 at-bats. A hitter who gets 31 hits in 93 at-bats will have a .333 average. One fewer at-bat will put him at .337 (rounded from .33695), and one more at-bat will bring him to .330 (rounded from .32978). If you progress with this logic and crunch enough numbers, you'll find that the following minimum combinations are needed to produce the elusive .331 to .336 averages:

.331	*39 for 118*
.332	*61 for 184*
.334	*96 for 287*
.335	*52 for 155*
.336	*36 for 107*

It may take almost 100 games before a hitter can have a .334 average with its minimum 287 at-bat requirement, producing .33449 with 96 hits. It's very close at 284 at-bats with 95 hits, but the computation of .33450 rounds up to a .335 average.

—Charlie Bevis

Wait Till Next Year?

Some analyses of win-loss records, 1960-1998

Robert Saltzman

Having taught an introductory course on statistics for several years, I'd wondered if some basic statistical measurements could shed any light on the following questions.

1. Is the exhibition season a meaningful predictor of how well a team does in the regular season? Should newspapers even bother to report on preseason games?

2. How strong is the correlation between a team's record at the All-Star break and its record at the end of the regular season? If it is strong, shouldn't teams be more concerned about first half losses than they usually are?

3. If a team does well this year, is it likely to do well next year? Conversely, how hopeless is it for next year if a team fares poorly this year?

To address these issues, I looked at win-loss records from 1960 to the present, because several important structural changes have taken place in major league baseball during this time. First, the major leagues have expanded significantly since 1960. After maintaining sixteen teams during the preceding sixty years, the majors nearly doubled in size to thirty teams by 1998. Second, the amateur draft was instituted in 1965, giving all teams a chance to select from the same pool of talent. Then, in 1975, the landmark free agency ruling occurred, allowing a player to establish his right of free agency by playing out his option year without a signed contract. Ever since, key players have been able to move quickly from one team to another in search of the most favorable contract. These events raise a few additional questions:

Has expansion diluted team strength so that team success is less predictable?

Did the amateur draft really help to equalize the teams?

Can we see the impact of free agency on the stability of team success?

In the analyses that follow, I measure a team's "success" by its winning percentage (WP), rather than by its rank in the standings or number of games won, for several reasons. In general, WP is more informative than rank—given the WP of all teams we can determine their ranks, but not vice versa. Also, a team can have a very successful year yet not finish first. The 1993 Giants, for example, won 103 games (a .636 WP) but finished second to the Braves' 104 wins (.642). Further, WP is a more consistent measure over the years than rank because the number of teams per league and per division has changed so many times. Finally, while WP and rank correlate quite well, WP is easier to work with statistically.

To answer the first question, I looked at the correlation between regular season WP and exhibition season WP (see Figure 1). It's easy to spot the Yankees, for example, who had both a good preseason (.556) and an extraordinary regular season (.704). Overall, the 1998 correlation coefficient (r) between regular season WP and exhibition season WP was

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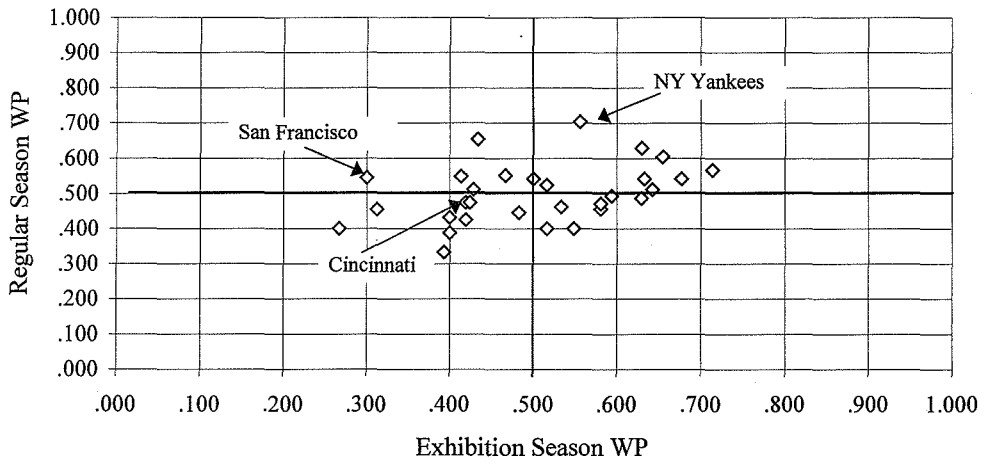
Figure 1. 1998 Regular vs. Exhibition Season (r = +0.39)

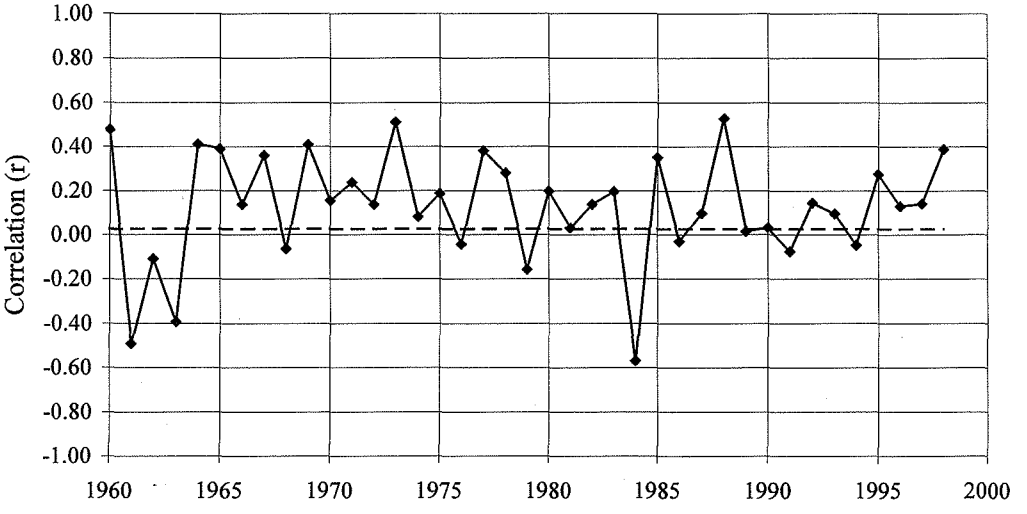


only +0.39, although this was still considerably higher than usual. Figure 2 plots the correlation for each year from 1960 to 1998. The median r value is +0.139. In other words, only about r^2 = 2 percent of the variation in WP at the end of a typical season can be explained by the variation in preseason WP. In fact, the correlation was negative in ten of the thirty-nine years, implying that doing well in the preseason was actually associated with doing poorly in the regular season. One such year was 1961 (r = –0.49), in which the Yankees had the worst exhibition season WP in the American League but the best regular season WP, while the Senators had the best exhibition season WP but the worst regular season WP.

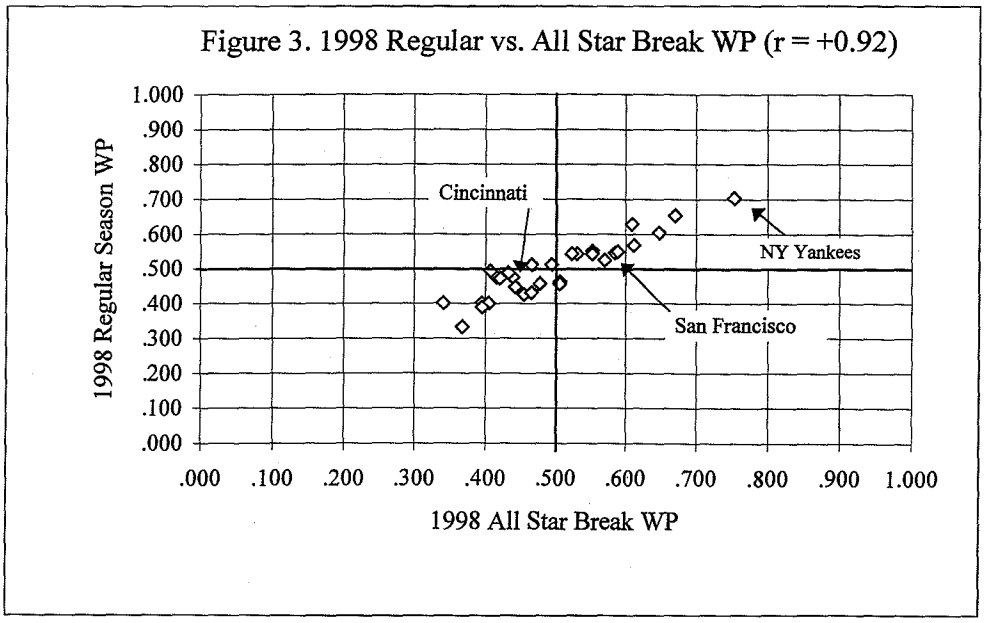
In terms of predicting regular season team success, the exhibition season is of no value: it's statistically meaningless. There are probably a number of reasons for this, including the fact that players are still getting into shape during spring training and some of them don't even make the regular season team. It's also likely that players and managers don't put maximum effort into winning games that don't really count. Since regular season performance is essentially unrelated to what occurs in the exhibition season, my advice to newspapers would be: don't bother sending reporters down to spring training games or even printing the exhibition season standings! Of course, I really wouldn't want to forego all the spring training hoopla that relieves so many people from the long winter offseason.

For the second question, I looked at the correlation between regular season WP and WP at the All-Star break. Figure 3 shows a plot of all thirty teams that played in 1998. Here, the Yankees' outstanding regular season (.704) was well underway by the All-Star Game (.753). Overall, the 1998 correlation was +0.92. Figure 4 plots the correlation in each year from 1960–1998, with a median value of r = +0.88. One

Figure 2. Regular Season WP vs. Exhibition Season WP



way to interpret this value is that 77 percent of the variation in regular season success can be explained by the variation in team success during the first half of the season. This large percentage means that most teams do not significantly alter their WP during the second half of the season. Teams that have done well (or poorly) in the first half tend to do about as well (or as poorly) over the entire season. It is perhaps for this reason that major league baseball has attempted to increase the drama of the second half by splitting into first two and now three divisions per league along with adding wild card playoff teams.



Occasionally, though, teams achieve a much different level of success by season's end than they had reached by the All-Star break. The best and worst second half changes in WP since 1960 are listed in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. While most of the biggest improvements were made by teams who did not contend for first place, there have been some exciting second-half surges into first place. These include the 1983 White Sox (+.092) from third place, the 1991 Braves (+.087) from third place, the 1964 Cardinals (+.080), who dramatically came from fifth place to eventually win the World Series, and the 1993 Braves (+.080) from second. At the other extreme, notable second-half collapses by teams in first place at the All-Star break include those of the 1995 Phillies (–.103) to second place, the 1977 Cubs (–.102), to fourth place, and the 1978 Red Sox (–.080) to second place after a heartbreaking playoff loss to the Yankees.

Table 1
Best Second-Half Improvements in WP since 1960

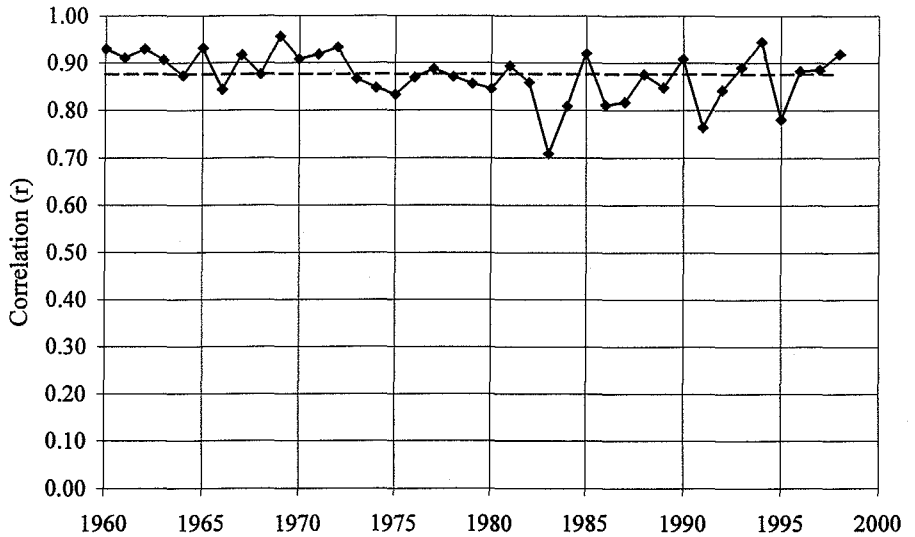
Year	Team	Improvement	
1997	Philadelphia	+0.134	.286 to .420
1979	LA Dodgers	+0.101	.387 to .488
1996	Boston	+0.101	.424 to .525
1984	NY Yankees	+0.098	.439 to .537
1983	Chicago W. Sox	+0.092	.519 to .611
1986	Oakland	+0.091	.378 to .469
1991	Atlanta	+0.087	.494 to .580
1998	Chicago W. Sox	+0.087	.407 to .494
1981	KC Royals	+0.085	.400 to .485
1975	Baltimore	+0.084	.482 to .566
1973	Cleveland	+0.081	.357 to .438
1964	St. Louis	+0.080	.494 to .574
1993	Atlanta	+0.080	.562 to .642

Table 2
Worst Second-Half Declines in WP since 1960

Year	Team	Decline	
1983	Anaheim	-0.106	.538 to .432
1995	Detroit	-0.105	.522 to .417
1975	Milwaukee	-0.103	.523 to .420
1995	Philadelphia	-0.103	.582 to .479
1977	Chicago Cubs	-0.102	.602 to .500
1995	Boston	-0.097	.567 to .470
1991	NY Mets	-0.097	.575 to .478
1975	Detroit	-0.095	.453 to .358
1991	Cincinnati	-0.093	.550 to .457
1966	Houston	-0.085	.529 to .444
1982	San Diego	-0.081	.581 to .500
1978	Boston	-0.080	.687 to .607

To address the third major issue, I looked at the correlation between regular season WP in one year and the preceding year. I give a plot of all thirty teams in Figure 5, which shows a weak correlation of +0.338 between 1997 and 1998 winning percentages. The data from 1960-1998 are plotted in Figure 6. In a typical year, the correlation r = +0.52 (r^2 = 27%), but it has been anything but stable over the years. The overall trend is that r has declined by an average of .01 per year over the past thirty-nine years. Prior to free

Figure 4. Regular Season WP vs. All Star Break WP



agency (1960-1975), the median r was +0.61. Since its inception, it has been +0.35.

Another way to look at the predictability of team performance is to examine the distribution of *changes* in WP from year t-1 to the next year t, (WP_t - WP_{t-1}). In any year, the interquartile range (IQR) measures the spread of the middle 50 percent of the distribution. I calculated these, and plotted them in Figure 7. It's clear from the graph that the spread of year-to-year changes has been growing over time—another indication of less predictability in team success from one year to the next. Large year-to-year fluctuations, both positive and negative, have been occurring more and more frequently. Two recent examples include San Francisco's surprising climb from last place in their division in 1996 (.420) to first in 1997 (.556), and Florida's rapid demise after their 1997 World Series title (.568) to the major's worst record in 1998 (.333).

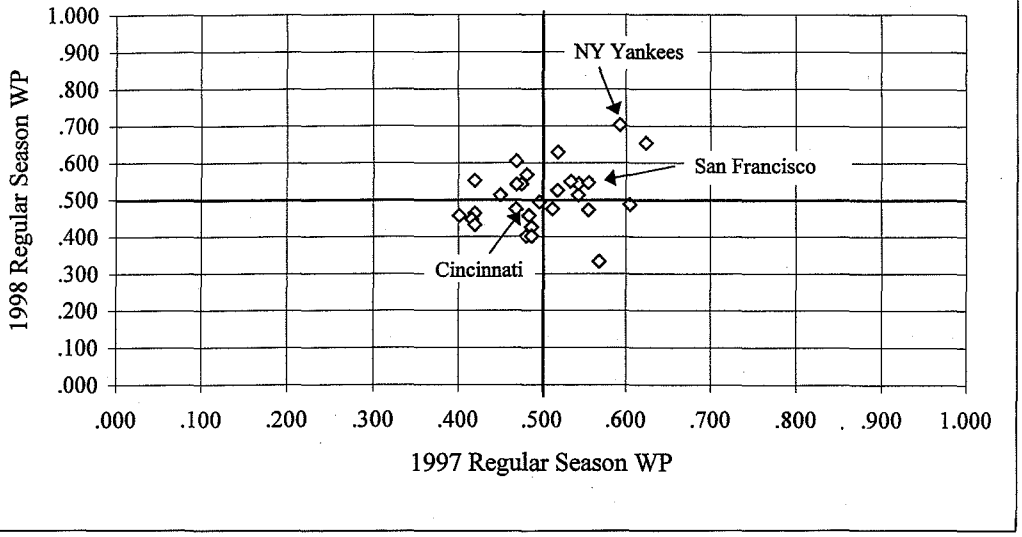
Since 1960, major league baseball has expanded six times, in 1961, 1962, 1969, 1977, 1993, and 1998. Except in 1961, the year-to-year correlation decreased (significantly in a few cases) but then went back up noticeably the following year (see Figure 6). Expansion, in which existing teams lose only a few non-star players, seems to have only a small and short-term negative impact on overall predictability.

On the other hand, the amateur draft begun in 1965 attempted to make all of the existing teams more balanced by spreading out the good new players. Initially, the draft appeared to do this, as evidenced by the large dip in the year-to-year correlation, 1967-1969. However, by 1970 the correlation returned to its pre-draft range of about +.65.

A more lasting effect was brought about by free agency, which began in 1975 and led to much less stability in team rosters. In some respects this instability has made baseball more exciting, enabling fourteen different teams to win the World Series between 1978 and 1993. Based on Figure 6, we can conclude that free agency had the strongest negative impact on predictability for at least those sixteen years, and perhaps continues its impact even to the present time.

Several conclusions can reasonably be drawn from

Figure 5. 1998 vs. 1997 Regular Season WP (r = +0.34)



these basic statistical analyses. First, there's no need to follow baseball until Opening Day: the exhibition season is not important to your team's ultimate success. Second, you should be concerned if your team isn't playing well by the All-Star break: it's quite unlikely to make a major recovery during the second half of the season, despite Yogi Berra's admonition that "it ain't over 'til it's over." Finally, should you optimistically "wait till next year" if your team has a bad season? Yes, you can be somewhat hopeful about your team's chances of success next year after a poor performance this year, but you'll have to be equally insecure about a letdown following a good year.

Figure 6. This Year's Regular Season WP vs. Last Year's Regular Season WP

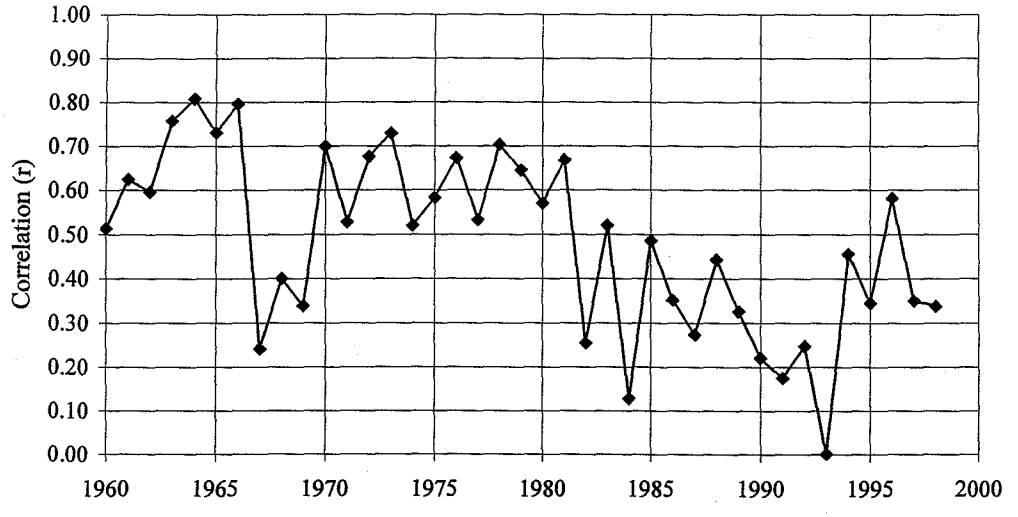
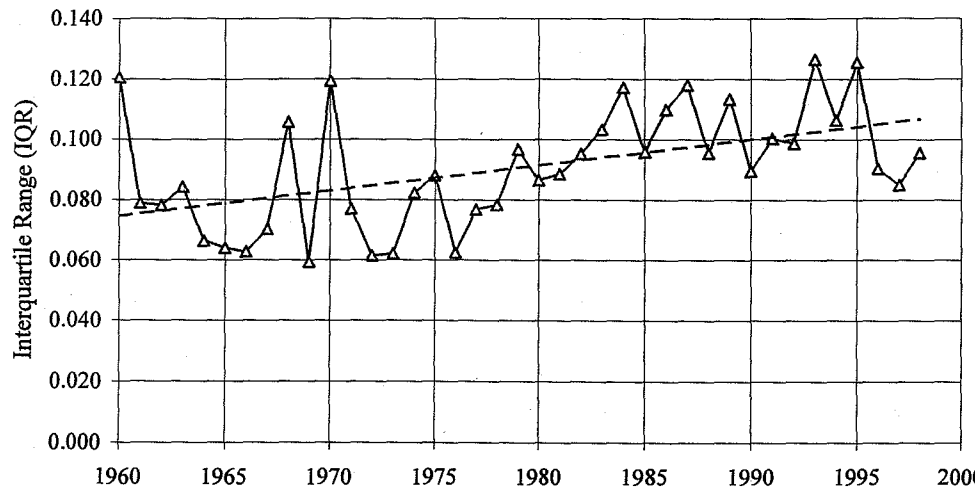


Figure 7. Year-to-Year Changes in Team WP's



Expansion Effect Revisited

'27 (Ruth) or '98 (McGwire)

Phil Nichols

Last year, in an article entitled "Expansion Effect," I showed that winning teams win more in expansion years. Now I am going to analyze whether Babe Ruth (1927) or Mark McGwire (1998) hit more "home runs" when the Expansion Effect is considered.

I first started by looking in *The Home Run Encyclopedia* (a great SABR volume) and discovered that the authors had conveniently listed the top five home run hitters annually by league. However, the book ended at the 1995 season. An e-mail to one of the authors quickly yielded information for 1997 and 1998. Thank you, David Vincent.

Since Ruth (1927) and McGwire (1998) each led his league in homers, I felt an analysis of the top five in each league during expansion years as compared to the year before would be fair. In other words, no matter the players' names, the first spot's number of home runs produced would be compared to the year before expansion. The second spot, the same analysis, and similarly through fifth spot. See Table 1.

Also, when "home run" appears in quotes, I am referring to home runs adjusted for statistical analysis in one way or another.

The 1960-61 American League expansion required an extra adjustment because eight games were added in 1961. I multiplied the old 154-game results by 1.052 to produce the statistical comparison for a 162-game schedule. The results are in parentheses. Likewise, the statistically adjusted differences are in parentheses. For example, Mickey Mantle led the American League in 1960 with 40 home runs. Roger Maris led the American League in 1961 with 61 home runs. Mantle's 40 was adjusted to 42.1 for a 162-game schedule. Therefore, the American League's top home run hitter hit 18.9 more "home runs" in the expansion year than the year before.

One truly significant surprise is that *not a single* home run hitter in the top five hit fewer home runs in an expansion year than the corresponding place the year before. Only twice, 1961-62 National League fifth place and 1997-98 American League first place, did the home run totals equal. The Expansion Effect seems to be powerful.

I totaled the data and summarized it in Table 2. The final analysis showed that the average top five home run hitters hit 7.76 more home runs in an expansion year. Surely that is not just significant—it is mind-boggling.

As sort of a "control group," I analyzed the similar data for the league that did not expand during an expansion year. See Table 3.

Table 4 summarizes the non-expanding league results. The final average turned out to be a tiny and insignificant +0.225 per home run hitter. I think this is a second proof that the Expansion Effect is powerful. There is no doubt that good players and good teams post significantly better statistical numbers in expansion years.

Phil Nichols *is an attorney in Stephenville, Texas, and a SABR member since 1994. This is his second SABR article. His great uncle, Clyde Barnhart, was a starter for the 1925 Pittsburgh Pirates world champions—his only claim to fame in his family.*

What's the result when we apply the simple schedule and Expansion Effect calculations to Babe Ruth's 1927 and Mark McGwire's 1998?

Ruth hit 60 home runs in 1927. McGwire hit 70 home runs in 1998. Adjusting Ruth's 60 by the multiplier 1.052 for the longer schedule yields 63.12 "home runs." Adjusting McGwire's 70 for the Expansion Effect by subtracting 7.76 homers yields 62.24 "home runs." See Table 5. The contest is a virtual photo finish.

Table 1.
Year Before vs. Year of Expansion.

1960 AL		1961 AL			
40	(42.1) Mickey Mantle	61	Roger Maris	+21	(+18.9)
39	(41.0) Roger Maris	54	Mickey Mantle	+15	(+13.0)
38	(40.0) Jim Lemon	46	Jim Gentile	+8	(+6.0)
35	(36.8) Rocky Colavito	46	Harmon Killebrew	+11	(+9.2)
31	(32.6) Harmon Killebrew	45	Rocky Colavito	+14	(+12.4)
				+69	(+59.5)

Table 1, continued.

1961 NL		1962 NL		
46	Orlando Cepeda	49	Willie Mays	+3
40	Willie Mays	45	Hank Aaron	+5
37	Frank Robinson	39	Frank Robinson	+2
35	Joe Adcock	37	Ernie Banks	+2
35	Dick Stuart	35	Orlando Cepeda	0
				+12

1968 AL		1969 AL		
44	Frank Howard	49	Harmon Killebrew	+5
36	Willie Horton	48	Frank Howard	+12
35	Ken Harrelson	47	Reggie Jackson	+12
29	Reggie Jackson	40	Rico Petrocelli	+11
25	many tied	40	Carl Yastrzemski	+15
				+55

1968 NL		1969 NL		
36	Willie McCovey	45	Willie McCovey	+9
33	Dick Allen	44	Hank Aaron	+11
32	Ernie Banks	38	Lee May	+6
30	Billy Williams	37	Tony Perez	+7
29	Hank Aaron	33	Jim Wynn	+4
				+37

1976 AL		1977 AL		
32	Graig Nettles	39	Jim Rice	+7
27	Sal Bando	37	Bobby Bonds	+10
27	Reggie Jackson	37	Graig Nettles	+10
25	many tied	33	George Scott	+8
25	many tied	32	Reggie Jackson	+7
				+42

1992 NL		1993 NL		
35	Fred McGriff	46	Barry Bonds	+11
34	Barry Bonds	40	Dave Justice	+6
33	Gary Sheffield	38	Matt Williams	+5
27	Darren Daulton	37	Fred McGriff	+10
27	Dave Hollins	36	Ron Gant	+9
				+41

1997 AL		1998 AL		
56	Ken Griffey	56	Ken Griffey	0
44	Tino Martinez	49	Albert Belle	+5
42	Juan Gonzalez	46	Jose Canseco	+4
40	Jay Buhner	45	Juan Gonzalez	+5
40	Jim Thome	45	Manny Ramirez	+5
				+19

1997 NL		1998 NL		
58	Mark McGwire*	70	Mark McGwire	+12
49	Larry Walker	66	Sammy Sosa	+17
43	Jeff Bagwell	50	Greg Vaughn	+7
41	Andres Galarraga	46	Vinny Castilla	+5
40	many tied	44	Andres Galarraga	+4
				+45

*McGwire actually hit 34 in the AL and 24 in the NL. To avoid really complicated calculations, his season total of 58 appears in the NL column. Statistically, AL or NL placement yields no difference in final totals or averages.

Table 2. Summaries of Increase/Decrease.

	Total	Average
60-61 AL	+59.5	+11.90
61-62 NL	+12.0	+2.40
68-69 AL	+55.0	+11.00
68-69 NL	+37.0	+7.40
76-77 AL	+42.0	+8.40
92-93 NL	+41.0	+8.20
97-98 AL	+19.0	+3.80
97-98 NL	+45.0	+9.00
	+310.5	+7.76

Table 3
Control group—no expansion

1960 NL			1961 NL			
41	(43.1)	Ernie Banks	46	Orlando Cepeda	+5	(+2.9)
40	(42.1)	Hank Aaron	40	Willie Mays	0	(- 2.1)
39	(41.0)	Eddie Mathews	37	Frank Robinson	-2	(- 4.0)
32	(33.7)	Ken Boyer	35	Joe Adcock	+3	(+1.3)
31	(32.6)	Frank Robinson	35	Dick Stuart	+4	(+2.4)
					+10	(+0.5)

Table 3, continued.

1961 AL	1962 AL		1992 AL	1993 AL	
61 Roger Maris	48 Harmon Killebrew	-13	43 Juan Gonzalez	46 Juan Gonzalez	+3
54 Mickey Mantle	39 Norm Cash	-15	42 Mark McGwire	45 Ken Griffey	+3
47 Jim Gentile	37 Rocky Colavito	- 9	35 Cecil Fielder	41 Frank Thomas	+6
46 Harmon Killebrew	37 Leon Wagner	- 9	34 Albert Belle	38 Albert Belle	+4
45 Rocky Colavito	33 many tied	- 8	34 Joe Carter	37 Rafael Palmeiro	+3
		-54			+19

1976 NL	1977 NL	
38 Mike Schmidt	52 George Foster	+14
37 Dave Kingman	41 Jeff Burroughs	+4
32 Rick Monday	39 Greg Luzinski	+7
29 George Foster	38 Mike Schmidt	+9
27 Joe Morgan	33 Steve Garvey	+6
		+40

Table 5
Adjustment table for McGwire and Ruth

Ruth (1927)

60	(in 154-game schedule)
x 1.052	(eight-game adjustment)
63.12	adjusted "home runs"

McGwire (1998)

70	(in 162-game schedule)
– 7.76	(Expansion Effect)
62.24	adjusted "home runs"

Table 4

	Total	Corresponding League Summaries Average	
60-61 NL	+0.5	+0.14	+0.1
61-62 AL	-54.0	-10.80	- 10.8
76-77 NL	+40.0	+8.00	+8.0
92-93 AL	+19.0	+3.80	+3.8
		+00.225	

Joe Wilhoit and Ken Guettler

Minor league hitting record-setters

Bob Rives

They were decades apart in time and hundreds of miles apart in where they played, but they had some things in common. Both were outfielders who set enduring records, one of them among the oldest in Organized Baseball. And both were involved in unusual incidents en route to their crowns.

What Joe Wilhoit did was set an all-time record by hitting safely in 69 successive games in 1919, a record apparently boosted by a polite—or "sportsmanlike"—third baseman in Omaha who held onto a bunt and kept the streak alive.

Ken Guettler in 1956 joined an exclusive list of players with 60 or more home runs in a season by hitting 62, and became the only player ever to lead minor leagues in home runs in eight different seasons. Yet he lost one home run to a questionable umpire's call and, more important, lost his much-needed glasses, perhaps to the opposing ball club in Houston.

Of the two, Wilhoit had by far the more successful career. He played three major league seasons, and made a brief World Series appearance, before setting his record in 1919. And he joined the Red Sox for another try at the end of his record-setting summer.

Guettler never left the minor leagues, even though he was in an organization so short of outfielders that at one point it had moved a catcher there.

Bob Rives *is retired from business in Wichita, Kansas, and makes occasional trips to Kansas City to see his grandson, Patrick, play for the Royals—a 10-11-year-old team in Johnson County.*

A great trade—Joe Wilhoit was a native Kansan from Hiawatha. He joined Wichita in 1919, the Western League's comeback year after it suspended operations during World War I.

The record he broke belonged to Jack Ness, who had hit safely in 45 successive games for Oakland. Joe DiMaggio in 1941 set the major league record of 56. But he had also hit safely in a remarkable 61 consecutive games while he was still in the Pacific Coast League, the most serious assault ever made on Wilhoit's mark.

Wilhoit came to Wichita from Seattle in the Pacific Coast League. His career was in a free fall. The Braves, Pirates, and Giants had all given up on his big league potential. His three weeks in Seattle that spring had been disastrous. In seventeen games he hit only .165. That's when Wichita club president Frank Isbell made what had to be one of his most successful trades.

Isbell was called "The Bald Eagle" during his own 1,119-game major league career, mostly with the White Sox, setting a World Series record for doubles that still stands. He moved to Kansas to run ball clubs after his playing time, and named his first Wichita team for himself, calling it the "Izzies." He later changed that to the Witches. To get Wilhoit and pitcher Art Bowman, Isbell sent his own top pitcher, former Washington Senator Claude Thomas, to the Northwest.

No one was betting that Wilhoit would set a record when he was acquired. Wichita simply needed an

outfielder. Western league rosters then had only fourteen slots—eight position players, five pitchers and a utility player. They earned an average of $185 a month. With outfielder Paul Maloan hospitalized after being hit in the head with a pitch, Isbell had put pitcher Thomas into the outfield. Then he made the trade for Wilhoit and Bowman.

The Wichita *Eagle* called Wilhoit a mediocre hitter: "Wilhoit is a finished ball player and one of the fastest outfielders in the game. While not a terrific hitter in the majors [he batted .255 overall in his big league seasons] his speed will earn him many a base hit in the Western." Despite the kind words, Wilhoit started in Wichita much as he had in Seattle. After 25 games, he was batting .198.

That changed, starting June 14. Wichita was home against Oklahoma City when Joe started his streak. He hit over .500 during his next 69 games, raised his batting average to well over .400, and lifted his team out of last place and into title contention.

A little help from his friends—As with all streaks, his almost ended several times. In 19 of those 69 games, he had only one hit. The closest call came in Games 62 and 63, a doubleheader against the Packers in Omaha. In the first game, he didn't get his hit until the eleventh, when he won the game with a home run.

In the second game, his only hit came this way, as outlined in the Wichita *Eagle*'s game account:

> Three times and sent back without a hit, Wilhoit resorted to a bunt to reach first. He laid the ball to Bert Graham who had been called in from the field to play the hot corner after Larbeau had sprained his ankle.
>
> Graham could have pegged his man at first, but with Omaha away to a big lead, he held the ball, giving Wilhoit his sixty-third game in a row in which he has hit safely. Graham's sportsmanship drew forth the admiration of the crowd.

Joe hit safely in six more games before ending his record on August 19, at home against Tulsa. He batted four times that day: walk, strikeout, fly out, groundout. Elam Vangilder, who would later pitch eleven years in the major leagues, was Tulsa's pitcher.

Still, it was a good day for Joe. The crowd at Island Park passed hats, collecting $600, almost doubling his summer's pay. During the streak, another fan had offered him $5 a hit. That brought him another $100.

A regular Joe—Wilhoit's 129 games in Wichita produced some of the best numbers ever recorded by any player in any league. In addition to his hitting streak, he led the Western League with a .422 batting average, was first in hits with 222, and scored an amazing 126 runs.

Yet his admirers thought batting was not his greatest skill. An *Eagle* sportswriter wrote:

> The most outstanding thing about Wilhoit is his modesty and good nature. His great work has failed to swell his head. He is popular everywhere and papers all over the circuit have printed his picture and advertised him as the greatest player ever to perform in this league.
>
> Not only in the Western has his work been noticed, but sport papers all over the country have given columns about his work. Wilhoit had a trial in the big show before but failed to hit consistently. There is no doubt that he has improved his weakness at bat and should go up to the American [League] next year. He is still young in baseball and has several years to prove a big star among the great ones in the majors.

At season's end, Wilhoit did go to the Red Sox, hitting safely six times in eighteen tries. But he returned to the minor leagues the next year, playing four seasons at Toledo in the American Association and Salt Lake City of the Pacific Coast League. He hit over .300 each year. Seven years after retiring, only forty-five years old, he died in Santa Barbara, California.

Hitter's year—It didn't worry Ken Guettler that the 1956 Texas League season opened on a Friday the thirteenth. If there was bad luck that year, it was for pitchers. Three men, including Guettler, hit 60 or more home runs, the only year that ever happened. For hitters, it was the last time a minor leaguer ever recorded that many.

In fact, Guettler had overcome a lot of bad luck just to get into the Texas League. He learned to hit with a right arm several inches shorter than his left. A hockey accident at his boyhood home in Bay City, Michigan, left one arm so stiff it could not be straightened. He also had bad eyes. Without glasses, he couldn't see a pitch more than thirty feet from home plate. Truly great hitters can see a bullet in flight. Ken had trouble with speeding watermelons.

Although he twice left briefly, Guettler spent half of his dozen professional years at Portsmouth, Virginia, in the class B Piedmont League. He led the league in home runs four times, including 1955, when he hit 41 while also managing. On three other occasions before arriving in Shreveport he had claimed the home run crown in other leagues. He was a batting champ once, RBI champ four times, and a runs leader one time.

Year	Team	League	League-Leading Production
1945	Kingsport	Appalachian	13 HR
1947	Griffin	Georgia-Alabama	25HR, 103RBI
1948	Montgomery-Gadsden	Southeastern	24HR
1951	Portsmouth	Piedmont	30HR/142G/114R/116RBI
1952	Portsmouth	Piedmont	28HR/104RBI/.334BA
1953	Portsmouth	Piedmont	30HR
1955	Portsmouth	Piedmont	41HR/113RBI
1956	Shreveport	Texas	62HR/115R/143RBI

On to Shreveport—Like many other minor leagues in the 1950s, the Piedmont was losing the battle to television. When it and four others folded after the 1955 season, Guettler was teamless, leagueless, and jobless. Fortunately, club owner Frank Lawrence was a friend of Bonneau Peters, president of the Shreveport Texas League club. Peters was a great wheeler-dealer, even for a used car lot owner. He had solved the problems of a World War II Texas League shutdown by selling his entire team to St. Paul of the American Association, for example. When Lawrence called to recommend Guettler, Peters wanted to meet him. At the interview, the two clicked.

Guettler hit .378 in spring games to become the Sports' right fielder. Sportswriters had a hard time finding a nickname that fit the 5-foot-11, 190 pounder whose forearms bulged like Popeye's. They tried "The Magnificent Blaster," "Bespectacled Blaster," "Mighty Ken," and "The Bazooka." The worst was "Kenneth the Menneth."

The right name was important because it soon was in the paper every day. Ken homered twice in his second game and seven times in the first seventeen. Immediately he was seen as a threat to Clarence Kraft's league record of 55 home runs set in 1924.

Kraft, known as "Big Boy," was a Texas League legend. After a career that included three games with the Braves in 1914, Kraft joined the Cats in Fort Worth and played 1918-1924, hitting more than 30 home runs in four years and batting .349 and .352 in his most productive seasons.

His home run record came when Fort Worth civic leader Amon Carter, whose name is still worn by the city's airport, offered $10,000 to anyone who could hit more home runs than Babe Ruth's 59 in 1921. Kraft believed Carter had a grudge against Ruth, but did not know why. He only knew his own effort fell four short.

"I didn't quite make it," he recalled. Still, he cashed in by hitting a Bull Durham tobacco sign on the outfield wall three times, earning $50 each time he did. And missing the $10,000 might actually have helped him, he believes. "I wouldn't have been able to quit," he said.

"I had a fine business opportunity for an auto dealership in Fort Worth. We liked the city and I figured that we'd gotten about all out of baseball that we could. So I quit. And I made it stick. The Fort Worth club offered me what was a real good salary in those days to come back, but I couldn't do that. I can't say that I've ever been sorry."

Good eye—By 1956 Kraft was sixty-nine and, as it turned out, had only one more season of baseball to see before his death. In watching Guettler's efforts to take the title from him, Kraft saw a difference in their hitting styles. Kraft hit long, lofty fly balls. Guettler hit both fly balls and long, hard line drives. One hit a moving car on Gray street behind Shreveport's park. Teammates envied him. "If others of us hit the ball like he does, we'd pop up. His go over the fence with that power," one told the Shreveport paper.

Even losing his glasses barely slowed him.

Shreveport opened at home with two games against Houston, AA farm club of the St. Louis Cardinals. Then the two teams took buses to Houston for its home opener. On his first night there, Guettler hit a two-run homer.

That may have been enough for the Buffaloes. When the Sports returned to the park for the second game of the series, Guettler's glasses were gone from the Shreveport locker room.

Ken's glasses were special shatterproof sports models. When he damaged them in the Piedmont League, it took a New York doctor days to replace them. The Sports knew they could not afford to lose their hot power hitter for that long. The hunt for the glasses took on some urgency.

While he accused no one, Shreveport manager Mel McGaha said flatly the glasses disappeared from his team's locker room in the Houston ball park. Guettler left them in his locker after the April 15 game. They were not there when he returned the next day.

The Shreveport *Times* quoted the manager as say-

ing, "The glasses were taken from the clubhouse. They were under supervision all the time we were in the clubhouse and when we left, the place was locked.

"Yet the glasses were gone when we returned to the park on Monday and there was no evidence of a break-in. They had to be taken by someone who had access to the place and who knew where they were. I'm not accusing anybody," McGaha continued, "but the circumstances are mighty suspicious."

"It's hardly conceivable that adult professionals would even be silent parties to such a bush-league caper as swiping an opponent's specs, and the Sports aren't saying that anybody on the Houston club did. But they're not all that sure that adequate precautions were taken by the home team to see that someone else didn't swipe 'em, somebody with an angle," wrote Jack Fiser in his *Times* column.

Even without glasses, Guettler returned as a pinch-hitter the next night. McGaha said he felt a partially sighted Guettler was more likely to loft a needed fly ball and produce a run than someone else with full vision. But it didn't work. "I never saw a pitch until it was halfway to the plate," Guettler observe after the experiment.

Fortunately, a San Antonio optometrist was able to make up a new pair of glasses in only a day. The new specs seemed to spark Guettler even more. He promptly hit a record eight home runs in eight games, a feat that had not occurred since Justin (Nig) Clarke smashed eight in one game during Corsicana's remarkable 51-3 victory over Texarkana in 1902. While Guettler's best day never approached Clarke's, he tied another league record by twice hitting three home runs in a single game.

Power shift—If Guettler had a problem in 1956, it was his tendency to pull most balls he hit toward left field. A version of the Ted Williams shift was quickly put in place by defenders. But that simply hurt his average, not his homer output. He batted a respectable .293 for the year, becoming one of just two minor league players to hit 60 or more home runs while batting under .300.

Both opponents and he credited the glasses with his results. In a spring eye exam, he learned just how bad his eyes had become. "I just started being a good hitter then," he said. "I know now that I hadn't been seeing pitches until they were halfway to the plate."

Bert Thiel, the 1956 Texas League pitcher of the year, agrees the glasses helped. Thiel had regularly faced Guettler in the Southeastern League in 1948, "He could hit then," the pitcher recalled. "But he didn't wear glasses and I'm sure that's helped the guy."

Norm Sherry later caught five years in the National League, but opposed Guettler in 1956 and earlier. He credited experience with Guettler's improvement. "We used to be able to get him out pretty good when we had to," he explained. "With two strikes on him, we'd give him the curve ball low and away and he'd chase it right into the dirt."

Actually, short of new glasses, most things that happened in 1956 did not help Guettler in his home run record quest. Shreveport is only 200 feet above sea level. Most 60-plus home run hitters played at higher altitudes where batted balls travel farther. Ken also spent part of the season not playing. In June, when he hit only seven of his home runs, he was benched. McGaha said he just needed a rest. "No, I don't think pitchers around the league have Guettler figured out," McGaha said. "Ken is simply off his timing and maybe sitting out a few games is the only way he'll get it back." In ten games he was used only as a pinch hitter. In midseason he was gone for three days because his wife was ill.

Even when he was playing, he didn't always have free rein to swing for the fence. On the day he broke Kraft's record, for example, he was ordered to bunt and successfully sacrificed.

And just as Bob Crues may have lost his bid to become baseball's first 70-home run hitter (see my article in last year's *BRJ*), Guettler also lost a homer to what might have been an umpire's bad call.

In July Guettler hit a ball that appeared to bounce off the farther of two rows of signs surrounding the Fort Worth outfield. That was supposed to be a home run. Fort Worth center fielder Don Demeter was so certain the ball was gone that he made no effort to retrieve it when it bounced on the field. But umpire Bill Malesky did not agree. He ruled the ball hit an inner sign, giving Guettler the only triple he recorded that summer.

By August it was evident that Guettler had a clear shot at Kraft's record, and newspaper sports pages introduced a "Guettlerometer." It compared Ken's progress with Kraft's pace. As the possibility of Guettler recording at least 60 homers grew brighter, Babe Ruth's 1927 pace was added. Then came Joe Bauman's record for 1954, the year he hit 72 for Organized Baseball's all-time high. In early August, Guettler led all three.

On August 10, Guettler hit a letter-high fast ball thrown by Franklin Delano (Ted) Wieand of Houston to tie Kraft's record. The next day, another Houston pitcher, Billy Muffet, repeated the mistake and

Guettler had his record.

Kraft wired congratulations and said the new record holder had a chance to hit at least 65 home runs. Guettler took off in pursuit.

Actually, "took off" isn't the best description. It was August 29, in Dallas, before he hit his number 61, and he had to leave that game because of illness. With six games remaining in the season, he hit number 62. He missed those last half dozen because of injury.

Honors rained. He was in the league All-Star game and on the season-ending All-Star team. He edged Oklahoma City's 5-foot-5 Albie Pearson as player of the year, and San Antonio third baseman Brooks Robinson and Fort Worth's Demeter as rookie of the year.

Afterwards—But it was no financial bonanza. Fans gave him $500 and the club $200. But "I made more the first year I played," Guettler said later. At Kingsport, Tennessee, in his first season, fans gave him cash for home runs. Guettler made as much as $175 a game.

Fans believed he had earned a big league bid. "Whether he crashes the big show or not, Ken is a mortal cinch to be promoted to the Triple A classification—assuming, of course, he wants to play minor league ball anywhere but here," Fiser wrote in the *Times*.

Over the winter the Braves bought his contract. So desperate was Milwaukee for outfielders in 1957 that they once put a catcher there. And their Triple A affiliate had to put a pitcher in the outfield. Guettler started that season with Wichita in the American Association but soon was back in Double A at Atlanta before returning to Wichita in August, a year to the day after he broke the Texas League home run mark.

The Wichita newspaper commented on his coming. "The hard-hitting outfielder who hit 62 home runs in the Texas League last year may be a valuable man here in a pinch-hitting role. It is doubtful if he can break in the outfield regularly, however, as he was never renowned as a fielder and Wichita will have Dale Talbott available before long as well as [Bob] Hazle, [Roy] Hawes, and [Ray] Shearer, the current three. At Atlanta he suffered from a bad ankle and played but seldom."

"Played but seldom" was the story of the rest of his career. In his final three seasons, he played at Dallas in the Texas League, in Monterrey and Nuevo Laredo in the Mexican League, and Charlotte and Charleston in the Sally. In 525 times at bat, he hit only .206 and 24 home runs.

He had one great disappointment in baseball. "I never had the opportunity to play in the major leagues. In fact, I was never invited by a major league club to its spring training camp," he said.

After the 1959 season he quietly left the game, the only player ever to lead minor leagues in home runs eight times and to be Texas League Player of the Year, Rookie of the Year and an All-Star in the same season. In 1956 he led the Texas League in home runs, runs scored and runs batted in as well. Retiring to Jacksonville, Florida, he finished life as a postal employee. When he died at age fifty, he left his wife and two children.

From a Researcher's Notebook

Al Kermisch

Lou Gehrig Played First and Last Games of Consecutive Streak at Yankee Stadium

In the July 12, 1999, edition of *Sports Illustrated*, the magazine listed some memorable dates in the history of Tiger Stadium in Detroit. The item for May 1, 1939, read,"Lou Gehrig played his 2,130th consecutive game—the last of his major league career." Not only did Gehrig not play his last game in Detroit, but there was no game on May 1, an off day. Actually, Lou played his last game at Yankee Stadium on Sunday, April 30, 1939, against Washington. In fact, Gehrig played the first and last games of his streak against the Senators in New York.

Gehrig's streak started on Monday, June 1, 1925, as the Yanks lost to Washington, 5-3. He batted for Pee Wee Wanninger in the eighth inning against Walter Johnson and flied out to Goose Goslin in left field. In the last game of the streak at Yankee Stadium on Sunday, April 30, 1939, Lou was 0-for-4 and in his last at-bat in the eighth inning he flied out to center fielder George Case against the pitching of Pete Appleton. The Senators won the game, 3-2.

The Yankees left for Detroit on the night of April 30. The next day, May 1, was an off day. Gehrig had just about made up his mind to bench himself after Sunday's loss to Washington. Since Manager Joe McCarthy had spent the off day at his home in Buffalo and did not arrive in Detroit until the morning of May 2, Gehrig was waiting for him and told him that he was benching himself for the good of the team. In the game that afternoon, Babe Dahlgren played first base and rookie Charlie Keller got a start in left field. Joe DiMaggio had injured his ankle several days before and did not make the trip. The Yankees jumped all over the Tigers to the tune of 22-2. Rookie Keller led the attack with a triple, home run, and six runs batted in.

Fan Interference Kept Babe Ruth From 60 Home Runs in 1921

In 1921, twenty-six-year-old Babe Ruth, in his second year with the Yankees, turned in one of the greatest slugging performances in major league history. He led the American League in home runs, runs scored, runs batted in, bases on balls, and slugging percentage. He was second in doubles, fourth in triples, and only Harry Heilmann and Ty Cobb bettered him in batting average.

Ruth came close to reaching 60 home runs in 1921. In a game at Yankee Stadium on July 5, as the Yanks beat the Athletics, 7-5, Ruth was robbed of a home run in the fourth inning when a fan reached out and touched the ball before it had surmounted the stands. The ball hit just above the top of the lower stand, and

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some eager fan in an effort to grasp it just managed to touch it. The Babe, who had reached third on the blow, had to go back to second.

Following are some of the long home runs Ruth deposited around the league in 1921:

May 14, at Cleveland. Ruth hit a home run off Jim Bagby into the center field bleachers, one of the longest ever hit at Dunn Field, and marked the first time any player had hit into that particular section.

May 25, at St. Louis. In the seventh inning, Ruth hit a home run off Urban Shocker into the center field bleachers. It was the longest home run ever hit on the grounds. The fence at the point where the ball sailed over was 550 feet from home plate.

June 13, at the Polo Grounds, New York. In the seventh inning Ruth hit a home run off Howard Ehmke, Detroit, into the center field bleachers, just to the right of the screen, a territory never before invaded by a batted ball.

June 14, at the Polo Grounds, New York. For the second time in two days, Ruth hit a ball into the center field bleachers. He hit two home runs off George Dauss of Detroit, and the second one entered the center field bleachers, just a few points northward and somewhat longer than the drive the day before.

July 18, at Detroit. Nine days after Harry Heilmann of the Tigers hit a record drive, Babe Ruth came into Detroit and surpassed Heilmann's hit, which Harry Bullion, of the Detroit *Free Press*, had measured at 515 feet, the distance from home plate to the barn door which the ball hit across the street from the park. From his personal observation, Bullion stated the Ruth blast, off southpaw Bert Cole, went at least seventy-five feet farther than the ball hit by Heilmann, making the total distance of Ruth's drive 590 feet.

Doc Crandall's No-Hitter Broken Up by Brother with Two Out in Ninth

Otis (Doc) Crandall was a favorite of manager John McGraw when he was a member of the New York Giants from 1908 through 1913. He was 67-36 for the Giants both as starter and relief pitcher. He was one of the best relief pitchers of his era. He also was a good hitter with an average of .285. Crandall jumped to the Federal League in 1914, and in two years with St. Louis in that league he won 34 games while losing 24. After the Federal League ceased operation after the 1915 season, Crandall spent the rest of his career in the Pacific Coast League until 1929, except for two games with the St. Louis Browns in 1916 and five games for the Boston Braves in 1918.

On April 7, 1918, while pitching for Los Angeles, Pacific Coast League, Crandall came within one out of pitching a no-hitter. Otis had his spitball jumping over the plate and looked unhittable. With the game out of reach, the score was 14-0. Doc might have felt secure since it was his brother, Karl Crandall, coming to the plate for Salt Lake City. Otis smiled at his brother, but Karl, a pretty good hitter, was all business and banged out a sharp single. Doc had to settle for a one-hitter.

Height of Pitcher's Mound in 1941 Varied From 7 Inches to 15 Inches

The height of the pitcher's mound was set at ten inches in 1969, a year after the pitchers completely dominated the hitters. From 1903 through 1949, any height up to fifteen inches was allowed. In 1950, rule 1.09 stated that the pitcher's plate shall be on a mound 15 inches high. It is interesting to note that in 1941, the year that Ted Williams hit .406 and Joe DiMaggio hit in 56 straight games the two superstars faced the pitchers with the height of the mounds in the American League ranging from seven inches to fifteen inches.

The heights of the mounds in the American League in 1941 were as follows:

Briggs Stadium in Detroit	15 inches
Yankee Stadium in New York	14 inches
Sportsman's Park in St. Louis	14 inches
League Park in Cleveland	13-1/4 inches
Fenway Park in Boston	13-1/8 inches
Shibe Park in Philadelphia	12 inches
Comiskey Park in Chicago	12 inches
Griffith Stadium in Washington	7 inches

Sammy Gray Lost Job with Browns in 1934 Over Pair of Stockings

If you did not live through the Great Depression of the 1930s it may be difficult to understand the following article which appeared in the Cincinnati *Enquirer* in 1934:

"April 13–St. Louis. Sammy Gray's determination

to keep his socks resulted in his unconditional release.

"Hornsby suspended Gray when he told the manager, 'I'm not going to lend my socks to anyone.' It seems there was a shortage of socks in camp. A teammate complained he was sockless and Hornsby set out to get a pair. He eyed the players on the bench and demanded Gray's socks. Gray, indignant, insisted: 'I'm not going to give my socks up.' Hornsby's anger flared. He ordered Gray to take off his uniform. Gray complied. Later, the club announced Gray's release. He signed with Milwaukee."

Gray was thirty-six years old at the time. He never pitched in the majors again. He had compiled a record of 111 wins and 115 defeats with the Athletics and Browns in his ten years in the American League. He won 20 games and lost 12 for the Browns in 1928, with a 3.19 ERA.

AL Rule on Day-Night Games Curtailed Great Effort by Al Milnar

On August 11, 1942, Al Milnar, Cleveland southpaw, pitched one of the best games of his career but had to be content with a scoreless fourteen-inning tie with Detroit in the first game of a twi-night doubleheader in Cleveland, before 13,116 fans. Milnar lost a no-hitter with two out in the ninth inning when Roger Cramer singled to right field. He gave up only one other hit, a single by Rudy York with one out in the thirteenth inning. Tommy Bridges pitched for the Tigers and gave up nine hits.

The game was called after fourteen innings because of darkness. It was a shame that the game could not continue under the lights, but in those days a league rule prohibited a game started in daylight to be finished under the lights. A few minutes after the players left the field the lights were turned on and the pitchers came out to warm up for the second game, which was won by Detroit, 3-2.

The Day That the Usually Mild-Mannered Connie Mack Lost His Cool

In a National League game at Union Park, Baltimore, on June 3, 1896, the Orioles defeated the Pittsburgh Pirates, 5-4, when southpaw Frank Killen hit Hugh Jennings with the bases full in the ninth inning to force in the winning run. Tim Keefe and George Weidman umpired the game, and Pittsburgh wrangled with Weidman all day. In the fourth inning, when Bill Hoffer was given his base on balls, Denny Lyons shook Weidman while the rest of the team crowded about him. Even the usually mild-mannered Connie Mack, the Pittsburgh manager, was hissed by the crowd when he refused to permit the umpire behind the bat to wear catcher Joe Sugden's mask. In those days it was customary for the umpire to use the mask of the catcher whose side was at bat, but Mack uncharacteristically ran out and took the mask away from Weidman. Oriole captain Wilbert Robinson lent Weidman a mask.

Umpire Weidman seemed unable to control the Pittsburgh players. Elmer Smith threw a ball over the bleachers, and pitcher Killen took a new ball and ground it into the dirt.

Tommy McCarthy Was Still Potent with Bat at Age Fifty-Five

Tommy McCarthy was a star outfielder in the major leagues from 1884 through 1896. He played with Boston, Union Association; St. Louis, American Association; and Philadelphia, Boston, and Brooklyn in the National League. He was elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame in 1946. In 1918 McCarthy was manager and part owner of the Newark club of the New International League. Although McCarthy was fifty-five years old at the time, he pinch hit several times for Newark.

In the second game of a doubleheader in Baltimore on July 13, 1918, won by the Orioles, 6-3, McCarthy entered the game as a pinch hitter in the ninth inning and rapped out a single but was cut down trying to stretch it into a double. The hit came off Ralph Worrell, Jack Dunn's sensational rookie southpaw, who won 25 games that year, more than any other pitcher in Organized Baseball. (Dunn had high hopes that Worrell would turn out to be another Babe Ruth, but fate intervened. He entered the service at the end of the season and died of influenza in an army camp in November, 1918.)

On September 2, the last day of the season, McCarthy pinch hit again, singled and scored a run.