

# TNP

What is baseball to America? Each in his own way, the writers in this edition of *The National Pastime* confront that question and suggest different answers. Where all agree, however, is that while baseball is surely a game—a fact sometimes obscured in a gumbo of “rites of passage” and “cosmic resonances”—it is also more than just the game of our youth. (Why else study a box score, or read a publication like this?)

Merritt Clifton, in “Where the Twain Shall Meet,” points out that America’s national pastime has long since gone international. Now baseball may—perhaps must—provide a model to all humanity of how the values of the individual and those of society can be in harmony. For Clifton, “the twain” signify not only East and West but also male and female, winter and summer, farm and city, war and peace. Can baseball light the way for the world’s tribes to come together as one? Read this provocative piece, beginning on page 12.

Baseball is sport, and it is business. John McCormack, in “Let’s Go Back to Eight-Team Leagues” (page 2) proposes a revolutionary plan—in the sense that the old has revolved 180° to become new again—to make baseball better sport and better business. He makes sense—here’s hoping that those in a position to effect such change consider the reasoning. In the same vein, Gary Hailey looks back to the events of seventy years ago—particularly, the dismantling of the Federal League. This chaotic retreat culminated in the famous Supreme Court ruling of 1922 exempting Organized Baseball from anti-trust legislation. Hailey clears up many misconceptions about baseball’s legal standing—including the erroneous notion that the Court ruled in favor of baseball because it was “not a business”—and poses to today’s owners and players a highly cautionary tale.

Baseball is mathematics (what isn’t, all you Pythagoreans must be muttering). It is governed by the laws of nature, the laws of man, and the laws of probability. In its order and regularity, it seems an exemplar of fairness in that what one sees is what one gets. For dissenting views, see Pete Palmer’s “Do Clutch Pitchers Exist?” (page 7) and Frank P. Bowles’ “Statistics and Fair Play: The Oliver System” (page 74).

Baseball is a myth machine, writer-fodder for remembrances of things past. See David Sanders’ “Farrell as Fan” (page 85) and Jack Zafran’s “The Last Brooklyn Dodger” (TNP’s first entrant in the realm of fiction, page 23).

And baseball is, as the current TV spots rightly put it, a game of fathers and sons, a bridge across the generations. It not only has tradition, but in this experimental, diverse, volatile society of ours, baseball is tradition, the tie that binds where faith, community, and family fall away. Fred Ivor-Campbell writing of the Providence Grays of a century ago; Bill Mead recalling the Flint Rhem caper of 1930; Mark Gallagher exorcising the “Damned Yankees” of 1959: The skein of baseball’s history is all of a piece.

Our front cover is by Mark Rucker.

## THE National Pastime A REVIEW OF BASEBALL HISTORY

Let’s Go Back to Eight-Team Leagues, <i>John McCormack</i>	2
Do Clutch Pitchers Exist? <i>Pete Palmer</i>	5
Take-Charge Cy, <i>Dan Krueckeberg</i>	7
Where the Twain Shall Meet, <i>Merritt Clifton</i>	12
The Last Brooklyn Dodger, <i>Jack Zafran</i>	23
Acrostic Puzzle, <i>Jeffrey Neuman</i>	25
The Year of the Hitter, <i>William B. Mead</i>	26
1884: Old Hoss Radbourne and the Providence Grays, <i>Frederick Ivor-Campbell</i>	33
Mutrie’s Mets of 1884, <i>John J. O’Malley</i>	39
Dick Allen’s 1972: A Year to Remember, <i>Mark Lazarus</i>	42
Spring Training, <i>Mike Mumby and Mark Rucker</i>	45
The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant, <i>Mark Gallagher</i>	57
Anatomy of a Murder: The Federal League and the Courts, <i>Gary Hailey</i>	62
Statistics and Fair Play: The Oliver System, <i>Frank P. Bowles</i>	74
The National Baseball Library, <i>Bill Deane</i>	82
Farrell as Fan, <i>David Sanders</i>	85
PS, <i>Vern Luse, Jerry Malloy, David Kemp</i>	87

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## SOAPBOX

# Let's Go Back to Eight-Team Leagues

JOHN McCORMACK

**A**T THEIR 1983 winter meetings the major leagues instructed their long-range planning committee to consider the feasibility of expanding the National and American leagues to sixteen teams each. I believe the committee should recommend such an expansion, and moreover it should recommend that the National and American leagues be dissolved, to be replaced by four regional eight-team leagues.

The National and American leagues have long since outlived their usefulness. They are, in fact, detrimental to the game. As long as they exist, no sensible realignment of teams can be effected. And, only through such realignment—and expansion to thirty-two teams—can baseball regain undisputed supremacy in professional sports.

Before discussing realignment and expansion, however, it would be useful to review the transition of the National and American leagues from vital forces to their present meaningless states. Once things were different. Very different.

The American League was formed in 1901 as a rival to the National League, then in its twenty-sixth year.

It soon had franchises in five of the National League's seven cities. Thereafter it was war, a nasty, bitter war for survival in which anything went. The resulting wounds were deep, the scars long-lasting. Though peace came with the 1903 season, the National League still regarded the upstart with scorn—so much so that in 1904 there was no World Series. The National League's New York Giants refused to play the American's Boston Pilgrims, surprise victors of the previous year's Series. Disingenuously, the Giants proclaimed themselves champions of the only major league: What could they gain through postseason play?

Although peace did not bring good fellowship, it did bring a great asset to the game: *league fan loyalty*. It was deeply ingrained by the war and was passed thereafter from parent to child. A fan was a National Leaguer or an American Leaguer—if his team didn't win the pennant, there was always the hope that his league could win the Series. It's inconceivable, for example, that a true Giant fan would ever have rooted for the New York Yankees in a World Series, even against the loathsome Dodgers.

Continental expansion, which

brought the pillage of all but one of the two-league cities (Boston, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and New York—only Chicago remained) just about killed league loyalty. Fans in one-league cities have no feel for the other league. Little attention, let alone passion, is given to it. And, how could it be otherwise? There is no longer animosity between the leagues. Even churlishness is rare. The leagues are, in effect, business partners who put on a display of mock-combativeness at the All Star game and the World Series.

Contrast Connie Mack's approach to the 1933 All Star game with Whitey Herzog's to the 1983 game. Mack was there to win. He wanted to humiliate his old antagonist, John McGraw, the National League's manager. He told his squad that if some did not play, it was unimportant so long as the American League won. Among those who rode Mack's bench all day were future Hall of Famers Bill Dickey and Jimmie Foxx. His future colleague at Cooperstown, Earl Averill, was luckier. He got to pinch hit. But the American Leaguers won.

In 1983 Herzog's pregame position toward victory was, "Who cares?" His National League team reflected its leader's indifference, being battered, 13-3—whereupon Herzog announced to one and all that he was *glad* the American League had won! John McGraw, Barney Dreyfuss, and Charlie Ebbets must have spun in their graves. Unfortunately for baseball, however, the American League's victory had little emotional impact on the game's fans. If the leagues didn't care who won, why should the fans?

Even if interleague rivalry is a thing of the past, would tradition warrant retaining the two leagues? Hardly. The Organized Baseball Establishment has given the back of its hand to tradition at every opportunity. What happened to tradition when such hallowed franchises as the Brooklyn Dodgers, Boston Braves (a charter

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National League member), and Philadelphia Athletics were callously uprooted when greater profits beckoned elsewhere? Where was tradition when greed produced the 162-game schedule that would surely (and did) destroy the game's records? Where was tradition when the American League corrupted the game with the designated hitter? ("The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville *nine* that day."—*Casey at the Bat* [emphasis added].) Tradition has long since been laid to rest. It's no grounds for keeping the two leagues.

The National and American Leagues should be replaced by four regional, eight-team leagues. Since a major purpose of the realignment would be to create fan loyalty—though to a region, not to a league—and thereby develop new, real fans, each league would be named for the region in which its teams were situated. Thus the Northeast, Midwest, Southern, and Western leagues, composed of these teams:

**Northeast:** Toronto Blue Jays, Montreal Expos, Boston Red Sox, New York Yankees, New York Mets, Philadelphia Phillies, Baltimore Orioles and (new) a team from Washington, Northern New Jersey, or Buffalo.

**Midwest:** Pittsburgh Pirates, Cincinnati Reds, Cleveland Indians, Detroit Tigers, Chicago Cubs, Chicago White Sox, Milwaukee Brewers, and Minnesota Twins.

**Southern:** Atlanta Braves, Houston Astros, Texas Rangers, Kansas City Royals, St. Louis Cardinals and (new) three teams from among Tampa, New Orleans, Miami, Memphis, and Birmingham.

**Western:** San Diego Padres, California Angels, Los Angeles Dodgers, San Francisco Giants, Oakland Athletics, Seattle Mariners and (new) two teams from among Vancouver, Phoenix, Portland, and Denver.

Each league would play a balanced 154-game schedule, i.e., twenty-two games against each other team, eleven at home, eleven away. Once

again there would be true pennant races. No longer would contenders meet for the last time in midsummer. No longer would there be unbalanced (and hence unfair) schedules; the best team would win on its merits. There would be no divisions, no split seasons, no Shaughnessy playoffs or any other bush practices. Just an old-fashioned, honest-to-goodness pennant race, the kind that used to grip the whole country, that was talked about into the winter. The winner would advance to postseason play; the losers would go home. To contend that baseball could not survive commercially if twenty-eight of thirty-two teams (87.5 percent) do not make the playoffs is nonsense. From 1903 through 1960 fourteen of sixteen teams (87.5 percent) did not make the World Series. Baseball got along very nicely financially with, it should be noted, nowhere near the television and radio income now received.

As is the case today, there would be three postseason series. Realignment, however, would admit only true champions into championship play. No longer would there be a ludicrous League Championship Series pitting one team against another it had beaten eleven out of twelve times during the regular season. To enhance the chances of the better team winning, all postseason series would be on a best-of-seven-games basis.

First-round matchups would be constant: Northeast vs. Midwest and Southern vs. Western. These pairings would maximize the possibility that at least one warm weather city would host the World Series. In any event, they would eliminate such present potential World Series climatic horrors as, among others, Chicago vs. Toronto and Milwaukee vs. Montreal. (Were these teams to meet in the first round under the suggested realignment, the shorter regular season would increase the chance of comfortable weather over what it would be if the teams met in a World Series as now constituted.)

With four regional leagues and no gimmicks for deciding the winners,

baseball would have *bona fide* champions competing for the game's ultimate crown. No other professional sport, with its wild-card teams or everyone-into-the-pool playoffs, could make that claim. (Nor can baseball now: The divisional setup permits mediocre teams to reach the World Series. Remember 1973? The New York Mets won the National League East with a disgraceful .509 mark. They caught a good Cincinnati Reds team looking the other way and stumbled into the Series.)

It would be easier for several reasons to stock new teams now than it was during prior expansions. First, the players' right to free agency won in 1976 would annually give to the six expansion teams the opportunity to sign some of the game's greatest stars. Second, the Caribbean area now sends more players to the major leagues than it formerly did, and it will continue to grow as a player source. Last, the United States population is quite adequate to support a slightly smaller increase of teams now, from twenty-six to thirty-two (23 percent) than occurred in 1961-62, from sixteen to twenty (25 percent). In 1983 the United States population was estimated at 234.2 million, or about 9 million per team. Expansion to thirty-two teams would reduce the per team number to 7.3 million. That's a decrease of about 19 percent per team. Sounds bad? Not really. It is insignificant when baseball's golden age (1920-1941) is considered. In 1920 the United States population was 105.7 million, or about 7.7 million per team. That's 5 percent more than the 7.3 million per team realignment would bring. Few fans would complain if major league play were miraculously to achieve 95 percent of the golden age's standard. One must conclude that a well-managed, well-financed expansion franchise could reasonably expect to become competitive quite quickly.

A 154-game schedule would be economically feasible. Two attributes of the regional leagues would more than offset the revenue loss of eight

games: natural rivalries and reduced travel expenses.

There's no doubt that the New York Yankees are a tremendous attraction. Their mystique lures customers to the ballpark regardless of how the Yankees are doing. But they alone have that mystique. Other teams draw exceptional crowds only because of their current success. The Cincinnati Reds of the mid-1970s had fans everywhere flocking to see them. The Cincinnati Reds of 1982-84 were not even an average attraction. If the Seattle Mariners were burning up the Western League, they would draw as many customers in San Diego as did the Big Red Machine. League leaders, whoever they are, will do about equally well.

So, the Yankees excepted, no club would lose any customers because it no longer played some long-time rival. Instead, they would gain. The attendance drawn by the natural rivalries created by the regional leagues would be eye-popping. In 1955, for example, the New York Giants drew 25 percent of the Brooklyn Dodgers' home attendance. The Dodgers produced 42 percent of the Giants' home gate. It is not unreasonable to predict that such regional natural rivals as the Dodgers and the Angels or the White Sox and the Cubs, to name but two of many, would do as well. The probabilities are that they would do even better—and with no travel expense. It would be lunacy if teams like the Angels and White Sox were to deny themselves such a source of revenue simply to retain the Yankees on their schedules.

That regional league teams would have drastically reduced travel expenses is easily shown:

	Present total miles to league cities	Realigned total miles	Reduction
CUBS	11,629	1,906	83.6%
DODGERS	21,447	3,766	82.4%
YANKEES	16,320	1,596	90.2%

The actual percentage of decrease would, of course, depend on a team's schedule. Let's then compare a 1983 Yankee west-coast road trip from

New York and back with the *longest* trip they would have in the Northeast League, assuming Washington were the eighth team. From August 26 through September 4 the Yankees played in Anaheim, Oakland, and Seattle in that order. They traveled 13,769 miles. If instead they had gone to Montreal, Washington, and Toronto, they would have traveled 1,902 miles. Assuming two such west coast swings (27,538 miles) and three Northeast treks (5,706 miles), the reduction in miles traveled would be 79.3 percent. More logical Northeast scheduling—Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia (360 miles)—would produce a three-trip total of 1,080 miles, a reduction of 96.1 percent.

Both players and fans would benefit from compact regional schedules. There would be virtually no travel wear-and-tear on the players. No longer would teams have to span the country for their next game. No more red-eye specials. Careers could be lengthened since tired players are more susceptible to injury. The fans would also benefit, for no longer would they pay good money to see a physically drained team.

A further advantage to the fan is that with only seven other teams to consider—each of which he could see eleven times—he would again know all the players in the league. Visiting players would again become the enemy. They would no longer be occasional visitors who were virtual strangers. Their quirks would be well known. Familiarity would breed contempt for the visiting teams—otherwise known as a healthy rooting interest in the hometown boys.

As a result, major league television rights (which all teams would share equally) would become more valuable. Audiences would be larger because each region would receive telecasts of only its league's games. The viewers would know the players. No longer would viewers be saddled with meaningless games of teams in other leagues. Each game would have a bearing on the pennant race about which the viewer was concerned.

And the games would be televised at reasonable times: no longer would the west coast have to watch games in midmornings, nor the east coast watch games that ended at two A.M. or later. The greatest time difference between cities in any league would be one hour. An added benefit would be better press coverage: One's morning paper would carry a full story on the previous night's game.

Television would pay more for the All Star game since it would be regarded as Connie Mack viewed that of 1933. Each league would go all out to win, for victory in any interleague competition would figure to put more customers in that league's stands. There would be three All Star games, but only two dates would be needed. Since two All Star games were played in 1959-62, there's precedent for this. Initial pairings would rotate since weather is not a factor in midsummer. The championship game would go to the league that had not most recently hosted it.

Compact regional leagues with their natural rivalries would create new fans. Real fans. When postseason (and, to a lesser degree, All Star) play began, casual fans—and even non-fans, to whom the National and American Leagues now mean nothing—would take notice. It would be their city's team (or their region's) against the world. Interest in baseball would reach new peaks. Television audiences would set records. Inevitably some of these people would become interested enough to pay their way into future games. They would become real fans.

The structural changes required by realignment would, for the most part, only repeat what had been done on occasion before. Those that were novel would be easily handled by any experienced lawyer. Whatever the legal costs, these would be recouped many times over in a short period.

Realignment and expansion would propel baseball into the most prosperous era the game has ever seen. The long-range planning committee should act quickly to bring it about.

## STATISTICS

# Do Clutch Pitchers Exist?

PETE PALMER

**O**VER A CAREER, a good pitcher wins more games than an average pitcher by allowing fewer runs than average and by receiving good batting support from his teammates. A *clutch* pitcher wins more games than expected—based on the number of runs scored and allowed—because he performs better in close games. That is, provided he exists.

The number of runs allowed by each pitcher is available from normal season data. Runs scored for each pitcher can be estimated by taking the runs his team scored times his innings pitched, all over nine, times the games the team played. Pitcher batting can be included by taking 80 percent of the number of runs produced compared to the average pitcher; 20 percent is assumed to be reflected already in the overall team scoring. This is done by using Linear Weights, which credit: 0.47 runs for a single; 0.31 runs for each extra base, walk, or hit by pitch; and a value for each hitless at bat which makes the league average come to zero (this value is generally -0.25 to -0.27 runs). For pitchers, the league average for runs produced is found by examining pitcher batting only.

The relationship between runs and wins was described in my previous *National Pastime* article ("Runs and Wins," 1982) as well as in *The Hidden Game of Baseball* (1984). The number of runs needed to produce an extra win over the course of a season is equal to ten times the square root of the number of runs scored per inning by both teams. Since the number of runs per inning is usually around one, the number of runs per extra win is about ten, and almost always between nine and eleven.

A pitcher would not be expected to win exactly the number of games predicted by the formula. The measured error can be expressed in terms of the standard deviation of the distribution of differences. The standard deviation is calculated by taking the square root of the average of the squares of the differences between expected and actual wins. If the distribution is normal, two-thirds of the differences should fall within one standard deviation and 95 percent within two. The anticipated standard deviation can be compared to the value actually found, and if they are about the same, the conclusion would be that the variation between a pitcher's runs allowed and runs

scored and his wins is due only to chance and that there is no such thing as a clutch pitcher.

This anticipated standard deviation is not easy to find. If all teams were evenly matched and runs scored and allowed were not known, the standard deviation could be expressed exactly based on a binomial distribution, which represents the outcomes of many coin flips—no heads out of five, one head, etc. This number is equal to the square root of the probability of success times the probability of failure times the number of trials or games. For 162 decisions by a .500 pitcher, this would be the square root of one-half times one-half times 162, or 6.36. However, if runs scored and allowed are known, the number would be smaller. Based on the minimum value found from the study cited above, this is about 4.1, or two-thirds of the original value. In the present study, though, runs scored are only estimated by overall team figures, introducing an error which will cause the anticipated standard deviation employed to be set at five-sixths of the binomial one. Previous investigations have revealed that the variation in run scoring due to chance is equal to the square root of twice the number of runs involved, so if a pitcher went 162 innings and expected to have 81 runs scored for him, the standard deviation due to chance alone would be equal to the square root of two times 81, or 12.7.

The data analyzed consisted of all pitchers from 1900 through 1983 who had at least 150 decisions—of whom there were 529. Twenty-six men would have been expected to exceed two standard deviations; only twenty were found. Of these twenty, six were modern ace relief pitchers. All six had a much lower winning percentage than expected, a fact probably due to the score situations when they entered the game. They were likely to have been brought in when the score

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PETE PALMER is co-author of *The Hidden Game of Baseball* (Doubleday, 1984-85).

**TABLE A**

Player	Club	Lg	Year	Runs	Losses	Runs/Loss
Skip Lockwood	NY	N	1979	7	5	1.40
Diomedes Olivo	StL	N	1963	9	5	1.80
Steve Howe	LA	N	1983	15	7	2.14
Jim Brewer	LA	N	1972	16	7	2.29
Lee Smith	Chi	N	1983	23	10	2.30
Rollie Fingers	SD	N	1978	33	13	2.54
Darold Knowles	Was	A	1970	36	14	2.57
Al Worthington	Min	A	1964	18	7	2.57

over two standard deviations from expected, four played in the early part of the century when runs-allowed data was incomplete and thus had to be estimated from known data on earned runs allowed, as shown in the Macmillan encyclopedia. These are indicated with asterisks. Thus more research is needed to find the exact

was tied, but more likely still to have entered when their team was ahead, thus making it easier to have picked up a loss than a win.

To illustrate this, a separate study was performed, checking the lowest ratio of runs allowed to losses for all pitchers since 1900. The top eight were all modern relief pitchers, led by Skip Lockwood, who in 1979 allowed only seven runs for the Mets yet lost five games. The data (five losses minimum) are presented in Table A.

**TABLE D**

Player	Runs for-agst	W-L actual	W-L expected	Diff.	No. of std. dev.
Tom Seaton	621-614	93-65	80-78	13	2.52
Joe Coleman, Jr.	1082-1202	142-135	126-151	16	2.34
Togie Pittinger*	869-982	115-112	101-126	14	2.22
Casey Patten*	822-1069	105-128	91-142	14	2.18
Wes Ferrell	1565-1382	193-128	178-143	15	2.05
Mike Torrez	1458-1469	184-155	168-171	16	2.05
Dave Koslo	820-740	92-107	107-92	-15	2.60
Harry Howell*	1186-1103	131-145	147-129	-16	2.48
Eddie Smith	752-816	73-113	87-99	-14	2.39
Dizzy Trout	1385-1166	170-161	188-143	-18	2.38
Denny Lemaster	835-778	90-105	103-92	-13	2.32
Otto Hess*	660-644	70-90	82-78	-12	2.20

**TABLE B**

Player	Runs for-agst	W-L actual	W-L expected	Diff.	No. of std. dev.
Skip Lockwood	512-539	57-97	74-80	-17	3.30
Rollie Fingers	762-569	112-110	132-90	-20	3.24
Mike Marshall	647-548	97-112	115-94	-18	3.02
Stu Miller	846-697	105-103	120-88	-15	2.44
Hoyt Wilhelm	1007-773	143-122	159-106	-16	2.33
Goose Gossage	581-440	81-73	93-61	-12	2.23

figures. Table D presents these twelve.

Looking at the top winners in history (Table E), most come pretty close to what would be expected.

The conclusion is that although good pitchers allow fewer runs than average, clutch pitchers do not exist.

The records of the six relief pitchers whose won-lost records failed of pre-

either direction. Unfortunately, of the twelve remaining pitchers who were

**TABLE C**

Player	Runs for-agst	W-L actual	W-L expected	Diff.	No. of std. dev.
Bert Blyleven	1499-1191	176-160	202-134	-26	3.34
Red Ruffing	2688-2117	273-225	303-195	-30	3.24

diction by more than two standard deviations are presented in Table B.

In a sample of 529, it would be expected that one pitcher would diverge from the norm by more than three standard deviations. Two were found, both of whom lost considerably more games than predicted. Their records are presented in Table C.

No other pitcher was more than 2.6 standard deviations from expected in

**TABLE E**

Player	Runs for-agst	W-L actual	W-L expected	Diff.	No. of std. dev.
Walter Johnson	2663-1902	417-279	435-261	-18	1.66
Pete Alexander	2534-1851	373-208	365-216	8	.79
Christy Mathewson	2357-1613	372-189	366-195	6	.64
Warren Spahn	2684-2016	363-245	375-233	-12	1.16
Eddie Plank	2207-1570	326-193	328-191	-2	.21
Gaylord Perry	2434-2128	314-265	323-256	-9	.86
Lefty Grove	2396-1594	300-141	301-140	-1	.11
Steve Carlton	2188-1733	300-200	299-201	1	.10
Early Wynn	2285-2037	300-244	298-246	2	.24
Robin Roberts	2192-1962	286-245	290-241	4	.41
Fergie Jenkins	2186-1853	284-226	290-220	-6	.66

## MEN IN BLUE

# Take-Charge

# Cy

DAN KRUECKEBERG

*There is one thing about baseball that always has impressed me, and that is that the fans always get a run for their money. Baseball is at once the cheapest and best of all professional sports, and so long as it is played along the lines on which the modern game is conducted, public interest in the players and the standing of the clubs will not wane.*

CHARLES "CY" RIGLER, 1916

**T**HE EAR-SPLITTING screech finally ceased and he knew his train had jumped the tracks. Hearing the moaning in the overturned cattle cars, he quickly rose from his coach seat. He stood over six feet and weighed 240.

Once described by Frankie Frisch as "a big mountain of a man, hard as a block of granite," he moved rapidly through the wreckage, hoisting injured cattle to the side, and braining the ones in worst condition, thereby ending their suffering. Another passenger, noting the powerful man's actions, commented that he was the only one around doing anything useful and inquired as to his occupation. "I'm an umpire," said the big man.



Cy Rigler

"What league?" asked the passenger as he proffered his card. "Central Ohio," he responded. The passenger nodded, turned, and left. The big ump read the card: "Harry Pulliam, President of the National League."

Several days later the big man was in Wheeling, chatting with a hotel clerk, when he glanced at the register

and saw the name Pulliam. That afternoon, before the game, he went to both teams' clubhouses and, with a confiding air, told the players, "Listen fellas, there's a couple of big league scouts in the stands looking you over. Make everything snappy and no arguments; it looks bad."

From Wheeling he went to Canton and, with the same pregame warning, the players put themselves on their best behavior. Then he encountered Pulliam. "I've been watching you for a week," Pulliam said, "and I never saw games run so smoothly. You'll hear from me."

He did.

\* \* \*

Charles "Cy" Rigler was born in Massillon, Ohio in 1882. Son of a German-born fire chief, he worked as a machinist and fireman, and was the starting left tackle on the original Massillon Tigers of 1903. When a knee injury forced him to the sidelines, Cy served in the Tigers' front office as a fund raiser. Eventually he was called upon to arbitrate local games. And he was good at it. He soon drew the notice of baseball officials, who in 1903 recommended him for work in the Central League.

At Evansville on April 30, 1905, in his second year as a professional umpire, Cy Rigler began the now universal practice of using his right hand when calling strikes in order that friends, sitting in the outfield, could distinguish his calls. (NOTE: Although a sign must have been used in the 1880s and '90s for deaf player Dummy Hoy, it was not accepted as normal practice for other players.) The *Evansville Courier* noted the next day: "One feature of Rigler's work yesterday that was appreciated was his indicating balls by the fingers of his left hand and strikes with the fingers of the right hand so everyone in the park could tell what he had

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DAN KRUECKEBERG, Ph.D., a freelance sports and educational writer, is grateful to the Rigler family, especially Mr. Charles S. Dautel, for assistance on this article.

called." When Rigler entered the National League a year later, he found that his raised-arm call had preceded him and was in wide use.

Cy's first major league game was September 27, 1906 in Brooklyn's Washington Park. Working conditions were not easy in those days: The leagues wouldn't defend their umpires, so they often were forced to defend themselves. As Fred Lieb noted in *The Sporting News*, "Baseball then still was a turbulent game, when aggressive ballplayers and managers still were riding umpires with boots and spurs. However, the genial Rigler quickly fitted himself into the picture."

The single ump of that day had to run the whole show. But Rigler was a gentle giant. In an age when fighting was common, Rigler actually did little when compared to his peers. Force had to be used at times, however, and when players or managers decided to challenge big Cy physically, they did it only once. "I always figure when a young fellow loses his temper and calls me a lot of uncomplimentary names," Cy once told a writer for the *Massillon Evening Independent*, "he doesn't mean what he's saying. In the heat of the struggle he has merely lost control of himself. Often a few kind words will bring him to his senses. In other cases a stern warning may suffice. Of course the line must be drawn on rowdyism."

It was more than rowdyism that day in Ebbets Field in the early 1920s. Adolfo Luque, "The Pride of Havana," was firing his fastball a wee bit too close to Jacques Fournier, and the Frenchman took exception. He screamed at Luque. The Cuban's pride was hurt, and he screamed back. Luque spewed Spanish, Fournier French. Big Cy, calmly chewing his gum, took out his little broom, dusted an imaginary speck of dirt from the plate, and gently admonished the boys. But Luque was hot. He took the ball that Rigler so placatingly gave him, returned quickly to the mound, and without waiting for his

catcher's signal, fired it directly at Fournier's Robin hat.

Up from the dust came Fournier, with mighty strong words. Now he was really mad. He was headed toward the mound and this time he had his bat with him. Meantime Luque had had enough talking. He charged from the mound to meet Fournier halfway. Suddenly, Cy stopped chewing his gum and sprang into action. In a single bound he grabbed Fournier, snatched his bat and, hiping him to the side as he passed, lowered his head and charged with a perfect knee tackle that knocked Dolfo to the mound.

Rigler walked over to Luque, picked him up, and stood him back on the mound. Heading back behind the plate, he shook a warning finger in Fournier's face, took out his little broom, cleaned the plate, and positioned himself back at his post, calmly chewing his gum as the game continued its serene course.

Cy had to deal with fan abuse and, sometimes, even more. Legend has it that during a game early in his career, he made a call against the home team that created quite an unusual scene. The home manager engaged Cy in some hot words. But before any blows were struck, the crowd swarmed onto the field, became threatening, and the game had to be halted for the day with Cy quickly slipping out. Next day the fans awaited Cy's arrival and blocked his path to the park gate. Rigler went to a nearby railroad siding which bordered the outfield and, standing atop a cattle car, declared the game forfeited to the visiting team.

Heavy press criticism was also common, and it came from many corners. Consider this note in a 1909 issue of *Leslie's Weekly*:

Messrs. Truby and Rigler were the official representatives of the National League on the field. Of Mr. Rigler, it is known that he came to the National League with a reputation of having the physical qualifications of a prize fighter. Nothing was said of his mental ability at the time, though much has been said on the subject

since he joined us. Mr. Truby . . . gets to be more and more of a joy from day to day. It has been the destiny of the writer to be hooked up in the games where these two have officiated ever since the season opened, and they form one of the most interesting teams we have seen since Punch and Judy quit.

It should be noted that 1909 was Mr. Truby's only year in the majors. Cy learned quick enough to accept these distractions, and coolly and competently ran National League games in four decades. Only Hall of Fame umpire Bill Klem worked more seasons in the league, thirty-six.

But Cy soon began to make more money during the offseason, when he worked for the East Ohio Gas Company bossing pipeline construction crews. This experience plus his off-season law-school training led to his negotiating oil and gas leases for the company. He was as successful at this as he was at umpiring. Asked to accept the position full-time, Cy left baseball for the entire 1923 season. But he missed the fans, the players, and managers, and what came to be his "annual vacation," so he returned to the diamond the following year.

A man for all seasons, Cy also refereed important football games, served as athletic advisor to many colleges and universities, coached the University of Virginia football and baseball teams, built and cared for golf courses, and designed and laid out new diamonds and ballparks in America and Cuba.

It was at Virginia that he first coached Hall of Famer Eppa Rixey. After Rixey's third year as the star hurler of the team, Cy arranged for him to sign with the Phillies. When the news came out that Rigler had received \$2000 for the signing, the other National League clubs joined together to bar umpires from future "scouting" for any team.

During one winter down in Cuba, Cy was under contract to umpire in Havana when John McGraw's Giants were there for exhibitions. Cy, who loved to eat, went out for dinner one night with McGraw and a New York



sportswriter. McGraw was soon recognized by a group of four thugs who surrounded the spunky little manager. One drew a knife and went after him. Big Cy jumped in, snatched away the knife and collared the four until the police could arrive. For his efforts Cy, along with McGraw, was fined \$20 by a local judge.

A master story-teller, Cy often related this event to friends, but McGraw never said a word to confirm or deny Cy's life-saving actions, as that was against John Joseph's diamond code. McGraw, however, gleefully enjoyed telling about how an umpire finally got fined.

Ironically, it was McGraw, the umpires' master intimidator, who years earlier had sought to have Cy fired. Rigler and one of the Giants had had a tremendous argument, and when the player started getting physical, Cy flattened him with one punch. McGraw protested. He wanted Rigler thrown out of baseball. John Tener, then the president of the National League, loved to listen to Cy's story-telling, and frequently asked Cy to stop by his office when in New York. But this time the circumstances behind the invitation were different.

Jocko Conlan, in his book *Jocko* (written with Robert Creamer), tells of the meeting, with some vaudeville flair:

Tener said, "Charlie, how could you do such a thing? Hit a ballplayer, oh dear. Charlie, I'm going to have to let you out. Why did you do it, Charlie?" "Well, I'll tell you Governor," Rigler said. "I want you to know that I kept my temper when he called me an ugly, stupid this-and-that, and I controlled myself when he said I was a blind, no-good so-and-so and every other name you could think of. That was all right. I'm an umpire. I can take that. But when he said, 'You're just as bad as that blankety-blank Tener that you work for,' I couldn't hold back any longer, Governor. I let him have it." Tener jumped up and yelled, "You should have killed him!" And he wasn't fired. He was suspended for a while, though.

Years later Cy had a highly publicized run-in with Frankie Frisch. As

Frisch noted later in *Frank Frisch: The Fordham Flash*, "He's the only umpire I ever heard of who fined himself after a row."

It was a scorching day at Sportsman's Park, 1934. The Gas House Gang was in the middle of a pennant drive. Everyone was heated, it was the twelfth inning, and the day had been long. But most thought it was over when Joe Medwick came swirling into the plate as Cub catcher Gabby Hartnett received the throw. Cy called him out. Medwick jumped up hollering as other Cardinals clustered around. The Old Flash came flying from the dugout in full stride and, from behind, grabbed Cy's arm in an attempt to get his attention.

Believing he was under attack, Cy pivoted, and with a spinning swing boffed Frisch and coach Mike Gonzalez with his mask. Baseball historian Bob Broeg recalled the scene: "The stunned Flash stood there holding his head and, staring with disbelief at Rigler, stammered, 'Why . . . Cy . . . Cy.'"

"I made the mistake of grabbing him by the arm," wrote Frisch. "Rigler insisted his decision was correct . . . he never did listen to our contention that even Hartnett, who made the tag, didn't think that Medwick was out, but Rigler didn't alibi about his part in the row. He was an honorable guy and he told exactly what happened and what he did, in his report to the league president, John A. Heydler, and Heydler informed Owner Sam Breadon by telegram the next day that I had been fined \$100 and that Heydler also had fined Rigler \$100. I always had a great respect for Rigler and my respect increased after that incident."

Then there was Cy's appetite. It was notorious. Clever ballpark caterers would serve him steak luncheons with all the trimmings between games of doubleheaders, and sometimes the intermission would last as long as forty minutes, with Cy gorging himself and the caterer's vendors doing plenty of business in the grandstand.



John McGraw

Much was said of Hack Wilson's ability to put it away, but Hal "Hot Dog" Stevens, the majors' top concessionaire for many years, took a dissenting view. "Hack was just an amateur," he once told a *Cincinnati Enquirer* reporter. "My old pal, Cy Rigler, was the champion trencherman of 'em all. One day, after a ballgame in Brooklyn, Cy came under the stands to our kitchen and he ate the following: five pig knuckles and accompanying orders of sauerkraut; five boiled potatoes; five ears of corn; three limburger sandwiches; five bottles of near beer; and three cups of coffee. As he was leaving, Cy turned to me and said, 'Hal, thanks for the snack.'"

On another day at Ebbets Field the doubleheader intermission lasted so long that the press box scribes rigged up a phony telegram which was delivered to Cy as he came out for the second game. Sid Mercer reported the prank in the *New York American*: "Hereafter confine yourself to three courses," the wire read, "and get the second game started sooner. John A. Heydler, president, National League." Rigler shoved the telegram in his pocket but two days later he told a scribe, "A lot of fresh guys up there in the pressbox are trying to kid somebody, I guess."

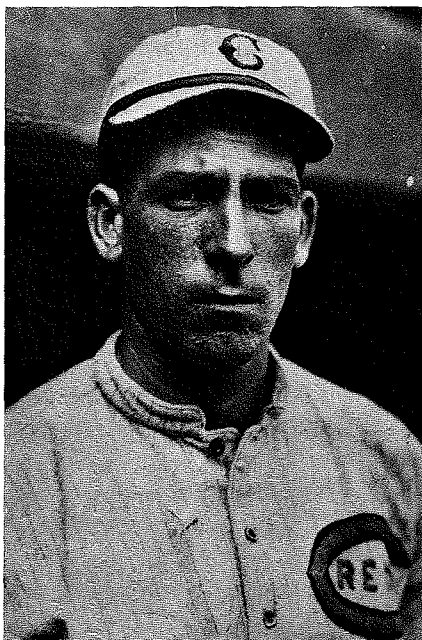
Of all the umps, Cy was one of the most persistent practical jokers, perhaps baseball's prize comic.

Cy often maintained that arbiters should take eyesight examinations with regularity, and to prove his sincerity he took many in the offices of eminent oculists. He would often get checked four or five times a year and, even in his older years, would top the results of his younger counterparts. But those who knew Cy well eventually caught on.

Big Cy was memorizing the eye-charts. Billy Evans, a Hall of Fame umpire, never quite figured it out and was frequently the butt of Cy's jokes. Cy would amaze poor Billy with his acuity and once sent Billy reeling by reading a Coney Island eyechart from 300 feet.

Cy would phone Billy and other umpires late at night, use a disguised voice, and ask them the craziest and slickest rule-book questions. Billy, shivering, tried his best to answer. "You don't know very much about baseball," Rigler would say. Frustration would sometimes overtake Billy. "Well, whoever you are, you can go . . ." he would explode, at which point Rigler would purr, "Hello Billy, this is Cy."

Students of baseball note that Rigler and Hall of Fame umpire Bill Klem rarely worked together during the regular season, even though they



Dolf Luque

comprised the most formidable duo for World Series action. Cy's penchant for pranks may have been the reason. Klem and Rigler rank first and second among all umpires in number of fall classics worked. From 1908 through 1930, excepting only three years, Klem or Rigler or both represented the National League in every World Series.

During the Series of 1912, Rigler, Klem, Evans, and "Silk" O'Loughlin were on a train headed to Boston. Rigler was reading a New York newspaper. Sid Mercer recalled:

"Look here," Rigler said, "see what one fellow has to say about the umpires," and

with that he read aloud: "One of the features of the game was the great umpiring of Bill Klem. In all his career he never was better. He did not miss a ball or a strike."

"Well, let's go to the diner," said Cy, casting aside the paper. The others left but Klem remained behind. He joined the party in the diner later. "What paper did you say that was in?" he inquired of Rigler, who blandly said he couldn't remember. Klem later examined all the papers without finding the quotation and then blasted Cy. "Some people think they are funny," he complained while the other umpires stifled laughs.

Although Cy's raised-arm strike call caught on quickly among the ranks of the game's men in blue, he was involved in another idea which met with less success. In 1929 Cy worked with a loudspeaking system designed to do away with an official announcer. He donned a mask equipped with a microphone connected by wires to metal soles fastened to his shoes. Behind the batter's box a copper plate was installed from which a network of hidden wires led to an amplifier, or what one New York paper more appropriately called "an umplifier." The moment Cy stepped on the copper plate his voice could be heard in all parts of the park. Cy announced the batteries before the game as well as all the strikes, fouls, and balls which he called throughout the game. This dubious innovation died a-borning.

In 1933, Cy Rigler was selected to umpire the majors' first All Star Game in Chicago's Comiskey Park. He considered it one of his greatest honors in the game.

At a time when arbiters were selected on merit to the All Star Game and the World Series, Cy worked his first fall classic during his fifth year in the league. He was behind the plate for Games 1 and 5 of the 1919 Series, when Eddie Cicotte and Claude Williams, the two pitchers of the Black Sox who were dropped from the ranks of Organized Ball, were on the mound. His last World Series was in 1930.

It was the Series of 1925, however, which gave the genial giant the most attention—attention he did not want—and controversy that would

not be clarified until almost half a century after its cause.

In Game 3 of that matchup of the Washington Senators and the Pittsburgh Pirates, Washington held a 4-3 lead in the eighth. Pirate Earl Smith drove a ball toward the bleachers in center. Washington outfielder Sam Rice raced back. Rigler ran for the spot. Sam caught the ball (or did he?) and tumbled into the low bleachers. It was a key Series moment, a key call, and Cy pronounced the batter out. Washington won the game 4-3, and the Series in seven games. Protests followed protests, but the decision held. Still, the controversy raged, and then two things happened.

First, Judge Kenesaw Landis, having heard Cy's explanation of what he saw, proclaimed that the decision would stand. Next, Rigler publicly called for a six-umpire crew for future Series action and detailed its duties.

Sam Rice said nothing. Judge Landis asked Rice about the catch and Sam gave what became his standard reply throughout his life, "The umpire called him out." A magazine even offered some big money for the inside story, but Sam replied, "The secret is more fun."

The "mysterious catch" remained a hotly disputed issue for many years. At Sam's induction into the Hall of Fame in 1963 he would not expound upon it. Finally, after prolonged badgering by several baseball historians, Sam Rice wrote a letter, gave it to the president of the Hall, and asked that it be opened only after his death. The letter, he said, contained the secret of the mystery catch.

Twenty-two years after Rigler's proposal, the major leagues began use of the six-umpire system. In 1974 Sam Rice passed away. The letter was opened. Cy had not missed the call.

Babe Ruth's last year in the majors, 1935, was also Cy's. By that time, his body had taken the abuse of officiating in over 6,000 games of Organized Ball. He also was in a serious auto accident, and, earlier, had been hit in the head by a player's bat as well as several bottles thrown by irate fans. Now, in midseason, the league reported that he was laboring.

But night baseball had come to the grand game and Cy was eager for it.

One night at Crosley Field, the crowd was so unruly that several hundred spilled out into right field. Without a sufficient number of guards, the field could not be cleared, and the situation grew worse. Fifty-three-year-old Rigler left his post behind the plate and calmly strolled directly into the mob. So all could see, he stood around talking. While seemingly just chatting, Cy was searching out the ringleaders. Locating them, he stepped over to them and spoke loud enough for the entire crowd to hear. "If you don't get off the field right now, I'm going to give you the worst licking you ever had in your life."

The troublemakers took a glance at



Sam Rice

Cy, decided he was big enough to mean what he said (and do it too), and headed for the stands. The rest of the crowd followed and the game was resumed.

Cy Rigler worked his last game at Sportsman's Park on September 28. Also on the field were three of his friends, Babe Pinelli, Bill Klem, and Beans Reardon. Following the season the league voted to retire Cy from active duty. When two, and later four, umpires were used for each game, many of the newcomers were assigned to work with Cy. Rigler's outstanding judgment and technique and his profound understanding of human nature gave him a special

talent at mothering and breaking them in. So it was that baseball named Cy Rigler to the newly created post of "chief of umpires." His assignment was a roving commission for the purposes of inspecting, scouting, and coaching new umpires, watching other arbiters at work, and inspecting other phases of the game as the personal representative of the National League president.

Two weeks later, on December 21, Cy Rigler suddenly and unexpectedly died. The next day Ford Frick stated, "He was to have been very active. The news of his death is a shock to all of us."

Rigler was buried in a little cemetery back in Massillon. Umpire Dolly Stark, representing the National League that day, proclaimed, "A greater baseball official than Cy Rigler never lived." Tom Swope of the *Cincinnati Post* wrote:

Rig was of a different mold than most of his fellow men, both in physical construction and mental makeup. He achieved better results in running the ballgames entrusted to his supervision than most umpires without carrying a chip on his shoulder as so many men of his calling seemingly believe it necessary to do. He ruled the field as completely as any of the czars of the chest protector yet he retained the friendship of the men who occasionally found themselves disputing his decisions. It was news when Rigler ordered any player from the game because he did it so seldom. He disliked taking advantage of anyone who tried to pick a fight with him and the few who did try to whip him not only quickly regretted it but are among those who mourn his untimely death the most. He was the National League's most beloved umpire.

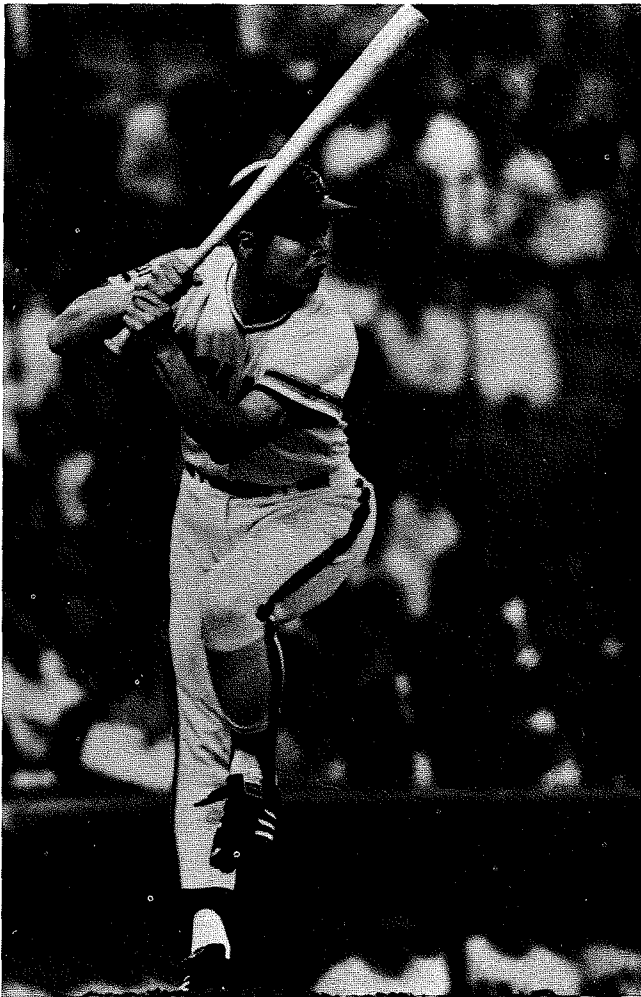
Bill Corum, writing for the International News Service, summed up:

Cy Rigler was not a belligerent man, but he was a fearless one. He had in fullest measure the one essential requisite of a good sports official—the ability to take prompt and decisive action. Unlike his coworker of many a long, hot summer, Bill Klem, Cy did not boast that he has never called one wrong. But he seldom called one twice.

*What baseball means to Japan—and humanity.*

# Where the Twain Shall Meet

MERRITT CLIFTON



*Sadaharu Oh*

**W**HEN A TEAM OF Japanese collegians defeated their American counterparts to claim the 1984 Olympic gold medal for baseball, stunned American fans realized what the Japanese have felt for years: Baseball is as truly theirs as ours. Japan's upset victory had even greater impact upon Americans than the initial victories by Taiwan, South Korea, and Okinawa in the Little League World Series some fifteen years ago. Then, at least, disgruntled U.S. fans could claim that the Asiatic teams consisted of older players hiding behind their small stature; and certainly the Asiatic Little League squads were selected from among the best players in entire nations, not just the best in extended neighborhoods. Olympic baseball, however, is just one or two steps from top-rank professional baseball. If the American game is still intrinsically superior, at this level the edge should show, even granting that the single-game elimination format of Olympic play permits flukes and does not force the teams to call upon their depth. Americans may still produce more and better second-line starting pitchers, relief pitchers, pinch-hitters, platoon outfielders, and utility infielders, but up front, the Japanese Olympians proved themselves equal, if not superior.

Thus far, no American major league club has ever lost an exhibition series to Japanese professionals. However, the Kansas City Royals had to beat the Japanese champion Yomiuri Giants six games to two to salvage a 9-7-1 overall record on their 1981 tour. The Royals claimed they started poorly because of a three-week layoff between the end of

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the 162-game American League season and the beginning of their visit to Japan—but the Japanese players had been waiting around even longer since the end of their 130-game season. Like most other American baseball authorities, the Royals still describe Japanese baseball as the equivalent of American Double-A minor leagues. They point out that even Double-A teams occasionally beat the big leaguers in exhibitions. But sooner or later some cocky major leaguers are going to arrive in Japan expecting to clobber quasi-minor leaguers and really get their ears pinned back. The Olympics should be taken as a warning that Japanese baseball has not only established itself as a cultural tradition, but also matured at a top-flight level.

The past two decades of Japanese play represented a Golden Age, setting standards for the future much as the 1920s and 1930s set enduring standards for the American game. Since the 1920s, as documented in Thorn and Palmer's *The Hidden Game of Baseball*, the average American major leaguer has risen to the levels of natural ability and acquired skill once possessed only by stars. Thus today's American stars stand out much less than did Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, and Walter Johnson. Likewise, though Japanese baseball no longer boasts players as dominant as home run king Sadaharu Oh was during the 1960s, this is because the average player has improved. The single-season and career records Oh and others set during the 1960s and 1970s may stand as long as the records of Ruth, Cobb, and Johnson because in Japan as in America it is no longer possible for any one player, no matter how good, to be that much better than all the rest.

It wasn't always so. Just a few generations back, the Great American Pastime was as foreign to Japan as the automobile and electronics industries. Japanese players were obviously smaller, slower, awkward, less understanding of the nuances of the game. But as with automobiles and electronics, Japan imported knowhow, worked hard, and put forth an impressive product.

"After the war," Japanese professional baseball commissioner Takeso Shimoda told the *New York Times*, "we had to start from zero. We had to improve the technical level of Japanese players . . . We had to hire American players. It succeeded. Now there's not much difference between American and Japanese players, technically."

He might have been speaking of cars or television sets, as an executive for Honda, Nissan, Sony, Sanyo, or Mitsubishi. Yet Shimoda wasn't speaking of a business success so much as of a cultural transformation, of a process that more or less replaced institutionalized emperor-worship with the transient idolatry that fans individually accord to favorite star athletes. Where Japanese boys once memorized the sayings of philosopher-emperors, since the middle 1960s they have memorized the statistics on the backs of Kabaya-Leaf baseball cards, just as their American counterparts who, with rare exceptions, long since ceased memorizing passages from the Bible.

The economic incentive behind Japan's rapid indus-

trialization is clear enough, but why should baseball have come with it? Why should baseball have become a national preoccupation while other American sports and other facets of American culture haven't? What particularly attracts the Japanese en masse to baseball and even bubblegum cards, but not to football or drag-racing?

Golf has been adopted among the Japanese economic elite because the nation's few greens provide an internationally acceptable place for informal business discussion. The young, upwardly mobile Japanese likewise play handball, squash, and tennis, and run marathons but, as in America, none of these successful transplants has become a major spectator sport, televised every day and discussed wherever men gather. Boxing, hockey, and basketball have been transplanted as spectator sports, but enjoy distinctly minor status.

Baseball possesses a uniquely national character in both Japan and America in part because it came first, ahead of the other leading spectator sports. But it also fills a cultural role that the other sports can't. Battalions of American sociologists and historians have tried to figure out just what baseball means, without reaching any consensus. However, historically it is clear that the rise of baseball was coincidental with that of industrialization in both the United States and Japan. It is further clear from the overseas birthplaces of many of the pioneer players that baseball in America caught on quite rapidly with recent immigrants, who might have been expected to stick with the sports brought with them from Europe. European-style football, rugby, cricket, and rounders all require less space to play, for one thing, and less equipment. They're easier for spectators to understand (all but cricket). Yet they faded into virtual oblivion, while the largest immigrant centers became the founding cities of the U.S. major leagues.

Sociologist Ken Hogarty, of the University of California at Berkeley, may have pinpointed the key difference between baseball and most other sports in his unpublished doctoral thesis (1977). According to Hogarty, the primary conflict in baseball is *individual versus society*, whereas the primary conflict in most other sports is *nation versus nation*. The model for most other sports is war, Hogarty observed, with the individual subordinate to the group, while baseball he compared to the classical western. The lone cowboy-outlaw, the batter, rides into town to confront a hostile posse of nine. Usually, society triumphs and the anarchic cowboy is buried in his dugout, the symbolic Boot Hill. Sometimes, however, the cowboy-outlaw shoots his way into the bank, first base. Sometimes his gang then shoots him back out of trouble with a succession of hits that finally bring him home. Once in a while, a particularly valiant cowboy shoots his own way clear through town with a home run. The umpires, in Hogarty's view, represent God rather than human authority. Dressed in their dark suits, they arbitrate justice.

Hogarty's model clearly explains why baseball should

have appealed to U.S. immigrants. Often as not, they came to America in rebellion against authority back home. Many had themselves been outlaws, of one sort or another. They could identify with the ambitious batsman/gunslinger who takes 'em all on. And, as they gradually gained property and responsibilities, they could identify with the home-team defense, too.

In football, basketball, hockey, soccer, tennis, even chess, the object of the game is capturing territory, plundering or violating a protected treasure—goal-nets and basketball hoops mix sexual and territorial symbolism so thoroughly as to leave no doubt how the reproductive and territorial drives are connected. Such sports date back to the very beginnings of society, to the first time tribal groups engaged in symbolic rather than literal mass combat to determine who would drink first at a watering hole. They survive because we retain our tribal instincts, expressed now as nationalism and political partisanship.

But, particularly since the Declaration of Independence asserted the rights of the individual as equal to those of the state, we no longer think of ourselves first as parts of a greater whole. We are each "me" before we are Christians or Jews, northerners or southerners, blue-collar or white-collar. The rise of baseball historically parallels the rise of individualism, concurrent with the collapse of the village-based, semi-tribal agrarian economy. Alexander Cartwright and Henry Chadwick devised baseball even as Ralph Emerson and Henry David Thoreau distinguished individualism from mere selfishness, the first philosophers to openly salute those "marching to the beat of a different drum." Their colleague Walt Whitman saluted baseball for expressing the same independent American character that Emerson and Thoreau defined. Unique among sports, baseball not only permits but demands that each player briefly emerge from among his teammates to stand alone. Every player must belong to the team on defense, but each must hit his own way on base. This balance of social and individual responsibility must have appealed greatly to young men who didn't really wish to be outcasts forever, but did wish to make the most of their own abilities in whatever field of endeavor.

But that was nineteenth century America, not Japan. Japan has received no recent waves of immigrants seeking freedom and opportunity. Throughout recorded history, Japan has maintained a society that has been regimented, if not entirely socially stratified.

Indeed, historically Japan would seem much more like Europe than like America, so that one might expect the Japanese game to have followed the European course. A game called baseball developed from rounders and cricket in England even earlier than it emerged in America—again concurrent with industrialization—but became a girls' game, which novelist Jane Austen mentioned in *Northanger Abbey*, written ca. 1803. It faded from popularity as Victorian mores discouraged women's participation in competitive sports, and vanished by 1850.

Reintroduced repeatedly, baseball did finally catch on somewhat in Europe after World War II, with Little League and adult weekend clubs now scattered among all the western nations. Italy boasts one low-caliber professional league including several American ex-major leaguers, while The Netherlands recently sent pitcher Win Remmerswaal to the Boston Red Sox, the first major leaguer to spend his entire amateur career in Europe.

Europe is now well into evolving a postindustrial economy, however. Baseball is at most a successful minor sport, not a significant cultural influence as it has been in Japan for decades. If the evolution of baseball in Europe could be compared at all to baseball history in America, it must be placed at about the Civil War level, the point at which troop movements and the new transcontinental railroads first spread the game from coast to coast, north and south.

Baseball in Japan, by contrast, is today about as well established as it was in the United States in 1919, by which time it was already undeniably the Great American Pastime. American professional baseball was exactly fifty years old in 1919, the Cincinnati Red Stockings having become the first admittedly salaried team in 1869. The first Japanese professional team, the Yomiuri Giants of Tokyo, was chartered almost exactly 50 years ago, on December 26, 1934. The Hanshin Tigers of Osaka followed a year later, on December 10, 1935. The Chunichi Dragons of Magoya were assembled on January 15, 1936. The Hankyu Braves of Nishinomiya came together just eight days later. Nineteen thirty-six brought formation of Japan's first fully professional baseball league. Expansion began when the Nankai Hawks became Osaka's second professional team on March 29, 1938. Postwar, these original five teams gradually grew into the present two leagues of six teams each, paralleling the development of our American and National Leagues.

When the Yomiuri Giants formed, baseball had been played in Japan for about twenty-five years. A team of American major leaguers first visited in 1912, beating a nine of U.S. missionaries. Babe Ruth led several subsequent visits, leading to the almost annual tradition of one U.S. team or another visiting in the fall. Each time Ruth visited, he and his teammates noted larger crowds and better players, an observation continued to this day.

Like the 1869 Cincinnati Red Stockings, the Tokyo Giants drew together top players from various locales—in the Giants' case, their talent was drawn from college and athletic club teams. They barnstormed against these same colleges and athletic clubs, in the absence of any organized professional league, and having most of the best players they naturally won most of their games. Even after other professional teams organized and the first Japanese major league was formed, the Giants were able to maintain their advantage, winning over thirty championships. Only two other Japanese teams have won as many as ten.

Here Japanese baseball history first diverges from American, and a difference in the cultural traditions appears. Our Red Stockings soon disbanded, with their players moving to other cities, principally Boston and Washington. But the Giants remained together. Other teams similarly started from scratch. Instead of raiding one another to achieve parity, they patiently developed their own talent. The principle became established that Japanese players would generally remain with their clubs for life. To this day, trading and otherwise moving from club to club is rare in Japanese baseball, just as Japanese factory workers rarely move from firm to firm. Japanese club owners, usually large industrial consortiums, are expected to provide lifetime employment for their players in one capacity or another, while players are expected to remain unswervingly loyal to their bosses.

These expectations of loyalty have recently become a point of conflict between the Japanese teams and imported American players, a conflict of great symbolic significance that may influence the future direction of all Japanese society. On the one hand, imported American players are viewed as mercenaries, and are clearly treated as such, hired, fired, and blamed for team failures with an abandon management would never display toward native players. On the other hand, the imported players are expected to conform at least outwardly to the same rules as the natives: to respect their supposed betters and keep

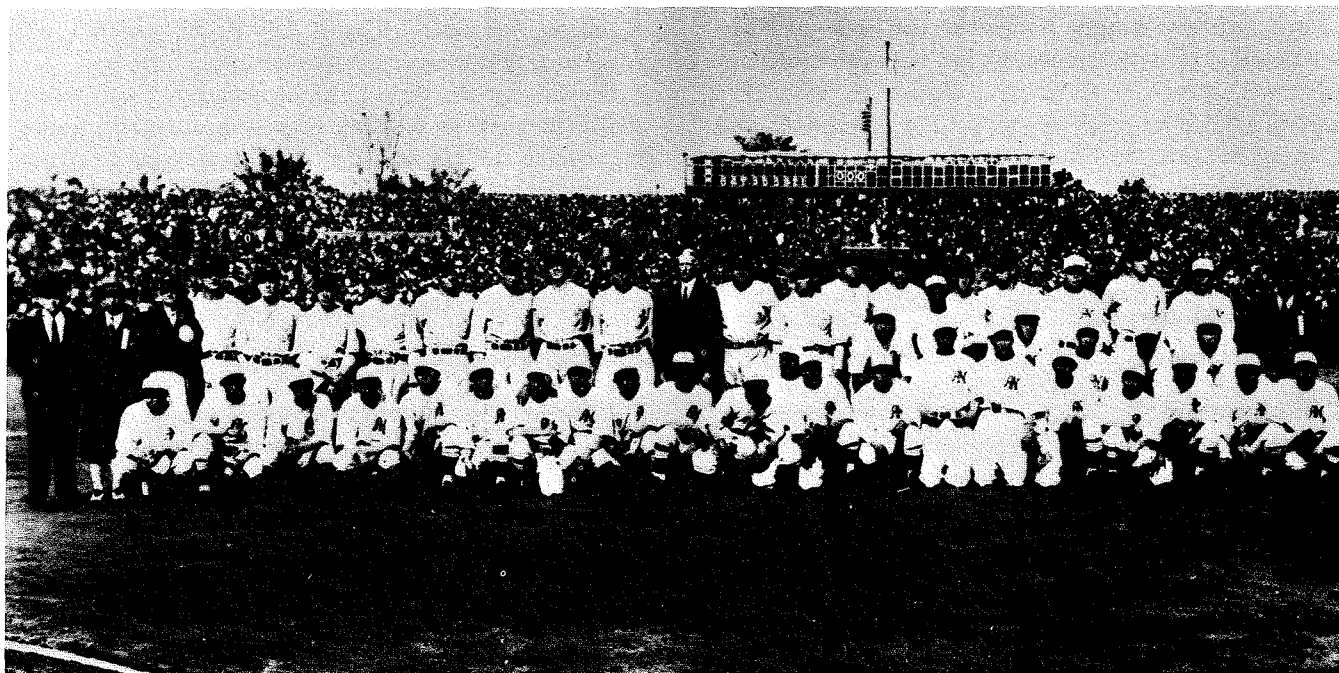
their mouths shut, just as if they could expect similar long-term rewards for good behavior.

Grafting on an almost feudal system of team loyalty was only part of how the Japanese adapted baseball customs to suit the traditions of their own society. Baseball took root in Japan at precisely the time when most other foreign activities became suspect, the period during the late 1930s when tariff wars with Great Britain and the United States were raising tensions that culminated in World War II. As Japanese baseball promoters realized immediately, the game would have to take on a nationalistic character to survive.

To great extent, this influenced the style of play. In the heyday of American jingoism, between the Spanish Civil War and World War I, the American game endured the "deadball" era, a phase in which managers tried to replace the freewheeling Wild West style of offense that characterized the '90s with team play emphasizing the sacrifice bunt. The sacrifice was lauded by sportswriters while players swinging for home runs were derided as "rutting sluggers" with more muscle than either brains or character. Baseball in Japan entered a similar phase, with several significant differences. Despite the patriotic emphasis on conformity during the American deadball era, Americans still prided themselves on being rough-and-ready. Thus American pitchers continued knocking batters down with inside fastballs and American base-

*Babe Ruth, hero to America and Japan on the 1934 tour.*





*The 1934 tour—Japanese and American teams.*

runners threatened fielders with their spikes at every opportunity. While sublimating offense, the American deadball era might have featured the most violently aggressive style of play ever. The Japanese, on the other hand, pride themselves on courtesy. As recently as the mid-1960s, pitchers apologized for accidentally “dusting off” batters, and no Japanese player ever physically challenged another. Players even bowed to the umpires who called them out. Deadball play in Japan stressed the sacrifice without any form of self-assertion emerging until after World War II.

Thus, even as jingoistic generals urged a return to the code of the samurai and other unique cultural traditions, baseball was not only tolerated but even encouraged. Baseball and military preparations were perhaps the only two realms in which Japanese leaders urged the population to learn from the West right up to the outbreak of war. Shortly before Pearl Harbor, when most foreigners were being hustled from the country, former major league catcher-turned-spy Moe Berg was not only allowed in but was welcomed with the red carpet, was allowed to take photos from a tower overlooking Tokyo, and was further permitted to take them home again, to be used in directing American bombers. Berg recalled in his memoirs that his having played on one of Babe Ruth’s teams that toured Japan served him much better with the Japanese authorities than either his passport or his ability to speak Japanese.

Nor did the war itself curtail Japanese enthusiasm for baseball. Americans who flew on General Jimmy Doolittle’s 1942 raid against Tokyo recalled feeling guilty about dropping their bombs after passing over children at a sandlot ballgame. Japanese troops on the Pacific islands

shouted “To hell with Babe Ruth!” at American invaders, but the invaders usually found shell-pocked baseball diamonds ready for play just as soon as they finished mopping up.

If baseball were only another game providing some sort of moral lesson, it probably wouldn’t have caught on so strongly, certainly not at that time. But the nature of the lesson had special appeal. Although Japanese baseball was played in a fashion tending to promote traditional values, it added the notion that there are times in life when it is not only necessary but also good and praiseworthy that each individual step forward and do something conspicuous. Though ostentation was discouraged, the spotlight was unmistakably focused upon the man at bat, upon his individual contribution to the greater whole. Here, at least, the small fish in the big sea were not permanently anonymous. Here also, they received the opportunity to perform so well as to become big fish. The promise of social mobility endemic to America was rather new to Japan, but equally appealing—and all the more noticeable, because in Japan hardly any other field of endeavor overtly offered it. The peasant who accepted industrialization might indeed become richer, but he would still be a peasant, whereas the humble batsman who excelled might become exalted as a samurai.

Perhaps the most significant clue to what baseball means in Japan lies within the event that prompted Commissioner Shimoda to address *The New York Times*—an event highlighting essential differences. A few months before the Olympics, xenophobic Japanese baseball fans including Shimoda raised a hue and cry against the foreign players they once enthusiastically hired and copied. Foreign players should be banned, they argued,



for corrupting the character of their national sport. Their definition of that character emerges from the origin of their wrath.

Former U.S. major league infielder Don Money touched off the uproar by signing with a Japanese team for more money than any of his native teammates were making, reporting to the team out of playing condition, griping incessantly about the Japanese training discipline, and finally leaving the team without permission in mid-pennant race. Money claimed he jumped the club to receive treatment for an injury from his own doctor back home, but Japanese baseball people weren't convinced. Many other disillusioned American players have used the same excuse as a means of escaping their Japanese contracts. Foreigners were nearly banned a decade ago, in 1973, when Joe Pepitone jumped the Yakult Atoms with a purported injury best diagnosed as acute culture shock.

Money was an irritant, both as an individual and as an economic factor, but Money in either sense wasn't the primary issue. The primary issue for most Japanese fans was that players like Money and Pepitone violate the fundamental tenets of their society by overtly placing their own interests above those of their team. Their actions are discourteous and disloyal. They set a poor example for Japanese youth. American sports columnists reported that Money and Pepitone were simply too individualistic to suit the Japanese, an unfair oversimplification. Money and Pepitone were criticized not for being individualistic so much as for being selfish.

Nor would their conduct have been any more acceptable in the American major leagues. Pepitone, in fact, wound up in Japan after similarly jumping his contract with the Atlanta Braves. During his career, Japanese baseball actually offered him more leeway than the American leagues did, since the standard Japanese contract for foreign players lasts only two years. At that time, players in the U.S. leagues, like native Japanese players, were purportedly bound for life to the teams that owned their contracts. In actuality, American players have always moved rather freely and frequently from club to club, through trades often self-initiated. Nonetheless, in either nation, Pepitone was expected to honor his contract by playing ball to the best of his considerable ability. In both nations, Pepitone was notorious as a playboy, often criticized for letting off-the-field pursuits interfere with realizing his on-the-field potential. American teams put up with Pepitone for a decade because he still hit better with a hangover than most players who were cold sober. In Japan, however, he hit .163, erasing any claim to special privilege.

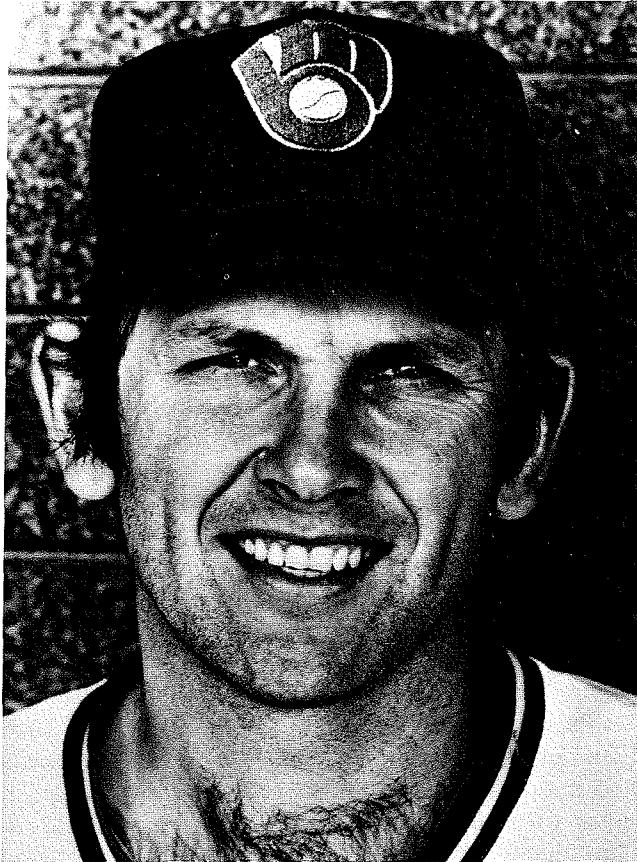
Money's case was somewhat different, in that U.S. baseball norms have changed since Pepitone's time. Since 1976, about midway through Money's career, American professional baseball has offered veteran players several means of openly choosing their own teams, through requesting or refusing trades and playing out their con-

tract options. The most significant change from past practice is that today players can change clubs without their former clubs receiving compensation: can in effect sell themselves, instead of being sold by club owners, and pocket the proceeds. But even under this new system, contract jumpers have never been tolerated. A U.S. major leaguer who simply breaks his contract is heavily fined, as Dick Allen was for abandoning first the Phillies and then the White Sox. If less valuable than Allen, one of the game's all-time great sluggers, a contract-jumper in the U.S. might also be suspended, or unconditionally released, ending the team's obligation to pay him. Over the last thirty-five years, such cases have usually been resolved through retirement or a trade, rather than confrontation such as happened in Japan in the Money and Pepitone cases.

American fans would certainly boo a Money or Pepitone for jumping his club, just as they booed Allen. The issue in either nation is not "individuality" but honor. Antagonistic toward the Americanization of traditional Japanese society, the xenophobes emphasize the imported players' mercenary status—warriors with no sense of honor, who unlike the samurai fight only for pay, and then only when they feel like it. After all, the American and Latin American players in Japan have already left other teams and countries, often under questionable circumstances. The very first American players in Japan actually were mercenaries, more or less. Former Boston Braves' pitcher Phil Paine became the first ex-major leaguer to play in the Japanese big leagues during 1953, while serving with the U.S. Air Force. Infielder Larry Raines made the U.S. major leagues in the mid-1950s as the best-known of many Americans who also played for Japanese clubs on leave from the U.S. military. Arriving under moral suspicion, meanwhile, was first baseman Don Newcombe, who drank himself out of a brilliant pitching career with the Brooklyn Dodgers. The first American stars to reach Japan, Newcombe and outfielder Larry Doby, played poorly for the Chunichi Dragons in 1962, becoming the focus of criticism directed at U.S. imports ever since.

Although American players have generally given honest effort and conducted themselves honorably, Japanese fans are aware that most view their two major leagues as a sort of Siberia, preferable only to the death of a return to the minors. American players go to Japan either because they're washed up, not good enough to stick in the U.S. major leagues, or because no American team will put up with them.

Faced with the end of their careers, many Americans do take advantage of the tough Japanese training regimen to get back into shape and play good baseball. George Altman and Willie Kirkland came off the American scrapheap to become superstars in Japan, thanking martial arts discipline for rescuing them from hard drink, fast women, and what appeared to be fast fade-outs after



*Don Money*

brilliant beginnings. U.S. minor leaguer John Sipin similarly developed his abilities through the Japanese approach, also becoming a superstar after scarcely getting a trial in the American majors. Former Kansas City infielder Tim Ireland, now with the Hiroshima Carp, speaks for many American players in observing that under the Japanese regimen, "you forfeit individual expression, but you gain in production and non-confusion."

Great comeback efforts are applauded and compliments from Americans accepted, even when they miss the point. But comebacks attributed to sobriety and proper conditioning also hurt Japanese pride somewhat, since Americans often take the successes of "failures" to mean Japanese baseball is inferior. Never mind that American stars often likewise emerge after interleague trades—Hall of Famers Carl Hubbell and Joe Cronin, for instance. No baseball expert claims the National League of the 1930s was inferior because the late-blooming Hubbell excelled for the Giants after failing with the Tigers, or that the American League was inferior because Cronin made it big with Washington and Boston after riding the Pirates' bench. The accusation that the Japanese game isn't quite as good persists because nonentities like Greg "Boomer" Wells keep emerging as superstars when Japanese clubs give them the first real chance to play regularly that they've ever had. How, then, to account for the inability of former stars like Reggie Smith or Warren

Cromartie to handle Japanese curveball pitching? American scouts find it easier to consider the Smiths and Cromarties washed up than to accept that they've misjudged a Sipin or a Wells, or an Altman or Kirkland, for that matter.

The Japanese, meanwhile, are sensitive about being considered a nation of imitators, whose products are essentially inferior to the originals. They've worked hard for two generations to erase the "Made in Japan" stigma from cars, cameras, and electronic equipment. Thus when Americans take Japan's national pastime lightly, the "ban foreigners" approach is understandable. It's what the U.S. and Soviet Union do, more or less, in boycotting one another's Olympics . . . what half the world does in boycotting sports events involving South Africans . . . what every child does when offended by a playmate: "If you don't play nice, I'll take my toys and go home."

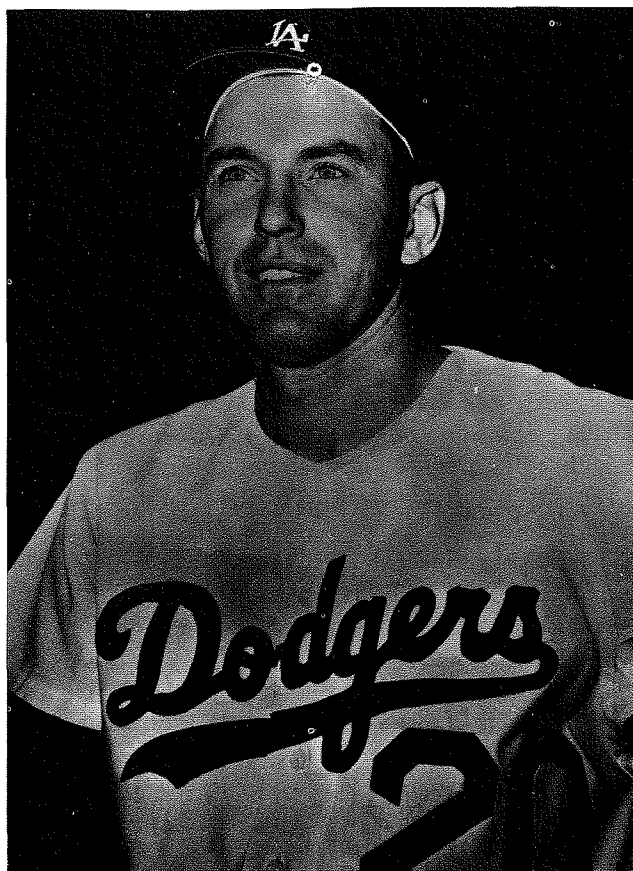
Ironically, the Japanese victory over the U.S. baseball team in the Olympics makes a ban on foreign players less likely. Japanese pride has been assuaged. Now that Japanese collegians, at least, have proved themselves peers of their American counterparts, fans can more easily shrug off the "inferior" rap whenever an American unknown hits a home run. The pressure on imported players to excel conspicuously might also diminish considerably, after decades of mounting. Having starred for the Hankyu Braves in 1964-68 and again in 1971-72, former infielder Daryl Spencer knows that pressure well, understanding thoroughly how it contributes to the present situation. Not only the fans but "the managers like to use Americans as scapegoats," Spencer recently explained to baseball historian Mike Mandel. "If the American has a bad year and the team doesn't do well, then the manager says, "Well, our Americans didn't do well," without regard to the performances of the other twenty-three on the roster.

Smith and Cromartie particularly demonstrate this tendency. The Yomiuri Giants more or less expected them to replace Sadaharu Oh, the Korean-born first baseman who hit even more home runs than Hank Aaron (868 to 755 before retiring in 1980) and Shigeo Nagashima, the third baseman whose lifetime batting average is the highest in Japanese baseball history. While the Giants dominated the Japanese game as the New York Yankees once dominated American baseball, Oh and Nagashima were the Japanese Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. Through their prime, the Giants alone among Japanese teams steadfastly refused to sign Americans. Their only imported players ever had been Hawaiian-born Wally Yonamine, Andy Miyamoto, Bill Nishida, Jun Hirota, and Fumiharu Kashiwaeda, all of pure Japanese descent, who formed their nucleus during the early 1950s. But tradition changed fast after Nagashima began declining. In 1975 the Giants jumped at a chance to sign infielder Davey Johnson, a perennial Gold Glove winner and All-Star with the Baltimore Orioles who had also hit 43 home runs as an

Atlanta Brave only two years before. Past his prime, Johnson disappointed, but he did have a good year in 1976 as the Giants kept on winning despite Nagashima's retirement. Aware what might happen, however, if the Giants lost, Johnson fled back to the U.S. after his two-year contract expired, where he enjoyed one more standout season in 1977. The Giants next traded for John Sipin, who did effectively replace Nagashima during Oh's last few seasons. In 1980 they added outfielder Roy White, a regular on three recent pennant-winning New York Yankee ballclubs. White starred, but after both Oh and Sipin retired, he slumped, unable to carry the Giants' offense alone. For the first time, the Giants suffered three consecutive losing seasons. Nagashima, probably the most popular Japanese player ever, had become the team's general manager. He couldn't be blamed. Nor could Oh be blamed, now the Giants' field manager. The Giants dumped White, bringing in first Smith, then Cromartie a season later with fanfare designed to hide the bitter truth that almost their whole club was over 30, they no longer had a single standout pitcher, and hadn't developed a native star in at least a decade.

Smith had been a legitimate major league superstar in his prime with the Red Sox, Cardinals, and Dodgers, distinguished for home run power, speed on the bases, and one of the best arms in the history of baseball. However, he arrived in Japan at age 38 after a succession of injuries had left him unable to throw hard, run fast, or even swing the bat hard every day. Cromartie, in his early thirties, was a few years past career highs of 14 home runs and .304 in seven seasons with the Montreal Expos. He was a good player, but only a marginal regular. Smith and Cromartie couldn't possibly have lived up to their billing, even if they had produced as well as Oh and Nagashima did during their last seasons; the Giants couldn't reasonably have been expected to win. But blaming them for the Giants' collapse helps Yomiuri management, including Oh and Nagashima, to survive the fans' disappointment while rebuilding their team from the bottom up.

The expectation that American players should be supermen even extended to Masanori Murakami, the Japanese pitcher who played for the San Francisco Giants in 1964-65. Murakami joined San Francisco almost straight out of college, after only half a season in the U.S. minor leagues. Under normal circumstances, no one would have expected him to create a stir right away. But, recalls Spencer, "Murakami came back [to Japan] and he was the first Japanese to play in the major leagues in America and they had a big bally-hoo every time someone hit a home run off him in spring training. And the kid got really psyched out, and the other Japanese players kind of resented him. He had a miserable time of it for about three or four years. Finally he did have a halfway decent season, but he never became a star," despite lasting eighteen years in professional baseball. Ironically, reversing the pattern of American players, Murakami returned



*Daryl Spencer*

to the San Francisco Giants for his final comeback attempt. Had he succeeded, he might have proved himself that American and Japanese baseball are simply different, rather than "better" or "worse." Instead, he received his unconditional release during 1983 spring training.

Yet another Spencer anecdote reveals the depth of the Japanese inferiority complex concerning American baseball. As he told Mandel in *S.F. Giants: An Oral History* (self-published, 1979), "I got in a situation where I was going for the home run crown with this Japanese player. And I was ahead of him 32 to 26 in August. And my interpreter told me to forget the home run title; it had already been decided that I wouldn't win. I couldn't understand what he was talking about, but in our next series we went into Tokyo and we were playing in this real small ballpark, and I always hit a couple of home runs there in a three-game series. And they walked me eight straight times. The greatest pitcher in Japan at that time, a kid named Koyama, who could throw strikes blindfolded, he walked me four times on sixteen straight pitches. So they were getting the message to me that I wasn't going to hit any more home runs. And eventually the guy caught me."

The Japanese have never been particularly sensitive about Americans winning batting championships. Even before former American major leaguers arrived, Wally Yonamine won the 1951 Central League batting title.

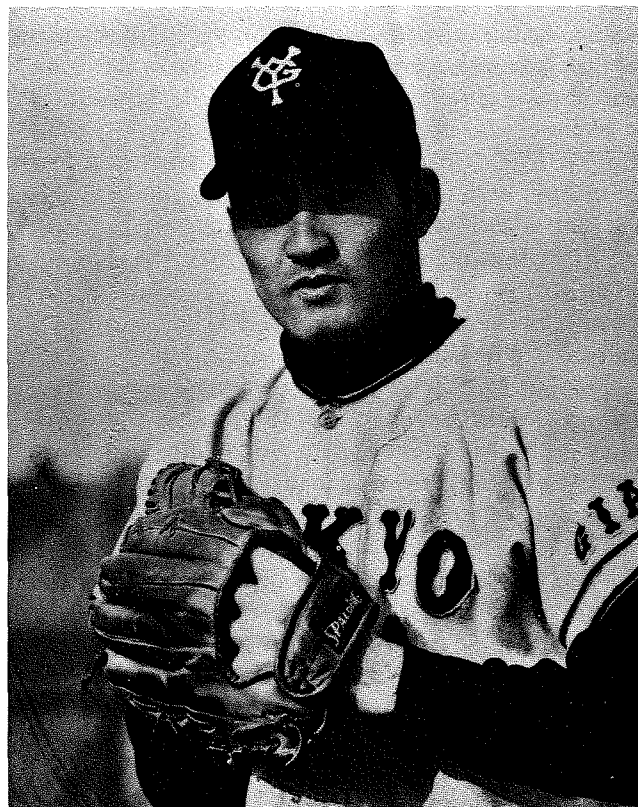
Larry Raines won the Pacific League batting title with the Hankyu Braves in 1954. No feelings were hurt because at that time the Japanese leagues did not even pretend to equality. Almost a decade later, playing at the same time as Spencer, former American minor leaguer Jack Bloomfield won back-to-back Pacific League batting titles for the Kintetsu Buffalos in 1962 and 1963.

Home run titles, however, have been a sore point, as has the whole business of home run hitting. In America, the self-sacrificing deadball era ended when pitcher Babe Ruth turned in his toeplate at the peak of his career and became a fence-busting outfielder instead. The deadball era in Japan ended almost the same way, when one-time pitching great Michio Nishizawa returned from World War II with an injured arm, forcing him to become an outfielder-first baseman. Unlike Ruth, Nishizawa had never before been much of a hitter. In fact, in seven previous seasons, he'd hit over .223 just once and that was as a teenaged rookie in 1937, when he got two hits in five at-bats. He'd hit only one home run in his life. Grateful just to be playing ball again, Nishizawa played conventional deadball for a couple of years, then discovered he was big and strong enough to hit home runs in bunches. The individual self-assertion inherent in swinging for the fences made Nishizawa the target of considerable criticism from the old guard, but most fans loved him. When he retired in 1958, his career total of 212 homers and single-season high of 46 in 1950 were both Japanese baseball records.

They didn't last long. Because Nishizawa's teams won, and because his hitting packed the bleachers, Japanese management immediately began seeking more fence-busters. This, as much as a desire to better the overall caliber of their game, was the real impetus behind the wholesale import of American players from the early 1950s on. Even playing in much smaller ballparks than the American norm, few native Japanese had the size and strength to hit home runs before the 1960s, when the improved nutrition of the postwar era brought a generally bigger, stronger generation to maturity. Meanwhile American players of average power, like Spencer, challenged league and team home run records, while Americans with no power reputation at all frequently became sluggers. The handful of Japanese players who did hit home runs consistently during the 1950s and early 1960s became symbols of national pride: Futoshi Nakanishi of the Nishitsu Lions and Kazuhiro Yamauchi of the Hanshin Tigers, who arrived in 1952; catcher Katsuya Nomura of the Nankai Hawks, who broke in during 1955 and played until age 46 in 1980; Shigeo Nagashima, debut season 1958; Oh, and outfielder Shinichi Eto of the Chunichi Dragons, who came up in 1959. These were the few players whose power complemented their other abilities sufficiently that even the most critical Americans recognized them as authentic major leaguers.

Whether or not Spencer accurately accuses Japanese

baseball of a conspiracy to deprive him of a home run title, it is a fact that although many Americans had spectacular home run totals, few of them actually became home run champions until after Oh hit the home run in 1977 that put him ahead of Hank Aaron as the all-time, all-world professional leader. Only since Oh's triumph have any Americans won multiple home run titles. Japanese players and fans today can better accept former American reserves like Adrian Garrett, Charlie Manuel, and Samoan-born Tony Solaita outslugging today's native favorites, Koji Yamamoto, Masayuki Kakefu, and Yasunori Oshima, because regardless of the outcome of any



*Shigeo Nagashima*

single season's home run race, Oh at least has done something no American shall rival for a long, long time.

What will happen in Japan, following the Olympic victory, might parallel developments in the Japanese industrial labor force now that Japan has established her reputation for quality and productivity. As Americans gain greater tolerance, they might also be permitted off-the-field influence equal to their influence on the diamond. Japanese players might begin asserting themselves as individuals with confidence that they do have somewhere else to go if their employers foolishly release them. Certainly American teams have been interested in obtaining Japanese players ever since Murakami held his own with San Francisco through the torrid 1965 pennant race. Only custom has bound them to Japan, while only pressure from the U.S. State Department has prevented

American teams from raiding Japanese talent in bidding wars. If the State Department believes American teams can sign Japanese players without Japanese fans feeling as if their major leagues are being treated like an amateur talent pool, if the international trade authorities judge that Japanese as well as American talent can move both ways without provoking more serious economic or diplomatic retaliation, the custom of eternal loyalty to one's team could quickly crumble.

There is an on-the-field precedent, one that Daryl Spencer initiated in early 1964. "In Japan they don't say 'Spencer,' they say 'Spen-sah,'" he told Mandel, "and when they talk about 'Spen-sah,' they talk about his sliding first . . . . In this one game, this same pitcher with all the control, the one who walked me four straight times on sixteen pitches, well, he walked me again to get to the next guy. That put runners on first and second in the bottom of the eighth inning with one out. And I yelled down to Gordon Windhorn," a fellow American who was the runner from second, "that if this guy hits a ground ball to just keep on running because I was going to take the second baseman out." A conventional play in American baseball, from Little League up, this was unheard of in Japan, where rough tactics had always been shunned. "Two pitches later he hit a ground ball to shortstop, the second baseman covered, I knocked him down, and Windhorn scored the winning run. They argued for about thirty minutes over that. Our players had never slid hard like that before. But from that game on, all our players started sliding hard. And in fact it changed the whole style of play in Japan as far as making double plays. It used to be that the player running to second base, if it looked like he was going to be out, he'd just turn and head out to right field," away from the relay throw. "No one would ever slide. The second baseman would just stand on the base and make the nice easy throw. And almost from that day on, all the second basemen had to adjust because all our ballplayers started sliding in hard. And of course all the other teams started to do it, too."

During the middle 1960s, firebrands like Spencer, Don Blasingame, Don Zimmer, and one-time Nankai Hawks coach Pete Reiser also introduced fighting with the hitherto sacrosanct umpires. Murakami reputedly threw the first deliberate brushback pitches in 1966—one reason, perhaps, why he was anathematized by most other Japanese players of his generation. Rough-and-ready American-style baseball still isn't universal, but by the middle 1970s Japanese management was hiring retired American tough guys like Clete Boyer, Jim Lefebvre, and Vernon Law to teach the very tactics some of them once asserted would kill their game.

From the sanctimonious press response to Spencer and cohorts, one would gather that Japanese fans universally disapproved of rude, individualistic aggression. Gate receipts tell a different story. The more colorful the American, at least on the field, the better the fans like him. If this

admiration for the man who stands out and even makes himself obnoxious spreads to off-the-field behavior, and if this in turn inspires average Japanese citizens to become more openly self-assertive as well, the whole of Japanese society could begin changing.

As, indeed, it seems to be. No longer content with collective achievements, many Japanese are now agitating for higher personal standards of living, more freedom of choice in occupational and social matters, and less rigidity in their educational system. The rights of peasant farmers were recently advanced by student militants as equal in importance to Tokyo's need for a new airport, a development perhaps akin to the Boston Tea Party in challenging the status quo. Minority rights have never before meant much in a society stressing obligations over options. Many of the student leaders professed Communism, certainly not the ideology of capitalistic American ballplayers. Yet both Communism and anything-goes capitalism present radical departures from prevailing custom, and may simultaneously appeal to the silently frustrated Japanese baseball fan for the same reasons.

While increasingly individualistic baseball players may help inspire the forthcoming changes in Japanese society, baseball should help equally to insure that these changes are not violent. Baseball in Japan, as in the U.S. and Latin America, may glorify the individual disrupter, but at the same time provides a safety valve for pent-up emotions, and also asserts a timeless, traditional pattern to events. Though longtime players and fans agree that no two games are ever the same, each team always fields a lineup of nine, sends nine hitters to the plate in an established order, and makes three outs in an inning.

There is an added dimension to this pattern, one that does not meet the average fan's consciousness—a dimension equally significant to nineteenth century New Englanders, Latin American Catholics, and Japanese Shinto-worshippers. It is a dimension as old and universal as humanity itself. At root, baseball is a fertility rite, a ritual symbolizing human reproduction from conception to birth. The infinite number of variations possible within the structured combat of two teams suggests the infinite variety of romantic and genetic possibilities between male and female.

But baseball's sexual dimension goes far beyond the genetic abstract. Pitchers stand on the mound, the sacred pedestal, as ovulating females, whose egg becomes vulnerable to the phallus-swinging batsmen. Their objective is to avoid unwilling impregnation; they are protected from rape by their clans, behind them, whose own phalluses menace other women in their turn. Yet each pitcher is also carrying the child of her clan, the hope of victory, which must be nourished through nine increasingly difficult innings corresponding to the period of gestation. Today, though not in baseball's first half century, midwife relief pitchers may help her. Relief pitchers, interestingly

enough, were at one time former starters past their prime: postmenopausal females. Pitchers are even treated as women off the mound, surrounded by eunuch or old-maid coaches in the bullpen-harem. Pitchers' arms are treated with the same sort of superstition as women's genitals.

Most telling, perhaps, is that young men generally become interested in baseball as they approach puberty, and are most intensely devoted to it in puberty, just before establishing their first liaisons with real rather than symbolic women. On the sandlot, whether in the U.S., Japan, or Latin America, young men usually experiment with the differing pitching and hitting roles, arguably a sublimated substitute for sexual experimentation.

As a fertility rite, baseball maintains a connection between past and present wherever it establishes itself, the green outfield recalling an agrarian society, the stooping motions of infielders resembling those of berry-pickers and fishermen, the running and throwing of outfielders continuing skills originally developed by hunters and herdsman, while the squatting catcher could be weaving a basket or milking a cow. Baseball may have initially failed in Europe because many centuries of Christianity had finally erased any instinctive feel for fertility rituals connected to the land and role-playing, rather than to statues of the Virgin. But baseball caught on like wildfire in Latin America, where Christianity has both absorbed and been absorbed by native fertility-worship. American Christianity through the age of Manifest Destiny took as its first commandment, "Go forth and multiply!", while the Transcendentalists, Mormons, and others variously explored how that might be achieved. Adopting the baseball fertility rite may have relieved the nation of having to choose definitively among the rival religious possibilities.

And in Japan, where forms of fertility worship have always been practiced, undisguised, baseball simply fit in, as a modern variant filling the same psychological needs when some of the older forms began to seem quaint, not quite what a growing industrial power should be doing.

Ultimately, baseball heroes are gods and goddesses of the harvest, of the future, a self-regenerating pantheon whose ever-shifting structure parallels our own lives. We watch stars emerge, shine, then fade and die within the space of a decade or two—but they don't really die, since as coaches and managers they perpetuate their lineage, while new players take their places. Baseball helps America remain American by demonstrating daily where we come from, why we're here, where we're each going, in a manner understood subliminally if not overtly. Likewise, baseball helps Japan remain Japanese. As a sport and subject of international commerce, baseball may help the world become a smaller place, providing new channels of communication. At some point, baseball rivalry might help replace war. When better understood, baseball's



*Grove, Gehrig, Maranville—the 1931 tour.*

universal patterns may help replace nationalism with new recognition of ourselves as individual members of a common species.

All of this may come about not because baseball is an international melting pot, but rather because baseball provides a model of balance between individuality and teamwork. The history of baseball in Japan and America alike demonstrates that the individual must not and cannot be forever repressed, yet the formula for victory requires that the individual must also cooperate with others. No matter how the Japanese have tried to diverge from the American pattern—tried to make their game enforce their own traditional values more than ours—similar patterns have emerged, not because baseball is a quintessentially American sport but because it is a quintessentially human sport. Had baseball begun in Japan, the American game would likely still follow the prevailing pattern—breaking from quasi-feudal beginnings where the players were samurais or knights eternally loyal to overlords, to cooperation of peers for mutual benefit. This is the stage just now arriving in both lands. Whether the Japanese know it or not, they too are baseball teachers: Americans have learned from them how to run effective college baseball programs, how to use martial arts exercises to improve performance, even how to make better equipment.

Mutual acceptance of one another as peers may still be a few years off, despite the Japanese Olympic victory. But it's coming. Once it happens, acceptance of Asiatic people as equals may gradually follow, as gradual acceptance of blacks has slowly followed the admission of black players into the U.S. major leagues. From there, perhaps, we may progress to accepting Latin American baseball as something more than a source of raw material for the U.S. majors—to considering Latin American people as equals. Who knows, we might even wind up with world peace, to which the ongoing performance of the Hiroshima Carp could contribute as much as the lingering memory of the Hiroshima bombing.

The year is 1960; fiction based on fact.

# The Last Brooklyn Dodger

JACK ZAFRAN

**P**HIL HAD COME to pay his respects. "Looks just like itself," he lied, trying to ignore the peeling paint and smashed windows. A wind blew up, sending some garbage swirling up the street and forcing him to close his eyes. Once it died down, he looked at the direction it had come from. There, on the Bedford Avenue side of the ballpark, stood the machines of demolition. One of the wrecking balls was painted like a baseball. Phil couldn't decide whether that was a nice touch or somewhat grotesque. Another sharp gust postponed his decision, and sent him inside.

He moved through the turnstile, the mechanism groaning to life after three years of inactivity. The sound scattered pigeons in the rafters and sent rats scurrying into unseen corners. Phil stood still, and remembered all the methods he had employed as a child to circumvent the front entrance he had just entered so easily. Peeking through the outfield fence, climbing onto the roofs of adjacent buildings, or slipping past a ticket-taker distracted by a friend. He brushed off the dirt the turnstile had left on his coat, then moved on, pushed by the February wind.

Crushing glass beneath his feet, he tried to imagine the smell of hot dogs and beer in the air. Ghosts of souvenir vendors hawked pennants, peanuts, and programs to a crowd of one. Memories of conversations lingered, discussing pitchers and hitters and yesterday's game. Phil worked his way past them all, stepping over fallen pieces of wood and finally emerging from the stadium's darkness into its light.

Though in the rear seating section, he was able to see the entire playing area from where he stood. The deep green grass he remembered had turned brown and gray.

The pitcher's mound had been worn away by the years. All the bases were gone and you couldn't tell foul territory from fair. The outfield scoreboard told of contests long decided, between teams that no longer existed. Faded billboards, given three years of free advertising, had not sold a single cigarette or bottle of beer. Ebbets Field, one-time home of the one-time Brooklyn Dodgers, active for over forty years, and retired for the last three, was about to die.

Phil walked toward the box seats, unhampered by ticket-seeking ushers. Picking up a two foot piece of wood along the way, he hopped the low railing and landed on the field. Glancing at the abandoned dugout, where gods once sat, he strode up to where he thought home plate had been. After a few practice swings with the makeshift bat, he reached into his pocket. The white brightness of the baseball he had brought along stood out in the bleak setting. Tossing the ball into the air, he swung and connected.

Running down to first, he watched the ball bounce into left field and hit the wall, the sound echoing throughout the empty park. He was leisurely heading for second when he was startled by the entrance of an additional player. A light-brown dog streaked toward the rolling ball, scooped it up into its mouth, and headed for Phil. Rounding third, Phil let out all the stops, trying to outrace the hotly pursuing four-legged fielder. With the animal closing in, he executed a picture-book slide into home, kicking up a dust cloud, ripping his pants, but beating the mutt by a step. It was a hell of an exciting play and would have electrified the crowd, had there been one.

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*JACK ZAFRAN is a writer who lives in Gramada Hills, California; his is the first piece of fiction published in TNP.*

The dog didn't argue the call; it just stood there wagging its tail. Phil got up laughing and made a motion to retrieve the ball from the animal's mouth, sending it sprinting back into the outfield. Brushing himself off, he noticed he also had human company. A solitary figure was watching him from the stands. From a distance, the man appeared to be wearing a baseball helmet, but as Phil approached, it focused into a construction worker's hardhat.

"Having fun?" the man asked.

"I'm not trespassing, am I?" said Phil.

"No. They don't care who comes in here anymore."

Phil, breathing heavily, sat down on a cold seat.

"You do this all the time?" the man asked.

"What's 'this'?" replied Phil.

"What you were doing out there."

Phil smiled. "No. Always wanted to, though. Since I was a kid. Always wanted to be a Brooklyn Dodger and play at Ebbets Field." He blew into his hands and longed for a cup of coffee. The sun had left, covered by some clouds, and what little warmth he had generated in running around the bases was quickly dissipating. Out near the scoreboard, part of a sign broke off and blew across the field.

"You used to come here?" asked the man.

"I lived in Brooklyn. You lived in Brooklyn, you spent your summers in this place," said Phil.

Some other men, in hardhats, began to arrive. Phil watched them fan out around the park.

"They're really going through with it, aren't they?" said Phil.

"That's why I'm here," said the man.

"You in charge?"

"I'm the foreman."

Phil stared out at the old ball field, remembering. "You know how long this place has been here?" he said.

"From the looks of it, forever," said the foreman.

"Just about. There aren't many people who can remember when it wasn't," said Phil. "I saw my first game here. So did my kid."

A flock of pigeons circled the park, finally landing in center field, near some faded lettering which read: HIT SIGN, WIN SUIT. They moved in unison, first to the right, then to the left, in sum standing still. Their stay was short, as the light-brown dog put them to flight.

"Dog's out of luck after today," said the foreman. "Been here for two years, too."

"So what happens to him now?" asked Phil.

The foreman shrugged. "The pound, I guess."

A workman was removing some seats near Phil and stacking them in piles.

"Some guy bought them at auction. We're putting them aside for him," said the foreman.

Phil looked at the seat he was sitting in. The wood was splintering and rotting.

"You can have that one if you want," said the foreman. "He won't miss it."

Phil gripped the metal frame, covering his hand with rust chips. A sudden gust blew them away.

"They got so old," said Phil.

In the outfield, the gates opened and the cranes and trucks rumbled in. Tall steel and squat iron, they took their positions around the stadium, like a macabre visiting team. The dog moved among the intruders, trying to bark them back into the street, its desperate protests filling the park. The machines stood still and waited.

"Crazy dog," said the foreman.

Phil's body shook, but it was more than the cold. He stood up and walked down the aisle.

"Hey, you want the chair or not?" asked the foreman.

Phil stopped.

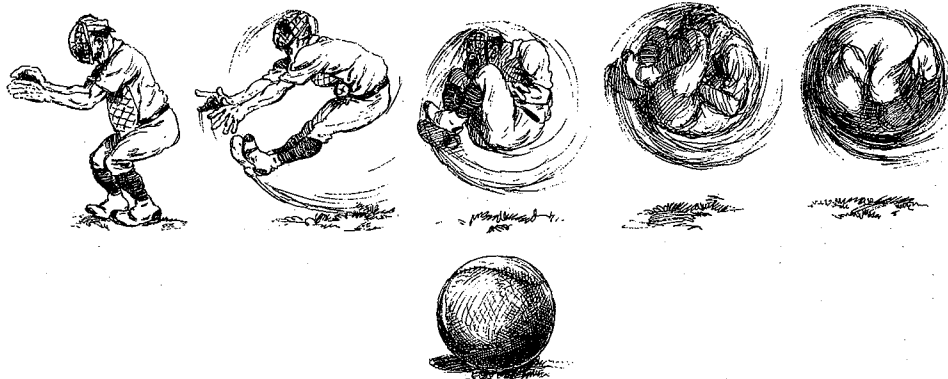
"Do me a favor, will you?" he said.

"As long as it don't cost me," said the foreman.

"Be gentle with the old place."

Phil turned and headed for the gate. He tried to imagine a summer sun and 30,000 shouting voices ignited by a time and place and someone dancing off third. Hearing only the barking of a frightened dog, he kept moving. Feeling only February, he was far away when the ball began to swing.

"ALL BALLED UP;"  
OR,  
THE TRANSFORMATION OF A CATCHER.





# ACROSTIC PUZZLE

JEFFREY NEUMAN

1T	2N	3C		4B	5D	6W	7I	8F		9M	10R	11A	12J		13U		14J	15L	16Q	17X	18C	19R	20K		21B	22Q	23K	24X	25W	26C	27D
	28V	29C		30Q	31I	32T	33X	34F	35D	36R	37P	38G		39M	40U		41J	42L	43W		44L	45A	46H		47B	48X	49U	50I	51E		52C
53V		54R	55G	56H		57W	58C	59N	60P		61A	62O	63C		64J	65T	66P		67X	68N	69V	70G	71R		72R	73N	74Y	75O	76C		77K
78P	79X		80P	81E	82I	83C	84G	85W	86H	87A	88U		89B	90S	91R	92U		93P	94E	95V	96S		97C	98K	99U	100H	101Q	102V	103M		104Q
105X	106I	107N	108D		109S	110V	111W	112F		113H	114C	115L		116U	117B	118R	119H	120I	121E	122T		123C	124D	125W		126Q	127B	128D		129L	130O
131Q	132X	133I		134S	135R	136T	137K	138F	139C	140U	141I	142Q	143D		144A	145Y	146B	147Q		148S	149K		150S	151R	152C	153M	154K	155A	156F	157V	
158L	159R	160N	161G		162L	163N	164C		165A	166Q	167L	168H	169F		170T	171Q		172K	173D		174K	175E		176I	177W	178R		179Y	180P	181Q	182K
	183K	184F	185E	186R		187H	188S		189M		190E	191I	192Q	193T	194C	195K	196O	197I		198G	199W	200K	201C		202U	203R	204C	205M	206D		

Fill in the words defined below, one letter over each numbered dash. Then transfer each letter to the box which is numbered correspondingly in the acrostic diagram. Black boxes indicate word endings; note that words may spill over at the right, from one line to the next. When completed, the diagram will yield a quotation from a celebrated baseball book; its author and title will be revealed by reading the first letters of the guessed words below.

Answer on page 88.

## CLUES

- A. Retire, in rat-a-tat fashion (2 wds)
- B. Friendly; cordial
- C. "\_\_\_\_\_ of possible words/Tinker to Evers to Chance . . ."
- D. Kind of slide (hyph.)
- E. Slippery, like a politician
- F. To what place?
- G. Mays would do this often, it's claimed (2 wds)
- H. Caught up with; passed
- I. Homeland for Blyleven
- J. Exclamation of relief
- K. Folk lament of one seeking a Whiz Kid shortstop? (5 wds)
- L. Kind of DH
- M. Lopez did this the most
- N. Short-tempered one
- O. Aware of (2 wds)
- P. Irritates, particularly the '78 Dodgers
- Q. Pitch nine (3 wds)
- R. Cause of the cry, "Batter out, if fair!" (3 wds)
- S. Dislocated man in a Beatle song
- T. Erstwhile home of the Crackers
- U. Detailed study of the mail of the species
- V. Common verb used in discussing R.
- W. No-hit Colt in 1963
- X. Ferguson Jenkins, e.g.
- Y. Kittle

- A. \_\_\_\_\_  
11 165 144 87 61 45 155
- B. \_\_\_\_\_  
117 89 4 21 47 127 146
- C. \_\_\_\_\_  
152 18 3 97 63 114 83 139 194 58 201 26 204 76 29 164 52 123
- D. \_\_\_\_\_  
124 206 35 128 173 5 143 108 27
- E. \_\_\_\_\_  
121 190 185 51 94 81 175
- F. \_\_\_\_\_  
184 34 138 8 112 156 169
- G. \_\_\_\_\_  
198 55 38 161 70 84
- H. \_\_\_\_\_  
187 113 168 56 119 46 86 100
- I. \_\_\_\_\_  
197 31 133 176 82 120 50 191 106 141 7
- J. \_\_\_\_\_  
14 41 12 64
- K. \_\_\_\_\_  
172 137 195 174 183 20 77 98 23 200 182 149 154
- L. \_\_\_\_\_  
162 158 15 115 42 129 167 44
- M. \_\_\_\_\_  
205 189 153 103 39 9
- N. \_\_\_\_\_  
163 73 160 2 68 59 107
- O. \_\_\_\_\_  
130 75 196 62
- P. \_\_\_\_\_  
78 180 37 60 93 80 66
- Q. \_\_\_\_\_  
22 126 166 104 181 30 101 171 16 131 147 192 142
- R. \_\_\_\_\_  
10 36 54 159 151 118 178 72 203 186 71 135 91 19
- S. \_\_\_\_\_  
188 134 109 148 96 150 90
- T. \_\_\_\_\_  
170 136 32 193 122 1 65
- U. \_\_\_\_\_  
202 116 13 140 99 92 40 49 88
- V. \_\_\_\_\_  
110 102 69 53 95 28 157
- W. \_\_\_\_\_  
25 199 111 43 125 85 177 6 57
- X. \_\_\_\_\_  
17 105 132 33 79 24 48 67
- Y. \_\_\_\_\_  
145 74 179

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And toss in night ball, gangsters, and a "kidnapping," too.

# The Year of the Hitter

WILLIAM B. MEAD

**H**ITTING HAS BEEN on the rise in baseball the past decade or so, and there is talk that today's ball, the Rawlings Rabbit, has more spring than any hare of seasons past. This is shortsighted history. Let me tell you, Sonny, about a time there was *hitting* in the major leagues.

The 1930 season is remembered for Hack Wilson's 56 home runs and 191 runs batted in, and Bill Terry's .401 batting average. Great as those achievements were, they stand out more in historical perspective than they did in their own day. In 1930, lusty hitting was a democratic activity, shared by all.

In 1984, the American League batted .264 and the National League hit .255. In 1930, the American League batted—including pitcher batting—.288 and the National League came in at .303. If the senior circuit had been a player—Nat League, 6-1, 190, throws right, switch-hits—it would have finished tenth in last season's batting race. In 1983 Lonnie Smith of the Cardinals missed the NL batting championship by only .002; if he had been warped back to 1930 with his .321 average, he would have found himself ranking seventh—not in the league, but *on his own team*. The 1930 Cardinals had twelve .300 hitters, only eight of whom could play at a time.

Wilson, of the Cubs, and Terry, of the Giants, had to hustle to stay on top. Wilson's 56 homers stand as the National League record, but his mark of 191 runs batted in is considered more impressive, and often is listed among baseball's few unbreakable records. It may be, but in 1930 Chuck Klein of the Phillies wasn't far behind, with 170, and Lou Gehrig of the Yankees led the American League with 174. Six major leaguers drove in more than

150 runs each that season, and thirty-two had 100 or more.

For the batting championship, Terry edged Babe Herman of the Dodgers, who hit .393, and Klein, at .386. As any good fan knows, no National Leaguer has batted .400 since Terry. What's more, no National Leaguer has hit .390 since Herman, either, or .386 since Klein.

Klein was the quintessential also-ran that season: second in the league in RBIs, second all-time; second to Terry in hits with 250, tied for third all-time; second to Wilson in slugging with .687, sixth best all-time. As for homers, Klein set the National League record just the year before, with 43, and lost it to Wilson in 1930. Strictly a spear-carrier, that Klein.

We could go on with these statistics. For example, count the .300 hitters: thirty-three in the National League, thirty-two in the American, a record. Trouble is, the figures understate the case, because they include only men who played in 100 games or more. In 1930, lots of .300 hitters couldn't crack the lineup. Some of them were pitchers, like Red Ruffing of the Yankees (.374), Erv Brame of the Pirates (.353), Chad Kimsey of the St. Louis Browns (.343), Red Lucas of the Reds (.336), and Firpo Marberry of the Washington Senators (.329).

The hitters splattered the 1930 season all over the record books, but it was a remarkable baseball year in other ways, too. It was the first year of the Great Depression, and the first year of Babe Ruth's \$80,000 salary. Night baseball began in the minor leagues, was an im-

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mediate sensation, and was denounced by major league owners as a blight and a fad. Gabby Hartnett of the Cubs was caught by a photographer while chatting with Al Capone, and Babe Herman twice was caught and passed by teammates on the basepaths. The Yankees traded a star pitcher because of a detective's report, and the Cardinals staged one of the greatest pennant drives in history, the more dramatic because of the disappearance—kidnapping?—of a star pitcher.

Baseball was such the dominant sport back then that its stars, like it or not, had to provide copy for the sports pages during the offseason as well as the summer. None filled the role as well as Ruth, who by then was a public idol of gargantuan proportions. Dour men like Rogers Hornsby made news only with their bats, but Ruth's ebullient personality and hearty living habits enhanced his reputation.

Ruth was holding out for \$85,000 that spring, and Jacob Ruppert, the Yankee owner, grumped at the figure. "Ruth has taken more money from the Yankees than I have," he said. One venture fell through, *Ruth's Home Run Candy* running afoul of the thirty-five-year-old copyright on the *Baby Ruth* bar, which had been named after the infant daughter of President and Mrs. Grover Cleveland. But no matter. Without playing another game of baseball or lending his name to another product, Ruth said, he was assured of a comfortable income for life.

But Ruth did not feel comfortable as a holdout, and during spring training he yielded, accepting \$80,000 a year for two years. It was a stunning figure, forty times the wage of the average worker, and it brought out the prophet in Edward G. Barrow, business manager of the Yankees. "You will never hear of another ballplayer getting that kind of money," Barrow said. *Never?* he was asked. "I'm sure there will never be another one on *this* ballclub," Barrow replied.

Next to Ruth, other players paled. Lefty O'Doul of the Phils also held out that spring. O'Doul had led the National League in batting the season before at .398, with 32 homers and 122 runs batted in. He demanded—think of it!—\$17,000. Too much, his boss said; O'Doul already was pulling down \$8,000, more than any other Phillie, ever. O'Doul, like Ruth, had to compromise.

Edd Roush of the New York Giants would not compromise. A .324 hitter in 1929 and a future member of the Hall of Fame, Roush held out all spring, and all summer, too; he didn't play a game. Al Simmons, the Philadelphia Athletics' slugger, threatened to do the same, and Connie Mack announced that Spence Harris, a minor league lifer with an American League career average of .249, would take Simmons' place. While the Athletics were warming up on opening day, Simmons signed. The fans at Shibe Park roared when he appeared in uniform, and roared again when he came to bat in the first inning, with a man on base, and homered off George Pipgras of the Yanks. So much for the value of spring training.

While Ruth's physical dimensions were fully the match of his accomplishments on the field, Wilson supplied a contrast. With short legs, size 5-½ shoes, and a huge torso, Wilson looked dwarfish, almost deformed. He was only 5 feet 6 inches tall, but weighed 190. His arms were large and muscular, his hands small. Even his nicknames were degrading; he was referred to as a gorilla, a sawed-off Babe Ruth, the Hardest-Hitting Hydrant of All Time, the Squatty Outfielder, the Pugnacious Clouter, the Abbreviated One, the Boy with the Mountainous Chin, none of which did much for his ego.

While Ruth went into the 1930 season with the dramatic flourish of his record salary, Wilson carried the



Chuck Klein

humiliation of a dreadful inning during the 1929 World Series. Trailing the Cubs 8-0 in the fourth game, the Athletics scored ten runs in the seventh inning. Wilson, the Cubs' center fielder, lost two balls in the sun, one of them falling for a single and the other for a three-run homer. The A's went on to win that game and the Series, four games to one.

Wilson was said to have been a pathetic figure following the Series. But he was a cheerful and likable man, and at spring training in 1930 Wilson was the life of the Cubs' camp. Cub players shouted "Wilson!" when fungoes were hit into the sun. Lampooning his own misplays, Wilson pulled the window shade in the hotel dining room, and asked the maitre d' to dim the light so he wouldn't misjudge his soup. Perhaps wishing to share in the fun,

Calvin Coolidge visited Catalina Island, California, where the Cubs trained. The former President had little to say, but posed for photographers with a macaw on his shoulder.

From the season's beginning, the hitting in 1930 was extraordinary, and was recognized as such. Not that baseball had been a pitchers' game in the 1920s—far from it; neither league had batted under .280 since 1920, and the number of home runs more than doubled between that decade's first and last years. But in 1930 there was even more of what the club owners obviously considered a good thing, since attendance had increased with hitting.

Rallies were immense, and pitchers absorbed terrible punishment; it was not yet the custom to relieve short of disaster. On May 12, in Chicago, the Giants scored six runs in the second inning and seven in the third, helped by a home run by Mel Ott and two doubles by Fred Lindstrom. Larry Benton, the New York pitcher, carried a 14-0 lead into the fifth inning, and little seemed amiss when Cliff Heathcote homered for the Cubs; 14-1.

In the Cub sixth, Wilson and Gabby Hartnett walked, and Clyde Beck homered; 14-4. In the seventh, Heathcote led off with his second homer, and, after one out, Wilson homered to right. So did Charley Grimm. Les Bell flied out and Hartnett fanned for what would have been the third out, but Shanty Hogan, the Giant catcher, dropped the ball, and then threw it wildly, Hartnett reaching second. Beck homered again; 14-9. At this point John McGraw decided that Benton was weakening. McGraw brought in Joe Heving, who gave up six hits and three runs, but no homers. The Giants won 14-12, the Cubs having run out of time.

In late May, the Yankees and Athletics played three doubleheaders in four days, and the hitters gorged. Ninety-nine runs scored, and there were twenty-four home runs, eight of them by Ruth and three each by Gehrig and Philadelphia's Jimmie Foxx. As if the sluggers were swinging a massive pendulum, all three doubleheaders were swept, and no game was close—15-7 and 4-1 for the A's, 10-1 and 20-13 for the Yankees, 10-6 and 11-1, Yanks again.

In a devastating road swing in July, the Athletics scored ninety-seven runs in eight games, winning all of them while averaging twelve runs and fifteen hits a game. They scored ten runs in one inning at St. Louis, then, the next day, nine runs in the first three innings. In Chicago, Foxx hit a ball clear over the left field stands at Comiskey Park, the first player to do so.

The Senators, who had led the AL on Memorial Day, fell back, and so did the Yanks. Walter Johnson, the Washington manager, was appalled at the slugging and scolded his pitchers. Johnson was forty-four and hadn't pitched for three years, but he thought he could do no worse than the younger men, and said he might pitch relief. Owner Clark Griffith talked him out of it. In truth, the Senators' pitching staff was excellent, compared with others: Wash-

ington was the only team in baseball that yielded fewer than four earned runs per game that season.

Ruth was hitting so many home runs tht he predicted he'd wind up with about 75. He might have, but on July 2 he jumped for a ball, caught a finger in the outfield screen, and lost the nail. The team doctor said the Babe would be out for a while, but he played the next day, his finger bandaged. Two days later, he hit his 32nd home run, putting him more than twenty games ahead of his pace in 1927, when he hit 60. But Ruth's slugging tailed off; he finished with 49 homers.

The Yanks were managed in 1930 by Bob Shawkey, and were watched surreptitiously by a detective, who was hired by Ruppert and traveled with the team, socializing with the players without letting them know he was snitching on them. Waite Hoyt, a pitcher who enjoyed night life, was traded to Detroit early in the season after the detective reported he was staying out even the night before pitching assignments. The Yankees could have used Hoyt, even with a hangover; their pitching was dreadful, and they finished a distant third.

The Cubs were the pick of the National League, but Hornsby broke his ankle and the race was close. Everyone expected the Brooklyn Dodgers, 70-83 in 1929, to improve in 1930, but not to contend. They did both. These were the Daffiness Boys, the Robins of veteran manager Wilbert Robinson. The Dodgers made errors in horrendous clusters, and, led by Herman, tended to squelch rallies with baserunning blunders.

On May 30 Herman, leading off first base, stood and watched while Del Bissonette's towering fly ball cleared the right-field screen at Ebbets Field. There was no chance that the ball would be caught, but Bissonette thought it might hit the screen and was running hard, as Herman should have been. Bissonette was declared out for passing a runner on the bases; his hit was registered as a single. On September 15 Herman did it again, this time depriving Glenn Wright of a home run.

On June 15, the Cardinals presented the Dodgers with three early runs on an outfield misplay. But the Dodgers fought back with five errors of their own, two of them by second baseman Mickey Finn, who fielded as if he had swallowed his name. Andy High, a Brooklyn castoff who was to haunt his old team all season, followed two of the errors with a triple, and a subsequent error with a home run. Dazzy Vance twice hit Taylor Douthit with pitches, but in the ninth decided to pitch to him, Dodger errors having placed two Cardinals on base. Douthit tripled, and the Cardinals won, 9-4.

Even while excelling, the Dodgers managed to err. At Pittsburgh on June 24, they managed to *conclude* the sixth inning with 10 straight hits, the last one a single to center on which Al Lopez was thrown out at the plate. Never mind; Brooklyn opened the seventh with a double by Wally Gilbert and a homer by Herman. That made twelve straight hits, a record even when done the Dodger way.



*Hack Wilson—a study in swat and suet.*

Perhaps aware that he could depend on the Dodgers to do themselves in, Pirate Manager Jewel Ens stuck through that awful sixth inning with his starter, the pitcher with the rhyming name, Heine Meine, who then departed, having yielded 14 runs and 19 hits, the last 10 of them in a row.

For hitting, no team was the superior of the Phillies, except whomever they were playing. In the nightcap of a doubleheader on July 23, the Phils attacked the Pirates with 27 hits, including two home runs by Don Hurst. Not enough; the Pirates won, 16-15, on a homer by Pie Traynor in the thirteenth inning. The Phils scored 15 runs the next day, too, against the visiting Cubs—who, alas, tallied 19.

An extraordinary number of high-scoring games were played that season on the home grounds of the Phillies, and it was no coincidence. The Phils played in Baker Bowl, a decaying museum of a stadium with a right field wall so close, according to Ray Benge, then a Phillie pitcher, that “standing on the mound it looked like you could reach back there and thump it.”

It was 280 feet to the right field corner, 300 feet in the right-center power alley. Today’s most inviting wall, the Green Monster in left field at Fenway Park, Boston, is distant by comparison at 315 feet—and short, too, at 37 feet, 2 inches. Baker Bowl was built in 1887, and whoever

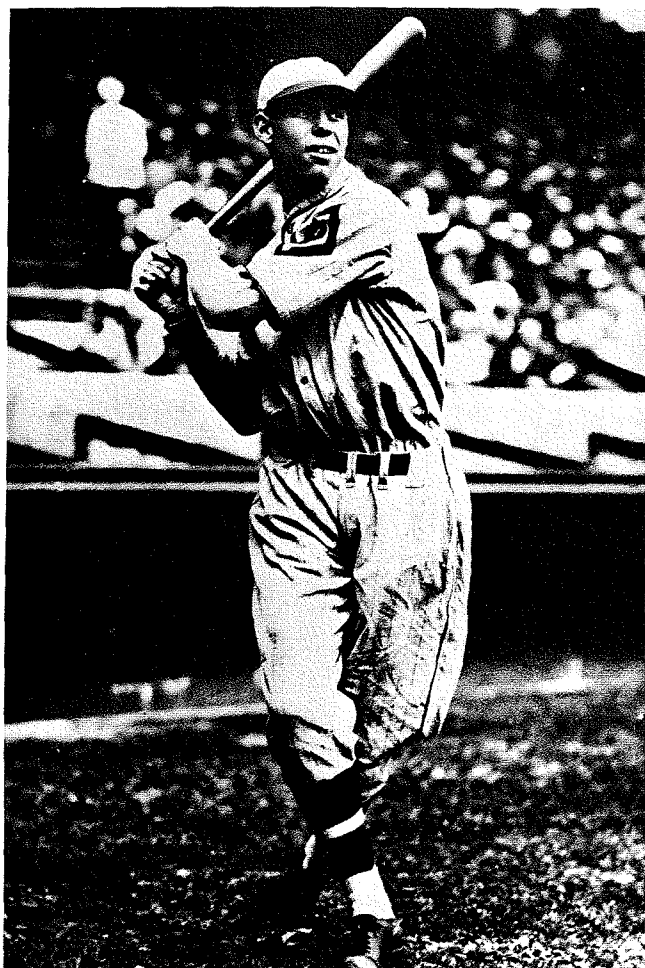
designed it should have invented the skyscraper instead. The stadium was rimmed with a high wall, and in right field a screen was put on top of that for a total height of 58 feet. Even the clubhouse, in center field, was two stories tall. The Phils dressed on the top floor, with a commanding view of the patchy green surface. “Down on the field it was like a hole,” Benge recalls.

Particularly for pitchers. “You just had one way to pitch,” according to Benge. “That was to the righthand side of the plate, outside to lefthanders, inside to righthanders. You wanted the righthanders to pull, but a lot of them wouldn’t do it. They’d punch the ball to right and ping it off the wall.”

One of the best pingers was Pinky Whitney, the Phils’ third baseman. “I hit a bunch of pop flies against it,” Whitney says. He batted .342, including 41 doubles, and batted in 117 runs.

On the Phils, that was good but not exceptional. The team scored an average of 6.13 runs a game, and batted .315. They had two strong lefthanded pull hitters in Klein and O’Doul, and both of them batted over .380. Together, Klein, Whitney, and O’Doul drove in 384 runs and scored 367. What would such a team do to the league?

The Phils’ answer, in 1930, was: bring up the rear. They won 52 games, lost 102, and never threatened seventh place. Phillie pitchers allowed a record 6.71 earned runs a



*Babe Herman*

game, about two more than a very bad pitching staff yields today, and Phillie fielders led the majors with 239 errors, 50 or so more than the most butterfingered of today's teams.

Between the Phils and their opponents, the overall batting average at Baker Bowl that season was .350. Klein hit .439 at home, .332 away. The tall right field barrier was made for doubles, both live and by ground rule, the latter coming when balls punched through the rusty metal wall and rattled to the ground behind, lost forever. Klein hit 59 doubles himself, and, playing right field, stymied many an opposing batter by becoming a ricochet artist. He had 44 assists, enough to divide in two and lead the league twice.

The Phils started the 1930 season with high hopes. Les Sweetland and Claude Willoughby had pitched well the season before, and Sweetland pitched a shutout to open the Phillie season. But he soon foundered, and poor Willoughby never got started. "He had pretty good stuff," Whitney recalls, "But when he had to pitch, he couldn't pitch. It was all-day baseball." Indeed, Sweetland and Willoughby held down so much combat duty on the mound that local sportswriters wove their names into a patriotic song:

My country, 'tis of thee,  
Sweetland and Will-ough-by  
Of thee I sing.

For obvious reasons, sportswriters nicknamed Willoughby "Weeping Willie." He won 4 games that season and lost 17, with a 7.58 ERA. Sweetland was 7-15, 7.71.

Baker Bowl, since torn down, was not the only stadium of that era to favor hitters. In addition, gloves were small and primitive by today's standards, and pitching was less sophisticated. The slider was not in general use, and relief pitching was not used as effectively as it is today. Batting averages were boosted by a rule that counted as a sacrifice any fly ball that moved a runner up, and scoring by a rule that counted as a home run any drive that bounced into the stands.

Although these factors help explain the hitting of that era, they do not account for the extraordinary surge of 1930. Nor can it be said that major league hitters just had a hot year. Batting overwhelmed the minor leagues, too. Joe Hauser of Baltimore hit 63 home runs to establish an International League record that still stands, but it wasn't enough to win him a promotion to the major leagues, or even to earn him recognition as the best first baseman in the league. That honor went to Rip Collins of Rochester, who had only 40 homers but batted .376 with 180 RBIs.

According to survivors, the fuel behind the hitting binge of 1930 was in the ball. The stitches were low, almost countersunk, which kept pitchers from getting a good grip. The insides had been gradually pepped up for a decade, and in 1930 they reached such superball resiliency that Ring Lardner called it "a leather-covered sphere stuffed with dynamite."

Benge, the Phillie pitcher, first noticed that his infielders looked slow. They were, but the 1930 ball darted past even the fastest glovemen. Some were not so lucky. Fred Lindstrom of the Giants, a good enough third baseman to make the Hall of Fame, was knocked unconscious by a batted ball—not a line drive, but a grounder.

Lindstrom, too, noticed a difference early in the season, but from a happier perspective. He was hitting extraordinarily well, and so were his teammates. Indeed, Lindstrom batted .379 that season, far above his norm, and the Giants' team average was .319.

Pitchers were intimidated. Joe Tinker, a star infielder for the Cubs a generation before, noted that many pitchers were not following through. "Pitchers are afraid to get off-balance for fear they'll get killed when the ball comes back at them," Tinker said. "Sakes alive," recalls Benge, "that ball was so lively you'd throw it and look for a mole hole to get in."

The hitting prompted a lively debate. Ruppert, of all people, wanted less of it, although he had benefited greatly from the lively ball as the owner of the Yankees and the employer of Ruth. "I should like to see the spitball restored and the emery ball, too," Ruppert said, adding this scornful comment about a proposal designed to boost hitting even more: "Why, they have suggested someone hitting for the pitchers. Now, isn't that rich?"

John J. McGraw, nearing the end of his long managerial career with the Giants, suggested that the ball be deadened and the pitching distance reduced by a couple of feet.

Otherwise, he said, no one would want to pitch. "Youngsters in the amateur ranks and on the sandlots no longer have ambitions to become pitchers," McGraw said. "They want to play some other position in which they can get by without being discouraged."

On the status quo side of things was Joe McCarthy, the Cubs' manager, who noted that the fans seemed to like high-scoring games. McCarthy, of course, had Wilson on his team.

The rabbit ball was not the only subject of controversy. Innovation comes hard to baseball, and in 1930 the major leagues grappled with all sorts of radical ideas. American League teams put numbers on the players' backs, but the National League held out; true fans were supposed to recognize their heroes at a glance.

Broadcasting of baseball games had begun in 1927, but three years later most teams still spurned it, fearing that fans would not buy tickets if they could listen free at home. The St. Louis teams adopted a middle ground: Allow broadcasts, but keep them dull. As the price of admission—it had not yet occurred to club owners that they could charge radio stations for the privilege—St. Louis broadcasters agreed to give a straight play-by-play, with no commentary. "This should be mutually satisfactory to both the fans and the magnates, for there are some announcers prone to wander far from the actual occurrences on the field," reported *The Sporting News*, which little knew how truly it spoke.

The most radical notion of all was night baseball, although it was not really a new idea. An amateur game was played under the lights in 1880, just a year after Edison invented the light bulb, and in 1896 Honus Wagner played a night game as a member of the Paterson, New Jersey, team of the Atlantic League. The exhibition was staged by none other than Ed Barrow, by 1930 the dignified business manager of the Yankees and a staunch opponent of night baseball—a position to which he was still clinging fifteen years later with the same prescience he brought to the subject of baseball salaries.

Legend has it that the first night game in Organized Baseball was played on May 2, 1930, at Des Moines, Iowa. In fact, Des Moines, of the Class A Western League, was beaten to the punch by Independence, Kansas, of the Class C Western Association. On April 28, the illuminated Independence Producers beat Muskogee, 12-2. Four days later, Des Moines played under what a local sportswriter called "33,000 candle power of mellow light," and scored 11 runs in the first inning en route to a 13-6 drubbing of Wichita. The game was attended by Cy Slapnicka, a Cleveland scout, who reported that he "did not see a man flinch from a ball, either batted or thrown."

The fans certainly did not flinch; more than 10,000 attended. The minor leagues, which had resisted night baseball for so long, now rushed to embrace it. By the end of May, twenty teams had lights or were installing them. Attendance doubled and tripled; it was a financial boost that the minors badly needed.

Cities that continued to hold out were scorned. Four of the six teams in the Piedmont League had lights by

mid-July. The two that did not, Henderson and Raleigh, were not drawing as well at home, and asked for a visitors' cut of the gate receipts while on the road. The other four teams not only refused, but told Henderson and Raleigh to install lights or get out of the league. So much for tradition.

But the majors held fast. The only owner who favored night ball was Sam Breadon of the Cardinals, and his trial balloon was popped by Phil Ball, owner of the Browns and of the stadium where both teams played. The Browns could have used a boost; they drew barely a million fans *that decade*. But Ball was not alone. In the face of declining attendance during the Depression, this astonishing denial of self-interest was sustained by all sixteen teams until 1935, when the Reds installed lights and played the first major league night game.

Of course, the major leagues did not intentionally discourage fans. Teams were attracting thousands of new patrons with Ladies' Days, a promotion so successful that the Chicago Cubs, for one, had to cut it back. One day in the heat of the 1930 race Wrigley Field was virtually taken over by 31,000 ladies, all admitted free. But the owners, then as now, feared that change would alienate the "true fan," whoever he might be.

In 1930, the Cubs' true fans included men prominent in Chicago's flashiest business, bootlegging. Al Capone was a Cubs fan, and so was his rival, Bugs Moran. The Cubs used to put on an entertaining pregame show, with fancy fungo hitting and a razzmatazz infield drill, and the gangsters came early to see it. "They used to come out and watch us practice," recalls Charley Grimm, the Cub first baseman. "They'd sit right behind our bench, and there was never a peep out of them."

One day, however, Capone peeped at Gabby Hartnett, the Cubs' catcher, and Hartnett walked over to Capone's box to autograph a ball. A newspaper photographer happened to catch them, and the picture—the Cubs' star catcher smiling alongside the country's most notorious gangster—appeared in newspapers throughout the U.S. Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis was outraged; he summoned Hartnett for a scolding and ordered the league presidents to forbid any conversation between players and spectators. Landis also told the teams to stop announcing the next day's starting pitchers, since that information was useful to gamblers, but sportswriters successfully protested that stricture, pointing out that if the Judge really wanted to keep gamblers in the dark he should keep the schedule a secret, too.

There was plenty to gamble on. The National League was enjoying a tight race among the Dodgers, Cubs, and Giants, and in August the Cardinals crowded in. They had improved their pitching by trading for Burleigh Grimes, who frightened batters by throwing at them and got them out with a spitball, mean but legal. The spitter had been banned in 1920, but seventeen pitchers who already used it in the majors were given a grandfather clause. By 1930,

only four were left; Grimes, at thirty-six, was the youngest.

The Cardinal hitting was fearsome. George Watkins hit .373, a record that still stands for rookies, but he was platooned in right field with veteran Ray Blades, who hit .396. Landis made the Cards keep a young catcher, Gus Mancuso, who had run out of options, and injuries to Jimmie Wilson, the regular catcher, forced them to use him. Mancuso merely hit .366.

These players, however, were not the Cardinal stars. Frankie Frisch, Chick Hafey, Jim Bottomley, and Taylor Douthit combined to drive in 411 runs.

But the Cardinals were somewhat undisciplined. They returned home in early August from a discouraging and raucous road trip, Manager Gabby Street having fined several players for what *The Sporting News* called "indiscrepancies," and seemed out of contention. On August 9 they were twelve games out, in fourth place. But they took a home series from the Dodgers and took heart for the stretch drive with Brooklyn, the Cubs, and the Giants.

Zigging and zagging, the Dodgers lost nineteen of twenty-seven games, falling to fourth place, and then won eleven straight to regain the lead in September. All four contenders were thundering. With ten games to play the Cards crept to within a game of the Dodgers, and came into Brooklyn for three games. The Cubs, only a game and a half back, meantime tangled at the Polo Grounds with the Giants, who trailed by five and a half.

The Dodgers had the home crowd and the momentum of their winning streak, while the Cardinals suffered the sudden disappearance of one pitcher and a freak accident to another. The vanishing pitcher was Flint Rhem, of Rhems, South Carolina, a hard enough thrower to have won 20 games in 1926 and a hard enough drinker to have been farmed out in 1929. The Cardinals restored him to grace in 1930, and Rhem went into the Brooklyn series with six straight wins.

Rhem did not return to his hotel room the night before the first game, did not show up at the ballpark the next day, and became an object of concern. He reappeared a day later, and immediately was pressed by newsmen as to his whereabouts.

"He was befuddled," recalls his roommate, Bill Hallahan. But Rhem was not without imagination, and he seized upon a newsman's chance question to spin a tale appropriate to the era. *I was idling outside the hotel, went Rhem's tale, when this big, black limousine pulled up. A fellow beckoned me over, and when I came alongside these guys pulled guns and forced me into the car. They drove me to a secret hideaway and forced cups of raw whiskey down my throat. Oh cruel fate. "Imagine kidnapping Flint Rhem," says Hallahan, "and making him take a drink!"*

The same night that Rhem disappeared, Hallahan caught two fingers of his right hand in a taxi door. The injury was to his glove hand, and the next day, as Hallahan puts it, "I had the catcher throw the ball lightly." Hal-

lahan threw the ball hard enough himself to have a no-hitter for 6- $\frac{2}{3}$  innings. But the Cards had as much trouble with Dazzy Vance, who fanned 11. The game was a rare classic of pitching and defense, with Dodger bumbles thrown in.

Herman stopped a Cardinal rally in the fourth with a brilliant catch. With two out in the Cardinal sixth, Sparky Adams was perched on third. He dashed for home and had it stolen, but Vance cut short his windup and fired the ball at Hafey, who was batting. It hit him: Dead ball, batter to first, runner back to third. Watkins, the next batter, fouled out.

In the Dodger eighth, batter Finn missed a hit-and-run sign: the runner, Harvey Hendrick, was out at second. Finn then singled, tried to stretch it and crashed into Charlie Gelbert, the Cardinal shortstop. Gelbert was knocked cold; Finn was safe but woozy. He tottered off second base and Hallahan picked up the loose ball and tagged him out.

With runners on first and second and none out in the home ninth, the Dodgers worked the right combination: a bunt, followed by a single. Trouble is, the bunt was popped to catcher Mancuso, who doubled the runner off second, and the single was wasted.

The Cardinals broke the scoreless tie in the tenth as pinch-hitter High doubled, went to third on Hallahan's bunt, and scored on a single by Douthit. In the home half, Brooklyn loaded the bases with one out; Lopez grounded hard to the left of Adams, who was then playing short. Adams knocked the ball down, picked it up and flipped it to Frisch, who made a lightning pivot and barely nipped Lopez at first. Ebbets Field, recalls Hallahan, lapsed into sudden silence. The race was tied. The Giants meantime shoved the Cubs back, 7-0, on a three-hitter by Carl Hubbell.

The Cards won the next two with the Dodgers, and now had a two-game lead with seven to play. They won six of them, one a smooth 9-3 effort by Rhem at Baker Bowl. The Dodgers kept losing and finished fourth, behind the Cubs and Giants.

Pitching had largely decided the final games, and it dominated the World Series as well. Lefty Grove and George Earnshaw of the Athletics won the first two games, yielding only three St. Louis runs; the Cards' Hallahan and Jesse Haines won the next two, the A's scoring only once. Neither team scored in the fifth game until Foxx homered off Grimes in the ninth. Earnshaw, having pitched seven innings of that game, came back to pitch all nine innings of the sixth and final contest, won by the A's, 7 to 1. The team batting averages were among the lowest on record—.197 for Philadelphia, .200 for St. Louis.

But who can blame the lumbermen if, after a long season of unprecedented exploits, their arms at last grew weary and their bats slow? Put October out of your mind; 1930 was The Year of the Hitter.



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*They won the first World Series, a century ago.*

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# 1884: Old Hoss Radbourne and the Providence Grays

FREDERICK IVOR-CAMPBELL

**F**RANK BANCROFT, THE NEW manager of the Providence Grays, was having second thoughts. Had he done well to leave Cleveland, where he had been treated kindly and where, the previous season, he had led his club to a respectable fourth-place finish in the National League? In late January 1884, in a letter to Harry Wright, his friend and predecessor as manager of the Grays, Bancroft hinted his distaste for the Rhode Island city, and wondered if he might find himself under too many bosses with the Grays.

Perhaps Bancroft's grumbling was simply new-job jitters. As manager, he would be expected to produce a profitable team—a manager in the 1880s managed his club's scheduling and business matters as well as its players. But Bancroft, although he was not yet thirty-eight years old, was known for his financial genius. In four years of managing National League clubs in Worcester, Detroit, and Cleveland, none had finished a season higher than fourth, but all had turned profits for their owners. Now, with a good team—one that in its six years in the league had never finished lower than third, one that in the two previous seasons had contended strongly for the championship—surely with a team like this he could earn not only money but maybe even a pennant for his new bosses.

Whatever his private fears, Bancroft in public looked toward the 1884 season with optimism. His team was essentially the one that the previous year had finished a strong third, only five games behind the champion Boston Red Stockings. The club had lost its right fielder, John Cassidy, to the Brooklyn club in the rival American Association, but in his place it had signed Paul Revere Radford, a promising young Bostonian who had broken into the

major league the previous season with his hometown team, and who could pitch as well as play the outfield.

All the other Grays regulars were club veterans. One, in fact—center fielder Paul Hines—had been with the team since it entered the National League in 1878. In his first three seasons with Providence he led the club in batting (leading the league in 1878), and had been every year among the Grays' two or three best hitters. As a fielder he was known for his fine eye and spectacular catches, especially of low line drives.

Two regulars had joined the Grays the year after Hines: veteran first baseman Joe Start and, late in the season, rookie second baseman Jack Farrell. Start, when he joined the Grays in '79, was already thirty-six. He had played in the old National Association, the first professional league, and before that, as an "amateur" star with Brooklyn's Atlantics and other clubs going back to 1860. Now, in 1884, at age 41 the league's oldest player, Start was still a fine fielder and, next to Hines, the Grays' most consistent hitter. He was the team captain, a responsible position in those days when a nonplaying manager (like Bancroft and, before him, Harry Wright) sat in the grandstand and conveyed through his captain whatever instructions he had for his players. Jack Farrell, after a rocky beginning (he twice led league second basemen in errors), developed into one of the league's surest fielders and led all key-stoners in fielding average for 1883.

Three Grays regulars were in their fourth year with the club in 1884. Third baseman Jerry Denny, whose major

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*The Grays of 1884.*

league career began with the Grays in 1881, had developed into something of a slugger, tying for second in league home runs (with 8) in 1883. But he was better known for his fieldings: Though known to throw the ball away upon occasion, he was splendid at stopping and catching it. Able to field the ball with either hand, he became—and remains today—the all-time leader of major league third basemen in his career averages of 4.2 chances and 1.6 putouts per game.

Also joining the Grays in 1881 were the battery of Charley Radbourn (most sources today omit the final “e,” but Old Hoss signed his name “Radbourn”) and Barney Gilligan. Gilligan came to the Grays after two years as catcher and outfielder with Cleveland, but Radbourn, though two years older than Gilligan, at age 26, was a virtual rookie. He had played six games in the infield and outfield for Buffalo in 1880, but he never pitched a major league game until he joined Providence. He quickly developed into one of the league’s most respected box artists, and in 1883 carried the team’s pitching, starting or relieving (four times) in 50 of the Gray’s 58 victories. Overall, he pitched 632 innings in 76 games, winning 49 and losing 25.

Manager Bancroft was confident that Radbourn would not be as overworked in 1884, even though the league was expanding its schedule from 98 to 112 games. Charlie Sweeney, a young pitcher/outfielder from San Francisco, was overwhelming batters in California winter ball. Though he had seen limited service with the Grays since joining them in 1882, Bancroft planned to alternate him in the box with Radbourn in 1884.

A second San Franciscan, catcher Vincent (Sandy) Nava, also broke into the majors with Providence in 1882. His heritage has been variously assessed over the years. Harry Wright, who signed him for the Grays, described him as a “Spaniard”; others have called him Portuguese or Cuban; his death certificate gives his father’s birthplace as “America” and his mother’s as Mexico; contemporary press accounts hinted that he was black. Whatever his race and ancestry, he caught well, and formed with Sweeney the Grays’ “California battery.”

The 1882 season saw not only the major league debuts of Sweeney and Nava, but also of left fielder Cliff Carroll, a

hunting buddy of Radbourn and, like Radbourn, a resident of Bloomington, Illinois. *Sporting Life* described him as the best man in baseball at beating out a bunt.

The regular team of 1884 was rounded out by shortstop Arthur Irwin, who came to the Grays in 1883 after three years in the league with Worcester. (One of Bancroft’s finds, Irwin played shortstop for him at Worcester in 1879, when the team was in a minor league, and the next year, when the team graduated, nearly intact, to the National League.) Irwin was a native of Toronto, but for many years had made his home in Boston. He was a daring though sometimes reckless baserunner, and like Carroll was known for his ability to bunt hit.

In addition to the eleven regulars, Providence had signed two extra catchers—Miah Murray, another Bostonian, and Charlie Bassett, a student at Providence’s Brown University—anticipating a “breaking up” of catchers under the new league rule permitting overhand pitching for the first time. Bassett, who would join the Grays after Brown finished its baseball season in June, was also an infielder, and became the Grays’ general utility man late in the season when injuries and illness afflicted the team. Murray caught only seven games in 1884, and Bassett none at all, as Gilligan and Nava proved more durable than expected.

Manager Bancroft’s confidence in pitcher Sweeney seemed well placed. He pitched well in the month of exhibition games that preceded the opening of the championship season—so well, in fact, that Radbourn must have wondered if he were about to be superseded by the brash twenty-one-year-old as darling of the fans.

Not only Sweeney, but the Grays as a team were impressive in preseason play. After defeating Brown University in Providence on March 29, the club traveled south to Hampton, Va., and rolled north through April, flattening every minor league and American Association club in its path. The Grays’ only preseason loss was a forfeit to Brooklyn on April 21, when Sweeney insisted on throwing overhand although the game was being played according to American Association rules, which forbade deliveries in which the pitcher’s arm came higher than the shoulder.

The Grays kept their momentum as the regular season began. After a close opening day loss to Cleveland on May 1, they won seventeen of their next eighteen games, with winning streaks of five and twelve games. The California battery of Sweeney and Nava worked the opening game and thereafter were generally alternated, as Bancroft had planned, with Radbourn and Gilligan. The pitchers matched won-lost records through May 24 (when both stood at 8-1) before Radbourn began to pull away from Sweeney with a victory on May 26 which Sweeney followed with two losses.

On May 22 the Grays had for the first time moved into the league lead ahead of Boston. Though the two successive losses dropped them back into second place for a day, Radbourn’s two victories (morning and afternoon)

on Memorial Day, and a third the day after, brought the Grays to the end of May in first place by a few percentage points. Boston regained the lead three days later.

Providence and Boston were by geographical proximity natural rivals, and their struggle for first place intensified the rivalry. The teams did not play each other the first month of the season. By the time they met in Providence on June 6, Boston was a game ahead of the Grays, but would slip into second place in percentage if they should lose the game. Excitement ran high, and the crowd of nearly 4500 that packed the Grays' Messer Street grounds included from 300-1500 fans (news accounts varied) who had traveled by train from Boston expecting a close and exciting game. They were not to be disappointed.

One Boston writer, recalling the 1884 Providence-Boston games a decade later, called them "the greatest ever played between two clubs in the history of base ball." This first game set the tone for the seventeen the clubs would play that season. In a monumental pitchers' duel, Radbourne and Boston's "Jumbo" Jim Whitney overpowered batters for sixteen innings without giving up an earned run. Darkness ended the game in a 1-1 tie. It turned out to be the league's longest game that year, and was hailed by one writer as "the most memorable in the history of the national sport." Boston still led the league.

The next day the teams played in Boston, but the league lead returned to Providence as the writers revised their judgment about baseball's most memorable game. Whitney unexpectedly was sent in to pitch again, and again permitted no earned runs, striking out 10 men. But Providence's Sweeney was the hero of the game, striking out 19 Boston batsmen for a new record (since tied but not surpassed), as the Grays defeated the Reds 2-1 on unearned runs.

The Grays returned to a jubilant welcome in Providence that evening, complete with a torchlight parade and a banquet. But the jubilation was short lived: Providence lost its next four games to Boston, falling four games out of first place, before Radbourne pulled out a 4-3 win in the fifteen-inning series finale.

Though they could not know it, the Grays had passed the low point of their season. For all the troubles to come, they would not again be further than three games behind the league leader. With the fifteen-inning victory over Boston they began another of their winning streaks—this one ten games—which included Radbourne's fourteen-inning 1-0 three-hitter against Detroit.

The game that ended their winning streak—a no-hitter by Larry Corcoran in Chicago on June 27 (the third of his major league career)—seems to have taken the wind out of the Grays' sail. By the time they next played Boston on July 11, though they had pulled to within two games, they were becalmed in a ten-game stretch of .500 ball.

And they played no better against their arch rivals, splitting their six games with Boston and ending the series still two games behind. Because Sweeney had developed

arm trouble, Radbourne was now pitching nearly every game; against the Reds he pitched the first three games, winning two. A "phenomenal" acquired from the Worcester club, Joseph "Cyclone" Miller, pitched well in the fourth game but lost a close one, 4-3. Radbourne lost the fifth game, on July 16, and that evening was suspended by manager Bancroft for "insubordination" and lackadaisical play. Although Radbourne's overall record to that date was good (24-8), half his losses had come in the previous two weeks.

With Radbourne out, Miller became the starting pitcher for the next two games, winning the first with Sweeney's help in the ninth (to conclude the Boston series), and giving way to Sweeney in the second inning the next day against New York in a game Providence went on to win. Sweeney's arm trouble seemed to have cleared up. It wasn't his arm that would bring him down.

The next day, July 19, Providence introduced its second phenom of the month. Pitcher Ed Conley, a frail amateur up from the Woonsocket, Rhode Island, "OSRC's" (for Orcutt's Sure Rheumatic Cure, which supplied their uniforms), stunned Harry Wright's Phillies with a two-hit 6-1 victory.

Two days later, on Monday, July 21, during an exhibition game in Woonsocket against Conley's old team, Sweeney (who was not playing) began drinking between innings in the dressing room. When the Grays returned to Providence after the game, he and Nava remained behind, and failed to show up for practice in Providence the next morning before a game with Philadelphia. Sweeney finally appeared at one o'clock and, taking manager Bancroft aside, said to him: "If you want to know why I was not here this morning I will tell you. I was drunk last night and did not get home."

Despite Sweeney's defiant attitude, Bancroft decided to give him his first start in two weeks. But he put Miller in right field to be available for relief if necessary. (Until 1891, substitutes could not be brought off the bench into a game unless one of the starting nine was injured or became ill.)

Sweeney pitched without will or effort, and it was only the Grays' strong fielding that held the Phillies to two runs in the first four innings. At the start of the fifth, Bancroft asked captain Joe Start to have Sweeney and Miller exchange positions, but Sweeney refused, and continued to pitch the next two innings. In the seventh, Bancroft called Sweeney over to the stands and asked him directly to let Miller relieve him. Sweeney refused, said "I guess I'll quit," and left the field.

Providence completed the game with eight men—Miller pitched, and Carroll and Hines covered the outfield. They managed to preserve their 6-2 lead into the ninth, but then balls began to fall between the fielders and two runs scored. The rattled Grays began to commit errors, and by the time the inning was over Philadelphia had scored eight runs. Final score: 10-6, Phillies.

Sweeney was expelled from the team, and the league, that evening. (There is some reason to suppose Sweeney acted deliberately to provoke his dismissal. Once freed from his league contract obligations, he promptly signed with St. Louis of the outlaw Union Association for higher pay; winning 24 games for them in the half season that remained, he completed 1884 with a combined record of 41-15.)

Although the *New York Times* report of the Sweeney incident suggested that the Grays might have to disband, that option seems not to have been seriously considered by the club directors. When they expelled Sweeney, they also reinstated Radbourne, revising his contract to pay him extra for pitching Sweeney's games in addition to his own. Radbourne, for his part (as baseball sage Henry Chadwick put it), "settled down to carry out his intention of 'pitching the Providence team into the championship,' and he did it splendidly, his work in the 'box' never before having been equaled."

For the next two months, until the Grays felt they had the pennant well in hand, Radbourne played every game. Most of them he pitched, but in the four games when Miller or Conley was started in the box, Radbourne played in the field to be available for relief. He did relieve Miller once, preserving the Grays' lead with four innings of no-hit pitching.

On August 7, in New York, after losing to the Maroons (also known as the Gothams, soon to be the Giants) 2-1 in 11 innings the day before, Radbourne came back to defeat them and begin the Grays' longest winning streak of the season—twenty games—and begin for himself a major league record eighteen consecutive wins. (Only two pitchers have surpassed Radbourne in the hundred seasons since then: Tim Keefe in 1888 and Rube Marquard in 1912, both with nineteen.)

When the Grays traveled to Boston two days later for the first game of their final series with the Red Stockings, they entered the most crucial period in their race for the pennant. Boston, only a game behind the Grays, knew it could come out of the series with as much as a three-game lead over Providence.

Boston's pitching was impressive. In the first game, Charlie Buffinton faced only twenty-seven men in nine innings—the two Grays who hit safely were promptly retired on a pickoff and a double play. But Radbourne was invincible. He matched Buffinton's pitching in the first game, which the Grays finally won in the eleventh, 1-0. In the second game, two days later, Boston scored a run, but Radbourne pitched his second two-hitter in a row and the Grays scored three runs to win. The next day Radbourne shut out the Reds for the second time in the series (4-0), and after a day's rest (a rainout) he finished them off with a third shutout, 1-0. The Grays' sweep left Boston five games behind.

For a time, Boston kept pace with an eight-game winning streak, but as Providence was now embarked on its

twenty-game streak, and would win twenty-eight of twenty-nine games before easing up, the Reds were out of the race.

Radbourne's endurance was as impressive as his effectiveness. In the two months following Sweeney's departure he pitched thirty-five complete games (plus four innings of relief), winning thirty, losing four and tying one. Two of his losses came at the end of this marathon as he pitched a twenty-first and twenty-second consecutive championship game for the Grays.

Radbourne's endurance and effectiveness are all the more remarkable in light of his agony in preparing for each game. Frank Bancroft, although he went on to other triumphs (culminating in a long, distinguished career as business manager for the Cincinnati Reds), never forgot 1884, and never tired of telling the Radbourne story. In an article he wrote for *Baseball Magazine* in 1908 he recalled Radbourne's warmup exercises:

Morning after morning upon arising he would be unable to raise his arm high enough to use his hair brush. Instead of quitting he stuck all the harder to his task[,] going out to the ball park hours before the rest of the team and beginning to warm up by throwing a few feet and increasing the distance until he could finally throw the ball from the outfield to the home plate. The players, all eagerness to win, would watch "Rad," and when he would succeed in making his customary long distance throw they would look at each other and say the "Old Hoss" is ready and we can't be beat, and this proved to be the case nine times out of ten.

The Grays' schedule called for them to play the final month of the season away from home. As the day approached for their departure they were variously honored by their fans. Before the game of September 2, for example, Radbourne and his catcher Gilligan were presented "life-size portraits of themselves, in crayon, handsomely mounted in heavy gilded frames." A week and a half later, "Radbourne was given a great bunch of flowers, in which was a valuable envelope, while Farrell received a magnificent crayon portrait of himself, and a gold watch, chain and charm, the latter articles being valued at \$185."

The Grays rewarded their fans, too, with their splendid play. Their loss on September 9 which ended their twenty-game winning streak was doubtless a disappointment, especially as poor umpiring seems to have contributed to Buffalo's two runs. But on the whole the Grays were awesome. On September 5, third baseman Denny hit "the best home run hit yet made on the Messer Street grounds. The ball went far above the roofs of the houses beyond the left field fence, and ere it had dropped Farrell was home and Denny nearly to second base. This won the game."

When the team left for Cleveland in mid-September, Conley and Murray were brought along as the change battery. Miller and Nava were loaned for the remainder of the season to a military team at Ft. Monroe, Virginia.

On September 25, in Chicago, Radbourne missed his first game as pitcher or fielder since returning from his

suspension on July 23. He pitched only five of the Grays' twelve remaining games. With his two consecutive losses in late September, the whole team slacked off, winning only half of their final fourteen games. Nevertheless, they clinched the pennant two weeks before the end of the season when Boston, weakened by injuries, lost its third game of the week to last-place Detroit.

On October 15 the Grays' championship season came to an end with a makeup game in Philadelphia. Radbourne pitched and won easily, 8-0, his eleventh shutout of the year. He started 73 games as pitcher and completed them all, winning 59, losing 12 and tying 2. Twice he came in from right field to relieve the starting pitcher and preserve his team's lead; by today's scoring guidelines he would be credited with two saves. (Saves, of course, were not calculated in 1884, and neither were pitching wins and losses. Radbourne, had he been asked, would simply have said he had pitched in 61 Providence victories. The 60-win figure that appears in baseball encyclopedias and record books was arrived at in the early years of this century by crediting one of his relief appearances as a victory in addition to his 59 complete-game wins.)

It was pitching and fielding that carried Providence to its .750 record of 84 wins against only 28 losses. In batting and slugging, the Grays ranked only fifth among the league's eight teams. Their .241 batting average was six points below the league average, and a full forty points below league leading Chicago's .281. Paul Hines led the Grays in batting with .302. Sweeney in his half season hit .298, and Start batted .276. Denny led the club in home runs with 6.

In fielding the Grays were much more impressive, their fielding average of .918 second only to Boston's .922. Two Grays were at the top of the league in their positions: Joe Start led first basemen with .980, nine points ahead of his nearest rival; second baseman Jack Farrell ended the season in a virtual tie with Boston's Jack Burdock at .922.

Most impressive, of course, were the Grays' pitching statistics. In earned run average (estimated in modern times), Providence pitchers led the league: Radbourne was first (1.38) and Sweeney second (1.55). The team's 1.59 was nearly half the league average (2.98), and nearly a run less per game than second-ranked Boston (2.47). Sweeney gave up the fewest hits per nine innings of anyone in the league (6.23); Radbourne was second (with 7.00). Radbourne led the league in strikeouts with 441.

On their return to Providence October 17, the Grays were once again paraded and banqueted. With Sweeney, the hero of the previous celebration, gone, Radbourne was king. He rewarded his fans' adulation by pitching a one-hitter the next day in an exhibition game against Cincinnati of the American Association—his final appearance of the year in Providence.

For Radbourne and the Grays there was one more triumph. Late in July Jim Mutrie, manager of New York's Metropolitan, who were headed for the American As-



*Hoss Radbourne, in his later years with Boston.*

sociation championship, began to talk about how his team could beat any team in the older National League. When Providence players heard this, they persuaded Bancroft to challenge the Mets to a postseason series to settle the question of league superiority. Mutrie accepted the challenge and, after much negotiation, a three-game series was scheduled for New York's Polo Grounds, then located just north of Central Park, for October 23-25 (six months to the day after the Grays—without pitching Hoss—had defeated the Mets in three preseason games).

This October series looms in importance through the mist of a hundred years as the forerunner and prototype of America's premier sporting event. But in 1884, even though some papers described it as a series to determine the championship of the world, the public remained unimpressed.

American Association teams were regularly defeated in exhibition games by National League clubs—although this pattern reversed itself in the next two years—and the Association champion Mets, before meeting Providence, had done no better than tie the Maroons, fourth place in the NL, in a series for the city championship. Furthermore, the weather turned windy and cold suddenly, dropping into the low fifties on the afternoon of the first game from a summer-like 76° the day before. Only 2500 spectators saw Radbourne shut out the Mets 6-0. Even

that number dropped the next day, along with the temperature, as only 1000 fans saw Grays' third baseman Denny win for Radbourne the second and deciding game, 3-1, with a home run over the center field fence.

As the outcome of the series had been decided and the weather remained cold, fewer than 500 fans showed up for the final game. The Grays, who were to split with the Mets the profits of the final two games, saw no profit in this small crowd and wanted to go home. When at last they were persuaded to take the field after being given the choice of umpire, they were given the game as well by the Mets' sloppy fielding. Scorers lost count, but when darkness mercifully halted the game after six innings, Radbourne and the Grays were once again victorious, by a score of 11—perhaps 12—to 2.

Henry Chadwick, reflecting on Radbourne's success while pitching nearly every game, argued his example as a paradigm for all those pitchers who claimed to need rest every other day. But even Radbourne couldn't maintain his 1884 pace beyond that season. The next year he pitched only two-thirds as many games as he had in 1884. And though he often pitched well thereafter, not once in his seven remaining major league seasons did he win even half the number of games he had won in his miracle year.

As for the Providence Grays, in 1885 they slipped below .500 and into fourth place for the first time in their history. Their fans deserted them, and at the end of the season the club was disbanded. Frank Bancroft, just a year after his greatest triumph, had for the first time managed a failure.

The game that decided the first World Series, scored in Henry Chadwick's hand.

CLUB		Date of Game		188		Where Played																		
Providence		Oct 24		188		New York																		
UMPIRE			INNING													Game Ended at								
Base on Balls	1st Base on Errors	Struck Out	Left on Base	Base Hits	Runs	BATS MEN													FIELDERS					
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Pos.		Put Out	Ass'ts	Errors	Wild pitches	Passed Balls
						Hines												1	Nelson					
						Cornell												2	Bradley					
1		1	1			Radbourne												3	Peter					
				1		Stout												4	Roseman					
				1	2	Farrell												5	Orr					
		1				Dewain												6	Fray					
			1	1	1	Gilligan		AK										7	Holbert					
			1	1	1	Denny		2K										8	Kennedy					
						Radford		2F										9	Keefe					
1	0	4	2	5	3	Totals	0	0	0	0	2	0	0					Totals	21	8	0	0	0	

CLUB		Date of Game		188		Where Played																		
New York		Oct 24		188		Providence																		
UMPIRE			INNING													Game Ended at								
Base on Balls	1st Base on Errors	Struck Out	Left on Base	Base Hits	Runs	BATS MEN													FIELDERS					
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Pos.		Put Out	Ass'ts	Errors	Wild pitches	Passed Balls
					1	Nelson	8F		8F	8F	8F							1	Hines					
						Bradley	1F		7F	7F		1F						2	Cornell					
		1	1	1		Peter	2K		6F	6F	6F	2F						3	Radbourne					
				1	1	Roseman	6F	4A	4F	4F	4F	4F						4	Stout					
						Orr	6F	4A	4F	4F	4F	4F						5	Farrell				2	
		1				Fray	3K		5F	5F								6	Dewain				1	
			1			Holbert		4F		3K								7	Gilligan					
		1	1			Kennedy	3F		7F		1K							8	Denny					
		2				Keefe		2K			2K							9	Radford					
0	1	6	1	3	1	Totals	0	0	0	4	0	0						Totals	21	9	3	0	0	

*Lynch and Keefe without relief.*

# Mutrie's Mets of 1884

JOHN J. O'MALLEY

**O**N OCTOBER 27, 1884, thousands of New Yorkers celebrated with cheers and fireworks as they witnessed a torchlight victory parade honoring the first local club ever to win a major league pennant. In the season completed twelve days earlier, the Metropolitanians had captured the American Association flag with a 75-32 won-lost record.

At 8:30 P.M. the champions, atop a horsedrawn tally-ho coach, set forth along the line of march. Preceding them were the veteran catcher of earlier New York nines John Clapp, who as Grand Marshal led the parade on horseback, and the 7th Regiment band, which had been a feature at the Metropolitanians' home opener. Following the Mets were several coaches bearing officials, reporters, guests, and manager Jim Mutrie, the man behind it all. Indeed, although the club was carried to the pennant by Tim Keefe, Jack Lynch, and Dave Orr, it might aptly have been named the "Mutriopolitanians."

After a disastrous season-opening series in Baltimore—in which Tim Keefe fanned fifteen Orioles only to lose as New York made seven errors, and then Jack Lynch fanned fourteen only to be sabotaged by ten Met miscues—New York straightened out and returned home with an away record of 6-3. Home, however, was as foreign as the road.

The Polo Grounds, located between Sixth and Seventh Avenues and extending from 110th to 112th Street, had served as the home field for New York's professional baseball clubs since September 29, 1880. On that date, the recently organized New York Metropolitanians played host to the Washington Nationals. Shortly after the close of the 1882 season, New York placed two clubs in the major leagues—the Metropolitanians in the American Association and a second club, which would be known variously in 1883 and 1884 as the Gothams and the Maroons, in the

National League. Both clubs used the old Polo Grounds facilities. This caused no particular problem, inasmuch as John B. Day was in the happy position of owning both clubs.

In December 1883, however, *Sporting Life* reported that the old arrangement was unsatisfactory to the visiting clubs and that the American Association had requested the managers of the Metropolitan team to find an enclosed ground elsewhere. A place was found in the plot of ground bounded by 107th and 109th Street and First Avenue and the East River. Work began at once to prepare the grounds for the May 13 home opener.

The 4,000 fans who attended that opening were serenaded for several hours prior to the game by the aforementioned 7th Regiment band. They experienced no let-down when the game started. New York took a 3-0 lead in the first inning and led all the way to a 13-4 victory. Keefe allowed ten hits but kept them well scattered. The fourteen hits by the Metropolitanians included three by Chief Roseman and two each by Dude Esterbrook, Dave Orr and Dasher Troy.

When New York ended its first homestand on June 18, its record stood at 26 won, 9 lost.

Despite that success, *Sporting Life* noted the rumor that the Metropolitanians would shortly disband with Keefe, catcher Bill Holbert, right fielder Steve Brady and first baseman Dave Orr thereupon to be transferred to New York's National League club. Certainly, the Metropolitanians were not first in the affections of owner John B. Day. During their homestand, many of their games had been

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scheduled early to enable the spectators at Metropolitan Park, at game's end, to take in a second match on the same day at the Polo Grounds.

The results of New York's second road trip were mediocre at best: 10 won, 8 lost, as the Metropolitan lost four of six series. It looked for a while during the July 2 game against Columbus that the Metropolitan pitching staff would be reduced to one. Tim Keefe was forced to leave the game after making only two pitches as severe pain struck his side, as it had in a game two weeks earlier. Two days later, however, Keefe returned to the mound and yielded but three hits as New York crushed St. Louis 17-0.

About this time, the New York management began to realize that the days of Metropolitan Park as their home field were numbered. The ground on which the park was built was formerly used as a dump to which the refuse and filth of the city were carted. Jack Lynch's wry comment "A player may come out of the dressing room as frisky as a two-year-old colt, go down for a grounder, and come up with six months of malaria" was uncomfortably close to the mark. New York would play a few more games in that park in July and August, but for all practical purposes, the Polo Grounds was once again home field for the Metropolitan.

Jack Lynch scored his first shutout victory on July 18 against Philadelphia's Billy Taylor. It was a 12-0 rout. Three days later, before a crowd of 2,000, Lynch gave Brooklyn the same treatment as the Metropolitan won by a 4-0 score. Brooklyn's offense consisted of four hits.

New York's 6-5 defeat of Washington on August 2 was historic. Plagued by financial problems, Washington was forced to disband after the game, shortly to be replaced by its longtime rival in peace and war—Richmond.

On August 16, at Pittsburgh, Lynch pitched his third shutout. The Metropolitan in winning 6-0 registered fifteen hits, including four each by Brady and the light-hitting left fielder, Ed Kennedy, against five for the Allegheny club.

Today Jack Lynch is little remembered, while his partner in the box, Tim Keefe, is in the Hall of Fame. But in 1884 they were equals, each winning 37 games. On August 19, Lynch won his fourteenth consecutive game since July 8, an 11-1 laughter against Brooklyn, whom he allowed only two hits.

Only three runs stood between Jack Lynch and the all-time record for consecutive victories as Baltimore, behind Bob Emslie, ended his winning streak 5-3 on August 27 (after a tie on August 21). Inasmuch as Lynch won his next five decisions, he would have won twenty consecutive games, or one more than the Keefe-Marquard record runs of 1888 and 1912, if the August 27 game had been won.

October 11 marked Jack Lynch's final game of the 1884 campaign. Cincinnati took an early lead, scoring three runs in each of the first two innings. At the end of seven innings, the score stood: Cincinnati 7, New York 2. The

Mets then rallied with three runs in the eighth inning and two in the ninth to tie the game at 7-7. When the game was replayed on October 14, the Mets had better luck, as they edged Cincinnati 4-3. With that victory, Keefe matched Lynch's season total of 37 games won.

The final game of the season, played on October 15, was unique in one respect: It was the only game of New York's 1884 campaign in which neither Tim Keefe nor Jack Lynch manned the box. For the occasion, the Mets imported pitcher Jim Becannon and catcher Tony Murphy from Hartford. Becannon, in excellent form, limited Indianapolis to two runs on two hits. New York scored thirteen runs on eleven hits.

At season's end, New York's totals were: 75 won, 32 lost, 5 tied. Columbus finished six and a half games behind with a 69-39 record. This was the team:

President:	John B. Day
Manager:	James J. Mutrie
Regulars:	
First Base:	David Orr
Second Base:	John "Dasher" Troy
Shortstop:	Jackson Nelson
Third Base:	Thomas "Dude" Esterbrook
Catcher:	William Holbert
Catcher:	Charles Reipschlager
Outfield:	Stephen Brady
Outfield:	James "Chief" Roseman
Outfield:	Edward Kennedy
Pitcher:	Timothy Keefe
Pitcher:	John Lynch
Additional players:	
* Grayson Pearce	
** Henry Oxley	
** Frank "Tony" Murphy	
** James "Buck" Becannon	
* Appeared in five games	
** Appeared in one game	

The basic strength of the club lay in its pitching as the following totals attest:

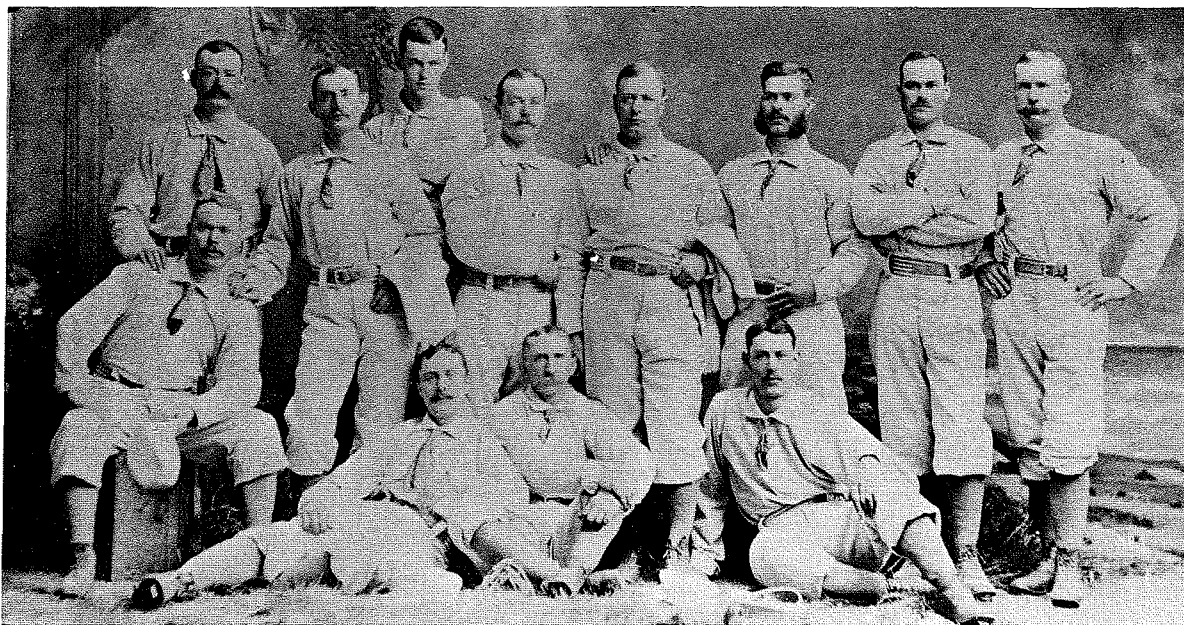
	Keefe	Lynch	Becannon	Total
Won	37	37	1	75
Lost	17	15	0	32
Tied	2	3	0	5
Innings pitched	483	496	6	985
Runs allowed	195	226	2	423
Hits allowed	378	420	2	800
Bases on balls	75	42	2	119

Note: When the Macmillan Baseball Encyclopedia was first published, it erroneously charged Tim Keefe with a loss on July 8. That defeat properly should go to Lynch, who pitched the complete game. The above totals reflect a correction for that game.

The Metropolitan pitching staff allowed more than eight runs in only six games. New York, in contrast, scored more than eight runs thirty-four times. (In its 112 games the team scored 734 runs—more than six per game. It is all the more surprising, therefore, to learn that only two of the Met regulars batted .300 or better in the season—Dave Orr at .354 and Dude Esterbrook at .314.)

Sam Crane, who played second base for the 1883





*The Mets of 1882 (no photo of the '84 team has survived): at the top left is Jack Lynch.*

Metropolitans, turned to sportswriting in his later years. Beginning in November 1911, he started a series of articles in the *New York Evening Journal* on those he regarded as baseball's fifty greatest players up to that time. He included Jack Lynch in that group. The choice was perhaps a sentimental one, for Lynch ended his career with 110 won, 105 lost and never again approached his 1884 brilliance. His inclusion nevertheless demonstrates that, with his own generation at least, the memory of that great season did not fade.

Posterity has treated Lynch's colleague more kindly. "He combines in a remarkable degree all the needed qualifications to excel in his chosen position, having wonderful speed, a troublesome curve and great command of the ball." Those words describing Tim Keefe appeared in a profile of him in the *New York Clipper* on May 22, 1880, two and a half months before his major league debut.

Taken as prophecy, it is astonishing. In all that company of pitchers who hurled entirely in the nineteenth century, Keefe probably ranks supreme. In his fourteen-year career, from August 6, 1880 through August 15, 1893, he amassed these totals:

342 Won*
224 Lost
1 Forfeit loss**
13 Tied
<u>20 Not involved in decision</u>
600 Total

\* Under modern rules, Keefe would have 337 won, 224 lost. In his time, however, it was the practice to award starting pitchers the victory, even if they went less than five innings, if they left the game with a commanding lead. Keefe had five such games: 6/3/86, 5/9/88, 7/16/88, 5/27/90 and 4/27/92.

\*\* 9/12/88.

The continued absence of Jim Mutrie from the Hall of

Fame must amaze anyone familiar with the early history of major league baseball in New York. That city has been represented by many clubs since 1871, but it is safe to say that to no baseball executive or manager is New York more indebted.

In September, 1880, he organized the New York Metropolitans—the first professional club actually to play its home games in New York. (The earlier Mutuals of New York played across the river in Brooklyn, then a separate city.) With the financial backing of John B. Day, Mutrie secured a lease of the Polo Grounds and succeeded in adapting that field to the playing of baseball. A little more than two years later, he played a key role in New York's entry into the major leagues. He won pennants for the Metropolitans in 1884 and for the Giants of the rival National League in 1888 and 1889. His lifetime won-lost average as a manager was .611, second only to Joe McCarthy's .614 in all baseball history.

The *New York Clipper* on November 12, 1881, declared, "The national game's present popularity in this city is the result mainly of Mutrie's energy and perseverance." That observation remains true to this day.

It has been said that team captains such as Buck Ewing or John Ward actually directed strategy during the game. Such criticism does not address the brilliant organizing and innovating which created those teams.

Mutrie gave a fresh illustration of those abilities during the 1884 campaign. In August, when it was evident that New York and Providence would in all probability win the American Association and National League pennants, he challenged Providence manager Frank Bancroft to a championship series between their clubs. After counter-challenges and negotiations, a postseason series was agreed upon. In that manner, James Mutrie created the World Series.

*"Imagine what might have been," he said.*

# Dick Allen's 1972: A Year to Remember

MARK LAZARUS

**R**ICHARD ANTHONY ALLEN. Just the mention of his name evokes surprisingly emotional responses from the baseball fans who saw him play. Some recall Allen's awesome natural talent, his intimidating presence on the field. Others regret his off-field difficulties, his seemingly wasted opportunity for greatness. When Allen burst onto the major league scene in 1964 as the National League's Rookie of the Year, he had it all: He could run, hit for average and power, field, throw, and he had that unusual gift of awareness on the field, the "sixth sense" that enables great players to make the great play when it counts.

If natural ability were the criterion for Hall of Fame election, Allen would be a sure thing; instead, he is on the outside looking in and figures to stay there. Still, despite devastating injuries to his right shoulder, wrist, and hand, a succession of disputes with management, media, and fans, and a growing battle with alcohol, Allen still produced a .292 career average and blasted 351 homers. In 1976, Dick himself wondered, "The Lord gave me a talent, but only He knows how much. Imagine if I didn't have this [pointing to his shoulder] and this [pointing to his hand]. Imagine what might have been."

Nothing was left to the imagination in 1972. Dick Allen was not only *the* dominant player in baseball, but his impact on the game and the city of Chicago went beyond the confines of the diamond. The period 1972 to 1974 was known as the "Allen Era" on the South Side. The attendance figures bear that out:

1971	833,891
1972	1,177,318
1973	1,302,527
1974	1,149,596
1975	750,802

Roland Hemond, general manager of the White Sox, still believes that Allen saved the American League franchise for Chicago. If it had not been for those three years, we might now have the Pale Hose of New Orleans, Denver, or Toronto. Beyond the raw attendance numbers, Allen's popularity and his leadership of a mediocre team into contention brought the South Siders much needed publicity and media exposure. In 1972, the Sox games were broadcast on radio station WEAW-FM, a station that could barely be heard in the Loop. The following year, they contracted with WMAQ, a 50,000 watt AM station that could be heard clearly (at night) in Philadelphia!

In April of 1972 fans endured baseball's first full-scale labor strike, forcing the cancellation of 85 games and creating an uneven schedule (one that in the end would frustrate Red Sox fans particularly, as Boston finished one-half game behind Detroit in the American League East). The ailing national pastime was in desperate need of a surprise team, an epic phenom, or the coming of age of a superstar. While Carlton Fisk did his best to fill the role of phenom (Rookie of the Year in the AL), and Steve Carlton rolled to a 27-10 Cy Young Award year with a last place team, it was Dick Allen and the Sox who captured hearts and headlines around the country.

In retrospect, it is amazing that the Sox were in the pennant race. Their main competition was an Oakland A's team that was to win the first of their three straight World Championships. The Sox finished seventh in team batting (.238), eighth in ERA (3.12), and ninth in defense (.977). They outscored their opponents by only 28 runs

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(566-538), yet were twenty games over .500! Oakland outscored their opponents by 147 runs, but finished 29 games over .500. Using Bill James' Pythagorean Method of determining a team's won-lost record— $(\text{Runs}^2 / (\text{Runs}^2 + \text{Opponent's Runs}^2)) = \text{Won-Lost percentage}$ —the Sox should have finished eighteen games behind the A's, but were only five and a half behind when the season clock ran out. Chuck Tanner did a phenomenal job of managing, maximizing his team's mediocre talents and winning the close games (evidenced by their 38-20 record in one-run decisions). The pitching staff was led by the big three of Wilbur Wood (24-17, 2.51 ERA), Stan Bahnsen (21-16, 3.60), and Tom Bradley (15-14, 2.98), who collectively started 130 of the 154 games. The ace of the bullpen was twenty-year-old southpaw Terry Forster (6-5, 2.25, with 29 saves); Goose Gossage, only six months older, was 8-1 but saved only 2 games.

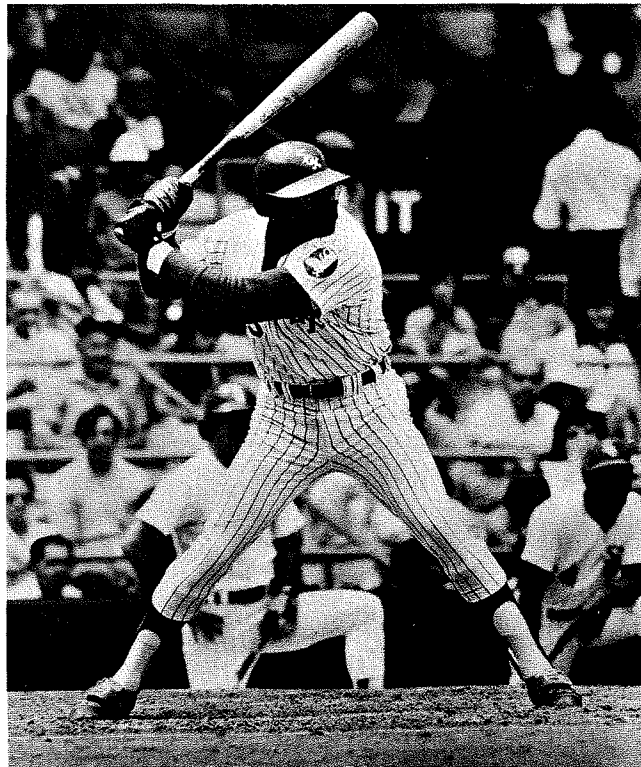
The Sox leadoff men—Pat Kelly and Walt “No-Neck” Williams were platooned—hit a combined .257 and scored only 79 runs. Mike Andrews batted second and “ripped” AL pitching at a .220 clip and scored 58 runs. Bill Melton, the league's home run champ in 1971 whose big bat was supposed to keep opponents from pitching around Allen, was shelved by a back injury in June and provided a meager 7 homers. His cleanup slot was taken by Carlos May, who hit .308 but certainly could not generate the power to protect Allen. May, in fact, went from July 23 to September 20 without a homer. The rest of the lineup was a collection of has-beens, never-will-be's, and maybe-someday's.

### The 1972 White Sox

PLAYER	AVERAGE	HR	RUNS	RBI's
Pat Kelly	.261	5	57	24
Walt Williams	.249	2	57	11
Mike Andrews	.220	7	58	50
DICK ALLEN	.308	37	90	113
Carlos May	.308	12	83	68
Bill Melton	.245	7	22	30
Jay Johnstone	.188	4	27	17
Rick Reichardt	.251	8	31	43
Ed Herrmann	.249	10	23	40
Rich Morales	.206	2	24	20
Luis Alvarado	.213	4	30	29
Ed Spezio	.238	2	20	22
Jorge Orta	.202	3	20	11
Tom Egan	.191	2	8	9
Jim Lyttle	.232	0	8	5
Tony Muser	.279	1	6	9
Buddy Bradford	.271	2	13	8
Chuck Brinkman	.135	0	0	0

Despite being pitched around (Dick tied for tops in the AL with 99 walks), Allen still piled up some very impressive stats. As late as September 9, he led all categories for the Triple Crown. Rod Carew's solid September edged

Dick by .011 for the batting title, but Allen's domination of all other offensive stats was awesome. His 37 home runs led the league; only one other player hit more than 26 (Bobby Murcer, 33). His 113 RBIs also set the pace by a wide margin; only one other had more than 96 (John Mayberry, 100). Allen's margin in slugging percentage over Carlton Fisk (.603-.538) was the biggest since Frank Robinson's Triple Crown in 1966. As further proof of Allen's dominance, I offer Bill James' Runs Created formula, computed for 1972. Taking into account steals, caught stealing, and bases on balls as well as hits and total bases, it is a superior measure of offensive con-



Dick Allen

tribution to either the batting average or the slugging percentage.

#### Top Five, Runs Created

Allen, CHI	128
Murcer, NY	110
Mayberry, KC	99
Rudi, OAK	98
Fisk, BOS	90

In the premiere issue of *The National Pastime*, Bob Carroll wrote a piece (“Nate Colbert's Unknown RBI Record,” TNP 1982) detailing the group of players that drove in 20 percent of their team's runs in a season. At 19.96 percent, Allen just missed that plateau in '72. However, none of the eight “20 percenters” (Frank Howard did it twice) accomplished it in the pressure of a pennant race. Jim Gentile's Orioles finished third in '61, but fourteen games behind the M&M Yankees. Ernie Banks was

the National League's MVP in '59, but the Cubs finished tied for fifth, thirteen games back. All of the others finished at least twenty and a half games out of first, with Wally Berger's 1935 Braves finishing an astonishing sixty-one and a half out. Certainly the Braves would have finished last with or without Berger, but the 1972 Chicago White Sox were a different story.

The definition of Most Valuable Player was epitomized by Allen's one-man gang. In addition to his prolific hitting, he stole 19 bases and finished second, only .0004 behind Mayberry, in fielding percentage. Coming down the stretch, in August and September, he hit .305 with an on-base average of .431. Despite their obvious intent to pitch around Dick, the World Champion A's were ripped by Allen for an on-base average of .514 and a slugging percentage of .647!

The way to beat the Sox was to pitch around Allen in clutch situations. This was evident from his 53 walks in the 65 losses he played in, compared to 46 walks in the 83 wins. When granted the opportunity to swing the bat, Allen hit .343 in winning games, .265 in losses. And he loved to entertain the home folks. In old White Sox Park (as it was called in '72), Allen hit 27 of his 37 HRs and had 83 of his 113 RBIs!

Some memorable moments of that memorable year:

- On June 4, in the second game of a doubleheader against the Yankees, with two on and one out in the bottom of the ninth, Allen (pinch-hitting for Rick Morales) blasted a Sparky Lyle pitch into the upper deck in left for a dramatic 5-4 victory. I'll never forget listening to Phil Rizzuto's call on radio (on my way to a batting cage in Seaside Heights, NJ). All the Scooter could shout over the roar of the crowd was, "I don't believe it!!! I don't believe it!!!," over and over, never telling what actually happened. It was at least two or three minutes before Frank Messer grabbed the microphone and told us of Allen's blast! On the All Star game telecast that year, the network showed a replay of the homer. Roy White took one step back, then headed straight for the dugout. It was one of the few times that I ever saw Allen display emotion on the field. As he rounded first and realized the ball had disappeared in the upper deck, he pumped his right fist in the air in triumph. Of course, he was mobbed by his teammates at home plate. It was a great moment for Dick, the Sox, and all of his fans (but not for the three Yankee fans who were in the car with me!).

- July 31: Allen became the seventh player in history, and the only one since 1950, to hit two inside-the-park home runs in one game. The pitcher victimized by both homers was Bert Blyleven, and the centerfielder who fell victim to Allen's torrid line drives was Bobby Darwin. Dick connected in the first inning with two on, and in the fifth with one on to lead the Sox to an 8-1 victory.

- August 23rd: Allen became only the fourth player in

history to reach the centerfield bleachers at Comiskey Park. Only Jimmie Foxx, Hank Greenberg, and Alex Johnson before, and Richie Zisk since, have been able to reach the seats. Again, Allen's was extra special. The blast came off Lindy McDaniel of the Yankees in the seventh inning with one on and cemented a 5-2 win to vault the Sox into first place. During the 1972 season, the Sox played all of their Wednesday home games in the daytime, and Harry Caray would broadcast from the centerfield bleachers, soaking up the sun and suds with his compatriots. Allen's shot missed Caray by just a few rows. Unfortunately, I have never had the opportunity to hear Caray's call of the homer, which must have been great. To reach the bleachers, the ball must travel 440 feet to the back wall and clear the sixteen-and-a-half-foot-high wall. Allen's blast cleared the wall easily.

- September 7-12: In a seven-game stretch against West rivals Oakland, California, and Kansas City, Allen had 16 RBIs, including four game-winners!

In November Allen was named, to no one's surprise, the AL Most Valuable Player. During the winter a new contract was negotiated, calling for \$225,000 per year for three years, making Allen the highest paid player in the game at the time.

Dick was well on his way to another MVP caliber year in 1973 when he broke his leg in a collision with Mike Epstein in June. In retrospect, this event seemed to burst the bubble as the pressures of the media, management, and fans became too much for Allen to bear. Despite a triumphant return to action in 1974, in which he led the league in homers and slugging, Allen announced his retirement on September 14. Over the winter the Sox traded his rights to Atlanta, who subsequently dealt him to the Phillies in May of 1975. Although welcomed home warmly by fans in the city of brotherly boos, Allen's continued erratic behavior and eroding skills led to his release after the '76 season. Charley Finley gambled by signing Allen for '77, but a quick exit from the ballpark during a game in June prompted his suspension and final release.

Dick Allen was a complex man with some deep-seated psychological scars that affected his behavior. But the sight of No. 15 digging in at the plate, tugging his uniform at the shoulders and left leg, pushing his batting helmet down on his afro, outlining the outside corner of the plate with his bat, and waving that forty-ounce war pole, brought a tremendous surge of excitement to the game. Wherever he played, the anticipation of a titanic home run had the crowd alive with each at-bat. In Philadelphia fans would not leave the ballpark until after Dick's final at-bat of the game, no matter what the score. Dick Allen may not make it to the Hall of Fame, but he was a player with *style*, a uniquely fearsome batter who will be remembered not only for what he might have been, but also for what he *was*.

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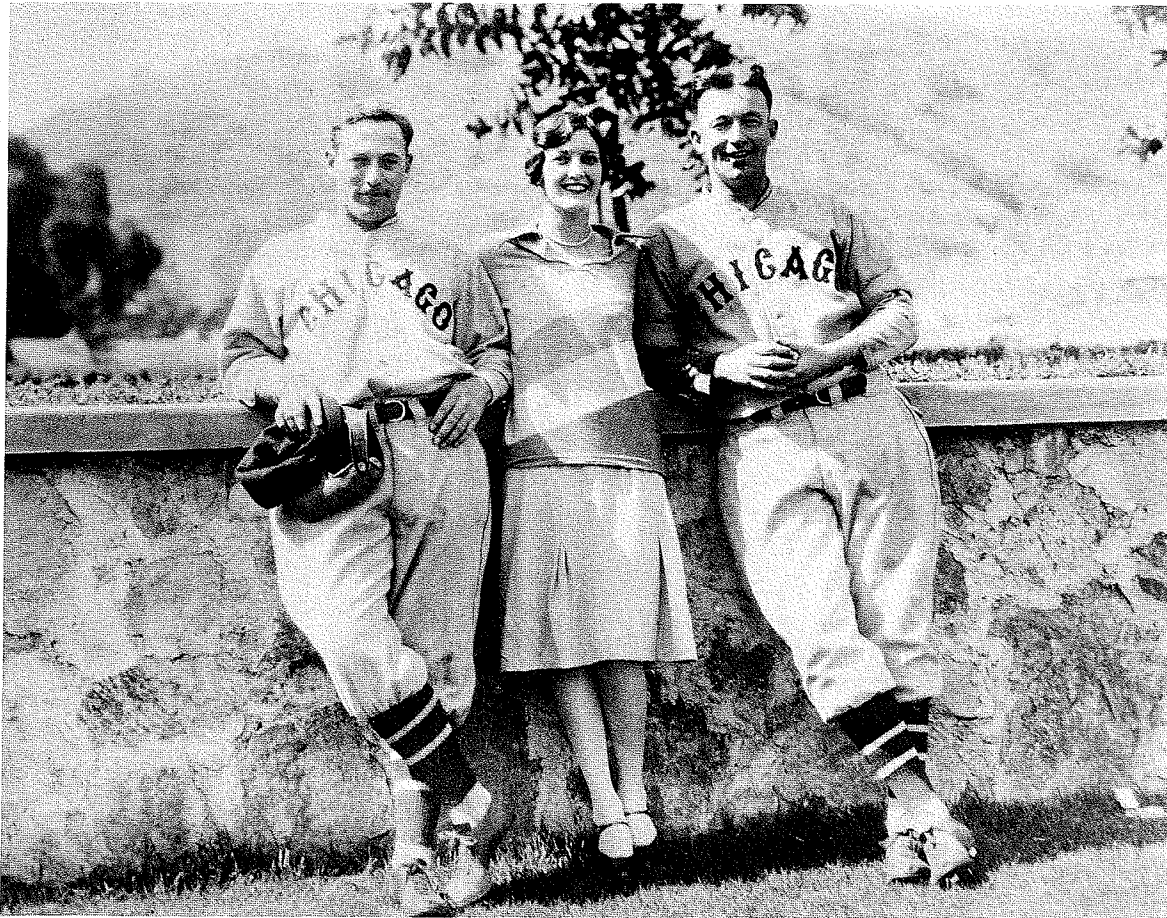
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SCRAPBOOK

# SPRING TRAINING

*MIKE MUMBY and MARK RUCKER*

Hope springs eternal in the human breast, wrote Pope—Alexander, not Dave—and for the baseball fan, no time of year is more laden with hope than spring. Last year's slate has been wiped clean, phenoms abound, and who's to say your team won't go 162-0? How wondrously green the playing fields seem through rose-colored glasses.



On Catalina Island, where the sting of winter is never felt, Charlie Root (left) and Gabby Hartnett take time out from their vernal exertions.

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*MIKE MUMBY is an advanced photo collector from Pontiac, Michigan who specializes in the dead-ball era.*

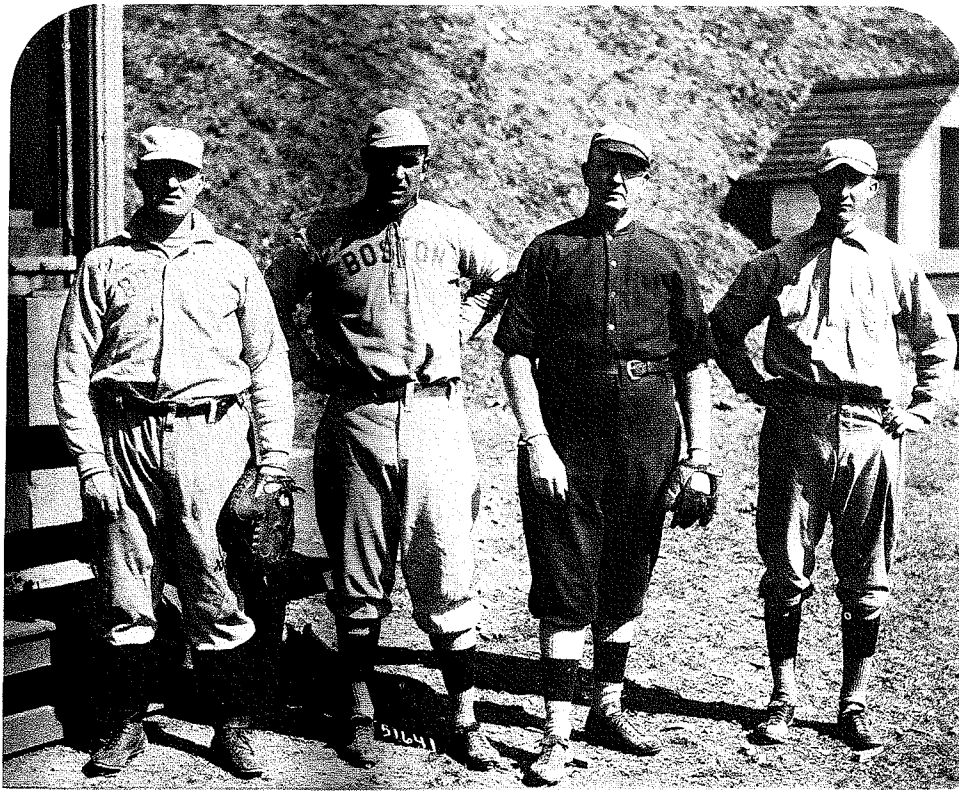
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*MARK RUCKER is a New York artist and co-chairs a SABR research committee; his painting graces the cover.*

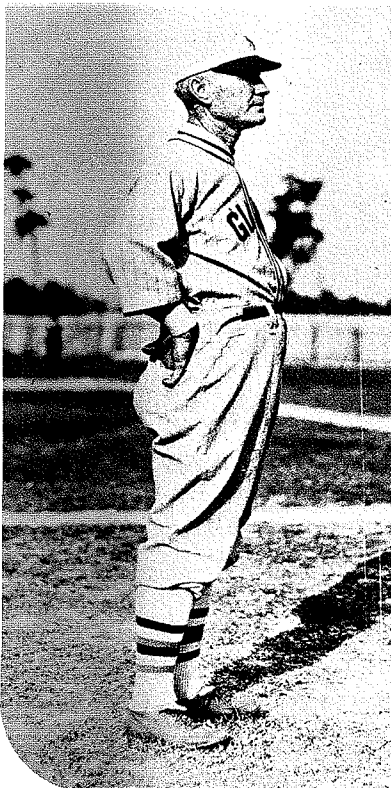


Competition and cooperation coexist in the spring. Above we see the Cubs at Shreveport, La., in 1909: (l-r) uniformed players Artie Hofman, Del Howard, and Chick Fraser; with his back to the camera is writer Hugh Fullerton. Below, Boston batterymates Buck O'Brien and Bill "Rough" Carrigan square off in their Little Rock camp in 1912.



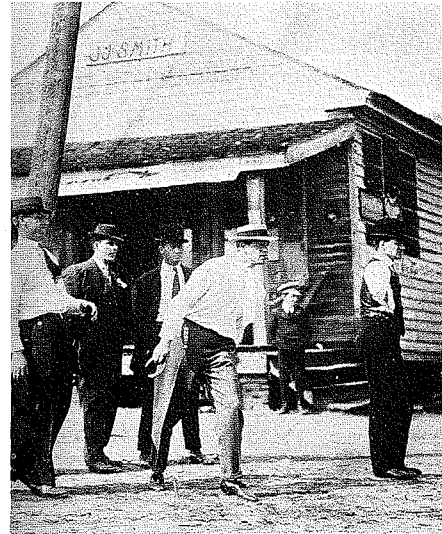


In the top picture, taken in 1912, Cy Young is seen for perhaps the last time in uniform, posing with Bill Carrigan, Jake Stahl, and Fred Anderson. No longer able to bend over for bunts, Young called it quits before the regular season opened. Bottom left: Young's Oriole nemesis of the 1890s, Hughie Jennings, here as a Giant coach in the '20s. Bottom right: Earle Mack greets his pop in April 1924 in Montgomery, Alabama. The heir apparent, Earle withered on the vine as Connie kept the helm through 1950.



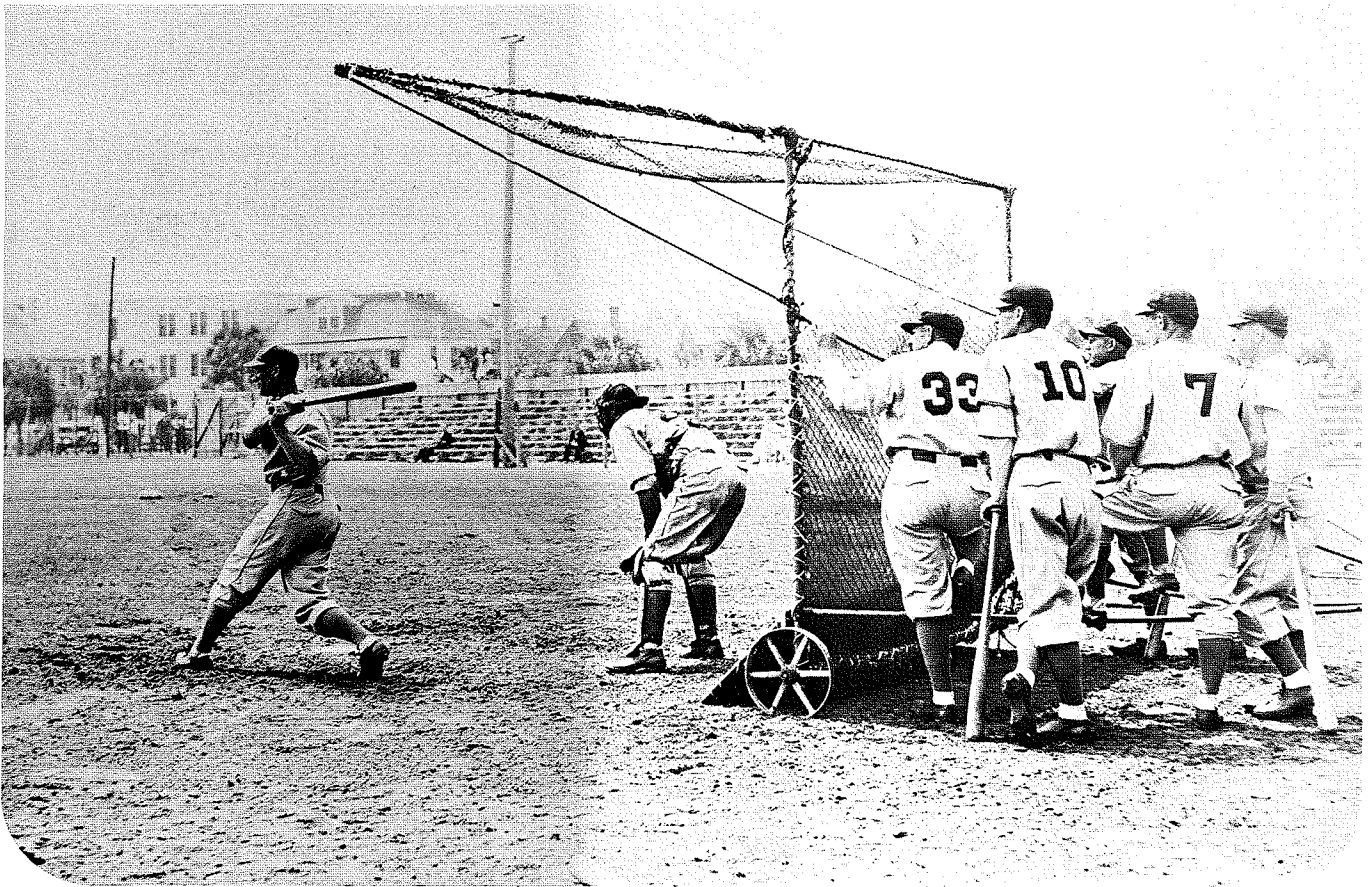


At left, veteran Rube Marquard readies for the 1923 campaign with the Braves in St. Petersburg. Right: Hal Chase pitches horseshoes (on the level?) at the New York Highlanders' spring camp in Gray, Georgia, 1909. Bottom: the 1912 Pirates line up before the Army & Navy Hospital in Hot Springs, Ark.





At right, in the Highlanders' camp of 1909, newcomer John Knight is so eager to please that he exercises a full-dress slide; Birdie Cree stands by. Below, at the Braves' camp in St. Petersburg, 1936, Wally Berger takes his cuts as manager Bill McKechnie and crew observe.





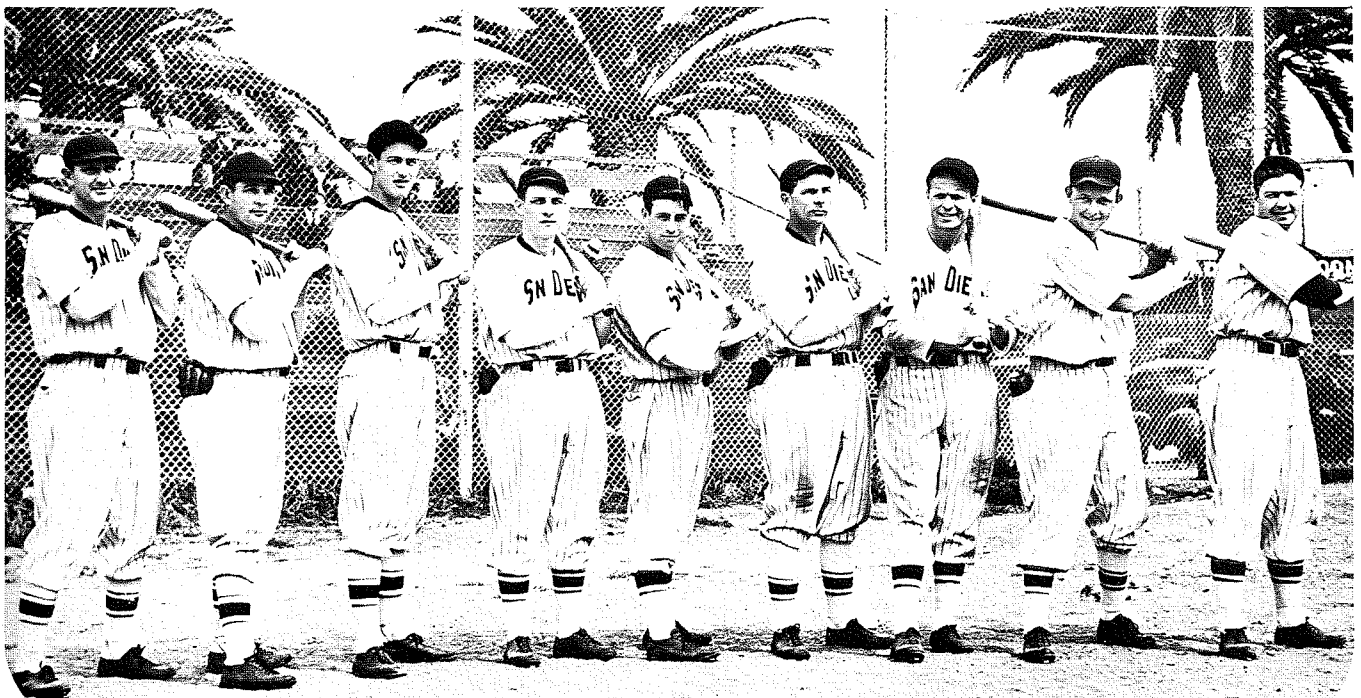
The Cubs of the 1930s were annual contenders despite the unusual spring regimen at Phil Wrigley's paradise, Catalina Island. Here we see them posing (above—Chuck Klein and rapt onlookers), digging a hole for themselves (put to good use from 1946 through 1983), boating (with Gene Lillard, Bill Lee, Hal Weafer, and John Hutchings), and tugging (lower right).

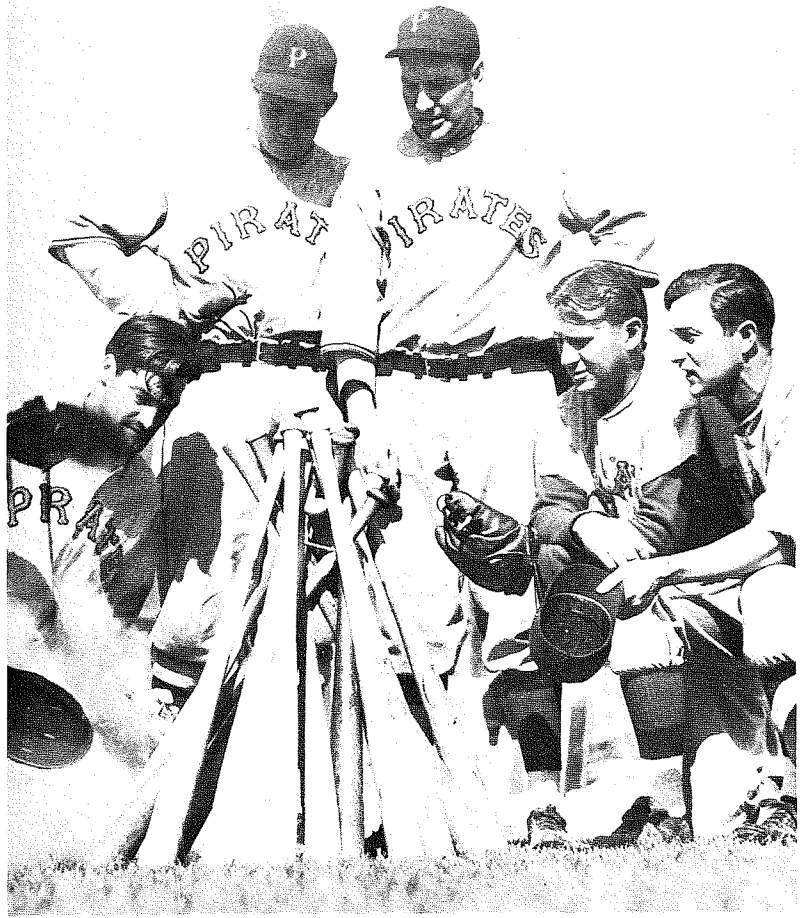






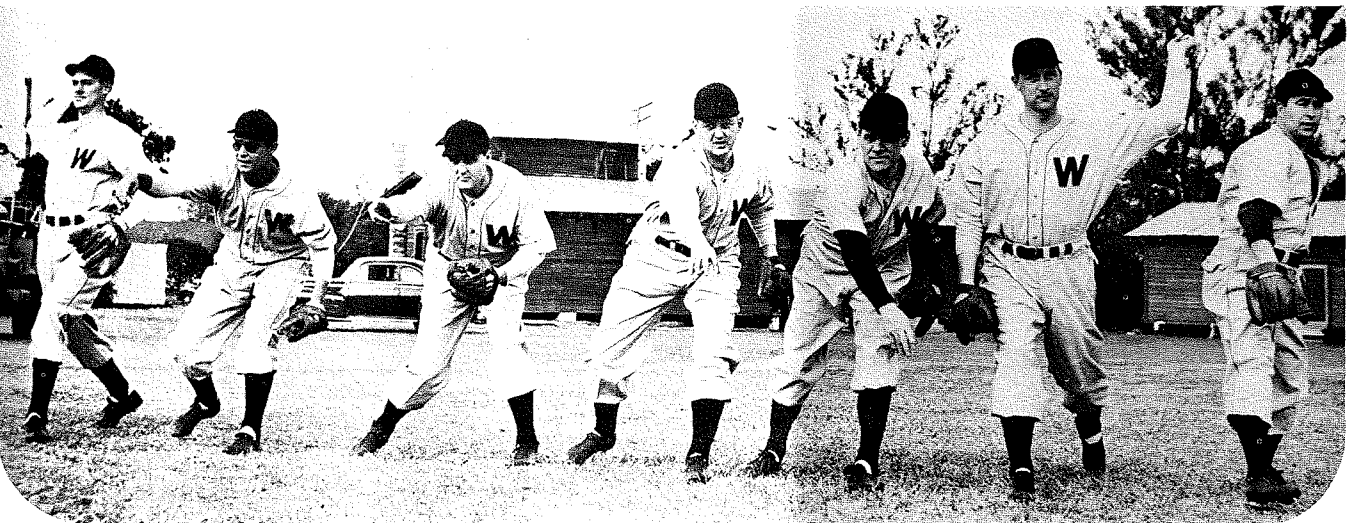
Cardinal rookie Mickey Owen slashes a hit against the Giants in a 1937 Grapefruit League contest. Below: The San Diego team of the same year lines up at home; note Ted Williams, third from left. On opposite page, top left, Schoolboy Rowe splitting his trousers. To his right, Pirates Gus Suhr, Arky Vaughan, Pie Traynor, Fred Lindstrom, and Paul Waner build a bonfire for the 1934 season. Below, Cardinals Jimmy Brown, Terry Moore, and Walker Cooper take aim on first place in the spring of 1942.







At left: In Muncie, Indiana, 1943, Honus Wagner and Frankie Frisch trade caps with sailors from the Peru Naval Base. Middle: Urban cowboys Buddy Kerr, Babe Young, and Sid Gordon strut their stuff in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1947. Below: Orlando, Florida, hosts the Washington Senators' pitching corps; (l-r) Sid Hudson, Walt Masterson, Dutch Leonard, Roger Wolff, Luther Knerr, Bill LeFebvre, Mickey Haefner. Opposite page, top: midnight revels in Sarasota, Florida, January 1936—(1) Willis Hudlin, (2) Roy Spencer, (3) Wes Ferrell, (4) Bob Burke, (5) Butch Henline, (6) Bert Montessor, (7) Heinie Manush, (8) Bill Sweeney, (9) Paul Waner. Below, midmorning revels at Cocoa, Fla., 1967, as the Astros hail the sun.







Is this baseball training or a Broadway rehearsal? The 1967 Yankees (above) seem ready to supply the song as the 1964 Cardinals (below) prepare for the dance. Arms and legs ache, but there is time yet until play becomes serious. Anything can happen. It is spring.





*The devil didn't make them do it.*

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# The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant

MARK GALLAGHER

**E**VERYONE, BOTH THOSE WHO cheered the Bronx Bombers and those who muttered, "Damn Yankees," expected the pinstriped powerhouse to win the pennant again. It was a great time to be a Yankee fan. It was 1959.

New York had won the American League pennant every year of the decade but 1954, and that was a lightning bolt season in which New York won 103 games—the most ever by Stengel's men—only to finish eight games behind Cleveland. And the Yanks would capture the first five pennants of the 1960s.

But what about 1959? That season the imperial Yankees crawled home in disheveled disgrace with a record of 79-75, a distant fifteen games out of first place. What went wrong? Everything. But 1959 wasn't just the year the Yankees lost the pennant; the first-place Chicago White Sox, with 94 wins, won two more games than the champion Yankees of 1958. Given their wealth of woes, the wonder is that the Yankees finished as high as third place. It was, despite a brief run at the pennant in June and a first-division finish, a disastrous season—at least by the unforgiving standards of the Yankees and their fans.

Still fresh was the image of Casey Stengel stepping off an airplane in New York following the 1958 World Series, his rugged countenance sporting the burnt-cork dollar signs Whitey Ford applied during a victory-celebrating flight. Casey's charges had courageously overcome a three-games-to-one deficit, won three straight games, and wrested the World Championship back from the Milwaukee Braves, the team of Aaron and Mathews, Spahn and Burdette. Now Stengel was basking in the glory of a dramatic World Series victory. He was at the pinnacle of his immense fame.

The Yankees of 1958 quickly had blown open the Amer-

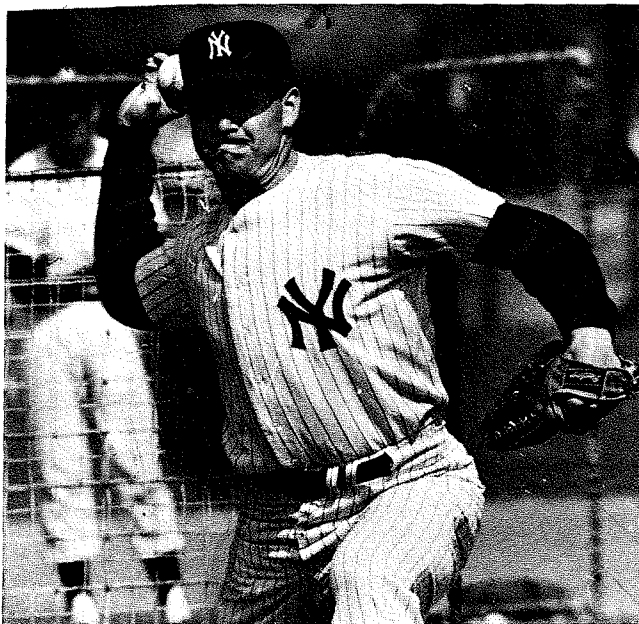
ican League race, sprinting to a 25-6 record and all but locking up the flag by Memorial Day. New York's lead reached 17 games in early August, and then, perhaps because the games no longer mattered, or more likely because a string of injuries began to take its toll, the Yankees sleepwalked home with a 25-28 record. But the last two months of the season, the harbinger of the season to come, were paid scant heed as the Yanks still won the flag by a healthy ten games and went on to dethrone the Braves—and probably saved Stengel's job.

Yankee coowners Dan Topping and Del Webb reportedly were not happy about having Stengel back as their manager in 1959, despite his record of nine pennants in ten years. The Ol' Perfesser would be sixty-nine in July of '59, and was showing signs of losing his grip. But the owners' hands were tied by the 1958 Series comeback; they couldn't fire Casey in his greatest hour. When Stengel signed a two-year contract in February 1959, Topping fully intended that this would be Casey's final pact with the Yankees. There was an uneasiness in the once strong relationship between Topping, Stengel, and General Manager George Weiss, whom Topping was also preparing to release. The normal lines of communication were strained as the Yankees broke spring training camp in 1959. Although troubled by Topping's aloofness, a robustly confident Stengel boasted, "I'll tell you what I think of our prospects. I think we've got the world by the ears, and we're not letting go."

But Stengel was bedazzled by the World Series, and was himself becoming aloof—if not downright irascible—to

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MARK GALLAGHER has chronicled Yankee triumphs and tragedies in several books, including *The Yankee Encyclopedia*.



Bob Turley

his players. Several key Yankees of past years crumbled in '59. Don Larsen and Tom Sturdivant had arm miseries. Larsen didn't win a game after mid-June, and it was a winless Sturdivant who was traded to Kansas City late in the spring. Gil McDougald, a World Series hero the previous October, was hit on the hands by a pitched ball and missed two weeks. He also was hindered by a bad back. McDougald hit .251 in 127 games in 1959, one point higher than his batting average of 1958—but his home runs dropped from 14 to 4, and his RBIs from 65 to 34. He was shuffled between second base, shortstop, and third, as a hole-plugging Stengel took advantage of Gil's versatility. But Casey may have weakened one of his most important bats in the process. McDougald had been an All-Star at all three positions—but not in the same season.

Like McDougald, first baseman Bill "Moose" Skowron, one of the league's premier sluggers, began the year with a serious back ailment. Wearing a back brace and gritting his teeth, Skowron was truly murdering the ball when he was able to play—but he would play in fewer than half the team's games.

Stengel's patience had worn thin with third baseman Andy Carey. Stengel wanted Carey to chop down on the ball and hit for a higher batting average—to "butcher boy." Andy, who hit .302 in 1954, ignored Stengel's advice and swung for the fences. But he just wasn't a power hitter, and now he wasn't hitting for average, either. Defensively, he was good on bunts, but his range was limited. Still, his biggest handicap in 1959 was bad luck. He had an early-season hand infection and after playing in only 41 games, developed an illness that sidelined him for the season.

The 1959 Yankees were bothered most of all by the physical problems of Mickey Mantle. For some time leg problems had taxed the Mick's play, but now a shoulder

injury, the result of a collision with Red Schoendienst in the 1957 World Series, was even more hampering. Pain shot through his damaged right shoulder whenever the switch-hitting Mantle swung lefthanded and missed. Mantle had a much smoother and more level swing as a righthanded hitter in 1958 and 1959.

Early in the 1959 campaign, Mantle reinjured his shoulder in making a throw from center field. His woes gathered in early May when he was hit by a pitch in batting practice and suffered a chipped bone in his right index finger. Then Mickey became one of several Yankees to come down with the Asian flu. And it wasn't even summer yet.

On May 20 the Yankees, owning a 12-19 record, tumbled into the American League cellar for the first time in nineteen years. Mantle, insisting on playing in pain, hit a two-run homer in a losing cause and was booed unmercifully by unfeeling Yankee Stadium fans as he circled the bases. But Mickey on this day was beginning a 20-for-42 streak (with 12 walks) and by May 31 the Yankees were out of last place. The Bronx Bombers were, in fact, commencing a great run at the league leaders, a surge that corresponded with Mantle's hot bat.

George Weiss, meantime, made a deal that helped the Yankees both in the short term and over the long haul. On May 26 Weiss sent the sore-armed Sturdivant, pitcher Johnny Kucks, and infielder Jerry Lumpe to Kansas City for Ralph Terry and Hector Lopez. Terry, a righthander who was originally in the Yankee farm chain and who was considered an excellent pitching prospect, was still maturing as a pitcher in 1959 and would go 3-7 with New York. However, he did flash a few spectacular outings that hinted at his 16-3 season in 1961 and his 23-win year in 1962. Lopez, on the other hand, paid immediate dividends. Stengel put him at third base, and although Hector wasn't much with the glove, he was a first-class hitter. In his first 32 Yankee games, the native of Panama had 26 RBIs, and for his full season with the A's and Yanks, Lopez had 93 RBIs; no other Yankee of 1959 could match that figure. Led by Lopez, Mantle, and Skowron, Yankee bats came alive in June.

Relief pitcher Ryne Duren led a resurgence in New York's pitching. From late April through mid-July, Duren pitched 36 consecutive scoreless innings over 18 appearances. The intimidating, flamethrowing Duren, the Goose Gossage of his era, posted a full-season ERA of 1.88, but at the point the Yankees were eliminated from pennant contention, his ERA was well under 1.00.

Yet Duren won only 3 games and saved only 14. The problem was that his great efforts were often wasted; the Yankees weren't scoring runs in the late innings, and didn't have many leads in need of protection. For years the Yankees excelled at keeping a game close and pulling it out in the late going, but the '59 Yanks were no 5 o'clock wonders, as their record stood around .500 for both extra-inning and one-run games.

Emancipated from the basement, the Yankees stormed through their June schedule, winning 17 of 23 games at one point and racing to within 1½ games of first-place Cleveland. But their momentum was halted in late June when the White Sox licked them in three of four games at Comiskey Park. Chicago was 13-9 against New York in 1959, the first year since 1925 that the Yankees lost their season series with the Chisox.

A few days later, Mantle hurt his right ankle; he would go on to hit only two home runs in July. He should have rested, but with the Yankees struggling to remain in the race, he limped through the summer. As Mantle slumped, to an unprecedented chorus of boos, the Yanks fell back, going 12-16 in July. Mantle was an unselfish player who realized his importance to the club and, pressing to turn the team's fortunes around, lost his rhythm. His impatience at the plate widened the strike zone and he swung at bad pitches rather than accept a walk. Mantle wound up striking out 127 times, the most in his career, while drawing only 94 walks, his only dip below 100 between 1954 and 1962. He ended the season with 31 homers, 75 RBIs, a .285 batting average, and a .514 slugging percentage, numbers that were considered, overall, his worst since 1951, his rookie year. Yet there were some positive numbers, too. That he had a career-high 21 stolen bases (in only 24 attempts) may say more about the team's punch than about his baserunning.

Through midsummer, Weiss and Stengel believed the Yankees would rally again. For good or bad, neither would panic; Weiss would make no wholesale roster changes and Stengel would not play his kids. If Casey was going to bite the dust, it would be with his veterans. But Boston dealt a damaging blow in mid-July. As the Fenway faithful roared their approval, New York dropped five consecutive games and fell seven and a half games off the pace.

More injuries followed. Gil McDougald and Tony Kubek collided in chasing a popup and both suffered lingering aches. Yankee fans were finding themselves in the unaccustomed position of using the loser's lament—bad luck—for the tribulations of 1959. Then, on July 25, Moose Skowron reached for an errant throw, stepping into the first base line, and was struck by Detroit's Coot Veal. The result: Skowron's arm was broken in two places and his season was over. So, most definitely, was the Yanks' season. "If you had him," said Stengel, "you could even think about winning it." But not without him.

Skowron finished 1959 at .298 and with 15 homers in 74 games. At the time of his broken arm, he was second in the league in RBIs with 59. Marv Throneberry, the famous beer commercial star, was Skowron's part-time replacement; Marvelous Marv's batting average was a lite .240.

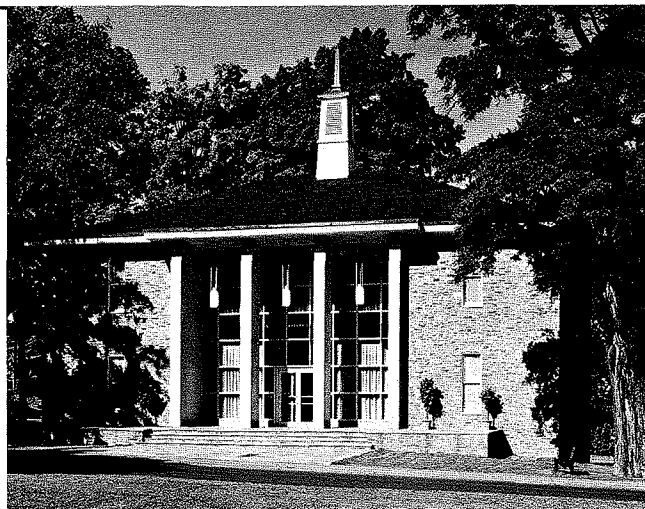
The Yankees played out the string in August and September, and then everyone went home. Everyone, that is,

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except Stengel, who covered the World Series for *Life* magazine.

Bob Turley's poor year was the single most puzzling aspect of 1959. "Bullet Bob" had won the Cy Young Award with a 21-7 record in 1958 and had rescued the Yankees in the World Series with two wins and a save in the final three games. But in 1959 he had no pop in his once blazing fastball, and he dropped to 8-11 with a fat ERA of 4.32.

Turley in his prime was one of the game's most awesome power pitchers, relying almost exclusively on heat. Then he learned to throw a slow curveball and fell in love with the pitch. When hitters began to sit on the curve, Bob went back to his fastball, only to discover that the old zip wasn't there. Writing of Turley and 1959, Stengel in his autobiography (*Casey at the Bat*, 1962) observed that there "was nothing wrong with his arm or his willingness to work. He just couldn't win." Casey complained that Turley wasn't throwing hard and "it looked like he was experimenting on all the hitters with slow stuff and junk."

Turley's 1959 decline was a critical jolt to a starting crew that was without a stopper, although Duke Maas (14-8) and Art Ditmar (13-9) were adequate and Bobby Shantz and Jim Coates pitched well out of the pen in support of Duren. Whitey Ford followed his 14-7 record in 1958 with a fine 16-10 mark, but his ERA was up by more than one run per game and he allowed more hits and walks while pitching in fewer innings than he did the year before. (Ford was far from finished, of course. In 1961 under rookie manager Ralph Houk, Ford began working

every fourth day in a regular rotation for a change, posted a 25-4 record and won the Cy Young Award.)

The Yankee lineups of the 1950s were characterized by the tremendous back-to-back punch of Mickey Mantle and Yogi Berra. As the Yankees rolled to four successive pennants from 1955 through 1958 (usually with Mantle batting third and Berra fourth), the twosome averaged a combined 67 home runs per season. They hit only 50 roundtrippers in 1959. The aging Berra no longer was putting the big power numbers on the board: He had 19 homers and 69 RBIs. Yogi may have been the league's most valuable player for the 1950s. Not only was he a first-rate defensive catcher, but he hit between 22 and 30 homers and had between 82 and 125 RBIs in every season of the decade until 1959. However, he turned thirty-four in 1959 and some of his power was sapped after years of playing the game's most demanding position.

With Berra aging and Skowron hurting, Elston Howard was the man most likely to protect Mantle in the batting order, but at age thirty he still didn't have a regular position in the field. Playing first base, catcher, and outfield in 1959, Ellie had 18 homers and 73 RBIs but might have done better still with the predictability of having a permanent, everyday job. Casey liked all-purpose players like McDougald and Howard because they increased his managerial options. "You can substitute but you can rarely replace," Stengel once said. "With Howard, I have a replacement, not a substitute." Stengel handed him the bulk of the catching in 1960, but Howard had his greatest seasons under Houk in the early 1960s.

The Yankees had a problem in right field, where for years Hank Bauer had roamed. Bauer had been a solid, all-round player, who symbolized Stengel's Yankee teams. He did nothing spectacularly but everything well, and he knew how to win. The tough ex-Marine didn't make mistakes and seemed to save his best performances for crucial moments. But his great effort in the 1958 World Series turned out to be his last hurrah. He turned thirty-seven in 1959, a season in which he batted only .238 with 9 homers. The next year would find him in the Yankees' last stop before sundown, otherwise known as Kansas City.

The 1959 Yankees had records of around .500 against righthanded pitching and at home, indicating the club wasn't taking advantage of the short right-field porch at Yankee Stadium. The Bombers should never be vulnerable to righties, and yet in 1959 Frank Lary and Cal McLish (as well as southpaw Don Mossi) each defeated New York five times. Clearly the Yanks needed a new rightfielder, preferably one who batted lefthanded. (Kansas City was to oblige with Roger Maris.)

The Yankees who didn't win the pennant had problems off the field as well as on. When spring training opened in 1959, Mantle and Ford were among the unsigned. Mickey signed for \$72,000, a small raise, and other Yankees fell into line. Stengel maintained that the tough negotiating stance of the front office put his players in a bad frame of

*Elston Howard and Yogi Berra*



mind. Casey may have forgotten that his old buddy Weiss was always a tough man to shake a nickel out of, in an age when players had little recourse but to sign on the dotted line. How tough was Weiss? Well, following Mantle's 1959 season, he wanted to cut Mickey's salary by \$17,000—yes, they actually cut salaries in those days—and Mantle finally signed for \$65,000, a painful cut of \$7,000.

Stengel was also bitter over losing his instructional school in 1959 (by act of Dan Topping). Stengel once had been a good teacher and enjoyed working with the organization's young prospects. But by 1959, having grown impatient with the inevitable mistakes of youth, Casey was browbeating and intimidating many of the youngsters. The more the Ol' Perfesser fussed and criticized, the tighter and more erratic the kids played. The cases of Norm Siebern and Jerry Lumpe make the point. Stengel rode both and both struggled; finally they were traded to Kansas City in separate 1959 deals. Lumpe was shifted from third base to second and Siebern was moved from the outfield to first base. Each was better suited to his new position. In 1962 Lumpe hit .301 with 193 hits and Siebern hit .308 with 25 homers and 117 RBIs. They weren't such bad players after all.

Tony Kubek and Bobby Richardson took Stengel's hazing, survived, and developed into stars with New York. Stengel liked Kubek's versatility—Tony played all four infield positions as well as the outfield under Stengel—but Tony, who developed into an excellent shortstop, may have lost a chance to be even better because he wasn't kept at the position from the start. Stengel wasn't a Richardson fan. He kept Bobby in a backup role until 1959, when the sweet fielder finally became the regular second sacker. Richardson hit .301, best of the 1959 Yankees. He and Kubek, who hit a solid .279, formed a dynamic double-play combo, too.

Stengel may have hindered Mantle, whom he didn't always treat warmly. Mantle's batting average peaked at .365 in 1957, and then fell to .304 in 1958 and .285 in 1959, a source of great frustration to Stengel, who always believed Mickey should have been even better than he was. Mantle was helped by two circumstances in the early 1960s. The first was the 1960 arrival of Maris, who became the new whipping boy of the fans and press, as Mantle finally became the people's choice. The second was Houk taking the managerial reins in 1961. Houk boosted Mantle's confidence and the Mick responded with perhaps his greatest season.

Yankee shake-ups seemed forthcoming after the 1959 disaster. But in the end, Weiss, Stengel and most of the players returned in 1960. Pitching coach Jim Turner was made the scapegoat and after the season was replaced by Eddie Lopat, the former great Yankee southpaw. As for Casey, he had one thing going for him; he had a year left on his contract, and Topping, unlike the management in New York today, wasn't in the habit of eating big contracts (Stengel's was for \$90,000). Nonetheless, Ralph



Bill Skowron

Houk was clearly the heir apparent, and Stengel knew it. He didn't like one bit having Houk looking over his shoulder, but the players found Houk an antidote to their irascible manager. Although still the darling of the fans and the media, Casey had lost the respect of several players and didn't ingratiate himself with his troops when he allowed management to use him in a midwinter press conference. This get-together with the media laid blame for the 1959 failure on the night owls. Casey, who had always been a nocturnal animal, cracked: "I got these players who got the bad watches, that they can't tell midnight from noon."

Weiss typically blamed 1959 on some of his players' outside business interests. But if George was correct, then he was the one at fault; with the salaries he was paying, the players were forced to supplement their incomes. Another theory held that the Yankees' slowness in signing black and Latin players had finally caught up with them. It would catch up with them, but not until 1965.

Wrote Stengel in *Casey at the Bat*: "This bad 1959 season was an emergency to our owners. They thought the manager was slipping. They thought the coaches were slipping. They thought the players were slipping . . . But maybe those people in the front office didn't have such a good year themselves." Casey had it right—everyone slipped in the year the Yankees lost the pennant. The sagging Bronx Bombers were not defeated by a Joe Hardy—instead they went out and got one, a Roger Maris who would hit 100 home runs in the next two years and restore to the Yankees their accustomed splendor.

# Anatomy of a Murder: The Federal League and the Courts

GARY HAILEY

## THE COURT HOUSE

This is that theater the muse loves best.  
All dramas ever dreamed are acted here.  
The roles are done in earnest, none in jest.  
Hero and dupe and villain all appear.  
Here falsehood skulks behind an honest mask,  
And witless truth lets fall a saving word,  
As the blind goddess tends her patient task  
And in the hush the shears of fate are heard.  
Here the slow-shod avengers keep their date;  
Here innocence uncoils her snow-white bloom;  
From here the untrapped swindle walks elate,  
And stolid murder goes to meet his doom.  
O stage more stark than ever Shakespeare knew  
What peacock playhouse will contend with you?

**W**ENDELL PHILIPS STAFFORD, the composer of "The Court House," was a federal judge in Washington, D.C., for almost twenty-seven years. One of the thousands of trials Judge Stafford presided over was a 1919 antitrust suit brought against Organized Baseball (O.B.) by the Baltimore club of the defunct Federal League—a suit that threatened to loosen O.B.'s monopolistic hold on the national pastime.

Antitrust litigation is rarely colorful or dramatic enough to be the stuff of poetry, and it is doubtful that Judge Stafford had *Federal Baseball Club of Baltimore vs. National League* in mind when he wrote his verse. But a reading of the testimony given in the two-week-long trial does bring to mind a number of the poem's phrases. There

were few, if any heroes to be seen, but "dupe and villain" were well represented in Judge Stafford's courtroom. Certainly "falsehood skulk[ing] behind an honest mask" was present in abundance at the trial, as well as "untrapped swindle."

But more than anything, the evidence presented by the *Federal Baseball* litigants tells the story of a "stolid murder"—the murder of O.B.'s last serious competitor, the short-lived Federal League.

## THE FEDERAL LEAGUE WAR

Late nineteenth century professional baseball was plagued by wars between the established National League and a succession of upstart leagues. The American Association war of 1882, the Union Association war of 1884, the Players League war of 1890, the American League war of 1900—all these bitter conflicts resulted in huge losses for almost everyone involved, not to mention widespread public disenchantment with the professional game.

More than two decades of strife ended in 1903, when the National League and the American League signed a peace treaty. American League President Ban Johnson testified at the *Federal Baseball* trial that the purpose of the peace treaty was to restore "normal conditions" to professional baseball.

Q. Then your purpose was to eliminate competition between the two leagues for players?

....

A. . . . I don't think we cared for competition at all.

---

GARY HAILEY is a Washington, D.C., attorney with the Federal Trade Commission.

Later that year, the two major leagues and several minor leagues adopted the "National Agreement," which provided for mutual respect for player contracts, reserve lists, and territorial rights. It also established a "National Commission," consisting of the major league presidents and a third man selected by them, to rule the sport.

Peace—or, to put it another way, the lack of competition between the two leagues—brought prosperity. Attendance and profits reached unprecedented heights, and the World Series added greatly to the public interest in the pennant races. That prosperity attracted the attention of potential rivals. In 1913, several wealthy businessmen organized the Federal League of Professional Baseball Clubs. Prior to the start of the 1914 season, Federal League President James Gilmore asked Ban Johnson if O.B. would allow the Federal League to operate under the National Agreement as a third major league. Johnson told Gilmore that "there was not room for three major leagues."

The Federal League owners declared war. They quickly erected brand-new stadiums in the league's eight cities—Baltimore, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Chicago, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis. They also declared that the reserve clause in O.B.'s standard player contract was unenforceable, and began to sign up players under reserve by existing major and minor league clubs.

#### THE RESERVE CLAUSE

Lawyers for the Federal Baseball Club of Baltimore hoped to persuade the jury that the purpose of the "right of reservation," a key feature of the National Agreement, was to enable O.B. "to eliminate the possibility of competition by establishing an absolute monopoly" over the supply of professional baseball players.

Much of the National Agreement and many of the rules and regulations issued by the National Commission dealt with the right of reservation, which National Commission chairman and Cincinnati Reds president August "Garry" Herrmann described as "absolutely necessary" to O.B. For example, Article 8, Section 1 of the National Agreement provided that: "[N]o non-reserve contract shall be entered into by any club operating under the National Agreement until permission to do so has been first obtained . . . ." Article 6, Section 1 of that document stated that no club could "negotiate for the purchase or lease of the property"—that is, players—"of another club without first securing the consent of such club." The title of a team to its "property" lapsed only when a team released a player or failed to include the player's name on the reserve list it was required to submit at the end of each season.

The reserve clause itself, which was found in section 10 of the standard player's contract, provided that:

In consideration of the compensation paid to the [player] by the [team], the [player] agrees and obligates himself to contract with and continue in the service of [the team] for the succeeding season at a salary to be determined by the parties of such contract.

What happened if the player and his team couldn't agree on a salary for the succeeding season? According to Herrmann, the player was free to go elsewhere.

Q. And if he does not want to sign, what happens?

A. That ends it. He becomes a free agent.

. . . .

Q. Could he go out and play for any other club in Organized Ball?

A. If he got employment, yes. There is no rule against it.

But on cross-examination, Herrmann admitted that the player would have a hard time finding a job with any other team.

Q. Could he get employment with any other club in Organized Baseball? . . .

A. I do not imagine any other club would take him, because I have always felt, and we all feel, that reservation is absolutely necessary to keep the game alive.

Baltimore Federals director and stockholder Ned Hanlon, a veteran baseball man who had managed Baltimore and Brooklyn to five National League pennants before the turn of the century, described what happened if a player didn't agree on contract terms with his team.

Q. At the end of a man's term of employment, under the Organized Ball system, it is provided in these contracts that the club shall have a right to negotiate with him for employment for another year, or another season, upon terms to be agreed upon. Suppose they could not agree on terms, on a salary, for instance, for the next year? What happened?

A. He could not play professional baseball. If they did not agree on terms, he could not go anywhere else, could not play anywhere else under professional baseball.

Q. How long could he be kept in that situation without employment?

A. For year after year.

Q. It would not prevent him from going to blacksmithing or plowing or anything like that, would it?

A. No, sir. If they put him on the reserve list, they could not agree on terms, and they did not see fit to sell him or exchange him to somebody else, they would reserve his reservation year after year, continuously. That is what it means.

The experience of former major leaguer Jimmy "Runt" Walsh supported Hanlon's claim that the right of reservation could last forever. Walsh was a Phillies utilityman who decided to sign with the Baltimore Federals after Philadelphia sold his contract to Montreal after the 1913 season. After the Federal League folded, Walsh spent the 1916 season with Memphis. When he and that team could not agree on a salary for 1917, Walsh quit baseball and went to work at a Baltimore steel mill. Walsh had not

played professionally since then, but he still heard from the Memphis club in following years.

Q. . . . They tendered you a contract at the end of the season of 1916 for the following year for \$250 a month, and you would not accept that. Did they tender you another contract at the end of the year 1917?

A. I got a contract from them again this spring, yes, sir, this past spring, February, I think.

Q. At the end of each year they have been offering you contracts, have they?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Why do they do that? Do you understand why?

A. I do not understand the reason why, no, sir, with the exception that they still reserve me to their club.

Q. The object is to reserve you, so that you cannot make any other contract without their consent. That is the purpose of their offering you these contracts every year?

A. Yes, sir.

Connie Mack described the situation of holdouts like Walsh very graphically.

Q. Suppose you cannot come to an agreement with him?

A. I will tell you. If a player is at all reasonable we come to terms.

....

Q. But suppose you don't think he is reasonable; suppose you can't agree?

A. There are cases of that kind.

Q. What happens?

A. We just let him lay there.

### THE BLACKLIST

Other rules of O.B. were intended to discourage players under reserve from jumping to "outlaw" organizations that were not parties to the National Agreement, such as the Federal League. Articles 22 and 23 provided that any player who signed a contract or even entered into negotiations with an outlaw team "shall be declared ineligible" for at least three years. Any National Agreement team that signed an ineligible player could be drummed out of O.B. Any player who even appeared in an exhibition game with an ineligible player was himself subject to blacklisting.

As several of the plaintiff's witnesses testified, players were reluctant to sign with the Federal League because they knew that they might be blacklisted for the remainder of their playing days. On November 12, 1913, Herrmann had told the annual meeting of minor league teams that "there will be no place in Organized Baseball" for players who did not respect their contractual obligations, including the reserve clause. According to Hanlon, his fellow director and part-owner of the Baltimore Federals,

L. Edwin Goldman, and Baltimore's player-manager, Otto "Dutch" Knabe, the team had to offer excessively large salaries and long-term, guaranteed contracts to attract players. Moreover, they alleged, most of the players who did take a chance with the new league were veterans who knew they were nearing the end of their playing days.

"Runt" Walsh's testimony supported those witnesses' statements. After the 1913 season, Walsh learned through the newspapers that the Phillies had sold his contract to Montreal of the International League. He had never been to Montreal and was not consulted whether he would care to go to Montreal, so he signed with Baltimore.

Walsh demanded a three-year contract without the



*James A. Gilmore*

usual provision that allowed a team to release a player on ten days' notice. He wanted the security of a guaranteed, long-term contract because he believed there was little if any chance that he would be permitted to return to O.B. A letter he received from Montreal president Sam Lichtenheim after signing with Baltimore proved that Walsh's concern was justified.

Dear [Mr. Walsh]:

. . . . I am very much surprised . . . you signed with the Federals . . . .

. . . [I]f you start to play with them, you are blacklisted from Organized Ball for three years, and if their league blows up I don't know what you will do for three years.

. . . I don't think you want to throw away three years of your future for the sake of a few hundred dollars advance money



which you may have received, and which if it is not too much I may be willing to pay back for you . . . .

. . . So don't be foolish and let these people blindfold you, which they have done with several players, and which players would be very glad to come back to Organized Ball but it is too late, because their clubs won't take them back, but in your case I will take you back, if your terms are not too much, before you make this fatal jump, but once you have made the jump and played one game for them, I could not take you back if you were willing to play for me for \$100.00 per month, as you must stay out of Organized Ball for three years, the same as any other player who plays one game for the Federal League.

Lichtenheim's letter to Walsh was very helpful to the plaintiff's case. The Montreal team president did not just threaten Walsh with blacklisting. He also encouraged Walsh to break his valid contract with Baltimore and generally libeled the new league.

[I]f the amount that they have advanced you is not too large, perhaps we could arrange to pay it back for you to them, when you report to us, and sign you to a contract, because . . . you know they will not go to the courts.

I am quite sure that Manager Knabe, or any of these other managers, would not do anything for you if you get hurt, or if you took sick, whereas in Organized Ball we have to take care of you, and I think you must know by now that this Federal League started out to be a Major League. I think you have already seen enough to know that they won't even be as good a league as ours, as they have only obtained very few Major League players, and the big bulk of their players come from our league and lower leagues, and I am quite sure that you know the public will not look on them as a Major League.

Don't you see that their whole trick is to get you signed to a contract so as to be taken over by Organized Ball, which will never be the case, but if they were taken over by Organized Ball, you would be in a worse position with them than you would be with us, because they would chop you down quickly, knowing that you could not go anywhere else.

Now just think this over and you will see that it is best to send them back their money, if they advanced you any money . . . and sign another contract with your real employers, who have always taken care of you, and who have made you what you are, and if you sign [a] contract with us we will protect your interests.

. . . .

. . . [T]here is nothing to stop them throwing you out at any time, and cancelling your contract as soon as they know you cannot get back to Organized Ball for three years and which you know is the case. So I think you are much better off with Organized Ball, and which is the devil you do know, instead of Outlaw Ball, which is the devil you don't know, and it must sound sensible to you, that Organized Ball, for whom you have worked for many years, can and will do more for you, than your new owners, who are only speculators, and who have started out to bluff the public right from the jump, because they have promised Major League Ball, which you know they will not have.

They also promised to have a club in Toronto, which they will not have, and I think you will find before you get through that they have made a great many other promises, which they will not carry out, whereas with Organized Ball we must carry them out, and if you know of any promise I ever made, of any kind, which I did not carry out, I will be glad to hear of it.

. . . .

P.S.— . . . [Y]ou must understand that you have a chance of

being captain or manager here later on, whereas with them as soon as your usefulness as a player is finished, or you meet with an accident, which I hope you won't, they would throw you on the street, and you could not work for them . . . . So don't throw the substance away for the shadow, and get caught by these alluring offers which cannot materialise, and you know as well as I do that they cannot pay these salaries and take it at the gates by playing Minor League Ball, and you also know that they will play nothing but Minor League Ball, and will also have to play when we are away, in other words they will have to take our leaveings, so I don't see how your future is in any way secure with them . . . . [O]utlaws in business have never been successful, and without organization there cannot be any success, and if we were not organized your position as a player would not be secure, and I think they don't know from week to week what cities they will play in and every week sees them change their cities, so you see they are only making a stab to be taken into Organized Ball, but they have guessed wrongly, and Organized Ball will never recognize them, and I think you know this already, and if you don't know it you may write to President Ban Johnson or [National League President John K.] Tener, and get their reply and find out for yourself that what I tell you is correct.

### JOHNSON FIGHTS BACK

Walsh never wrote to American League president Ban Johnson, as Lichtenheim had suggested. But only two weeks after Lichtenheim had written to Walsh, Johnson made his opinions known. In a March 5, 1914, interview with a New York *Evening Sun* writer, Johnson "declared war" on the Federal League.

There can be no peace until the Federal League has been exterminated . . . [W]e will fight these pirates to the finish. There will be no quarter.

Yes, I've heard that peacemakers are at work, but they are wasting their time. The American League will tolerate no such interference . . . .

This Federal League movement is taken too seriously, why, the whole thing is a joke. They are holding a meeting once a week to keep from falling to pieces. Quote me as saying that the Federals have no money in Buffalo, Indianapolis, and Pittsburgh. They have no ball parks in any of their cities, except an amateur field in Kansas City and a ramshackle affair in Pittsburgh. There are some wooden bleachers put up on Hanlon's Park in Baltimore, I believe.

We hear from day to day that the Feds have millions behind them. If that is true they ought to build half million dollar stadium[s] in a few weeks. But getting down to brass tacks, they have neither grounds nor players that amount to anything.

When the list of players is finally announced the baseball public will realize what a bluff these fellows have been putting up. They have many unknown players, taken off the lots[,] and a bunch of Bush Leaguers with a sprinkling of big fellows. But the American League will lose not more than ten men . . . .

We are going to cut and slash right and left from now on. We intend to show up the four flushers and the bluffers in the proper light.

The Johnson interview appeared in print the day before fifty-odd major leaguers returned to New York on the "Lusitania" after an around-the-world trip. According to the plaintiff, Johnson's tough talk was intended to frighten those players away from the Federal League as

well as to destroy the new circuit's credibility with the public.

### THE 1914 SEASON

In spite of Organized Baseball's opposition, the Federal League opened the 1914 season confident of success. Opening day attendance was high, with Baltimore's home opener attracting a standing-room-only crowd of 19,000.

The 1914 pennant race was a close one: Indianapolis, led by outfielder Benny Kauff (who hit .370, stole 75 bases, and scored 120 runs) and pitcher Cy Falkenberg (a 25-game winner with a 2.22 ERA and 9 shutouts), edged Chicago by one and a half games, with Baltimore a close third. Still, total Federal League attendance did not approach that of either the American or National League. The Chicago Federals led the league in attendance, but drew fewer fans than the sixth-place White Sox. The established leagues suffered as well; AL attendance fell from 3.5 million in 1913 to 2.75 million in 1914.

The players were not complaining about the competition between the rival leagues. The Federal League eventually signed 81 major leaguers and 140 minor leaguers to contracts, nearly all of them at much higher salaries. Other players used the threat of jumping to get more money from teams in O.B. Several players—including Ray Caldwell, Walter Johnson, "Reindeer Bill" Killefer, and Ivy Wingo—signed contracts with Federal League teams but were persuaded to jump back to their former clubs. Caldwell made \$2400 in 1913, but the Yankees gave him a four-year contract paying \$8000 annually to bring him back into the fold. Killefer's and Wingo's salaries also more than doubled while Johnson's went from \$7000 to \$12,500.

Several times, disputes over who had rights to a player ended up in court. Organized Baseball did not take legal action against players who were reserved but not under contract, but it did go to court to restrain players who had signed contracts for the 1914 season from jumping leagues. Early that season, pitchers Dave Davenport and George "Chief" Johnson and outfielder Armando Marsans of the Cincinnati Reds jumped to Federal League clubs. A Missouri federal judge granted the Reds' request for an injunction against Marsans, but a court in Illinois refused to issue a similar injunction against Johnson because the contract lacked "mutuality." On similar grounds, a New York court denied a White Sox request for a court order to prevent first baseman Hal Chase from jumping to the Buffalo Federals.

The tables were turned in the Killefer case. Killefer's 1913 Phillies salary was \$3200. On January 8, 1914, he signed with the Chicago Federals for \$5800; only twelve days later he signed a new Phillies contract for \$6500. A federal appeals court refused to order Killefer to stand by the contract with Chicago on the grounds that the Federal League team, which had induced Killefer to ignore his reserve clause, came into court with "unclean hands."

George Wharton Pepper, who represented O.B. in that case as well as in the Baltimore Federal Club litigation, persuaded the court that while the reserve clause was not legally enforceable by Philadelphia, the Chicago Federals had no business luring Killefer away before the Phillies had a fair chance to sign him to a contract for the 1914 season.

On January 5, 1915, the Federal League took the legal offensive by filing an antitrust suit against Organized Baseball. The Chicago federal judge assigned to hear the case was none other than Kenesaw Mountain Landis, who had the reputation of being a committed trustbuster. The trial of that case ended on January 22, and the Federal League hoped for a quick decision from Judge Landis. But the future commissioner seemed to be in no hurry to act. In March, Brooklyn Federals owner R.B. Ward approached Ban Johnson and again asked O.B. to allow its rival to become a party to the National Agreement.

### 1915: THE WAR CONTINUES

The Federal League opened the 1915 season with high hopes. Over 27,000 fans were on hand for opening day in Newark, where oilman Harry Sinclair had moved the Indianapolis Federals. But attendance fell off rapidly and losses began to mount. By the end of the league's second season, Brooklyn's Ward had lost \$800,000; the Kansas City and Buffalo clubs were insolvent. Baltimore lost \$35,000 in 1914 and almost \$30,000 in 1915.

According to President Gilmore, the league's financial ills became apparent early in the season.

A. [I]t was probably in May that some of us realized that it was going to be a very poor season from a financial standpoint, and I know along about the middle of July we started to hold meetings to discuss the situation, because previous to that time I had been called to Buffalo, and I had been called to Kansas City, in an effort to induce other people to invest money. Their overhead was far in excess of their receipts, and they were all beginning to complain.

Q. When did you say you reached the conclusion that the Federal League was doomed?

A. Along about the middle of June or the first of July . . . . [M]y opinion was that we were fighting a hopeless task. There were two clubs that had practically given up the fight, Kansas City and Buffalo. I had already received an opinion from the other members of the organization that they would not continue with six clubs . . . .

. . . .

Q. You had no idea from June on that the Federal League would be able to prepare for the next season at all?

A. I did not see any opportunity at all, no sir.

. . . .

Q. Were you absolutely convinced of that?

A. I felt satisfied in my own mind to the extent that I began to figure out some way that we could at least save the ball players, and save our own reputations.

## "IT WAS ONE BIG BLUFF"

Gilmore approached Sinclair and Ward with an audacious plan. First, they rented a suite of Manhattan offices and purchased an option to buy some vacant land at 143rd Street and Lenox Avenue. They then asked Corry Comstock, a New York City engineer and architect who was also the vice-president of the Pittsburgh Federal club, to draw up plans for a grandiose, 55,000-seat stadium. Gilmore then announced to the press that the Federal League planned to "invade" New York in 1916.

The purpose of all this? According to Gilmore, "[i]t was one big bluff," a trick to force O.B. into "coming around and making some kind of offer."



*Garry Herrmann*

Q. Your real purpose was to get Organized Baseball to buy you out?

A. To reimburse us for some of our expenditures, yes, sir.

Q. To buy you out. Did not they have enough ball parks for the American and National Leagues at that time?

A. I presume they did.

Q. You expected them to buy you out and get rid of you as an annoying competitor; is that the proposition?

A. I think so, yes, sir.

....

Q. You had statements and interviews in the papers about it [the N.Y. stadium]?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You said you were going to build it?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you had no idea of building it?

A. None at all. We did not know where the money was coming from unless some angel came along.

Q. You mean some devil; you were not associating with angels. Do you mean to tell this jury that you gave out interviews to the papers that you were going to build this stadium, employed an architect and manifested all of the different things that were necessary to accompany a real good faith act and had no idea of building a stadium at all?

A. It was one big bluff.

Q. That is the word you used for it?

A. Bluff, yes, sir.

Q. Might you not also characterize it as false pretense?

A. I do not know what you characterize it.

Q. Were you not engaging in false pretense?

A. We were trying to be protected to the best of our ability.

Comstock described the threatened invasion of New York by the Federal League as a "holdup"; he said there was "not a word of truth" in the announcement of the plans to build a stadium.

Gilmore and his co-conspirators did not tell the other Federal League owners about their scheme. According to Gilmore,

A. . . . [T]he bluff that we had formulated, the plan we had formulated, to put this thing through, was an absolute secret between Mr. R.B. Ward, Mr. Comstock, Mr. Sinclair and myself . . . .

Q. You were putting up a bluff on Baltimore?

A. Baltimore did not know one thing about the plan we were putting up in New York . . . . [W]e decided to keep it a secret from everybody. Mr. Weeghman [of Chicago] knew nothing about it. Mr. Ball of St. Louis knew nothing about it.

Gilmore's machinations certainly fooled the Baltimore club. While he was trying to bluff O.B. into buying out the Federal League, Baltimore officials were naively making preparations for the 1916 season. Colonel Stuart S. Janney, a prominent Baltimore attorney who held stock in the team and served as its lawyer, testified that the club's directors and stockholders had not expected to turn a profit overnight and were prepared to supply whatever additional financing was necessary for the 1916 season.

These preparations were encouraged by a series of letters Gilmore wrote to club officials in the fall of 1915, all of which contained some implication that the Federal League would be alive and well enough to operate in 1916. In an October 13 letter, Gilmore wrote:

[I] hope that your club is signing up some good talent for the

coming year. I have wonderful faith in Baltimore as a Major League city, and know if you can get a fighting team there and keep it in the race, you will draw wonderful crowds and easily pay expenses.

On November 1, he wrote:

I also want to suggest that in view of your experience the last year that you make out a statement of the approximate cost to operate your club during the next season. In other words, I would like an idea of how much cheaper you think you can operate in 1916 than you could in 1915. This will be valuable information for our Board Members, and I want you to get it as accurately as possible.

On November 30, Gilmore forwarded to Baltimore club president Carroll W. Rasin a letter from a Williamsport, Pennsylvania fan recommending that the Federal League sign up for the 1916 season a local star who was a "natural-born hitter . . . fast on his feet; a sure catch and a 'find.'" And on December 3, Gilmore wrote again to request the financial information that he had asked for in his November 1 letter.

### PEACE TALKS

Baltimore officials did hear rumors that some Federal League owners were negotiating a settlement. At a November 9 league meeting in Indianapolis, Baltimore President Rasin asked Gilmore, Weeghman, and Sinclair point-blank if there was any truth in newspaper reports to that effect. All three denied that they were in communication with Organized Baseball, but Rasin suspected at the time that their denials "might not be frank." In early December, Rasin saw more "newspaper talk" that O.B. and the Federal League were about to cut a deal. When he called Gilmore, Gilmore again assured him that there was no truth to the rumors.

On December 12, Gilmore ran into three National League officials in the lobby of New York City's Biltmore Hotel. One of them asked Gilmore to "come around and take this matter up" at the National League owners' meeting scheduled for the next day. Gilmore turned down the invitation. "Absolutely nothing doing," he said. "We have gone too far and made too much progress on our New York invasion."

The next day, the same men called Gilmore and asked him to "come over and fix this thing up." Gilmore—hoping to hook his adversaries a little more firmly before reeling them in—feigned disinterest. "I told you the other day I would not have anything to do with it," he said, "and I will not talk about it."

Gilmore then turned to Harry Sinclair and said, in a voice loud enough for his caller to hear, "Harry, these people want [us] to come over and talk to them. Do you want to go?" Also intending the caller to hear him, Sinclair replied, "We might as well go and hear what they have to say." The two of them went to National League President Tener's office to discuss the situation.

Gilmore, Sinclair, and the National League representatives came to a tentative peace agreement. First, the N.L. agreed to make all blacklisted Federal League players eligible to play in O.B. and to let the Federal League owners sell their players' contracts to the highest bidders. Next, the NL owners offered to buy the Brooklyn Federals' park for \$400,000, subject to the American League owners agreeing to kick in half of that sum. They also promised to approve the sale of the Chicago Cubs to Chicago Federals owner Charles E. Weeghman and put up \$50,000 of the purchase price. The NL owners then agreed to buy out the Pittsburgh Federals for \$50,000. Sinclair was a close friend of St. Louis Federals owner Phil Ball, and he assured



*Charles Weeghman*

the conferees that Ball would be satisfied if he could buy either the Cardinals or the Browns. The Buffalo and Kansas City clubs were no longer members in good standing of the Federal League—their owners had run out of money before the season ended, and the other teams had provided funds to pay their players in order to keep the league's financial problems a secret—so there was little need to worry about them. There was apparently no discussion concerning the Newark franchise, even though owner Sinclair was present.

That left only the Baltimore club. Gilmore testified that he asked for \$200,000 for Baltimore's owners, but was laughed at. He later told Sinclair that he thought it was wise "to start high." The meeting then broke up.

On December 16, 1915, Rasin received a telegram from Gilmore: "You and Hanlon be at Biltmore in morning. Important." Rasin, Hanson, and Janney took the midnight train to New York, and went to Gilmore's apartment at the Biltmore Hotel on the morning of December 17. Gilmore explained that he had summoned them to New York to tell them that the 1916 Federal League season was "all off." Gilmore then told the stunned Baltimore officials about the tentative peace agreement of the 13th.

Janney and Rasin asked why Gilmore and the others had agreed to sell out, but Gilmore did not reply. They then asked what arrangements had been made concerning the Baltimore club's interests. None, said Gilmore; however, he was sure that Baltimore would be "taken care of" before the settlement was made final.

Later, Sinclair, Weeghman, and representatives of other Federal League teams joined the meeting. They told the Baltimoreans that the opportunity to make peace had arisen suddenly and unexpectedly, and no one then present in New York felt he had authority to speak for Baltimore; however, like Gilmore, they were all sure that the National Commission would give due consideration to Baltimore's claims.

The Baltimore officials were in no mood to take Gilmore's advice and "accept the situation philosophically." According to Janney, the discussion "grew rather bitter." When Sinclair defended his and his allies' actions, "quite a dispute arose" between him and Janney; "his words and mine," Janney testified, "were not always of the smoothest." Janney argued that the Federal League clubs should get some share of the proceeds of any agreement to dissolve the circuit, but Sinclair said he "would have none of that."

Gilmore and his allies hoped to finalize the December 13 agreement at a meeting with American and National League club owners that evening at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. According to Gilmore, Comstock, and Ward, Rasin moved that a committee of three—Gilmore, Sinclair, and Weeghman—be authorized to represent all the Federal League clubs at that meeting. Rasin denied that he made such a motion.

### THE WALDORF MEETING

The Waldorf meeting was called to order by National Commission president August Herrmann at 9:10 P.M., Friday, December 17, 1915. Among the thirty or so baseball men present at the meeting were American and National League presidents Johnson and Tener; Federal Leaguers Gilmore, Sinclair, Weeghman, and Rasin; American League owners Charles Comiskey (White Sox) and Colonel Jacob Ruppert (Yankees); and National League owners Charles Ebbets (Dodgers), James Gaffney (Braves), and Barney Dreyfuss (Pirates). A stenographer was present, and a transcript was produced.

The conferees quickly ratified those parts of the tentative peace agreement of December 13 that provided that

the National League would put up \$50,000 toward Weeghman's purchase of the Cubs; that Organized Baseball would pay R.B. Ward's heirs \$20,000 a year for twenty years in exchange for the Brooklyn Federals' stadium; that Organized Baseball would pay \$50,000 to the owners of the Pittsburgh Federals; and that all Federal League players would be eligible to return to O.B.

Gilmore was asked if his committee was empowered to enter into a binding agreement on behalf of the Federal League.

*Gilmore:* I can say for the Federal League that the committee represented here tonight was appointed with full authority to discuss this proposition with you, and conclude any agreement that we might come to, and we are ready to open up the talk and see what can be done.

....

*Herrmann:* I understand, Mr. Gilmore, you state now that you have authority to act on behalf of the Federal League; that is, your committee?

*Gilmore:* We have full authority, Mr. Herrmann.

Rasin did not challenge Gilmore's assertion.

At about the time the meeting was beginning, a *Baltimore Sun* reporter went to the Biltmore to tell Janney that it looked as if Baltimore might be able to get a National League team. Janney hurried to the Waldorf, where Rasin also told him that Baltimore had a good chance of landing an established franchise if they asked for one. Herrmann then gave Janney the floor.

We feel just as I suppose everyone feels, that peace is the very best proposition in baseball and for baseball. We are all willing to concede that, and we hope it will come about. There is in the proposal which has been adopted, and which has been signed by certain parties—the situation in Baltimore is not touched upon, and it seems to me important in several aspects. In the first place, Baltimore has a population of seven hundred and fifty or eight hundred thousand people, including the suburbs . . . .

We are willing to purchase and pay for a franchise in the major leagues, if we can get it, and we want that to be the main keynote of our situation this evening . . . .

....

We are not venturing to suggest to you gentlemen just what franchise we think that would be. You could work that out probably better than ourselves, but that is our starting point, and that is what we would like to see, and which we lay before you.

Baltimore is not mentioned in the proposals that you have heretofore considered, and we think that, that is—we want to be taken up with every consideration, and . . . if you state or suggest that Baltimore would not pay the rest of the teams what the city does from which the franchise might be moved, we would be willing, and we will say that [we] will guarantee to pay as much as the city from which it is moved. In other words, the patronage there, we are willing to stand back of. We know it is there. We know that the people [will] attend the games, and we know we can produce the same revenue for a visiting team that has been produced by the city from which it will be moved . . . .

....

We represent a large body of representative citizens there, and

we will see to it that suitable guarantees are given to back up every word that I have said. That is our position, gentlemen; and . . . we do not ask anything if we could be given the privilege of buying and locating a major league club in Baltimore, at a reasonable price, a franchise in . . . either one or the other of the two major leagues which you represent. We do not ask anybody to sacrifice anything or contribute to us. We are willing to stand in our own position and come forward and back our words with deeds and give you suitable guarantees.

Several of the major league owners present ridiculed the notion that Baltimore could support a major league franchise.

*Comiskey:* Well, what would you give for a franchise in Baltimore? Suppose we could blow life into McGraw and Kelley and Jennings and all those players that you had there that you could not support . . . . What would you give for those players if we would guarantee that they would play good ball in Baltimore for ten years, what would you pay for them and how loyally would you support them?

*Janney:* We would support them well.

*Comiskey:* What crowd would you draw?

*Janney:* We would draw sufficient to enable us to pay \$250,000 for a franchise.

*Comiskey:* That is just the proper price for a minor league franchise . . . . Baltimore, a minor league city, and not a hell of a good one at that.

*Ebbets:* That's right.

*Comiskey:* As sure as you are sitting there now, and your friends will tell you. Charlie, show them what you have got in Baltimore. You are the best evidence in the world. Tell them what you drew in Baltimore . . . .

*Ebbets:* When [Ned Hanlon] quit Baltimore and came to Brooklyn, he said, "Baltimore is not a major league city." We lost money in Baltimore operating the club with the same players that Mr. Comiskey speaks of.

*Janney:* There are very peculiar circumstances that brought that about.

*Ebbets:* Nothing peculiar about it; it is a minor league city, positively and absolutely, and will never be anything else.

*Janney:* That is your opinion.

*Ebbets:* Sure that is my opinion, because I had a piece of experience and lost money down there.

*Janney:* But money has been lost in other towns also in baseball.

*Ebbets:* Not in major league cities.

*Janney:* Yes, they have been lost in other towns that are major league cities.

*Ebbets:* It is one of the worst minor league towns in this country.

*Janney:* It will never be a minor league town because the people feel naturally—

*Ebbets:* You have too many colored population to start with. They are a cheap population when it gets down to paying their money at the gate.

*Janney:* They come across, I think, in good shape. This is perfectly futile, of course. It requires your consent and I am not going to try to convince you when you are so set in your ways.

Janney was right to call further discussion futile. Under both American and National League rules, the transfer of any franchise to Baltimore would require the unanimous consent of the league owners. From the statements of the owners at the meeting, it is clear that any motion to give Baltimore an existing team—Janney and Rasin had thought the Cardinals might be available—would have been met not with unanimous consent, but unanimous refusal.

The two sides agreed that a detailed settlement, including something for Baltimore, should be worked out by the National Commission and a Federal League committee of three. Gilmore proposed that himself, Sinclair, and Weeghman serve as that committee, and neither Janney nor Rasin objected.

There was then some discussion of the Federal League's pending antitrust suit against Organized Baseball, which Judge Landis had still not decided. National League counsel John C. Toole felt that the suit should be withdrawn before any more negotiating was done:

[I]t seems to me that the very first thing that should be done, and that should be done very promptly, to show that the thing is moving along, is that both sides should agree that that action be discontinued, and prompt steps should be taken to discontinue it and get it out of the way. That ought to be done before you have any meeting of the [National] Commission with this committee.

Janney objected that Toole was putting the cart before the horse.

*Janney:* I think that should be part of the agreement ultimately reached, that the suit be discontinued. It would not certainly be any discourtesy to the Court for parties to a litigation to discuss its composition, and when they come to a composition, then to have the dismissal of the action as a part of the composition.

*Toole:* You are not settling that suit, that is the difficulty. If you were settling that litigation, that is another thing, but you are settling a multitude of things in no way involved in that, and reaching agreements on them and this decision has been in abeyance. He may decide it tomorrow, and all this go to nothing, and put you all in a very embarrassing position, although you do not, perhaps, get into contempt of court.

*Janney:* I think the most that could be done, so far as I can see, would be to wire our respective counsel to appear before the Court tomorrow and advise him that there are matters under discussion which may ultimately result in an agreement, and if this agreement is effective, it will involve the discontinuance of the action before him, and suggest it would be proper for him to delay rendering a decision in it until this could be seen, whether the composition was effected, and that would be perfectly compatible with every possible legal or courteous principle . . . . What we do here will be subject to the dismissal. It is not usual to dismiss the case and then compose it. You compose it and then dismiss it . . . . You do not dismiss your suit and then agree how to settle it. That is that whole settlement. You settle

this thing, and then, with your settlement, go and dismiss it. I have no objection, of course, to notifying the attorneys and telling them to do everything that is necessary to be courteous and pleasing to the Court.

When the meeting was adjourned, Toole telegraphed Organized Baseball's Chicago attorney:

Negotiations are pending, which if carried out will result in an agreement to withdraw the action brought by the Federal League. Please bring the matter to the attention of Judge Landis, if you think it advisable, and secure his approval of situation. Communicate with attorneys for Federal League, who will be advised by their client.

The Federal League was dead, but Gilmore and his allies weren't shedding any tears over its demise. Fearful



*Charles Comiskey*

that the league was doomed anyway, they decided to cut their losses rather than fight to the finish. Organized Baseball was happy to offer the Federal League a generous peace settlement. After all, there was still a chance that Judge Landis would issue a damaging verdict in the Federal League's antitrust action. The rival league's New York bluff also raised the specter of even more bitter competition for players and fans, with plenty of red ink to go around.

Ban Johnson would have preferred not to call a truce. The Federal League's threat to put a team in New York may have fooled the National League, but the American League knew better: It had considered building a new stadium on the Lenox Avenue property years earlier, but found that it was absolutely impractical to locate a park there. Johnson was characteristically blunt in describing his feelings about the peace pact.

Q. Can you tell us without any lengthy answer why did you pay \$50,000 for [the Pittsburgh park]?

A. That was a tentative agreement that the National League entered into, and we abided by their decision in the matter. I could not see any reason why Pittsburgh should be given \$50,000. As a matter of fact I did not want to give a five-cent piece to Pittsburgh.

Q. What you wanted to do was to knock them out?

A. Knock them out; that is it.

Q. Not to pay a cent?

A. Not a nickel.

Q. You were not as generous as Mr. Herrmann. Mr. Herrmann said yesterday he wanted to help them out.

A. I did not want to help them out. I am very frank in that regard.

The National Commission and the Federal League committee signed a peace treaty in Cincinnati on December 22. Before the agreement was concluded, Gilmore called Rasin to ask if Baltimore would accept \$75,000, but Rasin said no. Another meeting to discuss Baltimore's claims was held in Cincinnati on January 5, 1916, but no settlement was reached. A day or two later, Baltimore filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice, but Assistant Attorney General Todd announced on January 11 that he had no reason to believe that Organized Baseball had violated the antitrust laws.

### THE WAR MOVES TO THE COURTROOM

On January 27, the Baltimore stockholders voted to authorize the club's directors to spend up to \$50,000 on "litigation in such form as they deem advisable" to protect the stockholders' interests. They eventually filed suit in Washington on September 20, 1917.

After a year and a half of legal skirmishing, a jury was sworn in on March 25, 1919. The testimony summarized above was presented, the judge gave his instructions, and the jury retired to deliberate on April 12. Given the judge's instructions to the jury—which, in essence, told the jury that O.B. had in fact violated the federal antitrust laws, and that the Baltimore club was entitled to recover for any damages it suffered as a result—the verdict came as no surprise. The jury found in favor of the plaintiff and assessed damages at \$80,000. The antitrust laws provide that guilty defendants pay three times the amount of the actual damages plus attorneys' fees, so the final judgment was for \$254,000.

Organized Baseball's lawyers immediately appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. They attacked the trial court's decision on a number of legal grounds, but focused most of their attention on a single key issue:

By far the most important question presented by the as-

signments of error is whether professional baseball is interstate commerce.

In his memoirs, George Wharton Pepper, O.B.'s top lawyer, described his appeal strategy.

I raised at every opportunity the objection that a spontaneous output of human activity is not in its nature commerce, that therefore Organized Baseball cannot be interstate commerce; and that, it not being commerce among the states, the federal statute could have no application . . . .

. . . [T]he case came on for argument . . . on October 15th[, 1920]. I mention the date because of the coincidence that on the same day there was being played the final game in the [Dodgers vs. Indians] World Series of that year . . . .

. . . Counsel for the Federal League made the grave mistake of minimizing the real point in the case (the question, namely whether interstate commerce was involved) and sought to inflame the passions of the Court by a vehement attack upon the evils of [Organized Baseball], a few of which were real and many, as I thought, imaginary. I argued with much earnestness the proposition that personal effort not related to production is not a subject of commerce; that the attempt to secure all the skilled service needed for professional baseball is not an attempt to monopolize commerce or any part of it; and that Organized Baseball, not being commerce, and therefore not interstate commerce, does not come within the scope of the prohibitions of the Sherman [Antitrust] Act.

If the business of professional baseball was not interstate commerce, it was not subject to the Sherman Antitrust Act or any other federal regulation, even if all of the Baltimore club's allegations of monopoly and conspiracy were found to be true.

On December 6, 1920, the Court of Appeals issued its

decision, which was written by its Chief Justice, Constantine J. Smyth. Chief Justice Smyth first stated that interstate commerce "require[s] the transfer of something, whether it be persons, commodities, or intelligence" from one state to another. But, Smyth wrote,

A game of baseball is not susceptible of being transferred . . . . Not until [the players] come into contact with their opponents on the baseball field and the contest opens does the game come into existence. It is local in its beginning and in its end. Nothing is transferred in the process to those who patronize it. The exertions of skill and agility which they witness may excite in them pleasurable emotions, just as might a view of a beautiful picture or a masterly performance of some drama; but the game effects no exchange of things . . . .

It didn't really matter that baseball players traveled across state lines, or that the players carried their bats, balls, gloves, and uniforms across state lines with them.

The players, it is true, travel from place to place in interstate commerce, but they are not the game . . . .

. . . . The transportation in interstate commerce of the players and the paraphernalia used by them was but an incident to the main purpose of the appellants, namely the production of the game. It was for it they were in business—not for the purpose of transferring players, balls, and uniforms. The production of the game was the dominant thing in their activities . . . .

. . . So, here, baseball is not commerce, though some of its incidents may be.

Suppose a law firm in the city of Washington sends its members to points in different states to try lawsuits; they would travel, and probably carry briefs and records, in interstate commerce. Could it be correctly said that the firm, in the trial of

*Federal League President Gilmore's firm placed this ad in the Chicago Whales' scorecard.*

JAS. A. GILMORE, PRESIDENT		M. W. HUGHES, VICE-PRES. & GEN'L MGR.	
<b>"IT PULLS"</b>		<b>IT CAN'T PULL PLAYERS</b>	
		from the National and American Leagues, but from all American and National Factories, Foundries, Shops, Schools, Churches, Theaters, Barns and Residences,	
		<b>The Kernchen Siphonage Ventilator</b>	
		will Pull out the smoke, fumes, steam, gases or foul air, for	
		<b>"IT PULLS"</b>	
		Send for illustrated booklet containing Official Tests and other information.	
		<b>KERNCHEN COMPANY</b>	
		Ventilating Engineers	
		1547 McCormick Bldg. CHICAGO	
 SIPHONAGE PRINCIPLE	PATENTED	 SIPHONAGE PRINCIPLE	



the lawsuits, was engaged in trade and commerce? Or, take the case of a lecture bureau, which employs persons to deliver lectures before Chautauqua gatherings at points in different states. It would be necessary for the lecturers to travel in interstate commerce, in order that they might fulfill their engagements; but would it not be an unreasonable stretch of the ordinary meaning of the words to say that the bureau was engaged in trade or commerce?

Chief Justice Smyth then cited with approval cases holding that those who produce theatrical exhibitions, practice medicine, or launder clothes are not engaged in commerce.

The Baltimore club tried to persuade the United States Supreme Court to reinstate the original verdict in its favor. But Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, writing for a unanimous Court, upheld the decision of the Court of Appeals.

[E]xhibitions of base ball . . . are purely state affairs. It is true that, in order to attain for these exhibitions the great popularity that they have achieved, competitions must be arranged between clubs from different cities and States. But the fact that in order to give the exhibitions the League must induce free persons to cross state lines and must arrange and pay for their doing so is not enough to change the character of the business . . . [T]he transport is a mere incident, not the essential thing. That to which it is incident, the exhibition, although made for money would not be called trade or commerce in the commonly accepted use of those words. As it is put by the defendants, personal effort, not related to production, is not a subject of commerce. That which in its consummation is not commerce does not become commerce among the States because the transportation that we have mentioned takes place. To repeat the illustrations given by the Court below, a firm of lawyers sending out a member to argue a case, or the Chautauqua lecture bureau sending out lecturers, does not engage in such commerce because the lawyer or lecturer goes to another State.

The Supreme Court's decision was issued on May 29, 1922—almost seven years after the Baltimore Federals played their last game.

Given the legal doctrines of its day, the *Federal Baseball* case was correctly decided. The courts of that era applied the federal antitrust laws only to businesses that were primarily engaged in the production, sale, or transportation of tangible goods.

It is popularly believed that Organized Baseball was given immunity from the antitrust laws because baseball was a sport, not a business. That belief has grown out of a passage in the Court of Appeals opinion:

If a game of baseball, before a concourse of people who pay for the privilege of witnessing it, is trade or commerce, then the college teams who play football where an admission fee is charged, engage in an act of trade or commerce. But the act is not trade or commerce; it is sport. The fact that [Organized Baseball] produce[s] baseball games as a source of profit, large or small, cannot change the character of the games. They are still sport, not trade.

But a close reading of that language and the rest of Chief Justice Smyth's opinion shows that the key to the decision

was not the fact that baseball was a sport. The more crucial fact was that baseball—as well as the practice of law or medicine, the production of grand opera, and the other nonsporting activities cited in the opinion—was not commerce.

Antitrust doctrines have changed radically since *Federal Baseball* was decided in 1922. The cases that the Supreme Court relied upon in holding that baseball wasn't interstate commerce have long ago been overruled. By 1960, the Supreme Court had held that doctors, theatrical producers, boxing promoters, and even the National Football League were subject to the federal antitrust laws.

But baseball has somehow retained its uniquely privileged status. In 1953 and again in 1972, in the celebrated Curt Flood case, the Supreme Court affirmed the holding of *Federal Baseball*. Justice Blackmun, in *Flood vs. Kuhn*, noted that baseball's antitrust immunity was "an anomaly" and "an aberration." But, he noted,

Remedial legislation has been introduced repeatedly in Congress but none has ever been enacted. The Court, accordingly, has concluded that Congress as yet has had no intention to subject baseball's reserve system to the reach of the antitrust statutes.

. . . .

. . . If there is any inconsistency or illogic in all this, it is an inconsistency and illogic of long standing that is to be remedied by the Congress and not by this Court.

Is the *Federal Baseball* ruling of any consequence today? After all, the players' union has managed to decimate the reserve clause through collective bargaining. Free agency, arbitration, limits on trades without consent—no longer is the major league player, in Curt Flood's words, "a piece of property to be bought and sold irrespective of [his] wishes."

But what about the owners? Al Davis and Robert Irsay could move away from Oakland and Baltimore because the antitrust laws prevent the other NFL owners from taking concerted action against such moves. What if Calvin Griffith, rather than selling the Twins, had decided to move them to Tampa—or back to Washington, D.C.—without American League approval? If the other owners simply refused to schedule any games with the Twins and Griffith sued them, would *Federal Baseball* still control?

Or what if the USFL owners decided to start a baseball league, too? (Perhaps they would play in the fall and winter.) If Organized Baseball threatened NBC that it would never again sell broadcast rights to that network if it televised the new league's games, would the "USBL" win the antitrust suit that would undoubtedly follow?

Surely then *Federal Baseball*—a case decided over sixty years ago, long before television, jet airplanes, free agents, and night baseball—would finally be laid to rest. Of course, that was what Curt Flood's lawyers thought would happen in 1972. *Federal Baseball* may be an anomaly and an aberration—but it may also outlive us all.

*Hugh "Losing Pitcher" Mulcahy was its inspiration.*

# Statistics and Fair Play: The Oliver System

FRANK P. BOWLES

*Any visitor from a foreign country, wishing to study Americans, might well begin his labors in a baseball park. Baseball is so thoroughly American and offers so much expression of our way of thinking that the ball park displays America in miniature. Not the least of the characteristics displayed at the ball game is the American conception of fair play. If one understands what people consider fair play, he will have gone a long way in understanding the people themselves.*

**T**HESE IDEALISTIC WORDS were written nearly forty years ago by a dedicated baseball fan, T. C. (Ted) Oliver of California. Were Mr. Oliver alive today, he would certainly be a member of SABR, for he was devoted not only to the game itself, but also to its wealth of lore and statistical material. There was one feature of baseball, however, that he felt was at odds with our American sense of sportsmanship. He pointed out the case of a contemporary pitcher named Hugh Mulcahy, who had been toiling for the Phillies for a number of years prior to World War II:

As time went on . . . Mulcahy developed into quite a pitcher. Strong and willing, he was used more and more often by the club. But the Phils were such a pathetically weak team that his total of games lost began to reach terrifying proportions. By 1939 he had acquired the nickname of "Losing Pitcher Mulcahy" because his name appeared that way so often in the box scores . . .

With men close to the game, Mulcahy's unfortunate naming was more sympathetic than derogatory. Among them it was common knowledge that other and more powerful clubs were bidding for his services, and that offers of more than \$50,000 [a

high figure in those days] had been made the Philadelphia club for his release. But to the great army of fans and to the recorded history of the game as well, Mulcahy's name stood for an outstanding number of games lost . . . How did smart baseball men know he was a good man? His won and lost record was a laughing matter. His earned run average was not impressive. Obviously then, those close to the game give only lip service to the recognized yardsticks of measuring pitching values.

The problems faced by Mulcahy and other worthies saddled with poor teams grated on Ted Oliver's sense of fair play. Batters performing for weak teams can lead their leagues in batting and home runs. The baseball public is aware of their abilities. Such famous hitters as George Sisler, Chuck Klein, and Ralph Kiner come instantly to mind. But it is rare for any of the pitchers on these same teams to break even. All of the twenty-game winners, all of the high won-lost percentage men come from the strong clubs. Unless he is lucky enough to be traded, the poor hurler is stuck with his lot—or was, at least until the free agent market materialized in the late 1970s. This is why Steve Carlton's 1972 season was so amazing, as in posting a 27-10 mark he won 45.8 percent of the Phils' games. Under normal conditions, however, throughout the game's long history, a moundsman working for a weak team will be near the bottom in most of the accepted methods of pitcher evaluation, including the earned run average; more on this later.

Oliver set about trying to devise a system that would give the public a fairer check on the game's hurlers, by taking into account the relative strength and weakness of

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their supporting casts. By 1940 he had formulated a system that seemed adequate. Applied to the completed 1939 season, it appeared radical, because "some very prominent names were well down the list and some unsung names had high ranking." To get a better perspective and to test his system, Oliver next computed the records on a cumulative basis for a full decade. Here the results "were most gratifying as names like Grove, Hubbell, Dean, Ferrell, and Warneke rose to greet the eye. On the broader canvas the morning-glory boys faded before the luster of the really good men." At last, Oliver took his method back beyond the turn of the century, almost to the game's beginnings. He spent four years at the Helms Athletic Foundation library in Los Angeles, researching his subject. Because no real baseball encyclopedias existed at the time, he was forced to wade through the old Reach and Spalding Guides, which for all their value are nevertheless full of errors and inconsistencies. On finishing, he privately published his findings in *Kings of the Mound* (1944, revised 1947). Here he attempted to chart the year-by-year records of virtually every hurler in major league history. He also included an Introduction, offering an intelligent rationale for his system.

The present writer happened to pick up a copy of *Kings of the Mound* in 1947 and, seeing merit in the method, corresponded briefly with its developer. Oliver proved to be an enthusiastic, outgoing individual who was more than willing to discuss the merits and drawbacks of his system. Unfortunately, I know little about him personally, except that he moved to Sacramento in the early 1950s. He mentioned that he heard from other fans on occasion. Because his two editions of *Kings of the Mound* lost his "angel" some \$2,600, the latter "begged to discontinue," and there were no later editions. *The Sporting News* and other publications showed little interest. Thus Oliver apparently dropped his project, although he continued an active interest in the sport. I have no definite knowledge of his later history, but assume he has been gone for a number of years.

I

Essentially Oliver's Weighted Rating System compares a pitcher's won-lost record each season with that of his team when he is not on the mound. For example, in 1978 Ron Guidry's outstanding 25-3 mark was .337 (or 337 points) above the Yankees' record without him.

	won	lost	
YANKEES	100	63	
GUIDRY	25	3	.893
TEAM'S MARK			
SANS GUIDRY	75	60	<u>.556</u>
			+ .337

Had his work been merely of average quality, Guidry's percentage would have been close to that of his team. But

his year was 337 points better than that of the pennant-winning Yankees. This calculation represents the *quality* aspect of the system.

Another step is needed. Good as it was, Ron's 1978 percentage of + 337 was not even the best for recent seasons. Three years earlier, one Eduardo Rodriguez, a relief pitcher for Milwaukee, finished at 7-0, a 1.000 percentage. His superiority over the Brewer team percentage was .606. Wasn't that, then, superior to Guidry's record? No, because some account must be taken of the *quantity* of work performed as well. After all, the "ace" of a team, with a record of 20-6, should be considered more valuable to his club than a spot starter at 10-3.

But where should the line be drawn as to how many decisions should qualify? Ten? Fifteen? Twenty? Oliver decided to judge men by their works. By multiplying a man's percentage by the number of his decisions, a realistic blend of both quality and quantity is realized. Thus, if Guidry's 337 is multiplied by 28 (the number of his wins and losses), and Rodriguez's 606 by 7, we come up with final totals of 9,436 and 4,242, respectively. These are *positive* numbers, since Guidry and Rodriguez outperformed their clubs; of course *minus* scores result whenever the pitcher's record is weaker than that of his club.

In the history of the game there have been some truly spectacular seasons. The twenty-five best since 1893 are given below, in Table A.

TABLE A

	Year	Team	Record	Finish	Score
1.	Steve Carlton	1972 Phillies	27-10	Sixth	17,057
2.	Walter Johnson	1913 Senators	36-7	Second	15,093
3.	Ed Rommel	1922 Athletics	27-13	Seventh	13,680
4.	Jack Chesbro	1904 Yankees	41-12	Second	13,462
5.	Ed Walsh	1908 White Sox	40-15	Third	12,760
6.	Walter Johnson	1911 Senators	25-13	Seventh	12,236
7.	Cy Young	1902 Red Sox	32-10	Third	12,096
8.	Red Faber	1921 White Sox	25-15	Seventh	12,000
9.	Cy Young	1901 Red Sox	33-10	Second	11,696
10.	Ned Garver	1951 Browns	20-12	Eighth	11,640
11.	Bert Cunningham	1898 Louisville	28-15	Ninth*	11,266
12.	Bob Gibson	1970 Cardinals	23-7	Fourth	10,950
13.	Bob Feller	1946 Indians	26-15	Seventh	10,742
14.	Robin Roberts	1952 Phillies	28-7	Fourth	10,640
15.	Dazzy Vance	1925 Dodgers	22-9	Sixth(t)	10,323
16.	Bobby Shantz	1952 Athletics	24-7	Fourth	10,137
17.	Dazzy Vance	1924 Dodgers	28-6	Second	9,894
18.	Frank Killen	1896 Pirates	29-15	Sixth*	9,856
19.	Dutch Leonard	1939 Senators	20-8	Sixth	9,828
20.	Cy Young	1907 Red Sox	22-15	Seventh	9,805
21.	Larry Jackson	1964 Cubs	24-11	Eighth	9,695
22.	Denny McLain	1968 Tigers	31-6	First	9,694
23.	Frank Killen	1893 Pirates	34-10	Second*	9,680
24.	Ewell Blackwell	1947 Reds	22-8	Fifth	9,660
25.	Hal Newhouser	1944 Tigers	29-9	Second	9,652

\* Between 1892 and 1899 the National League had twelve teams.

Although the majority of big seasons were accomplished by well-known moundsmen, a number were produced by

individuals who, for one reason or another, were unable to sustain the pace. Oliver came to recognize that if *all* of a man's years in the game were added and subtracted on a cumulative basis, a realistic record might be obtained for a pitcher's entire career.

For some years, I have attempted to bring Ted Oliver's work up to date. I hope he would approve of this continuation of what obviously was to him a labor of love. Here then, in Table B, completed through the 1983 season, is a listing of the fifty-seven hurlers who have lifetime totals above 20,000 points according to his Weighted Rating System.

There are four major considerations behind the formation of Tables A and B. *One*, as Frank J. Williams ably documented in the premiere issue of *The National Pastime*, pitching records were poorly kept in the early years of our century. Yet the situation was even worse in the 1890s. Just observe the seasonal and career marks of Amos Rusie or Frank Killen; there is little agreement in the various record books. There are even disagreements con-

cerning exact records for such post-1920 hurlers as Lefty Grove, Lon Warneke, and Harry Brecheen. I have used the fifth edition of *The Macmillan Encyclopedia* for all seasonal and lifetime records in this article. More exact findings in the future will change many of these totals. Indeed, Pete Palmer incorporated Williams' findings in his listings of top seasonal and lifetime performances in *The Hidden Game of Baseball*.

*Two*, there are good reasons for beginning our study with the 1893 season. In this year the rulesmakers moved the pitching distance back from 50' to 60'6". Their purpose was to nullify the terrific speed of such men as Amos Rusie and thereby increase hitting. Batting averages leaped from a league mark of .245 in 1892 to .280 the following year, and .309 in 1894. Heavy hitting continued through the end of the decade, after which pitchers began to regain the advantage. Another reason for using 1893 is that pitching staffs were so small before that date it would be almost impossible to have sufficient "team" hurling innings to compare with those of a given hurler. In 1892,

**TABLE B**  
**Oliver System: 1893-1983**

	Pitcher	Yrs	Record	%	Best Yr	Totals
	1. *Walter Johnson (07-27)	21	416-279	.599	15093 (13)	96,074
	2. *Pete Alexander (11-30)	20	373-208	.642	9594 (20)	83,528
B	3. *Cy Young (90-11)	22	511-313	.620	12096 (02)	81,524
	4. *Christy Mathewson (00-16)	17	373-188	.665	9408 (08)	59,568
A	5. Tom Seaver (67-83)	17	273-170	.616	8588 (77)	59,301
	6. *Lefty Grove (25-41) L	17	300-141	.680	9216 (33)	52,528
B	7. *Clark Griffith (91-14)	20	240-140	.632	9472 (94)	48,864
	8. *Warren Spahn (42-65) L	21	363-245	.597	9150 (63)	43,392
	9. *Ted Lyons (23-46)	21	260-230	.531	9361 (30)	43,353
A	10. Steve Carlton (65-83) L	19	300-200	.600	17057 (72)	41,578
A	11. Phil Niekro (64-83)	20	268-230	.538	6279 (82)	38,521
	12. *Juan Marichal (60-75)	16	243-142	.631	8925 (68)	37,219
	13. *Dazzy Vance (15-35)	16	197-140	.585	10323 (25)	36,325
	14. Jesse Tannehill (94-11) L	15	195-119	.621	8778 (98)	36,172
	15. Wes Ferrell (27-41)	15	193-128	.601	6864 (35)	35,946
	16. *Whitey Ford (50-67) L	16	236-106	.690	6670 (61)	35,084
	17. *Bob Feller (36-56)	18	266-162	.621	10742 (46)	34,344
	18. *Robin Roberts (48-66)	19	286-245	.539	10640 (52)	33,325
	19. Ed Rommel (20-32)	13	171-119	.590	13680 (22)	32,404
	20. *Bob Gibson (59-75)	17	251-174	.591	10950 (70)	31,915
	21. *Carl Hubbell (28-43) L	16	253-154	.622	8704 (36)	31,808
B	22. *Kid Nichols (90-06)	15	360-202	.641	9284 (95)	31,523
	23. Red Shocker (16-28)	13	188-117	.616	8658 (21)	31,426
	24. *Ed Walsh (04-17)	14	195-126	.607	12760 (08)	31,193
B	25. Ted Breitenstein (91-01) L	11	168-169	.499	8624 (95)	30,585
	26. Nap Rucker (07-16) L	10	135-136	.498	6720 (11)	30,406
F	27. *Ed Plank (01-17) L	16	306-181	.628	8960 (12)	29,662
	28. Ferguson Jenkins (65-83)	19	284-226	.557	7252 (74)	29,034
	29. *Red Faber (14-33)	20	254-212	.545	12000 (21)	28,418
	30. *Addie Joss (02-10)	9	160-97	.623	8362 (07)	28,051
	31. Red Lucas (23-38)	15	157-135	.538	7161 (29)	27,992
	32. *Sandy Koufax (55-66) L	12	165-87	.655	8400 (64)	27,818

for instance, Bill Hutchison worked 627 innings, about half the total number played by his team. In the 1870s and early '80s it was common for one man to pitch all or nearly all his team's games. Thus such famous early pitchers as Clarkson, Radbourn, Keefe, Welch, Galvin, Caruthers, and Spalding are not to be found on these lists.

*Three*, the editor of this review has pointed out that both Ted Oliver and I obtained our point totals by dropping the decimal point in the calculations. Thus in 1978 Ron Guidry really had 9.436—or 9.4 wins-above-team—rather than 9,436. His career total through 1983 would be 26.533, or approximately 26½ lifetime wins above the average Yankee pitcher. The reader may choose which method he prefers. The editor's is better baseball, but 26,533 gives a Himalayan grandeur to Guidry's work.

*Four*, there are six oldtimers on the lifetime list who worked before the 1893 deadline, and one more whose pre-'93 records would push him past the 20,000-point cutoff. Cy Young moves to the head of the all-time list. See Table C, below.

	From 1893	Pre-1893	Totals
* Cy Young (90-92)	81,524	21,472	102,996
* Clark Griffith (91)	48,864	2,052	50,916
* Kid Nichols (90-92)	31,523	2,127	33,650
Ted Breitenstein (91, 92) L	30,585	2,464	33,049
* Amos Rusie (89-92)	25,773	18,419	44,192
Bert Cunningham (87-91)	21,811	-6,018	15,793
Frank Killen (91, 92) L	18,834	14,355	33,189

## II

Most of the truly great pitchers score well with the Oliver system. Walter Johnson, Cy Young, Christy Mathewson, Lefty Grove, Grover Cleveland Alexander, Carl Hubbell, Warren Spahn, Sandy Koufax—all of them are high on the chart. Nevertheless, there are a number of surprises: Famous names are missing, while lesser-known players rank well. Obviously such unexpected results must be made credible, or the whole method loses its force. My approach in this section will be to compare Ted Oliver's system with a number of the accepted statistical

TABLE B (continued)

	33. Dutch Leonard (33-53)	20	191-181	.513	9828 (39)	27,612
	34. Rip Sewell (32-49)	13	143-97	.596	6720 (43)	26,727
	35. Noodles Hahn (99-06) L	8	130-92	.586	9471 (01)	26,578
A	36. Ron Guidry (75-83) L	9	122-51	.705	9436 (78)	26,533
	37. Schoolboy Rowe (33-49)	15	158-101	.610	5654 (43)	26,412
A	38. Jim Palmer (65-83)	18	268-149	.643	6107 (72)	26,327
B	39. *Amos Rusie (89-01)	10	243-160	.603	7770 (97)	25,773
	40. *Joe McGinnity (99-08)	10	247-145	.630	8436 (00)	25,125
	41. *Dizzy Dean (30-47)	12	150-83	.644	9287 (34)	24,902
	42. Casey Patten (01-08) L	8	104-128	.448	8466 (06)	24,829
	43. Claude Passeau (35-47)	13	162-150	.519	5643 (42)	24,740
	44. Gaylord Perry (62-83)	22	314-265	.542	8397 (78)	24,461
	45. *Jack Chesbro (99-09)	11	197-128	.606	13462 (04)	23,885
A	46. Tommy John (63-83) L	20	248-184	.574	5310 (79)	23,738
	47. J.R. Richard (71-80)	10	107-71	.601	5800 (78)	22,660
	48. Jim Vaughn (08-21) L	13	176-137	.562	7452 (17)	22,469
B	49. Bert Cunningham (87-01)	12	142-167	.460	11266 (98)	21,811
	50. Wilbur Cooper (12-26) L	15	216-178	.548	9436 (17)	21,423
	51. Bucky Walters (34-50)	16	198-160	.553	6355 (44)	21,265
	52. *Burleigh Grimes (16-34)	19	270-212	.560	8148 (18)	21,152
	53. Jim Maloney (60-71)	12	134-84	.615	8700 (63)	21,033
	54. Slim Sallee (08-21) L	14	172-143	.546	7776 (13)	21,028
	55. Win Mercer (94-02)	9	131-164	.444	8858 (96)	20,738
	56. *Herb Pennock (12-34) L	22	241-162	.598	5400 (19)	20,432
	57. John Allen (32-44)	13	142-75	.654	7120 (37)	20,410

\* These players are members of the Hall of Fame.

A These players were still "active" in 1984.

B These players began their major league careers before 1893, the starting point for this chart. See Table C.

F These players appeared in Federal League games during 1914-1915. Neither *The Sporting News* nor Ted Oliver has considered the Federal a true major league, and I have eliminated such seasons from these men's lifetime records. But Eddie Plank's total would increase to 33,342 and Russ Ford would move onto the list, from 19,604 to 25,116, if Fed totals were included. Three Finger Brown and Gene Packard would also rise past 20,000 points.

L These players are lefthanders.

methods of pitcher evaluation and attempt to show that its results are indeed reasonable.

The *number of victories* a hurler is able to achieve has always been the basic way pitcher value has been determined. As a rule, twenty wins for the season and 200 for the career are levels that have been arbitrarily set to separate the men from the boys. Yet only 43 of the 68 players eligible with 200 wins made our first 102 positions, the number of positions accorded those who finished with 15,000 Oliver points. How can a sensible statistical tool eliminate twenty-five big winners, while including twenty-five moundsmen with less than 150 triumphs?

But why should such an arbitrary number be taken as magical? Some men went to 200, and often far beyond, not so much through sustained brilliance as by simple durability and freedom from serious injury. Look at some of the men who fell just short of that figure—Ed Walsh, Jack Chesbro, Rube Waddell, Dazzy Vance. All are Hall of Famers, as are three others with even fewer wins—Sandy Koufax (165), Addie Joss (160), and Dizzy Dean (150). All of these individuals were indisputably among the very best of their respective periods. In a relatively short space of time, each accomplished more on the diamond than many others with far more victories.

A favorite of many fans in my youth was Red Ruffing, the durable Yankee hurler of the 1930s and 1940s. In a twenty-two-year career, this grand old warrior piled up 273 victories, enough to put him in baseball's shrine many years ago. That he also lost 225 decisions has usually been put down to the fact that, early in his career, he toiled some half-dozen seasons for a hopeless Red Sox team. Once Red was traded to the Yankees in 1930, the feeling goes, he "hit his real stride," winning at a .650 pace for the Bronx Bombers. But let's look at the picture more closely . . .

Admittedly, the Red Sox were pathetic, but Ruffing lost at an even faster clip than did his teammates. And when his good fortune took him to New York, his high winning percentage there was only slightly better than that of the average Yankee hurler. Red's Boston total (-8,954) subtracted from his New York score (+6,597) leaves him 2,357 points *below* the median. Now any man who can pitch long enough in the major leagues to win 273 games must be both durable and capable. But just why Ruffing, Jess Haines, Eppa Rixey, and Waite Hoyt are enshrined in Cooperstown, while, say, Vic Willis, George Mullin, Sam Jones, Fred Fitzsimmons, Carl Mays, Hooks Dauss, and Mel Harder are ignored is hard to understand. In a different category entirely is Ted Lyons, who worked twenty-one seasons for the White Sox, a team that escaped the second division only four times in all the years he pitched. How did he manage to win 260 times for a team that was never in contention? His other statistics were not sensational: only 27 shutouts, more walks than strikeouts, many more hits given up than innings pitched. Yet Yankee

manager Joe McCarthy was convinced that Ted might have won 400 games had he pitched for the Bronx Bombers. Perhaps we can glimpse some of McCarthy's reasoning with these figures:

	Pitcher %	Team %	Difference
Ted Lyons	.531	.459	+72
Red Ruffing	.548	.551	-3
			<hr/> 75

Ruffing had a few more victories, a slightly higher winning percentage, and many more strikeouts and shutouts than the Chicago man. In the category of winning related to support, however, Lyons was by far the better pitcher. What if he, not Ruffing, had been traded to New York in 1930?

Waite Hoyt once said that "the secret of success in baseball is obtaining a job with the New York Yankees." Waite should have known, because nearly all his better seasons came with New York. How many times do we see a pitcher from a poor team get traded to a stronger club and immediately blossom? This happened not only to Ruffing and Hoyt, but to Bucky Walters, Herb Pennock, and numerous others. And to state that these men "suddenly found themselves" unfairly implies that they had been bad pitchers in their previous seasons with weaker clubs.

The category of *winning percentage* is equally popular with baseball men, writers, and fans. Yet virtually all the moundsmen with percentages ranging from .600 up to Spud Chandler's .717 played for dominant teams—teams such as the early Cubs, Giants, Pirates, and Athletics of the deadball era or the Yankees of every period save one since 1920. In this connection, Ruffing's Yankee teammate Lefty Gomez presents a useful study. The talented Gomez, charming and witty, is in the Hall of Fame largely because of his fine lifetime winning percentage of .649 (189-102). Nevertheless, during his thirteen seasons with New York his overall percentage was just a shade better than that of his team. If we compare his marks with those of a contemporary with a career of similar length we find these enlightening figures:

	Pitcher %	Team %	Difference
Wes Ferrell	.601	.515	+86
Lefty Gomez	.649	.641	+8
			<hr/> 78

Gomez was superior in strikeouts, earned run average, shutouts, and hit/inning ratio. But he won with the dominant club in baseball. Ferrell proved his ability as a winner with a variety of average teams.

It could be claimed that Gomez was, after all, forced to compete for points with another great pitcher, Ruffing, and the two more or less cancelled one another out. The facts, however, show that other Yankee pitchers of the period did even better:

Johnny Allen (1932-1935)	50-19, .725
Spud Chandler (1937-1947)	109-43, .717
Monte Pearson (1936-1940)	63-27, .700
Atley Donald (1938-1945)	65-33, .663

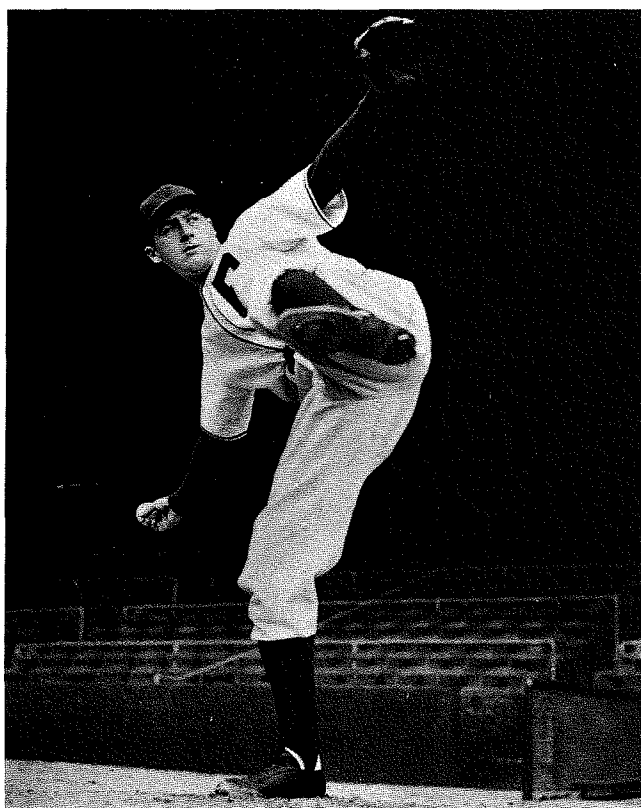
The amount of statistical data in baseball is staggering; number of victories and winning percentage are merely two of the most often employed for pitching. Another popular device is the use of earned runs charged against the pitcher. For many years *earned run averages* were only published well after the season was over, and were therefore of little interest to most fans. In recent years they have been issued daily, along with the other figures. Unlike won-lost records and victories, earned-run averages sometimes show men from lower-ranked teams near the top. But this method has weaknesses too. Some teams play much better defense than others, transforming hits into outs, a factor hard to measure to a fair degree by chances accepted. Many more earned runs will be scored against a poor-fielding team than against a good one. Furthermore, as Oliver wrote, the ERA "is at odds with the driving purpose of all ball players, which is to WIN THE GAME . . . . For this reason capable pitchers, especially veterans, extend themselves only when necessary." He continued,

The records prove that baseball men themselves acknowledge the inaccuracy of these methods of tabulation. Bucky Walters, Kirby Higbe, and Claude Passeau were purchased at tremendous cost by the Reds, Dodgers, and Cubs, respectively, though not one of the three had ever pitched .500 ball or compiled much of an earned run record with the Phillies. Obviously, from the price tags, these men were considered established stars and not just prospective winners when the money changed hands.

It should be added that all three of these men produced twenty-game seasons and vastly reduced earned run averages for their new—and stronger—clubs within a year of the trades. Look it up.

The most overrated method is that of *strikeouts*. At certain periods of the game's history the spectacular quality of the "K" has not been lost on owners and players. Nevertheless, strikeouts are but one means to an end. It is often better strategy for a pitcher to allow the batter to get a "piece" of the ball and take advantage of his fielding support, thus saving himself and his strikeouts for crucial moments. A large number of whiffs certainly proves that the pitcher has a strong arm, but the history of the sport is replete with powerful throwers who were unable to master the rest of the job well enough to win consistently.

The ability to pitch *shutouts* is valuable in close, low-scoring contests, but a 2-1 or 5-3 win is the same in the record. *Control* is another important aspect, one that most great pitchers possessed. At the same time, good control without some speed or deception is meaningless. For years the category of *complete games* was regarded as basic to strong pitching; however, the increasing importance of the relief specialist has greatly diminished its



Hugh "Losing Pitcher" Mulcahy

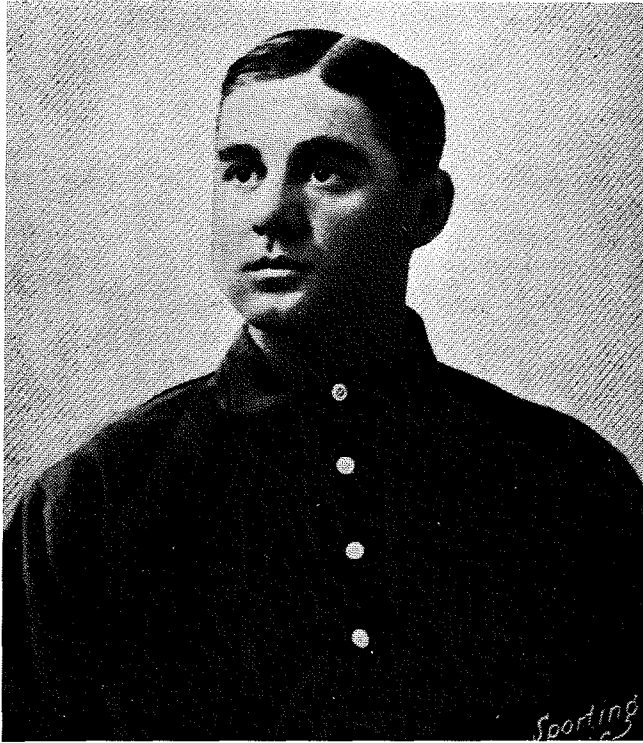
value. The ability of turn-of-the-century moundsmen to complete most of their starts was due far more to historical reasons than to physical ones. *Hit/inning ratio* is another favorite, although a number of players with low ratios—Nolan Ryan is a good example—walk so many hitters that the statistic can become delusory. *On-base average* would appear to be a more useful tool than hit-percentage, but it must be remembered that the essential requirement for the hurler is not to keep runners off the bases—it is to prevent them from scoring.

### III

Ted Oliver's system is by no means unique. The editors of *The Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball* write in the 1973 edition:

Baseball executives have long used the comparison between a pitcher's winning percentage and the winning percentage of his team as a measure of the pitcher's performance. This list shows this comparison on a lifetime basis for all pitchers with 150 or more wins whose careers ended since 1900.

There follows a listing running from Alexander (+108) and Johnson (+103) at the top down to Rube Walberg (-73) at the bottom. "Team" percentages are figured on "the average of the winning percentages of the teams he pitched for each year weighted by the number of his decisions." Results under this method are quite similar to those found on our Oliver list insofar as *quality* is con-



Jesse Tannehill

cerned. There is no allowance for the *quantity* aspect of a man's career, however, other than the 150-win minimum. Later editions of this Neft-Cohen method *have* included a weighting factor for number of decisions, but the system does not subtract a pitcher's own record from the team W-L%, which means that he is being compared partly to himself!

A similar method is used by John Davenport in his stimulating *Baseball Graphics* (1979). Davenport calls his method "WLD" (Won-Lost Decision) and incorporates it, along with numerous other factors, into cone-shaped graphs, which are probably too abstruse for general use. And finally, the Oliver system itself is among the "alternate" statistics evaluated by Pete Palmer and John Thorn in *The Hidden Game of Baseball* (1984).

#### IV

There are, of course, legitimate arguments against the Oliver plan. The obvious one seems to be that even a good pitcher is hurt by having to compete with another star (or stars) on his team. After all, one man's above-average performance must be balanced by the other members of the team's staff. A truly great season makes it hard on that year's scores for the pitcher's teammates. Yet over many seasons Lefty Grove's consistently high marks, while they undoubtedly damaged Rube Walberg's scores, did not hurt Ed Rommel unduly. Competing with Christy Mathewson did not seriously damage the year-by-year records of Joe McGinnity, whatever it may have done to Rube Marquard. Jesse Tannehill was a member of one of the best-balanced staffs of all time at the turn of the century

with Pittsburgh (Sam Leever, Deacon Phillippe, and Jack Chesbro were the other members); nevertheless, he piled up good totals almost every year, just as he later did with the Red Sox, when he teamed up with Cy Young and Bill Dinneen. Whitey Ford had team competition from such as Allie Reynolds, Ed Lopat, and Vic Raschi on the Yankees, but piled up higher percentages than his teammates.

Another argument states that men with really poor teams have a definite advantage. In a 1983 letter to me, John Thorn pointed out that

The lower the team's pct. the fewer wins it takes for a pitcher to exceed that record dramatically. Carlton [in 1972] was 17 games over .500 to record his 17,057 points. Grove in 1931 was 27 games over, yet recorded only 8,295. To match Carlton's point total, Grove would have had to go undefeated in 49 decisions—necessitating the extension of the A's schedule to 169 games.

In such situations, there may indeed be a legitimate beef against the method. Furthermore, exactly one-half of the top fifty seasons were produced by second-division hurlers, more than might be reasonably anticipated. On the other hand, only twelve of the sixty highest-ranking men on the 1973 Neft-Cohen lifetime list played for teams that averaged under .500 during their full careers. This discrepancy would seem to indicate that pitching for a bad team might be an advantage for a big year or two, but won't help too much over the long haul, unless the man in question is truly good. No, I don't believe the Oliver system makes mediocre pitchers with poor teams look good—only five men of the fifty-seven with 20,000 or more Oliver points lost more games than they won.

There are two real flaws in the method, as I see it. One is that there is no place in it for the modern relief specialist. Several individuals on our list did a good deal of relief work—Ed Walsh, Rip Sewell, and Ed Rommel, for example—but they weren't relief pitchers in the current sense. They were really starter-relievers. "Saves" is the key term with modern relievers, one that, unfortunately, has scant relationship with Oliver's system. The second difficulty is that the method works better from the *plus* side than from the *minus* one. Certainly Rube Walberg's total score of -25,895 (by far the lowest ever recorded) isn't realistic. To be sure, Rube had only two plus seasons in his whole fifteen-year career. Nevertheless, no man who can win 155 games in the major leagues (as Walberg did) can be considered a "terrible" pitcher. He was obviously superior to the thousands of youngsters who reach the big leagues, lose more contests than they win for a year or two, and depart the scene for good. Yet none of the fly-by-nights will ever approach Walberg's negative mark.

On the whole, this system gives justice where it is due, especially for the good performer unfortunate enough to be saddled with a weak team. It does *not* handicap good men with strong clubs, for the great majority of the top men on the primary list worked for above-average outfits. At the same time, the method does not make poor



moundsman with bad teams look good. The handful of men on the list who were career "losers" played for teams that were abysmal. Case Patten, Ned Garver, and Win Mercer may not have been great pitchers, yet during their unspectacular careers they managed to pitch well against great odds. It was the only choice open to them.

Another strong point of the Oliver plan is that it is handy. A person need not use a computer to work it. Each season in a player's career can be scored fairly rapidly, after which new years need only be added or subtracted to bring his record up to date. In the Neft-Cohen method, if I understand it correctly, both career and "team" marks must be constantly readjusted.

Finally, the Oliver method gives a balanced view of the long, constantly changing history of major league pitching. In most other statistics, we find performers in one or two periods dominating the charts. Virtually all the thirty-game winners and low earned-run averages come from the pre-1920 years, when a man was not forced to bear down constantly lest a .220 hitter knock a pitch out of the park to beat him. He could, furthermore, pitch more innings, shutouts, and complete games. On the other hand, most of the great strikeout totals are being produced in our day. Even though the batter had all the advantages in the 1890s and generally since the advent of the lively ball in 1920, Oliver's basic argument still sounds reasonable:

In the last analysis, at least for our purposes, the lively ball has no bearing on our ranking of pitchers. It really matters little, so far as winning the game is concerned, if the league bats .200 or .400. If a pitcher must face a galaxy of .300 hitters he also has the batting support of great batting power. If he must bear down on every pitch the opposing pitcher must do the same. A one-run lead may no longer be a safe working margin, but it is as fair for one man as for another.

All in all, the method is a necessary corrective to the better-known statistical systems, but it should be used *in conjunction* with them.

## V

There are a number of surprises on the list, hidden diamonds who needed a different system to show their real abilities. Juan Marichal was the obvious overlooked Hall of Fame candidate; now that Juan has been tapped, several other shrine possibilities begin to surface . . .

Jesse Tannehill's 195-119, .621 record is even better than it looks at first glance, because he achieved it with good, average, and downright poor teams. A small southpaw, disciplined and intelligent, he seldom struck anyone out. Through the use of a clever assortment of curves and the best control of any lefthander since 1893 (1.55 walks per 9-inning game), he held his own with such powerful giants as Cy Young, Amos Rusie, and Rube Waddell. Knowing in advance the eventual production of each man for his career, what manager in his right mind would



Wes Ferrell

choose Waddell over Tannehill? Unfortunately, Jesse never rode on fire engines, drank, or chased women immoderately, or struck out batters by the carload. Waddell made it to the Hall in 1946; Tannehill's name is seldom even mentioned in large baseball histories. He was a twenty-game winner six times.

Lack of color was never a problem with our second candidate, the late Wesley Ferrell. Handsome, talented, temperamental, Wes was one of the most ferocious competitors in the game's history. He is the only man to win twenty games in each of his first four seasons. All six of his twenty-game years were accomplished with average teams. Early in his career he was a power pitcher, but like Ted Lyons, he made himself into a "clever" moundsman after suffering an arm injury. A workhorse, Ferrell led the American League in innings pitched and complete games on several occasions. In addition, Wes hit more home runs than any hurler in history (38), often being called upon as a pinch hitter. His overall record was 193-128, .601.

The Oliver method's third nominee is one of the last of the "legal" spitballers, Urban (Red) Shocker. A twenty-game winner on four occasions, Red had his great days with the George Sisler Browns of the early 1920s. He was particularly noted for his ability to pitch to a batter's weaknesses. Shocker was still a fine pitcher in 1927 (18-6 for the Yankees), but a year later he died in Denver of heart trouble at the age of thirty-five. Tannehill, Ferrell, and Shocker were three of the best hurlers in their respective periods. Their accomplishments were obscured by their surroundings; Ted Oliver's statistical pursuit of fair play has enabled their stars to shine.

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## RESEARCH

# The National Baseball Library

BILL DEANE

ONE PLEASANT spring day, I took a drive through the picturesque countryside of the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York, to a hamlet called Cooperstown. As we know, Cooperstown is the home of Baseball's Hall of Fame and Museum; but, on this particular day, I bypassed the museum and went directly to the National Baseball Library, right next door, where I had the prearranged opportunity to meet the librarian and tour the premises. Although I had visited the library before, it was on this day that I was intimately introduced to the researchers' paradise nicknamed "Baseball's Attic."

The National Baseball Library was dedicated in 1939 as part of the newly built Hall of Fame, with the mission to collect, organize and preserve all types of documentation related to baseball. By 1968, the library had outgrown its original quarters and the present building was erected. Besides housing the nation's most extensive collection of library materials devoted exclusively to baseball, the library is also the site of the annual Hall of Fame induction ceremonies.

The library is divided into three

well-defined areas, each with its own purpose and philosophy. The first floor is for the reception and entertainment of the casual visitor. The second floor is the actual library, for the purposeful researcher. The basement houses the archives, including rare or unique, restricted research materials.

Tom Heitz has held the post of librarian since April 1983. Heitz has degrees in law and library science, and previously worked with the New York State Attorney General. A trim 43, Heitz is an approachable, accommodating, dry-witted fellow who enjoys talking baseball, and seems to love the atmosphere and challenge of his job: managing, organizing, and preserving the vast holdings of the National Baseball Library.

Serving the public in person, through the mail (P.O. Box 590, Cooperstown, NY 13326), and over the telephone (607-547-9988), Heitz handles several hundred inquiries each month, about 90 percent of which he is able to answer satisfactorily. Because of staff limitations, Heitz prefers that mail inquiries contain just one question per letter.

"Some people send me a list of fifty or one hundred questions," Tom relates. "When that happens, I politely explain our situation, and answer only the first question on the list . . . or maybe the easiest one."

About half the library's users are classified as just plain fans, but patrons also include students, journalists, Organized Baseball personnel, and the entertainment industry. Members of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) are frequent users, and receive high priority in research assistance. "At the library, we respect everyone," says Heitz, "and nobody gets special privileges; but we do recognize that SABR members have more than a passing interest in our resources, and we try to help them accordingly."

A perfect example of the use of the library by the movie industry was in the making of the recent film *The Natural*, starring Robert Redford and based on the Bernard Malamud novel. Examining thousands of pictures from the library's holdings, the movie's producers sought to duplicate authentically the settings, props, and costumes of 1939-era baseball—from the stadiums, locker rooms, uniforms, and hand-stitched baseballs right down to the scorecards, tickets, and the "Baseball Centennial" patch worn by players in that one year.

Heitz was recently asked to construct a "player profile" for a former minor leaguer. The player, now in his fifties, said that his family had seemed unimpressed by recollections of his playing days, not having any facts or figures they could relate to. Heitz researched the man's playing record, compiling year-by-year statistics which showed him to have been a pretty decent batsman, with about 1500 hits to his credit. The ex-player was immensely gratified by Tom's effort, saying that it brought a whole new meaning and perspective

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*BILL DEANE has published many baseball pieces in recent years; this is his second TNP appearance.*

to his baseball career, especially in the eyes of his kids.

The library is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., throughout the year except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. One enters the building at the first-floor lobby, which has a small section of reference books and a shelf with some offbeat baseball books and pamphlets for sale, including SABR publications. The exhibits are pedestrian: the Spink and Frick awards, a display of old baseball guides, and a room filled with mementoes of George M. Weiss, the late Yankees' executive.

On the lower level, adjoining the archives, is the visual aid room, where baseball films are shown several times each day. While Heitz and I chatted near the reception desk, a visitor wearing a Yankees' cap asked what film was being shown next. When told it was one about the 1964 World Series, he scowled: "That's no good—the Yanks lost that one!"

"Well, they didn't lose it until the seventh game," quipped Heitz, "so you can always leave early."

Because of space limitations, anyone wishing to use the second-floor research library should make an appointment. Up there is Tom's office, where he attends to mail and telephone inquiries. While we spoke there the phone rang; it was a researcher from *Sports Illustrated*, asking Tom to identify the fastest-starting teams in baseball history, and how the 1984 Detroit Tigers (17-2 at the time) compared with them. For Heitz it was a simple task, because he had already researched the subject for a few other publications. "I'm not an expert on anything," Tom remarks, "except knowing how to find it."

The research library has all that one might expect to find: baseball literature, guidebooks, periodicals, and team publications, for example. It also has many unusual collections: a file of handwritten, minor-league player record cards donated by the National Association; a representa-

tive collection of autographs of baseball personalities; and a monstrous, comprehensive collection of box-scores dating back to 1876, compiled mostly by the late John Tattersall.

Among the sports-oriented newspapers on file are *The Sporting News*; *Sporting Life* (1883-1917); and the New York *Clipper*, which was a post-Civil War publication devoted to the odd combination of theatre and baseball. As Heitz explains, "baseball at that time was regarded as outdoor drama, with the players as entertainers."

Perhaps the most impressive, well-arranged and widely used of the library's resources are the biographical files. These hold some 2.5 million documents, news clippings, and personal questionnaires covering the great majority of the 13,000-plus men who have appeared in a major league game, from Hank Aaron to Dutch Zwilling, along with managers, umpires, executives, and many others connected with baseball.

There is a large photo collection containing an estimated 100,000 prints of players, teams, stadiums, events, and miscellaneous subjects. The collection consists mostly of black-and-white prints, but the number of color prints and transparencies is growing steadily. Many of the photos are contributed by players and their families, or by fans. The library recently received a donation of about one thousand 1960-era photos from a woman in Troy, New York, who discovered them in the attic of a house she had just moved into.

There are the subject files—a half-million documents categorized by subject—which, according to Heitz, include "everything from pitchers' mounds to hot dogs." These files are in need of extensive expansion and revision.

A pet subject of Tom's is baseball cartoon art, of which there is also a scattered collection in the library. As Tom laments, this appears to be a dying art: "There doesn't seem to be much innovative cartooning any

more, as there was in the days of [Gene] Mack and [Willard] Mullins."

There is a fairly extensive assortment of baseball poetry, ranging from classics like *Casey at the Bat* to hand-scrawled efforts of grade-school kids. "We receive two or three submissions a month," says Heitz. "Most of it is submitted by fans, has never been published, and probably never should be; but it does have a place here, because it reflects the game's impact on the public."

There is even a haphazard collection of baseball sheet music. Among the song titles I noticed while leafing through the pile were "Our Bambino" and "I Love Mickey," which would certainly rank atop anyone's list of all-time greatest hits.

While we were passing through the visual-aid room en route to the archival storage area, a film on "all-time batting greats" was being shown. We paused to watch 1920s star George Sisler, in his baggy St. Louis Browns' uniform, bang out yet another hit. This area, which is not accessible to the general public, houses an estimated 2 million documents, some of them invaluable and irreplaceable. Because paper preserves better at low temperature, the basement is constantly kept at a crisp 55-60° F. and 45 percent humidity. It has a steel roof, thick concrete walls, and is airtight and waterproof.

The rollaway shelves in the basement are loaded with dozens upon dozens of bankers' boxes chock full of potential researchers' and collectors' delights. The problem, however, is trying to find anything. Some of these "mystery boxes" are labeled but, as Heitz admits, the labels often have no relationship to the contents. "It's like a giant rummage sale," he says with a half-smile. He estimates that the sorting and cataloguing of this room, with the assistance of students who help out in the summers, will take about three years.

Among the artifacts stored in the basement are scrapbooks from players and fans, some dating back to the 1870s; hundreds of hardcover

books, many in multiple copies; official documents; audio and video recordings; team publications; scorecards and programs. A 1926 World Series program caught my eye; originally selling for 75¢, it now brings hundreds of times that in the collecting trade.

Also in the basement are some true historians' treasures: some unopened file cabinets of former baseball commissioners; the correspondence of Garry Herrmann, President of the Cincinnati Reds (1903-27) and chairman of the National Commission, which contains thousands of letters from players, owners, and officials; the World Series film collection of former Yankees' owner Del Webb; and the baseball-related papers of former National League President A.G. Mills, who headed the commission that in 1907 issued the report which determined that baseball was originated in 1839 by Cooperstown's Abner Doubleday (hence the location of the Hall of Fame).

Heitz believes that the out-of-the-way locale has its advantages over a more urban site: "People come here not because they are just passing through, but because they want to come. As a result, we have a more respectful clientele."

The library enjoys good cooperation from team and league officials in obtaining information and publications. It also relies heavily on contributions from individuals. Heitz points out that anyone donating an original baseball book that is accepted by the library is afforded a lifetime pass to the Hall of Fame. Heitz is particularly interested in obtaining hard-to-find ephemeral publications reflecting the mood of their times. He cites as an example a cookbook put out a few years ago by the wives of the New York Mets' players, entitled *Gour-Mets*.

Perhaps the most ambitious project carried out by the library to date is the microfilming of, among other things, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century baseball documents, scrapbooks, correspondence, and

records. This project was co-sponsored by SABR and the New York Public Library in 1983. "This material, invaluable from a historical standpoint, was in a constantly deteriorating condition due to advanced age," explained Heitz in a press release. "If we are to salvage this for posterity, it is imperative that action be taken soon. Microfilm is the most practical solution, and the addition of this material to the National Baseball Library will certainly enhance our reputation as baseball's finest research facility."

Besides enabling the preservation of ancient documents, microforming will also greatly improve space management and ease of handling of research materials. For example, a single microfiche card, slightly larger than a dollar bill, can record more than 500 letter-size pages of information.

Heitz estimates that the conversion to microform will take between ten and fifteen years, and cost roughly a half-million dollars. Equipment will account for only 30-40 thousand dollars of that amount, with most of the rest of the expense going toward labor—the tedious sorting, editing, and filming of the vast amount of material.

Heitz is anxious to increase the visibility and activity of the library. "A lot of people don't realize all that we have, or even that we exist," he says. Heitz also looks forward to expanding the library's services—incorporating lending materials, for instance—and in partaking in more cooperative ventures, such as the one with SABR which led to the photographic issue of *The National Pastime* in mid-1984. To these ends, Heitz welcomes comments and suggestions from users and prospective users of the library.

With the tour and interview portions of my visit satisfied, I set out to utilize "Baseball's Attic" for some personal research. I felt like a little boy turned loose in a candy store.

Using the minor league directories and Spalding guides, I looked up the

minor league record of my high school baseball coach (shame on you, John, a .217 average!). From the biographical files I learned that Andy Pafko, whom I'd tentatively placed on my personal list of "Polish Home Run Leaders," is actually of Czechoslovakian descent. From the annual league Red and Green Book collection, I pieced together the "caught stealing" record of Hank Aaron, finding that his career stolen base percentage (.7668) is almost identical to that of Willie Mays (.7664). But the thing that made my entire day was a seventeen-year-old box score.

In the spring of 1967, I was ten years old and just beginning my love affair with baseball. I turned on the TV one day to watch my very first major league game, the Mets against the Cubs. I made mental note of the names of players who did well, and particularly remember a stellar performance by Adolfo Phillips, and a triple lodged in the ivy-covered wall by someone named Norm Gigon.

In later years, I looked up Gigon's record and discovered that that triple had been the only one of his brief big-league career! I often wished I could find an account of this epic game; now perhaps I could.

First, Tom supplied me with a guide book for the 1967 season, and I looked up that season's National League schedule. Since I already knew the teams, park, and approximate time of year of the game, it became simple to narrow down the possible dates. The next step was to grab the appropriate hardbound collection of *The Sporting News* from the shelf. And, a few minutes later, I had found my game.

On Sunday, June 11, 1967, Chicago hosted the Mets for a doubleheader. In the second game, the Cubs pounded out an 18-10 victory with the help of three home runs and two diving catches by their center fielder Adolfo Phillips . . . and a run-scoring triple by second baseman Norm Gigon.

For one brief moment, I was ten years old again.

## THE WRITER'S GAME

# Farrell as Fan

DAVID SANDERS

JAMES T. FARRELL was unquestionably the most devoted baseball fan among America's significant writers. (The *only* one, according to critic Malcolm Cowley in *The Literary Situation*.) The game was Farrell's second greatest obsession, next only to the succession of novels he wrote for fifty years up to his death in 1980. We begin to imagine the fan by recalling the writer who seldom emerged from the Manhattan rooms where he wrote *Studs Lonigan*, the Danny O'Neill novels, and the other fictional cycles about young men growing up in Chicago. No legends gather about Farrell as they have about Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and even Dos Passos. He spent his life writing. In politics, he wrote extended polemics while his contemporaries picketed or covered the Spanish Civil War. He went to ballgames while they hunted kudu and followed the bulls.

Born and raised on the South Side of Chicago, he was drawn to the White Sox and played on local sandlots long before his literary vocation claimed him. One suspects that if he had been given eyesight as keen as his imagination he might have driven himself to follow his contemporary in

the early 1920s, Freddie Lindstrom, from the South Side to the major leagues. In life as well as in *Father and Son*, he wrote a pseudonymous letter to Connie Mack that began:

I am writing to tip you off about a kid named Farrell [Danny O'Neill in *Father and Son*] who is to be seen playing ball in Washington Park in Chicago all the time. He isn't ripe just yet because he is only fifteen or sixteen, but he is coming along fast for his age, and will be ripe soon enough and he looks like a real comer . . .

Farrell never wrote a baseball novel on the order of Lardner's *You Know Me, Al*, Malamud's *The Natural*, Coover's *Universal Baseball Association . . .*, or Roth's *The Great American Novel*, although he carried out his early plan of making baseball an important part of his work. His one book wholly given over to the game is *My Baseball Diary*, a miscellany of opinion and reminiscence that includes the key baseball passages from his major novels. It is a fan's memoir unlike anything to have come so far from a baseball novelist, even the prolific masters of juvenile fiction. It is a straightforward recollection, with no effort to link baseball and writing.

The baseball novelists cited above have not been such fans. Malamud followed the game enough to see how its legends could resemble early myths—and, apparently, followed it no further. Coover created J. Henry Waugh, the ultimate fan in many ways, but in a later interview expressed astonishment over the number of readers who had written him about *their* imaginary baseball. Philip Roth in *Reading Myself and Others* recalls Newark summers when he played ball all day and idolized Joe DiMaggio, but *The Great American Novel*, for all that it digs out of baseball's archives, is still, like Coover's and Malamud's books, built upon baseball's being the smaller part of an ironic correspondence.

Farrell was a greater fan than Ring Lardner—which is not to say that he was any more knowledgeable about the game or that Lardner, when he first covered the Cubs and White Sox, was any less devoted to it. Lardner ceased being a fan with the Black Sox scandal or, some say, with the settling in of the long ball era. The revelations about the 1919 Series shocked Farrell, but not to the point where he lost interest in the untarnished Eddie Collins or Ray Schalk. Sensitive as he was to the possibility of insufficiencies in American culture, it never occurred to Farrell to see big league players as the neurotic clowns and cloddish schemers that appear in Lardner's gallery of American celebrities. On the contrary, Lardner's stories in the *Chicago Tribune*, read to Farrell by his aunt and uncles before he had mastered his alphabet, were among the primal sources of his one enduring illusion.

Farrell's earliest baseball memories were of the players' pictures that came with Sweet Caporal cigarettes. He learned the players' names and imitated their stances to the applause of older baseball fans in his family. As other children were bidden to perform or recite, Farrell at six enter-

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tained his elders by mimicking Joe Tinker and Honus Wagner. He saw his first game in 1911 and on August 27 of that year was on hand for Ed Walsh's no-hitter against the Red Sox. More than twenty years later it was a key episode in *No Star Is Lost*, in which the child Danny O'Neill sees Walsh and the rest of his White Sox heroes perform perfectly—and exactly according to his expectations. This heady experience was only one of “easily forty or fifty games” Farrell saw in 1911-13, when bleacher seats cost twenty-five cents and he would get inside the park any way he could, even accompanying his grandmother on ladies' day.

Ping Bodie was his earliest hero, partly because “the name stuck,” but he didn't identify seriously with a player until Connie Mack sold Eddie Collins to the Sox in late 1914 in his dispersal of the Athletics team just disgraced by the Miracle Braves. While Farrell had admired Bodie for his bat, Collins became his model as well as his idol. Collins was an aggressive player and “a gentleman off the field,” all that an idealistic ten-year-old might aspire to. Unconsciously, Farrell may have been acceding to the influence, usually resisted, of his uncle, who preached refinement as he understood it from Lord Chesterfield's letters. Even when he was sixteen, at an age to begin debunking in earnest, Farrell was proud to learn that the gamblers who had gotten to some of his teammates had not even considered approaching the incorruptible Collins.

In October 1919, after poring over accounts of Cincinnati's wins at home in the first two series, he saw Dickie Kerr shut out the Reds. Farrell heard rumors of deliberate misplays, but, as he wrote in *A Baseball Diary*, “the thought that the games were being thrown never entered my head.” It is extraordinary how thoroughly his loyalty prevailed against his imagination. “I didn't want to believe it; I hoped against hope,” he wrote about learning of the revelations in 1920. He had a box seat for

the last game of the 1920 home season, the last game that Joe Jackson would play in Chicago or that Eddie Cicotte would pitch. The Sox beat Detroit easily with Cicotte going the distance. (From *My Baseball Diary*: “If only he had pitched that well in the series.”) After the game, Farrell stood with a small crowd of boys and men under the stands near the clubhouse steps to wait for the players. When Jackson and Hap Felsch emerged “sportively dressed in grey silk shirts, white duck trousers, and white shoes,” the group surged toward them, and Farrell heard someone call out, “It ain't true, Joe.”

While he himself was forced to believe that the fix had taken place, Farrell never felt that Buck Weaver was guilty of more than mistaken judgment in keeping silent, and he often argued that Weaver and Joe Jackson belonged in the Hall of Fame along with Eddie Collins. It was not the scandal but, some years later, the library of the University of Chicago that drew him briefly away from baseball. Reading Nietzsche and the American pragmatists, writing the stories which led to his novels, Farrell passed the baseball seasons of his delayed undergraduate years barely in touch with the box scores.

Like most Americans, he became a transplanted fan. Always loyal to the White Sox, he began in his self-imposed exile of the 1930s to attend games in New York ballparks. He became authoritative about the Yankees and especially the postwar Brooklyn Dodgers with whom he traveled in 1955 on an inspired assignment from *Sports Illustrated*. They struck him as a great club in danger of “underevaluation” because they had lost so often to the Yankees and, more ominously, because they had become too familiar a sight on television. He was still going to Yankee or Shea Stadium once a week in the 1970s.

Does it matter that Farrell was a baseball fan? Was it merely a holiday from his brooding imagination and monastic routine? Seen in the con-

figuration of his writing and his criticism of American life, Farrell's devotion to baseball is significant. It was the only institution from his youth to escape the scourge of his education. Since he wrote almost exclusively of that youth and education, baseball, played and followed, must stand for at least some of Farrell's highest values: grace in action, the possibility of fellowship, and the game as sanctuary within a relentless existence. As Studs Lonigan drifts to his death and as Danny O'Neill rejects every tie to his surroundings, Farrell condemns the Church, the schools, and eventually every other object of the Irish-American, middle-class imagination *except* baseball. The games Farrell saw and those he played remain untarnished memories in his work. He never treats baseball ironically, even while suggesting that Americans have been cheated by so much else in their culture.

When he was young, Farrell played baseball as ardently as he watched it. Doggedly competent in football and basketball, he pursued a young man's ideal of excellence in baseball until he struck out with the bases loaded in his last at-bat for St. Cyril High School; “. . . a miserable failure . . . a bust, a flat tire,” he wrote of Danny O'Neill in a similar situation. “And sometimes,” he said to Ira Berkow in 1975, “the frustration recurs.”

The power of Farrell's fiction comes as the currents of honesty and sympathy cross in his portrayal of his South Side family. As these people become vivid to a reader, so also does Farrell's burden of leaving them only to live with them forever in his imagination. It matters that Farrell and his brothers remained baseball fans of much the same intensity. After pages of more routine observation in *A Baseball Diary*, it is startling to read Farrell's disclosure that while he was deep in the writing of *Studs Lonigan* he was moved by reading of Eddie Collins' retirement as an active player. “He played for me,” Farrell wrote. No one has ever expressed a fan's credo more succinctly.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The following comments by Vern Luse and Jerry Malloy have been abstracted from a number of letters received in this office over several months. The last issue of TNP featured Malloy's article "Out at Home," which detailed how baseball drew the color line in 1887. He wrote: "In 1884, when Walker was playing for Toledo, Anson brought his White Stockings into town for an exhibition. Anson threatened to pull his team off the field unless Walker was removed. But Toledo's manager, Charley Morton, refused to comply with Anson's demand, and Walker was allowed to play. Years later *Sporting Life* would write: 'The joke of the affair was that up to the time Anson made his "bluff" the Toledo people had no intention of catching Walker, who was laid up with a sore hand, but when Anson said he would not play with Walker, the Toledo people made up their minds that Walker would catch or there wouldn't be any game.'"

This has long been the accepted account of the first Walker-Anson confrontation, and has appeared in print on numerous occasions in this century. Here Vern Luse, SABR's premier authority on minor-league baseball before 1900, sets the story straight.

The article "Out at Home" by Jerry Malloy contains a critical error that may have been caused by resort to secondary or tertiary sources. This can be adequately documented by reference to the primary source of the period, the local daily newspaper, in this case the *Toledo Daily Blade* of August 11, 1883; it contains a full-column article, plus box score, covering the exhibition game between Toledo, of the Northwestern League, and the Chicago, of the National League.

Some background on the incident. The National League, American Association, and Northwestern League signed an agreement (usually known as the Tri-Partite Agreement) in the spring of 1883. In a sense, this was the origination of the concept of "Organized Baseball." It was a contract between three equals, not between two "majors" and one "minor." The baseball season of 1883 extended from April through September, even into October, much as today. However, only 84 championship games were scheduled in the Northwestern, stretching from May 1 through September 30, and 98 in both the National League and American Association, over approximately the same

span. The multitudes of open dates, even taking into account the relative slowness of railroad transportation, allowed—indeed, required—the teams to set up a schedule of exhibition games. In general, National League and American Association teams did not play exhibitions against each other, either intra- or inter-league, but only with outside teams.

Toledo's geographical position, its relatively good baseball team (ultimate winners of the Northwestern's 1883 championship), and the relative prosperity of the city dictated that Toledo become a frequent exhibition opponent of major league teams. Toledo played such contests against the New York Metropolitans, the New York Nationals, Columbus, and St. Louis prior to the scheduled date, August 11, 1883, of a game with Chicago of the National League.

Chicago was a particularly attractive exhibition opponent. They were the three-time champions of the NL, and were heavily engaged in battle with Boston for the 1883 pennant. With Toledo closing in on a pennant as well, a very large gate was anticipated. Exhibition contracts usually called for both a guarantee and a "rain guarantee," and for the visitor to receive a portion of the receipts over a specified amount. On August 11, Chicago was to receive its guarantee when the game was "called" by the umpire—that is, when the game began.

Moses Walker had been catching almost every Northwestern League game, and his hands were badly banged up, so he was not scheduled to play in the exhibition fray. Cap Anson specifically refused to have his Chicago take the field against Walker. Charles Morton, Toledo manager/captain, informed Anson that if Chicago did not play, no guarantee would be forthcoming. This argument was sufficiently strong that the exhibition was played—with Anson at first base for Chicago and Walker in right field for Toledo. The score of the game was Chicago 7, Toledo 6, in 10 innings, illustrating the relative strength of one of the top minor league teams of 1883 and the premier major league team of the time (Chicago was to finish second to Boston in 1883).

I believe the evidence, based on the article in the *Toledo Daily Blade* of August 11, 1883, excerpted below, is clear: Anson, early on, exhibited his prejudices, but he just picked on the wrong management to push around. When I had the microfilm of the 1883 *Blade*, I was unable to secure a photocopy of the relevant article and box score because our little library doesn't have a microfilm printer. Steve Lauer, one of our SABR members with whom I've corresponded in the past, provided this material. [ED.: *The printed*

*microfilm was too faint to permit facsimile reproduction.*]

## BALL AND BAT.

The National Champions Narrowly  
Escape Defeat in a  
10-Inning Game

*Baby Anson and the Color Line—  
No More Chicago's in Ours—  
The Score of Yesterday's Game—  
Notes.*

### The Color Line

Walker, the colored catcher of the Toledo Base ball Club, who, by the way, is a gentleman and a scholar, in the literal sense, and was a source of contention between the home club and that swelled organization (literal, again) the Chicago Club. The national champions came to Toledo yesterday morning, and their arrival created quite a sensation at the Union depot, where it was first thought they were Haverly's Mastadons [*sic*] or Callendar's Consolidated, their sun burned faces leaving it a matter of doubt as to their being tainted with black blood. They wore white tiles [*sic*] and blue uniforms, and under the command of the swelled baby (literal again) of Marshalltown, Capt. Anson, created a very considerable impression. Shortly after their arrival in the city the managing director of the Toledo Club was waited upon and informed that there was objection in the Chicago Club to Toledo's playing Walker, the colored catcher. It was not stated that Walker, being a "nigger," might contaminate the select organization of visitors, but that was the only inference to be drawn from the announcement. The New Yorks, Metropolitans, Columbus and St. Louis clubs, organizations outside of the N.W. League, had played with Walker against them and had experienced no unpleasant results save as his excellent play had militated against them, but the Chicago club was of more delicate fiber, more susceptible to deliterious [*sic*] influences and hence could not play, with a colored catcher against them.

Walker has a very sore hand, and it had not been intended to play him in yesterday's game, and this was stated to the bearer of the announcement for the Chicago. Not content with this, the visitors during their perambulations of the forenoon declared with the swagger for which they are noted, that they would play ball "with no d\_\_\_\_\_d nigger," and when the Club arrived at the grounds Capt. Anson repeated the declaration to the Toledo management. What would have been gratifying to Toledoans would have been for the management to have

ordered Capt. Anson and his crew off the grounds, without more ado, but this was not done. The management had put McQuaid in to play, and as announced in the morning, had not intended to play Walker, but when Capt. Anson made his "break," the order was given, then and there, to play Walker and the beefy bluffer was informed that he could play his team or go, just as he blank pleased. Anson hauled in his horns somewhat and "consented" to play, remarking, "we'll play this here game, but won't play never no more with the nigger in." Walker was put in right field, and played a faultless game, despite his sore hand . . .

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Here, Malloy's response to Luse's findings:

I greatly appreciate learning the details of the first Anson-Walker encounter in, as you decisively establish, 1883. [ED.: *On July 14, 1887, Anson successfully intimidated the management of the Newark team in the International League, forcing the removal of Newark's black battery—Walker and George Stovey—before Chicago would consent to play.*] Although I relied extensively on primary sources for events that occurred in the International League season of 1887 (the focus of my attention), I did, as you surmise, base my brief account of the Chicago-Toledo game on secondary sources. I do, however, acknowledge full responsibility for any and all inaccuracies in the text.

I find it especially interesting that your (correct) version of the game in question bolsters my central points: by 1887, Anson was able to disqualify black opponents, something he had been unable to accomplish only a few years earlier. I certainly wish I had known of this before I wrote my article.

Even more important than its service to my thesis, however, is the fact that your account is accurate. It is the duty of SABR to push back the boundaries of knowledge wherever possible, and to rectify this error on my part does just that.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In the same issue containing "Out at Home" there appeared a long narrative poem, "The Ballad of Old Bill Williams." Sent to TNP by James K. Gaynor, the poem was of uncertain authorship. Gaynor wrote: "These ballads were given to me in 1935 when I was umpiring in the Nebraska State League. There the donor was a young baseball writer in Norfolk, Nebraska; I long since have forgotten his name. He said they were written by a Dr. Starkey, a local physician whom I did not meet." As Vern Luse pushed back the boundaries of



Norfolk Elks, 1935

knowledge with his expansion of Jerry Malloy's original article, so, with this postscript, has David Kemp of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

I read "The Ballad of Old Bill Williams" with much interest. At the time, I had just completed work on the Sioux Falls Canaries who, along with the Norfolk Elks, the Lincoln Red Links, and the Beatrice Bees, made up the league in 1935. That happened to be the year umpire James Gaynor acquired the poem from a young sportswriter in Norfolk.

In my study of the Sioux Falls team I had spent several hours perusing the city's newspapers. I did not recall mention of a Norfolk sportswriter, nor a Norfolk physician by the name of Starkey, nor a poem about an umpire. I had been thinking of expanding my research to include the other franchises in the Nebraska State League; a search for the sportswriter, the physician, and the poem would give me an opportunity to learn about Norfolk, the Sioux Falls Canaries' prime rival of the late 1930s.

On the first nice day in the late spring of 1984 I headed for Norfolk, a town I knew only from seeing a television special about Johnny Carson, who grew up there. I began my search in the Norfolk Public Library by checking out the City Directory for 1935. No Dr. Starkey was listed, but there was a Dr. Lucien Stark of the Norfolk Nebraska Clinic. Was this Gaynor's Dr. Starkey? In conversations with local oldtimers it became clear that there never was a Dr. Starkey in town, and that Dr. Stark was known for his love of the sporting life. Orville Carlisle noted that the

local trapshooting award is called the Dr. Lucien Stark Memorial Award. When I later spoke with James Gaynor I asked if the poet's name could have been Dr. Lucien Stark. His reply was, "I believe that is it."

Dr. Stark was a large man with just as large a voice. His family was interesting: his wife, Marjorie, was Nebraska's first woman state senator. Their only son, Tim, was a professional singer. Dr. Stark passed away in the 1950s.

Who was the sportswriter who passed Gaynor the poem? I reviewed the Norfolk News for the months of the 1935 baseball season. There was no sign of a poem by Dr. Stark. Reviewing the list of employees at the newspaper I realized that the one and only staff writer was a Nelson A. Barth.

In my research on the Canaries I had come across a photo of the Norfolk Elks of 1935. In the middle of the second row is N. Barth. Seated next to him is a Dr. Mullong; from the newspaper accounts I established that Dr. C. Robert Mullong was the team's owner. The City Directory showed that his office was in the same building as Dr. Stark's.

James Gaynor recalls that it was through his acquaintance with Nelson Barth that he obtained the poem. Barth knew of Gaynor's interest in literature and asked him to try to find a publisher for the poem. Gaynor submitted it to *The Sporting News*, which rejected it on the grounds that it was too long. "The Ballad of Old Bill Williams" languished in obscurity for nearly fifty years until its publication in TNP.

The oldtimers of Norfolk did not recall Dr. Stark ever publishing any of his compositions. If we did locate his papers would we find out more about the poem? Would we find other sports poetry? In my journeys into the early days of Western baseball I hope someday to find the real-life model for Old Bill Williams, the umpire's equivalent of Casey at the Bat.

ANSWER FOR P. 25

"The first time I pitched against Ed Delahanty he hit two balls so far that one was never found and everybody felt like shaking hands with Van Haltren, the old Giant outfielder, when he returned with the other, as if he had been away on a vacation some place." MATHEWSON, *Pitching in a Pinch*