



# The Wood Pile



Newsletter of the Smoky Joe Wood Chapter of the Society for American Baseball Research

Volume I Issue 10

Winter 2020

## Leading Off: A Message from the Chapter President



Greetings, SABR-ites! Well, we are into the Hot Stove League now, and congratulations to the Washington Nationals for winning the Series. It was unprecedented for the road team to win every game. We are now seeing a lot of player movement, with more to come.

We had a good fall meeting in November, at Middlesex Community College in Middletown, with several good speakers. Some of us also went to the Southern NE meeting in RI, where we heard former Red Sox hurler Lenny DiNardo speak, we conducted a mock HOF vote, and heard other presenters.

By the time you read this, we will have had our annual holiday party at J-Roos restaurant in North Haven, which is always a nice occasion. What lies ahead is national SABR Day in January, and our spring general meeting.

I recently finished a book about the 1934 Gas House Gang Cardinals, with Dizzy Dean being the central character in the book. They came back in late season to both win the pennant, and then tame the Tigers in 7 games, to win the Series. While other players were also profiled, Dean got most of the focus. I would have preferred a broader focus on other players and teams, but it was a good read.

David Kaiser presented at our November meeting, on his book about Wins Above Average (WAA). I have read a lot of it, and it's a stimulating analysis. He doesn't do positional adjustments, which other measures do. He defines a superstar season as getting at least 4 WAA. Would positional or other adjustments affect these ratings? He writes in narrative form, chronologically, with statistics mixed in. I wonder if it would have been an easier read to have charts brought into the discussion, which Palmer and Thorn do in *The Hidden Game of Baseball*, which came out in 1985.

How do you all feel about the recent HOF balloting, where Marvin Miller and Ted Simmons got elected? Who would you have voted for? I had hopes for Munson, Evans and maybe Whitaker. We might have a forum on this in the near future.

See you soon at one of our future events!

Regards, Steve

## Upcoming Events

### Chapter Events

[www.smokyjoewood.com/events](http://www.smokyjoewood.com/events)

SABR Day  
Saturday, January 25  
Details to Come

General Chapter Meeting  
March – Date and Site TBD  
Contact Steve Krevisky  
[Skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu](mailto:Skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu)

Chapter Breakfast  
March – Date and Site TBD  
Contact Steve Krevisky  
[Skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu](mailto:Skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu)

*Watch for emails from Steve Krevisky for details on our chapter plans.*

### National Events

NINE Baseball Conference  
March 4-7, 2020  
Tempe, Arizona  
[nineconference.com](http://nineconference.com)

SABR Analytics Conference  
March 6-8, 2020  
Phoenix, Arizona  
[sabr.org/analytics](http://sabr.org/analytics)

19<sup>th</sup> Century Base Ball Conference  
April 24-25, 2020  
Cooperstown, New York  
[sabr.org/ivor-campbell19c](http://sabr.org/ivor-campbell19c)

Baseball & American Culture  
May 27-29, 2020  
Cooperstown, New York  
[baseballhall.org/discover-more/education/symposium](http://baseballhall.org/discover-more/education/symposium)

Negro Leagues Conference  
June 11-13, 2020  
Birmingham, Alabama  
[sabr.org/malloy](http://sabr.org/malloy)

SABR 50  
July 15-19, 2020  
Baltimore  
[sabr.org/convention](http://sabr.org/convention)

*More information at [sabr.org/events](http://sabr.org/events)*



## New Chapter Members

Welcome to new members (since July 2019):

Michael Cassarino, Meriden  
DJ Friedman, Stamford  
William Parlee, Vernon

Jim Chakulski, Columbia  
David Kozak, North Haven  
Mark Stewart, Salisbury

## On the Web

Society for American Baseball Research: [sabr.org](http://sabr.org)  
Smoky Joe Wood Chapter: [smokyjoewood.com](http://smokyjoewood.com)

## Smoky Joe Wood Chapter Officers

Stephen Krevisky (President): [skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu](mailto:skrevisky@mxcc.commnet.edu)  
Alan Cohen (Vice President/Treasurer): [adc0317@comcast.net](mailto:adc0317@comcast.net)  
Stan Dziurgot (Membership Director): [stanyank7@yahoo.com](mailto:stanyank7@yahoo.com)  
Karl Cicitto (Communications Director): [kcicitto@cox.net](mailto:kcicitto@cox.net)

Members are welcome to submit articles, book reviews or other information that might be interesting to other chapter members. Please send information to Karl Cicitto at [kcicitto@cox.net](mailto:kcicitto@cox.net).

## Connecticut Vintage Baseball Winter Meeting

By Mike "Dry" Dreimiller

The six member teams of the CT Vintage Base Ball Association - Connecticut Bulldogs (Hartford), Lisbon Tunnelmen, Newtown/Sandy Hook Base Ball Club, Thames Base Ball Club (New London), Wethersfield Red Onion and Woodstock Hilltoppers - will be holding their winter meeting on January 18th to prepare for the 2020 season. Agenda items include finalizing their schedules, planning recruiting efforts, and reviewing rules and procedures.

Newtown/Sandy Hook BBC, which has not played since the 2016 season, will be playing a limited schedule in 2020. The Connecticut Bulldogs are primarily a travel club representing various modes of vintage and classic baseball.

The CT vintage base ball season will kick off with Connecticut Day on May 9th which is currently scheduled to be held at Cove Park in Wethersfield, CT. All six CT teams will be participating along with representatives from some out-of state teams. The regular season will end on September 28th with an event held at Woodstock Common in Woodstock, CT, the same day as the Roseland Cottage Steampunk Festival (located across the street from the ball field), and will also feature representatives of all six CT teams.

The 2020 John P. Martin Memorial Northeast Historic All-Star Series will be held on October 11th. This year's event was held again at historic Muzzy Field in Bristol, CT. It featured 50 players from 22 teams and 9 states and included a re-creation of the 1986 MLB All-Star Game in addition to two vintage games.

Additional matches will be scheduled with teams from MA, RI, NY, and ME as well as participation in the New England Vintage Base Ball Festival in Cornish, ME (June 13-14), the National Vintage Base Ball Festival in Gettysburg, PA (July 18-19), and the Doc Adams Old Time Base Ball Festival in Old Bethpage, NY (August 1-2).



All games are free admission. Most games are played using the rules of 1864 and 1865.

All of the teams are actively recruiting new players. An open tryout/spring training event is planned for April 18th. Inquiries sent to [ctvbba@gmail.com](mailto:ctvbba@gmail.com) will be received by all of the teams.

Also contact them if you're interested in hosting a vintage base ball game at an event in 2020. Possibilities include moving a scheduled match to your event, providing a team to face a team that the event organizer puts together, or just providing guidance on the appropriate rules.

The CT VBBA web site at <http://ctvbba.org> has links to each team's web site, rules, and a history of vintage base ball in Connecticut. It will also have a master 2020 schedule.

## Frank Observations

By Michael Frank

Westchester SABR sub-chapter leader Ken Matinale calls himself a radical baseball man, and writes an occasional column offering "provocative, somewhat whimsical new concepts that challenge baseball orthodoxy". The columns are often an outgrowth of discussions at the monthly White Plains luncheons, and slanted to his (not my) beloved Yankees. Here are some examples from recent (October) columns:

- 300 home runs by a team is out of control. The Yankees set the record last year with 267. Titleist baseballs are the reason. If they used it in 1961, Bobby Richardson would have hit 30 homers. Several teams set team home run records in 2019.
- Brian Cashman should be fired as Yankee GM because of no world championships in the decade. This drew comments.
- New York City league leaders: 33 New York players led their league in home runs, from Buck Ewing to Peter Alonso. Babe Ruth did it the most times, 10, followed by Mel Ott (6), Mickey Mantle (4), Lou Gehrig (3) and several at 2.
- Two players have led more than one New York team in homers for a year: Carlos Beltran and Bill Joyce.
- 2321 batters have hit homers against the Yankees. Leaders are Jimmie Foxx (61), Ted Williams (60), Manny Ramirez (55), David Ortiz (53), and Carl Yastrzemski (52).
- 10 players have 1000 hits with two teams (none with three teams). Recent ones are Buddy Bell, Carlton Fisk, Vlad Guerrero, Rafael Palmeiro, Albert Pujols, Manny Ramirez, BJ Surhoff, Joe Torre and Dave Winfield.
- Never were all three, Cy Young, MVP, and Rookie of the Year from the same team. 2019 Astros came oh so close!
- He compared Mantle at age 32 with others at that age. Mantle was sixth behind Ruth, Ted Williams, Cobb, Gehrig and Hornsby. Mantle should have retired then.
- Mantle and Maris were the only teammates to hit 50 home runs the same year.

You can sign up with Ken at [Ken.Matinale@gmail.com](mailto:Ken.Matinale@gmail.com).

## Book Review

By Paul Hensler

### *Ballpark: Baseball in the American City*

By Paul Goldberger (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019)

In the acknowledgments of Paul Goldberger's *Ballpark: Baseball in the American City*, the author states that he sought to write about "the idea of the ballpark as both civic space and a work of architecture," and to that end he has succeeded greatly in this well-written volume (323).

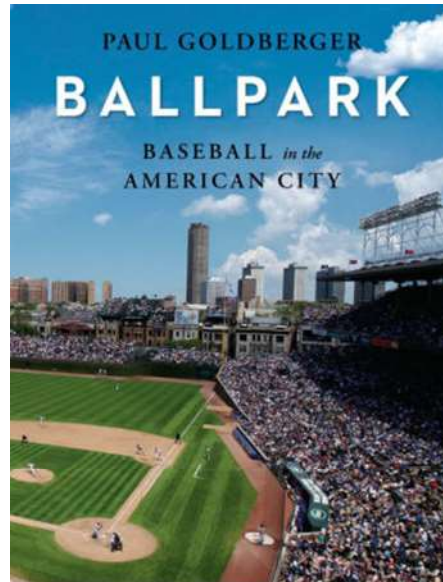
Goldberger covers much ground, both geographically and chronologically, and the book is a great primer in the evolution not only of ballparks in and of themselves but also their placement within the confines of cities and in the outlying suburbs. More than once is the phrase "*rus in urbe*" employed as a fitting expression to describe the blending of the pastoral green of the playing field with the cityscape to which ballparks are relegated (15).

Observing the separation of classes in early ballpark design – well-heeled patrons directed to the better sections, riffraff to the bleachers – the author says of Albert Spalding, "Fans with little money were far less welcome in his ballpark" (36). Separate entrances for bleachers and a lack of access to the main portion of the ballpark ensured segregation. Wooden structures eventually gave way to those made of concrete and steel in the early 1900s, and with these improvements came designs of the old classic ballparks.

Improvements in construction methods were vital, too: cantilever technology allowed for free-standing upper decks to be constructed, thereby eliminating supporting poles on the lower levels and creating the unobstructed views now taken for granted. Yet, the placement of these stadiums varied over the years, from within city limits to what were considered the outskirts, depending on land availability. Naturally, as the automobile came into greater usage, the accommodation of cars, by way of providing large tracts for parking lots, had to be taken into account, for better or worse.

Of great interest to many members of this SABR chapter, construction of the original Yankee Stadium in the early 1920s was imbued with a grandiose vision of seating for 85,000 fans, and its placement directly across the Harlem River from the Polo Grounds was not without a jab at the Yankees' former landlords, the Giants. The initial design called for the ballpark to be fully enclosed, thereby shutting itself off from the outside world, but the scaled-back final version came with an opening that allowed a view of the Number 4 Jerome Avenue trains: "New subway lines were making the Bronx the residential neighborhood of choice for people ready to take a step up from the tenements of the Lower East Side," says Goldberger (117). This type of commentary underpins Goldberger's talent in explaining the various forces ultimately affecting stadiums and their environs.

On Walter O'Malley's vision for an Ebbets Field replacement and a desire to accommodate "shopping malls and entertainment complexes," Goldberger observes, "[O'Malley and designer Norman Bel Geddes] set out to connect baseball to what they saw as the new forms of entertainment of the postwar age, and to house it in a



place that emphasized a new view of urbanism in which connection to either sky or street meant little" (157). Thus, the Dodger owner's toying with the idea of a domed stadium. Soon O'Malley would be inspired by Disneyland while "relying heavily on the tools of entertainment" to create Dodger Stadium, one of the most time-honored of the modern parks, while the Astrodome in Houston was infused with a sense that "American power and American technology could solve all things" and became emblematic of "an age in which bigger was often perceived as better" (165, 188).

The move of most 1960s-era stadiums to suburban areas allowed for their construction to be possessed of broader footprints and "had responded to the open space of the suburbs by indulging itself, expanding its program to grow ever larger" (175). These new stadiums, or "concrete donuts," were surrounded by vast tracts of parking lots that did nothing to create any sense of charm inherent in many urban ballparks.

The creation of Baltimore's Oriole Park became a new template for the construction of what we now term "retro parks" that not only drew inspiration from old classic stadiums but also incorporated the modern amenities now expected by twenty-first-century fans. Goldberger notes that Camden Yards is "a triumph of balance" because the ballpark blends "the functional demands of the modern baseball park with the look and feel of a more traditional one" (217).

Imitation is said to be the sincerest form of flattery, but Goldberger notes an important distinction regarding stadiums that followed in the wake of Camden Yards: Oriole Park was not intended to be exactly replicated in other cities but rather tailored to new environments. "Cleveland and Arlington were the first two children of Camden Yards, but they developed from a different part of their parent's DNA" (235).

One drawback of the book is that Goldberger frustrates time and again by downplaying the money involved in the construction of these stadiums in the modern era. The author seems intent on following the bromide that if you have to ask how much something costs, then you can't afford it, although he finally cracks late in the narrative: Citi Field checked in at \$850 million, Marlins Park in Miami cost \$634 million, and the new Yankee Stadium ran to a jaw-dropping \$1.5 billion.

*"Ballpark" continued on Page 10*

## MLB Roadtrip, Part Two: 7 Parks in 8 Days

By Ray Sikora

Following our successful 5 parks in 5 days roadtrip last summer, we were eager to begin part two this year, this time focused on the Midwest. We started Sunday, September 1st with a morning flight from Hartford to Midway Airport in Chicago. Once we picked up the rental car we were off to Wrigley Field to see our first stadium.

We were greeted with sunny weather for the mid-afternoon game between the Cubs and Brewers. While Chicago was shutout for 8 innings against 6 different Milwaukee pitchers, the Cubs went into the 9th inning down just one run. But Craig Kimbrel dashed any comeback hopes, as he gave up a three-run blast to Christian Yelich in the top of the 9th, his 42nd HR of the season. The Cubs went down in order in the bottom of the inning, and the win moved the Brewers to 3 games behind the Cubs in the NL Wild Card standings. This would not be the last time we saw a pivotal game in a Wild Card race.

After an overnight stay in Indianapolis, we embarked on a morning drive to Great American Ballpark for the Reds' afternoon Labor Day game against the Phillies. Cincinnati's pitchers were no match for the Philadelphia's bats. They pounded out 4 HRs, 2 by Rhys Hoskins and one each by Bryce Harper and Scott Kingery, en route to a 7-1 victory. The lone run for the Reds was a HR by young phenom Aristides Aquino, a 417 foot bomb that was the longest HR of the game. The Phillies victory kept them in the Wild Card hunt, in front of the Brewers but behind the Cubs.

Prior to arriving in St. Louis for Tuesday's game, we stopped in Louisville for a few pregame activities, after having a hearty breakfast at a local Waffle House. First up was the Louisville Slugger Museum. We toured the facility where they manufactured actual bats for MLB players, including star such as Yelich and Cody Bellinger. We were also able to hold bats from MLB history, including one Babe Ruth used in the 1920s, and later took batting practice with replicas of famous bats including one from Ted Williams. After we finished at the museum, we took a tour of the Evan Williams Distillery that was just down the street, and finished with a tasting of four Evan Williams bourbons.

After chowing down some ribs at Doc Crow's Southern Smokehouse, we began our 4 hour drive to Busch Stadium to see the Giants at Cardinals. It was a pitcher's duel, with Cards starter Jack Flaherty (8 innings, one hit, no runs, 8 Ks) one-upping Dereck Rodriguez (7 innings, one run, 7 Ks). The lone run of the game came on a moonshot from slugger Marcell Ozuna that nearly hit the famous "Big Mac Land" sign, still missing the "M" as the letter was going through maintenance after being hit two weeks prior. Besides the HR, the other highlight of the game was seeing Mike Yastrzemski, grandson of Red Sox legend Carl, get the only two Giants hits given up by Cards pitchers – including his first in the 6th while Flaherty still had a no-hitter going.

On Wednesday, we woke up early for a packed day of history and baseball. We started at the Missouri Civil War Museum, located at Jefferson Barracks, where we learned more about the Civil War than we ever did in school. In addition to detailed exhibits, videos,



and a highly knowledgeable tour guide, the museum featured numerous civil war artifacts. In particular, we saw several firearms manufactured by Colt Firearms in CT, including a sword made at the Collins Company in

Collinsville, CT, a neighboring town to where we live in Burlington. Following our visit, we headed to the National Transportation Museum to see a variety of trains, cars and trucks from the last century, and then hit the road for a 4 hour drive to Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City.

While the Royals-Tigers game featured 2 of the worst 3 teams in the American League, there was still plenty of excitement. The Tigers jumped to an early 3-0 lead in the top of the 2nd inning, yet we didn't think that would last long as Tigers starter Edwin Jackson came into the game with a 3-8 record and 9.35 ERA. Jackson gave up 2 runs each in the 4th and 5th, including a 450 foot no-doubt dinger by Jorge Soler. It was the Cuban slugger's 40th HR of the season, the first time in Royals history a player reached 40 HRs in a season. At 115 miles per hour, it was also Soler's – who would go on to lead the AL in home runs with 48 – hardest hit HR of the season and the 10th hardest HR in all of MLB in 2019. The drive helped Kansas City win 5-4.

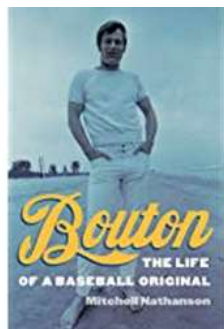
After four days of parks, we took a much needed rest day on Thursday - rest from baseball, that is. We stayed in the Kansas City area and planned for 90 minutes at the World War I museum, but that doubled to 3 hours with the tremendous amount of WWI artifacts and exhibits. Next we toured the Negro Leagues Museum, which offered a detailed look at black baseball players and leagues prior to their entry into MLB. In between the museums we had lunch at Arthur Bryant's Barbeque, known as the best barbeque in KC. We then drove until we hit Des Moines, where we ate at yet another barbeque joint, this time at Smokey D's – the number one barbeque spot in Des Moines.

While Des Moines to Minneapolis is typically a 3.5 hour drive, we figured while we were in Iowa we needed to stop at Field of Dreams. The baseball field made out of a cornfield is still around as a tourist attraction all these years after the 1989 Kevin Costner film. We played catch on the field just like Ray Kinsella and his father did in the movie, and each recreated disappearing into the outfield cornfields like Shoeless Joe and the rest of the old-time baseball crew. While the detour to Field of Dreams added 3.5 hours to our drive to Minnesota, it was well worth it.

We got to Target Field at 7:08pm, just in time to see the 1st pitch. We expected an offensive battle in the Minnesota-Cleveland

## Upcoming Baseball Book Releases

Compiled By Karl Cicitto (Source: amazon.com)



### **Bouton: The Life of a Baseball Original** (May 01, 2020) by Mitchell Nathanson

From when he first stepped into the Yankee clubhouse, Jim Bouton was the sports world's deceptive revolutionary. Whether it was his frank talk about player salaries & mistreatment by management or his passionate advocacy of progressive politics, Bouton confronted the conservative sports world. Bouton defied tremendous odds to make the majors, won two games for the Yankees in the 1964 World Series, & staged an improbable comeback with the Braves as a thirty-nine-year-old. But it was his fateful 1969 season with the Seattle Pilots & his resulting insider's account, *Ball Four*, that did nothing less than reintroduce America to its national pastime in a lasting, profound way. The book investigates the unlikely story of how Bouton's *Ball Four*, perhaps the greatest baseball book of all time and how it forever changed the way we view not only sports books but professional sports as a whole.

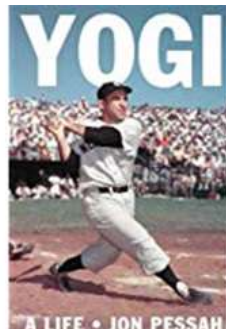
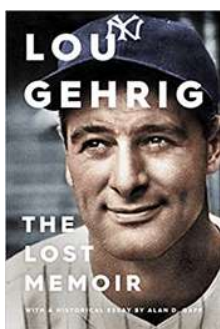
### **Lou Gehrig: The Lost Memoir** (May 12, 2020) by Alan D. Gaff

At the tender age of twenty-four, Lou Gehrig decided to tell the remarkable story of his life and career. He was one of the most famous athletes in the country, in the midst of a record-breaking season with the legendary 1927 World Series-winning Yankees. In an effort to grow Lou's star, pioneering sports agent Christy Walsh arranged for Lou's tale of baseball greatness to syndicate in newspapers across the country. Until now, those columns were largely forgotten and lost to history. It is a heartfelt rags-to-riches tale about a dirt poor kid from New York who became one of the most revered baseball players of all time. Fourteen years after his account, Lou would tragically die from ALS. His poignant autobiography is followed by an insightful biographical essay by historian Alan D. Gaff.

### **Big Sexy: In His Own Words**

(April 21, 2020) by Bartolo Colon & Michael Stahl

From picking coffee in the Dominican Republic to reaching icon status as a Major League pitcher in America, here is the story of baseball's most colorful player told in his own words. Bartolo Colón - also known as Big Sexy - is a baseball icon & one of the most beloved players to ever play the game. In a career spanning 21 years, Colón has won the Cy Young Award & won more games than any other Latin American-born pitcher. But more importantly, Big Sexy has captured the hearts of fans of the game as well as the stars he has played against. Colón plays the game the way it was meant to be.



### **Yogi: A Life** (March 24, 2020) by Joe Pessah

Lawrence Peter "Yogi" Berra is at once one of America's best-loved & least known heroes. He is famous for winning 13 titles, for his leadership, & for superlative play that put him in the Hall of Fame. And his paradoxical quotes are nothing less than national touchstones. He is the quintessential American success story: a first generation immigrant from a poor but determined family who went on to become one of the greatest players in baseball history. Now, separate fact from fiction to reintroduce us to a brilliant but misunderstood ballplayer, one who became not only a hall-of-fame catcher but also a war hero & cultural icon of such enormity that his fame transcended the baseball diamond. Drawing from years of research & dozens of new interviews, *Yogi* promises to become the definitive portrait of a Yankees legend, as well as a necessary addition to any baseball fan's bookshelf.

### **Buzzsaw**

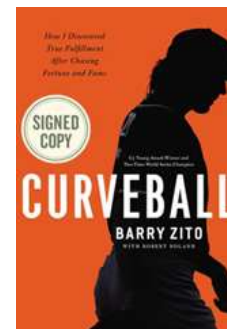
(March 24, 2020) by Jesse Dougherty

By May 2019, the Washington Nationals, owners of baseball's oldest roster, had one of the worst records in the majors and just a 1.5% chance of winning the World Series. Yet by blending an old-school brand of baseball with modern analytics, they managed to sneak into the playoffs & put together the most unlikely postseason run in baseball history. Not only did they beat the Houston Astros, they won all four games in Houston, making them the first club to ever do so. "You have a great year, and you can run into a buzz saw," Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg told Washington Post beat writer Jesse Dougherty after the team advanced to the World Series. "Maybe this year we're the buzz saw."

### **Curveball**

(Available Now) by Barry Zito

In 2007, pitcher Barry Zito signed a seven-year, \$126 million contract with the San Francisco Giants. At that time, it was the largest contract ever given to a pitcher. He was at the top of his game, in peak physical condition, & had the kind of financial security most people can only dream of. He was also miserable. And it began to show. Zito's career declined over the next few years until he hit rock bottom, watching from the bench as his team won the World Series in 2010. In the months that followed, Zito came face-to-face with the destructiveness of his own ego: his need to be viewed as the best. By sharing his experiences as a man who had everything except happiness, Zito offers readers a path through adversity and toward a life defined by true success.



## New Project: MLB Team Employee Database

By Stan Osowiecki

This past July, SABR's Business of Baseball Committee began seeking volunteers to help with a new project to build a historical database of Major League Baseball team employees. This is seen as an exciting initiative that should give us a new lens into major-league front and back offices, from team owners to ticket sales. It is hoped that upon completion of the data entry of the team information that it will allow for analysis as to the routes team employees have taken in their careers and provide insight into the activities that may make for good front office personnel.

To accomplish this project, we need volunteers to enter data from information sources, principally team media guides, into a spreadsheet. You do not need to have any of the sources. All you need is to have interest in a particular team (or year), we will provide you the sources electronically. If you do have a source with the relevant information and would be willing to enter it into a spreadsheet, that would be terrific as well.

We currently have the following media guides we can share electronically, thanks to Sean Lahman at SABR's office. The media guides already loaded include all teams from 2011 to 2019 as well as guides from additional years for a handful of others (some dating back as far as 1941).

For all teams, we have access to hard copies of roughly three-fourths of the years between 1985 and 2009. We will upload photos of the relevant few pages from each guide if there is a specific team you'd like to work on. If you have a source or team directory not listed here and would like to contribute, please let us know.

As we build the database we will be able to see the evolution of baseball employment over time and also create a record of the individuals who staffed them. This should be a valuable addition to our baseball knowledge. Please let us know if you might be willing to take on a few years of your favorite team or year.

The co-leads of this effort are Stan Osowiecki ([osowiecki@sbcglobal.net](mailto:osowiecki@sbcglobal.net)) from the Connecticut chapter and Dan Levitt ([dan@daniellevitt.com](mailto:dan@daniellevitt.com)) from the Chicago chapter. If you have any questions or wish to request a team or year to work on, please feel free to contact Stan or Dan.

## A Polar Bear Moves into New York

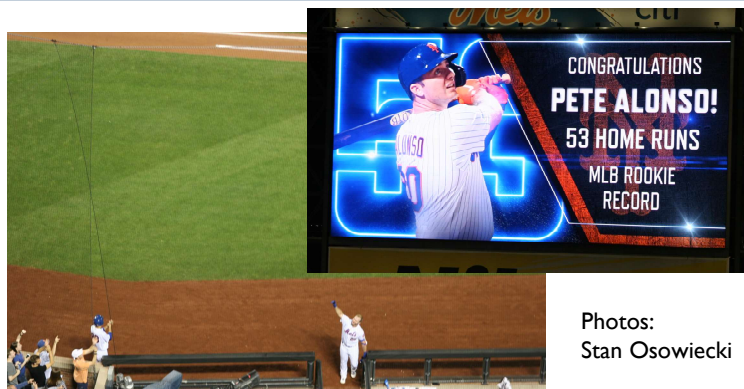
By Stan Osowiecki

Nicknamed early in his rookie year as the "Polar Bear", Pete Alonso went on to have a season all Major League rookies would want, finishing the 2019 season with 53 home runs (an MLB rookie record) and 121 RBI (three shy of the Mets' record) and along the way playing his way to be the National League Rookie of the Year. This is not to say that Alonso had an easy road to these spectacular numbers.

Alonso entertained dreams of being a big leaguer dating back to his freshman year in college. His desire was so strong that when asked to write a freshman paper on what would give him a "good life", Pete wrote about his desire to play baseball for a living. His professor was not buying into Alonso's desire and gave him a "C" on the paper saying that the desire was not "realistic enough".

Drafted in the second round of the 2016 draft, Alonso was assigned to the single A short season Brooklyn Cyclones where he hit five home runs in 30 games for the 2016 campaign. Pete spent most of 2017 with the single A St. Lucie Mets where he played 82 games and hit 16 home runs before a late season call up to the AA Binghamton Rumble Ponies where he hit two home runs in 11 games. Starting the 2018 season with the Rumble Ponies, Alonso split the season between AA and the AAA Las Vegas 51s where his final numbers were 36 homeruns in 132 games played.

While Alonso's bat had never been in question, many had expressed concern about his defensive capabilities. In fact, there were questions on whether Alonso would even be on the Opening Day roster for the Mets. With a strong showing in spring training both with his bat and glove, the Polar Bear made the Opening Day roster and silenced those defensive concerns with a solid effort in



Photos:  
Stan Osowiecki

2019. In the final rankings in SABR's Defensive Index, Alonso rated 10<sup>th</sup> among National League first basemen for his glove play.

In addition to solid glove play and his power with the bat, the Polar Bear became a fast fan favorite in 2019 as well as showing that he had the energy and personality to become a team leader for years to come. With his stated desire to continue to work on his game, Mets fans have a lot to look forward to from their amazin' first baseman.

### Sources

Alonso, Pete (interview) on "Rain Delay Theater: The Podcast". Originally released 07/10/2019.

Minor League Baseball. Player Statistics for Pete Alonso. Accessed on milb.com on 12/22/2019.

Society of American Baseball Research: SABR 2019 Defensive Index. Accessed on sabr.org on 12/22/2019.

## Cleveland in the Minor League American Association: 1914 - 1915

By Alan Cohen



Dave  
Hillyard,  
1914  
Cleveland  
Bearcats.  
(Photograph:  
L. Van  
Oeyen)

A Federal League club had played at Cleveland's Luna Park in 1913, but Cleveland's attempt to put a team in the major Federal League in 1914 was pre-empted by owner Charles W. Somers of the American League's Cleveland Naps. He moved the Toledo team (which he also owned) of the American Association to Cleveland and his two teams shared League Park II.

It was a while before the team's name was formally established. They were known as the Scouts, Spiders, Warriors, and Shecks (for manager Jimmy Sheckhard) before the team officially became the Bearcats on June 21.<sup>i</sup> The team was competitive after getting off to a slow start. They played 24 games on the road at the start of the season, and by the time of their home opener on May 14, they were in last place with an 8-16 record. They then proceeded to win 27 of their next 39 games to pull within a game of the league lead and gain their new name. They never quite made it to first place, but after a doubleheader sweep on September 10, they were, although in fifth place, within seven games of the league lead. Due to issues involving scheduling (the initial schedule was drawn up before the move from Toledo) and park availability, the Bearcats played only 65 games at League Park in 1914.

In a wild encounter on May 20, the first homers at League Park were hit. In a game that went twelve innings and ended up with the unwieldy score of 15-14, in favor of the home team, Denny Wilie homered for Cleveland (they were the Scouts at the time) and Bunny Brief homered for Kansas City. Brief's two-run homer had capped a five-run first inning that gave Kansas City an early lead. Wilie's three-run homer came in the bottom of the second and closed the gap to 5-4.<sup>ii</sup> Wilie played parts of three seasons in

the majors and had two big league homers, neither at League Park. Bunny Brief was a legitimate slugger and batted 342 homers in 19 minor league seasons. Like Wilie, he did not play long in the big leagues, spending parts of four seasons in the majors. Of his five big league homers, none were at League Park.

On January 16, 1915, the Bearcats became the Spiders and the Naps became the Indians. They once again shared League Park II, renamed Somers Park, in 1915. The Spiders had a new manager in 1915 as Jack Knight replaced Jimmy Sheckard at the helm. Once again, they got off to a slow start and found themselves in sixth place for a good part of the season. Amid reports that the team was being transferred back to Toledo, the Spiders went on a road trip in mid-June during which they lost two no-hitters. However, they won 10 of the 16 games and came home at the beginning of July to sweep Columbus in two straight doubleheaders and climb to the dizzying heights of third place. The moves to both the first division and Toledo fell through. The Spiders went on a long road trip in July, and when they returned to Cleveland, they were in sixth place once again.

Long road trips were the norm for the Spiders in 1915, and like their 19th Century namesake, they played far more games outside of Cleveland than at home. The original schedule called for only 65 home games and with the decision to play several of the games in the opponents' cities, only 50 games were played in Cleveland. Only four homers were hit there all season. Two homers were belted in a game with Minneapolis on September 18. Cleveland manager Jack Knight, who led his team with four homers in 1915 hit a homer as his team lost 9-4 in a game that clinched the pennant for Minneapolis. Knight had hit a homer at League Park I in 1906, but that was the first incarnation of League Park that was totally rebuilt prior to the 1910 season. Wally Smith homered for the victorious Millers. Smith never homered at League Park during his time in the majors. They played the balance of the schedule on the road and finished with a 67-82 record, good for seventh place.

Notes:

i "Bearcats' New Name for Sheckard's Crew," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, June 22, 1914: 10.

ii C. L. Kirkpatrick, "Scouts Take Real Batfest," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 21, 1914: 11.

## Quotable Baseball: On Youth and Baseball

By Jim Mizera

My father used to play with my brother and me in the yard. Mother would come out and say, 'You're tearing up the grass'; 'We're not raising grass,' Dad would reply. 'We're raising boys.'

- Harmon Killebrew (1936 - 2011), Hall of Fame first-baseman. (HOF induction speech)

But wherever I was I played baseball. That's all I lived for. When I sat up on the front seat of that covered wagon next to my father, I was wearing a baseball glove. That showed anybody who was interested where I wanted to go.

- Smoky Joe Wood, 1889 - 1985, Boston Red Sox pitching great. (Baseball Almanac)

It's great to be young and a Yankee!

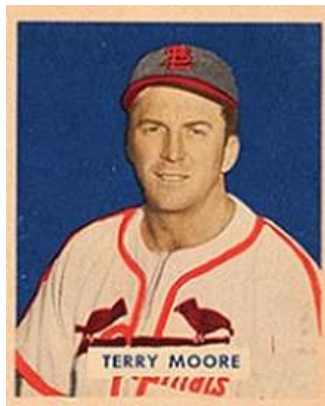
- Waite Hoyt, 1899 - 1984, Hall of Fame pitcher, coined in the 1920's. (Valley Morning Star, TX, 2-3-69)

## Cardinals, The Arch, Catsup & Moore with a Connecticut Connection

By Stan Dziurgot

A trip to St. Louis included toasted raviolis, televangelist Joyce Meyer, and Ted Drewe's Frozen Custard as we knocked another Major League Stadium off my bucket list.

As we crossed the Mississippi River over the Stan Musial Bridge from Illinois into the city, looking very much like the world's largest McDonalds Restaurant was the Gateway Arch, the Gateway to the West. Completion of the Arch in 1966 coincided with the Cardinals' opening of their new stadium, Busch Stadium, replacing Sportsman's Park. It was the first of the cookie cutter stadiums to be duplicated in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Cincinnati. The Cardinals shared Sportsman's Park with the St. Louis Browns until the Browns moved to Baltimore in 1954. Their new stadium was replaced by the newest version of Busch Stadium which opened in 2006.



The game we went to was a nondescript 10-0 Cardinals win over the Giants, a stress-free day for Cardinal Nation as St. Louis scored early and often. This was a day game after a night game, so no Buster Posey, but we did see Mike Yastrzemski, Carl's grandson. Outside the stadium is Ball Park Village. Inside are restaurants, bars, souvenir shops and a Cardinal Hall of Fame. Outside the stadium is a statue of Stan Musial. The stadium and downtown St. Louis are visible by taking a tram to the top of the Arch (630 feet tall) along with Illinois on the other side of the river. We did take the tram and also enjoyed a riverboat cruise on the Mississippi River.

The Cardinals have won the second most World Series titles behind only the Yankees. Cardinal Nation has members on both the East and West coasts of the United States. They are on a strong AM radio station; KMOX that can be heard all over the continental United States plus Mexico and Canada on summer nights.

Until the mid-1950's St. Louis was the western-most Major League city and the only one west of the Mississippi River (just barely). It also has the oldest university west of the Mississippi River; St. Louis University. Missouri was a slave state during the Civil War and under martial law by the Union Army. It was a border state with soldiers fighting for both the North and the South. Eighty years later St. Louis would be involved in a famous - or should I say infamous - racial incident. We actually stayed on the other side of the river from St. Louis in Collinsville, Illinois.

If Brooklyn is known as the Borough of Churches, Collinsville may not be far behind. A resident told me that there is a 10 -12 square block area in downtown Collinsville where there are a "ton of churches" and you can hear church bells from just about anywhere. I counted 35 churches on a website, this in a town of about 25,000 people, the size of North Haven or Wethersfield, CT.

The town is located mainly in Madison County with a portion in St. Clair County. It's about 10 -12 miles from St. Louis and actually a Saint Louis suburb (even though it's in Illinois) called the Metro East Area. Not to be confused with Collinsville, CT, it does have a Connecticut connection to the town's origin. First settled by the Cook family from Virginia in 1810 its original name was Downing's Station. The Collins family from Litchfield, Connecticut settled there in 1817 and bought out the Cook property, renaming the town Unionville. When they tried to set up a Post Office they discovered that there already was a Unionville, IL Post Office and the town was renamed Collinsville. There are historic sites to visit in the town which calls itself the "Horse Radish Capital of the World". There is a horseradish festival every year. Horse radish has been big since the late 1800's due to the influx of German immigrants in town. Speaking of condiments, Collinsville is home to the "World's Biggest Catsup Bottle". Built in 1949 the bottle has the name Brooks Catsup on it and is actually a water tower. The bottle is 70 feet tall and sits on a 100 foot tower. It holds 100,000 gallons of water or 640,000 bottles of catsup. Brooks merged with another company in the 1970's and moved to Mount Summit, Indiana. With the company gone the bottle and tower were saved from destruction a couple of times, most recently by Franklin "Al" Bieri, owner of the Mississippi River Construction Company who bought the tower and adjacent warehouse. The Catsup Bottle is now on the National Register of Historic Places and was featured on a PBS documentary on unusual buildings and roadside attractions. It was also mentioned on film in *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*. It reminded me of the bat at the old Yankee Stadium.

Since 1998 there has been World's Largest Catsup Bottle Festival in town. Things like marriage proposals and wedding photos between the church ceremony and reception happen at the Catsup Bottle and publicity photos have been taken with the Big Idaho Potato Truck and Oscar Mayer Weinermobile. The Brooks brand of catsup is still in production. It's now owned by Bird's Eye and manufactured in Canada.

While in the Midwest I discovered that one of the Cardinals mainstays from an earlier era had spent his later years in Collinsville. Terry Moore was the Cardinals center fielder from the mid 1930's to the late 1940's He was born in Vernon, Alabama and moved to Memphis at

*"Cardinals and Catsup" continued on Page 9*





## Cardinals & Catsup (continued from Page 8)

a young age and then to St. Louis at 4290 Castleman Avenue. His parents separated when he was 14 so Terry was forced to work at a young age. He delivered coal in the winter and ice in the summer, also working at an electric company and the Bemis Bag Factory. While playing amateur baseball he was signed by one of the Branch Rickey's Cardinal scouts. After hitting .328 in 1934 he was elevated to the major leagues with St. Louis at the start of the 1935 season. Referred to as the Gas House Gang, the team featured Hall of Famers Dizzy Dean, Joe Medwick, Frank Frisch, Johnny Mize, Enos Slaughter and Stan Musial during Moore's years with the team.

A solid .280 hitter, he had large strong hands and used a small glove with the fingers only 3 inches long. He was known for his speed and defensive prowess. Leo Durocher called him the best defensive outfielder he had ever seen; of course this was before Leo managed Willie Mays.

Comparable recent players are Jim Edmonds and Grady Sizemore. Moore appeared in four All Star Games and was named Captain of the Team by Manager Billy Southworth in 1941. The Cardinals won the World Series in 1942 but Terry spent 1943-1945 in the military service during World War II. He was still living with his mother at that time at 1903 Miami Street in St. Louis. He met his future wife, Penny, while serving in the military in the Panama Canal Zone. They married in 1945 and had two children. Returning from the military he played three more seasons from 1946-1948, winning another World Series title in 1946. When Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in 1947 with Brooklyn there were rumors that the Cardinals had signed a petition to strike rather than play against Robinson. Moore, a Southerner at birth, and Enos Slaughter were said to be the the ring leaders. Charges were denied but many Cardinal players had to deal with these allegations for the rest of their lives.

In 1994 at age 82, Moore had a lawyer contact a book publisher to retract the story that he was involved in the controversy. After his playing days Terry was a Cardinal Coach from 1949-1952 and again from 1956-1958 with a short stint as the Phillies manager in 1954. He also owned 2 bowling alleys and a night club after leaving baseball. After 12 years of marriage, Terry and Penny divorced in 1957. He married again in 1960, wedding his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Patricia. They settled on the other side of the Mississippi River in Collinsville at 501 Ridgemont Road.

Terry Moore was elected to the Cardinals Hall of Fame and his glove and cleats are on display at the Cardinals Museum in Baseball Village near Busch Stadium. He died in 1995 in Collinsville. He and his wife were members of Jerusalem Lutheran Church. He was buried in Holy Cross Lutheran Cemetery with Patricia, who passed away in 1999.

We discovered that there were many restaurants in St. Louis that are not operating on the East Coast, such as Bob Evans, Culver's, and Steak 'n Shake, among others. We also found out that the original name of Panera Bread was St. Louis Bread Company; a name it still goes by in some places in the Mid-west.

Maybe it was because we were on vacation but people in the mid-west in general all seemed very polite and courteous, using a lot of "please and thank you's". On a two lane interstate highway a sign said right lane closed ahead and everyone immediately got into the left lane. Unlike in other regions, no one stayed right and zipped ahead as far as they could go; knowing that someone would let them back in line on the left.

Lastly, FYI to pregnant women about the catsup bottle – folklore has it that if you visit the Catsup Bottle you will give birth to a redhead.

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## Ballpark (continued from Page 3)

The latest trend has teams building ballparks to be centerpieces of whole areas that the clubs control themselves, the Battery at Sun Trust Park in Atlanta being a prime example. However, for as ambitious as these projects are, production of such manufactured environments upset the “harmonic balance” between “the rural and the urban, the natural and the man-made” that can be found in a true city environment, thereby becoming a “simulacrum” devoid of urban authenticity or the key asset of diversification (317, 320).

All told, Paul Goldberger has created a masterwork in detailing the most conspicuous physical asset of every baseball club – the place where the game is played.

## Baseball Conjectures & Speculations By Ezra Count



Answer these questions to the best of your imagination:

1. Name 5 to 10 teams that looked like dynasties but fizzled out.
2. What were the best baseball stadiums built in the 1960s & 1970s?
3. What rules do players & managers misunderstand most often?
4. Who was a better speaker, Casey Stengel or Yogi Berra?
5. What are the best ways for pitchers to improve their control?
6. True or False: Changing managers seldom makes a difference.
7. Who were the most inconsistent or erratic players ever?
8. Give the 5 most important changes that baseball needs now.

## Roadtrip (continued from Page 4)

matchup, since the Twins were on their way to breaking a major league record for HRs in a season. Yet the Twins couldn't even muster one HR in their 6-2 loss. It was our only extra innings game of the trip, as the Indians scored 4 runs in the 11th inning to give the Twins the loss. Francisco Lindor hit a 433 foot bomb for the Indians, who won a key game in the AL Wild Card hunt.

On Saturday we made the trek from Minnesota to Milwaukee, for our second Brewers-Cubs matchup of the trip. We quickly learned by the amount of Cubs fans and tailgates we were greeted with that Miller Field is nicknamed “Wrigley North” as Cubs fans from all over the Midwest flock to Milwaukee when Chicago is in town. After downing a couple Wisconsin beers in the parking lot given to us by local tailgaters, we headed into the park. We drank another set of local beers at the stadium brewery and munched on cheese curds made with Wisconsin cheese.

As for the game, a pitcher's duel broke out between starters Yu Darvish and Gio Gonzalez, and the score was 2-2 heading into the bottom of the 9th. Christian Yelich came up with 2 out and one on, and delivered yet another clutch hit, an opposite field double to left for the walk off victory. The win was possible only by Addison Russell's error to start the inning. Yelich also added 3 steals in the game to bring his total to 30, and became just the 10th player in MLB history with 40 HRs and 30 SBs in a season.

We headed back to Chicago on Sunday to end the trip where it had begun a week prior. We drove to the South Side to Guaranteed Rate Field to see the White Sox host the Angels. After LA scored a run in the top of the 1st, Chicago scored one run each in the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6th and 7th innings to earn a 5-1 win behind 11 hits. Jose Abreu hit a 462-foot blast in the third, the longest HR we saw all trip. During the game we made a sign listing all the parks in our roadtrip, hoping to get on the stadium scoreboard. A White Sox cameraman was ready to capture us, but at the last moment bailed because we had written “Wrigley Field” on the sign!

After the game we drove into the city to grab a deep dish pizza at Gino's East, and that marked our last stop before dropping our rental car off at the airport, where we caught a late-night flight back to Hartford. All in, we drove over 2,000 miles in 8 days, spending 40 hours in the car – all of them well worth it. It was another successful road trip, and we are already planning a 6 park West Coast adventure for 2020.

## Quotable Baseball: On Youth and Baseball

By Jim Mizera

My mother used to pitch to me and my father would shag balls. If I hit one up the middle close to my mother, I'd have some extra chores to do. My mother was instrumental in making me a pull hitter.

- Eddie Mathews, 1931 - 2001, Hall of Fame third-basemen. (Baseball Almanac)

You have to have a lot of little boy in you to play baseball for a living.

- Roy Campanella, 1921 - 1993, Hall of Fame Brooklyn Dodgers catcher (Billings Gazette MT, 2-9-74, among many)

## The Twinch Who Stole 2019

By Matt Monitto



Photo: Denis Poroy/Getty

Every fan of the Twins loves their winning a lot,  
But the Twinch, who lived east of Manhattan, did not.

The Twinch hated Minny and Paul for no reason  
And brooded and grumbled the length of the season.  
It *could* be his cap had been fitted too tight.  
It *could* be his pinstripes weren't slimming quite right.  
But I think the cause of his furious cries is  
His ego too large by, oh, five or six sizes.

But whatever the reasons, the facts or the spins,  
From Opening Day he was hating the Twins.  
Staring out with his face in a tight, pinchy frown  
At the Target Field hopefuls, each wanting that crown.  
For he saw this new lineup would rise from beneath  
And compete for the Series. He gritted his teeth.

"And they're hitting those bombas!" he cried with a moan.  
"That Boomstick is booming! So's Schoop, and so's Cron!"  
So he cursed, with his Twinchy gray brain matter spinning:  
"I *must* stop these impudent Twinkies from winning!"

For this season, he knew that the Central was open!  
The Spiders had slumped! Minnesotans were hopin'  
To win! They were cheering! They'd cheer! Cheer! *CHEER! CHEER!*  
The sound drove him crazy! He CALLED! FOR! A! BEER!

Then the fans in the seat would take hankies and wave!  
And they'd wave! *And they'd wave!* And they WOULD! NOT! BE! -  
HAVE!

They would wave from the National Anthem's first stave  
'Til the moment that Rogers concluded the save!

And *then* they'd do something that drove him to hate:  
They'd walk from their seat, and they'd exit the gate;  
They'd leave with a mindset he loathed as a vice:  
These Twins fans, in winning, would leave and act *nice!*

They'd smile! *And they'd smile!* And they'd SMILE! SMILE! SMILE! SMILE!  
With their kindness and handshakes and "stay for a while,"  
The Twinch began thinking, "This fanbase is vile!  
For too many a year I've put up with it now!  
I *must* stop this ballclub from winning! ...But *how?*"

Then he got an idea!  
An awful idea!  
The Twinch got a horrible, awful idea!

"I know *just* what to do!" With a wide, Twinchy grin,  
The Twinch made a plan. "Let that baseball team win!"  
He cackled and laughed. "They'll be popping no cork  
When the playoffs present them that team from New York!"

"All I need are some Yankees..." The Twinch looked around,  
And with cash in his coffers, so many were found.  
Did that please that cruel Twinch? Yes indeed! And he said,  
"This new lineup I built will fill Twins fans with dread!  
They'll be covering wrecks as the playoffs approach,  
From the losers at home to each player and coach!"

Then he loaded some bags with an armload of cash  
And he ran to the market, his speed like a flash.

And the Twinch aired his money, and players came quick  
As children to sit on the lap of St. Nick.

As the contracts were signed, shouts of joy filled the sky  
From New Yorkers enthralled by the Twinch's new buy,  
Now certain they'd lift a grand trophy up high.  
"We're the top! Number one!" And the Twinch swung his pen  
And he signed his Twinch name. And he signed it again.

Then he surveyed his roster: a talented bunch,  
Who he knew could devour some Twinkies for lunch.  
He got spurned only once, maybe twice, but no matter:  
He moved to the next, whether pitcher or batter,  
And by spring he'd assembled a roster quite rich.  
"This ballclub," he grinned, "in *The Show* is a glitch!"

Then they batted and pitched from the season's beginning,  
And just as the Twinch had foreseen, they were winning!  
Homers! And shutouts! They came in huge piles!  
Victories mounted! The fanbase bore smiles!  
And the Twinch's was widest, he mentally certain  
*He* and his club would be tops at the curtain.

Then he watched in the standings: the Twins could win too!  
Their lead in the Central made Cleveland boo-hoo!  
He watched as their bombas flew over the fence,  
And he saw that this race would bring further suspense.

So he ordered his hitters to clobber the ball:  
"For *now*," said the Twinch, "they'll be watching through fall!"

And the Twinch's big sluggers were swinging their clubs:  
"We'll be sure to outthomer those wimpy young scrubs!"  
But then came a sound like the crack of a limb,  
All those wimpy young scrubs left the Twinch looking grim.

The Twinch was surprised by their prowess and power,  
As the vets and the youngsters made visitors cower.  
They turned to the Twinch and said, "Now can you tell?  
End of the year, and your record just fell!"

"Twinch" continued on Page 12



## Twinch (continued from Page 11)

But you know that the Twinch was too wily and sly:  
He thought up a plan, waved that record goodbye,  
And said, "Truly you've earned that old four-bagger mark  
With the bombas you've bomba'd clear out of the park.  
So I'll bow and acknowledge your skill with the lumber.  
Congrats! Go and cheer for your new record number!"

But the record, he thought, was enough for the Twins;  
They could clearly hit homers, but not get those wins.  
So while the division remained in their grip,  
His ballclub won games at a lightning-fast clip.

And the last game was done, and the playoffs in hand;  
The Twins were approaching... yes, just as he'd planned,  
And the fans came and filled every seat in the stand.

All the Twinkie-nuts rooters, excited, with hope...  
The Twinch shook his head. Would he favor them? Nope.

Yes, his ballclub, each game, would leave Twinkie fans coping  
With loss after loss, and they'd leave the stands moping.

It was only three games, and the Twinch remained thrilled...  
Yes, the Twinch remained glad as his plans were fulfilled!  
For his ballclub out-batting! out-pitching! out-scoring!  
Would send them back homeward, their kindness abhorring.

The ALCS would be his! Though it ended  
With Twinch on the bottom, the year had been splendid.  
"Bye-bye to the dry Minnesotans!" he gloated.  
"They've learned it's to losers they're firmly devoted!  
They're just finding out that they lost in a sweep!  
In a minute they'll yell that the Pohlads are cheap,  
Then the Twins and their Twins fans will all start to WEEP!"

"That's a sound," said the Twinch, "that I can't wait to hear!"  
So he paused, all to witness their joy disappear.  
And he *did* see reactions from out in the snow.  
They started out low, coming patient and slow...

But the sounds were not sad! They were measured and decent!  
This couldn't be so! In the past, but not recent...

The Twinch stared in shock! He reloaded his Twitter;  
Sure, some were obnoxious, but lots far from bitter!

All these Twins and their Twins fans, the wise and unread,  
Were cheering with hope for the season ahead!

He *hadn't* made rude Minnesotans; they're kind!  
Somehow, no matter, they're kind, you will find!

So the Twinch, looking out through the toe-numbing chill,  
Stood asking and asking: "Why all this good will?  
They lost without pitching! They lost without stars!  
They lost without bombas and took to the bars!"  
And he wondered for hours on a wondering bent,  
'Til one wonder came forth in a gutting lament:  
"To these Twins fans, a loss is a common event:  
So these fans are already, internally spent!"

And what happened then? Well, the Twinch, it is said,  
Saw his ego expand right along with his head!  
And the minute the Twinch felt determined again,  
He went back to the market and pulled out his pen,  
And he pulled out his wallet: "There's money right here!"  
And he...

...he himself...

...well, we'll find out next year.



## Major League Players with Connecticut Connections (Final 2019 Statistics) Source: www.mlb.com

Player	Team	Conn. Connection	POS	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SAC	GIDP	AVG	OBP	SLG
Ahmed, Nick	ARZ	UConn	SS	158	556	79	141	33	6	19	82	54	113	13	15	0.254	0.316	0.437
Davis, Rajai	NYM	New London	OF	29	25	4	5	2	0	1	8	1	5	0	0	0.200	0.231	0.400
Pollock, A.J.	LAD	Hebron	OF	86	308	49	82	15	1	15	47	24	74	4	7	0.266	0.327	0.468
Springer, George	HOU	New Britain	OF	122	479	96	140	20	3	39	96	68	113	4	12	0.292	0.383	0.591

Player	Team	Conn. Connection	POS	G	W	L	ERA	CG	SHO	SV	HLD	IP	H	ER	R	HR	BB	SO
Barlow, Scott	KC	New London	P	61	3	3	4.22	0	0	1	14	70.1	64	33	33	6	40	92
Barnes, Matt	BOS	Bethel	P	70	5	4	3.78	0	0	4	26	64.1	51	27	29	8	40	110
Carasiti, Matt	SEA	New Britain	P	11	0	1	4.66	0	0	0	0	9.2	11	5	6	2	5	10
Harvey, Matt	DFA	Mystic	P	12	3	5	7.09	0	0	0	0	59.2	63	47	48	13	29	39
Hughes, Jared	PHL	Stamford	P	75	4	4	4.04	0	0	1	8	71.1	57	32	37	13	28	54
Leone, Dominic	STL	Norwich	P	40	1	0	5.53	0	0	1	0	40.2	39	25	28	9	24	46
Oberg, Scott	COL	Uconn	P	49	6	1	2.25	0	0	5	8	56.0	39	14	18	5	25	58



## Around the Horn

By Karl Cicitto

**CT SABR President Steve Krevisky** will be among five Connecticut sportsmen who have unselfishly given hundreds of hours of their time to the betterment of athletics in their communities and state and have been selected recipients of the John Wentworth **Good Sport Award** by the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance. The honorees will be feted at the 79th Gold Key Dinner on Sunday, April 26, 2020 at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. Steve is co-founder of the Smoky Joe Wood Chapter and is the only president the 20-year old chapter has ever had. Please email me at [kcicitto@cox.net](mailto:kcicitto@cox.net) if you are interested in attending the dinner. Congrats, Steve!

**When Derek Jeter's election to the Hall of Fame** is announced on January 21 expect a spike in page views of the Jeter bio written by our own **Alan Cohen** for the SABR Bio project. A Google search for "Derek Jeter biography" served the link to Alan's article right after those of [biography.com](http://biography.com), [britannica.com](http://britannica.com) and Wikipedia. His 6,657-word Jeter piece will get a lot of clicks, I'll bet. Alan presently has 49 player bios, 37 game stories and 6 SABR Journal articles linked to his author page on [sabr.org](http://sabr.org).

**A superb Polo Grounds exhibit** at the Morris Jumel Mansion in NYC is open to the public until February 2. The museum is at 65 Jumel Terrace, NYC, just three short blocks away from Coogan's Bluff. Thanks to **Bob Wirz** for passing this along. Bob said the exhibit is by Neil Scherer, who did the Yankees-Red Sox Rivalry show at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury. Neil creates themed wall displays of great baseball feats/personalities in unbelievable detail--autographs, photos, ticket stubs, programs and other memorabilia. Any SABR member who can get there will thoroughly enjoy it. If you go, check with the museum to see if you can receive the SABR rate established for NY SABR members.

**Paul Hensler** has heard that the new **Jackie Robinson Museum** in New York may open in early 2020. The much anticipated museum is located at 75 Varick Street in Lower Manhattan. Watch for further developments at <https://www.jackierobinsonmuseum.org>

The Yard Goats Hot Stove Luncheon will be in the YG Club at Dunkin Donuts Park on January 23. Speakers will soon be announced. Tickets are \$50. The event benefits the Yard Goats Foundation. Check for more info or tickets at <https://www.milb.com/hartford>

Our friends at **The World Series Club of Hartford County** have brought in a fine series of speakers for their first 3 dinners including Andre Dawson, Mike Pagliarulo and umpire Ed Rapuano. Doug Mientkiewicz will speak at their January 9 dinner. Speakers for February and March will be announced soon. <https://worldseriesclub.com/>

**The November 2 General Chapter** meeting in Middletown featured media members, authors and new research presentations.

- **David Kaiser** explained year-over-year changes in WAA (2018-2019) for the Rays, Red Sox and Yankees. The Red Sox decline in Pitching WAA told the team's entire story.
- **George Pawlusch** updated us on the work of SABR's Minor League Research Committee, which he chairs.
- **Stan Osowiecki** offered opportunities to help build the MLB Team Employee Database, an effort he leads with Dan Levitt for the Business of Baseball Committee.
- **Paul Hensler** talked about his new book, *Bob Steele on the Radio: The Life of Connecticut's Beloved Broadcaster*.
- **Lawrence McCray** presented opportunities to work on the Baseball Origin Project.
- **Rich Coppola**, a 9x CT Sportscaster of the Year, shared memories from 30 years at Fox61, including snarky players (Youkilis) and those gracious-in-defeat (Mariano Rivera, e.g.)
- **Dom Amore**, a 5x CT Sportswriter of the Year, also shared stories from 30 years at The Hartford Courant. The doozy of the day was Dom's telling of the long period of hazing he was given by Reggie Jackson. Reggie, a Yankee at the time, progressively ignored him, held and checked his credentials, and intentionally called him by a wrong name ("Bus", as in, hey, Bus, how you doin'?). It was in effect an effort to be intentionally obnoxious to a writer. Dom also recalled how the Yankee beat writers would tell visiting scribes that they "should try Reggie's BS. It's the best in the City". Great stories, a great time. We had 25 members in attendance.

**The December 14 Holiday Luncheon** featured awards and research in a new location. **Joe Williams** presented **Larry Levine** with the first ever Ned Hanlon Award in recognition of Larry's longtime support and leadership of our chapter. Steve Krevisky's winning of a Good Sport Award was announced by me. At Joe's suggestion we resolved to fill a table at the banquet when Steve is honored. Our good friend from the R.I. chapter, **Mark Kanter**, presented his updated Competitive Index, which reflects how the relative closeness of pennant and divisional races has changed in the pre-Division, Division, and Wild Card eras. About 25 attended, including a number of plus-ones, and a super time was had by all.



## Opportunity Knocks for Writing Projects

Compiled by Karl Ciccito

SABR has published dozens of books and thousands of biographies and will continue to add to the canon of baseball history through the efforts of SABR members. Writing opportunities are abundant. First Timers are welcome. Here is some information on 5 writing projects and how to become involved.

### Team Ownership Histories Project

The SABR Baseball Biography Project and the SABR Business of Baseball Committee are teaming up to create a collection of the ownership histories of major league franchises. As they are completed, the histories will appear in the Business of Baseball newsletter and be posted permanently in a separate section on the BioProject web-site. If you are interested in doing a team's history, please contact Andy McCue ([amccue@sabr.org](mailto:amccue@sabr.org)), who is coordinating the project.

### Baseball Biography Project

The lofty goal is to write a high-quality journal-length biography of every player who ever played in the major leagues. 5,020 biographies have been written by 500+ SABR members as of November 05, 2019. Your subject can be anyone who ever played in the major leagues & has been retired for at least 5 years, or any manager, executive, umpire, scout, or broadcaster. In fact, we welcome your ideas for any subject who impacted the history of the game — someone from the Negro Leagues, the minor leagues, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, and even Japan.

Web-site: [sabr.org/bioproject](http://sabr.org/bioproject)

Things you should know: [sabr.org/content/bioproject-resources](http://sabr.org/content/bioproject-resources)

Request an assignment: Lyle Spatz at [bioassign@sabr.org](mailto:bioassign@sabr.org)

### SABR Games Project

The SABR Baseball Games Project is a new initiative to research and write articles on major-league and Negro League regular, postseason and All-Star Games. These game accounts will complement Retrosheet and Baseball-Reference box scores as well as BioProject essays on the players involved. All games, regardless of their historical significance, are eligible to be written up.

Web-site: [sabr.org/gamesproject](http://sabr.org/gamesproject)

Things you should know: [sabr.org/content/sabr-games-project](http://sabr.org/content/sabr-games-project)

Request an assignment: Steve Weiner at [sc.weiner@comcast.net](mailto:sc.weiner@comcast.net)

### SABR Baseball Ballparks Project

We love ballparks and feel that each one deserves its own biography. Ballparks have a life of their own. Your job, as the ballpark's biographer, is to cover that life in detail, from birth to death.

Web-site: [sabr.org/bioproj/parks](http://sabr.org/bioproj/parks)

Request an assignment: Scott Ferkovich at [scottferk@gmail.com](mailto:scottferk@gmail.com)

### SABR Book Projects

Biographers are needed for several books. Status of assignment availabilities changes daily. Please contact Bill Nowlin ([bnowlin@rounder.com](mailto:bnowlin@rounder.com)) to request an assignment.

## THE WOOD PILE

Newsletter of the Smoky Joe Wood Chapter  
of the Society for American Baseball Research



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Members are welcome to submit articles, book reviews or other information that might be interesting to other chapter members. Please send information to Karl Ciccito at [kciccito@cox.net](mailto:kciccito@cox.net).