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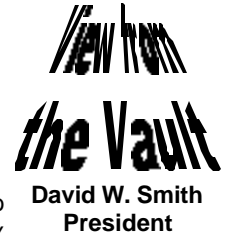
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The Retro Sheet

Official Publication of Retrosheet, Inc.

Since this is our double size year-end issue, it is fitting that I address two issues, first a comment on the SABR convention and Retrosheet annual meeting and then the most significant financial decision in Retrosheet's history.

The annual meeting of Retrosheet for 2000 took place during the SABR convention in West Palm Beach in late June. We had an excellent turnout, with nearly 100 people in attendance; see **David Vincent's** report elsewhere in this issue for the details. In addition to the annual meeting, Retrosheet was very much in evidence throughout the convention. The research aspect of SABR saw about 30 oral research talks and another 10 poster presentations. I took great pride in noting that seven of the lectures and four of the posters had Retrosheet data as a major part of what was presented, with very nice credit given to us in each case. This list includes **Doug Pappas**, who won the award sponsored by *Baseball Weekly* for the best research presentation for his talk on the history of ejections. The publicity for our organization is always appreciated, but I am even more pleased by the way our information is becoming such a standard, not only for statistical analyses, but for more traditionally historical projects as well.



The financial matter arises from a decision the Board made to expand the content our web site and increase our control over it. Since its inception, our web site has been generously hosted by Total Sports in Raleigh, North Carolina. The major content of that site has always been our play by play files, although we do also post the newsletters and some other features as well, with a current total of about 80 MB of storage. One major expansion we plan for the site is to post logs with a potential of over 100 pieces of information for every game. **Tom Ruane** is heading the effort to organize these files, which are based on the data collected by **Bob Tiemann** and originally computerized by **Arnie Braunstein**. Stay tuned in future issues for detailed descriptions of what will be included. The point here is that these files will be very large, averaging about 1 MB per season, so we would need about 100 MB just for the 20th century games. To put this in perspective, I note that many commercial Internet services offer space for personal web pages, usually with a limit of 5-10 MB. A second addition planned for the site is the implementation of some interactive software so that users can navigate the data more easily and pull out specific items of information without having to download whole seasons, a prospect which has frightened away more than one interested fan.

So the decision was made to host our own web site with our own server (computer). This was discussed at the annual meeting and many possibilities have been explored over the last six months. There are two main monetary issues. The first is the cost of the hardware and the second is the cost of the data line to connect us to the Internet. I was able to arrange with **Sam Myoda**, an Environmental Engineering graduate student at the University of Delaware, to build us a custom made server with a pair of 20 GB drives for storage and automatic backup (more details are available for those who really want them). This machine will clearly meet our storage needs, even if we greatly expand the type of data we post. The most amazing part of the story is that the total cost, including operating system and battery backup, will be around \$1000, which is an exceptional bargain. The fact that I am a member of Sam's Ph.D. advisory committee is purely coincidental!

Although that \$1000 is a lot of money to Retrosheet, we did have it in our bank account and it was a one-time expenditure. On the other hand, the data connection will require an ongoing monthly fee. As many of you know, there are lots of options for DSL (Digital Subscriber Line), and it is a real challenge to sort through them. We have made arrangements for a service that will provide what we need for \$99 per month (again, more details are available to anyone who wishes, but I don't want to spend space on them here). This is the first time Retrosheet has ever made a commitment for a recurring expenditure. The five Board members and the Retrosheet webmaster have all pledged to make annual donations of \$120, that is, essentially one tenth of the annual total from each of us to pay for the line. I am therefore asking the loyal Retrosheet volunteers to help with the \$468 balance. If we can find four people to donate \$120, then that will cover it. Of course, any amount will help and will be very welcome as we move to a new era in our web presence. This sounds and feels a lot like the pledge drives that public television and radio run, but there really is no alternative, and I promise we won't do it four times a year.

(continued on page 3)



Expanded Holiday Issue

2000 Meeting Report

The annual meeting of the Retrosheet, Inc. board of directors was held on June 23, 2000 in West Palm Beach, FL. All five members of the board participated, with **Sherri Nichols** and **Luke Kraemer** connected via phone. A large gathering of the Friends of Retrosheet attended the meeting.

The first business was the unanimous re-election of the President, **Dave Smith**, and Vice-President, **Sherri Nichols**, to their positions. *No recount was ordered, even though the election took place in Palm Beach County. This was because the vote was public and oral, thus avoiding any butterfly ballots.*

A change was made to Section 3.1 of the by-laws due to the decision by the IRS to allow Retrosheet tax-exempt status. The by-laws had referred to Section 501 (c)(6) of the IRS code but we were granted the status under Section 501 (c)(3).

The Secretary's report included the results of two votes taken since the last meeting. The first (in August 1999) reimbursed **Dave Smith** for the cost of copying the NL daily sheets microfilm that had been discussed at the 1999 meeting. The second vote was to change the order of the election of the three officers. The President and Vice-President had been elected in the same year since the start of the organization. However, the board extended the term of the Vice-President from the usual three to four years for the one term starting July 1, 2000. This now means that the officers are each elected in different years. Both votes were taken via e-mail and were unanimous.

The Treasurer's Report showed that the organization's income was \$200.01 more than the expenses for the year. The Retro bank account contained \$2277.28 at the time of the report, which is the highest balance of any report since the start of the organization.

The President's Report focused on many positive items, including the IRS approval and the microfilm copying. Data files on the web are complete from 1979-1989 with 1978 and 1990 coming soon. [Editor's note: 1990 was posted on the web site in September.] Proofing of 1974-1978 continues with public release when they are ready. **Jay Wigley's** RetroList electronic connection was announced; for more details, see our web site.

Retro Web Master **Mark Pankin** was instructed to investigate a new physical location for our site due to increasing demand for file space. For more on this issue, read "View from the Vault" on page 1. **Ted Turocy** discussed the concept of RetroFile, a way to extend our data file format to include partial game accounts. This was already reported in the March issue and more information will be forthcoming as the project unfolds.

Tom Ruane is leading an effort to expand our game result logs to include over 100 pieces of data for each game. These expanded files will be publically available on our web site. Tom is looking for help filling in the missing data.

We have a few people watching for scorebooks on e-Bay and other internet auction sites. **Luke Kraemer** requested that we not bid against ourselves. Contact him for more information.

From Clem Comly:

July 23, 1935, Yankees and Tigers face each other in a doubleheader in a close pennant race. Which of these is harder to believe? **Game 1:** Tie score, 4-4, home 7th LHP Hogsett faces LHB Gehrig with one out and man on 2b. Gehrig sacrifices him over to 3b (from which he scores) and the Yanks eventually win 7-5. **Game 2:** Tigers up 2-1 in top of 6th, Lefty Gomez has a man on 2b and 0 out when RHB Hank Greenberg sacrifices him to 3b (from which he scores) and the Tigers win 3-1! Love the "little ball"!

New type of data entry

By Dave Smith

At the annual meeting, **Tom Ruane** described work he has been doing with computerizing the microfilmed daily data, starting with 1911. There are lots of pitfalls along the way, including the use of scoring and e-cording practices that are certainly not consistent with modern practice. However, there is enormous value in having this information in electronic form, since it will allow us to pinpoint differences with the official totals directly and immediately. Also, we will be able to do detailed proofing for seasons in which we are still missing some games. Recall from above that we currently need to have all the games entered before comparison to the official totals begins. At any rate, Tom has devised a data entry system for entering the microfilmed information into a more usable format. Anyone who wishes to help in this work should contact me (dwsmith@udel.edu) and I will get you in touch with Tom.

Bill Deane Downs Coors Beer

Bill Deane got some inspiration from a beer commercial (well, research inspiration anyway) about Willie Mays. Bill wrote in SABR-L: "Recently, there was a Coors beer commercial in which the narrator - praising the Say Hey Kid's outfield expertise - casually claimed that 'Willie Mays threw out hundreds of runners at home plate.' I asked Dave Smith to check the Retrosheet holdings to disprove this claim. Shortly after, the subject of that statement's impossibility came up on SABR-L. Since then, coincidentally or not, Coors seems to have yanked that particular ad. Anyway, Dave reports that Retrosheet can document 143 of Mays's 195 outfield assists. Of those, 16 were at first base, 35 at second, 40 at third, and 52 at home (12 of which were 8-2 double plays). Assuming the same ratios for Mays's 52 undocumented assists, we can project that Willie actually threw out approximately 71 runners at home plate, which is 129 short of 'hundreds'."

View from the Vault (cont.)

I hope I have made the case that this is a worthwhile endeavor and that it is worthy of your support. Remember that donations to Retrosheet are now fully tax deductible, since we were granted 501(c)(3) status by the IRS this spring. Thanks for your consideration.

Publicity

By Dave Smith

Retrosheet continues to enjoy widespread and favorable public attention. **Joe Dittmar**, SABR stalwart and long-time friend of Retrosheet, published another book in 2000, "The 100 Greatest Baseball Games of the 20th Century Ranked", in which he graciously gave us credit for supplying many of the box scores he used. Joe was contacted by Jim Caple of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* for details on the first game played in Tiger Stadium. This contest is in our files, thanks to volunteer **Jim Herdman**, and I sent the details for the article.

Late in the 2000 season it appeared that Rickey Henderson was going to pass Babe Ruth for the career lead in walks and I supplied a detailed breakdown of each walk for Matt Baron, who wrote an article about it in the *Seattle Times*. As you probably know, Henderson fell just short and was not resigned by the Mariners, but stay tuned at the stat of the 2001 campaign. Tony Gwynn reached the 3000 hit plateau in 1999 and I prepared a complete summary of each of them for the Padres, who put the data on their web site, along with credit for us.

Rob Neyer, writing for ESPN, used our data on more than one occasion this year, always noting us as the source. One very interesting application was an analysis of the "clutch" performance of Tony Perez, a topic of some lively discussion as this was seen as one of Tony's prime credentials that got him elected to the Hall of Fame in 2000.

Perhaps our widest exposure in the last of 2000 came in *Baseball Digest*. In the January, 2001 issue, which appeared in early December, we are mentioned in the letters to the editor section. A reader had a question about the 26-inning game played between Boston and Brooklyn on May 1, 1920 and John Kuenster contacted me for his answer. John gave us credit and included my e-mail address with the note that I would be happy to try to supply box scores for people who wished them for specific games, such as the first one they attended. Paul White did a similar thing in *Baseball Weekly* in March and once again I received many requests, perhaps 20 or so, and I am happy to say we had the data for all of them except a 1945 doubleheader between the Yankees and the White Sox in Chicago.

From Clem Comly:

In 1914, the Federal League was in full flower. Oh, to be young and a LHB who can catch. Such a one is 23-year-old Sam Brenegan who debuts at catcher for the Pirates on April 24 in the 6th inning with the Cards ahead 7-1. With 2 outs and a man on 1B, the runner goes to 3B on a WP that the paper says Brenegan loafed after. In the 7th, with one out and a man on 1B, the runner takes 3B on a PB that split Brenegan's finger and again was slowly pursued. Brenegan is immediately replaced. He never batted in his debut game with a line of 0 PO 0 A 0 E 1 PB. That is Brenegan's entire ML career.

Hidden Ball Discovered

Clem Comly found another. The Tigers were playing the Red Sox in Detroit. On 8-22-1935 Billy Rogell was tricked by Ski Melillo at second. **Bill Deane**, the Master of Tricks, adds details from Melillo's story.

"I always used to try and let the umpire know I had the ball," said Melillo, who then proceeded, under prompting, to tell the story of the time he worked the hidden ball play on Billy Rogell, when the latter was with Detroit and Oscar was with the Red Sox.

"Rogell used to deliver milk to me in Chicago during the winter," explained Melillo, "and he would rattle those bottles on the back porch about four every morning and yell, 'Here's your milk, Mr. Melillo.' I once threatened to take a shotgun to him, but I couldn't wait up all night for him to show up.

"Anyway, this day in Detroit, Rogell leads off the last half of the tenth with a two-bagger, sliding into second just ahead of the throw. I palmed the ball inside my glove while he was getting up and dusting himself off. I had to distract him, so I started talking about milk.

"Remember when you used to wake me up every morning, yelling, 'Here's your milk, Mr. Melillo?'" I asked him.

"Sure," says Bill, laughing, "I used to get your goat, didn't I?" And with that he steps off the bag.

"Well, Mr. Rogell," I says stepping up to him real quick, "here is the ball!" and I plunked it in his ribs. He didn't speak to me for two years."

Debut Date

While working on the 1923 Chicago games, **Wayne Townsend** found that Denver Grigsby's actual ML debut should be 8-29-1923 instead of 9-1. This has been reported to SABR's Biographical Committee.

Data Proofing and Release of Event Files

By Dave Smith

Retrosheet's ultimate purpose has always been to distribute play by play data free of charge to anyone who wanted it for any purpose. Our web site is the primary vehicle for this task and we look forward to expanding the capabilities and user-friendliness of the site in the near future. A key feature of the publication of the event files is that they have all received a substantial amount of proofing and as a result the actual release often takes place a year or two after the computer entry has been completed. I have written about the importance of posting data that is as accurate as possible, or more importantly perhaps, not posting data with big errors, but I would like to expand on this point with a specific example. We currently have the data files from 1979-1990 on our web site (1984-1990 courtesy of Total Sports) and the 1978 season is the logical next one to be made public. We have always begun by generating season totals for all players and then comparing them to the official data that appears in Total Baseball. The discrepancies that are found are then pursued on a day by day basis to discover which game in our files has the error. Marc Stephenson did the detailed first pass for the 1978 NL by comparison to Sporting News box scores and Pete Palmer checked the AL differences using a microfilmed copy of the official daily totals (we did not have access to the NL film at the time, but we do now). Marc found about 525 cases needing changes and Pete found about 620. I took their lists and checked the scoresheets for each difference they found. After that process, there were still about two dozen disagreements for each league. Clem Comly stepped in to track down these really difficult ones and also expanded our proofing for the first time to include basic fielding totals. The categories he checked were games played at each position, errors, passed balls and double plays. He also compared the pinch-hitting totals for everyone, which can be tricky, since some sources, including The Sporting News, are not consistent in noting pinch-hitters.

I estimate that the four of us spent around 300 hours on these checking, correction and rechecking activities. As a result the 1978 data files will be the most accurate we have ever released. This same approach is being followed for the seasons next scheduled for release (see below) and then hopefully we can revisit the post-1978 files and improve them as well. The point of giving these details is to explain why it takes so long to get the data on the web. I understand that there is frustration at the pace, but I feel the wait is well worth the quality that results. As a final note, the 1978 files will not be released until we get our web site established on our own server (see the View from the Vault on page 1), which will hopefully be very soon.

Proofing continues on other seasons as well. The 1977 season has gone through the first stages of the same kind of review by Pete Palmer and John Jarvis, 1976 by Pete and Jay Wigley, 1975 by John Jarvis and Jon Dunkle, and 1974 by John Jarvis. In addition, Tom Ruane is making a major effort on the 1969 NL, Dave Knipe is proofing 1965 NL games against newspaper box scores and David Mitchell is doing the same for the 1963 NL. We have lots more to do, but a great deal is going on, so the future of data release looks brighter than ever!

Bucs Pull Double Play, But Nobody Gets Assist

The Sporting News, August 12, 1978: Pittsburgh - Okay, trivia buffs, try this one. Can two players be involved in a double play without either getting an assist? It happened in the July 18 game between the Dodgers and Pirates in Pittsburgh. First the situation: the Dodgers filled the bases with one out in the ninth. Steve Garvey was on third, Dusty Baker on second and Joe Ferguson on first. Bill North hit a long fly ball to center. Omar Moreno caught the ball over his shoulder at the warning track. Garvey had tagged up at third. Baker stood halfway between second and third waiting to see if Moreno would catch the ball. Ferguson rounded second base and passed Baker just about the time Moreno made the catch. Ferguson was called out (the third out) for passing Baker on the base paths.

Moreno had thrown the ball to Frank Taveras, the cutoff man, who threw to Rennie Stennett, who threw to Willie Stargell. All for nothing. There was no need to double up Ferguson with throws. He had already been declared out by third base umpire Eddie Vargo, who had spotted him passing Baker on the bases. How does it appear in the record books? It's a team double play. A putout for Moreno and a putout for third baseman Ken Macha, the nearest fielder when Ferguson passed Baker. The double play on the official score sheet reads: Moreno AND Macha. No assist.

From Clem Comly:

Hank Greenberg's box score line for the 7-30-1939 (G1) in Philadelphia was 4 5 4 0! Since the AL record for runs in a game is 6 (done twice since World War II), presumably this tied (as opposed to set) the record when he stole home with one out during double steal in the ninth inning with a 10-0 score. The Tigers won 14-0.

Strange and Unusual Plays

Contributing: **Greg Beston, Clif Blau, Clem Comly, Dave Lamoureux, Mark Pankin, Dave Smith, David Vincent**

5-15-1902 BRO @ CHN – In the top of the 12th, Bill Dahlen was on second with two outs. Hughie Hearne singled to right, the Cub's third baseman, Charlie Dexter, tripped Dahlen, who had to stop at 3B. There was only one umpire, Bob Emslie, who didn't see the play. The Cubs won the game in the bottom of the 12th.

5-16-1902 BRO @ SLN – In the top of the third, with two outs and a runner on first, Cozy Dolan was batting for the Dodgers. He hit a foul ball that ran up his bat, hit him in the head, and knocked him unconscious. The hard-headed Dolan remained in the game after he came to. The runner on first was picked off to end the inning, but Dolan led off the fourth with a single, his third of the game.

8-21-1902 BRO @ CIN – With former Orioles teammate Joe Kelley playing out of position at third for the Reds, Willie Keeler took advantage by laying down four bunts. He got two hits, and reached third on Kelley's throwing error before Kelley threw him out in the ninth. Brooklyn won 7-4, Keeler scoring 3 times.

4-16-1914 PIT @ SLN - In the home 7th, Walton Cruise singled to RF for an RBI. The RF's throw got through the catcher and rolled to the backstop with no Pirate backing up. Cruise should have scored, but as he went to second on throw home SS Wagner bluffed taking a throw (forcing Cruise to slide) and then Wagner proceeded to argue with umpire Emslie while Cruise lay on ground at second and the catcher recovered the ball.

5-3-1914 PIT @ CIN – The Reds were down 3-1 in the home 11th when the first batter was called out on strikes when he stepped out of the batter's box. He saw a ball thrown from the stands and the pitcher then delivered strike 3.

6-8-1914 PIT @ PHI – In the home 4th, Fred Luderus hit a line drive to the brick wall in deep centerfield where it stuck. Luderus circled the bases while CF Kelly "danced frantically underneath but the ball would not fall". Apparently a piece of brick was missing- forming a hole where the ball stuck in the "jagged edges of two broken bricks" for the *first true inside-the-park homer*. In the 5th, Pirate Mitchell singled to right, his smash tearing the nail off Phillie 2Bman Byrne's finger. Byrne left the game immediately.

6-20-1914 PIT @ BRO – In home first, Zach Wheat batted with men on 1B and 2B and 1 out. Wheat singled to Max Carey for an RBI. Wagner cut off Carey's throw to prevent the other runner from going to 3B, but Wheat dashed to 2B almost passing the runner. The runner headed for 3B and was tagged out by Wagner. Wheat meanwhile went back towards first and was doubled up. The Pirates #3 hitter Viox finished game 1-for-4 with a walk and a sacrifice, a bit unusual when the Pirates in 9 innings scored only 4 runs and left 10 on base. There should be only 5 PAs for Viox. In the top of the third, Viox led off with a walk and was forced out by Wagner. Viox managed to bat twice in a row without getting caught in that inning.

6-29-1914 CIN @ CHN - In the top of the 6th, Moran hit a foul down the third base line. 1Bman Hoblitzell argued the ball was fair and umpire Eason ejected him. Player manager Herzog ran into the argument and was ejected. One of the Reds took Moran's bat and threw it toward the players' bench but the aim was wide and the bat landed in the field boxes. Immediately some spectators charged the field but they were calmed by attendants and players. The arguing continued and Mullaney, Miller, and Douglas were ejected. A few moments later Moran slid into second and spiked Cub 2Bman Sweeney's thumb. Players and ump Quigley had to separate them. Quigley escorted Sweeney to the bench but did not eject him.

7-17-1914 NY1 @ PIT – Rube Marquard beat Babe Adams in 21 innings, 3-1 and Adams set the record for most innings (21) pitched without a walk. A Pirate run was taken off the board in home 6th that cost them the game. With one out and Wagner on 1B, Viox singled to CF and Wagner went for 3B. The CF's throw "got under Wagner's arm as he slid into 3B and he ran towards home, dropping the ball." Wagner was called out for interference and Viox sent back to 2B. In the 21st, the Giant lead-off hitter singled and stole 2B with 2 out. 2B Doyle followed with a hit "through Kelly" (the Pirate CF) for an IPHR. Marquard retired the Pirates in the home half on 1 hit for a well-earned victory.

7-18-1914 NY1 @ PIT (Game 1) - Usually the baserunner pits his speed against the strength of the catcher's arm, but in the fourth inning, the strength helped the baserunner. With a man on 1B and no one out, Carey bunted in front of the plate. Catcher Meyers threw over the second baseman's head into deep CF and Carey swiftly circled the bases. Apparently Carey may have interfered with Meyers because the Giants "kicked" and manager McGraw was ejected.

8-3-1914 PIT @ BRO - In the home 10th, the Dodgers loaded the bases with no out but the next two batters made outs. Clean-up hitter Zach Wheat hit a shot that 3Bman Mowrey fielded on the hop. Mowrey had the time to run to 3B for the force, but he threw wide to 1B instead. 1Bman Konetchy cut off the wide throw and threw home in time for a pedestrian 532 force out to save the game.

8-29-1914 BRO @ PIT (game 2) – In the 11th inning of a 1-1 game, Brooklyn had a runner on 1B with one out. Jake Daubert hit a fly ball to short CF, where Pirate 2B Viox gloved the ball, fell, flipped the ball to CF Kelly who fired to 1B for the 483 DP.

4-22-1915 CIN @ PIT – In the 7th inning, the Bucs RF, Bill Hinchman, hit the ball to the flag staff for an inside-the-park home run. That earned him (and all future Pirates hitting HRs in Pittsburgh) a 25-pound can of Radium fertilizer.

4-29-1919 SLN @ CHN – The Redbirds managed to run into fielder's choice double plays in the game. In the second inning, they had runners on 1B and 3B with one out when Jackie May hit the ball back to the mound. Joe Schultz was thrown out at the plate and Frank Snyder ran from 1B to 3B on the play. However, May was thrown out after overrunning 2B on the play. FC1/DP.3XH(1253);1-3;BX2(34) In the fourth, Schultz was on 2B when Snyder grounded to SS. Schultz was tagged out in a rundown and then Snyder was tagged after overrunning 2B with 3Bman Pete Kilduff getting the putout. FC6/DP.2X3(6546);BX2(635)

4-26-1924 PIT @ CHN – In the 7th inning a Cub fan in RF tried to distract Pirate hitters with a mirror. Konetchy complained and ump Klem

Strange and Unusual Plays (cont.)

put stop to it.

8-29-1933 CHN @ BRO (Game 1) – In the Cubs lineup Billy Herman played 2B and Floyd 'Babe' Herman played RF. Then in the third inning the new pitcher was Leroy Herrmann. Yikes!

4-16-1935 BOS @ NYA – The Yanks lost on Opening Day due to a Lou Gehrig error. This loss broke Lefty Gomez' winning streak against the BoSox; Gomez had never lost to Boston in his career, having won 11 games. From Lyle Spatz' *Yankee Openers*, here is the description: "Max Bishop, the former Athletic, opened the sixth with a single to center, but catcher Bill Dickey threw him out trying to steal second. Then Werber lined a hit to left, rounded first at full speed and beat left fielder Earle Combs's throw to second. Werber took a long lead, but when Gomez attempted to pick him off, he made the Yankees' first bad throw of the inning. His high toss caromed off second baseman Tony Lazzeri's glove, allowing Werber to go to third. Carl Reynolds went down swinging, but the ball got away from Dickey requiring a throw to first. As Dickey released the ball, Werber took off from third, heading for the plate. Reynolds was out at first, but Lou Gehrig's return throw to Dickey was high and Werber came home with the game's only run." Score the play K23.3-H(E3/THH)

7-3-1935 PHI @ NY1 – In the 8th, there were Giants at 1B and 2B with 1 out. Lieber fled to CF Ethan Allen who purposely dropped the ball. 84 forced the runner from first and 45 retired the runner from second at third. GDP/F?

7-18-1935 BRO @ PIT – As the Dodgers are throwing the ball around the infield before the bottom of the third, 3B Jim Bucher hurts his hand throwing the ball and has to leave the game.

7-26-1935 WS1 @ NYA - In the home second, there men on 1B and 2B with one out and the top of the lineup up. Hill lines a pitch off Linke's forehead back to the catcher in the air. He throws down to 2b to double up the runner there. Linke is carried off the field unconscious and taken to the hospital for X-rays.

8-16-1935 NYA @ CLE - Ladies day (8000 of them vs. 5000 men) saw Yanks score in each of first three innings to back Johnny Allen's shutout pitching. In the home third, after an out and a single, Allen was so incensed by a called ball that he threw his glove high in the air prompting umpire Geisel to eject him. Pat Malone relieved and finished walking the opposing pitcher. Malone gave up a single and an Earl Averill HR to fall behind 4-3. The Yankees pecked away for two more single runs to regain the lead. In home 6th, the Indians went out, E4, E4, W, WP, 2-RBI single to break the tie and instead of replacing the 2B, the Yanks replaced the pitcher! Cleveland wins 8-5.

8-26-1935 NYA @ CHA – In the home 15th, Zeke Bonura won the game with a steal of home (1 of his 4 1935 SBs).

8-27-1935 NYA @ CHA – Bill Dickey was put out 57/FL when Rip Radcliff caught the foul pop Jimmy Dykes muffed.

9-4-1935 NY1 @ CIN – In the top of fourth inning, Dick Bartell got credit for an infield single by hitting a pitch into the stomach of the opposing SS Gordon Slade. Slade was knocked out and was replaced in the game. The Giants went on to win 6-4.

4-20-1948 BSN @ PHI - This play took place in the very first inning of the season. In the top of the first inning, the Braves had Jim Russell on third with one out and Bob Elliott at the plate. Elliott struck out, but the ball got away from catcher Andy Seminick. Russell tried scoring on the play, but was out at the plate. Philadelphia third baseman Bert Haas noticed that Elliott had not run to first after striking out, so he grabbed the ball and ran over and tagged first base for this bizarre double play, K+OA/DP.3XH(21);BX1(15)

5-6-1948 DET @ BOS – In the top of the 4th, Sam Vico was on third and Hal White was at the plate when Vico was charged was a caught stealing of home. White attempted to bunt on a squeeze play but missed the pitch. Vico crashed into Tebbetts and a fight between the two players broke out. Vico claimed that Tebbetts had hit him in the head while Tebbetts claimed Vico's head had struck his shinguard. Both benches emptied as the umpires tried to separate the two players. Umpire Jones ejected Vico and Tebbetts but more trouble broke out when both men had to use the same runway to get to their respective clubhouses and they resumed the fight, followed down the runway by players of both teams. Umpire Jones had to call the police in to break up the fight. It was 15 minutes before order was restored. Vico had a black eye and Tebbetts' nose was bleeding. Both men claimed the other had done no damage and their minor injuries were caused by peacemakers.

5-26-1949 SLA @ BOS - In the bottom of the third inning, Johnny Pesky was the runner at 1B with no one out. Ted Williams hit a double play ball back to the pitcher. However, third baseman Bob Dillinger took the throw at 2B as the pivot man due to the shift St. Louis employed on Williams: 15(1)3/GDP.

6-24-1949 SLA @ BOS - In the bottom of the 8th inning with Boston leading 19-2, the Red Sox pulled off a double steal with Ted Williams stealing 2B (his only stolen base of the season) and Johnny Pesky stealing home.

7-9-1949 BSN @ PHI - In the top of the 6th inning, Braves manager Billy Southworth was showered with pop bottles as he took his position in the third base coach's box. The Philadelphia fans had been booing him the entire series for his failure as N.L. All-Star game manager to select Philadelphia pitchers Ken Heintzelman and Robin Roberts to the team. The P.A. announcer had to warn the fans to stop or the game would be forfeited.

8-5-1949 SLA @ NYA (Game 1) - It has been said that no one ever saw Joe DiMaggio get thrown out going from first to third on a single. However, it happened today, but not in the traditional way. In the bottom half of the first inning, the Yankees already had one run in with Charlie Keller on third, Tommy Henrich on second, and DiMaggio on first with one out. Bobby Brown then singled to right, scoring Keller. St. Louis right fielder Dick Kokos threw home, and Henrich retreated toward third. Catcher Sherm Lollar then threw to first trying to catch Brown off the bag. Henrich then broke for home and scored, beating Paul Lehner's throw. However, DiMaggio was out trying for the third on the

Strange and Unusual Plays (cont.)

play, S9.3-H;2-H(NR);1X3(92325)

9-13-1949 DET @ BOS - In the bottom of the 3rd inning Johnny Pesky was on 2B with two out. Detroit CF Hoot Evers snuck in behind Pesky for a very weird pickoff: POCS3(185).

6-26-1977 KCA @ OAK (Game 1) - Due to an error, the Athletics managed to have three batters get credit for sacrifice hit in the same inning! Rob Picciolo bunted but reached on Dave Nelson's bobble. Bill North and Marty Perez also bunted during the inning.

7-27-1978 NYN @ HOU - Umpire Joe West ejected Manager Joe Torre and utilityman Bobby Valentine of the Mets in the seventh inning of New York's 8-3 loss for protesting a call at 2B. West ruled that second baseman Doug Flynn did not tag the base on a potential double play. "West is so insecure," said an angry Torre, "that he has to do things like that to draw attention to himself. He leads the league in calling balks, phantom double plays and throwing guys out of the game."

Joe Morgan Analyzes Scoring Rules

by Dave Smith

Wayne McElreavy recently sent me the following e-mail message:

Joe Morgan's bio *Joe Morgan: A Life in Baseball*, page 185, has the following:

"We put on a double steal...when I got to third, I didn't even slow down, I just kept going...to the plate. Dave Cash, the Phillies second baseman...threw late. I beat the throw home--I had stolen two bases on one pitch! This play actually turned the league on its ear for a while. Because there seemed to be no provision in the scoring rules to allow more than one SB at a time, one of the SB had been ruled a fielder's choice. Of course, the ruling by the official scorer made no sense, but the league then devised a "Morgan Rule" that stands to this day. A player cannot be credited with more than one SB on any one play."

Since Morgan didn't join the Reds until 1972, if this happened, it was after the Bowa incident. Is it true? Why would the league be turned on its ear if it had already happened? Is there an actual rule? I can't find it in the *1997 Official Rules*. [Note, the "Bowa incident" to which Wayne refers occurred on June 19, 1971 in New York and was described in TRS in December, 1997]

And my response to Wayne:

It isn't in the rule book just that way, but the opening paragraph of rule 10.08 speaks of a runner who "... advances one base ...", which could be interpreted as meaning only one (emphasis added) stolen base on a single play. However, the incident that Joe describes in his book has some of the characteristics of an urban legend. The game in question was August 27, 1976 and the play occurred in the bottom of the 5th. Here is the text generated from our file:

REDS 5TH: K.Griffey singled to right field; J.Morgan forced K.Griffey (L.Bowa-ss unassisted) [J.Morgan to first]; J.Morgan stole second; G.Foster struck out; J.Bench walked; J.Morgan stole third and J.Bench stole second [J.Morgan scored (on throw)]; T.Perez flied to G.Maddox-cf.

In *The Sporting News* box score of the game the accompanying paragraph mentions Morgan taking the Phillies by surprise, but there is no indication it was ever seen as a stolen base. I checked *The Sporting News* for the next few weeks to see if the weekly article on the Reds had anything to say, but none did. We have two scoresheets for the game, one from each team. They both agree with *The Sporting News* that Morgan had three steals in the game (two in this inning and one in the 7th). Neither scoresheet has any special comments about this play and neither indicates it was ever thought of as a steal. I then checked the *Philadelphia Inquirer* each day for the following week to see if there were any special comments. Although the play is described very clearly and in complete agreement with the other sources, there was no mention anywhere of the scoring rules, let alone that this play caused a change in them. So, this is clearly a remarkable play, but I don't see any indication that it was the controversy that Joe describes.

"They are making 'lawn tennis home runs' nowadays. Home run hitting has degenerated into a burlesque... Modern baseball has become a game of home runs." - Ted Sullivan, Manager and organizer of the St. Louis Browns in the late 1800's, as quoted in the *New York Sun*, May 18, 1927

Game Account Acquisitions

by Dave Smith

This is always a cheerful article to write, since collecting new data is at the heart of our work. There are actually three pretty distinct aspects to this effort these days, now that we have received cooperation from all the teams and a very large number of writers and broadcasters. The first involves scanning the Internet, mostly eBay, for scorecards and scorebooks that are up for auction. The most active person in this regard right now is **Jim Wohlenhaus**, who has been exceptionally successful. Jim has contacted dozens of sellers and convinced a great many to either make a scan of the item or to photocopy the scored part of a program and send it to me. He has also downloaded some usable images directly from the eBay pages! It is interesting to see how many scored programs are out there and it is great to get some of them into our files. **Greg Beston** has done the same kind of eBay survey, so we have more than one set of eyes looking over the hundreds of auctions that are possibilities. **Luke Kraemer** has also been active on the web front and has purchased some wonderful items, for example the personal scorebook of Mrs. Max Carey for the 1914 Pirates. **Clem Comly** recently entered all of these games from the scorebook with help from Pittsburgh papers copied previously by **Brad Sullivan**. Also **Rob Neyer** obtained some programs for Pirate games we needed and generously donated them to Retrosheet.

The second form of data collection is the Herculean effort of **Bob Kistler**, about whom I have written before. Bob has been proceeding systematically back through time, copying accounts that we need for both Boston teams. He recently sent me the incredibly clear sheets for 1947 and is now working on 1946 and 1945. Of course, not all games are there, but he has expanded our Boston coverage from basically non-existent to a very respectable level. In addition, as though he didn't do enough, Bob also finds "bonus" games that did not involve Boston teams, but were printed apparently when there was extra space available or else there was an exciting pennant race going on. In this way we have improved our collection from several cities, including New York.

The third and final way we collect game accounts is by making photocopies from microfilmed newspapers. **Mike Grahek** has sent hundreds of games and **Jim Herdman** has copied many as well, including a substantial number of Federal League games. Both of these gentlemen have also entered many of the games they copied. Mike noted to me the joy of finding and entering three doubleheaders on July 4, 1904, a day we usually can't get. In most cases the newspapers we use did not publish on Sundays or holidays, so there are gaps in the coverage, but these microfilms are all we have for large portions of the past for many cities. I have called for help before, but I would like to repeat how valuable it would be for people to volunteer to obtain the film, usually via Interlibrary Loan, and make the copies. There are still literally thousands of games out there waiting for us that we have not had the opportunity to copy. I understand very well that this is a tedious task (I have copied around 5000 accounts myself) and I also understand that not everyone has the easy access to borrowed microfilm that I do (this is a major advantage of being a University professor!). However, if anyone can possible help in this regard, please contact me and I will tell you which newspapers for which years you should direct your attention to.

I close this article with a very recent piece of very good news. For quite some time we have been in the frustrating position of needing three game accounts to complete our coverage of the New York Mets for their entire history, all from the last week of the 1962 season, their epic inaugural season. Last week I obtained these three games from **Jack Lang**, a longtime New York sportswriter, who made the copies and sent them. They are very clear and will be easy to use for data entry. There has always been something of a collector's mentality associated with Retrosheet and finishing off the complete holdings for a franchise is a very satisfying milestone to reach. Many thanks to Jack for his generous cooperation and thanks also to **David Stephan** who put me in touch with Jack.

Honus Wagner Reaches 3000 Hits

The Pirates were in Philadelphia on 6-8-1914 and Honus Wagner singled to center for hit 2999 and "the crowd cheered wildly" and the paper anticipated a big turnout the next day. In the subsequent game when Honus reached base on a grounder to SS in the 4th, the crowd "cheered wildly and gave Wagner a wonderful ovation... but Official Scorer George "Stony" McLinn" called it E6 and "argued that the 3000th hit should be one of which even Honus should not need to be ashamed". Many messages to the press box asked about how it was scored and the crowd soon learned it was not a hit. Down 3-0 in top of the 9th, Wagner doubled to left and the crowd "stamped and cheered wildly for a long time".

Babe's Autograph Holds Up Game

Boston, 9-25-1933 – Eight-year-old Walter Cyr stopped a major league baseball game to get Babe Ruth's autograph.

Walter was taken to the Red Sox-Yankees game yesterday to see his hero. In the sixth inning the boy became worried lest he miss getting the Babe's autograph. So he climbed from the bleachers and ran across the field.

He handed Ruth a notebook while 7,000 waited for the game to be resumed. Then Walter discovered he had no pencil.

"Hold the notebook, will you, Mr. Ruth, while I get a pencil?" Walter asked as he started back for the bleachers. But the Babe sent him to the "bull pen" and at the end of the inning rewarded Walter's enterprise with his autograph on a brand-new baseball.

Cliff Blau and the 1902 Season

by Dave Smith

Cliff has completed the data entry of all the games we have for the 1902 season from the *New York Evening Telegram*, games which were copied from the microfilm by **Mike Grahek**. During the course of his work, Cliff was struck by some of the wild base-running he was encountering. He has made two posts to SABR-L with details on the subject and they are reproduced here:

"The October 2, 1902 game featured the Giants at Boston. There was one stolen base in the game, and eight runners were caught trying to steal. In addition, three runners were picked off base (although one managed to advance thanks to an error) and two more were thrown out at the plate. On the other hand, Ed Gremminger scored the winning run in the 14th inning, beating the throw from the Giants' third baseman, Billy Lauder, who had fielded Pat Moran's grounder. Roger Bresnahan was ejected from the game for arguing after he was caught trying to steal third with two outs. With all these lost runners, and with the help of three double plays, Luther Taylor nearly got away with yielding 9 walks. But alas, the aforementioned error proved fatal."

"Some people liked my last post on this subject, so here's another example of bad baserunning, dead-ball era. This time, courtesy of the Pittsburgh Pirates, NL champs that year. In the game of July 12 against the Giants, the Buccos managed a 4-0 victory, despite losing 5! straight runners via baserunning errors. With two outs in the third, Ginger Beaumont was on second, first base was empty, and he was put out trying to advance to third on a grounder. In the fourth, Hans Wagner led off with a triple, but was nailed at the plate on Kitty Bransfield's grounder to first. Bransfield was then thrown out trying to steal second. Claude Ritchey kept the inning going by drawing a walk, but Christy Mathewson then picked him off first. Capping this sequence, Jimmy led off the fifth with a double, but foolishly tried to stretch it into a triple, and was tagged out by Matty, who was covering the bag. I'm wondering if this is some kind of record, but my instincts say no."

It is dangerous to overreact to this kind of performance, but it does make one have second thoughts about the supposedly sound fundamentals that were supposedly the norm in the dead-ball era. Other inputters have noted examples of abandon on the bases and maybe it would make a great research presentation at a SABR convention one year!

Here is a story that Cliff doesn't even know about yet, so he will read it and hopefully be impressed along with everyone else! When inputters send me files of completed games, one of the first things I do is run a program which checks the dates and opponents and marks them as completed in my game log files. Cliff recently sent me a file which had two games between the Giants and Cubs on May 7 and May 8, 1902 that did not correspond to any games in the log file for that season. Occasionally inputters make errors in the date that is entered and sometimes the date on the account is wrong, but these games weren't even close to anything in the log and in fact according to our records these two teams did not even play on those days! The answer is that these are two of the very few games in Major League history which were thrown out after they were played. In the fifth edition of *Total Baseball*, Pete Palmer has an article on "Forfeit and no-decision games" and this pair between the Cubs and Giants shows up clearly on page 2443. Why were these games disallowed? The pitching distance was discovered to be too short and therefore the decision was made by National League President Heydler to remove the games from the record. This means that Cliff spent his time on two "non-games", but it is nice that Retrosheet has the play by play for two of these most unusual contests. Here I must interject some additional information on these games that I received in an e-mail from Warren Wilber:

"Thanks much for the rundown. I hadn't read anywhere about the May 8th game, also thrown out. That came about when Manager Selee was walking past home plate looking out toward the outfield - and get this - mused out loud, "That pitcher's box doesn't look like it's the full distance from here (home plate)." And can you imagine, just at that moment the Giants' manager, Fogel, walked by, and overheard Selee grumbling, almost to himself. Of such happenstances are games won and lost - or thrown out !?! That might just be worth a sidebar in the book I'm working on for McFarland on Cubs and Giants between 1870 and 1930. As usual, the topic is more than interesting."

Finally, I note that we have actually entered three games from Pete's list. The third was between St. Louis and Brooklyn on July 20, 1947 was amended after the fact and declared a tie, although the individual records did count (see second issue of TRS in July, 1995 for the details).

And finally on a more light-hearted note, Cliff posted the following on SABR-L:

"From the *New York Times* of October 5, 1902. 'Because the Pittsburg baseball champions wanted to break the record by winning 106(?) games and insisted on playing to-day, although the grounds were muddy, Cincinnati retaliated by making a farce of the game. Capt. Kelley came to bat smoking a cigarette. Seymour and Donlin also offended by smoking while on the field. President Dreyfuss refunded all money taken in at the gate, and has preferred charges against Kelley for unbecoming conduct on the field.'"

Must Have Been Something in the Air

By Clifford Blau

Some strange things happened in the Brooklyn-Chicago game of May 15, 1902. At least one was so unusual that no two observers could agree on exactly what happened. Based on accounts in three New York and three Chicago newspapers, as well as the *Sporting Life*, here's what occurred, as best as I can tell.

The score stood 4-4, with two outs in the top of the ninth. Brooklyn had runners on first and second with two outs when Jimmy Sheckard scorched one to the right side. Bobby Lowe touched the ball but couldn't stop it, and the ball went into right field. The runner from second, Hugh Hearne, headed for the plate while the Cubs' right fielder, Williams, threw the ball in towards second base. At this point, confusion set in, and as a result, the Superbas scored three runs.

One version of the story, courtesy of the *Chicago Tribune*, is that Lowe made a play on Hearne, and both teams thought that umpire Emslie had called him out at the plate. Catcher Kling, perhaps having heard the call correctly, threw the ball to third, but the Cubs' third baseman let it go and walked to the bench, thinking there were three outs. Cozy Dolan, the runner from first, ran towards home to join the argument, but when Emslie made it plain that he had called Hearne safe, Dolan touched home for the second run. Meanwhile, Sheckard continued around the bases while the ball lay in the outfield and scored the third run. Some accounts say that Dexter, the third baseman, playfully interfered with Sheckard as he ran home, perhaps even jumping on his back. This is interesting in light of a play in the twelfth inning, when Dexter tripped Dahlen as he was attempting to score from second on a single. The umpire didn't see that play, Dahlen retreated to third, and the Cubs scored in the bottom of the inning to win the game.

Fairly straightforward, it seems. However, the play-by-play from the *New York Evening Telegram* doesn't mention a play being made on any runner. It rather vaguely states that Dolan scored when Williams threw the ball to Tinker, and that during an argument about Dolan's run, Sheckard scored.

Then again, the reporter for the *Brooklyn Eagle* saw things very differently. He claimed that Williams attempted to throw Dolan out at home on Sheckard's double. Dexter thought that Dolan had been put out, so when Kling threw him the ball, he tossed to ball to Sheckard as he left the field. Sheckard then threw the ball into left and ran home for the final run while Dexter tried to tackle him. This account is supported by one of the Chicago papers.

My best guess is that the *Tribune's* story is the closest to what actually happened. I'm not sure how to reconcile the descriptions of Sheckard throwing the ball into left field with this account, or why Dexter was interfering with Sheckard if he had gone to the bench, but it does jibe with the box score (including the one printed in *The Sporting News*), which doesn't credit Sheckard with a double. In fact, no error was charged on the play, meaning Sheckard made a round trip of the circuit on a ground ball to second, without benefit of an error.

Thanks to Ted Turocy for his help in researching this play.

Dave Smith found this weirdness.

The Dodgers were in Atlanta on 9-12-1987. With the score tied at 9 in the bottom of the ninth, the Braves had the bases loaded with one out. Gary Roenicke batted for Rick Mahler and was hit by a pitch, evidently ending the game. However, the Dodgers protested that Roenicke swung at the pitch and umpire John Kibler agreed, calling Roenicke out on strikes. The players had left the field and the grounds crew was out working but everyone was told to resume the game, except Roenicke who was ejected by Kibler. The Braves won in the bottom of the tenth on an RBI double by Ken Griffey.

Carl Everett Had a Precedent

Chicago, 9-15-1951 – Catcher Wes Westrum of the Giants today was fined \$50 and suspended for three days as a result of his row with Umpire Al Barlick yesterday.

"Pushing the umpire" was the reason given by NL president Ford Frick for the double penalty, rare in that suspensions seldom are invoked against a member of a pennant-contending team at this stage of the race.

The fuss arose when Barlick called Frank Baumholtz of the Cubs safe on a close play at home in the first inning. Westrum rushed the umpire and shoulder-blocked him all around the plate before being dragged away by Leo Durocher. Wes was banished from the game.

"It was the worst decision I ever have had called against me," Wes said today. Close-up pictures in the local papers show that Westrum had the plate blocked and was waiting with the ball even before Baumholtz started to slide. The suspension will keep Wes on the sidelines until next Tuesday night's game in Cincinnati.

Courtesy Runners Found

Two new courtesy runners have been discovered and added to our collection. **Cliff Blau** reported that on 6-26-1902, the Giants were in Philadelphia. In the bottom of the eighth, catcher Fred Jacklitsch was hit "behind the ear" by a pitch from Roy Evans, and "dropped like a shot." Hallman, who was in the game as the third baseman ran for him and Jacklitsch returned to his duties in the ninth. And Cubs expert **Ed Hartig** found one on 9-28-1947. Bill Nicholson tore up his shoe sliding in the 4th inning. Pitcher Hank Borowy went in to run and eventually scored as Nicholson went for a new shoe. Nicholson returned to RF in the top of the 5th.

Lively Ball Theories

The following is an excerpt from Dan Daniel's column in the *NY World-Telegram* of 8-24-1933.

American Leaguers in general, and the Yankees and Indians in particular, resent the National League blast about the lively ball which is being used in the Harridge circuit.

Babe Ruth, for one, pointed out today that in the 1932 World Series only one home run was hit with the American League ball in the first two games in the Yankee Stadium, while no fewer than ten homers were accumulated off the National League leather in the last two contests at Wrigley Field.

However, this fact, while interesting, is not exactly germane to the debate, which will continue to hold the attention of the rival leagues until something is done about it.

There is no getting away from the truth that the National League ball, with a heavier cover, thicker, raised stitching, and a more liberal application of glue under the leather, is much slower, and the better controlled by the pitcher. The writer is quite willing to accept the judgement of Rogers Hornsby, who says that the American League ball is livelier.

The current debate may serve a good purpose and lead to the adoption of a uniform ball next winter. Some of the American League clubs, headed by New York, will fight any effort to change their ball. But National League argument may prevail and give us a more reliable index to comparative batting averages and pitching records in the two majors.

The third issue of the year is generally published in September. This year, however, none was published in the third quarter. The newsletter in your hands is a larger edition to make up for the missed edition.

Yankee Adventures on the Basepaths

by Terry Simpkins

These plays all happened within five days of each other. On 9-11-1931, playing Chicago at Yankee Stadium, Earle Combs led off bottom of first with single. Joe Sewell followed with a walk, but the mighty Babe promptly grounded into a triple play: 3B Billy Sullivan tagged out Combs and threw to 2B John Kerr to double up Sewell. Kerr threw on to 1B Lu Blue in time to triple up Ruth: 5(2)4(1)3/GTP Oh well - nothing you can do about that.

Three days later, however, on 9-14 against Detroit, again at the Stadium, the Yanks pulled what the *New York World-Telegram* affectionately dubbed a "Brooklyn double steal." Ruth again was at the center of fun.

With one out in the bottom of fourth, Vic Sorrell was on the mound for Detroit, clinging to a 1-0 lead. Sewell singled and Ruth walked. Sewell then managed to get himself trapped off 2B and, while he was being run down, Ruth decided he'd also make a dash for 2B. Ruth was promptly thrown out and, when Sewell tried to scramble back to 2B, he too was out. CS2(154); CS3 (46)/DP

Finally, the next day, 9-15, also against Detroit, the Yanks looked a little bit like the Mets in the 2000 World Series, running themselves out of at least three rallies:

1) In the 1st inning, Sewell singled off Tommy Bridges and attempted to steal 2B. Even though the pitch is ball 4 to Combs, Detroit catcher Muddy Ruel fired down to 2B but overthrew the bag. Sewell is thrown out trying for third: W.1X3(E2/TH2) (65)

2) In the 3rd, Lou Gehrig is on 1B with the bases loaded. Lynn Lary hit a "sac fly" (of course, there's no sac fly rule in 1931) to Gee Walker in CF, scoring Sewell with the go-ahead run. Gehrig, however, is thrown out at 2nd trying to advance, ending the rally and the inning - 8/FDP.3-H;2-3;1X2(86)

3) Four innings later, Gehrig singled and went to 3B on Lary's double. After Tony Lazzari walked to load the bases, Myril Hoag lifted a short fly to Roy Johnson in RF; Gehrig was again doubled trying to advance: 9/F9S/FDP.3XH(92)

Gehrig made up for his blunders on the bases with his bat, hitting a 3-run HR in the 5th (his 44th of the season) and a long sacrifice fly in the 8th, for 4 RBIs on the day. Yanks win, 9-2.

SABR's Biographical Committee is currently collecting another piece of data for each of the 15,417 major league players. Each player's debut date has been determined already but now a player's last date played is being added to the database. Retrosheet has helped a great deal by providing those dates for all players who finished their careers since 1978. **Dave Smith** generated those dates from the event files and **David Vincent** is coordinating the effort for SABR.

Help is being requested from Retrosheet volunteers. A list can be generated for any year with all players who finished that year. Volunteers are needed to search through box scores in newspapers to find each players' last date. The older years are more important at this moment since Retrosheet files will easily fill in the mid-1970s soon. *Event files are not being used until they are proofed.*

If you would like to help with this effort, please contact David Vincent at GrandSlams@aol.com. Thanks for your assistance.

Scoring Rules Through the Years

by Greg Beston

As we move back further in time, the scoring rules of baseball seem to make less sense and cause for more examination. For the 1950 season, I have noticed a problem with the awarding of sacrifice hits. In the 1950 rules, rule 10.06 reads:

"Score a sacrifice if, with less than two out, the batter advances one or more runners with a bunt and is retired at first base, or would have been retired except for a fielding error. In case a runner is forced out at any base on a bunt it shall be scored as a time at bat but no sacrifice..."

If you read this language literally, this rule seems to give the batter a sacrifice on either of the following plays:

13/SH.1-2
or
E1/BG/SH.1-2

It most certainly does NOT include:

FC1/SH.1-2

The rule makers must have realized this, because in 1951 there was an addition to the rule, which included situations when the fielders failed to get a lead runner on a bunt where no error was given on the play. I have found at least one such instance where this happened. It took place on 8-31-1950, CHA @ BOS. In the top of the 9th inning with no one out, Chicago had Billy Pierce on first base. Nellie Fox bunted and first baseman Walt Dropo's throw to second was too late to get Pierce. The account said that a sacrifice was awarded on the play. However, there is no way you can read the 1950 version of Rule 10.06 to give Fox a sacrifice.

This is NOT a situation where we strongly disagree with a scorer's judgment; the scoring rules of that season clearly do not allow the scorer to give the batter credit for something.

The 1948 Rules appear to have essentially the same language. However, Section 5 of Rule 70, which describes the scoring of base hits, includes the following (the emphasis is mine):

"When a fielder, after handling a batted ball, elects to try to retire a base-runner instead of the batter, the play is known as a 'fielder's choice' ... If the runner is not retired, and no error is made, the batter shall be charged with a time at bat, but no hit, provided he swung at the ball, *AND SHALL BE CREDITED WITH A SACRIFICE HIT, PROVIDED HE BUNTED THE BALL*; if, however, in the judgment of the scorer the batter could not have been retired at first base by perfect fielding, he shall be credited with a base hit."

Why they never included this language in the sacrifice section is beyond me, but we clearly see that this situation could be scored as a sacrifice during the 1940's. I looked through the entire 1950 scoring rules and it appears that this language was eliminated in the massive rules overhaul prior to the 1950 season. My guess is that they simply forgot to allow for the scoring of sacrifices in that particular situation, and they quickly corrected their mistake for 1951.

But what should we do about 1950 situations like Fox' where there is no place in the rules which gives the scorer the power to award a sacrifice? I am quite certain that they intended for such plays to be sacrifices, but they simply forgot to include the necessary language in the rules.



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Off-Season's Greetings