

Most Runs Batted In Individual Player American League Lifetime

Herm Krabbenhoft

SABR-42

June 28, 2012

Lou Gehrig's RBI Record

The Elias Book of Baseball Records **2012 Edition (page 26)**

Most Runs Batted In, League

- **2202 – Hank Aaron, NL: MIL/ATL 1954-1974**
- **1994 – Lou Gehrig, AL: NY 1923-1939**

The Elias Book of Baseball Records

Lou Gehrig's RBI Record

- 1994 RBIs – 2012 Edition
- 1996 RBIs – 2007-2011 Editions
- 1995 RBIs – 1996-2006 Editions
- 1990 RBIs – 1974-1995 Editions
- 1991 RBIs – 1973 Edition*

* Also *The Little Red Book of Baseball* – 1940-1963 Editions

How Many Career RBIs Did Gehrig Actually Have?

RESEARCH PROCEDURE:

Ascertain complete details for *each* and *every* run scored by the Yankees in *each* and *every* game Gehrig played.

RETROSHEET

Enabler of Baseball Research

- (1) Compare RBI stats in unproofed Retrosheet PBPs with RBI stats in official DBD records.
- (2) Get RBI stats from newspaper accounts for games with no Retrosheet PBPs and compare with RBI stats in official DBD records.
- (3) Resolve RBI discrepancies via multiple newspaper accounts.
- (4) Report findings – RBI-Errors and Corrections.

Lou Gehrig's RBI Record (1923-1930)

The Baseball Research Journal (Fall-2011)

<u>Year</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>SABR</u>	<u>Elias</u>	<u>Actual</u>
1923	9	9	?	→ 8
1924	5	5	?	5
1925	68	68	?	• 68
1926	107	112	?	→ 109
1927	175	175	175→173	→ 173
1928	142	142	146→147	→ 147
1929	126	126	?	→ 125
1930	174	174	174→173	→ 173
TOTAL	806	811	?	→ 808

Lou Gehrig's RBI Record (1931-1939)

<u>Year</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>SABR</u>	<u>Elias</u>	<u>Actual</u>
1931	184	184	184	
1932	151	151	?	
1933	139	139	?	
1934	165	165	165	
1935	119	119	?	
1936	152	152	?	
1937	159	159	?	
1938	114	114	?	
1939	1	1	?	
TOTAL	1184	1184	?	

1931 – 15 RBI-error games (12 players)
6 RBI-error games for Gehrig

<u>Date</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>RBI-Error</u>
4-21	2	3	Mix-up – Babe Ruth
4-22	2	1	Mix-up – Tony Lazzeri
5-03	0	1	Botched decision – RBI grounder
7-01	2	1	Mix-up – Ben Chapman
7-02	2	1	Mix-up – Jimmy Reese
7-08(1)	0	2	Mix-up – Sammy Byrd
Total	8	9	➔ Gehrig had 185 RBIs (not 184).

1932 – 5 RBI-error games (6 players)

0 RBI-error games for Gehrig

- **Gehrig had 151 RBIs.**

1933 – 13 RBI-error games (11 players)
1 RBI-error game for Gehrig

<u>Date</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>RBI-Error</u>
9-29	1	2	Botched Decision – 1 runner scored on bases-loaded walk; 1 runner scored on sacrifice fly.
Total	1	2	➔ Gehrig had 140 RBIs (not 139).

1934 – 5 RBI-error games (6 players)

1 RBI-error game for Gehrig

<u>Date</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>RBI-Error</u>
5-18	1	2	Mix-up – Harry Smythe
Total	1	2	➔ Gehrig had 166 RBIs (not 165).

1935 – 8 RBI-error games (10 players)

1 RBI-error game for Gehrig

<u>Date</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>RBI-Error</u>
6-08 (2)	0	1	Mix-up – Ben Chapman
Total	0	1	➔ Gehrig had 120 RBIs (not 119).

1936 – 11 RBI-error games (8 players)

2 RBI-error games for Gehrig

<u>Date</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>RBI-Error</u>
4-15	0	1	Mix-up – George Selkirk
9-04	1	0	Mix-up – Jake Powell
Total	1	1	➔ Gehrig had 152 RBIs.

1937 – 9 RBI-error games (9 players)

1 RBI-error game for Gehrig

<u>Date</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>RBI-Error</u>
6-07	2	1	Mix-up – Bill Dickey
Total	2	1	➔ Gehrig had 158 RBIs (not 159).

1938 – 9 RBI-error games (9 players)

2 RBI-error games for Gehrig

<u>Date</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>RBI-Error</u>
5-13	3	2	Botched decision – runner scored on 2-out error; 2 runners scored on a 2-RBI single.
5-28	1	2	Mix-up – Joe DiMaggio
Total	4	4	→ Gehrig had 114 RBIs.

1939 – No RBI-error games thru April 30
0 RBI-error games for Gehrig

- **Gehrig had 1 RBI.**

Lou Gehrig's RBI Record (1923-1939)

<u>Year</u>	<u>DBD</u>	<u>SABR</u>	<u>Elias</u>	<u>Actual</u>
1923-1930	806	811	?	➔ 808
1931	184	184	184	➔ 185
1932	151	151	?	151
1933	139	139	?	➔ 140
1934	165	165	165	➔ 166
1935	119	119	?	➔ 120
1936	152	152	?	• 152
1937	159	159	?	➔ 158
1938	114	114	?	• 114
1939	1	1	?	1
TOTAL	1990	1995	1994	➔ 1995

Most RBIs – Player – Career – AL

- Elias Sports Bureau:

1991 → 1990 → 1995 → 1996 → 1994 → ?

– Lou Gehrig, AL: NY 1923-1939

- My Research:

1995 – Lou Gehrig, AL: NY 1923-1939

Most RBIs – Player – Career – AL

Babe Ruth – what about him?

The Little Red Book of Baseball (1936-1971):

- 2197 – George H. Ruth, AL: BOS/NY 1914-1934

The Elias Book of Baseball Records (2012):

- 1994 – Lou Gehrig, AL: NY 1923-1939

(Since 1920 – Prior seasons not compiled on official scores.)

RETROSHEET

Board Meeting

Babe Ruth's AL RBI Record

Herm Krabbenhoft

June 30, 2012

Lou Gehrig's AL RBI Record

CONCLUSIONS:

- **Corrected 48 RBI-Errors in Gehrig's record.**
- **Achieved more accurate RBI record for Gehrig.**
- **BUT, R/RBI details still needed for 51 games – 100% agreement between boxscores and DBD.**

Acknowledgments

- **Freddy Berowski, Cliff Blau, Steve Boren, Keith Carlson, Bob McConnell, Trent McCotter, Pete Palmer, Tom Ruane, Dave Smith, Gary Stone, Dixie Tourangeau.**
- **Retrosheeters**
- **RETROSHEET – Enabler of Baseball Research**