

SUMMER 2022 | VOLUME 44 | NUMBER 3

# Memories *and Dreams*



**HIT GRASS WIN SALAD**

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM



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and for taking your place among the legends of the game.

With admiration, respect, and so much love,  
Your friends at the Boston Red Sox



*David Ortiz*  
31

# Memories and Dreams

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE HALL OF FAME

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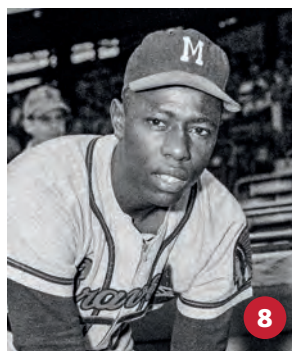
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WILFREDO LEAP IMAGES

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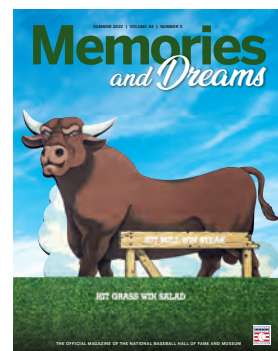
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JIM R. BOUNDS/AP IMAGES

## ON THE COVER

Baseball fans of all ages loved the 1988 movie *Bull Durham*, which brought the story of Minor League Baseball to life. This bull stands atop the left field wall at Durham Bulls Athletic Park.

## From the Board KEN GRIFFEY JR.



**O**n June 2, 1987, I was drafted by the Seattle Mariners with the first pick in the country. Thirty-five years later, I still can't believe I find myself in the Hall of Fame, and now a proud member of the Hall's Board of Directors. It's been a learning experience, and it all started with my year-and-a-half in the minor leagues.

Whether you make it to the majors or not, most ballplayers grow up a lot in the minors. My first minor league season was Low-A ball in Bellingham, Wash. I was away from home for the first time, and while I didn't get into trouble, I stretched the boundaries a little bit putting fun first – like any 17-year-old kid.

My mom came to visit me – I was hitting about .210 at the time. She joked, "I'm not coming back to see you until you start hitting!" Well, it worked. I turned it around and won MVP of the Northwest League. My mom was a baseball mom; I didn't want to disappoint her. That was the motivation I needed to refocus on my game.

I went to instructional league and then

to A-ball, where I hit .338 in San Bernadino before suffering a stress fracture in my lower back – which led to another important lesson. The team sent me home to heal, but my dad explained that ballplayers don't leave their team. He called the Mariners and they sent me to Double-A Vermont to rehab my back with the team – road trips and all. It wasn't long before I was in Seattle beginning a 22-year major league career.

The Hall of Fame is the keeper of the game's history, but I didn't always understand how important history is. When my dad and I hit back-to-back homers in 1990, he said, "Do you know what we just did?" I said, "Yeah, we hit back-to-back homers." He had the perspective to say, "We've done something that's never been done before." He understood that part of history that I didn't as a 20-year-old.

It wasn't until 17 years later, when I was rounding the bases after tying Frank Robinson on the home run list, when it hit me – right there between first and second base. That was the first time I felt what my dad had felt

when we went back-to-back – that this was a significant moment. I had the perspective to appreciate the history of what came before me.

The magnitude of the game's history – that's what makes being in the Hall of Fame so incredible. It's the people who played the game, and the people who used their abilities to make a positive difference in society. Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Jackie Robinson – what they did for the cities they played in, and for this country – there's nobody who can compete with that.

Being on the Hall of Fame's Board of Directors is a great honor and a way for me to pass the torch. We lost too many Hall of Famers in the past two-and-a-half years. Somebody passed the torch to them, and now it's time for my generation to do the same for the next generation. It's no longer about me and what I've done; it's what I can do to help the next group of baseball-loving kids who visit the Hall of Fame. There's sharing of the history, but also the lessons the game can teach.

And it's why I'm so excited about the Hall of Fame's new initiative focused on Black baseball. The result of this initiative will be a new exhibit that provides more depth to some of the most important stories in the game's history – from the early years of Black baseball through segregation, integration and today's game. We need to ensure that this history resonates with the next generation of visitors to Cooperstown.

The history of Black baseball has to be passed forward, like the stories each generation tells about the guys who played before them, the stories about guys who could have played in the American or National League if not for the color of their skin. I learned a lot of that from Class of 2022 Hall of Famer Buck O'Neil when he took me to the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City.

White or Black, Hispanic or Asian – so many kids think they're all by themselves, but they're not. The more we can pass these stories along, the more kids will understand they're not alone.

From my time in the minor leagues to today, I've grown up a lot in the game. I've seen how baseball brings us together – our families and our society. It is critical to preserve our history so that we can continue to educate the next generations. 📌



Ken Griffey Jr. was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2016.

MILES STEWART JR./NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

# Short Hops

FOR MORE BASEBALL INFORMATION AND NEWS FROM THE HALL OF FAME, VISIT [BASEBALLHALL.ORG](http://BASEBALLHALL.ORG).



## MUSEUM INITIATIVE TO HIGHLIGHT STORY OF BLACK BASEBALL

Seventy-five years ago, Jackie Robinson changed a game, and a nation, forever. His stepping onto the diamond at Ebbets Field on April 15, 1947, created a monumental shift in America's path towards civil rights.

Robinson's debut for the Brooklyn Dodgers remains one of the most significant moments in our country's history. But it's just one of the many important chapters to the story of Black baseball – a story that has inspired and empowered generations.

The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum will honor this history and celebrate its impact with an initiative to tell the story of Black baseball, culminating in the opening of a new permanent exhibit in April 2024. This exhibit will replace *Ideals and Injustices*, the Hall of Fame's current exhibit about the Black baseball experience. Originally titled *Pride and Passion*, this powerful exhibit opened in 1997 in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Robinson breaking the color barrier.

In the 25 years since the Museum opened the exhibit, extensive research has allowed

the baseball community to better understand the statistics as well as the significance of those who created and participated in Black baseball. Utilizing innovative technology to enhance and improve the visitor experience, the new exhibit will tell a more complete story of civil rights initiatives in the United States and throughout the baseball world.

To develop this initiative, the Hall of Fame has fostered new partnerships and expanded on existing relationships with cultural and historical institutions around the country, including the formation of an Advisory Board with representation from MLB, the MLBPA, the Smithsonian Institution, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, the Jackie Robinson Foundation, The Players Alliance and more. The Hall of Fame will also hire a full-time curator to provide an authentic voice to help develop the project.

The Advisory Board will also include a number of living Hall of Famers, former players, historians, media members and others from the baseball family, including Ken Griffey Jr., Barry Larkin, Dave Winfield,

## STAFF SELECTIONS



MILO STEWART / NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

**Name:** Addie Brundage  
**Position:** Manager of Visitor Experience  
**Hall of Fame Debut:** 2018  
**Hometown:** St. Johnsville, N.Y.  
**Favorite Museum Artifact:** Derek Jeter's batting gloves from his 3,000th hit  
**Memorable Museum Moment:** Working the Hall of Fame Classic Clinic in 2019!

Doug Glanville, Adam Jones, Dave Stewart, Adrian Burgos Jr., Leslie Heaphy, Larry Hogan and Larry Lester, among others.

## HOF ARTIFACTS ON EXHIBIT AT NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

Whether it's a home run or home delivery, the ties between baseball and the United States Postal Service date back more than 100 years.

The Smithsonian's National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C., celebrates this bond with the exhibit *Baseball: America's Home Run*, featuring several artifacts on loan from the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

The exhibit, which opened April 9 and runs through January 5, 2025, explores the National Pastime through a unique postal lens. Using material from the National Postal Museum's unparalleled collection, original stamp art from the U.S. Postal Service and artifacts loaned by other Smithsonian museums, private collectors and the Hall of Fame, the exhibit explores the many ways that baseball and postal history have been deeply intertwined.

Items currently on display from the Hall of Fame's collection include a Nap Lajoie bat and a catcher's mitt used by U.S. Armed Forces during World War I, and a tea kettle painted to resemble a baseball used to serve fans during military operations in Afghanistan.

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# Six Degrees of Minor Leagues

THE CONNECTIONS AND BEAUTY OF BASEBALL'S CRADLE OF HEROES  
DATE BACK MORE THAN A CENTURY.

By Steve Wulf

**IT'S A CHURCH BELL ALERTING THE PLAYERS** to batting practice. The patchwork quilt of signs for local businesses on the outfield fence. The teenage workforce hanging the sanitary socks out to dry. The eyes of the men in uniforms – wide if they are prospects, determined if they are hoping to get back to The Show, bleary if they got off a long bus ride the night before.

The smells of popcorn and cotton candy, the sight of the sky at sunset, the shouts from infield practice. A mascot tousles a toddler's hair while kids scurry after foul balls and old men with stopwatches sit behind home plate and swap stories.

All of that – and much, much more – is minor league baseball, the institution that really puts the adjective in “The National Pastime.” They're called the “bush leagues,” but they're really one network of green fields that connect North to South, coast to coast, the past to the future, people of all different ages and cultures. Like the game itself, the minors provide us with their own never-ending story, one filled with comedy and tragedy, heroes and villains, success and failure.

“I'm a minor league baseball guy,” said Jordan Kobritz, a lawyer and business professor who has presided over three different teams since 1982. “It's not an easy business, but I've loved every minute of it, from cleaning up from the night before to watching people walk through the gate to spotting future stars to locking up when everybody's left. It's the heartbeat of America.”

How do you begin to tell such a saga? Well, maybe with another one.

The setting is McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket, R.I., and the date is April 18, 1981. The game between the visiting Rochester Red Wings and the Pawtucket Red Sox began a little late that Saturday night because the lights weren't cooperating. Then, in the bottom of the ninth, the Red Sox left the bases loaded with the score tied 1-1. At that point, as Dan Barry wrote in his wonderful 2011 book about the game,

*Bottom of the 33rd*, “Like a boat slipped off its mooring, a baseball game in Pawtucket floats away upon the open waters of the night.”

When it was finally called at 4:01 a.m. on Easter Sunday, the two teams had played 32 innings and left 60 undyed Easter eggs on the center field scoreboard. At the bitter cold end of the 2-2 tie, the crowd of 1,740 had shrunk to a huddled mass of 27, not counting the infant daughter of one of the players, who was fast asleep under the desk of PawSox owner Ben Mondor. How bitter? In the 22nd, an inning after his Red Sox had tied up the game *again*, manager Joe Morgan got himself thrown out. How cold? The players had to warm themselves by burning broken bats and picket fences in garbage barrels.

Yet, frigid as it was, “The Longest Game” turned out to be quite an incubator (see more on page 18). The opposing third basemen, Cal Ripken Jr. for Rochester and Wade Boggs for Pawtucket, became Hall of Famers. Among the players to appear in the game were such future major league stars as Bob Ojeda, Bruce Hurst, Mike Smithson, Rich Gedman and Marty Barrett. Morgan and Red Wings skipper Doc Edwards would go on to manage in the big leagues, and so would the only player who didn't get in the game, Pawtucket catcher Kevin Kennedy. Even the 16-year-old batboy for the PawSox, Billy Broadbent, would come to play a pivotal role in the most improbable comeback in postseason baseball history.

But before we get to that, let's look at “The Longest Game” to see why it symbolizes the minor leagues themselves. There's nothing minor about an institution that's a classroom, a proving ground, a laboratory, an English class, a carnival, a job fair, a dating service, an economic engine, a seat on a bus and home sweet home, all rolled into one.

Just ask those two third basemen that night how important the minors were to them.

“Elmira, 1976,” Boggs said. “I'm a 17-year-old kid scared to death

and trying to prove myself to people who really didn't believe in me – they thought I was too slow and couldn't field. There are 52 guys on the roster that summer, so we dress two to a cubicle. But then the next year in Winston-Salem, Ted Williams shows up, asks me if I can hit, and I show them that I can.”

“My father was managing in the Orioles organization, and I loved those summers,” Ripken said. “Asheville, 1972. I was 12 and making \$10 a game as the batboy, which I thought was a lot of money. One day, I'm playing pepper with Doug DeCinces, and a stray bullet from a .22 rifle hits the ground near us. Doug immediately picks me up and carries me into the dugout. That's not all he did for me – he taught me so much about the game. And what did I do to repay him? I took his job as the Orioles' third baseman in 1982.”

### IT'S ALL IN THE PREPARATION

Every baseball game, minor or major league, begins with an umpire or clubhouse attendant rubbing brand-new baseballs with a substance that takes the shine off the ball and makes it easier to grip.

What they use is Lena Blackburne Baseball Rubbing Mud, invented by that very man in the late 1930s. A one-time major league infielder

and a long-time minor league manager, Blackburne came up with a solution to the complaints he often heard about the slickness of the balls. He dug up some mud at low tide from the bottom of Pennsauken Creek near his Palmyra, N.J., home, filtered out the stones and added a secret ingredient that gave it the consistency of cold cream. Nowadays, a four-pound container costs \$100.

It just so happens that Blackburne knew one of the pioneers of minor league baseball. While the official Minor League Baseball organization dates its records back to 1901, you have to dig a little further to find its true source. In 1877, two teammates from St. Mary's (Kan.) College started their own independent team in Milwaukee. One of them was Tim Sullivan, who would start the Northwest League. The other was Charles Comiskey, a first baseman who went on to play 13 years in the majors before founding the AL's Chicago White Sox in 1901.

Now the connections come fast. In 1910, Comiskey signed Blackburne to play shortstop for the White Sox, and while Lena wasn't much of a hitter, Comiskey thought so highly of him that he made him the White Sox manager in 1928.

Blackburne had an eye for talent. He signed future Hall of Fame



The Pawtucket Red Sox, whose fans celebrate as Marty Barrett crossed home plate with the winning run to end the longest game ever played, no longer exist. But the memories remain fresh of a team that, like so many others in Minor League Baseball, bonded with a community and shaped the careers of many players.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

catcher Bill Dickey to his first pro contract, and in 1945, when he was managing the Lancaster (Pa.) Red Roses, Blackburne nurtured a local kid named Nellie Fox. The same Nellie Fox who would go on to a 19-year Hall of Fame career that ended with the Houston Astros in 1965, after he lost his second base job to another little guy, Joe Morgan.

Here's what Morgan had to say when he was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1990: "I wouldn't be standing here today if it wasn't for what I learned from Nellie Fox." There you have it, around the horn from Comiskey to Blackburne to Fox to Morgan.

All of them were minor leaguers at one time or another. In fact, only a handful of Hall of Famers – Walter Johnson, Eppa Rixey, George Sisler, Frankie Frisch, Mel Ott, Bob Feller, Sandy Koufax, Harmon Killebrew, Al Kaline, Catfish Hunter and Dave Winfield – were able to make the major leagues without first having some minor league experience. Even for the greatest players, the minors can be a crucible. It took Hall of Famer Dazzy Vance 10 years in the wilderness before he won his first major league game.

The father of the modern major league farm system was himself a catcher who played in the Central League, the Iowa-South Dakota League and the Texas League before he made a name for himself: Branch Rickey. When he was running the St. Louis Cardinals in 1919, Rickey became frustrated that players he had found were being hijacked by other major league clubs. So he began acquiring control of various minor league teams, much to the consternation of Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis and the other clubs. But while his competitors hated "Rickey's chain gang," they had no other choice than to follow suit and create their own farm systems.

At the height of the minor leagues' pre-television popularity in 1949, there were 59 leagues with 464 teams, 9,000 players and a combined attendance of nearly 42,000,000. And just as players were fighting to get to the majors, so were cities.

Bill Veeck Jr., a 27-year-old dynamo whose father had helped make the Cubs a success, bought the last-place Milwaukee Brewers of the American Association in 1941 and brought them to life. He imported former Cubs manager Charlie Grimm to run the team, cleaned and painted Borchert Field, and turned games into carnivals with an endless series of giveaways, promotions, and circus and animal acts. He even scheduled morning games as a thank-you to the overnight wartime workers of the city.

Within a year, the Brewers were the best team in the league, though Veeck could only revel in their 1943 championship from afar because he had joined the Marines and was serving in the South Pacific. By the time the Boston Braves moved to Milwaukee in 1953, Veeck had already moved his act to the Cleveland Indians and then to the St. Louis Browns. But he could claim some credit for starting baseball's westward expansion.

Sometimes, what was happening in the minors garnered major attention. The Pacific Coast League, in particular, was a headline machine. Tony Lazzeri hit 60 homers and drove in 222 runs for Salt Lake City in 1925. Joe DiMaggio foretold his own immortality by hitting in 61 straight games for his hometown San Francisco Seals. The 1934 Los Angeles Angels finished with an unbelievable record of 137-50. Playing for the Roswell Rockets of the Class C Longhorn League in 1954, Joe Bauman hit an otherworldly 72 home runs with 224 RBI.

Remember the headlines made when Michael Jordan played for the Birmingham Barons in 1994? Well, he was only following in the footsteps of the great Washington quarterback Sammy Baugh, who was a shortstop for Rickey's Rochester Red Wings in 1938.

That willingness to take a chance has long been in the DNA of the minors. Under the auspices of Atlantic League president Ed Barrow, later the builder of the New York Yankees dynasty, Lizzie Arlington pitched an inning for the Reading Coal Heavers against the Allentown Peanuts in 1898. The first organized night baseball game was played in 1930 in Independence, Kan., between the hometown Producers and the Muskogee Chiefs of the Western Association – five years before lights made their debut in the National League and 19 years before Mickey Mantle made his minor league debut under the lights of Independence. The concept of a designated hitter had long been discussed in baseball, but it took the International League to make it a reality in 1969.

The San Diego Chicken and Phillie Phanatic were really stepchildren of Max Patkin, the baseball clown who stopped in nearly every minor league town for 50 years. He also made an appearance in *Bull Durham* (1988), a movie about the minor leagues that's possibly the best movie ever about baseball.

And chew on this: Little Leaguers everywhere have Rob Nelson to thank for his mouthchild, Big League Chew, a bubble gum that he developed while pitching for the Portland Mavericks in 1977.

Here's another relay. Branch Rickey called up bespectacled New York City native George Toporcer from Syracuse in 1921 to play second base for the Cardinals. Twenty years later, "Specs" was the manager of the Albany Senators when Ralph Kiner showed up to play his first season of professional ball. After Ralph hit 369 homers in the majors, he became a scout for the Indians, and in 1957, he signed a 21-year-old catcher and former Navy corpsman named Doc Edwards, who then embarked on a 56-year voyage through organized ball.

That cruise took Doc to McCoy Stadium on that fateful night of April 18, 1981. He was at the helm of the Red Wings, a team that had been in the International League since 1885. Pawtucket, too, had a rich baseball history, beginning with the Pawtucket Secrets in 1892.

It was no secret that the Pawtucket Red Sox were in trouble when local business executive Ben Mondor bought them in 1977. But as Bill Veeck Jr. had done in Milwaukee, Mondor cleaned up McCoy Stadium, invigorated the community and, with the help of general manager Mike Tamburro and communications director Lou Schwechheimer, turned Pawtucket into a model franchise. One of the things that Mondor did was to commission artistic portraits of PawSox who had gone on to stardom in Boston, players like Carlton Fisk and Jim Rice.

But in 1981, it was still very much a mom-and-pop-and-kid operation. The clubhouse manager is the hardest-working person in any organization, and Pawtucket's was Michael Kinch, a 19-year-old from the neighborhood who went by the name of "Hood." His day would start at 8 a.m. with the laundry. Then he would polish the cleats, stock the clubhouses with gum, chewing tobacco, soda and beer, and shop for the postgame meal he would prepare for the visitors – "The better the meal, the better the tips," he would say. He did pretty much everything, even giving the umpires a break by rubbing up the baseballs with Lena Blackburne's concoction.



The teenage batboys, Billy and Keith Broadbent, also had plenty to do. The pocket money they earned was peanuts. Their true reward was warming up guys who would one day play for the Red Sox. And everybody needed warming up that night.

“It was cold,” Boggs said, “really cold. That’s the first thing I remember. And the wind was blowing in. You kind of knew it was going to be a low-scoring game.”

The other third baseman had the same feeling. “You knew the pitchers were going to dominate,” Ripken said. “I remember how Earl Weaver used to say, ‘There’s no clock in baseball.’ Well, this was the game that proved him right.”

The 7:55 game didn’t start until 8:25 because the lights were balky, but it might’ve ended at a reasonable hour except that in the bottom of the ninth, with the Red Wings leading 1-0, Russ Larabee broke up Larry Jones’ shutout with a sacrifice fly to left. The postgame meal of chicken and pasta prepared by “Hood” had to wait ... and wait.

After the PawSox went down 1-2-3 in the bottom of the 32nd, it was decided to complete the game at a later date. Mrs. Broadbent, who had been understandably worried about her batboy sons, collected them. The Boggs family returned to their digs to rest up for the 1:05 p.m. Sunday game. “When I called my father the next morning,” Boggs said, “he asked me how I did, and I said, ‘I had four hits.’ When he said, ‘That’s pretty good,’ I answered, ‘Yeah, but I had 12 at-bats.’”

It took just 18 minutes to complete the game. On June 23, 75 days later, Dave Koza blooped a single in the bottom of the 33rd that drove in Marty Barrett, who was greeted at home by Boggs.

But the game itself never ends. The players go on to the majors, or maybe the Hall of Fame, or back home to something else. Morgan, who supplemented his income by driving a snowplow on the Massachusetts Turnpike, took over as the Boston Red Sox manager when they dismissed John McNamara in the middle of the 1988 season. Edwards managed the late, lamented Maine Guides for Jordan Kobritz in 1984 and ’85, and two years later, took over the Cleveland Indians for two seasons. In his 2008 Hall of Fame induction speech, Bruce Sutter singled out both Doc, his manager at Midland (Texas) in 1975, and his former pitching coach, Mike Roarke. Yes, they were the two men in the dugout at the end of that longest game.

Mike Kinch, the clubhouse manager, went into law enforcement and became the Deputy Police Chief of Cumberland, R.I. Billy Broadbent took over his clubhouse duties, and did them so well that the Red Sox called him up to handle the visitors clubhouse in 1993. After getting involved in videotaping the players in 1997, he became the team’s video coordinator.

As such, he worked with Red Sox outfielder Dave Roberts on breaking down the pickoff moves of Yankees reliever Mariano Rivera ... just in case. Well, the case came in the ninth inning of Game 4 of the 2004 ALCS, with the Red Sox, down three games to none, trailing 4-3 in the ninth. Roberts came in to pinch-run, stole second after three pickoff attempts, scored the tying run in a game Boston won in the 12th, and the rest is history.

“That was a lot more Dave than me,” said Broadbent, who’s still with the Red Sox. “But you can’t imagine how ecstatic I felt when he stole the base, and then when it led to our first World Series (championship) since 1918 ... I was a star-struck batboy again.”

Mondor, Tamburro and Schwechheimer continued to run the PawSox and made them one of the most successful franchises in the minors, with annual attendance figures in excess of 600,000. But in October 2010, the much beloved Mondor passed away. At the funeral home in Warwick, an honor guard of policemen waited to escort his casket to a cathedral in Providence. One officer broke ranks to hug his wife, Madeline: Cumberland Deputy Chief Michael Kinch.

After the 2015 season, Schwechheimer left the PawSox to form a group that bought two other minor league franchises: the Charlotte Stone Crabs and the New Orleans Zephyrs. He bought the Stone Crabs from Cal Ripken Jr. After rebranding the Zephyrs as the Baby Cakes, he moved the franchise to Wichita, Kan., where he oversaw the construction of a new stadium and brought them down a notch, to the Double-A Texas League. To help him with the club, which he named the Wind Surge, he enlisted the aid of an old friend from the International League – Jordan Kobritz. The Wind Surge became an overnight success, but Schwechheimer passed away in July 2020 as a consequence of COVID-19.

As for the PawSox, they were bought by a group that included Red Sox president Larry Lucchino with the intention of building a new stadium in Providence. But after a series of civic and state setbacks that resembled a 33-inning baseball game, president Mike Tamburro and the Red Sox relocated the team to Worcester, where they are now the WooSox.

That, too, is minor league baseball. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

It’s The Right Spot. That’s the name of the restaurant in Pawtucket that overlooks McCoy Stadium. The man across the table is the head of the Cumberland, R.I., Town Council, Michael Kinch. On the fourth finger of his left hand, he has a beautiful ring with a gem encircled by the words “Longest Game in Baseball History.”

“Hood” hasn’t been back in a while, but he was kind enough to give a stranger a tour of the old place. There’s no baseball team there now, but there is some activity generated by the COVID testing site alongside the stadium. Outside the stadium stands a statue of Ben Mondor, bat in hand. Inside, the scoreboard is intact and the signs for Burger King and Dunkin’ and Cardi’s Furniture are still up. The floors could use a sweeping and the grass a lot of water. The photos and player cards that trace the history of the franchise are fairly well-preserved, but those murals have taken a beating.

Kinch takes the visitor through the clubhouse where he used to serve Mrs. Mondor’s shepherd’s pie recipe, and the office where Meghann Boggs slept soundly, and Joe Morgan’s hiding place for 10 innings. “It’s a little sad, I know,” he said. “But that night is coming back to me, and I’m smiling. As cold and windy and long as it was, it was also one of the greatest tributes to perseverance I’ve ever seen. Jim Umbarger pitched 10 shutout innings in relief. Think of those poor catchers. And in the top of the 32nd inning, Sam Bowen throws a pea to Roger LaFrancois to nail the runner at the plate.

“Nobody gave up!”

That’s the minor leagues for you. 🍌

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*Steve Wulf is a freelance writer from Larchmont, N.Y.*

# South Bound

IN 1953, HANK AARON HELPED INTEGRATE THE SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE WITH AN MVP SEASON.

By Scott Pitoniak

**IN 1953, A YEAR BEFORE A SUPREME COURT RULING** desegregated schools, and two years before Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus, Hank Aaron struck a blow for baseball and the civil rights movement. The pioneering Black slugger took a bat to fastballs – some of which were aimed at his head – and bigotry.

And Aaron's trailblazing efforts would be greatly aided by Ben Geraghty, a white manager who judged the then-19-year-old prospect on his baseball skills and the content of his character rather than the color of his skin.

**N**early two decades before enduring epithets, bags full of hate mail and death threats while breaking Babe Ruth's hallowed home run record, Aaron took on the daunting challenge of overcoming deeply rooted prejudice while integrating baseball in the Deep South. He and four other men of color continued the work their idol, Jackie Robinson, had started. And by opening the doors to the segregated South Atlantic League – aka the Sally League – in the early 1950s, they helped their sport and society take a step forward.

"We played a season of great baseball in the Deep South, under circumstances that nobody had experienced before and – because of us – never would again," Aaron wrote in his 1991 best-selling autobiography *I Had a Hammer: The Hank Aaron Story*, co-authored with Lonnie Wheeler.

"We had shown the people of Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina and Florida that we were good ballplayers and decent human beings, and that all it took to get along together was to get a little more used to each other. We had shown them that the South wouldn't fall off the map if we played in their ballparks."

Aaron and Jacksonville Braves teammates Félix Mantilla and Horace Garner would do so while playing home games in a Florida Panhandle city that seven years earlier had padlocked ballpark gates to prevent Robinson's team from playing an exhibition game there. In places like Jacksonville and Savannah, Ga., where fellow Sally League Black pioneers Fleming Reedy and Al Israel played, the notion of interracial athletic competition seemed unthinkable to many. Jim Crow laws were so entrenched that Birmingham and Montgomery, Ala., had laws prohibiting Blacks and whites from even playing checkers or dominoes together, let alone baseball.

Even within these hostile settings, Aaron maintained a laser focus on the diamond. He led the league in batting average (.362), hits (208), runs batted in (135) and runs scored (115), and wound up overcoming the racist, dehumanizing mores that prevented him and his fellow pioneers from staying in the same hotels, eating in the same restaurants and drinking from the same water fountains as their white teammates. At season's end, a Florida newspaper columnist wrote that "courageous Hank Aaron may have started Jacksonville down the road to racial understanding."

The words touched the Hall of Famer's soul. "I'm not sure," Aaron responded in his memoir, "I've ever done anything more important."

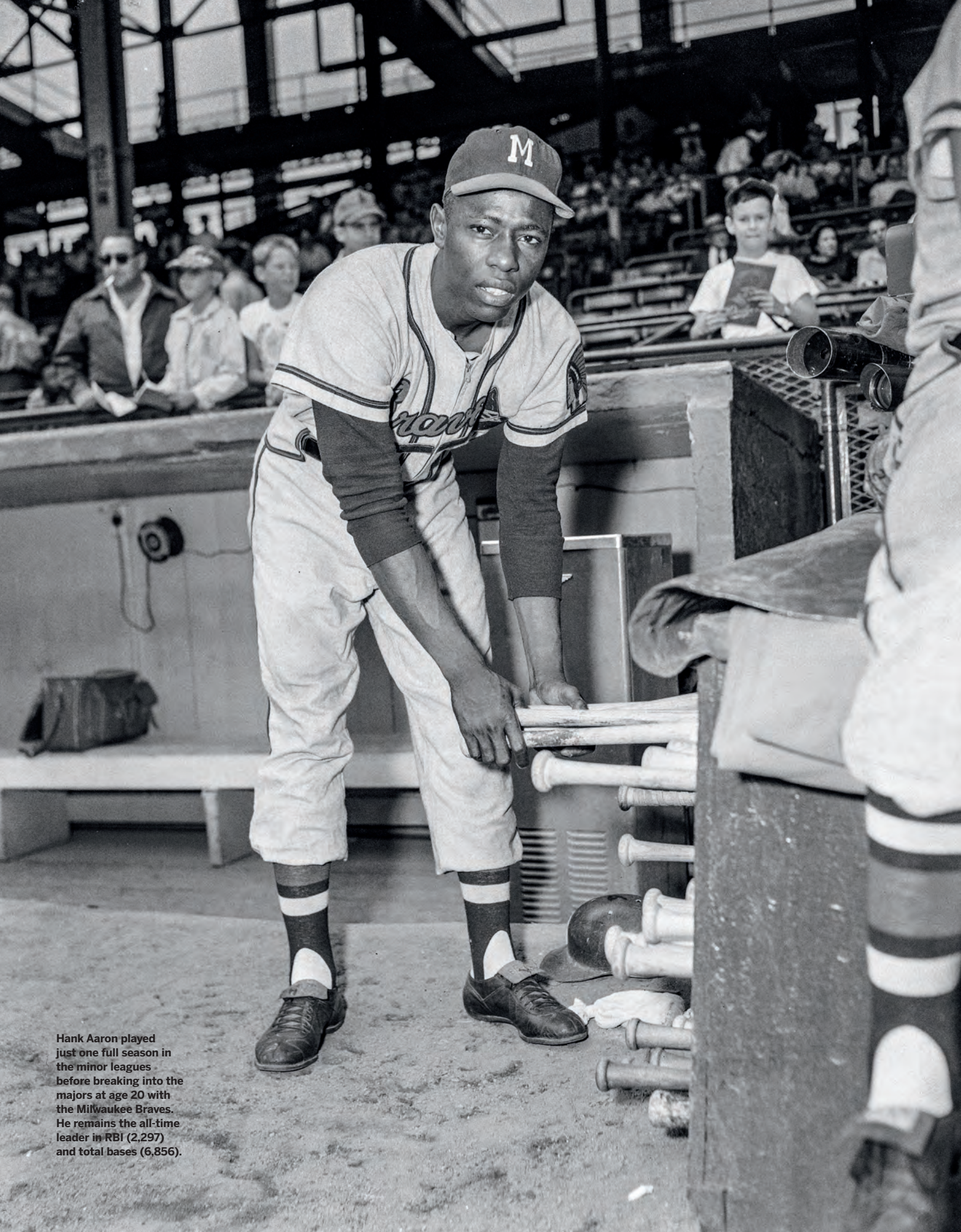
From the get-go, Geraghty was Aaron's biggest booster. He bragged often to baseball writers about his slugger's boundless potential. In one hyperbolic moment, he even said Aaron would one day make people forget Jackie Robinson. That, of course, never was going to happen. No one could do that. Nor did Aaron want to try. But he definitely would make people remember Hank Aaron by doing something even Jackie hadn't been allowed to do: Integrate baseball in the heart of Dixie.

In 1953, the major leagues were no farther south than St. Louis and Cincinnati. There wouldn't be an MLB franchise in the Deep South until the Houston Colt .45s (now the Astros) in 1962. The South was the stronghold of the minor leagues in those days, with the segregated Sally League known as the "Mother of the Minors" and the "Cradle of the Great." And, until the spring Aaron and four other men of color arrived, it was known for one other thing: Fielding all-white teams.

In some respects, argued author Howard Bryant in his Aaron biography, *The Last Hero*, "Henry would have a more difficult time even than Robinson. Where Robinson would have the benefit of going to his home ballpark in Brooklyn half of the time, the Sally League would play all of its games in the Deep South. Even the home park, in Jacksonville, would not always be a friendly place. Henry knew he might be able to win over the home fans with spirited play, but off the field, he found that Jacksonville was another southern town not ready to treat him with any degree of humanity."

Bryant also mentioned how the glare of the national press provided Robinson a certain degree of protection against the most virulent opposition. In the Sally League, Aaron would be isolated, with press coverage minimal.

Not that Aaron was entering this cauldron blindly. After all, he had grown up in segregated Mobile, Ala., so he was intimately familiar with Jim Crow laws and their impact.



Hank Aaron played just one full season in the minor leagues before breaking into the majors at age 20 with the Milwaukee Braves. He remains the all-time leader in RBI (2,297) and total bases (6,856).



**Ben Geraghty (right) was Hank Aaron's manager in 1953 in Jacksonville as Aaron integrated the South Atlantic League. Forever after, Aaron credited Geraghty with helping boost his career.**

He was aware that Jacksonville had refused to allow Robinson to play there in 1946. In Aaron's first game in northern Florida – an exhibition against the Boston Red Sox – he was peppered with epithets. Somehow, he shrugged them off and wound up crushing a home run over the center field fence.

Before the Braves departed for their first regular-season Sally League game the next day, Jacksonville's mayor visited the team bus and gave Aaron, Mantilla and Garner a "turn-the-other-cheek, suffer-in-silence" speech similar to the one Brooklyn Dodgers president Branch Rickey delivered to Robinson years earlier. He warned if they retaliated, their careers would be through, as would this grand experiment to integrate southern baseball.

"I knew that we had to shut out everything else and play ball," Aaron wrote. "But when we looked up in the stands at all those Black and white faces screaming at us, we couldn't help but feel the weight of what we were doing ... We knew that we not only had to play well, but if we ever lost our cool or caused an incident, it might set the whole program back five or 10 years. When pitchers threw at us, we had to get up and swing at the next pitch. When somebody called us [the N-word], we had to pretend as if we didn't hear it."

Fortunately, the trio had each other to lean on, as well as Geraghty.

"In all the years I played baseball," Aaron wrote, "I never had a manager who cared more for his players or knew more about the game."

He recalled times when Geraghty visited them in the Black neighborhoods they were forced to stay – in Jacksonville and on the road. The four men would sit, drink beers and talk baseball for hours. On road trips, Geraghty would raise a stink with restaurants that refused to serve his Black players. On rare occasions, restaurant managers relented. More often than not, they didn't, prompting Geraghty to order a bunch of burgers to share with Aaron and his two teammates on the team bus.

"I've known white players and managers who try to put on a good face around Black players despite their real feelings, but there wasn't a phony bone in Ben's body," Aaron wrote. "He was just a baseball man, and, to him, we were just baseball players. Besides that, he liked us."

A handful of white teammates stood up for them, too, none more vociferously than Joe Andrews, a muscular, 6-foot-1, 200-pound first baseman who took guff from no one.

"When we were leaving the ballpark after a game, Joe would carry a bat with him and

tell us to stick close," Aaron wrote. "Ben fathered us and kept us calm, but Joe was our protector. We couldn't talk back to the fans calling us names, but Joe could, and he damn sure did."

Any time he heard epithets or threats from the stands, the diamond or dugouts, Andrews would scream at the perpetrators. But his attempts to protect Aaron, Mantilla and Garner went only so far. The threesome needed to silence the bigots with their play, and no one's bat spoke more loudly that summer than Aaron's.

While rounding the bases following a home run during a game in Macon, Ga., Aaron received an earful from a racist pitcher who called the slugger the N-word and told him to stay loose his next at-bat because, "I got four pitches coming for your head."

Sure enough, Aaron's next time up, a fastball zoomed toward his noggin, and he moved out of harm's way just in the nick of time. The next pitch also bore in on him, but, instead of panicking, he quickly stepped back and tomahawked a line drive to the center field fence, driving in another run. There were more brush-back incidents that season, but managers and pitchers eventually learned it wasn't wise to rile Aaron.

After that season, he played winter ball in Puerto Rico, making the successful switch to the outfield from second base, where he had committed 36 errors in 1953. Thanks to Geraghty's urging, Aaron was invited to the Milwaukee Braves' major league camp the following spring, beginning an unparalleled career that saw him club 755 home runs and set a slew of MLB records, including most runs batted in (2,297), extra base hits (1,477) and All-Star Game selections (25), en route to first-ballot election to the Hall of Fame in 1982.

He wound up having the spectacular career Geraghty envisioned; a career that transcended the game. Hank Aaron became an important figure in the fight for racial justice.

Nearly seven decades ago, he helped integrate baseball in the Deep South. It was a crowning achievement in a life filled with many. 📌

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*Scott Pitoniak is an award-winning journalist and author based in Penfield, N.Y. His latest book is Remembrances of Swings Past: A Lifetime of Baseball Stories.*



FOX SPORTS CONGRATULATES

**DAVID ORTIZ**

AND ALL OF THE INDUCTEES INTO THE

**NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME  
CLASS OF 2022**



# Equal Opportunity

THE MINOR LEAGUES HAVE PROVIDED WOMEN THE CHANCE TO SHOW THEY BELONG AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE NATIONAL PASTIME.

By Carroll Rogers Walton

**LEGEND HAS IT – AND SO DID THE NEW YORK TIMES** – that Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig struck out against a “girl” pitcher in a barnstorming exhibition game in Chattanooga in 1931. A 17-year-old left-hander named Jackie Mitchell set down both the Sultan of Swat and the Iron Horse to cheers from a crowd of 4,000.

The story goes that after Ruth took a called third strike, he glared at the umpire, flung his bat and trudged back to the bench. It’s hard to tell from written accounts, though, whether Ruth’s gestures – and his effort at the plate – were legitimate or part of an act. Historians still debate whether he was just playing along.

**N**inety-one years later, a woman has yet to play in affiliated baseball. But the 2022 season opened with a woman managing in the minor leagues for the first time in history, wearing Yankee pinstripes, no less. Rachel Balkovec debuted as manager of the Yankees’ low Class A Tampa Tarpons on April 8.

To help break into the minor league ranks, she changed her name on her résumé to a more gender-neutral Rae. She eventually landed with the St. Louis Cardinals as a minor league strength and conditioning coach. That was 10 years ago. By now, her promotion is no fluke. It’s part of a trend.

A little more than one year after the Miami Marlins made Kim Ng the first female general manager in major league history, Balkovec is joined by 10 other women coaching in affiliated baseball this season, including Alyssa Nakken in the

major leagues with the San Francisco Giants.

As of January 1, 2021, 22 women held on-field coaching or player development roles, according to the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida.

Women have played in the Negro Leagues, barnstormed on women’s teams and entertained baseball fans during World War II in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, a women’s-only league documented in the movie *A League of Their Own*. Women have crossed into college baseball and the independent leagues. They’ve umpired, scouted and medically treated players in both the minors and majors. Several even owned a major league franchise.

But getting in on the action so close to the ball is the next frontier. Women such as Balkovec are in uniform now, in mainstream baseball, with a direct path to the major leagues.

“It’s wonderful that it’s a trend,” said Julie Croteau, the first woman to play men’s NCAA baseball (St. Mary’s College of Maryland) and coach in men’s Division I baseball (University



Rachel Balkovec donated her jersey from her first game as Tampa Tarpons manager to the Hall of Fame.

of Massachusetts-Amherst). “And it is amazing how much progress we’ve made.”

Like many of these women, Croteau grew up playing baseball with boys.

“I really liked it,” she said. “I think it picks you. Baseball picked me. I [believed] I shouldn’t have to give it up because of my gender.”

She faced her first fight in high school. In an attempt to discourage her from trying out for the JV team, the school offered her a spot on the varsity softball team and the cheer-leading squad. When she declined, the other first baseman quit, conceding the spot to her.

“It was a lonely season,” she said. “They were very isolating to me.”

When it came time to try out for varsity, the coaches posted the sign-up sheets and announcements inside the boys’ locker room. They filmed tryouts, Croteau said, and “lost” tapes of days when she played well.

As the daughter of two lawyers, she decided to sue the school for discrimination. A judge eventually ruled against her in court – as a group of varsity baseball players cheered.

“I was devastated,” said Croteau. “I remember crying a little bit and saying, ‘I hope this makes a difference for someone in the future because it’s been really hard.’”

One of the reporters covering the case was Mike Zitz, who also happened to manage the semi-pro Fredericksburg Giants. Recognizing her determination, he invited Croteau for a tryout. Playing for him, with college players, gave Croteau the confidence to walk on at Division III St. Mary’s in 1989.

While playing first base there, Croteau played against a second baseman for Catholic University named Brian Cashman. Later, as general manager of the Yankees, Cashman hired both Ng and Jean Afterman as assistant general managers. He is still at the helm of the organization that just promoted Balkovec.

“She was a force to be reckoned with,” Cashman said of Croteau. “You could tell that she was a real fierce competitive athlete. That impacted me because you can see that from across the diamond and the other dugout.”

Croteau later played for the all-women’s Colorado Silver Bullets team and in the MLB-sanctioned Hawaiian Winter Baseball League before moving into coaching and broadcasting.

“It feels very small-world, looking backward through the lens of the year 2022,” said Croteau, who now works in communications



**Above: Julie Croteau broke barriers for women in baseball as the first woman to play in a men’s NCAA baseball game.**

**Left: Kim Ng became the general manager of the Miami Marlins prior to the 2021 season. Ng is the first woman to hold such a role in big league history.**

for Stanford University. “But I think this is how change happens. People have an experience, that experience impacts them, and they take it into the decisions they make going forward. It’s not a huge leap, right? It’s not unusual as a baseball player to see somebody else as a baseball player first and then to see their race or gender later. You have a shared passion.”

For every pioneering woman, there are men who helped prepare the way.

Ila Borders credits her father, a former minor leaguer, for instilling the toughness she needed to become the first woman to earn a college scholarship for men’s baseball. In 1997, she signed with the St. Paul Saints of the independent Northern League to become the first woman since Toni Stone, Mamie Johnson and Connie Morgan of

the Negro Leagues to play professionally.

Borders remembers one poignant lesson she got from her father at 11 years old. She was trying to hit her first home run off him in batting practice. Phil Borders, who made it to Triple-A in five minor league seasons, fed her a steady stream of inside pitches.

Borders took a pitch off her hands that made them start to bleed. When she stepped out, looking for some comfort from her mom nearby, her dad said: “Ila, get your [expletive] back in there.”

“I remember this vividly,” Borders said. “I got pissed. For the first time in my life, something triggered in me where I was able to use my anger for good. I finally made the adjustment, got around that inside corner pitch and hit it up the middle and hit my dad in the shins.”

He kept pitching. She hit his next offering over the fence.

“When he came up to me, I had tears in my eyes,” she said. “He said, ‘Ila, that’s what it takes to be a winner in life. You’re going to be beaten down. You’re going to want to quit sometimes. You could be in pain. But this is what makes a winner. You keep going.’”

Borders kept going at Southern California

College when players threw jockstraps and protective cups at her, and when they hit balls at her during batting practice while she had her back turned shagging fly balls. She kept going when strangers showed up at her classes or in her dorm room to get a photo or a look at her.

She kept going the night she had to fight off multiple attackers while running the bases in her headphones. And she started taking self-defense classes.

“They try to do everything possible to put fear in you to quit,” said Borders. “I was trying not to give them one little ounce of anything – like everything was perfect, everything was fine – so there wasn’t anything to say: ‘Oh, see when you let a girl play baseball with the guys, this is what happens. We can’t allow it.’”

When Borders got to the Northern League, the climate finally began to change. A couple of her teammates were there when two men showed up at her room at a Best Western in Iowa. From that point on, they became her protectors, combing her hotel rooms for her and creating physical barriers so she could walk into opposing stadiums without interference from raucous fans.

In four seasons in independent leagues, the left-hander went 2-4 with a 6.75 ERA in 101.1 innings. She went 1-0 with a 1.67 ERA in 15 appearances (12 starts) for Madison, Wis., in 1999, prompting an invitation from Cincinnati Reds owner Marge Schott to Spring Training. Before it took place though, Borders said the Reds pulled the plug, claiming they didn’t want the media circus it would create.

“That crushed me,” said Borders, now a firefighter and paramedic in Portland, Ore. “I thought, ‘That [was] probably my best bet. No matter how well I do, I don’t think I’m going to get a shot.’”

Almost 20 years later, those same Reds hired Dartmouth graduate Bianca Smith as an intern in their baseball operations department.

What she really wanted to do was coach, so in her spare time Smith would sit in the stands during batting practice and take notes. One of the Reds’ hitting coaches noticed her and suggested manager David Bell invite her onto the field.

When he did, Bell asked her to bring her glove. Smith got to warm up players and coaches by playing catch and retrieving balls during infield practice. On game days, she



PHOTOS BY MILO STEWART @ NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

**Above: Alyssa Nakken wore this jersey on July 23, 2020, when she became the first woman to serve as a full-time coach in big league history. Nakken later donated the helmet she wore when she coached first base for the Giants in a 2022 game. Below: Ila Borders threw this baseball in a July 24, 1998, game between the Duluth Dukes and the Sioux Falls Canaries when she recorded her first victory as a professional.**



kept data on hitters’ swing decisions from the clubhouse.

Eventually she got up the nerve to half-joke to Bell, “Hey, now all I need is a uniform.”

It still surprised her one day when she saw a jersey with “BIANCA” on the back hanging in the Reds clubhouse.

“I was so shocked, I didn’t put it on,” said Smith. “One of the clubbies came up to me and asked, ‘Why aren’t you wearing your jersey?’ I didn’t want to get it dirty.”

Smith used the same gentle persistence when she left the Reds for a job as an assistant athletic director at Carroll University, a Division III school in Wisconsin. Coaching baseball wasn’t part of the job description, but Smith insisted it be during her interview. She was a slam dunk for the job, having both sports law and business degrees and experience in the compliance work they needed. So they took her to meet the baseball coach, and he

created a hitting coordinator role for her.

Smith put the Red Sox in a similar spot last winter when she interviewed for a job in scouting and player development.

After listening to her talk repeatedly about her passion for coaching, the Red Sox set up a conversation between Smith and their hitting coordinators. She’s now in her second season coaching outfield and baserunning, while also working with hitters at the team’s extended Spring Training complex in Fort Myers, Fla.

Smith’s hire, which made her the first Black woman to coach in professional baseball, came on the tail end of a flurry of female hires. In November 2019, the Twins hired Andrea Hayden as assistant strength and conditioning coach, the Cubs hired Rachel Folden as a rookie league hitting coach and the Yankees hired Balkovec as a roving hitting instructor.

J.J. Cooper, editor-in-chief of *Baseball America*, believes the uptick is a result of baseball’s increased emphasis on analytics.

“As the game became more analytical, all of a sudden, having a long pro career was not the core requirement to be a farm director, a scouting director, an assistant GM, a GM, a president,” Cooper said. “Front offices were filled with an array of male Ivy League grads without a whole lot of playing experience.”

And now those people are doing the hiring.

“What we’re now seeing is if the assistant GM who’s hiring didn’t play baseball at a high level, that person is unlikely to then view high-level baseball playing experience as core to being hired,” Cooper said.

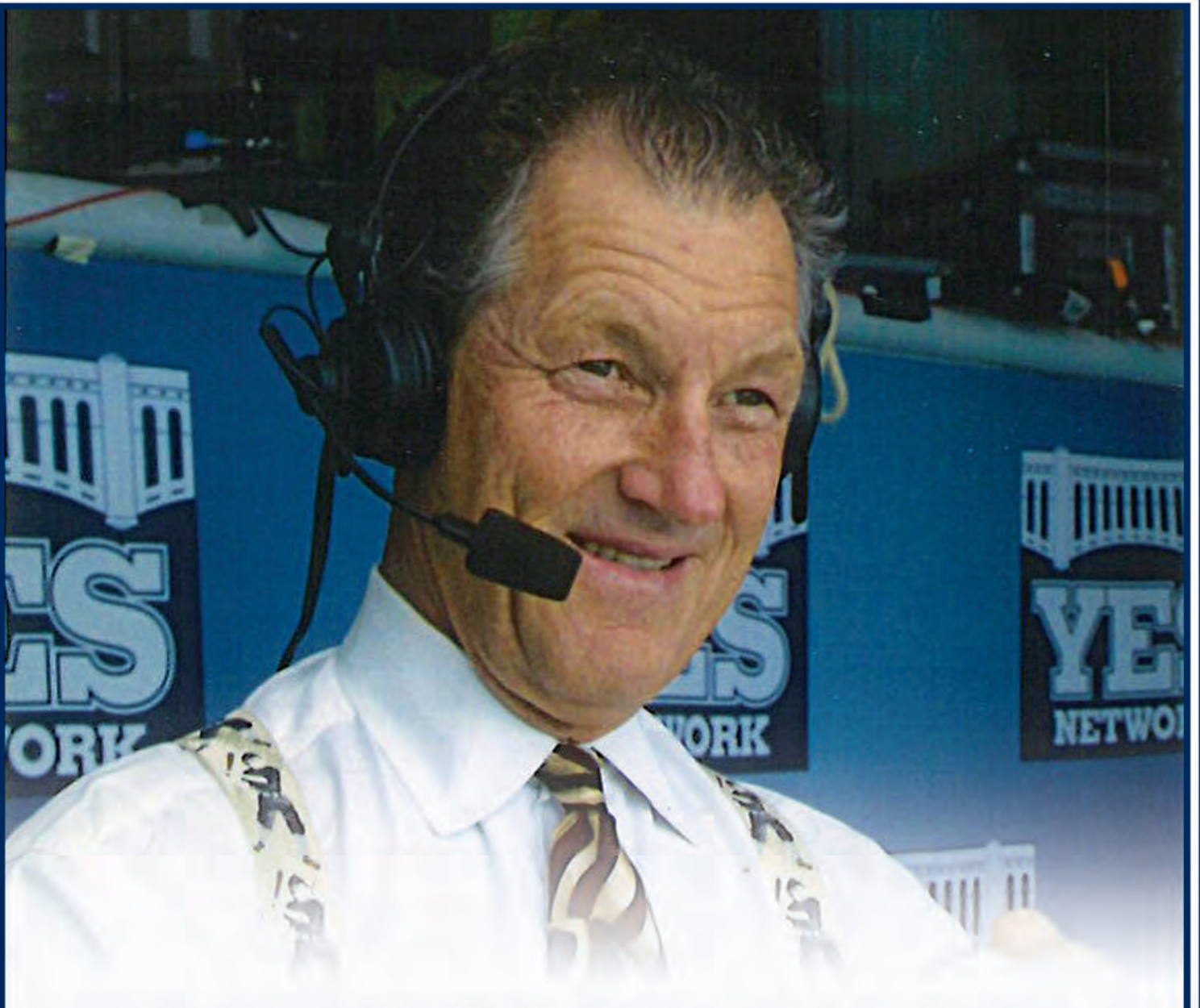
MiLB now requires its teams to have a dressing room for women. If this keeps up, they’re going to need more than one.

There’s a 6-foot-2 left-handed pitcher in Australia named Genevieve Beacom who pitched an inning for the Melbourne Aces in the Australian Baseball League last winter. She’s a 17-year-old with an 84-mph fastball, a sweeping curveball and an eye on coming to the United States to play college baseball.

“She has some really good potential,” said Borders, who is hopeful Beacom gets the chance to develop in baseball properly like a man would. “If they were to do that with her, I think she absolutely has a shot.” 🍎

*Carroll Rogers Walton covered the Braves for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and is currently a freelance writer based in Charlotte.*





YES NETWORK CONGRATULATES

# JIM KAAAT

ON HIS INDUCTION INTO THE  
BASEBALL HALL OF FAME



# Long, Strange Trip

FOR TREVOR HOFFMAN AND LARRY WALKER, UNLIKELY JOURNEYS THROUGH THE MINORS LED TO COOPERSTOWN.

By Steve Buckley

Carl Yastrzemski made his big league debut with the Boston Red Sox after two stellar seasons in the minors.

Robin Yount and Paul Molitor each needed only one season in the minors before suiting up for the Milwaukee Brewers.

And then there's Dave Winfield, who in 1973 went directly from the University of Minnesota campus to the San Diego Padres without playing a single minor league game.

They all wound up in the Hall of Fame.

If the Hall of Fame is reserved for the game's greats, it's an easy leap to assume they had it clicking from the very beginning. We picture the big club taking note of their natural athletic skills, sturdy work ethic, dogged determination, willingness to listen and to never stop learning – the list goes on and on – and thus they were propelled to the majors with little or no minor league fuss and muss.

It doesn't always happen that way. Larry Walker can tell you about that. So, too, can Trevor Hoffman. For here are two Hall of Famers who didn't merely do it the hard way; they did it the impossible way, beginning their careers as minor league question marks and ending them as big league exclamation points.

Walker was a kid from just outside Vancouver, B.C., who was signed by the Montreal Expos in 1984 for \$1,500 in bonus money. Not only did he struggle at the plate in his first season of pro ball, he also lacked a basic understanding of the game. But then he reached Double-A, and suddenly the performance caught up with the raw skills.

Hoffman was a shortstop in the Cincinnati Reds organization who struggled at the plate

and in the field, to the point he was about to be sent home. But then the Reds asked Hoffman if he would consider taking a shot at pitching, something he hadn't done since Little League.

So, what the heck happened here?

Let's begin with Walker, who in his younger days played in amateur baseball tournaments the way some people play softball: It wasn't much more than a recreational pursuit. Given a look-see by Expos executive Jim Fanning, Walker was signed to a no-risk contract – not as a phenom or even a prospect, but as a project.

"I came in with zero expectations, being that I had absolutely no idea what I was doing

playing baseball to begin with," Walker said. "I grew up wanting to be a hockey player."

He was sent to the Utica Blue Sox in the New York-Penn League in 1985 – located about 45 minutes from Cooperstown but at that point a world away. While his teammates looked at it as an important first step toward making the big leagues, Walker harbored no such expectations.

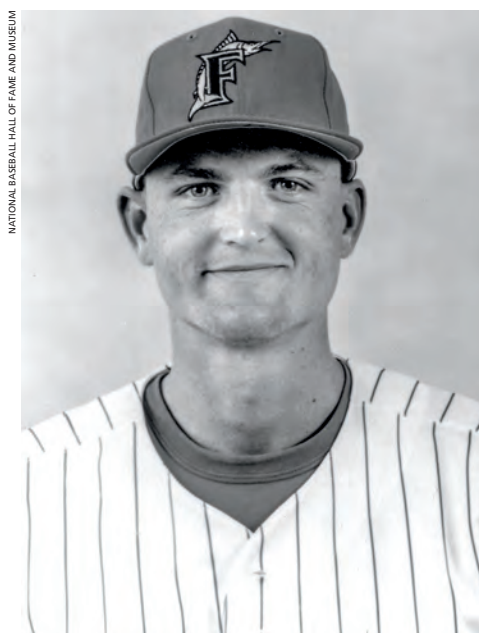
"I went away to play sports and have some fun and didn't think I had any chance to play in the major leagues," he said. "Never mind talking about the Hall of Fame."

It was bad enough that Walker hit just .223 with two home runs in 215 at-bats in his first season. He didn't even understand the game he was playing, as evidenced by that day when he tried to make up the rules as he went along.

"The hit-and-run was on, I rounded second (and) the ball was caught out in right-center," he said. "I ran back to first base and slid in safe, and the umpire called me out."

Walker remembers jumping up to argue.

The late Ken Brett, the Utica manager, happened to be coaching first base that day. "You're out, Larry," Brett said.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM



RON VESELY/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

**Left: Trevor Hoffman debuted with the Marlins in 1993 after coming to the team via the 1992 expansion draft. He was a shortstop in the Reds system before being converted to a pitcher, and eventually totaled 601 saves, second-most in MLB history. Right: Larry Walker grew up as a hockey player in British Columbia before getting a shot with the Expos. After learning on the job in the minor leagues, Walker became a three-time National League batting champion.**

“I didn’t realize that running across the pitcher’s mound to get back to first base was not the way to go, that you had to touch second first,” Walker said. “I didn’t know the rules of the game.”

The Expos probably didn’t much like to hear about that. They probably didn’t like the .223 batting average, either. What they did like was the raw talent. So the next year, 1986, they sent him to the Burlington (Iowa) Expos of the Class A Midwest League.

“I was doing decent, and they moved me up to a higher Class A,” said Walker, the higher Class A team being West Palm Beach in the Florida State League.

The move to West Palm Beach was great news, right?

“I was mad,” Walker said. “I didn’t want to leave. I had a bunch of friends on the team. It was fun. Everyone got along. You play a game, you go hang out, you have dinner, you have a beer, you meet people in the town. We’d hang out at this [place] called the Pzazz. It was great. And then all of a sudden it comes without warning that you’re getting moved. And I’m like, ‘What?’ You pack your bags and you’re gone. No time to say good-bye to the friends you’ve made. That family thing I got from my teammates, from the people I met in the town, I was leaving that.”

He hit .283 at West Palm Beach, and a career that began as a lark, followed by all those fun times at the Pzazz, now took on a more serious tone. What happened, Walker said, “... is that I was hearing that the hardest level to get to was Double-A, and the hardest level to get out of was Double-A. And when I did get to Double-A, I started to figure it out – how to hit for a better average, how to hit for power, how to really learn the game.

“I was all ears and eyes,” Walker said. “I practiced, I worked at it and then it became more interesting. But, yeah, that first year, hitting .220 or whatever it was with two home runs, was pretty pathetic.”

He played the 1987 season at Double-A Jacksonville, hitting .287 with 26 home runs. In 1989, he moved up to Triple-A Indianapolis, and then made his major league debut on Aug. 16 of that season, contributing three walks and a single in the Expos’ 4-2 victory over the San Francisco Giants. Except for a few rehab stints, he never went back to the minors. And as near as we can determine,

he never again tried to sprint back to first base by taking a shortcut across the pitcher’s mound.

For Hoffman, the plan was to follow in the steps of his older brother Glenn, a shortstop who broke into the big leagues with the Red Sox in 1980. Trevor was 12 years old at the time, and seeing his older brother play when the Red Sox pulled into town to face the Angels at Anaheim Stadium fueled his own big league dreams. He played his college ball at Cypress (La.) College and the University of Arizona and was drafted by the Reds in 1989.

Things got off to a rocky start. He hit .249 for the Billings Mustangs in 1989, and .212 for the Charleston Wheelers in 1990. And his defense was spotty.

“I didn’t anticipate smacking my head into a wall that quickly into my minor league career,” he said. “Things weren’t coming together.

“I was coming off a pretty decent college career, playing in the Pac-10. It was good baseball. But going 0-for-4 all the time, making an error, all that, mentally, was beating me up.”

Jim Lett, his manager at Charleston, contacted the baseball ops folks with an idea.

“Jimmy was telling them, ‘He’s got a pretty good arm for short; let’s see what it looks like on the mound,’” Hoffman said. “They put me out in the bullpen every third day with (pitching coach) Mike Griffin to work on some mechanics.

“They liked what they saw and invited me back as a pitcher the following Spring Training,” he said. During the offseason, he sought out some old friends for advice, including former Arizona Wildcats pitchers Scott Erickson and Lance Dickson, both of whom debuted in the big leagues in 1990. He also quizzed Jim Wing, the longtime Wildcats pitching coach.

“The reality of it was that I didn’t know what I didn’t know,” Hoffman said. “Having not picked up a baseball and toeing the rubber since I was in Little League, and then having the Reds say they liked what they were seeing ... that large gap, it didn’t seem conceivable that success would follow.

“I could throw the baseball across the diamond from the relatively weird positions where I’d catch it, and I could throw a strike to first base 120 to 130 feet away. Now I’m in a controlled environment where I’m throwing the ball from 60 feet, six inches. But I felt like I could do it pretty regularly.”

The first big surprise when this experiment began?

“Command,” Hoffman said. “It wasn’t so much velocity. It wasn’t so much development of a pitch. Being able to throw a fastball pretty good was one thing, but being able to throw it to different quadrants right away was intriguing to the Reds.”

As Hoffman remembers, Frank Funk, who managed the newly minted pitcher on the Cedar Rapids Reds in 1991, told him, “Look, I’m not going to mess with you mechanically.”

“He didn’t put a lot on my plate,” said Hoffman. “And I was thankful to just go out, try to throw hard and learn as I went. It was a nice maturation process.”

Never mind mechanics and maturation. Try to imagine the turning-on-a-dime aspect of waking up one morning as a shortstop and then going to bed that night a pitcher.

“But I was all in,” Hoffman said. “Because I knew what it was like in the big leagues. Whether I was a shortstop or not, I didn’t care. I just wanted the opportunity to be in the big leagues.”

He never again played shortstop. Not even in one of those goofy situations, say, bottom of the 13th, the bench emptied, the manager trying to be creative in pursuit of keeping the game alive.

“No,” Hoffman said. “They never even had that conversation with me. That should tell you how good an infielder I was that they never bothered to ask. It was over and done with.”

What was not over and done with was Hoffman’s baseball career. He was a combined 2-1 with a 1.89 ERA in 41 games between Class A Cedar Rapids and Double-A Chattanooga in ’91. Alas, the Reds had the vision, but not the payoff: They lost Hoffman to the Florida Marlins in the 1992 expansion draft. He made his big league debut on April 6, 1993, and soon was traded to the Padres, where he built the bulk of his Hall of Fame résumé, registering 552 of his career 601 saves.

Had the Expos given up on Larry Walker back when he was having fun at the Best Western Pzazz in Burlington, Iowa, or had the Reds not determined that there was a pitcher lurking inside Trevor Hoffman, there would be two fewer Hall of Famers today. 🍎

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*Steve Buckley is a freelance writer from Somerville, Mass.*

# Pieces of History

MINOR LEAGUE ARTIFACTS HELP TELL THE STORY OF THE GAME IN COOPERSTOWN.

By Bill Francis

**T**yrone Horne was from a small town in North Carolina, selected by the Montreal Expos in the 44th round of the 1989 amateur draft, and never made it to the big leagues. But the bat he used in a minor league game – to accomplish something never achieved before or since – is in Cooperstown.

Many have used the minor leagues as a stepping stone to future greatness, while others fell short of their dreams plying their trade in small towns across the United States and Canada. Whether ultimately successful or not, there are times when these farmhands are involved in something so noteworthy that the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum comes calling.

The Cooperstown institution, which has recognized the important role of the minor leagues since first opening its doors in 1939, counts numerous artifacts from this segment of the game in its permanent collection.

Included among the Museum's more than 40,000 three-dimensional artifacts and three million Library documents are minor league items as varied as balls and bats, tickets and trophies, pennants and banners, caps and uniforms, catcher's masks and umpire masks, and rings and medals.

"While visitors know they will certainly see coverage of the history of major league baseball," said Hall of Fame vice president of exhibitions and collections Erik Strohl, "the Hall has always documented all aspects of the amateur and professional game, including youth baseball, Olympic baseball, collegiate baseball and minor league baseball.

"The minor leagues have a rich and storied tradition going back more than 100 years. The Hall recognizes the importance of the minor leagues and the role that they play and have played in communities across America. We will continue to collect materials and document their story as an important facet of the game of baseball."

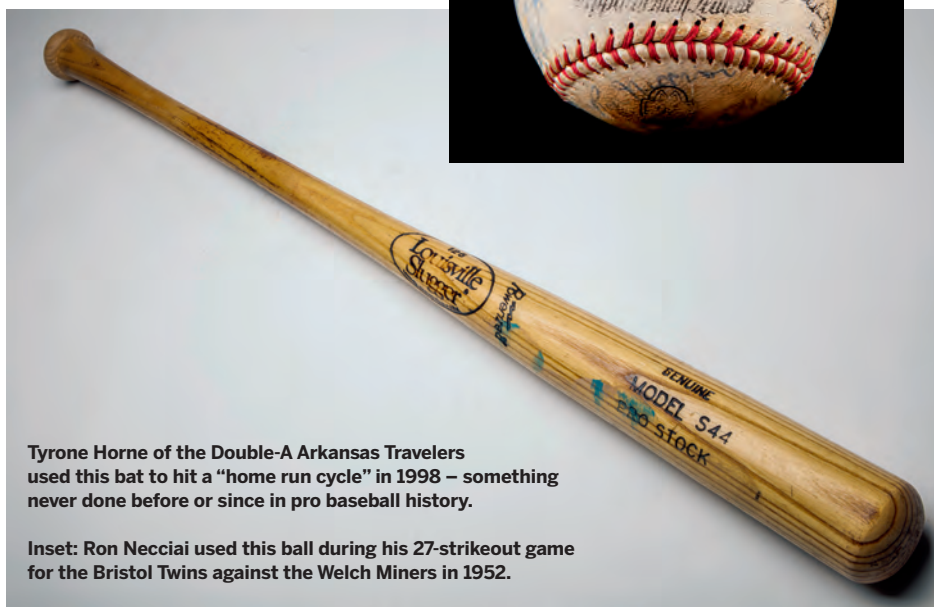
While there is some debate, depending on your definition, it is generally considered that minor league baseball began with the seven-team International Association in 1877. From those modest beginnings, the minor leagues have been woven into the fabric of the game. It is estimated that there have been more than 300 minor leagues involving 3,500 franchises in 1,400 different cities.

Among the more unique minor league artifacts in the Museum's collection are bats from every All-Star Futures Game MVP; a baseball and cap used by Tacoma Rainiers pitcher John Halama in 2001 when he tossed the first nine-inning perfect game in Pacific Coast League history; and the mask worn by female umpire Ria Cortesio in the Midwest League in 2001, the Florida State League in 2002 and the Southern League in 2003-04.

Artifacts from future Hall of Famers are also among the minor league donations, which include an Indianapolis Indians cap worn by Randy Johnson in 1988 and a bat used by Class of 2022 inductee Minnie Miñoso of the St. Paul Saints in 1993, which commemorated his sixth decade of professional baseball.

There's even a bat from another Hall of Famer, hoops legend Michael Jordan, that he used while playing outfield in 1994 for the Double-A Birmingham Barons.

For Horne, his moment in the sun came



**Tyrone Horne of the Double-A Arkansas Travelers used this bat to hit a "home run cycle" in 1998 – something never done before or since in pro baseball history.**

**Inset: Ron Necciai used this ball during his 27-strikeout game for the Bristol Twins against the Welch Miners in 1952.**

PHOTOS BY MILO STEWART JR./NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

on July 27, 1998, when the outfielder for the Arkansas Travelers, then the Double-A affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals, hit for the “home run cycle” in San Antonio.

Thanks to his two-run homer in the first inning, a grand slam in the second, a solo homer in the fifth and a three-run blast in the sixth, the 27-year-old left-handed batter accomplished something not done in professional baseball before or since.

Horne’s Louisville Slugger that night, weighing in at 32 ounces and measuring 33½ inches long, now resides at the Hall of Fame.

“When we returned back to Arkansas after the game is when I got the call from the Hall of Fame about donating my bat,” Horne recalled in a recent conversation from his home in Idaho Falls, Idaho. “When they said ‘Hall of Fame,’ it was no-brainer. I just donated it to them. It was then that I really knew I had done something special.

“I haven’t been to Cooperstown to see the bat, but family and friends have. I’m really going to make it a point to come this summer and check it out and show my kids. I have four daughters, and the younger ones don’t understand what I had done as an athlete. I want to show all my kids that their dad was famous.”

Horne spent 13 seasons in the minors, his highest level reached being 70 games in Triple-A. Not only did he make news across the country in 1998 with a special game, but that year he also won the Texas League MVP after hitting .313 with 37 homers and 140 RBI.

“After the game, I’m eating in the clubhouse and I see myself on ESPN,” Horne said. “Then I did a phone interview and that’s when I found out it was the first ‘home run cycle.’ I was like, ‘Home run cycle?’ All I knew was that I hit four home runs and had 10 RBI and contributed to my team winning the game.

“I will always have that ‘home run cycle.’ It’s something no one can take away from me. Someone may do it again, but I’ll always be the first.”

Arguably one of the most famous minor league games ever played was the 33-inning International League affair between the Triple-A Pawtucket Red Sox and the visiting Rochester Red Wings in 1981.

The contest began on the night of April 18, and 8 hours, 7 minutes later, at 4:01 a.m. the



**Top: Steve Grilli donated his Rochester Red Wings cap to the Hall of Fame after being tagged with the loss in the longest MiLB game ever in 1981. Grilli pitched in four big league seasons with the Tigers and Blue Jays, but has a permanent place in Cooperstown thanks to his time in the minors. Above: Bill George, the Pawtucket Red Sox’s official scorer, donated his scorebook from the record-setting 33-inning game between Pawtucket and Rochester in 1981.**

next morning, the game, tied at 2-2 after 32 innings, was postponed. Resumed some two months later on June 23, it ended after just 18 minutes when Pawtucket’s Dave Koza slapped a 2-2 curve from Cliff Speck into left field with no outs and the bases loaded to score Marty Barrett.

The cache of artifacts the Hall of Fame acquired from the game includes the bat Koza used and the ball he hit to knock in the winning run, the Rochester cap worn by losing pitcher Steve Grilli, the visiting lineup card, baseballs signed by both the Rochester and Pawtucket teams, tickets to the April 18 game and the June 23 continuation, and the Pawtucket official scorer’s scorebook.

“It’s a thrill to see the scoresheet again. It’s the only thing that ever made me famous,” said a laughing Bill George, Pawtucket’s

official scorer in 1981, when he visited the Hall of Fame back in 2018. “It brings back memories.

“The Pawtucket owner and I knew the scorebook definitely belonged in the Hall of Fame. I actually had a business trip to upstate New York later that summer and I delivered it, along with Dave Koza’s bat.”

Grilli finished his big league career, spent mostly with the Detroit Tigers, with a record of 4-3. But his claim to fame is as the losing pitcher in the longest game in professional baseball history.

“After the game was over, somebody from the Hall of Fame was present and asked me if I would donate my hat,” Grilli recalled during a visit to Cooperstown. “I kind of joked and told them they could have anything I wore in that game that they wanted. It’s great to be remembered for something. I was well short of winning 300 games in the big leagues, so I wasn’t going to get into the Hall of Fame that way.

“We’re all going to be dead and gone someday, but in a sense it’s almost like a tombstone etching right there in the Hall of Fame. If you can leave something there and be part of the history of this wonderful game, I think you’ve got to be a fool not to give it up.”

What Ron Necciai accomplished in a minor league contest on the night of May 13, 1952 – setting the professional baseball record for most strikeouts in a nine-inning game with 27 – may never be challenged. Taking place in a Class D Appalachian League game, the 19-year-old fireballer of the Bristol (Va.) Twins not only had his record-setting performance, but also tossed a no-hitter against the visiting Welch (W.Va.) Miners.

“When the game was over,” Necciai would later say, “my catcher Harry Dunlop came over and said, ‘Do you know you just struck out 27 batters?’ They’ve been playing this game for 100 years; I figured it had been done before.”

Necciai would later donate a ball from the game, signed by the members of his team, to the Hall of Fame: “That way everybody can see a piece of history. I wouldn’t want it any other way.”

*Bill Francis is the senior research and writing associate at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.*

PHOTOS BY MILO STEWART FOR NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

# Pitch Count

EVEN THE MOST TALENTED HURLERS VALUED THE LESSONS TAUGHT IN THE MINOR LEAGUES.

By Jerry Crasnick

**JIM PALMER RETIRED IN 1984** as one of the most dominant and decorated pitchers of his era. When he joined Joe Morgan on the Cooperstown podium in August 1990, his Hall of Fame plaque made note of his 268 wins, three Cy Young Awards and grand slam-free résumé as the “high-kicking, smooth-throwing symbol” of the dominant Baltimore Orioles teams of the 1960s and '70s.

Palmer’s speech was the culmination of a life in the game. But as he can readily attest, the start of a career can be just as meaningful as the finish.

Palmer was 18 years old and awash in press clips from his days as a multi-sport high school star when he left his home in Arizona to pitch for the Aberdeen (S.D.) Pheasants in the Class A Northern League in 1964. On a 40-degree day at the municipal ballpark, manager Cal Ripken Sr. summoned Palmer, Mark Belanger and the other young Aberdeen players down the left field line and schooled them on the baseball tenets known as the “Oriole Way.” These were the organizational standards they would be held to for the duration – which in Palmer’s case, turned out to be two decades.

“**F**irst of all, he asked us, ‘Why are we here?’” Palmer said. “And he pointed to the empty stands and said, ‘Because of the people that come to see us play. Don’t ever forget that.’ No. 2, he said, ‘We’re going to come every day and get a little bit better collectively as a team. No. 3, we’re never going to let anybody outwork us. Our work ethic is going to be unparalleled.’ And No. 4 was, ‘We’re going to come to the ballpark and have fun. And that means we’re going to win.’”

The impact of that 80-37 Aberdeen team on a young Jim Palmer is evidenced by how deeply the experience still resonates almost 60 years later. He is not alone in this regard.

Conventional wisdom says that teenage pitchers need time and nurturing to flourish. The velocity and stuff that overwhelm high

school lineups count for only so much in professional ball, so some of the best pitchers of their generation advance a rung, a pitch and a learning experience at a time.

A smaller number expedite the process with minimal fine-tuning. They reach the majors not far removed from their senior class proms and display the talent and resourcefulness to succeed, along with the fortitude to survive the long bus rides and daily demands of pro ball.

Nolan Ryan struck out 307 batters in 202 minor league innings in 1966 before making his big league debut in the New York Mets’ bullpen at age 19, but even pitchers without triple-digit radar gun readings can make quick work of their apprenticeships.

Palmer walked 190 batters in 182 minor league innings in 1964, but that couldn’t dissuade the Orioles from giving him his first taste of big league exposure a year later.

In 1966, Palmer went 15-10 with a 3.46 ERA in 30 starts and beat Sandy Koufax with a complete-game shutout in Baltimore’s World Series sweep of the Dodgers. Once organizational pitching guru George Bamberger taught him the importance of balance and fastball command, Palmer harnessed his control and was unstoppable.

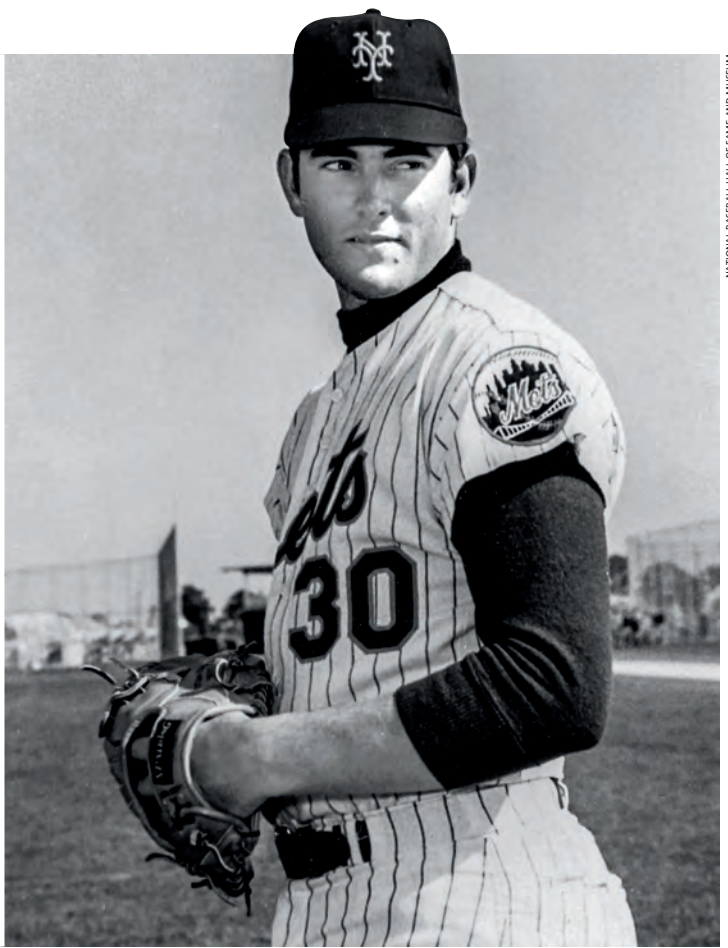
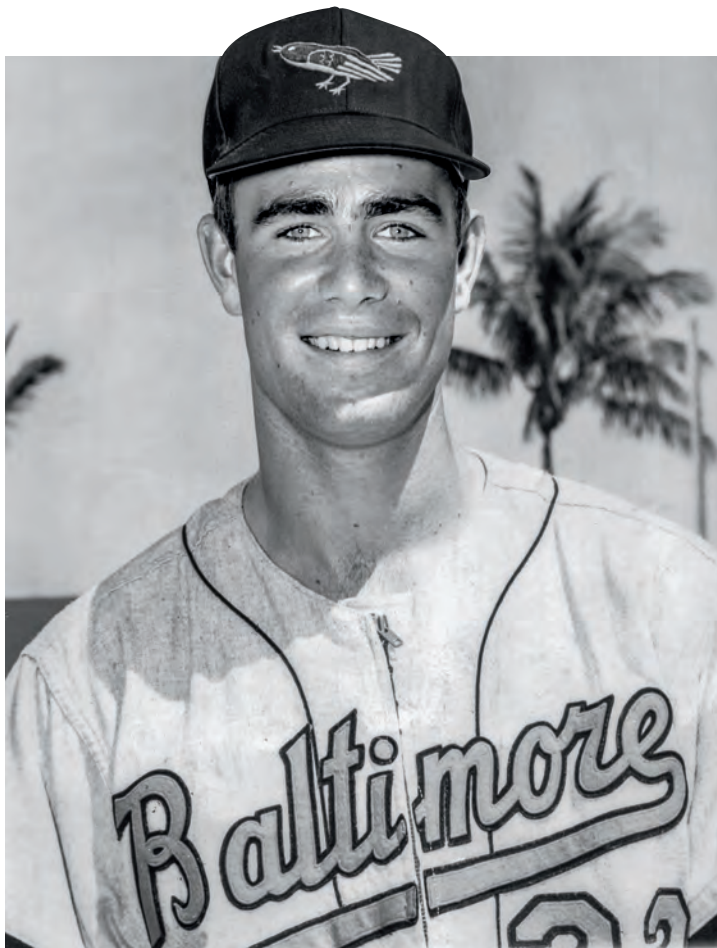
Dennis Eckersley, who signed with Cleveland at age 17, made 66 minor league starts before reaching the big leagues to stay at age 20. Don Sutton, Greg Maddux, John Smoltz and Pedro Martínez are among the other Hall of Famers who reached the big leagues at 20 or 21 and never looked back, while CC Sabathia and Clayton Kershaw fit that model among future candidates for Cooperstown.

Few pitchers pushed the timetable like Bert Blyleven, who signed with Minnesota at age 18 and logged a mere 195 innings in the minors before amassing 4,970 big league innings with the Twins, Indians, Pirates, Rangers and Angels. Blyleven was born in the Netherlands and moved to Canada with his family before his parents settled in Garden Grove, Calif. His father, Joe, straightened bumpers, did gardening and other odd jobs, and drove a molasses truck to support his wife and seven children, so young Bert developed a blue-collar mindset and didn’t have to be cajoled into getting his work done.

He was also quick to embrace a challenge. In his first two minor league stops, Blyleven posted a 7-2 record with a 2.09 ERA. Fred Waters, the manager of the Twins’ Gulf Coast League outpost, gathered the players one day and made an offer that piqued Blyleven’s interest and accelerated his learning curve.

“He asked us, ‘Who wants to play instructional league?’” Blyleven said. “I was surprised not many guys raised their hand. I didn’t make much money, so the choice was, ‘Go play instructional league or go home and pump gas.’ So of course, my hand went way up.”

After progressing under the guidance of pitching coach Ralph Rowe, Blyleven received an invitation to big league camp



**Jim Palmer (left) learned about the “Oriole Way” during his first season in the minors at the age of 18. At age 20, Palmer was pitching in the World Series. Nolan Ryan (right) demonstrated his strikeout potential in the minors, whiffing 307 batters in 202 innings before being promoted to the Mets’ bullpen at age 19.**

the following spring and latched onto veteran starters Jim Perry, Jim Kaat, Luis Tiant and Dave Boswell, who treated him like a younger brother. He impressed in seven starts with Triple-A Evansville to earn a promotion to Minnesota, where pitching coach Marv Grissom established the foundation for his career success. One day in the bullpen, Grissom placed a folding chair on the mound where Blyleven’s left leg landed. The exercise forced him to stay straight rather than throw across his body.

“My delivery was a little herky-jerky at the beginning. I was sort of like a javelin thrower, but Marv got me to open up and utilize more of my body and my lower torso to deliver pitches off the rubber,” Blyleven said. “I had a little of that Dutch stubbornness. God gave me a good arm, but you have to use your brain a little bit, too.”

Blyleven had learned his trademark curveball from listening to Vin Scully describe Koufax’s breaking ball on Dodgers broadcasts. One day during his rookie season in 1970, Blyleven was fortunate to sit in the dugout with Koufax’s Hall of Fame teammate, Don Drysdale. He listened, spell-bound, as Drysdale talked about the importance of hard work, aggressiveness, getting ahead in the count and finding a comfortable, repeatable delivery.

“He talked about pitching for 15-20 minutes, and everything he said, I still remember,” Blyleven said.

Eckersley, a product of the San Francisco Bay area, signed for a \$25,000 bonus out of high school as a third-round pick with Cleveland in 1972. He received an early tutorial on life in pro ball from Loyd

Christopher, a veteran scout who had also signed Dick Tidrow, Carney Lansford, Larry Andersen and numerous other big leaguers through the years. Eckersley waved goodbye to his mother and sister at the front door and headed off to Visalia with Christopher, who dispensed fatherly advice from behind the wheel of an old Mercedes, with its diesel engine humming the entire trip.

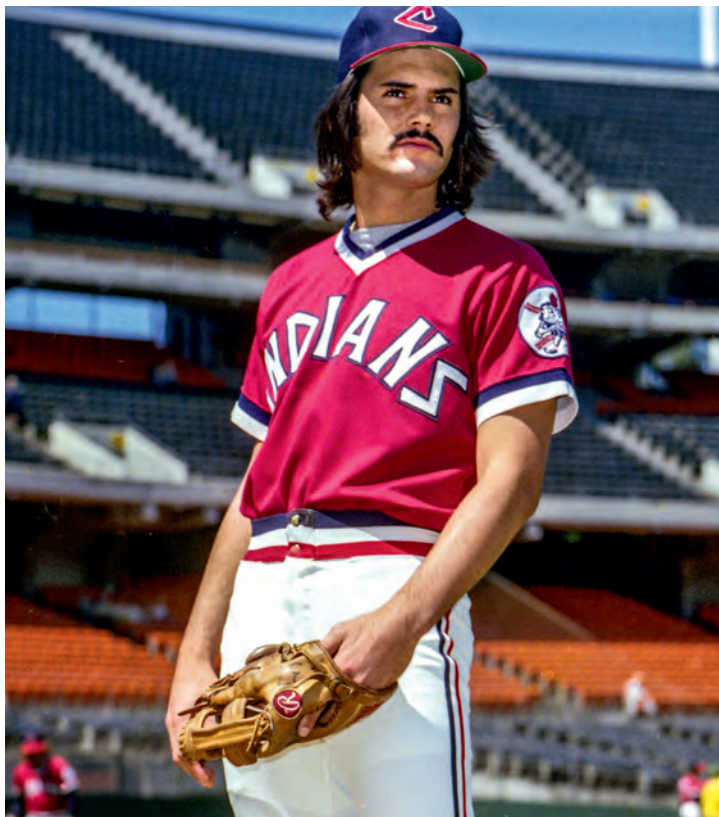
“He was such a calming force, like a grandfather,” Eckersley said. “He was a mentor right out of the gate. More than anything, it was the confidence, telling me how good I was. You need that, because you never think you belong. I think that goes on forever when you’re a player. It’s such an important thing to be raised with someone praising you.”

Eckersley needed the confidence boost while competing against players three and four years older in Reno.

“It’s a rude awakening when you’re a kid,” he said. “You’re used to dominating, then all of a sudden you try to hump up and the guy hits a rocket. You’re like ‘Whoa.’ It’s frightening. How do you make an adjustment?”

For Eckersley, the minors were an adventure because he was away from home and living on his own for the first time. He didn’t want to go cross-country to pitch in Florida, so the Indians sent him to Reno. But Reno had casinos and a nightlife that was a challenge to resist. He got married before his second season in Reno and took a more disciplined approach off the field. A year later, he received a promotion to Double-A San Antonio and swapped in his Dodge Challenger for a Corvette.

Palmer’s time in Aberdeen is equally quaint, in hindsight. He



Dennis Eckersley (left) debuted with Cleveland in 1975 at the age of 20 after just 66 minor league appearances. Bert Blyleven (right) was selected by the Twins in the third round of the 1969 MLB Draft. One year later, Blyleven was pitching in the big leagues.

remembers getting an envelope with \$27 in meal money and being told it had to last through a nine-day road trip.

“We didn’t have credit cards,” Palmer said. “In Winnipeg, there was a place across the street from the hotel where it was all you can eat for 85 cents. Maybe you’d find a place on the road where you could get a bowl of chili after the game with crackers and some butter. We all lived in basements in Aberdeen, and when it rained, your shoes would slide over into the corner and you’d squish over there to get them. In South Dakota, they had mosquitoes the size of B-52’s.”

The great ones find a way to surmount the challenges, on and off the field. They absorb the helpful tips and weed out the negativity. And they use setbacks as motivation, rather than internalizing failure and stewing on it.

Exhibit A: Maddux, who struggled badly with the Cubs at age 21. Pitching coach Dick Pole and Maddux’s veteran teammates eventually learned the reason why. One night, an opposing hitter lined a ball into the gap and spurned an easy triple to stop at second base. Subsequent sleuthing revealed that Maddux was tipping his pitches, and they were easily relayed from second. After a refresher course in Triple-A, he returned and became a star. At age 22, he went 18-8 with a 3.18 ERA and made the All-Star team.

“We saw a lot of guys in the minor leagues with a lot of talent,” said Rick Sutcliffe, who pitched with Maddux in Chicago from 1986-91. “I remember one time, one of my managers was talking about a guy and said, ‘He’s a million-dollar airport with a 10-cent control tower.’ Greg was just the opposite. He probably had a 10-cent body with a million-dollar mind.”

**“I DIDN’T MAKE MUCH MONEY, SO THE CHOICE WAS, ‘GO PLAY INSTRUCTIONAL LEAGUE OR GO HOME AND PUMP GAS.’”**

**— BERT BLYLEVEN**

The other factor that distinguishes the Palmers, Madduxes, Blylevens and Eckersleys from the crowd: The capacity to adapt over time.

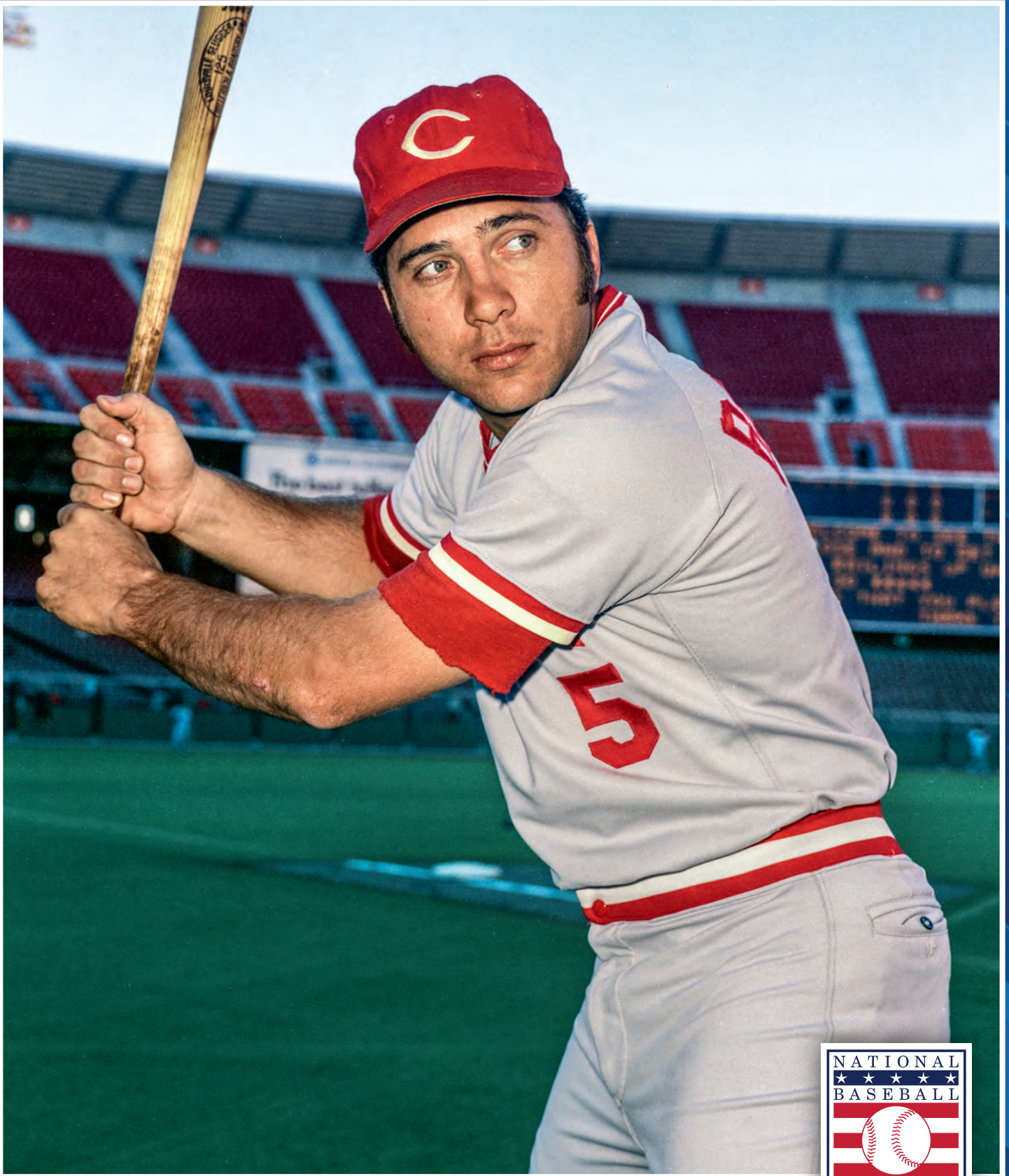
“They have the ability to reinvent themselves – to be honest and say, ‘I’m not a power guy anymore. I don’t throw 2-0 or 3-1 fastballs now, but I have the ability to spin it. I can get back in the count with an off-speed pitch because I’ve got the ability to do it for a strike,” Sutcliffe said. “They just continue to evolve.”

The special ones harness that knowledge and evolve all the way to the steps of Cooperstown, where the early memories inevitably come flooding back.

Nothing compares with a Hall of Fame speech. But even the greatest endings wouldn’t be possible without that first chapter. 🍌

*After three decades as a baseball writer, Jerry Crasnick currently works as a senior advisor for the MLBPA.*





**Johnny Bench** c

**CLASS OF  
1989**



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

# JOHNNY LEE BENCH

Elected: 1989 • Born: Dec. 7, 1947, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Batted: Right Threw: Right • Height: 6'1" Weight: 197 pounds

Played for: Cincinnati Reds (1967-83)



Year	Team	G	PA	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BB	BA	SLG
1967	CIN	26	93	86	7	14	3	1	1	6	0	5	.163	.256
1968	CIN	154	607	564	67	155	40	2	15	82	1	31	.275	.433
1969	CIN	148	592	532	83	156	23	1	26	90	6	49	.293	.487
1970	CIN	158	671	605	97	177	35	4	<b>45</b>	<b>148</b>	5	54	.293	.587
1971	CIN	149	613	562	80	134	19	2	27	61	2	49	.238	.423
1972	CIN	147	653	538	87	145	22	2	<b>40</b>	<b>125</b>	6	100	.270	.541
1973	CIN	152	651	557	83	141	17	3	25	104	4	83	.253	.429
1974	CIN	160	708	621	108	174	38	2	33	<b>129</b>	5	80	.280	.507
1975	CIN	142	606	530	83	150	39	1	28	110	11	65	.283	.519
1976	CIN	135	552	465	62	109	24	1	16	74	13	81	.234	.394
1977	CIN	142	563	494	67	136	34	2	31	109	2	58	.275	.540
1978	CIN	120	451	393	52	102	17	1	23	73	4	50	.260	.483
1979	CIN	130	538	464	73	128	19	0	22	80	4	67	.276	.459
1980	CIN	114	407	360	52	90	12	0	24	68	4	41	.250	.483
1981	CIN	52	196	178	14	55	8	0	8	25	0	17	.309	.489
1982	CIN	119	439	399	44	103	16	0	13	38	1	37	.258	.396
1983	CIN	110	334	310	32	79	15	2	12	54	0	24	.255	.432
<b>17 Years</b>		<b>2158</b>	<b>8674</b>	<b>7658</b>	<b>1091</b>	<b>2048</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>1376</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>.267</b>	<b>.476</b>

All statistics are from baseball-reference.com • All bolded marks are league-leading totals • Bolded and italicized marks are major league-best totals  
**Awards & Records:** 14-time All-Star • 10-time Gold Glove Award Winner • 1968 NL Rookie of the Year • 1970 & 1972 NL Most Valuable Player

## DID YOU KNOW ...

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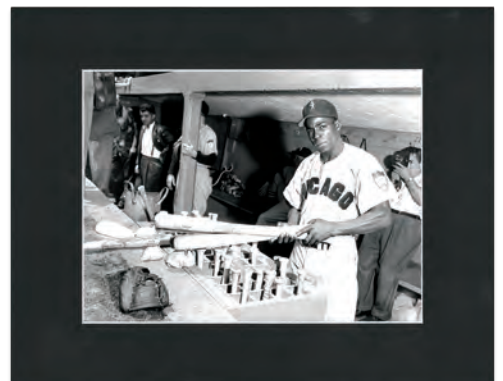
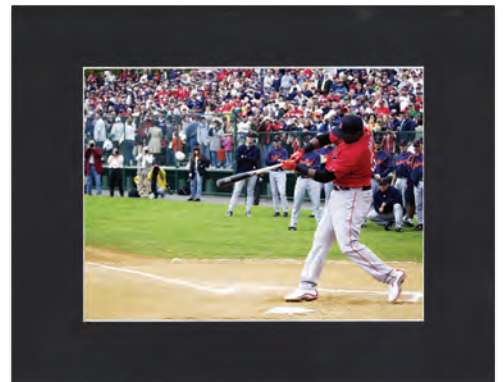
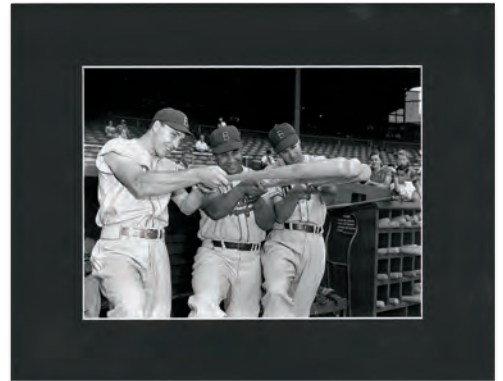
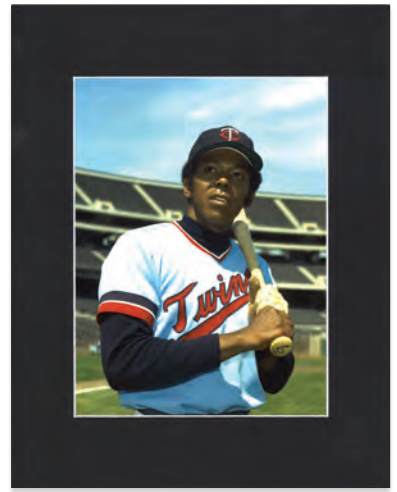
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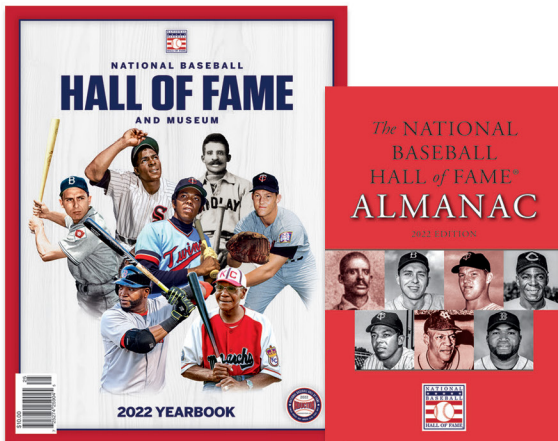
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# Absorbing Reading

BASEBALL DIGEST IS STILL ENTHRALLING FANS IN EIGHTH DECADE.

By Bill Francis

As a youngster, one way acclaimed sports broadcaster Bob Costas became knowledgeable about the National Pastime was by flipping through the black-and-white pages of *Baseball Digest*.

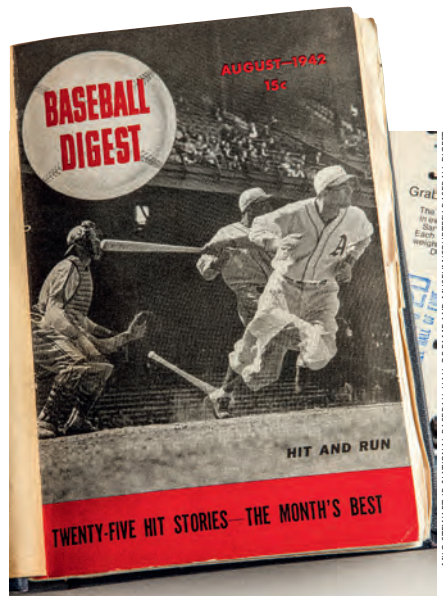
“I began reading *Baseball Digest* as a kid,” wrote Costas in a recent email. “I craved baseball content of all kinds, both current and historical. *Baseball Digest* provided that, along with quizzes about baseball rules and history.

“The landscape was much different then. Fans had the *Sporting News*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Sport* magazine, local papers and a few annual publications like ‘Baseball Stars of (whatever year)’ that served as reviews and/or previews of the past and upcoming season. That was about it. Thus, *Baseball Digest*’s content felt original to me, and expanded my knowledge and appreciation of the game beyond the teams and players I was most familiar with.”

Much has changed over the decades, but *Baseball Digest* – the nation’s longest-running baseball magazine celebrating its 80th anniversary in 2022 – has remained a constant through conflicts abroad, vast economic swings, a media revolution and even a worldwide pandemic.

In the pre-Internet world, *Baseball Digest* was especially appealing to fans whose first exposure to out-of-town baseball writing came through the pages of the publication. In its early days – when it was producing 9-to-12 issues per year – original content was featured, but it mostly consisted of previously published articles.

Herbert F. Simons, a former sportswriter with the *Chicago Daily Times* and *Chicago*



**Top: The first issue of *Baseball Digest*, a monthly magazine with a price of 15 cents, was published in August 1942. Above: Norman Jacobs (right) served as publisher of *Baseball Digest* from 1969-2021. Hall of Famer Ernie Banks (second from right) was on the cover of the June 1969 issue.**

*Journal*, was the editor and publisher of *Baseball Digest* until his death in 1968. After earning his journalism degree from Northwestern University in 1928, he covered the White Sox and Cubs before deciding it was time to stay home and start a family.

“So he began kicking around some ideas,” Simons’ widow, Mrs. John Grant, told the *Chicago Tribune*’s Jerome Holtzman in 1992. “*Readers Digest* had been a success, and Herb reasoned, ‘Why not a similar magazine devoted to baseball?’”

The first issue of *Baseball Digest* was published in August 1942.

“For light, but interesting reading,” wrote the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* that summer, “we recommend *Baseball Digest*, a pocket-sized magazine that abounds with unique plays and amusing anecdotes of the diamond.”

Featuring an image of a batting Elmer Valo of the Philadelphia Athletics on the cover, inside were stories condensed from when they originally appeared in newspapers and magazines from around the country. Among the 24 pieces were those penned by John Kieren, H.G. Salsinger, Tom Meany, Gordon Cobbledick and Shirley Povich, as well as a Moe Berg story excerpted from *The Atlantic* and a Billy Evans feature from *Esquire*.

“The first years were a terrible struggle,” said Mrs. Grant, who handled the secretarial and subscription duties for *Baseball Digest*. “The war had started, and the government said there was a limited amount of paper you could use. It was based on how much paper you used the year before. So we didn’t have that much paper.”

After Simons’ passed away, Norman Jacobs became publisher in 1969. With a background in advertising, he – along with newly installed editor John Kuenster, a longtime Chicago sportswriter – helped circulation grow from around 60,000 to a few hundred thousand in relatively short order.

The publication’s success during the era ultimately led to *Football Digest* in 1971, *Hockey Digest* in 1972, *Basketball Digest* and *Auto Racing Digest* in 1973, *Soccer Digest* in 1978 and *Bowling Digest* in 1983.

“I started reading *Baseball Digest* in the early ’60s, first as a newsstand buyer, later as a subscriber,” wrote Marty Appel, longtime baseball writer, executive and TV producer, in a recent email. “No doubt a (Mickey) Mantle story on the cover drew me to it.

And I read it cover to cover. It got me familiar with baseball writers from the whole country, the stories were well written, and the 'letters' pages were always so interesting, augmented by charts displaying really interesting material not found elsewhere."

Over the years, *Baseball Digest* has featured stories by the game's greatest writers – everyone from Red Smith to Peter Gammons, Roger Kahn to Dan Shaughnessy, and Wendell Smith to John Holway.

For Anthony McCarron, a recent contributor to *Baseball Digest* who has been writing about sports for more than 30 years, his affection for the publication dates back to a childhood with a more cluttered sports magazine landscape.

"I think I first bought it on the newsstand and then talked my mom and dad into a subscription. I adored the magazine back then. I read every story in it. Sometimes more than once," McCarron recalled.

"*Baseball Digest* was such pure baseball. There were other options like the *Sporting News* [and] *Sports Illustrated*, but *Baseball Digest* was my favorite because it was like a pure hit in your veins of just baseball."

When McCarron began writing for *Baseball Digest*, he called it "a total thrill. I love calling people up and telling them, 'Hey, I'm doing this piece for *Baseball Digest*. Can we talk?' It's great."

By the early 1970s, each issue of *Baseball Digest* consisted of at least 100 pages and included player profiles, action photos and statistics, the Baseball Quiz, a baseball crossword puzzle, rookie reports, "The Game I'll Never Forget," "The Fan Speaks Out" and "Whatever Became of ...?"

When *Baseball Digest* celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1992, U.S. President George H.W. Bush – who captained the Yale baseball team his senior year – said, "Thanks to publications like *Baseball Digest*, loyal fans can keep up with their favorite teams and players while also gaining an in-depth understanding of events that shape the game. Thousands of Americans eagerly await the words that such magazines bring each month."

While *Baseball Digest* captures the essential timelessness of baseball and preserves for all time the special memories of the game, it also suffers when the sport does. During the 1994-95 baseball strike, the publication's

circulation dropped about 100,000 per issue from over 300,000 only 10 years earlier.

"There's no doubt," said Jacobs at the time, "that after the strike things really went south."

Much like it did during its start, by providing WWII servicemen with a welcome respite during trying times, when sports were shut down in March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, *Baseball Digest* unlocked its online archive to fans for free for four months to, as Jacobs explained, "help fill the void until we can all return to the ballpark."

In 2021, *Baseball Digest*, of which a mostly complete run can be found in the Baseball Hall of Fame Library, got a new owner – only the third in its long history – when Jacobs sold the then bi-monthly publication to minority partner David Fagley of ProScouts LLC.



**Baseball Digest, the nation's longest-running baseball magazine, celebrates its 80th anniversary in 2022.**

"Today, *Baseball Digest* is a larger, full-color publication that is fresh in its design and content in a way that makes it distinctive even in today's crowded media world," wrote Costas. "It's an effectively updated version of what made *Baseball Digest* appealing way back when. It offers insight into – and a celebration of – the modern game and present players, while each issue reliably includes interesting historical pieces and the old standbys of rules and trivia quizzes. A perfect new/old blend.

"It's a very good, modern version of the *Baseball Digest* I grew up loving. And now, like then, I never miss an issue."

According to Jake Zimmerman, *Baseball*

*Digest's* general manager, the publication is evolving but also relishes what its long history represents to fans.

"I think as we see more and more print publications shutter or convert to digital, people like the leisurely read of a magazine, something they can hold in their hands. A quality product not just rushed into a digital space," Zimmerman said. "The current evolution of *Baseball Digest* has seen a dramatic change. We've gone from being an outside organization that really wasn't close to Major League Baseball to one that continues to grow that partnership."

Rick Cerrone, who once worked in public relations for Major League Baseball, the New York Yankees and Pittsburgh Pirates, has been *Baseball Digest's* editor-in-chief since 2018. He was charged with re-imagining the iconic brand's six print issues per year.

"When I took over, I did my due diligence, talking to people I knew in the game, and I found that the magazine was not resonating, even within the industry," Cerrone said. "I ran into so many people connected with the game who would say, 'Oh, *Baseball Digest*. I grew up with that as a kid. I didn't know it was still in business.' That's a big obstacle.

"So the first order of business was to re-engage with the baseball community."

A major part of the "re-engaging" was to supplement the magazine's longstanding awards program with a trophy ceremony. Besides naming a position-by-position All-Star team, an All-Star Rookie Team and Rookies of the Year in both leagues, *Baseball Digest* awards a Player of the Year, Pitcher of the Year and a Relief Pitcher of the Year. In 2021, it added an annual Lifetime Achievement Award – with Willie Mays the first recipient.

"Today, with a circulation of around 40,000, I think we're doing very well," Cerrone said. "For *Baseball Digest* to be around for 80 years is a testament to a lot of people who have kept it not only surviving but thriving. Things change, but they've weathered all the storms. And *Baseball Digest*, I think, is as vibrant in 2022 as it was in 1942 or 1952 or 1962." 📌

*Bill Francis is the senior research and writing specialist at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.*



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# Second to None

LARRY DOBY INTEGRATED THE AMERICAN LEAGUE EN ROUTE TO A STELLAR CAREER THAT BROUGHT HIM TO COOPERSTOWN.

By Terence Moore

**THIS IS THE THIRD OF A SERIES CELEBRATING THE GROUNDBREAKING EVENTS OF CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEERS IN BASEBALL IN 1947.**

During the fall of 2011, Dodgers and baseball legend Don Newcombe kept throwing fastballs wrapped in Black history over the phone from his home in Los Angeles to my ears in Atlanta. I listened even more intently when our discussion turned to heroes.

Black ones, of course.

He mentioned Jesse Owens and Joe Louis, Black athletes who survived and prospered during the middle of the 20th century while battling opponents for the ages along with a heavy dose of racism.

As the nation watched with much of the world, Owens and Louis began to share their spotlight with Newcombe and other baseball players after Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier on April 15, 1947, with the hometown Dodgers in Brooklyn.

“I think we had more of a need for Black heroes at that point in history, because of what was going on around the country,” Newcombe said, referring to everything from the ongoing segregation in the Jim Crow South to the racial ugliness suffered by Black players during the early years of integrated baseball.

“What we did – Jackie, Roy (Dodgers catcher Roy Campanella) and I and Larry Doby,” Newcombe said, pausing before he emphasized with a strong voice, “And don’t forget about Larry Doby.”

Then Newcombe continued hurling those fastballs by adding, “Even though we were athletes, we had a belief (during our AL/NL playing years of the 1940s and the 1950s) that there was more that needed to be done by us to make it a better country to live in.”



Larry Doby integrated the American League on July 5, 1947, following in the steps of Jackie Robinson in the National League.

I couldn't shake Newcombe's phrase ...  
“And don't forget about Larry Doby.”  
Folks often forget about Larry Doby.  
*Don't forget about Larry Doby!*

Slightly less than three months after Robinson's Dodgers debut, Doby walked into the visiting clubhouse at Comiskey Park in Chicago on Saturday, July 5, 1947, to pull on a uniform for the Cleveland Indians. He became the game's second modern-day Black player overall, but since Robinson's Dodgers were in the National League, Doby was the first Black player in the American League.

He could play, too. After he spent his pre-AL career – including a prolific stint with the Newark Eagles in the Negro National League – as an infielder, he was forced to learn outfield play in a flash with Cleveland. Gold Gloves weren't awarded for great fielding until 1957, but if they were around during Doby's prime in center field, he would have captured a slew of them.

*Don't forget about Larry Doby!*

Courtesy of his glove and his bat, Doby made seven trips to the AL/NL All-Star Game. He won AL home run titles in 1952 and 1954, and he led the league in RBI in 1954. On Oct. 9, 1948, he became the first Black player to homer in the AL/NL World Series, a blast that came as part of Cleveland's six-game series victory over the Boston Braves. He also did the most to push the Indians into the 1954 World Series (which they lost to the Giants) by finishing second in the AL Most Valuable Player voting.



Larry Doby's historic career included starting with the Negro National League's Newark Eagles, seven All-Star Game selections in the American League and becoming the second Black manager in AL history with the White Sox in 1978.

By the time he retired in 1959 – after 17 seasons in the Negro Leagues and American League – Doby had totaled 273 home runs, drove in 1,099 runs and carried a career .288 batting average.

Four decades later, in 1998, Doby was elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame by the Veterans Committee for two reasons: He had his brilliance between the foul lines, and he had his ability to join Robinson in conquering the first wave of racism for Black players by using his brain as well as his brawn.

“My father was humble, modest, and he didn’t talk a lot about the stuff that he did as a player,” Larry Doby Jr. said, describing the man who grew up in Camden, S.C., and later Paterson, N.J., where he spent his high school years meeting Helyn, his wife of 55 years.

Larry Jr. was the only son among five children for the Dobys. He is 64 now, but he hasn’t forgotten how he tried to pry as much history as possible from the mind of Larry Sr. – who died at 79 on June 18, 2003.

“It was very frustrating being a kid and wanting to know about all of this stuff and wanting to hear about it from your dad, but he didn’t want to talk about it,” Larry Jr. said. “As I get older, I begin to wonder why he didn’t want to talk about it, and I don’t know if it was painful. I don’t know if it was that (he thought) it served no purpose in his life at that point, even though I can’t see how it couldn’t have.

“Anyway, he didn’t want to talk about it.” That doesn’t change the bottom line ... *Don’t forget about Larry Doby!*

In Cleveland, where Doby used to say he was never booed, they gave him a street and a statue. The franchise also regularly honors Doby (retired number, franchise Hall of Fame, etc.), but outside of northern Ohio and baseball historians, many folks have forgotten about Larry Doby.

### THE MONTCLAIR, N.J., THING

With much help from Doby’s first nine AL seasons of on-the-field glory for the Indians through 1955, he became a Hall of Famer. Even so, the most popular Cooperstown guy in Montclair, N.J., where Doby spent the bulk of his life with his wife and children, was Yogi Berra, the New York Yankees catcher, slugger and master of Yogisms to the delight of the universe.

## THE BUZZ ALDRIN THING

Doby wasn't even the most famous "second" person in Montclair. Buzz Aldrin also lived there, and he took three spacewalks in 1966 as an American astronaut. Then, after Neil Armstrong made "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" on July 20, 1969, by becoming the first person to walk on the moon, Aldrin followed Armstrong as No. 2.

## THE OTHER ROBINSON THING

Cleveland made future Hall of Famer Frank Robinson its player-manager in 1975, which turned this Robinson into the first Black manager in the AL or NL. Three years later, the Bill Veeck who owned the Indians in July 1947 – when he acquired Doby from the Newark Eagles of the Negro National League – was the same Bill Veeck who owned the White Sox on June 30, 1978, when he promoted Doby from batting coach for the team to manager for the rest of the season. But Doby's notoriety as a Black manager was muted since Frank Robinson already had been there, done that.

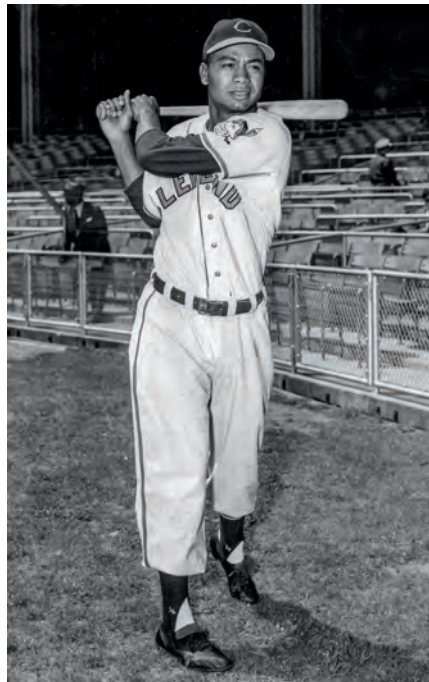
## THE SATURDAY, JULY 5, 1947, THING

One moment, Doby was with the Eagles in Newark, where he finished the first game of a doubleheader in 1947 on the Fourth of July hitting .340 with 20 homers in five years in the Negro Leagues. The next, he was getting word from team ownership that he had been sold for \$15,000 to Veeck's Indians. Soon, Doby joined Indians official Louis Jones for a train ride from Newark to Chicago, where the two Black men traveled to the south side the following day for Cleveland's game against the White Sox at Comiskey Park. When Doby pinch hit in the seventh inning on Saturday, July 5, it was historic, but it wasn't Jackie Robinson historic.

Not that it mattered to Doby.

Take it from Larry Jr., who remains in the family's longtime house in Montclair. He has spent decades working on the road crew for famed singer Billy Joel. So, Larry Jr. had that job, but when Larry Doby Sr. was alive, Larry Jr. also had another one: Trying to get his father to share his baseball past. Instead, the son got only bits and pieces from the father who mostly shrugged over his status.

"My father wasn't one to speak about all that stuff with me," Larry Jr. said. "When I learned most about what my father did, how he played, you know, who he knew and all of that stuff, it would be when he was on the phone talking to a reporter, and I would sit there and listen. Or he would be talking to Don Newcombe, who was probably his best friend in baseball. I would hear them talking about certain people and stuff like that."



**Larry Doby played 13 seasons in the American League with Cleveland, Chicago and Detroit, twice leading the league in home runs.**

Many of those conversations involved Doby's early years in the American League. There was his first day with the Indians, for instance. After player-manager Lou Boudreau introduced Doby to everybody in the visiting clubhouse that afternoon at Comiskey Park, some players turned their backs toward Doby as he tried to greet them, and others ignored his outstretched hand. Future Hall of Fame second baseman Joe Gordon was the only one who would play catch with Doby before his first game.

Doby was a pinch hitter that day against the White Sox, and in the second game of a doubleheader the next day, Boudreau wanted Doby to play first base. But since Doby mostly was a second baseman, he lacked a mitt for the position. None of his

teammates would loan him the correct glove.

Gordon borrowed one for Doby from a White Sox player.

You get the picture: Just like Robinson, Doby survived the bigotry – of teammates, of opposing players, of fans on the road, of the media (who called him everything from "surlly" to "a malcontent" for his quiet ways), of segregated hotels, restaurants, schools and neighborhoods – to become elite on the field among his peers. Even then, he couldn't escape the racial issues, which were exemplified in 1954 when he shined the most as a player.

Doby led the American League that year with 32 home runs and 126 RBI, and he remained potent enough in center field to use his fielding and hitting to help the Indians end the Yankees' string of five consecutive pennants. In the end, Cleveland managed a then-AL-record 111 victories, but it wasn't enough for the writers voting for the 1954 AL Most Valuable Player. They gave the award to Berra, the Yankees' white catcher, even though Berra ended with fewer home runs (22) and RBI (125) than Doby, and his Yankees finished eight games behind in the standings.

Doby and Robinson discussed such slights – and various triumphs – during phone calls through the years.

"My father had the utmost respect for him, and he always referred to him as Mr. Robinson," Larry Jr. said of Larry Sr., who was a pallbearer at Robinson's funeral in October 1972. "They were close. They did talk about who the good guys were, the bench jockeys, you know, which cities were rough. And they also barnstormed together. That was pretty cool, and it was a 'who's who' of Black players. I've seen a picture from those days, and it's Campanella. It's Newcombe. It's Doby. It's Hank Thompson. It's Monte Irvin. It's Sam Jethroe.

"My father knew that, in 1946, when Mr. Robinson signed with the Montreal Royals (in the minor leagues), he said, 'Maybe some of us will get a chance.' He knew somebody had to be No. 1, and somebody had to be No. 2, and my father was perfectly content with being No. 2."

Doby was more like No. 1B. 🍌

---

*Terence Moore is a freelance writer from Smyrna, Ga.*





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## What We've Done Together

### #COOPERSTOWNMEMORIES

As history has shown us time and time again, baseball has a tremendous impact on families and friends everywhere – bringing us together and creating special memories. As baseball fans, we all have stories: Our first trip to Cooperstown, meeting a Hall of Famer in America's Most Perfect Village, seeing an exhibit that brings our own memories flooding back, stepping into the Plaque Gallery and feeling the connection to the game's all-time greats – the memories are countless.

We would love for you to share your #CooperstownMemories with us.

Simply send an email that includes your story and your name to [development@baseballhall.org](mailto:development@baseballhall.org) and we'll share selected ones with our "baseball family."

Here is a story from one of our Museum Members:

**>>>** *I have always believed that if you are going to do something only once in your life, you might as well make it memorable. Ten years ago, my girlfriend Renee and I made the trip to Cooperstown a few days prior to Opening Day. What she thought was just a simple getaway turned out to be the beginning of our life together.*

*I had contacted the Hall of Fame in advance to see if there were any special events or guests in town. I let them know what I was planning to do, and they certainly wanted to be part of it.*

*Renee's birthday was just a few days earlier, so when I told her we got an upgraded suite at the hotel, she was pleased and not surprised. It worked to my advantage. I also fibbed and told her we may meet a Hall of Famer on*

*Monday. I gave her one Rawlings ball to hold and the other was in my jacket pocket. Well, what she thought was a ball anyway.*

*At 10 a.m. on the morning of April 2, 2012, we walked into the Autumn Glory exhibit at the Hall of Fame. Not too far in the distance was a man holding a large camera. We looked intently at the World Series champions ring display. Being that she is from Philadelphia, I asked Renee which Phillies ring she preferred, the 1980 or 2008 one? While she was deciding, I went down on one knee, quickly pulled the Rawlings box from my pocket and opened the ring box that was contained within. With the ring facing her, I asked out loud, "Or how about this one?"*

*She was caught completely off guard and Milo Stewart snapped several photos*

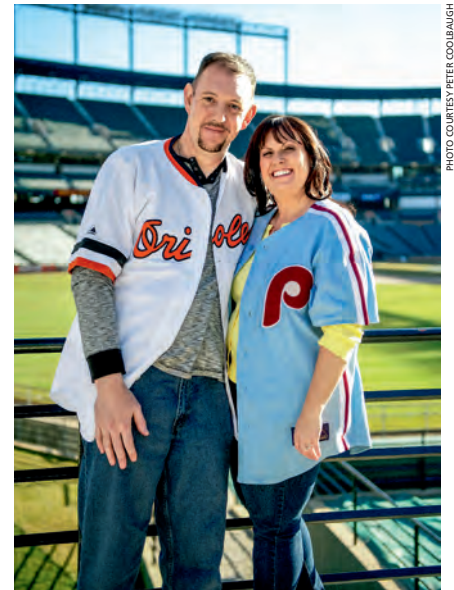


PHOTO COURTESY PETER COOLBAUGH

**Museum Member Peter Coolbaugh proposed to his fiancée, Renee, at the Hall of Fame.**

*capturing the emotion in the moment. I got the "yes" I was hoping for, and with that we were engaged right there in the Hall of Fame.*

*Director of Communications Craig Muder came and spoke to us and later that evening we appeared in an online blog. Word even made it out to Main Street as folks in a local diner were wishing us congrats that very afternoon. I certainly felt like a celebrity in addition to being on top of the world.*

*Renee and I later did our engagement shoot at Camden Yards. We did have a traditional church wedding, but the reception had baseball everywhere, including on the cake. I wanted the "birthplace" of baseball to also be the birthplace of our life together as a couple. And thanks to the good folks at the Hall of Fame, we have photos and memories that will stay with us forever.*

**Peter Coolbaugh**

*Member since 2007*

### PHOTOS TO BE DIGITALLY PRESERVED

Thanks to many generous donors, photographs featuring 338 Hall of Famers from our archive – more than 99 percent of all inductees from the Classes of 1936 to 2022 – have been funded in full and will

be digitally preserved. Many of these photographs will be added to our online digital collection, which you can browse at [collection.baseballhall.org](http://collection.baseballhall.org).

Projects recently funded include:

- **Bud Fowler** – Thanks to gifts from Todd Bolton and B. J. Ferneau
- **Frankie Frisch** – Thanks to gifts from Mr. Randy Barthelman, Dr. Jonathan Epstein, John C. Magnuson, Daniel Murphy, Joseph A. Pena, John Poelstra, Ken Ritzdorf, Kenneth M. Smith, Jason Wilcox and two anonymous donors
- **Gabby Hartnett** – Thanks to gifts from William G. Braudis, Larry and Trish Buffkin, William M. Curtis, Lon Hildreth, Robert Lekostaj, Mark Oswald, Thomas Seavers, Kevin Weldon and two anonymous donors
- **Jim Kaat** – Thanks to gifts from John P. Monahan, Michael Scheinkman

and R.G. Scherman

- **Minnie Miñoso** – Thanks to gifts from Peter Hand and R.G. Scherman
- **Tony Oliva** – Thanks to a gift from Paul D. Phillips
- **Buck O’Neil** – Thanks to gifts from George D. Kennett, Mark R. McCallum, Jan E. Rowley and Frank M. Zabaleta
- **David Ortiz** – Thanks to a gift from Lawrence Koellner

## What You Can Help Us Do

### WARREN SPAHN GLOVE

Ageless, rubber-armed and the winningest lefty in baseball history, Warren Spahn grew up wanting to be a first baseman. His father, however, thought Warren should learn to pitch in case he couldn’t hit his way into the

lineup. Spahn later credited his dad with teaching him that high-kicking delivery and fluid follow through, trademarks that propelled Spahn’s 21-year career and southpaw-record 363 victories.

After four games with the Boston Braves in 1942, Spahn joined the Army and spent the next three seasons as a combat engineer in World War II. He was awarded a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and a battlefield promotion for his service during the Battle of the Bulge. Of those days, he said: “After what I went through overseas, I never thought of anything I was told to do in baseball as hard work.” And to those who play the “what if” game about Spahn’s three lost seasons and the additional victories he might have won? “I matured a lot in those (war) years,” the 17-time All-Star noted. “If I had not had that maturity, I wouldn’t have pitched until I was 45.”

MILIO STEWART JR./NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM



This glove, worn by Warren Spahn when he set the record for most wins by a National League left-hander, came to the Museum in 1960 and is in need of conservation efforts.

In 1959, Spahn set the National League career record for wins by a lefty (267), and the following year sent the glove he wore for that feat to the Hall of Fame. It is a testimony both to Spahn's greatness and humility that, in the midst of the 1960 season, he took the time to send this personal tool of the trade to the Hall for safekeeping and exhibition.

Warren Spahn's glove now needs conservation. You can honor one of baseball's greatest by helping fund the work that will preserve this symbol of excellence for today's generation and the next.

> *Estimate for conservation to be performed B.R. Howard and Associates: \$2,250*

## DOUG McWILLIAMS PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

Doug McWilliams spent more than two decades photographing players for Topps baseball cards. In 2010, McWilliams traveled to Cooperstown to personally donate more than 10,000 negatives from his collection to the Hall of Fame's Photo Archive. Mostly color shots, these negatives span the years that McWilliams worked for Topps, bringing to the Hall of Fame much of the game's iconic photography from the 1970s, '80s and '90s.

As we continue our work to digitally preserve our Photos Archives, the **Doug McWilliams Photograph Collection** is our next major initiative. This collection needs to be reorganized, rehoused and conserved. As each image is rehoused, we will digitize it, which will reduce handling of the original, ensuring that it is preserved for years to come.

Additionally, digital preservation of the images will make this collection more accessible to fans at our website and streamline access for our staff for exhibits and other projects.

Please consider making a gift today toward the **Doug McWilliams Photograph Collection** project to ensure these historic images are preserved for generations of fans to enjoy.

> *Estimated balance to preserve the Doug McWilliams Photograph Collection: \$76,696\**

*\*Partially funded updated total*

## FROM THE McWILLIAMS COLLECTION



DOUG McWILLIAMS/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Above: Legendary slugger Willie McCovey signs autographs for fans at Candlestick Park in San Francisco. McCovey was captured on film by Doug McWilliams, whose collection is preserved at the Hall of Fame.



DOUG McWILLIAMS/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Left: Ernie Banks plays reporter as he interviews Warren Spahn, then a pitching coach for Cleveland, in the early 1970s.

## ADDITIONAL PROJECTS ONLINE

We are grateful for all our donors and Museum Members who've helped us to preserve baseball history. We have accomplished a lot together, but there is more to be done.

Explore additional projects, including artifacts, photographs and Library documents that are in need of conservation and preservation, at our website. 📄

**[baseballhall.org/museuminaction](http://baseballhall.org/museuminaction)**

For more information – or to make a donation of any amount toward one of the projects – visit [baseballhall.org/museuminaction](http://baseballhall.org/museuminaction) or contact our Development Team at (607) 547-0385 or [development@baseballhall.org](mailto:development@baseballhall.org).



# Minor League Tour

Catch all levels of minor league baseball on our annual Major/Minor Baseball Road Trip!

**Major/Minor Midwest: June 15,-23, 2022**

Join some of our STAT Stadium Hall of Famers on their annual quest to see even more ballparks -this time across the Midwest. Pay a visit to the Field of Dreams movie site and see a game at the College World Series in Omaha. A big league game in Minnesota ends the trip, but not before we see seven games in six different cities across the Midwest.

Call or visit us online today, and leave the planning to us.

## Baseball Road Trips

Create memories to last a lifetime on a Sports Travel and Tours' Baseball Road Trip that stops in historic Cooperstown, NY. Induction Weekend trips and week-long multi-city tours of baseball's greatest teams and stadiums are available with an option for every baseball lover. Travel relaxed and hassle-free as you experience great cities, visit attractions, and enjoy baseball games.

With trips full of avid baseball fans, you are guaranteed to make new friends along the way!

Call or visit us online today, and leave the planning to us.



## Hall of Fame Weekend Travel Packages

**Cooperstown, NY • July 22-24 (or 25), 2022**

Be there as Hall of Fame members make the annual trip to Cooperstown to be part of this special occasion, and attend the Weekends events. David Ortiz will join Golden Days Era electees Gil Hodges, Jim Kaat, Minnie Miñoso and Tony Oliva, and Early Baseball Era electees Bud Fowler and Buck O'Neil as the Class of 2022.

Call us today at 888-310-HALL or view your options online at [sportstravelandtours.com/NBHOF](http://sportstravelandtours.com/NBHOF)



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# Arti-Facts

AN INSIDE LOOK AT ONE AMAZING PIECE FROM THE COLLECTION  
AT THE NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

## Herman Goldberg Jersey



Herman Goldberg

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

- Herman Goldberg, a Jewish-American college catcher at Brooklyn College, wore this jersey during an exhibition game at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, the epicenter of Nazi Germany. Goldberg was one of the half dozen Jewish athletes on the entire US Olympic squad.
- On August 12, 1936, around 100,000 Germans, equipped with programs explaining baseball terminology, crowded Olympic Stadium to watch the exhibition game. The American team played a seven-inning intra-squad game as its originally scheduled opponents, Japan, opted not to send ballplayers with their delegation.
- Following the Olympics, Goldberg spent a few years in the minors before returning to school for a master's degree at Columbia University and eventually a doctorate in education at the University of Rochester.



This jersey is featured in the 12th episode of the YouTube series *Hall of Fame Connections: From Jim Thorpe to Jackie Robinson*.

To learn more about **Herman Goldberg's** jersey, follow the QR code to this episode of the Museum's *Hall of Fame Connections* series.

The red outline of the US logo is created with chain-stitching, an embroidery stitch that is rarely seen in modern uniforms, while the three-dimensional look of the blue filling is called “chenille” and is a technique most associated with varsity letters.

This stars and stripes shield patch was a common motif found on baseball uniforms in the early to mid-1900s, especially around the World War I and World War II eras.



Although baseball did not become a medal sport until the 1990s, the United States played exhibition baseball games in the Olympics as early as 1912.

# Stop and Stay

TONY OLIVA SAVORS TRIP TO COOPERSTOWN IN ADVANCE OF JULY 24 INDUCTION CEREMONY.

By Janey Murray

For Tony Oliva, walking through the Hall of Fame as one of its newest electees brought about emotions of awe and disbelief.

“Can you believe it? I’m going to have a plaque here,” Oliva said.

On March 2, Oliva traveled to Cooperstown for his Orientation Visit, during which he toured the Museum, signed the plaque backer where his Hall of Fame plaque will eventually be hung and spoke with media in the Plaque Gallery.

Oliva, who will be inducted on July 24 along with the rest of the seven-member Class of 2022, was elected to the Hall of Fame by the Golden Days Era Committee in December – along with Gil Hodges, Jim Kaat and Minnie Miñoso. Bud Fowler and Buck O’Neil were elected by the Early Baseball Era Committee at the same time, and David Ortiz was elected by the Baseball Writers’ Association of America in January.

“When I got the phone call from [Hall of Fame Chairman of the Board Jane Forbes Clark], I didn’t know what to say,” Oliva said. “I couldn’t believe it ... That was a big surprise for me.”

The eight-time All-Star and native of Pinar del Río, Cuba, captured three batting titles and the 1964 Rookie of the Year Award during his 15-year big league career, which he spent entirely with the Minnesota Twins.

Joining Oliva on his visit was his wife, Gordette, and his daughter, Anita.

Their tour commenced at the beginning of the Museum’s Timeline, progressing from

**“CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?  
I’M GOING TO HAVE  
A PLAQUE HERE.”**

– TONY OLIVA





# HALL OF FAME WEEKEND 2022 PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Schedule subject to change



## HALL OF FAME WEEKEND

July 22-25

### PARADE OF LEGENDS

Saturday, July 23, Main Street

### INDUCTION CEREMONY

1:30 p.m., Sunday, July 24

Grounds of the Clark Sports Center, Cooperstown

### LEGENDS OF THE GAME ROUNDTABLE

Monday, July 25



Scan the QR Code for more info on Hall of Fame Weekend 2022



MIL O STEWART / NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Above: Tony Oliva sits in front of a photo of the inductees at the inaugural Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in 1939, including (from left) Babe Ruth, Connie Mack and Cy Young, during his visit to Cooperstown on March 2. Left: Oliva stands next to the location where his Hall of Fame plaque will be installed. Oliva, who followed the tradition of signing his plaque backer, is part of the seven-member Class of 2022, which will be officially inducted on July 24.



baseball's origins all the way to present day. Along the way, Oliva recalled countless memories from throughout his career.

When he was handed Honus Wagner's bat, Oliva took a guess as to its weight.

"Is this about 45 ounces?" he asked.

He was right on the nose.

Oliva also tried out one of former teammate Rod Carew's bats for size.

"This guy, he knew what he was doing," Oliva said while holding the bat Carew used to record his 2,000th hit in 1978.

He then donned his Hall of Fame cap and jersey and signed the place where his plaque will soon be hung to make it official.

"I've been waiting for this for a long time

— for 45 years," Oliva said. "It's never too late."

Jack Graney, winner of the 2022 Ford C. Frick Award for broadcasters, and Tim Kurkjian, the 2022 winner of the Baseball Writers' Association of America's Career Excellence Award, will be honored at the 2022 Hall of Fame Awards Presentation in an invitation-only ceremony on Saturday, July 23, as part of Induction Weekend. The Awards Presentation will be shown live via a video display screen at Doubleday Field. 📺

Janey Murray was the digital content specialist at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

# Minor Key

MY COOPERSTOWN ROOTS AND MINOR LEAGUE EXPERIENCES HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT BUILDING BLOCKS TO MY CAREER.

By Phil Pohl

The stories that come out of a minor league season are unbelievable.

Some are heartwarming, some you can't tell on radio or TV. You get all ends of the spectrum, and you couldn't make them up if you tried.

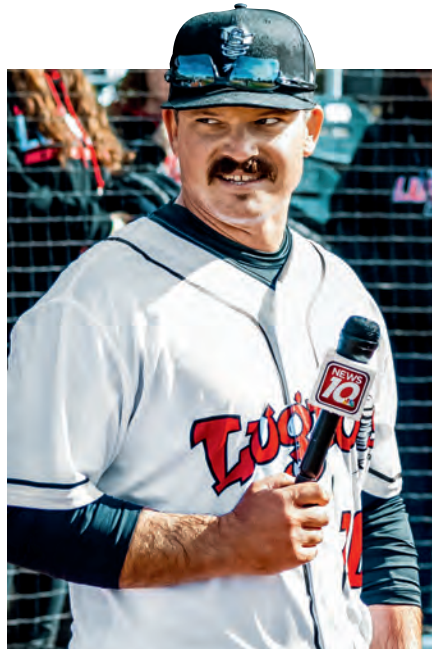
I grew up in a baseball family in Cooperstown. My dad played baseball, and my older brother and I were big into sports. It was really the perfect place to grow up for a kid who loves baseball. Not to mention the fact that as part of Cooperstown Central School's team, we got to play on Doubleday Field. I played on many minor league fields that couldn't hold a candle to what Doubleday Field was. I treasure each game I played there.

The older I get, the more I appreciate growing up in Cooperstown.

I always dreamed about being a big league player. When I was drafted by the Athletics in 2012 out of Clemson University, I started in the minors in the rookie league in Arizona and eventually went all over the country to places like Vermont, Northern California, the Midwest and even down to Laredo, Texas, in independent ball. Looking back, the relationships you make in the minors are what you remember the most. They are lifelong relationships you build.

You're in it together. The long bus rides, the food – which isn't as great as you hoped – and learning how to live away from home with people from different backgrounds and cultures. I spent parts of five years in the minors, and every city is unique.

Then, once the journey ends for you – and it ends for everybody, hopefully later



Cooperstown Central School graduate Phil Pohl is beginning his minor league managerial career this year with the Class A Lansing Lugnuts of the Midwest League.

rather than sooner – you appreciate it.

I remember playing in my first full season in 2013. We were in Stockton, Calif., and it was a kids' day with an 11 a.m. start. So we all figured we'd have the evening to relax. But the game went six hours, and I hit a home run in the bottom of the 16th inning to tie it up. It was exciting, because it was my first home run for the team, but my teammates were NOT happy. They all wanted to go home, and they let me know it. Fortunately, a teammate hit a homer in the bottom of the 17th to win it.

I know there will be stories like that in Lansing. And I'm excited to experience all of them.

The minor leagues are a tough life. If I didn't like being at the ballpark and interacting with the players every day, I wouldn't be doing this. The best managers I had in the minors were the ones who always had a good pulse on how each guy on the roster was doing – who was struggling, who was tired, whether a guy needed to be pushed. That's what I'll try to do.

Working as the bullpen catcher in Oakland for six years with Bob Melvin, I was able to see one of the best managers in the game. I already have an idea how practices are going to run and our scheduling, and a lot of that comes from the Oakland organization. How you help your players, though, is something you learn for yourself.

If I do my job, those guys won't stay there long. They'll move up. And whatever I can do to help them better their careers, I'll do. I'm looking forward to helping the next generation.

This is the first real step for me on the coaching side. When the A's offered me the chance to be the bullpen catcher six years ago, I wasn't sure if I was ready to end my playing career. But the opportunity was a good one, and it's led me to where I am now.

I guess I've come full circle, back to the minor leagues. Just like when I was a player, I'm sure there will be a lot of stuff that I'm not even aware of now that I'll have to learn on the fly. But that's the exciting thing about this opportunity.

I hope I can climb the ladder and make it to the majors as a coach someday. If I do, the lessons I learned in the minors, as a player and manager, will be a big part of it.

And along the way, we had – and will have – a lot of fun. 🍌

---

*Phil Pohl is a 2008 Cooperstown Central School graduate who spent six seasons as the Oakland Athletics' bullpen coach and is now in his first season as the manager of their Class A affiliate in Lansing, Mich. He donated the cap he wore during his first win as Lansing Lugnuts manager to the Hall of Fame.*

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## AROUND COOPERSTOWN

[thisiscooperstown.com/cooperstown-getaway](http://thisiscooperstown.com/cooperstown-getaway)

Old Glory shimmers in the sun with Otsego Lake's Kingfisher Tower in the background.