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Memories *and Dreams*



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





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Memories and Dreams

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE HALL OF FAME

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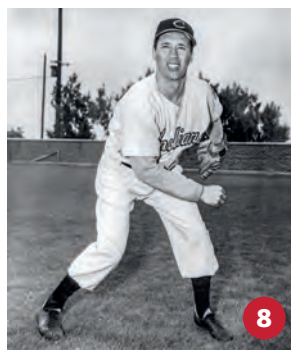
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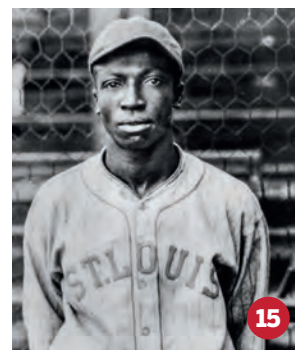
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NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Baseball and Speed

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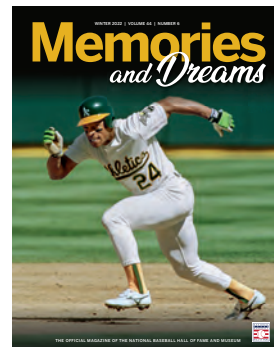
48 SPEED OF SUCCESS

Stolen bases were a byproduct of my focus on becoming an all-around player.

TIM RAINES



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



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ON THE COVER

Perhaps no one in the history of baseball is more associated with speed than Hall of Famer Rickey Henderson, holder of both the modern MLB record for stolen bases in a career (1,406) and a season (130 in 1982) – marks that may never be broken.

From the PRESIDENT



There's an old baseball adage that speed never slumps. While a hitter may fall into a 1-for-20 funk or a pitcher might struggle for weeks without finding his best stuff, the hardest tool to "slow down" is a player's natural running ability, both on the basepaths and in the field.

As a (slow) kid, I grew up watching some of the game's best base stealers ever and it captured my baseball imagination. My dad's favorite player, Maury Wills, changed the game and handed the reins to Hall of Famers Lou Brock, Rickey Henderson and Tim Lincecum. In fact, four of the top six players in career stolen bases played between 1960 and 2000.

In the early days of Fantasy Baseball, you could count on 100-plus bags being

swiped by Vince Coleman, who set the table all year long for the 1985 National League champion St. Louis Cardinals, stealing 110 bases as a rookie!

But as it often does, the game has changed and the stolen base has become less prevalent. Only four teams in baseball stole more bases than Coleman did alone in 1985.

Still, there is nothing quite as exciting as when a player like Wills or his protégé, Dave Roberts, would stand on first base in front of an entire stadium that knew he was going to steal, and, still, the catcher could not throw him out. Those two speedsters have another thing in common with Brock, Henderson and Raines in that all five have World Series rings, the ultimate goal for any player.

To truly appreciate the speed of the modern player, you need only watch Arizona rookie Corbin Carroll or Kansas City phenom Bobby Witt Jr. as they bolt around the basepaths. According to Statcast, they are two of the fastest current players with a footspeed of more than 30.4 feet per second. Their mere presence on the field changes the game.

As Major League Baseball implements new rule changes next year to help speed up the pace of play and increase action, we may begin to see the return of the stolen base. Although pitchers are throwing harder than ever before, often at speeds hovering around 100 miles per hour all game long, they will be limited in the number of times they can disengage the rubber.

We may never see anyone steal 130 bases in a season or 1,406 in a career like Rickey did, because after all, in his own words, he is the greatest of all time (or the GOAT, as we like to say these days). But it was only a decade ago that Billy Hamilton came along and swiped 155 bases in a minor league season, giving hope that the art of the stolen base has not been lost to history.

Meanwhile here in Cooperstown, the summer flew by but things are picking up quite quickly. With new technologies being added throughout the Museum, the announcement of our upcoming exhibit focused on Black baseball and the exciting news that the Savannah Bananas are coming to Doubleday Field in 2023, there has never been a better time to come visit the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

And in keeping with the theme of speed, my family and I have adjusted quite quickly to life in America's most idyllic village. I could not be more grateful for the way in which the Hall of Fame's staff and the people of Cooperstown have welcomed us into the community, and as we experience the MLB postseason and the gorgeous fall here in Central New York, we hope to see you all on a visit soon.

With gratitude,



Hall of Fame President Josh Rawitch (right) worked with record-setting stolen base artist Maury Wills during his time with the Dodgers. Wills passed away on Sept. 19, 2022.

Short Hops

FOR MORE BASEBALL INFORMATION AND NEWS FROM THE HALL OF FAME, VISIT BASEBALLHALL.ORG.



HALL OF FAME'S PICTURING AMERICA'S PASTIME EXHIBIT OPENS IN FULLERTON, CALIF.

The National Pastime and the art of photography came of age almost simultaneously, and baseball has long been a favorite subject of professional and amateur shooters alike.

This autumn at the Fullerton Museum Center in Fullerton, Calif., fans can experience some of the game's most telling images from the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum's world-renowned art archive through *Picturing America's Pastime*.

Running through Dec. 30, *Picturing America's Pastime* features 51 framed photographs representing the Hall of Fame's collection of more than a quarter million images. An extension of the Museum's exhibit in Cooperstown, the touring version captures the essence of an exhibit designed to show the historic link between these American passions.

Featuring work from photographers spanning generations, including Charles M. Conlon, Carl J. Horner, Arthur Rothstein, William C. Greene and Brad Mangin – along with many unidentified photographers whose images have been donated to the Museum – *Picturing America's Pastime* captures the grandeur of the early game to the vibrancy of today's sport.

Upcoming venues for *Picturing America's Pastime* include the Long Island Museum in Stony Brook, N.Y. (2023); the Dubuque Museum of Art in Dubuque, Iowa (2024); and the Upcountry History Museum-Furman University in Greenville, S.C. (2025).

MUSEUM'S DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM HONORED

The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) has honored the National Baseball Hall of Fame's Distance Learning program as one of its 2021-22 Pinnacle Award winners.

Coordinated through the Museum's Education Department, the Hall of Fame offers virtual field trips for students in grades K-12 that provide interactive and meaningful learning experiences that align with national learning standards without leaving the classroom.

Through distance learning, Museum teachers explore the role of the game in society and help students and teachers use the game to learn classroom subjects. The Museum's Education Department also hosts free lesson plans and other classroom materials for teachers at baseballhall.org/education. Fifteen different education subjects are available, including:

STAFF SELECTIONS



Name: Leah Buhagiar

Position:

Manager of Educational Programming

Hall of Fame Debut: August 2021

Hometown: Dearborn, Mich.

Favorite Museum Artifact: Al Kaline's 399th career home run ball

Memorable Museum Moment:

I recently had the opportunity to travel to the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum and Kauffman Stadium with Buck O'Neil's plaque. It was incredible to see firsthand how much Buck means to the people of Kansas City, and to be present for what was likely the only time his plaque will ever leave the Hall of Fame Plaque Gallery!

50TH ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Sandy Koufax, who celebrates his 50th year as a Hall of Famer in 2022. The longest-tenured Hall of Famer in history, Sandy has spent more than 57 percent of his life as a member of baseball's greatest team.



Batter Up (statistics); Before You Could Say Jackie Robinson (civil rights); and The Life of Lou Gehrig (character education) – all taught through the lens of baseball.

CILC "Programs of Distinction" are determined by evaluations from educators and activity coordinators who have participated in the live virtual field trip experience.

For more information on the Hall of Fame's award-winning educational offerings, email education@baseballhall.org.

MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFTS

THANK YOU to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum donors for their recent gifts to support our mission to preserve history, honor excellence and connect generations. Memorial and honorary gifts are listed below.

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To make a gift in memory or honor of someone special to you, please call (607) 547-0385 or visit baseballhall.org/support.

The Hall of Fame remembers Visitor Services team member Bruce Andrews, who passed away Oct. 2.

Speed Racers

FROM BATTERS TO PITCHERS TO FIELDERS, THE FASTEST HAVE USUALLY BEEN THE BEST THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL PASTIME.

By John Erardi

“I feel the need, the need for speed.”

– Maverick & Goose in the 1986 movie *Top Gun*

BASEBALL FANS FEEL THE NEED FOR SPEED, TOO.

Speed on the base paths, speed on the mound.

Speed has always been at the center of creating the excitement and spontaneity in baseball.

Shortstop George Wright, baseball’s first superstar and a Hall of Famer, had speed in spades.

Even Babe Ruth, in his under-30 seasons, was no slouch on the paths. While leading the majors in homers six times from 1918-24, he also averaged 11 triples and 10 stolen bases. Granted, the ballparks were much bigger back then, but you still had to be able to run to leg out a triple.

Who most compares to the Bambino today? Shohei Ohtani, the Los Angeles Angels’ two-way wunderkind who struck out 156 batters in 130.1 innings in his breakout season of 2021 – when he tied for the major league lead in triples (8) and stole 26 bases.

As long as we’re talking speed, let’s talk *bat* speed. In 2021, Ohtani led the majors with at least 150 batted balls with a 100.4-mph average exit velocity on fly balls and line drives.

The Bambino, indeed.

And who is it that inspires comparisons with the young Mickey Mantle, who as a 23-year-old in the year *before* he won the Triple Crown in 1956, led the league with 11 triples and 37 home runs? Ohtani’s teammate, Mike Trout. And why is that? Power and speed.

And speaking of two-way speed, what was it that was once said of reliever Aroldis Chapman, he of the former 105.1-mph fastball?

Dusty Baker, the Cincinnati Reds’ manager at the time, said he wished that just one time Chapman would get to bat for himself during a two-inning stint and hit a ball in the gap and long-stride out a triple.

“I’d love the fans to be able to see him run – he’s the second-fastest player on our team after Billy Hamilton,” said Baker, when he managed both the fastest man on the mound and the fastest man on the bases.

Like Mantle, Willie Mays was fast (he led the league in steals four straight seasons) and powerful.

When Jackie Robinson broke the color line as a 28-year-old rookie in 1947, he revolutionized baseball. His 29 stolen bases led the NL, as did his 37 two years later. He, too, had power – he averaged 14 homers a season in his 10-year career (11 when one counts his year with the Kansas City Monarchs, when he led the Negro American League with four home runs in 120 at-bats) – but what is the most famous action photo of him?

Yes, stealing home in Game 1 of the 1955 World Series, inspiring that iconic black-and-white video of New York Yankees catcher Yogi Berra ripping off his mask to argue with the umpire.

The common misconception is that in today’s game the stolen base is all but dead. While it’s true that stolen bases were much more “the game” in the Dead Ball Era – steals per team peaked at 213 in 1911 – the 1950s were the real slowdown era. The average stolen bases per team were in the 40s, with the individual leader in the 30s. In 2021, teams averaged twice that (74 steals); Starling Marte alone had 47.

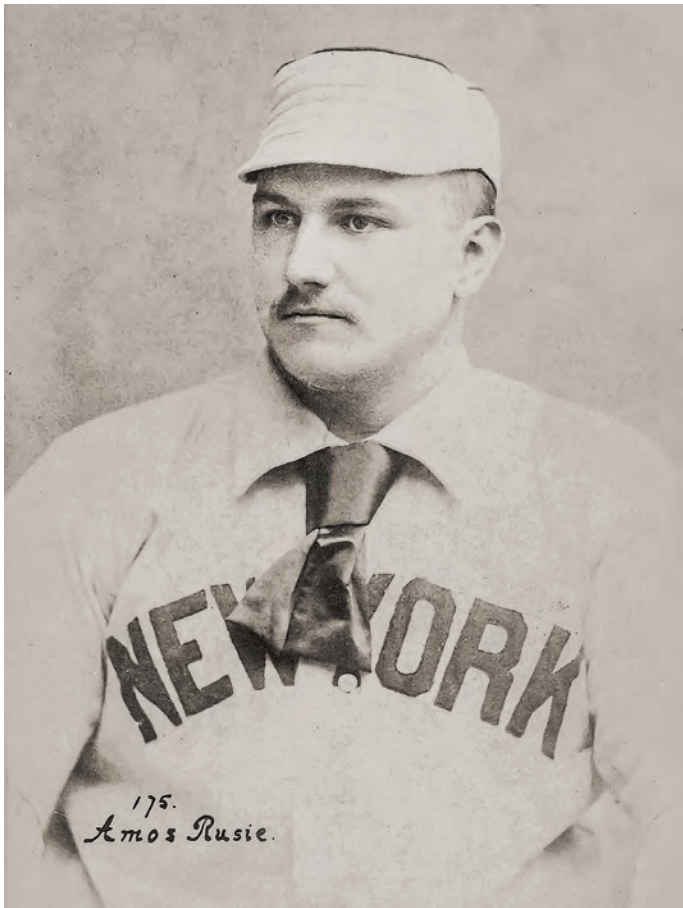
Even as center fielder Ty Cobb was setting stolen base records for the Tigers, his teammates were helping him electrify the crowd at the plate. The man playing next to Cobb in right field was Sam Crawford, the all-time career triples leader. Cobb is second in that category.

In *The Glory of Their Times*, Crawford lamented Cobb’s loner-ism, but defended him for never having gone out of his way to spike anybody on the bases unless the man had it coming. He remembered rubdowns by the Tigers’ trainer from a concoction made of Vaseline and Tabasco sauce called “Go Fast” (“Boy, it made you feel like you were on fire; now they have medical doctors and whirlpool baths and who knows what else?”).

From 1906-15, the two Hall of Famers were very fast, just not in the friendship department. Between them they averaged 33 triples and 83 stolen bases per season.

Forty years later, the two leading speed men played on not only separate teams but in separate leagues: Luis Aparicio and Maury Wills, who were head and shoulders above their peers.

What a show *they* put on.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Clockwise from above: Amos Rusie, Walter Johnson and Aroldis Chapman each made quantum leaps for the game in fastball velocity. Chapman threw the fastest pitch ever recorded at 105.1 miles per hour in 2010.

In 1959, Aparicio led the majors with 56 stolen bases, more than twice the total of Mays' 27. In 1960, Aparicio had 51 steals and Wills had 50, far above No. 3 Vada Pinson with 32. When Wills had 104 in 1962, Dodgers teammate Willie Davis was second with 32.

Twenty years later, it was future Hall of Fame manager Whitey Herzog's teams in Kansas City and St. Louis that changed the game with their speed on the artificial surfaces. It says so right on his Hall of Fame plaque: "Renowned for being two steps ahead of opposing managers ... emphasizing speed, pitching and defense."

Among Herzog's speedsters in St. Louis was Vince Coleman, who led the league in stolen bases his first six seasons, averaging 92 and topping out at 110 as a rookie in 1985.

Author Doug Feldman captures the White Rat perfectly in his 2018 book, *Whitey Herzog Builds a Winner*, from the manager's introductory press conference in St. Louis. Said Whitey: "I like to make things happen. We have a big ballpark here, and you can't sit around waiting for home runs. I didn't at Kansas City, and I won't here. We'll steal bases, hit-and-run. I like to keep people moving."

Herzog had observed that pitchers were having trouble holding runners on throughout the league.

I like to keep people moving.

Sounds like the rationale behind rules changes coming in 2023, doesn't it? *Make things happen, can't sit around.* No shifts, bigger bases, pitch clock.



THEARON W. HENDERSON/GETTY IMAGES



Luis Aparicio (left) rewrote the stolen base record books en route to the Hall of Fame. Aparicio won the American League steals crown in each of his first nine seasons. **Whitey Herzog's (right)** tactics – using speed to his team's advantage in artificial turf ballparks in Kansas City and St. Louis – produced six division titles, three pennants and the 1982 World Series crown.



Speed.

And let's not forget the importance and impact of speed on the defensive side, whether it be speed of the fastball or speed in turning the double play or speed in running down balls in the gap.

For the speediest players in baseball on offense and defense in 2022, check out the highlight reels of players like Tim Lincecum, Trea Turner and Jorge Mateo. Watch *those* three guys and you'll know why the powers-that-be want to increase the percentage of balls in play.

Speed of the fastball has been one of the enduring areas of fascination for everybody associated with the game. The magnificent 2015 documentary *Fastball* begins with a quote from *Baseball Magazine*: "No subject has stirred more debate among baseball fans than the speed of the pitchers' fastballs."

Baseball laureate Joe Posnanski elaborated in his 2021 book *The Baseball 100*. He writes that there are seven fastball pitchers who transcended the rest, "seven pitchers who blew up the conception of what a fastball looks and sounds like."

The seven are: Amos Rusie, "The Hoosier Thunderbolt" (legendarily the reason why the pitching distance was moved from 50 feet to 60 feet, 6 inches in 1893 – and has never been moved since); Walter Johnson; Bob Feller; Satchel Paige; minor leaguer Steve Dalkowski; Nolan Ryan; and Aroldis Chapman.

In 1907, Washington Senators catcher Cliff Blankenship had suffered a broken finger, so he was sent to Idaho to scout the 19-year-old Johnson.

A local fan had written a letter to Senators manager Pongo Joe Cantillon suggesting strongly that he sign the kid immediately.

"He throws so fast you can't see 'em," the local wrote Pongo Joe, "and he knows where he's throwing, because if he didn't there would be dead bodies strewn all over Idaho."

In 2018, Mark Saxon wrote an article for *The Athletic* headlined, "Jordan Hicks throwing 105 mph creates a question: How fast can they eventually throw?" In the story about the St. Louis Cardinals' reliever, it quoted Hicks and two other Cardinals as speculating that speed of a fastball might go considerably upward in the future. But the article then quoted an orthopedist who was an injury-research consultant to MLB, saying that the ulnar collateral ligament in the elbow wouldn't allow for the all-time fastball speed to go that much higher.

Posnanski said the same thing in *Fastball* three years earlier.

"It feels like what was possible in 1936 (as regards the fastball) is the same thing that's possible now (but not much, if any, faster.) The game changes, it moves up, it moves down, but that one thing – throw the ball as hard as you can – just stays constant through all." 🍌

John Erardi is the author or co-author of eight books, including Tony Pérez: From Cuba to Cooperstown, a Spitball magazine nominee as one of the top 12 baseball books of 2018. The Big Dog wasn't fast, but he did steal double-digit bags (10) in 1976, when the Big Red Machine defended its 1975 world championship.

Only one of baseball's greatest could carry a franchise
mired in a curse to the pinnacle of its sport.

Congratulations, David, on your first-ballot election
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
34

Fast Feller

SCHOOLBOY LEGEND BOB FELLER WAS REGARDED AS THE UNQUESTIONED KING OF THE FASTBALL DURING HIS CAREER.

By John Rosengren

IN 1946, HIS FIRST FULL SEASON after serving almost four years in the Navy during World War II, Bob Feller posted one of his finest performances. He won an MLB-best 26 games, 10 of them shutouts, most in the majors. He broke the modern major league record for strikeouts, fanning 348 (until it was later discovered Rube Waddell had struck out 349 in 1904). He posted a personal-best 2.18 ERA. His WAR was a dazzling 10.0.

“I don’t think anyone is ever going to throw a ball faster than he does. And his curveball isn’t human,” the Yankees’ Joe DiMaggio had said five years earlier. After going 0-for-4 against him on April 30, 1946, when Feller pitched his second career no-hitter, this one at Yankee Stadium, DiMaggio’s opinion hadn’t changed.

Feller also threw a slider, a sinker and, later in his career, a knuckleball. But it was his fastball that shaped his nicknames – Rapid Robert, Bullet Bob, the Heater from Van Meter – and powered him to immortality as one of the game’s greatest pitchers.

Pitching his entire career for the Cleveland Indians, he led the American League in strikeouts seven times and finished with 2,581 career Ks, which was third-highest all time (behind Walter Johnson and Cy Young) when he retired in 1956. He won 20 games six times, including a major-league best 27 in 1940, and 266 over his 18-year career. (Had he not missed almost four seasons in his prime, it is easily projectable that Feller could have won 350 games and recorded 3,500 strikeouts.)

He pitched three no-hitters and 12 one-hitters. He was the first pitcher elected to the Hall of Fame in his initial year of eligibility (1962) since Walter Johnson and Christy Mathewson in the Hall’s inaugural class.

And all of it stemmed from a mastery of baseball’s most basic skill: The ability to throw a ball.

Born on a farm in Van Meter, Iowa, in 1918, Feller claimed he could throw a baseball farther than 270 feet before he was 10 years old.

Never bashful about his estimation of himself, Feller said: “By the time I was nine years old, I knew I could throw a baseball faster than anybody else.”

He was pitching in the major leagues before he graduated high school, signed to the Indians by legendary scout Cy Slapnicka. On July 6, 1936, Feller appeared in an exhibition against the Cardinals. The second batter he faced, Leo Durocher, supposedly chided the youngster, “Keep the ball in the park, busher.” Feller struck him out on three fastballs. And in Durocher’s next at-bat, the kid struck out the Lip again.

Feller made his official MLB debut almost two weeks later on July 19, coming in relief in the eighth inning and walking a batter, and made several more relief appearances before being entrusted with his first start on Aug. 23 against the St. Louis Browns. With his fastball on fire, he struck out 15, one short of Waddell’s American League record. Before the summer ended, Feller tied Dizzy Dean’s major league record of 17 Ks in a nine-inning game. Two years later, when he was still a teenager, he set a new record, mowing down 18 Tigers on the final day of the 1938 season, including Hank Greenberg twice.

Feller was only 23 years old when he enlisted in the Navy after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In the three previous seasons, he had led the league in wins (24, 27, 25), strikeouts (246, 261, 260) and innings pitched (296.2, 320.1, 343.0). He’d thrown the first Opening Day no-hitter: At Comiskey Park against the White Sox on April 16, 1940. He’d throw two more no-hitters before he was done – against the Yankees in 1946 and one against the Tigers in 1951. Those three no-hitters tied the career mark held by Cy Young and Larry Corcoran and stood as the record until Sandy Koufax threw his fourth no-hitter in 1965.

Feller, who was an All-Star four times before WWII and four times

Opposite: Though it was difficult to gauge his exact speed, Bob Feller was known to throw harder than any pitcher of his day. Events were even staged to measure how fast he threw, once against a speeding motorcycle and another time using a U.S. Army device designed to measure the velocity of artillery shells.





NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

In 1941, a motorcycle was pitted against Feller's fastball in Chicago's Lincoln Park. Feller stood in the parkway wearing street clothes and shoes, without the benefit of throwing from a mound, while a Chicago policeman on a Harley-Davidson charged from behind toward a target 60 feet, 6 inches beyond Feller. As the motorcycle roared by at 86 mph, Feller reared and threw – though by the time he released the ball, the policeman had a 13-foot lead. Still, Feller's pitch easily beat the Harley to the target. The mathematicians calculated the speed of his pitch at 104 mph.

Five years later, in a 1946 exhibition at Griffith Stadium in Washington, D. C., Feller hurled several pitches through an Army contraption originally designed to measure the velocity of artillery shells. A catcher set up behind the wooden-frame machine that straddled the plate. One of Feller's pitches, instead of going through the opening about the size of a strike zone, struck the frame and knocked loose a two-by-four. But he threw enough strikes to allow the Army ordnance equipment to measure his speed. In newsreel footage of the event, narrator Ed Herlihy gushes: "Photoelectric cells register the unbelievable delivery of the ball, which rockets along at a world record speed of 98 and six-tenths miles per hour."

While that may have been the fastest pitch recorded at the time, if the ball's speed had been measured when it left Feller's hand – as is done these days – instead of when it crossed the plate, the speed would have registered even higher.

What mattered most was not his actual official speed but how fast his pitches appeared to batters.

"I DON'T THINK ANYONE IS EVER GOING TO THROW A BALL FASTER THAN HE DOES. AND HIS CURVEBALL ISN'T HUMAN." – Joe DiMaggio

after, had three more 20-game winning seasons after his return from military service. He went 26-15 in 1946, 20-11 in 1947 and 22-8 in 1951 – his .733 winning percentage that season the best in the league.

Feller was often as wild as he was fast, four times leading the major leagues in walks issued. He retired with 1,764 career walks, the most at the time and fifth overall today (behind fellow Hall of Famers Nolan Ryan, Steve Carlton, Phil Niekro and Early Wynn).

"I just reared back and let them go," he told *LOOK* magazine in 1951. "Where the ball went was up to heaven."

While his accuracy may have been less than perfect, his speed could always be counted on. In the days before it was a prerequisite for MLB pitchers to throw 90 miles per hour – and when it was basically unheard of for someone to reach 100 – Feller "could, very possibly, throw a round object harder than anybody else who ever strode upon God's green earth," Frank Deford wrote in a 2005 *Sports Illustrated* profile. "It was his speed that made Feller a marvel of his time."

Just how fast was Feller? Since he played before radar guns were de rigueur, it's hard to say. But his fastball so dazzled those who saw it – either from the batter's box or the stands – that several extraordinary attempts were made to measure its speed.

"It wasn't until you hit against him that you knew how fast he really was, until you saw with your own eyes that ball jumping at you," said Chicago White Sox Hall of Fame pitcher Ted Lyons.

The thought of facing him was enough to unnerve even the game's greatest hitters. Ted Williams said he would start thinking about Feller three days before he had to bat against him. Williams called Feller "the fastest and best pitcher I ever saw during my career. He had the best fastball and curve I've ever seen."

Feller himself said players who had batted against both him and Nolan Ryan, who threw a 100.9 mph fastball, told Feller he threw harder. That may be true, or it may simply have been the older guy boasting. Regardless, Feller will forever rank as one of the game's fastest pitchers, perhaps the best of his time – at least in the estimation of his peers.

Stan Musial added his praise to that from DiMaggio, Lyons and Williams, calling Feller "probably the greatest pitcher of our era." 📌

John Rosengren is the author of Classic Baseball: Timeless Tales, Immortal Moments, which includes several of his articles originally published in Memories and Dreams.

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Sweet Music of Hamilton

FOR 14 SEASONS, SLIDING BILLY HAMILTON SET THE STANDARD FOR BASERUNNERS IN THE BIG LEAGUES.

By Scott Pitoniak

LEGEND HAS IT THAT CLEVELAND SPIDERS third baseman Chippy McGarr became so frustrated with his team's inability to stop Billy Hamilton from stealing bases and scoring runs during a game in the early 1890s that he picked up the diminutive Philadelphia Phillies outfielder, carried him to the stands and tossed him over the railing.

In a subsequent game, Hamilton was rounding third when Cincinnati's Arlie Latham grabbed him by the shirt and held him. But the player known as "Sliding Billy" proved to be "Slippery Billy," wriggling free and reaching home safely.

There were other incidents of opponents attempting to trip him, spike him or tag him so hard in the head that he would be knocked woozy.

The tactics reflected the rowdy nature of baseball in the "Gay Nineties." But they also spoke to what a disruptive, unstoppable force the speedy, determined Hamilton was. As author Roy Kerr writes in his entertaining book, *Sliding Billy Hamilton: The Life and Times of Baseball's First Great Leadoff Hitter*, in an age when equipment, rules and strategy necessitated an emphasis on manufacturing runs with bunts, stolen bases and hit-and-run plays, nobody "traveled the grand circuit" better.

While baseball has changed dramatically since Hamilton's final major league season in 1901, the game's ultimate objective of scoring runs has remained the same. And few fulfilled that objective more effectively than Hamilton, whose average of 1.06 runs per game remains an MLB record for players with at least 5,000 plate appearances.

Fleet of foot and mind, Hamilton befuddled opponents with his lively legs and brain. One game, he went from first to third ... on an infield groundout. Another game, he stole seven bases, matching a major league record that still stands. His teammate, Sam Thompson, who later played with Ty Cobb, claimed Hamilton was "more daring and reckless" than the "Georgia Peach," but also more gentlemanly, too – on and off the field.

Hamilton's career stolen base total of 914 ranks third behind Rickey Henderson and runner-up Lou Brock, though comparisons of their statistics are tricky because stolen-base rules were vastly different in the 19th century. Starting in 1886, official scorers credited a runner with a stolen base for every extra base he advanced on his own.

For example, a runner going from first to third on a single was credited with one

stolen base. In 1892, the scoring rule was revised so that a runner was awarded a steal only if there was an attempt to put him out. In 1898, modern scoring rules for stolen bases were adopted.

What's indisputable is that in his day, Hamilton set the pace the way Henderson and Brock did in their eras, with "Sliding Billy" leading the majors in stolen bases five times while surpassing the century mark on four occasions.

As Hamilton's other statistics attest, he was much more than just a base stealer. Historian Bill James ranked him as the ninth-best center fielder of all time. Hamilton also could beat you with his bat and his eagle eyes, which enabled him to draw 1,189 walks during a 14-year career split among the Kansas City Cowboys, Phillies and Boston Beaneaters. His lifetime batting average is a robust .344 – the equal of Ted Williams. Only Babe Ruth, Williams, John McGraw and Josh Gibson have bettered Hamilton's all-time on-base percentage (.455).

And no one has come close to Hamilton's feat of 198 runs scored in a season (in just 132 games in 1894). There was one stretch that memorable summer when he set a record, still unmatched, by scoring a run in 24 consecutive games. Two weeks later, he began another streak of 20 straight games.

Many of his marks have stood the test of time, but Hamilton's legacy wound up being lost for a long time. The man who helped popularize the fadeaway slide would fade from memory, and he was nearly forgotten until a letter-writing campaign helped earn "Sliding Billy" his rightful place in the Hall of Fame in 1961.

The son of Scottish immigrants, Hamilton quit school at age 14 and began working with his father in a textile mill in Clinton, Mass. Despite logging 12-hour shifts on weekdays and half-shifts on Saturdays, the teenager found the time to play and excel in local semi-pro leagues. Though he stood only 5-foot-6 as an adult, he packed much of his 165 pounds into his muscular,

sprinter's legs, and those legs would be his ticket out of the factory.

He turned pro in 1887, playing for teams in New England. After batting .351 with 76 runs scored and 72 stolen bases in only 61 games the following season, his contract was sold to Kansas City of the American Association. Hamilton's rookie campaign came to an end after only 35 games, when he cut his ankle sliding.

Upon returning home to central Massachusetts, he worried that his big league career might be over shortly after it had begun. But he healed fine, and next season was off and running, batting .301 with a league-leading 111 stolen bases. That summer established the 23-year-old as one of baseball's rising stars.

The National League's Phillies wasted no time in signing him after the Cowboys folded following the 1889 season, and Hamilton wasted no time hitting his stride in Philadelphia. Over the next six summers, he established franchise records for batting average (.360) and stolen bases (510) that still stand.

After recovering from a potentially fatal bout of typhoid fever, Hamilton enjoyed his best season in 1894. In addition to setting the all-time runs scored record, he batted .403, reached base 52 percent of the time and teamed with future Hall of Famers Big Ed Delahanty and Sam Thompson to form one of the finest hitting outfielders in history.

Some criticized Hamilton for being a "record player" – a guy more concerned with personal stats than team success. He forcefully denied the accusations, saying he never stole a base unless it enhanced the Phillies' chances of winning.

"There is nothing in it for a ballplayer, as he takes too many chances of being crippled," he said, alluding to the numerous "purpose tags" he endured during baseball's "Rowdy Era."

In one of the most lopsided trades in baseball history, Hamilton was dealt to Boston in November 1895 in exchange for third baseman Billy Nash. The national press lambasted the Phillies, with one scribe writing: "Hamilton is the best run-getter that ever played ball. ... There is a dash about his play that inspires the spectator. That he will be missed both by the team

and its patrons is a certainty."

The words proved prophetic. Nash failed to hit above .258 in parts of three seasons in Philadelphia. Hamilton batted .339 and stole 274 bases while helping Boston win two pennants in his six years there.

After retiring from the majors, Hamilton continued on as a player-manager in the minor leagues. In 1904 in the New England League, at age 38, he batted .412 and stole 74 bases, breaking a league record established by Archie "Moonlight" Graham, who would be immortalized in W.P. Kinsella's *Shoeless Joe* and in the classic film *Fields of Dreams*. Hamilton would play six more years before hanging up his spikes.



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Billy Hamilton debuted in the big leagues in 1888 with Kansas City of the American Association. He played 14 seasons in the major leagues and totaled 914 stolen bases. He was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1961.

In retirement, Hamilton was not only overshadowed by modern ballplayers but also had some of his stolen base statistics revised downward. In the *New Baseball Historical Abstract*, published in 1999, James wrote: "Hamilton was completely invisible in the literature of the sport up to 1960. ... He left no legend behind him, no stories, no anecdotes. ... Even now, in books about 19th-century baseball, he is often not mentioned at all."

This prompted Roy Kerr, who had written about other 19th-century stars, to

delve deeper into the reasons behind Hamilton's historical disappearance.

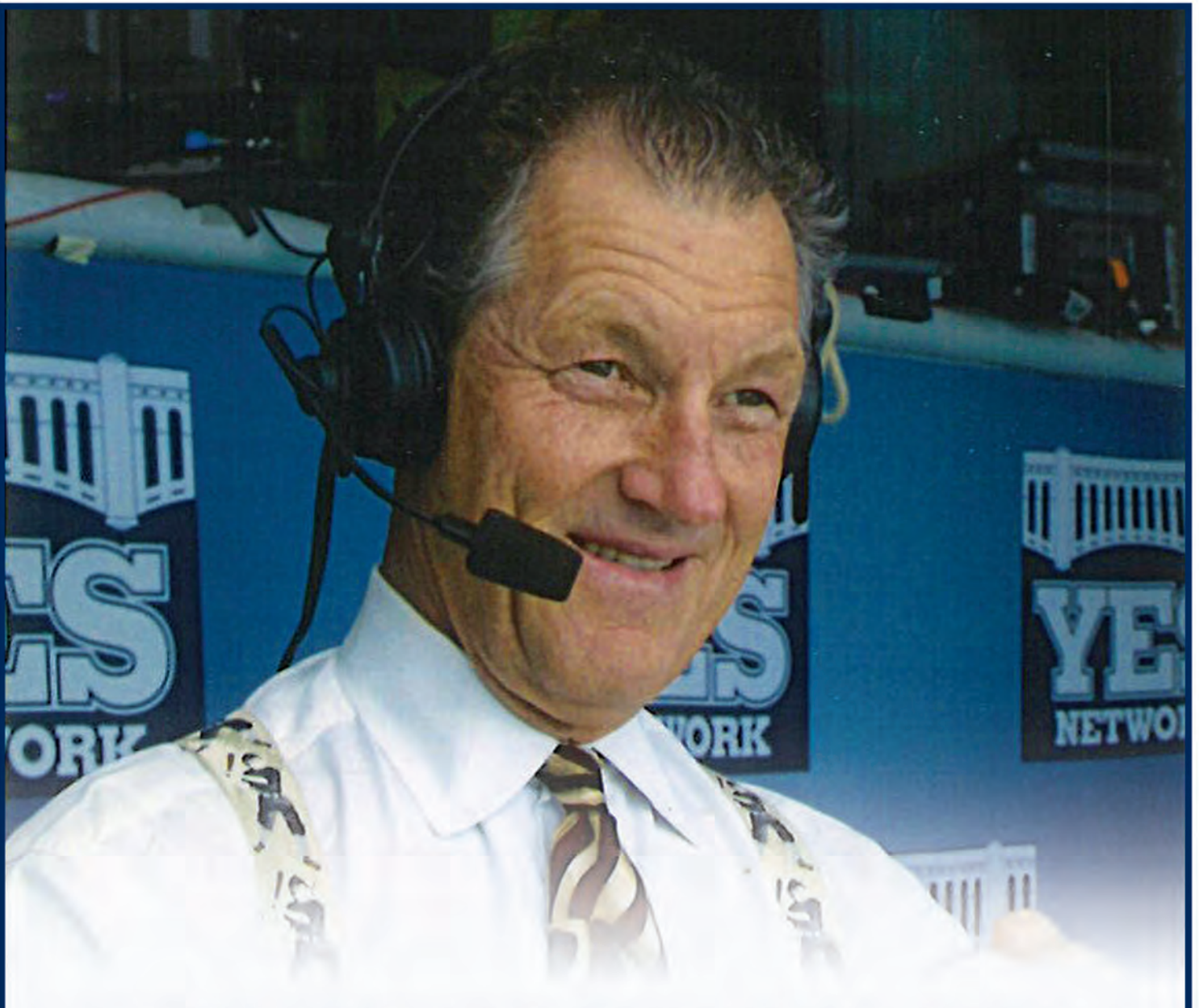
"I suggest that Hamilton's 'invisibility' in baseball lore stems not from any aspect of his playing record," wrote Kerr. "Rather, it derives at least partially from the fact that the stories and legends that he did indeed leave behind simply would not have been considered newsworthy by most sportswriters of his era, who tended to focus more on the adventures of the game's showmen and scalawags in their columns. In this sense ... Hamilton simply lacked the flash for which baseball in the 'Gay Nineties' was remembered."

Baseball scribes indeed gravitated toward colorful characters, and while Hamilton's daring-do on the basepaths entertained fans, he eschewed the ruffian approach to the game and life. He was devoted to his wife and four daughters, and abstained from alcohol and the saloon scene favored by many of his peers. In the eyes of numerous writers, he was boring and uninteresting – "bad copy." Unlike his flamboyant contemporaries Mike "King" Kelly and John "Muggsy" McGraw – each of whom had side gigs as vaudeville performers – Hamilton wasn't into self-promotion.

The movement to correct a historical oversight and secure Hamilton's place in Cooperstown started with a letter to the editor by John T. Morgan that was published in the *Worcester Telegram* in 1945. Over the next dozen years, Morgan corresponded with several baseball power brokers. In 1959, Hamilton's daughter, Ruth, sent a long hand-written letter to Commissioner Ford Frick and another to Paul S. Kerr, the secretary of the Hall's Veterans Committee and Hall of Fame President. Kerr in turn contacted the Museum's historian, Lee Allen, who wrote a glowing recommendation that Hamilton deserved enshrinement. In 1961 – 21 years after the ballplayer's death – "Sliding Billy" was inducted.

The man who rounded the bases as well as anyone in history had finally reached baseball's ultimate home. 📍

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.



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JIM KAAAT

ON HIS INDUCTION INTO THE
BASEBALL HALL OF FAME



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Bell Ringer

COOL PAPA BELL'S SPEED WAS SO LEGENDARY THAT HE APPEARED TO BE PLAYING IN A LEAGUE OF HIS OWN.

By Jerry Crasnick

JAMES THOMAS "COOL PAPA" BELL was blessed with one of the greatest nicknames in baseball, or any other sport. With apologies to Josh Gibson – who allegedly hit a ball so far it left his bat in Pittsburgh and landed a day later in Philadelphia – Bell was also the inspiration for some of the most enduring tall tales to emerge from the Negro Leagues.

Satchel Paige, raconteur nonpareil, seeded the ground for Bell's legacy with a trail of entertaining stories. He topped them all when he observed that Cool Papa was so fast, "he could turn out the lights and be in bed before the room got dark."

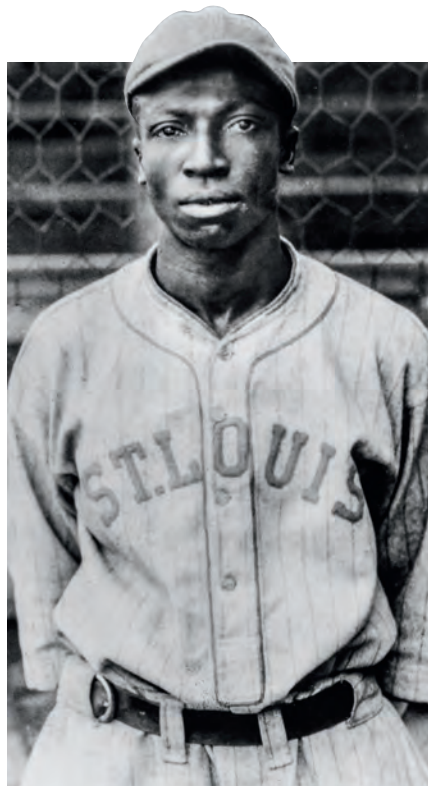
That seemingly impossible scenario actually had some truth to it, with a side order of mischief and financial opportunism.

As the late Lonnie Wheeler recounts in his 2021 biography *The Bona Fide Legend of Cool Papa Bell*, the incident in question most likely occurred during the 1934-35 Winter League season in California, when Paige and Bell were teammates and roommates. Because of an electrical short, the state of fluorescent bulbs at the time or some other mysterious glitch, lights often operated with a three-second delay.

Cool Papa, cognizant of the gap, made a seemingly outrageous boast and placed a \$10 bet with Paige. After flicking off the switch, dashing into bed and pulling the covers up to his chin, Bell happily collected his winnings. Then he and Paige would play the joke on other unsuspecting teammates.

Long story short: The man could fly.

Seventy-six years after his final game, 48 years after his election to Cooperstown and 31 years after his passing in 1991 at age 87, Bell continues to embody the spirit and aesthetic flair of the Negro Leagues. When Andrew "Rube" Foster and seven other



Cool Papa Bell played 21 seasons in the Negro Leagues and was widely considered the fastest player of his era. His speed helped him compile a .325 career batting average and .394 on-base percentage.

would-be pioneers met at the Paseo Street YMCA in Kansas City in 1920 with a goal of forming a new league, they envisioned a game that was long on creativity, derring-do, athleticism and plenty of action to keep fans engaged.

With his big personality and aggressive mentality, Bell was a walking (or, more accurately, running) endorsement for the style of play that Foster and others had learned to love and appreciate in barnstorming tours through the years. It was both a fun and fundamentally sound brand of baseball.

"That five-tool athlete was really what Foster and the other owners were trying to pull together – which I think is one of the reasons the game was so different in how they played it in the Negro Leagues vs. the major leagues," said Bob Kendrick, president of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. "They had players in the major leagues who could steal bases, but it was more a base-to-base kind of thing.

"The Negro Leagues played the game so much differently. They would bunt their way on. Steal second. Steal third. And as Buck O'Neil would say, 'If you weren't too smart, they were stealing home.' The pace of the game was so much faster. Speed kind of permeates through your roster. If you're surrounded by guys that can run, it's amazing how it impacts the rest of your team."

While Babe Ruth was revolutionizing the American League with his power, and Gibson was launching prolific home runs for the Pittsburgh Crawfords and Homestead Grays, Bell made his mark one burst and one base at a time.

He had lots of company. Negro Leagues rosters were dotted with players who could rattle opposing batteries, disrupt a game and generate runs with their legs.

According to historians Larry Lester and John Holway, Foster was an early and ardent proponent of the drag bunt, double steal, suicide squeeze, hit-and-run and a relentless style of play that inflicted death by a thousand cuts. During one memorable game in 1921, Foster's Chicago American Giants were

trailing the Indianapolis ABCs, 18-0, in the eighth inning when Foster called for 11 consecutive bunts. The Giants hit two late grand slams and tied the game, 18-18, before it was called on account of darkness.

In the field, Negro Leagues players used their range to steal hits and make acrobatic catches, particularly in the outfield. One of the premier five-tool athletes of the time was Oscar Charleston, whose career spanned 27 years with the Indianapolis ABCs, Harrisburg Giants and nine other clubs.

Charleston, listed at 5-8, 185 pounds, ran a 23-second 220-yard dash in the Army and was a wondrous combination of power and speed. He played a shallow center field, covered the gaps with aplomb and took pride in catching everything that went over his head.

“Oscar was the only player I’ve ever seen who could turn twice while chasing a fly and then take it over his shoulder,” said teammate Elwood “Bingo” DeMoss.

There were so many others. Outfielder Sam Jethroe was fast enough to make writers scramble for evocative nicknames. He was known as “Larceny Legs,” “Mercury Man” and “Jet Propelled Jethroe,” which was eventually shortened to “The Jet.” Willie Wells was a talented shortstop who used his speed as a springboard to a Hall of Fame career. Norman “Turkey” Stearnes had an unorthodox running style, but it didn’t prevent him from getting from Point A to Point B in a hurry. Eddie Dwight was a burner, and Clarence Jenkins’ dynamic playing style belied his nickname of “Fats.”

Jackie Robinson, who counted track and field among his numerous athletic pursuits at UCLA, got his start with the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro Leagues before signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers. He led the National League with 29 stolen bases as a rookie and stole home an astonishing 19 times during his major league career.

Bell stands above the crowd, though – in part because so many of his contemporaries served up colorful quotes and anecdotes on his behalf.

“If he bunts and it bounces twice, put it in your pocket,” said Ted “Double Duty” Radcliffe.

“One time he hit a line drive right past my ear,” Paige said. “I turned around and saw the ball hit him sliding into second.”



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

When Lou Brock set a modern-era record for stolen bases in 1974, Cool Papa Bell – who was elected to the Hall of Fame that year – helped honor Brock. Bell’s prowess on the basepaths inspired generations of players.

As Bell’s career progressed, his reputation preceded him. Champion sprinter Jesse Owens, not far removed from winning four gold medals at the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin, took a pass on a match race with Bell because, he said, he didn’t have his track shoes.

All too often, Bell’s speed obscured the other attributes that made him such a dangerous and respected baserunner. He was diligent in his preparation and attentive to every detail, from the pitcher’s delivery to the strength of the outfielders’ throwing arms. He ran low to the ground and cut the corners tightly – touching the bag with his hand, if necessary – to shave precious milliseconds off each trip. He would assess the situation, take a walking lead and reach top-end speed after just a couple of steps.

The numbers most likely don’t do justice to the constant threat that Bell posed. While he led his league in stolen bases eight times, he was credited with only 285 steals in almost 1,200 career games.

As Bell once explained, “I remember one time I got five hits and stole five bases, but none of it was written down because they forgot to bring the scorebook to the game that day.”

He was hesitant to share many trade secrets during his career, but eventually became a friend, mentor and advisor to Lou Brock, Jackie Robinson and other speedsters who helped perpetuate the Negro Leagues style of play in Major League Baseball.

“Cool Papa had the ability to turn singles into doubles, doubles into triples and triples into inside-the-park home runs,” Kendrick said. “The speed was legendary. Mythical-like. But it was also very real.”

He was Cool Papa Bell, and no one else could compare. Gone in a flash, and in bed before the room got dark. 📌

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

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Unstoppable Talent

FOR RICKEY HENDERSON, ABILITY AND WORK ETHIC PRODUCED INCREDIBLE RESULTS.

By Howard Bryant

“You ever been in an airplane? You see how an airplane lands? That’s me. I’m like an airplane.”

– Rickey Henderson

IN ANY LEGENDARY LIFE, THERE IS A FLASHPOINT MOMENT when the star becomes separated from the mortal rest. The heads turn, and the people who weren’t really paying attention get the alert, a special stock-tip whisper in the ear: Get in on this early. Those who listen can always say they were there on the ground floor before the rest of the legend fell deliciously into place.

For Rickey Henderson, that moment occurred on May 26, 1977, when the Modesto A’s were up against the Fresno Giants. It was just Class A ball, the California League. Rickey was 18. That was the night when all of the signature Rickey touches coalesced into one spectacular package they’d be talking about for years. For anyone who watched or played against Henderson, the traits had already been there, of course, but as big as Rickey was in Oakland, he was still area-code big, local hero big. From this night forward, a roadside sign was metaphorically parked over his head. He was serving notice.

The score didn’t matter – A’s 13, Giants 12 – because what mattered was that Rickey ran: He stole seven bases that night. Swiped seven bags – never got caught. A gleaming seven-for-seven. There was the trash talk that would soon be his signature: “I could have stolen an eighth, too,” a harbinger that Rickey was not just going to be good, but was going to let you know it, too.

As the man who signed Rickey, Oakland A’s scout Jim Guinn believed it was the unique road he had taken in the game and his own experience as a former player that

enabled him to see something in Rickey that not only did his own organization fail to see, but so did the rest of baseball: His desire to prove he would be great. Henderson was taken in the fourth round, the 96th pick of the 1976 amateur draft. The full-time professionals believed that 95 other players had a better chance of making an impact on the game than Henderson – and Rickey never forgot it.

“The biggest difference between Rickey and everybody else was his attitude,” Guinn recalled. “Rickey had something I could identify with. Rickey had that will to win. He didn’t back down from anybody. When

I asked Claudell Washington what he wanted to accomplish in the game, he said he wanted to hit .300 in the big leagues once. He didn’t say ‘every year.’ He said ‘once.’ Well, he did it in his first (full) year. Mission accomplished. He could have set his sights so much higher.

“Now, Rickey? When I asked Rickey the same question, as a 17-year-old, he said to me point-blank – again, as a 17-year-old, mind you – he said, ‘I want to be the greatest base stealer of all time.’”

There is no argument in baseball that Rickey Henderson is exactly what he set out to be. He stole 1,406 bases – best of all time. He held the all-time record for a dozen years as an active player. He holds the modern single-season record of 130, set in 1982. He’s the oldest player to lead the majors in stolen bases, with 66 in 1998, as a 39-year-old with the Oakland A’s. When Rickey had joined the Boston Red Sox to begin the 2002 season, he had stolen more bases over the course of his career (1979-2001) than all the Red Sox teams over that same span.

“I stole bases to win games,” recalled the great Kansas City Royals base stealer Willie Wilson. “Rickey? Rickey stole bases to break records.”

Rickey was fast. Super-fast. As a kid in Oakland, Calif., he used to race the school bus home, just for kicks. When he was in the minors, A’s owner Charlie Finley once offered Rickey \$50 to race against a horse before a game. It wasn’t just the base stealing either, but the whole Rickey experience. First, it was the body. He was the Football Kid – that’s what the Oakland kids called him – but he was playing baseball. The players noticed the strides toward first base, the way one push toward second could morph into full speed, and the havoc he could wreak without even getting a good jump. There was that violent headfirst slide leap. Pete Rose often slid in headfirst – but not every time. Rose ran the bases hard, but this kid was a base stealer who literally put his nose on the base.

When Rickey told Guinn he wanted to be the greatest base stealer of all time, he



BRAD MANTON/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM



Rickey Henderson's face-first slides became a trademark of his willingness to do anything to steal a base.

MICHAEL POZZI/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

had already made a deal with himself: He was going to put in the sweat.

And the thing about Tom Trebelhorn, Rickey's manager in both rookie ball Idaho and Class A Modesto, was that he wanted to know which players were willing to put their hands in the dirt, till the soil and turn themselves into ballplayers. Rickey would ask for help, and Trebelhorn would tell him they were going to do extra work. So Rickey would show up and grab a bat – then be surprised when Trebelhorn told him to put it down, for there was no hitting involved in the extra drills he had in mind.

For someone as successful on the basepaths as he was, Trebelhorn couldn't believe how bad Rickey's leads were. He was just a teenager, and his obvious raw potential was limitless. His burst of speed toward second was remarkable, and his ability to reach top speed within a step or two compensated for his poor jumps. With his speed, the jump was less important than getting the advantage on the catcher by stealing off the pitcher. If Rickey's jumps improved even slightly, Trebelhorn figured out, he'd be unstoppable.

On the back fields, Trebelhorn began working with Rickey on reading pitchers. He'd show him how to spot the little things that made a base stealer great, like noticing how the pitcher fumbled around with the ball in his glove. Too much movement meant he was trying to locate his curveball grip. Curveballs were great pitches to run on because they were slower to the plate and had spin on them, which made it more difficult for the catcher to get the ball out of his glove and make a clean throw. Curveballs also presented a good running opportunity because they were difficult to control. No way was any catcher lunging for a curveball in the dirt going to catch Rickey Henderson – that just wasn't going to happen.

And if the pitcher had to worry about finding the right grip on the ball – a life-and-death proposition should he throw a hanger – he also had to worry about throwing a meatball to the plate.

"He took me to the field every day to work on pitchers' moves and jumps," Henderson recalled. "I wanted to go hit. I'd say, 'Extra hitting.' He'd say, 'Extra work,' and take me straight to the bases. He's the

one who drilled that into my head. And the best thing about it was he was willing to work with me.

"His wife used to say, 'Why are you always going out there for extra hitting? Why do you have to go out there to do extra work all the time?' He'd say, 'I'm going out there with Rickey.' She came to me one day and said, 'Can you stop going out there and let my husband stay home for a little bit?' I said, 'He's the one getting me out there!'"

Over the course of his 25-year career, Rickey would be the ultimate offensive weapon. He had put in the work to learn the trade. He had the raw talent to retain the



Rickey Henderson celebrates after setting the MLB career stolen base record with his 939th steal on May 1, 1991.

information and the world-class speed to make it all happen. He added the great batting eye and power to the legendary speed – and so much of it stemmed from one characteristic above all else: Desire, the desire to win the battle against the pitcher and the catcher.

At 38 years old, he still stole bases at an 80 percent clip, 16 out of 20 bags with Anaheim in 1997. The Angels' bench coach at the time was Joe Maddon – the same Joe Maddon who tried to keep Rickey from snaring the stolen-base title for Modesto of the California League back in A ball 20 years earlier.

During a game, Maddon was in the dugout with the stopwatch – timing the pitcher's speed to home plate.

"If the pitcher's move is 1.4 seconds, I'm happy. If he's at 1.6, that's waaay too slow," Maddon said. "Rickey would steal 250 bases.

"Now I've got Rickey in Anaheim. He's at first, and I'm doing the times, and the guy on the mound – I don't remember which pitcher – but his time was 1.21. That's fast. At 1.2, nobody goes. Too fast to the plate. And Rickey would get that step, you know, where he would get that step and move, get that step and keep time. And if he timed it, he didn't care (how fast the pitcher) was to the plate. He stole and he was safe. I couldn't believe it. I've never seen that, where a guy was that confident on a 1.2 move. It just doesn't happen. I doubt any of the great base stealers did that. Brock? No. Maybe ask Rock Raines, but no. That was a combination of technique and the Three Musketeers' 'I'm better than you' confidence. That's just flat-out confidence. And he was almost 40 years old. That's what was incongruent to me.

"What Rickey did for the hitter and what he did to defenses, you just couldn't quantify the disruption," Maddon continued. "Who knows how many home runs were hit because of what he was doing to the pitcher? Who knows how many errors were caused because the defense was thinking about him and not on the situation? When you're standing on the top step of the dugout, you see that impact."

When it came to the analytics and science of stolen bases, the old Oakland Raiders fan in Rickey would take the Al Davis approach. He was going to be fearless. He was going to impose his will – on the stats, on the manager, on the pitcher and the catcher. He didn't care what the numbers said.

This was Rickey Henderson. Are you really going to let a stopwatch decide if he was going to steal?

"To me, what you're saying is you don't have confidence in me to beat this guy," Henderson said. "It's like the Raiders. We don't take what the defense gives you. You take what you want!" 📌

Adapted from RICKEY: The Life and Legend of an American Original, by Howard Bryant. New York. Mariner Books, 2022.



Lee Smith P

**CLASS OF
2019**



RON VESLEY/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

LEE ARTHUR SMITH

Elected: 2019 • Born: Dec. 4, 1957, Jamestown, La.

Batted: Right Threw: Right • Height: 6-foot-5 Weight: 220 pounds

Played for: Chicago Cubs (1980-87); Boston Red Sox (1988-90); St. Louis Cardinals (1990-93);

New York Yankees (1993); Baltimore Orioles (1994); California Angels (1995-96); Cincinnati Reds (1996);

Montreal Expos (1997)



YEAR	TEAM	W	L	PCT	ERA	G	GS	CG	SHO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
1980	CHC	2	0	1.000	2.91	18	0	0	0	0	21.2	21	9	7	14	17
1981	CHC	3	6	.333	3.51	40	1	0	0	1	66.2	57	31	26	31	50
1982	CHC	2	5	.286	2.69	72	5	0	0	17	117.0	105	38	35	37	99
1983	CHC	4	10	.286	1.65	66	0	0	0	29	103.1	70	23	19	41	91
1984	CHC	9	7	.563	3.65	69	0	0	0	33	101.0	98	42	41	35	86
1985	CHC	7	4	.636	3.04	65	0	0	0	33	97.2	87	35	33	32	112
1986	CHC	9	9	.500	3.09	66	0	0	0	31	90.1	69	32	31	42	93
1987	CHC	4	10	.286	3.12	62	0	0	0	36	83.2	84	30	29	32	96
1988	BOS	4	5	.444	2.80	64	0	0	0	29	83.2	84	34	26	37	96
1989	BOS	6	1	.857	3.57	64	0	0	0	25	70.2	53	30	28	33	96
1990	BOS/STL	5	5	.500	2.06	64	0	0	0	31	83.0	71	24	19	29	87
1991	STL	6	3	.667	2.34	67	0	0	0	47	73.0	70	19	19	13	67
1992	STL	4	9	.308	3.12	70	0	0	0	43	75.0	62	28	26	26	60
1993	STL/NY	2	4	.333	3.88	63	0	0	0	46	58.0	53	25	25	14	60
1994	BAL	1	4	.200	3.29	41	0	0	0	33	38.1	34	16	14	11	42
1995	CAL	0	5	.000	3.47	52	0	0	0	37	49.1	42	19	19	25	43
1996	CAL/CIN	3	4	.429	3.74	54	0	0	0	2	55.1	57	24	23	26	41
1997	MON	0	1	.000	5.82	25	0	0	0	5	21.2	28	16	14	8	15
18 Seasons		71	92	.436	3.03	1022	6	0	0	478	1289.1	1133	475	434	486	1251

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: Seven-time All-Star (1983, 1987, 1991-95) • Three-time Rolaids Relief Award winner (1991-92, 1994) • Baseball's all-time saves leader from 1993-2006

DID YOU KNOW ...

- ★ ... that of Lee Smith's 478 saves, 169 required at least four outs and 94 required two-or-more innings pitched?
- ★ ... that Smith finished in the top 10 of his league's Cy Young Award voting four times, including a second-place finish for the NL Cy Young Award in 1991?
- ★ ... that Smith averaged 8.73 strikeouts per nine innings, which ranks third all time among pitchers with at least 1,000 appearances?

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 CHICAGO, N.L., 1980-87; BOSTON, A.L., 1988-90;
 ST. LOUIS, N.L., 1990-93; NEW YORK, A.L., 1993;
 BALTIMORE, A.L., 1994; CALIFORNIA, A.L., 1995-96;
 CINCINNATI, N.L., 1996; MONTREAL, A.L., 1997;
 COMBINED PITCHING FASTEST LAST FOUR MORE THAN
 478 OTHER PITCHERS (1993-2006). RANKED 7th IN SAVES
 ORIGINALLY A MULTITASKING RELIEF ACE, TOTALLED 169 SAVES OF
 MORE THAN THREE OUTS, TRANSITIONED INTO FEARED ONE-INNING
 CLOSER AS BULLPEN ROLES SPECIALIZED, BECOMING THE FIRST TO
 RECORD AT LEAST 30 SAVES IN DIFFERENT SEASONS (1991-95).
 HONORED WITH CY YOUNG AWARD IN 1991 AND THREE-TIME
 YEAR HONORS THREE TIMES. RETIRED WITH THE HIGHEST STRIKEOUT
 RATE AMONG PITCHERS WITH AT LEAST 700 RELIEF APPEARANCES.

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- ★ "I talk to guys now about the confidence they have with a true closer behind them, and that was exactly what we all felt like with Lee down there." – TEAMMATE AND BROADCASTER RICK SUTCLIFFE
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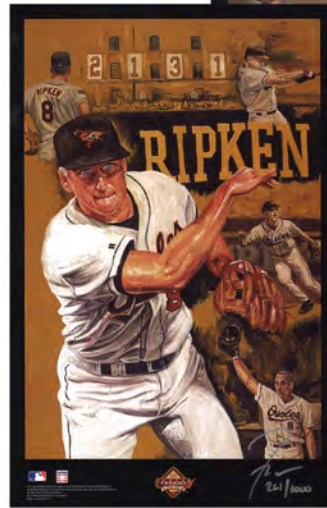
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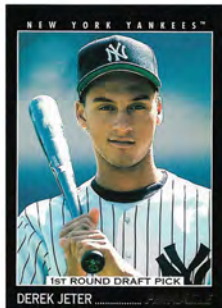
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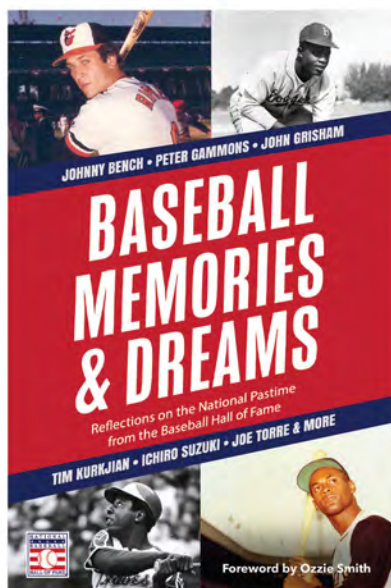
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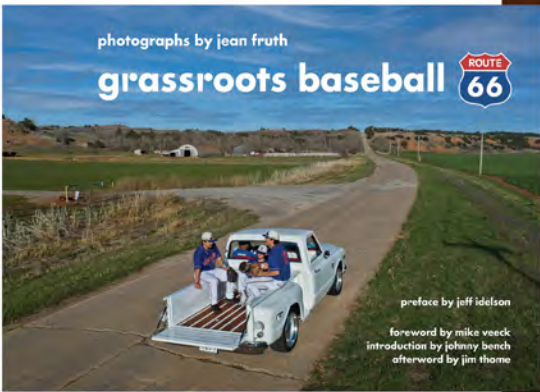


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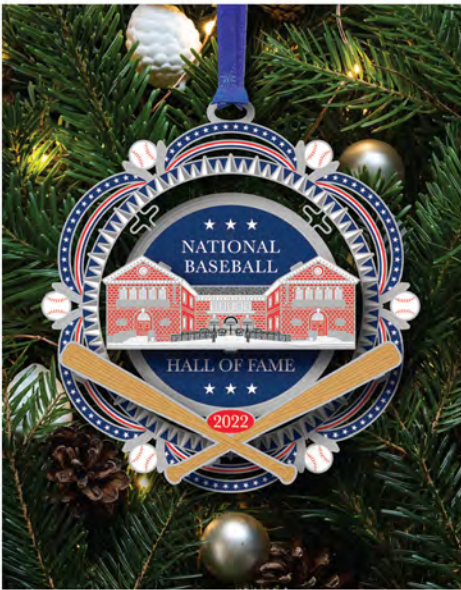


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Treasured Moments

ARTIFACTS FROM 2022 TELL THE STORY OF A HISTORIC SEASON.

By Craig Muder

From groundbreaking pioneers to legendary performers, the 2022 baseball season had it all.

The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum has added hundreds of artifacts to its collection of more than 40,000 three-dimensional pieces this year, every one of which tells a memorable story.

New additions to the collection include:

SALUTE TO THE SKIPPER

Several items commemorating Rachel Balkovec's managerial debut on April 8 for the Tampa Tarpons now have a home in



Rachel Balkovec jersey

Cooperstown, including the jersey she wore, the first pitch ball from the game, the original dugout lineup card, the official scorer's scorecard and tickets to the game. Balkovec became the first woman manager in Minor League Baseball history when she made her Florida State League debut.

COACH 'EM UP

Alyssa Nakken became the first woman to serve as an on-field coach in MLB history when she worked the first base box for the San Francisco Giants on April 12. The Giants later donated the batting helmet she wore on the field to the Museum.



Miguel Cabrera jersey



Alyssa Nakken batting helmet

MORE FOR MIGGY

On April 23, the Tigers' Miguel Cabrera became the 33rd player in history to reach the 3,000-hit mark. Already a member of the 500-home run club, Cabrera is just the seventh player ever with at least 3,000 hits and 500 home runs. The Tigers donated the jersey he wore for his 3,000th hit to the Hall of Fame.

ALL-STAR POWER

Giancarlo Stanton's two-run, fourth-inning home run in the All-Star Game erased a 2-0 National League lead and was the tipping point in the American League's eventual 3-2 victory on July 19 at Dodger Stadium. The Yankees slugger was later named the game's Most Valuable Player and donated his jersey to the Hall of Fame.

CAPPING IT OFF

The Astros' Dusty Baker became just the 12th manager with at least 2,000 wins when Houston defeated the Mariners on May 3. Baker, who finished the year at No. 9 on the all-time wins list, donated the cap and wristband he wore during that game to the Hall of Fame. 🧢

Craig Muder is the director of communications for the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.



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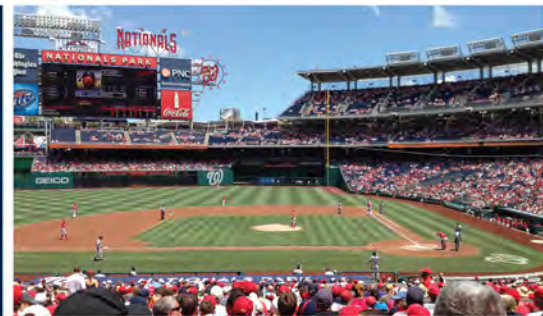


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Belle of the Ball

IN 1946, SOPHIE KURYS STOLE 201 BASES FOR RACINE OF THE AAGPBL.

By Carroll Rogers Walton

In a classic photograph published by *Newsweek* magazine in its July 29, 1946, issue, former Racine Belles speedster Sophie Kurys is pictured sliding into third base, kicking up a cloud of dirt.

Kurys is one of the key players featured in an article about the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. The photo description reads “Pretty Pilferer Kurys,” and its corresponding image shows the 5-foot-5, 120-pound Kurys arriving spikes first, apparently.

Given the dust and the grainy reproduction of the photo, it’s impossible to make out much from her waist down. You can’t see the flying hem of her Racine uniform skirt, the strawberries still raw on her bare legs from slides past, or even which base she’s obliterating. But Kurys’ body language – head up, eyes forward, demeanor calm – and her history tell us she was safe.

Kurys was arguably the best baserunner in the best-known women’s professional baseball league, which was made famous in the movie *A League of Their Own*. In that picture, during that 1946 season, she was on her way to stealing a cartoonish 201 bases in only 113 games. Kurys was thrown out attempting to steal only twice all year.

The 201 stolen bases still stand as a professional record, for men or women. Rickey Henderson holds the modern MLB record for stolen bases in a season when he swiped 130 in 149 games for the 1982 Oakland Athletics.

Henderson stole 1,406 bases for his career, which is still the all-time major

league mark. He did it over 25 seasons. By comparison, Kurys stole 1,114 bases in eight seasons with the Racine Belles (1943-50) plus a few weeks with the Battle Creek (Mich.) Belles in 1952.

Some 76 years later, Kurys’ numbers seem as mystical as the dirt-flying photo. But those who saw her believe.

“She was real fast,” said Betsy Jochum, who, like Kurys, was one of the original stars of the AAGPBL as an outfielder for the South Bend Blue Sox.

Jochum is among the last remaining living All-American Girls. Kurys passed

away in 2013 at age 87. Jochum is 101 years old and living in an assisted living facility in South Bend, Ind. When it comes to recalling her baseball days and playing against Kurys, her voice is strong and her mind sharp.

“She could run fast and got a good lead off,” Jochum said. “She knew how to steal.”

Writers took to calling Kurys, who grew up in Flint, Mich., the “Flint Flash” and “Tina Cobb,” as a nod to the legendary Hall of Fame baserunner and Detroit Tiger Ty Cobb.

Kurys played basketball, volleyball and softball in school. She ran track, she bowled and, in later years, golfed. At age 14 in 1939, she won a decathlon. She also played shortstop and third base on a state championship fast pitch softball team that year.

Kurys was one of the 280 or so players handpicked for a tryout at Wrigley Field for the inaugural women’s professional league, which was the brainchild of Philip Wrigley to feed a baseball-hungry public while big leaguers were off fighting in World War II. The day before her 18th birthday, Kurys signed as one of the original 60 players who



Sophie Kurys, star of the Racine Belles of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, slides into third base as a player from the South Bend Blue Sox looks on.

were divided among four teams of the AAGPBL. She and Jochum were two of the most talented and enduring players from the league.

When asked if Kurys was the fastest player in the AAGPBL, Jochum said, “Probably.”

It’s not like there are any stopwatch statistics recorded from that original tryout. Jochum has no recollection of players lining up to run a 50-yard dash.

“We didn’t do any dashes,” Jochum said. “We just played the game.”

After years of playing softball, where runners couldn’t leave first base until the pitcher released the ball to home plate, Kurys let loose on the basepaths playing a hybrid version of baseball. Even in the early years of the AAGPBL, when the game was more like softball given some of its rules and the size of the ball, she was allowed to lead off bases and take off running at any time. It didn’t take her long to study her opponents either.

“Pitchers always have a little bit of something that you can pick up on,” Kurys said in a 2009 video interview with historian Gordon Olson from Grand Valley State University. “And if you get a first step – the first step is the most important step – if you get that, you’re on your way.”

Kurys stole 44 bases in 106 games in her first season in 1943. She was kept in relative check by her manager, Johnny Gottselig, who batted her in the cleanup spot.

“When Johnny Gottselig managed Racine, he would tell us when to steal,” she told Virginia Western Community College professor Jim Sargent in a 1996 telephone interview. “The other managers let me steal on my own.”

In 1944, Kurys stole a record 166 bases, the first of seven straight seasons she led the AAGPBL in steals.

Granted, the bases were only 65 feet apart during the league’s first three seasons, but the pitcher’s mound was also only 40 feet from home plate. The pitchers, who still threw underhand at that point (later moving to side arm and then overhand) were that much quicker to home plate, and catchers had a much shorter throw to second.

By the 1946 season, the league was playing with bases 70 feet apart and the



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Sophie Kurys was the unquestioned base stealing champion of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. In 1946 alone, she tallied 201 steals for the Racine Belles.

pitcher’s mound 43 feet from home plate.

“The rules encourage a fast, wide-open brand of baseball,” wrote the author of the 1946 *Newsweek* article entitled “Baseball: Babette Ruths.” And (league president and future Hall of Famer Max) Carey, the greatest base runner of all time, stresses that aspect of the game. His prize pupil is 21-year-old Sophie Kurys, speedy second baseman for the Racine Belles.”

At that point, Kurys was in only her second season batting in the leadoff spot. It had taken a new manager, Leo Murphy, to move her there in 1945. And that’s when her skills – and her knowledge of the pitchers – really began to take off.

“The pitchers will either open up their shoulder a little bit or they might have their

feet a little bit closer to first base,” Kurys explained. “What you can pick up on in the body language is very important.

“And if they didn’t pay any attention to me, I could steal their pants off. If you kept throwing at me and kept going to first base, you could tire me out a little bit. And I’d say, ‘Oh man.’ But if you didn’t pay attention, then I would really go.”

Even in her 80s, during that video interview at the 2009 reunion of the AAGPBL, Kurys showed a glimpse of the personality that made her such a threat on the basepaths. She had the charisma and confidence baserunners such as Henderson and the Cleveland Indians’ Kenny Lofton had on the men’s side. Runners like Lofton, who were as good as on third base once they got to first, could single-handedly change a game, and they knew it.

Kurys once stole seven bases in a game. She bewildered pitchers – and opponents – for years.

“I didn’t like it,” Jochum said of Kurys’ baserunning prowess, all these years later.

The defining moment of Kurys’ career came at the end of that 1946 season, in the championship game against the Rockford Peaches. The score was tied, 0-0, after Carolyn Morris had no-hit Racine for nine innings, but the Belles finally broke through against reliever Millie Deegan.

In the 14th inning, Kurys singled and stole second. Then, as she led off second base, Rockford brought the infield in, and Betty “Moe” Trezza grounded through the right side.

“It was sharply hit,” Kurys told Sargent in 1996. “Rosie Gacioch was playing shallow. I had started to steal third, and Leo Murphy, our manager, just kept waving me to go, winding his arm up, and (yelling) ‘Go! Go!’”

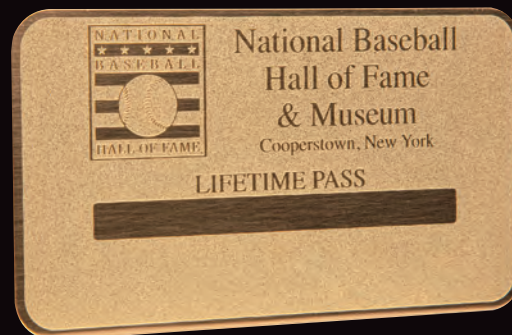
She came barreling home on a hook slide. When the dust settled, Racine had won, 1-0. Kurys went on to be named the league’s Player of the Year that season.

“I have a little bit of pride about that,” Kurys told Sargent. “Because it was the managers that did the picking, and most of them were major league managers.”

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

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Ryan's Hope

THANKS TO HALL OF FAME DETERMINATION, NOLAN RYAN WENT FROM THROWER TO PITCHER OVER 27 AMAZING SEASONS.

By Tracy Ringolsby

BY THE TIME NOLAN RYAN'S CAREER was complete, he had built a résumé that earned him first-ballot election to the National Baseball Hall of Fame, which included being the first pitcher in the modern era active for 27 big league seasons.

And to think, the pitcher most closely linked to the fastball – and longevity – almost ended his career before it began.

A 12th-round draft choice of the Mets in 1965, he did have big league exposure in five seasons with New York, but never could claim a regular slot in the rotation – which led to the team including him as part of a package deal to the California Angels for Jim Fregosi following the 1971 season.

“You always hate to give up an arm like Ryan's,” then-Mets manager Gil Hodges said at the time of the trade. “He could put it together overnight, but he hasn't done it for us and the Angels wanted him. I would not hesitate to make a trade for somebody who might help us right now, and Fregosi is such a guy.”

Rest assured, Ryan wasn't upset at the transaction.

“I was frustrated with the Mets,” Ryan said. “I wasn't pitching on a regular basis. I was ready to go home and do something else. (My wife) Ruth convinced me to stick it out.”

Then-Angels general manager Harry Dalton celebrated the trade.

“We picked up one of the best arms in the game,” Dalton said. “We know of the control problems, but he had the best arm in the game, and at 24 he is just coming into his own.”

That following spring, however, Ryan faced another gut check. At the end of Spring Training in 1972, the players went on strike, which delayed the start of the regular season.

“We weren't getting paid,” Ryan said. “I had rented a house in Anaheim. I had a rent payment due, and I didn't have any money. I honestly thought I needed to go home and get a job because we didn't know how long the strike was going to last.

“I was frustrated because I went to the Angels with the mindset that it was going to be an opportunity for me to be in the rotation and pitching on a regular basis, and I had a terrible spring. I was wild as all get out. I was very frustrated.”

With encouragement from Ruth, however, Ryan decided to give baseball a final shot with the Angels.

“What we ended up doing is calling a banker I knew in Alvin (Texas) and borrowing \$1,500 against my tax return.”

And the rest, as they say, is history, with achievements that included:

- Seven no-hitters (three more than any other pitcher in MLB history);
- Appearances in 27 big league seasons;
- A career .204 batting average allowed;
- A career that stretched through the administrations of seven U.S. Presidents.

So, it is no surprise that in 1999 the Baseball Writers' Association of America voted Ryan into the Hall of Fame, his name appearing on 491 of the 497 ballots (98.8%).

More difficult to believe is that after the Angels advanced to the postseason for the first time in franchise history in 1979, general manager Buzzie Bavasi let Ryan leave as a free agent, convinced that the fire-baller was on the downside of his career. Ryan, however, didn't buy that idea, and history proved him correct. He went on to pitch 14 more big league seasons – all of them in the Lone Star State. He took the mound for nine years with the Houston Astros and for five more with the Texas Rangers.

And he did it with a focus and determination that underscored his career.

As the 1986 season came to an end, Ryan admitted he had been pitching through a throbbing right elbow. He visited Dr. Frank Jobe and was told there was a ligament tear. Jobe suggested Tommy John surgery.

Ryan balked.

He would turn 40 during the offseason. He'd already had a fulfilling career. And doctors were still refining the elbow surgery that Jobe made famous after treating lefty Tommy John successfully about a decade earlier.

“It was a 15-to-18-month recovery back then, and at my age that didn't make any sense,” he said.

Ryan had such a stringent offseason workout routine to maintain his strength that he didn't feel he could keep his focus if he knew he would miss at least a full season, most likely more.

“Dr. Jobe said there might be scar tissue that would hold [the ligament together],” Ryan recalled. “I decided to go home and see what would happen. Around Dec. 15, it quit hurting. Then it was sore the first 10 days in spring, but it went away, and the rest is history.”

What followed was seven more big league seasons that continued to build Ryan's legend as the greatest fastball pitcher of all time. He

Nolan Ryan pitched a modern-day record 27 seasons in the big leagues – seven coming after he suffered an elbow injury that threatened to end his career.



led the National League with a 2.76 ERA in 1987, the start of a four-season streak of both 200-plus strikeouts and 200-plus innings, winning strikeout titles all four seasons.

And before Ryan retired following the 1993 season, he also added the final two of his record seven no-hitters.

Those no-hitters would come with the Texas Rangers, where he spent the final five seasons of his career. There was a 5-0 effort at Oakland on June 11, 1990, and a 3-0 no-hit victory against Toronto in Arlington, Texas, on May 1, 1991.

Ryan, however, admits a special feeling for that June 1, 1975, no-hitter he threw against the Baltimore Orioles, the fourth of his career. It ended with Bobby Grich, who would become a teammate of Ryan's with the Angels two years later, taking a game-ending called third strike – on a changeup.

“He just dropped his bat and stared at me,” Ryan said.

Ryan was known for his fastball, a consistent upper-90s pitch that would reach triple figures at times, back when radar guns picked up a pitch's velocity as it crossed home plate, as opposed to the modern-day method in which it is measured as the ball is released, accounting for as much as a five mile-per-hour difference.

NOLAN BY THE NUMBERS

- In 1987, his age-40 season, Nolan Ryan led the NL in strikeouts and ERA. He posted a WHIP of 1.14. The Astros scored zero or one runs in a quarter of his 34 starts. His record was 8-16.
- Hall of Famer Edgar Martinez struck out in 53 percent of his at-bats against Nolan Ryan. He struck out in 17 percent of his at-bats against everyone else.
- Nolan Ryan faced Roger Maris, Mark McGwire and Barry Bonds.
- Rod Carew (29), Andre Dawson (25), Carlton Fisk (24), Reggie Jackson (22), Jim Rice (19), George Brett (18) and Tim Lincecum (18) are Hall of Famers who struck out more against Nolan Ryan than anyone else in their careers.
- Nolan Ryan recorded at least one strikeout against 47 different Hall of Famers, not including pitchers.
- Nolan Ryan made six starts for the Astros in May 1980. They scored six total runs for him. He still won two of those games.
- From 1973 through 1991, there were 300 games in which a pitcher went nine or more innings and allowed two or fewer hits. Ryan accounted for 26 of them.
- Nolan Ryan struck out 26 percent of the batters he faced in the 1970s (2,678 of 10,453).

The film *Facing Nolan* debuted in 2022 and is the definitive documentary of a Texas and Major League Baseball legend. Learn more at facingnolan.com.

However, he is the first to explain that the key to his evolution as a pitcher was in those early days with the Angels, where he learned the importance of adding the curveball and a changeup to his arsenal.

“In the minor leagues, I had good success with my fastball,” Ryan explained. “Rookie League, (Class) A ball, there is a weeding out process. Those kids didn't have the ability to

move up. I pretty much dominated them.”

The big leagues were a different story. Enter Tom Morgan, the Angels' pitching coach when Ryan was acquired from the Mets. Ryan considers Morgan “the most influential” pitching coach in his career.

Morgan was the coach who drilled home the importance of adding pitches to his repertoire. And Ryan quickly got the message, realizing that hitters were so focused on not being beaten by the fastball he could catch them off guard.

Need proof? He won 19 games and posted a 2.28 ERA in his first season with the Angels.

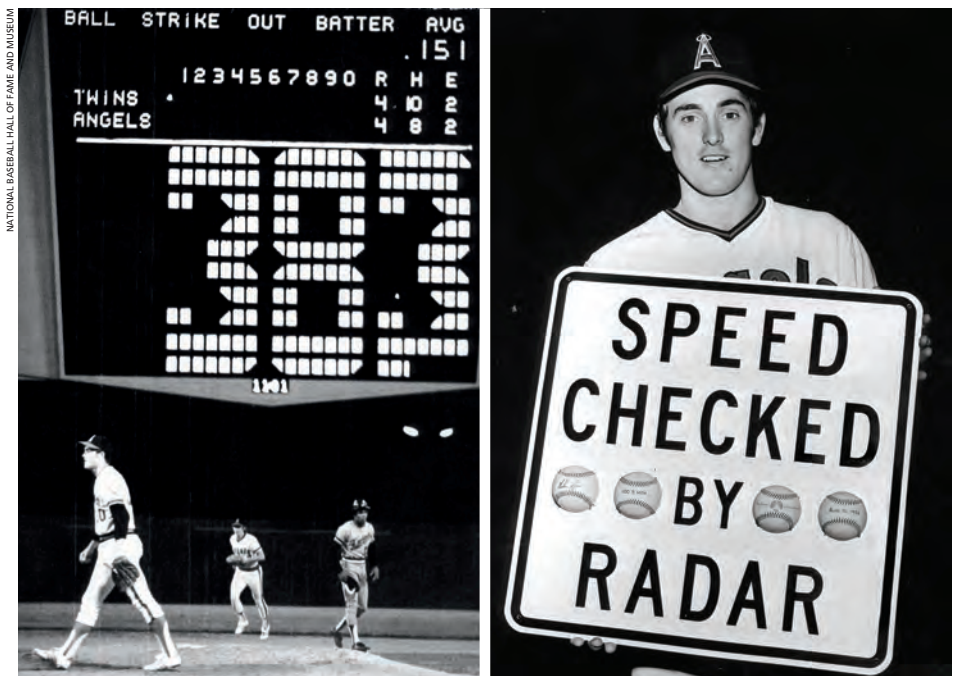
“You see more hard throwers in the game today than ever, but that's all they are, hard throwers,” Ryan said. “You don't see a lot of pitchers. You don't see them working in and out and commanding other pitches.”

Ryan knows all about that approach. He had the same problem. And then he met Morgan, who provided the foundation for the success Ryan enjoyed.

It was a foundation based on the most basic of skills: Throwing the baseball harder than anyone else.

“I was blessed with that ability,” Ryan said. “It was surely a gift.” 🍎

Tracy Ringolsby, the winner of the 2005 Baseball Writers' Association of America Career Excellence Award, has covered baseball since 1976.



Nolan Ryan struck out a modern-era record 383 batters during the 1973 season, a mark that still stands. Perhaps no other pitcher in history is associated with the fastball as Nolan Ryan, who set strikeout records that may never be approached.



BASEBALL HALL OF FAME BOOKS



118
"Some of the wounded survivors of the ill-fated warship speak in glowing terms of the team's former prowess and believe that some of the crack nines of the big league would have had to hustle in a contest with the sailor laddies who have made their last home run."
—The Savannah (Georgia) Morning News, May 27, 1898

The USS Maine baseball team and their goat pose for a picture, circa 1897. In an era when professional baseball was wholly segregated, the Maine's Black pitcher William Lambert (back row, far right) helped the squad win the Navy's 1897 baseball championship. The team never played another game, for the Maine famously and mysteriously exploded off the coast of Cuba on February 15, 1898, helping to spark the Spanish-American War. Over 260 men were killed, including everyone in the team photo save John Bloomer (back row, far left) and the ship's four-legged mascot.

Photograph by George C. Meigs

PICTURING AMERICA'S PASTIME

Historic Photography from the Baseball Hall of Fame Archives



Visit shop.baseballhall.org/hofbooks to check out our selection of Baseball Hall of Fame books and publications

In a Pinch

SOME OF THE WILDEST TALES IN BASEBALL HISTORY HAVE SPRUNG FROM THE EXPLOITS OF SUBSTITUTE BASERUNNERS.

By Steve Wulf

Once upon a time, a stranger in a foreign land felt someone touching his ankles.

The man was a world-class sprinter named Herb Washington, and the time was 1974. Washington had decided to try his feet at baseball with the Oakland A's, and in one of his 92 pinch-running appearances that season, he found himself standing at first base against the Chicago White Sox.

"Dick Allen, the first baseman, sauntered over," recalled Washington, now a successful businessman in Boardman, Ohio. "He bent down and started feeling my ankles. Then he said, 'I race thoroughbreds you know, and this is how I can tell if they'll be any good.'"

To get a feel for a pinch-runner in baseball, you don't need to go quite that far. But you should know that they are sent into a game for all sorts of reasons: urgency, emergency, relief, daring, even jollies.

Back in the beginnings of baseball, "courtesy runners" were a common practice – by gentleman's agreement, teams were allowed to substitute for a player who was injured on the base paths. But then, necessity became the mother of invention. And the father was John McGraw.

When New York Giants pitcher Bugs Raymond was beamed on Sept. 1, 1909, McGraw had a rookie outfielder named Bill O'Hara run for him. He proceeded to steal second and third. The next day, McGraw again used him as a pinch-runner, and again O'Hara stole second and third. McGraw soon found out that O'Hara couldn't hit,

but from then on, he started collecting pinch-runners.

One of them was Jim Thorpe, the great football player and hero of the 1912 Stockholm Olympics. After he was stripped of his gold medals for playing minor league baseball, Thorpe decided to play for the Giants in 1913. McGraw first used him as a pinch-runner and pinch-hitter, though Thorpe didn't much like it.

"I felt like a sitting hen, not a ballplayer," he said.

Another pinch-runner of note was Sammy Byrd. He is the answer to the trivia question, "Who is the only man to ever play in the World Series and The Masters?"

Byrd's nickname was "Babe Ruth's Legs." That's because in the years after the Yankees brought him up in 1929, he was often used as a pinch-runner and defensive replacement for the aging Ruth. That's how he got into the 1932 World Series against the Cubs, as the last-inning left fielder in the Yankees' 13-6 victory that completed their sweep.

The Yankees knew Sammy was a good golfer – Ruth often played with him. But they didn't know how good until after Byrd left baseball following the 1936 season. He became a golf pro and ended up competing in five Masters, finishing third in the '41 tournament behind Craig Wood and Byron Nelson.

If Byrd's pinch-running story was the stuff of fiction, Jim Delsing's was the stuff of farce. And, oddly enough, he had John McGraw to thank for becoming a footnote in baseball history.

In his book *Veeck As In Wreck*, Bill Veeck Jr. recounted how he came up with the idea for his most famous stunt when he owned the St. Louis Browns in 1951. He remembered overhearing McGraw talk with his father, Bill Veeck Sr., the president of the Chicago Cubs, about a little person employed by the Giants for good luck.

Wrote Veeck, "He would always swear to my father that one day before he retired, he was going to send his gnome up to bat."

With the Browns in the cellar and the fans staying away in droves, Veeck asked a booking agent to find him a "gnome," and he came up with 3-foot-7 Eddie Gaedel. Then Veeck swore his closest associates and Gaedel to secrecy.

And so, in the second game of a double-header against the Tigers on Aug. 19, a man wearing the uniform of 7-year-old batboy Billy DeWitt Jr. came out of the Browns dugout in the bottom of the first.

The public address announcer told the crowd, "For the Browns, Number One/Eighth, Eddie Gaedel, batting for Saucier." After manager Zach Taylor presented home plate umpire Ed Hurley with the necessary papers, Gaedel entered the batter's box and the crowd went wild.

Starting pitcher Bob Cain laughed as he tossed four balls above Gaedel's miniscule strike zone. Gaedel trotted down to first, and then relinquished the bag to Delsing.

As for Delsing, he had a noble 10-year career in the majors highlighted by his 1953 season with the Tigers, when he hit .288 with 11 homers and 62 RBI. One of his sons, Jay Delsing, became a PGA golfer, and one of his grandsons, Taylor Twellman, grew up to be a star forward for the New England Revolution in the MLS and the U.S. national team.

Now a commentator for ESPN, Twellman said: "He would go to all my games, whether they be baseball, basketball or soccer. When I got a little older, he once let slip that he thought it ironic that he played 10 years in the majors alongside men like Joe DiMaggio and Al Kaline, but all people remember him for is the Eddie Gaedel game. He didn't

sound bitter – he said it in a way that was both proud and self-deprecating.”

Believe it or not, that may not have been the craziest stunt involving a pinch-runner in baseball history. Competing for the honor is Hall of Fame pitcher Dizzy Dean, and the scene of his madness was Game 4 of the 1934 World Series in St. Louis. The Cardinals were ahead, two games to one, but the Tigers had a 4-2 lead in the bottom of the fourth when pinch-hitter Spud Davis hit a single to pull the Cardinals within one. Before manager Frankie Frisch could send in a replacement for the slow-footed Davis, his 30-game winner decided to be the pinch-runner.

Granted, Dean was a good runner, but he had won Game 1 and was scheduled to pitch Game 5 the next day. Pepper Martin hit a certain double-play ball to Charlie Gehringer, who scooped it up and tossed it to shortstop Billy Rogell, who threw the ball ... right into Dean's forehead. After Dizzy dropped to the ground, his brother Paul, also a pitcher, rushed out to help carry him off the field as Cardinals fans prayed that Dizzy would be all right.

He was. The story goes that a St. Louis newspaper reported that, “Doctors X-rayed Dizzy's head and found nothing.” So he pitched Game 5 the next day, losing 3-1, and worked Game 7 on one day's rest, throwing a six-hit shutout to win the Series, 11-0. That's right – when the Tigers looked up at the scoreboard at the end, they, too, found nothing.

Because they were good athletes, pitchers were often used as pinch-runners. Pedro Ramos, for instance, was so fast that he made 120 pinch-running appearances in his career.

Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Kaat, himself summoned to run 85 times in his 25 seasons, recalled one particular test of Ramos' speed.

“It's my first spring in the majors, 1959 with the Senators in Orlando, and the Phillies came over from Clearwater. One of our coaches had arranged with one of their coaches for a race between Pedro and their fastest guy, Richie Ashburn. Bets were made, and then somebody dropped the towel. Pedro won by a few yards, but as I recall, Richie tweaked a hamstring.”

For sheer athleticism, though, few pitchers of his generation could match Blue Moon Odom of the A's. In the 1972 season, he made 28 pinch-running appearances in between his 30 starts, went 15-6 with a 2.50 ERA, hit two home runs and stole four bases.

One reason Odom was used so often as a pinch-runner was owner Charlie Finley's obsession with speed and his insistence that his managers use it. Like McGraw, he brought in a string of pinch-runners. Allan Lewis was the first of his so-called “designated runners.” In six seasons with the A's, the “Panamanian Express” played in 157 games, 139 of them as a pinch-runner.

Looking for a pinch-runner for his pinch-runner before the 1974 season, Finley made a call to a Michigan State sprinter:

“Hi, this is Charlie Finley, owner of the world champion Oakland A's ...”

“Hi, Mr. Finley. This is Herb Washington, world's fastest human. How can I help you?”



Herb Washington may have been the most famous pinch-runner in baseball history and added to the legendary stories associated with baseball's most unusual substitute.

His new teammates wondered the same thing because Washington had no discernible baseball skills. But he did have confidence and former Dodgers great Maury Wills, whom Finley brought in to tutor him.

Washington made 92 pinch-running appearances in the '74 season, with 29 runs scored, 29 steals and 16 caught stealings. He certainly didn't stop the A's from beating the Orioles in the ALCS and the Dodgers in the World Series. But he did have one moment that left him pounding the dirt in frustration.

It came in the top of the ninth inning

of Game 2 of the Series. With one out, Washington was brought in to pinch-run for Joe Rudi, whose two-run single had narrowed the Dodgers' lead to 3-2. It was a college reunion, of sorts. Washington, first baseman Steve Garvey and relief pitcher Mike Marshall had all gone to Michigan State.

Marshall stepped off the rubber, three times, and Washington scooted back to the bag each time. Then, as he began to take another lead, Marshall threw over to Garvey, who applied the tag to the diving Washington.

“I felt bad for Herb,” said Garvey. “But, hey, all's fair in love and the World Series. Mike had a great pickoff move – I actually took a Kinesiology course from him [in college]. I guess you could say he schooled Herb, too.”

Washington was replaced early the following year in favor of another speedster, Don Hopkins. For his part, Washington used the money he earned from the A's to buy a McDonald's in Detroit, and parlayed that into a chain of McDonald's in the Midwest. That's right – the world's fastest human became a fast-food magnate.

Finley didn't stop with Hopkins. He also acquired Matt Alexander in '75, then Larry Lintz in '76. In his three seasons with the A's, Alexander made 163 pinch-running appearances, stealing 63 bases and earning the nickname of “Matt The Scat.”

“I liked that name,” said Alexander, who was originally signed by the Cubs on the recommendation of Hall of Famer Buck O'Neil. “What I didn't like was the pressure in Oakland. After I got hepatitis in the Mexican winter league, Finley released me 27 days short of my pension.”

Fortunately, Pittsburgh manager Chuck Tanner remembered Alexander from when he managed the A's in '76, so he made him the Pirates' pinch-runner. The Scat not only got his pension, but also a World Series ring as part of the 1979 “We Are Fam-a-lee” Pirates.

When it comes to pinch-runners, The Scat is also The GOAT. He holds the MLB record for most appearances (271), steals (91) and runs scored (89).

“I am proud of that,” he said. “You know, pinch-running is a lot like life. You have to pick a good time to go.” 🍌

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

Arti-Facts

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

Mary Pratt's Suitcase

At 24 years old in 1943, Mary Pratt tried out for Philip Wrigley's newly formed women's baseball league, which would become known as the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL). Pratt, a pitcher for the Rockford Peaches and the Kenosha Comets from 1943-47, used this suitcase during her travels with the league, adorning it with decals she collected along the way.



Mary Pratt

MARK CUNNINGHAM/GETTY IMAGES



Muskegon, Mich., was home to the AAGPBL's Lassies from 1946 through 1950. The team played its home games at Marsh Field, which first opened in 1916 and still stands today.



This suitcase is featured in the third episode of the YouTube series *Hall of Fame Connections: Dirt in the Skirt to Sandman*.

To learn more about Mary Pratt's suitcase, follow the QR code to this episode of the Museum's *Hall of Fame Connections* series.

The Abraham Lincoln statue featured on this pennant stands in Chicago's Lincoln Park, just a little over two miles south of Wrigley Field, the site of the league's first tryouts.

Pratt began her pro ball career with the Rockford Peaches, which became one of the best-known teams in the league, thanks to the success of the 1992 movie *A League of Their Own*.



The flags on this suitcase feature only 48 stars. Hawaii and Alaska did not become part of the United States until 1959, over a decade after Pratt's last playing season.

The AAGPBL's Blue Sox of South Bend, Ind., were one of two teams (along with the Rockford Peaches) to play all 12 seasons in the league without relocating.

The AAGPBL, which Cubs owner and chewing gum magnate Philip Wrigley founded in 1943, began as a softball league but later incorporated baseball rules. It was not until one year after Pratt's final season that overhand pitching was allowed.

Our Museum in Action

THESE ONGOING PROJECTS ARE JUST A FEW OF THE WAYS THE NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM'S MISSION IS BEING SUPPORTED TODAY.

baseballhall.org/museuminaction

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, and we'll share selected ones with our "baseball family."

Here is a story from one of our Museum Members:

>>> *I don't have one specific memory of going to the Baseball Hall of Fame. But it's funny how I can use my trips there as a*

timeline from child to young man to father.

My first trip was as a child with my father and two older brothers. Stepping into the

Plaque Gallery, it was the same feeling you get as when you enter the walkway to your seats at a ballpark and see that amazing green grass field for the first time.

My favorite player growing up was Johnny Bench, and one of my brothers said we would go up again when he was inducted. And sure enough, with me at 23 years old, we were there on July 23, 1989, to see Bench and Carl Yastrzemski inducted. An incredible day.

The next trip was a "guys weekend" with friends I worked with. While the first trip was as a child, this was one with four guys sharing great childhood baseball memories.

Then, as a father, have come my favorite trips. I've taken my son to the Baseball Hall of Fame three times: When he was 8, 13 and 19.

Six trips to what I consider my favorite place to visit and I look forward to the next trip.

John McNamara

Member since 2011

PHOTOS TO BE DIGITALLY PRESERVED

Thanks to a number of generous donors, our Hall of Famer photograph collection has been nearly funded in full – 339 of the 340 Hall of Famers have received the needed support to digitally preserve these important photo files. Many of these photographs will be added to our online digital collection, which you can browse at collection.baseballhall.org.

Projects recently funded include:



Museum Member John McNamara has visited the Museum with his son three times, creating countless lasting memories for himself and his family.

- **Ford Frick** – Thanks to gifts from Bruce Armbrust, Larry and Trish Buffkin, Donald M. Etheridge Jr., Tom Graves, Wayne Hebden, Lawrence Koellner, John S. Miller, Paul D. Phillips, David Raith, Benjamin J. Wright and an anonymous donor

Joe Cronin, elected to the Hall of Fame in 1956, is the only remaining Hall of Famer photo project that still needs funding. Cronin had one of the most interesting, multifaceted careers in baseball: He was a player, manager, general manager, American League President – and a member of the Hall of Fame’s Board of Directors and Veteran’s Committee.

When the Red Sox retired Cronin’s No. 4 in 1984, Ted Williams had this to say about him: “Joe Cronin was a great player, a great manager, a wonderful father. No one respects you more than I do, Joe. I love you. In my book, you’re a great man.”

The Cronin project is nearly funded; over 71 percent of the \$1,385 has been received. Make a gift today to not only close out the Cronin project, but help complete this initiative to fund the digital preservation of all Hall of Famer photo files.

What You Can Help Us Do

EDDIE SILBER ST. LOUIS BROWNS CAP

Featuring a once-orange “SL” logo, this now-faded cap was worn by outfielder Eddie Silber in 1937. Although Silber had a short major league career, the headgear represents one of the few St. Louis Browns artifacts of the era in the Museum’s collection.

For over half a century, the American League franchise now known as the Baltimore Orioles called St. Louis home. Although Hall of Famers such as George Sisler and Rogers Hornsby played for the Browns during their long baseball careers, the team faced trials and tribulations with losing records and poor attendance throughout their residency in the “Gateway to the West.” Nevertheless, it is important that the St. Louis Browns be documented



This St. Louis Browns cap was worn by Eddie Silber in 1937. Now part of the Museum’s collection, the cap is in need of conservation efforts.

through artifacts such as this cap.

Silber batted .313 in 22 games at the end of the 1937 season. The 23-year-old wore this cap while patrolling right field and at the plate, well before batting helmets were commonly used. After spending the following season with the Browns’ Texas League team, Silber made one last big league appearance in 1939 before playing the rest of his career in the minors.

Time had already taken its toll on the cap when Silber’s son-in-law donated it to the Museum in early 2022. Today, the Museum is seeking much-needed conservation and preservation work on this cap so the St. Louis Browns of the late 1930s can continue to be represented in the collection.

Estimate for conservation to be performed by B.R. Howard and Associates: \$2,962

1896 CUBAN GIANTS VS. ATLANTIC CITY SCORECARD

The Cuban Giants, among the earliest professional Black baseball teams, began in 1885 in part as entertainment for guests at Long Island’s Argyle Hotel. After showcasing their skills on Long Island, the team went on the road, traveling around

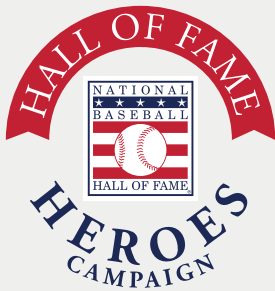
the country challenging local teams and major league talent alike. One frequent stop was famed seaside resort town Atlantic City, N.J.

The 1896 Cuban Giants played at least 10 games against Atlantic City’s top local club, an amateur team comprised of collegiate standouts. A scorecard documenting their July 23 matchup was donated to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in 2022. Three thousand fans congregated at Atlantic City’s Inlet Park for the game, won 6-4 by the home team. According to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, “the game was exciting throughout, and not till the last man was out was the result of the game a certainty.”

The Cuban Giants continued to travel to Atlantic City for years, competing against local white teams as well as other professional Black clubs.

You can honor these pioneers of professional Black baseball by helping fund the restoration of this scorecard, so that it can continue to illustrate this period of baseball history and its broader connection with American culture.

Estimate for conservation: \$2,805



Please consider enrolling today to make a monthly gift through our **Hall of Fame Heroes Campaign**. Your monthly gift will help preserve the greatest moments in baseball history.

Becoming a monthly donor is easy, and a recurring gift of ANY amount – \$10, \$25, \$50, \$75 or more – helps sustain the work we are doing every day to preserve the game.

"THE BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND THE HALL OF FAMERS ARE THE BEST OF WHAT THIS GAME HAS TO OFFER. THE MISSION OF THE HALL IS VERY CLOSE TO MY HEART. IF I CAN GIVE BACK A FRACTION OF WHAT I'VE GAINED FROM THIS GAME AND THE HALL OF FAME FAMILY, IT WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH.

BUT NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE CAN GIVE, I KNOW IT WILL HELP INSPIRE LOVE OF THIS GREAT GAME AND THIS GREAT HALL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS."

– DEB WILLIAMS

With 340 elected members to the Hall of Fame, our goal for this urgent need is to have 340 monthly donors.



MILD STEWART / NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Receive this special "Heroes" cap with a new monthly gift of \$25 or more.

To learn more about this Campaign and to see the list of Hall of Fame Heroes, visit baseballhall.org/monthlygiving.

DOUG McWILLIAMS PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION



COURTESY DOUG McWILLIAMS

Photographer Doug McWilliams donated his life's work to the Museum, and you can help ensure these images are preserved for generations to enjoy. Below: Padres manager Dick Williams is photographed by Doug McWilliams.

As we continue our work to digitally preserve our Photos Archives, the **Doug McWilliams Photograph Collection** is a major initiative. This collection, featuring mostly color images from the 1970s, '80s and '90s, needs to be reorganized, rehoused and conserved.

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.

To learn more about this project and to make a gift to support this initiative, visit support.baseballhall.org/McWilliamsPhotos.

Estimated balance to preserve the Doug McWilliams Photograph Collection: \$75,653*

** Partially funded*



COURTESY DOUG McWILLIAMS

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

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

8 from the '80s

CONTEMPORARY BASEBALL ERA COMMITTEE
TO CONSIDER CANDIDATES FOR CLASS OF 2023.

By Craig Muder

Six batters and two pitchers – all of whom began their big league careers in the 1980s – comprise the Contemporary Era Player Committee ballot that will be considered at baseball’s Winter Meetings on Dec. 4 in San Diego.

Albert Belle, Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens, Don Mattingly, Fred McGriff, Dale Murphy, Rafael Palmeiro and Curt Schilling were named to the ballot by the Baseball Writers’ Association of America’s Historical Overview Committee, which drafts the ballots annually considered by each Era Committee. The Contemporary Baseball Era features two distinct ballots: One for players (considered this fall) and one for managers, executives and umpires (considered in the fall of 2023).

The Contemporary Baseball Era Committee considers candidates whose primary contribution to the game came since 1980.

Belle, who played for the Indians, White Sox and Orioles from 1989-2000, was a five-time All-Star and five-time Silver Slugger Award winner. A three-time American League RBI champion who finished second or third in the league’s MVP balloting in each season from 1994-96, Belle remains the

only player in history to post a 50-home run/50-double season, having done so in 1995.

Bonds, baseball’s all-time home run leader with 762, was a seven-time NL MVP and an eight-time Gold Glove Award winner. Bonds – who played 22 seasons with the Pirates and Giants – set single-season records for home runs (73 in 2001) and walks (232 in 2004). He led the NL in on-base percentage 10 times and paced the league in batting average twice.

Clemens, a seven-time Cy Young Award winner, won the 1986 AL MVP Award and was named to the All-Star Game in 11 seasons. A two-time World Series champion with the Yankees (1999-2000), Clemens – who pitched in 24 seasons with the Red Sox, Blue Jays, Yankees and Astros – led his league in earned-run average seven times.

Mattingly played 14 big league seasons – all with the Yankees – and compiled a .307 batting average while earning six All-Star Game selections, nine Gold Glove Awards at first base and the 1985 American League Most Valuable Player Award. He was a three-time Silver Slugger Award winner and the 1984 AL batting champion.

McGriff totaled 493 home runs over 19 seasons in the big leagues that included eight 100-RBI campaigns. The 1994 All-Star Game MVP and one of the leaders of the 1995 Braves team that won the World Series, McGriff led his league in homers twice while compiling a .377 career on-base percentage.

Murphy earned back-to-back NL Most Valuable Player Awards with the Braves in 1982-83 during a five-year stretch where he won five Gold Glove Awards in center field and four Silver Slugger Awards. A seven-time All-Star, Murphy led the league in home runs, RBI and slugging percentage twice while posting a 30-homer/30-steal season in 1983.

Palmeiro totaled 3,020 hits, 569 homers and 1,835 RBI over 20 big league seasons, earning four All-Star Game selections, three Gold Glove Awards at first base and two Silver Slugger Awards. He posted 10 seasons with at least 100 RBI and at least 30 home runs.

One of only four retired pitchers with at least 3,000 strikeouts and fewer than 1,000 walks, Schilling was named the 2001 World Series co-MVP and owned an 11-2 mark with a 2.23 ERA in 19 postseason appearances. He won 216 regular season games over 20 seasons with the Orioles, Astros, Phillies, Diamondbacks and Red Sox.

The BBWAA will announce its 2023 Hall of Fame ballot in late November, and the results of the election will be announced Jan. 24 live on MLB Network.

The 2023 *Induction Ceremony* will be held July 23 in Cooperstown. 📍

Craig Muder is the director of communications for the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.



Albert Belle



Barry Bonds



Roger Clemens



Don Mattingly



Fred McGriff



Dale Murphy



Rafael Palmeiro



Curt Schilling

Speed of Success

STOLEN BASES WERE A BYPRODUCT OF MY FOCUS ON BECOMING AN ALL-AROUND PLAYER.

By Tim Raines



Tim Raines' speed and all-around skill made him one of the top leadoff hitters in the game's history.

RON VESELY/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

The first position I played on a baseball field was catcher. I could always run fast, but on my first team I was actually too young to play and the only reason they let me play was because they needed a catcher.

I was willing to play anywhere to get on the field.

Baseball was my first sport, but as I got older I fell in love with football. I also played basketball and even ran track in the spring ... but only when we didn't have a baseball game. I ran track, but I didn't go to track practice!

I chose baseball out of high school, giving myself two-and-a-half years to see if I could make it. Right on schedule, at the end of the 1979 season, I got called up to the Expos. Dick Williams, the manager, used me only as a pinch-runner. I thought: "If they're

going to call me up just to do this, I must be doing something right."

Then in 1980, I was brought up from Triple-A in the middle of the season, but I didn't swing the bat particularly well. So they sent me back down and I concentrated on becoming a better hitter and fielder, because I realized that no matter how fast I was, there's no way to steal first base.

Ron LeFlore was the Expos' left fielder and leadoff hitter in 1980, and I learned a lot from him. But he left as a free agent following that year, so now there was an opening in left field and in the leadoff spot. I was a second baseman in the minors, but I learned to play the outfield in Spring Training of 1981 and won the left field job.

When my career started, I didn't feel like it would evolve around the stolen base. I wanted to be an all-around player. Not just

base stealing, but baserunning as well. I wanted to be as good a leadoff guy as I could be. That meant taking pitches and telling my teammates what kind of pitches the pitcher was throwing.

But for a lot of that first full season in 1981, I actually felt like I could steal a base any time I wanted. I stole 71 in 88 games and didn't finish the year like I wanted to because I broke my hand in September and could only pinch-run. If I had been healthy, I'd have had a lot more steals.

But even then, my No. 1 objective wasn't to see how many bases I could steal. My objective was to get on base and score runs – because you can't win a game if you don't score a run. My main job was to give my team as many chances to score as I could. I always felt if you get on the board first, that team usually ends up winning the game. As a leadoff hitter, that was my opportunity.

I could have looked at my career as trying to be the best stolen base player in the game, but I didn't look at it that way. I wanted to get my team in position to score runs early and often because a stolen base didn't win you the game. It just padded your individual stats. If my intention was to be the greatest baserunner of all time, I would have had a whole lot more stolen bases than I did.

I tried to play the right way. I've always felt like baseball is a team sport, and you've got to do the best that you can for yourself, but mostly for the team. The team comes first.

It's funny how things turned out. I know how baseball turned out – pretty good – but I still think about football. All my offers out of high school were to play college football, and I wonder if I could have played at that level and beyond. I know I had the speed.

But I thank God it worked out the way it did. 🍌

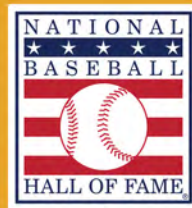
Tim Raines retired with 808 career stolen bases, and his success rate of 84.7 percent is the best of any player in MLB history with at least 400 steals. He was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2017.

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