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Memories and Dreams

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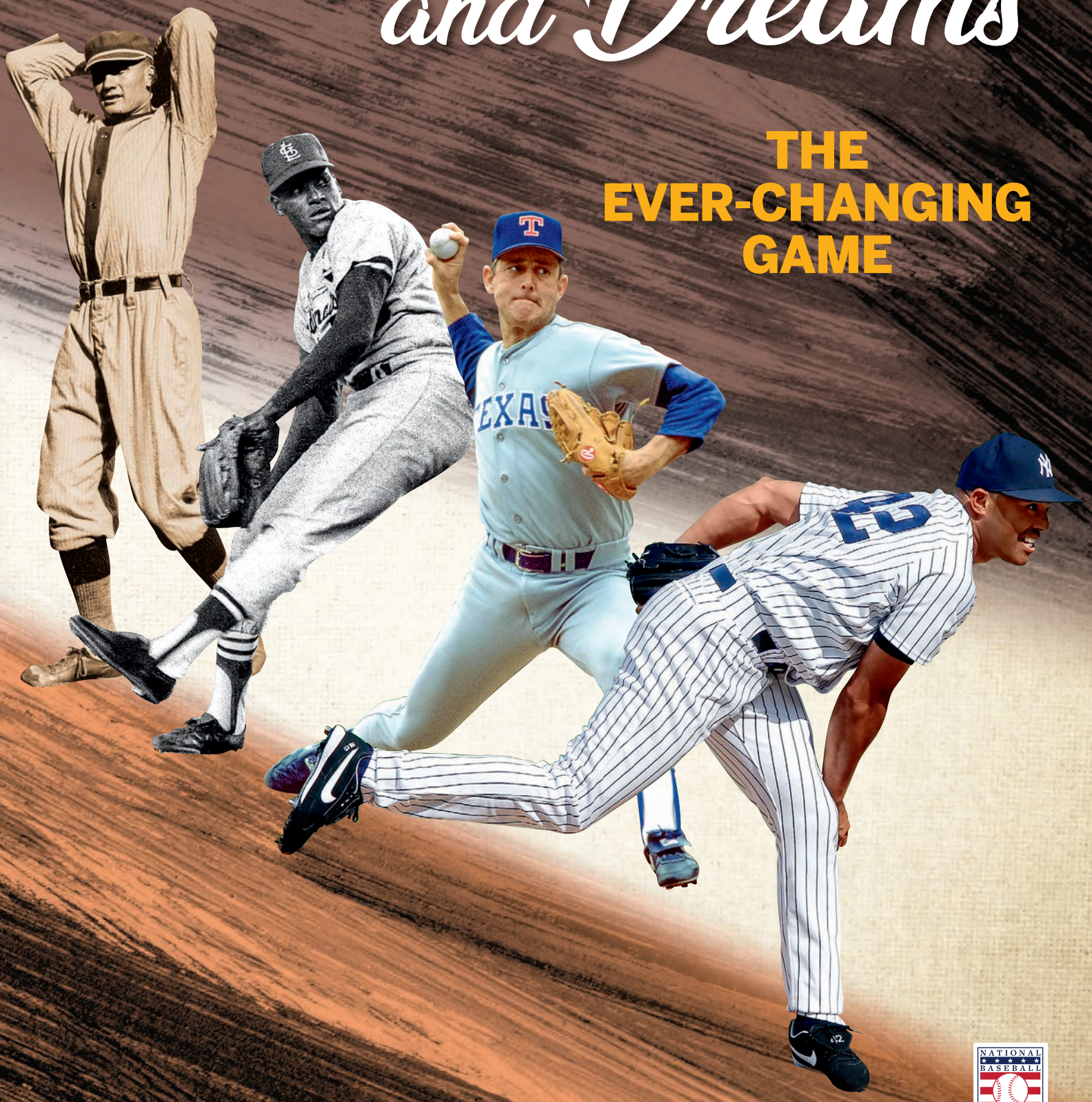

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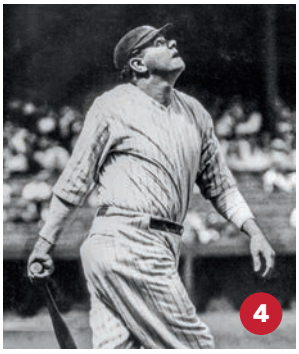

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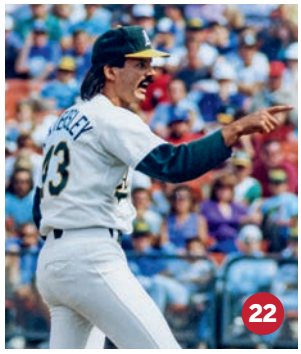

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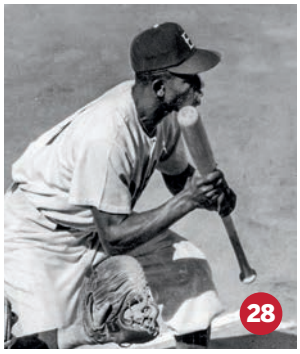

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Evolution of Baseball

OPENING DAY 2023 | VOLUME 45 | NUMBER 2

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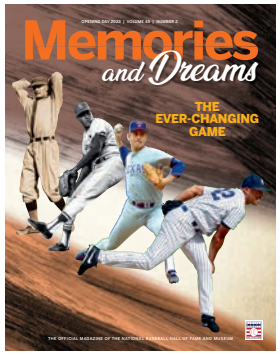


NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM, GETTY IMAGES

ON THE COVER
Hall of Fame hurlers Walter Johnson, Bob Gibson, Nolan Ryan and Mariano Rivera are representative of baseball's evolution through the years.

From the PRESIDENT

As I made my way through the Cactus League this spring, I was fortunate to attend a sun-soaked Friday afternoon tilt between the Padres and Mariners — the very first game where the new rules for 2023 were on display.

It did not take long to see what Major League Baseball's staff has witnessed over the more than 8,000 minor league games where these rules have been tested. The new defensive shift restrictions, pitch timer and even the larger bases will increase the pace of action, resulting in more balls put in play and emphasizing the athleticism of the world's most talented players.

Theo Epstein, who was one of MLB's key consultants involved in these changes, refers to what we are likely to see as a "better version of baseball" — and that means a return to the version that many of us grew up watching. As talented executives like Epstein sought to find advantages for their teams over the past 20 years, they found them in the form of advanced analytics, helping to guide their teams to championships while watching the league batting average drop from .271 in 1999 to .243 in 2022.

The former Red Sox and Cubs GM has properly pointed out that the game is *about* the players but *for* the fans, and these changes were made with all of us in mind. Epstein's acumen recently benefited our institution when he served on the Contemporary Baseball Players Era Committee that elected Fred McGriff in December — and if the thoughtful approach that he and the other committee members employed in that environment is indicative of the approach taken in creating these changes, exciting times are ahead.

Change rarely comes easily, but it is incumbent upon all of us involved in our beloved game to stay relevant for future generations, which is something we talk a lot about here in Cooperstown.

We certainly like and respect our traditions in "America's most perfect village," and some things never change. Prior to his passing at the age of 100, local resident Homer Osterhoudt went to every *Induction Ceremony* from 1939 to 2017, with the exception of the three he missed while serving in the Army in World War II. Our idyllic Main St. offers the same quaint vibe that our grandparents felt when they walked around town, while the unrivaled Otesaga Hotel is the same place where Hall of Famers have stayed for generations. In fact, many may not realize that the local resort actually predates the Hall of Fame and Museum by three decades.

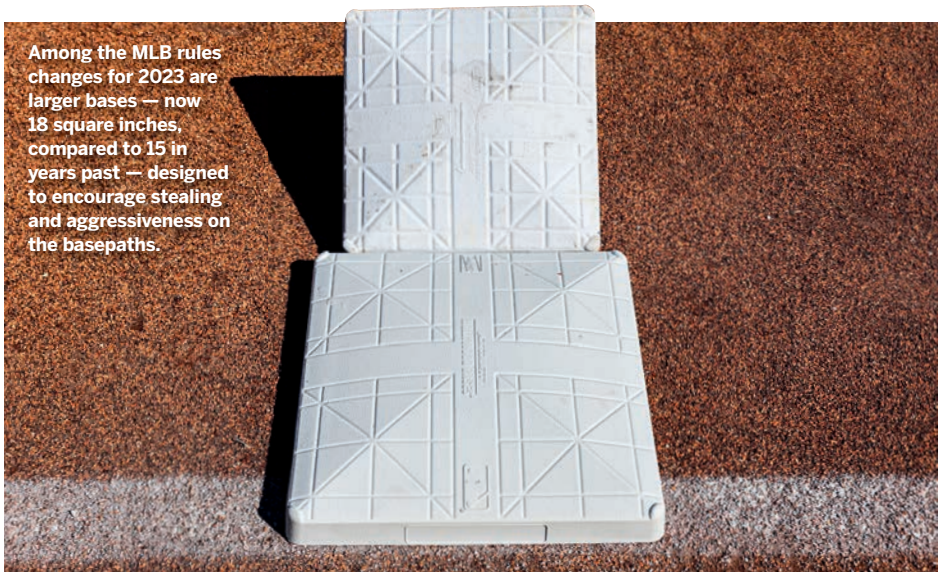
We even have some employees who arrived 35 years ago, shortly after computerization was first introduced to the Museum. Now, our visitors can point their smartphones at QR codes to help guide them throughout their day while utilizing our newly redesigned website to enhance their experience.

This summer, guests will find new interactive opportunities that should drive many to make their first pilgrimage to the Hall or encourage our regular visitors to make a repeat visit to see the latest and greatest. Then as the pennant races heat up at ballparks around the country, we will host the ever-popular Savannah Bananas and their unique brand of baseball at Doubleday Field in September.

All the while, we will continue to preserve history by documenting these changes and adding artifacts, documents and archival material for future generations to learn from and enjoy, just as we did with the introduction of the designated hitter, Interleague Play, the Wild Card and every innovation since we started putting gloves on the hands of our fielders.

One of the reasons our National Pastime is so revered is the feeling that you can compare players from one generation to the next because the game is essentially the same as it was in its earliest days. Baseball has always connected back through history, taking us to bygone eras and allowing us to revisit our own memories. I feel confident that these changes — like those that previous generations may have initially found jarring — won't change what we love about the game.

Even with a pitch clock, baseball remains timeless.



Among the MLB rules changes for 2023 are larger bases — now 18 square inches, compared to 15 in years past — designed to encourage stealing and aggressiveness on the basepaths.

MIKE CARLSON/MLB PHOTOS

Short Hops

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FROM THE HALL OF FAME, VISIT BASEBALLHALL.ORG.

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REMEMBERING TIM McCARVER

Longtime ballplayer and broadcaster Tim McCarver, 81, passed away Feb. 16 in Memphis, Tenn. He is survived by his daughters Kathy and Kelley, and grandchildren Leigh and Beau.

CARTER KEGELMAN/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Tim McCarver was honored with the Hall of Fame's Ford C. Frick Award in 2012.

For six decades, McCarver — the Hall of Fame's 2012 Ford C. Frick Award winner — shared the spotlight when baseball took the national stage. A championship-caliber catcher who seamlessly transitioned into the broadcast booth, he enjoyed a career that spanned from the 1950s to the third decade of the 21st century.

Born Oct. 16, 1941, in Memphis, McCarver starred as a football and baseball player in high school before signing with the Cardinals. As a 17-year-old, he batted .360 for Class D Keokuk of the Midwest League in the summer of 1959 to earn a promotion to Triple-A Rochester and then St. Louis. The eight games he played with the Cardinals that September would one day help put him among a handful of players to appear in MLB games in four different decades. His 21-year career included stops with the Cardinals, Phillies, Expos and Red Sox.

A member of World Series-winning teams with the Cardinals in 1964 and 1967, McCarver retired following the 1980 season — a year in which he also got his feet wet on the national broadcast stage on NBC's *Game of the Week*.

Through the years, McCarver served as part of broadcast teams for the Phillies, Mets, Yankees, Giants and Cardinals.

Nationally, he joined ABC's *Monday Night Baseball* and then went to CBS and The Baseball Network. In 1996, when FOX acquired the main MLB rights package, the network brought McCarver aboard. He remained with FOX through the 2013 season, working a total of 23 World Series — a record at the time of his retirement — and 20 All-Star Games.

STAFF SELECTIONS

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

Name: Joe Doerr

Position: Special Experiences Coordinator

Hall of Fame Debut: September 2022

Hometown: Rochester, N.Y.

Favorite Museum Artifact:
My favorite artifact is a handwritten letter that Ty Cobb wrote to Bobby Doerr in 1951. Growing up a Tigers fan, Ty Cobb was one of my favorite players, and I chose him as the subject of my third grade biography. With nearly three million [pieces] in our archives, and only about 15 percent of our three-dimensional collection on display, it is a really serendipitous coincidence to see a handwritten letter from one of the greats that made me fall in love with baseball — written to the Hall of Famer that I share a name with.

Memorable Museum Moment:
Watching Albert Pujols hit his 700th home run just weeks after my first day at work here and having that moment of realization that I am watching history unfold before my eyes — and will likely have the chance to witness his induction into Cooperstown in just a few short years.

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Babe Ruth's tremendous power — and his willingness to swing for the fences — ended the Dead Ball Era and ushered in the modern game.

Theory of Evolution

CHANGE IS HERE AND HAS BEEN A PART OF BASEBALL FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY.

By Scott Pitoniak

"America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It's been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt, and erased again. But baseball has marked the time. This field, this game — it's a part of our past … it reminds us of all that once was good, and it could be again."

— James Earl Jones in *Field of Dreams*

TRADITIONALISTS WILL TELL YOU that constancy is one of baseball's enduring appeals. And while there is truth to that sentiment, the reality is that the game has never been quite as stagnant and unchanging as one might think. In fact, the National Pastime has not only marked the time, but constantly changed with it. State of flux is a tradition often overlooked in a sport steeped in tradition. Like every institution, baseball has always been evolving, in ways both imperceptible and dramatic.

As Hall of Fame catcher and wordsmith Yogi Berra might have observed: "The more things stay the same, the more they change."

It is human nature to resist change, to rail against it and long for the "good old days." So, it's not surprising that whenever new rules are proposed and implemented, they're often passionately debated and met with harsh criticism. This, too, is a tradition, going all the way back to the game's roots. It speaks to how deeply people care about baseball.

"Change is hard," said John Thorn, Major League Baseball's Official Historian, "especially in what fans view as the unchanging game — the one that connects them with their youth."

During the 2023 season, fans are going to deal with change once more. Sweeping change.

In a desire to make baseball more entertaining and more action-packed, MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred has instituted three major rule changes for the coming season:

- The use of a pitch clock, in hopes of shortening the length of games;
- The banishment of infield shifts, in hopes of spurring more hits and more action;
- The enlargement of first, second and third bases from 15-inch squares to 18-inch squares, as a safety measure and in hopes of creating more stolen bases and offense.

Additionally, MLB will continue starting extra innings with a "ghost runner" at second base — something first implemented in 2020. Each of the rules has its proponents and detractors. Some critics have called them "sacrilegious" and say they will lead to the ruination of the game, while others believe they will save the game.

"Blowback is inevitable," said Thorn, who acknowledges these recent rule changes may rank among the most dramatic ever enacted. "But the Commissioner's responsibility is for the long-term health of the game, despite an anticipated short-term disruption. Of the three major rule changes, the one that may elicit the most groans on the field and off will be the pitch clock, which, by the way, has been on the books [for well over a century]."

Scribes, historians and fans have long waxed poetic about the lack of a clock being one of the main things that separates baseball from other sports. Purists argue that you can't run out the clock in baseball the way you can in football, basketball and hockey; you can't sit on a lead and wait for time to expire. But as Thorn and others have noted, baseball has been on the clock for decades.

"It just hasn't been an overly visible clock, like you see in other sports," said Tom Shieber, the Baseball Hall of Fame's senior curator. "Interestingly, the rule of delivering a pitch in a timely manner was instituted for the same reasons this new pitch clock rule is being instituted: To speed up the game; to get pitchers to deliver the ball in a timely manner and stop unnecessary delays."

The rule was first articulated in the 1901 "Spalding Guide." Since that time, there has been a rule in place requiring pitchers to pitch within some specific amount of time. As Shieber points out, in 2022 Rule 5.07 (c) (3) said that when the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball within 12 seconds after he receives it. If

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Clint Courtney introduced the oversized catcher's mitt in 1960 as a way to harness the knuckleball and also to protect catchers from getting hit with pitches that suddenly changed direction. Improved equipment has been often ridiculed when introduced but later accepted as standard to the game.

a pitcher delayed the game, the umpire was supposed to penalize him by calling a ball.

"Somehow, over time, the rule stopped being enforced by umpires," Shieber said. "Failure to enforce certain rules also is a baseball tradition."

In 2023, pitchers will be required to pitch within 15 seconds without baserunners and 20 seconds with them. Additionally, batters will be required to stay in the batter's box, ready to hit within eight seconds remaining on the clock, or they will be penalized with a called strike. The rules, which have been tested in various levels of the minor and independent leagues, resulted in games being shortened an average of roughly 25 minutes, and there was a noticeable increase in the number of stolen bases and a slight uptick in batting averages.

This issue of pace and length of games has been debated for at least 166 years. At a historic meeting of New York City-area baseball clubs in 1857, the adoption of a standardized set of rules, which included a 90-foot distance between bases, three outs per inning and nine-inning games, was instituted.

"Up to that point, the game was played until the first team reached 21 runs," Shieber said. "Back then, the most important clock in baseball was God's clock — the sun. When the sun went down, the game was over."

Over time, games have grown longer and longer and longer. According to Baseball-Reference.com, the average time of a nine-inning MLB game in 2022 was three hours and three minutes, continuing a trend that's seen games steadily lengthen from one hour, 47 minutes in 1920. Again, harkening back to pre-1857 baseball, today's games would be considered short, as some games back then ran from sunrise to sunset, occasionally without a winner being declared.

Nineteenth century games also could drag on because foul balls didn't count as strikes. A skilled batter could foul off pitch after pitch — to his benefit, but to the detriment of pitchers, fielders and fans yearning for some action.

"Before 1901, foul balls before the third strike were non-events, neither balls nor strikes," Thorn said. "That may be the great ignored rule change in the game."

Eventually, pitchers went from being underhand-throwing providers whose role was to accommodate batters to overhand-tossing adversaries who used a variety of pitches and deception to get batters out.

During baseball's nascent days, umpires didn't call balls or strikes on every pitch. They would wait until a string of pitches were deemed either unhittable or hittable before making calls. Once every pitch started being called, the pace of games accelerated dramatically.

Bolstering offense also has been a recurring baseball theme and is one of the reasons behind some of the current changes. The elimination of the 19th-century bounder rule, in which batters could be ruled out if a fielder caught a fair or foul ball on one bounce, aided batters, as did the reduction in the number of balls required for a walk from nine to the current total of four.

The transition from the Dead Ball Era to the Live Ball Era, most pronounced in the 1920s, brought the home run into vogue. A slugger with a prodigious appetite for life and baseball named Babe Ruth helped revolutionize the game during that era and make it more popular than ever. Ruth arrived at the perfect time, benefitting from the introduction of a relatively new cork-centered ball, the elimination of the spitball and other trick pitches, and the frequent replacement of worn baseballs with new ones throughout the game.

"Ruth's style increased attendance and raised salaries," Thorn said. "Both of those profound changes were not the product of rules changes."

The Ruthian surge in power and salaries was not embraced by everyone.

"The great trouble with baseball today is that most players are in the game for the money and that's it — not for the love of it, the excitement of it, the thrill of it," Ty Cobb said in 1925, a gripe that's been voiced by every generation since.

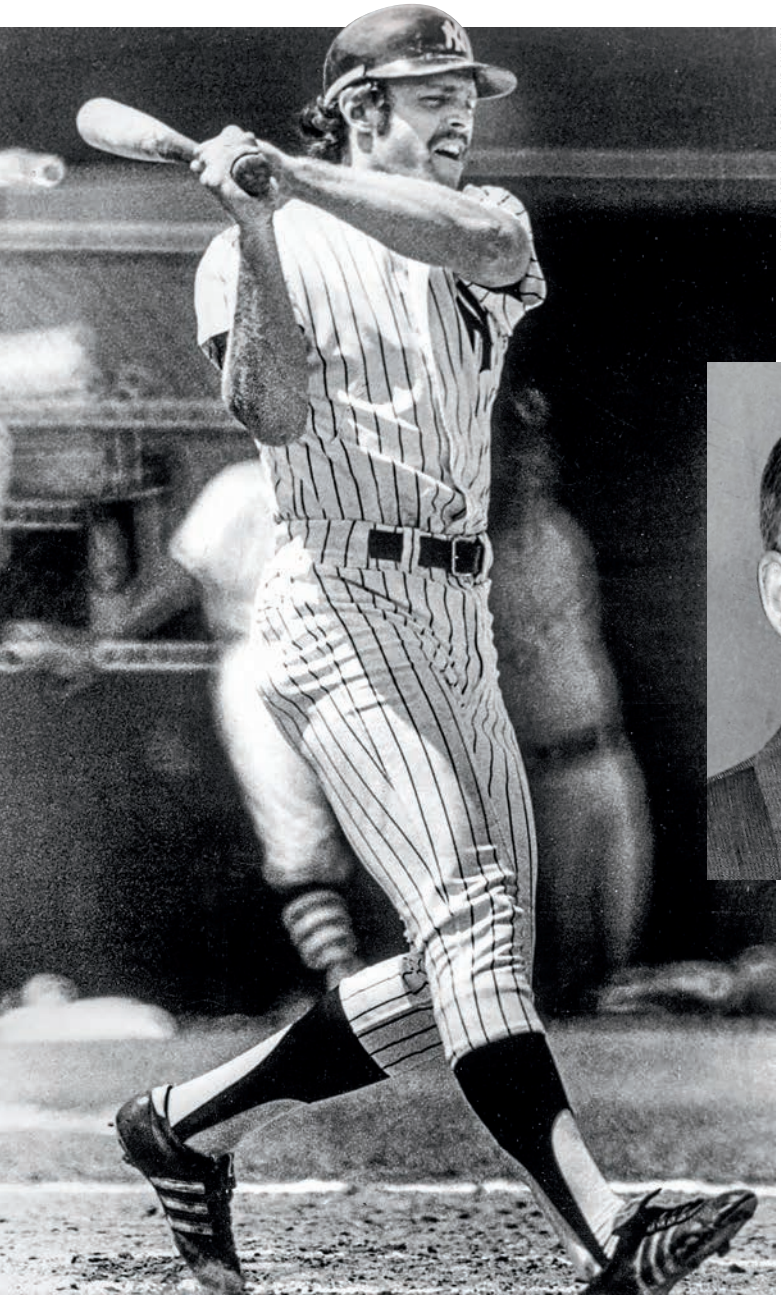
"I wouldn't give a dime to watch a baseball game today," early 20th-century star Edd Roush said in a 1987 interview, echoing another recurring criticism. "I see so many things they're doing wrong. For one, they're all swinging for the fences."

Hmmm. When have we heard that before? Oh, yes. Perhaps as recently as five minutes ago.

Following 1968 — the Year of the Pitcher season that saw Bob Gibson post a miniscule 1.12 earned-run average and Carl Yastrzemski win the AL batting crown with a .301 average — the powers that be toyed with the idea of moving the pitching rubber back from 60 feet, 6 inches to 65 feet, but instead opted to lower the mound from 15 inches to 10 inches and reduce the strike zone. That had an immediate impact, as the overall batting average rose 16 points in the AL and seven points in the NL in 1969.

Four years later, the American League took further dramatic measures, enacting a designated hitter to bat in place of the pitcher. The outcry could be heard far and wide, and was so repugnant to purists that the NL refused to go along, even though the DH worked, boosting AL averages by 20 points that first season.

"Some of us are traditionalists who find baseball beautiful and consider it a bloody awful shame when the hucksters wrench the game out of shape," wrote Pulitzer Prize-winning sports columnist Red Smith after



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NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Above: Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Red Smith was one of many writers who protested when the American League adopted the designated hitter in 1973. But the DH rule has — like many rules changes — proved popular with fans. Left: On April 6, 1973, Ron Blomberg of the Yankees became the first designated hitter to bat in an American League game. The bat he used is one of many artifacts in the Hall of Fame's collection that document the evolution of baseball.

the DH was implemented. "Now they are altering the music, a lot of tone-deaf hacks rewriting Beethoven."

Interestingly, the designated hitter was first proposed in 1891 but wasn't universally adopted by all of baseball until 2022.

"The most important early rule changes were designed to enhance the offense, whenever the defense, [mostly] pitching, seemed to overtake it," Thorn said. "Baseball is a game of delicate balance, in equipoise between the pitcher and the batter until, almost always, the pitcher tends to dominate. The overseers of the game then attempt to redress the balance."

Many baseball changes have been prompted by player safety. These, too, were criticized. The introduction of gloves and protective catcher's masks and chest protectors were decried. This was underscored in a 1907 poem by Harry Ellard, son of George Ellard, one of the founders of the original Cincinnati Red Stockings in 1869. One stanza reads:

We used no mattress on our hands,
No cage upon our face;
We stood right up and caught the ball,
With courage and with grace.

"There was a feeling that protective equipment was somehow an affront to manliness," Shieber said. "Fortunately, saner heads prevailed and equipment became commonplace. Improvement in gloves would enhance defense, and gear such as batting helmets and catcher's masks cut down on severe injuries and, in some instances, probably saved lives."

As mentioned, not all changes are the result of revisions to MLB's rule book. Integration, starting with Jackie Robinson's shattering of the color barrier in 1947, began a trend of the AL and NL adopting major aspects of Negro Leagues play (stolen bases, aggressive baserunning). That, along with the scouting, development and signing of international players, would have a monumental impact on the game, making it more entertaining and more inclusive, though there remains much work to be done.

Rulings striking down the reserve clause, which bound a player to an organization for life, led to free agency. That freedom of movement among players was supposed to be a death knell, but wound up being a win-win-win for players, owners and fans, a tide that raised all boats. It, along with the introduction of the MLB Draft in 1965, improved competitive balance by preventing the more affluent clubs from hoarding talent.

Media coverage through the years, from newspapers, radio, television and the internet, has played an enormous role, too. As have analytics. Though considered a relatively new development, like many baseball innovations, it is not. John McGraw was employing strategical tactics based on data back in the 1910s. Casey Stengel introduced a platoon system, utilizing right-handed batters vs. left-handed pitchers and vice-versa, during the New York Yankees dynasty of the late 1940s and '50s. Earl Weaver was eschewing sacrifice bunts for three-run homers decades before that became the norm. And Whitey Herzog tailored his speed-driven rosters in Kansas City and St. Louis to take advantage of AstroTurf-surfaced home fields.

Virtually all these changes were criticized.

Which brings us back to our original premise: Constancy and the way the game connects us to our youth remain among baseball's great appeals. But change has been a timeless baseball tradition, too.

Given the game's history, that isn't about to change.

Scott Pitoniak is an award-winning journalist and author who resides in Penfield, N.Y. His latest book is "Memories of Swings Past: A Lifetime of Baseball Stories."

Grand Harmony

BY USING GRANDFATHER CLAUSES, BASEBALL HISTORY OFTEN COMES FULL CIRCLE.

By Steve Wulf

A BASEBALL IS A WORK OF ART. For the official Rawlings major league baseball, that work is done in Costa Rica, where skilled hands sew together two pieces of cowhide over a ball of yarn with a rubber core inside — 216 red thread stitches altogether.

Even in repose, the 5-ounce baseball is a thing of beauty. In motion, either off the hand of the thrower or the bat of the hitter, it takes on a compelling life of its own.

Baseball — the National Pastime — is also worthy of our fascination. It's been sewn together by players and executives, fans and umpires, writers and broadcasters, over the course of a century and a half. But as such, it is a work in progress. Every now and then, Baseball, the one with the capital B, needs a little doctoring.

Which brings us to the "Grandfather Clause," a provision applied to a new rule the way, say, Burleigh Grimes applied a coating of saliva to the ball he was about to pitch. Grimes was trying to win games and further his career with added spin.

The executives are also hoping to change the flight of the game, and the grandfather provision is their way of slipping one by their opponents. Yes, it can be a little messy, but it is an attempt at fairness.

The most famous example of this kind of bargain came in the offseason between 1919 and 1920, when both leagues decided to ban the spitball. But, eventually, they exempted 17 practitioners of the pitch, including three Hall of Famers: Red Faber, Stan Coveleski and Grimes.

AS TIME GOES BY

The grandfather of grandfather clauses in organized baseball was born in infamy. It came about after a July 14, 1887, meeting of the directors of the International League in Buffalo. As the *Newark* (N.J.) *Daily Journal* reported:

> *"The International League directors held a secret meeting … and the question of colored players was freely discussed. Several representatives declared that many of the best players in the league are anxious to leave on account of the colored element, and the board finally directed Secretary White to approve of no more contracts with colored men."*

The color line had been drawn, but there were still some valued Black players in the league, such talents as pitcher George Stovey and catcher Moses "Fleetwood" Walker in Newark, second baseman Frank Grant in Buffalo, second baseman Bud Fowler in Binghamton and pitcher Robert Higgins in Syracuse. To be fair to them and their teams, it was decided that they would be permitted to keep playing, and thus they were "grandfathered" in. Soon enough, though, they saw the writing of bigotry on the wall. As irony would have it, when Fleet Walker stopped playing for Syracuse in 1889, he would become the last Black player in the International League until 1946, when Jackie Robinson joined the Montreal Royals.

The next significant use of the grandfather clause came 33 years later with the spitball ban. It was quite literally a loaded question that mirrored the Wet vs. Dry arguments of concurrent Prohibition. Never mind that heretofore, two of the greatest pitchers had been spitballers — Jack Chesbro (41-12 for the New York Highlanders in 1904) and Ed Walsh (40-15 for the 1908 Chicago White Stockings). Detractors, led by owners Calvin Griffith of the Washington Senators and Barney Dreyfuss of the Pittsburgh Pirates, claimed that the spitter was unsanitary, dangerous, hard on pitchers' arms, difficult to field and, most importantly, difficult to hit. Moreover, Babe Ruth had just captivated America with his 29 homers in 1919, and the owners wanted more of the same. And so, on Feb. 9, 1920, the joint rules committee voted to ban the pitch, along with other doctored pitches such as the "mud ball," "shine ball" and "emery ball."

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

The July 31, 1967, edition of *Sports Illustrated* featured a story on the spitball, which had been outlawed for more than 45 years at that time but was still in vogue in the big leagues. Hall of Famer Burleigh Grimes was the last pitcher allowed to throw the spitball.

Realizing this might be a shock to the system, the American League announced that each of its eight teams could designate two pitchers who would be allowed to use the spitball during the 1920 season, while the National League merely allowed its spitballers to continue without a team quota. All in all, 13 teams offered up 22 names, with the Senators, Pirates and Connie Mack's Philadelphia A's passing. The assumption was that the grace period was only for a year.

Enter Bill Doak, the St. Louis Cardinals' pitcher. According to "Spitballers: The Legal Hurlers of the Wet One," a wonderful book co-authored by Charles F. Faber and Richard B. Faber, it was Doak who spearheaded a campaign to allow spitballers to continue use of the pitch throughout their careers: "The effort got under way during spring training and was carried on in a quiet but effective manner all summer."

The practitioners also did themselves a favor by having very successful seasons: Coveleski, Grimes, Faber, Doak and Urban Shocker all won 20 or more games, while Jack Quinn won 18.

Early in the spring of 1921, both leagues agreed to allow regular spitballers to continue throwing their specialty. There were 17 in all — nine in the American, eight in the National. Taken as a whole, they were a remarkable group who did more than just put slippery elm cough drops in their mouth to increase their flow of saliva.

There were the Hall of Famers: Faber, Coveleski and Grimes. There was Doak, who became the Edison of Leather by suggesting to Rawlings in 1920 that they make a glove with a web between the first finger and the thumb. Ray Fisher, a Vermonter who taught Latin in the offseason, pitched for the Reds against the 1919 Black Sox, then went on to coach the University of Michigan baseball team for 38 years. Shocker, who had four 20-win seasons for the St. Louis Browns and 18 victories for the '27 Yankees, pitched with a heart condition that forced him to sleep sitting up. Quinn, who won 247 games in his 23-year career, pitched his last major league game at the grandfatherly age of 50.

As for Grimes, he kept throwing the pitch until Sept. 20, 1934, when he appeared in relief for the Pirates and struck out Jersey Joe Stripp in a 2-1 loss to the Dodgers. That was the last legal spitter.

But the pitch lived on. It's meant to sink, so naturally, it went underground. Umpires ejected Nels Potter of the Browns on July 20, 1944, for throwing a spitter while he was shutting out the Yankees in the fifth. Saliva gave way to shaving cream, hair tonic, olive oil and emery boards. Doctored baseballs became so pervasive that *Sports Illustrated* did a cover story on "The Infamous Spitter" for its July 31, 1967 issue.

In the story, names like Lew Burdette, Dean Chance, Jack Hamilton, John Wyatt, Phil Regan, Don Drysdale and Gaylord Perry were named, while a 73-year-old gentleman farmer from Trenton, Mo., waxed poetic about the pitch.

"I like to sit in this easy chair by the window here," said Burleigh Grimes. "That way I can look out at the birds and animals that come right up to the back lawn. … I think to myself that everything I've got I owe to the spitball."

Even after the story came out, instances of enforcement were rare. Regan, a Cubs reliever, was tossed for a loaded ball in 1968. Though long suspected of throwing a spitter, Perry wasn't ejected from a game until he was 43 and pitching for the Mariners in his 21st season (Aug. 23, 1982). Nine years later, he was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

CAPPING IT OFF

Age was no excuse for Gaylord, but it was when Fenway Park and Wrigley Field were grandfathered in 1958 and allowed to retain their outfield dimensions after Major League Baseball passed a rule stating that new ballparks had to have a minimum distance of 325 feet from home plate to the left and right field foul poles, and 400 feet in center. Fenway falls a little short on all three counts, while true center at Wrigley is 390 feet away from home. Now that both stadiums are more than

100 years old, we dare you to try and move them.

Adding to the anachronistic feel of Fenway in the 1970s was the Red Sox's backup catcher, Bob Montgomery. In December of '70, Major League Baseball mandated that all players wear helmets when stepping into the batter's box, though it did allow players already in the majors to eschew the added protection. Only three players had the temerity not to do so: Norm Cash, who retired after the '74 season; Tony Taylor, who called it quits after '76; and Montgomery, who played until 1979.

Montgomery, who was fearless enough to fly his own plane, once said, "Helmet? That's what my skull is for." Now 78 and sharp as a tack, he still jokes: "They didn't throw at .250 hitters. But I did wear a protective liner inside the hatband of my Red Sox cap. And I did wear a real batting helmet one time. It was in the minors when I was playing for Louisville, and a wild left-hander named Balor Moore was on the mound, throwing from out of the state fair's Ferris wheel in center field."

When Montgomery hit into a double play in the ninth inning of the Red Sox's 16-4 loss to the Orioles on Sept. 9, 1979, he became the last player to go to bat in a major league game without a hardhat. Somehow, he ended that season with a .349 average and his career with only seven HBPs.

That last cap he wore is in the Museum's collection of artifacts.

"They asked me for it when they had an exhibit on the evolution of the batting helmet," he said. "I actually saw it there when I went to see my old teammate Jim Rice inducted in 2009. I may not be in the Hall of Fame, but my hat is."

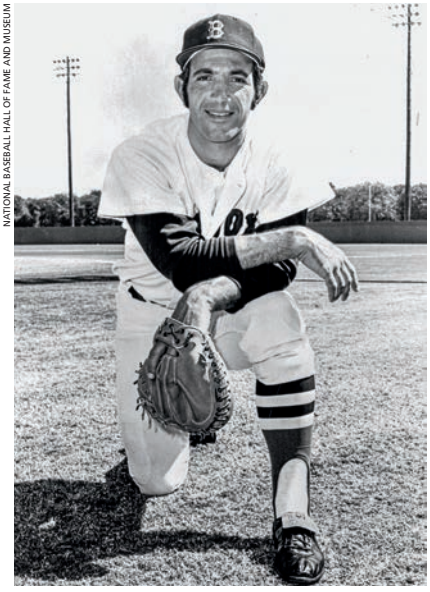
So are two other artifacts belonging to "grandfathers." One is the "balloon" outside chest protector that belonged to Jerry Neudecker, an American League umpire from 1966 until 1985. The AL had decided in 1977 to phase them out and adopt the inside protectors the NL was using, but veterans like Neudecker were allowed to wear the old one.

Oakland A's manager Billy Martin once said of Neudecker: "He's so incompetent that he couldn't be a crew chief on a sunken submarine." But his peers thought differently — they voted him Umpire of the Year after the 1980 season. He was behind the plate for Catfish Hunter's perfect game in 1968 *and* for the Pirates' 1979 World Series Game 7 victory over the Baltimore Orioles. His final game behind home plate was on Oct. 5, 1985, when the Toronto Blue Jays clinched their first AL East pennant with a 5-1 win over the Yankees at Exhibition Stadium.

That was the last game for a regular big league umpire who wore one of those big outside protectors. And Neudecker wore it well — when he passed away at the age of 66 in 1997, fellow umpire Bruce Raven said: "He had a big heart."

Like the protector, he wore that on the outside, too. At the time of his death, Neudecker was training a new generation of umpires.

The other artifact is a size 7 1/8 Florida Marlins helmet worn by Hall of Famer Tim Raines. "Rock" had made seven All-Star teams with the Montreal Expos while leading the NL in stolen bases four times and winning a batting title (hitting .334 in '86), spent another five years with the White Sox and won two World Series rings with the Yankees. So why the Marlins, with whom he finished his career in 2002?



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Starting with the 1971 season, MLB mandated that all batters wear protective helmets but allowed players already in the big leagues to choose to eschew the headgear if they so decided. Bob Montgomery, a catcher for the Red Sox, was the last player to bat without a helmet when he came to the plate on Sept. 9, 1979.

Well, it just so happened that Raines was the last player to wear a batting helmet without earflaps. In 1983, four years after Raines arrived in the majors, MLB mandated that all players wear helmets with ear protection. Exemptions were made, however, for veterans who had submitted written requests. By 2002, Raines was the only writer left.

NUMBERS GAME

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's 1947 debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers, Major League Baseball retired his number, 42, in April 1997. One little problem: 13 players already had that number.

So they were "grandfathered" and allowed to keep the number. For the record, and trivia contests, the players were Butch Huskey, Mike Jackson, Scott Karl, Jose Lima, Mo Vaughn, Lenny Webster, Tom Goodwin, Marc Sagmoen, Kirk Rueter, Jason Schmidt, Dennis Cook, Buddy Groom and Mariano Rivera.

By the start of the 2004 season, all but one of them had retired from baseball: Rivera. The Hall of Fame reliever hadn't asked for the number when he first showed up at Yankees camp in 1995 — clubhouse manager Nick Priore gave it to him. But 42 figuratively came to grow on him. "I decided I better learn about him and understand what he was all about," Rivera recently told MLB.com's Mark Feinsand.

Just months after Rivera retired following the 2013 season, he was given the Jackie Robinson Foundation Humanitarian Award.

While Rivera may have been the last major leaguer to wear No. 42, a man who actually knew Robinson was also given dispensation to wear the number. He is Art Silber, the owner of the Class A Fredericksburg Nationals. He grew up in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, near Ebbets Field. "We hung around the ballpark all the time," said Silber, now an 82-year-old actual grandfather of three. "He and Roy Campanella would often talk to us and sign our baseballs."

Later in life, Silber became a successful banker and minor league owner, and came to know Rachel Robinson, Jackie's widow. When the major leaguers who wore his number were grandfathered in, so was Silber, who coached first base for his team, the Potomac Nats.

He stopped coaching a few years ago, but his new team, the FredNats, is located at 42 Jackie Robinson Way in Fredericksburg, Va., and every year, they conduct a Jackie Robinson Essay Contest.

"He changed so many lives," said Silber. "He certainly changed mine."

The purpose of baseball is to get back to the place where you started. So there's a certain poetic justice in the history of the game's Grandfather Clause. It was first used to help draw the color line in baseball. One hundred and ten years later, it was used to honor the man who erased it.

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

"The Museum is a National Treasure where the legends of the game live forever. It's up to us as fans to make this happen – to keep their legacy alive."
– Bob Crotty

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NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME
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Glove Actually

THE STORY OF THE EVOLUTION OF BASEBALL GLOVES BEGINS IN THE 1870s AND CONTINUES TO THIS DAY.

By Jim Daniel

IN 1919, CARDINALS PITCHER "SPITTIN' BILL" DOAK went to the Rawlings Sporting Goods Company of St. Louis and pitched a new idea in glove design. Essentially, the plan introduced an adjustable laced web from the thumb to forefinger that formed a deep natural pocket and didn't need to be broken in.

Little did Doak know that his idea would revolutionize the fielder's glove as the most important design feature in 50 years. Rawlings rolled out the Doak model to the public in 1920 and hired a chief glove designer named Harry Latina two years later. Gloves soon became indispensable tools of the game.

While some prefer the bat as their trusty tool, it doesn't quite compare to the connection one has with their glove.

The evolution of the baseball glove is fascinating, but even more fascinating is piecing together the various stories and accounts from so many differing sources. Many sources and player memories contradict each other. Meticulous research has been done over the years as to the origin of the glove. Author/historians such as Peter Morris, Harvey Frommer and William Curran unearthed many early accounts of players wearing a glove.

It's common knowledge among baseball historians that gloves first made a brief appearance in the 1860s, grew in the 1870s, were commonplace in the 1880s and were used by most players in the 1890s.

To tell the story of how gloves evolved over the years, we have to start from the beginning.

References to amateur players donning gloves started to appear as early as the 1860s. In most instances it was by a catcher using them to protect sore hands. These gloves were oftentimes flesh-colored or light in color as to not draw unwanted attention to them. Players would purchase or repurpose a set of work gloves or tradesmen's gloves and cut off the fingers. Some players used a bricklayer's glove while others used driving gloves or a railroad brakeman's glove.

But no matter the primary source, gloves were utilitarian in nature and not made as sporting goods. They were repurposed from other trades used for one reason only: Protection. Players improvised and used everything from hay to sponges to raw meat as padding. As pitching rules evolved along with pitch deliveries and the need for catchers to stand nearer the plate, so did the need for protection.

A well-known account of Red Stockings catcher Doug Allison indicated he wore a set of buckskin gloves to protect his sore hands in 1870. Due to the stature of the Cincinnati club, the publicity cast a wide net and paved the way for others.

Charles Waitt was widely known as one of the first fielders to wear a protective glove in 1875, according to Albert G. Spalding. Although Waitt was not the first, Spalding wrote:

"The first glove I ever saw on the hand of a ball player in a game was worn by Charles C. Waite (sic), in Boston, in 1875. He had come from New Haven and was playing at first base. The glove worn by him was of flesh color, with a large, round opening in the back. Now, I had for a good while felt the need of some sort of hand protection for myself … For several years I had pitched in every game played by the Boston team, and had developed severe bruises on the inside of my left hand. When it is recalled that every ball pitched had to be returned, and that every swift one coming my way, from infielders, outfielders or hot from the bat, must be caught or stopped, some idea may be gained of the punishment received.

"Therefore, I asked Waite (sic) about his glove. He confessed that he was a bit ashamed to wear it, but had it on to save his hand. He also admitted that he had chosen a color as inconspicuous as possible, because he didn't care to attract attention. He added that the opening on the back was for purpose of ventilation … Still, it was not until 1877 that I overcame my scruples against joining the "kid-glove aristocracy" by donning a glove. When I did at last decide to do so, I did not select a flesh-colored glove, but got a black one, and cut out as much of the back as possible to let the air in.

"I found that the glove, thin as it was, helped considerably, and inserted one pad after another until a good deal of relief was afforded. If anyone wore padded glove before this date I do not know it. The 'pillow mitt' was a later invention." ***— America's National Game, 1911***

Spalding started the sporting goods company bearing his name in 1876, and his 1877 "Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide" first listed catcher's gloves for sale.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Left: Hall of Famer Bid McPhee was one of the last big leaguers to play without a glove. The acceptance of fielder's gloves took more than a decade but improved the ability of players and therefore the game itself. Right: Bill Doak won 169 games over 16 seasons in the big leagues and was a star during his era. But his 1919 design of a glove with a laced pocket was an innovation that changed the way the game was played and has lasted into a new century.

Austin Butts applied for the first patent on a sporting glove on May 15, 1877, and was granted a patent on Jan. 1, 1878. The Butts glove was similar to a bricklayer glove and used to bear the brunt of the pitched ball. On April 12, 1883, he applied for his second ball glove patent, this time for a fingerless glove. In 1885, George H. Rawlings of St. Louis patented the padded glove.

Providence infielder Arthur Irwin broke a couple fingers on his catching hand in 1883. He had an idea for a protective glove and took it to the J.F. Draper & Co. (later Draper & Maynard) to make it for him. His design was to transform an oversized buckskin driving glove into a padded glove to use on his injured hand so he could play. He continued to wear it after his hand healed and it caught on widely throughout the league. He said he made these gloves for other players as well as companies like Spalding and Reach that ordered them directly for retail sale. D&M then manufactured the Irwin Model for other retailers.

Until this time, gloves were only used at catcher and first base. In addition, the Irwin model further bridged the gap between gloves being homemade to gloves being manufactured as sporting goods and thus work or workman's gloves now became baseball gloves.

These were all gloves — protection with fingers up to this point. The mitt or mitten or "pillow mitt" referred to by Spalding had yet to come along. So catchers wore two padded fingerless gloves on both hands up through the mid-1880s. The catching glove developed padded fingers, and a thinner, smaller fingerless glove was used on the throwing hand to allow the catcher to return the ball to the pitcher. This would all change in the late 1880s with Joe Gunson's design of the round catcher's mitt … but the credit can't be given so quickly.

Many claimed to have invented the round mitt, and Morris wrote about it well. While Jack McCloskey, Paul Buckley, Ted Kennedy and Harry Decker all claimed to have invented it, it's more widely believed that Gunson should be given credit for the idea and that Kennedy took Gunson's idea and patented it prior to Gunson, who didn't really worry about such things. In a 1939 handwritten letter by Gunson to William Beattie, Curator at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum,

Gunson recounts making a mitt out of a glove by sewing the fingers together and using a perimeter wire, belts and sheepskin to be used in two games to be played on Decoration Day in 1888 while playing against Kennedy, the pitcher on the opposing team. Gunson explained his design to Kennedy, who was quick to patent an inferior version of Gunson's mitt. Decker realized the design deficiency then patented a better one more closely resembling Gunson's.

The use of gloves was nearly universal by the end of the 1880s. The 1890s saw baseball gloves progress toward fielding tools. Crescent-padded heels were sewn on the front exterior of the glove to form a pocket. Webs were sewn between the thumbs and forefingers. They started out large and later became smaller to allow more flexibility. Purists like George Wright thought gloves would give fielders an unfair advantage, yet his company manufactured them. In 1895, the rules committee felt the need to restrict the size of a glove to 10 ounces and no more than 14 inches in circumference. The catcher and first baseman were free to use a glove of any size.

With the advent of the automobile and its gaining popularity, the horse from horse-and-carriage fame became more and more obsolete. Horses, and their hides, were abundant, so most gloves were made of horsehide after the turn of the century. Cowhide gloves were still years away.

BRACE HEMMELGARN/GETTY IMAGES

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

Andy Pettitte of the New York Yankees wore this glove on July 1, 2013, when he set the career record for strikeouts by a Yankees pitcher. The glove is one of hundreds preserved at the Hall of Fame.

Not much happened during the Dead Ball Era. Reach's Diverted Seam patent of 1908 was the most important. As glove manufacturers strived for the next best invention, many of them fell flat and are treasured today due to their rarity. Gloves like a duck web ("Duk Fut"), where webs were sewn between all the fingers, started to appear around the same time along with ambidextrous gloves. Fielder's mitts were also produced — mitts that could be worn at any position. The practice of mitts only allowed at first base and catcher did not come until later.

The Draper & Maynard Co. led the way as the preferred glove among professional players until Rawlings really came on the scene with the introduction of the Doak glove. That changed everything. Harry Latina rolled through the 1930s as the leading glove designer and his son Rollie joined the design team in 1947. Harry crossed paths with Hall of Famer Hank Greenberg, who had modified the web of his basemitt to a whopping 13 inches, resembling a fish net, which led to a rule change from the Commissioner's office in 1939 banning mitts over 12 inches from top to bottom. It also led to Latina's revolutionary 1940 basemitt design called the Trapper, which essentially closed around the ball when caught. It was arguably the most exciting and important design feature for basemitts ever. He was king — and then came 1957.

Although there were nearly 100 glove design patents from 1920 to 1957, none were as revolutionary as Wilson's new glove. In Spring Training 1957, Wilson introduced a glove designed mostly by the players. According to the first reference in the 1958 Wilson catalog:

"The glove, known as the A2000, has a bigger, longer pocket … the ball stays trapped and caught, yet easy to retract for your split-second throw. That's the amazing Snap-Action feature! The deep, sewed-in, Grip-Tite pocket allows No Rebound! That ball just can't pop out again!"

The Snap Action heel was the key to the way gloves look today. It allowed the thumb to close over the fingers when a ball hit the web. The Latinas responded to the A2000 with the XPG model and Trap-Eze in 1959 featuring their new Edge-U-Cated Heel patent. Both the A2000 and Trap-Eze remain extremely popular today.

Harry retired a year later, and Rollie filled his shoes as head designer. Rawlings led the way through the 1960s, experimenting with different hides like kangaroo, which was lighter and softer but not as durable. The same was true of buffalo leather.

The 1980s and '90s saw the use of synthetics and other artificial materials, which were lighter and more durable, but design features tailed off slightly. After Wilson's game-changer, and the leading Rawlings patents of the '60s, gloves changed very little and new patent features were subtle.

Glove design has come a long way in its journey from protection to performance. When showing someone a vintage glove, the response is always the same: "How did they ever catch with these!"

Jim Daniel is a baseball glove historian and enthusiast who resides in Huntington Beach, Calif.

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Thanks to generous donations, the items pictured here have been preserved for future generations. Clockwise from top left: Henry Aaron photograph collection, Babe Ruth bowling ball bag, Betty Yahr AAGPBL cap, Roberto Clemente photograph collection, Cool Papa Bell spikes, Ty Cobb glove and Bob Feller spikes.

Field Level

WONDERFULLY QUIRKY BALLPARK FEATURES HAVE ENRICHED THE GAME FOR CENTURIES.

By Dan Schlossberg

THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF BASEBALL, even before the founding of the National League in 1876, the game has been played in thousands of venues, each with its own distinctive personality.

All 30 current MLB franchises have had multiple playing fields or major renovations to their home stadium, and with non-uniform dimensions the norm, baseball parks have become part of the fan experience in ways unlike any other sport.

"I was one of the [umpiring] crew members who opened Camden Yards," umpire Al Clark, who worked in the American League from 1976-2001, said of Oriole Park at Camden Yards, opened in downtown Baltimore in 1992. "When we walked in and saw it, we realized it was different than any of the cookie-cutter stadiums that were so prevalent then. It was almost like stepping back into history. Just about every ballpark since then has been built like that."

But even the multi-purpose stadiums of the 1970s had their unique aspects. And for parks built before and after, the stories of their quirks and quaintness could fill volumes.

The two oldest existing MLB stadiums, Fenway and Wrigley, are on the National Register of Historic Places. Like many ballparks of the early 20th century, they were squeezed into existing neighborhoods with their shapes dictated by streets and trolley tracks.

Fenway Park opened on April 20, 1912, but got little exposure in the local Boston press because the Titanic sank off nearby Newfoundland the same week.

Two years later, Wrigley opened as Weeghman Field, a Federal League facility, but changed to its current name after the Cubs settled there and the Wrigley family acquired the club.

The only city to host three teams at once, New York arguably had the ballparks with the most quirks.

Ebbets Field, opened in 1913, had a reputation as a perfect place for left-handed hitters. Its distance to right field was only 297 feet, as opposed to 348 feet down the left field line, but Dodgers icon Duke Snider insisted he lost almost as many homers as he gained because of a scoreboard that towered 40 feet above the field.

Playing the outfield at the Polo Grounds, the horseshoe-shaped home of the New York Giants, was even tougher. It measured 259 feet to right field and 279 down the line in left — with a 15-foot overhang that cut the distance to 264 if a fly ball grazed it — but 483 feet to center, with clubhouses located in an indented section of outfield.

The dimensions were dramatized in Game 1 of the 1954 World Series, when the Giants' Willie Mays caught a mammoth drive to center by Cleveland slugger Vic Wertz and, innings later, pinch-hitter Dusty Rhodes delivered a walk-off three-run homer for New York on a fly ball to right that might have gone half the distance.

On the other side of the Harlem River, the Yankees were thriving in "the House That Ruth Built," a nickname that referred to the revenue the team raised after buying Babe Ruth from the Boston Red Sox on Dec. 26, 1919.

When Yankee Stadium opened in 1923, Ruth and, later, fellow left-handed batter Lou Gehrig were the chief beneficiaries of the short right field wall. Although the short porch survived remodeling and replacement of the original edifice, the stadium's monuments did not.

As Ron Blomberg, baseball's first designated hitter on April 6, 1973, remembers: "I was playing first base and somebody hit a ball that went behind the monuments. The ball was out of sight but (Yankees center fielder) Bobby Murcer went around the monuments to get it and throw it in. It turned out to be an inside-the-park home run."

For years, the distance from home plate to right field was 296 feet, but the distance to center was 461. Joe DiMaggio, who batted right-handed, was frustrated by those dimensions, which short-circuited his power, and would have been better off aiming at Fenway Park's Green Monster for half the schedule. Had he been traded (a deal was famously rumored in the late 1940s) to the Red Sox for Ted Williams, a left-handed batter whose swing was made for Yankee Stadium, both might have challenged Ruth's records.

When the second edition of Yankee Stadium opened in 1976, the façade that ringed the top of the park remained but the monuments were moved behind the center field wall to become Monument Park. It included the first one, dedicated in 1932 after the untimely death of manager Miller Huggins. There's even more to see in Yankee Stadium's interior museum.

When Oriole Park at Camden Yards opened in 1992, it created a new standard for MLB ballparks — combining modern amenities with classic design.

Crosley Field in Cincinnati and Forbes Field in Pittsburgh featured inclines, rather than warning tracks, to warn outfielders they were running out of room.

"When I came up with the Reds," Art Shamsky recalled, "that terrace went all the way around the outfield. But it was higher in left field than right field. I learned to play with one foot on the terrace and one foot off."

Later a hitting hero for the 1969 Miracle Mets, Shamsky said the area not only pre-dated the warning track but also allowed teams to handle overflow crowds, with the sloping terrace allowing for better viewing.

"They used to allow people on the field to stand there and watch games, but they had to be higher than the outfielders so they could see."

The outfield dimensions at Forbes Field were so deep that light towers stood inside the playing field, along with a batting cage stored in left-center.

According to Jim Kaat, who joined the Hall of Fame in the Class of 2022, Fenway had more quirks than anywhere else he pitched.

"You're sort of at the whims of the ballpark you're playing in," Kaat said. "Look at the Bucky Dent home run (in the 1978 AL East playoff game). If that game had been at Yankee Stadium, it would have been a can of corn to the left fielder."

Kaat has seen a lot — from Bill Veeck's exploding scoreboard at Comiskey Park to the advent of artificial turf and domed ballparks.

He laughs when he thinks of the various tricks groundskeepers used to gain home-field advantage.

"In Comiskey Park, the White Sox won the pennant in 1959 because they had guys who could run. Luis Aparicio would drop a bunt that would stay fair because the foul line was slanted toward fair territory. The Twins let the infield grass grow to make it easier for Harmon Killebrew [to reach balls] at third base.

"And I loved the Dodger Stadium mound, which had lots of slope because of Sandy Koufax. The league would come and measure it, and then after they left, the groundskeepers said, 'OK, we can slope it, they won't be back for another month.'"

Built by the owners, ballparks are tailored to fit the home team by its grounds crew. "Ashburn's Ridge" at Connie Mack Stadium helped future Hall of Famer Richie Ashburn win a batting title by nudging his bunts and infield singles into fair territory. Years later, when Maury Wills was stealing bases with abandon, the groundskeepers at Candlestick Park allegedly saturated the infield to thwart his traction before the Giants-Dodgers NL pennant playoff of 1962.

Kaat is a fan of natural grass. "The original (artificial) turf played very fast," he said. "You could give up a lot of singles that would have been outs on grass."

He also prefers hand-operated scoreboards, such as those at Fenway and Wrigley, as opposed to the Comiskey's enormous exploding

BOB BUSSER/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Cincinnati's Crosley Field, which featured an incline in the outfield to warn fielders of the approaching wall, was in use by the Reds until midway through the 1970 season.

scoreboard — the Bill Veeck creation that launched a parade of home run salutes in ballparks.

"One of our hitters hit a home run and it went off by mistake," said Kaat, who pitched for the White Sox from 1973-75. "Harmon hated it during day games because it was red, white, yellow and blue in different places, and the ball seemed be coming out of the light area of the scoreboard."

Visibility was also a problem in Parc Jarry, the makeshift facility that housed the expansion Montreal Expos in 1969. During the summer months, the setting sun blinded the first baseman on throws coming from the left side of the infield. That created occasional "sun delays" that lasted up to 20 minutes.

Batters had trouble in Montreal, too.

"In the summertime," Al Clark said, "with the pitcher coming over the top, his arm and the white ball would explode at you over the white shirts in center field. If you were a hitter, you had to really concentrate to see the ball when it left the pitcher's hand, as opposed to a black background.

"At Fenway Park, the sun would set in the eyes of the batter. The batter would step out because he couldn't see. But neither could I!"

Late-afternoon shadows, especially during televised games that started at 4 o'clock, also posed problems as seasons changed during the six-month baseball schedule.

After the advent of night baseball, those were no longer issues. But early lights were dim and power failure was always a possibility. Johnny Vander Meer, a young left-handed pitcher, became the only man to throw consecutive no-hitters in part because the second one took place in the first night game at Ebbets Field, on June 15, 1938. Tickets had pictures of light bulbs on them and the actual lights weren't much brighter.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Left: At the first iteration of Yankee Stadium, the monuments in center field were in play. The park was one of several in the big leagues at the time that had "obstacles" in center field, including the Polo Grounds and Forbes Field.

Below: The right field wall at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn featured a 40-foot scoreboard and a fence that caused balls to ricochet at unpredictable angles.

Fenway Park's 37-foot Green Monster in left field contrasts with a spacious right field that often plays as the "sun field" during day games.

BOB BUSSER/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM (Fenway Park); NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Wrigley Field, the last to light, hosted 5,687 consecutive day games before the lights went on for the first time on Aug. 8, 1988. Rain wiped out that game, making Aug. 9 the actual date of the first night game there.

Wind and weather are also worrisome at Wrigley, where winds blow in from Lake Michigan one day but out the next. Greg Maddux, the Hall of Fame pitcher who started his career with the Cubs, said he didn't mind pitching there because the prevailing winds helped him as much as they hurt him.

The compact Chicago ballpark has hosted games that produced the most combined runs (49) and the second-most (45), while Fenway had an inning that featured 17 runs.

To prevent such slugfests, club owners in the 1920s considered imposing uniform "home run zones" in ballparks, according to John Thorn, Official Historian of Major League Baseball. Nothing materialized because owners realized reducing seating made no business sense.

The Denver-based Colorado Rockies, a 1993 expansion team, added a humidor to keep the balls at a constant humidity — and reduce the rash of ordinary fly balls that became home runs in the thin alpine air. That device is now universal.

Ballparks have certainly come a long way in the 175 years since 1,500 spectators paid 50 cents apiece to watch a game at the Fashion Race Course — the first field in regular use for baseball — in Jamaica, N.Y.

The unique aspects of that field were only the beginning.

Award-winning sportswriter Dan Schlossberg of Fair Lawn, N.J., has covered baseball since 1969 for The Associated Press, *Forbes.com,* Latino Sports, Sports Collectors Digest, USA TODAY Sports Weekly *and other outlets in addition to* Memories & Dreams. *He is also the author of 40 baseball books.*

Piece by Piece

ARTIFACTS DETAILING THE EVOLUTION OF THE GAME ARE PRESERVED IN COOPERSTOWN.

By Bill Francis

Five decades ago, Ron Blomberg stepped to the plate on Opening Day and made history as the big league's first designated hitter.

The bat "Boomer" used that day, like many other artifacts that have played a role in the changing game, now resides at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

"Baseball's rules have changed for as long as there have been baseball rules, and the many stories of this evolution of the game are important, enlightening and often surprising," said Hall of Fame senior curator Tom Shieber. "For these reasons, ever since our Museum first opened its doors, we have collected and exhibited artifacts related to this ever-changing landscape of the game."

Whether it's the introduction of artificial turf, players wearing fielding gloves, regional sports networks, expansion, Wild Card teams, instant replay, Interleague Play, domed stadiums, female coaches or the makeup of a baseball itself, all sports change to address various issues, and baseball is no exception.

Legendary broadcaster Ernie Harwell may have summed up the dichotomy best: "Baseball? Just a game, as simple as a ball and bat. And yet as complex as the American spirit it symbolizes."

And while many of the changes in baseball elicited intense opposition at the time they were implemented, and often had unforeseen consequences, the game from a century ago would look very familiar to the modern fan.

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

Ron Blomberg of the Yankees used this bat on April 6, 1973, when he became the first designated hitter in American League history. The rule change, which had been discussed as early as the 1890s, marked a seismic shift in the National Pastime.

"The sport to which I owe so much has undergone profound changes … but it's still baseball," Hall of Fame slugger Duke Snider once said. "Kids still imitate their heroes on playgrounds. Fans still ruin expensive suits going after foul balls that cost five dollars. Hitting streaks still make the network news. And the hot dogs still taste better at the ballpark than at home."

In a sense, Blomberg was "designated for assignment" on April 6, 1973, when his New York Yankees played the Boston Red Sox at Fenway Park and he became the first DH used in a regular-season game. Afterward, he donated his prized bat — a 36-inch, 35-ounce Louisville Slugger — to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Blomberg made DH history when, batting sixth in Yankees manager Ralph Houk's lineup, he came to bat in the top of the first inning with the bases loaded and two outs. Stepping up to the plate at 1:53 p.m. ET, in front of a sellout crowd of 32,882, he faced Boston starter Luis Tiant and walked on five pitches, driving in the game's first run.

The Yankees would go on to lose the season opener, 15-5, while Blomberg, the former No. 1 overall pick in the 1967 MLB Draft, finished the afternoon batting 1-for-3 with a third-inning infield single off Tiant.

Though injuries to his knees and shoulders ravaged what could have been a very successful career in the major leagues, Blomberg looks back with no regrets.

"I got lucky. One AB (at-bat) got me into the Hall, one AB got me into every newspaper and magazine in the country," he said. "The funny part about it is people still remember. Fifty percent of [them] love it, but 50 percent hate it. It's really been a fun ride.

"The great thing about being the first to do something is that nobody can ever take it away from you."

Among the thousands of baseballs the Museum has in its collection is one from the advent of night baseball in the National and American Leagues. On May 24, 1935, the

Cincinnati Reds hosted the Philadelphia Phillies at Crosley Field, the home team coming away with a 2-1 victory.

The Reds, one of the teams leading the fight for lights to aid a flagging box office, were rewarded when the National League voted to permit night baseball during the 1935 season. The official total had 20,422 overcoated Reds fans in attendance, the sixth-largest home crowd of the season — a motivating factor in illuminating the game.

But for a sport that for decades was played exclusively during the day, this heralded in what has been called one of the game's most important innovations of the 20th century. At 8:30 p.m., President Franklin D. Roosevelt threw a ceremonial gold switch at the White House and the lights went on in Cincinnati. Later donated to the Hall of Fame was a ball reported to be from the first pitch by Reds pitcher Paul Derringer to the Phillies' Lou Chiozza and signed by home plate umpire Bill Klem.

Erected at a cost of $50,000, the Reds specified a lighting system twice as brilliant as that of any other ballpark in the country. The lamps, on eight towers standing 100 feet and higher, brought more than one million watts of light to the field.

In attendance were both league presidents.

"One game, of course, is no criterion," said NL President Ford Frick, "but the players were not handicapped in any way that I could see, and I believe we will have more of it in 1936."

American League President Will Harridge called the game the "greatest spectacle modern baseball has offered in several years." He added that the illumination was "the best I have ever seen in operation."

The history of baseball night games, in fact, dates back to 1880 when two Massachusetts store teams experimented with the concept soon after Thomas Edison perfected the electric light bulb. Soon enough, over the next decades, various amateur, barnstorming and minor league teams had their sporadic moments under the lights.

One of the advances in night baseball came in 1930 with the Negro National League's Kansas City Monarchs. Led by owner J.L. Wilkinson — a 2006 Hall of Fame electee — a portable lighting system, at a cost of $50,000, was introduced that allowed both day and night games to be played in big cities and more remote outposts.

"In traveling with baseball clubs throughout the country for a number of years, I found that hundreds of people who wanted to see baseball games could not on account of working conditions which did not allow them to get off until after dark," said Wilkinson, later nicknamed the "father of night baseball."

It was reported at the time that a total of 12 cars and trucks were used to carry the lighting system, which consisted of a 110-kilowatt generator and a 250-horsepower, six-cylinder marine engine.

In the Hall of Fame collection is a framed broadside — 14 inches by 20 inches — for a Monarchs game at Concordia, Kan., on Sept. 16, 1930. The 8 p.m. tilt, to be played at Concordia's fairgrounds, was boldly promoted with type atop the broadside: NIGHT BASE BALL BY ELECTRIC FLOOD LIGHTS. Pictured was a team shot of the Monarchs as well as one of the towers supporting the electric flood lights.

Going back to the 19th-century game, the Hall of Fame was donated a celluloid ball and strike indicator for umpires and official scorers dating to 1887 — the only season in which it took four strikes to whiff a batter. It also took five balls to earn a walk that year, with bases on balls counting as hits for batting averages.

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

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

Top: This ball-and-strike indicator from 1887 features five balls and four strikes to reflect the rules in use at that time. Above: This broadside advertising night baseball played by the Kansas City Monarchs in 1930 is part of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum's collection.

The changes in 1887 were part of an effort to improve the balance between offense and defense — an evergreen pursuit throughout the game's history.

"The laborious processes of evolution attending the march of 'the national game' are not yet finished," a Nov. 28, 1887, editorial in *The New York Times* read. "Each year witnesses new experiments, and its elaboration goes on as incessantly as if it were not for a day, but for all time. Hardly less eagerly watched than the championship contests are the annual revisions of the playing rules which a joint committee of the League and the Association makes at the close of each season for the guidance of the next."

Hall of Fame righty Old Hoss Radbourn, on his way to a 24-23 record that season with the NL's Boston Beaneaters, claimed to a reporter that he wanted the four-strike rule to be left just as it was.

"The number of bases given on balls is getting smaller with every game, and the pitchers have all the opportunity they desire to exhibit their skill and work a player," Radbourn said in the interview published on May 23, 1887.

By 1888, however, the rule had promptly changed again, making three strikes an out — a familiar outcome that has remained. Four balls for a walk was made the rule in 1889. Walks counting as hits were also eliminated.

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

Meant to be Broken

BASEBALL'S UNWRITTEN RULES HAVE EVOLVED WITH CULTURE AND SOCIETY — AND THE CHANGING GAME.

By Henry Schulman

JACKIE ROBINSON SHATTERED BASEBALL'S COLOR barrier in 1947 when he debuted for the Brooklyn Dodgers, but segregation in the sport was hardly abolished. The unwritten rule among owners that kept Blacks and dark-skinned Latin American players out of organized baseball was not entirely scrapped.

Four years later, when Giants owner Horace Stoneham brought Willie Mays to New York, the team already had four players of color, but an unwritten rule, post-Jackie, was that no team would employ more than four players of color. Black players could not room with white players at the time, so one of the others had to go. As Mays recounted in his book, "24: Life Stories and Lessons from the Say Hey Kid," the Giants cut infielder Artie Wilson, who had mentored Mays in the Negro Leagues.

This case of an unwritten rule concerning the number of players of color was the most nefarious, impacting everything from stats, the quality of the sport and especially the lives of some of the best players ever to grab a piece of lumber or wind up on the mound. Stories abound of Negro Leaguers who never made it to the American or National Leagues because they were not given the opportunity.

Other unwritten rules are more harmless quirks of the sport: Don't wildly celebrate a home run or you'll get drilled the next time up; never mention a no-hitter in progress or talk to the pitcher on the bench; never swing on a 3-0 count, especially with a big lead.

As Yogi Berra probably said at least once during his Hall of Fame baseball and malapropping career: "The unwritten rules would be so much easier to follow if you could read them somewhere."

However, some of the more significant rules vanished in the wash of societal change. The most notable was the agreement that had kept Black players out of baseball since the 1880s.

By the time the 1971 Pittsburgh Pirates fielded the NL or AL's first all-minority lineup, the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts had been enacted, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated and laws designed to prevent discrimination in employment and housing were codified (if not evenly enforced).

John Thorn, Major League Baseball's Official Historian, has researched baseball integration extensively and calls the term "Gentleman's Agreement" an oxymoron because there is no archival evidence from the minutes of league meetings to suggest the topic was formally discussed. It surely was discussed in back channels and simply understood. The issue was complicated by laws in some states that would have forbidden baseball integration and the very real threat of player strikes had a Black player been brought to the AL or NL.

Even Branch Rickey, the Dodgers executive who has been sainted for signing Robinson, would push only so far. As Thorn noted in an interview for this story, the Dodgers signed a talented Negro Leagues outfielder named Sam Jethroe but did not promote him from the minors to Brooklyn because the Dodgers already had four Black players: Robinson, Don Newcombe, Roy Campanella and Dan Bankhead, the first Black pitcher in the National League.

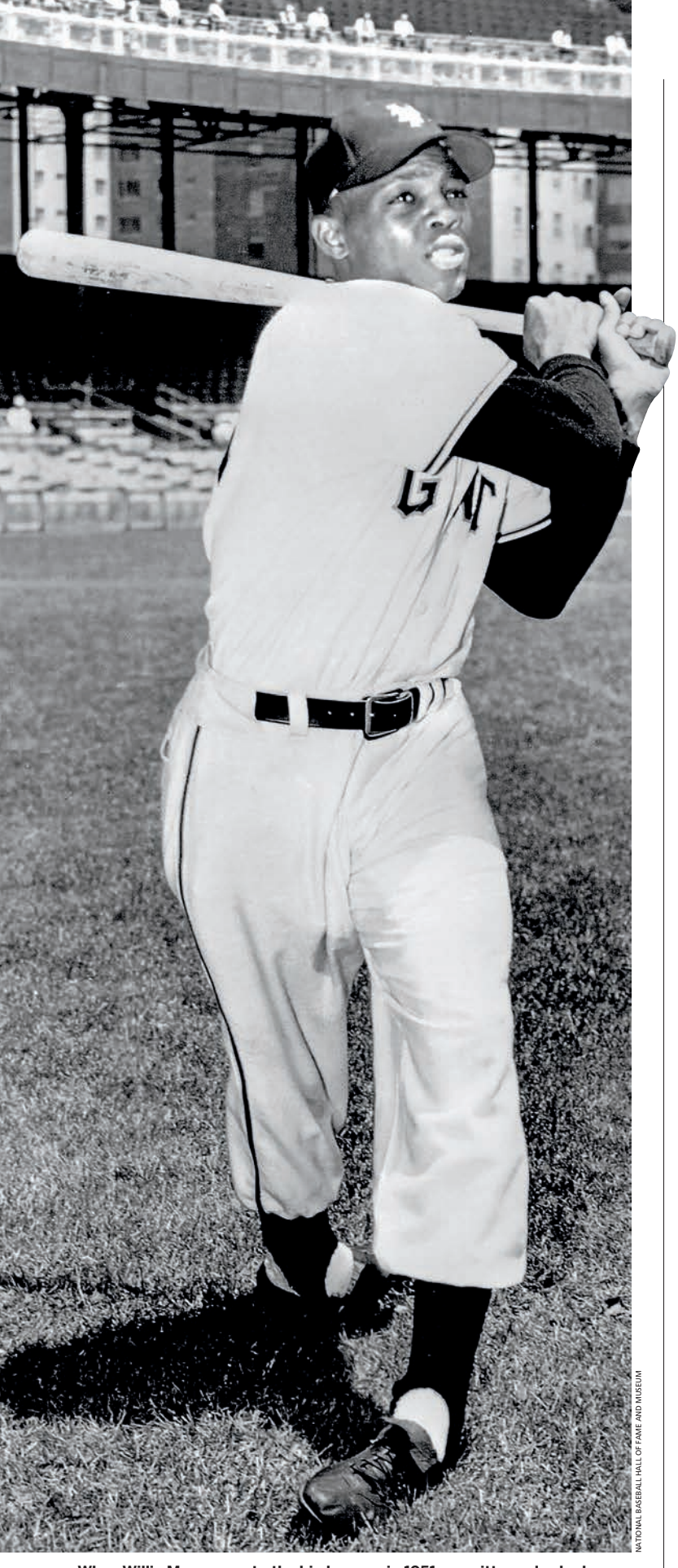
Jethroe was 32 when Rickey traded him to the Boston Braves, where, as that team's first Black player, he won National League Rookie of the Year in 1950.

As race relations evolved in the 1950s and 1960s, the limits on Black players dissolved — slowly. The Red Sox were the final team to integrate, 12 years after Robinson arrived.

This was the most significant unspoken code in baseball to disappear amid societal change. But on-the-field aspects of the game also change as society evolves.

One example is the bat-flipping celebration after hitting a home run. For virtually as long as the game has been played, a celebration like that would get the hitter knocked down the next time he batted.

Longtime major league first baseman Will Clark recounts how he



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

When Willie Mays came to the big leagues in 1951, unwritten rules had many teams limiting the number of Black players who could be on the roster.

returned to the dugout at the Astrodome after taking Nolan Ryan deep in his first big league at-bat in 1986. Clark did not even showboat, but asked teammate Chili Davis, "I'm going to get knocked down next time, right?" Davis nodded affirmatively. (Ryan ultimately spared Clark the welt.)

When rookie Jimmy Rollins flipped his bat after homering against reliever Steve Kline in 2001, Kline yelled at Rollins while he rounded the bases and later told reporters, "If you're going to flip the bat, I'm going to flip your helmet next time. You're a rookie. You respect the game for a while."

Such celebrations are viewed in a different light now, partly because players' personalities and individuality boost television ratings, but also due to cultural understanding. For instance, cheerfully releasing one's emotions is an integral part of the game in Latin America. Players from Puerto Rico, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic are accustomed to celebrating, and rules forbidding it often appear to be aimed their way.

"Unwritten rules were applied unevenly to people of color and people of different national origins as they came into the game," said Michael Duca, a California-based baseball historian who, with Jason Turbow, wrote the 2010 book, "The Baseball Codes … The Unwritten Rules of America's Pastime."

Jim Palmer, who has spent more than 50 years in the game as a Hall of Fame pitcher and broadcaster, understands the argument but believes the change is rooted more in the era than nationality. He noted that fellow Hall of Famer Roberto Clemente, a Latin American icon from Puerto Rico, never felt he had to show up a pitcher after going deep.

"Guys would hit home runs and they didn't do all the histrionics at home plate," Palmer said. "Now I read and watch and hear that it's a way to express themselves. But Frank Robinson didn't have to do it. Willie Mays didn't have to do it. Ted Williams and Stan Musial didn't have to do it, and Joe DiMaggio and Babe Ruth didn't have to do it."

Hall of Fame closer Dennis Eckersley used to pump his fist and point at hitters after striking them out — fairly mild by today's standards. Pitchers react far more emotionally these days after big strikeouts, but in Eck's time it was deemed as big a sin as a bat flip, though he did not even realize he was doing it.

Palmer once kidded Eckersley about the finger-point, and Eckersley denied doing it until Palmer said: "Eck, I have a bobblehead of you pointing at guys."

Players once were expected to adhere to another of the oldest unwritten rules: That rookies do whatever their clubhouse elders demand no matter how demeaning. That included Rookie Dress Up Day, usually on the team's final road trip, when their street clothes were confiscated during the game and replaced with outlandish outfits they had to wear in public as they left the ballpark, walked through the airport and checked into their next hotels. More often than not, they were given women's clothing to wear.

Forcing rookies to dress in that manner always could have been deemed offensive, but the anti-bullying movements sensitized the game to the potential harm. The Collective Bargaining Agreement that players signed with the owners in 2016 included an understanding that players would not challenge league policies against hazing and bullying. A subsequent MLB memo forbade "requiring, coercing or encouraging players from dressing up as a woman or wearing costumes that may be

offensive to individuals based on their race, sex, nationality, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or other characteristics."

Largely, though, the unwritten rules that policed baseball for generations have gone by the wayside because the game dictated it.

• Don't steal bases, swing at 3-0 pitches or otherwise try to run up the score with a big lead. What is "too big a lead" now that small ball is all but dead? MLB has addressed this with new rules governing position players pitching but gray areas still remain.

"It's getting harder and harder to know when to draw the line because of the frequency of the big inning," manager Dusty Baker told Duca and Turbow for their 2010 book. The point is even more valid 13 years later.

With starting pitchers throwing less and the bullpen more, the San Francisco Giants under manager Gabe Kapler unapologetically try to score as much as possible even with a large lead. They argue that forcing multiple opposing relievers into a game gives them an edge the rest of the series.

Also, with instant replay, managers feel they must challenge calls even with huge leads to support players lest their stats suffer. That reflects a power shift within clubhouses from management to the athletes, who wield expensive, long-term contracts as leverage.

DOUG McWILLIAMS/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

FRED THORNHILL/COURTESY TORONTO BLUE JAYS

Left: Hall of Famer Dennis Eckersley would often pump his fist and point at batters after striking them out. Eckersley's genuine display of emotion began to relax the standards that had been in place for decades. Right: José Bautista's bat flip in Game 5 of the 2015 ALDS vs. the Rangers injected the Blue Jays slugger into the conversation about unwritten baseball rules. Many consider the event to be a tipping point when celebrations became more accepted in the game.

• The pitcher owns the inside half of the plate. Crowd the dish and you'll get drilled. That might have been a fair rule in decades past, but pitchers rarely throw inside in the current era of livelier offense, fearing that a slightly misplaced pitch will be pulled 450 feet. Many pitchers rise from the minors not knowing how to throw inside effectively. If hitters want to protect the plate against pitchers who throw everything away, they need to crowd it.

• Show up my team or hit one of my guys and you might have to duck a head-high fastball. Not so much anymore. Umpires who sense coming retaliation issue warnings that lead to league fines and suspensions. Besides, the pitcher and hitter might have the same agent or play golf together in the winter and don't feel the animus one might have seen in eras past. Team owners are loath to see a $30 million-a-year player hurt by a purpose pitch, and as more is known about concussions, the thought of beaning a hitter as retaliation is less acceptable.

Now that most bullpens are stocked with guys who throw 95-100 mph, the risk of serious injury is higher than ever.

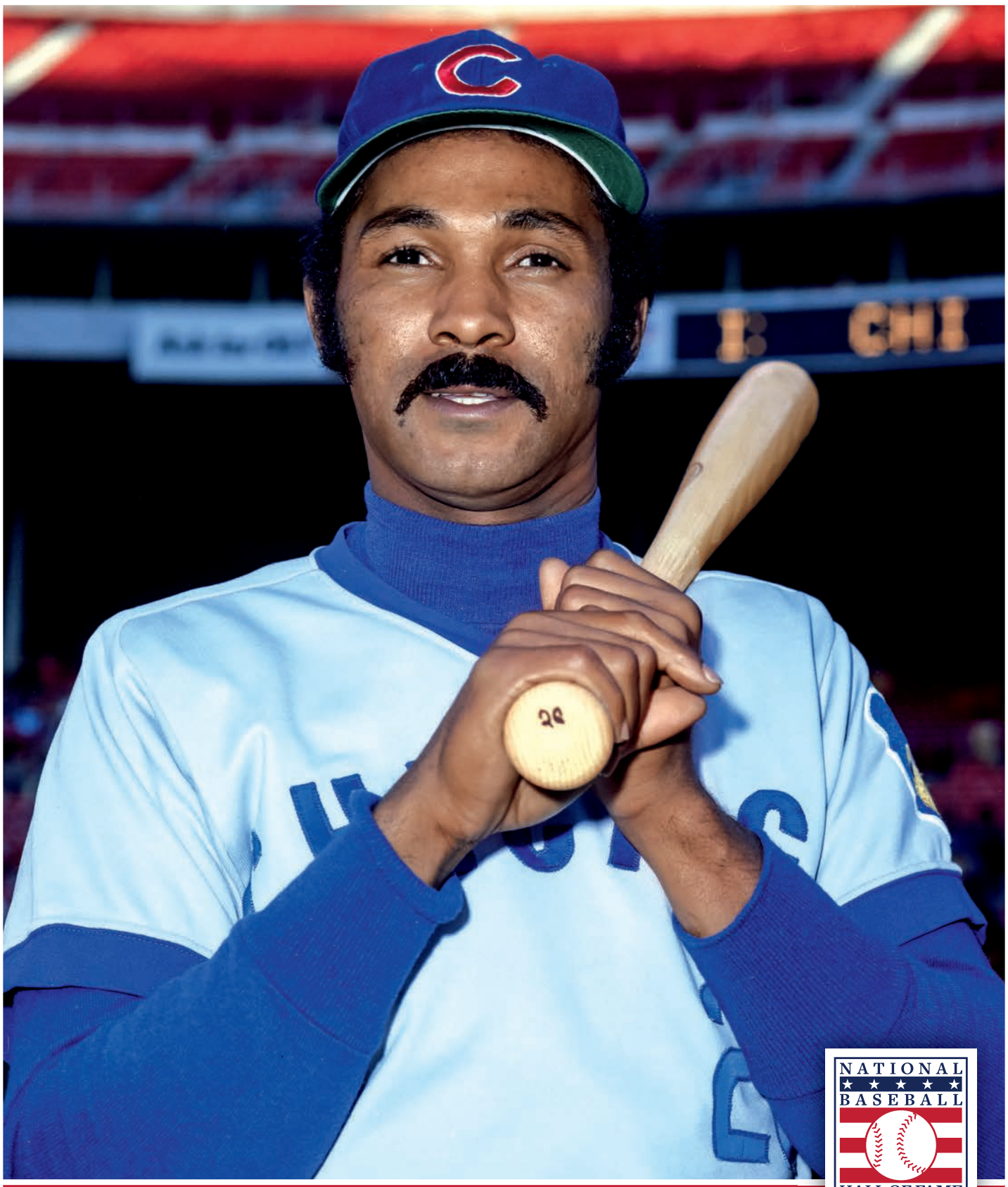
• Never bunt to break up a no-hitter. Who knows how to bunt anymore? Big league coaches complain the small-ball art is rarely taught or emphasized in the minors, and teams can go long stretches without a sacrifice bunt. A third of MLB teams had fewer than 10 in 2022. The Atlanta Braves had one. Hitters unaccustomed to bunting would be doing pitchers a favor by attempting one for the elusive hit.

• Don't fraternize with opposing players on the field. Young fans who see players in different uniforms backslapping one another on the field might be surprised to learn how important this unwritten rule used to be. Players would be fined merely for saying "howdy" to an opponent. Now, as Palmer noted, "It's a group hug before every game."

Some unwritten rules might stick for good, however. Players in the dugout still steer clear of teammates who are throwing no-hitters. Sign-stealing remains an accepted art, as long as electronics are not involved. And never — in the dugout, on the field and in the press box — comment on how quickly a game is going.

That's a surefire guarantee for 16 innings.

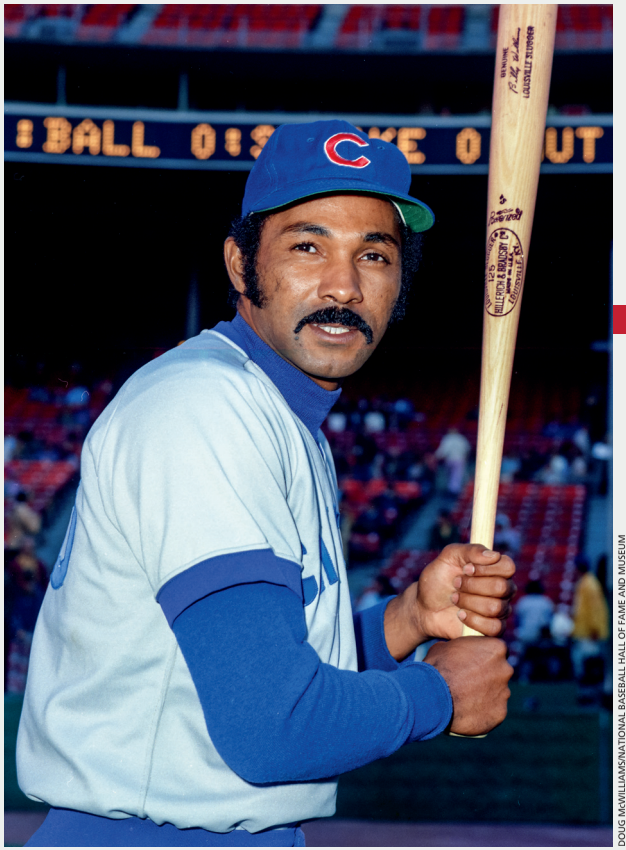
Henry Schulman is a San Francisco-based freelancer. He covered the Giants for the Oakland Tribune, San Francisco Examiner *and* San Francisco Chronicle *from 1988-2020.*



NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

Billy Williams LF

CLASS OF 1987



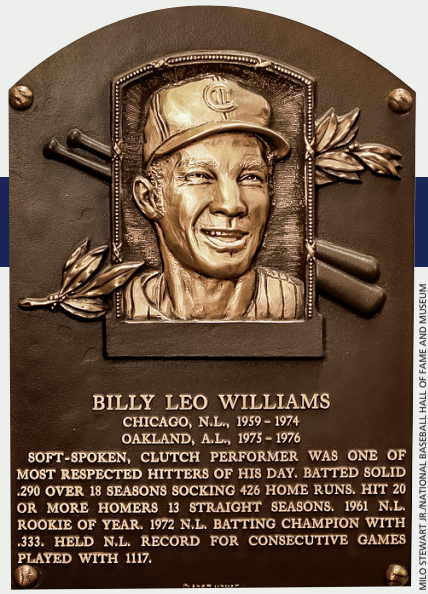
DOUG McWILLIAMS/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

BILLY LEO WILLIAMS

Elected: 1987 • Born: June 15, 1938, Whistler, Ala.
Threw: Right Batted: Left • Height: 6'1" Weight: 175 pounds
Played for: Chicago Cubs (1959-74); Oakland Athletics (1975-76)

YEAR	TEAM	G	PA	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BB	BA	SLG
1959	CHC	18	34	33	0	5	0	1	0	2	0	1	.152	.212
1960	CHC	12	52	47	4	13	0	2	2	7	0	5	.277	.489
1961	CHC	146	584	529	75	147	20	7	25	86	6	45	.278	.484
1962	CHC	159	699	618	94	184	22	8	22	91	9	70	.298	.466
1963	CHC	161	687	612	87	175	36	9	25	95	7	68	.286	.497
1964	CHC	162	709	645	100	201	39	2	33	98	10	59	.312	.532
1965	CHC	***164***	719	645	115	203	39	6	34	108	10	65	.315	.552
1966	CHC	**162**	***727***	648	100	179	23	5	29	91	6	69	.276	.461
1967	CHC	162	712	634	92	176	21	12	28	84	6	68	.278	.481
1968	CHC	***163***	699	642	91	185	30	8	30	98	4	48	.288	.500
1969	CHC	***163***	708	642	103	188	33	10	21	95	3	59	.293	.474
1970	CHC	**161**	714	636	***137***	***205***	34	4	42	129	7	72	.322	.586
1971	CHC	157	677	594	86	179	27	5	28	93	7	77	.301	.505
1972	CHC	150	650	574	95	191	34	6	37	122	3	62	***.333***	***.606***
1973	CHC	156	659	576	72	166	22	2	20	86	4	76	.288	.438
1974	CHC	117	474	404	55	113	22	0	16	68	4	67	.280	.453
1975	OAK	155	602	520	68	127	20	1	23	81	0	76	.244	.419
1976	OAK	120	413	351	36	74	12	0	11	41	4	58	.211	.339
18 Seasons		**2488**	**10519**	**9350**	**1410**	**2711**	**434**	**88**	**426**	**1475**	**90**	**1045**	**.290**	**.492**

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: Six-Time All-Star • 1972 National League batting champion • 1961 National League Rookie of the Year



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

DID YOU KNOW ...

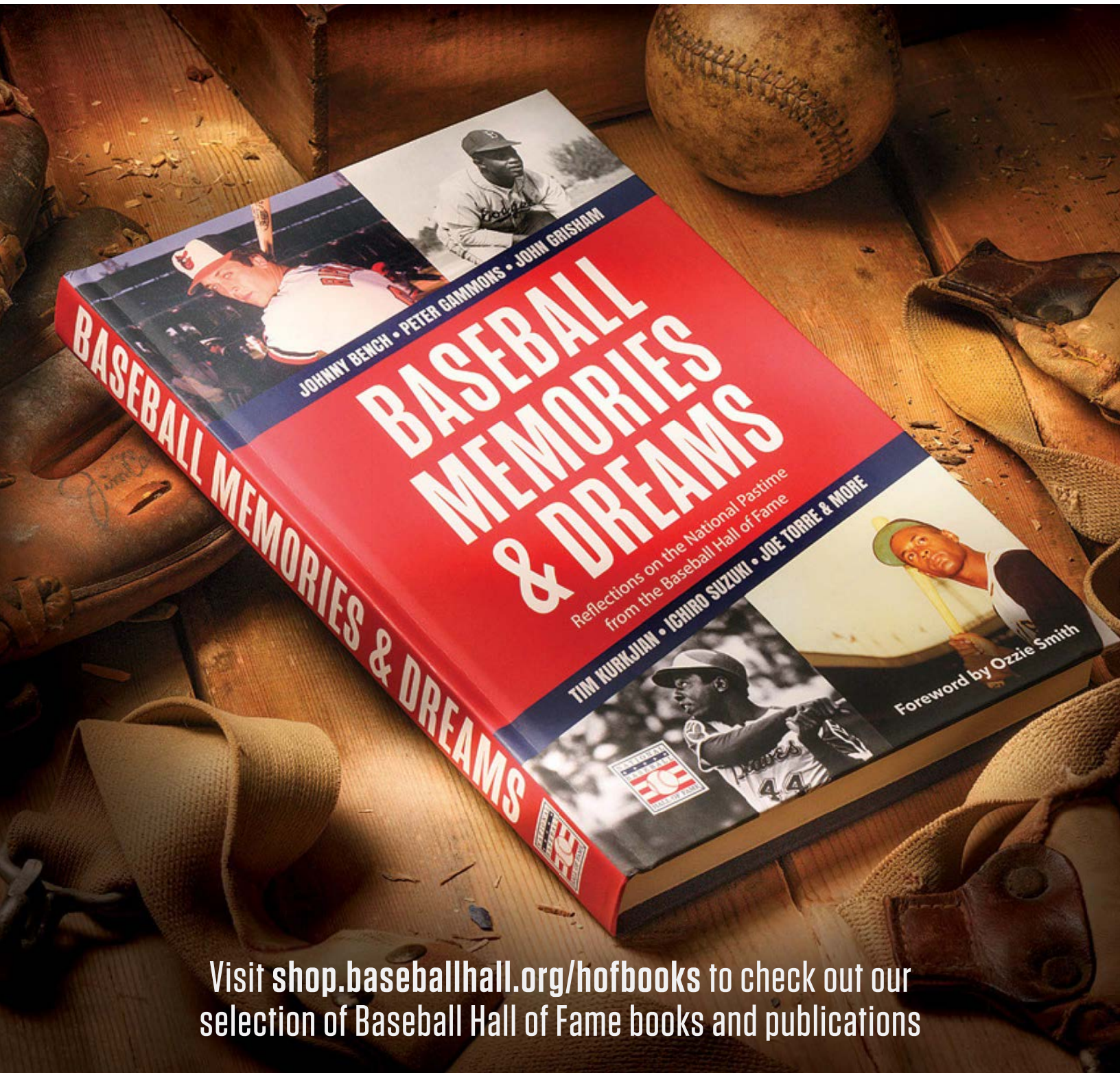
- ... that Billy Williams once held the NL record for consecutive games played with 1,117?
- ... that in the Year of the Pitcher in 1968, Williams led all NL batters with 321 total bases, one of three times he led the league in that category?
- ... that Williams appeared in 164 games in 1965, making him one of just six players to play more than 163 games in any season?

WHAT THEY SAY ...

- "He's the most relaxed hitter I ever saw. His swing is as smooth as silk. Nothing disturbs him." — CUBS TEAMMATE JOEY AMALFITANO
- "Every time I make out my lineup card, I have to put him in there — it would be like scratching Whirlaway and Seabiscuit from the big race." — CUBS MANAGER LEO DUROCHER
- "He's just the best-looking hitter in this league. Mays just overpowers the ball, but Williams is an artist up there." — REDS MANAGER FRED HUTCHINSON

FRONT OF CARD: DOUG McWILLIAMS/NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

BASEBALL HALL OF FAME BOOKS



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Strategic Change

RULES ALTERATIONS HAVE CAUSED GAME MANAGERS TO ADAPT FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS.

By Phil Rogers

CAN YOU FORCE THE TACTICS AND MINDSET of hitters and pitchers to change?

We'll be able to answer that question a lot more authoritatively at the end of the 2023 season. Commissioner Rob Manfred and the owners, with the blessing of the Major League Baseball Players Association, have instituted a series of back-to-the-future rules changes designed to put more action in the game.

The new rules are being mandated for big league players and managers after a century in which the game's tactics and strategies involving player usage and run creation and prevention often evolved in a more leisurely manner.

Extreme velocity and universally shared data-gathering methods have reduced some of the cat-and-mouse qualities that can be so intoxicating, replacing them with a steady soaring of baseball's three true outcomes: Home runs, strikeouts and walks.

Theo Epstein, hired by Manfred to find ways to improve the way the game is played, clearly stated his intentions in a 2021 interview with *The Athletic*.

"I personally think the best version of baseball involves more balls in play, quick action, more action, more people involved in the game, more doubles, more triples, more stolen bases, that type of thing," Epstein said. "Fans not having to wait around for four minutes for a ball in play. We all grew up in the game with more balls in play, more action. I think that's something league-wide that we can get back to down the line."

Only a couple times since the start of the 20th century has baseball made such significant changes: In 1901, when foul balls were declared to be strikes, and in 1973, when the American League added a designated hitter to bat in the pitcher's spot. Both of those changes stuck, though it took another 49 years for the National League to implement the DH rule, even though it immediately succeeded in its intention — injecting more offense into a game that was being dominated by pitching.

MLB had lowered the mound after Bob Gibson's historic season in 1968, but pitchers were still having their way a few years later. There was discussion about whether pitchers should hit as far back as the 19th century, and even Connie Mack supported the idea of a designated hitter. But it was controversial Oakland Athletics owner Charlie Finley who eventually sold his peers on the idea.

"It was the only thing Charlie Finley ever suggested that I voted for," Hall of Famer Bud Selig said. "Both leagues were hurting for offense, and the hope was that the National League would join us a few years later."

Change has come slowly in baseball, however, with the best players and teams learning from each other and everyone else following behind. The classic example is how Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn pioneered the use of video tape, with his wife, Alicia, recording games off television and shipping tapes to him across North America so he could study his at-bats, and franchises slowly creating their own video staffs and facilities.

Perhaps the biggest change in how the game is played came after Babe Ruth hit 54 home runs in 1920, which was 25 more than the record he had set the previous season and 35 more than George Sisler, the American League runner-up. Many of the best hitters grabbed onto Ruth's approach and technique, and with smaller ballparks, the game evolved from the Dead Ball Era, when singles were king, into the first version of the modern game.

There's been a constant push-and-pull dynamic under the surface ever since. Every player who ever put on a high school uniform knew to look at the third base coach for the signals — for instance, swipe across the chest for steal, hand down the thigh for hit-and-run, tap of the shoulder for bunt, two hands on the knee for take — but the use of those strategies has had peaks and valleys at the game's highest level.

Maury Wills stole 104 bases in 1962, then Lou Brock had 118 in '74 and

Monte Irvin steals home during the first inning of Game 1 of the 1951 World Series at Yankee Stadium while catcher Yogi Berra, umpire Bill Summers and Bobby Thomson, who was at bat when Irvin scored, look on. MLB has increased the size of the bases in 2023 in hopes that more players will attempt to steal.

Rickey Henderson electrified us with 130 in '82. But Luis Castillo led the majors with 62 only 18 years later, and in 2012 no one stole as many as 50.

Players did not get slower through the years. The opposite, of course, is true with gains through conditioning and nutrition.

But the value of small ball strategies was questioned by Bill James and others in the first generation of statistical analysis articles for fans and industry types. The low-risk, on-base movement exploded after Oakland GM Billy Beane shared his beliefs with author Michael Lewis during the 2002 season, generating the book "Moneyball," which became an Academy Award-nominated film starring Brad Pitt in 2011.

"If someone bunts on us, just pick it up and throw it to first," Pitt tells Oakland's pitchers in the film. "They're giving you an out. Just giving it to you. Take it. Say, 'Thank you.'"

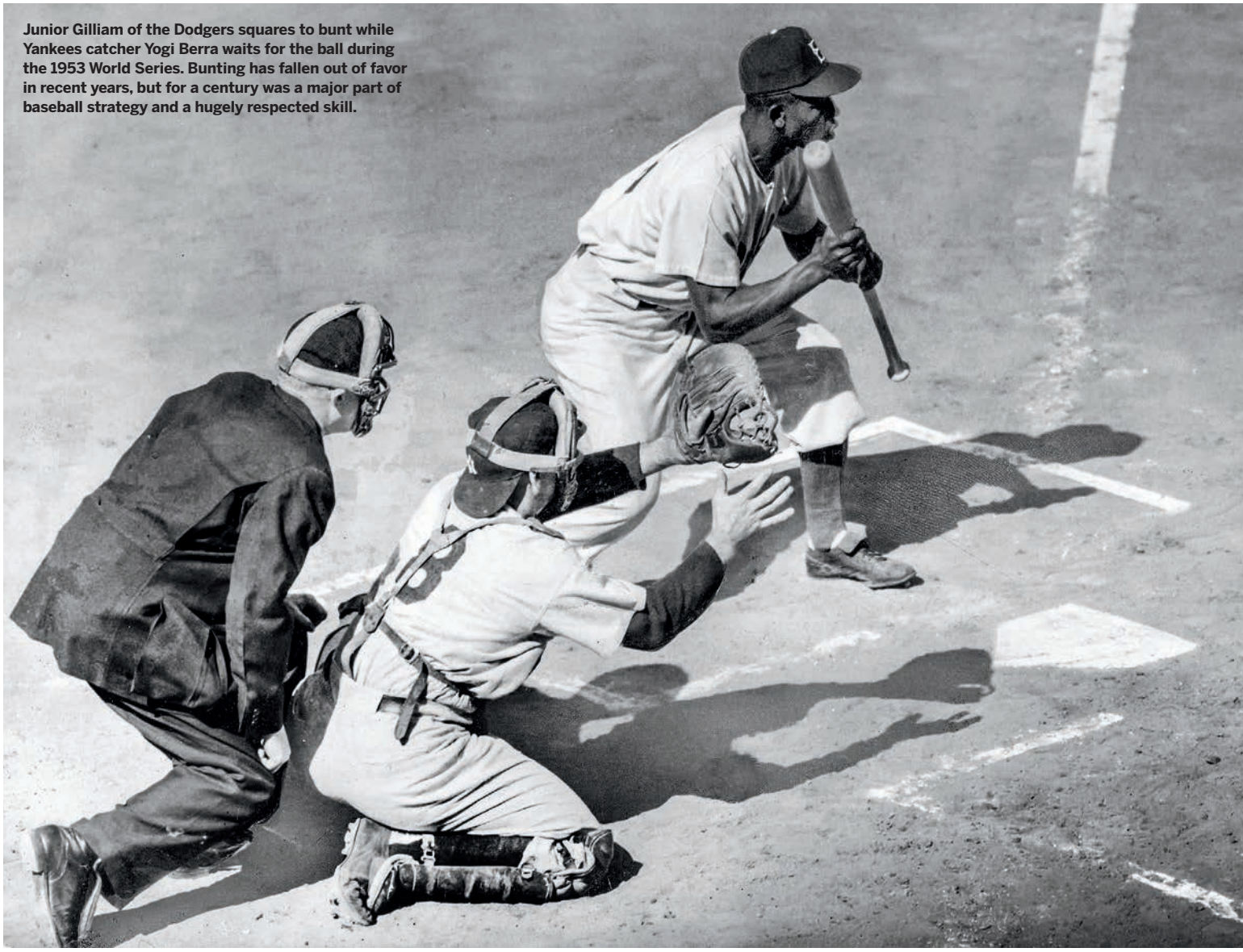
With Epstein's Red Sox leading the way, teams hired deep rosters of analysts and computer wizards to develop proprietary software and algorithms to evaluate players. Major League Baseball helped the less forward-thinking teams catch up by establishing shared data capture and analysis with its Statcast technology in 2015.

Suddenly all 30 teams were equal in at least having the same basic information on tendencies of hitters and fielders, and even average hitters were forced to face the same kind of defensive alignments that Lou Boudreau threw at Ted Williams in 1946. Catchers were judged on their ability to turn borderline pitches from balls to strikes with their subtle techniques of pitch framing.

None of this is new, of course. Branch Rickey hired statistician Allan Roth to compile spray charts for hitters long before he signed Jackie Robinson to break the color barrier, and the brilliant Eddie Robinson brought Craig Wright into the Texas Rangers' front office as Major League Baseball's first analyst identified as a sabermetrician in 1981.

Wright may have faced more pushback than anyone in the analytic revolution and support for him in the organization quickly waned. Traditionalists could stiff-arm the data revolution for only so long, however. Information paid too many benefits to be ignored. That was the case for other changes that developed organically, like the sharing of responsibilities on a pitching staff.

Leo Durocher was 33 when he moved into a player-manager role with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1939. He quickly understood the value of developing pitchers who consistently worked the late innings, rather than relying on starters to go the distance, and after moving to the New York Giants made knuckleballer Hoyt Wilhelm one of baseball's first true closers.



Junior Gilliam of the Dodgers squares to bunt while Yankees catcher Yogi Berra waits for the ball during the 1953 World Series. Bunting has fallen out of favor in recent years, but for a century was a major part of baseball strategy and a hugely respected skill.

Durocher loved his late-inning pitchers, who were known as firemen. He got 162 innings out of Hugh Casey in a hybrid starter/fireman role in 1941 and an amazing 159.1 from Wilhelm in 71 relief appearances in 1952.

But baseball never stands still. Durocher had fallen behind the times by 1969, when he was managing the Cubs, and Gil Hodges' strategic use of the entire Mets roster helped his club blow past Chicago in the newly formed NL East with one of the most memorable stretch runs in history.

Hodges, who was 45 and in his seventh year as a manager, announced his intentions out of the gate in April. Despite Tom Seaver turning in a Rookie of the Year season in '67 and following it with a 2.20 ERA over 278 innings in '68, Hodges went with a five-man rotation when most teams were using their best arms every four days, with only three days rest between starts.

Durocher got 91 percent of his starts from his four top starters, with Fergie Jenkins and Bill Hands giving the Cubs 611 innings between them, and pushed his fireman, Phil Regan, to his breaking point. He rarely rested seven of his eight regular players. The summer heat was oppressive, with no night games at Wrigley Field.

Shortstop Don Kessinger lost 15-20 pounds that season, shrinking so badly that one newspaper account said his uniform hung off him like drapes. Catcher Randy Hundley had caught a record 160 games in 1968, and might have matched that in '69 if not for some injuries.

Hundley said fatigue was an issue for the Cubs every August under Durocher. "I lost so much weight I couldn't reach the warning track," he said. "But Leo wanted me out there every day handling the pitchers."

Like Baltimore's Earl Weaver, Hodges understood platoon advantages and the system of filling one lineup spot with two hitters, which had been pioneered by Casey Stengel. Hodges shuffled lineups on a daily basis, with center fielder Tommie Agee the only Met to play more than 137 games. "I was never cool with the platooning," right fielder Ron Swoboda said. "But in the end, Gil proved he knew what he was doing."

The Mets went 38-11 after Aug. 15, moving from 10 games behind to an eight-game cushion at season's end. The message was sent, and received, about the importance of spreading around workloads.

Teams still leaned on their best starters — the Phillies' Steve Carlton topped 300 innings as late as 1980 — but rosters and responsibilities were evolving with the game. Tony La Russa built on that concept by constructing bullpens with pitchers in distinct roles: Long men,

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

MARK RUCKER/GETTY IMAGES

Maury Wills became the first modern-era player to steal at least 100 bases in one season in 1962. The stolen base continued to be a major part of the game into the 1980s before teams changed their strategies.

left- and right-handed set-up men and a closer who almost exclusively worked only the ninth inning.

La Russa and other copycats increasingly made more pitching changes, with left-handers often coming in to face only one left-handed hitter (a maneuver that was outlawed with a 2020 rule change requiring pitchers to face at least three hitters or complete an inning).

Hitting has increasingly become more difficult, both because of defensive shifts and the training methods of pitchers, who continue to find increased velocity.

Terry Francona, Kevin Cash, Rocco Baldelli and other managers are quicker than ever to use the power arms in their bullpens, with the textbook example coming when Cash pulled Blake Snell in the sixth inning against the Dodgers in an elimination game in the 2020 World Series. Tampa Bay was leading, 1-0, and Snell had struck out nine while throwing only 73 pitches.

While that infamous pitching change didn't work out, there's no denying the impact relievers have had on the mounting total of strikeouts — and the lack of action — in recent years. Consider Craig Kimbrel, who through his first 12 seasons had more saves (372) than hits allowed (347).

Purists were horrified when Bobby Bonds piled up 187 strikeouts in 1969. But at least one hitter has struck out that often in each of the last 16 seasons (not counting 2020's shortened season), including five hitters in 2017.

The new rules changes will certainly have their effect. The pitch clock cut about 25 minutes off the average game time in Triple-A last season. But the elimination of the shift hasn't created as dramatic of a change, with the batting average on balls in play increasing only three points in Double-A last season (and actually dropping in high-A games).

Joe Sheehan, one of the founders of Baseball Prospectus, believes it is time for a more radical change than those being enacted. He advocates moving the mound back from its traditional distance of 60 feet, 6 inches, giving hitters more time to react to velocity and break on pitches.

You wonder what the powers that be will think of that after watching the latest changes play out.

Phil Rogers is a freelance writer living in Utah who has covered baseball since 1984.

Royal Prose

KING SOLOMON WHITE'S 'HISTORY OF COLORED BASE BALL' RESONATES WITH RESEARCHERS MORE THAN A CENTURY AFTER IT WAS PUBLISHED.

By Justice B. Hill

SOL WHITE SPENT MOST OF HIS LIFE WAITING FOR THAT DAY ON APRIL 15, 1947, when a Black man crossed the metaphorical color line in Major League Baseball and again played ball with white teammates.

For White, then 78, the wait had lasted a half century.

But when he was younger, White had tasted integrated baseball. In the late 1800s, he and a handful of other Black men played with whites before team owners came to a "Gentleman's Agreement" on a color line.

Now, in 1947, White was an old man, an almost forgotten old man. His career as a player and manager was scarcely a footnote, and it might well have been forgotten altogether were it not for a singular work of nonfiction from 1907: "History of Colored Base Ball."

Who wrote the book?

Sol White.

"Still to this day, his book is one of the best resources we have to understanding the early participation of African Americans in baseball," said Leslie Heaphy, associate professor of history at Kent State University and one of the foremost authorities on Black baseball. "There's no better place to start."

Larry Lester, a noted researcher into the history of Blacks in baseball, echoed Heaphy's view: "Sol White's 'History of Colored Base Ball' is the only legitimate document out there that recognizes the early days of the Black game."

But Lester and Heaphy, both members of the Museum's Black Baseball Initiative advisory committee, wondered whether diehard fans will remember White, who was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2006, as more of a writer than as a ballplayer. Probably so, Heaphy said. White didn't use his book to trumpet his career, which started and ended decades before Jackie Robinson took the field with the Brooklyn Dodgers.

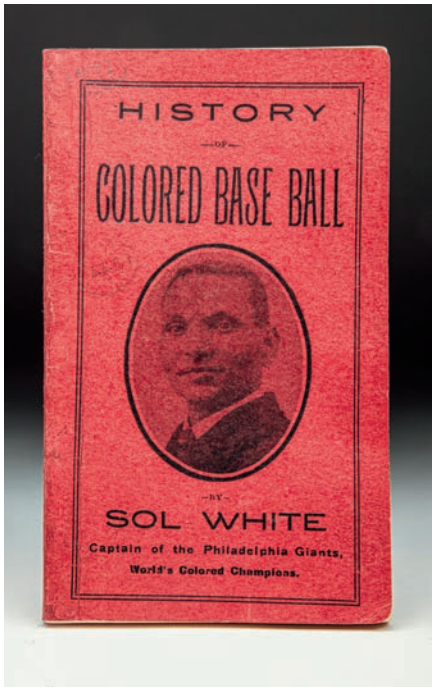
The slight of White's baseball skills is unwarranted. Lester said his research found that White was a prominent Black ballplayer around the turn of the 20th century. Some baseball historians rank him as the best Black ballplayer of the era.

Lester wouldn't make a fuss over the ranking. He put the ranking this way: "How good did Sol White have to be to play on white teams?"

The answer to Lester's question: Extraordinarily good.

White was in professional baseball when the only thing black were the shoes the men who played the game wore. He was part of a time in U.S. history when integration ran headlong into racism.

Like other Black men and women, King Solomon White knew racism well. Born in Bellaire, Ohio, after the Civil War, he got into professional baseball in 1887 with the



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

Sol White's "History of Colored Base Ball" is a singular document in the game's history, preserving the stories of many pre-Negro Leagues stars.

Pittsburgh Keystones of the League of Colored Baseball Clubs.

White, a good-hitting, good-fielding second baseman, joined Bud Fowler, Welday Walker and his more famous brother Moses Fleetwood Walker as a few of the earliest Black men to suit up on white teams.

Yet people who study or research baseball will find not much about how well White, Fowler or the Walker brothers played. The record of box scores from the period is incomplete, particularly from the various colored leagues, and stats were not packaged as neatly as they are nowadays.

Most games in Black leagues went uncovered in much of the white media, so what was learned of Black players who tried to carve out a living in pro baseball might well fall into the realm of Grimms' Fairy Tales.

Thank goodness for Sol White. No man contributed more to chronicling those early tales. In 1907, he published what Lester called the "seminal work" on Black players in baseball before the 1910s.

White filled the 128 pages of his "History

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Sol White (top row, third from left) was a standout player on the field in the game's earliest days. White was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2006.

of Colored Base Ball" with photographs, ads and illustrations, and his work has become an indispensable tool to baseball historians. Few other books exist that spotlight the careers of Black men who played before the turn of the 20th century.

"Realizing the great progress made, and the interest displayed by the players and the public in general, I have endeavored to follow the mutations of colored base ball, as accurately as possible …," he wrote in the preface.

If not for White's book, a generation of men who looked like him would have been even more obscure. He flushed out their stories with details not found in any other reference works or newspapers.

"In order to understand the pioneers, the people who came before the Robinsons of the world, you've got to start with Sol White's story," Heaphy said.

"Colored Base Ball" and its quarter century of history put to bed the notion that Black men didn't take the sport seriously, Lester said.

White wrote about baseball as a legitimate vocation, one in which color should never matter. He described the game as decidedly masculine, demanding all the manly qualities and powers to the extreme.

Almost as if he had heard the soliloquy James Earl Jones gave in the movie *Field of Dreams* nearly a century later, White argued that baseball was immune to the attacks of critics. He ought to claim authorship to these words Jones spoke: "The only constant through all the years … has been baseball. America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It has been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt and erased again. But baseball has marked the time."

Field of Dreams is a different bit of baseball history, and it never attempted to shine a spotlight on Black men who played baseball. White took that role on himself.

Intelligent and insightful, White sketched an outline of the struggles colored teams had in making a profit. Many were vagabond organizations, hopscotching from city to city to showcase their "stick work." Yet for all they endured, for all the obstacles in front of these ballclubs, these teams would not die.

The show had to go on.

"From a scientific standpoint, it outclasses all other American games," White wrote.

It certainly did so on the financial side.

In 1906, a year before he published "Colored Base Ball," White counted 150 men in colored baseball, and they had an average salary of $466, a few dollars above the average salary of $438 for Americans in all occupations.

White's research found that the 300 ballplayers in the major leagues had an average salary of $2,000, and ballplayers in the minors made $571.

Regardless of what the salaries in the period were, they came with a cautionary tale for Black ballplayers: Fans came to see flawless performances. The "funny man" in colored baseball was disappearing, he said.

The image of "Black baseball" as a minstrel show had always been hyperbole. Players in the colored leagues had to play with vigilance, activity and quickness or they risked the wrath of fans.

They didn't have to go to stadiums to see the circus, because Ringling Brothers came to towns near and far too often and satisfied people who liked clowns, lions and acrobats for entertainment.

White made clear that he and his brethren could play baseball with anybody of any color. Their Black leagues, however, didn't offer the financial foundation to build great wealth, nor could their players avoid the unsettling issues that came with traveling.

Segregation had a tight hold on America, and Black ballplayers felt its squeeze.

"The colored ball player suffers great inconvenience, at times, while traveling," White wrote. "All hotels are generally filled from cellar to the garret when they strike town."

The access to lodging made travels from town to town an ordeal, and efforts to earn a living with their white peers came to a halt because of the insistence of Cap Anson, a manager and the brightest star in 1880s baseball, that Blacks could not take the field with or against white ballplayers.

White wrote about Anson and how he used his platform to segregate the game even as some ballclubs wanted to sign the best ballplayers of whatever color.

Anson, though, seemed to have his hands on the pulse of America, circa 1890s. When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in its 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson decision that segregation was legal, Anson had the raw paint he needed to draw a color line.

The white media didn't quarrel with Anson; few wrote commentary about the wrong of barring Black men from the majors. The Black press spoke sporadically on the topic.

Some people who follow baseball closely say Anson gets too much blame for the color line. Lester is not one of them.

"Unfortunately, the white media gave Anson an excuse — he was a product of his time," Lester said. "White media tended to sugarcoat his personality — him and other legendary figures."

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Sol White transitioned from player to promoter, helping Black baseball players find opportunities in the game.

In his book, White didn't dwell on Anson or on those who supported segregation. His prose recounted the tales of Black ballplayers and highlighted the stars in their leagues. White's writing told of greats from those leagues.

As historians today comb newspaper archives in search of more information about early ballplayers of color, White has provided a starting point. He underlined their names in ink for all to read.

What would people know of pitcher George Stovey, slugger Home Run Johnson, pitcher Kid Carter or second baseman Frank Grant, another 2006 inductee into the National Baseball Hall of Fame, if not for their mention in "Colored Base Ball"?

"That's why the book is required reading for any serious scholar," Lester said.

Yet Lester doesn't know what White, who spent several decades writing for the Black press after leaving baseball and lived to see the AL and NL integrated, thought about Robinson's breakthrough.

Neither does Heaphy.

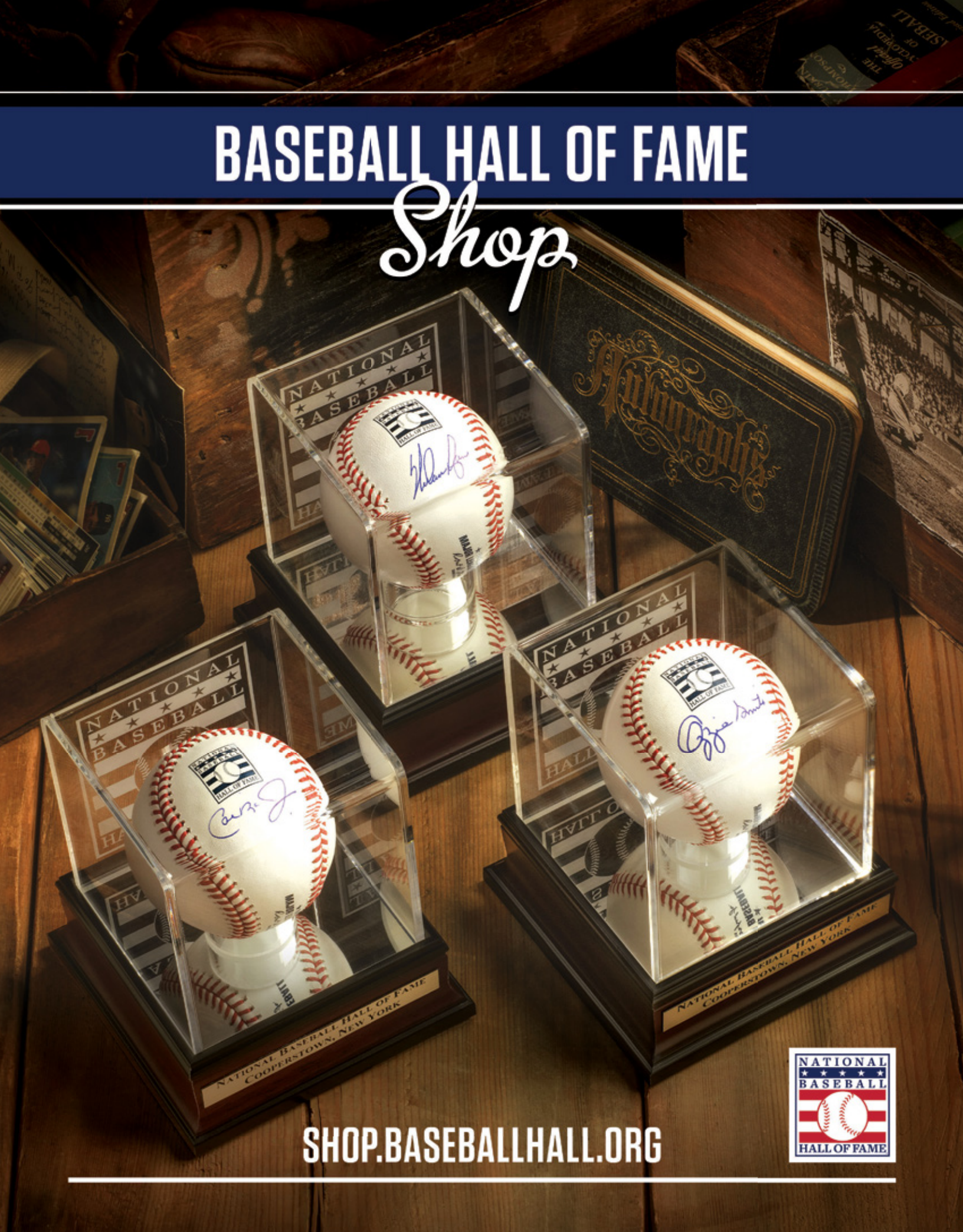
No articles have been uncovered in which White addressed Robinson or the erasure of the color line, she said.

"A lot of our appreciation of Sol White is from today's perspective, from our looking back and recognizing how important he is for us to understanding the game," Heaphy said. "It doesn't necessarily mean he was viewed the same way in his day."

CELEBRATING BLACK BASEBALL

The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum is celebrating and honoring the history of Black baseball with a new initiative that includes a lineup of educational outreach programs and a groundbreaking Museum exhibit that will open in April 2024.

Justice B. Hill, a former senior writer with MLB.com, practiced sports journalism for more than 25 years before settling into a teaching gig at Ohio University. He quit May 15, 2019, to write and globetrot. He continues to do both.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Uniform Approach

LONG BEFORE NUMBERS APPEARED ON THE BACK OF JERSEYS, TEAMS DEVISED WAYS TO IDENTIFY PLAYERS ON THE FIELD.

By Tom Shieber

ON JAN. 6, 1940, YANKEES PRESIDENT ED BARROW ANNOUNCED that Lou Gehrig's No. 4, the only uniform number he had ever worn, would never again be used by a member of the club. The offseason declaration marked the first time in baseball history that a player's uniform number had been retired. And yet, when the 19-year-old first baseman made his big league debut with the club in 1923, nearly six years before the Yankees first donned uniforms with numerals on their backs, he was assigned the No. 27, not 4.

How is that possible? The answer lies in a long-forgotten chapter in the history of numbering baseball players.

Forty-five years before Barrow made his historic proclamation, an unnamed individual suggested to James Hart, president of the National League Chicago Colts (now known as the Cubs), that his baseball players don uniform numbers. Hart endorsed the idea, which was detailed in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* of Dec. 29, 1894:

> *Every one who has attended a ball game knows how puzzled one occasionally gets in endeavoring to recognize some player or trying to locate a man who is on the team, but whose position has been changed from that signified on the score-card. The plan suggested to Mr. Hart is very simple. It is for every man on the team to have a separate number, which he shall keep throughout the season. … On the score-cards, the names of the players, with their numbers, shall be printed; and in this way the spectator can readily identify any player on the field.*

The proposed scheme was not new in the realm of sports. In horse racing, the practice of placing numbers on jockey silks began in the mid-1850s, if not earlier. Calls to have American football players don numbers started in the early 1880s. By the time of the baseball proposal, pinned numerals adorned the sleeves or backs of polo players and bicycle racers. But for baseball, talk was cheap and the National Pastime resisted the fan-friendly innovation.

In late 1906, a dozen years after Hart's numbering plan, Charles Murphy, the new owner of the Cubs, revived the idea. This time, however, the suggestion gained a foothold, though not initially in Chicago and not by physically placing numbers on uniforms. Instead, cost-conscious team magnates concocted a new scheme that, not surprisingly, aided profits.

Eliminating the time and money required to add numerals to the sleeves or backs of jerseys, the new plan entailed printing a unique number next to each player's name in the scorecards sold at the park and displaying these numbers in lineups posted on new-fangled electric scoreboards. This meant that to decode the numbering system, fans had to purchase a scorecard. And to top things off, wily owners would at times change these numbering assignments so that fans could not rely on the codes remaining the same each time they went to the ballpark, thus requiring them to buy new scorecards at every game they attended.

Newspaper reports from 1907 suggest that various American League clubs had already erected or planned to install new scoreboards that could handle this innovative numbering system. This included a new scoreboard at Boston's Huntington Avenue Grounds, then the home of the Americans (now known as the Red Sox), that quickly garnered a modicum of criticism. The *Altoona Tribune* of May 25, 1907, griped that "Boston's electric score board is a frost. When the balls and strike [sic] sign is working properly the batter sign on the other end makes a few changes not on the programme." Just a few weeks later, longtime baseball writer Sy Sanborn of the *Chicago Tribune* grumbled that "the electric score board installed at the Huntington avenue grounds is a distinct failure."

Despite initial hiccups, the scoreboard/scorecard numbering scheme flourished. By 1911, electronic scoreboards using the coding system were found at big league parks such as Boston's South End Grounds, Cleveland's League Park, Detroit's Bennett Park, Pittsburgh's Forbes Field, Washington's Griffith Stadium and both of Chicago's big league fields: West Side Grounds and White Sox Park.

Most of these scoreboards were likely manufactured by the World Score Board

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

Lou Gehrig's No. 4 Yankees jersey was the first to be retired by a team. But long before he wore No. 4 — which designated his position in the Yankees' batting order — he was identified by other numbers in team programs.

As seen in this photo from 1908, an electric scoreboard atop the right field wall at Boston's Huntington Avenue Grounds displayed player numbers next to indicators for balls, strikes and outs. The large dome in the background is the First Church of Christ, Scientist, located in Christian Science Plaza in Boston.

COLLECTION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

and Advertising Company, a Chicago-based firm that had acquired the patents of a local electrician, George Baird, in 1909 or 1910. Baird's patent papers described how the device featured various plates that:

> *… bear numerals. This is especially advantageous in the case of batters. The numerals may readily be made of a sufficiently large size to be distinguished readily from all the distant portions of a base-ball ground, whereas names upon the plates could not be read except from close at hand. The numbers employed will correspond with those assigned to the players in a printed or other list of the players supplied for the guidance of the audience, as for instance upon the usual score-cards or score-sheets which are employed for keeping record of the game.*

This early method of numbering players can be found in old scorecards that feature printed numbers next to player names, as well as explanations as to how fans could make the connection between the players, the numbers and the scoreboard. The Hall of Fame's archives include numerous such scorecards.

Red Sox scorecards from Fenway Park's inaugural 1912 season included this simple explanation of the system: "Follow the electric Score Board for changes — Every player has a Number as indicated."

Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, this method of numbering players and selling scorecards proved successful, and yet teams still discussed and experimented with the more direct method of affixing numerals to uniforms. Baseball clubs such as the Cuban Stars in 1909, the Cleveland Indians in 1916 and the St. Louis Cardinals in 1923 dabbled in donning numbered jerseys, but it was not until 1929 that the practice of placing numerals on the backs of team shirts truly took hold. That season the Indians and Yankees introduced the now-familiar tradition, and within a few years every major league club followed. Scorecards and scoreboards were still equipped to assist fans in identifying players by numbers, but now the players' uniforms also helped out.

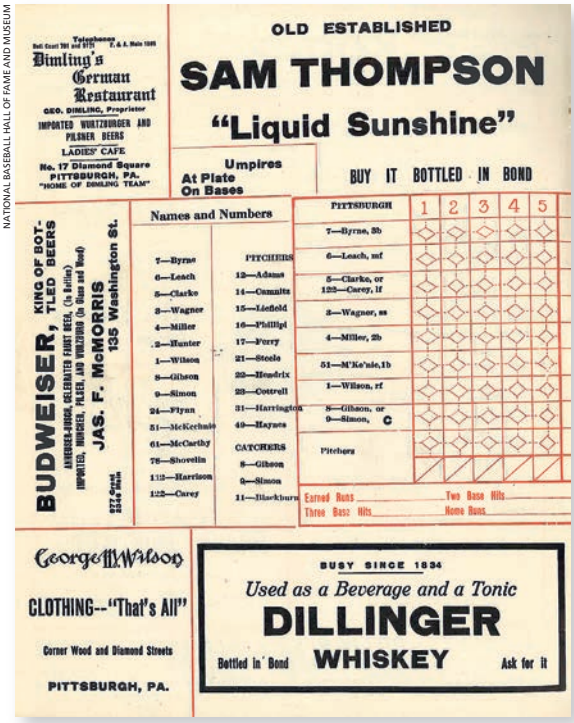
Today, the fan — in the stands, watching on television or streaming on their smart phone — has numerous ways to keep track of who's who on the diamond. Scoreboards, scorecards and digital devices use not just player numbers, but player names, images, video and audio. But few recall that just a decade into the 20th century, when ballpark vendors cried, "You can't tell the players without a scorecard," they really meant it.

Tom Shieber is the senior curator at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. The research for this article was done in close collaboration with Cassidy Lent, Library director at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

The 1911 "Baseball Blue Book" featured advertisements promoting a new electric scoreboard that "shows the player at bat … by numbers, same to correspond with players [sic] number as shown in Official Score Card."

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM



This detail of a scorecard in the Hall of Fame's archives comes from a Dodgers vs. Pirates game at Pittsburgh's Forbes Field, played on June 19, 1911, and includes one-, two-, and even three-digit numbers listed next player names.

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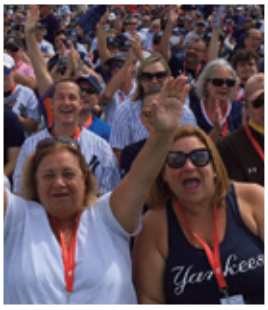

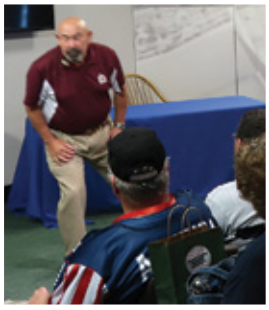

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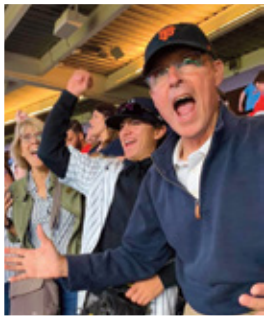
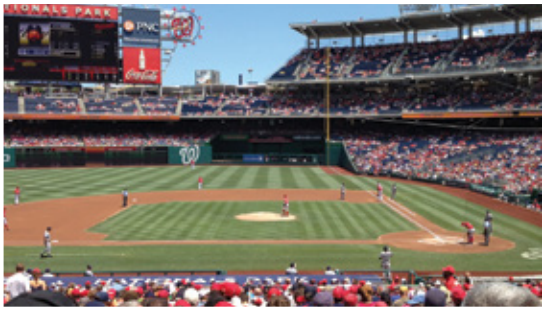




Hall of Fame Classic w/Cooperstown Golf Classic

May 26-28, 2023 • Cooperstown, NY

ALL NEW PACKAGE FOR 2023 - Salute the start of the summer season with this Cooperstown tradition, Hall of Fame Classic Weekend. In addition to the traditional Hall of Fame Classic events this package includes a golf outing led by Hall of Fame members at the Leatherstocking Golf Course on Otsego Lake on Sunday and much more.

Contact STAT today and let us do the planning.

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

COURTESY STEVE SANKER

Hall of Fame member Steve Sanker and his grandson Austin pose in front of statues of Babe Ruth and Ted Williams in the Hall of Fame's Plaque Gallery.

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 will share selections with our "baseball family."

Here are a few stories from our Museum Members:

>>> *I grew up loving baseball and have a 14-year-old son who plays baseball, but who doesn't have as keen an appreciation of baseball history as his old man. This past summer I took him on a trip to Cooperstown for the* Induction Ceremony *(we are big Red Sox fans living in North Carolina), mainly to see David Ortiz. The cumulative effect of walking through the Hall of Fame Museum, seeing the plaques, watching the videos and seeing items players used and wore started the process of opening his mind to the wonderful world of baseball history. Walking down the street and going to the many baseball-oriented shops, then meeting and getting autographs from Hall of Famers, just enriched the process. The* Parade of Legends *was a blast and the* Induction Ceremony *memorable. Now I have a kid who is starting to really love the sport, and all it took was one memorable weekend in Cooperstown. You can't put a price on that kind of magic!*

COURTESY OF JOHN DUNLAP

Jake and John Dunlap meet Rickey Henderson during a trip to Cooperstown.

John Dunlap
Member Since 2022

>>> *Back in 2017, I took my grandson Austin for his first visit to Cooperstown and the Baseball Hall of Fame. He enjoyed seeing the various uniforms on display in each team's locker, the movie presentation in the Grandstand Theater and all the Yankees memorabilia.*

Five years later in 2022, we made the trip again for his second visit. This time he focused on each player's plaque, the history of the game and, of course, the variety of baseball cards. I have made Cooperstown an annual destination since 1970 with my wife (an avid Mets fan), daughter and son. So now I have passed that torch — the love of the game — to my grandchildren.

The affinity of our National Pastime continues to be handed down from one generation to the next, and our family can surely verify that!

Steve Sankner
Member Since 1996

>>> *As a lifelong baseball fan, I had always wanted to visit Cooperstown. During some vacation time in 1967, my family and I, including my mother, decided to make the trip, so my wife and I gathered our three children, all under 5 years old, and drove there from central Pennsylvania. We stayed in a motel in town and proceeded to the Museum on Main Street.*

After arriving at the Hall, the first item I noticed upon entering the large, main room was Norman Rockwell's painting of the three umpires hanging on the wall to my right. The idea of this well-known painting sitting in the HOF blew me away. After viewing the signed

contracts of baseball giants, all under glass, I continued to soak up the atmosphere of this revered place for several hours. Just being at the place where Cobb, Ruth, Gehrig and so many other famous ballplayers had been honored was beyond my comprehension.

I chatted with Lee Allen, author of "The Hot Stove League," who was the historian at the time, and always looking to collect an autograph, I asked him to do that honor. Of course, he gladly complied.

Needless to say, I was hooked. I've returned many times since then, and it's always been a pleasure and joy for me and my family, not only to see the Museum, but to visit other spots in town.

Simply put, the Baseball Hall of Fame is a "must see" for baseball fans everywhere.

Earl Wood
Member since 2007

What You Can Help Us Do

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

This St. Louis Browns cap was worn by Eddie Silber in 1937 and is in need of conservations efforts.

EDDIE SILBER'S 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 that 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 its residency in the "Gateway to the West." Nevertheless, it is important that the St. Louis Browns be documented 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 daughter and 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

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS ONLINE

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

Explore additional projects, including artifacts, photographs, Library documents and exhibit updates that need 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**.*

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.

In 2010, Doug McWilliams traveled to Cooperstown to personally donate more than 10,000 negatives from his collection to the Hall of Fame's Dean O. Cochran Jr. Photograph Archives.

As we continue our work to digitally preserve our Photo 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**.

Remaining balance to preserve the Doug McWilliams Photograph Collection: $72,642

Visit of a Lifetime

SCOTT ROLEN SAVORS TRIP TO COOPERSTOWN.

By Bill Francis

Scott Rolen got his first tangible glimpse of immortality when he found himself in an oak-walled hall in Cooperstown.

Surrounding him were the bronze likenesses of the best of the best in the game's long history.

This summer Rolen will find himself among the 342 who are now on baseball's greatest team.

About a month after receiving the telephone call of a lifetime, the Hall of Fame Class of 2023 member was at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum for his Orientation Visit on Feb. 28. Following a morning of touring the Museum, he took questions from the assembled media in the Plaque Gallery.

"I'm sure there have been people sitting here who have been speechless, and I'm one of them," said Rolen, his wife, Niki, daughter, Raine, and son, Finn, standing nearby. "I'm so excited and thankful for my family to be healthy and have the opportunity to share this with us in July. What they're going to feel in this room, this is a special place. It's electric. I know what's going to happen when my parents, my brother and sister, and our family get to spend some time in here."

In introducing Rolen, Hall of Fame Chairman Jane Forbes Clark talked about the unique achievement Hall of Fame election represents.

"As we stand here in the Hall of Fame Plaque Gallery, we're surrounded by plaques describing the careers of baseball's greatest legends," Clark said. "The players on these walls represent only one percent of every man to play Major League Baseball in its history. One percent. And on July 23, Scott, your plaque will be joining theirs. And you're now on the same team as all of these greats.

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

Scott Rolen visits some of his equipment now part of the Museum's collection during his trip to Cooperstown on Feb. 28.

"So, it's my pleasure, Scott, to ask you to please put on your new team jersey. And we think it's the best team you've ever been on."

It was then that Rolen donned his Hall of Fame jersey with help from Clark and Hall of Fame President Josh Rawitch, then was escorted to where his plaque will be found after July's *Induction Ceremony*.

Rolen was the lone electee from the 2023 Baseball Writers' Association of America vote announced Jan. 24. With candidates needing to appear on at least 75 percent of all ballots cast to earn election, Rolen, in his sixth year on the BBWAA ballot, received 297 of the 389 votes for a percentage of 76.3. He debuted on the ballot in 2018 and received 10.2 percent of the vote.

Asked whether it had sunk in yet that he was now in the special company of the likes of Ted Williams, Lou Gehrig, Satchel Paige, Willie Mays and Ty Cobb, the Indiana native — who still calls the Hoosier State home — seemed perplexed for a moment.

"What do other people answer to that? I would like to hear some other people answer that question because I don't know how it's possible," Rolen replied. "As we're walking through here and seeing (plaques for) Babe Ruth and Jackie Robinson and Hank Aaron, that's not me. That's a whole world of baseball greatness that's unbelievable. And not just baseball. There's so much more to it in this Museum. It's an honor to just even be considered in the era that I played in the game to have some achievements. But the whole package, I'll never be able to figure out.

"When you actually have teammates, and you know them as humans, as people, as fathers — that's kind of a special thing. Especially for me to see Walk's (Larry Walker) and Doc's (Roy Halladay) plaques and know them from the time [I] spent with them."

When Rolen first entered the Plaque Gallery, the new Hall of Famer made sure to check out the bronze images of Jackie Robinson, Mike Schmidt, Red Schoendienst, Ozzie Smith, Walker and Halladay.

Rolen burst onto the baseball scene as the 1997 National League Rookie of the Year and would go on to win eight Gold Glove Awards and make seven All-Star teams. A lifetime .281 hitter and 2002 NL Silver Slugger for third base, he clubbed 316 home runs with a career OPS of .855. Among third basemen, Rolen ranks in the top 10 for WAR, while defensively only Brooks Robinson, Schmidt and Nolan Arenado have won more Gold Gloves than he did at the hot corner. He batted .421 in the 2006 World Series while helping the Cardinals to a Fall Classic crown.

A sturdy third sacker, listed at 6-foot-4 and 245 pounds during his playing career, Rolen — just the ninth third baseman elected to the Hall of Fame by the BBWAA — played 17 seasons from 1996 through 2012, splitting his time between the Phillies, Cardinals, Blue Jays and Reds. Selected out of high

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

Scott Rolen (far right) sits with (from left) wife, Niki, son, Finn, and daughter, Raine, in front of a photo of the 1939 induction class in the Museum during his Orientation Visit. Rolen and Fred McGriff will be inducted into the Hall of Fame on Sunday, July 23.

school by the Phillies in the second round of the 1993 amateur draft, he finished his career with 2,077 hits, compiled a .364 on-base percentage, clubbed 517 doubles, collected 1,287 RBI and stole 118 bases. He is one of only four third basemen in history (players who appeared in at least 50 percent of their games at third base) with at least 300 home runs, 100 stolen bases and 500 doubles, along with Adrián Beltré, George Brett and Chipper Jones.

Defensively, Rolen, who ranks 12th all time with 2,023 games played at third base, led the NL in putouts by third basemen twice (1997, 1998) and assists twice (2002, 2004).

According to Rolen, life has changed since receiving the phone call welcoming him to the Cooperstown family.

"It has, actually, in a positive way," he said. "We're pretty reclusive where we live, and we kind of mind our own business. And then we're on planes again and kind of reliving some stuff and having some incredible experiences like this. So, I think we're trying to soak it all in. And I know there's still quite a bit ahead that's maybe not in my normal day of coffee and dropping kids off at school."

As far as his induction speech goes, Rolen calls it a "work in progress."

He did jokingly feign nervousness when asked if the anticipation of the *Induction Ceremony*, with its large crowds, Hall of Famers in attendance and national television audience, was building up.

"Are you trying to put more pressure on me? I'm getting sick to my stomach right now," Rolen said with a smile. "We talked about the speech, and I know it's a heavy lift. Delivering it, there's going be a lot of people, but certainly spending time with your family and how you're going to deliver it, I think, is very important. So, we're going to go home, [Niki] is going to play with the dog, it's going to bark and we're going to be fine. We'll get there."

The Class of 2023 — which also includes Fred McGriff via December's Contemporary Baseball Players Era Committee vote — will be inducted on Sunday, July 23, in Cooperstown. Ford C. Frick Award winner Pat Hughes and BBWAA Career Excellence Award winner John Lowe will be honored during Induction Weekend at the *Awards Presentation.*

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

Arti-Facts

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

Tony Gwynn's 1994 Jersey

V.J. LOVERO/GETTY IMAGES

Tony Gwynn

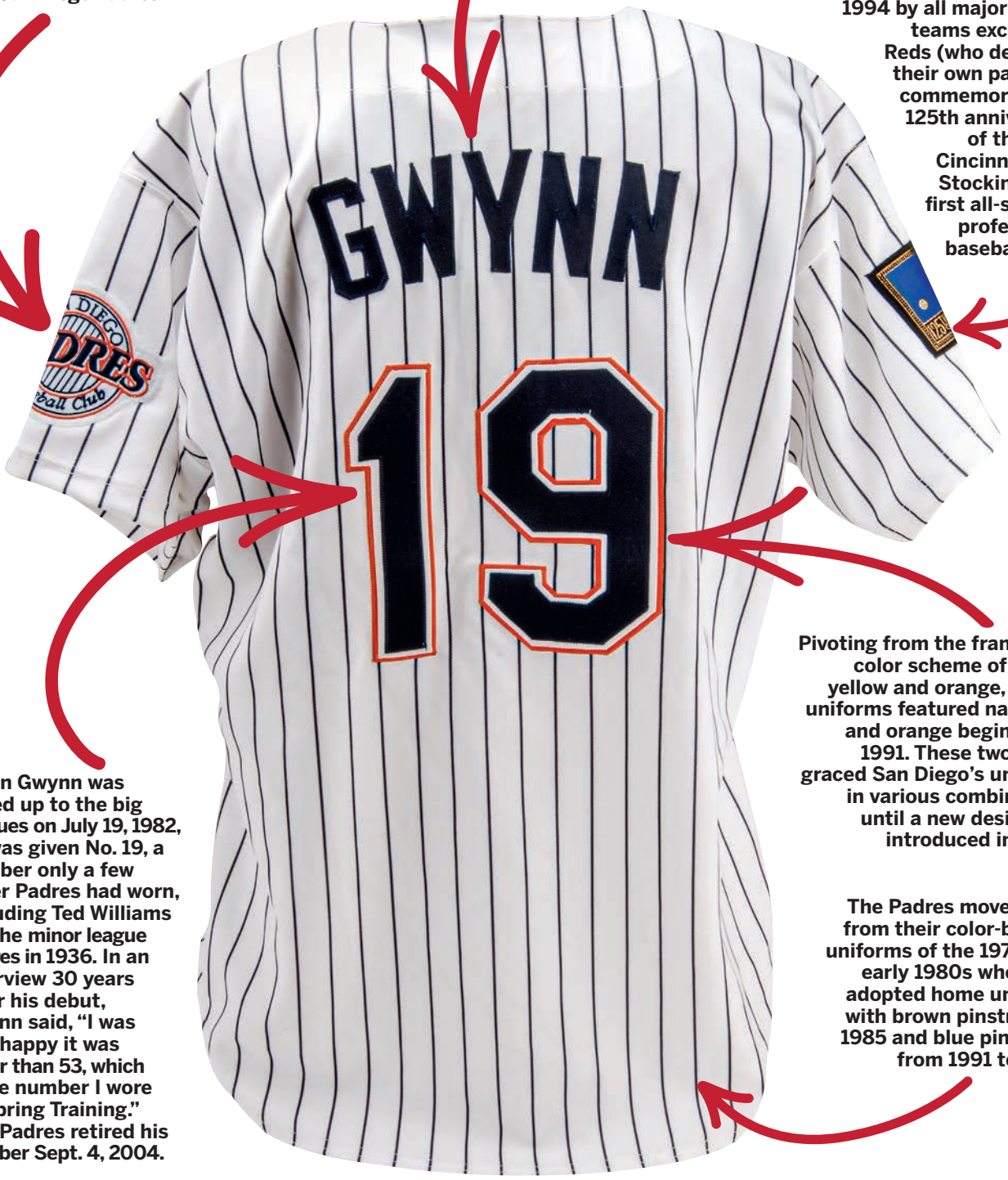
Tony Gwynn wore this San Diego Padres jersey during the strike-shortened 1994 season. With a .394 batting average, Gwynn's best offensive season of his 20-year career came to a halt when the season was ended by a labor dispute on Aug. 12.

THE NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM IS CELEBRATING AND HONORING THE HISTORY OF BLACK BASEBALL WITH A NEW INITIATIVE THAT INCLUDES A LINE-UP OF EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND A GROUNDBREAKING MUSEUM EXHIBIT THAT WILL OPEN IN APRIL 2024.

A longtime hotbed for professional baseball, San Diego was home to the Pacific Coast League's Padres from 1936 to 1968. In 1969, Major League Baseball expanded to include four new teams: the Montreal Expos, Kansas City Royals, Seattle Pilots and San Diego Padres.

Spending 20 years in the big leagues, all with San Diego, Gwynn earned the nickname Mr. Padre. Even though he retired more than 20 years ago, the right fielder still holds team records for runs, hits, singles, doubles, triples, RBI and stolen bases.

This patch was worn in 1994 by all major league teams except the Reds (who designed their own patch) to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the 1869 Cincinnati Red Stockings, the first all-salaried professional baseball club.



When Gwynn was called up to the big leagues on July 19, 1982, he was given No. 19, a number only a few other Padres had worn, including Ted Williams for the minor league Padres in 1936. In an interview 30 years after his debut, Gwynn said, "I was just happy it was lower than 53, which is the number I wore in Spring Training." The Padres retired his number Sept. 4, 2004.

Pivoting from the franchise's color scheme of brown, yellow and orange, Padres uniforms featured navy blue and orange beginning in 1991. These two colors graced San Diego's uniforms in various combinations until a new design was introduced in 2004.

The Padres moved away from their color-blocked uniforms of the 1970s and early 1980s when they adopted home uniforms with brown pinstripes in 1985 and blue pinstripes from 1991 to 2001.

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

First and Third

FRED McGRIFF AND SCOTT ROLEN WERE AT THE TOP OF THEIR CORNERS EN ROUTE TO COOPERSTOWN.

By CRAIG MUDER

Their careers featured multiple All-Star Games, awards and honors — plus a star turn in the World Series for each.

Seemingly, Fred McGriff and Scott Rolen were destined for Cooperstown. But while the journey to Induction Weekend 2023 was not a straight line for either, the legacies they left behind are nothing short of cutting edge.

McGriff and Rolen will share the induction stage on Sunday, July 23, on the grounds of the Clark Sports Center in Cooperstown. More than four dozen Hall of Famers are expected to return to celebrate the Class of 2023, which will feature two of the most respected players of their era.

"I've been totally blessed my whole life and continue to be blessed," McGriff said after learning he was unanimously elected to the Hall of Fame by the Contemporary Baseball Players Era Committee on Dec. 4. "I run into some ex-players and teammates and they all say: 'Fred, you had a great career. You need to be in the Hall of Fame.'

"It's really quite an honor."

McGriff was a tower of strength and stability at first base for 19 big league seasons, starting with Toronto in 1986. Reaching the 30-homer mark 10 times, McGriff anchored lineups with the Blue Jays, Padres, Braves, Devil Rays, Cubs and Dodgers — appearing in at least 150 games in 10 seasons and leading the NL with 144 games played in the strike-shortened season of 1995.

That year, McGriff — batting cleanup throughout the season — helped the Braves win their first World Series title since moving to Atlanta.

"We won a lot of games, but when (manager) Bobby Cox got upset, we all knew about it," McGriff said. "We loved playing for him, though. Bobby got tossed

MICHAEL ZAGARIS/MLB PHOTOS

Fred McGriff bats during Game 1 of the 1995 World Series in Atlanta. McGriff's second-inning home run tied the game, and Atlanta went on to win the contest, 3-2, and the series 4-games-to-2.

JOHN GRESHOM/MLB PHOTOS

Scott Rolen played 17 big league seasons, winning a World Series ring with the Cardinals in 2006 when he hit .421 in the Fall Classic.

out so many times because he would rather get tossed out of the game than have one of his players get tossed out of the game. Playing in Atlanta during those years was pretty special."

McGriff won his World Series ring in his 10th big league season, while Rolen ascended to the game's peak in his 11th campaign — helping the Cardinals capture the 2006 World Series crown. Rolen hit .421 in five games against Detroit that year with three doubles and five runs scored.

"After 2004, when we got swept by the Red Sox in the World Series, I told my wife that I would never win a World Series because I can't play on a better team talent-wise — and certainly a more cohesive team — than that," Rolen said immediately after he was elected to the Hall of Fame. "That's as good a group as you can possibly have. And then we come back in 2006 and it changed my mind about a lot of things. It was pretty impressive there, too."

Rolen began his MLB career in 1996 with the Phillies, falling one plate appearance short of exhausting his rookie status due to a broken hand. That set the stage for 1997 when he was named the unanimous choice as National League Rookie of the Year after hitting .283 with 21 homers and 92 RBI while immediately establishing himself as one of the best defensive third basemen in the game.

Traded to the Cardinals in 2002, Rolen helped lead St. Louis to two NL pennants and four first-place finishes in the NL Central in his first five seasons with the Redbirds.

Finishing his career with stints in Toronto and Cincinnati, Rolen totaled seven All-Star Game selections and eight Gold Glove Awards. But his biggest honor will come this summer — standing on the stage with a player who inspired him in his earliest days in the big leagues.

"I was young when Fred was [still playing], and he just dominated," Rolen said. "I was in awe by how large the man was at first base. But he was so wonderful — he talked to rookies and treated young guys with a lot of respect.

HALL OF FAME WEEKEND 2023

Schedule subject to change

HALL OF FAME WEEKEND
July 21-24

AWARDS PRESENTATION
Saturday, July 22

PARADE OF LEGENDS
Saturday, July 22

INDUCTION CEREMONY
1:30 p.m., Sunday, July 23
Grounds of the Clark Sports Center

LEGENDS OF THE GAME ROUNDTABLE
Monday, July 24

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

The Otesaga Resort Hotel will welcome Hall of Famers in July as part of the celebration of the Class of 2023.

"It will be fantastic this summer. I couldn't go in with a better person."

Hall of Fame Weekend 2023 will also feature the annual *Awards Presentation* on Saturday, July 22. Longtime Cubs voice Pat Hughes will receive the Museum's Ford C. Frick Award for broadcasters, while John Lowe will be honored with the BBWAA's Career Excellence Award. The annual *Parade of Legends* will take place following the *Awards Presentation*.

Admission to the *Induction Ceremony* and the *Parade of Legends* is free and open to the public.

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

Evolution Revolution

AS OWNER AND COMMISSIONER, WE HELPED GUIDE THE GAME THROUGH SOME OF ITS BIGGEST CHANGES.

By Bud Selig

I oversaw a lot of changes as an owner and commissioner. And I had a lot of concerns when we made those changes. I always wondered: "Am I doing anything that will damage what I think is the best game in the world?"

But the things we brought to the game — like the designated hitter, instant replay and the Wild Card — they've been so good for the game in every way.

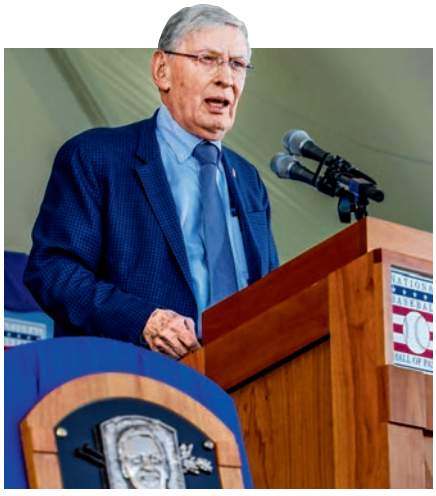
There's no way you can say the way we played the game in 1951 is OK for this era. Because it's not.

I was a fan before I was an owner, and when I was an owner and as commissioner I still loved the game. But when I started as an owner in 1970, the game was pretty much like it had always been. Baseball is always reluctant to change.

But in 1972, the American League had a meeting at the Plaza Hotel in New York City. We were talking about a lot of changes, and I remember Charlie Finley had some *interesting* ideas, in particular orange baseballs. But when he came up with the designated hitter, we all began to consider it.

The American League had been struggling on offense. And I remember John Fetzer of the Tigers, who was my mentor in the game, and Tom Yawkey of the Red Sox saying that it was time for a change. So we took a vote, and I voted for it. And now, the DH is everywhere.

You had to get used to the pitcher not hitting, but I must admit: The more I saw it, the more I liked it.



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

As Milwaukee Brewers owner and later MLB Commissioner, Bud Selig oversaw historic changes in the game. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2017.

Then when I became commissioner, we had some more changes to consider. We studied the Wild Card in 1992 and 1993 when I was acting commissioner, and I talked a lot to John Harrington of the Red Sox and Dave Montgomery of the Phillies, who were the two people I thought knew the most about scheduling. So we went to Boston for a league meeting, and I knew this was going to be a huge change.

As commissioner, I was a vote counter. The National League voted for the Wild Card unanimously, and I thought I had the votes in the AL. But the AL voted 8 to 6 against it. So I had to take a 10-minute hiatus and talk to the clubs. Many will tell you it was a little on the difficult side, but they all voted for it — save for one exception: George W. Bush of the Rangers. But he couldn't have been better because he told me: "If you need my vote, you have my vote."

Now if you think about the last 26 or 27 years, where would we be without the Wild Card? We had 26 teams — now 30 — and we were giving away September to football if we didn't have a pennant race that year. Now we've added even more teams to the Wild Card, so I guess they not only like it, but they want more.

Sometimes change comes very slowly. But this was so good for the game in every way. Just like Interleague Play. I remember hearing Hank Greenberg and Bill Veeck talk in the 1950s about how they couldn't understand why we didn't have it, how Cleveland fans could never see the Brooklyn Dodgers play. Then we tried in 1973 when I was the AL guy and Frank Dale of the Reds was the NL guy, and we came up with an idea for a six-game package, but it never went anywhere. Now, Interleague Play is a huge draw every year.

Then there's instant replay, and I give Tony La Russa all the credit for that. He was on a 14-man committee I put together, and they talked me into it. That's worked out very well.

Is there more that could have been done? Well, I guess I would have liked a more geographical realignment. But I like the way the leagues are constituted, too, and major realignment would eliminate that.

Everything in life evolves in some form or another. This game is so good, but I think the changes with the pitch clock and others that will come this year will be really helpful. What they're doing now is very good, and anything you can do to increase the pace of the game will have a huge benefit. I'm confident that things will work out as well with these new changes as they have with the ones we've had over the last 50 years.

This is all part of a normal evolution.

Allan H. "Bud" Selig is the Commissioner Emeritus after serving as the leader of the game from 1992-2015. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2017.

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AROUND COOPERSTOWN

thisiscooperstown.com/cooperstown-getaway

Blooming trees herald the coming of the warm weather months in Cooperstown.