

Baseball tidbits newsletter – interesting and random stuff, fodder for bar bets.

5.8.2022

Good morning baseball fans,

Grab a coffee and enjoy a tribute to Willie Mays, Dusty Baker's 2,000th win as a manager, rough days in Cincinnati, fun stuff and trivia.

THIS WEEK'S TRIVIA CHALLENGE

Career HR leaders by Number of letters in Last Name...3 through 9.

Answer at bottom.

If we asked 10 letters it would be Curtis Granderson 344 HRs or 11 letters Carl Yastrzemski 452 HRs. But 3-9 are pretty straight forward.

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

Only two players with more World Series home runs than **Yogi Berra's** 12--**Mickey Mantle** (18) and **Babe Ruth** (15).

Manny Machado had his 23 multi-HR games as a third baseman this week--ranks 12th all-time at the position. Hall of Famer **Eddie Mathews** is the career leader (48 multi-HR games).

Nolan Ryan took a no-hitter into the 6th inning 52 times.

Into the 7th inning 31 times.

Into the 8th inning 23 times

Into the 9th inning 12 times.

He threw 7 no-hitters.

By the way, in his no hitter on September 28, 1974 for the Angels over the Twins, Ryan threw 158 pitches.

Speaking of no hitters—in the 5 pitcher, 159 pitch no hitter the Mets delivered last week, **Edwin Diaz** struck out the Phillies 3-4-5 batters to end the game. That hasn't been done to end a no hitter in 50 years.

Kyle Schwarber of the Phillies had an interesting night. On a night his team was no-hit Schwarber made no outs—he walked three times.

According to the Elias Sports Bureau, he's only the third player since 1900 to bat three times (or more) in a no-hitter and reach base in every one of those trips. The other two: **Dale Long** (three walks for the Pirates in **Sad Sam Jones'** May 12, 1955 no-hitter for the Cubs) and **Bill Hall** (three walks for the Brewers in Justin Verlander's no-hitter for the Tigers on June 12, 2007).

Adam Wainwright and **Yadi Mollina** tied the all-time wins record for a pitcher-catcher battery at 202 with a win against the Royals. That ties them for first all-time with **Warren Spahn** and **Del Crandall**, who also were a part of 202 wins from 1949-63.

Think "stuff" is trumping "command and control" on the mound these days? Cardinals' relief pitcher **Ryan Helsley** let go of the strike-three fastball that blew D-backs second baseman **Ketel Marte** away during the eighth inning on Sunday afternoon, he knew there was something different about it.

Just to make sure, he took a quick peek at the Busch Stadium radar reading for confirmation: 103.1 mph.

Helsley's 103.1 mph four-seamer was the fastest MLB pitch this season. Previously, Mariners reliever **Andrés Muñoz** had thrown the fastest pitch of the season at 102.8 mph. Helsley threw eight of 18 pitches on Sunday at least 100 mph.

In 8 1/3 innings over seven outings, Helsley hasn't given up a run or a walk while striking out 16 hitters. The opposition is hitting .038 off him. Helsley's 103.1 mph fastball topped teammate **Jordan Hicks'** 102.1 mph pitch on April 17 as the fastest Cardinals pitch this year. Hicks, who tied **Aroldis Chapman** for the fastest pitch ever recorded at 105.1 mph in 2018.

When **Nolan Ryan** threw his famous 100.9-mph fastball — the one that the Guinness Book of World Records listed as the fastest pitch ever thrown — the speed was registered about 10 feet in front of the batter, or some 50 feet after Ryan had thrown it.

Today's fastball's speed is registered the instant it leaves the hand.

So, making the adjustments, the experts in “Fastball” said that Ryan’s fastball would today be clocked at an impossible 108.5 mph.

University of Tennessee’s **Ben Joyce** was clocked at 105.5 mph on Sunday, he has been absolutely lights-out in relief this season, striking out 38 in 21 innings with an 0.86 ERA. And he just set the record for the fastest college pitch ever thrown.

On Sunday, the Las Vegas Aviators — the Oakland A’s Triple-A affiliate — hosted the Tacoma Rainiers. Attendance: 6,153. Pretty good!

Monday, in Oakland, where the best baseball players in the organization work, **just 2,488 people showed up to the ballpark** to watch the visiting Rays beat the A’s, 6-1.

The brutal Monday number marks the lowest draw of any MLB game this season and the lowest the A’s have seen since 1980.

Robinson Canó was cut Monday by the New York Mets with nearly \$45 million remaining on his contract, ending an ill-fated marriage and perhaps signaling the end of his decorated major league career.

The 39-year-old Canó, who sat out last season while serving his second suspension for performance-enhancing drugs, is batting .195 (8 for 41) with one home run and a paltry .501 OPS in 43 plate appearances. He homered to the opposite field with a vintage swing in the home opener April 15 against Arizona, but has appeared in just 12 of 23 games, starting six at second base and five at designated hitter.

An eight-time All-Star and two-time Gold Glove winner, Canó spent his first nine big league seasons across town and helped the New York Yankees win the 2009 World Series. He has won five Silver Slugger awards and was MVP of the 2017 All-Star Game.

Canó has a .302 career batting average with 335 home runs, 1,305 RBIs, and an .842 OPS in 17 regular seasons. He has 2,632 hits, including 571 doubles. He is owed \$44,703,297 by the Mets from the remainder of the \$240 million, 10-year contract he signed with Seattle. He has lost \$36,258,065 because of the two drug suspensions.

With three singles in Thursday’s 3-2 loss to the Astros at Minute Maid Park, **Miguel Cabrera** passed Tigers legend and Hall of Famer **Al Kaline** for the No. 31 spot on the all-time MLB hits list and now sits at 3,008. Next up on MLB’s all-time hits list is **Wade Boggs**, who sits at No. 30 with 3,010 for his career.

Oh, and Saturday he delivered his 600th career double, making Cabrera one of only three players in MLB history to have 3,000+ career hits, 600+ doubles and 500+ home runs. He joins **Hank Aaron and Albert Pujols** in that elite tier.

When two runs scored on Cabrera's latest milestone hit, he passed **Frank Robinson** for No. 21 on the all-time RBI list with 1,813.

A useful guy to have on your team. Since the start of the 2020 season, the Rangers' **Adolis García** has hit 5 go-ahead home runs in the eighth inning or later.

King **Felix Hernandez** struck out **Mike Trout** 27 times, almost twice any other pitcher.

You might recall our recent piece on tall and short players. This week's update—6'11" **Sean Hjelle** took the mount for the San Francisco Giants (how appropriate) on Friday. He threw a perfect 7th inning in relief in his MLB debut.

At 6-foot-11, Hjelle also secured his place in the record books, matching **Jon Rauch** as the tallest player on record in the Major Leagues. **Randy Johnson** is 6'10".

Ranger Suarez of the Phillies pitched against the Texas Rangers this week.

BEST LIST I'VE SEEN IN A WHILE

Most Career Home Runs hit for a single manager. (this could have been this week's trivia question—how would you have done?)

Mark McGwire for **Tony La Russa** 497

Babe Ruth for **Miller Huggins** 467

Albert Pujols for **Tony La Russa** 445

Barry Bonds for **Dusty Baker** 437

Chipper Jones for **Bobby Cox** 436

15% INTO THE SEASON, STANDINGS UPS AND DOWNS.

Red Sox are also struggling. The Sox have converted only five of 12 save chances, Wednesday was the fourth time they have blown a save in the ninth inning or later this season, then Saturday was the fifth. They're also 0-6 in extra innings.

Then the Sox faced **Shohei Ohtani**. 7 shutout innings, 11 strikeouts, no walks in an 8-0 Angels' victory. As the Boston Globe put it, He challenged them with fastballs that topped 100 miles per hour.

Fooled them with sliders out the zone. Froze them with splitters over the plate. Four of Ohtani's 11 strikeouts came on the splitter, three on the slider, three on the fastball and one on a curveball. Throwing a season-high 99 pitches, Ohtani set a career high in his seven-inning outing by generating 29 swings and misses. His previous high was 26 on Sept. 19, 2021 vs. the A's. Ohtani threw his fastball 48 times, averaging 97.2 mph and topping out at 100.3.

On the other side of the ball, Ohtani went 2-for-4 with hard-hit singles in the fourth and eighth. The singles accounted for two of the game's top five highest exit velocities, a monster with a 103.7 mph single that drove in **Andrew Velazquez** during a five-run eighth inning. The ball was hit hard enough to knock his number off the manual scoreboard.

Hitting third and making his first start on the mound at Fenway Park, Ohtani became the first starting pitcher to bat in one of the top four spots in a game at the historic ballpark since **Babe Ruth** did so on Sept. 20, 1919.

More Red Sox struggles:

April 8: walk-off loss to the Yankees

April 23: walk-off loss to the Rays

April 26: walk-off loss to the Blue Jays

April 30: walk-off loss to the Orioles

Per The Athletic, that made the Sox the first team to serve up walk-off losses to every other team in their division in a calendar month since the Cubs did it against their fellow NL Central juggernauts in May 2012.

A hopeful Red Sox note--Double A Portland righthander **Brayan Bello** threw a seven-inning no-hitter for the Sea Dogs in the nightcap of a doubleheader sweep over the Reading Fightin' Phils on Thursday.

Bello, the top Red Sox pitching prospect, threw 96 pitches, 55 for strikes. He allowed an unearned run while walking three and striking out five. Portland beat Reading, 3-1, at Hadlock Field. The Sea Dogs won the first game, 5-1.

Bello got 11 swings and misses — five on sliders, and three each on fastballs and changeups. He worked at 96-98 miles per hour with his fastball.

The 22-year-old righthander features a high-90s fastball that he uses, much like **Nate Eovaldi**, for weak contact at the top of the zone. That offering sets up a pair of swing-and-miss secondary pitches — a slider and excellent changeup — and Bello has been working this year to incorporate a sinker to get more weak contact. Through five starts this year for Portland, he's 3-2 with a 1.95 ERA, 37 strikeouts, and 11 walks in 27⅓ innings while holding hitters to a .135/.224/.260 line.

Yankees and Mets closed out April both in first place. Last time that happened was 1986. Mets went on to win the World Series. The only other time it occurred was 1976, when the Yankees closed April with a 10-3 record (and went on to lose the World Series) while the Mets were pacing the N.L. at 13-7 (then failed to make the playoffs).

Overall, the Yankees have had the A.L.'s best record entering May 1 seven times since 1962, according to Baseball Reference, while the Mets have paced the N.L. four times. Before that, the Yankees had the top April record in the A.L. 18 times from 1903 to 1961. In seven of those 18 seasons, the top April team in the N.L. was either the Brooklyn Dodgers or the New York Giants.

AND THEN THERE ARE THE REDS

The Cincinnati Reds got off to a 3-19 start, second-worst 22-game start in 122 years.

They're last in hits (140), OBP (.271) and ERA (6.15). Then on Wednesday they lost to Milwaukee 18-4. The Reds are 2-14 against righties this season. Cincinnati is 3-17 as an underdog. Cincinnati is -82 in run differential.

Another update—three more losses and **3-22**, which puts them on pace for 142 losses this year. As we publish it hasn't gotten a whole lot better—4 up/23 down.

They're batting .203 as a team this year, which is somehow not the worst in the league. Shout out to the 13-13 Diamondbacks, who are hitting below .200.

Cincy has posted a wRC+ —an advanced hitting stat that measures offensive performance, then adjusts for park factors and league averages — **of 67**, 13 points worse than the second-best team at 80. League average is 100. Essentially, it's an entire team's worth of No. 9 hitters.

Thanks to the new draft lottery, the league's worst record no longer guarantees you the No. 1 draft pick — which will probably be **Druw Jones** (yes, son of **Andruw Jones**).

The Reds have just a 16.5% chance at the first pick if they finish last, identical odds as the second- and third-worst teams.

In that 18-4 Brewers win **Rowdy Tellez** had 8 RBI, a franchise record. **Richie Sexson, Jonathan Lucroy, Ryan Braun and Christian Yelich** were among the Brewers with seven RBIs in a game before this season. **Willy Adames** drove in seven runs just last week in Pittsburgh. But no Brewers player had eight RBIs prior to Tellez's four-hit performance on Wednesday.

And from Jayson Stark of The Athletic:

Worse than the Mets and Spiders? Really? Really. **Choo-Choo Coleman's** '62 Mets won seven of their first 25 games (on the way to 40-120). **Harry Colliflower's** 1899 Spiders won five of their first 25 (on the way to 20-134). So ...

In modern baseball history, only Jeff Stone's fabled 1988 Orioles (2-23, after an 0-21 start) and **Dmitri Young's** 2003 Tigers (3-22) have had a record this grim through 25 games. But no National League team has gotten off to a start this rough since **Piggy Ward's** 1894 Washington Senators (3-22). And that's not good!

Since April 12, they're 1-20! Yes, let the record show the Reds were once 2-2. And since then, *they're 1 and 20*. On one hand, 1-20 streaks do happen from time to time (even if they haven't happened to any Reds team since 1914). On the other hand, they don't happen much this time of year.

Other than those 1988 Orioles, who went 0-21 to kick off quite the rollicking season, you know how many teams in history have had a 1-20 streak that began in any part of April? Yessir. Exactly one. These 2022 Reds.

They still haven't won two in a row! All right, not that it's particularly surprising, when we're dealing with a team that has only won three games, period. But still ...

To get 25 games into a season and have no two-game winning streaks never feels like a harbinger of uplifting days ahead. The only good news we have here is, it'll take a few more weeks of this before they make history.

The deepest any team has ever gotten into a season before winning back-to-back games, according to Luckhaupt: **Urbane Pickering's** 1932 Red Sox (won games No. 43 and 44). The NL "record" is still held by **Spud Davis' 1928 Phillies** (42 and 43).

They're winless even in games when they score in the top of the first! Thursday marked the fifth time this season the Reds have gone on the road and grabbed a lead in the top of the first inning. This one went just like the other four. They were up by three after a half-inning. They were losing *by five* by the end of the third inning.

So the Reds are now 0-5 in games in which they score in the top of the first. The other 29 teams entered Thursday at 66-26 when they took the lead in the top of the first.

They've won zero games when trailing *at any point*! Here they are, 25 games in, and the Reds still have none of those always helpful "comeback wins" — meaning they're 0-22 in games in which they fall behind in any inning. That leaves them just four back of those '88 Orioles, who lost their first 26 in a row when trailing at any point. Luckily, the Reds will need at least another week and a half to blow past the all-time record for this sort of thing.

- The modern record, according to STATS Perform: 0-32 after trailing, by the 111-loss 2013 Astros.
- The modern NL record: 0-31, by **Jesse Gonder's** 109-loss '64 Mets.
- Oh, and one more thing. Worst record over a full season, since the '88 Orioles, when trailing at any point: 18-106 (.145 winning percentage), by **Hiram Bocachica's** 106-loss 2002 Tigers.

They're already 14 1/2 games out of first place! The Big Red Machine went through the entire decade of the 1970s without finishing 14 1/2 games out of first place. These Reds couldn't even make it to Mother's Day.

It might not seem that hard to fall this far back this fast when you lose every day. But *only one previous NL team in the modern era had ever done it*, Luckhaupt reports.

- Most games behind, 25 games into a season, by all NL teams since 1901: 15 1/2, by **Pug Bennett's** 1907 Cardinals.
- Most games behind, 25 games into a season, by all MLB teams in the division-play era (1969-2022): also 15 1/2, by those 1988 Orioles again.

What about the '62 Mets? Nope. They were 13 1/2 back. The 1899 Spiders? Sorry. A mere 14 out. It makes me shake my head even to write that.

Oh, and in a related development, it took these Reds just 24 games to fall at least five games behind *every other team in both leagues*! That matched a record held, in the divisional era, by ... the '88 Orioles, of course.

Their rotation has an 8.91 ERA! As recently as 2020, the Reds' rotation had the lowest opponent average and fourth-best ERA (3.50) in the major leagues. However ... we should probably mention it isn't 2020 anymore.

So 25 games into this season, this edition of the Reds' rotation has somehow allowed 99 earned runs in 100 innings (and 102 runs altogether). The Dodgers' rotation hasn't even allowed 30 yet. Needless to say, we're back into historic territory.

- Highest ERA by any team's rotation, according to Baseball-Reference, since earned runs became an official stat in each league in 1913: 6.64, by Felipe Lira's 1996 Tigers.
- NL record in that span: 6.34, by **Leo Sweetland's** 1930 Phillies.

So even if these Reds were able to spend the next 137 games lowering that ERA *by two runs a game*, they'd still have the highest ERA by any rotation ever!

Their ERA in their losses is 10.82! It's one thing to lose a lot. It's another to get bludgeoned a lot. Is it safe to say these Reds have carved out that bludgeon niche, too?

In their 22 losses, they're allowing nearly 11 earned runs a game. And yep, that would be yet another record. Hap Collard and the rest of the 1930 Phillies hold that one, with an 8.48 ERA in their losses, according to Baseball-Reference. Good thing these Reds don't have to pitch at Baker Bowl!

They're walking more than five batters a game! Hey, has anyone in Cincinnati spotted the strike zone? **Hunter Strickland** hasn't. He's got a 7/13 strikeouts-to-walks ratio working. **Vladimir Gutierrez** hasn't. He's at 13/17 K/BB. But this is an epidemic that's bigger than them on a staff that's sitting at 5.14 walks per nine innings, and headed for one of the worst walk rates in history.

Only five staffs in modern AL/NL history have averaged five walks per nine innings or worse. The most recent team to accomplish that did it *71 years ago!* That was **Stubby Overmire's** 1951 Browns (5.3 per nine). The distinguished record holders: **Squiz Pillion's** 1915 A's, who walked 5.5 per nine innings over a century ago. Is it possible this is all umpire **Angel Hernandez's** fault?

They have a minus-87 run differential already! Back in the glory days — which **Pete Rose** would like us to call 1967-81 — the Reds had a positive run differential in 15 seasons in a row. It's tough to like their chances of achieving positivity this year ... because they just missed setting the modern record for worst run differential through any team's first 25 games. Here's the company they're in, courtesy of Luckhaupt:

- **Delwyn Young's** 2010 Pirates — minus-89
- **Moose Salters'** 1936 Browns — minus-87

- Your 2022 Cincinnatians – minus-87

The '62 Mets were at “only” minus-48. And these Reds have practically doubled that!

As I mentioned, I take no joy in assembling these messy little notes. And I could have kept going.

I haven't even mentioned that their pitchers have *allowed more runs* than their hitters *have gotten hits*, something no team had ever done in its first 25 games. ... Have I let it slip that there are seven Reds hitters (with at least 10 plate appearances) who are under the Mendoza Line (**Joey Votto**: .122 hitter?). ... I never even got to their record 25 straight season-opening games without any starting pitcher going six innings. ... Have I written a word about the fact that with runners in scoring position, their staff has basically turned the whole sport into **Mike Trout** (.332/.414/.601)?

(more Jayson Stark on Yankees 11 game winning streak)

YANKEES PLAY “BEAT THE STREAK” — Whenever the Yankees rip off another double-digit winning streak (by which we mean pretty much every year), it's time for the latest, greatest edition of Beat the (Yankees) Streak, which goes like this:

- This latest streak was the Yankees' 29th double-digit winning streak *since their last double-digit losing streak* — in 1913.
- Since the Yankees' last double-digit losing streak, the other 29 teams have managed to accumulate a mind-blowing *378 double-digit losing streaks*.
- Did you know the Marlins have never won 10 games in a row? Ever? At any point in any of their 30 seasons? Meanwhile, the Yankees have fired off seven double-digit winning streaks in those three decades in which the Marlins were firing off zero.
- Finally, since the Yankees have now done this three years in a row (for the first time since 1956-57-58, and just the second time in Yankees history), they're already up to three double-digit win streaks in the 2020s.

Just so they know what they're up against, the franchise record for most in any decade is six, when the Yankees ran off *six in six seasons* between 1953-58. In a related development, they averaged 95.5 wins a season in the '50s — and only one other AL team was within 100 wins of them!

DUSTY BAKER REACHES 2K MANAGING WINS

Mlb.com

Dusty Baker, 72, became the 12th AL/NL manager to reach 2,000 wins – and first Black manager – as the Astros beat the Mariners, 4-0, at Minute Maid Park. Of the previous 11 managers to reach 2,000 career victories, 10 of them are in the Hall of Fame. The only one who isn't is **Bruce Bochy** (2,003 wins), who's not yet eligible for induction.

Baker's thirst to win has followed him throughout his career. He won a World Series with the Dodgers in 1981 as a player and returned to the World Series as a coach for the 1989 Giants. He won his first game as a manager with the Giants on April 6, 1993, his 500th with the Giants on June 1, 1999, his 1,000th with the Cubs on Aug. 30, 2004, and his 1,500th with the Cubs on May 9, 2012.

Who would've thought that Baker, who managed four different National League teams, would get his 2,000th win at the helm of an AL club? Only 137 of his managerial wins have come at the top step of the Astros' dugout, but the biggest of his career to this point came from a 4-0 Houston shutout of the Mariners. Baker became the sixth manager to reach the 2,000-win mark in the 21st century and is the first Black manager to do it. A World Series trophy still eludes him, though, as he is the sole manager to not win one while reaching the 2K mark.

The Braves drafted him in 1967 and continued with his MLB debut on Sept. 7, 1968, for Atlanta -- coincidentally, against the Astros. Baker pinch-hit for a Hall of Famer (**Phil Niekro**) and shared a lineup with two others (**Hank Aaron**, **Joe Torre**).

Every road to 2,000 wins starts somewhere, and for Baker, it was in St. Louis. On April 6, 1993, the newly hired Giants manager led his squad to a 2-1 victory over Torre's Cardinals in his managerial debut. Two of the top four hitters in Baker's lineup that night were **Dave Martinez and Matt Williams**. In another odd twist, more than two decades later, Baker would succeed Williams as manager of the Nationals, and Martinez would then succeed Baker.

On the day Baker managed and won his first game, 17 of the 32 players who had appeared for his 2022 Astros club entering Tuesday had yet to be born. The oldest, 39-year-old **Justin Verlander**, was still only 10.

Of the 12 managers with 2,000 wins, Baker is only the second to lead five different franchises before reaching that mark, after stops with the Giants, Cubs, Reds, Nationals and now Astros. Bucky Harris had skippered the Senators (three stints), Tigers, Red Sox, Phillies and Yankees before notching No. 2,000 on April 17, 1955, in his second stint with Detroit.

Here's how Baker's victories break down by team:

840 with Giants (1993-2002)
322 with Cubs (2003-06)
509 with Reds (2008-13)
192 with Nationals (2016-17)
137 with Astros (2020-22)

Baker has won everywhere he's been. Last season, when the Astros locked up the AL West title, he became the first person to manage a division winner with five different franchises, while his 11 total postseason appearances rank fourth. He is also one of nine skippers to win a pennant in both leagues, a list that includes 2,000-game winners Sparky Anderson, La Russa and Joe McCarthy.

Baker has a good argument for the second-best playing career in that group. Only his former teammate Torre beats out Baker in games (2,209 to 2,039), hits (2,342 to 1,981), homers (252 to 242) or RBIs (1,185 to 1,013). Note that Baker and Torre are the only members of the 2,000 wins/2,000 hits club. Same with 200 HRs/2,000 managing wins club.

At one point last week:

Wins as a manager — 1981

Hits as a player — 1981

Year he won the World Series as a player — 1981

When Baker's Astros reached the World Series in 2021, it was 19 years since he'd last been in the Fall Classic, in 2002 with the Giants. The only manager to go longer between consecutive World Series appearances was Harris -- in 1925 with the Senators, then in 1947 with the Yankees, according to Elias.

Baker was also the second-oldest manager to reach the World Series, at 72 years and 133 days old for World Series Game 1. Only **Jack McKeon** was older, at 72 years and 329 days old in 2003 for Game 1. With the Astros' postseason appearances in 2020 and '21, Baker became the first manager to lead teams to the postseason multiple times at age 70-plus.

And because we knew you' ask:

With Baker, a three-time Manager of the Year award winner, now part of the most exclusive club a skipper can join, here's a look at the other members of the managerial 2,000-win club. (Info about each manager's 2,000th win is provided by the Elias Sports Bureau.)

1) Connie Mack: 3,731-3,948-76

2,000th win: May 10, 1926 (4,068th game)

The longest-serving manager in MLB history, Mack's 3,731 wins in 53 seasons are almost 1,000 more than any other skipper. "The Grand Old Man of Baseball" spent three years as a player-manager for the Pirates, then in 1901, American League founder **Ban Johnson** asked Mack to establish the Philadelphia Athletics. Over the course of a 50-year tenure that outlasted that of eight U.S. Presidents, "The Tall Tactician" led the A's to nine AL pennants and five World Series titles.

As much success as Mack found in his career, he also endured a Major League record 3,948 losses before retiring after the 1950 season at the age of 87.

2) Tony La Russa: 2,828-2,445-4 (through April 28)

2,000th win: Sept. 10, 2003 (3,786th game)

La Russa is in his second season of his second stint with the White Sox, with whom he got his managerial start in 1979. After leading the White Sox for parts of eight seasons, he went on to manage parts of 10 years with the A's and 16 full years with the Cardinals. Along the way, he's captured six pennants and three World Series titles and been named Manager of the Year four times.

La Russa is one of two skippers to win World Series in both leagues, one of 10 to win three or more and the only one to win one in three different decades.

3) John McGraw: 2,763-1,948-58

2,000th win: Aug. 5, 1922 (3,410th game)

The first member of the managerial 2,000-win club, McGraw broke into baseball as a player for the Orioles in 1891. While with the Orioles, he helped introduce the hit-and-run, the Baltimore chop and other inside baseball tactics that he later employed as the manager of the New York Giants. Under his watch, the Giants became a perennial powerhouse, winning 10 NL pennants and three World Series championships in his 31 seasons at the helm. Known as "Mugsy" or "Little Napoleon," he was the first manager to win four consecutive pennants in either league. He also set a then-Major League record with 121 ejections.

4) Bobby Cox: 2,504-2,001-3

2,000th win: Sept. 29, 2004 (3,533rd game)

Cox's first stint with the Braves lasted just four seasons (1978-81) and resulted in a 266-323-1 record. But after leading the Blue Jays to 355 wins in four years, he returned to Atlanta as general manager in October 1985 to oversee a farm system that laid the foundation for one of the greatest runs in baseball history. Beginning with his first full season back in the dugout in 1991, the Braves reeled off 14 consecutive division crowns that led to five NL pennants and a World Series title in 1995. A four-time Manager of the Year award winner, Cox holds MLB records for playoff appearances (16) and ejections (162). His six 100-win seasons are also tied for the most in Major League history.

5) Joe Torre: 2,326-1,997-6

2,000th win: June 7, 2007 (3,739th game)

The only Major Leaguer to record 2,000 hits as a player and 2,000 victories as a manager, Torre's journey to 2,000 wins wasn't always the smoothest. Over his first 14 seasons with the Mets, the Braves and the Cardinals -- the same three teams he played with -- Torre went 894-

1,003-4 and made the postseason just one time. His luck changed, though, in 1995, when Yankees owner **George Steinbrenner** brought Torre back to New York as his team's skipper.

The Yankees made the playoffs in all 12 seasons under Torre, capturing six AL pennants and four World Series championships -- including three straight from 1998-2000. After leaving New York, Torre captained the Dodgers from 2008-10, winning two more division titles. When his career was said and done, the two-time Manager of the Year award winner ranked first all-time with 84 playoff wins.

6) Sparky Anderson: 2,194-1,834-2

2,000th win: April 15, 1993 (3,617th game)

Anderson had spent just two seasons -- one as a player and another as the Padres' third-base coach -- in the Majors when the Reds named him their skipper in October 1969. Nonetheless, he led Cincinnati to 102 wins and the NL pennant in his rookie season of 1970, in which the Reds became widely known as The Big Red Machine. Anderson produced another pennant in 1972 before leading Cincinnati to back-to-back World Series titles in 1975 and 1976. He later added a third championship in 1984 with the Tigers, becoming the first manager to win the World Series in both leagues.

Over the course of his 26-year career, Anderson posted four 100-win seasons and was twice named Manager of the Year.

7) Bucky Harris: 2,158-2,219-33

2,000th win: April 17, 1955 (4,107th game)

So great were the Washington Senators' struggles over their first two decades that they were often chided as "first in war, first in peace and last in the American League." Hoping to change that in 1923, Senators owner **Clark Griffith** took a chance and named Harris, his 26-year-old second baseman, the team's player-manager. The gamble paid off immediately, as Harris led the team to its first pennant and World Series title in 1924. Not only did Harris hit .333 and belt two home runs in the series, but he also outmaneuvered McGraw, earning the nickname "The Boy Wonder."

Harris led the Senators to a second straight pennant in 1925, but didn't reach the playoffs again until 1947, when he won the World Series in his debut season with the Yankees. Harris' 29-year managerial career also included stops with the Tigers, the Red Sox and the Phillies.

8) Joe McCarthy: 2,125-1,333-29

2,000th win: April 23, 1949 (3,278th game)

A career Minor Leaguer as a player, McCarthy got his first crack as a big league manager in 1926 with the Cubs. Over four seasons, he elevated the club from last place to the NL pennant in 1929, but following a second-place showing the following year, Chicago elected not to renew

his contract. The Cubs' loss proved to be the Yankees' gain, as McCarthy went on to help the Bronx Bombers to one of the most dominant eras in baseball history. In his 15 full seasons at the helm, the Yankees averaged almost 96 wins, captured eight AL pennants and won seven World Series championships -- including four straight from 1936-39.

McCarthy -- who also managed the Red Sox from 1948-1950 -- still holds the Yankees' franchise record for wins (1,460), and his seven World Series titles are tied with fellow Yankees skipper Casey Stengel for the most by any manager. His six 100-win seasons are tied with Cox for the most in MLB history.

9) Walter Alston: 2,040-1,613-5

2,000th win: July 17, 1976 (3,589th game)

Alston holds the unique distinction of being the only manager in Major League history to win 2,000 games with a single franchise. Following a big league playing career that consisted of one at-bat and 13 seasons managing in the Minor Leagues, Alston took over a Brooklyn Dodgers team in 1954 that was coming off two straight World Series losses to the Yankees. Alston's first season ended with a second-place finish in the NL, but in 1955, he got the Dodgers over the hump, guiding them to their only World Series championship in Brooklyn. After another pennant in 1956, Alston moved with the Dodgers to Los Angeles in 1958. There, he led them to five more pennants and three more World Series rings before retiring in 1976 after 23 seasons.

10) Leo Durocher: 2,008-1,709-22

2,000th win: Sept. 9, 1973 (3,723rd game)

A small, slick-fielding shortstop, Durocher won two World Series titles -- one with the 1928 Yankees and the other with the 1934 Cardinals -- in a 17-year playing career. That included five seasons as a player-manager with the Brooklyn Dodgers, beginning in 1939. Known as "Leo the Lip" and "Lippy" for his banter with umpires, executives and players, Durocher guided Brooklyn to its first NL pennant in 21 years in 1941. Seven years and 738 wins later, he took the reins of the crosstown rival New York Giants, who he led to the 1951 NL pennant and a surprising sweep of Cleveland in the 1954 World Series. His final nine seasons were spent with the Cubs and Astros.

Durocher was notably a staunch supporter of Jackie Robinson when he broke baseball's color barrier with the Dodgers in 1947. He was also in the third-base coach's box for one of MLB's most memorable home runs, **Bobby Thomson's** 1951 "Shot Heard 'Round the World."

11) Bruce Bochy: 2,003-2,029

2,000th win: Sept. 18, 2019 (4,022nd game)

The most recent addition to the managerial 2,000-win club prior to Baker, Bochy spent nine years in the Majors as a catcher with the Astros, Mets and Padres from 1978-87. He began managing in San Diego's Minor League system soon after retiring, and in 1995, he took over the

big league club. In 12 seasons at the helm, Bochy led the Padres to 951 wins, four NL West titles and the 1998 NL pennant. As impressive as that was, he took his success to another level after joining the Giants in 2007, ushering the club to 1,052 wins and three World Series titles.

Bochy -- whose lone Manager of the Year award came in his second season in 1996 -- is the only manager in Major League history to win at least 900 games with two different teams.

A few other names from the top 50 in career wins that might have come to mind as you reviewed this list:

Casey Stengel	1905 wins	(1842 losses)
Gene Mauch	1902	
Lou Piniella	1935	
Terry Francona	1792	
Jim Leyland	1769	
Mike Scioscia	1750	
Tommy Lasorda	1599	
Dick Williams	1571	
Buck Showalter	1551	
Earl Weaver	1480	
Miller Huggins	1413	
Davey Johnson	1372	
Chuck Tanner	1352	
Whitey Herzog	1281	
Joe Maddon	1269	
Billy Martin	1253	

MORE LISTS

How many of the ten American League 20 game winners from 1971 can you name? (reminder-- the Orioles had four 20 game winners that year).

Mickey Lolich 25

Vida Blue 24

Wilbur Wood 22

Catfish Hunter 21

Dave McNally 21

Joe Coleman 20

Mike Cuellar 20

Pat Dobson 20

Andy Messersmith 20

Jim Palmer 20

Players who have won MLB Comeback Player of the Year Multiple Times

Norm Cash 1965 Tigers, 1971 Tigers

Boog Powell 1966 Orioles, 1975 Orioles

Bret Saberhagen 1987 Royals, 1998 Red Sox

Andres Galarraga 1993 Rockies, 2000 Braves

Chris Carpenter 2004 Cards, 2009 Cards

Rick Sutcliffe 1987 Cubs, 1992 Orioles

Francisco Liriano 2010 Twins, 2013 Pirates

YOUR ODD STAT OF THE DAY FROM BASEBALL ROUNTABLE.COM

Through April, 35.5 percent of the MLB season's 23,462 plate appearances ended in a trot (back to the dugout, around the bases, to first base). We're talking about strikeouts, home runs, walks, hit by pitch and catcher's interference – all outcomes that are, basically, devoid of action on the base paths or in the field. Here's the breakout: strikeouts (23.0%); walks (8.9%); home runs (2.4%); HBP (1.1%); catcher's interference (less than 1%).

Now, to provide a little context (a more detailed post on this topic coming soon). Here are a few selected annual Trot Index scores since I began watching baseball in earnest: 1950 – 22.8%; 1960 – 25.1%; 1970 – 27.0%; 1980 – 23.1%; 1990 – 31.7%; 2000 – 29.9%; 2010 – 30.3%; 2021 – 36.3%.

JOE POSNANSKI ON WEAK OFFENSE

Going into this past Thursday:

No. 5: Chicago White Sox (3.25 runs per game)

It is pretty staggering how poorly the White Sox offense has been the first month of the season. Yes, they've had some injuries, but other than **Tim Anderson** being Tim Anderson and some early good vibes from **Andrew Vaughan**, this lineup has been pretty helpless. The White Sox walk less than any team in the league, and if you take away Anderson and Vaughan, the rest of the team has hit 12 home runs. That's not too good.

No. 4: Detroit Tigers (3.19 runs per game)

The Tigers have hit 10 home runs so far this season. Ten. Half of those have come from mega-free-agent acquisition **Javy Baez**, who is off to a terrific start, and mega-prospect **Spencer Torkelson**, who is off to a so-so start. Nobody else on the team has even two home runs.

In addition to their home run outage, the Tigers are also dead last in baseball in doubles. There's really no way around it, Detroit batters are simply not hitting the ball hard ... at all. Their 31 barrels is last in the American League.

No. 3: Kansas City Royals (3.18 runs per game)

The Royals lineup is just weird. **Andrew Benintendi** is hitting .367 with almost no power. Salvador Perez is among the league leaders in homers but he's hitting .174. Prospective phenom **Bobby Witt Jr.** might be finding the adjustment to the big leagues tougher than

everyone hoped, as indicated by his 20-3 strikeout-to-walk. **Whit Merrifield**, the very symbol of consistency the last few years, is hitting .157.

No. 2: Baltimore Orioles (3.08 runs per game)

Anthony Bemboom has the name. Unfortunately, he's hitting .129 and slugging .161. That's pretty much the Orioles right there.

No. 1: Cincinnati Reds (3.04 runs per game)

Last season, the Reds finished fourth in the National League in runs scored. I suppose dumping **Nick Castellanos, Jesse Winker, Eugenio Suarez and Tucker Barnhart**, and then getting a nightmarish start from **Joey Votto** will not lead to good things. But this lineup is even more of a "Walking Dead" episode than expected.

Put it this way — they're hitting .200 as a team, and that's the good news. They're only 14th in that category, thanks to the Diamondbacks. The Reds are dead last in the league in on-base percentage and slugging percentage.

Cincinnati is 3-20 so far this season — they will go 21-141 over a season if they keep playing that badly. The Reds averaged about 10,000 fans per game in their last home series against the Padres. Pittsburgh's coming to town on Friday. Tickets are still available.

THE WEIRDEST COACHING STAFF IN BASEBALL HAS MADE THE GIANTS A POWERHOUSE.

The San Francisco Giants have a coaching staff unlike any other, and their success is forcing the sport to rethink who is qualified to be in a major league dugout.

Jared Diamond, WSJ

Fernando Perez studied creative writing at Columbia University and is the author of essays that have been published in prominent literary magazines. **Mark Hallberg** spent years working as a teacher and administrator at schools in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. **Dustin Lind** has a doctorate in physical therapy.

These are a few of the people on the unconventional coaching staff who have helped transform the San Francisco Giants into a powerhouse and disrupted a sport that traditionally hasn't taken well to outsiders. The Giants were the surprise of the National League last season, winning 107 games and ending the Los Angeles Dodgers' streak of eight consecutive division titles. It's been

more of the same early in 2022, with San Francisco again looking like a serious World Series contender.

The Giants accomplished all of this while being guided by a group of coaches unlike any other in the history of baseball—and their unexpected success is forcing the industry to rethink just who is qualified to wear a major-league uniform.

“We hire a staff with the mind-set that a more diverse coaching staff gives us a better chance to win,” Giants manager **Gabe Kapler** said. “If you want to have a wide variety of human beings for players to connect with, you can’t have them all cut from the same cloth.”

That way of thinking would’ve been considered radical for much of the last 150 years. Conventional wisdom has long dictated that in order for a coach to gain the respect of players, he needed to have professional playing experience. “The longer you were around,” veteran pitcher **Alex Wood** said, “the more credibility you had.”

To Kapler, that attitude never made much sense, especially in the era of analytics. The data revolution that has changed the game has largely been driven by outsiders in the front office, so bringing people with unorthodox backgrounds into the clubhouse seemed like a natural progression.

When Kapler became the Giants’ manager in November 2019 after two middling seasons at the helm of the Philadelphia Phillies, he set out to build a different kind of coaching staff. It would be young, diverse and filled with candidates who bring an innovative perspective to the game. Playing experience wouldn’t be required.

The Giants now have 15 people listed on their website under Kapler with the word “coach” or “director” in their titles, an unusually large number. Only four played in the big leagues. Four others never played professional baseball at all.

“If you just sit them down and talk to them about their craft, there’s no shortage of knowledge or experience,” Kapler said. “It’s just not the type of experience that jumps off the page to the industry.”

Bringing such an unusual staff to San Francisco was a risk. The Giants had one of oldest rosters in baseball last season, led by veterans like **Buster Posey, Brandon Crawford and Brandon Belt**. It would’ve been easy for them to reject new ideas at such a late stage in their careers.

Then something remarkable happened: The team got better. Posey, who retired after the 2021 season, posted his highest OPS since his MVP campaign of 2012. Belt hit 29 home runs, 11 more than his previous high. Crawford delivered the best performance of his career by a wide margin in almost every offensive category.

“They got together and decided, ‘Hey, we’re going to give this a shot,’” bench coach **Kai Correa** said. “That’s not an easy decision with all the success they’ve already achieved.”

Correa, 33 years old, fits the description of a coach who easily could’ve been dismissed or ignored. He was a Division III college infielder, which he had long assumed disqualified him from pro coaching. Kapler thought differently.

While working in the Dodgers front office in the middle of the last decade, Kapler discovered Correa’s instructional videos on social media and was immediately impressed. It didn’t matter that at the time, Correa was merely an assistant at the University of Northern Colorado. Less than a decade later, Correa is Kapler’s bench coach with the Giants, a remarkable ascension from baseball obscurity to the verge of the manager’s office.

“What we lose in playing experience, we make up for in pedagogy experience,” Correa said of the Giants’ coaches.

Taira Uematsu embodies that philosophy as well as anybody. He grew up in Japan dreaming about playing professional baseball. When those hopes fizzled out in high school, he came to the U.S. barely knowing a word of English but desperate to find a way to stay around the game. His journey led him to the Giants organization, where he spent about 15 years toiling away as a bullpen catcher—an unglamorous, physically demanding and largely anonymous support role.

During the pandemic shutdown in 2020, the Giants started an organizational book club. One of the selections was Daniel Coyle’s “The Culture Code.” Reading it convinced Uematsu that he was capable of coaching. This past offseason, he approached Kapler about a promotion. He is now an assistant coach.

“What I learned in the last 15 years is that the best player is not the best coach,” Uematsu said. “Somebody who is willing to learn all the time and improve himself as a coach, those people are good at coaching.”

The book club that changed Uematsu’s life was started by **Alyssa Nakken**, a former college softball player who joined the Giants as an intern in 2014. When Kapler arrived, her job was primarily to develop and coordinate the organization’s health and wellness initiatives and events.

After hearing Kapler address the front office, she became inspired. For the first time, she thought perhaps there was a place for her closer to the field. Kapler agreed, and in 2020, she became the first woman in history to be a full-time member of an MLB coaching staff.

“He wants to surround himself with people who are going to challenge his perspective,” Nakken said. “In my career leading up to that point, I was in a lot of rooms where people thought the exact same, and I was getting bored.”

Even the coaches who did once play the game themselves aren't exactly typical. Perez spent two seasons with the Tampa Bay Rays, but his interests extend far beyond just baseball. He's been published in Poetry magazine and the Southern Review, has worked for various media companies and has taught courses for the School of the New York Times.

The Giants hired Perez ahead of the 2021 season. His title is "director of video coaching." Kapler described Perez as a "content producer" and wouldn't elaborate further. Perez didn't offer any more of an explanation but did say that his job "only would have happened here."

Hallberg advanced to Triple-A for the Arizona Diamondbacks, but his background is anything but traditional. The son of international educators, he spent much of his childhood in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. After playing, he went on to earn an M.B.A. Now he's the Giants third base coach, but before that he taught at Dhahran High School in Saudi Arabia and the American School of Dubai.

"Do you value that, or do you value somebody who has hit a certain amount of fungoes at the minor-league level?" Kapler said.

The Giants have chosen to value the former. There could be a championship in their future because of it.

FOR HIS 91ST BIRTHDAY, 24 AMAZING WILLIE MAYS FEATS AND STATS.

Mlb.com

He hit 660 home runs. He's a member of the 3,000-hit club. He won a batting title, four home run titles and four stolen base titles. He ranks among the all-time leaders in Wins Above Replacement. Perhaps most amazingly, **Willie Mays'** numbers would have been even more remarkable had he not missed nearly two full seasons in the prime of his career while serving in the military.

In honor of Mays' 91st birthday on Friday, here's a look at 24 facts on No. 24's legendary career.

1. Club of his own: 50 homers, 20 triples

Mays was one of the best dual-threat players in MLB history, using his incredible blend of speed and power to torment opposing pitchers. He is one of just 30 players all-time to hit at least 50 homers in a single season and he's one of 86 players to rack up at least 20 triples in a season. Mays, however, is the *only* player who is a member of both clubs. Making it all the more incredible is the fact that Mays reached those plateaus just two years apart, crushing an MLB-leading 51 homers in 1955 before pacing all players with 20 triples in '57. He later teed off for a career-best 52 homers in '65, making him one of just nine players in MLB history with multiple 50-homer seasons.

2. A game to remember: Four-homer barrage

Mays is one of just 18 players in Major League history to hit four home runs in a single game. On April 30, 1961, Mays went 4-for-5 with four homers and eight RBIs in a 14-4 win against the Braves at Milwaukee's County Stadium. Incredibly, Mays' four-homer effort came opposite fellow Hall of Famer **Henry Aaron**, who hit two long balls of his own in one of the best head-to-head slugging showdowns of all-time.

Mays hit his first two home runs -- a solo shot in the first and a two-run homer in the third -- off three-time All-Star and 1957 World Series MVP **Lew Burdette**. Mays kept the trend going with a three-run bomb off reliever **Seth Morehead** before adding a two-run shot off another All-Star pitcher, **Don McMahon**, in the eighth. Mays is the only member of the 600-home run club with a four-homer game.

3. A run like no other: 13 years of MVP consideration

Mays was the model of consistency from 1954-66, stringing together a 13-season run of pure excellence. He won the National League Most Valuable Player Award twice during that stretch - first in 1954 and again in '65 -- but he was a yearly contender for the honor. In fact, he received a share of MVP votes each season from 1954-66 and he finished in the top 6 in 12 of those 13 years -- and in the top 3 six times.

4) Extra, extra!

It's no surprise that Mays received annual MVP consideration during that run, recording at least 70 extra-base hits in 13 straight seasons from 1954-66. No other player has 13 such seasons, consecutive or otherwise, in Major League history.

5) A league of his own

Mays accounted for at least 7.0 bWAR in each of those 13 seasons from 1954-66, the longest such streak in big league history. **Lou Gehrig** is the only other player to post at least 7.0 WAR in even 10 straight seasons (he did it for 11 from 1927-37). Overall, Mays racked up 124.1 WAR from 1954-66 -- 27.7 more than any other player during that span. Hank Aaron was second with 96.4 WAR, followed by **Mickey Mantle** at 90.0.

6) What could have been?

Amazingly, Mays went on that 13-season tear immediately after missing nearly two full seasons while serving his country. He played in only 34 games in 1952, then missed the entire '53 season after being drafted into the Army. Mays clearly didn't miss a beat upon returning in '54, leading the Majors with a .345 average and a .667 slugging percentage, while also racking up 41 homers, 110 RBIs and an NL-best 13 triples en-route to earning his first NL MVP Award.

Despite missing what would have been his age-22 season entirely and playing only 34 games in his age-21 campaign, Mays ultimately finished his career with 660 home runs -- good for sixth

on the all-time list. Still, it's hard not to wonder what he might have done with an extra 1,000 plate appearances in the early days of his career.

7) Star of stars

Mays was named an All-Star Game starter a remarkable 18 times, the most for any player in MLB history -- and he did it at one of the game's marquee positions, no less. The caveat to that number is that it includes four seasons (1959-62) in which there were two All-Star Games. Still, Mays started 14 straight All-Star contests from 1957-65 (including both games in each season from 1959-62).

8) His star shines brightest

Mays didn't just play in those All-Star Games -- he quite literally starred in them. He had at least one hit in 15 All-Star Games. Only five other players have even logged a *plate appearance* in that many Midsummer Classics. Needless to say, Mays' 23 overall hits are the most in All-Star Game history.

9) Golden defense

Along with being one of the game's most prolific hitters, Mays is widely regarded as one of the best defensive center fielders of all-time. Mays not only took home 12 Gold Glove Awards (the most by any center fielder), but he is also responsible for "The Catch" -- an iconic over-the-shoulder grab in Game 1 of the 1954 World Series that is universally considered one of the greatest defensive plays in MLB history.

10) Best vs. best: Mays tees off vs. HOFers

The two pitchers Mays faced the most (by far) in his career were a pair of Hall of Famers: **Warren Spahn** (253 plate appearances) and **Don Drysdale** (243 PAs). Yet neither could find an answer for Mays' prowess at the plate. "The Say Hey Kid" hit better than .300 against each pitcher, combining for a .318/.371/.596 slash line and 59 extra-base hits, including 31 home runs, against the Hall of Fame duo.

Mays faced 14 Hall of Fame pitchers overall, posting a .286 batting average and an .859 OPS over 1,319 plate appearances. He hit 56 of his 660 career homers off Hall of Famers, including 18 against Spahn, 13 against Drysdale, five against Sandy Koufax and four apiece against **Robin Roberts** and **Fergie Jenkins**.

11) Mays and Trout in class of their own

Mike Trout has often drawn comparisons to Mays due to the pair's consistency and dominance in center field -- and the two stand alone as the only players in Major League history with multiple seasons of at least a .320 batting average, 25 home runs and 30 stolen bases. Mays accomplished the feat in back-to-back seasons from 1957-58, posting a collective .340 average while averaging 32 homers and 34 stolen bases over those two campaigns.

12) Three is the magic number

Mays is one of 33 members of the 3,000-hit club, but he's the only player in MLB history with at

least 3,000 hits, a .300 average, 300 home runs and 300 stolen bases. Mays, of course, exceeded some of those plateaus rather easily, finishing with 3,283 hits, 660 homers and 338 steals.

13) League leader in ... everything?

While some players consistently lead the league in a certain category -- whether it be home runs or stolen bases or triples -- it was nearly impossible to predict which stat Mays would ultimately lead his league in for a given season. Throughout his career, Mays claimed four home run titles, four stolen base titles and one batting title. He also led the NL five times apiece in OPS and slugging percentage; three times in triples; twice each in runs, extra-base hits and on-base percentage; and once apiece in hits and walks.

14) Founder of the 50-20 club

In 1955, Mays became the first player in Major League history to hit 50 home runs and steal 20 bases in the same season. It took 41 years for another player to repeat that type of production, and only three others -- **Brady Anderson** (1996), **Ken Griffey Jr.** ('98) and **Alex Rodriguez** (2007) -- have accomplished the feat to this day.

15) Forget 20-20, Mays sees 20-20-20-20

Mays is one of just four players -- along with **Frank Schulte** (1911), **Jimmy Rollins** (2007) and **Curtis Granderson** (2007) -- to record at least 20 doubles, triples, home runs and stolen bases in the same season. Mays accomplished the feat in 1957, when he racked up 26 doubles, 20 triples, 35 homers and 38 stolen bases. His .407 on-base percentage and .626 slugging percentage that season are the highest among any of the four players in this exclusive group.

16) Ranking among the best

Mays ranks third among position players with 156.2 bWAR, trailing only **Babe Ruth** (162.8) and **Barry Bonds** (162.1). That means Mays finished only 6.6 WAR shy of the all-time mark despite missing most of the 1952 season and the entire 1953 season while serving in the U.S. Army. Keep in mind that upon his return to the Majors in '54, Mays accounted for at least 7.0 WAR every season from 1954-66. An additional season along those lines in '53 could have been all Mays needed to lay claim to the highest WAR in Major League Baseball history.

17) All-around talent

Mays had three seasons in which he racked up at least 8.0 offensive bWAR and 2.0 defensive bWAR. The rest of the outfielders in MLB history have combined for exactly one such season (Trout, 2012). Even when removing the outfield qualifier, Mays' three such seasons are tied with **Honus Wagner** for the most in big league history -- and Mays and Wagner are the only players with more than one such season.

18) Now playing ... shortstop?

Though he was a Hall of Fame center fielder and spent some time at first base late in his career, Mays made an appearance at shortstop in one of the wildest games in MLB history. Facing the Mets in Game 2 of a doubleheader at Shea Stadium on May 31, 1964, Mays shifted from center

field to shortstop to begin the bottom of the 10th inning. Though he did not see any action, Mays spent three innings at short before shifting back to center field for the remainder of San Francisco's 23-inning victory. He was just 1-for-10 at the plate, while fellow Hall of Famer **Gaylord Perry** earned the win after tossing 10 scoreless innings in relief. This marked one of two career appearances at shortstop for Mays, who played 2,832 games in center field, 83 at first base, 12 in right field, two in left and one at third base.

19) Three is good, four is better

Of the 28 players in the 500-home run club, none hit as many triples as Mays' 140. Only two other members of the club even topped 100 triples -- Babe Ruth had 136 and **Jimmie Foxx** had 125. Mays also ranks second within the 500-homer club in stolen bases (338), trailing only Barry Bonds (514).

20) 35-35 club

Mays made a couple bids at a 40-40 season, though that was one of the few feats he ultimately did not accomplish. Still, he finished with 36 home runs and 40 stolen bases in 1956, then followed it up with 35 homers and 38 steals in '57. He was the first player in MLB history with multiple 35-35 seasons, though he's since been joined by **Bobby Bonds, Barry Bonds and Alfonso Soriano**.

21) Split proof

For Mays, it didn't matter where he was playing or who he was facing -- he was going to produce. He had a .302 career average with 335 homers while playing at home, and a .301 career mark with 325 home runs on the road. As for opposing pitchers, he was a career .300 hitter with a .917 against righties, and a .305 hitter with a 1.006 OPS vs. lefties. Mays also had at least a .300 average and .925 OPS in every month except July (.280 BA, .870 OPS).

22) Coming through in the clutch

Mays often stepped up in big spots, posting a .966 career OPS in high-leverage situations. That ranks fifth all time, behind only Jimmie Foxx, Barry Bonds, **Stan Musial** and Henry Aaron. Mays also had 1,928 documented total bases in the seventh inning or later, second-most on record behind only Aaron (1,984).

23) 162-game averages

Even factoring in the decline over his final seasons, Mays' career numbers work out to 162-game averages of 36 homers, 103 RBIs and 18 stolen bases. That includes his season and a half with the Mets -- at ages 41 and 42 -- when he hit just 14 homers in 135 games. Keep in mind, he also averaged "only" 21 homers and 70 RBIs over his final five seasons with the Giants.

24) Superstar on and off the field

In 1971, Mays was named the inaugural recipient of the Commissioner's Award, which was later renamed the **Roberto Clemente** Award following Clemente's death in '72. The honor is given annually to the player who best represents the game of baseball through extraordinary

character, community involvement, philanthropy and positive contributions, both on and off the field.

From Peter Abraham, Boston Globe

One of the best college baseball coaches in New England history was honored this past week. UConn-Avery Point, a junior college in Groton, Conn., named its field after **Roger Bidwell**. He won 1,007 games from 1982-2015 and guided six teams to the Division 2 JUCO World Series. Bidwell also sent 150 players to play at four-year schools. Three of his best players — **Rajai Davis, John McDonald**, and **Pete Walker** — went on to play in the majors. Davis now works in the commissioner's office; McDonald is a field coordinator with the Guardians; and Walker is in his 11th season as pitching coach of the Blue Jays. That all three stayed in the game after their playing days ended speaks to what Bidwell taught them

THIS WEEK'S TRIVIA CHALLENGE ANSWER

Career HR leaders by Number of letters in Last Name...3 through 9.

3	Mel Ott	511
4	Babe Ruth	714
5	Barry Bonds	762
6	Albert Pujols	681
7	Ken Griffey Jr.	630
8	Frank Robinson	586
9	Alex Rodriguez	696

And if you protested Griffey Jr as more than 7 letters but answered **Mark McGwire** 583 we'll give you half a point.

HOUSEKEEPING

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