

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

3.27.2022

Good morning baseball fans. Spring is emerging in Maine, opening day approaches. These are very good things.

In this week's edition—trivia, CBA notes, your nominations for most underrated players, launch of the Mets 60 years ago, Peter Gammons on Tommy John surgery and the benefit of premium players, anti-trust, players' famous relatives. Enjoy.

THIS WEEK'S TRIVIA CHALLENGE

Since 1950, 13 managers have won multiple World Series. Name them.

BONUS Since 1950 17 managers have lost multiple World Series. Name them.

Answers at the end of this issue.

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

04-07-2022 Opening Day	11 days
04-15-2022 Jackie Robinson Day	19 days
07-19-2022 92nd All-Star Game Dodger Stadium	114 days
09-15-2022 Roberto Clemente Day	172 days
10-07-2022 Wild Card Series	194 days
10-28-2022 World Series (Game 1)	215 days

According to SporTrac, free agent contracts this off-season total \$3.29 billion. The value of middle infielders is going up. In the last four months, **Carlos Correa**, **Story**, **Marcus Semien**, and **Corey Seager** all agreed to deals worth \$23 million-\$35.1 million a season.

Tom Seaver had the most wins in his career against the San Diego Padres (33-10)

Most All-Star Game starts in right field--**Henry Aaron** (14 starts for the NL; **Reggie Jackson's** 9 starts lead the AL)

The only two catchers in the Modern Era to start 100 or more games behind the plate at age 39 or older--**Bob Boone** (in 1987, '88, '89) and **Carlton Fisk** (1987, '90).

When I was a kid in the pre-internet dark ages, I'd scrounge allowance and buy pre-season baseball preview magazines at Jack's Smoke Shop—Street & Smith, The Sporting News and **Bill Mazeroski** Baseball. Actor William Hurt died recently. He was in the movie that featured Bill Mazeroski Baseball magazine — “Broadcast News.” Hurt is reading when he is at the airport waiting for Holly Hunter. It was the 1987 edition, **Dwight Evans** was on the cover.

You don't want to take the Dodgers out in the playoffs because they will immediately come after your best player. The Red Sox took them out in 2018, and they took **Mookie Betts**. The Nationals took them out in 2019, and they took **Max Scherzer** and **Trea Turner**. The Braves took them out in 2021, so they got **Freddie Freeman**.

On August 15, 1962, as the Phillies topped the Mets 9-3 in the first game of a twin bill, Phillies' starting left fielder **Don Demeter** touched up starting pitcher *right-hander* **Bob Miller** (Robert Lane Miller) for a third-inning, solo home run. In the ninth frame, Demeter (who had now moved to CF) hit a three-run home run, this time off left-handed reliever **Bob Miller** (Robert Gerald Miller). So, two home runs in one game off two Bob Millers, one southpaw and one righty, one starter and one reliever, while in the lineup at two different positions.

On July 27, 1998, **Tyrone Horne** (Double-A Arkansas Travelers) *became the first (and still only) professional ballplayer to hit for the “Home Run Cycle”* – popping a solo, two-run, three-run and Grand Slam home run in one game (a 13-4 road win over the San Antonio Mission). Horne never made it to the major leagues, completing a 13-season minor-league career with a .288 average and 143 home runs.

On August 14, 1958, the Indians’ **Vic Power** tied an MLB record by *stealing home an MLB record-tying twice in one game* – the second of which came in the bottom of the tenth inning, giving the Indians a “run-off” 10-9 win over the Tigers. Why does this feat rank so high on my list? *Power stole only three bases during the entire 1958 season.*

Ron Wright played professional baseball from 1994-2004, but got only one game in the big leagues. As his Mariners took on the Rangers (in Texas) on April 14, 2002, Wright started at DH. That day he would see *nine pitches in three plate appearance and be responsible for six outs*. In his first plate appearance, he struck out on three pitchers, with two runners on base (second inning). He came up with two on again in the fourth and hit into a triple play on a 2-2 pitch (although there were some baserunning miscues that contributed ... the play went 1-6-2-5-1-4). Wright came up again in the sixth, again with two on, and hit the first pitch he saw into a traditional 6-4-3 double play. The Mariners pinch hit for Wright in the seventh – and he never appeared in a major league game again.

Only five times in MLB history has a pitcher fanned 20 batters in nine innings – **Roger Clemens** (twice); **Kerry Woods**; **Max Scherzer**; and **Randy Johnson**. (Johnson was the only non-complete game. He fanned twenty in nine innings, but was relieved by Byung-Hyun Kim in the top of the tenth with the score tied 1-1.) The tidbit that attracted me here is that in those *five 20-strikeouts outings, these dominating pitchers did not walk a single batter*. That’s right, 100 whiffs and not a single walk.

*The final score of the Yankees/Red Sox game on October 1, 1961 – when **Roger Maris** hit his historic 61st home run (breaking Babe Ruth’s long-standing single-season record) was 1-0.* Despite the chance to witness history, only 23,154 fans were in attendance – just 34 percent of Yankee Stadium’s listed capacity at the time (67,337). That means, of course, about two of every three seats were empty.

Casey Stengel, while a member of the New York Giants, hit the first-ever inside-the-park and over-the-fence post-season home runs in Yankee Stadium, (Games One and Three of the 1923 World Series.)

Last rookie to win a batting title-- **Ichiro Suzuki** (won the AL title batting .350 in 2001)

Nice to read about **Tony Oliva** (age 83) and **Rod Carew** (age 76) at Twins spring training—both finally Hall of Famers.

The Red Sox are now valued at \$3.9 billion, a 13 percent surge from last year's \$3.47 billion, according to Forbes. The ball club is worth 457 percent more than it was 20 years ago, when the Fenway Sports Group ownership consortium purchased it for \$700 million.

The only player in the modern era to spend more than 50 games at shortstop and catcher at the major-league level is [Isiah Kiner-Falefa](#), the 27-year-old Hawaiian who was [recently acquired](#) by the New York Yankees.

Andy Pettitte--256 career wins, 19 post season wins, 5 World Series rings, 3316 innings pitched. Pretty strong.

CBA FALL OUT

Some notes from Jayson Stark of The Athletic

The major-league minimum has been raised from \$570,500 to \$700,000 for this year.

The new CBA rewards teams with draft pick compensation if they have one of the top rookies in their league, [based on award voting](#). In addition, the agreement gives the top two rookies in each league a full year of service time regardless of when they're promoted in-season. That should incentivize some organizations that have top major-league-ready rookies to promote them to the big-league team out of spring training.

The competitive balance tax has been set at \$230 million for the first threshold this year, which will act as a soft cap for several teams that will stay under that number. Some front offices now have millions to spend on talent. The new CBT structure also includes a new fourth threshold (\$290 million this year).

Under the CBA's new lottery system if a team finishes in last place, there is no guarantee it will even get a top five pick.

Six teams in the draft lottery. Designed to reduce tanking, it stops a team like the 2012-15 [Astros](#) picking first or second overall in *four drafts in a row*. Here is how the new system will prevent that:

A big-market team (one that pays *into* the revenue-sharing pool) can't get a lottery pick more than one season in a row. A small-market club (one that *receives* money from the revenue-sharing pool) can't be part of the lottery more than two years in a row. The highest those teams can pick once they're bounced out of the pool is 10th.

For the first time, teams have a limit to how many times they can send a player to the minor leagues (five options), which will change roster maneuvering, particularly for certain teams. (For more on this, don't miss Eno Sarris' [recent piece](#).) In fact, eight teams optioned at least three players six or more times in 2021; the [Giants](#) optioned one player — third baseman [Jason Vosler](#) — nine times, and the [Astros](#) and Dodgers each optioned a player eight times.

This will be a significant rule change, especially in April when GMs are concerned about not overworking pitchers and want to shuttle players back and forth to the minor leagues. Teams won't want to burn most of their moves early in the season because they'll prefer to save them for the dog days of summer when pennant races heat up. Having more minor-league depth will be important; instead of bringing up the next best minor-league player at a certain position, teams will want to have the second-best player ready to optimize the structure their roster for the long haul.

The National League has officially adopted the DH rule, creating 15 “new” lineup jobs.

12-team expanded playoffs. MLB will scoop up an extra \$85 million a year from ESPN by adding a third wild-card team in each league and expanding the wild-card round of the postseason from two games to as many as 12.

Goodbye to those tiebreaker Game 163s and to first-round travel days. They’re history. All deadlocks now will be settled with NFL-style tiebreaker formulas (starting with head-to-head records).

Because of the lock-out, the games that originally were supposed to serve as the opening series of the year will now become the final series of the year. Got that? In other words, instead of being played March 31-April 3, they’ll be played Oct. 3-5. So the season now ends Oct. 5 instead of Oct. 2.

The wild-card round was now going to expand from one game to best of three. If one of those teams reaches the World Series, it could potentially play (ready for this?) 22 *postseason games* — and host as many as 14.

In the eight full seasons since the dawn of the wild-card game in 2013, there would have been only one instance of a sub-.500 team (the 80-82 [Angels](#), [Rays](#), or [Royals](#) of 2017) sneaking into a 12-team tournament. And the extra wild-card teams in that time would have averaged 87 wins. Despite this expansion, the baseball playoffs will still be the most difficult to make among the four major professional sports.

Fox was telling MLB it couldn’t budge from the original World Series dates. So here is how MLB was able to pull that off:

Luckily, the tentative postseason schedule had already built in the likelihood of expanding the playoffs. So instead of starting the World Series on the traditional Tuesday, MLB had the option of starting it on a Thursday or Friday. That built in an extra two-day or three-day buffer that made this doable.

So the wild-card series will be scheduled to begin — with no travel days — on Friday, Oct. 7. And by squeezing an extra off day out of at least one of the other rounds, the World Series will still be able to begin on Friday, Oct. 28, and end on Friday, Nov. 4. An Oct. 27-Nov. 4 World Series might also be an option, but MLB is still studying whether that’s possible. Either way, the weather in Chicago, Detroit or Minnesota is always lovely in November. Just sayin’.

Teams that have road games in Toronto need to find out the COVID-19 vaccination status of each of their players. Unvaccinated players won't be allowed to travel to Canada to face the [Blue Jays](#) due to government regulations. Under new rules agreed to by [Major League Baseball](#) and the MLB Players Association, unvaccinated players (defined [here](#)) will not be paid nor get service time for those games and may be placed on the restricted list. Teams need to be prepared to replace them on the roster for those games.

How will everything change in the 2023 schedule?

You might have missed this in the announcement of [labor-deal details](#) if you were focused on stuff like tax thresholds. But this is a development that will make an impact on literally every team in baseball in 2023:

Unbalanced schedules: Out!

Playing every team in baseball every single season: In!

Yes, the 2023 schedule will cut back on rivalry games. And in their place, teams will play an NBA-like schedule that involves facing all 29 other clubs, including every one of the 15 in the other league. Here's a breakdown:

DIVISION GAMES (56): Clubs play all four teams in their division 14 times. (Current total: 19) So that means one three-game series and one four-game series each, both home and road.

OTHER 10 LEAGUE OPPONENTS (60): Those non-division teams within your league? You'll play them six times apiece — three at home, three on the road. (Current total: six or seven apiece)

INTERLEAGUE SCHEDULE (46): Here's how this works: Every team plays its interleague "rival" (Mets-Yankees, Cubs-White Sox, you know the deal) four times — two at home, two on the road. (Current total: four or six games, depending on the season)

As for the other 14 teams in the opposite league, you'll play three games against every one of them. Half are at home. Half are on the road. Then that will flip the following year. So if you miss [Mike Trout](#) in your NL city one year, he visits the next year. Get the picture? (Current total: three or four games each versus either four or five nonrival interleague opponents)

TAX MAN: The thresholds will increase gradually over the five-year term of the deal, from \$230 million in year one to \$244 million in year five. That also means that, at least initially, the second tier of tax penalties, with steeper rates, don't kick in until \$250 million — a level reached by only two teams in history. Guess who? The [Yankees](#) and [Dodgers](#), of course. But Cohen's Mets are a lock to join that club in a few weeks.

One development of note, which reappeared in the final version of the deal: Teams still will be able to reset their tax rates by dipping under the first threshold every few seasons.

New \$50 million bonus pool that will be paid out annually to the 100 best young players who don't qualify for arbitration. **HOW IT WILL WORK:** The \$50 million pool will be divided into two groups. The biggest dollars will go to players who have Vladdy-like seasons, based on award voting. Then the remaining dollars will be paid out based on a Wins Above Replacement formula that is still being crafted. Here's the breakdown.

- \$2.5 million to MVPs or Cy Young winners who aren't eligible for arbitration.
- \$1.75 million to MVP/Cy Young runners-up.
- \$1.5 million to MVP/Cy Young third-place finishers.
- \$1 million to MVP/Cy Young fourth/fifth-place finishers.
- \$750,000 to rookies of the year.
- \$500,000 to rookie of the year runners-up.
- \$1 million to all-MLB first teamers, or \$500,000 to all-MLB second teamers.

Then whatever money is left over gets divided among the top 100 pre-arbitration players, in a sliding scale based on a WAR formula that will be agreed on by July 1.

RON SWOBODA

A subscriber mentioned this week that he had been in touch with his acquaintance **Ron Swoboda**. Swoboda is now 77 years old. He played 1965-1973 for the Mets, Expos and Yankees. Over 9 seasons he had 624 hits, batted .242 with 73 HRs. And made a couple of World Series catches for the ages.

That got me thinking about the 1969 Mets. Under manager **Gil Hodges** the Mets went 100-62, won the NL East by 8 games over the Cubs, then swept the Braves 3-0 in the playoffs and beat the Orioles 4-1 in the World Series. You can probably name most of the 17 regulars:

1B **Ed Kranepool, Donn Clendenon**

2B **Ken Boswell**

SS **Bud Harrelson**

3B **Ed “the Glider” Charles, Wayne Garrett**

C **Jerry Grote**

LF **Cleon Jones**

CF **Tommie Agee**

RF **Ron Swoboda**

SP **Tom Seaver, Jerry Koosman, Gary Gentry, Don Cardwell, Jim McAndrew**

RP **Tug McGraw, Ron Taylor**

How many of the 18 subs do you remember?

C **JC Martin, Duffy Dyer**

INF **Kevin Collins, Bob Heise, Ed Pfeil, Al Weis**

OF **Rod Gasper, Jim Gosger, Amos Otis, Art Shamsky**

P **Nolan Ryan, Cal Koonce, Jack DiLauro, Al Jackson, Danny Frisella, Jesse Hudson, Bob Johnson, Les Rohr**

LIFTED FROM ENO SARRIS

Sarris is a numbers focused columnist for The Athletic.

At age 38 **Joey Votto** of the Reds has increased his bat speed from 69.5 mph to 72.5 mph—from around 35th percentile of mlb hitters to 75th percentile. Votto btw 15 seasons. 8,128 plate appearances, 2027 hits, 331 HRs, .302 career batting average. Maybe a candidate for our discussion of players who don’t get enough credit?

A grand total of 5,407 pitchers have thrown 200 inning seasons since we started tracking these sorts of things. All the way back in 1892, **Bill Hutchison** threw 602 innings! But things have changed. The last time someone threw 300 innings was Steve Carlton in 1980.

Last season, only *four* starting pitchers crossed the 200 inning threshold: [Zack Wheeler](#), [Walker Buehler](#), [Adam Wainwright](#), and [Sandy Alcantara](#).

Byron Buxton of the Twins is a really good baseball player. One of the [very best center fielders in the game defensively](#), his bat has grown to meet his glove in recent years. Last year he was so impossibly white-hot in his 254 plate appearances that he led the league in slugging (minimum 250 plate appearances) while hitting .306 and stealing nine bases to boot.

GOODBYE ANDREW MILLER

After a 16-year major-league career, left-handed reliever **Andrew Miller** told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on Thursday he was retiring.

After being selected as the sixth overall pick of the 2006 draft, Miller was initially seen as a cornerstone piece of the Tigers' future before he became part of one of the biggest trades in Detroit's franchise history. Miller was one of six players dealt from the Tigers to the Marlins in exchange for [Miguel Cabrera](#) and [Dontrelle Willis](#) in December 2007, though after three injury-plagued seasons in South Beach, the Marlins also parted ways with the left-hander.

Miller, 36, was a free agent after spending the past three seasons with the St. Louis Cardinals. He began his career as a middling starter with the [Tigers](#), [Marlins](#) and Red Sox, but after transitioning to a bullpen role in Boston he became dominant with over 14 strikeouts per nine innings in four consecutive seasons.

Miller became a full-time reliever in 2012 and essentially never looked back. The southpaw became one of baseball's top relief pitchers, working in a variety of different roles depending on his team's needs. Whether as a closer, set-up man, multi-inning workhorse, or lefty specialist, Miller became a valuable bullpen weapon in any capacity.

From 2013-17, Miller was next to unhittable, posting a 1.82 ERA, 41.1% strikeout rate, and 7.4% walk rate over 291 2/3 innings with the Red Sox, Orioles, Yankees, and Indians. That tremendous stretch saw Miller named to two AL All-Star teams, and receive top-10 Cy Young placements in both the 2015 and 2016 seasons.

His best years came after he joined the [Yankees](#) in 2015, when he finished 10th in the AL Cy Young voting. He was arguably even better in 2016 with an ERA of 1.45

He finishes his career with appearances in 612 games, in which he racked up 979 strikeouts and a 10.6 SO/9 rate in 829 combined innings. Miller retires with a tiny 0.93 ERA over 38 2/3 innings

in the playoffs, even winning 2016 ALCS MVP honors with Cleveland in 2016. That particular season saw Miller help carry an injury-riddled Cleveland pitching staff to within an inch of a World Series, falling to the Cubs in extra innings in game seven.

MADATE? WHAT MANDATE??

New York City will lift its private sector vaccine mandate Thursday in an announcement at Citi Field by Mayor Eric Adams, sources confirmed to *The Athletic* following a report from Politico. The mandate has prevented New York City athletes, including [Brooklyn Nets](#) guard [Kyrie Irving](#), from playing home games.

The mandate also would've prevented some New York athletes to play games in the city, but that will no longer be a concern once Adams makes the change with two weeks remaining until Opening Day.

In recent weeks, the Yankees and Mets both privately expressed confidence that this mandate would not keep their players off the field for Opening Day. Team president Randy Levine was the point person for the Yankees in this process; he himself has a background in city politics and in city hall. Both teams proceeded as if the mandate would not be an issue, which was proven correct by Mayor Adams' exemption for athletes.

The Yankees will not have as much leverage with the Canadian government regarding their vaccination mandate and will have to instead hope players get vaccinated or the restrictions change at some point this season. While the threat of missed games for unvaccinated players drops significantly with the NYC exemption, the games against Toronto will be some of the Yankees' most crucial games this season. They are scheduled to head to Toronto three times this season.

COINCIDENCES

From [baseballroundtable.com](#)

The Roundtable's favorite baseball coincidence. On May 2, 1954, **Stan "The Man" Musial** had one of the greatest days at the plate in major-league history. That day, the New York Giants faced Musial's Cardinals in a double header before 26,662 fans at Busch Stadium (I). Game One, a 10-6 Cardinal win, saw Musial go four-for-four with three home runs (his first-ever three-homer game) and six RBI. In Game Two, a 9-7 Cardinals' loss, Musial went two-for-four, with two home runs and three RBI – *becoming the first player ever to hit five home runs in a doubleheader.*

Why is this event at the top of this list? Well, among the 26,662 fans witnessing Musial's feat was eight-year-old **Nate Colbert** – who, on August 1, 1972, would become the *second player in MLB history* (and there are still only two) *to hit five round trippers in a double header*. In Game One of that doubleheader (Padres at Braves), Colbert went four-for-five, with two home runs and five RBI, as the Padres won 9-0. In Game Two, an 11-7 Padres' win, Colbert went three-for-four with three home runs and eight RBI. Stan Musial, however, was not in the crowd.

In 1961, the Orioles' **Jim Gentile** tied the MLB record and set a new AL mark (both since broken) for Grand Slams in a season with five bases-loaded long balls. *Every one of Gentile's five four-run blasts was hit in a game started by Orioles' righty **Chuck Estrada*** (who, as you would expect, picked up a victory in all four contests). Added credit for the fact that Gentile hit only one other Grand Slam in his career (June 26, 1960) and – you guessed it – the starting and winning pitcher in that contest was Chuck Estrada

RULES UPDATE 2022

Perhaps the most notable change, and one that is set to last for the life of the five-year CBA, is a nod to [Shohei Ohtani](#), and coincides with the implementation of the designated hitter in both leagues.

The proposed new rule says that if the starting pitcher is also in the lineup as the DH, then that player can remain as the DH even if he is removed as a pitcher. In the past, if the starting pitcher in the AL was also in the lineup, the DH was forfeited, and his spot in the order was occupied by the relief pitcher when he left the game.

Under the proposed rule, Ohtani -- or any other pitcher -- can serve as both the starting pitcher and DH in a given game, and if he is removed as a pitcher after a few innings he gets to stay in the lineup as the DH. This rule tweak was used in the 2021 All-Star Game to allow Ohtani to stay in the game as a DH even though he was also the starting pitcher, and could encourage more two-way players down the line.

For the 2022 season only, the agreement includes expanded rosters for the first month of the season and the return of automatic runners at second base during extra innings.

The expanded rosters for April are a response to the shortened Spring Training as a result of the collective bargaining negotiations. Per the agreement, teams will be allotted two extra roster spots (28 in total) to start the year. This will allow players, especially pitchers, to use the first few weeks of the season to get up to speed, and there will be no roster limits on pitchers during this period. Rosters will return to 26 players on May 2, and teams will not be allowed to have more than 13 pitchers on their rosters once they revert.

The automatic runner on second base in extra innings will return for the entirety of the 2022 season, but not beyond. A runner will be placed at second base during the start of each half inning, which is meant to speed up the pace of play by creating instant run-scoring opportunities during those extra frames. This rule was introduced during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season and rolled over into the 2021 season.

Additionally, seven-inning doubleheaders will now be a thing of the past, as MLB will revert to traditional nine-inning twin bills. The shortened games were introduced as part of the health and safety protocols in 2020.

AGE IS JUST A NUMBER

Years ago a friend told me the definition of ‘old’ was when you were older than every major leaguer. I was reading about **Nelson Cruz** signing with the Nationals. Cruz has hit over 400 HRs since age 28.

That led to looking up the top ten HR hitters after age 40. How many did you guess?

1. **Barry Bonds** 79
2. **Carlton Fisk** 72 (Fisk’s 72 homers after age 40 are impressive, but not as impressive as the fact that he caught 465 games in the same time span.)
3. **Darrell Evans** 60 (The member of the famed ’84 Tigers hit 49 home runs after 40 while playing for Detroit and finished his career with 11 as a 42-year-old with the 1989 Atlanta Braves.)
4. **Dave Winfield** 59
5. **Carl Yastrzemski** 49 (The Red Sox legend hit 10 home runs in 1983 when he was 43 years old.)
6. **Stan Musial** 46
7. **Ted Williams** 44
8. **Hank Aaron** 42 (Aaron hit 20 home runs for the Braves after turning 40 and then added another 22 with the Brewers before retiring.)

9. **Raul Ibanez** 42 (Ibanez's 29 homers with the 2013 Seattle Mariners tied him with Ted Williams for the most home runs hit by someone over 40 in a single season.)

10. **Graig Nettles** 40 (all came with National League teams: 34 with the Padres, five with the Braves and one with the Expos.)

NOMINATIONS FOR MOST UNDERRATED

A few weeks back a subscriber asked for ideas on the most underrated players so we asked for nominations. Your responded with **Rocky Colavito, Bob Friend, Catfish Hunter, Dwight Evans, Joe Morgan.**

ROCKY COLAVITO

Rocky Colavito had a pretty strong 14-year career--and during his 11-year peak he was a frigging monster --but you never even hear his name anymore.

	G	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	BA	OBP	SLG	OPS	OPS+	TB	WAR
1956	101	55	89	11	4	21	65	49	46	0.276	0.372	0.531	0.903	135	171	2.4
1957	134	66	116	26	0	25	84	71	80	0.252	0.348	0.471	0.819	122	217	3.6
1958	143	80	148	26	3	41	113	84	89	0.303	0.405	0.620	1.024	180	303	5.8
1959	154	90	151	24	0	42	111	71	86	0.257	0.337	0.512	0.849	133	301	5.4
1960	145	67	138	18	1	35	87	53	80	0.249	0.317	0.474	0.791	108	263	1.1
1961	163	129	169	30	2	45	140	113	75	0.290	0.405	0.580	0.982	157	338	7.6
1962	161	90	164	30	2	37	112	96	68	0.273	0.371	0.514	0.885	132	309	5.7
1963	160	91	162	29	2	22	91	84	78	0.271	0.358	0.437	0.795	119	261	2.9
1964	160	89	161	31	2	34	102	83	56	0.274	0.366	0.507	0.873	137	298	4.1
1965	162	92	170	25	2	26	108	93	63	0.287	0.383	0.468	0.851	140	277	3.2
1966	151	68	127	13	0	30	72	76	81	0.238	0.336	0.432	0.767	119	230	2.0
Yrly Avg	149	83	145	24	2	33	99	79	73	0.270	0.363	0.504	0.867	135	270	4.0

Awards: Rookie of the Year, 2nd; 9x All Star; MVP, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 8th.

How he rated among league leaders:

Runs: 4x top 10, 2x top 5, 1x top 3.

2B: 5x top 10, 1x top 5

HR: 9x top 10, 4x top 5, 2x top 3, 1 led (more than 30 7 out of 11 years)

RBI: 9x top 10, 7x top 5, 4x top 3, 1 led (more than 100 6 of 11 years)

BB: 7x top 10, 4x top 5, 2x top 3, 1 led

OBP: 5x top 10, 1x top 3 (over .360 7 of 11 years)

SLG: 8x top 10, 3x top 5, 2x top 3, 1 led (5 times over .500)

OPS: 5x top 10, 2x top 5, 1x top 3

OPS+: 7x top 10, 4x top 5, 2x top 3, 1 led (topped 130 8 out of 11 years)

TB: 7x top 10, 6x top 5, 3x top 3, 2x led

Times on Base: 7x top 10, 4x top 5, 3x top 3, 1 led

Runs Created: 7x top 10, 4x top 3, 1 led

Never had 100 K's

Are they HoF numbers? Not really, but people should remember him.

BOB FRIEND

Regarding your upcoming discussion topic of MLB players who appear underrated or better than their stats would indicate, I thought that the easiest route to take would be to take a look at pitchers with losing career records and who spent the majority of their careers with clubs that had dismal team records. My thought was that if these pitchers had been fortunate to have been with better offensive and defensive performing clubs with quality relief pitchers, their career records would have been far improved.

If our subscribers are interested in digging deeper:

<http://research.sabr.org/journals/evaluation-pitchers-won-lost-records>

<https://tlt.fangraphs.com/baseballs-losingest-pitchers/>

https://www.billjamesonline.com/the_career_won-lost_record/

My nomination is:

Bob Friend (1951-1966)

197-230 3.58 ERA 163CG out of 497GS (32.8%) 36 Shutouts

A winner of 197 major-league games, Friend as of 2018 still held Pirates records for career innings pitched and strikeouts. From 1951 to 1965 he averaged 232 innings pitched and 13 victories for some very lackluster Pirate teams. He pitched more than 200 innings for 11 consecutive seasons (1955 through 1965). As a 24-year-old in 1955, Friend became the first pitcher to lead his league in ERA while pitching for a last-place team. He went on to pace the National League in victories once, innings pitched twice, and games started three times. He never spent a single day on a disabled list in his 16-year career 15 of which were spent with the Pirates. Friend played one more major league season, splitting the year between the two New York clubs. He went 1-4, 4.84 with the Yankees and 5-8, 4.40 with the Mets.

A previously stated, Friend had come up to the majors in 1951 and pitched for some dreadful Pirates teams in the 1950s. Between 1951 and 1957, Pittsburgh finished last four times, seventh twice, and tied for seventh once. The club posted records of 42-112, 50-104, and 53-101 from 1952 through 1954. In Friend's first seven seasons in the majors, his team went 397-681. After four major-league seasons, Friend's record stood at 28-50. However, he blossomed in 1955 as he went 14-9 for a 60-94 last-place team and led the National League with a 2.83 ERA. He may have even won the Cy Young award that year but it wasn't until the following year that it became an annual award. In 1956, Friend became the workhorse of the Pittsburgh pitching staff.

Bob Friend finished his 16-year career with a 197-230 record, a 3.58 ERA, 1,734 career strikeouts, and 3,611 innings pitched. He pitched 36 shutouts in 163 complete games. Friend remains as of 2012 the only pitcher to lose more than 200 while winning fewer than 200, mostly due to playing with five last-place Pirate teams. On the sabermetric front, he had a career Wins-Above-Replacement total of 42.1.

Attendance at Forbes Field was rather poor and averaged less than 9,000 per game for half of his years in Pittsburgh. Although I could not find his home vs away stats, it is doubtful that pitching at home proved advantageous for him or the team.

CATFISH HUNTER

I loved HOF Catfish Hunter, he was a real competitor and was a memorable character. He had a great career, but was the 5x World Series Champ, one time CY Young Winner and One time ERA leader as great as we remember him?

He had 2000 Ks in 3500 innings. He only averaged 5Ks per game for his career, so he was not a dominating pitcher. His walk rate of 2.5 was above average, but hardly great. One could argue

that he was in the right places at the right times. His ERA looked better than it would have been if not for championship defenses and big ball parks. (Oakland with massive foul territories and NY with a huge outfield in center and left.) And his records looked great because he had amazing run support and truly great teams around him. If Catfish Hunter played his entire career with KC, where he started, would we even know his name?

Some others who were great beyond their reputations:

Jack Morris is tied for 2nd most opening day starts at 14 (Tom Seaver had 16, Morris tied with Randy Johnson, Steve Carlton, Walter Johnson at 14). Very clutch, but...not overwhelming 'back of baseball card'

Curt Schilling was perhaps the best clutch post season pitcher - But...not overwhelming 'back of baseball card'

Craig Nettles does not have his amazing defense, clutch post season defense & leadership on 'the back of his baseball card'

DWIGHT EVANS

We all know he was an outstanding right fielder. The guy deserves HOF consideration.

20 seasons. 2606 Games. 1470 Runs scored.

10,569 plate appearances, 2446 hits, .272 average, .370 on base pct.

385 HRs, 1384 RBI, .470 SLG.

483 doubles, 73 triples, 4230 total bases.

8 gold gloves, 2 silver sluggers, 3 All Star games.

67.1 career WAR ranks 129th all time.

He walked a lot. His 1391 BB is 29th all time.

He is in the top 100 all time in games played, plate appearances, runs scored, at bats, total bases, HRs, RBI.

JOE MORGAN

Joe Morgan did everything well. He stole a base when it counted, made every routine play, hit in the clutch (Game 7, 1975), and never seemed to take a wrong step. I saw the Big Red Machine many times, and as a Dodger fan, he was the guy I most feared. Fundamentally perfect, like a baseball version of Tim Duncan.

Voila!

I did question this nomination—Hall of Fame, 2x MVP.

Digging deeper:

On top of 2 MVPs, he finished 2 other times in top 4.

10x all-star

5x gold gloves

2517 hits, 268 HRs

Not sure he was underrated but a great player.

GAMMONS: TOMMY JOHN SURGERY IS MORE RELIABLE THAN EVER, BUT LET'S NOT TEST THAT THIS SPRING.

Peter Gammons in The Athletic

No one could have envisioned this. Not back in 1974, when **Tommy John** and **Brent Strom** were the first two pitchers to have the UCL reconstruction and repair operation later named after 288-game-winner John, who won 172 games *after* the revolutionary surgery.

Even 25 years ago, it wasn't like this. At that time, [Dodgers](#) rehabilitation director Ron Porterfield says "We could pretty much guarantee that without complications we could get a pitcher back to where he was before the operation. But that meant if he were on the Double-A level, that's where he'd get back to. Now, with the advances in surgery and technology, what doctors do today with the proper rehabilitation and time — which is closer to 15 or even more months than the 12 that gets thrown around — pitchers can come back even stronger than before."

That may be tested further in coming years, as the lockout brings another jammed-in schedule, on top of the COVID-19-induced conditions of the past few seasons. Pitchers are still struggling to find a sense of normalcy, their routines disrupted once again. We find ourselves in the strange position of not wanting to be so confident in the power of the remedy that we ignore how serious the problem actually is — but at the same time it's hard to discount just how effective Tommy John surgery has become when the evidence is all around us.

For example, on March 19, [Justin Verlander](#) took the mound against real competition for the first time since July of 2020, coming off the Tommy John surgery he had in October of that aborted season. He threw two hitless innings against the [Cardinals](#), sitting 95 MPH. Verlander turned 39 in February, has won 226 games, two Cy Youngs and an MVP, thrown 2,988 regular-season innings, started 30 postseason games (good for 187 2/3 innings) and wants to start on [Astros](#) opening day.

Want another example? Porterfield could talk to [Walker Buehler](#), whom the Dodgers drafted out of Vanderbilt with the 24th pick in 2015 knowing he likely needed surgery. Less than two months after that draft, Dr. Neal ElAttache performed the operation. Two years later, Buehler

made his major-league debut. He is now 27 years old, 40-13, with a 2.47 ERA for the Dodgers, a Cy Young-in-waiting.

Or look at the Red Sox pitching staff. They open the season in Yankee Stadium with a rotation featuring [Nathan Eovaldi](#), [Nick Pivetta](#), [Rich Hill](#), [Michael Wacha](#) and possibly [Garrett Whitlock](#); only Pivetta and Wacha have not had the surgery. The bullpen? Possibly composed of Whitlock, [Ryan Brasier](#) and [Kutter Crawford](#), all T.J. survivors. They expect [Chris Sale](#) (who underwent the surgery in 2020) back from his painful rib injury by the end of May, [James Paxton](#) by July and rookie fireballer [Bryan Mata](#) around the All-Star break. "Sale, Paxton and Mata would be like three impact trades," says one member of the Boston front office. Sale is well off his 2020 operation, while Paxton and Mata had their operations in 2021. It is very early, but Alex Cora and members of the pitching development program seem confident that Paxton and Mata are throwing well enough that both can contribute down the stretch.

Eovaldi is the rare pitcher to have undergone two Tommy Johns, one in high school, one in 2016. Porterfield, who rehabbed the 2016 surgery for the [Rays](#), says Eovaldi's arm "works differently from almost anyone I've ever known.

"I wasn't worried about having a second one," says Eovaldi. "I believed that if I worked hard, did what I was told to do, I'd come back."

In 2018, Dave Dombrowski traded [Jalen Beeks](#) — who now is coming back from surgery — for Eovaldi, who saved Boston's staff in Game 3 of the 2018 World Series by going from the 12th to the 18th innings before giving up a home run. It was a performance his teammates felt was so valiant that after the game, while talking about Eovaldi, **Rick Porcello's** eyes welled up. Last season, Eovaldi was Boston's number one starter as the Red Sox got to the ALCS, throwing a career-high 182 1/3 innings, led the league in games started, finished fourth in Cy Young balloting and carried a place of leadership in the clubhouse. Every year since the surgery, he has altered his pitch repertoire and tempo and gotten better. He was a two-pitch pitcher in 2016. Today he throws five and sometimes even six different pitches. Command difficulty is more of a sign of arm issues than velocity decreases. Last season, his strikeout-walk numbers were 195-35.

"We're really at the point that there isn't much risk in the operation," says one organizational director. "As long as the pitcher takes care of himself, is diligent following a program, is patient no matter how good it feels at the six-month mark, he can come back, often better than before. The rehabilitation is really just like walking a dog, only he has to constantly remind himself that he is the dog being walked. [Noah Syndergaard](#) got a little ahead of himself last season and suffered a setback, but the [Angels](#) were so confident in his two innings post-rehab that they're paying him \$21 million. [Tyler Glasnow](#) had his TJ last August, and I'll bet he comes back in 2023 and is in the race for Cy Young."

But perhaps the most telling stories about modern elbow surgery science come from young pitchers like [Gunnar Hoglund](#). Hoglund hurt his arm last spring, but the [Blue Jays](#) took the Ole Miss ace with the 19th pick, and he signed for \$3,247,500.

“We did a lot of background research on his work ethic and makeup as well as the medical information and were comfortable with picking him,” says Toronto scouting director Shane Farrell.

So were the [Athletics](#).

They acquired Hoglund in the [Matt Chapman](#) trade, just as they had acquired **J.T. Ginn** from the [Mets](#) in the [Chris Bassitt](#) trade. Ginn was a similar draftee — 2020 second-rounder out of Mississippi State taken despite an arm injury, and thus far has made 18 post-operation minor-league starts totaling 92 innings. One scout this spring mentioned [Justin Wrobleksi](#), a left-hander from Oklahoma State who had the operation before the draft. The Dodgers took him in the 11th round and are already convinced that he will realize the talent that before the operation had him being a high-round pick.

In this college season, two of the best draft-eligible pitchers have had the surgery. One is **Peyton Payette** of Arkansas, often compared to Buehler. The other is Alabama left-hander **Connor Prielipp**. Both will be drafted. The medical reports will tell drafting teams how complicated a rehab each faces if they select Friday night starters from the best conference in the country.

Since **Dustin May** had his Tommy John surgery on May 5 last year, the Dodgers can’t count on his being ready to pitch in August and September, but they do have [Tommy Kahnle](#) and [Caleb Ferguson](#) coming back off 2020 surgeries. John was 84-81 and 28 years old when the Dodgers traded **Dick Allen** to acquire him before the 1972 season. No one could have dreamed that these Dodgers will be hoping that his namesake surgery will get them a premier pitcher back for the stretch run, one of 115 TJ Surgeries performed on pitchers in 2021, and more than 2,100 since the original operation.

With a spring training so truncated that clubs know there are going to be a rash of pitching injuries between now and May 15, one GM this past weekend said “there’s a lot of talk about going from 26-man rosters to 27 or 28 until May 1. We may be headed into our opening day with our starters fortunate to be able to pitch five innings.” Within the next hour, two other GMs said they expect that the first time through the rotation their starters likely will pitch four innings.

The sciences of surgery and rehabilitation are ever-evolving and improving. But that doesn’t mean we can rely on those advances to get these young arms through what is going to be yet another abnormal spring. April, historically, has been the month with the most injuries. Another shortened spring training threatens to make that even worse. The extra roster spots are a step in the right direction. But this spring, every manager and general manager needs to remember

that they are working with fragile tools, easily broken, and not to take that lightly just because they can now be easily repaired.

A half-dozen hours after the [Twins](#) had come to terms with [Carlos Correa](#), Rocco Baldelli talked about how “it’s very tough to win today without premium players.” He pointed out why it made sense for the [Yankees](#) to sign [Gerrit Cole](#), so with [Aaron Judge](#) and [Giancarlo Stanton](#) they have three. [Max Scherzer](#) with what could be slightly limited innings from [Jacob deGrom](#) gives the Mets something close to the **Randy Johnson-Curt Schilling** tandem in Arizona’s heyday. [Starling Marte](#), arguably the most underappreciated star in the market, gives the Mets a go-to star alongside [Francisco Lindor](#).

“To contend and to win, a team needs premium players, especially if those players have been there and won,” says Baldelli. “That’s what Carlos Correa brings here. He’s a great player, and he’s performed on the big stage. He’s hugely important to us for a lot of reasons. He helps [Byron Buxton](#) and [Miguel Sano](#). We’re a different team.”

The Twins traded for [Sonny Gray](#) partly to help [Joe Ryan](#) and [Bailey Ober](#), and hope to acquire another veteran starter. The [Phillies](#) have the premier player who gives all he has in [Bryce Harper](#), but Dombrowski has surrounded him with [Kyle Schwarber](#) and [Nick Castellanos](#) to let Bryce run free, while retooling the bullpen with [Corey Knebel](#).

[Freddie Freeman](#) was a perfect fit for a Dodgers team that expects to win every year. Boston needed another piece in a division with four high-level teams — which Toronto may be for the next five years — and paid market price for [Trevor Story](#), who in an infield with [Rafael Devers](#), [Xander Bogaerts](#), [Bobby Dalbec](#) and possibly [Triston Casas](#) at midseason has the potential for enough energy and offense to allow Alex Cora to keep his outfield defensively aligned and utilize the team’s depth.

Story has had elbow issues and is moving to second, but Boston thoroughly checked all medicals and like that Story brings a hard-nosed edge — why wasn’t he a safety at the University of Texas? — and tremendous pull power for Fenway Park. The Fenway crowds at last October’s playoffs seemed to be the youngest and wildest in a generation (or more), and the Story signing ignited interest and fomented a sense of purpose around these Red Sox. Bogaerts can opt out after the 2022 season, but in many ways he and [Kiké Hernández](#) are the leaders of the team, and there is an optimistic sense that Story can play six years at second and be a Ryne Sandberg-type.

The problem is that not every team can afford even one premier player. Of the last 30 world champions (1991-2021, because there was no world champion in 1994), roughly a third of them had top-three payrolls, including all five Yankee championship squads and three of the four Red Sox winners.

In those 30 years, five small-market clubs won it all, two of them in Miami. The '91 Twins had premier players — **Kirby Puckett, Kent Hrbek, Jack Morris**. The '97 [Marlins](#) spent at the trading deadline, and had **Moises Alou, Gary Sheffield and Kevin Brown**.

The 2001 [Diamondbacks](#) had the best 1-2 pitching duo since **Sandy Koufax** and **Don Drysdale** in Randy Johnson and Curt Schilling, the latter of whom won games in all three-postseason series leading to the 2001, 2004 and 2007 World Series titles.

The 2003 Marlins were close to an exception. Hall of Famer **Pudge Rodriguez** had a huge impact coming in from free agency, a 20-year old [Miguel Cabrera](#) was taking his first step towards Cooperstown, and two premium players, **Mike Lowell** and **Derek Lee**, hit 66 homers between them; Lowell was always a leader, and was a nominal captain on the '03 Marlins and '07 Red Sox.

The most glaring exception, though, was the 2015 [Royals](#). “They were a different kind of team than anyone was used to playing in this era,” says Baldelli. “That ballpark is a tough place to play, tough to hit for power, and the Royals were running around the bases, scoring from first, always putting pressure. They could be doing nothing, then — boom! — they’d run off and score six or eight runs. They always played the game right. They weren’t a team with premium players the way we talk now, but they were really good.”

Alex Gordon was a Royals lifer. **Kendrys Morales**, always a huge clubhouse figure, especially for young players, had a great year. [Eric Hosmer](#) was special.

“But the big thing was that they were in the forefront of (having) a big powerful bullpen,” says Baldelli. Indeed, they had two starters with earned run averages under 4.00, **Chris Young** (3.06), **Edinson Volquez** (3.55). But Ned Yost figured it out, and [Wade Davis](#) was the best reliever in the American League and did not have a save. He was 8-1, 0.91, they won games in the seventh and eighth innings and held on with [Greg Holland](#) and defense.

That may not be possible today. The ballparks are by and large hitter-friendly. Few teams put the ball in play consistently, few teams run (which is curious because one constant topic this spring is how few pitchers know how to hold runners, how catchers have so many problems coming up throwing and how even mini-shifts create problems for middle infielders on steals).

How the game will evolve this season is hard to predict in the first week of spring training, which is a fast-forward month before Opening Day. Think April 7, Correa in Minneapolis, Story in Yankee Stadium, Freeman right above Alvarado Street. Get ready for [Corey Seager](#), [Marcus Semien](#), Correa, Story, Javy Báez, Marte, Scherzer and Freeman to alter pennant races. And if deGrom, [Jack Flaherty](#), Verlander, Sale, [Stephen Strasburg](#), Paxton and Syndergaard, [Mike Clevinger](#) and May are healthy in August, we’ll have October in our scopes.

HISTORY LESSON

Before the Mets Were Amazin', They Were Amazing

National League baseball returned to New York City 60 years ago, and Manager Casey Stengel knew exactly what he was brought in to sell.

By [George Vecsey](#), NYT

Now, baseball fans can dream again.

Even with all the terrible things going on around the world, fans of all 30 teams have the annual March diversion of dreaming: free agents actually worth the money, franchise pitchers staying healthy, the promised brilliance of the latest “pheenom” (to speak with Casey Stengel’s vocabulary).

Once there was a spring when a ready-made fan base, equal parts bitterness and adoration, saw dreams come true, via the Worst Team in the History of Baseball — 40 wins, 120 losses. [You could look it up.](#)

The losses came after the Mets were cobbled together in the manic spring of 1962 and supported by a built-in fan base of New York’s brokenhearted National League fans.

In this round-year anniversary — it has been 60 years since that inaugural season — it is safe to say that never has an American sports team begun with an aura like that of Stengel’s Amazing Mets — bedsheet banners, lusty chants and ancient blood loyalties, all touched off by the Ancient Mariner of a skipper.

The Mets were a welcome addition even before they fumbled their first pop-up, hit into their first triple play, tossed their first game-losing home run.

Whatever Mets fans obsess about today — **Jacob deGrom**’s elbow, the undervaluing of **Jeff McNeil**, the lack of continuity in the front office; I could go on — the team is supported by a six-decade love affair with the bittersweet image of “same old Mets” or “did you hear about *this*?” — even when they win.

Some of us can still remember how this all began, when Stengel assembled his pitchers at home plate on a funky lakeside practice field in St. Petersburg, Fla., in February 1962 and commanded them to run to first base, because that was the essence of baseball.

I was 22, enjoying covering high school sports for that great paper Newsday, on Long Island, and also enjoying the gaggle of New York baseball writers in Florida spreading the word about the ineptitude/lovability of this new team.

In those days, before teams' ubiquitous presence on social media, radio and TV, newspapers were the major outlet for a new team — and Stengel knew it.

The dispatches reached an instant Mets fandom looking to right a moral wrong — the abdication of the New York Giants and Brooklyn Dodgers to California after the 1957 season.

Other cities have lost their only team — [some got a new one](#) — but New York, New York, did not take kindly to the loss of both National League teams.

I was recently comparing notes with one of my best friends, Steve Jacobson, now retired after half a century, mostly as sports columnist, with Newsday. He covered a part of spring training with the Mets in 1962.

Jacobson recalled his fear, in 1957, that both New York teams were going to skip town for California. He had been a copy boy at The New York Daily Mirror after college and then went into the Army, based at Fort Bragg, N.C.

“I remember going into the barracks and reading The Times, and it said the Dodgers really were moving,” Jacobson recalled. “I threw the paper on the floor and said, ‘Damn, I’m never going to see the Dodgers again.’”

Hearts were broken. **Willie Mays** was going to San Francisco. Gil Hodges was going to Los Angeles. From 1958 to 1961, sulking Giants and Dodgers fans had to put up with the lordly Yankees winning three pennants and two World Series.

Some of us refer to that time as the Dark Ages.

“I was young, I didn’t have money, but I went to some Yankees games,” Jacobson admitted. “You respected them, but it wasn’t as much fun.”

He recalled that die-hard fans would fiddle with their radio dial to pick up Dodgers and Giants games from Philadelphia and other N.L. cities. “Some people drove down to Philadelphia to see the Dodgers and Giants. People would get mad because there were so many New Yorkers in the ballpark.”

Political pressure and economic reality forced a new team in New York to be created in 1962. It was to be called the Mets, named after the Metropolitans, a 19th century New York team, and based, temporarily, in the rusty, vacated Polo Grounds, hard by the Harlem River.

The first good sign for “us” was the hiring of the Old Man, Stengel, who had won 10 pennants in 12 years for the Yankees and was then “dismissed” (in his ornate vocabulary) for the criminal offense of turning 70.

Jacobson was hired by Newsday to cover the Yankees in 1960, and Jack Mann, the great sports editor, sprung me to cover a few home games that year and several dozen more in 1961, the year of Roger Maris’s 61 homers. For National League types, the wait was on.

The new Mets management wisely hired Stengel before the 1961 World Series, which was played then in God's own sunlight in early October and vastly more important to the American populace than it is today. Stengel was at Yankee Stadium, in the media scrum on the field before Game 2, evangelizing the glories of the Amazing Mets.

Stengel was described perfectly in The New York Times by Arthur Daley, the sports columnist, as sporting a "green Tyrolean hat," doing one of his famous soliloquies in his language known as Stengelese:

"There's Mr. Berra, which uster help me manage. ... I don't want to get close to these fellers which I am in the other league now and Mr. Berra will live to be 110. These once were my players and they gave me success to a certain extent and no one can say why."

(To translate: He was saying he would never do such a thing as covet Yankees players. However, he would pick up "Mr. Berra" as a playing coach and good luck charm in 1965.)

The Old Man was present for [Cincinnati's only victory](#) in that World Series, as **Elio Chacon** of the Reds dashed home from third base as a pitch got past the catcher. Chacon slid home in a cloud of Stadium dust and brushed himself off, applauded by anti-Yankees fans. I was there, writing a sidebar for Newsday, in an auxiliary press box, directly behind the Old Man, who doffed his aforementioned Tyrolean hat.

(With that single act of hustle, Chacon earned himself a spot with the Mets in their first season; Stengel had an affinity for players who hustled. Chacon had a mostly futile season, and never played in the majors again.)

As the team filled its roster with players other clubs did not want, Stengel was creating the Mets, an image-building act worthy of a high-grade advertising agency — whisking back and forth from his home in Glendale, Calif., to wherever there were note pads and cameras and microphones in New York.

He had a rolling monologue about the Amazing Mets, the Metsies, and his dream for "the youth of America" because "they ain't failed yet."

In January 1962, Stengel materialized in Manhattan to hold a no-news conference. Jacobson reported in Newsday that Stengel had drawn photographers and even Gabe Pressman, the peripatetic radio news reporter, away from "the president and the mayor" — that is, John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Wagner.

Stengel waved a paper roster detailing the culls and rejects the Mets had accumulated — geezers named **Hodges, Ashburn, Bell, Zimmer, Thomas, Labine, Neal** — to attract nostalgic National League fans — plus Chacon, of course, as well as [Rod Kanehl, a longtime Yankees farmhand](#) who had impressed Stengel by vaulting a fence on a practice field to catch a long fly ball.

The Old Man said he wore out a roster every day, brandishing it to writers and fans and prospective ticket buyers.

As he strode away, Stengel had parting words for the media types:

“Don’t forget to join the Amazing Mets!” Stengel shouted, adding, “If they have a newspaper merger, get a glove.”

Most New York newspapers assigned beat writers from the good old days — [Dick Young of The Daily News](#) was one — but The Times went the other route and dispatched Robert Lipsyte, not long out of Columbia University, literate and observant with no allegiance to standard sportswriting styles.

In his [50th anniversary paean](#) to the Mets, Lipsyte described those first days of camp, including how he actually took his glove with him and was allowed to shag flies at the lakeside field. The first fly “exploded in my hand” and “my palm still stings at the memory.” Fortunately, it did not seem to harm his articles, which I read avidly up north.

The New Yorker sent [Roger Angell](#) to see if he could dig up anything — the start of a career shift for the now-centenarian icon.

We at Newsday assigned [Stan Isaacs](#), who wrote a column called Out of Left Field, which he most certainly was, and [Jacobson](#), who started the spring with the Yankees and switched to the Mets.

“The Mets may finish ahead of the Colts because they have implemented their expansion draft roster with journeymen like **Frank Thomas** and **Charlie Neal**,” Isaacs wrote, picking the Mets for ninth place in the 10-team National League; Jacobson had them eighth.

“Ah, that was just wishful thinking,” Jacobson said recently. “They had formerly good players who just couldn’t do it anymore.” He brightened and said, “But there was a lot of laughter all the time.”

In St. Louis for the opening game, nearly a dozen Mets were [stuck in an elevator](#) in the team hotel and, for better or worse, rescued, in time to lose.

The first home game was two days later — [Friday the 13th](#), of course. I played hooky from the high school beat to sit in the stands on a nasty, sleety afternoon to watch the aged Mets slipping and sliding in front of only 12,447 fans. The growing Mets fandom survived a nine-game losing streak before they would win one: same old Mets.

In the days to come, **Richie Ashburn**, wise old slap hitter, would insist on playing, despite a concussion from hitting the wall. Same old Mets.

The Mets picked up a former Yankee named [Marvin Eugene Throneberry](#), born to be a Met, erratic in the field and on the basepaths. Ashburn, in the next locker, counseled Marvelous Marv to enjoy the chants from the fans: “Raspberry! Strawberry! We Love Throneberry!” Same old Mets.

“You had things you never had before, like banners and signs and chants like a college football game,” Jacobson recalled. “‘Let’s go Mets!’ It was very loud.”

Stengel would go out on the field and it would get louder. People would stand on the dugout.

The New York fans blended their hatred of the departed Dodgers and Giants owners with their love of National League ball — **Roberto Clemente! Henry Aaron! Frank Robinson! Stan Musial!** When Willie Mays and **Duke Snider** came home in their road gray uniforms, there were lusty family reunions.

It was a glorious time, and it seems like yesterday. I eventually covered Mets games, home and away, as the crowds began to flock to this strange early-60s happening in Woodstock-on-Harlem.

With the Yankees, Stengel used to concede that he couldn’t have done it without the players.

With the Mets, Stengel couldn’t have done it without the fans.

FAMOUS RELATIONS

Baseballalmanac.com is another free web site filled with interesting stuff. For example, who knew Mickey Mantle’s nephew was a drag queen performer? NBA coach Doc Rivers and Gary Sheffield are cousins?

Celebrity (Wikipedia)	Famous For	Baseball Player	Relation
Amanda Aardsma	Actress	David Aardsma	Sister
Acie Law	NBA Player	Ernie Banks	Great Nephew
Jillian Barberie	Actress / Hostess	Bret Barberie	Ex-Wife
Lauren Bay Regula	Olympic Softball Pitcher	Jason Bay	Sister
Jo Collins	Playboy Playmate of the Year	Bo Belinsky	Ex-Wife
Drake Bell	Actor / Musician	Heath Bell	Cousin
Vickie Chesser	Model (Mountain Dew)	Johnny Bench	Ex-Wife
Anna Benson	Model	Kris Benson	Wife
Lindsay Berra	Sportswriter (ESPN / MLB)	Dale Berra	Niece
Tim Berra	NFL Player		Brother

<u>Lindsay Berra</u>	Sportswriter (ESPN / MLB)	<u>Yogi Berra</u>	Granddaughter
<u>Tim Berra</u>	NFL Player		Son
<u>Henry Bibby</u>	NBA Player	<u>Jim Bibby</u>	Brother
<u>Mike Bibby</u>	NBA Player		Nephew
<u>Laura Cover</u>	<i>Playboy</i> Playmate	<u>Aaron Boone</u>	Wife
Lindsay Clubine	Model (Deal or No Deal)	<u>Clay Buchholz</u>	Wife
<u>Roy Campanella II</u>	Television Director / Producer	<u>Roy Campanella</u>	Son
<u>Helen Callaghan</u>	AAGPBL Player	<u>Casey Candaele</u>	Mother
<u>Jessica Canseco</u>	Model / Author	<u>Jose Canseco</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Josie Canseco</u>	Model / <i>Playboy</i> Playmate		Daughter
<u>Josie Canseco</u>	Model / <i>Playboy</i> Playmate	<u>Ozzie Canseco</u>	Niece
<u>Tracie Ruiz</u>	Olympic Synchronized Swimmer	<u>Michael Conforto</u>	Mother
<u>Kamala Devi</u>	Actress	<u>Chuck Connors</u>	Ex-Wife
Faith Quabius	Actress		Ex-Wife
<u>Jennie Finch</u>	Olympic Softball Pitcher	<u>Casey Daigle</u>	Wife
Kim DeJesus	Amazing Race Contestant	<u>David DeJesus</u>	Wife
<u>Jonny Diaz</u>	Christian Singer	<u>Matt Diaz</u>	Brother
<u>Dorothy Arnold</u>	Actress	<u>Joe DiMaggio</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Marilyn Monroe</u>	Actress / Model / Singer		Ex-Wife
<u>Mabel Hite</u>	Vaudeville Actress / Comedian	<u>Mike Donlin</u>	Wife
<u>Ann Meyers Drysdale</u>	Pro Basketball Player	<u>Don Drysdale</u>	Wife
<u>Dave Meyers</u>	NBA Player		Brother-in-Law
<u>Blackie Lawless</u>	Lead Singer (W.A.S.P.)	<u>Ryne Duren</u>	Nephew
<u>Laraine Day</u>	Actress	<u>Leo Durocher</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Jamie-Lynn Sigler</u>	Actress / Singer	<u>Lenny Dykstra</u>	Daughter-in-Law
<u>Ashley Eckstein</u>	Actress	<u>David Eckstein</u>	Wife
<u>Geraldine Farrar</u>	Opera Singer / Film Actress	<u>Sid Farrar</u>	Daughter
<u>Tawny Kitaen</u>	Actress / Video Vixen	<u>Chuck Finley</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Judy Pace</u>	Actress	<u>Curt Flood</u>	Wife
<u>Mia Hamm</u>	Soccer Star	<u>Nomar Garciaparra</u>	Wife
<u>Cyndy Garvey</u>	TV Personality	<u>Steve Garvey</u>	Ex-Wife
Nicky Getz	Amazing Race Contestant	<u>Chris Getz</u>	Wife
Kristian Giambi	Owner of Brulee	<u>Jason Giambi</u>	Wife
Kayleigh McEnany	White House Press Secretary	<u>Sean Gilmartin</u>	Wife
<u>Jared Goff</u>	NFL Player	<u>Jerry Goff</u>	Father
June O'Dea	Broadway Actress	<u>Lefty Gomez</u>	Wife

<u>Olga Tañón</u>	Latin Singer / Songwriter	<u>Juan Gonzalez</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Emily Kuchar</u>	Dallas Cowboy Cheerleader	<u>Zack Greinke</u>	Wife
<u>Anisha Nicole</u>	R&B Singer	<u>Chris Gwynn</u>	Niece
<u>Anisha Nicole</u>	R&B Singer	<u>Tony Gwynn</u>	Daughter
<u>Anisha Nicole</u>	R&B Singer	<u>Tony Gwynn Jr.</u>	Sister
<u>Heidi Hamels (Strobel)</u>	Survivor Contestant	<u>Cole Hamels</u>	Wife
<u>Jill Corey</u>	Pop Singer	<u>Don Hoak</u>	Wife
<u>Butch Patrick</u>	Actor / Musician	<u>Ken Hunt</u>	Step Father
<u>John M. Jackson</u>	Actor (JAG)	<u>Conor Jackson</u>	Father
<u>Zoe Ann Olsen</u>	Olympic Springboard Medalist	<u>Jackie Jensen</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Hannah Jeter</u>	Model	<u>Derek Jeter</u>	Wife
<u>Halle Berry</u>	Actress	<u>David Justice</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Stephenie LaGrossa</u>	Survivor Contestant	<u>Kyle Kendrick</u>	Wife
<u>Jeana Tomasina</u>	Actress / <i>Playboy</i> Playmate	<u>Marty Keough</u>	Ex-Daughter-in-Law
		<u>Matt Keough</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Clyde Tombaugh</u>	Discovered Pluto	<u>Clayton Kershaw</u>	Great Uncle
<u>Nancy Chaffee</u>	U.S. Tennis Champion	<u>Ralph Kiner</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Nancy Lopez</u>	LPGA Golfer	<u>Ray Knight</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Vanessa Morgan</u>	Actress	<u>Michael Kopech</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Richard Widmark</u>	Actor	<u>Sandy Koufax</u>	Ex-Father-in-Law
<u>Joanne Dru</u>	Actress		Aunt
<u>Peter Marshall</u>	Actor, Singer, Radio Personality	<u>Pete LaCock</u>	Father
<u>Annabelle Lee</u>	AAGPBL Pitcher	<u>Bill Lee</u>	Aunt
<u>Katrina Leskanich</u>	Singer (Katrina and the Waves)	<u>Curtis Leskanic</u>	Cousin
<u>Jenni Rivera</u>	Singer / Songwriter / Actress	<u>Esteban Loaiza</u>	Wife
<u>Jaime Edmondson</u>	Model / <i>Playboy</i> Playmate	<u>Evan Longoria</u>	Wife
<u>Connie Mack III</u>	US Senator	<u>Connie Mack</u>	Grandson
<u>Connie Mack IV</u>	US Congressman		Great-Grandson
<u>Patrick Mahomes</u>	NFL Quarterback	<u>Pat Mahomes</u>	Father
<u>Merlyn Mantle</u>	Author	<u>Mickey Mantle</u>	Wife
<u>Kelly Mantle</u>	Actor, Comedian, Drag Queen		Nephew
<u>Faith Hill</u>	Country Singer	<u>Tug McGraw</u>	Daughter-in-Law
<u>Tim McGraw</u>	Country Singer		Son
<u>Dan McGwire</u>	NFL Quarterback	<u>Mark McGwire</u>	Brother
<u>Cheryl Miller</u>	Olympic Basketball Player	<u>Darrell Miller</u>	Daughter
<u>Reggie Miller</u>	NBA Player (HOF)		Son

<u>Billie Jean King</u>	Tennis Champion	<u>Randy Moffitt</u>	Sister
<u>Alan Jackson</u>	Country Singer	<u>Brandon Moss</u>	Cousin
<u>Digger Phelps</u>	Basketball Coach / ESPN	<u>Jamie Moyer</u>	Father-in-Law
<u>Meredith MacRae</u>	Actress / Singer	<u>Greg Mulleavy</u>	Ex-Daughter-in-Law
<u>Greg Mullavey</u>	Actor		Son
<u>Judy Landers</u>	Actress	<u>Tom Niedenfuer</u>	Wife
<u>Elizabeth Prann</u>	Televison News Anchor	<u>Darren O'Day</u>	Wife
<u>Candi Staton</u>	Gospel Singer	<u>Otis Nixon</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Lana Parrilla</u>	Actress	<u>Sam Parrilla</u>	Daughter
<u>Shannon Schambeau</u>	Beauty Queen	<u>John Patterson</u>	Wife
<u>Chris Perry</u>	PGA Golfer	<u>Jim Perry</u>	Son
<u>Alicia Rickter</u>	<i>Playboy</i> Playmate	<u>Mike Piazza</u>	Wife
<u>Lisa Dergan Podsednik</u>	<i>Playboy</i> Playmate	<u>Scott Podsednik</u>	Wife
<u>Chea Courtney</u>	Actress	<u>Pete Rose</u>	Daughter
<u>Holly Hunter</u>	Actress	<u>Tim Salmon</u>	Cousin
<u>Cindy Blackman</u>	Musician	<u>Carlos Santana</u>	Wife
<u>Shonda Schilling</u>	Shade Foundation of America	<u>Curt Schilling</u>	Wife
<u>Deleon Richards</u>	Gospel Singer	<u>Gary Sheffield</u>	Wife
<u>Austin Rivers</u>	NBA Player	<u>Ken Singleton</u>	Cousin Once Removed
<u>Doc Rivers</u>	NBA Coach		Cousin
<u>Henry Slaughter</u>	Gospel Singer	<u>Enos Slaughter</u>	Cousin
<u>Allie LaForce</u>	TV Sports Sideline Reporter	<u>Joe Smith</u>	Wife
<u>Joanna Garcia</u>	Actress	<u>Nick Swisher</u>	Wife
<u>Mychal Thompson</u>	NBA Player		Father
<u>Klay Thompson</u>	NBA Player	<u>Trayce Thompson</u>	Brother
<u>Mychel Thompson</u>	Professional Basketball Player		Brother
<u>Julia Schultz</u>	<i>Playboy</i> Playmate	<u>Brett Tomko</u>	Wife
<u>Dale Torborg</u>	Pro Wrestler	<u>Jeff Torborg</u>	Son
<u>Misty May Treanor</u>	Olympic Beach Volleyball	<u>Matt Treanor</u>	Wife
<u>Cy Twombly</u>	Painter, Sculptor, Photographer	<u>Cy Twombly</u>	Son
<u>Butch Trucks</u>	Allman Brothers Band / Drums	<u>Virgil Trucks</u>	Nephew
<u>Derek Trucks</u>	Allman Brothers Band / Guitar		Great Nephew
<u>Katie Uhlaender</u>	Olympic Skeleton Racer	<u>Ted Uhlaender</u>	Daughter
<u>Kate Upton</u>	Model / Actress	<u>Justin Verlander</u>	Wife
<u>Brittany Viola</u>	Olympic Platform Diver	<u>Frank Viola</u>	Daughter
<u>Candice Wiggins</u>	WNBA Player	<u>Alan Wiggins</u>	Daughter

<u>Michelle Johnson</u>	Actress		Ex-Wife
<u>Erika Monroe Williams</u>	Television News Anchor	<u>Matt Williams</u>	Wife
Dolores Wettach	Miss Vermont / Vogue Model	<u>Ted Williams</u>	Ex-Wife
<u>Joanne Woodward</u>	Actress / Academy Award	<u>Woody Woodward</u>	Cousin
<u>Chuck Yeager</u>	Test Pilot / Air Force General	<u>Steve Yeager</u>	Uncle
<u>Tom Brady</u>	NFL Quarterback	<u>Kevin Youkilis</u>	Brother-in-Law
<u>Zack Padilla</u>	WBO Light Welterweight Champ	<u>Michael Young</u>	Cousin
<u>Anton Zamloch</u>	Professional Magician	<u>Carl Zamloch</u>	Father
<u>Julianne McNamara</u>	Olympic Gymnast	<u>Todd Zeile</u>	Wife
<u>Patrick Duffy</u>	Actor		Uncle
<u>Amber Seyer</u>	Former Miss Missouri		Wife
Joe Zito	Composer (Nat King Cole)	<u>Barry Zito</u>	Father
Roberta Zito	Singer (Nat King Cole)		Mother
Julianna Zobrist	Christian Singer	<u>Ben Zobrist</u>	Wife

BASEBALL'S ANTI-TRUST EXEMPTION

Evan Drellich of The Athletic explains

Bernie Sanders introduces legislation to remove MLB's antitrust protections

In an appearance on HBO's "Real Sports" that will air on Tuesday, Sen. Bernie Sanders (VT) described why he's introducing the "Save American Baseball Act," which would target [Major League Baseball](#)'s antitrust exemption.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision to provide antitrust protections to Major League Baseball. If Sanders has his way, MLB won't be able to enjoy them for much longer.

"I'm very excited that we have introduced this legislation which should do away with the unique antitrust protections that Major League Baseball has enjoyed since 1922," Sanders said. "I think the time is now when these billionaires should start paying attention to the needs of the fans and the people of this country, rather than just their bottom line."

On May 29, 1922, the Supreme Court ruled that MLB's business didn't meet the criteria of "interstate commerce." As a result, the court decided that MLB wasn't beholden to the Sherman Act, which forbids businesses from engaging in practices that suppress competition.

MLB's antitrust exemption has been challenged in court on multiple occasions, including as recently as three months ago when [four former minor-league affiliates filed a lawsuit in Manhattan federal district court](#) against minor-league reorganization that specifically called out the antitrust exemption.

Sanders signaled his intentions when he issued a statement on the end of the lockout on March 10.

"It would be wrong for Congress to simply celebrate today's agreement and move on. We must prevent the greed of baseball's oligarchs from destroying the game. The best way to do that is to end Major League Baseball's antitrust exemption and I will be introducing legislation to do just that."

When "Real Sports" host Bryant Gumbel asked Sanders what he wanted to achieve with this proposed legislation, Sanders described two of the league's actions as an "outrage." He called the owner-imposed 99-day lockout an attempt to "break" the union and took umbrage with MLB's decision to drop 40 minor-league affiliates before the 2021 season.

Sanders also described how removing MLB's antitrust exemption would bring the league in line with other major professional leagues like the NFL, which isn't allowed to use its connections or financial wherewithal to prevent leagues like the XFL and USFL from forming.

"It would mean that competition would arise," Sanders said. "It would mean that other people would have the opportunity to start different Major League Baseball leagues. It would mean that baseball would be spreading to areas that now don't have it. In other words, there would be finally competition. And the Major Leagues would not be able to do simply what they wanted to do."

Sanders expressed frustration with MLB for focusing on profits over fans, many of whom he says can't afford to attend major-league games. He also believes that both sides of the political aisle possess an appetite to look at MLB's antitrust exemption, and that will be evident when his proposal gets a hearing "in the very near future" in the Judiciary Committee.

"I think what you will see, Bryant, is support not just from Democrats, but from Republicans," said Sanders. "I think there is a growing anger amongst the American people at baseball. I think the temperature is rising here in Congress to do something about it."

'It's very valuable': What would change if MLB lost its antitrust exemption?

What might actually change in baseball if Congress or the Supreme Court took away [Major League Baseball's](#) antitrust exemption?

Congressional Republicans recently announced legislation to remove baseball's special status among professional sports leagues, the protection it has from the typical antitrust laws which

govern business in the United States, including in the [NFL](#), [NBA](#) and [NHL](#). Republicans are angry at commissioner Rob Manfred for his decision to [take the 2021 All-Star Game out of Georgia](#) in the wake of the state's new voting laws. But their attempt to bat back at the sport and [at Manfred, a registered Republican](#), might well wind up being an empty gesture.

Stephen Ross, the executive director of Penn State's Center for the Study of Sports in Society and a former attorney for U.S. Department of Justice, said the legislation has "zero" chance of passing.

"There needs to be a real change in the political culture to want to stop whatever the practices are that would be stopped," Ross said, "and I don't see that happening."

The political culture of the moment also makes it hard to imagine a bill sponsored by Sens. Marsha Blackburn, Ted Cruz, Josh Hawley, Mike Lee and Marco Rubio gaining much traction across the aisle. In the 1990s, legislation to repeal the exemption was co-sponsored by some of the most liberal members of the Senate as well as some of the most conservative. "I challenge you to find any other legislation that was supported by senior, bipartisan senators, and supported by organized labor and consumer groups that lost because people like Sen. Joe Biden, Sen. Ted Kennedy, Sen. Paul Simon and Sen. Diane Feinstein all opposed it because of their connections to major-league owners," Ross said. "So, this law is not going anywhere."

If this latest effort is in fact dead on arrival, then the exemption will carry on, impacting the sport in sometimes hard-to-see ways. The practices the exemption allows or encourages are not always easily understood.

"Just the word 'antitrust,' I mean it's such a lawyerly word that (for) the average fan — what does that even mean?" said Garrett Broshuis, a partner at the firm Korein Tillery who has brought antitrust action against MLB before. "And people talk about the antitrust exemption, the harm it does, but what is the concrete harm? I think that probably one of the easiest ways to sum it up is: Think about you and your job, and if you wanted to stay in the same industry and switch jobs and go work for another company. Any other industry, that's relatively easy to do if you're a talented person and have a desire to do so. But in the baseball industry, it's much, much harder to do. And so almost every employee within the industry of baseball is suffering in some way because of this exemption."

Antitrust laws, at their most basic, are intended to encourage free competition.

"The baseball exemption today gives Major League Baseball free rein to commit antitrust violations in the minor leagues, in its movement of franchises between cities and stadiums, in its business dealings with broadcasters and sponsors, and in its treatment of non-player employees," said Jeffrey Kessler, co-executive chairman of the firm Winston and Strawn and a renowned voice in sport and antitrust matters who sometimes works as outside counsel for the players' union in baseball. "It's very valuable."

Minor-league player pay

Of all stakeholders in the sport, MLB players might actually be the least affected by the antitrust exemption.

The exemption was born in a Supreme Court case in 1922. Seventy-six years later, Congress passed the Curt Flood Act, which reduced its reach for the benefit of major-league players. The act said that baseball players would have the right to make antitrust claims, just as any professional athletes in any other sport would. Meanwhile, for the rest of baseball's business, the exemption still applied.

But on a practical level, the **Curt Flood** Act could be considered redundant. In many ways, antitrust law was already out of the picture in dealings between the league and the union. In businesses where a union and management agree to a collective bargaining agreement, there is what's known as the "labor exemption," which means that labor law presides, rather than antitrust law.

"The reason we have the Curt Flood Act is because the owners realize that there's always going to be a union," Ross said. "And as long as there's always going to be a union, subjecting (owners) to antitrust liability for things they do vis a vis major-league players is irrelevant."

There is one caveat. One strategy that has been employed by players in other sports but never in baseball is called decertification, where the union is in essence disbanded. The reason a union would do that is so its members could pursue claims under antitrust law, rather than labor law. And if the Curt Flood Act never happens, then that tool would not be available to major-league players today. (The union can be later reinstated.)

But the other group of players employed by major-league teams — the minor leaguers — do not have a union representing them.

"So then you have the question about the treatment of minor-league players, and that obviously is something that if there were no exemption, would be challenged," Ross said. "A guy who today is playing for the Altoona Curve is paid by the [Pittsburgh Pirates](#). What is he paid by the Pirates? He's paid according to a scale which major-league baseball teams have agreed to. Absent an antitrust exemption, that's illegal."

Co-founder of a non-profit called Advocates for Minor Leaguers, Broshuis is a [lead figure](#) in the fight for improved pay for minor leaguers. Both he and Ross used the tech industry as an analog. Google and Facebook cannot legally agree on a pay scale for their employees across their businesses. When Major League Baseball sets a pay scale, what is happening is that 30 businesses — the 30 teams — are making an agreement.

"Even Google and Facebook wouldn't agree on prices," Ross said. "If they did, they'd go to jail. ... When the 30 owners say we're going to play 162 games, that is an agreement among the

owners. When the owners say the strike zone is measured here, there and the other thing, that is an agreement among the owners. And when the owners say here is the scale for paying minor-league players, that's an agreement among the owners, that's no different than if Google and Facebook did, or if *The Athletic* got together with The New York Times and decided to set salaries."

Minor-league contraction

This offseason, Major League Baseball overhauled Minor League Baseball, dropping the number of teams in the minor-league umbrella from 160 to 120. If the antitrust exemption did not exist, minor-league owners — particularly those who were pushed out of the umbrella — might have recourse if they filed claims under antitrust law.

"Antitrust laws don't allow competitors to get together and agree to restrict competition among themselves unreasonably," Kessler said. "So, if you look at the minor leagues, each of the major league teams are competitors with each other in terms of who they affiliate with, how many minor league teams they have, in what locations they have those teams, and how they support them. When all the teams of Major League Baseball get together and decide how many teams there will be and which ones have to go and who will get them, that would be subject to antitrust review as to whether it is an unreasonable restriction of competition between the teams. And I suspect it would be a very serious claim if they didn't have the baseball exemption."

Some minor-league teams have sued MLB, but have not done so under antitrust law. The Staten Island Yankees, for example, [claimed](#) breach of contract and other violations.

But to Ross, Minor League Baseball owners made their own bed via their support of the sport's antitrust exemption.

"It is absolutely clear that the reason Curt Flood Act exempts major-league baseball players only — and the reason that Congress has not overturned [Flood v. Kuhn](#) — is almost entirely not because of the arguments of Major League Baseball," Ross said. "It was the arguments of Minor League Baseball that Minor League Baseball would be in danger, and Minor League Baseball basically wanted to be part of the protected cartel.

"And ironically, now they've just gotten completely screwed. So to me, I do not feel particular concern or sympathy for them. To me, this would be like Norway and Venezuela complaining about how Saudi Arabia is operating in OPEC."

Club-employee relationships

Working for a major-league team is a dream job for many, but one that can also come with tangible downsides. Pay for employees in baseball can be lower than it is for comparable roles outside the industry, as teams leverage the knowledge that so many people would rather work

inside a sport than elsewhere. But teams also place restrictions on movement between clubs, and on the communication that employees can have with clubs other than their own.

“Those types of restrictions would be subject to antitrust review, no question, if there wasn’t an exemption,” Kessler said.

In 2016, Broshuis represented a pair of scouts, Jordan Wyckoff and Darwin Cox, [in a suit that accused MLB teams](#) of conspiring not to poach each other’s scouts.

“From the most elementary perspective, you have to remember what MLB is,” Broshuis said, “It’s an unincorporated association that has the 30 clubs as its members. And those 30 clubs get together and collude on all sorts of things that would typically run afoul of antitrust laws in other industries, including with their treatment of employees.

“Normally, if say, Apple and Google got together and decided to have an agreement not to compete for engineers, for instance, we would say that runs afoul of antitrust laws because it’s two competitors who are agreeing not to compete in a labor market. And that [actually happened](#). ... In MLB, in fact, it’s codified in a lot of the contracts and the agreements between the teams when it comes to agreements not to tamper with other employees. They call it ‘anti-tampering clauses.’”

Notably, other businesses also have restrictions on what an employee under contract can or cannot do, including whether they can have conversations with competitors. But the key is whether the clause exists as an agreement the teams collectively decided to impose.

“The question is whether those contract terms are up for negotiation,” Ross said. “One of the key elements of a contract that James Franklin or Bill Self at Kansas or Nick Saban or anybody else has, that’s a key term: If another team wants to hire you, do they need to get permission. Do the permissions need to be granted? Etc. ... In my day, there was something that was just called the ‘Lou Holtz clause.’ Lou Holtz agreed to be the head coach at the University of Minnesota, and it was [in his contract](#) that if at any time during that contract he should get an offer to coach at Notre Dame, he was absolutely free to go. But otherwise he couldn’t go at all.

“That’s something that’s negotiated. So if a scout signs the contract with the club, and it is the club’s official policy that we’re not going to let you out of a contract unless we get requested and they have to call us etc., well, then that’s just the contract. And any club can insist on that if they want. The antitrust problem is, if clubs agree amongst themselves that they will not compete on that ground. So if there was an actual agreement among the clubs that they will only include in their scouts’ contracts this whole process, that would be an antitrust violation.”

The Wyckoff case was dismissed.

“We brought a challenge under antitrust laws that in most industries would have its day in court, and would have eventually been decided on the merits,” Broshuis said. “But instead, we

lost in the very early stages simply because of the threshold issue of the antitrust exemption. And so a person who would normally have a claim and would get his day in court, didn't get his day in the court because of the antitrust exemption."

What else?

If removed, the antitrust exemption could give way to other challenges in areas of merchandise licensing, [telecast blackouts](#), and the movement and expansion of franchises. Inside and outside of baseball, some such cases have already been brought. The city of San Jose sued MLB over the potential relocation of the A's, and [San Jose lost because of the antitrust exemption](#). The [San Francisco Giants](#) were blocking the move because of the territorial rights the Giants held in Northern California — rights granted as an agreement amongst the owners.

But the exemption isn't the only hurdle for issues that apply to baseball. Ross said that a lot of the anticompetitive practices he sees across sports, not only in baseball, often go unchallenged because it's so hard to bring a case generally.

"There are a number of anticompetitive practices which baseball engages in which are also practices the other leagues engage in," Ross said. "And the question is, why does that happen?"

Ross pointed to a class-action suit filed on behalf of baseball and hockey fans against the NHL and MLB because of their virtually identical exclusive territorial system and the ability for fans to watch out-of-market games.

"If you were to go somewhere else and you wanted to watch an out-of-market game, you couldn't unless you get the package from the league," Ross said. "That was challenged. The first thing court said is, the baseball exemption doesn't apply, because this is not about the business of baseball, this is about the business of broadcast. So the first thing the courts have done is somewhat circumscribe what constitutes the business of baseball for purposes of the antitrust exemption."

The court also decided the case could not proceed as a class-action suit, which meant there wouldn't be money damages to recover.

"The parties quickly reached a settlement because the plaintiffs," Ross said, "private plaintiff's class-action lawyers, didn't want to pursue a case if they couldn't get a huge damage award."

In effect, then, there aren't many firms lined up to do this kind of work. Kessler's practice, Winston and Strawn, is a leader in the space.

"Because governments seem unwilling to challenge practices and your typical plaintiffs' antitrust attorney won't bring a claim unless they can make millions of dollars," Ross said. "Winston Strawn has been really the only entity that has been willing to represent players, represent clients, where it is clear that most of their money they're going to get from the

statutory attorney fees they get if they win, and not from some big pot of gold of damages that they're necessarily going to receive. And that explains why there's all sorts of practices of other leagues that have not been challenged."

Ross, too, called it "a failure of imagination."

"I do not understand why the national conference of mayors is not challenging the major league, the whole major-league system" he said. "If you applied the antitrust correctly to Major League Baseball, not only would you have a lot more minor-league teams that were independent and had different flexible arrangements with different clubs, where they had players on loan and they had their own players and things like that, and so you'd have a lot more minor-league teams, but you'd also have the opportunity, for you know, Newark to have a Major League Baseball team."

Why hasn't the exemption disappeared? In part, because the courts have consistently pushed the issue back to Congress, and getting legislation passed in Congress these days is particularly hard.

"Presumably, it's the lobbying power of Major League Baseball and their individual teams that has protected them over the years," Kessler said. "Perhaps in the future, Congress will take a different view and finally take action to end what is really an anomaly."

To Ross, there is no policy justification for singling out baseball.

"The only way, I think, the baseball exemption will be challenged is when the right case goes before the Supreme Court," Ross said.

"There are so many little things ... and because it's been the same way for so long, a lot of these things are just taken for granted," Broshuis said. "But in a normal industry, they wouldn't be OK. And you know, I think it's time to respect the free-market principles that this country has been built upon, and subject baseball to some of these free-market principles as well."

THIS WEEK'S TRIVIA CHALLENGE ANSWERS

Since 1950, 13 managers have won multiple World Series. Name them.

1. **Casey Stengel** Yankees 1950, 51, 52, 53, 56, 58
2. **Walter Alston** Dodgers 1956, 59, 63, 65

3. **Danny Murtaugh** Pirates 1960, 71
4. **Ralph Houk** Yankees 1961, 62
5. **Dick Williams** A's 1972, 73
6. **Sparky Anderson** Reds 1975, 76, Tigers 1984
7. **Tom Kelly** Twins 1987, 91
8. **Tommy Lasorda** Dodgers 1981, 88
9. **Cito Gaston** Blue Jays 1992, 93
10. **Tony LaRussa** A's 1989, Cards 2006, 11
11. **Joe Torre** Yankees 1996, 98, 99, 00
12. **Terry Francona** Red Sox 2004, 07
13. **Bruce Bochy** Giants 2010, 12, 14

The one time winners include [Leo Durocher](#), [Fred Haney](#), [Johnny Keane](#), [Hank Bauer](#), [Red Schoendienst](#), Mayo Smith, [Gil Hodges](#), Earl Weaver, [Alvin Dark](#), Billy Martin, Bob Lemon, Chuck Tanner, Dallas Green, [Joe Altobelli](#), [Dick Howser](#), [Davey Johnson](#), [Lou Piniella](#), [Bobby Cox](#), [Jim Leyland](#), [Bob Brenly](#), [Mike Scioscia](#), [Jack McKeon](#), [Ozzie Guillén](#), [Charlie Manuel](#), [Joe Girardi](#), [John Farrell](#), [Ned Yost](#), John Maddon, [A. J. Hinch](#), Alex Cora, [Dave Martinez](#), [Dave Roberts](#), [Brian Snitker](#).

BONUS Since 1950 17 managers have lost multiple World Series. Name them.

1. [Charlie Dressen](#) Dodgers 1952, 53
2. **Al Lopez** Indians 1954, White Sox 1959
3. [Casey Stengel](#) Yankees 1955, 57, 60
4. [Walter Alston](#) Dodgers 1956, 66, 74
5. **Yogi Berra** Yankees 1964, Mets 1973

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 6. Earl Weaver | Orioles 1969, 71, 79 |
| 7. Dick Williams | Red Sox 1967, Padres 1984 |
| 8. Sparky Anderson | Reds 1970, 72 |
| 9. Tommy Lasorda | Dodgers 1977, 78 |
| 10. Whitey Herzog | Cards 1985, 87 |
| 11. Tony LaRussa | A's 1988, 90, Cards 2004 |
| 12. Bobby Cox | Braves 1991, 92, 96, 99 |
| 13. Mike Hargrove | Indians 1995, 97 |
| 14. Joe Torre | Yankees 2001, 03 |
| 15. Dusty Baker | Angels 2002, Astros 2021 |
| 16. Ron Washington | Rangers 2010, 11 |
| 17. Dave Roberts | Dodgers 2017, 18 |

You might win a free drink if you looked at the lists of answers and then asked “name the 7 managers since 1950 who won multiple World Series and also lost multiple World Series”. Casey Stengel, Walter Alston, Dick Williams, Sparky Anderson, Tommy Lasorda, Tony LaRussa, Joe Torre.

HOUSEKEEPING

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