

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

12.4.2022

Good morning baseball fans,

Please take a moment and check out sundaybaseballtidbits.com

Thanks to Todd Mogren, who was a much, much better baseball player than I was at Wesleyan, we now have a place to stash things. Over 5,000 pages of back issues. All the trivia questions (and answers) in one place. Recommended web sites and books.

At a bar and want to challenge someone on baseball trivia? Need the perfect book as a gift to a super fan? Too much time on your hands and want to scroll through back issues? That's what the new site is for. I'd appreciate your feedback.

In this week's issue: RIP **Gaylord Perry**, hardest hit home runs of 2022, Hall of Fame chatter on the day of the Veterans Committee vote, a 17 player trade, plenty of miscellaneous stuff and two trivia challenges testing your knowledge of MVPs.

So pour yourself another coffee and enjoy.

THIS WEEK'S TRIVIA CHALLENGE

QUIZ 1

The MVP Award dates back to 1911. (writers took over in 1931). 32 players have won multiple MVPs. Just 7 of those won MVPs with more than one franchise. (note--A's could be Philadelphia, Kansas City or Oakland—for this exercise that's one franchise so **Willie Mays** with the New York Giants and San Francisco Giants for example doesn't count).

Right-handed batting Hall of Fame infielder, he won two triple crowns, 7 batting titles. MVP with Cards 1925, Cubs 1929.

Hall of Fame catcher, caught 1451 games, career .322 hitter, later managed the Tigers to 2 pennants/1 World Series win. Won MVPs with A's 1928, Tigers 1934.

Primarily a first baseman, he was a 3x MVP, triple crown winner, 9x All-Star and on 2 batting titles. .325 career batting average and 534 career HRs. He won MVPs with the A's in 1932 & 1933 and with the Red Sox in 1938.

Right-handed hitting outfielder. Triple crown winner, Hall of Famer, played for 2 World Series winners, 586 career HRs, only player to win MVPs in both leagues. 21 seasons as a player, then 16 seasons as a manager. Won MVPs with Reds 1961, Orioles 1966.

7-time MVP and all-time HR record holder. Won MVPs with Pirates 1990, 1992; Giants 1993, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004.

Infielder with 696 career HRs, 10 silver sluggers, 3 MVPs. Only player to win with multiple teams and multiple positions. Won MVPs with Rangers 2003, Yankees 2005, 2007.

Lefty swinging outfielder/DH. Rookie of the year, 7x All-Star, HR Derby winner. Won MVPs with Nationals 2015, Phillies 2021.

QUIZ 2

Name each team's last MVP

Atlanta	2020	1B
Baltimore	1991	SS
Boston	2018	OF
Cubs	2016	3B
White Sox	2020	1B
Cincinnati	2010	1B
Cleveland	1953	3B
Colorado	1997	OF
Detroit	2013	1B
Houston	2017	2B

Angels	2021	SP/DH
Dodgers	2019	OF
Kansas City	1980	3B
Miami	2017	OF
Milwaukee	2018	OF
Minnesota	2009	C
Yankees	2022	OF
Oakland	2002	SS
Philadelphia	2021	OF
Pittsburgh	2013	OF
San Diego	1996	3B
Seattle	2001	OF
San Francisco	2012	C
St. Louis	2022	1B
Texas	2010	OF
Toronto	2015	3B
Washington	2015	OF

Mets, Diamondbacks and Rays have never had a league MVP.

(Answers at the bottom)

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

Johnny Damon had more hits than **Ted Williams** (2769 vs. 2654) and more stolen bases than **Willie Mays** (408 vs. 338). According to the New York Times, only four players in baseball history have more career hits, runs, home runs, and stolen bases than Damon: **Barry Bonds, Rickey Henderson, Paul Molitor, and Craig Biggio.**

The Dodgers routinely draft and sign international free agents who are Boras clients, but they have not added one of his veteran free agents on a multi-year contract since Dec. 2012. The recipient, in the first year of the Guggenheim ownership, was lefty **Hyun-Jin Ryu** on a six-year, \$36 million deal.

So, while Boras clients such as Bellinger, **Corey Seager** and **Julio Urías** have excelled for the Dodgers in recent seasons, Andrew Friedman has mostly stayed away from Boras players on the open market since becoming the team's president of baseball operations in Oct. 2014. Mostly, but not completely. The Dodgers bid heavily for **Gerrit Cole** in 2019, only to lose out to the Yankees. The team also extended a one-year qualifying offer to Ryu in 2018, which the pitcher accepted.

Will another exception emerge from the current crop of free agents? **Carlos Correa**, **Carlos Rodón** and **Brandon Nimmo** are among the Boras clients whom the Dodgers could pursue.

Speaking of free agency, I bet it came up in conversations with the Yankees, the Giants and whomever is dancing with **Aaron Judge**--Judge led the Majors in runs (133), home runs (62), RBIs (131), on-base percentage (.425), slugging percentage (.686), OPS (1.111), OPS+ (211) and total bases (391) this past season.

Judge has 220 career home runs, which is the fourth most as a member of the Yankees among players drafted and signed by the organization. (*Note: the MLB Draft was first held in 1965.*) Career leader is **Jorge Posada** who hit 275 home runs over his 17-year big league career, all with the Yankees, from 1995-2011. Posada signed after being selected in the 24th round of the 1990 MLB Draft out of Calhoun Community College in Decatur, Ala. **Derek Jeter** had 260 HRs. **Don Mattingly** 222.

I was surprised that **Jackie Jensen** had more HRs for the Red Sox (170 from 1954 to 1961) than **Carlton Fisk** (162), **Xander Bogarts** (156), **George Scott** (154) and **Mookie Betts** (139).

Justin Verlander will be 40 on Opening Day in 2023. Most wins from age 40 and beyond--**Phil Niekro** with 121 wins from ages 40 to 48.

Don Newcombe won the first Cy Young Award in 1956 (initially there was one award for the majors top pitcher—in 1967 it was expanded to award the top pitcher in AL and the NL. **Sal Maglie** was runner-up to Newcombe, 10 votes to 4.

This quiz is too long for our weekly trivia but it is a great challenge. Last 5 MVPs in each league by position. Here is the link for the clues. You will be seriously challenged but it is surprisingly doable. Good luck and let me know how you do.

https://www.sporcle.com/games/Propellerhead/mlb_mvps_last_five_by_position

The Guardians' payroll last year, about \$90 million for the 40-man roster, was lower than it was in any year from 2012-2019. Their player development program, and a front office with a knack for savvy trades, is allowing the Guardians to pay less for players than all but a few teams while still being competitive and, most of the time, successful. They have made the playoffs in five of the last seven seasons, and have finished under .500 just once in the last 11 -- then only by a single game. This is an incredible baseball group working under the ownership of Henry Potter's cheaper big brother.

José Abreu hit 243 homers with the White Sox, the third-most in franchise history. Ahead of him on that list--**Frank Thomas** (448) and **Paul Konerko** (432). Back-to-back MVP winner, Hall of Famer Thomas wasn't hard.

But I whiffed on Konerko. Not only 432 HRs in an 18-year career. 2340 hits, 1412 RBIs. The 6 time All-Star batted .279 and .313 in 19 post-season games.

A tip of the cap if you knew **Matt Quatraro** and **Pedro Grifol** were the managers of the Royals and the White Sox.

Hall of fame classes 1972 **Lefty Gomez**, **Sandy Koufax**; 1973 **Warren Spahn**; 1974 **Whitey Ford**.

Four pretty fine southpaws:

	<u>Record</u>	<u>CG</u>	<u>Shutouts</u>	<u>Strikeouts</u>	<u>World Series</u>
Gomez	189-102	173	28	1468	6-0
Koufax	165-87	137	40	2396	4-3
Spahn	363-245	382	63	2583	4-3

Ford	236-106	156	45	1956	10-8
	953-540	698	176	8403	24-14

My how times have changed:

20 game winners in 1971

Mickey Lolich	25
Vida Blue	24
Fergie Jenkins	24
Wilbur Wood	22
Catfish Hunter	21
Dave McNally	21
Tom Seaver	20
Jim Palmer	20
Steve Carlton	20
Pat Dobson	20
Joe Coleman	20
Al Downing	20
Andy Messersmith	20
Mike Cuellar	20

2022

Kyle Wright, Braves	21
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2021

Julio Urias, Dodgers	20
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2019

Justin Verlander, Astros	21
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Fourteen 20 game winners in 1971. You have to go back to 2016 (**Rick Porcello, J.A. Happ and Max Scherzer**) to have more than two 20 game winners in all of MLB.

47 times a player has had 150 or more RBIs in a season. **Hack Wilson** has the record—190 in 1930. Nine players drove in 150 more than once, paced by **Lou Gehrig's** 7x.

Lou Gehrig	7
Babe Ruth	6
Jimmie Foxx	4
Hank Greenberg	3
Mel Ott	3
Al Simmons	3
Joe DiMaggio	2
Sam Thompson	2
Sammy Sosa	2

The last player to reach multiple 150 RBI seasons was Sammy Sosa in 2001. Prior to that go back to 1948 and Joe DiMaggio. Sam Thompson was the first to reach 150 RBIs in 1887. A Rod the latest in 2007.

Lou Gehrig never collected more than four hits in one game in his career.

Brothers **Henry and Tommy Aaron** pulled a double steal with Hank scoring for the Braves in a triumph over the Mets September 24, 1968.

Stan Musial, 42, celebrated the birth of his first grandchild on September 10, 1963, by hitting a 2-run homer in an 8-0 win over the Cubs.

Over the last seven seasons, **Trea Turner** leads the majors with 228 stolen bases. Few players can match Turner's combination of average, power and speed, especially at his position. He's one of two active shortstops with at least 100 career home runs and 200 stolen bases. The other, Phillies infielder **Jean Segura**, has played nearly 500 more games than Turner and hasn't played shortstop consistently since 2020.

Turner: 124 HR, 230 SB, 849 G
Segura: 107 HR, 205 SB, 1,328 G

How many bases Turner will steal next year with the new bigger bags and rule limiting the number of pickoff attempts a pitcher can make per plate appearance? He stole a career-high 46 in 2017 and 43 in '18.

Fastballs--pitchers throw them *less*—from 57% in 2015 to 49% in '22, the first time in recorded history that the fastball was not the majority foundation of pitching. Breaking pitches in that same period grew from 25% to 31%, while their spin jumped by 263 rpm, a 12% increase.

Pope Francis met with, among others, Hal Steinbrenner on Thursday at the Vatican. The Yankees are seemingly leaving no stone unturned to keep **Aaron Judge**.

Disney recently paid Major League Baseball \$900 million to purchase the final 15 percent of BAMTech, a streaming services company that had its origins with the formation of MLB.com in 2000. The 30 ownership groups agreed to pay \$1 million a year over four years to fund the new company. In the end, it sold for \$3.8 billion. For essentially the cost of a middling player, teams received a nine-figure profit. The next windfall will be expansion once the Athletics and Rays settle their ballpark issues

Think there may be an offense problem?

The AL league-wide .663 OPS at catcher last season was the lowest since 1989 (.635).

Center fielders across all of MLB last season hit .237 with a .303 on-base percentage and .688 OPS, the worst marks in each category at the position in at least 50 seasons (since 1973, when complete records by position are available).

For centerfielders it goes on and on...

- The five worst batting averages for center fielders in the past 50 seasons have all occurred in the past five seasons.
- The National League All-Star team last season did not include a center fielder among its eight outfielders.
- The two World Series teams, the Astros and Phillies, ranked 23rd and 27th, respectively, in center field OPS.
- The Guardians became only the fifth team in the past 50 seasons with no home runs from center fielders.
- Oakland center fielders hit .184, the worst at the position in any full season since 1973.
- The Guardians, A's and Rays all posted 50-year franchise lows for center field OPS.
- Four teams did not reach a .600 OPS in center field (Guardians, A's, Rays, Astros). No other full season since 1973 had more than two such teams.
- Only four qualified center fielders (with at least 100 games in center) posted an above-average OPS+: **Brandon Nimmo, Bryan Reynolds, Cedric Mullins and Julio Rodríguez**. In 2015, there were 12.
- From 1931 to 2019, there was never a full season with as few as four qualified center fielders (with at least 100 games in center) with above-average offense. It has happened in each of the past three full seasons (only three in '19, four in '21, four in '22).
- Injuries have limited **Mike Trout, Byron Buxton, George Springer and Luis Robert**.
- Elite everyday center fielders are a rarity. Over the past four seasons, the players with the most starts in center field are **Victor Robles** (390), Mullins (341) and **Myles Straw** (321). The number of players who started a game in center field jumped 28% in a decade, from 132 in 2012 to 169 in '22.

HALL OF FAME CHATTER

We have talked in this space about who should be in the Hall of Fame. Why exclude PED users but keep amphetamine users and drunks? Is the character portion of the qualifications even appropriate? Would life be less contentious if we just swept in Rose, Bonds, Clemens and a bunch more whose stats merit inclusion—put an asterisk on their plaque and move forward?

Peter Abraham of the Boston Globe had some thoughts:

When the Hall of Fame's Contemporary Baseball Player Era committee meets Sunday in San Diego, it will be settling all family business much like Michael Corleone in "The Godfather."

The Hall has dealt with **Barry Bonds**, **Roger Clemens**, and **Curt Schilling** for what is now 11 years and countless debates about their worthiness. Once the vote is conducted Sunday, that will decide the matter.

True, any candidate passed over Sunday will be eligible for the Class of 2026, but at that point they would have been rejected 10 times by the BBWAA and at least once by one of the era committees. The Hall at that point could move on to other players without much blowback.

Sunday essentially serves as a referendum for how the Hall will treat suspected PED users. Along with Bonds and Clemens, **Rafael Palmeiro** also is on the ballot. He tested positive in 2005.

Bonds and Clemens never tested positive but are widely assumed to have turned to drugs to extend their careers. Bonds had a 1.045 OPS over 126 games in his age-42 season and Clemens was an above-average starter at 44.

Schilling is a more nuanced case. Statistically he is not an automatic choice. Three of the pitchers he best compares with — **Kevin Brown**, **Bob Welch**, and **Tim Hudson** — are not Hall of Famers.

I've always voted for Schilling based on his 2.23 ERA in 19 postseason starts, his 3,116 strikeouts during a period of inflated offensive statistics, and a 4.38 strikeout-to-walk ratio that is 10th all time.

His assorted vile comments don't have anything to do with baseball. The Hall of Fame isn't a church; it's a museum.

"I know some people have personal issues with him. For me, he was a complete package as a teammate," **David Ortiz** said. "I don't think we win [in 2004] without him. He pitched in some huge games for us."

That Schilling was an anti-PED zealot as a player also might help him Sunday.

Albert Belle, **Don Mattingly**, **Fred McGriff**, and **Dale Murphy** are the other players who will be considered. To be inducted, a candidate needs at least 12 votes from the 16-person panel.

Hall of Fame cognoscenti view McGriff as being positioned best for induction. I see Mattingly as a greater omission than McGriff, even if the former Yankees first baseman never received more than 28.2 of the BBWAA votes in his 15 years on the ballot.

The question Sunday is whether another candidate will emerge with McGriff. It could well be Schilling.

Joe Posnanski this week made some great points in his (highly recommended) newsletter:

The JoeBlogs Hall of Fame: I want it to incorporate two things:

- 1. Statistical excellence.*
- 2. Pure awesomeness.*

*Both are so important. You will sometimes hear people say, "You don't just want the Hall of Fame to be the Hall of WAR." And what I think they mean by that is that you don't just want the Hall of Fame to be, say, only the 191 players who have accumulated 60 WAR in their careers and use no other consideration. What a dry Hall of Fame that would be! No more **Yogi Berra**? No more **Willie Stargell**? No **Whitey Ford** or **Mariano Rivera** or **Sandy Koufax** or **Oscar Charleston**?*

Who wants that Hall of Fame?

No. Plus, I would say there are numerous players with 60-plus WAR who you do not want in the Hall of Fame. I won't mention them here because I'm sure the answer would be different for each of you, but I feel sure you can look at the list and easily find some 60-plus WAR players that you would not have in your personal Hall of Fame.

*This is why the second category is important to me in building my Hall of Fame: Pure Awesomeness. Take **Ichiro Suzuki**. He might have 60 WAR, putting him right on some people's borderline (obviously this doesn't count his time in Japan). But if 100 Pure Awesomeness Points is typical for a Hall of Famer, Ichiro is probably at 235 or so Pure Awesomeness Points. So you add those two together and, voila, Ichiro is not only a Hall of Famer, but an inner circle one.*

*I think most of us **Don Mattingly** and **Dale Murphy** fans can admit that neither has the statistical gravitas of a Hall of Famer. Some will fight back with trick stats or by comparing them to low-level Hall of Famers ... I've played that game some. But let's be realistic here. They were both on the BBWAA ballot for a full 15 years, and neither got even 30% of the vote. They each have been on two veterans ballots and neither got enough votes to even register.*

Mattingly had to retire at 34 with a bad back, and he finished with 42.4 WAR and a career record awfully similar to the very good but not-really-a-Hall-of-Fame-candidate Cecil Cooper.

Murphy played every single day in his prime and he wore down and had his last good season at age 31. He finished with 46.5 WAR and couldn't quite get to 400 home runs despite a last-ditch effort with the Colorado Rockies.

They were both MVPs (Murphy was a two-time MVP). They both put up big years. They both won multiple Gold Gloves.

And yet, some of us just think ... they're Hall of Famers. We want it so badly.

You know why? It's because both of them have a LOT of Pure Awesomeness Points.

On Monday, the Hall of Fame announced the 16 voters for the Contemporary Baseball Era committee, which will meet in San Diego on Sunday at the winter meetings.

Sandberg is one of seven Hall of Famers on the committee, with **Chipper Jones, Greg Maddux, Jack Morris, Frank Thomas, Lee Smith and Alan Trammell**. There are also six executives (Paul Beeston, Theo Epstein, Arte Moreno, Kim Ng, Dave St. Peter and Ken Williams) and three members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America (Steve Hirdt, La Velle Neal and Susan Slusser).

Besides **Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens and Rafael Palmeiro**, the candidate list — chosen from those who made their greatest impact from 1980 onward — includes **Albert Belle, Don Mattingly, Fred McGriff, Dale Murphy and Curt Schilling**. Voters are limited to no more than three selections apiece, and candidates must receive 12 votes (75 percent) to be elected.

Chipper Jones-- "I couldn't imagine looking in my parents' eyes if they knew I had taken a shortcut or cheated. And ultimately, at the end of the day, that's what swayed me. And I knew that some of my contemporaries were doing it, but in the end it gave me a lot of satisfaction walking away knowing I did it the right way the whole time." I'm guessing Clemens, Bonds and Palmeiro won't be getting his vote.

Between 1966 and 2010, 18 players with 3,000 hits became eligible for the Hall of Fame. All of them except one was voted in first-ballot. The other one, as you no doubt know, was **Pete Rose**.

Between 1966 and 2010, 12 players came on the ballot with 500 homers. Eleven made the Hall of Fame, with the exception being **Mark McGwire**. It is true, though, that **Harmon Killebrew** had to wait until his fourth ballot, **Eddie Mathews** had to wait until his fifth.

But the point was still the point: If you got 3,000 hits, if you hit 500 homers, you were a Hall of Famer.

And now — well, Palmeiro has both, and he's not even close to the Hall of Fame. Barry Bonds, **Sammy Sosa and Alex Rodriguez** have SIX HUNDRED home runs, and they're not close to the Hall of Fame. A-Rod also, as mentioned, has 3,000 hits. **Manny Ramirez** has 500 homers. **Gary Sheffield** has 500 homers.

Palmeiro wore ear plugs in the last game he ever played. He had more hits than Wade Boggs and more home runs than Reggie Jackson.

one of only seven players to finish a career with 3,000 hits and 500 home runs. The other six are either in the Hall of Fame (**Willie Mays, Henry Aaron, Eddie Murray**), will be in the Hall of Fame soon (**Albert Pujols and Miggy Cabrera**) or are named Alex Rodriguez. Appeared on four BBWAA ballots, topping out at 12.6%.

After age 29, Palmeiro hit 437 home runs — fourth all-time behind only Barry Bonds, **Babe Ruth and Henry Aaron**.

But after age 29, he also never led the league in any individual category.

He was an **Eddie Murray** type, a **Fred McGriff** type, a **Carlos Delgado** type—consistent for a long time without dominating.

Albert Belle

Led league in RBIs three times and slugging twice ... Only player in MLB history to hit 50 homers and 50 doubles in same season ... Cleveland played only 144 games in 1995 because of the strike. That's 18 missed games for Belle and he STILL had a 50-50 season. the voters gave the MVP award to the considerably more likable **Mo Vaughn**.

Hit 381 career home runs ... His 144 Adjusted OPS+ ranks 59th all-time. In 1995 and 1996, he finished second and third in the MVP balloting. He was a truly great hitter for seven seasons — hitting .308/.391/.602 between 1993 and 1999 — but he was an indifferent fielder, an often

difficult teammate, and he was not exactly the ideal baseball hero. I'm surprised they keep putting him on veteran's ballots over superior players like **Dwight Evans and Lou Whitaker**.

Roger Clemens

Won 354 games and struck out 4,672 batters. He was the 1985 American League MVP and he won seven Cy Young Awards over his 24-year career. Appeared on 10 BBWAA ballots, topping out at 65.2% in his final year. This is his first time on a veterans ballot.

Barry Bonds

All-time home run leader both for his career (762) and for a single season (73). Seven-time MVP, including four years in a row from 2001 to 2004. Eight-time Gold Glove winner. Only player to hit 400 home runs and steal 400 bases ... but he actually hit 762 home runs and stole 514 bases. HOF discussion usually starts around 60 career WAR. Bonds was 162. Appeared on 10 BBWAA ballots, topping out at 66% in his final year.

Don Mattingly

Won the MVP award in 1985 and finished second in 1986. Led the league in doubles three straight years, from 1984 to '86. Twice led the league in total bases over that stretch. Nine-time Gold Glove winner. 42 WAR. Topped out at 28% of the ballots.

Dale Murphy

Won back-to-back MVPs in 1982 and 1983. Five-time Gold Glove winner. Twice led the league in home runs, RBIs and slugging, and once led in runs. 46.5 WAR, topped out at 23%.

Curt Schilling

Retired with the modern record for strikeout-to-walk ratio. One of the great big-game pitchers in baseball history — went 11-2 in the postseason with a 2.23 ERA. Topped out at 71%. 3,116 career strikeouts against only 711 walks. However, his ERA is higher than **Kevin Brown's**, his win total lower than **Jerry Reuss's**, and his strikeouts per season fewer than **Mickey Lolich's**. None of them are in the Hall.

Fred McGriff

Hit 493 career home runs — twice led the league in homers. He's top 50 all-time in RBIs (1,550), extra base hits (958) and just outside the top 50 in runs created and total bases. Topped out at 39% on regular ballot.

The HOF rules went through a big change. A player could stay on the ballot for 15 years, assuming he got at least 5% of the vote every year. The Hall of Fame changed it to 10.

In modern voting, only six players were voted in after their 10th year. They were:

- 2011, **Bert Blyleven**, 14th ballot
- 2009, **Jim Rice**, 15th ballot
- 2006, **Bruce Sutter**, 13th ballot
- 1980, **Duke Snider**, 11th ballot
- 1976, **Bob Lemon**, 12th ballot
- 1975, **Ralph Kiner**, 13th ballot

Would **Barry Bonds** make it if he had 15 years? He started at 36.8% in 2015, last year got 66%.

Bill James came up with a system that combined stats and awards to predict the likelihood (not who deserves to be in) of someone being voted in. He goes beyond the obvious 'not in yet but it will happen' players like **Albert Pujols, Justin Verlander, Max Scherzer, Adrian Beltre, Mike Trout, Clayton Kershaw, Miguel Cabrera**.

Since the algorithm only looks at stats and awards, a bunch of players whose on field accomplishments meet the criteria but likely won't be elected: **Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens, Pete Rose, Curt Schilling, Shoeless Joe Jackson, Eddie Cicotte, Rafael Palmeiro, Manny Ramirez, A-Rod, Sammy Sosa, Mark McGwire and Gary Sheffield**.

Here are 43 names that fall into that system's "maybe but unlikely" range. Any you'd vote for?
Does it come down to the HOF should be the elite of the elite, or players who had very good careers?

Albert Belle

Carlos Beltrán

Vida Blue

Bob Boone

Dave Concepcion

Carlos Delgado

David Cone

John Franco

Andres Galarraga

Nomar Garciaparra

Steve Garvey

Jason Giambi

Juan Gonzalez

Luis Gonzalez

Dick Groat

Ron Guidry

Todd Helton

Tommy John

Andruw Jones

Jason Kendall

Jeff Kent

Harvey Kuenn

Carl Mays

Fred McGriff

Al Oliver

Magglio Ordóñez

Lance Parrish

Dave Parker

Andy Pettitte

Jeff Reardon

Edgar Renteria

Allie Reynolds

Francisco Rodriguez

Jimmy Rollins

CC Sabathia

Alfonso Soriano

Mark Teixeira

Omar Vizquel

Billy Wagner

Bucky Walters

Bernie Williams

Maury Wills

Michael Young

Some more interesting Hall of Fame history from Joe Posnanski

The veterans committees have been around pretty much since the start. The first Hall of Fame vote — the famous first class of **Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, Honus Wagner, Christy Mathewson and Walter Johnson** — happened in 1936. Then in early 1937, the writers voted again, this time electing **Nap Lajoie, Tris Speaker and Cy Young**.

And that's when the first veterans committee met. It was just six people — formed by commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis — and the committee voted in a couple of executives (Ban Johnson and Morgan Bulkeley), a couple of managers (**Connie Mack and John McGraw**) and a 19th century player (**George Wright**). With that one vote, lines had been drawn. Veterans committees would now exclusively handle: (1) Executives; (2) Managers; (3) 19th Century Players; (4) Pioneers.

Naturally, over time, the veterans committees also took over the responsibility of voting in: (5) Umpires; (6) Owners; (7) Commissioners; (8) Negro Leagues players.

The one thing that veterans committees left to the BBWAA was: 20th Century Players.

But that too began to change in 1945. That year, the writers held a now-infamous vote in which they failed to elect a single player, even though the ballot contained FIFTY-EIGHT future Hall of Famers. **Lefty Grove** got 11.3% of the vote that year. **Charlie Gehringer** got four percent.

Frankie Frisch, who would come to define the Hall of Fame as much as anyone in the last 75 years, got less than 2% of the vote.

The problem, in retrospect, was that there simply wasn't a process in place for the BBWAA to elect players. All they had was the 75% threshold (which the early veterans committees did not have, by the way) and a blinding backlog of Hall of Fame candidates. Failure was inevitable.

But the Hall of Fame and baseball executives were furious. And so they pounced. In 1945, the veterans committee voted in NINE 19th century players. By gosh, somebody was going to populate this Hall of Fame.

Then in 1946, when the writers AGAIN failed to vote in a single player, the veterans committee decided enough was enough and voted in TEN players, but now they intruded on BBWAA territory. This time they voted in Tinkers, Evers and Chance (**Frank Chance and Johnny Evers** had been the top two vote-getters in the BBWAA's disastrous 1946 ballot). They voted in **Eddie Plank**. They voted in **Ed Walsh**. They voted in **Rube Waddell**. These were all 20th century players, who were supposed to be within the purview of the BBWAA.

Not anymore. The veterans committees, in addition to their role of voting in managers, executives, umpires, pioneers and 19th century players, took over the Deadball Era. In 1947, they voted in Three Finger Brown. (In 1953, they voted in **Bobby Wallace and Chief Bender**. In 1955, they voted in **Ray Schalk and Home Run Baker**.)

But here's the interesting part to me. At this point, the veterans committees were expanding their reach, but they were still, more or less, acting as "Old Timers Committees," meaning that they were going back a long way to find players they decided had, for one reason or another, been overlooked. And it stayed that way for a long while after. Yes, in the 1970s, veterans committees mostly led by Frankie Frisch elected a whole bunch of questionable (at best) candidates, but they were all players from nearly a half-century earlier.

I'd say this started to change in the 1980s. In 1981, the veterans committee voted in **Johnny Mize**, who had topped out at 41.3% in the BBWAA voting back in 1973. It was, I believe, a CORRECT overturn, Mize absolutely belongs in the Hall of Fame, and I have no idea how the BBWAA blew that call.

But it was the beginning of something new.

“I like that I was voted in by veterans committee,” Mize said. “That means I was selected by baseball people, not baseball writers. Who do you think knows more about the game?”

I believe this is exactly when the veterans committees started seeing their job as more than finding overlooked players from days of yore. No, they needed to be watchdogs for the BBWAA. They needed to fix mistakes and fix them immediately.

For example, in 1978, the BBWAA voters — for the 14th time — failed to vote in **Pee Wee Reese**. In 1984, the veterans committee voted him in.

And here’s the funniest part of all to me — when they voted in Reese, even though the BBWAA had never come close, the sportswriters mostly CELEBRATED the veterans committee overruling them. “The captain is finally in!” the great *New York Times* columnist Dave Anderson wrote. “Better last than never.”

This, too, would become a trend: Sportswriters being thrilled that players they denied were finally being elected.

In 1985, the veterans committee voted in **Enos Slaughter**, who had been repeatedly denied by the BBWAA, much to Slaughter’s fury. “Of course it came a long time too late, I thought,” he said to kick off his Hall of fame speech. “But that’s life for you.”

Red Schoendienst was next — six years after he fell off the ballot, having never received more than 42.6% of the vote, he was a Hall of Famer, thanks to the veterans committee. He said he was so sick of the process by then that he had stopped caring.

In 1994, after years and years of debate, the veterans committee voted in **Phil Rizzuto**.

“At long last, baseball’s veterans committee amended a glaring omission Friday by electing Phil Rizzuto to the Hall of Fame,” longtime BBWAA member Bill Madden wrote for the *New York Daily News*.

Again, the BBWAA had never even come close to voting in Rizzuto.

Probably the most famous and direct rebuke of the BBWAA, at least up to that point, came in 1996 when the veterans committee voted in **Jim Bunning**. The BBWAA had, for 15 years, tossed and turned over Bunning. They just about voted him in back in 1988 (Bunning fell four votes short), but then apparently reconsidered, and his vote total tumbled.

And, beyond that, the BBWAA failed to elect a single player in 1996.

The veterans committee voted in four people, including, obviously, Jim Bunning.

The veterans committees were shut down not long after that because they started letting TOO MANY people in — specifically they voted in **Bill Mazeroski**, who was not viewed as Hall of Fame-caliber by several full-blooded Hall of Famers. After a few sunset years, the committees have been revived and have been actively correcting writer “oversights” for the last few years. Since 2018, they have voted in **Alan Trammell, Jack Morris, Lee Smith, Harold Baines and Ted Simmons**. Among those five, only Morris came anywhere close to BBWAA election.

FABULOUS FEATS – A NEW WEEKLY FEATURE FROM BASEBALL ALMANAC

SIX HITS IN A GAME

MLB Players With 6 Hits in a Game | [Baseball Almanac](#)

Any hitter would be happy with a game where they went three for four, or even three for five, but no player regularly comes into a game expecting to collect three or four hits. Just think of the pride one has when he ends up with six hits in one nine-inning game.

As if the hits were not sensational enough, some players like to add another feat to their already fabulous day:

John Reilly (1883), **Dave Orr** (1885), **Henry Larkin** (1885), **Larry Twitchell** (1889), **Farmer Weaver** (1890), **Sam Thompson** (1894), **Bobby Veach** (1920), **Rondell White** (1995), **Ian Kinsler** (2009), and **Christian Yelich** (2018) each hit for the cycle while they collected six hits!

Shawn Green, on May 23, 2002, had four of his six hits leave the park, the only six-for-six hitter in baseball history who also joined the four home runs in a game club!

Wilbert Robinson and Rennie Stennett didn't settle for six hits, they went **seven-for-seven** — in a regulation (9-inning) game.

Cal McVey liked getting six hits in a game so much, he did it again, just three days later, the shortest time between any player with two 6-hit games.

Father time did not bother **Cal Ripken, Jr.**, who was 38 years / 293 days old when he had a six hit game, the oldest in major league history (and the American League record). His National League counterpart, **Roger Connor**, a mere 37 years / 335 days old when collected three singles, two doubles and a triple!

Jimmie Foxx was the youngest (22 years / 220 days) American League with six-hits in a game, but needed thirteen innings to join the club. **Mike Donlin**, 23 years / 25 days, holds the record for youngest junior circuit player with a six-hitters in nine-frames. The youngest in major league history belongs to **Duff Cooley**, a mere 20 years / 67 days old when he collected four singles, a double and a triple with the Senior Circuit Browns.

All of the players listed below defied the odds, bolstered their averages, and generally ruined a pitcher's day by going the distance, and hitting safely six times in a game, nothing short of amazing. Research by [Baseball Almanac](#).

Editor's note—you can see the full lists at [Baseball Almanac](#).

40 AL hitters have had a 6 hit game including **Ty Cobb, Kirby Puckett, Johnny Damon and Raul Ibanez**.

63 NL hitters did it including **Wee Willie Keeler, Sammy Sosa, Andres Galarraga, Jesus Alou and Wally Backman**.

Another 21 got 6 or more hits in extra-inning games including **Jimmy Foxx** who did it twice, **Nomar Garciaparra, Alfonso Soriano and Rafael Devers**.

GAYLORD PERRY DEAD AT 84

The latest in the "all my baseball cards are dying" series. I drove from college in Connecticut to Fenway one day to watch Perry pitch against **Luis Tiant** of the Red Sox.

Zack Meisel, NYT

Gaylord Perry, the Hall of Fame pitcher with a durable right arm and a penchant for lathering the baseball with saliva, grease and other peculiar substances, died Thursday at his home in Gaffney, S.C., according to the Associated Press. He was 84.

Perry, inducted into Cooperstown in 1991, won 314 games over a 22-year career in which he pitched for eight major-league teams, including a decade with the San Francisco Giants. He was the first pitcher to capture a Cy Young Award in both the American League and the National League.

The Williamston, N.C., native signed with the Giants in 1958 and debuted in the big leagues four years later. He received his first of five All-Star team selections in 1966. That year, he posted a 21-8 record and a 2.99 ERA across 255 2/3 innings. Over the ensuing decade, Perry averaged 309 innings per season and logged a 2.75 ERA.

Perry debuted in 1962 and threw 303 complete games in his career, the most in the Expansion Era (since 1961). (Second is fellow Hall of Famer **Ferguson Jenkins** (267 CG).

The Giants traded Perry to Cleveland for strikeout artist **Sam McDowell** in November 1971. In his first season with his new team, Perry went 24-16 with a 1.92 ERA in 342 2/3 innings, which earned him his first nod as the league's top hurler. He claimed his second Cy Young Award in 1978, shortly after he turned 40. He told the Associated Press that reporters had suggested he was "too old to do this and that, but I think I showed them. I'm going to dedicate it to people 40 or over."

Perry developed a reputation as the sport's most notorious spitballer, though he admitted he experimented with other methods of doctoring the ball, too. He would sometimes apply grease, Vaseline or fishing line oil, all in an effort to make the ball travel in unpredictable ways as it fluttered toward home plate and, perhaps most importantly, to mess with hitters' mental approaches.

In 1974, Perry released a 222-page work titled, "Me and the Spitter: An autobiographical confession," in which he detailed his knack for lubricating baseballs before he commenced his windup, even though spitballs had been banned since 1920. He wrote he "tried everything on the old apple except salt and pepper and chocolate sauce topping." Some wondered if the book was manufactured to make opponents think twice when facing him, with the threat of a pitch with a mysterious trajectory seeming even more daunting than his potent fastball and curveball.

Perry wrote he would rub his hands with grease and then shake the hands of his opponents the day before a start. He would constantly touch his face, cap, belt and glove — constantly fidgeting, with the intent of throwing hitters off their game. Umpires, of course, would conduct thorough searches to find illegal substances on Perry's uniform or equipment, but he wasn't ejected from a game until Aug. 23, 1982, in the twilight of his career.

Nearly two decades earlier, the Giants traded for **Bob Shaw** during spring training. Perry marveled at the manner in which Shaw's pitches careened toward home plate. He said Shaw

immediately became his idol and he quipped that he knew how Thomas Edison felt when he invented the lightbulb.

Perry worked with Shaw that spring on how to properly apply the agent, how to grip and release the ball and, of utmost significance, how to conceal his mischief from the umpires, opponents and, as he described, from “spying executives up in the box seats.” He first tested out the new tactic during a double header at Shea Stadium in New York on May 31, 1964, the day, he wrote, he “became an outlaw in the strictest sense of the word — a man who lives outside the law, in this case the law of baseball.”

There’s no denying Perry’s success. He topped the 20-win mark on four occasions and led the league in victories three times. His 314 career wins rank 17th in major-league history. Perry’s 5,350 innings rank sixth all-time, behind only **Cy Young, Pud Galvin, Walter Johnson, Phil Niekro and Nolan Ryan**. His 3,534 strikeouts rank eighth in history, and his 303 complete games are the most by any pitcher whose big-league career began after 1950.

Perry threw a no-hitter at Candlestick Park in 1968, as he out-dueled fellow Hall of Famer **Bob Gibson**, who garnered NL Cy Young and MVP honors that year, in a 1-0 Giants victory over the World Series-bound St. Louis Cardinals.

After he seized his second Cy Young Award with the Padres in 1978, Perry bounced around the league, joining the Yankees and then the Braves, the Mariners and the Royals. He notched his 300th career win with Seattle on May 6, 1982, about four months before his 44th birthday, in a complete-game effort against the Yankees at the Kingdome. He was the 15th pitcher in major-league history to reach the 300-win mark.

He and his older brother, **Jim**, pitched together in Cleveland’s rotation in 1974 and for a month in 1975. That second season, Cleveland traded Jim in May and dealt Gaylord to the Rangers three weeks later. The Perry brothers’ 529 wins rank second among brother tandems, 10 wins behind **Joe and Phil Niekro**. During that 1974 campaign, the Perry brothers accounted for 38 of the team’s 77 wins and combined to rack up 574 1/3 innings, about 40 percent of the club’s total.

Perry retired to his North Carolina peanut farm after the 1983 season and later coached at Limestone College in Gaffney, S.C. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1991 alongside **Bill Veeck, Tony Lazzeri, Rod Carew and Fergie Jenkins**.

Manager **Alvin Dark** said “There’ll be a man on the moon before he hits a home run” and he was right.

On July 20, 1969, most Americans were consumed by the event of a lifetime: the Apollo 11 lunar landing. The Giants were no different.

San Francisco groundskeeper Matty Schwab found space in his work area underneath the right-field grandstand at Candlestick Park to plug in a black-and-white television set. Schwab's hidden headquarters was close to the double doors adjacent to the Giants' bullpen. So, thanks to Schwab, Giants relievers could sneak peeks at history during the early innings of San Francisco's game against the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Right-hander **Bob Bolin** was among the Giants with divided attention. As he recently recalled, he was watching televised images of the lunar module when he heard the Candlestick audience of 32,560 erupt with a sudden ovation. "I was thinking the crowd was clapping because of the moon landing. I opened the door, and Gaylord [Perry] had hit a home run," said Bolin, punctuating his reminiscence with laughter.

This requires some explanation amid the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11's exploits.

Giants right-hander Gaylord Perry, a future Hall of Famer (inducted in 1991) who passed away on Thursday, homered off Dodgers left-hander **Claude Osteen** in the third inning of San Francisco's 7-3 victory the same day the Apollo 11 mission achieved glory. That the two happened nearly simultaneously drew Bolin back to something he had heard years prior.

During his tenure as Giants manager from 1961-64, Alvin Dark declared that a man would land on the moon before Perry, with his flawed swing, could hit a home run.

Here's what Bolin, 80, had to say:

"We were just sitting around the (batting) cage. It was pitchers' batting practice, and Gaylord was trying to hit one out. Somebody was talking about Gaylord hitting home runs, and Alvin just said, 'There'll be a man on the moon before he hits a home run.'"

Bolin recalled Perry's offensive shortcomings: "He just didn't have the snap of the bat to where (a batted ball) would jump out of the ballpark."

The initial exception occurred after Perry's first 547 plate appearances.

Though Neil Armstrong didn't set foot on the lunar surface until 7:56 p.m. PT, he and fellow astronaut Buzz Aldrin touched down in their module at 1:17 p.m. Because the game began at 1 p.m., the landing preceded Perry's third-inning at-bat.

Perry declined to comment for this story, but he told MLB.com in 2009 that "over the loudspeaker, they were telling everybody to stand and give a moment of silent thanks for the astronauts who landed on the moon. And I'd say 30 minutes later, Claude Osteen grooved me a fastball, and I hit it out of the park."

Perry batted .131 during his 22-year career.

Perry's homer was no fluke. He hit one in each of the following three seasons and finished his career with six.

Of course, Perry was the second-best hitter in his family. His brother, Jim, who won 215 games for the Twins, the Indians, the Tigers and the Athletics over his 17-year career, batted .199 before the DH benched him starting in 1973.

Several years before the moon landing, the Giants shared another memorable day with NASA: Oct. 3, 1962. While the Giants outlasted the Dodgers, 6-4, in the finale of a three-game playoff to win the National League pennant, astronaut Wally Schirra orbited Earth six times in his spacecraft, Sigma 7.

Some Career Highlights

May 31, 1964

The Giants' bullpen was virtually depleted entering the 13th inning of the second game of a doubleheader, tied, 6-6, with the Mets. San Francisco needed a reliever who could work multiple innings if the stalemate continued. As a part-time starter, Perry fit the description. Pitching as if his career depended on the outcome -- as it indeed might have -- Perry worked 10 shutout innings, allowing seven hits while walking one and striking out nine. The Giants prevailed, 8-6, in 23 innings. Suddenly, Perry was a performer to rely upon rather than avoid.

May 6, 1982

Pitching for the Mariners, Perry recorded his 300th career victory with a 7-3 decision over the Yankees. Fittingly, it was a complete game, one of 303 that the durable Perry accumulated on his way to a 314-265 career mark.

1991

If Perry's reputation suffered because he allegedly doctored the baseballs he threw, then the game's justice system must have been remarkably lenient. He was elected to the Hall of Fame on his third try, receiving 77.2% of the Baseball Writers' Association of America vote in 1991 (75% is needed for enshrinement). Perry just missed in his previous attempts, garnering 68% of the vote in 1989 and 72.1% in 1990.

Sept. 17, 1968

This was the year when St. Louis' **Bob Gibson** fashioned his glittering 1.12 ERA. Beating him required a superlative effort from the opposing pitcher. Perry's "hard slider" worked to perfection at Candlestick Park as he tossed a no-hitter with two walks and nine strikeouts. Ron Hunt's first-inning home run, his second of the year, provided the scoring in San Francisco's 1-0 triumph. Time of game: one hour, 40 minutes. It was the Giants' second no-hit victory since the franchise moved west in 1958; **Juan Marichal** accomplished the feat in 1963.

1972

In an ill-advised trade, the Giants sent Perry and infielder **Frank Duffy** to Cleveland for left-

hander Sam McDowell before the 1972 season. Perry won the American League Cy Young Award as he topped the league with 29 complete games and shared the league lead in wins with White Sox knuckleballer **Wilbur Wood** (24 apiece). Perry, who also finished with a personal-best 1.92 ERA, received 64 voting points to Wood's 58.

1978

Perry became the first pitcher to win the Cy Young Award in both leagues after leading the NL with 21 victories for San Diego. By this juncture of Perry's career, the screaming about his throwing slimeballs had mostly died down. Perry's five complete games matched his lowest total since 1964, but he also delivered a 2.73 ERA in 37 starts.

July 8, 1974

Perry entered this start at Oakland with 15 consecutive victories, one short of the AL record. A crowd of 47,582 packed the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum to watch Perry oppose **Vida Blue**, the charismatic A's left-hander. Perry took a 3-2 lead into the ninth inning, but Joe Rudi's one-out triple led to the tying run. Perry, who struck out 13, issued only his second walk of the game when **Pat Bourque** drew a free pass to open the bottom of the 10th. A sacrifice bunt and a groundout advanced pinch-runner **Blue Moon Odom** to third, and he scored from there on **Claudell Washington's** single.

Sept. 1, 1967

Many fans know of Juan Marichal's 16-inning, 1-0 triumph over **Warren Spahn** and the Milwaukee Braves on July 2, 1963. Relatively few observers recall that Perry essentially matched Marichal's feat. Perry worked 16 shutout innings at Cincinnati's Crosley Field but received no decision as three Reds pitchers silenced the Giants. Perry, who walked two and struck out 12, received some consolation when San Francisco pushed across a run in the 21st inning against the fourth Reds pitcher, **Bob Lee**, to prevail, 1-0. This was the central game in Perry's streak of 40 consecutive scoreless innings.

Oct. 2, 1971

Nobody suspected it then, but the National League Championship Series opener was Perry's final victory with the Giants. Despite lacking his best stuff, he refused to give in to the Pirates' hitters, a formidable group that included **Willie Stargell**, **Roberto Clemente** and **Al Oliver**. **Tito Fuentes** and **Willie McCovey** each hit two-run homers in the fifth inning to back Perry, who preserved the lead in a complete-game, 5-4 conquest.

ONE EXCELLENT YEAR

Mlb.com had an interesting piece on players who played with a team for just one year. A number of players have proved that over the years, making their marks in just a single season

with a particular club, whether by setting themselves up for a big contract elsewhere or even snagging a championship ring as a parting gift.

Marcus Semien, 2021 Blue Jays

Despite moving from shortstop to second base, Semien garnered some notable career firsts (an All-Star selection, Gold Glove Award and Silver Slugger Award), played in 162 games and blasted 45 home runs, notching another third-place MVP finish. He parlayed that into a seven-year, \$175 million deal with the Rangers.

Adrián Beltré, 2010 Red Sox

Beltré was coming off a five-year stint in pitcher-friendly Seattle that was better than the raw numbers made it look but still represented something of a career setback. Beltré then signed a one-year deal with the Red Sox and batted .321/.365/.553 (141 OPS+), with 49 doubles, 28 home runs and 7.8 WAR (per Baseball-Reference), before signing with the Rangers.

Alfonso Soriano, 2006 Nationals

Moving from second base to left field in D.C., Soriano went out and stole 41 bases. He added 46 homers, joining Jose Canseco, Barry Bonds and Alex Rodriguez as MLB's only 40-40 players. Soriano parlayed that rare performance into a big contract with the Cubs.

Ivan Rodriguez, 2003 Marlins

After 12 years with the Rangers, before moving on to Detroit the following offseason, Rodriguez started 134 games behind the plate for the Marlins and produced a 120 OPS+. He then proceeded to bat .313/.390/.522 with 17 RBIs in 17 postseason games, earning MVP honors in the NL Championship Series on the way to a World Series championship.

Mike Hampton, 2000 Mets

Hampton had just gone 22-4 with a 2.90 ERA (155 ERA+) with the Astros Available entering the final year of his contract, the lefty went to Queens and delivered a similarly strong campaign (142 ERA+ in 33 starts). In the NLCS against the Cardinals, Hampton took MVP honors by

throwing seven scoreless innings in Game 1, followed by a series-clinching shutout in Game 5, to send the Mets to the World Series. That led to an ill-fated free-agent deal with Colorado.

Kevin Brown, 1998 Padres

Brown was a key contributor to the championship-winning 1997 Marlins team, which was promptly torn down. Brown was caught up in the firesale and traded to San Diego. The fierce right-hander immediately helped turn around a pitching-starved Padres team, which jumped from 76 to 98 wins and won the NL West, as Brown went 18-7 with a 2.38 ERA (164 ERA+) over a whopping 257 innings. Brown then helped pitch San Diego into the World Series before signing MLB's first \$100 million contract with the Dodgers.

Jack Morris, 1991 Twins

Despite his accomplishments as a Tiger and Blue Jay, Morris is identified most closely with his lone season as a Twin. That's not so much because of his stellar regular-season performance (18-12, 125 ERA+ in 35 starts), which came after the Minnesota native signed a one-year deal with his hometown team. Rather, it's because Morris went 4-0 with a 2.23 ERA in five postseason starts and was named World Series MVP after throwing a 10-inning shutout to win his iconic Game 7 duel with the Braves' John Smoltz.

Rich "Goose" Gossage, 1977 Pirates

Traded by the White Sox, the 25-year-old Gossage responded with one of the 10 best seasons ever produced by a reliever, at least going by WAR. In a much different era of bullpen usage, Gossage churned out 133 innings with a 1.62 ERA, struck out 151 and combined 11 wins with 26 saves. A free agent the next offseason, he signed with the Yankees and never started another game, on his way to the Hall of Fame.

Reggie Jackson, 1976 Orioles

You probably remember Mr. October as a member of the A's or Yankees, or perhaps even from his late years with the Angels. But he also spent a rather tumultuous year in Baltimore in the middle of his career, when A's owner Charlie Finley traded him in his last year before free agency. Jackson didn't report to Baltimore right away, holding out until May, then struggled to

get going. He finally caught fire and hit .313/.388/.560 with 19 home runs over his final 81 games for an O's club that finished a distant second to the Yankees -- who then signed Jackson as a free agent.

15 HARDEST HIT HOME RUNS OF 2022

From mlb.com, watch some real blasts

https://www.mlb.com/stories/hardest-hit-home-runs-of-2022?partnerId=zh-20221201-771021-mlb-1-A&qid=1026&utm_id=zh-20221201-771021-mlb-1-A&bt_e=1fLqk%2BtKB6HDcMQiuBQmrads%2FJV9reHg0ybgm0s2SxigcYWd4vKwYlIFcfP3JdeK&bt_ts=1669904926308

Pete Alonso, O'Neil Cruz, Aaron Judge, Giancarlo Stanton, Wilson Contreras, Julio Rodriguez, Vlad Guerrero Jr., Jorge Soler and Shohei Ohtani combined for the 15 hardest hit HRs last season. Stanton's 119 mph leader is really smoked, 4th hardest ever recorded by Statcast.

HISTORY LESSON—17 PLAYER TRADE--BET WE DON'T SEE A TRADE LIKE THIS AT THE WINTER MEETINGS.

SABR.org

The 1954 major league baseball season ended leaving a lot of questions about the 1955 campaign unanswered - especially for the Baltimore Orioles and the New York Yankees.

In 1954 the Yankees, led by 64-year-old **Casey Stengel**, won 103 games (the only time in Casey's career that he would win 100 games) yet finished eight games behind the **Al Lopez**-led Cleveland Indians who set the American League standard with 111 games won in a 154-game season.

The Yankee pitching staff was the oldest in the junior circuit with **Allie Reynolds** (39), **Eddie Lopat** (36), **Johnny Sam** (36), **Tommy Byrne** (34), and **Jim Konstanty** (37). Reynolds, with a sore hand and a thriving oil business, gave every indication that his retirement threats were for real this time. Even though Casey favored going with his veterans he knew that some new, live arms

were needed to round out his pitching staff which also featured Rookie-of-the-Year **Bob Grim** and 25-year-old **Whitey Ford**.

Shortstop was a sore point for Casey too. **Phil Rizzuto** at 36 experienced his poorest year in '54, hitting only .195. He seemed to have lost a step or two in the field also. It became evident to Casey and the Yankee brass that an experienced man had to be brought in either to share time or replace the long time Yankee star.

Meanwhile, the Baltimore Orioles, recently moved from St. Louis, had experienced their ninth straight losing season. Not since 1945, when they finished third, had a Browns/Orioles team been able to finish higher than sixth. Veteran manager **Jimmy Dykes** led the 1954 O's to a seventh-place finish, 57 games behind the first-place Indians and three games ahead of the Philadelphia Athletics. Dykes played the regular '54 season with one of the youngest pitching staffs in the majors. His everyday players were among the oldest.

Paul Richards was brought in from the Chicago White Sox to be both field manager and general manager by Clarence Miles, the O's President. Richards had enjoyed some success, leading the White Sox to three straight third-place finishes. Miles hoped that Paul's knowledge of pitchers and his combativeness would turn the Orioles from a loser into a winner. Richards immediately saw that personnel changes would have to be made. He believed in the very old baseball axiom that in order to be competitive a team needed strong defense up the middle. Pitching was the Orioles strong point, yet they still managed to finish 57 games out in 1954. Richards quickly came to the realization that he would have to deal from his strength.

The other major league general managers were gleeful when the Yankees didn't win the 1954 pennant. They were not about to deal with the Yankees at a low cost. Chicago White Sox GM Frank "Trader" Lane had rebuffed all efforts by Yankee GM George Weiss to trade for Chicago star shortstop **Chico Carrasquel** and pitchers **Sandy Consuegra, Bob Keegan, and Billy Pierce**. At this time the press was also reporting that the Yankees were actively pursuing the contracts of Baltimore's shortstop **Billy Hunter** and pitchers **Don Larsen and Bob Turley**. The Yankees were well stocked with both major and minor league catching talent. The Yankees were prepared to deal in earnest using their major league catchers as bait.

Paul Richards had his eye on both **Gus Triandos and Hal Smith**. Triandos was more than capable at both first base and behind the plate. Smith was a hard-hitting catcher for whom the St. Louis Cardinals had offered the Yankees a large sum of money.

On November 17, 1954, Paul Richards of the Orioles and George Weiss of the Yankees engineered the largest two team swap of personnel in major league history. The deal was announced in the media in two stages - first, on November 18 it was announced that the Orioles had sent the "Second Coming of **Bob Feller**" Bullet **Bob Turley** (American League leader in K's and BB's), **Don Larsen** (AL leader in losses with 21) and Billy Hunter (the O's starting shortstop) to the New York Yankees for pitchers **Harry Byrd and Jim McDonald**; outfielder **Gene Woodling**; shortstop **Willie Miranda**; and minor league catchers Gus Triandos and Hal Smith

(the American Association's batting champ with a .350 average). Because of waiver and draft regulations the rest of the trade was not officially announced until December 2, 1954. Baltimore sent pitcher **Mike Blyzka**, catcher **Darrell Johnson**, first baseman **Dick Kryhoski**, and outfielders **Ted del Guercio** and **Tim Fridley** to the Yankees to complete their end of the deal. The Yankees in turn sent to the Orioles pitcher **Bill Miller**, second baseman **Don Leppert**, and third baseman **Kal Segrist**. Originally, it was reported, that the trade was to have also included Oriole pitcher **Lou Kretlow**, but the O's withdrew his name and George Weiss agreed to a nine for eight swap instead of nine for nine.

The trade was met with great applause in New York - no more Second place finishes for the Yankees now that Bob Turley had been lured away. The fan reaction was not so endearing in Baltimore. Baltimore sports were in turmoil. The Orioles had just traded away the team's only two true heroes - and to top it off the trade was reported on the same day that the National Basketball Association Baltimore Bullets were reported to be in dire financial straits and in danger of having to forfeit the rest of the games on their schedule. Baltimore sports fans were understandably upset.

For all practical purposes, it must be said that the Yankees traded Triandos, Smith, and Miranda for Larsen, Turley, and Hunter. The Yankees filled their need for younger pitching and a shortstop and the Orioles for up-the-middle defense and power. The Orioles as a team hit only 52 home runs, 29 fewer than the Washington Senators in 1955. The Yankees also stocked the O's farm system with players who would never be more than marginal big leaguers, but who might contribute to the Orioles immediate needs. Following are brief sketches on those players who were part of the trade yet did not contribute in a significant manner to their new ball clubs.

Darrell Johnson - played only briefly in 1957-58 for the Yankees. Johnson's main claim to fame was managing the 1975 Boston Red Sox to the World Series against the Reds.

Ted del Guercio - never played in a regular season major league game.

Don Leppert - hit .114 in 1955 with 8 hits in 70 trips to the plate. 1955 was his only year in the major leagues.

Kal Segrist - hit .333 with 3 hits in 9 trips to the plate. 1955 was his last year in the major leagues.

Bill Miller - was 0-1 in four innings for the O's in 1955 - he did not pitch again in the major leagues.

Jim McDonald - a pitcher with a lot of promise early in his career. After going 4-1 for the '54 Yankees he ended the '55 season with a 3-5 record for the O's. He ended his career with a 3-5 record in brief appearances for the White Sox in 1956-1958.

Harry Byrd - came to the Yankees in 1953 as part of a 13-player trade with the Philadelphia A's. He fell far short of expectations in '54 with a 9-7 record. He was 3-2 in 65 innings for the Birds in 1955 before being traded on to the Chicago White Sox. Byrd's big league career was over by 1957 when he finished up with the Detroit Tigers.

Jim Fridley - never played a game for the Yankees. He resurfaced briefly with the Reds in 1958.

Dick Kryhoski - didn't play a single game for the Yankees in 1955 as he was sold to the Kansas City A's along with pitchers **Tom Gorman** and **Ewell Blackwell** on March 31, 1955. He batted .213 in 47 at bats for the A's and was gone from the major league scene after the 1955 season.

Mike Blyzka - did not pitch again in the major leagues after going 1-5 with a 4.69 ERA in 1954 with the Orioles.

Gene Woodling - he was a slightly different story. Gene had been injured much of the 1954 season. At 32 he had a hand injury, hit only .250 after hitting a respectable .306 in 1953. Casey figured along with Weiss that Woodling was on the down side of a good career. His .318 average in five World Series bolstered his value as a clutch performer. Gene fooled everyone by playing for eight more years and actually had his highest season average of .321 in 1957 at age 35 for the Cleveland Indians. Gene did not last long in his first stint with the Orioles. On June 15, 1955 he was traded to the Cleveland Indians for outfielders **Dave Pope** and **Wally Westlake**.

In 1955 the Yankees finished three games ahead of the Cleveland Indians. In this writer's opinion, this was not due to the addition of Turley and Larsen to the Yankee staff. (Larsen began the season with a sore arm). Thirty-five year old Tommy Byrne, not counted on for much, turned his 1954 3-2 record into a fine 16-5 year in 1955. On the other hand, Cleveland's **Mike Garcia**, 19-8 in '54, fell to 11-13 and Indian first baseman **Vic Wertz** was stricken by polio after only 74 games.

Turley and Larsen had identical 3.06 ERAs for the '55 Yanks. Turley tied for second in the AL with **Early Wynn** with 17 games won; he finished second to Herb Score (245) in strikeouts with 210; ranked third in innings pitched with 247; and gave up more bases on balls (177) than any other pitcher in the league. Larsen appeared in only 19 contests with 13 starts and finished with a 9-2 record. Billy Hunter split the shortstop duties with Rizzuto, fielded well and hit a powerless .227.

The 1955 Orioles improved their record to 57-97 as 24 pitchers moved through Richard's revolving door and a total of 56 men wore the Baltimore uniform. Gus Triandos was the regular first baseman and led the O's with 12 home runs, 65 RBIs, and his .277 batting average was the highest among all Oriole regulars. Willie Miranda played a brilliant shortstop and hit a career high .255. Hal Smith was the regular catcher and hit a powerless .271. Smith was traded in 1956 to the Kansas City A's for catcher **Joe Ginsberg**. Smith's main claim to fame came in the eighth inning of the seventh game of the 1960 World Series when he hit a three-run homer off Yankee **Jim Coates** to help the Pittsburgh Pirates win the Series.

In 1956 Hunter suffered a broken ankle and lost his shortstop job to young **Gil McDougald**. He was part of the first trade of real importance that the Yankees and KC A's were to make over the next few years. The Yankees received pitchers **Art Ditmar and Bobby Shantz** (sore-armed at the time) and minor league infielder **Clete Boyer**. The Yankees sent Hunter and his bum ankle and outfielder **Try Noren** and his bum knees along with pitchers **Tom Morgan, Rip Coleman, and Mickey McDermott**, as well as minor league pitching prospect **Jack Urban**. A year later Hunter was through as a player when he retired from the Cleveland Indians.

Larsen and Turley were disappointing in 1956. Larsen went 11-5 with a 3.25 ERA and Turley turned in an 8-4 record with a 5.05 ERA and only 91 K's in 132 innings. It was only a league leading 190 home runs and the pitching of youngsters **Johnny Kucks and Tom Sturdivant** along with Whitey Ford that brought the Yankees in nine games ahead of the Indians who boasted three 20-game winners. The Yankees in spite of everything did barely manage to win the 1956 Series in seven games and Don Larsen did pitch a perfect game in game five. In 1956 Willie Miranda continued to field brilliantly and hit an anemic .217. Triandos became the regular catcher with Smith's departure and responded with a club high 21 home runs and 88 RBIs. Once again Richards sought the proper pitching combination as 23 different hurlers took the mound for the O's.

In 1957 Turley regained some of his old form as he started 23 times, winning 13 and losing 6. He struck out 152 batters in 176 innings and finished with a respectable 2.71 ERA. Larsen was a deceiving 10-4 as his 3.73 ERA was exceeded only by Tommy Byrne's 4.34. Triandos once again supplied most of the muscle and handled 20 different pitchers as the Birds finished at .500 for the first time in their short history. Miranda and his .194 batting average were spelled often by young **Jim Brideweser**.

Bob Turley's one true great year was 1958. He won 21 and lost only 7. His 21 wins and .750 winning percentage led the league. He was third in strikeouts with 168, second in complete games and shutouts and he gave up fewer hits per nine innings than any other qualifying pitcher in the major leagues. He was voted the recipient of the Cy Young Award and won the crucial seventh game of the World Series by pitching two-hit, one-run ball in relief of Don Larsen. Larsen, injured much of the year, finished at 9-6 in 19 starts. Triandos once again led the O's with 30 home runs and 79 RBIs and handled a pitching staff featuring a few winning pitchers. Miranda continued to excel in the field.

The 1959 season saw the basic demise of three of the remaining four principals. Larsen ended the season 6-7 with a 4.33 ERA and the handwriting seemed to be on the wall. The hurler, considered the sleeper in the original deal, was one of Stengel's favorites. Casey had a way of overlooking many of Don's excesses, but by 1959 he showed no signs, at age 29, of changing his ways. Larsen did not win a game after June because of a sore arm. Thus, during the off-season, George Weiss shipped Larsen, **Marv Throneberry, Hank Bauer, and Norm Siebern** to the Kansas City A's for utility shortstop **Joe DeMaestri**, first baseman **Kent Hadley**, and slugging but moody outfielder **Roger Mans**. Larsen, the sleeper, finished his Yankee career with 45 wins and 24 losses and one World Series perfect game. Turley, after going great guns in 1958, could do

no better than 8-1 1 with a 4.32 ERA. In 1960 he made a modest comeback when he went 9-3 with a 3.27 ERA. By 1963 Turley was pitching for the expansion Angels and ended his career that year with the Boston Red Sox. Turley's stay with the Yankees resulted in an 82-52 won-lost record, 1269 innings pitched, 909 K's, one Cy Young Award and no two seasons in a row with wins in double figures.

Willie Miranda had his last year in 1959. At age 33 the little Cuban had lost his starting job to Chico Carrasquel (the man originally coveted by the Yankees in 1954). Willie could only manage 14 hits in 88 trips to the plate. His anemic bat could no longer be carried by the now respectable Orioles. Only Gus Triandos remained as a significant force. He continued to pound the baseball and handle the up and coming "Baby Birds" of Baltimore. Although his average did fall to .216 in 1959, Gus remained the regular behind the plate until 1961. In 1962 Gus was traded to the Detroit Tigers as a result of age and a broken finger. Triandos is in the top ten (through 1981) in eight Oriole lifetime categories: 8th in total games played; 8th in at bats; 10th in hits; 5th in home runs; 9th in total bases; 6th in RBIs; 9th in extra base hits; and tied for 10th in slugging percentage with none other than Gene Woodling.

Larsen pitched a perfect game in the media capital of the world and Bob Turley for one year was the best pitcher in baseball. The Orioles could not have won a pennant with the Holy Trinity on their side in the mid-to-late 1950's. If longevity and consistency are the chief attributes a baseball player can offer, then the Orioles with Gus Triandos had the edge over the Yankees with Turley and Larsen.

RULE 5 DRAFT

On Wednesday, Dec. 7, the [Rule 5 Draft](#) will take place at the Winter Meetings in San Diego. As always, it will be an opportunity for teams to take some low-risk gambles to find big league talent.

For the uninitiated, a quick primer on how it works:

Players first signed at age 18 or younger must be added to 40-man rosters within five seasons or they become eligible to be drafted by other organizations through the Rule 5 process. Players signed at 19 years or older have to be protected within four seasons. Clubs pay \$100,000 to select a player in the Major League phase of the Rule 5 Draft. If that player doesn't stay on the 26-man roster for the full season, he must be offered back to his former team for \$50,000. For this year, that means an international or high school Draft pick signed in 2018 had to be protected. A college player taken in the 2019 Draft was in the same position.

While a 2006 change in the rules giving teams an extra year to evaluate talent before making this decision has made it a bit more difficult to find stars via the Rule 5, there have been a ton of big leaguers selected.

There have been a total of 133 players taken in the Major League phase of the Rule 5 Draft since 2012, the vast majority of them being pitchers (95). Some recent winning selections:

1. Ryan Pressly, RHP, HOU: Selected by Twins from Red Sox, 2012 (9.7 bWAR)

Pressly spent nearly six seasons as a valuable part of the Twins' big league bullpen after they took him No. 4 overall in the 2012 Draft. He led the league in appearances in 2018, the year the Twins dealt him to the Astros close to the Trade Deadline, and he's since made two All-Star appearances and cemented himself as the team's closer, playing a big part in Houston's World Series run this past season. He has a 2.56 ERA and 11 saves in 41 postseason outings for the Astros.

2. Garrett Whitlock, RHP, BOS: Selected by Red Sox from Yankees, 2020 (4.7)

The 2020 Rule 5 Draft went a little bit under the radar since there were no Winter Meetings for folks to attend in person. But there was still good talent to be found, led by Whitlock, the No. 4 pick of the Rule 5 Draft that year. He fought through a hip injury for much of 2022 before having surgery in late September but still proved to be valuable in a number of roles. He has a 2.73 ERA, .227 BAA, 1.062 WHIP and a 5.09 K/BB ratio in two seasons with Boston.

3. Odúbel Herrera, OF, PHI: Selected by Phillies from Rangers, 2014 (13.4)

The way things started for the No. 8 pick in the 2014 Rule 5 Draft, he looked like he could be one of the best Major League phase selections of all time, and he does lead the group of players who stuck in bWAR. Much of that came over his first two seasons (8.7), the second of which earned him an All-Star invite, but he's struggled with productivity and injuries, playing in just 62 games in 2022.

4. Anthony Santander, OF, BAL: Selected by Orioles from Cleveland, 2016 (4.8)

It's taken a while for Santander to get settled in the big leagues, playing in just 46 games in 2017 and 2018 combined. He's found his power stroke, especially in 2022, when he hit 33 homers and drove in 89 runs, accruing 2.1 of that 4.8 bWAR.

5. Mark Canha, OF/1B, NYM: Selected by Rockies (traded to A's) from Marlins, 2014 (12.5)

Canha stands second on the bWAR list among picks in the last decade and continues to be a productive player. He played nearly every day in his rookie season of 2015 and hit 16 homers, then had his best season in Oakland in 2019, when he hit 26 homers and finished with a .913 OPS. After signing a two-year deal with the Mets as a free agent, he was an everyday player with New York and has accrued 5.0 bWAR in his last two seasons combined.

6. Brad Keller, RHP, KC: Selected by Reds (traded to Royals) from D-backs, 2017 (8.9)

Keller began his first year with the Royals in the bullpen but might have been their most consistent starter by season's end. He was a mainstay in the rotation for the next three seasons and spent most of 2022 doing the same, though a lack of results pushed him back to relief work late in the year. From a bWAR perspective, his most productive year was his rookie season (4.0), followed by the following year (3.0).

7. Akil Baddoo, OF, DET: Selected by Tigers from Twins, 2020 (2.5)

The toolsy outfielder took advantage of playing time in 2021, finishing with 13 homers and 18 steals in his rookie season after the Tigers took him No. 3 overall. He wasn't really able to build on that in 2022, playing in just 73 games and finishing with a .558 OPS. There's still upside here given that he'll be 24 for most of the 2023 season.

8. Ji-Man Choi, 1B, PIT: Selected by Angels from Orioles, 2015 (5.2)

The Orioles had signed Choi as a Minor League free agent in November of that year but didn't protect him from the Rule 5 Draft, so the Angels took a shot. He appeared in 54 games with the Halos in 2016, then bounced around from the Angels to the Yankees to the Brewers as a free agent over the next couple of seasons. Milwaukee shipped him to Tampa in June 2018 and his best season as a big leaguer came with the Rays in 2019 (2.1 WAR), and he accrued 88 postseason plate appearances from 2019-2022 before the Rays sent him to the Pirates this offseason.

9. Delino DeShields Jr., OF, FA: Selected by Rangers from Astros, 2014 (5.1)

DeShields looked like a potential huge Rule 5 success story when he played 121 games with the Rangers and stole 25 bags in 2015, leading to him getting a Rookie of the Year vote. He stole 20-plus bags in four of his five seasons with Texas before seeing time in the big leagues with Cleveland in 2020 and the Reds in 2021. He spent the 2022 season in Triple-A Gwinnett (Braves).

10. Héctor Rondón, RHP, retired: Selected by Cubs from Cleveland, 2012 (4.9)

After appearing in 45 games out of the Cubs' bullpen as a rookie in 2013, Rondón became Chicago's closer, saving 59 games combined in 2014 and 2015. He picked up 18 saves in 2016 (and won a World Series ring) and 15 more with the Astros in 2018. He last pitched in 2020 with the D-backs.

Others of note (listed with team that acquired them in Rule 5): Josh Fields, RHP, Astros; Tommy Kahnle, RHP, Rockies; Victor Reyes, OF, Tigers; Trevor Stephan, RHP, Cleveland; Tyler Wells, RHP, Orioles; T.J. McFarland, LHP, Orioles.



Triple Crown winner **Ted Williams** (.343, 32, 162) is edged out by **Joe DiMaggio** (.315, 20, 97) for the American League MVP by one point when a writer from the Midwest leaves the Red Sox right-fielder off the ballot. November 27, 1947.

THIS WEEK'S TRIVA CHALLENGE ANSWERS

QUIZ 1

MVP Award dates back to 1911. (writers took over in 1931). 32 players have won multiple MVPs. Just 7 of those won MVPs with more than one franchise. (note-- A's could be Philadelphia, Kansas City or Oakland—for this exercise that's one franchise so for example **Willie Mays** with the New York Giants and San Francisco Giants doesn't count).

Right-handed batting Hall of Fame infielder, he won two triple crowns, 7 batting titles. MVP with Cards 1925, Cubs 1929.

Rogers Hornsby

Hall of Fame catcher, caught 1451 games, career .322 hitter, later managed the Tigers to 2 pennants/1 World Series win. Won MVPs with A's 1928, Tigers 1934.

Mickey Cochrane

Primarily a first baseman, he was a 3x MVP, triple crown winner, 9x All-Star and on 2 batting titles. .325 career batting average and 534 career HRs. He won MVPs with the A's in 1932 & 1933 and with the Red Sox in 1938.

Jimmie Foxx

Right-handed hitting outfielder. Triple crown winner, Hall of Famer, played for 2 World Series winners, 586 career HRs, only player to win MVPs in both leagues. 21 seasons as a player, then 16 seasons as a manager. Won MVPs with Reds 1961, Orioles 1966.

Frank Robinson

7-time MVP and all-time HR record holder. Won MVPs with Pirates 1990, 1992; Giants 1993, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004.

Barry Bonds

Infielder with 696 career HRs, 10 silver sluggers, 3 MVPs. Only player to win with multiple teams and multiple positions. Won MVPs with Rangers 2003, Yankees 2005, 2007.

ARod

Lefty swinging outfielder/DH. Rookie of the year, 7x All-Star, HR Derby winner. Won MVPs with Nationals 2015, Phillies 2021.

Bryce Harper

QUIZ 2

Name each team's last MVP

Atlanta	2020	1B	Freddie Freeman
Baltimore	1991	SS	Cal Ripken Jr.
Boston	2018	OF	Mookie Betts
Cubs	2016	3B	Kris Bryant
White Sox	2020	1B	Jose Abreu
Cincinnati	2010	1B	Joey Votto
Cleveland	1953	3B	Al Rosen
Colorado	1997	OF	Larry Walker
Detroit	2013	1B	Miguel Cabrera
Houston	2017	2B	Jose Altuve
Angels	2021	SP/DH	Shohei Ohtani
Dodgers	2019	OF	Cody Bellinger
Kansas City	1980	3B	George Brett
Miami	2017	OF	Giancarlo Stanton
Milwaukee	2018	OF	Christian Yelich
Minnesota	2009	C	Joe Mauer
Yankees	2022	OF	Aaron Judge
Oakland	2002	SS	Miguel Tejada
Philadelphia	2021	OF	Bryce Harper
Pittsburgh	2013	OF	Andrew McCutcheon

San Diego	1996	3B	Ken Caminiti
Seattle	2001	OF	Ichiro Suzuki
San Francisco	2012	C	Buster Posey
St. Louis	2022	1B	Paul Goldschmidt
Texas	2010	OF	Josh Hamilton
Toronto	2015	3B	Josh Donaldson
Washington	2015	OF	Bryce Harper

HOUSEKEEPING

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