

Sunday Baseball Tidbits Newsletter – interesting and random stuff, fodder for bar bets.

9.10.2023

Good morning baseball fans,

Crazy week with fun golf trip to Nova Scotia and my grandson's 5th birthday party. So an abbreviated Tidbits this week, maybe just one cup of coffee.

A reminder that just getting into the field gives you a decent chance at playing for a while. In 2022, a #6 seed and a #5 seed won their first-round matchups. A #6 seed got up 2-1 in the World Series. In 2019, 2014, and 2011, a wild-card team won the World Series, and in 2014, both pennant winners were wild-card teams.

In this week's issue the Martian has landed, a batch of trivia questions, BIB-BIG-BIG, Joe Sheehan on pushing rookies to the majors, lots of steals and a Fenway send-off for one of our subscribers.

In Longer Reads—a fun piece on Baseball Reference.com.

Enjoy.

THIS WEEK'S TRIVIA CHALLENGE

(answers at bottom)

Four Mets players have hit 40 or more home runs in a season:

Right-hand batting 1B, 2019, 2022, 2023)

Switch hitting CF, 2006

Right-hand batting C/1B, 1999

Switch hitting C, 1996

I hit a career high 47 HRs for an AL west team in 1969.

I played with the same team through 1975, adding HRs in two World Series.

1976 AL east, 27 HRs but no post-season.

I was off to another AL east team, homers in 3 World Series.

Wrapped my career with 6 seasons back in the AL west. But no World Series.

Who am I?

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

Only two pitchers in MLB history have allowed 500 or more home runs--**Jamie Moyer** with 522 home runs allowed, and **Robin Roberts** with 505 home runs allowed.

In case you missed the finals of the Little League World Series, here is the walk off HR that lifted California over Curacao. Louis Lappe hit a walk-off homer for the 6-5 win. Curacao had tied the game in the fifth on Nasir El-Ossais' grand slam to center. It was the first trip to the final for the team from El Segundo, a community in the Los Angeles area. California's eight titles are the most by any U.S. state.

<https://twitter.com/BRWalkoff/status/1695917997926629521?lid=xh6jfzet7u3e>

This week's **Shohei Ohtani** amazing stat—he stole his 20th base. That's the 10 wins on the mound/20 stolen bases club. He is the only member. The only players to come close—Rip

Sewell for the 1943 Pirates (21 wins, 7 stolen bases) and **Bob Gibson** in 1969 (20 wins, 5 stolen bases).

Pat Corrales, a catcher who appeared in 300 games while playing for four teams from 1964-1973, and later managed the Rangers, Indians, and Phillies, died on August 28 at age 81. The last of the backup backstop's four career home runs was a ninth-inning, three-run shot that gave the Reds a 3-1 win over the Braves in 1970. Corrales had one at-bat that October when Cincinnati lost to the Orioles in the World Series.

Houston Astros and Seattle Mariners starters have thrown 762 innings this year, tied for the most in the majors. San Francisco Giants starters have thrown 611-and-two-thirds innings, the fewest in the majors.

The San Diego Padres are 0-11 in extra-inning games this season. The 1969 Montreal Expos, who finished their inaugural season 52-110, went 0-12 in extra-inning games.

Heavy Johnson slashed .406/.471/.722 with 20 home runs in 429 plate appearances for the Negro National League's Kansas City Monarchs in 1923. A year earlier, the Atchison, Kansas native slashed .406/.450/.715 with 11 home runs in 263 plate appearances.

The week in 1917, **Grover Cleveland Alexander** logged a pair of complete-game wins as the Philadelphia Phillies swept a double-header from the Brooklyn Robbins by scores of 5-0 and 9-3. The Hall of Fame right-hander went on to finish the season 30-13, his third consecutive year with 30 or more wins.

A WHOLE LOTTA STEALING GOING ON

At the start of play on Friday, the league-wide stolen base rate was 0.71 per team game. Over the course of a 162-game season, that would project for 3,457 steals. If MLB reaches that total, it would be the second highest of the Live Ball Era (since 1920), trailing only 1987 (when there were still just 26 MLB teams).

Most SB in a season, Live Ball Era

1. 1987: 3,585
2. 1999: 3,421
3. 1983: 3,325
4. 1986: 3,312
5. 1997: 3,308

In 2022, Major Leaguers stole 2,486 bases. So, should they maintain their current pace in 2023, we'd see nearly 1,000 more stolen bases than we saw last year. An increase of 971 would represent the largest spike between consecutive full seasons in the Live Ball Era.

League-wide counting stats are heavily influenced by a number of factors, though, and 0.71 stolen bases per team game doesn't sound like a whole lot. But that figure is up from 0.51 steals per team game in 2022, the largest single-season jump since 1920. The corresponding 21-point increase in attempts per game is also the largest in that span.

23 teams have already surpassed their 2022 stolen base totals, with more than three weeks to go. The big winners here are the Reds, who are already up 105 from their 2022 total of 58.

Ronald Acuña Jr., who has dashed and slugged his way to the first 30-60 campaign in history. Acuña leads the Majors with 63 steals -- only A's rookie **Esteury Ruiz** (58) is close -- and has the first 70-steal season since 2009 (**Jacoby Ellsury**) well within his sights.

But this goes far beyond the amazing feats of one player. There are already seven players with 36-plus steals in 2023, and if all of them reach 40, that would be the most since there were eight in 2013. Just one year ago, Miami's **Jon Berti** was the lone 40-steal player.

A number of standouts are running significantly more than they did in 2022.

Biggest increases in SB, 2022 to '23

Min. 400 PA in '22

1. Ronald Acuña Jr. (ATL): +34 (29 to 63)
2. **Ha-Seong Kim** (SD): +19 (12 to 31)
3. **Nico Hoerner** (CHC): +16 (20 to 36)

4. **Bryson Stott** (PHI): +15 (12 to 27)

5. **Taylor Walls** (TB): +12 (10 to 22)

As stolen base rates fell over the last decade, success rates ticked up -- a natural product of only the best baserunners having the green light. And yet, the current league-wide 80.0% success rate is by far the highest in the Live Ball Era, set to shatter the previous record of 75.7% set in 2021. (Notably, the only four seasons in the Live Ball Era with an MLB-wide success rate of at least 75 percent are the past four seasons.) The gap of 4.3 percentage points between 2023 and 2021 is the same as the gap between 2021 and the 17th-best season on the list (2006, 71.4%).

To look at that success another way, consider this: While MLB's 3,457 projected steals would rank second in the Live Ball Era, as previously mentioned, its 864 projected times caught stealing would be only the 65th most during that 104-year stretch.

Potential base-stealers are taking their chances with a group of catchers that is in line to set new Statcast Era records for pop time (1.96 seconds), exchange time (0.67 seconds) and average arm strength (79.4 mph).

That said, for every stolen base, there is someone on the other side. So who has felt the uptick in the running game most acutely in 2023? The White Sox lead the Majors in stolen bases allowed as a team, with 149. **Noah Syndergaard**, recently released by Cleveland after pitching for the Dodgers and Guardians this year, has the most steals allowed by a pitcher (34), with just one CS. And the Nationals' **Keibert Ruiz** has been behind the plate for the most thefts, with runners going 98-for-114 (86.0%) against him and his pitchers.



(from the Wawenock GC newsletter) You all know Bud as our warm and witty “Players’ Assistant”, fearsome only when encountering slow play, but did you know that there is likely no greater and knowledgeable Red Sox and **Ted Williams** fan than The Other #9, Bud Elwin!

Bud has attended Red Sox Fantasy Camp four years: 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2023. In 2010 he was seventy and at this last outing Bud was a venerable eighty-three.

The Official Red Sox Fantasy Camp lets you live out the childhood dreams of being a Major League Baseball player. One trains at the Official Spring Training complex, uses the same facilities as the Major League team, and plays at the Fenway Park replica field at JetBlue Park. Coaching devotees of any skill level through the week are past Red Sox greats like **Keith Foulke**, **Trot Nixon**, **Oil Can Boyd**, **Rich Gedman**, **Frank Viola**, and others. Participants have to be over thirty (and their checks can’t bounce). These “fans extraordinaire” play on a team with two ex-Sox stars as their coaches. Eight seven inning games and one shortened game against the Pro Team are played. Over the years Bud has played First Base, Left Field, and Pitcher.

He remarks, “It was a lot easier when I was in my early seventies, more difficult this year. Like all athletes when you reach that level of play when you can't perform up to your expectations it is time to exit your field of dreams.”

Bud had his last “at bat” at Fenway Park in Boston, August 31st, played two games, and had a great time. About thirty relatives and guests attended his last game.

Bud sends a special THANK YOU! to his wife of sixty-three years for her continued support and guidance throughout his career.

He started playing baseball when he was eight years old in Somerville, Mass, retiring at the age of eighty-three in Walpole, Maine.

Bud Elwin the other #9, also known as Ted, reflects, “ I have waited for my last good pitch to hit.”

GOOD START FOR THE MARTIAN

On Sept. 1 **Jasson (the Martian) Dominguez** of the New York Yankees hit a home run in his first-ever MLB at-bat.

Domínguez then went on to have himself a First Week in the Big Leagues. Homered in his first career trip to the plate ... *and* twice in his first series in the big leagues ... *and* three times in his first five games as a Yankee. And he's 20!

No respect for his elders Domínguez was *not* the first player 20 or younger to homer in the first plate appearance of his career. But he *was* the first to hit that bomb off a 40-year-old (**Justin Verlander**). Oldest previous pitcher to give up a first-trip long ball to a hitter who hadn't turned 21: **Bert Blyleven** (age 35) to **Jay Bell**, in 1986.

No respect for Cy Young Domínguez's first homer came off a reigning Cy Young (Verlander). Verlander joins only **Randy Johnson** (2002, to **Marcus Thames**) among Cy Youngs with that claim to fame.

Other 20-year-olds in the live-ball era (1920-2023) have homered in two different road games in the first series of their big-league career? That would be None.

The only other 20-year-old in the last 80 years to hit two in his first road series? **Tom Brunansky**, for the 1981 Twins in Anaheim — but he smoked both home runs in one game.

Shades of the Mick Finally, there is this: You know how many 20-year-olds (or younger) have ever homered for the Yankees in two road games in the same series — any series? Well, there's Jasson Domínguez ... and ... a guy named **Mickey Mantle** (twice in 1952).

Dominguez is the 135th player in MLB history to hit a home run in his first big league at bat. On April 16, 1887, **George Tibeau and Mike Griffin** became the first players ever to do this. Three

of the players to achieve this did it with inside-the-park home runs, while six players hit grand slams in their first career at-bats. 52 players have homered in their first at-bat in the last 20 years. **Bob Nieman and Keith McDonald** are the only players to hit home runs in their first two career at-bats.

Historically, players who have hit home runs in their first at-bat have gone on to some pretty forgettable careers. Of the 135 players to hit a round-tripper on their first try, only 31 are Hall of Fame eligible (played 10 seasons and have been retired for five years), and only two players have been elected (**Earl Averill and Hoyt Wilhelm**). For 23 players, that first home run would be the only one they ever hit.

The most home runs hit in a career by a player who homered in his first at-bat is 360, by **Gary Gaetti**. **Carlos Lee** (358), **Jermaine Dye** (325), **Will Clark** (284), and **Aaron Judge** (248) round out the top five.

Judge is the leader among active players, and also has the most home runs ever in a season by a player with a first at-bat home run (62). **Tyler Austin**, who was a teammate of Judge, and also homered in his first at-bat in the same game that Judge did, hit a total of 33 career home runs in the MLB, and now plays for the Yokohama DeNA BayStars of the Nippon Professional Baseball League (NPB).

Since 1876, of the 20,490 players to play professional baseball in the United States, the 135 players who have homered in their first at-bat represent six-tenths of 1%. It was a historic first at-bat, and hopefully, it leads to a historic career.

Miguel Cabrera went 4 for 4 last week against the White Sox. He passed **George Brett** for 17th on the all-time hits list. Cabrera has 3,159 hits.

The last 40-year-old Tiger to have a four-hit game. **Chuck Hostetler** was a Minor League journeyman from 1928 through 1937, then left organized baseball to take a factory job, according to his SABR biography. He kept playing at the semi-pro and work league levels, and when many Major Leaguers were drafted into military duty for World War II, Hostetler earned a tryout with the Tigers as a 40-year-old in 1944.

Hostetler not only made the 1944 Tigers roster, seven years after his last pro game, he just missed batting .300 for the season. And when the Tigers hosted the St. Louis Browns for a Sunday doubleheader on June 18, Hostetler -- 40 years, 270 days old -- knocked out four singles and scored three of Detroit's seven runs.

Hostetler finished with 86 career hits, but he had that game, along with a 1945 World Series title. For 79 years, that stood as the only four-hit game by a player age 40 or older in Tigers history, at least according to research on baseball-reference. Then Miggy made another bit of history on Saturday.

The oldest player in MLB history with four or more hits in a game is **Pete Rose** who went 5 for 5 for the Reds on August 11, 1986 at 45 years, 119 days.

What do **Mickey Mantle, Jorge Posada, Jason Varitek, Bernie Williams, Jorge Polanco and Roy White** have in common?

All six were switch hitters, who played 10 or more seasons with the same AL team

So far this year, we've seen a few milestones. **Jose Altuve** and **Freddie Freeman** passed the 2,000-hit mark. **Justin Verlander** crossed 250 wins, and **Clayton Kershaw** got to 200. Meanwhile, **Craig Kimbrel** and **Kenley Jansen** each collected their 400th career save this year. **Bryce Harper** hit his 300th home run last week. **Giancarlo Stanton** hit career HR 400 this week.

In the "almost there" category Kershaw (2,927) and **Zack Greinke** (2,962) are creeping up on 3,000 strikeouts.

New York Yankees slugger **Giancarlo Stanton** launched his 400th career home run Tuesday, a two-run shot in the bottom of the sixth inning against the Detroit Tigers. Here's what you need to know:

Stanton's blast traveled 451 feet at 116.8 mph to left-center field — the kind of no-doubter that Stanton has been known for throughout his career. It came on **José Cisnero's** 1-1 slider.

Stanton, 33, became the fourth-fastest player to reach the milestone (1,520 games) and the third active player to do so, joining **Miguel Cabrera** (510 home runs) and **Nelson Cruz** (464). He is 58th on the all-time home runs list. The three ahead of Stanton are **Mark McGwire, Babe Ruth and Alex Rodriguez**.

Stanton has 22 homers this season and is slashing .206 /.282/.449, all in line to be career-worst numbers.

This season, he has hit just .206 with 22 home runs and 55 RBIs in only 85 games, missing nearly six weeks due to a left hamstring strain. Stanton has another four years remaining on his Yankees contract. Stanton, a five-time All-Star, was a second-round draft pick by the Marlins in 2007 and played the first eight seasons of his career with the team. He blasted 267 home runs in Miami for an average of about 33 per season. The Marlins signed Stanton to a 13-year, \$325 million contract in 2014. He was traded to the Yankees in December 2017 and hit 38 homers in his first season in New York.

BIG, BIG, BIG

Catcher: Big Wheel (**Lance Parrish**)

The Big Hurt (**Frank Thomas**)

Second base: Big Fundy (**DJ LeMahieu**)

Shortstop: Big Dee (**Daryl Spencer**)

Third base: Big Marine (**Matt Williams**)

Leftfield: Big Ed (**Ed Delahanty**)

Delahanty was one of the game's first big stars; he hit .400 three times in the 1890s. Crazy, he won only one batting title in those three years. In 1894, his .405 was good for just fourth in the league. In 1895, his .404 was beaten out by **Jesse Burkett's** .405. He won his only batting title in 1899, when he hit .410.

Centerfield: Big Poison (**Paul Waner**)

Paul Waner had 200 hits eight different times, and he's 15th all-time in doubles and 10th all-time in triples.

Rightfield: Big Kid (**Bryce Harper**)

Designated hitter: Big Papi (**David Ortiz**)

Left-handed pitcher: Big Unit (**Randy Johnson**)

Right-handed pitcher: Big Train (**Walter Johnson**)

Ronald Acuña Jr. hit a home run this week clocked at 121.1 exit velocity. In the nine seasons Statcast has been around four players have hit homers that hard-- **Giancarlo Stanton, Aaron Judge, Oneil Cruz and Gary Sánchez** — have stolen 78 bases combined *in their careers*. Meanwhile, Acuña is on pace to steal 74 *this season*.

You Don't see this every day—video of Miami ball boy tossing a fair ball into the stands.

https://bleacherreport.com/videos/461549-ball-boys-hilarious-fail?utm_medium=email&lid=ddlneh1i2p

DEREK JETER ATTENDS HIS FIRST OLD-TIMERS' DAY, REUNITING WITH CORE FOUR ON 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YANKEES 1998 TITLE

Larr Fleisher, Boson Globe

The former Yankees captain attended his first Old-Timers' Day on Saturday as New York celebrated the 25th anniversary of the 1998 team that won 125 games. He was introduced last, just like **Joe DiMaggio** used to be. A recording of late public address announcer Bob Sheppard boomed: “Now batting, number two, Derek Jeter.”

Jeter retired after the 2014 season with 3,465 hits, sixth on the career list. His number, the last of the Yankees' available single digits, was retired in 2017 and he was voted into the Hall of Fame three years later, when he was picked on 396 of 397 ballots. After serving as the Miami Marlins' CEO from September 2017 to February 2022, he's joined Fox's baseball coverage.

Jorge Posada, Andy Pettitte, and Mariano Rivera — fellow members of the Core Four — joined the reunion along with former manager **Joe Torre**. **Bernie Williams** was absent following shoulder replacement surgery on Thursday but recorded a brief video message.

Besides the 1998 Yankees, 2009 World Series MVP **Hideki Matsui** was introduced along with several members of the 1978 title team, including **Bucky Dent, Ron Guidry, Roy White, and Mickey Rivers**.

The widows of Hall of Famer Whitey Ford, five-time manager **Billy Martin**, and captain **Thurman Munson** were also introduced as part of an event that began in 1947 when **Ty Cobb** and **Babe Ruth** first appeared.

Lucas Giolito spent four months this year pitching for the White Sox. He spent 36 glorious days after the trade deadline watching the Angels' season go up in a raging bonfire. Then came Waiver Day, when he got claimed and won an all-expense-paid visit to Cleveland eight days ago.. In his first appearance with the Guardians he gave up 9 runs. Giolito has managed to allow at least eight runs three different times this year ... *for three different teams*. The only other pitcher to do it, according to STATS, was **Bill McGee** ... *in 1899* ... for the Phillies, Senators and Louisville Colonels.

In the first seven seasons of his career, Giolito made 145 regular-season starts and two more in the postseason ... and only gave up eight runs or more three times in seven years' worth of starts.

And then came this year ... when he gave up eight or more three times *in 48 days ... for three different teams*.

Reliever **Dominic Leone** was released by the Rangers, picked up by the Mets, then waived to the Mariners. He pitched three times at Citi Field in 37 days for three different teams. Only pitcher to pitch in three parks for three teams in that short a span. Position players **Mike Piazza** (1998 in Miami for Dodgers, Marlins and Mets over 16 days) and **Bobby Rhawn** – three times in 17 days at Philadelphia's Shibe Park in 1949, for the Giants, Pirates and White Sox, *while also playing against two different teams* (Phillies and A's).

Sept. 5, 1954: Joe Bauman goes deep three times for Class-C Roswell to give himself a Minor League single-season record of 72 homers for the Longhorn League club. It was the third straight season with 50-plus dingers for the 6-foot-5 left-handed slugger. In 2004, Minor League Baseball honored him with the naming of the Joe Bauman Award, given annually to the Minor Leaguer with the most home runs during the regular season.

The Angels went to Oakland last week and were swept by the A's who were 56 games under .500. That's only happened three times—2018 Blue Jays (by the Orioles), the 1909 Cardinals (by the Boston Doves) and the 1907 Boston Doves by the Cardinals in back-to-back series (first in five games in St. Louis, then in four games in Boston).

Nick Castellanos of the Phillies at San Diego this week:

First pitch of his night — Rolls over a 6-4-3 double-play ball in the first inning.

Second pitch of his night — Another 6-4-3 double play to end the third inning.

Third pitch of his night — *Breaking*: He takes that one for a ball in the sixth.

Fourth pitch of his night – Grounds into a 5-4-3 double play.

Going back to at least 1988, he is the only player to hit into three double plays on four pitches.

Stephen Strasburg's retirement news conference was cancelled—seems the Nationals want to negotiate down the guaranteed money left on his contract. Somehow Strasburg doesn't like that idea.

The pitch timer in postseason play will remain unchanged from regular-season play. After a meeting of its Executive Council, MLB informed the Competition Committee on Friday afternoon that it will not be presenting any proposals to amend rules for postseason play this year, according to a league official.

The notification is an indication that owners are satisfied with its pace-of-play initiatives and how players have adapted to the new rules. Thanks largely to a timer, which requires a pitch within 15 seconds with the bases empty and 20 seconds with runners, the average time of game has been cut from 3:03 to 2:39.

As hitters have grown more comfortable in using one timeout per plate appearance, time of game has crept up from 2:37 in April to 2:41 in August.

There had been some discussion among players that postseason play could benefit from more time on the clock between pitches, given the importance of the games. Data from MLB

indicates that players have adjusted well over the course of the season to playing with the clock.

According to that data, pitches with the bases empty are thrown with an average of 6.5 seconds remaining on the timer and 7.4 seconds remaining with runners on. Violations have declined from 0.71 per game in April to 0.29 per game in August.

Last month 75.4% of all games were played without a pitch-timer violation, including all 15 games on Aug. 25.

All other new rules will remain as is, including the ban on shifts and the limit on pickoff throws by pitchers. Stolen base attempts have declined slightly over the season, from 1.8 per game in April and May to 1.7 in July and August. Runs per game were 9.4 in August, up from the previous monthly high this year of 9.3 in July.

Other effects of the new rules, compared to last year:

- Runs per game are up 7%, from 8.6 to 9.2.
- Batting average is up six points, from .243 to .249.
- Batting average on balls in play is up seven points, from .290 to .297. The increase is 36 points on ground balls hit by lefthanders.
- Pickoff attempts per game are down 20%, from 6.0 to 4.8.
- The stolen base success rate is 80.2%, an all-time high, and up from 75.4%.
- The strikeout rate has increased from 22.3% to 22.7%, though it is below the 2021 level of 23.4%.

The Red Sox lost to the Orioles 13-12 Saturday. They had 23 hits yet lost. Last team to have 23 hits and lose—1930 Phillies.

The Atlanta Braves officially retired **Andruw Jones's** No.25 prior to last night's game. A native of Curaça, Jones played with the Braves from 1996-2007 in a 17-year career that saw capture 10 Gold Gloves and crush 434 home runs while logging a 111 wRC+ and 67 WAR.

Max Scherzer has been credited with 140 wins since the start of the 2014 season. Most losses--
Patrick Corbin of the Nationals with 100 losses.

Likely a close race for the NL Cy Young. Top contenders:

Spencer Strider, Braves. Strider is 16-5 with a 3.83 ERA, a 2.89 FIP, a 13.89 K/9, and 4.7 WAR.

Justin Steele, Cubs. Steele is 16-3 with a 2.55 ERA, a 2.98 FIP, a 9.06 K/9, and 4.3 WAR.

Zac Gallen, D'backs. Gallen is 14-7 with a 3.48 ERA, a 3.32 FIP, a 9.37 K/9, and 4.3 WAR.

Zack Wheeler, Phillies. Wheeler is 11-6 with a 3.49 ERA, a 2.93 FIP, a 10.16 K/9, and 5.7 WAR.

Zack Greinke has 66.0 WAR, and his bona fides include 2,962 strikeouts, six Gold Gloves, six All-Star berths, and a Cy Young award. There is a good chance that he will one day be elected to the Hall of Fame. If it happens, will he have had the worst-ever season for a pitcher enshrined in Cooperstown? With his 2023 campaign winding down, the Kansas City Royals right-hander is 1-14 with a 5.34 ERA and 84 ERA+ over 123 innings.

According to esteemed colleague Jay Jaffe, it depends on the parameters. If you're just going on winning percentage, Greinke's current .067 would be the worst when going with a 10-decision minimum. **Robin Roberts** went 1-10 (.091) in 1961.

If you go by ERA, Greinke's season is nowhere close to the worst. Jay pointed out that there are 47 seasons by Hall of Famers with an 84 ERA+ or worse in 120 innings or more.

Josiah Gray of the Nationals has allowed 19 home runs and issued 75 walks. George Kirby of the Mariners has allowed 19 home runs and issued 16 walks.

Cleveland's **Addie Joss** walked 30 batters in 325 innings in 1908. Cleveland's **Bob Feller** walked 208 batters in 277-and-two-third innings in 1938.

Eugenio Suárez (now with the Mariners, then with the Reds) had 49 home runs and 189 strikeouts in 2019.

Ted Kluszewski had 49 home runs and 35 strikeouts in 1954.

VERY HOT SHORT GUY

Jose Altuve is on fire. He's on such a tear that, by one measure, he's hotter than any hitter in MLB history.

In the sixth inning of Monday's game Altuve broke a 4–4 tie with a homer off of **Glenn Otto**. Then, in the ninth, he added an insurance run with another homer. For an encore on Tuesday, he homered in each of the first three innings. That's five homers in a span of just seven innings, which, according to OptaSTATS, had never been accomplished before in all of MLB history.

Even after homering three times in the first three innings on Tuesday, Altuve missed out on becoming the 19th player to hit four home runs in a single game, but he had made history as the first man with five homers in a seven-inning span.

Altuve hit four homers in four at-bats over four consecutive innings. He's the first player in the expansion era to homer in four straight innings.

Altuve had his right thumb broken in the World Baseball Classic and has fought nagging injuries since his return. At 33, though, he's not showing any decline at the plate: .321/.406/.563 in 68 games, 13-for-15 stealing bases.

The last player before Altuve to hit 5 home runs in the span of 2 games was the Nationals' **Kyle Schwarber** in 2021.

In a span of 19 days ... he got his 2,000th career hit on Aug. 19, then hit for the cycle on Aug. 28, then this week (according to STATS) became the first player since 1894 to hit a home run *in four consecutive innings* (over two games). So who the heck has had 19 days like that? Nobody.

The only other player who even had a cycle and four consecutive homers *in the same season* was **Jimmie Foxx**, in 1933. But he did it 67 days apart. Altuve did it eight days apart. (Foxx did get his 1,000th career hit in the middle of that)

But also, he's 5-foot-6! If we count postseason games Altuve owns two career three-homer games, one in the regular season and one in October. And have we mentioned *he's 5-foot-6*? Here's the reason to mention it again now:

Three-homer games by Jose Altuve: 2

Three-homer games by all other players in history 5-6 or shorter: 2*

by **Freddie Patek (1980) and **Hack Wilson** (1930).*

3 active position players who played at the old Yankee Stadium: **Miguel Cabrera, Joey Votto, Evan Longoria.**

Cabrera played at Yankee stadium at age 20 and at age 40. The only players to play at any edition of Yankee Stadium as both a 20-year-old (or younger) or a 40-year-old (or older) ... *while never playing for the Yankees:*

Brooks Robinson

Ted Williams

Miguel Cabrera

Bert Blyleven

Ugly look at last week's standings—the last time Yankees were 69-69, was in '69.

THIS WEEK'S "HOW 'BOUT THOSE MARINERS UPDATE

On Monday, Julio Rodriguez become the first player ever to have 25+ home runs and 25+ steals in each of his first two seasons. Rodriguez is also on pace to become the fourth player ever to have 25+ HRs and 40+ steals in a year in his age-22 season or younger.

Player	HR	SB	Season
Mike Trout	30	49	2012
Álex Rodríguez	42	46	1998

Player	HR	SB	Season
César Cedeño	25	56	1973

Fresh off earning his first career American League Player of the Month nod, on Monday Rodríguez ripped a homer to right-center field during the fourth inning of the eventual 6-3 loss to the Reds that put him into the MLB record books: He's the first player to register at least 25 homers and 25 steals in each of his first two seasons.

In August, he led all qualified AL hitters in hits (45), doubles (10), RBIs (30), stolen bases (11), batting average (.429), on-base percentage (.474), slugging percentage (.724) and OPS (1.198). He also crushed seven homers and recorded 13 multi-hit games during the month, including six games with at least three and five with at least four.

After finally snapping their long postseason drought last season with a 90–72 finish and a wild-card round win over the Blue Jays, this year got off to a bad start. As recently as July 24, Seattle's record stood at .500, 8.5 games behind the division-leading Rangers and in seventh place in the wild-card race. But since, no team has been hotter than the Mariners, who are 24–6 since that date. This weekend's sweep against the Royals, combined with the Rangers' recent swoon (they've lost nine of their last 10), put Seattle in sole possession of first place.

Last year, the Mariners went 18-14 in September and October to snap a playoff drought that dated back to 2001. This year — even with the benefit of a scorching 21-6 August that put them in striking position — they'll likely need a better finish than that to make the postseason again.

They will attempt to snap *another* drought: They're the only team in the league that has never played in a World Series.

Phillies lead off hitter **Kyle Schwarber** is hitting .195 — and leading his team in runs scored and RBIs. No player in history has ever done it.

Schwarber has nearly a 1.100 OPS when he leads off a game for the Phillies (1.094 to be precise). He's done that *while only hitting four singles all season (leading off the game)*. His breakdown of how he's reached base, in the 86 games he has led off, goes like this:

Singles — 4

Doubles — 4

Homers — 10

Walks — 14

Schwarber is *not* the only player in the live-ball era to lead off in this many games in a season and hit only four singles in all those first innings. **Robbie Grossman** led off 87 games for the Tigers in 2021—4 singles.

Top 5 all-time doubles:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Tris Speaker | 792 |
| 2. | Pete Rose | 746 |
| 3. | Stan Musial | 725 |
| 4. | Ty Cobb | 724 |
| 5. | Albert Pujols | 686 |
| 6. | Craig Biggio | 668 |
| 7. | George Brett | 665 |
| 8. | Nap Lajoie | 657 |
| 9. | Carl Yastrzemski | 646 |
| 10. | Honus Wagner | 643 |

Top active all-time doubles

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Miguel Cabrera | 623 |
| 2. | Freddie Freeman | 466 |
| 3. | Joey Votto | 458 |
| 4. | Evan Longoria | 431 |
| 5. | Andrew McCutcheon | 411 |
| 6. | Paul Goldschmidt | 408 |
| 7. | Jose Altuve | 395 |
| 8. | Elvis Andrus | 376 |
| 9. | Nelson Cruz | 372 |
| 10. | Daniel Murphy | 371 |

Two weeks ago, facing the Guardians, Rays reliever **Robert Stephenson** threw what would appear at first glance to be an immaculate inning. Three strikeouts, nine pitches thrown.

Except ...

Stephenson's feat came in extra innings. And with the automatic runner on second base, Rays manager **Kevin Cash** opted to intentionally walk **Andrés Giménez** with two outs. Stephenson didn't have to throw a pitch to Giménez, but the final line was: nine pitches, three strikeouts ... and a walk; two runners stranded.

So does it still count as an immaculate inning?

Our resort in Inverness, NS featured 10 baseball channels—most of them only showing the Blue Jays. We did get to see the showdown between the Rangers with **Max Scherzer** on the mound and the Astros with **Justin Verlander** hurling.

Scherzer coughed up 7 runs in 3 innings of a 12-3 loss so it wasn't an historic battle but:

Three Cy Young awards apiece

Multiple no-hitters apiece

More than 3,000 career strikeouts apiece

How many matchups since 1901 have even featured two starters with at least three Cy Youngs and 3,000 strikeouts — Here's that iconic list:

Steve Carlton versus Tom Seaver — We got three duels between those two after they'd joined both of these clubs — on Aug. 18, 1981, on May 24, 1982, and on April 5, 1983.

Greg Maddux versus Roger Clemens — Those two met once when the rotation stars lined up — on July 19, 2006, in a Cubs-Astros game at Wrigley Field ... after they had combined for 11 Cy Youngs and a mind-blowing 7,644 strikeouts.

On Sept. 1, 1998, en-route to breaking **Roger Maris's** single-season MLB home run record, **Mark McGwire** hit his 56th and 57th home runs of the season, breaking the decades-old National League record held by which player **Hack Wilson**. Wilson's mark of 56 home runs had

stood as the NL record since 1930, with few players even coming close to challenging it. Before '98, there had been only seven 50-homer seasons in NL history (compared to 15 in the AL).

Ralph Kiner ('47 and '49) and **Willie Mays** ('55 and '65) both accomplished the feat twice, along with **Johnny Mize** ('57) and **George Foster** ('77). In addition to Mark McGwire and **Sammy Sosa**, Padres outfielder **Greg Vaughn** also slugged 50 homers in '98.

Though McGwire broke Wilson's record, Wilson set another record in 1930 that will be hard to break, collecting 191 RBIs. Only nine times in the expansion era (since '61) has a player had even 150 RBIs in a season, most recently **Alex Rodriguez** with 156 in 2007.

GATHER ROUND THE BAR AND SEE HOW MANY OF THESE YOU CAN ANSWER

Editor's note—our Weekly Trivia Challenge is aimed at allowing you to noodle out the right answers. In the following it's the facts—much more an 'either you know it or you don't'. But they are still fun. Answers are below.

Which five Hall of Famers each played for only one manager who was also a Hall of Famer during their entire major league careers?

Of the sluggers with more than 600 career home runs, who is the only one to never win an MVP award?

Which player, over the course of his career, played with five different teammates who either had already, or would in the future, win two consecutive MVP awards in four different decades?

What four men played in the postseason in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s?

Name the pitcher who holds the major league record for most career regular season wins without ever having a single regular season at-bat.

Name 3 baseball commissioners who served for fewer than 4 years.

Who was the only American League batting champ without a homer that season?

Who was the first batter to homer off a pitcher whose Cy Young Award came before the hitter was born?

Which player was directly involved in three of the four American League forfeits in the 1970s?

Name the only modern-era Hall of Fame pitcher who, over a 3-year span, led his league in wins the first year, losses the second year, and wins again in the third?

Who is the only pitcher to surrender home runs to all three Alou brothers?

Although he never played for a New York team, this man hit 86 career home runs in New York. Name him.

What three pitchers have won a game as a teenager and after turning forty?

Name the only four pitchers in the modern era to win 20 games in a season for three different teams.

ANSWERS

Which five Hall of Famers each played for only one manager who was also a Hall of Famer during their entire major league careers?

A: Don Drysdale, Sandy Koufax, Ross Youngs, Harry Wright & Walter Alston

Drysdale's and Koufax's manager was Walter Alston.

Alston's manager was Frankie Frisch. Youngs's manager was John McGraw. Wright's manager was himself.

Of the sluggers with more than 600 career home runs, who is the only one to never win an MVP award?

A: Jim Thome

Thome's highest MVP finish was a 4th place for the 2003 Phillies.

Which player, over the course of his career, played with five different teammates who either had already, or would in the future, win two consecutive MVP awards in four different decades?

A: Jim Bouton

Bouton was teammates with **Yogi Berra** (1954-55 MVPs), **Mickey Mantle** (1956-57), **Roger Maris** (1960-61), **Joe Morgan** (1975-76), and **Dale Murphy** (1982-83).

What four men played in the postseason in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s?

A: Willie Mays, Norm Cash, Stan Williams and Don McMahon

Mays: 1951, '54, '62 and '73 WS + 1971 NLCS

Cash: 1959 and '68 WS + 1972 ALCS

Williams: 1959 and '63 WS + 1970 ALCS

McMahon: 1957, '58 and '68 WS + 1971 NLCS

Name the pitcher who holds the major league record for most career regular season wins without ever having a single regular season at-bat.

A: Ron Guidry

Guidry won 170 games for the New York Yankees from 1975 to 1988. He did have nine plate appearances in World Series play for the Yankees, but never recorded a hit.

Name 3 baseball commissioners who served for fewer than 4 years.

A: Bart Giamatti, Fay Vincent, William Eckert

Eckert served as commissioner from 1965 to 1968. Giamatti was hired as commissioner in 1989 before his untimely death at the age of 51. Vincent served from 1989 to 1992. (Peter Ueberroth served exactly 4 years.)

Who was the only American League batting champ without a homer that season?

A: Rod Carew

The Twins star hit .318 in 1972. (Three National Leaguers also turned this trick: **Wee Willie Keeler** of the 1897 Baltimore Orioles with a .424 average, **Ginger Beaumont** of the 1902 Pittsburgh Pirates at .357, and **Zack Wheat** of the 1918 Brooklyn Robins at .335.)

Who was the first batter to homer off a pitcher whose Cy Young Award came before the hitter was born?

A: Cameron Maybin / Roger Clemens

On August 18, 2007, Maybin — born April 4, 1987 — hit a home run off Clemens, who had won his first Cy Young Award in 1986.

Which player was directly involved in three of the four American League forfeits in the 1970s?

A: Rusty Torres

1 — The Washington Senators' final home game at RFK Stadium in 1971. (Torres started in RF for the Yankees.)

2 — Ten-Cent Beer Night in Cleveland in 1974. (Torres pinch-hit for Cleveland.)

3 — Disco Demolition Night in Chicago in 1979. Torres started in RF for the White Sox in the first game of the ill-fated doubleheader. The rioting between games prompted Chicago to forfeit the nightcap to Detroit.

Name the only modern-era Hall of Fame pitcher who, over a 3-year span, led his league in wins the first year, losses the second year, and wins again in the third?

A: Hal Newhouser, 1946-48

The Tigers lefty went 26-9 in 1946, 17-17 in 1947, and 21-12 in 1948. (**Eddie Cicotte** also did this from 1917-19 for the Chicago White Sox.)

Who is the only pitcher to surrender home runs to all three Alou brothers?

A: Ferguson Jenkins

Jesus Alou homered off the Cubs ace in 1967 and 1973, **Felipe Alou** in 1968, and **Matty Alou** in 1971.

Although he never played for a New York team, this man hit 86 career home runs in New York. Name him.

A: Stan Musial

Among his 475 career home runs, Musial hit 49 of them at the Polo Grounds and 37 at Ebbets Field.

What three pitchers have won a game as a teenager and after turning forty?

A: Herb Pennock, Bert Blyleven and Mike Morgan

Name the only four pitchers in the modern era to win 20 games in a season for three different teams.

A: Pete Alexander, Carl Mays, Gaylord Perry

Alexander: Phillies, Cubs, Cardinals

Mays: Red Sox, Yankees, Reds

Perry: Giants, Indians, Padres

Clemens: Red Sox, Blue Jays, Yankees

FROM THE JOE SHEEHAN NEWSLETTER

Editor's note—he cranks out interesting stuff every day. Mostly analytical but this piece on call-ups is interesting. Consider a subscription.

Back in 1980, the Phillies entered September as part of a wild three-team race in the NL East, trying to hold off the Expos and reigning champion Pirates. Their rotation had become a

problem behind **Steve Carlton and Dick Ruthven**, with rookie righty **Bob Walk** running out of steam in August (7.22 ERA) and veteran **Nino Espinosa** not much better (4.63, with eight (!) strikeouts in 35 innings). GM Paul Owens reached into the system in early September for a 22-year-old named **Marty Bystrom**, who would only go 5-0 in his five starts, push the Phillies over the top for the division title, and help them win the first World Series in franchise history.

My favorite player ever, **Don Mattingly**, would make his MLB debut two years and a day after Bystrom, after hitting .300 at every stop in the minors. He didn't play much that September, just 13 PA over seven games for a Yankee team on its third manager of the season, but as a young left-handed hitter who represented the future, he had the attention of a baseball-obsessed 11-year-old just across the river from Yankee Stadium.

A few years later, New York was agog over another September call-up, this time one of the most-hyped prospects of the 20th century, **Gregg Jefferies**. After hitting .367 at Double-A as a 19-year-old, the Mets called up Jefferies on September 6 as they tried to chase down the Cardinals. Like Mattingly, Jefferies didn't play much, but he did go 3-for-6 in limited time.

Today's history lesson comes in the context of **Jordan Lawlar**'s MLB debut last night, a bit more than two years after Lawlar was taken with the sixth pick of the 2021 draft. Lawlar has been a highly regarded prospect since he was picked. He has hit at every level, including .358/.438/.612 at Triple-A Reno (admittedly a bandbox) in 2023. The Diamondbacks, looking to emerge from a four-team race for the final NL playoff berth, called up Lawlar to boost an offense that ranks 19th in MLB in the second half.

Lawlar is just the latest top prospect to rocket through the minors in the last couple of seasons. **Elly De La Cruz** had just 85 games above A ball when the Reds promoted him this summer. Teammate **Matt McClain** beat him to the majors less than two years after being the 17th pick in the 2021 draft. **Eury Perez** had fewer than 200 minor-league innings under his belt when the Marlins brought him to the majors in May. The Orioles have pushed last year's #1 overall pick, **Jackson Holliday**, through four levels in five months at 19 years old -- he's already up to Triple-A.

It's important to note that this isn't new, but rather a return to the status quo that governed much of baseball history. Teams would use September to get a look at their top prospects as active rosters allowed them to carry up to 40 players. If you can believe it, they didn't carry 31 pitchers in doing so. They'd use September to let those top prospects get a taste of big-league life, even if they didn't play much. Mattingly and Jefferies barely played during their first MLB seasons. Go back to that era, and you'll find countless Hall of Famers making their debuts in September. **Mike Schmidt. Gary Carter. Tim Lincecum. Ryne Sandberg. Edgar Martinez.** In that first decade after the Seitz decision, teams hadn't yet figured out how to work the system -- what we would come to call service-time manipulation -- and so they prioritized baseball concerns in making these call-up decisions.

As teams grew more brazen about holding back players, the MLBPA, as well as a number of fans, began to question the practice. So in the 2022 CBA, the league and union agreed to incentives for teams that opened the season with top prospects on the roster. In the first year of those new rules, the Mariners picked up a draft pick for having Rookie of the Year **Julio Rodriguez** on the roster all season. The new rules may have been a factor in **Bobby Witt Jr., Jeremy Pena, Hunter Greene** and others making their teams out of camp and staying up all season. I think it was a factor in **Jordan Walker** opening the season in St. Louis this year, in Anthony Volpe starting for the Yankees.

So with teams now having an incentive to open the year with their best prospects on the team, September becomes a freeroll, with the service time gained by those players likely a non-factor in future arbitration and free-agent eligibility, and with September service and playing time low enough to keep those players rookie- and incentive-eligible the next year. Lawlar, **Jasson Dominguez, Ronny Mauricio, Masyn Winn, Alexander Canario** and others are in the majors today as a byproduct of that rule. It's the single biggest reason teams have turned up the aggression the last few years.

The rule change doesn't explain all of it, though. The Reds called up McLain and De La Cruz in June. The Marlins promoted Perez in May. The Brewers called up **Sal Frelick** pretty much the moment he was healthy. The Pirates brought **Henry Davis and Endy Rodriguez** to Pittsburgh before they had to.

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS

Frank White	73
Luis Gonzalez	56
Mike Piazza	55
Gerrit Cole	33

LONGER READS

THE STRANGEST, FUNNIEST, AND MOST FASCINATING BASEBALL REFERENCE PAGES

Editor's note-I often recommend that you explore baseballreference.com, a great (and free) website. It is an incredible, easy reference. This piece first appeared in The Ringer in 2020.

Hank Aaron, 1,000-home-run hitter? Check. A player who may have emerged from the Atlantic Ocean? Double check. In these days without MLB, our staff writers went on a deep dive of baseball's most complete database to find things that remind them of what makes the sport so great.

By Ben Lindbergh, Michael Baumann, and Zach Kram

Baseball-Reference is the eighth wonder of the world, and frankly, it's superior to some of the better-known seven, too. Who needs the Colossus of Rhodes, after all, when you have the player page for **Tuffy Rhodes**, onetime home run king of Japan?

One of the qualities that defines baseball's corner of the internet is the quirkiness inherent in appreciating its history. Much of that joy is tied in with browsing Baseball-Reference pages, which expose bizarre stats and fun names and fantastic accomplishments and all of those quirky histories. Baseball-Reference is already a year-round treat, but in a time absent of actual games—Opening Day was originally slated for Thursday—it becomes counterintuitively even more central for fans: Only the strangeness can slake our baseball thirst; the only new discoveries can come from mining the depths of already existing pages.

The site has more information available than anyone has time to read, social distancing or not. There are pages for every player, team, and season; for leagues ranging in skill level across four continents; for every possible statistical search a baseball fan would hope to answer. So to celebrate the breadth of the site's riches, we held a miniature draft, picking our five favorite B-Ref pages apiece, selected from anywhere on the site. As befits this eighth wonder, we got weird—and in so doing, found room for some baseball smiles even when the parks are closed, the mounds just waiting for the first real pitch of spring. —*Zach Kram*

1. Rogers Hornsby (*Michael Baumann*)

One of the most distinctive bits of Baseball-Reference branding is "black ink." Whenever a player leads his league in a statistical category, the number on his page is displayed in bold. If he leads all of Major League Baseball, it's both bolded *and* italicized. B-Ref even tracks black ink on a player's page, with certain categories weighted to emphasize their importance, and publishes the player's score at the bottom of his page as a quick and dirty estimation of his worthiness for the Hall of Fame.

When most statheads talk about players with a lot of black ink, they go to favorites from the recent past, like **Barry Bonds** or **Pedro Martínez**. But my personal favorite smattering of black ink belongs to **Rogers Hornsby**. The Rajah was a real asshole, God rest his soul, but he could absolutely rake. If you know anything about Hornsby, apart from his winning personality, it's

that his career batting average, .358, is the highest ever for a right-handed hitter and second only to **Ty Cobb** overall. That undersells his offensive prowess somewhat.

Year	BA	OBP	SLG
1920	.370	.431	.559
1921	.397	.458	.639
1922	.401	.459	.722
1923	.384	.459	.627
1924	.424	.507	.696
1925	.403	.489	.756

That's right, from 1920 to 1925, Hornsby led the National League in batting average, OBP, and slugging percentage (and by extension OPS and OPS+) *every single year*. Bonds and Ruth swept the triple-slash categories three times combined, while Hornsby did it six years in a row. As much as I love the nooks and crannies of Baseball-Reference, sometimes you just want a stats site to play the hits. Literally, in Hornsby's case.

2. 1899 Cleveland Spiders (Zach Kram)

The 1899 Spiders are the worst team in MLB history. They are also my favorite team in MLB history. (I adore them so fervently that early on in my relationship, my girlfriend bought me a vintage Spiders T-shirt as a birthday present.) And their Baseball-Reference page shows why.

The backstory here is that before the season, the Spiders' owners also bought the St. Louis Perfectos (later the Cardinals) and traded all their good players—including **Cy Young** and two other future Hall of Famers—to St. Louis to try to form a superteam. But that context isn't immediately apparent on the page. One of the only indications of something strange comes at the top of the page, when B-Ref gives an option to see the Spiders' previous season but not their next. That's because the Spiders franchise folded after 1899.

The other indication of something strange is the data itself; B-Ref is, first and foremost, a treasure trove of information. For instance, every team page includes a quick visual representation of the game-by-game results. Green means a win, red means a loss, and the height of the bar signifies the margin of victory. Here is the Spiders' graph of 20 green bars and 134 red.



Every page is filled with storytelling statistics. So it's easy to see that, say, Jim Hughey was the Spiders' ace but finished the season with a 4-30 record, and that the pitching staff as a whole finished with a 6.37 ERA and didn't feature a single player with a league-average mark or better.

The Spiders also exemplify the uncertainty of early baseball record-keeping, which wasn't nearly as precise as it is today. Six players have a "?" next to their names, which signifies that baseball historians are unsure of their handedness at the plate. And they highlight the wonders of old-timey baseball names, with players like **Sport McAllister**, **Ossee Schrecongost**, and **Highball Wilson**. **Harry Colliflower** was on this team, too, with a fun name and a hilarious player photo—another delight of early-years Baseball-Reference—to boot.



Teammate **George Bristow** and his magnificent moustache say a grainy hello, as well.



3. Minnie Miñoso (Ben Lindbergh)

Not to brag or anything, but I subscribe to the This Week in Sports Reference newsletter, which aggregates all of the latest updates and additions to every Sports Reference site. Unlike the huge hardcover encyclopedias that preceded it, Baseball-Reference is a living document. It's not enough for me to visit Sean Forman's fiefdom a dozen times per day; I also expect to be personally informed whenever he and his team make the most minor of tweaks.

The February 7 edition of the newsletter marked the inception of a page for freshly minted Hall of Famer Marvin Miller (career winning percentage in five work stoppages: 1.000%); celebrated the presence of more than 9,000 new historical headshots; and reported that "after being presented with supporting evidence," the site had changed the display name of the 1892 final—which featured a far more successful version of Zach's Cleveland Spiders—from "Championship Series" to "World Series." But one other note caught my eye: "Raised maximum displayable age to 78 so **Minnie Miñoso's** appearance at 77 is reflected properly."

This is fun for two reasons: First, that Baseball-Reference is such a stickler for details and accuracy that it will alter code to accommodate a single player (and not just Pat Venditte). And second, that Miñoso made a professional plate appearance in his age-77 season. (He walked.) Miñoso, who made his major league debut in 1949, came out of retirement in his 50s for five combined games with the Bill Veeck-owned White Sox in 1976 and 1980. Veeck's son Mike then activated him again in 1993 and 2003 for the Northern League's St. Paul Saints, making Miñoso the only person to play professionally in seven different decades (or six, for that matter). Miñoso's stat page points out that when he played for St. Paul in 2003, he had 50.3 years on the average Northern League player. B-Ref also informs me that Miñoso faced pitchers who appeared in the majors as early as 1936 (**Bob Feller**) and as late as 1993 (**Frank Tanana**), as well as another era-spanning pitcher, **Satchel Paige**, who made his pro pitching debut in 1927. (See another B-Ref frivolity, the Oracle of Baseball, for more mind-boggling baseball connections.)

Being Baseball-Reference, of course, the site encompasses Miñoso's career, from his early years with the Negro National League's New York Cubans to his cameos in indy ball, alongside his stints in the affiliated minors, the Cuban Winter League, and multiple Mexican leagues. Thus, Miñoso's page allows us to appreciate both B-Ref's comprehensive scope and Miñoso's excellence: Of the 13 hitters with the most WAR amassed between 1951 and 1961—Miñoso's first and last full MLB seasons—only Miñoso, who ranked eighth, isn't in the Hall of Fame. And if the color line hadn't delayed the beginning of his big league career, he'd probably be in the Hall of Fame also.

4. First Round of the 2011 Draft (Baumann)

As *The Ringer's* premier (only?) amateur draft obsessive, I spend a lot of time digging around B-Ref's draft archives, and there is no greater concentration of talent I can think of than in the

first round of the 2011 draft. In your garden-variety draft, even a first-round pick has only a small chance of becoming an impact big leaguer, but the 2011 draft was anything but ordinary.

The first pick in this draft was UCLA right-hander **Gerrit Cole**, though Rice third baseman **Anthony Rendon** (no. 6) could've gone with the top pick if not for injury concerns. The Seattle Mariners drafted Virginia right-hander **Danny Hultzen** second, but reportedly considered a high school infielder named **Francisco Lindor**, who ultimately went eighth. The Diamondbacks took Cole's college teammate, **Trevor Bauer**, third overall, one spot ahead of **Dylan Bundy**. Bundy's Oklahoma high school rival, Archie Bradley, joined Bauer in Arizona. Javier Báez went ninth overall, **George Springer** 11th, **José Fernández** 14th, and so on down the line through Cy Young winner **Blake Snell** at no. 52.

The first round of the 2011 draft, which swelled to 60 picks after the compensation round, has produced 13 All-Stars so far, including seven from the first 14 picks. First-rounders from this draft have featured in six of the past seven World Series. The one exception, 2015, featured a Mets club that was carried to the playoffs by **Yoenis Céspedes**, acquired from Detroit at that year's deadline for pitching prospect **Michael Fulmer**, the no. 44 pick in the 2011 draft and the 2016 AL Rookie of the Year.

The most impressive fact about this draft class is that the top 29 picks all played at least one game in the major leagues, which is an unbelievably high hit rate. Though for all the star power in the first round, the best player in this draft didn't go until the fifth round, when the Boston Red Sox spent pick no. 172 on a Nashville high school second baseman named **Mookie Betts**.

5. Bob Gibson's 1968 Game Log (Kram)

Gibson's 1968 is a season of legends. In the Year of the Pitcher, Gibson was *the* pitcher, recording a record (for the Liveball Era) 1.12 ERA. But to appreciate the totality of his performance that year, we need to dive into his game log—B-Ref includes game-by-game numbers for every player in every season dating back more than 100 years—which serves as a distillation of both the Cardinals ace and the sport at large in 1968.

The first factor that stands out is Gibson's innings totals. Between June and August, he started 18 games and pitched nine innings 17 times; in the 18th game, he went 11. Gibson threw more complete games in those three months than **Zack Greinke**, **Madison Bumgarner**, and **Max Scherzer** have thrown in their *careers*.

It was a different time for pitching strategy, and it was a different time for offense. The 1968-ness seeps through Gibson's game log in other places, too. He received zero, one, or two runs of support in more than half of his starts and often won games by scores of 1-0 (four times, all complete-game shutouts) or 2-1 (thrice). He lost nine games despite setting the ERA record.

Yet knowledge of the context of 1968's offensive doldrums, just before the mound was lowered to address the run-scoring crisis, doesn't dim the majesty of Gibson's game-by-game

performances that summer. His 13 total shutouts in 1968 are the most for any pitcher in the live ball era, and for those of us not fortunate enough to watch Gibson pitch, it's transporting just to imagine a pitcher going on a run like this in 2020.

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR	HBP
9.0	7	3	3	3	8	1	1
9.0	3	0	0	2	5	0	0
9.0	5	0	0	2	4	0	1
9.0	4	0	0	0	13	0	0
9.0	5	0	0	1	6	0	0
9.0	4	0	0	0	7	0	0
IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR	HBP
9.0	9	1	1	2	4	0	0
9.0	6	0	0	4	9	0	0
9.0	3	1	1	0	8	0	0
9.0	7	0	0	0	13	0	0
9.0	5	0	0	1	6	0	1
9.0	5	1	1	1	8	0	1

6. New Debuts Page (Lindbergh)

When we think about Baseball-Reference, we fixate, for good reason, on its unparalleled archive of historical stats. But the site is also invaluable for following the present season—provided, of course, that there *is* a present season. I like looking up long-dead players as much as the next nerd, but I also enjoy watching baby big leaguers be born. For that, there's the new debuts page, where we can watch minor leaguers make the leap to the Show like leatherback hatchlings completing their crawls across the sand. MLB is one of the country's longest-running reality shows, and the new debuts page helps us keep track of the cast.

Considering the size of modern pitching staffs and the way teams have taken to shuffling the backs of their bullpens, it's easy to miss recent arrivals who aren't top prospects. In 2010, 203 players made their major league debuts, but in 2019, 261 did, from the Mariners' **Dylan Moore** on March 20 to the Yankees' **Mike King** on September 27. Yet each one is worthy of at least a fleeting look. The new debuts page doesn't tell us what hardships each player had to endure, or how it felt to fulfill a dream, but it does give us basic biographical information: age (out to three decimal places!), team and position(s), height and weight, handedness, birthplace, and draft or signing info. It's up to us to associate stories with names.

This section of the site seems bittersweet now, when games aren't going on and teams aren't making more major leaguers. Normally, though, it's an inspirational page that reminds us of renewal and illustrates the circle of major league life. As B-Ref's homepage helpfully notes,

there have been 19,690 MLB players so far. The pace of debuts may slow somewhat thanks to newly lengthened pitcher option periods and a reduction in the size of September rosters, but within the next two full seasons, someone will become lucky big leaguer no. 20,000. Now we just need one of those seasons to start.

7. 2016 Florida Gators (Baumann)

Part of the reason I'm the kind of person who obsesses over draft classes is that I used to cover college baseball for a living. One thing I learned quickly on that beat is how much we take for granted the free availability of useful statistics and game day information. On the college beat, if I wanted to reference stats like run differential or strikeout rate, I had to do the math by hand, and some schools didn't even publish plate appearance totals or pitch counts. So while I've wanted to plant a big smooch of gratitude on Sports Reference boss Sean Forman's sainted forehead dozens of times through the years, the urge has never been more powerful than when B-Ref added recent college stats to players' minor league pages.

In 2016, my bosses at D1Baseball sent me to Gainesville, Florida, to cover a weekend series between the no. 1 team in the country at the time (Texas A&M) and the no. 3 team in the country (Florida). What was supposed to be a tight, hard-fought series turned out to be a total walkover. The Gators annihilated the Aggies to the point that in my wrap-up column I invoked a *Robot Wars* contestant that was disqualified because it would shred its opponents and fling bits of debris into the audience. This Gators team was the best college baseball team I've ever seen, and looking at this roster it's easy to see why.

The biggest name to come out of that Florida team so far is **Pete Alonso**, who hit .374/.469/.659, though pesky freshman third baseman Jonathan India grew into a power stroke in 2018 and ended up as the no. 5 overall draft pick that year. But the Gators' strength was pitching. In three days in Gainesville I saw no fewer than six future top-50 picks take the mound (A.J. Puk, Alex Faedo, Logan Shore, Dane Dunning, Jackson Kowar, and Brady Singer), plus closer **Shaun Anderson**, who made 16 starts for the Giants last year, and a nearly unhittable lefty specialist named Kirby Sneed.

It's incredibly cool that at least for the recent past, Baseball-Reference truly lives up to the name, instead of being merely *Pro* Baseball-Reference. There's an unplumbable depth of history to the college game, and I love that fans can just stumble into it now just by, say, clicking the NL Rookie of the Year's page.

8. Ed Porray (Kram)

Edmund Joseph Porray pitched 10 1/3 career innings across three games in 1914, allowing 18 hits and nine runs (five earned) while striking out no one. His B-Ref page is mostly unremarkable—even if it inspires further clicking around the site, because he played for the short-lived Buffalo team in the short-lived Federal League, which was technically a major league that competed with MLB.

But Porray's page stands out for one wholly unique reason.



Ed Porray

Position: Pitcher

Bats: Right • **Throws:** Right

5-11, 170lb (180cm, 77kg)

Born: [December 5, 1888](#) in Atlantic Ocean

Died: [July 13, 1954](#) (Aged 65-220d) in Lackawaxen, [PA](#)

Buried: Odd Fellows Cemetery, Lackawaxen, PA

Ed Porray was born in the Atlantic Ocean. On the Play Index, he comes up as the only player in history who was born "At Sea." Nothing on Baseball-Reference makes me laugh harder than the unsolved mystery of Porray's birth, and the ensuing imagination of a secret Atlantean deciding one day to emerge from the depths of the ocean and pick up a curveball.

9. *Eddie Smith (Lindbergh)*

We've reached the run on pitchers named **Ed. Smith**, a southpaw who was born on dry land and pitched for the White Sox, Athletics, and Red Sox in the 1930s and '40s, may have been the unluckiest pitcher of all time, although he still spent 10 seasons in the majors (not counting the two he missed for military service). I first came across Smith in 2018, when eventual Cy Young winner **Jacob deGrom**, who received scant run support from the Mets, was making a run at becoming the second qualified pitcher ever to finish with more pitching wins above replacement than pitching wins. Smith, who amassed 4.2 WAR despite a 4-17 record in 196 2/3 innings for the 1937 A's, was the first, and his exclusive status was assured when deGrom won his last two starts to finish 10-9. (He finished with 9.9 pitching WAR, although his hitting was worth another 0.5.)

"Some pitchers might moan about their support or the umpiring, but I am a young fellow just getting his start," Smith said in 1937, adding, "the breaks of the game were against me most of the season ... but I am learning. In 1938, I will know the batters better."

Opposing batters weren't Smith's problem; his own teammates were. For Smith, pitching well without wins to show for it would become a career-long curse. Although he retired with a 108 ERA+, he had a winning record only once. Among the 552 pitchers with at least 1,500 career innings pitched and an ERA+ of 100 or better—indicating that they were at least league average at preventing runs—Smith's .392 winning percentage (73-113) is the worst by 21 points, and if we raise the ERA+ bar to 108, his is the worst by 44 points. Wins were somewhat more reflective of a starter's performance at that time than they are now, when pitchers don't go

deep into games, but Smith mostly played for terrible teams, and he never pitched for a club with a league-average lineup.

Smith's lousy luck may have had the opposite effect on **Joe DiMaggio**: When DiMaggio started his 56-game hitting streak in 1941, Smith was on the mound. At least Smith won *that* game; in his historic 1937 season, he'd started 0-10. He started the 1942 season the same way, but he still made his second All-Star team. He ended that year with a league-leading 20 losses, but he didn't let it get to him. "What the hell," he said that June. "Things ain't never as bad as they could be." Let's hope he was right.

10. Johnny Dickshot (Baumann)

As a clearinghouse of information, Baseball-Reference ought to appeal to curious and sober-minded students of the game. On the other hand, you know who had a really funny name? **Johnny Dickshot**, an outfielder who played 322 big league games in the 1930s and 1940s. According to B-Ref, his nickname was "Ugly," which invites the question of why someone named Johnny Dickshot needed a nickname at all.

Two years after Dickshot's last big league game, the Philadelphia Phillies called up third baseman **Willie Jones**, who played 15 years in the majors despite having the nickname "Puddin' Head." He had 1,502 career hits, 539 short of the total posted by 19th-century infielder "**Pebble Jack**" **Glasscock**. Whatever else we know about Baseball-Reference, it's one of very, very few places on the internet where it's safe to type "Pebble Jack Glasscock" into a search bar without first turning on incognito mode.

Hippo Vaughn, Wonderful Terrific Monds, Tim Spooneybarger, Ducky Medwick, Choo-Choo Coleman ... the list goes on. "Who's on First" starts with Bud Abbott opining that ballplayers have funny names, which he must've learned from Baseball-Reference.

11. Sadaharu Oh (Kram)

I might appreciate the esoteric absurdities of the 1899 Spiders and Ed Porray's birthplace, but I'm also a simple man, a sucker for four-digit OPS totals. So gazing upon Sadaharu Oh's player page, with 16 consecutive seasons with a better-than-1.000 OPS in Japan's top league, is a slack-jawing experience.

Ted Williams's player page is similar (19 seasons, 18 of them with a four-digit OPS), plus the Splendid Splinter's page has the advantage of other individual quirks; he's listed as "frozen" instead of buried in a graveyard, for instance.

But Oh is like some sort of combination of Williams, **Hank Aaron**, and **Barry Bonds**. He hit a pro-record 868 career home runs, including 30-plus for the last 19 years of his career, despite NPB's shorter seasons. And his sheer consistency leaps off the page, across every row and column of his statistical table—games played, rate stats, counting tallies.

If Baseball-Reference contained only MLB data, or only data for MLB, the minors, and college ball, it would still be a wonder. But baseball is a global game and B-Ref is a global site featuring statistical gifts from leagues around the world, including Oh's entire record from 22 seasons playing in Japan (plus 19 seasons managing), well before I was born.

12. The Cup of Coffee Players Page (Lindbergh)

I recently rewatched *Field of Dreams*, the movie that made Moonlight Graham a household name. Graham played an inning in the outfield on June 29, 1905, but he didn't get to bat, and he never made it back to the big leagues. "Back then I thought, 'Well, there'll be other days,'" the movie version of Moonlight, played by Burt Lancaster, says. "I didn't realize that that was the only day."

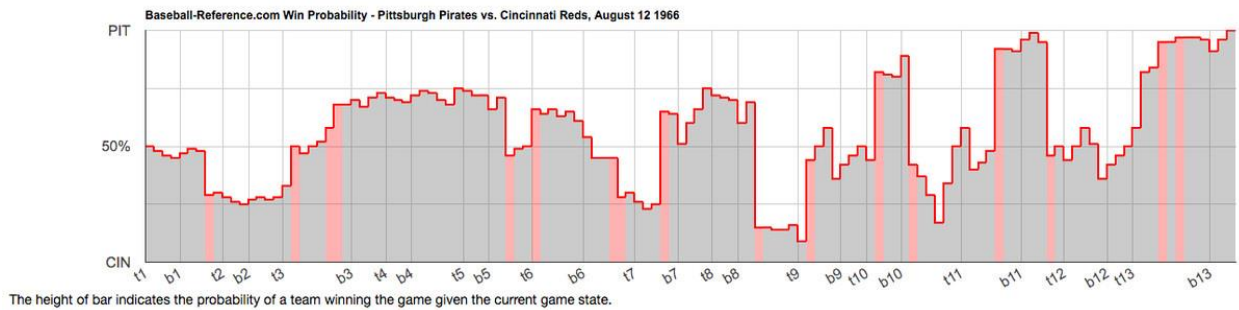
Hundreds of players have had only one day in the big leagues, and Baseball-Reference's cup of coffee player pages (one for hitters and one for pitchers) put them all in one place. Graham wasn't the only hitter who never held a bat in the big leagues: A couple of players (**Pedro Santana and Joe Hietpas**) have had the same experience this century. Among the hitters who *have* batted, the results have varied widely, from **Ron Wright**, who infamously struck out and then grounded into a triple play and a double play in his lone game with the 2002 Mariners, to **John Paciorek**, who singled three times and walked twice in his only major league look as an 18-year-old with the Houston Colt .45s. Wright never got an opportunity to improve on his colossal dud of a debut, and Paciorek never got the chance to repeat his spectacular success. Somewhere, a seasoned sports veteran is intoning, "There are no guarantees in this game."

Perhaps the most poignant entry of all belongs to **Larry Yount**, brother of Robin, who was injured while warming up for his first appearance on September 15, 1971. Yount was announced, so he got a game played, but he never threw a pitch. As my new debuts page pick revealed, I'm all about honoring the achievement of making the majors, regardless of the duration or distinction of one's stay. Only one cup of coffee recipient has been played by an (overacting) Academy Award winner in an (oversentimental) Oscar-nominated movie, but they all have supporting roles on this page.

13. Pittsburgh Pirates at Cincinnati Reds Box Score, August 12, 1966 (Baumann)

One nice thing about Baseball-Reference's box scores is that they tell the story of the game not only through counting stats and play-by-play data, but through win probability charts. And if you want to see a WPA chart go absolutely berserk, take a look at this puppy.

Win Probability Chart [Explanation of WPA](#) [Mouse over chart for play descriptions](#)



This is the win probability chart that results from handing a baseball to a dizzy toddler. This is baseball as written by M. Night Shyamalan. It makes me faintly seasick just to look at it. I discovered this game some years ago when I went to Play Index wondering which position player had posted the highest single-game WPA—in short, which batter had done the most to help his team win in any given game in baseball history. The answer: **Art Shamsky**. Now, it's weird enough that the best single-game performance in baseball history by one metric came not from Bonds or Cobb or Ruth, but an anonymous fourth outfielder, but it gets better: Shamsky didn't enter this game until the eighth inning, and his team lost.

Shamsky was double-switched into the game in the eighth inning with the Reds down a run. In the bottom of that inning, he hit a two-run home run to put the Reds in front. Cincinnati's bullpen blew the lead, and in the 10th inning Shamsky hit a game-tying two-run shot. The Reds allowed two more runs in the top of the 11th, and in the bottom of the frame Shamsky hit *another* game-tying home run, but the Pirates put the game away in the 13th before Shamsky could hit again.

That the most productively clutch performance in baseball history came in a loss is one of my favorite pieces of baseball trivia, and I learned about it only through the tools particular to Baseball-Reference. And on a personal note, the first thing Ben and I ever worked on together was a column about this game for *Baseball Prospectus*, when he was the editor-in-chief there and I'd just started blogging for *Grantland*. Maybe the real Baseball-Reference is the friends we made along the way.

14. *The Page Converting Everyone's Stats to Coors Field in 1999 (Kram)*

One oft-overlooked feature on the site, and a fitting choice for my final selection, is the set of "Neutralized and Converted Stats" pages. Essentially, B-Ref runs some calculations to determine what a player's stats would have looked like had he played at any other park, in any other season, in league history—serving as a reminder that the site isn't just a record keeper, but an analytical tool.

The best use of this feature is to virtually place every batter in MLB history in the most hitter-friendly ballpark we've ever seen. The Rockies averaged 7.1 runs per game at home in 1999, in

the thin air of pre-humidor Coors Field at the height of the steroid era—and were outscored, allowing 7.7 runs on average.

Some highlights of the 1999 Coors translation:

- 2001 **Barry Bonds** would have hit 95 home runs. A whopping 15 player seasons—including **Pete Alonso** last year—would have landed at 70 homers or more.
- 1931 **Lou Gehrig** would have collected 251 RBIs. A total of 99 seasons, including seven from Gehrig, would have reached 200 or higher.
- 1924 **Rogers Hornsby** would have hit .484, less than a dozen hits shy of .500. (I can see why Baumann picked his page first overall in this draft.) There are too many .400-or-better seasons to fit on one page.

The equivalent pitcher's page, whose best choice converts to Dodger Stadium in 1968, is plenty fun, too: 2000 **Pedro Martínez** and 1995 **Greg Maddux** both have converted ERAs below 1. There's something about 95 home runs and a .484 average that make the batting scenario just a bit more captivating, though. There's a limit to pitcher performance; an ERA can get only so low. But there's nothing stopping Bonds from just blasting dinger after theoretical dinger into the Denver mountain air.

15. Rich Sauveur (Lindbergh)

If Zach hadn't beaten me to the topic, I might have drafted Bud Selig's favorite B-Ref page (well, second favorite), the all-time neutralized batting stats leaderboard, on which **Hank Aaron** still leads **Barry Bonds** in career homers. (Playing the entirety of their careers in '99 Coors, the site says, Aaron would have hit 1,014 dingers to Bonds's 998.) And if Michael hadn't grabbed the 2011 first round, I might have taken the 2009 first round, a humbling reminder of human fallibility in which **Mike Trout** was selected 25th. (Trout is one serious **Stephen Strasburg** injury away from a real chance at producing more WAR than all of the players drafted ahead of him combined, especially if you exclude Randal Grichuk.) I also considered reliever **Ryan Webb's** seemingly unassailable record for games finished without a save (105), as well as the ultimate thrill ride, the random page selector.

Instead, I'm selecting **Rich Sauveur**, who recorded a 6.07 ERA and negative-0.4 WAR in six MLB seasons. Sauveur holds the distinction of the longest span between making a major league debut and losing rookie eligibility, as recorded by Baseball-Reference: He debuted in 1986 but didn't lose his rookie tag until 2000, a gap of 14 years. (Two other pitchers, **Fred Johnson** and **Dixie Howell**, went 16 and 15 years, respectively, according to data from B-Ref's Kenny Jackelen, but back then the rookie classification hadn't been defined.)

Sauveur was only 22 in 1986, but he didn't do well and was soon demoted. He resurfaced sporadically for the next decade—in '88, '91, '92, and '96, after becoming a scab during the strike—never for more than eight games in one season. "This year is it for me," Sauveur told the Philadelphia *Daily News* in 1998. "Of course, I say that every year."

Sauveur, who sometimes threw a knuckleball—and who was the last lefty to throw one in the majors until Ryan Feierabend ended the drought last year—held on until 2000, when the A’s gave him one more chance to erase his rookie designation. By then, Sauveur was the active career leader in minor league ERA and strikeouts; he finished with a 2.90 ERA in almost 500 Triple-A games. But to the best of B-Ref’s knowledge, the grizzled Sauveur remained a rookie in the Show.

In a *Boston Globe* column that May, Peter Gammons noted that a scout who’d seen Sauveur with the A’s reported that his fastest pitch was 80 mph. “Teammates call him crafty, which is baseball-speak for old,” added the *Sacramento Bee* that July. Yet after his A’s debut, manager **Art Howe** said that “the kid” had come through. Informed that the 36-year-old Sauveur was the third-oldest Athletic, Howe replied, “He’s a kid to me.” Maybe 36 seemed young to the 53-year-old Howe—or maybe Sauveur still smelled like a rookie.

At some point in his 18th professional season, B-Ref says, Sauveur finally accumulated enough service time to graduate from rookie status. In August, though, the A’s designated him for assignment. That last banishment cemented his claim to another ignoble record: most teams pitched for without a win. Since 2003, Sauveur has coached for three more clubs (the Brewers, Red Sox, and Diamondbacks). He has yet to get back to the big leagues.

THIS WEEK’S TRIVIA CHALLENGE ANSWERS

Four Mets players have hit 40 or more home runs in a season:

Right-hand batting 1B, 2019, 2022, 2023)

Pete Alonso (2019—53 HRs, 2022—40, 2023--42)

Switch hitting CF, 2006

Carlos Beltrán (2006—48 HRs)

Right-hand batting C/1B, 1999

Mike Piazza (1999—40 HRs)

Switch hitting C, 1996

Todd Hundley (1996—41 HRs)

I hit a career high 47 HRs for an AL west team in 1969.

I played with the same team through 1975, adding HRs in two World Series.

1976 AL east, 27 HRs but no post-season.

I was off to another AL east team, homers in 3 World Series.

Wrapped my career with 6 seasons back in the AL west. But no World Series.

Who am I?

REGGIE JACKSON

1969 47 HRs, 199 RBI, 123 runs scored for A's.

MVP of 1973 World Series with Oakland, 1 HR

1 HR in 1974 World Series with Oakland.

1976 Baltimore, no World Series.

MVP of 1977 World Series with Yankees with 5 HRs.

2 HRs in 1978 World Series with Yankees.

1 HR in 1981 World Series with Yankees.

Played 1982-86 with Angels and 1987 with A's but no World Series.

A reminder to check out sundaybaseballtidbits.com. Thanks to the efforts of subscriber (and Wesleyan baseball Wall of Famer) Todd Mogren, all back issues of the newsletter are archived and accessible. At the request of another subscriber there is a tab for all our trivia questions and a separate tab for questions with answers. No scrolling through the archives—easy access to all the trivia.

Please remember to check out

SUNDAYBASEBALLTIDBITS.COM

Over 5,000 pages of our back issues, trivia questions & answers, subscriber recommendations for best baseball books and websites. Special thanks to **Todd Mogren** for web support.

HOUSEKEEPING

Sunday Baseball Tidbits is distributed every Sunday morning. The goal is to provide “2 Cups of Coffee worth of baseball news, analysis, history and trivia” from a range of sources. All content belongs to its respective copyright holders. This newsletter is provided for the non-commercial enjoyment of our subscribers. Please email nhsuperseven@yahoo.com for a free subscription. We will never share your email address. Questions, comments, ideas, corrections and pointers to content you think subscribers would enjoy are encouraged and appreciated.

Our sources include:

The Athletic	Baseball-almanac.com
Baseballroundtable.com	Bleacher Report
Boston Globe	Mlb.com
The New York Times	Joe Posnanski newsletter
SABR.org	Sports Illustrated
Joe Sheehan newsletter	Baseballreference.com
ESPN.com	New York Post
SBNation	mlbtraderumors.com
baseballsavant.mlb.com	thebaseballcube.com
baseballthinkfactory.org	historicbaseball.com
ViSN (Vegas information and sports network)	
Atlas Obscura	statmuse.com
Fangraphs.com	atlas obscura
Baseball’s Best and Worst	Thedrummeyangle.com
Sports Business Journal	thisdayinbaseball.com
horsehidetrivia.blogspot.com	sportsskeeda.com
theringer.com	

Please check them out and support them.